

## Slane Castle Demesne Architectural Conservation Area

### Historical Development

In the late C17 the lands at Slane became the property of the Conyngham family, originally of Mount Charles in Donegal. Henry Conyngham, a General in the service of William III, built Conyngham Hall between 1703 and 1709 on the foundations of a Castle of the Flemings, who forfeited their estates in 1641. William Conyngham spent large sums on agricultural improvements and in mid 1770's commissioned Capability Brown to create designs for the estate, of which only the stable block was built. The woods were laid out to designs of the Irish gardener John Sutherland. The Gothic Revival Castle which survives was commenced on the site by Francis Burton, the second Baron, c.1785, to designs of James Wyatt ( 1785 –6 ) Later revisions and additions are by Francis Johnston (1795) including the East entrance gate. The Third Baron and first Marquess of Slane completed the house with interiors by Francis Johnston c. 1800.

The stable yards and nearby outbuildings are currently being converted to accommodate a distillery for Slane Castle Whiskey, including tourism facilities.

### Built form

The Boyne Valley at Slane is an excellent marriage of natural and designed landscape. The castle is one of the earliest picturesque houses to be built in the country in a neo-medieval style. Seen from the river, it is a dramatic four-storey block with battlements and turrets. The demesne lies along both banks of the river and has survived largely intact from the early 19thC, with mature woodlands and parklands, stableyard, kitchen and walled gardens, entrance gates, lodges, and demesne walls. Also within the demesne area is the archaeological site of the Hill of Slane.

### Objectives:

1. To ensure that the built features and designed landscape which may be considered to lie outside the curtilage of the protected structure of Slane Castle are given statutory protection.
2. 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, both within the demesne and in the surrounding area, should not have an adverse affect on the special qualities of the demesne.

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.