



Community and Enterprise Resources

Lesmahagow conservation area



Lesmahagow 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.

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. The purpose of this is to protect and enhance the character and unique identity of Lesmahagow, 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 Lesmahagow is formed by Abbeygreen, the long main street with its gentle curve and changing viewpoints. Although few buildings are of significant architectural merit, their position within the street pattern offers considerable townscape interest. This identity or townscape is created by the near continuous rows of two storey buildings which jut in and out along the edge of the road and the dominating presence of the church spire. Of major significance are the trees which form a visual stop when looking southwards from Abbeygreen.

The buildings we see today mostly date from the 19th century. The earlier buildings tend to be one, or more commonly, two storey, slated and with stone walls, now often rendered. They are distinguished from the later buildings of the Victorian period by lower ceiling heights, giving the buildings a squatter appearance. The Victorian period is also characterised by the use of slate and stone, though often highly worked to a stage called ashlar. Common features are the rows of purpose built shopfronts with flats above. Architectural details such as the pairing of windows, bay windows and attractively detailed dormer windows all contribute to the character of the conservation area.

The architecture or buildings of Lesmahagow are far from identical, yet most buildings have certain important characteristics which help to bind them together to form a pleasing townscape and individual detailing which should be safeguarded.

History

Lesmahagow Priory was founded c1140 by King David, and John Bishop of Glasgow and was part of the Order of Tiron whose abbeys included Arbroath and Kelso. The Priory survived the Reformation and the nave and tower remained until 1803, when they were

demolished to make way for the present church. The layout of the priory was established following an archaeological excavation.

The creation of a nucleated settlement or burgh is, however, linked to the Royal Charter of 1668. Lesmahagow was one of a series of Burghs of Barony created in the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire in the late 17th century. This status allowed certain privileges and restrictive practices, thereby fostering the consolidation of a settlement. The prosperity of the settlement was initially related to the Priory and to the surrounding countryside, with later associated activities such as handloom weaving. From the early 19th century, with the discovery of nearby coalfields and the development of the railway, coalmining dominated the town and was the basis of the wealth which created the town as we see it today.

Building characteristics

Whilst it is important to conserve the best buildings, it is also important to respect details and the common factors which give Lesmahagow its identity. Lesmahagow 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 Lesmahagow were constructed of stone. Not only does the stone provide a variety of colours, but in Lesmahagow, 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. Many of the buildings are finished in stucco which is scored to simulate ashlar stonework. The variety of textures is increased by the frequent use of traditional wet dash harling, particularly on the older buildings.

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 eg skewes; 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. The complex roofscape of Lesmahagow is of interest and is best viewed from New Trows Road.

Textures and colours

The variation in texture and colour in Lesmahagow has been reduced by the common use of paint, either on the commercially based ground floor or on the building as a whole. Whilst some buildings have been sympathetically treated, there is further scope for colour schemes designed not only to respect the architectural character itself, but to complement or reinforce an effective grouping of buildings. The painting of previously unpainted stonework will not in general be encouraged.

Shopfronts and advertisements

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

contains original shopfronts with their subtle detailing, narrow fascias and hand painted lettering. These are still in good condition and should be safeguarded and reinforced by attention to detail.

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 may 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

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 render 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.

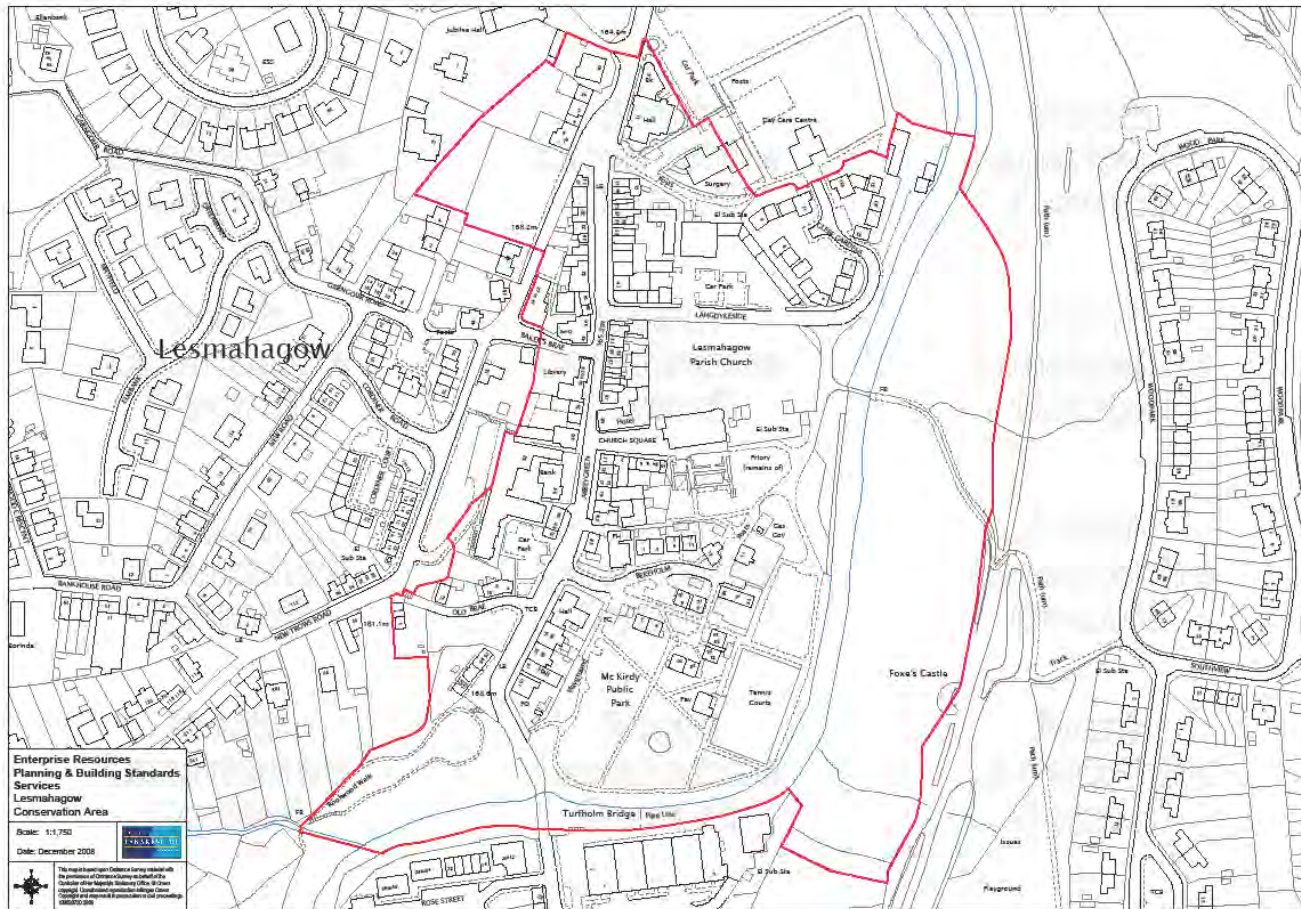
Listed buildings

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

Lesmahagow 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