



ARKLE SQUARE

Architectural Conservation Area

Character Appraisal & Policy Framework

2014

Preface

The assessment of the special character of the Arkle Square Architectural Conservation Area was commissioned by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and was carried out in 2011 by *Richard McLoughlin from Lotts Architecture and Urbanism Ltd.*

The Character Appraisal, which includes an edited version of the special character report, was prepared by the Conservation Division and Planning Department of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

1.0 Introduction

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown contains a number of areas, which exhibit a distinct character and unique quality based on their historic built form and layout. This character is often derived from the cumulative impact of an area's buildings, their setting, landscape and other locally important features developed gradually over time. These areas are an expression of our heritage and our identity and contribute significantly to the quality of our lives. These areas will continue to develop and change but their special character is of great value and worthy of protection.

The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, provides the legislative basis for the protection of such areas by facilitating their designation as Architectural Conservation Areas, or ACAs.

Under Part IV of this Act, an ACA is defined as a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, that:

- *is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, social or technical interest or value, or,*
- *contributes to the appreciation of Protected Structures.*

A wide variety of areas can be considered for designation as an ACA. For example, an ACA could be centered on an individual building, or a terrace of houses and it may be rural or urban. ACA designation forms the basis for policies to preserve or enhance an area and provides an element of control over the

external appearance of buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Planning controls are more extensive with limits on exempted development. Any works that in the opinion of the Planning Authority would have a material effect on the character of an ACA require planning permission.

Retaining the special character of an area is best achieved by managing and guiding change on a wider scale than the individual structure. Hence, the objective of the ACA designation is to guide change within an area and ensure future development is carried out in a manner sympathetic to its special character.

It should be noted that ACA designation is distinct from designation as a Protected Structure, although Protected Structures may be located within an ACA area. Protected Structures are subject to separate procedures and requirements under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

1.1 Aim of study

A number of Conservation Areas were identified in the 2004-2010 County Development Plan. These have now been assigned 'Candidate Architectural Conservation Area' status under the 2010 - 2016 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan. Section 11.3.13. Policy AR10: Candidate Architectural Conservation Areas states that:

A number of Conservation Areas were identified in the previous County Development Plan. The Council is committed to assessing these areas to determine if they meet the requirements and criteria for re-designation as Architectural Conservation Areas as set out in the Planning and Development Act, 2000, and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Historically, Arkle Square represents one of the fine examples of almshouses built at the end of the nineteenth century throughout the country under the patronage of Charles Sheils and also represents an important architectural and social contribution to that building type. Furthermore it is a significant example of the work of the Irish important architectural practice of Lanyon, Lynn and Lanyon.

The aim of the Arkle Square Candidate Area ACA study is to:

- To identify and describe the special character of Arkle Square ACA
- To set out conservation and planning policies which protect its special character and which guide future development.
- To inform owners/occupiers and developers of the type of work that would require planning permission.

Arkle Square is deemed to have special architectural interest. This study will re-evaluate the existing Architectural Conservation Area boundary to determine the extent of additions and/or omissions that might be deemed necessary to reconstitute it as an ACA and to establish a more comprehensive designation.

1.2 Location of existing Candidate ACA

Arkle Square is located in the townland of Tipperstown. The M50 lies 3/4 kilometre to the southwest and the Stillorgan Road is 1 kilometre to the northeast. It lies northeast of a roundabout intersection of the Leopardstown Road, Brewery Road and Burton Hall Road. The site is a triangular piece of land between Brewery Road and Leopardstown Road. The ground is flat with no noticeable incline.

1.3 Boundary of Proposed ACA

Arkle Square forms an architectural ensemble which is quite distinct from its urban surroundings. The core characteristics which determine the significance of the complex as a heritage site are architectural, historical, artistic, cultural, social and technical interest. These attributes, discussed in detail later in the report, relate primarily to the group of twenty-seven houses that compose the complex. To adequately protect this ensemble, their individual curtilages and the surrounding green space and trees must also be included.

The present approach to the ACA is in roughly the same location as the historical connection. Arkle Square bears no other direct relationship to the surrounding context and apart from the view

to the tower from the entrance it is not visible from the neighbouring roads. The trees surrounding Arkle Square are of high quality and have a strong visual presence when seen from the surrounding areas.

1.4 Re-evaluated boundary of ACA

Having assessed the candidate ACA, it is proposed to amend the boundary as follows:

- Extend the ACA boundary to include the surrounding large specimen trees in the open space to either side of Ballymoss Parade.
- Removal of a small portion of land set between Arkle Square and infill housing that no longer contributes to the setting of the ACA.

The exact boundaries of the proposed ACA are delineated on map no. PL-13-365 contained in Appendix 1.

2.0 Schedule of Protected Structures & Recorded Monuments and Land-use Zoning

A protected structure is a structure or part of a structure that a planning authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) is contained in Schedule 1 of the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2010-2016.

Protected Structures within the ACA are indicated in solid orange on the County Development Plan Maps 2010-2016;

however, this does not define the full extent of the protected site. By definition, a protected structure includes the land lying within the curtilage of the protected structure and other structures within that curtilage and their interiors. The notion of curtilage is not defined by legislation, but is understood to be the parcel of land immediately associated with that structure

RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES					
No.	Location	RPS No	No.	Location	RPS No
1	Arkle Square, The Chase	1570	16	Arkle Square, The Chase	1575
2	Arkle Square, The Chase	1568	17	Arkle Square, The Chase	1578
3	Arkle Square, The Chase	1566	18	Arkle Square, The Chase	1579
4	Arkle Square, The Chase	1564	19	Arkle Square, The Chase	1581
5	Arkle Square, The Chase	1563	20	Arkle Square, The Chase	1583
6	Arkle Square, The Chase	1561	21	Arkle Square, The Chase	1585
7-8	Arkle Square, The Chase	1562	22	Arkle Square, The Chase	1587
9	Arkle Square, The Chase	1565	23	Arkle Square, The Chase	1590
10	Arkle Square, The Chase	1567	24	Arkle Square, The Chase	1588
11	Arkle Square, The Chase	1569	25	Arkle Square, The Chase	1584
12	Arkle Square, The Chase	1571	26	Arkle Square, The Chase	1582
13	Arkle Square, The Chase	1572	27	Arkle Square, The Chase	1580
14	Arkle Square, The Chase	1574	28	Arkle Square, The Chase	1576
15	Arkle Square, The Chase	1577	29	Arkle Square, The Chase	1573

and which is (or was) in use for the purposes of the structure.

All the almshouses are designated Protected Structures, included in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

There are no archaeological sites, features or artefacts are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) within the Arkle Square ACA.

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Plan 2010-2016 sets down zoning objective 'A: To protect and-or improve residential amenity' for the area in which Arkle Square ACA is located.

3.0 Historical Development of the Area

3.1 Origins

Arkle Square was originally known as Sheils Institution and comprised of 24 almshouses built in c.1868 by the Charles Sheils Almshouses Charity for poor and deserving people. The almshouses are now in private ownership and new almshouses were built within the original site that is still managed by the Sheils Charity.

3.2 Tipperstown until the end of the nineteenth century

Sheils's almshouses were built in the townland of Tipperstown

which derives its name from the Irish *Baile-an-tobair* (*town of the well*). The land was included in the manor of Kill-of-the-



Fig 1: Aerial view of Arkle Square. Courtesy of Microsoft Corporation 2011

Grange owned by the Priory of the Holy Trinity and leased to tenants until the nineteenth century except for the period following the dissolution of the monasteries in the mid sixteenth century. According to Bell, the land was farmed by Councillor O'Farrell "with great skill" in the early nineteenth century.

The first edition Ordnance Survey map depicts the townland laid out in fields bisected by the current day Brewery Road and surrounded by country houses including Burton Hall, Leopardstown, Rockland, Merville, Waltersland and Mount Salem. The later Ordnance Survey map of 1869 depicts the Stillorgan Convalescent Home built in c.1867 on the site to the

north-east of the Sheils's almshouses site. Leopardstown Road has also been laid out intersecting with Brewery Road to form a triangular shaped site on which Sheils's Almshouses were later built in 1868.



Fig 2: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1869. Courtesy of Map Library, Trinity College

3.3 History of Almshouses in Ireland

Almshouses are houses built for the poor and typically managed by private charities. They were the first form of social housing and a precursor to local authority housing. Almshouses were built in Britain from the 10th century and the oldest surviving almshouses in Ireland date from the sixteenth and seventeenth century including Shee's Almshouses in Kilkenny c.1582 and

Boyle's Almshouses in Youghal c.1610. Almshouse charities were typically founded and endowed by wealthy patrons and were often built for particular sectors in the community such as sailor's widows or retired blacksmiths. A proverb on a sketch of Skiddys Almshouse illustrates the philanthropic foundations of the almshouse "he that have mercy on the poor, happy is he".

3.4 Charles Sheils (1782-1861)

Charles Sheils was born in Killough, Co. Down, on 8th November 1782. He served an apprenticeship in Dublin during which he spent time in London and America. He immigrated with his wife Catherine Newton to Liverpool where he reportedly became very wealthy as a partner in a firm of cotton merchants before retiring in 1851 and returning to Ireland to live in Anglesey, Killiney, County Dublin. He died on the 21st December 1861 and

is buried in St. Ann's Church, Killough. His epitaph describes his charitable character "Through life his warmest sympathies were with the poor. To improve their condition was the principle occupation of his last years and at his death by dedicating his property to their benefit he merited a title dearer to him than one of ordinary ambitions – that of the poor man's friend"

In Sheils's will, he recognises the difficult living conditions of Irish people and expresses his philanthropic objectives

"Wishing to rescue a few of the thousands of destitute persons scattered over almost all the towns and villages in Ireland, I purpose building almshouses as far as the balance of my property will extend, first, to relieve as many as I can of those who from their former lives are entitled to a better provision in

old age than the workhouse, and secondly, with the hope (should my scheme work as well as I expect it will do) that this little move may be followed by others, who even at this moment are anxious to assist the poor people, but find a difficulty in knowing how it can be accomplished."



Fig 3: A drawing of Skiddy's Almshouse built c.1718 (courtesy of the National Library of Ireland).



Fig 4: Almshouses in Castleblayney built c. 1879 (courtesy of the National Library of Ireland).

3.5 The Charles Sheils Charity

Charles Sheils died without issue and left £125,000 in his will of 14th February 1846 for the founding of five almshouses for the benefit of poor and deserving people. He stipulated that the residents must be "*persons of reduced circumstances and of good character*". He was evidently a progressive as well as benevolent nineteenth century man and he expressly stated that residents of almshouses be selected according to their need for housing irrespective of religion. The almshouses were equally available to all people suffering financial hardship but in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century appear to be

mainly occupied by elderly women, likely on account of their vulnerability in nineteenth century society. In addition to a house, residents of the almshouses also originally received an annuity of £10 per year. Sheils directed in his will that the first almshouses were to be built in Killough (his place of birth), followed by the counties Dublin, Tyrone, Antrim and Armagh.

Charles Sheils gave detailed instructions in his will, of how the almshouses should be set out and administered. The charity is a separate legal entity that was governed by a Private Act of Parliament of Westminster in 1864 due to difficulties in executing the directions of the will. The act has been amended by further acts in 1866, 1875 and 1911 enlarging the power and functions of the charity. An adaptation Order of the Irish government in 1927 enables the original British Statute to have full effect in the Republic of Ireland.

The Charity is governed by board of governors comprising of 3 ex-officio governors (Primate of the Church of Ireland, the Primate of the Roman Catholic Church and the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church) and 12 elected governors, who are the successors of the original executors and trustees of the will. The charity also has a Visitor, who is the supreme head, and who, under a Statutory Instrument of 1927 is the Lord Chief Justice of the Irish Free State. Each set of houses is administered by a local board and has a resident warden who lives in a house onsite.



Fig 5: Sheil's almshouses in Dungannon, National Library of Ireland

3.6 The Sheils Almshouses

The almshouses were designed by the famous Irish architectural practice Lanyon, Lynn and Lanyon, who were mainly based in Dublin and Belfast. The architectural practice designed numerous prestigious buildings in Ireland including The Utilitarian Church, St Stephen's Green in Dublin and Belfast Castle. Charles Lanyon also had previous experience of almshouses having designed the Gill's Almshouses, Carrickfergus in 1842. The almshouses were built in very quick succession, by different contractors in the late 1860s and in the order as stipulated by Charles Sheils: Killough Co. Down, Stillorgan Co. Dublin, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim, and Armagh Co. Armagh.

All the almshouses are in a Gothic Revival style and it appears that the later almshouse in Carrickferrgus and Armagh are more elaborately decorated than the earlier. The building materials vary including granite in Stillorgan, sandstone with limestone bands in Dungannon and originally red brick in Carrickferrgus that is now cement rendered.

Charles Sheils also gave detailed instructions in his will about the internal layout of the almshouses

" 12, 13 or 14 almshouses (according to the extent or convenience of the ground), each almshouse to have a separate entrance from the public road or path, and to be about 14 or 15 feet in breadth and 20 feet or upwards in length, and to be built in a neat, permanent and workmanlike manner, with two floors, the ground floor to be raised at least one foot above the level of the adjacent ground, and to contain a sitting room or kitchen, with a scullery, and place for coals and potatoes, and cupboards, shelves and other suitable conveniences, with a yard, midden, pighouse, and privy in the rear, the upper floor to contain two sleeping rooms, one a little bigger than the other, each sleeping room to contain one good sized bed and other suitable furniture," with further details on the interior furnishings.

The Irish Builder in 1869 describes the layout of the almshouses in Carrickferrgus which comprised of 4 large houses, 7 middle-sized houses and 9 small houses and it is likely that the Stillorgan houses similarly varied in size and layout. The large houses comprised of a kitchen, pantry, scullery and bedroom downstairs and two rooms upstairs, the middle size houses were similar with no downstairs bedroom and the small houses had



Fig 6: Sheil's almshouses in Stillorgan , National Library of Ireland

no downstairs bedroom and only one room upstairs. The variety of house sizes allowed the charity to accommodate residents with different housing requirements. To the rear each house had a washhouse, coal house and closet.

The houses were set within well maintained grounds and Sheils gave precise instructions on the details *"railed with iron railings, and neatly laid out in walks, grass and clumps of evergreens and flowers to be kept in good order by the inmates of the houses"*.

3.7 Twentieth Century

The Charles Sheils Charity continues to manage five sets of almshouses in Ireland. In Northern Ireland the original house have been restored and modernised to accommodate resident's requirements. The original Sheils Institution site on Brewery Road, Stillorgan were sold to the developer, Whiturius, in c.1985 and a housing estate was built on the site. The original houses were extended to the rear and the formerly open southern and north-eastern corners were filled by new houses. The almshouses, known as "Arkle Square", were then sold and are now in private ownership. New almshouses were built for the Sheils Charity called Sheils Houses within the site as part of the agreement with the developer.

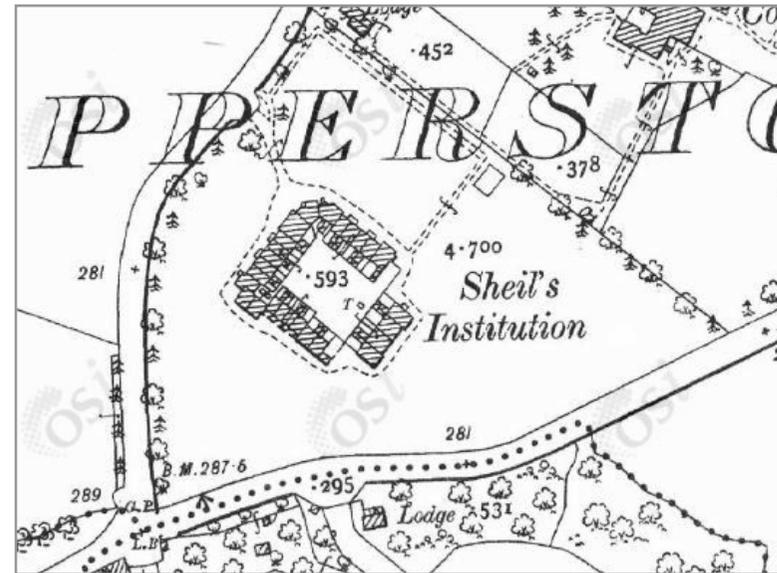


Fig 7: Extract from the OS map of 1907 showing the layout of Sheils Institution

4.0 Description of Historic Built Environment

4.1 Defining Characteristics

The special character of the Arkle Square ACA can be defined under the following distinctive attributes: Natural Features and Layout; Socio-economic functions; Building types and Materials; Quality and Treatment of open spaces.

4.2 Natural Features

The site is characterised by a flat topography with no noticeable change in level. The ACA is hidden from the outside boundary roads (Brewery Road and Leopardstown Road) by groups of mature trees. The approach from Brewery Road has been lengthened in comparison to the original but the entry view through an opening in the trees to the clock tower remains. The trees are a mix of fine examples of pines, cedar and chestnut and signal the imposing and rich quality of Arkle Square to the outside world.

4.3 Layout

The morphology or shape of Arkle Square is formal in one sense as it is arranged around a regular rectangular square but is informal in the composition of the houses with much differentiation in the composition of the house types and the elevations. The layout combines plan simplicity with volumetric and detail complexity that give a strong picturesque effect. The approach road was arranged (and remains to an extent) at an oblique angle to the north-west corner of the complex where the tower is positioned in order to emphasise the perspective and picturesque quality of the complex.

A road runs around the perimeter of most of the complex and is interrupted to the north east by a grassed separation area. This road also serves new houses opposite all sides of Arkle Square.

The historic houses are of different sizes and most of the corners are emphasised with larger building volumes. Between the corners the smaller houses are rows of units that are

smaller in scale to the corner buildings. The composition of the small houses differs on each side of the square.

The eastern side is characterised by an overall two-storey elevation and the end houses project forward of the centre pair, these have hipped gables. Two pairs of new houses have been added to both ends of the historic row and close a former corner opening to the south east.

The southern side is composed of a row of four houses expressed as single-storey with a continuous covered porch and dormers in the roof above. These are flanked by pairs of two-storey houses to either end with hipped gables. The pair of houses at the western end project substantially in front of the line formed by the other houses.

The western side is composed of four two-storey houses flanked by larger houses with hipped gables to either end. The house to the northern end also has an elaborate tower that serves to hail the complex to those on the approach road from the northwest. Part of the volume or plan of the house on the south end of the row also lies within the central row portion and this expresses the kind of complex plan and volumetric organisation that is characteristic of Arkle Square.

The north side of the complex is composed of four two-storey houses flanked by two larger houses. These larger houses have the same hipped gables as seen on the western and southern sides of the complex and also project forward of the central building line. The central houses have similar elevations to those on the west side.

Recent rear extensions to all of the historic structures have reduced the size of the central square around which the complex is organised. The historic substance of Arkle Square has almost no remaining presence in the central square apart from some of the rear gables and roof, chimneys and the large tower to the northwest.

4.4 Socio-economic Functions

Arkle Square remains in residential use. Additional housing of lesser architectural quality has been added opposite sides the historic complex to all sides but they are at least small in scale. The historic function of Arkle Square as almshouses has not continued since extensive redevelopment in the 1980s though one of the conditions of the then development was to construct new almshouses adjacent to the north.

4.5 Building Types

The quality of the historic building stock in Arkle Square ACA reflects it's historic, architectural and social heritage significance and consolidates its character, despite alterations and additions to the buildings. The houses were built to offer a number of dwelling sizes. These are cleverly expressed with different elevation and roof treatments and are subject to an elaborate architectural composition whose main aim was to evoke strong picturesque qualities.

The complex is an assembly of house types and accommodation developed in its time for charitable purposes and they are an important contribution to the building type in Ireland.



Plates 1 and 2: Banded slates and dormers with slate

4.6 Materials and Architectural Details

Roofs general: the roof is strongly articulated and decorated and contribute to the overall picturesque effect. The roofs are pitched with simple and hipped gables. On the south elevation the roof covers a continuous porch and has a prominent presence in the elevation. In other areas the roof tends to be more subdued relative to the building volumes below. The roof plane is broken in many places by small dormers that sit within the roof area or as extensions of the elevation below. These have different forms and levels of elaboration. The roof to the tower is a steep elongated and truncated pyramid form.

Roof materials: the finish is of slate, in two colours: the predominantly purple slate is broken by bands of blue-grey slate. Some of the dormers have blue-grey slate roofs and sidings. The roof of the tower has blue grey slates arranged in a diamond pattern.

Roof ridges are finished with red clay ridge tiles with serrated profiles. Expression is given to flashings to the external corners of the roof volumes and these serve to frame and emphasise the roof shapes. They consist of lead strips laid on wood rolls.

Roof details: the roofs are finely detailed. The roof meets the elevation gables to rest on continuous brick and stone corbels. In contrast the brick faced dormers above the houses on the east elevation have simple hipped ends framed in lead flashings.



Plate 3: Roof slates, clay ridges and corner flashings

On the south elevation the timber dormers have projecting roofs supported on profiled cantilever beams and timber struts with notched faces. Timber fascias above the sash windows are punctuated with decorative ventilation holes. These dormers have slate sidings below a profiled timber soffit.

The dormers to the west elevation are more elaborate. They repeat the projecting roof motif found on the south elevation but with more elaborate timber support brackets. These have additional concave reliefs to the notched strut faces. The brackets have profiled projecting ends and they support an arched fascia with decorative relief holes in a decorative composition. The corners of the timber canopy arrangement have uprights with splayed edges. The side of the canopy is perforated in an elongated form of circles and octagons. The dormers to the north elevation repeat the same details as those on the west elevation.

Hipped roofs above the gabled elevations and those on the larger houses have small projecting triangular roof ventilation hoods. These are located in the centre of the hipped roof shape and they have one splayed timber louver in a gothic frame.

The apexes of the hipped roofs and dormer roofs are marked with decorative metal spikes. These decorative elements comprise of verticals capped with a spike profile. Decorative elements project from the uprights with leaf and butterfly motifs and some have an arrangement of simple swirls. The decorative elements are applied depending according to the roof and dormer type. A decorative metal wind vane stands on the roof of the tower.

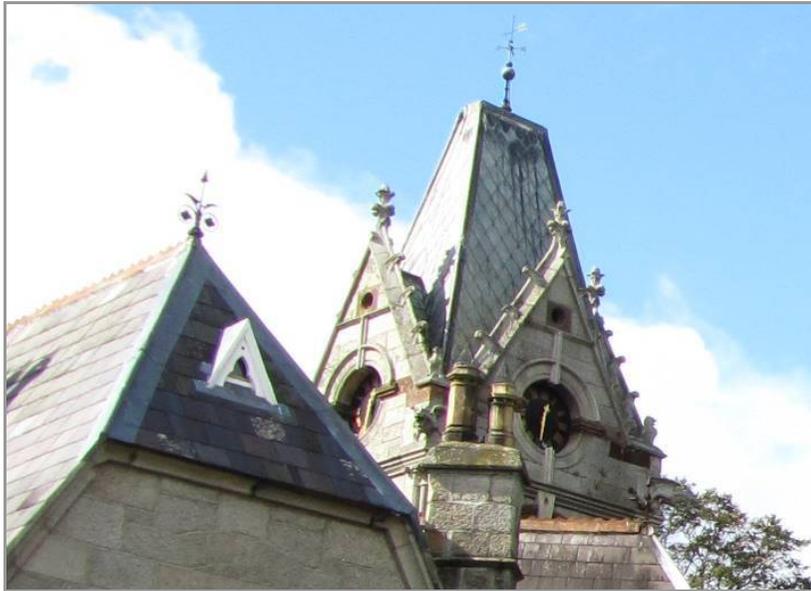


Plate 4: Decorative vent on hipped gable roof and metal decoration on the roof apexes

Gutters and downpipes:

The cast-iron gutters drains a complex roof system with different eaves and valley situations. Gutters rest on continuous corbels of stone or brick or on paired stone corbels. Truncated roof hips have elevation gutters that return over the neighbouring roof surfaces. Valleys cast water to decorative cast-iron hopper heads and downpipes that are part of the elevation compositions.



Plate 5: Return gutters and gutters resting on stone corbels

Chimneys: these are in a number of shapes and sizes. They have decorative octagonal yellow chimney clay pots which stand on splayed stone copings that project over the stacks. The stacks are rectangular in plan and some have splayed corners. A projecting stone band punctuates the stack volume. The arrangement of the stone walls of the chimney stacks is in a pattern similar to the elevations below.



Plate 6: Chimneys

Elevations general: the walls are constructed throughout of granite with dressed openings to window and doors and decorative wall banding in red brick and red sandstone. The windows to the east elevation have yellow brick surrounds. Window openings in the stone walls are without projecting sills. All elevations have a projecting stone plinth with a splayed top just above ground level. The stonework is roughly coursed and is broken down in different degrees to give the appearance of irregularity. This serves to emphasise the hand-crafted quality of the elevations. Decorative stone arches are also expressed in the elevations above single and paired window openings that have their own stone lintels.



Plates 7, 8 and 9: Stone pattern and decorative arches to the elevations and use of brick





Plate 10: Decorative gargoye in the tower elevation



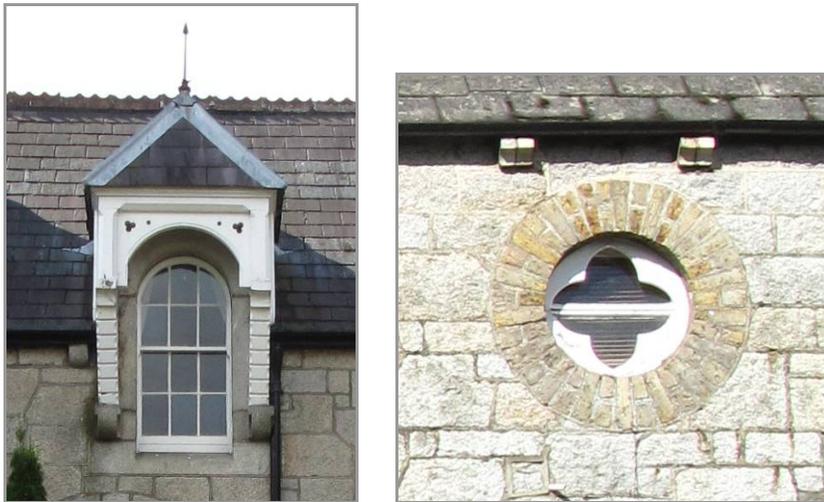
Plate 11: Decorative gargoyles, banding, columns and arches in the tower

Elevation decorative elements: there are many decorative stone elements, especially to the tower, with gargoyles, framed surrounds to the clock and tower lookout openings, columns etc. Many of the decorative elements are carved in Portland stone. The column capitals are of Portland stone and the shafts are of marble. The tower also has a clock with faces to all sides.

Windows: a number of formats repeat themselves throughout the complex. The windows are of timber and for the most part simple sashes now in six-over-six or two-over-two formats. Some of the dormer windows have semi-circular upper sashes. In the tower narrow window openings also have sash windows. Small circular openings with timber windows with a clover motif appear on the west elevations only.



Plates 12+13: Examples of six-over-six and two-over-two timber sashes with central decorative column



Plates 14 +15: Decorative dormer with round head to upper sash and bulls-eye window with quatre-foil window.

Doors: the doors are simple and painted. The elevation openings allow for small glazed rectangular fanlights. The doors are made of timber with diagonal timber sheeted infill. These were likely to have been installed during general extension and renovation work in the 1980s. A number of the doors have external canopies constructed of timber with slate finishes to match the main roof. These are held to the wall with timber struts and relate closely to some of the dormer windows in the use of detail and materials. The entrance doors to the tower dwelling are double doors.



Plates 16 +17: Double doors to the tower with decorative stone surround and external canopy

4.7 Open Space and Boundaries

Railings and Walls: No original railings or walls remain and it is unclear if any were part of the original complex. Low masonry walls with plaster and brick finishes were added as part of the recent development to mark the boundaries to the individual gardens.

4.8 Street Features and Materials

Paving and Steps: no original paving remains. The individual houses have historic steps to the front doors but no other steps remain.

Car Parking: some car parking is arranged in bays located off the road surrounding the complex and is relatively unobtrusive. Otherwise parking is arranged on the road parallel to the footpaths.

The individual houses have on-site parking with pier-flanked openings in the new garden walls. Paved areas are allocated in the gardens for car parking and for pedestrian access to the houses.

Overhead Cables: no service cables are located above the street space and linking to locations on the building elevations.

4.9 Gardens and Trees

Trees: fine mature specimen trees surround the complex in areas with grass and shrubs. These serve to screen the complex from the surrounding main roads and they play an important role in adding to the strong picturesque quality of the ACA setting. They are all that remain of the once extensive area of green around the complex. The choice of pines and cedars with chestnuts and other deciduous species underlines the rich and picturesque character of the ACA.

Front Gardens: these are additional to the original layout where no front gardens were provided. The addition of the gardens with boundary walls, trees and shrubs serves to obscure much

of the elevation detail and to detract from the unity of the complex. The garden walls have a modern 'housing-estate' appearance and do not relate to the character of the historic buildings. The provision of car parking spaces in the front gardens further detracts from appreciation of the elevations.

Central Square: this no longer bears any similarity to the original layout. Considerable extensions have been added to the rear of all the houses and these have reduced the size of the central space. Little of the historic rear elevations can be seen from the square except for some portions of the rear elevations of the houses to the west of the complex as well as the clock tower to the northwest. The space is provided with modern paving and grass.



Plate 18: View of modern rear extensions to the central space



View 1: Approach view from Brewery Road

4.10 Views

The most significant views in the ACA are:

View 1: The view into Arkle Square from Brewery Road. This is the only view of the complex from the surrounding context and remains largely similar to the historic view. The approach view is at a forty-five degree angle to the rectangular layout of the complex and this serves to emphasise the picturesque and perspective qualities of the complex. The function of the tower serves to herald the presence of Arkle Square to the oncoming visitor and to those beyond in Brewery Road.



View 2: The west elevation

View 2: this is of the west side of the complex looking either to the north or the south. It includes the row of repeated small house types in the centre with larger two-storey houses to either end. In addition the tower is located to the northern corner. The view displays the strong picturesque composition of elements such as roofs, chimneys, dormers, windows and doors. The elevation follows more or less one building line. Trees close the view to either end.

View 3: this is of the south side of the complex looking either to the west or the east. It includes a row of small house types in the centre and these are expressed as single-storey with a projecting roof over a continuous porch. The roofs are punctuated by a row of dormers. Paired larger two-storey houses are located to either end. The formality of the

arrangement is softened by the small scale and intimate expression of the central row of houses. A new pair of brick two-storey houses has been added to the south-east corner of the complex. Though sympathetic in scale these stand forward of the historic building line and obscure views of the houses to the east end of the row. Trees close the view to either end.



View 3: The south elevation

View 4: this is of the east side of the complex looking either to the north or south. The elevation is symmetrical with two two-storey houses flanked by larger houses. The latter have simple gable elevations to the street. This elevation is the simplest, most formal and symmetrical in the complex. The new two-



View 4: The east elevation

-storey houses flanking either end are set back and detract little from the historic elevations. Trees close the view to the south end.



View 5: The north elevation

View 5: this is of the north side of the complex looking either west or east. The elevation is symmetrical with a group of small two-storey houses flanked by larger two-storey houses. The north-eastern corner is marked by the tower and a corner house. This elevation resembles the west elevation. Trees close the west end of the view.

5.0 Significance of the Candidate ACA

Urban Design Significance

- Arkle Square traces its origin in the nineteenth century to the development of a building type consisting of groups of dwellings provided for people in need. These were located on peripheral locations of towns (Dungannon) and suburbs (Arkle Square).
- Unlike the sister complex of Sheil's almshouses built in Dungannon, the Arkle Square complex has no prominent urban or landscape setting. Its fine facades are reserved for close up views and its arrangement around a central square reflects an introverted and intimate character. The tall fine specimen trees that stand around the complex signal its significance to the outside world. The context of Arkle Square is still relatively intact despite the addition of recent adjoining suburban-type developments and the presence nearby of busy roads and a large roundabout.

Architectural Significance

- The complex represents a fine example of a nineteenth century architectural style combining elements of Venetian Polychrome and Arts-and-Crafts styles.
- The houses have externally (street side) not been altered to an extent that their homogeneity has been irrevocably disturbed.
- The survival of original features and the use of decorative materials and details are characteristic of the ACA.
- The use of materials and detailing in the construction of the buildings is of importance as representative of structures from the nineteenth century.
- The complex exhibits fine craftsmanship in the creation of stone walling, stone decorative carving, roofing and metalwork.

Historical Significance

- Arkle Square is a fine example of a number of philanthropic housing complexes built by Charles Sheils and is an important example of nineteenth-century provision of housing for the poor in Ireland.

Social Heritage Significance

- The intact nature of the fabric of Arkle Square and the continuity of use of the houses for domestic purposes provide continuity to the social history of the area.

Landscape Design Significance

- The mature specimen trees add greatly to the picturesque setting of the complex and they shelter it from the surrounding area and encroaching modern roads. The sense of enclosure is relieved only to the northeast where the historic entrance view to the clock tower is framed and defined by the trees.

6.0 Statutory context

Presently all the almshouses are designated Protected Structures, as such owners and occupiers are advised that the planning permission is required for all works which would materially affect the character of a Protected Structure, including its curtilage, which contributes to its special character. Owners and occupiers proposing to carry out any works to a Protected Structure including essential repair and maintenance works, are advised to request a declaration from the Planning Authority under Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. A declaration issued under this section sets out the type of works the Planning Authority considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or of any element of that structure, which contributes to its special interest.

It is the intention of the Planning Department to propose to remove the almshouses from the Record of Protected Structures under Section 54 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) after the Architectural Conservation Area has been adopted. If the proposal to remove the buildings from the

Record of Protected Structures is accepted by the elected members then Section 6.1 below is applicable.

6.1 Development Control within Arkle Square ACA

The aim of designating Arkle Square as an Architectural Conservation Area is to protect the special external expression of the buildings by managing change in a positive manner.

The objective of the ACA is to protect the special character of an area through the careful control and positive management of change of the built environment. Section 82(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) indicates that;

"Notwithstanding paragraph (a), (h), (i), (ia), (j), (k), or (l) of section 4(1), or any regulations made under Section 4(2) 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"

For the purpose of the Arkle Square ACA, development prescribed under 4(1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Classes 1, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 11 of Schedule 2 (Part 1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) are considered to potentially materially affect the character of the ACA.

Where a question arises as to what in a particular case is, or is not exempted development, any person may, under Section 5(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000,

on payment of the prescribed fee, request in writing from the Planning Authority, a declaration on that question.

Owners, occupiers or developers proposing to carry out works within the ACA should be aware that the normal exemptions from seeking planning permission, as outlined above, will no longer apply where the Planning Authority considers that they will materially affect the character of the Architectural Conservation Area.

Therefore, in its assessment of whether or not works constitute exempted development, the Planning Authority must have regard to not only the impact on the character of the structure itself and adjacent structures, as required under Section 4(1)(h) and Schedule 2 (Part 1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), but must now also have regard to the impact on the overall character of the area, as required under Section 82(1) and (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

The designation of ACA status therefore results in restrictions on certain works to the exteriors of structures, their settings and plot boundaries.

The purpose of this Section 6.2 of the ACA document is to give detailed direction and guidance on the type of works that do, and do not impact on the character of the ACA. The following is not a definitive list of all works, in all circumstances, that require planning permission, but identifies those works, which would impact on the character of the ACA. It should also be noted that some of the following works already constitute

development regardless of ACA designation and would require planning permission.

6.2 Development that may materially affect the character of Arkle Square ACA

The following exempted development classes will not apply to Arkle Square ACA as they are considered to potentially materially impact on the character of the area.

Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) Schedule 2, Part 1- Exempted Development – General, including the following classes:

CLASS 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11.

- Extensions (Class 1) – It is Council policy to ensure that planning permission is required for domestic extensions within ACA.
- Dish type antenna (Class 4) – It is Council policy to ensure that planning permission is required for dish type antenna within the ACA.
- Boundary treatment (Class 5) – It is Council policy that planning permission is required for alterations to boundary treatments to residential plot boundaries, including entrance gates and pillars and associated signage, on public and private roads within the ACA.

- Landscaping works (including hard surface areas), to domestic plots (Class 6) - It is Council Policy to ensure that planning permission is required for such works.
- Domestic porches (Class 7) - It is Council policy that planning permission be required for the addition of porches outside any external door of a dwelling house (also including canopies and awnings).
- Alterations to or erection of a gate or gateway (Class 9) – It is Council Policy to ensure that planning permission is required for dish type entrance within the ACA.
- Alteration to or construction of boundary and wall or fence (Class 11) – It is Council Policy to ensure that planning permission is required for alteration or construction of boundary wall or fence.

In addition the following works are considered to potentially impact on the character of the ACA and therefore are not exempt.

Roofs:

- The removal or partial removal of original roofing materials such as slates and ridge tiles and their

replacement with modern materials such as fibre cement slates or tiles.

- The removal or replacement of existing chimney stacks and the original chimney pots.
- The installation of roof lights or solar panels are only acceptable on hidden roof pitches.
- The removal of original rainwater goods such as gutters, hoppers, brackets and downpipes and their replacement with modern materials such as upvc to the front elevation.
- The addition of dormer windows.
- The addition of upvc fascias or bargeboards.

External Walls:

- The rendering, painting and/or cladding of any exposed stonework/brickwork.
- The re-pointing of the stonework/brickwork other than with a lime-based mortar
- Cleaning the exterior of the building with abrasive or chemical methods that will result in the loss of definition of the surface of the stonework and detailing.
- The erection of communications antennae, dishes or support structures for such equipment in such a way as to be visible on external walls, chimney stacks, roofs or elsewhere.

- Introduction of signage, decorative shutters, canopies and/or awnings to the front elevation.



Plate 19: Stone, brick and painted timber windows

Windows & Doors:

- The enlargement of window or door openings and/or the removal of stone sills/doorsteps.
 - The replacement of timber sash windows with inappropriate modern materials such as upvc or aluminium, or inappropriate styles such as casement windows.
- Replacement of the entrance doors in an inappropriate style, material or method of opening and the removal/replacement of any of the elements of the entrance doors such as canopies and decorative stone surrounds.
 - Construction of a porch to the front elevation.

New Build:

- Additions to the recent rear extensions should not be intrusive or detract from the prevailing character of the ACA or be visible from the opening at the north-east. Additions to the front or side of the original building would be visually intrusive and would adversely affect the ACA.
- New additions to the rear of buildings which depart from the proportions and façade arrangements typical to Arkle Square must be of a very high standard of architectural design and must positively contribute to the character of the area. Contemporary interpretations are favoured over pastiche in order to maintain the authenticity of the fabric of the buildings.
- The addition of dormers or alteration of the historic roof profiles would be visually intrusive and disruptive to the historic roofscape.
- The altering of existing plot boundaries.



Plate 20: Inappropriate addition of large volumes to the rear of historic houses

Boundary Treatments:

- Alteration or removal of existing mature trees and replacement of trees.
- The existing boundary treatment to the front gardens are not original, however they are consistent throughout the scheme and should not be removed from individual houses.

External Lighting:

- The method of lighting i.e. type of fitting, fixing method and type of light, must not affect public lighting levels,

result in light pollution, or negatively impact on other structures in the ACA.

Views:

- Key views as outlined in this document must be preserved and any works within the ACA should not adversely impact on or block these views. (List of views in Section 4.10)

6.3 Works not materially affecting the Character of Arkle Square ACA

These works will not require planning permission but the advice of the conservation officer.

Maintenance & Repairs:

- All features and materials that contribute to the ACA should be retained and repaired where possible. Where replacement is necessary they should be carried out in a like-for-like manner using similar materials and styles to those being replaced, unless they are replacing later inappropriate works.
- Repointing of brickwork or stonework providing it is carried out using suitable lime-based mortar that is softer and more porous than the masonry.

Internal Alterations:

- ACA designation for Arkle Square does not prevent internal changes or re-arrangements provided they do not impact on the exterior character of the buildings.

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 except where the removal would cause damage to the fabric.

Works to the Public Realm:

- Works to the public realm which includes footpaths, street furniture, parking provision etc will have to have regard to the special character of the ACA in line with Policy AR6 of the 2010-2016 County Development Plan.
- Parking is provided along the roadside and in parking pockets located off the road. Parking is also provided in the front gardens of the houses. Additional general parking and/or the widening of entrances would detract from the character of the ACA setting.
- 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 important contributing element of its special character. Good quality planting maintenance and design can support the planting in the present and into the future.



Plates 20 + 21: Prominence of car parking in house gardens and parallel parking on footpaths

NOTE: The guidance given above 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 must adhere to the general provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and the policies and objectives within the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan. The Area Planner and Conservation Officer of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council can be consulted if there is any doubt as to whether planning permission is required or not.

Historical Sources:

- Charles Sheils and his almshouses, The Irish builder, Vol. XI, No. 235, p. 219, October 1, 1869
- Dublin Builder, 15th June 1866 and 1st Aug 1866.
- Presentation by Peter Attchenston of the Charles Sheils Charity
- Irish Times Articles 28th Nov 1863, 2nd July 1910, 20 July 1912, 26 Feb 1973 and 26th Mar 1988.
- Francis Elrington Ball, A History of the County Dublin - The people, parishes and antiquities from the earliest times to the close of the 19th century, 1902-1920

Appendix 1:

Proposed Architectural Conservation Area Boundary

(Drawing No. PL-13-365)