

What is an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)?

Architectural Conservation Areas play a key role in the conservation of our environment. The Planning and Development Act 2000 provides the legislative base for the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). Under the Act an ACA is defined as 'a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights that:

- is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, social or technical interest or value, or
- contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.'

The Planning Act provides that all county and city development plans must now include objectives for conserving the character of ACAs and the designation of an ACA takes place as part of the making or the review of a development plan or as a variation to an existing development plan.

What types of Areas can be considered for ACA status?

A wide variety of areas can be considered for designation as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) but for the most part ACAs contain groups of buildings extending over parts of a village or town which taken together give a special character to an area.

Five areas have been designated as Architectural Conservation Areas in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2004-2010. These are:

- Clondalkin Village
- Lucan Village
- Palmerstown Lower (Mill Complex)
- Rathfarnham Village including Willbrook
- Tallaght Village

Purpose of the Designation of an ACA

The purpose of an ACA designation is to define the boundaries of an area that merits protection and to use appropriate controls over development in order to protect and enhance the special character of the Architectural Conservation Area under the following objectives:

- Ensure that all proposed developments are carried out in a manner sympathetic to the special character of the area.
- Conserve, restore, and rehabilitate the existing building stock in the area.

South Dublin County Council recognises that the protection and enhancement of the character of the area as a whole is best achieved by managing and guiding change on a broader scale rather than just focusing on individual buildings. Through the designation of an area as an ACA the loss of distinctive features is prevented and new development will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances its varied character thereby promoting high-quality urban change and improvement. Conservation Areas aid the survival of visually diverse urban areas thereby making our built environment richer and the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas is crucial if we are to safeguard attractive and varied streetscapes.

Development Management within an ACA

The carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure in an Architectural Conservation Area will be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the area. This is in addition to the requirement under Section 4 (1) (h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 that for works to be exempted they must be consistent with the appearance of the structure itself and of neighbouring structures. Therefore, although development may be deemed to be exempted development elsewhere (i.e. outside the boundary of the ACA) if the works to a structure in an ACA would affect the character of the ACA then planning permission may be required. Owners and occupiers of property in an ACA can apply for a declaration under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to determine if planning permission is required, unless the structure is a protected structure whereby a Section 57 declaration can be applied for. (Please contact South Dublin County Councils Planning Department for information & advice).

Where can I get further information on ACAs?

The law governing ACAs is set out in the Planning and Development Acts (2000 - 2006) and the Planning and Development Regulations (2001 - 2006) which may be purchased from the Government Publications Sales Office, Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2 or downloaded from www.environ.ie.

For further information on ACAs and the built heritage in the South Dublin County area contact the Conservation Officer, South Dublin County Council, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24 (Tel: 01 4149000) or view information online: www.southdublin.ie

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RATHFARNHAM

South Dublin County Council
ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA



RATHFARNHAM

Architectural Conservation Area

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Rathfarnham is located approximately 5 miles south west of Dublin close to the Dodder River and its tributary which flows past the village.

The development of Rathfarnham village is closely linked with that of Rathfarnham Castle, built in approximately 1583 by Adam Loftus, the then Archbishop of Dublin. It appears that the village largely developed to serve the Castle as well as the numerous large houses which were built in the vicinity. During the nineteenth century a series of mills were established on the Owendoher and Dodder Rivers including a woollen factory as well as paper and corn mills. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, numerous villas and small country houses were built in the vicinity of Rathfarnham and the proximity of the village to Dublin made it a popular location for such residential development. In the later part of the nineteenth century, with the introduction of trams, Rathfarnham became a suburb of Dublin with residents commuting to the city for work. Terraces of houses were built to accommodate suburban dwellers and local workers. At one stage proposals were put in place to divide the castle demesne into plots for more substantial houses.

An assessment of Rathfarnham was carried out prior to the adoption of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2004-2010 in order to define the boundaries of the Architectural Conservation Area.

Features which contribute to the character of an ACA include

- A shared palette of materials including natural slate; red and yellow brick chimney stacks, details and clay pots; cast-iron rainwater goods; red brick; render; railings and granite plinths.
- Volume or massing, plot size, boundary alignments and street-frontage alignment.
- Repetitive patterns including chimneys, windows and door openings.
- Streetscape, roofscape, views, and setting, for example the curve of a street, the pattern of roofs including shapes and heights, views towards church spires and open spaces.

RATHFARNHAM

Key: — Architectural Conservation Area Boundary