

Chapter 10: Built Heritage

10.1 Introduction

Offaly's historic environment, comprising its built form, landscape, heritage and archaeology, provides a depth of character that benefits the county's economy, culture and quality of life of our citizens. Built heritage assets are a non-renewable resource that contributes to our understanding of the past. It is important that our components of our built heritage such as our historic planned towns, heritage towns, protected structures, Geashill Architectural Conservation Area, sites and monuments, country houses and demesnes, industrial architecture, vernacular structures and monastic sites are valued and protected for future generations. The Council will continue to promote the conservation, management and preservation of our built heritage for its intrinsic value and as a support to economic renewal and sustainable employment while also revitalising the historic cores of our towns and villages by bringing historic buildings back to use.

10.2 Legislative and Policy Context

In the preparation of this chapter of the Plan, regard has been had to the following:

- National Monuments Acts (as amended);
- Heritage Ireland 2030;
- Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended);
- Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework;
- The National Development Plan 2018-2027;
- Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-31;
- The Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) Act 1999;
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage;
- Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2013;
- Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 1985);
- Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Valletta, 1992);
- Realising our Rural Potential, Action Plan for Rural Development 2017;
- Culture 2025 – A Framework Policy to 2025, DAHRRGA, 2016;
- The Survey of Thatched Buildings in County Offaly, 2018;
- Bridges of Offaly County: An Industrial Heritage Review, November 2005;
- Mills of County Offaly: An Industrial Heritage Survey, May 2009;
- Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan 2016-2020.
- Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage (2019).

10.3 Protected Structures

A protected structure is a structure that the Planning Authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. The Planning Authority in its Record of Protected Structures (RPS) includes details of protected structures, which accompanies this Plan. It may be amended by the addition or deletion of entries

independently of the Development Plan-making process. The inclusion of a structure in the RPS does not preclude appropriate use or development. The word protection is defined in the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), as including, in relation to a structure, or part of a structure, conservation, preservation and improvement compatible with maintaining the character and interest of the structure.

Protection is offered to:

- a) The exterior and interior of the structure;
- b) The land lying within the curtilage of the structure;
- c) Any other structures lying within that curtilage¹ and their interiors, and all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure. Normal planning exemptions do not apply to a protected structure or a proposed protected structure.

No works, which would adversely affect the character of the protected structure, or any element of it, which contributes to its special interest, may be carried out without planning permission. An owner or occupier of a protected structure may make a written request to the Planning Authority to issue a Section 57 Declaration as to the type of works, which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure that contributes to its special interest.



Figure 10.1 Charleville Castle

¹ Please see Chapter 13 'Curtilage and Attendant Grounds' of Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2013.

10.3.1 Alterations / Extension of Protected Structures

The Council will ensure that alterations or extensions to protected structures shall only be permitted if the proposals are in keeping with the character of the structure and preserve the architectural and historic features of the structure.

10.3.2 Change of Use of Protected Structures

The Council will favourably consider the change of use of any building listed for protection provided that such a change of use does not seriously impact on its intrinsic character, subject to other planning and environmental standards and requirements.

10.3.3 Demolition of Protected Structures

The Council will strongly resist the demolition of any structure listed for protection; unless the Council is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist to allow same.

Planning permission is necessary to demolish a protected structure and is governed by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).



Figure 10.2 Kinnitty Castle

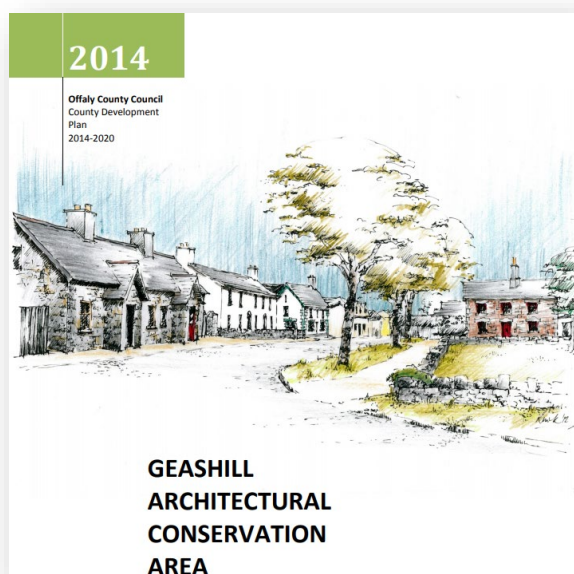
10.4 Architectural Conservation Areas

Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) comprise a place, an area, or group of structures or part of a townscape, which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures; and which is listed as such an area in the County Development Plan. It may or may not include protected structures. An ACA may consist for example, of a terrace of houses, a street, town centre or a cluster of structures associated with a specific building such as a mill or country house. Unless a structure is also included on the Record of Protected Structures, the protected status afforded from inclusion in an ACA only applies to the exterior and streetscape.

Any works which would have a material effect on the special character of an ACA need planning permission. Piecemeal alterations on individual non protected structures can have a significant cumulative effect on a streetscape. Offaly County Council will examine the need to designate further areas as Architectural Conservation Areas during the period of the plan.

10.4.1 Geashill Architectural Conservation Area

Geashill Village is an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) due to its distinctive architectural, historical, archaeological and social interest.



Protecting the special character of Geashill Village is important as this serves to reinforce the identity of the village, recognise its cultural and architectural heritage and contribute to its attractiveness as a special place to live and work. The primary aim of the Geashill ACA is to provide for future development in a manner sympathetic to the special character of the village. To fulfil this aim all new development within this ACA should be implemented and carried out in accordance with the relevant policies and objectives of this chapter.

10.5 Vernacular Buildings

Vernacular architecture refers to the traditional building forms and types, including modest rural and urban houses, built using local materials, skills and building techniques which form a vital component of the landscape. This includes traditional structures such as thatched cottages, shopfronts, farmsteads, lime kilns, mills, forges, and their products, such as gates. These structures reflect the unique local history and character of a place. The loss of vernacular architecture may not only result from the removal of whole buildings but also the gradual attrition of details such as the replacement of roof coverings and openings with inappropriate materials. Any changes proposed to a vernacular structure should be sympathetic to its special features and its character while ensuring its continued use.

The Survey of Thatch Buildings County Offaly 2018 prepared by Built Heritage Collective Ireland showed a rapid decline in the number of thatch buildings in the county and an increase in the number of these structures having fallen into a ruinous condition despite the majority being recorded on the County Offaly Record of Protected Structures 2014-2020. Every effort will be made by the Council to encourage and facilitate the survival of the remaining examples during the period of this Plan.

10.6 Industrial Heritage

The sites, structures, machinery, artefacts and plant associated with manufacturing, transportation, communications, construction, public utilities, raw material extraction and production form our industrial heritage.

A survey of all named bridges in Offaly, 407 in total, was carried out by Industrial Archaeologist Fred Hamond in 2005. Whilst the majority of bridges identified were found to be 18th and 19th century road bridges, a significant number of canal and railway bridges were also found. The bridges surveyed illustrate general advances in bridge construction and design, but they also reflect the evolution of County Offaly's transport network and changes in our landscape.

In 2003, Fred Hamond, also undertook a study of all of the mills, distilleries, breweries and maltings throughout Offaly. The initial paper survey brought up 274 individual mill related buildings and structures at 193 locations in the county. Most sites are on private land but there are two mill sites open on occasion to the public namely Belmont Mills in west Offaly and Fancroft Mill in south Offaly close to Roscrea.

10.7 Country Houses, Gardens and Demesnes

County Offaly has a significant number of country houses and demesnes where the grounds and settings constitute an intrinsic element of their character and are often the setting for a protected structure. By using landscaped features such as plants augmented with trees to form vistas, altering river courses to form lakes, building walled gardens to create sheltered areas, an architectural and horticultural composition was created. In 2003 and 2005, the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht carried out a desktop survey of the Historic Gardens and Demesnes in Ireland and have identified 203 such sites in Offaly.

10.8 Follies

Follies are predominantly garden buildings or decorative structures, ranging from classical and formal designs to more frivolous and whimsical structures, originating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The publication 'Flights of Fancy – Follies, Families and Demesnes in Offaly' 2017 by Rachel McKenna, County Architect, identifies, describes and illustrates the majority of follies contained within the country house demesnes of County Offaly, for example, water features, turrets and towers, bridges and gates, monuments and obelisks.



Figure 10.3 Gloster Arch Folly

10.9 Protected Species

Many buildings and structures of architectural heritage create important habitats for protected species, particularly bats and swifts. While the continued use and on-going maintenance of these buildings and structures is strongly supported, it is important to plan for the protection of these habitats and species during works to such buildings and structures.

10.10 Archaeological Heritage

Our Archaeological Heritage can include:

- National Monuments in the ownership/guardianship of the State or Local Authority
- Archaeological and Architectural monuments/sites in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)
- Monuments in the Register of Historic Monuments
- Zones of Archaeological Potential in Historic Towns
- Underwater Archaeological Heritage, including Historic Wrecks
- Previously unknown and unrecorded archaeological sites (including subsurface elements with no visible surface remains, both terrestrial and underwater)
- Potential sites located in the vicinity of large complexes of site or monuments
- Existing or former wetlands, unenclosed land, rivers or lakes; and
- Objects or artefacts of known or potential archaeological significance, including into the modern period and recent past (e.g. post-medieval archaeology).

In this respect, Offaly has a significant archaeological heritage, with over 4,000 archaeological sites dating back to the Mesolithic period, 7,000 B.C as documented by the National Monuments Service.



Figure 10.4 Aghancon Recorded Monument

The Council recognises that Community Archaeology has the potential to promote awareness, knowledge and understanding of local archaeological resources among individuals and community groups, organising visits to sites and monuments, developing heritage trails, exhibitions or events.

10.10.1 Sites and Monuments Record

Archaeological heritage is legally protected from unauthorised damage or interference through powers and functions under the National Monuments Acts 1930 as amended. Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994, made provision for the compilation of all recorded sites and features of historical and archaeological importance in the county into the Record of Monuments and Places.

10.10.2 Monuments in State and Council Ownership

A number of monuments are further protected by being in the ownership or guardianship of the State or the subject of preservation orders (National Monuments) and registration orders, see Tables 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3. Works to or at these monuments require the consent of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCHG). The National Monuments Acts provide for the protection of all previously unknown archaeology that becomes known (for example, through ground disturbance, fieldwork, or the discovery of sites underwater).



Figure 10.5 Rahan Monastic Site

Table 10.1 National Monuments in State Ownership in County Offaly

National Monument Number	Sites and Monument Record Numbers	Name	Description	Townland
313	OF009-005001 to OF009-005018, OF009-006 and OF009-031.	Durrow	Cross, Church, graveslabs and motte	Durrow Demesne
510	OF036-044004 and OF036-044006.	High Cross and Remains of Church, Kinnitty	High Cross and medieval wall	Castletown and Glinsk
497	OF039-003	Seir Kieran Monastic Church	Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Site	Clonmore and Churchtown
532	OF011-001	Clonin	Earthwork	Clonin
81	OF005-005	Clonmacnoise	Churches, Two Round Towers, crosses, slabs	Clonmacnoise
82	OF016-015001 and OF016-015010.	Rahan	Two Churches	Rahan Demesne
672	OF032-026	Cadamstown	Bridge	Cadamstown
617	OF010-010001	Cannakill	Deserted Medieval Village	Cannakill

Table 10.2 National Monuments in Guardianship of the State in County Offaly

National Monument Number	Sites and Monuments Register Number	Name	Description	Townland
336	OF006-038---	Clonfinlough	Rock Art	Clonfinlough
504	OF014-029001-, OF014-029006-, OF014-029017-to OF014-029027-	Gallen Abbey	Church and Slabs	Gallen

313	OF009-005001- to OF009-005018-, OF009-006----, OF009-031----	Durrow	Cross, Church, graveslabs and motte	Durrow Demesne
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Table 10.3 Monuments Protected by Preservation Order in County Offaly

Preservation Order No.	SMR Number	Monument	Townland	Effective Date of Order
08/1932	OF001-001	Crannog (Ballinaderry Lough)	Ballinahinch	05-Jan-33
49/1937	OF015-017	Coole Castle	Coole (Garrycastle By)	01-Jan-37
86/1940	OF022-008001	Clonony Castle	Clonony More	15-Oct-40
6/1956	OF023-010	Ringfort	Broughal	22/2/56
44/1935	OF006-038--	Clonfinlough Stone	Clonfinlough	14/09/1935
1/1957	OF026-014	Ballykean Ring Barrow (O'Dempseys Ring)	Ballykean	23-Jan-57
3/1986	OF024-036003	Motte Castle Earthworks	Rathlilhen	12-Sep-86
23/1976	OF039-037---	Hillfort (excluding School and Rectory buildings)	Glebe and Ballycurragh	04-Jun-76
5/2000	OF034-008001, OF034- 008001	Cemetery and Enclosure	Derryvilla	
1/2009	OF005-027001	Part of a monastic enclosure, mill race, and associated archaeological features	Clonmacnoise	23-Jul-09



Figure 10.6 Clononey Castle

10.10.3 Zones of Archaeological Potential

In 1986, an Urban Archaeology Study was undertaken by the Department of the Environment which informed the designation of Zones of Archaeological Potential in the following areas in Offaly;

- Banagher;
- Birr;
- Daingean;
- Dunkerrin; and
- Seir Kieran.

10.10.4 Monastic Sites

There are twenty-three recorded Early Christian Monasteries in the county. Conservation Management Plans have been prepared for Clonmacnoise, Leamanaghan, Durrow, Rahan and Killeigh. The Council will have regard to these plans when considering development within their boundaries and will carefully consider other sites which may not yet have conservation plans completed.

Clonmacnoise

Clonmacnoise is one of Ireland's foremost national monuments and is of international importance as a spiritual, historic, archaeological and cultural centre. The unique atmosphere and attractiveness of Clonmacnoise derives not only from the monastic site itself but its relationship to the River Shannon and the Callows together with the sense of enclosure provided by the eskers. The effect is heightened by the unfolding of the site as it is approached either from the river or any of the three approach roads.

The Council is conscious of the fact that the interaction of all these elements contributes significantly to the impact of the area and that it is necessary to preserve and protect these fully in order to retain the unique and special character of Clonmacnoise. In addition to the monastic site, the area surrounding Clonmacnoise, including Mongans Bog, Fin Lough and Clonmacnoise Callows, are designated sites of international and national conservation importance. A Draft Management Plan for Clonmacnoise was prepared by the OPW in 2009. The Council will support the preparation and subsequent implementation of a new masterplan by the OPW and Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

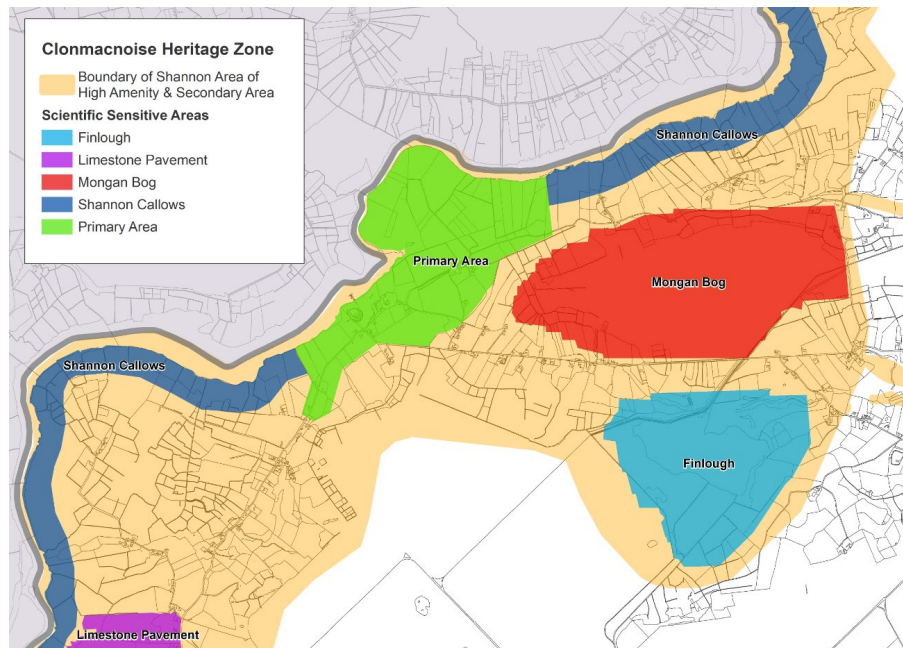


Figure 10.7 Clonmacnoise Heritage Zone Map (Source: Trinity College Dublin)



Figure 10.8 Clonmacnoise Monastic Site

Durrow

The remains of the monastery of Durrow are situated within Durrow Abbey Demesne. The monastery was founded by St. Columcille in 587 A.D. The site was used as a burial place for bishops, abbots and the nobles of the Midlands and Munster. The most elaborate feature at the site is the mid-ninth century high cross but it also has a number of other features of archaeological significance including the monastic enclosure, St. Columcille's Island and the Norman motte.

A conservation plan was commissioned by the Office of Public Works for Durrow Abbey and the surrounding thirty-one hectares of land acquired by the state in 2003. The Planning Authority will have regard to this Plan when assessing applications that are within this area or in close proximity to this area.



Figure 10.9 Durrow High Cross

Rahan

The monastic site of Rahan lies in flat pasture land on the south bank of the Clodiagh River, seven miles west of Tullamore. The Grand Canal passes to the south of the site. In the fifth century Camelacus was appointed by St. Patrick to establish a monastery at Rahan. The monastic site was re-founded by St. Carthage in the sixth century. The monastery is contained within a large D-shaped enclosure with the Clodiagh River forming the straight section on its northern side. A Conservation Plan for Rahan has been prepared and the Planning Authority will have regard to this Plan in relation to the assessing of applications in the vicinity of the site.

Killeigh

Killeigh has been a site of historical importance since the early days of Christianity in Ireland. St. Senech is credited with founding the first church at Killeigh at the beginning of the sixth century. The village contains a number of key sites of archaeological significance including the site of the Franciscan Friary, the site of the Augustinian Priory, the site of the Augustinian Nunnery and the Holy Wells.

An Historic Landscape Character Assessment for Killeigh was carried out in 2006. The Planning Authority had regard to this study when preparing the village plan for Killeigh (refer to Volume 2). The Planning Authority will have regard to this village plan when assessing applications within and adjacent to sites of archaeological significance.

Lemanaghan

The historic complex at Lemanaghan, with its focus at the early monastic site dedicated to St Managhan, is situated on the R436 between Ballycumber and Ferbane at the junction of the road to Pollagh. These monuments occupy an upland area in Lemanaghan Bog which is bordered to the south by the callows of the River Brosna. Surrounding them is an exceptional number of archaeological find sites, many relating to a complex infrastructure of trackways or toghers, which were built and repaired over several centuries. It consists of a medieval church, St. Mellas Cell, Holy Well and Togher, and a cluster of relatively small dwellings, the largest of which, Lemanaghan House, is to the south-west of the monastic site. The Heritage Council prepared a Conservation Plan for Lemanaghan in 2007. The Planning Authority will have regard to this plan when assessing applications that are within this area or in close proximity to this area.

10.11 Built Heritage Policies

Protected Structures

BHP-01 It is Council policy to ensure the protection, sympathetic and sensitive modification, alteration, extension or reuse of protected structures or parts of protected structures, and the immediate surrounds included and proposed for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, together with the integrity of their character and setting.

BHP-02 It is Council policy to ensure the protection of the curtilage of protected structures or proposed protected structures and to prohibit inappropriate development within the curtilage or attendant grounds of a protected structure which would adversely impact on the special character of the protected structure including cause loss of or damage to the special character of the protected structure and loss of or damage to, any structures of architectural heritage value within the curtilage of the protected structure.

BHP-03 It is Council policy to promote best practice and the use of skilled specialist practitioners in the conservation of, and any works to, protected structures. Method statements should make reference to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's Advice Series on how best to repair and maintain historic buildings.

BHP-04 It is Council policy to favourably consider the change of use of any structure included on the Record of Protected Structures provided such a change of use does not adversely impact on its intrinsic character and is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

BHP-05 It is Council policy to actively encourage uses that are compatible with the character of protected structures.

BHP-06 It is Council policy to retain where practicable a protected structure which has been damaged by fire, and to retain those elements of that structure that have survived (either in whole or in part) and that contribute to its special interest.

BHP-07 It is Council policy to prohibit the demolition of any protected structure unless the Council is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. The demolition of a protected structure with the retention of its façade will likewise not generally be permitted.

BHP-08 It is Council policy to require an Architectural Heritage Assessment Report, as described in Appendix B of the Architectural Heritage Protection, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (2013), to accompany all applications involving a protected structure.

BHP-09 It is Council policy to advise owners of protected structures in preparation of funding applications under Built Heritage Scheme of the Historic Structures Fund.

BHP-10 It is Council policy to ensure that in the event of a planning application being granted for development within the curtilage of a protected structure, the proposed works to the protected

structure should occur, where appropriate, in the first phase of the development to prevent endangerment, abandonment and dereliction of the structure.

BHP-11 It is Council policy to ensure that measures to upgrade the energy efficiency of Protected Structures and historic buildings are sensitive to traditional construction methods and materials and do not have a detrimental physical, aesthetic or visual impact on the structure. They should follow the principles and direction given in the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's publication Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings.

Architectural Conservation Areas

BHP-12 It is Council policy to encourage the retention of original windows, doors, renders, roof coverings, street furniture and other significant features of historic buildings and landscape features within Architectural Conservation Areas.

BHP-13 It is Council policy to proactively promote conservation through the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and other schemes available to the Council.

BHP-14 It is Council policy to preserve the character of Geashill Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and any future ACA's in County Offaly by ensuring that any new development within or contiguous to the ACA is sympathetic to the character of the area and that the design is appropriate in terms of scale, height, plot density, layout, materials and finishes having regard to the advice given in the Statements of Character for each area.

Vernacular Buildings

BHP-15 It is Council policy to encourage the protection, retention, appreciation and appropriate revitalisation of the vernacular heritage of Offaly.

BHP-16 It is Council policy to consider the guidance in "The Thatched Houses of Kildare" and "Reusing Farm Buildings, A Kildare Perspective" published by Kildare County Council in assessing planning applications in County Offaly relating to thatched cottages and traditional farm buildings.

BHP-17 It is Council policy to preserve the character and setting (for example, gates, gate piers and courtyards) of vernacular buildings where deemed appropriate by the planning authority.

BHP-18 It is Council policy to seek the repair and retention of traditional timber and/or rendered shop fronts and pub fronts, including those that may not be protected structures.

BHP-19 It is Council policy to communicate and work with owners of thatch buildings regarding the availability of conservation grants and funding.

BHP-20 It is Council policy to encourage where appropriate the covering of thatch with metal, as a measure for the protection of buildings which are unoccupied and showing signs of considerable distress.

BHP-21 It is Council policy to support proposals to refurbish vernacular structures that are in a run down or derelict condition, provided that;

- Appropriate traditional building materials and methods are used to carry out repairs to the historic fabric; and
- Proposals for extensions to vernacular structures are reflective and proportionate to the existing building and do not erode the setting and design qualities of the original structure which make it attractive.

Industrial Heritage

BHP-22 It is Council policy to protect the industrial heritage of Offaly, including mills, historic industrial buildings, canals and historic bridges.

BHP-23 It is Council policy to utilise the information provided within Mills of County Offaly: An Industrial Heritage Survey (2009) when assessing development proposals for surviving industrial heritage sites.

BHP-24 It is Council policy to protect and enhance the built and natural heritage of the Grand Canal and ensure that development within its vicinity is sensitively designed and does not have a detrimental effect on the character of the canal, its built elements and its natural heritage values and that it adheres to the Waterways Ireland's Heritage Plan 2016-2020.

BHP-25 It is Council policy to encourage appropriate change of use and reuse of industrial buildings, provided such a change does not seriously impact on the intrinsic character of the structure and that all works are carried out in accordance with best conservation practice.

BHP-26 It is Council policy to seek the retention and appropriate repair/maintenance of the historic bridges and harbours of the county whether they are protected structures or not.

BHP-27 It is Council policy to restrict vehicular access onto public roads that were formerly towpaths and any development permitted with access off a towpath must be screened effectively with trees and hedging. In relation to planning applications for housing in the open countryside with access proposed off towpaths, applicants must demonstrate compliance with Policy SSP-27 as towpaths are located within Natural Heritage Areas and Areas of High Amenity.

Country Houses, Gardens and Demesnes

BHP-28 It is Council policy to encourage the protection, conservation, promotion and enhancement of Country Houses, Gardens and Demesnes in the county and support public awareness, enjoyment of and access to these sites where appropriate.

BHP-29 It is Council policy to encourage the conservation, preservation, restoration and protection in their original setting of mausoleums and monuments: follies, grottoes; garden buildings and other structures of particular beauty or historic, environmental, architectural or industrial significance.

BHP-30 It is Council policy to discourage development that would lead to a loss of, or cause damage to, the character, the principle components of, or the setting of Country Houses, Gardens and Demesnes.

BHP-31 It is Council policy to consider the “Guidance Notes for the Appraisal of Historic Gardens, Demesnes, Estates and their Settings” published by Cork County Council 2006 in the appraisal and description of the impacts of proposed developments in County Offaly within or in close proximity to country houses and demesnes on historic designed landscapes, demesnes and gardens.

Protected Species

BHP-32 It is Council policy to protect habitats and species when considering proposed works to buildings and structures which are likely to impact on protected ecological sites and protected species.

Archaeological Heritage

BHP-33 It is Council policy to support and promote the protection and appropriate management and sympathetic enhancement of the county’s archaeological heritage within the Plan area, in particular by implementing the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended).

BHP-34 It is Council policy to seek to promote awareness of and access to archaeological sites in the county where appropriate.

BHP-35 It is Council policy to consult with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in relation to archaeological sites within and/or adjoining a proposed development.

BHP-36 It is Council policy to facilitate the identification of important archaeological landscapes in the county.

BHP-37 It is Council policy that any development that may, due to its size, location or nature, have implications for archaeological heritage (including both sites and areas of archaeological potential / significance) shall be subject to an archaeological assessment. When dealing with proposals for

development that would impact upon archaeological sites and/or features, there will be presumption in favour of the 'preservation in situ' of archaeological remains and settings, in accordance with Government policy. Where permission for such proposals is granted, the Planning Authority will require the developer to have the site works supervised by a licenced archaeologist.

BHP-38 It is Council policy to ensure that archaeological excavation is carried out according to best practice as outlined by the National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the National Museum of Ireland and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland and to protect previously unknown archaeological sites and features, where they are discovered during development works.

BHP-39 It is Council policy to ensure the protection and preservation of underwater and terrestrial archaeological sites, both known and potential in riverine or lacustrine locations including wrecks such as the remains of bridges.

BHP-40 It is Council policy to require archaeological assessment, including underwater archaeological assessment where relevant, for such developments that due to their location, size or nature may have implications for archaeological heritage. Such developments include those that are located at or close to an archaeological monument or site, those that are extensive in terms of area (0.5 hectares or more) or length (1 kilometre or more and developments that require an Environmental Impact Statement.

Monastic Sites

BHP-41 It is Council policy to retain the nominated status of the area comprising the National Monument at Clonmacnoise, enclosing eskers, Mongans Bog, Clonmacnoise callows, Fin Lough and the limestone pavement at Clorhane as the "Clonmacnoise Heritage Zone" in accordance with the recommendations of the study of the area carried out by the Environmental Sciences Unit of Trinity College, Dublin as shown in Figure 10.7 of this Plan.

BHP-42 It is Council policy to investigate the potential of Durrow Demesne as a public amenity and tourism asset.

BHP-43 It is Council policy to support and promote the protection and appropriate management of all monastic sites in the county.

Mass Rocks and Holy Wells

BHP-44 It is Council policy to preserve, protect and, where necessary, enhance mass rocks and holy wells in the County.

Historic Military Fortifications and Castle Sites

BHP-45 It is Council policy to support and promote the protection and appropriate management of historic military fortifications and castle sites in the county.

Funding

BHP-46 It is Council policy to support the progression and delivery of projects that repair and conserve historic structures under the Historic Structures Fund, the Built Heritage Investment Scheme or other funding schemes as applicable.

Community Archaeology

BHP-47 It is the policy of the Council to support the concept of Community Archaeology and greater collaboration in promoting awareness, knowledge and understanding of local archaeological resources in County Offaly.

10.12 Built Heritage Objectives

Protected Structures

BHO-01 It is an objective of the Council to review the Record of Protected Structures on an on-going basis and make additions, deletions and corrections as appropriate over the period of this Plan.

BHO-02 It is an objective of the Council to prepare a Buildings at Risk Register to prevent the endangerment of Protected Structures.

Architectural Conservation Areas

BHO-03 It is an objective of the Council to investigate the designation of further Architectural Conservation Areas at appropriate locations throughout the county.

Vernacular Buildings

BHO-04 It is an objective of the Council to identify and retain good examples of vernacular architecture and historic street furniture in situ, for example, cast-iron post boxes, water pumps, signage, street lighting, kerbing and traditional road and street surface coverings.

Archaeological Heritage

BHO-05 It is an objective of the Council to protect archaeological sites and monuments, and archaeological objects, which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, and to seek their preservation in situ (or at a minimum, preservation by record) through the planning process.

Monastic Sites

BHO-06 The Council acknowledges the nomination by the Government of Ireland, of two Monastic sites, Clonmacnoise in its own right and Durrow, as a suite of potential sites, on the tentative list for inclusion to the UNESCO World Heritage sites list. It is an objective of the Council to explore the potential of further designating the Monastic Sites at Clonmacnoise and Durrow as prospective UNESCO World Heritage Sites.