

Leith 地區文物保護 地區特色的界定

پیر کے قدامتہ کی خصوصیت کی تعمیر

Leith (Leith) 地区特色之界定

تعمیرات کی خصوصیت Leith 地区特色之界定

LEITH CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

*THE LEITH CONSERVATION AREA
CHARACTER APPRAISAL WAS APPROVED BY THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
ON 18 APRIL 2002*

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
<i>Conservation Areas</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Character Appraisal</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Leith Conservation Area</i>	<i>3</i>
HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT	4
ANALYSIS AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER	11
<i>Spatial Structure And Townscape</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Approaches and Context</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Old Leith and The Shore</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Madeira - Leith's 'New Town'</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Leith Links - Leith's Early Suburb</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Leith Walk</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Architectural Character</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Activities And Uses</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>Natural Heritage</i>	<i>53</i>
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT	58
GENERAL INFORMATION	61
<i>Statutory Policies</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Supplementary Guidelines</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Boundary Changes</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Implications Of Conservation Area Status</i>	<i>62</i>
CENTRAL LEITH TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE (THI)	64
<i>Heritage Lottery Fund</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Central Leith THI</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Projects</i>	<i>65</i>
REFERENCES	68

INTRODUCTION

Conservation Areas

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

There are currently 38 conservation areas in Edinburgh, including city centre areas, Victorian suburbs and former villages. Each conservation area has its own unique character and appearance.

Character Appraisal

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

A Character Appraisal is seen as the best method of defining the key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of an area.

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

NPPG 18: Planning and the Historic Environment states that Conservation Area Character Appraisals should be prepared when reconsidering existing conservation area designations, promoting further designations or formulating enhancement schemes. The NPPG also specifies that Article 4 Direction Orders will not be confirmed unless a character appraisal is in place.

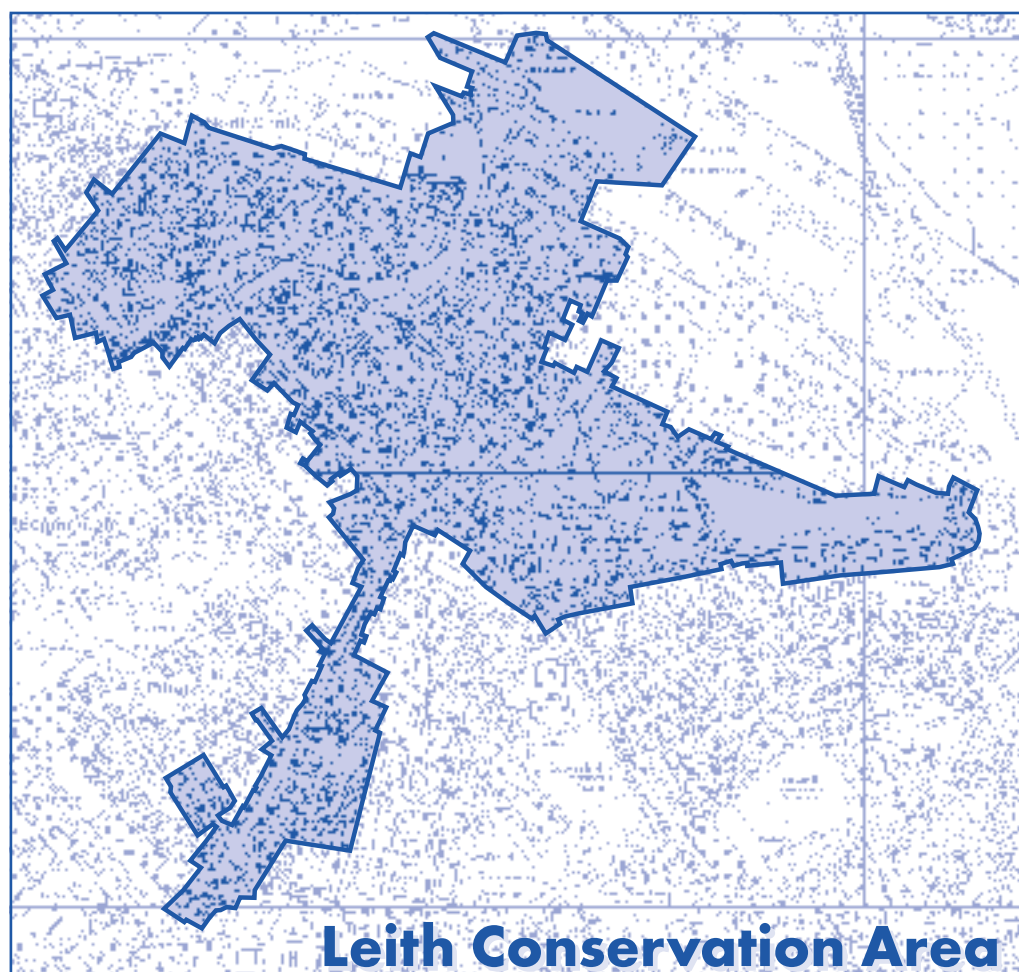
Leith Conservation Area

Leith lies on the coast, some 1.5 miles north east of the centre of Edinburgh.

The Leith Conservation Area was designated in 1998. It comprises the former Madeira and Old Leith Conservation areas with extensions at Leith Walk, Kirkgate, Albert Dock and the Citadel. The Old Leith Conservation Area was designated in 1977, with a number of subsequent amendments and the Madeira Conservation Area was designated in 1975.

The Conservation Area covers the extent of the historic town, and includes the Madeira area and Leith Walk, the town's main link with Edinburgh city centre.

The Conservation Area is located within Wards 12, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 37.



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HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

As the port of Edinburgh and a gateway to Europe, Leith has played a conspicuous part in the history of Scotland. It retains a strong sense of individuality based on its long history as a thriving and independent burgh, and Edinburgh's rise to importance can be attributed in part to the success of Leith as Scotland's primary port for a long time.



Leith Harbour



The Shore

Leith was first established on the banks of the Water of Leith, at the point where the river entered the Firth of Forth. The tidal mouth of the river would have afforded a haven for ships long before any artificial harbour was constructed. The first historical reference to the settlement dates from 1140, when the harbour and fishing rights were granted to Holyrood Abbey by David I. At this time, it was known by the compound name 'Inverleith' (meaning 'Mouth of the Leith').

There is little archaeological evidence of the early settlement, which is assumed to have been centered on the area bounded by the Shore, Water Street, Tolbooth Wynd and Broad Wynd. The built-up area was known as 'the closets' (or small closes). The natural harbour formed by the mouth of the Water of Leith became Edinburgh's port in 1329 when King Robert I granted control of Leith to the Burgh of Edinburgh. Further restrictive Royal Charters during the 15th century gave Edinburgh the rights to land adjoining the river and prohibited all trade and commercial activity by Leithers on the ground owned by Edinburgh.

Despite these restrictions, the settlement grew through the 15th century and a chapel was built circa 1490. Leith expanded in wealth as Scotland's main port and its prosperity was reflected in its substantial merchants' houses and warehouses. Development of the west bank began in 1493 when the first bridge over the Water of Leith was built, connecting North and South Leith for the first time and St Ninian's Chapel was founded.

Leith constantly features in the power struggles that took place in Scotland throughout the period and the battles, landings and sieges of Leith have had an influence on its physical development. In 1548, the Regent Mary of Guise moved the seat of government to Leith and the town was fortified. The fortifications ran from the west-end of Bernard Street south-east to the junction of the present Maritime and Constitution Street, south to the foot of Leith Walk, returning to the



1650

Shore along the line of what is now Great Junction Street. The siege of 1560 resulted in the subsequent partial demolition of its defensive walls. However, Leith continued to develop as a merchant port.

In 1645, Leith was struck by an outbreak of bubonic plague which wiped out two-thirds of the population. The Civil War was the next significant event to influence the town. Leith's fortifications were rebuilt; and an entrenchment was constructed between Edinburgh and Leith, the right flank of which was defended by

Calton Hill, and the left flank by the newly constructed fortifications of Leith. This resulted in the development of the Leith Walk route as the principal road between the two settlements. Previously access had been via Easter Road along the east of Calton Hill or down the Water of Leith valley through Bonnington.

In 1656-7 a large Cromwellian fort, Leith Citadel, was built west of the river; a gateway of which still survives in Dock Street. By the end of the 17th century, Leith had developed from its original nucleus by the Shore to fill the area which had been enclosed by the line of the 1548 fortifications. One of the few developments outside the line of the walls was a short row of tenements and a windmill, now known as the Signal Tower, built by Robert Mylne in about 1686 at the north end of the Shore



Signal Tower

After Edinburgh's North Bridge was completed in 1772, Leith Street and Leith Walk were firmly established as the major route to Leith. Market gardens developed along the length of Leith Walk to meet the needs of the growing population of Edinburgh during the first half of the 18th century. In 1764, Professor John Hope developed 13 acres of land on the west side of Leith Walk at Shrubhill as Botanic Gardens. The two storey gardener's house still survives and its single storey appearance from Leith Walk provides evidence of the extent to which the level of the street was built up in the 19th century.



1766

The Foot of Leith Walk was still almost entirely rural in 1785 when John Baxter prepared a scheme for development east of the street. Scattered development on both sides of Leith Walk followed in the late 18th century and the first years of the 19th century. James Smith, a merchant, bought the site of Smith's Place in 1800 and by 1814 he had laid out a cul-de-sac and the next year built a large house at its end.

By the mid 19th century, Leith Walk was an important public transport route. Horse drawn trams were introduced in the 1870s, cable cars in 1899, and electric trams a few years later. Expansion of the railways resulted in redevelopment at the Foot of Leith Walk and the formation of large goods yards at Steads Place and Brunswick Road.

The railways provided work for large numbers of people and resulted in major speculative developments that extended along the east side of Leith Walk and the adjacent streets towards the end of the 19th century. These streets form a herringbone pattern meeting Leith Walk at offset junctions.



Leith Tram Service

In the second half of the 18th century, regular streets (Bernard Street and Constitution Street) were formed on the edges of the town, Queen Charlotte Street (then Quality Street) cut through the medieval layout, and Constitution Street was extended south to the foot of Leith Walk. At the same time, villas were built nearby and Leith became a fashionable seaside resort which, as early as 1767, included a golf clubhouse built by the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers at the west end of the Links.



Golf on Leith Links



1852

Leith expanded substantially during the 19th century, associated with railway building and the growth of the docks; port related industries and warehousing also grew rapidly during this period. The following description of some of the activities in Leith during this period is given: “Leith possesses many productive establishments, such as ship-building and sail-cloth manufactories ... manufactories of glass ... a corn-mill ... many warehouses for wines and spirits ... and there are also other manufacturing establishments besides those for the

making of cordage for brewing, distilling, and rectifying spirits, refining sugar, preserving tinned meats, soap and candle manufactories, with several extensive cooperages, iron-foundries, flourmills, tanneries and saw-mills.”

The railways that were built to serve the expanding industries and the docks, eventually formed two elaborate and competing systems. The first line was a branch of the Edinburgh and Dalkeith railway (later absorbed by the North British) which was opened in 1838 to South Leith. In 1846, a branch line from the Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee Railway was built along the Water of Leith valley, but was isolated from the growing network of new lines converging on Edinburgh until a new connection joined it to the North British system in 1868. The Caledonian Railway had built a line to the North Leith Docks in 1864. The opening of the Victoria Swing Bridge across the harbour linked the systems and an elaborate network of dock lines and yards were laid out. In 1903, the Caledonian Railway built a new line to the South Docks and the North British a line to the new terminal at Leith Central, which was to be closed only 49 years later.



*Swing Bridge, Leith
(Sandport Bridge)*

New docks west of the harbour were begun in 1800, and in 1810 Great Junction Street was formed, leading to a new bridge over the Water of Leith, as a road to them from the foot of Leith Walk. The large parklands of the 18th century houses surrounding Leith were laid out for terraces and villas, beginning in 1800 with land south of Leith Links and continuing in 1807 with James Gillespie Graham's plan for a large area north of Ferry Road and Great Junction Street. Robert Burn laid out a scheme for land south of Ferry Road in 1808 and later a feuing plan for Great Junction Street. However, building was sporadic and these ambitious schemes were only completed (in significantly revised form) in the late 19th century.



1807

*Leith Customs House*

These first decades of the 19th century also witnessed a period of major civic building reflecting Leith's growing power and wealth. A number of Leith's finest remaining buildings date from this period, including the Leith Bank, the Customs House, the Assembly Rooms, Trinity House, and North Leith Parish Church.

The Madeira area was conceived as a comprehensive design prompted by the success of James Craig's New Town in Edinburgh. Beginning in 1800 with land south of Leith Links it continued in 1807 with James

Gillespie Graham's feuing scheme for a large area of north of Ferry Road. The grid pattern of streets was developed sporadically through the 19th century with Georgian buildings set back behind front gardens. By the turn of the century these basic rules were abandoned and Victorian buildings were inserted in the gaps taking their building lines directly from the heel of the pavement. This is most noticeable on Portland Place where a curved Victorian tenement projects forward from its Georgian wings on either side. The most important building in the area is William Burn's North Leith Parish Church (1816).

In 1833, Leith was established as an independent Municipal and Parliamentary Burgh with full powers of local government. Leith's architectural development of the time reflected its new status and a number of substantial buildings - a Town Hall, Burgh Court, Police Office - appropriate to its burgh status were built in the centre of the town throughout the 19th century. Leith expanded as massive warehouses and additional docks were built: the Victoria Dock in 1851, the Albert Dock in 1881; the Imperial Dock in 1903. In 1920, the town was amalgamated with Edinburgh.



*Leith's Original
Town Hall*

Leith's rapid growth during the 19th century and its role as a focus for Edinburgh's manufacturing industries resulted in a rapidly expanding population and a dense environment, with tenement housing, industrial and commercial uses all served by the dock and railway network. Typical of such areas during the Industrial Revolution, this rapid growth brought environmental and social problems, such as air pollution and poor housing.

After the passing of the Leith Improvement Act in 1880 many of the slums and most of the 16th and 17th century buildings were cleared away and replaced with tall tenements. Henderson Street was also forced through the old pattern of closes and wynds. Concurrent with the improvement schemes were programmes of major tenemental development, most significantly the building of dense tenement blocks over the fields between Leith Walk and Easter Road.

Leith Links were part of a larger area of common land which stretched along the coast including part of Seafield. Links is Scots meaning sandy ground with hillocks and dunes, and the present artificial flatness dates from about 1880. The Links were significantly remodelled at this time and brought, more or less, into their present form. A formal park, enclosed by railings with extensive avenues of trees, replaced the former rolling landscape of grassed dunes. These improvements removed most of the world's oldest golf course, which is mentioned as early as 1456. The Links were an important recreational centre, hosting horse racing and athletic meetings, and still contain bowling greens and cricket pitches that date from the 19th century.



Leith Races

Following the First World War, the number of shipyards was reduced from six or seven to one, and the stream of pre-war trade dwindled significantly. Through the inter-war years Leith had high unemployment. However, the population of Leith was still around 80,000 at the start of the Second World War.

Leith was the focus of slum clearance programmes between the 1950s and 1970s that resulted in the loss of the historic Kirkgate and the construction of a number of large public housing schemes. The demolition of large numbers of sub-standard houses resulted in a housing shortage, and many younger people were forced to move out of Leith to find accommodation. This distorted the community profile, with a bias towards the elderly.

In more recent years the emphasis has moved to urban regeneration, community needs and the conservation of Leith's historic environment. The Leith Project Initiative of 1980-85, incorporated an industrial and environmental programme directed at cleaning up buildings; helping to renovate and convert properties for quality housing, offices and workshops; developing industrial units in disused gap sites; consolidating key industries and encouraging new business to develop in the historic centre. The Vaults, the Cooperage and buildings along the Shore were converted to housing from redundant industrial buildings with assistance from the Leith Project Initiative. An important factor in Leith's revitalisation was the large stock of solidly built warehouses, usually with plenty of natural daylight making them suitable for conversion. The King's Landing (1985) was a substantial new private housing development on a former gap site.



*Scottish Executive
Office*

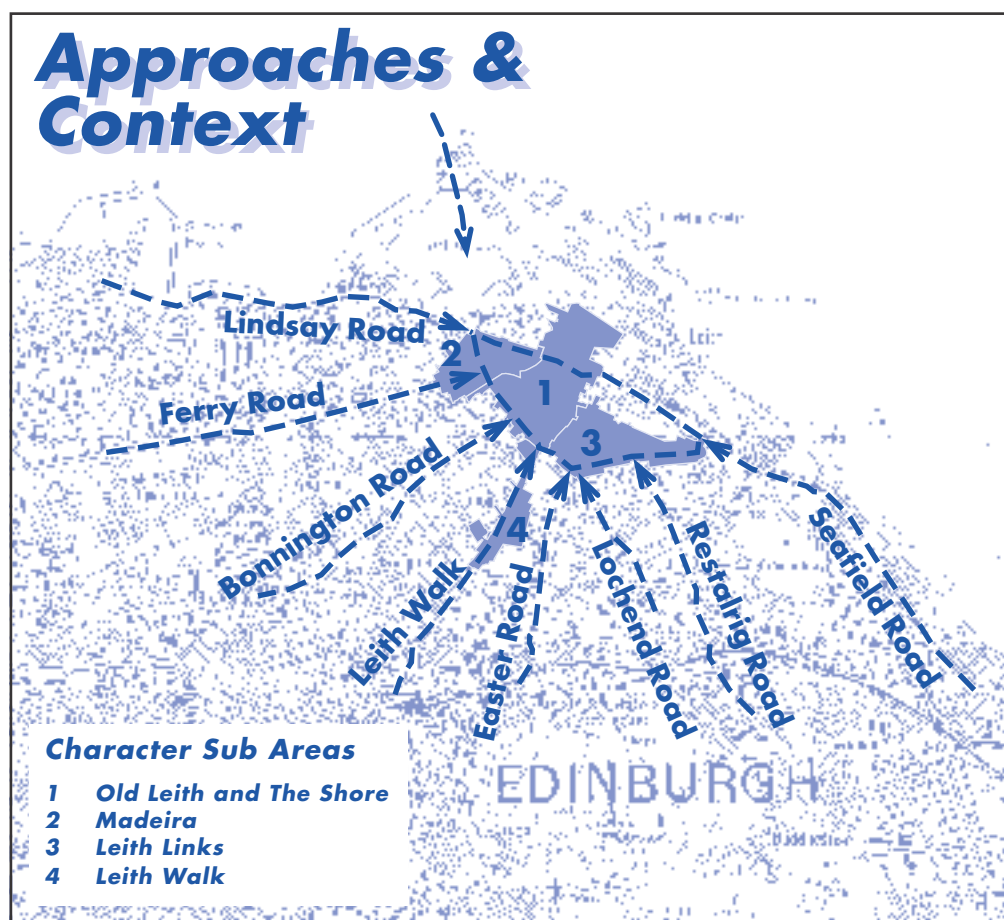
This more recent approach has resulted in the central shore and basin areas of Leith taking on new identities as important centres for high profile and innovative business, the relocation of the Scottish Executive Offices, quality housing, and high quality restaurants and bars. Redefinition of the operational dock area has also provided a large area of potential development land on Leith's northern fringe, which is now the focus of the majority of redevelopment proposals. Leith is also now the permanent home of the former Royal Yacht Britannia and its importance has been further strengthened by the opening of the Ocean Terminal development.

ANALYSIS AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER

Spatial Structure and Townscape

Approaches and Context

The main routes to and from Leith radiate out almost directly from the natural harbour created at the mouth of the Water of Leith where it meets the sea and from the medieval core which developed around it. These routes still relate to its long history as a port, joining it to other villages and settlements which the port served or supplied.



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Leith Library & Town Hall

Ferry Road connects the central area of Leith with earlier planned expansion in the Madeira area, including the relocation of its Town Hall and later ‘suburban’ growth on a gently rising ridge to the west. Lochend and Restalrig Roads play a similar if less obvious role to the east. The Foot of the Walk is a key junction and point of arrival. Though the Kirkgate, the Victorian focus and Leith’s High Street, has been demolished, a pedestrian route continues northwards along the line of the Kirkgate with Constitution Street forming a ‘bypass’ to the docks.

Stretching out west and east from the Foot of the Walk are ‘circular’ routes connecting the radials from the core. One example which is a focus today for considerable shopping activity is Great Junction Street, built over one line of the fortifications carried out in 1584, it goes on to meet the end of Ferry Road before the route gently curves north to the western coast road. To the east the route continues through a narrow pinch point along Duke Street before opening out again along Hermitage Place / Claremont Park turning north to the eastern coast road.



Great Junction Street

These subsidiary routes and the buildings which line them also form edges to the Conservation Area. The extensions and amalgamations into one Conservation Area make it of considerable size covering various historical periods and stages of development that form a variety of character areas and spatial patterns.

For the analysis of Spatial Structure and Townscape, the Character Appraisal is split into four sub areas representing distinctive patterns of growth and development. Sequences through the area street layout and topography open up changing vistas so that the same building may play a variety of roles in the townscape.

OLD LEITH AND THE SHORE

Spatial Structure

On its eastern edge this sub-area covers the core of the conservation area along Constitution Street, from Bernard Street and the docks to the north, to property surrounding the foot of Leith Walk, Great Junction Street and the river estuary to the south.



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Bernard Street



Great Junction Street



Water of Leith

The Shore area includes both sides of the old harbour waterfront to the west. Distinctive and contrasting edges are provided by Great Junction Street and the Water of Leith. Great Junction Street runs along the path of the old citadel wall retaining a straight and formal edge. The river with its steeply rising banks, flowing in a gently winding pattern to the sea, gives more organic and informal edges, softer and green along the upper reaches - harder and functional along the quays and harbour walls at the river mouth.

The spatial structure of this area still reveals the underlying medieval street pattern with strong radial routes to and from the port. Constitution Street to the east resembles a town main street. The redeveloped Kirkgate runs between the Shore and Constitution Street. It retains the line of the original route in pedestrianised form and some of the original buildings along it, including South Leith Parish Church and Trinity House.

The physical and visual disruption to the spatial structure caused by redevelopment in the 1960s is significant and makes analysis and description of the structure more complex than first impressions convey. The major redevelopment programme of the 1960s was the final part of a continuum stretching back to the development of Great Junction Street in the 18th century and the late 19th century Leith Improvement Programme.



Dr Bell's School

Great Junction Street is strongly linear with its sense of formality strengthened by the location of important institutions along its length, such as the former Leith Hospital, St. Thomas's Church, Dr. Bell's School, and its termination at the east by the clock tower of the former Leith Railway Station. Henderson Street demonstrates the Victorian interest in improving housing conditions; with its model tenements, broader street width, design for light and fresh air, and the provision of amenity open spaces. The contrast with the later redevelopment of the 1960s is the use of 'traditional' urban design principles in relating buildings to each other, to their surroundings and to the street, and in providing mixed uses with 'active' street frontages.

The form of the Kirkgate Centre incorporates features, such as the separation of pedestrians and cars and the grouping of buildings around a precinct, which are a product of the urban design principles prevalent in British post-war reconstruction and the development of new ‘satellite’ communities.

Cables Wynd House with its continuous balconies presently visible over the recent gap in Great Junction Street makes a dramatic statement. Other tower blocks in the area appear ad-hoc in their location. Some are located across the routes of existing roads, cutting them in half and closing them off.

Constitution and Maritime Streets echo the traditional street pattern. Although Constitution Street has been widened in parts, many of the narrow individual plot widths reflected in the building frontages and the differing building heights along it are reminders of the earlier street pattern. This traditional spatial structure is still apparent in the network of narrow streets and lanes with their changing widths and curving layouts that lead from the western part of the Shore. The frequent street interconnection, the pends running under buildings, the small scale of the perimeter blocks and the variety of properties within them all reinforce this character.



Constitution Street



Maritime Street

Maritime Street shows a change to predominantly larger plot sizes occupied by warehouses behind the Shore frontage. Many of these warehouses and bonds are now largely converted to residential use, they stand cheek by jowl just allowing lanes and wynds to squeeze between them, their bulk accentuating the narrowness of the lanes. This pattern of development reflects its functional origins and priorities for the efficient storage of goods, and though a number of warehouses have been lost, this area still retains a robust urban character.



The Shore

In the way that ancient road alignments tend to remain whilst the buildings change, the bends in the Water of Leith remains, gently angled by a series of straight edges evidence of early moorings. The bustle of port activity has been replaced by the calmer recreational pursuits of walking and cycling along the riverside walkway. Following the section of river in the Conservation Area there is a progression of moving from the openness of the parks on either side of its banks, to the enclosure of the inner harbour back to the present openness of the docks and eventually the sea beyond. Views through to the docks and the sea are being considerably eroded, it is very important that contact with Leith's maritime heritage, an essential part of its character, is not lost.



*Recent Residential
Dockside Development*

The river has varying combinations of development and space. On the east side of the Shore the continuity of frontages, the building line set to the pavement edge, and the road and quayside, contain the inner harbour. They frame it to give the impression of a long square and a focus for the area, especially to the cafes, bars and restaurants that look out over it. This impression is retained on the west side of the river, although development is more mixed and less tightly knit.

The north end of Constitution Street is terminated by Bernard Street in which the impression of a square is reinforced by a combination of the street layout, important civic and commercial buildings and their architecture. The Buildings of Edinburgh describes this part of Bernard Street as "Leith's most formal space, a broad triangle with the combined atmosphere of a street and a square narrowing at its west end as it jinks to the left for its exit to the Shore". The sudden turn of the street to the left at the west end means that the space is enclosed by buildings, an impression which is strengthened by exposed gable ends at the 'corners'. The former Leith Exchange with its giant ionic columns terminates the east side of the 'square'. However, the focal point is the former Leith Bank, the smallest building in the square. Only two storeys high, its ionic columns and bow front, the shallow domed roof over the banking hall, and the symmetry of the frontage with matching pilastered bays to each side all combine to give it a presence far greater than its size would suggest. The symmetry is

reinforced by the way the tenements on either side step up from it, first to three and then to four storeys towards the corners. The north side, though different in interpretation is of a similar formula.

The three central plots are of lower three storey heights than the three storey height buildings at either corner. Although different in detailed elevational treatment they are both of a palazzo form, the similarity of their heavily bracketed projecting eaves, shallow roof pitches and generously coped chimneys giving an impression of two corner buildings.



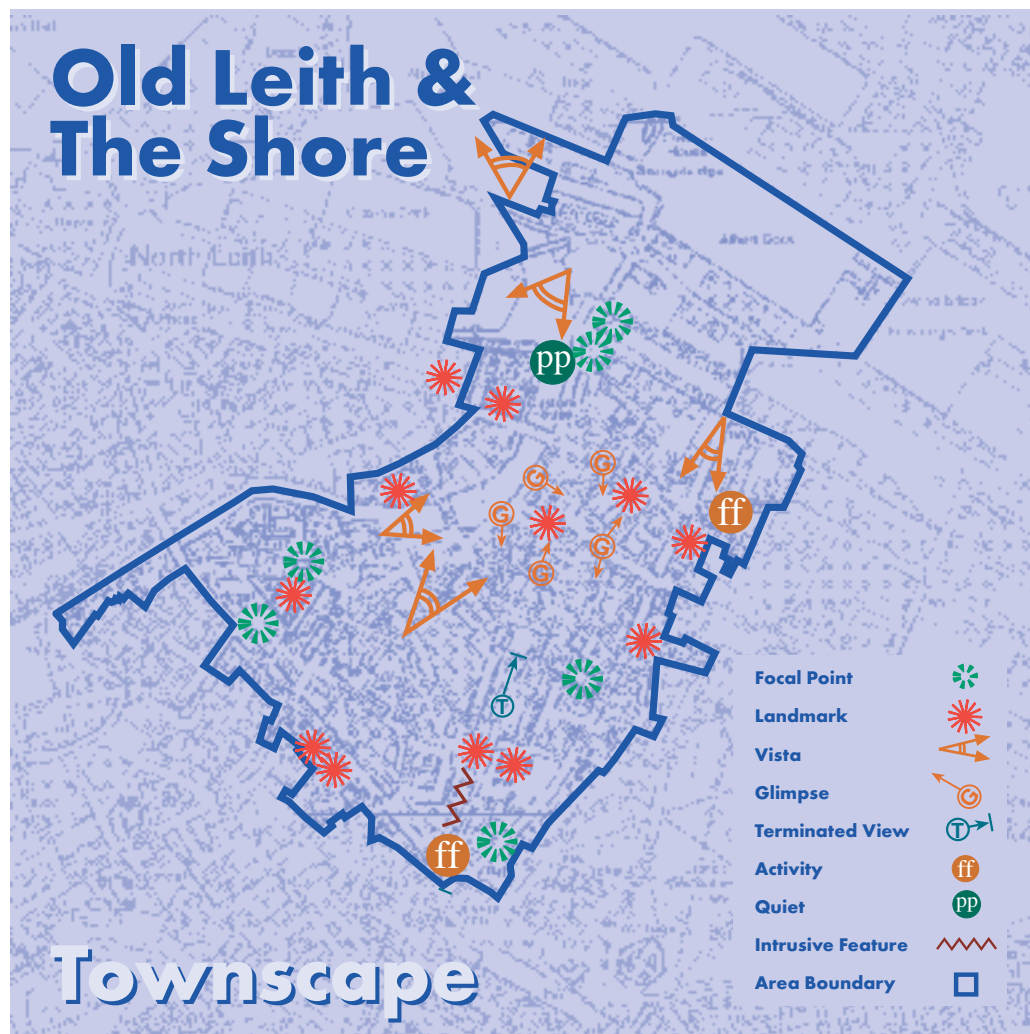
*Former Leith Bank,
Bernard Street*

The buildings range over almost the whole of the 19th century, and although their contribution to creating the space may not have been due to a formal plan, neither was it completely by accident. They demonstrate the continuation of a civic tradition in the design of individual buildings which contribute to the creation of a sense of place, a belief that their combined presence is more important than their individual status.



Bernard Street

Townscape



View down Leith Walk

The Foot of the Walk is closed visually by tenements at the end of the street. The west side of the street is set back behind large front gardens which opens up the space between building lines and gives a visual impression of Leith Walk terminating in a square overlooked by the statue of Queen Victoria. The location of the former Leith Central Station, the increase in pedestrians, the bus terminals and street junctions all reinforce a sense of arrival.

A similar sense of arrival could be seen when ships came in through the docks passing a small lighthouse, the clock tower on the former seaman's mission and the round watch tower, all 'signalling' a progression towards the enclosure of the harbour. From the Shore the inner harbour is gated by the Victoria swing bridge, which is now fixed across the narrow access channel masking the new road bridge behind it. The bridges across the harbour demarcate zones of transition from the open sea to the relatively domesticated and decreasing size of the river as progress is made up stream. Accesses to the bridges seem to break through the continuous frontages on to the Shore.



Victoria Swing Bridge

The streetscape matches the character of the medieval core and the robust surfaces required for the harbour. Most of the streets are setted with stone kerbs intact. The quay side is separated by bollards with chains linking them, although crash barriers tend to detract from the effect. Many of the capstans used to tie up boats remain in place. The contemporary design of the new dock gates, the sculptures and tree guards reinforce the prevailing character. Good examples of the reinstatement of original railings and a contemporary gateway supporting a globe can also be found in Dock Place. Throughout the area there are many early 20th century street lighting standards with decorative brackets.



Corn Exchange

Towers and turrets of a variety of styles and scales mark views down most of the main streets. Examples include the octagonal Art Nouveau tower at the end of Great Junction Street and the Italianate octagonal tower on the Corn Exchange which terminates Constitution Street. Many of these landmark features play a variety of roles.

The spires on the corner buildings with Bernard Street and Coalhill emphasise and turn the corners, and their added interest in the skyline attract and encourage progress further towards the Shore. The streets to either side provide distant views to church spires in the distance, which together with

the varied rooflines around the harbour, some of the warehouses still being gable end on, the cranes and ships now visible in the docks, provide interest and colour to the skyline.

The harbour remains a significant open space in which interest is provided by the buildings and activities on either bank. The views in this part of the Conservation Area are mainly internal. At either end there are limited views through the bridge towards the docks and to distant church spires inland. Longer views down Henderson Street to the docks and up Constitution Street to Calton Hill and Nelsons Monument, with its time ball signalling noon to ships, are also important.

The contrast between open space and enclosure at the Shore is reinforced by a wall of similar building heights and types set at the heel of pavement along the narrow quayside access road. Warehouses with a higher ratio of wall to window, where the windows are smaller and at wider spacing than tenements, accentuate the enclosure. Tenement and former warehouse development around the harbour is mainly 4 to 5 storeys, of continuous frontages and building lines, given vertical emphasis by gabled frontages and dormers.

New developments have shown mixed responses to this character. Sheriff Bank and Park with their suburban layout, frequent changes in scale, miniaturised proportions and orange brick, do not reflect the traditional character. The recent developments in Shore Place and Bowies Close, retain and tie in sympathetically with existing buildings at either end of the street, their frontages replicate narrow plot widths giving a vertical emphasis which is reinforced by changes in material and traditional gables.

Warehouse conversions in Maritime and Water, Streets and Timber Bush show how the traditional character can be preserved. Overall their conversion retains the sense of confinement given their robust stone construction, pedimented entrances, punched windows, and cast iron work detailing. The retention of the original streetscape of setts and stone kerbs, iron rails and cart track stones, heavy cast iron bollards protecting corners and entrances all still convey an image of a busy maritime past.



Harbour Panorama

Essential Character

- *A historic port located on the coast around the mouth of the Water of Leith.*
- *A microcosm of a small mercantile town with a range of civic and commercial institutions, with a diversity of important historic buildings reflecting its former independence and maritime history.*
- *The continuation of a civic tradition in the design of individual buildings which contribute to the creation of a sense of place and demonstrate that a combined presence is more important than individual status.*
- *The principal routes through the area give the initial impression of a radial spatial structure leading from the port.*
- *A medieval structure at the historic centre which is still reflected in the network of narrow streets and lanes, the frequent street interconnections, the small size of the perimeter blocks and the variety of properties.*
- *Redevelopment from the 1960s, makes analysis of the structure complex as its physical and visual impact is both significant and disruptive to the prevailing context.*
- *18th and 19th century improvements demonstrate ‘traditional’ urban design principles which relate buildings to each other, to their surroundings and to the street, and provide mixed uses with ‘active’ street frontages.*



Bernard Street (north side)



The Shore (south section)

- *The river, Shore and docks provide a sequence of spaces and important buildings signalling a progression towards sanctuary offered by the enclosure of the harbour.*
- *On the east side of the Shore the continuity of frontages with building line set to the pavement edge and quayside contain the inner harbour to give the impression of a waterborne square.*
- *Bernard Street is Leith's most formal space.*
- *The main streets have a strong linear definition with many street corners marked by towers and turrets of varying scale and style which provide skyline interest.*
- *Views are predominantly internal.*
- *Longer views to and from the docks and Nelson's Monument on Calton Hill relate Leith to the city and to the sea.*
- *The robust streetscape enhances the character of the medieval core and the harbour.*

MADEIRA - LEITH'S 'NEW TOWN'

Spatial Structure

Madeira forms a triangular area in the west of the Conservation Area. The north side is bounded by the bonded warehouses which run along the entire length of Commercial Street; the west by the high stone wall of Leith Fort, which runs down one side of Portland Street; and the east by the Water of Leith.



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The area retains the appearance of a planned extension with its focus on North Leith Parish Church. Development, however, was sporadic and took place over much of the 19th century. The formality of the street layout, the apparent symmetry of the Georgian architecture and disposition of key buildings to create focal points and vistas all contribute to the impression of this area as Leith's own version of the New Town.



Madeira Street

This formality is best demonstrated today by Madeira Street and Prince Regent Street, terminated by North Leith Parish Church, in a layout which is an example of scaled down classically inspired urban design. The approach uphill from the docks to the Church is processional, the climb up the hill accentuating the separation from the water's edge. The uniformity and formality of the layout along Prince Regent Street is softened in the surrounding streets by subtle variations in plot size and building design. The mix of plot widths, the variety of architects involved, the differing house types, larger front gardens and an air of faded grandeur all help to reinforce a more informal and relaxed character.



*North Leith Parish Church
(view along Prince Regent Street)*



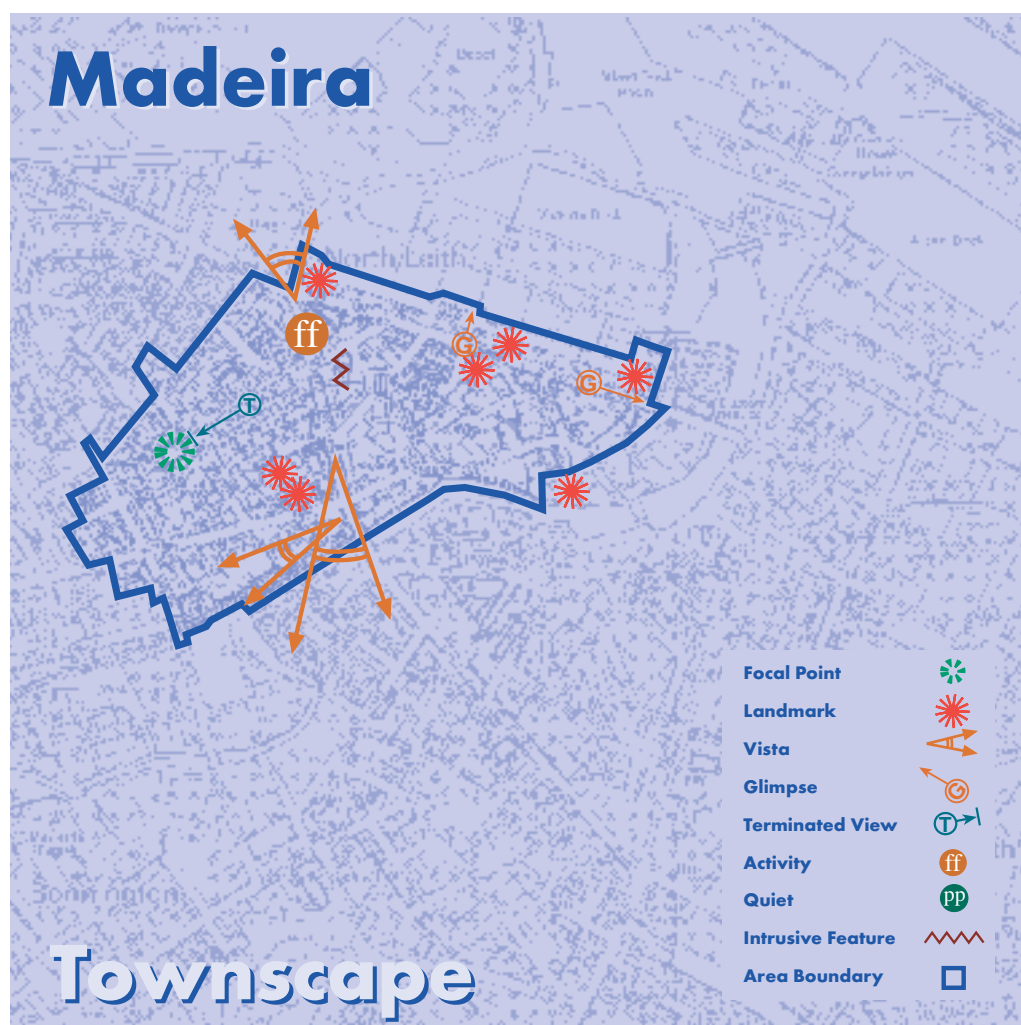
*Ferry Road, Leith Library
and Town Hall*

Ferry Road, the main access to Madeira, is at this point more densely developed and provides a more urban environment of tenements with a mix of commercial uses at ground floor. The intersection with Great Junction Street is the setting for the Town Hall and main Library built in the 1930s. Relief to this more urban character is provided by the Memorial Gardens along North Junction Street, Keddie Gardens off Largo Place and the gardens with gable wall mural at the corner of Ferry Road and North Junction Street.

A number of modern developments have not been sympathetic to the spatial structure. The housing along Portland and Commercial Streets is suburban in scale, although its backland location makes it less apparent. The tower block at Cooper Street is set across the middle of the old street line. The west bank of the river as it approaches the Shore becomes an area of transition from the mainly residential character of Madeira. The mix of small industrial estates, infill 'suburban' housing developments and vacant sites, make the spatial structure less intact and distinctive than that on the east of the Shore. Many of the now subsidiary streets appear to have connected with the water, suggesting a previous need for direct access routes convenient for earlier modes of transport. Whilst the bonded warehouses along Commercial Street form a barrier between Madeira and the port, the connections between these routes and the gaps between warehouses are still apparent.

Townscape

The majority of routes into the area link it back to the historical core of Leith. From the east, four bridges cross the river and act as gateways into the area. From the west the descent on the coast road, Lindsay Road, to the raised walkway and six storey mass of the bayed tenement at the corner with North Junction Street creates a sense of passing through into a more dense and urban form of development. Junctions are usually associated with a sense of arrival at the centre of a settlement, but in Leith they are also in gateway locations.



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Ferry Road

The most used approach today is along Ferry Road, where the boundary and development of the Conservation Area is conterminous with that of the Victoria Park Conservation Area. Ferry Road is one of the oldest routes leading to and from Leith and whilst sequences of differing building heights are discernible along it, these appear to relate to the growth of formerly independent settlements rather than an intention to form gateways.

The main routes in the area foresaw large volumes of traffic and are significantly broader and straighter than those of the early historic core. With tenements and warehouses directly onto the pavement, they have a robust and practical character, sometimes marked by the remains of railway or tram lines lined by the high Fort stone walls; sturdy cast iron bollards, some of which have recently been identified as old canons, with gates and weighbridges at the accesses to the docks.



Junction Bridge

Many of the streets that lead onto these routes still have setts, which remain a very important ingredient in the overall townscape. Many railings have disappeared. Though the main routes are of importance, the location of large road signs intrude, particularly that in front of the main facade of the former Town Hall.



Commercial Street (west end)



Scottish Executive Building

The former Town Hall and Main Library are located at the start of Ferry Road indicating a historic change of focus for Leith's institutions. The most impressive landmarks are the bonded warehouses along Commercial Street, North Leith Parish Church with its tall and elegant spire which acts as a focal point in views along Prince Regent and most recently the new Scottish Executive Office at Victoria Quay.

Ferry Road and Great Junction Street are bounded by a continuous building line, usually of four storey tenements with shops on the ground floor set to the heel of the pavement. Residential uses predominate on the side streets. There is a continuity of three storey tenements along Madeira and Prince Regent Streets, but beyond the building sizes are more mixed. They range from single storey cottages, colony type flats, terraced villas to three and four storey tenements, at some corner locations with shops projecting into the front garden space. Despite this mix they are characterised by a terraced form, and a continuous street frontages only rarely broken by mews lanes or pends through to the rear. Their use of standard proportions, sash and case windows, a similar sand stone and slate roofing reinforces a sense of uniformity, even if less formal than the New Town.

The north side of Commercial Street is occupied almost entirely by former bonded warehouses on a continuous building line right to the heel of the pavement. Their blackened stone work, small window openings, lack of access doors to the street, long eaves and ridge lines are only relieved by changes in height and the occasional rotunda providing light and ventilation to the floors below. Property on the other side of the street includes Leith's original railway station and is more mixed in use and in form.

Much of the area is introspective with planned or glimpsed views to the spire of North Leith Parish Church, some of these views down lanes, through gates and pends, to the cemetery and the rear of the Library create considerable interest and charm. From the bridge over the Water of Leith, views open out back to the city with Calton Hill and the Castle visible either side of the warehouses along South Fort Street.

Essential Character

- *The formality of the street layout, the symmetry of the Georgian architecture and disposition of key buildings to create focal points and vistas all contribute to the impression of this area as Leith's own version of the New Town.*
- *The mix of plot sizes, the variety of architects involved, and the differing house types give a more informal and relaxed character than the plan would suggest.*
- *Relief to the urban character is provided by small parks.*
- *The west bank of the Shore, in contrast to that opposite, is an area of transition where the mix of development makes the spatial structure and townscape less intact and distinctive.*
- *From the east four bridges cross the river and act as gateways into the area.*
- *Street junctions are usually associated with a sense of arrival at the centre of a settlement but here they are also in gateway locations.*
- *Impressive landmark buildings ranging from the earliest medieval beginnings in St. Ninian's Manse to the former Town Hall and Library from the 1930s.*



Junction Bridge

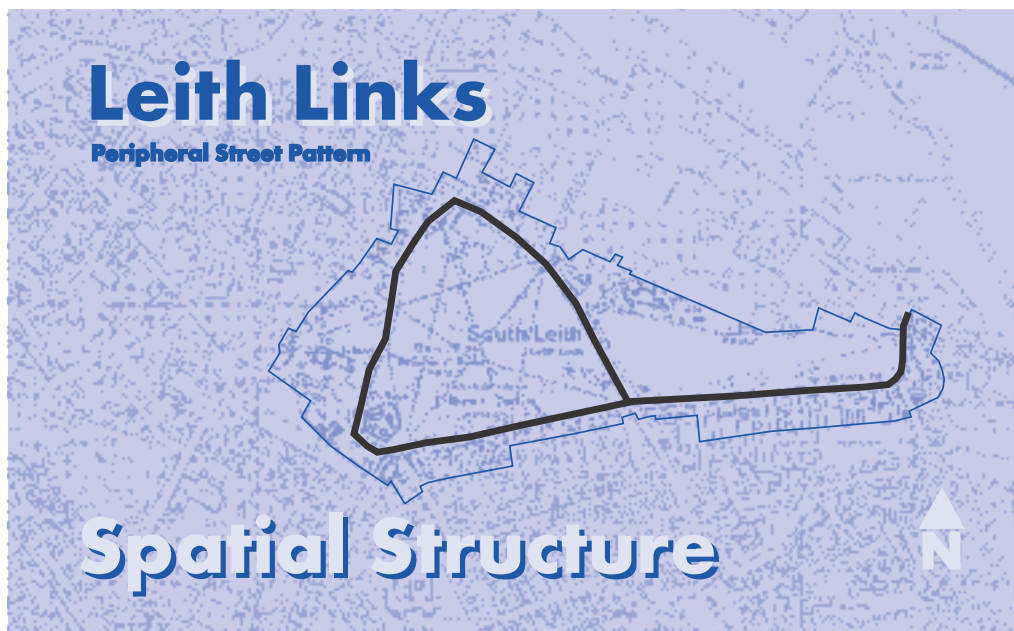


Leith Theatre

LEITH LINKS - LEITH'S EARLY SUBURB

Spatial Structure

Leith Links is located to the east of the Conservation Area and is similar in character to those other parks and gardens in Edinburgh, for example the Meadows and Pilrig Park, formed by the draining of former lochs. Development is confined to the outer side of all the roads surrounding it and while the sense of containment by development is greater to the west nearly all the edges are dominated by mature trees. The exception is that part of the north east edge fringed by industrial premises.



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Duncan Street and John's Place lying behind Constitution Street reflect a more urban character with their mix of institutional and educational uses, churches, warehouses and Georgian tenements. The small triangle of park at Wellington / St Andrew's Place is developed on two sides and could have the appearance of a village green.



Leith Links

Around part of the north side, a harder character is maintained by Victorian tenements. Smaller streets on to Link's Place create permeability. Villa development is located to the south looking over the longest side of the Links and gradually reduces in density as it extends away from the centre.

The earlier villas along Hermitage / Vanburgh Terrace are two storey terraces with the rhythm of their narrow plot widths emphasised by repeating bay windows, original attic dormers and chimney heads giving



Gladstone Place

vitality to their long frontage. These continue down to the entrance to Restalrig Road and are followed by five tenemental four storey blocks. From here to the end of the Links, the villas are two storey semi-detached and detached. Unity is given to terraced and detached villas by the continuity of small dwarf walls with railings on the same line along the heel of the pavement. This detail continues along the larger plots of the detached and semi-detached villas where the street becomes Claremont Park. Here entrances are marked by repeating stone gate piers with shallow pyramidal caps and the remains in most cases of cast iron brackets presumably for lights. These provide for vehicular access, and some villas have screen walls separating front and back gardens. 'The Buildings of Edinburgh' cites these villas between the tenements and red sandstone houses at the east end of Claremont Park as "a line of villas whose concentrated architectural quality makes it among the best such group in Edinburgh".



East Hermitage Place



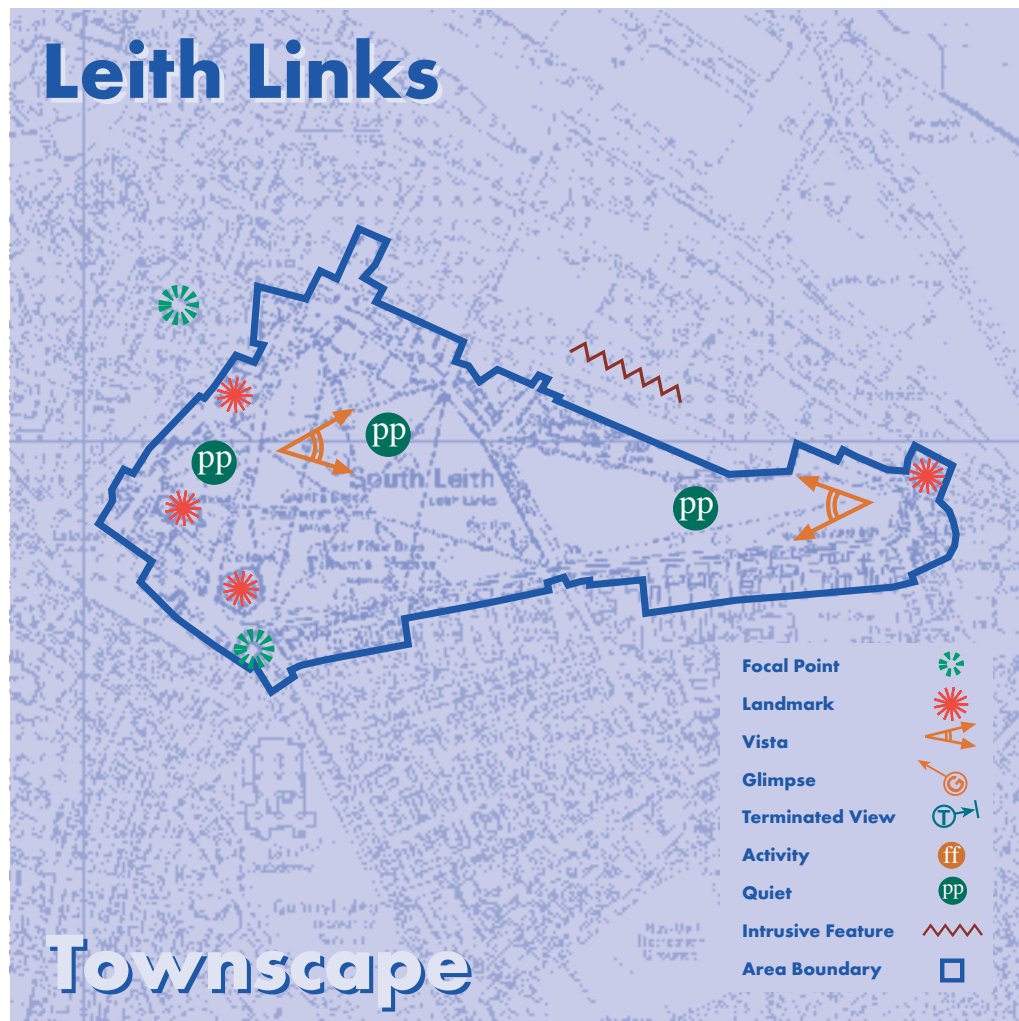
Claremont Park

Townscape

The openness and greenery of the Links is in contrast to its approaches. From the north east, it is completely obscured by industrial premises and the access is via a sharp turn off from Seafield Road which then passes under a former railway bridge before trees and green are revealed. At the corner of Seafield Road, in the midst of industrial and warehouse sheds, stands the former Seafield Baths, now converted on the ground floor to a public house with flats above. Dating from 1810-13, the building with its projecting doric porticos, linked above by shallow domed roofs forms one of the most graceful buildings turning a street corner in the whole city.



Former Seafield Baths



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View over Leith Links

The approach from the west is through the narrow confines of Duke Street. The Links provides a sense of release from Leith's densely tight urban core. The tapering form of the Links accentuates the perspective, making it seem longer and even more spacious.

The terraced villas have short front gardens which create a transition in planting from the trees around the Links. There are gate openings for pedestrian access and none of the gardens has been given over to off street car parking. Continuity is given to the varying plot sizes on the south side of the Links by small dwarf walls and railings.

The focus created where the north ends of Easter and Lochend Roads meet is marked by Leith - St. Andrews Church and the former Leith Academy. Views westwards along Vanburgh Place and through the Links focus on the church spire of Leith St. Andrews and to the bell tower of the former Leith Academy Annex, which terminates the north end of Easter and Lochend Roads. In the distance the spire of St. James Church, once at the heart of the town and still a major landmark, soars above the tree canopy. The tower of Kirkgate House looms up to one side.



Former St Andrews Place Church

At the east end of the Links are the gates, railings and lodge to Seafield cemetery. Their potential to terminate the view at the end of Claremont Park is partially obscured by mature trees. However, this makes their discovery one of Leith's surprises. Trees also obscure the former St. Andrews Place Church, now the Hindu temple. Its full height pedimented portico and giant ionic columns create a frontage of real presence.

Essential Character

- *Later industrial development has cut the area off from its original focus as a seaside resort and the Links provide a suitable substitute for the villa development facing it along its southern edge.*
- *The openness and greenery of the Links provides a sense of release and transition from Leith's tight knit, robust urban core.*
- *The west end reflects a more urban character with its mix of institutional uses, warehouses and Georgian tenements.*
- *Residential development is confined to the outer side of all the roads around the Links.*
- *The sense of containment by development is greater to the west and north side.*
- *Villa development to the south gradually reduces in density as it extends away from the centre.*
- *The earlier villas are two storey terraced with the rhythm of their narrow plot widths emphasised by repeating bay windows, original attics and chimney heads giving vitality to their long frontage.*
- *Continuity is given to varying plot and villa sizes by small dwarf walls and railings at the heel of the pavement on the south side of the Links.*
- *The terraced villa front gardens have only pedestrian gates and none has been given over to car parking.*
- *Front gardens provide a transition of greenery between the Links and villas.*
- *The former Seafield Baths is one of the most graceful buildings turning a street corner in the whole city.*

LEITH WALK

Spatial Structure

Leith Walk is one of the most important routes in the city. Its continuity as it stretches gradually downhill from the city centre is so prominent that it is clearly visible from many high vantage points around the city. It links the old fortified town of Edinburgh and its sea port, as other European capital cities are linked with their ports.



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A hard continuous edge is given to the east by almost uniform and repetitive tenements. These continue to form traditional perimeter blocks around common greens down the side streets. These are given life by the local communities and the variety of goods and services on offer in ground floor premises.



View along Leith Walk



View along Leith Walk

The side streets to the east are mainly residential, but several include churches or a school and just to the edge of the area are completely taken up by a park such as at Iona / Sloan Streets. One exception to this block form is Smith's Place, the focus of which is the splendid decorative and pedimented villa by James Smith.

The development pattern, building types and uses on the west side are more diverse. Tenements are still the predominant form, but they show much greater variety in their design, heights, building lines, roofscapes and ages which in many cases look much earlier than that to the east. In places

tenements are interspersed with town houses or smaller tenements well set back with front gardens to the street. Middlefield is a small Georgian mansion which has development in its original front garden and the corner tenement into Pilrig Street is followed by Georgian villas gently stepping down the hill towards Pilrig Park.

Casselbank Street with its mix of Turkish and gothic inspired architecture is set against more Georgian survivals. This demonstrates the importance of the building line and the perimeter block as organising elements in the development

pattern and shows, in contrast to the formal and planned development of Smith's Place, how an informal and almost romantic architecture can also produce significant townscape.



Casselbank Street



Smith's Place

Townscape

Leith Walk starts outside the Conservation Area. The steep slope and narrow street width down from the former North British Hotel frames the dramatic view up to its landmark clock tower. To the north, from the Picardy Place roundabout the views are gradually restricted by the changing street width. From the roundabout and clock at the junction with London Road the street seems to pick up momentum for its journey northwards. The slope downhill and the gentle curve draw the traveller along the street in the absence of any one particular focal



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point, until Kirkgate House becomes visible. Pilrig Church acts as a pivot to this curve helping to add to the momentum. The Foot of the Walk with its set back to the west gives the impression of another elongated square like that at Bernard Street, and provides a sense of arrival. The gently curving form of the street is accentuated by the greenways, heavy white lines and raised central reservation. Many of the side streets retain their setts which reflect the different colours of sandstone in the buildings giving an ‘integrity’ to the townscape and helping to slow traffic.



View to the Foot of Leith Walk



Pilrig / Dalmeny Church

Kirkgate House, despite its camouflaged outline, towers over the Foot of the Walk making it appear out of context with its surroundings. Pilrig Church with its cascading roofscapes to Pilrig Street and its spire and eastern facade which terminate Iona Street are as good as the set pieces in some of the city’s better known locations. Less dominant, but with the reflection of a different culture, the accentuated roofscapes and distantly familiar timber belfry of the Ukrainian Catholic Church gives added interest to Dalmeny Street.

The street runs more gradually down hill on its long journey to Leith, and looking north the apparent continuity of the tenements on its east side are an impressive feature.



Leith Walk

Essential Character

- *One of the most important routes in the city linking the New Town Conservation Area to that of Leith.*
- *The steep slope and narrow street width down from the former North British Hotel frames the dramatic view up to its landmark clock tower.*
- *The importance and clarity of the link between city and sea is reminiscent of other European capital cities.*
- *The continuity of form of Leith Walk makes it clearly visible from other high vantage points around the city.*
- *It is from the clock at the junction with London Road that Leith Walk seems to pick up momentum for its journey northwards.*
- *A more continuous edge is given to the east side of Leith Walk by almost uniform and repetitive tenements. These continue to form traditional perimeter blocks around common greens down the side streets.*
- *The area between Leith Walk and Easter Road forms a robust tenemental urban heartland, which with its mix of uses and facilities provides a rich and diverse community life.*
- *To the west tenements are still the predominant form but they show much greater variety in their design, heights, building lines, roofscapes and ages and are interspersed with town houses well set back with front gardens to the street*
- *The side streets to Leith Walk produce significant townscape ranging from the formal set pieces such as the ‘palace fronted blocks’ of Smith’s Place to the informal and almost romantic architecture of Casselbank Street with its mix of Turkish and gothic inspiration set against Georgian survivals.*
- *Many of the side streets are setted and this character should be preserved.*
- *Pilrig Church with its cascading roofscapes to Pilrig Street and its spire and eastern facade terminating Iona Street are as good as the set pieces in some of the city’s better known locations.*
- *The tower of Kirkgate House is a major intrusion to the vista down Leith Walk*

Architectural Character

Leith has a unique and complex architectural character that makes it distinctive and clearly identifiable within the context of Edinburgh. The Conservation Area has at its centre an important historical harbour town with its origins in the 12th Century. The architectural character of the Conservation Area derives from Leith's history, both as a port and an independent burgh, which imbue its individual architectural elements with a deeply rooted significance. Despite having lost most of its medieval buildings, Leith provides an excellent example of a small 19th century provincial town containing architecture which displays a rightness and fitness of scale (grand but not intimidating) and uniformly high quality of materials, detailing and design which have a unique significance in the context of Scottish architectural history. The historical and architectural importance of the Leith Conservation Area is reflected in the concentration of Statutorily Listed Buildings in the area: approximately 400 buildings are included on the Statutory List [32, Category A; 243, Category B and 122, Category C(S)].

Leith was a thriving and expanding commercial and industrial area throughout the 19th century, and much of the town's present urban structure and varied architectural fabric stem from this significant period in its development as an independent burgh and trading port. A combination of the grouping of its buildings, the form of its spaces and the many features of visual interest contribute to Leith's positive identity and distinctive urban character. Much of the architectural character stems from the juxtaposition of large warehouses and well detailed later-Georgian houses and public buildings.



Customs House



Burgess Street



*Scandanavian Church
North Junction Street*



*Former St Johns Church
Constitution Street*

Leith retains a broader range of building types from the past than most areas of the city. It has also been the subject of greater foreign architectural influence, which can be seen in a number of buildings in Leith. Although less visible than in its heyday (when Dutch, Nordic and French styles influenced many warehouses and offices), this is still reflected in remnants such as the Norwegian and Ukrainian churches, and replica buildings, such as St Thomas's on Sherrif Brae (copied from a church in Brittany) and South Leith Parish Church (copied from a St. Petersburg design). Street names such as Elbe, Baltic Street, Cadiz, and Madeira also testify to Leith's maritime tradition and extensive trading links.

Each period of Leith's long history has left buildings of major interest. The relatively formal spaces of Bernard Street and Constitution Street, the remnants of the medieval street pattern, the range of neo-classical buildings, the Victorian contribution of boldly detailed Italianate banks, offices and Baronial tenements, with massive warehouses behind, all unified by the common use of stone, combine to produce a town centre which is among the best and most varied in Scotland. A rich mixture of civic buildings and mercantile architecture also survives particularly at Bernard Street and The Shore. The concentration of public buildings within the Conservation Area makes an important contribution to the architectural character and reflects Leith's former civic independence and importance.

Building types within the Conservation Area vary but are traditionally of stone, with slate roofs. Pockets of public housing development from the 1960s and 1970s, of a contemporary character, also fall within the Conservation Area. Warehouses are a prominent element throughout the central area, many of them fine examples of industrial architecture, which act as a backcloth to earlier buildings. Several fine Georgian and Victorian examples survive, many now converted for residential or office use. The large rubble warehouse at 87 Giles Street known as the Vaults is one of the earliest, dating from 1682, and most outstanding.



The Vaults



North Leith Parish Church

Leith's ecclesiastical history is very old, and the area has a considerable number of fine church buildings. The best is possibly the elegant neo-classical 18th century North Leith Parish Church, with its full-height Ionic portico and tall steeple, in Madeira Street. More common are Victorian Gothic buildings such as the South Leith Parish Church (1847-8) by Thomas Hamilton, in the Kirgate and St Mary Star of the Sea (1853-4) by Pugin & Hansom in Constitution Street. St. Thomas's (1840-3) Church at the head of Sheriff Brae is now the Sikh Temple. The graveyard of South Leith Parish Church contains a number of fine Georgian grave markers.



South Leith Parish Church

More modern and brutalist architecture of the 1950s and 60s is represented by Thomas Fraser Court, John Russell Court, Cables Wynd House (known as the 'banana block'), Linksvie House on the line of the old Tolbooth Wynd, and the Newkirkgate Shopping Centre. Other more recent developments such as Citadel Place, Hamburgh Place and West Cromwell Street have retained a low-rise human scale.

*Maritime Court*

The central historic core of the Conservation Area is bounded by the docks to the north, Great Junction Street to the south, Constitution Street to the east and the Water of Leith to the west. This area more or less coincides with that enclosed by the early defensive walls. Historically it was the centre of the port activities that sustained Leith's growth and gave it an identity separate from Edinburgh. A dense fabric of closely grouped buildings separated by narrow lanes creates a distinctive character. As a result of the asymmetric road pattern there are few long views through the area, but rather a strong sense of enclosure and containment. The main routes through the area are those which define its edges: the Shore along the Water of Leith, Constitution Street and Great Junction Street. The centre of Leith has been identified as an area of archaeological significance.

*Leith Docks*

The Inner Harbour of the Water of Leith provides a vibrant focus for the Conservation Area, the older parts of Leith Docks, containing many early features including listed dock buildings. Scheduled Ancient Monuments associated with the docks consist of: the Victoria Bridge, the dry dock off Sandport Street, the swing bridge and lock at the East Old Dock, and features related to the Albert Dock.

The Bernard Street-Shore area contains several of Leith's most notable buildings and an architecture of high quality. The Shore, which formed the centre of Leith until the onset of the Industrial Revolution, was an important centre of trading houses and taverns associated with the activities of the port, and it retains something of its original maritime appearance.

*Main Dock Area and Ocean Terminal Building*

It has considerable architectural character forming a fringing sweep of buildings which follow the bend of the river giving breadth and definition to the impressive waterfront setting. Although many more recent buildings have been built, the present street pattern of the Shore area follows that of the historic town.

A number of significant early historic buildings are located in the Shore area. These include:

- *The circular battlemented Signal Tower, built in 1686 by Robert Mylne as a windmill for making rape-seed oil, which forms an important focal point at the corner of the Shore and Tower Street.*
- *Lamb's House in Water's Close off Burgess Street is one of the largest and most architecturally important early 17th century merchants' houses in Scotland. It is an impressive four storeys, incorporating traditional architectural features such as harled walls, corbels, asymmetrical gables, crowsteps, a steep pitched pantiled roof, and windows with fixed leaded upper lights with shutters below. The building was restored and converted into a day centre for the elderly in 1959 by Robert Hurd.*
- *St Ninian's Church and Manse which dates from circa 1493 with later reconstructions. The building incorporates a distinctive ogee spire, and has been recently restored and converted for residential / commercial use.*
- *The King's Wark at the corner of Bernard Street and The Shore has characteristic Dutch gables and scrolled skewputts in typical early 18th century fashion. It stands on older foundations and was part of a complex of buildings that included a chapel, royal mansion and tennis court.*
- *The Custom House in Commercial Street was designed by Robert Reid in 1812. Its Greek Doric Revival style is typical of the way Leith buildings of the period tended to reflect on a smaller scale those of the neo-classical New Town of Edinburgh.*



Lamb's House



King's Wark



Customs House

The eastwards approach to the Shore along Commercial Street, with high buildings on both sides giving a strong sense of enclosure and direction, passes the monumental Customs House and opens out dramatically to reveal the Water of Leith, the Inner Harbour and the Shore, a space of historic and visual interest. Bernard Street cuts through the centre of the area and is lined with buildings of great architectural merit which reflect Leith's thriving past, epitomising the mercantile prosperity of the 19th century. It forms the civic centre of the Conservation Area and is Leith's most formal space; a broad triangle in which the effect of enclosure, the irregular form and articulation of the space enclosed, and the relationship of the surrounding buildings create a place of great architectural interest.



*Constitution St /
Bernard St "Waterloo
Buildings"*

The spatial significance of Bernard Street is best appreciated when entering at the east and wider end where the street gradually narrows and changes direction, masking the western outlet and giving a powerful enclosing effect to the street space. The quality and cohesive grouping of the flanking buildings, the variety of their architectural styles and roof shapes, and such incidental features as the decorative cast iron lamp posts are part of the street's individual character and visual interest.

The bronze statue of Burns (1898) stands at the junction of Bernard Street and Constitution Street, adjoining the massive five storey Waterloo Buildings (1820) with its set-back bowed corner, which is the largest and grandest of Leith's Georgian tenements. Distinguished buildings such as the old Corn Exchange, and the dignified 18th century Exchange Building give a strong civic character to the junction. The Italianate former Corn Exchange (1860-3) emphasises its prominent corner site with an octagonal domed tower surmounted by a cupola, flanked by two storeys of arcaded windows and incorporates a distinctive carved frieze.



Burns' Statue



Portico detail, Bernard Street

Early 19th century Georgian buildings line much of the south side of Bernard Street. The centrepiece being the former Leith Bank (1804) an elegant two storey classical structure with an Ionic-columned bow window standing on an island, separated by narrow lanes on either side from the neighbouring three and four-storey blocks and flanked by symmetrical tenements of 1807-15. The north side is more varied with the Italianate former Royal Bank of Scotland (1871-2) at the east end, followed by the Clydesdale Bank (1923), in a modernistic neo-Georgian. Then the early 19th century Nos. 8-

14, adjoining a mid-Victorian palazzo, followed by the twin bows of Nos. 22-24. The canted bay-window and polished granite doorpiece of the former Bank of Scotland (1871) give presence to a narrow frontage. The north side of the final section of Bernard Street is lined with late Georgian buildings. The restrained Georgian grouping is broken by the Baronial detailing of Nos. 50-58.

Constitution Street was laid out at the end of the 18th century, along the line of one of the old ramparts of the 1560 fortifications. It is characterised by the juxtaposition of buildings of diverse architectural styles, dates and scales. These include Georgian villas, austere 19th century tenements, warehouses, and church buildings (St James', St John's and St Mary's star of the Sea).

Notable buildings on Constitution Street include:

- *Leith Assembly Rooms and Exchange (Nos. 37-43), dating from 1809. The Exchange Building was built as a meeting place for merchants, and incorporated the Assembly Rooms which were the centre of old Leith's social scene while the Exchange and Bernard Street were regarded as the commercial centre. The building presents a long three storey frontage to Constitution Street with a central pediment incorporating Ionic columns. It fits in well with the scale of Bernard Street creating a varied but unified composition.*



Bernard St / Constitution St junction



Leith Police Station

- *Leith Town Hall and Police Station is located at the north east corner of Constitution Street and Queen Charlotte Street. A robust monumental neo-classical building which makes excellent use of its corner site.*
- *92 Constitution Street was built as a merchant's house in 1793 and with its giant Corinthian pilasters and urns surmounting the pediment is the grandest late 18th century house in Leith.*

The Kirkgate was old Leith's main street with a lively and varied streetscape. The intimate urban pattern of winding streets and densely grouped buildings of the Old Kirkgate was lost in the redevelopment of this area during the 1960s. The remaining historic remnants include the 15th century South Leith Parish Church, the earliest building in the area, the Gothic revival style of which forms an interesting contrast to its opposite neighbour, the classically proportioned Trinity House.

The New Kirkgate shopping precinct and housing development to the north disregard the distinctive organic structure and scale of the surrounding urban pattern. The Kirkgate is a courtyard of low rise housing with zigzag rendered fronts which is terminated by the multi-storey slab of Linksvie House.



Great Junction Street

Great Junction Street follows the line of one of the ramparts of the Leith defensive walls of 1560. It was laid out in 1818 and is one of the busiest roads in Leith. Its straight linear form contrasts with the narrower winding roads to the north. The street is defined by a long procession of mainly four-storey late 19th century tenements built hard to the heel of the pavement, and it is lined with shops at ground level, above which are a few small businesses but mainly residential properties. The tenement on the Henderson Street corner (Nos. 48-52) dates from 1885, and was the first buildings erected under the Leith Improvement Scheme. The former Leith Hospital forms a major architectural feature standing to the rear of Taylor Gardens. At the west end of the street the

former Co-operative building with its distinctive clock tower overlooking Taylor Gardens, forms a major landmark and the view eastwards is terminated by the clock tower on the corner of the former Leith Central Station.

Notable buildings on Great Junction Street include:

- *The former State Cinema at No. 105 dating from 1938 in a Modern Movement style with white geometric walls massing up to a pagoda inspired tower.*
- *An Edwardian Art Nouveau inspired group at 160-174 which includes the former Leith Provident Co-operative Society building with its imposing domed octagonal corner-tower and a four-storey red sandstone fronted Glasgow style tenement dating from 1905.*
- *Telectra House dating from the early 1960s forms a well mannered sequence to the above with its delicately articulated glazed frontage and green slate cladding to the sides.*
- *The long Tudor frontage of Dr Bell's School which dates from 1839 with its crowstepped screen walls, octagonal piers and ornately canopied niche containing a statue of Dr Andrew Bell who endowed the school in 1831. It was taken over by the Leith School Board in 1891 (becoming the Great Junction Street School). At the rear of the original building, the Swimming Baths of 1896 reflect the architectural style of the school.*
- *St Thomas's is a plain late-classical church dating from 1824-5.*



Former State Cinema



Former Dr Bell's School

The Madeira area retains a largely homogeneous Georgian domestic character, with stone buildings and slate roofs predominating; some of the Georgian buildings retain astragal windows and doors with fanlights. Many of the roads are setted, the main exception being Prince Regent Street, and stone garden walls are a feature of the area. Madeira Place, with a terrace of circa 1825 on its north side, leads to Madeira Street which has North Leith Parish Church as its centrepiece. The church, with its Greek Doric portico and classical steeple, is an important early example of the Greek Revival style by William Burn and provides a visual focus to this mainly residential area, which also includes major public buildings such as Leith Library and Town Hall.



North Leith Parish Church



Pilrig / Dalmeny Church

Leith Walk is a busy urban thoroughfare and the main road linking the centre of Edinburgh to the old burgh of Leith. It has a strongly directional character, rising gently from the Foot of the Walk, with linear vistas. It is terminated to the north by the tower block of the New Kirkgate development which contrasts with the visual scale of the bay fronted Georgian building at the Foot of the Walk which forms the foreground. The spiky Gothic spire of Pilrig and Dalmeny Street Church, approximately halfway down Leith Walk, is a conspicuous and important landmark at what was the old boundary between the City of Edinburgh and the former Burgh of Leith. A slight curve in the street line at Pilrig prevents a continuous vista along the full length of the street.

Leith Walk is characterised by a mix of buildings of widely varied design, use, quality and relationship to the street. Victorian tenements set to the heel of the pavement predominate, particularly on the east side, with shops and pubs at ground floor level. The west side is less co-ordinated with Georgian development, tenements and industrial buildings. There are number of Georgian survivals, notably Smith's Place, which was laid out as a cul-de-sac by 1814. It consists of a palace fronted block on its north side, later plainer tenements on the south and an architecturally significant two storey villa, with a rusticated basement and Venetian windows, terminating the eastern end of the cul-de-sac. The building at 7 Steads Place is a former small country house dating from around 1750 and is one of the earliest on Leith Walk.



Queen Victoria Statue, Foot of the Walk

The Foot of Leith Walk, where four roads and a pedestrian route meet, is an important arrival point in the Conservation Area and a lively commercial and social focal point. The bronze statue of Queen Victoria, which stands in a central position in the area of open space with a low bow-fronted Georgian block as a backdrop, is one of Leith's principal landmarks.

The western side of Leith Links is surrounded by a continuous line of four-storey buildings of good architectural quality, which provide a strong edge to the park. The eastern end of the Links tapers to a narrow point, lined on the south by particularly fine two-storey Georgian terraces and villas set behind stone boundary walls, and on the north by industrial buildings behind Salamander Street. The sense of containment is enhanced by well-established mature tree planting.

The group of buildings on Claremont Park, designed by Thomas Hamilton from 1827, is of outstanding architectural quality. Designs vary but unity is provided by gatepiers with shallow pyramidal tops and linking screen walls separating the back and front gardens. The terrace on East Hermitage Place, was commenced by the Industrial Co-operative Building Society in 1868, but not completed until 1883. Robert Burn drew up the plan for West Hermitage Place in 1800, and, in 1825, Thomas Bonnar prepared elevations for the unfeued plots. It contains a simple terrace dating from 1805, and later grander houses incorporating rusticated stonework and typical Georgian decoration. Vanburgh Place, a unified terrace, was designed and built by William Lamb from 1825.

The prospect westwards from Hermitage Place has panoramic qualities with the broad expanse of the Links and, in the background, an interesting sequence of contrasting but well-related buildings: Leith Academy, the terraced houses in Wellington Place, massive warehouses with their regular pattern of windows, the Victorian Gothic Church of St James, the unified Georgian terrace in John's Place and the late 18th century detached houses in Queen Charlotte Street.



Villas on Leith Links

Essential Character

- *A unique and complex architectural character that makes Leith distinctive and clearly identifiable within the context of Edinburgh.*
- *A concentration of buildings of significant historic and architectural quality.*
- *The remnants of the medieval street pattern.*
- *The combination of the grouping of its buildings, the form of its spaces and the many features of visual interest which contribute to Leith's distinctive urban character.*
- *The concentration of civic and ecclesiastical buildings within the Conservation Area which makes an important contribution to Leith's architectural character.*
- *The unifying effect of traditional materials, stone and slate, within the Conservation Area.*

Activities And Uses

Leith is an intensively developed urban area with a multiplicity of land use activities co-existing with the predominant residential use. It contains a full range of social, commercial and community facilities, and performs an important shopping and service role for people working and living in the area. There has been a substantial reduction in Leith's traditional manufacturing industries around which its growth was based. However industry remains an important land use in Leith, but is now spread across a more diverse base with increasing growth in the service and technology sectors.

The business area is centred on its historic core and contains a variety of commercial activities amidst housing and shops. The office of the Scottish Executive is based at Victoria Quay, and Leith Docks are an important port with some 2000 jobs based in the dock area. Outside of the historic core residential uses within mainly tenemental property, with retail uses on the ground floors, predominate.

Leith's urban heritage and identity also make it a pleasant and stimulating place to live, work and visit. The range of mixed uses contributes considerable pedestrian movement and an active 'street life', an important feature in the areas character. Its riverside location and the increasing range of restaurants and similar establishments have also made it an attraction for tourists and other visitors.

In the historic core of Leith, the street pattern retains elements of its medieval form and most of the principal roads within the Conservation Area were established in the 19th century. The flow of large commercial vehicles and other traffic detracts from their environmental quality.

Redevelopment on the northern fringes of the Conservation Area herald further retail, office and residential development.



Leith Links



Leith Docks



Ocean Terminal

Essential Character

- *Multiplicity of land use activities, some still associated with its maritime history, co-existing with the predominant residential use.*
- *Considerable pedestrian movement giving an active ‘street life’.*
- *A waterfront area acting as a focus for restaurants, bars and coffee shops attracting both local residents and visitors.*
- *Prevalence of residential use.*
- *Provision of full range of community facilities.*



NATURAL HERITAGE

To the north east of Edinburgh, the Firth of Forth coastal plain includes the lower floodplain of the Water of Leith. As a result of the development of the river corridor right up to the estuary and the transition to the sea through the Port of Leith, the Water of Leith is very often hidden from general view. The surrounding gently rolling lowland terrain that is interrupted by higher hills and ridges, provides visual containment to the Leith valley at the coast. Views to Leith and the coast are available from high points such as Calton Hill and Trinity, often with a backdrop of cranes and features associated with the working docks.

This containment, combined with the dense development pattern of the spatial structure, results in few long range views from the lower lying areas of the river valley. Once out of the valley there are vistas to the surrounding high points such as Arthur's Seat. Open space forms an important characteristic of the 'hidden' townscape of Leith with parks and green spaces found amongst the surrounding urban fabric of the area. In addition there are many hard urban open spaces such as courtyards and cobbled lanes, created by the arrangements of buildings that provide important amenity spaces and often allow linkages through the surrounding urban area. More recent developments have included amenity open space where trees have formed the most important landscape features. Groups of trees are important townscape features often forming the focus of a view along a street or between buildings providing a similar scale to the surrounding buildings.

The Water of Leith corridor itself offers the key natural heritage resource in the area. It forms the principal wildlife corridor between the uplands of the Pentland Hills and the lower Water of Leith valley and the central urban area. It is designated as an Urban Wildlife Site and is an important habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna. The river corridor is characterised by a mix of natural green spaces and more urban spaces linked with the 'Water of Leith Walkway' and cycle paths. The Walkway is one of Edinburgh's major recreational and amenity facilities.



Water of Leith

The largest area of open green space is at Leith Links. The Links once extended as far as Portobello and are intimately associated with the history of Leith. The two visible mounds on the Links, known as the Giant's Brae and Lady Fyfe's Brae, are reputedly old gun emplacements dating back to the siege of Leith in 1560 when the English army bombarded the French held citadel. It was also where the sick were brought during the great plague of 1645. The Links have long provided a recreational facility for Leith being the home of the Leith Races and in the 17th and 18th centuries were recognised as Edinburgh's premier place for golf. It is likely that the golf course was an



Leith Links

attraction that resulted in the construction of many fine houses close to the Links.



*Leith Links
"Millennium Park"*

The present layout of the Links was established in the 1880s as part of the Leith Improvement Scheme. They form the most extensive area of parkland in Leith covering an area of 48 acres (19.44 hectares), and are bordered by John's Place on the west side, Seafield Place on the east and are dissected mid-way by Links Gardens. Their open expanse is in striking contrast to the densely developed parts of Central Leith and areas south of the Links. They form an attractive, large open space with tree-lined avenues and walkways and are used for a whole range of recreational purposes. Facilities include putting and bowling greens, cricket and football pitches and a children's play area. Walkers,

joggers and families also extensively use the Links for games and picnics. An allotment area is situated on the north side.

The Links have been designated as a Millennium Park, a status that ensures that it will be protected for the future, and the Artillery Mounds on the Links are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The park is also recognised as a neighbourhood nature area within the Nature Conservation Strategy.

Other smaller, but no less important areas of public open space include:

- *Taylor Gardens was laid out in 1910 after the closure of the former Leith Poorhouse on this site. It is situated on the east side of Junction Street near the junction with Ferry Road North and Coburg Street and covers an area of 0.90 acres (0.28 hectares). It is one of the few formally laid out gardens in the centre of Leith. It is south facing, has a fairly open aspect and is an important green area with trees and grass in a heavily built-up area. The Leith War Memorial faces the park on the east side.*
- *Keddie Park is situated off South Fort Street, at the easterly end of Pitt Street and extends to 1.35 acres (0.55 hectares). It is a small well-used neighbourhood park, with a fine setting above the Water of Leith, set in a high-density housing area and fulfils an important community function. The view southward from the park is dominated by the northern flank of Arthur's Seat and the cliffs of Salisbury Crags. Facilities include a play area and park benches.*
- *A large formal garden, the setting to the old Leith Hospital on North Junction Street, supports groupings of large mature trees that provide a significant space in the middle of the busy streetscape.*
- *A triangle of land between Sheriff Brae Hill, Parliament Street and Cables Wynd provides a neighbourhood park. An informal layout of grass and shrubs is complemented with groups of mature trees. A play area with a kick about space has been integrated at the western end.*
- *Another small park just off Commercial Street behind Sandport Street has a formal seating area at the centre. This open space extends beyond the obvious boundary through a series of informal footpaths to Sandport Place and the Water of Leith Walkway. Mature tree groups form an important edge to this area.*



Sherrif Brae



Neighbourhood Park
Sandport St



Commercial Quay

- *Across Commercial Street, the Scottish Executive Offices and redeveloped commercial quay have created areas of open space with seating and informal areas that have utilised original cobbled paving materials and water features. These areas connect with Dock Place and Queens Dock, and are important for linking recreation with the other activities and uses of restaurants and pubs. This is mirrored on the other side of the docks at the Shore where the quay is used informally in the summer as external seating areas. Tree groups have been introduced into these areas and provide an important setting to the river corridor.*

- *Tucked behind Great Junction Street along Henderson Street is a triangular site that provides an important local park, with play area and formal seating. The tree groups provide an important contrast with the surrounding urban development.*
- *Behind Constitution Street there are two important open spaces. The churchyard to South Leith Parish Church is secluded and hidden from anyone walking through the area. Bounded by high stone walls the area has many mature trees that reinforce this enclosure. St Mary's Church presbytery further north has a formal garden at the rear, enclosed with a boundary wall. Beyond these within the modern development area associated with the Kirkgate Centre and new flats there are groups and avenues of trees that have matured to provide an important framework to the surrounding built development and the setting to the pedestrian footways.*
- *Beyond this is a further local park and open space along Tolbooth Wynd. This incorporates formal seating, grassed areas and a kick-about space. Mature tree groups reinforce and create enclosure to the space, and footpaths provide connections to the surrounding area.*

The Forth coastline is generally recognised for its natural heritage importance and in many parts provides important open space. Leith Docks separates the Conservation Area from a direct relationship with the estuary. The outer shoreline is protected as both an Urban Wildlife Site in Edinburgh and as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) nationally. Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar status, that give it European/ International importance for its wintering bird populations and wetlands, reinforce the SSSI designation. Under this designation proposals are being drawn up for the creation of a tern colony within the western harbour area.

Essential Character

- *The relationship between the lower lying land associated with the Water of Leith valley with the surrounding more elevated topography of the city allows panoramic views and vistas across the Conservation Area.*
- *From the lower lying areas of the valley, views are contained by the townscape and surrounding high ground. Above the valley there are vistas to the centre of the City and Arthur's Seat.*
- *The Water of Leith Walkway and corridor is central to the Conservation Area and important for its natural heritage, open space and recreational value.*
- *The extensive area of open space at Leith Links is important for its scale, historic context, recreational and natural heritage value.*
- *Local Parks and green spaces within the urban area are important for their historic context, seclusion, local recreational value and landscape structure.*
- *Important incidental areas of green and urban open spaces provide buffers from development and seclusion from the general circulation areas.*
- *The Firth of Forth coastline is important for nature conservation and the setting of the Conservation Area.*
- *Footpaths and cycleway routes through the area form important connections between open spaces and townscape areas.*
- *Sculptures, monuments and specimen trees add structural and decorative interest to urban spaces and walkways.*

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

The Character Appraisal has concentrated on the more positive aspects of character in order that the future can build on what is best within the Conservation Area. The quality of urban and architectural design needs to be increased if the character of the Conservation Area is to be enhanced. It is intended that the opportunities raised here will inform the Council's recently launched Leith Initiative.

The process of industrial change has produced development opportunities both in the docks area and, on a more ad-hoc basis, along Salamander Street / Seafield Street. It is recommended that urban design frameworks be prepared to establish a new spatial structure, identify buildings for reuse, set parameters for new build and relate it to the best of the existing townscape, all to build and extend on the character of the Conservation Area.

The qualities of alterations to shop fronts, extensions, dormers and other minor alterations need to be improved. An overriding impression is of a low priority given to building repair condition. Initiatives should be identified to enable further repair work to the historic fabric

The public realm of the Conservation Area offers a wealth of squares, gardens and pedestrian spaces created at various stages during the development of Leith. These features and elements are important to the continued regeneration and improvement of the area. The quality of these features is variable and would benefit from the development of a public realm strategy that considers these factors comprehensively.

The public realm strategy should consider and analyse the existing features and spaces of value and consider opportunities to improve their quality and nature. An integral part of such a strategy should be the long term maintenance and management of the public realm. The strategy for improvements should take account of the following:

-
- *Giving greater prominence to the spaces and buildings of real quality such as Bernard Street and the Foot of Leith Walk.*
 - *Enhancement of the pedestrian links through the area and consideration of opportunities for further links and connections, such as the coastal links from the Water of Leith Walkway.*
 - *Enhancement of the landscape structure of the area through tree planting and improvements to the relationship of private and public spaces. The existing tree groups and specimens are very important to the character of the Conservation Area. Further consultation on the protection of these existing trees through Tree Preservation Orders should be considered in such a strategy. Improvements to the quality of existing open spaces through further tree planting, facilities and features and boundary treatments.*
 - *Working with the Department of Recreation to maintain and enhance the identity and landscape quality of Leith Links. Improving boundary treatments, particularly where they are weak to the north, new tree planting to ensure the existing tree structure is maintained and improved, and consideration of the relationship with the surrounding built development with opportunities for formalising the existing triangle at St Andrews Place.*
 - *Developing the proposals from the Water of Leith Trust for interpretation and sculpture/ artworks along the River corridor and throughout the Conservation Area generally.*
 - *Careful consideration needs to be given to floorscape which is an essential part of the overall appreciation of Leith's rich townscape heritage.*
 - *Consideration should be given to a lighting scheme for prominent buildings in the area*
 - *Encouraging visitors by improving orientation aids and history trails*

Kirkgate House in townscape terms is a major intrusion to the vista down Leith Walk. Thomas Fraser House and John Russell Court are also poorly located and intrusive. The Kirkgate low rise with Linksview House, and Cables Wynd House have qualities which reflect to some extent the aspirations of the post-war modern architectural movement. Quality materials and imaginative design could enhance the low rise housing and introduce more street life to create a more welcoming and safer environment, especially along the Kirkgate walkway and Tolbooth Wynd.

High traffic volumes including heavy goods vehicles threaten the character of parts of the Conservation Area especially Bernard Street, Commercial Street and Ferry Road. The intrusion of car parking needs to be sensitively controlled, a pedestrian emphasis is an essential ingredient in making the area attractive.

With the clearance of much of the dockland areas it is essential that Leith retains its connections with the sea, its nautical associations and the spatial and built context which developed to serve it. The recent past shows how the essential character of the Conservation Area has not been considered resulting in fragmentation. The opportunities offered for further change must be approached sensitively to help to reconnect and extend Leith's character.

Role of the Public

It is essential that property owners accept their maintenance responsibilities. The emphasis should be on the repair rather than replacement of original features, as these contribute to the Conservation Area's character as a whole. Alterations or additions should be sympathetic to the original style and of an appropriate scale.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Statutory Policies

The Leith Conservation Area lies wholly within the area covered by the North East Edinburgh Local Plan (adopted 1998). The local plan identifies a significant part of the Conservation Area as falling within the central Leith “mixed activities zone”, in which the Council’s planning objective is to further the well-established mix of residential, business and other uses. Where redevelopment is acceptable, it will be required to promote an appropriate mix of uses which will contribute to the area’s vitality and viability. Local plan policies protect residential amenity and support the preservation and enhancement of listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Within central Leith the local plan also identifies an area of archaeological significance, within which special care will be taken to ensure that development proposals are accompanied by an archaeological investigation.

Within the Conservation Area, the local plan identifies Great Junction Street and Leith Walk as district shopping centres. The plan supports further retail growth in these centres, resists the loss of shopping uses from their main frontages and encourages environmental improvements and high design standards.

The local plan safeguards a route for an LRT (light rapid transit) proposal within the Conservation Area on the following streets: Leith Walk, Great Junction Street, North Junction Street, Constitution Street, Bernard Street and Commercial Street.

Supplementary Guidelines

The Council also produces supplementary planning guidance on a range of development control issues. These are contained within the Development Quality Handbook.

Boundary Changes

Only minor changes have been made to rationalise the boundary in the Elbe Street/Mitchell Street area and include the substantial tenement building on the south side of Salamander Street, which forms a gateway entrance to Bernard Street.



Implications of Conservation Area Status

Designation as a Conservation Area has the following implications:

- *Permitted development rights under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 are restricted. Planning permission is, therefore, required for stonecleaning, external painting, roof alterations and the formation of hard surfaces. The area of extensions to dwelling houses which may be erected without consent is also restricted to 16m² and there are additional control over satellite dishes.*
- *Under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, the planning authority can seek approval of the Scottish Ministers for Directions that restrict permitted development rights. The Directions effectively control the proliferation of relatively minor alterations to buildings in conservation areas that can cumulatively lead to erosion of character and appearance. Development is not precluded, but such alterations will require planning permission and special attention will be paid to the potential effect of proposals.*
- *Article 4 Directions covering Madeira and Old Leith Conservation Areas were made in 1985 which controlled development within the curtilage of a dwelling house, sundry minor operations, industrial development and development by local authorities (the last two were only controlled in the Old Leith Conservation Area). Although the Old Leith Conservation Area was extended in 1988 a further Direction was not made to cover the additional areas. It is proposed to introduce an Article 4 Direction to cover the following classes of development (as defined in the 1992 General Permitted Development Order) over the Conservation Area:*
 - 1 enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house.*
 - 3 provision or alteration of buildings or enclosures within the curtilage of a dwelling house.*
 - 6 installation, alteration or replacement of satellite antennae.*
 - 7 construction or alteration of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure.*
 - 23 extension or alteration of an industrial building or warehouse.*
 - 24 development on industrial land.*
 - 25 creation of hard surface within the curtilage of an industrial building.*
 - 30/33 development by local authorities.*
 - 38 water undertakings.*
 - 39 development by gas suppliers.*

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

TPOs are used to secure the preservation of trees which are of significant stature, in sound condition, and prominently located to be of amenity value to the public at large. When assessing their contribution to amenity, the importance of trees as wildlife habitats will be taken into consideration. There is a strong presumption against any form of development or change of use of land which is likely to damage or prejudice the future long term existence of trees covered by a TPO. The removal of trees for arboricultural reasons will not imply that the space created by their removal can be used for development.

- *Grants may be available towards the repair or restoration of historic buildings. The Council runs a conservation grant scheme. Such grants are normally dependent on comprehensive repair and restoration of original features and priority is given to tenement housing and prominent buildings.*

CENTRAL LEITH TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE (THI)

Heritage Lottery Fund

The Heritage Lottery Fund uses money from the National Lottery to provide grants to support a wide range of projects. The mission of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is to improve the quality of life by safeguarding and enhancing the heritage of buildings, objects and the environment of the United Kingdom.

Strategic priorities for the HLF are heritage conservation, national heritage, local heritage and heritage access and education. The HLF commits more than £300million each year, through both capital and revenue funding, to support projects which preserve and enhance, or widen public access to and enjoyment of, one or more aspects of the physical heritage. These can be land and countryside, parks, historic buildings and sites, museum collections, archives, and industrial, transport and maritime heritage.

The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) enables partnerships of local, regional and national interests to preserve and enhance the distinctive character of historic areas.

Central Leith THI

The Central Leith THI is part of a co-ordinated partnership approach which aims to secure a balance between economic, social and environmental regeneration within the wider context of the Leith Strategic Framework and Action Plan. This Framework is endorsed by the key partners on the Leith Co-ordination Group: City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothians, Historic Scotland, Scottish Executive, Lothian Healthcare Trust, Communities Scotland, Forth Ports PLC.

In summary, the strategy is to:

- *Target investment in certain key streets and buildings in order to raise the quality of the environment and build on the historic framework.*
- *Raise the confidence of the traditional community, nurturing a greater sense of pride and ownership.*
- *Serve as a physical attraction, which will encourage connections between the waterfront and the tenemental heartland.*

Projects

The Heritage Lottery Fund has approved a Stage 1 application for the Central Leith THI. This requires a further more detailed submission before the HLF grant final approval for the THI.

The main projects which are currently being considered for the Stage 2 submission are the conversion of the former Dr Bell's School in Great Junction Street to affordable rent residential use, public realm improvements to the Kirkgate and repairs to the Sikh Temple, Mill Lane.

Former Dr Bell's School, Great Junction Street

The former Dr Bell's School at the corner of Junction Place and Great Junction Street is Statutorily Listed Category B and dates originally from 1839. Dr Andrew Bell (1753-1832) was a Scottish clergyman, who developed a system of popular education whereby older and more advanced students supervised younger ones to counter the shortage of teachers, the so-called Madras system of education. On his death he left a large fortune to endow educational schemes in Scotland. His Leith school was taken over by Leith School Board and reconstructed as Great Junction Street Public School in 1892. The Tudor-style front facade of the building is a prominent landmark on Great Junction Street.

It is proposed to convert part of the building to affordable rent housing and community use in association with Port of Leith Housing Association. The remaining parts of the building are likely to be retained as the local nursery school.



Kirkgate



The Kirkgate was old Leith's main street with a lively and varied streetscape. The intimate urban pattern of winding streets and densely grouped buildings of the Old Kirkgate was lost in the redevelopment of this area during the 1960s. The remaining historic remnants include the 15th century South Leith Church, the earliest building in the area, the Gothic revival style of which forms an interesting contrast to its opposite neighbour, the classically proportioned Trinity House.

The Kirkgate now presents a courtyard of low rise housing with zigzag rendered fronts, which is terminated by the multi-storey slab of Linksvie House.



It is proposed to develop the external environment of the Kirkgate area in a manner that makes best use of and integrates with elements of the existing character of the public realm of the Conservation Area. This could involve environmental improvements, restoration of original railings around the park at Tolbooth Wynd, and other landscaping works.

A steering group involving the Council and local partners has helped to guide the aims and objectives of the project.

In summary the brief set out to:

- *Establish a principal route that responds to the original Kirkgate ensuring its linkage through to the Shore.*
- *Investigate opportunities for the development of this route as part of a Heritage Trail from the Foot of Leith Walk to the Shore.*
- *Ensure a high quality of floorscape.*

- *Reinforce the public/ private boundaries through the area.*
- *Improve pedestrian linkages and circulation and reinforce the identity of the routes through the public realm.*
- *Improve the quality of the existing public realm through attention to the elements such as paving, boundary treatments, open space, landscape features, signage and public art.*

The project will require a high standard of urban design/ landscape design to fulfil these objectives and integrate the existing and proposed in a sympathetic and contemporary manner.

Sikh Temple, Mill Lane

The building was originally built as St Thomas's Church and it is Statutorily Listed (Category B). Its spire provides a focal point along Mill Lane and in the area in general. In 1978, the building was purchased by the Edinburgh Sikh Community for use as their temple or Gurdawara. Since that time, the Sikh community has maintained the building as well as possible with limited resources. It is now necessary to carry out a comprehensive scheme of repairs to ensure that the long-term preservation of the building is assured.



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