

Silverton

KNOXLAND SQUARE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

June 2017

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This document was prepared by the Scottish Civic Trust and Sonya Linskaill, Chartered Architect and Consultant.

30 June 2017

1. INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND JUSTIFICATION

1.1. Date and reason for designation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that conservation areas “are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify and designate such areas. The Knoxland Square Conservation Area was designated in 1984.

Conservation area status brings the following works under planning control:

- Demolition of unlisted buildings and structures
- Removal of, or work to, trees
- Development involving small house alterations and extensions, the installation of satellite dishes, roof alterations, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior.

It is recognized that the successful management of conservation areas can only be achieved with the support and input from stakeholders, and in particular local residents and property owners.

1.2. Purpose of appraisal

The purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal is to identify and assess the special architectural or historical interest of the area along with those key elements that contribute to its character and appearance. These can then assist in defining the conservation area boundary and justifying any proposed alterations to it.

In addition, the study provides a basis upon which a programme can be developed by the Council to protect and enhance the conservation area through the identification of opportunities for enhancement and priorities for future management.

Planning authorities have a duty to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas, although there is no imposed timeframe for doing so. The Act also indicates that planning authorities must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the designated area in making planning decisions that affect the area. A more considered and careful approach is therefore needed in considering development proposals in a conservation area.

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the conservation area and identify any issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and assist in the enhancement of the conservation area
- Provide West Dunbartonshire Council with a valuable tool with which to inform its planning practice and policies for the area

The appraisal conforms to Scottish Government guidance as set out in Planning Advice Note 71: Conservation Area Management (December 2004).

Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within Scottish Planning Policy (2014), Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) and Historic Environment Scotland’s series of Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes. Please note that SHEP should be read in conjunction with the legislation and regulations set out in the Historic Environment Circular which explained the legislative requirements of the Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014.

This appraisal provides a firm basis on which applications for development within and in the vicinity of the conservation area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the planning policy framework in the West

Dunbartonshire Local Plan (2010) and the West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (2015).

1.3. Methodology

This appraisal has been prepared by the Scottish Civic Trust and Sonya Linskaill, Chartered Architect and Consultant. The Trust was contracted in February 2017 to undertake a Conservation Area Character Appraisal of the Knoxland Square Conservation Area on behalf of West Dunbartonshire Council.

A thorough site survey of Knoxland Square Conservation Area was carried out including a character assessment comprising: setting, views, activity and movement; street pattern and urban grain; historic townscape; the evidence of change from historic photographs and maps; spatial relationships; trees and landscaping; and negative factors.

The conservation area character appraisal and analysis are intended to help understanding and management of Knoxland Square Conservation Area.

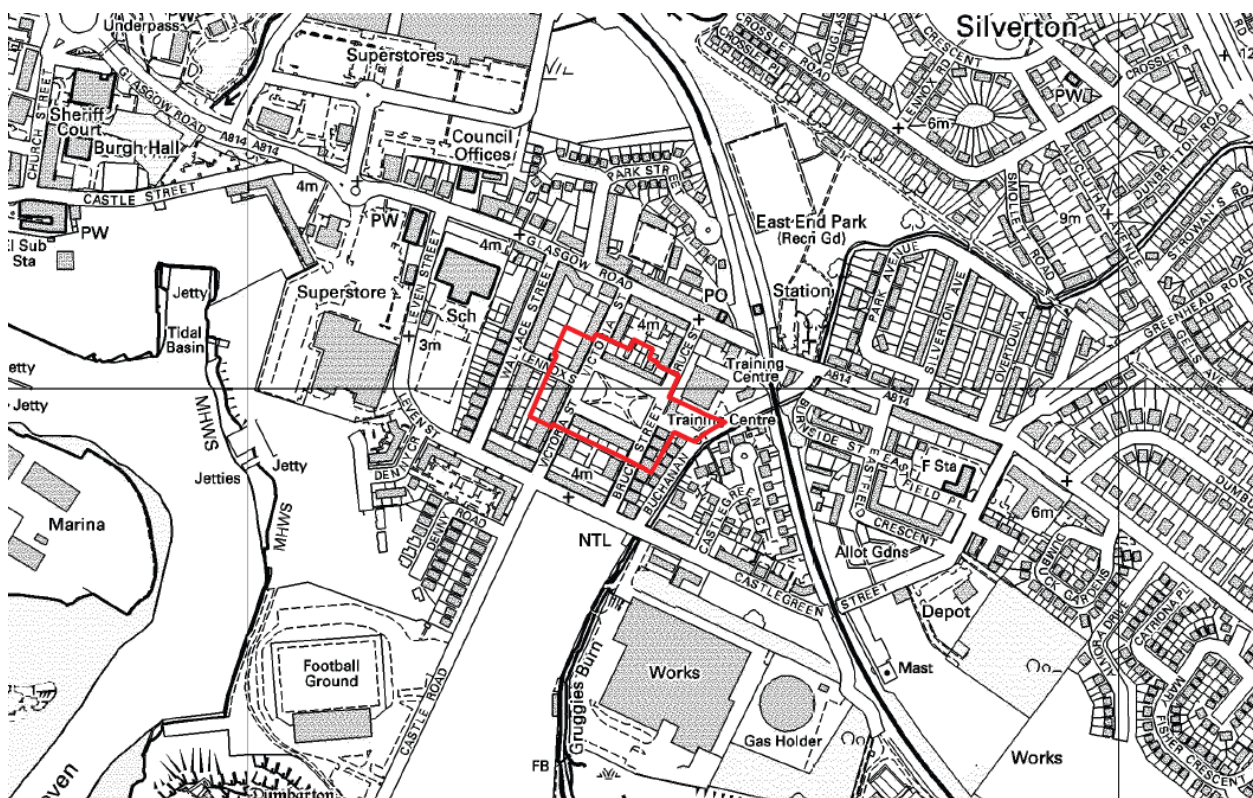


Figure 1 Knoxland Square Conservation Area. Source: West Dunbartonshire Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. (c) Crown copyright and database right 2017. All rights reserved.

2. LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE

2.1. Location

The Knoxland Square Conservation Area lies within the town of Dumbarton. Dumbarton is around 15 miles north-west of Glasgow on the north shore of the River Clyde at its confluence with the River Leven.

The conservation area occupies an area south-east of the town centre, close to Dumbarton East train station and south of the main Glasgow Road.

2.2. Relationship to Dumbarton

The Knoxland Square Conservation Area is one of two conservation areas in Dumbarton (the other being Kirktonhill Conservation Area) and is separated from the remains of the historic burgh by later redevelopment. There are a total of five conservation areas designated in West Dunbartonshire.

Consideration has been given during the appraisal process to the possibility of extension of the conservation area with areas adjacent to it. This is addressed in Section 9.5 Boundary Review.

2.3. Geology and Topography

Dumbarton lies on the alluvial plains of the two rivers with the striking volcanic basalt twin-peaks of the Dumbarton Rock marking the meeting point of the two rivers.

Dumbarton lies on a plateau of carboniferous lava which extends north eastward across the Clyde creating amongst other hill ranges, the Kilpatrick Hills. Volcanic vents protrude from this formation; the best known being the Dumbarton Rock. A belt of old red sandstone stretches over this area below the Highland Boundary Fault and there are known historic sources of sandstones in the Leven Valley.



Figure 2 Knoxland Square c. 1904 with bandstand, and Parish Church in the background. Image courtesy of West Dunbartonshire Council Libraries & Cultural Services.

3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Early Dumbarton

Dumbarton was founded as a royal burgh in 1222 by Alexander II. The community residing there was granted trading privileges and the right to charge tolls on Clyde traffic. Dumbarton developed steadily from the 16th century. In 1505, the first docks were constructed and, by 1516, Dumbarton had grown into a successful county burgh. It possessed a clock, tollbooth, and tron. These modest beginnings soon gave way to Dumbarton's expansion into industry.

Knoxland Square occupies an area to the south-east of the early burgh just within the Dumbarton Parish boundary. The area, south of the Glasgow road, appears to have remained undeveloped until the 19th century.

3.2. Development in the 18th and 19th centuries

The first bridge to connect the west bank of the Leven to Dumbarton was constructed in 1765, thus making a continuous road connection from Glasgow to the north-west. Shortly after, in 1776, Dumbarton Glassworks was set up, bringing its conical towers to the area now occupied by the Health Centre. Dumbarton's elite began to move across the river, constructing houses such as Rosebank, Springbank, and Bellfield along this main route north via Dalreoch (now West Bridgend).

The most significant mansion of this early period was Levensgrove House (built c. 1780) on an estate stretching south of Bridgend (now Levensgrove Park and Kirktonhill). The house was later bought by the Dixon family, prosperous owners of the Dumbarton Glassworks between 1817 and 1832. It is thought that when John Dixon died in 1822 and Levensgrove passed to his eldest son, his widow Anna commissioned Knoxland House as a new residence for herself. Anna was the daughter of Robert Knox, a wealthy Glasgow

merchant, which presumably gave rise to the name 'Knoxland'. There is evidence of Anna's family living at the house in 1824. Knoxland was built on the largely undeveloped east side of the burgh. Early cartographic records illustrate no buildings on the site until 1823 (un-named house, Thomson 1823). Knoxland House is illustrated on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, it was a substantial mansion within an eleven-acre estate including wooded parkland, walled garden and several ancillary buildings. Knoxland House changed ownership three times over the 19th century, the longest ownership being that of Dr Robert Buchanan and his wife Mary (daughter of John & Anna Dixon), from 1843 – 1873.

By the 1850s shipbuilding had taken over as Dumbarton's primary industry, and the Dumbarton Glassworks were dismantled. Archibald MacMillan and Son (established 1834, closed 1930s) and William Denny and Brothers (established 1844) were perhaps the most influential firms. Both would impact on the townscape of Dumbarton by constructing workers' housing. The first significant development was Dennystown on the southside of the River Leven from 1853 (now mostly demolished). Then later in the 19th century both MacMillan's and Denny's began to purchase land east of the burgh to provide workers' housing. Whilst other wealthy citizens had moved across the River Leven to the new western suburb of Kirktonhill, it appears that there had been little development east of the burgh before the mid-19th century. The Mill Burn marked the extent of the burgh although the legal Royalty boundary extended to the Gruggies Burn (see Figure 6). Peter Denny purchased the Knoxland estate sometime around 1881, and also Castlegreen House below Dumbarton Rock which was demolished (c.1881) to expand Denny's Leven Shipyard.

"...in 1882 Messrs Denny planned a new suburb at the eastern extremity of the town, called Knoxland, which is well laid out and provides comfortable accommodation for a large number of families." (Groome, 1896)

The new suburb was originally referred to as Newtown of Knoxland, and consisted of a regular grid plan of tenements and terraced housing extending from Leven Street in the west, to Buchanan Street in the east. There was a new Parish Church (by John McLeod, 1884- 1885, demolished 1986) and school for 700 pupils (by John McLeod, 1885 -1974). At its centre was Knoxland Square, gifted to the town by Peter Denny in 1890. The suburb's public space was an attractive open square with trees and a large ornate ironwork bandstand at its centre (see Figure 2).

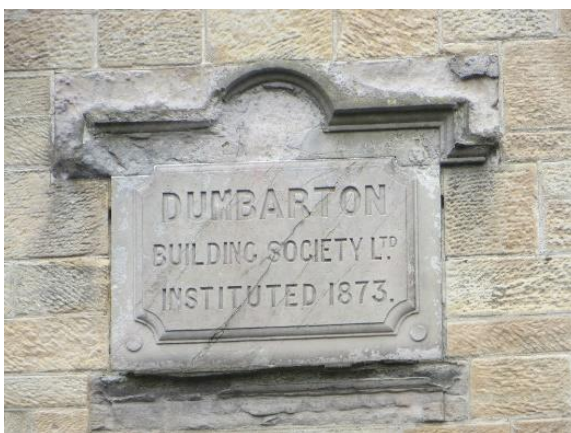


Figure 3 Carved stone panel on corner of Bruce Street / Glasgow Road.

The new housing on the former estates of Knoxland and Castlegreen was developed by the Dumbarton Building Society, instituted in 1873. North of the Knoxland estate on Glasgow Road further tenements were built from the 1880s by the Dumbarton Equitable Co-operative Society and the Dumbarton Building Society.

The railway had arrived in Dumbarton in 1858 on North British Railways' Glasgow, Dumbarton and Helensburgh line with a station at Dumbarton Central. This was supplemented in 1896 by the opening of the Lanarkshire & Dunbartonshire Railway immediately east of Knoxland, with a new station – Dumbarton East. (See Figures 7 and 8).



Figure 4 Knoxland Square north side – Nos. 1-15 tenement designed by John Black before 1897. Image courtesy of West Dunbartonshire Council Libraries & Cultural Services.



Figure 5 Knoxland Square south side – Nos. 2-24 terraced houses designed by George Budge c. 1898 Image courtesy of West Dunbartonshire Council Libraries & Cultural Services.

3.3. 20th century to the present day

In the first decade of the 20th century the new eastern suburb was completed (compare Figures 8 and 9). Beyond the train station, East End Park was donated in 1914 by Peter Denny and Dr JD White.

Further east, expansion continued with a new tenement block at Beechwood Terrace (1908-13, John G Campbell) and inter-war housing including the terraced houses on Silverton Avenue and Overtoun Avenue (1914-23, John G Campbell) also for the Dumbarton Building Society. Other industries built housing including managers' houses on Glasgow Road and workers' cottages on Geils Avenue by boiler manufacturer Babcock & Wilcox (1910-1963).

There was industrial change at the start of the 20th century. Only two shipyards remained, but other industries were established including Babcock & Wilcox and Hiram Walker & Sons' Dumbarton Distillery in 1938, then Europe's largest distillery, on MacMillans' former shipyard. However the 20th century was generally a period of steady decline for the area as shipbuilding, after an increase in demand during the First World War, suffered from a general global economic gloom. Denny's remaining works closed in 1963.

The most significant event to affect the area in the 20th century was the German bombing raids on the 13th and 14th March 1941, known as the Clydebank Blitz. Two nights of intensive bombing of the Clyde estuary focused on Clydebank, causing widespread social and physical damage. Dumbarton did not suffer

the extensive damage which occurred further east in Clydebank, however there were building losses, including the Dumbarton Equitable Co-operative Society store on the corner of Glasgow Road and Park Road, replaced by a lower storey building in the 1950s. See Map 5.2 Building analysis, page 22.

With the shrinking of the British Empire, social and economic reconstruction after the Second World War and the challenges of modernisation that the industry struggled to meet, Dumbarton, along with the other settlements that had grown up around shipbuilding faced an uncertain future.

From the 1960s renewal of the town centre commenced with the A814 to Helensburgh rerouted through the northern part of the historic centre, with new housing, civic buildings and shopping precinct. The new Artisan Bridge opening in 1974.

In the eastern suburbs bomb-damaged buildings were replaced. The Victorian school was closed in 1974 and a new school built further west on Glasgow Road on the cleared former site of housing on Leven and Clyde Streets. The church was demolished in the 1980s.

Today, Knoxland Square Conservation Area and the adjacent streets of the Victorian suburb retain their purpose as principally a residential area. Redevelopment of the former industrial sites south of Castlegreen Street to provide new housing is currently ongoing (2017).

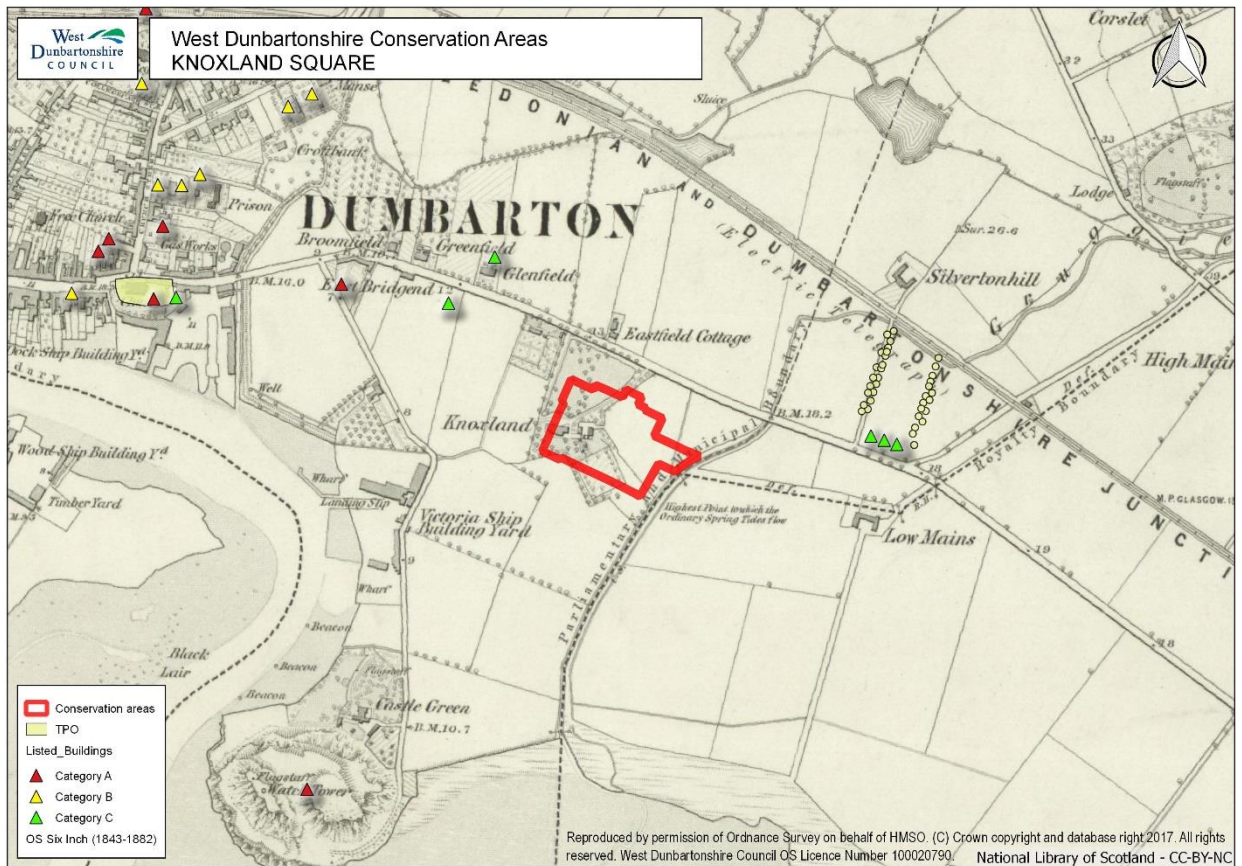


Figure 6 OS Six-Inch (1843-1882) showing conservation area boundary and nearby listed buildings and Tree Preservation Order. Source: West Dunbartonshire Council.

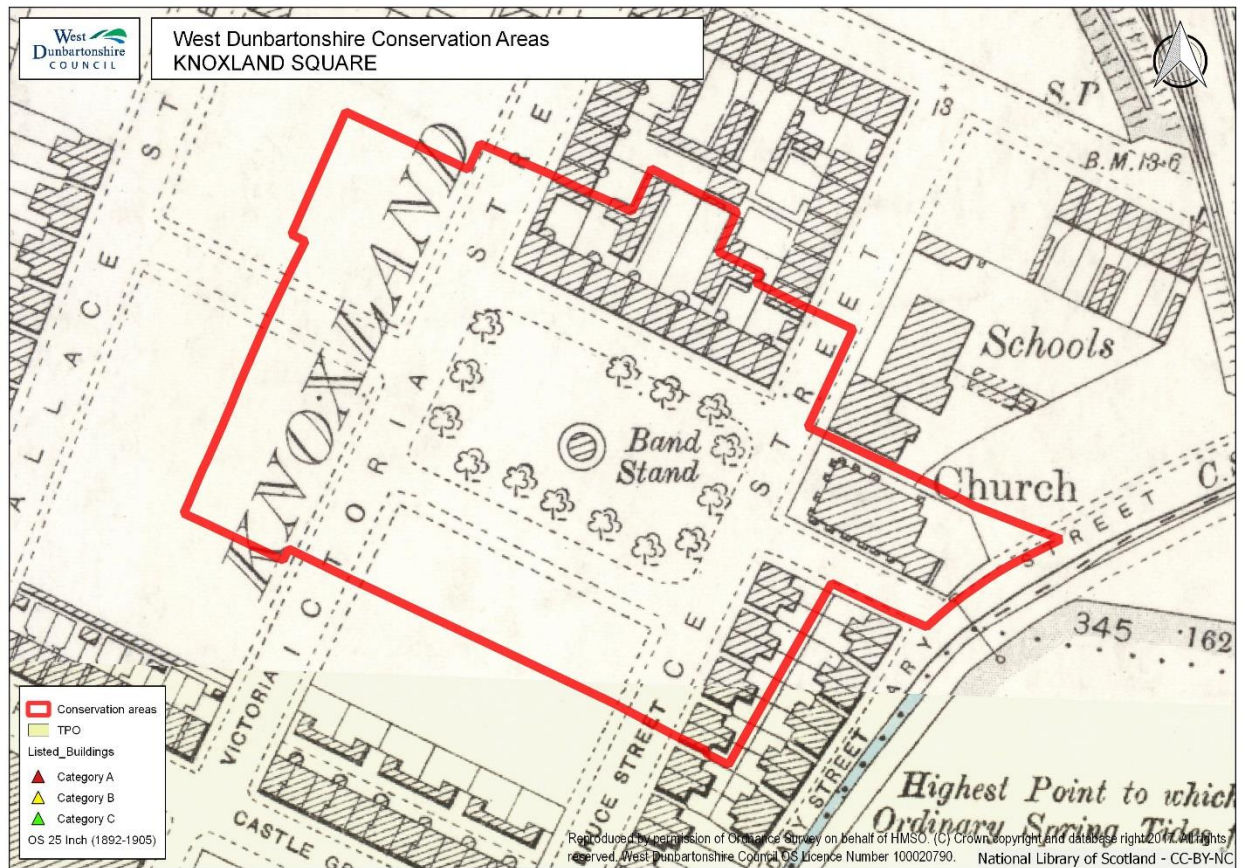


Figure 7 OS 25-Inch (1892-1905) showing conservation area boundary. Source: West Dunbartonshire Council.

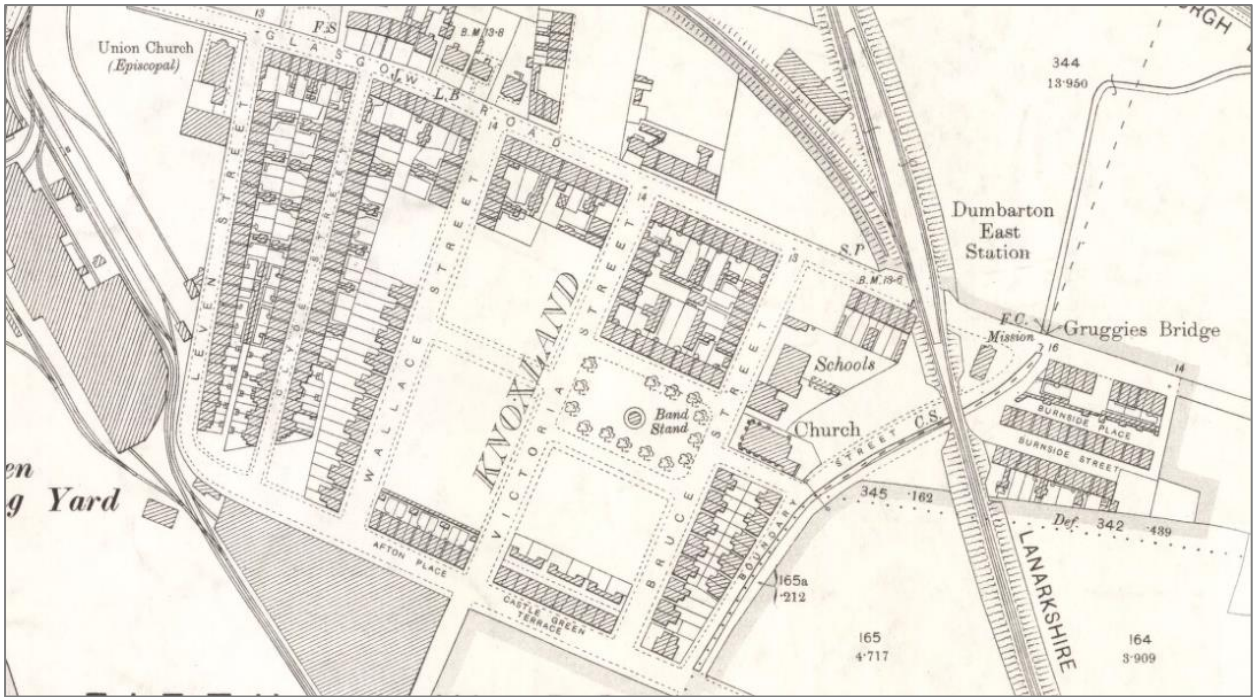


Figure 8 OS 25-Inch (1898) Source: NLS Online.

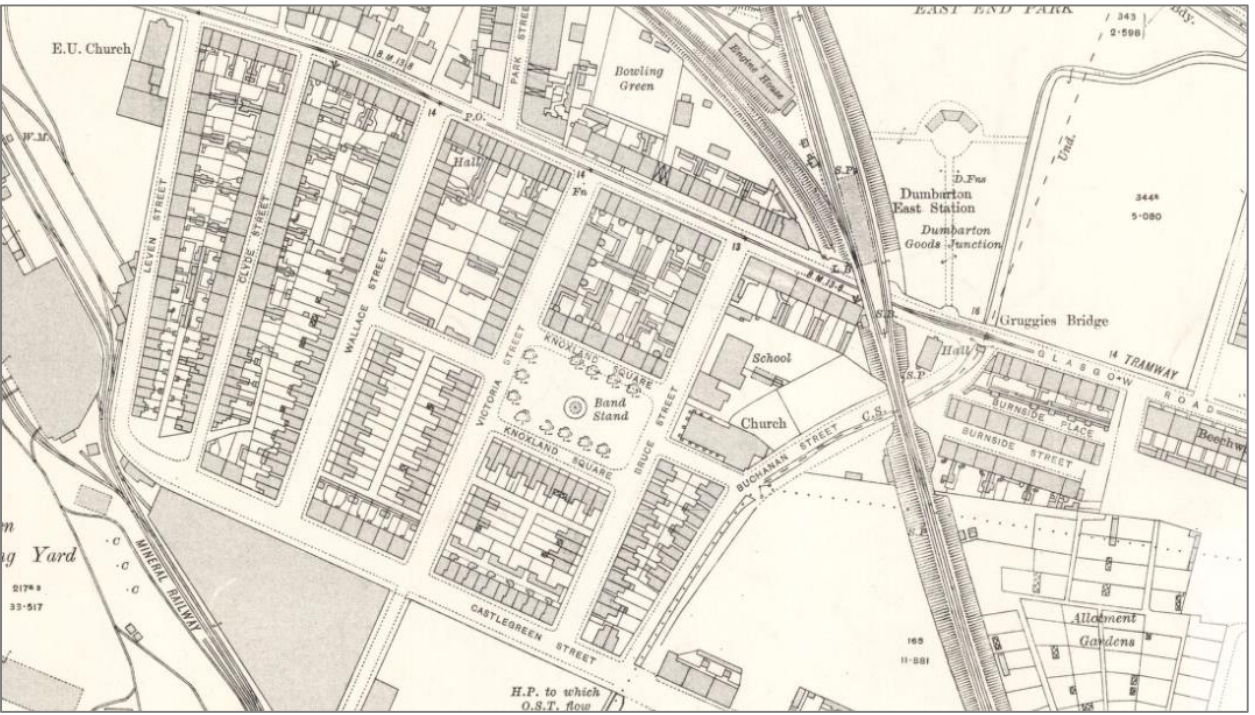


Figure 9 OS 25-Inch (1918) Source: NLS Online.

4. CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

4.1. Spatial Analysis

4.1.1. *Layout and Activities*

The Knoxland Square Conservation Area lies to the south-east of Dumbarton town centre separated from the centre by a commercial area comprising the St James Retail Park north of Glasgow Road, and a large supermarket to the south on the site of the former Denny's Leven Shipyard. Glasgow Road (A814) was an early route and remains one of two principal routes in Dumbarton. It passes through the town before crossing the River Leven heading west to Helensburgh.

The conservation area is a part of a larger late Victorian suburb which extends from Leven Street in the west, to the railway line and Gruggies Burn in the east. The suburb is enclosed by the busy Glasgow Road at its northern edge and by Castlegreen Street to the south. The residential streets have a quieter atmosphere than the traffic laded Glasgow Road. Laid out on a formal grid plan there is a regularity to the street pattern.

The conservation area specifically concentrates on Knoxland Square, a large rectangular 'square' bounded by Victoria Street on the west side and Bruce Street on the east side. Lateral streets form connections to adjacent streets: on the west, Lennox Street connects to Wallace Street; on the east, Knoxland Street connects to Buchanan Street, which runs parallel to the Gruggies Burn. This creates an interconnection of streets so that access to Knoxland Square is possible on all sides. The buildings which fall within the conservation area boundary are only those which form the square's immediate enclosure. (See section 9.5 Boundary review.)

There is a physical uniformity to the suburb despite consisting of a variety of residential building types including tenements, low terraces and semi-detached houses. This variety is also present in the conservation area.

The public space is enclosed by buildings on all four sides: to the north side, north-west and north-east corners, by three-storey tenements, and on the south side, south-west and south-east corners, by lower one to two-storey terraced and semi-detached houses. This creates an open aspect south toward the Clyde Estuary.

The Victorian tenements are set out on the street line with communal gardens and ancillary buildings to the rear. The semi-detached houses on Bruce Street are also built directly on the street line, separated from one another by narrow pends which give access to the rear gardens. The terraced houses on Knoxland Square and Victoria Street differ by having short front gardens. Built on narrow linear plots there are larger gardens to the rear, and service lanes behind. All house frontages address the street. The later 20th century flatted block (on the former church site) follows the same pattern, a section on Knoxland Street stepping from three- to two-storey reflecting the reduction in scale of the Victorian houses. However, the traditional communal garden has been replaced by car parking.

The conservation area is wholly residential (excepting a business premises on the north-west corner of Knoxland Square) with local businesses and shops concentrated on the nearby Glasgow Road, out with the conservation area.

4.1.2. *Open Spaces, Trees and Landscape*

The conservation area is focused on Knoxland Square, an open public space comprised of both green space (mature trees and landscaping) and hard landscaping. The square was gifted to the town in 1890 and originally had a large bandstand (see Figure 10). The central space remains with some benches but has a somewhat barren feel without its central focus. Surrounding the paved central area are mature lime trees (possibly original), five each on the north and south sides and one on the west side. On the

east side are four mature ornamental fruit trees and a planted bed. Other trees have been introduced on the west side. The green areas are laid with grass and rose beds. The square offers a welcome open space in the surrounding urban grid and a quiet place away from the main Glasgow Road.

Private gardens, both the short front gardens addressing the square, and rear gardens glimpsed from the side streets soften the urban environment and provide open space between blocks.

The contribution of greenspace immediately outwith the conservation area includes that of private gardens and individual trees such as those on the former school site. The Gruggies Burn marks the original extend of the suburb. Its east bank has naturalised vegetation with a pedestrian path which links Castlegreen Street, and housing on its east bank, to Dumbarton East train station. The most significant contribution beyond the area is made by the open aspect to the Clyde Estuary and, with that, visibility of the natural landscape of the Dumbarton Rock and south banks of the Clyde Estuary. There are also mature trees along Gruggies Burn to the south of Castlegreen Street creating a green perimeter to the brownfield site. Larger spaces, for example the East End Park north of Glasgow Road and the Knoxland Primary School grounds, are not visible from the conservation area.

Key tree groups are marked on the Trees map 5.4 on page 24.



Figure 10 Knoxland Square c.1900. Image courtesy of West Dunbartonshire Council Libraries & Cultural Services.



Figure 11 Mature Lime trees on north of Knoxland Square.



Figure 12 Mature ornamental fruit trees on east side of square.

4.1.3. Views, Landmarks and Approaches

The formal grid plan of the Victorian suburb and flat site creates long vistas south on Victoria and Bruce Streets toward the Dumbarton Rock and the landscape of the Clyde Estuary beyond. Views are more expansive due to a vacant brownfield site opposite this section on Castlegreen Street. This is currently under development, and depending on the layout and height of buildings, views may be reduced. The vistas north, and at cross streets from the square, are truncated by buildings. On side streets there are glimpsed views above high boundary walls across the private rear gardens, and the rear elevations of buildings are therefore often visible.

There are no building landmarks in the conservation area due to the unity of design, layout and use. The former Victorian church, school and bandstand would have formed significant landmarks before their demolition. Therefore the distinguishing character provided by these original buildings has been lost. However, Knoxland Square itself remains a landmark. On approach from either Glasgow Road or Castlegreen Street, its tall mature trees are the first indication before the open space emerges from the surrounding stone building facades.

Knoxland Square can be approached from either Glasgow Road or Castlegreen Street initially and then a number side streets which interconnect on the grid plan. From Dumbarton town centre the approach is on Glasgow Road with Leven Street forming a connection south to Castlegreen Street. Glasgow Road and Castlegreen Street form the principal east – west routes with Victoria and Bruce Streets connecting between. Approaching from the east, Castlegreen Street curves north to form a junction with Glasgow Road at Greenhead Road providing two routes into the suburb. Further west just before Dumbarton East train station, Buchanan Street leads off Glasgow Road and offers an alternative approach via Knoxland Street.

Victoria Street is signposted for access to Dumbarton Castle, continuing as Castle Street south of Castlegreen Street.

Views available from public roads are marked on the Views and Approaches map 5.5 on page 25.

4.2. Buildings and Townscape

4.2.1. Townscape Character

The Knoxland Square Conservation Area has a consistent building character derived from its construction over a relatively short period. The suburb of Knoxland was constructed over a 25-year period from c.1881 to c.1906 and intended to house labourers, craftsmen and managers from the various Denny

shipbuilding works. The building style reflects its development over the late Victorian period and as architectural styles and construction methods developed into the Edwardian period. There is one late 20th century flatted block on the north-east corner of Knoxland Street which generally follows the massing of the original buildings.

A number of residential forms were used to house the different employees: flatted tenements, small semi-detached houses and terraced houses, the latter being built after 1896 and in a more complex style. This hierarchy of house types were constructed on a planned street grid, the higher flatted properties built north of Knoxland Square, consistent with the tenements constructed on Glasgow Road. South of the square are one- to two-storey houses. This reduction in scale toward Castlegreen Street creates an openness of light, ventilation and views in the suburb.

The buildings were constructed using a palette of traditional building materials and techniques, including sandstones, Scots slate and timber windows and doors. Reflective of the development period, there is variety in the later buildings in particular the terraced houses presumably built for the craftsmen and managers which incorporate more architectural detail than the flatted tenements.

4.2.2. Key Listed and Unlisted Buildings

The conservation area contains no listed buildings, however the unlisted traditional buildings make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. These are identified on the Listed and Unlisted Buildings Map as ‘positive buildings’ (see map 5.1, page 21).

Such buildings are generally good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. In the case of this conservation area there have been significant levels of alteration to ‘positive’ buildings.

Key buildings and building groups

Nos. 1-15 Knoxland Square (north side)

Not listed



This northern section of Knoxland Square consists of blond sandstone three-storey tenements designed by John Black in the mid-1890s (Gifford 2002). On the street frontage, each of the six tenements had a central stepped gable chimney rising above the eaves line with an arched close entrance off the street below (2 front chimneys removed). There are corbelled lintels above each close. (This design repeats on the west of this street block on Victoria Street and on Glasgow Road, the latter without the elaborated entrances). There are distinctive semi-circular brick turnpike stairs to rear, most with their original curved glass windows. Roofs are pitched with piend ends to the block, a slightly projecting eaves course, and stout central party wall chimney stacks. The tenements on the west side of **Victoria Street (Nos. 14 – 24)** were built after 1897, repeating the corbelled lintels above close entries but without the stepped chimneys or arched doorways.

Nos. 2-24 Knoxland Square (south side)

Not listed



This southern section of Knoxland Square is more evidently turn of the century in style consisting of a full terrace block designed as one set piece by George Budge 1897-9 (Gifford, 2002). The blond sandstone frontage is dominated by its 2-storey gable fronted canted bays interspersed with lower single storey sections which have canted bay piend dormers. The houses are grouped in pairs, which with the two different house designs creates an attractive articulated roofline and façade. Roofs are pitched with projecting eaves course, cast iron finials, and stout central party wall chimney stacks. Most of the original windows have been replaced but, where remaining, show the original one over one fenestration pattern with horns to the upper sash. Short front gardens enclosed by railings and hedging lead to timber 4-panel doors with rectangular laylights above.

Nos. 26-42 Victoria Street Not listed



On the south-west side of Knoxland Square this terrace was built after 1897. Constructed in blond sandstone of one and a half storeys with piend canted eaves dormers extending from canted bay windows below. Detailing is similar to the tenements with corbelled lintels above paired entrances. Roofs are pitched with slightly projecting eaves course, cast iron finials, and slender central party wall chimney stacks. Most of the original windows have been replaced but, where remaining, show the original one over one fenestration pattern with horns to the upper sash. Short front gardens enclosed by replacement railings lead to timber panelled doors with rectangular laylights above. The originally very decorative ironwork railings are gone however the original gates remain in the majority of cases.

9-25 Bruce Street Not listed



On the south-east side of Knoxland Square this terrace was constructed by 1897 and designed as small semi-detached villas with narrow pends between each, built on the street line. Constructed in blond sandstone of one and a half storeys these modest houses are of the same design as those on Buchanan Street and the west side of Wallace Street. The entrances are paired with piend eaves dormers. Detailing is kept simple with projecting stone door lintels and dormer cills. Roofs are pitched with slightly projecting eaves course and gable chimney stacks (several removed). Bipartite windows on the front elevation (some with central mullion removed; all of the original windows have been replaced). Original entrances had rectangular laylights over double timber boarded storm doors and internal part-glazed door. A few storm doors survive and there are further examples on Buchanan and Wallace Streets.



Figure 13 Original door design on Buchanan Street.

4.2.3. *Materials and Local Details*

The traditional buildings in the conservation area are all from the late Victorian and Edwardian period which is reflected in their architectural detailing and construction materials. Masonry walls most clearly illustrate the period of building, the later Victorian and Edwardian periods favouring dressed stonework in a variety of finishes such as stugged and polished ashlar and coursed rubblework. There is a predominance of generally light buff/blond coloured sandstones, which may be from regional quarries. Rear boundary walls and stair towers are in red brick with buff brick detailing. The late 20th century block has a reconstituted stone frontage.

Roofs are predominately pitched, originally finished in Scots slate, although a significant number have either been re-slatted in new slate types, or re-roofed in concrete tile which is not in keeping with the character of individual buildings or the conservation area. This is particularly noticeable on the low-storey houses on Bruce Street and Victoria Street. All generally have a pronounced eaves course. Roof finishes were continuous over paired houses although several now have a separation such as a lead roll joint between houses. Tenements have flat skew copes between individual tenements. Eaves dormers are common on terraced and semi-detached houses (not tenements) and these houses have a small single rooflight above their entrances (replaced with modern rooflights, some enlarged). There is embellishment of the roofline of dormers with cast iron finials on all low storey buildings (several lost). Rainwater goods are cast iron, originally ogee gutters and cast iron downpipes.

Chimney stacks were an essential part of traditional properties and remain an important functional and aesthetic feature. This is an important feature of the roofscape. Most properties have prominent stacks, varying from the tall stepped front chimneys on the north side of Knoxland Square, to shorter

stacks on the terraced south side. Several chimneys have been removed or lowered which changes the roofline of the street blocks and appearance of individual buildings.

Projecting canted window bays are common on later properties, i.e. on the south side of Knoxland Square and Victoria Street, but not present on the tenements or the earlier houses on Bruce Street. Windows are vertically proportioned; however, very few examples of original timber windows survive. The rear stair towers of the tenements on Knoxland Square retain original, now quite rare, curved timber sash and case windows with astragals (e.g. six over nine, and four over six panes).

Similarly to windows, few original entrance doors remain. Examples suggest there were double timber boarded doors on Bruce Street, and 4-panel doors on the south side of Knoxland Square and Victoria Street. All with lay lights above, those to the tenements originally with semi-circular fanlights.



Figure 14 Door on Knoxland Terrace.



Figure 15 Clockwise from top left: Bay window with original timber sash and case windows, south side of Knoxland Square; finial detail; stepped front chimney on Knoxland Square tenement; corbelled lintel over tenement entrance, Knoxland Square; lintel detail on Victoria Street; decorative cast iron gate on Victoria Street terrace; red brick stair tower to the rear of Knoxland Square with original curved timber sash and case windows and Scots slate roof.

4.2.4. Public Realm

Road and pavement surfaces are generally tarmac or concrete paving slabs, with pavement kerbs generally in traditional whinstone. In several areas whin setts appear at the road gutter, possibly original.

Just outside the conservation area boundary, there are original service lanes to the rear of Nos. 2 – 24 Knoxland Square and another at the back of the Victoria Street terraces. The access points across the pavement to these lanes are laid in traditional whinstone setts. The Victoria Street lane has a tarmac finish, although the Knoxland Square lane finish is rougher and has been semi-naturalised.

To Knoxland Square itself, the hard landscaping was a mix of tarmac and modern paving with some damage. Paving is currently being replaced by tarmac. There are aged concrete kerbs around the perimeter of the grass sections which are in poor condition with many loose and lying out of position. Benches are in poor condition and other street furniture such as grit bins, bollards and waste bins are of standard design.

Where original road finishes survive this adds historic character and interest. Modern finishes and interventions are less successful and hard tarmac finishes increase erosion of sandstone walls. Whilst tarmac surfaces are generally unobtrusive on major routes, they do not enhance the conservation area and in particular are wholly inappropriate aesthetically for Knoxland Square.



Figure 16 Knoxland Square: resurfacing underway in June 2017.

Street lamps and other street signage are of standard off-the-peg designs which do not enhance the conservation area, square or the setting of the adjacent buildings.

Traditional stone boundary walls make an important contribution and are an essential factor in the character and appearance of the Victorian suburb and the conservation area. Most prominent are the tall stone boundary walls which enclose rear tenement gardens, for example the wall on Victoria Street at the side of No.1 Knoxland Square. These stone walls provide security to private gardens and importantly continue the building line of the streetscape. On Bruce Street, two original carved stone gate piers from the former church are retained outside the new housing.

Properties with front gardens similarly create enclosure using low stone boundary walls originally with railings (see Figure 4). No original railings appear to survive although there are original gates on Victoria Street. Here replacement railings appear to have been installed over the length of the terrace which creates continuity although they are significantly less decorative than the original gates. Replacement too on the Knoxland Square terrace is fairly continuous although there have been subsequent replacements and removals and some hedging exists. Some small sections of boundary treatments can detract including concrete block walling or timber fencing.



Figure 17 Knoxland Square: paving, bench and waste bin in poor condition.



Figure 18 Knoxland Square – mixture of tarmac and paving surfaces, concrete kerbs in poor condition and loose.

4.2.6. Condition

The vast majority of the buildings within the conservation area are traditionally constructed and remain robust and functional. On observation from the street level, the general condition of most buildings appears to be fair; however, there are elements in poor condition particularly at high level, and at street level on the tenements there are noticeable repair and maintenance issues.

One of the greatest threats to any heritage site is the loss of primary fabric through lack of maintenance or inappropriate repair and replacement, reducing the authenticity of the site. A common significant threat is the use of inappropriate modern materials and details, such as replacement windows and doors, and impervious cement mortars and paints.

Masonry on several buildings and boundary walls is in poor condition and/or has been repaired inappropriately including use of cement mortars, 'plastic' stone repairs and poor working methods. Attention should be drawn to the risk associated with impermeable materials and finishes and opportunities taken to repair in traditional materials when they arise. Disrepair and stone erosion is particularly noticeable at the pavement level to tenements and other walls built directly onto the street. Damage is likely due to water splashback from the hard surfaces onto the stone, and salt efflorescence from continued wetting and drying of the sandstone.



Figure 19 Traditional setts at entry to Victoria Street lane (just outside conservation area).

A significant number of properties have had concrete roof tiles used to replace traditional Scots slate which is detrimental to the appearance of these buildings and character of the area.

The majority of original windows and a significant number of entrance doors have been replaced, generally in inappropriate fenestration design and materials. Replacements in uPVC, aluminium, and/or non-traditional fenestration patterns and opening methods have a negative effect on both the character and quality of individual buildings and a cumulative impact on the character of the conservation area as a whole. Tenements and terraces would originally have had the same window and door designs; however, varied replacement has left a lack of continuity over these frontages.

A number of gable walls show signs of water ingress at high level below chimneys. This may be the result of a number of repair and maintenance issues (erosion of pointing or stone, defective flashings around the chimney, defect haunching, chimney pots not vented or capped appropriately). In a number of cases chimney stacks have been removed and modern vent pipe protrude from the roof.

4.3. Character Areas

An analysis of the Knoxland Square Conservation Area indicates that it does not require to be divided into character areas as the historical development, plot pattern, built form, uses and activities are similar throughout.



Figure 20 Stone erosion at gable chimney poorly repaired in cement.



Figure 21 Stone erosion at gable chimney and defects to chimney above.



Figure 22 Stone erosion at gable poorly repointed in cementitious mortar and plastic stone repair.



Figure 23 example of window replacement in non-consistent design and opening method and gable chimney removal with poor repair below.



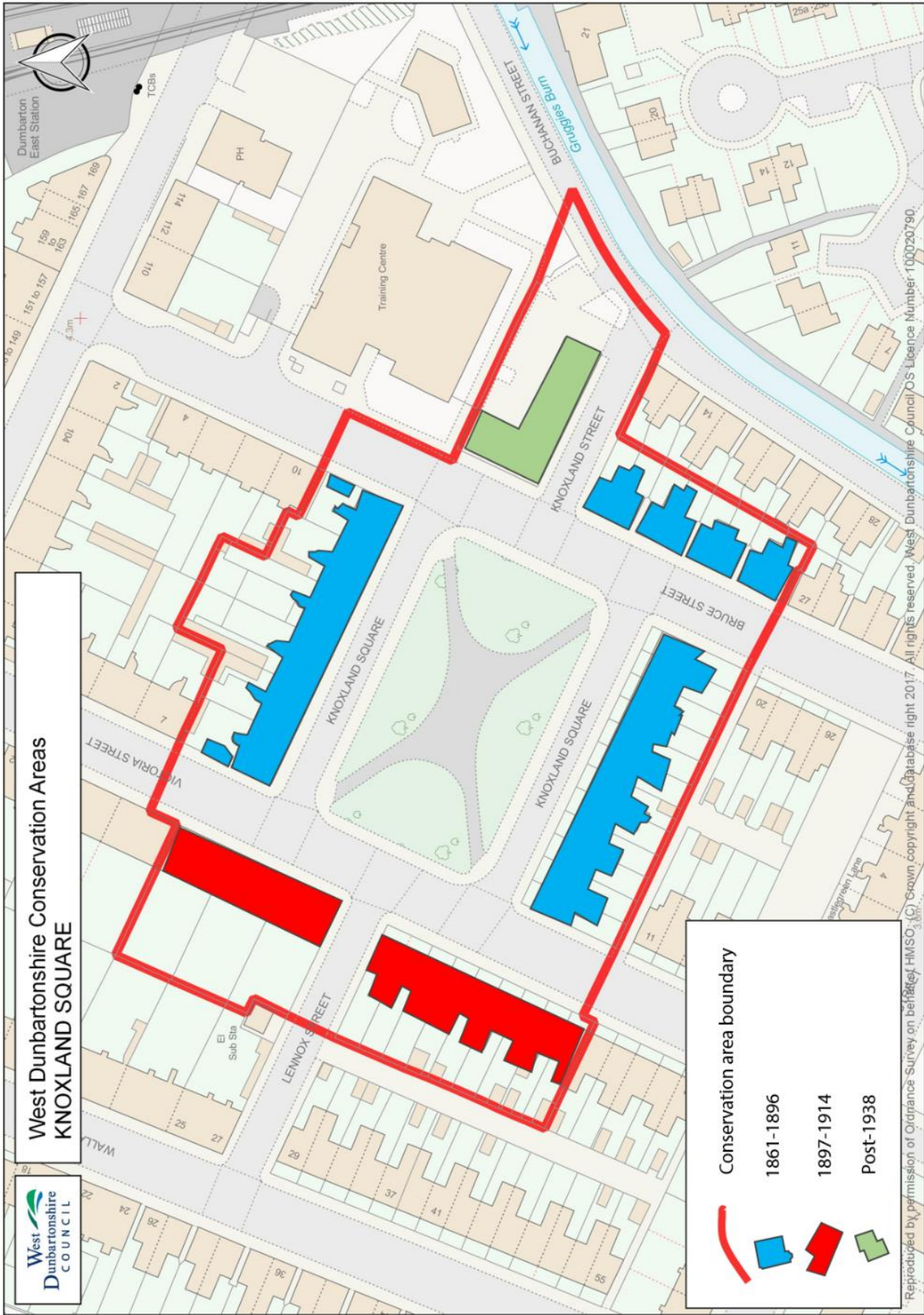
Figure 24 Poorly executed cementitious stone repairs, stone erosion to door lintel, and obtrusive vent.

5. MAPS



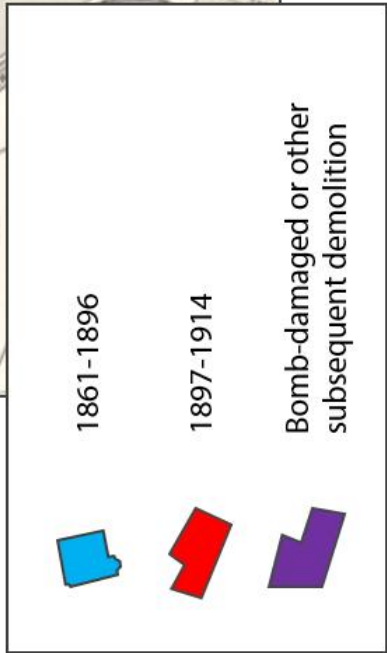
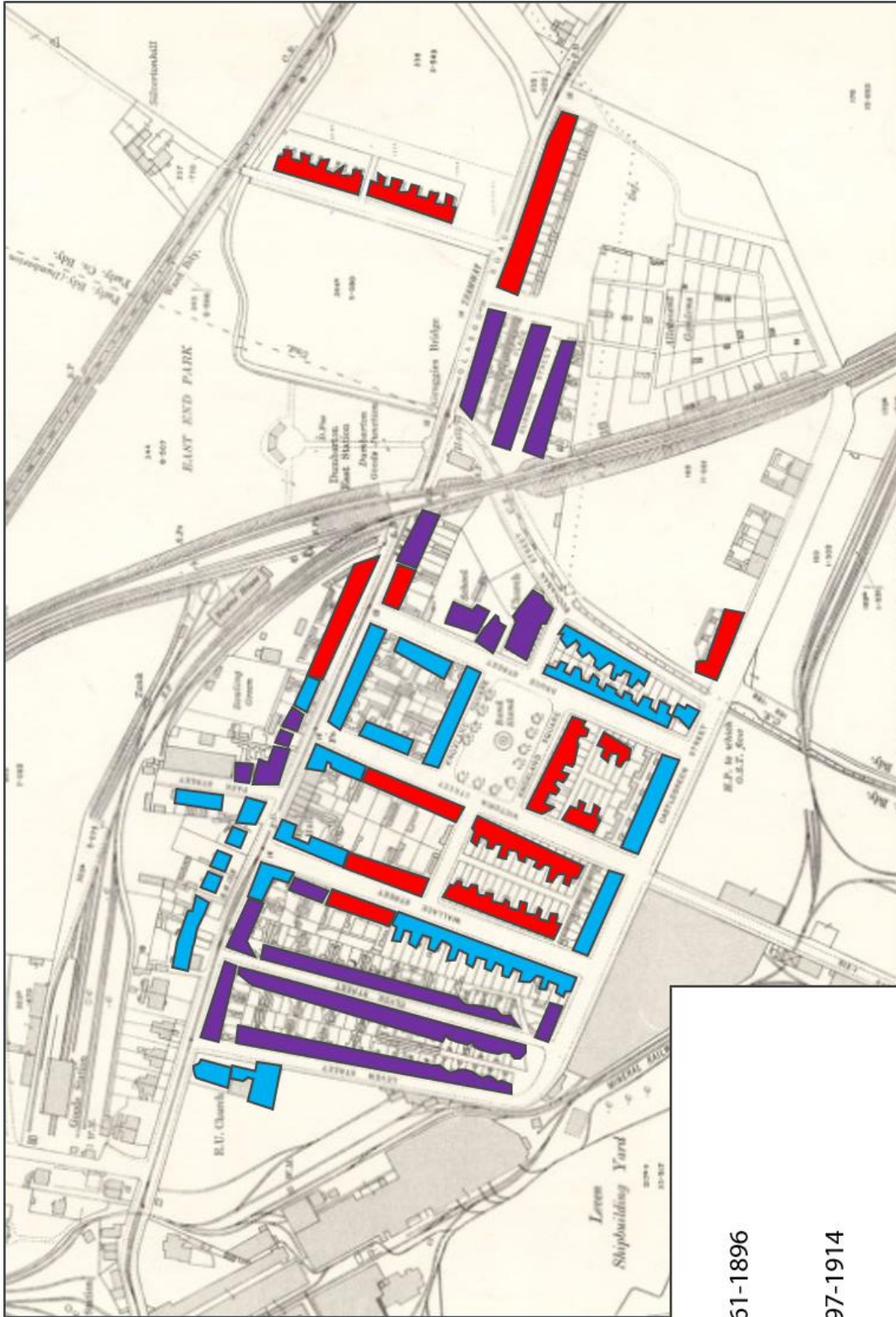
5.1. Listed and unlisted buildings

Only shows those within the conservation area boundary. Source: West Dunbartonshire Council.



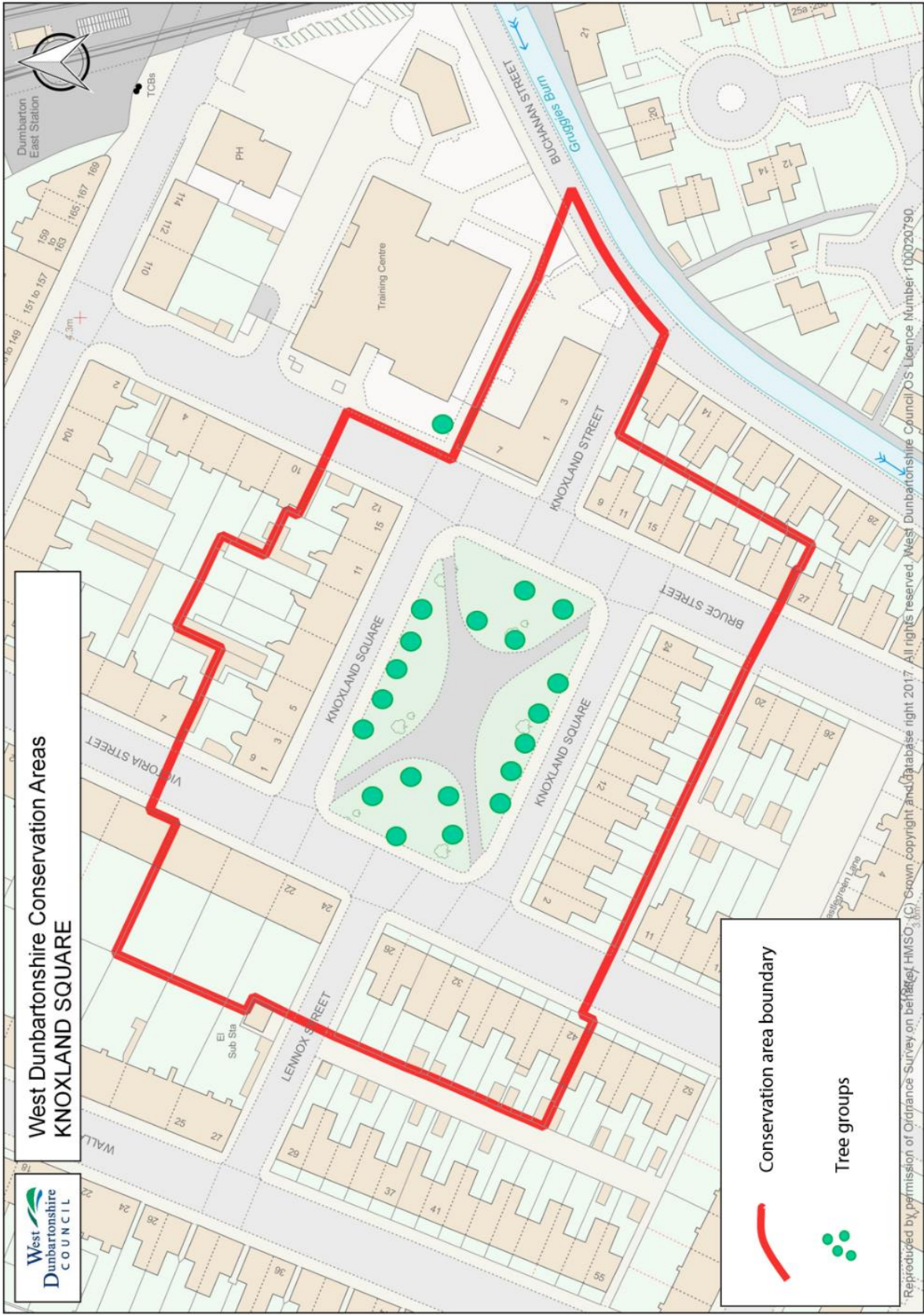
5.2. Buildings analysis

Source: West Dunbartonshire Council.



5.3. Buildings analysis of suburb on OS 25-Inch map (1918)

Source: NLS Online.



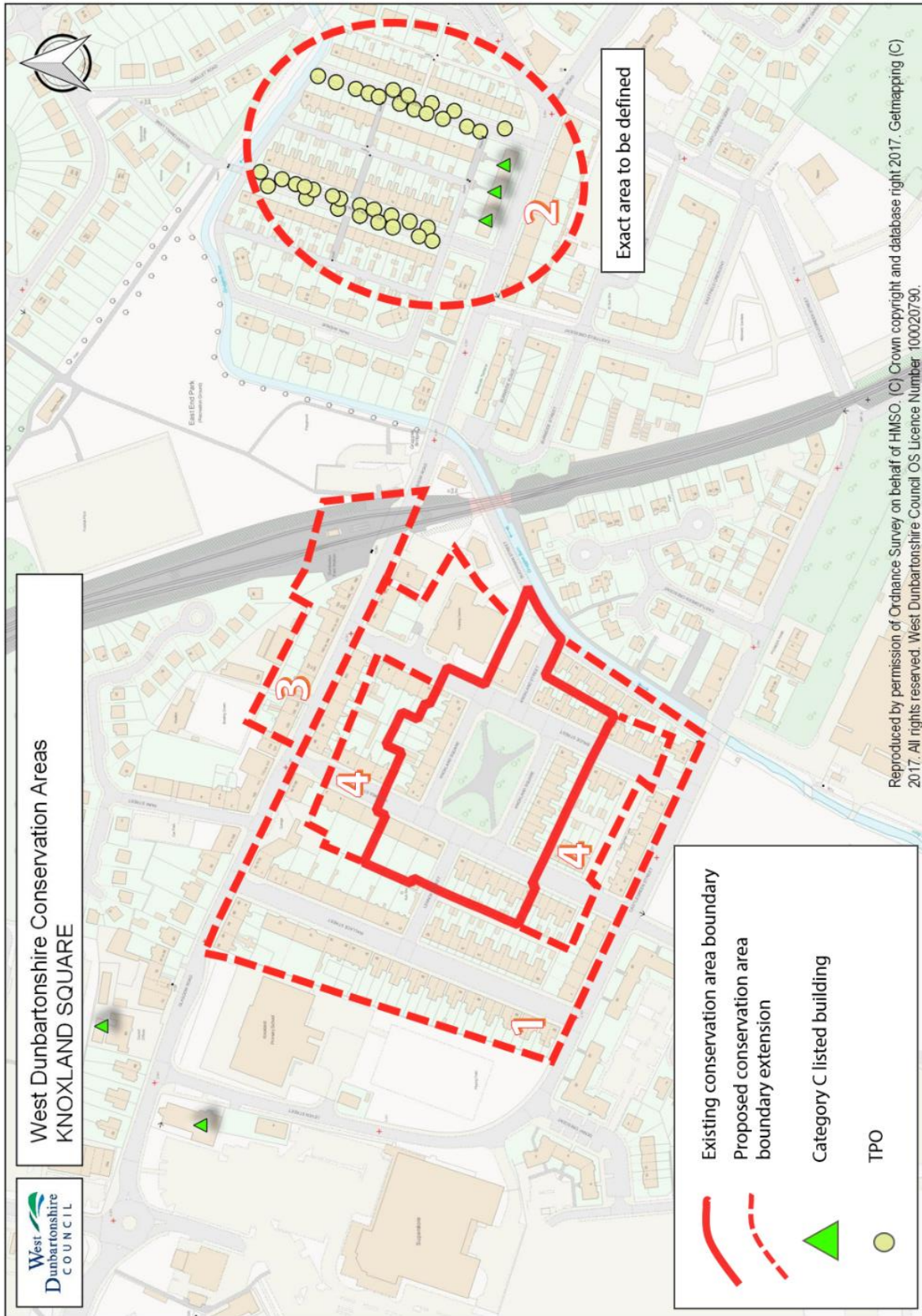
5.4. Trees and landscape

Source: West Dunbartonshire Council.



5.5. Views and approaches

Source: West Dunbartonshire Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. (c) Crown copyright and database right 2017. All rights reserved.



5.6. Boundary review

Source: West Dunbartonshire Council.

6. KEY FEATURES / ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Having carried out an assessment of the Knoxland Square Conservation Area it is now possible to identify the key features that define the special architectural and historic character of the area. These are:

- A coherent group of late Victorian and early Edwardian houses constructed over a 25 year period from c.1881 to c.1906, intended to house labourers, craftsmen and managers from the various Denny shipbuilding works.
- A large public open space gifted to the town by Peter Denny in 1890 with mature trees and planting.
- A relatively flat site with views south to the Dumbarton Rock and the Clyde Estuary.
- Wholly residential.
- A group of house types:
 - Three-storey flatted tenements with communal gardens to the rear.
 - One and a half storey small semi-detached houses with narrow pends between, built on the street line with rear gardens.
 - One- to two-storey terraced houses on long narrow plots, with short front gardens and larger rear gardens.
- Use of blond and buff (possibly regional) sandstones, slate roofs, and (originally) traditional sash and case windows and timber panelled doors.
- Traditional boundary treatments including tall and short stone boundary walls and original decorative ironwork gates.

7. CONSERVATION ISSUES

A number of conservation issues have been identified which have the potential to have a detrimental impact on the conservation area. These are listed below. These form the basis for the Sensitivity Analysis and the Opportunities for Enhancement.

- The replacement of traditional materials and elements has led to significant loss of historic fabric and a negative impact on the character of the conservation area.
- Maintenance and repair requirements have been identified for both properties and the historic built environment.
- Modern development (chiefly alterations) in the area is not always sympathetic to the character of the area in terms of materials and design.
- The public realm is generally utilitarian in character and can detract from the high-quality historic built environment.
- Loss of some green space with the introduction of hard landscaping and loss of traditional boundary enclosures and screening.

8. SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

8.1. Loss of original architectural details and building materials

Although the majority of the buildings in the conservation area appear to be in fair physical condition the area as a whole is at risk from small changes which have cumulatively diluted the special character of the area. Examples which have adversely affected buildings in the conservation area include the replacement of original timber windows and doors with inappropriate materials such as uPVC or unsympathetic designs or methods of opening; the replacement of natural roof slates; the removal of chimney stacks; and

inappropriate and poor quality repair to masonry. These changes in detailing and the loss of original features effect both the external appearance of individual buildings and the local streetscape. It is important that future changes are managed, ensuring that appropriate materials and designs are used, in order to protect and enhance the character of the conservation area.

8.2. Buildings at Risk

There are no Buildings at Risk in the Knoxland Square Conservation Area.

8.3. Repair and maintenance

There are properties and boundary walls in need of repair and maintenance. This is important to prevent the loss of original fabric and details and to ensure buildings are energy efficient and safe.

8.4. Quality of new development, alterations and extensions

There is a small proportion of new development in the conservation area, being a new flatted residential block on the former Knoxland Parish Church site. The design of the urban grid and plot sizes would indicate that there is little space for development on the existing site, the only redevelopment having occurred on areas of loss, such as the church and adjacent former school site (outwith the conservation area).

As discussed in section 8.1 modern alterations to the traditional fabric have not generally been in keeping with the original design or materials.

8.5. Quality of public realm

The utilitarian nature of the public realm does not reflect the character of the conservation area. It is vital to ensure that public works and

street furniture do not detract from the otherwise high quality historic environment. Where traditional and original finishes and architectural detail such as walls, railings and gates survive these should be appropriately maintained and repaired.

Knoxland Square is a significant feature and community asset; however, the condition of hard landscaping and street furniture is poor. The use of tarmac for resurfacing is detracting (see Figures 16-18).

8.6. Protection of trees, hedges and traditional boundaries

Trees make an important contribution to the open space of Knoxland Square and should be properly managed and protected. Hedges, railings, gates, and boundary walls also make a major contribution and similarly need to be retained. There are a few instances of poorly maintained boundaries and the use of inappropriate or poor quality materials for walls or gates, which detracts from the character of the conservation area.

9. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

9.1. The control of unlisted buildings

As part of the appraisal process, unlisted but 'positive' buildings have been identified (see map 5.1, page 21). Generally, these are individual or groups of traditional buildings which contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. As with listed buildings, there is a general presumption in favour of their retention. Any application for the demolition of a building which is deemed to make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area will therefore need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification as to why the building cannot be retained, similar to that required for a listed building. The owner must also have made positive efforts to market the building, or to find a suitable new use, before an application can be determined.

The Council should consider applications for change to 'positive' buildings extremely carefully and should refuse any which adversely affect their architectural or historic interest.

Where detrimental change has occurred, opportunities should be taken to enhance positive buildings. Council policies or supplementary guidance may assist in this process.

Further reading:

- [Managing Change Guidance Notes \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

9.2. Quality of new developments, building alterations and extensions

In assessing planning applications within the conservation area or which might impact on its setting, the Council shall consider them in relation to the Local Plan and Proposed Local Development Plan policies. Particular attention will also be paid to the following requirements:

- New development, building alterations and extensions should be in accord with the prevailing form of historic development, including the scale, massing and historic layout of buildings using traditional and compatible materials.
- New development, building alterations and extensions should not impinge on the setting of existing buildings.
- There will be a presumption against garden development within the original plots in the conservation area and new development should follow existing plot ratios.
- New development should protect significant views within the public realm.
- Original or historic features should be retained wherever possible.
- New development, building alterations and extensions should

use materials which are high quality, durable and which complement the palette of materials traditionally found in the conservation area (the use of UPVC, aluminium, concrete tiles or other non-traditional materials are not considered appropriate).

- Where stonework is not currently painted or rendered, a coating should not be applied.
- Colours should be muted and in keeping with the rest of the conservation area.
- Trees and private gardens should be maintained and managed as an important asset. Any proposed new development should protect important trees, hedges, boundary walls and other established boundaries.
- Hard landscaping, roads and pavements should be maintained and where repair or resurfacing is required, careful consideration should be made to the choice of materials respecting the original character of surfaces. There should be a reluctance to approve the removal of green space for hard landscaping.
- New boundary treatments should use traditional materials and be of appropriate design to suit the locality.
- Historic photographs may be consulted to inform the design of new development, building alterations and extensions. A useful and important resource is the Dumbarton Building Society Jubilee Souvenir (Lyon, 1923)

Where necessary, the Council will require applications for new development which may have an impact on the Conservation Area to be accompanied by a Design Statement explaining and illustrating the principles and concept behind the design and layout of the

proposed development and demonstrating how the proposal relates both to the site and its wider context. Applicants can use this Character Appraisal to assist them in this.

Further reading:

- [New Design in Historic Settings \(Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Government and Architecture + Design Scotland\)](#)

9.3. Building maintenance and repair

It is important that historic buildings are adequately maintained and repaired using traditional materials and techniques and property owners are encouraged to get specialist professional advice.

West Dunbartonshire Council's planning team can provide advice on traditional repairs. The council will encourage owners of historic buildings to use traditional materials and repair techniques through advice and publications. Advice can also be obtained from Historic Environment Scotland.

Further reading:

- [Maintaining your home - A short guide for homeowners \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)
- [INFORM Guides \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

9.4. Buildings at Risk

Historic Environment Scotland maintains a Register of buildings that are at risk from deterioration due to neglect, vacancy or threat of demolition (the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland). This is updated as necessary and the Council has powers to protect all listed buildings and also, in certain instances, unlisted buildings in a conservation area, where they make a positive contribution to the area's special character.

Where the condition of a historic building deteriorates to a point where it is considered

vulnerable and detrimental to the character of the area then West Dunbartonshire Council, in conjunction with the Scottish Ministers, will consider appropriate action to enable its return to a reasonable state of repair. The Council will encourage the reuse of existing vacant buildings over new build construction where possible.

Further reading:

- [The Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland](#)

9.5. Boundary review

As part of the assessment, the boundaries of the conservation area were inspected. In considering any review of the content and boundary of a conservation area, it is important to establish criteria against which decisions can be assessed. An overarching principle comes from the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. In defining Conservation Areas and the role planning authorities have in considering development proposals within them, four main themes are identified. These are: a. architectural interest; b. historic interest; c. character; and d. appearance.

As shown in map 5.3 buildings analysis on historic 1918 map on page 23, the existing conservation area boundary encompasses only a small part of the surviving Victorian suburb of Knoxland constructed by the Dumbarton Building Society for Denny's workers. The conservation area solely focuses on the public open space of Knoxland Square and immediate buildings which enclose it, to the point that the remainder of street blocks consisting of identical buildings are excluded. The current boundary therefore excludes a significant proportion of the historic properties. Options considered were:

1. Designation of the original extent of the Victorian suburb of Knoxland from Leven Street to the Gruggies Burn.

2. Designation of development of later date further east of the above boundaries.
3. Designation of development of later date north of the above boundaries.
4. Amending boundaries to include full street blocks but not to extended to the full Victorian suburb.

1. Original suburb of Knoxland

The historic suburb, originally referred to as Newtown of Knoxland, consisted of a regular grid plan of housing extending from Leven Street in the west, to Buchanan Street in the east (see map 5.3, buildings analysis on historic map, page 23). Two streets of housing on the western boundary, Clyde Street and Leven Street, are now redeveloped forming the site of Knoxland Primary School and recreation grounds. The remaining suburb is largely intact accepting the Knoxland Parish Church and school on Bruce Street demolished in the later 20th century.

There is significant historic interest for Dumbarton. The suburb was the first expansion east of the old burgh, and built for the workforce of shipbuilding family Denny, one of the principal industrial families of the 19th and early 20th centuries on the Clyde. Architecturally the suburb offers a consistent urban area with a mix of tenements and terraces, designed by a small number of architects for the Dumbarton Building Society. Houses types found in the conservation area are also found on surrounding streets, for example the west side of Wallace Street and Buchanan Street consist of the same semi-detached houses as Bruce Street. Tenement designs are repeated from Knoxland Square on Victoria Street (east side) and the section of Glasgow Road which completes this urban block. The character and appearance of the remaining suburb outwith the conservation area is therefore completely

consistent with the conservation area itself.

There is therefore a strong case for the suburb as a whole to be designated excluding any peripheral new development (see map 5.6 Boundary review on page 26).



*Figure 25 Above: Tenement block on Castlegreen Street – very similar to the Knoxland Square block.
Below: Semi-detached houses on Wallace Street to the same design as Bruce Street.*

2. Historic Development further east of Knoxland

Construction of tenements and terraced housing continued eastward in the early years of the 20th century and in the 1930s. This includes the tenement block at Beechwood Terrace (1908-13, John G Campbell) and inter-war housing, including the terraced houses on Silverton Avenue and Overtoun Avenue (1914-23, John G Campbell), also for the Dumbarton Building Society. The west side of Silverton Drive in particular has similarities

to the south side of Knoxland Square. On Castlegreen Street east of the Gruggies Burn are the red sandstone tenement blocks of Rockview Terrace (1907-8; John G Campbell).

Architecturally, these later developments are not consistent with Knoxland (e.g. red rough-faced sandstone, bay window tenements). There is also significant redevelopment east of the railway line on Glasgow Road which would mean physical continuity of a conservation area boundary here would be difficult. Historically the land east of the Gruggies Burn was not part of the Knoxland Estate. Therefore there are historic, architectural and physical reasons not to include these areas within an extended conservation area. However the Council may wish to review this Edwardian development as a separate case for designation.

3. Historic Development further north of Knoxland

Tenements were constructed outwith the original Knoxland estate on the north side of Glasgow Road. These include an important block (Nos. 129-171) built in 1906 which is more elaborate in character than the Knoxland tenements being a storey taller and with canted bay windows. Whilst architecturally different, including this side of Glasgow Road would be a significant consideration in the future management of an extended conservation area.

Also on Glasgow Road is the Dumbarton East Railway Station (see Figure 26) which is contemporary to the tenement development. Its channelled ashlar sandstone façades, grand arched entrance, as well as the original stone boundary walling and traditional railings make a significant contribution to the streetscape and character of the area, despite its current poor condition. It would be important to include the original station structure if the conservation area were

extended to include the north side of Glasgow Road.

4. Amended boundaries (not extending to full historic suburb)

Whilst theoretical reasons can be made for expansion of the conservation area to include the whole of Knoxland, the Council must also consider future management of an extended area especially as considerable small incremental changes that have already occurred. This is the strongest reason against designation; however, these changes have also occurred within the conservation area. Designation can be an instrument of change and enhancement and an opportunity to stop detrimental change of this historic area.

However if option 1 is not followed, then, as a minimum, it is recommended that consistency is achieved by including full street blocks i.e. Nos. 44-52 Victoria Street, Nos. 11-17 Victoria Street and Nos. 20-26 Bruce Street (both the same design as the south side of Knoxland Square); Nos 27-37 Bruce Street, Nos. 4-10 Bruce Street, and remainder of tenement blocks on Victoria Street. It is difficult to argue why an identical house on one side is in the conservation area, and its neighbour is not.

In summary, it is recommended that the conservation area boundary be amended to include items 1 and 3. These are logical extensions that would consolidate the conservation area around the original 19th century suburb of Knoxland and strengthen its designation. It could protect and enhance an important built legacy for Dumbarton, and



Figure 26 Dumbarton East station.

encourage consistent future management of the area.

9.6. Public realm enhancement

The council should consider a public realm audit to fully record the existing fabric and plan accordingly for future management, change and enhancement opportunities. It is recommended this be extended to adjacent areas if boundary changes are not affected. Appropriate repair and enhancement of Knoxland Square's hard landscaping should be considered using a suitable palette of good quality materials to complement the surrounding historic fabric. Creating a new focal point or redesigning the seating and street furniture at the centre of the square could also be considered.

Any new public realm design should be considered in conjunction with these surrounding areas, which provides the opportunity to emphasise and coordinate the public realm across a broader area.

Further reading:

- [Designing Streets \(Scottish Government\)](#)

9.7. Trees and landscape

West Dunbartonshire Council will continue to enforce the relevant policies to ensure that the very special qualities of the Conservation Areas are protected from unsympathetic change. New development should protect important views, trees, hedges, boundary walls, gates, and other established landscape features.

Further reading:

- [Inform guide - Domestic Boundary Walls \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)
- [Managing Change in the Historic Environment - Boundaries \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)
- [Managing Change in the Historic Environment - Setting \(Historic Environment Scotland\)](#)

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This document should be reviewed every 5 years from the date of its formal adoption by West Dunbartonshire Council. It will be assessed in the light of the proposed West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan and government policy and guidance on the historic environment. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area including a photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been, particularly in relation to:
 - Protection of unlisted 'positive' buildings
 - Quality of new developments and building alterations re: Section 9.2
 - Buildings at Risk
 - Tree works
 - Protection of views
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action
- Publicity and advertising

It is possible that this review could be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the council. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement. Work towards the review will be taken throughout the period leading up to the formal review.

11. FURTHER INFORMATION AND LINKS

Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)
www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/shep

Historic Environment Scotland's Managing Change

Guidance Note series

www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/managingchange

Historic Environment Scotland - Advice for Owners of Listed Buildings

www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/heritage/historicandlistedbuildings.htm

Historic Environment Scotland's INFORM Guides

www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/learning/freepublications.htm

Historic Environment Scotland's Knowledge Base website

<http://conservation.historic-scotland.gov.uk/home/resourcecentre.htm>

Historic Environment Scotland - Grants
www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/grants

Funds for Historic Buildings
www.ffhb.org.uk

Scottish Civic Trust

www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk

Heritage Lottery Fund

www.hlf.org.uk

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National Library of Scotland Map images website [maps.nls.uk] Accessed June 2017. All historic maps © NLS unless otherwise stated.

Cuttings held at Dumbarton Library about Knoxland House.

Archive images courtesy of West Dunbartonshire Council Libraries & Cultural Services.