for Kildare County Council

Naas Architectural Conservation Area
Naas, Co Kildare

Statement of Character

Preface

This assessment of the special character of Naas Architectural Conservation Area was prepared by Lotts Architecture and Urbanism Ltd. Architectural historian, Dr. Michael O'Neill contributed to the section on the history of Naas.

The study was commissioned by Kildare County Council and its progress was guided by Patricia Hyland, Executive Planner and Peter Black, Conservation Officer.

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Acknowledgements

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Architectural Conservation Areas

Planning legislation allows a planning authority to include objectives in its development plan to preserve the character of places, areas, groups of structures, or townscapes that:

- are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or

- contribute to the appreciation of protected structures.

Such areas, places or groups are known as Architectural Conservation Areas or ACAs.

An ACA could be an historic town centre, a distinctive streetscape, a terrace of houses, or it might be a wider group of structures associated with a specific building such as a country house, an old mill or a canal.

The aim of ACA designation is to preserve and enhance the character of the area or group. The form and arrangement of buildings, structures and landscape features within an ACA are important in how they contribute to the character of the area or group. Historic materials, architectural features, prevailing heights, building lines and plots sizes, as well as the scale and arrangement of streets and open spaces all make a contribution to the character of an ACA.

For this reason, the external appearance of buildings and the features of an open space are protected in an ACA. Planning permission is required for any works that would have an impact on the character of an ACA. Importantly, works which in other locations would meet the criteria for Exempted Development as outlined in the Planning Regulations will require planning permission if they are within an ACA.

Designation as an ACA does not prevent alterations, extensions or new build within the area, but aims to ensure that any new development respects or enhances the special character of the ACA. Works should therefore be carried out in consultation with the Planning Authority and the Council's Architectural Conservation Officer.

This document is one in a series that set out to define the special character of each individual ACA in Co. Kildare and give guidance to homeowners, developers, architects and planning professionals on the type of works that would require planning permission in that specific conservation area.

1.2 Kildare County Development Plan and Naas ACA

The Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied) defines the boundaries of ACAs in a number of towns in the county including Naas. Section 12.7.2, Objective ACAO 2 of the County Development Plan states that:

'It is an objective of the Council to prepare a character statement appraisal and area specific policy for each ACA to include Athy, Ballitore, Kilcock, Leixlip Maynooth, Monasterevin, Moone, Naas Prosperous, Rathangan, Celbridge, Johsntown, Ballymore Eustace,

Kilcullen, Brannockstown, Rathmore, Clane and Newbridge and to preserve, protect and enhance the character of these areas.'

This Statement of Character document along with policies and objectives contained in a local area plan for Naas will fulfil this objective in relation to Naas.

1.3 Location and Setting of Naas ACA

Naas, in Irish *Nás na Ríogh*, or An *Nás*, meaning 'The Place of Assembly of the Kings', is situated in the east of County Kildare and is the administrative capital of the Kildare. It lies along the important historic route connecting Dublin some 30km in the east to the southwest of the country. It is now bypassed by the M7 motorway, some 2km to the northwest. The settlement of Sallins lies just north of the motorway and this has a train station on the main line to Dublin. The town serves a large rural hinterland and is also in an important employment centre and a commuter settlement for people working in the region.

Fig. 1: Extract from the historic geological survey map of 1855, sheet 120

The town is situated in a landscape described in the Kildare County Development Plan 2017- 2023 (as varied) Landscape Character Assessment as '*Northern Lowlands – Naas and environs. …of fertile lands with relatively high levels of local population and intensive land management. The slope and topography of areas occur in a shallow/gradual transition; the area is generally characterised by flat terrain and low vegetation.*' The bedrock is carboniferous limestone and the River Liffey meanders through the landscape a short distance away to the north and west.
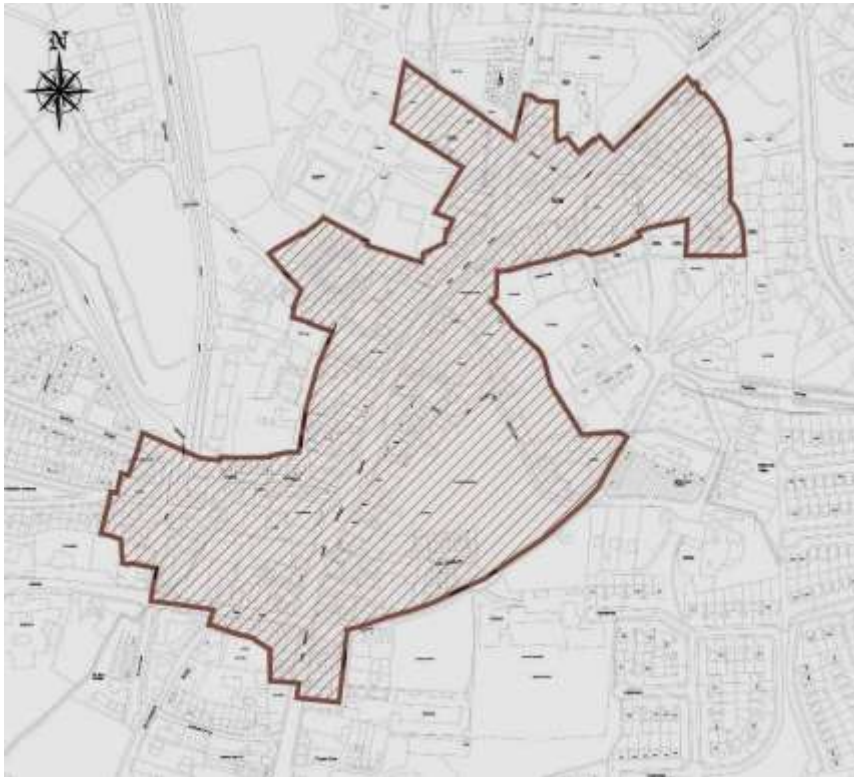
Fig. 2: ACA boundary, Source: Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023

Naas is organised around a main axis that runs roughly in a north-south direction. It is named along its length as North Main Street and South Main Street and has a junction to the north end at Sallins Road and Dublin Road. To the south, Fairgreen Street continues the linear axis of the town and an important junction branches from the southern end of South Main Street towards the west with the New Row/Newbridge Road.

The largest historic infrastructural feature near the town centre is the Grand Canal to the west, this is a spur off the larger Grand Canal, which runs through Sallins to the north. The canal spur has a small harbour in Naas and it continues on to connect with Corbally Harbour some 8.5km to the southwest.

Section A:

Historical and Architectural Description

2.0 Historical Development of Naas

2.1 Medieval Period

Part of County Kildare was located within the maghery (heartland) of the English Pale and partly the marches (outlying areas). The Pale maghery boundary was delineated by a rampart which stretched from Dundalk to Ardee, to Kells, south to Kilcock, Clane, Naas and the bridge of Kilcullen and finally eastward to Ballymore Eustace and Rathmore then leading to Dalkey, Dublin. Only a small area of County Kildare fell within the maghery.

The tangible medieval structures in Naas are parts of the fabric of the medieval parish church of St David and St David's Castle. Documentary evidence from the medieval, early modern period and eighteenth century suggest a substantial amount of medieval building. This included up to ten urban tower-houses – defensible houses of wealthier merchants, vaulted on the ground floor for storage with accommodation being located on the upper floors. The majority of these were on the main street. Austin Cooper, the eighteenth-century antiquarian, in his diary for 27 June 1781 noted that 'the town of Naas is small and old-looking, having some old Castles therein and some Old houses built in that stile'. On 7 August 1782, he said that 'near the [Gaol] which is an inconsiderable House just at the entrance from Dublin, stands a small square case,[Castle] of a very ancient appearance – a small distance further on in a line with the street and with this case is another, much larger and of very modern appearance – between both there is

another…' On 20 May 1784, Cooper mentioned that 'an old case fell down in Naas by which one man was killed and 2 or 3 wounded'. Cooper illustrated one of these urban town houses in Naas but without identifying its location.
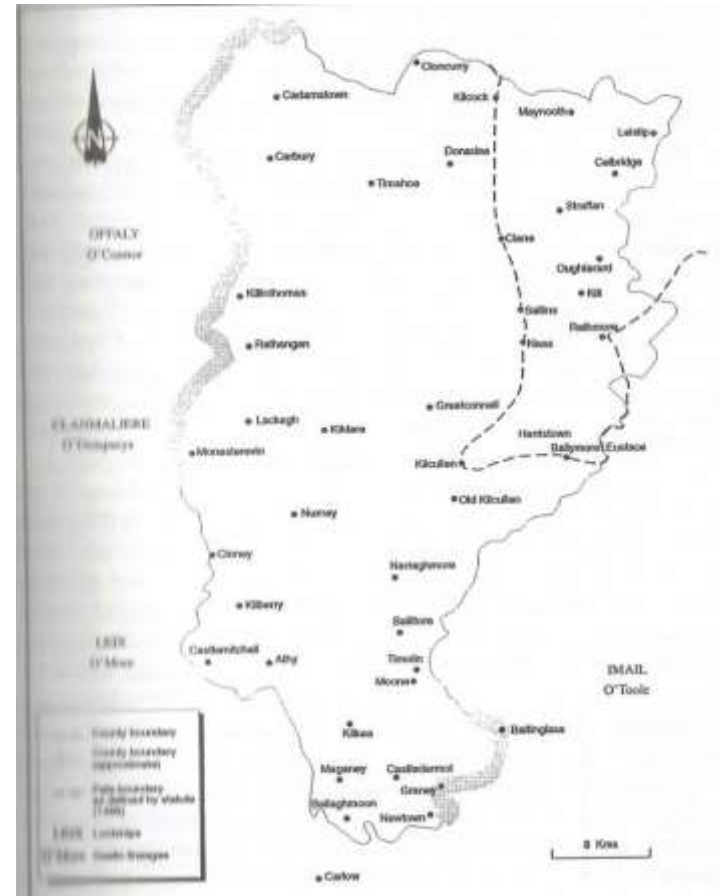
Fig. 3: From Mary Ann Lyons, *Church and Society in County Kildare c.1470-1547* (Dublin 2000), Map 1, p.19.

Following De Burgh, both Murtagh and Thomas indicate the probable location of these urban tower-houses. One might think then of similar buildings surviving in the streetscapes of Dalkey and Ardglass to get a sense of the appearance of Naas up to the late eighteenth century.

Naas also had three religious houses, an Augustinian Priory to the north, founded in the late twelfth century, a Dominican Friary founded in 1335-56, dedicated to St. Eustace and a second Augustinian Friary founded in the fourteenth century.

The most recent consensus is that the religious house to the northwest was the Dominican Friary (and not the Augustinian Friary as labelled on the OS Maps). An inquisition of 1540 mentions a church and belfry, a chapter house and a hall. In that year also, the priory is described as being, 'by the Mote of Naas'. In 1781, Cooper described the remains as consisting of, 'a small square steeple supported on an arch and adjoining on the north side, are the side walls; of what part I cannot say; but a more ruinous pile, I never yet have seen' (Price 1942, 26). In 1791, Grose (1791, ii, 27) recorded that, 'the belfry is entered by a Gothic arch, on each side of which is a staircase leading up to the rooms, in number three.' The Ordnance Survey Letters (Herity 2002, 52 (156)) noted that, 'Within this graveyard there formerly stood an Abbey, the tower belonging to which, being popularly called "Abbey Castle" was entirely demolished two years ago' (i.e. 1835). If indeed the crossing tower of the Dominican Friary was in any near as good a condition as depicted by Cooper and Grose, it is a tragic loss to the townscape.

Fig. 4: Old Castle, Naas. Austin Cooper 1782 (NLI Mss. 2122 TX (1) and (2), reproduced from Peter Harbison ed., *Cooper's Ireland. Drawings and Notes from an Eighteenth-Century Gentleman* (Dublin, 2000), p.83.

The possessions of these religious houses, itemised at the dissolution, help build up a picture of Naas in 1540-1541. They owned several of the town's cottages and tenements. They also owned two water mills and numerous gardens in the town centre. The largest house, St John's Hospital, had an orchard and a small plantation of ash trees in its precincts as well as a stable and a barn. Tenants in the cottages belonging to St John's Hospital paid their rent in money and were liable to pay customs which consisted of two days of autumn reaping in the

demesne of the monastery. The Dominican Friary possessed ten gardens, eleven acres of land, a water mill and five cottages.

Entrance to the medieval town was apparently through a series of gates. Whether these were vaulted structures with accommodation overhead is unclear, but the documentary evidence lists a number: West, Green, Corban's, Water, North and Jago's (Jokeston and Omes gates not located). A linked question is whether Naas was a medieval walled town. The likelihood is that it was, and the Down Survey Map of 1656-58 of Naas Parish certainly depicts it as enclosed by a circular circuit. The language and tone of the various murage (grants (tax levied for building or repairing the walls of a town), however, casts doubt on whether walling was ever achieved in the medieval period. Murage grants are known only from 1414 when one was allowed for 20 years (*Municipal Corporations in Ireland, report and appendix in Parliamentary Papers*, 1835 and 1836 (MCI), 213). Naas was included in the review of murage to Meath towns in 1463 (*MCI* 119). A number are known to have followed in the 15th and 16th centuries, but the evidence in some of them seems to point still to initial buildings rather than repair (H.F. Berry and J.F. Morrissey eds., *II-IV: Statute Rolls of the Parliament of Ireland, Henry VI – Edward* IV (Dublin, 1910-14, 1939), in 1463 the town was described as 'not previously walled' and supervisors were requested in 1467 'to direct the wall in such a line as they think most advantageous for the good of the town'. This grant took the form of a county levy, 'half on the lords and half on the commons' based on the rateable valuation of property held in Naas. The 1567 murage charter again raised doubts about the wall, referring to the 'desire of

the burgesses to fortify the borough with a fosse and walls of lime and stone' (J. Morrin ed., *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland… Henry VIII – Elizabeth* (Dublin, 1861-3), 16). The last known reference comes from a petition in parliament, dated 1697, in which misuse of murage money is noted so that 'no gates, nor walls, nor bridges were repaired (*MCI* 217). (Avril Thomas, *The Walled Towns of Ireland* (Dublin, 1992), Vol 2., 168).
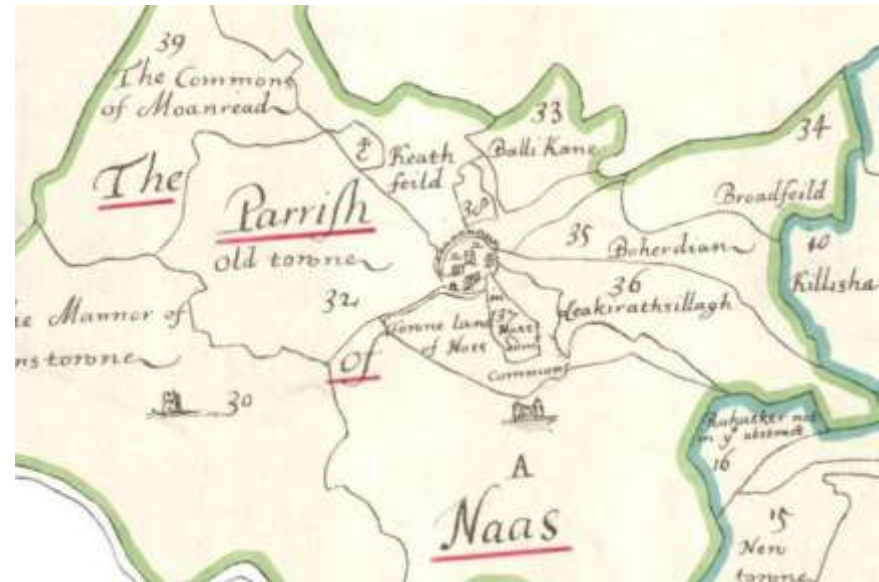
Fig. 5: Down Survey, 1656-58, Naas Parish Map, east-west alignment

A weekly market and court sessions were held in Naas.

The town's cottages were thatched and we get some notion of the size of Naas from Lord Deputy Sidney's description of an attack by Rory

O'More and Cormack McCormack O'Connor on the town in 1577.
Somewhere in the region of 700 or 800 houses were burned, and there
were said to have been over 500 men in the town. [De Burgh, pp190-1].
Even allowing for exaggeration, it does suggest an important and
thriving town.

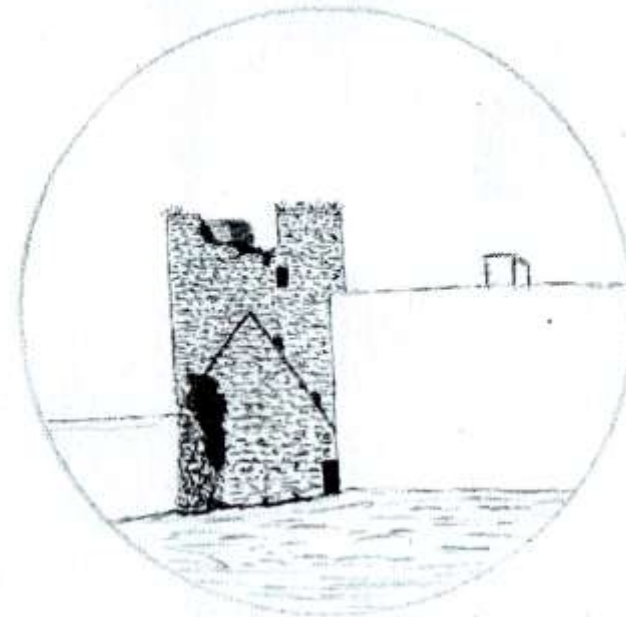Fig. 6: Dominican Abbey, Naas. Austin Cooper 1782 (NLI Mss. 2122 TX (1) and
(2), reproduced from Peter Harbison ed., *Cooper's Ireland. Drawings and Notes
from an Eighteenth-Century Gentleman* (Dublin, 2000), p.67
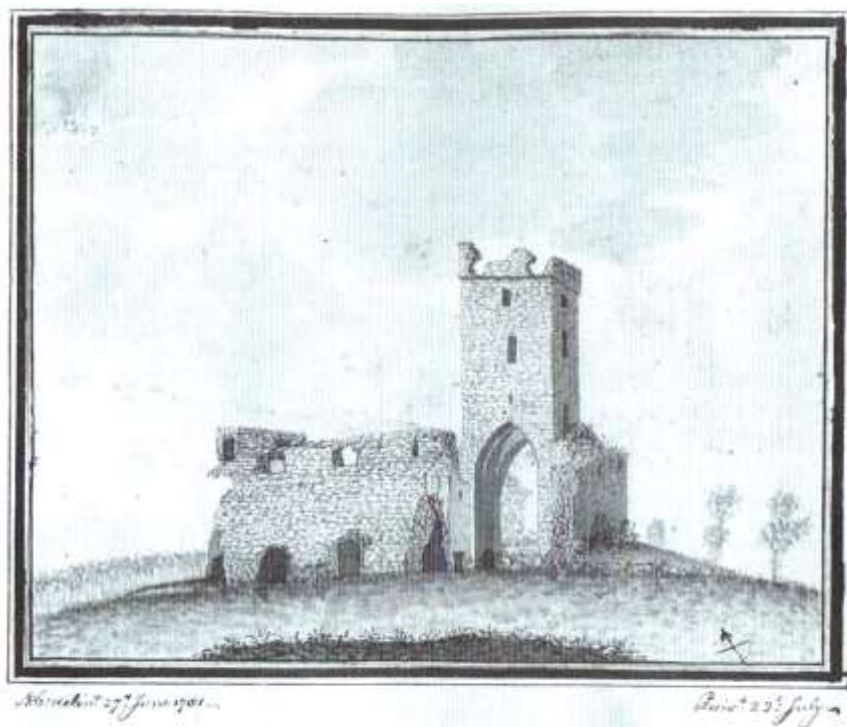
Fig. 7: Abbey at Naas, Co. Kildare. Francis Grose, *The Antiquities of Ireland.
The Second Volume*, (London, 1791), Pl.30

2.2   Eighteenth-century Naas

The earliest detailed maps of Naas are those drawn by Robert Whittlesey for Thomas Burgh (1670-1730), MP for Naas and Surveyor General: *A Book of Maps of several parcels of ground In and Abouth the Town of Naas In the County of Kildare belonging to Thomas Burgh Esq. 12th April 1722.*

A map of the extensive holdings of Thomas Burgh in Naas drawn in 1722 gives a good indication of the layout of the main thoroughfares. Burgh, architect and engineer, who was Surveyor General from 1700 until his death in 1730, was high sheriff of Co. Kildare in 1712 and a member of parliament for Naas, Co. Kildare, from 1713 until his death.

The plot patterns shown are typical of most Irish towns – narrow frontages to the street and some extending quite deeply may represent burgage plots from the medieval period. Some of these plots must have been the location of the urban tower-houses discussed above and noticed by Cooper later in the eighteenth century. St David's parish church and graveyard are shown diagrammatically, the church is shown with a west tower, presumably medieval, and replaced by the present one built by Lord Mayo in 1781. The steps depicted on plot no. 63 as it extends onto Main Street indicate the location of the Tholsel (also called the Session House) and dating from the 1660s if not earlier. The Toll House or Town House (and formerly the Market House) stood in the centre of the road at the southern end of South Main Street. It was demolished in 1787 to improve the Kilcullen turnpike road. Plot No. 73 hidden from view behind short plots on the west side of South Main

Street was the site of the Dominican Priory in the town (to be differentiated from the medieval site).

Fig. 8: Estate Map of Thomas Burgh, Surveyor General and MP for Naas, 1722 by Robert Whittlesey. Redrawn by Sheena Meagher.

Fig. 1. Central portion of
Sherrard's Map of Naas
1787 (Scale 7:1).
A. Town/Toll House.
B. Tholsell/Sessions
House/Court House.
C. Poplar Square.
D. Poor House [Lattin
Alms House].
E. Old Jail.
F. New Court House.
G. New Jail [Town Hall].
H. Brewery.
J. Church [St. David's].
K. Power's Inn.
L. Black Bull Inn.
M. Murphy's Inn.
N. Red Cross Inn.
P. Malt House.
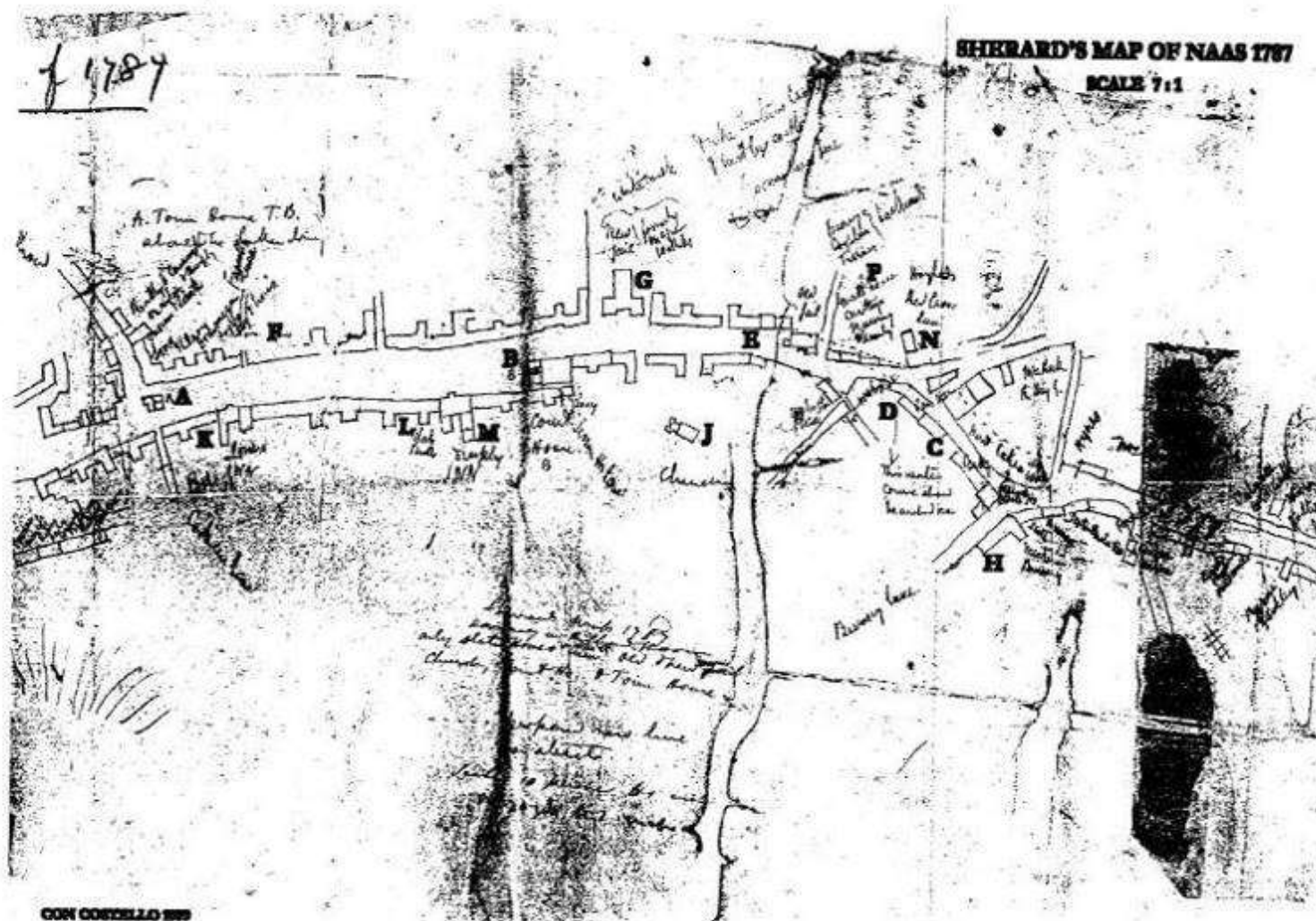
Fig. 9: Central portion of Thomas Sherrard's Map of Naas 1787. Key by Con

Costello. (Orientated with West to the top of the page)

Sherrard's map of Naas dated 1787 (scale 10 perches to 1 inch or 70 yards to 1 inch) includes proposals for the widening of parts of the streets suggests that it also was prepared as part of the road plans. It shows the Court House [B] beside Sessions' House Lane [A]. A flight of steps leads up to the entrance of the Court House. As noted above this was also referred to as the Tholsell and as the Sessions House.

At the present Poplar Square [C] the cartographer indicates 'part taken by road' on the west side of the street and further on near the Poor House [D] 'this water course should be arched'. At the junction of the of the main street and the Limerick Road the Town House [A], which stood in the middle of the thoroughfare, is noted 'should be taken down T.B.' This map then must be seen in the context of the Act of the Irish Parliament of 1787 for improving and repairing the Turnpike Road leading from the City of Dublin to Kilcullen Bridge.

Another note on the map refers to the 'proposed new line for the streets', indicated by broken lines, the west side of Poplar Square and onwards to the old jail [E] and the Kilcullen road as it leaves the town.

The new Sessions or Court House [F], to a design of Richard Morrison, on a site further south on the west side of Main Street, was completed by 1807 when Thomas Rawson from Athy recorded that 'a new gaol and court-house have been lately erected' in his *Statistical Survey of the County Kildare*. The Court House was subsequently enlarged by John McCurdy in 1860.

In 1782 Cooper saw the jail [E] as 'an inconsiderable house just at the entrance from Dublin', but, as discussed above, close to it he admired

'a small square castle of very ancient appearance, a small distance further on in a line with the street and with this castle is another, much larger and very modern in appearance, between both of these is another much the same as the first mentioned'.

By the time Sherrard undertook the making of his map in 1787 the jail observed by Austin Cooper is shown as the Old Jail. The New Jail [G] is described as White Castle, formerly McGee's and in 1900 de Burgh wrote that White Castle, Geoghegan's and Ward's houses and gardens [made] into a jail in 1792'.

A note on Sherrard's map of 1787 is that 'the only slated houses in Main Street were Old and New Jail, Church, Court [Sessions] House and Town House'. The remainder of the houses had thatched roofs. The Town House was the old Toll House which stood at the junction of the Main Street and the Limerick and Kilcullen roads A. It is also shown on Taylor's map of 1783. It had been the Market House in 1670, and it was taken down as part of the improvements for the turnpike road in 1787.

2.3 Nineteenth century developments

The nineteenth century saw consolidation and some outward expansion of settlement and development from the main spine of the town as shown in Sherrard's 1787 map.

The 1837 first edition Ordnance Survey map (fig.13) gives a description of the town and its surrounding. Important institutions for the most part retain their architectural footprints shown in the map of 50 years

before. Some are renewed and some significant religious, military and civil buildings are added to the town in the first part of the 19th century.

Important features of the map include:

- Good built definition to the roads leading off the main axis along the Dublin Road, Sallins Road, New Row and The Green.

- Good built definition to Basin Lane (now Canal Street) and the south portion of Corbans Lane

- The canal basin is shown with a loose framing of structures with extensive open space needed for quayside associated operations

- Abbey Street, west of and parallel to South Main Street, is shown with almost continuous built edge definition to make the block between it and the main street have a public face to all sides.

- The main street has been augmented with the addition of a jail building located on the west side with a small set back. Though built in 1796 the map notates it as the 'old jail' and a larger structure ('new jail') with panopticon plan arrangement is shown west of the canal harbour area.

- A new courthouse (1805-1810) has been added the southern half of South Main Street. Like the old prison it is set back from the street space and by means of its elongated façade and

projecting classical portico, it adds a strong civic character to the street and architectural profile of the town.

- The Catholic Church of Our Lady and Saint David was built in 1825-30 and situated close to the north end of Main Street South on the Sallins Road. It is set back from the road and has no presence along the main town axis but the large Neo-Gothic edifice with a tall tower added considerably to the skyline of the north end of the town.

- The area west of the harbour sees the addition of a new prison. Corrective, medical and military institutions are often arranged in close proximity in historic urban layouts. Naas follows this pattern and a large barracks built south of the Limerick Road in 1813 with parade grounds, accommodation and its own hospital, jail and mortuary.

Fig. 10: Naas Courthouse (1805-10), Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

Fig. 11: Devoy Barracks (1805-10), Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

Fig. 12: St. David's RC church (1825-30), Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

Fig. 13: Extract from first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1837 (enlarged from original scale of 6" to 1 mile).

The revised Ordnance Survey map dated from 1871 (Fig 14) shows the layout of the town to be similar to that shown in the 1837 map (Fig.13). It gives detailed plans of some of the public buildings and notates other recent important institutional and commercial structures and infrastructure:

- The addition of a chapel, convent, gardens and cemetery to the site of St David's Catholic chapel and school

- A Christian Brother's School east of the Motte.

- A structure is noted on the motte as the 'old guard house' (this may be the same as the unannotated structure marked in the 1837 map)

- A market is shown to the rear of the Town Hall (Old Gaol) with a boundary wall with a narrow structure running along much of the perimeter.

- A Presbyterian meeting house was built (1865-70) to the north end of the market space in South Main Street. It had adopted the role of giving architectural definition to the end of the space that it still holds today. Church Lane is shown to clearly connect the eastern corner of the space to the site of St David's castle and beyond. A connection that was more loosely defined in the earlier map.

- The mill race and canal system shown in the 1837 map is given more detailed description and it is clear that it had an important function because of its extensive layout to the east and south of the town. It also connects to Oldtown demesne a short distance to the north where important historic water channels and basins remain today.

- The map notes the location on South Main Street of new structures such as the large three-storey Hibernian Bank and Royal Hotel, which underline the growing commercial importance of the town.

- The ongoing importance of the security infrastructure is marked by the three-storey constabulary barracks built c.1870 to the south side of the court house.
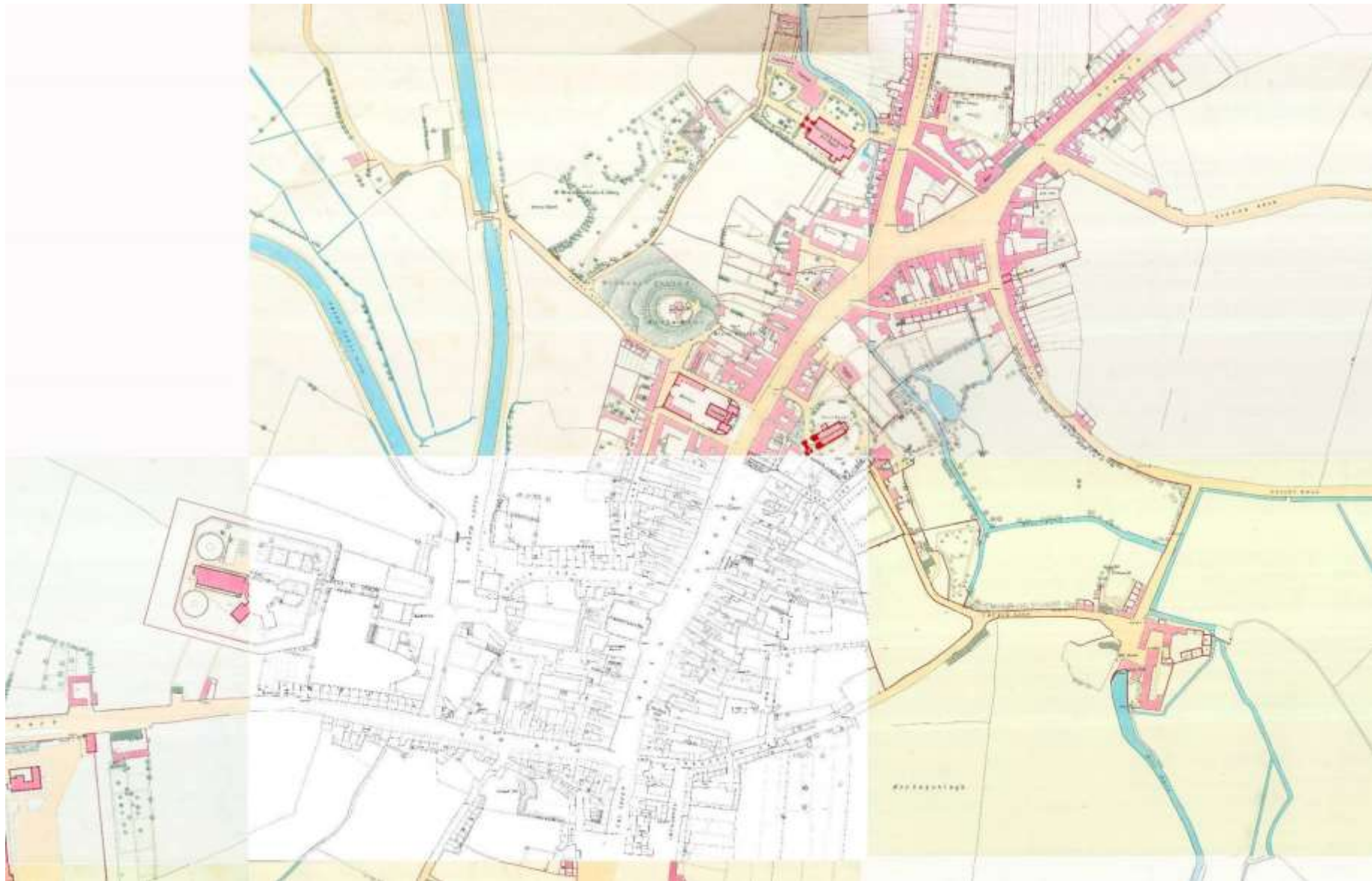
Fig. 14: Extract from Ordnance Survey map of 1871

The 1908 Ordnance Survey map gives a detailed picture of an intact historic town on the threshold of radical changes to the way the town and its surroundings are used and all the consequential changes to its historic fabric that we see today. The differences to the 1871 urban layout are minimal, with further built definition of streets extending from the urban core and the addition of structures to the rear of many of the urban sites. Features of note include:

— Further impressive bank structures such as the finely crafted Tudor-revival structure on the east of South Main Street (now AIB bank) from c.1875. Also, the impressive and urbane Neoclassical Ulster Bank on the same street side from 1890-95.

— Adaptations and replacement of existing street structures with several structures having gabled dormers in a low-key historicist style, e.g. 36 South Main Street from c.1900.

— Bespoke offices such as the Leinster Leader building from c.1870 on the east of South Main Street, with a well-ordered and sober architectural expression.

— New row houses in pairs or short runs such as the presbyteries on the east side of the Sallins Road, or on the north side of New Row (no longer extant)

— The direct connection of a strong urban layout to the surrounding countryside remains, no suburbs have yet severed that relationship

Railway infrastructure came relatively late to Naas with the opening of a line linking Naas, Baltinglass and Tullow with the main line at Sallins. The railway line ran to the east side of the town and Naas Station was located just south of the Dublin Road. Little of the infrastructure is extant save for a stone storehouse and an elevated bridge on the Friary Road. Both lie east of the ACA boundary, save to say that the inclusion of Naas in the railway network was acknowledgement of the town's importance at the turn of the century.

Fig. 15: South Main Street, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

Fig. 16: South Main Street, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

Fig. 18: Poplar Square, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

Fig. 17: South Main Street, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

Fig. 19: Extract from view of 'The Moat', Lawrence Collection, c. 1900
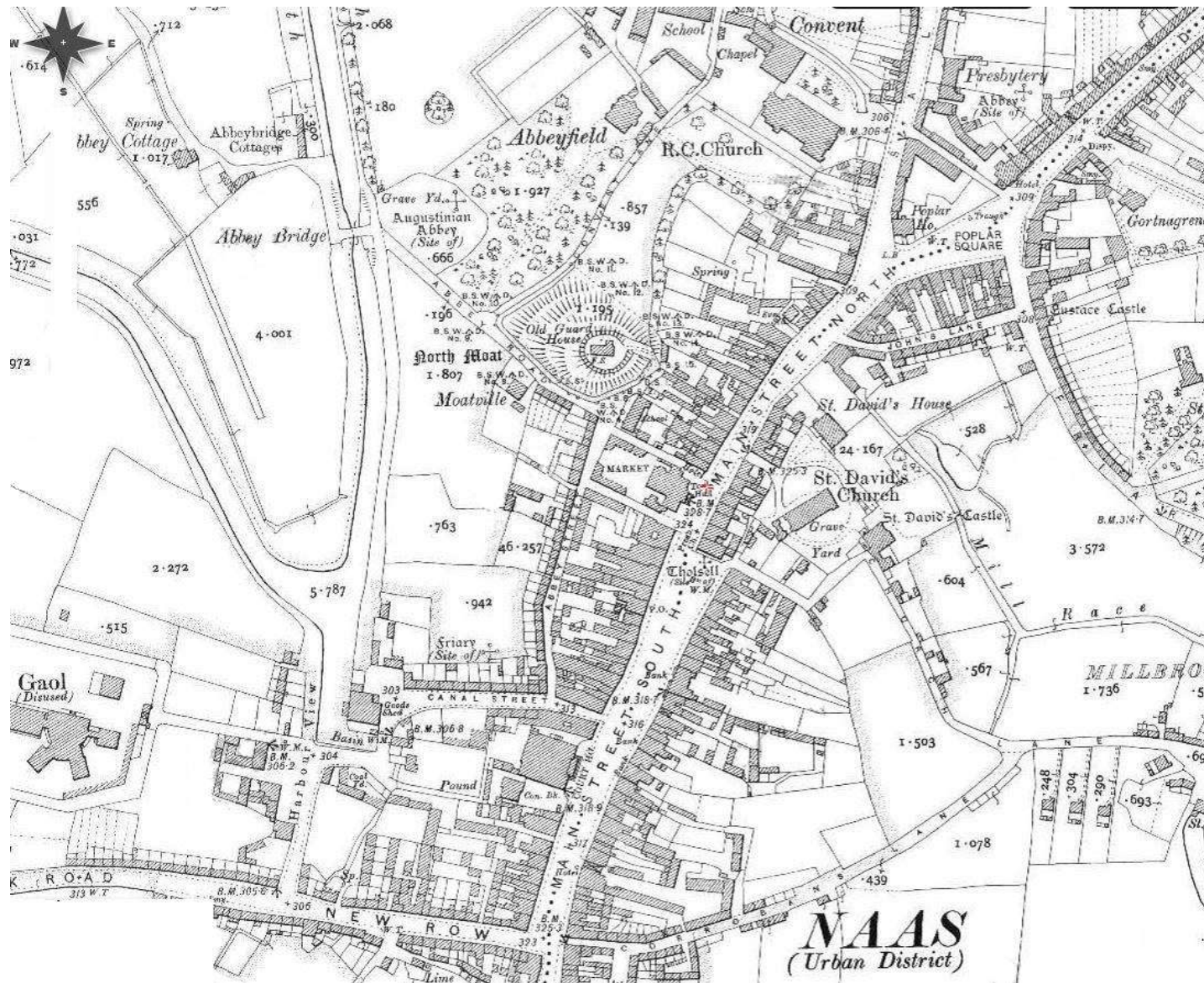
Fig. 20: Extract from 25" Ordnance Survey map of 1908

2.4   Twentieth century

It is interesting to see that the lay-out of the main streets of the county town are today almost exactly as they were in 1722. However, the streetscape has completely changed, with the only remaining buildings, as identified on the map of 1787, being the New Jail, now the Town Hall as remodelled in 1904, and St David's church and tower. The majority of the houses date from the nineteenth century when considerable rebuilding was necessary following the destruction carried out during the Rebellion of 1798. Before April 1799 twenty-seven persons submitted claims to the Commissioners for enquiring into the Losses sustained by such of *His Majesty's Loyal Subjects*, as have suffered in their Property by the Rebellion. Thomas Burgh of Oldtown, a major property owner in the town, headed the list with a claim of £1,400. [NLI JLB 94107; De Burgh, 'Ancient Naas', p.199].

In terms of the twentieth century, the town expanded over a very large area with suburban developments that bear little urban or architectural relationship to the historic core. Residential living in the town has been severely reduced. Public space in the town is almost exclusively devoted to traffic and parking requirements.

New additions of architectural interest to the core include the Dara Cinema from 1935-45, executed in an International and Art Deco style and adding urban sophistication to the existing range of architectural styles and functions.

The two-storey development of the triangular site at the junction of the Dublin Road and Sallins Road, dating from the 1970s or 1980s is tidy in appearance, however it represents a loss of urban and architectural definition to a key historic public location in the town.

The large and incomplete Corban's Lane Shopping Centre development located the east of South Main Street, which has little visual presence when seen from the street, however, impacts heavily on the otherwise intact skyline and is out of scale and character with the historic town.

Fig. 21: View from Sallins Road/Poplar Square looking south along Main Street
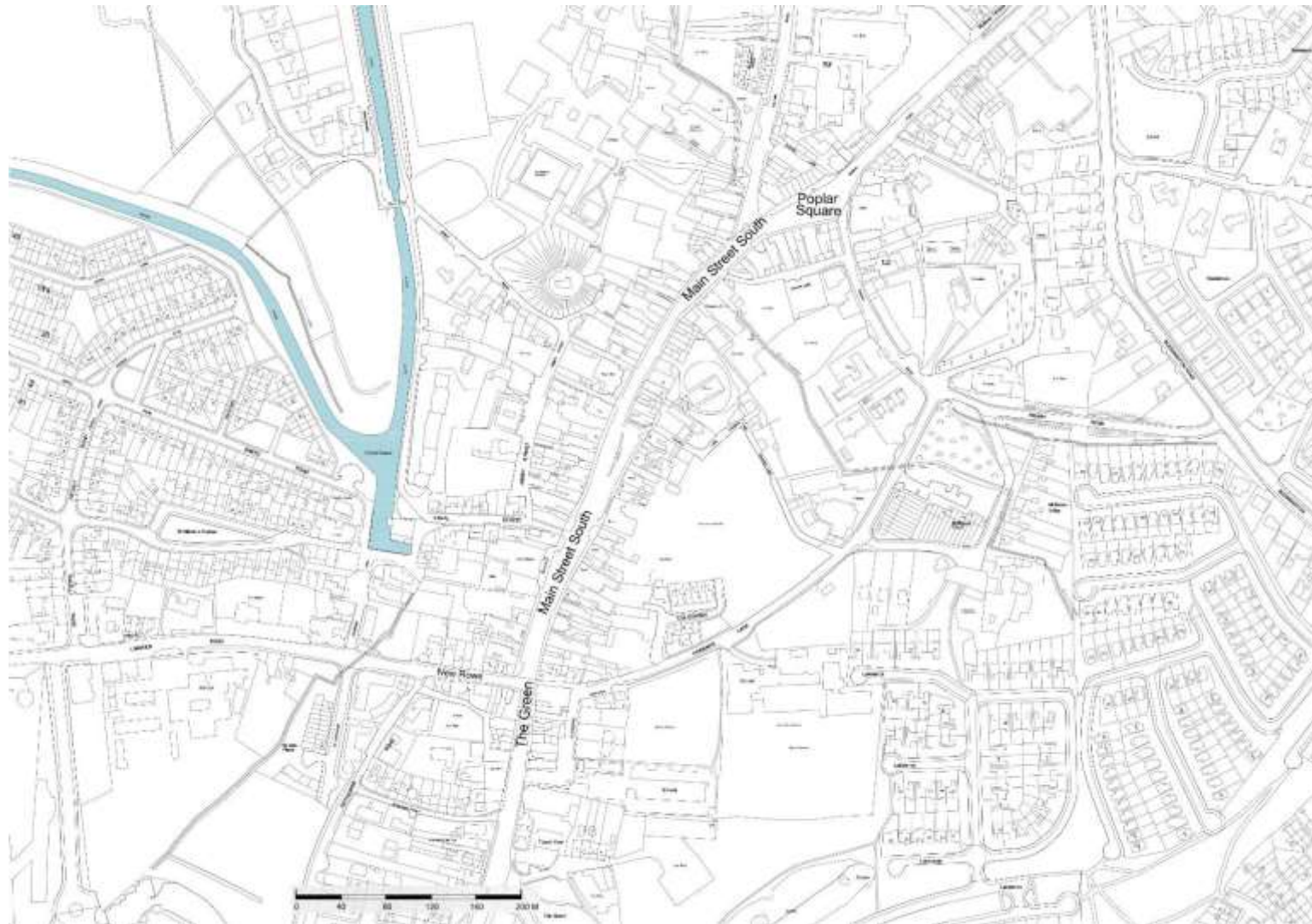
Fig. 22: Extract from contemporary Ordnance Survey map

2.5   Historical Sources

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— Liam Price ed., *A Eighteenth Century Antiquary. The Sketches, Notes and Diaries of Austin Cooper (1759-1830)* (Dublin, 1942)

— Avril Thomas, *The Walled Towns of Ireland* (2 Vols.) (Dublin, 1992)

Websites:

www.buildingsofireland.ie

www.osi.ie

www.griffiths.askaboutireland.ie

Other:

Naas Local History Group

3.0   Statutory Protection and Planning Objectives

In addition to the protection afforded by the ACA designation, some individual structures within the ACA are protected in their own right by other statutory designations.

3.1   Protected Structures in the ACA

The structures listed below, many of which lie within the boundary of the Architectural Conservation Area are included in the Kildare County Council Record of Protected Structures (RPS), in the County Development Plan 2017-2023.

In addition to the protection conferred by the ACA, these structures and their attendant grounds, known as their curtilage, are protected in their own right under Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

NS19-001   St. David's Castle, 8 North Main Street

NS19-002   St. David's Church, North Main Street

NS19-003   Our Lady and St. David RC Church, Sallins Road

NS19-004   Road bridge at Abbey Bridge

NS19-005   St. David's House, 6 North Main Street, former rectory

NS19-006   Presbyterian Church, Market Square

NS19-007   Naas Court House, South Main Street

NS19-008   Naas Court Hotel, South Main Street, former RIC barracks

NS19-009   Allied Irish Bank, 40-41 South Main Street

NS19-010   Ulster Bank, 44 South Main Street

NS19-011   Almshouses (former), Dublin Road

NS19-013   North Moat, Abbey Street

NS19-014   Burial Ground, Abbey Street

NS19-015   Mercy Convent, Sallins Road

NS19-016   Canal Stores, The Harbour, former warehouse

NS19-017   "Butt Mullins" Restaurant, Poplar Square, historic wall

NS19-018   Hayden's Bar, 6 Poplar Square, former house

NS19-019   Former Hospital Chapel

NS19-020   Former workhouse burial ground

NS19-021   Religious House

NS19-022   Kavanagh's Public House, 10 South Main Street

NS19-023   36 South Main Street

NS19-024   Kalu, Main Street South Basin Street, former bank

NS19-027   The Naas Photo Centre, South Main Street

NS19-028   Jam Music Company, 56 South Main Street

NS19-029   Single storey school

NS19-031   Leinster Leader, 6 South Main Street

NS19-032   Gogarty's, 21- 22 South Main Street

NS19-033   Bank of Ireland, 48 South Main Street

NS19-034   Bank of Ireland, 47 South Main Street

NS19-036   Moat Theatre, Abbey Street, former school

NS19-037   House

NS19-038   Canalised stream

NS19-039   Naas Presbytery and Naas Parochial House, Sallins Road

NS19-040   Ballycane House

NS19-043   St. Anne's, 8 Poplar Square, house

NS19-044   Station master's house

NS19-047   Town Hall, South Main Street

NS19-049   Cottage and St. David's South Main Street

NS19-050   Rubble wall between Fairground and Lakelands

NS19-051   Daly's Pharmacy, 17 South Main Street

NS19-052	Elvery Sport, 6 South Main Street
NS19-053	The Knocks house and farmyard
NS19-054	Goods shed Friary Lane
NS19-057	Conway's, 5 North Main Street
NS19-058	House at Jigginstown Castle and Environs
NS19-059	Limerick Bridge, hump-back road bridge
NS19-060	Jigginstown Bridge, hump-back bridge
NS19-061	Ploopluck Bridge, hump-back road bridge
NS19-062	Tandy's Bridge, hump-back road bridge
NS19-063	St Patrick's Well
NS19-068	Cemetery gates, wall and lodge
NS19-071	Detached modernist eleven bay two-storey building designed as a hospital
NS19-072	Oldtown House
NS19-077	Pair of turrets, Sallins Road
NS19-079	Tower house, Limerick Road
NS19-080	Church, Caragh Road
NS19-084	House at Spring Gardens
NS19-086	House
NS19-087	House at Leinster Grove
NS19-088	Former corn-mill at Leinster Mills
NS19-089	Ringfort
NS19-091	Ringfort
NS19-092	Enclosure
NS19-093	Cemetery mound
NS19-094	Enclosure
NS19-096	Maudlin's farmhouse

NS19-097	Monread Farmhouse
NS19-098	Monread House
NS19-099	Lannreagh House, Sallins Road
NS19-100	House at the Firs, Sallins Road
NS19-101	House at Sallin's Road
NS19-102	House at Titusville, Sallins Road
NS19-104	Albans House, Sallins Road
NS19-105	Melitta Cottage, Sallins Road
NS19-107	Former gas works manager's house
NS19-108	Detached U-plan single-storey house
NS19-109	House, Old Limerick Road
NS19-111	Thatch cottage
NS19-115	Victorian Farmhouse
NS19-117	House at Tipper Road
NS19-119	Hill House, Tipper Road
NS19-123	Holy well
NS19-127	Market House, Harbour View
NS19-128	Harbour View, house
NS19-129	Harbour View, house
NS19-132	Store/Warehouse, Harbour View
NS19-147	Hugh Statham, 22A, South Main Street, former house
NS19-148	The Leinster Leader, South Main Street
NS19-149	Basin Street
NS19-151	Spotless Cleaners/County Shop, South Main Street
NS19-152	South Main Street, former house
NS19-153	Naas Post Office, South Main Street

NS19-154   EBS, North Main Street, former house

NS19-155   Thomas Fletcher Public House, 13 North Main Street

NS19-158   Grandstand, North Main Street, former house

NS19-160   Top Twenty, North Main Street, former house

NS19-161   Grahams, North Main Street, former house

NS19-162   Dara Cinema, North Main Street

NS19-167   House, 4 Victoria Terrace

NS19-168   House, 3 Victoria Terrace

NS19-169   House, 2 Victoria Terrace

NS19-170   House, 1 Victoria Terrace

NS19-178   Foxes, South Main Street, former house

NS19-179   Jordan, 31 South Main Street, former house

NS19-180   Shylocks, South Main Street, former house

NS19-181   Ivy Inn, South Main Street, former hotel

NS19-182   34 South Main Street, former house

NS19-185   Nolan and Brophy, South Main Street, former house

NS19-186   The Forge Inn, 46 South Main Street, former house

NS19-188   50 South Main Street, former house

NS19-192   McMahon Solicitors, Poplar Square, former house

NS19-195   House at Tipper Road

NS19-196   House, Dublin Road

NS19-197   Rosetta House, Dublin Road

NS19-198   William McCormack, 37 South Main Street, former house

NS19-199   38 South Main Street, former house

NS19-200   South Main Street, former house

NS19-201   Naas Female National School, Off Sallins Road

NS19-202	Former laundry girls' home
NS19-204	Naas Parish Hall, Off Sallins Road
NS19-205	Sallins Road Graveyard
NS19-206	Sallins Road, adjacent to Naas Parish Hall
NS19-211	House, Dublin Road
NS19-212	House, Dublin Road
NS19-215	Freestanding chimney
NS19-216	Friars House, Mill Lane
NS19-217	Red brick outbuilding
NS19-218	House, 1 Glenville Terrace
NS19-219	House, 2 Glenville Terrace
NS19-220	House, 3 Glenville Terrace
NS19-221	House, 4 Glenville Terrace
NS19-222	House, 5 Glenville Terrace
NS19-223	House, 6 Glenville Terrace
B24-16	Kilashee House
B24-12	Church and graveyard at Kilashee

3.2   Recorded Monuments in the ACA

The following archaeological sites, features and artefacts within the Naas ACA are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) as Recorded Monuments and are thereby protected under the National Monuments Acts of 1930 to 2004:

RMP No KD019-030039	Religious house - Dominican Friars
RMP No KD019-030022	Graveyard
RMP No KD019-030052	Well
RMP No KD019-030008	Town Hall

RMP No KD019-030055	Excavation
RMP No KD019-030	Historic Town
RMP No KD019-030018	Castle
RMP No KD019-030017	Castle - Tower House
RMP No KD019-030016	House - 16th/17th century
RMP No KD019-030054	Excavation
RMP No KD019-030013	Castle
RMP No KD019-030009	Castle-Motte
RMP No KD019-030019	Castle-tower house
RMP No KD019-030057	Graveyard
RMP No KD019-030034	Graveslab
RMP No KD019-030027	Font
RMP No KD019-030026	Font
RMP No KD019-030031	Graveslab
RMP No KD019-030033	Graveslab
RMP No KD019-030025	Architectural fragment
RMP No KD019-030025	Wall Monument
RMP No KD019-030035	Wall Monument
RMP No KD019-030030	Tomb – Table Tomb
RMP No KD019-030053	Excavation
RMP No KD019-030015	Castle
RMP No KD019-030048	House – Medieval
RMP No KD019-030049	Excavation
RMP No KD019-030041	Excavation
RMP No KD019-030014	Castle – Tower House
RMP No KD019-030056	Burial Ground

3.3 Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as varied) (CDP)

A key objective of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 (as vaired) is to prepare a Statement of Character for Naas and specific policy guidance for the ACA in order to protect and preserve the character of the ACA. It is also stated in the CDP that new development within ACAs will only be considered if it can be demonstrated that it will not harm the character or appearance of the area. Furthermore it is acknowledged in the CDP that ACAs provide an opportunity to build upon an existing character by establishing a high standard of urban design to complement the ACA and to establish a distinctive sense of place through street lighting and furniture, paving, signage and by encouraging best conservation practice in the repair and maintenance of historic buildings and by insisting on high design standards for new developments.

3.4 Naas Town Development Plan 2011-2017

The Naas Town Development Plan 2011-2017 sets out the former Town Council's approach to the management of development in the town.

One of its key principles is to '*Protect local assets by preserving the quality of the architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage, the landscape, canal, open spaces and material assets of the town*'. The plan is accompanied by a map defining the Architectural Conservation Area.

3.5 Draft Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027

A new Draft Naas Local Area Plan (LAP) 2021-2027 is in the course of preparation. This LAP replaces the Naas Town Development Plan 2011-2017. The ACA and Statement of Character has informed the policies and objectives contained within the Draft Local Area Plan.

Furthermore, the Draft LAP introduces the concept of Core Regeneration Areas (Refer to Chapter 3) located within the historic town centre. The Core Regeneration Areas comprise six distinctive character areas and set out a design framework to facilitate the upgrading of the public realm, identification of key connections, the adaptive re-use of existing buildings and the development of infill sites in a manner that is sensitive to the ACA and the historic core of the town. The development of the Core Regeneration Areas has taken into consideration this Statement of Character for Naas.

3.6   Description of Historic Built Environment

3.7   Defining Characteristics

The special character of the Naas ACA can be defined under the following distinctive attributes:

- Layout
- Socio-economic functions
- Building types, scale and materials
- Quality and treatment of open spaces.

Fig. 23: View looking north along South Main Street

Layout

The morphology of Naas is regular but informal, the result of its medieval origin as an organised defensive outpost of loosely elongated rectangular form, overlaid with subsequent informal development over the centuries.

The town consists of a north-south main street forming the main route through the town, this bends slightly along its length to give it an intimate sense of enclosure. It also widens and narrows over its length with the most pronounced narrowing at the junction of North Main Street and South Main Street where the Presbyterian meeting house now stands. The south end of the axis street finishes in a cruciform crossing, the north however widens and bends and forks in a pronounced informal arrangement not found elsewhere in the town. A number of secondary lanes and roads branch off the main axis. Those to the west are more regular in their layout, those to the east are longer and meandering in character. The only true parallel street space to the main street axis is Abbey Street, which is short and runs between the North Moat and Basin Street.

The medieval wall defences are not readily perceptible in the town but leave traces in the street layout. The location of Abbey Street, the North Moat, Chapel Lane (in the north) and The Alley (in the south), roughly follow the old wall position.

The subdivision of the areas between the roads and structures is in long narrow parcels known as 'burgage plots' which are perpendicular to the main street. This type of site division survives to a good extent in the modern town of Naas, and is one of its defining characteristics.
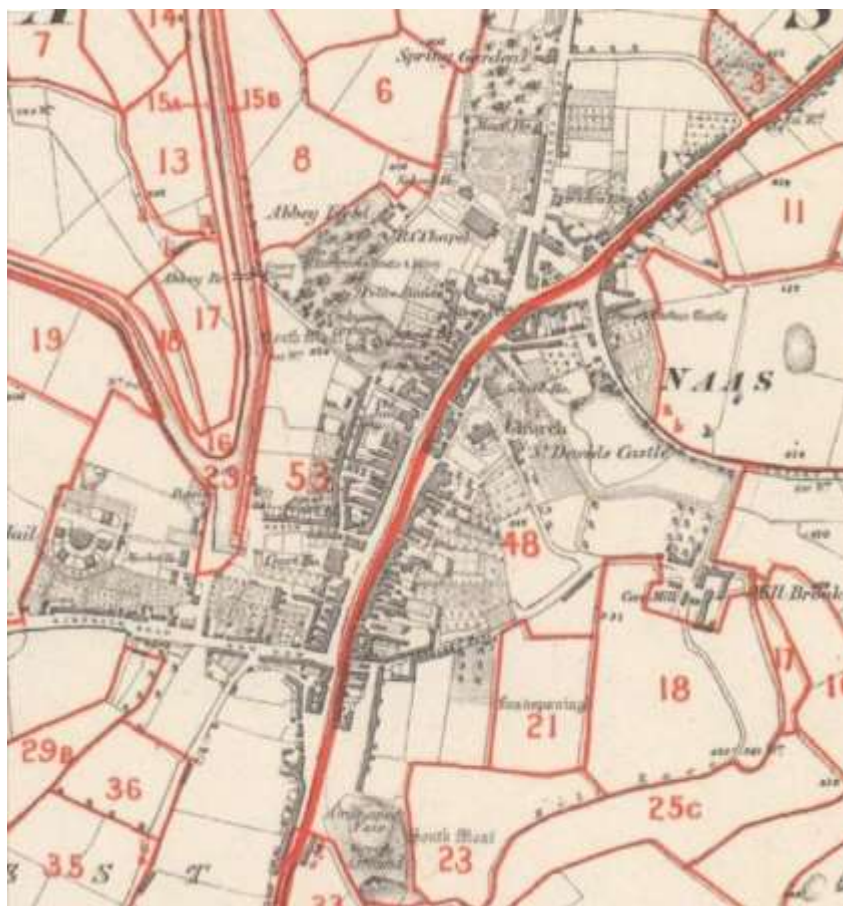
Fig. 22: Extract from Griffith Town Plan from 1848-64, showing characteristic irregularity of the Main Street, and narrow side lanes and streets

The non-orthogonal and informal layout is underlined with the positioning of the main architectural monuments in the town for the most part either side of the main street axis and with understated links to that axis. St David's Church, St David's Castle, Our Lady and St David RC Church and the North Moat are all substantial structures that have little or no presence in the Main Street space. Later monuments such as the Court House and Town Hall (former prison) and the Presbyterian Meeting house are located on the Main Street but are not overbearing in their presence. Overall the architecture of the main street space is marked mostly by an architecture of domestic and commercial expression and scale.

3.7.1   Socio-economic Functions

Uses associated with Naas's role as a traditional market town contribute to its historic architectural character. The town had a significant military and prison infrastructure in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, largely on the outskirts of the town, but most of this is no longer extant. It provides a centre of employment as well as commercial, administrative and other services to its population and to the surrounding rural hinterland. The town hosts the administrative centre of the county at the County Council offices located a short distance southwest of the centre.

Over the latter half of the twentieth century the trend was for traders and professionals to move away from the town centre, as happened in most other Irish market towns. Residential use is no longer an important component of the ACA, most residential houses in the ACA are located in the side streets, and most of the town's population now lives outside the immediate core. Buildings in the town on the main streets have commercial units on the ground floor, the spaces above were most likely once used for family accommodation associated with the businesses below. These are now largely in use as storage or offices. Most structures retain separate street entrances for the upper floors and it is important to retain these to preserve the architectural character of the town.

Most of the shops were traditionally small units and were located on the Main Street. Some plots have historic warehouses located to the rear of the street-side buildings, reached through arched openings from the street and a small number of these openings remain.

As well as Catholic and Protestant churches and a Presbyterian Meeting House, Naas also contains a town hall, a court house, hospital, Garda station, several banks, schools and a convent. Public functions are generally situated outside the immediate historic core which is the designated ACA.

3.7.2   Building Types, Scale and Materials

The quality of the historic building stock in the Naas ACA reflect its historic, architectural and social heritage and give form to its architectural character.

Fig. 25: West side of South Main Street

The street architecture of the town follows a clear hierarchy. The wide Main Street is the primary artery, lined with predominantly two-storey and three-storey buildings, all arranged in orderly continuous rows of consistent building line and varying architectural expression, generally rendered and having vertical window openings with shopfronts or decorative door cases at ground level, the street frontage is modulated by arched and gated openings giving access to the rear. Commercial buildings which intersperse the streetscape are marked by more conscious design in their expression, scale, detailing and choice of materials. This homogenous arrangement is modestly interrupted by the courthouse in South Main Street which breaks the prevailing street line by means of a setback but remains integrated in terms of scale. The Town Hall breaks the prevailing street line in North Main Street with a more modest setback and the effect of its impressive façade is constrained by the relatively narrow street space.

Fig. 26: West side of North Main Street

The side streets branching off the Main Street have less continuity in their buildings. The sense of continuity along Main Street and contrasting discontinuity in the side streets are notable characteristics of the ACA. Other character areas with different historic functions and resulting architectural expression include:

– The religious institution to the northwest (Church of Our Lady and St David and McAuley Place)
– The Canal Harbour area to the west,
– The smaller streets and lanes off Main Street

The hidden pockets of St David's Church of Ireland Church, St David's Castle and North Moat are historically of great importance and have strong identities of their own. These fit between the larger areas described above.

Fig. 27: RC Church of Our Lady and St David and convent building

Our Lady and St David RC Church on Sallins Road lie to the north-west periphery of the old town and ACA. It is a large Neo-Gothic structure and a number of other structures stand close by that include a former convent and school. The ensemble is impressive in its size and institutional expression.

Fig.28: Harbour with former Market House in background

The harbour is defined by a water area terminating in a loose collection of well-proportioned houses and a former market house setback on its west side. The centre of the harbour is dominated by a historic warehouse of functional expression. The water and quay spaces are generous and bear witness to a once important canal infrastructure and economy.

Fig.29: Row cottages on Basin Street

The small lanes and streets off the main axis of the town are home to small-scale housing, outbuildings and warehouses and boundary walls. In places these spaces have an almost rural character.

Fig.30: North Moat

Fig. 31: St David's Church of Ireland church (l)

Fig.32: St David's Castle (r)

Fig. 33: Gogarty's, South Main Street

In the ACA the muted palette and homogeneity of materials typical of buildings in rural Irish towns is augmented by public, religious and commercial buildings in distinct architectural styles. Rendered and painted elevations are the mainstay of street scenes. The prevailing materials are rendered walls, many buildings having window surrounds of stucco. Most have little and simple decoration, though some the more special buildings have elaborate plasterwork marking richer or commercial uses. Roofs are typically of natural Welsh slate, though many have been replaced over the years with modern coverings. Slate roofs are detailed without fascia or bargeboards and this emphasises the plain clear forms of the buildings, lending a neat appearance in contrast to the suburban detailing of more recent buildings, having fascia and soffits to eaves, and gable ends with oversailing verges, inappropriate details which undermine the simplicity of the prevailing historic character. Chimney stacks are an essential character feature of the skyline of the ACA. Where these have been removed this constitutes a weakening of the historic architectural character of the town.

Red brick elevations are present, but represent an exception rather than the rule, being used in some houses and in one-off designs such as the Leinster Leader building and Allied Irish Bank. Brickwork is used prominently for decorative purposes in the elevations of the Presbyterian Church.

Public, religious and finer commercial buildings predominantly have elevations of exposed rubble limestone some with ashlar dressings, examples being the former constabulary building (Naas Court Hotel), Presbyterian Church, Ulster Bank. Notable exceptions are the Court House (the portico columns are of stone) and the Town Hall, both structures have rendered elevations.

Some of the buildings retain historic timber doors or sash windows. Any surviving joinery is therefore of crucial historic importance to the character of Naas.

The general built fabric of Naas ACA conforms to the following typologies:

- Two-storey 18th and 19th century houses of more formal appearance with slate roofs, rendered walls and vertical windows.
- Two and three storey 19th century shops, commercial premises and banks with varying degrees of architectural decoration and articulation.
- 19th century shops and public houses of varying degrees of richness in elevation treatment
- Single-storey 18th and 19th century vernacular houses in secondary streets.
- Rubble stone warehouses, outbuildings, farm buildings, mill buildings and corrugated-iron barns

One-off buildings include:

- A medieval motte that was once part of the town's defences
- St David's Church of Ireland church, a 19th Gothic Revival Church of Ireland church incorporating the fabric of an earlier church, c.1600, set in a churchyard with fine trees
- St David's Castle, an 18th century house incorporating the fabric of a tower house, c.1600
- An early 19th century two-storey Court House in the classical style
- A late 18th century three-storey jail, now Town Hall
- A late 19th century three-storey constabulary with stone elevations
- Catholic Church of Our Lady and St David, an early 19th century Gothic Revival church with stone elevations and tower
- An early 20th century three-storey convent/nunnery
- A late 19th century two-storey school
- An early 19th century Parish Hall

- A 19th century modest stone Presbyterian Church

- An early 19th century three-storey former rectory

- An early 20th century cinema in International/Art Deco style

3.7.3   Quality and treatment of Open Space

The principal public space in Naas is the main axis composed of South Main Street, North Main Street, Poplar Square and the branching ends of Sallins Road and Dublin Road. The width of the space and the reflection of its natural topography with views along its length are strong characteristics of the ACA. Most buildings on this axis open directly onto the footpath, whilst in the secondary streets there is a less formal mix of direct frontage and setbacks. The principal urban squares are Poplar Square and the widened north section of South Main Street. Otherwise the Harbour View to the west of the ACA is the largest space defined by historic buildings.

Fig.34: Poplar Square and North Main Street from the Sallins Road

Simplicity is the key design characteristic of the open spaces in Naas, typical of towns of this size throughout Ireland. Unfortunately, there are no visible remains of historic paving materials in the ACA, which historic photographs show to have included cobbled drains and stone paving. Modern street surfaces are for the most part tarmac and footpaths are of modern unit paving of precast unit pavers.

Fig.35: South Main Street, c.1900 (Lawrence Collection, NLI)

Historic photographs give little indication of trees playing an important role in the main urban public spaces. These did play a significant role on private lands off the main streets.

Green spaces within the ACA include the Church of Ireland churchyard and graveyard, the grounds of the adjacent St David's Castle, the North Moat and a garden to the north of Our Lady and St David's RC church.

An important part of the built heritage of Naas is its waterways. The canal gives significant character definition to the west side of the town and ACA. There is also a network of smaller waterways that run throughout the town and beyond. These ran in parallel to the canal and are significant features in

the historic landscaped gardens of Oldtown House to the north of the ACA. Within the ACA itself a mill race connects from the north to run past the grounds of the Catholic church, it once reappeared to the north of the former rectory and the grounds of the Church of Ireland church to run past St David's Castle and on to Corban's Mill to the southeast. In the nineteenth century a branch of the mill race supplied a decorative lake in the grounds below St David's Castle. Portions of this network of water channels remains visible today.

Fig.36: Lake in grounds of St David's Castle (Lawrence Collection, NLI). See also 1871 map in Fig.14 for historic water network

3.8   Street by Street Appraisal

3.8.1   Poplar Square, Dublin Road and Sallins Road

Many of the structures shown on the OS 1908 Map (Fig. 37) remain intact today, though some sites have been merged and structures have been replaced with larger structures, such as Barker and Jones and Poplar House. This has generally weakened the small-scale grain of the historic plot layout and the replacement structures are out of scale and jar with the historic urban fabric.

The streets and square still mark an important transition between the main axis space of the town and roads connecting to the north and southeast. They are largely supported in this role by the remaining historic structures.

Continuity with the historic structures lining the Dublin Road and Sallins Road have been eroded with the development of the Naas Town Centre Shopping Centre to the north. This development is disproportionate and represents and incongruous architectural composition.
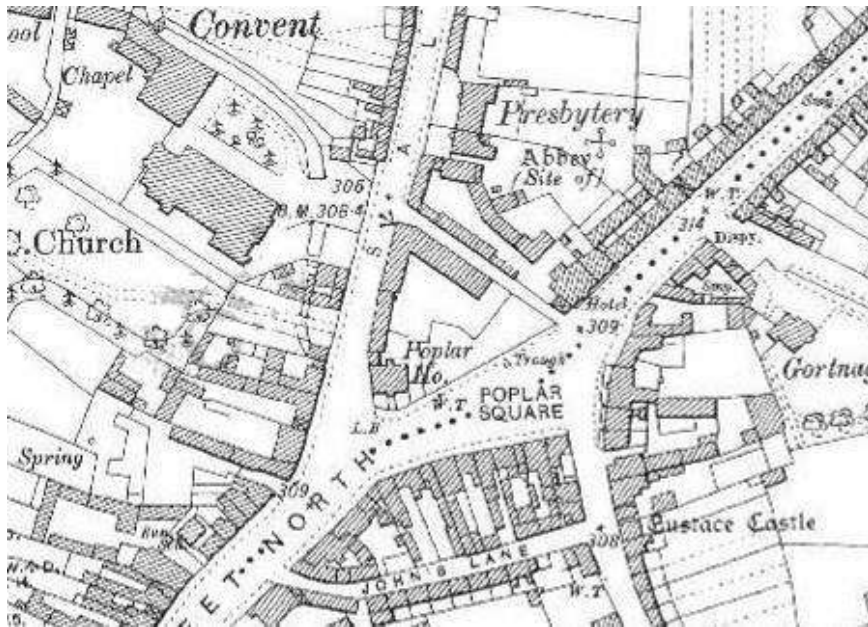
Fig.37: Extract from OS map from 1908

The public space in Poplar Square has lost its role as urban square and now serves as a car park. Historic buildings retain their fabric to different degrees, though the sense of visual unity and harmony has been eroded by clashing and busily composed shopfronts, clutter and signage. Chapel Lane remains as a pedestrian connection between the Dublin and Sallins roads and it allows the reading of the historic location of the defence wall that once surrounded the historic core. The row of houses located to the south side of John's Lane have been removed and replaced with a large three-storey office and retail structure.

Fig.38: Poplar Square from Sallins Road, c.1900 (Lawrence Collection, NLI)

Fig.39: Poplar Square from Sallins Road

Fig.40: South side of Poplar Square

Fig.41: Poplar Square at the junction of Sallins Road and Dublin Road

Fig.42: East and south sides of Poplar Square from North Main Street

Fig.43: Chapel Lane from the Dublin Road

Fig.44: Former house beside Chapel Lane on the Dublin Road

Fig.45: East side of the Dublin Road looking to the north

Fig.46: Sallins Road looking south into Poplar Square

3.8.2 Catholic Church and Environs
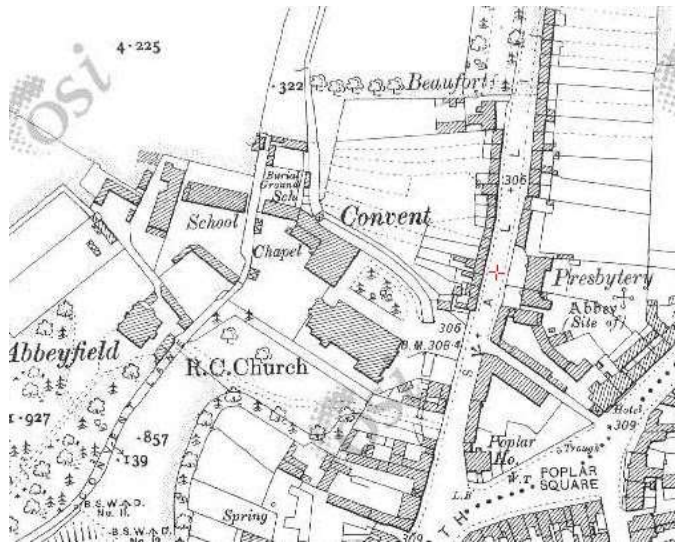
Fig.47: Extract from OS map of 1908

The Catholic church of Our Lady and St David's is an impressive structure that adds considerable architectural character to the north end of the town and is one of the most important features of the town skyline. Since its construction, and that of the nearby school, a number of associated structures have been built in the grounds to the north (the convent, laundry, parish hall) and east (Presbytery houses on the Sallins Road). As an ensemble they give strong character definition to this part of the town. The architectural expression is sombre in Neo-Gothic and Italianate styles. The grounds of the church are one of the best opportunities in the town to observe the historic mill race, a portion of this is uncovered directly in front of the church has been built over.

Fig.48: Historic view of the RC chapel, c.1900 (Lawrence Collection, NLI)

Fig.49: McAuley Place, Former Convent building and garden

Fig.50: Presbytery Houses on the Sallins Road

Fig.51: Mill race on north boundary of McAuley Place

3.8.3 North Main Street
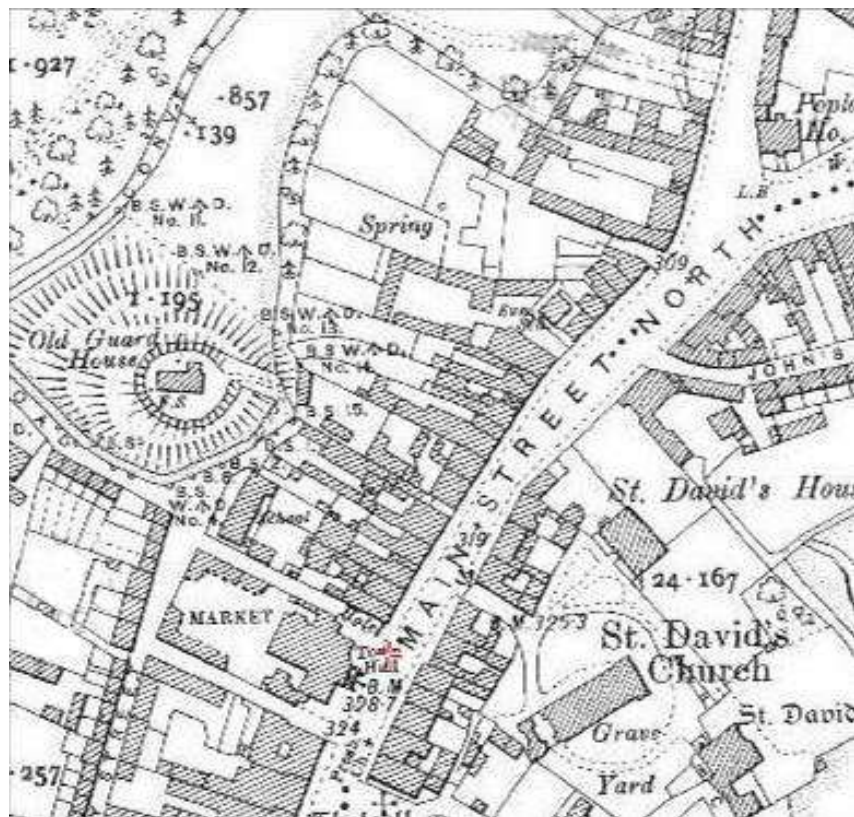
Fig.52: Castle Street in extract from Griffith Town Plan, surveyed 1854

The defining characteristic of North Main Street is its long and narrow proportion, slightly canted plan arrangement and climb in topography from the low end at Poplar Square in the north, up to the junction with South Main Street. It is an important connection between these two spaces.

The building line is continuous, lined with houses and shops of two and three storeys. The historic plot grain remains largely intact with relatively narrow frontages. This gives the street a vibrant and picturesque appearance. The building functions are predominantly shops with (former) accommodation above, there are no banks or hotels located on South Main Street.

The building line is broken at the south end by the former prison (now Town Hall), an imposing three-storey structure with an interesting and animated elevation. It is set back from the established building line but its tall façade supports the scheme of spatial compression of the street space.

The former Dara Cinema was built in the 1930s is located at the north-east end of the street. It occupies the widest plot on the street. It is two-storey in appearance but its strong symmetrical elevation gives it enough presence without over dominating its neighbours.

The entrance to St David's Church of Ireland is understated, with a simple arrangement of iron gates, flanking piers and pedestrian side access gates and railings. The church building lies a distance away on higher ground and only offers a side elevation to the street.

Though the palette of materials and architectural expression is limited, there is a rich diversity of details and composition to give strong visual interest. Many of the historic covered access ways from the street to rear yards and gardens have now been removed but separate access from the street to the upper floors of the buildings remains in many cases.

Fig.53: North Main Street, looking towards the Town Hall (former prison)

Fig.54: Town Hall (former prison)

Fig.55: Former Dara Cinema on North Main Street

Fig.56: Entrance to St David's Church of Ireland church grounds
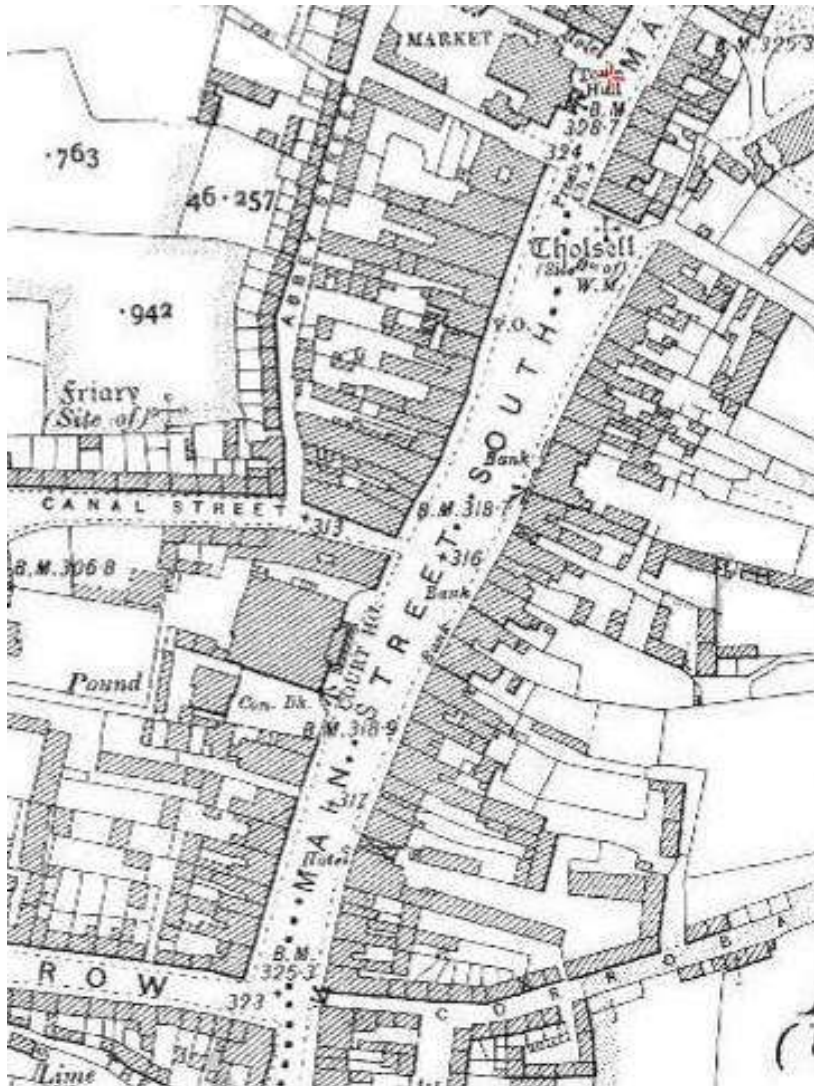
3.8.4   South Main Street

Fig.57: South Main Street from OS map of 1908

The defining characteristic of South Main Street is its long and wide proportion. It is wider to the north end and the street sides are slightly canted in plan arrangement. The topography of the street dips slightly towards the centre from either end. The Fairgreen (R448) connects the street to the south, this is a narrower street than Main Street. New Row connects the south end of the street to the west, it too is narrower than the Main Street. The space overall has the character of an elongated square in comparison with the connecting streets to the north and south.

The plot sizes are narrow and compare with those on North Main Street. This is interrupted on the west side by the early nineteenth century courthouse. A free-standing two-storey structure slightly set back from the building line with a large projecting colonnaded portico.

The buildings on South Main Street echo those of North Main Street in size and function (shops with accommodation above). However the large impressive urban space attracted the presence of several bank buildings in select architectural styles, finely executed. It is also home to a fine stone-faced former constabulary barracks. These structures emanate from the late nineteenth century and are witness to the economic importance and the security role of Naas at that time.

The north end of the space is terminated by a small but finely composed Neo-Gothic Presbyterian Church. The pronounced decorative brick bands to the windows of the church give it a sense of presence beyond that of its size.

The street is largely intact and offers a rich and picturesque array of architectural styles, materials and details of interest.

A few of the covered passage ways from the street to rear yards remain and have timber gates. Some fine boundary treatment can be seen in the iron railings to either side of the courthouse and to the front of the Presbyterian Church.

Nothing remains of historic street or footpath paving and the small kiosk structure located in Market Square shown in early photographs no longer exists.

The street has a strong urban and civic feeling, akin to a scaled-down O'Connell Street in Dublin.

Fig.58: South Main Street, c.1900 (Lawrence Collection, NLI)

Fig.59: South Main Street, c.1900 (Lawrence Collection, NLI)

Fig.60: South Main Street, c.1900 (Lawrence Collection, NLI)

Fig.61: Courthouse and west side of South Main Street

Fig.62: Presbyterian Church at north end of South Main Street

Fig.63: East side of South Main Street

Fig.64: East side of South Main Street

A portion of New Row (Newbridge Road) and Fairgreen (Kilcullen Road) are included in the ACA boundary. These are lined with small scale one and two-storey buildings of simple architectural expression that have been altered or replaced over time and a busy array of shop fronts and signage makes their inherent character difficult to appreciate. The most significant structure stands at the south end of South Main Street at the junction with the Kilcullen Road. The current structure replaced an earlier three-storey one of more dignified architectural expression.

Fig.65: View of New Row from South Main Street

Fig.66: View of Fairgreen and Kilcullen Road from South Main Street

3.8.5   Harbour Area
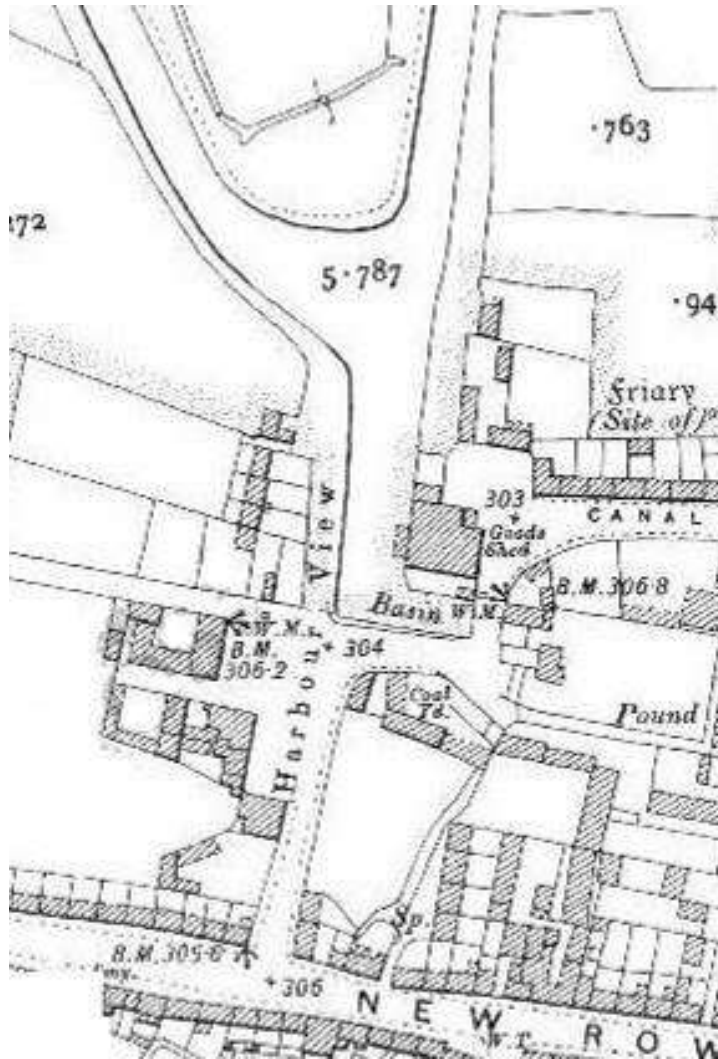
Fig.67: Harbour Area from OS map of 1908

The harbour area is an area of distinctive architectural character. The commanding feature is the canal with its hairpin turn to the north and harbour spur wrapping around the south side of the historic warehouse structure. The canal bank walls are lined with large ashlar stonework. No historic paving remains to the quaysides but the character of the space is defined by a row of houses to the southwest, a former market house and the utilitarian warehouse building.

These buildings differ from those of the Main Street in having wide frontages with ample foreground space affording good views on approach. The former Market House is now masked with coverings to its windows. Past images show a structure with a well-proportioned and symmetrical elevation arrangement with a central pediment, lending a monumental character to the space.

Recent houses of non-descript suburban character and the 1980s library building do not contribute to the architectural character of the area. The site to the southeast of the basin is now vacant and lends no spatial definition to the space.

Fig.68: Canal Harbour Basin with historic warehouse structure

Fig.69: Former Market House (Source: NIAH)

Fig.70: Houses/Restaurant on Harbour View

Fig.71: House on Harbour View

3.8.6   Plots to rear Main Street

Historically Main Street was the location of all commercial and activity in the town. The products traded in the shops facing the street were produced, handled and stored in the long burgage plots to the rear, which also provided living accommodation and stabling, as well as having productive gardens to support households. Few such outbuildings and warehouses are evident today and front street access has often been removed. Warehouses and rear outbuildings would have been constructed of rubble stone and of simple architectural expression. Some still exist and can be viewed from the rear of individual properties and add interest to the architectural appearance of those sites.

Fig.72: Rear of plots to east of North Main Street seen from St David's Church of Ireland

Fig.73: Entrance on South Main Street and rear of sites in the Harbour

Fig.74: View of rear of sites on North Main Street seen from the North Moat

3.8.7   Basin Street, Abbey Street and the North Moat
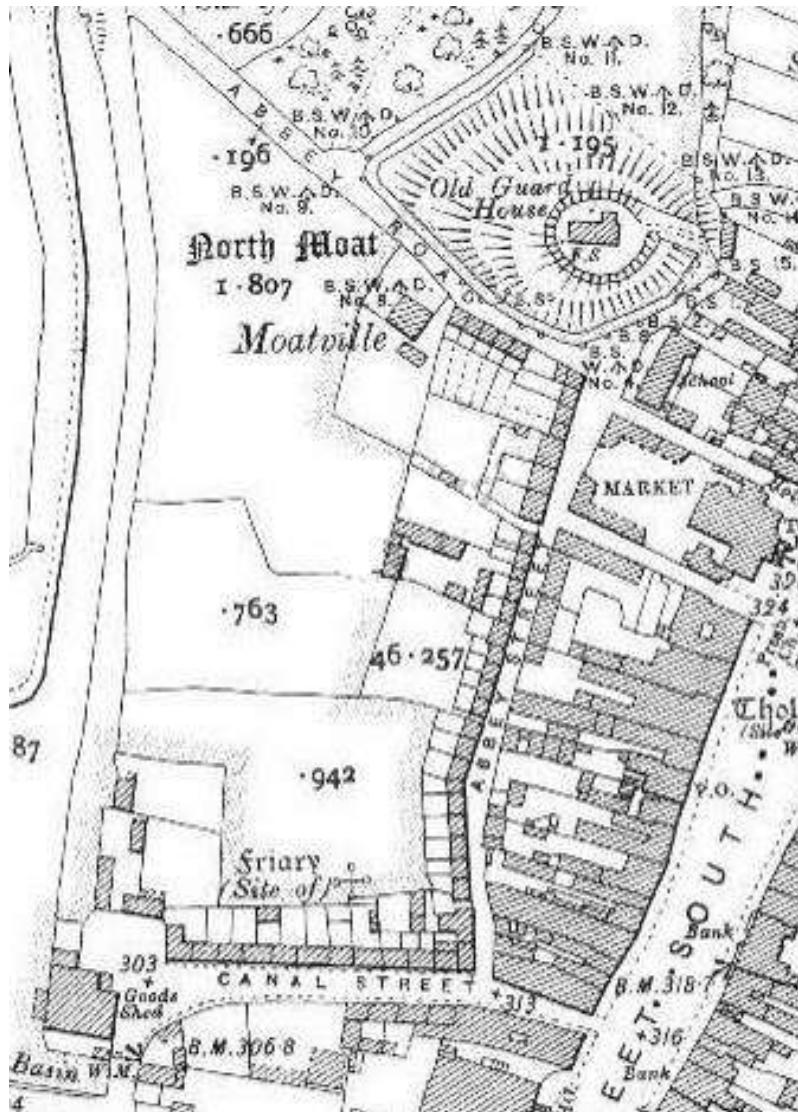
Fig.75: Extract from OS map of 1908

Basin Street (formerly Canal Street) retains many of its historic row houses on the north side of the street, they give strong character to the space and make an interesting transition between the Harbour and South Main Street. This row of dwellings once continued along the full west side of Abbey Street and further on again into Abbey Street.

The historic dwellings once located on Abbey Street have been replaced with structures which have eroded the quality and legibility of this street. Furthermore, the lack of pavements with parking dominating the space has further created a poor quality environment for pedestrians. The only structure of architectural quality is the historic market site to the rear of the Town Hall with a large simply rendered boundary wall punctuated by an arched gateway framed in ashlar and dressed in brick.

The North Moat remains an impressive defensive monument and an unusual feature to survive in the centre of an Irish town. Despite being occupied by circa 1960's bungalows, the summit affords good views of the town, canal and surrounding countryside. The stone-faced former school (now the Moat Theatre) gives good definition to the open space at the foot of the motte. Abbey Road retains some of its historic row houses that give good character definition to the lane approaching from the west and the Canal.

Fig.76: Row houses on Canal Street

Fig.77: Moat Theatre (former school) from North Moat

Fig.78: Boundary of Market to rear of Town Hall

Fig.79: Historic row houses on Abbey Road with Moat Theatre in background

3.8.8 Corban's Lane, Church Lane, Friary Road and Gleann-na-Greine
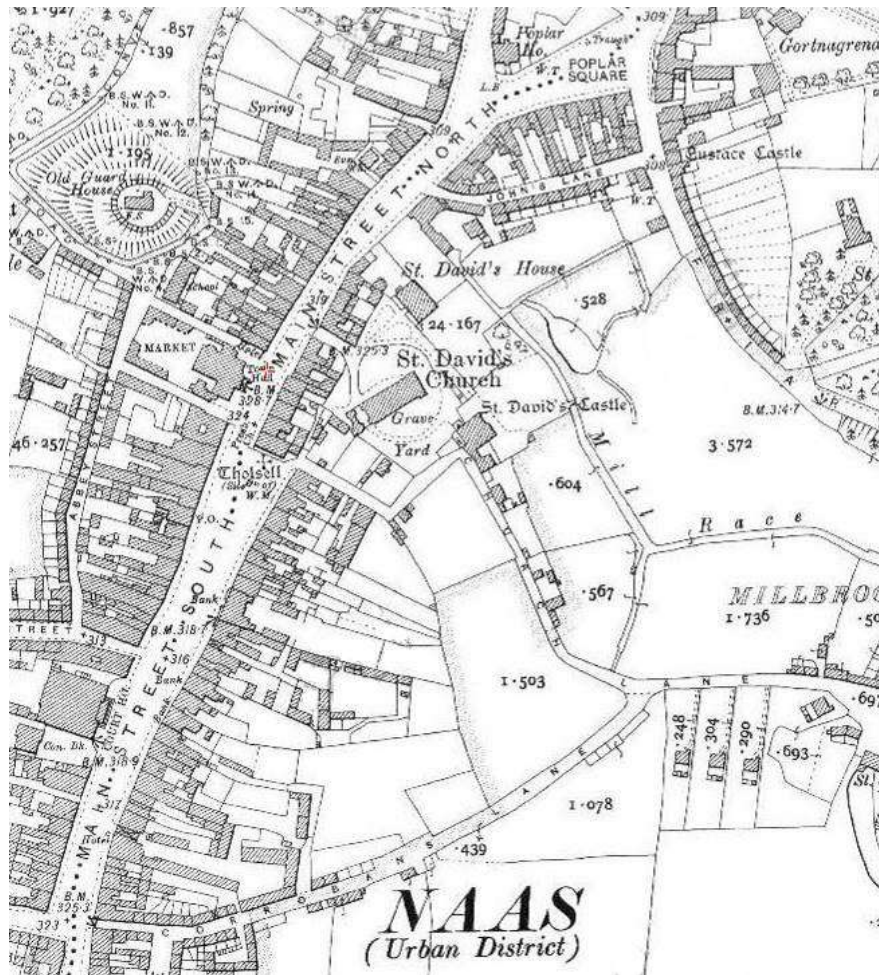
Fig.80: Extract from OS map of 1908

The lanes branching east from the main north south axis of the town differed from those to the west in being longer and functioning more as connections to the rural hinterland. This has given rise to the definition of their characters.

Friary Road once linked with the railway station and was defined on its east side by a long continuous row of houses that are no longer extant. Two good examples of mid-nineteenth century row houses remain at the northwest end of Friary Road within the ACA boundary and thus remain an important part of its historic character.

Church Lane is a route of special character and charm that allows access to the site of St David's Castle. It has a picturesque appearance defined by rubble-stone boundary walls, an arched opening to the castle, small scale outbuildings and trees. The walls run the full length of the lane and it helps it to retain its historic character on ground floor level in spite of the recent commercial development on the west side.

Corban's Lane retains little or no landscape or built features of historic interest or character.

Gleann-na-Greine in the northeast of the ACA is a site of two attached early nineteenth two-storey houses and a row of five two-storey late nineteenth-century houses. It was once a road that extended eastward into the countryside but was truncated by the railway (no longer extant). These structures give strong character definition to the lane and are witnesses to its historic development.

Fig.81: Houses on Friary Road

Fig.82: Church Lane and St. David's Castle

Fig.83: Houses on Gleann-na-Greine

Fig.84: Row houses on Gleann-na-Greine

3.8.9   St David's Church of Ireland Church and St David's Castle
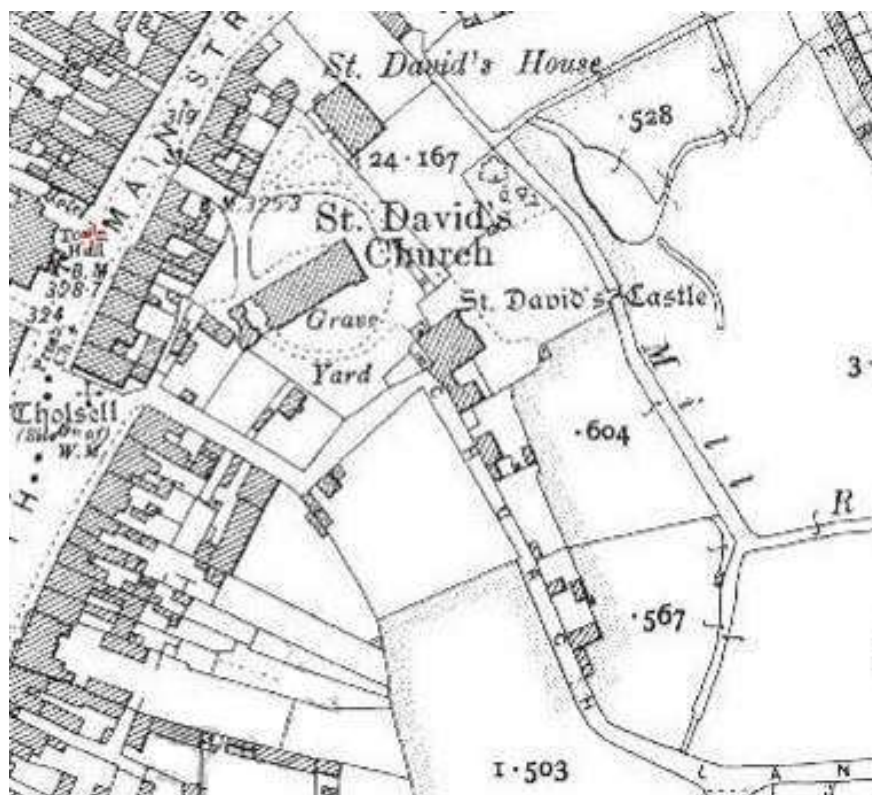
Fig.85: Extract from OS map of 1908

St David's Church of Ireland (COI)Church, the former rectory (St David's House) and St David's Castle are a cluster of closely positioned and related important historic structures. Though they have little visual presence on Main Street, they can seen from Church Lane and from areas around North Main Street. Together they form a hidden mini Acropolis of great potential beauty in the very heart of the town.

St David's Church stands on high ground with a sloped approach from North Main Street. There is ample space around the free-standing structure to admire the charm of the nineteenth-century church and its relationship to the monumental sixteenth-century ruin. It is well landscaped and the raised ground affords good views of relatively intact rear elevations and outbuildings on the Main Street.

The space around the church also allows views of the handsome elevation of the former rectory to the north. The structure appears as two-storey on higher ground but is three storeys and stands on lower ground. The north side of the space is marked by a retaining wall that has an imposing presence at the lower level.

Fig.86: View of St David's COI from the south

Fig.87: View of gate and approach to St David's COI towards North Main Street

Fig.88: View of grounds of St David's House COI

Fig.89: View of retaining wall, St David's Castle and COI from former rectory site

St David's Castle is a further site of great historic and visual interest. Its small size belies a complex interior spatial arrangement and an equally complex and picturesque arrangement of outbuildings and yards set along Church Lane. The elongated arrangement looks to the north on falling ground. The retaining wall to the church site does not continue into the castle grounds. At the lowest level of the site is the historic mill race and the site of the former picturesque lake (currently a car park).

Fig.90: View of the Castle (Source: NIAH) (c.2002)

Fig.91: View of St David's Castle and St David's Church from the castle grounds. The unfinished Corban's Lane shopping centre impacts negatively on the setting of both structures (2018)

Fig.92: Castle and outbuildings as seen from the southeast (2018)

Fig.93: Castle outbuildings and castellated courtyard walls with the unfinished Corban's Lane shopping centre development in the background (2018)

3.9 Views

The skyline of the town is generally important in the perception of views in the town and changes in the topography augment this. Taller historic monuments can be seen from different vantage points. The incomplete shopping centre development adjoining Church Lane shows how much an impact such large scale structures can have on an otherwise intact skyline.

The following views (see ACA Map Appendix 1) are significant features of the ACA, however the 'principal views' are those marked, A, B, C, D and I.

- View south along South Main Street and North Main Street (A)

- Views to and from Poplar Square from the surrounding streets (B-D)

- Views along the Dublin Road into and out of the ACA (C)

- Views along the Sallins Road into and out of the ACA (D)

- Views along Church Lane in both directions (E)

- Views along New Row into and out of the ACA (F)

- Views along Fairgreen into and out of the ACA (G)

- Views from the summit of the North Moat over the nearby green and built-up areas (H)

- Views around the harbour area, from Harbour View in the south and from the canals in the north and northwest (I)

- Views along Abbey Road to the North Moat (J)

- Views along Basin Street in both directions (K)

- Views along Moat Lane and Town Hall Lane in both directions (L)

Fig.94: View to of the North Moat from Abbey Street

Fig.95: View along Basin Street onto South Main Street

Summary of Special Character

- Naas has retained the characteristic charm of a market town.

- Except for the harbour and area to the north, the relationship between the built and designed landscape environment of the town and the rural landscape is no longer extant.

- Underlying natural landscape: The gently rolling landscape setting contributes strongly to the spatial character of the town as experienced along the Main Street and laneways.

- Archaeological Significance: Naas traces its history back to the Normans and the town played a significant role in the history of the Pale. As a medieval walled town it is of great archaeological interest. It contains sites of medieval structures which add great depth to its historical interest and value. The only standing structure, and one of impressive presence, is the large earthwork of the North Moat.

- Morphology of the Town: The historic layout was defined by the walled enclosure and the main north-south linear thoroughfare. The location of the walls can be traced somewhat in the present-day street layout.

- Architectural Significance: Naas contains many significant buildings from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. These include infrastructural, defensive, administrative, religious, commercial, industrial and domestic structures of different types, both vernacular and of formal design. The compact urban layout allows for the appreciation of these buildings in a richly varied context. The informal mix of functions is significant in forming an intact and historically authentic architectural setting of informal simplicity and differing scales which defines the character of the town.

- Architectural Character: Naas is a good example of an Irish town in which many houses conform to a simple typology of rendered street architecture with slate roofs and simple sharp detailing. In addition, many boundary walls, outbuildings and warehouses have exposed stonework walls. These are interspersed with more elaborate structures with fine detailing and expressive use of stone and brick as building materials. The intrinsic value of the architecture lies in the mix of appealing historic formality and informality, contextual grouping and the survival of early detailing.

- Vernacular architecture: The informality of the town is reinforced by the survival of some vernacular buildings. These simple buildings reinforce the character of Naas as a rural market town.

- Built landscape features: Walls, gates and railings give strong boundary definition to properties and add considerable diversity to the streetscape. The canal, mill race and water channel network that extends beyond the ACA are significant features and contribute strongly to Naas's special character.

- Tree planting: Rows and groups of trees in the ACA play an important role in defining the spatial character of individual sites in Naas as can be best seen at St David's Church of Ireland Church and St David's Castle.

- Social and Cultural Heritage: The intact nature of the fabric of the town and the continuity of uses provide valuable insight into the social history of the Naas.

Section B:

Guide to Development within the ACA

4.0   Implications for Planning and Development

4.1   Development Management

The objective of Architectural Conservation Area designation is to protect the special character of an area through the careful control and positive management of change in the built environment.

4.1.1   Limits to Exempted Development

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that planning permission be obtained for all development works, except for those deemed to be Exempted Development. In Architectural Conservation Areas only works which do not affect the special character of the area are exempt, and interventions which may otherwise be exempt will require permission. Section 82(1) and (2) of the Act defines exempted development in the context of an ACA:

> (1) Notwithstanding section 4 (1)(h) of the Act, the carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure located in an architectural conservation area shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the area.

> (2) In considering an application for permission for development in relation to land situated in an architectural conservation area, a planning authority, or An Bord Pleanála on appeal, shall take into account the material effect (if any) that the proposed development would be likely to have on the character of the architectural conservation area.

Assigning ACA status therefore imposes restrictions on certain works to the exterior of structures within the designated boundary. Planning permission is required for any new-build works to façades and sides of buildings or for changes to original materials, such as windows, wall finishes, boundary walls, roof coverings, rainwater goods etc that would normally materially affect the character of the building/area. New infill development and alterations to existing structures are subject to planning permission, and proposals which respect or enhance the special character of the area will be favourably considered by the planning authority.

More detailed advice is given in the following section on the type of works that will or will not require planning permission.

4.1.2 Protected Structures

Planning permission is required for all works that would materially affect the character of a protected structure, or any element of the structure including its curtilage, which contributes to its special character. Works to a protected structure that constitute essential repairs or maintenance require written consent of the Council, as set out in Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). This can be sought in the form of a Declaration from Kildare County Council under Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. A declaration issued under this section sets out the type of works the Planning Authority considers would or would not affect the character of a structure or any elements which contribute to its special interest.

4.1.3 Other Structures

Owners and occupiers of non-protected structures located within the ACA should be aware that works, which in the opinion of the Planning Authority would materially affect the character of the Architectural Conservation Area will require a specific grant of planning permission under Section 82(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

4.1.4 Role of Exempted Development (Section 5 Application)

This establishes the exempt status of a protected structure for owners and occupiers wishing to carry out works. A request for a Section 5 should be made to the local authority, this is prescribed procedure and information on making an application is given by the authority.

It should be noted that Amendment No. 2 to the Planning and Development Regulations, 2018 which are in force until 21st December 2021, regarding the exemption of change of use of vacant structures to habitable accommodation subject to a number of conditions and limitations.

The Manual for the Reuse of Existing Buildings 'Bringing Back Homes' published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG, 2018) addresses Specific Regulations Affecting Older Buildings including those that are Protected Structures and those located within an ACA. The Manual seeks to safeguard the fixtures and features in such buildings notwithstanding the provisions of Amendment No. 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2018. It is reiterated in the Manual that where a building is a Protected Structure located within an ACA, the usual

exemptions from the requirement for planning permission may not apply. Furthermore, that in an ACA, any works to the exterior of a building which would affect the character of the area require planning permission.

4.1.5   Public Realm

Works in the public realm are generally carried out by the local authority, Kildare County Council, and its subcontractors, or by statutory undertakers such as gas, electricity or telecommunication network companies, in consultation with the local authority. Larger scale works will require permission under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

It is proposed that a Public Realm Strategy for the town will be prepared during the life of the Plan and implemented on a phased basis over the lifetime of the Plan as funding is secured. It is envisaged that all agencies carrying out works in the public realm, e.g. footpaths, planting, street furniture, parking schemes, public lighting, etc., will be required to consider the special character of the area as identified in this document, and should consult with the Planning Authority.

Only materials appropriate to the character of the ACA should be used. New infrastructure should not be positioned where it would be detrimental to the character and setting of a protected structure or the character of the ACA.

Private sector utilities should employ professional conservation advice to minimise and mitigate the impact of any proposed intervention and should consult with the Planning Authority and comply with Public Realm Strategy for the town centre of Naas.

4.2   Works which do not affect the character of the ACA

4.2.1   Maintenance and Repairs

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance and necessary repair works, such as to roofs, rainwater goods or windows within the ACA as long as works do not materially affect the character of the area e.g. retaining original materials where replacement is strictly limited to damaged fabric and made on a like-for-like basis.

4.2.2   Internal Alterations

ACA designation for Naas does not prevent internal changes or re-arrangements to those buildings within the area that are not Protected Structures, and as long as these changes do not impact on the exterior of the building.

4.2.3   Restoration of Character

Where original materials have been removed and replaced with modern or inappropriate alternatives, the restoration or reinstatement of such original features will not require planning permission where the method, materials and details for the works have been agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

5.0   Works which affect the character of the ACA

In an ACA, any worked that would affect the special character of an ACA require planning permission. The carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure will be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the area. In particular this can mean any works that impact on the external appearance of structures, such as changes to roofing material, windows, boundary wall, repair to brick or stonework, construction of new features such as porches or extensions.

For further information, refer to *Advice Series, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht,* which is a set of guides for owners and others responsible for historic structures on how best to repair and maintain their properties.

5.1.1   Roofs

<u>Roofing Materials:</u> The removal of the original roofing material, ridge tiles, chimneys, bargeboards, eaves details, cast-iron gutters and downpipes, and their replacement with modern materials can seriously damage the character of the ACA. Original coverings and elements can generally be repaired and reused and should always be retained as they are essential to the character of the area. Where original roofing materials have been lost, replacement with historically correct materials will be encouraged. Materials used in repairs should also be historically correct to prevent incremental erosion of the character of the ACA.

<u>Chimneys</u>: Chimney stacks are an essential component of the roofscape an historic urban environment. Removal of stacks will not be deemed acceptable, and any external alteration will require permission.

<u>Roof Lights:</u> The installation of standard roof lights is only generally acceptable on hidden roof pitches, as they can fundamentally alter the visual character of the streetscape.

<u>Dormer Windows:</u> There is some tradition of dormer windows within the Naas ACA on Main Street. These are in line with the front elevation and an integral part of the façade. Otherwise dormers may fundamentally change the special character of the town and therefore planning permission is required to install such windows.

Fig.96: Carefully integrated dormers in elevations on South Main Street

Eaves, Fascias, Soffits and Bargeboards: Most traditional buildings in the ACA were built without timber eaves details, and this historic detail should be retained if roof coverings are renewed. Verge details at gable ends typically have no bargeboards and render extends to the underside of the roof slates, forming a neat junction characteristic of Irish traditional buildings. This detail should always be retained. Projecting eaves or verges should be avoided except in buildings where this was the historic detail. UPVC fascias or bargeboards are inappropriate and should not be used within the ACA. Few buildings have projecting eaves and gable bargeboards. These tend to be used in Gothic Revival or Arts and Crafts influenced buildings. In these cases the detail is an important element in defining the character of the building and should be retained.

Roof pitch: The alteration of the roof profile affects the character of the building and changes to the angle, ridge height, eaves level or span of roofs would not be deemed acceptable within the ACA, where it would be considered to negatively impact the special character of the ACA.

Fig.97: Typical slate roof detail without overhang at eaves and verge

5.1.2   External Walls

<u>Rainwater Goods</u>: Historic gutters, downpipes and hopper-heads, generally of cast-iron, constitute a significant enrichment of the character of the ACA. All intact surviving elements of rainwater goods should be retained, and only individual components which are damaged beyond repair should be replaced. All replacements should be like-for-like to match the surviving elements. Where historic rainwater goods have been inappropriately replaced, the historic type should be reinstated in any development works.

<u>Alterations to façades</u>: Alterations to historic façades or window openings will affect the character of the exterior and may not be permitted. Previous unsympathetic alterations will be required to be reversed where a proposal affects that part of the historic structure.

Fig.98: Use of brick in historic elevations

Brickwork Elevations: Any proposal to restore historic brick façades must retain the historic patina and character of the façade. Renewal of pointing to façades of exposed brick can substantially alter the appearance of a building. Such work must retain intact historic pointing mortar, and care must be taken to use the correct material and detail. Removal of earlier inappropriate pointing can result in damage to the host brickwork. Repointing work on the facades of historic structures located within an ACA will generally require planning permission and to be carried out in consultation with the Planning Authority.

Fig.99: Stone façade with decorative brickwork

Stonework Elevations: Renewal of pointing to exposed stonework can substantially alter the character of a building. Such work must retain intact historic pointing mortar, and care must be taken to use the correct material and detail. This work will generally require planning permission and must be carried out in consultation with the Planning Authority.

Removal of Render: The loss of historic external render damages the authentic character of the ACA and removes a water-resisting surface that protects rendered buildings from decay. The removal of render in such cases is not considered acceptable. Removal of render from buildings may be acceptable where it can be conclusively demonstrated that the underlying substrate was intended to be exposed. In particular the reinstatement of brick façades may be considered desirable in order to restore the former character of a building/street. Removal of render in such cases will only be considered acceptable where the historic substrate will not suffer inordinate damage.

Fig.100: Decorative render detail

Un-rendered elevations: Some structures have traditionally had exposed stone or brick façades. The addition of external render to these structures damages the authentic character and may add a water-resisting surface that hinders the free exit of water from the building. The addition of render in such cases would be deemed unacceptable.

Fig.101: Exposed rubble stone wall

<u>Unpainted buildings and features</u>: Some structures within the ACA have a render finish that was always intended to remain unpainted. Such renders add to the aged patina of the ACA and should not be painted over. Similarly, structures originally constructed with exposed cut-stone or brick were not intended to be painted and later removal of such paint can damage the external surface of the material.

<u>Painting</u>: Painted finishes are a characteristic feature of the ACA. Repainting of façades, shopfronts, doorcases and other features can alter the character of the ACA and should be undertaken in consultation with the Planning Authority. Muted colours will be preferred and garish colours or painting of shopfronts or façades for brand identity should be avoided. Modern chemical-based paints can have a detrimental effect on historic buildings by trapping moisture in the fabric causing dampness and decay. For this reason, external paints used in historic buildings must be breathable.

<u>Cleaning:</u> Abrasive cleaning methods such as sandblasting damage the external surface of natural building materials. They often remove the hand-tooled surface from stonework or the protective fired surface from bricks, leading to porosity and harmful water ingress. Generally sandblasting of external walls is not advised on historic buildings. Other non-abrasive cleaning methods may be appropriate, but these must be non-destructive and must preserve the aged appearance of historic buildings. Cleaning measures may require planning permission and should always be undertaken in consultation with the Planning Authority.

<u>External Cladding:</u> Most historic buildings in Naas tend to have a rendered finish, outbuildings and warehouses are of exposed stone and a few buildings are of brick. The alteration of the original finish by cladding external walls with stone, tiling or timber is not acceptable in the historic buildings of the ACA. Original historic external finishes must always be retained. Any proposal for the alteration of the existing finishes will require planning permission, and changes which materially affect the special character of the ACA will generally not be acceptable. However, the addition of cladding to more modern structures may be considered, but only in consultation with the Planning Authority.

<u>Rear Elevations</u>: In many instances the rear elevations of buildings play a key role in the character of the group of buildings in the ACA. It is important to note that ACA protection pertains to the rear as well as to the front of buildings in an ACA.

Fig.102: Rear of houses on North Main Street seen from the grounds of St. David's Church

<u>Satellite antenna, TV aerials and other communications devices:</u> The addition of such installations to the front elevations or roofs of structures within the ACA can have a negative impact on the character of the area. Satellite dishes should not be visible on the front elevation of buildings. Planning permission is required for the erection of a satellite dish on the front elevation of a property, whether in an ACA or not. Less visible methods of TV reception, such as cable, should be used. Where existing aerials have become redundant, they should be removed.

Fig.103: Proliferation of fittings diminishes the character of the ACA

5.1.3   Windows and Doors

<u>Alteration of Openings:</u> Enlargement of window or door openings or the removal of stone sills or doorsteps can alter the prevailing proportions of the townscape and result in incremental loss of historic materials on whose texture and authenticity add to the special character to of the town. Any proposed change to openings would therefore require planning permission.

Fig.104: Decorative fanlight on South Main Street

Replacement of Windows or External Doors: Original timber or metal windows, doors and fanlights are key features which enrich the character of the ACA. Examples of authentic historic fenestration and external doors are becoming relatively rare and their retention is therefore crucial to the preservation of the character of the ACA. Decayed timber windows can in most cases be repaired and should not be accepted as a reason for replacement. Replacement of original windows and doors with modern artificial materials such as uPVC or aluminium has a particularly negative impact and will be deemed to be unacceptable. Where windows and doors have been altered or replaced prior to ACA designation, the reinstatement of

windows of correct historic design will be encouraged, and where planning applications are made for the buildings concerned such reinstatement may be sought. Alterations to windows or doors within the ACA which would materially affect the character of the ACA require planning permission.

Fig.105: Historic windows are perhaps the single most important element of an historic streetscape

Fig.106: Historic doors, formal and vernacular, add richness to an ACA

Ironwork: Window guards, balconettes, grilles, boot scrapers, and other ironwork fittings are essential to the palette of materials in the ACA and may not be removed or altered. Repairs should follow best conservation practice using traditional techniques, and welding should be avoided. Any such work must be undertaken in consultation with the planning authority.

5.1.4   Archaeology

The ACA lies within a designated Zone of Archaeological Potential, and any excavation work below ground level may uncover archaeological material. An archaeologist and the Planning Authority are to be consulted before and during all digging within the ACA.

In addition to below-ground archaeology, all standing structures built before 1700 or containing any pre-1700 fabric are protected under National Monuments legislation. Therefore, any works must be carried out in consultation with the National Monuments Section of the Department of Culture,

Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Medieval structures are key to the appreciation of the character of the ACA, and due to their great rarity must be given very careful consideration in any repair or development proposal.

5.1.5   Vernacular Buildings

Vernacular houses and functional buildings built of simple materials in unpretentious style are an important component of the special character of the Naas ACA and demolition or replacement of vernacular buildings needs careful appraisal, justification and consideration. Raising of eaves levels, alteration of roof pitches or insertion of dormer windows fundamentally change the character of vernacular buildings and are generally unacceptable. Alterations to provide modern facilities should be carried out in sympathy with the historic value of these buildings. Alterations to increase the size of vernacular houses are not always appropriate and generally should be facilitated to the rear of structures. Reinstatement of traditional vernacular features such as lime-washed external walls, timber sheeted doors and sash windows will be encouraged, but must conform to correct historic detail in form, material and technique.

Fig.107: Vernacular houses add to the variety of the streetscape

5.1.6   Shopfronts

<u>Historic shopfronts</u>: A number of historic shopfronts survive throughout the ACA, varying from modest to elaborate detail, and contribute strongly to the special character of the Naas ACA. Alterations to historic shopfronts located in the ACA should be restricted to a minimum and will require planning permission.

<u>Painting of historic shopfronts</u>: Repainting in the historic colour, or in another appropriate muted tone, may not affect the character of a shopfront, and may be undertaken with the approval of the Planning Authority. Paint stripping from historic shopfront elements should not be carried out without consultation with and approval of the Planning Authority, as earlier layers, in particular overpainted traces of former signage, can be of particular interest.

Fig.108: Elaborate shopfront on South Main Street

Existing non-historic shopfronts: Alterations to shopfronts in the ACA will require planning permission, unless the works are considered Exempted Development under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Care must always be taken in works to seemingly non-historic shopfronts in historic buildings, as concealed features of earlier frontages may be concealed beneath. Such concealed features as may come to light in works to shopfronts must be notified to the Planning Authority, even in cases where planning permission has been obtained.

New shopfronts: Insertion of shopfronts in historic buildings where none has previously existed can damage the special character of the ACA and will require special consideration and will not generally be acceptable. New shopfronts, whether in contemporary or traditional style should reflect the principle of historic examples and be restricted in size to enclose a display window and entrance door only. New shop fronts should not rise higher than the prevailing height in the street and should not alter or obscure architectural details of the original building such as sills, stringcourses, windows, doorways, etc. New signage boards to shopfronts in the ACA, whether in contemporary or traditional style, must reflect the detail of historic examples. Deep fascias and off-the-shelf brackets should be avoided.

Replacement shopfronts: Shopfronts may only be replaced where the replaced frontage is not historic. Surviving components of historic shopfronts, such as pilasters or vitrolite signage fascias, should be retained.

Shopfronts of contemporary design: Shopfronts of contemporary design can enhance the layered character of the ACA if properly considered. Where non-traditional designs are proposed, a design statement should be submitted outlining the rationale and concept of the design and demonstrating the intended contribution to the character of the ACA.

Fig.109: Details add to the character of the town

Awnings: Historic awnings are a feature of nineteenth century display windows and should be retained where they survive. New canopies or awnings are rarely acceptable, as they can mask the features of the building to which they are attached and can detract from neighbouring buildings. Where new canopies are deemed acceptable, they should be made of heavy-duty cotton material with painted metal or timber hardware. Plastic should not be used.

Fig.110: Shopfront refurbishment, Castle Street, Dublin (Dublin Civic Trust)

Fig.111: Street renovation, Norden, Germany by Riemann Conservation Architects. Two of some ten buildings refurbished. Historic fabric was revealed and reinstated. Note the contemporary addition to the rear of the site to allow for a new shopfront and access.

5.1.7   Signage and External fittings

Fig.112: Simple materials and signage add to the character of the town

New signage: Signage should be of appropriate design to complement or enhance the structure and should not be overtly dominant on the streetscape. Internally illuminated and plastic fascia boxes will not be considered acceptable. Standard corporate signage which would detract from the character of the ACA should be adapted in scale, colour or material colour to be more in keeping with the area.

Outdoor Advertising Billboards: Care should be taken that outdoor advertising does not detract from the special character of the ACA. Billboards which conceal historic features or impinge on significant views will not be deemed acceptable.

Fig.113: Commercial advertising obscure and overwhelm historic features

Shutters: If required, the design of security shutters should complement rather than damage the character of the building and the ACA. Metal roller shutters with visible boxes are not acceptable within the ACA boundary. Shutter boxes should be positioned discreetly behind the fascia board and sliding lattice open grilles be positioned behind the shop window or timber panelled shutters painted to match the shop front colour scheme. Security shutters should not cover the whole commercial frontage but only the vulnerable glazed areas. Where appropriate to the type of shop or to the historic interior arrangement, security shutters should be located behind the window display. External security screens are deemed acceptable by the Planning Authority only in exceptional circumstances. All shutters and grilles should be painted or finished in colour to complement the rest of the exterior.

External Seating and Screening: Planning permission or a Section 254 license are required for external seating. Seats should be of wood, painted metal or other traditional material which enhances the visual appearance of the ACA. Plastic is not an acceptable material for seating. Enclosing ropes and canvas windbreaks can incrementally damage the special character of an ACA and must be carefully considered and assessed as part of the overall level of existing street furniture. Screens to enclose external seating areas should be made of heavy-duty cotton, glazed or metal panels and should not be used for advertising purposes.

Any proposed seating should be undertaken in consultation with the Planning Authority and in accordance with the proposed Public Realm Strategy.

Other External Elements to Commercial Premises: Canopies, vending machines, newspaper receptacles and other similar items can damage the special character of an ACA and are only acceptable to a limited degree. Sandwich boards are not acceptable. Planning permission is required for external vending machines, ATMs, newspaper receptacles and storage bays. Commercial premises should limit the clutter of temporary external retail furniture, such as external heaters, bins, and menu-boards, as such fittings are only acceptable where their design complements or enhances the character of the area.

5.1.8   Boundary Treatments

Alteration or removal of historic railings, boundary walls, piers, gates, etc. requires planning permission. Loss of such features can be seriously damaging to the character of the ACA and is therefore not considered to be acceptable. Reinstatement of lost features such as ironwork details to correct historic detail will be encouraged by the Planning Authority or required by condition where appropriate when granting permission for developments within the ACA.

Fig.114: Railings to house on the Sallins Road

5.1.9 Demolition

Demolition of any building visible within the ACA, whether it is a Protected Structure or not, requires planning permission. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining any structure that makes a positive contribution to the character of the ACA to avoid incremental loss or damage to its special character. Where permission is sought for demolition on the grounds of structural defects or failure, a condition report produced by a suitably qualified and experienced conservation professional, supported by photographs and drawings indicating locations of defects will be required. Justification on structural grounds for any demolition within the ACA must include details of repairs or remedial works normally used in similar circumstances demonstrating why they are not suitable in that instance. A full photographic record and measured survey will be required before any demolition commences.

Façade Retention: Although interiors are not protected within an ACA 'façade retention', or the demolition of the interiors of a structure to leave the outer façade only, will not be considered an acceptable approach to redevelopment of an area.

5.1.10 New Build Interventions

Plot Size: New buildings should follow existing plot boundaries to retain the existing fine grain with a strong vertical emphasis which is an important determining factor of the special character of the ACA. New buildings should have regard to the surrounding scale and mass of built form. In larger developments on sites where former individual boundaries have already been removed, the original plot divisions should be articulated in the volume and composition of the new buildings, both to the front and the rear.

Fig.115: New buildings which ignore established building sizes and volumes damage the character of the street space and town skyline

New and Infill Developments: Designation as an ACA puts an onus on prospective developers to produce a high standard of architectural design, which respects or enhances the particular qualities of the area. New buildings should be designed to blend into the streetscape respecting and using where appropriate the prevailing materials, proportions and massing. Buildings should have regard to the eaves heights, roof pitches, building lines which predominate in the surrounding context[1]. Chimney stacks should be included where these are a feature of the roofscape. Windows should be of matching proportions and alignments at head and sill, and the window-to-wall ratio should be derived from the historic buildings forming the context of the infill site. Contemporary interpretations and detail which allow the new building to be identified as an addition should be favoured over pastiche styles in order to avoid undermining the authenticity of ACA.

Alternative Design Approach: New buildings which depart from the proportions and façade arrangements typical of the context must be of a very high standard of architectural design and must positively contribute to the character of the area. A design impact statement outlining the concept of the design and providing justification for the proposal, demonstrating a considered response to the scale, materials and grain of the ACA must accompany any such application.

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[1] The Guidelines on Urban Development and Building Heights (2018) encourage the development of taller buildings in urban centres, however the guidelines also emphasise the need for taller developments to integrate properly with existing and historical areas.

Materials and Features: Only materials of good visual quality and durability may be used in new developments. Features which are not typical of the historic buildings of the town should be avoided. These include roof lights, standard-issue concrete sills or copings, top-hung casement windows, pressed aluminium gutters or uPVC features of any kind. Roofs should be covered with natural slate, lead or other roofing materials which enhances the character of the ACA.

Extensions to Front or Side: New additions to the front or visible elevations of structures within the ACA will require planning permission. Very careful consideration will be given to applications for extensions to the side or front of a structure within the ACA, as these can be particularly detrimental to the character of the area.

Rear Extensions: Additions to the rears of properties can often be visible from other parts of the ACA and can affect its character. Rear extensions which may otherwise constitute exempted development can materially affect the external appearance of a building within the ACA and would in that case require planning permission. Extensions should be designed to minimise their visibility from any public area in the ACA, they should be subsidiary to the main building, of an appropriate scale, and should follow the guidance for new infill buildings given above.

5.1.11   Amalgamation of Properties or Sites

Amalgamation of Structures: Joining buildings together into one functional unit requires planning permission. Any proposals for the amalgamation of properties within the ACA will be considered with regard to the impact of the change on the special character of the ACA, whether in its visual appearance or characteristic use. Original entrances should therefore remain to maintain an active and vibrant street frontage. Treatment of facades to joined buildings should emphasise the individual plot. Paint finishes or shopfronts should not aim to present adjoining buildings which have been joined in the same ownership in a uniform manner.

Amalgamation of Plots: Any proposed development of a group of sites within the ACA, especially at an increased density, must respect the scale, mass, height, and design of adjoining buildings and of the whole streetscape. This does not preclude modern design but should reflect the predominant and historically significant grain of the town, informally arranged buildings of intimate scale and narrow frontage. Development that amalgamate or cross over former plot boundaries should reflect the historic boundary in the elevations and volumetric expression of the proposed new building in order to fit in with the historic scale of the ACA. Developments which span across former individual plot boundaries, should be articulated in their volume and façades to reflect the historic plot divisions, both to the front and the rear, avoiding wide frontages of continuous height. There will be a presumption

against the demolition of buildings that contribute positively to the character of the ACA. All such buildings should be retained and incorporated sensitively into any proposed re-development with respect for their historic and architectural qualities and original plot form.

5.1.12   External Lighting.

Proposals for the illumination at night of buildings and other features within the ACA require the consent of the Council. The method of lighting, i.e. type of fitting, fixing method and type of light, must be specified by the applicant in seeking permission and should be designed so that it does not affect public lighting levels, result in light pollution, or negatively impact on other structures in the ACA.

5.1.13   Views

Key views as outlined in this document must be protected and any works within the ACA should not adversely impact on or block these views. These views are considered for 'Protected View' status in Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027.

5.1.14   Use of Professional Advice

Historically Naas set a high standard of architecture quality for creation of buildings in the town, be they civic, commercial or domestic structures. Some had the involvement of architects and others made by builders followed well-used canons of composition and proportion. Buildings were mostly constructed using traditional materials up to World War II. Structures were of high quality and durability and have gained character over time with the patina of use and weathering. A high quality of appearance was expected to show Naas at its best.

Today, traditional craftsmanship and quality natural materials are not abundant as of yore. However good quality architectural design can do much to improve the appearance of even modest new structures and refurbishments. High standards defined from the outset encourages good construction standards and a well-designed and built building encourages work on neighbouring buildings and sites to keep up these standards.

All proposals for development within the ACA should have regard to and consult with the Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011) and the various complementary Advice Series documents by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

5.3 Works to the Public Realm

It is proposed that a Public Realm Strategy for Naas will be prepared during the lifetime of the Plan and be implemented on a phased basis as funding is secured.

Most works undertaken in the public realm are carried out by Kildare County Council. These works include road opening works for drainage, water supply and metering, road resurfacing, paving works, accessibility improvements, street lighting, street furniture, controls and signage for traffic and pedestrians, parking provision and metres. Larger scale works will require planning approval under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). The Architectural Conservation Officer should always be consulted in this process.

In smaller scale interventions, the relevant engineering department should consult closely with the Architectural Conservation Officer to ensure that any unavoidable impact on the character of the ACA is suitably mitigated.

Where subcontractors are used, the tender documents should inform bidding companies of the constraints imposed by working within an ACA. Subcontractors should be carefully overseen or should be required to engage professional conservation advice in any interventions within a historic context.

5.3.1 Works by Statutory Undertakers

Infrastructure for supply of gas, electricity, telecommunications, and cable tv, is provided by a range of providers, and all of which can have a damaging impact on the historic built environment.

Utility and service providers are each governed by different legislation, but all must consult to a greater or lesser degree with the local roads authority and obtain permission for any road-opening works.

The road authority as the overseeing body should inform the relevant service provider of the constraints imposed on work within an ACA and should consult with the Planning Authority of Kildare County Council and the Conservation Officer before approving interventions.

Private sector utilities should be required to employ professional conservation advice to minimise and mitigate the impact of any proposed intervention in a historic context.

Fig. 116: Poor consideration in the location of service boxes

5.3.2   Historic Paving and Street Furniture

Alterations to paving and street furniture should be in keeping with the visual simplicity of the town. Where historic evidence of street furniture does not survive, new elements should be chosen to be high quality and low-key. Conspicuous arrays of litter bins or bollards should be avoided through the use of integrated designs to minimise clutter. The impact of necessary items should be mitigated by careful consideration of their position in the streetscape.

The Planning Authority should be consulted before any works commence, to ensure that works do not adversely affect, but rather enhance the character of the area.

5.3.3   Drainage

Sewers and culverts which are not visible contribute nonetheless to the historic character and civil engineering heritage of the ACA. Works to this infrastructure should be respectful of historic features and should favour repair over replacement.

5.2.4   Street Lighting

The street lighting in parts of the ACA is utilitarian roadway lighting. Consideration should be given to improving the lighting scheme with lower lamp standards to produce a more intimate lighting which would reinforce the town's architectural character.

5.3.5   Traffic and Management Signage

There is considerable traffic due to the strategic location of the town in the network of national and local roads. It is important that all signage and other traffic management features be carefully sited to cause the minimum impact. Traffic engineers should consult the Planning Authority regarding any changes or improvements proposed to traffic management and signage.

5.3.6   Management of Parking

Parking has generally a negative effect on the character of the ACA in the areas where it is provided. Cars detract from the historic character of streets and impede proper appreciation of historic buildings and spaces. In addition, off-street surface car parks also add to the degradation of the character of the town. Parking is provided throughout the ACA in different arrangements. This should be revised when possible to allow structures to regain their historic boundaries or to be free of cluttering vehicles. Site boundaries, understanding of historic plot sizes and landscape features should not be sacrificed to providing parking spaces.

To enhance the character of the ACA, the exclusion of parking from key positions in the ACA should be considered, especially in public squares. The configuration of parking bays in sensitive areas should be designed for the best possible presentation when cars are not present. For disabled-accessible parking spaces alternatives to blue surfacing should be provided.

Fig.117: Absence of designated pathways for pedestrians, wide openings to off-street parking sites and perpendicular parking right up to buildings detract from the character of Abbey Street.

Fig.118: Visually intrusive access controls detract from the historic structure

Fig.119: Loss of civic space due to parking

Fig.120: Proliferation of kerbs and separate road surfaces for parking and access, signage, lighting masts, bins and a bus stop have a negative impact on the most important historic public space in the town

Fig.121: Neuville aux Bois, France. Google image of the main street, 2009 prior to refurbishment of the Main Street.

Fig.122: Neuville aux Bois, France, following refurbishment of the main street.
Note the continuation of stone used for paths into areas for parking and part of the public street to give the appearance of a square and diminish the character of a 'road'. Note also that all kerbing and most signage has been removed.

5.2.7   Planting and Landscaping

Good quality landscape design can enhance the setting of historic buildings and improve the appreciation of the urban spaces. Such designs should employ good quality natural materials which are already found in the streetscape or are in sympathy with its scale and materials.

The quantity and quality of planting and trees within the ACA is an essential contributing element of its special character. Good quality planting maintenance and design can support this in the present and into the future. This also applies to areas in private property that are not in the street space such as front and rear gardens as they can be seen from public routes and are part of the larger landscape makeup of Naas. The Planning Authority should be consulted in the design of any such schemes, to ensure that the impact on the historic character of the town is acceptable.

Fig.123: Remaining Scot's Pines in the grounds of St David's Castle

5.3.8   Service Utilities

Naas ACA is particularly adversely impacted by overhead cables and (often redundant) cables and other electrical components on elevations. Where underground services are proposed beneath historic paving, this should be carefully lifted by suitably skilled operatives and laid in the original position and detail. Where cabling on façades is not avoidable, these should be placed neatly in discreet positions using dark coloured cable.

5.3.9   Wires and Distribution Poles

Overhead electricity supply and telephone cables and poles detract significantly from the character of Naas. The Council facilitate and support initiatives to place overhead services underground within the historic ACA. The removal of redundant services, signage, electrical wires, and lighting from the façades of buildings should also be encouraged.


Fig. 124: Proliferation of masts and cables in street spaces (left) and redundant fittings on elevations (right)

NOTE:

Some of the works listed in the preceding section require planning permission irrespective of whether they are located within an ACA or not but are included to highlight the need for careful consideration of the design of the proposed works to ensure that they do not impact negatively on the character of the area.

The guidance set out in Section 5.0 is not in itself a comprehensive list of all works, in all circumstances, that require planning permission, but identifies those works that would impact on the character of the ACA. Development works would still have to adhere to the general provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended). The Planning Authority of Kildare County Council should be consulted if there is any doubt as to whether planning permission is required or not.

Appendix 1: Architectural Conservation Area Map containing labelled principal views

Source: Lotts Architecture and urbanism Ltd. (April 2019)
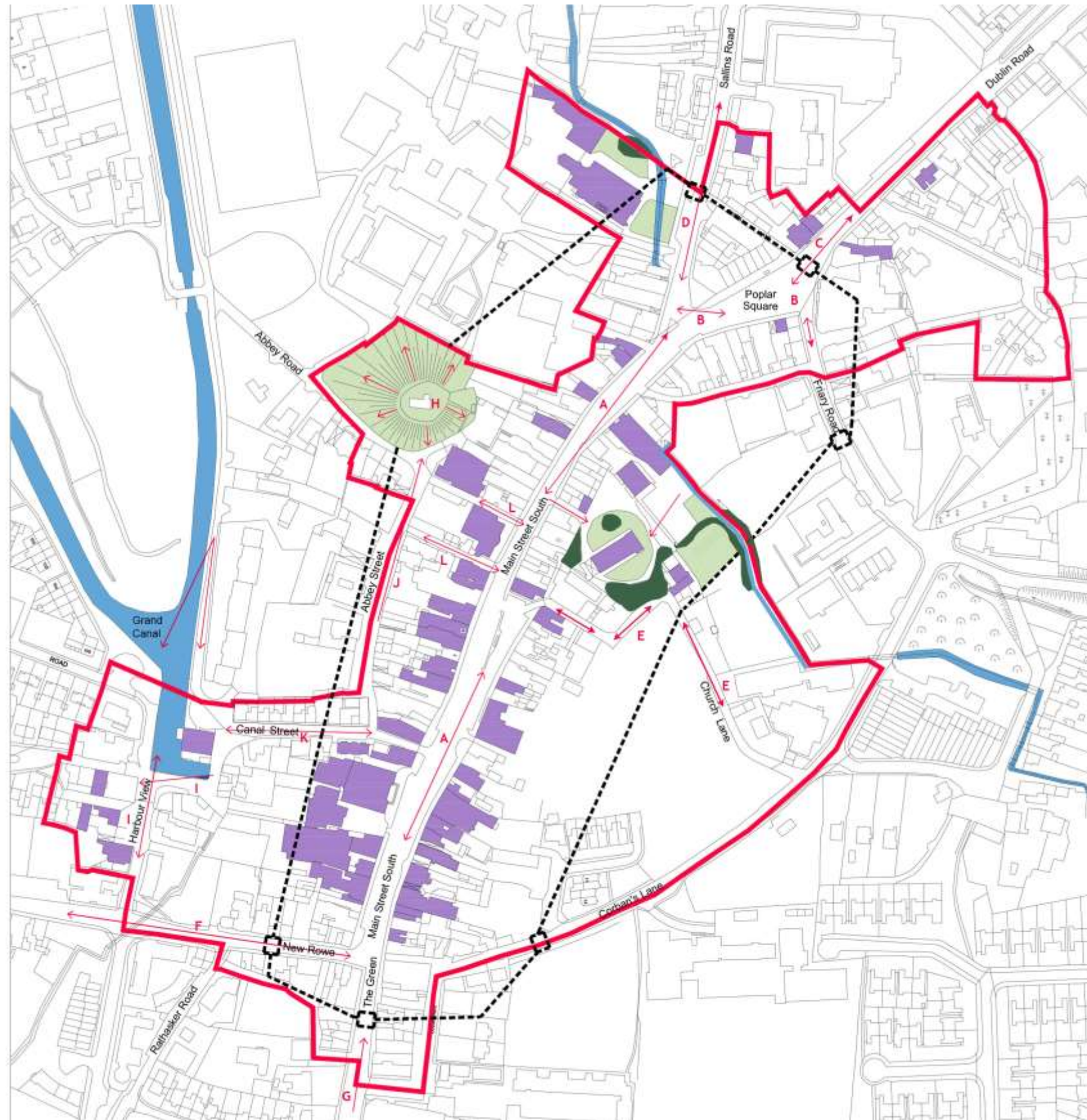
NAAS ACA MAP

Protected Structures in the ACA	
ACA BOUNDARY	
IMPORTANT VIEWS	
LOCATION OF HISTORIC TOWN WALLS	---------
IMPORTANT GREEN AREAS	
AREA OF SIGNIFICANT TREES	
HISTORIC WATERWAY/ CANAL	