

Appendix D

Proposed Architectural Conservation Area

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1.0 Introduction

Many of the towns and villages of County Kerry contain areas which exhibit a distinct character and intrinsic qualities, based on their historic built form and layout. This character is often derived from the cumulative impact of the area's buildings, their setting, landscape and other locally important features. The materials used and the manner in which they are used in the buildings all possess historical significance and render a sense of place and identity. These areas are an expression of our culture and our identity and constitute an important part of our heritage. The Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides the legislative basis for the protection of such areas, known as Architectural Conservation Areas, or ACAs.

An ACA is 'a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, that is of special architectural historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or that contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure and whose character it is an objective of the Development Plan to preserve'.

A wide variety of areas can be considered for designation as an ACA. For example, an ACA could be focused on an individual building, or a terrace of houses; they may be rural or urban. ACA designation forms the basis for policies to preserve or enhance an area, and provides a basic control over the external appearance of buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Planning controls are more extensive with exempted development limited. Any works that would have a material effect on the character of an ACA require planning permission.

Kerry County Council recognises that by making provision for the protection of these areas, in order to retain the special character of an area, in many cases, this protection is best achieved by controlling and guiding change on a wider scale than the individual structure. The objective of the designation is to guide the processes of change within an area and ensure that all future developments are carried out in a manner sympathetic to the special character of the area.

This document is one of a series of appraisals aimed at identifying the special character of each ACA throughout the county, with specific conservation objectives and policies formulated to protect this character. The aim is to give guidance to owners/occupiers and developers on the type of work that would require planning permission.

The objective of the Castleisland Architectural Conservation Area is to protect the special character of an area through the careful control and management of change.

Owners, occupiers or developers proposing to carry out works within the ACA should be aware that the normal exemption development regulations, will no longer apply. Therefore, in its assessment of whether or not works constitute exempted development, the Planning Authority must have regard to not only the impact on the character of the structure itself and adjacent structures, as required under Section 4(1)(h), but must now also have regard to the impact on the overall character of the area, as required under Section 82(1).

The designation of ACA status therefore results in restrictions on certain works to the exteriors of structures, their settings and plot boundaries.

For example, the construction of a small house extension or a boundary wall within an ACA may require planning permission, although such works may be exempted development elsewhere.

Owners, occupiers or developers proposing to carry out works within the Castleisland ACA should be aware that in general, planning permission will be required for any new build to the front of structures and changes of original materials, such as windows, wall finishes, boundary walls, roof materials etc. While new development and alterations to existing structures can still occur subject to planning, proposals should respect or enhance the area's special character. The key consideration for the Planning Authority will be to ensure that development proposals respect the special character and appearance of the area and contribute to its preservation and enhancement.



Fig.1 Lower Main Street

2.0 Location and Boundary of the Architectural Conservation Area

The Castleisland ACA, as illustrated on Maps 3 (a) and 3 (b), is concentrated mainly at the western end of Main Street with smaller zones comprised of terraces of three to five houses at Barrack Street, Church Street and Cordal Road.

3.0 Historical Development of the Area

The settlement at Castleisland dates from c1226 when the Normans established a castle on the banks of the Maine. The town is one of the oldest settlements in Kerry. The castle and surrounding lands were in the ownership of the Fitzgeralds, Earls of Desmond up to the time of the Munster Plantation when the lands were transferred to English colonists. The town was granted a charter in 1601 which allowed for the establishment of weekly markets and fairs and permitted the collection of tolls on approach roads to the town. The market house which is still extant was completed in 1747. From 1822 onwards following the completion of a new road network by Richard Griffith, the town prospered and a number of slated two storey houses were built, the street surface was improved and limestone footpaths were put in place.



Fig. 2 Skinner 1783 (map disoriented)

4.0 Schedule of Protected Structures and Recorded Monuments in/adjacent to ACA

The following 12 structures are included in the Record of Protected Structures within the proposed ACA;

- RPS Ref. No. 21400504 J.K. O Connor, Main St
- RPS Ref. No. 21400506 Tomo Burkes (Skevenas), 20 Main St
- RPS Ref. No. 21400507 W. Prendeville, 24 Main St
- RPS Ref. No. 21400508 AIB, 68 Main St
- RPS Ref. No. 21400509 Woman's World (WC O' Connor), 29 Main St
- RPS Ref. No. 21400511 M O Herlihy, 26 Main St
- RPS KY 040-003 M.D. Breen, 8 Main St.
- RPS KY 040-006 Hannons, 28 Main St.
- RPS KY 040-007 Griffins, 70 Main St.
- RPS KY 040-008 David Costello, 72 Main St.
- RPS KY 040-015 Jackie Reidy, 59 Main St.
- RPS KY 040-017 D. Hussey, Corner Main St./Barrack St.

In addition, there are three structures located within the proposed ACA which are Proposed Protected Structures in the current draft local area plan for the town.

- RPS KY 040-22 Kingdom House, Main St.
- RPS KY 040-23 Three-storey former school building, Church St.
- RPS KY 040-26 Hartnetts Bar, Main St

Two known Recorded Monuments are adjacent to the boundaries of the ACA, namely:

- KE040-026 Castle Site, Castleview
- KE040-027 Church Site, Moanmore



Fig. 3 1842 OS map (map disoriented)

5.0 Description of Existing Built Environment

a) Street pattern and Materials.

The width of Main Street combined with the central location of what was the old market house has led to the creation of an impressive architectural set-piece. The Main Street is orientated north east /south west and is over 34 metres wide measured from the building line at some points. The southern end of the street, which encompasses part of the ACA, is dominated by three storey structures.

The majority of the buildings are commercial, with either retail outlets etc. on the ground floors and some residential on the upper floors. A limited number have commercial outlets on the first floors. Similar to other towns of a similar size the number of residents on the Main Street has diminished considerably over recent decades.

Street facades include shops, pubs and dwelling houses which, apart from some fine stonework and plaster decoration do not have special distinguishing qualities, but by virtue of their simplicity, scale and continuity are an important element of the streetscape of the town. The layout of the town, the street pattern and the extent of the built up area in the town centre has not altered significantly since Skinners maps were completed in 1783.

b) Form and Arrangement of Public and Private Open Space.

There is no designated public open space within the boundaries of the ACA. The central tree lined island which was put in place approximately 15 years ago has a limited use as a public open space. The width of the street allows for wide footpaths, which in places where the building line is recessed, is up to 5 metres wide.

All the buildings within the ACA apart from the terraces in Cordal Road and Barrack Street access directly onto the public footpath and any private open space is to the rear of these properties.

c) *Socio Economic Functions.*

The houses are a mixture of private dwellings and commercial properties although commercial properties dominate on Main Street. The lower end of Main Street was and still is the commercial heart of the town despite the transfer of some businesses to the outskirts.



Fig 4 Town Clock



Fig 5 Building style on Main Street



Fig. 6 Castleisland Main Street 1930s

d) *Built Fabric-General Description.*

While there is some mixture of building types in terms of material, heights, form and scale, the buildings, in particular on Main Street, are mainly three storey with pitched slate roofs. The old market house with prominent pedimented clock, now operating as a drapery business, parts of which date to the late 1700s, still dominates the Main Street. But there are also much simpler structures such as the low two storey iron roofed vernacular dwelling house with wooden half door at the upper end of Main Street.

e) *Roofs, Ridges, Bargeboards, Chimneys.*

Along the Main street large robust chimneys dominate the skyline, some rendered some cut stone and some red brick. A small number of chimneys still retain terra cotta chimney pots. The skyline has altered imperceptibly over the decades as can be seen from earlier photographs, apart that is from the addition of a few large modern structures in recent years.



Fig. 7 Prominent chimneys



Fig. 8 Vernacular style with half door

f) *Walls.*

Rendered block and start quoins are a common feature in the ACA and are particularly prominent when highlighted as part of the painting regime, as is evident on many buildings on Main Street.. Most walls have a painted smooth rendered finish. There are also some fine examples of coursed square stonework using local limestone. Some properties have ruled lines in the render to give the appearance of an ashlar stone building. Plaster was an economical substitute for cut stone to imitate all sorts of classical details and its use was widespread in Ireland. Castleisland exhibits some fine examples of these plaster fronts and these should be preserved. Such features as moulded rendered eaves with consoles are also a feature along Main Street and give a sense of continuity to the streetscape.



Fig. 9 Decorated plinth



Fig. 10 Coursed squared stonework

g) *Openings*

Entrances and openings have been altered over the years to suit particular commercial or domestic circumstances. In many buildings the base/plinth is highlighted with either decorative plasterwork or paintwork. Red brick block and start window surrounds are a common enough feature throughout the ACA.

h) *Boundaries*

All the buildings on Main Street front directly onto the pavement. There are front garden boundary walls or railings attached to the terraces in Barrack Street and Cordal Road.



Fig. 11 Ornate plasterwork



Fig. 12 Stone chimney with terracotta pots

i) *Rainwater Goods*

Some original cast-iron rainwater pipes and gutters remain but many have been replaced by uPVC.

j) *Views*

The vista looking north along Church Street towards Main Street and the vista looking southwest along Main Street towards the former fountain structure and the old market house are attractive vistas in the town.

6.0 Summary of Special Character of Castleisland Town

6.1 *The principal features of the built form in Castleisland are;*

- variety of building form and architectural styles dating mainly from the early 19th to the early 20th century and to the present day.
- buildings arranged with a common building line almost exclusively on the back of the pavement
- pitched roofs covered in slate or artificial slate
- some fine coursed limestone stonework
- roofs have variable ridge and eaves heights
- simple rectangular shapes with a mixture of traditional and modern shopfronts
- red brick window surrounds where visible
- some remaining timber sash windows, mainly UPVC top opening or casement windows
- traditional decorative plasterwork

6.2 *Negative Features;*

- some unsympathetic alterations to historic features such as windows, the cumulative effect of which is damaging to its status as a conservation area
- some poorly maintained buildings
- the removal of render to reveal poor quality rubble stone walling
- some unsympathetic modern development
- inappropriate replacement rainwater goods

7.0 Guidelines for development within the Conservation area

1) New Buildings

All new buildings in an ACA should be designed with reference to their surroundings and their impact on the character and appearance of the area. Special attention should be paid to form, height, bulk, materials (style and colour), proportion of openings and detailing of roofs, windows and doors.

2) Alterations and Extensions

These should not dominate an existing building's scale or alter the composition of its main elevation. Any alterations including partial demolition should respect an existing building and its materials. All new work should complement the old in quality, texture and colour as well as method of construction. Artificial wall cladding and coatings or artificial roof slates will not generally be allowed on any elevation.

3) Materials.

In certain circumstances planning permission will include conditions to ensure that traditional materials, appropriate to a particular building or site, are used.

4) Colour and Painting.

The architectural unity of an ACA, in whole or part, may depend on the use of specific colours for the decoration of external rendered walls, joinery or railings. Therefore original colour schemes should be retained. Walls and stone detailing which have traditionally not been painted should generally remain undecorated.

5) Advertisement.

All advertisements within an ACA should be sympathetic to its historic character. New advertisement displays will be strictly controlled and the removal of inappropriate signs pursued. There will be a presumption against internally illuminated projecting fascia signs and advertising above ground floor level. Advertisement hoardings of any description will not be appropriate.

6) Undoing Damage.

The Council will use opportunities created through planning applications or other proposals to negotiate improvements which remove unsympathetic alterations or additions from existing buildings and which secure the proper repair or restoration of buildings.

7) Protected Structures.

Some buildings in the ACA may be included in the RPS. Any internal or external alterations to a Protected Structure may require planning permission. Elements such as doors, windows, cornices, consoles, cast iron gutters, decorative plaster hood mouldings are critical elements in determining the heritage character of the ACA. The fabric of the ACA is therefore made up of elements which themselves may be quite small, but when taken together are important in determining the character of the town. The accumulative effect of small changes to these elements whether by removal, crude repair or tactless additions can have a long-term detrimental effect on the character and visual amenity of the town. Whilst the fabric of the town is simple in detail, it reflects almost 200 years of local craftsmanship and is an important expression of the town's vernacular architecture.

8.0 Planning Implications

8.1 Works not affecting the character of the ACA (do not require planning permission);

a) *Maintenance and Repairs*

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and genuine repairs within the ACA (such as roof, window repairs or rainwater goods) as long as original materials are retained where they exist or where replacement is necessary that it is on a like-for-like basis. When repairing a building in an ACA, the original character of masonry and/or brickwork walls should be maintained.

Roof- Chimneys, Dormer Windows, Satellite Dishes. The roof is one of the most important parts of a property as it makes the building wind and watertight and can bring harmony to a streetscape. Where possible the original roof material (such as natural slate) ridge tiles and hip tiles should be retained and repaired, or replaced on a like-for-like basis. Imitation slates are a poor substitute in quality and appearance for natural slate and detract from the character of a building. The conversion of loft space and the installation of inappropriate dormer windows and/or rooflights have a negative impact on the appearance of a building and detract from the character of a roofscape. In some areas dormer windows may be acceptable but they must be of a modest size, have pitched roofs and be built in traditional materials and designs.

The shape, height and variety of chimney stacks and other architectural details on buildings in a conservation area contribute greatly to the local character and should be retained and repaired. Aerials, satellite dishes and alarm boxes can have a detrimental impact on the appearance of a building. Where possible they should be situated inside or to the rear of a building or carefully located to minimise the impact on the character of the building.

Window and Door Openings. Windows and doors are an important component of a building and any alteration or replacement can significantly alter the character and appearance of a house. Whenever possible the original windows and doors should be retained and repaired in order to keep the integrity of the original design, so preserving the character and proportions of the house. The efficiency (thermal capacity and soundproofing) of the windows can be increased through the use of appropriate secondary glazing. Imitation replacement window styles and inappropriate replacement window materials (such as UPVC) are poor alternatives for traditional timber vertical sliding sash windows. UPVC windows have thicker cruder frames than timber windows. These unsuitable styles and materials impact on the proportions and overall appearance of a window and a building. The character of a house is then changed which has a detrimental impact on the overall appearance of a townscape and an ACA.

Rainwater Goods. Original cast iron rainwater goods such as gutters on brackets, downpipes and hoppers contribute to the character and appearance of buildings in an ACA. UPVC rainwater goods attached to fascia boards have a negative impact on the appearance of a traditional house. Where possible, original rainwater goods should be retained and repaired or replaced on a like-for-like basis.

b) *Internal Alterations*

ACA designation does not prevent internal changes or rearrangements (save in the case of Protected Structures) as long as these changes do not impact on the exterior of the structure.

c) *Restoration of Character*

Where original materials have been removed and replaced with inappropriate alternatives, the restoration or reinstatement of such features will not require planning permission where the method, materials and details for the works have been agreed with *Kerry County Council*

d) *Works to the Public Realm*

It is the aim of the Council to improve the pedestrian environment in Castleisland. To this end the Council will encourage the removal of incongruous items of street furniture, including poles, public signage, or other items which add to the visual clutter and detract from the streetscape and pedestrian safety.

8.2 Works impacting on the character of the area (works requiring planning permission);

a) *External Walls.*

Removal of render.

Changes to the original finish, or the addition of an applied layer of masonry, brick, wood or plaster.

b) *Roof- Chimneys, Dormer Windows, Satellite Dishes.*

The removal of the original roofing materials such as natural slate and its replacement with modern materials such as fibre cement tiles.

The removal of existing chimney stacks and early terracotta, or clay pots or other features of the roofscape.

The installation of rooflights or dormer windows on front elevations, or on slopes visible from the public realm.

c) *Window and Door Openings.*

Alterations to structural openings and creation of additional openings.

Replacement of doors or windows in a style, material, or method of opening other than the existing.

The replacement of single glass panes with double glazed units, reinforced glass or textured glass.

Removal of features such as fanlights, overlights, sidelights and door ironmongery.

d) *Rainwater Goods.*

Removal of original cast iron hoppers, gutters and downpipes.

e) *Extensions.*

Extensions and all new build that impacts on the street facing elevations of buildings within the ACA will require planning permission.

Proposals for the alteration or extension of properties within the ACA will normally be acceptable where they are sensitive to the existing building, in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and will not compromise the amenities of adjacent properties.

Any proposals for extensions should be subsidiary in size and design to the main building and of appropriate scale, use appropriate materials and should normally be located on the rear elevations of a property.

Very careful consideration will be required for alterations and extensions affecting the roof of a property as these have the potential to significantly impact on the character and appearance of the ACA

- f) *Commercial Frontages.*
The alteration of frontages of shops or other commercial premises within the ACA, the installation of new signage and the installation of additional external elements to the facades of commercial premises.
- g) *Plot Widths/ Building Lines.*
Any such alterations could impact negatively on the character of the area.
- h) *Amalgamation of Sites /Properties*
Any such alterations could impact negatively on the character of the area.
- i) *New build / Replacement*
Developers will be required to demonstrate that any new build reflects the established character of the buildings in the ACA, developers need to take account of such aspects as roof line, overall proportions and external finish.
- j) *Backland Development*
The height of any backland development should not exceed that of the existing building stock.
- k) *Demolition*
The demolition of any house in the Castleisland ACA would have to be justified on the grounds of structural defects or failure. As part of the justification for demolition details will be required of repairs/or remedial works normally used in such circumstances and an explanation as to why they are not suitable in this case.
The developer will also be required to submit a comprehensive photographic survey of the structure to be demolished.
- l) *Views*
Existing views of importance need to be maintained.
- m) *Landscaping*
The original pattern of gardens and grounds and the presence of trees can contribute greatly to the character of a conservation area and should be retained.
- n) *Colour and Painting*
Any painting scheme should complement the existing colour regime.