

MARKET SQUARE, RATHANGAN

Public Realm Scheme Conservation Report

Prepared for
The Paul Hogarth Company



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HISTORIC BUILDING SPECIALISTS

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Market Square, Rathangan PUBLIC REALM SCHEME CONSERVATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This conservation report has been prepared for the Paul Hogarth Company by Alastair Coey and Rory Lamb of Alastair Coey Architects. Alastair Coey is a RIAI Grade One Conservation Architect. The report is a supporting document to accompany a Part 8 application submitted in connection with proposed public realm improvement works around Market Square, Rathangan, hereafter referred to as the Part 8 site.

The Part 8 site is bounded to the north by buildings fronting Market Square spreading to east and west along Chapel Street and Main Street, and the junction where they meet Bridge Street is part of the busy and congested principal traffic route passing through the town. The east and west sides of the site are bounded at the north end by the commercial and residential properties fronting Market Square and Bridge Street, to the south by the sides of Rathangan Bridge and areas of trees. The south boundary stops before Grand Canal Bridge on Bridge Street (R401) and excludes the warehouse to the east, but does include the Memorial Garden to the west. The horizontal surfaces of the Part 8 site are at present, in the most part, given over to busy vehicular traffic and parking interspersed by a uncoordinated range of trees, paving and signage, often interfacing poorly with historic features.

At the outset it should be emphasised that the proposed works are confined to the horizontal surfaces of the streetscape and no work is envisaged to the surrounding buildings which form the vertical enclosure to the sides of the Part 8 site.

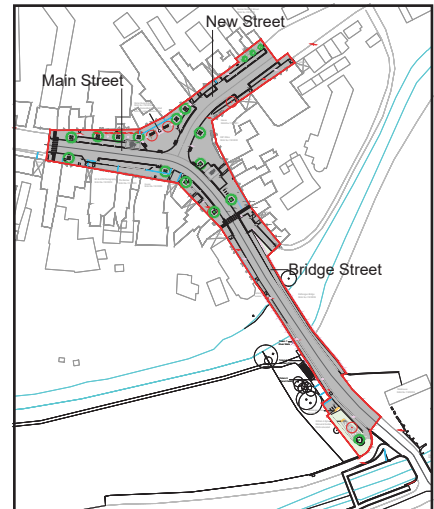


Image 001: Extent of Part 8 site



Image 002: Cart entrance on Main Street



Image 003: General view of Market Square

STATUTORY CONTEXT

The strategy for architectural and archaeological heritage in Rathangan has been informed by national, regional and local policy according to the Regional Planning Guidelines as follows:

National Planning Framework: Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 sets out a strategy to promote the sustainability and attractiveness of national built heritage, providing long-term objectives to “enhance, integrate and protect the special physical, social, economic and cultural value of built heritage” (National Objective Policy 17).

The NPF highlights the value of the quality and character of cultural heritage, stressing that a ‘sense of place’ is important in “attracting foreign direct investment and individual talent”.

Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The RSES offers a strategic over-arching plan spanning 12-20 years that includes support for the protection and enhancement of the value of built heritage through “spatial planning and economic strategy”. The strategy involves supporting regional level and national policies to emphasise the importance of areas of architectural heritage and Architectural Conservation Areas.

Kildare County Development Plan 2017 - 2023

The 2017-2023 County Plan provides further policy background. It lists as policy the intention to “promote the maintenance and appropriate re-use of buildings ... which make a positive contribution to the character, appearance or quality of the streetscape” (PS 11) and to “protect and retain important elements of the built heritage including historic gardens, stone walls, landscapes and demesnes, and curtilage features” (PS 16).

It also emphasises the importance of vernacular architecture in its contribution to the heritage of Kildare and its historic townscapes (Policy VA 1-8). This goes on to the objective to “identify and retain good examples of historic street furniture in situ e.g. cast-iron postboxes, water pumps, signage, street lighting, kerbing and traditional road and street surface coverings” (VAO 1).



Image 004: Apartment 2, Busby House



Image 005: Existing planters and bollards



Image 006: Ramped surfaces on Bridge Street



Image 007: Memorial garden at the canal

Rathangan Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

The Rathangan Local Plan 2002 recommended the designation of an ACA in 2002 (P2.8.2) and it had been agreed by the publication of the County Plan (2017). The County Plan states that a current council objective is to prepare a character appraisal for each of its ACAs including at Rathangan (ACAO 1). Rathangan ACA centres around two junctions, those of Market Street, Bridge Street and Chapel Street, and Main Street and Leinster Street, and includes the north end of the site for the proposed scheme. The Small Town Plan states the specific aim to “protect and enhance the character of the Architectural Conservation Area” (RN43) recognising the contributions of the otherwise unprotected buildings within it to townscape character.

ACA designation provides a means to manage change within the ACA in order to preserve its special heritage value and to improve and enhance its presentation. A distinctive sense of place can be created through street lighting, street furniture, shopfronts, paving, signage and by encouraging best conservation practice in the repair and maintenance of historic buildings. ACA designation de-exempts works to the exterior of any structure which would materially affect the character of the area. Statutory approval is required for all significant changes to the external appearance of structures within an ACA, including changes to windows, doors, façades and shopfronts.

Architectural Heritage Guidelines

Proposals for new development in the town centre should adhere to the character of the area and to the principles of good practice, as set out in Architectural Heritage Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2004). These provide guidance to Planning Authorities on the application of Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The guidelines also deal with Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas in considerable detail. While primarily aimed at planning authorities, the guidelines also offer assistance and advice to owners and occupiers of protected structures and buildings within Architectural Conservation Areas.



Image 008: Existing refuse bins



Image 009: Vacant house on Market Square



Image 011: View to Bridge Street from archway



Image 010: Rathangan Bridge from south

Protected Structures

Rathangan was recorded as part of the Kildare survey of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage in 2001. A number of the buildings and structures recorded in the inventory are affected by the proposed scheme and some have subsequently been included in the Record of Protected Structures deemed to be of regional significance:

RPS No.	Name	NIAH No.
B17-18	D&T Dillon	11810001
B17-19	D&T Dillon	11810002
B17-20	Rathangan Bridge	11810003
-	House (NC & J O'B Photography)	11810013
-	House (The Burrow)	11810009
-	House (Formerly Roma)	11810008
-	Water Pump	11810056
-	Former Rathangan National School	11810005
-	Former Rathangan National School	11810057



Image 012: Rathangan Parochial Hall



Image 013: Existing surfacing and bollards on Bridge Street

MITIGATION OF IMPACT OF PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT WORKS ON HISTORIC FABRIC

The proposed public realm improvement works do not involve any work to the buildings forming the backdrop to the Part 8 site. The construction contractor will be required to implement appropriate measures to ensure that no damage is caused to historic fabric.

Re-surfacing

No historic surfacing materials appear to survive in the Part 8 site although it is possible that some evidence of previous historic finishes may be uncovered during the implementation stage. A watching brief by a conservation architect and archaeologist will be provided during excavation stages and any previous surfaces exposed will be evaluated and, if considered to be of significance, recommendations will be made to the Council proposing appropriate action to be taken. This might involve recording before removal, isolating the relevant surface before laying of new finishes or incorporating the surface in the scheme.

New finished ground surface levels will be designed to avoid covering building thresholds and plinths, some of which are historical, or exposing underbuilding. It is recommended that the proposed paving for vehicular crossings, for example at carriage arches and entrances between buildings, comprise traditional granite setts to reinforce historic character.

The Part 8 site retains some good quality cast-iron man-hole covers. Retaining these within the re-surfacing and incorporating new iron covers where necessary is greatly favourable to introducing steel or plastic coverings.

Lamp-posts

There are seven imitation historic lamp-posts lining the pavement in front of Hackett's supermarket which are of little historical value and it is unlikely that they reflect the town's historical street furniture. We recommended that these are replaced with new lighting furniture in a good quality sensitive contemporary design which can be used across the Part 8 site. Conservation input should be provided in the development of design details.



Image 014: Existing surfacing towards riversides walk



Image 015: Historic threshold details

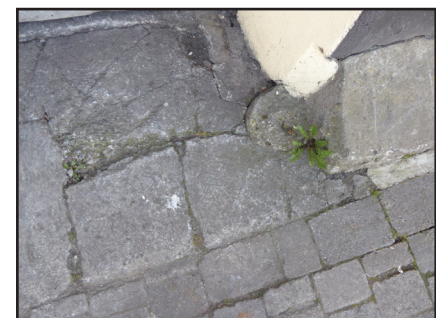


Image 016: Remains of cart threshold and fender

Rathangan Bridge

The bridge over the River Slate is a protected structure and is among the most sensitive assets in the Part 8 site. It is a nineteenth-century rubble-stone, three-span bridge with a flood arch to the south, rubble-stone buttresses, parapet walls and pavements flanking the carriageway. There is evidence that it was widened later in the nineteenth century.

Proposals affecting the bridge comprise three lighting totems with attached lettering rising over the south side, a similarly designed railing on the north parapet and new street lighting. There is opportunity for the design of these features to be streamlined further to incorporate specific conservation input in consideration of the historic bridge and views to and from it. The prominent designed character of the totems and railings as approach features to Rathangan at present feels somewhat out of place with small size and scale of the village and these features are visually dominant over the historic and natural character of the surrounding context. Both designs could be streamlined to make less of a statement, but rather enhance the existing qualities of the setting, and the railings in particular would benefit from making more acknowledgement of the historic rubble-stone parapets on which they sit. We note that at present the proposals do not show the street lighting for the bridge and the arrangement of these alongside the totems will need to be considered to avoid cluttering the approach to the village with vertical elements and affecting the views to and from the bridge.

Details of fixings with the bridge should be developed with input from a conservation architect, especially if wind-loading creates need for the totems to be fixed to the historic masonry.

Existing surfacing around the bridge, both asphalt and stone setts, has been applied heavily and without consideration for historic features. During excavation for the proposals, record should be made of any surfaces or details of the bridge obscured by the present surfacing and consideration made of whether they should be incorporated into the scheme. In implementation, protection should be provided to the bridge features, including abutments, parapets and arches where they interface with new surfacing.



Image 017: Imitation lamp post



Image 018: Existing surfacing and parapet wall



Image 019: View across Rathangan Bridge from south



Image 020: View up the River Slate from Rathangan Bridge

Free-standing features

The following free-standing features will also require consideration:

- *Water pump* – cast-iron with handle, spout and ribbed cap on concrete plinth emptying into stone basin. It is recommended that the components of the pump and basin are numbered and dismantled during construction period and replaced using appropriate conservation techniques. The proposed new railings around the pump should be of a good-quality contemporary design to enhance the historic features.
- *Wheel fender posts to carriage arches* – Darchini Restaurant and Chapel Square. Circular granite posts with domed caps. The posts may remain in situ during the construction period but the contractor will be required to implement appropriate measures to ensure that no damage is caused.



Image 021: Abutments and bridge arch



Image 022: Water pump and basin



Image 023: Apartment 1, Busby House

Buildings on north side of the Part 8 site (Market Square)

- *Apartment 2, Busby House* – two-storey three-bay attached rendered house with pitched natural slate roof. No particular protection measures necessary.
- *Apartment 1, Busby House* – two-storey three-bay attached rendered house with pitched natural slate roof and timber doors. Protection to be provided to thresholds and timber doors.
- *Hackett’s Supermarket* – two-storey five-bay rendered houses in use as supermarket with pitched natural slate roof, imitation shop-front comprising granite-faced stall-risers and pilasters, and timber window surrounds, with carriage arch to west bay. Protection to be provided to surfaces around carriage entrance.
- *1-2a Market Square* – two-storey four-bay attached rendered houses with pitched natural slate roof and imitation shop front to 2a. No particular protection measures required.
- *Vacant property, Market Square (red)* – two-storey two-bay attached roughcast rendered vacant house with pitched natural



Image 024: Wheel fender and threshold

slate roof and timber door with moulded architrave. Protection to be provided to entrance comprising plinth, threshold, plinth blocks and architrave.

- *Vacant property, Market Square* (blue) – two-storey three-bay semi-detached roughcast rendered vacant shop premises with pitched natural slate roof and timber imitation shop front. No particular protection measures required.
- *Rathmore House* – two-storey three-bay detached rendered house with pitched natural slate roof, filleted window openings and decorative quoins. Protection to be provided to plinth course, quoins, tiled threshold, door surround and timber door and screen.
- *Lynch's Hardware* – two-storey five-bay detached roughcast rendered house with pitched natural slate roof and timber panelled doors. Full-height carriage posts and decorative iron gates to entry to west leading to Aiden Cross Bridal Designers. Protection to be provided to eight-panel timber door, two-panel timber door with glass lights, plinths and thresholds, and to carriage posts and gates.
- *3 New Street* – two-storey four-bay roughcast-rendered detached pair of houses with pitched natural slate roof and quoins. No particular protection measures required.



Image 025: Lynch's Hardware



Image 026: Gates and cart post



Image 027: Vacant property on Market Square



Image 028: Rathmore House

Buildings to west of Part 8 site (Market Square into Bridge Street)

- *The Village Pump* – two-storey three-bay attached rendered public house with pitched natural slate roof, quoins, timber door and fascia. Protection to be provided to plinth course, quoins, six panel timber door and architrave.
- *House* – two-storey four-bay attached rendered house with pitched natural slate roof. No particular protection measures required.
- *NC & J O'B Photography* – two-storey five-bay attached rendered house and gallery with pitched natural slate roof, quoins, imitation shop front, historic signage to entrance, and carriage arch to west bay. Protection to be provided to surfaces around carriage arch; window box railings; and details of historic door surrounds including two two-panel timber door with glass lights, plinth blocks and



Image 029: The Village Pump

arched signage above.

- *The Burrow* – two-storey five-bay attached roughcast-rendered public house with pitched natural slate roof, timber imitation shop front, casement windows and timber panelled doors. Protection to be provided to shop front including stall risers, pilasters, double four-panel doors and double six-panel cart doors.
- *Roma* – two-storey four-bay paired attached rendered shop units with pitched natural slate roof, banded rustication to ground-floor, quoins, decorative first-floor window architraves and timber shop



Image 030: NC & J O'B Photography



Image 032: The Burrow



Image 031: Zebra crossing on Main Street

fascia. No particular protection measures required.

- *Bracken's The Corner House* – two-storey four-bay rendered semi-detached public house with pitched natural slate roof, quoins, imitation timber shop front fascia and pilasters. Protection to be provided to shop front pilasters; and to entrances comprising two-panel half-glazed timber doors with raised thresholds and steps.
- *Darchini Indian & Italian Restaurant* – two-storey four-bay rendered attached restaurant with pitched natural slate roof, timber shop front pilasters and fascia, and carriage arch to north bay. Protection to be provided to shop front pilasters; and to wheel fenders and surfaces around carriage arch.
- *Ladbrokes* – two-storey three-bay attached rendered shop unit with imitation timber shop front. No particular protection measures required.
- *Natasha's* – two-storey three-bay semi-detached rubble-stone shop unit with pitched natural slate roof and timber imitation shop front. No particular protection measures required.
- *Mystique Hair Studio* – two-storey three-bay attached rendered shop unit with pitched natural slate roof and timber imitation shop front. No particular protection measures required.
- *Rathangan Post Office* – two-storey two-bay semi-detached rubble-stone shop unit with pitched natural slate roof and timber imita-



Image 033: Bracken's The Corner House



Image 034: Range of units including Natasha's



Image 035: Cottages on Bridge Street



Image 036: The Bridge Bar



Image 037: Vacant property on Bridge Street

tion shop front. No particular protection measures required.

Buildings on east of Part 8 site (Market Square into Bridge Street)

- *Cottages* – single-storey seven-bay roughcast-rendered cottages with pitched natural slate roof and carriage arch to north bay. No particular protection measures required.
- *Next Door off license* – two-storey two-bay attached roughcast-rendered shop unit with pitched natural slate roof and timber imitation shop front. No particular protection measures required.
- *The Bridge Bar* – two-storey four-bay attached rendered public house with pitched natural slate roof and timber imitation shop front with timber doors. Protection to be provided to thresholds, timber doors, plinth course and plinth blocks.
- *D. Wall Butchers* – two-storey one-bay attached rendered butchers shop with pitched natural slate roof. No particular protection measures required.
- *Vacant Premises (Bridge Street)* – two-storey three-bay attached rendered vacant premises with pitched natural slate roof, timber shop fascia and carriage arch to north bay. No particular protection measures required.
- *D & T Dillon* – two-storey seven-bay rendered corner site public house with three-bays returning to north, pitched natural slate roof, timber fascia, some timber sliding sash windows, quoins and lime-



Image 038: Limestone string course reused for kerbing



Image 039: Remains of a street feature, possibly a cast-iron post box



Image 040: D & T Dillon

stone entrance steps. Limestone string course reused as kerbing at southwest corner. Protection to be provided to entrance steps, terrace and side stepped entrance; and to limestone kerbing.

- *River court/ Ryan's Pharmacy* – two-storey attached three-part range with pitched natural slate roof, central archway and timber imitation shop front to east. No particular protection measures required.
- *Forget Me Not* – two-storey three-bay attached roughcast rendered florist shop with pitched natural slate roof and timber imitation shop front. No particular protection measures required.
- *House (to east of Forget Me Not)* – two-storey three-bay attached roughcast rendered house with pitched natural slate roof and timber door. Protection to be provided to historical door surround, threshold step and six-panel door with fanlight.
- *House on Chapel Square* – two-storey three-bay attached roughcast-rendered house with pitched natural slate roof and carriage arch to west bay. Protection to be provided to wheel fenders and surfaces around carriage arch entrance.



Image 041: Steps and railings outside Dillon's



Image 042: Forget Me Not



Image 043: House on Chapel Square