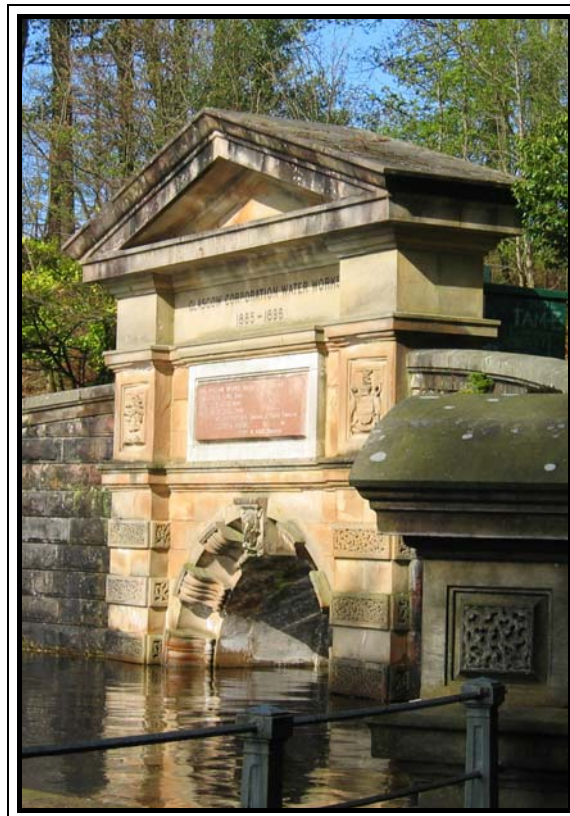


CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

MILNGAVIE RESERVOIRS

MILNGAVIE
CONSERVATION AREA

JUNE 2006



CRAIGMADDIE GAUGE STATION



East Dunbartonshire Council

www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

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INTRODUCTION



GALE'S MONUMENT

East Dunbartonshire has 12 Conservation Areas and 25 Townscape Protection Areas. Conservation areas (C.A.'s) are defined in the Town and Country Planning legislation as “.... *Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.*”

Townscape Protection Areas (T.P.A.'s) are a Council designation used to identify other localities with distinctive architectural and historic qualities.

The original survey work and designation of many of the CA's and TPA's date back to the mid 1970's. Following commitments set out in the East Dunbartonshire Local Plan a comprehensive review of each area is underway.

In addition the designation of new CA's and TPA's is also under consideration.

In this regard the East Dunbartonshire Local Plan, adopted in February 2005, specifically identifies the Milngavie Reservoirs complex as a potential CA.

Following from this a detailed assessment of the Reservoirs has been carried out involving a :-

- A 'walk over' and appraisal survey.
- A review of existing documentation relating to the architectural and historic value of the site, in particular:-
 - i) The Milngavie Reservoirs Conservation and Recreation Management Plan (MRCRMP) - Final Draft Report, and
 - ii) A Survey of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes in East Dunbartonshire (Draft), commissioned by East Dunbartonshire Council.

The Area Appraisal

This work is drawn together in this “Appraisal”, which is based on advice in the Scottish Executive Planning Advice Note no. 71 – Conservation Area Management. The Appraisal summarises the survey and assessment work and concludes with a preliminary recommendation that the Milngavie Reservoirs should be designated a Conservation Area.

Public Consultation

The Appraisal is initially published in a draft form to allow consultation with local residents, local Councillors and other interested parties. A public meeting will also be held. Regard will be taken of views and comments submitted in response to the consultation process prior to the publication of the final version of the Appraisal.

MAP OF THE AREA

The map on the following page shows the proposed boundaries of the conservation area. This coincides with the boundaries marking the curtilage of the category ‘B’ listed building.

HISTORIC CONTEXT & ARCHITECTURAL AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



BARRACHAN

The history, engineering, architecture and landscape design of the Milngavie Reservoirs complex is well documented, most recently in The Milngavie Reservoirs Conservation and Recreation Management Plan (Final Draft Report), published in March 2006, upon which the following commentary is based.

History

The unprecedented pace of industrialisation and urbanisation in early and mid-Victorian times was accompanied by concentrations of poverty and declining standards of health in overcrowded towns and cities. The fatal ravages of 'classless' water borne diseases such as cholera coupled with realisation of the vital importance of sanitation and a pure water supply to human health saw the promotion of many municipal water supply and sewage disposal schemes.

Following further outbreaks of cholera, particularly in the north of the city, in December 1852 Glasgow Corporation appointed Mr. John Bateman, by then a well established specialist reservoir and water supply engineer, to investigate the ways and means to supply clean water to the city. Various options were investigated, and the conclusion reached to transport water from Loch Katrine to a storage reservoir (Mugdock) at Barrachan, north of Milngavie, for onward distribution to the city. A Bill was promoted in Parliament, with final authorisation given in April 1855.

Commencing in May 1856, the works were completed 30 months later and formally opened by Queen Victoria in October 1859.

The relentless expansion of the city's population and industrial base and resultant shortfall in capacity saw the effective duplication of the Mugdock scheme. Authorised by Parliament in 1882, works commenced in 1885 on a second aqueduct from Loch Katrine and the Craigmaddie reservoir (beset with delays on account of geological difficulties), was formally opened in June 1896 and finally commissioned on 1 January 1897.

Engineering

The Reservoirs are part of the Loch Katrine supply scheme which, in its entirety, displays all that is exemplary in resilient Victorian municipal engineering design. For the Mugdock system the water is transferred 25 ¾ miles from Loch Katrine via a series of pipes, tunnels and aqueducts. The Craigmaddie route is slightly shorter at 23 ½ miles. Flow over the entire length is by gravity alone, the water running at a gradient of 1: 6 300 for Mugdock and 1:5 500 for Craigmaddie. The overall difference in levels over this considerable distance is about 22 feet, a remarkable achievement.

Mugdock holds 550 million gallons and Craigmaddie 700 million, capable of supplying 90 million gallons a day to the growing city.

Architecture

The ethos of Victorian municipal architecture; its scale, durability, the impression of 'no expense spared' attention to detailing and materials, is represented in full. As a consequence, in May 1971, the site was designated a category 'B' listed building. The formal description is brief:

"Mugdock Reservoir ready in 1855 and the Loch Katrine scheme leading to it completed 1859. Craigmaddie reservoir opened in 1896. Tunnel entrances, retaining walls and bridge present a good example of engineering architecture."

Under the headings building components, reservoirs structures components, and monuments components the MRCP includes a detailed audit of structures deemed to be included in the listing.

Buildings Components

9 buildings are identified. The Commissioners Cottage, Craigholme Cottage, Craigmaddie Lodge and Barrachan Cottage, Barn and Hall are all Victorian, domestic scale, sandstone and slated properties at various locations. Craigholme Cottage and Craigmaddie Lodge (actually two semi-detached houses) are privately owned residences; the remaining buildings either vacant dwellings or offices and storage facilities. The currently disused public convenience is a small stone and slate roof building; there is a grouping of modern treatment work buildings close to the Commissioners Cottage, and six pump houses, in deteriorating and/or potentially dangerous condition at various points on the perimeter of the reservoirs.

Reservoir Structure Components

21 features are identified, including gauging basins, measuring ponds, overflow channels, causeways, dams, draw down towers, culvert accesses and straining wells. The intricate metal work and masonry of these features combine aesthetics and engineering in a manner at which the Victorians excelled, as illustrated in the relevant photographs in the appraisal.

Monument component

This comprises of bronze bust of the Chief Engineer of the Craigmaddie scheme, George Gale, upon a granite block with complimentary landscaping.

Landscape Design

The purposeful laying out of the reservoir complex as a formal public park, with its intricate path network, tree planting and formal planting beds, reflected Victorian zeal for healthful outdoor recreation. In addition the various carefully positioned 'cottages' and 'lodges', stone walls, ornate entrance gates and the grand avenue of the 'Commissioners' Walk' create the aura of a secluded landed estate. The MRCP includes a detailed analysis of the mature woodlands, plantations, tree belts and avenues that now grace the site. The various stone perimeter walls and entrance features area also noted as landscape features.

The Council has also commissioned its own inventory of historic and designed landscapes in East Dunbartonshire. With regards to the Milngavie Reservoirs the draft conclusion is that the Reservoir complex is:-
i) a unique engineered landscape with impressive and historically valuable designed features and, ii) outstanding visual character due to its setting and recreational value.

The New Water Treatment Works and Storage Reservoir

In addition to the above a central open area north of the Reservoirs is currently (Spring 2006) being developed as a water treatment works and storage reservoir. These are substantial operational structures to satisfy Scottish Water's legal obligations to improve drinking water quality to meet latest EU standards. The development was the subject of extensive assessment and public consultation on the site selection process and the more detailed aspects of integration with the wider landscape, the quality of architectural design and materials and the ground engineering, landscaping and tree planting of the overall development site. Given the operational need for these structures the final approved design and layout (which followed an initial decision to refuse planning permission and listed building consent) is considered to respect the setting of the listed structures and designed landscape.

CONCLUSIONS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: All preliminary recommendations to be the subject of further discussion and debate through the consultation process on the draft version of the Appraisal.)



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Designation as Conservation Area

The East Dunbartonshire Local Plan, adopted in February 2005, includes a recommendation that the Tannoch Conservation Area be re-appraised in order to include the Milngavie Reservoir complex (Policy HE6, p66).

The Milngavie Reservoirs Conservation and Recreation Management Plan (Final Draft Report, published in March 2006), includes a statement that the “... lack of ‘Conservation Area’ status undermines the cultural significance of the site and reduces the level of statutory protection.” (para. 5.25, p. 43)

Following from the above recommendations and in light of the survey and assessment work of the present appraisal it is concluded the Milngavie Reservoirs complex is an area of special architectural and historic interest, the character and appearance of which remains desirable to preserve and enhance by means of a Conservation Area designation. It is however considered sufficiently ‘special’ to be designated as a CA in its own right rather than as an extension to the Tannoch CA.

Listed Building and Designed Landscape Status

The MRCRMP also includes a recommendation that the listed building status of the Milngavie Reservoirs be upgraded from category ‘B’ to category ‘A’, as a more fitting level of protection, which recognises the importance of the site in architectural, engineering and landscape design terms.

The MRCRMP and the Council’s draft Inventory of Historic and Designed Landscapes in East Dunbartonshire both recommend the site be included in Historic Scotland’s ‘Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland’, on account of its high national value.

Designation and Upgrading

In light of the above it is concluded the Council:-

- Initiates the necessary procedures to designate the site as a Conservation Area.
- Supports the upgrading of the site from a category ‘B’ to a category ‘A’ listed building.
- Supports the inclusion of the site in Historic Scotland’s ‘Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland’.

Management of the Site

The future management of the site is the subject of ongoing detailed discussion and debate under the auspices of the MRCRMP Steering Group and as such is outwith the remit of this appraisal.