



Restalrig
Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Contents

Purpose of Character Appraisals	3
Location and Boundary	4
Statement of Significance	5
Historical Origins and Development	6
Topography	10
Setting	10
Development Pattern	10
Townscape	11
Architectural Character	12
Conservation Areas	14
Trees	14
Listed Buildings	14
Planning Guidance documents	15
Assessing Development within the Restalrig Conservation Area	16

Restalrig

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

RESTALRIG

Purpose of Character Appraisals

Conservation area character appraisals are intended to help manage change. They provide an agreed basis of understanding of what makes an area special. This understanding informs and provides the context in which decisions can be made on proposals which may affect that character. An enhanced level of understanding, combined with appropriate management tools, ensures that change and development sustains and respects the qualities and special characteristics of the area.

Planning Advice Note PAN 71:

Conservation Area Management specifies that:

'When effectively managed, conservation areas can anchor thriving communities, sustain cultural heritage, generate wealth and prosperity and add to quality of life. To realise this potential many of them need to continue to adapt and develop in response to the modern-day needs and aspirations of living and working communities. This means accommodating physical, social and economic change for the better.'

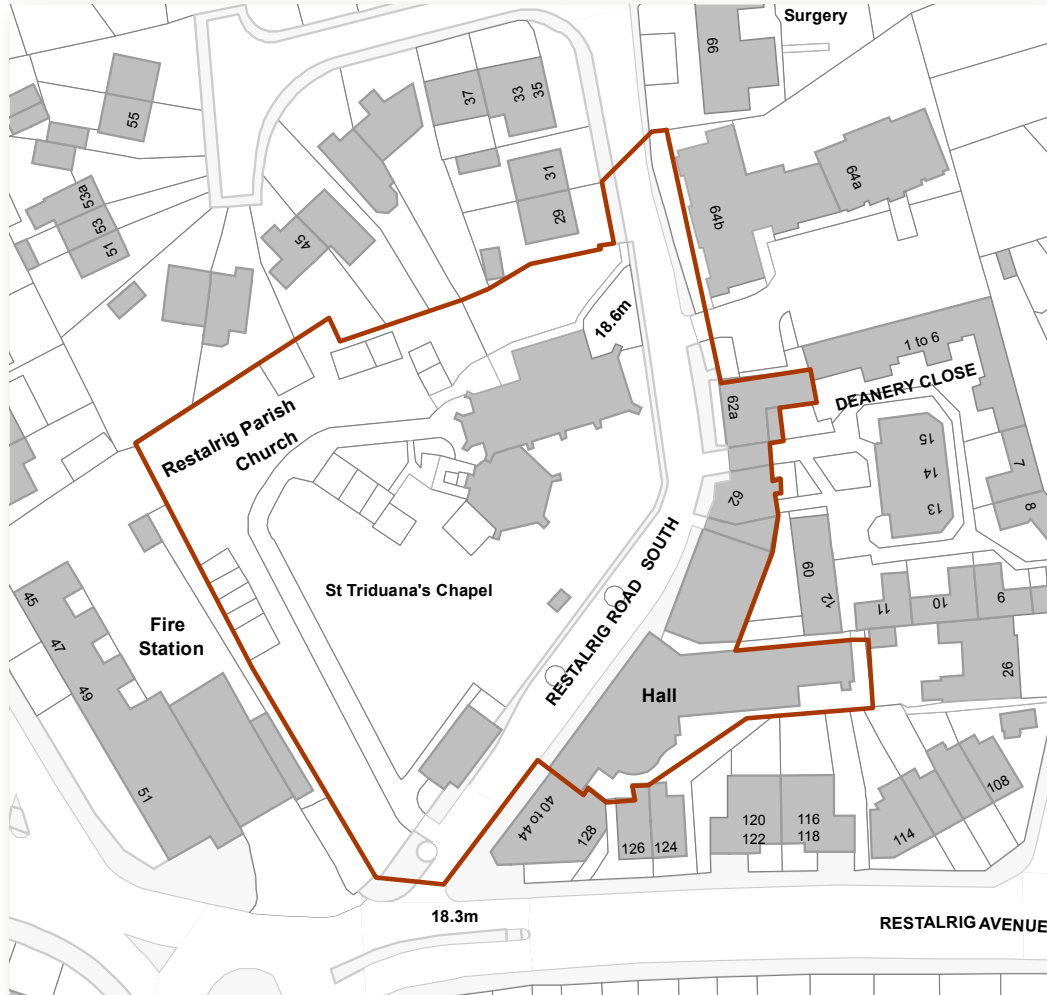
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Character Appraisal

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Location and Boundary



The area lies to the north east of the City. The boundary of the Restalrig Conservation Area includes St Margaret's Parish Church, graveyard and surrounding buildings at the entrance to Restalrig Road South from Restalrig Avenue.



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Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

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Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

Statement of Significance

The Restalrig Conservation Area is historically significant as a result of its development around the church. Within the area there are several listed buildings which are historically significant and form part of the prevailing character of the area. These include:

- St Margaret's Parish Church, including graveyard, gatehouse and boundary walls;
- 62 Restalrig Road South; and
- The Deanery Wall.

There is also a Scheduled Monument:

- St Triduana's Aisle, Chapel and Well house.



These buildings reflect the historical and architectural significance of the area and its development as a centre of religious activities.



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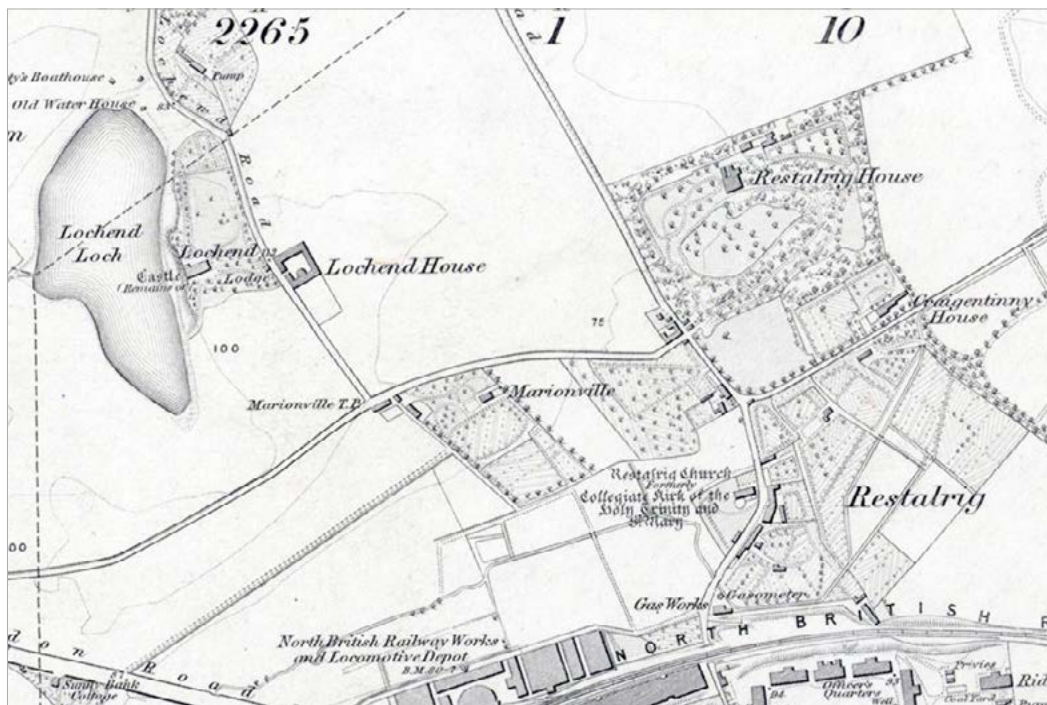
Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

Historical Origins and Development

The village of Restalrig developed around the ancient parish church of St Margaret (formerly Restalrig Parish Church). The name Restalrig is a 15th century variant on the name Lestalric, recorded from the late 12th century. The area was part of a medieval estate owned by the De Lestalrics.

St Margaret's Church has its origins in the 12th century and formed the nucleus of the village. The original parish incorporated South Leith.



Map courtesy of NLS OS 1853



Artist Alex Burke

Restalrig

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal



The village was the home of the cult of St Triduana. According to the most popular legend, St. Triduana was born in the city of Colossae in Phrygia in Asia Minor in the fourth century. She became a nun, travelled to Scotland in the company of St Rule with the bones of St Andrew and landed at Kilrymont, the old name for St Andrews. She then settled at Rescobie in present day Angus. Legend has it that Nectan, King of the Picts, fell in love with Triduana for her beautiful eyes. Triduana then tore out her eyes, skewered them on a thorn and gave them to the King. Triduana then settled in Restalrig where she spent the final years of her life.

St Triduana was soon invoked by the blind and a well, which sprung up at Restalrig, was visited for its powers to restore sight ('mend the ene'). Restalrig became the most celebrated place of pilgrimage in the Lothians and many miracles were attributed to the influence of St Triduana. It is recorded that people were visiting Restalrig as late as the 1920s seeking help for ophthalmic problems.

Restalrig

Conservation Area

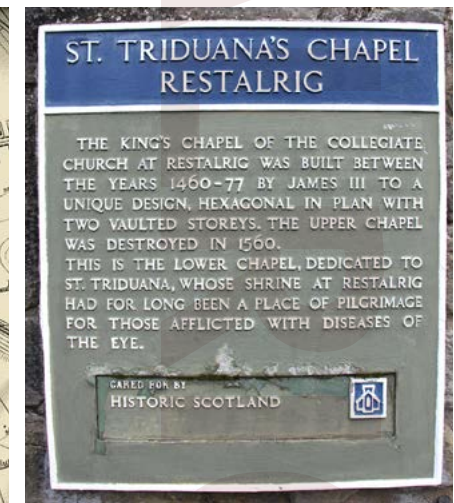
Character Appraisal

The Norman family of the De Restalrigs built a church on the site of the shrine to St Triduana. The church was enlarged in the 15th century by order of King James III of Scotland, was further enhanced by James IV and James V, and developed into one of the most remarkable churches in Scotland. In the early part of the 16th century, a chapel was built to enclose the Well of St Triduana.



In 1560, during the Reformation, Restalrig was singled out for especially zealous treatment by the reformers and it was decreed 'that the kirk of Restalrig as a monument of idolatrie be raysit and utterly castin downe and destroyed'. In 1836, the parish church was rebuilt by the architect William Burn and was dedicated to St. Margaret. The lower storey of the hexagonal chapel was rediscovered and restored in 1907. Its conical roof is topped by a statue of the Saint and it remains an impressive and unusual piece of architecture.

Restalrig remained a small parish until the 1930s when it was engulfed by the modern city. The housing development stretched north from the East Coast mainline, encompassing what was previously farmland surrounding the village.



Restalrig

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal



As a result of the area's more recent development, much of the original historic character of the village has been lost. However, there is a clearly distinguishable character in the area surrounding St Margaret's church. This character is defined by the streetscape, materials, historical significance and uses.



Restalrig

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

Topography

The topography of Restalrig is mainly flat although slopes slightly higher towards the north of Restalrig Road South. The land also slopes down westwards towards Lochend Loch.



Setting

The area is bound by mainly residential properties which are predominantly low density. There is a modern flatted block east of the Deanery Wall and most new development south of this has been for flats of around four storeys. The north of the Conservation Area is bordered by Restalrig Avenue. The east is bordered by Marionville Fire Station.

Development Pattern

The development pattern of the Conservation Area consists of a single road with a few closes leading from the pavement and access to a car park behind the Deanery Wall. There is also an access route around the perimeter of the graveyard leading to the entrance of St Margaret's parish Church.

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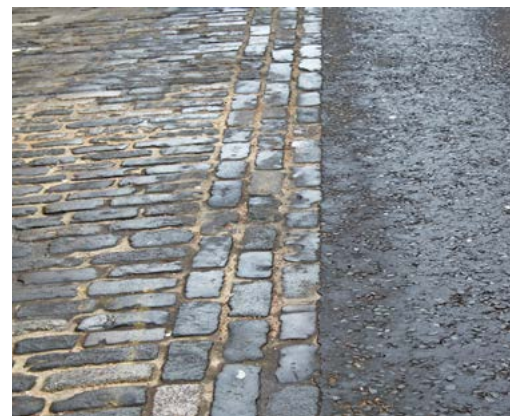
Restalrig

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

Townscape

The Conservation Area is characterised by the predominance of St Margaret's Parish Church and its ancillary buildings. The road is partly made up of well-maintained setts with the main through car route finished in tarmac. The pavements are narrow but there are some opportunities for public life, through the provision of benches. Buildings and walls surrounding the road have a distinctive character through the use of rubble built walls.



RESTALRIG

Architectural Character

Restalrig Parish Church including the graveyard, gatehouse and boundary walls are listed at Category 'A'. The existing building dates from 1487 and was restored by William Burn in 1836. It is a rectangular plan Gothic church, built in rubble stone. The graveyard has a collection of late 17th century and early 18th century table stone tombs and wall mounted headstones, and 18th and 19th century classical gravestones.

The rubble stone Deanery Wall, between 62a and 64 Restalrig Road South, was part of the outer wall of the Deanery of Restalrig and dates from the 16th century.



Restalrig

Conservation Area

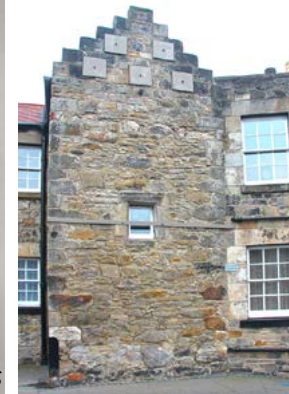
Character Appraisal

St Triduana's Aisle Chapel and Wellhouse is an ancient monument adjoining the partly rebuilt medieval church of Restalrig. It consists of St Triduana's Aisle, a hexagonal two-storeyed chapel dating from the 15th century. The lower chamber was cleared out and restored in 1907 by Dr Thomas Ross, and has since been known as St Triduana's Well-House. The presence of water may be accidental and the structure is probably a chapel rather than a well-house. The upper chamber was probably the Kings Chapel which was endowed by King James III in 1477. The monument is of national importance because of its architectural quality and its association with James III. The area around has the potential to provide archaeological evidence for the construction of the chapel and for ecclesiastical use of the site.

A row of late 17th-century cottages, with crowsteps over semi-dormer windows, stands across the road from the church. The end house at 62 Restalrig Road South is known as the Wricht's House, dates from 1678 and is Category B listed. It has a projecting 17th-century stair-tower and is probably the oldest house in the village. It was remodelled around 1938. The entrance door lintel is dated 1678.



Thomas Ross Courtesy of RIAS



RESTALRIG

Conservation Areas

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that Conservation Areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify and designate such areas. Special attention must be paid to the character and appearance of the conservation area when planning controls are being exercised. Conservation area status brings a number of special controls:

- The demolition of unlisted buildings requires conservation Area consent;
- Some permitted development rights are removed;
- Alterations to windows are also controlled in conservation areas in terms of the Council's guidelines; and
- Works to trees are controlled (see Trees for more detail).

The removal of buildings which make a positive contribution to an area is only permitted in exceptional circumstances, and where the proposals meet certain criteria relating to condition, adequacy of efforts to retain the building and the relative public benefit of replacement proposals. Conservation area character appraisals are a material consideration when considering applications for development within conservation areas.

Trees

Trees within Conservation Areas are covered by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning (etc.) Act 2006. This Act applies to the uprooting, felling or lopping of a tree having a diameter exceeding 2" (75mm) at a point 4ft (1.5m) above ground level. The planning authority must be given six weeks' notice of the intention to uproot, fell or lop trees. Failure to give notice will render the person liable to the same penalties as for contravention of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Listed Buildings

A number of the buildings within the Restalrig Conservation Area are listed for their special architectural or historic interest and are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. Listed building consent is



required for the demolition of a listed building, or its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its special character.

Restalrig

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

More detailed, subject-specific guidance is set out in Planning Guidance documents.

Those particularly relevant to the Restalrig Conservation Area are:

Guidance for Householders

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Edinburgh Design guidance

Street Design Guidance



RESTALRIG

Assessing Development within the Restalrig Conservation Area

General Criteria

General issues to be taken into account in assessing development proposals in the Conservation Area include the appropriateness of the overall massing of development, its scale (the expression of size indicated by the windows, doors, floor heights, and other identifiable units), its proportions and its relationship with its context i.e. whether it sits comfortably. Development should be in harmony with, or complimentary to, its neighbours having regard to the adjoining architectural styles. The use of materials generally matching those which are historically dominant in the area is important, as is the need for the development not to have a visually disruptive impact on the existing townscape. It should also, as far as possible, fit into the "grain" of the Conservation Area, for example, by respecting historic layout, street patterns or existing land form. It is also important where new uses are proposed that these respect the unique character and general ambience of the Conservation Area, for example certain developments may adversely affect the character of a Conservation Area through noise, nuisance and general disturbance.

New Buildings

New development should be of good contemporary design that is sympathetic to the spatial pattern, scale and massing, proportions, building line and design of traditional buildings in the area. The development of new buildings in the Conservation Area should be a stimulus to imaginative, high quality design, and seen as an opportunity to enhance the area

Alterations and Extensions

Proposals for the alteration or extension of properties in the Conservation Area will normally be acceptable where they are sensitive to the existing building, in keeping with the character and appearance of the particular area and do not prejudice the amenities of adjacent properties. Extensions should be subservient to the building, of an appropriate scale, use appropriate materials and should normally be located on the rear elevations of a property. Very careful consideration will be required for alterations and extensions.

