The Development of the Gardens and Designed Landscape at Carronvale House, Larbert

GLORIOUS GARDENS

Exploring our hidden gardens and forgotten landscapes

Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership

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Carronvale House
NGR: 8669 8199

Report on the development of the designed landscape
on behalf of
Scotland's Garden & Landscape Heritage
Registered Charity No SC034618

Cover Plate: The southern elevation of Carronvale House, 2017

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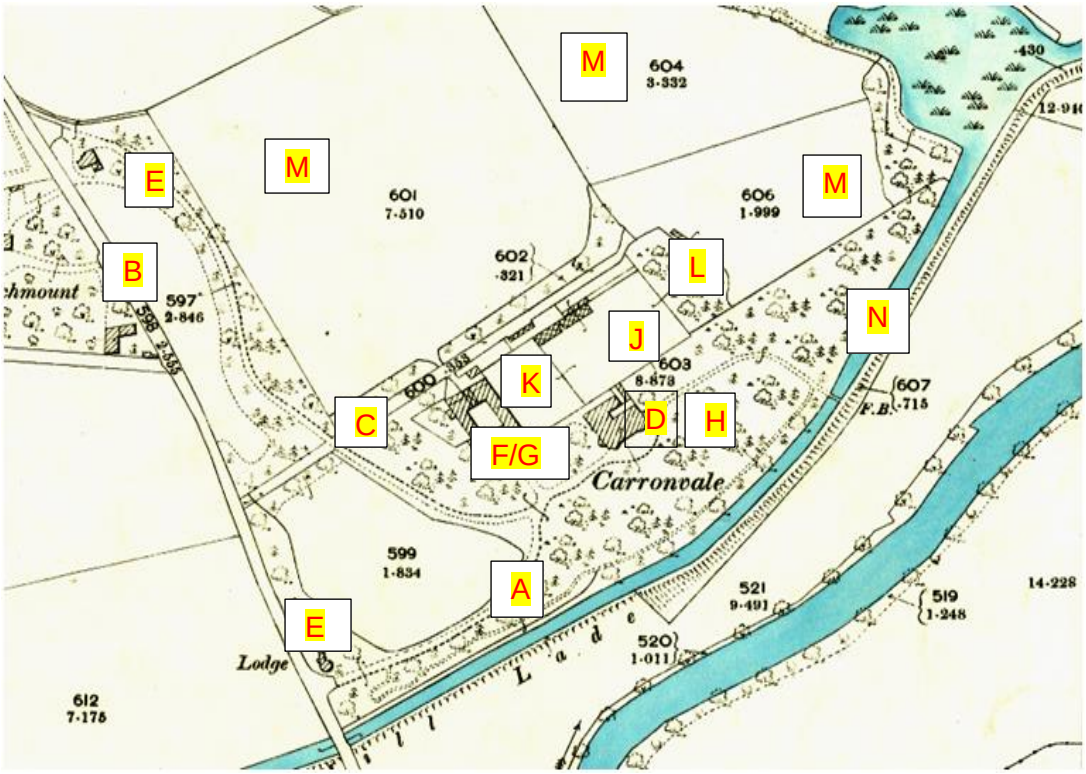

Illus 1: Carronvale House and grounds as shown on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map (Stirlingshire 024.14 includes Falkirk; Larbert), 1897, with components of the designed landscape shown (map reproduced from http://www.maps.nls.uk).

A	First drive
B	North drive
C	Service drive
D	Mansion house
E	Lodges
F/G	Stables
F/G	Domestic offices
H	Pleasure gardens
J	East walled garden
K	West walled garden
L	Site of Vegetable garden
M	Arable land
N	Pasture
Q	Mill Lade

1.0 Introduction to Glorious Gardens

Glorious Gardens was a two-year pilot project (2015-17) to research and record historic gardens and designed landscapes (GDLs) in two areas of Scotland. The project focused on properties which are not listed in the Historic Scotland Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes, but which still retain evidence for their development and have some conservation value.

One strand of the pilot project, funded by Historic Environment Scotland (HES), studied properties in the Falkirk local authority area while another strand, funded by Historic Environment Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund, focused on GDLs in the Clyde & Avon Valley Landscape Partnership (CAVLP) area.

The Glorious Gardens pilot project was initiated and managed by Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage, who contracted Northlight Heritage to recruit, train and support groups of volunteers to conduct the research and produce reports on properties in each area during 2015-17.

This report has been written by Paul Wilkinson and Sue Hewer, the volunteers who conducted the research and survey work, and Lorna Innes of NLH. The assessment of significance (section 7) was conducted by SGLH based on their findings.

2.0 Introduction to Carronvale House

Carronvale House is located in the parish of Larbert, the property centred on NGR: 8669 8199. It was remodelled in 1897 by Sir John Burnet for George Sheriff. The house remains in use, currently serving as the Boys Brigade Training Headquarters, Recreation Centre and Conference Centre. It is situated in a slightly elevated south-east facing position overlooking a simple lawn with a shrub and ornamental woodland backdrop which runs down to the now choked mill lade. To the rear of the house there are the remains of a walled garden, which now contains two sports pitches and a car parking area. Carronvale House is a large two storey grade A listed building with neo-Georgian details. The whole of what remains of the designed landscape within which the house is set is covered by a Falkirk Council Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Name	Designation	Grade	ID	Web link
Carronvale House	Listed building	A	LB10487	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/LB10487

3.0 Methods

The study followed the project methodology, as detailed in the Glorious Gardens Method Statement (see SGLH collection, held on CANMORE). It involved the consultation of key historic maps, aerial photographs, local and national archives, and databases of heritage assets and statutory designations. The results were entered on a Property Information form and hosted on a secure server, to ensure a consistent level of recording.

The desk-based research was followed by a systematic walkover survey in January, March and August 2017 to identify and record surviving components and key elements of the historic designed landscape.

The survey employed a recording system designed for the project that combines written field notes, tablet-based data capture and photography. All available data gathered during the project are available for consultation as part of the SGLH Collection on CANMORE. The sources consulted are listed in section 8. The information gathered has been synthesised to establish a baseline understanding of the development of the designed landscape and its current state, including its overall structure, surviving components and conservation opportunities.

4.0 Desk-based research results

4.1 Historic maps

Carronvale House itself does not appear on maps until the mid-19th century. This section summarises the changes to the designed landscape which are captured on each of the more informative historic maps. Section 6 draws out further evidence from the maps as it relates to specific components of the landscape.

Illus:	2
Cartographer:	Timothy Pont
Title:	The East Central Lowlands (Stirling, Falkirk & Kilsyth)
Date:	1583-96

'Fakirk' or Falkirk is clearly visible, as are the magnificent grounds of Callendar House. 'Lairbarrk' is recorded on Pont's map in the centre of the top third of the map. This is likely to be the settlement of Larbert. There is no indication of a residential building at the future location of Carronvale, north of the River Carron. The mill lade has not yet been created.

Approximate future location of Carronvale House

Illus:	3
Cartographer:	William Roy
Title:	Military Survey of Scotland
Date:	1747-55

The area where Carronvale House was built is more easily identified on the Roy map than on the earlier Pont map as the course of the river is well defined. There is, however, still no evidence of a house there. Larbor (Larbert) is located to the north west. At this time the land where Carronvale was eventually built was given over to the runrig system of agriculture, prior to enclosure. The mill lade, lying to the north of the River Carron is also shown. Carronvale was built on its north bank.

Approximate future location of Carronvale House

Illus:	4
Cartographer:	John Grassom
Title:	To the Noblemen and Gentlemen of the County of Stirling.
Date:	1817

Grassom's map, published some sixty to seventy years after Roy shows a number of changes. Larbert is identified by its modern spelling. The first house to be built on the present site of Carronvale, the southern-most 'Broomage', is shown. It is located close to the mill lade and River Carron. The three occurrences of the name 'Broomage' on the map are explained by the fact that in 1775 the ownership of the Broomage estate was divided into three parts equal in value, having previously been the property of three joint owners. One of the individual owners sold his portion at the end of the eighteenth century and this later became called the Carronvale estate. (New Statistical Account, Vol VIII, 1845, p. 357). With regard to agriculture, it appears that the runrig system has gone out of use, although there is no indication that the land has been enclosed to any great extent at this point.

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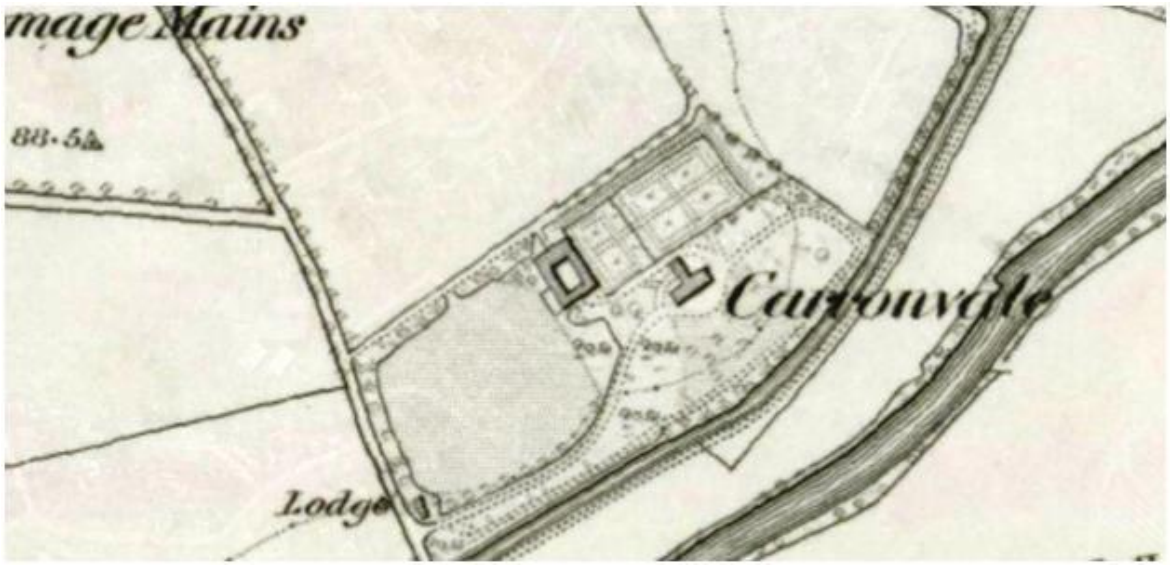
Illus:	5
Cartographer:	John Thomson
Title:	Atlas of Scotland; Stirlingshire
Date:	1820

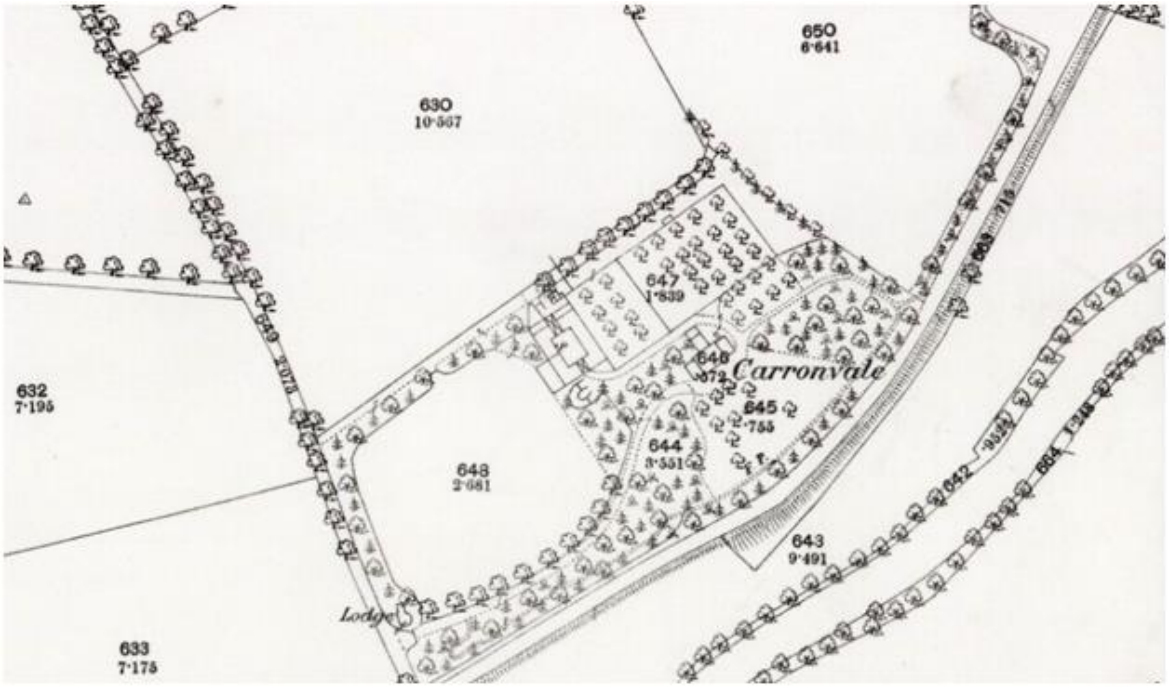
As in Grassom's map, the house that becomes Carronvale is not named. It might well be that Dr Duncan Robertson had not named his newly acquired estate when Thomson either undertook his survey, or simply revised Grassom's map. Around the same time (1821) John Ainslie published a map of the southern part of Scotland (http://maps.nls.uk/view/74400286), but again Carronvale is not noted.

Illus:	6
Cartographer:	Ordnance Survey
Title:	Stirlingshire Sheet XXIV (includes Airth, Dunipace, Falkirk, Grangemouth, Larbert and St Ninians) 6-inch 1st edition
Date:	Surveyed 1861, published 1865



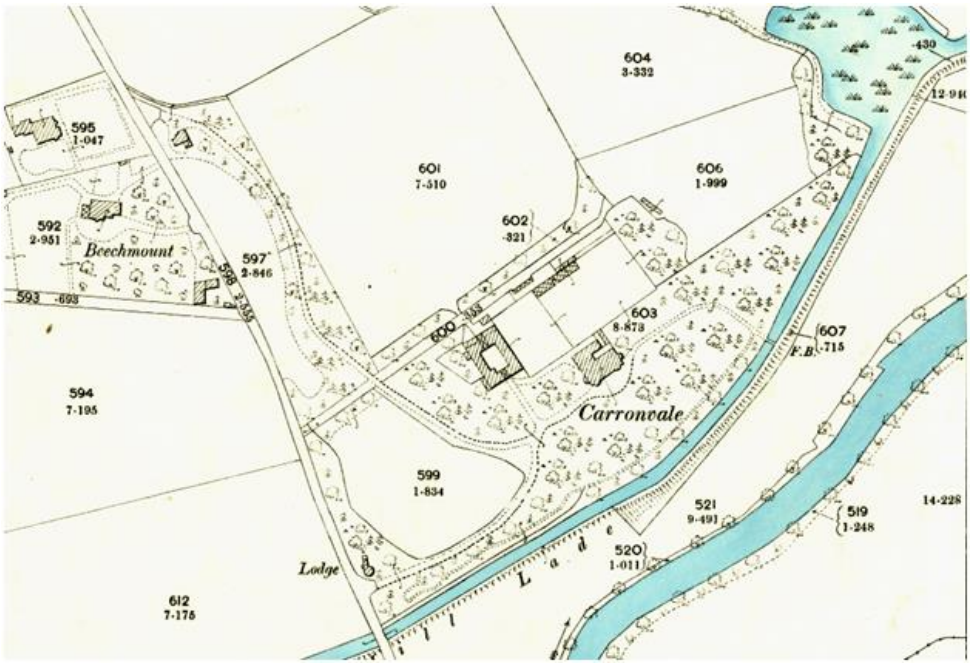
Carronvale House is first named on the earliest Ordnance Survey (hereafter OS) 6-inch map following the initial survey in 1861. The mansion house is set within a small designed landscape consisting largely of lawn and broad-leafed woodland. A lodge house is located to the south west at the entrance to the tree-lined first drive which sweeps east to the front of the house passing a small grass park on the north side which is framed by broad leafed trees. The drive continues round the back of the house to the stable and domestic offices block to the north-west of the house. Wooded pleasure grounds surround an open area on the south front of the house and there is a path running alongside the mill lade to the south of the boundary of the property. The walled garden has a formal layout consisting of a series of quadrants or separated by paths. Each quadrant appears to be lawned with a single specimen tree at its centre. Formal gardens like this, similar to those of the seventeenth century, came back into fashion in some quarters in the Victorian period. There is a service drive to the north of the main drive that leads off the public road giving access to the grass park, the rear entrance to the stables and to the field to the north-east of the walled garden.

Illus:	7
Cartographer:	Ordnance Survey
Title:	Stirlingshire Sheet XXIV.14 25-inch 1st edition
Date:	Surveyed 1859 and 1860, published 1891



Unusually, the 25-inch map, an extract of which is shown above, was produced from a revised version of the initial surveys and not published until 1891. As we can see, there is a significant change in the layout of the walled garden. The previous formal layout has now been exchanged for rows of fruit trees in both the east and west sections. The lodge at the drive entrance, the parkland, mansion house and stable block/offices remain as in the 6-inch map (see illustration 5). There appear to have been additional plantings in the woodland, including conifers.

Illus:	8
Cartographer:	Ordnance Survey
Title:	Stirlingshire 024.14 (includes Falkirk and Larbert) 25-inch 2nd edition
Date:	Revised 1896, published 1897

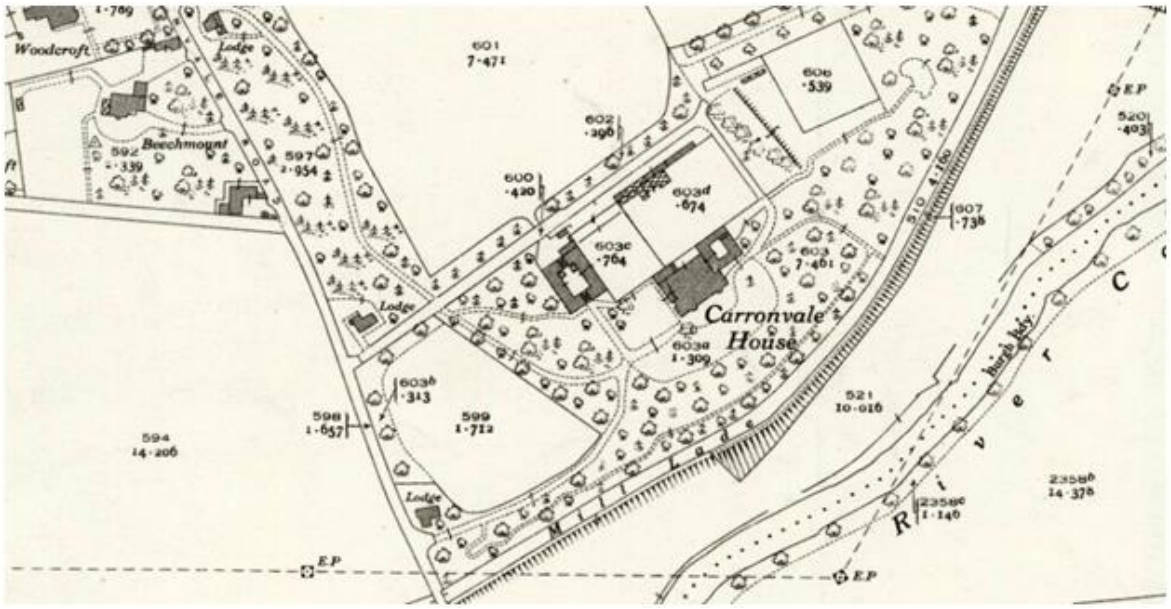


There are a number of changes to the gardens shown in this map, the survey having taken place during a time of overall change at Carronvale. The footprint of the house in plan has altered in size and shape, and a second lodge and a third drive (North Drive) have been built to the north west. This new drive sweeps in past the new lodge house which is set back from the public road. It continues south through a wooded stretch of land, crosses the service drive and is separated from the grass park to the west by a fence. The service drive which enters the property between the two lodges remains in place as in the previous map. The original driveway no longer loops round the property. The extension to the house, now re-modelled, appears to cut this route off. There is, however, a new route to the stables/offices from the main drive where the main drive and the north drive meet. This new section of driveway is very short and leads directly to the front entrance of the stables and domestic offices. The pleasure garden remains a combination of lawn in front of the house flanked by wooded areas with a footpath extending along the northern edge of the mill lade. In keeping with OS regulations current at the time of the survey, there is no detail given of the layout of the walled garden with the exception of two new glasshouses shown on the northern interior wall (south facing) of the east section. A potting shed is located on the exterior of the north wall of the west section, close to the service drive.

Illus:	9
Cartographer:	Ordnance Survey
Title:	Stirlingshire n024.14 (includes Falkirk, Larbert) 25-inch 3rd edition
Date:	Revised 1913, published 1917

The footprint of the house at Carronvale has altered again since the earlier map (1890s), with a courtyard complex located on the north-east side. In addition, a third lodge house has appeared at the entrance to the service drive. This drive to the rear of the stables/offices and walled garden now provides access to the large field to the north, to the walled garden and also to a newly introduced vegetable garden to the east of the walled garden and screened off by a beech hedge and a row of broad leafed trees. An extension to the main drive to the front of the house has also been introduced, running along the east side of the walled garden to where it joins with the service drive which leads to the vegetable garden. A footpath to the south of the vegetable garden has been created, leading to a pond next to which there is a small, unidentified structure. The west section of the walled garden might still be used as a garden. On the other hand, given the new vegetable garden further to the north-east, it might well be the location of "two tennis courts - one a hard court and the other a grass court- alongside each other" which were listed in the sales particulars of 1936. The grass park to the west appears to have conifers as well as a few broad-leafed trees set around its edges. The lawn in front of the house is generally clear with the exception of one tree marked at the north-east edge, likely to be a yew tree that remains in place today. It is difficult to identify the contents of the east section of the walled garden. The symbols are not those used by the OS to indicate trees. The two glass houses on the interior of the walled garden remain, and there is an additional run of other buildings such as potting sheds and boiler houses to heat the green houses. The small glasshouse or cold-frame noted on the previous map has been removed.

Illus:	10
Cartographer:	Ordnance Survey
Title:	Stirlingshire n024.14 (includes Falkirk, Larbert) 25-inch
Date:	Revised 1943. Published 1947



There are few changes in this extract from the OS map published in 1917. The mansion house footprint, drives and footpaths all remain much the same. The small structure close to the pond has gone, and the tree planting on the north side of the vegetable garden seems more formal than on the earlier map. The footprint of the glasshouses within the walled garden has altered. Unlike the previous OS map, there are no fruit trees or planting of any sort shown within either section of the walled garden, but this does not necessarily indicate an absence, as indicated in Illus 8 above. There are few other notable new features other than the possible presence of garden ground around the three lodges.

4.2 Aerial Photographs

There are a number of aerial photographs (hereafter AP), relating to Carronvale House. One of the earliest is held by Falkirk Community Trust in the archives at Callander House. This image, shown below, dates to the 1920/30s. Carronvale can be seen to be an extensive mansion house, set within compact but well-tended gardens. The west section of the walled garden to the rear of the house is laid out in quadrants with a globe sundial, the Stenhouse Sundial, at the centre of the path network. The globe from the top was reported in 1989 to be in the possession of the Falkirk Local History Society, but the whereabouts of the rest of the sundial is currently unknown. (Anne Cassells, 24 September 2009). There is no period assigned to the sundial in the CANMORE entry.

There appear to be fruit trees and occasional beds in the quadrants of the east section of the walled garden. A run of glasshouses is located on the interior of the north wall, confirming the cartographic evidence. Fruit trees are clearly visible being trained up the south facing walls of the walled garden. Unfortunately, the image is not clear enough to confirm or deny the presence of two tennis courts in what was the west section of the walled garden. The garden area to the front of the house is laid to lawn with surrounding ornamental woodland and pleasure walks accessed by steps leading down from the drive and carriage sweep at the front of the house. There appears to an ornamental feature on the front lawn. The large yew tree and two wellingtonias in the pleasure garden can be identified in this photograph. These veteran trees remain in place today, as do many other specimen trees throughout the grounds. There is a large, flat lawn to the west of the house, possibly a croquet lawn. The stables and domestic offices are clearly visible, in particular the high arched pend which leads into the central courtyard. Map evidence suggests that there is a similar feature to the rear. A chimney can be seen on the east side.

Illus 11: Carronvale from the Air: Falkirk Archives and Museums, Reference: P43407 (http://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/search.do?id=482987&db=object&page=1&view=detail)

An image captured in 1946 is a vertical AP as opposed to the oblique view above and at a less detailed scale. There are few obvious changes to the landscape between the two. The details of the walled garden are less well defined and it may be that the walled garden, vegetable garden and possibly the pleasure grounds have suffered a degree of neglect as a result of the shortage of gardeners both during and after the Second World War. On the other hand, it is also possible that the walled garden and the vegetable garden had both been put to food production during the war.

Illus 12: Carronvale 1946

The modern AP below is again an oblique view, taken from the north east in 2011. The extent of the garden grounds and policies has been reduced, with housing encroaching on three sides. A modern block has been erected on the east side of the house and the offices/stables have been replaced by a modern building that caters for leisure and recreational activities. The wooded surroundings of the immediate designed landscape remain, as do the walls of the walled garden which now contains an astro-turf pitch and a grass pitch. The western section of what was once walled garden, adjacent to the new modern leisure centre and former stables and domestic offices, is now predominantly a car park as is a section of the lawn to the west of the house. The vegetable garden has been built over, as has the grass park to the west and the two fields to the north and east.

Illus 13: NCAP 000-000-134-132 July 22nd, 2011

The AP below shows the grounds of Carronvale House within its contemporary setting. The designed landscape has been much reduced, housing encroaching on three of the four sides. The north driveway that appeared between the 1860s and 1890s no longer exists. The lodge associated with this drive has been removed and replaced by modern houses and gardens. The lodge at the service drive entrance - now the current entrance - and the original lodge house at the south-west corner of the policies - have survived, although they are likely to have been subjected to alteration and extension over the years.

Illus 14: Google Maps 2016

5.0 Timeline for the Development of the Carronvale Designed Landscape

Date / Period	Event / Phase of Development
1452-1476	Lands gifted to James Rutherford by James II.
1476-?	Proprietor: James Livingston, 2nd Lord Livingston.
1576-1644	Proprietor: John Maitland, 1st Earl of Lauderdale, Viscount of Lauderdale, Viscount Maitland, and Lord Thirlestane and Boltoun.
1644-?	Proprietor: John Burne.
? - 1715	Proprietor: Lodovick Callander (alias Willison of Dorrator).
1715-1819	Proprietors: the Brown Family. The first house to be built on the site of the present day Carronvale was probably built around 1800. It would appear, therefore, that Alexander Brown the younger of Broomage or his son James was responsible for its construction. (B. Watters, Falkirk Local History Society 2006.)

1819	James Brown lost money in the failure of the Falkirk Union Bank, necessitating the sale of the property which was purchased by Dr Duncan Robertson.
1819-1824	Proprietor: Dr Duncan Robertson (died 1824). During this period, two wings were added (1820s), a lodge house was built at the south-west corner of the site, the grounds were laid out and the name of both house and estate was changed from Broomage to Carronvale. (B. Watters, Falkirk Local History Society 2006.)
1824 – 1857	Proprietor: Duncan Robertson Jnr (son of Duncan Robertson Snr) The house, fully furnished, was offered for rental in 1826 and 1827 when it was said to be "modern...all in the best order. The offices were large and complete and the [walled] Garden was said to contain "up-wards of a Scots acre, well enclosed with Birch walls, and completely stocked with Fruit Trees in full bearing." Birch walls are not common! The only definition found relates to their use in the construction of a court theatre for Queen Elizabeth 1 by the Master of the Revels. "These birch walls provided the medium for the workmen to fix the cartloads of ivy and bay and the thousands of bunches of roses and other flowers 'gathered bounde and sorted' by over 200 'workfolkes', mostly women…" (Streitberger, WR *The Master of the Revels and Elizabeth 1's Court Theatre* 2016). It is possible that the Carronvale birch walls consisted of a brick wall to which strips of birch had been added perhaps to provide increased insulation to enhance the micro-climate within the walled garden or supports for climbing shrubs. The house was sold following the death of Duncan Robertson Jnr. According to the formal Note of the [sales] Particulars of Carronvale Estate dated 1856 ahead of the sale in February 1857 "The Plantations, which are about 45 years of age, are thriving and ornamental, and the garden is large with excellent soil and complete walls." (Falkirk Community Trust Archives: A1847 008.)
1857 – 1896	John Bell Sherriff (died 1896) purchased Carronvale in 1857. He was a distiller from Glasgow with local connections including his son, George, who inherited Carronvale on the death of his father, having been previously living nearby at Woodcroft.
1896 - 1908	Proprietor: George Sherriff, son of John, died 1908 Prior to moving to Carronvale, George had had Woodcroft designed for him by TL Watson and built for him in 1888 in the English Arts and Crafts style (See Illus 8).

	He soon set about having Carronvale extensively remodelled for him by Sir John Burnet, an eminent Glasgow architect. The walls of the existing house and the two wings added in the 1820s, were incorporated. George's wife, Catharine, was an ardent horticulturist. Her youngest child, George Sherriff, was born at Carronvale and followed in his mother's footsteps. He met up with experienced plant hunter Frank Ludlow in the Himalayas in 1929 whilst on duty with the Indian Army and himself became an ardent collector. He was one of the first to use air transport for getting plant material back to Europe and was one of Britain's most prolific plant hunters. (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography)
1908 – 1936	Proprietor: Alick Sherriff, son of George Sherriff and brother to George Sherriff Jnr.
1914-1918	Officers of the 8th Scottish Rifles (The Cameronians) were billetted in the stables at Carronvale House for the duration.
1936	The sales particulars for Carronvale Estate provide several insights into the gardens and policies which, including the footprint of the house, extended to 19.515 acres, imperial. Also included in the sale were 47.709 acres of arable land north of the river Carron and a field on the south side amounting to 15.476 acres. Additional land was also available for purchase if required. "The subjects consist of Carronvale House, Garden, Vegetable Garden, Amenity timber, and arable land all lying in the Parish of Larbert, with the exception of ... land on the south side of the River Carron which is situated within the Burgh of Falkirk." "The Gardens consist of two subjects. A walled garden adjoining the house is reserved for flowers and fruit trees and the hot houses are situated there. The vegetable garden lies a few yards to the east, screened by a beech hedge. The glass houses consist of a Fern house, Cold house and Potting shed all in one range, Peach house, Melon house, Tomato house, Vinery and conservatory, small rockery near vegetable garden. (Falkirk Community Trust Archives: A1847.011)
1936 – 1945	Proprietor: Prudential Insurance Company (storage of records).
1945- present day	Boys Brigade National Training Centre, recreation centre and conference centre. Sir David Steele MSP opened the new recreation centre on 6th May, 2000.

6. Components of the designed landscape

6.1 Existing Components of the Designed Landscape at Carronvale

This section summarises the historical development of each component and describes its current character and condition. The following designed landscape components and elements still exist at Carronvale.

Component	Name of element as used in the report
Avenues, Drives and Approaches	First drive
	North drive
	Service drive
Residential	Mansion house
	Lodges
Stables and Domestic Offices	Stables
	Domestic offices
Gardens	Pleasure gardens
	East walled garden
	West walled garden
	Vegetable garden
Agricultural/industrial	Arable land
	Pasture
	Mill lade

6.2 Drives & approaches

There have been several changes in the number and location of the drives over the lifetime of the house to date, probably in part as a result of the coming of cars and in part by social change. The first evidence of a drive is on the OS map of 1861, but it is likely that it was created by Dr Robertson or his son, James, in the 1820s, if not by the person who constructed the house on the site, given that access by coaches would have been required. In 1861 the main drive came off the public road at the south-west corner of the policies, passing the tree-lined grass park to the left before bearing right through a wooded area to reach the carriage sweep and entrance on the south front of the house. Having dropped off his passengers, the coachman was then able to drive around the back of the house and into the stables. By 1896 a second drive, the North drive, had been constructed, entering the property at the extreme north-west corner by a new second lodge and coming through a narrow, lightly wooded, corridor of land. It

joined up with the original drive at the south-east corner of the grass park. Almost immediately a left turn led to the stables because the drive round the back of the house had been removed. A third drive, the service drive, had been introduced by 1896. It came in off the public road between the main drive and the North drive and continued past the back entrance to the stables, on past the back wall of the walled garden and into one of the three fields to the north and east of the property. By 1913 the drive around the back of the house had been restored, joining up with the Service drive at the back of the walled garden. This would have made the delivery of goods to the house very easy. A right turn at the back corner of the walled garden along the Service drive led to the new vegetable garden. By 1943 there was no change in the layout of the drives, but a third lodge had been built where the Service drive met with the public road.

The only drive leading in and out of Carronvale now is off the former Service drive. In order to get access now, you need to take a right turn approximately sixty metres after leaving the public road at the point where the former service drive becomes a footpath. The drive then winds round to the front door on the south front of the house as it did before.

6.3 Residential

There is cartographic evidence of a house on the site of Carronvale on Grassom's map of 1817 although it is said to have been built around 1800, probably by Alexander Brown of Broomage or his son, James. It was initially called Broomage but gained its eventual name of Carronvale in the 1820s during the ownership of either Dr Robertson or his son. It was during the Robertson years that two wings were added, a lodge was built at the south-west corner of the site and the grounds were laid out. The next major change for the house came in 1896 when the house was extensively remodelled by Sir John Burnet for George Sherriff. The work included enclosing the walls of the original house and the wings added in the 1820s. The wings were raised to two storeys and the whole was covered by a broad-eaved roof of rosemary tiles. (B. Watters, Falkirk Local History Society 2006.) A court yard extension was added after the 1896 OS revision. The front elevation is dominated by the central entrance and two large bay windows on either side. The west elevation has a glass covered loggia facing out over a lawn and car park. Sadly a modern extension on the east side detracts from the overall impression of a well-kept and interesting building.

Carronvale is an A-listed house. As it stands today, it is built of blonde sandstone ashlar blocks which are in a good state of repair and it retains its broad-eaved roof.

Illus 15: Carronvale House from the north-west. The west wall of the walled garden is on the left. Date of the photograph unknown. Provided by Keith Morrison of the Boys Brigade.

Illus 16: The house from the south-east, possibly in between the ownership of the Prudential Insurance Company and the Boys Brigade. The old yew tree can be seen on the right. Date of the photograph unknown. Provided by Keith Morrison of the Boys Brigade.

Illus 17: The west side of the house showing the glass covered loggia. Date of the photograph unknown. Image provided by Keith Morrison of the Boys Brigade.

6.4 Stables and Domestic Offices

The first building housing the stables and domestic offices is evident in John Grassom's map of 1817, in that two buildings are shown on the site, one larger than the other. Given the size of the house shown, a stable and domestic offices would have been essential. The structures shown are in much the same position as the stables and offices were in relation to the house throughout the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. We know from the sales particulars of 1856/57 that "The court of offices [which included the stables], removed a short distance from the Mansion-house, possesses every convenience, and could, at a trifling expense, be put into a state of thorough repair". The state of relative disrepair is perhaps down to John Brown's failing financial circumstances which necessitated the sale of the property. The information in the sales particulars of 1936 gives us an indication of the size of the stables. They contained "stabling for 5 horses, small stable for one horse, and Loose Box. There is a Garage for two cars, and two garages for one car each, squash court, workshop, harness room, store room and Coal cellar". It is clear from this description that the domestic offices have moved into the house by now and that is confirmed in the particulars.

The stables etc were taken down by the Boys' Brigade and replaced by an up-to-date recreation centre which was opened in May 2000. It is a brick built structure which reflects to some extent the style of the house, but is also clearly of its own time. The original wall has been incorporated into the west wall of the building running north to south.

Illus 18: The new recreation centre on the site of the former stables and domestic offices

6.5 Gardens

6.5.1 Pleasure Gardens

The grounds of Carronvale are not extensive. For the purpose of this report, therefore, the pleasure gardens are taken to include the lawned area below the south front of the house, the surrounding woodland, the pleasure walks and the lawn on the west side of the house. The first evidence of a house on the site of the present Carronvale House is on Grassom's map of 1817. There is an indication there of planting to the north of the house and alongside the access road. Dr Duncan Robertson, who owned the property from 1819 to 1824, is credited with laying out the grounds and changing the name of both house and estate from Broomage to Carronvale (B. Watters, Falkirk Local History Society 2006). On the sales particulars dated December 1856 it is suggested that the plantations are "about 45 years old" confirming, therefore, that it was either Dr Robertson or his son who had them planted or perhaps his immediate predecessor, James Brown. By the time of the first Ordnance Survey in 1861, it is clear on the 6-inch map that considerable planting has occurred around the small park to the west of the house and throughout the setting, including to the north of the walled garden. Subsequent plantings have included a range of both native species and non-native ornamental trees and shrubs, the latter possibly introduced by horticulturist Catharine Sherriff, wife of George Sherriff, owners between 1896 and 1908 when shrubberies containing ornamental exotics were fashionable. There was also a rockery in the area near the vegetable garden, again a fashionable feature at the turn of the century. In the sale particulars of 1936 it is clear that gardening has become important as discussed further in the section concerned with the walled garden. After the sale of the property to the Prudential Insurance Company in 1936, there is little change to report in the pleasure gardens.

Illus 19: Family members and gardeners in the pleasure garden prior to the 1896 remodelling of the house. The two wings added by Dr Duncan Robertson or his son, c. 1820, are clearly shown. Date of the photograph unknown but after 1820 and before 1897. Image provided by Keith Morrison of the Boys Brigade.

The pleasure garden today is well kept in parts although the woodland between the lawn area and the mill lade would benefit from some attention. The pleasure walks which form part of the pleasure garden, have been surfaced with wood chippings and are a pleasant recreational feature for conference delegates. As in the past, the wide variety of ornamental trees and shrubs is the key feature, in particular the two Wellingtonias which frame the steps down to the lawn and the front entrance to the house. Also of importance is the large single yew tree to the east of the Wellingtonias which lends a sense of age to the area. The ornamental woodland is now the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. Part of the lawn to the west of the house now has a hard surface and has been converted in part into a car park, as befits the new role of the property. The mill lade beyond the woodland is now choked with grasses and carries only a small amount of flowing water.

Illus 20: The Wellingtonias from the front door (19th century plantings)

Ilus 21: The Carronvale Yew Tree

The Boys Brigade employs a tree surgeon to check all the trees annually. In order to enable the young people in their charge to understand more about the setting of the house, on the spot information about the trees is provided.

Illus 22: Information about the yew tree

Illus 23: One of Carronvale's mature beech trees.

6.5.2 West and East Walled Gardens

The area of the setting of the mansion at the time of the sale in 1936 amounted to 19.515 imperial acres and the 'gardens' were said to consist of two subjects, a walled garden adjoining the house and a vegetable garden lying a few yards to the east screened by a beech hedge. In the rental of 1856/57 the Garden was said to contain "up-wards of a Scots acre, well enclosed with Birch walls, and completely stocked with Fruit Trees in full bearing." See Timeline for a definition of 'birch walls'.

The first cartographic evidence of the walled garden is on the first edition OS 6-inch and 25-inch maps for which the survey was undertaken in 1861. At this stage, on the 6-inch map, it has been laid out in a formal style reminiscent of the late 17th and early 18th century and back in fashion in some quarters in the mid-nineteenth century. It has been divided into a series of quadrants defined by paths and with a specimen tree at the centre of each quadrant. It is not clear whether the quadrants are grassed or whether something more productive is being cultivated. According to the 25-inch map, based on a second survey, it had become an orchard prior to the publication of the map in 1891, some thirty years

after the 6-inch map.

By the time of the publication of the second edition (revised 1896) 25-inch OS map, there has been an addition of two glasshouses on the south-facing wall and a possible potting shed on the north facing side of the wall. By 1913 this has been extended, and the garden is again laid down to fruit trees. By the 1920s/30s the garden has been divided into four large quadrants split by paths. By the irregularity in height and shape of the plants shown in the relevant AP, it appears to include fruit trees, flowers and vegetables. The OS map surveyed in 1943 indicates that the walled garden remains during the period when the house was occupied by the Prudential Insurance Company to store records during WWII. Both house and grounds were subsequently purchased by the Boys Brigade. Significant sections of the policies were sold off for housing over time and the house is now surrounded by modern housing.

The three surviving complete walls of the walled garden remain fairly sound today. For the most part they are brick built with flat sandstone coping stones and are approximately 2.5 metres high for the most part. There is a stone and rubble built section in the south facing wall. At the north-west end the wall rises to approximately 4metres, possibly indicative of the direction of the prevailing wind. Five of the doorways are now bricked up, but still retain their sandstone coining. The west section of the walled garden has been converted into a car park and the east section into two sports pitches, one made up of Astro turf and the other natural turf. There are many metal pins on the west facing wall in the east section, evidence of the previous cultivation of wall fruits and/or climbing plants. The remains of whitewash on the walls of both the west and south facing walls indicate the wish of former head gardeners to generate increased warmth by reflecting the sun off the walls. The 'roof raggle' of the former glasshouse range can still be seen on the south facing wall of the east section.

Illus 24: The walled garden now covered in Astro Turf

Illus 25: South facing wall in the former walled garden

Illus 26: The Stenhouse sundial, said to have stood at the centre of the walled garden for a time. The ball is now in the safekeeping of the Falkirk Local History Society. The whereabouts of the base is unknown. See "Sundials of Six Scottish Counties near Glasgow" by W B Stevenson, printed in 1940 and "Lands and Lairds of Larbert and Dunipace Parishes" by John C Gibson in 1908. Date of the photograph 1908. Image provided by Keith Morrison of the Boys Brigade.

6.6 Agricultural and Industrial features

6.6.1 Pasture

There has been a grass park on the western boundary of the site at least since the first OS survey of 1861 although it is likely that it was created in the 1820s when Dr Robertson or his son is credited with laying out the grounds. It is roughly rectangular in shape and conveniently located by the stables. In the 1860s it was lined with trees on its south side and with alternate trees and shrubs on the other three sides. By the OS 1896 survey the shrubs had gone. The new drive from the north-west cut through the north-east corner of the park, separating it from the stables and causing the loss of the trees on the east side. Trees have also been lost along the other sides of the park. Some re-planting had occurred by the time of the OS revisions of 1913, and the subsequent revision of 1943 indicates that the new plantings had prospered.

The grass park was one of the areas sold off in the second half of the 20th century and is now the site of a number of modern houses as shown in the aerial photographs.

6.6.2 Arable land

Although this report is only concerned with the setting of Carronvale House itself, it was the mansion house belonging to an estate of some 92 arable acres (imperial) when the estate was sold in 1857. Some 77 imperial acres were let, providing an income for the owners of the house. The remaining 16 acres made up the setting and footprint of the house. By the time the estate was up for sale in 1936, the land available had been reduced to 82.7 acres of which the mansion house and policies extended to 19.5 acres. According to the sales particulars the gross rental of the property was £227.10 shillings, including the house and the land.

6.6.3 Industry: The Mill lade

The mill lade continues to run to the north of the river Carron, having been constructed in the late 18th century to provide power for the furnace at the Carron Iron Works. It is now choked with weed. It is interesting to note the number of closely planted shrubs alongside the path which runs outside the southern boundary of Carronvale, possibly to shield the residents from the attention of the public on the lade path.

Illus 27: Pathway by the Mill lade showing the dense planting of shrubs and one of several mature ash trees on the site.

7.0 Assessment of significance

7.1 The concept of significance

In the context of national policy, it is necessary to identify and understand the cultural significance of an aspect of the historic environment before its national importance can be considered. The concept of cultural significance, which is now widely accepted, was introduced in policy statements including the *Burra Charter* (2013). Assessment of significance is designed to help establish why a place or feature is considered to be important and why it is valued. It can be a subjective exercise – reflecting the moment in history when it is written and the state of knowledge about the site at that time. This means that the assessment of significance has the potential to change as knowledge and understanding of the site increase, as ideas and values change or as a result of alterations to the place or feature.

In order to be considered to be of national importance and therefore inscribed on the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes, designed landscapes must have a particular cultural significance - artistic, archaeological, historic, traditional, aesthetic, scientific and social - for past, present or future generations (*Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement*, June 2016).

The cultural significance of a designed landscape rests on three types of characteristics, as set out in the *HES Policy Statement* (2016).

1. **Intrinsic** - those inherent in the landscape and/or its constituent parts, including:
    - its condition
    - its research potential
    - the length and legibility of its apparent developmental sequence
    - its original or subsequent functions
2. **Contextual** - those relating to its place in the wider landscape or body of existing knowledge, including:
    - the rarity of the designed landscape or any part of it, assessed against its regional and national context
    - its relationship to other, similar landscapes in the vicinity
    - the relationship of the designed landscape and its constituent parts to the wider landscape setting
3. **Associative** - the historic, cultural and social influences that have affected the form and fabric of the designed landscape, and vice versa, including:
    - its aesthetic attributes
    - its significance in the national consciousness or to people who use or have used it, or their descendants
    - its associations with historical, traditional or artistic characters or events

The grading of significance here is based on a ranking system developed from Kerr (1996) for conservation plans. It grades the **quality** of the landscape's intrinsic, contextual and associative characteristics; based on the grading of quality, it assesses cultural significance according to a **range**, as set out below.

Quality:	Outstanding	**Range:**	International
	High		National (Scotland)
	Some		Regional
	Little		Local

An assessment of local cultural significance does not mean that a designed landscape or its constituent parts are not worth conserving; indeed, sound conservation and management practices can enhance their significance.

7.2 The significance of the designed landscape at Carronvale House

Intrinsic value

Most of the major development of the setting of Carronvale House took place during the second half of the twentieth century with agricultural land immediately adjacent to the setting being sold for house building, the block containing the stables and former domestic offices replaced by a recreation centre and the house extended to fit it for its new purpose as a conference and recreation centre for the Scottish Boys Brigade. The walled garden has been given over to a car park and a football pitches. Despite the above changes, the shrubbery and woodland typical of the house's nineteenth century roots have remained and it is there that the intrinsic value of the site lies. The mansion house, however, is A listed and provides the site with intrinsic value.

Contextual value

The designed landscape of Carronvale House has low contextual value. There are no strong family or neighbourhood links and any connections with the wider landscape have now gone. Whilst the designed landscape is very much of its time, it is one of many in the same style in the Falkirk area.

Associative value

Carronvale's strongest associations came with the Sherriff family. John Bell Sherriff bought the property in 1857. On his death his son George Sherriff took over and had the house remodelled in something of an Arts and Crafts style by a prominent Glasgow architect, Sir George Burnet. George Sherriff's wife was a good horticulturist and her second son, George, whose childhood was spent at Carronvale, was to follow in his mother's footsteps, becoming one of Britain's most prolific plant hunters. The family's ownership of the house came to an end in 1936 when it was sold to the Prudential Insurance company, and subsequently to the Boys Brigade for their Scottish Headquarters.

Cultural significance of Carronvale House

Although George Sherriff was not directly concerned with the gardens at Carronvale, he did merit an entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography as a very important plant collector. Equally Sir George Burnet's mansion is also A listed. Taking these two facts into account Carronvale can be considered as having regional significance.

8.0 Sources consulted

8.1 Historic maps

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John Thomson	1820	Atlas of Scotland	Stirlingshire
Ordnance Survey	Surveyed 1861 Published 1865	Stirlingshire 1st edition 6-inch to the mile	XXIV
Ordnance Survey	Surveyed in 1859/60 Published 1891	Stirlingshire 1st edition 25-inch to the mile	XXIV.14
Ordnance Survey	Revised 1896 (revised), Published 1897	Stirlingshire 2nd edition	024.14
Ordnance Survey	Revised 1913 Published 1917	Stirlingshire 3rd edition	n024.14
Ordnance Survey	Revised 1943 Published 1947	Stirlingshire	n024.14

Source: http://maps.nls.uk

8.2 Aerial photographs

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