

**East Dunbartonshire Council**

**Conservation Area  
Appraisal  
Clachan of Campsie**

**Final report**  
Prepared by LUC  
January 2021



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# East Dunbartonshire Council

## Conservation Area Appraisal Clachan of Campsie

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# Chapter 1

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

**1.1** The special interest of the Clachan of Campsie and the desire to celebrate and preserve its historical importance was recognised by the former Stirling County Council in 1974 by its designation as an area of special interest. This conservation area appraisal was produced in October 2020 to review and update the previous appraisal and 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 Clachan of Campsie Conservation Area, please refer to the separate 'Conservation Areas: Managing Change' document.

### Location and context

**1.3** Clachan of Campsie lies in the edge of the Glazert Valley, south of the Campsie Fells at the mouth of the Campsie Glen, located in the most northerly extent of East Dunbartonshire. The nearest settlements are the village of Haughhead immediately to its south and

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### Executive Summary

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Lennoxton, approximately 1.5km to the south-east, with the centre of Strathblane approximately 4.5km to the west within the Stirling local authority area.

**1.4** The area has been described as one of the most beautiful places in East Dunbartonshire due to the scenic beauty of the surrounding landscape. This is due in no small part to the differing properties of the underlying geology of the area, which has resulted in the precipitous stepped escarpments of the Campsie fault contrasting with the low-lying pastoral flood plain of the Pow Burn/Glazert Water. The special landscape qualities of these areas are recognised in the designation of the Campsie Fells and Glazert Valley Local Landscape Areas. Clachan of Campsie is located on the border between these two contrasting landscapes, giving it a picturesque and unique position compared to other settlements in the region.

**1.5** Two areas closely related to the conservation area are designated as Local Gardens and Designed Landscapes in recognition of their historical and landscape value: the grounds of the former Ballencleroch House, now the retreat of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, forming the south-western part of the conservation area, and the romantic designed landscape of Campsie Glen, overlapping and extending to the north of the conservation area.

### Historical development

**1.6** The story of Clachan of Campsie as the settlement we see today begins with the arrival of Saint Machan and the subsequent building of a church in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, supposedly over his grave. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century this was joined (to the south-west) by a large laird's house set in generous and private grounds. The historic core of the village naturally grew up between the two, focused on a village square, at the junction between drove roads and paths along the Glazert Valley and the Campsie Glen. This remained relatively small and contained until the late-18<sup>th</sup> century. At this point, the natural resources of the Clachan led to the development of local industry. This was part of massive changes that were afoot as a result of the industrial revolution, and the small-scale agricultural economy that had supported residents for centuries was overtaken by bleachworks and printworks, based here to take advantage of the plentiful and powerful water sources.

**1.7** By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century this rush of activity had all but finished and today there is little evidence it was ever there, the factories, mills and workers' cottages long since demolished, although the higher-status residences from this period do survive. A small amount of infill and additional housing has been added throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but on the whole the

Clachan has returned to its quieter, more modest size and appears much as it did a century before.

### Summary of defining characteristics of Clachan of Campsie Conservation Area

**1.8** The context and historical development of the Clachan are unique to the village 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 Clachan:

- The picturesque ruin of the original parish church, its churchyard setting and additional features such as the Kincaid-Lennox family Vault, stone boundary wall and ornate entrance gate and pillars. The somewhat sombre colours are offset by the brighter whitewash of the adjoining Aldessan Gallery.
- The organic layout and low density of buildings, loosely concentrated around the village square. Buildings in the area are predominantly small scale, harled and whitewashed – with two notable exceptions – with slate roofs and stone boundary walls. The buildings and their grounds incorporate numerous small scale architectural and streetscape detailing and ornamentation.
- The incorporation of large amounts of mature planting and green space, both designed and unplanned, and the extremely close relationship and integration of the natural and built environment throughout the whole area. This includes the substantial walled, wooded and private grounds of the Schoenstatt Retreat and the wilder, intimate and public space within the Glen and along the banks of the burns.
- Visitor activity associated with the Glen, Schoenstatt Retreat, Aldessan Gallery and shops, which adds a sense of vitality to the conservation area.
- The beautiful, powerful, wild, contrasting and dramatic landscape setting of the Clachan at the edge of the Glazert Valley at the foot of the Campsie Glen and Campsie Fells is a defining feature that makes for a strong identity and sense of place.

## 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 Clachan of Campsie that made it ripe for successful occupation.

#### Location

**2.1** 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.<sup>1</sup>

**2.2** Clachan of Campsie (herein known as the Clachan) lies at the side of the Glazert Valley south of the Campsie Fells at the mouth of the Campsie Glen, and is described as one of the

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

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### Location and Context

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most beautiful places in East Dunbartonshire due to the scenic beauty of the surrounding area. Located within the north extent of the local authority area (originally within the county of Stirlingshire), the parish was first established in the 12<sup>th</sup> century when a parish church was erected dedicated to St Machan. The boundaries of the parish remained consistent until 1649 when the eastern portion to the Garrell burn was transferred to Kilsyth parish and western portion to Baldernock parish.

**2.3** The nearest settlements are the village of Haughhead immediately to its south and Lennoxton, approximately 1.5km to the south-east, with the centre of Strathblane approximately 4.5km to the west within the Stirling local authority area.

### Geology & Topography

**2.4** 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 Glazert Valley and 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 area. The further south and south-west you travel the more densely populated the area gets as it transitions from its rural hinterlands to become the urban fringes and overspill of the City of Glasgow.

**2.5** 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 by a sequence of lava flows 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 area.

**2.6** This wide band of sedimentary rock that underlies most of the area 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. Clachan of Campsie is located on the border between these two contrasting landscapes, giving it a picturesque and unique position compared to other settlements in the region.

**2.7** It is along this line that the tumultuous geology of the Campsies has been formed, with the severe downthrow of the Campsie Fault giving rise to the precipitous stepped escarpments. More recent episodes of glaciation have created various depositional features on lower slopes and progressive erosion by the Kirk Burn reveals many of the finer geological details of these episodes. Owing to its relative accessibility and enlightened landlords opening it to the public since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the glen has brought generations of amateur and professional geologists to the Campsie Glen alongside visitors too.

Figure 2.1: The Fells and surrounding low-lying countryside



The entrance to the conservation area

## The Conservation Area Boundary

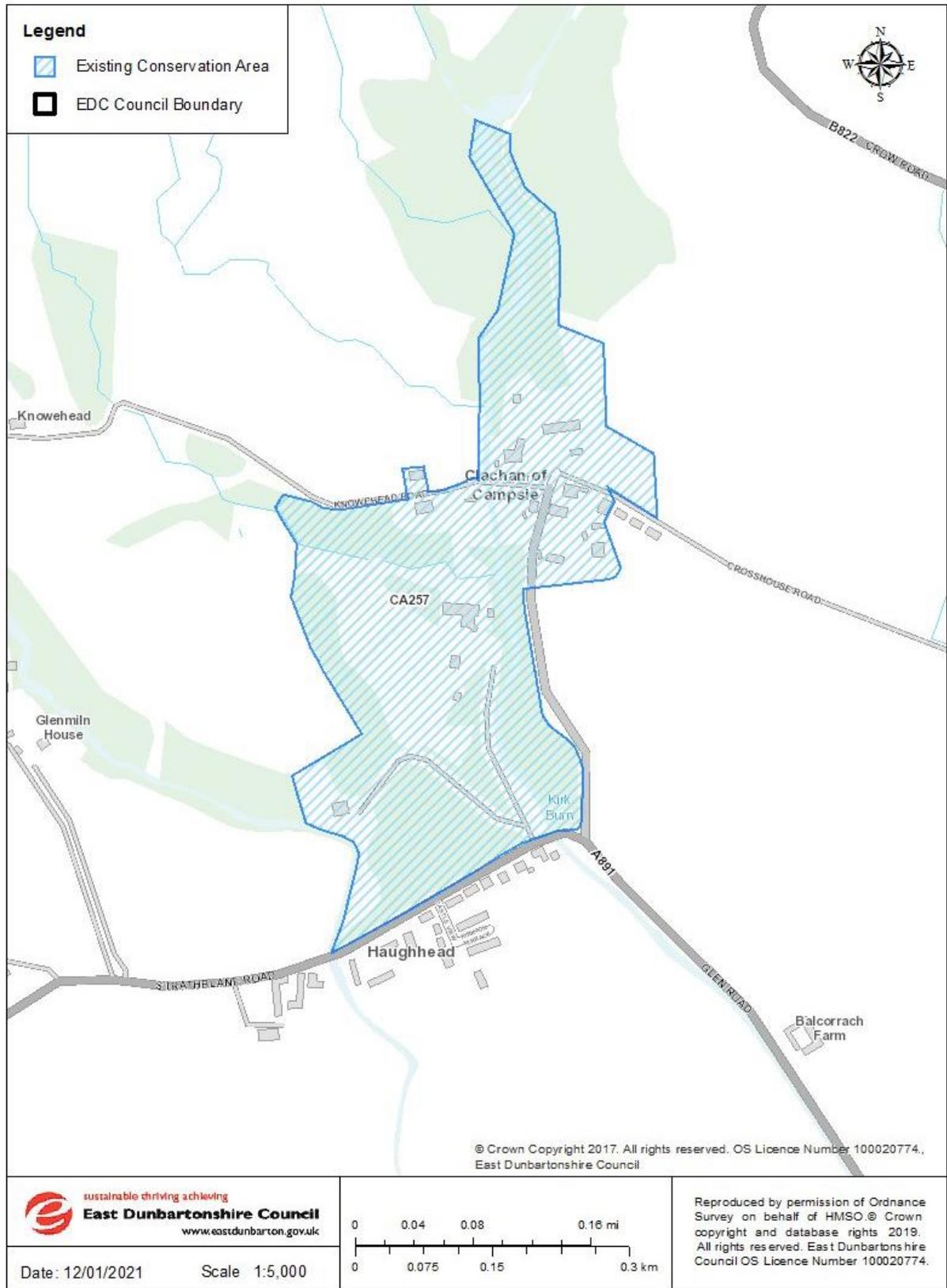
**2.8** The conservation area measures approximately 16 hectares and encompasses a section of Campsie Glen and the village adjacent known as Clachan of Campsie, largely following historic field boundaries and routeways. Although containing one large area, there are two distinct parts of the conservation area: the historic village with access to the glen, and the former grounds of Ballencleroch (or Kirkton) House. Campsie Glen and the Lands of Ballencleroch House are also identified as local Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes in the East Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2017 and previous Development Plans, with background information provided in the council's 2006 "Survey of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes in East Dunbartonshire".

**2.9** The historic village core is concentrated around a square with the Clachan of Campsie Road leading into the centre, Knowehead Road to the west and Crosshouse Road to the east. Immediately behind the square lies the historic burial ground which contains the ruins of the old church of St Machan alongside the Kincaid-Lennox family vault.

**2.10** To its north, the boundary contains the site of the former bleachworks before rising into a section of the Campsie Glen, stopping at the James Linn waterfall. The naturally steep-sided valley forms the eastern extent of this section and the west bank of the Kirk Burn acts as the western boundary. The village boundary previously contained a larger number of buildings which were predominantly workers' cottages but these have long been demolished.

**2.11** The former grounds of Ballencleroch House are defined on its northern boundary by Knowehead Road, east by Clachan of Campsie Road, Strathblane Road (A891) to its south and field boundaries through woodland on its western edge. It contains the location of the former Ballencleroch House and its lodge, Ballencleroch Cottage, Knowehead Cottage and Finglen House. The extensive grounds now contain the purpose built Schoenstatt Retreat and Conference Centre, run by the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary.

Figure 2.2: Map of CA boundary



## Chapter 3

# The Historical Development of Clachan of Campsie

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 Clachan of Campsie developed from its earliest origins into the settlement we see today.

### Ecclesiastical Origins

#### Parish Church

**3.1** The Clachan's first substantial building dates from around 1175, when a parish church dedicated to Saint Machan was established over his reputed grave. Little is known about Machan's life; however, documentary evidence suggests that he was educated in Ireland and became an ordained bishop in Rome. Probably attracted to the secluded environs of the Campsie Glen, he built a small chapel at the base of the glen from which he carried out missionary work in the area.

**3.2** An adjacent well 70m to the north of the chapel is reported to have been used by Machan for baptisms, although unfortunately no structural remains survive. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, it was described as consisting of a four foot deep structure fed by a spring, partly covered by a flagstone, with the water leading off through a (possible stone slab covered) tunnel to the woods north of the church. This is a rare example of a well with a clear association with a saint at an early-medieval ecclesiastical site, such wells were often attributed healing properties.

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### The Historical Development of Clachan of Campsie

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**3.3** Not long after the church was founded in the late-12<sup>th</sup> century, the Earl of Huntingdon granted control of the Campsie church to Kelso Abbey with the approval of King William I and the bishop of Glasgow, along with the neighbouring, but now lost, Antermony church. However, this was challenged by the Earl of Lennox who in turn granted the buildings to Glasgow Cathedral sometime between 1208 and 1214; this is evident in a bull of 1216, which lists the church of Campsie amongst the prebendal churches of Glasgow.

**3.4** The church continued in active use and underwent many alterations in subsequent centuries, including the last major renovation during the 1770's. Through time, each modification incorporated fabric from the existing structures whilst adding to it with new material and decoration. This was confirmed by a standing building survey undertaken of the church in 2016, which identified different masonry and pointing techniques, alongside breaks in coursing, that revealed different phases of building work, with the north wall likely to be the earliest surviving element. Additionally, on the west gable, a simple cross-incised stone was built into the wall core during its consolidation in the 17<sup>th</sup> century; the stone is likely to be of medieval origin and is a rare example of an early Christian marked stone in the region.

**3.5** The church at Clachan was abandoned in 1828 to make way for the new parish church located in the more urban settlement of Lennoxton to the south-east. The old church was substantially demolished at this time in order to raise money for the fittings for the new church, although during the 1850's the bell tower at least was still in operation, it being used for funerals and evening meetings on Sunday at the nearby parish school. The bell then went on a tour of the area, first being relocated to Oswald School in Lennoxton, then to Milton of Campsie Church in 1888, before finally returning back to Clachan to be installed in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century bellcote outside the former inn (now a café and gift shop) The bell has since been removed to an unknown location, possibly housed in the new Milton of Campsie church building on Campsie Road.

**3.6** Today, very little of the building remains apart from the west gable and reduced sections of the north and south walls, although these are largely covered with vegetation. The 2016 building survey confirmed that, after its abandonment, exposed wall foundations on the south and west walls were consolidated with recycled masonry, cement pointing and hard capping.

Figure 3.1: The remains of Clachan's ecclesiastical origins



The ruins of the parish church – the west gable is visible but the walls are concealed by vegetation.



The late-20<sup>th</sup> century bellcote housing the old church bell, although the bell itself is currently missing.

### Churchyard

**3.7** The old parish church stands within a wider churchyard (listed together as LB4351) surrounded by a stone boundary wall, partly in rubble and partly in squared ashlar at its entrance. The current curved shape of the churchyard wall to the north-west suggests that it may retain the partial footprint of an earlier curvilinear structure. Oval boundary walls are typical of early medieval church and cemetery sites and could be associated with the chapel established by St Machan.

**3.8** The churchyard is scattered with headstones, table tombs and ground slabs of varying sizes and decorative detailing, dating between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. There is also a single

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cast iron headstone, an obelisk and Celtic cross. The Gazetteers of Scotland describes many important individuals to the local area who are buried in the churchyard including:

- Two Covenanters
- The Campsie minister John Collins, murdered in 1648 by the Laird of Belglass on his way from a presbytery meeting
- The martyr William Boick executed in Glasgow in 1683 for his loyalty to Scotland's Covenanted cause
- The geographer James Bell who lived in Campsie in the final years of his life
- Local poet William Muir who wrote a lament for the decline of Campsie in the early 1800s
- Reverend Norman Macleod (1812-72), a clergyman whose father was minister of Clachan parish church.

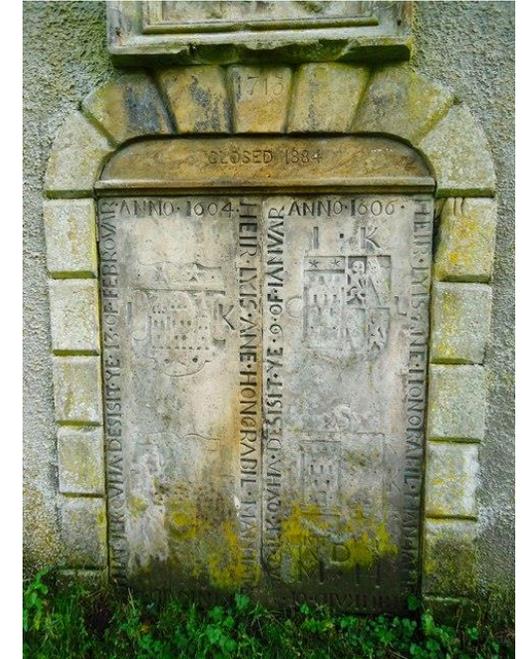
**3.9** The most substantial structure in the churchyard is the Kincaid-Lennox family vault (LB4358) in the south-east corner, a two-storey building with a domed roof. The keystone from the entrance dates to 1715 with the upper storey added in 1819 by Miss Lennox, which acted as a waiting room between church services and was accessed from an external stair on the east gable. Initially, the coffins were laid on stone shelves within the vault; however, after the funeral of Mrs Kincaid Lennox in 1876 (the last funeral to take place in Clachan) all the coffins were buried beneath the vault. A lintel at the entrance marks the vault as being closed in 1884, with the doorway blocked by two slabs from former table tombs. These indicate the churchyard was in use by the family before the construction of the vault, with Latin inscriptions to James Kincaid (who died on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1604) and another James Kincaid (who died 19<sup>th</sup> January 1604).

Figure 3.2: The Kincaid-Lennox family vault



The vault stands to the right-hand side of the entrance to the churchyard. Behind it to the left the Campsie Fell rises in a dramatic backdrop.

"Clachan of Campsie, St. Machan's churchyard [2]" by Robert Murray is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)



The reused, early-17<sup>th</sup> century former table tomb slabs.

"Clachan of Campsie, St. Machan's churchyard [3]" by Robert Murray is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

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## Country Estate

**3.10** Located in the woodland to the south of the village, on the site of the current Schoenstatt Retreat, was Ballencleroch or Kirkton House (referred to herein as Ballencleroch). The first documentary evidence is in a charter dating to 1423 where the land, including that to the north to incorporate an area of the glen and waterfalls, was granted to the Brisbane family of Bishopton. They constructed a fortified tower or mansion house that overlooked the land to the east that fell to the Kirk Burn.

**3.11** The Brisbane's held the policies for just over 200 years when, in 1642, it was sold to the McFarlans of Keithton or Kirkton. The McFarlans were a turbulent family based in the lands between Loch Long and Loch Lomond (now forming the parish of Arrochar) with ancestral links to the Earls of Lennox. Over their time at Ballencleroch, members of the family served in the army, as lawyers, surgeons and as members of the clergy. In 1665, laird James McFarlan built a new home for his aristocratic wife, Mary Keith, the daughter of the Earl of Marischal. The new modest lairds house was a two-storey, T-plan house incorporating elements of the previous dwelling.

**3.12** The grounds surrounding Ballencleroch House were planted and landscaped from the early-18<sup>th</sup> century by the then owner Hugh McFarlan, who purchased the property in a judicial sale in 1703. The son of James and Mary McFarlan, he had hastily fled the family home over 20 years earlier after killing a son of Stirling of Glorat during a duel in the grounds of the house. During this time, he became a soldier on the European mainland fighting under the Duke of Marlborough where he brought back a large variety of tree species which he planted in the grounds and towards Campsie Glen.

**3.13** Ballencleroch was substantially enlarged between 1852-3 in the Scots Baronial style. A series of contemporary letters between the owner John McFarlan and architect Robert Logan discuss the alterations planned and their specifications. McFarlan died in 1852 (buried in the graveyard at the Clachan parish church) so his son continued his plans. It was a considerable undertaking: the new extension, once completed, had cost £1,417, approximately £113,000 in today's money.

**3.14** The new Ballencleroch House incorporated both new and altered elements from the old house: the original main entrance of the 17<sup>th</sup> century building was closed up and the building itself resigned to being the north wing; new three-floor extensions were added to the south and west and a tower to the south-east with large, hood-moulded windows; crow stepped gables

were added and the external walls white harled; the internal staircase was repositioned, the drawing room enlarged, and an entrance porch added bearing a heraldic panel above the doorway.

**3.15** With a newly positioned entrance came a new main driveway. This was formed adjacent to the Kirkburn and connected the house to Haughhead to the south, with a smaller road leading to the north to provide access into Clachan. In the south, entrance gates were added to the surrounding boundary wall (still visible today) and a now demolished entrance lodge placed to the west of the bridge over Kirkburn. Also within the grounds was Finglen Cottage, lying at the end of a branch of the main driveway to the south west of the main house. Its origins are unknown, but the building appears on historical mapping in 1817, constructed between the two main alterations to the house.

**3.16** Despite the considerable investment made in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the house and estate was subsequently let to a range of tenants throughout the remainder of the McFarlans' ownership before it passed from the family in the 1960s. Ballencleroch House was then converted into the Campsie Glen Hotel, a popular country retreat aimed at the upper class and celebrities, before it was destroyed by arson in 1983 and laid vacant for five years until it acquired new owners.

**3.17** In 1987 the 17-acre estate was acquired by the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, a German religious order, bringing a new chapter in the history of the site. The order had historic connections to the area, with a private chapel in honour of Our Blessed Lady created in 1508 by Sir John Strivelling of Gragbernand in his own neighbouring house. In 1989, the Marian Shrine (modelled on the original in Germany) was opened in the grounds of the house as a place of pilgrimage and prayer. Due to the fire damage and years of neglect, the house itself was beyond repair and was demolished. It was replaced with a new building, also called Ballencleroch House, in 1995 which echoed the Scots Baronial character of the previous house, including crow stepped gables and tower. Since then, further accommodation has been constructed and the site has become a popular retreat and conference centre.

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Figure 3.3: Aerial view of the village and surroundings



A view of the village and its surroundings from the fells, looking SSW. The core of the village and centre of activity today is the area around the old inn, the building centre-right in the foreground. Behind it is the considerable grounds of Ballencleroch House can be seen, with a heavily wooded shelterbelt marking its boundary. The conical roof of the retreat can be seen along with the gable end of the shrine (in the centre of the photograph). Note also the pastoral fields surrounding the village, a key feature of the area and for a long time the principal economy.

"Clachan of Campsie" by Bill Jarvie is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/)

## A Rural Revolution

**3.18** The Clachan is in the rural upland region which, along with much of the rest of the country, had an economy largely based on peasant agriculture until the late-18<sup>th</sup> century. Both the settlement and its surrounds testify to this in various buried and upstanding archaeological remains. These highlight the historic pastoral use of the landscape associated with the conservation area, both within its boundaries and in its immediate surroundings. Most of these features date to the post-medieval period and lie on the land owned by the McFarlan's, residing in Ballencleroch House. Cultivation terraces have previously been recorded near the church extending eastwards across the contours of the hillside with some over a meter high. Just outside of the conservation area, possible sheiling huts and enclosures have also been identified, probably related to sheep farming; later, the wool farmed from this trade would have provided a natural resource for use in the factories on the banks of the Kirkburn.

**3.19** Situated just off the village square and to the left of the main road leading into the Clachan stands the building that once contained the old parish school. It has origins in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when it opened under the patronage of John, Archbishop of Glasgow, with the deed of creation stating that the schoolmaster should teach Latin. The school would have been in use by the rural community, especially accommodating the children of the families working in the various industries during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The building held the school, used for primary education, until 1978 when it closed and the building subsequently has held various workshop and residential uses.

**3.20** The picturesque and rural landscape surrounding Clachan of Campsie allowed it to remain secluded and continue largely unchanged for much of its history; however, the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a catalyst for economic and social change across the country and even Clachan would not escape its reaches. The local topography, both beautiful and resource rich, would fuel the growth of the village in two ways: industry and tourism.

## Industry

**3.21** The demotion of Saint Machan's church at Clachan from parish church was a direct result of the establishment of a new town, Lennoxton to accommodate the workers of the growing industrial development at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The industries that prospered at this time included mining, textile printing and chemical industries, all of which contrasted with the raw, natural, picturesque qualities of the Campsie Glen to the north. Even the Glen itself did not remain free of industry, with manufacturers taking advantage of the natural power of the

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Kirkburn and its waterfalls for generating power and as a water source. The surrounding landscape was rich in raw materials, which spurred on the rapid growth of industry during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**3.22** The largest industry was the Clachan Bleach Works which opened in 1819, converted from an earlier mill at the foot of the Glen to the north of the churchyard. It employed 13 people which expanded to 50 by 1851, with workers bleaching cotton muslin. Of the 28 houses recorded in Clachan in 1841, the majority housed workers at the bleachfield; unsurprisingly, however, the work was dangerous. Bleaching usually involving harmful substances such as sulphuric acid or chlorine to speed up the process and is likely to have caused long-term health impacts on workers. Testament to the strength of the industry, a further bleach works – the Glenmill Bleach Works – opened in 1831 approximately 0.6km to the west-south-west of Clachan, employing 90 people with a dedicated women’s lodging.

**3.23** During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, other forms of industry grew up around the bleach works, taking advantage of the convenient location and resources. This included a meal mill, a blacksmith, a textile workshop with over 50 looms, a kiln and a print field for printing cotton fabrics (likely linked to the bleachfields). The clearest evidence of historical growth appears on 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS mapping, which depicts a number of new structures. The industries were placed on the east bank of the Kirk Burn to the left of the church, influenced by the topography; the force generated by the upstream waterfalls provided power and a water source whilst the flat land before the steep glen provided space for factories and their associated features. A nursery and large glass house were also mapped in the field north of the Crosshouse Road, and a gasometer appears on the banks of the Kirkburn, probably used to provide gas lighting to the different industries to allow longer production days.

**3.24** Aside from the factory buildings, the bleachworks also needed ponds for treating the cloth with chemicals prior to spreading on large fields to be bleached in the sun. Field surveys north of the churchyard have discovered the remains of ponds and platforms associated with the mill and bleach fields. Although there are no physical remains of the factories themselves, buildings such as Almeel House and The Cottage (4 Clachan of Campsie), that would have housed workers within the village, do survive as a testament to this once prominent local industry.

**3.25** The sound, smell and environmental impacts of the industry had noticeable and quite dramatic effects on the Clachan, altering its quiet and picturesque character. Writing in 1892,

Groome documented the waste material spilling into the burn, noting:

“streams, which a mile away are clear as morning, are dyed black as ink before they have escaped from print work and bleaching-green...”

**3.26** In response to the industries, further development sprang up around the central square, with new residential properties for workers appearing throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These were predominantly workers cottages with two late-Victorian villas appearing at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The industry was prolific but short-lived, however, and by 1895 the bleachworks were in decline, the last standing evidence of the industry demolished by the 1940s. As other forms of power became cheaper and more readily accessible, industry moved out of the rural glen and east to Lennoxton.

### Tourism

**3.27** The land surrounding Clachan and into the Campsie Glen were part of the estate owned by the McFarlans, the lairds of Ballencleroch. They kept the lands private until, in an unusual move for the time, John McFarlan opened part of the estate to visitors at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, marking the beginning of the area as a visitor attraction. To improve the romantic and scenic appeal of the glen, a designed landscape was created with pathways up its steep sides to the waterfalls, along with new planting and bridges.

**3.28** The move paid off, gaining popularity from both the local population and visitors which continues to the present day. Other country estates with similar topography also began opening their glens for tourists during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, with other examples including the Falls of Bruar and the Falls of Clyde. The opening of the Campsie Glen Station in 1867 as part of the Blane Valley Branch Line, half a mile from Clachan, provided improved access and the area became more popular with day visitors from Glasgow.

**3.29** Prominently located at the head of the village, the two-storey Aldessan House and attached cottage range (LB4359) dates to the 1830’s and was initially a laird’s house. By 1859, historic mapping indicates it had become the Crown Inn, providing accommodation and refreshment to increasing numbers of visitors, reflecting the popularity of the glen as a tourist

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destination. In 1922, after the inn had closed, the buildings became the Temperance Red Tub Tearooms; the tearooms were run by a group of well-known local ladies on strict temperance principles to remove the ill reputation which closed the inn in the first place. Behind the building was a water garden for customers to dine and enjoy the views up to the Campsie Fells. A further attraction came to the Clachan when world champion boxer Benny Lynch used the Red Tub as a training centre between 1936 and 1938, with thousands of people visiting in an attempt to see their idol. After the closure of the tearooms, the buildings saw a variety of uses including a private dwelling and post office. Opening in 1988, it now houses the Aldessan Gallery and Coffee Shop with different retail and workshop units in the lower range, which remains popular with visitors today.

**3.30** The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the tourism industry continue to thrive and further residential properties constructed, located on infill sites within the conservation area or on its outskirts. Between the 50s and 70s a handful of additional houses were constructed including the municipal semi-detached houses beyond the area's eastern boundary.



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### 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** Today, the Clachan is a small village predominantly of residential houses. The industry that once dictated people's comings and goings have long since disappeared and with it the church, school and local amenities that, before the advent of the car, were necessary to keep such a remote settlement functioning.

**4.2** One industry that has remained strong, however, is tourism. The beauty and history of the area continue to draw visitors in and the Clachan is perfectly placed in the Glazert Valley at the foot of the Campsie Fells to act as a base. Within the Clachan, most of this activity centres around Aldessan House, where there is car parking, a café, gift shop, bicycle shop and toilets, and from where it is then easy to explore the churchyard or strike out into the glen to the north. The popularity of the area for day trips and holiday makers means that at peak season the area can be teeming with visitors; off-peak, however, when the weather starts to turn the village returns to its core community, with fewer visitors during the winter months, enjoying the austere beauty of the glen in that season.

**4.3** Alongside those who come to explore what the natural and historic environment has to offer are those who come to visit the shine and retreat set up by the Schoenstatt Sisters of

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Mary. Although it is open all year round, its location within the former grounds of Ballencleroch House mean that activity in this part of the conservation area is largely contained behind the heavily planted and walled boundary of the grounds.

#### Scale

**4.4** The loss of the industrial buildings and the now predominantly residential use in the area means that buildings in the Clachan are overwhelmingly domestic in scale. Buildings within the historic core are largely single or 1½- storey up to a maximum of 2-storeys with attics. Nestled in at the foot of the Campsie Fells their human scale is amplified by the comparatively monumental landscape, which rises behind the village; it is a constant reminder that despite man's intervention nature still dominates the area and is, after all, the very reason for the settlement's existence.

#### Hierarchy

**4.5** Buildings within the area are principally generously sized 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century detached and semi-detached dwellings. They are positioned fairly organically along the main thoroughfares through the village and, as such, there is no demonstrable hierarchy from building to building. The exception to the rule would have been Ballencleroch House, which was a much larger, high-status residence; even now, despite the demolition of the house, its walled and densely tree lined boundary is suggestive of a substantial and private property, even if you cannot see it.

**4.6** Individual buildings, however, are slightly more nuanced and show a pattern of hierarchy typical of domestic properties of this date: it generally follows that the greatest financial investment went into the principal façade of the building – the part most people would see – to convey the status and refinement of the occupants. The rear of the property, offshoots and ancillary buildings are humbler in style and appearance, and will also tend to be smaller in footprint and scale.

Figure 4.1: Building scale and hierarchies



The 1½ storey central range of the principal dwelling with smaller, lower offshoots – with less detail and fewer windows (glass was expensive) – to either side.

### Spatial Qualities

#### Development Pattern, Layout and Density

**4.7** The Gaelic term clachan generally refers to a small hamlet where the layout of dwellings has no particular formal plan. The church and its associated manse (of unknown date but appearing on historic mapping of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century) were deliberately placed at the opening of Campsie Glen, sited on the borderland of mountain and plain. The conservation area follows

a broadly organic, informal, loose-grain development pattern southward from this point, with subsequent development concentrating around a central square and along the routes leading toward it. The majority of houses are orientated on a roughly east-west line, with their principal elevations facing south or north. The retreat and the grounds to Ballencleroch House form a contrast with the development pattern of the village core, spreading out from the central square. This accounts for nearly two thirds of the conservation area but contains only three buildings: the new retreat building and shrine, Finglen Cottage (depicted on historic mapping from 1817) and the lodge, which is depicted on OS 1st edition mapping.

**4.8** Historic rights of way are still visible within the area, with the roads and pathways providing evidence of past communities making their mark on the landscape as they travelled to the parish church. Crosshouse Road leading south-east is depicted on mapping from the late-18<sup>th</sup> century linking Clachan with Lennoxton, with Strathblane Road (forming the southern boundary of the area) also dating to this period. Clachan of Campsie Road follows the route of a road that appeared at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, running parallel to the boundaries of Ballencleroch and connecting to the important Strathblane Road. To the east of the conservation area, Crow Road is a historic route leading over the Campsie Fells, possibly an old drove route.

**4.9** The evidence of industry so clear on the early edition OS maps is all but gone now, leaving only the few dwellings that date from this period. The lack of large scale, dense development, the extensive grounds of Ballencleroch House and the enhanced natural landscape of the glen means that the natural environment dominates. From the ground, the siting of buildings in the area have the appearance of having been dropped into the landscape almost at random with the natural environment weaving between them, tying the composition together into a coherent whole. The intimate and immediate relationship between built and natural elements is an absolutely fundamental part of the character of the area, softening the hard edges of man's intervention into the landscape and reinforcing its rural and secluded character.

Figure 4.2: The influence of the built and natural environment on spatial qualities



The spaces between buildings allow nature in and the relatively informal layout gives the area an organic and informal character.

### Public and Private Space

**4.10** Despite the surrounding area's active tourism trade, the majority of space within the conservation area boundary is private. The grounds owned by the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary are open all year round for visitors to the retreat and shrine, but it is enclosed by a stone boundary wall and there is no formalised access to the grounds for the general public; however

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there is a well-designed, designated woodland walk beside the Kirk burn which is popular with locals and visitors. Most of the dwellings in the area also stand within generous, private grounds, demarcated by boundary walls, hedging and railings.

**4.11** The northern part of the conservation area – the glen and the space around the village square – is more open and easier to access. During the 1990's, the square underwent various public sector improvement works to enhance the historic centre of the Clachan. This included resurfacing works; creation of 23 car parking bays on the edges of the square; installation of black seating, street furniture and bespoke street lighting, and fingerposts and trees outside Aldessan House. The works are commemorated by a plaque as you enter the square from the south. As a result, the visiting public was brought into the heart of the village, bringing custom to the businesses and allowing better appreciation of the glen which forms its backdrop.

**4.12** There are several private roads within the conservation area with dead ends (but which continue into core paths): Knowehed Road leading to Knowehed House and farm; the path to Fin Glen and Allanhead; Crosshouse Road leading to Crosshouse Cottage; and a path to Lennoxtown, via Hole Farm. Finglen Cottage is also accessed via a private road leading of the main driveway within the Schoenstatt grounds.

**Figure 4.3: Private and public spaces**



The entrance to the private grounds of the Schoenstatt retreat (the grounds of the former Ballencleroch House) and Finglen cottage.



Public space at the foot of the glen around the village square.

### Setting

**4.13** What sets the Clachan conservation area apart from all other conservation areas in the region is the drama and immediacy of its landscape setting. Situated on the border between low lying, open countryside of the Glazert Valley to its south and the rising, imposing Campsie Fells to its north, the contrast between the two and their constant presence in views within, toward and out from the area is a defining feature, and yet most of it is within the setting of the area, not within its boundary. Unlike some conservation areas, 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.

**4.14** From the fells, there are contained, intimate, picturesque views within the glens as well extensive views outwards across the settlement and beyond, with the accents of white buildings standing out amongst the hedgerows, woodland and gardens. Campsie Glen appears behind key buildings and features, such as the churchyard and Aldessan House, adding to their visual appeal and significance. Kirkburn is the watercourse flowing through the glen, with its many waterfalls a key attraction to visitors historically and today.

**4.15** The setting of the conservation area extends beyond the purely visual connection and provides historic context that helps us understand and appreciate the area's history. The village of Clachan may be associated with the church and Ballencleroch House in the mouth of the glen, but it is also linked to a variety of other key sites within the wider area, connected through ownership with Lennox Castle and Woodhead. The Clachan is visible from parts of the designed landscape surrounding Lennox Castle where it appears in the same view as Craigharnet to the west, thus also providing a visual connection between the sites.

**4.16** In short, the setting of the conservation area has much to contribute to our appreciation and understanding of the settlement's evolution and distinctive character, as well as enhancing its aesthetic appeal. This setting adds to the sense of rurality and remoteness of the site whilst also linking to the areas agricultural and industrial history. It imparts a powerful sense of character and place and our experience of the conservation area is greatly enriched by the contribution it makes to its special interest.

Figure 4.4: The setting of the Clachan



A view from the fell looking south west. Starting from the left and moving right: new development within Lennox Castle (with the old grounds stretching behind and to the right); the pastoral, flat, lowland fields that surround the Clachan and separate it from Lennoxtown; the small collection of houses Haughhead; the grounds to the Schoenstatt retreat; the collection of buildings are the core of the Clachan, gathered around the village square. "[Lennoxtown](#)" by [Andy Mitchell UK](#) is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

## Architectural Detailing

### Types, form, and materials

**4.17** The buildings in the Clachan are principally domestic in use and overwhelmingly domestic in character. Even those that were once in other uses – such as the schoolhouse – or have been converted from domestic to commercial – such as Aldessan House – have the appearance of accommodating domestic functions. Most are 1½ storeys in height with pitched roofs incorporating gabled dormers (to gain extra room and height within the roof space) and chimney stacks to the gable ends. Slates roofs predominate and external walls are harled (a rough cast render) and whitewashed.

**4.18** The exception to this is the large, late-Victorian villa that occupies the corner plot to the south-east of the village square (6 Clachan of Campsie). At 2½ storeys – and built to tall, Victorian proportions – it is taller than the established building height in the Clachan and is finished in coursed ashlar rather than harled and whitewashed. Like its neighbours it has a slate roof, but its hipped roof form is anomalous in the area; similarly, the double height canted bay window is an unusual feature and, whilst dormers are common, the two here are canted dormers with hipped roofs set into the roof pitch rather than gabled and extending up from the wall head; consequently, although it is undoubtedly a handsome building, it is not representative of the overriding architectural character of the area. To the east of this house, down Crosshouse Road, stands a contemporary neighbour. Although finished in the same exposed stonework, it has adopted a form more characteristic of the area, standing at 1½ storeys with a pitched roof, gabled dormers and end chimney stacks.

### Styles and decoration

**4.19** There are no lavish architectural statements within the Clachan; Ballencleroch House with its applied baronial style would once have filled this gap, and whilst the building that replaced it references the site's past it is a fairly modest building in detailing, if not in scale. That said, the dwellings in the Clachan are no humble, vernacular cottages either. Their incorporation of details such as sash windows, fan lights and moulded, often classically inspired, door surrounds shows awareness and conscious adoption of architectural fashions in a desire to create attractive, polite, contemporary residences. Of particular note are the fanlight and porch to the old schoolhouse and the upper sashes of the house opposite, all of which have incorporated simple geometric patterns to pleasing visual effect.

Figure 4.5: Architectural styles and materials



In the foreground, the large, late-Victorian villa on the corner of the village square. Behind it, a more characteristic form of building.

### Boundary treatments

**4.20** The gardens and boundaries to the properties in the Clachan are an extension of the buildings and, as such, often display a similar level of thought and detailing. Boundary walls are without exception stone built; most are random rubble and topped with coping stones to help shed water from the wall head. To the former schoolhouse and 6 Clachan of Campsie, these walls are low level with railings set into them, those to the former schoolhouse (along with the

corresponding gate) are a particularly fine feature. These hard boundaries are often coupled with planting, used to reinforce the demarcation and to offer more privacy to the space within.

#### Public realm and floorscape

**4.21** Due to the size and openness of the area around the village square, public realm within the Clachan exerts a considerable influence on our experience of the village but, unfortunately, little street furniture or floorscape of any historic interest survives, bar a lone water fountain just south of Aldessan House. The public realm improvement works in the 1990s have served the village and its tourists well, but they are starting to look worn and are in need of repair in places. The abundant use of standard design benches, bollards, bins and the assortment of paving types is not reflective of the individual, rural, village character of the Clachan and generally clutters and detracts from its aesthetic qualities.

**4.22** Priority has also been given to the car and parking – a common problem in remote but popular villages. An understandable resolution has been found by concentrating parking spaces around the village square, but as the gateway to the Glen, the heart of the village and the focus of tourist activity it is regrettable that this area has lost most its historic significance and identity.

Figure 4.6: Public realm and street furniture



Standard design benches, bins and bollards and assorted paving around the village square are beginning to look tired and do not reflect the individual character of the area. In the centre, sandwiched between a bollard and bin, is the water fountain.

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## Trees and Landscaping

**4.23** A dominant feature within and surrounding the conservation area is the presence of mature planting, veteran trees and green spaces – some designed, some fortuitous – many of which have a history that predates the buildings in the area. Several impressive veteran trees, planted within private gardens but widely visible, contribute to the conservation area. Both Roy's 1750 and Ross's 1780 maps show that at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century there was planting surrounding the parish church and Ballencleroch House, features that continue to define the characteristics of the area today. As such, natural features – whether deliberately planned or not – are an integral part of the infrastructure and quality of the area.

**Figure 4.7: Trees within the conservation area**



Trees are not just a feature of the designed landscapes or the surrounding countryside but form an integral part of the infrastructure of the character of the area.

## Greenspace character

### Schoenstatt grounds

**4.24** As a result of Ballencleroch owner Hugh McFarlan bringing new species of young trees from his time abroad at the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the subsequent planting and landscaping, the woodland in and around Clachan became beautiful and diverse. In particular, the woodlands surrounding the then house were designed and can be traced through historic mapping to the woodlands we see today.

**4.25** Between the Schoenstatt Centre and Clachan of Campsie Road, the Kirk burn is enhanced and made more attractive by a strip of woodland formed of a diverse range of species. This includes large broadleaf trees (including lime, sweet chestnut, beech and ash) and conifers (including Douglas fir, Norway spruce, cedar of Lebanon, larch and yew). In particular, in the south of the woodland there is a specific conifer group that contains two large Wellingtonias (giant redwoods).

**4.26** Further woodland was planted in the grounds along the south boundary enclosing the main driveway and evidence of some restocking. On the western boundary, there is a large mixed block of conifers and broadleaves with rhododendrons.

**4.27** 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS mapping from the mid to end 19<sup>th</sup> century highlights this small scale designed landscape of parklands within the grounds. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition also appears to depict planned pathways to the north of the house on either side of the Kirk burn, possible as part of a walled garden. There is a similar feature to the west of the manse.

Figure 4.8: The shrine and surrounding gardens at the Schoenstatt retreat



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### Campsie Glen

4.28 Hugh McFarlan also planted trees within the glen itself, predominantly beech trees. OS mapping from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century shows this woodland stretching from the main road in the north of the village up into the glen, and is present today.

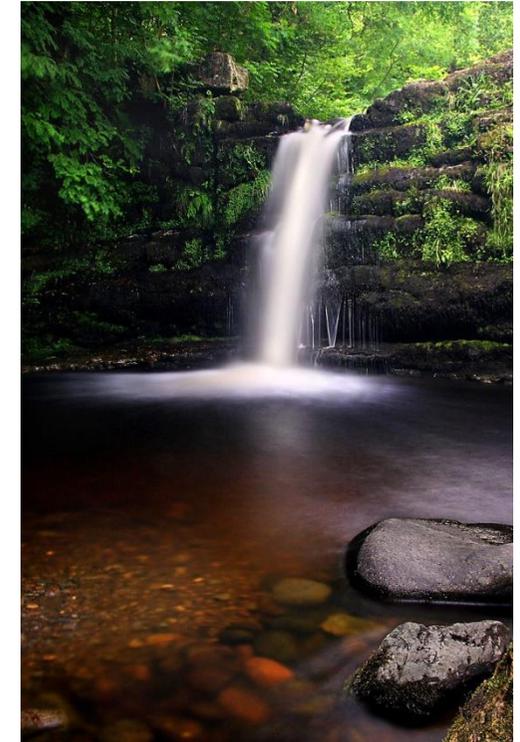
4.29 Planting is within enclosures created with fences or dykes, stretching from the entrance to the glen at Warden Hill up to the Darling Linn, the waterfall at Jacob's Ladder. This deliberate act was likely a result of John McFarlan opening the glen for visitor access where a designed landscape was created to improve the scenic and romantic appeal. This included creating pathways to the waterfalls, bridges and new planting with evidence for planting on outcrops and ridges for picturesque effect.

4.30 Today the area surrounding the glen is covered in young woodland planting, largely conifers to the west and broadleaved trees to the east. The western side of the glen is composed of mixed broadleaves with scatters of conifers and the east bank of mature beech.

Figure 4.9: The glen



One of the pathways through the densely treed environment of the glen, one of the features designed to give better access and enhance the visitor experience.



The glen has long been a draw for those wishing to experience – and capture – its beauty. "Afternoon in the Glen" by [Kirsty McWhirter](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#)

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## Views

### Types of Views

**4.31** 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 the Clachan is no exception – in fact, its character depends on it. 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 Clachan of Campsie Conservation Area

**4.32** Clachan of Campsie is particularly enriched by a range of striking and beautiful 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

**4.33** The view across the village square toward the principal elevation of Aldessan House. This view is contained by the boundary walls and planting to the east and west of the square, which frames the view of the main elevation – the public facing front. This shows Aldessan House at its best as the whole architectural composition of the façade can be appreciated and is at its most visually striking. It also includes the glen as the backdrop, reinforcing and emphasising this point as the gateway to the natural wonders beyond.

Figure 4.10: Static view – Aldessan House



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#### Glimpsed

**4.34** The fleeting view down a private drive at the entrance to the conservation area along Clachan of Campsie. Several characteristics of the area are visible here – the stone boundary walls, the trees – that demarcate the public and private space. They also contain the view, channelling it down the drive to a vanishing point as it turns a corner – a passing, fractional glimpse into a private domain.

**Figure 4.11: Glimpsed view – private drive, entrance to Kirkland**



#### Dynamic

**4.35** The first two photographs (Figure 5.11) show a kinetic view along Clachan of Campsie road leaving the area (and, equally, in the other direction), which changes quite dramatically from an enclosed environment where views are contained and foreshortened by boundary walls and tree cover, to suddenly opening up to reveal the vast expanse of countryside within which the conservation area sits and which is such an important part of its character. The importance of these views is in the 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. In particular the unfolding views along the path into the Glen, which reveal glimpses of burn and waterfalls and along the drives/paths in the Schoenstatt grounds, which open into parkland around the shine.

**4.36** In contrast, the next photograph (Figure 5.12) shows a panoramic view taking in multiple features of the area from a fixed point, resulting in a stunning view of high scenic quality. As with the previous views, the picturesque effect is enhanced by visual contrast, but this time by being able to take in the raw and dramatic nature of the fells and the flatter, more understated character of the pastoral flood plain of the Pow Burn/Glazert Water. This can be appreciated from both eastern and western approaches, but perhaps can be best seen, as in this photograph, from the rising gradients of the Crow Road and public car park above the head of the Glen. From here, the wooded indent of the Glen and glimpses of whitewashed properties draw the eye, whilst to the south again the fields merge with rising slopes of the Lennox Forest.

Figure 4.12: Dynamic view – Clachan of Campsie road



Figure 4.13: Panoramic view



**4.37** *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.

**4.38** 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.

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## Appendix A

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