

Building Sensitively and Sustainably in County Louth

LANDSCAPE, SETTLEMENT AND BUILDING TRADITION



L O U T H C O U N T Y C O U N C I L

BUILDING SENSITIVELY AND SUSTAINABLY
IN COUNTY LOUTH
by Philip and Delphine Geoghegan

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cover	Existing building tradition informs the design of new housing in Carlingford
back cover	New sheltered housing in the shadow of the abbey tower in Carlingford
frontispiece	Farmhouse in upland location achieves shelter by positioning and planting

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Foreword

The commissioning of this book and the approval of its contents by Louth County Council marks an important step in the promotion of positive, sustainable planning in the county.

The County Development Plan sets out a clear policy structure, with designated development centres around towns and villages in the county, and careful controls to limit inessential housing in the countryside.

The council is committed to sustainable development. Whilst ensuring that the special qualities of the environment and the landscape will be conserved, the council will promote suitable development to further the social and economic well-being of those who live in the county.

This book is intended to help that process. It identifies the characteristics of landscape, settlement and building tradition which make up County Louth, and promotes practical and positive design guidelines for developing in a sensitive, sustainable and an environmentally friendly way.

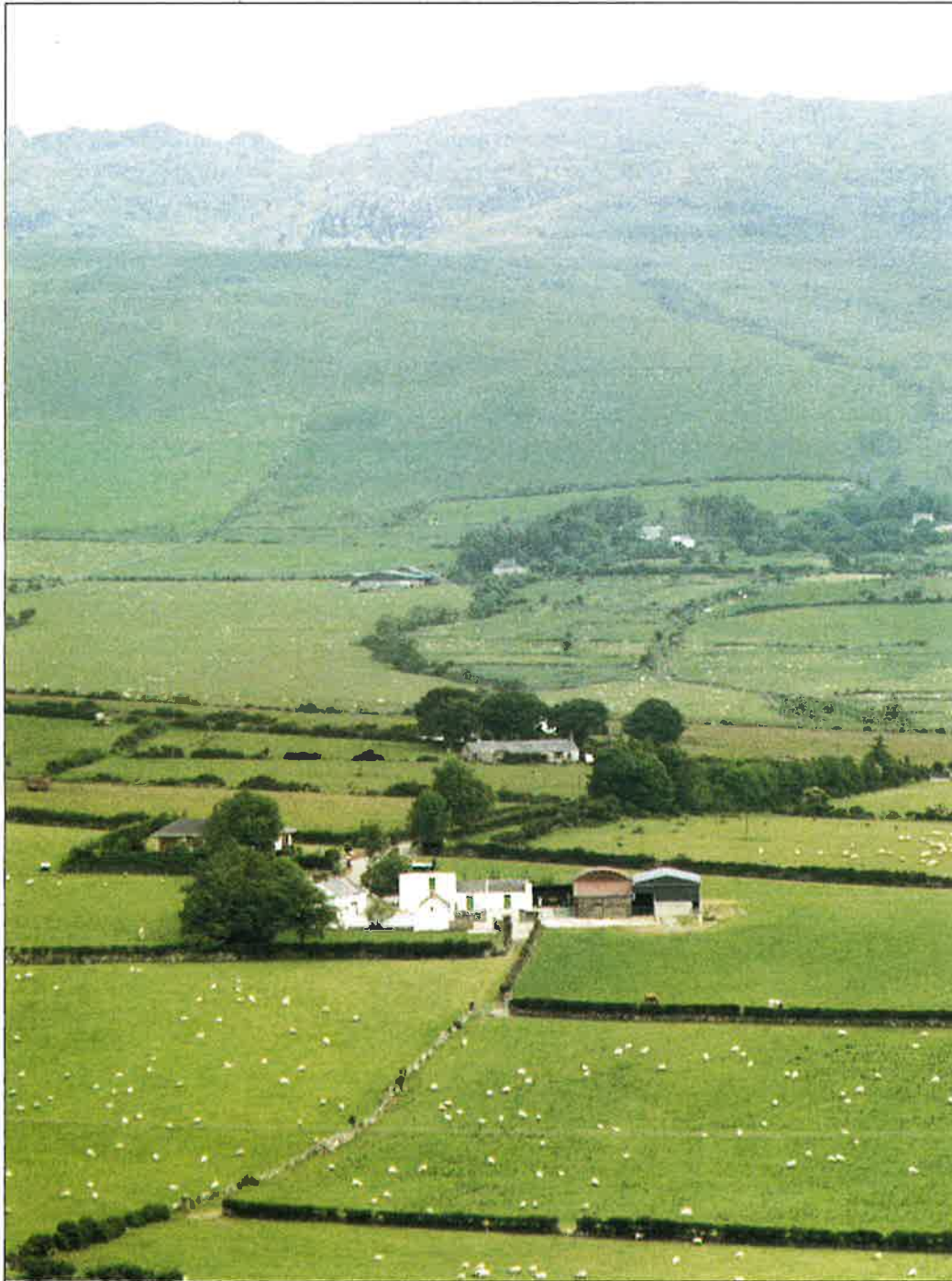
I should like to take the opportunity of thanking the members of the steering group, who advised the authors over several meetings in order to bring this project to a successful completion.

JOHN QUINLIVAN
County Manager



Drumlin landscape in the north of the county





Traditional farming practices shape the landscape. Upland areas are less enclosed and uninhabited. This valley has a diverse field pattern, and is punctuated with tree-sheltered farms.

A detail from a sixteenth-century map which shows the notional limits of County Louth. 'Caligfordia', the modern-day Carlingford, represents the northern limit, and the river Boyne with 'Drothera', the present-day Drogheda, defines the southern limit.



Introduction

THE CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENTS IN CO LOUTH

Outside of the two principal towns, Drogheda and Dundalk, the landscape dominates and moulds the settlements of County Louth. There are inseparable links between settlement and landscape, and the towns and villages owe their position and *raison d'être* to the nature of the countryside and coastline. The history of the living settlements in County Louth goes back to the Anglo-Norman invasion, but the original location of places can be traced to the much earlier, prehistoric and early Christian periods.

The creation of eleven mediaeval boroughs set the pattern for the urban structure of the county. Not all of the boroughs thrived, but Carlingford developed as a major town in the county. The Cromwellian period of the 1650s brought further changes to the settlements. Ardee, for example, became a plantation town, replacing its mediaeval role as a walled borough. Whitestown, an agricultural village with mediaeval origins, retained its unique layout of houses, which is intact today. The nineteenth century was a period of change and growth in Irish towns, and many of the buildings which make up the streets of towns today are from this century. Towns and villages benefited also from the activities of landlords, who shaped and improved many settlements in County Louth. Termonfeekin, Castlebellingham and Collon have been chosen to illustrate this, whereas Clogherhead originated as a coastal village with a fishing harbour. By selecting a range of villages and towns, by relating them to the landscape in which they have grown, and by describing the patterns within the settlements, the future identity of growth can become clearer, ensuring that the quality of both landscape setting and settlement will be conserved.

The consideration of individual buildings in the countryside demands also that their landscape context be appreciated and conserved. Landscapes have varying capacities to absorb development. The broad categorisation of the landscape of County Louth which follows will help in identifying an appropriate response.

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 are about the qualities of landscape and settlement which make up the special character of County Louth. New buildings should respect these qualities, not necessarily by copying them but certainly by being sensitive to location and the traditions of building, and sometimes by reinterpreting tradition creatively, using a modern design language.

Chapters 4 and 5 give guidelines to applicants who intend to build in the landscape or settlements of County Louth.



Chapter 1 – The landscapes of County Louth

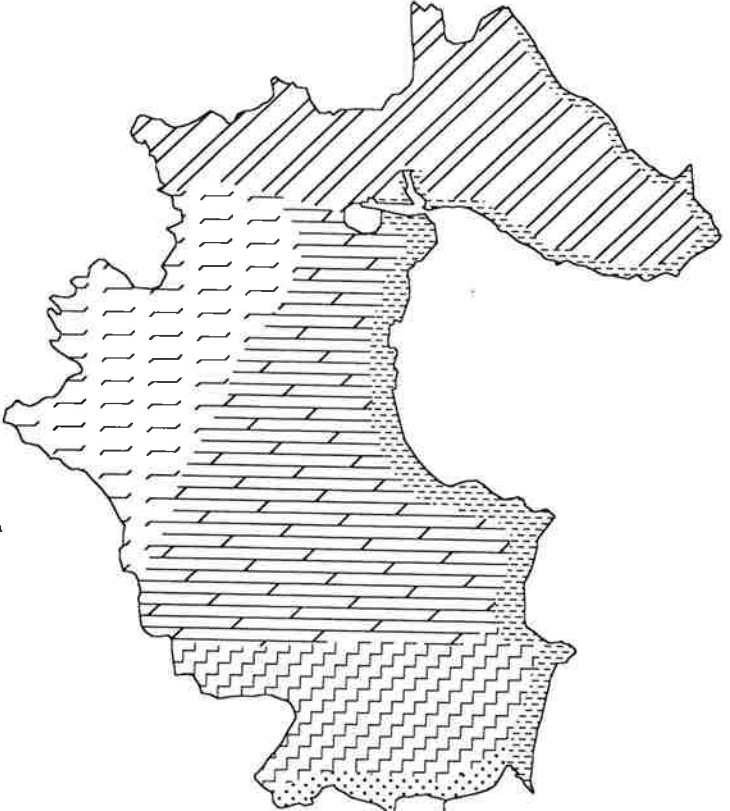
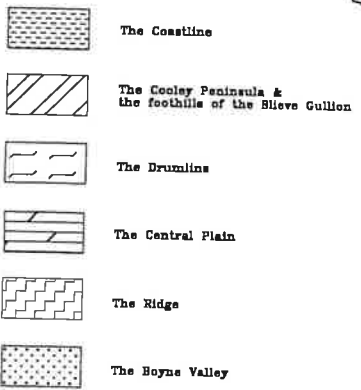


An early map of Carlingford showing the original town walls

This chapter describes the diverse landscapes in County Louth. Despite being the smallest county in Ireland, it contains a wide range of landscapes and land uses. Its northern and southern limits are demarcated mainly by natural features. The deep length of Carlingford Lough and the foothills of Slieve Gullion make up the northern boundary, whilst the rivers Boyne and Mattock form the southern edge. Between these limits, it is possible to identify six landscape areas in the county, as follows:

- The Coastline
- The Cooley Peninsula and the foothills of Slieve Gullion
- The Drumlin Area
- The Central Plain
- The Ridge
- The Boyne Valley

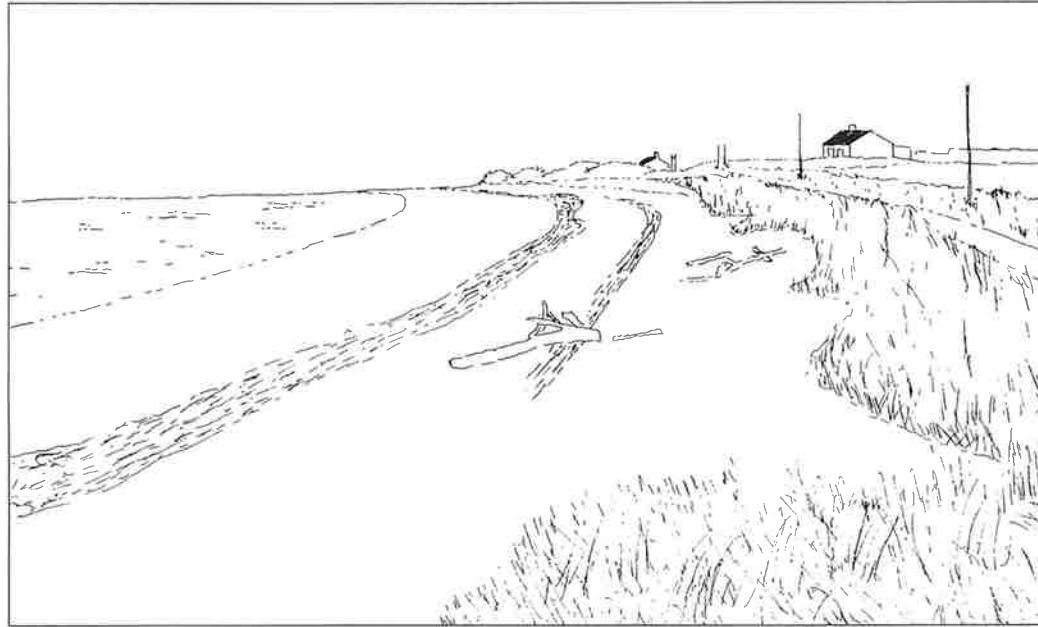
The main landscape types of County Louth



opposite
The mediaeval fortified walls of Carlingford, now dismantled, helped contain the town within the landscape

The Coastline

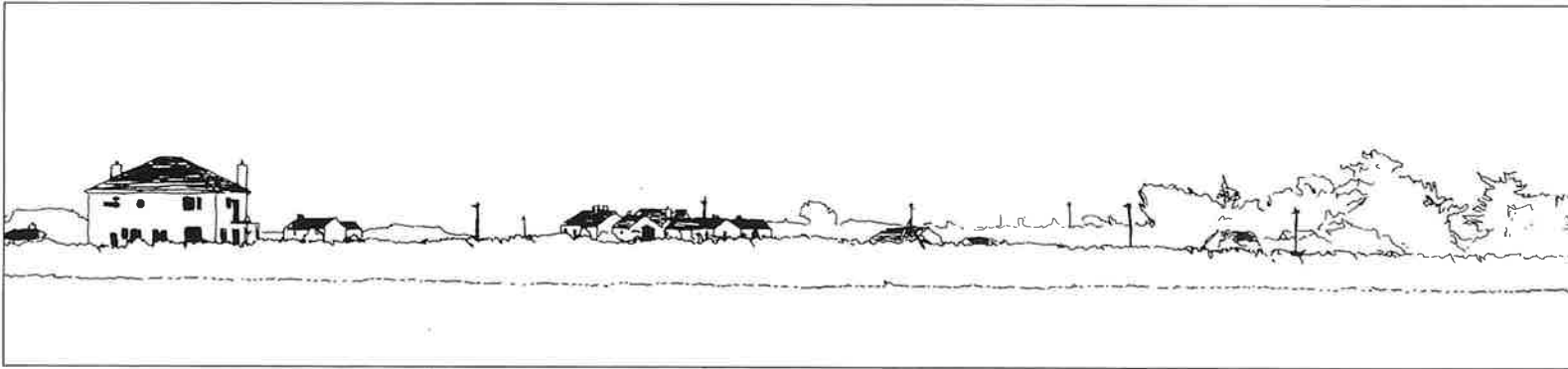
Much of the coastline has a high scenic quality, which is recognised by the designation of about two thirds of it as a Coastline of Special Scenic Quality. Other areas, not designated so, can be adversely affected by development because they are low-lying and exposed, with little protection from topography or landscape elements. Thus, the entire coastline is particularly vulnerable in terms of development, and there are already many examples of less than desirable development in the form of caravan sites, individual bungalows, and strings of houses along the coastal roads.



Buildings, even single-storey dwellings, become prominent features in the exposed, low-lying areas of the Louth coastline

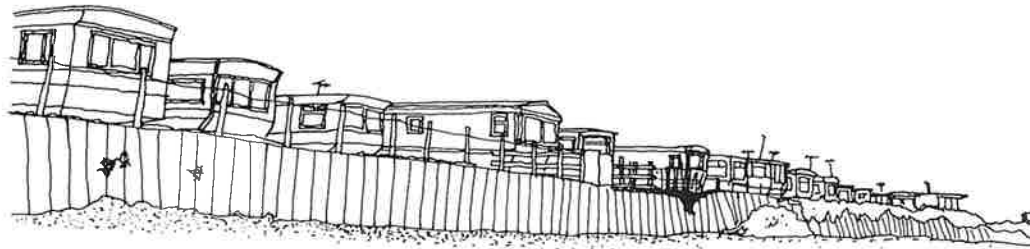
The exposed, treeless coastline with a very gentle ground shape presents a beautiful, yet fragile and vulnerable landscape where development can have a disproportionately negative impact



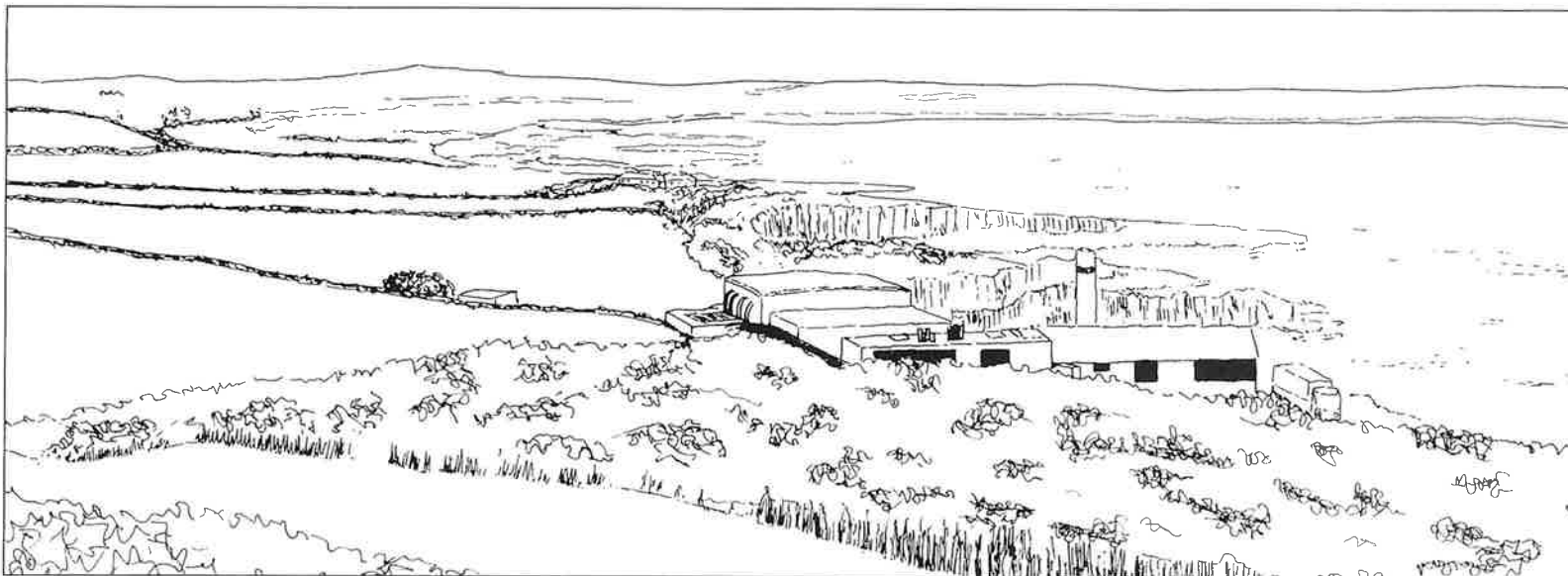


The coastal edge is under pressure for further development. In this view, extensive planting around the house on the right has helped to overcome the coastal exposure. Planting for shelter is needed for the newer house on the left.

Caravans, a coastal protection concrete retaining wall, and post-and-wire fencing composed in this manner neither recognise the intrinsic beauty of the area, nor provide a good tourist amenity



Coastal industry



The Cooley Peninsula and the foothills of Slieve Gullion

This is predominantly a mountainous area, wild and little inhabited. The coastal strip running along Carlingford Lough, and the southern coastline of the peninsula, are areas with a long history of inhabitation. The mediaeval town of Carlingford and the rural settlements, many of which also date from mediaeval times, form clusters of settlement along the coastal plain. This landscape zone contains areas which are very sensitive in relation to development. A large portion of this area is designated for protection as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and as a Scenic Coastline.

A sheep farm in the mountains above Carlingford. A wild and barely inhabited landscape such as this needs to be protected from any development which will detrimentally alter the balance between man and environment. The visual impact of unsuitable development would be disastrous to the natural beauty. Not only housing, but inappropriate forestry, masts for telecommunications, and ill-located wind farms need strict controlling in this area.



The Drumlin Area

Drumlins, formed by glacial deposits, create a special landscape of small scale, with limited horizons and rounded hillsides divided by hedgerows and lines of trees.

Buildings can be located successfully in sheltered enclaves between the drumlins in what is primarily a rural area with few villages, and served from Carrickmacross and Ardee.



The gentle shapes of drumlins are emphasised by the hedgerows which divide them. Development on the hillsides should be kept below the horizon and in the valleys between drumlins, which is the natural location for shelter.

A long view over the drumlin area in County Louth. This is a very gentle, undulating landscape which is visually pleasing, with short horizons and a variety of outlook.



The Central Plain

This relatively flat area covers a large part of the county, from north of Dundalk as far south as Dunleer, and from east to west across the centre of the county. The two main north-south routes cross the area and form the focus for development, with towns and villages along the routes at river-crossing points.

The area is very fertile and contains the richest agricultural land in the county. The flat topography means that landscape elements such as tree screens and hedgerows make the most impact and strongly influence the appearance of buildings in the landscape.



Mature landscape – Stone walls, trees and hedgerows provide the setting for well-sited rural houses and farm buildings. Roadside housing can destroy this pattern.

Undulating landscape between the Central Plain and the Ridge, where the imprint of the fields and their boundaries structures the landscape



The Ridge

South of the Central Plain is a ridge, formed by a geological fault, which crosses the county from Collon in the east to Clogherhead on the coast. This upland area rises to over 600ft at Mount Oriel and Belpatrick, just west of Collon. This part is designated an Area of High Scenic Quality, along with another rural area south of Monasterboice. They are characterised by a rolling landscape, with mature planting of trees and hedgerows and stone walls, creating landscape environments of the highest quality, and, consequently, pressures for residential development. At the western end of this area, Clogherhead is classified an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in order to protect it from inappropriate development.



The village of Collon is contained by the hilly landscape, which is planted with mainly deciduous trees

Trees in the landscape at Mount Oriel



The Boyne Valley

The River Boyne forms the border with Co Meath, and flows for only a few miles before being absorbed into the urban area of Drogheda. Nevertheless, this is designated an Area of High Scenic Quality, and needs careful protection because of its proximity to Drogheda and the

resultant pressure for development. East of Drogheda, the estuary of the Boyne creates a unique landscape environment. Queensborough, the estate village related to Beaulieu House, and the traditional village of Baltray form attractive built frontages to the estuary.

Queensborough faces the estuary of the Boyne at the edge of the Beaulieu demesne, which provides a backdrop of deciduous woodland



Country road in the Boyne valley with mature canopy of trees





Chapter 2 – The settlements of County Louth

The settlements chosen in this chapter serve to illustrate the breadth of settlement types to be found in County Louth. With the exception of Whitestown and Queensborough, the settlements have been identified in the County Development Plan as development centres. Chosen here to suggest both the urban and the landscape context within which development can be considered, they provide a structure for which design guidelines may be proposed. The following settlements are described and illustrated:

- Termonfeckin: Arcadian village
- Whitestown: agricultural settlement
- Baltray and Queensborough: settlements of the Boyne estuary
- Clogherhead: coastal village
- Collon: landlord village
- Castlebellingham: landlord and brewery town
- Carlingford: mediaeval borough

Trees form a canopy over the churchyard in the mediaeval town of Carlingford

Village life, Louth Village

opposite – Refurbished shops beside Ardee Castle



Termonfeckin

Arcadian village

The pattern of the village is of individual houses in dispersed plots, set in a landscape of trees which dominates the form of the village and its buildings. The village lies in a valley, on either side of a small river. The churches are set away from the road, within churchyards which are also dominated by trees. The sense of enclosure and shelter is quite different from the exposed coastal areas nearby.

Lewis wrote of the village in 1840: 'The village ... was partly rebuilt and greatly improved by the late Mrs Brabazon of Rath House; it now contains eighty-nine houses, most of which are very neatly built...'

The map shows that the number of houses in the village proper has not grown much, except for the addition of a housing estate relatively recently, suggesting that the layout was extended from the coastal road, which was running in a north-south direction.

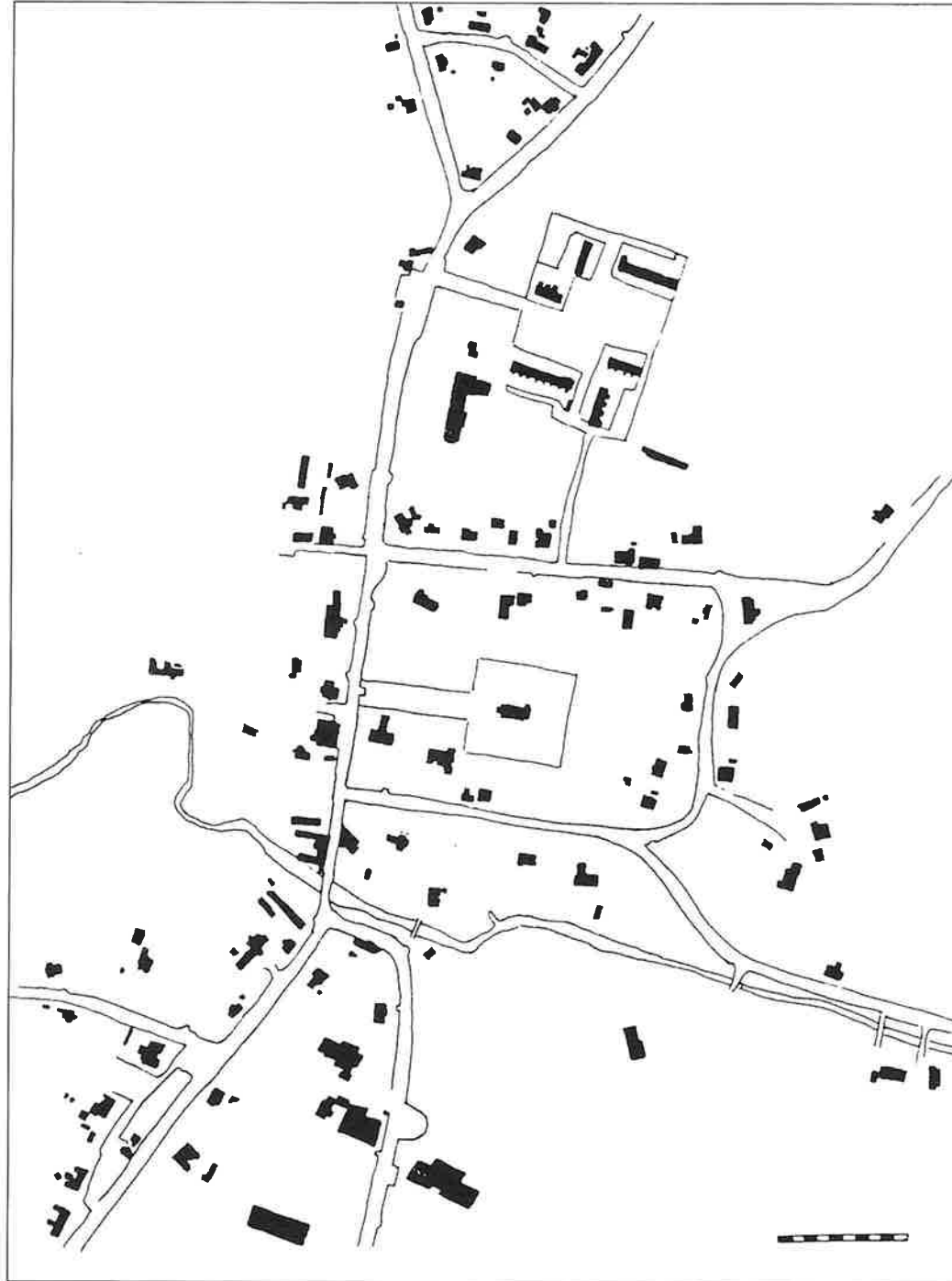


Figure-ground plan of Termonfeckin

Village form and landscape

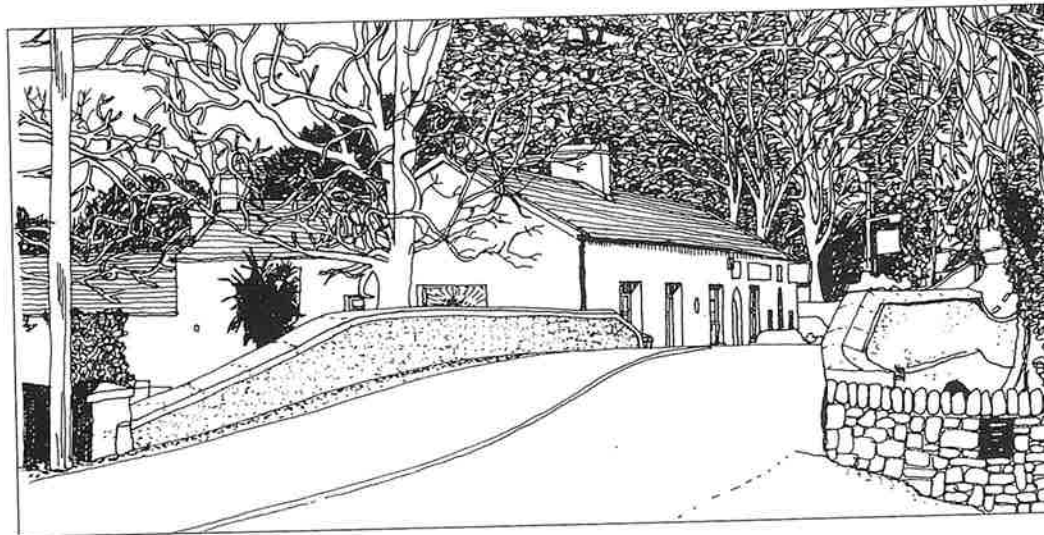
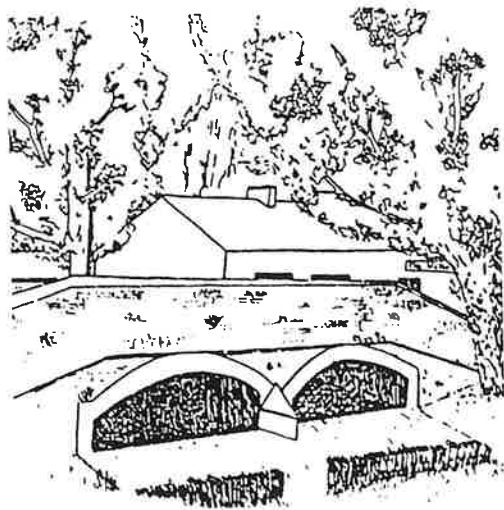
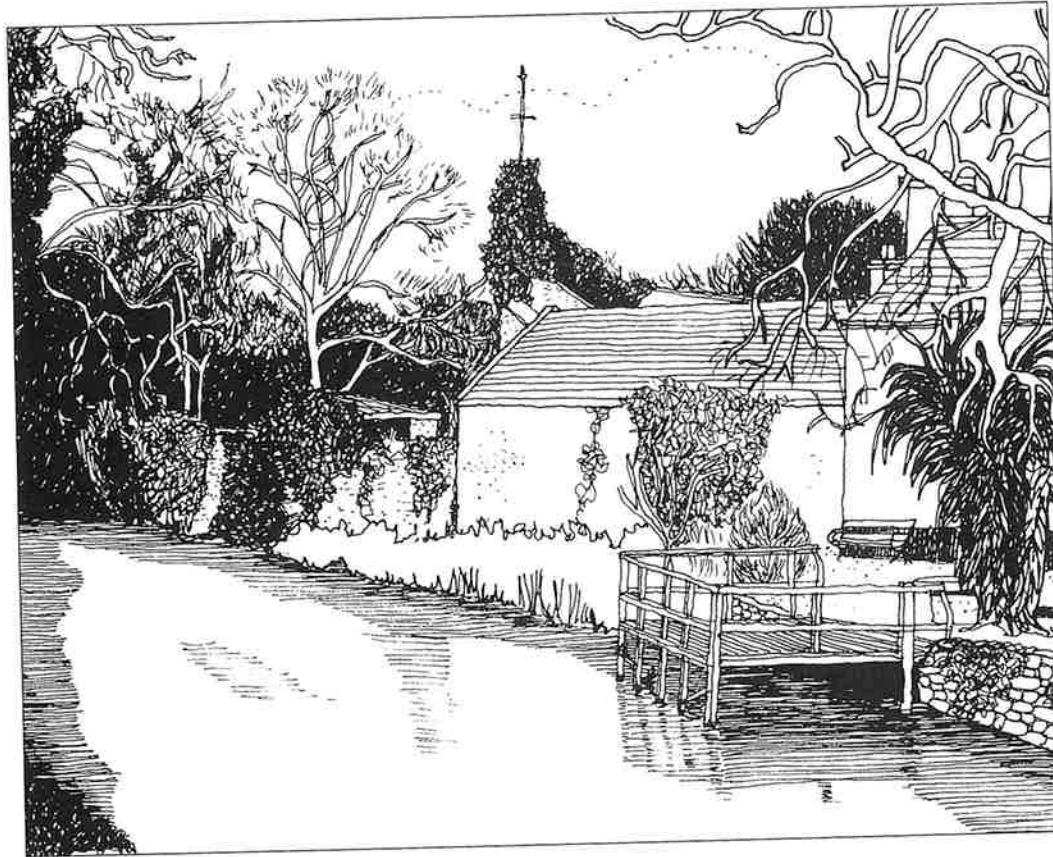
Termonfeckin is the archetypal Arcadian ideal village. The vegetation dominates to such an extent that the village appears to be underneath a canopy of trees.

The illusion of the ideal landscape goes even further. The stream flows through the village, lazy, deep and slow, over the weir; below the bridge, it's rushing, bubbling and lively beneath the dense foliage.

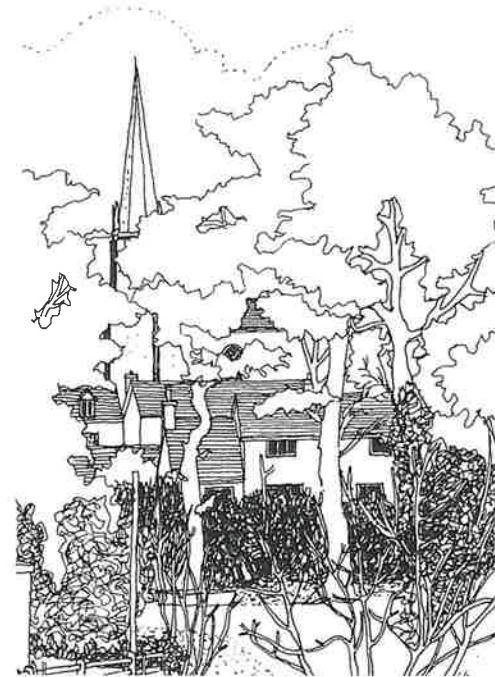
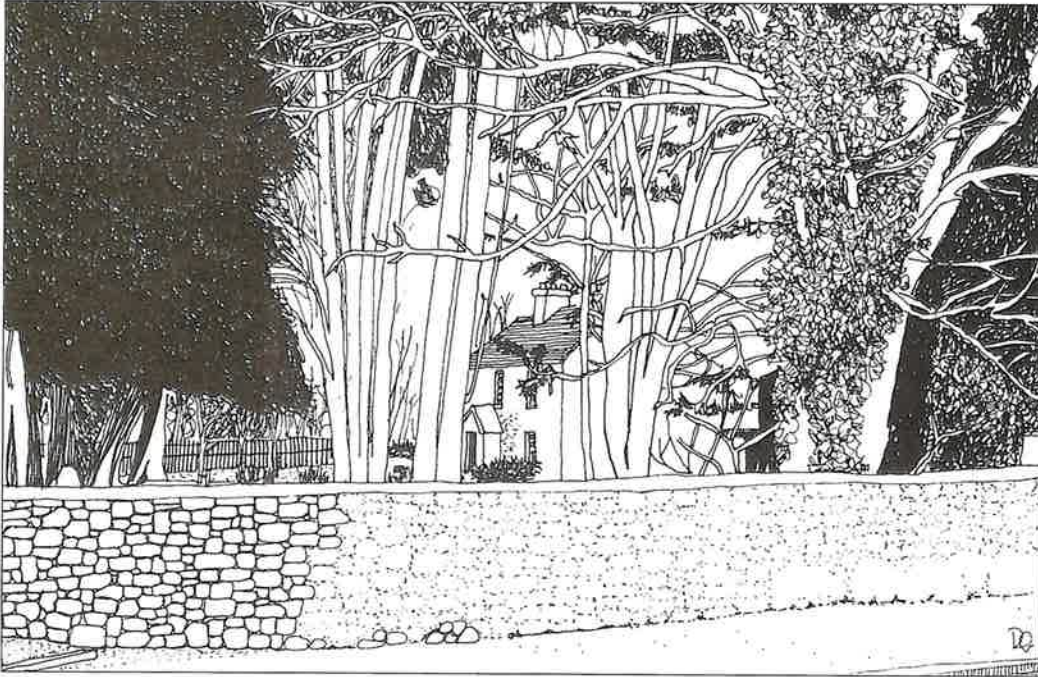
The stream beside the pub

The pub beside the bridge

The arched stone bridge and weir



SETTLEMENTS



House screened by mature trees and stone wall (partly rebuilt) creates an evocative, secret world behind

Ancient trees and new planting help to settle new buildings in their environment

The success of new development in Termonfeckin will depend on the retention of hedgerows and trees, the undertaking of appropriate planting, and the recognition of the existing built form and boundary treatment in the village



Summary of the patterns which have generated form

- The village centres on the bridge carrying the coastal road across a lively stream.
- The topography of the valley is a dominant feature in the form of the village.
- The village is set among and below hedges and trees.
- Houses are single and two-storey, detached, set back from the road, and surrounded by gardens.
- The two churches create strong landmarks.
- The pub and shops hint at a central focus to the village.
- Stone walls and hedges create property boundaries to the roads.
- The housing estate does not follow the patterns of the village, using terraced houses.

Conclusion

The dense landscape was created for the village. New development towards the coast is located within a different microclimatic situation, and looks very bleak by comparison, as does the ribbon development along the coast road. The village is a landscape experience, and any new housing should generate a proper landscape response.



Whitestown

Agricultural settlement

Whitestown is an agricultural village with a timeless quality. It is a remarkable survival of an almost complete 'clachan' settlement, with a fascinating distribution of space and building form. It is essentially a single-street village, with clusters of cottages forming secondary spaces from the street. The figure-ground plan shows the form of the village, and also indicates those buildings which have disappeared.

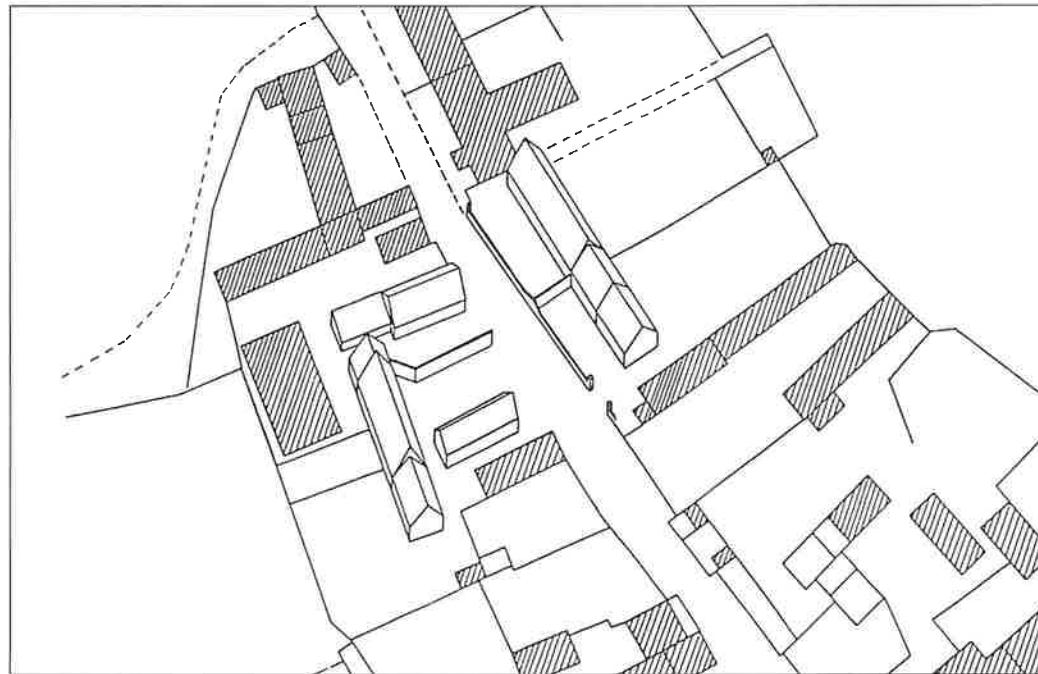
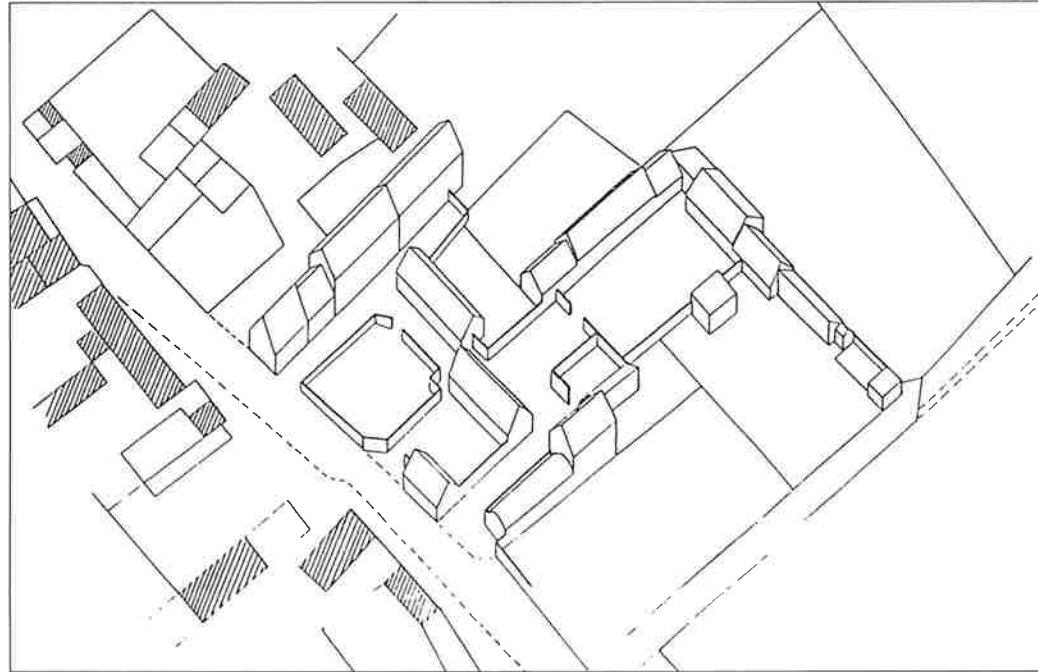


Figure-ground plan of Whitestown

Linked cottages set back from the road provide a stretch of continuous frontage in the village

The upper diagram shows how the houses are linked by walls and smaller outbuildings, creating an intricate pattern of lanes and courtyards. Some houses face the street, others are end-on to it, producing a varied street-edge.

The lower diagram shows houses set back from the street, two with small gardens and others with a courtyard open to the street. These simple themes and variations combine to produce a rich and consistent language for the settlement.





Village form and landscape

The village is located on the coastal strip of the Cooley Peninsula. It is fairly exposed to the sea, but around and within the village, trees and buildings combine to shelter the settlement. The street is created with a variety of buildings and walls, punctuated by mature trees which soften the street with greenery. Colourful shrubs, particularly fuchsia, spill over the boundary walls. The road is not defined by a concrete kerb; the asphalted road is edged with neatly cut grass verges at the same level. The effect is to create a gentle transition between hard and soft surfaces, between man-made and natural.

The buildings are small in scale, single-storey and two-storey, partly within the pitched roofs. The village was probably originally thatched throughout, whereas it now has a mix of thatched, corrugated iron and slate roofs.

Boundaries

The buildings and boundary walls are constructed in stone with a variety of finishes: natural stone, painted render, dash and painted, or whitewashed stonework. Mature hedges and trees define boundaries, and gates are part of the language of the village. Painted buildings are mainly white, with coloured reveals.

Thatched roof, overhanging trees, wild grasses and flowers indicate a settlement in tune with its natural environment

Neatly cut grassed verges grow onto the road, creating a delightful feeling of informality and increasing the sense of the romantic

opposite

The gentle winding road entices further exploration ...

...and more

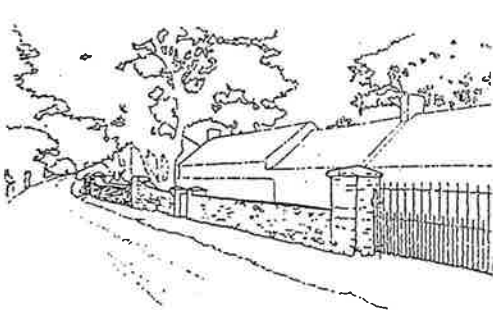






Summary of the patterns which have generated form

- The village street gently curves, increasing the sense of enclosure and place.
- Mature trees punctuate the built form along the street.
- Buildings are single and two-storey, in about equal numbers. The scale is very gentle, as the two-storey buildings are small scale.
- Both gables and frontages face onto the road, creating a very interesting rhythm.
- Building frontages are interspersed with walls, varying in height between three and six feet, giving a continuous frontage, a sense of enclosure to the street, and privacy to the houses.
- The only commercial building is the pub at the seaward end of the street. It is a two-storey building of domestic scale



Robust, whitewashed walls define properties and allow glimpses of the buildings behind

The boundary elements – walls, gateways and planting – strengthen the settlement structure

Roofs are generally strongly held by verges, and roofing materials vary between thatch, tile, slate and corrugated metal

Conclusion

Whitestown is a remarkable example of a conserved agricultural village. It offers many clues to creating successful rural dwelling environments. In this case, the formative influences were agricultural, but the resulting structure is a fascinating play of secondary spaces relating to the primary single-street form. It is a valuable model which can be adapted to modern residential use.



Ruined building in Whitestown indicates that every effort is required to safeguard existing structures

The contrast of the boldly coloured building elements with the whitewashed walls is truly special

Baltray and Queensborough

Settlements on the Boyne estuary

Introduction

Baltray is a traditional settlement on the estuary of the Boyne, at the mouth of a small tributary. Historically, the livelihoods of the inhabitants would have depended on fishing and agricultural activity. The village is a concentrated line of cottages, facing south onto the estuary, with a short 'street', composed of buildings on either side, leading out of the village.

Queensborough is a landlord-built estate village. It also fronts onto the river estuary in a line of buildings, but its appearance contrasts greatly with Baltray because of the architectural form, the wooded backdrop, and the stone boundary walls.

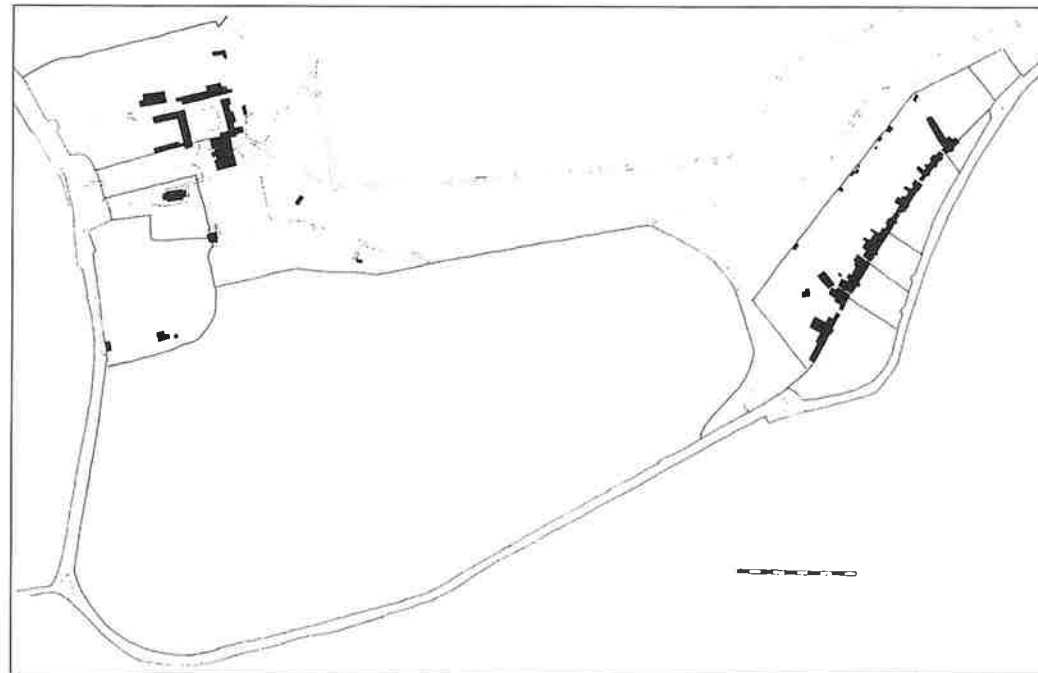
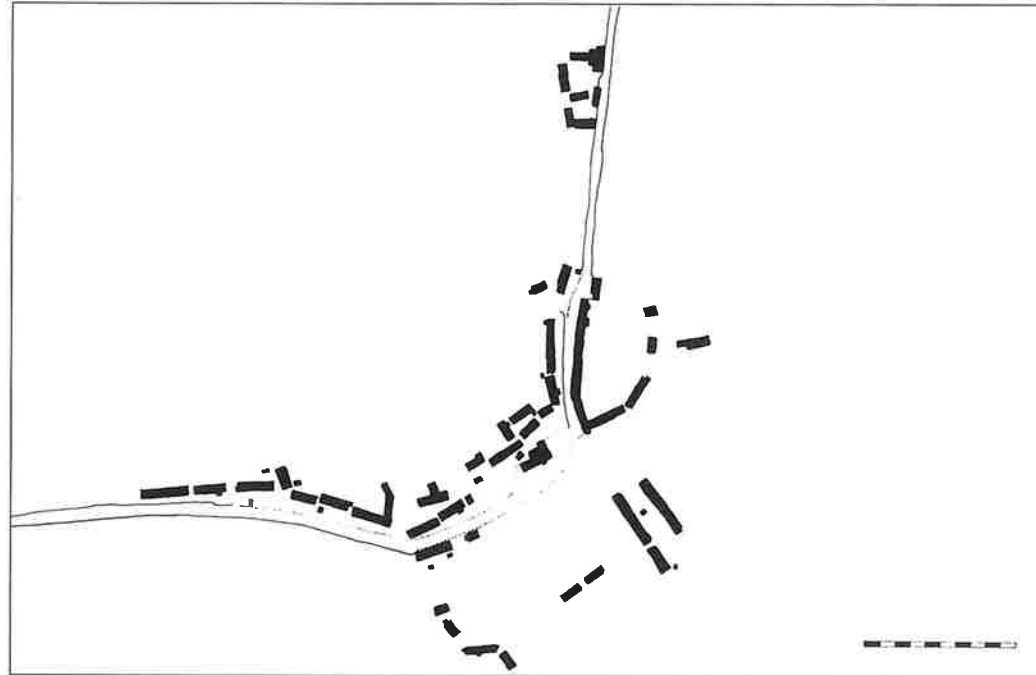


Figure-ground plan of Baltray

Figure-ground plan of Queensborough

Village form and landscape

Baltray

Most of the cottages have been renewed or replaced, but there are some thatched cottages remaining. The scale is predominantly single-storey. The outlook onto the estuary has been improved by a green area in front of the houses. The entrance to Baltray is effected across an ancient and very beautiful bridge, preceded by a pretty, restored thatched cottage. The village form is linear, with an irregular continuous string of buildings. On the Ordnance Survey map, each holding has a long 'garden' behind, which would have been used for growing vegetables. This form can be seen also in Clogherhead, further up the coast.

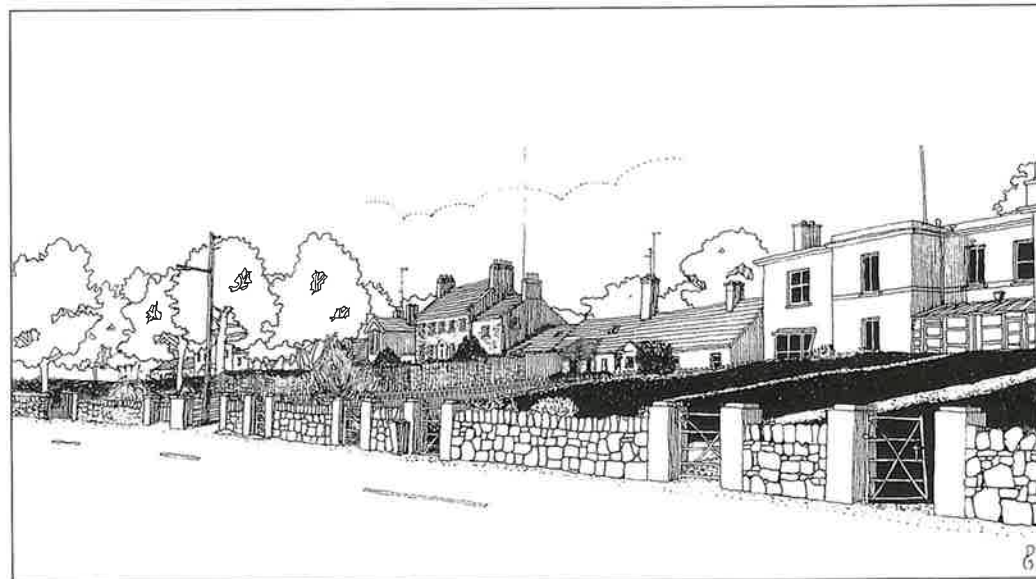


Ancient bridge and farm buildings in Baltray village

The stone boundary walls of Queensborough visually hold together the diverse building types

Queensborough

By contrast, nearby Queensborough is an estate village serving the Beaulieu estate. It too fronts onto the estuary, and forms an irregular string of buildings. However, these buildings are much more self-conscious, containing substantial Georgian houses as well as more modest single-storey estate cottages. They have long gardens which face the river, and fine stone wall boundaries. With mature tree-planting, they present an entirely different image to that of Baltray and a fascinating diversity of house types.



Summary of the patterns which have generated form

Baltray

- The village is positioned on the estuary beside the mouth of a small tributary.
- The settlement is made up of small fishermen's cottages, with a smallholding at the rear for growing vegetables.
- The scale is predominantly single-storey.
- The buildings were originally all thatched cottages, but many are now improved, enlarged, or replaced with stone and slate buildings, some two-storey.
- The village has an open prospect onto the Boyne, which has been emphasised with a substantial public green area in front of the cottages.

Queensborough

- This is a landlord estate village, built to serve Beaulieu House and estate. It is built along the estuary and is backed by the mature woodlands of the estate.
- There is a diversity of houses, including substantial Georgian residences, single-storey estate cottages, flat-roofed red-brick houses, and a modern country house.
- They group together coherently because they all address the estuary and roadside, with gardens to the front and consistent treatment of boundaries with stone walling, and with a wooded backdrop which sets them within the landscape.

Baltray – The old settlement form is intact, contained in the landscape by mature trees



Conclusion

These villages, which are located close to each other on the Boyne estuary, show an essential contrast in type, between the informal, organic traditional village of Baltray and the much more self-conscious arrangement of houses and sites in Queensborough. Both have experienced considerable change, yet retain their essential quality.



A magnificent stone wall marks the boundary of the Beaulieu demesne

Baltray – Diversity of house types still retains village form

Clogherhead

Coastal village

Clogherhead retains the character of its original vocation as a fishing village, with a fascinating street of small houses leading down to the sea. However, it has been greatly changed and enlarged over the years, becoming the focal point for caravan tourism and the centre for a sizeable rural hinterland. The growth is evident in the plan of the village, which shows three stages of development over time.

Village form and landscape

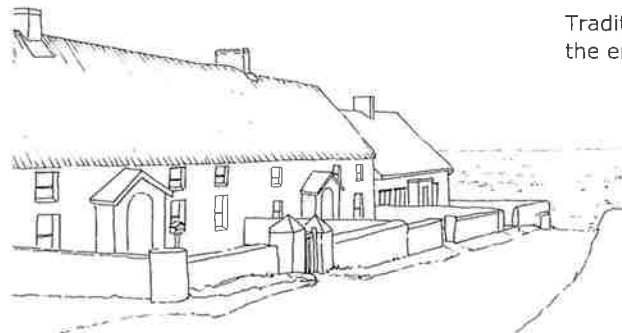
The village is located on a southerly slope. The main street is away from the coast, although it is connected by a straggling street of what were originally fishermen's cottages. The landscape is bleak and open because of its exposed seaside location, and the village is sheltered only by its own buildings and the enclosure of the street.

The street which leads down to the sea is lined with the sites of earlier fishing cottages, some of them with the original buildings with thatched roofs, some with much modified cottages, and others with modern houses crowding in on the small plots. The street terminates in an abrupt turn, beyond which a row of thatched cottages is placed right at the sea edge. The main street is also



Figure-ground plan of Clogherhead

Traditional two-storey thatched cottages at the end of the road, beside the sea



of village scale: single- and two-storey cottages are interspersed with shops and pubs. The village has extended to the north and east with two further streets, one of which leads to the harbour and the other which connects the lower street with the upper one.

The village spreads over the landscape, and retains a strong rural quality. Its various stages of growth have observed the basic rules of making a street with continuous development on either side, with small garden margins or no garden margins between houses and roads.

The houses are almost all rendered, and painted in light colours. The few remaining thatched cottages are very precious as a reminder of the earlier character of the village. Most of the houses are roofed in natural slate.



Main Street is sheltered from the sea by a mix of single and two-storey houses

The original plots of the old fishermen's cottages are now crowded by the larger, modern houses

Positioning of stores in front gardens derives from the original cottage plans



Summary of the patterns which have generated form

- Fishermen's cottages are built on long, narrow plots with small front gardens and long rear gardens or vegetable plots. Stores and garages sometimes occupy the front garden.
- The scale is small and village-like, with mostly single-storey buildings, but also with dormer cottages and two-storey replacements. Recent houses are mainly two-storey.
- Buildings are aligned along streets – terraced or closely spaced – and give visual continuity to the façades, even though there is a diversity of house types.
- The sloping streets accentuate the irregularity of buildings, producing a pleasing stepped sequence.
- There is little planting to soften the appearance due to the coastal exposure, so gardens provide an important opportunity for shrubs and trees to grow, behind the shelter of boundary walls.

Conclusion

Over time, it seems that the village has absorbed stages of growth with a street-by-street extension. Further extension of the village could follow this pattern and avoid prominent sprawl in this exposed landscape.

Traditional and modern houses side by side on the street



Collon

Industrial landlord village

Collon was a landlord village. It was the site for a sizeable cotton and linen factory, a flax mill, a large bleaching green, and three corn mills.

The village had the ingredients for a model industrial revolution settlement, with a large factory employing six hundred people, built-up streets, an infants' school and a primary school, a market hall, a large Church of Ireland church (built in 1813), a Catholic chapel and a Wesleyan-Methodist chapel.

Village form and landscape

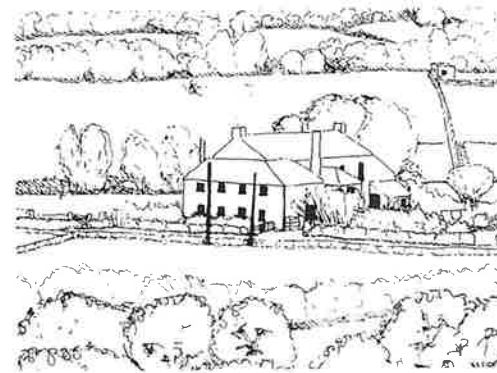
The location of the village relates to the river, which was the source of the steam and waterpower needed to drive industry. Whilst the factory was located in the valley, the village occupies the upper slopes, with a fine outlook onto the rolling landscape. The village is within the demesne of Oriel Temple, which also contains Mount Oriel.

Collon is located at a crossroads on the N2, the national trunk road from Dublin to Derry. The earlier buildings of the settlement are located at the south end, towards the valley bottom, whereas the model village was created on two intersecting arms of the crossroads. The village green, design for an open-air market, is set



Figure-ground plan of Collon

Farmhouse overlooking the river below Collon





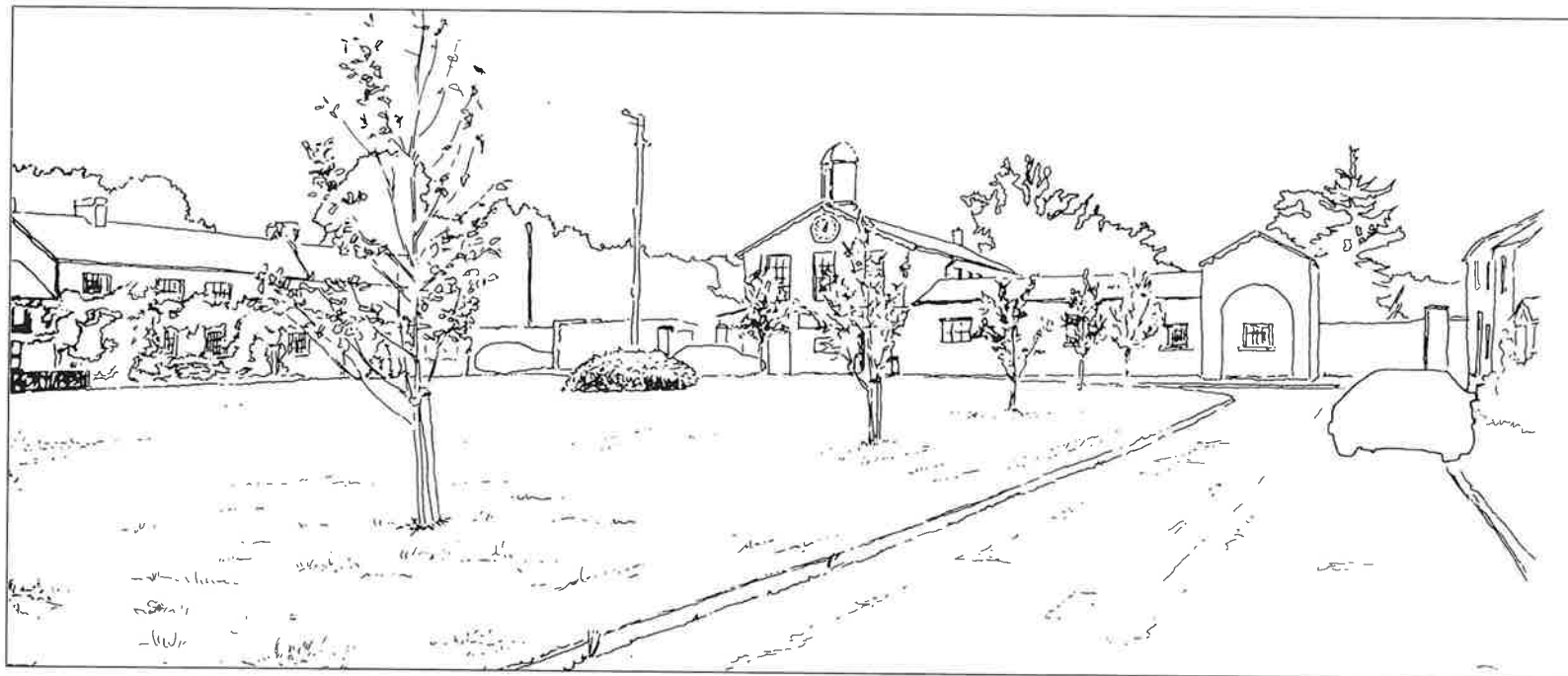
Village green opens to the main street

back from the main road, with the market hall occupying the far end.

The fourth arm of the crossroads from the west is largely unbuilt, and draws a beautiful landscape into the heart of the village.

There is a fine, early Georgian terrace of houses at the east-west arm of the village. The village has been severely affected by its position on the N2, but the completion of the M1 motorway through the county will radically transform the situation and allow Collon to recapture its original neatness and charm.

Market hall and village green in the centre of Collon



Summary of the patterns which have generated form

- Collon is a crossroads village which was greatly improved in the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to give an urban quality to the streets.
- Residential buildings generally front onto the street with little or no private open space in front. Public buildings are generally set back from the street edge.
- A two-storey scale is maintained in the village.
- There is a strong connection with the landscape. To the north, the rows of estate trees dominate, and to the south, the valley, with uninterrupted views across the countryside, dominates. Streets are not tightly enclosed, and the surrounding countryside is still dominant.



Conclusion

Collon is an interesting example of a model village, despite the fact that it never developed to any degree and the industrial buildings have all but disappeared. The reduction in traffic with the opening of the M1 will create a new opportunity to regenerate the village.

Early Georgian terrace of houses

Earlier buildings at the south end of the village



Castlebellingham

Landlord and brewery town

Situated on the Dublin-Belfast road (the N1) the town's history is linked with the Bellingham family and the celebrated Castlebellingham ale. Their impact on the town can be observed in the large malt-house and brewery, the buildings of which remain, and the castellated gateway entrance to Castle Bellingham, beside which is a picturesque group of widows' cottages built around the Church of Ireland church.

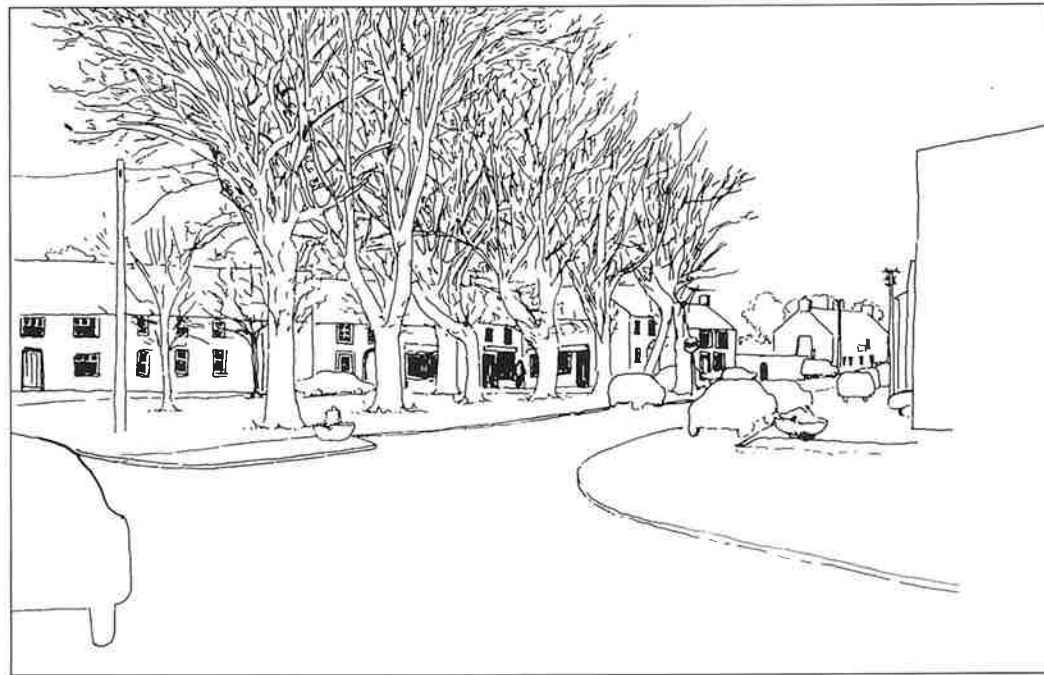
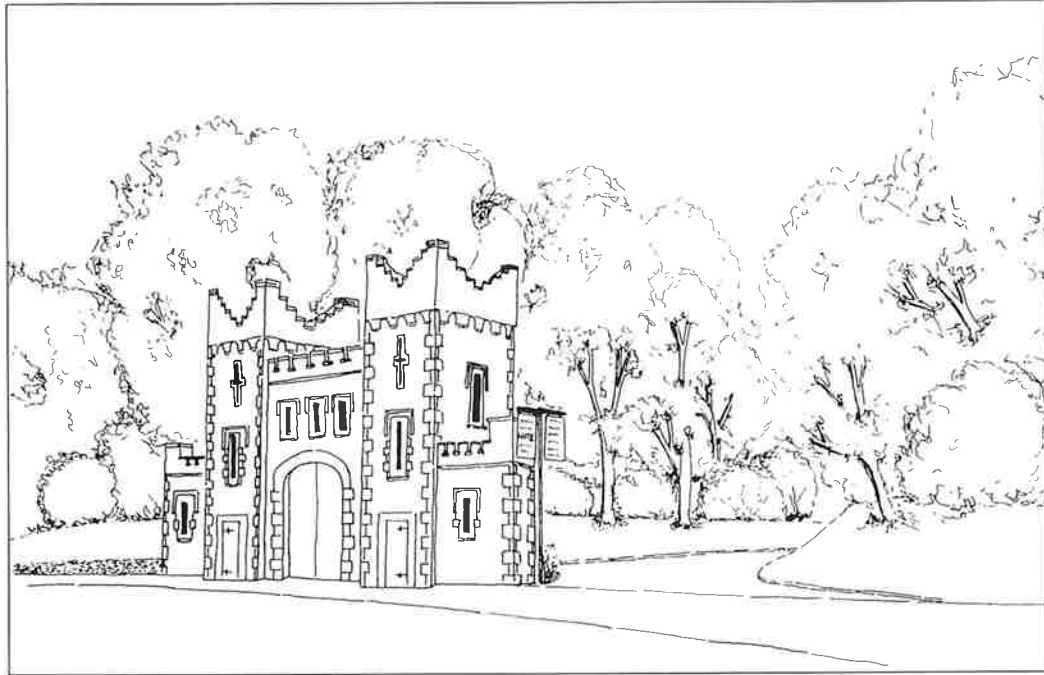
The main road meanders through the town, producing a sequence of pleasant views. Heading north, it starts at the bridge, goes by the gateway and alms houses, then passes a triangular space with trees, dominated by the old brewery buildings, followed by a bifurcation of the road. There are several local routes which meet in the town and connect with the main road.



Figure-ground plan of Castlebellingham

Town form and landscape

The town is defined on the south side by a deep river valley which is heavily treed and landscaped. To the north, the landscape is less accentuated, and leads into open agricultural land. The town spine is a sinuous route with interesting spaces – at the gateway, then in front of the brewery, and finally where the road forks. Each space is landscaped, and creates a pleasant rhythm in the sequence through the town. Modest street buildings – a combination of houses and shops – front onto and enclose the street. Completion of the M1 motorway will reduce traffic substantially and allow for the charm of the town as a local centre to be rediscovered.



Gateway to the castle grounds

Village green with mature trees marks the town centre

Summary of the patterns which have generated form

- The gently sinuous route through the town produces an interesting variety of views and places.
- The buildings at the centre follow the street and front directly onto it. The scale of houses is modest – two-storey – and contrasts with the much larger scale of the brewery building in the centre.
- The river produces a strong landscape context, and a sense of natural environment co-existing with the built environment. The presence of mature trees in the triangular space produces another strong landscape element.
- Both the gateway to the castle and the brewery buildings make a strong visual impact, and give a unique identity to the town.
- The group of widows' almshouses built around the church and beside the gateway are a lovely example of picturesque architecture, and contribute as a group to the quality of the town.



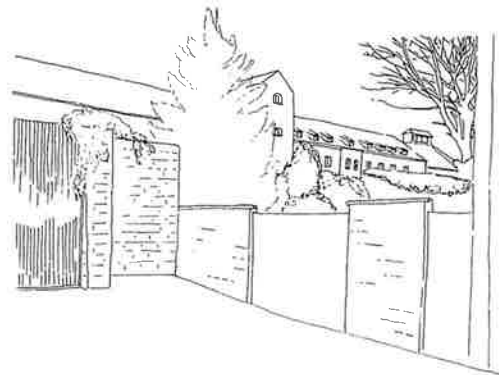
Picturesque group of widows' houses

Brewery and maltings in the centre of Castlebellingham

Row of modern houses produces an unusual rhythm along the street

Conclusion

Castlebellingham is a small town with considerable architectural, urban design and landscape interest. It will have a new opportunity to exploit these when the M1 mototway frees the town of its pitiless traffic burden.



Carlingford

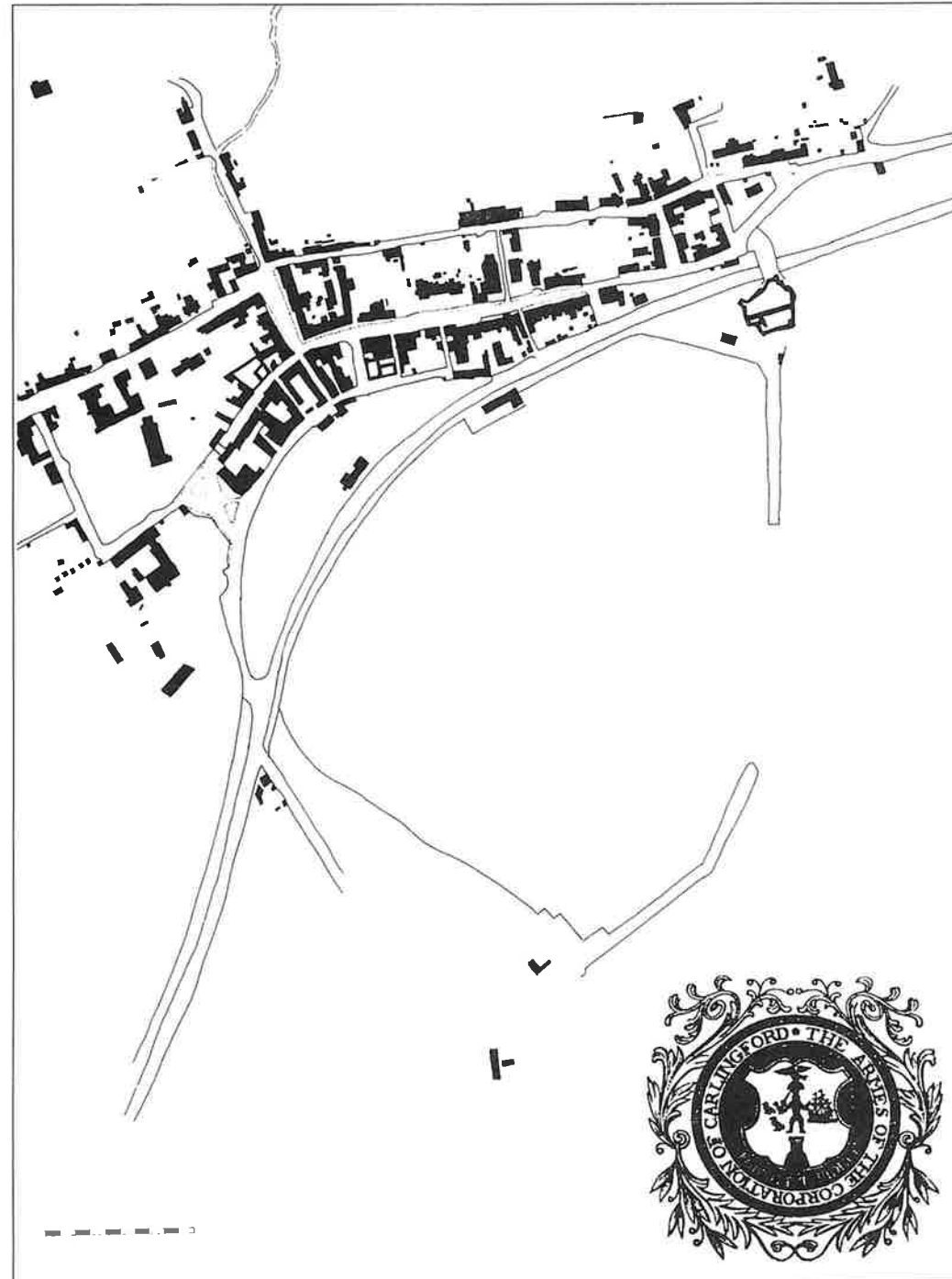
Mediaeval borough

Carlingford received borough status in 1326, which marked the beginning of the creation of a fortified town with walls. Early maps of Ireland in the 15th and 16th centuries record the position of Carlingford and its significance as a port and town. The tight urban structure is explained by the constriction of walls, which contained the main street and market square. There are still several fortified houses in the town, which, according to Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary*, arise from the town's frontier position within the Pale.

The position of Carlingford in the landscape is very striking. It is located at what was a convenient ferry crossing-point – a sheltered and deep-water position on Carlingford Lough. The town is backed by the mountains of the Cooley Peninsula, and lies on the open, level ground of the peninsula's coastal strip. It looks out over its harbour at the north side of the lough to the mountains of Mourne. The combination of a tight mediaeval town and a spectacular landscape generates a considerable visual impact.

Figure-ground plan of Carlingford

Seal of the arms of Carlingford and introduction to entry in Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary*





Settlement and town form

The enclosure of the streets of Carlingford is striking. The internal form of the town is closed, with a hard ground landscape of streets and square. The town layout is simple and intelligible, with two parallel streets leading at the south end to the predominantly green areas built outside the walls. The growth of the harbour and the incursion of the railway effectively severed the town edge from the coastal edge, but with the disappearance of the railway this connection is gradually becoming re-established.

The growth of suburban-scale development around the town has damaged the clarity of form, and needs a clear redefinition of the mediaeval form and future areas of growth by some sort of considered buffer zone and conservation guidelines for the town.



The mediaeval lane pattern is still evident

Mediaeval form is apparent in this view towards the churchyard



Mediaeval street pattern leading from one of the gateways to the town

Mediaeval stone building and churchyard at the edge of the walled town

Gateway at the southern end of the walled town



SETTLEMENTS

Summary of the patterns which have generated form

- The town is positioned on a coastal strip, in a linear form which follows the coast.
- The streets are narrow and buildings front directly onto them in the core of the town, creating a powerful urban form.
- The mediaeval tower-houses produce a striking historical atmosphere, whilst the height and frontage of other buildings maintain the urban quality.
- Materials in the town include a large amount of slated roofs and natural stone, some directly painted, and some plastered and painted. White-painted buildings prevail, but there are several strong-coloured buildings which produce an effective contrast.
- The southern edge of the walled town is marked by a mediaeval gate and the mature trees which surround the former Church of Ireland church. The church tower is supposedly a part of the town wall. The northern edge is defined by King John's Castle, a powerful visual stop on a rocky promontory.
- The mature trees which form an immediate backdrop to the core of the town on the southern side are a most important visual element on the open coastal edge.
- Much of the harbour has a strongly rural feel, as development has not linked it to the town.

Conclusion

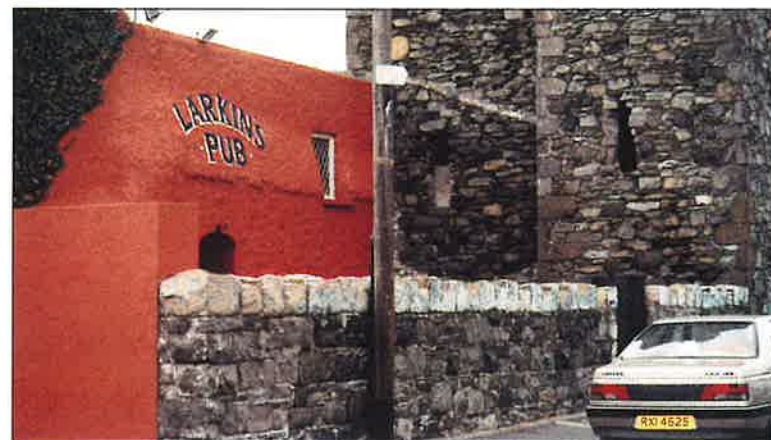
Carlingford is truly a heritage town of great historical, architectural and urban quality. It has a series of patterns within the town which have been followed effectively in most development. Landscape characteristics need to be protected and reinforced as new development is accommodated.

Traditional and modern architecture combine in the D'Arcy Magee Centre

Mediaeval tower-house beside Larkin's pub

opposite

View of Carlingford from the hills behind







Chapter 3 – **Building tradition in County Louth**

Any consideration of appropriate building design in County Louth should start with an appreciation of the architectural tradition and qualities of the many centuries of building which can be observed. This chapter is a simple guide to the main building types which can be seen in houses in County Louth, and spans over six centuries. Even in this small selection, the diversity and quality is remarkable.

Some of the buildings visited were in poor condition and were at risk through neglect or disuse, underlining the need for building protection to cover the simple, domestic, traditional buildings, as well as the more obviously architectural historic tower-houses and country houses. It is vital that the rich and diverse building tradition be conserved, as this will provide the backdrop and continuity for modern buildings.

Georgian house in Queensborough

opposite

A Victorian two-storey stone estate manager's house with spectacular chimneys is contained in the landscape. Stone wall and gateposts complement the building fabric.



Tower-Houses

15th-17th century

Tower-houses became the typical residences of the gentry during the fifteenth century, and were prevalent for about two hundred years. They were fortified houses, the residence of the local landowner. In County Louth they followed much the same design: three or four floors, barrel-vaulted ground floor, round spiral-stair tower, massive walls, narrow slit windows, and a wall-walk on the roof. They can be found within the mediaeval boroughs of Carlingford and Ardee, and in prominent, defensible places in the countryside.

Knock Abbey, Thomastown, has an extensive early Georgian addition and a 20th-century mock-mediaeval extension

The Mint, Carlingford



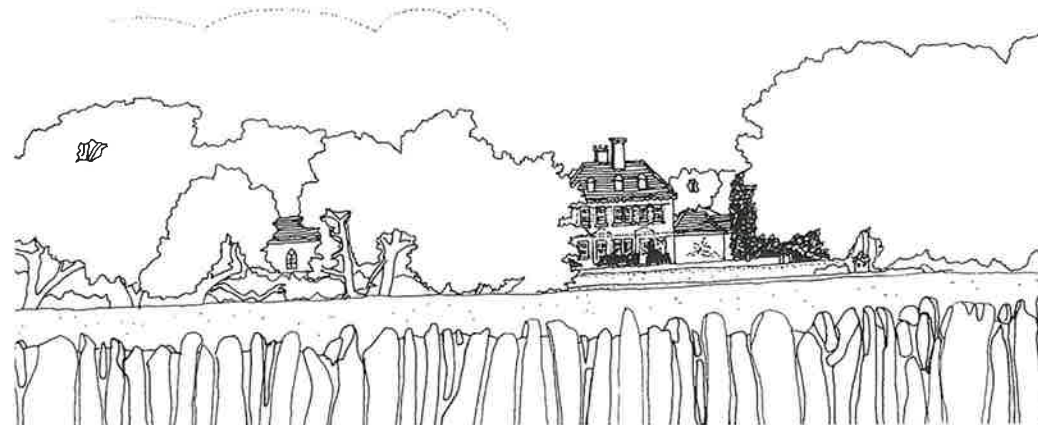
Country Houses (i)

17th century

Seventeenth-century country houses are relatively rare in the county. Beaulieu is one of the finest.

It was built close to the mouth of the Boyne river in the 1660s. It is said to have been designed by Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of St Paul's Cathedral in London. It has a superb setting, with mature oak and beech trees, stone walls, lawns and a small church beside the house. The south side of the house overlooks the Boyne.

The estate includes Queensborough, a group of estate houses along the Boyne, which are also of considerable interest.



Beaulieu – Entrance view with church alongside

Beaulieu – The elevation to the River Boyne

Country Houses (ii)

18th-19th century

A number of thatched houses of substantial size have survived from over 250 years ago. It is very difficult to date these buildings accurately. The one illustrated, near Ballymascanlon, has 19th-century windows, but it is likely that the openings were enlarged at that time.

The house is beautifully proportioned, with a raised garden at the front, screened from the road by mature trees. It is a most attractive example of traditional building in County Louth.

The slated farmhouse is at Collon, below the village and close to the river. It has renewed windows, but the form, proportions and doorway suggest that it is a house dating from the early 1700s. The house is simple and long, and has been extended at either side.

The elegant Georgian house [page 49] is situated at Queensborough. Its typical Georgian characteristics include the symmetrical five-bay elevation, with diminishing window size at the upper level, and the doorcase with semi-circular fanlight and raised entrance steps.



Thatched house near Ballymascanlon

Farmhouse at Collon

Rural Cottages

Pressure to replace thatch with more durable materials has spelled the end of an unbroken tradition of vernacular building. These houses had simple plan-forms, and were found individually, in clusters and in settlements. Buildings had a modest depth of about five metres, and frontages of about eight to ten metres. Outbuildings frequently formed a courtyard or garden to the front.

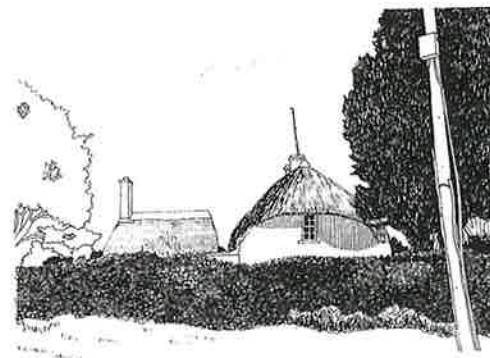
The thatched cottages of farming and fishing families present a rich heritage resource in County Louth. Their simple form, natural roof-covering and unassuming character bed them into the landscape. Often their outbuildings shelter the house from harsh winds, and the roof sweeps low, held at either side by strong verges.

The cottages were both single and two-storey, where the upper floor was held within the roofspace, and windows or dormers provided minimal light. During the nineteenth century, slate began to be used for modest houses as well as larger houses, and this gradually replaced thatch as a roofing material. Protection is needed for the remaining cottages, as they are becoming rare in the county.

Beautifully maintained cottage in Whitestown

Thatched cottage with slated single-storey outbuildings makes a sheltered courtyard in Whitestown. Note the tiny, fringed upper-storey windows.





Thatched cottage, Baltray

Thatched and slated cottages, Baltray

Simple two-up, two-down cottage,
Clogherhead



opposite

Two-storey adjoining thatched cottages in
Clogherhead

Fringed eaves are shaped around the small
upper-storey windows, Clogherhead

Thatched fisherman's cottage at
Clogherhead. The bold use of colour on
external features creates an attractive
contrast with the whitewashed walls.



Tenant Cottages

Many landlords provided housing for workers on their estates. They would prepare designs or use pattern books to produce architecturally self-conscious buildings, even if they were very modest in size. They contrast with the vernacular building tradition of the other modest rural houses. The two examples shown depict roadside tenants' cottages. Their condition would give rise to fears about their survival.

Roadside cottages on the Ardee Road

Terraced cottages at Ballymascanlon

Fanciful, castellated, through-drive gate lodge at Castlebellingham. Gate lodges were a typical expression of the landlord's wish to announce the architectural quality of the estate at its entrance. Their design varied considerably, from the monumental to the romantic, the design of which was often derived from pattern books of the era.



Village Houses

Many of the villages were built, or added to, by landlords. In Castlebellingham, the widows' houses are an example of landlord altruism. They were designed in the picturesque style in the Georgian period.

The traditional terrace houses, also in Castlebellingham, belong to an earlier period – up to a century before – and are located close to the brewery and maltings. They have steeply pitched roofs and chimney gables. A small front garden sets them back from the road. These houses would have been built with random rubble stone, and faced with lime plaster. They contrast with the use of cut-stone quoins, coursed rubble, brick window reveals, decorative fascias, and the extraordinary chimneys of the widows' houses .



Whitewashed village house with sweet-scented roses, County Louth

Traditional terrace houses in Castlebellingham

An example of the widows' houses in Castlebellingham



Modern, 20th-century Housing

So many houses have been built during the twentieth century that it is difficult to identify types. Unhappily, the continuity of treatment which characterised the traditional buildings, and the discipline with which the classical styles were interpreted were not replicated in the building movements of the twentieth century. The result is a diversity of styles and a wide variation in quality.

The examples shown represent only a fragment of types. They are chosen to reflect the quality to be found in an architecture which sought to express its time, yet they are also examples which have contributed to the county by respecting principles of siting and the use of appropriate materials.



The round house near Collon is a unique object in the landscape, reminiscent of windmill forms and prominent as the tower-houses. It is a strong statement within an open and rolling landscape, and creates a modern landmark.

This is an unusual row of houses in Castlebellingham, set below the road and emphasising the form of the roofs. The design uses the variation created by the form of the garage and the house as a rhythm along the street. Thus, whilst this is a new insertion, it obeys the basic rules of frontage and produces a skillful rhythm which contributes to the village.





Museum at Mellifont Abbey – The proximity to the abbey allowed the reuse of this old farmhouse whilst retaining its simple proportions and form. The extension emphasises its newness through the use of different materials and form. The retention of the mature tree is commendable.

This extraordinary juxtaposition of mediaeval and modern on the rise of the hill at Termonfeckin shows two individual and powerful expressions of their time – both have indented and fragmented forms. Neither was designed to blend in with the landscape; the new house was designed as a foil for the old.



BUILDING TRADITION



This modern house at Queensborough, Baltray, sits comfortably in a much older landscape setting.

This house is located beside the main Drogheda-Dundalk road. It was built about twenty years ago, and extended recently. The form reads as a series of distinct roofs which appear to float above the glass. The building is specific to its site, and by now is well set into the landscape.



Grouped Buildings

In village, town or open country, the grouping of buildings is an opportunity to create public or semi-private space, to strengthen visual character, to control the impact on the landscape, and to avoid the appearance of sprawl. The layout of landlord towns was a recognition of the opportunity for place-making in the urban and village environment, which generated much urban quality in the county's settlements. Today, we have successful examples of housing layouts; more often their setting is ignored. These examples show the different impacts which can be achieved with grouped layouts.



Termonfeckin golf course – These houses occupy a bleak, windswept site and need their own shelter. Grouping limits the impact and leaves the fields around relatively undisturbed.

Collon village green – An industrial landlord, the Foster family, created the village and these cottages which define the green. The market house completes the space.





Queensborough, Baltray – Linear estate village is varied in house types but holds together well with continuous stone walls fronting the road

Whitestown – Linked cottages set back from the road provide a stretch of continuous frontage in the village

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to show the ever-varying presence of architecture in County Louth – from the unselfconscious, charming rural cottages, to the grand and imposing country houses. History and heritage has shaped the built quality of the county within a rich and varied landscape. Within that variety, there is a continuity of tradition and a sense of belonging in the landscape. There is no limit to the creative possibilities in the new architecture. It will flourish through acknowledgement of the continuity of building tradition within the unique landscapes of the county, and in its expression of local identity through an appropriate architecture.



Ardee – New buildings adopt the scale of adjacent grain stores. The archway leads to an enclosed square surrounded by new houses, creating an attractive town-centre-scale development.

Collon – New housing creates a street edge and steps down with the gradient. A gentle rhythm is developed by the building elements: doors, windows, downpipes, overhanging porches and roofs.





Chapter 4 – Policy guidelines for settlement, growth and buildings in the countryside

This chapter sets out the background to policies about development in the county and both the national and local framework within which design guidelines should operate. The policies included in the County Development Plan are summarised here, but they are not a comprehensive statement of the Plan, which should be referred to for the statutory basis for policy.



Carlingford – planning for the future means safeguarding the environment of Co Louth

Recent development in Louth Village strengthens the village form

opposite

New sheltered housing in Carlingford



Sustainable development in County Louth

The Government has published a national policy for sustainable development which local authorities are required to adopt according to the particular circumstances of their settlement patterns. Louth County Development Plan closely mirrors these provisions, the thrust of policies aiming to ensure that sustainable development is achieved throughout the county. The first part of this chapter is a summary of the most relevant parts of the National Sustainable Development Strategy.

National Sustainable Development Strategy **Urban-generated development in rural areas**

Although the predominant national rural characteristic is one of rural decline, there are rural areas, such as those around Dublin, and including County Louth, where there is intense pressure for growth generated by those people who work in the nearby city and towns, and those who would like to develop tourist housing or second homes in scenic areas. In a general sense, these demands are unsustainable for the following reasons:

- 1 Being at a distance from work, shops, schools and entertainment demands a high level of fossil fuel energy-consumption on a day-to-day basis.
 - 2 Individual septic tanks pose a threat to groundwater protection and water supplies.
 - 3 Roads, transport and waste collection costs are increased.
 - 4 There may be a negative impact in terms of the urban fabric of the smaller towns.
- The National Strategy proposes that certain principles should be adhered to in respect of such development, and includes:
- restriction of development along national primary and secondary roads for traffic safety reasons;
 - recognition of the need to preserve outstanding landscapes and views;
 - integration of one-off housing into the landscape, through good design, good use of site and use of appropriate building materials;
 - use only of sites suitable for sewage disposal and drainage;
 - encouragement for rehabilitation of derelict houses, which in certain instances may be a more sustainable option than the construction of a new dwelling;
 - clear demarcation between urban and rural land uses to help prevent



urban sprawl, to encourage more sustainable development patterns in larger settlements, and to help maintain the rural landscape.

These issues are specifically covered in the Louth County Development Plan.

National Sustainable Development Strategy
Conservation of the architectural heritage

The refurbishment of older buildings which have intrinsic architectural, historic or traditional qualities is seen as a major element of the sustainable development policy and is emphasised at a time when government is introducing new legislation to ensure the adequate protection of the architectural heritage. Local authorities play a prime role in this new structure, and must ensure that protected buildings are not

Cottages at Ballymascanlon – These are part of the rich architectural heritage of the county, but are at risk and urgently in need of protection and repair

opposite

Large new urban-style dwellings in the countryside make a decisive change in the landscape. This prominent development is along the coast road near Termonfeckin.

endangered by neglect or by ignorance, and that they should be protected as part of the development plan.

County Louth already has an extensive list of protected properties, but it is likely that a countywide inventory of buildings of architectural, historical and traditional importance will identify a much larger number, including town and village houses which have a unique quality as a group, traditional farm buildings and thatched cottages.

National Sustainable Development Strategy
Design, construction, and energy-efficiency in sustainable housing

The basic principles are quite straightforward – minimise artificial lighting, heating and mechanical ventilation; conserve water; use site

and materials wisely; recycle where possible; exploit energy-intelligent design. Energy efficiency improvement in buildings, resulting from increased insulation standards, will continue to play a major part in giving maximum comfort to occupants whilst causing minimum pollution of the atmosphere.

These extracts from the Government Sustainable Development Policy serve to confirm that the objectives included in the Louth County Development Plan closely mirror this policy, and also to highlight national concerns about those local issues which are experienced in County Louth.



Development policies and the County Development Plan

The Louth County Development Plan is the vehicle for setting out policies for settlement. As a statutory document, it should be the first point of reference for anyone seeking to build in the county.

This summary gives a flavour of those policies, but it is important to refer to the Development Plan to understand the context in which they are set out.

County Development Plan

Housing development strategy

The introduction to the housing development strategy emphasises the economic disadvantages of servicing an increasingly dispersed settlement pattern, and the social and physical implications of falling populations within existing settlements: the under-use of infrastructure, increased dereliction and vacancy levels of property.

There is concern that the rural parts of the county will not be able to accommodate new development in a satisfactory manner, and the tendency towards ribbon

development leads to a blurring of the definitive edge of the settlements.

County Development Plan

Preference for housing within existing settlement structures

The County Council wishes to retain the existing housing stock in the county, whilst expanding it through new housing development within the existing settlement structures. There may be exceptional cases due to family situations, local rural employment, or where renovation of

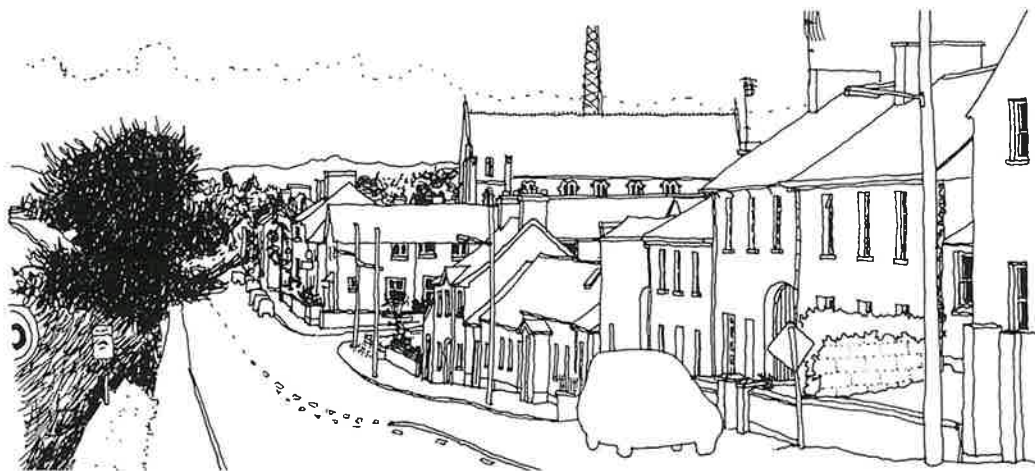
an existing derelict property is concerned where building elsewhere may be approved.

There will, nevertheless, be particular limitations to ensure that protection is afforded to the landscape and coastline of the county, and to proposed Natural Heritage Areas.

County Development Plan

Avoiding ribbon development and urban sprawl

Settlements can become indistinct if the development reaches out into the



countryside, creating ribbon development and linking one village or town with another.

It becomes particularly important to make a definite edge between settlements and the countryside when dealing with larger settlements – Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee – to try to contain urban sprawl.

County Development Plan

Dealing with rural housing within specially designated areas

The Development Plan designates certain areas within which any proposed development will be severely restricted. These are as follows:

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

There are two such areas identified in the county:

- OB1, which is the Ravensdale / Carlingford area, and
- OB2, which is the coastal area around Port Oriel and Clogherhead.

- Areas of High Scenic Quality (AHSQ)

There are six of these areas considered as significant scenic reserves, and they are distributed from north to south throughout the county.

- Scenic Routes

This is a baseline list of routes which are seen to need protection from adverse developments in order to preserve their rural character and the views from the routes.

- Coastline of Special Scenic Quality (CSSQ)

This often overlaps with the scenic routes, and covers about two-thirds of the coastline. A general objective in these areas is to resist development of any kind within two hundred metres of the shoreline.

Coastline in County Louth possesses a distinctive and special beauty

opposite

A distinctive edge between settlement and countryside



County Development Plan
Differential areas of development control

Recognition that the county is not a homogeneous region in development terms has led to the proposal of four distinctive areas with different characteristics for the purposes of development control:

- the areas of high amenity as set out;
- the hinterlands of Dundalk and Drogheda;
- the remaining rural areas of the county;
- the designated development centres.

There are differing restrictions on housing development in each of the distinctive areas to ensure that the

objectives are achieved. They include limitation on house size (140m² to 150m²) in designated scenic areas, and minimum plot sizes (0.2 ha.). In some areas, there is provision for sterilising further land for development adjacent to the road, and for maintaining a minimum (100m) frontage to the road. To avoid ribbon development, a maximum of three houses in a row is permitted, with minimum distance between rows of four hundred metres. Minimum garden sizes are set down: from 90m² to 150m², with a requirement generally for on-site garage and parking provision.

These requirements are specific to particular area designations, and should be checked in the County Development Plan.

Detailed provision is made to fulfil the objectives set out above, which are as follows:

- to preserve and protect the natural, unspoilt physical landscape and beauty of the area;
- to protect areas of High Scenic Quality from over-development;
- to protect the coastline;
- to avoid ribbon development;
- to preserve the rural character.

The identification of a large number of development centres is intended to encourage residential development to locate within existing villages and nucleated settlements.

The guidelines which follow are based on an interpretation of these policy statements, to assist in achieving the positive development objectives set out for the county, whilst paying careful attention to the environmental situations which demand a sensitive and sustainable response.

Vulnerable dune system adjacent to a golf course





No shelter on an exposed coastal site

Discreet building in a sensitive landscape near Ravensdale





Chapter 5 – Design guidelines for countryside, towns, villages and development centres

This chapter offers design guidelines for single houses and clusters of houses in the countryside, where the location is appropriate, within towns and villages, and within the designated development centres of the county.

Ireland's rural history, and that of County Louth, has ensured a continuity of habitation in the countryside. Formerly, living in the countryside reflected farming patterns, with the single farmstead and associated outbuildings on the land. Today's pattern of development in the rural environment indicates changing lifestyles and aspirations. The availability of vehicular transport and greatly improved telecommunications means that distance from the workplace or urban centres no longer creates an obstacle to living in the countryside.

The rural dream remains strong in Ireland. However, creeping suburbanisation of the rural landscape, unless managed and guided, will erode the very attributes that are treasured about the countryside.

The availability of well-designed urban houses, with adjacent green

areas, in proximity to services, schools, shops and the workplace is vital to the creation of a sustainable structure for living in the country. Travelling long distances to perform daily tasks can increase stress and consumes non-renewable fuel. However, the realisation that countryside homes can become viable workplaces, due to the advent of tele-industries, with fax machine, phone and computer to provide the basic ingredients for effective rural-based jobs within the community, is creating a reassessment of the potential for country living.

Whilst the best of traditional building and local architecture can influence new design, the demands of modern lifestyle create a new challenge: how to successfully integrate a new home into the rural environment. Site-sensitive design looks to local influences, such as climate, natural features, traditional built forms and views.

By recognising and realising the potential for design in the landscape, new development can promote site-sensitive houses and clusters which add to the distinctive nature and quality of place in the countryside, whilst strengthening the settlement

structure for the county.

The guidelines in chapter 5 are divided into three parts, as follows:

- 1 Design guidelines for single houses in the countryside
- 2 Design guidelines for towns and villages
- 3 Design guidelines for grouped development in designated development centres

opposite

New terraced housing is sympathetic to the urban character of Carlingford

Design guidelines for single houses in the countryside

Traditional Patterns

Observation of the patterns of design and location of traditional houses can give a strong lead in setting out design guidelines for new dwellings.

Traditional houses take advantage of opportunities for shelter in the following ways:

- by locating houses away from the full force of prevailing winds, and sheltering it, where possible, by the lie of the land and its natural features
- by creating sheltered situations through the planting of trees and hedgerows; older houses benefit from the maturing of the planted landscape, which cannot be achieved overnight with new houses
- by using enclosing walls to create good microclimates and to define and shelter gardens and yards
- by exploiting the form of the house and outbuildings in a way which creates enclosure and shelter.

Farm cottage in timeless setting sits unobtrusively as part of the landscape



The form of traditional houses was invariably simple, relying on the walls and projecting porches and outbuildings for variations in form and to enclose space around the house.

The making of the entrance is a very important design characteristic in County Louth, as elsewhere: substantial piers, stone walls at either side, gateways composed in countless different ways to give expression to the entrance.



This house in Ravensdale is set into a well-planted and sheltered location. Immediately above is a new house, which is barely visible, despite its proximity, because of pre-existing mature screen-planting.

The choice of a sheltered site will allow this almost-finished house bed into its setting relatively quickly

Design Guidelines 1: site-sensitive design

CHOOSE A SHELTERED SITE OR THE MOST SHELTERED PART OF A SITE

- Identify and use the natural sheltering features of the site: folds in the land, contours, existing trees and hedges. Aim to design above frost hollows and below the skyline. Try to understand the local climate on site.
- Establish site orientation and ensure that the design takes advantage of the sun.
- Recognise wind patterns (obtain a wind rose for County Louth). Minimise exposure through design.
- Identify views from the site in order to include them in requirements for enclosure and shelter.
- Consider views to the site and building, and their impact on the landscape.

CREATE MORE SHELTER WITH NEW PLANTING AND LAND-SHAPING

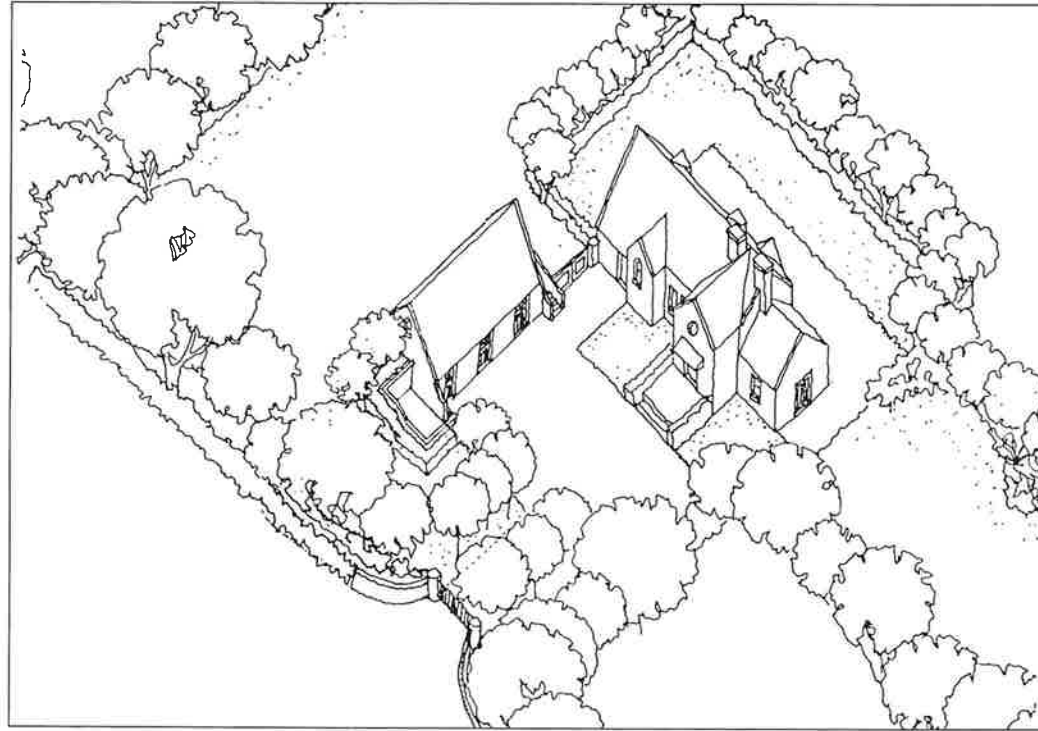
Planting trees and hedges and creating shelter belts can significantly reduce the impact of the wind and will save up to 15% in heating costs.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Shape the building and land to guide the wind above, around and away. Information on planting for shelter is included in the appendix.

CREATE FURTHER SHELTER BY USING WALLS AND OUTBUILDING TO ENCLOSE AREAS AROUND THE HOUSE

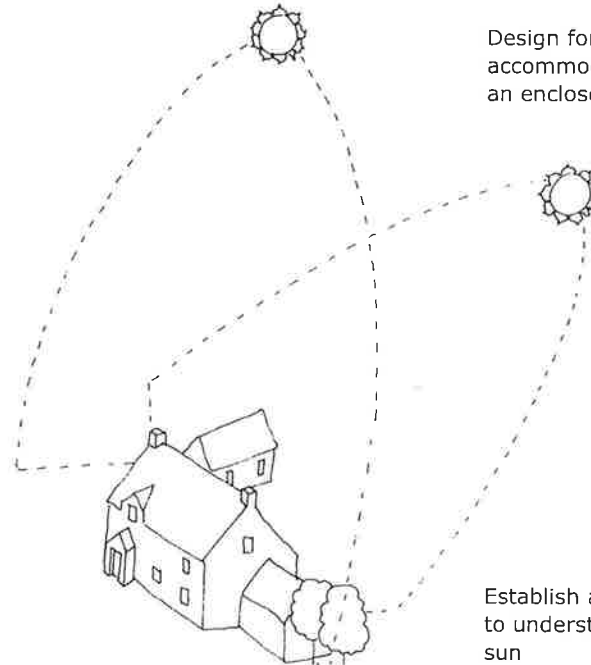
There are opportunities for imaginative design solutions which exploit the built elements on the site to create enclosed and sheltered areas around the house, in conjunction with tree and hedge planting. Traditional farmyards and gardens exemplify these opportunities. The elements which can be used might include garage, stores, sheds, stable accommodation and conservatories.



Design for house which uses ancillary accommodation and landscaping to create an enclosed, sheltered area at the front

EXPLOIT THE SUN

The positioning of the house relative to the sun can make substantial differences to the climatic conditions both within and outside the house. Advantageous orientation allows the sun to be used as a component of the heating system of the house.



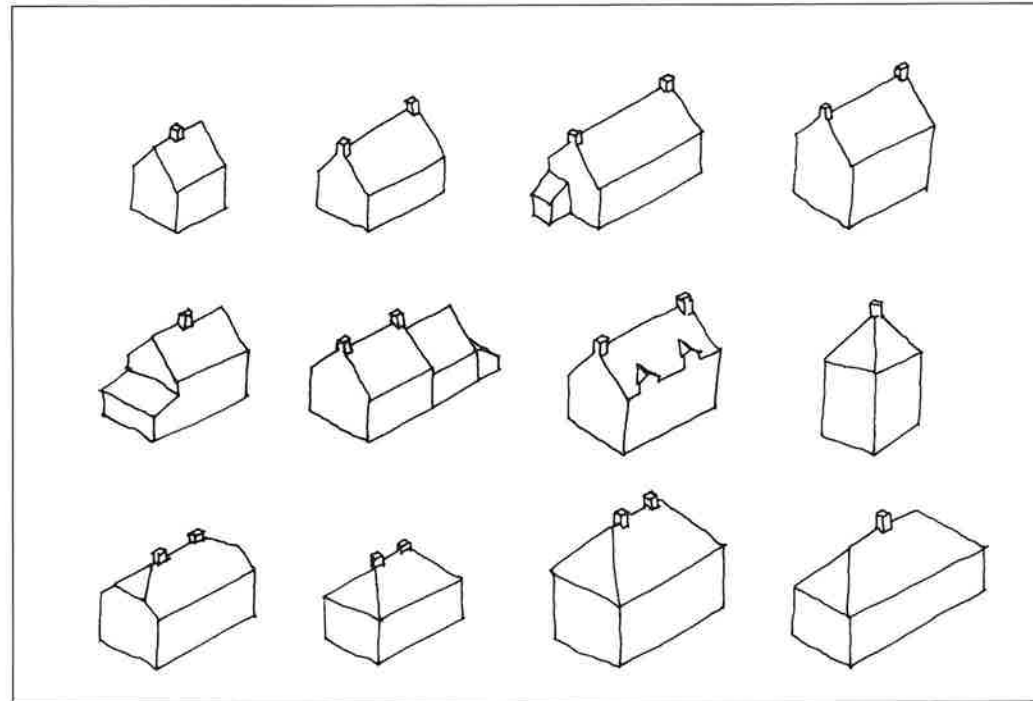
Establish a sun-path diagram for the house to understand how to effectively exploit the sun

Design Guidelines 2: presence in the landscape

SIMPLE FORMS LOOK BEST IN THE LANDSCAPE

For the most part, houses are visible and often prominent in the landscape, at least until planting grows. Most modern houses with a simple sloping roof and rectangular form are innocuous in the landscape, but bulky or unfamiliar forms can look wrong. Whilst a contrast between old and new can be successful, it is more likely to clash, unless handled with skill.

Traditional building form provides hints for creative reinterpretation relative to scale in the landscape, depth of building, frontage characteristics and use of materials. Avoid complex and unfamiliar forms.



Examples of familiar forms in the landscape. Beware of unfamiliar and overly complicated forms.

The same house, but 'finished' differently. The simple form is transformed by the use of a lower roof-pitch, inclusion of a bulky dormer, horizontal windows, fake shutters, the application of a mixture of styles and materials, and inappropriate planting.

LIMIT THE RANGE OF MATERIALS USED

Building materials on offer make it possible to use a wide range on a single-building site. This can result in a visual hotchpotch. The setting will often suggest appropriate materials which are compatible with neighbouring dwellings. Consider



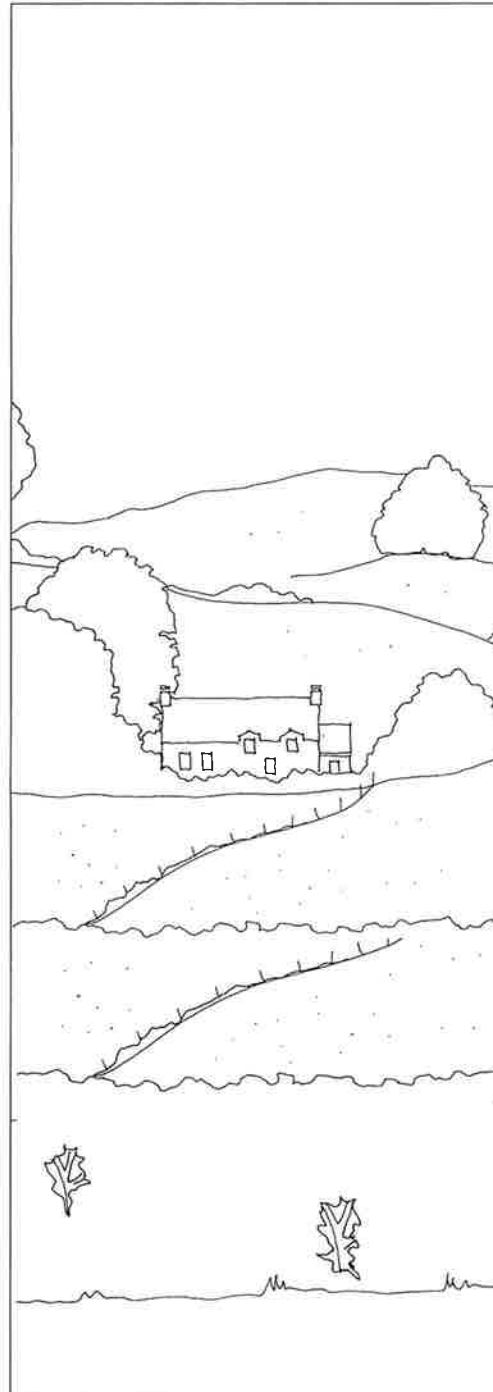
using similar materials for house, boundary walls and outbuildings. Avoid, for example, brickwork in areas where it is not usually chosen, and the use of token panels of stonework.

CONSERVE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE AS THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL SITING OF HOUSES

In most situations, the existing field boundaries and landscape elements are an inseparable part of the larger landscape.

By conserving these patterns it is easier to create a landscape-sensitive solution.

New building blends with the landscape because it sits within it. By carefully siting the house to make use of existing hedgerows and trees for shelter, any rawness is avoided.



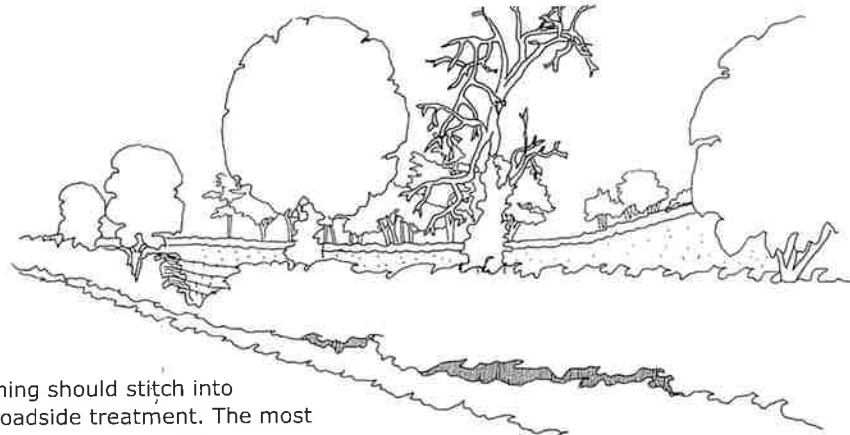
Design Guidelines 3: the roadside frontage

GOOD ENTRANCES CAN BE BOTH BEAUTIFUL AND SAFE WITHOUT DESTROYING THE HEDGEROWS AND BOUNDARY WALLS

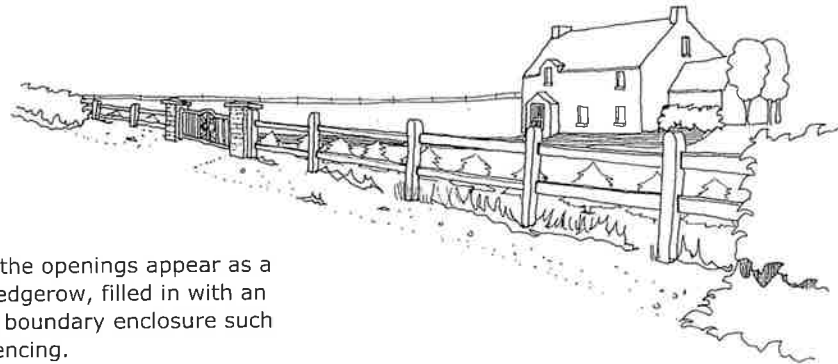
The greatest visual impact of built development in the countryside is perhaps created by the entrances to house sites. These new entrances, together with their gateway, or opening and driveway, have created large holes in the natural environment by the removal of hedgerows from the leafy lanes of County Louth, and their replacement with ranch-type fencing, concrete walls, or post and wire fencing.

The openings must meet demanding engineering requirements for visibility and car movement, and consequently can be of some length. It is a design challenge and opportunity to make an opening along the roadway which complements the frontage. The traditional elements of hedgerow, bank, wall and gateway can be represented in an original and imaginative way, without destroying roadside quality.

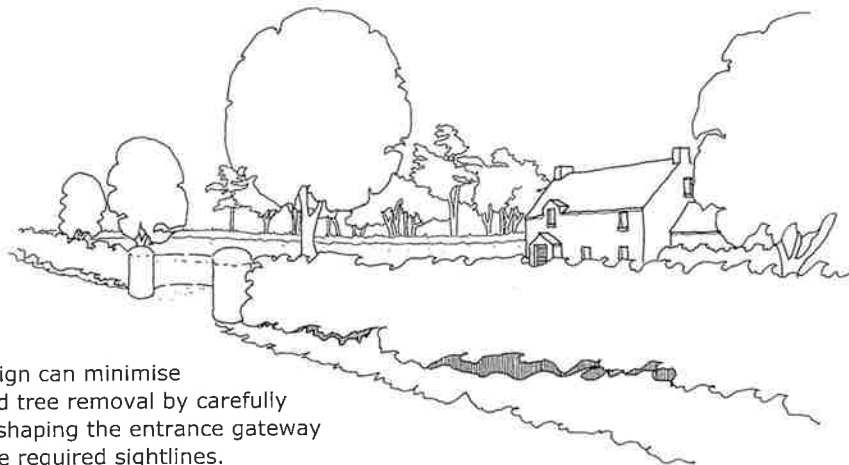
Avoid harsh ground surface treatment. Gravel, for example, is less obtrusive than asphalt in the natural environment. Use materials and landscape treatment which are



The new opening should stitch into the existing roadside treatment. The most favourable point of access is where an existing hedgerow is degraded, or a tree, through age or condition, requires removal.



All too often, the openings appear as a gash in the hedgerow, filled in with an inappropriate boundary enclosure such as concrete fencing.



Judicious design can minimise hedgerow and tree removal by carefully locating and shaping the entrance gateway to achieve the required sightlines.

compatible with the area. New boundary edges should recognise local traditional techniques. Stone walls are prevalent in many areas of the county. Often grassed verges exist in front of the boundary.

The difficulties arise in a marked way when there are several frontages, and particularly when these are adjacent to one another. In these circumstances, it is important to establish rules to ensure that the entrances are compatible, and combine to create an attractive rhythm.

Making an entrance

A mature landscape leaves only the entrance as a hint of the house within



Design Guidelines 4: different landscape settings

BUILDING ON THE COASTLINE

Those areas which are suitable and available for building along the coast are likely to be low-lying and exposed, offering little protection from the topography or landscape elements.

Coastline areas have suffered from the building of individual houses, one beside the other, generating a random and disparate appearance.

The application of guidelines about materials, form and boundary treatment should help to improve future development, and planting for shelter is a most important

consideration. In bleak, open and flat landscapes, the house form will be visible from many miles away, and will create a silhouette on the horizon. Design needs to recognise this challenge and use methods to break down scale, or creatively reinterpret traditional strong forms in the landscape, such as barns, towers and other recognisable built features. Wind protection should be considered at design concept stage.

Siting in a flat, exposed situation will require years of careful planting and screening to achieve satisfactory shelter and a softening of the impact on the landscape

BUILDING IN THE CENTRAL PLAIN

This area contains the richest agricultural land in the county. It has an established landscape tradition, derived from the division of land, with stone walls in some places, hedgerows and grassed banks in others. Belts of trees define the horizons. In this area, because of the established landscape, the form of houses is more easily accommodated and may not be the dominant consideration. However, the development of sites where field boundaries are ignored and roadside hedges removed along the entire frontage is very damaging to the traditional landscape.

New house in established landscape will require further planting to bed it in its environment



BUILDING IN UPLAND AREAS – THE DRUMLIN AREA, THE RIDGE AND THE COOLEY PENINSULA

The upland areas cover a range of distinct landscape types in County Louth, much of which is recognised in designations of outstanding natural beauty and areas of scenic quality, which limit development. From a design perspective, there are some additional generalised guidelines for upland areas which should be helpful:

TWO-STOREY BUILDINGS CAN MERGE SATISFACTORILY INTO THE LANDSCAPE

A backdrop of hills and mature trees helps to contain the scale of building.

IN UPLAND AREAS, CHOOSE THE GENTLEST PART OF THE SLOPE

Choose a gentle slope or a naturally occurring indentation. If excavation is necessary, minimise the cut into the hill and grade the resultant material carefully to ensure that it blends with existing contours.

Farmhouse in coastal location achieves shelter by positioning and planting

KEEP DEVELOPMENT OFF THE SKYLINE

There are visual as well and climatic reasons for advocating that development be kept off the skyline. Development on the skyline interrupts the natural landscape form, and whilst some strong and positive built landmarks exist, it is not appropriate that buildings should be allowed to litter the skyline.

IDENTIFY THE BUILDING ZONE IN UPLAND AREAS

It is usually possible to identify a zone in upland areas where development has primarily been located. Typically, this is above the valley bottom, which is prone to marshy land, flooding and frost hollows, and below the area where grassland gives way to moorland. The hillside road position reinforces this building zone. In the Cooley Peninsula

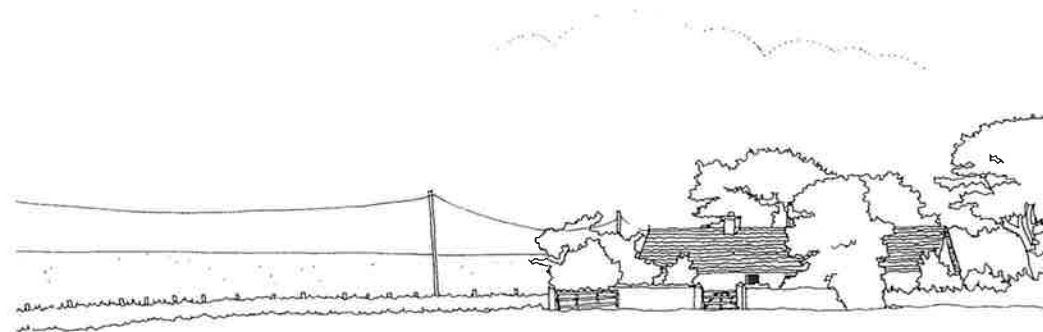
area, these slopes rise from the coastal plain and follow a horizontal band along the lower hillside. Building above this zone should be avoided. Recognising this zone helps to lend coherence to the overall landscape and the positioning of buildings.

The drumlin areas have gentle, undulating and rounded forms, with small hills and ever-changing skylines. Development should be positioned in the lower folds of the landscape.

PLANT FOR SHELTER

Use and conserve existing shelter. Create a sheltered environment to reduce problems of coastal exposure. Fortify existing planting on site. Recognise local plant types and choose carefully. (See the appendix which deals with building for shelter.)

A cottage in an exposed coastal area is surrounded by planting for shelter and its gable end is to the sea



Design guidelines for towns and villages



Settlement identity derives from recognisable characteristics or patterns. Their identification provides the basis for offering design guidelines. Unthinking conformity can lead to monotony. Progress and different lifestyles will continually generate new patterns to be absorbed into the traditional form. Their successful introduction is reliant on good judgement and balance.

Patterns for settlements in County Louth are described here. The study of patterns is an objective preparation

for design in a particular place. They are a generalisation only, and would not be precisely the same for any two villages. They need to be applied in line with the patterns for each place.

The built fabric of settlements

The settlement will have some public buildings – church, schools, market hall, community hall. These are usually buildings with special characteristics. They occupy larger sites than houses. They may address

existing public space. They may help to create public spaces by being set back from the street, or by picking up or making an axis in the town. Ordinary, thematic buildings like houses make up the fabric of the settlement. They have varied characteristics, but these usually fall within fairly well defined limits.

The setting of Carlingford, a mediaeval borough, on the Cooley Peninsula. Located at the foot of the hills, and fronting onto its sheltered harbour, it is defined and held in the landscape. Greenore is beyond.

Patterns

Scale of settlements

Scale in villages is typically single-storey, dormer and two-storey. It is rarely three-storey, except where industrial mills and storage buildings occur. In villages there is little conformity in house types; they include detached, semi-detached and terraced types.

Scale in towns is generally more homogeneous, with continuous streets of two-storey and sometimes three-storey buildings.

House Types

Houses in villages are usually set-back two to five metres from the road, with a low wall, but sometimes they front directly onto the street.

Houses in towns more usually front onto the street. Houses invariably have a pitched roof. Older houses usually have a 40° to 55° roof pitch. Frontages are generally eight to ten metres wide and one room deep, i.e. five to six metres.

Modern houses have between a 30° and 45° roof pitch, frontages up to about eight metres, and depths from six to eight metres. They conspicuously vary from the patterns of older buildings.

Commercial buildings

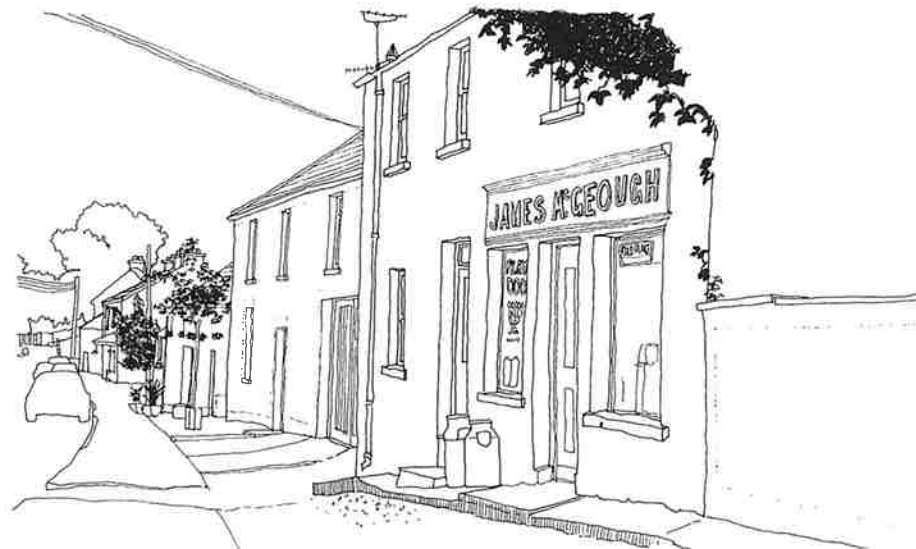
Commercial buildings include pubs, shops and garages/service stations. There is a tradition of two-storey shops and pubs, with residential accommodation above. Shopfronts are generally accommodated within this form. The scale of the garage/service station is usually single-storey, with large canopies and corporate advertising.

Streets

Houses with a small set-back on either side of the road create the feeling of a village street, with the notable exception of villages facing onto a river or the coast, where a single-sided street often occurs, as at Baltray and to some extent at Clogherhead.

The main streets of towns are generally enclosed, with house frontages on either side, sometimes with open spaces within the enclosure. There are exceptions, where there is frontage onto the sea, as in Blackrock.

The most concentrated area of the street is often built up along the footpath, with predominantly two-storey buildings. In the outer areas, the houses are generally set back from the road, and are more likely to include single-storey houses. The street form in villages is as much defined by boundary walls as by the houses themselves. In towns, the building is the frontage onto the street, giving a stronger urban character.



DESIGN GUIDELINES

The elements of building façades are usually consistent and repetitive: window and door openings, some arched gateway openings, shopfronts, and pitched roofs punctuated with chimneys. The distinctive character of many settlements derives from their position in the landscape and at coastal edges. Gaps in the street frontage allow vehicular access behind the houses, and provide views to the landscape throughout the village. In towns, the core is characterised by a continuous wall of buildings to the street, broken only by street junctions and yard entrances.

Landmarks

Landmarks position the settlement in its setting. They may be prominent buildings, such as tower-houses or churches, court houses or market halls.

Open Space

Green areas in the form of grass verges, and sometimes green spaces, occur on the village street. Hard areas are the street and the footpath, aprons of commercial and public buildings, and occasionally public spaces. Towns contrast with this, having mainly hard surface areas in their centre and green areas towards the edge, such as the old fair green in Ardee.



Green area on the edge of town, Ardee

opposite

Village scale in Louth

The heritage centre in Carlingford respects the hard-stone quality of the abbey tower behind, introduces glass, and accords volumetrically with existing buildings whilst not aping them



STRENGTHEN THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF THE SETTLEMENT

The distinctive character of the village needs to be understood. It may well derive from its position in the landscape, the coastal edge, transport routes, or river crossing.

New development should contribute to the distinctiveness of the place, and not diminish it.

PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SETTING

The position of the settlement in the landscape is usually very specific. Its natural environment setting should be protected.

REINFORCE THE FORM OF THE SETTLEMENT

The morphological characteristics of the settlement should be respected. Some settlements have linear forms, some concentric.

Some settlements have defined street edges, as in Ardee, some are set in the landscape, as in Termonfeckin.



The nature of Carlingford is created by being bounded on one side by water, and on the other by the hillside. Insensitive development would erode this quality.

Main Street, Ardee, with defined street edges and a view of the countryside beyond



SETTLEMENTS SHOULD HAVE CLEAR BOUNDARIES TO GROWTH

Whilst the village may be subject to growth at its edges, there should be an identifiable boundary at its ends to mark its limits in the landscape.

Put another way, the entrances to the village should be marked and emphasised, and not confused where new development is undertaken.

PROTECT LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS WITHIN AND VIEWS OUT

Gaps in the built form of a village, where streams or rivers may cross, or continuous belts of trees may run through, or fields may 'invade' the centre of the village, are elements which draw the landscape through the village, and should be retained and strengthened.

Gaps in the frontage, affording views to the landscape, should be sustained where new development is undertaken. Landscape views should not be eroded by intrusive development.



Tree-lined entrance to village frames the house and church, signalling the built-up area of Louth Village

Termonfeckin – A stream runs through the centre of the village



ENCOURAGE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT TO STRENGTHEN THE CORE, AND TRY TO SITE NEW PUBLIC BUILDINGS CLOSE TO THE CENTRE

New public buildings should be located with convenient access from the village centre. They should have a place in the village, rather than being placed at the edge without any connection.

Existing landmark buildings should be given due consideration for new uses in order to secure their conservation.

CONNECT NEW DEVELOPMENT WITH OPEN SPACE AND GREEN ROUTES

New development should be seen as an opportunity to increase the public zones of the village, with provision of public space. There should be easy pedestrian access within the settlement, with connection to the main street to strengthen the core of the settlement.



Ardee – New town housing is linked by bridge through revitalised landscaped area to town centre

This new restaurant and guesthouse in the centre of Carlingford helps to restructure the street



Traditional example of the margin in a village situation at Clogherhead. The setback has been observed in newer buildings on either side.



VEHICULAR ACCESS SHOULD CONNECT CONVENIENTLY TO THE TOWN

Vehicular access should normally be taken from the main street in a small settlement and within the built up boundary in a larger one. Vehicular access and parking provision should not dominate the environment; it should be integrated in an overall residential environment of quality.

FAVOUR INFILL AND DERELICT SITE DEVELOPMENT

Areas in the village which are unfinished; gap sites, derelict sites, unused areas within the boundary; should be given priority for development, in preference to development at the edge.

RESPECT AN INCREMENTAL FORM OF GROWTH

The scale of new development should respect the incremental form of the village. This will help to ensure that the village appears to be complete at any time.

Development in depth should be controlled, with ready access to the main street, whether pedestrian or

vehicular. Whilst residential schemes will have their own identity, they should also stitch into the town by using, for example, green routes which connect to schools or other parts of the town, or by exploiting vistas to landmark buildings.

Scale of development should work with the existing scale in the village. In the case of a village, it is likely to be two-storey, and in the case of a town, it may be appropriate to consider up to three-storey development.

CONSIDER THE MARGIN IN FRONT OF HOUSES

There should be a defined margin between the footpath and the front of the house to correspond with typical margins in the village. The edge should be defined with a boundary wall. The wall should be built of materials in keeping with the village: masonry, stone or rendered blockwork, as appropriate. The height of the boundary wall should be a minimum of 90cm, and up to 180cm where the wall acts as a screen for a private garden. The growth of hedges behind the walls is encouraged.

HOUSE FORMS SHOULD BE SIMILAR TO EXISTING FORMS

Providing houses in villages:

The form of houses along the building line should be similar to existing village forms, i.e. medium to wide frontage, pitched roof of not less than thirty degrees, and comparable ratios of window to wall. The houses should have an entrance to the street where the frontage is on the street.

Providing houses in towns:

The house should have an urban frontage, creating town houses which have little or no margin between house and footpath, comparable in feeling to the existing street houses whilst allowing for a residential environment with sufficient private space, parking and public space. Backland areas behind the main street can provide new housing opportunities, with connection to the street through an archway if necessary.



CREATE SAFE PRECINCTS FOR TOWN HOUSING

The traditional linear street form in towns is visually very powerful, but has environmental drawbacks concerning safety, privacy, identity of a group, control and security. The creation of precincts or courtyard areas with mixed car and pedestrian use produces an edge-to-the-street quality, with dramatic improvement in safety. Each area should have sufficient space for landscaping, access and parking to create precincts which are overlooked and safe for play.

A townhouse type, with a public front area and a private back area, is an effective and well-tried solution. Selective orientation will exploit solar gain and improve comfort, both for the house and garden. On-curtilage parking is generally preferred.

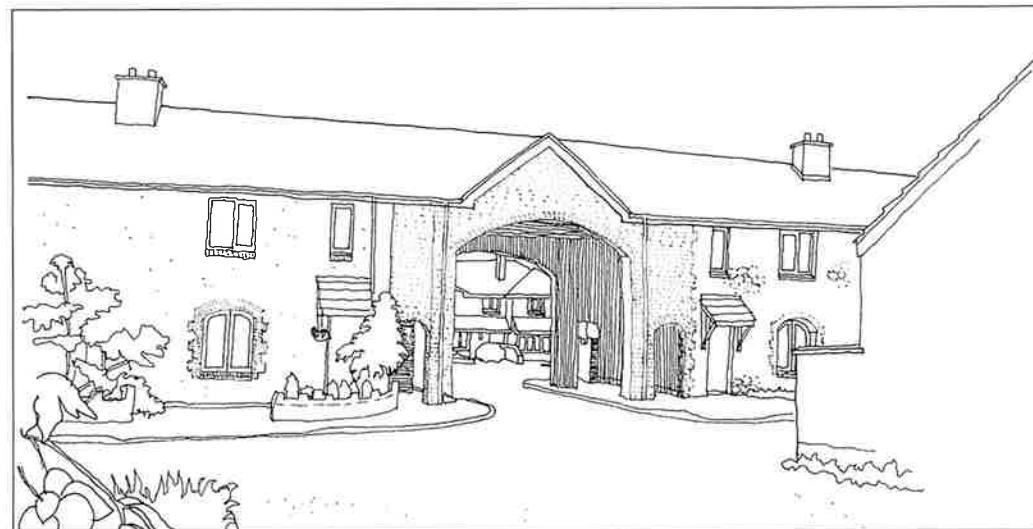


The town form is maintained in this terrace of houses which follows the street line and echoes the earlier street housing in Carlingford.

In-town development in Ardee retains the street form and produces a courtyard development to create a safe and secure precinct.

LANDSCAPED DESIGN HELPS TO SOFTEN THE IMPACT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Planting and landscape should be provided at the outset to soften the impact of new development, and should ideally form part of a designed network of green routes and spaces.



Design guidelines for grouped development

Design Guidelines: grouped development in designated development centres

1 – Housing clusters: groups of houses carried out by a developer

The clachan is the strongest image of a cluster from earlier times. Its economical use of ground effected a tight grouping of buildings with, no doubt, strong social interaction. Clustering defined and limited the inhabited area of the countryside, and created the opportunity for shelter within the cluster.

Today, however, each householder requires access and parking for cars, and space around the house for garden and outdoor activities, making it difficult to imagine that clachans could be seen as a model for development. Yet their form suggests that they could be an inspiration, if not a model, for grouping which is distinct in the landscape and visually coherent. Typically, present-day housing in groups lacks such coherence, and follows a pattern of site-division into roughly equal plots, either in linear form or in a cul-de-sac, with little regard for old field patterns, hedgerows, orientation, climatic conditions or the natural landscape.

Grouped housing helps sustainability. Water supply and sewage treatment systems can be grouped. Appropriate planting and boundary conditions can unify the whole. Each individual house can be positioned in accordance with climatic demands. The group can also provide much better climatic protection. Housing appearing as a cluster is very satisfying in the landscape.

2 – Grouped sites with separately designed houses

This type of development requires assiduous attention to ensure that the effect on the natural environment is not suburbanisation. Houses on each of the plots tend to be purpose-built for each owner with a deliberately original palette of materials, reflecting the individuality of the unit rather than the community of the group. Yet, if there are common rules about materials, boundary design, continuity of landscape treatment, common landscaped areas, and site entrances, the result could be of the highest quality without sacrificing individuality in the house design.

As more than one designer is usually involved, and sites are sold individually, the planning authority

should be approached at the outset by the owner, to define suitable plots and establish a common design brief.

The design of a group of houses in the countryside, in appropriate locations, offers the opportunity to optimise the potential for clustering and to set the group within the surrounding landscape. Farm clusters have existed over the years, and many generate beautiful spaces as well as achieving a sense of protection and shelter. Good examples may serve as a useful model for adaptation to present-day uses.

Local authority sheltered housing designed around a courtyard and located close to the town centre of Carlingford.



Design Guidelines: groups of houses

UNDERTAKE A THOROUGH SITE ANALYSIS

Identify climatic patterns, natural landscape features, orientation, wind direction, sun path, vegetation, trees, hedgerows, watercourses/springs, views to/from the site, problem zones (i.e. poor drainage or ground conditions), neighbouring buildings, traditional treatment of walls, etc.

EXAMINE THE LOCAL DESIGN VOCABULARY

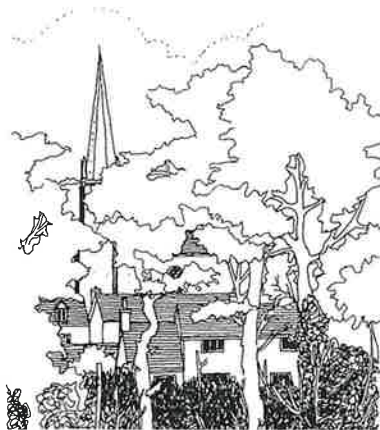
Examine the design vocabulary of historical and vernacular building types in the locality as one starting point for design.

TRADITIONAL CLUSTERS MAY PROVIDE USEFUL MODELS – CLUSTERS CAN IMPROVE SHELTER

Use each site and its associated outbuildings, such as garages and sheds, together with walls and neighbouring buildings, to shield from winds, thereby creating a favourable microclimate.

CONSIDER THE GROUP OF HOUSES AS A WHOLE

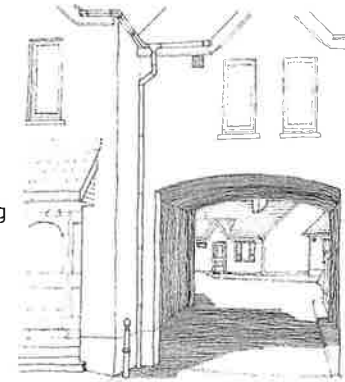
Grouped sites need to have common rules regarding materials, boundaries and landscape. Consider grouped parking or screened parking, and avoid excessive harsh surface treatment. Gravel surfaces are visually preferable to tarmac. Boundaries to each building in the group should be of the same design in terms of height and materials. The area between the boundary and the road should be treated in the same way throughout. These measures will help to unify the appearance of the group. Wherever possible, conserve natural hedgerows and trees on the boundary, and repair openings in hedgerows. Consider the impact of grouped housing from different views in the landscape. Design to minimise its effect by using natural contours, horizon lines and vegetation.



GENERATE OPEN SPACE AND PLAY AREAS WITHIN THE CLUSTER

Grouped housing can be designed to enhance the public/semi-private and private realms. Create opportunities to provide safe play areas for children and to utilise open space.

Carlingford
– Access from the main street through an archway to new housing behind



APPLY GUIDELINES TO CARAVAN PARKS

Caravan parks, by their nature, are grouped clusters. The general principles above apply in similar measure. The unsheltered and open characteristics of coastal locations increase the urgency to provide climatic protection through sensible layout, the use of attractive permanent boundary treatment as screening, and the undertaking of appropriate coastal planting.

APPLY GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL HOUSES WITHIN GROUPS

- Houses should recognise their responsibility towards their neighbours. Competing styles and the application of products 'onto' the house, such as plastic porticos, concrete balustrading, applied 'stonework', and the like, creates a confusing mixture.
- Aim to create a favourable microclimate on each individual site.
- Individual access points from the road can be unified through materials, height and gateposts.
- Individuality of design can be achieved through recognition of the natural planted features and climatic conditions on each plot through orientation. Houses which maximise climatic advantages have reduced running costs.
- Outbuildings present a design opportunity to increase privacy, shelter and enclosure, and to achieve an integral composition. These elements include porches, garages, sunrooms, sheds, pump houses, etc.
- Aim to hide services such as oil tanks, satellite dishes, washing lines, bins, etc.
- Anchor the house in the natural environment by fortifying existing planting with indigenous planting.



New terraces of houses with carefully considered stone walling boundaries and attractive gates enhance the built environment of Carlingford

The design of new houses is enriched by recognising prevailing winds, orientation,

landscape, relationship to other buildings, and methods to enhance privacy and create shelter. In this case, each plot is designed separately without acknowledgement of the above. The introduction of quality boundary edges and significant landscaping would benefit the whole.



Appendix

Planting for Shelter

Ireland has a higher wind speed in winter than most other European countries. The effects of exposure in coastal areas are compounded by salt-laden spray carried on the sea winds. In sheltered locations, however, the climate can be favourable. The role of shelter-planting is important to achieve this.

Most of the older houses in County Louth are located in the more sheltered positions, surrounded by belts of trees. Today, however, many houses are sited prominently, and are subject to strong gales, yet little consideration is given to shelter-planting. The type of suburban garden favoured by new owners is not sufficient to counteract the severe climatic conditions experienced in many coastal and rural locations.

The advantages of shelter-planting

Hedges, groups of trees, shrubs and shelter belts, when planted near buildings, have the following advantages:

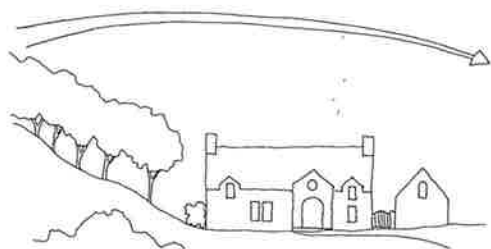
- they shelter buildings from cold winds and driving rain;
- they can reduce fuel consumption of the building by up to 20%;
- they provide privacy;
- they improve the appearance and comfort of the immediate area, making it more desirable as a place to live and work;
- they encourage wildlife;
- they soften the outlines and reduce the dominant appearance of new buildings;
- they help to harmonise the buildings with their surroundings;
- they provide an additional point of interest in the countryside, with varying forms, colours and textures throughout the year.

Planting for shelter creates a favourable microclimate and can reduce heating bills



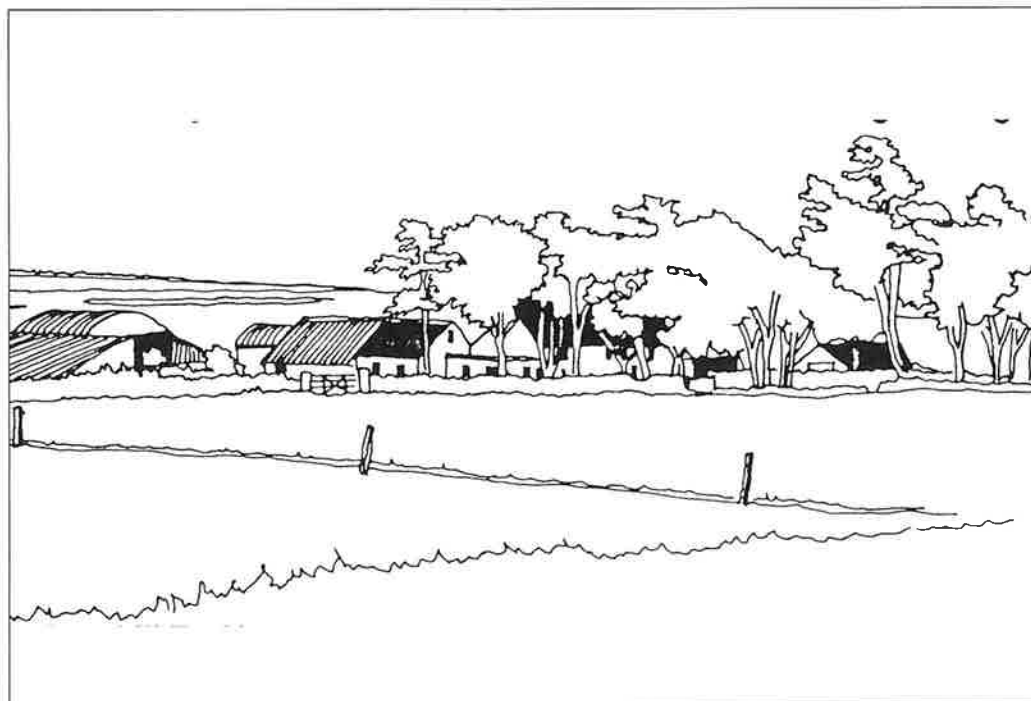
Siting

Shelter-planting should be located across the path of the wind and should be sited to make use of and improve local features such as ridges and outcrops. Planting on ridge tops is not recommended.



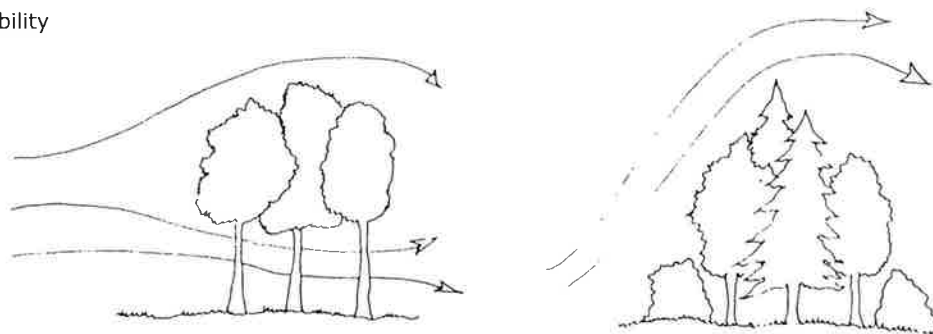
Permeability

A good shelter belt or hedge filters the force of the wind without causing damaging turbulence.



Permeability

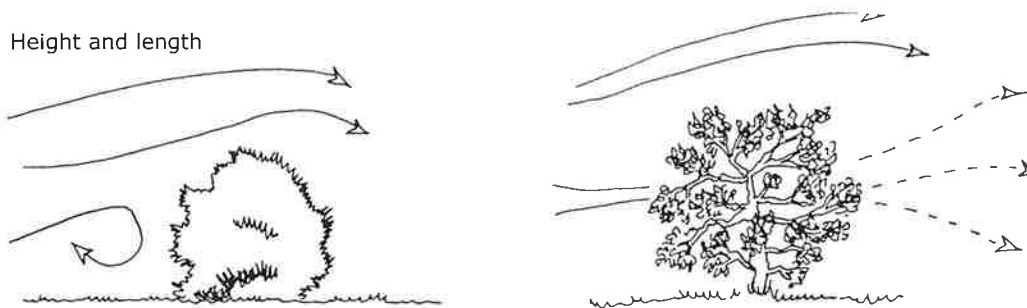
Profile



Profile

Shelter-planting should lift the wind, and not cause winds to be funnelled below the crown of trees. Therefore a shelter belt should have a hedge or wind-tolerant shrubs on the windward side, and taller trees in the centre.

Height and length



Height and Length

As a rule, the sheltered zone will extend for a distance twenty times the height of the trees and will become effective when the length exceeds twelve times the height.

Planting

A shelter belt should consist of not less than three rows of trees, with a row of broadleaved trees included, together with a hedge. Forestry transplants of 'whips' up to 50cm tall should be planted at two-metre spacing in staggered rows. In very exposed locations, planting should be on the leeward side of a stone wall, dyke, or timber lath screen.

Stock-proof hedges should be purely hawthorn, with plants 25cm to 50cm high, at 25cm spacing, in a double, staggered row 15cm apart, giving eight plants per metre.

Purely amenity hedges may contain other species as well as hawthorn, and may be planted in a single row at 30cm spacing.



Farmhouse in upland location achieves shelter by positioning and planting

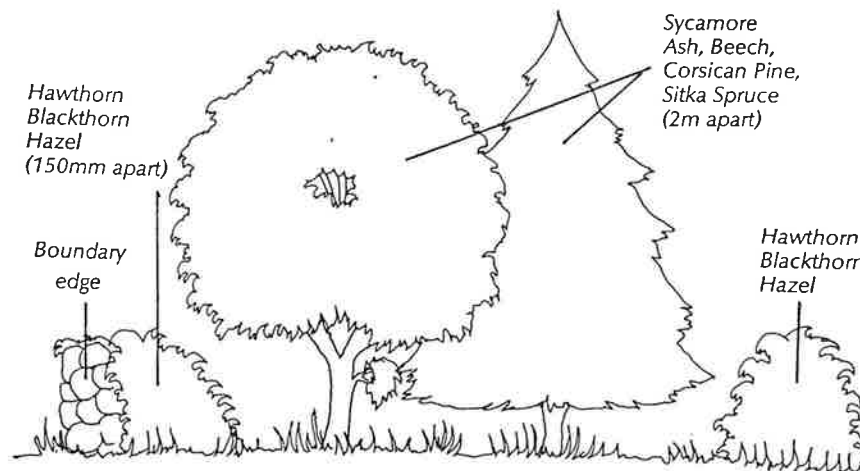
Shelter belt consisting of three rows of planting

Aftercare

Trees and shrubs should be well watered after planting, and hedgerow shrubs cut back to 10cm above ground to encourage bushy growth.

Plants cannot compete for water with a mat of grass or weed. The soil should be kept clean with mulch, herbicides or black polythene.

Larger trees may need a short stake, about one metre tall, to hold roots until established, and this should be removed in the second year.



Suitable Species

In exposed coastal areas the following are the species likely to succeed and are selected for their tolerance to salt-laden winds. Consult with your local nursery.

species	common name	evergreen	height (ft)	rate of growth
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore		60	F
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder		35	F
<i>Atriplex halimus portulacoid</i>	Tree purslane	S	6	M
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn		25	M
<i>Eleagnus macrophylla pungens</i>	Oleaster	*	12	M
<i>Escallonia macrantha</i>		*	10	F
<i>Euonymus japonicus</i>	Spindle	*	15	M
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash		60	F
<i>Fuschia magellanica</i>	Fuschia		8	F
<i>Griselinia littoralis</i>		*	15	F
<i>Hebe brachysiphon</i>		*	6	M
<i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>	Sea buckthorn		8	M
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	*	25	S
<i>Olearia macrodonta</i>	Daisy bush	*	15	F
<i>Olearia traversii</i>			20	VF
<i>Pittesporum tenuifolium</i>		*	15	F
<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	Sitka spruce	*	100	VF
<i>Pinus nigra maritima</i>	Corsican pine	*	120	M
<i>Pinus pinaster</i>	Maritime pine	*	100	F
<i>Pinus radiata</i>	Monterey pine	*	120	F
<i>Populus alba</i>	White poplar		70	VF
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn		10	F
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm oak	*	50	M
<i>Salix alba</i>	White willow		90	VF
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder		12	F
<i>Senecio greyii</i>		*	3	
<i>Sorbus intermedia</i>	Whitebeam		50	F
<i>Tamarix</i>		*	10	M
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse	*	8	

Information in this appendix is taken from *Building Sensitively in the Landscapes of County Wexford* (by the same authors), published in 1988. It was supplied by