

ST VINCENT CRESCENT CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Approved 28 April 2005

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Location
- 1.2 Definition of a Conservation Area
- 1.3 What Does Conservation Area Status Mean?
- 1.4 Purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal
- 1.5 Designation

2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 Early History
- 2.2 19th Century
- 2.3 20th Century
- 2.4 Historical Maps

3.0 TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL

- 3.1 Topography
- 3.2 Gateways
- 3.3 Conservation Area Boundaries and Edges
- 3.4 Setting
- 3.5 Street Pattern
- 3.6 Plot Pattern
- 3.7 Open Space
- 3.8 Circulation/Permeability
- 3.9 Views
- 3.10 Activities/Uses
- 3.11 Architectural Character
- 3.12 Building Materials
- 3.13 Condition
- 3.14 Townscape Detail
- 3.15 Landscape and Trees

4.0 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Key Features
- 4.3 Key Challenges
- 4.4 Positive Buildings and Areas
- 4.5 Negative/Neutral Buildings and Areas

5.0 BOUNDARY

6.0 PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Opportunities for Preservation and Enhancement
- 6.3 Grants

7.0 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

8.0 CITY PLAN

- 8.1 Context
- 8.2 Part One, Development Strategy
- 8.3 Part Two, Development Policies and Design Guidance
- 8.4 Policies

9.0 FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES

APPENDICES

1. Boundary Map
2. Designation Papers
3. Historic Maps
4. Conservation Areas
5. Aerial Photograph
6. Setting
7. Street Pattern
8. Plot Pattern
9. Open Space
10. Views
11. Map of Listed Buildings
12. List of Listed Buildings and Categories
13. Unlisted Buildings of Merit
14. Positive Buildings and Areas
15. Negative/Neutral Buildings and Areas
16. Proposed Boundary Changes
17. Outstanding Status
18. Article 4 Directions

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location

The St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area is located to the west of the city centre and lies between the Queen Street Station railway line/Stobcross Business Park to the south and the tenements and terraces of Kelvingrove and the Park area to the north. It is centred on St Vincent Crescent a long, serpentine terrace and also includes part of Argyle Street, Kelvinhaugh Street, Kent Road and Claremont Street. A detailed map showing the location and extent of the conservation area is set out as **Appendix 1**.

1.2 Definition of a Conservation Area

Conservation areas were first introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area)(Scotland) Act 1997 provides the current legislative framework for the designation of conservation areas.

A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

All planning authorities are required to determine which parts of their area merits conservation area status. Glasgow currently has 21 conservation areas varying in character from the city centre and Victorian residential suburbs to a rural village and former country estate.

1.3 What Does Conservation Area Status Mean?

In a conservation area it is the buildings and the spaces between them that are of architectural or historic interest. Planning control is therefore directed at maintaining the integrity of the entire area and enhancing its special character. Conservation area status does not mean that new development is unacceptable, but care must be taken to ensure that the new development will not harm the character or appearance of the area.

Conservation area designation automatically brings the following works under planning control:

- Demolition of buildings
- Removal of, or work to, trees
- Development involving small house extensions, roof alterations, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior, provision of hard surfaces, and
- Additional control over satellite dishes

Where a development would, in the opinion of the planning authority, affect the character or appearance of a conservation area, the application for planning permission will be advertised in the local press providing an opportunity for public comment. Views expressed are taken into account by the local planning authority when making a decision on the application.

In order to protect the conservation areas, designation requires the City Council to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement.

Local residents and property owners also have a major role to play in protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area by ensuring that properties are regularly maintained and original features retained.

1.4 Purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal

Conservation area designation should be regarded as the first positive step towards an area's protection and enhancement.

Planning authorities and the Scottish Executive are required by law to protect conservation areas from development which would be detrimental to their character. It is necessary therefore for planning authorities, residents and property owners to be aware of the key features which together create the area's special character and appearance.

The purpose of this conservation area appraisal is to define what is important about its character and appearance; to identify its important characteristics. It is also a vital tool to enable the active management of the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area. It identifies the areas special features and changing needs through a process which includes researching its historical development, carrying out a detailed townscape analysis and character assessment. This information informs consideration of conservation area boundaries as well as providing a context for the assessment of development proposals within the area. It identifies opportunities and priorities for enhancement, and sets out the policy framework for the determination of development proposals. This appraisal should however be regarded as supplementary to the policies set out in the Glasgow City Plan (adopted August 2003).

The document is laid out as follows: -

Section 1	Introduction
Section 2	Historical Development
Section 3	Townscape Appraisal
Section 4	Character Assessment
Section 5	Boundary
Section 6	Preservation and Enhancement
Section 7	Article 4 Directions
Section 8	City Plan
Section 9	Further Information and Advice

The text is supported by maps and background papers contained in Appendices.

It is recognised that the successful management of conservation areas can only be achieved with the support and input from stakeholders, and in particular local residents and property owners. Following consultation at the Draft Appraisal stage comments and suggestions received have been considered and included as appropriate.

This document provides the basis for the development of an action plan as the next stage in the management process.

1.5 Designation

The St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area was first designated on 16 July 1975 by Glasgow District Council encompassing St Vincent Crescent, Corunna Street, the south side of Argyle Street and part of Kelvinhaugh Street. It was extended on 21 February 1986 to include the north side of Argyle Street and property in Kent Road. An alteration to this boundary was made on 25 September 1992 to remove part of a new development in Kelvinhaugh Street which was bisected by the conservation area boundary. Copies of the papers confirming the above are included as **Appendix 2**.

2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Early History

The stretch of Argyle Street within the conservation area, formerly known as Dumbarton Road, was the main highway from Glasgow to Dumbarton during the 18th Century. An ancient wooden cross once stood at its junction with Finnieston Street and it was from this that the name Stobcross was derived. Stobcross was the name of the estate on which the conservation area now stands and was once part of the Bishop's Forest and later the Great Western Common.

2.2 19th Century

The oldest surviving building in the area, a two-storey cottage with attic, can be found at 1125 Argyle Street. Dating from the early 1800's this former inn stands on the site of a tollhouse. In the mid 1830's Dumbarton Road still had a predominantly rural character and the section of road behind the Crescent was fronted only by two mansion houses, Mulberrybank and Whitebank set in their own grounds. Remnants of the sandstone wall that enclosed the gardens of Whitebank House form part of the ground floor walls of Laird's factory (1061 Argyle Street) and the rear walls of some backcourts.

Stobcross Estate, which comprised Stobcross House and 62 acres extending from Finnieston Street to the west end of what is now the SECC, was sold in 1844, with the southern part developed by The Clyde Trust for the construction of Queens Dock. In 1849 the Stobcross Estate Company was formed to begin speculative building on the remaining northern part of the estate. Architect, Alexander Kirkland was commissioned to design the new suburb of Stobcross. The elegant serpentine of Stobcross Crescent, later to be renamed St Vincent Crescent, was the first and only part of the ambitious housing development to be built. Plans to extend the development westwards and southwards never materialised. The west end of the Crescent (nos. 31-70) was constructed from 1850 onwards with Alexander Kirkland himself occupying No 39. Nos.19-30 were built circa 1855 however, in 1882 No 23 was demolished to make way for the Glasgow and District Railway, now the Queen Street Station line with Finnieston Station opening in Argyle Street. It has since been demolished. Half of No 24 was demolished around 1943 due to subsidence and the site is now a plumbers yard. As is obvious from the gable end of No 70, it had been intended to continue building further west.

In 1884 the Crescent looked over farmland but this was acquired by the Railway Company for mineral yards, and later developed for light industrial purposes.

Kirkland was also employed by different developers to design buildings in Corunna Street. They were erected between 1850-55 linking the Crescent with Dumbarton Road (now known as Argyle Street). The eastern continuation of the Crescent, Minerva Street, was built in two stages, Nos.26-32 in 1853 and Nos.8-20 in 1856. These buildings form the main entrance to the development, although only the northern section now remains, the southern block of tenements having been demolished in 1972.

Unlike the unified design of St Vincent Crescent, the Dumbarton Road (Argyle Street) frontage between Finnieston and Corunna Streets was a result of more piecemeal development.

1854 saw the construction of Sandyford Church (later to be known as the Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church) in Kelvinhaugh Street designed by JT Emmett and completed by John Honeyman.

Two acres in front of the west end of the Crescent were originally laid out as pleasure gardens. In 1859 the St Vincent Crescent Bowling and Curling Club was formed and ground acquired for a bowling green and curling pond. Tennis courts later replaced the curling pond and further bowling greens were opened. A large boating pond was formed to the south of the gardens and bowling greens and this was used as an ice rink when frozen. While the bowling greens still survive, the gardens and boating pond have been replaced by the Scottish Power building.

In 1866 "The Blackie Trust" built a block of tenements on the site of Whitebank, four storeys high with shops on the ground floor. A furniture shop known as John Lairds (No. 1113-1117) was owned by the original tenant's son and grandson until the 1990's when it was acquired by Funeral Directors. Laird's also built a factory (1061 Argyle Street) to supply their shop, a three storey red and white brick building, built as a cabinetmakers works in 1877. Lairds still retain a presence in the area with a French polishing business in the backlands.

2.3 20th Century

The "backlands", development in the backcourts between Argyle Street and St Vincent Crescent commenced in the late 19th/early 20th Century with many small trades and workshops operating from premises there.

Mulberrybank, a mansion house located on the south side of Argyle Street was demolished in the 1920's to make way for the Kelvin Cinema which opened in the 1930 and closed in 1959. This property has been used for a variety of purposes since, including bingo hall and restaurant.

By the 1930's St Vincent Crescent had begun to deteriorate. The encroachment of further industrial and commercial development caused many of the middle class families to move away resulting in houses being let out as "rooms". By the 1950's the fabric of the buildings was so poor that demolition was considered. By the mid 1960's however, interest in restoring this property was developing and with the growth of the conservation movement in the 1970's its rehabilitation was achieved.

2.4 Historical Maps

The development of this area is well documented. Maps dating from 1860, 1895, 1913 and 1933 are included in **Appendix 3**.

3.0 TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL

3.1 Topography

The St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area occupies a very slightly sloping site with the ground rising gradually along Argyle Street from east to west. Railway cuttings and tunnels traverse the area from east to west and north to south.

3.2 Gateways

While tenements on the northside of Argyle Street mark the eastern approach to the conservation area, it is not until its junction with Minerva Street that a gateway is created. It is dominated by the impressive 4-storey gusset building which leads into the gentle sweep of Minerva Street.

From the west the three Gothic gables of the Sandyford-Henderson Memorial Church located close to the junction of Kelvinhaugh Street and Argyle Street marks the entrance to the conservation area. The tenements on the north side of Argyle Street to the west of Derby Street are simple in form while the tenements on the east side, lying within the conservation area are more decorative.

There are two gateways from the south: -

- Finnieston Street which joins the eastern gateway just south of the existing conservation area boundary and
- Minerva Street which branches east at its junction with St Vincent Crescent.

Approaches from the north are less well defined.

3.3 Conservation Area Boundaries and Edges.

The conservation area is linear in form and can be split into two distinct parts: -

- St Vincent Crescent/Minerva Street/Corunna Street
These streets are mainly residential in character, with an open southerly aspect. The curved built form is softened by abundant planting, created by the small front gardens and back courts of the flats, landscaping around the bowling greens and trees in the pavement.
- Argyle Street and all that lies to the north
This part of Argyle Street is a straight busy thoroughfare with ground floor shops and tenement flats above rising directly from the pavement creating a strong canyon effect.

The southern boundary of the conservation area is well defined, following the southern edge of the St Vincent Crescent highway and bowling greens. It excludes virtually all modern development, with the exception of No 26a St Vincent Crescent.

The open aspect of the Crescent and the green open space afforded by the numerous bowling greens is one of the most important elements of the conservation area's setting.

The northern edge follows the rear boundary of tenements fronting Argyle Street, including the street block bounded by Kent Road and Claremont Street, and part of Dover Street and Brechin Street.

The properties at 1094-1138 Argyle Street adjoin the boundary of the Park Conservation Area which lies immediately to the north and as shown in **Appendix 4**.

To the west the boundary follows St Vincent Crescent Lane, excluding the modern student flats but including the park and Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church. The boundary then crosses Argyle Street excluding the listed Westminster Terrace and simply detailed tenement on the north side of the street.

The eastern boundary consists of vacant sites and modern development forming a well-defined edge to the Victorian buildings.

The aerial photograph contained in **Appendix 5** clearly shows the relationship of the conservation area to the surrounding area.

3.4 Setting (Appendix 6)

An important element of the conservation area's setting is the aspect afforded by the bowling greens to the south of St Vincent Crescent. This broadly follows the original feuing plan for the area which included pleasure gardens in this location with further development to the south.

3.5 Street Pattern (Appendix 7)

The sweeping serpentine line of St Vincent Crescent and Minerva Street dominates the conservation area. Tenement lined Argyle Street runs roughly parallel to the Crescent on an east-west axis and they are linked midway along the Crescent by Corunna Street. The area to the north of Argyle Street has a grid-iron street pattern but only the tenements fronting Argyle Street are included in the conservation area.

3.6 Plot Pattern (Appendix 8)

With tenements being the predominant building type plots tend to be standard in size, with the larger plots occurring where building type changes e.g. church, cinema. The majority of tenement plots have remained unchanged since their date of construction. Many of the backland buildings between the Crescent and Argyle Street are occupied by various workshops which have developed and extended on an adhoc basis. Tenements, which originally occupied the site next to the Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church have been demolished and a small park created.

3.7 Open Space (Appendix 9)

The open space within the conservation area varies in character. Private open space consists of the very small front gardens in St Vincent Crescent, Corunna Street and Kent Road and the backcourts to the rear. In addition the privately owned bowling greens located immediately to the south of the Crescent secure an open southerly aspect for the Crescent.

Public open space can be found in the form of a small park, a shaded, grassed area dominated by trees with no play facilities, adjacent to the Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church in Kelvinhaugh Street.

Two hard landscaped areas with seating are located either side of the western entrance to the Scottish Power site.

3.8 Circulation/Permeability

Argyle Street is one of the city's main arterial routes and is therefore an important vehicular thoroughfare. There is a particularly busy junction at the meeting of Finnieston Street, Argyle Street and Minerva Street at one of the main entrances to the conservation area. The ground floor shops also generate pedestrian activity. All other roads take access from Argyle Street with the exception of Claremont Street which is stopped up. The western part of St Vincent Crescent is a cul-de-sac as is Kent Road which is stopped up at the secondary school. St Vincent Crescent Lane, East and West are also cul-de-sacs. The Exhibition Centre railway station on the Argyle Line, located at the foot of Minerva Street also generates pedestrian movement.

3.9 Views (Appendix 10)

Views westwards along the Crescent are terminated by a modern flat development. The gap between the Crescent and the modern flats is occupied by a large green timber shed, which can only be viewed from the western end of the Crescent looking north. The curve of the building hides and then opens up fresh views while the leafy open space to the south provides a soft edge. The tenements along both sides of Argyle Street create a long view terminated by the curve in the street, outwith the conservation area, at Haugh Road and Overnewton Street.

Other views within the conservation area vary from the closed vistas created by Argyle Street tenements looking north up Corunna Street and the St Vincent Crescent tenements topped with a tall slender chimney stack when viewed from Minerva Street, to the back lanes where distant views are often obscured by trees and shrubs. Views of the backlands can be glimpsed from Argyle Street at the railway cutting /tunnel and through the narrow pend between numbers 1101 and 1105 Argyle Street.

The vacant site in Corunna Street opens views to the rear elevation of the church.

Views to the south, out of the area, are diverse including a view of the Stobcross/Finnieston Crane and beyond from Minerva Street.

Some views change with the seasons. The assortment of sheds and warehouses located to the south of the bowling greens as well as the Exhibition Centre and Moat House Hotel, are more apparent in winter with the loss of leaves from trees. The panoramic views south can only be experienced from the upper floors of the Crescent.

3.10 Activities/Uses

The conservation area is essentially residential in character with ground floor commercial uses e.g. shops bars, restaurants/takeaways confined to Argyle Street. Offices occupy a few ground floor properties in St Vincent Crescent. Small workshops e.g. blacksmith, French polisher, violin maker, recording and artist studios can be found in the "backlands" which co-exist with the adjacent residential flats. A plumbers business (Sweeney Drainage) operates out of St Vincent Crescent on the site of part of No 24 which was demolished in 1943. MNS Photocolour occupy premises on the south side of the Crescent. There are two churches within the conservation area, the Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church in Kelvinhaugh Street and the Finnieston Evangelical Church located on the ground floor of Nos. 10,12 Minerva Street. The three bowling greens provide the main leisure facility within the conservation area.

The surrounding area outwith the conservation area is urban in nature with a mixture of uses including a school, student residences, timber yard, offices, depots, retail warehouses and car showrooms.

3.11 Architectural Character

The buildings possess a strong sense of uniformity in terms of design, style and materials and this is the essence of the conservation area's character. In many cases their architectural and historic interest has been recognised through statutory listing. (See **Appendices 11 and 12**) Other buildings of more modest architectural character, but which contribute positively to the character of the area, have been identified as "unlisted buildings of merit". These are detailed in **Appendix 13**.

The built form is dominated by St Vincent Crescent which, when combined with Minerva Street presents an almost unbroken sinuous curved façade of about half a mile. The main feature of the 3-storey Crescent is its unified classical design. It is constructed in yellow sandstone with parapet balustrading, slate roofs, large chimneystacks, porticos (some painted), twelve pane timber sash-and-case windows, original fanlights, storm doors, vestibule doors and very small gardens originally bounded by cast iron railings set into stone plinths. The window pattern at No 26 and 32 Minerva Street (4 pane) differs from the rest of the street (12 pane). The eastern section of the Crescent between the railway cutting and Minerva Street differs from the rest, excluding ground floor and basement houses on either side of the main access to the upper floors, making them more conventional tenements.

The Corunna Street properties, linking the Crescent to Argyle Street are of similar design but with a solid eaves parapet. Kirkland's designs continue into Argyle Street where they give way to traditional 4 storey, yellow sandstone Glasgow tenements. None of the 4 storey tenements have basements but the four blocks between numbers 1087-1117 Argyle Street have saloon backcourts at first floor level over commercial/workshop premises, which either extend from the Argyle Street frontage, or which are entered from the rear lane, reached via the mid pend at 1103.

Replacement doors, windows and roof coverings in modern materials and styles, are present. Many chimneystacks have been retained and in some cases rebuilt in brick and rendered. There are minor variations in stone detailing.

Visual interruptions to the tenemental frontages on Argyle Street include:

- No 1125-1129 Argyle Street a much-altered 2-storey cottage style property with attic dormers and straight stone skews. Reputably the oldest building in the conservation area, appearing on the 1860 map as an inn, it is dwarfed by the scale of the adjacent tenements. Its position over the railway line has probably contributed to its survival.
- The Crème de la Crème building with its low parasol roofed octagonal turret disrupts the continuity of the tenement frontage due to its size, materials and colour scheme.

The backlands which are largely hidden from public view, consist of mews properties which have been extended creating a mixture of small one or two storey brick or timber buildings, many with slate roofs. Other simple structures have appeared over the years, in various styles and materials. Scale is small with the emphasis on colour.

The remnants of the former Cabinetmakers workshop, a red and white brick building still exists at 1061 Argyle Street. Part has been demolished and the chimneystack reduced.

The small, colourful shop units in Argyle Street contribute to its vitality however there are a number of unoccupied shop premises. Fragments of original frontages survive

but the quality of shop frontage design varies considerably throughout the conservation area with some modern designs detracting from the appearance of the building.

The Argyle Street, Finnieston Street, Minerva Street junction is the main focal point within the conservation area. It is dominated by No 995-1017 Argyle Street/ 8-20 Minerva Street a 4 storey, 12 bay, curved, gusset building dating from 1856, formerly known as Napier Place. It stands at the entrance to the conservation area and is finely detailed with arched windows at ground floor level and giant Corinthian pilasters rising through the first and second floors at the corner section.

The gusset building on the north side of Argyle Street formed by Argyle Street and Kent Road is less imposing but possesses fine features including curved timber projecting bow windows at the corner with a simple stone pediment at eaves level.

The Sandyford-Henderson Memorial Church, Kelvinhaugh Street dating from 1854, was originally designed by JT Emmett and completed by John Honeyman with a fine yellow sandstone Gothic façade dominating the junction with Argyle Street. It consists of three buttressed gables with plate tracery to windows. It also houses the earliest collection of stained glass in the city.

3.12 Building Materials

The traditional building materials found in the conservation area are: -

- Yellow sandstone: walls and boundary walls, ashlar and rubble
- Slate: roofs
- Cast iron: railings with various finials, basement grills
- Timber: sash and case windows, storm doors, and vestibule doors
- Glass: windows, stained glass
- Clay/terracotta: chimney pots
- Granite/whin setts: road surfaces
- Brick: buildings/walls located in the backcourt/backland areas are traditionally constructed in red brick often with cream/white brick detailing. Some chimneys have been rebuilt in brick and rendered.

Modern materials are also found in the conservation area, although their inclusion below does not mean that their use is acceptable: -

- Concrete: roof tiles, pavement surfacing
- Metal: windows, satellite dishes, central heating flues
- UPVC: windows
- Tarmac: roads, pavements
- Render: applied to chimneys rebuilt in brick

3.13 Condition

During the 1970's residents took advantage of grants available from Glasgow District Council, Strathclyde Regional Council and the Historic Buildings Council for Scotland. to help restore and upgrade, their properties stimulating confidence in the area and raising property values. In some cases these grants were combined, to facilitate co-ordinated terrace repair schemes. It is now over 20 years since most of the tenement properties underwent major restoration including stone cleaning, window replacement and backcourt improvements. The quality of repair work varied from property to property. It is evident that some general maintenance is now required. While some properties have managed to reinstate railings to the original design (with assistance of Council grants) there are still many properties with either wooden fencing or no boundary treatment at all.

No 1155-1163 Argyle Street is vacant and in a poor state of repair having suffered fire damage. It does however retain the original shopfront with hand painted signage relating to its previous use.

3.14 Townscape Detail

The presence of the following features adds significantly to the character of the conservation area:-

- Cast iron gateway to the St Vincent Bowling Green
- Flag poles
- Setts in Claremont Street and through pend to backland courtyard
- Basement ironwork
- Public Toilet Railings
- Hand painted shop signs
- Tram wire fittings on buildings
- Building dates carved into stonework
- Urns on wallheads of east elevation of 183 Kent Road
- Massive original timber panelled doors to Argyle Street shops

3.15 Landscape and Trees

The following provide the main landscape elements in the conservation area:-

- Street Trees - The majority of birch trees planted in the footpath of St Vincent Crescent have thrived, and although not often used for street planting, their fine winter form and light summer foliage act as a perfect foil for the impressive stone façade of the terrace.
- Bowling Greens - This green open space to the front of the Crescent creates an important urban space, which is more visible from upper windows than at street level.
- Front Gardens - Well-stocked and maintained gardens surrounded by appropriate period railings make a valuable contribution to the streetscape.
- Landscaped western entrance to Scottish Power site – These spaces located on either side of the entrance are simply detailed with concrete slabs, brick and cobbled surfaces. Small trees, bench seating and ancillary planting provide a neat area of open space.
- Kelvinhaugh Street Park – an undulating area of grass and blaes with dense tree canopy.

4.0 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction

Having examined the townscape of the Conservation Area it is now possible to use the findings to identify those features which contribute to its character and appearance as an area of special architectural and historic interest. This assessment will identify features which contribute positively and are worthy of retention as well as those features which make no positive contribution or which detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Listed below are: -

- **Key Features**

Essential elements which define the special architectural and historic character of the area.

- **Key Challenges**

Inappropriate elements which detract from the character and appearance of the area.

- **Positive Buildings and Areas**

These are considered to be buildings or areas which contribute positively to the character of the conservation area and which it is considered desirable to preserve and enhance. There is a presumption against the demolition and redevelopment of any building or area which is considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Proposals for the alteration of such buildings and areas will be carefully considered in the light of the adopted policies of the City Council.

- **Negative/Neutral Buildings and Areas**

These are considered to be buildings or areas which do not contribute positively to the character or appearance of the conservation area. Neutral buildings or areas while not forming part of the special character do not detract from it. Negative buildings or areas on the other hand have a negative effect on the character and appearance of the area. There is no presumption against the demolition and redevelopment of these buildings or areas.

4.2 Key Features

4.2.1 Architectural quality which is reflected in the number of statutory listings in the area, and in particular the "A" category awarded to St Vincent Crescent. The Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church is not only of architectural interest but is an important townscape feature at the western gateway to the conservation area. (A map showing the location of listed buildings within the Conservation Area and a list of listed building addresses with categories are contained in **Appendix 11 and 12**).

Unlisted buildings of merit, which contribute positively to the character of the conservation area are identified in **Appendix 13**. There is a presumption within the City Plan that these buildings will be retained and re-used wherever possible.

4.2.2 Uniformity in terms of scale, design, style and materials helps create a cohesive, well-defined area.

- 4.2.3 Use of traditional materials such as sandstone, slate, timber windows and doors and cast iron railings and granite and whin setts make a valuable contribution to the quality of the conservation area and contribute to its cohesive character. Traditional materials give the area a feeling of permanency and sense of history.
- 4.2.4 Original building line with the St Vincent Crescent tenements creating a strong continuous curved frontage set behind small gardens, while the remaining tenements and buildings within the conservation area all emerge from the heel of the pavement. Where the building line is ignored the character of the area fragments e.g. Stobcross Business Park. The curved line of the gushet building at Minerva Street/Argyle Street and to a lesser extent at Kent Road/Argyle Street also contributes to the quality of the townscape.
- 4.2.5 Roofline with the rhythm of tenement roofs punctuated at regular intervals with substantial chimneystacks.
- 4.2.6 Survival of original details e.g. storm doors, sash and case windows, railings, bowling green gate, signage, granite and whin setts.
- 4.2.7 The scale and materials of the backland/mews property contrast with the larger scale tenements which surround them creating visual variety within the conservation area.
- 4.2.8 Combination and distribution of uses play an important part in creating the special character of the area. The full occupation of shop units in Argyle Street is essential to the character of the conservation area as much as the residential character of St Vincent Crescent. The backlands located between the Crescent and Argyle Street and accessed through a narrow pennd off Argyle Street have developed organically into an artisan quarter of unique character. The numerous businesses/workshops seem to be well tolerated by local residents and provide useful local services.
- 4.2.9 The aspect afforded by the bowling greens which contrast with the hard townscape elements mentioned above. They provide views of the Crescent as well as creating a feeling of space and light. They also echo the aim of the original feuing plan.
- 4.2.10 The retention of cast iron railings and planting of front gardens enhances the setting of the buildings.
- 4.2.11 Argyle Street, Finnieston Street, Minerva Street junction is the main focal point within the conservation area.

It is dominated by No 995-1017 Argyle Street/ 8-20 Minerva Street a 4 storey, 12 bay, curved, gushet building dating from 1856, formerly known as Napier Place.

It stands at the entrance to the conservation area and is finely detailed with arched windows at ground floor.

The importance of the junction of Argyle Street and Finnieston Street has been emphasised over the years by the location of the now disused underground public toilets and a drinking fountain. The drinking fountain, originally located at the junction of Finnieston Street and Minerva Street, just out with the conservation area boundary, has been removed.

4.3 Key Challenges

4.3.1 Loss of original architectural detail

Original architectural detail makes a defining contribution to the character and appearance of any conservation area. Its retention and repair is therefore an important aspect of the preservation and enhancement of an area. By contrast, the proliferation of inappropriate replacement doors, windows, roof coverings and boundary treatments, particularly in Argyle Street, has to some extent eroded the special character of the Conservation Area.

4.3.2 Use of inappropriate materials

The use of materials in any conservation area is another important element of its character and appearance. Where these are replaced with modern materials there will normally be a loss of character. A common example is the replacement of original timber windows with modern plastic substitutes which are not in keeping with the character of nineteenth century tenements.

4.3.3 The Public Realm

The quality and upkeep of the public realm within the conservation area is a major concern to residents. The principal areas of concern relate to paving surfaces and damage by utilities and other contractors, design and location of street furniture, street lighting, proliferation of street signs and the maintenance of amenity spaces and trees.

4.3.4 Shopfronts, Signs and Adverts

The survival of a limited number of original shopfronts and signs in an area contribute to its character. However, there are also frontages which are not in keeping with the area's character and their proliferation is harmful to the quality of the local townscape.

4.3.5 Backlanes

Poor surfacing and the dilapidated condition of some property backing onto lanes diminishes the historic appearance of the Conservation Area.

4.4 Positive Buildings and Areas

The buildings and areas which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area are plotted on the map presented as **Appendix 14**.

4.5 Negative/Neutral Buildings and Areas

The buildings and areas which do not contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area are plotted on the map presented as **Appendix 15**.

5.0 BOUNDARY

The assessment of existing conservation area boundaries in terms of appropriateness is an important element of this appraisal. While the majority of the conservation area boundary is clearly and logically defined there are small parts that require revision to remove inconsistencies.

The appraisal has identified the following inconsistencies in the conservation area boundary

- Inconsistencies in the northern boundary area are apparent at Berkley Street and Brechin Street where the boundary bisects tenements of a similar style and age .
- Tree planting along the edge of the carriageway is a feature of St Vincent Crescent but the trees at the northern boundary of the PC World car park and the small “landscaped” area on the corner with Finnieston Street are currently excluded from the conservation area.

In order to remedy the situation it is considered that the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area boundary be amended in accordance with map found in **Appendix 16**.

6.0 PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

6.1 Introduction

Detailed analysis of the conservation areas character and analysis of consultation responses has highlighted opportunities for its preservation and enhancement.

The application of heritage policies, use of Article 4 Directions and provision of information and advice encouraging sympathetic maintenance and repair are important tools in the preservation of the areas unique character and are dealt with in the following pages.

A number of specific sites/issues have also been identified as opportunities for enhancement.

6.2 Opportunities for Preservation and Enhancement

6.2.1 Maintenance

The best means of preserving the character and appearance of any area is through the routine maintenance of buildings. Roofs, chimneys, windows, doors, guttering, stonework, entrance steps, gardens and boundary treatments both front and rear all need regular attention to prolong their life secure the future of the building and enhance its setting. Regular, coordinated maintenance programmes can help reduce costs in the long term.

6.2.2 Development

Minor works such as the removal of chimneys and replacement of traditional windows, doors, and railings with modern styles and materials are evident and can have the cumulative effect of eroding the character of the conservation area. The City Council, is committed to the preservation of the areas unique character through the application of Built Heritage policies. Information relating to the key policies which promote the sympathetic design, repair and maintenance of property can be found in **8.0 CITY PLAN**.

Works such as the formation of a new shopfronts will also be guided by City Plan Policies.

6.2.3 Information and Advice

Property owners and residents have a major role to play in the preservation and enhancement of St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area. To encourage participation the City Council will prepare and distribute information leaflets explaining the implications of living in a conservation area and/or listed building. Details of the availability of grants will also be included. In addition specific guidance for residents/owners wishing to carry out repairs and alterations to their property will be prepared. Other methods of disseminating this information such as via the Council's web site or in the local press will also be investigated.

6.2.4 Enhancement Opportunities in St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area

No 1155-1163 Argyle Street

This listed property has been damaged by fire, lies vacant and continues to deteriorate. It is an important element of townscape at the western gateway and its restoration would enhance this part of the conservation area.

The Backlands

The small buildings located between Argyle Street and St Vincent Crescent have been altered and extended on an adhoc basis over the years and now provide an eclectic mix of workshops and offices providing accommodation for a variety of craftsman. While much of their original character has been lost, the vitality of this area is considered worthy of protection. The assessment of pedestrian and car parking needs, resurfacing/relaying of setts in the access courtyard and repairing/restoring buildings would enhance this unique area.

New Development

The sympathetic redevelopment of the sites listed below would enhance the character of the conservation:

- Gap site in Corunna Street
- Site to west of Breadalbane Street
- No 1061 Cabinetmakers Works/temporary car park (originally identified for development potential in the St Vincent Crescent Policy Report produced in 1978)
- No.1073-1083 Argyle Street, Crème de la Crème building, adjacent property and car park (originally identified for development potential in the St Vincent Crescent Policy Report produced in 1978)
- Plumbers site at no 23 St Vincent Crescent
- Workshops at no 23b St Vincent Crescent
- Scottish Power site
- Kelvinhaugh Street Park

Minerva Street Public Toilets

The decorative railings surrounding the disused toilets in Minerva Street are interesting townscape features which would benefit from maintenance and repair.

The Park, Kelvinhaugh Street

The Park provides little amenity, with trees creating extensive shadow. It is currently underused and acts as a pedestrian link from Kelvinhaugh Street to Corunna Street via St Vincent Crescent Lane. The future use of this amenity space merits consideration.

Former Woodside Secondary/St Thomas Aquinas School Site

It is intended that this building should continue in educational use with the establishment of a fully integrated Gaelic school. The implementation of this proposal will provide a valuable opportunity to improve the setting of the conservation area.

Shopfront Design

The commercial premises in Argyle Street are important to the vitality of the area and encouragement should be given to the establishment of businesses in this location. The proliferation of unsympathetic shopfront designs however has a detrimental affect on the architectural integrity of the buildings. The units are small and colourful, but the shopfront design policy needs to be applied to prevent the erosion of historical detail and encourage sympathetic designs.

Back Lanes

The privately owned back lanes are unsurfaced and in a poor state of repair. The lanes are used by heavy lorries which contribute to their poor condition. The situation is further exacerbated by the proliferation of refuse which collects in the lane between No 9 and 21 Corunna Street. At present the City Council offers technical assistance for the upgrading of lanes with costs having to be met from other sources.

Street Furniture

The selective introduction of signs for the conservation area, appropriate design and positioning of lighting fixtures and street furniture (bins, pedestrian barriers etc) could reinforce the local sense of place.

With regard to lighting the City Council is committed to renewing the entire street lighting network across the City and to upgrade to whiter light sources to improve visibility and security for both road users and pedestrians.

The Lighting Improvement Project Framework has specified the use of a standard column painted in gunmetal grey for roads and footpaths in the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area

There can be a departure from the standard column/lantern design for sites of historic/architectural interest that will be assessed as follows:

- The proposed column/lantern design must be historically accurate and seek to replicate that design. All proposals must be supported by documentary evidence such as old photographs.
- The additional cost of providing such columns/lanterns would not normally be met by the Lighting Network Renewal Contract and the organisation promoting the non-standard columns and lanterns would be required to fund the difference.
- Land Services must be satisfied that the lighting proposals meet the Council's lighting design standards.

If these conditions are met, the Council will give consideration to the alternative equipment.

Pavements

Twenty years ago Caithness slabs were the most common pavement surface in St Vincent Crescent. Repeated excavations by statutory undertakers has resulted in their gradual removal/destruction, so that today the pavement surface is a very poor mix of concrete patching. Quality surfacing would significantly improve the setting of St Vincent Crescent and the character and appearance of the conservation area generally.

Traffic Management

The volume of on street car parking in St Vincent Crescent and its use as a short-cut has a detrimental affect on amenity, creating circulation, noise and parking problems for local residents. Controlled parking is to be introduced over the next two years which should alleviate the problem of all day commuter parking, freeing up spaces for short term and residents parking. Further study would be required to establish the degree of other traffic problems and any measures which may be appropriate. Implementation of a parking scheme will provide an opportunity to review street furniture and design.

6.3 Grants

The St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area is regarded as "Outstanding" for grant purposes by the Scottish Ministers. Papers relating to "Outstanding" status are contained in **Appendix 17**. In affect this means that property owners of listed or unlisted buildings in this area are potentially eligible to apply for grant assistance to Historic Scotland for carrying out external repairs. Those in listed buildings can additionally apply to Historic Scotland for grant assistance for works to internal features.

Glasgow City Council administers a discretionary grant called the **Historic Buildings Grant** designed to assist owners with the restoration and repair of listed buildings and unlisted buildings in conservation areas.

Owners of property within the Conservation Area can apply although only certain kinds of work are eligible, such as:

- The restoration or repair of original architectural features, including the repair or reinstatement of original windows and railings.
- The repair to the structural fabric including stonework, roofs and dry rot eradication.

Alterations, repairs to services and normal routine maintenance such as painting are not regarded as grant eligible.

7. ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

In addition to the specific conservation area controls mentioned in **1.2 What Does Conservation Area Status Mean?** further controls apply in the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area called Article 4 Directions. These were originally promoted by the Council and confirmed by the Secretary of State in March 1979. The introduction of new legislation, the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(Scotland) Order 1992 required their updating in May 1993.

The effect of a Direction is to control minor works which, over time, could erode the character and appearance of the conservation area. Article 4 Directions do not preclude the carrying out of these works but planning permission must be sought.

The St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area has Article 4 Directions covering the following Classes of Development:

- Class 7 - the erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or other alteration of a gate, fence, wall, or other means of enclave
- Class 27 - the carrying out on land within the boundary of a private road or private way of works required for the maintenance or improvement of the road or way.

A review of Article 4 Directions has been carried out as part of this appraisal and as required by the City Plan.

It is considered that the above Classes of Development should continue to be covered by Article 4 Directions in order to protect the character of the area.

Further papers relating to the confirmation of Article 4 Directions are presented in **Appendix 18**.

8.0 CITY PLAN

8.1 Context

In July 1978 the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area Policy Report was published. This was an interim policy statement for the conservation area, pending the preparation of the Park/Anderston Local Plan which was finally adopted on 26 May 1991. Many of the policies contained within these documents have been included or updated in the Glasgow City Plan which was adopted on 1 August 2003. The City Plan consists of two parts, Part One, Development Strategy and Part Two, Development Policies and Design Guidance

8.2 Part One, Development Strategy

Of particular relevance to the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area are proposals contained in the Environment section, paragraph 7.24 stating that the Council will prepare conservation area appraisals, and paragraph 7.33 committing the City Council to assessing the Crescent with a view to establishing an action plan to prevent further deterioration of the built fabric.

8.3 Part Two, Development Policies and Design Guidance

Part Two of the Glasgow City Plan contains Development Policy Principles and Development Policies and Design Standards that are used by the City Council to consider development applications.

The City Plan applies a “**Residential Development Policy Principle**” over the conservation area. This policy recognises that the predominant land use is “**RESIDENTIAL**” but also recognises that residential properties require other facilities e.g. local shops, businesses, community and health facilities as well as recreational and local green space.

Development Policies and Design Standards have been prepared to protect and enhance the character of conservation areas and listed buildings throughout the city. These are primarily located in **Section 8 Built Heritage** as follows:-

- **Policy HER 1 Conservation Areas** which relates specifically to the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. It also lists the conservation areas within the City and the statutory controls that apply.
- **Policy HER 2 Listed Buildings (Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Importance)** relates to the protection of listed buildings and their setting.
- **Policy HER 3 Design Standards for Listed Buildings and Properties in Conservation Areas** details Council policy and design standards relating to the maintenance and repair of property as well as proposals for conversion or new development. This is tackled on a topic basis e.g. chimneys, doors, extensions etc.
- **Policy HER 4 and 5** relate to **Ancient Monuments** and **Sites of Archaeological Importance** respectively.

Other relevant policies can be found throughout the City Plan in Sections relating to **Residential, Industry and Business, Shopping and Commercial, Transport and Parking Urban Design** and **Greenspace, Landscape and Environment**.

The City Plan can be accessed on www.glasgow.gov.uk.

The completion of the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area Appraisal provides an opportunity for the interpretation of these policies at a more local level, focussing on the areas unique character, architectural features and townscape detailing.

8.4 Policies

The City Plan provides detailed guidance on a variety of works relating to listed buildings and conservation areas including standards for, exterior paint work, gutters and down pipes, stonework repair, roofing etc. Some of the policy issues arising within the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area are listed below.

8.4.1 Basement Areas

In St Vincent Crescent there are instances where additional accommodation has been created in the basement by excavating soil away from the basement wall on the front elevation and inserting windows and, in some cases, doors. This results in the exposure of rubble basement walls which contrast with the smooth ashlar upper floors.

This work has been tackled in a number of ways with varying amounts of garden removed. Access to the basement property is either internal or by creating a doorway under the main entrance steps with direct access from the pavement.

Self-contained basement flats in St Vincent Crescent must satisfy Residential Policies, and in particular **Policy RES 14 Sub-division** as well as Built Heritage **Policy HER 3 (A) 2 Basement Areas**.

To ensure that the character of the listed building is protected and the visual impact of such work is kept to a minimum: -

- traditional cast iron railings, to match the originals, should be retained or erected, around the garden area and on basement stairways
- retaining walls and basement stairways should be faced in stone.

8.4.2 Doors

In the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area there are many fine examples of traditional panelled storm doors with inner glazed vestibule doors which make a significant contribution to the historical and architectural character of the area. **Policy HER 3 (A) 6.1, Storm Doors** and **6.2, Vestibule Doors**, promote their retention or replacement with doors to match the original. The use of traditional door ironmongery and the use of a single colour are also encouraged.

Policy HER 3 (A) 6.3 provides guidance on the design and installation of close doors.

Original storm doors are generally 4 panelled although examples of massive 8 panelled doors can be found in Argyle Street.

8.4.3 Windows

In the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area the original windows, including their detailing, materials and method of opening are an important element of the buildings design and make a significant contribution to the areas character. Some of these features are being lost in unlisted buildings in Argyle Street in particular, with the substitution of modern replacements. The City Council encourages the retention and repair of traditional windows in **Policy HER 3 (A) 16, Windows** which also gives

policy guidance on window replacement. This policy also applies to dummy windows, examples of which can be found in St Vincent Crescent.

In tenement property it is important that the original style and type of window is retained to ensure that the original proportions of the building are unaltered.

8.4.4 Ironwork And Boundary Treatment

Original cast iron railings were largely removed during the Second World War. Some examples however did survive and replicas of these have been successfully made for reinstatement in St Vincent Crescent and Corunna Street. The City Plan encourages the removal of timber fencing/masonry walls and the enclosure of all front gardens with the re-introduction of original railings, painted black, (**Policy HER 3 (C) 5, Ironwork and Boundary Treatments**). The restoration and upgrading of front gardens would improve the setting of the buildings. The planting of hedging does not require planning consent, but if planted should be trimmed to railing height.

8.4.5 Pavements

In the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area the pavements were originally paved with Caithness slabs, but over the years this material has gradually disappeared. **Policy HER3 (D) 2 Footpaths and Carriageways, (b) Footpaths** advocates the reinstatement of such high quality materials.

Street trees are an important townscape feature in St Vincent Crescent and should be protected. To minimise disruption to quality paving surfaces however, root containment measures should be included. The establishment of a tree management scheme would ensure that they continue to enhance the character of the conservation area.

8.4.6 Shopfront Design

Policy SC13, Shopfront Alterations and Shop Security sets out standards that the Council will apply when determining applications relating to shop design.

Unsympathetic shopfront design in Argyle Street has a detrimental affect on the architectural integrity of the building and the shopfront design policy needs to be applied to retain the architectural and historic integrity of the street.

8.4.7 Change of Use

In order to protect the residential amenity and character of the area, the change of use of mainstream dwellings will be strongly resisted, with a presumption in favour of converting properties back into mainstream residential use. The City Plan contains the following Local Area Policies which apply in the St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area :-

- **Policy RES 7 Change of use of dwellings**
- **Policy RES 8 Guest Houses/Bed and Breakfasts**
- **Policy RES 9 Residential and Nursing Homes**
- **Policy RES 11 Day Care Nurseries**

8.4.8 Bin Stores

When backcourts are being upgraded, consideration should be given to increasing space for bin stores to enable recycling or compost making.

9.0 FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

For further information and advice relating to conservation areas or heritage issues generally please contact: -

**Heritage & Design
Development & Regeneration Services
Glasgow City Council
229 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1 QU**

**Phone 0141 287 8555
Fax 0141 287 8444**

BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES

1. *Glasgow The Forming of the City, edited by Peter Reed, Edinburgh University Press, 1999*
2. *The Buildings of Glasgow by Williamson, Riches and Higgs, Penguin Books in association with the National Trust for Scotland, 1990*
3. *St Vincent Crescent Conservation Area Policy Report, Glasgow District Council, 1978*
4. *Glasgow City Plan, Glasgow City Council, 2003*