

## Monasterboice Monastic Site

This uniquely important early medieval monastery site was founded by St Búithe about AD 500 and was an important centre up to the twelfth century, when its importance was eclipsed by the foundation of the first Cistercian abbey in Ireland nearby at Mellifont.

The principle monuments are the Early Christian Round Tower, High Crosses, and Medieval church ruins. Muiredach's Cross and the Tall Cross, which date from the late ninth or early tenth century, are among the most remarkable works of early Irish Art. These are beautifully carved with scenes from scripture and, as some of the finest examples of their type, are of undoubted international importance. The Round Tower is 35m high and although damaged by fire in c1100AD it is in very good condition.

The area of the overall settlement, with its souterrain sites and evidence for enclosures and surviving archaeological deposits in the ground, is largely unspoilt and mostly free from modern development.

Traces of the circular earthen ramparts which once enclosed the monastery can be seen from the top of the tower.



*If you have further queries regarding  
ACA designation please contact:*

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A GUIDE TO

**MONASTERBOICE**  
Architectural Conservation  
Area

ACA



## What is an Architectural Conservation Area/ACA?

Architectural Conservation Area designation will help to retain and enhance special places for future generations. This is achieved through the planning system and through works by the council in recognition of the ACA's special character. ACAs are not about preserving everything as it is at the time of designation.

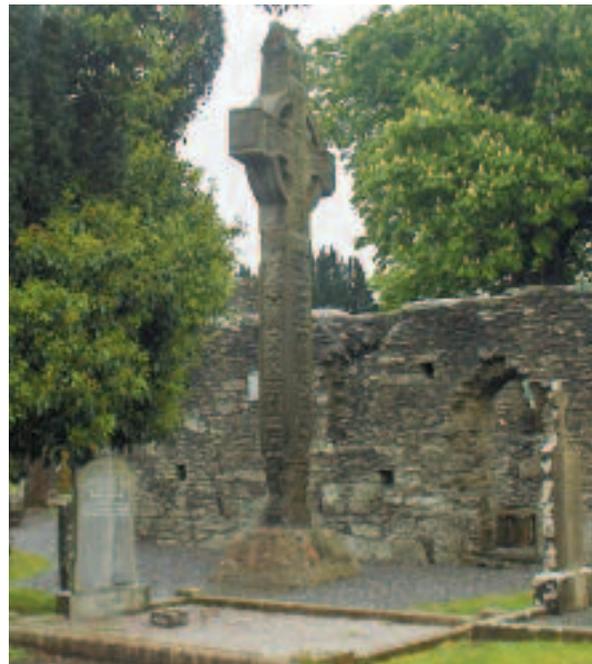
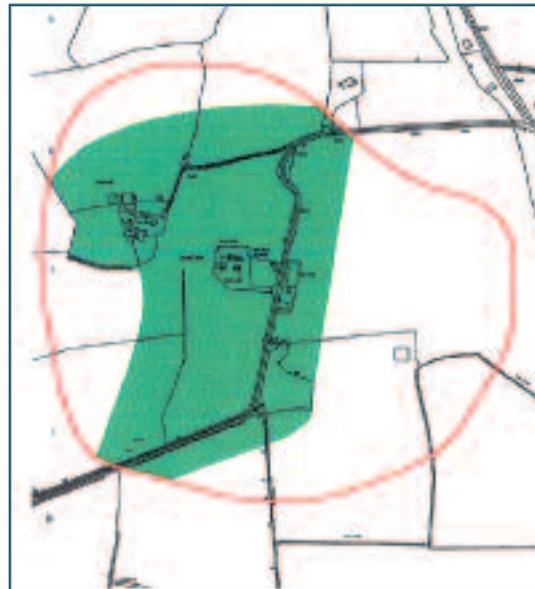
Designation of ACAs is carried out during the review of the County Development Plan. Built into this process there is the opportunity for the public to make submissions. The idea is for the Council to ensure that places that have a special character should be protected from inappropriate development or demolition of structures which are of local interest.

Louth has eight ACAs outlined in the 2003-2009 County Development Plan. These include the historic town centres of Ardee, Collon, and Carlingford, clachan settlements at Whitestown, Newtownmonasterboice, Salterstown and Milltown, and the monastic site described here. Other ACAs may be proposed in future plans.

The next review of the County plan may recommend other areas, remove existing designations, or alter boundaries.



ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA  
ZONE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL



## AREA COVERED BY ACA DESIGNATION

It is the intention of the planning authority by the designation of the Monasterboice ACA to protect the setting of the mediaeval structures and allow the Round Tower to remain the dominant vertical feature of the skyline.

## Does this mean no building work will be permitted?

Within an area designated as an ACA any work which would affect the character of the area will require planning permission. This includes development which might otherwise be exempt such as agricultural buildings or domestic extensions.

Extensions, alterations, new build, backland development and even replacement of buildings will all still be considered by the council within the ACAs subject to normal planning. Any proposed works will be carefully assessed in relation to their impact on their surroundings to a greater extent than previously, and to a greater extent than in areas outside ACAs. Impact on Character will be used as grounds for refusal or the attachment of conditions.

