Settlement Review - Balfron
Balfron (population 1770 (2008) Rural Village

Context

Balfron is a relatively large village which straddles the line of the A875. The settlement alongside the road comprises social housing dating to the 1960’s now expanded again due to private development in the last ten years. There are two attractive designated Conservation areas to the north and south of the village.

The village is sited on a south facing slope which rises from Strathendrick and the River Endrick in the south and the road and adjoining properties generally gain distinctive long range views to the Campsie Hills in the south. In the north the road meets a Clachan which is overlooked by the church, a war memorial and an ancient oak (thought to have sheltered Rob Roy McGregor). Further north the golf course is located on land which rises to open moorland.

The village developed in the 19th Century during the Industrial Revolution, a cotton mill, the Ballindalloch Cotton Works was built on the River Endrick and a planned village was constructed on both sides of the main road between the river and the Clachan to accommodate mill workers. The village was also served by a railway line at nearby Balfron Station (closed in the 1950’s).

The village centre is now mainly a commuter village and supports a number of shops and local amenities. The local school campus has a sports facility which can be accessed by the community.
General Description of Open Space Provision

The main open spaces within Balfron are generally located to the north of the village. The large open space of Balfron Golf Course dominates to the north, offering scenic views of the surrounding landscape. A large park is located to the north east at Donaldson Park with play areas and playing fields and a footpath link to the school. There is a small area of semi-natural woodland to the north west of the community and a cemetery. The local school is situated to the north east of the village and offers a range of sports facilities to the general public.

Amenity spaces are located amongst the residential areas to the west of the settlement including a small area of semi-natural woodland with a central path which links Greek Thompson Road and Endrick Gardens. This provides a link with the mature woodlands on the western edge of the village and the Clachan Burn to the north.

The main open space features in Balfron are:

- Donaldson Park – a large attractive open space with a football pitch, a children’s play area and a woodland walk
- Balfron Golf Course – A large, well maintained open space with scenic views.
- Balfron Campus – The local school has sports facilities which are available for public use
- Endrick Road – The path between Greek Thompson Road and Endrick Gardens offers a potentially attractive walk through areas of developing woodland
Stirling Council
Openspace Strategy 2011

Openspace Typologies
Balfron

1. Public Pks and Gdns
2. Private Gdns or Grounds
2.1. Private Gdns
2.2. Schools
2.3. Institutions
3. Amenity Greenspace
3.1. Amenity - Housing
3.2. Amenity - Business
3.3. Amenity - Transport
4. Playspace
5. Sports Areas
5.1. Sports - Playing fields
5.2. Sports - Golf
5.3. Sports - Tennis
5.4. Sports - Bowling
5.5. Sports - Other
6. Green Corridors
6.1. Green access routes
6.2. Riparian routes
7. Natural/Semi-natural Greenspace
7.1. Natural GS Woodland
7.2. Natural GS Open Semi natural
7.3. Open Water
8. Other Functional Greenspace
8.1. Allots
8.2. Church yards
8.3. Cemeteries
8.4. Other Functional Green Spaces
9. Civic space
Stirling Council Openspace Strategy - Access Audit
Settlement: Balfron

Data Shown:
- Public Parks & Park Access Points
- Public Parks 400m Buffer & 5 min Walking Distance
- Amenity Greenspace & 300m Buffer

Legend:
- Public Park Access Points
- Public Parks
- Public Parks - 5min Walk From Access
- Public Parks - 400m Buffer
- Greenspace - Balfron
- Greenspace - Balfron 300m Buffer
- Stirling Settlements - 1km Buffer
## Settlement Review - Aberfoyle

### Balfron

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Audit Score</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donaldson Way</td>
<td>Balfron</td>
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<td>Weaver Row</td>
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<td>Station Road</td>
<td>Balfron</td>
<td>Woodland And Seminatural</td>
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</table>

### Settlement Population:
- 1770 No.

### Identified Openspace:
- 102.37 ha of greenspace (ref: Access Map) High % of large private gardens

### Quality Audit:
- 8 sites audited. The average score for Balfron being 47%

### Access Audit
- Good distribution of accessible openspace with public park to north of settlement. All residents appear to be within 300m of accessible openspace or Countryside.
### Audit analysis Quantity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Stirling Average</th>
<th>Proposed Benchmark</th>
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**Note**

Column A represents the total areas based on the primary typology categories. This under-represents play areas and playing fields as these frequently form part of other spaces.

Column B includes the area of all play areas and playing fields.
Survey issues

There is only one park in Balfron; Donaldson park. It provides a reasonable area and is in band C. Playspace area is below the benchmark level. There is good sports provision – both in area and range (it includes the Golf Course).

There is no allotment/community food growing provision.

All households within 300m of an open space and there is reasonable access to Donaldson Park around 60% of all households are within 400m.

48% of households are more than 500m from a play space however the new play area will greatly increase access to play. There is good access to woodland and countryside, but the Ettrick Water forms a barrier to accessing countryside to the South. There are good path links around the village.

8 sites were included in the quality audit, but quality was generally not high. Only one (the golf course) is in band A. The village has large amounts of low scoring amenity green space. The amenity space in Endrick Rd is the lowest scoring space in the entire audit.

Band A  1 site  13%
Band B  2 sites  25%
Band C  5 sites  63%

Consultation summary

- Donaldson Way proposed play area is contentious.
- Donaldson park is identified as a valued open space with potential for improvements.
- More circular routes and improve path network desired.
- Balfron Community Futures Development Trust is undertaking a green mapping exercise.

Key quotes

- “Dog walkers must clear up after their dogs.”
- “General ‘looking after’ needs to be improved. Community would be willing but needs to be co-ordinated.”
- “Donaldson Park needs upgrading.”
- “All local open spaces are important to me.”
- “Large Oak Tree to be preserved and protected.”

Strategy Opportunities

National/regional level

Balfron is approximately 4 miles from the edge of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

Settlement level

Donaldson Park is a Local Park of Band C quality within the park hierarchy providing adequate facilities. Explore opportunities to work with the Donaldson Trust to improve facilities including Play provision. Sports provision is good but Play space area is below benchmark.

General

- Implement the local biodiversity toolkit on new or improved open spaces.
- Resolve Endrick Drive Amenity space/ SUDs issues.
- Resolve options for future of Donaldson Way Play space.
- Through the development of a Playing Fields Strategy determine the quantity and quality of existing sports provision and identify and resolve any deficits.
- The Council will priorities routes which link community facilities, including open spaces, and seek to improve the safety, security and accessibility of these routes as and when resources and opportunities exist.
- For New Development sites investigate developer contribution to existing open spaces.
Provision and shortfalls
There is only one park in Balfron [Donaldson park]. It provides a reasonable area and is in band C. Playspace area is below the benchmark level but there is good sports provision. All households within 300m of an open space and there is reasonable access to Donaldson Park around 60% of all households are within 400m. 48% of households are more than 500m from a play space however the possible new play area could greatly increase access to play. There is good access to woodland and countryside, but the Endrick Water forms a barrier to accessing countryside to the South. The village has large amounts of low scoring amenity green space.
- Good sports provision – both in area and range
- Mixed quality results

Opportunities/
Resolve future options for possible play in Donaldson Way
• Work with the Trust on possible upgrades to Donaldson Park
• Review path network/connections in and around the village
• Review Endrick Drive Amenity Space
• Work with and support the established Community Futures Development Group
• Investigate “Kings Highway” cycle link

Support the Balfron Community Futures Development Trust’s green mapping exercise

Investigate “Kings Highway” cycle link

Settlement opportunity plan
Balfour

Key
- Open Space
- Woodland/Semi natural open space
- Open Space Opportunities
- Improved network opportunities
- Existing core path network
- Play space
- Boundary

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