

INVENTORY GARDENS REVIEW 2014-2018 DESIGNATIONS PROJECT REPORT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- From 2014-2018 Historic Environment Scotland's Designations Team carried out a nationwide review of 42 inventory gardens and designed landscapes (more than 10% of the inventory) in response to feedback about the quality and consistency of the inventory.
- Selected by means of an internal sift of all inventory sites, we prioritised an initial target group of gardens and designed landscapes with low recorded expressions of value (Review Phase 1), followed by a smaller grouping of sites designated mainly or solely for their horticultural collections (Horticultural Review).
- The project gave us the opportunity to focus resources where needed, and visit and assess sites afresh that had not been reviewed since their original designation on the inventory up to 30 years ago.
- We consulted on all proposed decisions with property owners and local authorities, and decisions made after October 2015 are published online.
- Out of a total of 42 sites, we removed 31 from the inventory, and retained 11 sites, the records of which have been updated.
- The reasons for removal were fragmentation of landscapes, often over a long period of time, loss of integrity (wholeness or coherence), and the loss of horticultural collections.
- The project highlights the dynamic and sometimes ephemeral nature of historic gardens and designed landscapes, compared to other kinds of designated site. It shows how some gardens can be more resilient than others due to their components (eg. long-lived species within woodland gardens) and/or their long-term management arrangements.

I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

1.2 The inventory of gardens and designed landscapes

Designated sites and places are among Scotland's greatest assets. They chart our history and help to make Scotland a great place to live, work and visit.

First published in 1987, the inventory is a list of nationally important gardens and designed landscapes. It is one of five designations managed by Historic Environment Scotland's Designations Team, the others being listed buildings, scheduled monuments, the inventory of battlefields and historic marine protected areas. With over 55,000 designations, keeping information about each of them up to date is one of our biggest challenges.

The purpose of the inventory of gardens and designed landscapes is to identify sites of national importance and to provide information about them to aid understanding, protection and sustainable management through the planning system and other relevant contexts, such as landscape management.

Sites on the inventory include country estate landscapes, botanic garden collections, urban public parks, and even some cemeteries and golf courses. Together, gardens and designed landscapes make an important contribution to Scotland's historic environment. Sites on the inventory range in size from one hectare to well over 1000 hectares and date from the medieval period up until the 20th century.

Inventory sites are living and changing landscapes. Reviewing inventory records helps to ensure that the inventory is as up-to-date as possible.

1.3 The need for this project

The Designations Team is part of Historic Environment Scotland's Heritage Directorate and we work closely with our colleagues who provide advice on national planning matters and consents.

In 2013, external respondents to an online survey about the inventory told us they thought the inventory was out of date. Meanwhile, colleagues within the Heritage Directorate told us that out of date inventory records was a growing problem for their casework on planning matters affecting inventory gardens and designed landscapes. They noted that certain inventory records had much lower expressions of value, or merit, compared with others, and wanted to be sure that these sites continued to meet the criteria for inclusion on the inventory as a garden and designed landscape of 'national importance'.

Up until this project, designation work on the inventory had followed a traditional model of area-based resurvey. However, this approach left little if any available staffing resource for responsive, targeted or thematic reviews. Therefore, in 2014, the Designations Team set up the Inventory Gardens Review in order to allocate staffing resources where a problem had been identified.

1.4 Project aims

The project was set up to review a tightly-defined group of sites with a demonstrable need for fresh assessments.

Our overall objective was to improve the quality and consistency of the inventory of gardens and designed landscapes and to ensure the inventory remains a useful and relevant tool in the planning process. This is for the wider benefit of our colleagues and stakeholders, including landowners and local authorities.

The intended outcome was a more up-to-date inventory that more accurately reflects Scotland's nationally important garden and designed landscape heritage.

1.5 Methodology

Site Selection

In 2014, a rapid desk-based review of all the sites on the inventory at that date revealed a number of gardens and designed landscapes which had only one or, in some cases, no 'outstanding' values, or areas of interest. Frequently, they had wording in their inventory records which raised doubts as to their merit for the inventory. Nearly all of these sites had been designated as part of the original 1987 publication of the inventory. None had been reviewed subsequent to their designation.

A total of 23 sites were prioritised for a fresh assessment against the criteria for determining national importance (Review Phase 1). A further 19 sites were allocated to a second phase of the project – (Horticultural Review), so named because they had been designated mainly, or wholly for their plant or tree collections, or horticultural associations. Similarly, the wording and value assessments expressed within their inventory records raised doubts about their merit for designation.

Figure 1 shows the geographical distribution of these sites.

Assessment

All of the sites were visited by members of the Designations Team and assessed using the criteria set out in Annex 5 of The Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (2016). At the time of writing, this policy is being revised and is due for publication in 2019. Landowners and local authorities were given the opportunity to comment on our proposed decisions for each case.

For designation decisions after October 2015, the assessments against the criteria are published online on our Portal as part of the Report on Handling for each case. For designation decisions prior to October 2015, the assessments are not available online.

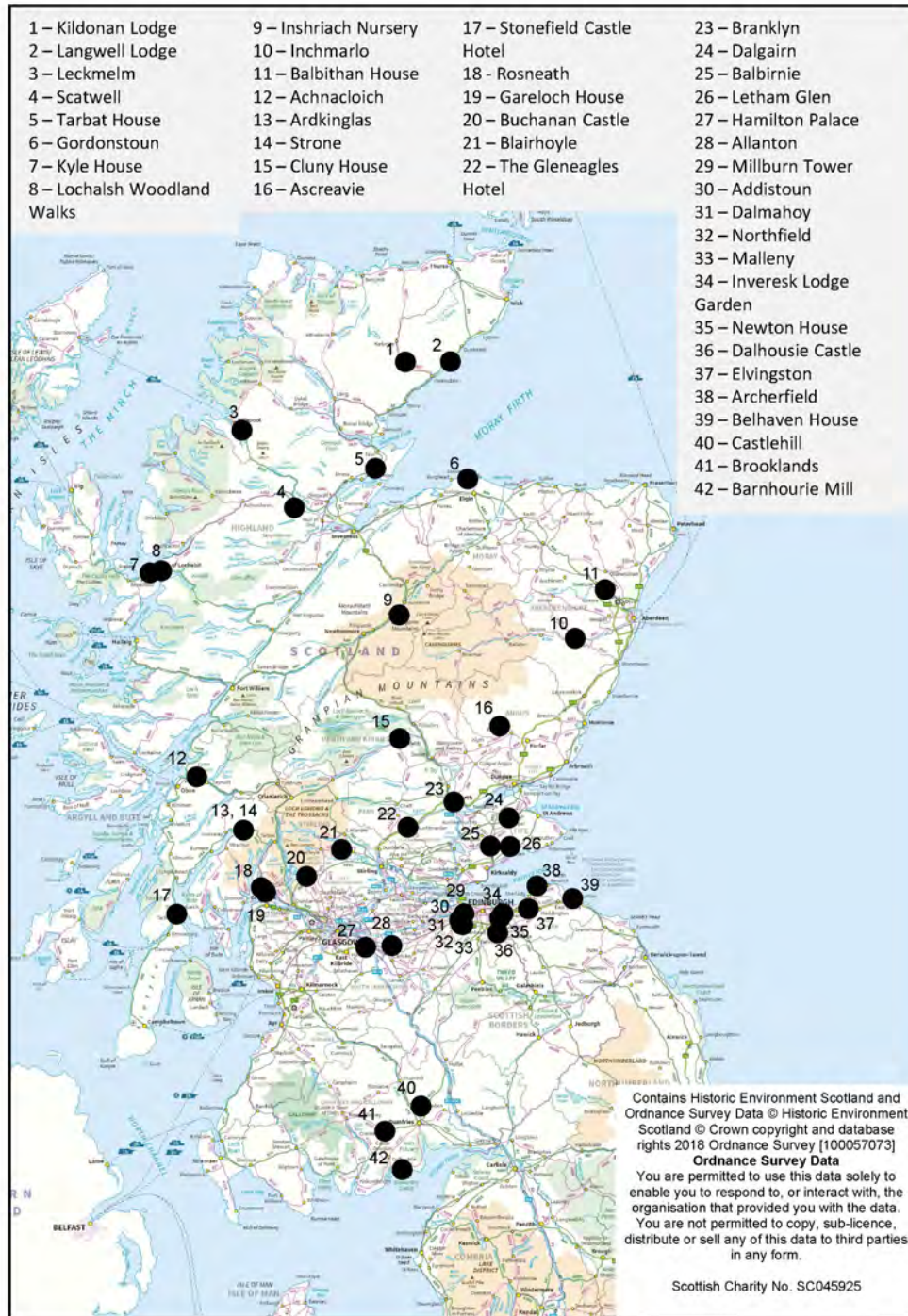


Figure 1 - Distribution of sites

2. PROJECT RESULTS

The results of the 2014-2018 review project are set out in the table below, with further detail provided in Appendices 1 and 2.

Project	Project dates	Sites assessed	Decision	
			Amend	Remove
Review phase 1	2014-16	23	3	20
Horticultural review	2016-18	19	8	11
	Totals	42	11	31

Updated inventory records for sites remaining on the inventory are available online on our heritage portal at <https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/>

2.1 Review Phase 1

Twenty out of 23 sites no longer met the criteria for inclusion on the inventory of gardens and designed landscapes and were removed from the inventory.

Of these removals, most were country estate landscapes dating mainly from the 18th-19th centuries. A lesser number were more modest garden grounds of the 19th-20th centuries, associated with a house or lodge. Letham Glen was the only public park within this group.

While each site presented its own unique circumstances, the reasons for removal were either insufficient merit when assessed against the seven criteria (7 cases), insufficient integrity (wholeness or coherence) (3 cases), or, more frequently, a combination of both of these factors (10 cases).

When we assess integrity, we consider the condition and survival of the main components of the garden and designed landscape, and its overall coherence, either as an example of a site with just one overarching historic design phase, or as a constantly evolving, multi-period site, which nevertheless retains a generally strong and enduring design structure.

Gardens and designed landscapes removed from the inventory on account of insufficient integrity typically exhibited,

- The fragmentation of ownership at one or more stages in its history
- The loss, partial loss or declining condition of main designed landscape components during the 20th century, (including the main house, ancillary buildings or structures, parklands, specimen trees, garden collections, woodlands and boundary features)
- Development within former designed landscape grounds (including residential, industrial or commercial construction, road building and golf courses and facilities).

For many of these sites, these impacts were incremental, occurring in stages during the 20th century, and more often than not, predating the designation of the site on the inventory in 1987.

The most extreme example was Hamilton Palace in South Lanarkshire. Although once a large and important designed landscape, the palace was demolished by the 1920s, and the grounds largely developed during the second half of the 20th century for a range of facilities, including Hamilton Palace Retail Park, a sports complex, motorway service station, and more than 800 houses (Figure 2).



Figure 2: View of retail park, Hamilton Palace, South Lanarkshire

We questioned why some of these sites were included on the inventory in 1987, when there were concerns about their level of integrity at that date. At this time, although the condition and integrity of a garden and designed landscape was taken into account in the description of a landscape, it was not part of the assessment criteria.

Consultation responses to the removal of these sites have not been analysed as a group, however we did note that some landowners and property owners within former estate landscapes expressed support for continued designation, or at least indicated that they valued the greenspace environments created by the surviving elements of the landscapes.

The three sites that were found to still meet the criteria for inclusion on the inventory when reassessed were Balbirnie in Fife, an 18th-19th century country estate landscape designed by Robert Robinson and Thomas White, Millburn Tower in Edinburgh, an early 19th-century informal designed landscape, and The Gleneagles Hotel and Golf Courses in Perth and Kinross.

We amended the designation boundaries for all three of these sites. Millburn Tower only required a minor adjustment. For Balbirnie, we removed an area of residential development from the designation boundary. For The Gleneagles Hotel, we amended the boundary to include the full extent of the Professional Golfers' Association Championship Course, modified by Jack Nicklaus and, to date, the only example of his work in Scotland.

2.2 Horticultural Review

19 gardens and designed landscapes designated mainly for their horticultural importance were selected for review on account of their otherwise low value expressions across the other categories of assessment.

We found that just over half (11 sites) no longer met the criteria for inclusion on the inventory of gardens and designed landscapes. Of these, Strone was 'technically removed' although in practice the grounds were partially incorporated within an amended and enlarged inventory boundary for Ardkinglas – renamed as Ardkinglas and Strone.

Nine of the removed sites comprised the garden grounds around a substantial house or villa. Of these, Gareloch House and Kyle House were woodland gardens. Ascreavie, Blairhoyle, and Brooklands were modest country estate landscapes. Inshriach Nursery was the only commercial nursery assessed within the group.

Most of these sites were designated for the importance of their post-war gardens, developed and planted by their owners in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. These owners were often plant collectors, horticulturalists or, in the case of Balbithan House, a botanical artist, and the collections of plant material reflected their individual interests.

Ascreavie House in Angus, for example, was the former home of the plant collector and explorer, Major George Sherriff (1898-1967) and was known for its alpines, shrubs, rhododendrons and primulas. Belhaven House in East Lothian, belonged to the botanist and former director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, Sir George Taylor (1904-1993), and contained a wide variety of plants, shrubs and trees. Barnhourie Mill in Dumfries and Galloway belonged to the horticulturalists, Dr Mavis Richmond Paton and Miss Horwood King, and was known for its dwarf rhododendrons. Balbithan House in Aberdeenshire was the former home and garden of the horticulturalist and renowned botanical artist, Mary McMurtrie (1902-2003), where she planted the gardens with shrub roses, violas and native flowers.

In all of these cases, the collections associated with these individuals had either declined in condition, been lost, or partially lost in the years and decades following their death, and were no longer under active horticultural development. This meant not only reduced horticultural interest, but also the loss of one of the tangible links that connected place with the individual in question. Although these sites often had merit in other categories of interest, (for example, Balbithan House has outstanding value for its architectural interest), none had sufficient merit overall to be considered of national importance for the inventory.

For the other sites in this group that were not associated so strongly with one notable individual, (including Gareloch House, Kyle House, and Inveresk Lodge Garden) the reasons for removal were generally insufficient merit, and for Gareloch House and Kyle House, also some reduction in integrity (wholeness and coherence).

For Inshriach Nursery, we found that while the site still had high historic interest as a pioneering alpine nursery founded by Jack Drake in 1938, it had insufficient merit overall for continued designation as a site of national importance.

Of the 8 sites that were assessed and found to still meet the criteria for the inventory, 5 are woodland gardens. These are Achnacloch in Argyll and Bute, Ardkinglas and Strone, in Argyll and Bute, Cluny House in Perth and Kinross, Leckmelm in Highland, and Lochalsh Woodland Walks in Highland. Stonefield Castle Hotel in Argyll and Bute is a 19th century estate landscape also with a substantial woodland garden element. The other two sites (Malleny, in Edinburgh, and Branklyn, in Perth (Figure 3), are both National Trust for Scotland gardens with special horticultural collections, which are managed and maintained.

Minor adjustments to the designation boundaries of 3 of these sites ensured better alignment with mapped physical boundaries, such as fence-lines, or road edges. In the case of Cluny House and Achnacloch, additional adjustments included small areas of interest previously outside the designation, while for Malleny, a small area of peripheral land was removed from the designation.

A major amendment to the designation boundary for Ardkinglas allowed for the inclusion of the woodland garden, formerly designated separately as Strone, (with the designation renamed as Ardkinglas and Strone). For Balmacara Estate (Lochalsh Woodland Garden), we reduced the area of designation by over a half in order to include only the woodland garden (with the designation renamed as Lochalsh Woodland Walks).

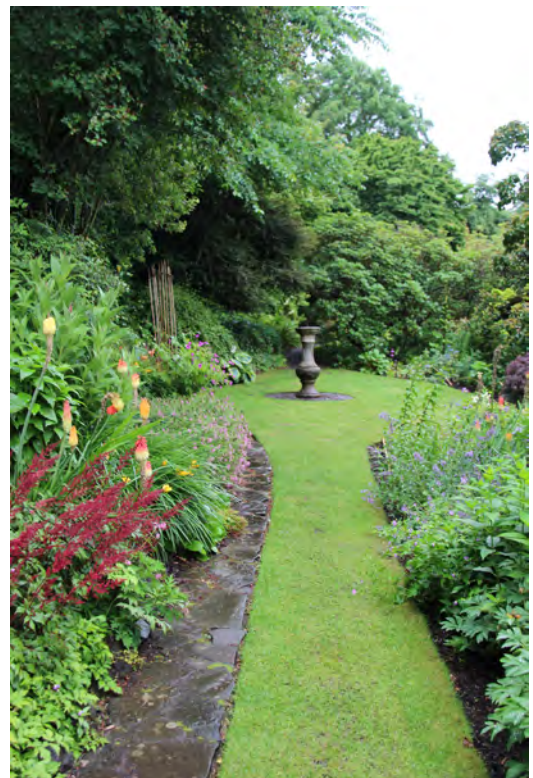


Figure 3: Branklyn Garden, Perth

3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Out of a total of 42 sites reassessed as part of the Inventory Gardens Review Project, we removed 31 from the inventory (73%). The following observations are relevant.

- Doubts raised at the beginning of the project by the wording and expressions of value in just over 10% of garden and designed landscape designation records dating to the 1980s and 1990s were largely borne out when we visited, researched and assessed these sites against the current inventory criteria.
- In Review Phase 1, loss of integrity (wholeness or coherence) was either the main reason for removal, or a contributing factor for removal in nearly all of the 20 sites removed from the inventory. It was also a factor in reducing the designation boundary in one of the three sites retained on the inventory (Balbirnie). Typically, loss of integrity was linked to the fragmentation of ownerships in a former estate, and the process of declining condition and integrity predated designation on the inventory by many years and even decades, reflecting the legacy of 20th century pressures on historic designed landscapes.
- For the Horticultural Review, the results were more evenly split with 11 sites removed and 8 retained on the inventory. The most vulnerable sites were clearly the post-war gardens developed and curated by a particular individual or individuals. These gardens were often defined by plant material with a short to medium life-span, and were not maintained in the same way after the death of the individual or individuals concerned.
- In contrast, those gardens and designed landscapes more likely to still meet the criteria for designation within this group were woodland gardens, and the gardens under long-term management by the National Trust for Scotland (Branklyn, Malleny and Lochalsh Woodland Walks). This points to the greater natural resilience of gardens containing more long-lived species, and also the importance of long-term custodianship of such gardens.
- The predominance of woodland gardens among the sites found to still merit inclusion on the inventory suggests that this kind of garden is more resilient than other gardens with more short-lived horticultural collections.

3.1 Concluding statements

- Following this project, the inventory of gardens and designed landscapes more accurately reflects the current state of Scotland's nationally important garden and designed landscape heritage.
- The 73% removal rate indicates the importance of carrying out a targeted review of existing inventory records at this time, nearly 30 years since the creation of the inventory.
- The methods used during the review process have been largely successful, and suggest that targeted reviews of this sort can be a highly productive way of managing the inventory of gardens and designed landscapes, helping to improve consistency of decision-making and quality of inventory records across Scotland.
- The project highlights the dynamic and sometimes ephemeral nature of garden and designed landscape heritage. It provides insight into how and why gardens and designed landscapes might change, and how fragmentation of ownership, declining condition and lack of long-term management strategy may reduce the interest of gardens and designed landscapes for designation.
- Estate landscapes that had already suffered substantial loss of condition and integrity by the time of their original designation on the inventory in 1987, were largely in the same, or worse position some 30 years later, in terms of their legibility and survival as historic landscapes. This highlights the fragility of historic landscapes once the process of fragmentation has begun.
- More positively, consultees living within fragmented former estate landscapes told us that they valued the environments created by surviving elements of historic estate landscapes.
- Privately owned post-war garden collections of horticultural interest also form a vulnerable group, while woodland gardens and gardens with long-term custodianship arrangements (i.e. those managed by the National Trust for Scotland) offer more resilience.
- We provide guidance about managing change in gardens and designed landscapes in our publication, available to download at <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationid=83214207-c4e7-4f80-af87-a678009820b9>

Appendix 1 - Review phase 1 (2014-2016)

Site name and reference	Date designated	Local authority	Status	Link to online decision (if available)	Reasons for Removal
Addistoun (GDL00008)	1987	City of Edinburgh	Removed	-	Insufficient merit
Allanton (GDL00012)	1987	North Lanarkshire	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000221	Reduced integrity
Archerfield (GDL00017)	1987	East Lothian	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000921	Reduced integrity
Buchanan Castle (GDL00077)	1987	Stirling	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000839	Reduced integrity
Castlehill (GDL00098)	1987	Dumfries and Galloway	Removed	-	Insufficient merit
Dalgairn (GDL00126)	1987	Fife	Removed	-	Insufficient merit, reduced integrity
Dalhousie Castle (GDL00127)	1987	Midlothian	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000771	Reduced integrity, insufficient merit
Dalmahoy (GDL00129)	1987	City of Edinburgh	Removed	-	Insufficient merit, Reduced integrity
Elvingston (GDL00172)	1987	East Lothian	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000920	Insufficient merit, impacts on integrity
Gordonstoun (Bog O'Pleulands) (GDL00199)	1987	Moray	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001175	Reduced integrity

Hamilton Palace (GDL00207)	1987	South Lanarkshire	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000559	Reduced integrity
Inchmarlo (GDL00219)	1987	Aberdeenshire	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000356	Reduced integrity, insufficient merit
Kildonan Lodge (GDL00236)	1987	Highland	Removed	-	Insufficient merit
Langwell Lodge (GDL00253)	1987	Highland	Removed	-	Insufficient merit
Letham Glen (GDL00261)	2005	Fife	Removed	-	Insufficient merit
Newton House (GDL00301)	1987	Midlothian	Removed	-	Insufficient merit
Northfield (GDL00302)	2001	City of Edinburgh	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000355	Insufficient merit, impact on integrity
Rosneath (GDL00328)	1987	Argyll and Bute	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000564	Reduced integrity, insufficient merit
Scatwell (GDL00337)	1987	Highland	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000138	Insufficient merit
Tarbat House (GDL00353)	2003	Highland	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000558	Reduced integrity
The Gleneagles Hotel (GDL00360)	1987	Perth and Kinross	Amended (boundary and text), amendment to designation name, to 'Gleneagles Hotel and Golf Courses'	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000717	
Balbirnie (GDL00034)	1987	Fife	Amended (boundary and text)	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000857	
Millburn Tower (GDL00286)	1987	City of Edinburgh	Amended (boundary and text)	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500000582	

Appendix 2 – Horticultural Review (2016-2018)

Site name and reference	Date designated	Local authority	Status	Link to online decision	Reason for removal
Ascreavie (GDL00030)	1987	Angus	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001589	insufficient merit
Balbithan House (GDL0035)	1987	Aberdeenshire	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001430	insufficient merit
Barnhourie Mill (GDL00049)	1987	Dumfries and Galloway	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001330	insufficient merit
Belhaven House (GDL00053)	1987	East Lothian	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001488	insufficient merit
Blairhoyle (GDL00062)	1987	Stirling	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001429	insufficient merit, reduced integrity
Brooklands (GDL00073)	1987	Dumfries and Galloway	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001466	insufficient merit
Gareloch House (Achnashie) (GDL00187)	1987	Argyll and Bute	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001434	insufficient merit, reduced integrity
Inshriach Nursery (GDL00222)	1987	Highland	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001264	insufficient merit

Inveresk Lodge Garden (GDL00225)	1987	East Lothian	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001433	insufficient merit
Kyle House (GDL00249)	1987	Highland	Removed	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001361	insufficient merit, reduced integrity
Strone (GDL00352)	1987	Argyll and Bute	Technical removal	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001550	to be merged with Ardkinglas
Achnacloich (GDL00007)	1987	Argyll and Bute	Amended (boundary and text)	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001428	
Ardkinglas (GDL00022)	1987	Argyll and Bute	Amended (boundary and text, to include former separate inventory site of Strone (GDL00352). Amendment to designation name, to 'Ardkinglas and Strone')	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001553	
Balmacara Estate (Lochalsh Woodland Garden) (GDL00043)	1987	Highland	Amended (boundary and text). Amendment to designation name, to 'Lochalsh Woodland Walks'	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001431	
Branklyn (GDL00069)	1987	Perth and Kinross	Amended (text only)	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001435	
Cluny House (GDL00104)	1987	Perth and Kinross	Amended (boundary and text)	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001564	
Malleny (Wester Lymphoy) (GDL00272)	1987	City of Edinburgh	Amended (boundary and text). Amendment to designation name, to 'Malleny'	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001432	

Leckmelm (GDL00256)	2003	Highland	Amended (text only)	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001454	
Stonefield Castle Hotel (GDL00350)	1987	Argyll and Bute	Amended (text only)	http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/decision/500001427	

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