



**Fingal County Council**  
Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall



Nos. 20a to 26 Strand Road, Sutton

Architectural Conservation Area

Statement of Character



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Permission has been granted by the Map Library, Trinity College Library, Dublin for the reproduction of Figure 2 which is an extract of Bernard Scale's 1773 map of the *City and Suburbs of Dublin* and Figures 3 and 4 which are extracts from the first and second edition of the Ordnance Survey Maps.

## Introduction

Many of the towns and villages of Fingal contain areas of architectural, historical, and/or cultural interest, which have a particular distinctive character considered worthy of retention and enhancement. Planning legislation allows a planning authority to include objectives in the County Development Plan to preserve the character of a place, area, group of structures or townscapes, taking account of building lines and heights, that:

- is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value or
- contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

The title given to these areas or places is *Architectural Conservation Areas*, or ACAs for short. Currently, there are 28 ACAs designated in Fingal.

An ACA could encompass, for example, a terrace of houses, a whole streetscape, town centre, or a small cluster of structures associated with a specific building such as a mill or country house. Most structures in an ACA are important in how they positively contribute to the streetscape or character of an area. Therefore, in ACAs the protection relates to the external appearance of such areas or structures. **Any works that would have a *material effect* (i.e. impact) on the character of an ACA require planning permission**, even works that are outlined in the Planning Regulations as not normally needing planning permission, and known as Exempted Development. This does not prevent alterations, extensions or new build within ACA's but the designation seeks to ensure that any new development respects or enhances the special character of the area and is carried out in consultation with the Planning Department and Conservation Officer, usually through a planning application.

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

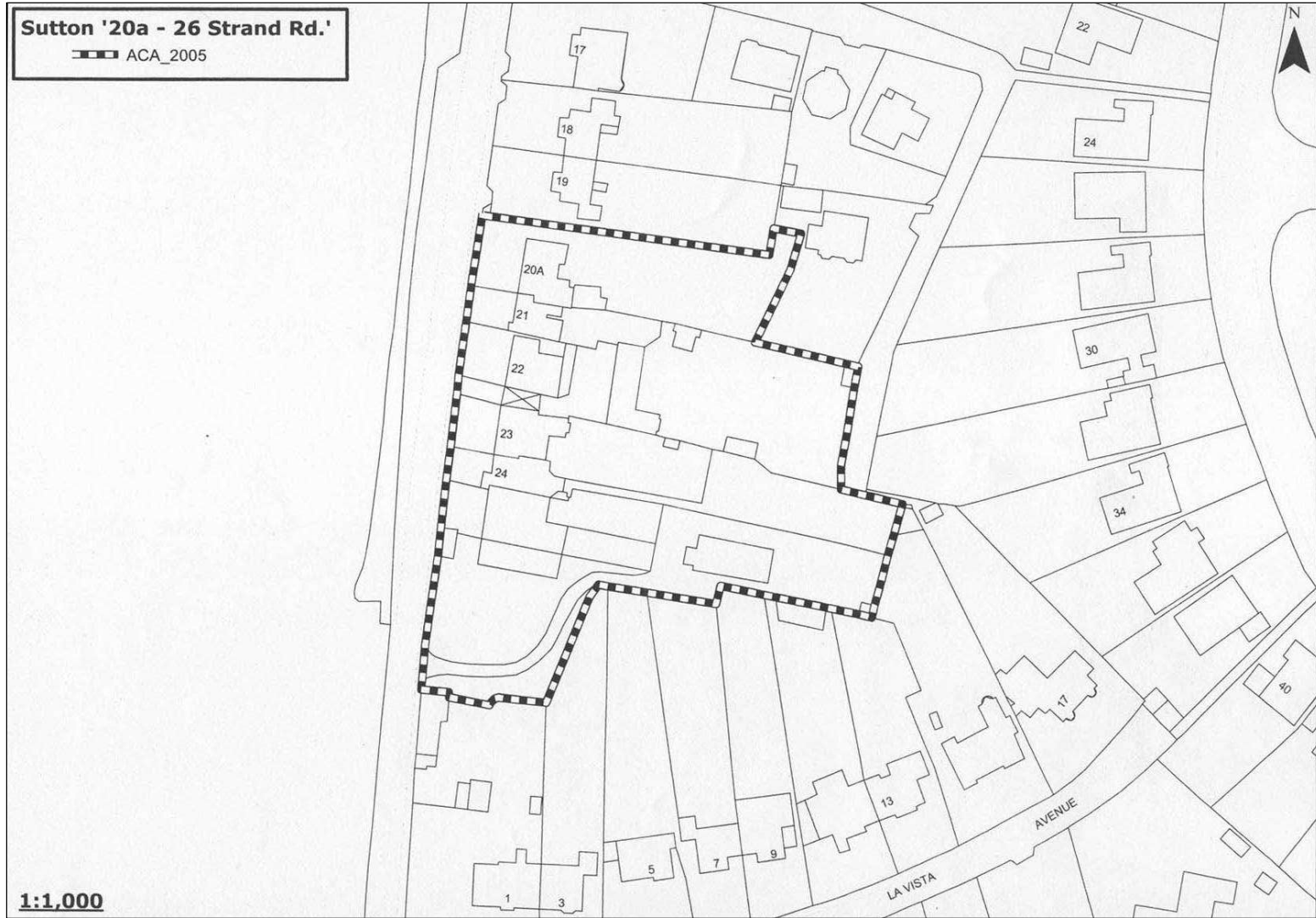
## **Location and Boundary of the Conservation Area**

Strand Road, Sutton is located on the western side of the Howth Peninsula, which extends out from the north-eastern shore of Dublin Bay. Howth and Sutton themselves form part of Fingal's southern boundary with Dublin City Council.

Sutton has developed along the isthmus that connects the peninsula of Howth to the Dublin mainland. The core of Sutton Village is located at the crossroads of Station Road/Greenfield Road and Dublin Road/Howth Road. Strand Road is some distance south of this core and is actually located along the western coastline of the Howth peninsula, with the road itself running in a mostly north-south direction. This narrow coastal road has impressive views overlooking North Bull Island and Dublin Bay and out towards the southern suburbs of Dublin and the Wicklow Mountains. At Bottle Quay the road turns sharply eastwards where it becomes Shielmartin Road and heads uphill towards Sutton Castle Apartments. A pedestrian footpath and cliff walk continue along the coastline from Bottle Quay, past Sutton Martello Tower, towards Drumleck Point and The Summit, and ultimately to Howth Village.

Nos. 20a to 26 Strand Road form a terrace of 7 houses located along the section of Strand Road between the junctions with Carrickbrack Road and St. Fintan's Road. The numbering of the terrace from No. 20a, also known as St. Lawrence's Cottage, to No. 26, or Byron House, runs from north to south. There are uninterrupted views from the terrace out across Dublin Bay towards the Wicklow Mountains. The modern bungalow within the grounds of Byron House is not subject to the planning restrictions outlined in this document but must still adhere to the general provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to 2002 relating to works that require planning permission.

Fig. 1 Boundary of No. 20a to 26 Strand Road ACA



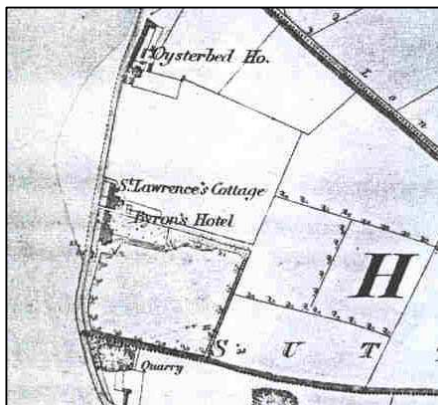
## Historical Development of the Area

Late 18<sup>th</sup> century maps of Howth show that there was relatively little development along the western edge of the peninsula or around modern day Sutton. It was during the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the settlement of Howth took the form that is recognisable today as a popular seaside destination, with the construction of the harbour and many of the large houses within the village itself and the surrounding environs of Sutton and Howth Head.



**Fig. 2 Extract from John Rocque's Map of County Dublin 1773**

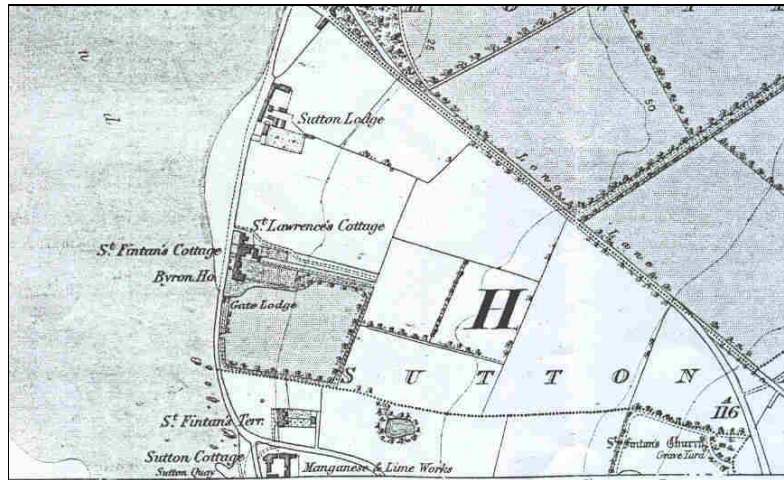
The extract from Rocque's Map of 1773, shown above, does show some structures along the western coast of the peninsula and one of these, east of the area marked Sutton Oyster Bed, appears to be in the vicinity of site of the terrace. This may be one



**Fig. 3 Extract from Ordnance Survey Map c. 1837-43**

of the structures in the terrace, perhaps St. Lawrence's Cottage, or just an earlier structure on the site of the terrace. John Taylor's Map of 1816 indicates that there are a number of buildings along this stretch of the road but is not at a legible scale to positively identify whether they are the current houses that form the terrace or not. However, the first edition of the Ordnance Survey Map from 1837 clearly shows the existence of group of houses with St. Lawrence's Cottage at one end and Byron's

Hotel at the other, along what was then called Sutton Road. It would appear from the form and layout of this cluster of buildings that these are the same structures as Nos. 20a to 26 Strand Road, and that over the decades the plots have been sub-divided to create the seven individual properties that make up the terrace today.



**Fig. 4 Extract from 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Ordnance Survey Map circa 1870**

The early street directories for Dublin City and County, such as Thom's, date from around the same time as the first edition of the Ordnance Survey in 1837 and so it is difficult to ascertain the exact dates for structures prior to this unless the original deeds still exist. Also, the early street directories often have just the names of individuals living in rural areas or villages, like Sutton, without linking them to specific street address or building name as this information was generally not available.

However, from the cartographic and documentary evidence examined the majority of the buildings in the group appear to be early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date, but some structures may be slightly earlier in date.



### **Schedule of Protected Structures & Recorded Monuments**

There are no Protected Structures within the boundaries of the Architectural Conservation Area.

There are also no known archaeological sites, features, artefacts, etc., listed as Recorded Monuments on the Record of Monuments and Places, within the boundaries of the ACA.

### **Development Plan Zoning & Objectives**

In the Fingal Development Plan 2005 –2011 the land is zoned Objective RS - *To provide for residential development and to protect and improve residential amenity.*

## Description of Existing Built Environment

- **Street pattern & materials**

Strand Road is located on the western side of the Howth Peninsula and has a north-south orientation. Therefore, the terrace itself has an east-west orientation, apart from Byron Lodge, which faces southwards. Strand Road is a coastal road with open views across Dublin Bay and structures only located on the eastern side, apart from Sutton Sailing Club.



**Fig. 5 Strand Road**

The road itself has modern tarmac finish. There is a margin on the seaside of the road with a metal post-and-rail fence that provides space for cars to pull in.

- **Form & arrangement of public and private open space**

Nos. 20a to 26 Strand Road are a group of private residences, therefore there are no public open space areas within the boundaries of this ACA. The private open space comprises of front and rear gardens for each individual property.

- **Socio-Economic Functions**

The houses are in private ownership, in residential use, and are in a good state of repair.

- **Built Fabric**

Nos. 20a & 21 appear to have been built as one entity. There is a small gap separating No. 21 from the rest of the row of houses in the group, which seems to confirm that St. Lawrence's Cottage, which probably originally consisted of both Nos. 20a & 21, is the earliest structure within this cluster of buildings, with the other houses built later.



**Fig. 6 St. Lawrence's Cottage, No. 20a Strand Road & The Mews, No. 21 Strand Road**

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey Map also shows a gap between No. 22 and 23, however this is not apparent on the second edition and so seems to have been filled to create a third bay to No. 22. Nos. 22 to 25 have the appearance of being constructed as a group as they share the characteristic feature of tripartite windows. Byron House, which terminates the southern end of the terrace, is in a villa style and is orientated differently from the rest of the group.



**Fig. 7 Byron House, No. 26 Strand Road**

While there is some variation in the built fabric of the seven structures that form this ACA, overall there is shared uniformity with regard to the scale, ridge height and set back of the building line, which when combined with the architectural features of the houses creates the distinctive character of the area.

**Roofs:** The roofs along the front elevation of Nos. 20a to 25 are pitched slate roofs with rendered chimneys. Nos. 23 to 25 also have a low parapet. A number of original clay chimney pots have survived, with the decorative pots on No. 22 and No. 23 Strand Road of particular note. No. 26 has a hipped slate roof and high parapet. None of the chimney stacks have television aerials attached to them, which is a positive feature of the area as the roofscape is not detracted by the clutter of masts, aerials or satellite dishes.



**Fig. 8 Chimney pots of No. 23 Strand Road**



**Fig. 9 Roofscape of Nos. 21 to 26 Strand Road**

**Walls:** The majority of the houses have a smooth render finish. The render on Byron House at No. 26 and No. 24 Strand Road includes detailing to give the impression of regular quoins at the edges of the front facades. The front elevation of No. 23 is almost completely obscured by a creeper. Nos. 20a and 21 have removed the external render to expose the random rubble stonework with brick surrounds to the openings.



**Fig. 10 No. 23 Strand Road and adjoining rendered buildings**

There has been some replacement of the original cast-iron rainwater downpipes and gutters along the terrace using different materials. The gutters for Nos. 23 to 26 Strand Road are hidden behind the parapet walls, with holes at points along this elevation to enable hopper heads funnel the water into downpipes. No. 24 does not have a downpipe on its front elevation and may have water pooling in the gutter, which could account for the vertical crack and staining along the top of the front façade.



**Fig. 11 Hidden Gutter**

**Openings:** The original proportions of the openings have been retained for the most part along the terrace. There have been some alterations to ground floor openings. A key feature of the terrace are the tripartite Wyatt timber up-and-down sash windows



**Fig. 12 Tripartite Window**

of Nos. 22 to 25, with their central six-over-six sash window flanked on either side by narrow two-over-two sash windows. Nos. 20a and 21 have a narrower fenestration pattern, with six-over-six timber sash windows in No. 20a and replacement top-hung casement windows in No. 21. No. 26 also has six-over-six timber sash windows at ground floor level but these are long, almost floor to ceiling, windows.

There are a variety of entrance doors within the group of houses. Some are panelled timber doors with fanlights or rectangular overlights, two houses have small front porches that obscure the front door and one has a glazed entrance door along with French doors. The entrance to No. 26 is the only one not at ground level but is accessed by a set of granite steps with iron railings.

**Boundaries:** Each property has a different boundary treatment, from low plinths with iron railings that are accessed by a pedestrian gate to high stone/stone-faced boundary walls with vehicular access to provide off-street parking.

- **Views**

Impressive views extend out over Dublin Bay and the Bull Island across to the southern suburbs of Dublin and the Wicklow Mountains. These views contribute to the character of the area and it is important that new development in the area does not negatively impact on or obscure these views from this terrace.



**Fig. 13 Views across Dublin Bay**

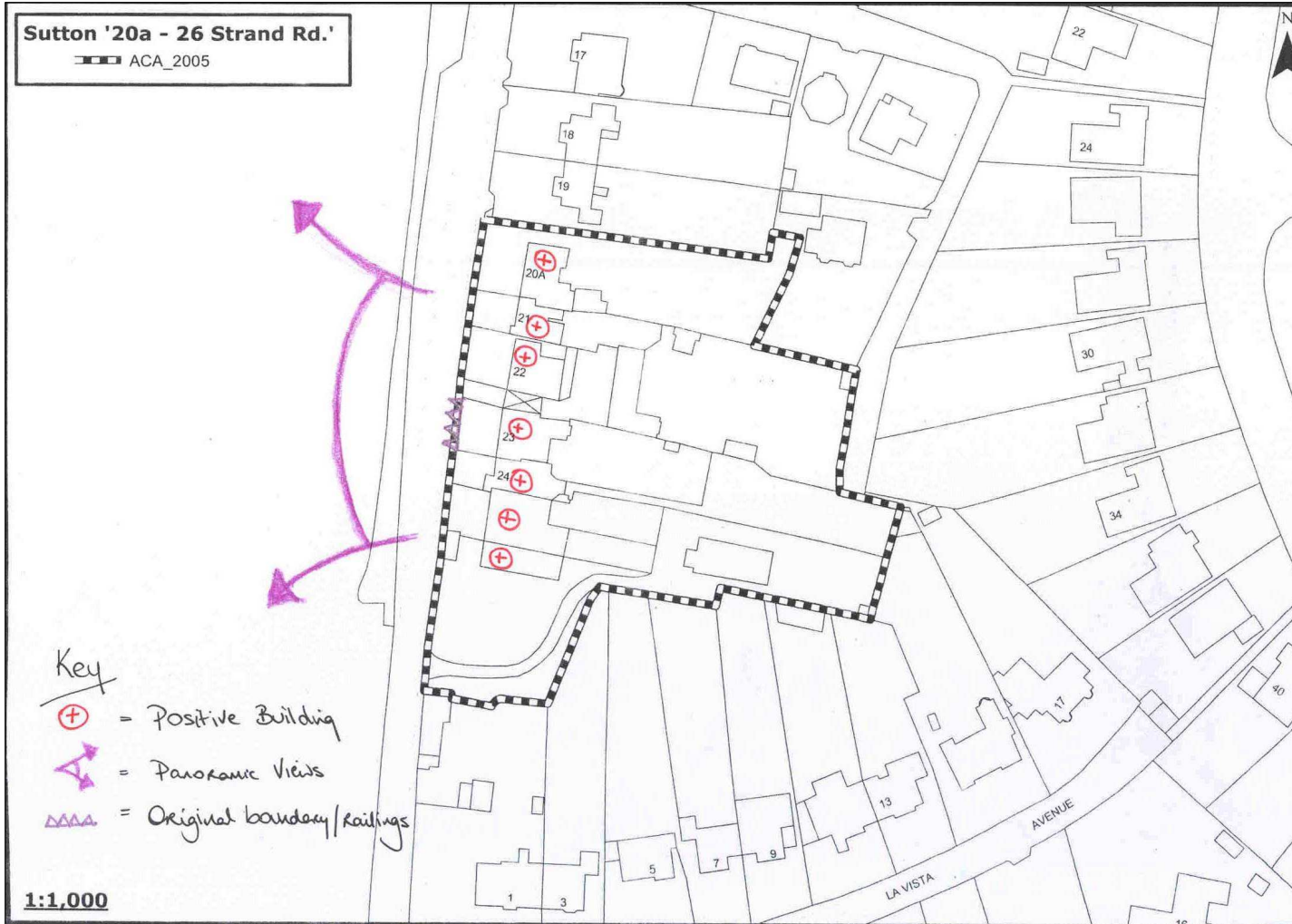
### **Summary of Special Character**

The special character of this ACA arises from the way in which the different buildings in this group respect the proportions, scale and building lines of the adjoining houses so that there is an uniformity to the overall appearance of the properties even though there are variations in the built fabric and architectural features of these early 19<sup>th</sup> century houses. The siting of the terrace with uninterrupted views across Dublin Bay also adds to its appeal.



**Fig. 14 Aerial view of ACA area**

Fig. 15 Annotated Map



## Planning Implications

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 of the built environment. Therefore, the assigning of ACA status on a streetscape, cluster of buildings, or a town/village core results in **restrictions on certain works to the exteriors of structures** within the boundary of the ACA. Owners, occupiers, or developers proposing to carry out works within an ACA should be aware that in general, planning permission will be required for any new build to the front of the structure and changes of original materials, such as windows, wall finishes, boundary walls, roof coverings etc. While new development and alterations to existing structures can still occur subject to planning, proposal should respect or enhance the area's special character.

More detailed direction is given overleaf on the type of works that do and do not impact on the character of the ACA at Nos. 20a to 26 Strand Road, Sutton and therefore will or will not require planning permission.



WORKS NOT AFFECTING THE CHARACTER OF THE ACA (DO NOT REQUIRE PLANNING PERMISSION)

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- **MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS**

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance works and genuine repairs within this ACA (such as roof, rainwater goods or window repairs) as long as original materials are retained where they exist, or where replacement is necessary that it is on a like-for-like basis.

- **INTERNAL ALTERATIONS**

ACA designation for Nos. 20a to 26 Strand Road, Sutton does not prevent internal changes or re-arrangements, as none of the houses are Protected Structures, and as long as these changes do not impact on the exterior of the structure.

- **RESTORATION OF CHARACTER**

Where original materials have been removed and replaced with modern or inappropriate alternatives, the restoration or reinstatement of these features will not require planning permission only where the method, materials and details for the works have been agreed with the Conservation Officer.

- **WORKS TO THE PUBLIC REALM**

In general, works to the public domain will be carried out by Fingal County Council or the major utility and service providers, and may be exempt from planning permission. However, consultation with the Conservation Staff of Fingal County Council will be required before any works commence to ensure that these works enhance and improve the character of the area and do not negatively impact on it, such as: improvements to public roads and footpaths; undergrounding of overhead wiring and services; public lighting schemes; etc.

## WORKS IMPACTING ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA (WORKS REQUIRING PLANNING PERMISSION)

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- **EXTERNAL WALLS**

**The removal of the external plaster/render to expose rubble stonework or brickwork.** The render or plaster provides a water-resistant surface that protects the building from water ingress and decay. Often the rubble stonework or brickwork underneath this render is of poor quality as it was never meant to be exposed to the elements. The majority of historic structures in Fingal were rendered, especially those in coastal locations. Therefore, the removal of the external render is deemed unacceptable within this ACA and will not be granted planning permission if an application is submitted.

- **ROOF**

**The removal of the original slate roofing material, chimney stacks or pots,** and their replacement with modern materials, or the taking down of chimney stacks permanently. Original elements should be retained where possible as they can generally be repaired and reused and they contribute to the character of the area.

**The installation of roof lights or dormer windows on the front elevations of the terraces.** Roof lights, where required, should be placed on inner or hidden pitches of a roof and any planning applications for dormer windows should be to rear elevations.

**Installation of satellite antenna, TV aerials and other communications devices.** The addition of any of these and other devices to the front elevations or roofs of the terrace would be considered to have a negative impact on the character of the area, as the roofscape is currently devoid of any clutter. These devices should be placed to the rear of the property or less visible methods, such as cable, could be used.

- **WINDOW & DOOR OPENINGS**

**The alteration of window openings and external doors,** namely the enlargement of openings or the removal of original windows, doors, sills and doorsteps, and/or the replacement of original features with materials such as PVC or aluminium will require planning permission. Most of the houses have timber sash windows along the front elevation, with the tripartite windows a key feature of this ACA. Owners should retain these where they exist. Planning permission will be required where owners wish to alter the openings, the glazing pattern of the timber sash windows or their

replacement with a different material. Where windows have already been altered prior to the ACA designation, owners will be encouraged to consider a more appropriate window material and glazing pattern if they intend to change their windows in the future.

- **EXTENSIONS**

**Extensions and all new build that impact on the front elevations of the terrace.** As the character of this area is associated with the uniformity of the setback, ridge heights and scale of this cluster of buildings, the addition of elements to the front elevation could impact negatively on this character. When submitting plans for any features to the front façade consideration should be given not just to how it suits the individual structure but also how it fits in to the whole group of buildings in this ACA. Extensions to the rear should be careful not to extend above the existing ridgeline and should be subsidiary in size and design to the main building.

- **AMALGAMATION OF SITES/PROPERTIES**

**The amalgamation of structures** requires planning permission irrespective of whether located in an ACA or not, unless it involves reversing the subdivision of what had originally been a single dwelling. However, within this ACA planning permission will be required for any amalgamation of plots or properties and any proposals for this type of work should seek to retain the proportions and entrances of the original front elevation of both properties.

- **INFILL**

Where the size of individual sites provides the opportunity for infill development, any proposals should respect the proportions, scale and mass of the existing dwellings and not dominate the site. In relation to this specific ACA the possibility for infill development is to the rear of the properties, subject to the suitability of the site in relation to normal planning, water, and waste treatment issues.

- **DEMOLITION**

**Demolition of any building within the ACA.** As this ACA consists of a terrace of houses, the demolition of any one house in this group would have a very significant detrimental affect on the area, and therefore it is highly unlikely that permission for demolition would be granted. Where permission is sought for demolition on the

grounds of structural defects or failure, a report containing photographs and drawing(s) indicating locations of photographs will be required, produced by a suitably qualified and experienced professional regarding the existing condition. As part of the justification for any demolition within the ACA on structural grounds, details will be required of repairs/remedial works normally used in similar circumstances and details of why they are not suitable in that instance.

- **BOUNDARY WALLS & PARKING**

**Carparking within the area.** Planning permission is required under normal circumstances for the creation of a new driveway. However, all the properties along this terrace have already created private off-street parking spaces using a variety of materials and finishes.

- **VIEWS**

**Preservation of views.** The key seaviews across Dublin Bay, the Bull Island, and of the Wicklow Mountains should be preserved and any works within the ACA should not adversely impact or block these views.

**NOTE:**

Some of the works listed above require planning permission irrespective of whether the area is protected 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 above list 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 Acts 2000-2002 and Planning Regulations. The Area Planner and Conservation Officer of Fingal County Council can be consulted if there is any doubt as to whether planning permission is required or not.