



BALMERINO CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

and

MANAGEMENT PLAN



**ECONOMY, PLANNING AND
EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES**

APPROVED FEBRUARY 2017

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1.0 Introduction & Purpose

1.1 Conservation Areas

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

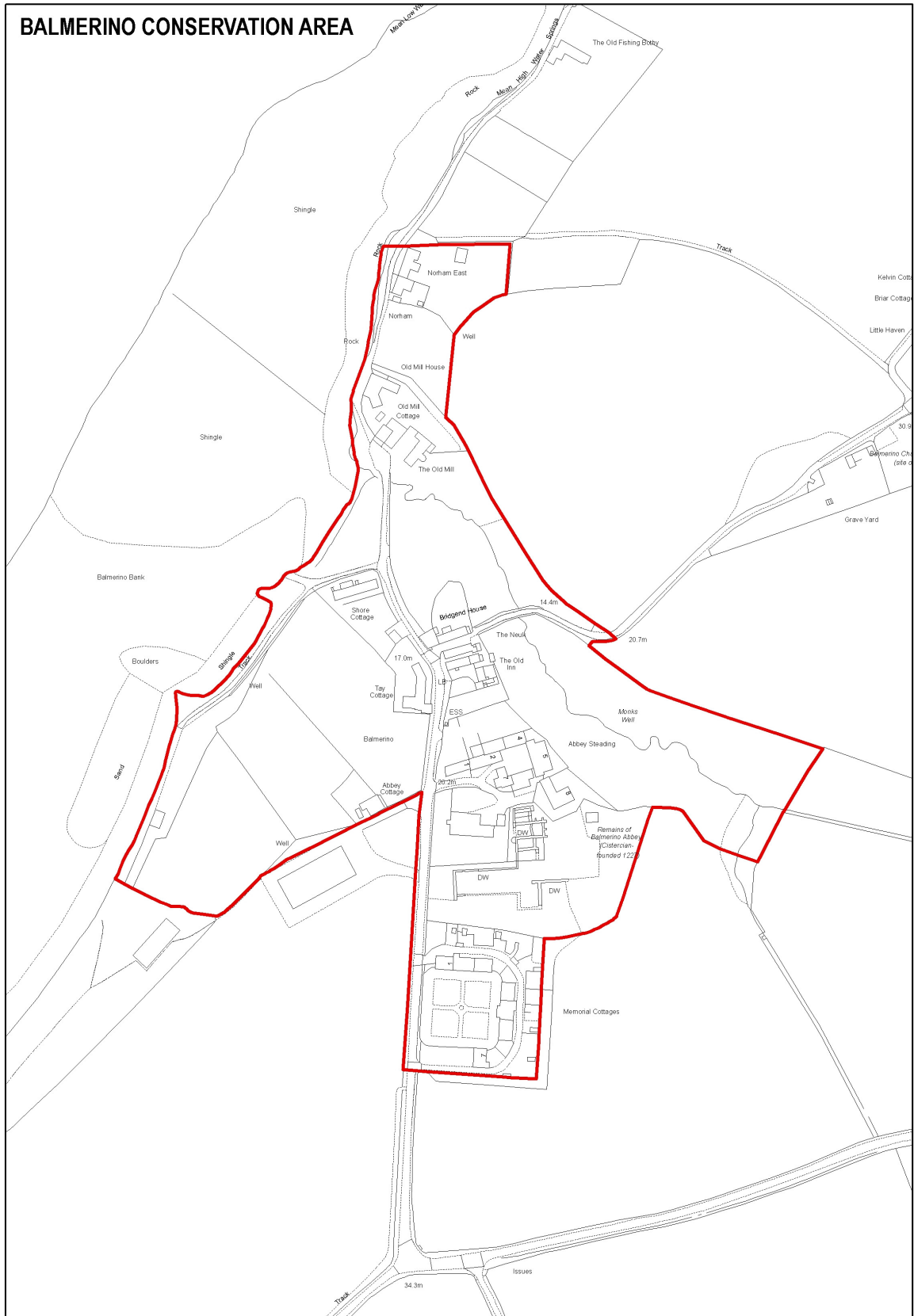
Conservation area designation is not a means to preserve an area without change, but there is a joint responsibility between residents and the Council to ensure that change is not indiscriminate or damaging and that the unique character of each area is respected. In this way, communities can benefit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

1.2 Purpose of this Document

Balmerino conservation area was designated in 1984 in recognition of its special historical and architectural interest. The purpose of this appraisal is to:

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

BALMERINO CONSERVATION AREA



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2.0 Location, History and Development



Former Abbey Chapter House



Remains of former harbour pier



The former harbour in the middle distance looking SW from the Old Mill

Balmerino is located on the bank of the Tay River approximately 8 km south west of Newport-on-Tay. The conservation area comprises of the whole of this small hamlet which is clustered around the ruined 13th century Cistercian Abbey. The settlement developed again in the 18th century to service harbour trade exporting lime from the Fife Hills to the Carse of Gowrie and corn to Dundee, and in the 19th century with the growth of salmon fishing. The surviving buildings reflect these periods of growth. The name Balmerino may derive from the Gaelic words to mean 'farm abounding in sea-bent'.

In the 18th century there was a ferry twice a week to Dundee. The harbour is described in the Old Statistical Account (OSA) as '*...a creek belonging to the custom house of Dundee, is the chief place on the Forth side of the Tay for shipping of wheat and barley for the Forth and Canal.*' The pier and quay was first designed in 1750s for shipping lime from the Fife Hills to Dundee but by the 1790s all lime was coming from Charlestown in SW Fife and from South Southerland. The harbour is described as '*...but trifling*'. But as the harbour traffic declined it is noted that there were eight salmon '*fishings*' in the parish on the banks of the Tay, which were '*...becoming very valuable of late*'.

By the time the New Statistical Account (NSA) was published in 1835 the main employment in the parish was weaving and agriculture and the produce of salmon fishings '*which used to be immense*' was '*now very inconsiderable*'. The former fishermen were employed in weaving or some young men in the winter months were '*engaged in Greenland whale fishery*'. That said it should be noted that the Tay Salmon Fisheries Company was established in 1899 eventually becoming one of the biggest such operations in the country. Net fishing was a major industry on the Tay as a whole until the 1980s when salmon numbers began to decline. Coble and net fishing was seasonal so large numbers of summer workers were needed each year and housed in riverside bothies. The population of the parish as a whole had in 1835 '*been steadily on the increase for many years past, owing to feuing, and to its vicinity to Dundee, where employment can easily be procured in the manufacture of linen etc.*' Between



18th century 'Old Inn' - Category B listed



18th century Bridgend House and Commalton behind the inn - Category C listed



Typical salmon fishing bothies on the Tay



1755 and 1837 the population of the parish grew from 565 to 1070. In 1846 the population of Balmerino was 62. About the same time it is described as '*a nice little fishing village*'. The NSA repeats the claim in the OSA that '*few places in Fife can boast of a healthier climate*' and even seems to link this with the high number of twins being born.

The limitations of the harbour are noted in the NSA - '*vessels of limited berth only can approach...*'. Navigation or shipping was '*on a meagre scale*'. Coal was discharged and though no longer grain, potatoes were shipped out to London. There was still a passenger boat to Dundee but only once a week. In the hamlet there was little business. It comments that there was not even a baker, butcher or brewer. Although there was no turnpike road in the parish, the statute roads were said to be in good condition. Westwood's Parochial Directory notes in 1862 and 1866 respectively, two blacksmiths; a boot and shoe maker; one and later two corn millers; a farmer and later a vintner but nothing else. The inclusion of a 'vintner' would in this context mean no more than someone who sold beer, probably at the 'Old Inn' servicing passengers waiting for the weekly ferry to Dundee.



'Balmerinoch'. Extract from Joan Blaeu map 1654. Source: National Library of Scotland



'Balmarinoe'. Extract from John Adair map 1700. Source: National Library of Scotland



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



Extract from Sharpe, Greenwood and Fowler map 1828. Pier is shown. Source: National Library of Scotland



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

3.0 Character and Appearance

3.1 Setting

The setting has been important in shaping the special character and development of the settlement. The proximity and access to the River Tay gave rise to shipping, ferries and salmon fishing, a rich surrounding agricultural hinterland, a burn to power the water mill, a healthy elevated escarpment site and relative seclusion for the original Cistercian Abbey all contributed.

3.2 Street Pattern and Topography

The current settlement has remained essentially the same as shown on the 1894 Ordnance Survey map below (but with the Memorial Square added on the southern edge in 1948). The mill pond shown on the map behind the 1743 dated sluiced bridge/dam is now barely evident. The pier has all but disappeared under the water although the remains of masonry can still be seen.



View upwards from the east

The Old Statistical Account (OSA) compiled in the 1790s describes Balmerino as '*...almost a fermicircle, with the church in the centre, and the northern half of the circle cut off by the Tay.*' The settlement is essentially a loose collection of groups of buildings along a single road which runs northwards from inland to terminate on the bank of the River Tay. Historically it branched north and south to serve the corn mill, harbour and salmon fishing. To the south and west the ground slopes



View upwards from the north

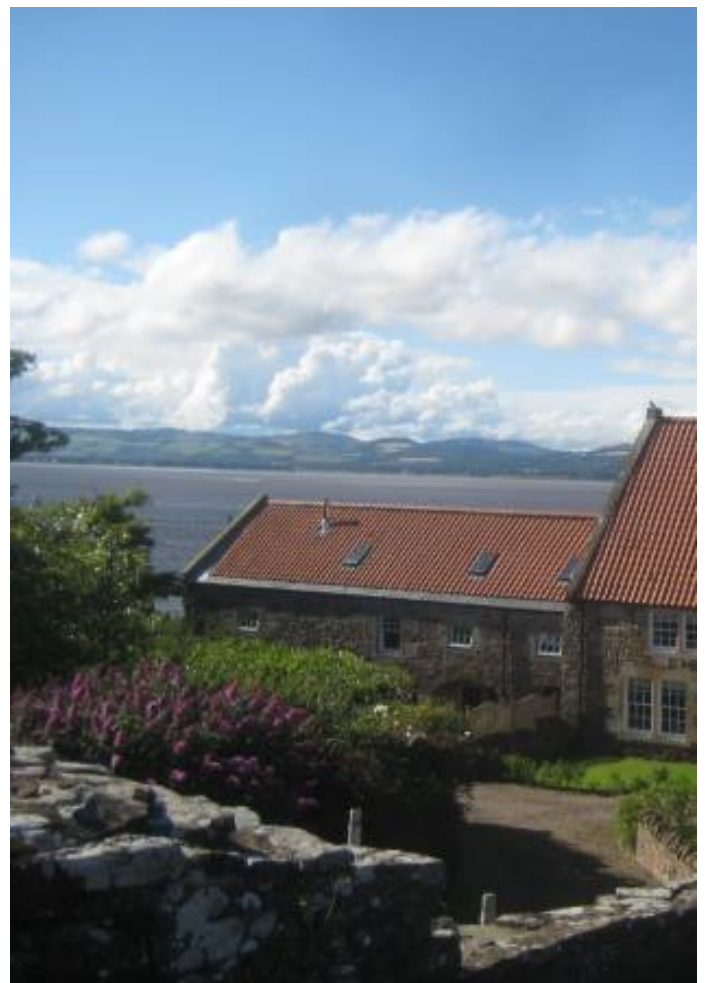


View looking upstream

gently. To the north the land drops steeply down an escarpment to the riverside and to the east to a burn. This gave the farm steading and formerly the Abbey considerable visual prominence in the surrounding landscape and when viewed from the river.



Extract from Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition 6" map of 1894. Source: National Library of Scotland



View looking north towards the Tay River from the Abbey Chapter House over the roof of former farm steading.

3.3 Buildings and Townscape

3.3.1 Building Types

The conservation area as a whole is characterised by the variety of buildings and structures. They form loose groupings separated by green spaces or farmland:

- ruined 13th century Abbey buildings
- former farm buildings, including 15th century barn, within a mid-19th century steading; associated stockman's house and farm house
- 18th century/early 19th century bridge, mill; salmon fishing bothies and houses
- Mid-20th century Memorial Home

3.3.2 Distinctive Architectural Styles, Detailing and Materials

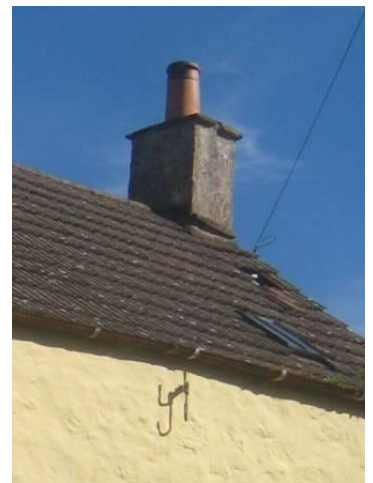
The relatively few vernacular buildings are built in simplified versions of the characteristic Fife rural vernacular' style of the 18th and 19th centuries, with pantile roofs but barely raised gable skews and little ornamentation. None have Corbie or crow-step gables seen elsewhere in Fife. Except inappropriately on new additions to the farm steading there are no slate easing courses. There is evidence of roofs being altered from steeper pitches for thatch to pantile and slate, with possibly the loss of earlier detailing such as thackstones. Walls are generally constructed in squared rubble with dressed margins using local sandstone and whitewashed.



Unusual octagonal chimney head on the much altered original 19th century farm stockman's house.



Traditional style cottage door



Evidence of former thatched roofs. Thackstone evident to right and steeper pitches. Ridge lowered (left) and pantiles; original pitch but later pantiles replaced with concrete tiles.

What may have been very modest salmon fishermen's bothies have in modern times been greatly enlarged and up-graded. The memorial Square buildings are an eclectic mixture of Fife vernacular single storey cottages with Georgian fanlights, a Georgian classical tetrastyle R-doric portice and Georgian cast-iron urns on the terminal piers.

3.3.3 Orientation and Density



Buildings face the main through road to the former pier and riverside. Others face the riverbank. The farm buildings are functionally orientated towards each other, as are the ruined Abbey buildings.

A characteristic of the hamlet is the very low density of development. The loose open grain of the settlement being interspersed with many greenspaces, agricultural land or semi-natural woodland. Groups of buildings are set back from the road or separated by the escarpment which backs the river bank. This special character and appearance could be easily destroyed by unsympathetic infill type new development.



At the date of writing an application (15/01912/PPP) is being considered for consent to build a house on the above previously undeveloped plot within the heart of the hamlet.



'Old Inn'



Abbey Cottage



Norham



Memorial Cottages

3.3.4 Key Listed and Unlisted Buildings

There are 8 statutory list entries for the conservation area (ref. Appendix 2 for full details and photographs). Balmerino Abbey Conventual Buildings and Barn; Abbey and associated Church; Abbots House and Effigies are Scheduled Monuments.

The Abbey ruins are largely self-contained and out of sight from the wider conservation areas though historically highly significant. The Memorial Square is largely self-contained; however, it is more visible being located on the main route in and out. It's modest scale and grassed courtyard further adds a quiet contemplative calm to that of the neighbouring Abbey ruins. The rural and riverside setting and large proportion of green space within the settlement further enhances this character.



Former Chapter House, rebuilt in 15th century and extended to east in 16th.

As the settlement is so small, although not listed all the other buildings including for example Abbey Cottage and Norham, contribute in some way to the special character of the conservation area.

3.4 Spaces

There are few public open spaces. There are maintained grassed grounds to the Abbey ruins and a small grassed area on the foreshore.



Public art sculpture enhancing the character of the conservation area.



River bank looking south towards the former harbour

The conservation area includes some large areas of greenspace which gives it much of its special character. The abovementioned riverbank and beach area around the former jetty and wharf and fields behind has the Fife Coastal path run through it and includes a section of what was the access track. Similarly the riverbank to the north has a track linking the row of former salmon fishers' bothies and open fields between and behind.



Above: View of steading and abbey across former 'Mill pond'



Above and below: category B listed 18th century bridge/dam. Above view looking downstream to sluiced opening.



Pond overflow channel. Source: Canmore



View of dam sluiced outlet from downstream. Source: Canmore



View of dam from upstream. Source: Canmore

To the north of the former Abbey and steading, there is an area of grassland where there would have been the 'mill pond'. The sluiced bridge/dam (see photographs above) would have containing a head of water for the mill below where the burn flows into the creek next to the former water mill. This area of uncultivated land contains the 'Monks' Road' and 'Monks' Well' but has potential to be enhanced as a natural asset for the conservation area and perhaps returned to closer to its original historic character and appearance.

3.5 Trees and Landscaping

There is no formal landscaping within the conservation area although trees can be seen throughout the conservation area. Sometimes beyond in the surrounding countryside, visible due to the open low density grain of the settlement.



Typical woodland around conservation area edges.



Ancient sweet chestnut tree in the Abbey grounds



View of main street looking north

The Abbey grounds contain a sweet chestnut tree which, according to tree-ring dating carried out by the National Trust for Scotland is almost 500 years old and so qualifies as the oldest tree in Fife. Modern arboriculture best practice would advise a number of measures to better care for the tree to protect its special interest.

There are no individual Tree Preservation Orders, however, all trees within the conservation area are protected and permission is required for felling or lopping.

3.6 Activity and Movement

There is little activity or movement within the conservation area. There is limited roadside parking next to the entrance to the Abbey grounds and for a few vehicles near the river. Vehicular traffic is confined to that generated by small numbers of residents and visitors to the Abbey enjoying the walks in the area. One of which is the Fife Coastal Path which passes through the conservation area, diverted inland from its riverside route (although the old sign directing walkers west along the riverbank confusingly remains). Another, the 'Monks' Road' footpath passes along the northern edge of the conservation area.



Way marker for the Fife Coastal Path



Way markers for the Monks' Road and Fife Coastal Path

4.0 Public Realm Audit

4.1 Street Furniture



Quality modern decorative wrought iron gate to Abbey grounds

Historically there was no street lighting. The recently installed street lights with utilitarian steel columns of hollow circular section and reproduction 'period' lamps have no historic precedent and confuse the authentic character of the conservation area. Other items of street furniture can have an impact, such as litter bins. The historic quality of a conservation area can be diminished by the casual use of ersatz 'heritage' furniture from a catalogue.

The selection of any 'period' item off-the-peg should be based on archival documentation or other historical research. If no documentation or historic precedent exists, the next best option is to procure high quality street furniture to complement the architecture and character of the conservation area.



'Heritage range' street light and bin



Though not strictly street furniture other items such as a letter box or bollard can add to the historic character and appearance of the public realm.



Traditional cast iron wall post box



Cast iron bollard

4.2 Surfacing

Street surfaces are significant as the foreground and setting for historic buildings. They also give cohesion and character to the streetscape as a whole. Historic surfaces if present often acquire the patina of time and past activity, and have cultural meaning. They are of their place and usually reflect local geology. Once removed such surfaces cannot easily be replaced. There is no visible surviving historic surfacing within the conservation area. New surface treatments should be sympathetic with the age of the majority of the listed buildings in the conservation area. In the case of Balmerino conservation area there is no single dominant period although late 18th/early 19th century is the most represented by surviving buildings.

The present character of the conservation area with soft edges without gutters or raised kerbs is appropriate. The road surface would have been at best of compacted stone chippings and dust or clinker, simulated today by bitumen or asphalt with locally sourced fine stone chippings for the surface course. Historically, there may have been cobbled or whinstone spalls or horonized strips in front of some buildings and in other high traffic areas. Sett paving was expensive and used selectively for high wear areas such as entrances to steadings.

4.3 Information and Interpretation Boards



Old style National Trust for Scotland directional signage



Community notice board and Abbey information board



There are no interpretation/interpretation boards or any other signage to indicate that a conservation

area exists or what is of special architectural or historic interest. These are recommended. There is, however, good information on the Abbey itself, located within its grounds and a well-used community notice board.

5.0 Survey of Specific Issues

5.1 Building Materials and Details

The correct use of traditional materials and detailing is important in defining and enhancing the special character of the area. Roofs for example, form a dominant character element in vernacular architecture. Where examples still exist they are particularly valuable in helping inform the choice of appropriate new materials or details. Materials or components have a limited life. Many will have already been renewed. It may not simply be a case of replacing like for like or retaining things as they were at the date of statutory listing. Buildings have been re-roofed for example with inappropriate modern concrete tiles; a porch roof has had the Victorian slate roof replace in pantiles; or a raised skew has been capped in lead sheet.



Unusual lying pane glazing pattern window



Remnants of carved stonework (above and below) now incorporated into the 19th century farm steading buildings. The above possibly 16th century door pediment is re-dated 1849.



Modern concrete tiles on an 18th century roof which may have been thatched originally.



Inappropriate non-traditional detailing and use of materials at chimney head/gable (lead sheet capping).

The particular mix and diversity of materials can be an important component of the character of an area. However, using similar types of slate or pantile particularly on a single terrace of houses or cottages even though they are in different ownership helps enhance their architectural and historic identity. Similarly, too great a variety of chimney can or ridge or skew treatments may have an adverse impact. 18th century or earlier buildings may currently use materials that were not available when built and whilst for example it is not practical to re-instate what would have been originally thatch in many cases, a more historically contemporary material may help enhance the significance.

The loss of chimney cans or heads from now redundant chimneys further diminishes the historic and architectural character. Often this includes the loss of thackstones which are usually reminders that the roof would have been originally thatched. The correct use of traditional building materials and methods can greatly enhance the historic character, as well as protect buildings.

6.0 Negative Factors

One of the challenges faced by the historic environment, as identified in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy Statement 2016 which sets out the Scottish Ministers' policies for the historic environment, is:

"...inappropriate change that reduces the cultural significance, or detracts from the appearance or quality of conservation areas."

6.1 Unsympathetic New Development or Conversion of Buildings



Above and below – various views of the Balmerino Steading residential conversion.

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

"...it is important not only to identify and to protect their character and setting but also to ensure that new development responds to their existing form and layout. Successful new design frequently grows out of a careful study and analysis of the nature, form and history of a specific place. This helps



Above category B listed 18th century former corn water mill (incorporating earlier elements) pre-development.

Below post development: total loss of original identity.



Suburban and modern features added: eaves raised; new chimney heads x3; new modern roof lights x4; doors changed to French windows; re-modelling of end bay; new windows x4 in gable wall; gable where there was probably a piend roof; chimney head; rainwater goods, etc.

identify the 'DNA' of a place – how it has come down to us today and what were the key factors that have influenced its current form. It is important to stress that this process of analysis does not only describe what currently makes up a place – the form, layout and materials used – but it also involves understanding how its individual elements were created and why they took the form they did. Getting behind the appearance of a place is crucial to understanding and appreciating the linear patterns of development within a historic burgh, a planned neo-classical suburb or a 20th-century new town. Each place has its own character and its own story to tell.”

Traditional rural vernacular buildings such as steadings and mills, from the 18th and 19th centuries, are a major feature of the Scottish landscape, and an important part of Scotland's architectural and cultural heritage. During the 20th century, changes in agricultural practice such as increased mechanisation resulted in many such buildings falling redundant. Their conversion to residential and other uses offers a finite number of exceptional opportunities, not only to increase the level and variety of the housing stock, but to create for each owner, a dwelling of highly individualistic character within an attractive rural setting.

Local and national policy acknowledges that redundant agricultural buildings have the potential to make highly attractive homes. In converting these properties for residential use, the temptation is often to incorporate standardised domestic features, which result in very modest vernacular buildings becoming suburban in appearance. In doing so, their original character and setting can be compromised. The best conversions reinforce the original architectural qualities of the building. Sometimes, innovative and contemporary interventions can successfully contrast with, yet highlight, a building's traditional qualities.

Retention of Original Building Identity

Original characteristics of a stading or mill that is to be converted for residential or other use, should be retained, and consideration given to the reinstatement of significant or attractive features that have previously been removed. Alterations should be the minimum necessary to allow the

building to function adequately in its new use, and should not disguise its original purpose.



Pre-redevelopment photograph illustrates the agricultural (not domestic) character of the steading buildings.

A founding principle in adapting buildings of historic character, is that within practical limits, the user should adapt the use of the building to suit its form, rather than adapt the building to suit the use, which can lead to major and harmful transformation.



Cumulative negative impact of an accumulation of inappropriate alterations and additions. Completely new building in foreground.



View pre-development above (source: Canmore) post development left. Complete loss of identity of category A listed 15th century barn.



Note above: domestic style and additional windows, flue pipe and rooflights in roof; door converted to window; inappropriate modern slate easing course; rainwater downpipe; enclosed 'garden' with modern style trellis fencing and hedging. Not visible in the above are the former cart shed open bays now enclosed with heavy framed windows which read architecturally as such.

The following publications provide useful and detailed complementary guidance applicable to the conversion of rural vernacular buildings including steadings and mills:

- Scottish Executive: **The Conversion of Redundant Farm Steadings to Other Uses**
- Historic Environment Scotland: **Guide for Practitioners 1 – Rural Buildings of the Lothians – Conservation and Conversion**

6.2 Replacement Windows and Doors



PVCu replacement of a traditional timber sash and case window on a listed building

Windows and doors play an important role in defining character, particularly in vernacular architecture where they are dominant elements. Inappropriate replacements can easily adversely affect this. The opportunity should be taken whenever possible to replace inappropriate windows and doors with well-designed traditional timber sash and case windows or solid timber plank or panelled doors.

Even where windows have been replaced with traditional style timber sash and case ones, the detailing may be inappropriate and give a modern appearance which detracts from the significance. For example 'trickle vents' for double glazed windows are not a traditional feature and should be concealed if possible or avoided. 'Horns' on sash windows are similarly not traditional on multi-pane windows, which did not need this additional joint strengthening feature (allowing a full tenon joint), prior to the use of float glass in the mid-19th century. Similar considerations need to be applied to doors where inappropriate ironmongery or glazed panels can have a significant impact.



Inappropriate detailing making the above window on a listed building appear modern: trickle vent; horns; glazing beads; thicker frame; different refractive properties of double glazing.

Fife Council Planning Customer Guidelines
Windows in Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are available online on www.fifedirect.org.uk.
 There is additional guidance from Historic Environment Scotland: *Guide for Practitioners 3: Conservation of Timber Sash and Case Windows; Looking After Your Sash and Case Windows; and Policy Guidance for Windows in Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas*.

6.3 Views /Vistas

Views and vistas within, across, out and towards the conservation area contribute much to the special character of a conservation area. In relation to the Balmerino conservation area the most important is the view of the main street when approaching from inland. There are glimpses of the river Tay at various points which are an important

visual link with past activities. Although mostly elevated the woodland surrounding much of the area prevents expansive views. The views looking up-stream and down-stream from the riverbank are particularly important and vulnerable to any inappropriate changes.

7.0 Sensitivity Analysis

7.1 Materials



Modern concrete roof tiles

Modern cement mortars and renders have been inappropriately used on traditional masonry buildings throughout the conservation area. There is also widespread use of modern film-forming masonry paints. These types of paint and mortar are harmful from a technical viewpoint as they trap moisture within the masonry and accelerate decay. In addition to trapping moisture, cement-rich mortars and renders do not absorb moisture either directly or through drawing it from the less porous adjacent stone to allow it to freely dissipate over a large surface area. Instead the adjacent stone will absorb a greater proportion of the moisture. Depending on the location it may also absorb run-off from adjacent surfaces. The combined result will be the accelerated decay of the stone. Also aesthetically they are historically incorrect and do not protect or enhance the special character of either buildings or the area. Lime based paints and mortars should be used or breathable liquid silicate (mineral) paints. Traditional lime mortars, harls and colour washes should be used rather than the extensive use of wet dash modern cement renders, mortars and modern masonry paints.

7.2 Colours

The choice of colour can greatly affect the character of a historic building or area. Within the conservation area brilliant white, which was not historically available, is widely used for external renders, windows and other woodwork. Off-whites (not creams) are historically more appropriate. Pigments for lime-washes for walls may have been derived from a range of animal, vegetable or mineral sources, provided that they were alkali resistant. Natural earth pigments and even lamp black may have been used in the past as they were cheap and readily available. Natural impurities in the local limestone used for producing the slaked



Traditional off-white limewash would be more appropriate than the present 'Ochra' colour.

lime for the lime-wash would have produced various off-whites, but not the brilliant whites seen today. Finishes would also have been softer and not the high gloss/ high sheen finishes common today.

Certain dark colours may be more appropriate for windows, having a historic precedent. External woodwork was not usually varnished and so is not generally an appropriate finish within the conservation area. In exceptional cases poorer quality external woodwork may have been painted to simulate a high quality hardwood. It may, in these exceptional cases be acceptable to use external varnishes if supporting evidence can be provided. Colours used should be restrained as intense colours were historically not generally available. Care needs to be taken to avoid non-traditional colours which have no historic precedent and may detract from the special character of the area.

Primary colours should be avoided for doors and for picking out margins although strong traditional colours in deep shades are acceptable for doors. The use of black for contrasting door and window margins is often considered traditional although this would have had a very different appearance to the modern intense high gloss blacks and whites so often seen.

Unless stone is of poor quality/durability or harled or rendered, masonry should not be painted. Modern film-forming paints should be avoided in favour of lime-washes or liquid silicate paints which allow the masonry to 'breathe'. An added benefit of lime based paints is they produce a less uniform, more historically accurate finish.

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

7.3 Alterations and Additions



Satellite dish on steading building visible from within the Abbey grounds

Historic Environment Scotland guidance *Managing Change in the Historic Environment. External Fixtures* warns of the potential cumulative detrimental effect and incremental damage which can be caused by relatively small scale inappropriate additions. The introduction of a new architectural feature or addition to a listed building should be avoided if there is no historic precedent or evidence for it. An extension or addition to a building or the introduction of a new feature such as a garage door, dormer window or roof-light may harm the special character of the building and the area.



Now hidden behind a high hedge and new wall, Balmerino farmhouse (above) would historically have been a highly visible and prominent building. It would have made a significant contribution to the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

8.0 Buildings at Risk Survey

There is one building in the conservation area, category C listed 18th century Commalton and Bridgend House, currently on the national Buildings at Risk Register maintained by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland on behalf of Historic Scotland. In addition, the Abbey ruins which are a Scheduled Monument and include the category A listed Chapter House are in urgent need of attention to address ongoing damage caused by rainwater saturation of the masonry.



Commalon and Bridgend House



Abbey Chapter House

9.0 Opportunities

9.1 Boundary Refinement

It is recommended that the conservation area is extended northwards to include the 'Old Fishing Bothy' and the intervening section of riverbank and adjacent fields as shown on the map included as Appendix 3. The riverside location and historic importance of salmon fishing are vital components of the special character and appearance of the settlement. The special character of the open river bank with the bothies located at intervals is still strongly evoked by the existing buildings although much altered.



Typical Tay salmon fishing riverside activities and bothys



Former salmon fishing bothy subject of planning application 14/03859/FULL

It is noted however that there is a pending planning application (14/03859/FULL) for a substantial new house to be built next to the Old Fishing Bothy. Whilst the context and setting for the former fishing bothy has been compromised by the existing adjoining modern house there are still considerable benefits in being able to control any further future development by extending the conservation area as proposed.



The conservation area presently extends to include the old Mill Cottage and Norham East Cottages

9.2 Article 4 Direction

In order to properly ensure that the character of a conservation area is not affected by inappropriate alteration or development, additional controls are generally used by making what is known as an Article 4 Direction (Article 4 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) Scotland, Order 1992). Article 4 Directions are in place in all existing conservation areas in Fife and they can be varied according to the particular needs and character of an area. The current Article 4 Direction is considered to be sufficiently up to requires renewal following the recent changes in permitted development rights set out in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 which came into force on 6th February 2012. Further amendments and refinements are proposed to the non-domestic elements of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) and impact of these will similarly be assessed. Details of the current

Balmerino Conservation Area Article 4 Direction are provided in Appendix 4.

10.0 Conservation Strategy

10.1 Planning Policy

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

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997
Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006
Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1979
Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992
Scottish Historic Environmental Policy (SHEP) – October 2011
Scottish Planning Policy – 2014
Planning Advice Note 71: Conservation Area Management – 2005
Approved TAYplan (2012)
Adopted St Andrews and East Fife Local Plan (2012)
FIFEplan Proposed Local Development Plan 2014
Article 4 Directions (Article 4 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992)
Making Fife's Places Planning Policy Guidance 2015

TAYplan, through Policy 3: Managing TAYplan's Assets, aims to ensure that Local Development Plans ensure responsible management of natural and historic assets including townscapes, archaeology, historic buildings and monuments. TAYplan also prioritises the re-use of previously developed land and buildings (particularly listed buildings).

The St Andrews and East Fife Local Plan (2012) provides the existing adopted policy framework and is a material consideration in any development proposals for the village. In summary, this framework is as follows:

Policy E2 Development Within Town and Village Envelopes

Policy E3 Development Quality –
Environmental Impact
Policy E4 Development Quality - Design
Policy E5 Housing Development and Open
Space
Policies E7 to E9, covers Conservation
Areas, Listed Buildings and Demolition of
Listed Buildings
Policy E10 Protection of Orchards and Riggs
Policy E13 Street Furniture

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

FIFEplan – Local Development Plan 2014. Planning Policy is currently being updated through the production of a Local Development Plan for the whole of Fife. When adopted in 2017 this will replace the St Andrews and East Fife Local Plan (2012). Policy context is provided in:

Policy 1 – Policy Principles
Policy 14- Built and Historic Environment

10.2 Long Term Management

The policies contained within Local Development Plan 2014 and the adopted St Andrews and East Fife Plan provide continuing commitment to regeneration and enhancement of the built heritage.

10.3 Customer Guidelines

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

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

Fife Council takes enforcement action against

unauthorised development. This is further supplemented by the use of urgent and full repair notices that are most commonly applied under Building Regulations legislation. Where necessary the Council is also committed to the use of Compulsory Purchase to secure the repair or redevelopment of buildings and sites.

10.4 Grants and Funding

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

12.0 Monitoring and Review

There are currently no formal monitoring programmes in place for Balmerino conservation area. It will be reviewed annually on an informal basis by one of Fife Council's Built Heritage Officers. Policies relating to the Conservation Area will also be reviewed at 5 year intervals with the production of the Local Plan which covers St Andrews and the East Fife area.

12.0 Further Advice

For general advice and advice on grants contact:

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

Telephone: 08451 555 555 (X476998)

13.0 Recommended Reading and Other Resources

The following are recommended:

The Buildings Of Scotland – Fife. Gifford, J. (1988) Penguin Books, London

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

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

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

Around North East Fife. Pearson, J.M. (2004), (ed), Levenmouth Printers: Buckhaven

The Place-Names of Fife, Vol. 2; Taylor, S. (2008), Shaun Tyas, Donington

Life on the Edge. The Cistercian Abbey of Balmerino, Fife (Scotland). A Journal of Historical Studies. , 2008, Citeau: Commentarii cistercienses, Forges-Chimay, Belgium ISSN 0774-4910; ISBN 978-2-9600647-1-1

APPENDIX 1

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION FOR BALMERINO CONSERVATION AREA

Commencing on the "Gauldry Road" which runs north/south through Balmerino at a point 120 metres north of its junction with the Hazelton Walls/Bottomcraig Road, thence in a northerly direction along the western boundary of the "Gauldry Road" for a distance of 175 metres to the south eastern boundary of the field to the west of Balmerino (Parcel No. 6672) thence south/west along said boundary to the southernmost point of said field, thence north west along the south western boundary of said field to the foreshore of the River Tay, thereafter north east along the said foreshore for a distance of 485 metres to a point opposite the northern boundary of Norham East, thence east along said boundary and south and south west along the east and south east boundaries respectively to the southernmost point of the property. Thence south across the adjacent field (Parcel No. 0004) for a distance of 60 metres to the north eastern boundary of the tree belt, adjacent the "disused mill", thence south east along said boundary for a distance of 160 metres to the Balmerino/Kirkton of Balmerino Road. Thereafter west along said road for a distance of 20 metres to the north eastern boundary of the field to the east of Balmerino which contains Monk's Well (Parcel No. 0070), thence south east along said boundary for a distance of 180 metres to the easternmost point of said field thence south west along the south eastern boundary and west along the southern boundary of said field to the eastern boundary of Balmerino Abbey, thence south and east along said boundary to the eastern boundary of Memorial Cottages thence south along said boundary and west along the southern boundary of said cottages to the point of commencement.

STREET INDEX:

Tay Cottage; Shore Cottage; Norham East; Norham Cottage; Mill House and disused Mill; Bridgend Cottage; The Neuk; The Old Inn; Balmerino Farm and Steading; Balmerino Abbey; Abbey Cottage; The Bungalow; Eastshore Cottage.

APPENDIX 2

LISTED BUILDINGS AND SCHEDULED MONUMENTS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

PROPOSED EXTENSION TO CONSERVATION AREA



APPENDIX 4

BALMERINO CONSERVATION AREA ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

Balmerino Conservation Area was first designated in 1984. The following Article 4 Direction under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 is effective for the area as from 25/11/87 (approved by Scottish Office on 17/12/87).

Use Class	Summary Description of Use Class	Requirement for Use Class
Part 1 Class 1	The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Part 1 Class 2	Any alterations to the roof of a dwellinghouse including the enlargement of a dwellinghouse by way of an alteration to its roof.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Part 1 Class 3	The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, or the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure.	To protect the historic fabric, special character and visual amenity of the area.
Part 1 Class 6	The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna on a dwellinghouse or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Part 2 Class 7	The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.	To prevent indiscriminate repair of the historic fabric (boundary walls) through use of inappropriate building methods and materials or inappropriate alteration or new build within garden ground boundaries.
Part 2 Class 8	The formation, laying out and construction of a means of access to a road which is not a trunk road or a classified road, where that access is required in connection with development permitted by any class in this Schedule other than Class 7.	To prevent unmitigated development and inappropriate alteration and/or development within garden ground.
Part 6 Class 18	The carrying out on agricultural land compromised in an agricultural unit of (a) works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building, (b) the formation, alteration or maintenance of private ways, or (c) any excavation or engineering operations, requisite for the purposes of agriculture	To prevent unmitigated development and inappropriate alteration and/or development within agricultural ground.

	within that unit.	
Part 9 Class 27	The carrying out on land within the boundaries of a private road or private way of works required for the maintenance or improvement of the road or way.	To prevent unmitigated development and inappropriate alteration and/or development within garden ground.
Part 12 Class 30	The erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority of certain buildings, works or equipment.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Part 12 Class 31	The carrying out by a roads authority on land outwith but adjoining the boundary of an existing road or works required for or incidental to the maintenance or improvement of the road.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building methods and materials where applicable.
Part 12 Class 32	Any development relating to sewerage by a regional or islands council being development not above ground level required in connection with the provision, improvement, maintenance or repair of a sewer, outfall pipe or sludge main or associated apparatus.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building methods and materials where applicable.
Part 12 Class 33	The carrying out within their own district by a planning authority of works for the erection of dwellinghouses; any development under the Housing (Scotland Act 1987 (b)); any development under any enactment the estimated cost of which does not exceed £100,000.	To protect the townscape and aesthetic integrity of the area by ensuring that new development is sympathetic in design, layout, fabric and character.
Part 13 Class 38	Development for the purposes of water undertakings.	To protect the special character, fabric and layout of an historic building and the surrounding area in order to prevent uncontrolled site coverage.
Part 13 Class 39	Development for a public gas supplier required for the purposes of its undertaking.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building methods and materials where necessary.
Part 13 Class 40	Development by statutory undertakers for the generation, transmission or supply of electricity for the purposes of their undertaking.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building methods and materials where necessary.
Part 13 Class 41	Tramway or road transport undertakings.	To protect the historic fabric of the area and ensure the replacement and repair of such areas is carried out sympathetically using appropriate building

		methods and materials where necessary.
Part 13 Class 43	Development required for the purposes of the Post Office.	To protect the townscape from indiscriminate installation of boxes, pouches or machines.
Part 20 Class 67	Development by Telecommunications Code Systems Operators	To protect the townscape from indiscriminate installation of telecommunications equipment.

