APPENDIX 14

A Guide to ACAs in Louth

A GUIDE TO

Architectural Conservation Areas in LOUTH

"An architectural conservation area is a place, area, group of structures or townscape which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest in its own rights, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures."

ACA



Architectural Conservation Areas are of great importance for the protection and enjoyment of our environment.

Some were originally described as Conservation Areas in earlier development plans, but since the introduction of the legislation on the protection of the Architectural Heritage, on 1st January 2000, these earlier conservation areas have been renamed, their boundaries altered and designated as ACAs. New ACAs have been also been designated.

They vary in their nature and character and can cover areas as diverse as the historic centres in our towns and villages, terraces of early 20th Century houses, mills and their associated weirs, stretches of canal with their locks and lock houses, and the demesnes of country houses.

The special character of these areas does not lie in the buildings alone. The historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries, mix of uses, gardens, parks and greens, trees and street furniture, landmarks and views all contribute to the special sense of place.



Roden Place, Dundalk

How do I know if I live in an Architectural Conservation Area?

The Planning Authority's development plan includes a description of the ACAs in its area and maps which show the exact boundaries. You can see these in your local planning office, and they will also be available on the Local Authority website.

www.louthcoco.ie

How is an ACA designated?

Planning authorities are required by the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to include objectives for the conservation of the character of Architectural Conservation Areas. The designation of an ACA is done during a review of a County or Town Development Plan, or as a variation to the Plan. They are not attached to Local Area plans, but may be referred to. Any changes to the boundaries of an ACA, or changes in objectives, must be done as a variation or subsequent review of the plan.

This is a list of all the Architectural Conservation Areas in Louth:

In Drogheda - there are 17 ACAs

1. Bolton Square / Green Lanes
2. Clinton's Lane
3. The Dale
4. Fair Street
5. Laurence's Street
6. Legavoureen Park
7. Magdalene Street (north)
8. St. Mary's Cottages
9. Millmount
10. North Quay / Back Lanes
11. St Peter's Church of Ireland and Environs
12. Railway Terrace
13. Windmill Road (part)
14. West Street and central shopping core
15. Leyland Place
16. Ship Street
17. Old Abbey Lane

In Dundalk there are seven ACAs

1. St Mary's Road
2. Roden Place
3. The Crescent
4. Clanbrassil Street
5. Jocelyn Street
6. Soldiers Point coastguard houses
7. Demesne/Magnet Road

In the County Council's operational area there are eight ACAs

1. Ardee
2. Carlingford
3. Collon
4. Milltown (Grangebellew)
5. Monasterboice
6. Newtown Monasterboice
7. Salterstown
8. Whitestown



Salterstown

Can I have a say in the matter?

Yes. When the development plan for your area is being reviewed it is advertised in the newspapers and the plan will be on public display. You can send your comments to the relevant Planning Department on all aspects of the plan, including ACAs.



Pump in Collon

How are ACAs protected?

This is done by:

- Defining the character that merits protection, including the open spaces.
- The use of planning controls over demolition and alterations within the area.
- Giving careful consideration to the impact of any new development proposal on the character of the area.

Designating an area as an ACA does not prohibit all new development. However, permission for new development will only be granted if it can be shown that the development will not be detrimental to the character of the area. The design of the new development will be of particular importance and it is preferable to minimise the visual impact. The more unified the character of the area the greater will be the need to retain that uniformity of design. Where there is a mixture of styles, a new building should ideally demonstrate a high standard of contemporary design which would be complementary to the overall pattern of the area. Existing building heights and materials should also be respected unless it can be demonstrated that a particular site deserves an extraordinary treatment.

Are Trees Protected in an ACA?

Trees can make an important contribution to the quality of the area, and while the removal of a single tree might not have much impact, removal of a stand of trees along the roadside or in a green space could make a significant difference.

What needs planning permission?

The protection of an ACA relates to the external appearance. As an ACA includes the rear of buildings and the open spaces most works to the outside of a building or structure in an ACA will need planning permission.

If, for example you proposed to build a small extension, change the roof materials or windows, install a roof light or satellite dish, form a parking space, strip off plaster, or erect signage you will probably need permission.

Planning permission will not be needed for works to the interior unless it involves a change of use. Normal repair and maintenance work will not require permission unless it uses materials or details which are not appropriate to the structure.

If you are in any doubt as to whether or not planning permission is required for any proposed works to a building or structure, please check with the planning authority before you start.

General guidance for works in ACAs is being prepared and will be available on the Local Authority website or from any planning office in County Louth.

Suppose I want to demolish a building within an ACA?

Planning permission will be needed for demolition of any building within an ACA. An application for demolition of any building will need to include reasons for the demolition, a survey of the existing building with photographs and a brief architectural appraisal. In the case of a building which makes a positive contribution to the character of the area it will also be necessary to include a condition survey.

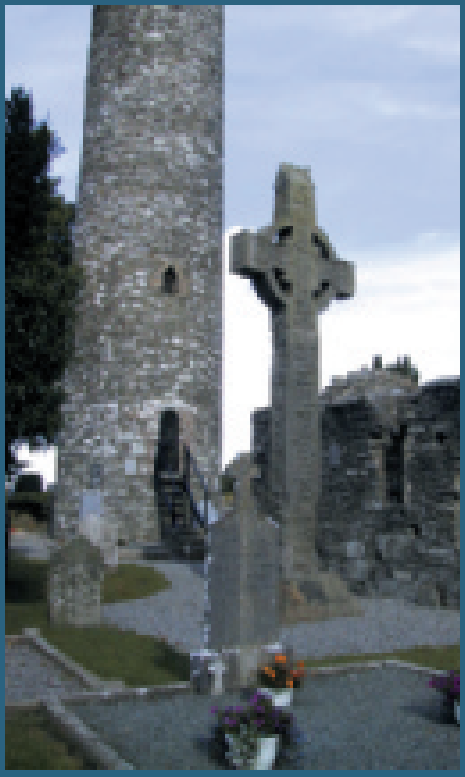
What about archaeology?

Since ACAs are often in the historic centre of towns and villages, they frequently also include or overlap with areas of archaeological potential. Where excavations are being carried out within the zone of a recorded monument it is necessary to give two months' notice to the National Monuments section of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

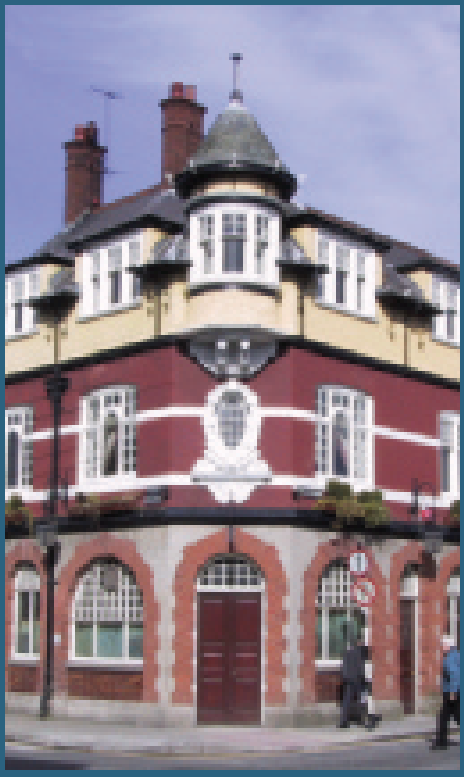
Do I need special materials or architectural advice?

Most buildings in Architectural Conservation Areas are constructed of traditional materials such as stone, plaster, slate and brick, with timber windows and doors. Particular local materials and forms of detailing can be a significant part of the appearance of the area and it is best to use these traditional materials for any alterations to existing buildings.

If you are considering innovative designs you should consult an architect. The Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland keep a register of architects with conservation skills, and can help you find one with particular skills in a style, period or building type. The Irish Georgian Society has a register of traditional skills and trades, and your Local Authority Conservation Officer also maintains a list of consultants and tradespeople with conservation knowledge.



Monasterboice



Dundalk



Carlingford

Checklist

Checklist

- Find out if you live in an ACA by contacting the Planning Authority
- If you live in a Protected Structure you should have received a notice when the building was first placed on the Record, however, if you are buying an older building you should always check the record of protected structures in the development plan for the area.
- If you are thinking of carrying out any work (however minor) check with the planning authority to see if -
  - Planning permission is required for the works you are considering
  - Find out if a conservation area appraisal exists that can guide change

It is better to get advice from the planning authority before you begin work than to have the work halted, removed or amended at a later date. This will save you time and money.

If you have further queries regarding ACA designation please contact:

The Planning Section,
County Hall, Millennium Centre,
Dundalk, Co Louth

Phone: 042 935 3180
Fax: 042 932 0080
e-mail: planning@louthcoco.ie
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Architectural Conservation Areas in LOUTH





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For more information please contact: