

East Dunbartonshire Council

Conservation Area Appraisal Baldernock

Final report
Prepared by LUC
January 2021





East Dunbartonshire Council

Conservation Area Appraisal Baldernock

Project Number
11049

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1.	Draft	R. Nicholson R. Brady	R. Haworth	S. Orr	14.12.2020
2.	Second draft – amended following clients comments	R. Nicholson	R. Brady	S. Orr	18.12.2020
3.	Third draft – formatting amendments	R. Nicholson	R. Brady	S. Orr	13.01.2021

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OHS627041



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Chapter 1

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 The special interest of Baldernock and the desire to celebrate and preserve its historical importance has been recognised by its designation as an area of special interest. This conservation area appraisal has been produced to document the reasons for the area's designation, considering the character and appearance of the area as it stands today.

1.2 This appraisal is one of a suite of appraisals and documents that consider the importance of conservation areas in East Dunbartonshire and how their special interest should be managed.

- Each conservation area has its own appraisal that considers the historical development of that specific area, along with an analysis of its character based on an assessment of its function and form, spatial qualities, architectural detailing, trees and landscaping and views.
- Further information on why and how an area is designated as a conservation can be found in the accompanying document 'An Introduction to Conservation Areas'.
- For advice on how to retain, restore and reinforce the character of conservation areas, along with specific management issues, opportunities and recommendations identified for the Baldernock Conservation Area, please refer to the separate 'Conservation Areas: Managing Change' document.

Location and context

1.3 The dispersed settlement of Baldernock is located in the centre of the historic parish of Baldernock, 16 km to the north of Glasgow. The boundary of the parish was defined in 1649 and covers an area approximately four miles by three miles, comprised of three parts: Baldernock, Balmore and Bardowie. The conservation area centres on Baldernock parish

church, the war memorial and Kirkhouse (a former inn). It covers an area of approximately 23 hectares, most of which comprises agricultural land. The area is enclosed by the Strathblane and Campsie Hills to the north and east, the River Kelvin to the south and the Pow Burn to the west. The nearest town is Milngavie, 1 km to the west, and the small hamlet of Bardowie lies approximately 0.9 km to the south.

Historical development

1.4 The landscape around Baldernock conservation area is rich in prehistoric evidence that tells of the domestic, defensive, ritual and funerary activities of our ancient predecessors. This activity, along with the richness of the landscape, influenced the evolution of the settlement, although the character of the area as we see it today largely stems from its medieval and post-medieval development.

1.5 The first recorded mention of Baldernock appears in 1200 and there has been a church on the site on the present late-18th century parish church since 1236. The church at Baldernock has always served a rural community: when it was built, the surrounding land was worked by tenant farmers and this continued to be the case well into the 19th century. The agricultural economy, later supplemented by mining and quarrying, also brought with it mills (needed to process the crop from the land) as well as weavers, shoemakers, smiths, masons, carpenters and a midwife – all needed to help this rural community remain self-sufficient. Today, the area is largely residential, but evidence of its past is evident in the buildings and in the inextricable relationship they have with the landscape.

Summary of defining characteristics of Baldernock Conservation Area

1.6 The context and historical development of Baldernock are unique to the settlement and it is from this that it draws its individual character. This strong sense of place comes from many facets and the way these elements combine to create a special place of architectural or historic interest – that is, the foremost criteria for conservation area designation. The following features are of particular importance to the character and appearance of the Baldernock:

- The character of the area is very much the result of its dispersed settlement form. Its small core and the centre of parish activity is focused around the church, and satellite development – mills, manses and farms – radiating out from this point across the conservation area and beyond into the wider landscape. All this is interspersed with

considerable expanses of farmland. It is the low-density, sporadically placed buildings within this network of fields that underpins the area's spatial and visual qualities, and is fundamental to its character and appearance.

- Aside from the two churches, buildings in the area are either domestic or working in appearance. The former are usually harled and white-washed and identifiable by their comparatively larger, regularly placed and proportioned windows, chimneys and moulded stone detailing such as window surrounds and stringcourses. The latter are usually exposed stone or lime washed with openings – or lack of – and architectural features placed according to function and need. However, all buildings are united by their small scale, simple form, and modest detailing, part of which is a direct response to their need to protect themselves from the exposed hilltop location.
- The continuity of use – not only of Kettlehill Farm but the wider agricultural landscape – is a significant, deeply enriching part of the area's character and history. This character is reinforced by the hedges, shelterbelt trees and stone boundary walls that help divide, protect and manage the working landscape. It brings with it visual variety and activity and is part of the legacy of the local community's intimate relationship with the landscape.
- The area is enriched by a landscape of low rolling drumlin hills and views that steadily reveal different aspects of the area's character by continually evolving as we experience them. Roads enclosed by trees or hidden in the fall of a hill transition suddenly into higher ground or open fields, allowing far-reaching views across and out of the area that are beautiful and dynamic. This includes a glimpse view of wider countryside around Bearsden to the south west and Kilpatrick Hills to the west, from Dowan Road south of the Church. Similarly, long-range views of the conservation within its setting are not only extremely picturesque but reveal the spatial relationship between the buildings and the landscape that is the crux of the character of a dispersed settlement.

Chapter 2

Location and Context

The character of an area starts to form long before the human interventions of buildings, streets, fields and towns are established: it starts with the geology and topography of a place. These literal foundations are what makes some places suitable for human habitation and others not, what makes some settlements flourish whilst others fade. This section considers what it is about the location and context of Baldernock that made it ripe for successful occupation.

Location

2.1 The area of East Dunbartonshire lies to the north of the city of Glasgow in central Scotland. Bordered by Stirling to the north, West Dunbartonshire to the west and North Lanarkshire to the east, it covers an area of approximately 175 square kilometres and incorporates parts of the historic counties of Dunbartonshire, Stirlingshire and Lanarkshire.¹

2.2 The dispersed settlement of Baldernock is located in the centre of the historic parish of Baldernock, 16 km to the north of Glasgow. The boundary of the parish was defined in 1649 and covers an area approximately four miles by three miles, comprised of three parts: Baldernock, Balmore and Bardowie. The parish is enclosed by the Strathblane and Campsie

¹ <https://www.geni.com/projects/Dunbartonshire-Main-Page/16029> [accessed 7th July 2020]

Hills to the north and east, the River Kelvin to the south and the Pow Burn to the west. The nearest town is Milngavie, 1 km to the west, and the small hamlet of Bardowie lies approximately 0.9 km to the south.

Geology & Topography

2.3 The landscape of the region varies in character, descending from the sparsely populated, rugged uplands of the Campsie Fells in the north-west, through smooth, undulating foothills into the broad, deep lowlands of the Kelvin Valley and on to the rolling, pastoral farmland of the south-east of the region. Punctuating this landscape are small towns and villages, with the largest settlements congregating along the corridor created by the valley lowlands that extend on a gentle incline from south west to west, allowing easy passage across the region. The further south and south-west you travel the more densely populated the region gets as it transitions from its rural hinterlands to become the urban fringes and overspill of the City of Glasgow.

2.4 The change in landscape character can largely be attributed to the geology that underlies this area. For the most part, this comprises sedimentary bedrock formed between 350 and 300 million years ago in the Carboniferous Period. Known as the Clackmannan Group, this layer of rock is made up of a sequence of sandstones, siltstone, mudstones, ironstones and coals overlaid by seams of clays, silts, sand and gravel that were deposited on top of them during the last Ice Age. Over millions of years this rock has eroded, and it is this action that has formed the gentle hills and lowland of the majority of the region.

2.5 This wide band of sedimentary rock that underlies most of the region sits alongside harder volcanic rocks in the north, and it is the nature of these different types of rock formation that directly accounts for the area's topography. Volcanic rock is more resistant to erosion and wears away at a much slower rate than sandstone. The transition between the two – along a line known as the Campsie Fault – has endowed East Dunbartonshire with a beautiful, contrasting and at times dramatic landscape, a defining feature that makes for a strong identity and sense of place.

2.6 This fortune extends much further than just visual appeal, however, and has also gifted the region with a plentiful supply of tough and durable sandstones that make excellent building stone, as well as rich deposits of coal that brought landowners in the region much wealth. It is this comparatively easy access to quality stone that makes East Dunbartonshire a region of

predominantly sandstone and slate buildings. By no means has this resulted in homogeneity, however: stones ranging in colour from brown, red and pink through to grey, cream and buffs recall the locality from which they were quarried, tying the buildings back to the landscape that they stand on and, indeed, are hewn from.

Figure 2.1: The landscape surrounding Baldernock



This view is from the Langbank Holdings to the west of Bardowie Loch, looking north towards Baldernock. In the centre middle of the photograph are the collection of buildings around the old mill, and ENE of them the church and Kirkhouse. In the distance forming the backdrop are the Campsie Fells. The gentle swells and dips and lush green of the drumlin foothill landscape in this area can clearly be seen, contrasting with the dramatic rise and more rugged character of the fells.

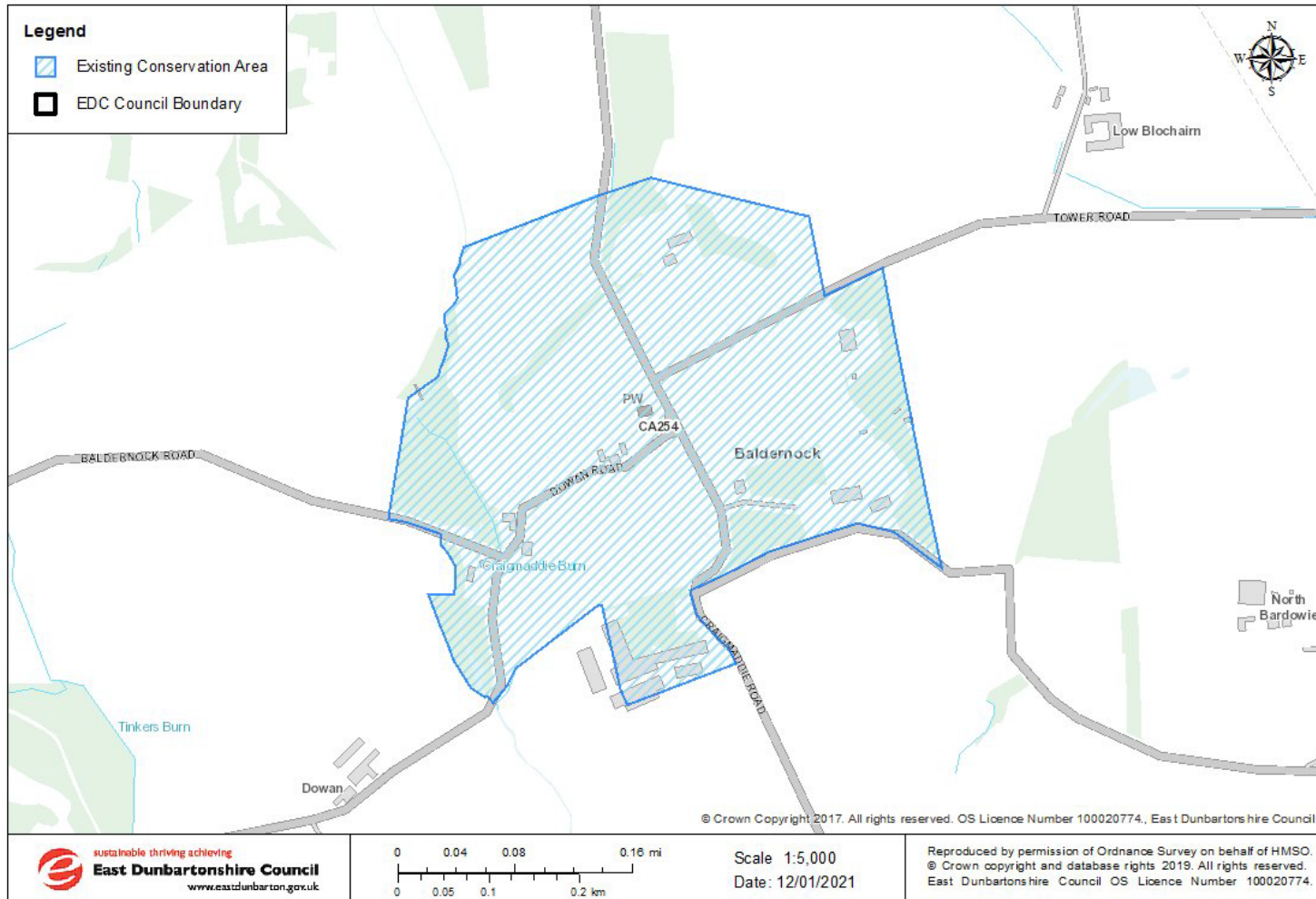
The Conservation Area Boundary

2.7 The conservation area measures approximately 23 hectares and centres on Baldernock parish church, the war memorial and The Kirkhouse (a former inn). Directly north of the church stands its historic manse, whilst to the east stands the Old Free Kirk and the associated Baldernock House and Lodge. The historic corn and sawmill lie to the west with the boundary

incorporating its water source, sluice and dam, and to the south stands Kettlehill Farm, located on its present site since before 1795 and containing a scheduled medieval dun (SM2190).

2.8 The conservation area boundary is slightly unusual in that it takes in a large amount of open, rural countryside; indeed, the list above broadly covers all historic built structures within the area. The character of this open countryside is similar to the area's surroundings, often making the boundary difficult to read on the ground. However, where this land differs is in the strength of its relationship with the buildings (with the boundary often following historic field boundaries associated with the buildings within the area) and also, more importantly, in the spatial connection it has with them by forming the space between the buildings. This land is critical to understanding the settlement type: it is this space that distinguishes Baldernock as a dispersed settlement – made up of hamlets and separate farms – compared with the more concentrated and denser nucleated settlement type of villages and towns.

Figure 2.2: Map of CA boundary



Chapter 3

The Historical Development of Baldernock

Conservation areas did not develop in isolation, and in order to understand what is included within the boundary and why we must look beyond to give the area context. This section considers how Baldernock developed from its earliest origins into the settlement we see today.

Prehistoric Beginnings

3.1 The area to the north of Baldernock conservation area contains a rich prehistoric landscape that tells of the domestic, defensive, ritual and funerary activities of our ancient predecessors.

3.2 On the rising ground to the northeast of the conservation area lie the remains of five cairns, located on rocky outcrops in undulating fields of rough grazing near High, Low and Blochairn Farms. The name Bal-cairn means “town of cairns”, illustrating the lasting impact of the monuments on the imagination of later communities and their sense of place. One of these, High Blochairn (SM2539), is a scheduled example dating from the Bronze-Age (between about 2,000 BC and 800 BC) and it is likely the others are of similar date due to their comparative size and form. The landscape above Baldernock is a prime location for prehistoric funerary monuments, which were often deliberately placed in elevated, prominent positions to take advantage of the views outwards, towards and between the monuments.

3.3 Only 1 km northeast of the Blochairn cairns we find more evidence of prehistoric activity. Located on Craigmaddie Muir are two Neolithic long cairns, a burnt mound and three standing stones, one which is cup marked and all of which are placed to mark important aspects of equinoxes. There is also evidence of a cluster of earth and stone rectangular and circular

buildings that also may be prehistoric in date. The 'Auld Wives Lifts' are a set of glacial erratic boulders with interesting associations with stone carvings, including carved 'heads' and individuals initials², and related folklore since at least the 18th century.

3.4 Both within and out with the conservation area there are examples of Iron Age defended settlements, dating between 700 BC and AD 500. Craigmaddie Castle (SM1749) 1.2km to the north is constructed on the remains of an Iron Age fort, taking advantage of the steep land leading to Craigmaddie Muir for defensive and control purposes. Situated on the summit of a low rocky knoll, Kettlehill dun (SM2190) lies within the conservation area and also contains a settlement site dated to the medieval period.

3.5 This evidence of human activity and occupation is important because it gives a glimpse into prehistoric life and illustrates the continuity of occupation in the area for thousands of years. Although the monuments themselves are not always distinguishable, they have often influenced later activity – such as with the location of Kettlehill Farm – and so have had an enduring, if subliminal, effect on our perception and experience of the landscape today.

The Lands of Baldernock

3.6 Apart from an isolated find in 1957 of a Roman coin in the churchyard,³ evidence for further activity around Baldernock does not reappear until the medieval period. The first recorded mention of Baldernock appears in 1200, written as 'Bathernok' or 'Buthernock' and appears later in the 13th century as "the lands of Cartenbenach". These lands were granted to Maurice Galbraith by Maldoven, Earl of Lennox, around 1214. The Galbraith's principal seats in the area were Craigmaddie Castle (2.7km to the north of Bardowie Castle) and Gartconnel Castle in Kilpatrick, but in the late-14th century the Galbraith patriarch line ended. The family's lands were divided between three sisters (whose husbands inherited the estates) with the

castles at Bardowie and Craigmaddie inherited by John Hamilton of Cadzow, the husband of one of the sisters, Janet Keith.

3.7 A charter from the beginning of the 16th century by the Earl of Lennox confirms the shift of name to 'Bathernok' and the presence of the Hamiltons in the area. In 1532, King James V granted the mill of 'Bothornok' to Allan Hamilton – the first direct mention of a mill in Baldernock.

Figure 3.1: Kettlehill Farm



² The carved 'heads' and initials only appeared after the first written record of the Lifts as a druid altar in the 18th century. In 1867, a circular mark was recorded on top of the capstone believed to be an ancient symbol however it's likely a quarryman's mark. The record of the first circle led to the folklore and subsequent 'graffiti' on the stones. For more information see: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/76C412622F49BD866F25AC7717EFB28E/S0003598X00071441a.pdf/div-class-title-the-auld-wives-lifts-div.pdf>

³ Baldernock lies approximately 2.3km north of the Antonine Wall. Constructed in AD142, the wall signified the most northern extent of both the Roman occupation in Britain and frontier of the Roman Empire; it was inscribed onto

UNESCO's World Heritage Site list in 2008 as part of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire, which takes in Hadrian's Wall and the German Limes. The coin that was found in Baldernock was a worn silver *denarius* depicting Emperor Trajan. Trajan reigned between AD 98-117, meaning the coin predates the construction of both Hadrian's Wall (AD122) and the Antonine Wall. The find could be illustrative of trade networks and pacification of local populations or have been dropped by a soldier on patrol after the construction of the Antonine Wall. By its very nature, however, ground in a churchyard is repeatedly disturbed and turned over, so equally the coin could just have been found and dropped again by anyone working in the graveyard.

The present Kettlehill Farm, situated on an elevated, rocky knoll to the south of the parish church that looks out toward the Clyde Valley. This site has been the location for human activity in the area for centuries.

© Copyright Richard Sutcliffe and licensed for reuse under this [Creative Commons Licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). Available to view online at <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/4663445> [accessed 09th December 2020].

3.8 The system of land ownership in place at this time meant that landowners were responsible for law and order of tenants living and working their land. They also had to supply soldiers to the royal army, which was expensive and often resulted in land being sold and changing hands. In order to pay soldiers serving under Montrose in the Civil War in the 17th century, the 11th laird of Bardowie mortgaged the lands around Baldernock.

The Community of Baldernock

3.9 The First Statistical Account in 1796 contained information on Baldernock, written by the minister at the Baldernock parish church in 1783, the Reverend Mr James Cooper. The population across the parish was 620, divided into 137 families. The majority of those families were farmers, but also recorded are weavers, millers, shoemakers, smiths, masons, carpenters and a midwife. The area remained largely rural due to the lack of established roads, providing explanation for the large number of trades within the area, which had to be self-sufficient.

3.10 Tenant farmers continued to work the land in the 18th century, with rent (often paid in kind) for arable land ranging between 10 shillings to £2 per acre. Farmers had additional obligations including a certain number of days of tiling, reaping and sowing and providing their landlord with a third of their produce.

3.11 The 1803 Gazetteer of Scotland describes the parish as having a “great plenty of lime and freestone...everywhere abounds with coal of excellent quality”. There is evidence of limestone quarrying visible across the landscape, particularly from a number of disused quarries to the east of the conservation area. One example just outside the conservation area boundary, approximately 100m from the old free church, was a coal mine and quarry, marked on 1st Edition OS map from 1864. The appearance of the railway at Bardowie in 1879 on the Kelvin Valley Line facilitated the greater movement of this raw material out of the area and brought financial gain to inhabitants due to growing demand.

Mills

3.12 Tenants of farmland were obliged to be thirled to a particular mill where they had to take their grain and pay the miller a sixteenth part of all grain taken. If a mill was not in operation due to drought, millers still had to be paid and farmers had to take their grain elsewhere and pay again.

3.13 Within Baldernock parish there were three known mills, which are evident on historic mapping: the Mill of Auchenhowie (now known as The Jaw), Fluchter Mill and Baldernock Mill. Mill sites took advantage of the topography and watercourses and were required to support the main staple of diet. Three mills may appear to be excessive compared to the small size of the parish, but this was a parish was based predominantly on a rural economy. The large amount of farmland with thirled farmers required a sufficient number of mills to process the output from the land.

Figure 3.2: Baldernock Mill



3.14 Baldernock Mill at the western edge of the conservation area is an important survival of this industry. It was part of the Dougalston Estate, owned by one of Glasgow's famous Tobacco Lords, John Glassford, but a mill at the site has been present in its location since at least 1532. The water to drive the mill was obtained by diverting the Craigmaddie Burn with a weir and lade, with a dam constructed upstream to ensure water was still available during dry periods. Originally a corn mill, by the time of the 1st Edition OS mapping in the mid-19th century the mill had expanded to include a sawmill. This diversification of services happened in reaction to the

decline of corn mills after the repealing of the Corn Laws; this was a turning point in the history of rural mills, which saw many adapt but left many more unviable as they were unable to compete with larger mills and cheaper, imported corn. Baldernock Mill stayed in operation well into the 20th century; in 1932, the Kirkintilloch Herald reported an accident at when the saw mill caught on fire from a container of hot bitumen tipping outside the mill. An outbuilding to the immediate east of the mill is likely to have acted as a storage area.

3.15 From the mid-19th century onwards into the 20th century, a remarkable transformation in agricultural practices took place, with a shift from the labour-intensive working of land in small steadings to more mechanised, larger holdings at select locations. Although much expanded now, one of these former steadings remains at Kettlehill Farm within the conservation area, with several others within its setting, along with historic field boundaries.

Ecclesiastical buildings

Baldernock Parish Church

3.16 Although there has been a church in this location since 1236 (with the oldest gravestone in the churchyard dating to 1644), the current Baldernock Parish church was constructed in 1795 for a cost of around £435, approximately £33,000 in today's currency. The First Statistical Account highlights that a large number of parish inhabitants gave up their time freely to build it, a big ask considering a large portion were farmers who relied on their crops for income and Britain was currently at war with France. It is highly likely that the new church incorporated elements of the previous building in order to keep costs and time down, such as the moulded steps on the outside stairs or moulding in front of the gallery and pulpit. In 1892, records note that the church held 406 parishioners.

3.17 The manse in the northern extent of the conservation area dates from around 1803 and would have been the home of the minister; a receipt from 1750 from the estate of Bardowie indicates their share of additional expense, suggesting it may date to this time. In 1828, an octagonal watch house was constructed at the entrance to the parish churchyard. This acted as a shelter for watchers who stood guard over new graves, a deterrent to grave robbers who sold bodies to the Glasgow medical school.

3.18 For many decades, a granite war memorial (dedicated on the 10th September 1921) stood just outside the church gates at the intersection of several roads. Over time this experienced

severe frost damage and was replaced by another in 1995 by the Strathkelvin District Council as part of their VE Day celebrations. The original was removed to the rear of the old graveyard and its plaques have been mounted within the church building.

3.19 The parish church also has an interesting theatrical connection: it is the setting for the successful play "Bunty Pulls the Strings" by Glaswegian Graham Moffat, first produced at the Haymarket Theatre in London before opening on Broadway in New York City in 1911 and later became a silent film.

Free Church of Scotland

3.20 The Free Church of Scotland was established in 1843 when over 450 ministers of the Church of Scotland resigned from their duties and broke away from the Church after a long period of civic and religious unrest. This had a considerable impact on ministers, who were deprived of their income from stipends and manses and caused communities and families to be divided across the country.

3.21 At the time of the Disruption (as it came to be known) the minister at Baldernock parish church, Mr John Pollock, left to form a new congregation and church less than 300m to the south east of the existing one. A manse was constructed immediately to its west by local farmers in 1848, which was extended during the Edwardian years and is now known as Baldernock House; the associated lodge which faces onto Craigmaddie Road was also constructed at this time.

Figure 3.3: Baldernock church



cc-by-sa/2.0 - Baldernock Church and... by Stephen Sweeney - geograph.org.uk/p/1407858

The octagonal roof of the watch house can just be seen to the right of the church beneath the tree and, beyond that, the war memorial marking at the main junction in the settlement. Photo © Stephen Sweeney (cc-by-sa/2.0)

Figure 3.4: Baldernock Old Free Church



Figure 3.5: The historical development of Baldernock



A word cloud created using the above text to illustrate the key factors and defining influences on the development of Baldernock.

Chapter 4

Conservation Area Character Analysis

This section considers how the historical development of the area, as outlined above, is evidenced in the historic environment that is included within the boundary of the conservation area.

Function and Form

Activity and movement

4.1 Despite lacking the intensity of development of villages and towns in the region, Baldernock was once the nerve centre of the parish and would have been buzzing with activity around the churches, inn, mill, and all across the land that connects them. Today, however, Baldernock's role as an important meeting point within the parish – as well as the industry that once dictated people's comings and goings – and has long since waned. The buildings associated with this activity are still there and their original purposes largely identifiable, but most have now been converted to residential use. As such, although the area has always had a very strong rural character, it is more tranquil and slower paced than it would have been historically. It is precisely this quality that also makes the area an attractive destination for visitors, who are drawn to its quiet beauty and strong sense of history.

4.2 This more subdued character is, however, bolstered by the continued use of Kettlehill Farm and the surrounding working landscape. This brings not only a different type of activity to the area but illustrates the important relationship between the settlement and the landscape. This continuity of use – not only of Kettlehill Farm itself but the wider agricultural landscape – is a significant, deeply enriching part of the area's character and history.

Scale and hierarchy

4.3 The height of the buildings within Baldernock varies, largely depending on the age of the building and its function, but all falling within a relatively limited range of 1 to 2 storeys. Those buildings with an associated trade function, dating between the late-18th to mid-19th century are single or 1 ½ storey structures, including the mill and related buildings, the Kirkhouse, and Kettlehill farm outbuildings.

4.4 Travelling east along the road from the mill to the centre of the conservation area, the rising hill reveals each of the buildings leading to the parish church. The consistency of scale allows the buildings to complement the landscape rather than draw attention away from it, retaining a rural character and a feeling of the buildings being embedded within the area.

4.5 The religious buildings with their associated manses and lodges are taller 2 or 2 ½ storey buildings, reflecting their civic role, the wealth of the church, and the greater importance placed on these by the community because of the important role religion played in everyday life. The parish church's southern projecting bay with bellcote atop is an accent in the landscape but does not dominate, instead just subtly drawing the eye to the elevation of the building and emphasising its positioning at the heart of the settlement.

Figure 4.1: Building scales



Left to right: the corner of the Kirkhouse (former inn), a 1 ½ storey building typical of most of the modest domestic and industrial buildings in the area; its smaller scale outbuildings; the parish church rising up in the background.

The slightly more imposing former manse of the parish church, which stands at 2 storeys. Photo © Richard Sutcliffe (cc-by-sa/2.0). Available to view online at <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/5018169> [accessed 10th December 2020]

Spatial Qualities

Development pattern, layout and density

4.6 The layout and density of the conservation area has remained largely consistent since at least the 19th century and is still entirely legible. It is fairly loose, informal and organic in layout, with buildings placed in the landscape according to their needs and purpose. The settlement focuses on a central crossroads, which is marked by the war memorial, parish church and the former inn. These few buildings are the historic 'core' of Baldernock. Radiating out from this point are the mill to the west, the manse to the north, the old free kirk to the east and Kettlehill Farm to the south; this radial development pattern is continued beyond the conservation area boundary by the isolated, satellite farms and mills of the area's rural community.

4.7 This dispersed settlement pattern – both within the conservation and its setting – is still distinct due to the limited amount of later infill development. It is a fundamental part of the area's character and shows how the space between buildings is just as important as the building's themselves in illustrating the historical use and development of the area.

4.8 Historic rights of way are still visible in Baldernock parish, with the roads and pathways illustrating the movement and activity of past communities who once used the land. The parish church is located on well-established east-west and north-south routes, including Craigmaddie Road, which is a historic road to the church from the south of the parish. A previous right of way once linked Kettlehill Farm with Baldernock mill; although no longer legible, it probably followed the line of the existing field boundary.

Public and private space

4.9 Aside from the main roads through the hamlet, the principal public spaces within the conservation area are centred around the war memorial, which itself is located within a triangle of green space. There are no formal pavements or paths.

4.10 The churchyard around the parish church and the adjacent cemetery line Craigmaddie Road either side of the war memorial. The boundaries of both are denoted by coped rubble stone boundary walls with cast iron gates. These hard boundaries are softened by the use of hedges and planting to the divide space within. This clear demarcation of boundaries and the more manicured appearance of the internal spaces stands in contrast to the rugged character of the rural landscape. The headstones within – as well as the war memorial – are also a poignant reminder that, despite its sparsely populated appearance, Baldernock is a settlement founded to serve a community – and indeed has been an important place for commemoration of the dead for millennia.

Figure 4.2: Layout, space and setting



The crossroads at the centre of the conservation area, marked by the war memorial. Beyond it the gently undulating fields of the conservation area and Kettlehill Farm, and beyond that continuing views out across the Clyde Valley and towards Glasgow.

4.11 The private space within the conservation area is confined to the associated grounds belonging to the various private dwellings. The buildings along Dowan Road are located right on the roadside offering no immediate privacy to the principal elevation, but each contains private grounds that extend beyond them. In contrast, the larger manses and lodges associated with the churches in the north and east are set in generous, well-wooded grounds, creating a sense of privacy and seclusion.

Setting

4.12 The conservation area lies on undulating ground, peppered with knolls and swellings, in an intermediate area between the Haughs' flood plain and the higher Muirs to the north in a rolling landscape of glacial drumlins. Due to this location, it has extensive views down towards the flood plain, which contribute to its rurality and reinforces the connection to its agricultural heritage. It also has an enclosed feel due to rising ground and surrounding field boundaries and woodland shelter belts.

4.13 The church especially is deliberately sited to take advantage of this elevated and open position: not only does it afford extensive views over the landscape and would have helped the bell echo out over the surrounding fields but, more importantly, it establishes the building as an important landmark and orientation point in the landscape. The building is visible acting as a marker for the conservation area well beyond its boundary. The intimacy of the area's relationship with its setting means that it is virtually impossible on the ground to tell where the boundary starts and ends, emphasising just how important the contribution of setting is to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Figure 4.3: The conservation area's setting



The view north towards the southern boundary of the conservation area from Cragmaddie Road. Also see Figure 2.1.

Architectural Detailing

Types, form and materials

4.14 The rural character of the area is captured in the different building types within the conservation area. Together they demonstrate the three main activities that historically defined the parish: milling, farming and religious activity.

4.15 Regardless of the original function, however, most of the buildings in the area are now in residential use and broadly domestic in character. Most are harled⁴ and whitewashed, with low-slung, shallow-pitched slate roofs. They range from one to two-storeys, but overall heights of all buildings are low, and the buildings squat in appearance. This is true even of the church: the building's prominence comes from the bellcote, which extends well above the roofline of the

⁴ Harling is a traditional rendering technique in Scotland involving lime mortar being mixed with shells or small stones and roughly applied – generally thrown – to walls. The harl would help protect the walls from the weather and lime wash would be applied when required to seal cracks, protect the harl and give the building a consistent appearance.

building and is a disproportionately large feature – given the size of the bell – on the principal elevation of what is otherwise a fairly modestly sized building.

4.16 The use of these materials and the form of the buildings is a direct response to their environment, and was for practical reasons as much as for any aesthetic effect. Shorter internal floor-to-ceiling heights minimised the surface area of external walls (thereby reducing heat loss) and afforded the buildings some protection from the inclement weather of this exposed, hilltop location.

4.17 Underneath the harl, buildings are built of stone quarried from the landscape on which they now stand. Some have this stonework exposed (the church, the former inn, the mill building) or lime washed (the barns at Kettlehill Farm, the stables at rear of the former inn, the dilapidated outbuilding on Dowan Road) – all buildings of non-domestic function. All buildings, however, are of simple, linear form, rectangular in footprint with small offshoots. The humbler buildings stand eaves-on at the back of the road edge, with principal elevations fronting straight onto the road. The manses and other later, larger dwellings distinguish themselves not through materials or form so much as the more generous and private grounds they occupy, set away from the roads.

Figure 4.4: Form and materials



Distinctive architectural style and detailing

4.18 The influence of environment, economy, necessity and function has created a predominantly vernacular character within the area. Even the larger houses are relatively restrained in architectural detailing, with the status of buildings more subtly differentiated through scale and setting. Other features common to dwellings in the area include evenly

proportioned, spaced, and modestly sized windows – again, practicality and the need to guard against the weather have had their influence here. Most are multi-paned sashes with moulded sandstone margins, sometimes painted a dark colour.

4.19 Stone detailing such as chimneys, skews and skewputts to gable ends and projecting stringcourses or plinths are also common; these last details serve a functional purpose, too, as they are devices to help shed water from the building and keep it dry, but they also have an aesthetic value by animating building elevations and adding visual interest and distinction. This attention to detail and simple but cleanly executed architectural detailing subtly influences the character of the area by creating a coherence through repetition and familiarity.

4.20 Also of note – for their novelty rather than for their commonality – are the details of the Kirkhouse former inn. The entrance door has a classical door surround of Tuscan columns supporting a projecting pediment – a demonstration of architectural aspirations that looks slightly out of place (and oversized) on such a small building, but is charming in its naivety. The chimneys too are unusual, especially for the area, comprising a pair of diamond-shaped stacks with tall chimney pots and splayed feet set into a single base, located at each gable end.

Figure 4.5: Polite architectural detailing



4.21 The architectural details that contribute to the character of the area are not just those applied out of a desire for polite architectural distinction, however, but those of functional character and detail. For an area whose history is so deeply entwined with the landscape and a community that relied so heavily on agriculture and industry for survival, there are few buildings now that survive to tell that story. Where they do, they are extremely important in illustrating the history of the area but also in ensuring it retains something of its character as a working landscape, not just as a picturesque destination. Examples within the conservation area include:

- The single-storey outbuilding to the east of the old mill. Its tall, wide cart entrance, doocot on its south gable with three flight holes and a flight ledge, and weathervane on its north gable, are all features that distinguish it as a working building.
- The mill, with its water wheel, mill dam wall, weir and lade.
- The barns and outbuildings behind Kettlehill Farm, with their solid stone walls and slim ventilation slots giving away their purpose as buildings for storage, not living in.

Figure 4.6: Functional architectural detailing



The lade leading up to the water wheel at the old mill.

Photo © Richard Sutcliffe (cc-by-sa/2.0)



The dilapidated outbuilding on Dowan Road. Note its simple, vernacular appearance, with harled and lime washed elevations, slate roof, low-slung pitched slate roof, linear form, and positioning at the back edge of the road. The silhouette of its weathervane can also be made out.

Boundary Treatments

4.22 Both hedges and stone walls are prominent features of the area, used both for site boundaries and field boundaries. Boundary walls are without exception stone built; most are random rubble and, on the whole, low level – between knee and shoulder height. They are usually used when more sturdy boundaries are needed between fields and roads, in order to protect livestock. Where this is not necessary – for residential properties and within the fields – hedges are more common, the exception being the churchyard and cemetery. The hedges

within fields often follow the line of historic field boundaries and are an important characteristic of the landscape.

Trees and Landscaping

Rural character

4.23 There is a lot of open areas formed by fields and paddocks to the conservation area; indeed, it is overwhelmingly made up of greenspace, and surrounded by it too. These are almost exclusively in the form of large, open fields, enclosed by hedges and boundary trees. Within the conservation area they are set to pasture, but to the south of Kettlehill Farm within the setting of the area some are in arable use.

4.24 There is also a large amount of mature tree cover in the area, including large shelterbelt planting to the north around the manse, to the east around the old free kirk, and to the west lining the Craigmaddie Burn and around the old mill, as well as individual notable specimens such as the yews in the churchyard. Moving through the area by road, this combination creates a varied and at times dramatic character towards the countryside around Bearsden and Milngavie to the south-west, as the trees enclosing the roads suddenly open up to reveal far-reaching views across open ground. This experience is enhanced by the dips and rises of the hills, which help contain and reveal the views as well as animate them.

Figure 4.7: Greenspace and tree cover



View east along Tower Road towards North Lodge.

The view south-east towards Baldernock Lodge from
Dowan Road.

Views

Types of View

4.25 Whilst all senses are engaged in our experience of place, human reliance on the visual does mean that views play a major role in our understanding and perception of character, and Baldernock is no exception. Views tend to come in different shapes and forms depending on whether they are designed or fortuitous; framed, contained or open; fleeting or enduring. Broadly, however, they tend to belong to one of three categories:

- **Static views** – these types of views tend to be – although not always – designed or intentional, or at least self-aware. They are a specific, fixed point from which a particular aspect of the area's character can be best appreciated.
- **Glimpsed views** – these types of views are often enclosed and fleeting, and principally incite intrigue or surprise in those that notice them that add to the experience of an area.
- **Dynamic views** – these are views that steadily reveal different aspects of a place's character and continually evolve as we experience them. These may be panoramic views from a fixed point or kinetic views that are revealed as the observer moves through the area. These views are influenced by both constant features (not necessarily dominant features but those that remain present throughout) and transient features (accents in the view that come in and pass out of views at different points).

Examples of views in Baldernock Conservation Area

4.26 Baldernock is particularly well enriched with a variety of interesting, beautiful and at times panoramic views, but the seemingly mundane have their role to play too in conveying the character of the place. Below are some examples of the more obvious and noteworthy views in the area – in that they are the ones that clearly embody important characteristics of the conservation area – but it is important to remember that experience is entirely personal and the value placed on views subjective; as such, there will be many more that are not noted here that portray the sense of place equally well.

Static

4.27 The view of the front elevation of the parish church. It is from here that the architectural treatment of the principal elevation can best be appreciated and the building is at its most striking. Whilst the church is the dominant element in this view, the composition is enhanced by the presence of the watch house, planting, monuments and gravestones, all secured behind the boundary wall, which offers protection and a degree of seclusion – or at least separation – from the building's surroundings. Note also the glimpsed view of the Manse in the far distance between the church and watch house.

Figure 4.8: Static view – Baldernock Parish Church



Glimpsed

4.28 A fleeting view down Baldernock Road from Dowan Road. Several characteristics of the area are visible here: the small scale building, pitch-roofed with harled, white-washed walls, the mature trees lining the road's edge, the rolling topography, the low-level stone walls. These features also frame and contain the view, channelling it down the road to a vanishing point up the hill in the distance as it turns a corner.

Figure 4.9: Glimpsed view – Baldernock Road



Dynamic

4.29 It is dynamic views towards and from Baldernock that really help define its character, due mainly to the topography and development pattern of the area. Travelling along the network of country roads and tracks, views are enclosed then open out then close in again and the eye is drawn to various buildings, woodlands and field boundaries against the backcloth of pastureland. The importance of these views is in the animated, dynamic experience of the

transition from one environment with one set of characteristics into an equally interesting but contrasting environment, rather than being reliant on a particular view from a defined point.

4.30 That said, it is also a pleasure of the area to stand still and take in the exceptionally tranquil and timeless character of the landscape, such as this view towards the countryside around Bearsden and Glasgow to the south-west from outside the church.

Figure 4.10: Dynamic view



Photo © Richard Sutcliffe (cc-by-sa/2.0) available at <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/5022182> [accessed 11th December 2020].

4.31 'Static', 'glimpsed' and 'dynamic' cover the types of views you might find, but their relevance to the significance of the conservation area lies firmly in what those views contain; that is, what they can tell us about the history of the settlement or the area, or how they influence our experience of its character. And, of course, all of these views have their own, varying degrees of aesthetic appeal, degrees that are dependent on the time of day, the time of

year and, above all, the viewer and what they find pleasing as much as established criteria of visual aesthetic or artistic appeal.

4.32 Furthermore, these views are not mutually exclusive: one asset or feature may contribute to the character and appearance of the area in different ways in different views, and views may transition, interrupt and develop concurrently with one another.

Chapter 5

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