

## Oldcastle Architectural Conservation Area

### Historical Development

Oldcastle is a small market town in north County Meath just west of the great hill of Loughcrew, famous for its megalithic monuments. The town and its surrounding land was the stronghold of the Plunkett family until the mid seventeenth century, with St. Oliver Plunkett being the most notable family member, as Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland. The town developed during the C 18 as the largest yarn market in the country. The lands were then the property of the Naper family, whose improvements contributed much to its present appearance.

### Layout

The central square, of an irregular triangular form, is on an elevated site, particularly evident from the southern and eastern approach roads. The town's streetscape extends along four of the five roads that radiate from the market square, with the southern approach road from Castlepollard giving the most dramatic view of its centre.

### Built form and materials

The architectural character the town is predominantly late Georgian, with two- and three-storey houses, some with stuccoed Victorian commercial facades.

The buildings in Oldcastle ACA are characterised by a broad range of traditional materials with a number of quality shopfronts including 'Creans', 'Next Door Express' and 'Mullens' and formal buildings such as the former courthouse, markethouse and Banks.

### Objectives:

1. To preserve the character of the town and its setting by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within and adjoining the historic core of the town should complement its character and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.
2. To encourage the removal of visually intrusive elements such as overhead cables or inappropriate signage.
3. 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.

A detailed statement of character and planning guidance is available to download from the website