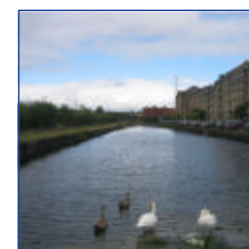




The Forth & Clyde Canal

Landscape, Townscape & Habitat Character Assessment



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Forth and Clyde Canal

The Forth and Clyde Canal runs from Bowling on the River Clyde to Grangemouth on the Firth of Forth, connecting Scotland's west and east coasts. It passes through the north side of Glasgow, from Drumchapel to Possil Loch, some 16km lying within the city boundaries including a branch from Maryhill to Port Dundas, which is separated from the city centre by the M8 motorway.

Having been constructed between 1768 and 1790, the canal was at one time Scotland's most important waterway. In the mid 1800s it annually transported 3,000,000 tons of freight and 200,000 passengers. However, new modes of transport including rail, and latterly roads, gradually lead to a steady decline in use until the canal was finally closed in 1963.

In recent years the canal has benefited from various sources of funding leading to restored navigation and usage: most importantly the Millennium Link Project and Falkirk Wheel which restored east-west navigation in 2001 and, currently, the reconstruction of the link between Spier's Wharf and Port Dundas on the Glasgow Branch of the canal.

The canal is an important feature in the north of the city providing recreational potential, a landscape and habitat corridor as well being an important historical and cultural feature. At the same time there are large areas of derelict land or open space associated with or linked to the canal corridor, many of which have been developed for housing or are subject to developer interest. It is with this potential both for conservation and development in mind that the canal has been subject to past studies and strategies and is now subject of this current landscape, townscape and habitat assessment.

1.2 Project Brief

Glasgow City Council have commissioned this assessment of the landscape, townscape and habitat of the Forth and Clyde Canal within Glasgow City boundaries in order to establish its character, quality, value, importance and sensitivity. The study will inform decisions about the future development and/ or conservation of the canal and its hinterland: The broad objectives of the study are to:

- Help formulate the Local Development Strategy for the Canal
- Help formulate policies for City Plan 2
- Help develop a landscape and townscape strategy for the management, conservation and enhancement of the canal landscape and townscape

- Identify the capacity of the different landscapes and townscapes to accommodate new development
- Identify the type of change appropriate and the impact of change for each specific area or type
- Identify areas that deserve special recognition
- Bring together the stakeholders in the canal

1.3 Approach to Study

The study is broad ranging, encompassing physical, biological, cultural and subjective/ aesthetic aspects of the canal. The objectives have been addressed through a number of parallel studies.

Landscape and Townscape

The appearance of the canal and its landscape/ townscape context has been assessed using current landscape character assessment guidance. This has involved desk based study and fieldwork. The main assessment includes:

- Establishment of study area including zone of visibility and 'sphere of influence' of the canal
- Identification of landscape and townscape character types and areas

- Detailed characterisation and assessment of each area
- Establishing key features, issues and sensitivities associated with each area
- Formulating recommendations and guidelines for the conservation and/ or development of each area and the canal as a whole

Habitat

The assessment of habitats has been carried out using an enhanced Phase 1 survey with target notes. Areas surveyed and recorded include:

- Aquatic and marginal habitats in the canal
- Terrestrial habitats associated with the canal corridor
- Predominantly terrestrial habitats interconnected with the canal corridor

The vegetation types have been recorded onto GIS database mapping. In addition to plant communities the presence of protected animal species and other features of note is recorded.

Cultural Heritage

This study examined the recorded history and historic buildings, structures and archaeological artifacts of the canal and its surroundings. This includes:

- Records for Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings
- Archaeological and architectural records
- Historic accounts
- Historic maps

The location and details of the sites and features recorded in the survey have been recorded in a GIS database with maps and tables. Their significance is assessed and their overall contribution to the canal corridor evaluated

Consultation

The assessment has involved consultation with both statutory and non-statutory organizations as well as neighbourhood and community groups.

Other Subject Areas

The study has touched upon other aspects of the canal that may affect its future use and development including

- water quality and levels
- pollution and contamination
- geology
- current usage

Reporting

The following report is a synthesis drawing from all aspects of the study. It records the character, and all the significant qualities, components and features of the canal in a form that allows identification of the key issues relating to conservation, enhancement and development. Recommendations and guidelines relating to the future of the canal have been developed from these.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Before describing the Forth and Clyde canal in detail it is necessary to set the scene by briefly describing the canal and its landscape and historic context.

2.2 Description

The Forth and Clyde Canal forms a narrow green and tranquil corridor in Glasgow, often twisting tightly through the northern suburbs as it passes through from Bowling on the River Clyde to the countryside of East Renfrewshire below the Campsie Fells. The Glasgow Branch, branching off from the main canal at Stockingfield in Maryhill, heads south towards the city centre through a more urban environment, passing the elegantly renovated Spier's Wharf but ending in the semi-dereliction of Port Dundas.

Throughout its course the canal passes through a variety of settings: inner urban, suburban and rural. Sometimes the surrounding city intrudes, elsewhere it is hardly apparent. In traversing the varied surroundings and changing topography the canal itself changes character: from tranquil, enclosed and hidden to the noise and activity of locks, the sudden exposure of an aqueduct crossing or to the open basins.

The Forth and Clyde Canal West of Stockingfield

From the west the Forth and Clyde canal enters Glasgow in Knightswood, under the Duntreath Avenue road bridge. The tow path is located on the south side of the water from here all the way through to the Glasgow Branch of the canal.

On a straight east-west alignment the canal passes through a suburban environment of flats, houses and playing fields, rising up in a series of three locks before swinging northwards and passing into Blairdardie under the Great Western Road. Again the surrounding environment is suburban, but more established with a higher proportion of tree cover.

The canal then turns east again, rising up through three more locks at Clobberhill. At this point the canal turns towards the south east and lies just north of the city boundary, passing between Knightswood to the south and Westerton to the north. Through this section the canal is uninterrupted by road bridges, in a tree lined setting with rising ground and mature suburbs to the north.

As it passes into Netherton and Temple, the canal twists south then south east again, passing under Bearsden Road. The character of the canal and its surroundings change significantly at this point, from suburban and tree covered, to more exposed and urban in character.

This area has a more lively character with locks, a pub with beer garden and nearby roads.

As it passes east into Maryhill the canal begins to regain some of its tranquility and enclosure, although the surroundings are markedly more inner-urban than the area west of Bearsden Road. West of the Clevedon Road bridge, surrounding variations in topography and a more twisting course add to the change in character. The canal passes across the leafy River Kelvin valley, then passing into a built up area with steeply rising ground ahead and the imposing series of locks at Maryhill. This last series of locks is one of the key areas of the canal, where open space, activity, extensive westerly views and the sound of water combine to create a unique location.

Passing east of the locks the canal again twists tightly through a changing urban landscape, with the surrounding levels changing significantly in a short length from level to under an aqueduct and back to level or rising above the canal.

At Stockingfield the canal splits into two courses, with the Glasgow Branch heading south towards Port Dundas and the city centre and the main Forth and Clyde continuing to head west. At this point the towpath heads south along the Glasgow Branch and access to the Forth and Clyde canal east of here is gained by dropping down to Lochburn Road and passing

through a narrow road tunnel. Emerging on the other side a ramp leads up to the towpath, which is now on the north side of the canal.

The Forth and Clyde Canal East of Stockingfield

The canal heads east for 800m, with the trees and greens of Ruchill golf course rising to the south and a mixture of urban housing, industry and development sites to the north. As the canal turns to the north between Cadder and Lambhill, it passes over the West Highland railway line and a large area of scrubland opens to the west. On the east side there is densely packed new suburban housing, with the remaining open space under development for housing.

The canal turns tightly to the east and then once more to the north as it passes under the Balmore Road bridge. North of this bridge the canal widens and the surrounding landscape has an urban/rural fringe character, with the Possil Loch bird sanctuary to the west and the High Possil industrial estate and housing area on the other side of the canal. The canal is fringed by scrub and trees limiting views to the sides, but open countryside can be seen ahead.

Less than a kilometre north of the Balmore Road bridge the canal passes into open countryside, with rolling fields and woodland belts, and becomes a wide tranquil watercourse.

The Glasgow Branch

The Glasgow Branch of the canal passes through a mainly inner urban environment, but with significant areas of associated open space and canalside vegetation.

Heading south from Stockingfield, the canal passes along a fairly leafy corridor but with the surrounding buildings always visible through the trees. The towpath is on the west and south side of the canal. The surrounding ground rises steeply to the east and falls away to the west.

Passing under Ruchill Street and over Bilsland Drive the surroundings close in, with industrial estates and housing close to the watercourse. South of the latter extensive views open up over Maryhill Road and across the valley of North Kelvinside, whilst to the east the ground rises steeply to Ruchill Park. The canal then swings tightly round to the north east, overshadowed by trees to the north and screened by trees and shrubs to the south.

Passing east under Firhill Road bridge another dramatic transition is experienced as Firhill Basin comes into view. The canal bends tightly to the south, separated from the basin on its inside by a curved island. This is the largest area of open water on the canal system, lying in a shallow natural amphitheatre between the housing of Ruchill to the north and

east and Firhill Park football ground inside the bend. This area currently has an under-used feeling and a poor interface with its surroundings.

Heading south once more the canal continues to pass along the side of a slope, with the ground and trees rising to the east and occasional views over buildings to the south east. The canal widens at Applecross Basin, where British Waterways' headquarters are located. This area has a traditional canalside character, due in no small measure to the presence of canal boats, a number of original canal cottages now used by BW and a metal bascule bridge at the eastern end of the basin.

South of the bascule bridge the canal is dominated and enclosed by large traditional warehouses, culminating in the end of current navigation at Spier's Wharf. The latter is a recent redevelopment, converting an impressive block of existing warehousing into flats and offices with extensive views over the city's West End.

Currently the canal is severed from the basin at Port Dundas, 300m east. The basin itself is located between two hills. It comprises a short stem of canal and a sub-rectangular ring of water enclosing an island accessible by bridge. The surrounding area comprises light industry and commerce, with Sighthill park to the east. The area has a run-down character with the canalside in being in poor repair.

2.3 Geology and Topography

The canal's course and character have to an extent been determined by the underlying topography and geology. Nevertheless, as an artificial watercourse its relationship to topography and geology is not as dependent as that of a river. Thus at times the canal defies the normal expectations of a watercourse and traverses hillsides or crosses valleys. In combination with the means of ascending slopes and crossing valleys (ie. locks and aqueducts) this gives the canal its uniquely different character.

The western branch descends over a series of locks towards Bowling as well as crossing significant topographic features such as the River Kelvin Valley via an aqueduct.

The Glasgow Branch follows the west-facing slopes of the Kelvin Valley. It is level throughout its course, and this is achieved by contouring around the slope, giving this section of the canal its unique 'perched' character and panoramic westerly views.

The eastern branch is also level, reflecting the gentler topography of the north east of Glasgow.

2.4 Water Quality and Levels

The water quality of the canal varies according to the branch. The Glasgow Branch and east of Stockingfield has fairly poor water quality, whereas west of Stockingfield the quality is good. *(to be completed)*.

3.0 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

One of the key reasons for the timing of this study is the fast-moving planning and development context for the canal and adjacent areas of changing land use. In particular much of the Glasgow branch and areas around Maryhill, Cadder and Ruchill have seen significant development since The Glasgow Canal Strategy was written in 2001 and are currently subject to further planning applications and development proposals.

It is the intention of this study to provide a landscape and townscape context for the canal as well as highlight its cultural heritage and biodiversity importance. This information will be used to inform a Local Development Strategy for the Forth & Clyde Canal. The strategy will develop the policies in the Glasgow City Plan to safeguard and secure the Council's vision for the future of the canal.

The information in this report will ensure that future development proposals are considered in the context of the canal and respect and relate to it, taking full advantage of this important corridor threading through the north side of the city. This will be done either through specific design and development guidelines or by providing a framework

for informed responses to speculative applications.

This section of the report puts the canal into its current planning context and reviews the recent development history (from 2000/2001 to date). It then looks towards existing proposals and potential future developments.

3.2 The Planning Context

The Glasgow City Plan was recently adopted and replaces the 43 Local Plans that previously covered the city. It sets the planning context for the next 20 years. The Forth and Clyde canal within Glasgow is covered by specific policies within the City Plan, Part 1 of which states:

'Following completion of the Millennium Link project, the Council is preparing a strategy to prioritise the enhancement of the canal and canal-side sites and highlight opportunities for access improvements'

The City Plan has a number of areas of focus with defined Local Development Strategies. Much of the canal, east from Maryhill, lies in the Glasgow North area and the regeneration of the canal corridor is one of the key issues identified.

Development along and relating to the Forth and Clyde Canal is covered

specifically by Policy DES 10 which recognizes the canal as part of the City's green network. Whilst development proposals are not discouraged, those that affect the canal and its setting must protect the permeability of the canal corridor. The 11 policy points describe in more detail how development should be of an appropriate design and layout to protect and enhance the canal corridor and its recreation potential, landscape qualities and wildlife and heritage value.

The canal itself has a number of environmental policy designations including Scheduled Ancient Monument (HER 4); Corridor of Wildlife and/or Landscape Importance (ENV 7) and Sites of Archaeological Significance (HER 5). Adjacent designated areas include Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (ENV 4), Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Ancient, Long-Established or Semi-Natural Woodland (ENV 5).

The Development Policy Principles define the existing and preferred future land uses for all areas of the city. In addition to designated greenspace there are several vacant or derelict sites close or adjacent to the canal which are designated for housing. There are also extensive areas of existing and proposed industry and business, particularly around the Glasgow Branch.

3.3 Recent Developments

There are several recent or current developments in areas adjacent to or nearby the canal. The following are also detailed in the relevant Character Area descriptions in Chapter 7.0. The survey and state of development reported in the 2001 Glasgow Canal Strategy is used as an approximate baseline.

Duntreath Avenue to Stockingfield

Heading west from Duntreath Avenue the first significant development is the Sports Centre and new flats built between the south side of the canal and Anniesland industrial estate. None of these connect directly with the towpath or relate visually to the canal. On the opposite side of the canal the former Netherton Farm site has been developed with a mix of flats and houses. These have open space interconnected with the canal and the original swing bridge is restored and used by pedestrians. Further east a new railway station has been completed at Kelvindale and areas of existing housing have been cleared at Maryhill.

Stockingfield to Lochfaulds

Immediately east of Stockingfield there is a site on Lochburn Road that is under redevelopment for housing, with another substantial residential site on the inside of the bend at Lambhill.

Stockingfield to Port Dundas

The Glasgow Branch is the principal focus of development on the canal, with several gap sites.

Currently, east of the canal in Ruchill, housing is being developed on the former McLelland Rubberworks site at Shuna Street and the former bakery site at Murano Street. Both of these sites are adjacent to the canal but the latter is at the top of an inaccessible embankment.

On Maryhill Road a block of medium rise flats has been built which backs onto the canal embankment but has no relationship or direct connection to the towpath. At Firhill Basin the north stand site at Firhill Park football stadium has been redeveloped as eight storey student flats. This block overshadows a section of the canal and no attempt has been made to use external works to relate to the canal.

A new office development is being constructed on the slope above Spiers Wharf.

The new section of canal is currently being constructed between Spier's Wharf and Port Dundas.

3.4 Development Proposals

In addition to the most recent developments there are several

development proposals or existing planning applications in areas adjacent to the canal. Many of these could have a significant effect on the character and biodiversity of the canal.

Duntreath Avenue to Stockingfield

There are two main proposals on this section. British Waterways have proposals for housing and a marina in the vicinity of Lock 27 (already the location of a waterside bar). There is a 600 flat residential development proposal for the Botany housing area north of Maryhill Locks.

Stockingfield to Lochfaulds

Most sites capable of significant development are currently under development. Remaining open land is not geologically suitable. A community resource centre is proposed as a refurbishment of the derelict Lambhill stables.

Stockingfield to Port Dundas

Again the Glasgow Branch is the principal focus of development on the canal, with several proposals at various stages.

The industrial areas to the west of the canal around Lochburn Road are likely to be redeveloped but there are currently no specific proposals.

Firhill Basin is a key focus area for development. In addition to the watersports centre between the football stadium and basin proposed by British Waterways there is a proposal for a four storey flat development on the Panmure Street site north of the basin. The latter includes a footpath to the basin.

British Waterways have proposals to develop the area from Applecross Basin to Spiers Wharf as an area of long term moorings.

A new 8 storey residential development is proposed in the empty site on the west side of Spiers Wharf.

There is a proposal for a 16 storey office block adjacent to the new section of canal currently being constructed between Spier's Wharf and Port Dundas.

There are no significant proposals for the Port Dundas area. This is considered to be principally due to poor access between the site and the city centre.

4.0 HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

4.1 Introduction

The Forth and Clyde Canal is now an important green corridor in the north of Glasgow. However its history is critical to the industrial and commercial development of the city. The cultural heritage of the canal, associated structures and buildings and the surrounding area are part of the fabric and character of the landscape and townscape.

The Forth and Clyde Canal is located in a modern landscape, much changed since the canal was opened in 1790. The stretch of canal between Duntreath and Lochfauld passes through a mixed predominantly suburban, residential and rural setting. In contrast, the Glasgow Branch of the canal, from Stockingfield to Port Dundas passes through an urban environment, dominated by a residential and industrial landscape that has been subject to continued development and change since the latter half of the 19th century. These changes are partly due to the introduction of the canal and the ensuing industrial and residential developments that grew up within its hinterland. Although many of the features relating to the early landscape of the canal have since disappeared, pockets of features both within the canal corridor

and the hinterland survive, contributing to the character and cultural heritage of the canal.

Features of cultural heritage interest within this assessment have been defined as all surviving man-made features pre-dating 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping (1865 in this area) in addition to selected sites of more recent date. This criterion has been established because the period represented by the 1865 OS highlights the most informative period with regard to the development of the canal. This includes all Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings. Cultural Heritage, as it is interpreted here, thus includes all types of historic buildings and archaeological sites.

Key Study Objectives

The key objective of the cultural heritage assessment is to identify:

- Potential impacts of development on known sites of cultural heritage interest; and
- Potential impacts of development on areas containing possible undiscovered archaeological remains.

4.2 Historical Background

The Forth and Clyde Canal was built between 1768 and 1790 following the design of the engineer John Smeaton. The

canal is 35 miles long and stretches from Bowling in the east to Grangemouth in the west, linking the Firths of Clyde and Forth. The canal in Glasgow extends from Duntreath in the east to Cadder in the west and from Stockingfield along the Glasgow Branch to Port Dundas.

The Forth & Clyde Canal took 22 years to build. Water was first let into the canal in 1773, reaching as far as Kirkintilloch, which became the terminus until 1775 when the water was taken as far as Stockingfield. In 1784 the work continued towards Bowling, which was reached in 1790, becoming the terminus on the River Clyde. The canal was finally opened to through navigation in the summer of that year.

The Forth and Clyde Canal was the world's first coast to coast canal, allowing ships of the coastal trade to transit between the east and west coasts of Scotland without having to undertake the hazardous voyage around the northern coast. The canal also provided a good inland waterway to transport imported and locally manufactured products, opening up trade to the towns between Edinburgh and Glasgow. The canal also improved cross-country travel, as many coach services linked up with canal services. In addition to the increased industrial activity along the canal, particularly along the Glasgow Branch, the ship and boatbuilding industry developed, building and repairing lighters

and canal craft for firms located on the Canal. Boatyards also supplied fishing vessels and coastal 'Puffers' that travelled all round the Scottish coast.

The Forth & Clyde Canal enjoyed an active life, but by the end of the Second World War there were faster ways to transport goods and trade fell away. The 1960's were a time of decline, infilling and building of bridges over the canal to carry the larger road networks. In 1962 ownership of the Canal passed to British Waterways and after an Act of Parliament that year the Canal was closed to all traffic on 1st January 1963.

4.3 Assessment Methodology

The cultural heritage assessment comprises a baseline survey (documentary research and field survey) followed by an assessment of the significance of identified areas and groups features, and the potential for the discovery of unrecorded archaeological remains.

The focus of the assessment concentrated on sites of cultural heritage interest pre-dating the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1865) and those sites of more recent date that have a direct relationship with the canal.

Areas of the Cultural Heritage Assessment

The assessment has been divided into three main areas along the canal corridor as detailed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Cultural Heritage Assessment Areas

Area 1	Duntreath to Kelvindale
Area 2	Lochfauld to Maryhill Locks & Stockingfield to Ruchill
Area 3	Firhill Basin to Port Dundas

Within each area above, all sites of cultural heritage interest have been assessed from 3 concentric zones located around the canal corridor as detailed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Cultural Heritage Assessment Zones Around the Canal

Zone 1	The area of the canal corridor, identified by the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) boundary. This includes the canal basin, basins, docks, towpath, wharfs and quays and canal furniture. All features within the footprint of the SAM should be considered as being a part of the SAM with the same statutory protection. The only exceptions to this would any named sites excluded in the Scheduling descriptions and any buildings that are currently occupied.
Zone 2	The Inner zone follows the area of interest for the archaeology and built heritage identified in the Forth and Clyde Local Plan (Glasgow City Council Canal Strategy document p.8).
Zone 3	The Outer Zone forms a 200m Buffer Zone around the canal. This was included to highlight the presence of sites related to the canal, such as industrial complexes, that lie beyond the immediate vicinity of the canal corridor and Zone 2.

Desk-Based Assessment

A search was undertaken of all readily available and relevant documentary sources. This included the following:

- The Schedule of Ancient Monuments, and the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, maintained by Historic Scotland;
- The National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS);
- WoSAS Sites and Monuments Record (SMR);
- Ordnance Survey maps and other maps and plans held in the Map Library of the National Library of Scotland.
- National Archives of Scotland (West Register House)

A full list of sources consulted is listed in Appendix xx

Field Survey

A walkover survey of the assessment area was undertaken on the 7th October 2005. The walkover visited those sites identified during the assessment that were seen to merit further inspection. In addition, the stretch of canal between Stockingfield Junction and Port Dundas was assessed in detail because this area revealed the most sites deemed to be significant in

terms of the general character of the cultural heritage landscape. This area also contained the largest number of sites of cultural heritage interest. New sites were identified during the survey; the site of the Foundry at Stockingfield (HA54); the boatyard and slip at Firhill Road Basin (HA52); the remains of Oakbank Mill and quay (HA73); the remains of the Mill at Baird Brae (HA56); the remains of the canal-side building at Possil (HA75); the recently demolished works at Sawmillfield (HA120); the west quay and canal furniture at Port Dundas (HA118); the canal vessel at Port Dundas (HA117); the distillery at Port Dundas (HA123).

Significance Criteria

For the purposes of this assessment, a cultural heritage significance value is given to all the sites within the assessment. This significance is measured in terms of the contribution of a site or group of sites that best represent the character of the cultural heritage of the canal, canal corridor and immediate hinterland. These criteria are summarised in **Table 4.3** below and presented for all sites in the Appendix.

Table 4.3: Criteria for assessing significance of sites of cultural heritage interest

Significance of site	Definition
High	All Listed Buildings and sites located within the SAM boundary of the canal. Any sites or group of sites that have a direct relationship to the canal or that make a significant contribution to the character of the cultural heritage of the area.
Medium	Any sites that make a moderate contribution and still have an obvious link to the character of the cultural heritage of the canal and its immediate landscape.
Low	Any sites that make a low contribution or that have a tentative link to the character of the cultural heritage of the canal and its immediate landscape.
Negligible	Sites that lie within the assessment area but have little or no contribution to the character of the cultural heritage of the area.

4.4 Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy

NPPG5: Archaeology and Planning sets out the Government's planning policy on how archaeological remains and discoveries should be handled through the development plan and development plan control systems. It distinguishes between different categories of archaeological importance, and the way in which such sites should be treated. The NPPG sets out a hierarchical approach to the protection of archaeological resources and states that, in general, *'the preservation in situ of important archaeological remains is always to be preferred, particularly in relation to nationally important sites. Where this is not possible, archaeological excavation and recording may be an acceptable alternative'* (Paragraph 18).

In terms of other archaeological remains (i.e. non-scheduled known resources and unknown features), NPPG5 notes that such cases *'will not always be so clear cut'*. The NPPG concludes by stating that:

"Positive planning control, as well as development plans, can help to reduce possible conflict between development and preservation, and to indicate ways of preserving archaeological resources without unnecessarily delaying development. The ultimate objective is to secure the best possible treatment of the

archaeological heritage while at the same time accommodating the need for development."

PAN42 - Archaeology: The Planning Process and Scheduled Ancient Monuments provides more specific advice in relation to development control and its role in safeguarding archaeological resources. It sets out provisions for monitoring development as it progresses, and defines where it may be appropriate to preserve remains *in situ* or excavate or record them.

NPPG18: Planning and the Historic Environment sets out the Government's planning policies in relation to the historic environment with a view to its protection, conservation and enhancement. The Guideline deals primarily with listed buildings, conservation areas, world heritage sites, historic gardens, designed landscapes and their settings.

The NPPG recognises that the historic environment is a finite and non-renewable resource and seeks to ensure that it can be preserved in good order for future generations. In particular, it emphasises the need to find ways in which the active life of historic buildings and the wider historic landscape can be sustained.

4.5 The Cultural Heritage Resource

The study has assessed a total of 126 previously recorded and currently unrecorded sites within the area of assessment. This includes 78 sites that are directly related to the canal within the canal corridor (i.e.. within the SAM boundary), 34 sites within the Inner Zone (that established by Glasgow Council Local Plan), and 14 sites in the Outer 200m Buffer Zone (Figure 4.xx).

A detailed baseline description of the cultural heritage resource is given in Appendix xx. This includes location maps and a gazetteer with the site reference information source, name, site type and location for each of the recorded sites. All identified sites have been allocated a unique number (with an HA prefix).

From the current desk based analysis it has not been possible to identify the condition and current status (eg whether occupied, use etc.) of the identified sites so an assessment of the sensitivity of individual monuments to development cannot be determined with any consistency. This would require a systematic visit of all sites and an understanding of the nature of the developments proposed. The following sections do, however, provide an over view of the sensitivity of the main areas under development together with an assessment of the significance of individual features.

4.6 Evaluation of Sites of Cultural Heritage Interest

The key development areas are identified in the Glasgow Canal Strategy document and by reference to Glasgow City Council. These include Maryhill Locks, Stockingfield Junction, Cadder/Lambhill (in Area 2), Ruchill, Firhill Basin, Applecross (Hamiltonhill) Basin, Spiers Wharf and Port Dundas (in Area 3).

Area 1: Duntreath to Kelvindale

Most of the sites of cultural heritage interest within Area 1 fall within the boundary of the SAM of the canal corridor (ie. Zone 1). Where these sites are directly related to the character of the cultural heritage of the canal they have been classified as HIGH or MEDIUM in terms of cultural heritage significance and therefore likely to be highly sensitive to direct impact by development. The cultural heritage value of this area includes features relating to the technological and engineering history of the canal; the canal basin itself (HA19, 19, 22 & 134), locks (HA4, 13, 14, 15, 23, 25), bridges (not modern) (HA5, 7, 11, 18, 21, 26, 28 & 104), aqueducts (HA71), and canal furniture (HA27). In addition the socio-historical past of the canal can be identified in structures such as the Lock keeper's cottages (some of which have been demolished) located along the canal corridor. All the above, currently surviving, features above

contribute to the aesthetic character of the canal.

Much of Area 1 in the immediate vicinity of the canal comprises mixed residential or formal open space land-use, and few development opportunities have been identified, mainly consisting of environmental improvements with negligible impact.

Area 2: Lochfauld to Maryhill Locks & Stockingfield to Ruchill

Most of the cultural heritage sites identified in Area 2 are found within the boundary of the SAM of the canal corridor, or in the immediate vicinity in Zone 1. These sites have a direct relationship to the character of the cultural heritage of the canal and most have been classified as HIGH or MEDIUM in terms of cultural heritage significance. These include features relating to the technological and engineering history of the canal; the canal basin itself (HA43, 110 & 133), locks (HA32 & 37), docks (HA33), bridges (not including HA47) (HA39 & 40), and Aqueducts (HA31, 34, 36 & 38). In addition the socio-historical past of the people connected with the canal is also represented in structures such as the Lock keeper's cottages (some of which have been demolished in the recent past) located along the canal corridor. All the standing features above contribute to the aesthetic character of the canal.

As much of Area 2 in the immediate vicinity of the canal comprises mixed rural and residential land-use, few development opportunities have been identified, mainly consisting of environmental improvements with negligible impact. Exceptions to this include the development opportunities highlighted at Maryhill Locks, Stockingfield Junction, Cadder/Lambhill and Ruchill (Glasgow Canal Strategy document p.26 – 47).

Areas that highlight particular cultural heritage attributes have also been identified within Area 2. The Lock system (HA32) at Maryhill, is a particularly fine example of 18th century engineering. This complex includes the site of the Kelvin Dry Dock (HA33) and the long associations that this site has had with aspects of ship/boat building and repair on the canal adds further to the cultural heritage significance of this stretch of the canal. The aqueducts identified in Area 2 are also fine examples of canal engineering, particularly the Kelvin Aqueduct (HA31) and Stockingfield Junction Aqueduct (HA36), both of which are 18th century in date. The Lifting Bridge and wharf (HA40), and the stables (HA41) at Lambhill also represent fine cultural heritage assets in this area. The stables highlight particular architectural and socio-historical attributes. The sites of cultural heritage interest located in the Ruchill area are also worthy of mention.

Although the works located in this area (HA46, 48, 50, 51, 112 & 111) all date to the end of the 19th century, they are particularly indicative of the close relationship between the canal and the industries that utilised it. This link is also recognised in the tangible remains of the wharf at Ruchill (HA49).

Area 3: Firhill Basin to Port Dundas

Area 3, in the immediate vicinity of the canal, comprises a mixture of residential and industrial land-use. Indeed, much of the ex-industrial brown-field sites along the canal corridor are waste ground or facilities at various stages of demolition. Modern Industrial Estates and housing schemes occupy many of the previous industrial facilities noted on the 1st and 2nd edition OS. As such, development opportunities have been highlighted on vacant sites in Area 3. These include Firhill Basin, Applecross (Hamiltonhill) Basin, Spiers Wharf and Port Dundas (Glasgow Canal Strategy p.48 - 65).

On the whole, the canal in Area 3 includes the industrial heart of the canal and what constituted the outer limits of the city of Glasgow in the 19th century. This zone stretches from Firhill Basin to Port Dundas. Many of the facilities relating to the industrial heritage of the canal in this area have been demolished in recent years. Some structures however do survive, many of which date to the heyday of the canal in the 19th century.

The majority of these cultural heritage sites are located within the boundary of the SAM of the canal corridor, or in the immediate vicinity in Zone 1 (Zone 2 in the case of Port Dundas). Most sites in this instance have been classified as HIGH or MEDIUM in terms of cultural heritage significance, and sensitivity to direct impacts. Exceptions to this include HA62, 64, 65, 69, 86, 87 and 120.

Areas that highlight particular cultural heritage attributes are well represented in Area 3. This includes Firhill Basin (HA66) and the site of the filled-in timber basin to the east (part of Firhill basin within the SAM boundary); The Firhill Road Basin (HA70) and the location of the previous boatyard and slip (HA52), and the group of sites focused around Applecross (Hamiltonhill) Basin, Possil Road and Craighall Road (HA76 – 88, 56, 75 & 78). The features in this area, particularly the old workshops (HA79), Lock keeper's house (HA82) and the remains of past industry (HA56, 78, 75, 84 & 85) all characterise the nature of the heritage landscape of the canal in this area. Indeed, this is exemplified further with the suite of mid 19th century warehouses (HA90-100 & 108) and canal offices (HA101) located along Spiers Wharf to the south. The Anne Street basin (HA114) that once linked Spiers Wharf to Port Dundas was destroyed during the construction of the M8 motorway. Many of the associated structures (quays, wharfs and warehouses) were demolished at the

same time. It is unlikely therefore that any of these facilities survive within the archaeological record. The focus of this concentrated industrial landscape culminates in the canal's terminus at Port Dundas. The surviving structures that relate to the past heritage of the area include aspects of the present distillery building (HA123), the Eagle Foundry (HA125), the basin (HA130), the filled in timber basin (HA116) and associated canal structures and furniture (HA118, 124, 126, 127, 128, 131 & 132).

4.7 Summary of Cultural Heritage Assets

The nature of the Forth and Clyde Canal and its hinterland as identified within the cultural heritage assessment has changed dramatically since the canal was completed in 1790. Despite this, a number of sites and areas highlight the many characteristics inherent in the cultural heritage of the canal and as such define particular facets of this important heritage asset. The three areas identified in the assessment all reveal evidence for features that relate to the technological and engineering aspects, the industrial heritage, and the socio-historical connections with the canal.

Much of Area 1 and 2 comprises mixed rural and residential land-use, and few development opportunities have been identified, mainly consisting of

environmental improvements with negligible impact. Cultural heritage characteristics in Areas 1 and 2 include the technological and engineering aspects of the canal; the canal basin itself, locks, bridges (not modern), aqueducts, and canal furniture. In addition the socio-historical past of the canal can be identified in structures such as the Lock keeper's cottages located along the canal corridor, Public Houses, such as that at Maryhill Locks and the stables at Lambhill. In addition, these features also contribute to the aesthetic character of the canal.

Area 3 represents the industrial heart of the canal and what constituted the outer limits of the city of Glasgow in the 19th century. This area forms the nucleus for potential development opportunities, whilst also containing the highest concentration of cultural heritage sites. Many of the facilities relating to the industrial heritage of the canal in this area have been demolished in recent years, but many of those that do survive date to the heyday of the canal in the 19th century. Particular areas include the stretch of the canal between Firhill Basin and Spiers Wharf to the south. The focus of this concentrated industrial landscape culminates in the canal's terminus at Port Dundas, soon to be reconnected with Spiers Wharf. The surviving structures that relate to the past heritage of the area include aspects of the present distillery building, the Eagle Foundry, the basin, the filled in timber basin and associated canal structures and furniture.

The Forth and Clyde Canal (and associated sites) is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and as such is afforded statutory protection. In addition, a number of Listed Buildings are also identified within the assessment. In both cases, Scheduled Ancient Monument and Listed Building consent is required before the instigation of any proposed development. The assessment has also highlighted sites that are not officially classified as Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Listed Buildings but form an important part of the cultural heritage landscape of the canal and its hinterland. The assessment also recommends that those sites within the SAM boundary should be considered to have the same statutory protection, and have been classified accordingly.

5.0 HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

5.1 Introduction

Terms of Reference and Scope of Study

The brief for this assessment included providing a Phase 1 survey of the canal corridor and adjoining areas of open space within Glasgow City Council boundaries. The emphasis of the study is to:

- update the previous (1991) Phase 1 survey and provide information for the character area assessment
- allow the connectivity between the canal and other habitats to be examined, with a view to establishing the importance of the canal as a wildlife corridor.
- provide the results of this survey as a digital maps using ESRI's Arcview format.

Aquatic macrophytes were not fully re-surveyed, although gross changes from 1997 surveys by British Waterways and additional species were noted. The species records of the 1997 surveys have been included here as target notes.

5.2 Survey Methods

Habitats and Plants

The Phase 1 Habitat Survey – A technique for environmental audit (JNCC, 1990) provides a standard methodology of classifying and mapping the study site, and ensures that surveys are carried out to a consistent level of detail and accuracy. The methodology is for a trained surveyor to visit every parcel of land within the study site classifying the vegetation in terms of some ninety habitat categories. Mapping was undertaken at the unusually fine scale of 1:1000 because of the nature of this contract. A digitised habitat polygon map is created by redrawing field maps onto digital maps to produce ArcView shapefiles. The location of target notes is also recorded as ArcView shapefiles.

5.3 Description of Canal Corridor Habitats

Refer to the habitat map and accompanying target notes provided in Appendix X.

The terrestrial habitats along the canal corridor are all common and widespread communities, and rather species-poor. The most widespread habitat is scrub of *Salix caprea* with *Crataegus monogyna*, *Salix cinerea*, *Salix viminalis*, *Betula pendula* saplings, *Fraxinus excelsior*

saplings and *Acer pseudoplatanus* saplings over *Rubus fruticosus* agg., *Chamerion angustifolium* and *Urtica dioica*. This grades into immature broadleaved woodland in places. Small stands of broadleaved plantation also occur, most immature. Ruderal vegetation is also very abundant along the canal. This is dominated by *Chamerion angustifolium* with *Urtica dioica*, *Cirsium arvense*, *Aster* sp. *Rubus fruticosus* agg., *Rumex obtusifolius*, and clumps of the invasive *Reynoutria japonica*. Ruderal vegetation often grades into patches of rough grassland with abundant *Dactylis glomerata*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Festuca rubra*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Aster* sp. plus most of the ruderal species above. Grassland that is shorter because it is developing over derelict ground or is regularly trampled tends to be dominated by the fine-leaved grasses *Agrostis capillaris* and *Festuca rubra* with *Trifolium pratense*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Achillea millifolium* and *Trifolium repens*. Many of the canal verges are of improved grassland with *Lolium perenne*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Plantago* spp. and *Trifolium repens*.

The marginal vegetation of the canal is dominated by *Glyceria maxima* with frequent *Lycopus europaeus*, *Epilobium hirsutum*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Solanum dulcamara*, *Berula erecta*, *Typha latifolia* and *Iris*

pseudacorus plus occasional *Eupatorium cannabinum*, *Lythrum salicaria* and *Myosotis scorpioides*. This vegetation runs along almost the entire length of the canal. It has even begun to develop along recently reinstated sections of canal.

The aquatic macrophytes were thoroughly surveyed in 1997 and it was felt that there was no need to repeat the survey here. However, localised areas did seem to be less diverse than maps indicate, with a preponderance of filamentous algae. This may be an incorrect perception due to differences in the season of observation, difficulties in accurate interpretation of existing maps, and the fact that only a superficial survey was carried out; or it may be due to increased eutrophication. But overall the canal has a diverse aquatic flora containing many regionally scarce species. Two macrophytes - *Alisma lanceolatum* and *Nuphar lutea* - seemed to be more widespread than the 1997 survey indicates.

The only invasive alien plant species to be recorded was Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, and this is only of scattered occurrence.

5.4 Wildlife

The habitat survey showed few signs of protected species, although there is clearly potential habitat. Information has been provided by Scottish Natural Heritage and by reference to the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Glasgow.

Bats are known to feed along the canal, and a five year study has recorded the Soprano pipistrelle and Daubenton's. It is possible that the bats use buildings or mature/ over-mature trees close to the canal as roost sites. Any development or management activity affecting such buildings or trees should be preceded by a bat survey and works affecting bats will require a licence.

Otters are known to inhabit and use the canal but a survey in 2001 indicated only one location, near to the Possil marsh SSSI. There is a minimum 30m clearance required for development near otter refuges.

A survey carried out in 2001 indicated that water voles are present on the canal at Firhill basin, Possil and between Drumchapel and Westerton. Water voles live on the canal banks close to the water and are most likely to inhabit the offside of the canal, where there is minimal disturbance, in areas that are dominated by grass, herb and reed vegetation. The habitat and place of refuge of water voles is protected.

5.5 The Canal as Wildlife Corridor

Open areas and semi-natural habitats within Glasgow City have been reduced to small isolated patches. The linear features of the Forth & Clyde Canal, the River Kelvin and railway lines have a conservation value in their own right as well as providing valuable corridors of wildlife exchange within northern Glasgow. They connect the wider countryside and nature reserves such as Possil Loch with the centre of the city, and also link many of the open spaces remaining within the city.

The canal is obviously highly beneficial for plants and invertebrates of aquatic habitats, and recent restoration of the canal for boat traffic has removed most of the barriers to free movement. Beyond specifically aquatic organisms, however, the value of this corridor (and most others) to wildlife is restricted to common and widespread or catholic species; the mobile generalists of the wider countryside. Most species of conservation concern have very specific habitat requirements and often have poor mobility: these species cannot realistically be catered for within the city. It is the common 'all garden' species that may successfully be encouraged. The terrestrial habitats associated with the canal (as well as the River Kelvin and railway lines), and the habitats available as patches within the city are of common and widespread types, mainly scrub/

immature woodland, rough grassland and ruderal vegetation. Also, the contribution that private gardens make to the wildlife resource of the city cannot be over estimated. Gardens may also be considered as grassland/scrub habitat from the point of view of the wildlife which inhabits them.

To increase the value of the canal as a wildlife corridor it is necessary to widen the terrestrial habitats of the corridor wherever possible and improve connectivity with open areas and other wildlife corridors, thus reducing the number of barriers to wildlife movement. The canal corridor is very narrow through much of the city. A remarkable number of areas shown on 1997 maps as being open/waste ground are now developed or under development (such as the expansion of the Murano student village), generally with very narrow way-leaves, just 5m or so. Future developments should leave wider buffer zones along the canal and this zone should contain a wildlife matrix of scrub and rough grassland.

A major improvement to wildlife mobility may be achieved by increasing connectivity between the canal and other wildlife corridors, specifically the River Kelvin and railway lines, in order to establish a wildlife corridor network. The River Kelvin and the canal intersect at Maryhill aquaduct and all three wildlife corridors intersect at the adjacent

Dawsholm Park. This is a major node where the corridors may be linked by extensive areas of wildlife matrix habitats, utilising existing woodland, broadleaved plantation and grassland as a starting point. Further wetlands, such as ponds and ditches, may also be created to act as stepping stones between river and canal for aquatic species. Similarly a matrix of semi-natural habitats may be created around the node where the railway intersects the canal at Lambhill and Ruchill Park Golf Course.

Further wildlife matrix may be creation in open areas adjacent to the canal such as Knightswood Park and golf course along the Garscadden Burn, and at Sighthill Park adjacent to Port Dundas basin.

The ideal wildlife matrix of habitats for common species of the wider countryside is a fine mosaic of rough grassland and scrub, as already exists along much of the canal. A mix of these habitats provides a productive environment and complex architecture with many niches for plants and invertebrates and the birds and mammals that fed on them. Such a matrix requires minimal management to maintain, and public use merely adds to the diversity of habitats such as trampled and bare areas. It also provides a suitable setting for the creation of more specific habitat patches, such as ponds and ditches, small woodlands, scattered large trees and herb-rich grasslands; and thus specific elements of local Biodiversity

Action Plans may be accommodated. The larger such areas, or wider such corridors, the more diverse they will become. Dense hedges planted along the boundaries of such areas beside roads or the built environment help to reduce so called edge effects, such as disturbance, pollution and noise.

5.6 Further Work Recommended

This report is a brief outline of the approach to improving the function of the canal as a wildlife complex in itself, and as a corridor for the movement of species throughout north Glasgow City. It is recommended that a management plan be prepared for the canal which integrates the management of existing habitats, local biodiversity priorities and initiatives, and specific site plans for habitat creation to improve connectivity at corridor nodes and with existing open spaces.

6.0 LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE ASSESSMENT

6.1 Introduction

The Forth and Clyde Canal passes through a variety of settings within the City of Glasgow, varying from rural on the outskirts of the city at Lochfaulds, to suburban at Blairdardie or Anniesland and inner-urban at Maryhill and Port Dundas. The surrounding land uses also vary from residential to industrial, commercial or greenspace. The canal itself varies in scale, form and function from straight, level stretches to steeply climbing series of locks (for example at Maryhill) and the wide basin at Firhill. The vegetation in and immediately adjacent to the canal contributes to its character: from hard edged to soft and open to enclosed.

Whilst recognizable as a distinctive corridor throughout its course, it is the changing nature of the canal, its surroundings and wider setting that creates distinct changes in landscape character along this length. In order to provide a basis for the conservation or enhancement of the canal and its setting it is necessary to record both the measurable and the more subjective elements of its landscape setting. With this information, robust and defensible frameworks for future development and investment can be devised that respond to the setting and character of the canal

and ultimately enhance its value to the City.

Landscape assessment is a tool that is used to record and evaluate a predominantly subjective experience. Whilst the appearance and quality of a landscape is agreed by all to be important, opinions on any particular landscape, its attractiveness and worth vary considerably from person to person. Nevertheless, the assessment of landscape and townscape character of the canal corridor is the core of this study. The methodology used is based on published guidelines and involves the collection of data from desk-based studies, collection and analysis of field survey information and the assessment of subjective and experiential characteristics.

The information is described and reported in a clear and informative manner, forming the basis for developing strategies for the protection and enhancement of this important corridor.

6.2 Methodology

Published Guidance

The method used for the assessment is based on published guidance including *'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2nd Edition)* (The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment and

Management, 2002) and *'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland'* (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002). Nevertheless these publications are guidelines and principles that need to be adapted for each survey. In particular the assessment of urban landscapes, in particular townscape, presents a challenge that is not addressed in detail by the published guidance, which tends to concentrate on rural and urban fringe landscapes. Nevertheless the same basic principles of survey, evaluation and analysis apply and this has been undertaken for the Forth and Clyde canal assessment.

Survey and Assessment Process

The landscape/ townscape assessment has been carried in four basic stages:

- Desk-based data collection;
- field survey;
- analysis; and
- classification and description.

The desk-based assessment has included a study of maps, photographs and air photos. Information on designations, policies and land use has also been drawn from the Glasgow City Plan. Further background has been gleaned from previously published reports including *Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Landscape Assessment* (SNH, 2001), *Glasgow Canal Strategy* (Glasgow City Council, 2001)

and the *Waterspace Strategy* (British Waterways, 2003). Information from the cultural heritage and historical assessment (Chapter 4) and the habitat survey (Chapter 5) is also included.

The field survey took place in summer and autumn of 2005. The area was traversed by bike, foot and partly by canal barge. The survey comprised three phases:

- An initial traverse by bike/ foot to familiarise with the canal, corroborate map information, determine the sphere of influence and establish broad character types;
- A detailed survey by foot to determine the boundaries between character areas and survey each character area's objective and subjective characteristics;
- A follow-up survey as necessary to confirm final assessment and analysis.

In carrying out the assessment information has been recorded on maps and in photographs. In addition to this a proforma has been used as a platform for the objective recording of landscape characteristics (landform, land cover, features etc) and subjective landscape characteristics (scale, enclosure, security etc). This information forms the basis for determining the extent and nature of Landscape Character Areas along the canal.

The result of the assessment is that the canal has been divided along its length into a series of Character Areas, based on both the characteristics of the canal corridor and those of the landscape or townscape setting.

In Chapter 7.0 each Character Area is described in detail and illustrated by annotated plans, sections and photographs. There is an initial summary of the objective and subjective characteristics, followed by a more detailed description of specific aspects of the landscape and/or townscape including:

- Canal features (*straight, winding, wide, narrow, locks, bridges etc*)
- Surrounding landuse and topography (*built up, greenspace, slopes, hills, valleys etc*)
- Vegetation (*in and adjacent to the canal and in adjacent greenspace*)
- Cultural heritage (*features of interest, historical associations etc*).
- Access (*towpath, access from surrounding paths, roads, open spaces etc*)
- Views in and out of the canal corridor (*open, enclosed, key viewpoints*)
- Landscape change (*recent and proposed developments*)

Following the detailed description of the Character Area the main positive and negative features are identified. Key issues are identified and strategies for conservation, improvement and development control are applied to each Character Area in order of priority.

In Chapter 8.0 an overall assessment of the canal corridor is made following the results of the description and assessment of each character area in Chapter 7.0. The assessment draws on common issues and factors identified throughout the canal corridor.

Landscape or Townscape?

No hard rules are applied as to whether a character area is considered to be a 'landscape' or 'townscape'. This is a qualitative judgment based on the relative proportion of 'hard' and 'soft' landscape elements and features (ie. landform and vegetation versus buildings, structures roads etc).

Despite the variety of surroundings from rural to inner-urban the appearance of an area as 'landscape' or 'townscape' can vary in an unpredictable fashion, particularly where there has been significant clearance of buildings or there is a high proportion of greenspace. However the descriptions, plans and photographs make the nature of a Character Area clear and the merits, issues and strategies are based on the findings of the assessment.

7.0 LANDSCAPE/ TOWNSCAPE AREAS AND STRATEGIES

7.1 Introduction

This chapter details the results of the landscape assessment carried out in summer/ autumn 2005. Each of the character areas is described and illustrated in detail. Key issues are identified together with suggested strategies for conservation, enhancement and/or development control as appropriate.

7.2 Previous Studies

Previous studies have identified and described the landscape of the Forth and Clyde Canal corridor.

In the *Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Landscape Assessment* it is identified as one of the 'Green Corridor' landscape character types, occurring where river valleys or canals penetrate the urban fabric as an undeveloped corridor of open space feeding into the city. The report describes the corridor prior to the Millennium Project works, emphasizing the grass and scrub corridor, large areas of derelict land and the appearance of new housing at one or two locations. The report emphasizes the importance of all of the green corridors and the conservation and enhancement of their visual, recreational and ecological value and the

creation and reinforcement of linkages to other green corridors and open spaces. Furthermore there is the potential for neighbouring development to contribute to overall environmental quality. In particular the effects of transportation corridors and neighbouring development should be carefully considered. New infrastructure and developments should be designed sensitively and the orientation, scale, design and materials of buildings, together with open space provision and access, should be carefully designed. The development of a design guide should be considered.

The *Glasgow Canal Strategy* covers the same area as the current study, carrying out a strategic overview and a more detailed look at the canal corridor, which is subdivided into 16 sections. The study is not primarily based on landscape character, but draws in many areas of concern and focuses particularly on development opportunities. It identifies eight Key Development Areas:

- Maryhill Locks
- Stockingfield Junction
- Cadder/ Lambhill
- Ruchill
- Firhill Basin
- Applecross Basin
- Spiers Wharf
- Port Dundas

The strategy emphasizes the need to strengthen the character and increase the public profile of the canal. It gives outline development guidelines/ design principles for each of the areas, concentrating on the need to relate development to the canal and its surroundings as well as elevate its public profile. The report serves as a useful baseline for assessing the amount of development that has taken place over the past 5 years.

The *Glasgow Waterspace Strategy* covers the Glasgow Branch including the main canal between Maryhill Locks and Cadder. It provides detailed survey and analysis, including a landscape character study, followed by detailed design guidelines and a series of development case studies for principal sections of the canal.

7.3 The Canal Corridor and its Sphere of Influence

Early in the study surveys determined the extent to which the canal corridor influences the landscape character of its surroundings. This was done primarily by determining the visibility of the canal. This included establishing the visual horizon and viewpoints from within the canal corridor and by assessing the prominence of the canal corridor from surrounding areas.

From within the corridor the views out are most commonly limited by the woodland and scrub vegetation growing beside the canal and towpath, with buildings more

influential in the Glasgow Branch. Topography generally defines the furthest extent of visibility where the canal is not enclosed by vegetation or buildings. In some locations, where the canal is not enclosed or where it descends a gradient with closely spaced locks, extensive views or long distance vistas are available. Views are also more extensive in winter as the dense canalside scrub loses its leaves. The extent of the visual envelope and main views is shown in Figure 7.1a-c.

Viewed from the surrounding area the canal corridor is not generally a strong influence on the landscape character. This is partly due to screening by vegetation and buildings and partly due to a lack of prominent features or visible activity, such as vehicle or waterborne traffic. Furthermore, unlike a river, the canal does not closely relate to or indeed determine the surrounding topography.

Only where there is a concentration of features or expansion of the watercourse, such as at Maryhill Locks and Firhill Basin, does the canal strongly influence its surroundings. In places the concentration of trees and scrub has a softening effect on the surrounding urban area, often merging with adjacent vegetation associated with railways, roads and derelict land. A subtle secondary influence of the canal is through association with past industrial and commercial development, most closely associated with the Glasgow Branch. This influence is

prominent at Spiers Wharf, visible from the M8, but more diluted, and decreasing, in other areas where new development is taking place, often at the expense of former industrial sites.

7.4 The Factors Determining Character Areas

The Character Areas were each separately identified during the survey on the basis of the characteristics of the canal corridor and the surrounding landscape or townscape setting.

The decision to 'merge' or 'split' lengths of the canal is based on assessment of the characteristics along the length of the canal. Although continuously variable along its length there are locations where a distinct change in the canal corridor is apparent, its setting or a clear boundary separation, such as a main road bridge. Conversely there are lengths where variation in the canal or its surroundings is indistinct, fragmented or gradual. Sometimes there are short sections where the nature of the canal contrasts with the homogeneous lengths either side.

Ultimately the decision to separately identify areas is based on an assessment of a relative weighting of homogeneity or contrast, together with the practical considerations of presentation and assessment of information in a meaningful form.

The main characteristics leading to an identification and separation of the character areas have included:

Canal Features

Whether the canal is level, straight, curving, wide, narrow, has bridges, locks or is on an aqueduct. Locks in particular are associated with moving water, noise and activity that contrast with tranquil, level sections of the canal. The width of the overall corridor between adjacent land uses is also influential.

Vegetation

Whether or not the canal is enclosed by trees, scrub or an overgrown hedge, has more open views or a predominantly hard boundary such as a wall or building. Even modest widths of dense vegetation along the canal boundary, particularly in summer, can significantly screen and reduce the influence of the surrounding setting.

Surrounding Topography and Landuse

The degree of enclosure or openness of the canal is often determined by surrounding topography, together with the presence or absence of trees and buildings. Quite often the canal is contouring a slope, distinctively giving enclosure on one side and views over the downhill side.

Urban/ Rural Character

Where not modulated by the canalside vegetation or reduced in significance by the canal features, the character of the surrounding city has an influence on the character area. This can be either by controlling views in and out or by the character of the area. In particular there are fairly clear distinctions such as:

- Rural
- Urban/rural fringe
- Suburban
- Inner Urban

The non-rural character types are also influenced by the density of development, the type and height of buildings and land uses.

Physical/ Visual Barriers

The physical divisions between lengths of canal are sometimes the obvious, overriding factor. In particular where it passes under a busy, wide road bridge or turns a tight bend. In combination with the change in surroundings that often occurs either side of a barrier such as a main road.

7.5 The Character Areas

There are 28 character areas in total on 16 km of the canal. The longest is

approximately 1 km at Westerton and the shortest 250m at Great Western Road. Broadly speaking they can be categorised into 22 types based on their surrounding context. Within any context the canal-side features introduce a wide range of variation.

The Character Areas

1. Duntreath Avenue
2. Knightswood
3. Great Western Road
4. Blairdardie
5. Clobberhill
6. Westerton
7. Netherton
8. Temple
9. Cleveden Road
10. Kelvindale
11. Maryhill Locks
12. Maryhill Road
13. Stockingfield
14. Ruchill and Lambhill
15. Ruchill Golf Course
16. Cadder
17. Balmore Road
18. Possil Marsh
19. Lochfauld
20. Stockingfield to Shuna Place
21. Shuna Place to Bilsland Drive
22. Bilsland Drive to Firhill Road
23. Firhill Basin
24. Hamiltonhill
25. Applecross Basin
26. Rockvilla Whisky Bond
27. Spiers Wharf
28. Port Dundas

Character Area 1 Duntreath Avenue

Description of Character Area

The first character area in the west passes from Clydebank into Glasgow under Duntreath Avenue Bridge. Either side of the bridge the canal is on a straight west-east orientation, set in a fairly flat area, surrounded by equal proportions of adjacent greenspace and housing. The canal is on a slight embankment and a tall hedge, with scrubby woodland partially screens views down to Garscadden Sports Ground. A fenced in footpath is at the base of the embankment and forms the boundary between playing field and canal corridor. A small pedestrian bridge spans the canal below Lock 36 and links with the underpass at Great Western Road.

This section of the canal is relatively bland in character, being straight, open and crossed by a busy road. However the locks provide visual interest.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is straight throughout this section and passes under a busy road.

There are 2 locks (35 and 36) at either end and a bascule bridge at the east end. There is also a small pontoon near lock 35. For the majority of its length the canal has soft reed edges, with small sections around the locks stone edged.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is fairly flat with land use mainly residential to the north. A large grassed sports ground lies to the south. There is a small shop on Kelso Street close to lock 35.

Vegetation

Unmanaged scrub woodland and tall ruderals on the canal sides and embankment. Tall hedge on south (towpath) side and small area of ornamental planting and neutral grassland around Duntreath Avenue bridge. The canal is lined either side with marginal/emergent planting.

Cultural Heritage

Features are principally related to the canal SAM area and includes the bascule bridge at the Kelso Street end.

Access

The towpath is on the southern side of the canal. A small pedestrian bridge links the canal to the underpass and paths on the north around the Duntreath Avenue

bridge. A bascule bridge at the east end links Kelso Street and Manor Road en route to the Great Western Road. There are several informal muddy paths linking the towpath with the housing to the south. An intimidating, overgrown and fenced in footpath runs between the playing field and canal embankment.

Views in and out

Views in and out of the canal corridor are fairly open, although screened by housing on the north side filtered by the hedge on the south side.

Landscape Change

The surrounding areas appear to be well established residential neighbourhoods and greenspace.

Positive Features

- The canal locks and bascule bridge add interest and character.
- Links and proximity to Garscadden Sports Ground.
- Links across canal to Great Western Road.
- Green boundaries and hedge.

Negative Features

- Unmanaged scrub woodland between the canal and playing field.
- Poor environment and muddy, informal paths linking surrounding housing with the canal towpath and the towpath with the small shop near lock 35.
- Intimidating path at base of canal embankment.
- Potholes and puddles along towpath, where there has been necessary vehicle access to Locks.
- Japanese knotweed along canal corridor.

Key Issues

Vegetation Management

The area between the towpath and sports ground is scrubby and unmanaged. There are problems with flytipping in this area.

Access

There are numerous muddy desire lines linking the surrounding housing with the towpath and small shop and the overall environment is poor.

Intimidating Footpath

The linking footpath at the base of the canal embankment is fenced in, overgrown and a focus for antisocial behaviour.

Poor Condition of Towpath

In common with most sections of the towpath around Locks, necessary vehicle access to open and close locks in this section has resulted in potholes and puddles along the towpath.

Japanese Knotweed

Present in many sections of the canal.

Strategies

There are relatively few major issues affecting this section of the canal

- *Manage vegetation on embankment, plant additional trees and hedge to bulk up the planting. MEDIUM*
- *Improve area around Kelso Street bridge and shop and formalise/rationalise footpaths linking to and from the canal. MEDIUM*
- *Consult with local community about removing or improving the intimidating footpath at the base of the embankment. MEDIUM*
- *Upgrade towpath to take frequent vehicle access around and between locks. Provide surfaced areas to allow vehicle to park off the towpath next to Locks. MEDIUM*
- *Remove/treat areas of Japanese Knotweed. MEDIUM.*

Character Area 2 Knightswood

Description of Character Area

This section of the canal between Lock 35 (Kelso Street) to the greenspace beyond Bard Avenue is characterised by a long straight stretch climbing eastwards through a series of three locks. These provide a distinctive feature and the sound of cascading water. The canal is fully or partially enclosed by vegetation along both sides and views either side of the canal are fairly restricted. At Bard Avenue there is a bascule bridge, fitting in visually with the lock superstructure. The canal then bends to the northeast and the surroundings open out.

The surroundings comprise high density suburban housing. Surrounding topography varies, falling away slightly to the south and rising gently to the north. Housing to the north is a mixture of post war semi-detached housing and medium or high rise blocks of flats. The housing to the south of the canal comprises houses and four storey flats, separated from the canal by a short embankment and dense hedge/ scrub cover. Open spaces between houses are generally well maintained, with mown grass and amenity tree and shrub planting. There is considerable pedestrian activity along the canal.

The overall impression is that the canal has a distinctive character but does not greatly influence its surroundings. The scale is fairly small and the canal and surroundings feel safe although only partially overlooked.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The western part of the canal and towpath rises gently through a series of three locks (33-35) whereas the eastern part is level. It follows a straight course from Kelso Street to the bascule bridge at Bard Avenue before bending to the north east. The towpath is on the southern side.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography rises gently to the north and falls gently to the south, with the canal on a slight embankment. The surrounding land use is residential with high density modern suburban housing predominating. On the north side of the canal the flats along Keal Avenue are laid out at a right angle to the canal. Together with maturing vegetation this regular pattern relates well to the canal compared with many developments that turn their backs to it. On the south side of the canal the housing is of the more usual relationship, although visually screened by a dense hedge and scrub. There is a small shop south of the Bard Avenue bridge.

Vegetation

The embankment on the towpath side has a long overgrown hedgerow and deciduous woodland/ scrub. There is maintained amenity grassland surrounding the locks. The north side is also dominated by scrub but with planted deciduous woodland by the Keal Road flats. There are reedbeds on either side of the canal.

Cultural Heritage

The main features relate exclusively to the canal SAM: 2 locks, a bascule bridge and a lock keeper's cottage.

Access

This section of the canal can only be accessed from two main points: the lock bridge at Kelso Street and the bascule bridge at Bard Avenue. These allow access from the surrounding roads and housing on both sides. There are motorcycle barriers at these locations. There are two other informal accesses or desire lines passing through scrub, from Archerhill Road to the towpath.

Views in and out

Vegetation and housing significantly limits views out of the canal corridor, with the longest vista being that to the west along the canal. It is only at either end of the section that the canal surroundings open out.

The housing and vegetation limit visibility from the surrounding area. The flats on the north side will have views up and

down this section due to their height and layout at a right angle to the canal.

Landscape Change

The surrounding areas appear to be well established residential neighbourhoods and no significant development has taken place near the canal in recent years.

Positive Features

- The series of locks and the bascule bridge provide visual and aural interest
- The screening or visual softening of the canal corridor due to the densely vegetated boundaries.
- The arrangement of the flats along the south side of Keal Avenue provides a good relationship between housing and the canal.
- Crossing points at either end of the section

Negative Features

- No visual relationship or formal access between housing and the towpath side of the canal.
- No signage.
- Poor curtailage to shop near Bard Avenue bridge

- Towpath potholed by necessary vehicle access.

Key Issues

Access and signage.

Lack of access between housing and towpath. With no signage to indicate existing formal links to and from the towpath.

Poor Quality Surroundings of Shop

Area around shop is poor quality and is a focus for graffiti, rubbish and fly tipping.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Consider vegetation management to improve security along and access to the towpath without significantly affecting the canal character.*** MEDIUM
- ***Carry out environmental improvements around the shop on Bard Avenue.*** MEDIUM
- ***Improve signage to and from access points and nearby main roads.*** MEDIUM
- ***Consider improving greenspace linkage to canal edge at Keal Avenue.*** LOW

Character Area 3 Great Western Road

Description of Character Area

This short section of the canal lies between Keal Avenue and the Great Western Road overbridge. The section is considered separately as it contrasts in character with the straight stretch through Knightswood and is cut off to the east by the major road bridge. It curves gently to the north at a level grade between an area of open space and suburban housing. The canal corridor is enclosed by vegetation.

This section of the canal is semi-enclosed. Its scale is small to medium and the canal and surroundings feel safe although not generally overlooked.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves through the surrounding landform, its edges softened by reedbeds.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is fairly level. The canal is on a slight embankment above a suburban residential area on the south east side. To the north west is a short embankment backing onto open space. The Great Western Road and its traffic dominate the northern end.

Vegetation

Scrub woodland on the towpath side with areas of larger trees. Immature broadleaved semi-natural woodland on the north western side on the embankment below the mown amenity grass of the playing fields.

Cultural Heritage

There are no surviving features other than the canal corridor.

Access

Users can only access the canal towpath from sections in adjacent character areas. A muddy desire line links the towpath with the footway on Great Western Road, on the embankment above.

Views in and out

Vegetation and housing significantly limits views out of the canal corridor. Views along the canal are limited by its curve and the road bridge.

Landscape Change

The surrounding areas appear to be well established residential neighbourhoods, with well maintained gardens and greenspace. The canal section north of the Great Western Road was restored as part of the Millenium Project (see Character Area 4).

Positive Features

- The canal corridor is an attractive green corridor in the surrounding residential area.
- Open space linkage to playing fields

Negative Features

- No direct access to the towpath.
- Desire lines provide poor linkage with the Great Western Road.
- Japanese Knotweed growing in several areas in this section.

Key Issues

Access.

Desire lines are the only link from the towpath to the footway at Great Western Road.

Japanese Knotweed

A problem in many sections of the canal.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- *Remove/treat areas of Knotweed.* MEDIUM.
- *Formalise link between towpath and Great Western Road.* MEDIUM.

Character Area 4 Blairdardie

Description of Character Area

The section of the canal between the Great Western Road and Blairdardie Road is one of the more distinctive sections, having been rebuilt as part of the Millennium project. In contrast with traditional arrangement, the path is separate from the canal.

The area is fairly open with mown grass and clear-stem trees south east of the canal. The topography is fairly level with housing set well back to the south east and a main road and playing fields to the north.

This section of the canal has a parkland character due to the open space, mown grass and clear-stemmed trees.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves gently through the surrounding landform. It is crossed by the Great Western Road to the south and a raised footbridge to the north, connecting the stopped ends of Blairdardie Road.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is level or gently undulating. The predominant land use to the east is open space and residential. To the west is a school and sports centre, with housing and flats beyond. A road parallels the canal on its west side.

Vegetation

The majority of the surroundings are amenity grassland. Ornamental trees and planting east of the canal. There is relatively little marginal/ emergent planting as the reinstated canal is only 5 years old.

Cultural Heritage

This is a reinstated section of the canal and there are no original features.

Access

The canal path is accessed at either end of this section, from the Great Western Road and the footbridge at Blairdardie Road. There is also a connection to the towpath south of the Great Western Road by passing under the road bridge. Users can access the canal-side over grass on the path side and on the road side it is possible to access the canal but here there is no path.

Views in and out

Views in and out are fairly open due to the lack of dense canal-side vegetation and clear-stem trees.

Landscape Change

This is a well-established area with little change occurring, with the exception of the recent reinstatement of the canal which has severed Blairdardie road.

Positive Features

- The canal corridor is well maintained and has a pleasant suburban parkland character.
- Open views of canal and boats available from the surroundings, particularly from the north and west.
- Generous allocation of surrounding greenspace and play area.
- Proximity to Sports Centre, school and shops.

Negative Features

- Rear of nearby housing has high ugly mesh security fencing separating it from the canal corridor.
- Derelict hairdressers to north of Blairdardie Road footbridge.
- Open views of road and crash barrier on the offside.
- Canal open with mown grass close to road reducing habitat value.
- Play area in poor condition.

Key Issues

Boundaries

The boundary between the housing and greenspace is a high ugly mesh security fence.

Environment

The derelict hairdresser and area around the footbridge is poor.

Habitat Value

Large areas of mown grass, which has a low habitat value.

Strategies

No significant problems affect this section.

- *Improve boundary and access between established housing and greenspace/ canal path. MEDIUM*
- *Improve signage to and from canal. MEDIUM*
- *Establish scrub planting and emergent/ marginal vegetation between road and canal. MEDIUM*
- *General landscape improvements by tree planting along school playing fields, Great Western Road etc. LOW*

Character Area 5 Clobberhill

Description of Character Area

A long curving section of canal defined by Locks at either end. The canal initially rises through two locks before curving through the surrounding housing and ending through three further locks. The section is set within slightly hillier topography compared with the preceding sections, and the canal is cut into the side of a slight hill around the final three locks. As a result long views can be obtained of the Kilpatrick Hills to the northwest.

Views of the surrounding housing are partially screened by scrubby woodland, and topography. To the north the railway is clearly visible on embankment where it runs alongside the final Locks.

The mown grass areas around the locks contrast with the ruderal/scrubby vegetation of the rest of the section. North of the pedestrian bridge, which defines the start of this section there is poor quality open space comprising of a derelict shop, muddy informal paths and security fencing.

The Locks define this section and their noise and form create interest at either end. The overall impression is one of nodes of activity separated by a tranquillity, with the canal gently curving

through the surrounding landform and open views out. The section feels safe, but small areas of neglect detract from this.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is rich in features in this section. It rises through its surroundings via a series of five locks (28-32). These and the associated basins together with the curve of the canal define the character of this section. In addition there are several pontoons and mooring rings. The central 'section' is reed edged, with a small area where metal edging has been used as reinforcement on the offside. The towpath has been badly eroded by vehicle use near locks.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surroundings consist of gently rolling hills, with the canal cut into the side of a hill. This cutting and embankment are however not conspicuous. The predominant surrounding landuse is residential, with semi-detached housing, some blocks of flats and garages. The railway line runs close to the canal on an embankment to the north and is separated from it by a small house-filled hollow in the topography. However the rails are at the same height as the towpath and these along with the trains and power lines are clearly visible.

Vegetation

Closely mown mounds with amenity grass together with overgrown ornamental planting surround both sets of locks. But scrubby unmanaged woodland and tall ruderal vegetation on the canal embankments/ cutting back onto private gardens contrast with this 'tidiness'.

Cultural Heritage

The main focus of interest is the five locks.

Access

Access is via the pedestrian bridge linking both sections of Blairdardie Road and from numerous muddy informal desire lines leading from the surrounding housing to the towpath.

Views in and out

This section is semi-enclosed by the embankment and housing on the south side, but to the north views open out. The topography, the change in level of the canal and the cutting on this side allow views to the Kilpatrick Hills and surrounding landscape.

Public views of the canal are limited to those from the footbridge and from passing trains. The surrounding housing would also enjoy slightly screened views into the canal corridor.

Landscape Change

The surrounding housing areas are well established, but the derelict shop appears to be acting as a focus for anti-social behaviour in the area.

Positive Features

- The visual interest and sound created by the locks and basins.
- Open views to the north of the Kilpatrick Hills.
- The manicured surrounds and mounded landforms around the Locks.

Negative Features

- Derelict shop acting as a focus for anti-social behaviour and detracting from the visual quality of the area.
- The poorly managed and designed open space around the footbridge at Blairdardie Road.
- The large numbers of muddy informal access paths to the canal.
- Poorly maintained boundary fences to the canal corridor, particularly behind garages.
- The potholed and rutted towpath caused by necessary vehicle access to the locks.
- The unmanaged scrubby woodland on the canal embankments.
- Overgrown ornamental planting around locks.

Key Issues

Derelict Shop.

The shop is acting as a focus for anti-social behaviour and detracting from the overall good quality of the canal and surrounding housing.

Greenspace around the Pedestrian Bridge

The greenspace on both sides of the pedestrian bridge is badly designed and managed. There are numerous muddy desire lines, poor quality security fencing and materials.

Access to the Canal

Throughout this section there are numerous informal muddy access paths from the surrounding housing.

Boundaries

There are problems with undefined, vandalised or poor quality boundaries to the canal corridor, particularly behind the garages.

Poor Condition of Towpath

In common with most sections of the towpath around Locks, necessary vehicle access to open and close locks in this section has resulted in potholes and puddles along the towpath.

Vegetation Management

In contrast to the grass areas, sections of ornamental planting and scrubby woodland are unmanaged and detract from the overall landscape quality of the section.

Strategies

Numerous small-scale problems are detracting from the overall qualities of this section of canal and surrounding townscape.

- *Demolish/re-develop derelict shop at Blairdardie Road. HIGH*
- *Re-design and improve the informal open space around the pedestrian bridge at Blairdardie Road. HIGH*
- *Formalise and rationalise access and desire lines from surrounding housing. HIGH*
- *Tidy up and redefine problem canal boundaries, particularly behind the garages. MEDIUM*
- *Upgrade towpath to take frequent vehicle access around and between locks. Provide surfaced areas to allow vehicle to park off the towpath next to Locks. MEDIUM*
- *Manage scrub woodland and ruderals, and consider additional tree planting. Also replace overgrown ornamental planting around locks. LOW*

Character Area 6 Westerton

Description of Character Area

This section of the canal between Lock 28 and Anniesland Industrial Estate meanders gently at a level grade through suburban surroundings characterised by a high proportion of tree cover. The canal is generally enclosed by vegetation along both sides. Due to the meanders, views along the canal are fairly restricted. The canal corridor opens up for a short section below Westerton station in which more open views north and south are available, with two long enclosed sections either side. Surrounding topography varies, falling away slightly to the south and rising to the north. Housing to the north is set on a hillside, pre-war or interwar age and predominantly detached or semi-detached bungalows. East of the station is Westerton Conservation area with large gardens and dense tree cover rising to a tree-crowned hill. The housing to the south of the canal is on flatter ground, more densely spaced and comprises houses and four storey flats, separated from the canal by a short embankment and dense hedge/ scrub cover. Open spaces between houses are generally well maintained, with mown grass and amenity tree and shrub planting. There is considerable pedestrian activity along the canal.

The overall impression is of one of tranquillity and enclosure due to the meandering watercourse and backdrop of trees. With the exception of the area opposite Westerton station the surroundings do not feel built up. The scale is small and the canal and surroundings feel safe although not generally overlooked.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves through the surrounding landform, its edges softened by reedbeds. It is crossed by one modern high footbridge.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography consists of hills interspersed with level areas, a prominent hillside dominating the area to the north east of the character area. The predominant land use is residential with the Westerton Conservation area to the north east. The suburban railway line runs parallel to the canal on a steep embankment and this artificial landform defines sections of the northern boundary. Westerton station lies north of the canal midway along this section.

Vegetation

Private gardens, private open space with ornamental planting and closely mown grassland on the canal banks to the

north, emphasise the 'neatness' of this section of canal. The towpath side comprises a long hedgerow and deciduous scrub woodland. Scrub woodland also covers most of the north side except where there is open amenity grassland, fringed by ruderal vegetation. The canal has wide strips of marginal and emergent vegetation on both sides.

Cultural Heritage

With the exception of the canal SAM itself there are no recorded areas of cultural heritage interest.

Access

Users can access the canal from several points along the towpath side of this section. The railway embankment limits access points from the north, the off-side. The pedestrian bridge in the centre of this section, between Glendinning Road and Westerton railway station, crosses the canal but drops by ramp to the low ground south of the towpath. Access is then back up ramped paths

Views in and out

Vegetation significantly limits views out of the canal corridor, with most views along the canal also limited by meanders. It is only opposite the station that the canal opens out, with views to the north limited by topography and housing and views over housing to the south more open due to the canal's elevation on an embankment.

Like most of its length, topography, buildings and vegetation limit public views into the site. Houses on Almond road and Orchy Crescent to the north have views of the canal over an area of greenspace and houses on Rotherwood Avenue and Glendinning Road to the south see the canal corridor and traffic but are unlikely to see the water. By car brief glimpses can be obtained opposite the station and railway passengers get clear views of the canal for a short section. The best viewpoint is from the footbridge to the station.

Landscape Change

The surrounding areas appear to be well established residential neighbourhoods, with well maintained gardens and greenspace. The newest housing lies between the canal and railway at Almond Road and Orchy Crescent.

Positive Features

- The tranquil, enclosed nature of the canal corridor, meandering through dense, maturely vegetated surroundings
- The canal corridor is well maintained and pleasantly suburban in character.
- Open views available from central part of this section

- Access to public transport at Westerton Station
- Greenspace at Almond Road, between the railway and canal and beside Glendinning Road/ Rotherwood Avenue.

Negative Features

- Pedestrian bridge from Station does not access the towpath directly and access from adjacent road is steep/ poorly surfaced.
- Separation of Almond Road greenspace from canal corridor by dense ruderal/ scrub vegetation and a ditch.

Key Issues

Access and signage.

The area between Westerton Station and Rotherwood Avenue/ Glendinning Road is an important access and transport node. Currently access to the station and canal are separate and signage is poor.

Canal and Greenspace Linkage

The greenspace at Almond Road is largely cut off from the canal by intervening ruderal/scrub growth and a ditch

Vegetation Management

The enclosure provided by trees and scrub adds to the character of this section but could be considered as a security risk that might discourage towpath usage.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Upgrade the accesses between the canal towpath and Rotherwood Avenue/ Glendinning Road, specifically the desire line close to the local shop. MEDIUM***
- ***Signpost the canal and route to and from the station, emphasising the transport linkage. MEDIUM***
- ***Consider improving greenspace linkage at Orchy Crescent/ Almond Road. LOW***
- ***Consider vegetation management to improve access to the towpath and security by surveillance without significantly affecting the canal character. MEDIUM***

Character Area 7 Netherton

Description of Character Area

This section of the canal meanders tightly at a level grade through predominantly built up suburban surroundings characterized by a high proportion of tree cover. The canal is generally enclosed by vegetation along the south and east (towpath) side with short to medium range views across the canal to housing on the north side. Due to the tight meanders, views along the canal are fairly restricted with views around the bends emphasizing the relatively minor variations in character resulting from the differences in appearance of the adjacent housing and surrounding open spaces. Surrounding topography is gentle, falling away slightly to the south and rising to the north. Trees and buildings define the extent of views. Housing is modern or new and varies from rows of small terraced houses with gardens backing onto the canal, to a more urban form of flats set in a sparsely landscaped area. Open spaces between houses are generally well maintained, with mown grass and amenity tree and shrub planting. There is considerable pedestrian activity along the canal. A Swing Bridge is the main pedestrian route across the canal in this area.

The overall impression is of respectability and tranquillity, emphasized by the neatness of mown grass and the enclosure or backdrop of trees. The scale is small and intimate and the canal and surroundings feel safe due to surveillance from the housing.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal curves through the surrounding landform its edges softened by reedbeds. Below Bearsden Road a wooden pontoon allows boat users to tie up and use toilet blocks and showers. Unlike many road bridges crossing the canal, Bearsden Bridge is ornamental with cast iron railings and stone parapets. Another bridge crosses between Netherton Road and Howth Drive. A smaller original swing bridge at Netherton Farm Road forms an important pedestrian link across the canal.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography consists of gently rolling hills, interspersed with level areas. The predominant land use is residential with a large private retail gym on the south western boundary. The suburban railway line runs parallel to the canal on a steep embankment and this artificial landform defines sections of the north eastern boundary.

Vegetation

Private gardens, private open space with ornamental planting and closely mown amenity grassland on the canal banks to the north, emphasise the 'neatness' of this section of canal. The towpath side has a long hedgerow/ broad belt of deciduous scrub woodland. There is abundant marginal and emergent planting along both sides of the canal.

Cultural Heritage

The main points of interest are the original swing bridge at Netherton Farm Road and the massive 1932 lifting bridge at the Bearsden Road crossing.

Access

Users can access the canal from several points along the towpath side of this section. The railway embankment limits access points from the north, the off-side. A very popular through route is via the pedestrian bridge in the centre of this section, access to the north is through a private housing scheme and a bridge under the railway. From the south the connecting right of way from Anniesland, has been squeezed to a minimum width by new developments. Two metre high fences, one metre width and the poor quality of the path do not appear to deter users.

Views in and out

Like most of its length, topography, buildings and vegetation limit public views into the site. By car brief glimpses can be

obtained from the road bridges and railway passengers may get clear views of the canal during winter months when leaf cover is lost.

Landscape Change

New housing development and on both sides of the canal and the Gym have already filled in most of the gap sites around the canal in this section.

Positive Features

- The canal corridor is well maintained and pleasantly suburban in character, with sections of the north bank adopted and maintained as open space within private developments.
- The open space and design of new townhouses at Netherton Farm Road to the north relates well to the canal corridor.
- The new pontoon, moorings and facilities close to the pubs and facilities in the adjoining section at Lock 27 have created a new canal based hub.

Negative Features

- To the south, the new Gym and Flats do not link visually or physically to the canal corridor.

- The important pedestrian access route from Anniesland to the canal has been squeezed by new development and is physically difficult and intimidating to use.
- Pedestrian access around Bearsden Bridge needs improvement.
- Vehicle use of the towpath by BW, opening lock gates for boats has damaged the path surface.

Key Issues

Areas of new development not linking visually of physically to the canal

New development to the south of the corridor ignores the canal and does not relate to it in scale or design. This contrasts badly with the recently built townhouses at Netherton Farm Road. There are few potential gap sites in this area, but any new development proposals should relate to the canal in both layout and design.

Pedestrian Route from the south has been compromised by new development

The important and well used access route linking Anniesland to housing in the north has been squeezed by new development and is intimidating to use and badly maintained. This path should be upgraded, surfaced and the high wooden fencing moved and lowered to allow access.

Pedestrian Routes around Bearsden Bridge are poor

Paths around the bridge and housing are poor quality muddy desire lines. These should be formalised with surfacing and signage works.

The towpath surface has been damaged by vehicle use

Use by BW vehicles and staff, primarily to open lock gates in sequence for boats on the canal has pot holed and puddled the towpath surface. Where vehicle use is required the towpath should be improved and strengthened.

Strategies

The following strategies address the issues of poor design, pedestrian and vehicle access.

- ***Encourage opening up of connections between new developments and the canal towpath Encourage the adoption of areas adjacent to the canal corridor by private developers/ landowners.*** HIGH
- ***Improve/ preserve important pedestrian access points and paths. Ensure that in future they are protected from incursion by developers, by integrating paths in development plans.*** HIGH
- ***Upgrade the towpath to improve vehicle access corridor and prevent damage to path surface.*** MEDIUM

Character Area 8 Temple

Description of Character Area

An active and busy area, defined by canal locks 26 and 27, Bearsden Road Bridge, footbridge and a pub called 'Lock 27'. This is the only section of the canal where eating and drinking facilities are provided on the canal side. The focus of the pub is on the canal, with its name, 'Lock 27' and its outside seating area between the towpath and canal edge.

The noisy, main Bearsden Road crosses the canal and on the off side the equally busy Temple Road follows the banks of the canal for most of this section. The railway also follows the line of the canal on a wooded embankment above Temple Road with another railway line crossing under the canal next to the pub.

The accumulated noise these transport routes is masked by the noise of falling water from the lock, and does not seem to detract from the popularity of sitting outside next to the pub.

The overall impression of this section of canal is that it is surrounded by action and noise, with cars, trains, towpath users and boats all visible. However unlike the rest of its length the pub allows people to sit next to the towpath in relative security and watch the world pass by. It feels like a green island surrounded by the sound of falling water and allowing views out of the city.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal straightens in this area and changes in level, rising to the east through Locks 27 and 26. The edges vary, with stone blocks around the lock structure interspersed with soft reed banks. The distinctive black and white metal work, railings and lock gates form an interesting feature. The towpath in front of the pub has been constructed using poor quality materials and detracts, together with the chunky concrete and timber benches, from the overall quality of the space. Poor quality landscape work has also been carried out around the pub car park, which abuts the towpath and the pedestrian bridge. Temple Road closely follows the banks of the canal on the off side and traffic is unscreened.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The canal in this section has a small change in level along its length via two locks. Other transport corridors intersecting with the canal have created manmade changes in the natural topography, with cuttings and embankments. To the north a wooded railway embankment rises steeply above Temple Road. This together with the canal itself is crossed by another railway line in a cutting below. To the west Bearsden Road rises to bridge the canal and forms the boundary to the section. The surrounding landuse is divided. To the south is the built up edge of Temple with poor quality retail units, a boarded up restaurant building and housing. North of the canal lies Dawsholm Park, together

with a few poor quality office and retail units next to Bearsden Road.

Vegetation

To the south around the pub the vegetation is predominantly ornamental, with planting in raised broken brick beds. To the north the edge of the canal comprises ruderal vegetation and a crash barrier next to Temple Road, with a steep wooded railway embankment on the far side of the road. There is extensive mature broadleaved semi-natural woodland on the railway embankments contiguous with canal corridor.

Cultural Heritage

Principal features relate to canal, including Locks 26 and 27 and railway aqueduct. Former Lock keepers cottage appears to have been supplanted by 'Lock 27' pub.

Access

Access to and from the canal is excellent in the west of this section. It is possible to cross the canal via a single wooden pedestrian footbridge at lock 27, Bearsden Road Bridge or the top of the lock gates. Access to the canal is from either Temple Road, Bearsden Road or next to the pub.

Views in and out

As with most of the locks on the canal there are extensive and pleasant views west to distant hills. To the east views are closed in by the topography, with the twin gasholders dominating the horizon.

Unlike most of its length, extensive views of the canal can be gained whilst travelling by car along Temple Road, with only a brief glimpse from Bearsden Road Bridge.

Landscape Change

The canal forms the edge between residential areas to the north and the local retail centres of Temple and Anniesland. The area is undergoing change with the closed down and boarded up restaurant 'The Canal' something of an eyesore.

The towpath in front of the pub is degrading and the ornamental landscape elements are in a poor state of maintenance.

Positive Features

- The popular and busy pub on the towpath attracts people to the canal and acts as a local focus and destination along the canal.
- Opportunity to sit next to the canal and watch the world pass by.
- The busy crossing points allow easy access to the canal by foot and car and increase its visibility in the surrounding 'townscape'
- The locks form an interesting architectural feature.
- Views out of the city to distant hills.

- Noise of water cascades flowing through/ over lock gates acting as an aural screen to the noise of traffic and trains.
- Original canal side features retained and maintained
- Occasional boats passing through the locks.

Negative Features

- The surroundings of the pub are poor quality and falling apart, with the towpath and outside seating area in need of upgrading.
- The traffic along Temple Road is visually intrusive together with the industrial crash barrier.
- Boarded up buildings and poor quality retail units detract from the quality of the area.
- Poor quality security fencing around Railway cutting.
- Green corridor very narrow and subject to disturbance on both sides, which may discourage passage of wildlife.

Key Issues

Enhancing existing opportunities for sitting, eating and drinking next to the canal.

Unique to the canal, the pub provides a

local and citywide focus for users of the canal. It is the only place to sit next to the canal and enjoy a drink or some food. It is popular and busy, however its immediate surroundings are of a poor quality.

Temple Road Traffic and crash barriers

Although it is one of the few sections visible to car users, the traffic along Temple Road detracts from the overall quality of this section.

Re-use of poor quality and boarded up buildings.

Boarded up buildings detract from the area and should be re-used and re-developed.

Strategies

Given its existing popularity and importance, as a focus for canal activity improvements should be made to enhance and improve on the success of the pub and its surrounding area.

- ***Upgrade and repair the towpath and landscaping (planting, paving and seating) around the canal and pub.*** HIGH
- ***Allow for further re-development upgrading works to emphasise the areas importance as a destination on this section of canal.*** HIGH
- ***Planting (and possibly screen fencing) to screen Temple Road from the canal corridor and improve conditions for mobility of wildlife.*** HIGH

Character Area 9 Clevedon Road

Description of Character Area

The twin gasholders visually dominate this section, towering above the canal corridor. The canal itself is level and fairly straight, on embankment and is enclosed in a 'green corridor'. At the start of the section the canal crosses the railway via a sandstone aqueduct. The towpath is then bounded for a small distance by a brick wall and low building. This is topped by barbed wire and covered in graffiti. An intimidating narrow path, squeezed between high fences links the towpath to neighbouring roads. Then to the end of the section, the vegetation has been clipped to form a hedge. This disguises the slope and hides views into the gas works grounds.

On the offside the canal lies high above the railway, which is in cutting. Above both, but screened by woodland for most of its length, runs Temple Road. A small tree covered bund forms the boundary to the canal itself, edged with old, rotting wooden beams. The new Station at Kelvindale is located at the end of this section in cutting. It is only conspicuous because steep grassed slopes surround it.

This section is relatively uninteresting, due to its straightness and the visual dominance of the gasholders. The space

feels enclosed, with the cut hedge adding a note of formality. The area around the brick boundary wall and building is vandalised and intimidating.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level and predominately straight, with a very slight curve. It passes over a rail aqueduct and is crossed by a new road bridge at Clevedon Road. Its edges are soft, with reedbeds and sections of rotting sleepers on the offside. There is a small area of stone edging around the aqueduct. There is also a pontoon.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography consists of some gentle hills, but these along with the canals location on embankment are relatively inconspicuous.

The dominant adjacent landuses are industrial and transport with the gasholders and associated areas. The railway and road corridors also run alongside and in the case of the railway cut under the canal corridor. Housing is visible but does not border the canal side.

Vegetation

Scrub and deciduous woodland, trimmed hedge to boundary trees. Extensive areas of mature semi-natural broadleaf woodland around railway lines either side

of the canal. Extensive marginal and emergent planting along both sides of the canal.

Cultural Heritage

The main features relate to the canal SAM and include the railway aqueduct.

Access

Users can access the canal from the new station at Kelvindale. Access to the towpath is from the new bridge at Clevedon Road and from adjacent sections. A narrow, muddy and intimidating access path links the towpath to Strathcona Gardens west of the gasholders and another to Dorchester Avenue near the road bridge.

Views in and out

Views are limited by topography and vegetation, but there are views east to the housing on the hill at Kelvindale and across to the large white towerblock above Maryhill as well as west to the gasholders.

Public views in to the canal are limited to those from Clevedon Road bridge and brief glimpses through trees from Temple Road. The housing on the hill at Kelvindale would also have views of this section of canal.

Landscape Change

The new Kelvindale Station and the road bridge are the main recent changes. The sleeper edging to the canal of the offside appears to be degrading. The surrounding

landuses appear to be fixed and unchanging but it is possible that the gasholder site could be redeveloped in the future. Vandalism to the rear of the brick building will get worse if untackled.

Positive Features

- Good access to canal towpath from the new station at Kelvindale via the road bridge and ramps.
- The mature deciduous woodland growing along this section of canal and railway creating a green corridor and screening busy Temple Road from canal users.
- Attractive hedge screening gasholders and works.

Negative Features

- The grey, rusty gasholders visually dominating this section of canal and making an uninviting space.
- Intimidating footpath from Strathcona Gardens, which is fenced in and muddy.
- Graffiti, security fencing and rubbish around the rear of the wall, next to the footpath.
- Poor quality, muddy footpath from Dorchester Avenue.

- The large number of different security fencing types along the canal corridor.
- Wooden edge to canal is degrading.

Key Issues

The Gasholders

The gasholders visually dominate the canal in this section and they are rusty and grey in colour.

Poor Quality Footpaths

The footpaths from Strathcona Gardens and Dorchester Avenue are muddy and intimidating.

Anti-social Behaviour To the rear of Brick Building

The rear of the brick building and wall, where it forms the boundary to the canal corridor, is the focus for anti-social behaviour. With Graffiti and litter.

Security Fencing

Due to high level of risk in this section of canal, steep embankments, railway cuttings and aqueducts, there are a large number of different types of security fencing. These are visually confusing and clutter up the space.

Canal Edge

The canal edge is wooden and is rotting several sections.

Strategies

The major issue of the gasholders affecting the character of the canal in this section is possibly the most intractable.

- ***Upgrade footpaths accessing the canal and improve signage to/from Station and Dawsholm Park.*** HIGH
- ***Remove graffiti and litter from brick wall and reconsider the design of security fencing.*** HIGH
- ***Any future redevelopment of the gasholder site should capitalise on the relationship to the canal.*** HIGH
- ***If gasholders are retained long term repaint and light to change focus and create a positive landmark.*** MEDIUM
- ***Investigate/replace wooden canal edges.*** MEDIUM
- ***Rationalise the security fencing.*** LOW

Character Area 10 Kelvindale

Description of Character Area

The canal dominates this section, snaking around the edge of the Kelvin Valley in a narrow corridor before it finally spans the river at the Kelvin Aqueduct. Enclosed in dense deciduous woodland, the canal has been cut into the side of the north facing slope. For part of this section, an old sandstone wall separates the towpath from a tree filled hollow, an old dismantled railway. A steep bank then leads up to the flats and houses of Kelvindale. Numerous muddy paths lead up through the woodland from the towpath to an area of derelict land above. On the offside, to the north, a small bund covered with mature birch and ash divides the canal from the steep slope down to Skaethorn Road and houses of Maryhill.

This section, surrounded by dense and tall vegetation, feels enclosed and isolated from the city, with only occasional views out to the surrounding housing. The steep topography and mature vegetation create a green tunnel, where the sound of birdsong dominates. The unmanaged woodland, with its dense understorey, litter and rough paths, make it a slightly unsettling place to be.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is narrow through this section and is reed edged as it gently curves around the side of the hill. A small pontoon lies on the offside by the Clevedon Bridge at the start of this section.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is steep. The canal enters the Kelvin valley in this section and skirts along its side before spanning it via the Kelvin Aqueduct. Residential areas surround the canal, although views out to houses are limited by topography and vegetation. A triangle of derelict land lies above the canal between the River Kelvin, the canal and the housing at Kelvindale.

Vegetation

The canal is surrounded by dense scrub and maturing deciduous woodland linking with the woodland of the Kelvin Valley. The maturing trees create an attractive backdrop to the canal, in particular the white trunks of the Birch trees growing on the bund on the offside. However the dense understorey in the woodland detracts from user security.

Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage survey records canal cottages on the corner of Clevedon and Skaethorn Roads.

Access

Users can access the canal from Clevedon Road Bridge and citywide from the new station at Kelvindale. The Kelvin Walkway also links to the towpath at the end of this section. Numerous informal paths snake down from Kelvindale.

Views in and out

Vegetation and topography significantly limit views in and out of the canal corridor. However, with leaf loss, views of the surrounding housing will be clearer in winter. Longer views are only possible at the start and end of the section, when the 'tunnel' opens out. At the bridge the gasholders dominate views west and east towards the aqueduct the white high rise at Maryhill dominates the skyline.

Views in are limited to Clevedon Road bridge and from adjoining sections. Residents in the surrounding houses would have limited views in winter.

Landscape Change

New housing has been developed to the north at Skaethorn Road. The triangle of derelict land offers opportunity for sympathetic residential development.

Positive Features

- The tranquil, enclosed nature of the canal corridor, curving through mature woodland.
- The interesting topography and low tree covered bund on the offside.

- The juxtaposition with the contrasting adjoining section, the Kelvin Aqueduct and Maryhill Locks, produces one of the most interesting and attractive sections of the canal.
- Links to the Kelvin Walkway from the adjoining section.
- Access to public transport at Kelvindale Station
- Attractive sandstone wall bounding the towpath and disused railway.

Negative Features

- Dense understorey of vegetation around the towpath affects user security.
- Deep tree covered disused railway, only partially screened by wall, affects user security.
- Boundaries to neighbouring Kelvindale unclear and messy.
- Triangle of derelict land above the canal and river detracts from the quality of the area.
- Informal muddy paths and litter.
- Degrading wooden edges on offside.

Key Issues

Woodland Management.

The woodland is attractive but it is unmanaged, with a dense under storey, which affects pedestrian security.

Disused Railway

The disused railway is overgrown and screened for most of its length by a sandstone wall, but its presence as a dark void next to the towpath is slightly threatening.

Boundaries

The canal corridor and woodland are separated from the adjoining back gardens and derelict land by broken down fences.

Derelict land

The canal, river and housing are separated by a triangle of derelict land. This important area on the shoulder of the Kelvin Valley, detracts from the quality of the area.

Access

Numerous informal access paths link the housing at Kelvindale and the canal towpath, these are muddy and strewn with rubbish.

Canal Edge

The canal is edged with wooden beams that are rotting in places.

Strategies

This part of the canal is attractive and important, but numerous small problems need to be addressed.

- ***Manage woodland and remove dense under storey around towpath and along corridor to increase user security.*** HIGH
- ***Re-develop triangle of derelict land, preferably with housing.*** HIGH
- ***Fully fence/wall off disused railway, clears of rubbish and vegetation.*** MEDIUM
- ***Formalise or redefine boundaries with robust fencing.*** MEDIUM
- ***Consult with local residents and either formalise or remove access paths from Kelvindale.*** MEDIUM
- ***Investigate/Replace rotting wooden edging to canal.*** MEDIUM

Character Area 11 Maryhill Locks

Description of Character Area

The aqueduct adjacent to a succession of locks and basins climbing on a steep uphill crescent to the east presents a dramatic contrast to the more enclosed and tranquil corridors either side. Emerging from the west the canal or towpath user is confronted by the steeply rising stairway of locks topped by housing and trees, whereas approaching from the east the view opens out to woodland, housing and industry across the Kelvin valley. In addition to the landform the noise of water pouring through the locks is a distinctive characteristic that fortuitously competes with the noise of traffic on the nearby roads. The curving complex of basins, lock gates and bridges also contrasts with the simple meanders of level sections of the canal. The surroundings include substantial mown areas of grass and open grass areas surrounding housing. The housing on the south side is predominantly derelict, whereas a mixture of housing and shops lines the busy Maryhill Road on the north side.

The Kelvin aqueduct and Maryhill Locks are one of the key character areas of the canal corridor, providing visual and aural contrast and drama as well as activity and interest. The landform and surrounding open areas provide a setting for this focus

of interest. Nevertheless the surroundings are generally poor with substantial dereliction and ripe for redevelopment. The setting could be vulnerable to unsympathetic development.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal crosses the Kelvin Valley on an aqueduct before it widens in this area, forming a series of five stone edged basins connected by five locks stepping up the slope in an eastwards crescent. The series of black and white painted lock gates and equipment are highly distinctive. The fourth basin also has a dock extending into the corner of Maryhill and Cowal Roads.

The surrounding area is grassed with the towpath separated from the canal. A dilapidated wall and poorly maintained landscape planting define the southern boundary of the corridor. There are two derelict canalside houses on the northern side, one a bungalow of modern design, the other a more traditional black and white painted former inn.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The locks are set on a west facing slope on the east side of the Kelvin Valley which falls steeply to the river beyond the locks. To the south the ground rises up steeply whereas to the north it is more level with the canal corridor. The surroundings are urban in character, but with substantial areas of mown grass to the south and

derelict flats, of which there are still streets remaining. A large multistorey block of flats dominates the area. To the north lies the busy Maryhill Road with varied development including modern and Victorian, residential and commercial. Directly north of the dock a substantial area of mown grass is located in the 'Botany' area of cleared housing to the north of Cowal Road.

Vegetation

The open space around the canal is greater than straight sections. The locks and basins are surrounded by mown grass, fringed to the north by a strip of poorly maintained landscape planting. In the surrounding area there is a substantial area of grasslands and planted broadleaf woodland, the latter merging west into the mature semi-natural woodland of the Kelvin River valley.

Cultural Heritage

This section of the canal SAM is highly significant, featuring the high, elegant aqueduct, the chain of locks and the former dry dock. In addition the former White House Inn (now derelict) is contemporaneous with the canal, although the original lock keeper's cottage has been replaced with a modern bungalow.

Access

The towpath is separated from the canal winding downhill to the Kelvin aqueduct. It is an unsealed surface which is poor and eroded in places. The locks area is accessible from much of the surrounding

area and in this respect is a pedestrian hub for the canal and those crossing from the housing areas to Maryhill Road. The locks are crossed on footbridges. There are main bus stops on either side of Maryhill Road. There is access down to the Kelvin Walkway from the aqueduct, but it is not signposted, is overgrown and is intimidating to users.

Views in and out

The Maryhill Locks are both a key viewpoint and an area in which the canal is prominent in its surroundings. The views west are extensive, with the descending series of locks and basins providing foreground interest and the wooded slopes on the opposite side of the Kelvin Valley providing a backdrop. The views of the locks ascending from the Kelvin aqueduct are one of the more distinctive views of the canal.

Unlike much of the canal corridor, the locks are visible from the surrounding area including Maryhill Road. This is because of the sloping site and the amount of open space surrounding the locks and dock.

Landscape Change

The main driver of change is the gradual dereliction and eventual clearance of housing to the north and south of the canal. This is opening up areas of land which are now ripe for development. Within the corridor the former inn appears to have been derelict for a number of years. It is highly graffiti-covered. The

newer, smaller bungalow appears to have been occupied until recently. The towpath is degrading and landscape boundaries to the canal corridor are in a poor state of maintenance.

Positive Features

- The curving sequence of locks and basins is unique along the canal
- The surrounding open space provides a setting for the locks and basins and increases the prominence of the canal in the surrounding urban area
- Valley side location with extensive views opening to the west
- Noise of water cascades flowing through/ over lock gates
- Original canalside features retained and maintained
- Footpath access and bridge crossings
- Nearby bus stop and car parking
- Occasional boats passing through the locks

Negative Features

- Under-utilised open space and dereliction surrounding canal corridor
- Canalside buildings derelict and vandalised
- Neglect and poor maintenance/ repair to canal corridor boundaries
- Towpath in poor condition
- Adjacent traffic noise
- Unsigned and threatening links down to the Kelvin Walkway.

Key Issues

Open space and townscape around the canal

The locks are surrounded by a considerable amount of open space, both as a result of their layout and sloping location but also due to housing clearance. The open space provides a generous setting for the locks and focuses attention on the canal. However the space is under-utilised and will increase following clearance of adjacent derelict housing. The surrounding townscape is thus fractured and degraded. There is a golden opportunity for future development plans.

Development proposals

There is at least one major development proposal in the vicinity of the locks, and large areas of open or derelict land that will attract future development. The effect on the townscape setting and the amount open space around the locks could have a profound influence on their future character and use.

Dereliction and landscape maintenance

Areas of derelict/ poorly maintained land and two derelict buildings are located in the canal corridor. These detract from the overall natural qualities of dramatic location and focus of activity/ interest. The canal corridor itself could be addressed independently of the surroundings but would be better considered as part of an overall regeneration scheme.

Access

The locks are highly accessible by foot and cycle as well as being close to public transport links and car parking. This further increases the importance of the area as a focal point or 'node', not only for the canal but also for the Maryhill/ Gilshochill neighbourhood. Future redevelopments should take note of this. The towpath is currently an unsealed surface in poor condition in places due to vehicle use and surface water erosion.

There are poor quality unsigned links down to the Kelvin Walkway, the path is threatening to users.

Strategies

Maryhill Locks is the key inner city location on the western branch of the canal. The layout and location together with the surrounding clearance of housing provides a unique opportunity to sensitively regenerate the surrounding area including provision of a high profile public open space and access point to the canal. Given the potential for development pressure it is important to ensure that new development proposals are appropriate in character and layout.

- ***Investigate re-development opportunities to create a new focus of regeneration and activity around the locks and within Maryhill and Gilshochill. HIGH***
- ***Ensure development proposals give high priority to retaining adequate open space around the locks. HIGH***
- ***Issue townscape/ design guidelines to ensure new development relates well to the locks and canal. HIGH***
- ***Re-develop the derelict inn within the canal corridor. HIGH***
- ***Upgrade/ repair boundaries and soft landscape. MEDIUM***
- ***Upgrade towpath surfacing. MEDIUM***
- ***Upgrade, open up and sign links down to the Kelvin Walkway. MEDIUM***

Character Area 12 Maryhill Road

Description of Character Area

The canal goes through a series of tight bends as its relationship to the surrounding topography changes. The size of the canal corridor narrows on embankment before crossing the busy Maryhill Road. In this section the surrounding townscape is much closer and more apparent as the canal crosses behind the tenements and shops of Maryhill high street, out onto the high aqueduct, which gives elevated views of the three churches of Maryhill and along Maryhill Road to the south. To the north of the canal small scale terraced houses border the offside. Their gardens do not link with the canal side, but balconies on the first floor overlook the corridor. To the south the backs of tenements and shops on the high street are partially screened by woodland and a line of mature poplars, however small parcels of derelict land occupy the space between embankment and the back of buildings.

This short section has a varied inner urban character and feels quite secure, raised on the narrow canal embankment winding through the surrounding buildings and roads. The shape of the canal and its complex landform in relation to the surroundings create interest. With pleasant mid range views of churches and mature trees. However distant views of

tower blocks and traffic noise do detract from the overall quality.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and it winds sinuously on embankment through the surrounding landform. The red sandstone aqueduct and railings are the only section where the canal is edged with stone. The remainder of the banks are reed edged.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The canal sits on embankment on what is the crest of a hill. So its relationship to the surrounding landform is interesting and relatively complex, with the canal side varying from level to steep. Surrounding land use is mixed, varying from housing to commercial and small scale industrial with small pockets of undeveloped land.

Vegetation

Private gardens bound to the north, with scrub and ruderal vegetation as the canal side steepens to embankment. To the south a row of large poplars enhance the embankment down to Maryhill Road. Small pockets of overgrown and derelict land behind are unmanaged and covered in litter.

Cultural Heritage

The principal feature of interest is the Maryhill Road aqueduct.

Access

Access to this section of canal is only via the towpath from adjoining sections. However this section is short and pedestrian access from the surrounding area is via Maryhill Locks or Stockingfield junction, which are less than 800m away.

Views in and out

Views from the canal are mainly medium length, to the surrounding housing, tenements and particularly the three sandstone churches.

Like most of its length, views of the canal are limited and if obtained, are difficult to distinguish as a canal. By car, views up to the aqueduct are clear from Maryhill Road, but apart from its extra depth, difficult to recognise as 'canal' unless a boat is crossing.

Smaller roads in the area have views up to the canal, but the embankment prevents clear sight lines.

The small off-side houses have clear views out over the canal from both floors, which enhances user security. Views from the tenements are screened by trees in winter.

Landscape Change

There is little change in this area, with no obvious building or redevelopment works around the canal corridor. The cope stones and wall stonework on the aqueduct are gradually degrading.

Positive Features

- Complex canal alignment and surrounding level changes.
- Views of three local churches and down busy Maryhill Road.
- Small scale housing on the off-side relates in layout to the canal, and enhances user security.
- Old stone aqueduct is both a feature and a viewpoint.
- Row of mature poplar trees creates a pleasant green tunnel, along the canal side.

Negative Features

- Small parcels of derelict and unmanaged land next to the canal contrast with the managed areas to create an air of dereliction.
- Limited direct access to the canal in this section.
- Stone aqueduct in need of maintenance.
- Knotweed growth at western end of section.

Key Issues

Derelict land

Small parcels of land around the canal embankment are unmanaged and litter strewn. These detract from the overall sense of this section being well maintained and urban/sub-urban. The parcels are small and often inaccessible so may be unsuitable for re-development, but could at least be enhanced as links between the canal and surrounding area.

Maintenance of Aqueduct

The red sandstone aqueduct has missing cope stones and damaged walls.

Vegetation Management

A small section of this part of the canal has knotweed growth.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Manage small sections of derelict land abutting the canal corridor for either nature conservation or amenity value, consider planting additional trees.*** HIGH
- ***Treat and remove knotweed infestation.*** HIGH
- ***Carry out structural survey and repairs to stone aqueduct.*** MEDIUM

Character Area 13 Stockingfield

Description of Character Area

At Stockingfield the canal splits into three branches: the Glasgow Branch heads south, and the Forth and Clyde canal heads west and east. Despite its inner urban location the canal at this point is adjacent to large areas of green space, including Ruchill Golf Course, although industry predominates to the south and west and housing to the north. The branch is not a simple 'T' but kinks to cross Lochburn Road, creating a space that contrasts with the linear arrangement of the majority of the canal.

This section is a key location for the canal or towpath user, presenting a travel choice but currently with a frustrating break in canalside access and poor local environment around Lochburn Road. The character is mixed for such an inner-urban location, with townscape predominating to the north and west but trees and natural landform dominating to the east.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal widens slightly in this area, forming a three way junction, but not a T-

shape due to the need to cross Lochburn Road by a short aqueduct. The remains of a World War II stoplock form a constriction to the eastern branch.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The canal junction is set mainly on embankment in an area of steep, complex topography and mixed townscape and landscape. To the north the ground rises slightly to an area of predominantly recent housing, including semi-detached and short terraces of flats. To the north east embankments fall to Lochburn Road before rising again to the housing. To the southwest the ground falls steeply to Lochburn Road and is dominated by small industrial/ commercial set in older buildings. In contrast the east side of the city branch is tree covered and rises up to the rolling hill of Ruchill Golf Course.

Vegetation

There are large areas of dense tall scrub in the eastern corner and on the towpath side of the Glasgow Branch. A strip of willow on the northern side of the west branch and a dense informal hedge on the towpath side. The embankment down to Lochburn Road east of the tunnel has mixed ruderal and scattered scrub, with an extensive area dominated by coniferous planting to the north of the road.

Cultural Heritage

The principal feature of interest is the Lochburn Road Aqueduct.

Access

Currently the towpath west of Stockingfield is on the south side of the Forth and Clyde canal, whereas to the east it is on the north side. It therefore connects seamlessly with the towpath on the west side of the Glasgow Branch but the path to the east is inaccessible at canal level. The user has to drop down to Lochburn Road, pass through a narrow road tunnel and back up a ramped path to rejoin the canal. The towpath is unbound but in reasonable condition. Access to the canal from the surrounding area is fairly good with three points of access

Views in and out

There are limited views both in and out of the canal corridor. There are views from the aqueduct along and around Lochburn Road. To the southwest these are of the local industrial and commercial areas, with longer views to high buildings beyond. To the east views are heavily tree covered and limited by the higher ground of Ruchill golf course. To the north the views are limited by rising ground and houses.

The aqueduct is prominent from Lochburn Road but not particularly recognisable as a canal. The houses on rising ground to the north have a view over the junction, some along the city branch.

Landscape Change

The existing landscape uses are all well established. However there may be future changes to the industrial areas along Lochburn Road

Positive Features

- The intriguing focal point and ‘travel choice’ presented by the junction of the canal branches.
- Views from the aqueduct.
- Surrounding trees and linkage to the open space of Ruchill golf course.

Negative Features

- Frustrating break in towpath continuity along the Forth and Clyde.
- Lengthy and unattractive ramp and underpass access required to continue along the Forth and Clyde.
- Poor, degraded townscape of the industrial/ commercial area around Lochburn Road.
- Poorly maintained access steps from Lochburn Road.
- Litter and dog fouling on access points, particularly around Lochburn Road.

Key Issues

Towpath access and continuity

Access to the towpath along the Forth and Clyde canal is broken, with towpath users having to cross under the canal to continue to the east. The access steps

are poorly maintained and litter and dog fouling is a problem.

Poor Quality Townscape

The highly visible, degraded townscape of the industrial/ commercial area around Lochburn Road.

Strategies

The Stockingfield junction is a key access point for the canal. The area has the potential to be considerably more accessible and attractive than is currently the case.

- *Carry out environmental improvements to the canal access steps.* HIGH
- *Investigate options for constructing a bridge linking the towpath at grade along the Forth and Clyde.* HIGH
- *Investigate options for further linkage by making a three way crossing which includes access to Ruchill Golf Course.* HIGH
- *Investigate re-development opportunities around Lochburn Road and Stockingfield Junction.* MEDIUM
- *Repairs and improvements to walls and boundaries.* MEDIUM

Character Area 14 Ruchill and Lambhill

Description of Character Area

The first section of the canal east of Stockingfield parallels Lochburn Road. Cut into the side of a hill, an embankment drops from the towpath down to the road and new housing developments. To the south the steeply wooded slopes of Ruchill Golf course rise to enclose the canal corridor. A low bund next to the towpath and the golf course woodland partially enclose the space.

The landform and the surrounding landscape setting define the character of the area, with a contrast between new housing to the north and an established naturalistic landscape to the south. Despite being on the edge of an inner urban area, this section is predominantly 'soft' and suburban in feel with the mature deciduous woodland creating a pleasant backdrop.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves gently along a north-facing slope. The towpath is on the north side of the canal. The off-side is inaccessible.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is dominated by the rising slopes of Ruchill golf course to the south, with an embankment falling to Lochburn Road on the north side, before rising up again. The north side is dominated by housing, existing and under construction. The south is greenspace with woodland, and a golf course beyond.

Vegetation

On the south side of the canal the slopes are covered with mature woodland. On the north side the embankments support a mosaic of scrub, woodland, ruderal and grassland.

Cultural Heritage

There are no features of interest other than the canal.

Access

The towpath is accessible only by the ramp from Lochburn Road at Stockingfield. A rough path leads up from Lochburn Road to link to the towpath.

Views in and out

Landform and trees significantly limit views to the south, whilst partially obscured to open views of housing and the new development site to the north are available. Views along the canal are limited by meanders.

From outwith the corridor the canal is not visible to the north but is generally visible from residential areas on higher ground.

Landscape Change

New housing is being constructed to the north of Lochburn Road. The site is lower than the canal, (approximately 10m), but the new 'tower' development will be eight storeys high so will overlook the canal corridor.

Positive Features

- Natural landform and mature woodland fringing canal to the south, linking substantial areas of greenspace into the canal corridor
- Diverse habitat mosaic on substantial north facing embankment
- The canal corridor is well maintained and pleasantly suburban in character.
- Access to Lochburn Road.

Negative Features

- No surfaced access to east end of Lochburn Road
- Potential visual impact of new tower in housing area under construction.

Key Issues

Access and signage.

There are no formal links down to Lochburn Road.

Canal and Greenspace Linkage

The link with woodland on Ruchill golf course

Vegetation Management

Maintain partial enclosure/ gaps on north side to create a diverse habitat and maintain security through surveillance.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***A new link from the east end of Lochburn Road to the towpath should be created to access the new housing area. HIGH***
- ***Consider vegetation management to improve security along the towpath without significantly affecting the canal character. MEDIUM***

Character Area 15 Ruchill Golf Course

Description of Character Area

This character area differs from the first section of the canal east of Stockingfield by virtue of the contrast in its surroundings. The slopes of Ruchill Golf course to the south are open, rough grassland with housing beyond on the skyline. North of the canal the embankment widens and the land below is currently occupied by Glasgow City Council Works depot.

This character area is open with contrasting surroundings to north and south. It has an increasingly suburban feel to the east as views of housing and open space mix.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and meanders gently along a diminishing north facing slope. The canal passes over the West Highland railway on an aqueduct. The towpath is on the north side of the canal. There is a derelict and unsafe underpass to parallel to the railway line.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is dominated by the rising slopes of Ruchill Golf Course to the south, with a wide embankment falling to Lochburn Road on the north side. The north side is dominated by Glasgow City Council Works. The east end passes across the West Highland Railway line.

Vegetation

A mosaic of scrub woodland and ruderal on the north side and a scrub fringe and amenity grassland on the golf course to the south. A fringe of marginal/emergent planting along both sides of the canal.

Cultural Heritage

Railway aqueduct over the West Highland Line.

Access

The towpath is accessible only from the towpath in adjacent character areas. Informal muddy paths link the towpath to Lochburn Road. To the east, where the canal crosses the railway line, poor quality links exist to a pedestrian bridge over the railway and a footpath running from the end of Lochburn Road into the area of regenerating woodland at Cadder. In addition an abandoned tunnel under the canal is full of fly tipped material and is very threatening to people using this access point.

Views in and out

To the north the landform opens out,

allowing distant views of the Campsie Fells and nearby housing areas.

From outwith the corridor the canal is only visible from the golf course. From below the embankment it is visible as an open corridor but not recognisable particularly as a canal.

Landscape Change

Little change is occurring in this area of established landuses.

Positive Features

- Natural landform and greenspace fringing canal to the south, linking a substantial area into the green corridor
- Grass and scrub on wide north facing embankment.
- Open views out of corridor.

Negative Features

- No surfaced access to east end of Lochburn Road
- Poor quality area around end of Lochburn Road/Railway/Canal.
- Tunnel is threatening and full of fly-tipped rubbish.

Key Issues

Access and signage.

Poorly maintained access from the end of Lochburn Road to the canal and Cadder scrubland.

Area at end of Lochburn Road

The area at the end of Lochburn Road, is partially policed by the GCC Works, but fly-ipping is a problem and the whole area is overgrown and threatening to users.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Upgrade and formalise links between the canal, Lochburn Road and Cadder scrubland. HIGH***
- ***Close tunnel under canal to remove focus for anti-social behaviour and replace access with a bridge over the canal. HIGH***

Character Area 16 Cadder

Description of Character Area

Crossing the West Highland railway into this character area the canal turns north-east. It meanders tightly across an undulating landform and feels almost like a river. On its west side is a large area of regenerating and planted woodland/ scrub. On the offside, to the east is existing suburban housing and an area of new housing development. The houses back directly onto the canal corridor and contrast with the semi-natural scrub on the opposite side. Large pylons cross this section, with a pylon next to the towpath.

This character area continues the theme of contrasting open space and development. It has a suburban feel.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level and reed edged throughout this section and meanders tightly. The towpath is on the west side of the canal. The off-side is inaccessible by members of the public.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is very gently undulating. The east side is

dominated by housing development. The west is regenerating and planted woodland/ scrub.

Vegetation

Scrub, ruderal and grassland on the west side and a scrub fringe on the east side. Narrow bands of emergent/ marginal on both sides.

Cultural Heritage

Remains of former rail bridge visible in canal. Lifting bridge at Balmore Road.

Access

The towpath is accessible by informal paths from the adjacent greenspace or from the towpath in adjacent character areas. No access to the towpath from the offside.

Views in and out

Views are constrained by topography, vegetation and housing.

From outwith the corridor the canal is visible from private housing and flats and from roads at Lambhill.

Landscape Change

Newly completed housing and housing under construction on the east side of the canal.

Positive Features

- Canal corridor is contiguous with woodland/ scrub area and scrub-lined railway corridor.

- Some of the newest existing housing relates to the canal with balconies and waterside gardens.

Negative Features

- No formal access or signage to Cadder.
- Poor relationship to canal of new housing under construction.
- No vegetation management in Cadder woodland.
- Electricity pylons dominate skyline.

Key Issues

Access and signage.

No formal access between new housing and towpath on the opposite side.

Poor Quality design and layout of new housing

The new housing under construction does not relate to the canal in layout or design, despite the canal defining its western boundary.

Vegetation Management

Maintain setback of vegetation west of towpath to maintain security through surveillance.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- *A new link across the canal from new housing to the towpath and Cadder. HIGH*
- *Encourage the adoption by private developers of areas adjacent to the canal corridor. HIGH*
- *Consider vegetation management to improve security along the towpath without significantly affecting the canal character. MEDIUM*

Character Area 17 Baltimore Road

Description of Character Area

The canal narrows and curves in a cutting before it passes under Baltimore Road via the old metal lifting bridge. The corridor is tight and enclosed with steep vegetated sides. On the flat land above the canal to the east are the large warehouses of Baltimore Industrial Estate and the local school. Unusually a footpath on the offside follows the canal at the top of the bank. To the west, above the towpath and next to the bridge, are the attractive original sandstone built Lambhill Stables. These are boarded up and the building has no roof. It has become a focus for anti-social behaviour with graffiti and rubbish littering the area. Below the stables set into the banks of the canal are stone arched entrances, covered with cast iron door grilles. To the north of this lies the extensive area of the Possil Marsh nature reserve. Adjacent to the bridge on the south side are a pub and shops.

This section lies in an urban fringe landscape, but is enclosed and feels slightly neglected. The original buildings are attractive, but their obvious dereliction creates an unsettling atmosphere. The scrubby and ruderal vegetation adds to the air of neglect. The green corridor contrasts with the busy road above and the shops and pub next to the bridge.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is the dominant feature as it curves through the cutting. The original lifting bridge requires painting, as do the black and white railings next to the access points. There are also a few mooring rings. The old stone stables and doorways are attractive, but derelict, features.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is fairly flat although the canal passes through a small hill in cutting in this section. The surrounding land use is mixed with industrial estates, a school, shops, flats, a pub, derelict land, Wildlife reserve and a road adjoining the canal.

Vegetation

Predominately ruderal vegetation and scrub woodland, grading into neutral grassland to the north west in the Possil Marsh Nature Reserve.

Cultural Heritage

The principle interest is the Lambhill Stables building, formerly used for housing both horses and canal workers.

Access

This is the only part of the canal where specific disabled access has been provided, with specialist car parking and access ramps at the stables. There are informal links to the Possil Marsh area. In addition a footpath runs along the offside

linking the shops at Lambhill with the houses at Aultbea Street and High Possil.

Views in and out

Vegetation and the topography limit views out of the canal. With only short views possible up to the bridge and stables.

Views in are limited to views from the upper towpath and offside path and from the Baltimore Road bridge.

Landscape Change

Constrained between a school and the SWT reserve at Possil Loch there are limited possibilities for change around the canal corridor. However there are problems with the continued degradation of the derelict stables.

Positive Features

- The attractive original canal stables are an interesting feature.
- The old lift bridge.
- Disabled parking and wheelchair access.
- Location next to the SWT reserve at Possil Marsh.
- Path following the canal on the offside.
- Limited views of poor quality surrounding landscape.

Negative Features

- Stable buildings are derelict and a focus for anti-social behaviour.
- Enclosed and curved nature of canal corridor reduces user security.
- Unmanaged poor quality scrubby vegetation emphasises air of neglect.
- Old Lift bridge and railings require painting.

Key Issues

Original Stable Buildings.

These old sandstone buildings are very attractive, however they are derelict and although boarded up are a focus for antisocial behaviour in the area.

Canal Corridor

The canal in this section is in cutting with surrounding land uses and users high above. This enclosure together with the curve in the canal makes it an unsettling place to be.

Vegetation management

The scrubby and ruderal vegetation is unmanaged and adds an air of neglect to the canal corridor.

Old Lift Bridge

The old lift bridge together with the railings in this section are rusty with graffiti and require painting.

Strategies

Significant issues affect this section of the canal.

- ***Re-develop and re-use old stable buildings site.*** HIGH
- ***Clear rubbish and graffiti from stables area.*** HIGH
- ***Manage vegetation and cut back low scrubby growth around towpaths. Open up sight lines between upper and lower paths.*** HIGH
- ***Paint Lift Bridge and railings.*** LOW

Character Area 18 Possil Marsh

Description of Character Area

The canal starts to widen and straighten up as it leaves the city. There are distant views of the Campsie Fells to the north. Pylons and electricity lines cross the canal, and dominate the skyline. This part of the canal is semi-enclosed by low trees and vegetation. On the offside small scale houses are just discernible behind a bank of low willows. Industrial units are fully screened by a band of low woodland, but noise from them is audible. Possil Marsh a SSSI is screened behind a high bund, covered in rosebay willowherb. There are no signs to indicate its presence to canal users or to direct them to the linking gravel paths. An unmarked path leaves the towpath and provides limited views of the Marsh.

This part of the canal feels increasingly rural. The flatness of the landform and the open views to distant hills are interesting. However land uses on either side of the canal contrast with each other, with the more manicured, domestic offside highlighting the apparently unmanaged Possil Marsh SWT reserve next to the towpath.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves through the surrounding landform, its edges softened by reedbeds.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is flat with distant views of hills. The land use comprises residential and industrial on the east side and nature reserve on the west.

Vegetation

Scrub woodland, grassland, ruderal and swamp in Possil Marsh.

Cultural Heritage

No features other than the canal.

Access

Access is possible to both sides of the canal for all of this section, with a gravel path on the offside. There are unmarked links with paths around Possil Marsh and eventually the A879, Balmore Road.

Views in and out

Views out are along the canal towards to Campsie Fells, views either side are restricted by topography and vegetation. There are only limited views of Possil Marsh.

Views in are limited to the upper floors of housing on the east side.

Landscape Change

This section of canal appears to not be undergoing any changes.

Positive Features

- Views out towards the Campsie Fells.
- The soft reed edged canal corridor and overhanging willow trees.
- Canal corridor contiguous with Possil Marsh SSSI, providing a wildlife link.
- Footpaths linking to Possil Marsh.
- Well maintained adjoining housing area to east.

Negative Features

- Limited visual links to Possil Marsh, screened by bund from the towpath.
- No signage to paths linking to Possil Marsh and through to Balmore Road.
- Pylons visually dominating the skyline.
- Muddy informal fishing pegs.

Key Issues

Views to Possil Marsh.

There is no visual link to Possil Marsh SSSI from the canal corridor.

Unmarked paths linking to Possil Marsh

There are links through and around the Marsh but they are unsigned and therefore confusing or threatening to users.

Fishing Pegs

There are several muddy informal and obviously popular fishing spots along this section of canal.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Lower sections of the bund or provide observation points to open up views towards Possil Marsh. MEDIUM***
- ***Signpost paths to and from Possil Marsh and provide interpretation. MEDIUM***
- ***Formalise/provide fishing pegs. LOW***

Character Area 19 Lochfauld

Description of Character Area

The canal has a rural feel as it moves out the city with open views of surrounding fields and the Campsie Fells. The wide canal dominates the space, with a soft reed edge and overhanging wet woodland on the offside. Small streams feed into the canal and the distant noise of cars is screened by the sound of running water. Electricity transmission lines cross the canal in two locations, with double rows feeding into and out of the large sub-station adjoining the canal. A small concrete table and seats on the towpath is a popular drinking den and shopping bags of 'tinnies' hang from tree branches next to the towpath.

The canal feels rural even with the large number of pylons. The soft edges and broad width of the waterway contribute to this tranquil character. However the drinking dens may make towpath users feel unsafe.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves before straightening out. The edges are soft, with overhanging trees on the offside.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The canal is located within a rolling landscape of fields and marshland. The surrounding landuse is agricultural with large areas of boggy marshland. A large sub-station is sited east of the offside.

Vegetation

Scrub woodland, ruderal and grass in the canal corridor. Marshland and arable fields in the surrounding area.

Cultural Heritage

There are no features other than the canal.

Access

Both sides of the canal are accessible, with a gravel path running along the offside. There are also links through to Possil Marsh.

Views in and out

Clear views outwith the canal corridor are possible because of the rolling topography and the lack of development next to the canal. Views are possible north towards the Campsie Fells, with distant views south to houses around the edge of the city.

Clear views of the canal can be obtained from surrounding agricultural land and the farm at Lauchfauld. In addition golfers at Bishopriggs Golf Course in East Dunbartonshire, would be able to distantly view this section of canal.

Landscape Change

No significant change is occurring in this section.

Positive Features

- The calm, rural nature of the canal.
- Distant views of surrounding fields and the Campsie Fells.
- Access along both sides of canal corridor.
- Access to Possil Marsh

Negative Features

- The visual dominance of fourteen Pylons in this section and the close proximity of the sub-station.
- Drinking Dens and associated rubbish along the towpath.

Key Issues

Drinking Dens

This area is a popular location for drinking and this intimidates towpath users.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Drinkers should be encouraged to take their litter home.*** HIGH

Character Area 20 Stockingfield-Shuna Pl.

Description of Character Area

This section of the Glasgow Branch meanders gently at a level grade between the inner urban areas of Maryhill and Ruchill. The canal is set on a slope with a wooded hillside rising to the east and steep scrub covered embankment falling to the west. Despite the location between industry and housing the canal is generally enclosed by vegetation along both sides with filtered views and sounds hinting at the urban context. Due to the meanders, views along the canal are fairly restricted.

This character area is relatively tranquil and enclosed due to the meandering watercourse and backdrop of trees. The scale is small and the canal and surroundings feel safe although not generally overlooked.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and meanders on a contour of the west slope of Ruchill. The towpath is on the western side. It crosses an attractive small stone bridge over a spillway from the canal, where stone copes are missing and rubbish is a problem.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography is a west facing slope rising to a hill crest in Ruchill. This is the east side of the Kelvin valley, along which the canal contours. To the east the lower slopes are tree and grass covered, with medium density interwar housing on the top of the slope. To the west the predominant land use is light industrial/ commercial with large areas of car parking and some residential.

Vegetation

Scrub woodland and marginal/ emergent vegetation on both sides. On the east side the area of scrub and woodland is greater and links in with Ruchill Golf Course.

Cultural Heritage

Ruchill spillway and canal basin are on opposite sides of the canal. The latter is overgrown but was associated with the now demolished Bryant and May match factory. There is also an aqueduct over a disused railway tunnel.

Access

This section is not accessible from the surrounding area. The only access is along the canal towpath, which has access points at Lochburn Road and Ruchill Street not far beyond either end. The towpath surface is unbound and in good condition.

Views in and out

Vegetation significantly limits views out of the canal corridor, with most views along

the canal also limited by meanders.

Like most of its length, topography, buildings and vegetation limit public views into the canal corridor.

Landscape Change

Little change is occurring in this section.

Positive Features

- The tranquil, enclosed nature of the canal corridor, meandering gently through dense, maturely vegetated surroundings
- The canal corridor is well maintained
- The contouring location and gaps in the vegetation allow occasional views over the Kelvin Valley and the City to the west
- Adjacent greenspace on the slopes above.
- Attractive stone canal spillway and bridge create the sound of running water.

Negative Features

- Lack of external access and enclosure may make this section feel insecure.
- Greenspace on offside unmanaged, with damaged boundary fences and fly tipping in canal.

- Damage to stone bridge and rubbish around canal outlet.
- Large fenced off railway tunnel entrance below housing on offside embankment.

Key Issues

Greenspace Management

The greenspace below the housing at Ruchill links in with the golfcourse, but appears unmanged, with damaged boundary fences and fly-tipping in the canal.

Canal Spillway

The canal outlet is vandalised with missing copes on the stone bridge and rubbish in the water.

Strategies

There are relatively few issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Conserve and manage greenspace on the eastern side of the canal, limiting access to the off-side*** HIGH
- ***Repair and tidy up canal spillway and bridge.*** HIGH
- ***Consider vegetation management on the towpath side to improve security and views along without significantly affecting the canal character.*** MEDIUM

Character Area 21 Shuna Pl. - Bilsland Dr.

Description of Character Area

As with the previous character area, this character area lies between Maryhill and Ruchill. However in contrast to the northern section, here the surrounding inner urban character is much more apparent, with industry and housing visible on both sides.

The character of this section is less enclosed and more urban, busy and noisy than that to the north. It is overlooked by buildings and fragmented by the road crossing. The vegetation on the boundary of the canal only partially softens the intrusion of the surrounding inner urban character.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves through the surrounding landform. It is crossed by a new road bridge at Ruchill Street, under which it narrows. The towpath is on the west side. The canal has stone edges around the bridge and a poonton and mooring rings are located there.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography rises to the northwest, the canal contouring. North of the Ruchill Street bridge the surrounding land use is predominantly light industrial/commercial, with the white buildings of a Business Centre (formerly a lead and colour works) on Ruchill Street overlooking the canal. South of the bridge the surroundings are mainly residential, with mixed tenements and low rise flats on the southwest side and new flats being constructed on the former rubberworks site on the northeast side.

Vegetation

The extent of peripheral vegetation and greenspace is much less than to the north. There are thin bands of dense scrub and a fringe of marginal/ emergent planting either side of the canal.

Cultural Heritage

The area around the Ruchill Street bridge is fairly rich in original industrial buildings. This includes a lead and colour works served by a wharf (remnants visible) and a cooperage. The former McClelland rubberworks site is now being redeveloped and the bridge is a modern replacement of the original bascule bridge.

Access

The towpath is accessible by ramps and steps from the west side of the Ruchill Street bridge. This is close to Maryhill Road, which is a Quality Bus Route. The

towpath is mainly an unbound surface but in good condition. The section of towpath under the road bridge is setted.

Views in and out

Buildings and vegetation limit public views into and out of the corridor.

Landscape Change

The former rubberworks site on Shuna Street has been cleared and is currently being redeveloped as mid-rise flats. The council housing on Hugo Street is also cleared but not yet redeveloped. A small car park has been developed to the south west of the Ruchill Street bridge

Positive Features

- Access to and from towpath on Ruchill Street via ramps and steps.
- Nearby access to public transport and shops on Maryhill Road
- Proximity to Ruchill Church Hall designed by Charles Rennie MacKintosh, (reflected in bridge design), which is now a cafe.
- Greenspace around the bridge.
- New flats recognise, to some extent, their location next to the canal with their alignment, balconies and decks.

Negative Features

- Scale of flats on Shuna Street site may dominate canal, and their external space does not link directly to the canal.
- Ornamental planting in greenspace around bridge is overgrown and badly maintained.
- White business centre next to the bridge appears scruffy and unattractive and there is no continuity in the off side vegetation.

Key Issues

Scale of New Buildings

The new flats in the old rubber factory are large scale and may dominate the canal corridor. Their external space is not linked to the canal corridor.

Greenspace

The planting around the bridge is overgrown and unmanaged.

Buildings Next to Canal

The old white painted brick buildings next to the bridge do not relate to the canal and are scruffy and unattractive.

Strategies

Strategies are concerned mainly with the relationship of buildings to the canal

- ***Create access/ green space in new development to ensure it relates well to the canal. HIGH***
- ***Improve management of greenspace around Ruchill Street bridge. HIGH***
- ***Encourage the development of a continuous strip of vegetation on the off side. MEDIUM***
- ***Encourage the redecoration/ refurbishment of buildings around Ruchill Street bridge. MEDIUM***

Character Area 22 Bilsland Dr. - Firhill Rd.

Description of Character Area

This long character area lies on a broad north through to east loop of the canal, lying between Ruchill Park and Maryhill Road and cut off from Firhill Basin by the Firhill Road Bridge.

The character of this section is a well-established green corridor. Mature woodland and dense scrub on both sides creates a pleasant tunnel around the canal. It is overlooked by student flats on the hill above and fragmented by a gated, student only, footbridge. The trees visually screen the intrusion of the surrounding inner urban character, but do not mask the noise from the busy Maryhill Road below.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves on a grand loop from where it crosses the Bilsland Road Aqueduct on a north-south axis through to where it passes under the Firhill Road bridge on a northeast-southwest axis. It is crossed mid way by a footbridge accessing the student flats in Ruchill. The canal contours around the landform that rises up to Ruchill Park. The towpath continues on the west side.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding topography rises to the east and north, the canal contouring the base of the hill on which Ruchill Park lies. On this side of the canal there is a steep, vegetated uphill slope. In contrast, on the west and south side the canal is on a steep embankment of varying height, set above the Kelvin Valley. On both sides of the canal the land use is predominantly residential, comprising traditional tenements. There is a high proportion of greenspace on the north and east side, including the steep vegetated canal bank and Ruchill Park. There is a large area of student housing on this side. On the west and south side the housing is focused around the busy Maryhill Road, where there are also shops.

Vegetation

Belts of mature deciduous semi-natural woodland and dense scrub on both sides of the canal, wider on the east/ north side. Areas of amenity grassland around Bilsland Road, the student flats and the footbridge.

Cultural Heritage

The main features of interest are the aqueduct on Bilsland Road and Firhill Road bridge, which replaced an older Bascule Bridge.

Access

The towpath is accessible mid-section from Maryhill Road by ramps and steps and from Firhill Road near the bridge.

There is a gated footbridge linking Ruchill student accommodation to Maryhill Road and the towpath. Maryhill Road is a quality bus route. The towpath is mainly an unbound surface in good condition.

Views in and out

Buildings and vegetation limit public views into the site.

Views out are restricted to Bilsland Road aqueduct, and the ramps and footbridge in the middle of the section, linking to Maryhill Road, where there are views over the Kelvinside area.

Landscape Change

The new mid-rise flats built between Maryhill Road and the canal do not relate well to the canal to their rear. The former bakery site on Mrano Street is currently being redeveloped for housing.

Positive Features

- Good access to and from towpath to Maryhill Road and Firhill Road via ramps and steps
- Access to public transport and shops on Maryhill Road
- Substantial belts of woodland and scrub on either side of canal.

Negative Features

- New flats on Maryhill Road relate poorly to the canal.
- Poor quality open space around access ramps to Maryhill Road.
- No access to Bilsand Road means a long stretch of the towpath is inaccessible.
- Vandalised fishing platform and benches at open space north of Bilsand Road.
- Widespread Japanese knotweed growing in the mature woodland next to canal.
- Informal muddy footpaths down embankment to Maryhill Road.

Key Issues

Design and Layout of New Housing Development

The new flats and existing student accommodation do not relate to the canal. In particular the new block of flats on Maryhill Road next to the footbridge relate more to the road and have no direct access to the green corridor behind.

Poor Quality Open Space

The open space around the access ramps to Maryhill Road is badly designed and maintained even though it is a major access point to the canal.

The open space next to Bilsand Road is vandalised, with the fishing platform destroyed.

Access

Access to this long section is restricted. The footbridge is private, there is no access from Bilsand Road and there is not enough access along Maryhill Road, with desire lines down the embankment to link with the shops.

Vegetation Management

The mature woodland is unmanaged with large sections of the Japanese Knotweed on the canalside.

Strategies

There are a number of issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Issue townscape/ design guidelines to ensure further new development relates well to the canal. HIGH***
- ***Consider improving greenspace areas at both Bilsand and Maryhill Road. Ensure links to the canal are highlighted. MEDIUM.***
- ***Improve access from Maryhill by formalising desire lines. MEDIUM***
- ***Consider linking towpath to open space on Bilsand Road by constructing a pedestrian bridge. MEDIUM***

- ***Manage vegetation and treat and remove Japanese Knotweed. MEDIUM***

Character Area 23 Firhill Basin

Description of Character Area

Hidden behind Firhill Park Football Stadium and overlooked by multi-storey flats, this section of canal corridor is defined by the surrounding large scale townscape and the open expanse of water in Firhill Basin. The basin and canal form a tight bend, the basin on the inside, lying in a hollow at the base of a steep slope enclosing the north and east sides. The canal skirts the bottom of the hill but the towpath is separate, following the western edge of the basin. Car parking and security fencing for the stadium form the western boundary. To the north the steeply wooded hill is topped by tower blocks and Ruchill Park. The old ornamental stone tower of Ruchill Hospital punctuates the skyline contrasting with the pylons spanning the basin.

The reed edged basin appears almost semi-natural, sitting within a hollow in the landscape, separated from the main canal. However this contrasts starkly with the surrounding low quality townscape, security fencing, stadium and multi-storey flats. Although very much overlooked the space feels isolated and forgotten. Recent new built flats next to the stadium compound the problem by not connecting or relating to the canal.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The main feature is the reed edged basin on the inside of the canal bend, separated from the canal by a curved linear island. Other features include an informal boat ramp, a large pontoon, fishing platforms, and stone built entrance to basin from canal.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The canal and basin fit into a hollow flat area nestling between the surrounding hilly landforms to the east. Land uses comprise high density housing (flats and tower blocks), cleared ground, a football stadium, park, and regenerating scrub woodland on derelict land.

Vegetation

The extensive triangular area to the east of the canal is covered by dense scrub and mixed woodland planting, with a fringe of tall ruderal vegetation on the canal edge. This area has become an important wildlife habitat and known site for water voles. Ruderal vegetation also dominates the narrow island.

All the canal and basin edges have a belt of marginal/ emergent plants. On the inside of the bend the vegetation bordering the football ground is mainly neutral or amenity grassland.

Cultural Heritage

There is a high concentration of interest

based on the basin. The remains of footbridges and a WWII stoplock are visible either end of the island. The triangular vegetated area to the east was formerly a basin.

Access

There is no access along the canal itself as the towpath leaves the canal to skirt the inside edge of the basin. Access to the basin and towpath is possible by car, with parking spaces provided. Pedestrian access is limited to the north and south via the towpath under Firhill Road bridge or the short side street north of Firhill Park, off Firhill Road. On the other side of the canal there is only informal access to the open space.

Views in and out

There are medium length views to the north and east but these are limited primarily by topography and the high rise flats of Firhill. Views south and west are screened completely by the football stands and flats.

The main public views into this section are from the open parkland of Ruchill Park. There are limited views over the stone wall from Panmure Street and the bridge where Firhill Road crosses the canal.

Landscape Change

The most recent change to this area is the new north stand to the football stadium, developed concurrently with student flats on the site of the old stand, between the

stadium and the canal. The former foundry on Panmure Street to the north has been cleared and is to be redeveloped as housing.

Positive Features

- An substantial open expanse of water and greenspace situated in an inner city urban environment
- Substantial areas of semi-natural vegetation providing habitat and biodiversity, linked with other areas further south
- Popular location for fishing

Negative features

- Edge treatment of adjacent developments (including new flats) and access roads do not relate well to the canal
- Eroded edges of basin
- General air of dereliction and under-use of space in the basin
- Poor access from adjacent areas

Key Issues

Firhill basin is one of the most important features of the canal in Glasgow, with the most extensive body of water on the canal and linking greenspace. At present it has an air of dereliction and has a poor interface with its surroundings.

Poor Edge Treatments

Edge treatments along the boundaries with other developments are generally poor, with unsightly fencing, poor edges to roads, views of poor buildings, car parking etc.

Future usage of the basin

As the largest area of open water on the canal the basin will be a focus of usage by canal traffic, static boats, towpath traffic etc. Accommodating increased usage would entail a considerable level of upgrading and development to the canal, towpath, basin and island.

Conservation and development

It will be important to maintain a balance between future development, access and usage of the area and the conservation of vegetation and wildlife

Erosion of basin edges by anglers

Whilst usage by the public is to be encouraged there are some areas of erosion and litter where anglers access the side of the basin.

Strategies

The following strategies address the issues of under-use, dereliction and conservation.

- *Comprehensive survey of interfaces with surrounding developments/ land uses followed by design treatments for improvement – either in co-operation with landowners or within BW land adjacent to the boundaries.* HIGH
- *Development strategy for canal development and usage including moorings (permanent and temporary) and water-based activities* HIGH
- *Develop an access strategy for canalside on both sides of canal/ basin, including footpaths, bridge(s) and pontoons.* MEDIUM
- *Develop conservation strategy to protect important habitats/ linkages from future increased development and access.* MEDIUM
- *Construct fishing platforms and reinstate eroded areas on edge of basin.* MEDIUM

Character Area 24 Hamiltonhill

Description of Character Area

This section is a green corridor where the canal curves around the bulk of Hamilton Hill. Both sides of the canal are enclosed with vegetation and trees, with no built form within the boundaries of the corridor. To the north and east, on the off-side, the ground rises steeply to housing at the top of the hill, although there is no clear view of the buildings. This area of hillside is covered in scrubby woodland.

To the south the partly wooded/ partly grassed canal embankment drops down to the busy Gartscube Road. The trees screen out most of the movement but not the noise. In winter limited views will open up to the tenements along the side of the road. The canal is edged with reeds and trees overhang the water on the off-side.

Pylons and the sub-station on the hill at Port Dundas dominate this section of canal and are incongruous elements within this wooded corridor.

The canal feels enclosed and simple, a green corridor, unremarkable compared to adjoining sections. The steep hillside above has a semi-wild/neglected character, which contrasts strongly with its city location.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section and curves through the surrounding landform, its edges softened by reedbeds and trees. A former side basin, now partially infilled by reeds, is located opposite Firhill Road

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The canal contours around the base of a hill, the ground rising to Hamiltonhill to the east and north. The canal is on embankment to the west and south and falls gently to the Kelvin Valley beyond this. The surrounding land use is greenspace, with 2 storey interwar housing and allotments to the east and mixed tenement housing and commercial to the south and west.

Vegetation

This section is surrounded by substantial areas of open space supporting a mosaic of tall ruderals, scrub, woodland (planted and semi-natural) and grassland (neutral and mown amenity). Marginal and emergent plants colonise all the canal edges including the former basin.

Cultural Heritage

The main interest is the former basin opposite Firhill Road, which accessed a quarry used for extracting the puddle clay lining material for the canal. A former boatyard and slipway has been noted from the 2nd edition OS maps.

Access

There is no formal access to the towpath along this section, although it is possible to access the canal embankment from Gartscube Road across greenspace. On the off side there are several informal paths or rough tracks in the extensive area of scrubland on the hillside.

Views in and out

Views are limited by topography and vegetation to the east and north. Vegetation also significantly limits views out of the canal corridor to the west, although there are gaps in the trees and scrub. Most views along the canal also limited by the curve of the canal. The canal is not particularly prominent in views from its surroundings.

Landscape Change

No significant changes have taken place recently.

Positive Features

- A substantial area of open space and mixed habitats linked in with adjacent open space.
- Informal footpaths allowing access to the open space on the off side.
- Basin to side of canal is a feature of interest and extends aquatic habitat.
- Inner city views partially screened by vegetation.

Negative Features

- No formal access to the canal towpath from adjacent areas between Firhill Road to Applecross Basin.
- Former quarry area is still scarred and bare.
- Scrap yard area at southern end is unsightly
- Pylons and lines dominating the skyline.

Key Issues

Greenspace Linkage

There is a substantial area of diverse and intermingled habitats that are linked with areas to the north and south along the canal corridor. This is a very important resource in an inner urban area.

Access

Currently there is no linkage of the towpath with surrounding areas and the access on the off side of the canal is informal and not linked with other areas.

Environmental Improvement

The former clay quarry and scrap yard area detract from the environment.

Strategies

There are a number of important issues affecting this section of the canal

- ***Formal access to the towpath from Firhill/ Garscube Road should be created through one of the adjacent greenspaces.*** HIGH
- ***Consideration should be given to construction of a bridge linking Hamiltonhill and adjacent greenspace to Garscube Road and Firhill.*** MEDIUM
- ***Improve footpath access and linkage to Firhill Basin and Applecross Basin on the offside of the canal.*** MEDIUM
- ***Signpost the canal towpath and routes to and from Firhill and Hamiltonhill.*** MEDIUM
- ***Consider an ongoing vegetation management plan to maintain the diverse habitat mosaic surrounding the canal.*** MEDIUM
- ***Consider restoration of clay quarry site and tidy up of scrap yard area.*** MEDIUM

Character Area 25 Applecross Basin

Description of Character Area

The canal corridor widens in this section to form an open space around the Applecross Basin. Whitewashed two storey buildings of traditional canalside appearance and the modern brown brick offices of British Waterways bound the basin to the north. The housing of Hamiltonhill is screened by woodland on the slope behind. To the south, on the towpath side, the landform slopes down towards the city, but the potentially panoramic views are limited by old stone walls and scrubby woodland on the embankments. At the eastern edge of this section, the canal crosses the busy Possil Road via an aqueduct and there are clear views of the city. The hard structure of the basin and original metal bascule bridge define the space, with stone blocks lining the canal edge and a cobbled towpath.

This section is a pleasantly traditional canal side setting. Interesting architectural features, moored narrow boats and the small whitewashed buildings create a rustic atmosphere. The bridge is a popular pedestrian through route and this together with the office buildings make it feel a secure place to be. The small scale of the built form, together with the rich original details makes this section vulnerable to unsympathetic development.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal widens in this area, forming a stone edged canal basin opposite original canalside cottages. There is an aqueduct bridge over Possil Road (which is set in a deep rock cut, a metal bascule bridge, cobbled towpath and approach road, mooring rings, moored narrow boats and British Waterways railings.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The canal basin is set on a south west facing slope, providing a sheltered backdrop to the north with slopes falling gently into the Kelvin valley to the south and west. The surroundings are predominantly built up and urban in character, with small scale offices and industrial units to the south and west and areas of housing above the wooded slope to the north. However the area's character is dominated by the canal basin's greater width, which creates a semi-amphitheatre with the hillside behind.

The towpath opens out into an informal grassed area delineated by cobbled footpaths and bounded by derelict wall containing scrubby woodland. A small, unused triangular grassed park occupies the space between the Applecross Road and the Possil Road cutting.

Vegetation

Hard surfaces predominate on the canalside. However there is an area of grassed parkland, ornamental planting in

front of BW offices, mown grass, and scrubby woodland on top of the south facing slopes.

Cultural Heritage

There is a cluster of features associated with the basin. The basin itself, together with the bascule bridge and remains of a quay and the aqueduct over Possil Road form the canal SAM. The whitewashed workshops on the north side are listed and there is a listed bridge keeper's house set back along on Applecross Street.

Access

The towpath is cobbled or newly grit surfaced throughout this section and is easily accessible. The bridge provides an important pedestrian route across the canal and links the housing at Hamiltonhill with the shops along Garscube Road. Pedestrian crossing points are limited to this bridge or the road under the canal, which is extremely busy with traffic.

Views in and out

Buildings and the surrounding topography limit views from the canal.

As with most of its course, views towards the canal are limited until adjacent to its immediate surroundings. As a pedestrian walking up the cobbled Bairds Brae the canal is not apparent until arrival at the side of the basin.

From a car in the Possil Road cutting it is difficult to distinguish the stone bridge as an aqueduct and trees and walls screen

the canal, on an embankment. Views are obtained only from Applecross Road, but this is only a lightly-used access road to BW offices.

Landscape Change

Areas along Possil Road identified in the Glasgow Canal Strategy remain as yet undeveloped.

Along the canal the cobbled towpath is gradually degrading and metal canal furniture requires re-painting.

Adjacent to the main corridor regenerating woodland is taking over the derelict sites in this section and stone boundary walls are collapsing. New flats are being constructed in Hamiltonhill, on the hillside overlooking the canal.

Positive Features

- The basin shape and size increases the dominance of the canal in its surroundings
- Original canalside buildings retained
- Other original features of note such as the bascule bridge and aqueduct
- Hillside location allowing potential for views south and west

Negative Features

- Newer buildings not sympathetic with original
- The use of the canalside buildings as maintenance and storage facilities, together with parking on the canal side.
- Existing open space next to the canal is gradually degrading and appears under utilised.
- Scrubby vegetation interferes with potential panoramic views of Kelvinside.
- Derelict land at Bairds Brae and bounding this section detract from its landscape character.
- Dominance of Pylons across the skyline.

Key Issues

Newer development unsympathetic to its surroundings

Recent new development in the area, specifically Applecross House, has been unsympathetic in both style and materials, with the original canal buildings. New development should match and reflect, in scale, materials and relationship to the basin, the existing traditional buildings.

Under-utilisation of original buildings and use of canalside for parking

The focus of this section is the whitewashed buildings. These are currently being used as a base for the BW maintenance teams and the cobbled canalside as a car park. The storage yards and parking are unsightly. The buildings are underused and could be redeveloped to improve existing services for boaters and create a focus for this section of canal.

Derelict land around the basin

Several pockets of derelict land are located around the canal side and corridor. These detract from the overall quality of the section and the regenerating scrubby woodland obscures views towards the city. Due to its urban location and the strong hard structure of the canal, there is scope for additional development in this section. Appropriate redevelopment of derelict sites and the increase of small scale built form around the canal would enhance the character of this area.

Pylons

The pylon line crosses above the basin and pylons on the hillside above visually detract from the quality of the basin. However it is unlikely that these could be removed or re-routed.

Strategies

The Applecross Basin is potentially a key access point to the canal close to the city centre. It is capable of being further developed with care, including enhanced interpretation and recreation, retaining a traditional canal-side character.

- ***Investigate re-development opportunities around the basin and Possil Road to create a new focus of activity in the area. HIGH***
- ***Develop design guidelines to direct new development so that it is sympathetic to the canal and exiting building style and scale. HIGH***
- ***Develop canalside activities to create a recreational focus for the area. HIGH***
- ***Vegetation management to allow panoramic views towards Kelvinside and the city centre. MEDIUM***

Character Area 26 Rockvilla Whisky Bond

Description of Character Area

The large red brick derelict whisky bond dominates this small section of the canal, which links Applecross Basin with Spiers Wharf. A large pylon straddles the towpath and its lines cross high above the canal. The canal itself narrows before turning sharply south at the start of Speirs Wharf. The corridor itself is tightly enclosed between old stonewalls, but the steep hillside occupied by Port Dundas distillery rises to the east, its chimney punctuating the skyline. Graffiti, security fencing and the abandoned bond create a feeling of dereliction. But surrounding landuse is partially screened by the stone boundary walls and woodland.

This section feels forgotten, situated between the busy attractive areas of Spiers Wharf and Applecross Basin. The scale of the old brick Whisky Bond, with its small barred windows dominates the canal and defines the character. This section feels unsettling and only the recent maintenance of the towpath and railings stop it feeling abandoned. Overall the poor quality of the surroundings detracts from the canal and the towering pylons add to user unease.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level in this section and its edge next to the towpath, is stone block softened by reed beds. On the off-side, woodland overhangs the canal and the edge is undefined. British Waterways black and white railings separate the towpath from the canal. This together with the new surfacing offsets the overall appearance of dereliction created by the surrounding land uses.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The surrounding landform is steeply hilly to the north-east with the canal on an escarpment. The ground drops to the south, but this change is screened by the high stonewalls. The Possil Road cutting forms the eastern boundary.

The surrounding land use is mixed, with predominately industrial or post-industrial derelict land. On the off-side to the north-east, the large, low warehouse on Dawson Road is separated and screened from the canal by a band of woodland. The derelict old bond buildings and old Rockvilla School also lie to the north of the canal. To the south a Travellers' site is screened by trees and a high wall.

Vegetation

A triangle of dense scrub woodland dominates the off side. On the towpath side there is mown amenity grassland. Small patches of scrub overhang the adjacent walls. Small area of knotweed

Cultural Heritage

The main features of interest are in the surroundings. The Whiskey Bond remains but other commercial buildings have been demolished. A former timber basin is now infilled and built over/ grown over by scrub.

Access

Access is limited in this section to the towpath from adjoining sections.

Views in and out

The high stonewalls limit views out of the canal corridor to its immediate surroundings, but both Spiers Wharf and Applecross Basin are visible along its length. The hillside and distillery are clearly visible to the east.

Views in to this section of canal corridor are limited to those from the little-used High Craighall Road. The woodland, topography and walls combine to enclose the canal, although the old bond is highly visible from the surrounding area.

Landscape Change

The old bond is degrading, along with the old stonewalls. Regenerating woodland is increasing in size to 'green up' the area.

A new office development has been built below the Distillery on the hill to the east of the site, but does not relate to the surrounding older stone buildings at Spiers Wharf and Applecross.

Positive Features

- This section of canal is close to the centre of the city and located between the nodes of exiting activity at Speirs Wharf and Applecross Basin.
- Large areas of vacant and derelict land, offer opportunities for re-development.
- Mature trees around the corridor, screen the large warehouse to the north and enhance the character of the area.

Negative Features

- The old Whisky bond dominates the space and is currently an unattractive building.
- Large areas of vacant and derelict land.
- Poor quality boundary walls.
- Graffiti, fly tipping and rubbish are a problem.
- A Pylon is sited on the towpath and power lines cross the space.
- Unmanaged regenerating woodland.

Key Issues

Lack of Positive Identity

Situated between Speirs Wharf and the busy Applecross basin, this section of canal feels forgotten and abandoned contrasting poorly with the adjoining character areas. Land use is predominately vacant and derelict, which results in a lack of positive identity.

Dominance of unattractive Whisky Bond building

The large derelict Whisky Bond building visually dominates this section and overshadows the canal.

Large areas of vacant and derelict land

Large areas of land adjoining the canal are either vacant or derelict, although the high stone boundary walls screen clear views into them from the canal.

Poor Quality Boundary Walls

Immediately adjacent to the canal the large old stone boundary walls are in poor state of repair and the metal security tops contribute to the threatening environment.

Graffiti, rubbish and fly tipping

Graffiti, rubbish and fly tipping are problems along this section, possibly due to the apparent 'abandoned' nature of the surrounding land.

Pylon

The towpath and canal in pass underneath a pylon and power lines which detract from the quality of the area.

Unmanaged Woodland

On the off-side an area of dense scrub has developed. It consists of mainly mature specimens, of species associated with water, such as willow. These overhang the banks and are unmanaged.

Strategies

Significant problems affect this section of canal, predominately resulting from poor quality or undefined surrounding land uses. Considerable work will be required to redefine the use and appearance of the area.

- ***Investigate re-development opportunities to create a new focus of regeneration and activity in this section. Recognising its importance as a link between Speirs Wharf and Applecross Basin. HIGH***
- ***Issue townscape/ design guidelines to ensure new development relates well to the canal. HIGH***
- ***Re-develop/demolish the derelict Old Whisky Bond. HIGH***
- ***Upgrade/ repair stone wall boundaries and remove security fencing. HIGH***
- ***Clear rubbish and graffiti. MEDIUM***
- ***Investigate removing or re-routing pylons. LOW***
- ***Manage woodland. LOW***

Character Area 27 Spiers Wharf

Description of Character Area

This area is highly urban in character, dominated to the east by the monolithic bulk of a 5-6 storey terrace of refurbished 19th century stone faced warehouses. These are set in a hard stone setted landscape with car parking and ornate street lighting between the buildings and the canal. The towpath is on the opposite (west) bank and is wide but enclosed to the west by a tall wall. The canal is wide and straight. Topography is subservient to the built form, although rising ground behind the to the east reinforces the bulk of the warehouses, whereas falling ground and lack of tall buildings to the west opens up panoramic views westwards over the city from upper floors of the warehouses. There is little vegetation in this area.

This section of the canal is dominated by the built form and by rectilinear shapes. It has a historic, handsome townscape redolent of a traditional Regency or Victorian docklands development, but interestingly located on high ground remote from the sea with panoramic views over the city centre. As such its apparently strong character is vulnerable to changes in townscape context, requiring careful consideration in the urban design of its surroundings.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal curves into a straight north-south alignment and becomes significantly wider than average, with hard edges on both sides. The east side is hard surfaced with setts.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

The wharf is built on a contour of the west facing hillside that rises above Port Dundas. The ground falls away to the west and south. The warehouse buildings dominate the scene. The surroundings are predominantly commercial and industrial, with areas of vacant land.

Vegetation

There is little marginal/ emergent vegetation on the hard canal edge and little significant vegetation on the land. A strip of scrub lines the wall on the west side of the canal corridor.

Cultural Heritage

The main features are the several listed 5-6 storey sandstone faced warehouse buildings that form an imposing terrace on the east side of the wharf. The buildings and their surroundings have been restored and are now used for mixed residential and business purposes.

Access

Access is via the towpath on the east side, with the west side private access and car parking for the buildings.

Views in and out

Views from the towpath are restricted due to the surrounding buildings, wall and scrub. In the northern section there are open views towards the city centre and further south the views are seen between trees and scrub. Panoramic views of the city are available from the upper floors of the warehouses. These are in turn highly visible from the West End and the M8, although it is not apparent that there is a canal associated with them.

Landscape Change

There is new development on the hillside to the east of Spiers Wharf and to the south a new section of canal is under construction, linking Spiers Wharf with Port Dundas.

There are development proposals for the vacant land in the Garscube Industrial Area to the west of the canal

Positive Features

- The restored warehouse buildings are impressive.
- The large scale canal basin provides an appropriate setting for the buildings.
- Panoramic views due to the hillside contour location of the wharf.
- The immanent reconnection of the Wharf with Port Dundas.

Negative Features

- Dense car parking on the east side of the wharf.
- Derelict and industrial areas beyond the west side of the wharf.

Key Issues

Development

There are changes happening all around Spiers Wharf. Development proposals for the land to the west of the canal could significantly affect the character of the area.

Canalside Character

The canalside character on the east side is spoiled by mass car parking.

Strategies

This is a strategically important, high profile section of the canal, requiring careful controls on future development.

- *New developments should be integrated with the overall character of Spiers Wharf by respecting the form and scale of the existing listed buildings and basin. HIGH*
- *New development to the west should allow for the retention of some views towards the city centre from Spiers Wharf and the canalside. HIGH*

- *New development should create visual and pedestrian links between Spiers Wharf and surrounding areas including residential areas to the west and the city centre to the south. HIGH*
- *The new section of canal must have a clearly defined character and pedestrian route linking to Port Dundas. HIGH*
- *Car parking in any new development should be kept away from the canalside. MEDIUM*

Character Area 28 Port Dundas

Description of Character Area

This section of the canal lies at the south eastern end of the Glasgow branch, between North Canal Bank Street and Sighthill Park. Currently, although the canal itself is intact it is located in an inner urban area of poor environmental quality and townscape. The surroundings are predominantly industrial/ commercial, with a park and the M8 lying to the south. The canal forms a sub-rectangular basin around an island.

The topography is flat around the canal but rises up steeply to hills in the north west and south east. Surrounding land use is predominantly industrial, with large areas of vacant and derelict land.

The area exudes an impression of dilapidation and decay, with canal an incidental feature between low industrial buildings, yards, roads and wasteland.

Main Characteristics

Canal Features

The canal is level throughout this section, forming a sub-rectangular basin with a spur heading south west along North Canal Bank Street. A footbridge crosses the spur close to where it connects to the main basin. The main basin encloses an

island connected to North Canal Bank Street by a single road bridge. The area is rich in canal architectural features, with swing and lift bridges, old cobbles and stone edges. A former canal vessel is located on dry land adjacent to the basin.

Surrounding Landuse and Topography

Whilst the basin area is flat, the surrounding topography includes rolling hills to the north west and south east. The predominant land use around the canal and to the north and east is industrial and business. The island area and some of the land to its west is currently undeveloped/ cleared. The hilly landform of Sighthill Park lies to the south east and is directly adjacent to the canal, separating it visually from the nearby M8.

Vegetation

Much of the land around Port Dundas is built on. However there are two substantial areas of open ground with grassland and ruderal vegetation. To the south east in Sighthill Park there is a substantial area of amenity grassland, with an area of scrub and ruderals bordering the south east edge of the basin.

Cultural Heritage

There are a number of original canal features still extant. In addition to the canal and basin with original quayside features this includes three bridges, two of which are B listed, and a former canal boat mounted on dry land close to the basin. In the surrounding area there are a few buildings dating from the 19th

century including the Eagle Foundry and the remains of a former distillery, now incorporated into a new distillery. The other industrial buildings in the area are of modern origin.

Access

The Port Dundas area is generally best accessed from north of the M8. Access from the rest of the canal via Spiers Wharf is currently curtailed by the construction of the new canal link. It is anticipated that this situation will be remedied by completion in the near future. There is currently no towpath by the canal and not all areas are accessible due to private property and fencing. The section along Sighthill Park is accessible but only on an informal basis. The island area is inaccessible to the public, connected to the outside of the basin by one road bridge currently accessing a private site.

Views in and out

Views in and out of Port Dundas are limited by landform and buildings, with the canal lost amongst the industrial buildings and yards.

Landscape Change

The immediate surrounding area is subject to continuous low-level change. The most important change currently is the construction of the new section of canal connecting Port Dundas to the rest of the canal at Spiers Wharf.

Positive Features

- Canal still intact with water flow maintained.
- Canal rich in architectural features such as stone edging, cobbles, original lift and swing bridges.
- Connection with greenspace at Sighthill Park.
- Screening of M8 by Sighthill Park.

Negative Features

- Poor visual and environmental quality of surrounding open space and townscape.
- Poor access from city centre across M8 corridor

Key Issues

Poor quality environment

The Port Dundas area is visually and environmentally poor in quality, with the canal an incidental and-non-functional feature.

Rich Architectural Canal Features

The canal itself at Port Dundas has a large amount of rich original detailing, including stone edging, cobbles, original bridges and mooring rings.

Access from city centre.

The Port Dundas area is isolated from the city centre by the M8 corridor. Currently there is one road and a single footbridge crossing the motorway

Canal-side access and signage.

Whilst due to improve with the new canal connection, access to the canal-side is poor and not signed.

Strategies

Port Dundas is perhaps the area of greatest importance and development potential along the canal in Glasgow. Not only is it currently being physically linked to the rest of the canal, but the proximity to the city centre, the current poor environment and the pace of change in the surrounding area all point to the potential to substantially regenerate the area.

- *Investigate the potential for improvements to vehicular and pedestrian access to and from the M8 and city centre.* HIGH
- *Improve signage for pedestrians to and from the city centre.* HIGH

- *Develop a comprehensive area-specific Local Development Strategy for Port Dundas and the canal terminus that balances the existing industrial uses to the north with the likely mix of uses that would be developed in a high amenity focal area.* HIGH
- *Consider expanding the area of water available for berthing of canal traffic and creation of and integrated land and waterscape.* HIGH
- *Develop design principles and guidelines for new development that respect and integrate with the canalside character. Take advantage of the existing heavy detailing and large expanse of water to create high quality townscape and hard landscape intermingling with water.* HIGH
- *Protect and enhance original architectural canal features in any development.* HIGH
- *Carry out environmental improvements to Sighthill Park.* MEDIUM

8.0 KEY ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

8.1 Introduction

The detailed descriptions and analysis in Chapter 7 illustrates the characteristics and issues specific to each character area along the Forth and Clyde canal. It is clear that there are common themes throughout the canal's length and this chapter is an overview resulting from analysis of the detailed surveys and the character assessment.

For clarity, the following chapter is divided into a number of subject headings. There are inevitable overlaps or conflicts of priority between the subject areas. Common issues are identified together with suggested strategies for conservation, enhancement and/or development control.

8.2 Landscape/ Townscape Character

The assessment in Chapter 7 illustrates in detail the diversity of landscape character along the length of the canal in Glasgow, from inner urban to suburban and rural.

The canal forms a continuous corridor threading throughout the northern part of Glasgow. It usually stamps its distinctiveness within the narrow confines of the corridor and has very little presence beyond, particularly as

redevelopment of the surroundings has destroyed or fragmented much of the originally associated industrial and commercial development of the 19th century. Nevertheless in a limited number of locations, where the waterway expands in width or has a wider area of open surroundings, the influence is more obvious. This is particularly apparent at Maryhill Locks, Firhill Basin and, to a lesser extent, at Port Dundas.

In many locations the landscape character is strong and distinctive, whether defined by the canal, surrounding vegetation, landform or buildings. In this case strategies for conservation, enhancement, development control etc are clear. Such areas include Westerton, Maryhill Locks, Applecross Basin and Spiers Wharf.

Conversely, in a number of locations the landscape character is degraded, indistinct or in transition. Such areas often coincide with development opportunities and pressures. Such areas include Temple, Firhill Basin and Port Dundas. In these cases a clear idea is required of:

- features that are important to conserve
- areas/ aspects that require enhancing
- the extent and type of development that would be acceptable or desirable.

In the absence of a clear landscape character, guidance may be clear from the presence of cultural heritage or

wildlife/ habitat priorities. Alternatively it may be apparent from wider landscape/ townscape character and can be the subject of development plans. As a rule the opportunity must be taken to ensure that future development realises the opportunities presented by the canal as a feature of interest or focus.

8.3 Development

A comparison of the findings of this survey and the Glasgow Canal Strategy of only five years previously is a telling indication of the pressures for development along the canal corridor. Since 2000/ 2001, ten of the sites identified as potential development land have been developed or are currently in the process of development. In addition there are a number of significant development proposals that exist as formal planning applications or as developing proposals. Most of the recent developments and proposals are located along the Glasgow Branch or between Temple and Cadder.

In common with most postwar development along the canal many of the recent and ongoing developments do not exploit their proximity to the canal to advantage by relating their frontages and externals to the canal or by creating a link to the corridor. Instead they simply occupy the space available.

It may not always be suitable to open up development to the canal corridor. In particular developments on the off side of

the canal risk interfering with the wildlife corridor created by undisturbed areas, unbroken scrub belts and marginal / emergent planting. However, there is more opportunity for connectivity on the towpath side and at crossings, where disturbance and breaks in continuity already occur. Even on the offside it may be possible to allow continuity of access parallel to the canal but remote from the canal edge.

Despite considerable development having taken place, opportunities for further development exist in many locations. This includes locations where open space already exists in association with, or adjacent to, the canal corridor, or where existing industrial/ derelict land uses are likely to change.

In some locations development will be in limited areas alongside a stretch of the canal, with one linear interface. However there are at least three locations (Maryhill, Firhill Basin and Applecross Basin through to Port Dundas) where the potential development area is significant or the configuration of the canal presents an opportunity. In these locations, significant redevelopment of an area could involve urban design exploiting the canal as a focal feature or an additional layer woven into the urban fabric.

Development should be carefully planned to relate to the canal, making it a focal feature by retaining and defining open

space, creating linkages and orienting buildings to reinforce the pattern. Within this objective careful consideration needs to be given to cultural heritage and biodiversity constraints, discussed below in 8.4 and 8.5.

Areas of key development potential should be subject to a controlled process of environmental scooping/ assessment, master-planning and design guidance to ensure that environmental and cultural aspects are not adversely impacted and that townscape and landscape aspects are appropriately considered.

8.4 Cultural Heritage

The canal corridor and its curtilage is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and has a high density of associated sites of significance. The potential for development of this corridor, including environmental improvement, is limited by statute. The cultural heritage assessment has demonstrated that whilst the canal itself is protected the surrounding areas originally associated with it have undergone extensive and often repeated redevelopment, losing much of the original fabric and character. Furthermore this is an ongoing process and, currently, limited areas or sites of cultural heritage value are left.

Any development directly affecting a SAM, including the defined area of the canal, or

affecting the setting of a SAM, will require Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent. It is recommended that a similar level of constraint be placed on other sites within the canal corridor. Any permitted development should ensure that adverse effects on the integrity and setting are minimized. The unlisted sites in the canal's hinterland, particularly old industrial buildings along the Glasgow Branch, also provide a historical link to the past and contribute to the character of the canal. Wherever possible these should be conserved and integrated into redevelopment, following the successful example of Spier's Wharf. Particular areas of concern include the former public house at Maryhill Locks, industrial buildings around Ruchill Street and buildings and features around Applecross Basin and Port Dundas.

8.5 Habitats and Wildlife

The Phase 1 habitat survey has demonstrated that the canal and its surroundings is not in general an area of rare or threatened habitats and wildlife. Nevertheless, in an urban environment, the canal corridor comprises a valuable mixture of habitats in a continuous corridor which links urban and suburban greenspaces with the surrounding countryside. Key habitats within the canal corridor include scrub, tall ruderal vegetation, neutral grassland and marginal/ inundation vegetation along the

edge of the canal. These are contiguous with habitats in adjacent open spaces including further scrub, grassland and ruderal vegetation as well as semi-natural and plantation woodland. This provides wildlife with habitats and freedom of movement in an otherwise relatively sterile or fragmented city environment.

Key Habitat Areas

Notable areas of habitat valuable to wildlife are located along the canal:

- Between Temple and Maryhill scrub, semi-natural woodland and plantation woodland, ruderal and grassland habitats link with the semi-natural woodland on the railway line and along the Kelvin River valley and Dawsholme Park.
- The Stockingfield/ Ruchill golf course area has extensive areas of scrub contiguous with semi-natural woodland and with marginal canalside vegetation, neutral grassland and the extensive amenity grassland of the golf course. The golf course is linked via the canal corridor to an extensive area of scrub and grassland on the opposite side of the canal between the railway and housing at Cadder.
- North of Lambhill the canal passes into urban fringe and open countryside. The canalside habitats are adjacent to the extensive marshland habitats of Possil Loch and the neutral grassland and marshland of Lochfaulds

- Firhill Basin on the Glasgow Branch has an extensive area of scrub contiguous with tall ruderal vegetation and mixed plantation woodland and south to Applecross Basin there is an extensive mosaic of scrub, woodland, ruderal, grassland and marginal habitats between Hamiltonhill and the canal. Firhill Basin is also a habitat for water voles
- At Port Dundas scrub habitats on the southern edge of the basin merge with the grassland and plantation woodland of Sighthill Park.

The survey has indicated that as they stand, often unmanaged and in a mosaic of tall vegetation and open areas, the habitats are ideal for encouraging a diversity of wildlife and maximizing biodiversity.

Successful continuance of the current status quo, together with future improvements, will be ensured by addressing a number of issues including: habitat protection/ development control, habitat creation and targeted vegetation management.

Continuity of Habitats

It is important to ensure that an unbroken corridor of varied and interlinking habitats is maintained, together with linkages to adjacent green spaces and green corridors. This may involve restriction on development in key locations, together with targeted habitat creation.

Reducing Disturbance

Managing vegetation to ensure that valuable habitat areas, particularly on the offside of the canal, are difficult for the public to reach. This will provide opportunity for wildlife to feed and find refuge without fear of disturbance. This will involve careful consideration of development close to the canal, retaining a 'green margin' that may not always be compatible with townscape and design objectives. Strategic management or habitat creation may also be required to create barriers.

Vegetation Management

Whilst a low management input has currently produced a successful result it will be necessary to carry out vegetation management such as selective thinning, grass cutting or dredging of margins to maintain the diversity and balance of habitats in and around the canal. Maintenance is also required to address issues such as access, safety and security. All management activities should be integrated into a management programme addressing all such issues with an objective of maximizing biodiversity. The management programme for the canal should also be integrated with those for the adjacent green spaces.

Habitat Creation

Where possible opportunities should be made for habitat creation, either as part of development proposals or to augment the existing habitat network and linkages. New habitats should comprise predominantly native species and be targeted towards the objectives of habitat management/ biodiversity action plans.

8.6 Access and Transport Links

The canal is accessible along the towpath on at least one side for the whole of its length within Glasgow. There are points of access on the off side as well although generally these are limited or informal and the off side is inaccessible, which is beneficial for wildlife (see 8.5). Access to the towpath from the surrounding area varies considerably from one area to another. For instance in the kilometre between Netherton and Kelvindale there are seven access points, whereas over a similar length between Firhill Road and Applecross Basin the towpath is not formally accessible from outside the canal corridor.

At a number of locations the towpath is accessible from a nearby Quality Bus Corridor (eg. Duntreath Avenue/Great Western Road, Maryhill Road, Garscube Road) or, in two cases from a railway station (Westerton and Kelvindale).

Priorities should be to improve accessibility without compromising landscape character, cultural heritage or biodiversity priorities. This will involve formalising some desire lines, improving access gradients and path surfacing and creating new linkages between the canal towpath and other important pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes.

At a few locations additional access across and to the canal would significantly improve overall linkages and permeability:

- At Stockingfield the unsatisfactory crossing through a tunnel could be much improved by provision of a bridge over the waterway from the Glasgow towpath to the Stockingfield-Lochfaulds towpath. There is the possibility a double bridge linking the towpaths and Ruchill golf course.
- The linkage of greenspace and access to the towpath between Hamiltonhill and Firhill can be addressed by a footbridge crossing and new canal access close to the Firhill Road/Garscube Road junction.
- A footbridge across the canal at Cadder, superseding the derelict tunnel at Halloween Pend, would connect the newly built housing with the towpath as well as linking the greenspaces at Ruchill Golf Course and the Cadder scrubland (this would be the final link in a continuous

greenspace from Applecross Basin through to Lambhill).

- A major barrier to the redevelopment at Port Dundas is the lack of access from the nearby city centre, currently severed by the M8. At present there is only one pedestrian and one vehicular route across the motorway. Any future redevelopment with a commercial and residential element will require significantly improved access if it is to succeed.

8.7 Usage and Recreation

During the survey most activities observed were on the towpath or banks, with occasional boats on the canal. Only one boat was observed going through the locks. The most common activities were walking, dog walking, cycling and angling.

The recreational potential of the canal is already subject of the *Glasgow Canal Strategy* and the *Glasgow Waterspace Strategy*.

A watersports activity centre at Firhill Basin is proposed by British Waterways. This area is under considerable development pressure and already has recent development that has not related well to the canal. Furthermore it is one of the key habitat areas, and includes the protected habitat of the water vole. It is essential that future development in this

area is carefully planned and integrated to ensure that adverse impacts on habitat and disturbance to wildlife are minimized and that there is a fully integrated development plan resolving the multiple pressures on this area.

8.8 Signage

Good signage along and to and from the canal is a vital component of its accessibility and helps to reinforce identity. Currently signage is infrequent and patchy – in particular signage between the canal and other locations. A signage strategy is required. This should:

- identify the shortfalls in current signage and recommend minimum signage standards in terms of frequency, location and information
- recommend adequate signage as an integral part of any access improvements or development proposals
- address design standards/ styles for individual signs in order to maintain consistency of information and appearance and reinforce the profile of the canal corridor.

8.9 Maintenance and Repair

The state of the canal and towpath is in general good, which may be a result of Millennium funding and overhauls

together with continuing management by British Waterways.

In a number of areas the towpath surface is deteriorating. This appears largely to be due to vehicle access by operating teams in the lock areas. The path surface has become eroded by vehicles, and this has become a weakness further eroded by surface water flow on the gradient. Consideration should be given to reinforcing or sealing the surface of these sections of the path.

Boundaries such as walls and fences are often in a poor state of repair. Whilst not necessarily dangerous at present there is current unsightliness and the possibility of further deterioration. In many cases these are the upstanding components of the SAM. There should be an ongoing programme of inspection and repair. Where an unsightly boundary feature belongs to a neighbouring property consideration should be given to using vegetation to screen it.

There is little sign of significant vandalism, dumping or litter in the canal or on the towpath areas. However, some of the more extensive and linking spaces have vandalism and littering problems. It is possible that the problem may be reduced by improving passive surveillance of these spaces. This can be achieved partly by vegetation management and environmental improvement and also by gradually increased use of the canal towpath and waterway. Badly affected areas should be targeted for early

management and environmental improvements. New development that relates to the towpath should also increase the extent of surveillance.

8.10 Safety and Security

The canal currently has a number of areas in which safety and security could be perceived as a poor. This applies to areas where there are long sections with few access points and the canal is enclosed by tall vegetation. Security can be improved by:

- vegetation management, creating larger gaps around access points along the towpath or to allow passive surveillance from neighbouring buildings
- improved/ more frequent access points.
- Design of future developments that interact positively with the canal.

The needs of security should be balanced with the retention of the special character of sections of the canal where vegetation provides screening from the surrounding built up environment.