

**Historic Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Barnacullia**

**Part 9: Analysis**

Elements	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p><b>Topography</b></p>	<p>The landscape in the Barnacullia area is strongly influenced by underlying granite. This site is in a transition zone between the uplands to the west and the lowlands to the east. This gives the area a distinct character.</p> <p>Due to the elevated situation of the site, there are significant views of the surrounding landscape to the east.</p> <p>In many places local stone gives character to buildings / walls / gateways.</p>	<p>The underlying granite may act as a limiting factor to development in the area.</p> <p>Upland soils are thin and peat-based, thus, very susceptible to erosion</p>	<p>Future development should take cognisance of the surrounding landscape – particularly the views of the nearby hills and mountains</p> <p>Where practical, local stone should be employed, to retain and enhance its distinct character.</p>	<p>Construction of houses / landscaping could seriously inhibit the characteristic views of the surrounding landscape</p>
<p><b>Biodiversity</b></p>	<p>The surrounding landscape has a high value for a broad range of bird species deer and recreation use.</p> <p>The extensive open upland habitats merge with small scale fields of low intensity agriculture, to provide suitable habitats for a range of flora and fauna.</p>	<p>This is a small site which has a limited range of habitats.</p>	<p>There are opportunities for the development of recreation management plan for the area to control damage in the uplands and maximise educational value of this habitat.</p>	<p>Afforestation of agricultural land would radically alter this habitat.</p> <p>Growing volumes of traffic along roads in the area may impede movement of mammals.</p> <p>Recreation use is a threat, as is fire to the uplands.</p>
<p><b>History and Society</b></p>	<p>The Barnacullia area displays evidence of settlement dating to the Neolithic period.</p> <p>There are a number of high-quality vernacular buildings in the area, and the traces of a possible clachan.</p> <p>Some of the landscape features around Glencullen have survived for considerable periods. This includes boundary lines, vegetation patterns and some settlements with a long history of habitation.</p>	<p>A number of old buildings are in ruin, and a number of the old quarries lie derelict.</p> <p>There is a poor awareness of the history of the area, particularly the vernacular building forms.</p>	<p>A number of local houses could be restored, and features such as house ruins, and the now overgrown Carthy's Green offer opportunity for creative use of the landscape.</p> <p>Future development offers the opportunity to explore and examine the abandoned pathways / roadways in the area.</p> <p>The remains of quarries offer an opportunity to explore the important industrial heritage of the area.</p>	<p>The integrity of the local society is at risk to high pressure development from the east.</p> <p>A number of vernacular houses have been destroyed in recent times – to allow for the construction of modern dwellings. This is a serious neglect of the built heritage.</p>

Elements	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>Archaeology</p>	<p>Barnacullia contains a small number of archaeological monuments that form part of a much larger archaeological system in the south County Dublin/North Wicklow area.</p>	<p>The monuments are physically un-protected and vulnerable to damage and destruction from natural and human factors.</p>	<p>Opportunities exist to manage and protect the monuments so that they can be appreciated by the public and studied, particularly in regard to the wider Dublin/Wicklow context.</p>	<p>The local community seem to have little appreciation of the significance of the archaeological monuments. This lack of knowledge may result in damage and destruction. In addition the monuments are vulnerable to vandalism.</p>
<p>Built Environment -Morphology</p>	<p>The linear, winding, narrow and rural aspect of the Barnacullia road pattern – so near to Suburban Dublin - is one of the significant characteristic features of Barnacullia.</p>	<p>The roadways have no footpaths and this causes difficulty for pedestrians. In addition, the narrow width of the carriageway causes traffic disruption, particular in the case of delivery services.</p>	<p>The rural expression of the area could be retained and conserved by making safe and by safeguarding the upland rural aspect of the road system.</p>	<p>The narrow carriageways are in danger of being insensitively widened: thus reducing their intrinsic character.</p>
<p>Built Environment -Streetscape</p>	<p>The narrow carriageways, walkways, grain, massing, stone walling, landscape, low density, and stepped terracing, all combine to reflect and give a strong upland character to Barnacullia. In addition, the alternating rhythm of treescapes and wide gaps in the building fabric facilitates the appreciation of the spectacular upland and coastal views.</p> <p>The existing walkways are a significant feature of the area and are of historical importance.</p>	<p>There is very little street furniture in the area and what does exist is poorly maintained. In addition, there are few opportunities such as viewing areas, to appreciate the views from the roadways.</p> <p>The walkways are in poor condition and badly maintained.</p>	<p>The established morphological character of the area could be protected and retained through the sensitive control of development. Viewing platforms and parking bays could be sensitively introduced.</p> <p>The walkways could benefit from sympathetic management.</p>	<p>The walkways are in danger of being lost through neglect and non-use. In addition, the gaps in the building fabric – through which the views can be appreciated - are in danger of being closed through additional housing development. Also, the stone boundary walling and hedgerows are in danger of being damaged through over development.</p>
<p>Built Environment -Architecture</p>	<p>The small-scale vernacular cottages, and to a lesser extent the Victorian houses and the 1930s bungalows that lie distributed throughout the road area, are an important and significant architectural feature of Barnacullia.</p>	<p>The impact of the vernacular architecture and to a lesser extent the Victorian houses has been weakened by the bulk of more recent housing. The integrity of the cottages, houses and bungalows has in some cases suffered from insensitive extensions. In addition, the vernacular cottages, in particular, are in danger of being demolished to make way for contemporary housing.</p> <p>Both the vernacular cottages and 1930s bungalows have suffered from unsympathetic window replacements.</p>	<p>The use of the forms, massing and elements of the vernacular, Victorian and 1930s architecture could act as a guide for future sustainable housing development in the area.</p>	<p>The modest scale of the vernacular architecture in particular, is in danger of being overpowered or completely replaced by new large-scale houses.</p>

**Historic Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Barnacullia**

**Part 10: Historic Landscape  
Character**

## Historic Landscape Character - Barnacullia

The significant feature of the Historic Landscape Character Assessment process is that it offers a perspective of the dynamics of the history and development of the total landscape, thereby contributing to the promotion of sustainable development within the study area.

The following sections draw together the various parts of this report in an attempt to provide an overall assessment of the Historic Landscape Character of Barnacullia.

### Prehistoric Landscape

The underlying granite of the Dublin mountains forms the foundation for the character of Barnacullia. In terms of building materials and topographical form, the present day landscape reflects its geological heritage.

Settlement in the prehistoric period, was strongly influenced by the landscape. The upland nature of the area with its light, well-drained and thin forest cover was suitable for early agricultural practices. Throughout the Neolithic period and into the Bronze Age, use was made of these upland sites, with the extensive forestry of the lowlands relatively untouched.

### Medieval and Early Modern Landscape

The majority of archaeological elements in Barnacullia date from the early medieval period and while they demonstrate an early settlement pattern they play only minor part in the present day landscape character.

There is little visible evidence of either concentrated or dispersed early medieval or post-medieval settlement patterns within the present study area. This suggests an abandonment of the upland area as a residential zone, in favour of the nearby fertile lowlands. Similarly, there is no evidence of eighteenth century development in the area.

Due to these factors it is difficult to ascertain the character of the landscape in these periods. It may have been at this time that some of the early settlement forms in the area were established, possibly even, as summer habitations to facilitate low intensity upland grazing..

### Nineteenth Century

In contrast the nineteenth century was a period of dynamic growth. The extraction of granite for construction in nearby Dublin was the major economic driving force. New road patterns made their appearance, stone quarries were developed, and a range of vernacular cottages and Victorian houses were laid out.

The cottages were small single structures with rendered stone walling, slated gabled roofs and small windows. These were often accompanied by modest outbuildings of similar construction. During the same period, the more successful residents built larger two storey homes for themselves. These had rendered walls, slated gabled roofs and vertically proportioned windows.

A range of supporting morphological elements accompanied the cottages and houses. These included narrow roads, stone walling, gateways, stepped terracing, and the laying out of landscaped gardens and trees.

The surrounding landscape would have been open moorland, with upland grazing, and agricultural activity becoming more extensive towards the lower slopes of the mountains and hills. During this period any remaining forestry was converted to timber or fuel, to cater for the increasing population.

Despite the increased population, there is little evidence of service provision in the area. This in conjunction with the east-west nature of the earliest communication routes suggest strong linkages to the nearby lowland sites of Stepside and Kilgobbin. Thus, Barnacullia may have resembled an industrial landscape, characterised by the extraction of stone, with some agriculture. The absence of a church or school would have made the area dependent on nearby communities.

### Twentieth Century

The early twentieth century saw the development of a range of individual 1930s style bungalows along the main axis of the area. These houses were sited here due to the high amenity value of the surrounding landscape and the outstanding views, while still being proximate to the newly developing capital city.

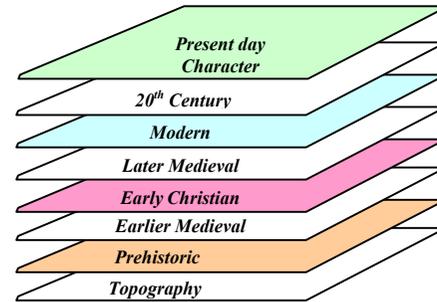
These houses consisted of modest single storey bungalows with characteristic 1930s elements including symmetrical forms, rendered walling, hipped tiled roofs, large metal framed windows, and bay windows.

Later in the century, an extensive programme of large-scale, eclectically detailed houses and bungalows made their appearance. The same period saw the erection of a series of metal decked industrial buildings in a number of the quarry sites.

### Historic Landscape Character

The Historic Landscape Character of an area is determined by many layers of history laid one upon the other formed upon the physical landscape.

These many layers determine the character of the area as it exists in the present-day .



In Barnacullia, the character is predominantly one that was formed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with the physical landscape being of paramount importance.

**Historic Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Barnacullia**

**Part 11: Recommendations**

## Policy Recommendations

These Recommendations are made, taking note of the Landscape Character Assessment which is contained in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2004-2010

The Historic Landscape Character of Barnacullia is primarily rural, with origins in nineteenth century morphology, streetscape, and architectural forms. It is therefore recommended that every effort be made to sustain this character as follows:

## Protection

Every effort should be made to protect the historic landscape and the nineteenth century morphology, in terms of grain, streetscape, landscape, massing, stonework, colour, texture, and overall architectural character of the Barnacullia area.

The destruction of vernacular houses in the area is a practice that should be discouraged.

## Sustainability

All new developments in the area should be sufficiently sympathetic to emphasise, strengthen and enhance the established character of the area - particularly in regard to morphology, grain, streetscape, street furniture, landscaping, architecture, massing, proportion, materials, colour, texture.

## Design Guide

In order to safeguard the established character of Barnacullia and achieve an acceptable degree of sustainable development, it is recommended that a Design Guide be prepared. The object of the Guide should be to ensure that future developments in the Barnacullia area be sympathetically absorbed into, and blended with, the existing character.

This guide should address the following elements:

### Morphology

- Road Layout
- Carriageways
- Grain
- Street Furniture
- Boundary Walling and Gateways
- Landscaping
- Views
- Walkways

### Architecture

- Clustering
- Massing
- Architectural Elements
- Materials
- Scale
- Colour

**Historic Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Barnacullia**

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**Historic Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Barnacullia**

**Appendix A : Barnacullia  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**from County Development  
Plan 2004-2010**

## Landscape Character Assessment of Barnacullia.

**Description** *Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown has carried out a Landscape Character Assessment study of the rural area of the County (May 2002) which identifies 13 Landscape Character Areas in addition to Cherrywood Rathmichael Special Development Area along with a recommended strategy for each area.*

9. Barnacullia	Sensitivity / Strategy
<p>This enclosure encompasses the elevated slopes rising from Stepside village up towards Three Rock Mountain.</p> <p>Three of the boundaries are man made features – the roadway, the plantation forest and the edge of the built up area of the city. The enclosure can be almost subdivided into two separate enclosures by the Barnacullia Road. To the west of this road the land slopes steeply upwards to the summit of Three Rock Mountain. The most significant feature is the granite quarry which is clearly visible from a number of viewpoints within the County and from 2 kilometres off shore in Dublin Bay. One-off housing is dotted up the mountainside with almost continuous ribbon development along the road. To the east of the Barnacullia Road the landscape is gentler in slope and characterised by irregular fields broken up by deciduous tree belts. One-off housing is again prevalent along the lower side of the roadway although views down valley are currently protected. The noise of traffic in Sandyford village is audible and a line of large pylons traverses the enclosure. This enclosure also includes the area containing the NHA Fitzsimons Wood which occupies an area of approximately 8 hectares near Lamb’s Cross.</p>	<p>The area has already absorbed considerable residential development along its main routeways. At present the Enniskerry Road R117 acts as a boundary between urban and rural developments as the land begins to rise steeply to the west of this roadway.</p> <p>The impact of any further pylon schemes on the landscape shall be carefully assessed.</p> <p>Any new residential development shall maintain the rural character of the area and should not be obtrusive on the horizon.</p> <p>The impact of further extractive industries on the elevated slopes of Three Rock shall be carefully assessed.</p> <p>Where possible road improvement schemes shall not remove hedgerows and walls</p>