

Appendix C

Architectural Conservation Areas



Appendix C - Trim Architectural Conservation Areas

1.0 Introduction

Some of the towns of County Meath contain areas of architectural, historical, and/or cultural interest, which have a particular distinctive character considered worthy of retention and enhancement. Planning legislation allows a planning authority to include objectives in the Development Plan for the area to preserve the character of places, areas, group of structures or townscapes that:

- are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or
- contribute to the appreciation of protected structures.

Such areas or places are known as Architectural Conservation Areas, or for short, ACAs.

An ACA could be a terrace of houses, a streetscape, a town centre, or a cluster of structures associated with a specific building such as an historic mill or country house. The objective of the ACA designation is to guide change within an area and ensure that future development is carried out in a manner sympathetic to the special character of this historic place. Most structures in an ACA are important in how they positively contribute to the character of the area. Historic building materials and features, heights and building lines, and the scale and arrangement of streets and open spaces all make a contribution to the character of an ACA.

Therefore, it is the external appearance of structures and the appearance of the open space which are protected in an ACA. Planning permission is required for any works that would have a material effect, or impact, on the character of an ACA. Even works which in other locations would meet the criteria for Exempted Development as outlined in the Planning Regulations will require planning permission if they are within an ACA. This does not prevent alterations, extensions or new build within ACAs but any new development must respect or enhance the special character of the area and must be carried out in consultation with the Planning Department and Conservation Officer, usually through a planning application.

There are currently a total of 23 ACAs in Meath, 2 of which are in Trim:

- The Trim Historic Core ACA,
- The Porch Field ACA

This document is one in a series that sets out to identify the special character of each ACA and give guidance to homeowners, developers and planning professionals on the type of works that would require planning permission in that particular area.

2.0 Statutory Protection and Development Plan Policy

The Meath County Development Plan 2013 – 2019 provides the policy framework for the County.

Trim Town Plan 2014 – 2020. This plan establishes a framework for the planned, co-ordinated and sustainable development of Trim and for the conservation and enhancement of its natural and built environment over the plan period and beyond. The ACAs were designated in the Trim Plan of 2002 and the boundaries amended in the 2008 plan.

There are a number of protected structures within the boundaries of the Trim ACAs that are protected under Part IV of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 - 2014. A protected structure is a structure or part of a structure that a Planning Authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. A protected structure includes the land lying within its curtilage and other structures within that curtilage and their interiors. The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) is contained in Appendix B of the Trim Town Development Plan 2014 – 2020

The Record of Monuments and Places lists structures and sites of archaeological heritage. The schedule is available to the public at the Planning Office of Meath County Council, Teagasc Offices and Town Councils. A small proportion of National Monuments are in state ownership and care, or subject to a Preservation Order. These are shown in Appendix D of the Trim Town Plan 2014 – 2020.

3. Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area

3.1 Location and Boundary

The Trim Historic Core ACA was designated in the Trim Development Plan 2002. The area was reviewed for the 2008 Plan and the boundaries adjusted on the west side of Haggard Street, south side of Patrick Street, and to the west of the Wellington Monument. It was considered that the character of these sectors is not of sufficient interest to warrant continued inclusion in the ACA.

One minor change has been made to the boundary in the review of this plan – to extend the south eastern boundary to coincide with the townland boundary as shown on Map No 3.

The following streets or thoroughfares are wholly or partly located within the Historic Core ACA:

Haggard Street
Navangate Street
High Street
Abbey Lane
Mill Street
Mill Lane
Bridge Street
French's Lane
Watergate Street
Market Street
Emmet Street
Finnegans Way
Castle Street
Wellington Place
Patrick Street



3.2 Historical Development

The site of Trim was known from the earliest times as a fording point of the river Boyne, at the upper limits of navigation. It is thought that the Watergate Street crossing is the original ford point. The first clear evidence of settlement is described in the Book of Armagh which details the foundation of a monastery by St Loman in 432 A.D.

At the time of the foundation of the church, Ath Truimm (Trim) was the location of the royal residence of the King of Brega. This placename 'ford of the elder tree' indicates that this residence was located with a view to controlling a folding point on the river.

When Hugh de Lacy was granted the lordship of Meath by Henry II, the site of the castle was selected in 1172 and fortified and the town became the centrepiece of a lordship that stretched from the Shannon to the Irish Sea. The castle was previously thought to have been built in the first half of that century, however it is now established that it is substantially a late 12th Century building, most of it probably finished by about 1200. The earliest reference to Trim as a borough is in the early years of the 13th C.

The dissolution of the Abbey and Friaries in 1539 and 1540 had far reaching impacts on the economic, social and political powers in Trim and by 1584 the town was a substantial and well-fortified city and recommended as the site for Trinity College.

In the 18th C Trim acted as the County town for Meath and a thriving market centre until overtaken by Navan in the 19th C.

At the beginning of the 19thC the plan of Trim had hardly changed from the pattern of the 13th C with the exception of an expansion to the south and the building of St Marys Catholic Church. The construction of Wellington Place in 1817 added a monumental element to the townscape.

In 1835 the corporation was replaced by town commissioners who brought about major improvements in the form and fabric of the town. In 1852-3, two major projects were commenced – the building of a Town Hall, and installation of gas lighting.

Trim did not grow to any great extent during the 20thC. The workhouse was converted into a hospital and a number of large schools were established. In the latter half of the 20th century small suburban districts were developed but the greatest changes in the town occurred as a result of the growth of the commuter hinterland of Dublin in the last 10 years.

3.3 Character Overview

Trim enjoys a relatively compact urban structure. The town straddles both sides of the River Boyne, with development generally well balanced on both sides. The scale of the built environment is generally low, predominantly two storey structures, though the areas along Market Street and surrounding the castle and historic buildings demonstrate a higher scale. More recent developments in the town have resulted in the introduction of modern architectural urban elements into the built landscape. The most notable new structures include the new Courthouse building, the Trim Castle Hotel on Castle Street, and the Headquarters of the Office of Public Works. Such initiatives have introduced a taller scale and contemporary architectural elements into the town's built environment.

Other than the space around the Castle and the Yellow Steeple, there is little or no soft landscaping within the historic core ACA. Consideration should be given to how planting might be incorporated into the townscape.

3.3.1 Street Pattern

The town plan is complex for an Anglo-Norman colonial town. Its unusual layout can be read as a composite of a number of plan units. To the south of the Boyne the pattern follows a H shape with Market Street as its spine. To the north, a second H-shaped pattern was laid out, aligned along Mill Street.

The Augustinian Priory was located immediately north of the river and the curving pattern formed by High Street and Navan Gate Street is thought to represent an old monastic boundary.

The curved elements of the plan found in High St and Haggard Street were probably the result of thirteenth century expansion. All of these streets and their long, narrow medieval property plots were enclosed by a town wall that provided defence but also expressed the civic independence of the burgesses. The basic urban components of castle, streets, property plots, Abbey parish church and town walls were in place by c. 1200.

The medieval burgage plot pattern is largely intact within the ACA, in Navan Gate Street, High Street and particularly in Emmet Street where it backs onto the town wall. The presence of a clear burgage plot pattern outside the town wall at Emmet Street suggests that there may have been an early suburb there. Suburban development also occurred outside Dublin Gate and beyond Navan Gate in the thirteenth century.

3.3.2 Building Types and Materials

Trim is notable for the survival of medieval structures, most prominently, Trim Castle, which is the largest and most impressive Norman Castle in the country.

The majority of commercial and residential buildings in the town core are two or three storeys in height and plain and unadorned Georgian in style. The Castle Street cottages are exceptional in that they were built by the Dunsany estate in 1890 and are a row of 10 estate cottages with decorative timber bargeboards, and small diamond paned windows.

The last 15 years has seen the gradual erosion of architectural character by the removal of traditional sash windows, plaster, and rainwater goods. However, there is the potential to retain, and restore where necessary, the distinctive quality and historic character of the town.

The buildings in Trim are predominantly plastered and painted in a variety of colours; however the more important institutional and commercial buildings have dressed stone facings. There are several impressive houses on Navan Gate Street with stone facades and a small number of late 19th century commercial buildings have brick facades with interesting detailing. In common with all small Irish towns, the roofscape of Trim consists for the most part of pitched slated roofs.

3.3.3 Significant Views and Vistas

The Castle dominates the centre of the town and its eastern approaches. Visitors climbing to the roof are given panoramic views of the town and the river valley.

The skyline is pierced by churches and towers: the tower of St Loman's cathedral, the Yellow Steeple and the spire of St Patrick's church.

The vista eastward on Market Street frames a significant view of the Yellow Steeple and Talbot Castle.

Protected views are noted in Appendix F and shown on Map No. 3.

3.4 Objectives:

It is the intention of the Council by the designation of this Architectural Conservation Area:

1. To preserve, protect and enhance the architectural heritage of Trim for future generations.
2. To preserve the historic street pattern within the core of the town.
3. To retain the row of single storey cottages on the east side of Haggard Street and Boyne Cottages on Frenche's Lane without any major alteration to their roofs or front facades
4. To preserve the historic character of the streetscape in Market Street.
5. To require that all new developments shall observe the existing scale of the town.
6. To protect the character of the existing streetscape by giving consideration to the suitability of style, construction materials, colour and decoration to be used in any proposals for development taking place within this area.
7. To encourage appropriate new uses for empty and under-utilised buildings.
8. To avoid the destruction of minor historic elements whose cumulative loss would severely erode the cumulative cultural significance of the town.
9. To require good quality design for new buildings, works to exteriors of the existing buildings including shopfronts, signage, and public realm works.

4. The Porch Field Architectural Conservation Area

4.1 Location and Boundary

The Porch Field ACA is located immediately to the east of Trim town centre, bounded for the most part on the south by the Boyne River, on the north by the Navan Road, on the west by the town wall, and its eastern extent includes the medieval borough of Newtown-Trim. The ring road connecting the Navan Road to the Dublin Road traverses the Porch field from north to south.



1836 OS Map

4.2 Historical Development

Newtown Trim is a deserted medieval borough. In the Middle Ages it was a busy market centre with several important churches, a hospital and a mill. The Episcopal See of Meath was moved here from Clonard in the late 12th century. The church dates from 1206 and must have been one of the largest medieval churches in Ireland. South of the original nave stood the domestic buildings. To the east of the Cathedral are the remains of a small medieval church, which houses the tomb of Sir Lucas Dillon and his wife. Newtown developed as a centre of worship and of trade. In 1217 it was granted royal permission to host a weekly market, and later an annual fair.

The buildings on the eastern side of the bridge are the remains of the 13th and 15th century Friary and Hospital of St John the Baptist. From a gate beside the road on the opposite side of the river to the refectory of the monastery there is a remarkable echo.

The *Porchfield of Trim* lies between the new Anglo-Norman town of Trim founded c.1180 and the rural-borough of Newtown-Trim founded c.1220.

The two towns were connected through the 'open-field' Porch field by a medieval road or 'sunken-way'. The Porch field probably included 'three acres in the fields outside the town' for a number of the new burgesses of Trim, as documented in the Borough Charters for Kells and Drogheda.

The field was called Porch Field from at least the fifteenth Century with some sources referring to the Porchgate in association with property beside the Augustinian priory. It is thought that the derivation of the prefix Porch-may be from the French word *porte* meaning gate.

4.3 Character Overview

This area acts as a backdrop against which the town is set. It frames Trim Castle, The Yellow Steeple, Sheepgate, St Johns Friary, Newtown Abbey, and allows these structures to be appreciated as they historically appeared in the landscape. It provides an exceptional open space and public amenity for the town.

This land can only be used in consultation with the OPW for amenity and recreational purposes.

4.4 Significant Views and Vistas

The Area provides exceptional views and vistas in both directions along the river valley. Protected views are noted in Appendix F and shown on Map No 3.

4.5 Objectives:

1. To maintain the open landscape character of the area;
2. To ensure that any proposed developments shall recognise the particular role of this area in the protection of the unique setting of the town and its heritage buildings, shall harmonise with its character and respect views and prospects along the river valley.

5. Implications for planning and development in the Trim ACAs.

The objective of Architectural Conservation Area designation is to protect the special character of an area through rigorous control and positive management of any changes made to the built environment. Under the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2014 there is a requirement to obtain planning permission for all development works which do not constitute exempted development. Section 4 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2014 lists developments which are considered exempt, for the purposes of the Act. With regard to Architectural Conservation Areas it is important to take into account Section 4(1)(h) of the Act which states that the following shall be exempted development:

"Development consisting of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any structure, being works which affect only the interior of the structure or which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of the neighbouring structures".

Protected structures:

Planning permission is required for all works that would materially affect the character of a protected structure, or any element of the structure including its curtilage, which contributes to its special character. Works to a protected structure that constitute essential repair and maintenance works may require a declaration from Meath County Council under Section 57 of the Planning & Development Act 2000. A declaration issued under this section sets out the type of works the Planning Authority considers would or would not affect the character of a structure or any elements thereof, which contributes to its special interest.

Non-protected structures:

Owners and occupiers of non-protected structures located within the Trim Historic Core and Porch Field Architectural Conservation Areas should be aware that works, which in the opinion of the Planning Authority would materially affect the character of the Architectural Conservation Area, will require a specific grant of planning permission under Section 82(1) of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 - 2014.

5.1 Works requiring planning permission

5.1.1 External walls

With the exception of the larger public buildings which were built with limestone facades, and some terraced houses with brick facades, the majority of buildings in Trim have a render or stucco finish. This rendering forms a protective layer for rubble stonework. Although not a prevalent practice in Trim, in some instances the render or plaster has been removed exposing the stone, which was never intended to be seen. This practice not only significantly alters the architectural character of the structure and affects the visual integrity of the building, particularly in a terrace, but it also exposes the building to decay and damage, once its protective layer is removed. In addition, some facades have had their original lime mortar pointing removed and replaced with an unsuitable cement based mortar. This type of re-pointing would be deemed unacceptable by the Planning Authority and the restoration of lime render following the correct historic detail will be encouraged.

Unpainted rendered buildings contribute to the patina of the historic town and should not be painted. Likewise exposed stone or brickwork should never be painted. Use of modern paints which can be detrimental to the building's fabric, or the sand blasting of external surfaces which may lead to porosity and water ingress are also unacceptable.

Covering external walls with finishes other than their historic finish, such as stone or timber cladding, is not acceptable in the historic buildings of the ACA. Original historic external finishes must always be retained. Any proposal for the alteration of the existing finishes will require planning permission and changes that affect the special character of the ACA will not be acceptable.

5.1.2 Roofs

The roofscape of Trim is clearly visible from the upper levels of the Castle. The roofscape is an integral part of the special character of the town. The original form of the roofs must always be retained. Original elements should be retained where possible, and repaired and reused rather than replaced. The following works require planning permission:

- The replacement of original roofing material such as natural slate and lead roll or terracotta ridge tiles with modern materials like fibre-cement tiles will not be deemed suitable by the local authority
- The removal of existing chimneystacks and early terracotta or clay pots or other features of the roofscape such as cast-iron gutters, downpipes or decorative cresting.
- The removal of timber bargeboards and other eaves details and their replacement in a material other than the original.
- The installation of roof lights or dormer windows on the front or prominent elevation of a structure, visible from the public realm. With the notable exception of the Castle Street cottages, there is no tradition of dormer windows in Trim and their installation will not be deemed generally appropriate by the local authority.
- The erection of, or alterations to, externally mounted signs, shopfront signage, and advertisements at roof level, including banners.
- The provision of awnings, canopies, flags and flagpoles.
- The erection of solar panels, TV satellite dishes, communication antennae or support structures for same. These are considered to have a highly negative impact on the character of the area and should be avoided when visible from the public realm. Where existing aerials have become redundant they should be removed.

5.1.3 Window & Door Openings

The buildings within the ACA of Trim retain a reasonable amount of original windows and doors, however a large number of windows have been replaced with uPVC or aluminium frames or with timber frames having inappropriate glazing bars. Original elements should be retained where possible, and repaired and re-used rather than replaced. Where inappropriate windows are being replaced, the planning authority will require that the new windows or doors shall be appropriate to the style and period of the building. The following works require planning permission:

- The alteration or enlargement of original openings.
- The removal of original timber or metal windows, fanlights and original timber doors. Replacement with modern, artificial materials such as uPVC and aluminium will not be deemed acceptable.
- The removal of stone sills and doorsteps and thresholds, and their replacement with modern artificial materials such as aluminium.
- Repairs to historic windows and doors should only be carried out following consultation with the Conservation Officer of Meath County Council

5.1.4 Commercial Frontages

Planning permission is required for the alteration of commercial frontages whether the structure is within an ACA or not. However, alterations within the ACA boundaries will be assessed on the impact of the proposed design on its adjoining and surrounding structures, having regard to scale, proportion, materials and detailing. The overall aim in the design of new shop fronts should be to reinforce the unity and integrity of the whole elevation. The following guidance should be adhered to:

- High quality, durable materials should be used, such as stone, brick, timber, vitrolite tile and glass, rather than artificial contemporary materials.
- Signage and fascias should be in proportion to the shop front while colours should be complementary to those of the building and adjoining properties.
- New and extended shop fronts should never obscure architectural details of the original structure, such as sills, stringcourses, eaves details, windows and doorways.
- The windows to the main façade of the shop front should be of clear glass and not used as a surface for advertisements or other coloured signage.
- While outdoor advertising is necessary for commercial activity, new signage must not detract from the special character and visual amenity of the ACA. There are a number of well designed shop-fronts in Trim such as Spicers on Market St., Harvest Home Bakery on Bridge St., Trim Kitchen Centre on Emmet St., James Griffin's Pub, and Antonia's bookshop. Endeavours should be made by other owners and occupiers of commercial premises to maintain an appropriate traditional style, which complements the original structures, and hand painted signs will be encouraged. The use of corporate signage will depend on its compatibility with adjoining buildings, but plastic box signs and the use of incompatible colours on shopfronts is strongly discouraged by the Planning Authority. This is most pertinent in the case of certain commercial premises such as fast-food outlets, bookmakers, amusement arcades, phone-call centres and similar establishments.
- Planning permission will be required for external vending machines, ATMs, newspaper receptacles, and storage boxes and bays. All commercial premises should endeavour to limit clutter of temporary external retail furniture such as, external heaters, various bins, menu-boards, seating and tables and ensure that these elements do not detract from the special character of the ACA.
- Awnings should be traditional in style and retractable, and made of heavy duty material rather than plastic and planning permission will be required for new installations.

- While security is an issue, the design of security shutters and grilles should complement the structure, with open mesh designs used in preference to solid screening. Heavy boxed metal roller blinds are not acceptable within ACA boundaries. Shutters can be positioned discreetly behind the fascia board or lattice grills may be positioned behind the shop window. In some buildings the original timber shutters can be used for security purposes. Security shutters should never cover the whole commercial frontage but only the vulnerable glazed areas and should be painted or finished in colour to complement the rest of the exterior. Where external security screens are deemed acceptable they should be of transparent open chain-link grille design rather solid or perforated shutters, which are not transparent when viewed obliquely.
- Separate access to the upper floors of the buildings should be maintained where existing and commercial and residential uses that bring vitality to upper floor areas will be encouraged.

5.1.5 Vernacular Buildings

Traditional houses, typically two-storey terraced houses, and single storey terraced cottages, built of simple materials in modest style are an important component determining the special character of the Trim Historic Core ACA. The thatched cottages that were once commonplace are long gone, although one survives on Emmet St, its thatch having been replaced with galvanized iron. Single storey terraces such as those at French's Lane and Haggard Street retain original natural slate roofs in some cases. In many cases their elevations have been compromised by the modification of original openings or the replacement of historic materials with inappropriate synthetic slate, uPVC and aluminium windows and doors. Demolition or replacement of single-storey vernacular buildings, whether detached or in terraces, is not considered appropriate. The raising of eaves levels, alteration of roof pitches or insertion of dormer windows fundamentally change the character of vernacular buildings and are similarly unacceptable. Alterations to provide modern facilities must be carried out in sympathy with the historic character of these buildings and extensions which significantly increase their size are not always appropriate and must be confined to the rears of houses. Reinstatement of traditional vernacular features such as lime-washed external walls, timber doors and sash windows will be encouraged, but must conform to correct historic detail in form, material and technique.

5.1.6 New Build

Designation as an ACA puts an obligation on prospective developers to produce a very high standard of design, which should contribute to the visual enhancement of the area while respecting its physical character. The following guidance regarding new development should be adhered to:

- Direct imitation of earlier styles is not always appropriate but if this model is to be followed, the elevation treatment of the new development should be well-proportioned and built with respect for its context. Buildings should follow the eaves heights, roof pitches and building lines which predominate in the respective streets and should employ windows of matching proportions and alignment. Materials should be of good visual quality and durability. Features which have no precedent in the historic buildings of the town should be avoided. These are: projecting eaves, fascia and soffit boards, dormer windows and roof windows, standard-issue concrete sills or copings, top-hung casement windows, pressed aluminium gutters or uPVC features of any kind. Roofs should be covered with natural slate, terracotta decorative elements, lead or other roofing which enhances the character of the ACA.
- High quality contemporary architectural design that is complimentary to the character of the ACA is acceptable, but the development of any infill sites within the ACA, particularly as part of the streetscape, will require a very sensitive design approach and should positively contribute to the character of the area. A design impact statement providing justification for the proposal in terms of design concept, scale, materials and proportions should accompany such an application.
- Extensions should be to the rear of the property and be of an appropriate scale, built with suitable materials and finishes. Extensions to the side or front of street-fronted structures, or to the rear where the side elevation fronts onto another street will not be encouraged by the local authority as these could be detrimental to the character of Trim.

5.1.7 Development within properties of longer plot length.

In the case of buildings of longer plot length or with large gardens, special consideration must be given to the impact of any new development on the buildings, and on their respective existing boundaries. New development within these sites should retain the predominance of the existing building on the site and should follow the pattern of the historic urban grain.

5.1.8 Amalgamation of Structures, Properties & Sites

The amalgamation of structures requires planning permission regardless of whether they are located in an ACA or not, unless it involves reversing the subdivision of what had originally been a single dwelling or premises. Proposals for the amalgamation of properties within the ACA should take into consideration the impact of changing or extending the existing plot sizes on the streetscape. Original entrances should remain in use. The amalgamation of sites within the ACA, especially with an increased density, should respect the scale, mass, height and design of the adjoining buildings and the entire streetscape. Sensitive planning and design treatment is required in order to complement the fine grain of the established streetscape. New buildings should take into account existing building lines and plot sizes in order to retain the existing grain and character of the ACA. Where larger developments span across former individual boundaries, the original plot divisions should be articulated in the volume of the new buildings, both to the front and the rear. It should be noted that within the medieval core of Trim, the historic pattern of burgage plots remains in evidence. The amalgamation of sites across such historic boundaries should be avoided. A design impact statement providing justification for the proposal should accompany such applications and the design should acknowledge and demonstrate the presence of the original plot boundaries.

5.1.9 Demolition Works

Proposals to demolish structures within the ACA will require planning permission. Demolition will normally only be permitted where the structure makes no material contribution to the character or the appearance of the area. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining structures that make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Where permission is sought for demolition on the grounds of structural defects or failure, a report containing annotated photographs and drawings will be required. The report is to be produced by a suitably qualified and experienced professional with conservation skills, regarding the existing condition. As part of the justification for any demolition within an ACA on structural grounds, details will be required of repairs and remedial works usually carried out in similar circumstances and details of why they are not deemed suitable in this case.

5.1.10 Boundary Treatments

Removal of original railings, gates, gate piers and boundary walls, whether visible from the public realm or not, will require planning permission. Most buildings within the Historic Core ACA are street-fronted, but some structures have cast-iron railings, limestone plinths and piers and rubble stone walls. The Porch Field ACA has some rubble stone boundaries, and stone faced banks. Where these historic elements exist they should be retained and maintained. In the instance where a section of a boundary wall has been removed in order to provide a new entrance, the breaks should be sensitively repaired and finished.

5.1.11 Access

Provision of ramps to facilitate access to existing buildings needs careful consideration. While an access ramp to a single building may be achievable, the cumulative impact of a series of such interventions on the historic streetscape, particularly on streets with narrow footpaths, would have a significant impact on the ACA.

5.1.12 Erection of Fences or Other Items

The integrity of the landscape is compromised by fences and insertions into the landscape. Such interventions will therefore require planning permission.

5.1.13 External Lighting

Proposals for the illumination during night-time hours of certain buildings and landmark features within Trim ACAs must be first agreed with Meath County Council. The method and type of lighting, i.e. type of fitting, fixing method and type of light, should be specified by the applicant when seeking

permission and should be designed so as not to result in light pollution or negatively impact on other structures in the ACAs.

5.1.14 Preservation of Views

The significant views outlined in this document are towards major landmarks, and along the river valley. It is vital to the special character of the town that these views are not obstructed by developments within or outside the ACAs.

5.2 Works Not Requiring Planning Permission

5.2.1 Internal Alterations

The ACA designation does not prevent internal changes or re-arrangements to structures not listed as protected structures within the ACA, provided that these changes do not impact on the exterior of structure, such as the fixing of advertising signage to the inside of windows. However, all internal changes must comply with current building regulations.

5.2.2 Works to the Public Realm

In general, works to the public realm will be carried out by Trim Town Council, Meath County Council or by service and utility providers, and may be exempt from planning permission. However, prior to commencement of the works, consultation with the Conservation Office of Meath County Council will be required, to ensure that these works enhance and improve the special character of the ACA and do not negatively impact upon it. The following areas will require careful consideration:

- Works to public footpaths, including the preservation of historical street surfaces such as original kerbing. Within the historic core, new pavements should not be of poured concrete or tarmacadam with concrete kerbing, but should reflect the natural materials of the town. When cobble-lock style paving is used, it should be of an appropriate scale and detail to complement the character of the town.
- Retention and preservation of all surviving items of street furniture, which contribute to the special character of the ACA, such as cast-iron water pumps, historic cast-iron man-hole covers and post boxes. New street furniture when installed should be of high quality reflecting the character of the ACAs.
- The installation and location of utility boxes, such as ESB meter boxes, should be given careful consideration with regard to their position within the ACA and the impact of colour and massing on the adjoining boundary or structures.
- Changes to traffic management and parking within the ACA. This should take into account its ACA designation and seek to preserve and enhance the character of the area in the design and provision of parking meters, signage, ramps, renewed surface treatment and pavement layout. Suitable design of public signage, in particular tourist information, will be encouraged.
- New street lighting should be in a style which reflects the character of the town. The lighting should not have a negative impact on the roofscape of the town or obstruct significant views in the ACAs. As the river valley is an SAC and SPA, habitat surveys should be carried out to ensure that lighting levels or positions do not affect populations of bats or other wildlife.
- The removal of redundant distribution poles, wires and services which hang across the streets or deface commercial frontages and residential terraces should be encouraged. Equally, initiatives to place overhead services underground will be supported and facilitated where possible.

5.2.3. Maintenance & Repairs to Non-Protected Structures

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and genuine repairs within the ACA (such as roof, rainwater goods or window & door repairs) provided that original materials are retained where they exist, or where replacement is necessary, that it is on a like-for-like basis.

Please note:

Some of the works listed in Section 5.0 and all of its subsections above require planning permission irrespective of whether the area is protected or not, but are included to highlight the need for careful consideration of the design of the proposed works. This is to ensure that they do not impact negatively on the special character of the area. The list is not a comprehensive list of all works, in all circumstances that require planning permission, but identifies those works that would impact on the character of Trim ACAs. Development works would still have to adhere to the general provision of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2014 and planning regulations. The area planner and conservation officer of Meath County Council can be consulted on these matters.

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