



Broxburn Conservation Area Appraisal

West Lothian Council

Draft report

Prepared by LUC

August 2026

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1	Draft for public consultation	PJ, VA, JS, NN	RH	RH	14.08.2026



Land Use Consultants Limited

Registered in England. Registered number 2549296. Registered office: 250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD. Printed on 100% recycled paper

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Chapter 1

Executive summary

Summary of special architectural and historic interest

1.1 The context and historical development of Broxburn are unique and it is from this that it draws its individual character. This strong sense of place comes from many facets, but the following characteristics are of particular importance to the special interest of Broxburn:

- Strong Victorian and Edwardian character with rubble and ashlar sandstone buildings and slate roofs.
- Low rubble boundary walls with cast-iron railings and varied gate piers.
- Surviving historic shopfronts and narrow cobbled alleyways in the commercial core.
- Distinctive sub-areas: New Holygate miners' cottages and Port Buchan canal-side dwellings
- Landmark structures include West Church, St John Cantius and St Nicholas, Union Canal Bridge 25, and the clock at 23 West Main Street.

- Union Canal and Brox Burn provide key linear green corridors and contribute to the conservation area's setting.

Summary of management recommendations

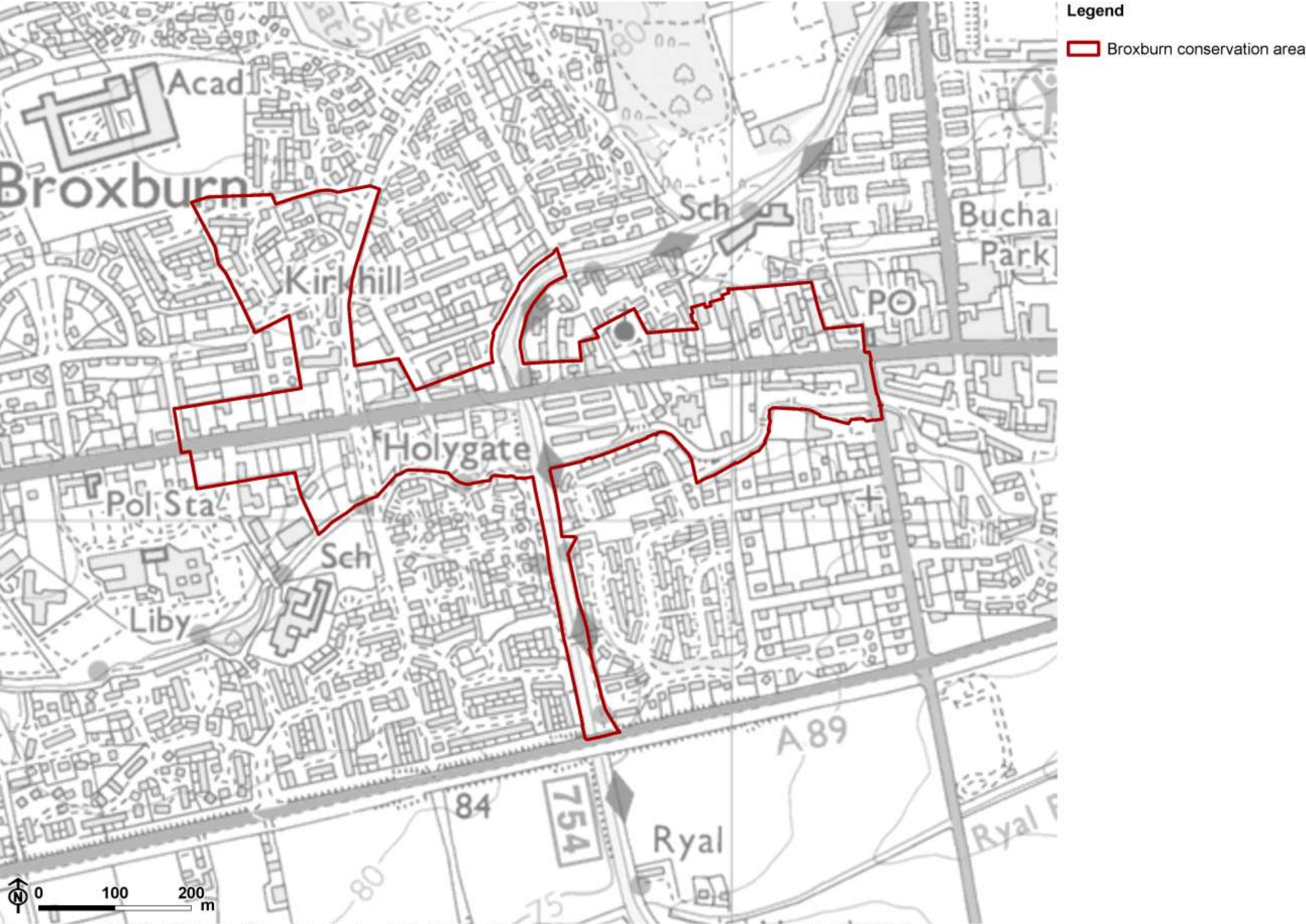
1.2 The appraisal has identified the following issues to effectively manage the preservation or enhancement of the conservation area:

- Changes are recommended to the boundary to reflect the special character of the conservation area.
- No changes are recommended to the Classes of development controlled by the current Article 4 Direction. The area it applies to should be amended to reflect the new extent of the conservation area should the proposed boundary changes be adopted.

Executive summary

- The conservation area is found to have a balance of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, of which the key points are:
- Declining condition of older buildings, boundary treatments and rainwater goods.
- Erosion of traditional windows and doors.

Figure 1.1: Boundary map



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Chapter 2

Introduction

What are conservation areas?

2.1 In 1967, the Civic Amenities Act introduced the concept of recognising buildings and areas of historic interest and making provisions for their protection. Today, the spirit of that Act is embodied in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, which places a duty on local authorities to designate,

“Areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”

2.2 The legislation applies nationally, although conservation areas are identified and designated by local authorities based on what is considered ‘special interest’ in their area. The Council is responsible for administering conservation areas and managing the impacts of change to their special interest.

2.3 The designation of an area introduces some restrictions on what can and cannot be done without planning

permission. It increases local planning authority controls, such as over the design of new buildings, and planning applications are judged by their impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Special architectural or historic interest

2.4 Deciding what is special for each place includes consideration of:

- The **architectural quality** of buildings and structures. 'Quality' does not just mean the number of listed buildings in an area or buildings designed by a notable architect: it could be a building that is representative of an era or type of use; one that retains many historic features; is a good or rare example of local or regional architectural style; is distinct in appearance, a local landmark, or one part of a whole street or townscape that collectively imparts a strong sense of place.
- **Associations** with notable people, literature or art, industries, artistic, political or cultural movements or

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events that have left their mark on how a place appears today.

- The **spatial qualities** of a place. This is not just about the height, orientation, density and layout of buildings, but of streets, public spaces, private spaces, urban spaces, green spaces, trees, and how all these features relate and are used and valued by their communities.
- Relationship with the **surrounding topography and landscape**. As well as adding to the visual appeal or drama of a place, it can also tell us why a settlement is where it is, why it prospered or failed, what industries it relied on, why it developed in one direction and not another. In this way, the setting of a conservation area can contribute greatly to our understanding of the story of a place, or its beauty, or both.

The benefits of conservation area status

2.5 There are several environmental, social and economic benefits of conservation area status.

Economic

2.6 Retaining and enhancing the buildings, features and spaces which make a place special ensure that residents, workers and visitors continue to enjoy its unique character and invest in its success.

2.7 Re-using and enhancing the buildings, features and spaces will also help retain and attract businesses, making a major contribution to their long-term survival as a vibrant place and an attractive destination.

2.8 The protection of the special character of a place generally means higher market values for buildings, and their appreciation in value. Research by the London School of Economics is 2012 [\[See reference 1\]](#) demonstrated that conservation area restrictions have benefits – beyond the conservation of character and appearance - as they help sustain or enhance the value of properties in designated areas.

2.9 Potential for grant funding to conserve or enhance conservation areas. This can be to repair, re-use or restore buildings, sites or the public realm.

2.10 All the above combined give greater economic confidence and can lead to investment in built fabric and regeneration.

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Community

2.11 Conservation area designation reflects the value placed by the community on its place and its role in the regeneration of the local area. People are more likely to come together in community groups in protected areas to care for and enhance the significance of their homes, business and their sense of place.

2.12 This can also provide greater certainty to residents, businesses, and stakeholders that harmful change will be avoided, minimised or mitigated through the requirement to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area.

Environmental

2.13 Green and open spaces and trees, which make an important contribution to the local environment, are protected where they contribute to the area's special interest.

2.14 Locally valued buildings will be protected. Traditional buildings were built with lower embodied energy than modern construction. They have the potential to perform over centuries, with sensible and sustainable maintenance and repair, and reduce their operational energy use through low embodied, sustainable and healthy energy repairs.

2.15 Conservation area controls can provide opportunities to improve the appearance and maintenance of the streetscape with appropriate materials which are environmentally conscious (natural, compatible, repairable, re-usable, recyclable) and work in balance with traditional building materials.

Purpose of a conservation area appraisal

2.16 Section 63 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 places a duty on the local authority "to formulate and publish, from time to time, proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their district which are conservation areas."

2.17 Section 64 of the Act requires that, "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

2.18 Conservation area appraisals are a tool to help people understand what is important about a place and manage change within it. Change is managed using the information about the conservation area and its character in the appraisal, and by carrying out the actions identified in the management plan.

Broxburn Conservation Area background

2.19 1970s: Broxburn Conservation Area officially designated.

Chapter 3

Assessing the special interest

3.1 The character of an area starts to form long before the human interventions of buildings, streets, fields and towns are established: it starts with the geology and topography of a place. This section considers what it is about the location and context of Broxburn that made it suitable for successful occupation.

Location

3.2 Broxburn stretches along an east-west aligned Main Street roughly following the Brox Burn. Uphall is located to its immediate east while Winchburgh is located c.2.2km north-east of the conservation area. The conservation area, representing the historic core of Broxburn, is flanked on all sides by modern development, with arable fields to its north and south beyond this.

Geology, topography and landscape setting

Geology

3.3 The underlying geology of the conservation area is almost entirely characterised by lacustrine Hopetoun Member sedimentary rocks with an area of olivine analcime microgabbro running north-east to south-west through the centre of the conservation area [\[See reference 2\]](#). These bedrock geologies formed during the Carboniferous period. Hopetoun Member sedimentary rocks belongs to the West Lothian Oil-Shale formation [\[See reference 3\]](#), the presence of oil-shale embedded within which allowed the shale oil industry to take hold in West Lothian and form a vital element of the local economy. In addition, the Dunnet and Binny sandstones which belong to the Hopetoun Member bedrock has historically been a popular building material, characterising the appearance of much of the historic buildings in the region [\[See reference 4\]](#).

3.4 The bedrock is primarily overlain by poorly sorted glacial till, which was created, and deposited, by melt water

Assessing the special interest

during the retreat of the glaciers, while areas along the Brox Burn feature alluvial clays, silts, sands and gravels. Although glacial deposits often result in poor agricultural capability, the land around Broxburn is capable of producing average to high yields of a wide range of arable crops [\[See reference 5\]](#).

Topography

3.5 The landscape around Broxburn is generally flat with occasional gentle undulations. The most dramatic landscape feature in close proximity to the conservation area is the artificial mound of Greendykes Shale Bing to its north-west. The conservation area is largely surrounded by Broxburn's 20th century and later housing expansions. Broxburn largely coalesces with Uphall to its west during the 20th century eastward expansion of Broxburn.

Figure 3.1: Context



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Chapter 4

History and development

4.1 This section considers how Broxburn developed from its earliest origins into the place we see today.

Prehistory and the early medieval period

4.2 The earliest examples of human activity in the vicinity of Broxburn includes the late Bronze Age to early Iron Age settlement of Carledub, as well as a largely prehistoric enclosed settlement to its north by Greendykes Shale Bing. Both of these are scheduled monuments.

4.3 A Roman coin recovered from Uphall Golf Course which dates to AD 238 – 44 also suggests a Roman influence in the general area [\[See reference 6\]](#). The Romans likely perceived the people of modern-day West Lothian as part of the ‘Votadini Tribe’ who are often viewed as clients of (separate from but dependent upon) the Roman Empire [\[See reference 7\]](#). Following the retreat of the Romans, the region would repeatedly change hands as early medieval kingdoms vied for control. Initially, the region was likely part

of the Brythonic Kingdom of Gododdin but by the 7th century, the Lothians would be split between the Kingdoms of Strathclyde/Cumbria [\[See reference 8\]](#) and that of Bernicia [\[See reference 9\]](#) [\[See reference 10\]](#). It was not until the 10th to 11th centuries that the Lothians would be annexed by the Kingdom of Alba/Scotland [\[See reference 11\]](#).

4.4 Medieval settlements in Scotland were often re-used or ‘over-written’ [\[See reference 12\]](#) with very similar post-medieval structures. This can make it difficult to understand the precise origins of a place around this period.

The medieval period

4.5 In the medieval period, Broxburn appears to have originally been called ‘Strathbrock’, possibly meaning ‘Valley of Badgers’ [\[See reference 13\]](#), and was likely under the influence of the Flemish nobleman Freskyn who was granted the lands of modern Uphall and Broxburn by King David I [\[See reference 14\]](#).

History and development

4.6 In the late 14th century the lands of Strathbrock were divided in two with Eastern Strathbrock, or Easteroun, becoming a distinct settlement [See reference 15]. Owing to the influence of the Douglas family in the region, and their role in political instability throughout the 15th century, Eastern Strathbrock would be burned down twice [See reference 16]. The only remnant of the medieval period within Broxburn conservation area appears to be a 15th or 16th century font which was contemporary with a church which stood here prior to the construction of the late 19th century St John Cantius and St Nicholas Roman Catholic Church (LB19222).

Post-medieval period: early development of modern Uphall

4.7 The settlement was named Broxburn by Sir Richard Cockburn of Clerkington in 1600, allegedly after the hamlet in Dunbar in which he was born [See reference 17]. The name Broxburn might derive from the Saxon 'Broc', meaning a brook or stream, and 'Bourn/Bourne' meaning boundary [See reference 18]. Alternatively, 'Brock' can mean badger in Scots with the "burn" component relating to a stream [See reference 19]. As such 'Broxburn' may mean "a stream which separates fields and/or settlement" or "badger burn". Around the same time as this renaming,

Kirkhill House (LB19678) was constructed for a local landowner, Jonh Laing, before becoming the residence of the advocate Ludovic Stewart.

4.8 By the mid-18th century, Broxburn comprised a series of buildings situated along a road, to the south was a mill which was supported by a leat that connected to the Brox Burn. To the north-west of these houses is a series of large, possibly treelined, rectangular enclosures which may relate to an early designed landscape and gardens. The house was remodelled c.1770 on behalf of David Erskine, 11th Earl of Buchan (1742 – 1829) who resided there). In 1776-7, a model solar system was built to the south-west of the house which would likely have functioned as an impressive focal point within the estate grounds and the central square pier stills stands today (LB14232).

Post-medieval: 19th century expansion and industry

4.9 In the early 19th century, the 31 miles long Union Canal was constructed according to designs by Hugh Baird, a noted Scots engineer, to facilitate the transport of coal from the west of the country to its east [See reference 20]. This separated Broxburn from the Kirkhill estate as it ran north-

History and development

south between the two, under West Main Street [\[See reference 21\]](#).

4.10 By the mid-19th century, the settlement of Broxburn was focused to the east of the conservation area and had expanded south of the modern A899, necessitating the creation of a road which would later be named Almondell Road [\[See reference 22\]](#). Broxburn is located within the Parish of Uphall and, as such, the almost doubling of parish's population between 1810 and 1841 [\[See reference 23\]](#) may have contributed to this southward expansion.

4.11 Within this settlement to the east of the conservation area, a corn mill existed, supported by a leat, dam and sluice located to the immediate south of the Almondell Road. This may be a continuation, or replacement, of the earlier 18th century mill which existed to the south of Broxburn. Within the conservation area a series of sluices, and a dam, to the west of Union Canal fed a mill leat on its east which travelled towards a series of buildings adjacent to Broxburn Park near modern Parkwood Gardens. One of these buildings is likely to be another mill. Settlement within the conservation area at this time was less dense than that to its immediate east, comprising only a Free Church, associated manse, a few small dwellings and some larger country houses, the most notable of which being Kirkhill House (LB19678) in its far west. At this time, the grounds of

Kirkhill House (LB19678) appear to have substantially reduced from the mid-18th century.

4.12 By the end of the 19th century, Broxburn had expanded considerably, primarily westwards, across the Union Canal [\[See reference 24\]](#) and northwards towards the Liggat Syke [\[See reference 25\]](#). This rapid growth is likely related to the rapid growth of the shale-oil industry in West Lothian which led to the establishment of the Broxburn and Albyn Oil Works opposite the settlement, to the north of the Union Canal. These oil works exploited the new Pythall Shale Pit to the west of the Broxburn Oil Works as well as the Stewartfield and Dunnet Shale Mines which were located between the Broxburn and Albyn works. In addition to the production and refinement of shale oil, wax and candles were produced here [\[See reference 26\]](#). This industrial centre was serviced by the Drumshoreland and Winchburgh railway line, which ran to the west of the Union Canal and further encroached on the grounds of Kirkhill House (LB19678).

4.13 The development of the shale-oil industry and its position near both the Union Canal and Drumshoreland and Winchburgh railway line as well as location on the former main road between Glasgow and Edinburgh meant that Broxburn became a highly important hub for both extractive industries as well as logistics. This perhaps superseded the

History and development

existing agricultural economy owing to the loss of the mill to the south of Broxburn.

4.14 Although Broxburn had previously been served by a free church, the influx of new people necessitated the construction of the St John Cantius and St Nicholas Roman Catholic Church (LB19222) to the west of the Protestant church.

20th century

4.15 Broxburn would continue to expand in the 20th century with notable housing developments west of the Union Canal which stretched over the Drumshoreland and Winchburgh railway line [\[See reference 27\]](#). Over the course of the early to mid-20th century, the immediate surroundings of the conservation area became enclosed by housing developments with substantial growth southward, across the Brox Burn, and eastward towards Melbourne Drive. This appears to reflect the continued success of the shale-oil industry around Broxburn at this time, as evidenced by the considerable expansion of the Stewartfield Shale Mines and several new buildings within the Broxburn and Albyn Oil

Works. However, competition from overseas meant that the works would be closed in 1927 [\[See reference 28\]](#) and largely demolished c.1937 [\[See reference 29\]](#). It is around this time that the railway line would fall out of use [\[See reference 30\]](#), being replaced by the Clarkson / Blyth Roads, and both termini of the Union Canal would close, before becoming closed to all transport in 1965 [\[See reference 31\]](#).

4.16 Industry did not leave Broxburn in its entirety, however, with the wax and candle production remaining until c.1962 [\[See reference 32\]](#). In addition, the former grounds of the oil works were converted into small industrial estates which was later joined by the East Mains Industrial Estate to Broxburn's east in the late 1960's. These housed a variety of industries, the most substantial of which was a meat processing facility which moved to Broxburn in 1962 [\[See reference 33\]](#). This, combined with the gradual establishment of Broxburn as a commuter hub, facilitated the continued growth of the settlement westward towards Uphall, eventually uniting the two settlements into one, visually continuous, settlement [\[See reference 34\]](#). The Union Canal would also be reopened in 2001 as part of the Millennium Link restoration project [\[See reference 35\]](#).

Historical mapping

Figure 4.1: Broxburn and its surrounds in 1854-5 (Linlithgowshire, sheet 6, Survied 1854-55, Published: 1856. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)



Figure 4.2: Broxburn and its surrounds in 1895 (Linlithgowshire, sheets VI.SW and VI.SE, Revised: 1895, Published: 1897-8. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)



Chapter 5

Heritage assets

Designated assets

5.1 The following assets lie within the conservation area:

5.2 Five listed buildings comprising:

- Three category B; and
- One category C

5.3 One scheduled monument comprising segment of the Union Canal, River Almond to River Avon (SM8654).

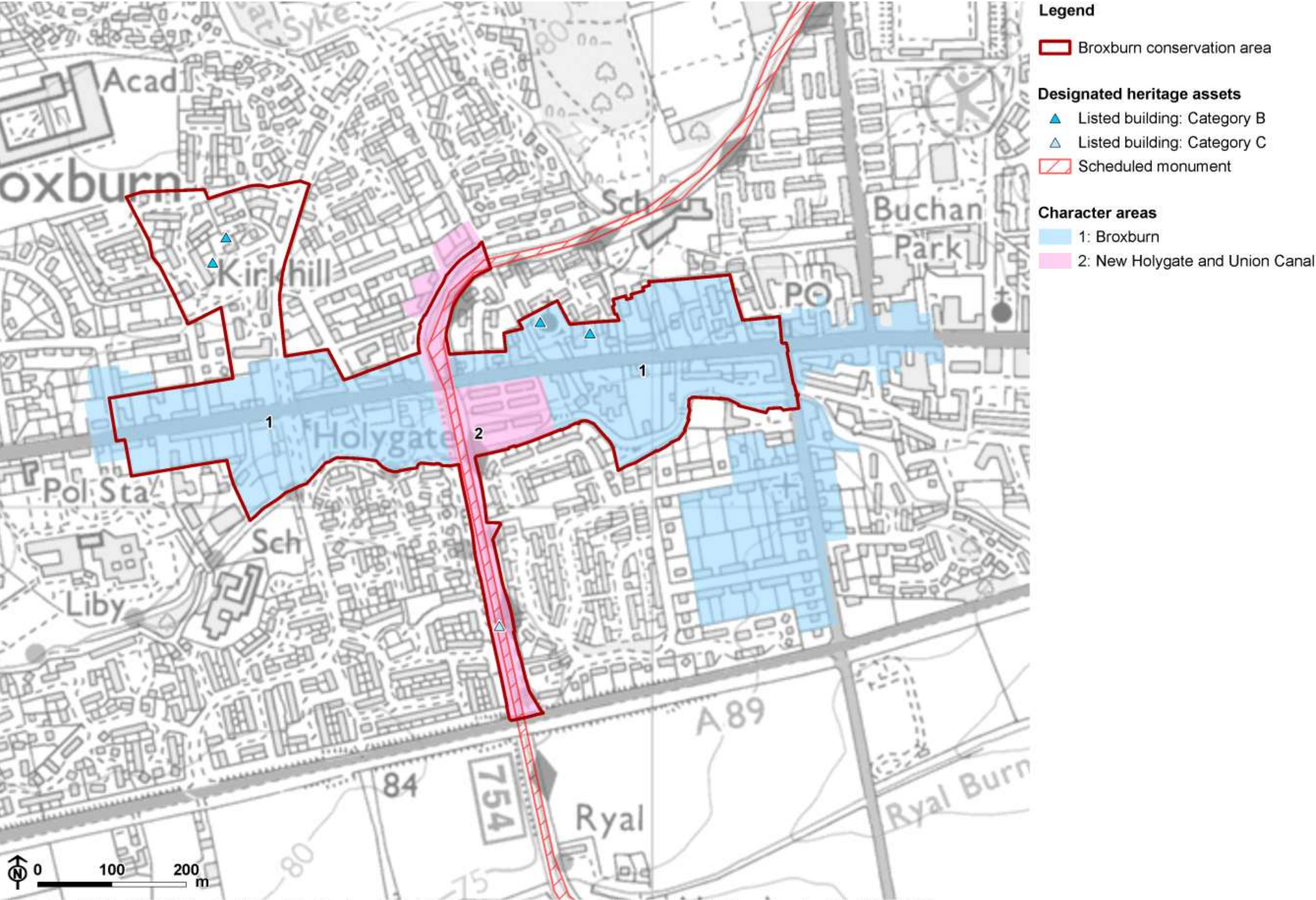
5.4 There are no other designated heritage assets within the conservation area.

the potential for archaeological remains relating to early phases of the settlement to survive beneath the foundations of later structures. Such remains, although likely to be severely truncated, would further our understanding of Broxburn' development. Future planning and development of the settlement should consider this potential.

Archaeological potential

5.5 Broxburn conservation area may hold archaeological interest in addition to that contained in the historic layout of the village and its individual historic buildings. The archaeological potential of much of Broxburn is low owing to the extent of 20th century development and the distribution of known archaeological sites. There remains

Figure 5.1: Heritage Assets



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Chapter 6

Character analysis

Overall character

6.1 The following aspects of character apply to the whole conservation area. The conservation area also contains the New Holygate and Union Canal sub-area with a distinctive character of its own. These areas are shown in **Figure 5.1** and **Figure 6.20**, and the factors contributing to their special character are described below.

6.2 The Broxburn conservation area stretches along West main Street (A899) with an extension along Clarkson Road towards Kirkhill and along the Union Canal. The general form was laid out from the 19th century, while Broxburn grew, largely as a hub for those employed in the burgeoning shale oil industry. Many of the listed buildings in the conservation area date to these periods.

6.3 The tree-lined banks of the Brox Burn and Union Canal form a backdrop to various streets and buildings, falling in and out of view as they pass behind or beside areas of varying character.

Green spaces, trees and landscaping

6.4 Due to the lack of consistent public access to the Bronze Burn, the main public green space within the conservation area is the Union Canal as well as that around Kirkhill House (LB19678) and St John Cantius and St Nicholas Roman Catholic Church (LB19222). This provides relief within the extensive built-up area and continuous east-west main road.

6.5 Trees regularly appear within private grounds, lining West Main Street. The primary groupings of trees are located along West Main Street to the south of the St Nicholas Roman Catholic Church (LB19222) as well as lining the short road towards Kirkhill House (LB19678). These help separate these unique buildings from the surrounding domestic development, defining their associated historic grounds.

Character analysis

Figure 6.1: View along the Union Canal footpath



Figure 6.2: The Union Canal from under the bridge carrying the A899



Landmarks

6.6 The main landmarks within the conservation area comprise the following architecturally unique and prominent structures:

- The clock opposite 23 West Main Street
- West Church, 18 West Main Street
- Union Canal

- St John Cantius and St Nicholas Roman Catholic Church (LB19222)
- Union Canal Bridge 25 (LB14231)
- St Nicholas United Free Church

Character analysis

Figure 6.3: The stature of West Church, 18 West Main Street combined with its large plot allows it to form a prominent landmark



Figure 6.4: The clock opposite 23 West Main Street stands prominently at the entrance to the commercial core of Broxburn



Character analysis

Figure 6.5: St John Cantius and St Nicholas Roman Catholic Church (LB19222) is one of the tallest buildings within the conservation area



Views

6.7 Views within the conservation area are generally linear. This is due to the density of buildings along roads. This largely restricts views to internal ones along roads, such as those West Main Street.

6.8 Other linear views can be achieved along the Union Canal, for example, from the bridge that carries the West Main Street. Here, foliage funnels views along the canal to the south while a mixture of foliage and buildings achieve the same result in north-facing views from the north-west of the canal.

Figure 6.6: View along the Union Canal from the Main Street bridge towards Union Canal Bridge 25 (LB14231)



Character analysis

6.9 Outward views are restricted as a result of the pattern of development, however, the Almond Valley River Viaduct can be seen in the distance when travelling eastward along East Main Street.

Architecture

6.10 The architecture of this conservation area is largely characterised by semi-detached or terraced Victorian and Edwardian buildings. These are constructed of rubble and ashlar sandstone which is usually exposed owing to the typical lack of harling other than on gable ends. Painted quoins as well as window and door margins are rare. Street and property names are occasionally carved into stones which forms part of the structural fabric of domestic buildings. These are typically situated in prominent locations such as on the decorative margins of doorways or windows.

6.11 Building plots are defined by low walls, typically of a rubble construction, with capstones. It is common for cast iron railings to run across the top of these walls. Gate piers commonly flank the entranceways through these walls and come in various forms including small and simple square piers with rounded tops to larger, more ornate, examples with finial.

Figure 6.7: Eastward view along East Main Street, towards the Almond Valley River Viaduct.



Figure 6.8: Example of buildings with roughcast gables and low walls defining plots



Character analysis

Figure 6.9: An example of an ornate gatepier



6.12 Where buildings feature a harled or painted exterior, this is most commonly found on the ground floor of buildings which also house commercial premises. A number of historic shopfronts, or the vestiges of them, survive in the commercial section of East and West Main Street.

6.13 The roof line is largely consistent throughout the conservation area with groups of one- and two-storey buildings with few examples where one-story buildings punctuate a row of two-story buildings. The roofs themselves are typically slate, often in diminishing courses.

6.14 Within the historic commercial core of the conservation area, there are a number of small alleyways. These are paved with a mixture of flags, cobbles, and setts.

Figure 6.10: Building with painted margins



Figure 6.11: Example of commercial premises, painted ground floors and alleyway



Character analysis

Figure 6.12: Row of properties with a consistent roofline and varied commercial premises below.



6.17 Occasionally, isolated, or small groups, of later buildings have been positioned in gaps between earlier examples. These have maintained the linearity of the settlement.

6.18 The width of streets and pavements, as well as the presence of front yards and single-story buildings, prevents a strongly enclosed feel west of 35 West Main Street. A gradual contrast is achieved further east where the density of multi-story, terraced buildings abutting the pavement creates a much stronger sense of enclosure.

Figure 6.13: An example of a villa-like dwelling, away from the commercial core within a larger plot



Development pattern, layout and density

6.15 Broxburn is characterised by Victorian and Edwardian dwellings which radiate away from the commercial core of West Main Street. This reflects the historic form of the settlement with the Main Street continuing to function as the main artery in/out of Broxburn.

6.16 Larger dwellings, set back from the commercial centre of the conservation area, are typically located in plots which vary in size, often reflecting the size/status of the building situated within it.

Figure 6.14: An example of a modern addition on Main Street



Figure 6.15: Denser development characterises the commercial core



New Holygate and Union Canal

Layout, streets and spaces

6.19 Although not directly functionally related, there is a sense of separation between the area of the New Holygate miner's cottages and the Union Canal and the rest of the conservation area. This is achieved through the fact that New Holygate and the Union Canal occupy land which is lower in elevation than West Main Street and the uniquely green space which surrounds it.

6.20 The New Holygate miners' rows feature rows of terraced dwellings arranged in a three by two grid while the buildings situated along the Union Canal on Port Buchan are arranged in a linear, slightly curving manner, facing onto the canal opposite the road.

6.21 Along the Union Canal, the single-storey buildings are located in small plots while the two-storey buildings are situated within larger plots with rear gardens space. Of the three rows of miners' cottages, only the southernmost row of miner's cottages is situated feature garden stretching northwards towards the middle row.

Character analysis

Figure 6.16: A row of the New Holygate miner's cottages



Figure 6.17: Single and two-storey buildings located along the Union Canal



6.22 The streets of New Holygate are characterised by a mixture of brick cobbles and concrete in various conditions. This creates a strong visual contrast from the rest of the conservation area. Where the street is made of cobbles, it mirrors sections of the foot path along the Union Canal which is also occasionally built of cobbles.

Architectural style, form and detailing

6.23 New Holygate consists of eight, small, single storey dwellings with a largely uniform appearance. They are brick built with slate roofs and brick chimneys with almost every dwelling being painted or roughcast in white with painted margins, typically black. They all feature later front porch extensions with nearly every example featuring a dormer.

6.24 Building located along the Union Canal on Port Buchan, are semi-detached and one- and two-storey dwellings in groups of the same height resulting in a coherent roofline. They are roughcast in a variety of shades of white/cream as well as ochre. One dwelling features white paint over its ashlar masonry where it faces the road but is roughcast elsewhere. Two examples also have painted quoins and decorative margins around doors and windows.

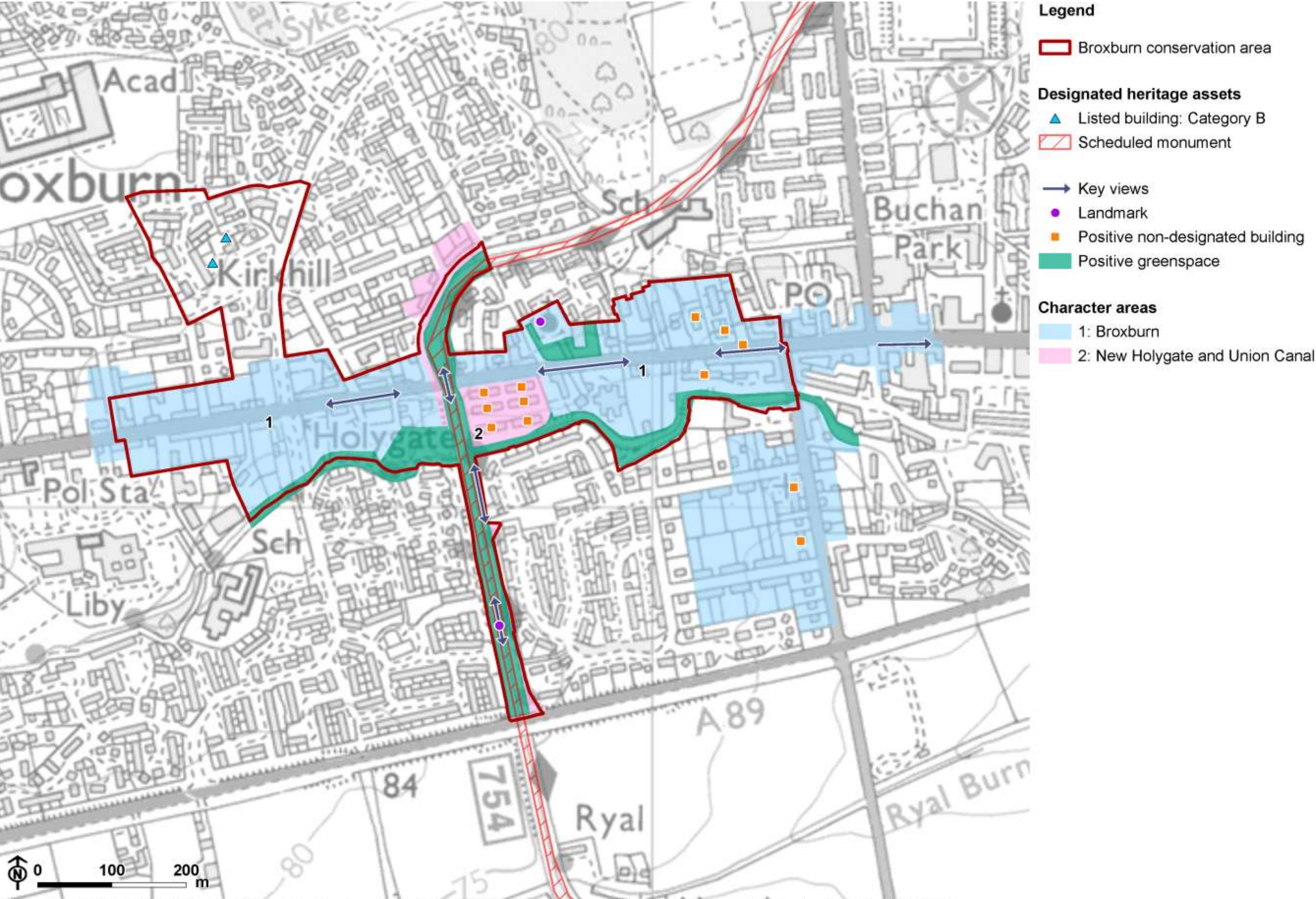
Figure 6.18: The New Holygate cobbles are a distinctive characteristic reminiscent of the nearby Union Canal



Figure 6.19: Three rows of miners' cottages descend towards the Brox Burn



Figure 6.20: Character Analysis



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Chapter 7

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Strengths

- Surviving historic features and details to buildings and the use of traditional materials
- Retains much of its original layout and character
- The quality of the architecture and the story it tells us about the Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian periods in West Lothian, their architectural tastes and fashions
- The historic core of the conservation area has experienced little change
- Buildings within the conservation area are largely well maintained.
- None of the buildings within the conservation area are vacant. Few are neglected or underused.
- Roads are maintained relatively well within the conservation area.

- Scale of lighting appears sympathetic to the scale of the village, and there is no overpowering/domineering lighting that would impact the conservation area.
- Many boundary walls are in harmony with the surrounding buildings.

Figure 7.1: Well maintained road with development maintaining the historic linear nature of development



Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Weaknesses

- Condition of the older buildings and boundary treatments within the conservation area.
 - Poor maintenance of rainwater goods, leading to water ingress, staining and algal growth on rear of properties.
 - High wooden fences or metal fencing built to protect the privacy of the properties, but detract from historic character.
- New residential development inside the area that does not harmonise with the character of the conservation area. Often the later development has a negative effect on the spaces, as the buildings from later twentieth or early 21st century rarely harmonise with the earlier historic buildings.
- Few of the properties north of the Broxburn Care Home have the historic/aesthetic interest of other parts of the conservation area.
- Replacement of windows and doors with non-traditional designs and materials including extensive use of white uPVC.
- Large dormer or roof extensions, substantially expanding and detracting from the scale and character of the modest original building.
- Poorly positioned, or over prominent, security alarms, and visible surface cables.
- Public Realm
 - Lack of street furniture, or inappropriate location.
 - Some shop frontages with inappropriate signage/lighting/shutters
 - Need for interpretation or heritage boards within the area
 - There are no historic signs within the conservation area. Newer modern street signs are lacking in care

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Figure 7.2: Typical character of buildings north of Broxburn Care Home



Figure 7.3: An example of an inappropriate shop front



Opportunities

- Improvement of the public realm: highway surfaces, pedestrian priority, interpretation board(s), street furniture, lighting, and the repair and restoration of surviving historic features.
- Use of enforcement powers, guidance, grant funding and/or planning decisions to help maintain and repair historic buildings, and/or reinstate lost historic features and details.
- Planning and design guidance for particular features such as dormers, windows and doors, boundary features or shopfronts and signage, or colour palettes and finishes for particular streets. This would control the changes to building façades on West Main Street, modern developments within the buildings.
- Seasonal planting displays, promoting improved shopfronts and housing fronts in a traditional style.

Threats

- Further loss of historic features and details to historic buildings through permitted development rights, planning decisions and/or lack of enforcement action. This will particularly undermine the group value of the buildings.
- Changes to the public realm that do not respect the character or appearance of the area and appear incongruous with the buildings.
- Loss of greenery, including trees.
- Buildings becoming underused, vacant or neglected

Chapter 8

Management recommendations

Boundary

Inclusions

8.1 Buildings along Station Road, Park Road and St John's Road to the south-east of the conservation area offer a coherent example of well-preserved Edwardian buildings. These make a substantial contribution to the understanding of Broxburn's history and development and, as such, should be included in the conservation area.

8.2 The conservation area should be extended from West Main Street to 100 East Main Street. This would allow for the incorporation of numerous 19th century buildings which contribute to the overall historic layout of Broxburn. Their inclusion would help protect their historic fabric from the pressures which may be imposed on them by the high street commercial premises that occupy their ground floors.

8.3 The eastern extent of the conservation area should be extended to include 140 and 203 West Main Street, as well as extend along Buchan Road to 10 and 11 Buchan Road.

These properties represent a coherent group of Edwardian buildings as well as the eastern limit of coherence in the surviving remnants of the Edwardian phase of development in Broxburn. As such, these contribute to the understanding of the settlement's historic layout and development.

8.4 By extending the conservation area to include 11 to 43 Port Buchan, examples of 19th to early 20th century dwellings, designed to overlook the Union Canal, will be granted protection. They help to illustrate the role of the canal in the development of Broxburn and its historic layout.

Exclusions

8.5 Although Kirkhill House (LB19678) and its associated buildings are of historic interest, the vast majority of buildings north of the Broxburn Care Home relate to the mid-20th century and later developments of Broxburn.

Management recommendations

These have little to no historic interest and do not continue to the special qualities of Broxburn conservation area. In some instances, these buildings restrict, sometimes prohibit, the appreciation of historic buildings associated with Kirkhill House (LB19678). As such. It is proposed that this area is removed from the conservation area boundary.

Article 4 Direction

8.6 Incremental change to the appearance of dwellinghouses and flats is one of the main potential threats to the special character and appearance of Broxburn Conservation Area. Gradual, small-scale change such as replacement of traditional roofing materials, sash and case windows, wall finishes, installation of rooflights or removal of traditional garden boundaries, which would not normally require planning permission, can have a significant cumulative effect over time. Other types of change arising from agricultural, industrial and highways/ transportation works may also have potential to affect the special character of the conservation area.

8.7 Such changes can, in certain circumstances, be controlled using Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (GPDO). Under Article 4, the planning authority can apply

to the Scottish Ministers for Directions that restrict or remove permitted development rights.

8.8 An Article 4 direction was first introduced in 1978 for Broxburn for works within the curtilage of dwellinghouses and a range of other types of activity. This was amended in 2015, taking into account major updates made to the GPDO in 2009-2011. These updates brought most external changes to dwellinghouses and flats under the control of the GPDO, largely removing the need for local authorities to put in place a separate Article 4 direction to suspend those PD rights.

8.9 A further update to the GPDO in 2024 reversed the removal of PD rights for altering or replacing windows in a conservation area, and instead created a prior approval process for some changes to windows (Class 7A). West Lothian Council non-statutory guidance was updated to cover this change and advise on appropriate replacements.

8.10 A review of recent planning applications in the conservation area (in the five-year period to 2026) suggests that planning applications are being submitted for relevant categories of householder development as required by the GPDO, and that decisions are being made on the basis of their impact on the special character and appearance of the conservation area. Only a very small number of prior approval submissions for windows under Class 7A was noted since 2024 (3-4 across West Lothian Council as a

Management recommendations

whole), suggesting that, at present, this Class is not widely applicable.

8.11 The current condition of the conservation area suggests that, in general, traditional materials and built character are being maintained. However, inappropriate alterations have taken place, with replacement of traditional windows and doors with uPVC or aluminium being widespread, particularly in the unlisted buildings. Many of these instances appear to be of substantial age, or may be the result of multiple phases of replacement, and therefore outwith the scope of enforcement action.

8.12 The application of the existing Article 4 Direction to windows and doors appears not to have been particularly successful in the case of Broxburn, as erosion of the character of these elements has largely already taken place. However, other types of alterations, such as to external facing materials, do not appear to have caused a major erosion of character to the same extent.

8.13 Except in the case of windows and doors therefore, the requirements of the current GPDO appear sufficient and proportionate to avoid harm to dwellinghouses from incremental change. The coverage of non-domestic classes of development also remains appropriate.

8.1 It is as yet unclear what the long-term effect of Class 7A (windows) will be in relation to preservation of character,

although it appears unlikely to be able to effect a reversal of the erosion that has taken place.

8.2 Options for reversal of the erosion of traditional windows and doors should be investigated further, which could be through a combination of publicity and encouragement to undertake sympathetic replacements, planning and repairs advice.

8.3 The numbering of the Classes of development in the 2015 Article 4 Direction and the present version of the GPDO remains the same. The content of the Article 4 Direction therefore does not require amendment. The area it applies to should be amended to reflect the new extent of the conservation area should the proposed boundary changes be adopted.

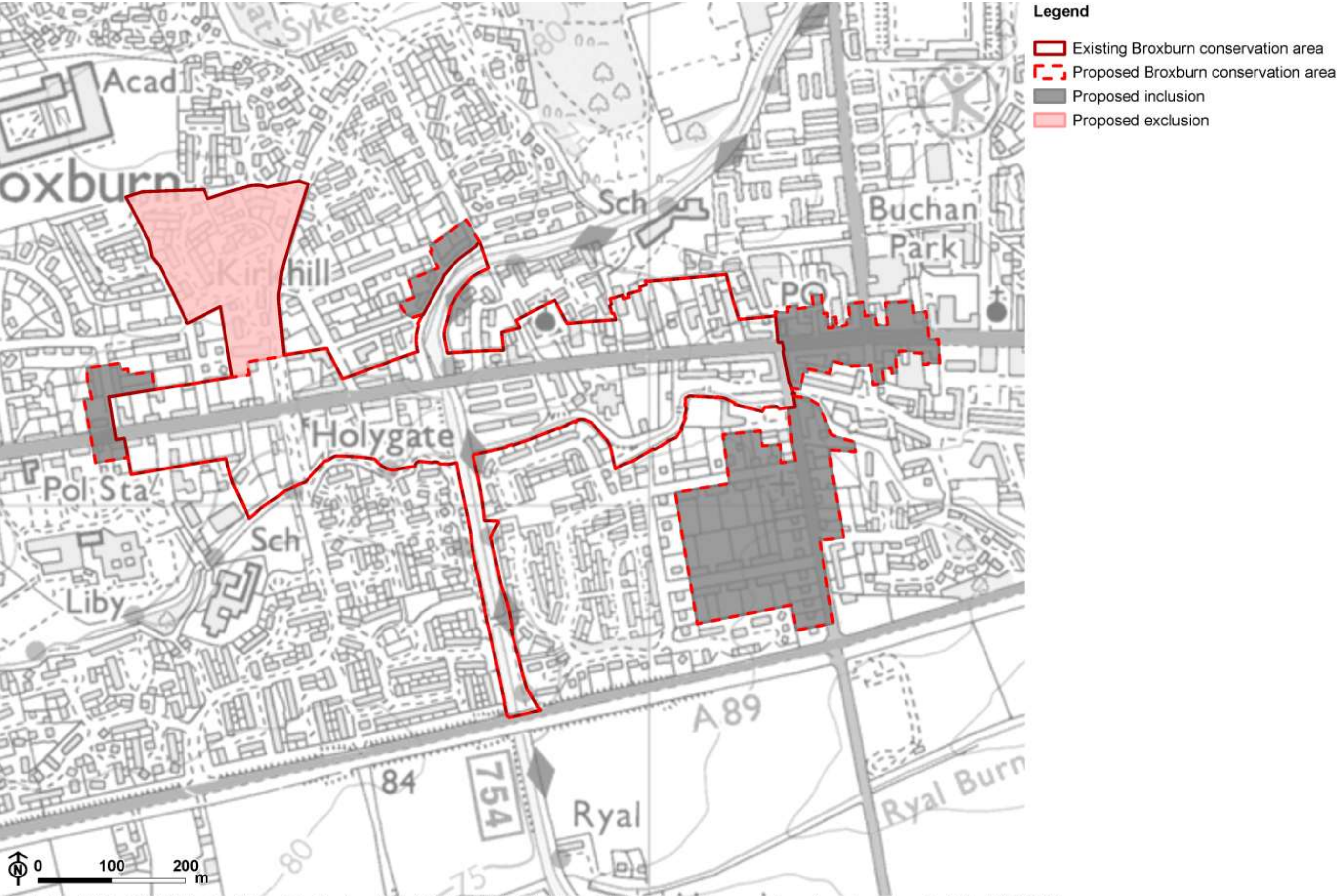
Recommendations

1. Amend the conservation area boundary to best reflect the areas containing the special character of Broxburn.
2. Amend the 2015 Article 4 Direction to reflect any boundary amendments made as a result of this conservation area appraisal review.

Management recommendations

3. Monitor the condition of the conservation area at appropriate intervals (approximately 5 years) to review whether additional management measures are required.
4. Investigate options to encourage reversal of the erosion of traditional windows and doors.

Figure 8.1: Broxburn Proposed Boundary Amendments



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Appendix A

Gazetteer of designated heritage assets and positive non-designated features

Table A.1: Gazetteer of heritage assets

Name / asset type and reference / address	Photograph (where available)
Astronomical Stone (In Walled Garden And Pillars, Kirkhill c.20m south-west of Kirkhill House, Kirkhill Court Category B Listed Building - LB14232	

Gazetteer of designated heritage assets and positive non-designated features

Name / asset type and reference / address	Photograph (where available)
St John Cantius And St Nicholas Roman Catholic Church And Shrine In Grounds West Main Street Broxburn Category B Listed Building - LB19222	
Kirkhill House Kirkhill Court Category B Listed Building - LB19678	

Gazetteer of designated heritage assets and positive non-designated features

Name / asset type and reference / address	Photograph (where available)
Union Canal Bridge 25 Broxburn Between Bader Brook and Parklands Category C Listed Building - LB14231	
The clock opposite 23 West Main Street Positive non-designated feature Landmark	

Gazetteer of designated heritage assets and positive non-designated features

Name / asset type and reference / address	Photograph (where available)
West Church, 18 West Main Street Positive non-designated feature - WoSAS ID: 70198 Landmark	
St Nicholas United Free Church Station Road Positive non-designated feature - WoSAS ID: 70205 Landmark	

Gazetteer of designated heritage assets and positive non-designated features

Name / asset type and reference / address	Photograph (where available)
1 - 8 New Holygate Positive non-designated feature	
9 - 16 New Holygate Positive non-designated feature	
17 - 24 New Holygate Positive non-designated feature	

Gazetteer of designated heritage assets and positive non-designated features

Name / asset type and reference / address	Photograph (where available)
25 - 32 New Holygate Positive non-designated feature	
33 - 40 New Holygate Positive non-designated feature	
41 - 48 New Holygate Positive non-designated feature	
28 Station Road Positive non-designated feature	

Gazetteer of designated heritage assets and positive non-designated features

Name / asset type and reference / address	Photograph (where available)
36 West Burnside Positive non-designated feature	 A photograph of a two-story stone house with a dark roof and two chimneys. The house features a white bay window on the ground floor and several white-framed windows on the upper floor. A silver car is parked in front of the house, partially visible on the right side.
Windsor Lodge, 16 West Main Street Positive non-designated feature - WoSAS ID: 70209	 A photograph of a stone house with a gabled roof. The roof has several solar panels installed on the left side. The house is partially obscured by a dark, wooden fence in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue.

Appendix B

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Table B.1: Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	Buchan Road, 1
Include	Buchan Road, 10
Include	Buchan Road, 11
Include	Buchan Road, 2
Include	Buchan Road, 3
Include	Buchan Road, 4
Include	Buchan Road, 5
Include	Buchan Road, 6
Include	Buchan Road, 7
Include	Buchan Road, 8
Include	Buchan Road, 9
Include	East Main Street, 1
Include	East Main Street, 10
Include	East Main Street, 100
Include	East Main Street, 11
Include	East Main Street, 12

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	East Main Street, 13
Include	East Main Street, 14
Include	East Main Street, 15
Include	East Main Street, 16
Include	East Main Street, 17
Include	East Main Street, 18
Include	East Main Street, 19
Include	East Main Street, 2
Include	East Main Street, 20
Include	East Main Street, 21
Include	East Main Street, 22
Include	East Main Street, 25
Include	East Main Street, 27
Include	East Main Street, 3
Include	East Main Street, 30
Include	East Main Street, 31
Include	East Main Street, 32
Include	East Main Street, 33
Include	East Main Street, 34
Include	East Main Street, 35
Include	East Main Street, 36

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	East Main Street, 37
Include	East Main Street, 38
Include	East Main Street, 39
Include	East Main Street, 4
Include	East Main Street, 40
Include	East Main Street, 41
Include	East Main Street, 42
Include	East Main Street, 43
Include	East Main Street, 44
Include	East Main Street, 45
Include	East Main Street, 46
Include	East Main Street, 47
Include	East Main Street, 48
Include	East Main Street, 49
Include	East Main Street, 5
Include	East Main Street, 50
Include	East Main Street, 51
Include	East Main Street, 52
Include	East Main Street, 53
Include	East Main Street, 54
Include	East Main Street, 55

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	East Main Street, 56
Include	East Main Street, 57
Include	East Main Street, 58
Include	East Main Street, 59
Include	East Main Street, 6
Include	East Main Street, 60
Include	East Main Street, 61
Include	East Main Street, 62
Include	East Main Street, 63
Include	East Main Street, 64
Include	East Main Street, 65
Include	East Main Street, 66
Include	East Main Street, 67
Include	East Main Street, 68
Include	East Main Street, 69
Include	East Main Street, 7
Include	East Main Street, 70
Include	East Main Street, 71
Include	East Main Street, 72
Include	East Main Street, 73
Include	East Main Street, 74

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	East Main Street, 75
Include	East Main Street, 76
Include	East Main Street, 77
Include	East Main Street, 78
Include	East Main Street, 79
Include	East Main Street, 8
Include	East Main Street, 80
Include	East Main Street, 82
Include	East Main Street, 88
Include	East Main Street, 9
Include	East Main Street, 90
Include	East Main Street, 92
Include	East Main Street, 94
Include	East Main Street, 96
Include	East Main Street, 98
Include	Greendykes Road, 1
Include	Greendykes Road, 11
Include	Greendykes Road, 13
Include	Greendykes Road, 15
Include	Greendykes Road, 17
Include	Greendykes Road, 2

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	Greendykes Road, 3
Include	Greendykes Road, 4
Include	Greendykes Road, 5
Include	Greendykes Road, 7
Include	Greendykes Road, 9
Include	Park Road, 1
Include	Park Road, 10
Include	Park Road, 11
Include	Park Road, 12
Include	Park Road, 13
Include	Park Road, 14
Include	Park Road, 15
Include	Park Road, 16
Include	Park Road, 17
Include	Park Road, 19
Include	Park Road, 21
Include	Park Road, 23
Include	Park Road, 25
Include	Park Road, 3
Include	Park Road, 5
Include	Park Road, 7

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	Park Road, 8
Include	Park Road, 9
Include	Port Buchan, 11
Include	Port Buchan, 15
Include	Port Buchan, 17
Include	Port Buchan, 21
Include	Port Buchan, 25
Include	Port Buchan, 27
Include	Port Buchan, 35
Include	Port Buchan, 37
Include	Port Buchan, 41
Include	Port Buchan, 43
Include	Port Buchan, 45
Include	Port Buchan, 47
Include	St John's Road, 1
Include	St John's Road, 10
Include	St John's Road, 12
Include	St John's Road, 13
Include	St John's Road, 15
Include	St John's Road, 16
Include	St John's Road, 17

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	St John's Road, 19
Include	St John's Road, 2
Include	St John's Road, 20
Include	St John's Road, 21
Include	St John's Road, 22
Include	St John's Road, 23
Include	St John's Road, 24
Include	St John's Road, 25
Include	St John's Road, 26
Include	St John's Road, 3
Include	St John's Road, 4
Include	St John's Road, 5
Include	St John's Road, 6
Include	St John's Road, 7
Include	St John's Road, 8
Include	Station Road, St Nicholas United Free Church
Include	Station Road, 1
Include	Station Road, 10
Include	Station Road, 11
Include	Station Road, 12
Include	Station Road, 14

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	Station Road, 15
Include	Station Road, 16
Include	Station Road, 17
Include	Station Road, 22
Include	Station Road, 24
Include	Station Road, 25
Include	Station Road, 26
Include	Station Road, 27
Include	Station Road, 28
Include	Station Road, 29
Include	Station Road, 3
Include	Station Road, 30
Include	Station Road, 31
Include	Station Road, 32
Include	Station Road, 33
Include	Station Road, 34
Include	Station Road, 36
Include	Station Road, 37
Include	Station Road, 38
Include	Station Road, 39
Include	Station Road, 40

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Include	Station Road, 41
Include	Station Road, 43
Include	Station Road, 7
Include	Station Road, 9
Include	Strathbrock Place, 1
Include	Strathbrock Place, 3
Include	Strathbrock Place, 5
Include	West Main Street, 197
Include	West Main Street, 199
Include	West Main Street, 201
Include	West Main Street, 203
Exclude	Lumsden Court, 1
Exclude	Lumsden Court, 2
Exclude	Lumsden Court, 3
Exclude	Lumsden Court, 4
Exclude	Lumsden Court, 5
Exclude	Lumsden Court, 6
Exclude	Lumsden Court, 7
Exclude	Lumsden Court, 8
Exclude	Kirkhill Court, 1
Exclude	Kirkhill Court, 2

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Exclude	Kirkhill Court, 3
Exclude	Kirkhill Court, 4
Exclude	Kirkhill Court, 5
Exclude	Kirkhill Court, 6
Exclude	Kirkhill Court, 7
Exclude	Kirkhill Court, 8
Exclude	Globe Place, 17
Exclude	Globe Place, 19
Exclude	Globe Place, 21
Exclude	Globe Place, 23
Exclude	Globe Place, 25
Exclude	Globe Place, 1
Exclude	Globe Place, 2
Exclude	Globe Place, 3
Exclude	Globe Place, 4
Exclude	Globe Place, 7
Exclude	Globe Place, 9
Exclude	Globe Place, 11
Exclude	Globe Place, 13
Exclude	Globe Place, 29
Exclude	Globe Place, 31

Buildings to be included / excluded by the proposed boundary change

Proposed change	Address
Exclude	Globe Place, 33
Exclude	Globe Place, 35
Exclude	McIntosh Court, 1
Exclude	McIntosh Court, 3
Exclude	McIntosh Court, 5

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