

Conservation Area Assessment Report  
**Gartmore Village**  
**Conservation Area**

**Building scale, form and architectural style**

- 4.1 The character and quality of the individual buildings within a Conservation Area are absolutely central to its value and people's perceptions of it. This section therefore incorporates a general discussion of the range found in the village, but does not extend to a building by building analysis, although this would be a valuable exercise.
- 4.2 The variety of age, scale and form of buildings has been touched on before but the importance of the continuity of development from the 1700's through to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century cannot be over stressed. This has produced truly vernacular burgh buildings of the quality of Murray House (which is one of the buildings in Gartmore known to have a wheel staircase), through the typical Victorian style of the School House and the arts and crafts influence of Lochengelly and Hazel Cottage. The buildings generally exhibit simple forms with pitched roofs and vertical full height gables, often surmounted with a chimney stack at one or both ends.



Figure38: Murray House, The School House, Lochengelly, Hazel Cottage

- 4.3 This encyclopaedic exemplar of Scottish village architecture, is punctuated by the more 'polite' or at least formal Parish Church, School and Village Hall.
- 4.4 The houses to the main street are generally of modest proportions and predominantly one storey or 1½ storeys in height. Many of the upper storeys are later alterations to buildings and while not intrinsically damaging, the quality of detailing of dormers in particular is crucial to the maintenance of the overall quality of the Conservation Area.

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Figure 39a: Examples of diverse architectural styles and date



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Figure 39b: Further examples of architectural styles and date

4.5 One notable feature common to a number of buildings is the inclusion of a front porch. Again this is not entirely typical of a village laid out as early as Gartmore and may be related to the inclusion of front gardens which provide space for these features.

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Figure 40: Traditional front porches to Tadmore and Murray House, note the modern pattern, uPVC and pressed steel door to Tadmore

4.6 Occupation of roof spaces has also been identified as a typical aspect of the Conservation Area and dormer windows are another feature that play a definite contribution to the area.



Figure 41: Original dormer windows to Smarls Cottages and Lochengelly, good examples of traditional, vernacular dormer style and the influence of arts and crafts architecture

4.7 In common with most of Scotland windows used in Gartmore prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century are almost exclusively timber sash and case. The dominant material for both doors and windows would have been good quality softwood, either Douglas Fir, red or Scots pine. Windows are typically set back 100-150mm from the front face of the building, with the box frames (cases) hidden by rebates. Sash horns, a

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traditional English feature are either applied for utility, to strengthen the bottom rail joint or for stylistic purposes from the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

- 4.8 Large panes, either 2 over 2 or 1 over 1 vertical sash and case windows predominate. A closer examination of windows to the earlier buildings however, suggests that there may have been some 'modernisation'. For example the sashes to the first floor of Murray House are 2 panes over 2 but the central astragal (mullion) is of delicate proportions and there are no horns to the bottom rail of the top sash. It is possible therefore that the original form of the windows has been altered by the removal of intermediate astrigals. A similar situation relates to Thorn Cottage.



Figure 42: Windows to Murray House and Thorn Cottage

- 4.9 There are some fine examples of later windows, those to Lochengelly have already been highlighted but many of the other later houses have small paned upper sashes over large paned lower sashes. This style, very popular in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The loss of original windows is a major issue in the Conservation Area (see below) and specific protection of those that remain as well as measures to encourage a return to traditional styles are certainly justified.
- 4.10 There are a number of traditional cast iron rooflights retained in the village, notably to the School House and Smails Cottages and once again retention of these and resisting replacement with standard pattern (eg Velux) windows is to be encouraged.

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Figure 43: 20<sup>th</sup> century window to Stronach and a 19<sup>th</sup> century formation from the School House

4.11 Original and early doors are another feature of the Conservation Area which is under threat. Retention of timber doors, either singly or to vestibule entrances should be encouraged.



Figure 44: Traditional doorways

4.12 The only shop front to the village is that on the Post Office which while unspectacular probably retains much of the original fabric. Refurbishment and enhancement of this important feature would be welcome.

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**Materials**

4.13 The predominant materials in Gartmore are stone walls with slate roofs. There is however, a range of stones and slate types and many houses are rendered, either with a traditional harl or more modern finishes. Stonework to the older properties is simply material of necessity. As the buildings become more 'designed' we see increasing attention taken in the construction of walls, which move from truly random rubble to more mannered and 'polite' systems. Dressed margins and contrasting quoins are all features of the village. The whole system of masonry construction is of course important and not only the stone requires protection but care must be taken in retaining appropriate pointing. Where replacement is necessary, this must be undertaken in the correct materials and matching the original in pattern.



Figure 45: Variety of stonework throughout the village illustrating contrasting patterns and types of stone as well as examples of good and poor pointing practice

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- 4.14 The addition of paint to many of the walls probably has its origins in the limewashing of the walls to provide a sacrificial weather surface and should not be discouraged. Application of paint to more mannered stone surfaces could however be seen as detrimental and should be resisted.



Figure 46: Painted and unfinished stonework to Smails Cottages. This stonework was intended to be visible and painting or other finishes that obscure the stonework should be resisted

- 4.15 It is almost certain that many of the early buildings in Gartmore were thatched and thakestones to Bellevue indicate this. However since the 19<sup>th</sup> century there has been increasing use of slate and although natural Scottish slates, laid in diminishing courses is still the dominant roofing material in the Conservation Area, replacement slates, probably of Welsh origin and a range of concrete tiles have also been employed particularly in re-roofing. To Braeval, the low pitched roof is extremely unusual and is finished in built up felt, it would be interesting to research whether this is the original roof form. Measures to retain original materials and ensure that replacements are undertaken in appropriate materials should be taken.
- 4.16 The Scottish slate in use is principally the darker grey/black slate associated with the West Highlands but locally sourced slate from the Highland Fault Zone was also of this colour.

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Figure 47: Variety of roofing materials across the village



Figure 48: Render types, traditional Harl and cement render

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4.17 These traditional Scottish materials are augmented in many cases by cast iron gutters and attractive timber soffits and barge boards and decorative chimney pots.

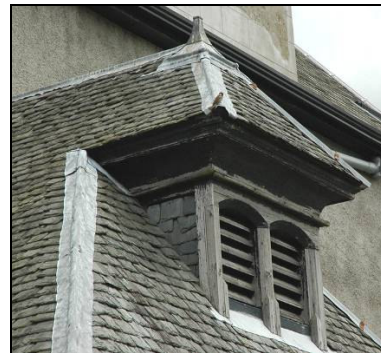


Figure 49: Other materials ranging from cast iron gutters to decorative joinery and lamps all contribute to the character of the village