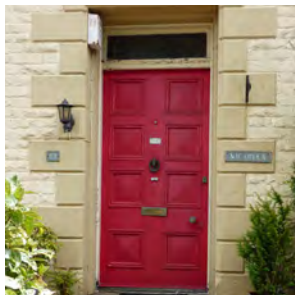
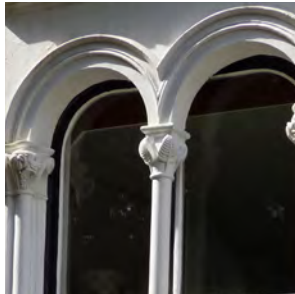




Community and Enterprise Resources

Biggar Conservation Area



Biggar Conservation Area

Definition of a conservation area

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 sets out the current legislative framework for the designation of conservation areas, defining conservation areas “as an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” Planning authorities are required to periodically determine which parts of their district merit designation as a conservation area.

The historic core of Biggar was one of the first conservation areas in South Lanarkshire, originally designated in 1972 with boundary amendments in 1982. The early designation of Biggar not only reflected the quality of many of its individual buildings, many of which are listed, but the relationship of the buildings to each other and to spaces (streets, closes, public parks) in which they are contained or help to form.

What does conservation area status mean?

Designation of a conservation area does not mean development is prohibited. However, when considering development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to its character and appearance. Greater control over development is available to us as a planning authority within a conservation area and the purpose of this is to protect and enhance the character and unique identity of Biggar, from taking care with the treatment of details to the larger scale of requiring new extensions or buildings which are sympathetic to their surroundings.

General description

The main identity of Biggar is formed by the long High Street, narrow in the west but opening out to the former market square. The High Street we see today is largely the product of major redevelopment in the 19th century, although some earlier buildings still survive. This development was, however, still influenced by medieval land ownership patterns with their narrow frontages onto the High Street, although the market square was significantly reduced in width and several buildings built jutting into the central space. Victorian expansion resulted in many routes being formed and new residential areas such as Rowhead Terrace being constructed.

The earlier buildings tend to be one or more commonly two storeys, built of semi-tooled stone and slate, with three window fronts. Architectural detail is limited to an occasional columned doorway or carved skewput. The Victorian period is also characterised by the use of slate and stone, although often highly worked to a stage called ashlar; and specimen types of architectural style. Many more buildings for public uses were constructed including schools, churches and banks. Existing buildings were altered by devices such as a bay window, the pairing of windows or a canted bay dormer in the roofspace.

The architecture or buildings of Biggar are far from identical, yet most buildings have certain important characteristics which help to bind them together to form a pleasing townscape. Biggar also contains a wealth of detail as craftsmen or later architects, sought to incorporate motifs to reflect the owner's status or the function of the building.

Some details within the conservation area:

- Wallhead dormer windows with timber bargeboards and finial
- Hand painted fascia on shopfronts with 'Art Nouveau' lettering
- Circular dormer windows
- Ornamental skewputs
- End chimney stacks with projecting stone cope and fireclay can

History

The immediate area of Biggar is important in terms of early settlement and evidence of later Norman influence and fortification is seen in the surviving Motte Hill. The history of Biggar is strongly tied with the Fleming family who had strong feudal powers over a defined area known as a barony, and evidence of whose wealth can still be appreciated in the ruins of nearby Boghall Castle.

The creation of a nucleated settlement or burgh is however, directly linked to the Royal Charter of 1451. Biggar was one of many Burghs of Barony created in the late 15th century and this status allowed certain privileges and restrictive practices, although trading rights were more restricted than that of a Royal Burgh such as Lanark. The prosperity of the town was closely tied to the surrounding countryside and Biggar was an important market centre. The town we see today is, however, largely the product of the wealth and changes created by the late 18th and 19th century revolutions in agriculture, industry and communications.

Building characteristics

Whilst it is important to conserve the best buildings, it is also important to respect details. Biggar not only has many interesting buildings, but a wealth of detail that should be safeguarded and reinforced where applicable.

Stone – until the First World War, most buildings in Biggar were constructed in stone, either whinstone or a range of sandstones. Not only does the stone provide a rich variety of colours, but in Biggar, there is tremendous variety of stone masonry and detailing, from the earlier coursed rubble with dressed stone around windows and doors to the smooth polished and squared stonework known as ashlar.

In Biggar, a common feature is the use of whinstone and sandstone on the same building to provide a colour contrast, as well as differences in texture caused by method of masonry construction. Many walls contain small stones, either rough or squared, known as snecks which make an important contribution to surface texture. The latter feature in particular can suffer from bad repointing work.

Roofs - the use of Scottish slate is common place. This roofing material came into common usage at the end of the 18th century and a typical pitch of the roofs is 45 degrees, steep by modern standards. Slate is unfortunately no longer quarried in Scotland and the main

source is therefore second-hand from building demolition. Slate has many qualities, both as a roofing material and visually through different sizing and grading, to a subtle variation in colours from grey to purple. The treatment of gables; skews; cast iron gutters and downpipes; chimney stacks often with moulded copes and fireclay cans and traditional dormer windows, also individually and collectively make a contribution to the roofscape.

Windows and doors

The role of traditional sash and case windows must be emphasised. In general, the openings did increase in size from the late 18th century to the late 19th century, but still retained the essential vertical emphasis and proportions. The development of window styles reflected changes in glass technology, but the method of construction and opening essentially remained the same. Most modern window types are not suitable as they adversely affect the character of the building. In many cases, only traditional timber sash and case with appropriate detailing would be acceptable.

Doors too are often overlooked and the relationship to fanlights misinterpreted when being replaced. Traditional doors are timber, solid with the emphasis changing from vertical lined boards to four or six panelled doors, often with double opening.

Detailed guidance on what is likely to be acceptable is found in our guide, 'Windows and doors for listed buildings and conservation areas' which is on the Council website at: http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/7633/windows_and_doors_for_listed_buildings_and_conservation_areas

Textures and colours

The variety of textures is widened by the smooth cement renders to simulate ashlar or the application of traditional wet dash harling. Applied colour plays an important part, from the painting of window bands to colour schemes for individual buildings or groupings. In either case, insensitively applied colour can mar the appearance of the building or jar an effective grouping of buildings.

In the High Street, with its commercial focus, the role of traditional shopfronts and sympathetically designed advertisements all have their part to play.

Further information and guidance on the historic environment

South Lanarkshire Council's adopted local development plan (2015) contains its policy on the historic environment:

https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/7600/south_lanarkshire_local_development_plan_proposed_may_2013

South Lanarkshire Council has also prepared supplementary guidance on the natural and historic environment:

http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/9921/natural_and_historic_environment

Historic Environment Scotland has a series of guidance notes which provide advice on best practice on how to make changes to listed buildings or to properties in conservation areas. They cover a range of topics including extensions, interiors, roofs, windows and shopfronts. They can be viewed or downloaded at:

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/managing-change-in-the-historic-environment-guidance-notes/>

Permissions and procedures

The following summarises some of the types of development which require planning permission in a conservation area.

Alterations to houses

If your property is within the conservation area, you will require planning permission from the Council before making alterations to your house, including:

- the erection of any extension or porch
- the erection of sheds, garages, greenhouses, huts or decking etc if they have a floor area exceeding 4 square metres
- adding to or altering the roof of your property, including the formation of dormer windows and rooflights, or changing the roofing material
- the erection or construction of any access ramp outside an external door of your house
- replacement windows or doors, installation of solar panels, flues, satellite dishes etc
- any building, engineering or other operation
- provision of a hard surface in your garden ground
- the installation of a freestanding wind turbine or air source heat pump
- the installation of CCTV
- changing the walling material (eg from stone to roughcast), stonecleaning or painting the exterior of the house

Alterations to flats

If you live in a flat in a conservation area, there are no permitted development rights and you will require planning permission for any external alterations or development.

Walls and fences

You need planning permission if you want to erect any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.

Demolition

Complete or substantial demolition of any unlisted building within the conservation area requires permission from the Council called 'Conservation Area Consent'.

Trees in conservation areas

Trees in conservation areas which are already protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) are subject to the normal TPO controls. The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) 1997 as amended also makes special provision for trees in conservation areas which are not the subject of a TPO. Anyone proposing to cut down or carry out work on a tree in a conservation area is required to give the Council six weeks prior notice. The purpose of this requirement is to give us an opportunity to consider whether a TPO should be made in respect of the tree. Any notified works must be carried out within two years from the date of the notice. Failure to give notice to the Council renders the person liable to the same penalties as for contravention of a TPO.

Shops and offices

The extension or external alteration of a shop or or financial or professional services establishment needs planning permission in a conservation area.

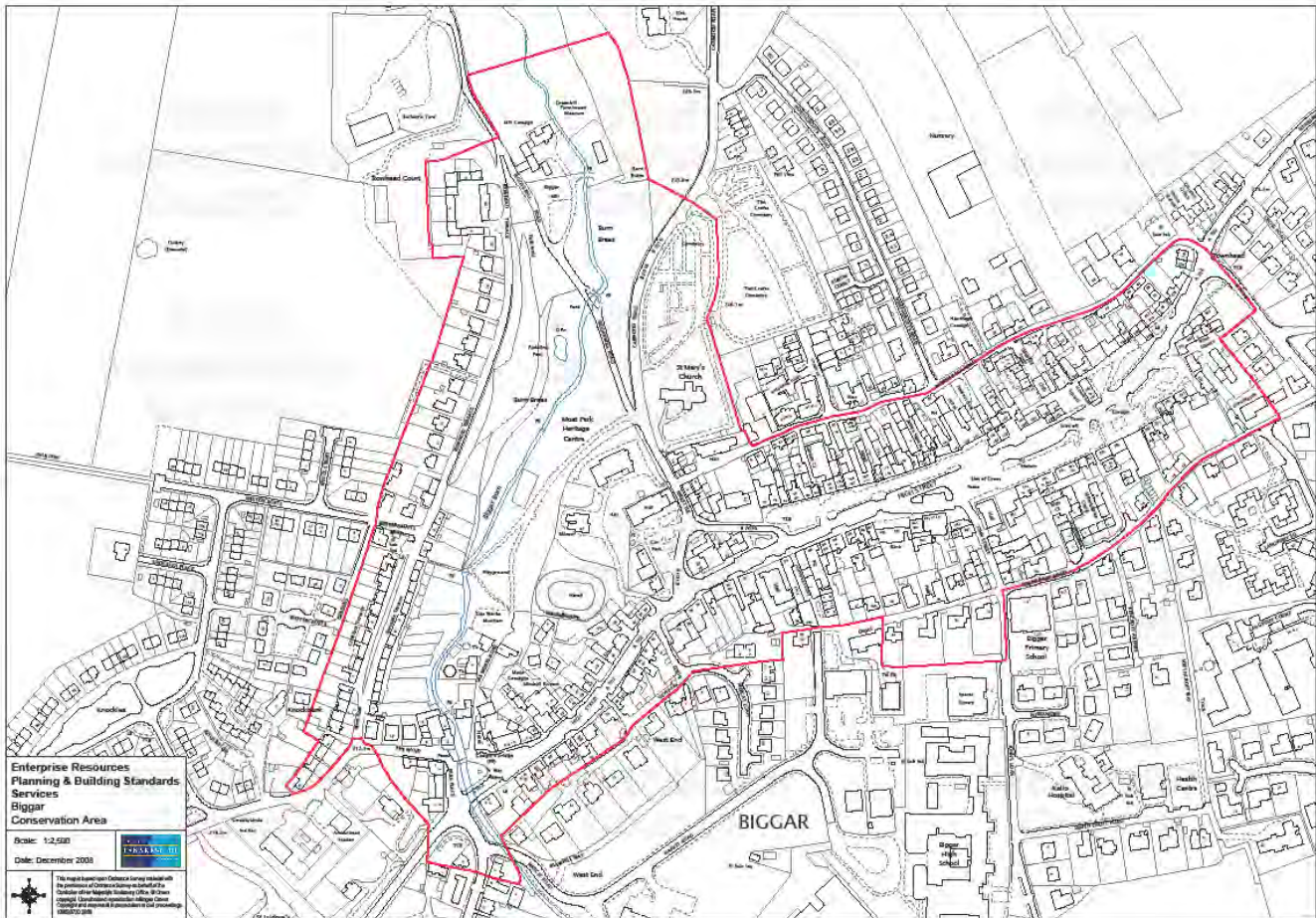
Listed buildings

Listed building consent is required for any works that affect the external or internal character of a listed building. You can check if your property is a listed building on the Historic Environment Scotland website: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/>

Contact

Address	Planning and Economic Development Montrose House 154 Montrose Crescent Hamilton ML3 6LB
Phone	0303 123 1015
Planning email	planning@southlanarkshire.gov.uk
Building Standards email	buildingstandards@southlanarkshire.gov.uk
Opening times	Monday to Thursday 8.45am – 4.45pm; Friday 8.45am – 4.15pm
Disabled access	Parking bays for disabled users to front of building. Ramped access to automatic door. Lift and toilet facilities for disabled users

Biggar conservation area boundary



If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Phone 0303 123 1015 or email: equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk