

Ardbraccan Demesne Architectural Conservation Area

Historical Development

Ardbraccan House and demesne occupy an historically important site as it has been the seat of the Bishops of Meath since the fourteenth century. The house is set in mature pasture land with formal and walled gardens.

The construction of the house commenced c. 1734 to the designs of Richard Castle and was completed in the 1770's to the designs of James Wyatt, Thomas Cooley and the Rev. Daniel Beaufort.

Built Form

The domestic and agricultural outbuildings associated with Ardbraccan House display an exceptionally high level of architectural design. These include piggeries, granary, dovecotes, bell tower, bullock sheds, carriage house, fowl yards, laundry yard, pump yard, slaughter house, vaulted stables, and clock tower.

The Demesne structures include the gate lodges, entrance gates and walls, ha-ha, eel pond, ice house, vineries, grotto, and water pump.

The detached two-storey four-bay house, possibly the farm manager's house, was built c.1820, of randomly coursed limestone with roughcast render and raised rendered quoins. The particular interest of this building is in its relationship with the single-storey cottages to the immediate north.

Within the demesne are other structures – St Ultan's Church and graveyard, Infant school, dated 1856, and holy well.

Objectives:

1. To preserve the character of the demesne, its designed landscape and built features by limiting the extent of new development permitted within the demesne and requiring that any such development respect the setting and special qualities of the demesne.
2. To require that all works, whether of maintenance and repair, additions or alterations to existing buildings or built features within the demesne shall protect the character of those buildings and features by the use of appropriate materials and workmanship.