

Dumfries and Galloway Council

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2

# Crichton Conservation Area Character Appraisal

*Supplementary Guidance - February 2020*



# CRICHTON CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL



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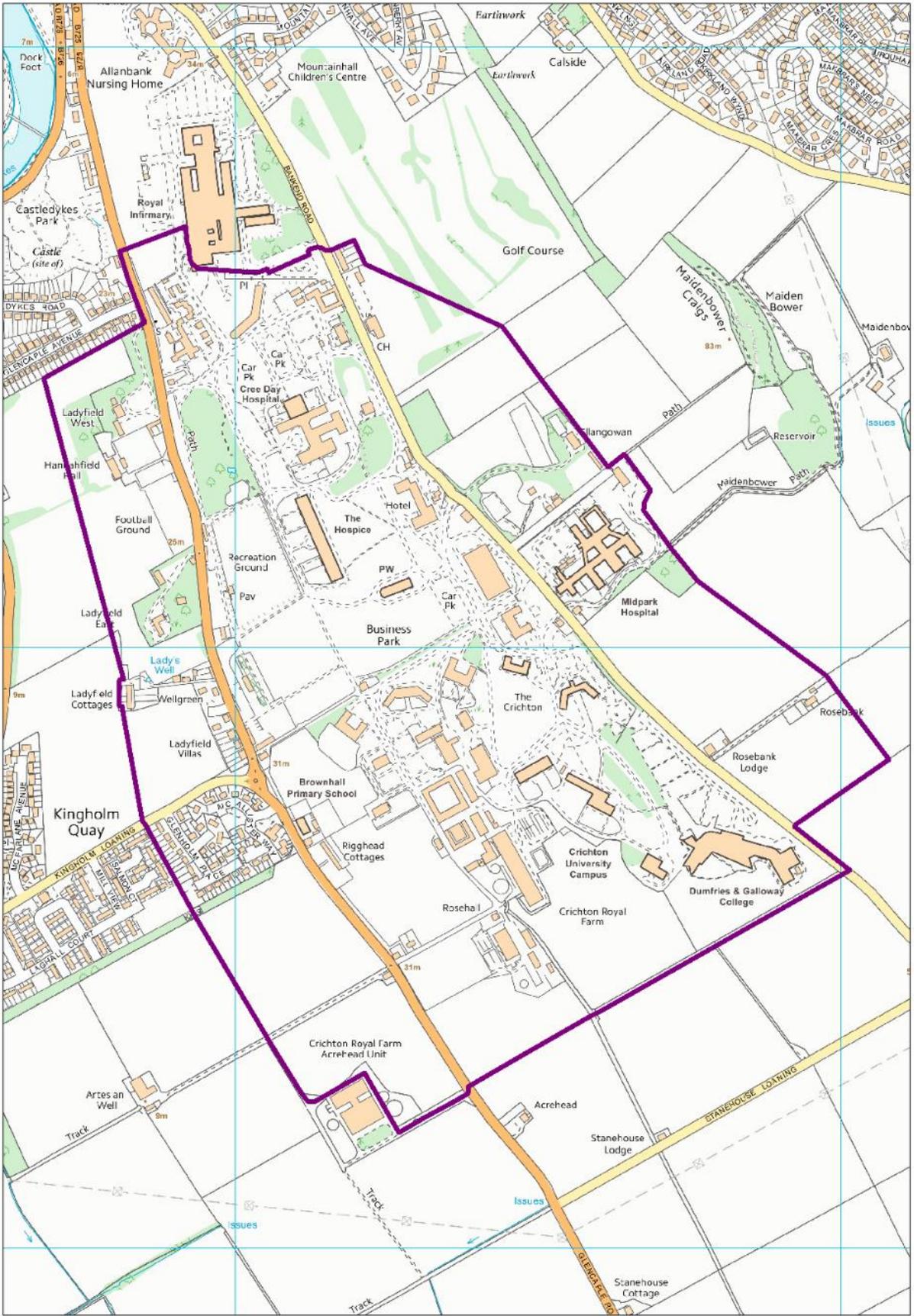


Figure 1.1 The boundary of Crichton Conservation Area

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document is a summary and assessment of the character of Crichton Conservation Area. It identifies features of importance but not every detail of built structures, spaces or landscape. The appraisal document will assist stakeholders to address all aspects of character when preparing proposals for change in Crichton Conservation Area. Decision makers should use the appraisal to guide them in respect of the impact of change, including alteration, demolition, new development, enhancement or maintenance.

### Policy Context

#### National Planning Policy

1.2 The Scottish Government National Planning Framework 3 [NPF3] 2014 and Scottish Planning Policy [SPP] 2014 recognise the contribution made by cultural heritage to the economy, cultural identity and quality of life in Scotland. Paragraphs 135 to 151 of SPP 2014 consider the subject policy 'Valuing the Historic Environment' and the ways in which planning can help maintain and enhance historic places as part of making Scotland a successful, sustainable place. SPP states that Conservation Area Appraisals should inform development management decisions (*SPP, Paragraph 144*).

*"The historic environment is a key cultural and economic asset and a source of inspiration that should be seen as integral to creating successful places. Culture-led regeneration can have a profound impact on the well-being of a community in terms of the physical look and feel of a place and can also attract visitors, which in turn can bolster the local economy and sense of pride or ownership." (SPP 2014, Paragraph 136)*

Historic Environment Policy for Scotland, 2019 supports informed decision making based on appraisal of the historic environment.

#### Local Policy

1.3 Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2 (LDP) was formally adopted on 4th October 2019. Policy HE2: Conservation Areas and the accompanying text refer to supporting proposals consistent with appraisals and management plans. It promotes a sensitive and informed approach to development within conservation areas. It refers to the intention to publish conservation area appraisals and management plans as supplementary guidance. This appraisal is part of that supplementary guidance.

1.4 LDP2 includes economic development Policy ED3 – The Crichton Quarter which encourages development proposals which also protect, maintain and enhance the quality of the setting, environment and buildings of the Crichton.

### Definition of a Conservation Area

1.5 Conservation areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Each planning authority must determine which parts of their area merit designation.

1.6 Introduced as a planning tool in 1967, designation of conservation areas provides the basis for positive management and recognition of the value of part of the historic environment to ensure that special character is respected and enhanced when development is proposed.

### Purpose of Crichton Conservation Area Character Appraisal

1.7 Change within a conservation area is inevitable as buildings and spaces must adapt to accommodate new physical activities and social environments. An informed awareness of the key features of each conservation area is needed to manage that change. The appraisal identifies, describes and evaluates the elements of Crichton Conservation Area which contribute to its present day character, taking account of its historic development.

1.8 Using the appraisal, change may be guided to reinforce and enhance special character and preserve or enhance individual features. It is usually possible to alter buildings and spaces and introduce new buildings without diluting "special interest" as long as the character of the conservation area is preserved or enhanced. Decisions may be reached based on a better understanding of the character of Crichton Conservation Area.

1.9 Within the appraisal the effects of recent development within the conservation area boundary, changes of use and the current physical condition of individual buildings or structures is considered in the context of the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is a step towards protecting and enhancing the special architectural and historic interest of Crichton Conservation Area and an opportunity to acknowledge the impact of changes that have already taken place.

### Crichton Conservation Area

1.10 Crichton Conservation Area is approximately 1 mile south-east of Dumfries in south-west Scotland between Bankend Road and Glencaple Road. It is centred on the buildings and outdoor facilities of Crichton Royal Institution. The boundary of Crichton Conservation Area is shown at Figure 1.1.

1.11 Outside the core Crichton Royal Institution area, the boundary extends:

- north of Crichton Hall to include the hospital boiler, dental hospital and Maryfield Terrace;
- south of Crichton Campus to include Dumfries and Galloway College and part of Crichton Royal Farm Dairy Research Unit;

- east of Bankend Road to include all or parts of Ellangowan, Rosebank, Midpark, Crichton Golf Club and Midpark Psychiatric Hospital; and
- west of Glencaple Road to include Ladyfield East, Ladyfield West and some areas of housing.

## 2 HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRICHTON ROYAL INSTITUTION

2.1 There are several phases in the history and development of Crichton Royal Institution, which after 150 years remains the core of Crichton Conservation Area.

### From the 1830s – the early years

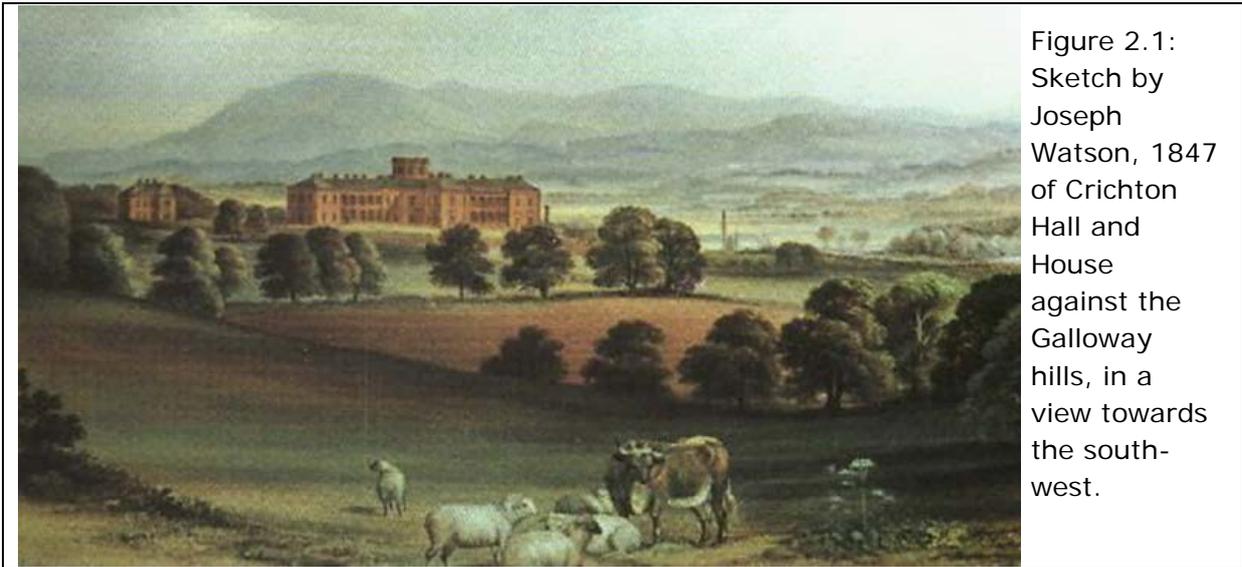
2.2 The origins of Crichton Institution lay in the inheritance of Elizabeth Grierson Crichton from her husband Dr James Crichton, second son of James Crichton. He joined the East India Company after studying Medicine at Edinburgh University and became Medical Physician to the Governor General of India. He also had trade interests in China and India which made his fortune. In 1808, he bought two properties: Goosehill Castle near Sanquhar and Crofts Estate near Kirkpatrick Durham and in 1809 returned from abroad to buy Friars Carse near Dumfries. He married Elizabeth Grierson in 1810.

2.3 On her husband's death in 1823, Elizabeth Crichton's original wish was to create a university at Dumfries with the support of the Trustees of her husband's estate. Opposition from the established universities prevented it so the Trustees supported her alternative proposal for a psychiatric hospital, which reflected her husband's interests. It was the last of the Royal Asylums to be built and dubbed the 'Crichton Foolery' in the local press. £3000 was also given for a new free school in Sanquhar.

2.4 Elizabeth's legacy project began with the purchase of the land south of Dumfries and the design of Crichton Hall by Architect William Burn. There were insufficient funds to build the complete Burn's design so the northern part was constructed from 1838-39; the ambitious full design was never fulfilled. The appointment of Dr William Browne, the first medical superintendent followed closely. Browne's description of his ideal asylum in 1940 included:

"... Conceive a spacious building resembling the palace of a peer, airy, and elevated, and elegant, surrounded by extensive and swelling grounds and gardens. The interior is fitted up with galleries, and workshops, and music rooms. The sun and air are allowed to enter at every window, the view of the shrubberies and fields, and groups of labourers, is unobstructed by shutters or bars; all is clean, quiet, and attractive. The inmates all seem to be actuated by the common impulse of enjoyment, all are busy, and delighted by being so. The house and all around appears a hive of industry. ...Every article should be constructed in reference to two important principles: the perfect safety of those for whom it is intended, and the similarity it should bear to what is in common use, and to what custom has made familiar and necessary. ... the windows consist of a double-sashed iron frame-work, uniting the four great requisites of

perfect security without the appearance of restraint, free ventilation, the admission of light, and the command of a beautiful landscape. ..."



2.5 The design and siting of Crichton Hall met many of Browne's criteria [Figure 2.1]. In 1839 patients were sought nationally; part of an advertisement for 'Crichton Institution for Lunatics' was published by John W Parker, London in June 1839 and read: "...the means of restoring the insane to reason - or, if that be impossible, to greater tranquillity and happiness than can be secured to them elsewhere ..."

The bestowing of a Royal Charter in 1840 allowed it to be known as Crichton Royal Institution.

2.6 Initially, the high quality environment and care regime was within enclosed grounds around Crichton Hall with 120 beds. The fee structure allowed 'respectable' patients to have separate, well-furnished accommodation, refined food and access to a carriage. Elizabeth Crichton could nominate patients for significant reductions if unable to pay in full. 'Paupers' from south-west Scotland paid for basic individual bedrooms, shared public rooms and simple food.

2.7 The medical superintendent's residence Crichton House (now named Campbell House) was built in 1842 designed by William McGowan. In 1849 Alexander Crombie designed the Southern Counties Asylum for the mentally ill poor of the county. [Figure 2.2] The site chosen resulted in some support buildings being relocated and reduced the likelihood of eventual completion of the full Burn's design for Crichton Hall. In 1850 there was a small lodge at Glencaple Road gate and buildings at Hillhead with filter beds for the hospital water supply [Figure 2.3].



Figure 2.2: The Southern Counties Asylum building was completely demolished by 1925. It was built in 1849 to provide mental health care for the poor at a time when Crichton Royal Institution focused on paying patients.

2.8 The land east and west of the hospital site was populated with isolated large dwellings and farms [Figure 2.3]. Some of these became part of the Crichton Royal Institution and those that remain are included within Crichton Conservation Area. Hannahfield (later renamed Ladyfield West) was built around 1812 in Greek Revival style, designed by local Dumfries Architect, Walter Newall. The Classical style Ladyfield (now Ladyfield East) was built by 1830 and altered by 1843. The architect is not known but the alterations were commissioned by William Forsyth.

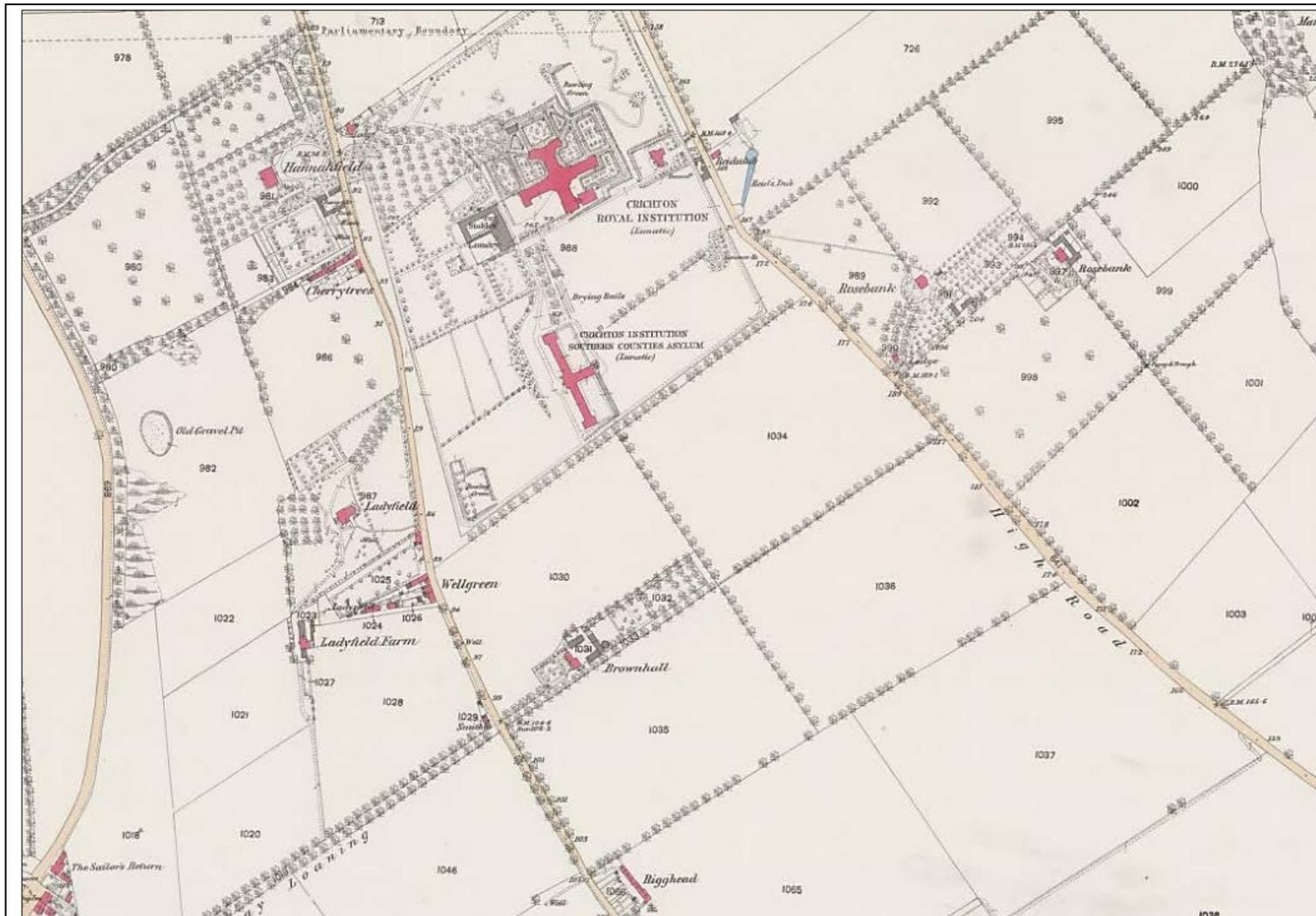


Figure 2.3:

The extent of Crichton Royal Institution is captured. A number of the buildings and areas which subsequently became part of the Institution are seen such as Ladyfield and Hannahfield.

It also shows buildings that were later demolished such as the Southern Counties Asylum and the row of cottages at Cherrytrees.

On the east Rosebank is the property which is later renamed Midpark.

Extract from OS 25 inch to the mile, surveyed 1856, published 1861.



Figure 2.4: Extract from OS 25 inch surveyed published 1900.

This phase of development included Crichton Memorial Church, Johnston House with a new laundry block, Crichton Farm and Criffel View and extensions to Crichton Hall.

Mid Lodge, Church Lodge, Spittalfield Cottages and Spittalfield stores are complete.

A new recreation field has been made and the bowling green relocated north of Crichton Hall.

Brownhall School and schoolhouse; Ellangowan and its outbuildings; the first part of Midpark and its lodge are built.

There are new Stables north of Crichton Hall.

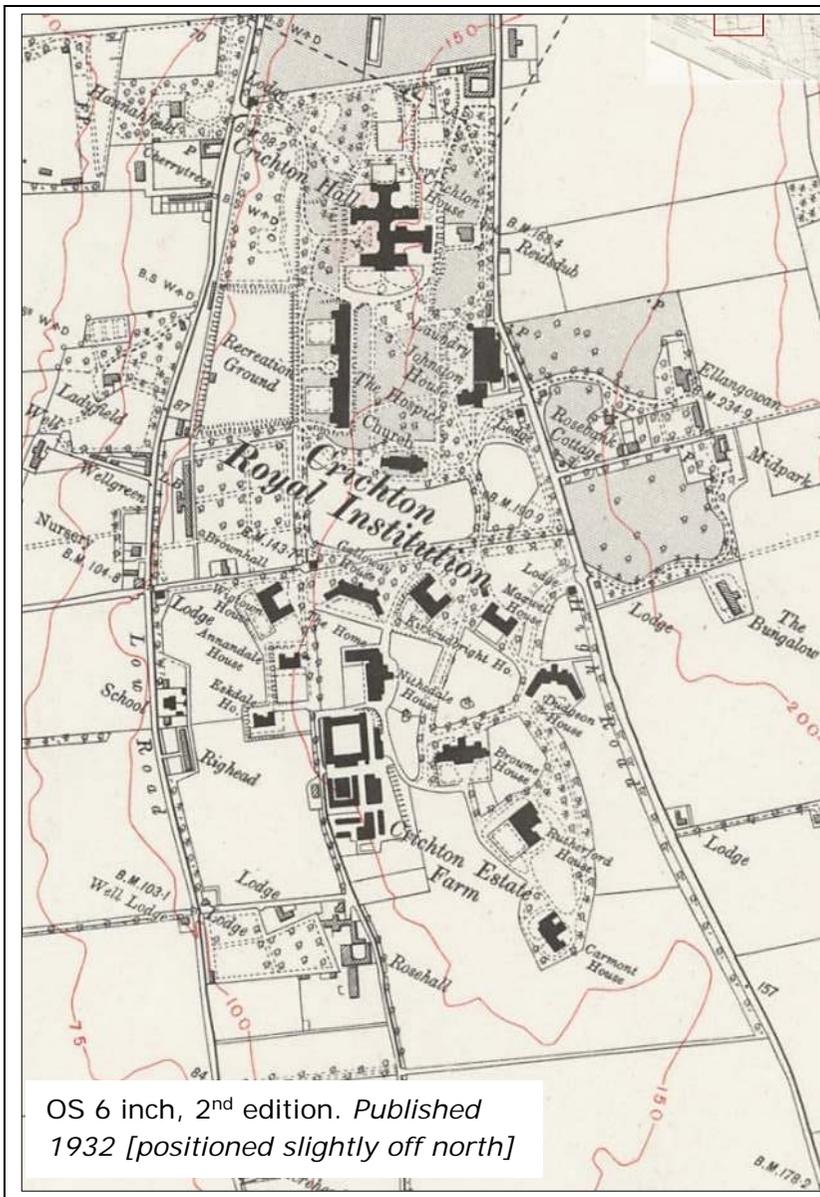
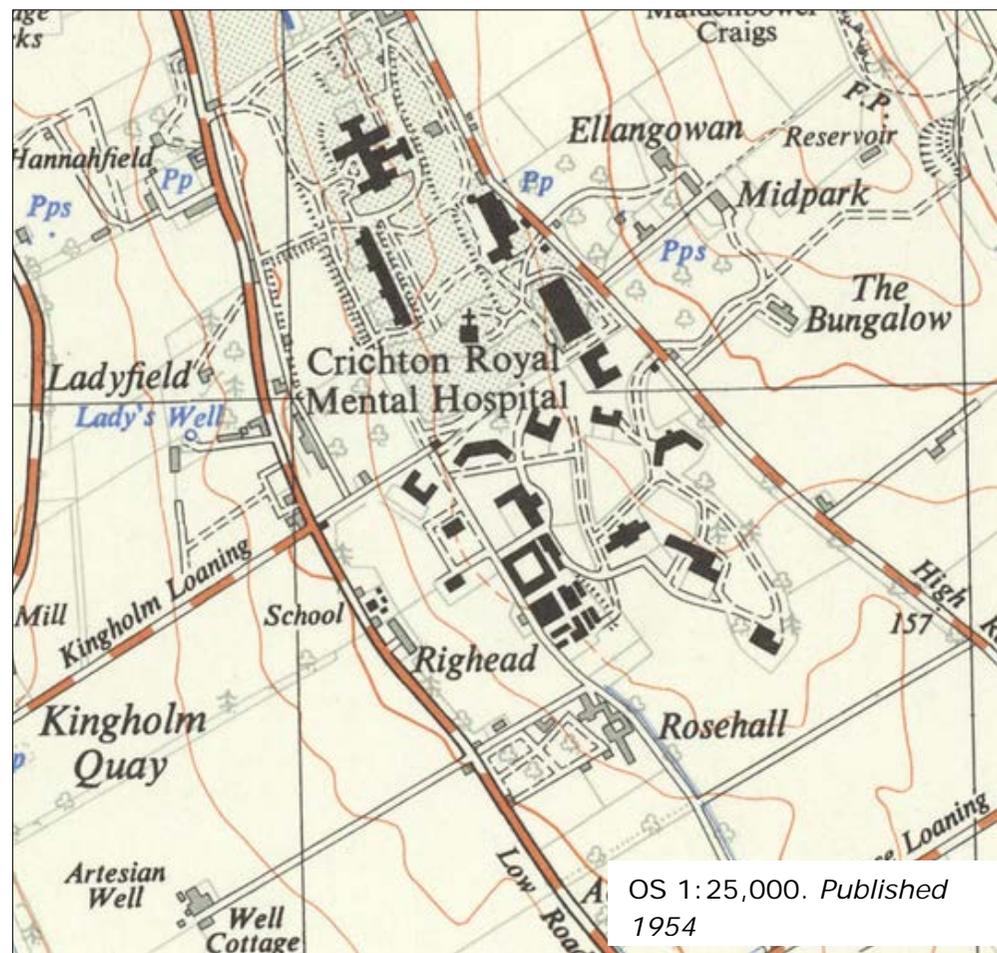


Figure 2.5: The last phases of development of Crichton Royal Institution were in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many more villa buildings were built, some designed by Sydney Mitchell & Wilson and later by James Flett.



## 1850s until the 1920s

2.9 Between 1858 and 1879, Medical Superintendent Dr James Gilchrist added land and buildings to Crichton Royal Institution and extended Crichton Hall using architect William Moffatt. He began removing walls from around Crichton Hall; purchased farmland at Maryfield and Brownhall where patients could be employed; and increased recreation space. Hillhead House and Cottages on Bankend Road were built in 1862 designed by Alexander Crombie and Spittalfield Cottages were built in 1876 designed by James Barbour [Figure 2.4].

2.10 From 1879 until 1914, Dr James Rutherford was superintendent. With the Trustees Rutherford brought properties outside the Institution site into use for patient accommodation including Hannahfield [Ladyfield West] first leased in 1889 and land and the now demolished dwellings at Oakfield, Maryfield and Allanbank and the Bungalow at Rosebank which burned down. He developed golf, cricket, curling and tennis for recreation and established a vegetable garden at Brownhall where patients grew food. Crichton Royal Golf Course which had first opened at Brownhall, then relocated to Maryfield in 1906 for 60 years and was then permanently moved east of Bankend Road.

2.11 Rutherford's expansion included new treatment methods and care arrangements based on the villa colony system established in Germany. His contemporary approach to psychiatric treatment resulted in a new cluster of buildings for staff and patients south of Crichton Hall. He commissioned John Davidson to build Crichton Farm, advised by Colonel R.F. Dudgeon. The building group Criffel View, Solway House and livestock barns, completed in the 1890s, provided farming work and accommodation for male patients [Figure 2.4]. The farm produced food for the institution.

2.12 Dr Rutherford engaged Sydney Mitchell & Wilson Architects to design a church for the 50th anniversary of Crichton Royal Institution, dedicated to James and Elizabeth Crichton. The church was completed in 1897; Johnston House completed in 1901, designed by Mitchell; and Dr Rutherford had Crichton House extended to William Moir's design. In 1895 the Crichton Royal Institution's perimeter wall and railings were completed. Upper Brownhall Gate Lodge [Grierson Gate] and the present Low Lodge were built in 1904, both attributed to James Barbour.

2.13 South of Crichton Hall, Sydney Mitchell & Wilson designed several new patient and staff villas. Some were built in pairs, although not necessarily identical, such as Rutherford and Carmont in 1904; Annandale and Eskdale finished 1909; Browne and Dudgeon completed in 1910; and individually designed buildings including Maxwell and Galloway which were completed by 1912 [Figure 2.5]. Some other villas, built later, were adaptations of Sydney Mitchell designs.

2.14 Dr Charles Easterbrook was medical superintendent from 1914. He continued developing the layout of the Institution as a villa colony. He reinforced the principle of patients benefiting from work on the land and being outdoors. A special Trustee Committee provided the Arboretum and Rock Garden and the 1923 glasshouses for horticulture. Monreith and Kindar were two of the new buildings completed based on original designs by Sydney Mitchell.

2.15 In 1925, all of the Southern Counties Asylum had been demolished and replaced with James Flett's Art Deco single storey Hospice. Flett also designed the flat roofed Hestan, Grierson and McCowan in the 1930s. Dr Easterbrook persuaded the Trust to buy Ladyfield [East] for gentlemen patients and the freehold of Hannahfield [Ladyfield West]. It is understood that this was partly to preserve views from Crichton Hall.

2.16 Dr Easterbrook had a grand scheme to provide a cultural and therapy centre and with Flett he produced designs for Easterbrook Hall positioned to overlook the church and landscaped setting, with hill views across the Solway. The war intervened before he could build it.

#### 1930s up to the creation of the National Health Service

2.17 Dr Peter McCowan became medical superintendent in 1937. He had Easterbrook Hall built and completed by 1939. Much less development took place during the war and afterwards changes in clinical practices began. Short stay therapy treatment using new technology and drugs gradually replaced long term confinement. The new focus was to support patients at home so the need for accommodation decreased. However, improvements continued and in 1948 a central boiler house was built.

2.18 In July 1948 the Institution transferred to the new National Health Service, continuing to operate as a mental health care hospital. A laundry was added in 1960 and a sterile supplies unit in 1974, both in modern designs and materials of their time, neither using sandstone.

2.19 In 1972 the management of Crichton Royal Institution amalgamated with Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary and in 1974 the combined hospitals became part of the new Dumfries and Galloway Health Board. This began the final chapter of the Institution buildings use for mental health care. Crichton Hall and the Hospice continued to have health care uses but the remainder of the buildings were gradually vacated.

2.20 In 1995 Dumfries and Galloway Community Health NHS Trust was formed and had no further use for the majority of the buildings of Crichton Royal Institution. Dumfries and Galloway Council stepped in and the majority of the Crichton estate buildings and outdoor spaces were bought by the Council. The last mental health patients were moved to the new Midpark Hospital in November 2011 and Crichton Royal Institution officially closed. Ladyfield East and West stayed in

the ownership of the NHS, in use until the 2010s. Crichton Hall and the Hospice remain in NHS ownership and use in 2016.

### The Crichton Trust

2.21 Crichton Trust was formed in 1995. The Trust has responsibility for the Council owned Crichton buildings through a lease arrangement. Crichton Development Company, Crichton Trust's business arm and subsidiary, has carried out a great deal of work to restore, adapt and develop the former hospital buildings, and has attracted new uses for the buildings, particularly in the university level education sector. The Crichton continues to be promoted and remains a significant, active, historic place.

## 3 KEY ELEMENTS OF CRICHTON CONSERVATION AREA.

3.1 Crichton Conservation Area is based on the former Crichton Royal Institution, the heart of the original hospital being Crichton Hall. From 1834 there have been several phases of development and land purchase, motivated by a desire to progress the treatment and general care of the patients. The way buildings and spaces around them were designed, sited, orientated and grouped and how each was used, related directly to patient care.

### Designation

3.2 Crichton Conservation Area was designated on 6th June 1997 by Dumfries and Galloway Council due to "the quality of the planned landscape which provides the setting for the Listed Buildings". In making this designation, the Council recognised all of the following attributes:

- a remarkable, unified appearance despite differences in architectural styles;
- views into and out of the site are a key part of the original design concept;
- as a result of their landscape design and the careful choice of planting spaces are of high quality;
- high quality landscape settings for individual buildings;
- evolution of the site over a period of time;
- the Crichton Royal Institution area is the most valuable part, between Bankend Road and Glencaple Road, for its historic, architectural and scenic value;
- the wider setting within the boundary contributes to its quality.

3.3 The designation of Crichton Conservation Area set out to preserve special interest and acknowledge that the quality of the buildings and landscape are inextricably linked with the history and development of therapy at the hospital. The conservation area boundary includes land and buildings which played a part in Crichton Royal Institution and Crichton Royal Farm.

3.4 There are Listed buildings within the conservation area and many other buildings of architectural and historic value which were important parts of Crichton Royal Institution.

#### Quality of buildings

3.5 The architectural themes, individual details and building materials of the Crichton Royal Institution buildings have survived although some alterations have taken place. On the southern side of the conservation area buildings are loosely grouped and use local architectural styles. There are individually designed large and small buildings to the eastern and western parts.

3.6 Crichton Hall is constructed from red sandstone quarried at Trohoughton. The design of this building was based on the 1818 Stanley Royd Hospital, in Wakefield [Figure 3.1]. The red sandstone has persisted as a unifying theme of the Institution buildings and later buildings were constructed from local Locharbriggs sandstone.

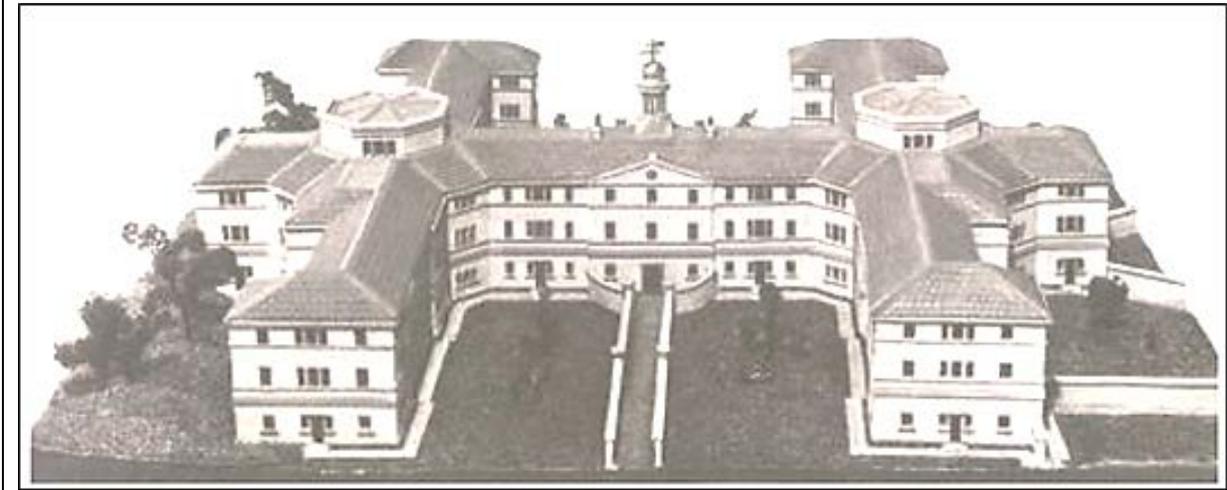
3.7 Most of the villa buildings on the south side of Crichton Hall were built in the early 20th century as either accommodation for patients and staff or therapy units. They were based on successful European institutions particularly Alt-Sherbitz near Leipzig, which Sydney Mitchell visited in 1905 with Rutherford. The domestic scale 'colony of villas' each had a limited number of residents. [Figure 3.3]



Figure 3.1: Above is a 1950s aerial view of Crichton Hall. Built in 1839, the Hall was the first part of Crichton Royal Institution. Architect William Burn's intended design was two linked Greek crosses each with central octagonal stair turrets. However, only one cross was completed.

The Burn design was firmly based on that of the West Riding Pauper [or Stanley Royd] Lunatic Asylum in Wakefield, designed by Watson & Pritchett of York.

Below: 3-D Model by A. L. Ashworth exhibits the full building and its similarity to the original design for Crichton Hall.



3.8 Within Crichton Royal Institution many buildings from the same development phases have similar designs although not identical. Each building had an intended function and most have been adapted and altered in subsequent years. The scale, height, materials and form, in conjunction with the siting of buildings in relation to each other, became a firmly established design theme.

#### Common building features

3.9 The villa buildings of Crichton Royal Institution are slender from front to back mainly with symmetrical floor plans such as linear, H plan, butterfly plan or the Greek cross shape of Crichton Hall. The many, regularly placed windows allow the interiors to be naturally well lit.

3.10 The majority of buildings in Crichton Conservation Area are constructed from Permian-Triassic sandstone quarried from close to Dumfries. The red sandstone creates a strong body of colour and displays the local geology. The elevations are mostly squared rubble some with smaller square cut stone snecking. A range of surface tooling techniques give textural variation, mostly bull faced, smooth and hammer dressed, stugged or droved ashlar. Lime mortar is used discreetly in the masonry joints. Unfortunately, some newer buildings are clad in timber or insulated panels and the resulting grain, texture and colour dilutes the established character.





Figure 3.2: From the beginning, doctors at Crichton Royal Institution wanted patients to benefit from the outdoors. Open glazed arcades were included on the upper floors of Crichton Hall; although glazed in subsequent years. Many late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century villas had west facing verandas. Criffel View and Monreith House are shown.

3.11 Buildings outside the Crichton Royal Institution site are more varied, some by design, others altered. Ladyfield West is painted white although it was originally smooth, pale, red/pink in colour above rusticated sandstone. Ladyfield East is rendered and painted pink. The older elevation of Midpark is rendered and painted and the newer is sandstone. On Glencaple Road some houses have been rendered with varied finishes.

3.12 On pitched roofs, slate is the dominant covering material. Both Welsh and Cumbrian slate are common, mostly dark grey, but with some colour variations. The variety of roof shapes includes hips, gables and octagonal, round, flat or conical turrets. Lead covers some of these features. The roof-level features are dormer windows, stone and metal balustrades, chimneys and vents, providing characteristic strong and architectural themes, and distinct rhythms in individual buildings.

3.13 Some Crichton Royal Institution villa buildings have fully or partially glazed verandas [Figure 3.2] which open into the 'ward gardens'; these were spaces where patients could still have some privacy while outdoors.

3.14 With few exceptions, the villas of the former hospital were carefully placed to create views to the south or south-west, new buildings preserving the existing views. To achieve this they used both natural topography and engineered building platforms. Thus, there are building groups within the conservation area with shared ground levels.

Roof vents, chimneys and balustrades.

3.15 Vents are one of the very striking, positive and recurring features on the roofs of many of the buildings [Figure 3.3]. They were required as ventilation for the central heating systems in the accommodation blocks. On some buildings they are the only roof feature.

3.16 Chimneys are also a recurring roof feature across the whole of the conservation area [Figure 3.3]. They come in a wide range of designs. On 19th and early 20th century buildings they are usually stone and make a very positive contribution to the individual building and to the skyline of the conservation area. The chimney of the 1960s hospital boiler is very tall and out of proportion with other chimneys and, although of its time and required for the boiler to function, it does not contribute positively to the character of Crichton Conservation Area.

3.17 Outside the former Crichton Royal Institution chimneys are the predominant roof feature of the buildings. The designs vary dependant on the style of the host building. Their presence makes a positive contribution to character in contrast with the plain roofs where chimneys are absent.

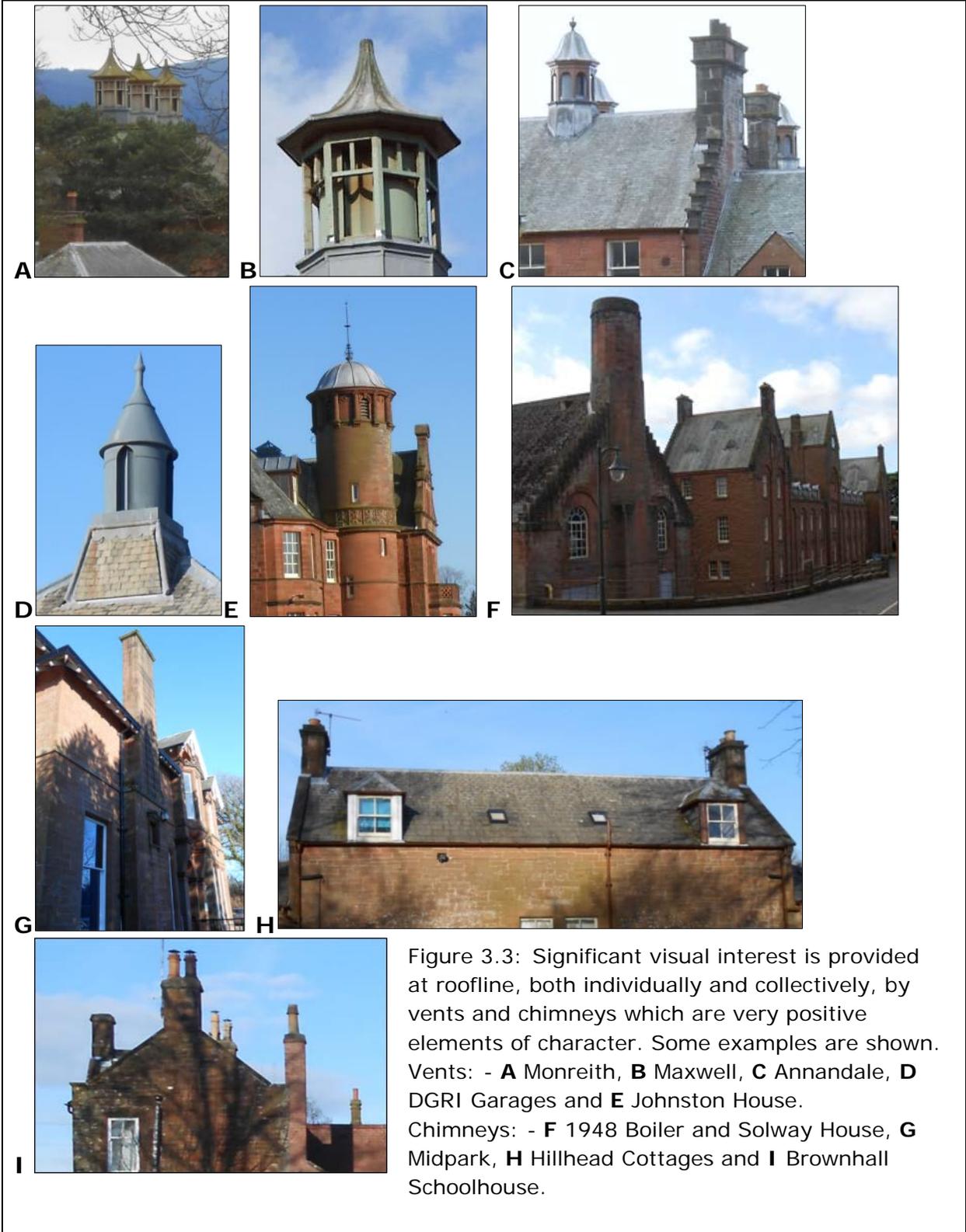


Figure 3.3: Significant visual interest is provided at roofline, both individually and collectively, by vents and chimneys which are very positive elements of character. Some examples are shown. Vents: - **A** Monreith, **B** Maxwell, **C** Annandale, **D** DGRI Garages and **E** Johnston House. Chimneys: - **F** 1948 Boiler and Solway House, **G** Midpark, **H** Hillhead Cottages and **I** Brownhall Schoolhouse.

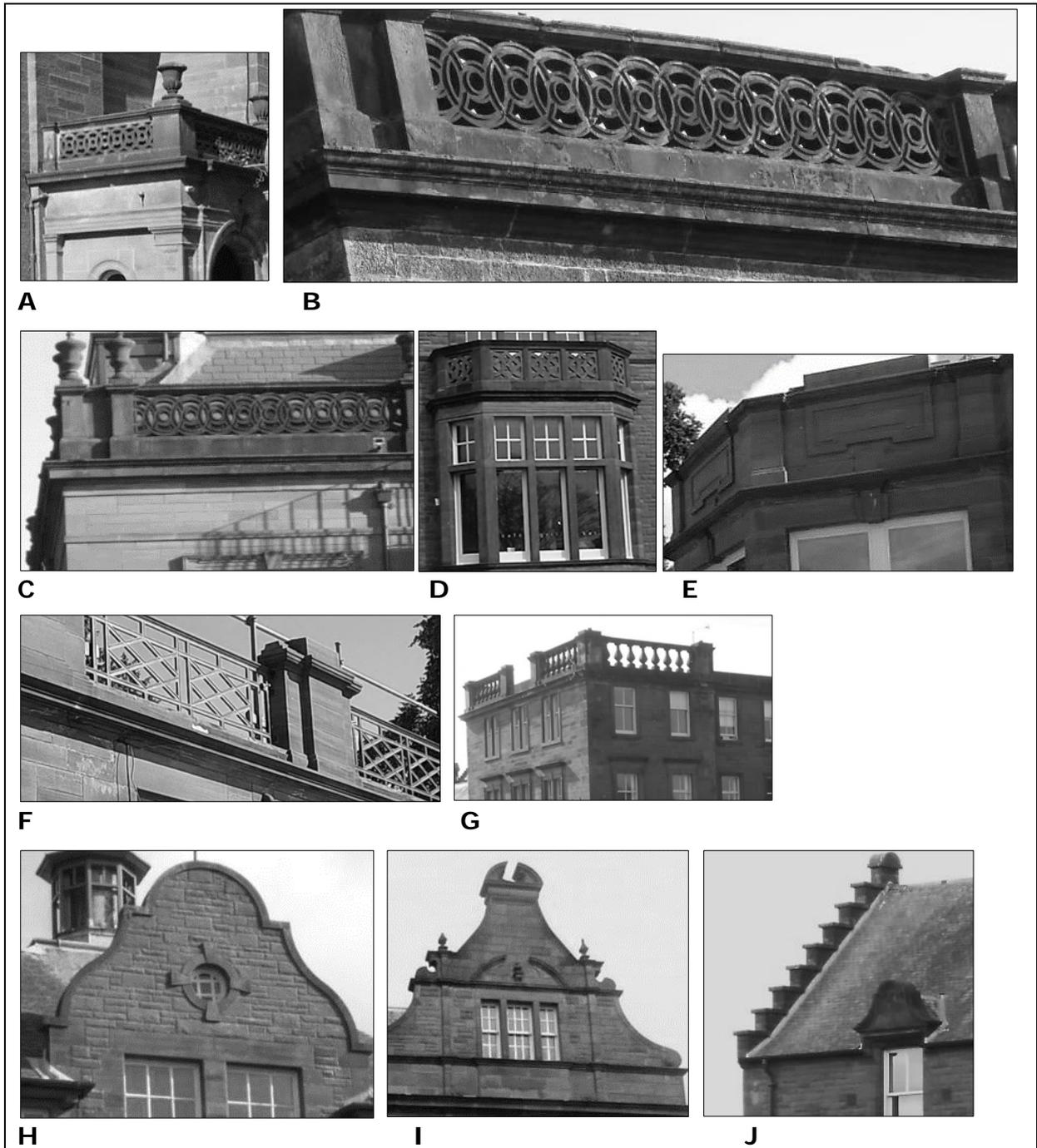


Figure 3.4: Examples of the decorative parapets on the former Crichton Royal Institution buildings. Most designs are specific to the individual buildings but there is also repetition between buildings. Pierced parapets: - **A** above porch of Campbell House; **B & C** on Crichton Hall; **D** over bay window on Johnston House. **E & F** show parapets on the Hospice both solid stone and wrought iron railings; and **G** shows stone balusters on Grierson. **H, I** and **J** respectively show gables on Kindar, Johnston and crow-steps on Annandale. All of these contribute positively to the quality of the individual buildings and to the character of the conservation area.

3.18 Many buildings of the Crichton Royal Institution have flat roofs which have some form of parapet including sandstone piers with pierced stone or wrought iron balustrades between. Some pitched roof buildings have roofline balustrades above porches and bays and there are a number of shaped parapet gables. These are each important positive features demonstrating the care taken with the original design and the architectural quality that has persisted. [Figure 3.4]

#### Spaces

3.19 The important open spaces in Crichton Conservation Area are recognised in Policy CF3 of the LDP. Landscape features and outdoor facilities have been altered during many of the phases of development of Crichton Royal Institution. Some early formal gardens and the tennis court space remain in different use but the 1850s bowling green and 1878 Octagonal Pavilion are still in use [Figure 3.5]. There are many open, green spaces which put distance between the buildings which also provided essential places for patients to venture outdoors. They are separated in a number of ways by fences, close grown hedges, perimeter treelines and earth embankments. These spaces are considered in the landscape sections below.



landscaped gardens were laid out using trees and landform to divide the spaces and for interest. These spaces were used communally for gentle pedestrian activity [Figure 3.7]. Some areas were dedicated to individual activities including putting or bowling and others were intended for a range of team pursuits [Figure 3.8].

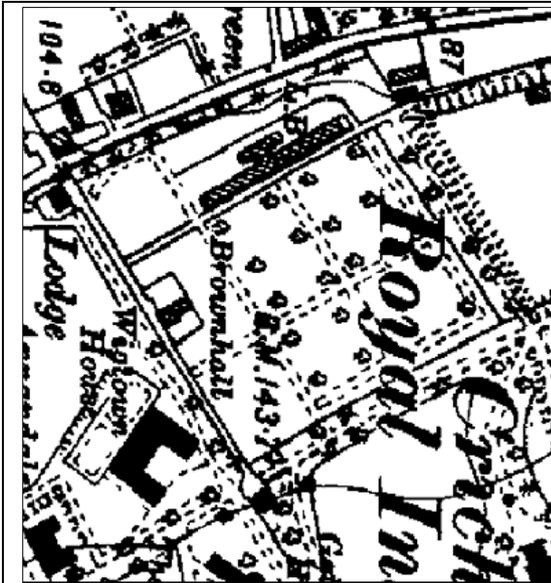
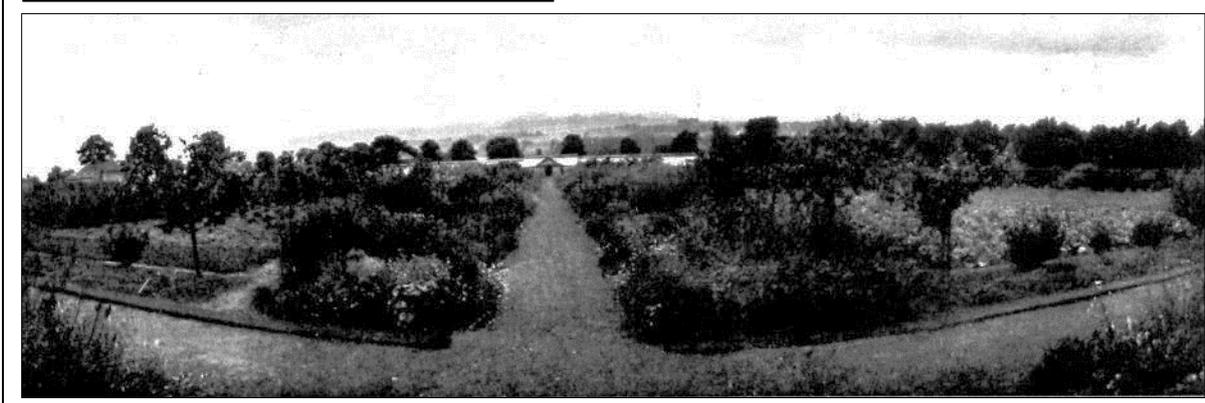


Figure 3.6: This is the formally laid out garden area in front of the 1923 glass houses.

From the early 20th century this area was used for 'taking the air'. Some patients also benefited from the therapy of growing plants and flowers.

From 1931 Ordnance Survey Map.

Below is a photo from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century of the same area.



3.22 'Pauper' patients worked at Crichton Royal Farm First and second division patients took part in horticultural activity including helping grow plants inside the 1923 glasshouses. This building was one of the last additions to the hospital landscape. It was part of the occupational therapy side of the progressive approach to treatment of mental health patients who were at the hospital.

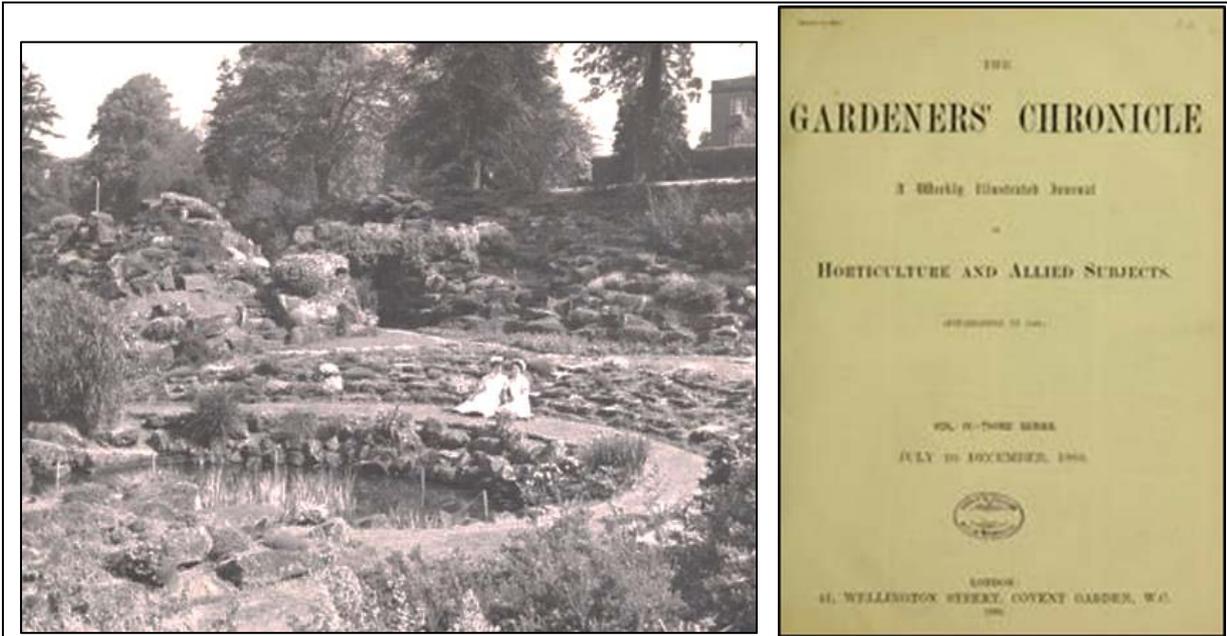
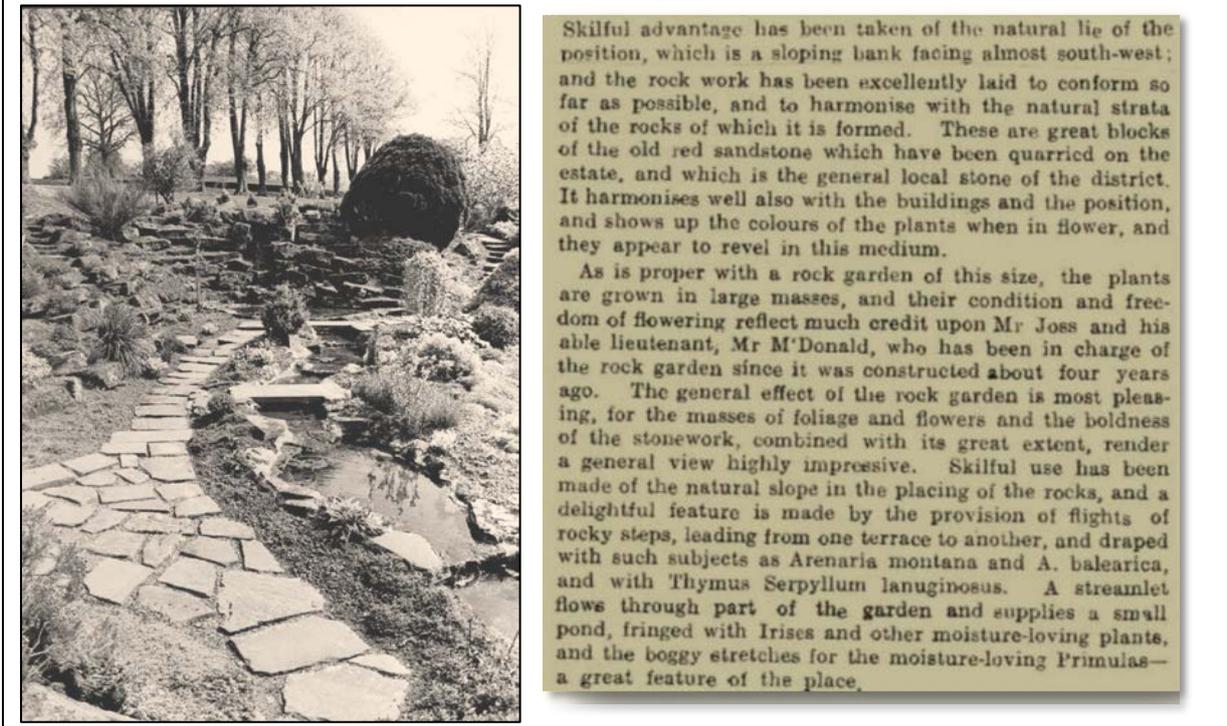


Figure 3.7: The Rockery. 1960s images, courtesy of The Wellcome Archive and an extract from the Gardener's Chronicle, 'The Rock Garden' reprinted in The New Moon, July 1928. It refers to using carefully chosen plants, natural topography and locally quarried stone to create garden features, including elaborate paths, steps and moving water.



Skilful advantage has been taken of the natural lie of the position, which is a sloping bank facing almost south-west; and the rock work has been excellently laid to conform so far as possible, and to harmonise with the natural strata of the rocks of which it is formed. These are great blocks of the old red sandstone which have been quarried on the estate, and which is the general local stone of the district. It harmonises well also with the buildings and the position, and shows up the colours of the plants when in flower, and they appear to revel in this medium.

As is proper with a rock garden of this size, the plants are grown in large masses, and their condition and freedom of flowering reflect much credit upon Mr Joss and his able lieutenant, Mr M'Donald, who has been in charge of the rock garden since it was constructed about four years ago. The general effect of the rock garden is most pleasing, for the masses of foliage and flowers and the boldness of the stonework, combined with its great extent, render a general view highly impressive. Skilful use has been made of the natural slope in the placing of the rocks, and a delightful feature is made by the provision of flights of rocky steps, leading from one terrace to another, and draped with such subjects as *Arenaria montana* and *A. balearica*, and with *Thymus Serpyllum lanuginosus*. A streamlet flows through part of the garden and supplies a small pond, fringed with *Iris*es and other moisture-loving plants, and the boggy stretches for the moisture-loving *Primulas*—a great feature of the place.

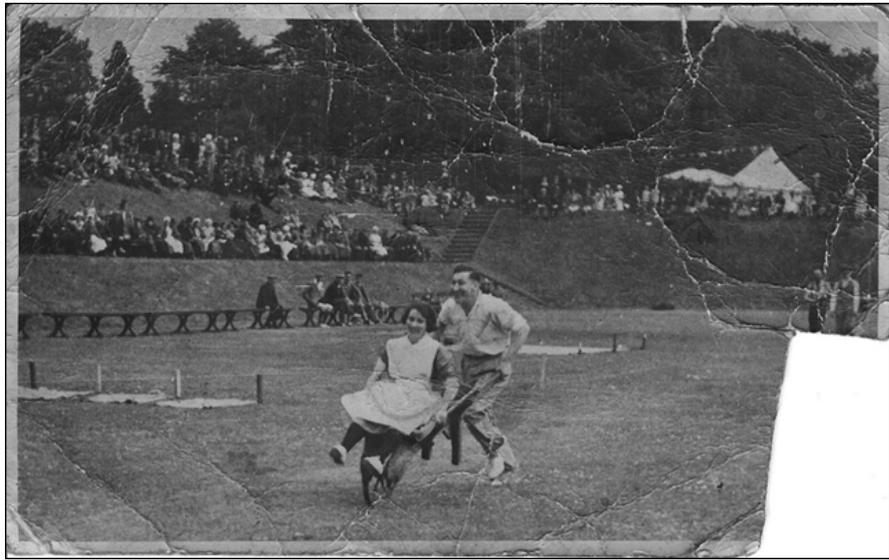
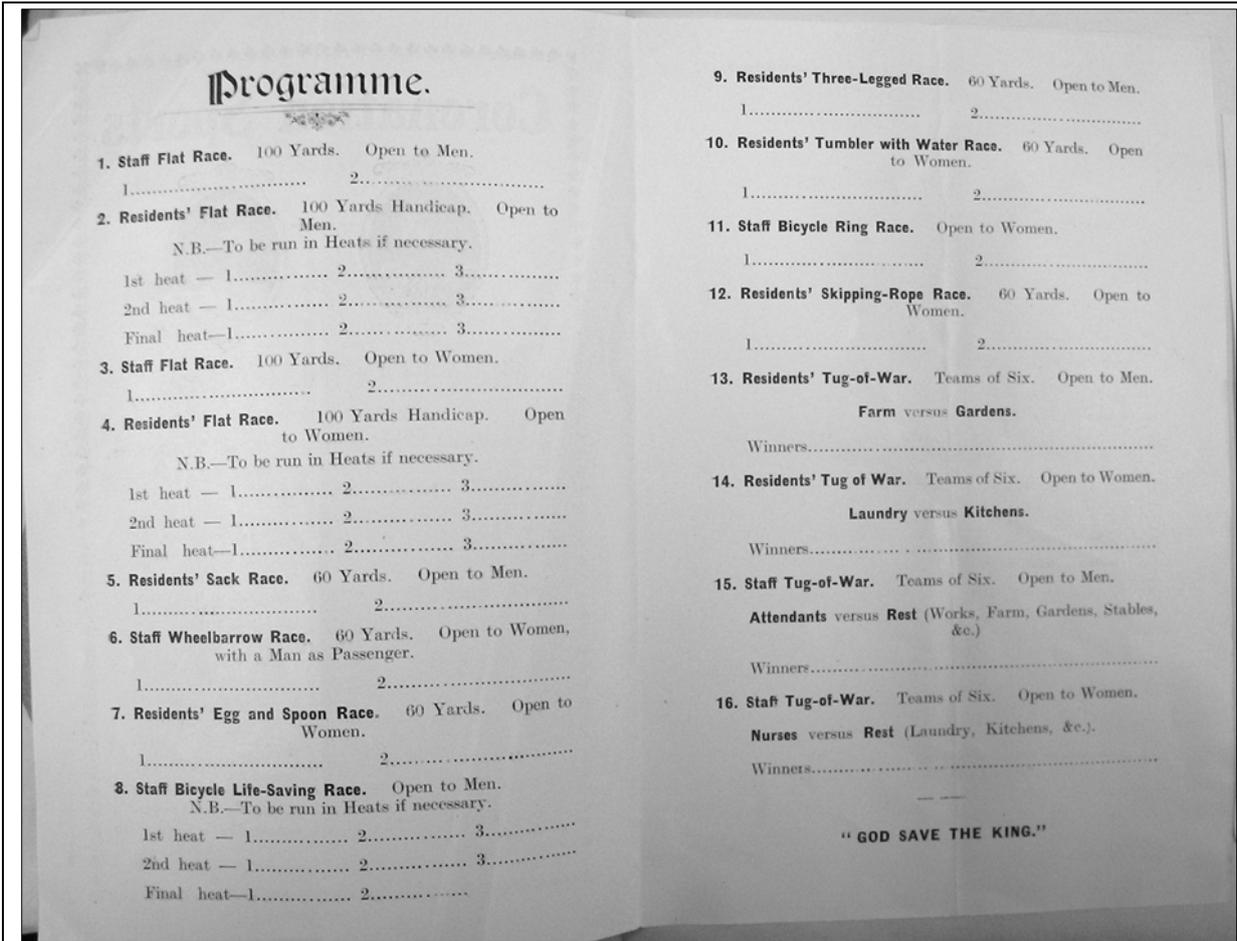


Figure 3.8: Recreational use of open spaces, both images courtesy of the Crichton Royal Project: Care Not Confinement.

Above is a page from a programme for the games marking the coronation of George V in 1911. On the right is a photo of a Staff Wheelbarrow race in 1933.



Figure 3.9: Views towards and into the Arboretum. The 1920s Arboretum and Rock Garden attract considerable interest due to the design by Sir George Watt, a hospital director at the time and, former Professor of Botany at Calcutta. Some of the specimen trees were donated as seeds and cuttings from Dumfriesshire landowners.



Red Snake Bark Maple



Paper Handkerchief Tree



3.24 West of Glencaple Road there are both large dwellings with landscaped settings, farms and modest houses. Ladyfield East sits in its own designed landscape, originally bordered by trees with a walled garden and orchards. Although trees have gone and former lawns are now shrubberies the original structure of the landscape is clear [Figure 3.10].

3.25 The landscape at Ladyfield West is of particular note as, with the dwelling, its quality was considered in J.C. Loudon's 'Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture'. Although many changes have taken place over the intervening years since Loudon's commentary, significant elements of the landscape remain including parts of the walled garden, garden cottages and many of the trees. Many trees have also been removed or lost as a result of natural processes [Figure 3.11].

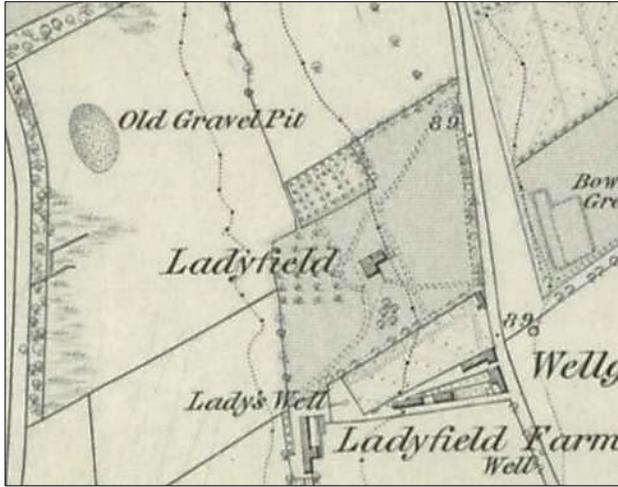


Figure 3.10: The landscape of Ladyfield East.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the house was set in relatively open lawns with a formal walled garden area to its north and an orchard to its west. The boundary was defined by tree lines.

21<sup>st</sup> century aerial photo shows there are some tree lines remaining but some areas of lawns now have groups of trees and shrubs.



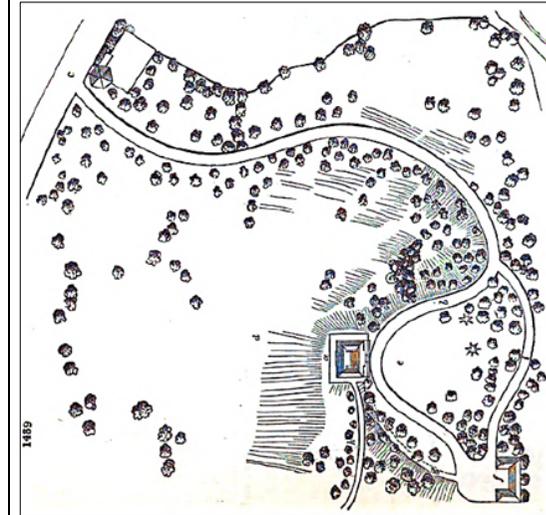
The orchard and walled garden are no longer planted. There is a new building north of the house on the eastern edge of the walled garden.



Figure 3.11: Hannahfield [Ladyfield West]. In 1831, J C Loudon visited Hannahfield. He referred to it his seminal work: An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture and Furniture, London 1842.

Loudon describes the drive from Kingholm Road, up through trees, turning to arrive at the 'back front'. He wrote "... we have taken some liberties with the line of approach and the situation of the stables, which, like the disposition of the trees, is done more with a view of showing what we think ought to be, than what it is ..."

Many avenue trees have gone, the lodge drawn by Loudon was hexagonal but appears modern today and only the stone gate piers are hexagonal.



Loudon's sketch compared with an extract from the 1861 OS map. In 1890 there was a lodge and long avenue which was severed and replaced by a shorter access from Glencaple Road.

3.26 East of Bankend Road, many parts of the agricultural land and the designed landscapes around the former dwellings of Midpark and Rosebank have been altered and developed to accommodate the golf course and Midpark Hospital. However, Ellangowan has retained much of its immediate landscaped setting including the original gate piers and tree lined avenue leading up to the 'reveal' of the 1869 Victorian Gothic house by James Barbour [Figure 3.12].



Figure 3.12: The landscape of the three large dwellings east of Bankend Road - OS map circa 1900 and as it appears now, 2015.

3.27 The landscape of the whole conservation area is integral to its character. Within the former Crichton Royal Institution the landscape structure survives despite many of the spaces having changed their use. It is firmly connected with the development and purpose of the former hospital and was part of the patients' therapeutic experience. Outside the core hospital site the landscapes are linked to former individual dwellings some of which have retained their structure but all of which have succumbed to weather, disease and age without planned programmes of care.

### Trees

3.28 A study, carried out by Land Use Consultants, in 1998 for Crichton Trust identified tree species, groups and particular specimens in part of the conservation area. Trees continue to contribute very significantly and positively to the special character of Crichton Conservation Area. There is a variety of roles played by trees in different locations. Avenues of large trees line paths, recreational spaces or access roads and create formality. The open placement of trees in the Arboretum appears informal.

3.28 The trees are a planned part of the former hospital grounds and form the basic structure of the designed landscape. This also applies to the landscape settings of the large dwellings outside the original Institution area. Trees are used in groups and avenues to compartmentalise spaces, frame views and provide enclosure without the rigidity of constructed barriers [Figure 3.13]. The range of

colours and shapes of the trees contrasts with the hard edges of the red sandstone buildings. Changing foliage, bark and blossom connect the conservation area with the seasons and provide shade and shelter; movement on windy days; and can be focal points for the activity of animals. All of the outdoor spaces, and therefore the character of the conservation area, are positively influenced by the presence of trees [Figure 3.14].

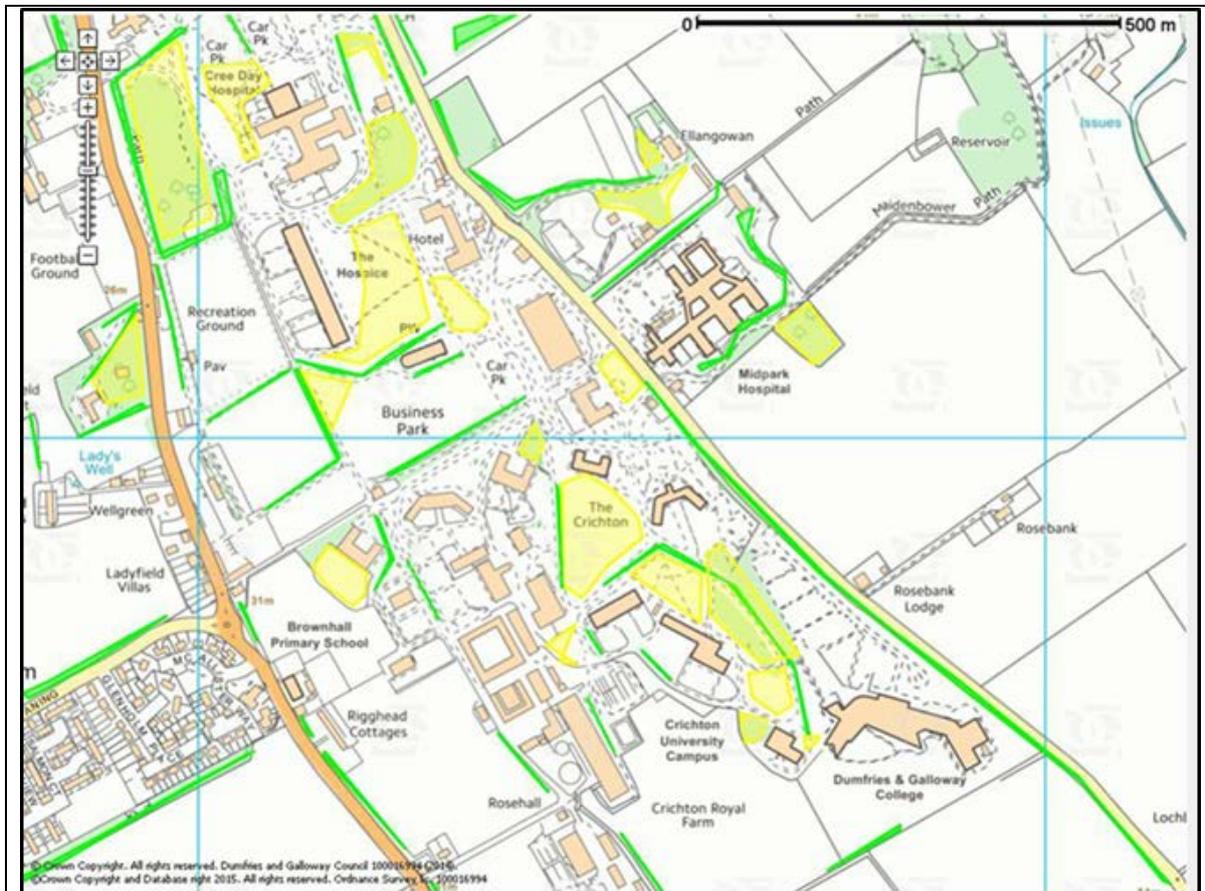


Figure 3.13: Areas within Crichton Conservation Area with groups of trees which contribute positively to the character of Crichton Conservation Area.

**Yellow** indicates groups of trees, either densely or loosely clustered.

**Green** indicates lines or avenues of trees, both new and old.

(Adapted from a 1998 survey by Land Use Consultants)

3.30 Proposed tree works within Crichton Conservation Area require permission through an application to the Council. The Council has six weeks from the date of application to consider whether a Tree Preservation Order would be appropriate to protect the tree from the proposed works. The criteria for making an Order are based on the value the tree or group of trees makes to the general amenity and whether it makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.

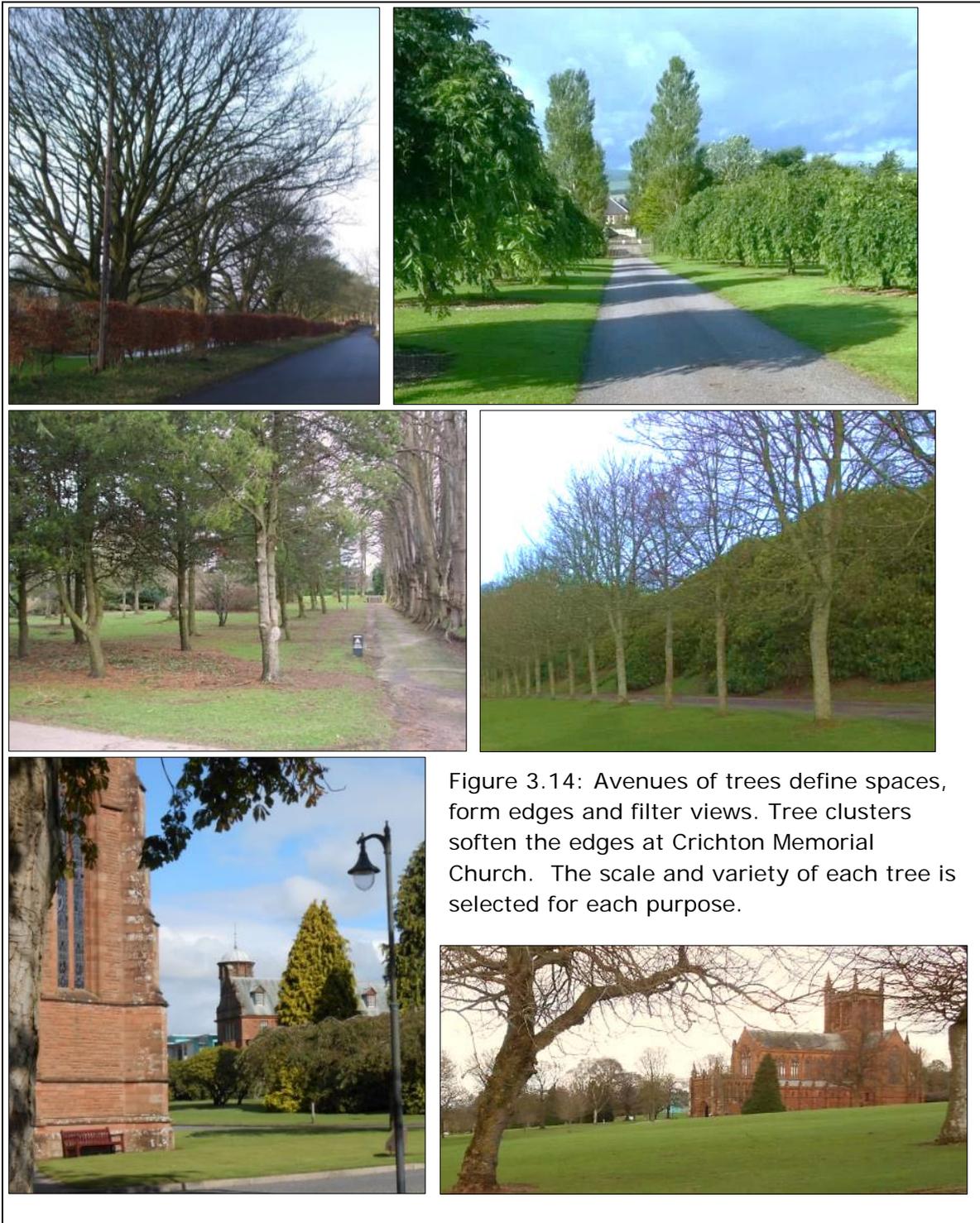
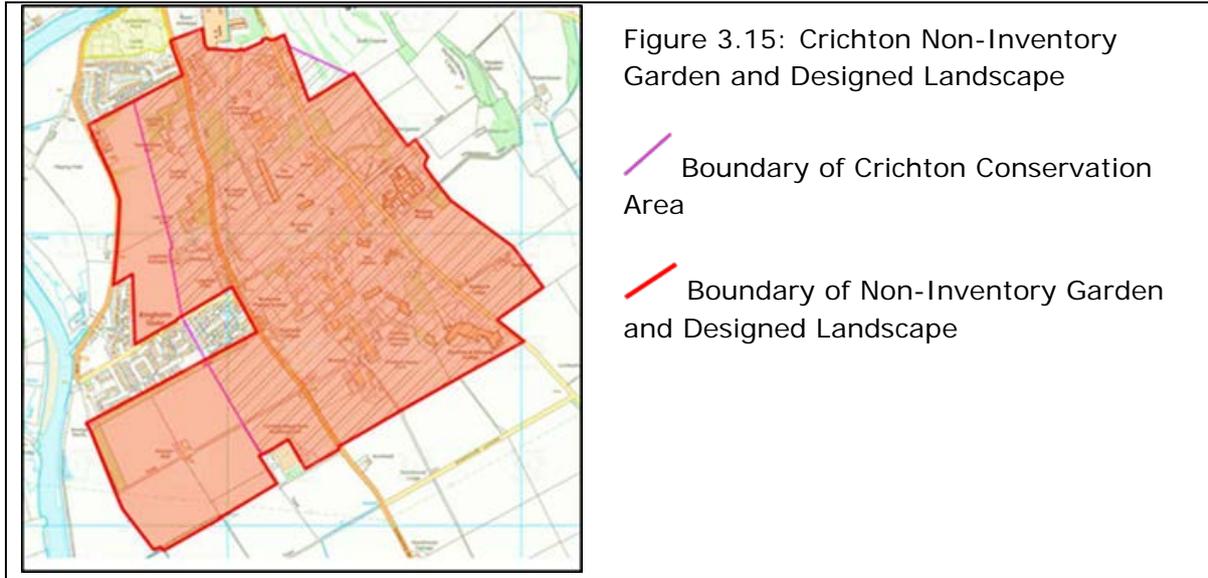


Figure 3.14: Avenues of trees define spaces, form edges and filter views. Tree clusters soften the edges at Crichton Memorial Church. The scale and variety of each tree is selected for each purpose.

Crichton Non-Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape

3.31 The quality of the landscape of Crichton Conservation Area is recognised by inclusion in the register of Non-Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes. Virtually the whole conservation area lies within the designation [Figure 3.15]. The description refers to its association with the 19th century Crichton Royal Institution. Policy HE6 of the Dumfries and Galloway Local Plan: Gardens and Designed Landscapes, supports the protection and enhancement of significant elements and qualities of both Inventory and Non-inventory designed landscapes.



### Street surfaces, furniture and signage

3.32 The most frequently used road and path surface is tarmac. Other materials used are gravel, grit, mono-block or granite setts [Figure 3.16]. Concrete is the most common kerbstone but on Glencaple Road there is a short length of traditional granite kerb. Black tarmac highway surfaces with concrete kerbs have neutral impact on character whereas granite kerbs better reflect historic tradition. Many of the pedestrian paths have informal, natural edges which creates informal character.

3.33 Road markings are standard width, painted white or yellow. There are many standing traffic signs which vary in design. Some seem surplus to need, intrusive or do not make a positive contribution to character. Visitor signs are mixed in appearance with little uniformity.

3.34 A lighting column design has been adopted by Crichton Trust for outside spaces and paths. The tall, slender form of the column and its regular use provides uniformity and a positive impact on character. The lamp design is not used everywhere in the conservation area [Figure 3.17].



3.35 Car parking has become more prominent on the former hospital site as buildings have found new uses. Some areas are screened but generally surface parking, including along the internal roads, is visually intrusive in the conservation area. Ways of reducing car use include two bus routes, and several cycle facilities. The down-side is that passenger and cycle shelters are merely a functional design and in some cases are placed in the line of view from significant buildings.

3.36 Individual pieces of outdoor furniture or surface treatments do not each detract significantly from the original character of the conservation area but collectively they may have detrimental impact if they are not carefully considered. The placement of outside furniture in the setting of buildings, in the landscape or in the view can change the perception of the conservation area. There is a lack of cohesive, good design of street furniture which is not appropriate to the setting and which detracts from buildings and spaces.



### Boundary Treatments

3.37 The former Crichton Royal Institution is distinctly marked by a Category C Listed low, red, ashlar sandstone wall with cast iron railings above [Figure 3.18]. It is largely complete along Glencaple Road although not so on Bankend Road. The entrance points are often alongside lodges and at Upper Brownhall entrance the lodge, gateway, wall and railings are Listed Category B. The boundary provides both containment and a sense of arrival which has been lost in places where any of the wall and railing combination has been removed.

3.38 Hedges and trees are used to define former ward gardens and alongside access roads. As these are often dense, they provide a strong sense of ownership of spaces and privacy [Figure 3.19].

### Biodiversity

3.39 There are no natural heritage designations within the conservation area but there are habitats for insects, birds and mammals in the trees, hedges and buildings. The fruits, flowers and seeds in the landscape attract wildlife emphasising the importance of the outdoor experience in Crichton Conservation Area. There is good habitat for flying insects, bat's main food source and potential breeding sites in the mature trees, hedges and buildings for bats and birds. A survey carried out at Crichton Royal Farm in 2013 identified at least three bat species roosting or breeding in farm buildings or mature trees.



Figure 3.18: Railings and sandstone walls. A variety of boundary walls are used some to subdivide open spaces and protect private spaces. Some are in combination with other features such as low walls under substantial cast iron railings; hedges; or tall stone walls. There are also a number of sandstone retaining walls.





Figure 3.19: Close clipped beech, evergreen and holly hedges are used to screen and define spaces. Field hedges continue to feature strongly in the agricultural land.



### Archaeology

3.40 There are a small number of archaeological records within the conservation area boundary. Historic map records show that Ladyfield estate dates from the 18th century and Hannahfield [now Ladyfield West] from the early 19th century. There are 19th century military boundary posts near Hannahfield. Rosehall farm appears on maps from the end of the 18th century. Mountainhall and Brownhall estates, parts of which were bought by the Crichton Royal Institution Trustees, are first named on early 19th century maps [Figure 3.21].

3.41 Other archaeological records close by, outside the conservation area are: Castle Dykes Scheduled Ancient Monument dating from the 12th century, destroyed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century - linked to the release of David II by the English and the terms of the 'king's ransom'. There is an early earthwork at Mountainhall;

remnants of an enclosure at Stanehouse Loaning; and a prehistoric fort and subsequent burial ground at Camp Hill Trohoughton.

Boundary of Crichton Conservation Area.

3.42 The original boundary came about through consultation with Historic Environment Scotland. It includes the core buildings and landscaped spaces associated with the Crichton Royal Institution and omits the most significantly altered area where new modern buildings are dominant. It includes outlying properties which were part of the operation of the Crichton Royal Institution and sufficient land to protect the immediate outlook from the site.

3.43 At that time consideration was given to drawing the conservation area boundary more tightly around the buildings and spaces designed as part of the Crichton Royal Institution, between Bankend Road and Glencaple Road; to exclude buildings that were taken into the Crichton Royal Institution such as Ladyfield; or to exclude those with little operational connection with the Hospital such as Ellangowan on the east or Dumfries and Galloway College building to the south. In order to preserve the ethos of the Crichton Royal Institution, and because some of those properties protect the views and the wider setting, a tighter boundary was not considered to be appropriate.

3.44 Consideration was also given to drawing the boundary more widely by including an area to the north which includes the 20th century Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary [DGRI] and Allanbank Nursing Home. The main DGRI building is very large; very modern in design; clad externally in white; surrounded by parking and access roads; and has very little green space close to it. While there is significant open green space in the wider area around these buildings, it was considered that inclusion of this part of the site would dilute the character of the conservation area.

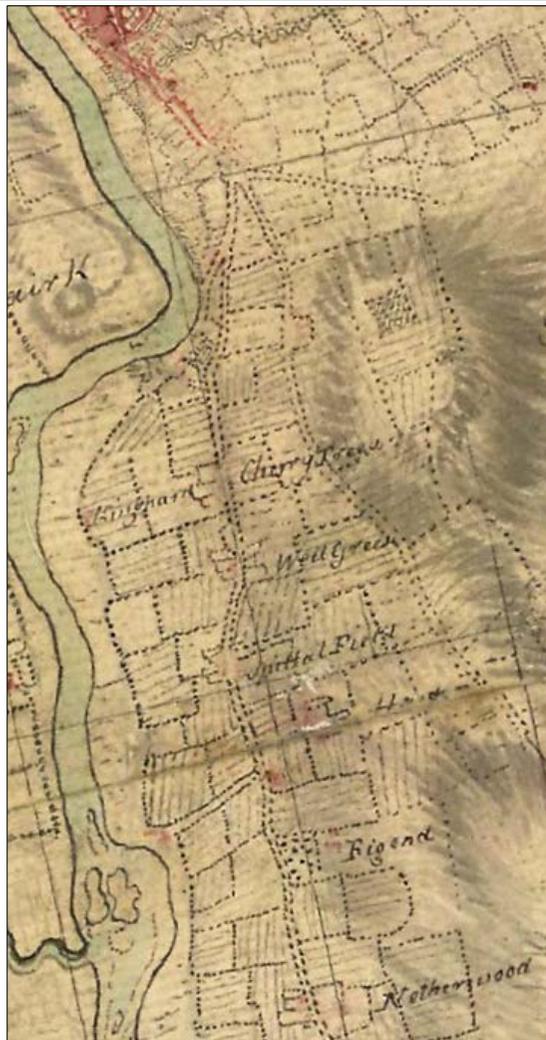
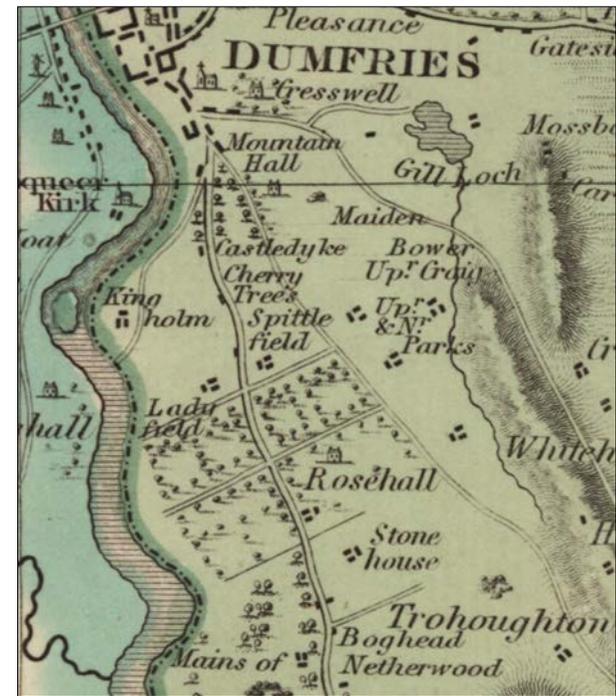
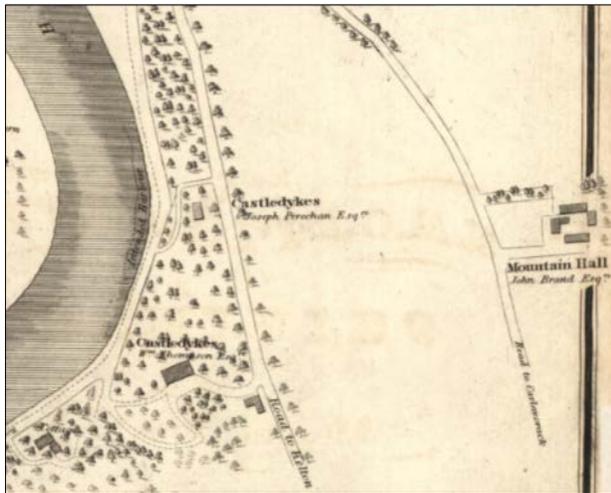


Figure 3.20: The area before Crichton Royal Institution – left to right:  
 Roy, Military Survey of Lowlands Scotland 1752-1755  
 John Thomson's Atlas 1832  
 John Wood Plan 1780 – 1847  
 Tracks and boundaries are visible along with property names some of which continue in the landscape such as Spittalfield and Well Green.  
 William Crawford Map of Dumfriesshire 1774-1828 showing property names including Rosehall, Ladyfield, Cherry Trees, Stone house, Trohoughton and Spittle field.



3.45 The periphery of the Crichton Conservation Area boundary takes in elements which are modern in character including: the staff accommodation at Maryfield; the boiler buildings at Garage Gate; the dental hospital near Garage Gate constructed since designation; and university accommodation at the top of Kingholm Loaning.

3.46 It was concluded then that the special character and appearance of Crichton Conservation Area was best preserved within the boundary as it now exists. There is no amendment proposed.

## 4 LOCATION AND SETTING

4.1 Crichton Conservation Area lies approximately 2km south of the centre of Dumfries. Written accounts indicate that in 1834 the 40 acre site chosen by the Trustees for Crichton Royal Institution was from 'the lands of Hillhead,' part of the Mountainhall estate, selected because of its raised position and proximity to Dumfries. Trustees were discerning, being aware of views across the Nith to Criffell and the Solway, and towards the Galloway Hills understanding that the psychological well-being of future patients should benefit. The siting of Crichton Hall made best use of that outlook.

### Topography and landform

4.2 The contour map shows how the land falls from north-east to south-west [Figure 4.1]. Maidenbower is at 83m; Ellangowan and Midpark at approximately 70m; Crichton Golf Course lies between 60m and 50m; and Crichton Hall is between the 50m and 40m contours. The majority of the former Crichton Royal Institution buildings lie between the 60m and 40m contours. Ladyfield East and West are between the 30m and 20m contours and their land carries down south west towards the River Nith just above sea level. The level changes were anticipated in the design and siting of the original buildings [Figure 4.2].

4.3 The elevation of the site means that, in a number of places west of the River Nith, there are views towards the conservation area. The trees and buildings are visible as groups but the tower of Crichton Memorial Church is clear. From the south, there are broad views from Stanehouse Loaning of the farm, Carmont and the college buildings. Further south-east Camp Hill blocks views towards Crichton Conservation Area.

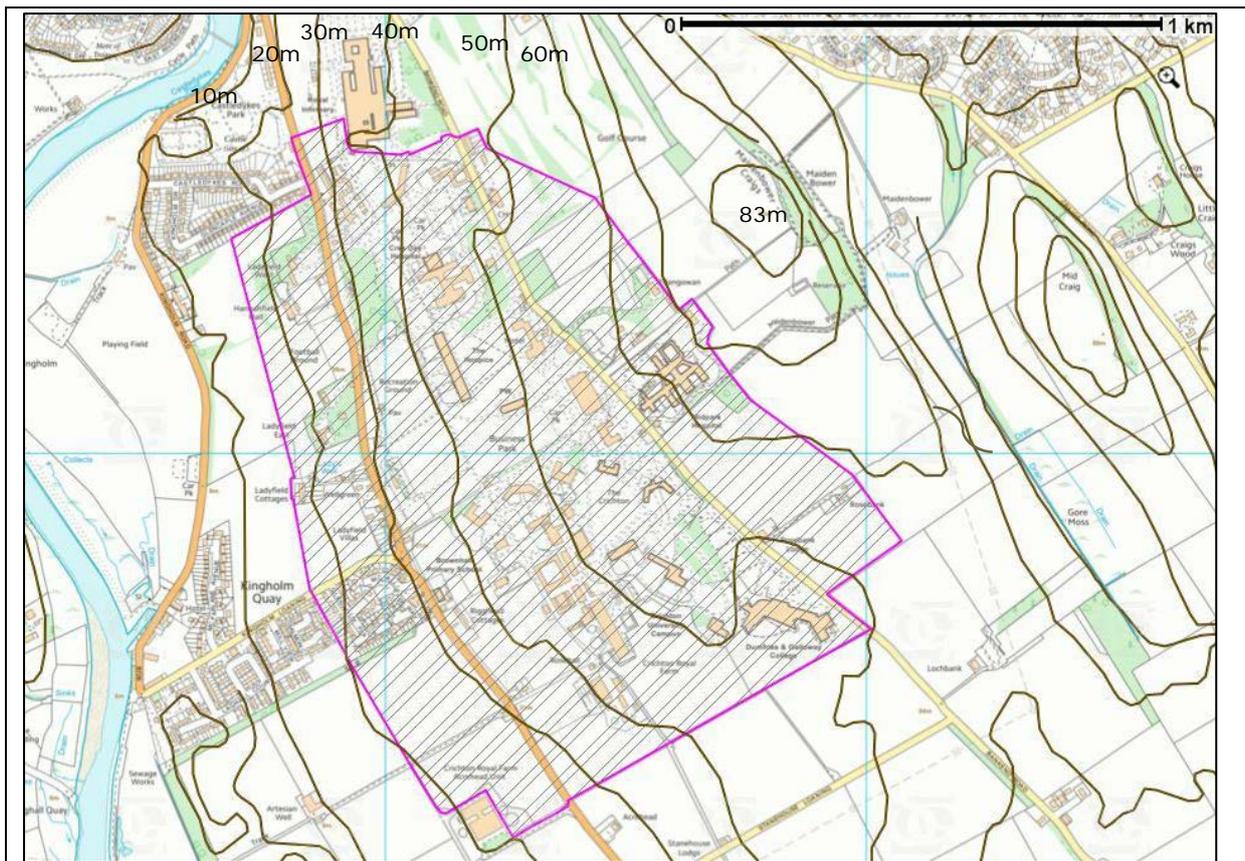


Figure 4.1: Topography of the area around Crichton Conservation Area Boundary



4.4 Land was excavated or levelled to create building platforms and recreational areas for the former Crichton Royal Institution. [Figure 4.3]. Going south-west, the buildings are seen to reduce in height, at times exaggerated by flat roof designs. In this way the westward outlook from existing buildings has been preserved and new buildings can have similar views [Figure 4.4].

4.5 The main sports field is on a manmade platform with a perimeter embankment. There are embankments around the recreation ground north of Crichton Hall. These areas contrast with the more organic, sloping form of other parts of the landscape.

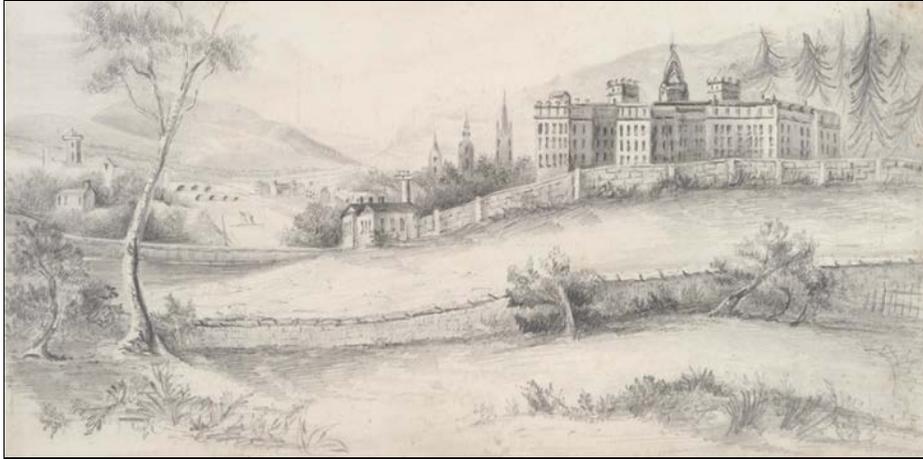


Figure 4.2: A 19<sup>th</sup> century proposal sketch for Crichton Hall in its landscape. The proposed full William Burn design for Crichton Hall is shown, even though never built, with the bridges and steeples of Dumfries in the background. Real level changes between the Hall and Hospice site are in the 2015 photograph.

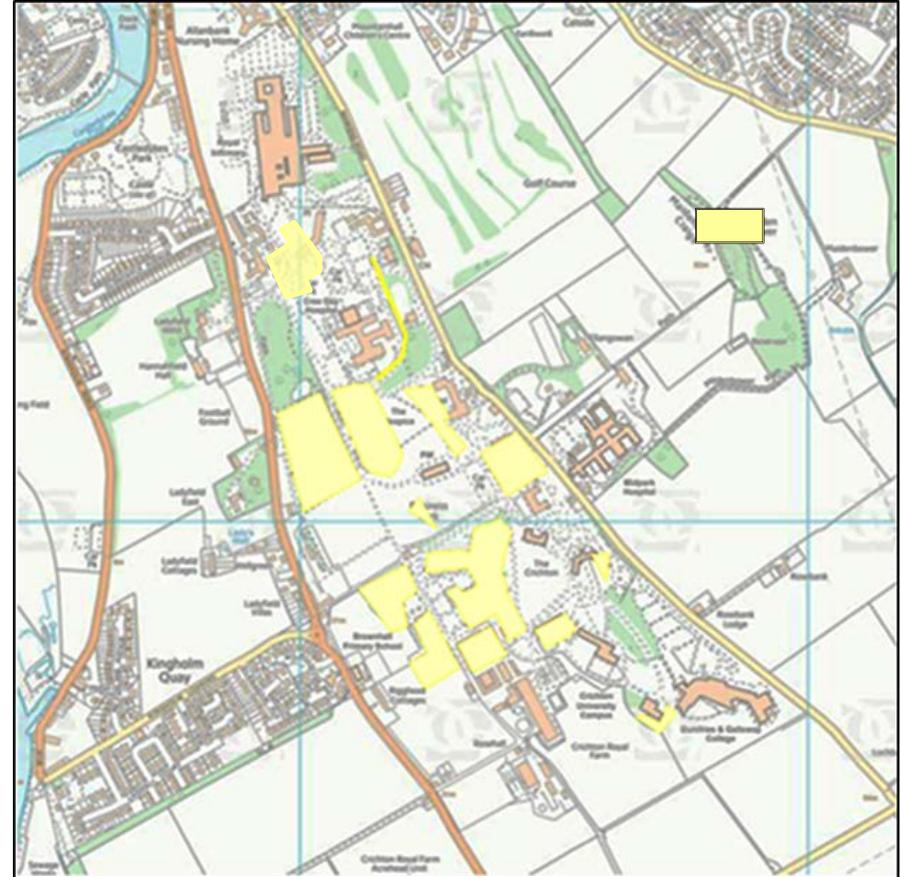


Figure 4.3: Artificial level changes are shown within the Crichton Royal Institution site in **yellow**. Throughout its development land level changes have been engineered for buildings and outdoor spaces within Crichton Royal Institution site. Other more recently engineered sites exist at Midpark Psychiatric Hospital.

## Setting

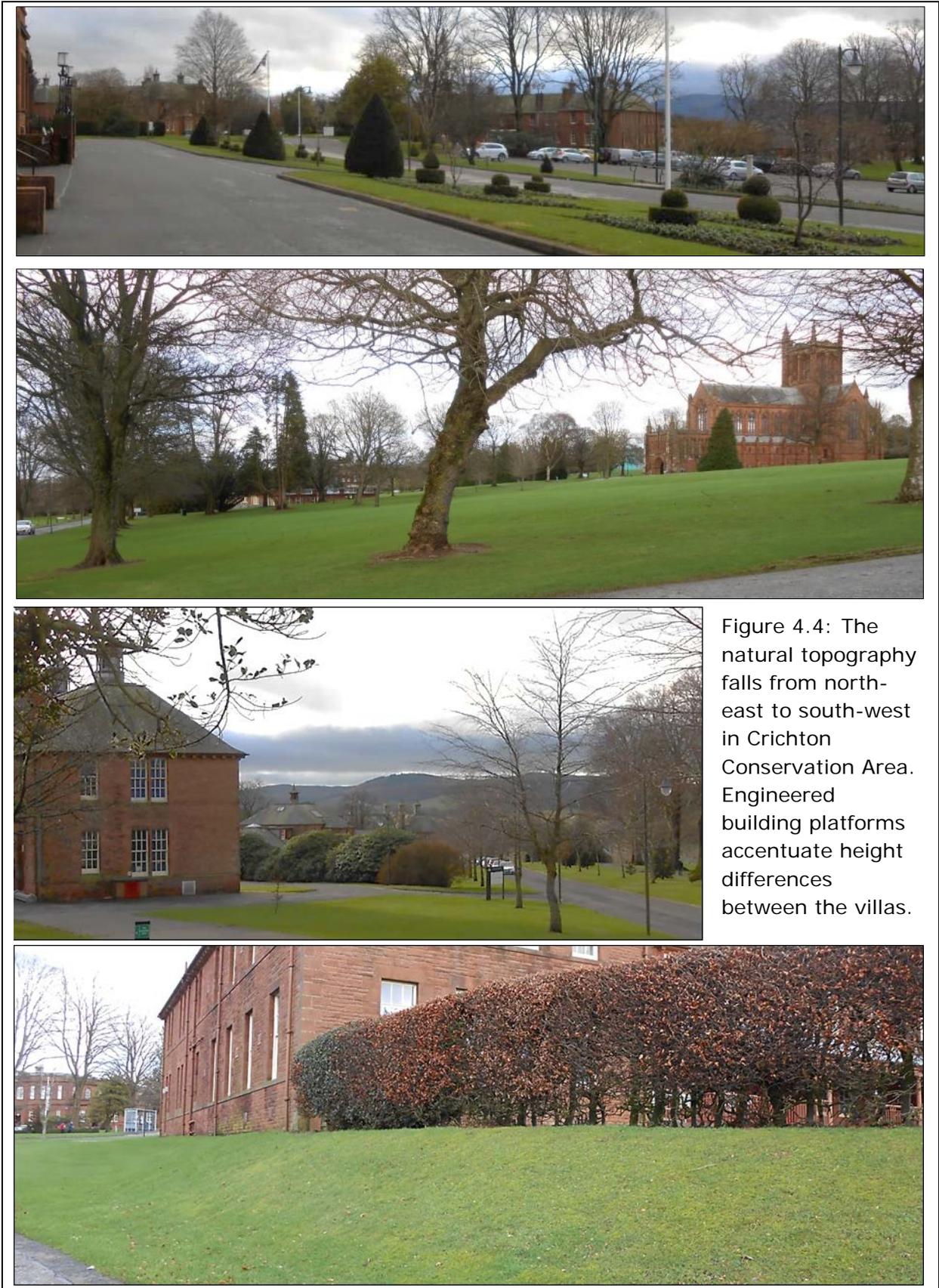


Figure 4.4: The natural topography falls from north-east to south-west in Crichton Conservation Area. Engineered building platforms accentuate height differences between the villas.

4.6 The settings of both the historic buildings of the Crichton Royal Institution and the wider conservation area have altered significantly. There have been changes to boundary features; layout and content of gardens; buildings have been demolished and others built; parking has been introduced; but, for the most part, the very extensive landscape features of the various settings remain.

4.7 Generous areas of open space between buildings have remained a constant feature. However, the density of development is not uniform across the conservation area [Figure 4.5]. Early 20th century phases of development created loose clusters of buildings and since then some additional buildings have been slotted in. Near the edges, in the 20th and early 21st century, new large footprint buildings and residential schemes were introduced such as agricultural buildings, Midpark Hospital, Dumfries and Galloway College and many houses. Despite significant change, the setting of the conservation area remains open in character and change is expected to continue as other development related to existing uses comes forward.

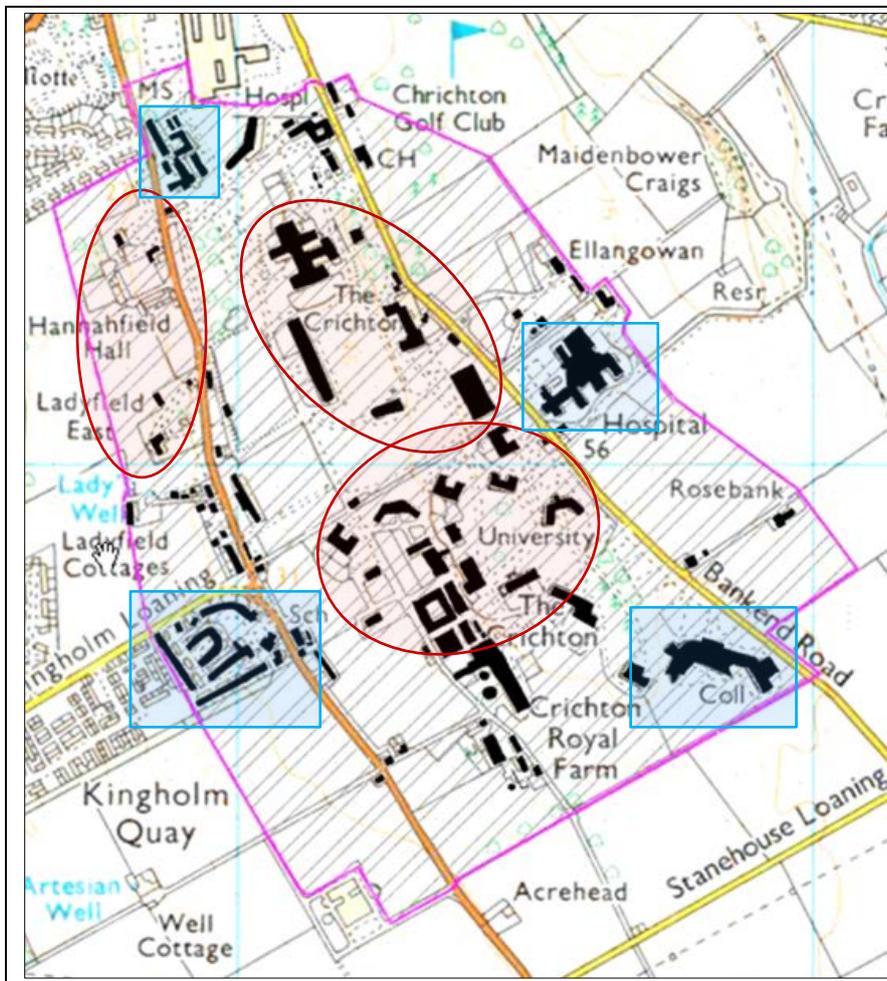


Figure 4.5: Density of development.

There are a range of different densities of built development in different parts of the conservation area.

The built areas from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century with significant open space are indicated by red ovals and the denser areas of housing or large, single footprint buildings by blue rectangles.

4.8 Many of the former Institution buildings have new uses without residents so that the pattern of occupancy and activity in the outdoor space is different from its original intended purpose. Car parks have increased the areas of hard surface and shelters and other outdoor furniture are present in the setting of the buildings.

4.9 The topography and landform are very significant features of the conservation area; demonstrating that by using engineering building platforms and manipulating the positions of buildings, the westerly and south-westerly views from most development within the conservation area can be established and maintained.

## 5. APPRAISAL BY AREA

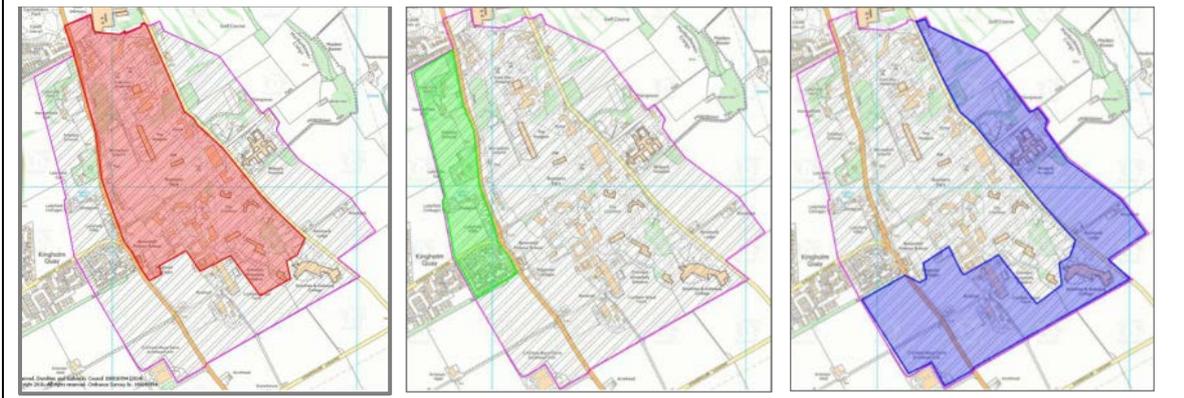
5.1 Crichton Conservation Area is based on Crichton Royal Institution and its carefully planned and designed phases of development over 100 years as a private hospital. As the Institution bought nearby properties to provide additional facilities there are different character areas. Three separate areas are identified for the purposes of this appraisal.

Figure 5.1: The three character areas used are shown below.

Red is the **Crichton Royal Institution Core Area**;

Green is the **Ladyfield Area**; and

Blue is the **Midpark and Peripheral Farmland Area**.



### Crichton Royal Institution Core Area

5.2 At the heart of Crichton Conservation Area are the buildings and open spaces of the former Crichton Royal Institution [the Institution]. There are a number of very significant buildings within this area, mostly red sandstone buildings some of which are Listed and spaces originally associated with the Institution. There are also a small number of modern buildings.

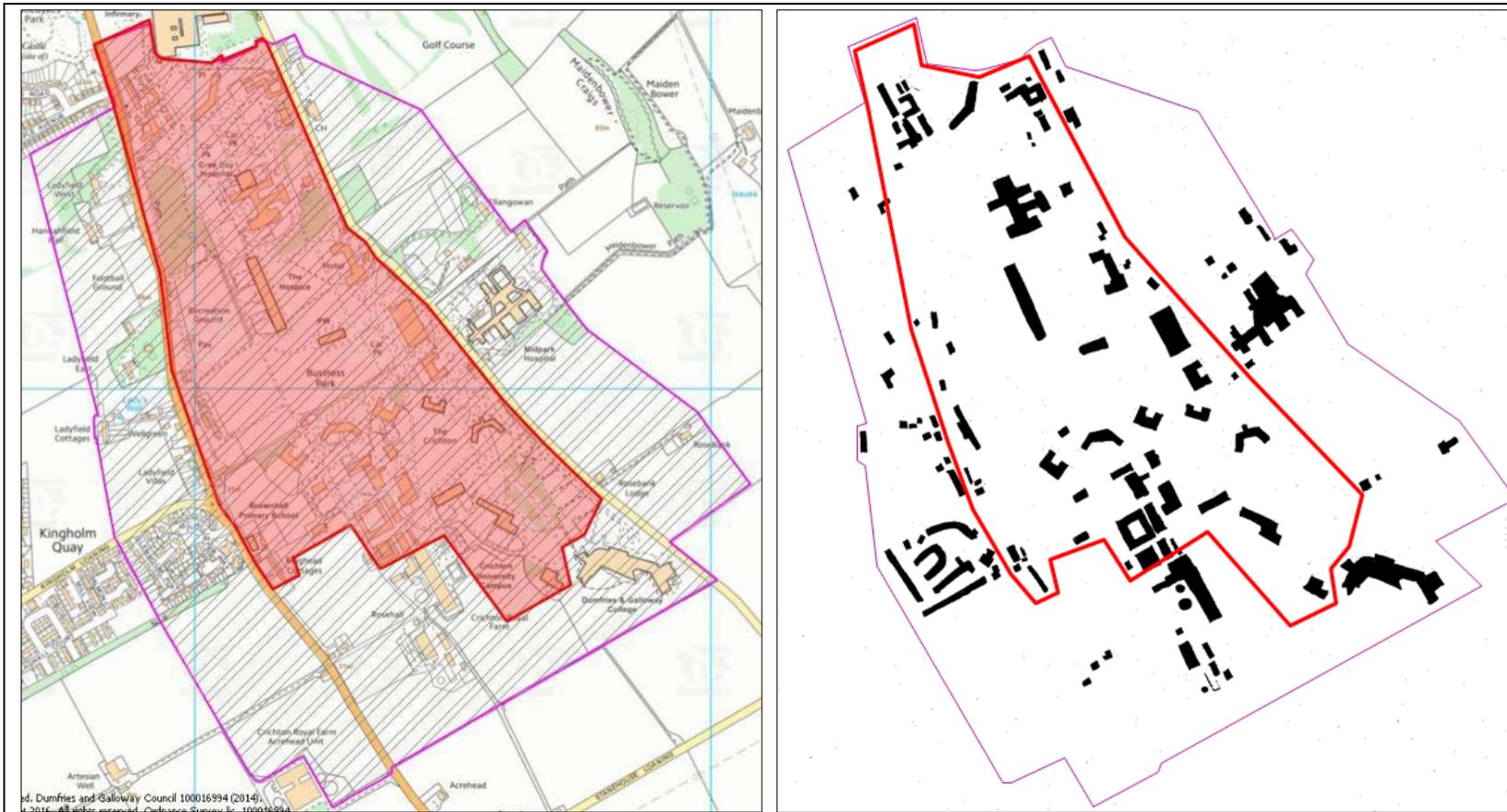


Figure 5.2: Crichton Royal Institution Core Area. The right hand side plan shows the building footprints including their shape and orientation, their distribution in the site and the spaces between them.

### Significant buildings and spaces.

5.3 **Crichton Hall** is Category A Listed and is the earliest building of the Institution on the original part of the Institution owned land. It is built from local red sandstone, in a lightly ornamented, classical architectural style, which set the standards of design for subsequent buildings. It is the largest footprint building of the Institution and the tallest, at three storeys high with a four storey octagonal stair turret. It has been extended several times but for the most part has kept its original character of narrow wings with banks of windows. It is in an elevated position with good views to the south-west, an attribute which has influenced the design and layout of the development of the whole Institution. The condition of this building and its setting are central to maintaining the character of the conservation area. The immediate landscape setting of Crichton Hall to the west is lawns with a variety of trees [Figure 5.3].

5.4 **Campbell House** [originally Crichton House] is Category C Listed and sits within its own contained landscaped area east of Crichton Hall [Figure 5.3]. It was the medical superintendent's accommodation. It is a two storey high red sandstone building with a basement but plainer than the Hall. It has been extended once, very significantly. The pierced sandstone balustrade details match balustrades on Crichton Hall. Unlike many other buildings, the immediate, relatively secluded, landscape setting of Campbell House is more significant than views from it.

5.5 The 19th century **Octagonal Timber Pavilion**, Category B Listed, is located close to the earliest recreation grounds of the Institution just north of Crichton Hall. Along with the unlisted pavilions the area continues to be used for crown bowling. The regular use of the spaces keeps them in good order. By contrast the adjacent former tennis court is now used for parking [Figure 5.4].



Figure 5.3: Aerial photography showing: the original + footprint and subsequent T shaped extensions of Crichton Hall and the recreation areas to its north and landscaped setting to its west; Campbell House and landscaped setting east of Crichton Hall; the DGRI hospital boiler east of the recreation grounds; the stables and garage complex north of the boiler; the open V-shaped dental centre with helicopter landing area in the surrounding lawns; and Maryfield Terrace to its east. The large area of Arboretum and Rockery are clearly visible in the western part of the photograph. Johnston House and its large northern extension is seen in the bottom right corner.



Figure 5.4: On the northern edge of Crichton Conservation Area the character comes from the fall of the land, open lawns and recreation areas, groups of trees and the small sandstone buildings. From west to east: Maryfield Terrace; the Dental Centre; the Octagonal pavilion; the garage and stables complex; the hospital boiler building and chimney; and the recreation grounds with pavilions.



5.6 The late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century **Garage and Stables** complex is made up of single storey red sandstone buildings including a quadrangle with some cottages fronting Bankend Road and west of them a number of fully hipped storage buildings with tall vents beside single storey buildings [Figure 5.4]. The group has cottage scale which is different from most other Institution buildings. Some modifications have taken place but the group retains its original character.

5.7 In the area north of Crichton Hall, there are many alternative materials and designs used which are at variance with the historic Institution buildings [Figure 5.4]. There is a risk that character may be lost if development is introduced which fails to reinforce the use of red sandstone as the most important building material. Some of the existing buildings using modern design and materials include:

- The Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary [DGRI] boiler building, sited east of the recreation ground in a relatively self-contained site, is brick built with a single-span roof and tall, pale brick chimney.
- The DGRI Dental Centre, located north-west of the recreation ground, is long, narrow and angled forming a wide open V and clad in cedar boards. One end is supported on narrow posts to counter the level change in the land. It sits separate from the sandstone buildings with which it contrasts markedly and it forms a clear edge to the conservation area.
- Maryfield Terrace takes the form of 2 and 3 storey, pale brick built terraced dwellings which provide accommodation for hospital staff. The materials and form contrast with the historic sandstone buildings although the terrace is close only to Low Lodge and separated by trees and hedges.

5.8 The **Arboretum and Rockery** are west of Crichton Hall, at a lower ground level. These are unusual landscape features in the context of a hospital and they have been a cherished part of the Institution since being laid out in the 1920s [Figures 3.9 and 3.10]. They are well maintained but a well-informed forward plan would be of great benefit to the Arboretum.

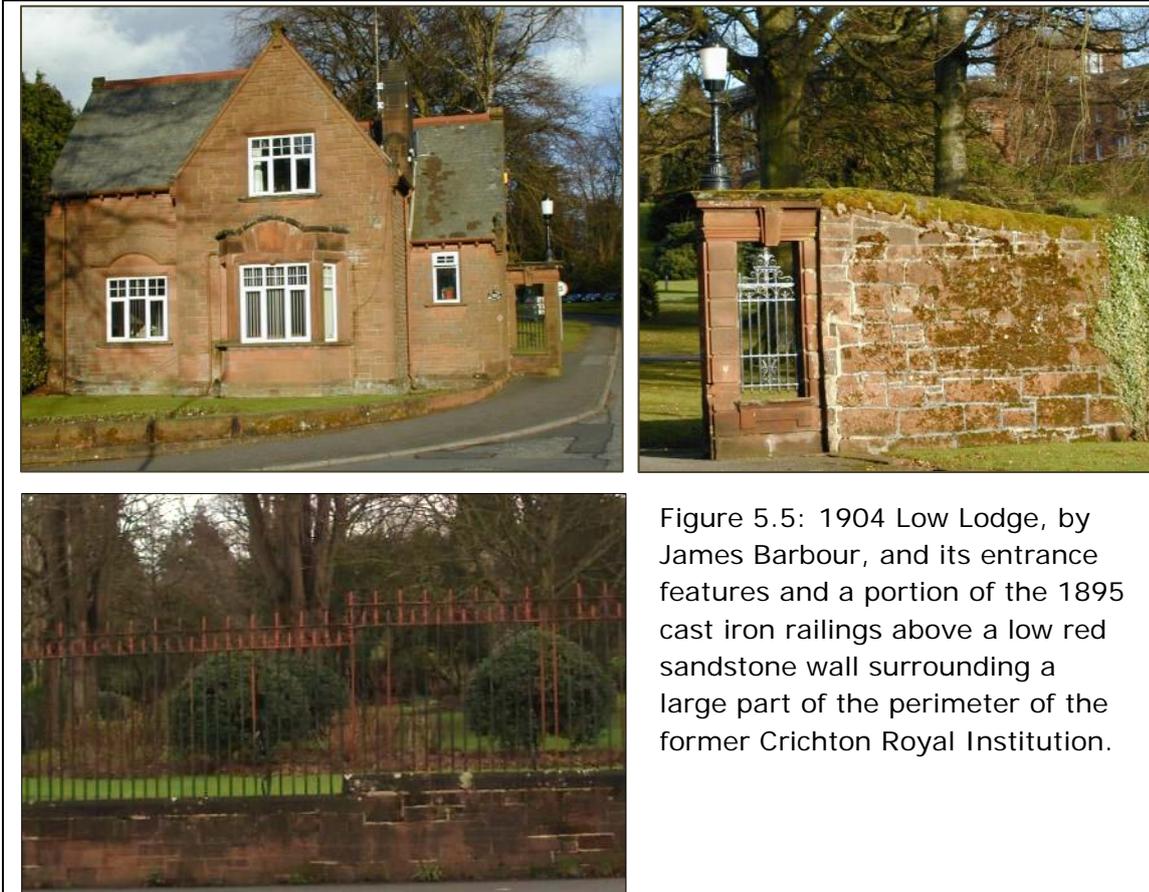


Figure 5.5: 1904 Low Lodge, by James Barbour, and its entrance features and a portion of the 1895 cast iron railings above a low red sandstone wall surrounding a large part of the perimeter of the former Crichton Royal Institution.

5.9 **Low Lodge** on Glencaple Road marks the original western entrance to Crichton Royal Institution. It is Category C Listed along with the entrance piers, walls and long lengths of roadside railings. The sandstone lodge is in good original order with the exception of replacement windows. The cast iron railings are above a low sandstone wall and are undergoing phased repairs [Figure 5.5]. It sits close to the Arboretum and mature trees east of the lodge separating it from Maryfield Terrace.

5.10 **Johnston House** design by Sydney Mitchell and Wilson as part of the second phase of development of the Institution, beginning at the end of the 19th century. It is Category B Listed and the design carried on the use of sandstone, a narrow front to back depth and many windows, however it introduced a new, more Scottish style. Johnston House sits west of older, more vernacular dwellings of Hillhead House and Hillhead Cottage and stores, on a naturally elevated site with views west and south. In the early 21st century a large 3 storey extension was added to its north side, using white and malachite clad elevations with a flat roof over. Although the form of the extension sits comfortably in the Hillhead complex, the colour is a very bold contrast to red sandstone which does not reinforce the established character of the conservation area [Figure 5.6].

Figure 5.6: Johnston House and its dramatic extension which uses a very contrasting form and materials palette. It joins with the 19<sup>th</sup> century Sydney Mitchell building using a low, glazed link.



5.11 There is a large area of landscaped lawn and open tree planting in front of Johnston House which leads down to the Hospice building and allows filtered views south to Crichton Memorial Church and north back towards Crichton Hall.

5.12 **Crichton Memorial Church** was completed by 1897 to a design by Sydney Mitchell & Wilson and is Category A Listed. It is a dedication to Elizabeth and James Crichton for their contribution to Crichton Royal Institution. The church is Gothic Revival style built on a gentle slope in tree planted, open lawns. It is built from red sandstone and has a square tower with many fine stone details on all elevations. The pointed arch windows incorporate stained glass and elements of stone tracery. It occupies an important position in the central part of the Institution site.

5.13 **The Hospice** is located west of Johnston House beyond the sloped lawns and is built down into the landscape with the roof level with the slope to its east. It is a long narrow, flat roofed Art Deco building built in 1924 to a design by James Flett on the site of the former Southern Counties Asylum. In front of it is a ward garden area now in use for car parking and beyond that is the main sports field of the Institution. The building is very carefully designed and sited to have views to the west and not to interrupt views to the south-west from the lawns and buildings behind it.

5.14 The **Sports Field** was engineered to be level and is surrounded by an embankment which varies on how high it is up the slope. The northern edge also has an avenue of lime trees. The sports field and pavilion dating from 1923 is in use for part of the year.

5.15 East of the Memorial Church is **Easterbrook Hall**, Category B Listed [Figure 5.7], which is the last therapy building of the Institution, completed in 1938. It is

a flat roofed, Art Deco design by James Flett facing south-west down the slope of the lawns with scenic views over the glass conservatories. Its social and leisure roles have been revived by Crichton Trust.



Figure 5.7: Easterbrook Hall and views from it across the sloping lawns and over the glass house conservatories.

5.16 The **lawns in front of Easterbrook** are part of the setting of the Memorial Church and lead down to the Category B Listed **Glass Houses and Conservatories** [Figure 5.7]. The glass houses are in extremely poor condition and attempts to find long term uses have not so far succeeded, however they were built in 1923 at a similar time to the creation of the Arboretum and Rockery and are an important feature of the designed landscape.

5.17 **Grierson House** was completed in 1934 to a design by James Flett. It is flat roofed, Art Deco in style and has common architectural themes with Easterbrook Hall, directly north-west of it. It is used as offices but has retained

the former ward garden to its south-west frontage; parking provided to the eastern side of the building which is partially screened from Bankend Road by mature trees.

Figure 5.8: The James Barbour design of Upper Brownhall Lodge contrasts with the simple vernacular architecture of Church Gate Lodge and Mid Lodge.



5.18 **Upper Brownhall Lodge at Grierson Gate** from 1904 is very distinctive in its design by James Barbour. It has a tall straight chimney (with some similarity to his design at Midpark) and an Arts and Crafts style half-timber porch. Other lodge buildings at Church Gate and Mid Lodge are a simple vernacular style with hipped and gabled slate roofs [Figure 5.8].

5.19 The buildings in the south-eastern part of the Institution date mainly from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the layout having been heavily influenced by the European approach to mental health care. The loosely grouped colony of villas with gardens and landscaped areas between them developed over a number of building phases and the position of these buildings makes best use of the south-west slope. Where a limitation on views could result, building platforms were created. As a result of the wish for long views many of the elevations are aligned approximately north-west to south-east with some exceptions including: Crichton farm buildings which pre-date most of the villas and **Dudgeon** which is close to Bankend Road and faces south-south-east. Dudgeon is a 1910 partly single storey, open U plan footprint, designed by Sydney Mitchell & Wilson. Uncommonly for the Institution villas, long scenic views from Dudgeon are restricted. The plan of the building gives the impression of private space on the southern side.

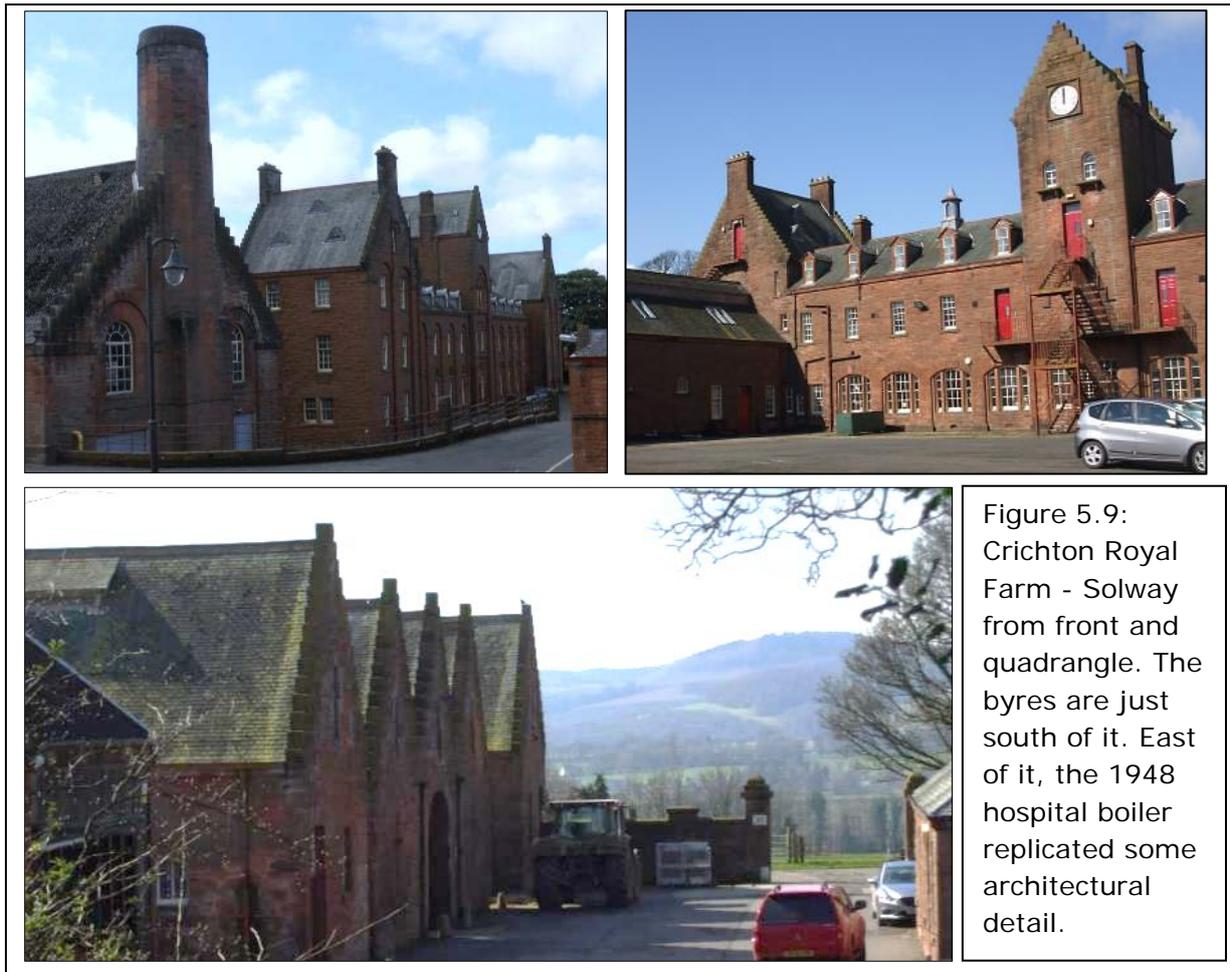


Figure 5.9: Crichton Royal Farm - Solway from front and quadrangle. The byres are just south of it. East of it, the 1948 hospital boiler replicated some architectural detail.

5.20 **Solway House** is the frontage building of the Category A Listed **Crichton Royal Farm** buildings. It was built in 1893, designed by John Davidson with R.F. Dudgeon assisting. It is built from red sandstone and has a central, north facing, 4-storey clock tower over an archway, 3-storey corners connected by 2-storey with attic height buildings to form a quadrangle. It is quite different from the villas. Behind it the animal byres are a linked group of parallel barns with 5 crow-stepped north gables [Figure 5.9]. The site for the farm was levelled and other buildings used the same level. **Criffel View** is on the same platform, designed by Sydney Mitchell and Wilson and completed in 1899. It has been altered but the distinctive elements of its single storey form are preserved. **Hestan** (1923) and the **1948 Hospital Boiler** and are also on this platform. The boiler clearly repeats the architectural themes of Solway and is sited to follow the frontage line of the older buildings.

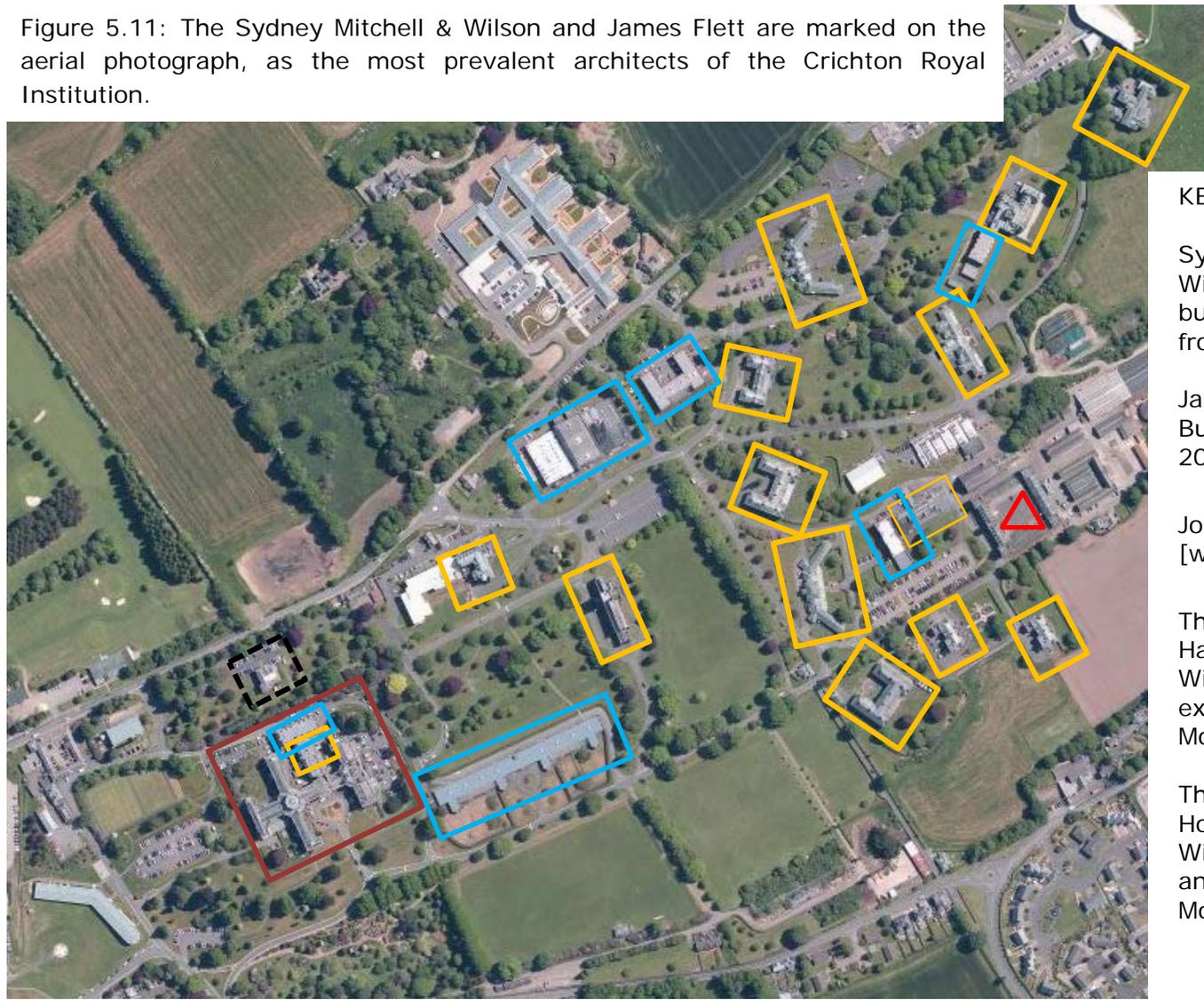
5.21 The distinctive architectural forms used by the two main architects are evident. Sydney Mitchell designs are mainly single or two storey, hipped roof buildings and James Flett designs are flat roofed Art Deco style. [Figure 5.10] There are single storey buildings in both styles. All are red sandstone with narrow floor plans either U shaped, H shaped or with splayed wings. There are many regular, vertically aligned windows and verandas or glazed patios which open onto former ward gardens. Originally many entrances were discreet, but some modern

entrance canopies have been added such as on Galloway and Annandale. These have not affected the quality of the buildings. Mitchell's **Memorial Church**, **Rutherford** and **Johnston House** are the most flamboyant buildings of the Institution.



Figure 5.10: Highlighting the different villa styles of Sydney Mitchell & Wilson Architects and Architect James Flett. Mitchell designs are on the left – Galloway, Maxwell and Rutherford from two sides; and Flett designs on the right – Hestan, Grierson and McCowan.

Figure 5.11: The Sydney Mitchell & Wilson and James Flett are marked on the aerial photograph, as the most prevalent architects of the Crichton Royal Institution.



KEY

Sydney Mitchell and Wilson designed buildings and extensions from the 1890s to 1914;



James Flett designed Buildings from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century;



John Davidson design [with R F Dudgeon];



The first part of Crichton Hall was designed by William Burn and first extended by William B Moffat;



The first half Campbell House was designed by William McGowan and extended by William Moir.



5.22 Flett designed **Hestan** which is Category C Listed, 3 storeys and flat roofed and **McCowan**, now linked to Rutherford [Figure 5.10]. Flett came after Mitchell and despite the use of flat roofs to preserve outlook, his building designs fit well with existing buildings as they continued to use red sandstone and carried through other architectural themes from earlier buildings.

5.23 The buildings are in open settings [Figure 5.11], on building platforms at levels which allow views out south or west and into closer landscaped spaces. The most westerly buildings are Sydney Mitchell designs - **Carmont** was built 1904 and is Category B Listed. **Annandale** and **Eskdale** are a pair built in 1909 facing south-east and are Category C Listed as are **Monreith**, **Galloway** and **Kindar** which each face south-west. Mitchell also designed **Maxwell**, Category B Listed facing south-west, and **Browne** which faces south-east.

5.24 There are newer buildings between the historic Institution buildings which are different in appearance and reduced the amount of space between the villas. The single storey, single span, 1974 sterile supplies building is clad in red-brown plywood which picks up on the sandstone colour but not the grain or detail of older elevations. Close by is a 1960s brown-brick modern laundry which contrasts greatly with other buildings although it remains linked to a small sandstone weigh-bridge building.

5.25 There are a number of important spaces between buildings including those south of Maxwell House, between Solway and Hestan and immediately east and west of Rutherford-McCowan which contribute to the open impression of this part of the former Institution. This is a key feature of the conservation area which it is important to protect to preserve the character.

5.26 In addition to the spaces between the buildings and their immediate gardens there are broad areas of open space including the lawns in front of Easterbrook and Johnston and the Sports Field recreation area in front of the Hospice. The Arboretum and Rockery are very important landscaped spaces in their own right as well as their contribution to the wider setting and backdrop of the former Institution buildings.



Figure 5.12: Original part of Brownhall School and the former schoolhouse.

5.27 There are a number of less significant buildings in this area. Within the farm is a semi-detached pair of vernacular cottages – Dairy Cottages. Near the conservatories and fronting the east side of Glencaple Road are Spittalfield Cottages, which are semi-detached vernacular, red sandstone dwellings. Along Glencaple Road, further south, **Brownhall School** and its former **Brownhall Schoolhouse** are also red sandstone and share some architectural details. The school has a modern extension. Sited above Glencaple Road are Rigghead Cottages which are a long, single storey, much altered, semi-detached pair.

5.28 There is a strong built edge to the Institution site which is created by the boundary wall and railings along Glencaple Road and Bankend Road, and the roadside position of the small lodge buildings and cottages and the school.

#### Key positive features of the Crichton Royal Institution Core Area

5.29 There are a number of positive characteristic features of the former Crichton Royal Institution which are annotated in the following table [Figure 5.13].

Figure 5.13: Key Positive Features of Crichton Conservation Area.

#### BUILDING HEIGHT, POSITION AND ORIENTATION

- **Height is directly related to the position of the building in the landscape** and in relation to other buildings  
eg: Crichton Hall is 3-storey at the top of the slope; the Hospice is single storey and flat roofed on a lowered building platform to sit beneath the line of view; Hestan is three storeys but flat roofed on a lowered building platform preventing it interrupting views from Kindar.
- Many buildings are **orientated to face south-west, west or south-east**.
- Buildings are positioned to have **views of their own from at least one elevation**.
- Buildings are positioned to **preserve lines of view** from existing buildings.
- **Flat roofed buildings** are used **in key positions** as are pitched [hipped] roofs.
- **Smaller buildings** are placed **out of the main view** away from key outdoor spaces such as Mid Lodge which is single storey and built to the side of the lawn.

#### BUILT FOOTPRINT

- Most buildings have **narrow, symmetrical floorplans**.

#### ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY

- **Consistent use of red sandstone** as the main building material and a variety of masonry finishes which contributes to the colour, pattern, grain and texture of the elevations:
  - dressed stone
  - bull faced (hammer dressed) ashlar
  - stugged (regular surface tool marks) ashlar
  - smooth or plain ashlar sometimes as a contrasting detail
  - snecked stonework
  - shaped stone features over windows, porches and at roof edges.
- The use of **signature towers and turrets** which emphasise the design quality including Crichton Hall, Rutherford House, Johnston House, Crichton Memorial Church and Solway.
- The buildings incorporate and **share many embellishments and themes** in window margins, balustrades and the use of dormer windows.
- Strong building lines formed by boundary features and roadside dwellings along Glencaple and Bankend Roads - sandstone walls and railings school and cottages.

#### ROOFING MATERIALS

- Consistent use of **grey** and grey-green **slate** for the main roof cover.

- Use of **lead for smaller roofs** such as dormers and turrets.

#### FENESTRATION AND DOORS

- The Institution buildings have many **vertically aligned windows**.
- Many buildings have **verandas or glazed arcades** linked to outside spaces.
- **Windows are sash and case format** and mostly timber with variations in size according to building design.
- Occasional **decorative shaped windows** - the Gothic windows of Crichton Memorial Church, the round oculus in Maxwell House and the stone moulded windows of Brownhall School and schoolhouse.
- **Doorways in public buildings** are emphasised using **porches, stone moulded surroundings and stained glass**
- Crichton Memorial Church carved stone 'gothic' door and double door with clock over at Easterbrook Hall.

#### LANDSCAPE SETTING AND SPACES BETWEEN BUILDINGS

- The whole of this area is **part of a designed landscape**.
- The **Arboretum and Rockery**, are significant in their own right, and create an important foreground for Crichton Hall.
- Areas of lawn and avenues of **trees** give structure to and subdivide the open landscape
- Ward gardens contribute to separation between the buildings
- Both natural and engineered landform is used to enhance outlook from buildings

#### Ladyfield Area [Figure 5.14]

5.30 To the west of Glencaple Road the conservation area is dominated by the land and buildings which were formerly part of the two Ladyfield properties and a modest housing development. There are also a number of vernacular dwellings on Glencaple Road.

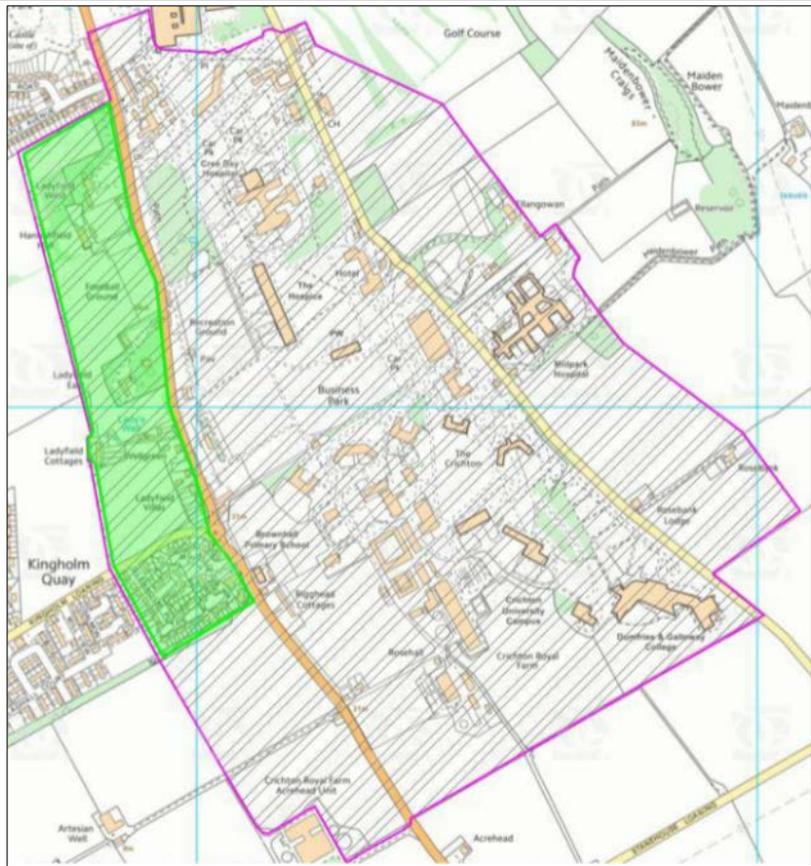


Figure 5.14: The Ladyfield Area is west of Glencaple Road and takes in the two former dwellings of that name, agricultural land and small housing developments. The plan shows the footprint of buildings and the low level of development in this area.



Figure 5.15: Ladyfield West as it was and as it is. It was built in 1812 known as Hannahfield. It is Greek revival style finished in white painted stone and render and is split level with a 'single-storey' eastern elevation and two-storey west facing elevation. The building is on Scotland's Buildings at Risk Register. The grounds in which it sits were formerly a fine landscaped garden but the structure of the landscape has degraded over many decades of changing use. The 19<sup>th</sup> century landscape is shown at Figure 3.12.

## Significant buildings and spaces

5.31 **Ladyfield West** was designed by Walter Newall and is Category B Listed. On the elevation facing Glencaple Road the house is single-storey but because there was already a natural level change on the site it was designed to have a two-storey west facing elevation [Figure 5.15]. It sits within its own designed landscape behind a sandstone wall. The original entrance was from Kingholm Road to the west where there was a lodge, outside the conservation area, but the entrance is now from Glencaple Road [Figure 5.16]. The former landscape design is discernible but in need of significant restoration. There is also a walled garden

with a pair of semi-detached garden cottages and other abandoned, walled areas and the remnants of demolished cottages beside Glencaple Road.

5.32 The wider land formerly associated with Ladyfield West is on the slope leading down to Kingholm Road. The land is in pastoral use and although the field system is intact, the hedges are gradually degrading. This land is understood to have been bought by Crichton Royal Institution partly to preserve the grand vistas but the property itself was used for 'gentlemen' patients and most recently by the NHS for young people.

5.33 **Ladyfield East** was built and extended as a gentleman's dwelling between 1820 and 1840 in a Classical style. It is constructed of sandstone but painted a pinkish colour [Figure 5.16]. It is Category B Listed and became part of the Crichton Royal Institution estate in 1932. It has a brick built lodge and hexagonal gate piers at the entrance on Glencaple Road. Both these features have been damaged. The landscaped grounds were formerly contained by sandstone walls and divided from the farmland by trees [Figure 3.11]. It was used by Crichton Royal Institution as accommodation for wealthy patients and subsequently by the NHS for mental health care when the house was extended and a new building was constructed in the grounds, north of the house.

5.34 There are a number of vernacular dwellings in this area which include the name Ladyfield or Hannahfield. **Ladyfield Cottages** are a row of 4 terraced dwellings on the western edge of the conservation area directly adjoining Ladyfield East. They were associated with employees of Ladyfield farm and built in the 19th century. They have been altered but the original design is clear, they sit low in the landscape and command good westward views. **Hannahfield Cottages** are a pair of modest red sandstone dwellings within a walled garden area off Glencaple Road, originally part of Ladyfield West [Hannahfield]. The exteriors have retained their original character and design, despite having replacement windows and doors. One of the cottages on Wellgreen also retains significant vernacular character [Figure 5.18].

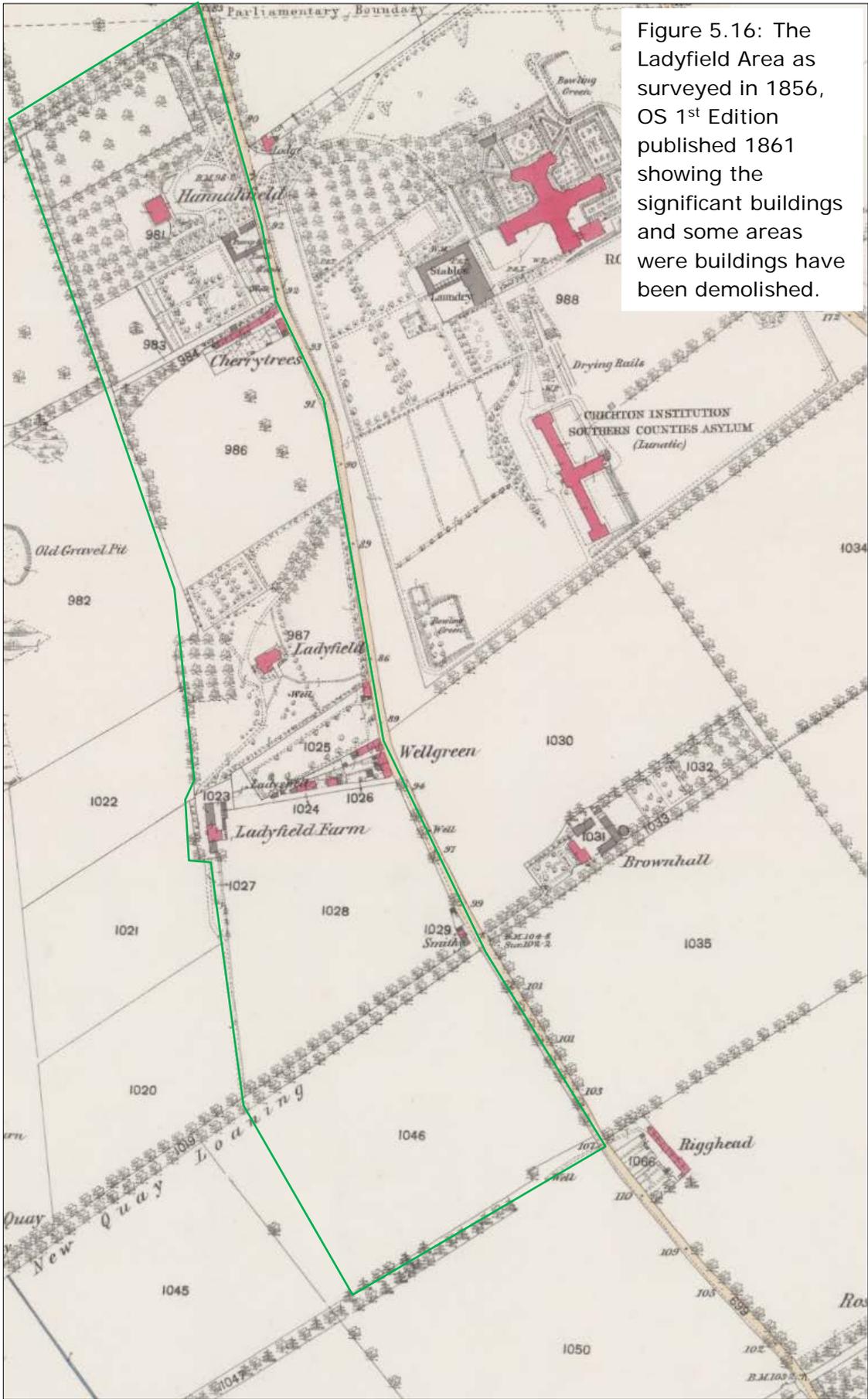


Figure 5.16: The Ladyfield Area as surveyed in 1856, OS 1<sup>st</sup> Edition published 1861 showing the significant buildings and some areas where buildings have been demolished.



Figure 5.17: Ladyfield East as it was and as it is.

All of the chimneys have been removed and there is a modern extension. Other changes are less apparent.

The landscaped grounds have changed but the basic structure of the landscape remains despite the addition of a building in the grounds near the former orchard. The lodge at the gate and the hexagonal gate piers are in poor and condition.

The last use was by the NHS for the mental health care of young people.



5.35 There are a number of roadside dwellings and a small group of new bungalows with rendered elevations in neutral shades. Although the underlying building material for many of these properties was red sandstone, there is no longer a consistent appearance. The walls of Ladyfield East and West are red sandstone and Ladyfield Villas, a row of roadside dwellings on Glencaple Road, have retained their sandstone elevations.



Figure 5.18: There are a number of modest dwellings with varying degrees of alteration and modernisation in the vicinity of Ladyfield East and West. Ladyfield Cottages, Hannahfield Cottages and the cottage on Well Green have retained much of their original simple vernacular designs.

5.36 Along Glencaple Road a number of roadside dwellings have been demolished and others built. These dwellings and the lengths of sandstone boundary walls create a well-defined road edge and building line. The density of development in this part of the conservation area is very low, with the exception of the housing development at Glenholm Place which has approximately 50 residential units.

5.37 The open land and spaces are important in the context of the historic, designed landscape and setting of the Ladyfield properties. Most views from the east side of Glencaple Road have not been detrimentally affected by the residential developments due to the topography, landform and the use of low rise designs [Figure 5.19].

Key positive features of the Ladyfield area.

5.38 This area has many different components to its character. However, the main characteristics are the landscapes and buildings of Ladyfield East and West and the unifying features are the sandstone walls and occasional buildings on the west side of Glencaple Road. The open aspect of the land sloping down to the west plays a part in maintaining the important views from Crichton Royal Institution.

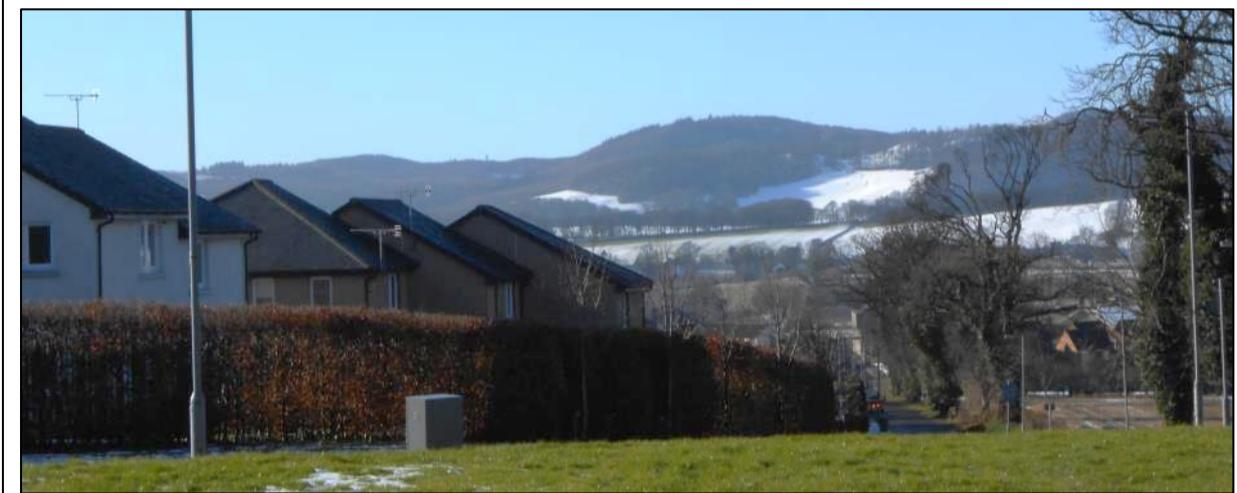
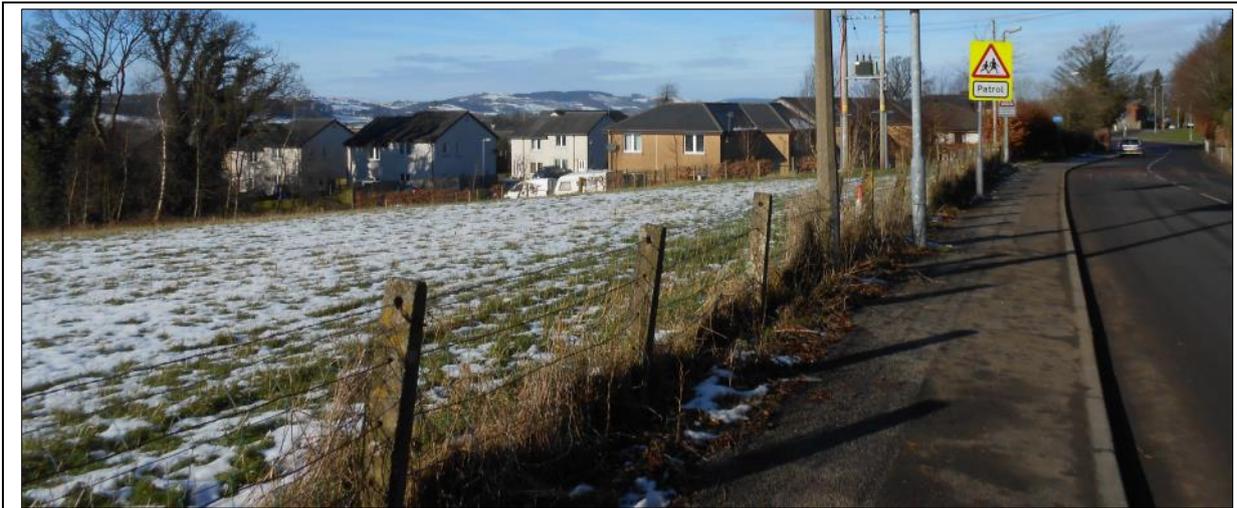


Figure 5:19: Views past and over the residential development of Glenholm Place. The buildings sit low in the landscape and do not impede westerly views from east of Glencaple Road or the buildings of Crichton Royal Institution.

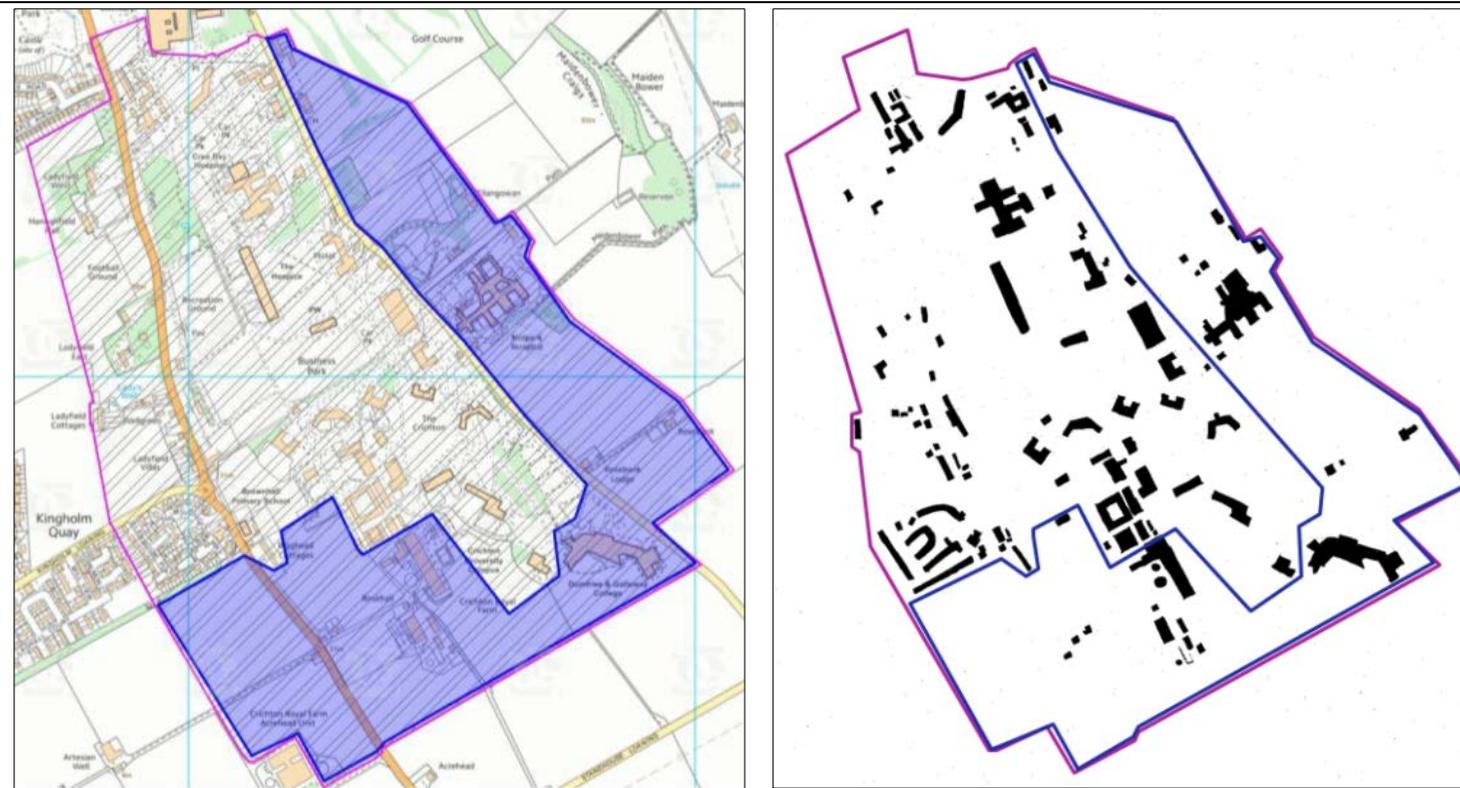


Figure 5.20: The Midpark and Peripheral Farm area wraps around the core of the former Crichton Royal Institution. The building footprints plan shows a number of large buildings, uncharacteristic of other parts of the conservation area and large areas of open land.

Midpark and Rosehall Area [Figure 5.20]

5.39 This part of the conservation area includes large areas of open land, in agricultural use, a small part of the Crichton Golf Club course, a small number of historic buildings and two very significant modern [early 21<sup>st</sup> century] buildings.

Significant buildings and spaces.

5.40 East of Bankend Road is visually dominated by **Midpark Hospital** which is a colourful, uncompromisingly modern, flat roofed building which opened in 2012 [Figure 5.21]. The entrance garden landscape *DoubleWalk* is by the father and daughter designer team Charles and Lily Jencks.



Figure 5.21: Midpark Hospital. East of Bankend Road, the new mental health facility is built on land which was formerly part of the Crichton Royal Farm used by the Institution. It steps down the slope in colourful, articulated flat roofed, single and two storey blocks in a designed landscape, but it limits views from Midpark.

5.41 East of Bankend Road is the 19<sup>th</sup> century dwelling, **Midpark** which is Category C Listed and in use by the NHS for administration of the psychiatric hospital [Figure 5.22]. The original frontage would have had south-westerly views and the later James Barbour designed frontage would have had southerly views. A combination of the new hospital building and trees in the immediate curtilage prevent long views. The trees are an important part of the landscape especially where they line the avenue up to Midpark, just south of the hospital, as well as the cluster of mature trees in the lawns between the former dwelling and the hospital. On the roadside at the entrance to the access road is a small vernacular lodge building.



Figure 5.22: Midpark – both frontages. The west facing elevation is painted stone, pre-dating James Barbour’s extension with distinctive straight, stack bonded, sandstone chimneys. The Victorian Gothic Ellangowan with octagonal tower by James Barbour and Ellangowan Coach House.

5.42 **Ellangowan** is an individual red sandstone dwelling dating from 1869 designed by James Barbour in a Victorian Gothic style; it is Category B Listed [Figure 5.22]. The house is approached through Listed gate piers up a gently sloping winding drive lined with mature trees to the reveal. The trees around the dwellings are an important part of the character of this part of the conservation. The house is largely unseen from the road. To its south is Ellangowan coach house which is a vernacular style building in use as a dwelling. The access to this building, from Bankend Road, is separate from the main dwelling and leads past the remnant buildings of Rosebank farm.

5.43 South of Midpark Hospital, the area is mainly agricultural fields which became part of Crichton Royal Farm. There were two dwellings which were linked with the former Rosebank property. North of Ellangowan is agricultural land and the golf course. The 1970s club house on Bankend Road does not reflect the

architectural quality of the Crichton Royal Institution or designed dwellings. By contrast, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century **Mountainhall Cottages** [formerly called Crichton Cottages] on Glencaple Road which form a single-storey sandstone terrace with Arts and Crafts details.



Figure 5.23: Dumfries and Galloway College. The long, irregular footprint building and car park together dominate this corner of Crichton Conservation Area.

5.44 The conservation area wraps around the southern side of Crichton Royal Institution. From Bankend Road the most visible building is the **Dumfries and Galloway College** [Figure 5.23]. It has a very large car park in front and although there are mature trees and hedges along much of the roadside, these do not completely screen either the building or the car park. There are clear views to the rear elevation from Stanehouse Loaning. The college has a very large footprint and an irregular shape although there are a number of features which appear to have been adapted from the buildings of Crichton Royal Institution: the building is highly fenestrated although much of the glazing has a horizontal emphasis; the colour of the elevations is similar to the red sandstone although texture and details are absent; the building uses the land levels to disguise its full height; it has an open setting part lawns and part car park; and there are long views from the building to the south and south-west.

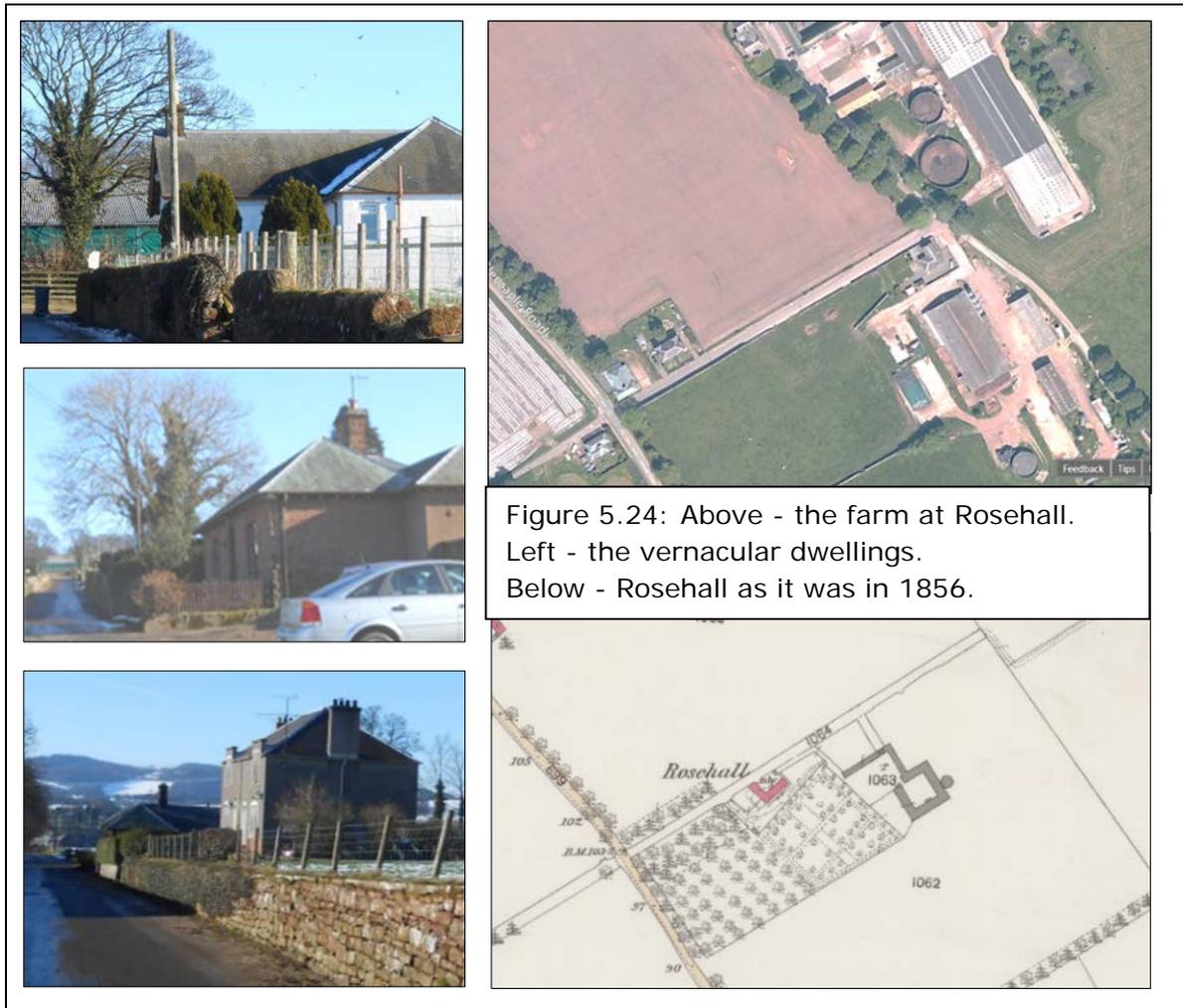
5.45 To the west of the college are the farm land and buildings used by the Scottish Rural University College [SRUC]. They are sited on the historic farm area of Rosehall and many of the buildings are close behind the 19<sup>th</sup> century Crichton Royal Farm byres. There a number of remnant sandstone walls in the area which were part of a formal garden of the house and steading at Rosehall [Figure 5.24].

5.46 The buildings accommodate the college dairy business and include large, single span barns and circular storage tanks along with smaller buildings and structures. There are a number of mature trees along the access tracks between

buildings which provide important greening and screening. There are a handful of small dwellings at Rosehall including a former lodge and cottages on the east of Glencaple Road and one on the west of the road. On the west, the land slopes down towards the River Nith and the conservation area boundary ends at the storage buildings of Acrehead, part of the SRUC dairy research farm. North of the access track, open agricultural land leads to the edge of the residential development of Glenholm Place.

#### Key positive features of the Midpark and Rosehall Area

5.47 The majority of the conservation area in the Midpark and Rosehall area is in agricultural use. There are two significant historic dwellings and a small number of simpler vernacular dwellings. The most visible buildings are Midpark Hospital in its modern designed landscape on the east of Bankend Road and Dumfries and Galloway College on the west of Bankend Road. The field hedges and fences split the open land up into a smaller pattern. There are important trees particularly those close to the historic buildings of Midpark and Ellangowan and on the avenues to them. The trees along the edge of Bankend Road are very significant in the conservation area providing screening or filtering from the road, separating the Crichton Royal Institution site, and creating a green backdrop. Some of the pasture land protects the line of view out from buildings of the Institution and others are an important backdrop to the whole conservation area.



## 6. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 The following bullet points set out the most significant features and themes underlying the character of Crichton Conservation Area, which it is essential to preserve or reinforce in order to keep it special.

- Crichton Royal Institution was the legacy project of Elizabeth Grierson Crichton using the substantial bequest from the estate of her husband, Dr James Crichton. Both were from Dumfriesshire.
- Crichton Conservation Area is based on the site of Crichton Royal Institution which was a nationally important former mental health facility founded in 1839. It was the last built mental health hospital of this form in the UK and, within it, contemporary therapeutic and care practices were pioneered, adopted and developed by successive clinical leaders.
- The clinical history of mental health care is reflected in the development of the site under the guidance of individual Medical Superintendents, in association with new and established ideas of their time. The influences on

the clinical approach came from other institutions abroad which led to villa style accommodation in open landscaped settings.

- The architectural and design interest of the buildings on the whole of the Institution site stem from the high standards set by Crichton Hall, the first Institution building, designed by Architect William Burn.
- There are several phases of design and development ending in 1948 when the last sandstone building of the Institution was completed, shortly before the hospital became part of the new NHS. These phases can be seen in the layout of buildings and open spaces.
- A number of established Scottish architects designed the buildings of the Institution and within the wider conservation area. The signature styles of the different architects are relatively easy to recognise especially the works of Sydney Mitchell & Wilson. There are also designs within the conservation area by Dumfries Architects James Flett, James Barbour and Walter Newall.
- The east to west slope of the land within the conservation area has guided the siting of buildings and outdoor spaces so they take advantage of the aspect and the view. This has been enhanced by the use of terraced and tiered platforms, some of which are natural and others engineered.
- There is consistent use of local red sandstone which, along with the use of some shared architectural details, gives the buildings individual interest and creates collective and cohesive designs within the Institution site.
- The most significant architectural and design themes which contribute to the character include the materials which are red sandstone elevations; pitched, hipped and flat roof forms; decorative and rhythmic roof line details including dormers, vents and chimneys; balustrades around flat roofs; many vertically aligned windows; verandas and glazed arcades; and private ward garden areas close to buildings which are enclosed by hedges and railings.
- A number of buildings have significant individual designs such as Crichton Hall, Crichton Memorial Church, Solway, Rutherford and Easterbrook, each with elements which are emphasised by the use of height or decoration. Outside the Institution individually designed buildings include the two Ladyfield houses, Ellangowan and Midpark, each the work of Dumfries architects. These buildings are each important and contribute to the overall quality and interest of the conservation area. Some of the significant buildings are recognised through statutory Listing.
- The spaces between buildings are linked with their former use and the importance placed on access to the outdoors as well as being attractive settings for individual buildings.
- The trees and spaces are part of a recognised non-inventory planned and designed landscape which is significant in its own right. This landscape has

a number of individually special elements including the Arboretum and the Rockery; the landscape of Ladyfield West; and the landscape around Ellangowan, even if the full design of these landscape spaces is no longer complete.

- Trees, walls, embankments and hedges divide spaces in the conservation area and are a very significant part of its character. The trees demonstrate the maturity of some of the places where they are found.
- The boundary walls and railings edging Bankend Road and Glencaple Road create a strong unifying theme both visually and historically and are very significant elements of the character of the conservation area. The red sandstone vernacular buildings and the walls on Glencaple Road extend the red sandstone theme.

6.2 The positions of the buildings and spaces are captured in the aerial photograph from 1995 [Figure 6.1] before many of the modern extensions and buildings were constructed. It shows some of the gradual reduction in the height of the land from north-east to south-west. The Listed Buildings are identified in Figure 6.2 below. The diagrammatic plan Figure 6.3 identifies the buildings and spaces which contribute most to the character of Crichton Conservation Area.

6.3 The level of significance of each theme or characteristic is not the same for every building or space. Assessing the impact of new development or improvement proposals on existing character will determine in what way the character of the conservation area might be affected. Guiding those proposals and ensure that they 'preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area'.

6.4 Many of the buildings within the conservation area have changed from their original healthcare function to education, office and leisure uses which that attract more people. Despite the important boundary features, there is relatively good access to the open spaces within the conservation area which now serve a public and semi-civic function. Both these changes allow the significance and special character of Crichton Conservation Area to be more fully appreciated by a wider audience.



Figure 6.1: The main part of Crichton Conservation Area looking north, 1995

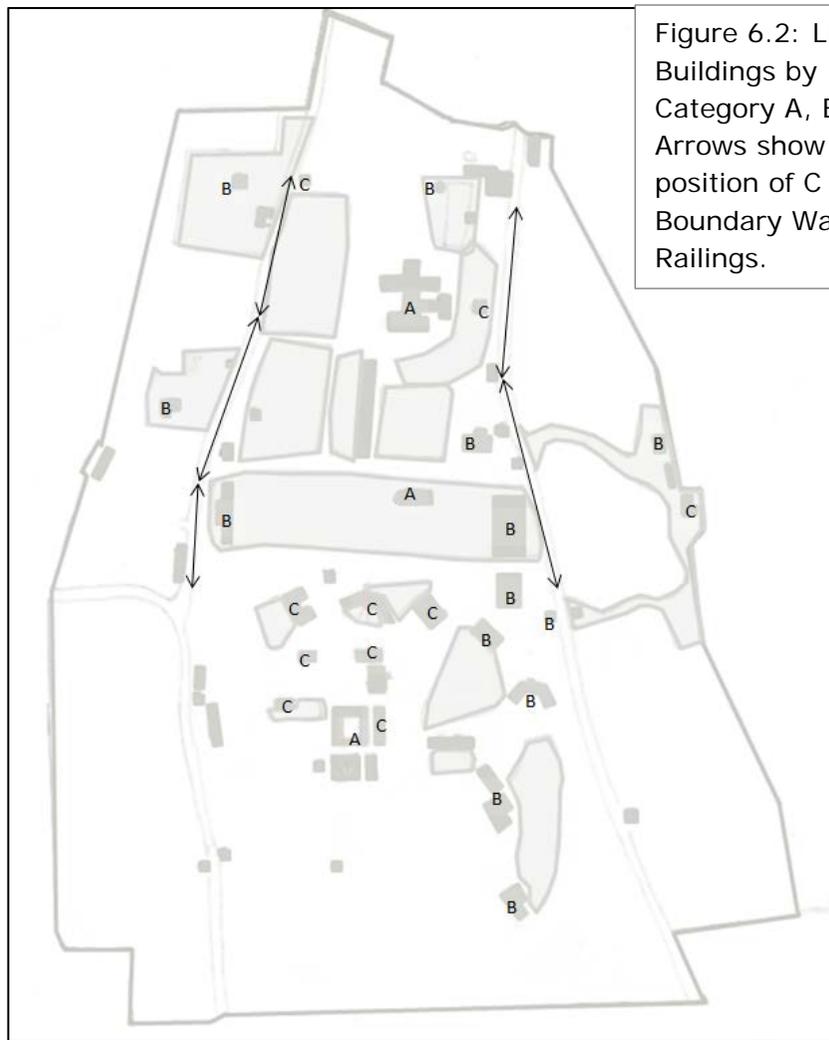


Figure 6.2: Listed Buildings by Category A, B or C. Arrows show position of C Listed Boundary Walls and Railings.

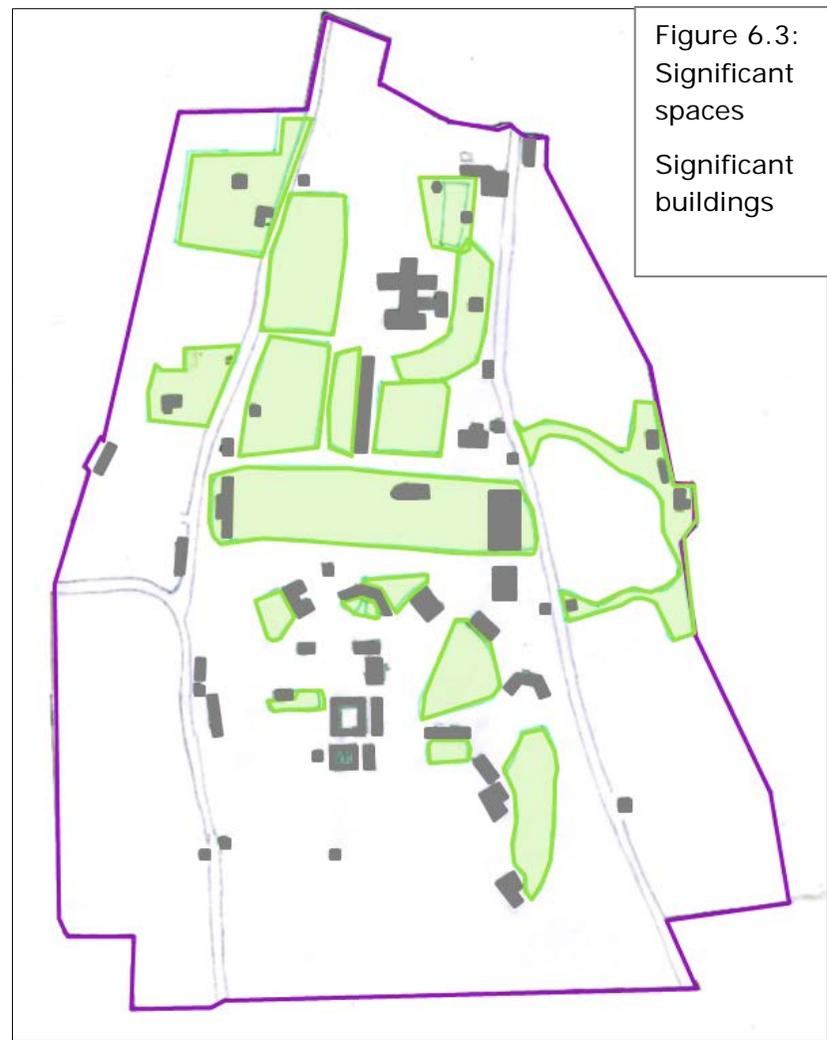


Figure 6.3: Significant spaces (light green outline) and Significant buildings (dark grey fill).

## 7. CHANGES, THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

7.1 Since the 1997 designation of Crichton Conservation Area a number of physical changes have taken place within its boundary. Every change impacts on the character of the conservation area some having a more positive impact than others.

### Change

#### New buildings, extensions and alterations to buildings

7.2 New buildings and extensions have drawn attention to the quality of the original buildings especially where they contrast significantly with the form, use of material and style of the historic buildings of the conservation area. Many extensions have integrated successfully with existing buildings such as small porches to improve the visibility of entrances to buildings. The flat roofed, modern extension to Brownhall School has used red sandstone and preserves the character of the host building. Some developments do not compliment the host building such as the modular extension at Ladyfield East and the uPVC replacement windows in Low Lodge which are both detrimental to the historic designs. Other extensions have also departed from the original materials palette and diluted the red sandstone character of the buildings and boundaries within the conservation area. Together, the changes have put the character of the conservation area under pressure as the introduction of new styles and materials dilute the wider design themes.

7.3 New buildings have generally not used the established materials palette. Midpark Hospital is a very large footprint building which is cut into a stepped site east of Bankend Road. It respects the topography although the form contrasts with established designs within the conservation area. The Dental Centre is clad in a silvered board and takes many cues from the Institution buildings in its footprint and height however it contrasts significantly in its colour and texture and it has very flat elevations. Dumfries and Galloway College is a very large building which also follows some of the established design characteristics of the Institution buildings as well as using the landform to reduce the impact of its height. However, the very open car park does not provide an attractive setting for the nearby former Institution buildings. Buildings which do not reinforce the materials palette on which the character of the conservation area is based dilute the character of the conservation area.



Figure 7.1: Attachments to buildings and boundaries where more sensitive consideration would have benefitted the appearance of the buildings or structure and preserve the character of the conservation area.

7.4 Small apparently insignificant modifications such as signage, electrical or other utility attachments on buildings have the potential to alter their character and damage the fabric. There are some examples of aerials attached to vents which are very out of place [Figure 7.1]. Both individually and cumulatively, small changes can create asymmetry, spoil details and be detrimental to character.

#### Boundaries

7.5 The perimeter railings of the former Crichton Royal Institution are part of a programme of repair and repainting. In other places railings have been introduced that clash with existing historic railings such as those at Brownhall School. Boundary walls and fences have not all been well maintained and there are many examples where damage has not been repaired.



Figure 7.2: Vacant buildings within Crichton Conservation Area – remaining buildings of the former dwelling house at Rosebank; Ladyfield West; and the Crichton Royal Institution Conservatories.

#### Vacant buildings

7.6 Unintended changes have come about due to building vacancy [Figure 7.2]. The Category B Listed glass conservatories have been empty for some years and are in very poor condition although they are still a significant element of the

landscape of the conservation area. Ladyfield West was last used by the NHS and is vacant and in a very poor state of repair. Ladyfield East is also vacant and in a declining state of repair. Finding solutions which bring these buildings back into a long-term use following appropriate restoration is key to their survival.

#### New uses of buildings

7.7 The Crichton Trust and Crichton Development Company have been very successful in restoring buildings sensitively and finding new uses including attracting universities and training organisations. The NHS has found new clinical uses for some of the buildings in its care including the Hospice. To facilitate those new uses, some of the outside spaces have been altered and car parking has been created in previously open and landscaped spaces. The large car park at Dumfries and Galloway College was an open green space. The ward garden of the Hospice is now a car park. Other ward gardens have become parking areas and it varies as to how well they are screened by hedges and trees.

#### Street furniture and signage

7.8 New access roads, bus stops and shelters, bicycle facilities, benches, lighting and signage have been introduced as more people work in and visit Crichton Conservation Area resulting in more traffic. Although the lighting columns looked after by the Crichton Trust are themed there is no design theme or code for other lighting or other furniture. The placement of street furniture and shelters can be detrimental to the views and to the setting of buildings.

#### Management of spaces

7.9 Many of the recreation and sports areas are in use and well looked after by the groups that use them; however, those that are underused are in need of attention. The former putting green beside the crown bowling greens is in poor condition; parts of the Arboretum need to have a planned replanting and management programme based on historical records.

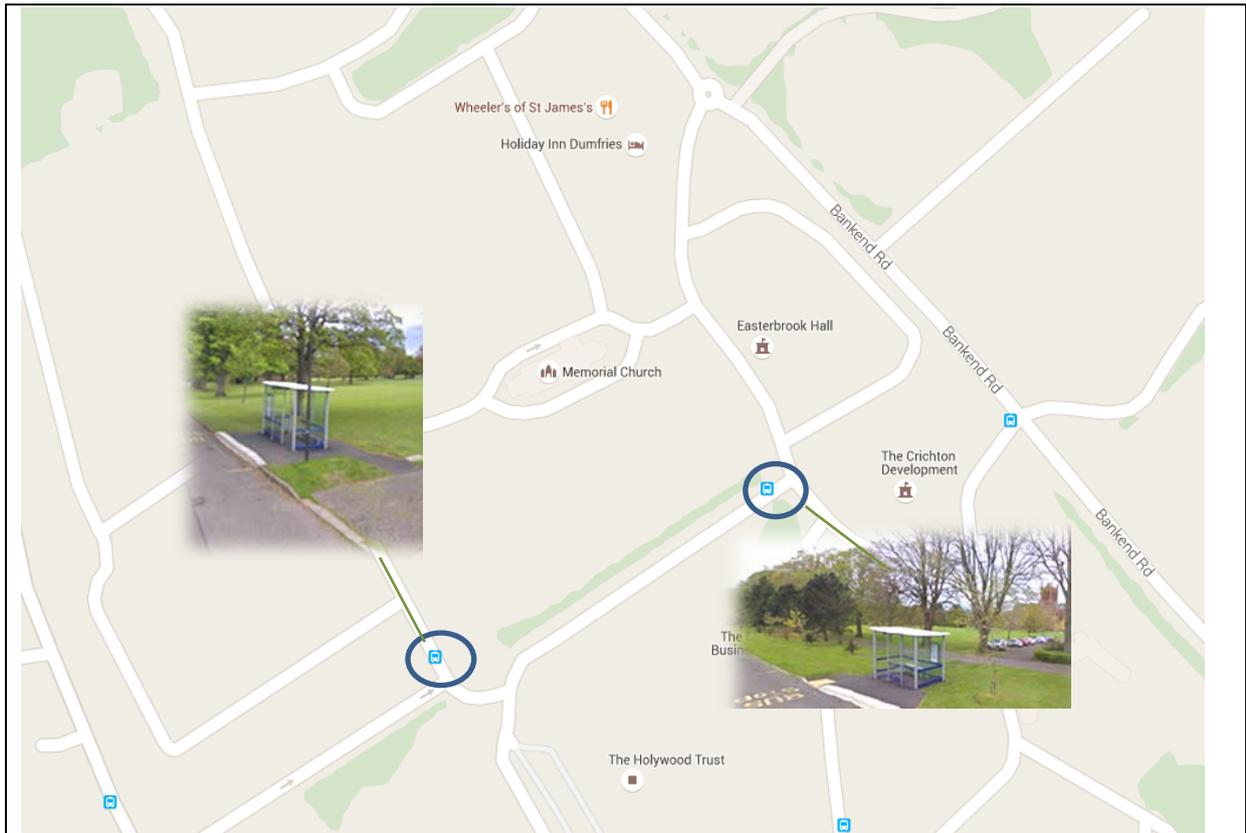


Figure 7.3: Poor design and placement can be detrimental to the overall character and perception of the conservation area. Consideration could be given to the location and design of shelters and whether they could share space with another use.

Top: the bus shelters are shown in context. In a clockwise order the 1960s hospital laundry; 1970s sterile supplies store; bus shelter and cycle shelter.

## Threats

7.10 There are a number of types of development within Crichton Conservation Area or adjacent to its boundary, which have the potential to have detrimental impact on individual parts of the conservation area or its character as a whole. In brief they are:

- new development sited alongside existing buildings;
- building in key spaces between buildings;
- large development sites which ignore the key elements of the character of the Crichton Conservation Area;
- modern facilities and adaptations required to service changes of use of buildings or to service other new development;
- changes to boundary features;
- uncoordinated accumulation of outside furniture and attachments.

7.11 Other changes which do not come about from development proposals are:

- the declining condition and lack of use of individually Listed or other significant buildings;
- inappropriate care or neglect of the historic landscape;
- failure to find uses or continue the use of buildings and spaces in the conservation area as a whole.

## Opportunities

7.12 Development management decisions can be guided to follow the design and spatial characteristics of other buildings within the conservation area. Large and small scale new development within the Crichton Conservation Area which carry through the existing themes will preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area. The key design themes of the conservation area should be recognised and used as the starting point for all new development [Figure 5.14].

7.13 Finding long term uses for significant buildings within Crichton Conservation Area which will preserve them is key to preserving the character of the conservation area. There are already a wide variety of stakeholders including the National Health Service who have an interest in working together to develop the site for healthcare, education and agriculture. There is potential for residential uses either private or shared and each of these developments should also ensure the restoration or re-use of individual buildings.

7.14 A number of key Category B Listed buildings including Ladyfield East and West and the conservatories urgently require restoration [Figure 7.4]. They are in poor condition and to bring them back into use would require significant intervention funding. They are an important part of the history of Crichton Conservation Area and any opportunity to resolve their future would be of benefit to the character of the conservation area.

7.15 Crichton Trust and Crichton Development Company look after much of the buildings and space on the main Crichton estate and have attracted academic institutions, management and IT based businesses, among others, to use the buildings. There is currently a masterplan being developed for this part of the estate which will establish how some of these uses may be consolidated on the site by accommodating more students and research space. This represents a major opportunity for the future of the Crichton estate and the wider Crichton Conservation Area.

7.16 The Category A Listed, Crichton Hall may become under-used should the NHS vacate it and appropriate, alternative, long term uses for this building should be supported.

7.17 Car access onto the site to some degree works to the detriment of leisure and cultural visitors. Opportunity should be taken to explore a variety of ways of improving the impact of cars on the character and appearance and recreational use of the conservation area.

7.18 The landscape and individual parts of it, such as the Arboretum and Rockery, are very special. Therefore, special attention should be given to them in the form of a full landscape assessment involving all stakeholders, which would allow a well-informed and structured approach to be taken to the maintenance and succession planting of the landscape. The Arboretum and landscape design also offer opportunities for new groups of visitors with a range of interests.

7.19 There are unique learning possibilities associated with the historic purpose of the Crichton Royal Institution and other links with the past of individual buildings within Crichton Conservation Area which could be exploited for people from the local area and further afield. Individual elements of the conservation area, including local architectural history and design, offer many learning themes and levels.

7.20 It would be beneficial to produce a design code for the manufacture and placement of outdoor furniture of all descriptions in order to generate cohesion across Crichton Conservation Area.

7.21 It would be beneficial to produce a maintenance and management code for all of the buildings within the conservation area to preserve the buildings of the Crichton Conservation Area involving all of the stakeholders.

7.22 Community involvement in the use and maintenance of the outdoor spaces and facilities could be encouraged further. More pedestrian access to and through the site could be part of this.

7.23 A Crichton Conservation Area Management Plan incorporating many of the opportunities should be produced.

## 8. FUTURE ACTIONS

8.1 Consult the public and organisations in respect of the content of the Crichton Conservation Area Character Appraisal as the first step towards adoption as Supplementary Guidance.

8.2 Seek to carry out a Landscape Assessment of the Non-Inventory Designed Landscape with a view to developing a long term management and maintenance strategy and promote the Non-Inventory Designed Landscape to be included in the Inventory held by Historic Environment Scotland.

8.3 Engage with key stakeholders to produce a Crichton Conservation Area Management Plan which is based on the Character Appraisal.

8.4 Engage with the people and organisations who make day to day decisions about maintenance, to agree a protocol to reduce the impact that small alterations and maintenance decisions can make on the character and significance of the buildings and spaces.

8.5 Engage with the occupiers and managers of all of the Crichton Conservation Area to grow ideas for use of vacant or under-used buildings and sites into the future. Crichton Trust is producing a Master Plan for part of Crichton Conservation Area and the National Health Service is looking at options for their buildings to which the Crichton Conservation Area Character Appraisal can make a positive contribution.

8.6 Produce appropriate site design briefs for individual development sites within the Crichton Conservation Area or those close enough to affect its setting.