

The Green,
Clonaslee,
County Laois.

FAO: The Secretary,
An Bord Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG- <u>046 611-21</u>	06.12.2021
ABP- _____	
13 DEC 2021	
Fee: € <u>220</u>	Type: <u>Cheque</u>
Time: <u>14:48</u>	By: <u>Henel</u>

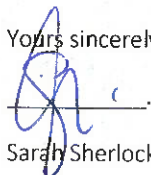
Section 5 Declaration Appeal: - S5/2021/36 - The Square, Clonaslee, County Laois.

Dear Secretary,

Kindly see the attached it is my appeal to An Bord Pleanála.

Proof of payment of €220 is attached and confirmed.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Sherlock MRICS MSCSI MII

I wish to appeal the decision¹ of Laois County Council (LCC), dated the 15th of November 2021.

The determination sought was:-

Laois County Council is requested to determine whether the removal of a large longstanding rectangular flowerbed (seats, and bin storage) complete with permanent surrounds, from within the Clonaslee Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), to install a new circular (possibly Chinese) granite water fountain complete with a water (and possibly rubbish) storage section underneath, and paving is or is not development or is or is not exempted development.

The decision issued was as follows:-

Now Whereas Laois County Council in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Section 5(2)(a) of the 2000 Act, as amended it is hereby decided that the proposed development consisting of the following 'the removal of a large rectangular flowerbed complete with permanent surrounds, and installation of a new circular granite water fountain and paving at the Square, Clonaslee, Co. Laois

Is development and is exempted development under provisions of the exempted development provisions as set out under Class 33 (a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

I consider that LCC has made an error in their determination as they have failed to take into consideration, the fact that the core village of Clonaslee is the subject matter of an ACA. The works are situated within the core of the ACA – the historic village square. I refer to Map 2-14 appended to the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023².

ABP also need to be aware that the position of Architectural Conservation Officer (ACO) in LCC remains vacant. I've raised concerns about this within the county previously, and in respect of many matters, for it is quite possibly having a negative and avoidable impact on our heritage both in Clonaslee and beyond.

One of the primary internal vistas within the Clonaslee ACA is created from the local Heritage Centre³ at the eastern axis of the historic village to Brittas Gates⁴ on the western axis – it is locally important, and its integrity must be retained and improved upon where possible. The historic village square falls along that vista and therefore any alterations need to be sympathetic and enhancing of what exists.

The 2002 Clonaslee Village Design Statement⁵ (VSD) specifically states:-

A VDS is a local planning statement that aims to manage change in the physical environment. It advises how planned development should be carried out in harmony with, and complementary to, the character and quality of the local area.

The current development is not in harmony with, nor is it complementary to, the character and quality of the local area. The granite water fountain is entirely out of keeping with the natural sandstone undertones that are evident, well documented, and distinctly present throughout the village⁶. The VDS is the first coordinated attempt to provide a strong, locally-based, advisory input into future development and planning policy in the area, and it ought to have been honoured.

Key open spaces were addressed in the VDS, and the square featured:-

¹ A copy of the application is at Annex A, and the decision at Annex B.

² A copy of the Map is at Annex C

³ Record of Protected Structures Ref No: 339

⁴ Record of Protected Structures Ref No: 432 – Brittas House

⁵ A copy of the 2002 Village Design Statement is at Annex D

⁶ The old red sandstones of the Slieve Blooms, which Clonaslee is neatly nestled at the base of is well known. Dr John Feehan has written extensively on them and their unique characteristics

Open spaces play a particularly important role in any village as providing well-needed open space areas and also giving the village character and a sense of identity. Local people are critically aware of how important retention and maintenance of these areas is and favour the development of additional amenity and recreation areas.

The Square (at Hickey's Pub⁷)

This small area directly in front of Hickey's pub is hard landscaped with planting and picnic tables. Located close to the bridge over the Clodiagh River, it provides fine views of Main Street and the River.

All the planting and public seating has been removed in favour of a partially filled [stagnant water and partially filled with rubbish] granite water fountain⁸.

The appearance of a street – or streetscape, is influenced by all of the surrounding elements including buildings, roads, paved areas and open spaces. All development within the ACA must work from the whole to the part for any other approach will result in avoidable loss and destruction, which is detrimental to the overall character of the area and its significance⁹.

Laois County Council County Development Plan 2011 – 2022 inclusive¹⁰, through the ACA Appendices¹¹ clearly state:-

Open spaces make an important contribution to the character of the village and comprise the Green and the open space to the front of Hickey's Public House known as The Square.

The Square is a place with a long-standing trace of local pride - it embodies the character of the village, and this new development now leaves the historic village square in a completely interfered state and highly compromised. The partially finished granite water fountain, and former flowerbed corner¹² are entirely out of place and kilter with village and its square. The granite water fountain derides the character of the immediate area, which is highly influenced by the Millar and Symes Gate Lodge along with Hickey's Pub.

LCC have failed to respect their own dictum¹³, regarding development in an ACA, as set out in their CDPs:-

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a particular area special. The

⁷ Record of Protected Structures Ref No: 343

⁸ The bin, sign and remainder of the former flower bed are left in a precarious state, which is not ideal for it is near a public house (where a patron who may be a little intoxicated could be unfortunate enough to fall into it, it may not be the easiest to get out of with all the rubbish etc...).

⁹ According to the OPRs, Planning Leaflet 12 – A Guide to Architectural Heritage, at Annex J. "Additional information on how the proposed development would affect the character of that area must be submitted with the application. The planning authority notifies other interested bodies, including the Heritage Council and An Taisce, before making a decision on the application".

¹⁰ A copy of the DRAFT 2021-2027 CPD ACA Appendix is at Annex E. The same wording is included there too.

¹¹ A copy of the 2011-2017 CPD ACA Appendix is at Annex F, and A copy of the 2017-2023 CPD ACA Appendix is at Annex G.

¹² The bin, sign, and remainder of the former flower bed, now demolished are left in a precarious state

¹³ 2017-2023 CPD ACA at Appendix G & ors.

demolition or insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted.

The Class 33 exemption cited by Laois County Council in their decision needs to be considered in light of the restrictions on exempted development provided by Art 9(1)(vii) of the Planning and Development Regulations, namely works which:-

consist of or comprise the excavation, alteration or demolition (other than peat extraction) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological, geological, historical, scientific or ecological interest, the preservation, conservation or protection of which is an objective of a development plan or local area plan for the area in which the development is proposed or, pending the variation of a development plan or local area plan, or the making of a new development plan or local area plan, in the draft variation of the development plan or the local area plan or the draft development plan or draft local area plan,

'Places, caves, sites, features or other objects' is expressed disjunctively. The ACA is a 'Place' which is listed for preservation in the CDP and the works comprise of the alteration of the streetscape i.e., the Place. Class 33 of the Regulations cannot be applied in such circumstances to exempt development coming within the meaning of Art 9(1)(vii) of the Regulations.

Another very important issue is that LCC has not considered the fact that the new works may have influenced how traffic access, egress, and park in and around the area. This is of fundamental importance for the village square abuts the very busy R402 and a crossroads too. Access, egress to and from The Square do not have full visibility when exiting from the village square onto the R402, and this is a noteworthy traffic consideration that ought to have been properly provided for to mitigate against any potential for road traffic accidents, and or endangerment to human life. Poorly laid out, on-street parking was first formally identified as an issue in the community c. 20 years ago, and this recent development does little to allay the issue.

Lastly, it is extremely disappointing, and deeply worrying to see a well-intentioned member of the public forced and ultimately burdened to pay a staggering €300 (wholly exclusive of personal/professional time, effort, and raising their head above the parapet in ways that the public certainly should not ever be forced to) out of their private pocket to have a matter of the utmost public interest addressed. It is highly probable that if LCC had the necessary competencies within, to begin with, the granite water fountain could nor or indeed would not ever have commenced in our beautiful historic village square. It is an affront to the public interest, and our heritage at large that the position is not filled, and that this matter now finds itself before you ABP at a significant [and avoidable] cost.

I hereby request that ABP, unlike LCC, do find that the works are not exempted development.

Annex A

A copy of the original Section 5 application

Annex B

Laois County Council's decision

Annex C

A copy of the Map 2-14 appended to the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023

Annex D

A copy of the 2002 Village Design Statement

Annex E

A copy of the DRAFT 2021 - 2027 CPD ACA Appendix

Annex F

A copy of the 2011 - 2017 CPD ACA Appendix

Annex G

A copy of the 2017-2023 CPD ACA Appendix

Annex H

Original receipt and letter of acceptance from Laois County Council

Annex I

Proof of payment to ABP

Annex J

The OPRs, Planning Leaflet 12 – A Guide to Architectural Heritage

(A)

SarahMSherlock@protonmail.com

20.10.2021

FAO: Ms Angela McEvoy,
Senior Planner & A/Director of Services,
Planning Department,
Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae,
JFL Ave.,
Portlaoise,
Co. Laois
R32 EHP9

By Email Only: amcevoy@laoiscoco.ie

Section 5 Declaration Regarding Development / Exempted Development

Dear Angela,

Laois County Council is requested to determine whether the removal¹ of a large longstanding rectangular flowerbed² (seats, and bin storage) complete with permanent surrounds, from within the Clonaslee Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), to install a new circular (possibly Chinese) granite water fountain complete with a water (and possibly rubbish) storage³ section underneath, and paving is or is not development or is or is not exempted development.

Photos are enclosed for your ease of reference.

Location: The Square, Clonaslee, County Laois.

Google Earth Dropped Pin: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/8DnHnja36ChG85RH8>

Easting: 631729 (approx. only)

Northing: 711042 (approx. only)

Yours sincerely

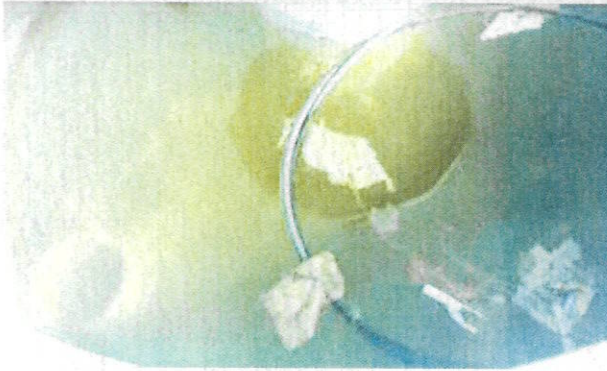
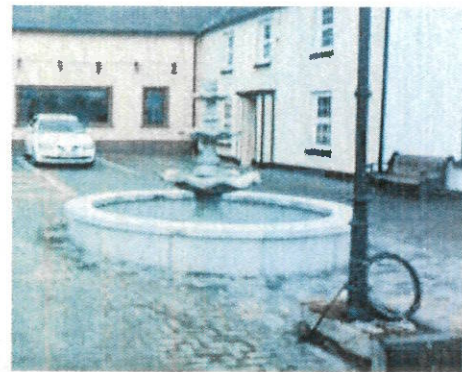


Sarah Sherlock MRICS MSCSI MII

¹ Note a small section of one corner complete with "Swan" sign remains in-situ.

² Installed as a part of major urban realm enhancement works in, and to the village c. some 30 years ago

³ And, what appears top be new piping of some type of other





Payment Reference: TBC.

Laois County Council Cash Office have confirmed c. 12.50 hrs that payment cannot be made without a reference from planning. Therefore, I am making this submission and I will discharge the fee as soon as I receive the reference, that I require for the Cash Office.



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

8



Comhairle Chontae
Laoise
Áras an Chontae
Port Laoise
Contae Laoise
R32 EHP9

Laois County Council
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www.laois.ie

REGISTERED POST

Sarah Sherlock,
The Green,
Clonaslee
Co. Laois.

15th November, 2021

Re : Section 5 Declaration - the removal of a large rectangular flowerbed complete with permanent surrounds, and installation of a new circular granite water fountain, and paving at The Square, Clonaslee, Co. Laois.

A Chara,

I refer to your Section 5 application received in this office on the 20th October, 2021 in connection with the above.

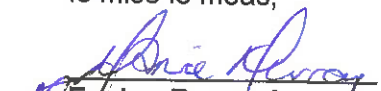
NOW WHEREAS Laois County Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 5(2)(a) of the 2000 Act, as amended it is hereby decided that the proposed development consisting of the following '- the removal of a large rectangular flowerbed complete with permanent surrounds, and installation of a new circular granite water fountain, and paving at The Square, Clonaslee, Co. Laois

is 'Development' and **is Exempt development** under provisions of the exempted development provisions as set out under Class 33 (a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Please be advised that you may, on payment of the prescribed fee to An Bord Pleanála, request a review of this decision.

Any such request should be made to An Bord Pleanála within four weeks of the date of this correspondence.

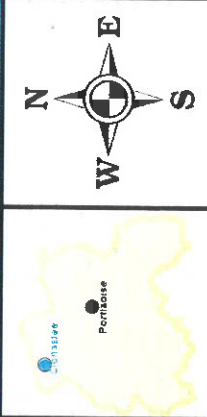
Is mise le meas,


Evelyn Browrigg
Administrative Officer,
Planning Section

Tá Fáilte Romhat
Gnó a Dhéanamh
as Gaeilge



**LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2017-2023**



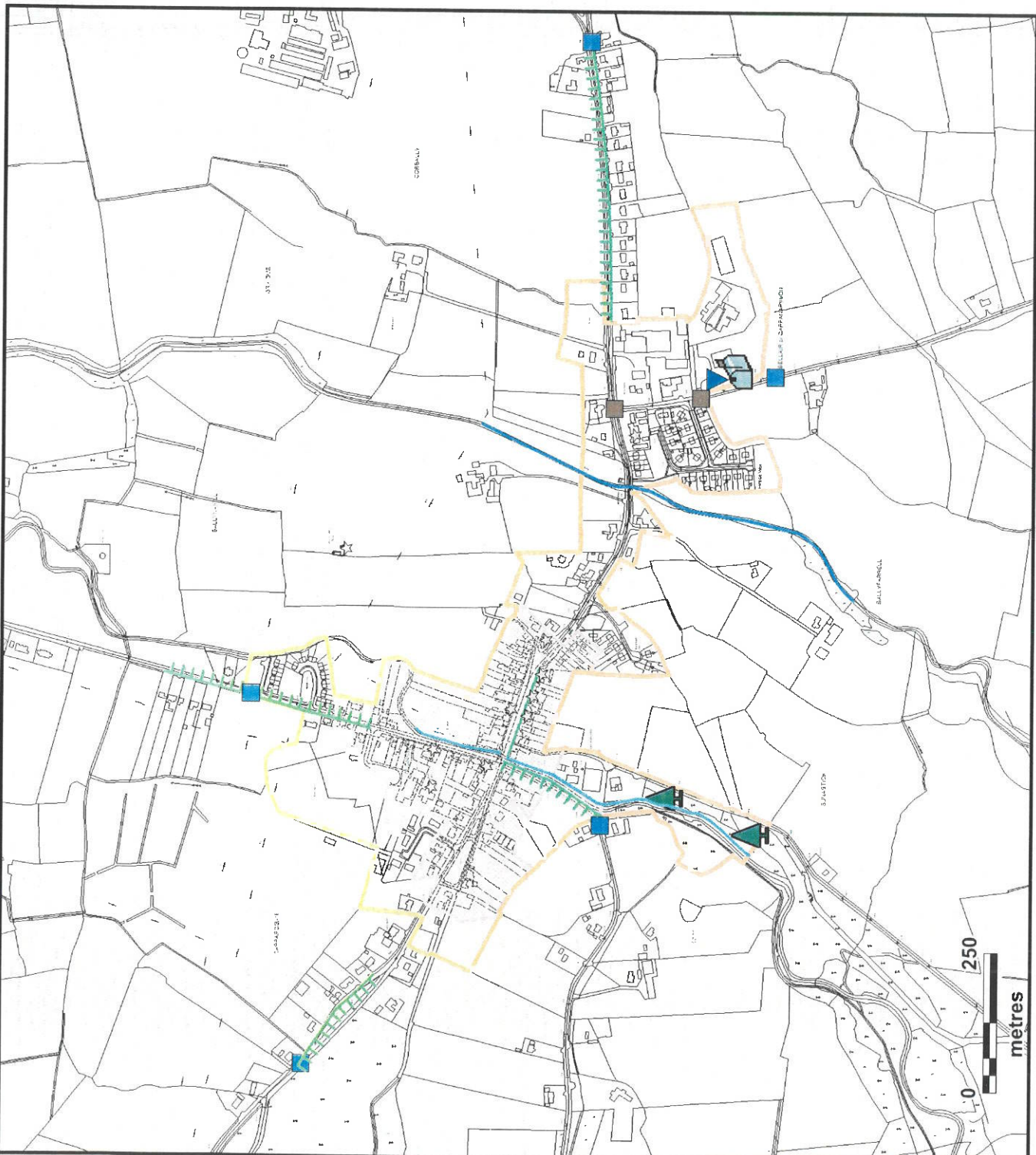
- Legend**
- Welcome Sign
 - Protect Tree Stand
 - Storage Locations For Recycling
 - Recycling Centre Locations
 - Play Ground
 - Green Area
 - Seating & Bins
 - Plaza Area
 - Protected Structures
 - Designate Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)
 - Archeological Zone
 - Provide Lime Kiln Feature
 - School Fishing Lights
 - Traditional Lighting
 - New Lighting
 - Park and Ride Area
 - Amenity Area
 - Provides or Improves Footpaths and Public Lighting
 - Up Grade and Construct Footpath where necessary
 - Provide Walkway on Riversides
 - Clean Our River
 - Maintain Natural Boundary
 - Development Boundary

MAP 2.14 - CLONASLEE

Laois County Council
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

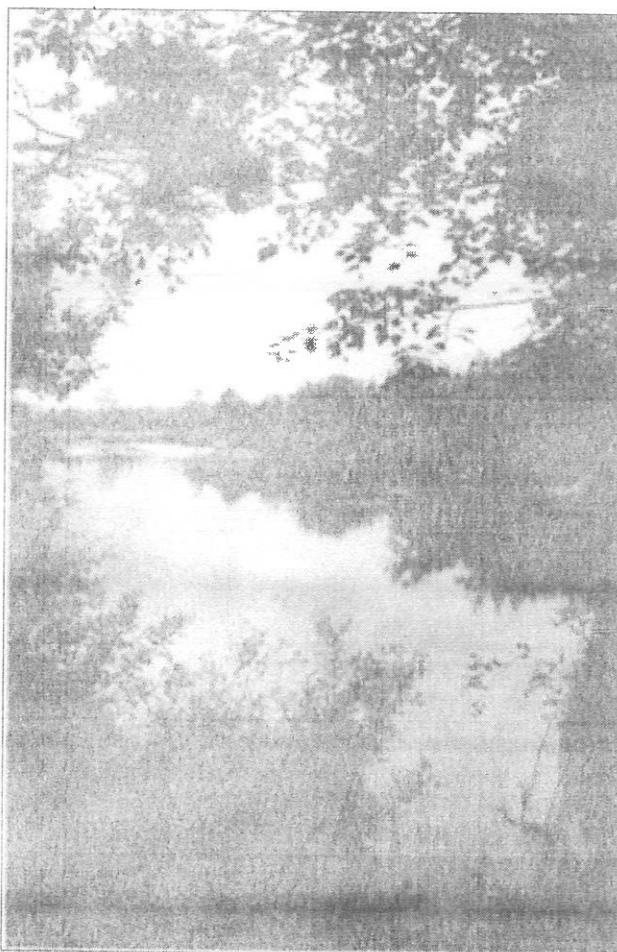
Drawn: **Dermot Dunne** Checked: **Dona Kiely** Approved: **Angela McEvoy**

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9

Clonaslee Village Design Statement



Prepared by the Local Community

With technical assistance from
CAAS (Environmental Services) Ltd.



Funded by

**Laois LEADER
The Heritage Council
&
Laois County Council**

November 2002

The Clonaslee Village Design Statement (VDS)

What is a VDS?

A VDS is a local planning statement that aims to manage change in the physical environment. It advises how planned development should be carried out in harmony with, and complimentary to, the character and quality of the local area.

Community input into this document also means that these guidelines set out how the local people of Clonaslee feel about their village and how best future development can compliment its existing character, which has evolved through hundreds of years of change.

In this way, the special character of Clonaslee can be recognised, protected and enhanced for the enjoyment of both the local community and visitors to the area.

To achieve this, this statement identifies those features of Clonaslee that give it its character and sense of place. It looks at:

- Buildings,
- The use of materials, colours and special features,
- Street patterns,
- Views and vistas into and out of the village;
- Open spaces and amenity areas;
- Street lighting and furniture; paving, footpaths and roads;
- Any other features of the area worthy of preservation, improvement or that may need to be provided.

Photo 1 Clonaslee, Co. Laois

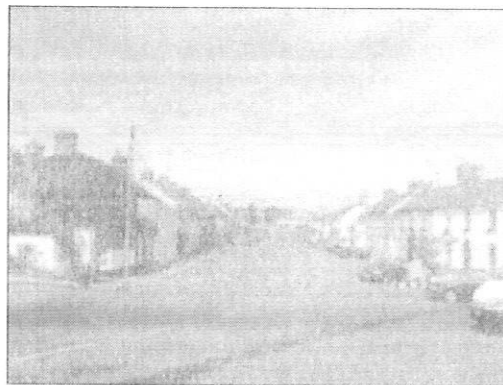


Why Prepare a VDS for Clonaslee?

Clonaslee is a unique place with a strong sense of local community closely linked to its historical and physical character. This Statement is a tool which can be used to ensure that in a few years, those features of

the area that give it character will not change so dramatically or even disappear.

Photo 2 Main Street, Clonaslee



What are the Objectives of the Statement?

The objectives of the Statement are to:

- o Identify and describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside;
- o Identify that character with regard to its landscape setting, shape and nature of the built environment;
- o Establish design principles based on that distinctive character;
- o Work with the County Council within existing planning policies and influencing future policies.

Therefore, the Statement will provide a strong, locally based, advisory input into future development and planning policy in the area.

Reflecting the Views of Clonaslee

A unique aspect of the VDS is that it is a strong reflection of how the people of Clonaslee feel about their locality and how it can be managed, maintained and improved.

In order to achieve this, independent planning consultants CAAS Ltd., were commissioned by Laois LEADER and Laois County Council, to study the area and then to provide an arena in which members of the local community could vocalise their opinions.

Listening to the Public

Involving the general public required a flexible and informal approach. Initial meetings with the Clonaslee Development Association – a well-established and active local community group, provided general information about the area, and also a good base for greater involvement of the community.

Photo 3 *The Community Workshop*



A very successful Community Workshop was held in the Community Hall on the evening of 17 September 2002. Radio and newspaper advertisements, posters in shop windows and invitations issued to every house, ensured a turn out of over 50 local people. In the week before the meeting leaflets describing what the VDS was all about and an overview description of key 'character areas' in the village were provided to give people a good idea of what would be discussed.

Briefly, the workshop involved:

- o An overview of what this pilot project involves and the type of feedback needed;
- o Display of photographs and images from throughout the village;
- o Targeted discussion of key areas in the village and any suggested

improvements that may upgrade their appearance;

Photo 4 *Discussion Groups Looking at Small Local Areas*



"The local community have worked very hard to clean, tidy and plant the public areas to wonderful effect."

Local Opinion from the Community Workshop

- o Presentation of a list of key issues facing the village as seen by the consultants from the outsiders point of view and the reaction of the local population to these – whether they felt these were inadequate or indeed incorrect;
- o General discussion of general aspects of the village with the completion of a brief survey.

Presenting the Statement

Before its formal presentation to the community the statement was finalised in consultation with members of the Development Forum. Also, a display of the overall findings – and a copy of the statement itself, was made available to the wider community in early November and through the County Council website (www.laois.ie).

Key Concerns and Issues Raised by the Local Community

During the public consultation session, local people were presented with a series of 'key issues facing Clonaslee'. Feedback on the adequacy of these was given by the local community and, where appropriate, additions made to that list.

These issues and other points raised have been mapped (see over to **Map 1**) to give an

idea of the local feeling about specific parts of the village.

At this stage a number of other concerns – all relevant but some outside the scope or remit of the VDS, were raised. These concerns and other aspects of the village local people would like to see addressed are set out in the final section of this Statement.

Issues Facing Clonaslee

1. The on-street parking is poorly laid out and actually contributes to congestion in the Main Street during peak times.
2. The extraction of water from the Clodiagh River and the high colour of the water make the river an unattractive feature in the village.
3. Wirescape and overhead cables on Main Street are unattractive.
4. Inconsistent roofscapes on Main Street and varied building colours detract from the attractive village.
5. Use of modern materials – such as PVC windows and doors, has dramatically changed the character of some parts of the village.
6. Re-organisation of some key features of old buildings such as the removal of windows and façade materials has changed the appearance of buildings – such as on the Tullamore Road.
7. Traditional shopfronts are being replaced by less attractive modern shopfronts.
8. Pressure for new residential development on the periphery of the Village.
9. Underused buildings – such as the former VEC School on the R422 approach into the village from Rosenallis.

The R422 Approach from Cadamstown

An attractive approach into the village, this part of the village is considered a credit to FAS, Tidy Towns and other local groups. This is considered to give a good first impression view of the area and provide important views of the surrounding forestry, Main Street and the Square.

The Brittas Estate

There are close links between the evolution of the village and that of the Dunne Family of the Brittas Estate. This link is important to the local community who feel the creation of a heritage trail around the village could tell the area's story and history.

The Green

This is an attractive green space area in the village and its identity closely linked with important civic buildings such as the old Courthouse. Fine views to the east of the Heritage Centre and west towards the Brittas Estate Gates are locally important.

Buildings at the Junction of the Tullamore Road and Main Street

This area contains a number of particularly attractive buildings – namely Hickey's Pub and the Lodge House. These buildings feature highly in the public consciousness and are considered essential to the character of the village. This area is also considered attractive for its fine views along the River north along the Tullamore Road and south on the road leading up to the Brittas Lake.

The Clodiagh River

The river is an attractive feature of the village and considered an important focal point. There is significant public concern for the decreasing water levels – due to the abstraction of water further upstream by Tullamore UDC. Some improvements to the Bridge itself are also favoured.

The Tullamore Road

Locally this is considered the most scenic and attractive approach into the village. Fine views of the surrounding landscape and the close proximity of the River compliment the attractive streetscape on this road

The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church is an attractive building. Its relationship to the village is unique in that its gate piers are set into the streetscape of the Tullamore Road, yet the building itself is set back some distance. Furthermore, the neighbouring area plays an important civic role – being the location of the school GAA Facilities, etc.

Main Street

This attractive wide and open street is locally considered one of the most unique aspects of Clonaslee. The capturing view of the Heritage Centre is particularly important, as is the bridge over the River. Parking and traffic impact negatively on this area and this is cause of local concern. Similarly, the community feel work could be done to improve the street furniture, wirescape and signage.

The Approach from Rosenallis

The focus of much development in recent times – including the Community Hall and residential developments, this area is considered in need of some attention. While fine views of the spire of the Heritage Centre are retained closer to the village, a pattern of ribbon development on this road is not favoured and the potential riverside amenity remains underutilised.

The Heritage Centre

Another key building in the village, The Heritage Centre is the focus for the Main Street as seen on the line of sight from the gates to the Brittas Estate. The successful conversion and use of this building is a source of local pride. The building is well maintained and its surrounds attractively landscaped.



Map 1 Clonaslee – A 'Local Character Map'

One element of the public workshop sessions was topical discussion of specific areas within the village to prompt locals to look at what was unique about those parts of Clonaslee, and what they liked and also disliked about these areas. This required the identification of small areas of specific character and provided a clear idea of those features most readily identified with the village. Essentially, those points raised have been summarised on this map and give a good overview of how Clonaslee is perceived by the local community.

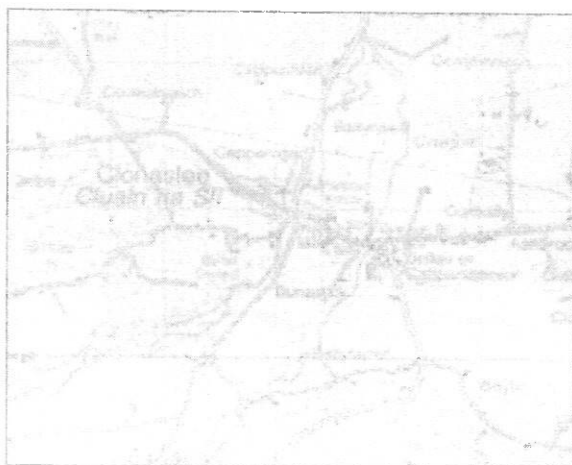
Clonaslee Village

Location

Clonaslee is located in north-west Laois, on the R422 regional route linking Mountmellick (9.5 miles to the east) and Birr (17.5 miles to the west).

Clonaslee is located at the base of the northern slopes of the Slieve Bloom Mountains. Famous for its cut stone, Clonaslee has a high-profile location on arterial routes through the County and lies on the famous Sli Dála or Munster Way.

Map 1 Clonaslee, Co. Laois



Population

The population for the area in 1996 was 504 persons indicating an increase of 4.3% from the 1991 census figure

The village population is projected to increase to 1,200 persons by 2020¹. Provisional statistics from the 2002 Census indicate the population of the Clonaslee Electoral Division increased from 830 persons in 1996 to 883 persons in 2002. This increase – in the order of 6.4%, supports these projections for future years. It is therefore important to plan how the physical requirements of an increased population can be facilitated in an appropriate way.

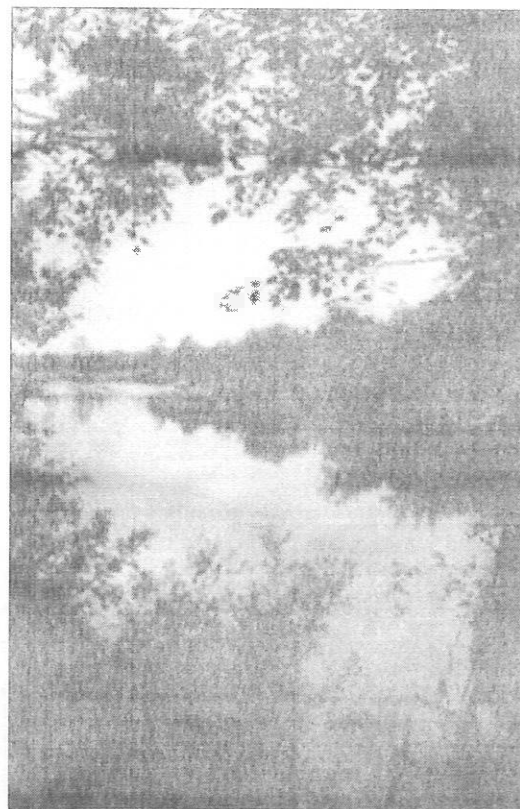
Origins and Evolution

Although a number of archaeological finds in the area indicate the presence of settlements in the area from the Neolithic period, the modern day Clonaslee has evolved from its beginnings as an Anglo-Norman town of the

late 12th Century. At this time the eskers and related landforms gave great strategic advantage providing ideal vantage points where mottes and other defensive battlements were constructed. This advantage also had a profound influence on the location of towns and villages throughout the County.

From the **12th to 17th Centuries**, recorded history does not provide much detail on the development of Clonaslee. The most significant period in the village's growth undoubtedly took place from the **16th Century** under the influence of the Dunnes of Brittas. This family left their mark on the form and history of the village as evidenced in its planned form and also from a number of ruins in the area. The former residence of a young branch of the family remains in ruins one mile from the village at Clara Hill. Also near the east bank of the Clodiagh River stand the ruins of Ballinakill Castle, built in 1680 by Colonel Dunne.

Photo 5 The Restored Brittas Lake – Former Game Fishing Lake of the Brittas Estate



Throughout the **18th Century**, Clonaslee prospered due to its location on an important highway across Laois leading onto Munster.

¹ Source: Laois Leader Rural Development Company Ltd.

The proximity of Brittas – the seat of the Dunnes, was also influential as the power of this family has by now grown beyond that of a native Irish Chieftain.

In 1771, Francis Dunne, then head of the Dunne Family, became a Roman Catholic and built a thatched parish chapel in the village. This was located close to the site of the present church.

The Dunne family continued to finance the construction of landmark buildings in the village. The parish Church was erected in 1814 under General Dunne (known locally as 'shun-battie Ned' because of his rumoured refusal to fight at the 1815 Battle of Waterloo). The construction of the Church was aided by a gift of £800 and a loan of £300 from the former Board of First Fruit. In 1830, the same board donated £50 towards the construction of Glebe House.

The village continued to grow quickly from the 1800's to the 1830's. This was largely due to the development of the Mountmellick to Birr road in 1814. This period also saw the arrival of civic facilities such as the Post Office, the Police Station and other offices of Civil Administration.

The population of the village peaked at 561 inhabitants in 1841. However, in the coming

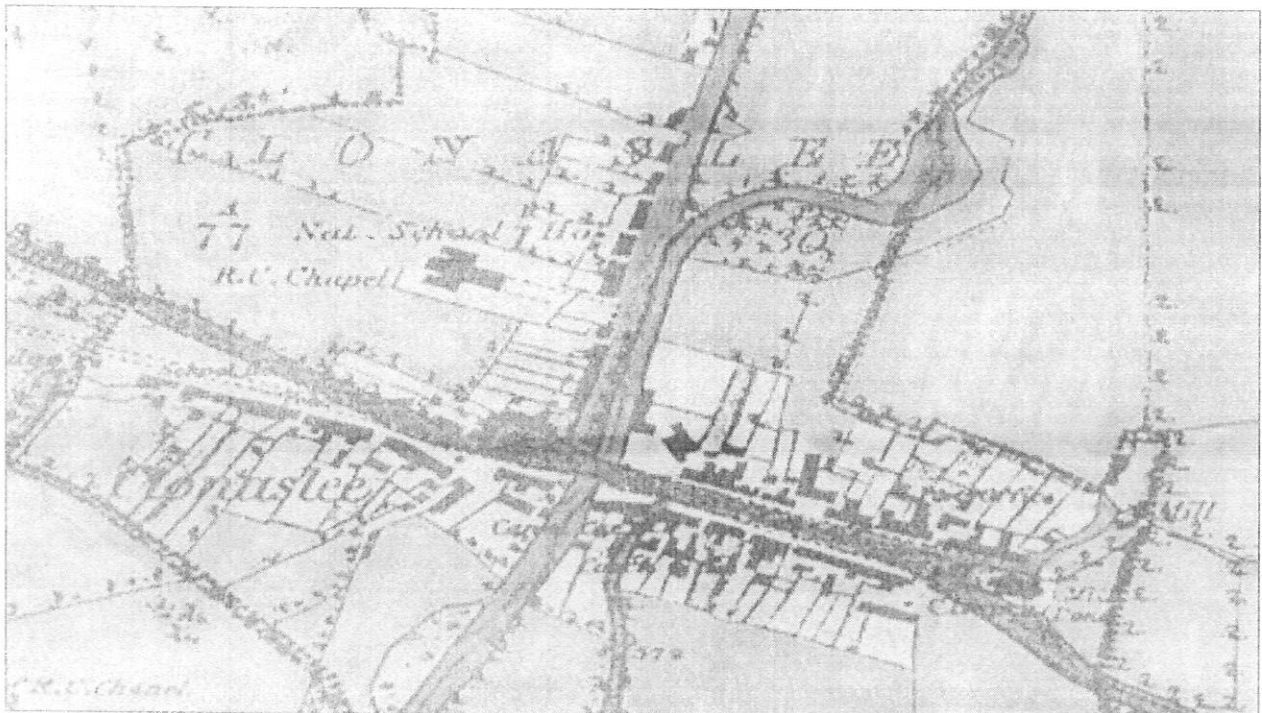
years this fell to a low of 287 persons (in 1901).

Photo 6 View of the Village Terminating at the Heritage Centre as seen from the gates to the Brittas Estate



In this Century, the function of the village has changed greatly. Once a planned Estate settlement located on an important routeway, Clonaslee is now a small commuter village with a largely residential function. While local services and facilities are important to the village, larger scale commercial, retail and employment opportunities are provided in nearby urban centres such as Portlaoise, Tullamore and Mountmellick.

Map 2 Ordnance Survey Map of Clonaslee in 1841



Modern Day Influences – Clonaslee in the 20th and 21st Centuries

While the village's form and character have not dramatically changed in recent years, there are a number of modern-day influences that impact on the village.

o Traffic and Parking

Significant volumes of traffic flow through the village each day and these cause some difficulty to local people. In particular, Main Street is congested at peak times such as lunch-time.

This is exacerbated by the provided on-street parking which local people feel is poorly planned and laid out. In particular, the high kerbs and lack of adequate drainage cause particular difficulty. This is considered locally to have a serious negative impact on the character and functionality of the Main Street.

"On street parking has been destroyed by the recent addition of the kerbing on the street."

Local Opinion from the Community Workshop

Furthermore, the parking bollards are considered unsightly. The local preference would be to mark out parking bays with additional landscaping and planting in favour of these bollards.

Photo 7 Clonaslee's Busy Main Street at Lunchtime.



o New Development

There are a number of newer housing schemes in the village and in light of the population growth in the area, it is likely that the pressure for housing will increase. The local community are generally aware of this and also the negative impact that on-going

ribbon development along the approach roads could have.

Naturally, there is some local feeling that new development will put additional pressure on additional local resources and services. However, this is, to some degree, off-set by the desire to see the area grow and expand.

"We feel that if there is no housing development, the population of the area will go into decline."

Local Opinion from the Community Workshop

However, the keen awareness of the community about the unique nature of the village and its surroundings means that they are keen to see any future growth and development takes place in harmony with the existing character of the area.

o Buildings Undergoing a Change of Use

There is some concern about the future of buildings in the village that are currently unused such as the former VEC and smaller school buildings on the Rosenallis Road.

o The Clodiagh River

The River is a focal point of the village. However, the reduction in the water levels in recent years due to abstraction of water by Tullamore UDC has been a cause of local anger. As a result levels have fallen considerably and the overall attractiveness of the River is greatly compromised.

In addition, the general appearance of the Bridge is considered poor as the simple metal railing is not considered attractive. Some improvements to this area are considered important in improving the appearance of the area and utilising the riverside amenity. The use of subtle up-lighting at this area was suggested.

o Building Maintenance and Condition

Building maintenance and particularly the use of modern materials such as uPVC windows and doors has changed the appearance of individual buildings and in general the Main Street and the Tullamore Road. Alterations to façade features such as doors, windows and also external finishes – both renders and paint, have negatively impacted on the appearance of specific areas.

There is a high level of community awareness about the overall effect this will have on the character of the village.

Context and Setting – The Landscape, Streets and Spaces

The Surrounding Landscape

Clonaslee is located at the base of the picturesque Slieve Blooms on the banks of the Clodiagh River. The surrounding landscape is dominated by these gentle uplands with views of sloping hills and mature forests visible throughout the village.

Photo 8 Views Southwards on the Road Towards Rosenallis



Important views of this landscape remain throughout the village proving the extent to which street patterns and building styles have been planned and traditional building proportions – such as heights, maintained. These views are particularly important to the local community who widely identify the relationship between the village and the surrounding rural landscape as being important.

The surrounding uplands provide a highly scenic backdrop to the village and give it a strong sense of both enclosure and context. The large areas of forestry and mature trees associated with the Brittas Estate are located extremely close to the village and provide views and amenities that are considered of paramount importance to the local community. In many ways these are the green areas of the village and this close link between the countryside and its amenity function is evidenced in the walking routes and guides for which the area is known.

Views of the landscape and planted areas are available throughout the village, and in particular along the central spine road and along the axis leading from the Tullamore Road towards the Brittas Lakes. This highly scenic route is considered of particular importance to the local community.

Both the Clodiagh and the Gorrageh Rivers are strongly linked with the village and the centrally located Clodiagh is of particular importance. There is considerable local feeling that the rivers should be landscaped better with the possible creation of a riverside walk towards the Brittas forests.

The recently restored Brittas Lake (see **Photo 5**) is a source of much local pride. This attractive man-made lake was once the game fishing lake of the Dunne Family Estate and is nestled in upland forests above the village. Signposted for walking routes, the lake is well maintained and an extremely attractive addition to the area.

The Physical Environment

The physical character of the village is directly influenced by a number of features. These both add to its charm and attractiveness and also give an indication of the influences of development trends and patterns throughout the years.

o The Shape of the Village

Essentially, Clonaslee is a planned linear village and its overall shape has changed little from its 18th Century planned form. Closely surrounded by uplands, forests, estate lands the village has remained physically contained.

There are two very distinctive areas within the village. The historic core essentially focuses on Main Street extending to the Village Green in the west, the Tullamore Road in the north, the estate lands to the south and past the Heritage Centre in the east towards the former VEC on the Rosenallis Road. This area contains many of the older buildings in the village and most of those features considered



Northern Side of Main Street, Clonaslee

by the local community to be both unique to Clonaslee and critical to its sense of identity.

The remaining areas of the village can be regarded as peripheral. These areas stretch along the northern areas of the Tullamore Road, the R422 west towards Castlecuffe and the R422 east towards Rosenallis. Typically, these developments are generally residential and characteristic of ribbon development seen throughout the country. While at present there are relatively few such developments, a proliferation of development along the approach roads into the village could result in the further extension of the built up area into the countryside.

In addition, the clustering of civic and community developments such as the Community Centre and the new school to the west of the village core has shifted some of the emphasis further outwards. This influence is not particularly recent given that the old

schoolhouses, graveyard and former VEC (1937) are located here but combined with ribbon development, could impact heavily on the future shape and expansion of the village.

Street Layout

The street layout of the village was entirely influenced by the planned nature of the settlement and has changed little over the intervening 300 years.

Map 3 (below) shows the Clonasee street network of the 1800's. At that time the village was centred on a dominant primary spine road extending from the gates of the Brittas Estate at the Green eastwards and terminating at the Heritage Centre. Located along this axis were many of the important buildings of the village – namely the Courthouse (on the Green) and the elegant commercial and residential properties of Main Street.

Map 3 1800's Street Layout of Clonasee Village (Source: Ordnance Survey)



Northern Side of Main Street, Clonaslee

Photo 9 The Former Courthouse on The Green



Also dominant in this street layout are the cross-roads with the Tullamore Road – a definite secondary street that followed along the banks of the Clodiagh River. At this junction a small urban space was created (namely The Square - a small hard landscaped area in front of Hickey's pub) and a number of important buildings located – such as The Bridge House and the Lodge.

Key Open Spaces

Open spaces play a particularly important role in any village as providing well-needed open space areas and also giving the village character and a sense of identity. Local people are critically aware of how important retention and maintenance is to these areas and favour the development of additional amenity and recreation areas.

'The Green'

There is essentially only one formal open space in the village and this, the Green, is located in a prominent position at the gates of the Brittas House Estate. Its location and importance of this space is 'knitted' closely into the urban planning of the village and as a result it is locally recognised as an important feature of the village.

"The Green is a well landscaped open space"

Local Opinion from the Community Workshop

Photo 10 View Towards Main Street from the East of the Heritage Centre



"[The] Very wide main street with a commanding view of the heritage centre and the Green is unique"

Local Opinion from the Community Workshop

Photo 11 The Green



The Green was once a focus of civic function and activity in the village linking the Estate and providing the location for the old Courthouse and other fine buildings that surround it. Views along the side of the Green from the Estate gates have been maintained and still capture a closing view of the Heritage Centre.

Now this area is nicely landscaped and well maintained and is a high quality amenity area and community focus within the village. This is



Northern Side of Main Street, Clonaslee

also the site of the village's millennium project – an engraved rock sign. However, as mentioned by local people, it is unfortunate that no information on its history, or that of the buildings fronting onto it is provided.

The Square (at Hickey's Pub)

This small area directly in front of Hickey's pub is hard landscaped with planting and picnic tables. Located close to the bridge over the Clodiagh River, it provides fine views of Main Street and the River.

Other Green Areas in the Village

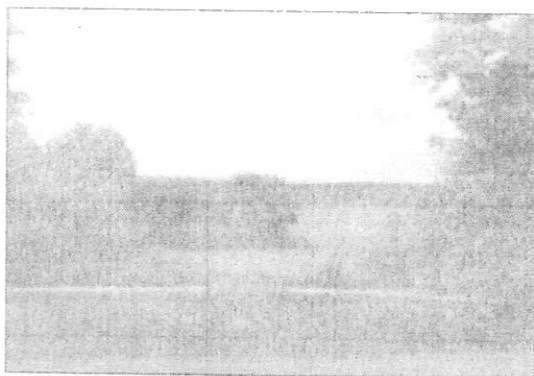
There are a number of smaller open spaces and grassed areas in the village – most notably in front of the residential developments on the Cadamstown Road and also within the residential housing estates on the Rosenallis Road. These areas are well maintained and simply landscaped.

However, green areas within new housing estates tend to be less publicly accessible and more a part of that scheme than the fabric of the village.

Potential Development of Additional Open Spaces

The local community are keen to see the development of additional amenities and open spaces in the area. In particular, there is some enthusiasm to see the riverside areas further opened-up for the development of riverside walks perhaps linking with the Brittas Lake or forests. In particular, the development of such an amenity in the vicinity of the Gorragh River was proposed.

Photo 12 The Gorragh River



Approaches into the Village

There are three main approaches into the village. The quality of these approaches is recognised by the local community as very important – not just because it creates a first impression of the appearance of the village, but also because the feeling of coming into a built up area is essential in ensuring traffic slows down.

Photo 13 Leaving Clonaslee Along the Tullamore Road



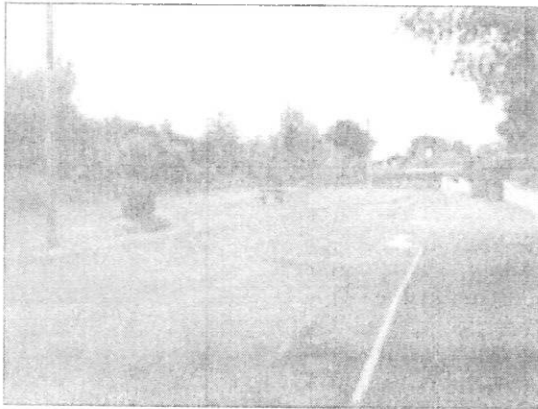
The Tullamore Road is locally considered the most attractive approach into and out of the village as it provides key views of the River, surrounding uplands and forestry and also the fine buildings of the village. Coming into the village the characteristic view of the terraced housing is broken only by the attractive pillars of the RC Church with the River flowing opposite. Furthermore, the attractive landscaped stonewall on the banks of the street creates a solid streetscape and a generally highly attractive approach into Clonaslee.

The approach from the Castlecuffe road is similarly attractive providing high quality views of the sweeping landscape and upland forestry. The landscaped open green space with seating area is attractive and well maintained as are signs and verges. Trees planted along this road will, when mature, further soften this approach and provide a heightened sense of arrival.



Southern Side of Main Street, Clonaslee

Photo 14 Approaching the Village from the West Via the R422 from Castlecuffe



The approach from Rosenallis westwards into Clonaslee is considered locally to be in need of attention. This road is the focus of much ribbon development and this has undoubtedly impacted on the views and sense of approach coming into the village. While the grass verges are well maintained, the condition of the road surface is variable. Furthermore, numerous boundary walls and fences are in need of maintenance – as is the Goddagh River Bridge.

Photo 15 The Rosenallis Road Approach



The future appearance of this area is greatly affected by the condition and use of the key buildings fronting onto it – namely the former VEC School and the small school buildings on the north side of the road.

Signage on this approach is good but the area could possibly benefit from some tall native planting to soften the roadside and also to help slow down traffic approaching the village.

However, this approach into the village has great potential – due largely to the attractive views of the Heritage Centre and Main Street (see **Photo 11**). This view is of a particularly high quality and should be maintained and protected.

Views and Vistas

Attractive views within the area reveal glimpses of the surrounding landscape and also the numerous important buildings and spaces within the settlement itself.

Clearly the primary internal vista is from the Green along Main Street towards the Heritage Centre. This captures beautifully the former Church of Ireland Church and provide a key view of the busy Main Street.

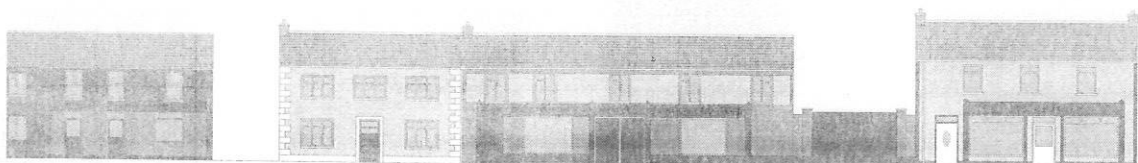
Similarly, the view from the junction of Main Street and the Tullamore Road is important and particularly attractive with the set piece buildings of Hickey's Pub and the Lodge prominent from the west and the Main Street view on the east. Views along the river at this point are also important.

Views in Clonaslee of the wider landscape tend to be terminal (i.e. closing views such as at the end of a road or over the crest of a hill) rather than between buildings, but are spectacular. Such views are provided along all of the approach roads and along the central north-south, east-west axes running along the Tullamore Road and Main Street respectively.

Streetscape

Streets are extremely important elements in the landscape of a village. The appearance of a street – or streetscape, is influenced by all of the surrounding elements including buildings, roads, paved areas and open spaces.

Within Clonaslee, there are essentially two streets. Main Street is a formal, set out street where the prescriptive planning of an estate village is clear. A wide and open boulevard it



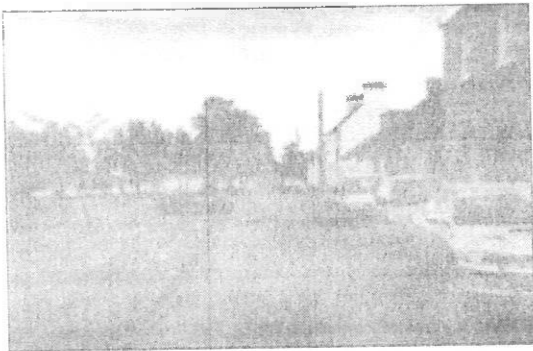
Southern Side of Main Street, Clonaslee

is the primary focus of the village.

The streetscape of the Tullamore Road is no less formal but quite different. At the southern end – closer to the village, two storey buildings create a strong feeling of urban enclosure. However, past the Church gates, the building form changes and one-storey dwellings are predominant. More importantly, there are no buildings on the opposing side. Therefore the definition of the streetscape depends on the attractive stone wall built to retain floodwaters on the river. Therefore, this wall is an essential element of the village's streetscape.

At The Green, the streetscape is again differently defined with the buildings fronting onto the green area creating a strong sense of place and enclosure.

Photo 16 Buildings Fronting onto The Green



Within this historic core the building orientation and heights play an important role in not just defining street edges but also capturing specific views and creating a sense of enclosure and place and these views have remained unchanged – as evidenced in the retention of the view from the Estate gates.

Within this core area, most buildings front directly onto the street with their facades defining the edge and are an element of the public thoroughfare. Similarly, gable walls often de-mark corner sites to great effect. Therefore, given the prominence of buildings features and façades as elements of the streetscape, their maintenance and general appearance greatly affects the appearance of the street and therefore the village.



Southern Side of Main Street, Clonaslee

Photo 17 Main Street



A critical element in this is the pitch of roofs which, along Main Street, are relatively uniform. This is a reflection of the planning that went into the initial design and layout of the street, where every second house has the same floor plan and same external appearance. However, within this uniformity a level of variation still occurred but these knitted together in an overall coherence and gave the village its unique style.

The streetscape of the residential housing estates on the Rosenallis Road is typical of modern day developments. Focussed on a distributor road and central open space, houses are laid out on regular plots. Parking and lighting are provided in a reasonably standard manner also.

Photo 18 Modern Housing Estate, Clonaslee



Surfacing

Roads and paved areas impact greatly on the streetscape. Generally, these are in good condition throughout the village but the footpaths on Main Street require some attention. Similarly, paving in a number of key locations – such as on the Rosenallis Road, also require upgrading works.

The provision of upgraded bridges and crossings on each of the bridges is also of local importance. These could be greatly improved by the construction of simple and low stone walls. However, these should not be overly elaborate and ribbon pointing should be avoided.

Street Furniture

The public perception of the adequacy of street furniture in Clonaslee is closely tied into the deep rooted feeling about the problems with on-street parking in the village. Of greatest concern is the steepness of the parking spaces and also the high kerbing that was provided. Similarly, the use of bollards to mark out parking bays on the Main Street is greatly criticised and these are considered to detract from the appearance of the area.

"Remove the unsightly parking bollards on both sides of the street..please."

Local Opinion from the Community Workshop

Additionally, there is a need for the more street lighting – particularly at the approaches into the village. Lighting should be provided within the built up area, and specifically:

- To the Community Centre on the Rosenallis Road,
- To the GAA pitch on the Tullamore Road,
- To the first Clonaslee nameplate on the Cadamstown Road.

Seating is also required close to amenity areas.

Signage

Signage – both commercial and road signage, can have a particularly strong impact on the quality of a streetscape.

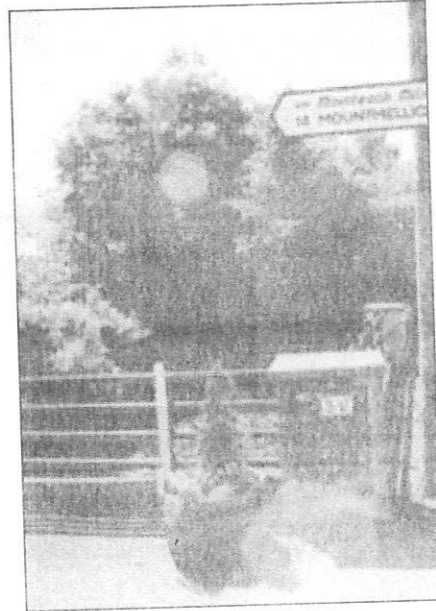
Signage on the approaches into Clonaslee is well maintained and attractive. These give a good impression coming into the village.

A number of post mounted road signs remain and these are well maintained and an attractive feature. Where possible these should be maintained in favour of the larger,

more modern road and traffic signs seen in many small villages.

Photo 19

Attractive Signage at the Junction of Main Street and the Tullamore Road



Within the village, street or place name signs are not prominent. Members of the local community did suggest that small heritage plaques could be erected on old buildings – such as at the Courthouse, giving some insight to the local community and any tourists, about the rich heritage of the area. If these are to be provided the signs should be subtle and appropriately positioned. They should not appear to clutter or detract from any buildings. In all cases the advice of the County Council is advised.

In general, existing advertising in the village does not detract from the visual quality of the area. Where some street signs are left on the pavement, they could possibly be wall mounted to better effect.

Boundary Treatment

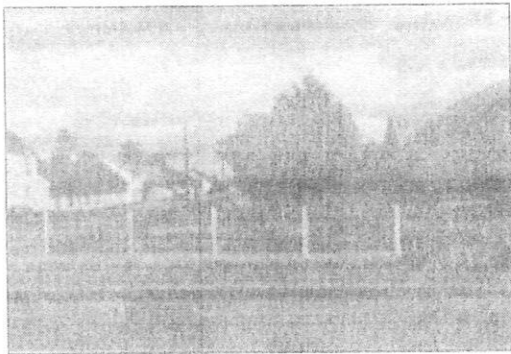
Within the central village area few residential properties have private front gardens. Therefore direct frontage onto the street is characteristic in these areas. However, a number of properties have, at some stage, fenced or bounded in a small area to the front of their residence and the use of unsuitable fencing or wall materials in these instances is unattractive.

There are a number of attractive stonewalls in the village – particularly what are presumably the old Estate walls located on the left hand side of the R422 heading west towards

Castlecuffe. Similarly, attractive stone walls are used at the Clodiagh River banks. These walls are a characteristic feature of the village and should be maintained and repaired as necessary in an appropriate way and using the appropriate materials.

There is a high level of local criticism for the current bridge over the Clodiagh River. At present this consists of stone pillars and horizontal metal railings. This could perhaps be improved by stone facing, but the selection of an appropriate material should be carefully considered to ensure it compliments existing stone walls in the vicinity. Ribbon pointing is not considered appropriate.

Photo 20 Stone Walls and the Bridge at the Clodiagh River Crossing

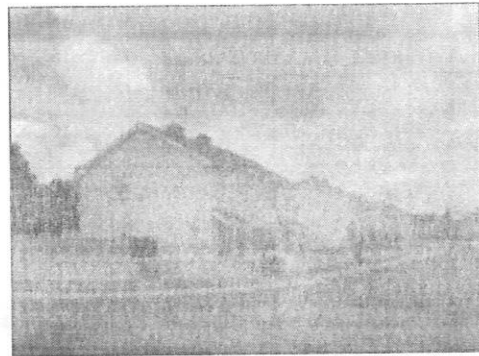


Railings and walls are used together in a number of locations to good effect such as at the Heritage Centre and the Lodge. Similarly, the gates of the Catholic Church on the Tullamore Road are particularly attractive features on that street.

Within the modern housing developments, boundary walls tend to be unremarkable and somewhat uniform in appearance. Where rendered, the painting of these walls is important and, where possible, neighbouring properties should adopt a common approach. Where breezeblock walls exist, their enhancement with careful planting should be considered (see forward to **Planting Guidance**).

Photo 21

Boundary Treatment within a Modern Housing Scheme



Village Character: Buildings and Features of the Village

Buildings

There is a significant stock of fine older building in the village and these are undoubtedly key to the protection and enhancement of the area's character.

There are a number of buildings in the village, which feature highly in the public consciousness and are central to the sense of place of the local community. However, there are also those normal buildings which have a particular vernacular style which quietly reinforces this feeling, contributing to what it is that makes Clonaslee unique.

"In Clonaslee we have many old style buildings which are very historical. We should provide small stone plaques to give brief historical details about these buildings."

Local Opinion from the Community Workshop

Key Buildings

These are buildings that feature prominently in the public awareness of the area. These are of such importance to the local community that they are considered central to the identity of Clonaslee.

o The Ruins of Brittas House

Destroyed by a fire in 1942, Brittas House was a fine castellated house, built in 1869 by General Francis Plunkett Dunne to the design of architect John McCurdy and stands on nor near the ancestral home of the O'Dunnes. The gate piers of the grand house still remain on the western edge of The Green.

The links with Clonaslee village, and the remains of the Brittas Estate are strong. The expansive demesne grounds contain many splendid trees – remnants of the larger plantations Lawson's cypress, copper beech, yew, sycamore, cut-leaved beech, and oak that covered much of the townland of Brittas over a century ago. Brittas Lake – which has recently been restored, was originally constructed as a reservoir for the House. Its banks are stone lined and water was pumped from the Clodiagh River. It is now a public amenity area.

o The Heritage Centre

The gothic revival former Church of Ireland Church on the Main Street was built in 1814. The building is located along a central axis about which the village is planned providing a beautiful terminal vista when seen from the gates of Brittas House. It is one of the most outstanding buildings in the area and now houses a Heritage Centre and Library.

Photo 22 *The Heritage Centre, Main Street*



o The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church of St. Manman's is located off the Main Street on the Tullamore Road. It was built in 1813 by the Dunne family on the site of an old thatched chapel dating back to 1771. The building has a number of particularly fine features – including its fine iron gates and gate-piers and three alters made from Clonaslee cut stone.

o The Lodge

This fine 18th Century building, located at the junction of the Tullamore Road and Main Street, is extremely significant to the local population. The features of the building – including the decorative fascia boards and gable finishes, are particularly noteworthy. Well maintained and set in attractive gardens, the Lodge is an attractive addition to the village.

Photo 23 The Lodge



o Hickey's Pub

Located opposite the Lodge, Hickey's pub is a local landmark. An attractive building with fine detailed fascia boards and overhanging porches, the building remains in use as a public house

Photo 24 Hickey's Pub



o The Former VEC School, the Rosenallis Road

Local opinion is divided as to the merits of the old VEC building – a Protected Structure under the County Development Plan. An attractive 'art-deco' style building located on an elevated site on the R442 it dates back to 1937. At the time of publication the building had been recently sold.

Photo 25 The Former VEC School



Vernacular Style

The vernacular style of Clonaslee is based in a simplicity of building form, with key buildings and spaces set within a planned urban fabric defining the area's character.

In general, the older normal buildings are simple in their design and appearance. The buildings tend to front directly onto the street. Facades are typically rendered with a symmetrical arrangement of sash windows and wooden doors. Many of these features – namely the sash windows, have been replaced with modern elements such as uPVC, and this has greatly altered the character of the streetscape.

Doors and windows have a strong vertical emphasis. These elements are set back into the building façade by some 100mm (typically) to create a shadow effect and give the façade a feeling of depth. This effect is generally increased by the painting of window and door frames to contrast with the façade colours. Plaster finishes and painting of facades are predominant.

Building heights in the village vary but the vast majority of older buildings within the historic core are two-storey. As the village is laid out in a series of streets, the maintenance of terraces within which the individual buildings sit is important. This is achieved by a maintaining a reasonable uniformity of building styles and roof pitches. Furthermore, the retention of roof pitches ensures the classical views and vistas of this planned village are maintained.

Where single storey buildings are found they mirror the proportions and features of the two-storey buildings.

Given the simplicity of the facades, painting and features such as door surrounds are used to good effect to provide a level of detailing and decoration.

Place Names

The particular place names found within a settlement with such a rich history as Clonaslee are of significance. In particular it is essential that new place names for developments within the village reflect the areas history and past.

'Clonaslee'

'Cluain na Slighe' translates literally as 'roadside meadow', and this derivation of the name could be related to the siting of the coach road. However, an earlier spelling gives us Cloneslieu which means Cluain na Sléibhe

or 'the mountain meadow'. Clonaslee was also sometimes known Kilmanman, after its patron Saint, St. Manman

Building Features

External Finishes and Renders

Interestingly, there is little diversity in the finishes of older buildings in the village.

Smooth plaster finishes are predominant and these are generally painted. Only in few cases is higher quality stone used for features such as cills or door frames as these tend to be quite simple and of plaster construction.

Removal of External Render – A Good or a Bad Idea?

Quite often a render or plaster is removed from a stone or brick façade for entirely aesthetic reasons with the intention of exposing attractive stonework. However, this impacts significantly on the character of a building, and if done on a wider scale, the character and appearance of an entire street or village.

It is important to bear in mind that when the building was constructed, the render was put on as the essential skin to weatherproof the building. The stone therefore is like a skeleton that needs its skin. These rendered rubble stone buildings are very different from cut-stone buildings, which were built using worked stone and never designed to be rendered.

The stripping of renders can lead to water penetration and serious damp problems, which can in the long term, have severe structural implications. Taking off the render also greatly changes the appearance of the building with the joints of rubble stonewalls being large, irregular and often pointed in an unattractive and unsightly manner.

In light of these considerations, it is a general rule of thumb that the removal of a render is ill-advised and the maintenance of renders and plasterwork is in all cases highly preferable.

Similar care is required in repairing rendered buildings. Most old buildings were finished with a limestone render. Appropriate lime mixtures must be used in all repair works and applied by a qualified person. If in doubt, seek the advice of the Conservation Officer.

Owners of Protected Structures (buildings previously called 'Listed Buildings') should note that any alterations to their buildings may require planning permission. In all cases seek advice from the County Council.

Photo 26 *Cut Stone (Locally Sourced) as Used at the Brittas Estate Gates*

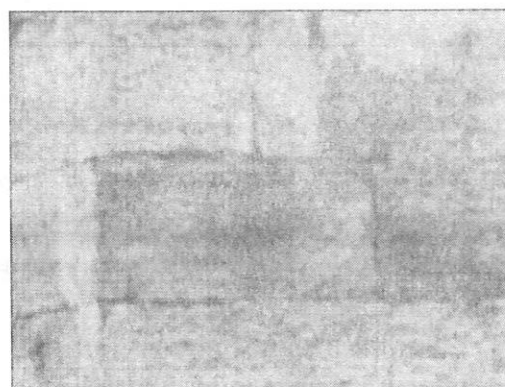
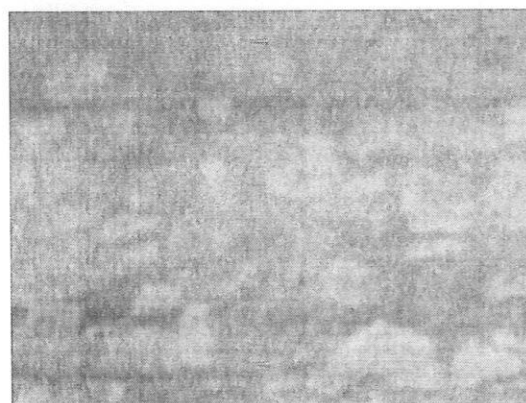


Photo 27 *Rubble Stone as Exposed by the Removal of a Finishing Plaster / Render.*



Most buildings in the village also have a painted plinth and quoins are used to good effect, emphasising building edges adding to the visual strength of the building.

In general there is a careful use of colour on these buildings. White or similarly pale colours are often used with a stronger dark colour used to decorate the window reveals, door frames, plinths and guttering.

More modern developments utilise a variety of finishes including redbrick and painted renders. While attractive, these do not readily reflect the styles and materials used in the area and therefore are visually separate from the main settlement. Furthermore, the use of a variety of bright colours is often excessive.

o Roofs

Roofs may at first appear to be a fairly innocuous and somewhat invisible element of a building and streetscape, but even a minor alteration can have a serious impact on the surrounding area.

Roof pitches tend to be uniform (approximately between 35 and 45 degrees) along streetscapes and this is critical in the maintenance of views and vistas. For example, along the Main Street there is little variation in roof pitch although building heights do vary. However, there are a number of locations where flat roofs are used to poor effect with a resultant negative impact on the streetscape and neighbouring buildings.

Some older buildings incorporate hipped roofs – even within the streetscape, and these are an attractive feature.

With few exceptions roofs in the village are tiled or slated. Few buildings have parapet walls with most roofs simply constructed with small over-hangs accommodating guttering and a small gap between the eaves and windows of the upper floor.

Poor maintenance of roofs in older buildings rapidly leads to structural problems – such as damp, and decay. Therefore, the maintenance of older roofs and the use of appropriate materials and insulation is critical.

Chimneys – an important roof feature, are present but tend to be 'invisible' as they are not particularly ornate features. On terraced houses they are generally located on the shared gable walls and are simple in design and appearance. Their absence on numerous buildings suggests extensive modernisation and remodelling. However, where possible these should be retained and maintained appropriately with clay chimney pots

Ornate fascia boards are seen on both the Lodge and Hickey's Pub and are attractive features of both buildings as they are painted brightly to contrast with the façade. These fascia are an attractive feature that should be maintained.

Modern developments should have cognisance for this feature of the townscape and avoid the inclusion of uncharacteristic features such as dormer windows in prominent locations.

o Windows and Doors

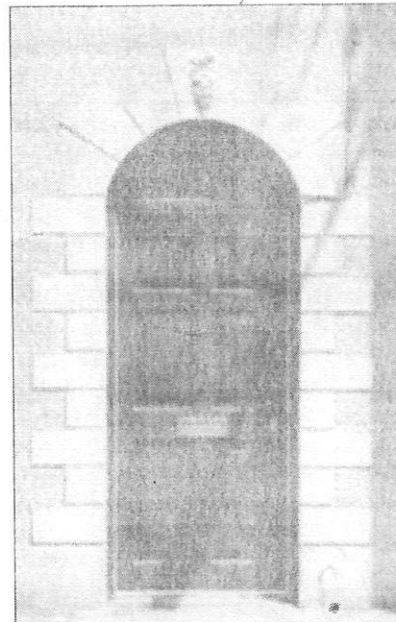
In older houses the proportions of doors and window openings were critical in capturing light and also maintaining the character and style of the building.

Generally symmetrical principles were applied in large houses with a centrally located door flanked by windows on either side. In smaller houses a window was generally located on one side only. Where present, the windows of upper floors were smaller.

At one stage, most of the older buildings in Clonaslee would have been wooden sliding sash windows. These are characteristic of the vernacular style with glazing bars providing a vertical emphasis. However, many of these have been replaced by PVC swing windows and this has had a serious impact on the streetscapes of the village.

Windows were set back into the façade to give a feeling of depth and shadow. In few buildings, plaster or brick surrounds are evident but it is more characteristic for window reveals to be brightly painted to deepen the shadowing effect of the set-back window. Similarly, cills are not a dominant feature on buildings in Clonaslee and where provided are simple and often painted to match the window surrounds.

Photo 28 *Detailing Above a Door Surround on a Former Pub on Main Street (now a Private Residence)*



Traditional doors were wooden with vertical emphasis and set into the façade with a small setback (in the order of 100mm). Some buildings retain door surrounds but these do not appear to have been an original feature of significance. Where provided there are a

number of examples of beautiful detail (see *Photo 28*) and these should be maintained.

Unfortunately, many wooden doors have been replaced by PVC or metal, and this inevitably alters the character and appearance of buildings.

Few terraced houses have altered their facades with the addition of protruding porches – undoubtedly due to the frontage onto the street. This has ensured the retention of the character and proportions of the terrace.

Fitting uPVC and Modern Material Windows in Old Buildings.

Older windows found in Clonaslee and throughout Ireland are typically wooden with sliding sash or a similar style. These windows were used with minor variations up until the mid 20th Century – particularly in public buildings. Only in the mid-1950's did the use of metal frames become more widespread and these were replaced by aluminium in the 1970's. Nowadays, the use of uPVC is dominant but it is important to realise the impact these can have on older and historic buildings before making any changes.

Commonly, old windows are replaced as they are considered draughty and unable to exclude outside noise such as traffic. However, the 'wear and tear' on an old sash windows can often be simply repaired at a small cost as the wood used in these windows came from slow-growing mature trees and is denser and of a much higher quality than the timber used today. Regular maintenance (such as painting every 3 to 5 years) can protect from water penetration and timber decay, making the replacement of snug fitting sashes unnecessary, as they will manage to effectively exclude both draughts and noise. It is also important to note that older buildings were designed to 'breathe' based on the fitting of sash windows and their replacement with modern windows, which hermetically seal openings, can result in reduced ventilation with resultant condensation.

The removal of sash windows greatly changes the architectural appearance of a building. This also affects the financial value of the building as period details are highly desirable.

Again, owners of Protected Structures are reminded that changing or altering windows may require planning permission and in all cases you should seek the advice of the County Council.

While there should be an overall preference for wooden sash windows, new developments – particularly on Main Street, incorporating uPVC windows can minimise their negative impact on the streetscape by using up-and-down sliding windows rather than outward swinging ones.

Shop Fronts

There is an established core of commercial and retail activity on Main Street. However, there is a trend to move away from the proportions and features of the traditional shop front – particularly in favour of a standard, corporate facade that does little to add to a 'sense of place'.

A considerable number of traditional shop fronts remain and these should be maintained and retained as a feature of the village. Where renovated or altered, all works should be carried out carefully with an appreciation for the need to retain the old character.

Photo 29 A Particularly Attractive Shop Front, Morrissey's, Main Street



Where new shop fronts are being installed, the use of contemporary styles and materials in a manner complimentary to the building and its environs should be considered. Generally pastiche or mock traditional shop fronts should be avoided unless an alternative is inappropriate.

The largest issue relating to shop fronts is that of advertising. Some effort should be made to avoid the use of plastics and neon. Perhaps some consideration could be given to the use of a small hanging sign or advertisements painted directly onto the façade wall.

In general the following principles should apply:

- Where practicable, a traditional shop front should be maintained and restored in favour of its replacement;

- o The shop front and associated signage should be a secondary feature to the main building;
- o Shop fronts should be designed with regard to the proportions of the building;
- o Maintenance of shop fronts is critical and glazing putty and paint should be regularly maintained to avoid decay.
- o The incorporation of roller shutters – where often necessary as a security measure, should be carefully considered for its impact on a traditional shop front or historic building;
- o Signage – in windows or hanging from a wall, should not be above the ground floor level;
- o Neon and bright lighting should be avoided in favour of more subtle illumination or ‘animation’ of the shop front by the use of planting, (such as window baskets, modest hanging baskets) or subtle up-lighting.

Conclusion

There are a number of characteristic features of the built environment of the Village. Detailed in the preceding sections these are summarised in **Tables 1** and **2** below.

Tables 1 & 2

A Summary Guide to Characteristic and Non-Characteristic Features of the Village.

Characteristic Features – These should be maintained in existing buildings and complimented by new development.
Two-Storey terraces (Main Street)
Variety of single and two-storey buildings (Other Streets)
Plintns
Quoin stones
White or pale colours on plaster finished building facades
Significant place names
Dark colours on door and window surrounds
Wooden windows and doors with a vertical emphasis
Wooden, sash windows
Uniform roof pitches (while often accommodating variations in height)
Hipped roofs
Chimney stacks
Fascia Boards
Native species and planting
Subtle signage using wood, stone and small metal signs as appropriate
Traditional shop fronts
Gated carriage lanes

Uncharacteristic Features – Where possible, these features should be avoided in both existing and new developments.
Red brick finishes
uPVC doors and windows and doors in old buildings
Swing-out windows in all buildings
Removal of render
Use of strong colours as the primary colour on building facades
Inappropriate place names
Dormer windows
Plastic and corporate shop fronts
Overhead wiring
Large-scale and plastic signage

General Guidance for Development in Clonaslee

New Developments in Clonaslee

Clonaslee has an established urban tradition and style that has evolved from its history as a planned village. Therefore, all aspects of new developments in the village should have regard to this existing established and recognised character of the village.

The location and siting of new developments is also influential. Where possible, on-going roadside or ribbon development should be avoided as such a pattern of development will have a cumulative impact on the shape and form of the village.

Whether infill or large-scale new development, building orientation and plot layout should reflect existing styles and patterns. Similarly, the proportion, scale and design of buildings should compliment the existing urban character.

The monotony typical of many modern residential developments can be avoided through the use of a variety of building types and the careful use of colour and other building features.

Place names and signage should reflect local trends and traditions. Similarly, street furniture should be provided with cognisance for the existing street layout and style. Landscaping should be incorporated early into a development. Semi-mature planting with native species (see below) should be considered as an effective means of reducing the 'bare' look of a new development.

Building Maintenance

Building maintenance plays an essential role in ensuring the built tradition of the village is protected. This is important for *all* village buildings.

All owners of buildings in the village should appreciate the importance of maintenance through regular painting, retention of boundaries and original features is important in preserving Clonaslee's character.

Undoubtedly, regular roof and structural inspections of older buildings will ensure they do not gradually fall into a state of disrepair. Similarly, older wooded windows, doors and other features can be protected if well maintained and looked after.

All owners of Protected Structures should be aware of their legal obligation to maintain their property and prevent it from falling into disrepair. In such buildings, particular care should be taken to seek expert advice to ensure the use of proper materials and procedures. Due to recent changes in legislation for planning permission for works on Protected Structures, the advice of the County Council should be sought before any works are undertaken.

Alterations to Existing Buildings

All works undertaken on an existing building should reflect the character of the building and its vicinity. In particular, the building style should be reflected through the façade elements – such as windows, doors, etc. Roof styles and pitches should similarly compliment the existing structure. The use of appropriate materials is critical and all aspects such as - texture, colour, proportion, etc. should reflect the established character of the area and compliment existing buildings and styles. Where possible, un-used materials from older buildings should be recycled for re-use.

Alterations such as the removal of original render and the replacement of windows and doors should not be undertaken without due regard to their potential impact on the character of the building. In all instances professional advice should be sought and all alternatives considered.

Amenity Areas and Landscaping

Amenity areas should be retained and well maintained with the addition of lighting and seating to encourage their use and ensuring the safety of users.

Landscaping adds greatly to an area and should be encouraged. The use of appropriate native trees, as a cost effective and environmentally friendly method of livening up and visually improving the character of areas is recommended. In particular, the screening of unattractive features such as ESB boxes or telephone exchanges is encouraged. Where undertaking such works always liaise with the appropriate body.

The preference should be for the permanent planting of native trees and shrubs. Small-scale flowerbeds and planting should be secondary to these larger-scale plants which will, in the long-term, add to and compliment the village's character, but the use of a variety

of sized plants will add greatly to any planting scheme. Such planting should be strategically located to act as both an amenity, landscape features and also to encourage traffic calming and speed control on busy routes. Trees should be planted in clusters – even of two or three, rather than laid out in a straight line, unless they demark an avenue or walking track.

The planting of native species is important particularly as they play an important role in

maintaining local wildlife and ecology. **Table 3** below sets out briefly a number of native species that are commercially available and can be appropriately used in planting schemes.

Close liaison between all groups in the village including the Tidy Towns Committee is encouraged to ensure all resources are used to maximum effect

Table 3 Summary Guide to Commercially Available Native Trees and Plants

Common Name	Latin Name
Alder Common	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Aspen	<i>Populus tremula</i>
Birch Silver	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Birch Downey	<i>Betula pubescens</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>
Burnet Rose	<i>Rosa pimpinellifolia</i>
Common Gorse, Furze or Whin	<i>Ulex europeus</i>
Crab apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>
Dog Rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Goat Willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Guelder Rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>
Pedunculate Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Rowan or Mountain Ash	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Scots Pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
Sessile Oak	<i>Quercus petraea</i>
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>
Wild Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>
Woodbine, Honey suckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>
Wych Elm	<i>Ulmus glabra</i>
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>

Detailed guidance is available in 'Our Trees – a Guide to Growing Ireland's Native Trees: in Celebration of the New Millennium' published by the People's Millennium Forest.

Street Furniture

In general, the provision of street furniture can raise the somewhat difficult question of

maintenance. The variety of 'shareholders' in this aspect of the 'streetscape' including private residential owners, private commercial ventures, the ESB and the County Council makes the organisation and co-ordination of design and maintenance often difficult. However, there are a number of key principles to be observed:

- o Temporary and permanent street furniture should be organised to minimise clutter. This is important in relation not only to appearances but also to the ease of which a mobility impaired person or person with a pram or wheelchair can realistically navigate the path.
- o Street furniture such as lamp standards should compliment the area and in general and overly ornate designs should be avoided.
- o A schedule of maintenance should be drawn up with particular references to painting and regular maintenance.

Signage

Appropriate signage of amenity areas – such as indicating walks and trails, is encouraged, as is the on-going use of walking path maps and information packs.

Signs at the approach into a village should be clearly visible and made from an appropriate material. However, these should not be excessively dominant or bright.

A Community Action List

Throughout public information sessions a number of issues arose that the local community felt extremely strongly about. While some of these suggestions are beyond

the remit of the VDS they are included here within a comprehensive and all-inclusive Community Action List.

Community Action List

1. The difficulties associated with on-street parking on Main Street should be addressed immediately by the lowering of the kerb, the provision of drainage and the possible re-arrangement of the existing bollards.
2. The current condition of the Clodiagh River due to the on-going extraction of water from the by Tullamore UDC should be addressed.
3. The Bridge over the Clodiagh River should be improved and the possible development of a riverside walk towards the Brittas Lake should be investigated.
4. A local heritage or local history trail should be set up with small plaques telling the story of the village and its various important buildings.
5. The Rosenallis approach should be improved with better signage and road re-surfacing.
6. Some key areas should be landscaped to improve their appearance – namely, in the area beside the Barracks and the around the new school and Community Centre.
7. The Gorrageh River Bridge should be fixed and maintained. The possible use of this riverwalk as an amenity should be looked into.
8. The Heritage Centre should be used as a tourist centre with a craft shop and coffee dock.
9. Additional lighting is required along Main Street and on all the village approaches.
10. Cables should be ducted underground to improve the appearance of the street.

SarahMSherlock@protonmail.com

20.10.2021

FAO: Ms Angela McEvoy,
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By Email Only: angelamcevoy@laoiscoco.ie

Section 5 Declaration Regarding Development / Exempted Development

Dear Angela,

Laois County Council is requested to determine whether the removal¹ of a large longstanding rectangular flowerbed² (seats, and bin storage) complete with permanent surrounds, from within the Clonaslee Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), to install a new circular (possibly Chinese) granite water fountain complete with a water (and possibly rubbish) storage³ section underneath, and paving is or is not development or is or is not exempted development.

Photos are enclosed for your ease of reference.

Location: The Square, Clonaslee, County Laois.

Google Earth Dropped Pin: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/3DnHrja3GChG85RH8>

Easting: 631729 (approx. only)

Northing: 711042 (approx. only)

Yours sincerely

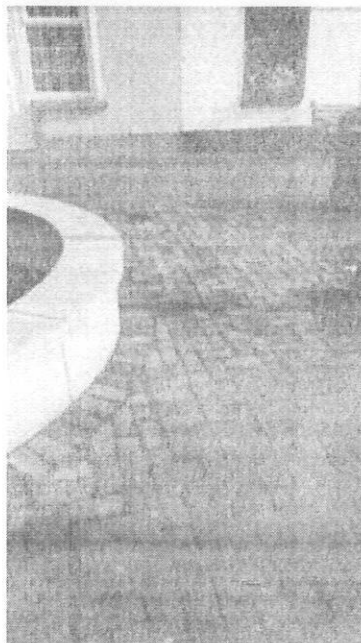
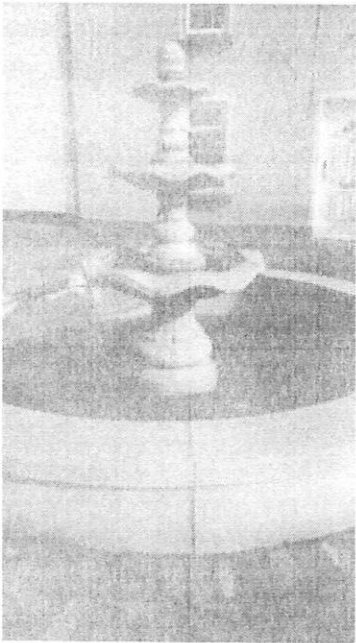
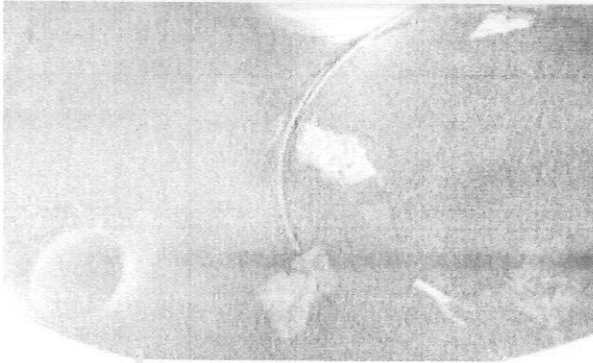
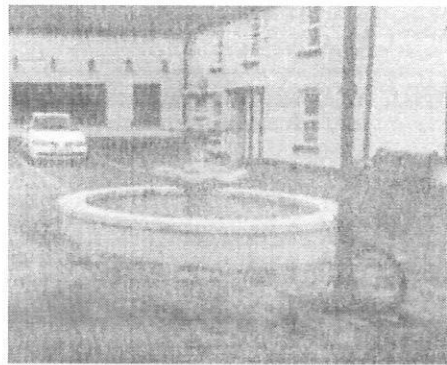


Sarah Sherlock MRICS MCSI MII

¹ Note a small section of one corner complete with "Swan" sign remains in-situ.

² Installed as a part of major urban realm enhancement works in, and to the village c. some 30 years ago

³ And, what appears to be new piping of some type of other





Payment Reference: TBC.

Laos County Council Cash Office have confirmed c. 12.50 hrs that payment cannot be made without a reference from planning. Therefore, I am making this submission and I will discharge the fee as soon as I receive the reference, that I require for the Cash Office.

2021- 2027

(E)

Laois County Council
Comhairle Chontae Laoise

[APPENDIX 2: ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREAS]

DRAFT LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027:
January 2021

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INTRODUCTION

The designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) arose from recognition of the need to protect groups of historic buildings and street patterns, as well as individual buildings. ACAs are designated to protect the special character of an area through positive management of change.

It is Council policy to:

Consider favorably development proposals within an ACA that would either preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the ACA. In considering applications for changes of use, the Council will be concerned with maintaining the character of that area;

Manage change within Architectural Conservation Areas by preserving what makes the ACA special, allowing for alterations and extensions where appropriate, enhancing the quality of the ACA by identifying opportunity sites for refurbishment or redevelopment.

Additional objectives and policies relating to ACAs are contained in Volume I



ABBEYLEIX ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Setting and General Morphology

Abbeyleix is located in south County Laois within the plain of the Nore River which lies about 2.5km to the west of the town. The Gloreen Stream runs to the north of the town. Abbeyleix is located in a flat rural landscape with gently undulating hills located to the east and north-east. The surrounding fields are demarcated by hedgerows and are used for dairying and tillage purposes.



The present town of Abbeyleix, which is eighteenth century in date, was planned on a linear axis with the convergence of the main thoroughfares at a cross roads in the centre. A market place was established immediately to the north of the principal crossroads which today still acts as the pivotal centre of the town. The main commercial area is centred on Main Street and Market Square with residential areas concentrated on the southern portion of Main Street, Stucker Hill to the north, New Row/Balladine Row to the west and Ballinakill Road to the east.



History

The origins of Abbeyleix can be traced back to the early medieval period, a church was founded in the area during the seventh century. The lands formed part of the territory of O'Mores, who retained their lands during the Anglo-Norman Invasion. The early medieval church was re-founded as a Cistercian Abbey by Conor O' More in 1183.

The place name Abbeyleix derives from an anglicisation of the Gaelic name for the abbey (*Mainistir Laoighise*). O' More granted the abbey the lands that now correspond to the Parish of Abbeyleix. The establishment of such abbeys provided the impetus for the development of many Irish villages during the

medieval period. The abbeys often controlled vast swathes of lands that required large numbers of farm labourers and their families who began to converge in nucleated settlements. The Cistercian abbey at Abbeyleix developed into one of the most important foundations in the Diocese of Leighlin during the medieval period. A sixteenth century land survey records that the abbey had holdings of 1237 acres when it was dissolved in 1552. The abbey and much of its lands subsequently came into the possession of the Earls of Ormond. It was in use as one of their residences in 1580 when the buildings were burnt down by the Earls of Desmond and there are now no visible surviving remains.

The riverside village that had developed around the abbey continued in existence until the area came into the possession of the Viscount de Vesce in 1750. The residence of the de Vesce family, Abbeyleix House built in 1773 is reputedly built on the site of the abbey. The setting of the village on the marshy river bank had led to persistent problems with flooding and, in the closing decades of the eighteenth century, the de Vesce's decided to level the old settlement and to found a new town at its present location.

The new town was initially named 'New Rathmoyle', then 'New Abbeyleix' and eventually simply 'Abbeyleix'. The creation of the new town of Abbeyleix in the eighteenth century was an early example of a wider movement whereby estate towns and villages were founded in the estates of the newly secure landlord classes. As they were often designed on a clean slate many of these new settlements were formally planned with architecturally unified streetscapes. A wide linear main street, with a central market and planted lime trees, formed the spine of the new town of Abbeyleix and the original

houses were of one-storey construction with thatched roofs and half-acre back gardens. The economic benefits of a successful market town within their demesnes were recognized by the landlords and the development of commercial activities such as markets, milling and textile manufacturing were actively pursued by the de Vesce family. Abbeyleix's prosperity in the nineteenth century was founded on the construction of a centrally placed market-house in 1836 and a flourishing textile industry based on wool and yarn manufacturing. Abbeyleix also benefited from the diversion of the route of the Dublin to Cashel mail road through the town. By the 1830s the town also contained 140 houses, a number of schools, a police station, jail, and Church of Ireland and Catholic churches.

While Abbeyleix had prospered in the early nineteenth century the need for the establishment of a workhouse, a fever hospital and an almshouse by the de Vesce's in the early 1840s suggests that many families in the parish were living in destitute conditions even in the years prior to The Great Famine. The traumas of the 1840s resulted in amendments to the physical layout of the town as a number of works were carried out as part of famine relief schemes. The recovery of Abbeyleix in the second half of the nineteenth century was in part due to the increase in the trading capability of the town resulting from the arrival of the railway network in 1867. The town's textile industry continued to thrive until the early decades of the twentieth century and the most of the thatched roofs of the houses were replaced with slate at the start of that century.

The detail on the Ordnance Survey maps from the 1840s onwards indicates that the basic layout of the town's streetscape has remained relatively unchanged up to the present day. The fortunes of the town as an industrial centre declined during the twentieth century

with the closure of many of the textile industries and the railway station. However, the retention of the essential character of the original estate settlement has resulted in Abbeyleix being recognised as an important heritage town.

Architectural Interest

The formal design of the town and the sustained involvement of the de Vesce family over a period of almost 250 years, has resulted in a large proportion of the buildings being of high architectural quality. A range of distinct building styles are represented in the town. Good examples of late eighteenth to early nineteenth century Georgian architecture are to be seen throughout the town with notable examples being Preston House, the former courthouse and the Abbey Gate Hotel.

Also of note from this period is the modest Methodist chapel and meeting hall on Main Street which was built c.1826. The Market House, whose ground floor colonnades lend it a somewhat Italianate air, was built in c.1836, extensively reconstructed in c.1906 and refurbished in 2009 by De Blacam and Meagher Architects on behalf of Laois County Council.

As the nineteenth century progressed it is likely that some of the older housing stock was upgraded and replaced as well as being added to as the town expanded outwards from its core. Much of the housing stock within the town dates from the 1830s onwards. The continued desire of the de Vesce's to improve the settlement led to the construction of stylistically unified terraces which continue to be readily identifiable today although some incremental loss of fabric and unifying elements has occurred. Excellent examples of buildings in the Tudor revival style, which was particularly popular in

the 1830s and 1840s, are to be seen at Pembroke Terrace. More modest Tudor/Gothic revival structures flank the entrance to Temperance Street.

The terraces on the east and west sides of main street, to the south of the Market Square and incorporating Morrisey's pub and Bramley's date to the second half of the nineteenth century. While they are modest in scale they display considerable attention to detail as evidenced by the moulded eaves brackets, elegant proportions and the many fine Victorian shopfronts which still adorn them.

The Church of Ireland Church on Ballycolla Road was built c.1865 and incorporates parts of an earlier nineteenth century church. Both the 1860s church and its predecessor were designed in the Gothic revival style, the earlier building by architect John Semple and the later by T.H. Wyatt.

Also dating to the later nineteenth century is the Catholic Church of the Holy Rosary which dominates the town from its elevated site to the east of the Main Street. The building is a Victorian interpretation of the Hiberno-Romanesque style and was built in the early 1890s to a design by William Hague.

There are fewer examples of notable buildings as we move into the twentieth century. The Edwardian Bank of Ireland building on the east side of Main Street is an exception. It is an eclectic mix of styles and is influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. It was designed by J.P. Wren in 1909.

Abbeyleix has been fortunate in retaining much of its historic fabric and today stands as an excellent example of a planned estate town.

Building Features which contribute to the Special Character of the Town

Roof, chimneystacks and rainwater goods

Within the town centre, and on all approach roads, the morphology of the town is composed of terraces of buildings in small groupings separated by laneways. This has resulted in there being a range of different roof heights along the streetscape.

The majority of roofs in the proposed Abbeyleix Architectural Conservation Area are pitched. Roof pitches vary but tend to give a uniform appearance along the streetscape even though building heights are changeable. Slate covering appears to be dominant on older buildings but where it has been replaced, or where buildings have been rebuilt, roof covering tends to be artificial slate, fibre cement tiles or clay tiles.

Detached buildings which are also feature buildings tend to have hipped roofs such as the central Market House, A.I.B bank and Abbeygate Hotel or later infill buildings, including the post office terrace, and terraces on Stucker Hill. The central cross road is defined on three sides by buildings which are L-shaped and have hipped roofs following the line of the road. Few buildings deviate from the pitched or hipped roof form but there are exceptions. Examples include the Bank of Ireland where the architectural composition includes a copper dome, parapet and projecting gable fronted bay with pediment. The tudor-inspired gabled projection with heavy finial at roof level is a feature repeated along Pembroke Terrace and the remaining buildings of Temperance Row.

Newly constructed buildings tend to be higher, or out of scale and are therefore not in keeping with the streetscape. They include features such as dormer windows and off centre chimneystacks, found in recent infill development in upper Main Street.

The majority of chimneystacks are simple in design and are either rendered or brick stacks. Chimneystacks are placed both centrally and gable ended. Where placed at gabled ends they create a strong gable and where centrally placed they indicate shared gable walls to terraces. There are a number of tall chimneystacks and stepped chimneystacks present along the main street which are an unusual characteristic. The carved limestone chimneystacks in Pembroke Terrace are highly ornate reflecting the overall appearance of the terrace. The stacks to RPS 74 (inventory no. 76) have been replaced in a sensitive manner showing high quality craftsmanship and good conservation practice.

Decorative timber barge boards are confined to the school buildings within the town. Terracotta ridge cresting is found on numerous buildings adding to the decorative quality of their appearance. Rainwater goods are generally cast-iron or cast-aluminium and are painted. Replacement rainwater goods and those on infill newer buildings are generally uPVC. Such replacements detract from the streetscape and the overall character and appearance of the area.

Where present supporting eaves brackets are ornate and contribute to the aesthetic appearance of the building. Good examples include the A.I.B, the terraced buildings on Main Street including Bramley's which display finely carved brackets tucked in under over hanging eaves. Such features created a repetitive feature along the streetscape. Similar ornate eaves courses are evident in decorative rendering to the Leix Bar and

adjoining building on Main Street. The mirroring of such detailing links the architectural character of the area adding a sense of place.

Render (plasterwork) and external finishes

Renders commonly used in Abbeyleix include (a) roughcast or harling and (b) smooth lime or cement render. Buildings using smooth render are painted with some having a ruled- and lined decoration. Most buildings have a smooth rendered plinth and some have channelled quoins which emphasise the buildings edge while adding visual appeal to the structure. Moulded render detailing is also used in window and door surrounds and as string and eaves courses highlighting the division of storeys and giving vertical emphasis to buildings.

The removal of render to expose rubblestone walls such as at Market Square should not be encouraged. The carrying out of such works can have a long term detrimental effect on the condition of the building as exposing the stone to the elements can result in the onset of dampness. This is further amplified by the removal of lime mortar and repointing with cement strap pointing. Such work detracts from the appearance of the individual building and the streetscape as it breaks the building line and therefore has a negative effect on the character of the area as a whole.

Deliberately exposed stone construction is evident in the R. C church and Pembroke Terrace which display the use of high quality limestone. The uniform use of dressed stone construction and fine cut stone finish to Pembroke Terrace creates an aesthetically pleasing group of structures with a strong building line. External cut stone is also evident on the market house where it contributes to the overall architectural expression of the

building and its importance to the architectural character of the town.

Windows and Doors

Despite a high degree of loss, there are a variety of traditional window types found within the proposed ACA. Original windows were usually of timber sash construction with the glazing bars providing vertical emphasis. In Abbeyleix there are varying window openings from traditional square-headed, camber headed and feature oriel openings. Like many Irish towns Abbeyleix has witnessed the replacement of timber sash windows with uPVC casement windows. Such replacements are not in keeping with traditional design and detract from the appearance of the building therefore having a negative effect on the overall character of the area.

The sealing effect created by uPVC windows on historic buildings can lead to the build up of condensation and result in the onset of damp. Replacement timber sash windows have been inserted into Bramley's, Main Street with the removal of an oriel window. This has been carried out in a sympathetic manner as part of the successful conservation of the building. In doing so the appearance and character of the building has been retained and the building contributes positively to the streetscape. Window surrounds add decoration and define the opening and in many cases are simply rendered or moulded render, some with cornices. This mirrored detailing creates harmony along the streets appearance adding to the character of the area. In some case this detailing has been replaced with poor alternatives with flat two dimensional surrounds.

More affluent buildings such as the court house and those of Pembroke Terrace have carved stone window and door openings displaying work of skilled masons and adding considerably to the appearance of the buildings. The presence of oriel windows is also found owing to the Tudor revival design of the terrace. The presence of oriel windows is unusual but it occurs in a few buildings along the streetscape such as the Leix Bar, the Abbeygate hotel, Costcutter's and originally Bramleys, thus providing a repetitive architectural link to the streetscape. It is likely that in some cases the oriels were a later nineteenth century modification.

Window sills in general were constructed of tooled limestone but in many cases have been replaced with concrete sills, often coinciding with the replacement of windows. Doors follow the same form and design as windows usually having a vertical emphasis and originally being of timber construction.

There are a variety of door openings in Abbeyleix ranging from traditional square-headed openings, round-headed openings and larger more ornate segmental-headed doorcases. Side doors giving access to upper storeys of buildings along Main Street appear to be simple and square or round-headed in design. Those functioning as the main entrances are more elaborate in nature and are either round-headed or segmental-headed often with fanlights and flanking sidelights.

Door surrounds to Pembroke Terrace and Temperance Street are of high quality architectural design with Tudor revival pointed arched openings which give a repetitive pattern to the terrace. At 'Church View' terrace, although the actual doors have been replaced, door canopies are an unusual feature which breaks the monotony of an otherwise austere terrace.

Replacement doors are often half glazed to allow for additional light where overlights or fanlights are not present on more vernacular designed buildings. uPVC replacement doors are also common.

Shopfronts and Advertisement

The established retail centre of the town centres on the market square. Shopfronts are an integral part of the fabric and texture of the town and contribute enormously to the historic architectural character of the ACA. The surviving traditional shopfronts are predominately of timber construction with ornate detailing to the fascia, framing pilasters and console brackets. Slender pilasters and consoles are a typical feature of many of the nineteenth century shopfronts in the town.

Good examples of traditional shopfronts include Leinster House and Mossissey's, Main Street, and Mooneys, and the Ireland Own Antiques, Market Square. The scale and finish to earlier shopfronts blend with the street architecture lending it a historic patina. Such features are an integral part of the character of the area creating a link to the past and establishing a unique sense of place. Traditional shopfronts are constantly under threat from modern replacements, enlargements of display windows or pastiche insertions, which can lead to inappropriate alteration of the streetscape. New development should be sensitive to the overall character of the area.

Consideration must also be given to signage as it can easily detract from the overall appearance of a building and its contribution to the streetscape. On the most part signage within Abbeyleix is neat and is painted directly onto the building or fascia. Brash neon or oversized signage can have a detrimental effect and be offensive.

Carriage Arches

Carriage arches provided access to backlands behind the main streetscape. They are intermittently located along the street creating groups of small terraces and strong gable ends. Most are integral segmental headed arches, which maximise the use of space by providing a living space overhead thus balancing the appearance of the building and providing punctuated openings along the street.

Street furniture

Sometimes heritage items in the public realm are the easiest to preserve and yet the most vulnerable to carelessness. Abbeyleix retains a number of items of historical street furniture which add to its character. A pillar box located at the southern end of Main Street is Edwardian in date and shows high-quality cast-iron detailing which gives this item of street furniture artistic and technical interest. The adjacent water trough is a reminder of the former use of horse and cart for transport before high car dependency. A wheel guard remains just east of the cross roads on the Ballinakill road. Four finely-crafted commemorative water fountains located at strategic points within the town create focal points within the public realm.

Railings and Boundary Walls

Most properties in the town core front directly onto the street and therefore lack boundary treatments. In contrast to this some architecturally designed structures are purposely set back from the street with strong boundary treatments. These include Pembroke Terrace, Preston House, Epworth Hall, the Court House and the Bank of Ireland, the use of cast-iron railing on a low plinth wall creates deliberate separation while simultaneously allowing the building to be viewed and appreciated. The entrance to the

Roman Catholic Church from the Ballinakill road also displays finely executed cast—iron railings and gates creating an impressive entry to the church grounds.

Residential properties on approach roads such as those on the northern end of main street, De Vesci Terrace and properties along the Ballinakill Road are set back from the street with a variety of boundary treatments including rubblestone walls, render walls, hedging and plinth walls with cast and wrought-iron railings atop. Every effort should be made to retain these boundary treatments. Traditional stone wall boundary treatment such as those behind Pembroke Terrace, Ballacolla Road and to the north-east of the church are constructed with locally quarried stone and are of rubble construction. They form a definite strong line and help delineate the original boundaries of the town and therefore the ACA.

ACA Boundaries

When assessing Abbeyleix for ACA designation the boundary was drawn up using the architectural heritage guidelines to ensure a legible and meaningful boundary was created to protect the unique character of the town. Those areas excluded from the ACA were viewed as being too recent in nature or did not contribute to the special character of the area.

Summary Character Statement

Constructed in the late eighteenth century as a formally planned town, Abbeyleix did not evolve over a long period of time like most Irish towns and villages. The town was planned on a linear axis with the convergence of the main thoroughfares at a cross roads in the centre. The location of the market place immediately to the north of the principal crossroads creates the pivotal centre of the town.

The high quality of architecture is particularly evident in the buildings lining the main square and along the main street. The designed layout is comprised of two storey structures grouped together in small terraces with intermittent laneways, integral carriage arches and long narrow burgage plots to the rear of the buildings. A relatively large number of traditional shop fronts survive, the majority of which display a high level of craftsmanship in their design and finish. This creates an aesthetically appealing appearance which contributes to the overall visual perception of the town and in turn the character of the ACA.

The buildings in close proximity to the market square form the basis for the town's commercial and financial centre. They include individual structures such as the market house, court house and banks. These buildings are of high architectural value and have been designed and finished to a high quality. Repeated features such as the use of stone finishes for window sills, steps, eaves and string courses create a linked appearance and a sense of harmony to the town centre. There are numerous detached civic buildings of architectural significance dispersed throughout the town. At the northern limit of the ACA boundary, for example, is the landmark former North National School, now the heritage centre. This building has been extended over time and sensitively renovated to remain an important building within the town. The Roman Catholic Church located on an elevated site creates a prominent feature in the centre of the town.

A grouping of buildings including the Church of Ireland church, South National School, Sexton's House and the former railway station are located on the south-west fringe of the town and all are listed on the record of protected structures. These structures

contribute to the architectural quality and character of Abbeyleix.

In addition to these significant buildings there are designed terraces which share repetitive patterns of roof pitches, chimneystacks, door and window openings giving the streetscape a sense of harmony and scale. Most notable are 'Pembroke Terrace' and 'Temperance Street' (partially demolished). Such fine terraces are of both national and regional importance and create a pleasing focal point as the town is entered from the south. The same repetitive pattern is mirrored on New Row but in a more vernacular design in 'Church View' terrace whose door canopies created a symmetrical rhythm along the streetscape.

The urban pattern and morphology of the town is defined by residential terraces of houses located on the approach roads which are more traditional in design and finish. In turn as one moves closer to the town's centre the buildings change and take on the dual function of commercial and residential. The town centre is defined by the presence of the market square and number civic buildings which give a firm definition of urban place. Apart from the central market house there are a number of prominent buildings of high architectural quality on the main street such as the Bank of Ireland and Allied Irish Bank which create focal points along the streetscape.

The full appraisal has identified 109 structures within the ACA boundary which add to the character of the town.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special

character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.


For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.


- Other works that would require permission include:
- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a

particular area special. The demolition or insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted. Some structures within the boundaries may be of little architectural interest and are included within an ACA boundary only because of their location within the streetscape. Buildings of little architectural merit may be subject to wholesale redevelopment as part of a planning permission. However, any replacement building should be designed with due regard to the special characteristics of the ACA. Suitably designed infill or bankland development that contributes to the special character of the ACA will also be encouraged. Works to the public realm within ACAs e.g. footpaths, street furniture, parking schemes will be required to respect the special character of the area also.






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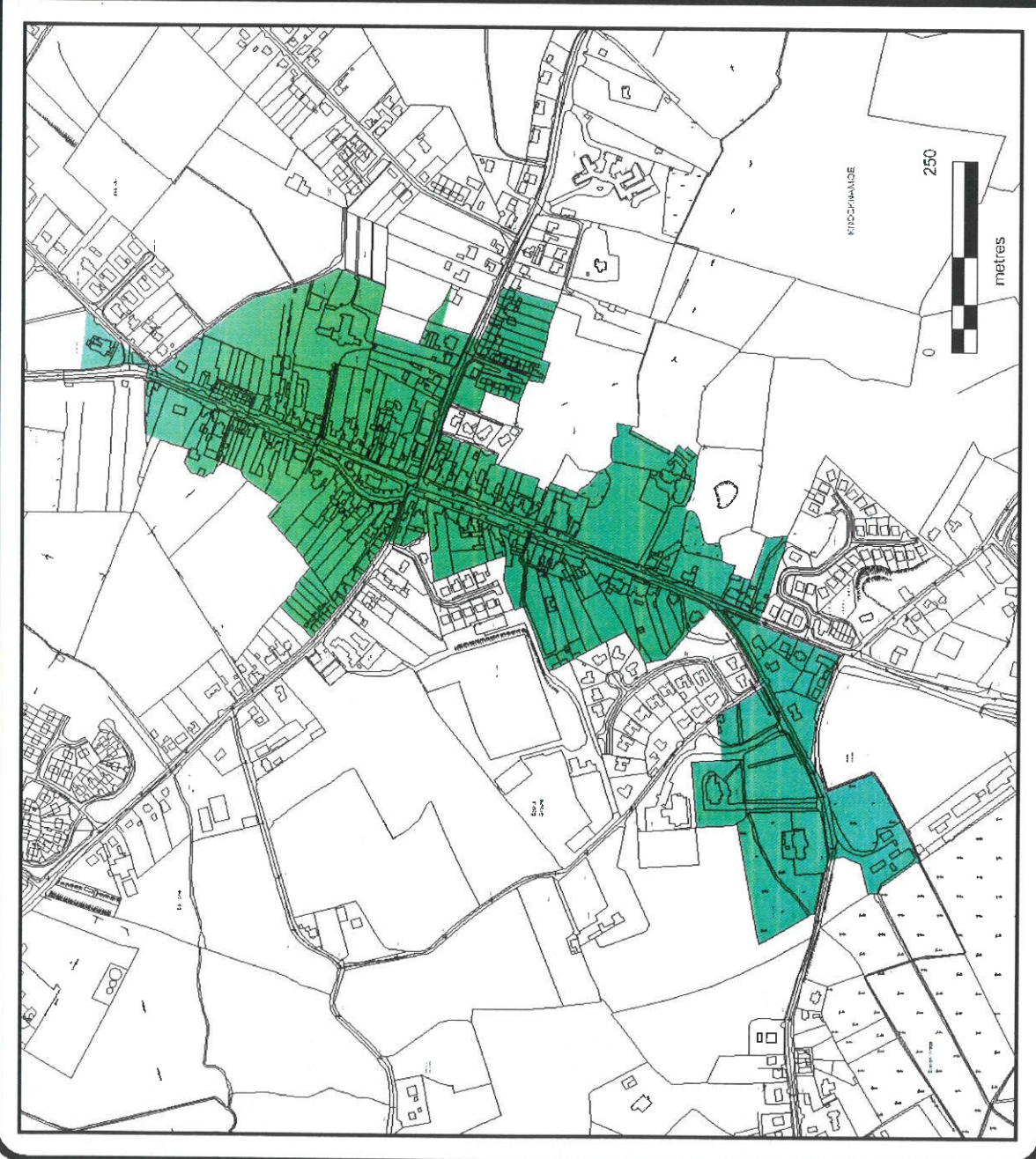
- Architectural Conservation Area

ABBEYLEIX ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



**LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION**

Drawn	Checked	Approved
Dermot Durne	Donal Kiely	Angela McEvoy



BALLINAKILL ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

History

Ballinakill is located in south County Laois. The name Ballinakill is thought to derive from "Baile na Coillte" meaning the town of the wood. The hinterland around Ballinakill remains well-wooded.

The town dates to the seventeenth century. In 1606 the right to hold a market and fair at Ballinakill was granted. Originally part of the Cosby Estate, lands were granted to Thomas Ridgeway in 1611 and an English colony was established there soon after. Ridgeway is said to have spent £10,000 in the creation of the town. In 1613 the town was incorporated by charter. The economic development of the town was underpinned by its proximity to ironworks located to the southeast of the town on the Ironmills River, a tributary to the Owenbeg River where the Ironmills Bridge spans the River.

In 1631, the town was said to contain a large castle, one hundred dwelling houses, a fulling mill (a step in woollen cloth making), two water mills, the iron mill referred to above, three fairs and two markets. In 1642, the town is described as: *seated among woods in a place so watered with springs as afforded the Earl convenience to make many fish ponds near the castle he built there; which he likewise fortified with a strong wall and that with turrets and flankers; besides that, the town since it had been planted was well inhabited*

The castle referred to above was built between 1605 and 1613 and destroyed in the mid-seventeenth century. This Castle was initially used to defend territory against the Confederates (Irish Catholic Confederation who governed parts of the country independently following the 1641 rebellion) with settlers flocking there for refuge when the rebellion broke out. The Castle withstood initial attacks but ceded to the Confederates when it came under attack by heavy artillery.



All of Laois came under confederate control by 1643 and the Castle was used as a garrison in 1646. The Castle was surrendered to Cromwellian forces in 1650 and seemingly destroyed. The Castle was a substantial structure with a water-filled moat, gatehouse and clock tower. The ruinous remains of what is known locally as Ballinakill Castle was built in 1680 by the Dunnes, of roughly coursed pink shaly stone with dressed limestone quoins. The structure was originally five storeys in height; the extant structure is three storeys in height and retains features such as ground and first floor gun loops and a second floor window.

By 1659 the town was the third most populous in Laois and the population was one quarter English. By the eighteenth century, it was one of the most important fair towns in the County. In 1801 it was a major tanning and brewing centre and also featured a small woollen business. The corporation and borough of Ballinakill were dissolved with the Act of Union in 1800.



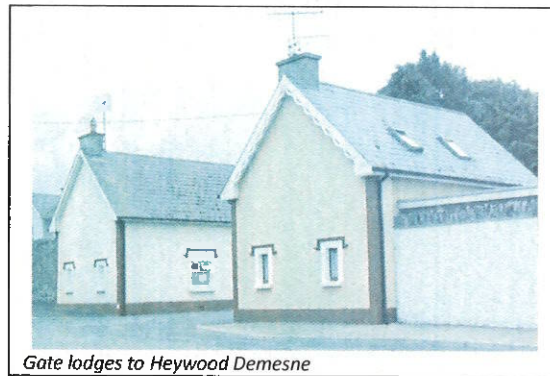
Seventeenth century plan form



Eighteenth century streetscape and plan form

Plan form

In the seventeenth century the street plan of Ballinakill was laid out along the long access formed by Graveyard Street and Stanhope Street with Chapel Lane and Castle Lane running perpendicular to the east. The current large rectangular urban space known as The Square and the related Church Street to the north and Bridge Street to the west are an eighteenth century addition. The more sinuous seventeenth century is quite distinct from the more geometric eighteenth century addition on aerial photographs of the town. A well-defined burgage plot pattern is discernible on the east side of Stanhope Street and the Square. Parts of the building fabric in this area may be seventeenth century in date, the area is within the Ballinakill zone of archaeological potential.



Gate lodges to Heywood Demesne

Influence of Heywood Demesne

Ballinakill is closely associated with the Heywood Demesne. The Demesne dates back to the eighteenth century. The house and gardens were designed by the owner and amateur architect MF Trench, who adorned the sites with follies salvaged from medieval sites. In the nineteenth century the house was significantly altered and was eventually destroyed in the 1960s. In the 1920s Edwin Lutyens designed the landscape around the house. It survives and comprises a sunken garden, ornamental pond and fountain within elliptical flowerbeds and terraces. Gertrude Jekyll devised the planting scheme.

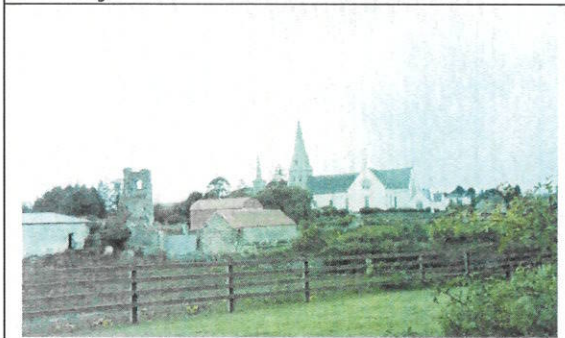
Most of the laneways on the 1841 Ordnance Survey map linking the town with the

Heywood Demesne remain. However, a laneway to the east of the Square, the north of Chapel Lane and the Mass Lough no longer directly connects these spaces. A direct route from the Mass Lough to The Square has now partially disappeared and is now a short laneway to the rear of commercial and residential properties.

on the Square appear neglected and would benefit from more active uses. Features to townhouses on the Square include rusticated ground floors, semi-circular fanlights to front doors and faux plaster quoins.



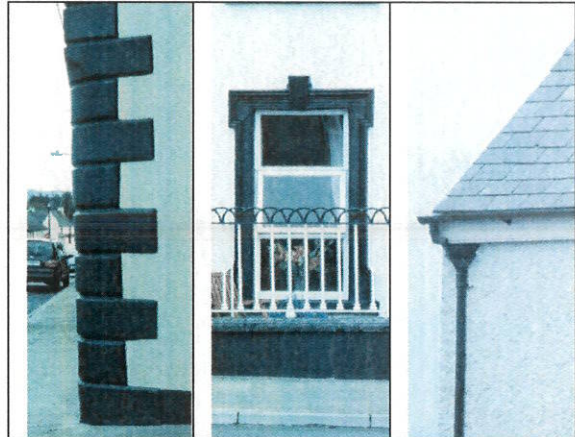
Fine Georgian House



Backland view of ruinous towerhouse, Roman Catholic Church and Church of Ireland spire

Architectural Interest

Much of the extant building stock of architectural interest in Ballinakill is eighteenth century in date. High order buildings overlook the square and more modest buildings are located to the south and east. Fine individual structures include the gatehouses to the Heywood Demesne along Church Street to the back of the Heywood Demesne, the Georgian Gothic Church of Ireland (1821) and the Gothic Revival Roman Catholic Church (1835) and two detached late nineteenth century schools also on Church Street. Some of the late Georgian structures and mid to late nineteenth century structures



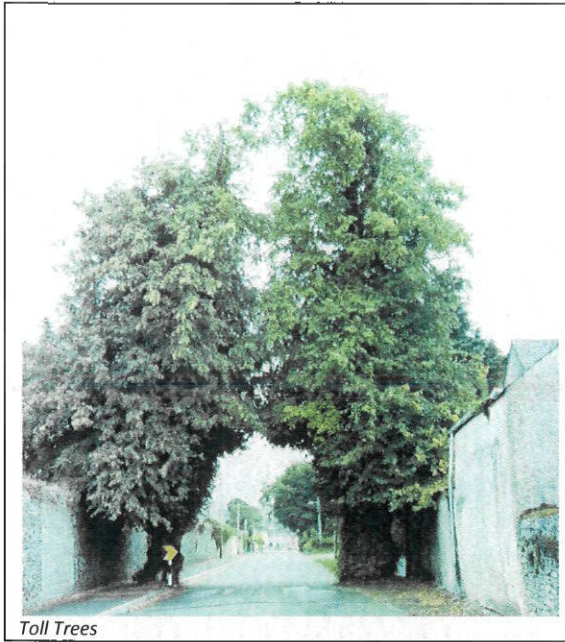
Building features: chamfered, faux quoins; raised plasterwork window surround with keystone detail and wrought iron railings to front; natural slate roof and cast iron hopper



Traditional shopfront with stained glass lantern, with living quarters to the side and above



Market House and Market Square



Although the Square retains a strong and cohesive character with the Market House to centre, many of the sliding sash windows and also the natural slate materials have been replaced with unsympathetic modern materials. The Square would benefit from more sympathetic treatment, it is currently finished with concrete slabs, tarmacadam and red brick. The toll trees at Church Street frame the approach into Ballinakill and contribute to its special character. The setting of the village against the wooded Heywood Demesne, encompassing the Mass Lough and related esker are an essential part of the village's character.

Boundaries

The ACA boundary is focused on the seventeenth and eighteenth century village centre. While many buildings within the ACA are of architectural merit, some buildings of little or no architectural merit may be included within the boundaries because of their location within the historic streetscape.

Implications of ACA designation

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works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission. For example, the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

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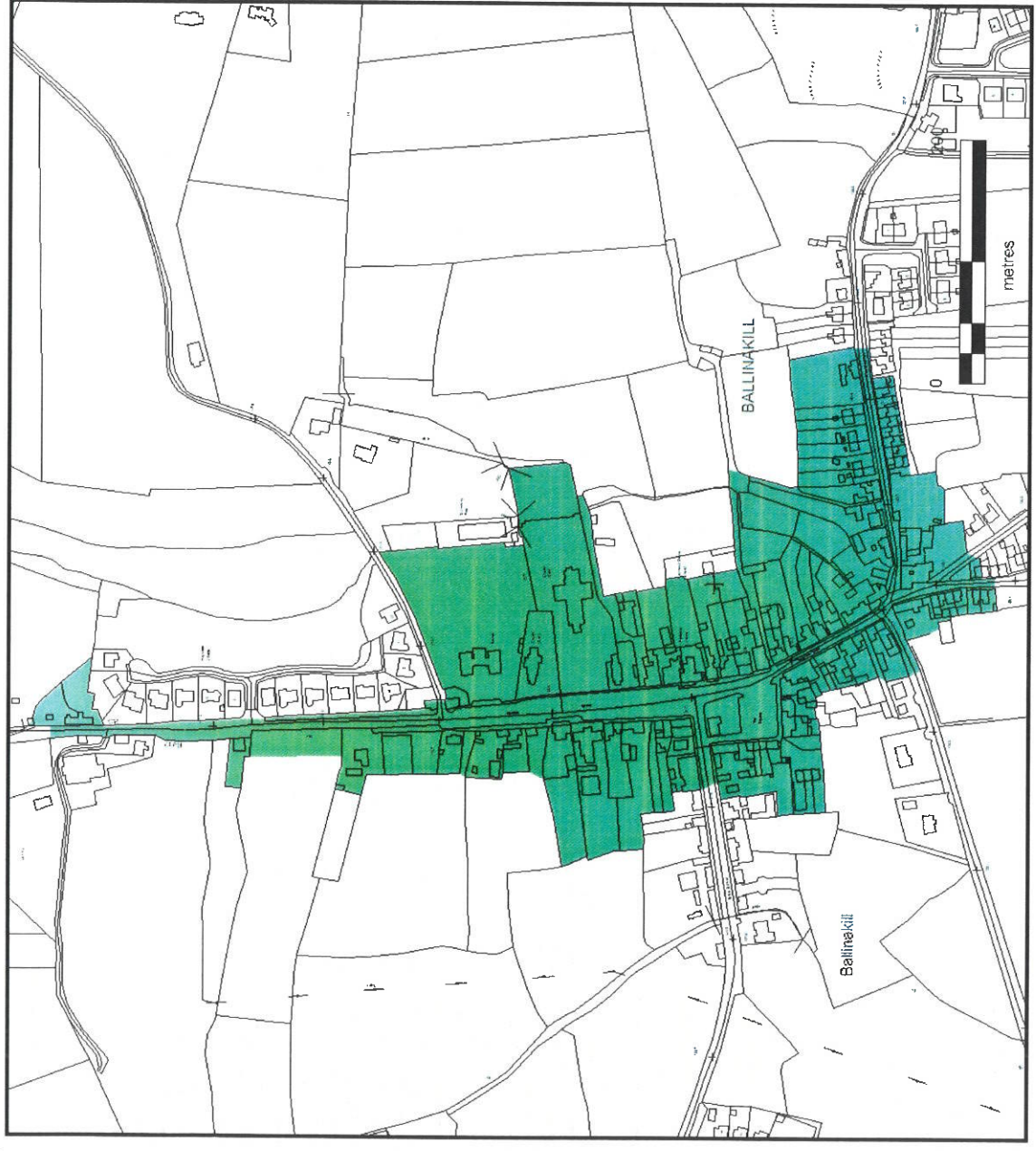


Legend:
Architectural Conservation Area

BALLINAKILL ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA


LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

Chairman	Deonail Kiely	Assistant	Angela McEvoy
Clerk	Dermot Dunne		



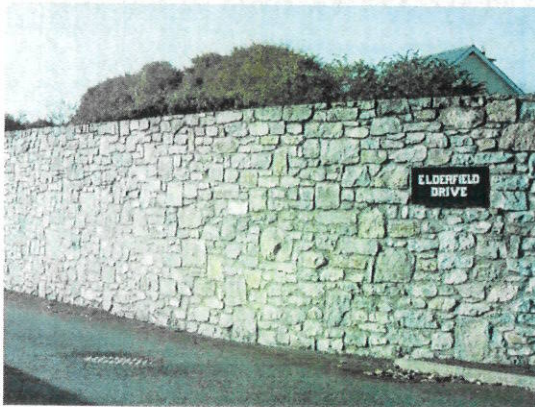
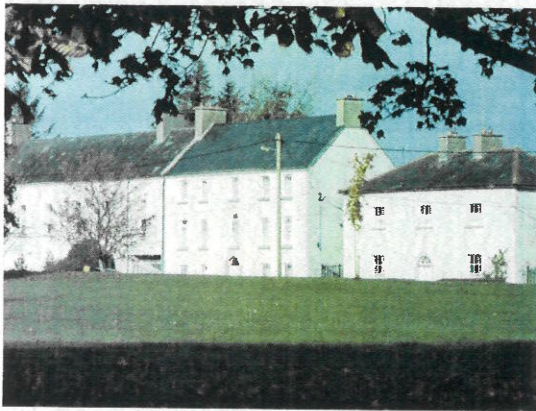
CASTLETOWN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

History

Castletown reportedly takes its names from a Norman twelfth century castle of which only fragments remain. The development of the village is associated with the MacGiollapadraigs.

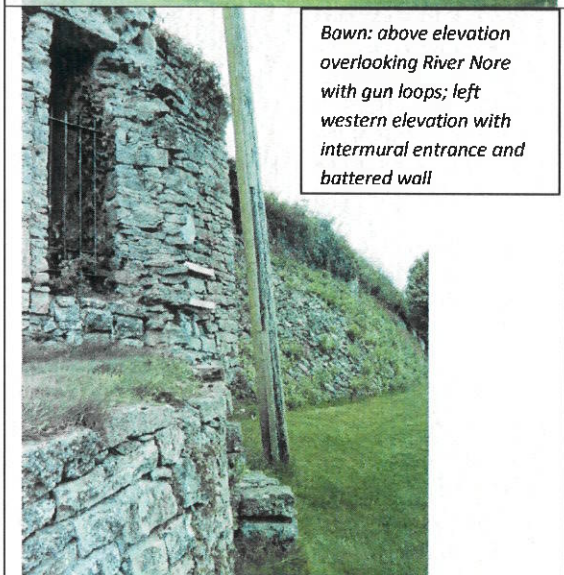
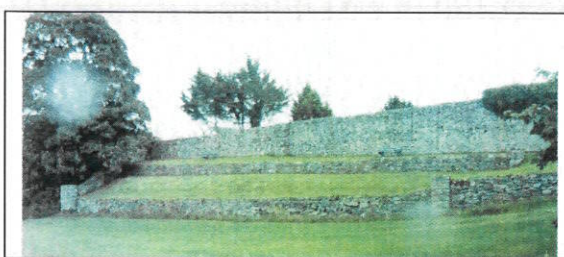
In the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the MacGiollapadraigs (Fitzpatricks) were displaced from lands to the south and made a common cause with the Delaney's seizing the Norman castles at Castletown, Aghaboe and Borris in Ossory. The MacGiollapadraigs were one of the seven tribes of the Laoighis, claimed descendance from the Milesians (Celts) and are attributed in the rebuilding of the fourteenth century monastery at Aghaboe. In the early fourteenth century, the remnant foreign settlers within the MacGiollapadraig's territory were expelled.

There is little documentation and study related to the plantation of the Upper Ossory the barony in which Castletown is located or the origins of the Castletown settlement. Castletown and the surrounding area were reportedly burned in 1600 to prevent royal forces taking succour. The crown made a largely spurious claim to this territory and proceeded with its plantation following an inquisition in 1621. Large-scale land seizures from the dominant family the MacGiollapadraig's were made in 1626 and this included the Castletown estate. The MacGiollapadraig's disputed the seizures, arguing that Elizabeth I had previously assured them that the Castletown estate would remain in their possession. The MacGiollapadraig's ceded territorial supremacy to the Duke of Buckingham in 1627. A reportedly apocalyptic preacher Olmstead received more than 500 acres of former MacGiollapadraig land in and around Castletown. Evidence suggests the MacGiollapadraigs became increasingly



impoverished as a result of their loss of territory.

During the 1641 revolt, the MacGiollapadriagns and other families rejected the plantation siding with the Conferderates and were central to the siege of Birmingham's castle in Borris in Ossory. In 1642 the MacGiollapadraig's laid siege, but had little success because of a lack of artillery.



Bawn: above elevation overlooking River Nore with gun loops; left western elevation with intermural entrance and battered wall

A bawn is located above the south side of the river. The elevation overlooking the river comprises roughly coursed cut stone wall with gun loops and square pillars and two terraces with similar pillars. An intermural entrance with associated steps is located to the northwest corner. The western elevation is of similarly roughly coursed but has a curved batter of random rubble and rounded stone. This bawn appears defensive in nature and is strategically sited overlooking a navigable watercourse which would have functioned as an importance trading corridor. It may be associated with the MacGiollapadraig's and the late medieval period. Further survey and study of this monument is needed.

This history of Castletown in Upper Ossory is sometimes confused with Castletown near Killabban in the east of the county which was an important settlement in Norman times and is associated with Hugh de Lacy.

Architecture – Description of Special Character

Castletown, is described in the Topographical Dictionary of Ireland of 1837 as *a village pleasantly situated on the River Nore and on the road from Dublin to Limerick, taking its names from an ancient castle containing 59 houses, many of which are good residences and the whole has an appearance of neatness and respectability.* Based on urban morphology typologies, the village's layout around a central triangular green is seventeenth century in date.

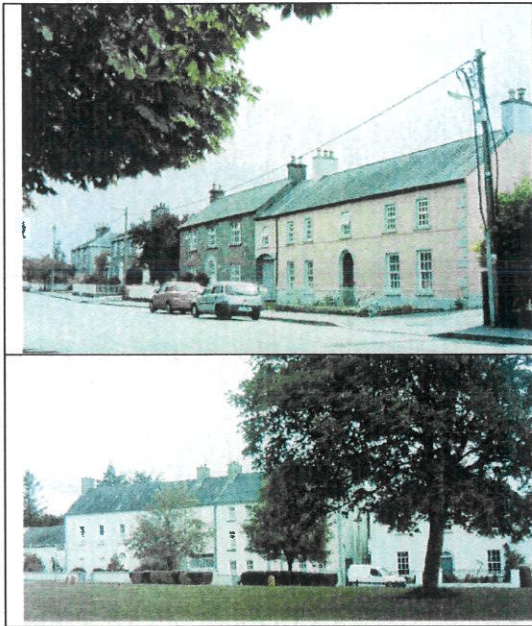
The land falls from south to north afforded panoramic views of the wider landscape and the Slieve Blooms from the green.



Castletown Green retains a strong Georgian character. Buildings of a high architectural order, with good survival of original architectural features such as windows and rainwater goods, overlook the triangular central green with its mature horse chestnut trees.

Early Georgian buildings are of particular interest, some have pitched-gables and others hipped-gable pitches, the larger properties tend to have integrated carriageway entrances and double pitches. Some later

structures dating to the 1830s at the Green are more modest.

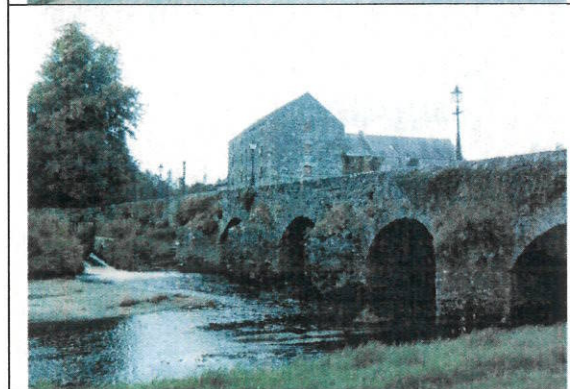
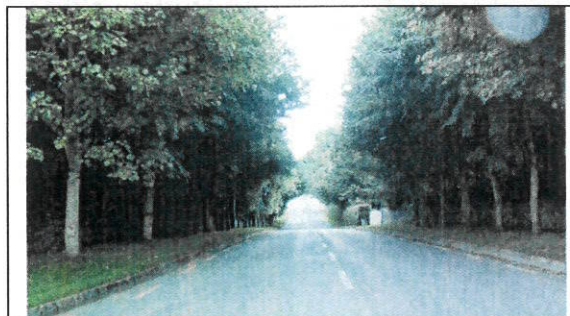


Notable nineteenth century additions include the rendered De La Salle Monastery (1870) (below) with red clay crested ridge tiles, yellowbrick chimneystacks and profiled cast iron rainwater goods. The Monastery dominates the green because of its large scale and the topography of the Green.



The Corn Mill (1840) (above) of coursed limestone rubble, dressed in brick with limestone quoins, slate roof, red ridge tiles and cast iron rainwater goods is a landmark building. As suggested by its location adjacent to the River, it was water-powered and the mill race, weir and steps along the southern side of the river bank are extant. The bridge spanning the river is sizable and can be appreciated from the banks, it is ornamented by cast iron lanterns. The mill structure is now vacant.

Twentieth century structures include the two school buildings from the first half of the twentieth century and a social housing estate.



The double row of trees and the six-arch limestone bridge (1750) with rubble stone parapets provides a fitting entrance to the village and can be appreciated from the grassed river banks below. The village has a tidy and well-maintained feel.

The village retains a strong geographic relationship to the river, though with the exception of the mill and the bawn, the buildings do not address the River.

Castletown would have benefited from its location close to a navigable river which would have been used to transport agricultural produce from the hinterland and other bulky goods.

The current commercial uses are located in the adjacent street giving The Green a tranquil atmosphere comprising residential and institutional uses.

The ACA boundaries are focused on the Green and the river.

Implications of ACA designation

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Legend:
ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

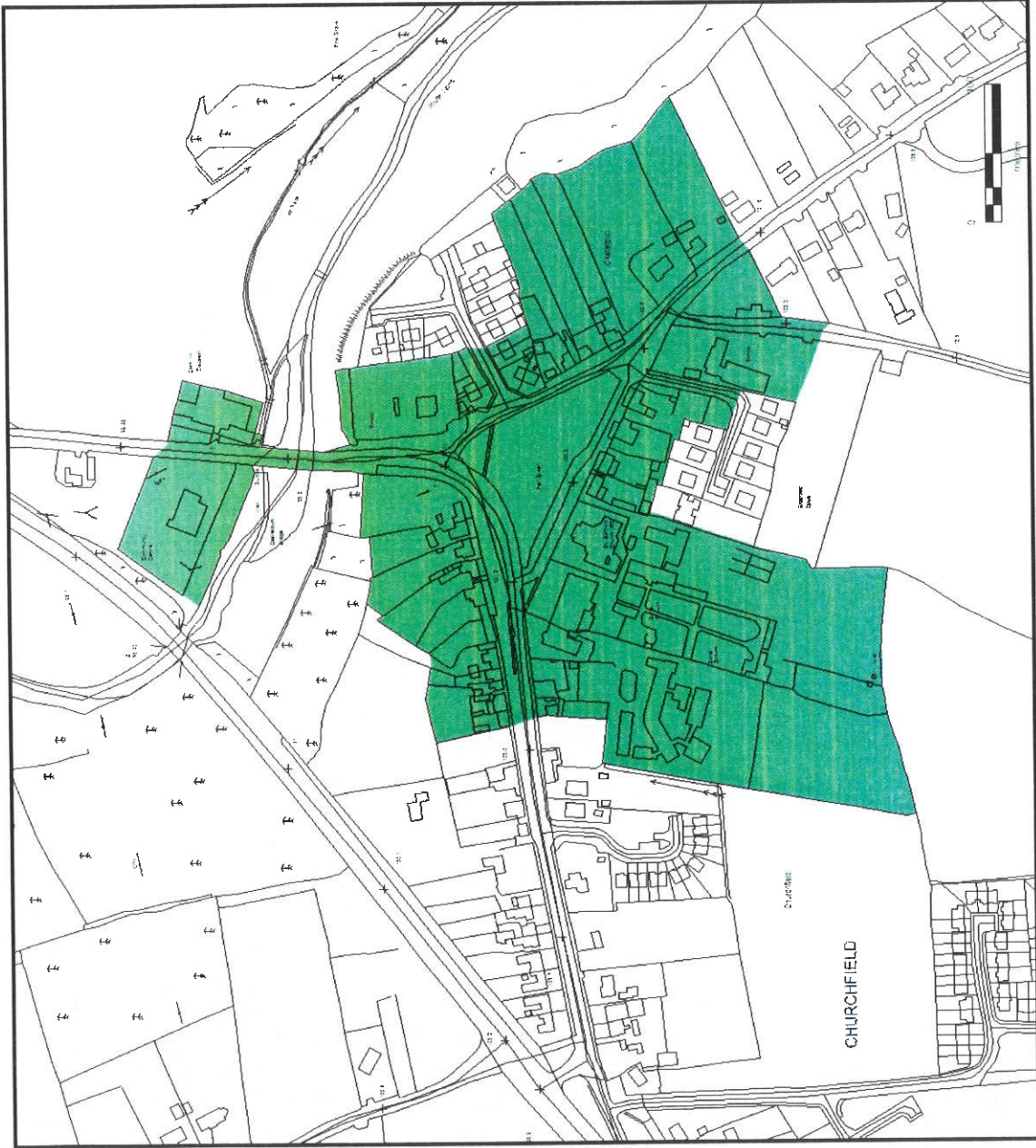
CASTLETOWN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

LAKES COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION



Drawn: Dermot Cumme
Checked: Donal Kiely
Approved: Angela McElroy

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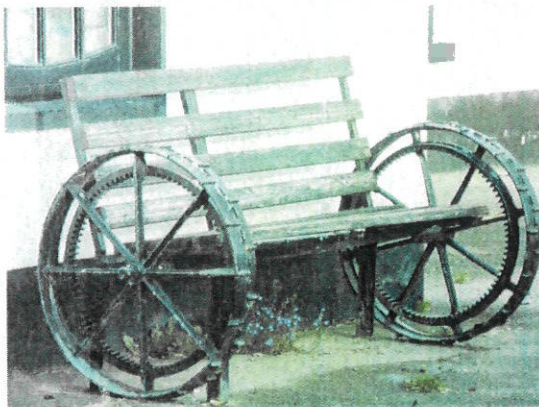
CLONASLEE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

History

Clonaslee originated as an Anglo-Norman settlement, though detail of its development during the late medieval period is scant. Its name is thought to derive from Cluain na Slighe, roadwise meadow or Cluain na Sleibhe, mountain meadow.



The development of the estate village of Clonaslee is associated with the Dunne family (of Irish descent) and the Brittas Estate. During the Williamite wars, soldiers from James I's army are said to have been based at Clonaslee in 1691, as the Dunne family were supporters of James Ist.

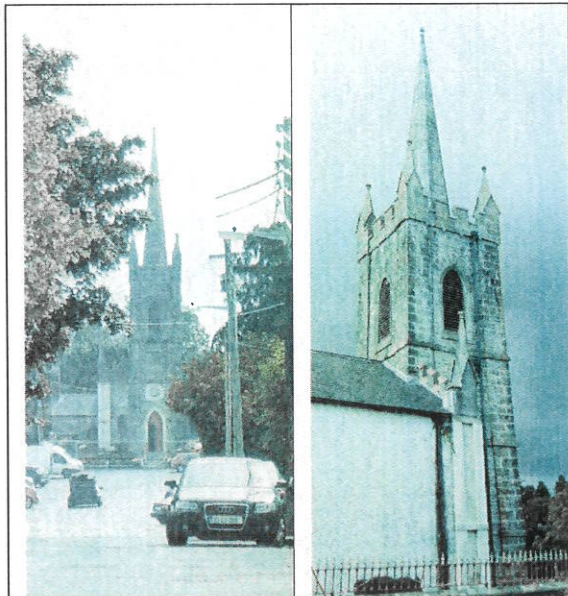


The Dunne's country house was built in 1869 to designs by John McCurdy, then extended and altered by Millar and Symes in 1879 and comprised three-storey over basement tower. The house was built by General Dunne then a Member of Parliament. The building is now derelict as a result of a fire in 1940s with no roof to the main structure. The appearance of the flag tower remains striking, being of sandstone ashlar masonry with defensive features including buttresses, corbelled, castellated parapet and a castellated turret and ornamented windows dressed in sandstone. A detached gatehouse and detached outbuildings forms part of the estate. The sandstone gate piers to the estate are sited within the village, tangibly indicating the close relationship between the demesne and the village.



Gates to Brittas Demesne

As with many estate villages, it is arranged around a wide boulevard. The plan form is thought to be eighteenth century in date. The former Church of Ireland (1814) is constructed in a Georgian Gothic style and is given central importance within the streetscape: the vista created by the strong building line of the boulevard terminates with the Church and is punctuated by the square tower and tall spire above. The church was erected under General Dunne, aided by a grant from the Board of First Fruits which was set up by Queen Anne to improve churches and glebe (rectory) houses.



The Roman Catholic Church, Saint Manman's (1813) is located on the Tullamore Road and is set back from the road and is simpler in design. It is located on the site of an earlier

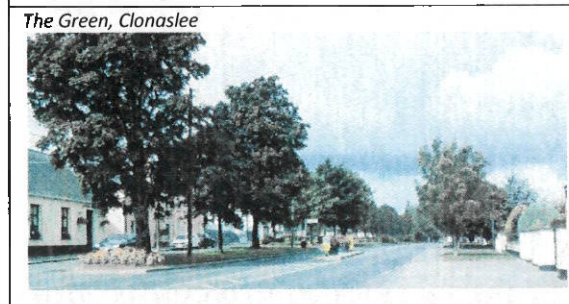
thatched chapel built around 1771 by Francis Dunne who became a Catholic.



The village grew quickly between 1800 and 1830. This growth was due to making of The Cut through uplands to create a new road between Mountmellick and Birr. This period saw the arrival of services such as a Post Office and Police Station. The current urban form of the centre of Clonaslee very much resembles its appearance in the first ordnance survey map in 1841. Clonaslee suffered severe population decline during the famine. The settlement has expanded eastwards and now functions as a large village.



Main Street Clonaslee



The Green, Clonaslee

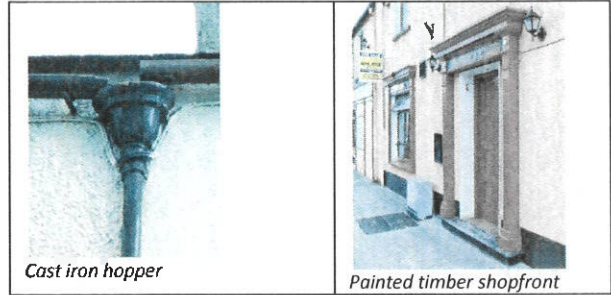
Tullamore Road Clonaslee



Clodiagh River



The topography of the village is flat and is set in a landscape dominated by gentle uplands and mature woodlands. The Clodiagh River runs along the Tullamore Road enclosed by a stone wall and under the Main Street towards Brittas Lake and contributes to the special character of the village. The streetscape of Main Street is cohesive, incorporating a strong building line defining the edge of the street, the buildings are mostly two-storey, with wide frontages, gable-pitched roofs, large chimney stacks and vertical emphasis windows, are orientated towards and open directly onto the Main Street.

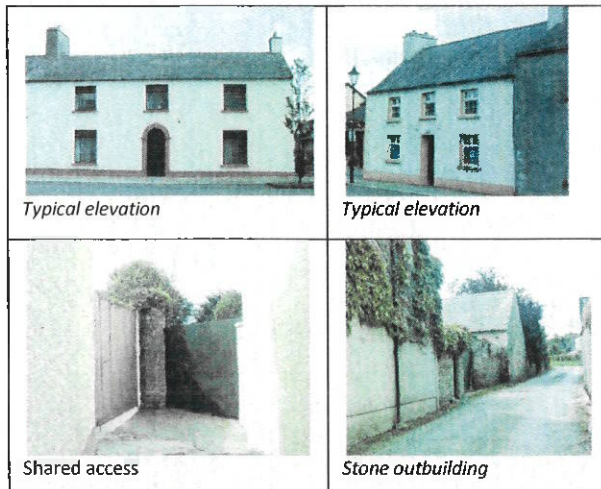


Cast iron hopper

Painted timber shopfront

Gaps between the buildings provide shared access to backlands though a few integral carriageways exist also. Most of the buildings have no elevational decoration, some are decorated with painted raised plasterwork to the doorways and faux quoins to the edges. Elevational finishes include roughcast, lime render and cement renders. Much of the original building fabric such as doors, sliding sash windows, roof tiles and rainwater goods have been replaced. Chimney stacks and pots generally survive. A small number of shopfronts of architectural quality survive.

The roof heights and pitches vary along the Main Street within a small range. More generally the streetscape comprises a linear form, designed vistas and views and some fine individual buildings including the Church of Ireland which now functions as a Heritage Centre, the Lodge and Hickey's Public House with their decorative timber fascia boards, the defunct Courthouse overlooking the Green. The Swan Public House, though not of architectural interest, is a prominent building by reason of its siting.



Typical elevation

Typical elevation

Shared access

Stone outbuilding





Open spaces make an important contribution to the character of the village and comprise the Green and the open space to the front of Hickey's Public House known as the Square.

Buildings along the western side Tullamore Road are more informally arranged becoming single-storey cottages from the village and are generally of a lower architectural order. The cottages along this road contribute to the special character of the ACA. The buildings and open spaces of the village are generally well-maintained.

Boundaries

The ACA is focused on the historic core of Clonaslee which comprises the Main Street, the Green and the Tullamore Road. While many buildings within the ACA are of architectural merit, some buildings of little or no architectural merit may be included within the boundaries because of their location within the historic streetscape or setting of the village.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

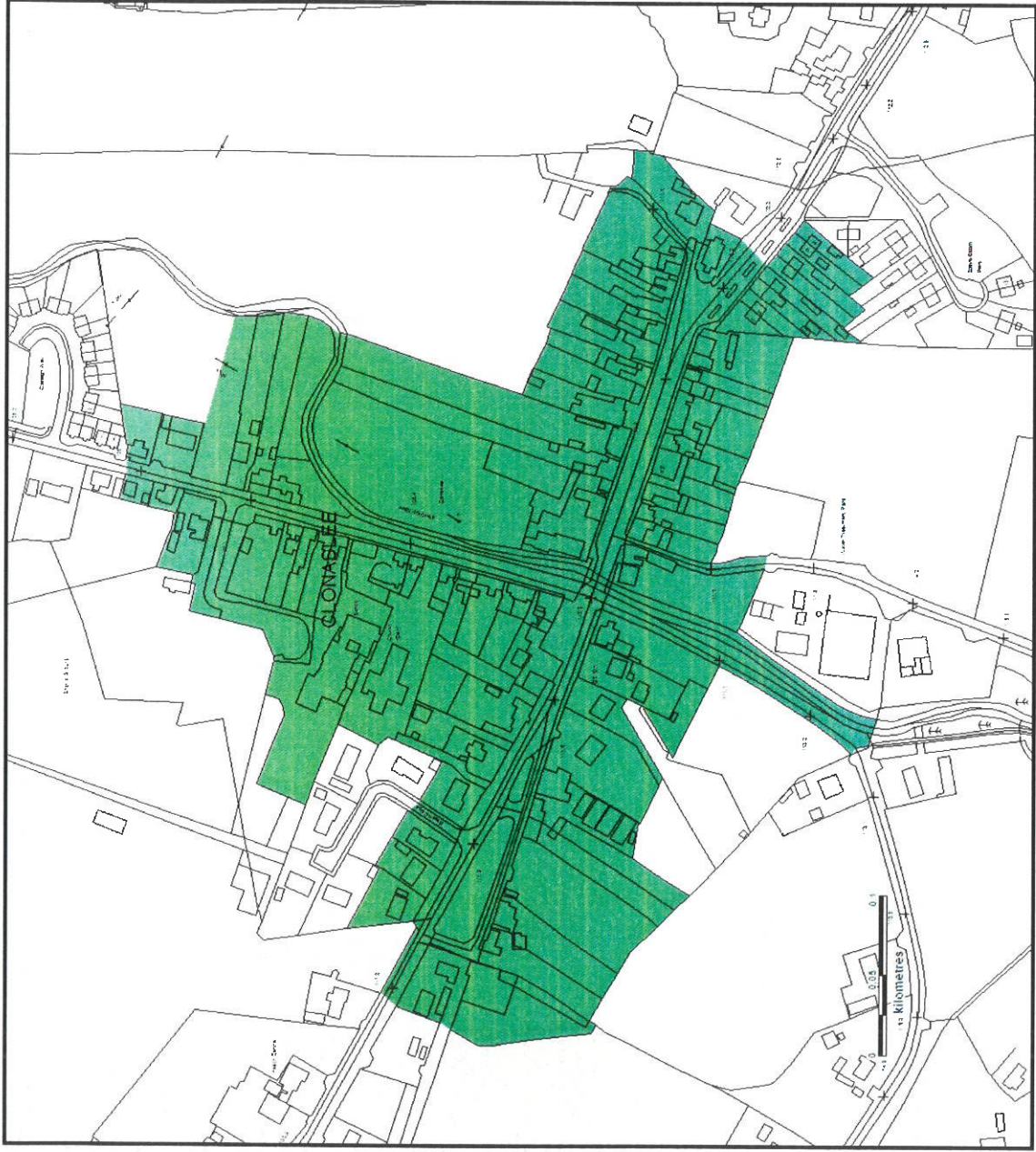
For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

- Other works that would require permission include:
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- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a particular area special. The demolition or insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted. Some structures within the boundaries may be of little architectural

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Legend:
 ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

CLONASLEE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

LADY'S MOUNT DEVONISH COUNCIL
 FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

Drawn: Dermot Dunne
Checked: Donal Kiely
Approved: Angela McElroy

FORWARDED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL FOR ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION
 AND MONUMENTS TO THE NATIONAL MONUMENTS AUTHORITY
 IN 2011 UNDER THE MONUMENTS AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT ACT 2004

DURROW ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Location and General Morphology

Durrow is located in south County Laois in a rural landscape of gently undulating hills, the River Erkina skirts the northern boundary of the village and the former main road to Dublin bisects the village diagonally. The village of Durrow centres around the pattern created by the convergence of two roads; the main (N8) route running from Dublin on the north east to Urlingford and Cork beyond on the south west, and the road to Kilkenny (N77) in the south east. These three main approaches create the basis for the triangular arrangement of Old Chapel Street, Mary Street and Castle Street and this coupled with the open 'Square' in front of the entrance to the settlement's principal *raison d'être*, Durrow Castle, give Durrow the well defined layout of a planned estate village.

History

The place name Durrow is an anglicisation of *Dar Magh* ('the plain of the oaks') and the earliest reference to the area is in the fifth century. There are also references to a monastery founded in *Dervagh* during the sixth century. There are no remains of this monastery but the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) records an ecclesiastical site (LA029-042000) on the south side of the Erkina river and on the western outskirts of the present day town. The association of St Fintan with Durrow is commemorated by a holy well (LA029-043001) dedicated to him on the north bank of the river. A number of derivations of the place name Durrow can be seen in other historical references to the area. A grant issued in 1245 to Geoffry de Turville, Bishop of Ossory, to hold a weekly market and an annual fair at the manor of *Derevald*. In 1350 the Manor of *Deraugh* was listed as the most valuable of the temporalities of the See of Ossory. The manor remained in the possession of the bishops until the Reformation and their influence is reflected in

local place names, such as 'Bishop's Meadows', 'Bishop's Roads' and Bishop's Woods'. The Earl of Ormond was granted possession of the manor following the Reformation. Durrow was officially removed from the jurisdiction of Queen's County and transferred into Kilkenny during the 1680s.

The estate was rented by the Viscount of Ashbrook, Sir William Flower in the same decade, and was then released to the Flower family in 1708. The estate of Castledurrow remained in the ownership of his descendants until the early twentieth century. The construction of Castledurrow was completed in the 1730s and by the end of the eighteenth century the earlier settlement of Durrow had been replaced with a planned estate village of 218 houses.

The new village was centred on a large square located to the east of the grounds of Castledurrow and they were connected by a tree-lined avenue that ran along the north end of the walled estate gardens. A number of three storey buildings to the north of the square were constructed by Flowers for his Welsh and English estate managers. The leases for the village plots made available to settlers prescribed the exact location and dimensions of the houses to be built and the timescale for the completion of construction. A number of leases were also granted for the milling operation at the Course on the Erkina during the eighteenth century and milling continued at this site until 1929.

A stone bridge was constructed to the north of the square in 1788 to replace an existing wooden bridge reputedly located c.500m up river and was itself replaced in 1958. The new estate town at Durrow benefited from its location on the Cork to Dublin mail road and the 'The Red Lion' hotel, which was constructed in the 1790s, functioned as a halting station for the Bianconi coaches.

In his 1837 description of Durrow, Samuel Lewis records that the town's population at that time was 298 inhabitants and that many of its 236 houses were well-built and roofed in slate. There were weekly markets held at the

market-house and the town also contained a number of schools, a courthouse, a boulting mill, a police station, dispensary, a Church of Ireland church and a newly built Catholic church.

The detail on the first edition OS map of 1841 demonstrates that the present day street layout on the south side of the river was in place by that time and shows the regular garden plots to the rear of the street front buildings. The Church of Ireland Church is shown on the west side of The Square and the Catholic chapel on the east end of the town.

In 1846 the Ordnance Survey Commissioners finally returned Durrow to Queen's County. The population of the town began to decline during the 1840s and had dropped to 559 by the early twentieth century. The detail on the 2nd edition OS map of 1890 and the 25-inch map of 1908 indicates that the layout of the core of the town remained unchanged during the remainder of the nineteenth century. The functions of a number of buildings are indicated on the 1908 map, including a hotel market house, constabulary and pump on The Square. This map also shows the presence of outbuildings in many of the garden plots behind the street front buildings. The market house in The Square continued to function until 1968 when the building was incorporated into Alley's Drapery. The layout of the eighteenth century estate town street plan, and indeed its fabric, have survived.

Description and Character Appraisal

The village developed on the south bank of the Erkina River beside the bridge which, although now defunct, replaced a previous timber crossing on this site and an earlier medieval stone bridge a short distance upstream. Its buildings are one, two and three storeys and they generally retain their long, narrow rear plots. They are arranged along both sides of the southern approaches to Durrow, around a triangular block created by a linking street between the main square and a smaller green area, and fronting onto the north, east and southern sides of the wide square that dominates the village.



view of houses on north side of square

The north western portion of Durrow was reserved for the Castle and its demesne along with the Church of Ireland and National Schools. These distinctive estate structures along with the ordered plan-form of the village, most buildings within which are eighteenth and nineteenth century in date, provide its individual architectural character. The village has a notably defined and relatively unaltered central core and this is separated from the more modern, suburban-type development of recent years by principal buildings on the three approach roads to Durrow. On the southwestern approach, the prominent national school building marks the original boundary of the village here, the stone arched bridge and the impressive former Bianconi Hotel demarcate the northern boundary to the village and on the southeastern approach, the Catholic Church and former infants' school provide effective bookends to the village centre. Within the village, notable structures include the Church of Ireland, Dun Naoise House on the north side of the Square and the former courthouse building which now houses the library on Oldchapel Road.

The large square contributes to the identity of the village and is a focal point for both Durrow and its surrounding landscape. The high quality and relatively unaltered nature of architecture, particularly along the Square's northern and western sides adds to its gravitas and provides a centre-piece to the village. The southern and eastern sides of the Square contain the majority of commercial activity within the village and this continues with shops, public and business premises along Mary Street, returning north on Oldchapel Street and east on Castle Street to form a triangular core to the centre of Durrow. The increasing scale and impact of

architecture towards the Square is visible on the terraces which line the southern approach routes, and channel the visitor towards the village centre along Patrick Street and Carrigan Street. With only a small number of modern infill buildings to the subject part of Durrow and larger modern developments well defined outside the limits of the original village centre, its general intactness contributes considerably to its architectural interest. This lack of disturbance applies even to rear plots of terraced street-fronting properties – a feature which is often eroded in larger towns as pressure of traffic management, parking or large commercial premises can see rear yards amalgamated and boundaries obliterated.

Views of Durrow from outside are limited with relatively dense belts of forest within one kilometre on all sides and no particularly elevated land in the surrounding area. Within the village the effect of road morphology and planned design of buildings constructed along the two southern approaches has been carried out with the aim of gradually unfurling views of different parts of the village to the visitor. With subtle bends in the roads, the visitor is guided through modest dwelling terraces to the commercial centre of the village and only when one arrives in the main square can it be fully appreciated and viewed. With no significant residential development, either modern or historic on the northern route into the village, one arrives directly at the corner of the Square with a very short approach from the edge of the village.



Former Red Lion Hotel

Despite road realignment the former Bianconi Hotel and those buildings on the northeastern

corner of the Square still frame the view of the Square ensuring its visual impact from all sides. There are no views of the river except for those from the bridges themselves however there is pedestrian access along the river. As in many Irish towns or villages the river in Durrow is largely ignored rather than exploited for its contribution to the character of the place. This may have been due to the historic association of rivers with heavy industry such as milling or with the use of rivers until recent decades as dumping grounds for waste generated by urban settlements. As legislation and practice is resulting in the improvement of river environments, their recognition as integral parts of village character is renewing interest in the contribution of rivers to the fabric of Irish towns and villages. In the case of Durrow, development of an amenity which interprets and commemorates the milling heritage of the area is providing this renewal of interest in the river as part of the village's character.

The overall area of Durrow village can be considered as three distinct but interlocking parts:

- Carrigan Street and Patrick Street
- Oldchapel Street, Mary Street and Castle Street
- The Square

Architectural Character

The village's architectural character is based on the distinctive plan form and on a mix of large residences displaying formal design elements, such as Georgian door-cases, and smaller scale buildings in a vernacular style.

The buildings on the square were consciously arranged with the residential element set back from the main thoroughfare which runs diagonally across the square and the more commercial element located to the south and east sides of the square. Although individual buildings differ in design this arrangement purposely creates a homogenous appearance

which contributes to the overall setting and character of the village.

The village reverts to a more informal, traditional appearance as one moves from the main square towards the outskirts of the village. Here the buildings are more vernacular in design and construction and front directly onto street. The repetitive use of pitched slate roofs, strong chimneystacks and render wall finishes adds symmetry to the streetscape while the lack of standardised facade treatments lends visual interest. Along these side streets, buildings were designed to have a dual purpose with a commercial function on the ground floor and residential accommodation to the upper floors. Buildings are frequently grouped in small terraces with intermittent laneways and integral carriage arches providing access to long narrow rear back plots.

During the early nineteenth century the historical urban townscape continued to develop with the construction of prominent civic structures dispersed throughout the village. The Church of Ireland church creates a focal point on the western side of the square, the Court House forms a prominent feature to the south of the village and the Roman Catholic Church located on an elevated site closes the south eastern perimeter of the village.

Building Features which contribute to the Special Character of the Town

Roof form, chimneystacks and rainwater goods

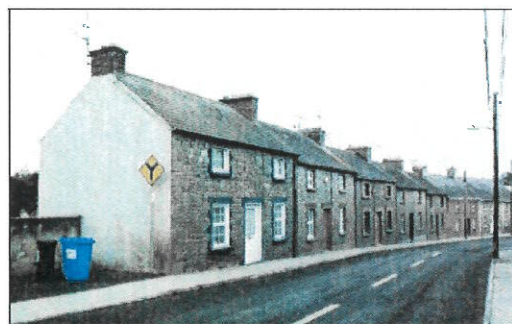
The majority of roofs in Durrow are pitched with slate cladding. Within both the village core and on approach roads to the village there is a range of differing roof heights. The roof heights along Carrigan Street, Patrick Street and the east side of the square are stepped to follow the natural slope of the ground. Roof pitches vary only slightly and tend to give a uniform appearance along the streetscape even though building heights vary. Detached or more recent infill buildings tend to have hipped roofs, such as the court

house, Ashfield Lodge (former Red Lion Hotel) and the semi-detached council cottages on Mary Street. Newly constructed buildings tend to be higher, or out of scale mono-pitched and are sometimes not in keeping with the streetscape.

The majority of chimneystacks are simple in design and rendered, with the exception of some brick stacks along the upper end of Carrigan Street. Chimneystacks are placed both centrally and on gable tops, indicating shared gable walls to terraces. Traditional rainwater goods are generally cast-iron or cast-aluminium and are painted.



View of Mary Street (formerly Queen Street), c.1900. At least two buildings in the photograph have thatched roofs. (Source: D O'Cherty)



Stepped roofline following natural slope along Carrigan Street.

Render (plasterwork) and external finishes

Renderers are the external coatings applied to buildings. Renderers commonly used in Durrow include (a) roughcast (b) smooth lime or cement render. Buildings using smooth render are painted with some having a ruled and lined decoration. Most buildings have a smooth rendered plinth and some have channelled quoins which emphasise the building's edge while adding visual appeal to the structure.

Exposed stone construction is evident along Patrick Street and Carrigan Street and displays the use of high quality stone in a more vernacular and traditional manner. Recent alterations have resulted in some of these residential units being rendered or bricked over, which conceals the natural stone finish, thus breaking the strong building line and visual appeal of these terraces. The carrying out of such works can have a long term detrimental effect on the condition of the building preventing it from breathing resulting in dampness.

Pebbledash is also present in Durrow but it is not widely used and is frequently confined to use on the upper storeys of buildings. Examples of this are generally confined to the side streets with the buildings facing the square being smooth or rough cast rendered.



Locally-produced brick from Attanagh was used in the finish of buildings along residential terraces on Carrigan Street and Patrick Street indicating the later expansion of the village along the village periphery.

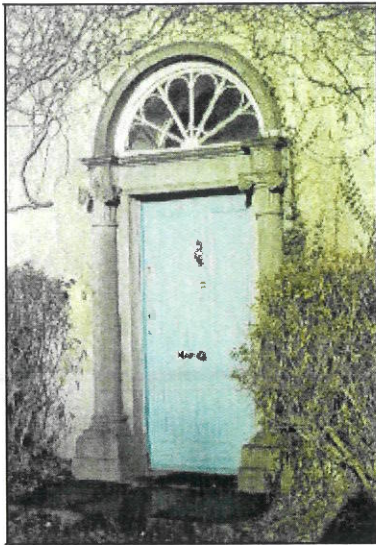
Window and Door Openings

Within Durrow the majority of buildings have been designed with window and door openings giving a symmetrical appearance to the buildings and the streetscape. More affluent building with classical proportions such as those to the north side of the square and the former Red Lion have diminishing window sizes with larger windows to the ground floor and small windows to the upper floor. Original windows were usually of timber sash construction with the glazing bars providing vertical emphasis.

Like many Irish villages Durrow has witnessed the replacement of timber sash windows with uPVC casement windows. Such replacements detract from the appearance of the building and have a negative effect on the overall character of the area. This is evident on both Carrigan Street and Patrick's Street. Sash windows are retained along the north square where buildings are of a higher design quality and more affluent in appearance.

Replacement timber sash windows have been inserted into Ashfield Lodge (Red Lion Hotel) in a sympathetic manner as part of the successful conservation of the building. In doing so the appearance and character of the building has been retained and the building contributes positively to the streetscape and acts as a landmark as one enters the village from the north.

Moulded render detailing is often used in window and door surrounds to decorate and define the openings. This mimics the craftsmanship evident in the high quality cut stone surrounds visible in buildings on the north side of the square. A good example of render detailing to window and door openings is evident on Castle Street. More affluent buildings located along North square have carved stone window and door openings displaying work of skilled masons and adding considerably to the appearance of the buildings.



Entrance doorway to Dun Woodse House

Residential terraces along Carrigan and Patrick Streets have brick window surrounds. This repeated detailing creates harmony in the street's appearance adding to the character of the area. In some cases this detailing has been replaced with poor alternatives such as stone cladding or has been hidden completely in cases where the building has been rendered over.

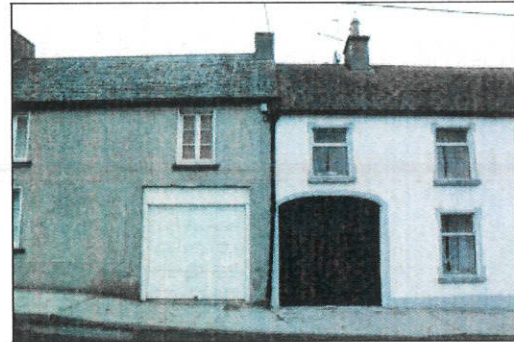
Window sills in general were constructed of tooled limestone but in many cases these have been replaced with concrete sills, often coinciding with the replacement of windows. Doors follow the same form and design as windows, usually having a vertical emphasis, and originally being of timber construction.

Replacement doors are often half glazed to allow for additional light where overlights or fanlights are not present on more vernacular designed buildings. uPVC replacement doors are also common reflecting the attempt to reduced noise levels created by passing traffic. Door surrounds to the more affluent north square are round-headed and of high quality architectural design and constructed of cut limestone with decorative fanlights.

Carriage Arches

Carriage arches provided access to backlands behind the main streetscape. They are intermittently located along the street creating groups of small terraces and strong gable ends. Most are integral segmental

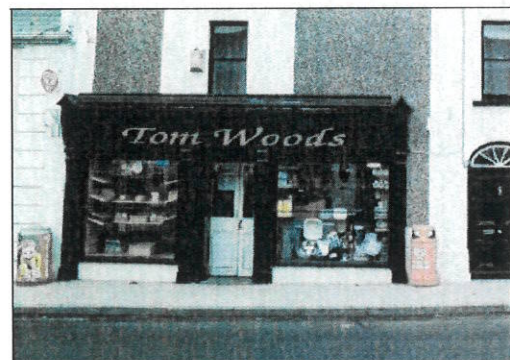
headed arches, however some openings have been altered to create square-headed arches. Such alterations change the appearance of the streetscape and result in the slow erosion of the character of the area.



The alteration of openings and the insertion of modern doors results in slow erosion of the characteristic features of an area.

Shopfronts and Advertisements

The established retail centre of the village is concentrated to the south of the square and along Mary Street. This has resulted in a variety of shopfront styles and finishes. Traditional shopfronts that remain are of timber construction, with ornate detailing. Examples include Tom Woods on Carrigan Street and the Medical Centre and Post Office on Old Chapel Street. Such features are an integral part of the character of the area creating a link to the past and establishing a unique sense of place.



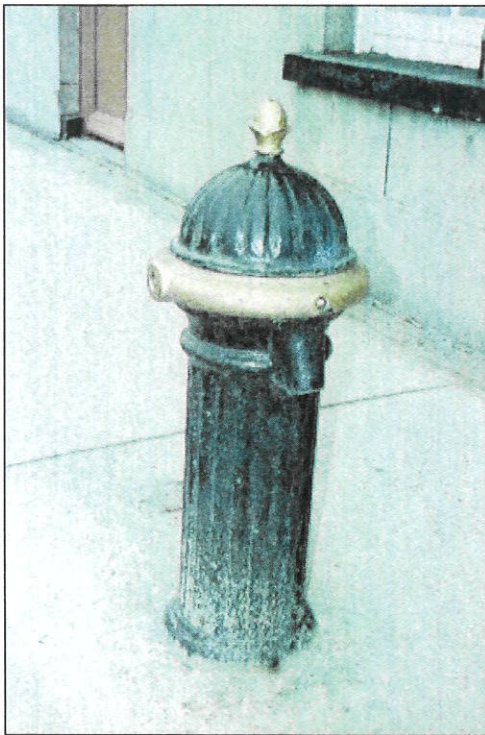
Traditional shopfront, Carrigan Street

Traditional shopfronts are constantly under threat from modern replacements or pastiche insertions, which can lead to inappropriate alteration of the streetscape. New development can reflect modern design, while simultaneously being sensitive to the overall character of the area.

Consideration must also be given to signage as it can easily detract from the overall appearance of a building and its contribution to the streetscape. On the most part signage within Durrow is neat and is painted directly onto the building or fascia. Brash neon or oversized signage can have a detrimental effect on the streetscape.

Street furniture

Durrow retains a number of items of historical street furniture which add to its character. At the northern corner of the square there is a wheel guard indicating the line of the road as it passed over the old bridge. The "Top pump", Located at Tea Lane is an important feature and is a reminder of social water schemes of the late nineteenth century. The village also retains at least three cast iron hydrants of later nineteenth century date.

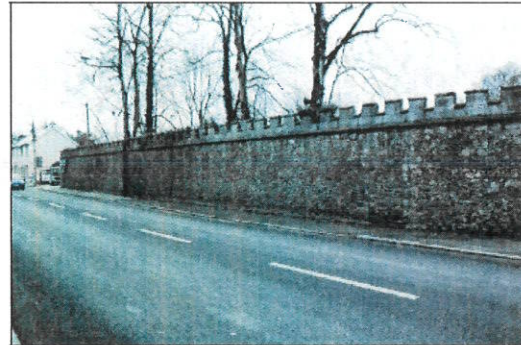


Hydrant

Railings and boundary walls

The main boundary wall in Durrow marks the edge of the Castledurrow estate and is constructed with rubblestone or roughly dressed limestone with crenellated coping. Most properties in the village core front directly onto the street and therefore lack boundary treatments. Properties on the north

side of the square, however, feature the use of railings atop low cut limestone plinth walls. These cast-iron railings are of high quality and every effort should be made to retain these boundary details.



Castle Durrow perimeter wall on approach road to south west of Village Square

ACA Boundaries

The proposed ACA boundary has been delineated to encompass the historic core of the village and the associated backlands which are part of its original layout.

Summary Character Statement

This village as at present is significant due to its planned eighteenth century origin, much of the character of which has been retained by good maintenance and the absence of significant inappropriate development within the historic core.

Durrow retains most of its built heritage due to its original, well-planned layout which placed appropriate building types in the right areas. This arrangement continues to be relevant and has prevented the need for major remodelling of significant parts of the village core and the loss of historic material and character which can often result. The replacement of windows in Durrow with uPVC frames or frames with different glazing arrangements is resulting in a gradual degradation of heritage character of the village and could relatively easily be prevented by use of more appropriate materials and designs. Such gradual erosion of historic character usually results from loss of historic material and features outlined in the

sections above, over a period of several decades and it may only begin to be noticed when it is irretrievable.

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Legend:

ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

DURROW ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



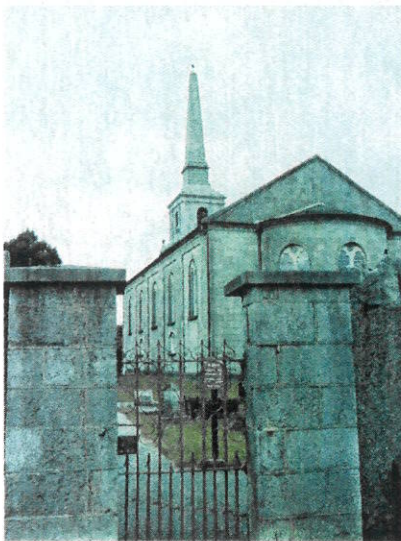
LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

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Approved:
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PREPARED BY: LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL, FORWARD PLANNING SECTION.
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PORTLOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



Setting

Portlaoise is set in quite a flat landscape, with natural features such as the Triogue River, an esker along the Ridge Road and man-made features such as a railway embankment and the busy JFL Avenue influencing the character of the town. The historic core of the town is centred around the Main Street, the town slopes downwards from west to east towards the Triogue.

History

The town dates to the sixteenth century and is the oldest town in the County. Its origins were as an early garrison town and are linked to the Laois/Offaly plantation. The concept of planting this area with settlers was first mooted around 1550, following a long and ravaging campaign to subdue the local lords and secure the Pale territory against attacks.

A crown fort known as the Fort Protector or Fort of Leys was erected in 1548 on rising ground to the southeast of the Triogue with the esker to the east forming a natural boundary. The town was planted with gentry from the Pale and soldiers involved in the campaign. The town's early history was fraught with instability as local leaders reacted aggressively. Attempts were made to displace the O'More and O'Connor-Faly clans and the leaders of the O'Mores were eventually massacred. The plantation did not become rooted until the late sixteenth century and even then problems persisted. The town was plundered in 1580, burned in 1597 and attacked the following year. The hinterland around the town was difficult to penetrate and dangerous to Crown forces.

The fort was rebuilt in 1563 and comprised a rectangular enclosure with a projecting circular tower in the northeast corner and a rectangular tower in the southwest corner. The rectangular tower became known as the Castle of Maryborough. The settlement was

renamed Maryborough in 1556 after Queen Mary and became Portlaoise (a derivation of Fort Protector) in 1920. The town was granted a market in 1567, attained Borough status in 1569, and had a parish church by around 1556 (Old St Peter's). A high number of property grants between 1559 and 1571 indicate a brief period of prosperity. A schematic map dating to 1565 shows a small walled town around the Fort, with fourteen houses.

Influence of Sixteenth Century Town on the Current Plan Form and Building Stock

The street, indicated on the 1565 schematic map, to the south of the Fort aligns broadly with Main Street and Bridge Street, while the street to the north of the Fort aligns with Church Street. A map dating to 1766 shows the contemporary street pattern of Main Street, Church Lane, Church Street, Chapel Lane and Church Avenue (culverted).

The medieval market was most likely located where the Main Street widens adjacent to the junction with Chapel Lane, this area was still being used as a market place up to the early twentieth century. The kink in building line and street at Chapel Lane is thought to follow the line of a water-filled ditch along the southern wall of the fort in 1565.

No remains of the town wall have been uncovered. There have been suggestions that the laneways to the south of the Main Street (in particular Pepper's Lane and Lyster Lane) may indicate entrances into the medieval town.

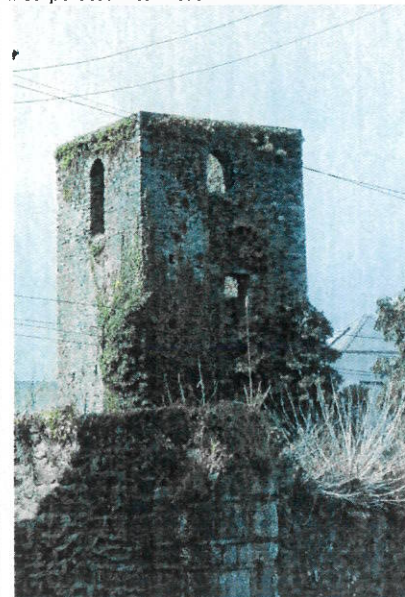
The north, east and south walls of the Fort from 1563 survive along with short sections of the northern end of the western wall, along with the circular tower to the north east. The square tower did not survive. The circular tower is the most distinctive element of the modern-day streetscape, this robust structure has an internal diameter of 8.2m with walls measuring 1.5m in thickness, ledges to the interior indicate the structure was originally three storeys high. Another distinctive

element is an external batter along the east wall.

Circular Tower to Fort Protector shown on 1565 map of Portlaoise



Circular Tower shown on 1565 map of Portlaoise now incorporated into Presentation Convent



Tower to old Saint Peter's Church dating to sixteenth century

There is little documentary evidence of the development of Portlaoise in the seventeenth century, though it is known that the town and the Fort suffered severe damage during the Cromwellian Wars of 1652-3.

A building called the Stone House is identified on the 1565 map directly east of the Fort and may have been a mill. A tower on the southern gable of the Stone House has been incorporated into the adjacent Presentation Convent and survives. The Presentation Sisters took residence in the Stone House in 1824; the structure was incorporated into the convent building by way of an extension in 1872. A conservation report on the convent recommends the removal of later extensions to expose the sixteenth century structure. A subterranean tunnel connecting the fort with the Stone House is said to exist and possibly a wider subterranean network.

Of the sixteenth century Old Saint Peter's Church, the west tower and north wall of the nave survive within its own burial grounds. The church fell into disuse in the early nineteenth century. The square church tower is a focal point in the skyline of Church Street.

A significant element of the special interest of Portlaoise ACA resides in the late medieval street plan (Main Street, Bridge Street, Church Avenue, Church Lane, Church Street, Chapel Lane, Pepper's Land and Lyster Lane) and late medieval building stock. These elements are of special historical, archaeological and architectural interest. Its plan form indicates a strong association between the late medieval town and the present day town centre. The Fort is the earliest historic structure in the town and the historic centre of Portlaoise from which the town grew. The development within and around the Fort show the evolution of the town and it forms an integral part of the character of Portlaoise Town. The Fort is a recorded monument, protected structure and is located within an area of archaeological potential and is of immense importance, especially as the fort of similar

date built in Daingean, County Offaly does not survive.

The extant structures of Old Saint Peter's Church and in particular the Fort Protector are of national importance, being physical reminders of the Laois/Offaly plantation. The plantation of Laois/Offaly, though initially of limited success was a vanguard for more extensive plantations of other regions of Ireland, which transformed the economic, social and political order of the Country. The defensive nature of the extant Fort Protector is indicative of contemporary military architecture and the serious nature of local resistance to crown forces.

A significant proportion of the Fort was formerly part of a Mill and is now used as a depot by the Council, two schools and a number of dwelling units are now located within the Fort. Old Saint Peter's is now derelict and its grounds overgrown. The Presentation Convent is also in a poor state of repair. The condition of these structures belies their immense importance and these structures would benefit from a detailed Conservation Management Plan and subsequent conservation works. Plans for the re-use of the fort as a County Museum and Library are under examination and if works are carried out sensitively, these could benefit the structure. Archaeological excavation of the fort could contribute to our understanding and the location of a County Museum could enhance appreciation of the importance of the structure and its history as well as the historic appeal of the town.

Influence of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

A manuscript map of 1766 indicates the modern-day sweep of Main Street and Bridge Street, the eastern half of Market Square, Railway Street as well as the earlier Church Avenue and Church Street. This manuscript also shows Old St Peter's Church and a two-storey Courthouse with a central clock tower on the site of the present-day courthouse.

A number of fine Georgian residences were constructed along Church Street in the eighteenth century, as well as the sombre stone-clad gaol in 1789, designed by Richard Harman which now functions as the Dunamais Theatre and Arts Centre. Other surviving fine Georgian residences include Portleix House and the IBS building on the Dublin Road.

Dunamais Theatre and Arts Centre



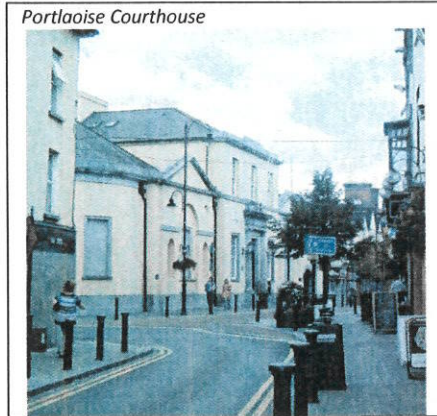
The greatest thrust of development in Portlaoise occurred in the nineteenth century, producing most of Portlaoise's prominent public buildings and current streetscape comprised of archetypal pattern-book designs and vernacular terraced residences. The Main Street is punctuated by laneways leading to Lyster Square and integral carriageway entrances which survive. Doorways to living quarters above the shop are often integral to the design of the façade and shopfront and a number survive. The buildings become more modest along Bridge Street and have a finer grain with smaller shop units. Few retain a retail use.

The town's expansion was shaped by the nature of new roads projecting out from the core. The new Saint Peter's Church built in 1803-4 was the first building located to the west of the diamond at the junction of the newly laid out Grattan Street and Coote Street. Its strong form and obelisk steeple

(attributed to Gandon) is a strong focal point in the Market Square. The diamond became the setting for a new public square, the Market Square for the town. A free standing Market House was rebuilt in the second half of the nineteenth century as the Town Hall (destroyed in 1945 by fire).

In 1805, the Courthouse was rebuilt and is ascribed to Richard Morrison. This structure continues to function as a district and circuit court and is a landmark building in the Main Street. It was linked by a curved wall to the gaol on Church Street.

Portlaoise Courthouse



The gaol was moved to a more substantial County Gaol and House of Correction in 1830, built in a Gothic Revival style on the Dublin Road. St Fintan's Asylum erected in 1832 is another fine public building, its plan form is distinctive to nineteenth-century asylum design, intended to provide good natural light.

Fine institutional buildings shown on the first ordnance survey map of 1839 include: a cut stone barracks now functioning as the Garda Barracks, schools on the Stradbally Road, on the north side of Church Street and formerly attached to the Catholic Chapel on Church Avenue (built 1837-8 in Gothic style, demolished in 1960s) and the Presentation Convent (1830).

Presentation Convent



As mentioned above, the Presentation Convent has fallen into disrepair and the reuse of this structure to secure its longevity is now necessary. Fine and substantial residences from this period include Portrain House, Annebrook House and Annefield House.

The early to mid-nineteenth century townhouses along Grattan Street are modest, well-proportioned and arranged around a wide street and like Main Street, many have integral carriageway entrances. The straight building line, gable-pitched roofs and vertical emphasis windows along this approach road to Market Square give these townhouses a cohesive character. Cooite Street is dominated by high traffic levels and heterogenous in terms of architectural order and roofscapes.

Late Georgian Terrace, Cooite Street



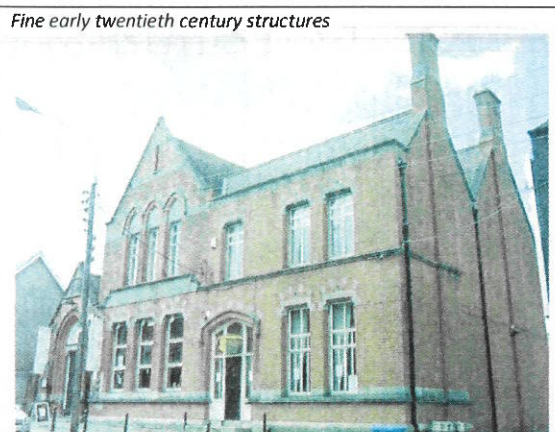
Elements of Maltings complex

A terrace of three late Georgian houses make a positive contribution to this approach towards Market Square. The Maltings complex is late nineteenth century in date and an important element of the industrial heritage of the town but is also a landmark complex within the streetscape, capable of making a significant contribution if brought back into active use.

The arrival of the railway in Portlaoise resulted in the construction of the iconic railway station of location limestone attributed to engineer Sancton Wood, as well as the layout of Railway Street and resulting development along it including the Methodist Church built in Gothic Revival style. By the end of the nineteenth century, industrial development in Portlaoise included the Odlum's Mill complex (close to the location of the late medieval mill on the 1565 schematic plan), an Old Tannery to the south of Main Street, a Textile factory in Tea Lane, and an extensive Maltings off Cooite Street, served by a spur off the new railway line.

Fine early twentieth structures include the elaborately decorated O'Loughlins Hotel and Pharmacy and the redbrick Kingfisher Restaurant formerly a bank building. The wholly modernist Midland Regional Hospital (1933-36) by Michael Scott is one of the finest structures of its type in the Country. The symmetrical façade of the former cinema (1940) is decorated with circular opes, four pilasters and horizontal emphasis projecting

blockwork below first floor windows and to the parapet and is representative of its period and typology and its historic function is of social importance. The main thrust of speculative and social housing dates to the 1950s. James Fintan Lawlor Avenue was laid out in the 1970s and changed the character of the town substantially. The County Hall was constructed in 1982.



The Main Street continues to operate as the commercial core of the town and benefits from recent public realm improvement works limiting vehicular transport through the street. However the core extended westwards into Lyster Square during the twentieth century and major convenience retail establishments are located west of JFL Avenue.

Although the survival rate of many building features along the Main Street such as timber sliding sash windows, doors, natural slate roofing and shopfronts is low, some do survive. Importantly the eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings themselves survive, some features such as elevational plasterwork, cast iron rainwater goods and profiled chimney stacks along with most of the upper storey window openings are intact. More attention to the historic architectural scale, materials and elevational details is needed as well as more considered new and infill development; the designation of this ACA will facilitate this. Some well-designed contemporary shopfronts contribute to the character of the streetscape.



Surviving historic building fabric: painted timber door with decorative fanlight; timber sliding sash window with crown glass; decorative painted console

The form of the Market Square changed with the diversion of the Abbeyleix Road in the nineteenth century to align with Coote Street, fragmenting the southern terrace overlooking the Square. Although the Market Square features a number of fine buildings, it is dominated by traffic and parking and would benefit from carriageway realignment and public realm improvement works to give pedestrians more priority, in particular as the N80 bypass is complete. A number of fine nineteenth century properties around or approaching Market Square, some with carriageway arches, are under-used or vacant and an improvement in the quality of Market Square and a reduction in vehicular throughput may improve the attractiveness of these structures as residences.

The special architectural character of the Portlaoise ACA also resides in the grouping of some eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century buildings along Main Street, Coote

Street, Grattan Street and Bridge Street; the heterogenous heights, grain, roof pitches, architectural order and elevational features of buildings along Main Street, Bridge Street and Coote Street, the urban spaces at Market Square and adjacent to the Fort Protector and individual fine landmark buildings such as the Kingfisher Restaurant and O'Loughlin's Hotel or fine terraces such as along Church Street or Coote Street. The layering of structures of different dates and orders tangibly show the origin and evolution of the town.

Boundaries

Some structures of special interest are excluded from the ACA, but are protected by way of inclusion within the RPS. The boundaries of this ACA are tightly drawn around the town centre and historic core in order to give the ACA a strong focus.

Conclusion

The history of the town is embedded in individual historic or special buildings, groups of buildings, building features, open spaces and the street pattern. Collectively the tangible layering of these structures can deepen the understanding among town residents of the cultural heritage of their home place. If well-presented and maintained, ACAs can foster civic pride amongst residents and admiration from visitors.

Heterogenous building grain, heights and elevational treatments



The urban centre of Portlaoise is more than the sum of its parts, it cannot be conserved effectively simply by adding its significant buildings to the Record of Protected Structures. An ACA would define a wider entity, also embracing the open spaces of the town.

The incremental loss of features of the historic environment erodes this value and depreciates the character of a town, and this leads to a feeling of decline and low self image.

In particular the Fort Protector is a rare built element of the first significant English Plantations in Ireland and as such a heritage site of enormous significance and potential. It is currently subdivided into multiple titles and its importance cannot be appreciated. It is essential that this site should not be regarded as a backlands area of the town and its key historical significance as the genesis of the settlement of Portlaoise actively recognised. Great care should be taken to prevent irreversible development which would damage this enormous asset to the identity of Portlaoise. If the Fort Protector were to be restored to a high conservation standard, this unique structure could become a cultural and economic resource of benefit to the town. It is noted that currently there are no significant cultural attractions nationally that treat the plantation of Ireland in detail and that historic accounts of the plantation of Laois/Offaly are detailed and colourful.

Conservation of the adjacent former St. Peter's Church and graveyard, and of the hugely significant former Presentation Convent, which faces the Fort wall, would create an historic precinct of great heritage value and interest, with the capacity to greatly raise the profile of the town.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special

character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission. Other works that would require permission include:

- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a particular area special. The demolition or insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted. Some structures within the boundaries may be of little architectural interest and are included within an ACA

boundary only because of their location within the streetscape. Buildings of little architectural merit may be subject to wholesale redevelopment as part of a planning permission. However, any replacement building should be designed with due regard to the special characteristics of the ACA. Suitably designed infill or bankland development that contributes to the special character of the ACA will also be encouraged. Works to the public realm within ACAs e.g. footpaths, street furniture, parking schemes will be required to respect the special character of the area also.

Current threats to the special character of Portlaoise ACA include:

Threats to that character include:

- stripping of render from elevations, demolition of chimney stacks
- removal of carriageway entrances
- removal of doorways to the upper storeys of buildings along the main street
- replacement of natural slates with artificial materials,
- replacement of cast iron rainwater goods with uPVC,
- replacement of timber sliding sash windows with uPVC,
- loss of historic shopfronts and related advertisements
- insensitive infill development
- wholesale demolition of historic buildings.
- the most serious threats to the special character of Portlaoise ACA include underuse, vacancy and dereliction

A number of landmark structures within the ACA including the Presentation Convent, the Maltings Complex, Old St Peter's Church and the Fort Protector need active uses to secure their longevity.

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
2015/0155



Legend:
Architectural Conservation Area



PORTLAOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

Drawn: Cormac Duime
Checked: Donal Kieley
Approved: Angela McEvoy

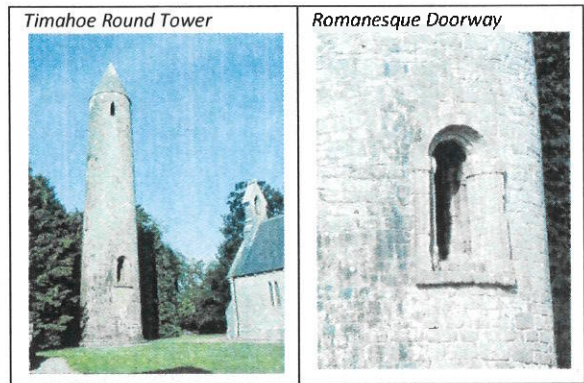
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TIMAHOE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA (ACA) - Candidate

History

The development of the village is linked with the Timahoe monastic site which is likely to have been a medieval proto-urban settlement. The monastery is said to have been founded by Saint Mochua who died in 657 suggesting the settlement was founded in the seventh century.



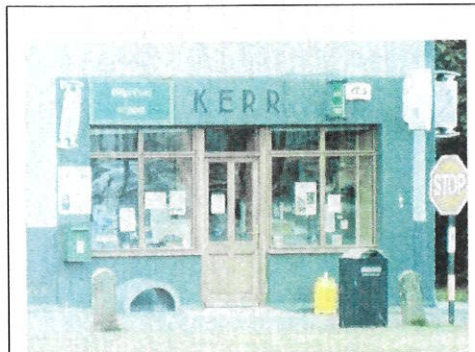
The monastery was considered prosperous by the nineteenth century and was plundered and burnt in 919 and again in 1142. Monastic buildings from the early medieval period are generally of wood and it was not until the eleventh or twelfth century that stone became a predominant building material. It is therefore not surprising that no monuments from the early medieval period are extant.

In late medieval times the monastery was refounded by the O'Mores suggesting it had become defunct, and was regranted to Richard Cosby in 1609. A monastic community functioned here as late as 1650. Based on urban morphology typologies the arrangement of buildings around a triangular green indicates

the village was laid out in the seventeenth century.

Architecture

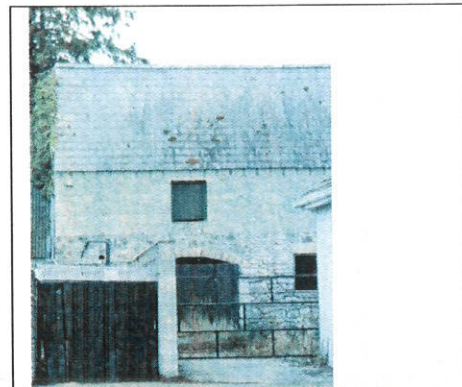
The village contains a former Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks which has been subdivided into two dwellings and a number of traditional shopfronts.



Traditional Shopfronts



Eighteenth and nineteenth structures retain few original features, although individually these structures are not of special interest, collectively they make a positive contribution to the ACA. Opportunities for infill development around the Green remain.



Opportunities for refurbishment



The village also contains a large Roman Catholic Church built between 1830 and 1835 finished with roughcast render with the gables, church tower, windows and eaves dressed with ashlar masonry of limestone.



The former Church of Ireland building now functions as the village library. It is a more modest structure built in a gothic revival style in 1840 with a projecting porch, chancel and

vestry and lancet windows with leaded lights. The elevations are finished with snecked limestone with ashlar plinth, quoins, corbels and windows dressings.

The library is located within the grounds of the medieval settlement which comprises a fine twelfth century round tower with a base that may be older, a ruinous sixteenth century tower house and remnants of a fifteenth century church.

The round tower measures 29.26m high and is roofed with a conical cap, no internal floors survive. The tower is a striking feature within the ACA. A Romanesque doorway to the first floor of the tower is decorated with human heads with intertwined hair and has four receding orders, a window in a similar style is visible at second floor, slit and square headed and pointed windows are located on other floors. During medieval times a Round Tower functioned primarily as a status symbol indicating prestige and wealth.

The ruinous tower house is located to the southeast of the round tower and may be associated with the Cosby's. The tower house was reported to feature a Sheela na Gig, but this is no longer visible. The remnants of the fifteenth century church, possibly consisting of the chancel arch are incorporated into the eastern wall of the tower house. The east wall and short sections of the north and south walls of the tower house are extant.

Goose Green with band stand



Timahoe River and footbridge

Approach into Timahoe



The monastic campus retains a strong relationship with the village because of its proximity to the green and the siting of the library within its grounds. The round tower and the Goose Green are the most prominent and distinctive elements of the ACA. The arrangement of modest single and two storey buildings with simple elevations around the

green and orientated towards it is an essential element of the village's character. Mature oak, sycamore and horse chestnut trees within the grounds of the round tower and a small pedestrian bridge over the Timahoe River running through the village reinforce the link between the monastic site and the village green.

The topography of the town is flat but it is set against Fossey Mountain to the south. Public realm features such as a timber band stand and cast iron pump with wrought iron railings around are prominent given the flat topography. A dual line of sycamore trees on the approach road from Portlaoise contribute to the sense of place.

Summary of Special Interest

The special interest of Timahoe resides in the arrangement of modest two-storey buildings with little ornamentation dating mostly to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a number in commercial use orientated towards a large central green known as the Goose Green and the continuing function of Timahoe as a working village serving its rural hinterland. The special interest also resides in the relationship between the village and the monastic site to the west of the Timahoe River and the monuments and protected structures associated with Timahoe's origin and development.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic

building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

- Other works that would require permission include:
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- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
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Laois County Council
Laois County Council
Laois County Council



Legend:
Architectural Conservation Area

TIMAHOE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION



Drawn	Checked	Approved
Dermot Dunne	Donal Kieley	Angela McEvoy

PROJECTED BY: LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD PLANNING SECTION
PROJECTED BY: LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL FORWARD PLANNING SECTION
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Laois County Council
Comhairle Chontae Laoise

Appendix 2:
Architectural Conservation Areas

Laois County Development Plan
2011-2017

Adopted 11th October 2011

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INTRODUCTION

The designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) arose from recognition of the need to protect groups of historic buildings and street patterns, as well as individual buildings. ACAs are designated to protect the special character of an area through positive management of change.

It is Council policy to:

Consider favorably development proposals within an ACA that would either preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the ACA. In considering applications for changes of use, the Council will be concerned with maintaining the character of that area;

Manage change within Architectural Conservation Areas by preserving what makes the ACA special, allowing for alterations and extensions where appropriate, enhancing the quality of the ACA by identifying opportunity sites for refurbishment or redevelopment.

Additional objectives and policies relating to ACAs are contained in Volume I



ABBEYLEIX ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Setting and General Morphology

Abbeyleix is located in south County Laois within the plain of the Nore River which lies about 2.5km to the west of the town. The Gloreen Stream runs to the north of the town. Abbeyleix is located in a flat rural landscape with gently undulating hills located to the east and north-east. The surrounding fields are demarcated by hedgerows and are used for dairying and tillage purposes.



The present town of Abbeyleix, which is eighteenth century in date, was planned on a linear axis with the convergence of the main thoroughfares at a cross roads in the centre. A market place was established immediately to the north of the principal crossroads which today still acts as the pivotal centre of the town. The main commercial area is centred on Main Street and Market Square with residential areas concentrated on the southern portion of Main Street, Stucker Hill to the north, New Row/Balladine Row to the west and Ballinakill Road to the east.



History

The origins of Abbeyleix can be traced back to the early medieval period, a church was founded in the area during the seventh century. The lands formed part of the territory of O'Mores, who retained their lands during the Anglo-Norman Invasion. The early medieval church was re-founded as a Cistercian Abbey by Conor O' More in 1183.

The place name Abbeyleix derives from an anglicisation of the Gaelic name for the abbey (*Mainistir Laoighise*). O' More granted the abbey the lands that now correspond to the Parish of Abbeyleix. The establishment of such abbeys provided the impetus for the development of many Irish villages during the

medieval period. The abbeys often controlled vast swathes of lands that required large numbers of farm labourers and their families who began to converge in nucleated settlements. The Cistercian abbey at Abbeyleix developed into one of the most important foundations in the Diocese of Leighlin during the medieval period. A sixteenth century land survey records that the abbey had holdings of 1237 acres when it was dissolved in 1552. The abbey and much of its lands subsequently came into the possession of the Earls of Ormond. It was in use as one of their residences in 1580 when the buildings were burnt down by the Earls of Desmond and there are now no visible surviving remains.

The riverside village that had developed around the abbey continued in existence until the area came into the possession of the Viscount de Vesci in 1750. The residence of the de Vesci family, Abbeyleix House built in 1773 is reputedly built on the site of the abbey. The setting of the village on the marshy river bank had led to persistent problems with flooding and, in the closing decades of the eighteenth century, the de Vesci's decided to level the old settlement and to found a new town at its present location.

The new town was initially named 'New Rathmoyle', then 'New Abbeyleix' and eventually simply 'Abbeyleix'. The creation of the new town of Abbeyleix in the eighteenth century was an early example of a wider movement whereby estate towns and villages were founded in the estates of the newly secure landlord classes. As they were often designed on a clean slate many of these new settlements were formally planned with architecturally unified streetscapes. A wide linear main street, with a central market and planted lime trees, formed the spine of the new town of Abbeyleix and the original

houses were of one-storey construction with thatched roofs and half-acre back gardens. The economic benefits of a successful market town within their demesnes were recognized by the landlords and the development of commercial activities such as markets, milling and textile manufacturing were actively pursued by the de Vesci family. Abbeyleix's prosperity in the nineteenth century was founded on the construction of a centrally placed market-house in 1836 and a flourishing textile industry based on wool and yarn manufacturing Abbeyleix also benefited from the diversion of the route of the Dublin to Cashel mail road through the town. By the 1830s the town also contained 140 houses, a number of schools, a police station, jail, and Church of Ireland and Catholic churches.

While Abbeyleix had prospered in the early nineteenth century the need for the establishment of a workhouse, a fever hospital and an almshouse by the de Vesci's in the early 1840s suggests that many families in the parish were living in destitute conditions even in the years prior to The Great Famine. The traumas of the 1840s resulted in amendments to the physical layout of the town as a number of works were carried out as part of famine relief schemes. The recovery of Abbeyleix in the second half of the nineteenth century was in part due to the increase in the trading capability of the town resulting from the arrival of the railway network in 1867. The town's textile industry continued to thrive until the early decades of the twentieth century and the most of the thatched roofs of the houses were replaced with slate at the start of that century.

The detail on the Ordnance Survey maps from the 1840s onwards indicates that the basic layout of the town's streetscape has remained relatively unchanged up to the present day. The fortunes of the town as an industrial centre declined during the twentieth century

with the closure of many of the textile industries and the railway station. However, the retention of the essential character of the original estate settlement has resulted in Abbeyleix being recognised as an important heritage town.

Architectural Interest

The formal design of the town and the sustained involvement of the de Vesci family over a period of almost 250 years, has resulted in a large proportion of the buildings being of high architectural quality. A range of distinct building styles are represented in the town. Good examples of late eighteenth to early nineteenth century Georgian architecture are to be seen throughout the town with notable examples being Preston House, the former courthouse and the Abbey Gate Hotel.

Also of note from this period is the modest Methodist chapel and meeting hall on Main Street which was built c.1826. The Market House, whose ground floor colonnades lend it a somewhat Italianate air, was built in c.1836, extensively reconstructed in c.1906 and refurbished in 2009 by De Blacam and Meagher Architects on behalf of Laois County Council.

As the nineteenth century progressed it is likely that some of the older housing stock was upgraded and replaced as well as being added to as the town expanded outwards from its core. Much of the housing stock within the town dates from the 1830s onwards. The continued desire of the de Vesci's to improve the settlement led to the construction of stylistically unified terraces which continue to be readily identifiable today although some incremental loss of fabric and unifying elements has occurred. Excellent examples of buildings in the Tudor revival style, which was particularly popular in

the 1830s and 1840s, are to be seen at Pembroke Terrace. More modest Tudor/Gothic revival structures flank the entrance to Temperance Street.

The terraces on the east and west sides of main street, to the south of the Market Square and incorporating Morrisey's pub and Bramley's date to the second half of the nineteenth century. While they are modest in scale they display considerable attention to detail as evidenced by the moulded eaves brackets, elegant proportions and the many fine Victorian shopfronts which still adorn them.

The Church of Ireland Church on Ballycolla Road was built c.1865 and incorporates parts of an earlier nineteenth century church. Both the 1860s church and its predecessor were designed in the Gothic revival style, the earlier building by architect John Semple and the later by T.H. Wyatt.

Also dating to the later nineteenth century is the Catholic Church of the Holy Rosary which dominates the town from its elevated site to the east of the Main Street. The building is a Victorian interpretation of the Hiberno-Romanesque style and was built in the early 1890s to a design by William Hague.

There are fewer examples of notable buildings as we move into the twentieth century. The Edwardian Bank of Ireland building on the east side of Main Street is an exception. It is an eclectic mix of styles and is influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. It was designed by J.P. Wren in 1909.

Abbeyleix has been fortunate in retaining much of its historic fabric and today stands as an excellent example of a planned estate town.

Building Features which contribute to the Special Character of the Town

Roof, chimneystacks and rainwater goods

Within the town centre, and on all approach roads, the morphology of the town is composed of terraces of buildings in small groupings separated by laneways. This has resulted in there being a range of different roof heights along the streetscape.

The majority of roofs in the proposed Abbeyleix Architectural Conservation Area are pitched. Roof pitches vary but tend to give a uniform appearance along the streetscape even though building heights are changeable. Slate covering appears to be dominant on older buildings but where it has been replaced, or where buildings have been rebuilt, roof covering tends to be artificial slate, fibre cement tiles or clay tiles.

Detached buildings which are also feature buildings tend to have hipped roofs such as the central Market House, A.I.B bank and Abbeygate Hotel or later infill buildings, including the post office terrace, and terraces on Stucker Hill. The central cross road is defined on three sides by buildings which are L-shaped and have hipped roofs following the line of the road. Few buildings deviate from the pitched or hipped roof form but there are exceptions. Examples include the Bank of Ireland where the architectural composition includes a copper dome, parapet and projecting gable fronted bay with pediment. The tudor-inspired gabled projection with heavy finial at roof level is a feature repeated along Pembroke Terrace and the remaining buildings of Temperance Row.

Newly constructed buildings tend to be higher, or out of scale and are therefore not in keeping with the streetscape. They include features such as dormer windows and off centre chimneystacks, found in recent infill development in upper Main Street.

The majority of chimneystacks are simple in design and are either rendered or brick stacks. Chimneystacks are placed both centrally and gable ended. Where placed at gabled ends they create a strong gable and where centrally placed they indicate shared gable walls to terraces. There are a number of tall chimneystacks and stepped chimneystacks present along the main street which are an unusual characteristic. The carved limestone chimneystacks in Pembroke Terrace are highly ornate reflecting the overall appearance of the terrace. The stacks to RPS 74 (inventory no. 76) have been replaced in a sensitive manner showing high quality craftsmanship and good conservation practice.

Decorative timber barge boards are confined to the school buildings within the town. Terracotta ridge cresting is found on numerous buildings adding to the decorative quality of their appearance. Rainwater goods are generally cast-iron or cast-aluminium and are painted. Replacement rainwater goods and those on infill newer buildings are generally uPVC. Such replacements detract from the streetscape and the overall character and appearance of the area.

Where present supporting eaves brackets are ornate and contribute to the aesthetic appearance of the building. Good examples include the A.I.B, the terraced buildings on Main Street including Bramley's which display finely carved brackets tucked in under over hanging eaves. Such features created a repetitive feature along the streetscape. Similar ornate eaves courses are evident in decorative rendering to the Leix Bar and

adjoining building on Main Street. The mirroring of such detailing links the architectural character of the area adding a sense of place.

Render (plasterwork) and external finishes

Renders commonly used in Abbeyleix include (a) roughcast or harling and (b) smooth lime or cement render. Buildings using smooth render are painted with some having a ruled- and lined decoration. Most buildings have a smooth rendered plinth and some have channelled quoins which emphasise the buildings edge while adding visual appeal to the structure. Moulded render detailing is also used in window and door surrounds and as string and eaves courses highlighting the division of storeys and giving vertical emphasis to buildings.

The removal of render to expose rubblestone walls such as at Market Square should not be encouraged. The carrying out of such works can have a long term detrimental effect on the condition of the building as exposing the stone to the elements can result in the inset of dampness. This is further amplified by the removal of lime mortar and repointing with cement strap pointing. Such work detracts from the appearance of the individual building and the streetscape as it breaks the building line and therefore has a negative effect on the character of the area as a whole.

Deliberately exposed stone construction is evident in the R. C church and Pembroke Terrace which display the use of high quality limestone. The uniform use of dressed stone construction and fine cut stone finish to Pembroke Terrace creates an aesthetically pleasing group of structures with a strong building line. External cut stone is also evident on the market house where it contributes to the over all architectural expression of the

building and its importance to the architectural character of the town.

Windows and Doors

Despite a high degree of loss, there are a variety of traditional window types found within the proposed ACA. Original windows were usually of timber sash construction with the glazing bars providing vertical emphasis. In Abbeyleix there are varying window openings from traditional square-headed, camber headed and feature oriel openings. Like many Irish towns Abbeyleix has witnessed the replacement of timber sash windows with uPVC casement windows. Such replacements are not in keeping with traditional design and detract from the appearance of the building therefore having a negative effect on the overall character of the area.

The sealing effect created by uPVC windows on historic buildings can lead to the build up of condensation and result in the inset of damp. Replacement timber sash windows have been inserted into Bramley's, Main Street with the removal of an oriel window. This has been carried out in a sympathetic manner as part of the successful conservation of the building. In doing so the appearance and character of the building has been retained and the building contributes positively to the streetscape. Window surrounds add decoration and define the opening and in many cases are simply rendered or moulded render, some with cornices. This mirrored detailing creates harmony along the streets appearance adding to the character of the area. In some case this detailing has been replaced with poor alternatives with flat two dimensional surrounds.

More affluent buildings such as the court house and those of Pembroke Terrace have carved stone window and door openings displaying work of skilled masons and adding considerably to the appearance of the buildings. The presence of oriel windows is also found owing to the Tudor revival design of the terrace. The presence of oriel windows is unusual but it occurs in a few buildings along the streetscape such as the Leix Bar, the Abbeygate hotel, Costcutter's and originally Bramleys, thus providing a repetitive architectural link to the streetscape. It is likely that in some cases the oriels were a later nineteenth century modification.

Window sills in general were constructed of tooled limestone but in many cases have been replaced with concrete sills, often coinciding with the replacement of windows. Doors follow the same form and design as windows usually having a vertical emphasis and originally being of timber construction.

There are a variety of door openings in Abbeyleix ranging from traditional square-headed openings, round-headed openings and larger more ornate segmental-headed doorcases. Side doors giving access to upper storeys of buildings along Main Street appear to be simple and square or round-headed in design. Those functioning as the main entrances are more elaborate in nature and are either round-headed or segmental-headed often with fanlights and flanking sidelights.

Door surrounds to Pembroke Terrace and Temperance Street are of high quality architectural design with Tudor revival pointed arched openings which give a repetitive pattern to the terrace. At 'Church View' terrace, although the actual doors have been replaced, door canopies are an unusual feature which breaks the monotony of an otherwise austere terrace.

Replacement doors are often half glazed to allow for additional light where overlights or fanlights are not present on more vernacular designed buildings. uPVC replacement doors are also common.

Shopfronts and Advertisement

The established retail centre of the town centres on the market square. Shopfronts are an integral part of the fabric and texture of the town and contribute enormously to the historic architectural character of the ACA. The surviving traditional shopfronts are predominately of timber construction with ornate detailing to the fascia, framing pilasters and console brackets. Slender pilasters and consoles are a typical feature of many of the nineteenth century shopfronts in the town.

Good examples of traditional shopfronts include Leinster House and Mossissey's, Main Street, and Mooneys, and the Ireland Own Antiques, Market Square. The scale and finish to earlier shopfronts blend with the street architecture lending it a historic patina. Such features are an integral part of the character of the area creating a link to the past and establishing a unique sense of place. Traditional shopfronts are constantly under threat from modern replacements, enlargements of display windows or pastiche insertions, which can lead to inappropriate alteration of the streetscape. New development should be sensitive to the overall character of the area.

Consideration must also be given to signage as it can easily detract from the overall appearance of a building and its contribution to the streetscape. On the most part signage within Abbeyleix is neat and is painted directly onto the building or fascia. Brash neon or oversized signage can have a detrimental effect and be offensive.

Carriage Arches

Carriage arches provided access to backlands behind the main streetscape. They are intermittently located along the street creating groups of small terraces and strong gable ends. Most are integral segmental-headed arches, which maximise the use of space by providing a living space overhead thus balancing the appearance of the building and providing punctuated openings along the street.

Street furniture

Sometimes heritage items in the public realm are the easiest to preserve and yet the most vulnerable to carelessness. Durrow retains a number of items of historical street furniture which add to its character. A pillar box located at the southern end of Main Street is Edwardian in date and shows high-quality cast-iron detailing which gives this item of street furniture artistic and technical interest. The adjacent water trough is a reminder of the former use of horse and cart for transport before high car dependency. A wheel guard remains just east of the cross roads on the Ballinakill road. Four finely-crafted commemorative water fountains located at strategic points within the town create focal points within the public realm.

Railings and Boundary Walls

Most properties in the town core front directly onto the street and therefore lack boundary treatments. In contrast to this some architecturally designed structures are purposely set back from the street with strong boundary treatments. These include Pembroke Terrace, Preston House, Epworth Hall, the Court House and the Bank of Ireland, the use of cast-iron railing on a low plinth wall creates deliberate separation while simultaneously allowing the building to be viewed and appreciated. The entrance to the

Roman Catholic Church from the Ballinakill road also displays finely executed cast-iron railings and gates creating an impressive entry to the church grounds.

Residential properties on approach roads such as those on the northern end of main street, De Vesce Terrace and properties along the Ballinakill Road are set back from the street with a variety of boundary treatments including rubblestone walls, render walls, hedging and plinth walls with cast and wrought-iron railings atop. Every effort should be made to retain these boundary treatments. Traditional stone wall boundary treatment such as those behind Pembroke Terrace, Ballacolla Road and to the north-east of the church are constructed with locally quarried stone and are of rubble construction. They form a definite strong line and help delineate the original boundaries of the town and therefore the ACA.

ACA Boundaries

When assessing Abbeyleix for ACA designation the boundary was drawn up using the architectural heritage guidelines to ensure a legible and meaningful boundary was created to protect the unique character of the town. Those areas excluded from the ACA were viewed as being too recent in nature or did not contribute to the special character of the area.

Summary Character Statement

Constructed in the late eighteenth century as a formally planned town, Abbeyleix did not evolve over a long period of time like most Irish towns and villages. The town was planned on a linear axis with the convergence of the main thoroughfares at a cross roads in the centre. The location of the market place immediately to the north of the principal crossroads creates the pivotal centre of the town.

The high quality of architecture is particularly evident in the buildings lining the main square and along the main street. The designed layout is comprised of two storey structures grouped together in small terraces with intermittent laneways, integral carriage arches and long narrow burgage plots to the rear of the buildings. A relatively large number of traditional shop fronts survive, the majority of which display a high level of craftsmanship in their design and finish. This creates an aesthetically appealing appearance which contributes to the overall visual perception of the town and in turn the character of the ACA.

The buildings in close proximity to the market square form the basis for the town's commercial and financial centre. They include individual structures such as the market house, court house and banks. These buildings are of high architectural value and have been designed and finished to a high quality. Repeated features such as the use of stone finishes for window sills, steps, eaves and string courses create a linked appearance and a sense of harmony to the town centre. There are numerous detached civic buildings of architectural significance dispersed throughout the town. At the northern limit of the ACA boundary, for example, is the landmark former North National School, now the heritage centre. This building has been extended over time and sensitively renovated to remain an important building within the town. The Roman Catholic Church located on an elevated site creates a prominent feature in the centre of the town.

A grouping of buildings including the Church of Ireland church, South National School, Sexton's House and the former railway station are located on the south-west fringe of the town and all are listed on the record of protected structures. These structures

contribute to the architectural quality and character of Abbeyleix.

In addition to these significant buildings there are designed terraces which share repetitive patterns of roof pitches, chimneystacks, door and window openings giving the streetscape a sense of harmony and scale. Most notable are 'Pembroke Terrace' and 'Temperance Street' (partially demolished). Such fine terraces are of both national and regional importance and create a pleasing focal point as the town is entered from the south. The same repetitive pattern is mirrored on New Row but in a more vernacular design in 'Church View' terrace whose door canopies created a symmetrical rhythm along the streetscape.

The urban pattern and morphology of the town is defined by residential terraces of houses located on the approach roads which are more traditional in design and finish. In turn as one moves closer to the town's centre the buildings change and take on the dual function of commercial and residential. The town centre is defined by the presence of the market square and number civic buildings which give a firm definition of urban place. Apart from the central market house there are a number of prominent buildings of high architectural quality on the main street such as the Bank of Ireland and Allied Irish Bank which create focal points along the streetscape.

The full appraisal has identified 109 structures within the ACA boundary which add to the character of the town.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special

character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

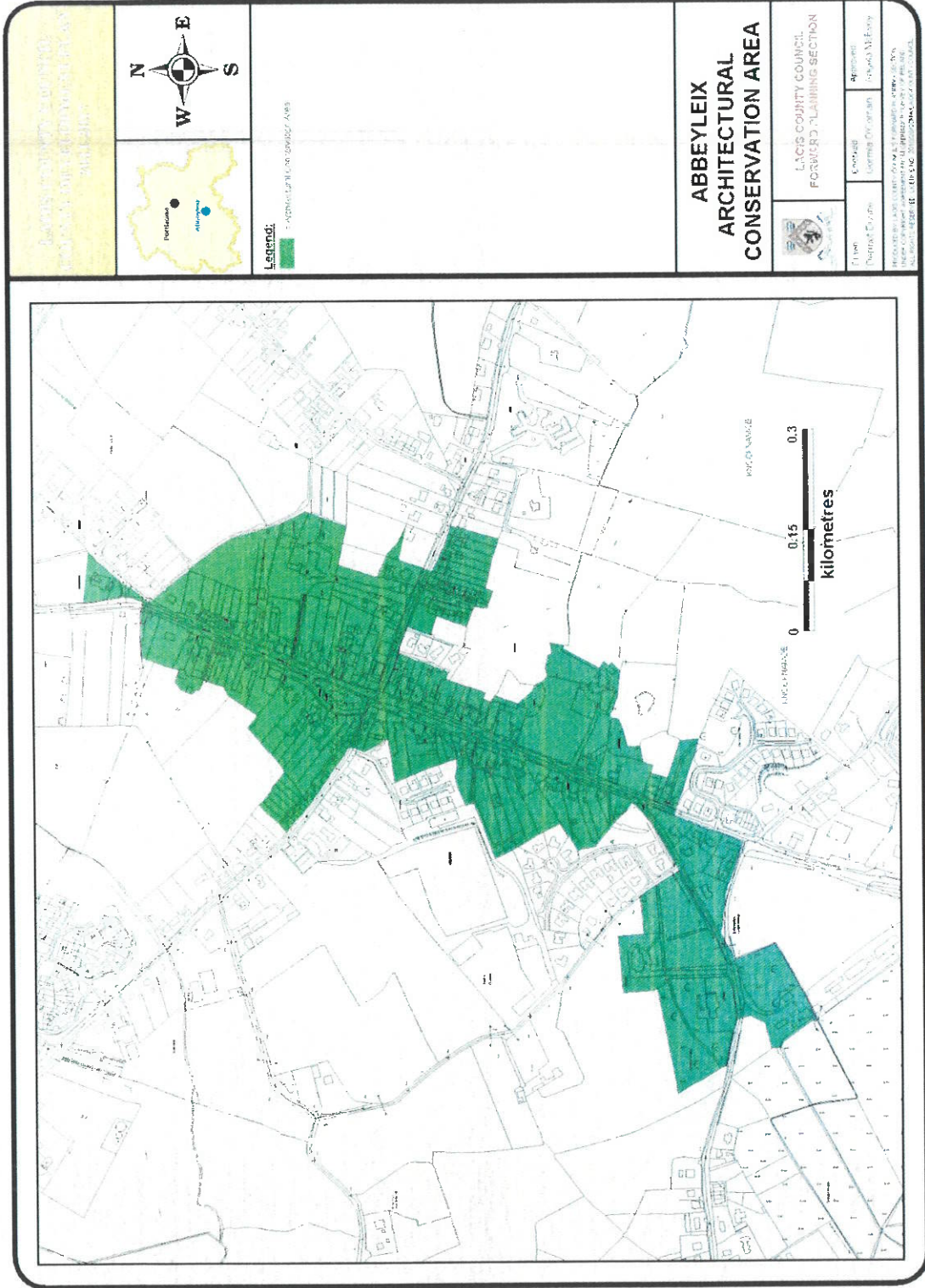
For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

- Other works that would require permission include:
- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a

particular area special. The demolition or insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted. Some structures within the boundaries may be of little architectural interest and are included within an ACA boundary only because of their location within the streetscape. Buildings of little architectural merit may be subject to wholesale redevelopment as part of a planning permission. However, any replacement building should be designed with due regard to the special characteristics of the ACA. Suitably designed infill or bankland development that contributes to the special character of the ACA will also be encouraged. Works to the public realm within ACAs e.g. footpaths, street furniture, parking schemes will be required to respect the special character of the area also.



BALLINAKILL ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

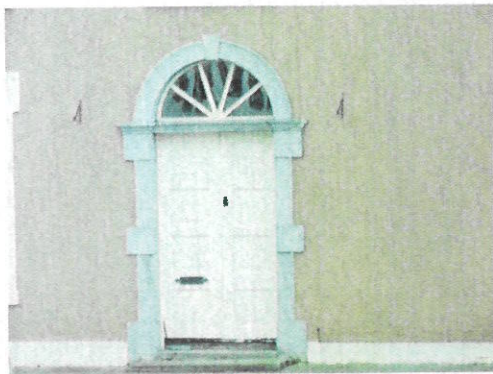
History

Ballinakill is located in south County Laois. The name Ballinakill is thought to derive from "Baile na Coillte" meaning the town of the wood. The hinterland around Ballinakill remains well-wooded.

The town dates to the seventeenth century. In 1606 the right to hold a market and fair at Ballinakill was granted. Originally part of the Cosby Estate, lands were granted to Thomas Ridgeway in 1611 and an English colony was established there soon after. Ridgeway is said to have spent £10,000 in the creation of the town. In 1613 the town was incorporated by charter. The economic development of the town was underpinned by its proximity to ironworks located to the southeast of the town on the Ironmills River, a tributary to the Owenbeg River where the Ironmills Bridge spans the River.

In 1631, the town was said to contain a large castle, one hundred dwelling houses, a fulling mill (a step in woollen cloth making), two water mills, the iron mill referred to above, three fairs and two markets. In 1642, the town is described as: *seated among woods in a place so watered with springs as afforded the Earl convenience to make many fish ponds near the castle he built there; which he likewise fortified with a strong wall and that with turrets and flankers; besides that, the town since it had been planted was well inhabited*

The castle referred to above was built between 1605 and 1613 and destroyed in the mid-seventeenth century. This Castle was initially used to defend territory against the Confederates (Irish Catholic Confederation who governed parts of the country independently following the 1641 rebellion) with settlers flocking there for refuge when the rebellion broke out. The Castle withstood initial attacks but ceded to the Confederates when it came under attack by heavy artillery.



All of Laois came under confederate control by 1643 and the Castle was used as a garrison in 1646. The Castle was surrendered to Cromwellian forces in 1650 and seemingly destroyed. The Castle was a substantial structure with a water-filled moat, gatehouse and clock tower. The ruinous remains of what is known locally as Ballinakill Castle was built in 1680 by the Dunnes, of roughly coursed pink shaly stone with dressed limestone quoins. The structure was originally five storeys in height; the extant structure is three storeys in height and retains features such as ground and first floor gun loops and a second floor window.

By 1659 the town was the third most populous in Laois and the population was one quarter English. By the eighteenth century, it was one of the most important fair towns in the County. In 1801 it was a major tanning and brewing centre and also featured a small woollen business. The corporation and borough of Ballinakill were dissolved with the Act of Union in 1800.



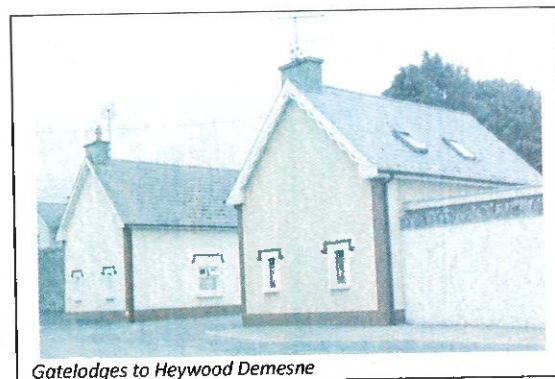
Seventeenth century plan form



Eighteenth century streetscape and plan form

Plan form

In the seventeenth century the street plan of Ballinakill was laid out along the long access formed by Graveyard Street and Stanhope Street with Chapel Lane and Castle Lane running perpendicular to the east. The current large rectangular urban space known as The Square and the related Church Street to the north and Bridge Street to the west are an eighteenth century addition. The more sinuous seventeenth century is quite distinct from the more geometric eighteenth century addition on aerial photographs of the town. A well-defined burgage plot pattern is discernible on the east side of Stanhope Street and the Square. Parts of the building fabric in this area may be seventeenth century in date, the area is within the Ballinakill zone of archaeological potential.



Gate lodges to Heywood Demesne

Influence of Heywood Demesne

Ballinakill is closely associated with the Heywood Demesne. The Demesne dates back to the eighteenth century. The house and gardens were designed by the owner and amateur architect MF Trench, who adorned the sites with follies salvaged from medieval sites. In the nineteenth century the house was significantly altered and was eventually destroyed in the 1960s. In the 1920s Edwin Lutyens designed the landscape around the house. It survives and comprises a sunken garden, ornamental pond and fountain within elliptical flowerbeds and terraces. Gertrude Jekyll devised the planting scheme.

Most of the laneways on the 1841 Ordnance Survey map linking the town with the

Heywood Demesne remain. However, a laneway to the east of the Square, the north of Chapel Lane and the Mass Lough no longer directly connects these spaces. A direct route from the Mass Lough to The Square has now partially disappeared and is now a short laneway to the rear of commercial and residential properties.

on the Square appear neglected and would benefit from more active uses. Features to townhouses on the Square include rusticated ground floors, semi-circular fanlights to front doors and faux plaster quoins.



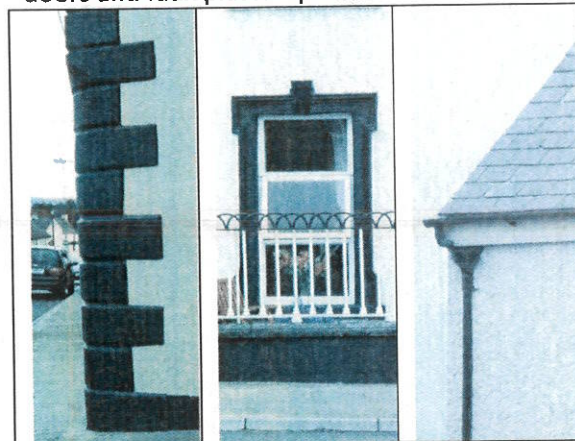
Fine Georgian House



Backland view of ruinous towerhouse, Roman Catholic Church and Church of Ireland spire

Architectural Interest

Much of the extant building stock of architectural interest in Ballinakill is eighteenth century in date. High order buildings overlook the square and more modest buildings are located to the south and east. Fine individual structures include the gatehouses to the Heywood Demesne along Church Street to the back of the Heywood Demesne, the Georgian Gothic Church of Ireland (1821) and the Gothic Revival Roman Catholic Church (1835) and two detached late nineteenth century schools also on Church Street. Some of the late Georgian structures and mid to late nineteenth century structures



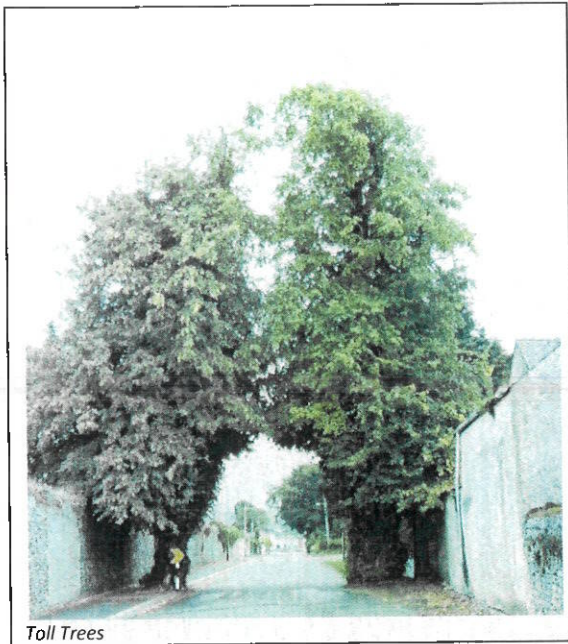
Building features: chamfered, faux quoins; raised plasterwork window surround with keystone detail and wrought iron railings to front; natural slate roof and cast iron hopper



Traditional shophouse with stained glass lantern, with living quarters to the side and above



Market House and Market Square



Although the Square retains a strong and cohesive character with the Market House to centre, many of the sliding sash windows and also the natural slate materials have been replaced with unsympathetic modern materials. The Square would benefit from more sympathetic treatment, it is currently finished with concrete slabs, tarmacadam and red brick. The toll trees at Church Street frame the approach into Ballinakill and contribute to its special character. The setting of the village against the wooded Heywood Demesne, encompassing the Mass Lough and related esker are an essential part of the village's character.

Boundaries

The ACA boundary is focussed on the seventeenth and eighteenth century village centre. While many buildings within the ACA are of architectural merit, some buildings of little or no architectural merit may be included within the boundaries because of their location within the historic streetscape.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that

works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission. For example, the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

Other works that would require permission include:

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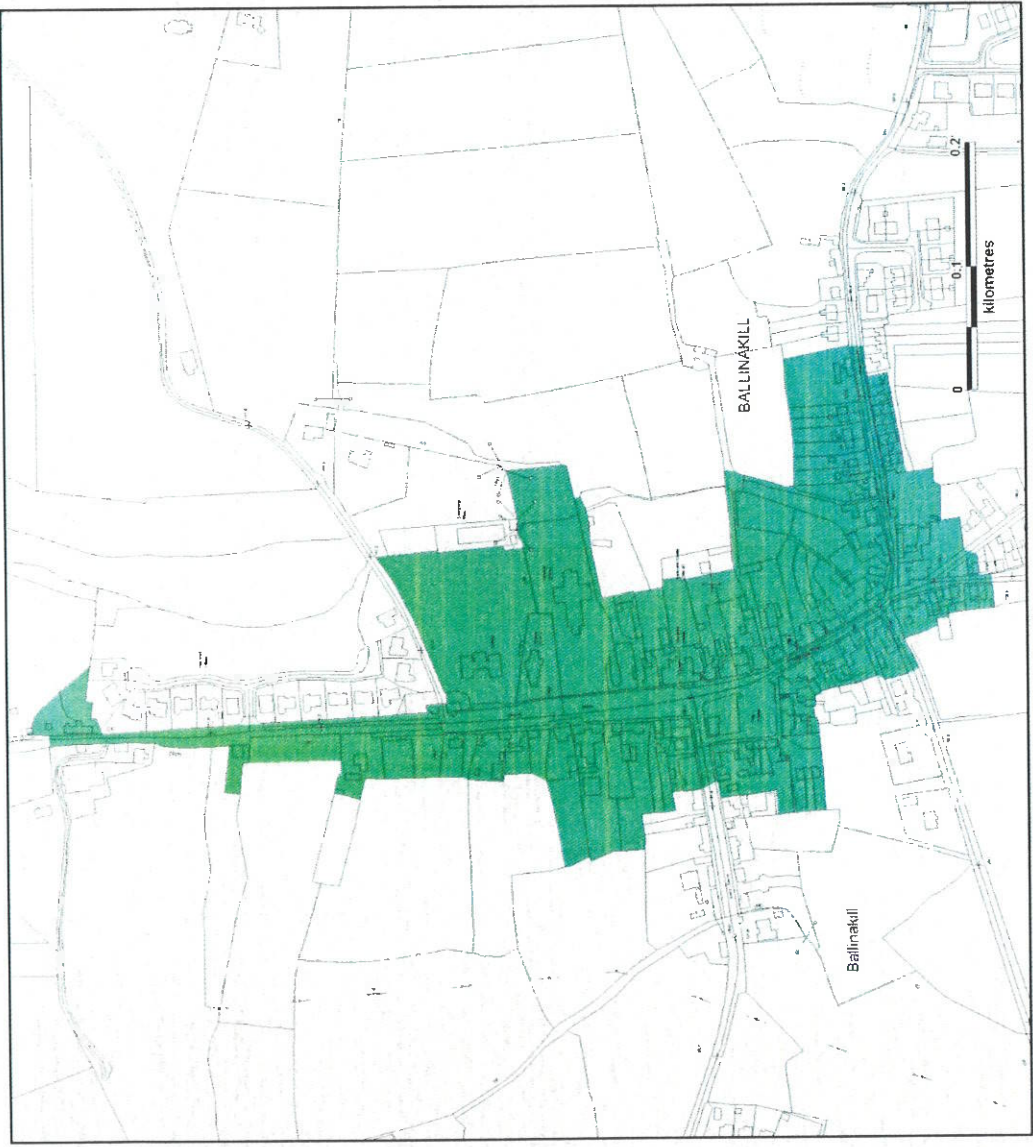


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**BALLINAKILL
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CASTLETOWN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



History

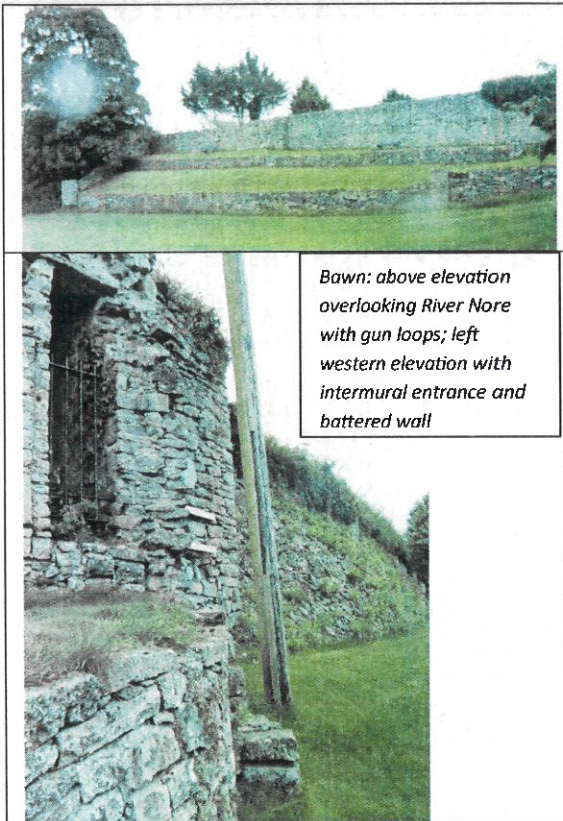
Castletown reportedly takes its names from a Norman twelfth century castle of which only fragments remain. The development of the village is associated with the MacGiollapadraig's.

In the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the MacGiollapadraig's (Fitzpatricks) were displaced from lands to the south and made a common cause with the Delaney's seizing the Norman castles at Castletown, Aghaboe and Borris in Ossory. The MacGiollapadraig's were one of the seven tribes of the Laoighis, claimed descendance from the Milesians (Celts) and are attributed in the rebuilding of the fourteenth century monastery at Aghaboe. In the early fourteenth century, the remnant foreign settlers within the MacGiollapadraig's territory were expelled.

There is little documentation and study related to the plantation of the Upper Ossory the barony in which Castletown is located or the origins of the Castletown settlement. Castletown and the surrounding area were reportedly burned in 1600 to prevent royal forces taking succour. The crown made a largely spurious claim to this territory and proceeded with its plantation following an inquisition in 1621. Large-scale land seizures from the dominant family the MacGiollapadraig's were made in 1626 and this included the Castletown estate. The MacGiollapadraig's disputed the seizures, arguing that Elizabeth I had previously assured them that the Castletown estate would remain in their possession. The MacGiollapadraig's ceded territorial supremacy to the Duke of Buckingham in 1627. A reportedly apocalyptic preacher Olmstead received more than 500 acres of former MacGiollapadraig land in and around Castletown. Evidence suggests the MacGiollapadraig's became increasingly

impoverished as a result of their loss of territory.

During the 1641 revolt, the MacGiollapadriagns and other families rejected the plantation siding with the Conferderates and were central to the siege of Birmingham's castle in Borris in Ossory. In 1642 the MacGiollapadraig's laid siege, but had little success because of a lack of artillery.



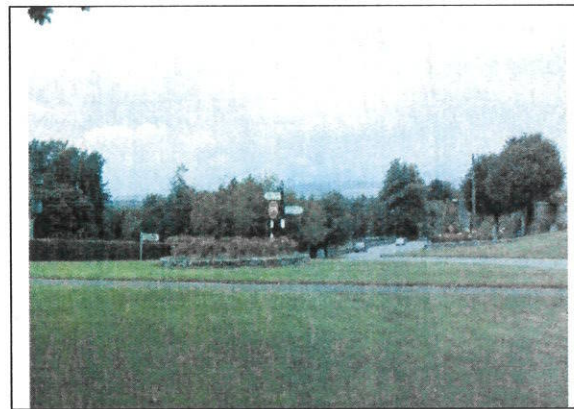
A bawn is located above the south side of the river. The elevation overlooking the river comprises roughly coursed cut stone wall with gun loops and square pillars and two terraces with similar pillars. An intermural entrance with associated steps is located to the northwest corner. The western elevation is of similarly roughly coursed but has a curved batter of random rubble and rounded stone. This bawn appears defensive in nature and is strategically sited overlooking a navigable watercourse which would have functioned as an importance trading corridor. It may be associated with the MacGiollapadraig's and the late medieval period. Further survey and study of this monument is needed.

This history of Castletown in Upper Ossory is sometimes confused with Castletown near Killabban in the east of the county which was an important settlement in Norman times and is associated with Hugh de Lacy.

Architecture – Description of Special Character

Castletown, is described in the Topographical Dictionary of Ireland of 1837 as *a village pleasantly situated on the River Nore and on the road from Dublin to Limerick, taking its names from an ancient castle containing 59 houses, many of which are good residences and the whole has an appearance of neatness and respectability.* Based on urban morphology typologies, the village's layout around a central triangular green is seventeenth century in date.

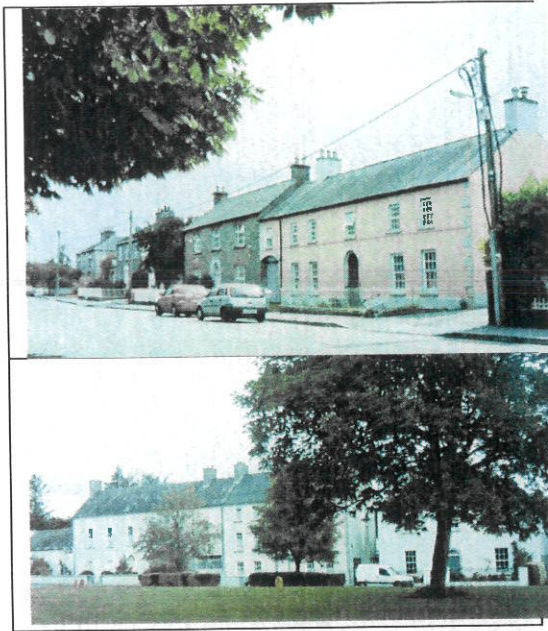
The land falls from south to north afforded panoramic views of the wider landscape and the Slieve Blooms from the green.



Castletown Green retains a strong Georgian character. Buildings of a high architectural order, with good survival of original architectural features such as windows and rainwater goods, overlook the triangular central green with its mature horse chestnut trees.

Early Georgian buildings are of particular interest, some have pitched-gables and others hipped-gable pitches, the larger properties tend to have integrated carriageway entrances and double pitches. Some later

structures dating to the 1830s at the Green are more modest.

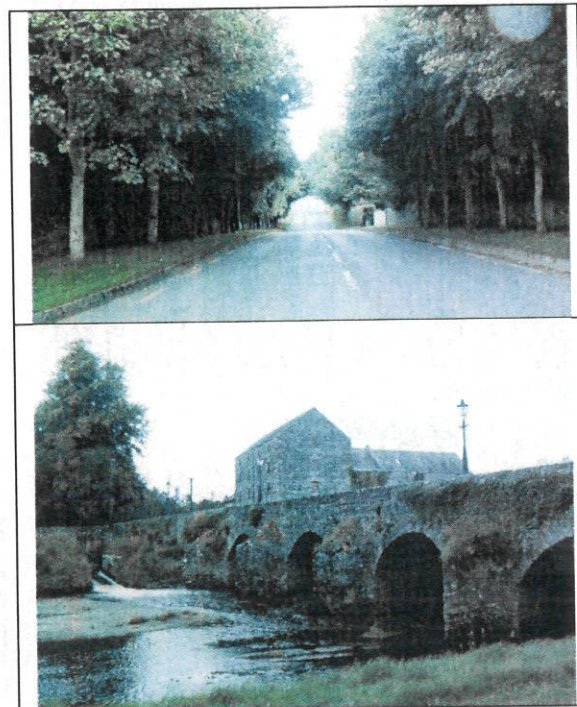


Notable nineteenth century additions include the rendered De La Salle Monastery (1870) (below) with red clay crested ridge tiles, yellowbrick chimneystacks and profiled cast iron rainwater goods. The Monastery dominates the green because of its large scale and the topography of the Green.



The Corn Mill (1840) (above) of coursed limestone rubble, dressed in brick with limestone quoins, slate roof, red ridge tiles and cast iron rainwater goods is a landmark building. As suggested by its location adjacent to the River, it was water-powered and the mill race, weir and steps along the southern side of the river bank are extant. The bridge spanning the river is sizable and can be appreciated from the banks, it is ornamented by cast iron lanterns. The mill structure is now vacant.

Twentieth century structures include the two school buildings from the first half of the twentieth century and a social housing estate.



The double row of trees and the six-arch limestone bridge (1750) with rubble stone parapets provides a fitting entrance to the village and can be appreciated from the grassed river banks below. The village has a tidy and well-maintained feel.

The village retains a strong geographic relationship to the river, though with the exception of the mill and the bawn, the buildings do not address the River.

Castletown would have benefitted from its location close to a navigable river which would have been used to transport agricultural produce from the hinterland and other bulky goods.

The current commercial uses are located in the adjacent street giving The Green a tranquil atmosphere comprising residential and institutional uses.

The ACA boundaries are focused on the Green and the river.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

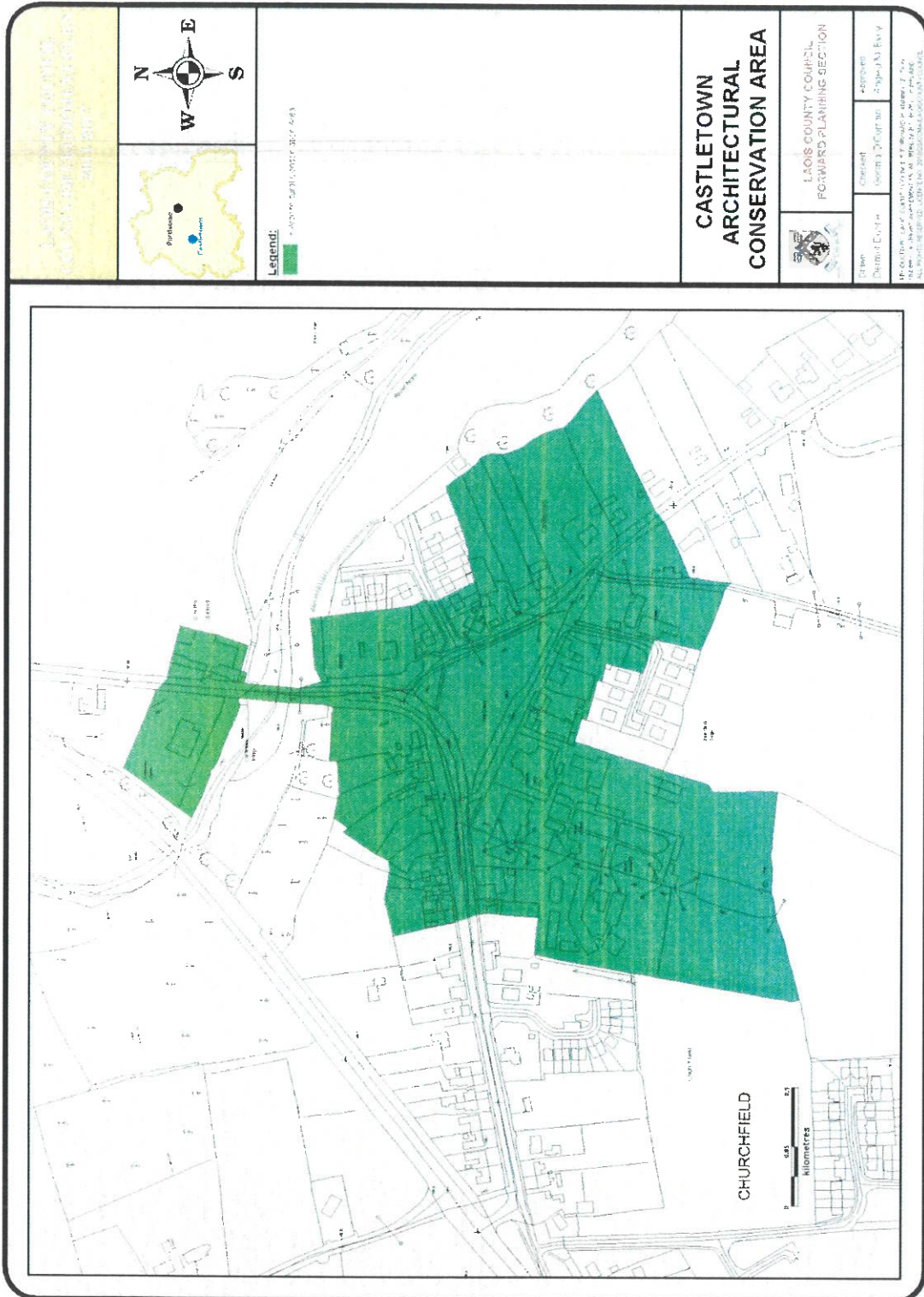
- Other works that would require permission include:

- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a particular area special. The demolition or insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted. Some structures within the boundaries may be of little architectural interest and are included within an ACA boundary only because of their location within the streetscape. Buildings of little architectural merit may be subject to wholesale redevelopment as part of a planning permission. However, any replacement building should be designed with due regard to the special characteristics of the ACA. Suitably designed infill or bankland

development that contributes to the special character of the ACA will also be encouraged. Works to the public realm within ACAs e.g. footpaths, street furniture, parking schemes will be required to respect the special character of the area also.





CLONASLEE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

History

Clonaslee originated as an Anglo-Norman settlement, though detail of its development during the late medieval period is scant. Its name is thought to derive from Cluain na Slighe, roadwise meadow or Cluain na Sleibhe, mountain meadow.



The development of the estate village of Clonaslee is associated with the Dunne family (of Irish descent) and the Brittas Estate. During the Williamite wars, soldiers from James I's army are said to have been based at Clonaslee in 1691, as the Dunne family were supporters of James Ist.

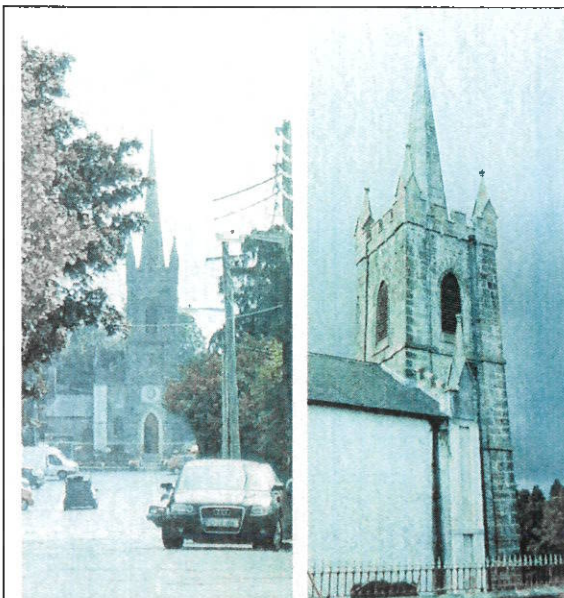


The Dunne's country house was built in 1869 to designs by John McCurdy, then extended and altered by Millar and Symes in 1879 and comprised three-storey over basement tower. The house was built by General Dunne then a Member of Parliament. The building is now derelict as a result of a fire in 1940s with no roof to the main structure. The appearance of the flag tower remains striking, being of sandstone ashlar masonry with defensive features including buttresses, corbelled, castellated parapet and a castellated turret and ornamented windows dressed in sandstone. A detached gatehouse and detached outbuildings forms part of the estate. The sandstone gate piers to the estate are sited within the village, tangibly indicating the close relationship between the demesne and the village.



Gates to Brittas Demesne

As with many estate villages, it is arranged around a wide boulevard. The plan form is thought to be eighteenth century in date. The former Church of Ireland (1814) is constructed in a Georgian Gothic style and is given central importance within the streetscape: the vista created by the strong building line of the boulevard terminates with the Church and is punctuated by the square tower and tall spire above. The church was erected under General Dunne, aided by a grant from the Board of First Fruits which was set up by Queen Anne to improve churches and glebe (rectory) houses.

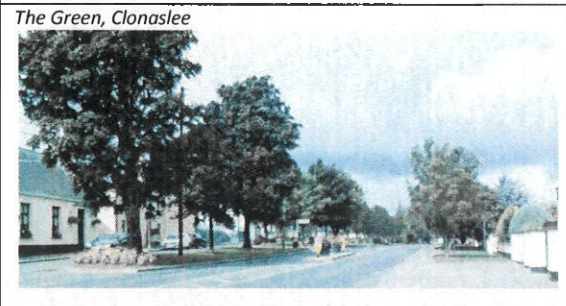
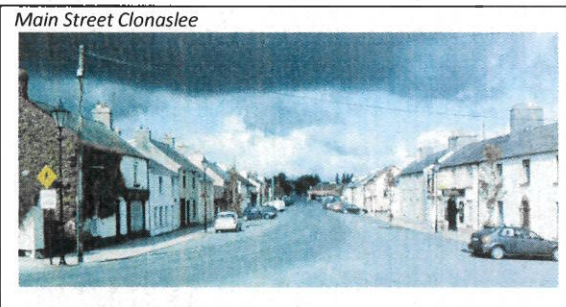


The Roman Catholic Church, Saint Manman's (1813) is located on the Tullamore Road and is set back from the road and is simpler in design. It is located on the site of an earlier

thatched chapel built around 1771 by Francis Dunne who became a Catholic.



The village grew quickly between 1800 and 1830. This growth was due to making of The Cut through uplands to create a new road between Mountmellick and Birr. This period saw the arrival of services such as a Post Office and Police Station. The current urban form of the centre of Clonaslee very much resembles its appearance in the first ordnance survey map in 1841. Clonaslee suffered severe population decline during the famine. The settlement has expanded eastwards and now functions as a large village.



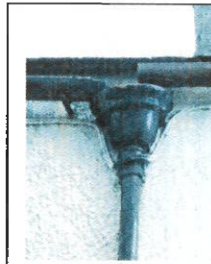
Tullamore Road Clonaslee



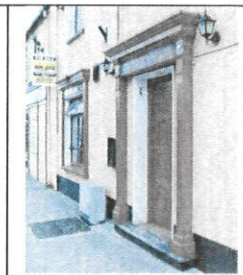
Clodiagh River



The topography of the village is flat and is set in a landscape dominated by gentle uplands and mature woodlands. The Clodiagh River runs along the Tullamore Road enclosed by a stone wall and under the Main Street towards Brittas Lake and contributes to the special character of the village. The streetscape of Main Street is cohesive, incorporating a strong building line defining the edge of the street, the buildings are mostly two-storey, with wide frontages, gable-pitched roofs, large chimney stacks and vertical emphasis windows, are orientated towards and open directly onto the Main Street.



Cast iron hopper



Painted timber shopfront

Gaps between the buildings provide shared access to backlands though a few integral carriageways exist also. Most of the buildings have no elevational decoration, some are decorated with painted raised plasterwork to the doorways and faux quoins to the edges. Elevational finishes include roughcast, lime render and cement renders. Much of the original building fabric such as doors, sliding sash windows, roof tiles and rainwater goods have been replaced. Chimney stacks and pots generally survive. A small number of shopfronts of architectural quality survive.

The roof heights and pitches vary along the Main Street within a small range. More generally the streetscape comprises a linear form, designed vistas and views and some fine individual buildings including the Church of Ireland which now functions as a Heritage Centre, the Lodge and Hickey's Public House with their decorative timber fascia boards, the defunct Courthouse overlooking the Green. The Swan Public House, though not of architectural interest, is a prominent building by reason of its siting.



Typical elevation



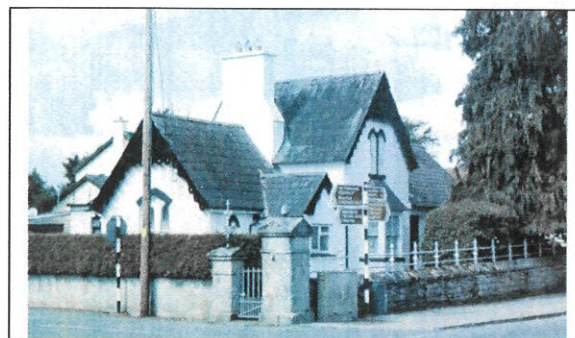
Typical elevation



Shared access



Stone outbuilding





Open spaces make an important contribution to the character of the village and comprise the Green and the open space to the front of Hickey's Public House known as the Square.

Buildings along the western side Tullamore Road are more informally arranged becoming single-storey cottages from the village and are generally of a lower architectural order. The cottages along this road contribute to the special character of the ACA. The buildings and open spaces of the village are generally well-maintained.

Boundaries

The ACA is focused on the historic core of Clonaslee which comprises the Main Street, the Green and the Tullamore Road. While many buildings within the ACA are of architectural merit, some buildings of little or no architectural merit may be included within the boundaries because of their location within the historic streetscape or setting of the village.

Implications of ACA designation

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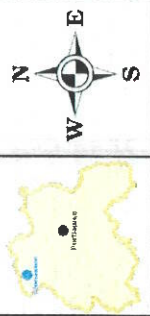
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LACKS COUNTY COUNCIL
ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREAS
2014/2017



Legend:
Architectural Conservation Area

CLONASLEE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

LACKS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

Author: [Name]
Checked/Drawn: [Name]
Approved: [Name]



DURROW ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Location and General Morphology

Durrow is located in south County Laois in a rural landscape of gently undulating hills, the River Erkina skirts the northern boundary of the village and the former main road to Dublin bisects the village diagonally. The village of Durrow centres around the pattern created by the convergence of two roads; the main (N8) route running from Dublin on the north east to Urlingford and Cork beyond on the south west, and the road to Kilkenny (N77) in the south east. These three main approaches create the basis for the triangular arrangement of Old Chapel Street, Mary Street and Castle Street and this coupled with the open 'Square' in front of the entrance to the settlement's principal *raison d'être*, Durrow Castle, give Durrow the well defined layout of a planned estate village.

History

The place name Durrow is an anglicisation of *Dar Magh* ('the plain of the oaks') and the earliest reference to the area is in the fifth century. There are also references to a monastery founded in *Dervagh* during the sixth century. There are no remains of this monastery but the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) records an ecclesiastical site (LA029-042000) on the south side of the Erkina river and on the western outskirts of the present day town. The association of St Fintan with Durrow is commemorated by a holy well (LA029-043001) dedicated to him on the north bank of the river. A number of derivations of the place name Durrow can be seen in other historical references to the area. A grant issued in 1245 to Geoffry de Turville, Bishop of Ossory, to hold a weekly market and an annual fair at the manor of *Derevald*. In 1350 the Manor of *Deraugh* was listed as the most valuable of the temporalities of the See of Ossory. The manor remained in the possession of the bishops until the Reformation and their influence is reflected in

local place names, such as 'Bishop's Meadows', 'Bishop's Roads' and Bishop's Woods'. The Earl of Ormond was granted possession of the manor following the Reformation. Durrow was officially removed from the jurisdiction of Queen's County and transferred into Kilkenny during the 1680s.

The estate was rented by the Viscount of Ashbrook, Sir William Flower in the same decade, and was then released to the Flower family in 1708. The estate of Castledurrow remained in the ownership of his descendants until the early twentieth century. The construction of Castledurrow was completed in the 1730s and by the end of the eighteenth century the earlier settlement of Durrow had been replaced with a planned estate village of 218 houses.

The new village was centred on a large square located to the east of the grounds of Castledurrow and they were connected by a tree-lined avenue that ran along the north end of the walled estate gardens. A number of three storey buildings to the north of the square were constructed by Flowers for his Welsh and English estate managers. The leases for the village plots made available to settlers prescribed the exact location and dimensions of the houses to be built and the timescale for the completion of construction. A number of leases were also granted for the milling operation at the Course on the Erkina during the eighteenth century and milling continued at this site until 1929.

A stone bridge was constructed to the north of the square in 1788 to replace an existing wooden bridge reputedly located c.500m up river and was itself replaced in 1958. The new estate town at Durrow benefited from its location on the Cork to Dublin mail road and the 'The Red Lion' hotel, which was constructed in the 1790s, functioned as a halting station for the Bianconi coaches.

In his 1837 description of Durrow, Samuel Lewis records that the town's population at that time was 298 inhabitants and that many of its 236 houses were well-built and roofed in slate. There were weekly markets held at the

market-house and the town also contained a number of schools, a courthouse, a boulting mill, a police station, dispensary, a Church of Ireland church and a newly built Catholic church.

The detail on the first edition OS map of 1841 demonstrates that the present day street layout on the south side of the river was in place by that time and shows the regular garden plots to the rear of the street front buildings. The Church of Ireland Church is shown on the west side of The Square and the Catholic chapel on the east end of the town.

In 1846 the Ordnance Survey Commissioners finally returned Durrow to Queen's County. The population of the town began to decline during the 1840s and had dropped to 559 by the early twentieth century. The detail on the 2nd edition OS map of 1890 and the 25-inch map of 1908 indicates that the layout of the core of the town remained unchanged during the remainder of the nineteenth century. The functions of a number of buildings are indicated on the 1908 map, including a hotel market house, constabulary and pump on The Square. This map also shows the presence of outbuildings in many of the garden plots behind the street front buildings. The market house in The Square continued to function until 1968 when the building was incorporated into Alley's Drapery. The layout of the eighteenth century estate town street plan, and indeed its fabric, have survived.

Description and Character Appraisal

The village developed on the south bank of the Erkina River beside the bridge which, although now defunct, replaced a previous timber crossing on this site and an earlier medieval stone bridge a short distance upstream. Its buildings are one, two and three storeys and they generally retain their long, narrow rear plots. They are arranged along both sides of the southern approaches to Durrow, around a triangular block created by a linking street between the main square and a smaller green area, and fronting onto the north, east and southern sides of the wide square that dominates the village.



view of houses on north side of square

The north western portion of Durrow was reserved for the Castle and its demesne along with the Church of Ireland and National Schools. These distinctive estate structures along with the ordered plan-form of the village, most buildings within which are eighteenth and nineteenth century in date, provide its individual architectural character. The village has a notably defined and relatively unaltered central core and this is separated from the more modern, suburban-type development of recent years by principal buildings on the three approach roads to Durrow. On the southwestern approach, the prominent national school building marks the original boundary of the village here, the stone arched bridge and the impressive former Bianconi Hotel demarcate the northern boundary to the village and on the southeastern approach, the Catholic Church and former infants' school provide effective bookends to the village centre. Within the village, notable structures include the Church of Ireland, Dun Naoise House on the north side of the Square and the former courthouse building which now houses the library on Oldchapel Road.

The large square contributes to the identity of the village and is a focal point for both Durrow and its surrounding landscape. The high quality and relatively unaltered nature of architecture, particularly along the Square's northern and western sides adds to its gravitas and provides a centre-piece to the village. The southern and eastern sides of the Square contain the majority of commercial activity within the village and this continues with shops, public and business premises along Mary Street, returning north on Oldchapel Street and east on Castle Street to form a triangular core to the centre of Durrow. The increasing scale and impact of

architecture towards the Square is visible on the terraces which line the southern approach routes, and channel the visitor towards the village centre along Patrick Street and Carrigan Street. With only a small number of modern infill buildings to the subject part of Durrow and larger modern developments well defined outside the limits of the original village centre, its general intactness contributes considerably to its architectural interest. This lack of disturbance applies even to rear plots of terraced street-fronting properties – a feature which is often eroded in larger towns as pressure of traffic management, parking or large commercial premises can see rear yards amalgamated and boundaries obliterated.

Views of Durrow from outside are limited with relatively dense belts of forest within one kilometre on all sides and no particularly elevated land in the surrounding area. Within the village the effect of road morphology and planned design of buildings constructed along the two southern approaches has been carried out with the aim of gradually unfurling views of different parts of the village to the visitor. With subtle bends in the roads, the visitor is guided through modest dwelling terraces to the commercial centre of the village and only when one arrives in the main square can it be fully appreciated and viewed. With no significant residential development, either modern or historic on the northern route into the village, one arrives directly at the corner of the Square with a very short approach from the edge of the village.



Former Red Lion Hotel

Despite road realignment the former Bianconi Hotel and those buildings on the northeastern

corner of the Square still frame the view of the Square ensuring its visual impact from all sides. There are no views of the river except for those from the bridges themselves however there is pedestrian access along the river. As in many Irish towns or villages the river in Durrow is largely ignored rather than exploited for its contribution to the character of the place. This may have been due to the historic association of rivers with heavy industry such as milling or with the use of rivers until recent decades as dumping grounds for waste generated by urban settlements. As legislation and practice is resulting in the improvement of river environments, their recognition as integral parts of village character is renewing interest in the contribution of rivers to the fabric of Irish towns and villages. In the case of Durrow, development of an amenity which interprets and commemorates the milling heritage of the area is providing this renewal of interest in the river as part of the village's character.

The overall area of Durrow village can be considered as three distinct but interlocking parts:

- Carrigan Street and Patrick Street
- Oldchapel Street, Mary Street and Castle Street
- The Square

Architectural Character

The village's architectural character is based on the distinctive plan form and on a mix of large residences displaying formal design elements, such as Georgian door-cases, and smaller scale buildings in a vernacular style.

The buildings on the square were consciously arranged with the residential element set back from the main thoroughfare which runs diagonally across the square and the more commercial element located to the south and east sides of the square. Although individual buildings differ in design this arrangement purposely creates a homogenous appearance

which contributes to the overall setting and character of the village.

The village reverts to a more informal, traditional appearance as one moves from the main square towards the outskirts of the village. Here the buildings are more vernacular in design and construction and front directly onto street. The repetitive use of pitched slate roofs, strong chimneystacks and render wall finishes adds symmetry to the streetscape while the lack of standardised facade treatments lends visual interest. Along these side streets, buildings were designed to have a dual purpose with a commercial function on the ground floor and residential accommodation to the upper floors. Buildings are frequently grouped in small terraces with intermittent laneways and integral carriage arches providing access to long narrow rear back plots.

During the early nineteenth century the historical urban townscape continued to develop with the construction of prominent civic structures dispersed throughout the village. The Church of Ireland church creates a focal point on the western side of the square, the Court House forms a prominent feature to the south of the village and the Roman Catholic Church located on an elevated site closes the south eastern perimeter of the village.

Building Features which contribute to the Special Character of the Town

Roof form, chimneystacks and rainwater goods

The majority of roofs in Durrow are pitched with slate cladding. Within both the village core and on approach roads to the village there is a range of differing roof heights. The roof heights along Carrigan Street, Patrick Street and the east side of the square are stepped to follow the natural slope of the ground. Roof pitches vary only slightly and tend to give a uniform appearance along the streetscape even though building heights vary. Detached or more recent infill buildings tend to have hipped roofs, such as the court

house, Ashfield Lodge (former Red Lion Hotel) and the semi-detached council cottages on Mary Street. Newly constructed buildings tend to be higher, or out of scale mono-pitched and are sometimes not in keeping with the streetscape.

The majority of chimneystacks are simple in design and rendered, with the exception of some brick stacks along the upper end of Carrigan Street. Chimneystacks are placed both centrally and on gable tops, indicating shared gable walls to terraces. Traditional rainwater goods are generally cast-iron or cast-aluminium and are painted.



View of Mary Street (formerly Queen Street) c. 1900. At least two buildings in the photograph have thatched roofs. (Source: O'Doherty)



Stepped roofing following natural slope along Carrigan Street

Render (plasterwork) and external finishes

Renderers are the external coatings applied to buildings. Renderers commonly used in Durrow include (a) roughcast (b) smooth lime or cement render. Buildings using smooth render are painted with some having a ruled and lined decoration. Most buildings have a smooth rendered plinth and some have channelled quoins which emphasise the building's edge while adding visual appeal to the structure.

Exposed stone construction is evident along Patrick Street and Carrigan Street and displays the use of high quality stone in a more vernacular and traditional manner. Recent alterations have resulted in some of these residential units being rendered or bricked over, which conceals the natural stone finish, thus breaking the strong building line and visual appeal of these terraces. The carrying out of such works can have a long term detrimental effect on the condition of the building preventing it from breathing resulting in dampness.

Pebbledash is also present in Durrow but it is not widely used and is frequently confined to use on the upper storeys of buildings. Examples of this are generally confined to the side streets with the buildings facing the square being smooth or rough cast rendered.



Building displaying moulded render window and door surrounds and channelled quoins, Castle Street

Locally-produced brick from Attanagh was used in the finish of buildings along residential terraces on Carrigan Street and Patrick Street indicating the later expansion of the village along the village periphery.

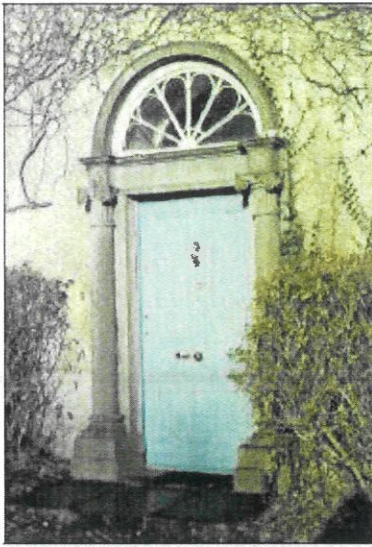
Window and Door Openings

Within Durrow the majority of buildings have been designed with window and door openings giving a symmetrical appearance to the buildings and the streetscape. More affluent building with classical proportions such as those to the north side of the square and the former Red Lion have diminishing window sizes with larger windows to the ground floor and small windows to the upper floor. Original windows were usually of timber sash construction with the glazing bars providing vertical emphasis.

Like many Irish villages Durrow has witnessed the replacement of timber sash windows with uPVC casement windows. Such replacements detract from the appearance of the building and have a negative effect on the overall character of the area. This is evident on both Carrigan Street and Patrick's Street. Sash windows are retained along the north square where buildings are of a higher design quality and more affluent in appearance.

Replacement timber sash windows have been inserted into Ashfield Lodge (Red Lion Hotel) in a sympathetic manner as part of the successful conservation of the building. In doing so the appearance and character of the building has been retained and the building contributes positively to the streetscape and acts as a landmark as one enters the village from the north.

Moulded render detailing are often used in window and door surrounds to decorate and define the openings. This mimics the craftsmanship evident in the high quality cut stone surrounds visible in buildings on the north side of the square. A good example of render detailing to window and door openings is evident on Castle Street. More affluent buildings located along North square have carved stone window and door openings displaying work of skilled masons and adding considerably to the appearance of the buildings.



Entrance doorway to Dun Macaire House

Residential terraces along Carrigan and Patrick Streets have brick window surrounds. This repeated detailing creates harmony in the street's appearance adding to the character of the area. In some case this detailing has been replaced with poor alternatives such as stone cladding or has been hidden completely in cases where the building has been rendered over.

Window sills in general were constructed of tooled limestone but in many cases these have been replaced with concrete sills, often coinciding with the replacement of windows. Doors follow the same form and design as windows, usually having a vertical emphasis, and originally being of timber construction.

Replacement doors are often half glazed to allow for additional light where overlights or fanlights are not present on more vernacular designed buildings. uPVC replacement doors are also common reflecting the attempt to reduced noise levels created by passing traffic. Door surrounds to the more affluent north square are round-headed and of high quality architectural design and constructed of cut limestone with decorative fanlights.

Carriage Arches

Carriage arches provided access to backlands behind the main streetscape. They are intermittently located along the street creating groups of small terraces and strong gable ends. Most are integral segmental

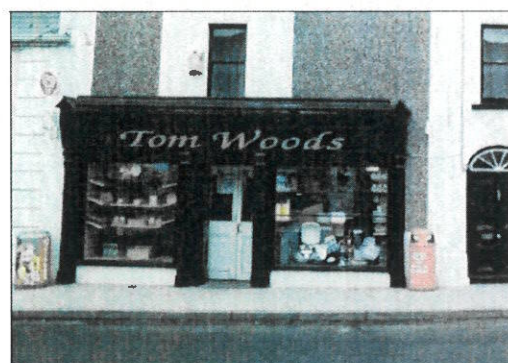
headed arches, however some openings have been altered to create square-headed arches. Such alterations change the appearance of the streetscape and result in the slow erosion of the character of the area.



The alteration of openings and the insertion of modern doors results in slow erosion of the characteristic features of an area.

Shopfronts and Advertisements

The established retail centre of the village is concentrated to the south of the square and along Mary Street. This has resulted in a variety of shopfront styles and finishes. Traditional shopfronts that remain are of timber construction, with ornate detailing. Examples include Tom Woods on Carrigan Street and the Medical Centre and Post Office on Old Chapel Street. Such features are an integral part of the character of the area creating a link to the past and establishing a unique sense of place.



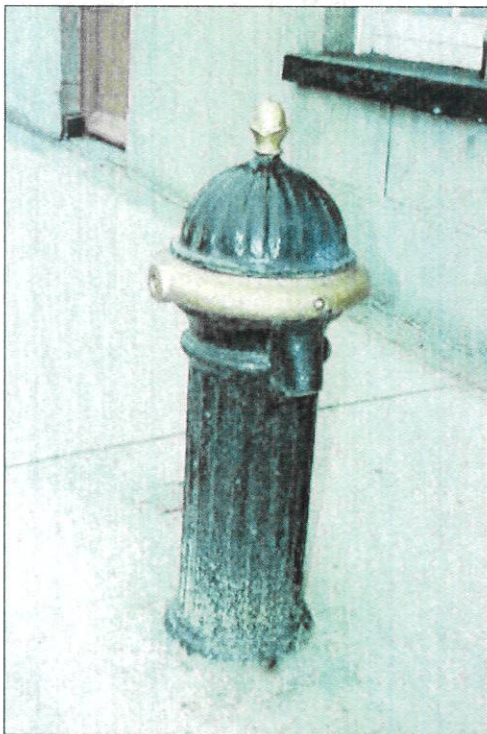
Traditional shopfront Carrigan Street

Traditional shopfronts are constantly under threat from modern replacements or pastiche insertions, which can lead to inappropriate alteration of the streetscape. New development can reflect modern design, while simultaneously being sensitive to the overall character of the area.

Consideration must also be given to signage as it can easily detract from the overall appearance of a building and its contribution to the streetscape. On the most part signage within Durrow is neat and is painted directly onto the building or fascia. Brash neon or oversized signage can have a detrimental effect on the streetscape.

Street furniture

Durrow retains a number of items of historical street furniture which add to its character. At the northern corner of the square there is a wheel guard indicating the line of the road as it passed over the old bridge. The "Top pump", Located at Tea Lane is an important feature and is a reminder of social water schemes of the late nineteenth century. The village also retains at least three cast iron hydrants of later nineteenth century date.



HYDRANT

Railings and boundary walls

The main boundary wall in Durrow marks the edge of the Castledurrow estate and is constructed with rubblestone or roughly dressed limestone with crenellated coping. Most properties in the village core front directly onto the street and therefore lack boundary treatments. Properties on the north

side of the square, however, feature the use of railings atop low cut limestone plinth walls. These cast-iron railings are of high quality and every effort should be made to retain these boundary details.



Castle Durrow demesne wall on approach road to south west of village square.

ACA Boundaries

The proposed ACA boundary has been delineated to encompass the historic core of the village and the associated backlands which are part of its original layout.

Summary Character Statement

This village as at present is significant due to its planned eighteenth century origin, much of the character of which has been retained by good maintenance and the absence of significant inappropriate development within the historic core.

Durrow retains most of its built heritage due to its original, well-planned layout which placed appropriate building types in the right areas. This arrangement continues to be relevant and has prevented the need for major remodelling of significant parts of the village core and the loss of historic material and character which can often result. The replacement of windows in Durrow with uPVC frames or frames with different glazing arrangements is resulting in a gradual degradation of heritage character of the village and could relatively easily be prevented by use of more appropriate materials and designs. Such gradual erosion of historic character usually results from loss of historic material and features outlined in the

sections above, over a period of several decades and it may only begin to be noticed when it is irretrievable.

Implications of ACA designation

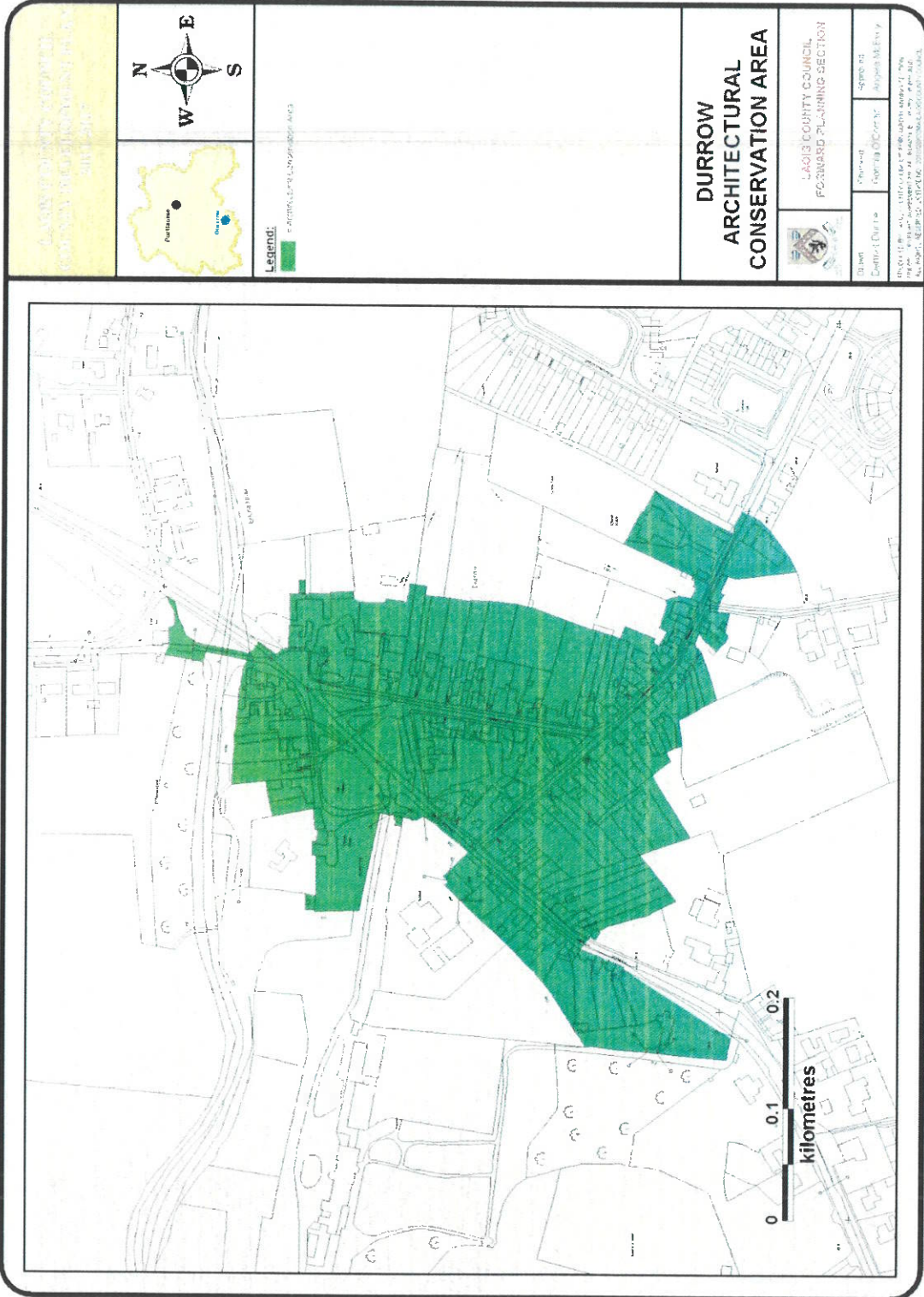
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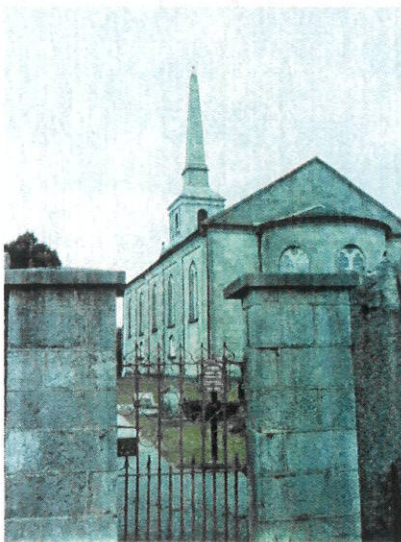
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PORTLAOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



Setting

Portlaoise is set in quite a flat landscape, with natural features such as the Triogue River, an esker along the Ridge Road and man-made features such as a railway embankment and the busy JFL Avenue influencing the character of the town. The historic core of the town is centred around the Main Street, the town slopes downwards from west to east towards the Triogue.

History

The town dates to the sixteenth century and is the oldest town in the County. Its origins were as an early garrison town and are linked to the Laois/Offaly plantation. The concept of planting this area with settlers was first mooted around 1550, following a long and ravaging campaign to subdue the local lords and secure the Pale territory against attacks.

A crown fort known as the Fort Protector or Fort of Leys was erected in 1548 on rising ground to the southeast of the Triogue with the esker to the east forming a natural boundary. The town was planted with gentry from the Pale and soldiers involved in the campaign. The town's early history was fraught with instability as local leaders reacted aggressively. Attempts were made to displace the O'More and O'Connor-Faly clans and the leaders of the O'Mores were eventually massacred. The plantation did not become rooted until the late sixteenth century and even then problems persisted. The town was plundered in 1580, burned in 1597 and attacked the following year. The hinterland around the town was difficult to penetrate and dangerous to Crown forces.

The fort was rebuilt in 1563 and comprised a rectangular enclosure with a projecting circular tower in the northeast corner and a rectangular tower in the southwest corner. The rectangular tower became known as the Castle of Maryborough. The settlement was

renamed Maryborough in 1556 after Queen Mary and became Portlaoise (a derivation of Fort Protector) in 1920. The town was granted a market in 1567, attained Borough status in 1569, and had a parish church by around 1556 (Old St Peter's). A high number of property grants between 1559 and 1571 indicate a brief period of prosperity. A schematic map dating to 1565 shows a small walled town around the Fort, with fourteen houses.

Influence of Sixteenth Century Town on the Current Plan Form and Building Stock

The street, indicated on the 1565 schematic map, to the south of the Fort aligns broadly with Main Street and Bridge Street, while the street to the north of the Fort aligns with Church Street. A map dating to 1766 shows the contemporary street pattern of Main Street, Church Lane, Church Street, Chapel Lane and Church Avenue (culverted).

The medieval market was most likely located where the Main Street widens adjacent to the junction with Chapel Lane, this area was still being used as a market place up to the early twentieth century. The kink in building line and street at Chapel Lane is thought to follow the line of a water-filled ditch along the southern wall of the fort in 1565.

No remains of the town wall have been uncovered. There have been suggestions that the laneways to the south of the Main Street (in particular Pepper's Lane and Lyster Lane) may indicate entrances into the medieval town.

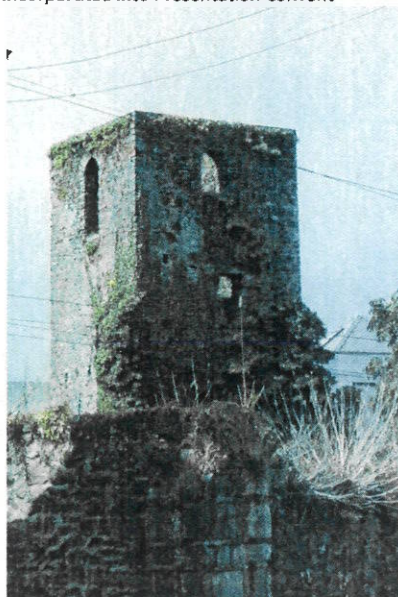
The north, east and south walls of the Fort from 1563 survive along with short sections of the northern end of the western wall, along with the circular tower to the north east. The square tower did not survive. The circular tower is the most distinctive element of the modern-day streetscape, this robust structure has an internal diameter of 8.2m with walls measuring 1.5m in thickness, ledges to the interior indicate the structure was originally three storeys high. Another distinctive

element is an external batter along the east wall.

Circular Tower to Fort Protector shown on 1565 map of Portlaoise



Circular Tower shown on 1565 map of Portlaoise now incorporated into Presentation Convent



Tower to old Saint Peter's Church dating to sixteenth century

There is little documentary evidence of the development of Portlaoise in the seventeenth century, though it is known that the town and the Fort suffered severe damage during the Cromwellian Wars of 1652-3.

A building called the Stone House is identified on the 1565 map directly east of the Fort and may have been a mill. A tower on the southern gable of the Stone House has been incorporated into the adjacent Presentation Convent and survives. The Presentation Sisters took residence in the Stone House in 1824; the structure was incorporated into the convent building by way of an extension in 1872. A conservation report on the convent recommends the removal of later extensions to expose the sixteenth century structure. A subterranean tunnel connecting the fort with the Stone House is said to exist and possibly a wider subterranean network.

Of the sixteenth century Old Saint Peter's Church, the west tower and north wall of the nave survive within its own burial grounds. The church fell into disuse in the early nineteenth century. The square church tower is a focal point in the skyline of Church Street.

A significant element of the special interest of Portlaoise ACA resides in the late medieval street plan (Main Street, Bridge Street, Church Avenue, Church Lane, Church Street, Chapel Lane, Pepper's Land and Lyster Lane) and late medieval building stock. These elements are of special historical, archaeological and architectural interest. Its plan form indicates a strong association between the late medieval town and the present day town centre. The Fort is the earliest historic structure in the town and the historic centre of Portlaoise from which the town grew. The development within and around the Fort show the evolution of the town and it forms an integral part of the character of Portlaoise Town. The Fort is a recorded monument, protected structure and is located within an area of archaeological potential and is of immense importance, especially as the fort of similar

date built in Daingean, County Offaly does not survive.

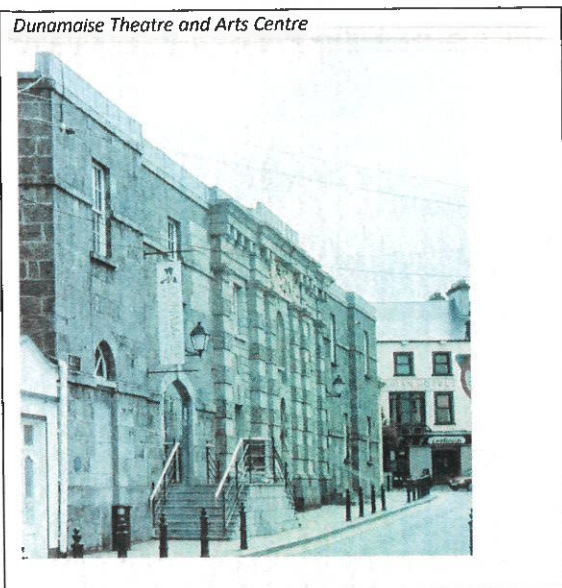
The extant structures of Old Saint Peter's Church and in particular the Fort Protector are of national importance, being physical reminders of the Laois/Offaly plantation. The plantation of Laois/Offaly, though initially of limited success was a vanguard for more extensive plantations of other regions of Ireland, which transformed the economic, social and political order of the Country. The defensive nature of the extant Fort Protector is indicative of contemporary military architecture and the serious nature of local resistance to crown forces.

A significant proportion of the Fort was formerly part of a Mill and is now used as a depot by the Council, two schools and a number of dwelling units are now located within the Fort. Old Saint Peter's is now derelict and its grounds overgrown. The Presentation Convent is also in a poor state of repair. The condition of these structures belies their immense importance and these structures would benefit from a detailed Conservation Management Plan and subsequent conservation works. Plans for the re-use of the fort as a County Museum and Library are under examination and if works are carried out sensitively, these could benefit the structure. Archaeological excavation of the fort could contribute to our understanding and the location of a County Museum could enhance appreciation of the importance of the structure and its history as well as the historic appeal of the town.

Influence of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

A manuscript map of 1766 indicates the modern-day sweep of Main Street and Bridge Street, the eastern half of Market Square, Railway Street as well as the earlier Church Avenue and Church Street. This manuscript also shows Old St Peter's Church and a two-storey Courthouse with a central clock tower on the site of the present-day courthouse.

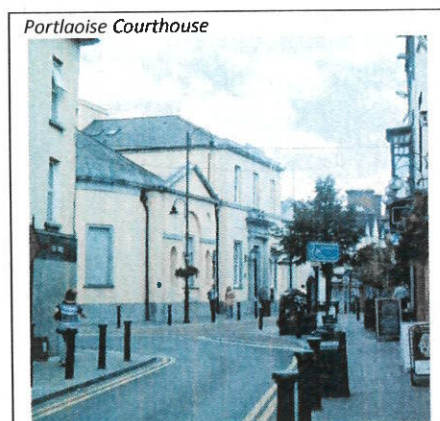
A number of fine Georgian residences were constructed along Church Street in the eighteenth century, as well as the sombre stone-clad gaol in 1789, designed by Richard Harman which now functions as the Dunamais Theatre and Arts Centre. Other surviving fine Georgian residences include Portleix House and the IBS building on the Dublin Road.



Dunamais Theatre and Arts Centre

(attributed to Gandon) is a strong focal point in the Market Square. The diamond became the setting for a new public square, the Market Square for the town. A free standing Market House was rebuilt in the second half of the nineteenth century as the Town Hall (destroyed in 1945 by fire).

In 1805, the Courthouse was rebuilt and is ascribed to Richard Morrison. This structure continues to function as a district and circuit court and is a landmark building in the Main Street. It was linked by a curved wall to the gaol on Church Street.



Portlaoise Courthouse

The greatest thrust of development in Portlaoise occurred in the nineteenth century, producing most of Portlaoise's prominent public buildings and current streetscape comprised of archetypal pattern-book designs and vernacular terraced residences. The Main Street is punctuated by laneways leading to Lyster Square and integral carriageway entrances which survive. Doorways to living quarters above the shop are often integral to the design of the façade and shopfront and a number survive. The buildings become more modest along Bridge Street and have a finer grain with smaller shop units. Few retain a retail use.

The town's expansion was shaped by the nature of new roads projecting out from the core. The new Saint Peter's Church built in 1803-4 was the first building located to the west of the diamond at the junction of the newly laid out Grattan Street and Cote Street. Its strong form and obelisk steeple

The gaol was moved to a more substantial County Gaol and House of Correction in 1830, built in a Gothic Revival style on the Dublin Road. St Fintan's Asylum erected in 1832 is another fine public building, its plan form is distinctive to nineteenth-century asylum design, intended to provide good natural light.

Fine institutional buildings shown on the first ordnance survey map of 1839 include: a cut stone barracks now functioning as the Garda Barracks, schools on the Stradbally Road, on the north side of Church Street and formerly attached to the Catholic Chapel on Church Avenue (built 1837-8 in Gothic style, demolished in 1960s) and the Presentation Convent (1830).

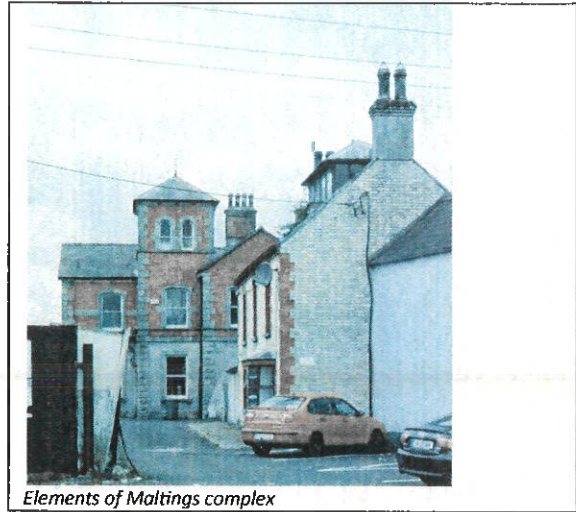
Presentation Convent



As mentioned above, the Presentation Convent has fallen into disrepair and the reuse of this structure to secure its longevity is now necessary. Fine and substantial residences from this period include Portrain House, Annebrook House and Annfield House.

The early to mid-nineteenth century townhouses along Grattan Street are modest, well-proportioned and arranged around a wide street and like Main Street, many have integral carriageway entrances. The straight building line, gable-pitched roofs and vertical emphasis windows along this approach road to Market Square give these townhouses a cohesive character. Coote Street is dominated by high traffic levels and heterogenous in terms of architectural order and roofscapes.

Late Georgian Terrace, Coote Street



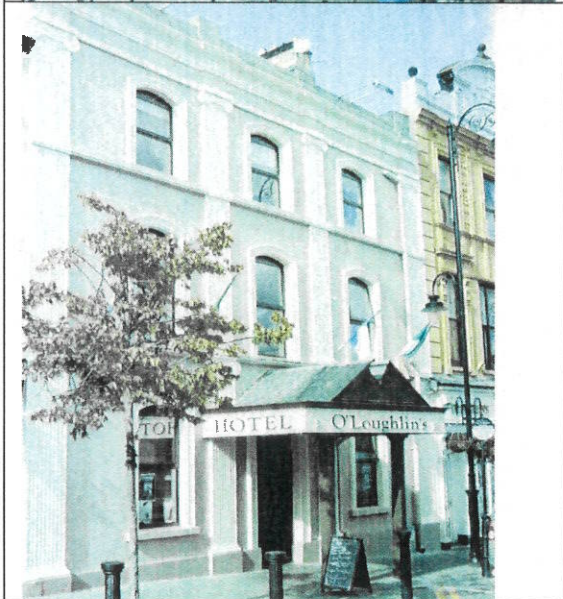
A terrace of three late Georgian houses make a positive contribution to this approach towards Market Square. The Maltings complex is late nineteenth century in date and an important element of the industrial heritage of the town but is also a landmark complex within the streetscape, capable of making a significant contribution if brought back into active use.

The arrival of the railway in Portlaoise resulted in the construction of the iconic railway station of location limestone attributed to engineer Sancton Wood, as well as the layout of Railway Street and resulting development along it including the Methodist Church built in Gothic Revival style. By the end of the nineteenth century, industrial development in Portlaoise included the Odlum's Mill complex (close to the location of the late medieval mill on the 1565 schematic plan), an Old Tannery to the south of Main Street, a Textile factory in Tea Lane, and an extensive Maltings off Coote Street, served by a spur off the new railway line.

Fine early twentieth structures include the elaborately decorated O'Loughlins Hotel and Pharmacy and the redbrick Kingfisher Restaurant formerly a bank building. The wholly modernist Midland Regional Hospital (1933-36) by Michael Scott is one of the finest structures of its type in the Country. The symmetrical façade of the former cinema (1940) is decorated with circular opes, four pilasters and horizontal emphasis projecting

blockwork below first floor windows and to the parapet and is representative of its period and typology and its historic function is of social importance. The main thrust of speculative and social housing dates to the 1950s. James Fintan Lawlor Avenue was laid out in the 1970s and changed the character of the town substantially. The County Hall was constructed in 1982.

Fine early twentieth century structures



The Main Street continues to operate as the commercial core of the town and benefits from recent public realm improvement works limiting vehicular transport through the street. However the core extended westwards into Lyster Square during the twentieth century and major convenience retail establishments are located west of JFL Avenue.

Although the survival rate of many building features along the Main Street such as timber sliding sash windows, doors, natural slate roofing and shopfronts is low, some do survive. Importantly the eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings themselves survive, some features such as elevational plasterwork, cast iron rainwater goods and profiled chimney stacks along with most of the upper storey window openings are intact. More attention to the historic architectural scale, materials and elevational details is needed as well as more considered new and infill development; the designation of this ACA will facilitate this. Some well-designed contemporary shopfronts contribute to the character of the streetscape.



Surviving historic building fabric: painted timber door with decorative fanlight; timber sliding sash window with crown glass; decorative painted console

The form of the Market Square changed with the diversion of the Abbeyleix Road in the nineteenth century to align with Coote Street, fragmenting the southern terrace overlooking the Square. Although the Market Square features a number of fine buildings, it is dominated by traffic and parking and would benefit from carriageway realignment and public realm improvement works to give pedestrians more priority, in particular as the N80 bypass is complete. A number of fine nineteenth century properties around or approaching Market Square, some with carriageway arches, are under-used or vacant and an improvement in the quality of Market Square and a reduction in vehicular throughput may improve the attractiveness of these structures as residences.

The special architectural character of the Portlaoise ACA also resides in the grouping of some eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century buildings along Main Street, Coote

Street, Grattan Street and Bridge Street; the heterogenous heights, grain, roof pitches, architectural order and elevational features of buildings along Main Street, Bridge Street and Coote Street, the urban spaces at Market Square and adjacent to the Fort Protector and individual fine landmark buildings such as the Kingfisher Restaurant and O'Loughlin's Hotel or fine terraces such as along Church Street or Coote Street. The layering of structures of different dates and orders tangibly show the origin and evolution of the town.

Boundaries

Some structures of special interest are excluded from the ACA, but are protected by way of inclusion within the RPS. The boundaries of this ACA are tightly drawn around the town centre and historic core in order to give the ACA a strong focus.

Conclusion

The history of the town is embedded in individual historic or special buildings, groups of buildings, building features, open spaces and the street pattern. Collectively the tangible layering of these structures can deepen the understanding among town residents of the cultural heritage of their home place. If well-presented and maintained, ACAs can foster civic pride amongst residents and admiration from visitors.

Heterogenous building grain, heights and elevational treatments



The urban centre of Portlaoise is more than the sum of its parts - it can not be conserved effectively simply by adding its significant buildings to the Record of Protected Structures. An ACA would define a wider entity, also embracing the open spaces of the town.

The incremental loss of features of the historic environment erodes this value and depreciates the character of a town, and this leads to a feeling of decline and low self image.

In particular the Fort Protector is a rare built element of the first significant English Plantations in Ireland and as such a heritage site of enormous significance and potential. It is currently subdivided into multiple titles and its importance cannot be appreciated. It is essential that this site should not be regarded as a backlands area of the town and its key historical significance as the genesis of the settlement of Portlaoise actively recognised. Great care should be taken to prevent irreversible development which would damage this enormous asset to the identity of Portlaoise. If the Fort Protector were to be restored to a high conservation standard, this unique structure could become a cultural and economic resource of benefit to the town. It is noted that currently there are no significant cultural attractions nationally that treat the plantation of Ireland in detail and that historic accounts of the plantation of Laois/Offaly are detailed and colourful.

Conservation of the adjacent former St. Peter's Church and graveyard, and of the hugely significant former Presentation Convent, which faces the Fort wall, would create an historic precinct of great heritage value and interest, with the capacity to greatly raise the profile of the town.

Implications of ACA designation

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Current threats to the special character of Portlaoise ACA include:

Threats to that character include:

- stripping of render from elevations, demolition of chimney stacks
- removal of carriageway entrances
- removal of doorways to the upper storeys of buildings along the main street
- replacement of natural slates with artificial materials,
- replacement of cast iron rainwater goods with uPVC,
- replacement of timber sliding sash windows with uPVC,
- loss of historic shopfronts and related advertisements
- insensitive infill development
- wholesale demolition of historic buildings.
- the most serious threats to the special character of Portlaoise ACA include underuse, vacancy and dereliction

A number of landmark structures within the ACA including the Presentation Convent, the Maltings Complex, Old St Peter's Church and the Fort Protector need active uses to secure their longevity.

LEASING AUTHORITY FOR THE
 PORTLAOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA
 2011-2017



Legend:
 - Architectural Conservation Area

PORTLAOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

LISIOS COUNTY COUNCIL
 FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

Author: Central Planning
Checked: Central Planning
Approved: Deputy Mayor

PROVISIONAL - NOT VALID FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES
 THIS PLAN IS AN INSTRUMENT OF THE PORTLAOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA
 AND IS SUBJECT TO THE PORTLAOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

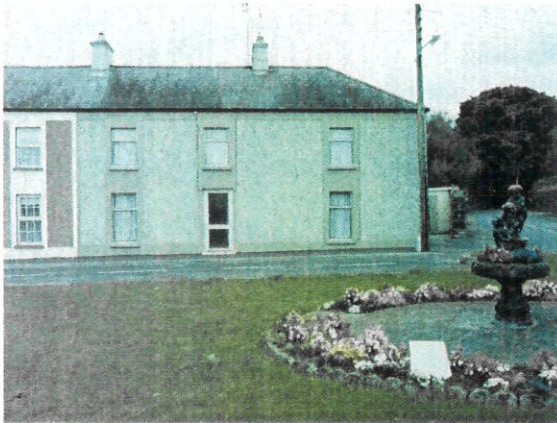




TIMAHOE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA (ACA) - Candidate

History

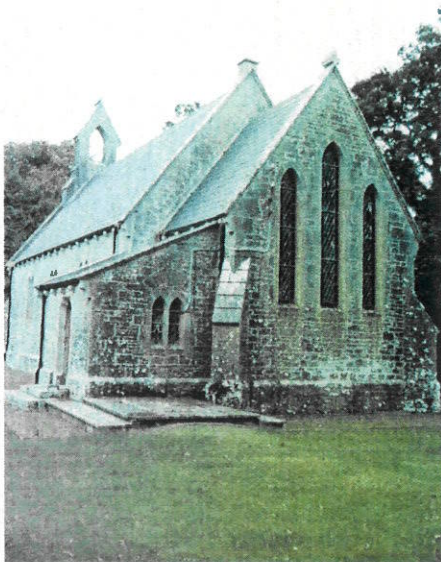
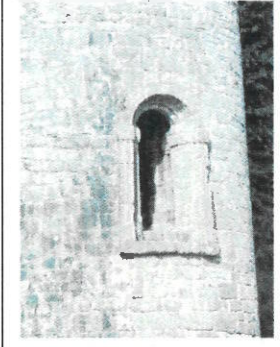
The development of the village is linked with the Timahoe monastic site which is likely to have been a medieval proto-urban settlement. The monastery is said to have been founded by Saint Mochua who died in 657 suggesting the settlement was founded in the seventh century.



Timahoe Round Tower



Romanesque Doorway



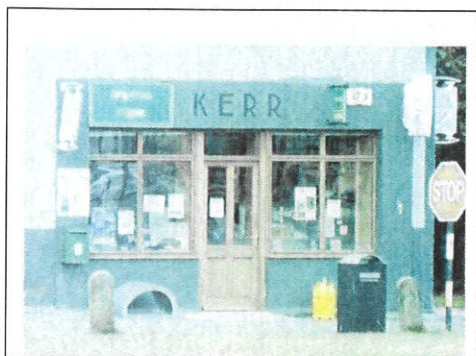
The monastery was considered prosperous by the nineteenth century and was plundered and burnt in 919 and again in 1142. Monastic buildings from the early medieval period are generally of wood and it was not until the eleventh or twelfth century that stone became a predominant building material. It is therefore not surprising that no monuments from the early medieval period are extant.

In late medieval times the monastery was refounded by the O'Mores suggesting it had become defunct, and was regranted to Richard Cosby in 1609. A monastic community functioned here as late as 1650. Based on urban morphology typologies the arrangement of buildings around a triangular green indicates

the village was laid out in the seventeenth century.

Architecture

The village contains a former Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks which has been subdivided into two dwellings and a number of traditional shopfronts.



Traditional Shopfronts



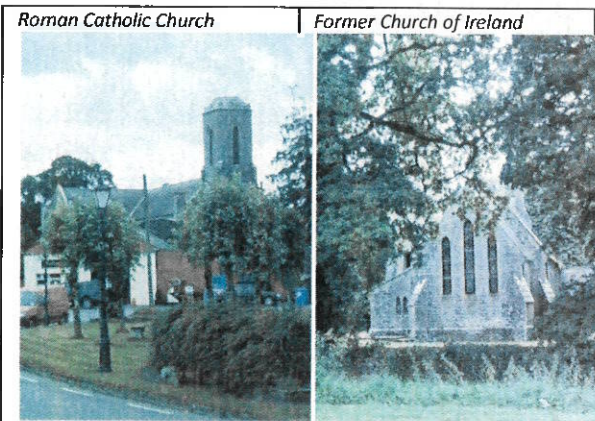
Eighteenth and nineteenth structures retain few original features, although individually these structures are not of special interest, collectively they make a positive contribution to the ACA. Opportunities for infill development around the Green remain.



Opportunities for refurbishment



The village also contains a large Roman Catholic Church built between 1830 and 1835 finished with roughcast render with the gables, church tower, windows and eaves dressed with ashlar masonry of limestone.



The former Church of Ireland building now functions as the village library. It is a more modest structure built in a gothic revival style in 1840 with a projecting porch, chancel and

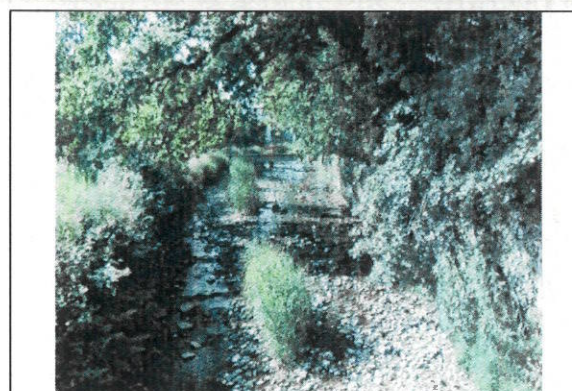
vestry and lancet windows with leaded lights. The elevations are finished with snecked limestone with ashlar plinth, quoins, corbels and windows dressings.

The library is located within the grounds of the medieval settlement which comprises a fine twelfth century round tower with a base that may be older, a ruinous sixteenth century tower house and remnants of a fifteenth century church.

The round tower measures 29.26m high and is roofed with a conical cap, no internal floors survive. The tower is a striking feature within the ACA. A Romanesque doorway to the first floor of the tower is decorated with human heads with intertwined hair and has four receding orders, a window in a similar style is visible at second floor, slit and square headed and pointed windows are located on other floors. During medieval times a Round Tower functioned primarily as a status symbol indicating prestige and wealth.

The ruinous tower house is located to the southeast of the round tower and may be associated with the Cosby's. The tower house was reported to feature a Sheela na Gig, but this is no longer visible. The remnants of the fifteenth century church, possibly consisting of the chancel arch are incorporated into the eastern wall of the tower house. The east wall and short sections of the north and south walls of the tower house are extant.

Goose Green with band stand



Timahoe River and footbridge

Approach into Timahoe



The monastic campus retains a strong relationship with the village because of its proximity to the green and the siting of the library within its grounds. The round tower and the Goose Green are the most prominent and distinctive elements of the ACA. The arrangement of modest single and two storey buildings with simple elevations around the

green and orientated towards it is an essential element of the village's character. Mature oak, sycamore and horse chestnut trees within the grounds of the round tower and a small pedestrian bridge over the Timahoe River running through the village reinforce the link between the monastic site and the village green.

The topography of the town is flat but it is set against Fossey Mountain to the south. Public realm features such as a timber band stand and cast iron pump with wrought iron railings around are prominent given the flat topography. A dual line of sycamore trees on the approach road from Portlaoise contribute to the sense of place.

Summary of Special Interest

The special interest of Timahoe resides in the arrangement of modest two-storey buildings with little ornamentation dating mostly to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a number in commercial use orientated towards a large central green known as the Goose Green and the continuing function of Timahoe as a working village serving its rural hinterland. The special interest also resides in the relationship between the village and the monastic site to the west of the Timahoe River and the monuments and protected structures associated with Timahoe's origin and development.

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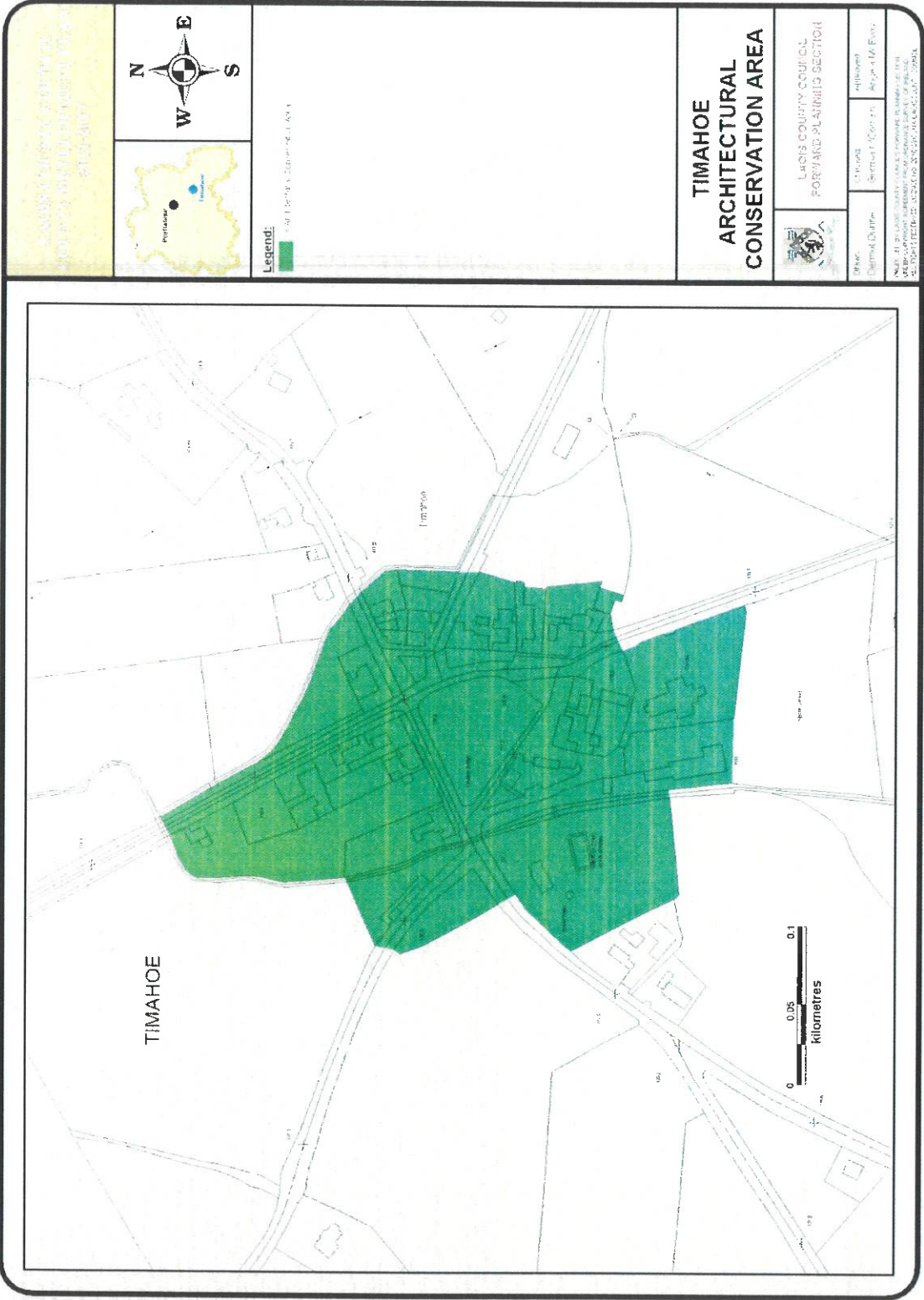
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9



**Laois County Council
Comhairle Chontae Laoise**

**Appendix 2:
Architectural Conservation Areas**

*Laois County Development Plan
2017-2023*

Adopted 26th June 2017

*In effect from
24th July 2017*

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INTRODUCTION

The designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) arose from recognition of the need to protect groups of historic buildings and street patterns, as well as individual buildings. ACAs are designated to protect the special character of an area through positive management of change.

It is Council policy to:

Consider favorably development proposals within an ACA that would either preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the ACA. In considering applications for changes of use, the Council will be concerned with maintaining the character of that area;

Manage change within Architectural Conservation Areas by preserving what makes the ACA special, allowing for alterations and extensions where appropriate, enhancing the quality of the ACA by identifying opportunity sites for refurbishment or redevelopment.

Additional objectives and policies relating to ACAs are contained in Volume I



ABBEYLEIX ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Setting and General Morphology

Abbeyleix is located in south County Laois within the plain of the Nore River which lies about 2.5km to the west of the town. The Gloreen Stream runs to the north of the town. Abbeyleix is located in a flat rural landscape with gently undulating hills located to the east and north-east. The surrounding fields are demarcated by hedgerows and are used for dairying and tillage purposes.



The present town of Abbeyleix, which is eighteenth century in date, was planned on a linear axis with the convergence of the main thoroughfares at a cross roads in the centre. A market place was established immediately to the north of the principal crossroads which today still acts as the pivotal centre of the town. The main commercial area is centred on Main Street and Market Square with residential areas concentrated on the southern portion of Main Street, Stucker Hill to the north, New Row/Balladine Row to the west and Ballinakil Road to the east.



History

The origins of Abbeyleix can be traced back to the early medieval period, a church was founded in the area during the seventh century. The lands formed part of the territory of O'Mores, who retained their lands during the Anglo-Norman Invasion. The early medieval church was re-founded as a Cistercian Abbey by Conor O' More in 1183.

The place name Abbeyleix derives from an anglicisation of the Gaelic name for the abbey (*Mainistir Laoighise*). O' More granted the

abbey the lands that now correspond to the Parish of Abbeyleix. The establishment of such abbeys provided the impetus for the development of many Irish villages during the medieval period. The abbeys often controlled vast swathes of lands that required large numbers of farm labourers and their families who began to converge in nucleated settlements. The Cistercian abbey at Abbeyleix developed into one of the most important foundations in the Diocese of Leighlin during the medieval period. A sixteenth century land survey records that the abbey had holdings of 1237 acres when it was dissolved in 1552. The abbey and much of its lands subsequently came into the possession of the Earls of Ormond. It was in use as one of their residences in 1580 when the buildings were burnt down by the Earls of Desmond and there are now no visible surviving remains.

The riverside village that had developed around the abbey continued in existence until the area came into the possession of the Viscount de Vesci in 1750. The residence of the de Vesci family, Abbeyleix House built in 1773 is reputedly built on the site of the abbey. The setting of the village on the marshy river bank had led to persistent problems with flooding and, in the closing decades of the eighteenth century, the de Vesci's decided to level the old settlement and to found a new town at its present location.

The new town was initially named 'New Rathmoyle', then 'New Abbeyleix' and eventually simply 'Abbeyleix'. The creation of the new town of Abbeyleix in the eighteenth century was an early example of a wider movement whereby estate towns and villages were founded in the estates of the newly secure landlord classes. As they were often designed on a clean slate many of these new settlements were formally planned with

architecturally unified streetscapes. A wide linear main street, with a central market and planted lime trees, formed the spine of the new town of Abbeyleix and the original houses were of one-storey construction with thatched roofs and half-acre back gardens. The economic benefits of a successful market town within their demesnes were recognized by the landlords and the development of commercial activities such as markets, milling and textile manufacturing were actively pursued by the de Vesci family. Abbeyleix's prosperity in the nineteenth century was founded on the construction of a centrally placed market-house in 1836 and a flourishing textile industry based on wool and yarn manufacturing Abbeyleix also benefited from the diversion of the route of the Dublin to Cashel mail road through the town. By the 1830s the town also contained 140 houses, a number of schools, a police station, jail, and Church of Ireland and Catholic churches.

While Abbeyleix had prospered in the early nineteenth century the need for the establishment of a workhouse, a fever hospital and an almshouse by the de Vesci's in the early 1840s suggests that many families in the parish were living in destitute conditions even in the years prior to The Great Famine. The traumas of the 1840s resulted in amendments to the physical layout of the town as a number of works were carried out as part of famine relief schemes. The recovery of Abbeyleix in the second half of the nineteenth century was in part due to the increase in the trading capability of the town resulting from the arrival of the railway network in 1867. The town's textile industry continued to thrive until the early decades of the twentieth century and the most of the thatched roofs of the houses were replaced with slate at the start of that century.

The detail on the Ordnance Survey maps from the 1840s onwards indicates that the basic

layout of the town's streetscape has remained relatively unchanged up to the present day. The fortunes of the town as an industrial centre declined during the twentieth century with the closure of many of the textile industries and the railway station. However, the retention of the essential character of the original estate settlement has resulted in Abbeyleix being recognised as an important heritage town.

Architectural Interest

The formal design of the town and the sustained involvement of the de Vesci family over a period of almost 250 years, has resulted in a large proportion of the buildings being of high architectural quality. A range of distinct building styles are represented in the town. Good examples of late eighteenth to early nineteenth century Georgian architecture are to be seen throughout the town with notable examples being Preston House, the former courthouse and the Abbey Gate Hotel.

Also of note from this period is the modest Methodist chapel and meeting hall on Main Street which was built c.1826. The Market House, whose ground floor colonnades lend it a somewhat Italianate air, was built in c.1836, extensively reconstructed in c.1906 and refurbished in 2009 by De Blacam and Meagher Architects on behalf of Laois County Council.

As the nineteenth century progressed it is likely that some of the older housing stock was upgraded and replaced as well as being added to as the town expanded outwards from its core. Much of the housing stock within the town dates from the 1830s onwards. The continued desire of the de Vesci's to improve the settlement led to the construction of stylistically unified terraces which continue to be readily identifiable

today although some incremental loss of fabric and unifying elements has occurred. Excellent examples of buildings in the Tudor revival style, which was particularly popular in the 1830s and 1840s, are to be seen at Pembroke Terrace. More modest Tudor/Gothic revival structures flank the entrance to Temperance Street.

The terraces on the east and west sides of main street, to the south of the Market Square and incorporating Morrisey's pub and Bramley's date to the second half of the nineteenth century. While they are modest in scale they display considerable attention to detail as evidenced by the moulded eaves brackets, elegant proportions and the many fine Victorian shopfronts which still adorn them.

The Church of Ireland Church on Ballycolla Road was built c.1865 and incorporates parts of an earlier nineteenth century church. Both the 1860s church and its predecessor were designed in the Gothic revival style, the earlier building by architect John Semple and the later by T.H. Wyatt.

Also dating to the later nineteenth century is the Catholic Church of the Holy Rosary which dominates the town from its elevated site to the east of the Main Street. The building is a Victorian interpretation of the Hiberno-Romanesque style and was built in the early 1890s to a design by William Hague.

There are fewer examples of notable buildings as we move into the twentieth century. The Edwardian Bank of Ireland building on the east side of Main Street is an exception. It is an eclectic mix of styles and is influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. It was designed by J.P. Wren in 1909.

Abbeyleix has been fortunate in retaining much of its historic fabric and today stands as

an excellent example of a planned estate town.

Building Features which contribute to the Special Character of the Town

Roof, chimneystacks and rainwater goods

Within the town centre, and on all approach roads, the morphology of the town is composed of terraces of buildings in small groupings separated by laneways. This has resulted in there being a range of different roof heights along the streetscape.

The majority of roofs in the proposed Abbeyleix Architectural Conservation Area are pitched. Roof pitches vary but tend to give a uniform appearance along the streetscape even though building heights are changeable. Slate covering appears to be dominant on older buildings but where it has been replaced, or where buildings have been rebuilt, roof covering tends to be artificial slate, fibre cement tiles or clay tiles.

Detached buildings which are also feature buildings tend to have hipped roofs such as the central Market House, A.I.B bank and Abbeygate Hotel or later infill buildings, including the post office terrace, and terraces on Stucker Hill. The central cross road is defined on three sides by buildings which are L-shaped and have hipped roofs following the line of the road. Few buildings deviate from the pitched or hipped roof form but there are exceptions. Examples include the Bank of Ireland where the architectural composition includes a copper dome, parapet and projecting gable fronted bay with pediment. The tudor-inspired gabled projection with heavy finial at roof level is a feature repeated

along Pembroke Terrace and the remaining buildings of Temperance Row.

Newly constructed buildings tend to be higher, or out of scale and are therefore not in keeping with the streetscape. They include features such as dormer windows and off centre chimneystacks, found in recent infill development in upper Main Street.

The majority of chimneystacks are simple in design and are either rendered or brick stacks. Chimneystacks are placed both centrally and gable ended. Where placed at gabled ends they create a strong gable and where centrally placed they indicate shared gable walls to terraces. There are a number of tall chimneystacks and stepped chimneystacks present along the main street which are an unusual characteristic. The carved limestone chimneystacks in Pembroke Terrace are highly ornate reflecting the overall appearance of the terrace. The stacks to RPS 74 (inventory no. 76) have been replaced in a sensitive manner showing high quality craftsmanship and good conservation practice.

Decorative timber barge boards are confined to the school buildings within the town. Terracotta ridge cresting is found on numerous buildings adding to the decorative quality of their appearance. Rainwater goods are generally cast-iron or cast-aluminium and are painted. Replacement rainwater goods and those on infill newer buildings are generally uPVC. Such replacements detract from the streetscape and the overall character and appearance of the area.

Where present supporting eaves brackets are ornate and contribute to the aesthetic appearance of the building. Good examples include the A.I.B, the terraced buildings on Main Street including Bramley's which display finely carved brackets tucked in under over

hanging eaves. Such features created a repetitive feature along the streetscape. Similar ornate eaves courses are evident in decorative rendering to the Leix Bar and adjoining building on Main Street. The mirroring of such detailing links the architectural character of the area adding a sense of place.

Render (plasterwork) and external finishes

Renders commonly used in Abbeyleix include (a) roughcast or harling and (b) smooth lime or cement render. Buildings using smooth render are painted with some having a ruled-and lined decoration. Most buildings have a smooth rendered plinth and some have channelled quoins which emphasise the buildings edge while adding visual appeal to the structure. Moulded render detailing is also used in window and door surrounds and as string and eaves courses highlighting the division of storeys and giving vertical emphasis to buildings.

The removal of render to expose rubblestone walls such as at Market Square should not be encouraged. The carrying out of such works can have a long term detrimental effect on the condition of the building as exposing the stone to the elements can result in the onset of dampness. This is further amplified by the removal of lime mortar and repointing with cement strap pointing. Such work detracts from the appearance of the individual building and the streetscape as it breaks the building line and therefore has a negative effect on the character of the area as a whole.

Deliberately exposed stone construction is evident in the R. C church and Pembroke Terrace which display the use of high quality limestone. The uniform use of dressed stone construction and fine cut stone finish to Pembroke Terrace creates an aesthetically pleasing group of structures with a strong

building line. External cut stone is also evident on the market house where it contributes to the overall architectural expression of the building and its importance to the architectural character of the town.

Windows and Doors

Despite a high degree of loss, there are a variety of traditional window types found within the proposed ACA. Original windows were usually of timber sash construction with the glazing bars providing vertical emphasis. In Abbeyleix there are varying window openings from traditional square-headed, camber headed and feature oriel openings. Like many Irish towns Abbeyleix has witnessed the replacement of timber sash windows with uPVC casement windows. Such replacements are not in keeping with traditional design and detract from the appearance of the building therefore having a negative effect on the overall character of the area.

The sealing effect created by uPVC windows on historic buildings can lead to the build up of condensation and result in the onset of damp. Replacement timber sash windows have been inserted into Bramley's, Main Street with the removal of an oriel window. This has been carried out in a sympathetic manner as part of the successful conservation of the building. In doing so the appearance and character of the building has been retained and the building contributes positively to the streetscape. Window surrounds add decoration and define the opening and in many cases are simply rendered or moulded render, some with cornices. This mirrored detailing creates harmony along the streets appearance adding to the character of the area. In some cases this detailing has been replaced with poor alternatives with flat two dimensional surrounds.

More affluent buildings such as the court house and those of Pembroke Terrace have carved stone window and door openings displaying work of skilled masons and adding considerably to the appearance of the buildings. The presence of oriel windows is also found owing to the Tudor revival design of the terrace. The presence of oriel windows is unusual but it occurs in a few buildings along the streetscape such as the Leix Bar, the Abbeygate hotel, Costcutter's and originally Bramleys, thus providing a repetitive architectural link to the streetscape. It is likely that in some cases the oriels were a later nineteenth century modification.

Window sills in general were constructed of tooled limestone but in many cases have been replaced with concrete sills, often coinciding with the replacement of windows. Doors follow the same form and design as windows usually having a vertical emphasis and originally being of timber construction.

There are a variety of door openings in Abbeyleix ranging from traditional square-headed openings, round-headed openings and larger more ornate segmental-headed doorcases. Side doors giving access to upper storeys of buildings along Main Street appear to be simple and square or round-headed in design. Those functioning as the main entrances are more elaborate in nature and are either round-headed or segmental-headed often with fanlights and flanking sidelights.

Door surrounds to Pembroke Terrace and Temperance Street are of high quality architectural design with Tudor revival pointed arched openings which give a repetitive pattern to the terrace. At 'Church View' terrace, although the actual doors have been replaced, door canopies are an unusual

feature which breaks the monotony of an otherwise austere terrace.

Replacement doors are often half glazed to allow for additional light where overlights or fanlights are not present on more vernacular designed buildings. uPVC replacement doors are also common.

Shopfronts and Advertisement

The established retail centre of the town centres on the market square. Shopfronts are an integral part of the fabric and texture of the town and contribute enormously to the historic architectural character of the ACA. The surviving traditional shopfronts are predominately of timber construction with ornate detailing to the fascia, framing pilasters and console brackets. Slender pilasters and consoles are a typical feature of many of the nineteenth century shopfronts in the town.

Good examples of traditional shopfronts include Leinster House and Mossissey's, Main Street, and Mooneys, and the Ireland Own Antiques, Market Square. The scale and finish to earlier shopfronts blend with the street architecture lending it a historic patina. Such features are an integral part of the character of the area creating a link to the past and establishing a unique sense of place. Traditional shopfronts are constantly under threat from modern replacements, enlargements of display windows or pastiche insertions, which can lead to inappropriate alteration of the streetscape. New development should be sensitive to the overall character of the area.

Consideration must also be given to signage as it can easily detract from the overall appearance of a building and its contribution to the streetscape. On the most part signage within Abbeyleix is neat and is painted directly onto the building or fascia. Brush neon or

oversized signage can have a detrimental effect and be offensive.

Carriage Arches

Carriage arches provided access to backlands behind the main streetscape. They are intermittently located along the street creating groups of small terraces and strong gable ends. Most are integral segmental headed arches, which maximise the use of space by providing a living space overhead thus balancing the appearance of the building and providing punctuated openings along the street.

Street furniture

Sometimes heritage items in the public realm are the easiest to preserve and yet the most vulnerable to carelessness. Abbeyleix retains a number of items of historical street furniture which add to its character. A pillar box located at the southern end of Main Street is Edwardian in date and shows high-quality cast-iron detailing which gives this item of street furniture artistic and technical interest. The adjacent water trough is a reminder of the former use of horse and cart for transport before high car dependency. A wheel guard remains just east of the cross roads on the Ballinakill road. Four finely-crafted commemorative water fountains located at strategic points within the town create focal points within the public realm.

Railings and Boundary Walls

Most properties in the town core front directly onto the street and therefore lack boundary treatments. In contrast to this some architecturally designed structures are purposely set back from the street with strong boundary treatments. These include Pembroke Terrace, Preston House, Epworth Hall, the Court House and the Bank of Ireland, the use of cast-iron railing on a low plinth wall

creates deliberate separation while simultaneously allowing the building to be viewed and appreciated. The entrance to the Roman Catholic Church from the Ballinakill road also displays finely executed cast-iron railings and gates creating an impressive entry to the church grounds.

Residential properties on approach roads such as those on the northern end of main street, De Vesci Terrace and properties along the Ballinakill Road are set back from the street with a variety of boundary treatments including rubblestone walls, render walls, hedging and plinth walls with cast and wrought-iron railings atop. Every effort should be made to retain these boundary treatments. Traditional stone wall boundary treatment such as those behind Pembroke Terrace, Ballacolla Road and to the north-east of the church are constructed with locally quarried stone and are of rubble construction. They form a definite strong line and help delineate the original boundaries of the town and therefore the ACA.

ACA Boundaries

When assessing Abbeyleix for ACA designation the boundary was drawn up using the architectural heritage guidelines to ensure a legible and meaningful boundary was created to protect the unique character of the town. Those areas excluded from the ACA were viewed as being too recent in nature or did not contribute to the special character of the area.

Summary Character Statement

Constructed in the late eighteenth century as a formally planned town, Abbeyleix did not evolve over a long period of time like most Irish towns and villages. The town was planned on a linear axis with the convergence of the main thoroughfares at a cross roads in the centre. The location of the market place

immediately to the north of the principal crossroads creates the pivotal centre of the town.

The high quality of architecture is particularly evident in the buildings lining the main square and along the main street. The designed layout is comprised of two storey structures grouped together in small terraces with intermittent laneways, integral carriage arches and long narrow burgage plots to the rear of the buildings. A relatively large number of traditional shop fronts survive, the majority of which display a high level of craftsmanship in their design and finish. This creates an aesthetically appealing appearance which contributes to the overall visual perception of the town and in turn the character of the ACA.

The buildings in close proximity to the market square form the basis for the town's commercial and financial centre. They include individual structures such as the market house, court house and banks. These buildings are of high architectural value and have been designed and finished to a high quality. Repeated features such as the use of stone finishes for window sills, steps, eaves and string courses create a linked appearance and a sense of harmony to the town centre. There are numerous detached civic buildings of architectural significance dispersed throughout the town. At the northern limit of the ACA boundary, for example, is the landmark former North National School, now the heritage centre. This building has been extended over time and sensitively renovated to remain an important building within the town. The Roman Catholic Church located on an elevated site creates a prominent feature in the centre of the town.

A grouping of buildings including the Church of Ireland church, South National School, Sexton's House and the former railway station

are located on the south-west fringe of the town and all are listed on the record of protected structures. These structures contribute to the architectural quality and character of Abbeyleix.

In addition to these significant buildings there are designed terraces which share repetitive patterns of roof pitches, chimneystacks, door and window openings giving the streetscape a sense of harmony and scale. Most notable are 'Pembroke Terrace' and 'Temperance Street' (partially demolished). Such fine terraces are of both national and regional importance and create a pleasing focal point as the town is entered from the south. The same repetitive pattern is mirrored on New Row but in a more vernacular design in 'Church View' terrace whose door canopies created a symmetrical rhythm along the streetscape.

The urban pattern and morphology of the town is defined by residential terraces of houses located on the approach roads which are more traditional in design and finish. In turn as one moves closer to the town's centre the buildings change and take on the dual function of commercial and residential. The town centre is defined by the presence of the market square and number civic buildings which give a firm definition of urban place. Apart from the central market house there are a number of prominent buildings of high architectural quality on the main street such as the Bank of Ireland and Allied Irish Bank which create focal points along the streetscape.

The full appraisal has identified 109 structures within the ACA boundary which add to the character of the town.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In

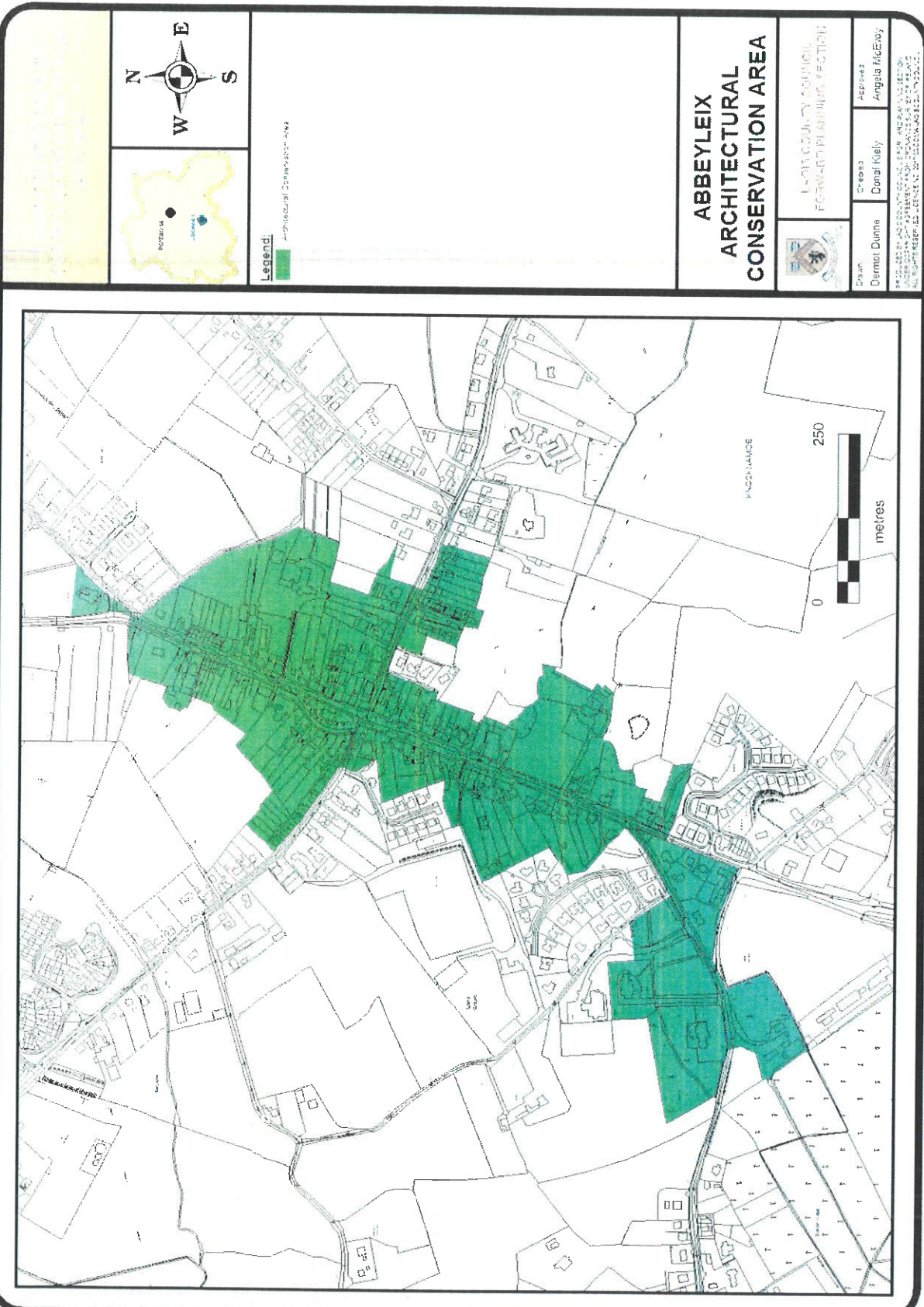
addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

- Other works that would require permission include:
- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a particular area special. The demolition or insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted. Some structures within the boundaries may be of little architectural interest and are included within an ACA boundary only because of their location within the streetscape. Buildings of little architectural merit may be subject to wholesale redevelopment as part of a planning permission. However, any replacement building should be designed with due regard to the special characteristics of the ACA. Suitably designed infill or bankland development that contributes to the special character of the ACA will also be encouraged. Works to the public realm within ACAs e.g. footpaths, street furniture, parking schemes will be required to respect the special character of the area also.



BALLINAKILL ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

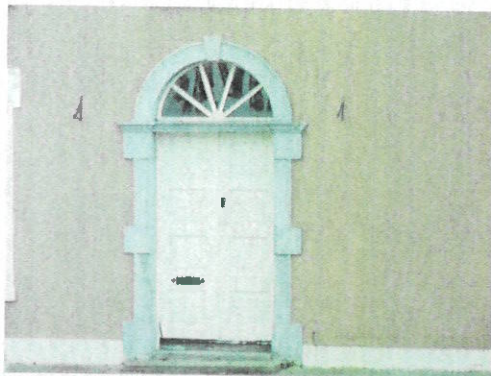
History

Ballinakill is located in south County Laois. The name Ballinakill is thought to derive from "Baile na Coillte" meaning the town of the wood. The hinterland around Ballinakill remains well-wooded.

The town dates to the seventeenth century. In 1606 the right to hold a market and fair at Ballinakill was granted. Originally part of the Cosby Estate, lands were granted to Thomas Ridgeway in 1611 and an English colony was established there soon after. Ridgeway is said to have spent £10,000 in the creation of the town. In 1613 the town was incorporated by charter. The economic development of the town was underpinned by its proximity to ironworks located to the southeast of the town on the Ironmills River, a tributary to the Owenbeg River where the Ironmills Bridge spans the River.

In 1631, the town was said to contain a large castle, one hundred dwelling houses, a fulling mill (a step in woollen cloth making), two water mills, the iron mill referred to above, three fairs and two markets. In 1642, the town is described as: *seated among woods in a place so watered with springs as afforded the Earl convenience to make many fish ponds near the castle he built there; which he likewise fortified with a strong wall and that with turrets and flankers; besides that, the town since it had been planted was well inhabited*

The castle referred to above was built between 1605 and 1613 and destroyed in the mid-seventeenth century. This Castle was initially used to defend territory against the Confederates (Irish Catholic Confederation who governed parts of the country independently following the 1641 rebellion) with settlers flocking there for refuge when the rebellion broke out. The Castle withstood initial attacks but ceded to the Confederates when it came under attack by heavy artillery.



All of Laois came under confederate control by 1643 and the Castle was used as a garrison in 1646. The Castle was surrendered to Cromwellian forces in 1650 and seemingly destroyed. The Castle was a substantial structure with a water-filled moat, gatehouse and clock tower. The ruinous remains of what is known locally as Ballinakill Castle was built in 1680 by the Dunnes, of roughly coursed pink shaly stone with dressed limestone quoins. The structure was originally five storeys in height; the extant structure is three storeys in height and retains features such as ground and first floor gun loops and a second floor window.

By 1659 the town was the third most populous in Laois and the population was one quarter English. By the eighteenth century, it was one of the most important fair towns in the County. In 1801 it was a major tanning and brewing centre and also featured a small woollen business. The corporation and borough of Ballinakill were dissolved with the Act of Union in 1800.



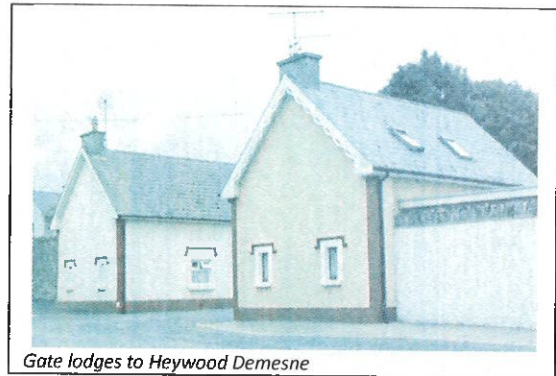
Seventeenth century plan form



Eighteenth century streetscape and plan form

Plan form

In the seventeenth century the street plan of Ballinakill was laid out along the long access formed by Graveyard Street and Stanhope Street with Chapel Lane and Castle Lane running perpendicular to the east. The current large rectangular urban space known as The Square and the related Church Street to the north and Bridge Street to the west are an eighteenth century addition. The more sinuous seventeenth century is quite distinct from the more geometric eighteenth century addition on aerial photographs of the town. A well-defined burgage plot pattern is discernible on the east side of Stanhope Street and the Square. Parts of the building fabric in this area may be seventeenth century in date, the area is within the Ballinakill zone of archaeological potential.



Gate lodges to Heywood Demesne

Influence of Heywood Demesne

Ballinakill is closely associated with the Heywood Demesne. The Demesne dates back to the eighteenth century. The house and gardens were designed by the owner and amateur architect MF Trench, who adorned the sites with follies salvaged from medieval sites. In the nineteenth century the house was significantly altered and was eventually destroyed in the 1960s. In the 1920s Edwin Lutyens designed the landscape around the house. It survives and comprises a sunken garden, ornamental pond and fountain within elliptical flowerbeds and terraces. Gertrude Jekyll devised the planting scheme.

Most of the laneways on the 1841 Ordnance Survey map linking the town with the

Heywood Demesne remain. However, a laneway to the east of the Square, the north of Chapel Lane and the Mass Lough no longer directly connects these spaces. A direct route from the Mass Lough to The Square has now partially disappeared and is now a short laneway to the rear of commercial and residential properties.



Fine Georgian House

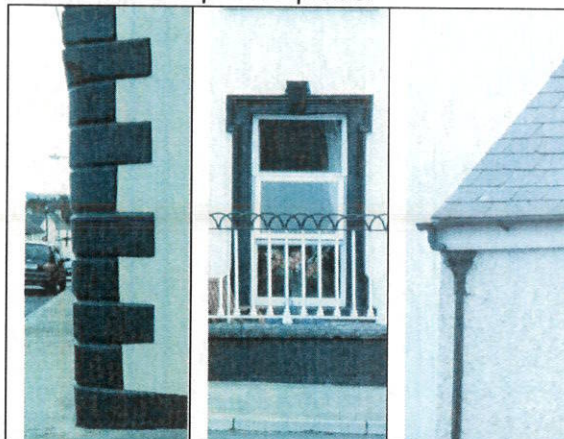


Backland view of ruinous towerhouse, Roman Catholic Church and Church of Ireland spire

Architectural Interest

Much of the extant building stock of architectural interest in Ballinacill is eighteenth century in date. High order buildings overlook the square and more modest buildings are located to the south and east. Fine individual structures include the gatehouses to the Heywood Demesne along Church Street to the back of the Heywood Demesne, the Georgian Gothic Church of Ireland (1821) and the Gothic Revival Roman Catholic Church (1835) and two detached late nineteenth century schools also on Church Street. Some of the late Georgian structures and mid to late nineteenth century structures

on the Square appear neglected and would benefit from more active uses. Features to townhouses on the Square include rusticated ground floors, semi-circular fanlights to front doors and faux plaster quoins.



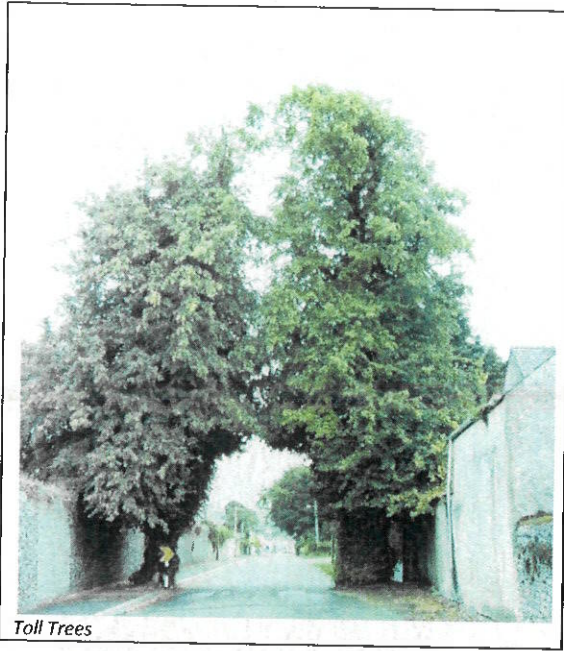
Building features: chamfered, faux quoins; raised plasterwork window surround with keystone detail and wrought iron railings to front; natural slate roof and cast-iron hopper



Traditional shopfront with stained glass lantern, with living quarters to the side and above



Market House and Market Square



Toll Trees

Although the Square retains a strong and cohesive character with the Market House to centre, many of the sliding sash windows and also the natural slate materials have been replaced with unsympathetic modern materials. The Square would benefit from more sympathetic treatment, it is currently finished with concrete slabs, tarmac and red brick. The toll trees at Church Street frame the approach into Ballinakill and contribute to its special character. The setting of the village against the wooded Heywood Demesne, encompassing the Mass Lough and related esker are an essential part of the village's character.

Boundaries

The ACA boundary is focused on the seventeenth and eighteenth century village centre. While many buildings within the ACA are of architectural merit, some buildings of little or no architectural merit may be included within the boundaries because of their location within the historic streetscape.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that

works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission. For example, the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

Other works that would require permission include:

- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

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PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING SERVICES
PLANNING SECTION



Legend:
Architectural Conservation Area

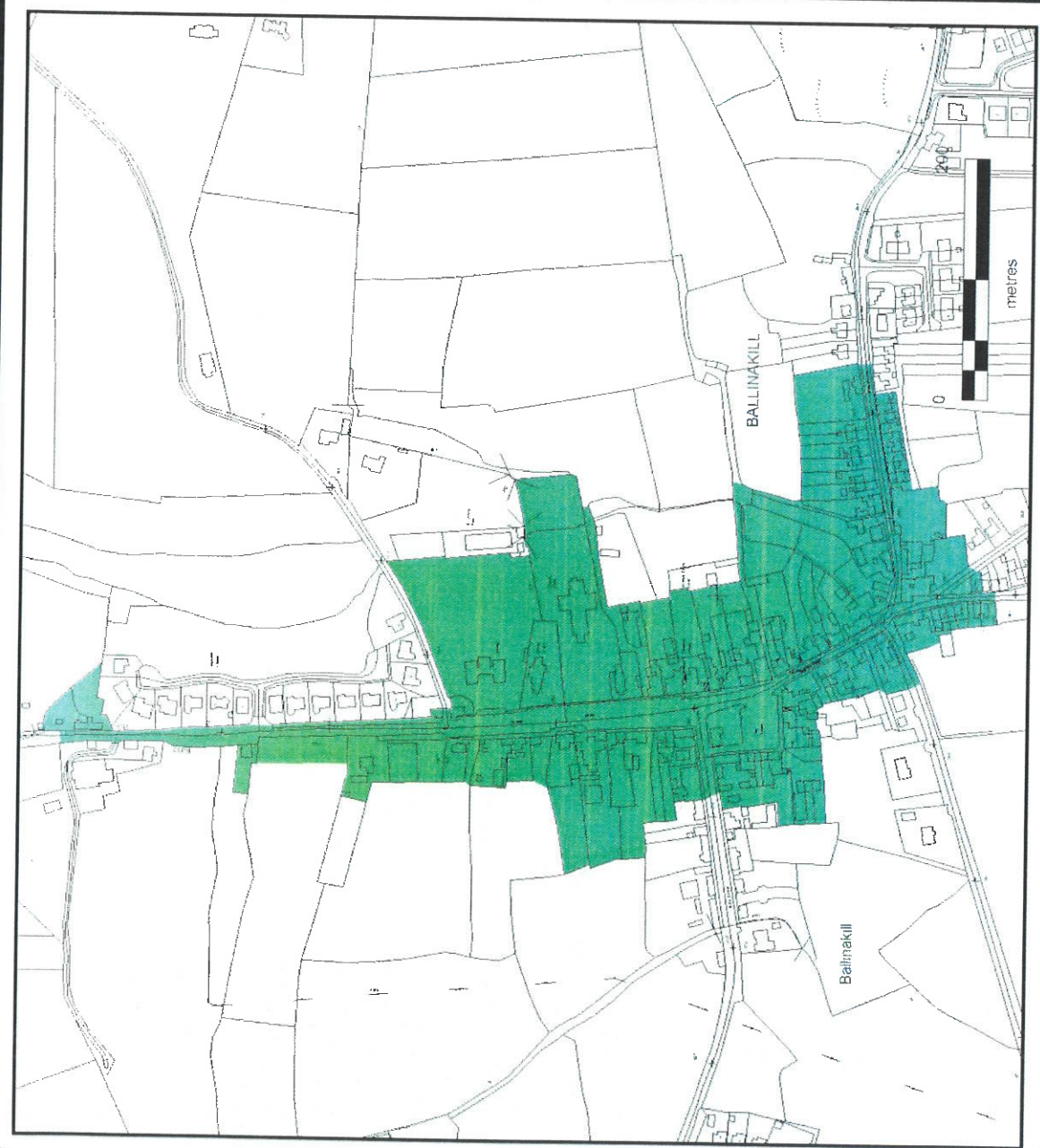
BALLINAKILL ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

LENS ROUTE LOCAL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

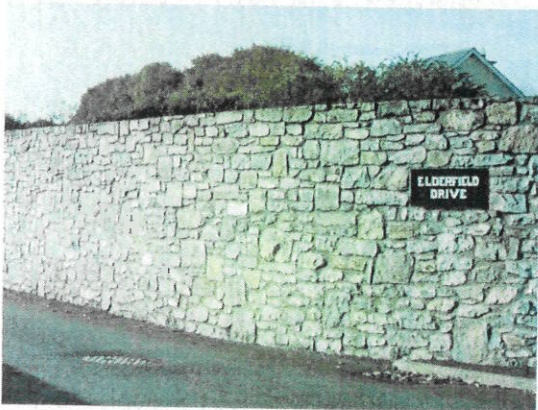
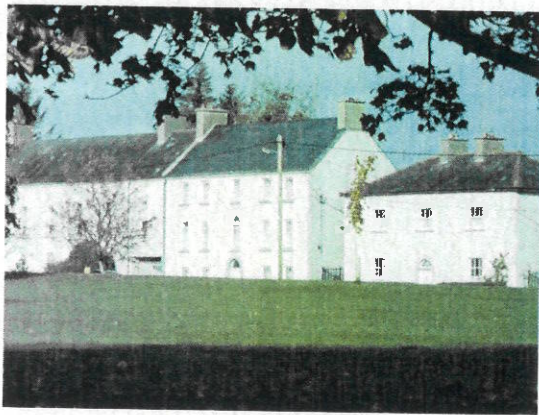


Client: Dermot Dunne
Drawing: Donal Kiely
Approved: Angela McEvoy

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CASTLETOWN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



History

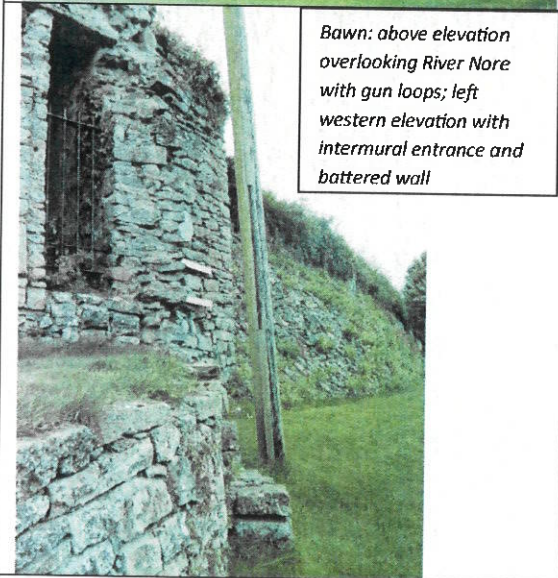
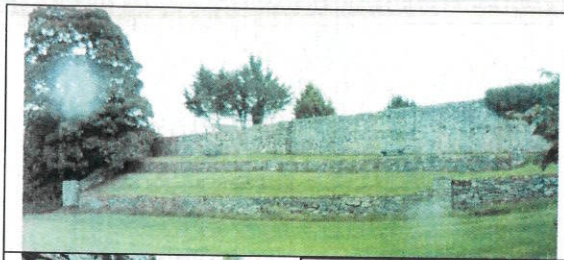
Castletown reportedly takes its names from a Norman twelfth century castle of which only fragments remain. The development of the village is associated with the MacGiollapadraigs.

In the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the MacGiollapadraigs (Fitzpatricks) were displaced from lands to the south and made a common cause with the Delaney's seizing the Norman castles at Castletown, Aghaboe and Borris in Ossory. The MacGiollapadriags were one of the seven tribes of the Laoighis, claimed descendance from the Milesians (Celts) and are attributed in the rebuilding of the fourteenth century monastery at Aghaboe. In the early fourteenth century, the remnant foreign settlers within the MacGiollapadrig's territory were expelled.

There is little documentation and study related to the planatation of the Upper Ossory the barony in which Castletown is located or the origins of the Castletown settlement. Castletown and the surrounding area were reportedly burned in 1600 to prevent royal forces taking succour. The crown made a largely spurious claim to this territory and proceeded with its plantation following an inquisition in 1621. Large-scale land seizures from the dominant family the MacGiollapadraig's were made in 1626 and this included the Castletown estate. The MacGiollapadriag's disputed the seizures, arguing that Elizabeth I had previously assured them that the Castletown estate would remain in their possession. The MacGiollapadrig's ceded territorial supremacy to the Duke of Buckingham in 1627. A reportedly apocalyptic preacher Olmstead received more than 500 acres of former MacGiollapadriaig land in and around Castletown. Evidence suggests the MacGiollapadraigs became increasingly

impoverished as a result of their loss of territory.

During the 1641 revolt, the MacGiollapadriagns and other families rejected the plantation siding with the Confederates and were central to the siege of Birmingham's castle in Borris in Ossory. In 1642 the MacGiollapadraig's laid siege, but had little success because of a lack of artillery.



Bawn: above elevation overlooking River Nore with gun loops; left western elevation with intermural entrance and battered wall

A bawn is located above the south side of the river. The elevation overlooking the river comprises roughly coursed cut stone wall with gun loops and square pillars and two terraces with similar pillars. An intermural entrance with associated steps is located to the northwest corner. The western elevation is of similarly roughly coursed but has a curved batter of random rubble and rounded stone. This bawn appears defensive in nature and is strategically sited overlooking a navigable watercourse which would have functioned as an importance trading corridor. It may be associated with the MacGiollapadraig's and the late medieval period. Further survey and study of this monument is needed.

This history of Castletown in Upper Ossory is sometimes confused with Castletown near Killabban in the east of the county which was an important settlement in Norman times and is associated with Hugh de Lacy.

Architecture – Description of Special Character

Castletown, is described in the Topographical Dictionary of Ireland of 1837 as *a village pleasantly situated on the River Nore and on the road from Dublin to Limerick, taking its names from an ancient castle containing 59 houses, many of which are good residences and the whole has an appearance of neatness and respectability.* Based on urban morphology typologies, the village's layout around a central triangular green is seventeenth century in date.

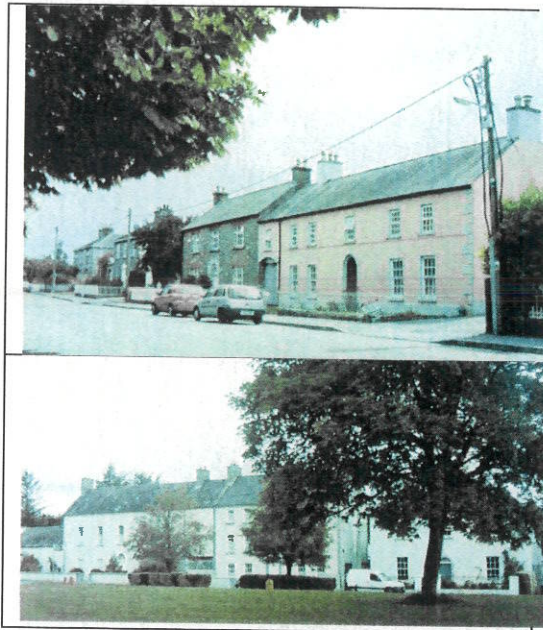
The land falls from south to north afforded panoramic views of the wider landscape and the Slieve Blooms from the green.



Castletown Green retains a strong Georgian character. Buildings of a high architectural order, with good survival of original architectural features such as windows and rainwater goods, overlook the triangular central green with its mature horse chestnut trees.

Early Georgian buildings are of particular interest, some have pitched-gables and others hipped-gable pitches, the larger properties tend to have integrated carriageway entrances and double pitches. Some later

structures dating to the 1830s at the Green are more modest.

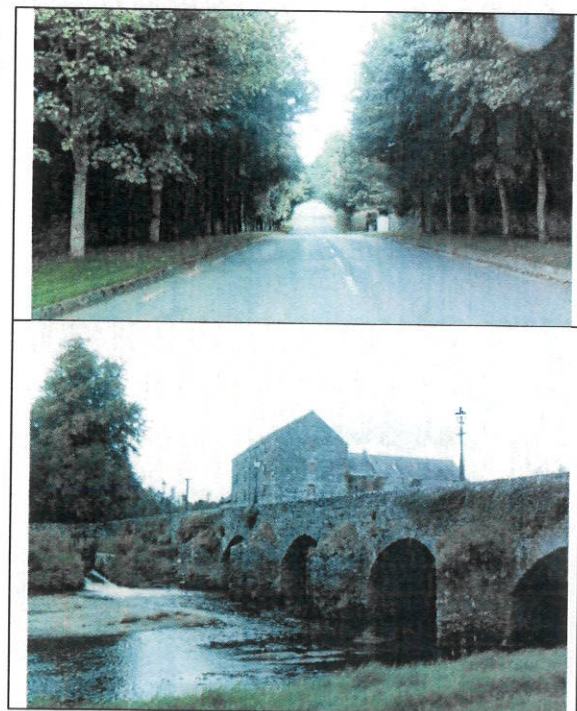


Notable nineteenth century additions include the rendered De La Salle Monastery (1870) (below) with red clay crested ridge tiles, yellowbrick chimneystacks and profiled cast iron rainwater goods. The Monastery dominates the green because of its large scale and the topography of the Green.



The Corn Mill (1840) (above) of coursed limestone rubble, dressed in brick with limestone quoins, slate roof, red ridge tiles and cast iron rainwater goods is a landmark building. As suggested by its location adjacent to the River, it was water-powered and the mill race, weir and steps along the southern side of the river bank are extant. The bridge spanning the river is sizable and can be appreciated from the banks, it is ornamented by cast iron lanterns. The mill structure is now vacant.

Twentieth century structures include the two school buildings from the first half of the twentieth century and a social housing estate.



The double row of trees and the six-arch limestone bridge (1750) with rubble stone parapets provides a fitting entrance to the village and can be appreciated from the grassed river banks below. The village has a tidy and well-maintained feel.

The village retains a strong geographic relationship to the river, though with the exception of the mill and the bawn, the buildings do not address the River.

Castletown would have benefited from its location close to a navigable river which would have been used to transport agricultural produce from the hinterland and other bulky goods.

The current commercial uses are located in the adjacent street giving The Green a tranquil atmosphere comprising residential and institutional uses.

The ACA boundaries are focused on the Green and the river.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

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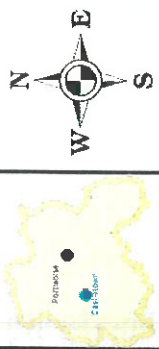
- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
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CASTLETOWN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



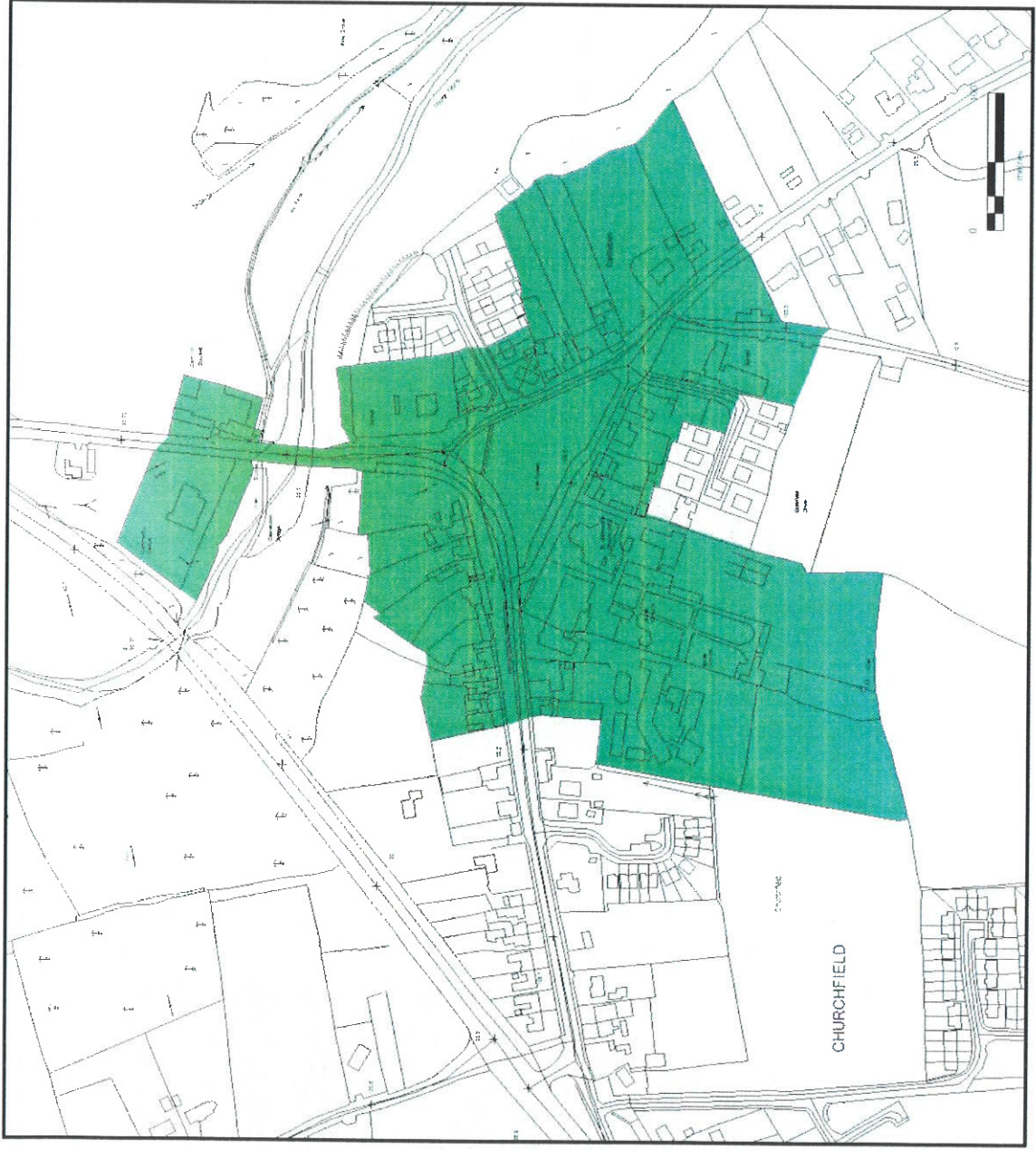
Legend:
 Architectural Conservation Area

CASTLETOWN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

ILLINOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
 FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

Drawn	Checked	Approved
Deborah Dunne	Donal Kuby	Angela McEroy

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CLONASLEE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

History

Clonaslee originated as an Anglo-Norman settlement, though detail of its development during the late medieval period is scant. Its name is thought to derive from Cluain na Slighe, roadwise meadow or Cluain na Sleibhe, mountain meadow.



The development of the estate village of Clonaslee is associated with the Dunne family (of Irish descent) and the Brittas Estate. During the Williamite wars, soldiers from James I's army are said to have been based at Clonaslee in 1691, as the Dunne family were supporters of James Ist.

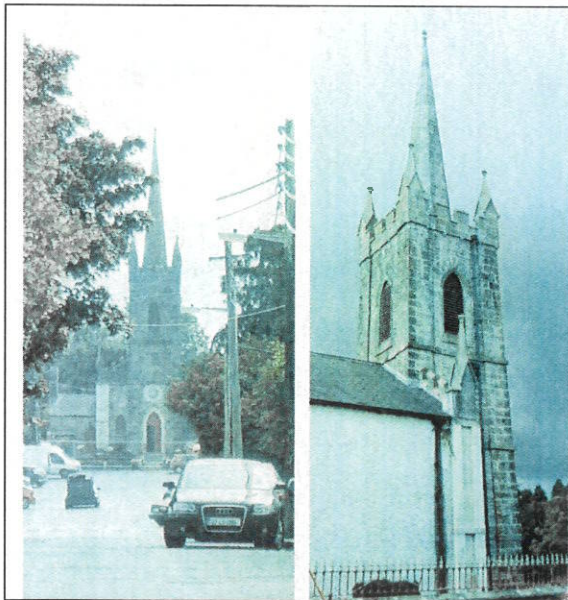


The Dunne's country house was built in 1869 to designs by John McCurdy, then extended and altered by Millar and Symes in 1879 and comprised three-storey over basement tower. The house was built by General Dunne then a Member of Parliament. The building is now derelict as a result of a fire in 1940s with no roof to the main structure. The appearance of the flag tower remains striking, being of sandstone ashlar masonry with defensive features including buttresses, corbelled, castellated parapet and a castellated turret and ornamented windows dressed in sandstone. A detached gatehouse and detached outbuildings forms part of the estate. The sandstone gate piers to the estate are sited within the village, tangibly indicating the close relationship between the demesne and the village.



Gates to Brittas Demesne

As with many estate villages, it is arranged around a wide boulevard. The plan form is thought to be eighteenth century in date. The former Church of Ireland (1814) is constructed in a Georgian Gothic style and is given central importance within the streetscape: the vista created by the strong building line of the boulevard terminates with the Church and is punctuated by the square tower and tall spire above. The church was erected under General Dunne, aided by a grant from the Board of First Fruits which was set up by Queen Anne to improve churches and glebe (rectory) houses.



The Roman Catholic Church, Saint Manman's (1813) is located on the Tullamore Road and is set back from the road and is simpler in design. It is located on the site of an earlier

thatched chapel built around 1771 by Francis Dunne who became a Catholic.

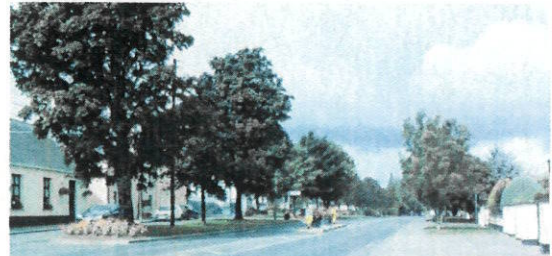


The village grew quickly between 1800 and 1830. This growth was due to making of The Cut through uplands to create a new road between Mountmellick and Birr. This period saw the arrival of services such as a Post Office and Police Station. The current urban form of the centre of Clonaslee very much resembles its appearance in the first ordnance survey map in 1841. Clonaslee suffered severe population decline during the famine. The settlement has expanded eastwards and now functions as a large village.

Main Street Clonaslee



The Green, Clonaslee



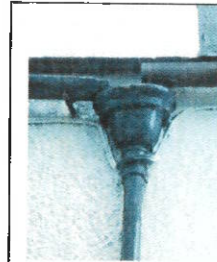
Tullamore Road Clonaslee



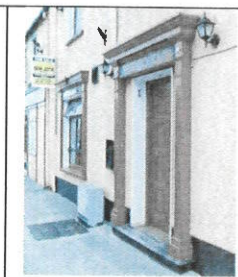
Clodiagh River



The topography of the village is flat and is set in a landscape dominated by gentle uplands and mature woodlands. The Clodiagh River runs along the Tullamore Road enclosed by a stone wall and under the Main Street towards Brittas Lake and contributes to the special character of the village. The streetscape of Main Street is cohesive, incorporating a strong building line defining the edge of the street, the buildings are mostly two-storey, with wide frontages, gable-pitched roofs, large chimney stacks and vertical emphasis windows, are orientated towards and open directly onto the Main Street.



Cast iron hopper



Painted timber shopfront

Gaps between the buildings provide shared access to backlands though a few integral carriageways exist also. Most of the buildings have no elevational decoration, some are decorated with painted raised plasterwork to the doorways and faux quoins to the edges. Elevational finishes include roughcast, lime render and cement renders. Much of the original building fabric such as doors, sliding sash windows, roof tiles and rainwater goods have been replaced. Chimney stacks and pots generally survive. A small number of shopfronts of architectural quality survive.

The roof heights and pitches vary along the Main Street within a small range. More generally the streetscape comprises a linear form, designed vistas and views and some fine individual buildings including the Church of Ireland which now functions as a Heritage Centre, the Lodge and Hickey's Public House with their decorative timber fascia boards, the defunct Courthouse overlooking the Green. The Swan Public House, though not of architectural interest, is a prominent building by reason of its siting.



Typical elevation



Typical elevation



Shared access



Stone outbuilding





Open spaces make an important contribution to the character of the village and comprise the Green and the open space to the front of Hickey's Public House known as the Square.

Buildings along the western side Tullamore Road are more informally arranged becoming single-storey cottages from the village and are generally of a lower architectural order. The cottages along this road contribute to the special character of the ACA. The buildings and open spaces of the village are generally well-maintained.

Boundaries

The ACA is focused on the historic core of Clonaslee which comprises the Main Street, the Green and the Tullamore Road. While many buildings within the ACA are of architectural merit, some buildings of little or no architectural merit may be included within the boundaries because of their location within the historic streetscape or setting of the village.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

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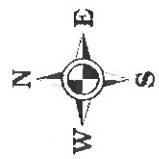
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CLONASLEE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



Legend:
Architectural Conservation Area

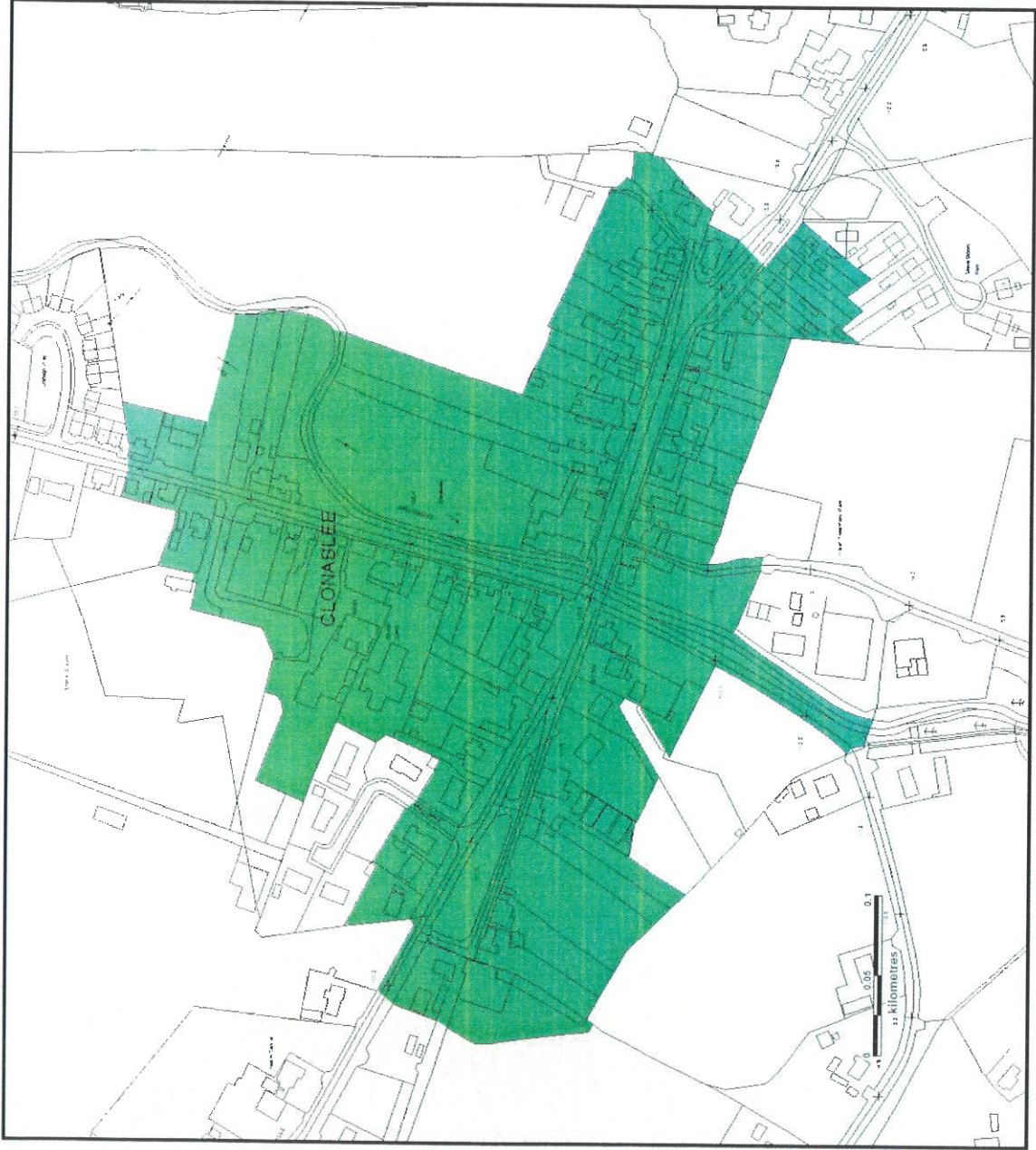
CLONASLEE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

Drawn	Checked	Approved
Dermet Dume	Donal Kiely	Angela McEvoy

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DURROW ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Location and General Morphology

Durrow is located in south County Laois in a rural landscape of gently undulating hills, the River Erkina skirts the northern boundary of the village and the former main road to Dublin bisects the village diagonally. The village of Durrow centres around the pattern created by the convergence of two roads; the main (N8) route running from Dublin on the north east to Urlingford and Cork beyond on the south west, and the road to Kilkenny (N77) in the south east. These three main approaches create the basis for the triangular arrangement of Old Chapel Street, Mary Street and Castle Street and this coupled with the open 'Square' in front of the entrance to the settlement's principal *raison d'être*, Durrow Castle, give Durrow the well defined layout of a planned estate village.

History

The place name Durrow is an anglicisation of *Dar Magh* ('the plain of the oaks') and the earliest reference to the area is in the fifth century. There are also references to a monastery founded in *Dervagh* during the sixth century. There are no remains of this monastery but the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) records an ecclesiastical site (LA029-042000) on the south side of the Erkina river and on the western outskirts of the present day town. The association of St Fintan with Durrow is commemorated by a holy well (LA029-043001) dedicated to him on the north bank of the river. A number of derivations of the place name Durrow can be seen in other historical references to the area. A grant issued in 1245 to Geoffrey de Turville, Bishop of Ossory, to hold a weekly market and an annual fair at the manor of *Derevald*. In 1350 the Manor of *Deraugh* was listed as the most valuable of the temporalities of the See of Ossory. The manor remained in the possession of the bishops until the Reformation and their influence is reflected in

local place names, such as 'Bishop's Meadows', 'Bishop's Roads' and Bishop's Woods'. The Earl of Ormond was granted possession of the manor following the Reformation. Durrow was officially removed from the jurisdiction of Queen's County and transferred into Kilkenny during the 1680s.

The estate was rented by the Viscount of Ashbrook, Sir William Flower in the same decade, and was then released to the Flower family in 1708. The estate of Castledurrow remained in the ownership of his descendants until the early twentieth century. The construction of Castledurrow was completed in the 1730s and by the end of the eighteenth century the earlier settlement of Durrow had been replaced with a planned estate village of 218 houses.

The new village was centred on a large square located to the east of the grounds of Castledurrow and they were connected by a tree-lined avenue that ran along the north end of the walled estate gardens. A number of three storey buildings to the north of the square were constructed by Flowers for his Welsh and English estate managers. The leases for the village plots made available to settlers prescribed the exact location and dimensions of the houses to be built and the timescale for the completion of construction. A number of leases were also granted for the milling operation at the Course on the Erkina during the eighteenth century and milling continued at this site until 1929.

A stone bridge was constructed to the north of the square in 1788 to replace an existing wooden bridge reputedly located c.500m up river and was itself replaced in 1958. The new estate town at Durrow benefited from its location on the Cork to Dublin mail road and the 'The Red Lion' hotel, which was constructed in the 1790s, functioned as a halting station for the Bianconi coaches.

In his 1837 description of Durrow, Samuel Lewis records that the town's population at that time was 298 inhabitants and that many of its 236 houses were well-built and roofed in slate. There were weekly markets held at the

market-house and the town also contained a number of schools, a courthouse, a boulting mill, a police station, dispensary, a Church of Ireland church and a newly built Catholic church.

The detail on the first edition OS map of 1841 demonstrates that the present day street layout on the south side of the river was in place by that time and shows the regular garden plots to the rear of the street front buildings. The Church of Ireland Church is shown on the west side of The Square and the Catholic chapel on the east end of the town.

In 1846 the Ordnance Survey Commissioners finally returned Durrow to Queen's County. The population of the town began to decline during the 1840s and had dropped to 559 by the early twentieth century. The detail on the 2nd edition OS map of 1890 and the 25-inch map of 1908 indicates that the layout of the core of the town remained unchanged during the remainder of the nineteenth century. The functions of a number of buildings are indicated on the 1908 map, including a hotel market house, constabulary and pump on The Square. This map also shows the presence of outbuildings in many of the garden plots behind the street front buildings. The market house in The Square continued to function until 1968 when the building was incorporated into Alley's Drapery. The layout of the eighteenth century estate town street plan, and indeed its fabric, have survived.

Description and Character Appraisal

The village developed on the south bank of the Erkina River beside the bridge which, although now defunct, replaced a previous timber crossing on this site and an earlier medieval stone bridge a short distance upstream. Its buildings are one, two and three storeys and they generally retain their long, narrow rear plots. They are arranged along both sides of the southern approaches to Durrow, around a triangular block created by a linking street between the main square and a smaller green area, and fronting onto the north, east and southern sides of the wide square that dominates the village.



view of houses on north side of square

The north western portion of Durrow was reserved for the Castle and its demesne along with the Church of Ireland and National Schools. These distinctive estate structures along with the ordered plan-form of the village, most buildings within which are eighteenth and nineteenth century in date, provide its individual architectural character. The village has a notably defined and relatively unaltered central core and this is separated from the more modern, suburban-type development of recent years by principal buildings on the three approach roads to Durrow. On the southwestern approach, the prominent national school building marks the original boundary of the village here, the stone arched bridge and the impressive former Bianconi Hotel demarcate the northern boundary to the village and on the southeastern approach, the Catholic Church and former infants' school provide effective bookends to the village centre. Within the village, notable structures include the Church of Ireland, Dun Naoise House on the north side of the Square and the former courthouse building which now houses the library on Oldchapel Road.

The large square contributes to the identity of the village and is a focal point for both Durrow and its surrounding landscape. The high quality and relatively unaltered nature of architecture, particularly along the Square's northern and western sides adds to its gravitas and provides a centre-piece to the village. The southern and eastern sides of the Square contain the majority of commercial activity within the village and this continues with shops, public and business premises along Mary Street, returning north on Oldchapel Street and east on Castle Street to form a triangular core to the centre of Durrow. The increasing scale and impact of

architecture towards the Square is visible on the terraces which line the southern approach routes, and channel the visitor towards the village centre along Patrick Street and Carrigan Street. With only a small number of modern infill buildings to the subject part of Durrow and larger modern developments well defined outside the limits of the original village centre, its general intactness contributes considerably to its architectural interest. This lack of disturbance applies even to rear plots of terraced street-fronting properties – a feature which is often eroded in larger towns as pressure of traffic management, parking or large commercial premises can see rear yards amalgamated and boundaries obliterated.

Views of Durrow from outside are limited with relatively dense belts of forest within one kilometre on all sides and no particularly elevated land in the surrounding area. Within the village the effect of road morphology and planned design of buildings constructed along the two southern approaches has been carried out with the aim of gradually unfurling views of different parts of the village to the visitor. With subtle bends in the roads, the visitor is guided through modest dwelling terraces to the commercial centre of the village and only when one arrives in the main square can it be fully appreciated and viewed. With no significant residential development, either modern or historic on the northern route into the village, one arrives directly at the corner of the Square with a very short approach from the edge of the village.



Former Red Lion Hotel

Despite road realignment the former Bianconi Hotel and those buildings on the northeastern

corner of the Square still frame the view of the Square ensuring its visual impact from all sides. There are no views of the river except for those from the bridges themselves however there is pedestrian access along the river. As in many Irish towns or villages the river in Durrow is largely ignored rather than exploited for its contribution to the character of the place. This may have been due to the historic association of rivers with heavy industry such as milling or with the use of rivers until recent decades as dumping grounds for waste generated by urban settlements. As legislation and practice is resulting in the improvement of river environments, their recognition as integral parts of village character is renewing interest in the contribution of rivers to the fabric of Irish towns and villages. In the case of Durrow, development of an amenity which interprets and commemorates the milling heritage of the area is providing this renewal of interest in the river as part of the village's character.

The overall area of Durrow village can be considered as three distinct but interlocking parts:

- Carrigan Street and Patrick Street
- Oldchapel Street, Mary Street and Castle Street
- The Square

Architectural Character

The village's architectural character is based on the distinctive plan form and on a mix of large residences displaying formal design elements, such as Georgian door-cases, and smaller scale buildings in a vernacular style.

The buildings on the square were consciously arranged with the residential element set back from the main thoroughfare which runs diagonally across the square and the more commercial element located to the south and east sides of the square. Although individual buildings differ in design this arrangement purposely creates a homogenous appearance

which contributes to the overall setting and character of the village.

The village reverts to a more informal, traditional appearance as one moves from the main square towards the outskirts of the village. Here the buildings are more vernacular in design and construction and front directly onto street. The repetitive use of pitched slate roofs, strong chimneystacks and render wall finishes adds symmetry to the streetscape while the lack of standardised facade treatments lends visual interest. Along these side streets, buildings were designed to have a dual purpose with a commercial function on the ground floor and residential accommodation to the upper floors. Buildings are frequently grouped in small terraces with intermittent laneways and integral carriage arches providing access to long narrow rear back plots.

During the early nineteenth century the historical urban townscape continued to develop with the construction of prominent civic structures dispersed throughout the village. The Church of Ireland church creates a focal point on the western side of the square, the Court House forms a prominent feature to the south of the village and the Roman Catholic Church located on an elevated site closes the south eastern perimeter of the village.

Building Features which contribute to the Special Character of the Town

Roof form, chimneystacks and rainwater goods

The majority of roofs in Durrow are pitched with slate cladding. Within both the village core and on approach roads to the village there is a range of differing roof heights. The roof heights along Carrigan Street, Patrick Street and the east side of the square are stepped to follow the natural slope of the ground. Roof pitches vary only slightly and tend to give a uniform appearance along the streetscape even though building heights vary. Detached or more recent infill buildings tend to have hipped roofs, such as the court

house, Ashfield Lodge (former Red Lion Hotel) and the semi-detached council cottages on Mary Street. Newly constructed buildings tend to be higher, or out of scale mono-pitched and are sometimes not in keeping with the streetscape.

The majority of chimneystacks are simple in design and rendered, with the exception of some brick stacks along the upper end of Carrigan Street. Chimneystacks are placed both centrally and on gable tops, indicating shared gable walls to terraces. Traditional rainwater goods are generally cast-iron or cast-aluminium and are painted.



View of Mary Street, formerly Queen Street, c. 1900. At least two buildings in the photograph have thatched roofs. (Source: O'Doherty)



Stepped roofline following natural slope along Carrigan Street.

Render (plasterwork) and external finishes

Renderers are the external coatings applied to buildings. Renderers commonly used in Durrow include (a) roughcast (b) smooth lime or cement render. Buildings using smooth render are painted with some having a ruled and lined decoration. Most buildings have a smooth rendered plinth and some have channelled quoins which emphasise the building's edge while adding visual appeal to the structure.

Exposed stone construction is evident along Patrick Street and Carrigan Street and displays the use of high quality stone in a more vernacular and traditional manner. Recent alterations have resulted in some of these residential units being rendered or bricked over, which conceals the natural stone finish, thus breaking the strong building line and visual appeal of these terraces. The carrying out of such works can have a long term detrimental effect on the condition of the building preventing it from breathing resulting in dampness.

Pebbledash is also present in Durrow but it is not widely used and is frequently confined to use on the upper storeys of buildings. Examples of this are generally confined to the side streets with the buildings facing the square being smooth or rough cast rendered.



Building displaying moulded render window and door surrounds and channelled quoins, Castle Street

Locally-produced brick from Attanagh was used in the finish of buildings along residential terraces on Carrigan Street and Patrick Street indicating the later expansion of the village along the village periphery.

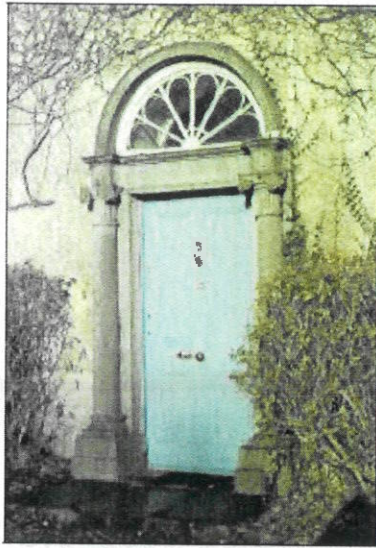
Window and Door Openings

Within Durrow the majority of buildings have been designed with window and door openings giving a symmetrical appearance to the buildings and the streetscape. More affluent building with classical proportions such as those to the north side of the square and the former Red Lion have diminishing window sizes with larger windows to the ground floor and small windows to the upper floor. Original windows were usually of timber sash construction with the glazing bars providing vertical emphasis.

Like many Irish villages Durrow has witnessed the replacement of timber sash windows with uPVC casement windows. Such replacements detract from the appearance of the building and have a negative effect on the overall character of the area. This is evident on both Carrigan Street and Patrick's Street. Sash windows are retained along the north square where buildings are of a higher design quality and more affluent in appearance.

Replacement timber sash windows have been inserted into Ashfield Lodge (Red Lion Hotel) in a sympathetic manner as part of the successful conservation of the building. In doing so the appearance and character of the building has been retained and the building contributes positively to the streetscape and acts as a landmark as one enters the village from the north.

Moulded render detailing is often used in window and door surrounds to decorate and define the openings. This mimics the craftsmanship evident in the high quality cut stone surrounds visible in buildings on the north side of the square. A good example of render detailing to window and door openings is evident on Castle Street. More affluent buildings located along North square have carved stone window and door openings displaying work of skilled masons and adding considerably to the appearance of the buildings.



Entrance doorway to Dun Naírise House

Residential terraces along Carrigan and Patrick Streets have brick window surrounds. This repeated detailing creates harmony in the street's appearance adding to the character of the area. In some cases this detailing has been replaced with poor alternatives such as stone cladding or has been hidden completely in cases where the building has been rendered over.

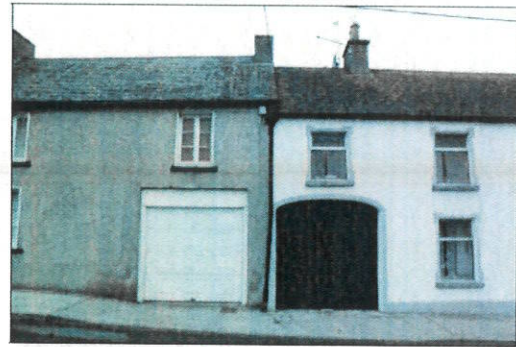
Window sills in general were constructed of tooled limestone but in many cases these have been replaced with concrete sills, often coinciding with the replacement of windows. Doors follow the same form and design as windows, usually having a vertical emphasis, and originally being of timber construction.

Replacement doors are often half glazed to allow for additional light where overlights or fanlights are not present on more vernacular designed buildings. uPVC replacement doors are also common reflecting the attempt to reduced noise levels created by passing traffic. Door surrounds to the more affluent north square are round-headed and of high quality architectural design and constructed of cut limestone with decorative fanlights.

Carriage Arches

Carriage arches provided access to backlands behind the main streetscape. They are intermittently located along the street creating groups of small terraces and strong gable ends. Most are integral segmental

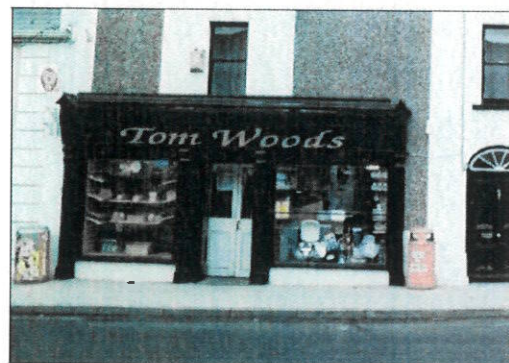
headed arches, however some openings have been altered to create square-headed arches. Such alterations change the appearance of the streetscape and result in the slow erosion of the character of the area.



The alteration of openings and the insertion of modern doors results in slow erosion of the characteristic features of an area.

Shopfronts and Advertisements

The established retail centre of the village is concentrated to the south of the square and along Mary Street. This has resulted in a variety of shopfront styles and finishes. Traditional shopfronts that remain are of timber construction, with ornate detailing. Examples include Tom Woods on Carrigan Street and the Medical Centre and Post Office on Old Chapel Street. Such features are an integral part of the character of the area creating a link to the past and establishing a unique sense of place.



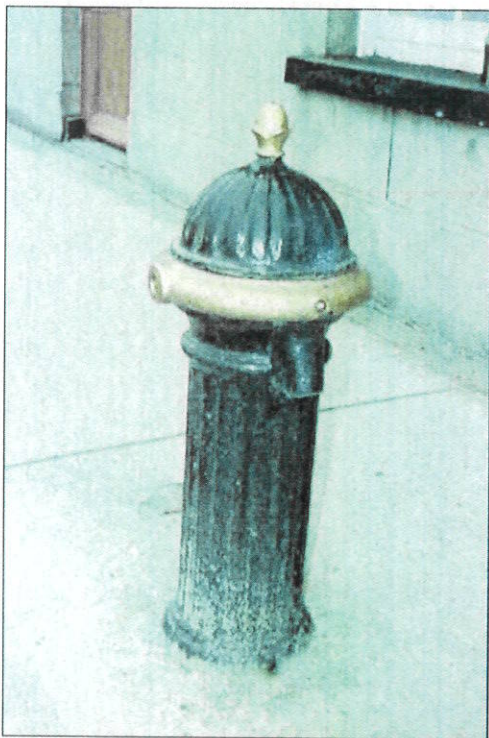
Traditional shopfront, Carrigan Street

Traditional shopfronts are constantly under threat from modern replacements or pastiche insertions, which can lead to inappropriate alteration of the streetscape. New development can reflect modern design, while simultaneously being sensitive to the overall character of the area.

Consideration must also be given to signage as it can easily detract from the overall appearance of a building and its contribution to the streetscape. On the most part signage within Durrow is neat and is painted directly onto the building or fascia. Brash neon or oversized signage can have a detrimental effect on the streetscape.

Street furniture

Durrow retains a number of items of historical street furniture which add to its character. At the northern corner of the square there is a wheel guard indicating the line of the road as it passed over the old bridge. The "Top pump", Located at Tea Lane is an important feature and is a reminder of social water schemes of the late nineteenth century. The village also retains at least three cast iron hydrants of later nineteenth century date.

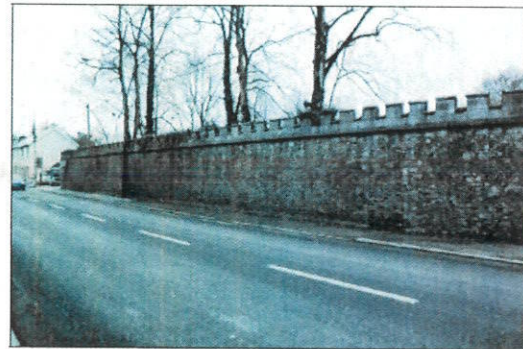


Hydrant

Railings and boundary walls

The main boundary wall in Durrow marks the edge of the Castledurrow estate and is constructed with rubblestone or roughly dressed limestone with crenellated coping. Most properties in the village core front directly onto the street and therefore lack boundary treatments. Properties on the north

side of the square, however, feature the use of railings atop low cut limestone plinth walls. These cast-iron railings are of high quality and every effort should be made to retain these boundary details.



Castle Durrow demesne wall on approach road to south west of village square.

ACA Boundaries

The proposed ACA boundary has been delineated to encompass the historic core of the village and the associated backlands which are part of its original layout.

Summary Character Statement

This village as at present is significant due to its planned eighteenth century origin, much of the character of which has been retained by good maintenance and the absence of significant inappropriate development within the historic core.

Durrow retains most of its built heritage due to its original, well-planned layout which placed appropriate building types in the right areas. This arrangement continues to be relevant and has prevented the need for major remodelling of significant parts of the village core and the loss of historic material and character which can often result. The replacement of windows in Durrow with uPVC frames or frames with different glazing arrangements is resulting in a gradual degradation of heritage character of the village and could relatively easily be prevented by use of more appropriate materials and designs. Such gradual erosion of historic character usually results from loss of historic material and features outlined in the

sections above, over a period of several decades and it may only begin to be noticed when it is irretrievable.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

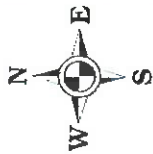
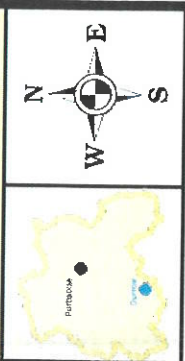
For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

- Other works that would require permission include:
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- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
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- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a particular area special. The demolition or insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted. Some structures within the boundaries may be of little architectural interest and are included within an ACA boundary only because of their location within the streetscape. Buildings of little architectural merit may be subject to wholesale redevelopment as part of a planning permission. However, any replacement building should be designed with due regard to the special characteristics of the ACA. Suitably designed infill or bankland development that contributes to the special character of the ACA will also be encouraged. Works to the public realm within ACAs e.g. footpaths, street furniture, parking schemes will be required to respect the special character of the area also.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING SERVICES
PLANNING SECTION



Legend:
Architectural Conservation Area

DURROW ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

LAKES COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

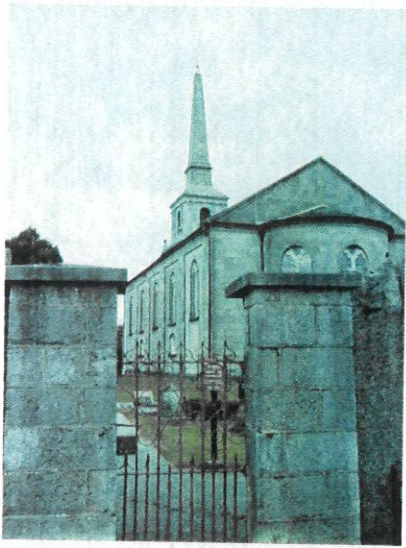


Drawn: Dermot Durne
Checked: Donal Kraly
Approved: Angela McEvoy

PREPARED BY J. COLLINS FOR THE ARCHITECTS SECTION
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PORTLAOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



Setting

Portlaoise is set in quite a flat landscape, with natural features such as the Triogue River, an esker along the Ridge Road and man-made features such as a railway embankment and the busy JFL Avenue influencing the character of the town. The historic core of the town is centred around the Main Street, the town slopes downwards from west to east towards the Triogue.

History

The town dates to the sixteenth century and is the oldest town in the County. Its origins were as an early garrison town and are linked to the Laois/Offaly plantation. The concept of planting this area with settlers was first mooted around 1550, following a long and ravaging campaign to subdue the local lords and secure the Pale territory against attacks.

A crown fort known as the Fort Protector or Fort of Leys was erected in 1548 on rising ground to the southeast of the Triogue with the esker to the east forming a natural boundary. The town was planted with gentry from the Pale and soldiers involved in the campaign. The town's early history was fraught with instability as local leaders reacted aggressively. Attempts were made to displace the O'More and O'Connor-Faly clans and the leaders of the O'Mores were eventually massacred. The plantation did not become rooted until the late sixteenth century and even then problems persisted. The town was plundered in 1580, burned in 1597 and attacked the following year. The hinterland around the town was difficult to penetrate and dangerous to Crown forces.

The fort was rebuilt in 1563 and comprised a rectangular enclosure with a projecting circular tower in the northeast corner and a rectangular tower in the southwest corner. The rectangular tower became known as the Castle of Maryborough. The settlement was

renamed Maryborough in 1556 after Queen Mary and became Portlaoise (a derivation of Fort Protector) in 1920. The town was granted a market in 1567, attained Borough status in 1569, and had a parish church by around 1556 (Old St Peter's). A high number of property grants between 1559 and 1571 indicate a brief period of prosperity. A schematic map dating to 1565 shows a small walled town around the Fort, with fourteen houses.

Influence of Sixteenth Century Town on the Current Plan Form and Building Stock

The street, indicated on the 1565 schematic map, to the south of the Fort aligns broadly with Main Street and Bridge Street, while the street to the north of the Fort aligns with Church Street. A map dating to 1766 shows the contemporary street pattern of Main Street, Church Lane, Church Street, Chapel Lane and Church Avenue (culverted).

The medieval market was most likely located where the Main Street widens adjacent to the junction with Chapel Lane, this area was still being used as a market place up to the early twentieth century. The kink in building line and street at Chapel Lane is thought to follow the line of a water-filled ditch along the southern wall of the fort in 1565.

No remains of the town wall have been uncovered. There have been suggestions that the laneways to the south of the Main Street (in particular Pepper's Lane and Lyster Lane) may indicate entrances into the medieval town.

The north, east and south walls of the Fort from 1563 survive along with short sections of the northern end of the western wall, along with the circular tower to the north east. The square tower did not survive. The circular tower is the most distinctive element of the modern-day streetscape, this robust structure has an internal diameter of 8.2m with walls measuring 1.5m in thickness, ledges to the interior indicate the structure was originally three storeys high. Another distinctive

element is an external batter along the east wall.

Circular Tower to Fort Protector shown on 1565 map of Portlaoise



Circular Tower shown on 1565 map of Portlaoise now incorporated into Presentation Convent



Tower to old Saint Peter's Church dating to sixteenth century

There is little documentary evidence of the development of Portlaoise in the seventeenth century, though it is known that the town and the Fort suffered severe damage during the Cromwellian Wars of 1652-3.

A building called the Stone House is identified on the 1565 map directly east of the Fort and may have been a mill. A tower on the southern gable of the Stone House has been incorporated into the adjacent Presentation Convent and survives. The Presentation Sisters took residence in the Stone House in 1824; the structure was incorporated into the convent building by way of an extension in 1872. A conservation report on the convent recommends the removal of later extensions to expose the sixteenth century structure. A subterranean tunnel connecting the fort with the Stone House is said to exist and possibly a wider subterranean network.

Of the sixteenth century Old Saint Peter's Church, the west tower and north wall of the nave survive within its own burial grounds. The church fell into disuse in the early nineteenth century. The square church tower is a focal point in the skyline of Church Street.

A significant element of the special interest of Portlaoise ACA resides in the late medieval street plan (Main Street, Bridge Street, Church Avenue, Church Lane, Church Street, Chapel Lane, Pepper's Land and Lyster Lane) and late medieval building stock. These elements are of special historical, archaeological and architectural interest. Its plan form indicates a strong association between the late medieval town and the present day town centre. The Fort is the earliest historic structure in the town and the historic centre of Portlaoise from which the town grew. The development within and around the Fort show the evolution of the town and it forms an integral part of the character of Portlaoise Town. The Fort is a recorded monument, protected structure and is located within an area of archaeological potential and is of immense importance, especially as the fort of similar

date built in Daingean, County Offaly does not survive.

The extant structures of Old Saint Peter's Church and in particular the Fort Protector are of national importance, being physical reminders of the Laois/Offaly plantation. The plantation of Laois/Offaly, though initially of limited success was a vanguard for more extensive plantations of other regions of Ireland, which transformed the economic, social and political order of the Country. The defensive nature of the extant Fort Protector is indicative of contemporary military architecture and the serious nature of local resistance to crown forces.

A significant proportion of the Fort was formerly part of a Mill and is now used as a depot by the Council, two schools and a number of dwelling units are now located within the Fort. Old Saint Peter's is now derelict and its grounds overgrown. The Presentation Convent is also in a poor state of repair. The condition of these structures belies their immense importance and these structures would benefit from a detailed Conservation Management Plan and subsequent conservation works. Plans for the re-use of the fort as a County Museum and Library are under examination and if works are carried out sensitively, these could benefit the structure. Archaeological excavation of the fort could contribute to our understanding and the location of a County Museum could enhance appreciation of the importance of the structure and its history as well as the historic appeal of the town.

Influence of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

A manuscript map of 1766 indicates the modern-day sweep of Main Street and Bridge Street, the eastern half of Market Square, Railway Street as well as the earlier Church Avenue and Church Street. This manuscript also shows Old St Peter's Church and a two-storey Courthouse with a central clock tower on the site of the present-day courthouse.

A number of fine Georgian residences were constructed along Church Street in the eighteenth century, as well as the sombre stone-clad gaol in 1789, designed by Richard Harman which now functions as the Dunamaise Theatre and Arts Centre. Other surviving fine Georgian residences include Portleix House and the IBS building on the Dublin Road.

Dunamaise Theatre and Arts Centre



The greatest thrust of development in Portlaoise occurred in the nineteenth century, producing most of Portlaoise's prominent public buildings and current streetscape comprised of archetypal pattern-book designs and vernacular terraced residences. The Main Street is punctuated by laneways leading to Lyster Square and integral carriageway entrances which survive. Doorways to living quarters above the shop are often integral to the design of the façade and shopfront and a number survive. The buildings become more modest along Bridge Street and have a finer grain with smaller shop units. Few retain a retail use.

The town's expansion was shaped by the nature of new roads projecting out from the core. The new Saint Peter's Church built in 1803-4 was the first building located to the west of the diamond at the junction of the newly laid out Grattan Street and Coote Street. Its strong form and obelisk steeple

(attributed to Gandon) is a strong focal point in the Market Square. The diamond became the setting for a new public square, the Market Square for the town. A free standing Market House was rebuilt in the second half of the nineteenth century as the Town Hall (destroyed in 1945 by fire).

In 1805, the Courthouse was rebuilt and is ascribed to Richard Morrison. This structure continues to function as a district and circuit court and is a landmark building in the Main Street. It was linked by a curved wall to the gaol on Church Street.

Portlaoise Courthouse



The gaol was moved to a more substantial County Gaol and House of Correction in 1830, built in a Gothic Revival style on the Dublin Road. St Fintan's Asylum erected in 1832 is another fine public building, its plan form is distinctive to nineteenth-century asylum design, intended to provide good natural light.

Fine institutional buildings shown on the first ordnance survey map of 1839 include: a cut stone barracks now functioning as the Garda Barracks, schools on the Stradbally Road, on the north side of Church Street and formerly attached to the Catholic Chapel on Church Avenue (built 1837-8 in Gothic style, demolished in 1960s) and the Presentation Convent (1830).

Presentation Convent



As mentioned above, the Presentation Convent has fallen into disrepair and the reuse of this structure to secure its longevity is now necessary. Fine and substantial residences from this period include Portrain House, Annebrook House and Annfield House.

The early to mid-nineteenth century townhouses along Grattan Street are modest, well-proportioned and arranged around a wide street and like Main Street, many have integral carriageway entrances. The straight building line, gable-pitched roofs and vertical emphasis windows along this approach road to Market Square give these townhouses a cohesive character. Coote Street is dominated by high traffic levels and heterogenous in terms of architectural order and roofscapes.

Late Georgian Terrace, Coote Street



Elements of Maltings complex

A terrace of three late Georgian houses make a positive contribution to this approach towards Market Square. The Maltings complex is late nineteenth century in date and an important element of the industrial heritage of the town but is also a landmark complex within the streetscape, capable of making a significant contribution if brought back into active use.

The arrival of the railway in Portlaoise resulted in the construction of the iconic railway station of location limestone attributed to engineer Sancton Wood, as well as the layout of Railway Street and resulting development along it including the Methodist Church built in Gothic Revival style. By the end of the nineteenth century, industrial development in Portlaoise included the Odlum's Mill complex (close to the location of the late medieval mill on the 1565 schematic plan), an Old Tannery to the south of Main Street, a Textile factory in Tea Lane, and an extensive Maltings off Coote Street, served by a spur off the new railway line.

Fine early twentieth structures include the elaborately decorated O'Loughlins Hotel and Pharmacy and the redbrick Kingfisher Restaurant formerly a bank building. The wholly modernist Midland Regional Hospital (1933-36) by Michael Scott is one of the finest structures of its type in the Country. The symmetrical façade of the former cinema (1940) is decorated with circular opes, four pilasters and horizontal emphasis projecting

blockwork below first floor windows and to the parapet and is representative of its period and typology and its historic function is of social importance. The main thrust of speculative and social housing dates to the 1950s. James Fintan Lawlor Avenue was laid out in the 1970s and changed the character of the town substantially. The County Hall was constructed in 1982.

Fine early twentieth century structures



The Main Street continues to operate as the commercial core of the town and benefits from recent public realm improvement works limiting vehicular transport through the street. However the core extended westwards into Lyster Square during the twentieth century and major convenience retail establishments are located west of JFL Avenue.

Although the survival rate of many building features along the Main Street such as timber sliding sash windows, doors, natural slate roofing and shopfronts is low, some do survive. Importantly the eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings themselves survive, some features such as elevational plasterwork, cast iron rainwater goods and profiled chimney stacks along with most of the upper storey window openings are intact. More attention to the historic architectural scale, materials and elevational details is needed as well as more considered new and infill development; the designation of this ACA will facilitate this. Some well-designed contemporary shopfronts contribute to the character of the streetscape.



Surviving historic building fabric: painted timber door with decorative fanlight; timber sliding sash window with crown glass; decorative painted console

The form of the Market Square changed with the diversion of the Abbeyleix Road in the nineteenth century to align with Coote Street, fragmenting the southern terrace overlooking the Square. Although the Market Square features a number of fine buildings, it is dominated by traffic and parking and would benefit from carriageway realignment and public realm improvement works to give pedestrians more priority, in particular as the N80 bypass is complete. A number of fine nineteenth century properties around or approaching Market Square, some with carriageway arches, are under-used or vacant and an improvement in the quality of Market Square and a reduction in vehicular throughput may improve the attractiveness of these structures as residences.

The special architectural character of the Portlaoise ACA also resides in the grouping of some eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century buildings along Main Street, Coote

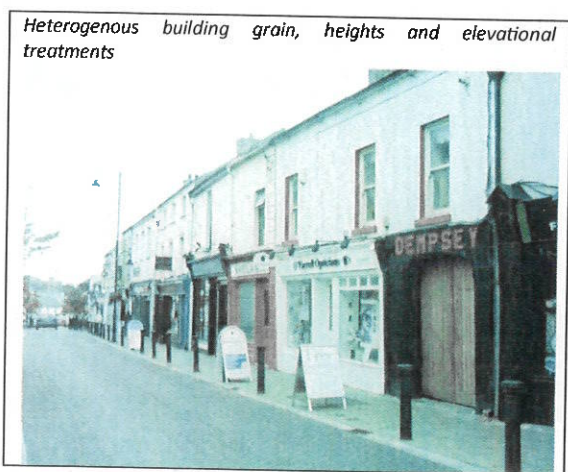
Street, Grattan Street and Bridge Street; the heterogenous heights, grain, roof pitches, architectural order and elevational features of buildings along Main Street, Bridge Street and Coote Street, the urban spaces at Market Square and adjacent to the Fort Protector and individual fine landmark buildings such as the Kingfisher Restaurant and O'Loughlin's Hotel or fine terraces such as along Church Street or Coote Street. The layering of structures of different dates and orders tangibly show the origin and evolution of the town.

Boundaries

Some structures of special interest are excluded from the ACA, but are protected by way of inclusion within the RPS. The boundaries of this ACA are tightly drawn around the town centre and historic core in order to give the ACA a strong focus.

Conclusion

The history of the town is embedded in individual historic or special buildings, groups of buildings, building features, open spaces and the street pattern. Collectively the tangible layering of these structures can deepen the understanding among town residents of the cultural heritage of their home place. If well-presented and maintained, ACAs can foster civic pride amongst residents and admiration from visitors.



The urban centre of Portlaoise is more than the sum of its parts, it cannot be conserved effectively simply by adding its significant buildings to the Record of Protected Structures. An ACA would define a wider entity, also embracing the open spaces of the town.

The incremental loss of features of the historic environment erodes this value and depreciates the character of a town, and this leads to a feeling of decline and low self image.

In particular the Fort Protector is a rare built element of the first significant English Plantations in Ireland and as such a heritage site of enormous significance and potential. It is currently subdivided into multiple titles and its importance cannot be appreciated. It is essential that this site should not be regarded as a backlands area of the town and its key historical significance as the genesis of the settlement of Portlaoise actively recognised. Great care should be taken to prevent irreversible development which would damage this enormous asset to the identity of Portlaoise. If the Fort Protector were to be restored to a high conservation standard, this unique structure could become a cultural and economic resource of benefit to the town. It is noted that currently there are no significant cultural attractions nationally that treat the plantation of Ireland in detail and that historic accounts of the plantation of Laois/Offaly are detailed and colourful.

Conservation of the adjacent former St. Peter's Church and graveyard, and of the hugely significant former Presentation Convent, which faces the Fort wall, would create an historic precinct of great heritage value and interest, with the capacity to greatly raise the profile of the town.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special

character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission. Other works that would require permission include:

- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
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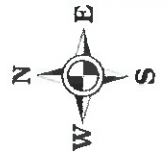
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Current threats to the special character of Portlaoise ACA include:

Threats to that character include:

- stripping of render from elevations, demolition of chimney stacks
- removal of carriageway entrances
- removal of doorways to the upper storeys of buildings along the main street
- replacement of natural slates with artificial materials,
- replacement of cast iron rainwater goods with uPVC,
- replacement of timber sliding sash windows with uPVC,
- loss of historic shopfronts and related advertisements
- insensitive infill development
- wholesale demolition of historic buildings.
- the most serious threats to the special character of Portlaoise ACA include underuse, vacancy and dereliction

A number of landmark structures within the ACA including the Presentation Convent, the Maltings Complex, Old St Peter's Church and the Fort Protector need active uses to secure their longevity.



Legend:
Architectural Conservation Area

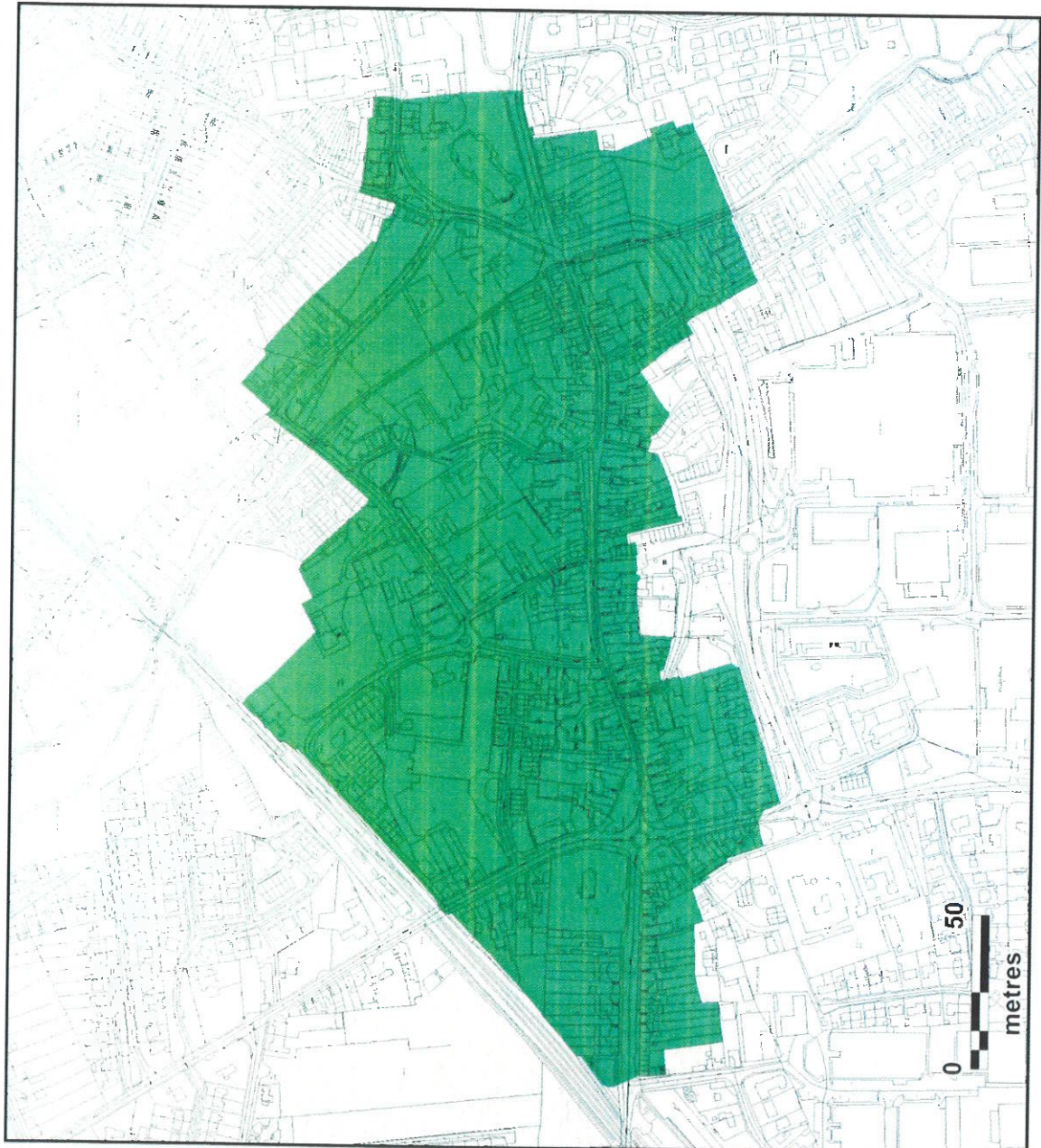
PORTLAOISE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION



Drawn: Dermot Dunne	Checked: Donal Kieley	Approved: Angela McEvoy
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TIMAHOE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA (ACA) - Candidate

History

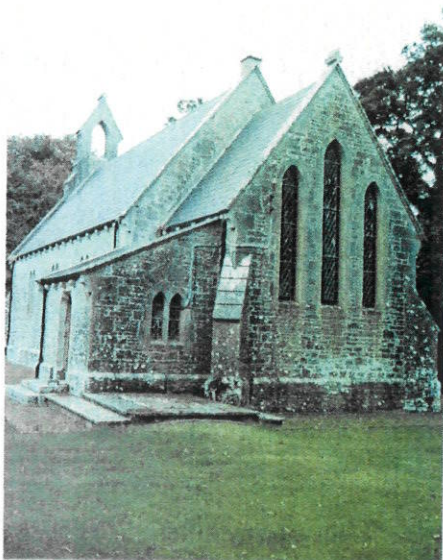
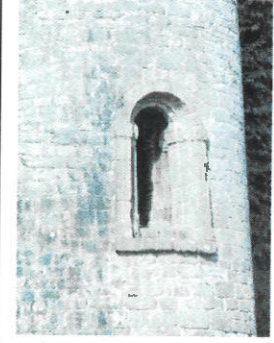
The development of the village is linked with the Timahoe monastic site which is likely to have been a medieval proto-urban settlement. The monastery is said to have been founded by Saint Mochua who died in 657 suggesting the settlement was founded in the seventh century.



Timahoe Round Tower



Romanesque Doorway



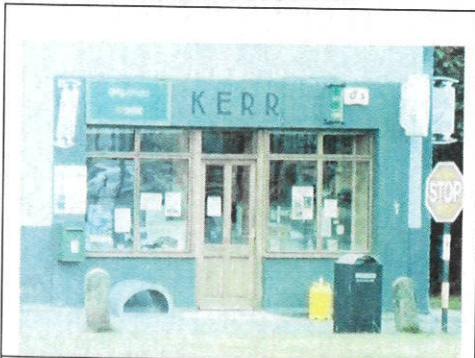
The monastery was considered prosperous by the nineteenth century and was plundered and burnt in 919 and again in 1142. Monastic buildings from the early medieval period are generally of wood and it was not until the eleventh or twelfth century that stone became a predominant building material. It is therefore not surprising that no monuments from the early medieval period are extant.

In late medieval times the monastery was refounded by the O'Mores suggesting it had become defunct, and was regranted to Richard Cosby in 1609. A monastic community functioned here as late as 1650. Based on urban morphology typologies the arrangement of buildings around a triangular green indicates

the village was laid out in the seventeenth century.

Architecture

The village contains a former Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks which has been subdivided into two dwellings and a number of traditional shopfronts.



Traditional Shopfronts



Eighteenth and nineteenth structures retain few original features, although individually these structures are not of special interest, collectively they make a positive contribution to the ACA. Opportunities for infill development around the Green remain.

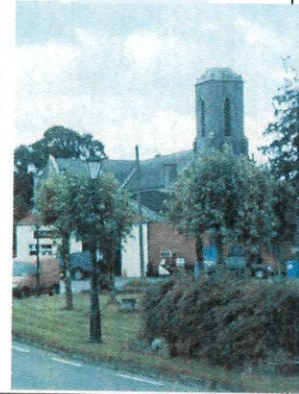


Opportunities for refurbishment

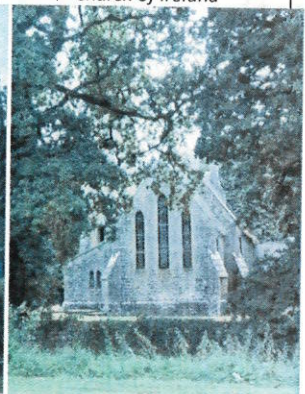


The village also contains a large Roman Catholic Church built between 1830 and 1835 finished with roughcast render with the gables, church tower, windows and eaves dressed with ashlar masonry of limestone.

Roman Catholic Church



Former Church of Ireland



The former Church of Ireland building now functions as the village library. It is a more modest structure built in a gothic revival style in 1840 with a projecting porch, chancel and

vestry and lancet windows with leaded lights. The elevations are finished with snecked limestone with ashlar plinth, quoins, corbels and windows dressings.

The library is located within the grounds of the medieval settlement which comprises a fine twelfth century round tower with a base that may be older, a ruinous sixteenth century tower house and remnants of a fifteenth century church.

The round tower measures 29.26m high and is roofed with a conical cap, no internal floors survive. The tower is a striking feature within the ACA. A Romanesque doorway to the first floor of the tower is decorated with human heads with intertwined hair and has four receding orders, a window in a similar style is visible at second floor, slit and square headed and pointed windows are located on other floors. During medieval times a Round Tower functioned primarily as a status symbol indicating prestige and wealth.

The ruinous tower house is located to the southeast of the round tower and may be associated with the Cosby's. The tower house was reported to feature a Sheela na Gig, but this is no longer visible. The remnants of the fifteenth century church, possibly consisting of the chancel arch are incorporated into the eastern wall of the tower house. The east wall and short sections of the north and south walls of the tower house are extent.

Goose Green with band stand



Timahoe River and footbridge

Approach into Timahoe



The monastic campus retains a strong relationship with the village because of its proximity to the green and the siting of the library within its grounds. The round tower and the Goose Green are the most prominent and distinctive elements of the ACA. The arrangement of modest single and two storey buildings with simple elevations around the

green and orientated towards it is an essential element of the village's character. Mature oak, sycamore and horse chestnut trees within the grounds of the round tower and a small pedestrian bridge over the Timahoe River running through the village reinforce the link between the monastic site and the village green.

The topography of the town is flat but it is set against Fosse Mountain to the south. Public realm features such as a timber band stand and cast iron pump with wrought iron railings around are prominent given the flat topography. A dual line of sycamore trees on the approach road from Portlaoise contribute to the sense of place.

Summary of Special Interest

The special interest of Timahoe resides in the arrangement of modest two-storey buildings with little ornamentation dating mostly to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a number in commercial use orientated towards a large central green known as the Goose Green and the continuing function of Timahoe as a working village serving its rural hinterland. The special interest also resides in the relationship between the village and the monastic site to the west of the Timahoe River and the monuments and protected structures associated with Timahoe's origin and development.

Implications of ACA designation

Within an ACA, there are restrictions on certain works to exteriors of structures. In addition to the usual requirements of planning law, the designation means that works that would materially affect the special character of the ACA will need planning permission. In practice, this would mean that the removal of historic

building fabric and its replacement with modern materials will require planning permission.

For example the removal of sliding sash windows and their replacement with uPVC windows will require planning permission. If uPVC windows are already in place, their replacement will not require planning permission.

- Other works that would require permission include:
- the stripping of render from a building to expose stonework
- the cladding of a building with stone or timber
- the removal of cast iron rainwater goods, the removal of a natural slate roof covering
- the removal of chimney stacks or changes to the roof profile
- the removal of limestone sills
- changes to the window proportions
- the addition of porches
- other extensions that would impact on the front elevation of the buildings
- the removal of historic shopfronts or elements thereof
- the installation of roller shutter blinds
- the removal of historic boundary walls or railings.

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and repairs, as long as original materials are retained where they exist and where replacement is necessary (for example due to rot) that it is on a like-for-like basis.

The intention behind the designation is not to stop change, but to manage the nature of the change in order to respect and enhance the features and characteristics that make a particular area special. The demolition or


insensitive alteration of structures that make a positive contribution to the ACA will not be permitted. Some structures within the boundaries may be of little architectural interest and are included within an ACA boundary only because of their location within the streetscape. Buildings of little architectural merit may be subject to wholesale redevelopment as part of a planning permission. However, any replacement building should be designed with due regard to the special characteristics of the ACA. Suitably designed infill or bankland development that contributes to the special character of the ACA will also be encouraged. Works to the public realm within ACAs e.g. footpaths, street furniture, parking schemes will be required to respect the special character of the area also.

2014/15
2015/16
2016/17
2017/18
2018/19



Legend:
Archaeological Conservation Area

TIMAHOE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA


LACIS COUNTY COUNCIL
FORWARD PLANNING SECTION

Chair	Demot Dume	Chair	Donal Kieley	Approved	Angela McEvoy
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DESIGNED BY: M. J. O'NEILL
DRAWN BY: M. J. O'NEILL
CHECKED BY: M. J. O'NEILL
DATE: 14/11/18
LACIS COUNTY COUNCIL
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COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

(H)

Comhairle Chontae
Laoise
Áras an Chontae
Port Laoise
Contae Laoise
R32 EHP9

10/5

22nd October, 2021

Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae
Portlaoise
County Laois
R32 EHP9

Sarah Sherlock,
The Green,
Clonaslee
Co. Laois.

T: (057) 8664000
F: (057) 8622313
corp@laoiscoco.ie
www.laois.ie


Re : Section 5 Declaration - the removal of a large rectangular flowerbed complete with permanent surrounds, and installation of a new circular granite water fountain, and paving at The Square, Clonaslee, Co. Laois.

A Chara,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your application for a Section 5 Declaration and enclose herewith receipt in the sum of €80.00 receipt no. 191633 refers.

I wish to advise you that a response on this matter will be sent to you on or before the 16th November, 2021

Trusting the above is in order,


Administrative Officer
Planning Section

The actual receipt was not enclosed
Thus I had to call to LCC & collect a copy, which is attached to this
10/11 JS

Tá Fáilte Romhat
Gnó a Dhéanamh
as Gaeilge



Laois County Council
Planning Dept. Cash Office
Aras An Chontae
Portlaoise
Co. Laois

=====

20-10-2021 16:21:31

Receipt No. : L2/704375/191633
***** REPRINT *****

Sarah Sherlock



Other Receipts-Dev Incent&Con	80.00
GOODS	80.00
VAT	0.00

section 5

Total 80.00 EUR

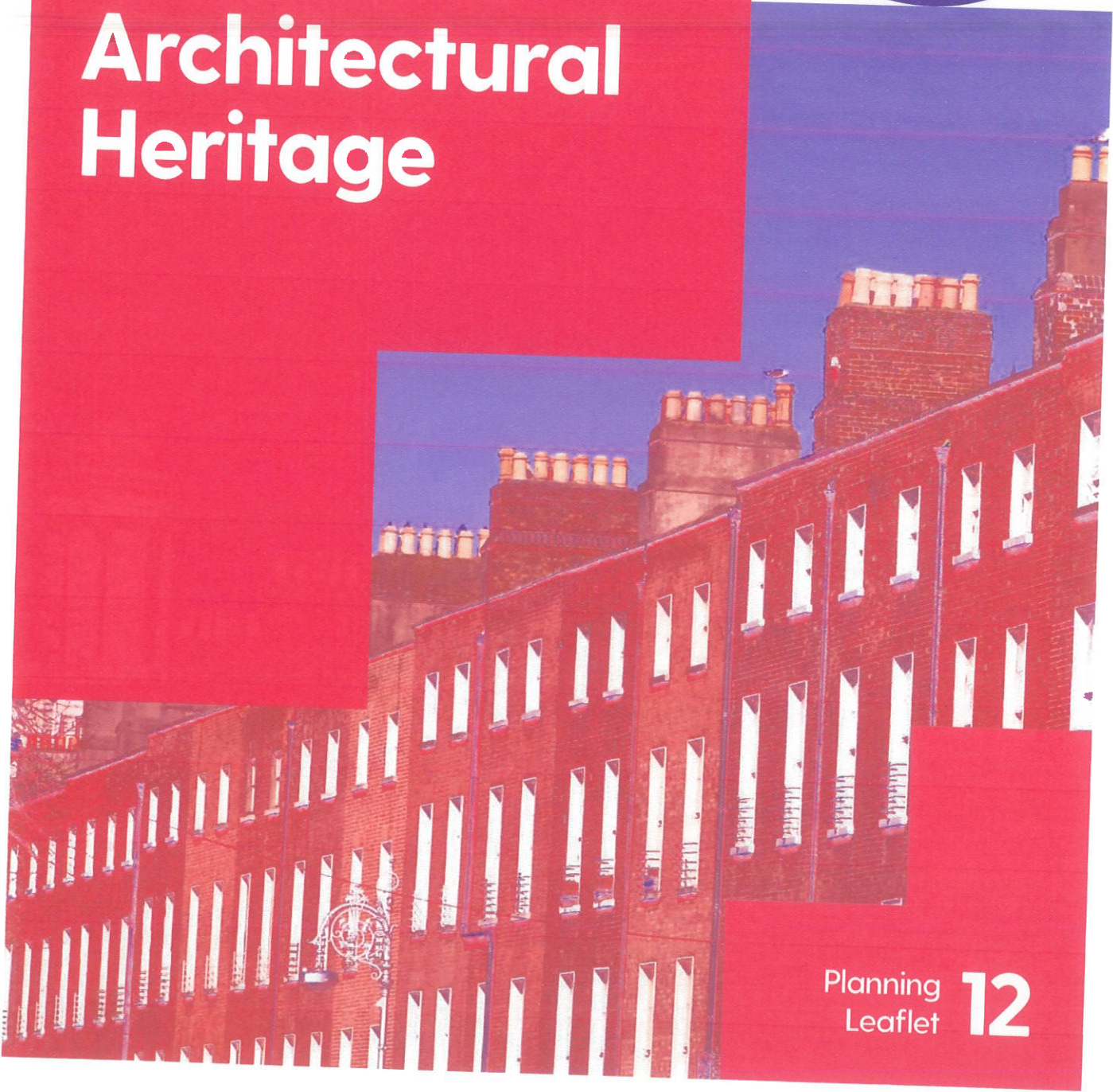
Tendered:
Credit Card 80.00
Visa
55€
07/2€

Issued By : Planning Cashier
From: Planning Lodgement Area

10



A Guide to Architectural Heritage



Planning
Leaflet **12**



Oifig an
Rialaitheora Pleanála
Office of the
Planning Regulator



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



A Guide to Architectural Heritage

This is a practical guide to help understand how structures of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest are protected under planning law. This leaflet is not a definitive legal interpretation of planning law. For further information, you should consult your local planning authority (city or county council).

1. What laws are there in relation to the preservation of historic buildings?

The law regarding this subject is set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. This legislation includes provisions for preserving protected structures and structures in architectural conservation areas (see Question 11 below). Other historic structures may also be protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930 - 2004. Further guidance on the preservation of historic buildings is provided in the 'Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2011', published by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

2. What is a protected structure?

A protected structure is a structure or part of a structure that a planning authority considers is of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view.

Details of protected structures are entered by a planning authority in a Record of Protected Structures (RPS), which forms part of the development plan. The RPS is usually recorded in list and map form and is normally included as an appendix to the development plan. If you are an owner and/or occupier of a protected structure, you are legally obliged to ensure that no damage is caused to the structure.

This obligation applies from the time you, as an owner/occupier, are notified of a proposal to include the structure in the RPS (at which time the structure becomes a 'proposed protected structure').

The State also maintains a National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). This is a central database for post 1700 architectural heritage. The structures listed in the NIAH do not have statutory protection. However, the guidelines referred to in Question 1 above indicate that, where an NIAH survey has been carried out, those structures which have been given a rating of international, national or regional importance will be recommended by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to the planning authority for inclusion on the RPS.

3. What parts of a protected structure must be preserved?

The obligation to preserve a protected structure applies initially to all parts of the structure. This includes its interior, all of the land around it, and any other structures on that land and their interiors. The obligation also applies to any exterior or interior fixtures and fittings of a protected structure, or of any structure on land within its curtilage (this means any land or outbuildings which are/were used for the purposes of the structure).

There is a mechanism to check if minor works can be undertaken on or in a protected structure. This process is known as a Section 57¹ declaration (see Questions 6 and 7 below). Where such a declaration is sought, the planning authority can clarify which, if any, parts of the structure or its surrounding curtilage are not of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, and therefore do not require special protection.

Should the declaration confirm that any interior or exterior features are not part of the protected structure status, then planning exemptions in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended will apply to these features².

4. How does a structure become a protected structure?

A structure becomes protected when it is included in the RPS compiled by the planning authority and adopted as part of its development plan. You should check with your planning authority to find out if a structure is protected or proposed for protection.

Planning authorities must follow certain procedures when they propose to record a structure as protected. These procedures involve notifying owners and occupiers of the structure and other certain interested bodies of the proposal.

The planning authority must also notify the public by publishing an advertisement in a newspaper circulating in the locality. The owner and/or occupier of the structure, along with any member of the public, is entitled to make comments on the planning authority's proposal. These comments are considered before the planning authority's elected members (locally elected councillors) decide whether the structure should become protected. The same process applies to structures proposed for deletion from the RPS. Structures are added or deleted to the development plan on an on-going basis.

5. What obligations fall on owners and occupiers to ensure the preservation of protected structures?

If you are an owner and/or occupier of a protected structure you must ensure that the structure or any element of it is not endangered. Endangering a structure can mean either directly or indirectly damaging any element of the structure or neglecting the structure to the extent that it is damaged.

1 Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

2 Refer to Question 6 below.



6. Can I carry out development to a protected structure without planning permission?

Under planning law, minor works to structures do not normally require planning permission. These works are known as exempted development. However, in the case of a protected structure, planning permission may be required for minor works, unless the planning authority decides that the works would not affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure that contributes to its special interest.

The planning authority advises whether they consider planning permission is necessary in a particular case through the Section 5 and Section 57 declaration processes. The

Section 57 declaration process is described in Question 3 above.

Anyone may seek a Section 5 declaration from a planning authority if they want to establish if a specific development requires planning permission. An owner and/or occupier of a protected structure may seek a Section 57 declaration from a planning authority regarding the type of works which would or would not materially (significantly) affect the character of the structure (see Question 7 below), and which would or would not require planning permission. In the case of structures where the decorative condition is of special interest, planning permission could be required for interior decorating such as plastering or painting.

7. How does an owner or occupier know which works require planning permission?

An owner or occupier of a protected structure may request the planning authority to issue a declaration under Section 57 regarding the structure and its curtilage (the surrounding land or outbuildings which are/were used for the purpose of the structure).

This will indicate the types of works that can be carried out without affecting the character of the protected structure or any element of it which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social and technical interest, and those which cannot. Works which are normally regarded as exempted development and which do not affect the character of the structure do not require planning permission.

A declaration under Section 57 is issued to the owner or occupant of a protected structure free of charge on application. Your local planning authority will issue this declaration within 12 weeks of receiving a request. It will be necessary for an official of the planning authority to carry out a detailed inspection of the structure. The applicant for a declaration under Section 57 may be asked to state the extent of the property in their control, and to submit a drawing or map outlining its extent. Although the declaration is available to be inspected at the office of the planning authority, no information of

a sensitive nature will be included in the publicly available record.

Alternatively, anyone who wishes to query whether a specific development (e.g. works such as roof works, or window repairs to a protected structure, or a structure within an architectural conservation area or change of use) requires planning permission may apply to the planning authority for a declaration on development and exempted development under Section 5.

The applicant must describe in writing the nature of the query on which a declaration on development and exempted development is sought. They must also include any other relevant information required by the planning authority (such as a site location map) and the appropriate fee. The planning authority will issue the declaration within four weeks of receiving a request.

In both cases, if the applicant disagrees with the planning authority on whether planning permission is needed, the applicant can refer the decision of the planning authority to An Bord Pleanála (the Board) on payment of the appropriate fee. The decision must be referred to the Board for review within four weeks of the decision of the planning authority.

8. How does an owner or an occupier apply for planning permission to carry out works to a protected structure?

A planning application involving a protected structure is made in the same way as any other planning application (see Planning Leaflet 4 – “A Guide to Making a Planning Application”). However, because of the sensitivity of most protected structures, a planning application for works to a protected structure is generally more detailed.

The relevant newspaper and site notice for the planning application must indicate that the application relates to a protected

structure. Additional information, including plans and documentation, on how the proposed development would affect the character of the protected structure must be submitted with the application. The planning authority notifies other interested bodies, including the Heritage Council and An Taisce, before making a decision on the planning application.

It may be advisable to check with your planning authority in advance of applying for permission for development to make sure that your application is complete.



9. Are there any measures to assist owners and occupiers to preserve a historic structure?

Yes. There are two schemes, which are funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Historic Structures Fund and the Built Heritage Investment Scheme. Applications can only be made via your local authority with applications accepted by local authorities up to the end of January each year.

Full details of the schemes are available from your local authority.

10. Do planning authorities have special powers in relation to protected structures?

Yes. A planning authority may:

- require an owner or an occupier of a protected structure to carry out works if it considers that the structure is or may become endangered. Where a planning authority requires works to be carried out to prevent a protected structure from becoming or continuing to be endangered, the owner or occupier may qualify for financial assistance from the planning authority;
- require an owner or an occupier of a protected structure to carry out works if it considers that the character of the structure ought to be restored. The planning authority will in certain circumstances pay the reasonable expenses of carrying out the works required; *and*

- acquire, by agreement or compulsorily, a protected structure if it considers that this is desirable or necessary to protect the structure. Where a planning authority acquires a protected structure compulsorily, compensation equal to the value of the structure may be payable.

11. What is an architectural conservation area?

An architectural conservation area is a place, area, group of structures or townscape which is either of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest in its own rights, or which contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

This could include, for example, a terrace of houses, buildings surrounding a square, or any group of buildings which together give a special character to an area.

In a rural setting, an architectural conservation area could include a group of structures associated with a mill or with a country house estate. An architectural conservation area could also include protected structures.

Planning authorities may designate an area as an architectural conservation area in their development plans to ensure that its character is preserved.

To designate an area as an architectural conservation area, a variation to the

development plan is required. This includes a public consultation process and the elected members of the local authority (councillors) ultimately decide on whether the proposed architectural conservation area should be included. Planning permission would normally be required before works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in an architectural conservation area.

A planning application involving a structure in an architectural conservation area is generally made in the same way as any other planning application. Additional information

on how the proposed development would affect the character of that area must be submitted with the application. The planning authority notifies other interested bodies, including the Heritage Council and An Taisce, before making a decision on the application.

It may be advisable to check with your planning authority in advance of applying for permission for development within an architectural conservation area to make sure that your application is complete.



12. Are there penalties for causing damage to protected structures?

Yes. Any person who damages a protected structure or proposed protected structure commits an offence. If found guilty, a person could be liable for a significant fine and/or a term of imprisonment. It is also an offence to undertake any work to a protected structure without planning permission, if it is required.

13. Where can I get further information?

The law governing protected structures is set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. You can purchase these from the Government Publications Sales Office, telephone (01) 6476834 or at publications@opw.ie or download them for free from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's website www.gov.ie/housing. Legislation is also available to view and download from: www.irishstatutebook.ie.

Guidelines on architectural heritage protection have been published and are available at www.gov.ie/housing and from the Government Publications Office. In addition a series of illustrated booklets known as the "Advice Series" was published by Government in 2015 in an effort to guide owners and others responsible for historic structures on how best to repair and maintain their properties. The booklets cover the following topics:

- "Thatch – A Guide to the Repair of Thatched Roofs"
- "Paving – The Conservation of Historic Ground Surfaces"
- "Access – Improving the Accessibility of Historic Buildings and Places"
- "Bricks – A Guide to the Repair of Historic Brickwork"
- "Conservation of Places of Worship"
- "Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings"
- "Iron – The Repair of Wrought and Cast Ironwork"
- "Maintenance – A Guide to the Care of Older Buildings"
- "Roofs – A Guide to the Repair of Historic Roofs"
- "Ruins – The Conservation and Repair of Masonry Ruins"
- "Windows – A Guide to the Repair of Historic Windows".

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191-193A North Circular Road

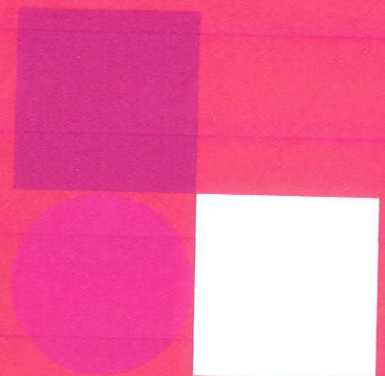
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