



PLEWLANDS CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL



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ترجمہ کے لئے حاضر

আনন্দের সঙ্গে অনুবাদ করব

بسمعتنا توفیر الترجمة

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◆ EDINBURGH ◆
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

*THE PLEWLANDS CONSERVATION AREA
CHARACTER APPRAISAL WAS APPROVED BY THE PLANNING
COMMITTEE ON MAY 2010*

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INTRODUCTION

Conservation Areas

Section 61 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, describes conservation areas as “...areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The Act makes provision for the designation of conservation areas as distinct from individual buildings, and planning authorities are required to determine which parts of their areas merit conservation area status.

There are currently 40 conservation areas in Edinburgh, including City centre areas, Victorian suburbs and former villages. Each conservation area has its own unique character and appearance.

Character Appraisals

The protection of an area does not end with conservation area designation; rather designation demonstrates a commitment to positive action for the safeguarding and enhancement of the character and appearance. The planning authority and the Scottish Ministers are obliged to protect conservation areas from development which would adversely affect their special character. It is, therefore, important that both the authorities, other groups who have an interest in conservation and residents are aware of those elements which must be preserved or enhanced.

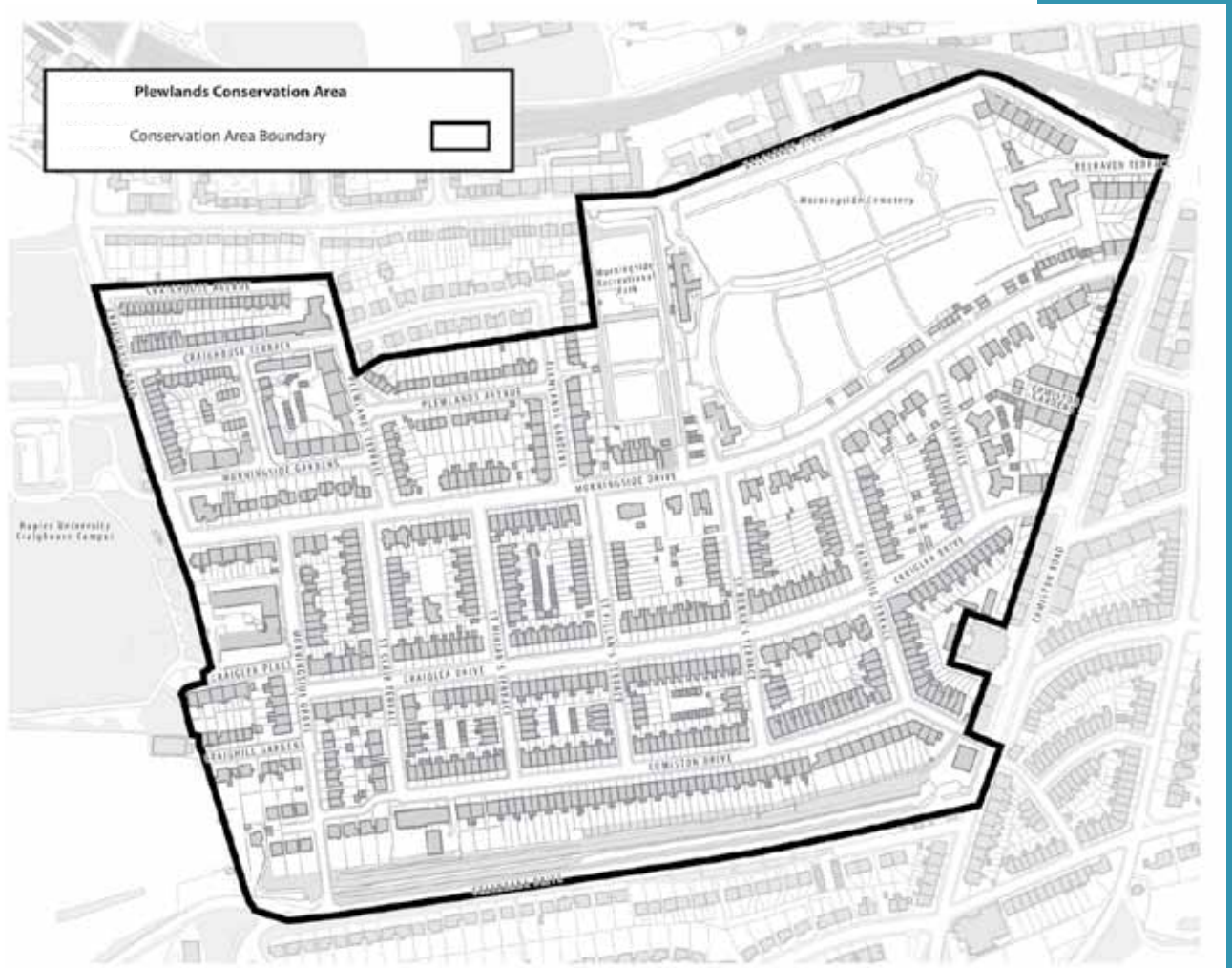
A character appraisal is the best method of defining the key elements which contribute to the special historic and architectural character of an area.

Character appraisals guide the local planning authority in making planning decisions and, where opportunities arise, preparing enhancement proposals. The Character Appraisal will be a material consideration when considering applications for development within the Conservation Area and applications for significant new developments should be accompanied by a contextual analysis that demonstrates how the proposals take account of the essential character of the area as identified in this document.

Plewlands Conservation Area

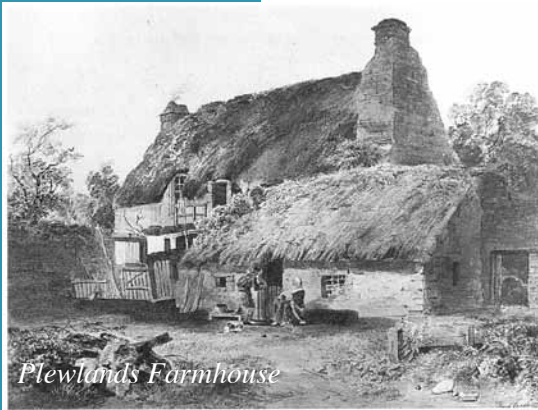
The Plewlands Conservation Area was designated on the 12 February 2010.

The Conservation Area incorporates the mainly residential area to the west of Comiston Road, north of Greenbank Drive, east of the Napier University Craighlockhart campus, and south of Plewlands Gardens and Craighouse Avenue. The area includes Morningside Cemetery. It is bounded to the east by the Morningside Conservation area and to the west by the Craighlockhart Hills Conservation Area.



HISTORICAL ORIGINS & DEVELOPMENT

The name Plewlands has been associated with the area under consideration since at least 1497, when it was part of the lands of Braid. The original estate consisted of two farms, Over Plewland and Nether Plewland; the former became the area now known as Greenbank and the latter, stretching from the Plewlands Sike (Comiston Burn) to the Briggs o' Braid and from Craighouse to the Biggar Road, became known simply as Plewlands. Plewland refers to the old Scots measurement of area (104 Scots acres or roughly 132 imperial acres) that could be ploughed over the year by a single team of 8 oxen.



Plewlands Farmhouse

Plewlands Farmhouse, situated close to the present Morningside public park, was recognised as a favourite summer retreat in the early nineteenth century. That the area was noted for its health-giving properties was recognised by the building in the late 1870s of what was intended to be the Morningside Hydropathic (near what is now Morningside Grove). This never functioned as a spa (because of the depressed financial climate of the time) and the buildings were occupied in 1882 by Morningside College for Boys. The school moved to new premises in 1889 and from 1890 to 1895 the building, renamed Plewlands House, afforded a more “airy and salubrious situation” for the Royal Hospital

for Sick Children than its previous premises in the Lauriston area. Plewlands was considered as a permanent site, but its distance from the centre of the City was, at that time, regarded as a drawback and, in 1895, the hospital moved to purpose-built accommodation in Sciennes. On being vacated Plewlands House was demolished and it is said that much of the stonework was reused in building the terrace that forms 28-38 Morningside Grove.

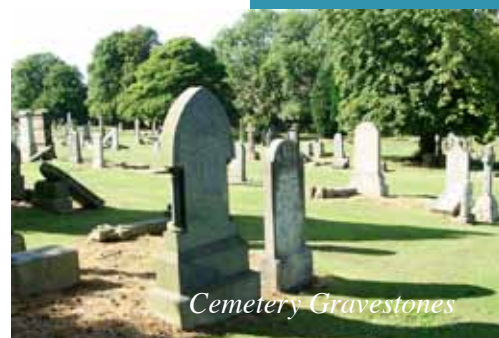


Morningside Cemetery

Morningside Cemetery occupies the north east corner of the area (to the north of Morningside Drive). The cemetery was opened in 1878 by the Metropolitan Cemetery Company Ltd in response to the Medical Officer of Health, Dr Henry Littlejohn's recommendations that new cemetery development should be outwith the city boundary to avoid the undesirable proximity of dwellings and graves, and to provide sufficient space for all burials to take place at a desirable depth. The layout of Morningside Cemetery is an example of the principles of cemetery design laid down by John Claudius Loudon. There are no catacombs and access to the gravesides is facilitated by wide drives.

The previously employed “pleasure ground” tree planting scheme was rejected in favour of isolated evergreens which would not obstruct the free flow of air. Besides a cenotaph to the dead of the First World War and some individual war

graves, it contains a number of monuments to minor but interesting figures in history. Perhaps the most well-known is Robert Louis Stevenson's nurse, Alison Cunningham (the dedicatee of "A Child's Garden of Verses"). Other noteworthy internments include David Livingstone's daughter, Thomas Carlyle's nephew, Georg Lichtenstein, an exiled member of the revolutionary Hungarian government of 1848, and Sir Edward Appleton, Nobel Prize winner. It is also the burial place of the Cadell sisters, key figures in the opening up of medical education in Edinburgh to women. As well as the gravestones of missionaries, colonial administrators, university professors, medical men, writers and artists, there is a large area devoted to the unmarked graves of those who died in the City Poorhouse nearby in Greenbank.

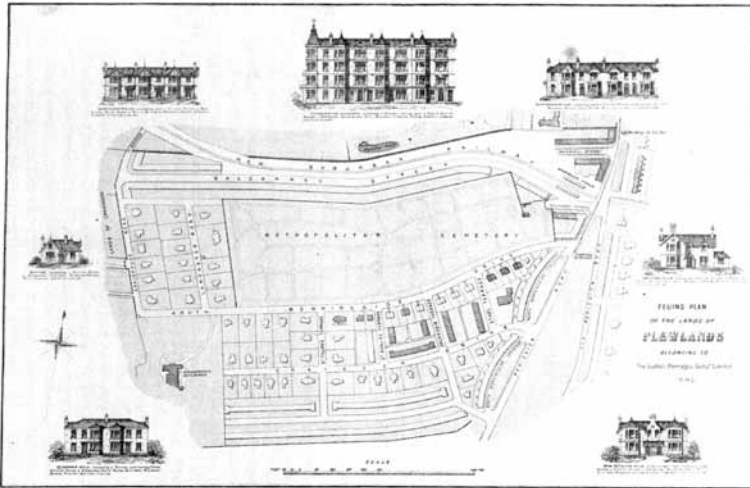


Cemetery Gravestones

The development of the part of the Plewlands Estate to the south of Morningside Drive began in the late 1870s (before the abolition, in 1883, of the toll bar at the Briggs o' Braid and the opening, in 1884, of the South Circular Railway and Morningside Station). The advantages emphasised by the developers (the Scottish Heritages Company Ltd) included the open and healthy situation combined with the favourable climate, the proximity to the tramway and to the planned Suburban Railway, and the fact that the properties would be liable only for county rates, not for municipal rates, but would still have the use of town water, sewerage and gas supplies. The intent was to feu out the bulk of the estate for "villa residences of smaller and more moderate priced villas than had hitherto been fashionable in the suburbs of Edinburgh" ranging from £600 to £1,000. This was in response to the straitened financial circumstances of the time. The feuing plan published in 1883, shows a proposed development with many detached and semidetached villas with some two-storey continuous villas (terraces) and four-storey tenements. However, what were eventually built were largely two-storey terraces with gardens to front and rear. The first of these was Ethel Terrace, building of which started in 1879 to a plan provided by W Hamilton Beattie (the architect of The North British Hotel, Jenner's department store and the short lived Morningside Hydropathic and the architect to The Scottish Heritages Company



Ethel Terrace



Plan of the proposed development of the Plewlands Estate, 1882

itself). A small number of semidetached and flatted semidetached villas were built along Morningside Drive (some of the former also to Hamilton Beattie's plans) and the tenements are almost all found on the periphery on the eastern margin. Development of the area was largely complete by 1900. One of only two detached villas on the site, St Ann's had originally been the residence of a Councillor Younger at Abbey Mount but, was demolished and rebuilt stone by stone on the corner of Morningside Drive and St Fillan's Terrace.

The 1891 census shows the area to have been occupied by rising middle class households headed, for example, by ministers of religion, school teachers, medical students, junior army officers, widows of private means, annuitants, accountants, small businessmen, and bank and insurance clerks. Families tended to be younger and many households employed a resident general servant. The larger houses in Morningside Drive were occupied by more affluent business men, solicitors, bankers, and the like. The area is symbolic of the economic success resulting from the expansion of empire and industry during the period, with the successful civil servants, the new professionals and the emerging middle management seeking a new environment.



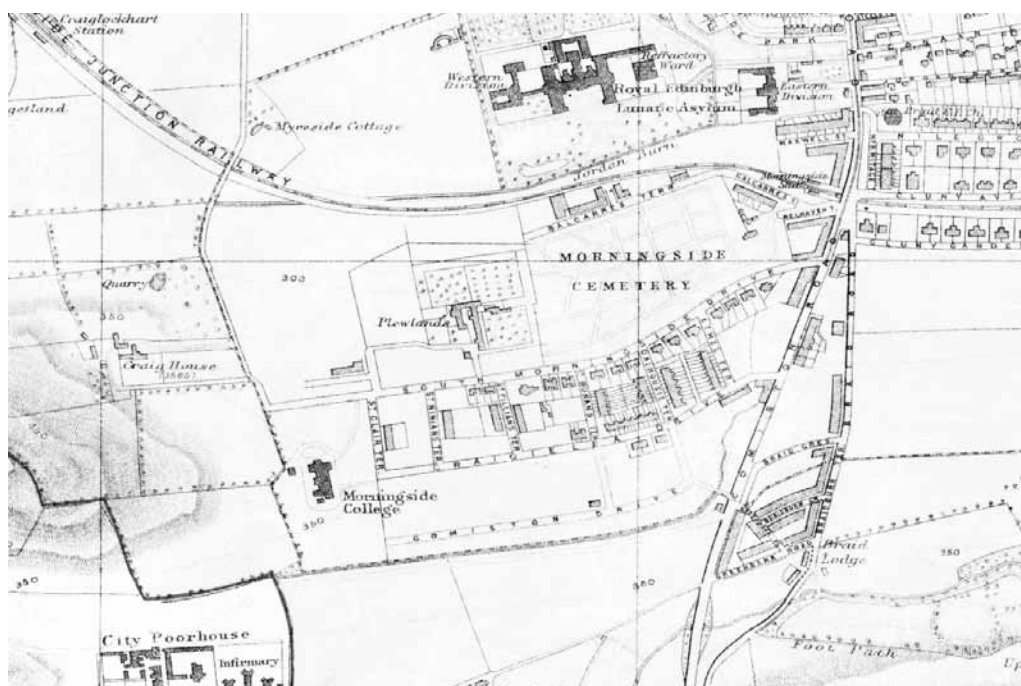
Housing on Morningside Drive



St. Clair Terrace

The area had apparently attracted a notable number of those with a profession in the arts. There are several painters (portrait and landscape) and illustrators, musicians including the composer Alfred E Moffat, popular writers of the time, both male and female, including Joseph Laing Waugh (exponent of the kailyard school) and Hannah B Mackenzie, and photographers. The most notable resident in this group is George Washington Browne, the architect of several of Edinburgh's landmark buildings. He is listed as living at 4 (now renumbered 9) St Clair Terrace. According to

the Dictionary of Scottish Architects he built this house to his own design and it seems almost certain that he designed the entire terrace of six houses (of which number 9 is an integral part of the overall design) shown on Johnston's Plan of Edinburgh of 1888.



The development of the area to the north of Morningside Drive and to the west of the cemetery started rather later and was both more protracted and more varied. There are two-storied terraces in a variety of styles ranging from what is referred to in *The Buildings of Edinburgh* by Gifford et al, as “a cottagery row in Craighouse Terrace by *Dunn & Findlay*, 1899” to the Arts and Crafts of Plewlands Avenue (also by Dunn). The tenements also vary in style from Victorian (Morningside Gardens and Balcarres Street) through Arts and Crafts (Plewlands Terrace) to Art Deco, (corner of Morningside Gardens and Craighouse Park). The remaining spaces, mostly to the north of the site, have been filled with bungalows, semidetached villas and flatted villas and blocks of flats in 1930s and later styles.



Plewlands Terrace



Craighouse Terrace



Art Deco House

ANALYSIS AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER

Spatial Structure and Townscape

The Plewlands area lies just east of Comiston road, which is one of the key arterial routes from Edinburgh to the south west. The area has a prominent location situated within the Braid Burn valley. Blackford Hill and Craiglockhart Hill rise up to the east and west respectively with the Pentland Hills in the distance to the south.

There are three main east-west arteries - Morningside Drive, Craiglea Drive, and Comiston Drive, all meandering very gently and with very flat gradients. Morningside Drive on the northern edge is a main city distributor route lined with large villas. The north-south terraces are very short and considerably steeper, being built against the slope. Each one is uniquely designed.



Craiglea Drive



Morningside Drive



Tenements on Comiston Road



Morningside Park

The spatial structure of the area is characterised by its varied street pattern and terraced properties, contrasted with the green space of Morningside Park and Morningside Cemetery. The scale is set by two storey housing, although the eastern boundary is formed by the large scale tenements on Comiston Road.

The southern part of the area is built along a gently curving ridge rising towards Easter Craiglockhart Hill, with the result that the grid iron street pattern found south of Morningside Drive never becomes oppressive. The curve of the east-west streets (Morningside, Craiglea and Comiston Drives) allows the vistas towards Blackford Hill and Arthur's Seat in the east and Easter Craiglockhart Hill in the west to be gradually revealed, whilst the cross Terraces allow glimpsed views towards the Pentlands to the south and Fife to the north. The gradients in the terraces falling away from Craiglea Drive also add interest with the stepping of the terraced houses down the slope.

To the north the street plan is more irregular with the remnants of the original road from Briggs o' Braid to Craighouse marked by Morningside Gardens and Plewlands Avenue with their offset junction at Plewlands Terrace. The streets at right angles to this original road allow views across Edinburgh and Fife. The streets offer a continually changing experience, with different building types and styles coming into view at every corner.

The clarity and simplicity of the plan give it an elegance which is absent in some plans of the period and in subsequent suburban development. These coincide largely with the demise of terrace housing and the emergence of the bungalow and its space consuming partner, the motorcar. It is the use of terrace housing that gives the area its considerable urban strength.



View to Pentlands



View to Fife



Terraced Housing at Plewlands Gardens

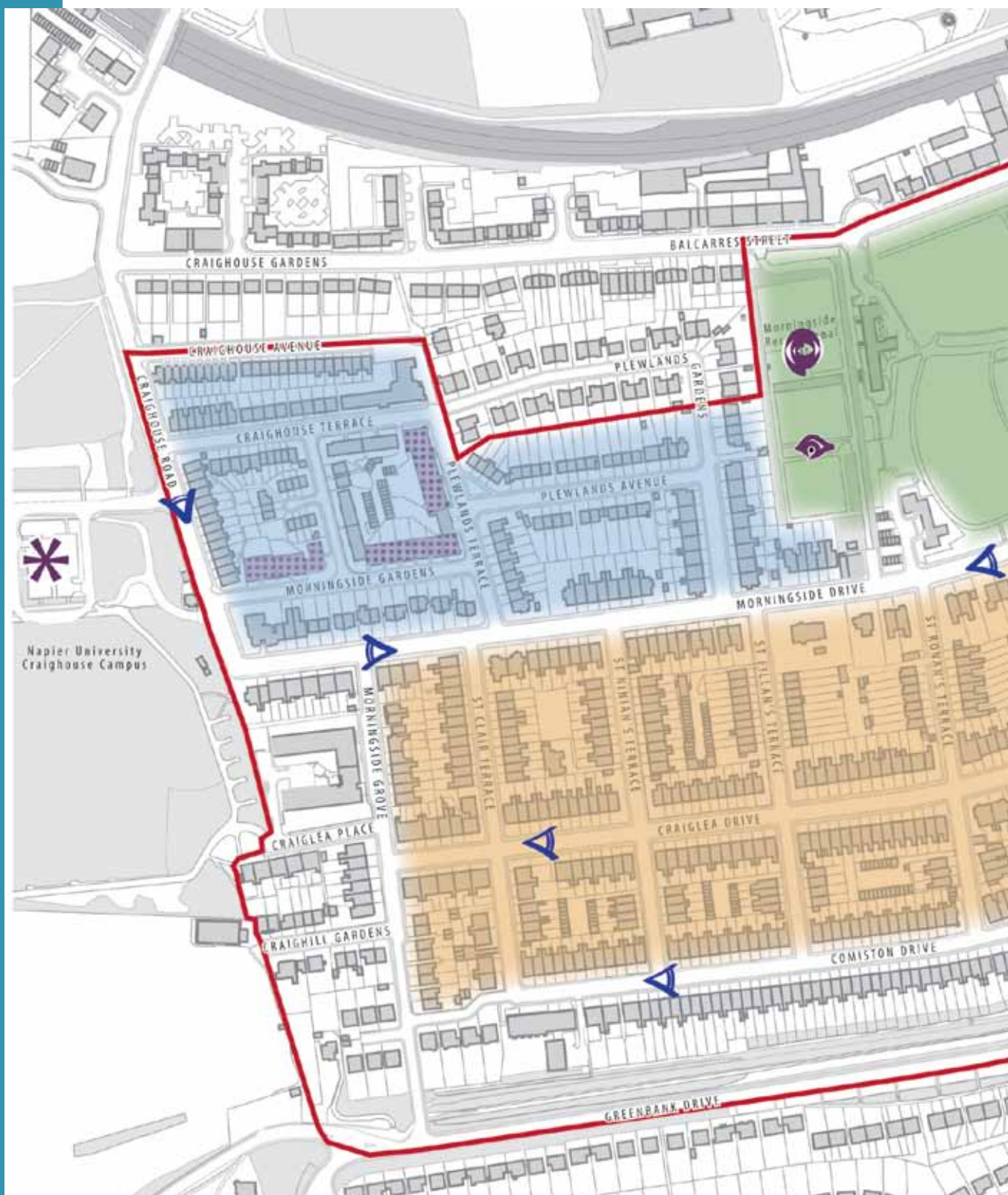


Terraced Housing













Terraced Housing

Spatial Structure & Townscape Map





Key

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Open Space
-  Grid Iron Plan
-  Irregular Street Plan
-  Tenements
-  Activity
-  Focal Point
-  Quiet
-  Vista
-  Landmark



Tenement at Morningside Gardens

The area is mainly comprised of low rise residential development. The predominant height is two storeys but there are a small number of flatted elements of mainly three and four storeys. The buildings are complemented by the profusion of mature trees, extensive garden settings, shallow stone boundary walls and spacious roads. The stone boundary walls give definition to the street layout and create a clear distinction between public and private spaces. Tenemental development is restricted to Morningside Gardens and Morningside Drive. The tenement buildings contrast in mass, density and scale with the main area of detached/semi-detached villas and terraced development.



Terraced Housing

The urban fabric of the area can be divided into a number of distinct zones defined in terms of their building types, heights and density:-

To the North lie a mixture of detached/semi detached villas, tenements and terraces contrasted with the open space of Morningside Park and Morningside Cemetery.

The central grouping of terraced streets including: Ethel Terrace, Dalhousie Terrace, Saint Clair Terrace, Saint Ninians Terrace and Saint Fillans Terrace. This grouping of streets constructed between 1882 and 1886 provides the core of the Plewlands area with a distinctive grid street pattern.



Terraced Housing

The area is a coherent entity and forms a good example of the response to the requirement for homes for the expanding rising middle class of Edinburgh during the last quarter of the 19th century and the first years of the 20th century.

Vistas

Views through the area are important. Travelling from north to south, down through the Braid Valley, the dominant view is that of the Pentland Hills. A spectacular end vista to the west is provided on Morningside Drive in the form of the towering Craighouse Estate, lying on the lower slopes of Easter Craiglockhart Hill. Immediately outwith the boundaries of the conservation area, to the east, is Blackford Hill and Hermitage of Braid Local Nature Reserve which provide a visually dominant backcloth from many points within the area. Looking north from Craighouse Road provides an overview of Merchiston. Views of the River Forth and Fife are also visible in the distance.



View to Craighouse Estate

Architectural Character

Building periods are predominantly late 19th century. The area is mainly composed of Victorian/Edwardian Terraced housing. Building types in the area range from 4-storey Victorian tenement blocks, to 2 and a half storey terraces to 2-storey detached/semi-detached houses. Tenement blocks occupy corner plots throughout the area as building rows continue from Comiston Road. These tenements generally contain shops at ground level, a few with the original frontages remaining.



Shops on Comiston Road

There is an overall architectural coherence with the houses being built of grey or red sandstone and roofed with slate. However, there is a wide range of difference in character mirroring the eclectic stylistic influences prevalent in Victorian and Edwardian architecture. There are also small pockets of Arts and Crafts cottages and a sprinkling of thirties design properties. Further unity is derived from the terraced form of most development.

There is considerable variation in detail between the blocks of terraced houses with very little repetition of design. Although most are two storey, some have mansard roofs forming the second storey. Some houses are flat fronted whilst others have bay windows on the ground floor; others have bays on both floors. Some bays are bow, others are rectangular. St Ronans and Dalhousie Terrace have entirely original conservatories at first floor level poised over the entrance ways to provide an open porch for shelter below. Plewlands Avenue consists of parallel rows of Arts and Crafts terraced cottages with typical upper floor bedroom windows tucked up cosily below the eaves, fine ground floor bay windows and crafted doorway surrounds.



First Floor Conservatories

Whilst most terraces are made up of a series of similar single units, others, notably that putatively by George Washington Browne in St Clair Terrace consist of different units combined to form a coherent whole. Throughout the area there are scatterings of 1960's and 70's development, as well as pockets of more recent new build.



St. Clair Terrace

There are a number of examples of properties that are of interest in terms of the links they offer with the historical and cultural heritage of Edinburgh itself. The house known as St Ann's, on the corner of Morningside Drive and St Fillan's is one such, originally located at Abbey Mount, this house was demolished and rebuilt stone by stone on its present site in the late 19th century; a row of two-storey terraced houses on Ethel Terrace built in the late 1870s, were the design of W Hamilton Beattie (architect of the North British Hotel and Jenner's).



Ethel Terrace

Natural Heritage

Within the proposed boundaries of the area, the environment is predominantly residential; however, there are two important areas of open space. These consist of: Morningside Recreational Park, located just off Morningside Drive, and Morningside Cemetery, which occupies a substantial area of land between Balcarres Street and Morningside Drive. The mature trees and linear planting in the cemetery provide natural heritage interest, with cover and dense habitat areas for wildlife.

Despite this overall lack of public open space within the area, the predominant townscape nature of Victorian/Edwardian properties with their associated large gardens, containing many mature trees, provides an environment of lush greenery. These private gardens are particularly important for providing suitable habitats for birds and wildlife. A feature of Morningside Drive is its stately procession of venerable trees growing up through the narrow pavement on the north side.

There is a clear distinction between front and back, public and private. Front gardens are displays of public pride defined by low walls to allow a good 'keek'. Rear garden walls stand above head height preventing 'keeking' from neighbours.

Activities and Uses

There is a single public building, a red sandstone block of 1888 in French Baroque style, now used as a Masonic Hall, at 11-23 Morningside Drive. The shops and small businesses on the ground floor of this building and the tenement opposite are the only surviving retail spaces in the area. This paucity of public buildings and business premises contributes to the essential character of the whole area which is of quiet, leafy residential streets, virtually unchanged, in the main, since they were built except for the removal of the railings during the Second World War and the advent of the motor car.



Morningside Recreational Park



Morningside Cemetery



Morningside Drive



Masonic Hall

GENERAL INFORMATION

Statutory Policies

The Edinburgh City Local Plan (2010) includes the Plewlands within the general 'Urban Area' where the Plan seeks to ensure that all new development respects the principles of sustainable development and contributes positively to the development of sustainable communities. The area is predominately residential and policies are in place to safeguard the existing residential character and amenities.

The Local Plan contains relevant policy advice on a range of matters. It also contains two specific policies in relation to both development and demolition of buildings within conservation areas. Development proposals in the conservation area are required to take into account the area's special interest and how its character and appearance may be preserved or enhanced.

Implications of Conservation Area Status

Designation as a conservation area has the following implications:

- Permitted development rights under the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 are restricted. Planning permission is therefore required for stone cleaning, external painting, roof alterations and the formation of hard surfaces. The area of extensions to dwelling houses which may be erected without consent is also restricted to 16m² and there are additional controls over satellite dishes.
- Under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, the planning authority can seek approval of the Scottish Ministers for Directions that further restrict permitted development rights. The Directions effectively control relatively minor alterations to buildings in conservation areas that can cumulatively lead to erosion of character and appearance. Development is not precluded, but such alterations will require planning permission and special attention will be paid to the potential effect of proposals. The following Classes of Permitted Development have been restricted under the Article 4 Direction Order for the Plewlands Conservation Area:

Class 1 The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse.

Class 3 The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of any building or enclosure.

Class 6 The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna on a dwellinghouse or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.

Class 7 The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.

Class 38 Development by statutory undertakers for the purposes of water undertakings.

Class 39 Development by public gas supplier.

Class 40 Development by electricity statutory undertaker.

- Special attention must be paid to the character and appearance of the conservation area when planning controls are being exercised. Most applications for planning permission for alterations will, therefore, be advertised for public comment and any views expressed must be taken into account when making a decision on the application.
- Within conservation areas the demolition of unlisted buildings requires conservation area consent.
- Alterations to windows are controlled in terms of the Council's policy.
- Trees within conservation areas are covered by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The Act applies to the uprooting, felling or lopping of trees having a diameter exceeding 75mm at a point 1.5m above ground level, and concerns the lopping of trees as much as removal. The planning authority must be given six week's notice of the intention to uproot, fell or lop trees. Failure to give notice renders the person liable to the same penalties as for contravention of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

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