



Location and Context

The *Agricultural Plain - Glasgow & Clyde Valley* Landscape Character Type only occurs in one area within Glasgow and the Clyde Valley at Houston, within Renfrewshire.

The *Agricultural Plain- Glasgow & Clyde Valley* is bordered by the Black and White Cart Waters to the east and by the Rolling Farmlands of Kilmacolm to the west and south. The Clyde Estuary bounds the area to the north. The town of Bishopton lies on the *Agricultural Plain – Glasgow & Clyde Valley*. Much larger areas of former floodplain on either side of the Clyde are now urbanised and therefore do not fall into this predominantly rural landscape character type.

Key Characteristics

- Distinctive, low-lying landform.
- Generally open character though woodland blocks and remnant field boundary trees create containment in some areas.
- Lush pastures, arable fields and a number of surviving mosses.
- Significant urban influences in some areas, resulting from urban expansion, transport, infrastructure and activities such as waste disposal.

Landscape Character Description

Landform

The *Agricultural Plain – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* area occurs partly on underlying carboniferous limestone and partly on the igneous rock with basaltic drifts which underlie the adjacent hills. It is, however, the alluvial deposits associated with the Clyde and its tributaries together with the peat deposits which have the greatest influence on the landscape.

The *Agricultural Plain – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* is low and flat and naturally susceptible to flooding. The area tends to be wet with some drainage and subsidence (e.g. on the road

bounding Linwood Moss). Some areas of moss and birch scrub remain, contrasting with some of the neighbouring farmland.

Landcover

The land is generally fertile and of a relatively high agricultural quality with an unusually high amount of arable land for the Greater Clyde Valley area. The remaining agricultural land is improved pasture. Woodland cover is minimal and generally limited to field boundary trees and country house estates. However, there are some pockets of deciduous woodland and some areas of semi-natural vegetation remaining along watercourses (e.g. along the River Gryfe). In these areas, there are several Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. There are also three large areas of coniferous forestry plantation in the Alluvial Plain.

Settlement

Settlement is limited to scattered farmsteads in the Bishopton area and a number of villages, such as Houston and Brookfield. A number of these have experienced considerable growth over recent decades. The former Royal Ordnance Factory at Bishopton (Dargavel) is a significant area of regeneration from the previous use to create the new Community Growth Area. The development is now at a stage where it has made a significant impact on the village and in the context of the wider landscape. The former industrial use of the site has now given way to the development of new residential areas and associated uses with significant new infrastructure, open space and green and blue networks.

Large scale industry has had a major impact on the parts of this landscape type. Examples include Glasgow International Airport to the north of Paisley and the Royal Ordnance Factory site near Bishopton. The latter is being redeveloped for mixed housing, business and leisure use. Historically, the India Tyre Factory was located at Inchinnan and the listed building remains. There are also two waste disposal sites within the area.

The area has several former estate landscapes. The best of these are Houston House and Barochan near Houston, and Dargavel near Bishopton. These retain 19th Century woodland planting, specimen tree, field layouts, estate buildings and landscape features such as walls and gateways. Craigends near Houston, and Walkinshaw House near Glasgow Airport, are largely lost, but retain some of these features.

Transport routes and facilities dominate this landscape. Inchinnan Kirk and bridge mark an ancient crossing of the Black Cart Water. The River Clyde at this point was narrowed in the mid-19th Century and much of the land around Newshot Island is reclaimed. The M8 and the east-west train line pass through the *Agricultural Plain – Glasgow & Clyde Valley*. The Glasgow International Airport and its related infrastructure have a major visual and aural impact on the rural character of the area.

Agricultural practices reflect these pressures and there are tracts of underused and unfarmed land, plus areas of tipping and dumping. Changes in agricultural practice include the development of a turf farm near Linwood.

The eastern-most parts of this landscape type are visually connected to the urban area. Industry along the eastern side of the White Cart, Glasgow Airport, the M8 and the village

and business park at Inchinnan all contribute to the visual presence of the urban area. Moving west this influence decreases, though Linwood and the A737 road corridor do influence the northern part of the area. The area is subject to commercial, industrial and residential development pressure.

Perception

Some parts of this LCT are visually indistinct, particularly the eastern are around the airport, M8 and associated business parks and urban fringe. The extensive Royal Ordnance Factory site, surrounded by dense woodland, creates a barrier to views, although some of this area is opening up where development is taking place. Though there are long views of the Kilpatrick Hills to the north, these are often interrupted by nearer features.



This is one of 390 Landscape Character Types identified at a scale of 1:50 000 as part of a national programme of Landscape Character Assessment republished in 2019.

The area covered by this Landscape Character Type was originally included in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley LCA (Land Use Consultants), published 1999.