

City of Edinburgh Council

Edinburgh
Survey of Gardens and Designed Landscapes

035 Upper Cramond
and **036 Barnton**

Consultants

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035 - Upper Cramond
036 - Barnton



EDINBURGH
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

**SURVEY OF GARDENS AND
DESIGNED LANDSCAPES**

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Key

	Site boundary		Ruined buildings		Site of former house		Main drive		Principal views or vista		Panoramic View		Walled Garden
	Gardens		Water		Woodlands		Parkland						

035, 036 Upper Cramond (035) and Barnton (036)
including Davidson's Mains Park (038) and Oak
Plantation & Bonnyfield Strip (039) pre-1890

Parish	Cramond, later Edinburgh
NGR	NT 195 757 (site of [Old] Barnton House) NT 188 758 (site of King's Cramond, later [New] Barnton House)
NMRS No	NT17NE 217 Bruntsfield Links Golf Clubhouse NT17NE 224 Royal Burgess Golf Clubhouse
Owners	Fragmented with areas in private, institutional and recreational use
Designations	
Listing	Barnton House West Gate Piers B Royal Burgess Golf Course Clubhouse, Boundary Wall and Gate Piers B
City of Edinburgh Green Belt	
Area of Great Landscape Value	
National Cycle Network: Cycle Route No. 1, Edinburgh to Aberdeen crosses site	
Urban Wildlife Site: part of the Bruntsfield Golf Course, including Quarry Pond	
Tree Preservation Orders	
Heritage Trees	

REASONS FOR INCLUSION

Although the Barnton estate was broken up more than a century ago, the surviving elements of the once-extensive designed landscape, which incorporates the former lands of [Old] Barnton House and Upper Cramond, still play a major role in the character of the landscape on the north-west fringe of the city. The former parkland and policies now accommodates two golf courses, two large schools, a public park and several housing developments, all of which derive some benefit from their surroundings in different ways.

The site has an extremely complex history, with present ownership greatly fragmented, including areas in private, institutional and recreational use. The first part of this site report deals with the period to c1895, when the Barnton Estate was in single private ownership. The period from c1895 to the present day begins with the construction of the Barnton Branch Railway. Thereafter, the history of the south portion of the estate, effectively cut off by the railway, is covered by separate report –Site 038, 039 Davidson's Mains Park and Oak Plantation / Bonnyfield Strip (post-1890). The remaining area, to the north of the railway is dealt with under the present heading of Barnton (036) and Upper Cramond (035)

LOCATION, SETTING AND EXTENT

The designed landscape, prior to its fragmentation during the 1890s, was bounded to the south by the Queensferry Road, to the east by Quality Street and Cramond Road South, to the north by Gamekeeper's Road and a short section of Cramond Road North, and to the west by Whitehouse Road. Before the combination of the two estates to form a single landscape, the principal access to [Old] Barnton House was from the Queensferry Road, while that to Upper Cramond was from Whitehouse Road. Following the combination of the two estates and the transfer of Barnton House to Upper Cramond, a curving carriage drive or avenue was built, linking the two houses across the park. Although Barnton Avenue West

and Barnton Avenue East preserve the line of the carriage drive, access to the core parkland is now via the two golf clubs – the Royal Burgess Golf Club on Whitehouse Road and the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club via Barnton Avenue East. Cargilfield School, built c1900 near the site of Upper Cramond / [New] Barnton House, has a separate access from Gamekeeper's Road. Surrounding housing developments have their access from the neighbouring roads, although Barnton Avenue East is closed to vehicular traffic at its east end, by Davidson's Mains Park. Surrounding house developments all benefit to a greater or lesser extent from their setting within the fringes of the designed landscape, and their proximity to the mature woodland and specimen trees that used to characterise the park. Approx 600 acres (at its peak)

The Royal Burgess Golf Course and Bruntsfield Golf Course, developed within the former policies of Barnton House, together with the now-detached section of Davidson's Mains Park, are located within the City of Edinburgh Green Belt and within a designated Area of Great Landscape Value

The separate housing areas developed on either side of Barnton Avenue West, and on either side of Barnton Avenue East, including the grounds of Easter Park, and part of the grounds of Cargilfield School were designated in the Edinburgh North West Local Plan (1992) as Areas of Interest where '*... local amenity or character [should] be safeguarded in any development*'. The eastern area was upgraded in 1997 and is now designated as the Barnton Avenue Conservation Area.

National Cycle Network: Cycle Route No. 1 Edinburgh to Aberdeen, developed by Sustrans, crosses the site by way of Barnton Avenue East and Barnton Avenue West, with a linking section on the line of the former carriage drive or avenue, between The Royal Burgess Golf Course and Bruntsfield Golf Course. Site areas: Barnton 134.3ha; Upper Cramond 22.1ha.

MAIN PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

Early 18th century, Barnton and Upper Cramond estates combined and extensive landscape park created; early-mid 19th century, redesigned parkland; 1890s break-up of estate and railway division; late-19th century and 20th century, progressive fragmentation and built development.

HISTORY OF LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

The estate of Barnton had its origins in the two neighbouring properties of Barnton and Upper Cramond, also known as King's Cramond or Cramond Regis. After passing through a number of hands, the two estates were united under a single ownership in the early 18th century and in a single landscape design comprising a number of rectangular tree-lined parks. The transfer of the house and name to Upper Cramond, at the end of the 18th century, and the subsequent demolition of old Barnton House c1820, was accompanied by a new landscape scheme in the then-fashionable parkland style. This survived until the sale and break-up of the estate in the 1890s, when the south part of the landscape was cut off by the Barnton Branch Railway. End-of-the century plans for the building of houses over the whole of the estate came to nothing. Instead, the core parkland was redeveloped as two separate golf courses in the 1890s, preserving much of the parkland, while built development began to encroach on the landscape from both east and west along the line of Barnton Avenue, and at other points around the edge of the estate, during the first decades of the 20th century. Sporadic development has continued through the 20th century, though much of the surviving landscape is now protected from development through its designation as part of the City of Edinburgh Green Belt.

The post-1890 history of the Bonnyfield Strip, Oak Plantation and Davidson's Mains Park is described separately under the Site 038, 039 entry.

Early records distinguish between the neighbouring estates of Barnton and Upper Cramond, although they appear to have been both separately and jointly owned at different times. Apart from a sequence of owners which included George Maxwell (c1460), Sir Robert Barnton (c1520), James Elphinstone of Barnton, First Lord Bamerino (c1600) and his successors until the late 17th century, we know little about the house and estate of Barnton. The 4th Lord Balmerino sold the estate to Sir Robert Milne in 1688 from whom it passed first to George Hamilton of Binney, who sold it on to John First Earl of Rutherglen in 1698, who also acquired the neighbouring estate of Upper Cramond in 1718. By 1771 the house belonged to John, Viscount Glenorchy, whose widow sold the combined estates to Edinburgh banker William Ramsay in 1786. George Ramsay remodelled and greatly enlarged Upper Cramond to designs by Robert Adam c1794, and again in 1810 to designs by David Hamilton, renaming it as [New] Barnton House, before demolishing the old house. There are estimates and records of significant expenditure at this time on landscape improvements, including new fencing, planting and the removal of old buildings. The Ramsay family were seeking to expand and consolidate the estate with the purchase of land from the neighbouring Lauriston estate, and by the removal of the village of Upper Cramond. In 1865 the owner was Sir Alexander Charles Gibson Maitland of Clifton Hall. It was his heir, Sir James Ramsay-Gibson Maitland, who began the process which led to the progressive break-up of the estate after 1880.

Although a plan was drawn up before the end of the 19th century which would have seen the whole estate built over by new houses, the Ramsay family chose instead to dispose of it in separate lots over a number of years. First, a strip towards the south edge of the park was sold to the London Midland Scottish Railway Company in 1893 for the creation of a new suburban branch line to a terminus at Barnton Station (originally known as Cramond Bridge), which stood close to the Junction of Whitehouse Road and Queensferry Road. Second, part was leased to the Royal Burgess Golfing Society, founded in 1735 on part of Bruntsfield Links, which had shared a course briefly with the Honourable Company of Golfers, the Bruntsfield Golfing Society and the Royal Musselburgh Golf Club at Musselburgh from 1774, before moving to its new home at Barnton in 1894, where the legendary golfer Tom Morris was employed to lay out the new course that opened in 1895. The club-house was built in 1897, with further modifications to the course being made by James Braid in 1932 and 1945, before it was finally taken over fully by the club in the 1970s. A third part was leased to the Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society, which was founded in 1761, and which, having also shared the course at Musselburgh with the aforementioned clubs, eventually moved to Barnton in 1898, where noted designer Willie Park Junior was employed to lay out the new course. Finally, much of the remaining land at the east and west ends of the Barnton Avenue was sold for residential development, a process beginning shortly after 1900, described by Harris (2002) and Gifford *et al* (1984), concentrated initially around Barnton Avenue East.



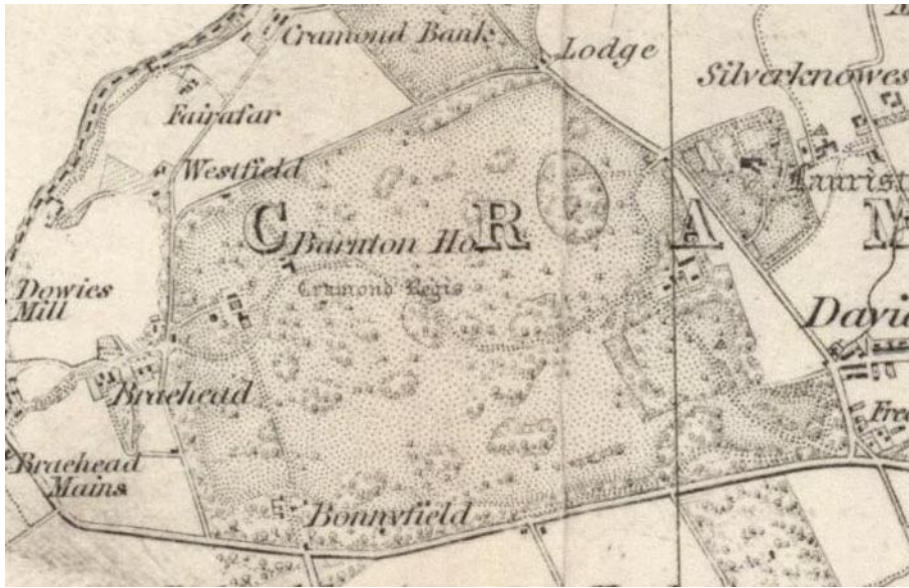
Blaeu 1654



Adair manuscript map 1682

Maps and Graphic Evidence

Blaeu (1654) marks *Over Barntoun*, *Nether Bartoun* and *Ober Kramont* as separate houses or settlements. The first indication of planting and enclosure is seen on Adair's manuscript map of 1682, which shows *Over Cramond* and *Barntoun* as separate houses, each within a fenced or walled enclosure and with associated planting. By the time of Roy's map c1750, *Barntoun* and *Upper Cramond* are seen to fall within the bounds of a single broadly rectangular landscape, walled around and subdivided into rectilinear grazing parks and areas of cultivated ground by a series of internal walls and hedgerows. Barnton House lay towards its south-east corner, Upper Cramond, towards its north-west corner. This same layout was recorded on Laurie's map (1766) and Armstrong's map (1773), but had disappeared almost entirely by the time of Knox's map (1816). Knox shows the name Barnton transferred to Upper Cramond, with Barnton House marked as *Old Mansion House*. Also in place by this time was the curving drive of Barnton Avenue, linking the two houses across the park.



Ordnance Survey 6" map 1882

No longer subdivided by internal walls and hedges, the park was bounded by a narrow encircling belt of trees and ornamented with standard trees and numerous clumps of trees. Although Thomson's Atlas (1832) marks Barnton House (probably using information from Knox's map), Sharp, Greenwood and Fowler's map (1828) suggest that it had been demolished some time before this. There is certainly no indication of a building at or near the site of the old mansion house on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1853).

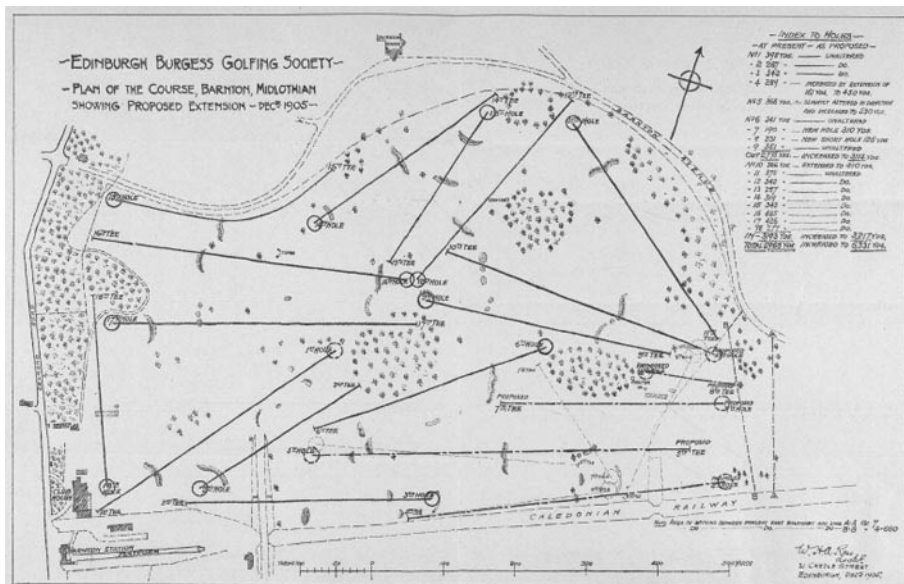


Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6" map 1853, detail showing parkland planting

The landscape remained largely intact and unchanged until the last years of the 19th century, when various events marked the beginning of its break-up. With the westward expansion of Edinburgh at this time, plans were drawn up in the 1890s for the creation of a new suburban housing development of Barnton Park, to be served by its own branch railway. Although the railway was constructed and opened in 1894, effectively cutting off the south edge of the park, housing development took a different form to that shown on the plan. Although built development can be seen on later maps to have encroached on the park from both east and west along the line of Barnton Avenue, the greater part of the park was subsequently preserved and developed as two golf courses, separated by the line of the avenue. The character of the golf courses owes much to the pre-existing parkland planting, with some of the old clumps still extant, although new planting intended to define fairways has tended to erode the original design.



Unexecuted feuing plan 1890s



Edinburgh Burgess Golfing Society, Plan of the Course, Barnton, Midlothian, Showing Proposed Extension, Decr 1905 (National Library of Scotland)



Barnton House 1952 (The Scotsman)

*View from Barnton Avenue to
Bruntsfield golf course*



COMPONENTS OF THE DESIGNED LANDSCAPE

Barnton Avenue, East

Development of the eastern end of Barnton Avenue began in the early years of the 20th century, with the construction of a number of large villas on either side of the avenue. Further residential development has occurred at intervals since – eg. Barnton Loan (1924), Easter Park Gardens (1973) on and around the site of Old Barnton House, and East Barnton Gardens (1978) next to the old gate at Davidson's Mains, where part of the original gate-piers still survives (Harris). While some of the large villas survive largely unchanged within their landscape grounds, others have been and continue to be subdivided or redeveloped. In spite of this, the area retains its character as a leafy suburb, with houses largely hidden by walls and hedges.



West gates and flats

Barnton Avenue, West

All that remains of the grand western entrance to Barnton House policies is the imposing pair of Tudor arched gate-piers by David Hamilton c1810 (Gifford), behind which new flats have been built. Development at the west end of neighbouring Barnton Avenue also began in the early 20th century, with the construction of large villas on either side of the avenue. Further residential development has occurred at intervals since that time, eg. Barnton Brae in 1936 (Harris). As with Barnton Avenue East the character of the area is of a leafy suburb.



Housing at King's Cramond

King's Cramond

Cargilfield School was built in 1899 close to the site of [New] Barnton House, formerly Upper/King's Cramond, which was demolished c1920 (Colvin). Since that time the north-west corner of the original parkland landscape to the west of this has been progressively overrun by residential development, albeit that the history is preserved to some extent in the street names.



*Above and right: two views of
Barton Avenue footpath and
cycleway*





Bruntsfield golf course club-house



Quarry pond, Bruntsfield golf course



Old hedgerow, Bruntsfield golf course



Rhododendron shrubbery, Royal Burgess golf course

Northern Parkland, Bruntsfield Links Golf Course

The parkland to the north of Barnton Avenue was leased in 1897 to the Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society, who employed former Open Champion Willie Park Jun. to lay out a new golf course. Bruntsfield Golf Club House, built 1898, enjoys spectacular northward views over a narrow garden terrace and falling ground to the Firth of Forth and the Fife hills. The course preserves much of the open character of the original parkland, including one large and two smaller clumps of mixed broadleaved trees, the former enclosing a large water-filled quarry. There is a small belt of mature planting in the north-eastern corner of the park by Cramond Road North. Other preserved features within the course include traces of old cultivation rigs, stone dykes, a well-head and former wheel-pond. Some recent planting has been added to separate and define the fairways, along with underplanting in the big central clump, with grant aid from the Forestry Commission, though the latter appears somewhat neglected.

Southern Parkland, Royal Burgess Golf Course

The parkland to the north of the line of the Barnton Branch Railway (closed 1951), and to the south of Barnton Avenue, was leased to the Royal Burgess Golf Club in 1895. A new course was laid out on gently undulating ground by Open Champion 'Old' Tom Morris, and the club-house completed two years later. Like neighbouring Bruntsfield Links, the course preserves something of the character of the open parkland on which it was developed, though it lacks outward views. Slightly less is preserved of the original mature, mixed broadleaved planting than on the Bruntsfield course. Small parts of the woodland within the course have been planted with ornamental shrubberies. Apart from the mixed broadleaved planting, there are no obvious historical features dating from the earlier history of the park.



Royal Burgess golf course club-house

Royal Burgess golf course

Wheel-pond, Bruntsfield golf
course



Barnton Avenue, centre

For approximately 400m between the eastern extremity of Barton Avenue (East) and the western extremity of Barnton Avenue (West), the line of the former carriage drive through the centre of the park at Barnton serves as a public footpath and cycleway, dividing the Bruntsfield Links Golf Course from the Royal Burgess Golf Course. The route forms part of *Sustrans National Route No. 1 : Edinburgh to Aberdeen*. This takes the form of a bitmac path approximately 2m wide, flanked by broad grass verges, with a combination of metal railing fences, barbed wire and thorn hedges separating these from the golf courses on either side. A few old avenue trees, including 150-200 year old oaks, stand beside the path. Bollards at the west end of Barnton Avenue East prevent vehicular access to this path. Maintenance is the responsibility of City of Edinburgh Council. There are glimpses of the golf courses on either side from the path.

Tree Preservation Orders

Within the boundary of the former policies of Barnton House are several areas subject to blanket Tree Preservation Orders. These include the Oak Plantation and Bonnyfield Strip, together with a small detached area of woodland at the back of the Royal High School; the area known as Easter Park, adjacent to Barnton Avenue East; an area straddling the western end of Barnton Avenue West; and a small area at the junction of Whitehouse Road and Gamekeeper's Road.

Views and Vistas

Views within the south part of the parkland are largely circumscribed by surrounding trees and built development. In contrast, within the north part of the parkland the falling topography allows long northward views across the Firth of Forth towards Fife. Streetscape views in Barnton Avenue West and East are

Woodland belt beside
Cramond Road



typical of Edinburgh's leafier suburbs. Views from the central section of Barnton Avenue are somewhat restricted by the flanking fences and scrubby vegetation. Some of the larger houses on Barnton Avenue which back onto the two golf clubs enjoy views across the courses. There are few views of the parkland to be had from neighbouring roads on account of the high stone walls which surround large sections of the park, as along Cramond Road North and Gamekeeper's Road.

Archaeology

Although there are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments or other designated archaeological sites, a number of finds have been recorded within the boundary of the designed landscape, which also bears traces of past land uses.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Public access to much of the green space is limited due to its use for golf, with the courses' boundaries secured by walls and fences. The only part with unrestricted public access is the line of Barnton Avenue where it runs between the two golf courses.

Public access to the south part of the landscape is described separately under Site 038, 039 Davidson's Mains Park and Oak Plantation / Bonnyfield Strip (post-1890).

FUTURE MANAGEMENT POTENTIAL

Given the restricted nature of public access to the two golf courses, whether for reasons of security or public safety, there are few issues affecting the greater part of the area. While one could argue that the open character of the former parkland will be diminished over time by the insertion of new planting to define fairways within the two golf courses, it does appear that both golf clubs are aware of the need for careful management of the woodlands on their courses – for example, the Bruntsfield course has a policy of planting 50 new trees every year. Encouragement might be given to the planting of larger and longer-lived broadleaved species and the planting of selected exotic specimen trees most appropriate to policy woodlands and parkland landscapes. At the same time specific areas might be more positively managed to increase their habitat value – eg. by planting native trees and shrubs and encouraging grassland beneficial to wildlife.

Away from the golf courses public safety could be seen as an issue in the few areas where mature to over-mature trees are to be found close to neighbouring roads and footpaths, as at the corner of Cramond Road North. Dutch elm disease has evidently been a problem for some time, leading to the loss of trees.

Although the central footpath-cycleway section of Barnton Avenue appears to be well used by cyclists and walkers, with views across the neighbouring golf courses, these are less attractive than they might be due to the functional nature of the security fencing and what low level of maintenance of the path and verges. The approach to the footpath-cycleway from Barnton Avenue West between high walls of neighbouring properties is unattractive and uninviting, as well as being poorly signed. The condition of a small number aged trees adjacent to the path should be monitored, to avoid hazards.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Overall

The character and integrity of what was formerly one of Edinburgh's most impressive and extensive parkland landscapes has been significantly diminished over time through fragmentation and built development. The mature policy planting that survives is attractive scenically, but appears unremarkable in arboricultural

terms and recent golf course planting has done little to enhance this. Given the local topography, restricted public access and the paucity of inward views, the greatest scenic benefit is to adjacent properties and golfers. The recreational benefits are mostly for members of the two golf clubs. Accordingly, the site can be considered be of high significance locally, but of little wider significance.

Work of Art

Little

Historical

Some

Horticultural / Arboricultural / Sylvicultural

Some

Architectural

Little

Scenic

High

Nature Conservation

Some

Archaeology

Little

Recreational

Some

Sources – Primary

Maps

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Adair *A map of Midlothian - Counties of Scotland* MSS version c1682 NLS

Adair/Cooper *A map of Midlothian – Counties of Scotland* printed version -1735 NLS

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Laurie, *A plan of Edinburgh and places adjacent*, 1766 NLS

Armstrong, *Map of the Three Lothians*, 1773 NLS

Knox, *Map of the Shire of Edinburgh*, 1816 NLS

Sharp, Greenwood and Fowler *Map of the County of Edinburgh* 1828 NLS

Thomson, *Atlas of Scotland*, 1832 NLS

First edition Ordnance Survey (1852) Sheets 1 and 2a NLS

Parish map OS (1898-1904) NLS

Ordnance Survey (1920 Sheet III NW NLS – paper copies

NLS National Library of Scotland www.nls.uk

RMS Reg Mag Sig Register of the Great Seal of Scotland, Edinburgh

NMRS National Monuments Record of Scotland

SCRAN Scottish Cultural Resource Access Network www.scran.ac.uk

Plans at National Archives of Scotland (NAS), Register House Plans (RHP)

RHP 999 1813 Plan of the estate of Lauriston

RHP 1354 1770 Plan of the enclosures around Barnton House, property of Lord Glenorchy

RHP 1846 1356 *Plan showing part of Barnton policy and ground adjoining proposed to be entailed*

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