

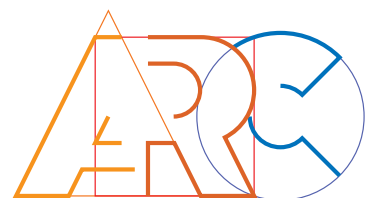


Strategic Housing Development

Former Heiton Buckley site Castle Street, Bray
ABP Reference -311610-21

Outline Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

April 2022



ARC Consultants have been commissioned by the applicant to prepare this Outline Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment in relation to a proposed Strategic Housing Development on lands at the Former Heiton Buckley site at Castle Street, No. 20 Dwyer Park and St. Anthony's, Dwyer Park, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Methodology

Before visiting the site of the proposed development, a desktop study was carried out to identify architectural heritage assets in the surrounding area. This desktop study had regard to the Bray Local Area Plan 2018-2024 and to the Record of Protected Structures contained in that Plan. The desktop study also had regard to historic maps and documents detailing the heritage of Bray, and to the Irish Historic Town Atlas No 9, Bray.

The site of the proposed development and the surrounding area was visited on the 25th of January 2022, and a number of photographs taken on site during that visit are reproduced below. There are no protected structures on the site of the proposed development and the site does not fall within or adjoin an Architectural Conservation Area or a Conservation Area. There are no protected structures in the immediate vicinity of the site. There are a small number of protected structures in the wider area from which there may be a potential for the proposed development to be visible. These are tabled later in this report. There is no potential for the proposed development to result in any direct physical impact on any protected structure.

Definition of Effects on Architectural Heritage

This assessment of effects on Architectural Heritage had regard to the *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency (Draft of 2017), and to Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) on the assessment of the likely effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

The list of definitions given below is taken from *Table 3.3: Descriptions of Effects* contained in the *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency. Some comment is also given below on what these definitions might imply in the case of architectural heritage. The definitions from the EPA document are in italics.

- **Imperceptible:** *An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.* The definition implies that there would be minor change to an aspect of the heritage interest of a structure, but not one that would be readily noticeable to the casual observer; and not a change that would materially alter the overall heritage interest of the structure.
- **Not Significant:** *An effect which causes noticeable² changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences* (the footnote '2' to the word 'noticeable' is: 'for the purposes of planning consent procedures'). The definition implies that there would be changes to aspects of the heritage interest of a structure capable of being noticed by an observer who is actively assessing the effects of changes to the heritage interest of a structure for the purposes of planning consent, and, although there may be changes to aspects of the heritage interest of a structure, these changes would not be considered material with reference to planning consent.
- **Slight:** *An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.* The definition implies that there would be changes to aspects of the heritage interest of a structure or part of that structure. However, apart from such changes, the overall heritage interest of the structure, and/or its contribution to its surroundings, would remain substantially intact.
- **Moderate:** *An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.* In this case, there would be material changes to the heritage interest of a structure or part of that structure; and these changes must be consistent with a pattern of change that is already occurring, is considered acceptable, and is envisaged by policy.
- **Significant:** *An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.* The definition implies that there would be material changes to aspects the heritage interest of a structure or

part of that structure; and these changes would not be consistent with an acceptable pattern of change that is already occurring, nor are envisaged by policy.

- **Very Significant:** *An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.* The definition implies that the heritage interest of a structure would be changed to a considerable degree and these changes would not be consistent with an acceptable pattern of change that is already occurring, nor are envisaged by policy. For example, a “very significant” effect would occur where the heritage interest of a structure would be substantially removed as a result of a proposed development, though parts of the structure might remain intact.
- **Profound:** *An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.* The definition implies that a development would result in the loss of the heritage structure, or all of its heritage significance.

This assessment relates solely to Effects on Architectural Heritage, and does not concern itself with other effects, beneficial or adverse.

The loss of a structure of heritage interest, even a minor structure, will result in a profound negative effect on the architectural heritage of structure itself, though perhaps only a slight negative effect on the architectural heritage of the surrounding area. The removal of a heritage structure might result in a whole range of potentially significant beneficial effects in terms of planning gain and sustainable development; but these are not of themselves positive effects on architectural heritage and are not evaluated as part of this assessment.

Relevant Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The proposed development includes the following:

- Demolition of all existing vacant commercial and residential buildings and sections of boundary wall
- Construction of a mixed-use residential and commercial development in 2 blocks ranging in height from 1 to 7 storeys set around a central podium level amenity space and a separate single storey pavilion building. The residential element will accommodate 139 apartments. The pavilion building will accommodate a community facility on Castle Street
- Provision of 59 no. undercroft car parking spaces and 3 no. creche drop-off spaces
- Landscaped communal open spaces, boundary treatments, substation, plant rooms, bin stores, bicycle parking, signage and all associated site works and services.

Relevant Statutory Provisions

Chapter 10 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022 includes the following objectives in relation to built heritage:

To ensure that the protection and conservation of the built heritage of Wicklow is an integral part of the sustainable development of the county and safeguard this valuable, and in many instances, non-renewable resource through proper management, sensitive enhancement and appropriate development;

To ensure the protection of the architectural heritage of Wicklow through the identification of Protected Structures, the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas, the safeguarding of designed landscapes and historic gardens, and the recognition of structures and elements that contribute positively to the vernacular and industrial heritage of the County

It is noted that there are no protected structures on the site of the proposed development and the site and the site does not fall within or adjoin an Architectural Conservation Area

Receiving Environment

The site of the proposed development consists of the lands of the former Heiton Buckley builders providers at Castle Street and includes No. 20 Dwyer Park and St. Anthony's, Dwyer Park. The south western corner of the site has frontage onto Castle Street and the corner of Castle Street and Dwyer Park. A short length of the eastern side of the site also fronts onto Dwyer Park. Otherwise the site of the proposed development is a backland site bounded on its western side by the rear of existing commercial developments on Castle Street and at its south eastern corner by the rear of houses on Dwyer Park. The northern and north eastern boundaries of the site adjoin lands that are currently disused.

In his introduction to Irish Historic Town Atlas No 9, Bray, K. M. Davies begins:

'The Dargle River, once called the Bray River or Bray Water, flows into the Irish Sea some 18 km to the south of Dublin city, draining, with its tributaries, a roughly semi-circular area of south-eastern Co. Dublin and north-eastern Co. Wicklow. For part of its course it at one time marked the boundary between these two counties and it also serves to divide the town of Bray into two parts, 'Great Bray' and Little Bray. Constricted and swiftly-flowing for most of its passage, the Dargle has created a narrow flood plain before reaching its marshy estuary. This estuary, unlike the mouths of the Liffey further north or the Vartry and Avoca Rivers at Wicklow and Arklow further south, did not apparently attract permanent settlers during the Viking period, but high bluffs cut into solid rock on the south bank of the river, close to the tidal limit, provided a good site for the first small community of the manor of Bray in the years after the Anglo Norman invasion.'

The flood plain at the mouth of the Dargle was, and is, bounded on the south side by higher ground the northern edge of which runs roughly parallel to the present course of the River. On the north side the high ground bounding the flood plain runs along the north side of the Upper Dargle Road and continues east to include the former lands of Ravensdale House. The site of the proposed development lies on the lower ground within the original flood plain of the Dargle. The engraving below by W. H. Bartlett, published in 1842, shows a considerable flooded area to the west of Bray Bridge covering much of the land between the present River and the Upper Dargle Road. It would appear that Castle Street was a low ridge crossing the northern side of the Dargle flood plain and leading to a narrow part of the River where there was a ford, and later a bridge.



W. H. Bartlett's view of Bray from *The Scenery and Antiquities of Ireland* published in 1842.

K. M. Davies goes on to say:

‘Certainly the site was attractive to the settlers of the late twelfth century. Walter de Ridelesford was granted the lands on either side of the Dar c. 1173, and soon afterwards he built a castle, probably a motte, on the south side of the river (Fig. 1). If there was indeed an early church, then the castle may have been deliberately positioned adjacent to it. But in any case the position must have seemed strategically sound; the site overlooked the lowest crossing point of the Dargle and commanded panoramic views to the west, north and east. Its lack of protection from the south and south-west, however, was a factor that would prove to be of significance in subsequent centuries. De Ridelesford had, in the event, selected the wrong side of the river for a defensive site; the threat of attack by forces opposed to the crown was never to come from the north.

Two summaries of the component parts of the new manor date from a hundred years later, but it can be assumed that many of the elements originated in the last two decades of the twelfth century. Extents of 1284 and 1311, the first made for the crown and the second for the earl of Ormond, record the existence of a “stone house” — presumably the castle — a church and a mill, together with tenements and cottages. There were some thirty burgesses, together with a range of feudal tenants, English names outnumbering Irish ones.

The 1311 extent recorded that there is a certain wood outside from which the lord can take nothing on account of robbers and war’ and three years later Bray was burnt by the O’Byrnes and the O’Tooles when they raided the coastlands from Arklow northwards. Sir Hugh de Lawless, granted the manor in 1316, surrendered it back to the crown in 1320, stating that his profit during five years of tenancy had amounted to two salmon, 10 while in the 1330s Bray was described as being in the march, so that scarcely anything can be received therefrom’. In 1402 the inhabitants of Bray were uncomfortably close to a major battle, when the forces of the mayor of Dublin inflicted a crushing defeat on the O’Byrnes at ‘Bloody Bank’ on the north bank of the Dargle (a site still commemorated, sanitised, in Little Bray’s Sunnybank). The location of this battlefield serves to highlight the shortcomings of the site chosen by de Ridelesford for his castle. Indeed, in

Likely Visibility of the Proposed Development

The proposed development will be visible from its immediate surroundings but otherwise from most of Little Bray, including the area between the Upper Dargle Road and the River; the proposed development will not be visible. From along the south side of the River Dargle visibility of the proposed development will also be very limited. Given that the potential visibility of the proposed development is limited, the potential effects on heritage will also be limited. There is no potential for the proposed development to result in any direct physical impact on any protected structure, or to have an effect on the setting of any protected structure. Where the proposed development is visible from a protected structure there may be a very limited potential for the development to have an effect on the outlook from that structure. Potential visibility from a number of protected structures is tabled below.

Table of Potential Visibility from Protected Structures in the area

RPS No	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	INTERVISIBILITY
B10	Dublin Road	No.29 and 30 Dublin Road (Pace Institute)	None
B42	Little Bray	St. Peter’s Church and old graveyard (excluding new graveyard)	None
B43	Lower Dargle Road	An Lar	None
B46	Main Street	Courthouse and fountain	Slight
B49	Main Street	St. Pauls Church	Slight
B56	Mill Lane	The Maltings	Slight
B76	Seapoint Road	Seapoint House	Unlikely
B77	Seapoint Road	No.1 Seapoint Road	Unlikely

Potential Effects on Architectural Heritage

As has been stated above, there is no potential for the proposed development to result in any direct physical impact on any protected structure, or to have an effect on the setting of any protected structure. Almost all the structures on the site are modern and in poor condition. There is a small ruinous roofless structure near the south east corner of the site that appears somewhat older. Most of the boundaries of the site are modern, but there are two lengths of boundary wall that appear to be older. These are illustrated in the photographs below.

One of these forms the current rear boundary wall of Nos 15 and 16 Dwyer Park, and would appear to consist of fragments of the walls of small buildings that were demolished in the course of the construction of Dwyer Park. This wall has little heritage value, is in poor condition, and is unstable. It is proposed to replace it with a safer modern wall.

The second wall is a brick wall near the north west corner of the site. This appears to be the partial remains of a wall that once bounded a walled garden. It is proposed to retain, repair and refurbish this wall. The retention of this brick wall will give rise to a positive effect on architectural heritage.

W. H. Hastings FRIAI • April 2022

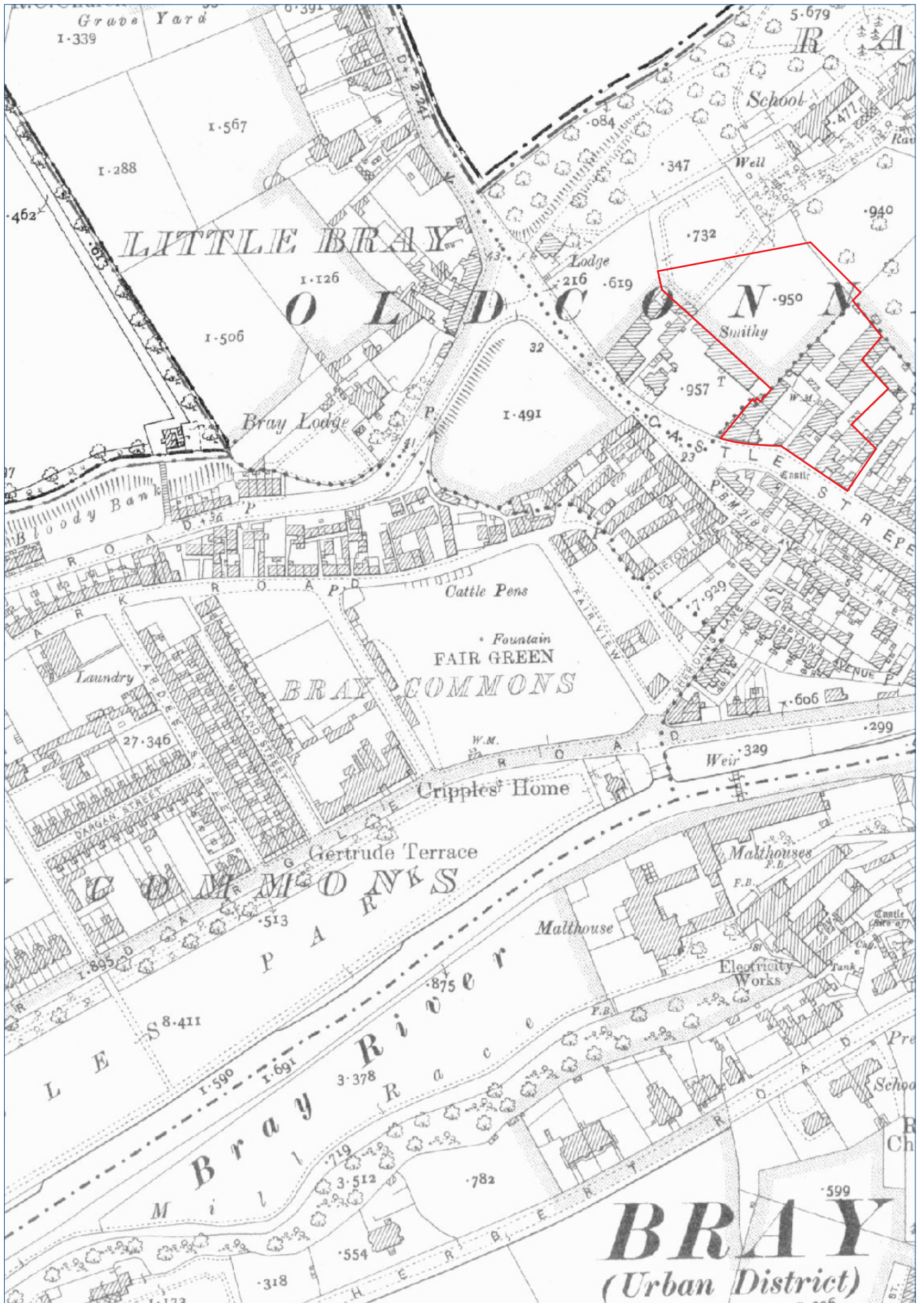
RIAI Grade 1 accredited Conservation Architect



Rear boundary wall of Nos 15 and 16 Dwyer Park. It appears to be fragments of the walls of small buildings in the course of the construction of Dwyer Park. It is proposed to replace it with a more stable wall



Brick wall near the north west corner of the site. This appears to be the partial remains of a wall that once bounded a walled garden. It is proposed to retain, repair and refurbish this wall



Extract from the 25 Inch Ordnance Map of c. 1907. The site of the proposed development is outlined in red. "Bloody Bank", the site of the defeat of the O'Byrnes in 1402 is marked near the top of the left side of the map



Extract from the First Edition Ordnance Map of c. 1840. The site of the proposed development is outlined in red.



General View of the south west corner of the site.



General View of the north east corner of the site.