



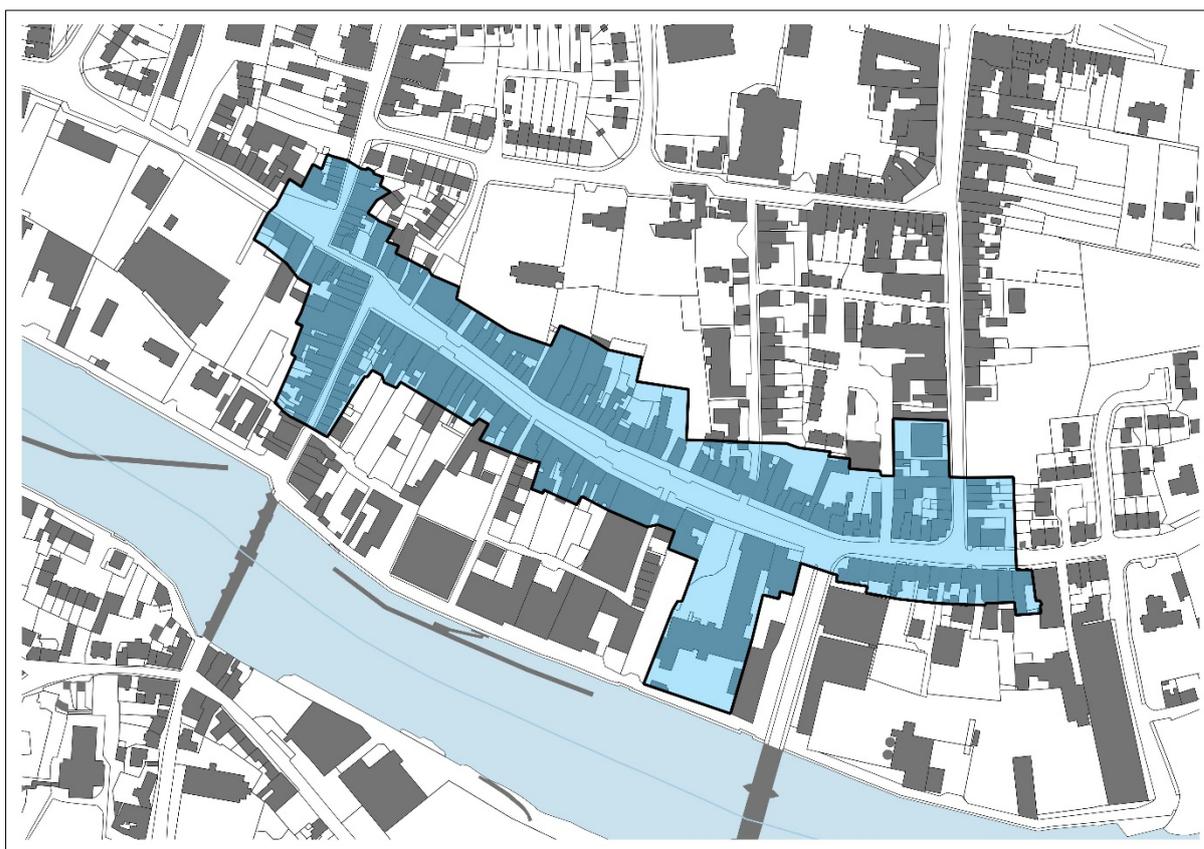
Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann  
Tipperary County Council

# **Draft Carrick-on-Suir & Environs Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031**

## **Appendix 6: Architectural Conservation Area Statement of Character**

# 1. ACA Description & Character

The Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is outlined in Figure 1 and includes Main Street, West Gate, Sean Kelly Square and parts of Bridge Street, New Street and Castle Street. The ACA is so designated as the delimited area contains buildings and townscape detail that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural and social interest. These features of special interest are derived from the building lines and heights, distinctive palette of traditional materials and design features which contribute positively to the creation of a unique urban character in the historic core of Carrick-on-Suir.



*Figure 1: Carrick-on-Suir Architectural Conservation Area*

Continuous phases of development have seen the underlying medieval and early urban layout of the town integrating the mostly eighteenth and nineteenth-century street-lines with twentieth-century infill, as well as more recent and ongoing additions to create a characteristic and recognisable townscape. The combination of time-proven architectural fabric, along with historic proportions and detail which have garnered a patina of age can provide important references for the site-appropriate design of modern additions. While retention and conservation of existing built heritage in situ for suitable reuse is the preference from a built heritage and sustainability perspective, this does not preclude sensitively designed alterations and new structures. These may be the best option to address the inevitable deterioration of

historic buildings and to provide modern amenities which maintain the social and economic vitality of the urban core, but the impact of any building replacements within the ACA should be carefully considered before proceeding.

The planning authority considers that the conservation of increasingly scarce examples of surviving, historic fabric and traditional townscape features within this area is a critical element in the successful management of the town as an attractive place to live, visit and do business in. It also acknowledges that many of the buildings, frontages and open spaces require improvements and visual enhancement in order to facilitate the objective of creating a positive urban environment. Traditionally, change within the delimited ACA boundary was gradual with the most successful building alterations and additions having been undertaken in a manner complementary to the existing built fabric of the area. The use of local materials and design features have helped to create a consistently recognisable and distinctive local or regional character.

## **1.1 ACA Features and Fabric of note**

Carrick-on-Suir contains many features of traditional Irish townscapes, namely a fine-grained Main Street with adjoining perpendicular streets leading south to the river crossings and to the formerly busy, quay-side goods-handling facilities that developed from the early eighteenth-century, or north to mid nineteenth-century and later civic amenities, the main road and rail network. The rear plots and back-lands of Main Street-fronting properties are permeated by several back-lanes running between buildings to form narrow streets, pedestrian links and private access to gardens and outbuildings. This definition of long, narrow plots extending behind terraced façades is a relic of the town's medieval origin when the Main Street formed a central spine of the walled town west of the later-altered, mid-fifteenth-century Ormond Castle. The enclosed town was defined by the thirteenth-century church dedicated to Saint Nicholas of Myra and replaced by a Protestant church dating to 1811 in the north-west portion and by the surviving fifteenth or sixteenth-century bridge which marked the lowest crossing point on the course of the Suir for centuries on the south-west access point. Localised developments for warehousing on the riverside quays and other amalgamation of some rear plots for commercial purposes or car parking from the early nineteenth-century to the present have not obliterated the historic form of the town. Maintaining the plot definition and permeability through lands to the rear of the Main Street will be an important development consideration to help preserve the distinctive character of Carrick-on-Suir.

The typical contrast between painted, rendered street-fronting façades with dark-coloured, slate-clad roofs is easily overlooked as a distinctive characteristic of traditional townscapes in Ireland but should be valued and retained in ongoing redevelopment. The relatively closed street edge within the ACA is punctuated by varying roof-lines, steps in the façade-line with railed

open areas separating buildings from the pedestrian footpath. There are a variety of opening types at ground-level that include traditional shopfronts, occasionally elaborate doorcases, varying window arrangements and archways. The first, second and occasionally third floor-levels of the principal street façades reflect the typically ordered timber sliding sash fenestration with vertical emphasis, which varies subtly to define the floor-heights and bays of individual buildings that form part of the coherent terrace.

Texture on the street-fronts is provided by moulded render string courses, render lettering, quoin detail and heavy cut-stone sills as well as distinctive, moulded eaves detail in render, cut or natural stone. Several exposed gables and stairwell projections within the ACA feature slate-hanging and there are some remnants of local Ahenny slate on individual roof elevations.

As with many public thoroughfares, incidental street furniture visible on historic photographs has in many cases been lost, although there are remaining portions of age-worn limestone kerbs to some footpaths. There are also a number of guard-stones on exposed corners and domestic features such as stone entrance steps and boot-scrapers in various forms.

## **2. ACA Statement**

In the ACA, the planning authority seeks to conserve and protect existing historic fabric which contributes positively to the character and visual amenity of the area within the ACA boundary as well as providing a distinctive identity for the wider associated urban space. Surviving built fabric within the ACA should be integrated into new developments which complement the existing detail, form and massing of historic structures in a manner which continues to facilitate its recognisably distinctive character.

The carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure within the boundary of the ACA will be exempted development only if these works would not materially affect the character of the area<sup>1</sup>. Maintenance and repair works will be permitted where these are carried out in accordance with conservation best practice and where they retain the consistent character of the structure and its neighbouring buildings.

Owners of buildings and land within the ACA should consult with the Planning Authority prior to carrying out works and the following principles should apply;

- Sensitivity is required in the design of buildings or extensions within an ACA.
- Significant redevelopment should respect the fine grain and layout of the urban core.

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<sup>1</sup> Owners and developers are advised to check whether a structure is a 'Protected Structure' as further restrictions on permitted development may apply

- Conversion/adaptation of an existing property should be considered before the need to demolish and replace. Older buildings can be successfully adapted to new uses where conversion can make good economic sense as well as retaining energy embodied in the high-quality fabric of the existing structure. Conversion, rather than replacement can often enable an important street façade to continue forming part of an area’s distinctive character.
- Extensions or alterations must complement the existing buildings and avoid amalgamating or blurring the historic plot boundaries of individual sites. The extension should be subordinate in scale and in a form that allows the character and architectural primacy of the original structure to be retained.
- Notable architectural details should be conserved and retained in situ, including:
  - local and traditional, natural slate roof and wall-cladding,
  - chimney stacks, often with attractive moulded detail
  - cast-iron rainwater goods
  - stone walls and window sills,
  - iron railings,
  - historic windows and
  - moulded plasterwork.
- New buildings should complement neighbouring properties and adjacent spaces. Proposals should have regard to the continuity of rhythm, scale, mass and outline of adjacent buildings as well as their architectural details, materials, texture and colour along with established street lines and natural topography. While pastiche replication of perceived historic design is to be avoided, legibly contemporary new structures can be successfully integrated with existing urban fabric, provided the quality of design is sufficient.

The following criteria will apply when considering works to existing or proposed new shopfronts in ACA’s:

- i. Elements of historic shopfronts should be retained and repaired in accordance with conservation best-practice using appropriate materials and techniques to retain the architectural and any artistic significance of the original fabric.
- ii. Shop-front advertisements should normally be restricted to fascia signs placed immediately above the shop window. Existing moulded timber, stone or render detail of historic shop-fronts should be protected from being damaged or obscured by modern advertising. Fascia lettering and logos should be hand-painted or individually cut in a style and colour that harmonises with the shop and helps to portray its use. Printed,

plastic fascia signs and those which stretch across the full width of a building frontage or straddle across two or more buildings should be avoided. Signs that extend higher than the sill of first floor windows will not normally be acceptable.

- iii. Hanging signs can have a place in the streetscape; however, they should not be mounted higher than first floor windows. There should be normally not more than one hanging sign to each property frontage, and the bracket should not extend more than 80cm from the wall face and the lowest part of the sign a minimum of 2.2m above pavement level.
- iv. In the case of properties with multiple tenancies, the ground floor shop may have a fascia sign and one additional projecting sign may be permitted to the first-floor premises. A plaque located at the front door should serve all additional tenants.
- v. Where there is insufficient fascia space decorative lettering can be painted directly onto the display window, provided it is of an appropriate form.
- vi. Brand advertising is not acceptable on shop elevations and fascias should not link buildings of different styles.
- vii. Modern roller shutters result in a blank appearance during closing hours and render a dead street frontage. Thus, applications including such roller shutters will be deemed unacceptable and alternative security arrangements should be proposed if required.
- viii. Retractable or fixed awnings should be of a fully-reversible design that does not compromise the decorative detail of a historic shop-front or risk damage to historic wall masonry or window sills.
- ix. Separate entrances to upper level residences shall be retained and reinstated.

Note: Murals require planning permission and applications for wall painted advertising will be assessed against the visual impact on the character of the area, particularly within an ACA.

### **3. ACA Policy & Objectives**

The Carrick-on-Suir Architectural Conservation Area comprises much of the historic walled town centre which has a discernible form and layout, overlaid with many phases of localised development over several hundred years. There are a number of sites included on the record of protected structures within the ACA representing type sites or key examples of re-used medieval structures, notable commercial and residential buildings within the town centre, distinctive architectural features and institutional buildings. The ACA gives recognition to all elements of the coherent historic character of the urban core, providing protection to the streetscape generally in instances where individual sites would not all warrant specific protection in their

own right. Designation of the ACA also facilitates protection of the general setting of the protected structures within the area. Historic building fabric and design features which help to define the architectural character of the ACA will be protected from deliberate damage and their appropriate conservation will be encouraged. This will retain their positive contribution to the historic character of the ACA and provide a reference for appropriate new design.

### **Policy on Architectural Conservation Areas:**

It is the policy of the planning authority to ensure the enhancement and management of ACAs. Where provided, the planning authority will refer to the published character appraisal and objectives for a particular ACA when considering development proposals within the delimited boundary. There will be a general objective to assess and complete character appraisal documents for all designated ACAs to provide guidance on the specific elements that should be conserved to continue making a positive contribution to the historic character of the area.

Within ACAs the Council will have regard to:

- a) The impact of proposed development on the character and appearance of the ACA in terms of compatibility of layout, function and use, design, colour and finishes, and massing of built form;
- b) The impact of proposed development on the existing amenity value and historic character;
- c) The need to retain important architectural and townscape fabric and features such as shopfronts, sash windows, historic ironwork, decorative plasterwork, etc.

### **Development Objectives:**

The following specific development objectives of the planning authority seek to conserve the existing historic fabric and character of the Carrick-on-Suir ACA and to promote sustainable development of the area which compliments its distinctive character:

- i. Retain and refurbish fabric of interest which contributes positively to the historic character of the ACA. Encourage best-practice conservation of historic masonry walls by retaining and repairing surviving lime render surfaces and appropriate replacement of existing cement-based wall render with a suitable lime render.  
  
Provide access to grant assistance, where funds are available, for approved conservation works to historic buildings within the ACA.
- ii. Require, when applicable, the removal of redundant or obsolete services (alarm units, security cameras, lighting, communications equipment, television or satellite receivers, cabling etc.) from visible elevations and chimney stacks within the ACA

- iii. Retain and consolidate plot boundaries including masonry walls to the rear of street-fronting properties. Necessary openings to link back-lands should seek to minimise the loss of historic masonry fabric, ensure the continued legibility of historic plot boundaries and use appropriate materials and techniques to consolidate wall-tops and reinforce exposed wall-ends.

Policy 13-2 of the TCDP and the policies and objectives contained in Chapter 7 (Recognising our Local Heritage) of this LAP shall also apply.

## 4. Carrick-on-Suir ACA: Photographic Survey



*Plate 1: Approach to ACA looking south along New Street with varied rooflines and façade detail creating an interesting but coherent streetscape framing the view towards the wooded ridge beyond.*



*Plate 2: Approach to ACA looking west along Castle Street with gentle curve in street-line revealing Main Street gradually as one travels into town from the castle*



*Plate 3: Approach to ACA looking north along Dillon Bridge with visual connection between convent site and tower of Saint Nicholas' RC Church, both later additions on opposite sides of the central Main Street of the medieval town*



*Plate 4: Approach to ACA looking east along Greystone Street with Tholsel or Town Clock marking the west gate of the walled town.*



*Plate 5: View south along Bridge Street towards historic Old Bridge and Carrickbeg beyond*



*Plate 6: A variety of window types but with a generally vertical emphasis on more uniformly-arranged first floor-level and above. Grouping of fenestration defines individual, terraced properties and internal floor-levels.*



*Plate 7: Traditional rhythm of terraced façades and slightly varied rooflines within coherent rows continues on minor side-streets and laneways off the main thoroughfare*



*Plate 8: Retaining original fenestration and roofline details to upper floor-levels enables legibility of original building form even when ground-level units are continued across multiple façades.*



*Plate 9: Unusual variations on traditional window forms help to enliven and enrich the streetscape and should be retained and refurbished where necessary in their original form*



*Plate 10: Several phases of different window types contribute to architectural diversity and understanding historic development of a particular site.*



*Plate 11: Traditional timber sash windows with fine dimensions of glazing bars and mid-rails are possible to retain and refurbish as functioning, attractive features of a historic building. Specific moulded details of historic sash horns and frames contribute to distinctive character of ACA and are not well-replicated by mass-produced replacement windows.*



*Plate 12: Localised repairs to existing window frames and sashes, stripping back of built-up layers of paint and recoating, appropriate draft-sealing and renewal of cords, weights and fittings where necessary are encouraged and are eligible for grant assistance where available.*



*Plate 13: Deep, overhanging stone eaves are a particular feature of terraced buildings in Carrick-on-Suir which should be retained and incorporated in redeveloped buildings.*



*Plate 14: Moulded stone, oversailing eaves cornices should be retained and appropriate, durable gutters should be fitted such that they do not cause damage or obscuring of such distinctive decorative features*



*Plate 15: Retention and appropriate refurbishment of traditional features such as natural roof slates, cast-iron roof-lights and eaves gutters as well as chimney stacks help to keep much of the traditional character of the streetscape intact.*



*Plate 16: Particular significance is attached to local materials such as Ahenny natural slate with any remaining examples of this conserved in an appropriate manner.*



*Plate 17: Localised examples of traditional slate hanging, particularly on rear elevations and stairwells such as this, should be retained and conserved using appropriate lime mortar.*



*Plate 18: Traditional shopfronts are a recurring feature which contribute positively to the historic character of the ACA and enliven the pedestrian experience of the streetscape. Care should be taken to retain and refurbish moulded timber detail, doors, historic awnings and appropriate signage. Clutter of redundant wiring and other fixtures should be minimised where possible.*



*Plate 19: Striking colour schemes to traditional, ground-level shopfronts can help distinguish commercial premises, but conservation of historic detail and avoidance of extraneous additions or inappropriate signage will help to continue the positive contribution of these features to the historic character of the ACA*



*Plate 20: Retention of traditional shopfronts even when the premises becomes fully residential retains the positive contribution of the historic feature to the evolving streetscape.*



*Plate 21: Amalgamation and conversion of rear plots can facilitate parking and other uses but the removal of usable outbuildings and boundary fabric should be minimised to help maintain legibility of the historic urban layout behind the main thoroughfares.*