

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

WESTERTON GARDEN SUBURB

JANUARY 2011



MAXWELL AVENUE



sustainable thriving achieving

East Dunbartonshire Council

www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk



STIRLING AVENUE

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

2. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTERTON GARDEN SUBURB OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION AREA AND FEATURES OF ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

3. CURRENT ISSUES

4. CONCLUSIONS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDICES

1. EXTRACTS FROM HISTORIC SCOTLAND'S LIST OF BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC INTEREST

2. PLANNING GUIDANCE AND POLICIES

3. SOURCES OF ADVICE AND INFORMATION AND REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION



MAXWELL AVENUE

East Dunbartonshire has 14 Conservation Areas and 25 Townscape Protection Areas.

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

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

The original survey work and designation of for the CA's and TPA's dates back to the mid 1970's. An ongoing review has now covered the CA's and TPA's of Bearsden, Milngavie, Kirkintilloch, Bishopbriggs, Bardowie and Baldernock. Phase II of the review will cover the remaining CA's at Westerton and Clachan of Campsie, the CA's and TPA's of Lenzie and two small TPA's in Waterside and Wester Gartshore.

The Westerton CA was originally designated in June 1987, and subsequently designated an 'Outstanding CA' in July 1997. Additionally, with the exception of the extended property at 66-80 Maxwell Avenue, in June 1988 all properties were listed, either category 'B' or 'C'. In November 2006 the Westerton Garden Suburb was also included in the

Council's "Survey of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes in East Dunbartonshire."

A detailed re-assessment of the Westerton CA has now been carried out involving:-

- **A 'walk over' and appraisal survey.**
- **An assessment of the current appropriateness of the designation and area boundaries.**
- **An assessment of the degree and quality of change since the original designation.**
- **Where necessary a consideration of wider 'management' issues such as open space maintenance, traffic management, controls over tree works, opportunities for development and condition and appearance of street furniture such as bus shelters and signs.**

The Conservation Area Appraisal

This work is drawn together in this "Appraisal", which is based on advice in the Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note no. 71 – Conservation Area Management. The Appraisal summarises the survey and assessment work, describes the CA, its historical significance and townscape character, identifies ongoing conservation issues and sets out policies and proposals for future management. The Appraisal includes historic maps and photographs and it is hoped it will also be of interest for reference and educational use.

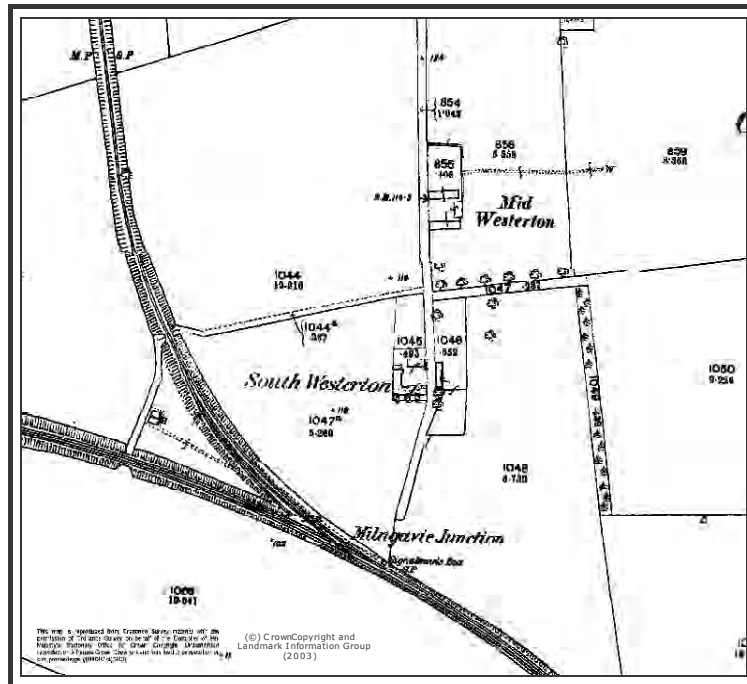
Public Consultation

The Appraisal is initially published in a draft form to allow consultation with local residents, the Community Council, community groups and other interested parties. A public meeting will also take place on Wednesday 8th December 2010 in Westerton Primary School, to present the findings of the appraisal and to mark the start of a 6 week public consultation exercise. Regard will be taken of views and comments submitted in response to the consultation process prior to the publication of the final version of the Appraisal.

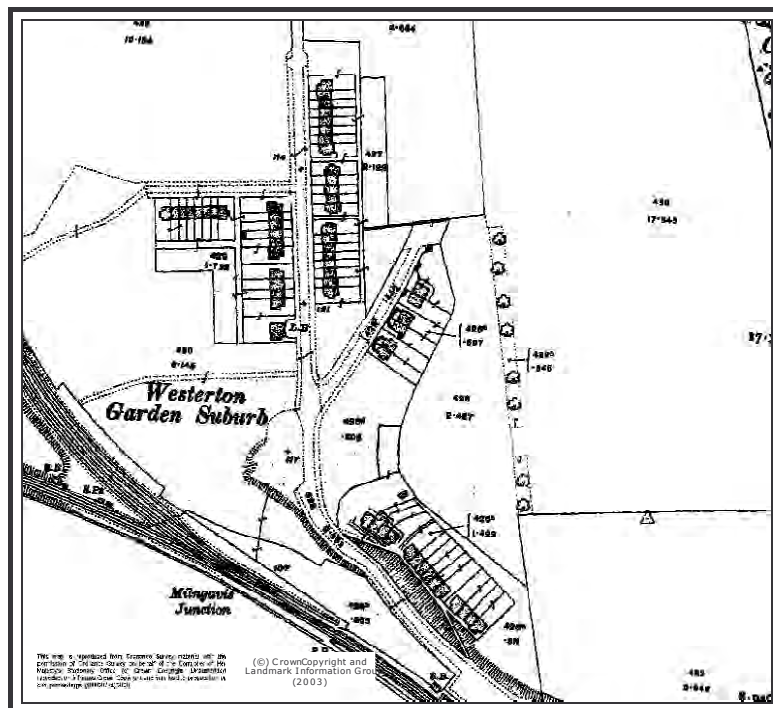
MAPS OF THE CA

I. Locality Map

2. Historic Maps



O.S. Map c. 1860's



O.S. Map c. 1910's

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTERTON GARDEN SUBURB CONSERVATION AREA AND FEATURES OF ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST



Foundation Stone

“WESTERTON GARDEN SUBURB - This is the name now given to the Co-partnership Garden Suburb now in the process of erection on the Canniesburn Golf Course. It is the first example of a Co-partnership Estate in Scotland. The aim is the application of garden city ideals to Glasgow. The scheme is on a sound commercial basis and merits the support of every public spirited citizen who is desirous of seeing a system of housing arise in our midst which makes for better health and improved moral and social conditions.

The Idea arose from the Housing Problem, and its real purpose is shown in its name - The Garden Suburb. It is a successful attempt to establish, on the outskirts of large towns, carefully and beautifully planned estates, where the number of houses to the acre is limited. The congestion of industrial centres is thus relieved, and the worker finds a home in beautiful and healthful surroundings, where he and his family enjoy better health and in consequence become better citizens.”

(Extracts from the Prospectus of the Glasgow Garden Suburb Tenants Ltd. 1913)

Rapid urbanisation in 19thC. Britain raised many serious health and social issues associated with substandard, overcrowded, high density housing. Expanding rail and tram networks did allow wealthier residents to relocate to new 'villa suburbs' in the countryside (such as Bearsden) or nearby coastal towns. However such was the scale of the problem that politicians, social commentators and religious leaders increasingly recognised the need for broader systematic solutions.

One option was to bring the country to the town. Municipal parks were laid out on the edges of towns and cities to provide greenery, fresher air and space for outdoor recreation. Attention was though increasingly given to the possibilities of taking the town to the country, out of which was born the Garden City Movement. Its leading exponent was Ebenezer Howard. His book *Tomorrow - A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* was published in 1898, then re-issued in 1902 as *Garden Cities for Tomorrow*. The 'Cities' were to have a maximum population of 32 000, and provide all classes of people with better standards of housing, decent social and educational facilities and a healthier living environment. Industry would be located on the periphery, encircled by a green belt. Howard also advocated a form of community ownership called co-partnership.

The first Garden City at Letchworth began in the early years of the 1900's. Soon though numerous difficulties in planning and developing these integrated settlements, even at this comparatively small scale, led to more realistic proposals for Garden Suburbs – modest but well designed and laid out co-operatively owned housing in attractive countryside settings.

This indeed was the topic of a lecture, in December 1910, to the Glasgow and Western Scotland Branch of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, presided by Sir John Stirling Maxwell. The main speaker, Councillor Marr from Manchester, sought to distinguish between Garden City and Garden Suburb, the latter deemed... 'the most practical kind of proposal that could be put before the public at present so far as housing is concerned.' Recently enacted planning and housing legislation also allowed for the formation of housing cooperatives.

These two key events led to the creation of an association known as the 'Glasgow Garden Suburb', which first met in January 1911. Again Sir John Stirling Maxwell was to the fore. Initial attention was given to finding suitable ground. Three localities were investigated, two south of Glasgow at Cathcart and Giffnock, and one to the north, at 'Garscube'. By May 1911 negotiations for Cathcart had broken down and Giffnock rejected. Though the ground here was 'fairly suitable' it was '... a 10 minute walk from the station and the service of the trains was not very good.'

Thus ground at the Garscube Estate, adjoining the North British Railway, was finally chosen. With an option on 200 acres of land and somewhat protracted negotiations with the railway company (fearful of competition

from tram services) finally securing a firm commitment to build a railway station, the first general meeting of the Glasgow Garden Suburb Tenants Ltd (GGST) took place in April 1912. The GGST secured the supervisory services of Raymond Unwin, a prominent architect in the Garden City Movement, and heavily involved in the design and layout of Letchworth Garden City and Hampstead Garden Suburb. The main contract architect was J.A.W. Grant (whose early career crossed with Charles Rennie Mackintosh), and who went on, in the inter-war years, to design several award winning municipal housing developments.

Upwards of 300 houses were originally envisaged, with 120 or so planned for the initial phase, constructed on flatter lower lying ground adjacent to the new station. Taking its name from an abandoned farm steading - Westerton Garden Suburb - 'Glasgow's First Garden Suburb' - came into existence. The foundation stone was laid by Lady Campbell of Succoth on the 19th April 1913, whose party travelled by train from Glasgow city centre. 84 houses and a shop with flat over were completed before construction ceased in 1915 as a consequence of the outbreak of World War I. Though tentative steps were taken to resume building at the end of the War, local authorities were soon after invested with regulatory powers and resources to design and build larger scale municipal housing schemes, as exemplified by nearby Knightswood. Increasing affluence and mobility also led to the rapid inter-war expansion of suburbs of more affordable private housing.

Westerton Garden Suburb did though continue to be occupied and managed on a co-partnership basis. A strong community identity was fostered and maintained. Social events centred around the village hall and recreation ground, and the Co-operative store was another focus of community activity.

The co-partnership arrangement finally ceased in 1988, the limited company was dissolved and the houses passed into individual private ownership.

FEATURES OF ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

A specific objective of the **Garden Cities Movement** was the provision of quality family housing in an attractive setting. The design of **Westerton** was supervised by the architect **Raymond Unwin**, a leading figure of the **Garden Cities Movement**, and to whom is attributed the anglicised cottage arts and crafts house designs.

Appendix I comprises of extracts from **Historic Scotland's** statutory list of buildings of architectural and historic interest. The first thing of note is the identification of 13 separate terraces (from 3 to 8 units long) and 4 pairs of semi-detached houses. All houses are of a 'cottage' scale, one and a half to two storeys, the first floor partially or completely accommodated in roof spaces of varying design. Windows, dormers and doors have been sized and positioned to ensure pleasing symmetry and proportions.

The extracts detail common design elements but also highlight features distinguishing one building from another, marking a conscious effort by the architects and the **GGST** to create houses of complimentary but individual character and appearance.

The most consistent external finish is harl or wet dash render, perhaps the main concession to traditional/vernacular finishes of Scottish domestic buildings. Between each building there is though subtle variations in texture and colour. Roofs are also mainly slate, again displaying variations in colour, for example on either side of **North View**. The terraces at 41-49 and 58-64 **Maxwell Avenue** are though finished in red clay tiles. Though increasingly popular in inter-war years this was, at this time, an innovative material for west central Scotland. The contrast in colour and texture enlivens the streetscape of **Maxwell Avenue** and the tile colour is also picked up by the red brick chimney stacks.

Finer architectural detailing on individual buildings includes:-

- i) **Main roofs** - Displaying a range of intricate subsidiary features, such as wall head gables, hipped ends, valleys and varied eaves lines, sometimes sweeping over projecting ground floor windows and porches or forming canopies over main doors.
- ii) **Windows** - Mainly timber sash and case on main elevations, the lower sash having one pane of plate glass, the upper divided into smaller panes by astragals. They can also be of a casement design, particularly on in-roof dormers, but occasionally dormers are also sash and case.
- iii) **Dormers** - Various wall head designs with flat, hipped and gabled roofs and flat roofed dormers on the main roof slopes.

iv) Doors and porches - In various positions, paired or on the flanks, sometimes with canopies, either flat and suspended with ornamented iron ties or slate roofed on timber brackets.

v) Half timbering on wall head gables.

vi) Chimney stacks - Mostly harled (some having a slight batter). but some constructed of red brick and incorporating corbelling.

vii) Miscellaneous features such as ridge and hip tiles, cast iron 'rain water goods' such as rhones, gutters and hoppers, lead flashings, original timber front doors and timber features such as brackets and barge boards.

The following sequence of pictures illustrates a selection of this ornamentation and detailing.



Slate Roof, Brick Chimney Stacks and Flat Roofed Dormers



**Original Timber Doors with
Slated Canopy**



Canted Bay Windows