

Slane Village Architectural Conservation Area

Historical Development

According to tradition St. Patrick began his conversion of Ireland by lighting a fire on the hill of Slane in defiance of Druidic law. The early settlement of the village was destroyed in 1156 and 1161, and again in 1172 by Dermot McMurrough and his ally Strongbow. In the seventeenth century The Civil Survey for Meath recorded one large stone house, two chapels, a friary, an old castle and twenty-five tenements in the village. By the mid-eighteenth century a new residential square was laid out on the old market place at the crossroads. At the end of the eighteenth century the Conynghams granted a site for the Roman Catholic Church of St. Patrick at the top of Chapel Street completing the building of ecclesiastical structures at Slane.

Summary of Character

Much of Slane's charm derives from its geographical setting, its iconic formal setpiece of the octagon, the use of stone in its architecture and its association with adjoining ACAs such as the Slane Castle Demesne and Slane Mill, to which it belongs historically and socially. Furthermore the historical associations to the Conyngham family and the architects and builders employed by them, adds to its special archaeological and architectural significance. Its location provides dramatic views through the village towards the natural landscape of the beautiful Boyne Valley and towards the plantations of the adjacent demesne. The approaches and exits to and from the village are largely defined by rubble stone walls framed by mature trees, a classic feature of eighteenth-century Irish villages and it must be emphasised that these features are just as important as the building fabric within the village. The built fabric of Slane's streets and enclosed private grounds is typically austere and well defined by an eclectic mix of uniform terraces, houses with varied plot widths and detached landmark buildings in both residential and ecclesiastical use

Objectives:

1. To preserve the character of the village and its setting by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within the village and in the surrounding area should complement the character of the village and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.
2. To protect the landscape setting of the village and the views outwards.
3. To encourage the removal of visually intrusive elements such as overhead cables and inappropriate signage.
4. 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