



Gorebridge

Conservation Area Character
Appraisal & Management Plan

MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL
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Introduction

1. Conservation areas are areas of special architectural and/or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance. Under Section 61 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, Midlothian Council is required to determine which parts of their administrative area should be designated as conservation areas.
2. When a conservation area has been designated, it is the duty of Midlothian Council to pay special attention to the character or appearance of the conservation area when exercising powers under planning legislation. The character of a conservation area is not a simple matter of style, it is a combination of street layout, building density, building scale and building form.
3. Conservation area appraisals are a non-statutory form of planning guidance recommended as part of the ongoing management of conservation areas. The purpose of this Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CACAMP) is to:
 - Highlight the significance of the area in terms of townscape, architecture and history;
 - Provide a framework for conservation area management and for managing change within the conservation area; and
 - Confirm the importance of the designation of the area and to consider the ongoing relevance of the current conservation area boundary.

This CACAMP will define how change is managed within the conservation area, identifying specific opportunities for enhancement and it will inform planning decisions in the conservation area. The purpose of conservation area designation and the CACAMP is not to prevent change. The aim is to identify the key characteristics of the historic environment and establish a context within which change can continue in a way which enhances historic character.

4. Gorebridge is located 4 miles south of Dalkeith, to the east of the A7 (the original Edinburgh – Carlisle trunk road). It has a population of approx. 8,100. The town has incorporated a number of small villages as it has grown, including Stobhill, Arniston and Harvieston. Gorebridge is situated on a south west facing slope at the southern end of the Mayfield to Tranent ridge. The ridge forms the watershed between the valleys of the River Esk and the Tyne Water. The Gore Water (a tributary of the River South Esk) runs to the west of Gorebridge, and gives the settlement its name.
5. Gorebridge Conservation Area was designated in 1978 and is located in the town centre, focusing on Main Street. The Conservation Area has a tightly drawn boundary to the rear of the properties fronting Main Street and the south eastern part of Hunterfield Road. Main Street slopes steadily from north east to south west. To the

south of the Conservation Area lies the Borders Rail Line and the wooded valley of the Gore Water.



6. The Conservation Area benefitted from investment through a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, funded by Historic Environment Scotland, which ran from 2013-18. This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been prepared following the completion of the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme. It utilises the appraisal work undertaken as part of the project, including work by University of Edinburgh Architecture students in 2015.

Historical Development and Significance

Origins of the Settlement

- Gorebridge Conservation Area is focused on Main Street, which is the core of the original village. Gorebridge's development resulted from the opening of the first gunpowder works in Scotland, Stobs Mill, in the 1790s. The buildings on Main Street are first shown on a map from 1828, although the road can be seen on earlier maps dating back to the 1750s (Roy Lowlands 1752-55). The housing and enterprises on Main Street developed in the first half of the 19th Century to house and serve the employees of the gunpowder works.

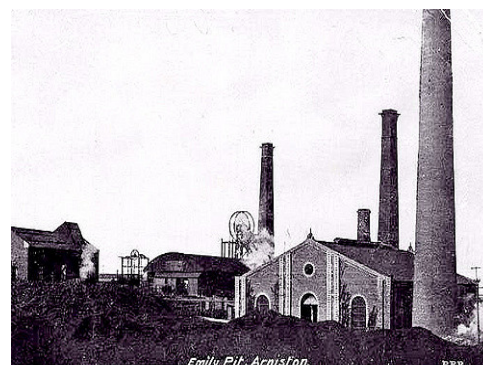


Sharp, Greenwood & Fowler Map of the County of Edinburgh (1828)



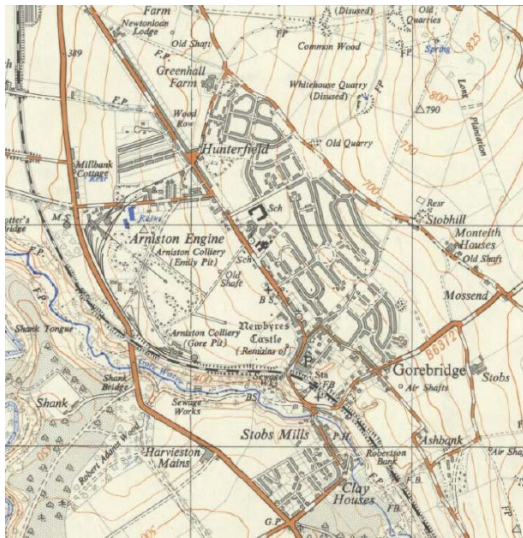
Roy Lowland Map (1752-55)

- The railway station first opened in 1847 to help serve local industry. Robert Dundas of Arniston opened two large collieries, the Emily pit in 1854 and the Gore pit in 1878, which drove the expansion of the village and the continuing success of Main Street as the commercial centre of the village. Both sides of Main Street were redeveloped in the later 19th century to provide two storey buildings with continuous street frontages, giving a strong enclosure to the street, accentuated by the curve and slope of the street and ground. Shopkeepers and other business owners originally lived above the commercial premises, but the success of the businesses led to the development of the villas on Private Road, which backs on to Main Street to the east, as homes for the business owners. The town continued to grow in the 20th and early 21st centuries as large housing estates were developed.

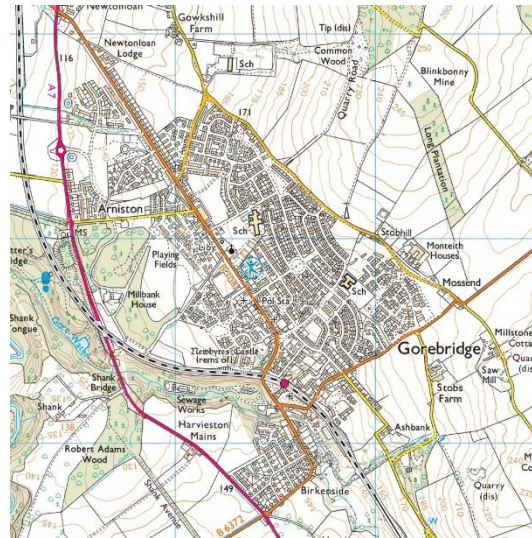


Archaeological & Historical Significance

9. Gorebridge as a whole has considerable historical importance. The settlement's creation was closely linked to its geography and landscape setting. The mineral rich fields of the area not only provided a suitable location for Scotland's first gunpowder works, but also provided the coal that was to define and develop the character of the town in the 19th and 20th centuries. Commercialism grew on the back of the industrial growth. Main Street presents a fairly intact and relatively unaltered example of a 19th century commercial High Street.



Ordnance Survey 1955



Current Ordnance Survey

Townscape Analysis

Architectural Quality & Built Form

10. The streetscape along Main Street is defined by its two opposing rows of buildings fronting directly on to the street. The road runs down the steep hill to the valley, and corresponding to this the roof ridges reflect the fall in the street. The result of the strict formation of buildings is that when approaching from the north and looking down towards the valley, attention is drawn through the narrow corridor formed by the buildings out to a glimpse of the horizon, which then opens out into panoramic view of the hills beyond when travelling down the street. The skyline in this lower section of the Conservation Area is characterised by diminishing or rising building heights (depending on direction faced) and a regular pattern of chimney stacks.



11. At the northern end of Main Street, the streetscape opens out into Hunter Square and Hunterfield Road. The looser knit and wider street scene of Hunterfield Road, with its properties set back from the street, contrasts with the character of Main Street. The original street layout at the junction of Hunterfield Road and Main Street had a narrower carriageway, but buildings were demolished to widen the street. This area has been improved recently to create a functional civic space for the community. Beyond this, on Hunterfield Road, there are coal mining cottages with their distinct steeply pitched rooflines and regularly positioned chimney stacks. Rubble sandstone walls and well maintained hedges line the street and, in contrast with Main Street, the buildings are set back from the street to provide an element of privacy. From this point on the hill there are panoramic views to the south out above the roofline of Main Street.



12. The Conservation Area has two distinct architectural styles, with the exception of the ecclesiastical and modern buildings.



The first style is along Main Street, where the buildings are predominantly rectangular plan, 2 storey terraced houses, built for commercial use and fronting directly onto the street. The buildings form a distinct linear street plan. Most of these buildings have plain facades featuring large windows or shop fronts on the ground floor and residential premises above. The main change to this pattern over the years has been the conversion of ground floor shops to residential premises. Rooflines on Main Street are generally aligned parallel to the carriageway with occasional gable ends at right angles to the road, for example the Old Post Office, which has a baronial style crow stepped gable.



The second style is found on Hunterfield Road, and is defined by cottages with steep pitched roofs, bargeboards, finialed porches, and in some cases further detailing such as hood moulded windows and heraldry.



13. There are a few notable exceptions to the styles identified above. These include 13 Hunterfield Road, which is a Category C listed building built in 1886 as a public library (Newbyres Reading Room). It is a single storey, 3 bay, Tudor gothic style building of tooled squared and snecked sandstone with overhanging eaves. It has 2 pane and 4 pane timber sash and case windows, a grey slate roof with lead ridge, cast iron rainwater goods and wallhead stacks. The Category B listed former church at 20 Hunterfield Road, which is now a children's nursery, was built in 1886. It is a gothic revival church with truncated bellcote (originally a spire) with sandstone walls and a slate roof. Newbyres Hall (5 Hunterfield Road) was built as a Free Church in 1858, then turned into a village hall in 1882. It was restored as part of the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, and now accommodates a children's nursery.



Materials

14. The buildings in the Conservation Area are primarily of sandstone masonry construction on the street facing façades and a mixture of rubble and brick to the sides and rear. The masonry finishes on the principal façades are mainly roughly pointed ashlar, often snecked and with a form of tooling to the face. The buildings with finely jointed ashlar also have other more decorative and detailed finished such as carved window and door surrounds, and carved panels, usually indicating greater wealth of the original owners.



15. The majority of roofs in to conservation areas are finished in slate, with most appearing to be Welsh slate. Over the years a high proportion of the original windows and doors in the conservation area have been replaced, leading to a variety of styles, shapes, colours and material. Progress on restoring these has been made through the recent Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme.



Setting and Views

16. Gorebridge sits on the north bank of the valley formed by the Gore Water, which is a major tributary of the River South Esk. The land rises steeply from the river, with Main Street running up this gradient. This setting provides picturesque views of the countryside to the south and west, including the Moorfoot and Pentland Hills.



17. The Conservation Area covers Gorebridge’s “town centre” although most of the residential areas which form the town lie to the north of the “centre”. Although some community facilities exist in the town centre, including a dentist, health centre, veterinary surgery and children’s nursery, other major facilities including the library, leisure centre and community hub building, along with convenience retailing, are located to the north of the town centre. The areas around the conservation area

reflect the gradual outward growth of the settlement from its original focus on Main Street.

Public Realm, Open Space and Trees

18. The public realm in the Conservation Area mainly consists of the footways between the road and building frontages. Along Main Street the footways are paved in light coloured stone slabs. The car parking bays along the eastern side of Main Street are defined by modern red and grey setts. The footways on Hunterfield Road are tarmac. The only area of civic open space in the conservation area is Hunters Square, which is paved in yorkstone with whinstone kerbing and granite block detailing.



19. There is no public greenspace within the Conservation Area. There is however a large greenspace immediately to the west of Main Street, which includes the remains of Newbyres Castle. This area is maintained by the Gorebridge and District Environmental Group and the Gorebridge Community Development Trust as a community garden. The only street trees in the Conservation Area are in Hunters Square. There are also two mature trees in the grounds of the former church at 20 Hunterfield Road that contribute to the street scene.



20. The street furniture in the Conservation Area is modern, but designed to be sympathetic to the setting. There are lamp posts, bollards, bins, bus stops, benches and a community noticeboard. There are also bespoke cycle racks in Hunter Square, designed to reflect the industrial heritage of the town. All are black painted metal.



Assessment

Significance

21. Gorebridge has considerable historical importance. The Gore Water and the mineral rich fields of Arniston, Dalhousie, Newbattle and Vogrie not only provided a suitable location for Scotland's first gunpowder works but also provided the plentiful supply of coal that defined the settlement character of Gorebridge and many other settlements across Midlothian. Commercialism grew on the back of the industrial growth in Gorebridge, and is of considerable historical importance locally. The intact nature of Main Street and its distinctive Victorian architectural quality is particularly significant, and is worthy of protection.
22. Gorebridge Conservation Area covers a largely intact 19th century core of commercial and residential buildings enclosing the curved slope of Main Street. It has been designated not only for the value of the individual buildings, but also for its significance as a group of buildings. Although the area contains some unsympathetic modern buildings and extensions, they do not significantly detract from the cultural value of the conservation as a whole, particularly since the restoration and improvements carried out through the recent Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme.

Condition

23. The condition of the Conservation Area has been significantly improved through the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, both in terms of the individual buildings and the public realm. This investment in the conservation area has, due to its focus on restoration, made a noticeable difference to the condition of historic buildings. It has also enabled the reintroduction of historic materials into the public realm, specifically in Hunters Square.
24. The restoration of Newbyres Hall has made a particularly important contribution to the overall condition of the Conservation Area, as have the shopfront improvements on Main Street. There is still work to be done, particularly on the modern buildings to ensure they make a positive contribution to the conservation area. On-going appropriate maintenance is key to ensuring the legacy of the CARS investment and the overall condition of the Conservation Area.

Opportunities

25. While significant improvements in the condition of buildings resulted from the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, there are still opportunities for further enhancement of the Conservation Area. One significant improvement would be the replacement of the supermarket façade on 23-25 Main Street with one that relates to the shop frontages in the traditional buildings.
26. There may also be some value in reviewing the boundary of the Conservation Area at some point in the future. Specific areas to consider are:

- Private Road, due to its links to the evolution of Main Street as the commercial centre of the village,
- The railway station building, due to its importance in the development of the town, and
- Properties on the west side Hunterfield Road between the Police Station and the current Conservation Area boundary.

Challenges

27. The recent investment in Gorebridge Conservation Area through the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme has significantly reduced the challenges it is facing. However, there are on-going challenges with the potential loss of retail units to residential use resulting from the struggle to maintain viability faced by all town centres. This would significantly disrupt the historic character of Main Street. There are also buildings which still have issues with past, poor quality, inappropriate repairs.
28. An additional significant challenge is the potential for small incremental changes to buildings and poor quality repairs to have a cumulative negative impact on the Conservation Area. The effects of this happening in the past have been mostly rectified through the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, there is a definite risk that it could happen again, particularly as property ownership and tenancies change over time. This challenge also relates to shopfronts.
29. The existing public realm, particularly on Main Street and Hunter Square is of an appropriate standard for a Conservation Area as a result of recent investment. However, maintaining the public realm over the long term will be an important contribution to the character of the conservation area.

Management Plan

30. The purpose of this Conservation Area Management Plan for Gorebridge Conservation Area is to set out the actions required to maintain and enhance the elements which contribute to the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area, as described in the Conservation Area Appraisal. This Management Plan is intended to inform the actions of Midlothian Council and other stakeholders, including property owners and occupiers, in relation to the built environment within the Gorebridge Conservation Area. It explores the issues facing the conservation area, opportunities for enhancement and building repair and maintenance.

Issues Facing the Conservation Area

31. Overall the Conservation Area is in good condition as a result of the recent investment through the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme. There are still some buildings which would benefit from appropriate repair or action to rectify past repairs of an inappropriate quality. It is also important that the improvements achieved through the regeneration scheme are not undermined by small incremental changes in individual buildings.
32. As with many town centres, Gorebridge faces challenges to remain competitive and relevant. The townscape quality of the area is a significant contributor to the success or otherwise of a town centre. Gorebridge is particularly vulnerable to loss of shop premises to residential use, which disrupts the historic character of Main Street. Poor shop front design, unsympathetic public realm works and under use or vacancy of buildings can all contribute to erosion of the character and quality of the townscape.

Opportunities for Enhancement

33. Most of the traditional buildings in Gorebridge are built of relatively thick, solid stone walls pointed in lime mortar. This traditional method of building enables the structure to 'breathe' as it is able to accommodate varying moisture levels by taking in and then evaporating moisture. These buildings usually have good ventilation under the floor and air movement is encouraged by open flues and through roof spaces. Breathing buildings are comfortable and healthy to live in. Repairing traditional buildings with modern materials such as cement mortars, gypsum plasters, modern formula paints and replacement windows will lead to problems with damp, stone decay and rot in timbers.
34. The following sections provide information on construction methods and materials used locally and expectations for the repair and restoration of traditional buildings in the conservation area.

Roofs and Chimneys

Original roof pitches and coverings should be preserved. Roof coverings are usually natural slate (mainly Welsh slate in Gorebridge) which gives a distinctive character and

texture to roofs that substitutes cannot easily replicate. When repairing or re-roofing, the preferred option is to use matching slate.

The detailing of roof lights, dormers, copings and flashing is equally important to the overall appearance of the roof and any change of materials should be avoided. Roof lights tend to be of metal fixed flush to the slope of the roof. Where replacement is necessary, conservation style rooflights should be specified. Repair and restoration of dormer windows should match the original design, materials and profiles closely. Original chimney stacks (stalks) and pots should be maintained where possible. Lead should usually be used to repair or replace dormer window flashings, roof valley gutters and skew gutters.

Masonry Walls

Traditional masonry walls are built with two 'skins' of stone and lime mortar. The core between the skins is filled with broken stone, lime mortar waste and rubble. The outer layer or face is either random rubble (to take harl or smooth lime render) or ashlar (stone blocks with smoother or textured face built with fine joints). The inner skin is rubble with wider joints and lime mortar. Horizontal timber laths are fixed to the inner face to take two or three coats of lime plaster. The cavity between the lathes and the stone face allows air movement and the evaporation of any moisture in the wall. Original masonry surface coverings such as harling should be kept. Pointing should use a lime mortar and should be correctly carried out.

Moisture in the base of walls can be reduced by lowering ground levels, improving drainage around the building, replacement of cement mortar with lime mortar and ensuring underfloor ventilation is functioning effectively. Stone repairs should be carried out using matching stone and lime mortar. Reconstituted stone is not an appropriate finishing material in the conservation area. Patching with cement or other substitutes is not acceptable. Using a mortar analysis service, such as that offered by the Scottish Lime Centre, can help identify suitable mortar for repairs and maintenance.

Windows and Doors

Original door and window openings possess the correct proportions for a building and should be retained to preserve the architectural integrity of the buildings. Original mullions should also be retained.

Additional window openings should be of an appropriate size and proportion, and should not spoil symmetry.

Most original windows in traditional buildings are either casements or sash. Repair or restoration of traditional windows is preferred over replacement, and replacement with windows in other materials such as aluminium or uPVC is not recommended.

Any replacement windows on the front and all sides of a traditional building in the conservation area which is visible to the public should match the original in every detail, including materials, design, opening method and paint finish.

Any original glazing should be investigated for its historic importance, and retained if merit is established (for example, Crown glass). Where existing glazing has no special merit, it may be possible to insert modern “slim profile” double glazing into the existing frames and astragals with minimal effect on the original profile.

Traditional doors are normally timber and panelled. Rear doors are usually plainer in style. Original doors should be retained or restored wherever possible. Where replacement is unavoidable, new doors should be timber and traditional in style, with door hardware in keeping with the character of the building.

External Details

A wide range of details contribute to the character of a conservation area, and it is important that these are not lost. Important details include rainwater goods, external pipework, finials and stone details such as skewes, cornices, balustrades, door and window surrounds and other ornamentation. Stone walls and metal railings should be retained.

Satellite dishes will not be permitted on principal or public elevations or above the ridge line of the roof. Equipment should be placed in unobtrusive locations to minimise their impact.

Shopfronts and Signage

The following principles should be taken into account when replacing or improving shopfronts in conservation areas:

- Shopfront design should be based on research into the historic shopfront for the specific building, and should be related to the composition of the building as whole. Proportions should reflect the historic proportions of the building.
- The use of traditional materials, including timber, is preferred. Aluminium or other “standard” shopfront systems that do not respect the historic patterns will not normally be acceptable, particularly for listed and traditional buildings.
- Proportions of shopfronts and signs should reflect the historic proportions of the building. Fascia signs should sit neatly within the fascia, clear of any framing detail. Over large fascias that are out of scale with adjoining fascias or obscure the shop window, or projecting box-like fascia signs, are not normally acceptable.
- Where separate buildings have been amalgamated at ground level into one unit, the shopfronts should be kept separate with strong vertical divisions between the buildings. Where two or more shop units occupy the same shop frontage in the same building, the shopfront design should not fragment the frontage.

Streetscape and Street Furniture

Recent improvements in the public realm will need careful maintenance to ensure that the quality of the streetscape is protected. Any future works in the conservation area should use traditional materials (for example yorkstone, granite setts and whinstone kerbing). Detailing should be in keeping with existing traditional styles. Street signage should be carefully located and kept to the minimum amount possible.

Trees

Under Section 172 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, trees in Conservation Areas are given some protection. Anyone proposing to cut down or carry out work on a tree in a conservation area is required to give the planning authority six weeks' notice. The purpose of this requirement is to give the planning authority an opportunity to consider whether a Tree Preservation Order should be made in respect of a tree. Further information and a link to the relevant application forms is available at www.midlothian.gov.uk.

Midlothian Local Development Plan 2017

Policy ENV 19 Conservation Areas

Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area, development will not be permitted which would have any adverse effect on its character and appearance. In assessing proposals, regard will be had to any relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

New buildings, extensions and alterations

In the selection of site, scale, choice of materials and design, new buildings, and extensions and alterations to existing buildings, must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Materials appropriate to the locality or structure affected, will be used in new building, extensions or alterations. Care in the design of replacement windows and doors will be required on the public frontage of buildings.

Demolition

Demolition to facilitate new development of part or all of a building or structure that makes a positive contribution to a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it can be shown that:

- A. The structural condition of the building is such that it cannot be adapted without material loss to its character to accommodate the proposal; and*
- B. The Conservation Area will be enhanced as a result of the redevelopment of the site; and*
- C. There is no alternative location physically capable of accommodating the proposed development.*

Where demolition of any building or other structure within a Conservation Area is proposed, it must be demonstrated that there are acceptable proposals for the immediate future use of the site which enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Detailed plans for an acceptable replacement building must be in receipt of planning permission before conservation area consent will be granted for demolition and redevelopment. Conditions will be applied to the planning permission to ensure that demolition does not take place in advance of the letting of a contract for the carrying out of a replacement building or alternative means of treating the cleared site having been agreed.

These requirements may not apply in circumstances where the building is of no architectural or historic value, makes no material contribution to the Conservation Area, and where its early removal would not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Appendix 1: Listed Buildings

Address	Description	Category	Ref No.
20-22 Hunterfield Road	<p>Church building including gate, gate piers and boundary wall. 1886. Rectangular plan, Gothic Revival church with truncated bellcote (originally a spire). Squared and snecked bullfaced sandstone with polished dressings. Base course; dividing band courses; pointed arched openings; angle buttresses with pinnacles. Octagonal gate piers with square base and gabled caps; cast iron gate with barley sugar uprights; tooled squared and snecked coped wall surmounted by matching cast iron railings along SW front; snecked sandstone rubble walls with semicircular coping to SE and NW.</p>	B	LB45157
13 Hunterfield Road	<p>Single storey, 3 bay, Tudor gothic former public library with 20th century additions to rear. Robert Smith, 1886. Tooled squared and snecked sandstone with droved dressings; long and short quoins; chamfered reveals; hoodmoulds; overhanging eaves; plain bargeboards to gables. Known as the Newbyres Reading Room, the hall was built by Robert Dundas as a public library (for books originally donated by Dr Milne of the gunpowder mill). In addition it was used by Gorebridge Working Men's Club for "social intercourse, instruction and rational amusement" (Gorebridge Yesterdays p5).</p>	C	LB45158
34 Hunterfield Road	<p>Single storey, 3 bay cottage, with later additions to rear. 1888. Squared and snecked sandstone with droved dressings; chamfered reveals; overhanging eaves with plain bargeboards and carved timber finials to gables. Built by Robert Dundas as a cottage for the District Nurse.</p>	C	LB45159
14 Main Street (Lonach)	<p>2 storey, 3 bay, rectangular plan traditional terraced house. Later 19th century. Painted tooled snecked sandstone with droved dressings.</p>	C	LB45160

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19 & 21 Main Street	2 storey, 3 bay, rectangular plan traditional terraced house altered to form shops at ground floor. Later 19th century. tooled snecked sandstone rubble with droved dressings; long and short quoins.	C	LB45161
32 & 34 Main Street	2 storey, 5 bay, rectangular plan pair of shops with tenements over. Dated 1889. Coursed stugged sandstone with droved dressings, stop chamfered to first floor; long and short quoins; base course; dividing band course.	C	LB45162
36, 38 & 40 Main Street	2 storey; 3 bay; rectangular plan shop with tenement above. Late 19th century. Irregular coursed tooled sandstone with stugged and polished dressings. Long and short quoins; chamfered reveals.	C	LB45163
45a & 45b Main Street	Symmetrical 2-storey, 3-bay rectangular-plan terraced house, including boundary wall and railings. 19th century with later alterations. Slightly setback from street forming part of a former dairy complex. Snecked, tooled sandstone with droved dressings and stop-chamfered reveals. Distinctive single storey gabled porch centred to NW (principal) elevation with ball finial, small windows to returns with remnants of painted 'Dairy' lettering to lintels. BOUNDARY WALL AND RAILINGS: tooled low sandstone wall flanking porch to NW, semi-circular coping surmounted by modern plain iron railings.	C	LB49673
53 Main Street	2 storey, 3 bay, rectangular plan house, forming end of terrace. Later 19th century. Tooled coursed sandstone with droved dressings; long and short quoins.	C	LB45164
Gorebridge Post Office, Main Street	2 storey and attic; 4 bay terraced house. 1879. Coursed tooled sandstone with droved dressings; chamfered reveals.	C	LB45166

Plan showing Listed Buildings in Conservation Area

