

DRAFT



**LETHAM CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
and
MANAGEMENT PLAN**



**ECONOMY, PLANNING AND
EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES**

DRAFT JAN 2010

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1.0 Introduction & Purpose

1.1 Conservation Areas

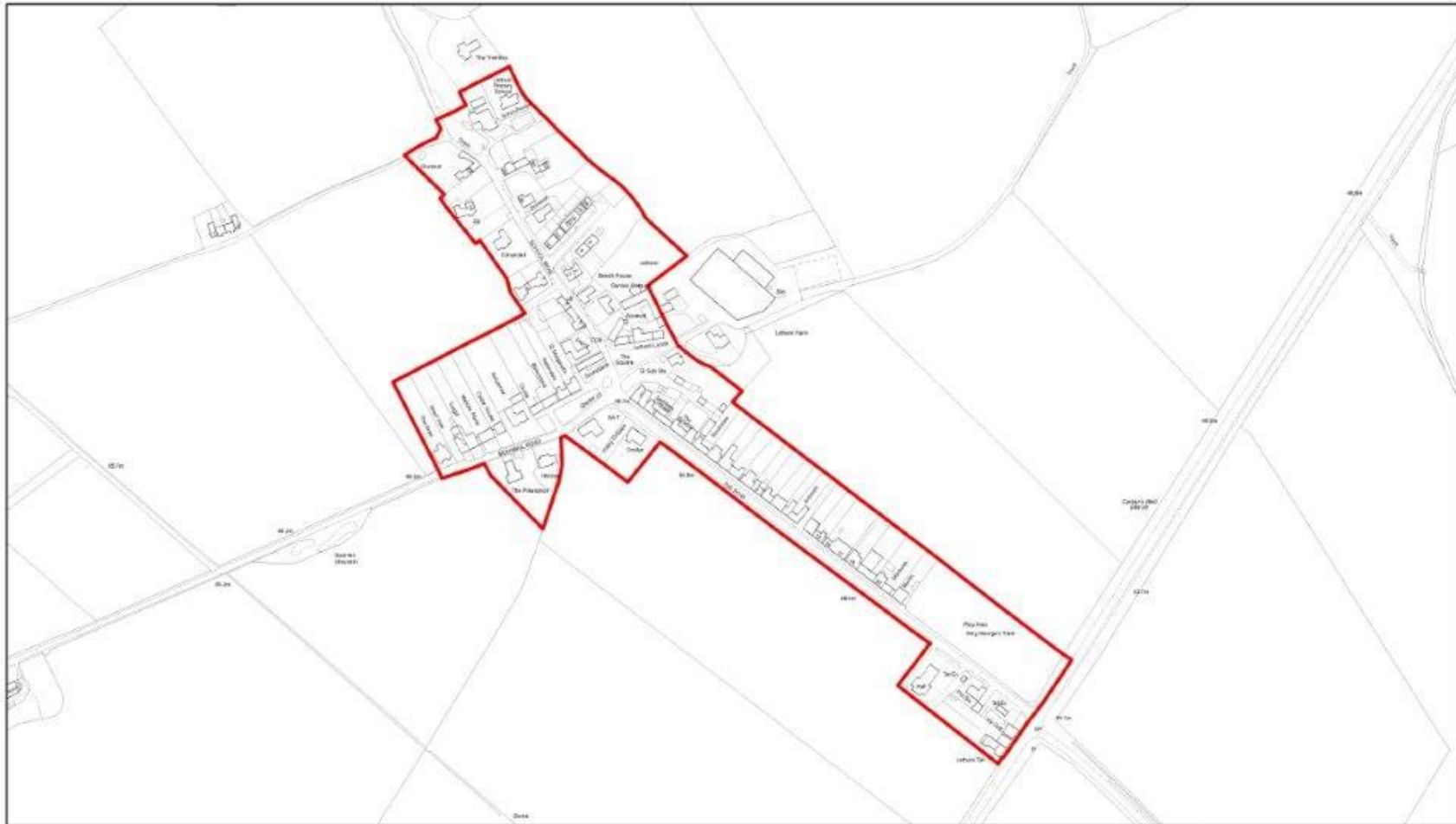
In accordance with the provisions contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 all planning authorities are obliged to consider the designation of conservation areas from time to time. Letham conservation area is one of forty-eight conservation areas located in Fife. These are all areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Fife Council is keen to ensure that the quality of these areas is maintained for the benefit of present and future generations.

Conservation area designation is not a means to preserve an area without change, but there is a joint responsibility between residents and the Council to ensure that change is not indiscriminate or damaging and that the unique character of each area is respected. In this way, communities can benefit from living in an environment of recognisable value. A map showing the conservation area boundary is included below and a written description included in Appendix 1.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

Letham conservation area was designated in 1993 in recognition of its special historic and architectural character and appearance. The appraisal aims to:

- confirm the importance of the designation of the area and to review the current conservation area boundaries
- highlight the significance of the area in terms of townscape, architecture and history
- identify important issues affecting the area
- identify opportunities for development and enhancement
- stimulate interest and participation in conservation issues amongst people living and working in the area
- provide a framework for conservation area management



Letham Conservation Area

 Conservation Area Boundary



Scale 1:4,500



**Economy, Planning &
Employability Services**

2.0 Location, History and Development

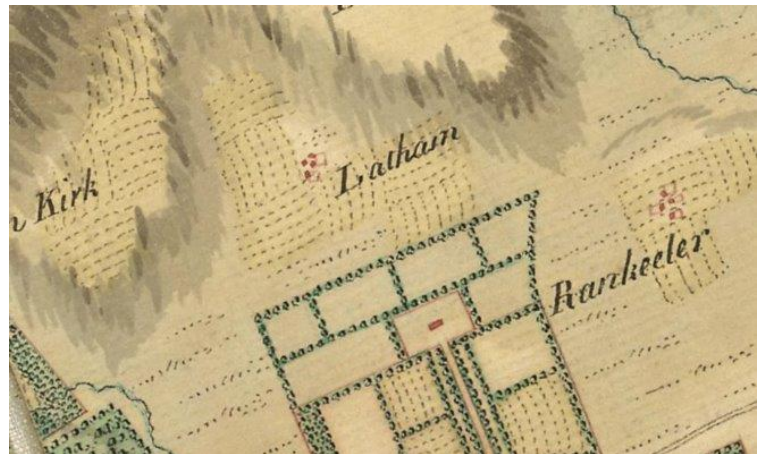


17th century School Brae (above) and Letham Lands (below) doocots.

Letham is located approximately 15km north of Glenrothes; 8km west of Cupar; and 13km south-east of Newburgh. 'Lathane' appears, by name, first in a document in 1452. The name is from the Gaelic *leathan* meaning 'broad slope', which describes well the topography of Letham. *Leathan* is a common place-name element in east Scotland and occurs in all parts of Fife.



Extract from 1642 James Gordon map showing 'Lathum'. Source: National Library of Scotland.



Extract from 1747-55 William Roy military map showing 'Latham'. 'Rankeeler' House is shown NW of its actual location. Source: National Library of Scotland.

It is referred to in a 1452 document as St Andrews Church land. In 1521 there is reference to a mill, and in 1595 to the town and lands of Letham, and meadow, and to a house, toft and garden lying next to the west side of the burn of Letham (now culverted under School Brae). In spite of its small size and lack of a directly associated large house or



Letham Lands doocot.

its own church (Monimail Old Church to 1796 and then the Parish Church), it is significant enough to be shown on Gordon's map of 1642. The 1691 dated lintel in the Bakehouse and 17th century doocots suggesting a house in the 17th century, and a farm town settlement centred round a farm, originally the Lands of Letham and later also Letham Park. There is reference in the 18th century to it being famous for its weekly sheep markets in April. The Old Statistical Account (OSA) by 1792, however, refers to the village only by association, referring to '*A great marsh, of about 30 acres, Letham mire...*' There were, historically, strong links with Melville House to the west, as landlord and employer, from the early 18th century, up to 1950. The influence of the two Ages of Improvement is evident in the linen weavers' cottages in The Row, rebuilt in the early 19th century.



Buildings to the rear of Letham Lands, photograph c1900. 17th/18th century group, including bakery and brewery, with stackyard to the right. Doocot to centre and left today. Source Cupar Library Archive.

The NSO comments that the principle improvement since the OSA is the draining of '*a morass of 30 or 40 acres*', presumably a reference to Letham mire. Another improvement is that there are now three different lines of turnpike passing through the parish, in all totalling 10 miles, plus about the same length of statute-labour maintained road. Letham Toll is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1854 extract below. It further notes the number of inhabitants is 440 (Barbieri's gazetteer eighteen years later, 450). The current population is considerably less (2001 census 138).



Extract from 1775 John Ainslie map showing 'Letham'.
Source: National Library of Scotland.



Extract from 1832 John Thomson map. Source: National Library of Scotland.

Although there is little evidence of this now, in the mid-19th century, the village had a range of businesses, including at one time, a bakery, brewery, malthouse, three pubs, saddler, joiners, bootmakers, dressmakers, general store (Storrar's Emporium), post office, three schools and a doctor). A school, smithy and tavern (Crown Tavern) are shown on the 1854 Ordnance Survey map (above). The only reminder is some shop sign lettering in The Row (below). There was a railway station in Collessie from 1857, easier travel and competition from nearby settlements, including Cupar.



Letham Post Office & Storrar's Emporium. Source Cupar Library Archive.



R. Storrar. Saddler, Upholsterer and Collar Maker sign The Row.

3.0 Character and Appearance

3.1 Setting

The village is located on the broad lower slope of Letham Hill (114m). The 17th century Adair map, extract below, shows the settlement at the foot of a hill rising steeply to the north. The photograph, below, shows better the gentler topography. The hill includes a disused quarry and an area of Ancient Woodland (8.65ha Letham Wood), also designated an area of Scottish Semi-Natural Woodland. The village is surrounded by open fields. Beyond the A92 road at the bottom of the slope is the area which was formerly the 'Mire', which although drained presently includes some wetland.



Setting looking north towards Letham from south of Letham Toll, with Letham Hill and Wood in the distance.



Extract from John Adair map of 1684. Source: National Library of Scotland.

3.2 Street Pattern and Topography

The settlement is centered on Letham Lands steading and the junction of four roads, as shown in the 1775 Ainslie map (left). The current plan form was established by the 19th century, with the addition of The Row and lateral expansion along these axes, followed by modern infilling of the previously undeveloped land along School Brae.

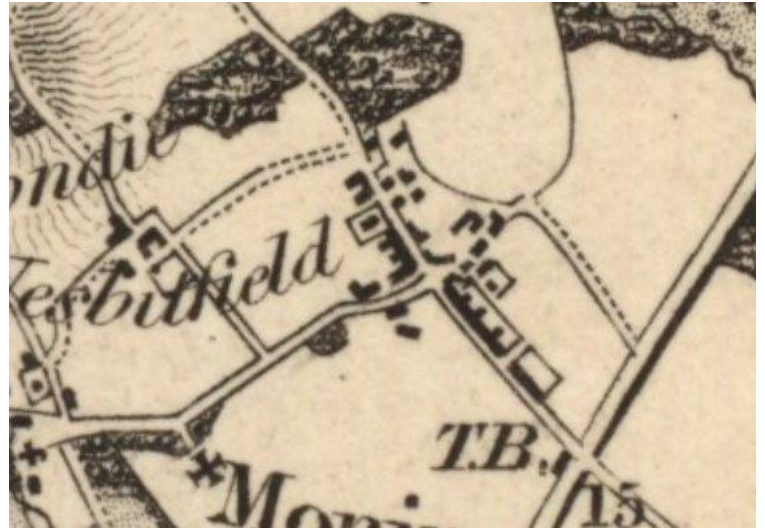


Extracts from John Ainslie map of 1775 (above) and OS 1st Edition of 1854 (below). Source: National Library of Scotland.

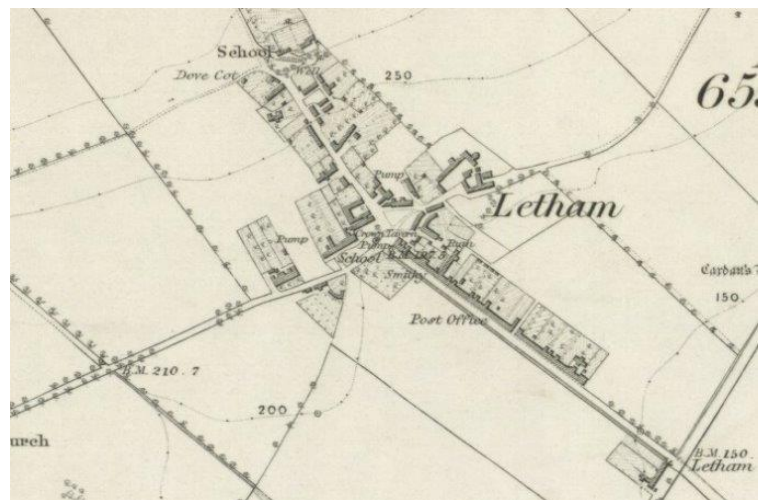
There is great contrast between the dense rows of single and two storey houses on The Row and West End respectively, and the scattered clusters of cottages up School Brae. John Ainslie's map of 1775 shows additional buildings facing Letham Lands, behind and parallel to those at the top of the



Row. These are shown on the OS map of 1854 although the one to the SE is now noted as a ruin. By 1828 the settlement is shown spreading down the slope towards Letham Toll.



Un-named, the settlement is shown on the Greenwood, Fowler and Sharp 1828 map above. Source: National Library of Scotland.



Extract from Ordnance Survey map of 1854. Source: National Library of Scotland.

The 1854 OS map above shows an open sewer which ran down the western side of The Row, draining into the mire. At one time there were also three water pumps along its route. The enclosed land forming the sites of the fair and the stackyard are shown. The stockyard for Letham Farm was opposite the former smiddy. Adjacent, and now occupied by two modern houses, was the site of the annual fair noted in Barbieri's 1857 gazetteer. The ground was enclosed by a wall and used specifically for fairs. Royal consent was obtained in the late 17th century for two annual fairs.



Extract from Ordnance Survey map of 1896. Source: National Library of Scotland.



The field west of The Row. Source Cupar Library Archive.

There were two cattle markets and an annual sheep fair. By the early 19th century there was only one fair in May or June. Although not within the conservation area, the field which bounds The Row contributes much to the special character and historic identity of the village.

3.3 Distinctive Architectural Styles, Detailing and Materials

The buildings are described by John Gifford in *The Buildings of Scotland – Fife* as 'mostly single-storey C19th cottages'. The buildings mostly fall within the following broad types:

- Two storey 19th century houses
- Single storey 19th century cottages



One of seven pends or passages permeating The Row.

- Modern infill and redevelopment
Typical of 19th century Fife vernacular buildings, the majority have little architectural ornamentation. The character is all in the detail and juxtaposition of a limited range of materials and architectural paradigms.



Former workshop doors in The Row.

Although exclusively residential now, the village contained a range of businesses and occupations such as weaving, of which the pends and workshop doors are reminders.

3.3.1 Roofing Materials



Typical examples (above and below) of pantiled roofs on, probably, originally thatched buildings. Note thack stanes.

The earliest buildings would have been thatched. The number of surviving thack stanes are clues to this, though some perhaps misleadingly re-used or added by masons when no longer needed. Red clay pantiles were readily available from the 19th century, produced locally at relatively low cost. From 1857, the railway and station at Collesie, would have made slate from the west coast quarries cheaper and more readily available for new higher status buildings. Slate increasingly became the preferred roofing material for new buildings, such as the 19th century houses built along the West End.

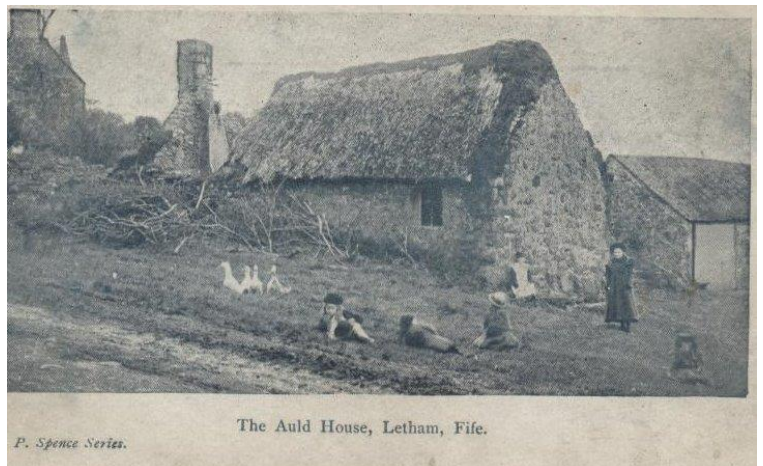
Over half (54%) of listed building roofs in the conservation area are slate (17% of all buildings); and 31% pantile (45% of all). There is no single roofing material which is appropriate for all types of building, age or location. The Row, for example, was once uniformly roofed in clay pantile (with Scottish slate easing courses), and this remains the predominant roofing material (66%). Other roofs in



the Row are now inappropriately slated or have concrete pantiles or Roman tiles. Elsewhere, for example on the north side of the West End, all roofs are slated.



The Row. Originally homogenously roofed with pantiles and slate easing courses. Source: Cupar library archive.



The 'Auld House' above was demolished in 1960. Dating from 17th/18th century, the surviving buildings are to the south (to right in the above photograph). Source: Cupar library archive.



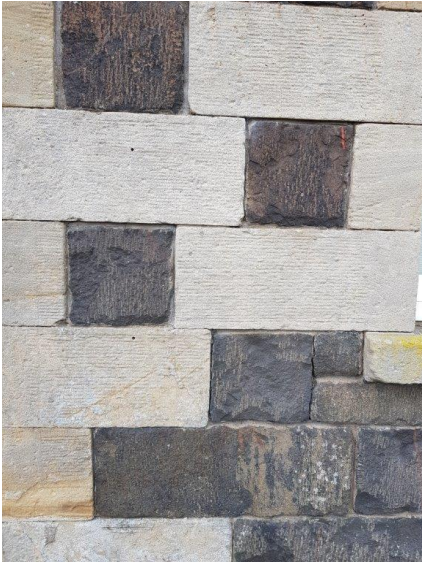
Former dairy The Pleasance. Source: Cupar library archive.

The 1959 photograph (above) shows the 18th century former dairy in The Pleasance, now demolished. The original thatch of the main roof was

replaced by pantiles. The exterior, exceptionally, was whitewashed, as was probably the interior.

3.3.2 Stone and masonry

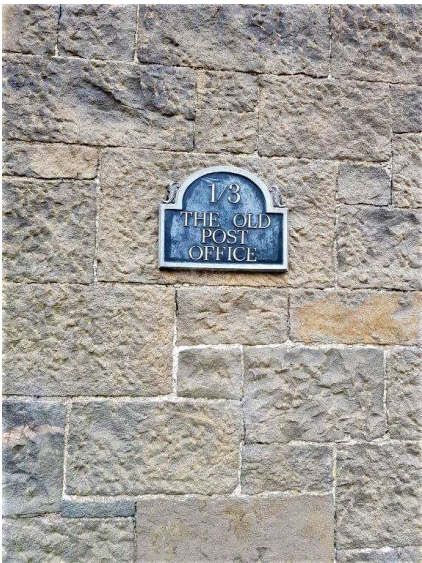
Barbieri's 1857 gazetteer refers to whinstone hills to the north of the parish, producing an abundant supply of stone but with few exceptions it being unfit for building, and of freestone sufficient for local use to the south. This echoes a description in the 1836 NSA. However, quarries were opened in the late 18th century in Ladies Seat at Monimail and Letham Hill which supplied a better-quality whinstone.



Distinctive pattern of unusually long out-band rybats, contrasting with small snecks of whinstone.



Broken random ashlar sandstone masonry.



Snecked whin masonry with its distinctive pattern of levellers, risers and sneck stones.

With few exceptions, the buildings are constructed in bare local whinstone, with blonde sandstone margins. Probably the only building which was whitewashed was the former dairy (see photograph in 3.3.1 above). The cottages which make up The Row use a variety of whin with sandstone margins masonry designs. One cottage is, unusually, constructed entirely in sandstone. The earlier buildings use random undressed rubble, later ones fine squared blocks laid in a variety of styles, demonstrating a high level of skill. Nearby, Auchtermuchty has similar high-quality whin masonry of the same period.



Typical random rubble masonry. Note housing for former water pump shown on 1854 Ordnance Survey map.



Squared coursed whin masonry with decorative cherry caulking; contrasting with droved pale sandstone ashlar rybats.

3.4 Orientation and Density

Buildings are generally orientated with their longest, principle elevation facing the roads, or south-facing at right angles along the gradient. Although School Brae has suffered from modern in-fill development of what was farm land, it still retains a looser, more open grain, with small clusters or rows of buildings. On the north side of Monimail Road and the east side of The Row the development is high density, made up of continuous rows or closely spaced, detached buildings.

3.5 Key Listed or Unlisted Buildings

There are thirteen statutory list entries for the conservation area (ref. Appendix 2 for full details and photographs). 46% are category C listed and 54% category B. A few buildings (below) are also noteworthy for their contribution to the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the conservation area.

Former bakery (below), which was part of an early group of buildings, which included the brewery, dating from late 18th century. It includes a re-set 1691 date lintel, of unknown provenance. The alterations to adapt it for residential use have changed its character (French windows; and six other new windows in the north elevation alone). It still exerts a strong influence as part of the category B group including the doocot and former steading.



Letham Lands (below)

Later 18th century, category B listed. This former steading is at the heart of the village and original ferm town. It included the unusual tower doocot which has recently been fenced off with the former bakehouse to which it is attached, with a consequent loss of significance.



Balmerino Cottage, School Brae (left)

Hidden behind its boundary walls, this circa 1790, category B, picturesque Gothic cottage is listed with its garden walls, shown on the 1828 Greenwood, Fowler and Sharp map. One of the earlier buildings, it may be on the site of an earlier building.



Balmerino Cottage

26 School Brae (below)

Unlisted, 18th century, although altered retaining some of the original character, home of Sir Thomas Paxton, Baronet of Letham (1869 -1930), Lord Provost of Glasgow 1920 to 1923. The building could be greatly improved by the replacement of inappropriate concrete, Roman tiles; front door and windows, cementitious pointing mortar, and the relocation of the flue in the front roof slope.



26 School Brae



26 School Brae. Source: Cupar library archive.

3.6 Spaces

The Well Tree marks the centre and heart of the village. The open area consisting of Kill Hill immediately to its east and Letham Lands is particularly important. To its west is an enclosed open private green space which separates the house fronting it from the road. This combined area is significant to the special character of the village.



Private enclosed open ground.



'The Village Green' (Kill Hill). Source: Cupar library archive.

There is a large area of more modern public greenspace (King George V Playing Field) at the southern end of The Row. Elsewhere, the private open space of Parliament Square contributes to the open character of the area.



King George V Playing Field public playing fields.



Private ground Parliament Square off School Brae.

3.7 Trees and Landscaping

The village is set against a backdrop of woodland classified as Ancient Woodland in Scottish Natural Heritage's Ancient Woodland Inventory, as Springfield Wood. There are many trees scattered throughout the conservation area which collectively and individually contribute to the special character. There are seven Tree Preservation Orders. These relate to four *Cedrus deodara* (Deodar Cedar), one *Quercus cerris* (Turkey Oak), one *Fagus sylvatica 'purpurea'* (Copper Beech) and one *Fraxinus*



Deodar Cedar



Trees planted around the park include immature Ash, Rowan and Scots Pine.



Village Hall Cherry trees.

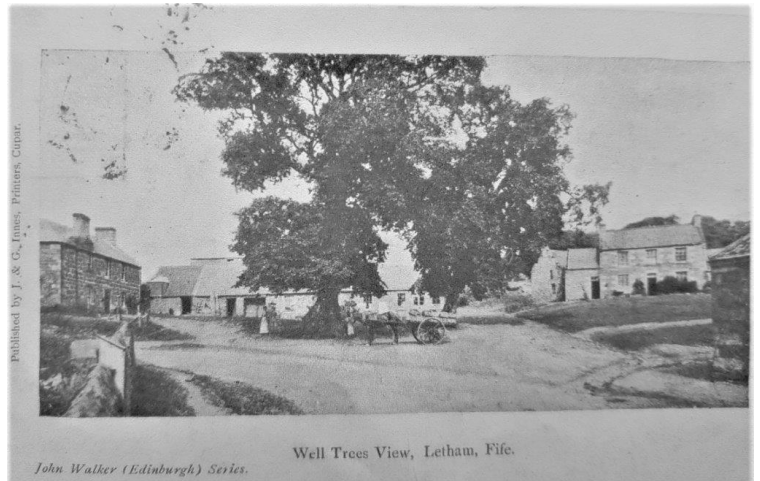


Cedars Top of School Brae
Also a variety of other species such as Yew, Oak, Ash, and Birch.

excelsior (Ash).



There are two more Oaks just outside the Conservation Area on the road to the Bow of Fife. However, all trees within the conservation area are protected and permission is required for felling or lopping.



The original Well Trees. Source: Cupar Library archive.

The 'Well Tree' is highly significant as it marks the symbolic centre of the village. Until 1952 there were two elm trees from the 17th century (c1617), known as the Well Trees, as they faced the well at the top of The Row. Historically it was, at times, a religious, political and social public meeting place. It had, and still has, a public seat round its base, and the community notice board was even attached to one tree. The original trees became unsafe, were felled in the 1950s and the present copper beech was planted in their place. The Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) at the front of Melville Place was planted 1840s or 1850s. The species was first introduced to Britain from India by William Henry Leslie-Melville of Melville House. There are further examples in front



School Brae looking south.

of Letham Hall and at Letham School. The trees can reach a height of 70 feet and spread up to 40 feet.



The Well Tree Copper Beech.



Tree at the top of The Row

The area to the rear of Letham Lands, each side of School Brae, was originally largely agricultural and the current trees help to soften the impact of the modern infill and redevelopment.

At the entrance to the village from the A92, many trees have been planted around the play park. These include immature Ash, Rowan and Scots Pine for example. On the opposite side of the road, beside the village Hall, are two Cherry trees. Several high amenity trees such as the Deodar Cedar and Turkey Oak can be seen along Monimail Road. At the top of School Brae, close to the School Building, many Cedars have been planted, are establishing well, and are becoming a feature with variety of other species such as Yew, Oak, Ash, and Birch. They are located at the top of School Brae leading to Springfield Woods, which although just outside the Conservation Area provides connectivity between the village and the woodlands beyond.

3.8 Activity and Movement

Core paths (P204, P352; P209) pass through the conservation area. The busy A92 bypasses the village to the south. There is little through vehicle or pedestrian traffic or activities, other than the school, generating periodic activity or movement.

3.9 Views and Vistas



View north from the top of School Brae aka Trimlands

The long views up and down The Row and down School Brae are significant. Within the village the glimpses of the surrounding countryside are important, providing connectivity and context. These include; south from Monimail Road aka The Pleasance; and north from the top of School Brae aka Trimlands.



View looking south down The Row.



View south from Monimail Road aka The Pleasance.

3.10 Character areas

The conservation area is the combination of several distinct character areas:

The Row

Due to the steepness of the slope and stepping down of the continuous row of similar weavers' cottages; its relationship with the open aspect in front, wide forecourts merging into the roadway and the field beyond. Pends punctuate the row and provide access to the area behind.

Letham Lands

The historic heart of the village is centred on the farm steading. The relationship of the buildings, roads and the open space forms a distinctive hub and link with the other areas.

Monimail Road (West End)

Characterised on its north side by its rows of two storey houses of similar age and construction. To the south are reminders of some of the earlier buildings which included the dairy.

School Brae

Leading to the school and the area known as The Trimlands. It was never a through road. The land to the east was historically owned by Letham Lands and, as the early OS maps show, sparsely developed. It has subsequently been in-filled with modern housing. The former maltings was located at the bottom of the Brae, demolished in 1970 after ceasing operation post WWII. The 1870s row of terraced houses were built as bothies for itinerant agricultural labourers.

Letham Toll

This consists of a short row of cottages, now degraded by multiple inappropriate alterations and additions. It, nevertheless, is at the gateway to the conservation area and is a reminder, in spite of the demolition of the end corner cottage, of its roots in the adjacent toll gate.

4.0 Public Realm Audit

4.1 Street Furniture



Water pump (with an associated stone trough). Restored 1977. Prior to mains water in the 1950s the village was served by multiple wells and pumps.

The modern, traditional style, post box (below) enhances the historic character and appearance of the conservation area. This, unfortunately, can easily be diminished by the casual use of 'heritage' furniture from a catalogue. Street furniture can have a negative impact due to its poor quality or insensitive siting. If any street furniture is needed in the future it is best to procure high quality items to complement the architecture and character of the conservation area.

If no historic precedent exists for street lighting, the best option for any future replacements is to procure high quality, inconspicuous, examples. Designs comprised of utilitarian steel columns of hollow circular section with simple lanterns are preferable to misleading reproduction 'period' designs which have no historic basis and confuse the authentic character of the conservation area.



Traditional style post box and telephone kiosk.



Hybrid modern/heritage design (L) Discrete modern design (R)

4.2 Signage



Historic street name signs can contribute to the special character of the conservation area. Whilst the village historically had no need for road name signs, there is scope for replacing any modern signs with ones of a more traditional design and materials to complement the historic character. This could tie in with the provision of new interpretation panels, improved street furniture and public realm resurfacing.

Attempts to reduce street clutter can result in over use of single columns which then become visually intrusive.

4.3 Surfacing



Modern surface treatments at The Row.



Historic surface treatments at The Row.

Early photographs, such as above, show few raised pavements and drainage channels generally to the side of a roadway of compacted stone dust and chippings. This should be compared with the present streetscape and surface treatments (left). The historic character of the conservation area could be greatly enhanced by choosing designs and materials which are less urban and formal. Soft edges without gutters and raised kerbs (using set channels instead) would be appropriate in most areas.

Surfacing within the conservation area generally does little to enhance the historic character of the conservation or setting of listed buildings. The agreement of a palate of historically complementary traditional materials and detailing to be used for all future surfacing within the conservation area is recommended. The most sympathetic surfacing compatible with modern vehicular traffic, for example, would be hot-rolled asphalt with rolled-in chippings, consistently sourced from a local quarry. This would also help differentiate the conservation area.

4.4 Information and Interpretation Boards

There are public notice boards to the north, south and centre of the village. There are, however, no interpretation or information boards, or signs to indicate that a conservation area exists or to explain what is of special architectural or historic interest. These are recommended.

There is an interpretation board beside the restored School Brae doocot which is in a dilapidated condition which refers to this doocot and the two others in private ownership. The doocot and access to it are hidden from view by overgrown bushes. Clearing the bushes would enhance the setting, visibility and conservation area.



Board near village hall.



Board near Well Tree.

5.0 Survey of Specific Issues

5.1 Building Materials and Details

The correct use of traditional materials and detailing is important in defining and enhancing the special character of the area. This is particularly important with vernacular buildings. Roofs for example, form a

significant character element in vernacular architecture. Materials or components have a limited life. Many will have already been renewed. It may not be desirable to replace like for like, retaining things as they were at the date of statutory listing, if they are historically or architecturally inappropriate. Scottish slate is very different in character and appearance to Welsh slate, for example. The profiles of red clay pantiles differ, and any replacements should replicate the local vernacular design. Roman style pantiles for example, even if of red clay not concrete, show an inappropriate profile, however, many buildings have been re-roofed with these tiles. Elsewhere pantiles have been replaced with slates.

Using similar materials, particularly on a single terrace of houses or cottages, such as The Row, even though in different ownership, helps protect their architectural and historic identity. Too great a variety of chimney can or ridge or skew treatment may have an adverse impact. The loss of cans or entire heads from redundant chimneys, further diminishes the historic and architectural character.

6.0 Negative Factors

6.1 Unsympathetic New Development or Conversion of Buildings



Modern residential redevelopment.



Modern light industrial unit and yard occupying site of former maltings.

The Historic Environment Scotland publication ***New Design in Historic Settings*** sets out broad principles and provides examples to help achieve good design in historic settings. Referring to Scotland's historic villages it states:

“...it is important not only to identify and to protect their character and setting but also to ensure that new development responds to their existing form and layout. Successful new design frequently grows out of a careful study and analysis of the nature, form and history of a specific place. This helps identify the ‘DNA’ of a place – how it has come down to us today and what were the key factors that have influenced its current form. It is important to stress that this process of analysis does not only describe what currently makes up a place – the form, layout and materials used – but it also involves understanding how its individual elements were created and why they took the form they did. Getting behind the appearance of a place is crucial



Generic post-war housing.



Inappropriate 'traditional' architectural detailing.



Incongruous crazy-paving style face-bedded stone cladding.



Alterations to adapt the above for residential use have changed its character.

to understanding and appreciating the linear patterns of development within a historic burgh, a planned neo-classical suburb or a 20th-century new town. Each place has its own character and its own story to tell."

A third of the buildings in the conservation area are modern (almost two thirds in School Brae). Their designs appear to either disregard the historic materials, architectural paradigms and detailing of the conservation area or to consciously contrast with it. Even recent development uses 'traditional' elements which are alien to the conservation area. Incongruous materials and finishes have been used, including brick, concrete roof tiles, rough cast renders, and PVCu windows, doors and rainwater goods. Most display no sense of place and detract from the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the conservation area.



Modern infill with incongruous materials and architectural paradigms.

Although sympathetic, alterations to adapt the former bakehouse to residential use have changed its character. These include French windows and six other windows in the north elevation alone. The building was previously on the national Buildings at Risk Register.

6.2 Replacement Windows and Doors

In vernacular architecture, windows and doors have proportionally greater significance. Original windows should be repaired and retained where possible. If the case is made for their replacement the new windows should look appropriate for the age and type of building. PVCu will not be acceptable. Double-glazed windows can be acceptable, but can have a negative impact, for example, if the frame and astragal widths and detailing are different. Large gaps between the panes of glass also change the reflective and refractive characteristics. Details such as conspicuous trickle vents, 'horns', glazing beads and metallic spacers between panes can accumulate to create a modern appearance. There are many examples in the conservation area of inappropriate replacements and the cumulative adverse impact can be easily seen, for example along The Row.



Non-traditional aluminium window frames.



A modern (1954) window inserted into a gable wall. Recently, improved by renewing in more sympathetic traditional materials.



Non-traditional PVCu window frames.

Fife Council Planning Customer Guidelines *Windows in Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas* are available online on www.fifedirect.org.uk.

There is additional guidance in their following publications:

- *Guide for Practitioners 3: Conservation of Timber Sash and Case Windows Historic Environment Scotland 2002;*
- *Looking After Your Sash and Case Windows Historic Environment Scotland 2003;*

- *Historic Environment Scotland Policy Guidance for Windows in Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.*

7.0 Sensitivity Analysis

7.1 Materials

7.1.1 Concrete Roof Tiles

Over half (55%) of modern and some traditional buildings have concrete roof tiles. These do not have the local pantile's colour, texture or profile. The lifespan is often shorter, the surface more rapidly degrading, absorbing moisture and promoting moss growth. They should be replaced with slates or clay pantiles, as appropriate, at the first opportunity.



Concrete Roman tiles.



Concrete tiles.

7.1.2 Cement Mortars

Modern cement mortars and renders have been used on traditional masonry buildings throughout the conservation area. These types of mortar are harmful from a technical viewpoint as they trap moisture within the masonry and accelerate decay. In addition to trapping moisture, cement-rich mortars and renders do not absorb moisture either directly or through drawing it from the less porous adjacent stone to allow it to freely dissipate over a large surface area. Instead the adjacent stone will absorb a greater proportion of the moisture. Depending on the location it may also absorb run-off from adjacent surfaces. The combined result will

be the accelerated decay of the stone. Aesthetically such mortars are historically incorrect and neither protect nor enhance the special character of either buildings or the area. Traditional lime mortars, harls and colour washes should be used rather than wet dash modern cement renders, mortars and masonry paints.



Modern cement render removed to reveal the original masonry.

7.2 Paints and Colours

Unless stone is of poor quality/durability or harled or rendered, masonry should, generally, not be painted. If a case is made for painting masonry, modern film-forming paints should be avoided in favour of lime-washes or liquid silicate paints which allow the masonry to 'breathe'. Lime based paints are preferable as they produce a less uniform, more historically authentic appearance. Door and window margins were usually not painted or, if the wall was lime-washed, were painted the same colour. For example, the 'White House' at the top of The Row was originally unpainted the same as the rest of The Row, with bare whinstone walls and blonde sandstone margins. In modern times it has had a variety of white and black colour combinations applied. Elsewhere, inappropriate non-traditional colour schemes have been used.



Examples above and below of non-traditional colour schemes.

The choice of colour can greatly affect the character of a building or area. Care needs to be taken to avoid non-traditional colours which have no historic precedent and may detract from the special character and appearance of the area.



Within the conservation area brilliant white, which was not historically available, is widely used for windows. Off-whites (not creams) are historically more appropriate. Finishes would also have been softer and not the modern high gloss/ high sheen finishes generally used. Certain dark colours may be more appropriate for windows, having a historic precedent.

Colours should be restrained as intense colours were historically not generally available. Primary colours should be avoided for doors, although, strong traditional colours in deep shades are acceptable. Modern wood stains and varnishes are historically inappropriate and should not be used for external woodwork.

Fife Council has produced guidelines on painting the exterior of buildings in conservation areas which describes, with examples, the basic principles which should be followed. This publication *Guidelines on Painting the Exterior of Listed and Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas* is available online on www.fifedirect.org.uk

7.3 Alterations and Additions

The introduction of a new architectural feature to a listed building should be avoided. Not only does it degrade the special interest but it changes the character of the conservation area. For unlisted buildings there may be a case for sympathetic, historically and architecturally appropriate additions or where they have no impact on the conservation area. An addition such as a porch, a dormer window, roof window or French window may harm the special character of the building and the area. Modern roof windows, for example, introduce an alien architectural element, indicative of modern loft conversions.

The addition of inappropriate dormer and other modern style roof windows has largely been avoided, though there are a number of inappropriate modern additions. There are examples such as 28 School Brae (below), Letham Toll and The Row, where the cumulative adverse impact is evident. Roofs are, proportionately, highly significant architectural elements in simple vernacular buildings.



Past unsympathetic first floor extension.



28 School Brae pre-alterations.

Roofs often represent over half the elevation area, particularly when the buildings are also single storey and the ratio of roof to wall area is high. The impact of modern roof windows is particularly harmful. Small individual traditional roof lights can, in some situations and locations, be acceptable.



28 School Brae post-alterations.

Historic Environment Scotland guidance, *Managing Change in the Historic Environment. External Fixtures*, warns of the potential, cumulative, detrimental effect of incremental damage caused by relatively small scale but inappropriate alterations and additions. Within the conservation area there are numerous examples of inappropriate alterations and additions. Historic Environment Scotland guidance in the *Managing Change in the Historic Environment* series is relevant and should be followed.

8.0 Buildings at Risk Survey

There are three buildings in the conservation area on the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland maintained by Historic Environment Scotland.

These are: the unlisted 'farm buildings, The Square', categorised as in very poor condition and at critical risk; the category B listed 'horse engine house and farm out buildings, Letham Lands', noted as in a poor condition and at moderate risk; and the category B listed, unroofed, 'doocot to the north of School Brae', noted as in poor condition but at low risk.



Extract from OS 6 inch 1st Edition map 1854. The thatched 'Auld House', demolished in the 1960s, is shown. Source: National Library of Scotland.



Building adjacent former dairy
Monimail
Road



'Farm
buildings'.



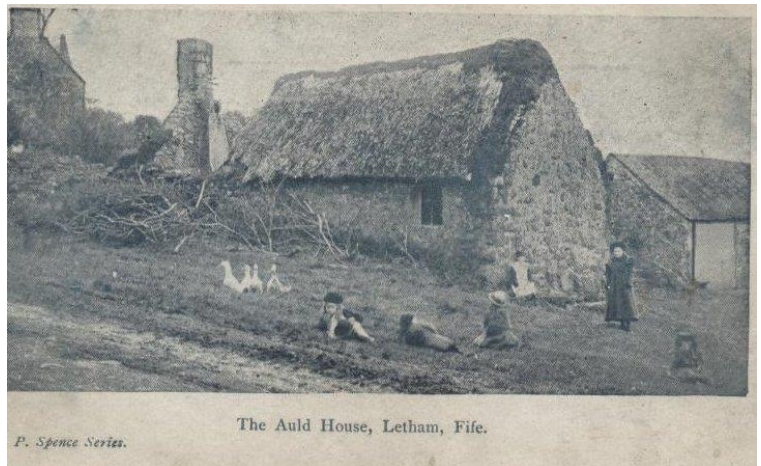
Roofless doocot to north of School
Brae.



Steading buildings, Letham Lands.



'Farm buildings' located to the south of the 'Auld House'.
Above left today; in the 1960s below and further below, in late
19th century.



P. Spence Series.

The Auld House, Letham, Fife.

Unusually, Letham has three former doocots. Only one, that to at the northernmost edge, is noted on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1854 and 1913. These other doocots are, whilst secured and roofed, in poor condition and potentially at risk.

9.0 Opportunities

9.1 Boundary Refinement

The existing conservation area boundary, designated in 2004, is appropriate and does not need any further modification due to any major development proposals or significant changes in architectural or historical interest in the area.

9.2 Article 4 Direction

To properly ensure that the character of a conservation area is not affected by inappropriate alteration or development, additional controls are generally used by making what is known as an Article 4 Direction (Article 4 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) Scotland, Order 1992). Article 4 Directions are in place in all existing conservation areas in Fife and they can be varied according to the particular needs and character of an area.

Although the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 widened the scope of permitted development, it also included text recognising that many development rights did not apply to conservation areas. These changes made many of the Council's Article 4 Directions obsolete because the majority of householder development in conservation areas will now automatically require planning permission under the terms of the Order. However, in the 2012 Amendments to the Order, the exemption of conservation areas from permitted development have not been included against every type of development. Some small-scale developments such as flues or those with a floor area of less than 1msq have become permitted development with no caveats about conservation areas. While the impact of these developments would normally be minimal, in a conservation area they could still detract from the setting of historic buildings or the overall historic townscape.

Therefore, it is proposed to retain several of the Article 4s in the Letham Conservation Areas to maintain a suitable level of protection from detrimental development. Appendix 4 sets out the Article 4s which are required. The proposal is therefore to remove the Article 4 Direction and then simultaneously designate it.

10.0 Conservation Strategy

10.1 Planning Policy

The policies contained in this management strategy complement the conservation area appraisal, and

comply with:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997
- Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006
- Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1979
- Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992
- Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement, June 2016
- Scottish Planning Policy – 2014
- Planning Advice Note 71: Conservation Area Management – 2005
- Approved TAYplan (2017)
- FIFEplan Local Development Plan 2017
- Article 4 Directions (Article 4 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992)
- Making Fife's Places Planning Policy Guidance 2015

TAYplan, through Policy 9: Managing TAYplan's assets, C. Safeguarding the integrity of natural and historic assets, aims to ensure that Local Development Plans ensure responsible management of natural and historic assets including townscapes, archaeology, historic buildings and monuments. A consideration of all assets will form part of the 'place-based' approach in Policy 2 to ensure the benefits of historic assets are maximised, by incorporating and enhancing them.

FIFEplan – Local Development Plan 2017. Planning Policy is currently being updated through the production of a Local Development Plan for the whole of Fife. Policy context is provided in:

Policy 1 – Policy Principles

Policy 14- Built and Historic Environment

While the above Local Plan policy framework provides the Development Control context to secure ongoing preservation/enhancement of the area in a sensitive manner, and to secure that preservation/enhancement in the long-term, the Local Plan also places great importance on the benefits which regeneration initiatives can provide.

10.2 Long Term Management

The policies contained within Local Development Plan 2017 provide continuing commitment to regeneration and enhancement of the built heritage. Fife Council takes enforcement action against unauthorised development. This is further supplemented by the use of urgent and full repair notices that are most commonly applied under Building Regulations legislation. Where necessary the Council is also committed to the use of Compulsory Purchase to secure the repair or redevelopment of buildings and sites.

10.3 Customer Guidelines

In addition to the statutory plan framework outlined above, Fife Council has a series of Planning Customer Guidelines that supplement the adopted policy framework and provide general and specific guidance and set design standards for conservation areas. Relevant Planning Customer Guidelines from the series include:

- Windows in Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas
- Painting the Exterior of Listed and Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas

10.4 Grants and Funding

There are no grant schemes available or planned for Letham conservation area in the foreseeable future. Limited grants may be available from Historic Environment Scotland for listed buildings in need, such as buildings at risk, and these are assessed competitively. Historic Environment Scotland support for conservation areas is channelled through local authorities and target those conservation areas that are most in need of regeneration. For other potential sources of funding refer to <https://www.heritagefundingdirectoryuk.org>

11.0 Monitoring and Review

There are currently no formal monitoring programmes in place for Letham conservation area. It will be reviewed annually on an informal basis by one of Fife Council's Conservation Officers. Policies relating to the Conservation Area will also be reviewed at five-year intervals with the production of

the relevant Local Plan.

12.0 Further Advice

For general advice contact:

Conservation Officer
Fife Council
Economy, Planning and Employability Services
Kingdom House
Kingdom Avenue
Glenrothes
KY7 5LY

Telephone: 08451 555 555 (X476998)

13.0 Recommended Reading and Other Resources

Gifford, J. (1988), *The Buildings of Scotland – Fife*, London: Penguin Books

Lamont-Brown, R. (1988), *Discovering Fife*, Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd

Omand, D. (2000) (ed), *The Fife Book*, Edinburgh: Birlinn Ltd

Taylor, S. and Markus, G. (2008), *The Place-names of Fife*, Glasgow: Shaun Tyas

Pride, G.L. (1999), *The Kingdom of Fife – The Fife Book*. An Illustrated Architectural Guide, Edinburgh: Inglis Allen

The Old Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799
<http://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/home>

The New Statistical Account of Scotland 1834-1845
<http://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/home>

1842 - Topographical, statistical, and historical gazetteer of Scotland. National Library of Scotland
<https://digital.nls.uk/gazetteers-of-scotland-1803-1901/archive/97491772>

Dallas, D. (2019), *Letham. The History*, Peterborough: BPUK

APPENDIX 1

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION FOR LETHAM CONSERVATION AREA

Commencing at a point at the southern corner of the most southerly house fronting the A914 Glenrothes/Dundee road, thence north-west along the Letham Toll boundary for 110M turning north-east at the western corner of the Community Hall property and running for a distance of 45M until the boundary wall is reached that faces The Row. Thereafter 290M in a north-west direction, thence turning to the south-west for 45M and thence in a north-west direction until the verge of the public highway is reached, a distance of 65M. Thereafter south-west for 80M, thence north-west for 70M to the public highway following the line of the stone boundary wall. Thereafter along the southern edge of the Monimail road in a westerly direction for 40M. Thence for 95M in a north-west direction along the western boundary of 'The Brae'. Thereafter turning easterly along the rear of the property boundaries of 'West View', 'Cargill', 'Melville Place', 'Balyarrow', 'Clunie', 'Ballacraine', 'Helenslea' and 'St Margarets' for a distance of 130M. Thereafter turning north-west for 165M running along the western property boundary of the houses to the west of School Brae. Thereafter in a north-east direction for 35M thence north-west for 20M, turning north-east for 30M, and north-west for 15M, thence north-east for 50M along the rear of Letham primary school. Thereafter south-east along the eastern boundary of the properties to the east of School Brae for a distance of 225M. Thereafter turning south-west for 40M, thence 60M south-east for 425M until the A914 is reached. Thereafter turning south-west for 110M to the point of commencement.

STREET INDEX

Letham Toll
The Row
School Brae
Letham Lands
Monimail Road

APPENDIX 2

LISTED BUILDINGS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

APPENDIX 3

EXISTING ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION USE CLASSES

Letham Conservation Area was designated in 1993. The following Article 4 Direction under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 is effective for the area as from 5th November 1993.

Use Class	Summary Description of Use Class	Requirement for Use Class
Class 1	The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Class 2	Any alterations to the roof of a dwellinghouse including the enlargement of a dwellinghouse by way of an alteration to its roof.	To protect the historic fabric, special character and visual amenity of the area.
Class 3	The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, or the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure.	To protect the historic fabric, special character and visual amenity of the area.
Class 6	The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna on a dwellinghouse or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Class 7	The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.	To prevent indiscriminate repair of the historic fabric (garden walls and structures) through use of inappropriate building methods and materials or inappropriate alteration or new build within the boundaries of the gardens.
Class 8	The formation, laying out and construction of a means of access to a road which is not a trunk road or a classified road, where that access is required in connection with development permitted by any class in this Schedule other than Class 7.	To prevent unmitigated development and inappropriate alteration and/or development within garden ground.
Class 27	Repairs to Private Roads and Private Ways	To protect the historic fabric, special character and visual amenity of the area.
Class 30	The erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority of certain buildings, works or equipment.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Class 31	The carrying out by a roads authority on land outwith but adjoining the boundary of an existing	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building

	road or works required for or incidental to the maintenance or improvement of the road.	methods and materials where applicable.
Class 33	The carrying out within their own district by a planning authority of works for the erection of dwellinghouses; any development under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and/or any development under any enactment the estimated cost of which does not exceed £100,000.	To protect the townscape and aesthetic integrity of the area by ensuring that new development is sympathetic in design, layout, fabric and character.
Class 38	Development for the purposes of water undertakings.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Class 39	Development for a public gas supplier required for the purposes of its undertaking.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building methods and materials where necessary.
Class 40	Development by statutory undertakers for the generation, transmission or supply of electricity for the purposes of their undertaking.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building methods and materials where necessary.
Class 41	Tramway or road transport undertakings.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building methods and materials where necessary.
Class 43	Development required for the purposes of the Post Office.	To protect the townscape from indiscriminate installation of boxes, pouches or machines.
Class 67	Development required for the purposes of Telecommunications Code System Operators.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building methods and materials where necessary.

APPENDIX 4

PROPOSED ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION USE CLASSES

CLASS	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF USE CLASS	JUSTIFICATION WITH EXAMPLES	ADDITIONAL NOTES
	Domestic use classes		
3D	The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of any deck or other raised platform within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of that dwellinghouse.	Some rear elevations of unlisted houses are overlooked, and such development would have a detrimental impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the CA. e.g. School Brae	<i>(The Order permits development under Class 3D for structures that are under 3m in height and less than 4msq in area. It is proposed to extend the exemption from permitted development to all such structures).</i>
7	The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.	Boundary features (natural stone walls and railings) help to define the distinctive layout and rigg gardens and other distinctive garden layouts, historic spaces and together with entrances are a special feature of the conservation area. Therefore, such development could have a detrimental impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the CA. e.g. The Row and School Brae	
	Renewable Energy		
6C	The installation, alteration or replacement of a flue, forming part of a biomass heating system, on a dwellinghouse or building	In the case of Class 6C-F the permitted development is allowed on all except the principle elevation. It is proposed to remove the permitted development for any elevation.	

	containing a flat.	Some of the roofs and rear elevations of unlisted houses are overlooked and such development would have a detrimental impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the CA. e.g. School Brae	
6D	The installation, alteration or replacement of a ground source heat pump within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse or building containing a flat.	Some rear elevations of unlisted houses are over-looked and such development would have a detrimental impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the CA. e.g. School Brae	
6E	The installation, alteration or replacement of a water source heat pump within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse or building containing a flat.	Some rear elevations of unlisted houses are over-looked and such development would have a detrimental impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the CA. e.g. School Brae	
6F	The installation, alteration or replacement of a flue, forming part of a combined heat and power system, on a dwellinghouse or building containing a flat.	Some rear elevations of unlisted houses are over-looked and such development would have a detrimental impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the CA. e.g. School Brae	
	Statutory Undertakers/ Local Authority		
30	(1) The erection or construction and the maintenance,	New buildings, alterations, equipment, street furniture and other such development could have a detrimental impact on the special	

	<p>improvement or other alteration by a local authority of—</p> <p>(a) any building, works or equipment not exceeding 4 metres in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity on land belonging to or maintained by them, being building, works or equipment required for the purposes of any function exercised by them on that land otherwise than as statutory undertakers;</p> <p>(b) street furniture required in connection with the operation of any public service administered by them.</p>	<p>architectural and historic character and appearance throughout the CA.</p>	
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<p>38 Water undertakings</p>	<p>(1) For the purposes of water undertakings development of any of the following descriptions— (a) the laying underground of mains, pipes or other apparatus; (b) the installation in a water distribution system of a booster station, valve house, meter or switch-gear house; (c) the provision of a building, plant, machinery or apparatus in, on, over or under land for the purpose of survey or investigation; (d) any other development carried out in, on, over or under the operational land other than the provision of a building but including the extension or alteration of a building.</p>	<p>Installation of a booster station, valve house, meter or switch gear station, extension or alterations to buildings and such development could have a detrimental impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance throughout the CA.</p>	
<p>40 Electricity undertakings</p>	<p>(1) Development by statutory undertakers for the generation, transmission or supply of electricity for the purposes of their undertaking consisting of— (a) the installation or replacement in, on, over or under land of an electric line and the construction of shafts and tunnels and the installation or replacement</p>	<p>Such development could have a detrimental impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance throughout the CA. The introduction of incongruous modern pillars, stations or chambers can also negatively affect the character of the conservation area where visible.</p>	

	<p>of feeder or service pillars or transforming or switching stations or chambers reasonably necessary in connection with an electric line;</p> <p>(b) the installation or replacement of any electronic communications line which connects any part of an electric line to any electrical plant or building, and the installation or replacement of any support for any such line;</p> <p>(c) the sinking of boreholes to ascertain the nature of the subsoil and the installation of any plant or machinery reasonably necessary in connection with such boreholes;</p> <p>(d) the extension or alteration of buildings on operational land of the undertaking;</p> <p>(e) the erection on operational land of the undertaking of a building solely for the protection of plant or machinery; and</p> <p>(f) any other development carried out in, on, over or under the operational land of the undertaking.</p>		
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