



Inverclyde
council

LAST UPDATED 2018

GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

LOCATION	HES* REFERENCE
A	
Ardgowan Estate	GDL00021
D	
Duchal House	GDL00146
F	
Finlaystone Estate	GDL00180

HES* - Historic Environment Scotland

Garden and Designed Landscape

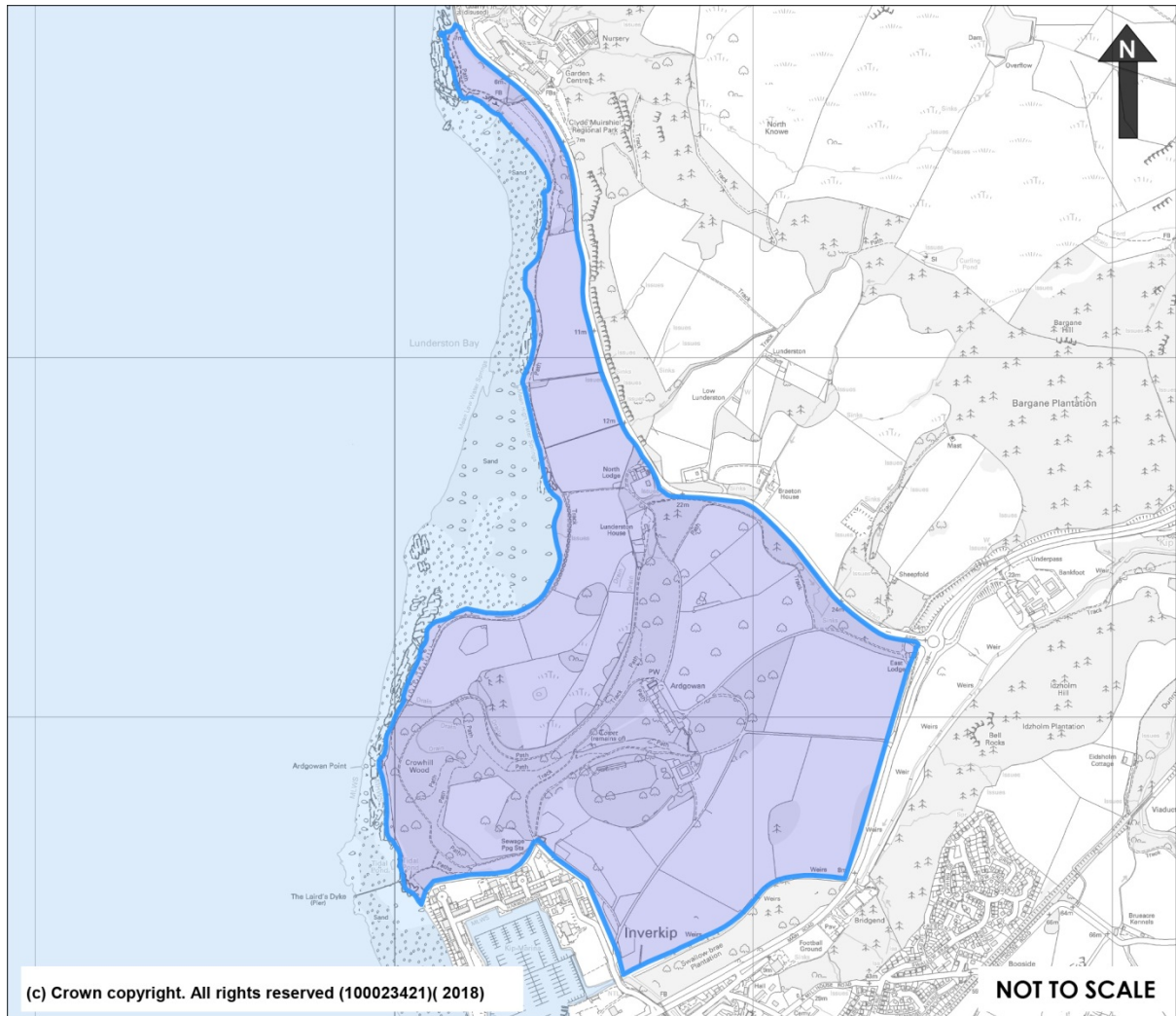
Site Name: Ardgowan Estate

Grid Reference: 220656, 673078

Date Added: 1 July 1987

HES Reference: GDL00021

Amended: 24 June 2015



Description

The designed landscape at Ardgowan dates from around 1800 and is a good example of the work of James Ramsay. The parkland, woodland and gardens provide an impressive setting for the category A listed house and make an important contribution to the local scenery.

Commanding extensive views over the Firth of Clyde, the mansion sits within late Victorian and Edwardian formal and kitchen gardens in a wider frame of parkland and woodland.

Main structure established c1800 with improvements mid/late-19th-century and improvements and additions early-20th-century to present.

Importance of Site

A site included in the Inventory is assessed for its condition and integrity and for its level of importance. The criteria used are set out in Annex 5 of the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (December 2011). The principles are represented by the following value-based criteria and we have assigned a value for each on a scale ranging from outstanding value to no value. Criteria not applicable to a particular site have been omitted. All sites included in the Inventory are considered to be of national importance.

Criteria	Value	Comments
Work of Art	Outstanding	The designed landscape at Ardgowan has outstanding value as a Work of Art and is an important example of the work of James Ramsay.
Historical	Outstanding	There are several estate plans dating from the 18th century at the house and also Lady Alice Thynne's records of the gardens. Ardgowan has been associated with the Stewart family since the early 15th century.
Horticultural/Arboricultural/ Silvicultural	High	Many members of the family have been keen plantmen and the collection of shrubs at Ardgowan has high value. It has been well documented in the past.
Architectural	Outstanding	The designed landscape provides the setting for an A listed building and has outstanding Architectural value.
Scenic	Outstanding	The landscape of Ardgowan is visible from the surrounding roads and makes a major contribution to the scenery.
Nature Conservation	High	The older woodlands and shoreline provide a variety of habitats which give Ardgowan high value in this category.

Location and Setting

Ardgowan lies half a mile north of Inverkip at Lunderston Bay on the Firth of Clyde. It is some 3 miles (5km) south of Gourock and 5 miles (8km) south-west of Greenock. It is bounded by the A78(T) to the south-east and the A78 to Gourock to the north and by the Firth of Clyde to the west. The Kip Water flows through the southern margin of the estate. To the north of the river valley, the hills rise up to 663' (202m) and, to the south, they rise to 935' (285m) at Dunnock Hill. The designed landscape of Ardgowan has been laid out on the relatively flat coastal area, although the mansion and former Castle were built on a higher elevation on the raised beach, 60' above the surrounding land. The mansion commands extensive views over the Firth of Clyde to the north, west and south. The designed landscape at Ardgowan is very visible from the surrounding woods and the policy woodlands are particularly significant in the views from the A78(T) to the south.

Ardgowan Castle, now a ruin, was set on a promontory on the raised beach above the surrounding coastal flats in a relatively defensible position. When the mansion house was built in 1797, a site was chosen further east, still commanding extensive views. General Roy's plan of 1750, surveyed before the mansion house was built, shows only a small area of enclosed land around the old Castle with a formal arrangement of shelter planting. The 1st edition OS map of 1856 shows the picturesque designed landscape as laid out by Ramsay. It extends from Bankfoot in the north-west to Bridgend in the south-east and to Inverkip Bay in the south

and is enclosed by minor roads. Beyond these boundaries, the hill slopes to the north-east and south-east were planted by the 8th Baronet to be viewed from the mansion house; Idzholm and Bargane Plantations were established for amenity to show a variety of colour. The extent of the designed landscape remains similar today and encloses some 365 acres (147.8ha).

Site History

The designed landscape at Ardgowan was laid out c.1800 to the designs of James Ramsay.

The lands of Ardgowan were conferred by Robert III in 1403 to his natural son, Sir John Stewart, whose descendants have held the lands of Ardgowan ever since. The old castle at Ardgowan is now a ruin and lies a short distance to the south-west of the present mansion. The designed landscape at Ardgowan dates from the end of the 18th century when the new mansion house was built. The 3rd Baronet, Sir Michael, had married Helen Houston in c.1730, an heiress of the Shaw family and acquired the Mansion House in Greenock. His son, John Shaw-Stewart, commissioned Hugh Cairncross to design a new mansion house at Ardgowan which was started in 1797. John's wife, Frances, was the widow of Sir James Maxwell, 6th Baronet of Pollok, who was herself a keen gardener and is reputed to have introduced shrubs and the snowdrops, for which Ardgowan is renowned, from Pollok.

The design plan for the layout of the grounds around 1800 has recently been discovered at Ardgowan. It is by James Ramsay, and a survey plan of 1817 drawn by D. Reid, also kept at the house, shows the landscape laid out according to Ramsay's plans, with minor changes, eg the drives. The 6th Baronet, Sir Michael, succeeded in 1825 and employed William Burn to carry out additions to the house. He was succeeded by his son, Sir Michael, as 7th Baronet in 1836 and he married Lady Octavia Grosvenor in 1852. They made many improvements to the grounds and Lady Octavia brought her gardener from Eaton Hall in Cheshire to Ardgowan. A formal garden was laid out to the south west of the house with a beech walk along the ridge to the Castle. Two summerhouses were placed along the woodland walks in the grounds. The formal garden was laid out with white gravel paths.

Sir Michael died in 1903 and was succeeded by Sir Hugh, who employed Lorimer in 1904 to carry out improvements which included the construction of the Conservatory. Sir Hugh married Lady Alice Thynne who was a keen plantswoman and kept detailed record books of the gardens. They were both keen planters; the policy woodlands were planted up to be viewed from the house and exotic and ornamental trees and shrubs were planted along the ridge. The Golden Garden was added for them on their Golden Wedding Anniversary. During World War II the house was used as a hospital and some of the garden features, such as the summerhouses, were lost during this time.

Sir Houston and Lady Shaw-Stewart are currently making improvements to the gardens and have commissioned Vernon Russell Smith to design the new layout along the south-west front of the house.

Landscape Components

Architectural Features

Ardgowan House was designed in 1797 by H. Cairncross. It is a two-storey classical style mansion house with pedimented three-storey centre block, and it is listed A. Additions were made by William Burn in 1831-32 and Sir Robert Lorimer in 1904. Ardgowan Castle is a three-

storey tower, now ruined, of the late 15th century which is listed B. The North Lodge is dated 1797 and is of similar style to the house, one storey, and listed B.

There is a Gothic chapel to the north of the house designed by John Henderson in the 1850s and the offices include a model dairy building with servants' tunnel leading to the steading. The stables were also built around 1797 and there is a doocot in the courtyard. There is also a game larder near the house and a tall complex sundial in the formal garden.

Parkland

The parkland at Ardgowan retains the design drawn up by Ramsay and contains some particularly fine parkland trees including some older oak trees which date from the 18th century and were retained when the new landscape was laid out. Other specimens include horse chestnut, beech, sycamore, elm and Scots pine, most dating from the mid to late 19th century. There was at one time a 9-hole golf course laid out in the parks but they are now all maintained for grazing sheep and cattle.

Woodland

Many of the estate woodlands were replanted by Sir Hugh, 8th Baronet, in the early years of this century. He chose mixed plantings of deciduous and conifer species, planting with regard to their colour in the views. Planting was continued up to World War II and most of the woodlands are in good heart. The older woodlands, particularly the parkland roundels, need some attention. Crowhill Wood, to the west of the house above the shore at Ardgowan Point, is an old beech wood; walks were laid out to it from the house and summerhouses are shown on the 1st edition OS map along the routes.

The Gardens

The main garden has been developed along the ridge from the Castle to the mansion house and has been redesigned during its history. The 1st edition OS map of 1856 shows a small formal area along the south-west front of the house, surrounded by a shrubbery, with a bowling green marked to the east of the Castle. The shrubbery was planted by Sir Michael and Lady Octavia and contained many interesting varieties of Rhododendrons and other ornamental shrubs. A photograph taken in 1889 shows the broad grass walk laid out along the ridge with the newly planted young ornamental trees, including cedar and Sequoias. The Gardeners' Chronicle article of 1901 describes the magnificent broad terrace and the 'well-kept flower garden' in the parterre to the south-west of the house. There were 'great yews, similar in shape to a horse-shoe, with a garden seat in the recess so formed, also other stone-like hedges that the late Duke of Devonshire used to term evergreen buttresses'.

In Edwardian times the formal garden was laid out as a rose garden with hybrid tea roses in formal beds with a central sundial feature. Vernon Russell-Smith has redesigned these gardens and they are currently being relaid. Many ornamental trees and shrubs remain alongside the Broad Walk and these include Eucryphia, Cercidiphyllum and Azaleas. The banks of the ridge support many wildflowers and spring bulbs, particularly the snowdrops which were illustrated in Sir Herbert Maxwell's book. The shrubberies were separated from the parks by ha-has. The Golden Garden lies to the north of the park and was put in on the occasion of Sir Hugh and Lady Alice's Golden Wedding.

Walled Gardens

The 3.5 acre kitchen gardens were put in to the south of the castle ridge in the first half of the 19th century and are shown on the 1st edition map. The walled garden is an unusual lozenge shape and vegetable crops were grown outside the walls over a further 1.25 acres. In 1901

there was a 'spacious central wall, trimmed yews and a magnificent ribbon border' two hundred yards long which was planted with Alyssum, Pelargonium and Ageratum. There were four good sized greenhouses with a porch in the centre. A circular walk surrounded the walled garden and could be overlooked from the castle above. Since World War II the gardens have been let as a market garden and, more recently, as a tree nursery.

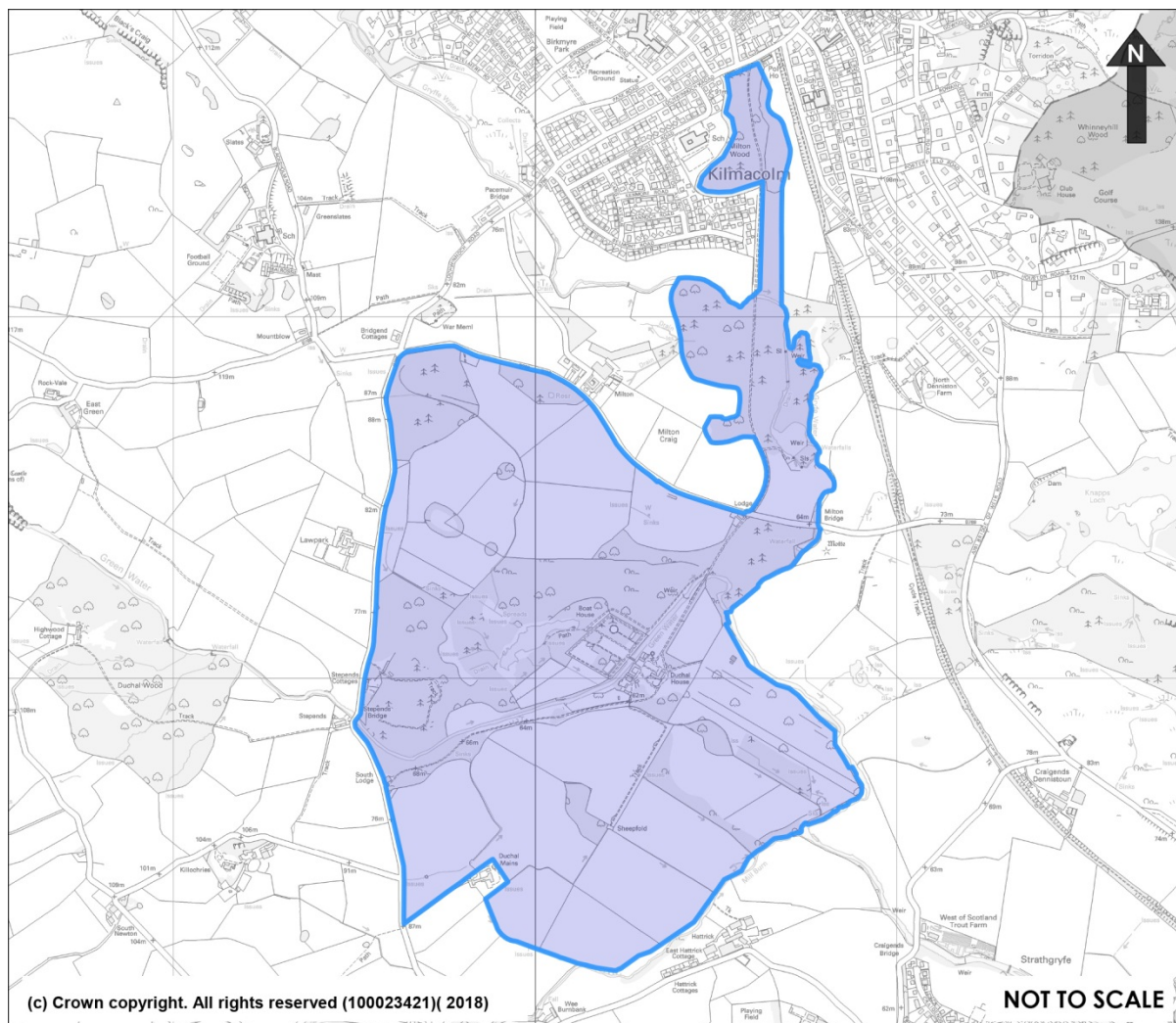
Garden and Designed Landscape

Site Name: Duchal House

Grid Reference: 235172, 668153

Date Added: 31 March 2006

HES Reference: GDL 00146



Description

Duchal is a good example of a formal late 17th/early 18th century designed landscape into which later overlays have been well integrated.

It is a medium-sized, formal landscape, characteristic of the late 17th/early 18th century and incorporating later 18th and 19th century modifications.

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Importance of Site

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Criteria not applicable to a particular site have been omitted. All sites included in the Inventory are considered to be of national importance.

Criteria	Value	Comments
Work of Art	High	The formality of the house and landscape combined with its riverside setting give this site high value as a work of art.
Historical	Outstanding	The known family history and the development and survival of the designed landscape give this site outstanding historical value.
Horticultural/Arboricultural/ Silvicultural	High	The lime avenues and the ancient trained fruit trees in the walled garden give this site high arboricultural and horticultural value.
Architectural	Outstanding	The landscape provides the setting for a Category A listed building therefore the site has outstanding architectural value.
Scenic	High	Views from the surrounding roads of the policy planting and the lime avenues give this site high scenic value.
Nature Conservation	High	The mixed woodland and the pond west of the walled garden and the area around the Gryfe Water north of the house contain a rich variety of flora and fauna, giving this site high nature conservation value.
Archaeological	Some	The remains of the motte to the northeast of Duchal House give this site some archaeological value.

Location and Setting

Duchal House is situated southwest of Kilmacolm, west of the A761 and south of the B788. The house and immediate policies lie within a large loop near the confluence of the Green and Gryfe Waters. The landscape at Duchal is generally flat but rises slightly to the east. There are views out of the estate to the south-west to Duchal Moor, and the Duchal designed landscape is highly visible from the roads that surround it. There are good general views from the A761 which is raised above the level of the policies to the north-east, and fine views of the lime avenues and across the water courses from the Craighends Bridge road, off the A761, to the south-east of the estate.

The earliest estate plans show Duchal House estate was developed by the Porterfield family from 1544 onwards. General Roy's Military Survey of 1747-55 shows a formal late 17th/early 18th century designed landscape bounded to the north and east by the Gryfe Water and extending over the Green Water to the west where it is contained within a rectangular-shaped enclosure. Outlying fields and parks beyond the western enclosure stretch towards the Old Place or Castle of Duchal which lies approximately one kilometre to the west-north-west of the existing estate. Duchal Castle and Duchal Wood, probably the castle's nearby hunting park, do not appear to have belonged to the Porterfields but this remains to be confirmed.

Duchal House policy boundaries appear to change little until the later 19th century when the designed landscape was extended northwards to Kilmacolm. Between 1863 and 1898, the landscape was affected by the expansion of Kilmacolm and by the building of the now disused Greenock branch railway line.

The designed landscape today extends from the B786 in the west, the B788 and southern edge of Kilmacolm in the north, the Gryfe Water and Mill Burn on the east and south-east, and to Duchal Mains in the south.

Site History

From the 13th century, the lands of the present Duchal House belonged to the Lyles whose stronghold was Duchal Castle, one and a quarter miles to the west-north-west. The castle, of which little now remains, stood on a rocky outcrop between the Green Water and Blacketty Water. In 1544, the land passed to John Porterfield of Porterfield whose family were lairds at Duchal House for the next 300 years.

Johann Blaeu's Atlas, 1654, shows 'Ducchal' and 'Old Castle', each surrounded by a palisade. It is extremely likely that a formal designed landscape was created between 1654 and 1755. Alexander Porterfield built a house at Duchal in 1710 which is now the south wing of the existing mansion. The layout shown on General Roy's Military Survey, 1747-55, may be attributable to Alexander Porterfield, or may be earlier. Roy's plan shows formal gardens on the south side of the house with a series of parallel rides or avenues stretching out into the landscape. The doocot may belong to the 1710 period.

In 1768, Boyd Porterfield extended the house to the east with a new principal wing centred on the main east-west avenue. There does not appear to have been a radical reforming of the gardens and designed landscape at this time, but the offices were relocated on the east-west axis between Boyd Porterfield's new wing and the Green Water. The Green Water may have been canalised at this date or earlier.

The later 18th century saw the formation of an informal drive from the south-west, running alongside the Green Water. This is shown on John Ainslie's plan of 1796 but it is not known who was responsible for this development.

The walled garden was probably built when the house was extended towards the end of the 18th century, and is constructed out of stone. It first appears on the 1st edition OS map of 1863, as does the informal drive through the park to the south-east. These developments may precede the mid-19th century Shaw-Stewart era.

The Shaw-Stewarts acquired the estate in 1854 but apparently only used the house as a shooting lodge for Duchal Moor. They extended the policies north-east towards Kilmacolm after 1863, creating an entrance from the town with a long picturesque drive, northwards from the B788. This drive is now abandoned and is used as a footpath.

The estate was bought by Mr and Mrs Wallace in 1910, but sold in 1915 to the first Lord Maclay, grandfather of the existing Lord Maclay in whose ownership it remains.

Landscape Components

Architectural Features

Duchal House, c.1768, is a relatively modest country house, consisting of two storeys and basement. The early 18th century laird's house survives as the south wing. A third storey was added later. The **Offices and Stables**, dated 1764, are symmetrically arranged around the east-west axis of the c. 1768 house. The north offices comprise two single-storey, semi-detached cottages; the south office and U-plan stables are also single-storey. An **Octagonal Game Larder**, harled, with slate roof and timber vent, lies adjacent to the north offices. The **Dooocot** stands in a small park south-west of the house. It is a circular stone-built building with

conical, slated roof. The original roof burnt down accidentally in the 1950s and was restored by the current Lord Maclay. The stone **Ha-ha** follows the line of the south-west drive separating the garden from the park. The **Timber Bridge** over the Green Water replaces an earlier arched stone bridge. The original **Stone bridge**, carrying the north drive across the Green Water, was a plain arched structure, replaced in the 19th century by a Victorian wrought iron humpbacked bridge. This second bridge was washed away in a flood in the 1950s. One set of the original gates, pillars and stone vases which stood at either end, has been retained by as an entrance beside the round house. There is now a wooden bridge, raised by an additional 75cm to give extra clearance. No wrought iron parapet railings have been retained on the estate. The **Ice-house**, shown on the 2nd edition OS map of 1913 remains in the undergrowth near the north-west corner of the walled garden. The **Walled Garden** is bounded on three sides by a high stone wall. There are double cast-iron gates in the north and south walls. A circular brick-lined pond, similar to one at Caprington lies to the north of the garden. The **North and South Lodges** are single-storey, stone-built with slate roofs. **Mid Lodge** is a later Victorian asymmetrical two-storey lodge. The present Lord Maclay believes that all three lodges were built in 1871 as compensation for the railway, the construction of which causing the redundancy of the original drive from the front of the house to the B761. Two **Stone Columnar Gateposts** with pyramidal caps stand in an isolated location to the south of the 1710 house. They may relate to the old north-south avenue on the west side of the house.

Drives & Approaches

There are two main drives to Duchal House from the south-west off the B786 and the north-east off the B788. The lodges are both 19th-century. Roy's plan suggests that the north-east approach, originally from Milltown on the north side of the Green Water, is a long-standing approach which continued past the west side of the 1710 house. By the time of John Ainslie's plan, 1796, a new, informal south-west drive followed a picturesque route alongside the Green Water. This remains the south-west drive today and is planted with oak and beech, many of which are young specimens and part of the ongoing regeneration programme.

In the early 19th century, before the 1st edition OS map of 1863, there was a south-east approach from the A761. This was truncated and subsequently abandoned when the Greenock branch railway to Kilmacolm was built in 1869.

The later 19th-century extension to the north-west drive is still used for foot traffic and vehicles travelling from Duchal House to Kilmacolm.

Parkland

The main ornamental parkland at Duchal is located to the southeast of the house. The planting is dominated by twin double tree avenues. In the 18th century these two parallel avenues were probably all lime, but today the northern one is beech, probably planted in the 19th century. Gaps in the southern avenue continue to be replanted with lime. Towards the house is a lone sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) which could date from around the time of the 1710 house, or even earlier.

A plantation of conifers on the site of a deciduous tree clump shown on the 1st edition 1863 OS map provides an edge to the parkland on this side of the house.

Woodland

To the northwest of the Walled Garden is a large area of mixed deciduous/coniferous woodland which superseded and expanded upon the 18th century wilderness shown on Roy's plan. Within the woodland is a fishpond which may be early 19th century. Walks were

made around it which were edged with Rhododendron planting. The Rhododendrons no longer survive. Other woodland further west includes shelter belts and perimeter planting inside the boundary wall, such as ash, sycamore, and Wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*). The wooded areas on the banks of the Gryfe Water are dominated by native alder. Within the policies to the north of the house are clumps of mixed deciduous trees.

The Gardens

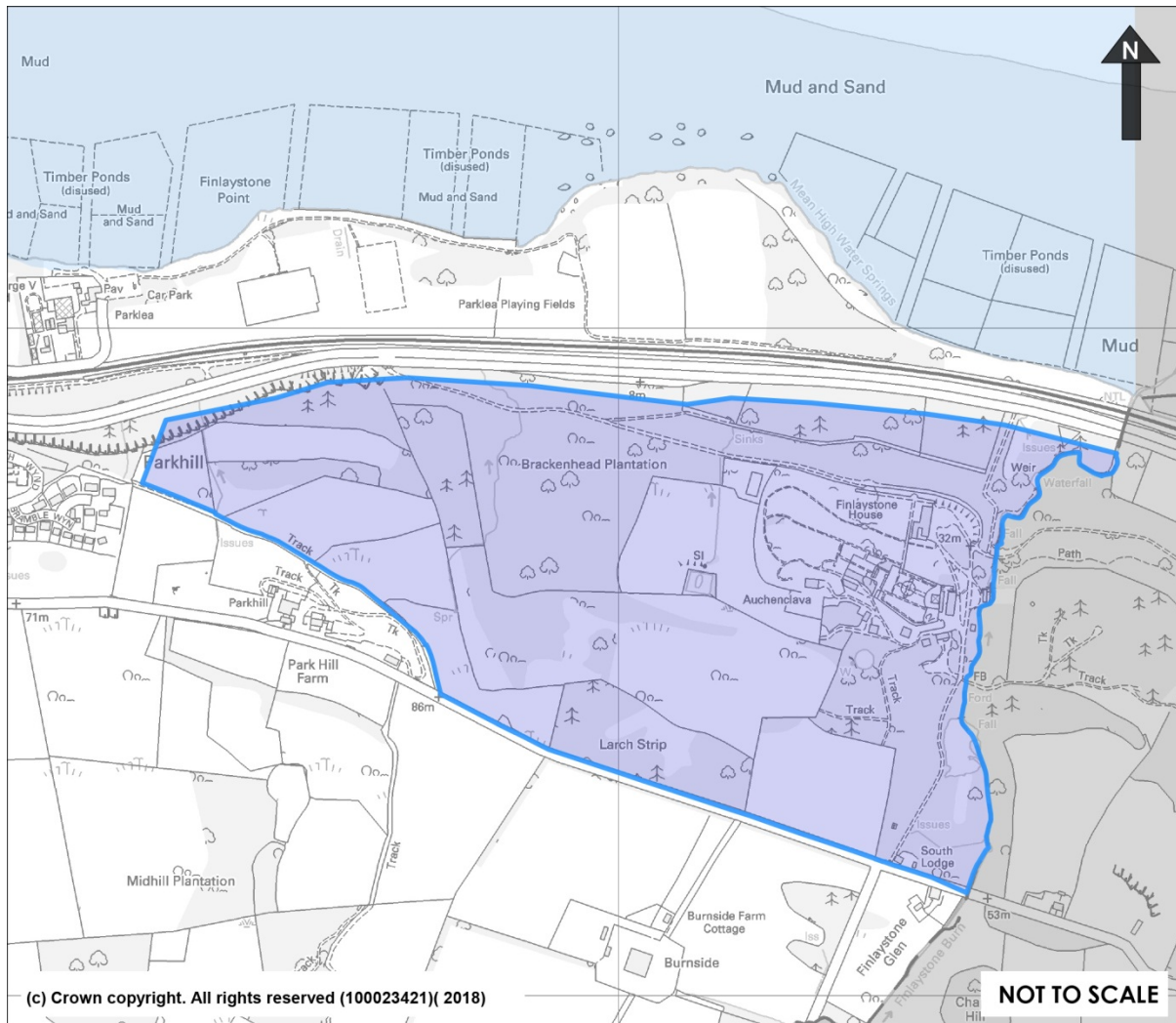
Sweeps of mown grass and shrub groupings are maintained close to the house on three sides, to act as an immediate foreground to the wider parkland landscape. The main garden area is located to the northwest of the house. A small stone ha-ha between the house and garden isolates a lawn area beside the house which acts as the prelude to the Walled Garden.

Walled Gardens

The Walled Garden is the main garden area at Duchal. It was probably built in the late 18th century (after the house was extended), and lies on the northwest side of the Green Water, overlaying part of the former mid 18th century landscape layout. The garden is reached by a timber bridge which replaces an earlier Victorian stone and wrought-iron one.

This garden is a traditional mixed flower and vegetable garden which still contains much of the original box hedging and fruit trees. Some of the features in the walled garden may relate to the 18th century formal landscape, for example the mound, which may be a mount, planted with holly and rhododendron. There was an eagle's cage which was constructed in the 19th century and is no longer extant. To the north of the walled garden is a circular brick-lined lily pond. An axial double border bisects the garden from north to south.

Garden and Designed Landscape	
Site Name: Finlaystone Estate	
Grid Reference: 236327, 673591	
Date Added: 1 July 1987	HES Reference: GDL00180
Amended: 14 September 2015	



Importance of Site

A site included in the Inventory is assessed for its condition and integrity and for its level of importance. The criteria used are set out in Annex 5 of the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (December 2011). The principles are represented by the following value-based criteria and we have assigned a value for each on a scale ranging from outstanding value to no value. Criteria not applicable to a particular site have been omitted. All sites included in the Inventory are considered to be of national importance.

Criteria	Value	Comments
Work of Art	High	The policies of Finlaystone have high value as a Work of Art in their present form.
Historical	Outstanding	Finlaystone has outstanding Historical value in

		view of the available documentary map evidence and the associations with the Earls of Glencairn.
Horticultural/Arboricultural/ Silvicultural	High	Finlaystone has high Horticultural value in view of the interesting range of trees planted in the arboretum between 1900 and 1925.
Architectural	Outstanding	Finlaystone has outstanding Architectural value as it provides the setting for Architectural features of exceptional interest.
Scenic	High	The house and woodlands of Finlaystone are of high significance in the surrounding landscape.
Nature Conservation	Outstanding	The presence of an SSSI on the foreshore of Finlaystone gives the site outstanding Nature Conservation value.

Location and Setting

Finlaystone House is situated on the south bank of the Firth of Clyde between the village of Langbank and the town of Port Glasgow, some 18 miles (29km) west of Glasgow. The village of Kilmacolm lies 2.5 miles (4km) to the south. The A8(T) forms the northern boundary of the policies whilst the old Greenock Road forms that to the south. The mansion is set on a whinstone cliff south of the River Clyde. The Finlaystone Burn flows northwards through the policies and cuts down to the River Clyde over a series of waterfalls; it was dammed to form a pond in the south of the policies for the purpose of providing water power for electricity generation. The average annual rainfall is 48". The surrounding landscape to the south is farmed while, to the west, lie the housing and industrial developments of Port Glasgow; Langbank is to the east. To the north, across the Firth of Clyde, lies Dumbarton Rock and the town of Dumbarton beyond which views are gained to the Kilpatrick Hills. Views can be gained along and across the Clyde, particularly from the terraced garden. From the A814, on the northern shore of the Firth of Clyde, views can be gained across to Finlaystone and the woods and house are of some significance from the A8(T) along the boundary of the site.

Finlaystone House stands on a cliff above the Firth of Clyde surrounded by lawns some of which, in spring, are clothed with daffodils. The designed landscape extends north to the A8(T), south to the old Greenock Road, west beyond Brackenhead Plantation and east to Marypark. In 1830, the Glasgow/Greenock railway line separated the rest of the estate from the foreshore although this remains part of the estate. The mudflats are designated as an SSSI. In more recent years, realignment of the A8(T) caused a further division, separating part of the north park and East Lodge from the policies. Following this work, the northern boundary wall was rebuilt in its present position.

There are several estate plans at Finlaystone including a survey plan of 1861, and documentary evidence is also provided by General Roy's plan of 1750 and the OS map editions of 1866 & 1910. These show that the policies were extended to the east between 1750 and 1860 and have remained consistent in size since then. Four drives link the house with the outer limits of the policies; of these, only the east and south drives remain in regular use.

The designed landscape boundary was amended in 2015 to exclude the dual carriageway and roundabout to the west of the designed landscape. Following the 2015 changes, the designed landscape boundary encloses an area of some 208.3 acres (84.3ha).

Site History

The designed landscape in its present form was laid out between 1750 and 1860. Major improvements to the gardens were undertaken in the late 19th & early 20th centuries and from 1955. James Whitton is thought to have been involved in the design of the terraced garden c.1900.

It is thought that there has been a castle at Finlaystone since the late 14th century when Robert II confirmed the lands on Sir John de Danyelstoun. His son, Sir Robert de Danyelstoun, was keeper of Dumbarton Castle. On his death in 1399, his property was divided between his two daughters; Newark Castle which lies on the shore to the west of Finlaystone went to Elizabeth, whilst Finlaystone itself was inherited by Margaret who married Sir William Cunningham in 1405. Their grandson, Alexander, became the 1st Earl of Glencairn in 1488. His descendant, the 5th or 'Good' Earl, was a strong supporter of the Reformation. In 1556 John Knox gave Communion to the family, reputedly under the yew tree which remains today in the garden. The 9th Earl of Glencairn, William (1610-64), was made High Chancellor of Scotland after the Restoration. The 14th Earl, James (1749-92), was a friend and benefactor of Robert Burns.

In 1746-50 proposals were prepared for alterations to the house but these were not carried out until 1760. On the death of the 15th Earl in 1796, the estate passed to the grandson of the 12th Earl, Robert Graham of Gartmore, in whose family it remained until 1862. In 1830, the railway was constructed through the north of the Finlaystone policies and, as a result, the walled garden was moved from its position near the railway line to its present position. It is thought that some of the existing outbuildings may also have been built around this time. Sir William Cunningham-Graham sold the estate to Sir David Carrick-Buchanan in 1862 who let the house five years later to George Jardine Kidston.

In 1882, Kidston bought the property and began an extensive series of improvements to the house and policies. He commissioned Sir John James Burnett to remodel the house. The gardens were extended, the terraces laid out and the arboretum established. His daughter married Richard Blakiston-Houston and they continued the plantings in the mid-1920s. Their daughter, Marian, married General Sir Gordon MacMillan, and after 1955 further developed the policies and planted extensively in the grounds, particularly after the devastation of the gales of 1968, and also established the nursery in the walled garden. The present owner is their son, George Gordon MacMillan, hereditary chief of the Clan MacMillan. He and his wife, and other members of the family, are actively involved in the upkeep and maintenance of the designed landscape.

Landscape Components

Architectural Features

Finlaystone House, listed B, was built c.1760 around an earlier Castle; the architect was John Douglas. It was remodelled in the Baroque style by Sir John James Burnet in c.1900 although the turrets predate this extension. The South Lodge stands on the Old Greenock Road at the end of the south drive. The stables, garages and garden buildings lie to the east of the walled garden. They are thought to have been built in the mid-19th century and were altered c.1900. The Laundry stands on the west bank of the Finlaystone Burn and has been converted for use as a tea room. A fine stone bridge spans the Finlaystone Burn on the main east drive. There are two sundials: one in the old rose garden and another in the walled garden, the latter of which requires some restoration. A stone Japanese lantern stands at the edge of a footpath to the south-west of the house. Stone ornaments are mounted on the

pillars which are incorporated at either end of the balustraded north retaining wall of the terraced garden.

Parkland

Reference to the 1st edition OS map of 1866 shows parkland trees in an area along the northern boundary of the policies, now known as the Macneill Field, and west of the house. Reference to General Roy's map of 1750 would indicate that these parks had been cut out of areas of former woodland. By the time of the 2nd edition OS map, the number of trees in these areas had been reduced. Today there are three mature oaks in the Macneill Field and, since 1976, the area has been cultivated for soft fruits. The park to the west of the house was largely developed as a garden at the beginning of this century, incorporating some beech and other old parkland trees including a Turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*) which was thought to be the largest in the West of Scotland in 1907. A small area of parkland remains on undulating ground between the gardens and Brackenwood Plantation.

Woodland

Woodlands were established at Finlaystone by the mid-18th century, as shown by General Roy's map. Of these, some were cleared for parkland. By 1860, the blocks which remained lay in the central core of the policies, along the Finlaystone Glen and along the edge of the cliff to the north of the house. The Great Lime Avenue and three mature yew trees, which remain in an area known as Paradise to the north-east of the house, are remnants of an earlier wood shown on General Roy's map of 1750 which incorporated a series of intersecting rides through it. By 1866, it had been largely cleared. The age of the yews is uncertain and is the subject of various reports including those by the Andersonian Naturalist Society, who visited in 1893, and a Glasgow Naturalist Magazine article of 1912 which estimated that they may have been planted c.1620.

Between 1866 and the early 1900s, the structure of the policy woodlands remained similar. 90% of the older woodlands are deciduous with sycamore, ash, wych elm, oak and horse chestnut species. Extensive planting has been carried out in the woodlands to the east of the Finlaystone Burn since 1882, when the estate was acquired by Mr Kidston. He also established the arboretum between 1890 and 1900, mainly along the east and west drives. The tree collection was further embellished by his son-in-law c.1925. The trees were catalogued and measured in 1974. They include a diverse range of species: among them *Abies homolepis*, *Abies cilicica* and *Picea polita*. After 1955 spruce, larch and pine plantations were established, particularly in the areas between established woodlands to the east of the Finlaystone Burn. Seventy acres of mainly young woodland were lost in the gales of 1968, some of which have been replanted, whilst other areas have been left to naturally regenerate. *Rhododendron ponticum* became established in the understorey but has been cleared.

The Gardens

There are two areas of informal garden at Finlaystone: the New Garden below the Laundry and the Bog Garden. The New Garden is situated on either side of the Finlaystone Burn, between the Laundry and the stone bridge. It is significant from the main drive where it is seen against the backdrop of the waterfall and the rustic bridge which crosses the burn opposite the Laundry. The area was cleared in 1959 and the present garden has been created since then by Lady MacMillan. It includes a range of Azaleas, Rhododendrons, Hostas and Primulas.

The Bog Garden is situated at some distance from the west of the walled garden. The whole area was created from an artificial pond made in 1900. After 1945 it was leaking beyond

repair and was gradually filled in and planted. It is centred on a pond which has recently been cleared and around which the garden is currently being established. The pond is edged by informal shrub beds which include a mixed range of species. A 'folly' for the garden is currently being designed by George MacMillan. The Bog Garden is separated from the terraced garden by informal lawns and shrub borders, in which various species and hybrid rhododendron and azalea are planted. Philadelphus, Buddleia, Hydrangea and other shrubs are also growing in this area. Many of the plants have been propagated for sale in the nursery.

There are two areas of formal garden: the old rose garden which lies due west of the walled garden and the terraced gardens on the west side of the house. The old rose garden is enclosed by a clipped yew hedge. The box compartments laid out to contain the rose beds are now used for cuttings and cut flowers.

The terraced gardens were laid out c.1900 for Mr Kidston on the site of the earlier formal gardens. James Whitton, Superintendent of Glasgow Botanic Gardens from 1893 to 1923, is thought to have been involved in their design and a Mr Goldring is thought to have laid them out. The terraced lawn adjacent to the house is contained by a stone retaining wall along the north boundary. A flight of steps incorporated within the wall links the terrace with the west drive. The banking between the terrace and the drive is clothed with clipped laurel. The 'John Knox Tree' stands on the lawn next to the house. The tree was moved in 1900 and a series of three photographs exist which record the operation. Lady MacMillan's great-aunt was involved in the castellated clipping of the yew hedges (inspired by the castellations of Marlborough House, London) which enclose the rose garden beyond the main lawn. A bomb dropped in World War II was responsible for the undulating surface of the area. Since then, the beds have been relaid and planted with roses given as gifts to General Sir Gordon and Lady MacMillan on the occasion of their Golden Wedding. All the plants were lost in a recent bad frost and the beds are to revert to bedding plants, a style first adopted between 1918 and 1939, until the ground is ready to take roses once again. A long herbaceous border lies on the north edge of the lawn which lies beyond the rose garden.

Walled Gardens

The walled garden was built in its present position between 1830 and 1861. The original planting was herbaceous until World War I when it was cleared for vegetables. It was planted with vegetables during the wars and since 1955 it has been managed as a tree and shrub nursery by Lady MacMillan. An interesting selection of trees and shrubs is propagated in the glasshouses from material in the gardens, whilst other plants are brought in from other Scottish sources.