



**Montpelier Place  
Architectural Conservation Area  
Character Appraisal**

## **Preface**

"The assessment of the special character of Montpelier Place Architectural Conservation Area was commissioned by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and was carried out in 2011 *by Lotts Architecture and Urbanism*.

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."

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## 1.0 Introduction

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown contains a number of areas, which exhibit a distinct character and unique qualities 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 centred 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 exempted development limited. 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 previous 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’.”*

The primary aim of this study is to:

- *identify the special character of the proposed Montpelier Place ACA;*
- *to set out conservation and planning policies which protect its special character and which will guide future development;*
- *to inform owners/occupiers and developers of the type of work that would require planning permission.*

## **1.2 Architectural Conservation Areas**

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 introduced the ACA to Irish planning legislation. Under the Act, a local authority must include an objective in its development plans to preserve the

special character of places or groups which it designates as ACAs.

Chapter 3 of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Local Authorities published in 2004 by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government sets out how an Architectural Conservation Area should be identified and evaluated and how it should be protected through planning legislation. Section 3.2.3 lists the types of ensembles which can be considered for designation as an ACA.

Amongst these types are ‘groups of structures of distinctiveness or visual richness or historical importance’. The area which is the subject of this document falls under this category.

In Section 3.2.2 a list of guidelines are used in identifying appropriate areas for protection. In the case of Montpelier Place the following apply:

- a) Groups of structures of distinctiveness or visual richness or historical importance;
- b) The setting and exterior appearance of structures that are of special interest, but the interiors of which do not merit protection.

Historically, Montpelier Place is one of a number of developments from the same period in the area that includes the nearby Montpelier Parade on the Monkstown Road that are also contained within a designated ACA.

### 1.3 Location and Topography of proposed ACA

Montpelier Place is located off the Stradbrook Road which continues as Temple Hill Road to Blackrock in the west and southeast to Monkstown and Deansgrange. The Monkstown Road branches off Stradbrook Road north of Montpelier Place and continues eastwards to Monkstown. Montpelier Place is therefore situated in the triangular space between Monkstown and Stradbrook Roads and lies parallel to the former. The topography of Montpelier Place slopes gently down to the south west meaning that it slopes up when approaching from Stradbrook Road.

Montpelier Place today forms an architectural group which is quite distinct from its urban surroundings. The core characteristics which determine the significance of the street as a heritage site are architectural, historical, artistic, cultural, social and technical interest. These attributes relate primarily to the group of six houses that set an imposing scale. To adequately protect this ensemble their individual curtilages and the urban space formed by them must also be included.

The ACA is set in context by its relationship to Stradbrook Road, the boundaries of the latter are marked with high walls and gates that open to reveal Montpelier Place. The Friends Burial Ground, another proposed ACA, is situated on the west side of the road. The presence of trees to one end of Montpelier Place and the trees in the Friends Burial Ground to the west play an important role in closing the significant views within and beyond the ACA.

Mount Temple house and ground play a significant role in defining the boundary and entrance to the ACA as well contrasting in the role of stand-alone villa with the terrace of houses in Montpelier Place.

### 1.4 Extent of Proposed ACA

Having made the study of the candidate ACA, it is proposed to amend the boundary to include the rear grounds to Mount Temple House and No's 4 and 5 Montpelier Place.

#### 1.4.1 Reasons for expansion of Candidate ACA

Section 3.2.5 of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Local Authorities states that *"the boundaries of a candidate ACA should make physical, visual and planning control sense"*, and recommends reference to the *"core characteristics of the area in order to establish the most appropriate boundary lines"*.

The quality of the existing boundary is coherent in terms of the legibility and representation of the character of the ACA as a whole. However, it is proposed to amend the boundary to make more physical sense by adding the full curtilage of the following properties. (See Drawing No. 12-658 contained in Appendix 1)

- The full extent of the rear grounds to the former outbuildings to Mount Temple House (Nos. 1 & 2 The Stables) that are located behind and northeast of the gate entrance to Mount Temple from Montpelier Place.
- The full extent of the rear grounds to Nos. 4 and 5 Montpelier Place.

### **1.5 Protected Structures & Land Use Zoning Objectives within the Proposed ACA.**

None of the dwellings within the Montpelier Place Architectural Conservation Area are included in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

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

The 2010-2016 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan sets out the zoning objective for the area in which the proposed Montpelier Place ACA is located.

Save for the access road serving Montpelier Place, the proposed ACA is zoned Objective A, which has a stated objective "To protect and improve residential amenity".

The graveyard of the Society of Friends that lies south west of Montpelier Place on the opposite side of the Stradbrog Road is a candidate ACA and is zoned Objective F: "To preserve and provide for open space with ancillary active recreational amenities".

### **2.0 Historical Development of the Area**

#### **2.1 Origins and medieval period**

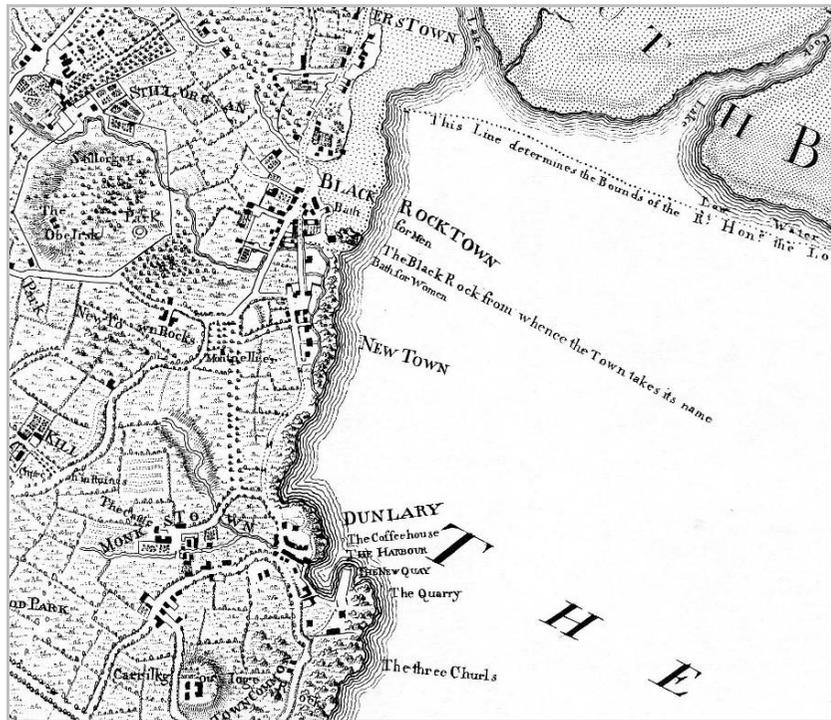
There is little mention in early documents of the area that was to become Montpelier Place. Nearby Monkstown, according to Lewis's Topographical Dictionary, probably derived its name from an ancient grange that belonged to the priory of the Holy Trinity, Dublin.

#### **2.2 Seventeenth and eighteenth century**

This part of the countryside outside Dublin was sought after as a place to reside close to the sea beyond the city, even before the arrival of the railway in 1834. In her book 'Landscape Design in Eighteenth-Century Ireland' Finola O'Kane describes how Emily and James Fitzgerald, first Duke and Duchess of Leinster, decided to purchase the house and land in 1766 of Frascati in the Dublin suburb of Blackrock. O'Kane remarks that sea-bathing and exploiting sea views possibly influenced the choice of location. The seaside location relieved the Fitzgeralds of their duties on their large country estates and pressures of publicity in town. In the mid-eighteenth century the country was seen a refuge from the vice of the city and advantageous to the health and education of children. O'Kane also describes how Louisa Conolly (of Carton in Co.Kildare) bought a property near the Fitzgeralds and how these smaller properties offered a sense of intimacy and immediacy not found at their very large country estates.

In 'Between the Mountains and the Sea' Peter Pearson comments that in this period of the development of residential

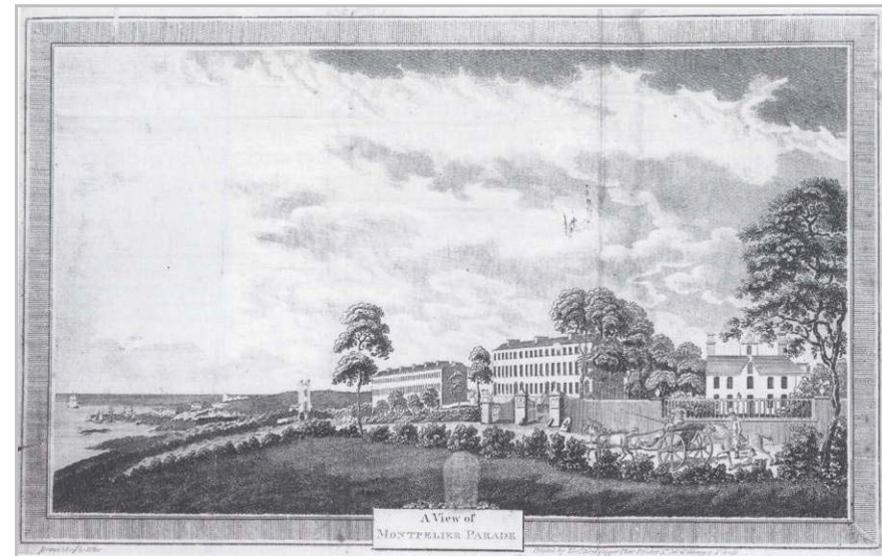
Monkstown there were few buildings between 'Dunlary' and Blackrock except for some large houses near Newtown and Blackrock itself. John Rocque's map of 1760 indicates a house and grounds named Montpellier sited in open countryside. The grounds to the west of the house are shown planted with trees forming a rectangle grove around which roads from the south and west are routed. A tree-lined route runs along the north side of the grove and house connecting to Monkstown in the east. Another route is indicated leading north from the house towards Newtown and the coast.



Extract from John Rocque's map of the area from 1756

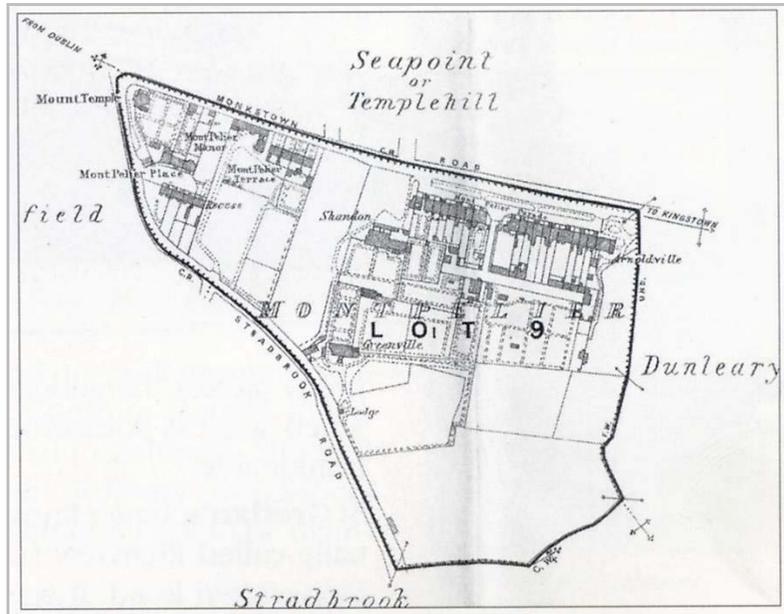
### 2.3 Nineteenth century

Pearson states that the first large change to the area occurred with the building of Montpellier Parade around 1800 taking advantage of views to the sea from its elevated site. The parade is shown in an engraving from that time consisting of Montpellier Parade with two terraces of three storey houses over basements. It was a speculative development by Molesworth Greene and he is listed in the Griffith's Evaluation as the lessor of most of the seventeen properties.



Montpelier Parade with Shandon on the right, 1802 (source Peter Pearson; Between the Mountains and the Sea)

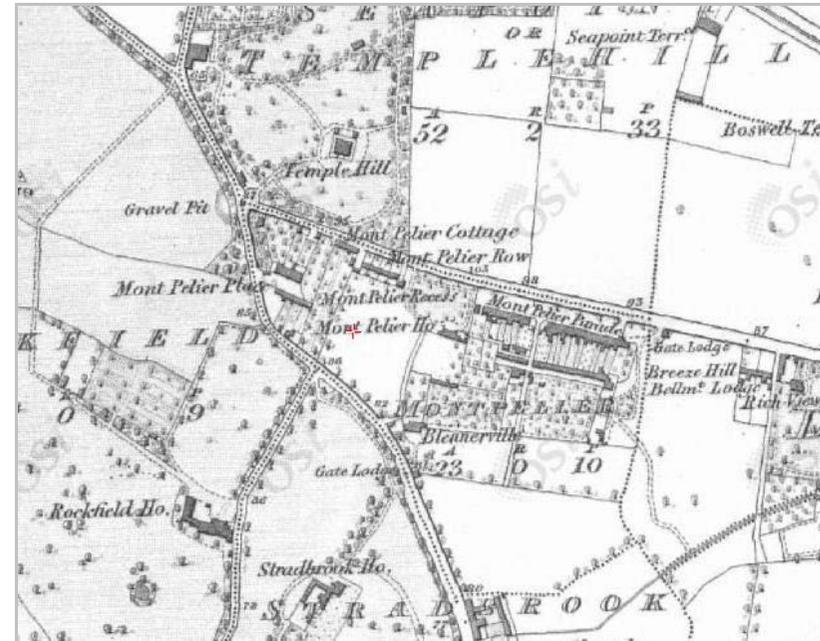
The engraving also depicts the former Montpelier House, now known as 'Shandon' a two-storey, five-bay structure with chimneys in end gables and a central breakfront. This house was demolished in the 1990s.



Map of the Montpelier estate (source Peter Pearson; Between the Mountains and the Sea). Montpelier Place and Temple Hill are included within the boundary.

Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of 1837 records that sea-bathing facilities in neighbouring Blackrock were popular in the summer months and boarding houses were opened there for visitors. Baths were constructed by the Dublin and Kingstown Railway Company near the village to develop the area as a health resource and these allowed visitors to escape the 'squalor

and vice' of the city. Lewis records some of the principle seats in Blackrock to include Montpelier House of J.Duckett, Esq and Mount Temple of E.Brewster, Esq.



Extract from first edition OS Map 1837

The 6" Ordnance Survey first edition of 1837 shows the small townland of Montpelier with structures such as Mont Pelier Place, Mont Pelier Cottage, Mont Pelier Row, Mont Pelier Parade and Mont Pelier House as well as a formal space to the north of a house on the Monkstown Road called Mont Pelier Recess. A house named Blennerville is located south-east of Montpelier Place on Stradbrook Road. The characteristic asymmetry of Montpelier Place can be seen from the map with the terrace to

the north shorter than that to the south. The easternmost house on the south terrace is shown not facing into the street space and may have been accessed solely or additionally along the north end of its long site on the Monkstown Road. The site further east of this also stretches the full length from Monkstown Road to Stradbroom Road with a house located on the former.

In 'The Growth of Victorian Dublin', Mary Daly describes how terraces such as 'Idrone Sur Mer' in Blackrock, St. James's Terrace in Malahide and many houses along the seafront of Dún Laoghaire were constructed to exploit the fashion of using the coast for sea-bathing that has been started in the late eighteenth century. Daly also notes that people moved from the city to the suburbs in the nineteenth century to avail of lower rates and that this trend continued until around 1900. The Victorian housing market went through several phases of boom and decline with the greatest boom taking place in the 1860s. Daly remarks that housing developments caused the area around Seapoint, Montpelier, Temple Hill and Blackrock to be laid out in building plots. The capacity for new housing for the professional and middle classes seemed to have been reached by the 1870s when prices started to fall.

In the planning of estates, Daly comments that though some local authorities regulated the size and layout of streets and buildings, landlords and lessees often determined themselves if plots were laid out in grids, as a crescent or square, the sites size, setback from the road or how much park or open space was provided. The degree to which developers could dictate the

specification of the houses themselves also seems to have been greater in more profitable areas to the south-east of Dublin.



View of Shandon, demolished in the 1990s (source Peter Pearson; *Between the Mountains and the Sea*)

Uniformity of building expression was sometimes brought about by building the houses at either end of a terrace first so that the houses between conform to the precedents. In Montpelier Place uniformity was established by the similarity of houses in each terrace but the terraces themselves are of different length and each with its own house type.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1869 shows the position of Mont Pelier Manor to the northeast of Montpelier Place on the Monkstown Road. According to Pearson this was built around 1850 (it was demolished some time before 1937).

The house called Blennerville in the 1837 map has changed to Greenville. A large house called Mount Temple is shown at the junction of Monkstown Road and Stradbrook Road, connected by a short drive to the west end of Montpelier Place with a gate house or outbuilding standing beside the entrance. Otherwise the asymmetrical layout of Montpelier Place has not changed much in comparison with the 6" map.



Extract from OS revised Map of 1869

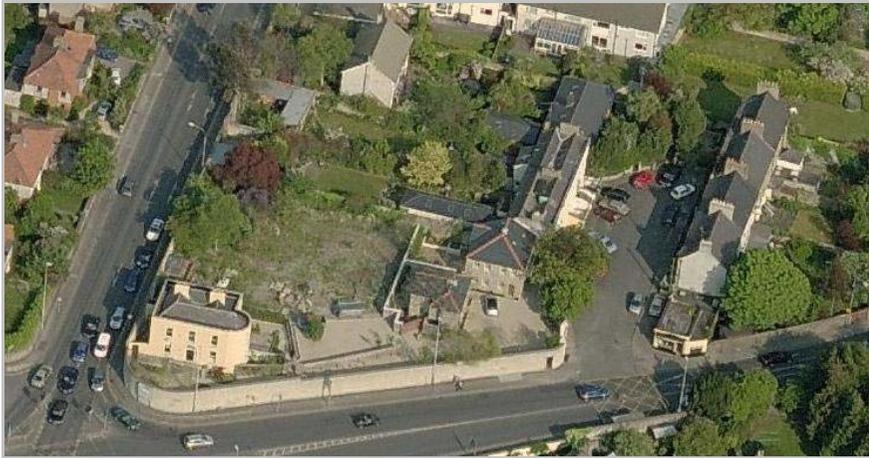
Daly comments that only the largest houses in Victorian Dublin had a mews where a horse and carriage could be accommodated. In the 1837 and 1871 maps small structures are indicated at the ends of the gardens in Montpelier Place but it is not certain if they were used to accommodate horse drawn transport.

#### 2.4 Twentieth century

The twentieth century saw the addition of many small scale detached, semi-detached and terraced suburban houses throughout the area but no substantial change to the outward appearance of Montpelier Place itself.

Externally Mount Temple house has also changed little, the structure beside the gate has been removed and the gate connects directly to the junction of Montpelier Place and Stradbrook Road. Its site still remains largely free of any other new structures.

The two houses to the north terrace of Montpelier Place retain their long rear gardens stretching to the Monkstown Road. The previously vacant site to the east of these is now occupied by a single-storey house with a pitched roof that aligns with the existing terrace structures and may date from the 1970s. The largest new interventions in the immediate area are to the east and northeast of Montpelier Place. Here terraces of two-storey houses, probably dating from the 1960s or 1970s, have been built and are connected to the Monkstown Road. A single storey structure to the west end of the south terrace is occupied by a shop that faces into Stradbrook Road.



Aerial view of Mount Temple house and grounds (Bing Maps 2011)



Extract of OS Map of 1937

### 3.0 Description of Historic Built Environment

#### 3.1 Defining Characteristics

The special character of the Montpelier Place 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.

#### 3.2 Natural Features

The street space is characterised by a slight rise in the topography from south to north and this gives it a sense of separation from the larger and busier Stradbroke Road. The view into the ACA is closed at the eastern end by a boundary railing in front of a group of mature trees. Similarly the view out of the ACA is closed by a boundary wall on Stradbroke Road with large groups of trees in the cemetery receding into the distance.

#### 3.3 Layout

The morphology or shape of Montpelier Place is essentially formal with two facing parallel terraces. This formality is loosened by the angled placement of Montpelier Place in relation to Stradbroke Road (it is at roughly a 45 degree angle to Stradbroke Road and is parallel to the Monkstown Road to the north). It is further loosened by the different lengths in the opposing terraces, the different house types in both terraces and the absence of a structure closing the eastern end of the

street. Also the terraces have no formal gable elevations addressing Stradbrook Road, the gables are blank and have no formal architectural expression.

The northern terrace is composed of two two-storey five-bay houses over basement and the south terrace is composed of four two-storey three-bay houses over basement. The street surface and paths serve the houses to the northern terrace and three of the houses to the south terrace. The three houses addressing the road space on the south make a longer terrace than that on the north side and the east end of the road is splayed. The fourth or easternmost house on the south terrace lies beyond the street with a gate in the splay connection.

The rear gardens of the north terrace stretch to the Monkstown Road and the south terrace to Stradbrook Road. The boundary wall of the latter is an important feature of Stradbrook Road. Extensions, some very large, have been added to the rear of both terraces. These are more apparent to passers-by from Stradbrook Road.

The above characteristics and informalities of layout help define the distinctive character of Montpelier Place and give it a picturesque and informal quality.

### **3.4 Socio-economic Functions**

Montpelier Place is residential in character with a small shop to the west end of the south terrace at the junction with Stradbrook Road.

Some of the houses have been subdivided with several tenants but the overall character remains one of large single dwellings.

A plaque on the elevation of No. 2 on the south terrace marks the house as the location that Charles J. Kickham (1828-1882) died on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August 1882. Kickham was a poet, novelist and a prominent member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

### **3.5 Building Types**

The quality of the historic building stock in Montpelier Place ACA reflects its historic, architectural and social heritage significance and consolidates its character. The houses are three-bay and two-storey over basement.

### **3.6 Materials and Architectural Details**

#### **3.6.1 Roofs**

The roofs are either natural Welsh slate or modern equivalents. The roofs to the single pitch of the south terrace are visually more present to the streetscape than those of the north terrace that are double pitch with an internal valley. The chimneys to the north terrace stand lower relative to the roof level compared to those of the south terrace. Those of the former have simple clay pots and a rectangular capping; the latter have more numerous pots with rounded capping for four of the five chimneys. The two houses to the west end of the south terrace have no parapet wall to roof level, whereas the remaining houses do, although one of these has lost some of its decorative

profiling. The two houses to the north terrace are united by a parapet of the same height with a continuous stone capping.

### 3.6.2 Elevations

The painted terrace house facades are a typical characteristic for seaside locations where the use of brick is less prevalent. The houses to the north terrace are similar in colour and brightness while those on the south side are painted different colours and hues to one another. Façade detailing is more intricate to the south terrace with plaster frames to the main window and entrance door openings. The door openings to the houses on the north side are half round with fanlights and one of these has a stone lintel below the fanlight and stone columns flanking the door.

### 3.6.3 Boundary Treatment

All the houses have basements with setbacks from the footpath and some have steps leading from the path. The entrances to the houses to the south terrace stand slightly above pavement level with up to four steps determined by the slope down to Stradbrook Road. Some of the original cast iron railings remain. The entrances to the houses to the north terrace are higher relative to the footpath with up to seven steps difference in level. These imposing flights are flanked with solid balustrades with painted render finish and stone copings.

### 3.6.4 Windows and Doors

Two of the houses to the south terrace have two-over-two timber sash windows and the remaining houses have contemporary variations of these in uPvc. The houses to the north terrace have timber windows in a formation of three over six and six over six timber sashes. The houses to the south side have timber panelled front doors with glazed side lights and horizontal fanlights. The doors to the houses on the north side are also timber panelled, the house to the west has a simple timber fanlight and timber pilasters either side of the door that are probably of more recent type.



Door and window details to no.4 (left) Door and window details to no.3a (right)

### 3.6.5 Open Space and Boundaries

Some of the houses to the south terrace retain cast iron railings which stand on granite copings on low parapet walls, these mark the border of the footpaths to the basement setbacks. The landings and steps are also flanked with cast iron railings.

On the north terrace granite copings on solid rendered balustrades flank the entrance steps and landings to the houses. No stone copings exist on the low parapet walls to the basement wells beside the paths; these have modern type railings set on the parapets. There are also walls that divide the basement wells between the houses and enclose them at either end. These walls are sloped down from the facades towards the pavement and join the railings to the pavement. They are capped with granite and have an added feature of a central groove running from locations where rainwater downpipes used to be located.

The railings and gates at the east end of the street space are of contemporary type marking the boundary of the southern property. Those to the north are of cast iron railings set on rendered masonry walls with a cast iron gate and stone pier.



Detail of steps and railings to no.1



Detail of steps and parapet to no.4



Detail of separating wall and drainage coping between no.4 and no.5



View of boundary walls and entrance to Mount Temple house on Stradbrook Road

The boundary walls lend a character of privacy and maturity to Stradbrook Road. Importantly the fact that there are few

openings in any of the wall works as a general background to the large openings that signal entrances to Mount Temple House and the Cemetery on Stradbroke Road. The long runs of wall in the street space also works as a contrast to the opening of the street space to Montpelier Place; these walls are an important feature in defining the boundary character of the ACA.

### 3.6.6 Street Features

The street space retains no historic paving materials and it has a tarmacadam road surface with concrete footpaths. The steps up to the entrances of the buildings are of large blocks of granite. To the south terrace the bottom step stands on the footpath with half round ends, the other steps are rectangular.



Detail of paving to front door of no.3a

The street space is dominated by car parking set perpendicular to the path on the north side with parallel parking beside the south footpath. The parking on the north side is intruding into and narrowing the footpath space for users.

Overhead cables traverse the street space; the most intrusive are from a pole to the west of the south terrace that extends to a pole located beside the gated entrance to the property at the east end of the north terrace. Television aerials attached to the chimneys are prominent and take from the quality of the roofscapes to both terraces.

### 3.6.7 Gardens

A group of trees stand in the garden of the property to the north-east end of Montpelier Place and serve to close the view of the street. Trees also stand in a setback west of the north terrace in front of the boundary wall to Mount Temple House and frame the view from Stradbroke Road toward the north terrace. Both planting areas add to the mature suburban character of Montpelier Place.

An important aspect of the ACA is the boundary treatment of the rear gardens to Stradbroke Road. The gated entrance to Mount Temple house is flanked with tall piers with cappings (set asymmetrically). This opening signals the presence of the house and grounds and adds an important feature in a long and unarticulated boundary wall. This high wall marks the boundary of Mount Temple house to Stradbroke Road. On the opposite side of the road are masonry walls that can be seen from Montpelier Place when looking west and these form an important part of that view. A masonry wall with gated openings marks the border between the rear gardens of the south terrace in Montpelier Place and the footpath in Stradbroke Road. The rear garden character is reinforced by trees that can be seen above the wall from the road space. The wall mirrors the

boundary wall and planting to the cemetery to the other side of the road.



View of boundary walls to rear of sites on Stradbrook Road

### 3.6.8 Views

The most significant views in the ACA are:

**View 1:** The view into Montpelier Place from Stradbrook Road: this view includes the foreground of the boundary walls and gate to Montpelier House, the boundary walls and shop at the end of the south terrace, the terraces themselves, the rise in the topography and the green enclosure at the end of the street space. The raised level of the street in relation to Stradbrook Road heightens the sense of perspective. The restrained

character of the foreground walls is important in focusing the view to the architectural richness of the buildings defining the street space.



View 1: from Stradbrook into Montpelier Place looking east

**View 2:** The view from Montpelier Place looking west: the space within the ACA appears to open out and down towards the west as it is enclosed to the east end of the terrace by greenery and a strong sense of privacy. This view gives a fine perspective of the terrace houses and with the trees west of the north terrace they frame the view to the far distance. The near foreground has a stone wall typical for Stradbrook Road. The single storey bungalow in the foreground behind the stone wall has little presence in the view and its roof is relatively simple with no windows. The background is marked by fine trees to the north of the cemetery.



View 2: from Montpelier Place looking west

#### 4.0 Significance of the Proposed ACA

##### 4.1 Urban Design Significance

- Montpelier Place traces its origin back to the development of the area from the eighteenth century as a fashionable suburb to Dublin and a location offering proximity to the sea and is typical of the private developments from those times. Though it contains only six terrace houses, some boundary walls and the entrance to a larger freestanding house, the ACA mirrors the grandeur on a smaller scale of larger terraces found in Monkstown, Dun Laoghaire and elsewhere.
- Though located within easy reach of the city, Montpelier Place has not been engulfed by modern development and

retains a suburban character that is typical to this part of Dublin since the eighteenth century.

##### 4.2 Architectural Significance

- The mixture of repetitive terrace house types and elevation treatment with asymmetrical street layout gives Montpelier Place a particular character not found in other developments.
- The houses have externally not been altered to an extent that their homogeneity has been disturbed.
- The survival of original features and the repetitive use of simple 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 rounded end detail to the steps to the street of the houses on the south terrace and the drainage channels to the copings of the walls dividing the basement setbacks on the north terrace are unique and of great importance.

##### 4.3 Historical Significance

- Charles J. Kickham (1828-1882) died on the 22nd of August 1882 at no. 2 Montpelier Place. Kickham was a poet, novelist and a prominent member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

#### 4.4 Social Heritage Significance

- The intact nature of the fabric of Montpelier Place, the continuity of use of the houses and gardens for domestic purposes provide continuity to the social history of the area.

#### 4.5 Landscape Design Significance

- The underlying sloping topography is reflected in the perspective view upwards into and a downward view from the ACA and is a defining feature of the space.
- Groups of trees inside and outside of the ACA play a significant role in defining the spatial suburban character of Montpelier Place.
- The stone walls marking the boundary to the gardens of the properties on Stradbroke Road are an important feature of its streetscape and in defining the entrance into Montpelier Place. They reflect the use of similar walls throughout the area. The railings and steps to the entrance elevations of the houses in Montpelier Place also contribute significantly to its special character.

#### 5.0 Implications for Planning and Development

In general terms there is a requirement under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, to obtain planning permission for all development works, which do not constitute exempted development. The regulations governing exempted development are set out in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. These regulations set out the classes of development, which constitute exempted development together with relevant conditions and limitations.

Section 4 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, lists developments, which constitute exempted development, for the purposes of the Act. Section 4(1)(h) is of particular relevance. It states that the following shall be exempted development for the purposes of the Act:

*“Development consisting of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any structure, being works which affect only the interior of the structure or which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures”*

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.

### 5.1 Implications of ACA designation

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 section 4(1)(h), 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”*

**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), 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. For example, the construction of a small house

extension or a boundary wall within an ACA may require planning permission, whereas such works may be exempted development elsewhere.

The purpose of this Section 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 and, therefore, will or will not require planning permission.

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.

Where there is uncertainty as to a particular case the Planning Authority would advise that a Section 5 declaration should be sought.

- *Extensions and new building works that impact on street-facing elevations of buildings or which would be visible from the public realm.*
- *The demolition of any structure or part thereof.*
- *Re-pointing in a style or manner other than existing.*
- *Removal or alteration of original architectural features on the main facades of non-Protected Structures including:*
  - a. *The painting of previously unpainted surfaces.*

- b. *The rendering of any façade not previously rendered.*
  - c. *The removal of existing render or material finish of a structure and its replacement with another material or detail, including the removal of any previously rendered/stuccoed surfaces to expose otherwise inferior stonework underneath.*
- *Formation of parking spaces.*
- *The removal of the original roofing materials such as natural slate or clay tiles and their replacement with modern materials such as fibre cement tiles.*
- *The removal of existing chimney-stacks and early terracotta or clay pots or other features of the roofscape.*
- *The removal of timber bargeboards and/or their replacement in a material other than the existing.*
- *The installation of solar panels and roof-lights on visible slopes.*
- *The erection of, or alterations to, externally mounted signs and advertisements, including banners.*
- *The provision of awnings, canopies, flags and flagpoles.*
- *The provision of any security shutters or grilles, and associated casings and fittings, on the face of a building or in front of a window display area.*

- *The erection of communications antennae or support structures for same.*
- *The removal or alteration of traditional stone walls or railings, including historical plot boundaries.*

## 5.2 Public Domain

Agencies and service providers carrying out works to the public realm for example footpaths, planting, street furniture, parking schemes, public lighting etc., are required to consider the special character of the area as identified in this document and should consult with the Planning Department of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council prior to the carrying out of any works.

## 6.0 De-Exempted Development within the ACA

In summary the de-exempt development classes for Montpelier Place ACA (with reference to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) are:

Schedule 2, Part 1- Exempted Development – General, including the following classes;

CLASS 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 31d, 50b.

- Extensions (Class 1) – It is Council policy to ensure that planning permission is required for domestic extensions within Montpelier Place ACA.

- Garages/sheds etc (Class 3) - It is Council Policy to ensure that planning permission is required for domestic garages, glasshouses, sheds etc. within Montpelier Place ACA.
- Signage and pillars (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).

### 6.1 Guidance for New Development Works

New development should contribute to the visual enhancement and vibrancy of the area whilst respecting its existing physical character. Below are guidelines for the carrying out of works within the Architectural Conservation Area boundary:

#### 6.1.2 Roofs

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

Roof Lights/Solar Panels: The installation of roof lights or solar panels can fundamentally alter the visual character of the streetscape. They may only be considered on less visual pitches.

Dormer Windows: There is no tradition of dormer windows within the Montpelier Place ACA. Introduction of same would therefore affect the special character of the ACA.

Eaves Fascias, Soffits and Bargeboards: Buildings within the ACA were built with parapets and without timber eaves details. Verge details at gable ends typically have no bargeboards and render extends to the underside of the roof slates, forming a neat junction characteristic of such terrace houses. This detail should be retained.

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

### 6.1.3 External Walls

Removal of Render: The houses in Montpelier Place have rendered facades characteristic of seaside locations. The loss of external render to these houses damages the authentic character of the ACA and removes a water-resisting surface that protects these buildings from decay.

Painting: Painted finishes are the predominant treatment of facades in the ACA. The removal of such paint can damage the external surface material. It is very important that paint finishes should be breathable, as the use of modern chemical based paints can trap moisture and prevent drying out causing dampness, decay of stucco mouldings, reduced thermal insulation and ingress of moisture to the internal fabric.



Painted render and decay of plaster window/door frames

Cleaning: Abrasive cleaning methods such as sandblasting damage the external surface of natural building materials. They often remove the hand-tooled surface from stonework or the protective fired surface from bricks leading to porosity and harmful water ingress.

External Cladding/Insulation: The alteration of the original finish by cladding external walls will affect the special character of the ACA. Original historic external finishes must always be retained.



Intrusive overhead cables and antennae

#### 6.1.4 Windows & Doors

Alteration of Openings: Enlargement of window or door openings or the removal of stone sills or doorsteps can alter the prevailing proportions of the ACA and result in incremental loss of historic materials.

Replacement of Windows or External Doors: Original timber or doors and fanlights are key features which enrich the character of the ACA. Examples of authentic historic fenestration and external doors are becoming relatively rare and their retention is therefore crucial to the preservation of the character of the ACA.

#### 6.1.5 Shopfront

Alterations to the Existing Shopfront and Signage: Whilst planning permission is required for any alteration to commercial frontages, whether within an ACA or not, applications for alterations within the ACA boundaries will also be assessed in the impact of the proposed design on surrounding structures and the special character of the ACA, having regard to scale, proportions, materials and detailing.

New Shopfronts: Introduction of shopfronts to buildings within Montpelier Place can damage the special character of the ACA.

Replacement Shopfront: For the existing shop front, applications within the ACA boundaries will be assessed in the impact of the proposed design on the special character of the ACA.

New signage: New signage on the commercial structure in the ACA should be of an appropriate design to complement or

enhance the structure and should not be overtly dominant on the streetscape. Standard signage which would detract from the character of the ACA should be adapted in scale, colour or material colour to be more in keeping with the area.

Outdoor Advertising Billboards: Outdoor advertising will detract from the special character of the ACA. Billboards which conceal historic features or impinge on significant views.

Shutters: The design of security shutters for the existing shop should complement rather than damage the character of the building and the ACA. Metal roller shutters with visible boxes are not acceptable within the ACA boundaries. Shutters and grilles should be painted or finished in colour to complement the rest of the exterior.

Other External Elements to the shop front: Canopies, awnings, newspaper receptacles, vending machines etc. can incrementally damage the special character of an ACA and can only be accepted to a very limited degree at the commercial premises on Stradbroke Road. Where canopies or awnings are deemed acceptable in this location, they should not be made of plastic but of heavy-duty cotton material with painted metal or timber hardware.

#### 6.1.6 New Build Interventions

Plot Size: The existing plot boundaries are to be retained to express the existing grain which is an important determining factor of the special character of the ACA.

Extensions: Additions to the rears of properties can often be visible from other parts of the ACA and can affect its character (especially to the rear of the south terrace facing towards Stradbrook Road). Extensions should be designed to minimise their visibility from any public area in the ACA, they should be subsidiary to the main building and of an appropriate scale. A contemporary high-quality design will be encouraged over pastiche in order to maintain the authenticity of the fabric of the buildings.

#### 6.1.7 Amalgamation of Properties or Sites

Amalgamation of Structures: Joining buildings together into one functional unit will require planning permission.

Amalgamation of Plots: The existing plot structure is to be retained to express the existing grain which is an important determining factor of the special character of the ACA.

#### 6.1.8 Internal Alterations

For buildings which are not designated as Protected Structures, the ACA designation does not prevent internal changes or re-arrangements provided that these changes do not impact on the exterior of the structure.

#### 6.1.9 Demolition

Demolition of any building visible within the ACA, whether it is a Protected Structure or not, will require planning permission. Demolition will only be permitted where the structure makes no

material contribution to the character or appearance of the area or does not have the potential to do so through reinstatement of historic features. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining any structure that makes a positive contribution to the character of the ACA to avoid incremental loss or damage to its special character.

#### 6.1.10 Boundary Treatments

Alteration and/or removal of historic railings, boundary walls, piers, gates etc. always requires planning permission. Loss of such features can be seriously damaging to the character of the ACA and should be retained.



Railings to no. 3

## 6.2 Works To The Public Realm

While the following works to the public realm do not require planning permission, unsympathetic works can have a detrimental impact upon the character of the ACA. In this instance, any planned works to the public realm should be respectful of the special character and enhance the appreciation and setting of the streetscape in line with Policy AR6.

### 6.2.1 Historic Paving & Street Furniture

Future alterations to paving and street furniture should be in keeping with the visual simplicity of the ACA. Where historic evidence of street furniture does not survive, new elements should be chosen to be high quality and low-key. Conspicuous arrays of litter bins or bollards should be avoided through the use of integrated designs to minimise clutter. The impact of necessary items should also be mitigated by well considered positioning. The Council will actively promote the retention of all surviving original pavings and street furniture.

### 6.2.2 Wires and distribution poles

Overhead electricity supply and telephone cables and poles detract from the character of the ACA. The Council are supportive of any initiatives to place overhead services underground within the historic ACA. The removal of redundant services from the facades of buildings would also be encouraged.

## 7.0 Policy Objectives

### General

- The Council will ensure that development within the ACA will be managed in order to protect, safeguard and enhance the special character and environmental quality of the area.
- The Council will seek to preserve, protect and enhance the architectural heritage of the Architectural Conservation Area for future generations.
- The Council will actively encourage the reinstatement of historically accurate architectural detailing on buildings of heritage value/interest in accordance with recognised conservation practice. However, the use of contemporary new-build extensions will be encouraged where appropriate and materials/finishes used should complement the character of the area.
- The Council will not normally consider the demolition of a structure without proposals for re-development and will seek to ensure that demolition, if permitted, will be followed by a continuous re-development building operation.
- The Council will seek to prohibit the demolition of structures that positively contribute to the character of

the Architectural Conservation Area, except in very exceptional circumstances, in accordance with Policy AR12 of the 2010 – 2016 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan. Where the demolition of a building/structure/item is proposed within the Architectural Conservation Area, one of the key considerations that will be taken into account is the quality of any replacement structure and whether it enhances / contributes to the unique character of the area.

- The re-use and maintenance of existing entrances and original boundary walls where appropriate will be strongly encouraged in order to maintain the essential character of the Architectural Conservation Area.

#### New Build

- The Council will seek to ensure that any development including modifications and/or alterations or extensions affecting structures within the ACA, are designed and sited appropriately and are not detrimental to the character of the structure or its setting and context within the ACA.
- The Council will encourage where appropriate the use of non-reflective glazing to exposed elevations containing a low solid to void ratio (i.e. large extent of glazing relative to masonry).

- In considering all proposals for building/structures, the Council will seek to encourage an imaginative, high quality, passive design for new buildings which should provide an opportunity to enhance the ACA generally. In this regard, appropriately scaled new build should have respect for the site/building context without imitating earlier styles.
- Throughout the ACA generally, the Council will encourage a sensitive design approach for any development proposals in order to maintain the overall integrity of the urban grain, whilst also encouraging, where appropriate, contemporary designs that are complementary and/or sympathetic to their context and scale. Particular regard will be had to roofscape treatment to avoid large unbroken flat roof spans.

#### Alterations and Extensions

- The Council will seek to encourage appropriately scaled extensions and alterations to properties within the ACA that are generally sensitive to the main structure and subsidiary (to the main structure), particularly in the case of Protected Structures and positioned generally to the rear or lesser elevation.
- All proposals to extend properties within the ACA involving/affecting the roof of a property shall be carefully and sensitively considered.

- The Council will seek to encourage the retention of original features, where appropriate, including windows, doors, renders, roof coverings and other significant features of buildings and structures within the ACA whether Protected Structures or otherwise, whilst simultaneously encouraging a continued diversity of sensitively scaled contemporary and energy efficient designs.

lighting cables etc. from building facades in line with Policy AR9 of the 2010-2016 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan.

#### Works to the Public Realm

- The Council will actively promote the retention of all surviving original kerbing, paving and items of street furniture, which contribute to the special character of the ACA, in line with Policy AR6 of the 2010-2016 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan.
- Works to the public realm, such as footpaths, street furniture, parking provision etc, must have due regard to the special character of the ACA. Design and provision of traffic control measures including signage, ramps, renewed surfaces, dished pavements etc will be required to consider the historic landscape and essential character of the area as outlined in this document.
- New street furniture when being provided will be of high quality reflecting the character of the ACA.
- The Council will encourage the under-grounding of overhead services and the removal of redundant wiring /

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### 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 works would still have to adhere to the general provisions of the Planning and Development Acts 2010-2016 and Planning Regulations. 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.