



**THE BUILT HERITAGE**



## **Chapter 11**

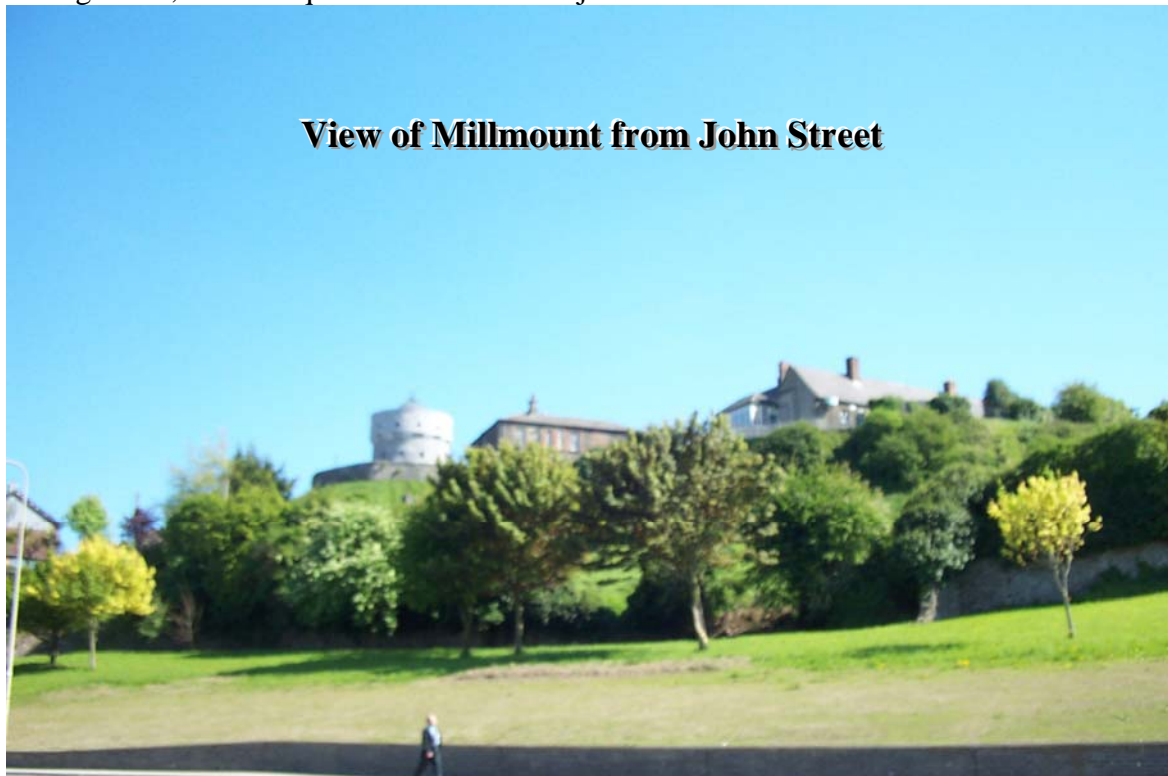
### **THE BUILT HERITAGE**

#### **11.1 Introduction**

The urban character of Drogheda has unique and varying qualities, characterised by its interesting street and lane patterns, streetscapes, historic sites, fine public buildings and buildings of historical significance. The physical forms of the individual buildings, structures and places of historical and architectural value are symbols of the social, economic and cultural development of the town. They have acquired economic and aesthetic values and contribute to the town's distinctive character.

It is recognised that the fabric of the town is subject to continuous change and that such change is necessary to maintain and enhance the vitality of the town. Nonetheless, Drogheda Borough Council are committed to the protection and preservation of buildings, streetscapes, features and sites of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest which contribute to the distinctive character of the town.

In order to address these issues, there is a need for comprehensive townscape management, which requires a number of objectives:





## 11.2 GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- **BH 1**  
*Maintaining existing uses and attracting new ones to the town centre.*
- **BH 2**  
*Respecting the historical and traditional context, that contributes to Drogheda's character.*
- **BH 3**  
*Promoting the right balance between conservation and redevelopment.*
- **BH 4**  
*Enhancing the townscape through pedestrianisation and other environmental improvements (such as the placement of electricity cables underground, improvements in street lighting, paving and public art).*
- **BH 5**  
*Protecting key buildings of the town's architectural heritage (through the Record of Protected Structures)*
- **BH 6**  
*Protecting and enhancing key streetscapes and elements of townscapes (primarily through Architectural Conservation Areas).*

In support of these objectives of townscape management, Drogheda Borough Council will implement Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000, which relates to Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas in accordance with government policy and guidelines.

### 11.3 Protected Structures:

Drogheda is rich in buildings, structures of historical, archaeological and architectural value, which are an intrinsic part of our cultural heritage. Among the town's major features of historic, architectural and archaeological interest are Laurence's Gate, the Abbey of St Mary d'Urso in Old Abbey Lane, Millmount and the Railway Viaduct. In addition, there are a number of fine buildings including : St Peter's Church of Ireland, Barlow House, Ballsgrove House and Gate, Mayoralty House ( the Sound Shop ), the Tholsel, and Francis Johnston's Cornmarket – now the council offices.

Furthermore, Drogheda still maintains small sections of the medieval defensive wall, which surrounded the town centre in the medieval period.

The Planning & Development Act 2000 (Part II, Section 10) places an obligation on all local authorities to include in its development plan objectives for the protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. These buildings and structures are compiled on a register known as the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), and is outlined in Appendix I and mapped on the Built Heritage Conservation Map.



A total of 281 structures are recorded. The map is considered as a guide and should only be used as an aid to identification. It does not seek to indicate or define the curtilage of any building. This is a matter that shall be subject to the individual assessment of planning applications and/or following a request for a declaration.

#### **11.4 The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage for Drogheda:**

Drogheda was initially surveyed in 1986 by William Garner for An Foras Forbartha. The buildings on the RPS and in the ACA's have been recently reviewed by the Conservation Officer working with Drogheda Borough Council and assessed in accordance with the National Inventory of Architectural rating system - international, national, regional, local or record only architectural heritage significance.

An individual record of these buildings is in preparation as an Appendix to the Drogheda Development Plan 2005-2011. In summary, the existing RPS includes;

1. 31 sites been evaluated as being of National Architectural Heritage significance
2. 192 sites been evaluated as being of Regional Architectural significance.
3. 21 sites of Local importance are included on the RPS.

The owner or occupier of a protected structure may make a written request to the Planning Authority, to issue a declaration as to the type of work which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or of any element of the structure defined in the record of Protected Structures.

The Minister for the Environment and Local Government (Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands) recommended that those structures designated of regional and national importance in the 1999 Drogheda Development Plan, be included in the Local Authorities Record of Protected Structures in the Development Plan.

Structures may be added to the Record of Protected Structures, outside of the Development Plan without the requirement to make a variation of the Development Plan, and updated records and proposals for new additions are available for inspection in the offices of the Planning Authority. Developers and persons proposing to purchase historic buildings are advised to check the updated Record of Protected Structures.

Any person or organisation who wishes to propose a structure to be added to the record may send details of their proposal, which should include a location map, photographs and any historical references available, to the relevant Planning Authority.

**Policies;**

In terms of Protected Structures, it is the policy of Drogheda Borough Council:

1. To preserve and protect structures contained in the Record of Protected Structures, contained in Appendix I and shown graphically on the Built Heritage: Conservation Map; (available for inspection in the Planning Office, Drogheda Borough Council).
2. To safeguard the character and setting of protected structures through the control of design of new development in the vicinity, by the control of the change of use of adjacent land to ensure that there is no material impact and by the preservation of trees and other site features where appropriate;
  1. To resist the unnecessary alteration of Protected Structures;
  2. To ensure that proposals for changes of use of Protected Structures are compatible with essential character of the buildings and their setting;
  3. To prohibit the installation of external additions, including satellite dishes and other antennae, signs and other attachments; inappropriate alterations to or replacement of doors and windows where they would adversely affect the essential character of a Protected Structure;
  4. To ensure that proposals to extend alter or refurbish a Protected Structure are sympathetic to its essential character and in accordance with good conservation practice;
  5. To ensure the protection, preservation and where appropriate, the restoration of, Protected Structures under the care of or in the ownership of Drogheda Borough Council;
  6. To promote and encourage the use of Conservation Guidelines published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government and to promote and encourage the take up of funding available under the Conservation Grants Scheme;
  7. To provide conservation literature, advice and guidance to the public, perspective developers, voluntary bodies and community groups.

**OBJECTIVES:**

In terms of Protected Structures it is an objective of Drogheda Borough Council:

- **BH 7**

*To ensure that all significant development proposals for Protected Structures or which would affect the setting of such Structures are referred to the prescribed bodies, including the Planning and Heritage division of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, An Taisce, and, in the case of post 1900 structures -the Arts Council*

- **BH 8**

*To ensure when planning to undertake development, or when considering the approval or authorisation of development, that adequate information to assess the impact of the proposed development on the character of the Protected Structure, is provided, by the proposers of the development;*

- **BH 9**

*To ensure when undertaking development or when permitting development that the loss of or damage to, historic fabric in the execution of the work is minimised;*

- **BH 10**

*To ensure, by means of the use of the provisions of Section 59-79 of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000, that the essential character for Protected Structures does not become endangered.*

### 11.5 Architectural Conservation Areas: (ACA's)

The Planning & Development Act 2000 (Part II, Section 10 and Part IV, Section 81) places an obligation on local authorities to include an objective for the preservation of the character of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA). An A.C.A is a place, area, group of structures or townscape, which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, and social or technical interest. They also include areas, which contribute to the appreciation of a protected structure. Piecemeal alterations on individual non -protected structures can have a significant cumulative effect on the streetscape.



**St Peter's Church and Environs ACA**



An ACA may consist of patterns of elements, such as materials, construction systems, architectural elements, that are repeated within the area and give it a sense of harmony or it may relate to the importance of a number of buildings or structures whose protection is based on the wider ensemble of which it may be a component. In this sense, it is concerned as much with the setting of the structures and their interrelationship, though it may relate to urban forms of distinctiveness or to particular relationship, though it may relate to urban forms of distinctiveness or to particular landscape settings.

The effect of having a building within the Architectural Conservation Area, has the effect of de-exempting works to the exterior of any structure within the A.C.A where the proposed works would materially affect the character of the area concerned.

The streetscapes of Drogheda's medieval settlement retain facades of architectural merit and contain a number of fine buildings, several of which date from the mid 18th Century.

### **Architectural Conservation Areas ACA's**

**ACA 1: *Bolton Square***

**ACA 10: *North Quays & Back Lanes***

**ACA 2: *Clinton's Lane***

**ACA 11: *St Peter's Church & Environs***

**ACA 3: *Dalebrook Cottages***

**ACA 12: *Railway Terrace***

**ACA 4: *Fair Street***

**ACA 13: *Windmill Road (part)***

**ACA 5: *Laurences Street***

**ACA 14: *West Street & surrounding Shopping Streets***

**ACA 6: *Legavoureen Park***

**ACA 15: *Leyland Place***

**ACA 7: *Magdalene Street North***

**ACA 16: *Ship Street***

**ACA 8: *Saint Mary's Cottages***

**ACA 17: *Old Abbey Lane & Narrow West Street***

**ACA 9: *Millmount***

A full list of Drogheda's 17 Architectural Conservation Areas together with descriptions of each can be found in Appendix 2, available for inspection in the Planning Office, Drogheda Borough Council.

**POLICY:**

In terms of Architectural Conservation Areas it is the policy of Drogheda Borough Council:

1. To protect, conserve and enhance the essential character of the A.C.A through the control of the design, location and layout of new developments;
2. To require proposals for development outside the Architectural Conservation Area but which affect its settings or views into and out of it, to respect its character and appearance;
3. To require the conservation and retention of traditional features and building elements such as shop fronts, windows and glass, doors and door cases and where replacements are necessary ensure that they respect the original character of the building or setting which they relate;
4. To protect existing streets that contribute to the setting of the A.C.A;
5. To respect the character of existing buildings, important views and spaces and the historic settlement in terms of scale, height, grouping, density, design and materials;
6. To adopt a presumption in favour of protection of older buildings, through renovation and conservation, over demolition and replacement;
7. To promote the visual attractiveness of the area by encouraging and requiring owners and occupiers of derelict structures to improve them in an appropriate manner;
8. To promote the preparation of Conservation Guidelines and the provision of advice and guidance to the public, developers, public bodies and groups and associations;
9. To promote the preparation of Special Planning Control Schemes in order to preserve protect and enhance the civic, architectural and historic character of the designated Architectural Conservation Area;
10. To ensure when planning to undertake development or when considering the approval or authorisation of development that the policies and objectives of Special Planning Control Schemes for the Architectural Conservation Area are complied with;

**OBJECTIVES:**

In terms of Architectural Conservation Areas it is an objective of Drogheda Borough Council:

- **BH 11**  
*To require drawings to be submitted showing the proposed works or new buildings in the context of the streetscape, or otherwise demonstrate the impact of the development on the area.*
- **BH 12**  
*To have regard for the relevant policies and objectives in the design and carrying out works in the area such as paving, street lighting and furniture, parking signs, double yellow lines etc.*



## 11.6 Archaeological Heritage

The archaeological heritage of Drogheda includes structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, all recorded monuments as well as their contexts, and moveable objects, situated both on land and underwater. (*The European Convention for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, Valetta 1992*).

*This means that the archaeological heritage is not confined to the archaeological sites within the Record of Monuments and Places. It includes any archaeological site that may not have been recorded yet, as well as archaeology beneath the ground surface, as well as the context of any site.*

### The Archaeological Heritage is comprised of:

- Recorded sites and features of historical and archaeological importance included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994,
- Major sites of archaeological importance in State Ownership or Guardianship.
- National Monuments which are the subject of preservation orders.
- All previously unknown archaeology that becomes known (e.g. through ground disturbance, fieldwork, or the discovery of sites underwater).

### General Policies

It will be the general policy of the Drogheda Borough Council to apply the following principles to the archaeological heritage:

- **To protect and enhance archaeological monuments and their settings including town walls, towers, town embankments and ditches, town gates, bastions or ancillary fortifications.**
- **To facilitate appropriate guidance in relation to the protection of the archaeological heritage in the area covered in the Plan.**
- **To provide guidance to developers and property owners regarding the archaeological implications of a proposed development.**
- **To promote pre-planning consultations in relation to the archaeological heritage with the Planning Authority and with The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.**
- **To endeavor to ensure the dissemination of the results of archaeological excavation in a timely and appropriate manner.**
- **To promote public awareness of the rich archaeological heritage in the area.**

The Archaeological heritage of an area includes structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, moveable objects, monuments of other kind as well as their contexts, whether situated on land or under water. In this respect, Drogheda has a significant archaeological heritage, which provides a valuable and valued cultural, educational and tourism resource. The Planning Authority recognises the importance of preserving, protecting and fostering a greater public appreciation of the town's archaeological heritage. It has therefore designated, 77 no. of areas of Archaeological Potential, which were identified individually in Appendix 3 (available for inspection in the Planning Office, Drogheda Borough Council).



The most extensive zone is concentrated in the northern side of Drogheda particularly the town centre area and adjacent the Gates of the town wall. These areas are delineated on a Map, which is available for inspection in the Planning Office, Drogheda Borough Council.

The 'Archaeological Inventory of County Louth' also identified individual sites which are located outside the designated areas of archaeological potential and which may be of archaeological significance. The zones of archaeological potential and recorded sites and monuments are shown on the Archaeological & Natural Heritage Map and detailed in Appendix 3 (refer to the Planning Office, Drogheda Borough Council, for details).

The policies outlined below should also apply to development proposals on those sites, which are indicated on the Archaeological & Natural Heritage Map.

- 1. Any proposed developments, that may due to their location, size or nature, have implications for the archaeological heritage, will be referred to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government for comment. This applies to National Monuments in the care of the Minister, archaeological and architectural monuments and sites in the Record of Monuments and Places and zones of Archaeological Potential.**
- 2. It is the duty of the Planning Authorities to oppose on archaeological grounds any works that are considered to be harmful to recorded monuments or the integrity of their setting.**
- 3. The value and significance of this archaeological heritage is acknowledged by Drogheda Borough Council and through their policies they seek to ensure the effective protection, conservation and enhancement of archaeological sites, monuments and their settings.**

## **OBJECTIVES:**

In terms of Archaeology the following are the objectives of Drogheda Borough Council:

- ***BH 13***  
*To preserve and maintain the existing archaeological monuments within the town and to safeguard the integrity of their setting;*
- ***BH 14***  
*To ensure that all development in the vicinity of archaeological sites and monuments in Drogheda are sympathetic with, and do not detract from, specified sites of archaeological significance;*
- ***BH 15***  
*To encourage access where appropriate to National Monuments;*
- ***BH 16***  
*To ensure that, where relevant, all planning applications for new development or refurbishment/restoration works, within the Areas of Archaeological Potential or in close proximity to individual sites included in the Sites and Monuments*



*Record, shall be referred by the Planning Authority to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, and their recommendation taken into account prior to the making of a decision on such an application;*

- **BH 17**  
*To ensure that details of all proposed developments by the Local Authorities within the Areas of Archaeological Potential or in close proximity to individual sites included in the Sites and Monuments Record shall be referred to Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government,*
- **BH 18**  
*To retain the grain of the medieval street pattern by retaining and protecting streets and laneways in terms of layout, pattern and building line;*
- **BH 19**  
*To have regard to archaeological matters when considering proposed service schemes and proposed roadworks within the Areas of Archaeological Potential, details of such schemes shall be forwarded to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government,*
- **BH 20**  
*It will be an objective of Drogheda Borough Council to secure the preservation (in-situ or by record) of all sites and features of historical and archaeological interest.*
- **BH 21**  
*It will be an objective of the Drogheda Borough Council to secure the preservation (in situ) of town walls, embankments, town gates, bastions or ancillary fortifications or portions thereof. The upstanding remains of the town wall of Drogheda represent the last remaining defences which enclosed an area of 45 hectares/113 acres and had a circumference of 1.46 miles, making it one of the most extensive lines of town defences in Ireland.*
- **BH 22**  
*It is an objective of Drogheda Borough Council to preserve the integrity of existing archaeological monuments in their settings including the integrity of town defences. The visual impact to a National Monument such as St Laurances' Gate should be considered when development is proposed in close proximity to it. Enhancement of this Monument by lighting at night could be proposed as part of the conservation plan for the town wall. The Monument should be cleaned and protected from the impacts of heavy traffic travelling through.*
- **BH 23**  
*It will be the objective of Drogheda Borough Council to ensure that development in the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest shall not be detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or its setting by reason of its location, scale, bulk or detailing.*



- **BH 24**

*When considering development in the vicinity of town defences, Drogheda Borough Council will aim to achieve a satisfactory buffer area between the development and the town defences in order to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the amenity associated with the presence of town defences within the historic urban pattern. In the case where portions or sections of town wall may run down to the riverside, these areas should be considered as 'green' areas and what remains upstanding should be enhanced and preserved. For example; A section of town wall running from West Gate to Peace Bridge.*

*Drogheda Borough Council will have regard to the preservation and enhancement of the line of the town defences when considering development proposed in their vicinity. Disturbance, removal and alteration of the line of town defences shall not be considered appropriate within the historic core of Drogheda. However, provided this Department is consulted prior to conservation works, night lighting may be feasible, for example or a 'clean up' plan for existing remains could be considered.*

- **BH 25**

*The plan of Drogheda is a good example of a medieval chequer plan. The streets follow the natural topography of the site, which curve with the bend of the River. The streetscape on the North side of the river is still mostly intact and this should be maintained. A number of old streets still exist on the South side, such as Cornmarmet Hill, Curry's Hill and Duleek street. It will be an objective of the Planning Authority to retain the existing street layout, historic building lines and traditional plot widths where these derive from medieval or earlier origins. Street widening can have a negative impact on the Medieval Street layout of Drogheda. This should be taken into consideration prior to road design being submitted so that the original layout can be maintained within the modern environment.*

- **BH 26**

*In securing such preservation the Planning Authority will have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, both in respect of whether or not to grant planning permission and in respect of the conditions to which permission, if granted, should be subject.*

- **BH 27**

*When considering development in the vicinity of all upstanding monuments including town defences, the planning authority will require the preparation of submission of an archaeological assessment detailing the potential impact of any development on both upstanding buried structures and deposits. The report will also include a visual impact assessment to ensure adequate consideration of any potential visual impact the proposed development may have on any upstanding remains. This is particularly important for Drogheda.*



▪ **BH 28**

*Pre-planning consultation with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government is strongly advised for any development in Drogheda as there are substantial remains of medieval town wall, towers, gates and associated features existing below ground level. Archaeological deposits have been known to exist 3-4 metres below ground level within Drogheda and sub-surface excavation such as that associated with provision of basements or pile driving can have a direct impact on these remains. Development close to the riverbanks has and can reveal old town wall revetments and defences.*

## **11.7 Archaeological Landscapes**

It will, within the lifetime of this Plan, be an objective of the Planning Authority to seek to include 'archaeological landscapes' as part of an ongoing landscape character assessment of the plan area.

## **11.8 The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)**

The Record of Monument and Places (RMP) is a statutory audit of archaeological monuments provided for in the National Monuments Acts. It consists of a county by county set of marked-up Ordnance Survey maps and a manual listing basic information in relation to each monument or area included in the RMP. Monuments in the RMP are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. The RMP is revised periodically.

## **11.9 Historic Towns and Town Defences**

Historic Towns which have been identified by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government for general protection are towns which were first identified in the Urban Archaeological Survey of Louth and which have been included in the RMP. For Louth these historic towns include the following list – Ardee, Carlingford, Castlering, Castleroche, Castletown, Dundalk, Collon, Drogheda, Dundalk, Dunleer, Louth, Termonfeckin. The guideline boundaries for these towns are illustrated within the RMP. The area within the historic boundaries are known as Zones of Archaeological Potential, and are areas where intense archaeology is present.



Many of our historic villages, towns and cities comprise a series of streets bounded by town walls, embankments and ditches with town gates marking the entrance to and exit from the urban area. The town defences are amongst the most important monuments in any medieval town.

These fortifications marked out the area of jurisdiction of the town's authority. In some examples additional protective features, like bastions and star-shaped fortifications were built alongside or outside the original town bulwarks.

In a few rare examples, the modern urban centre has not yet fully developed within the area enclosed by the ambitious town walls. However, in most examples, lengths of town wall, gateways and in some cases town banks and ditches lie within or under the modern urban fabric. The survival of these town defences can vary. Some are relatively intact, although pierced through by modern roads and bridges, others lie buried beneath a palimpsest of later building. Protection of the town's heritage includes the retention of existing street layout, historic building lines and traditional plot widths where these derive from medieval or earlier origins.

(Details of monuments within Zones of Archaeological Potential are shown on maps accompanying the Urban Archaeological Survey, which are available from Louth County Council.)

Drogheda Borough Council asks developers' to take due cognisance of the *Bruges Resolution on the Conservation of Smaller Historic Towns, (1975)*, which was adopted by the 4<sup>th</sup> ICOMOS General Assembly, which outlines the importance of preserving the features of historic towns, while allowing for the necessity of development.



### 11.10 Underwater Archaeology

Under the National Monuments Acts 1930-1994 all shipwrecks over one hundred years old, underwater archaeological structures, features and objects are protected. The quantification of the underwater archaeological resource is at a preliminary stage with the National Shipwreck Inventory currently being compiled. This source indicates areas of high archaeological potential within marine environments. The Record of Monuments and Places does not include all underwater archaeological sites. As a result the potential exists for development to impact negatively on our underwater cultural resource. Development proposals should therefore take account of any development and constructional impacts on riverine, lacustrine, intertidal and sub-tidal environments. This is particularly important for Drogheda as it has served as an important entrance/inland routeway to the site of 'Bru na Boinne', a World Heritage Site and it acted as an important medieval port. It was, in fact, one of the busiest medieval ports on the East coast of Ireland during the 14<sup>th</sup> Century and archaeological remains reveal its prosperity into the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Recent Dredging works in the Boyne have revealed a substantial amount of medieval pottery, ship timbers, shipwrecks, and other artefacts relating to trade and exchange from medieval times and earlier periods. Pre-planning consultation for Quayside developments in Drogheda is strongly advised as remains of revetments, town defences, shipwreck material or other could be revealed on the lower levels in the flood plain of the River Boyne.

#### **Monument or sites included in the Record of Monument and Places (RMP) located within the land holding of development proposals.**

Where a proposed development (excluding individual residential home units) includes a monument or site included in the Record Monument and Places within the landholding it will be a requirement of Drogheda Borough Council that;

*A) The developer shall commission an archaeological assessment to establish the extent of archaeological material associated with the monument or site. This assessment shall also define the buffer area or area contiguous with the monument which will preserve the setting and visual amenity of the site. This is particularly advised where upstanding remains are elevated and visible from afar such as Millmount Motte and Bailey, the Abbey of St. Mary D'Urso, St. Laurances Gate, and upstanding remains of the Medieval Town Wall for example.*

*B) The area of the monument and buffer should not be included as part of the open space requirement demanded of a specific developments but should be additional to the required open spaces.*

*C) If a monument or place included in the Record of Monument and Places lies within the open space requirement a development, a conservation plan for that monument should be requested as part of the landscape plan for that proposed open space.*

*D) Should a monument or site included in the Record of Monument and Places be incorporated into a development the monument and attendant buffer area should be ceded to Local Authority Ownership once the development and associated landscaping works are complete so that the future protection of the monument can be assured.*



## 11.11 Nature Conservation

### General:

The Drogheda Borough Council administrative area contains parts of two distinct Special Areas of Conservation (SAC):

Boyne Estuary (Site Code - 001957)

River Boyne and River Blackwater (Site Code – 002299)

Special Areas of Conservation are designated under the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna).

The site also contains part of one Special Protection Area:

Boyne Estuary (Site Code - 004080)

Special Protection Areas are designated under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds).

### 11.12 Stagrennan Polder:

The Polder is located within the “Boyne Estuary Special Protection Area” (Site Code – 004080). This SPA is designated under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79 / 409 /EEC) regarding the conservation of wild birds. Any development of such sensitive sites will be subject to appropriate assessment.