

## ‘The Grange’ Development

This development presents a quite different problem to the Cnoc Dubh site because of the backland location of the site to the rear of Main Street. Located in the southern part of the village beside Keelings, it is a large site on which only two large houses have been built out of a total of 18 permitted dwellings. This development is located to the rear of existing development which fronts onto Main Street and apart from the access road the site is not visible from the Main Street.

- Two houses are built and occupied, but they stand as an island at a far remove from the entrance to the site.
- Foundations and ground floor slabs have been laid for four more houses.
- The public open space and access road have been completed.

The situation is most unfortunate for the residents of the two completed houses which stand in the middle of an unfinished estate in a scheme which may take years to complete. In the meantime there is a need to clean up the site and remove building equipment and materials.



### Above, right:

Aerial photograph shows the site with its connection to the Main Street of the village and its proximity to the Keelings operation. The houses are secluded, behind the existing hedgerows. The builders' yard is located in a mature garden, but not prominent at entrance level and not visible from the Main Street.

### Lower, right:

Two houses out of 18 stand in the middle of an unfinished estate in a scheme which may take years to complete.





**Above:** Key area in the centre of the village proposed as a Village Character Protection Zone. It contains several buildings of traditional, historical, vernacular interest: **1** Old hay barn with corrugated iron barrel shaped roof and small stone building facing onto the street, with mature landscape of hedgerow trees. **2** Village pub. **3** Community Centre (Old National School), with pitch and putt course. **4** Traditional farmhouse fronting the Main Street, with stone outbuildings and paddock behind. **5** Catholic Church. **Below, left:** Aerial view shows the church and the adjacent farmhouse. **Below, right:** Delineation of a **Village Character Protection Zone**.

## 1.5 Architecture in the Village

There is an interesting diversity of architecture in the village, spanning nine hundred years, from the ruins of the first church of the Assumption to the modern 'pastiche' development across the road from the old national school. It includes some interesting traditional vernacular relating to agricultural buildings and their additions over the years. The local distinctiveness of the village is partly due to the unusual mix of buildings in its centre.

A 'Village Character Protection Zone' is proposed, to safeguard the village from erosion of its local distinctiveness. Such a Zone will identify which buildings and landscape features within it should be retained and integrated into future development proposals within the Zone. There will be a presumption that beneficial reuse shall be sought for redundant structures.



## 1.51 Traditional Architecture in the Village

The traditional buildings along the village street are a remaining memory of the rural village origins of Ballyboghil. As such they are important elements in the heritage of the place. Some are used for agricultural purposes, but several have fallen into disuse. However, with a renewed use they could still play a valuable role in maintaining the village identity. The building beside the pub, (shown on this page, centre **right**, and **below**) for example might provide the site for a village market, where local produce and other goods could be traded, or a recycling centre which would take the bins off the street. The diagrams on the facing page indicate a possible **Village Character Protection Zone** which could be important in ensuring that buildings and landscape features are retained in any redevelopment proposals and that buildings are given new uses as appropriate.



**Above right:** courtyard and outbuilding, area number 4 on the aerial images. This is a handsome stone building with slated roof, extended at the rear with corrugated iron roof. It could be used for conversion to residential use, or possibly for a craft type activity with exhibition area which would help to attract visitors to the village. It might be developed in conjunction with the courtyard areas attached to it.

**Above centre, and lower left:** area number 1 on aerial images. In the foreground, a small building with corrugated iron roof, possibly a dwelling at some time, is an unusual presence on the Main Street; very attractive with connected wall and stone copings and mature trees. The building and its garden courtyard is close to the pub. Behind the small building is a hay barn with barrel vault roof, all contained in a small overgrown plot.

(1.51 Traditional Architecture in the Village, continued)



**1 and 2:** Farm outbuilding north of village on roadside has good stonework, in reasonable condition, with recently felted roof.



**3 and 4:** Farm outbuildings at southern end of village (west side). The roadside building appears to be a mud structure with previously thatched roof. Stone gable buildings also appear to have architectural merit.



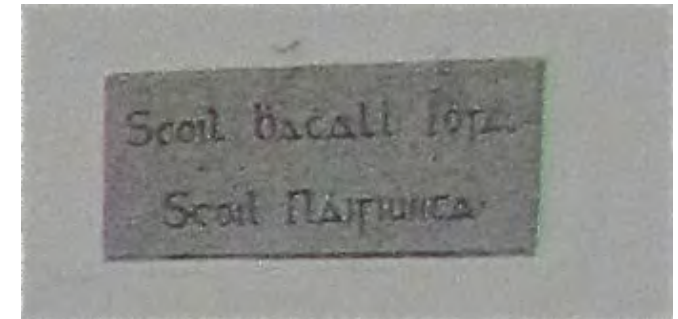
**5:** Farm outbuildings at southern end of village, east side. Variable condition suggests that conservation would not be an option.



## 1.52 Other Heritage Buildings - The Church of the Assumption, the Village Inn, the Old National School, the Mediaeval Church ruins and graveyard



**Above, left;** the new church, built in 1836. The truncated spire suggests that there may have been an intention to build the spire later.  
**Above, right and facing page:** the old church, a beautiful ruin in its graveyard setting with extended views over the countryside.  
**Left:** The Village Inn at the northern end of the village, a late nineteenth century building with a strong presence on a key site.  
**Left, below:** Community centre, originally the National School from the first half of the nineteenth century. The pitch and putt course is directly behind the community centre. The stone inscribed sign for the school is reproduced **below**.





The old Church of the Assumption  
The site has its origins in the twelfth century. It has a lovely graveyard setting, and was built as a chapel for the outlying distant farm of St Mary's Abbey in the centre of Dublin. The building is rated as of national importance by the NIAH. This is the description from the survey:  
"Detached single-cell sixteenth-century church with four-bay side elevation and triple bell-cote to rear, now in ruins. Set in graveyard with various cut stone grave markers, c.1600 to present. ROOF: Formerly double pitched roof; coursed rubble bell-cote rises from rear gable. WALLS: Coursed rubble walls with buttress to side elevation. OPENINGS: Arched window opening with cut stone surround; pointed arched cut stone entrance door with coursed rubble reveals cambered headed cut stone opening to rear gable with tripartite, pointed arched bell-cote opening above."

There is also a memorial beside the church to United Irishmen. It is a carved limestone slab with inscription:

*United Irishmen  
Tell To The Nations,  
Though Their Grass Is O'er Them For  
Many A Weary Year,  
Our Fathers' Souls Still Thrill The Land  
That Bore Them, Their Spirit Still Is Here.*

*In Grateful Remembrance Of The Gallant  
Wexford and Wicklow Rebels  
Who Gave Their Lives  
In The Cause Of Irish Freedom On The  
14th July 1798*



## 1.6 Protection for Architecture, Public Space and the Landscape

The character of Ballyboghil village is dependent on fascinating yet fragile remnants of its agricultural age as well as its diversity of architecture. Both attributes are significant heritage which contribute to the sense of place and distinctiveness of the village.

The delineation of a **Village Character Protection Zone** will provide for the protection of key buildings in the village, the vernacular fragments and the lands relating to them.

Some of the **buildings of architectural interest** have had unhappy additions or window alterations. It would be good to restore these with a sensitive eye for their original qualities.

The unfinished scheme **Cnoc Dubh** at the northern end of the village had proposed a terrace of shops and a three storey scale with dormer level in the roof. This part of the scheme remains unfinished for some years. If the scheme were to be revived, omission of the dormer level second floor would be more in scale with the village.

**Public space** needs to be developed beyond the conventional street and pavement to provide for recreational as well as gathering space. Adjustment to the boundary of the school to allow a wider pavement in front of the school would generate a natural place where people can gather, waiting for their children or just chatting. The area beside the river and behind the church is an opportunity to create a village scale park which would also be attractive to visitors.

**Landscape quality** is recognised and promoted by the Hedgerow Society who should be supported in identifying and protecting the hedgerows, which are the key landscape feature around the village.

## 1.7 Entrances to the Village

There is often an expectation that a settlement should announce itself at the point where the road becomes the entrance to the village. It is not always necessary to do so and in the case of a rural village like Ballyboghil, the issues are often more about ribbon development along access roads, poor provision of footpaths and access to the country, inappropriate scale and types of building, such as industrial sheds, and unfortunate advertising which is often unauthorised.

The snapshot pictures of the entrances are accompanied by comment on the impressions given and make some recommendations. Overall, the transition from countryside to village is pleasant, although it needs adjustment on both the southern and the northern approaches to ensure that traffic is effectively slowed down.

The Cnoc Dubh development, visible from the north approach, is largely acceptable with the colourful terrace on entry. But closer to the village, the unfinished buildings and sites are highly visible.

The access from north-east is also negatively affected by the abandoned building site frontage. Immediate action to screen the site is necessary.



### North

First sense of the village is given by the GAA Club and ramps on the road. The village comes into sight as the road descends and the new, colourful houses of Cnoc Dubh come into view. Hedgerows are well maintained. There is a need to slow down traffic as it approaches the village.



### North East

This is a small road entry into the village which arrives beside the pub on the left hand side, with the unfinished part of Cnoc Dubh on the right hand side. Before that, these beautifully clipped hedges present an excellent entrance. Unfortunately, at the end of this route, and in front of the pitch and putt site is the recycling centre which should be relocated to a less obtrusive site.



**Above:** hedges with neat footpath and verge make for a very successful approach. **Below:** This is the end of the vista on this approach...



# West

Entry from Oldtown, Naul, Garristown beside the river, which is on left behind the hedge. Several large houses have been built behind the hedgerow on the right. They have been well screened by its retention. The bridge parapet is visible at the end of the road. The footpath is narrow. Provision of a footpath /cycleway behind the hedge, along the river bank may be possible.



# East

This is the road from the eastern part of the county, the coast, the M1 motorway. It is a very attractive entrance, traveling through an open landscape and very large field with mature tree boundaries to arrive at the junction with well-clipped hedges and grass verge. It is a very successful transition. It is proposed that a footpath should be provided, integrated and within the riverside green area.



**Above:** entering the village with attractive green edges; sign held in the landscape, not obtrusive  
**Below:** winter photo closer to bridge and church.



# South

This is the road which arrives from Swords, the Airport, Dublin. The approaches are leafy with well maintained hedges. It is a very gradual approach and even on entering the village the southern end is spaced out, with green intervals between built areas. The approach is very varied with landscape dominant until the entry to the town is announced at the single storey crescent of cottages. At this point there is no enclosure, the road is relatively straight and traffic travels at high speed. It would benefit from a strategy to calm traffic and announce the village more boldly than the attractive, but minuscule sign, circled at bottom right.



**Far right:** Aerial view of the Main Street showing both northern and southern approaches. In both situations, bends, **circled**, help to slow traffic.





Green hedgerows on the road to Garristown and Oldtown provide an effective screen for houses on the edge of the village.



# Section 2

## A Vision for the Future

### 2.1

#### Opportunities ahead for the Village

CHAPTER 3  
**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

This is the introductory page of Chapter 3 from the Fingal County Development Plan 2011-17

**AIM**

Create an integrated and coherent green infrastructure for the County which will protect and enhance biodiversity, provide for accessible parks and open space, maintain and enhance landscape character including historic landscape character, protect and enhance architectural and archaeological heritage and provide for sustainable water management by requiring the retention of substantial networks of green space in urban, urban fringe and adjacent countryside areas to serve the needs of communities now and in the future including the need to adapt to climate change.

This Section progresses from analysis of the village as it is today, and looks at opportunities which may be pursued in a renewed phase of development.

#### 2.11 The Cnoc Dubh housing scheme

There is little doubt that the priority for the village is to achieve an adequate level of completion to housing schemes and this one in particular. It is essential for those who live there to be able to enjoy a home environment of a quality as anticipated when the houses were first sold. The unsightly unfinished frontages should be transformed, ideally into a built frontage as intended. As suggested already in the report, the scale might be reduced to two storeys. The site frontage is in a critical position in the village and should be dealt with as a priority, either as a built frontage or cleared and reclaimed, with a new hedgerow boundary treatment.

#### 2.12 The Village Structure

The scattered nature of buildings along the long road that is Ballyboghil is part of its charm, as it draws the landscape of the area into the village. Consolidation in the northern half has been quite successful, but further development at the expense of existing buildings could be damaging to the particular character of the village. For this reason, a **'Village Character Protection Zone'** is proposed in Section 1, to ensure that, in the northern part of the village, the combined qualities of buildings and natural environment are conserved.

#### 2.13 Village Park

The quality of the meadow beside the river and church is an ideal location for a proposed village park, which could connect to the existing little park with its Celtic cross and history of the 'Bachall Iosa'. The image, **right**, shows the suggested extent of the park. There is an opportunity to make a short loop walk, a play park and seating areas developed as a community garden project, and to create bowers, gazebo, bridges, etc, in a garden landscape.

#### 2.14 Design Yard and Small Business Units

The farmhouse beside the church which fronts onto the Main Street could, with limited attention to the design of the porch and window openings, retrieve the original qualities of this frontage, and bring back the feeling of an old building. The reuse of the remarkable stone outbuilding to the rear might be considered as a base for a local Design Yard project, possibly incorporating the field behind the building to allow for small business units. It is suggested that the lands adjoining the rear of the church be retained for any future church / community related uses. The greenway connection between park and pitch and putt links up with the proposed new housing, making an extension of walking routes within the village.

**Below:** Proposed Village park project area makes a key connection with the bridge area and continues across along the riverside. There are footbridge connections across the river and to the Celtic cross on the junction corner. The park also leads into a proposed walk to the Grange along the river. The park connects with the proposed housing area and pitch and putt site. Light green shows the site envisaged for the Design Yard and Small Business Centre. Space is left behind the church for parish activities.

