



ST. BRIGID'S COTTAGES

ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA 016

CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND RECOMMENDED SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

MARCH 2026

PREPARED BY:

Maol Íosa Molloy B.Arch., BSc.Arch., MUBC, Dip.Arb., MRAI, Grade 1 Conservation Architect

Michelle O'Donovan B.Arch., PGDip., MRAI, Grade 2 Conservation Architect

MOLLOY & ASSOCIATES CONSERVATION ARCHITECTS

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0 PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT OF THE ST. BRIGID'S COTTAGES ACA
- 2.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT
- 3.0 CHARACTER AND SPECIAL INTEREST
- 4.0 SUMMARY CHARACTER STATEMENT
- 5.0 INTERVENTIONS WHICH WOULD AFFECT ACA CHARACTER
- 6.0 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE ACA
- 7.0 ST. BRIGID'S COTTAGES ACA RECOMMENDATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document serves to appraise the St. Brigid's Cottages Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) 016, to the south of the historic core of Clondalkin.

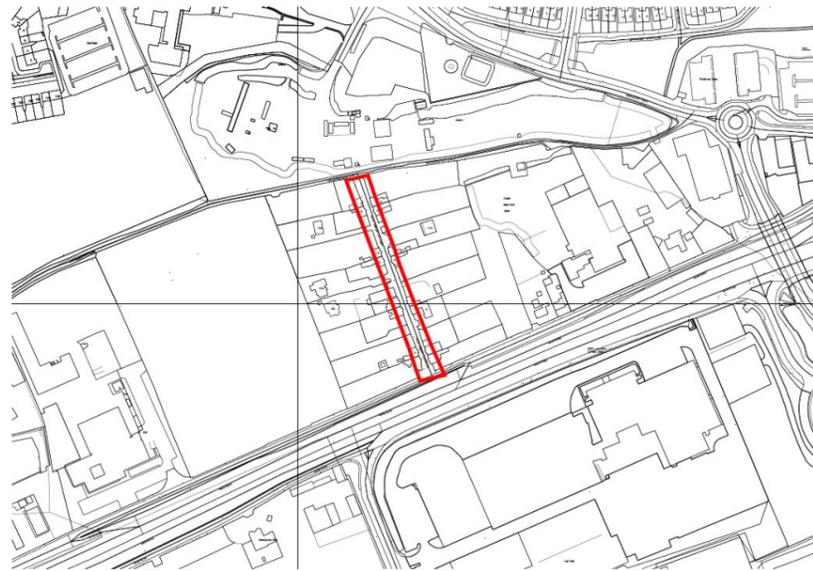


Figure 1 Location of the St. Brigid's Cottages ACA

It should be read in conjunction with the South Dublin County Development Plan; a draft Clondalkin Conservation Plan and a Clondalkin Local Planning Framework.

1.0 PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT OF THE ST. BRIGID'S COTTAGES ACA

WHAT IS AN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

The Planning and Development Act 2024, Part IV, Chapter II, Section 331 defines an Architectural Conservation Area as follows:

331. (1) Where a planning authority considers that—
- (a) a place in its functional area—
 - (i) is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or
 - (ii) contributes to the appreciation of protected structures, and
 - (b) it is necessary to do so for the preservation of the character of the place, it shall, taking account of building lines and heights, include an objective in the development plan to preserve the character of the place.
- (2) Where a development plan includes an objective referred to in subsection (1), any development plan that replaces the first-mentioned development plan shall, subject to any variation thereof under section 58, also include that objective.
- (3) The Minister may prescribe particulars relating to an architectural conservation area that shall be included by a planning authority in the objective referred to in subsection (1).

Designations of such areas under the provisions set out above are referred to in statutory terms as Architectural Conservation Areas, or ACAs.

Each area of historic significance has its own unique characteristics; with combining factors comprising structures and features of various forms and settings into which that built heritage is framed. All such interdependent components contribute collectively to the character of the area or group.

Architectural treatment and detailing of building forms, materials, building heights, roofscapes and alignment, plot character, as well as the width and

arrangement of streets, footpaths, entrances and open spaces all combine to create a unique sense of place defining the essence of an ACA.

Owing to the variety of components, the protection of those features which inform the character and enduring quality of the ACA is essential. Changes are anticipated but must accord with development parameters clearly set out in the Planning Act and the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028.

The same statutory parameters govern the types of development within ACAs that fall under exempted / non- exempted works. The subject St. Brigid's Cottages ACA character appraisal is informed by these comprehensive development tools, in their capacity to protect and sustain the special character of ACAs. These are expanded upon in Section 6 of this document.

As set out in the legislation, the designation of ACA's is actioned through the relevant County Development Plan for the area.

It is also notable that Section 3.5.3, Chapter 3 Natural, Cultural and Built Heritage of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 defines an Architectural Conservation Area as follows:

'An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value or that contributes to the appreciation of Protected Structures. An ACA may consist for example, of a row of terraced houses, a street, a village centre or a cluster of structures. Unless a structure is also listed on the Record of Protected Structures, the designation afforded from inclusion in an ACA only applies to the exterior and streetscape.'

PURPOSE OF ACA DESIGNATION

The aim of designating an area as an ACA is to protect the special external expression of the buildings by managing change in a positive manner. This is

achieved through the Development Management functions of the Local Authority. The legislation and requirements of this process as they relate to Architectural Conservation areas are set out in Section 6 of this report.

WHY PREPARE AN ACA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

The legislation as set out in this document gives a planning authority the jurisdiction to formally recognise the importance of places, building groups or townscapes that have special significance under a range of prescribed categories: architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or enhance the setting of protected structures.

The appraisal identifies the special character of the ACA, provides policy and objectives to protect the ACA and provides guidance to owners/occupiers on works that might require planning permission and to provide guidance in relation to new development within the ACA area.

ST. BRIGID'S COTTAGES ACA

This document is one in a series for Clondalkin which in this instance identifies the special character of the St. Brigid's Cottages Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), in accompaniment to a draft Clondalkin Conservation Plan, collectively establishes a baseline for the Clondalkin Local Planning Framework.

The location and boundary of the St. Brigid's Cottages ACA is shown in Figure 1.

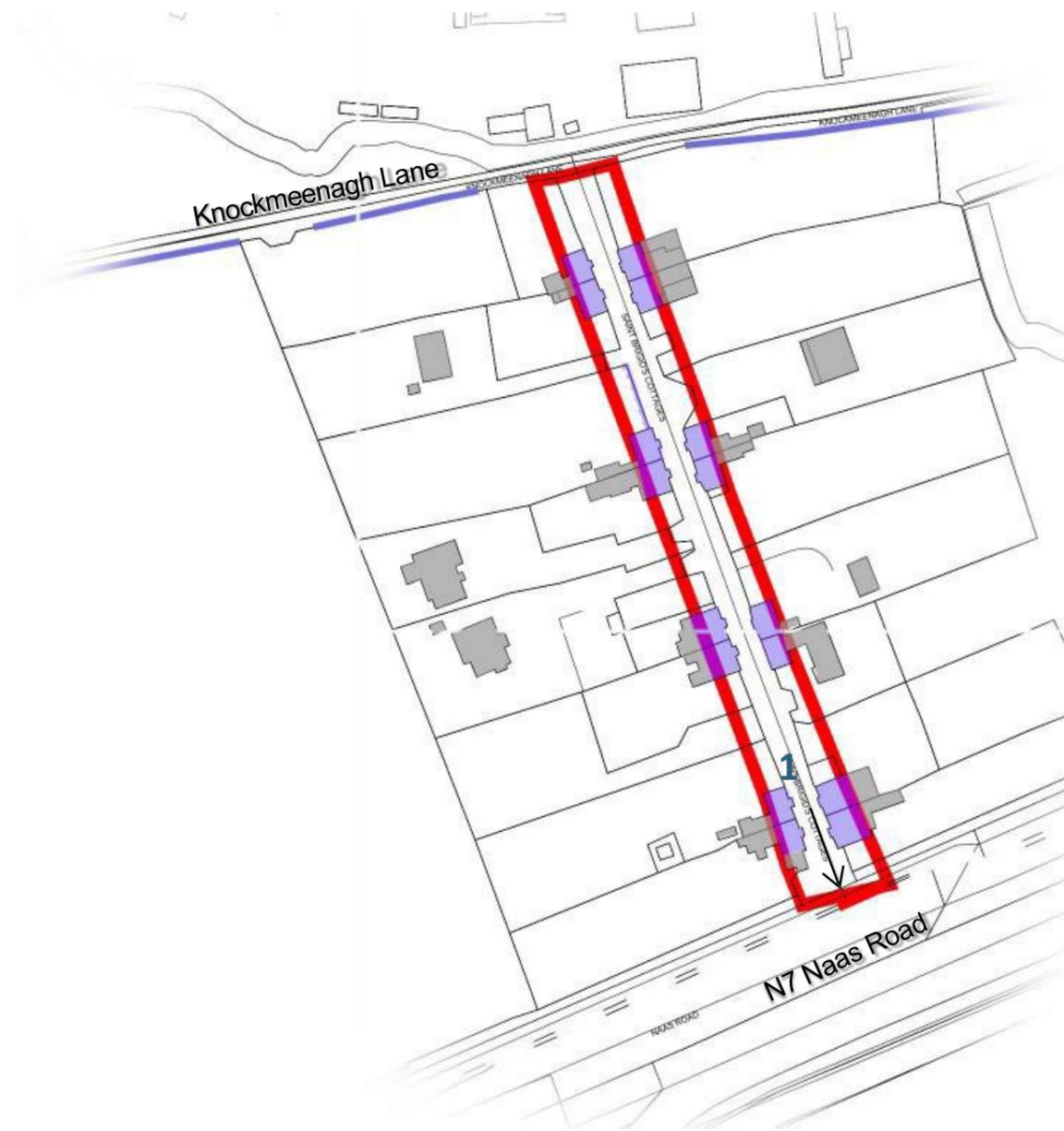
In addition to identifying the special character of the ACA it also;

- a) provides specific conservation objectives and policies to protect the ACA
- b) provides guidance to ACA owners/occupiers and developers on the type of work that would require planning permission and
- c) provides recommendations to guide the built form of new development in the ACA where such development is likely to impact key architectural heritage assets by virtue of, for instance, location or design and
- d) provides advice and guidance to those seeking planning permission, such as homeowners, developers and planning professionals, on the type of work(s) or development that would be acceptable within the St.

Brigid's Cottages ACA to avoid loss or negative impact to its special character.

ACA AND LOCAL SETTLEMENT OBJECTIVES

The subject St. Brigid's Cottages ACA *Character Appraisal and Recommended Safeguarding Policies* and draft Clondalkin Conservation Plan have been prepared in conjunction with and to support local settlement objectives set out in the Clondalkin Local Planning Framework or other relevant plan arising from the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2024.



- KEY
-  ACA Boundary
 -  Character Area
 -  Protected Structure
 -  Positive Building
 -  Area of Archaeological Interest
 -  Views
 -  Green Space of Historic Significance

DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

The following building features have been identified as characteristics of the St. Brigid's Cottages ACA, contributing positively to its character.

- Uniform terrace of paired houses with distinctive gabled porches.
- Low-rise buildings with traditional vernacular forms.
- Uniform pitched roofscape with central brick chimneystacks.
- Use of traditional materials including the exclusive use of brick with distinctive dressed openings and quoin stones and natural slate roofs.
- Long, linear, narrow plots and gardens emulating traditional burgage allotments.
- Wrought iron, parkland style railing to garden boundaries.



Typical dwelling house in St. Brigid's Cottages ACA

2.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT

St. Brigid's Cottages are a group of local authority houses constructed in the early 20th century as homes for local workers. South Dublin Union acquired the land from S.B. Rourke of Floraville by compulsory purchase order.



Figure 2 St. Brigid's Cottages depicted on the 25-inch Ordnance Survey Map

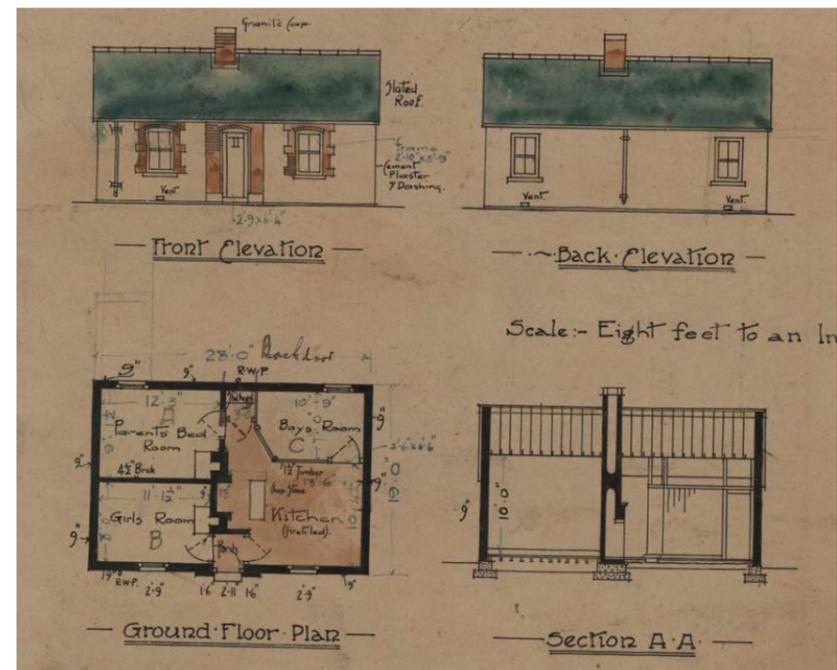


Figure 3 Extract of drawing of 'Design for a labourer's Cottage', generic house plans to improve housing conditions. This design, by T.J.Byrne is similar to St.Brigid's Cottages.

The brick cottages are based on generic designs, using high quality materials. Large rear gardens required by the Labourers Act were provided so that rural workers could be self-sufficient in sustaining animals and growing food for their families.

Their suburban plots are very long relative to contemporary standards, and the many of the original houses have subsequently been extended to the side or rear, or in some instances, new detached residences have been constructed on rear of plots, within the boundaries of original gardens.

3.0 CHARACTER AND SPECIAL INTEREST

Special Interest as defined under the Planning Act is assigned in terms of the architectural quality of the terrace.

Architectural The dwellings on St. Brigid's Road represent a regionally significant example of early twentieth-century housing, provided by South Dublin Rural District Council and designed by T.J.Byrne for rural workers.

URBAN GRAIN

St. Brigid's Cottage ACA is a short length of road, orientated approximately on a north-south axis between the quiet Knockmeenagh Road and the busy N7, a neat row of semi-detached single-storey cottages. The residential area is bounded by the quarry to the north and brownfield sites to the east and west.

There are eight pairs of semidetached single storey cottages in total, evenly spaced along both sides of the narrow road, and slightly staggered relative to the opposite side of the road. The buildings open directly onto the street forming a strong linear building line. Despite the multiple extensions and modification to the cottages, the rhythm of the historic streetscape is apparent.

Notwithstanding significant alterations to the cottages, the regular rhythm of the street, punctuated by the projecting gabled porches street creates a distinctive and attractive architectural character to the ACA

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

The cottages were designed to be efficient and robust with little emphasis on superfluous applied decorative details. The quality of the materials, and the manner in which they are used, however, are architecturally pleasing and consistent with housing developments by architect T.J.Byrne.

Built Form

The original form of the cottages featured identical rectangular footprints, with a small return to the rear. The single storey cottages have pitched roofs with gable-fronted porches.

Materials

The external walls of the original cottages are constructed in a buff-coloured brick, with contrast red brick quoins and dressings on the projecting gabled porch and window openings. Wicklow granite is used on the windows cills and plinths and entrance steps to the porch.

Joinery

Original windows would have comprised of hardwood timber sashes, although many if not all have since been replaced.

Roof finishes & rainwater goods

A number of the cottages have original slate roofs with red brick chimneystacks. The cottages originally had semi-circular profile, cast irons rainwater goods, the majority of which have been replaced with uPVC versions.

URBAN REALM

Surface treatment

No historic street furniture or paving was observed, apart from the granite steps at the threshold of the cottages. The present footpaths are concrete and the road has a tarmacadam finish.

Boundary Conditions

Original garden boundaries between the cottages would have been formed by wrought iron railings and hedging. New boundaries and entrances have been constructed in a wide range of styles introducing a variety of materials and eroding the architectural coherency of the original streetscape.

Signage

There is no surviving historic signage within the ACA, with all directional signage dating post 2000. The incremental introduction of surface mounted services, lighting and signage has negatively impacted the visual amenity of the streetscape.

Setting

The junction with the heavily trafficked N7 at the southern end of the street is at odds with the quiet, rural character of the street and could benefit from urban realm landscape interventions.



Plate 1 View from the northern end of St. Brigid's Cottages, with the Dublin Mountain range in the background.

4.0 SUMMARY CHARACTER STATEMENT

The special character of St. Brigid's ACA is due to the regionally significant example of early 20th century housing, influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, and designed by architect T.J.Byrne.

The essential character of this group of houses lies in their repeating modest scale and linear arrangement on the street. The use of high-quality materials like brick and natural slate as well as distinctive architectural features also contribute to the historic significance of the area.



Plate 2 Typical cottage: buff brick with projecting gabled porch and pitched roof with red brick chimneys.



Plate 3 Many of the original cottages have been extended, and in this example, the form of the original cottage on the street front is maintained on account of the set-back of the extension behind the building line.

5.0 INTERVENTIONS WHICH WOULD AFFECT ACA CHARACTER

The Planning and Development Act 2024, Part IV, Chapter II, Section 333 outlines the types of works within Architectural Conservation Area, that would require planning consent, as follows:

Declaration on works affecting character of architectural conservation areas

333. (1) An owner or occupier of land situated in an architectural conservation area may make a written request to the planning authority, within whose functional area that architectural conservation area is situated, for a declaration (in this section referred to as a "declaration") as to whether specified works identified in the request would materially affect the character of the area.

(2) (a) A request under subsection (1) shall be accompanied by all such information and documentation as is necessary to enable the planning authority to perform its functions under this section in relation to the request.

(b) For the purposes of the performance of its functions under this section, a planning authority may, by notice in writing, require a person who makes a request under subsection (1) to provide the planning authority with such further information and documentation as it specifies in the notice not later than 2 weeks (or such longer period as may be prescribed) from the date of the notice.

(c) A planning authority may, for the purpose of the performance of its functions under this section, request a person (other than the person who made the request under subsection (1)) by notice in writing to provide the planning authority with such information and documentation as is specified in the notice not later than 2 weeks (or such longer period as may be prescribed) from the date of the notice.

The incremental loss of features of architectural heritage interest within the ACA is notable. Every effort should be made to avoid further demolition within the ACA.

The cumulative impact of loss of integral architectural character must be considered when carrying out works. All works (including energy efficiency upgrades, elevational change and plot alteration) affecting the external character of buildings and their setting within the ACA will require full planning permission, in accordance with statutory national and local architectural heritage protection guidelines.

The introduction of new materials and treatments within the ACA has the effect of visually detracting from the elegant simplicity of the streetscape and will require planning permission. The introduction of surface mounted services, lighting and signage has the potential to negatively impact visual amenity and will require planning permission.



Plate 4 External alterations: External wall insulation has been applied to the structure on the right resulting in the loss of the original brick, the loss of the decorative brick quoin to openings, the loss of the granite stonework at the entrance, loss of the chimney profile and has introducing a stepped profile at the junction with the adjoining house.

6.0 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE ACA

As set out in Section 1 of this document, the aim of designating an area as an ACA is to protect the special external expression of the buildings by managing change in a positive manner. This managed through the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

General requirement for planning permission and exempted development

There is a requirement under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, that planning permission be sought for all development works except those considered to be exempted development.

Section 4 (i)(h) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, also lists developments, which constitute exempted development, Section 4 (i)(h) states:

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 its neighbouring structures

Schedule 2, Part 1 – Exempted Development – General, include the following classes: Class 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 31d, 50b.

The most prevalent are as follows:

- Extensions (Class 1): Domestic Extensions
- Domestic garages/sheds etc. (Class 3) –domestic garages, glasshouses, sheds etc. within an ACA.
- Signage and Pillars (Class 5)

Exempted Development within an ACA

Section 82(1) Planning and Development Act ‘Development in architectural conservation areas’ states:

(1) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), (h), (i), (ia), (j), (k) or (l) of section 4(1), or any regulations made under section 4(2), the carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure located in an architectural conservation area shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the area. Works generally exempt but will require planning permission in an ACA Area if It materially affects the character of the area.

How to determine if Planning Permission is required for development/works within an ACA

Planning permission will be required for any development/works within an ACA even where development/works would normally be exempted if any of the character elements listed in the Character Appraisal are impacted in any way by the proposed development/works either directly or indirectly.

What to do if there is any uncertainty as to the need to apply for planning permission

Where uncertainty arises as to what, in a particular case, is or is not exempted development, any person may under Section 5 (1) Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, on payment of the prescribed fee, request in writing from the Planning Authority, a Declaration in relation to the query. Advice and information can also be requested from the Council’s Architectural Conservation Section

Therefore, when considering development within a designated ACA the provisions of Section 4(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Provisions of 9(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2024 should be consulted as should the detailed Character Appraisal contained within this document.

County Development Plan¹

In respect of land uses the Zoning provisions and associated use classes which advise on the uses permitted/open to consideration and not permitted within any areas of the County should also be consulted. It is noted that in the County Development Plan 2022-2028 the ACA is designated for VC uses Zoning objective ‘VC’ – ‘To protect, improve and provide for the future development of Village Centres’.

¹ The Planning and Development Act 2024 also includes these provisions under Sections 9(4)© in respect of

restrictions on exempted Development within ACA’s and associated regulations yet to be published

Section 333 allows an owner or occupier to request a declaration from the Planning Authority as to whether

specified works are would materially affect the character of the ACA.

7.0 ST. BRIGID'S ACA RECOMMENDATIONS

To protect the special interest of St. Brigid's Cottages ACA and to manage its future development the following **recommendations** are proposed.

Preserving character

- To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out. Historic buildings should be repaired using historically appropriate materials and methods.
- Repair works should ensure that historically appropriate materials and methods are used
- Boundaries extending beyond the ACA but informing its legibility:
 - To require repair rather than replacement of historic wrought iron railings
 - To discourage the amalgamation of adjoining plots and the removal of boundaries

Reinstatement of character

- To reinstate traditional details in buildings of architectural heritage interest.
- To reinstate new wrought iron railings where missing from side garden boundaries.
- To encourage the reoccupation of vacant houses.

Streetscape and skyline clutter

- To encourage the removal of visually intrusive elements such as overhead cables.
- New electrical wiring or satellite dishes should not be fixed to front facades and alarm boxes should be positioned so as to minimise their visual impact.
- Well-designed public lighting standards to be encouraged.

- Positioning of public signage to carefully consider the potential for adversely impacting

New development

- Extensions to the original dwellings should be set-back from the established building line, ideally located to the rear and sympathetic to the existing cottages with respect to scale, and plan form.
- The quality and type of materials proposed for new developments should complement those on the original dwelling houses.
- Rear extensions should not exceed the existing ridge height of the historic street-fronting block of the houses.
- New development involving amalgamation or subdivision of original plots within the ACA must demonstrate deference to plot character and boundary treatment.
- Enhanced prominence of connection with Knockmeenagh Lane must be provided to safeguard the particularly special character of the Lane as it interacts with the terrace.