

5. Tier 3 Settlements- Strong Towns and Villages



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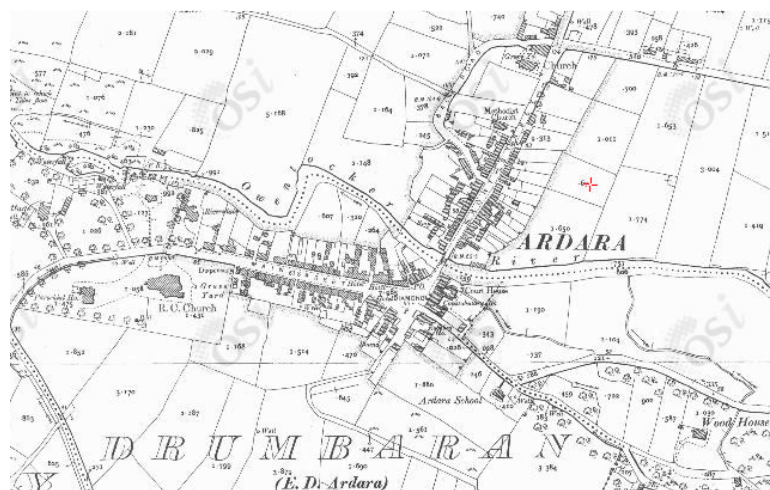
5.1 Ardara



Context

Ardara is a heritage town that has a long association with the tweed and knitwear industry. It is located to the west of Donegal and has a high tourist value. The town offers a wide range of services and facilities and has a strong identifiable main street, and generally compact urban form. The town has a crucial role in providing a range of local services and functions to a wide geographic rural hinterland.

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Natural Heritage:

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; these are listed below, the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie.

- Ardara/ Maas Road 000197 SAC (partially within settlement to west)
- Ardara/Maas Road 000197 pNHA (partially within settlement to west).

Of note is the presence of Fresh Water Pearl Mussels in the Owenea River North of the village.

Built Heritage:

There are 3 buildings on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) along the Main Street and a further 19 on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

Additional historic features found outside Ardara include the Kilcooney Dolmen and Maghera caves which hold a history. It is said that during penal times local people would hide in the caves to avoid being killed by invading forces.

Landscape characteristics

Located within LCA 30 Ardara Bays and Coast characterised a low lying undulating area with an open aspect, framed by the higher uplands of the surrounding LCAs and by a long and varied coastline indented by long sandy tidal estuaries. The area has a myriad of landscape types; the inland landscape is pre-dominantly bog and lake interspersed with fertile riverine agricultural corridors to the south following the Owenea and Owentocker Rivers and large commercial coniferous forestry plantations within the east. Agricultural lands along river valleys and in the hinterland of Ardara and Glenties are characterised by larger hedgerow bound geometric fields, at variance with the coastal farmland of a more open nature with historic fields patterns of note at Loughros and Portnoo.

The coast extends from within the tidal estuary at Gweebarra bay, past Inishkeel Island, around Dawross Head and into Loughros More Bay and estuary before following the shore around Loughros Point and Loughros Beg Bay and estuary. The Wild Atlantic Way extends through this area along the route of the R261, skimming the north coast that already has an established tourism and recreation base at Nairn and Portnoo. The village is situated on the Owentocker River which is a defining feature of the village provides a tranquil setting and connection with the physical landscape. The elevation of the landscape provides fairly open vistas with a mountainous backdrop. Beside Loughross Point

Identification of Settlement Type (Height of the Fort)

Ardara is located on the banks of River Owentocher, within the Glenties. This busy town provides services for a wider rural hinterland and its strong heritage focus contributes significantly to its function as a tourism destination.

Townscape features



A designated heritage town on the basis of basis of weaving and knitting, it won the title 'best town to live in 2012' by The Irish Times. The village is nationally known for its festivals, live traditional music and immense community spirit. Town recognised for its strong association with Donegal's knitwear and tweed industry, with several shops in the town which sell high quality tweed and knitwear. Additional townscape features include:



- Distinct rural settlement with curved main street reflecting the topography.
- Vernacular buildings within the settlement, some of which are original weaver's cottages echo Ardara's early association with the tweed industry.
- Recognition of Ardara's association with traditional skills of knitwear and tweed industry to highlights Ardara's role and that of the wider County in traditional and vernacular skills.
- Buildings located around diamond give a sense of enclosure to the streetscape.
- Diamond provides a valuable break in built up townscape and provides a definitive centre to the town.
- High concentration of services within the centre with dispersed settlement on the outskirts. New housing estates along approach road from the east.
- Ornamental planting and decorative street lighting contribute to a stimulating environment.
- Variations in rooflines also contribute to a stimulating environment and effectively break up the elevation adding to the towns' distinctive character.
- Commercial buildings front onto the main street and traditional shop fronts resulting in a vibrant character.
- Former Town Courthouse - currently used as a heritage centre - is a distinctive building within the settlement, its cut stone features, segmental arch, front gable and clock adds character to the streetscape.
- Walkway along the river.
- Mix of uses along the main street including residential, commercial and retail provide active and passive surveillance all day long contributing to sense of vitality within the settlement.
- Houses within the townscape are typically terraced giving a high sense of enclosure to the street.

Views and prospects

The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the village from either end.
- Views channelled towards the landscape setting including the River Owentocker and surrounding mountain ranges which contribute to a sense of place.
- Views of landmark buildings within settlement including churches.
- Mature trees located within the diamond at the centre of the main street which enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value, damage to this element has the potential to alter the coherence of this locality.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscapes.

5.2 Bunbeg- Derrybeg



Context

Bunbeg- Derrybeg is located in the Donegal Gaeltacht and framed by the Atlantic Coast to the west and the Derryveagh mountains to the East, this area is characterised by its dispersed settlement pattern, a wide range of commercial and social facilities along with the extensive Udarás na Gaeltachta Business Park at Ard na gCeapairí. The principle access to the area is via the N56 and the 'Back of Errigal' road and also benefits from proximity to Donegal Airport at Carrickfin.

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Built heritage:

There is one protected structure (RPS) located within the centre, and a further 13 structures listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The presence of these buildings is an important part of the character of the townscape and provides a back drop to the landscape itself. Boats to Tory Island travel from Bunbeg Pier, this quality built heritage enhances the visitor experience as well as having a potential future role in tourism in the wider area which is a major contributor to the local economy and investment in the area.

Natural Heritage:

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie. Wild Atlantic Way stretches around the coastline with discovery points at Cnoc Fola and Bunbeg Harbour.

Landscape characteristics

Bunbeg-Derrybeg is located within LCA unit 27 within An Gaeltacht on the northwest corner of Donegal and defined by a dramatic landscape comprising Cnoc Fola mountain in the north and Ardsmore mountain in the east looming over a landscape of excessively worked low-lying Atlantic bog interspersed with lakes, open rural landscape with isolated instances of trees or hedgerow, towards a rugged and windswept coastline. The coastal landscape within the north west of this landscape unit consists of a distinctive and historic local field pattern of small sinuous fields bound by historic stone walls of rounded dry stone, and known colloquially as 'Bloody Foreland' owing to the colours of the landscape from the setting sun. Further south, the more populous coastal area has clusters of houses amongst copses of trees within a more undulating agricultural landscape behind a sandy and sand dune coastal edge with tidal estuaries.

This coastline has important machair and sand dunes as well as shingle banks and a host of other important habitats for sea birds. River streams and lakes are valuable fishing resources both for tourists and residents. Inland this landscape has extensive cut bog, bog lakes and a series of river valleys creating pockets of agricultural land with individual isolated rural dwellings; an 8 turbine wind farm is located on the southern slopes of Ardsmore, just north of Gweedore.

The coastline is characterised by frequent indents, multiple stony beaches to the north which Bunbeg and Derrybeg are two of the most densely populated rural areas in Donegal. There is a strong fishing industry with commercial fishing operating from Bunbeg harbour together with a ferry operation and the coastguard. The coastal location provides a tranquil setting. There is a strong visual impact from the pier which characterises the area, ladder farms and an old agricultural layout. There are also distinctive historic stone wall field boundary patterns within this area characterised by a rounded dry stone.

Identification of Settlement Type (Small River Mouth)

This particular Settlement is important in terms of access to Tory Island via Bunbeg Pier. Reinforcing the connection the settlement has with the surrounding coastal seascape and the Islands reflecting the integration of sea, coastline and land components together.

Townscape features



Bunbeg- Derrybegs townscape is characterised by a linear town land with a dispersed settlement pattern serving a large rural hinterland; it has more functions than similar sized settlements due to its large rural hinterland. Additional features include:

- Settlement rich in vegetation, mature trees and stone walls which add character to the area and enhance the visual amenity of the town.
- Mix of uses along the main street include residential, commercial and retail providing active and passive surveillance all day long contributing to sense of vitality within the settlement.

- Streetscape defined by tarmac road and pavements.
- A variety of building materials and colours are present in both older and modern styles of buildings.
- 1-2 storey buildings contribute to a streetscape of human scale.
- On street car parking is a feature of the streetscape as the settlement was not built with the car in mind also adding to its distinctive character.
- Church within settlement provides a focus to shared social space within the area.
- Close visual connection with the islands and the Derryveagh Mountain Range.
- Flight paths over the area relating to the northern approach to Donegal Airport.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church visible from outside the town is a local landmark.
- Views channelled to open countryside and coastline including the Atlantic Coast to the west and the Derryveagh mountains to the East
- Views to and from the pier..
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscapes.

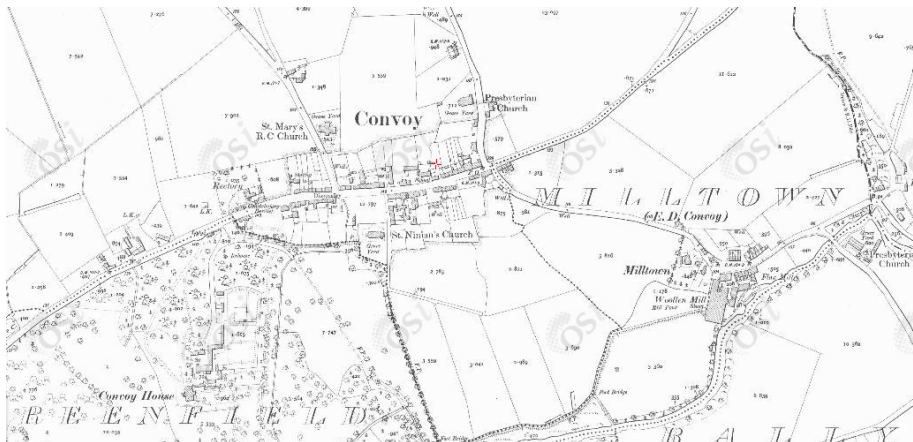
5.3 Convoy



Context

The town has a compact form and includes a mix of residential, retail, community and business uses and has notable character in its built form, in particular as defined by Convoy House, Gate Lodge and curtilage. There has been a considerable amount of new residential development in recent years primarily to the north and east of the town, and there is a high level of vacant units. The town does however provide a strong role at a local level.

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- There are five RPS structures located within the settlement boundary, namely Convoy House, Convoy Gates and Lodge, Convoy Presbyterian Church, Convoy Enterprise Centre, and Convoy Reformed Presbyterian Church.
- 3 recorded archaeological Monuments are located within the settlement boundary; 2 standing stone sites and a miscellaneous site.
- There are structures on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and in proximity to within the settlement.
- Once served by rail station, closed in 1960.

Landscape characteristics

Convoy is located within LCA Unit 12 Lagan Valley which is a vast undulating agricultural landscape of pasture and arable land characterised by large, geometric, hedge trimmed agricultural fields extending over a wide geographical area, with a long shore along Lough Swilly. Often described as a 'Plantation Landscape', this good quality farming land

was confiscated from Gaelic Lords in the early 1600s and colonised by settlers from England and Scotland as part of the wider colonisation of Ulster.

Identification of Settlement Type (Hound Plain)

Convoy is a plantation town located on the banks of the River Deele. The towns' woolen mill was once key to its economy, today the town acts as a commuter town for larger surrounding towns like Strabane and Letterkenny.

Townscape features



This particular townscape can be described as a compact, mixed use centre with heritage and character, defined by Convoy House, one of 5 protected structures within the town. Additional features to note include:



- Spacious character of streetscape due to a relatively wide street proportion.
- Mix of uses along the main street including residential, commercial and retail provide active and passive surveillance all day long contributing to sense of vitality within the settlement and gives residents greater access to a number of retail services.
- Buildings frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.
- Ample car parking provided for residents and visitors.
- Elements of mature trees and vegetation enhance the visual amenity of the town.
- Church spire visible from both ends of the town providing a local focal point which connects the town to the surrounding landscape.
- Row or terraced residential properties along the main street give a sense of enclosure to the streetscape.
- Attractive pedestrian environment with streetscape elements include seating areas in front of the church, formal planting and street trees which contribute to a stimulating environment adding colour and life perceptually breaking up large paved areas.
- Churches are a dominant feature within the streetscape.

- Convoy House and curtilage are an important element of the town fabric, and an amenity zoning has been designated within a proportion of the demesne of Convoy house and within other important amenity areas in the town.
- Town well served with both estate type development of housing and looser ribbon type of individual houses and bungalows to accommodate a growing population.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires visible from outside the town form local landmarks which are important in terms of a focal point for the community to congregate.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- Mature trees located in the town centre enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value.
- Views projecting out to the surrounding countryside provide a connection with the settlement and the landscape which contribute to a strong sense of place.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscapes.
- Convoy House and Demesne.

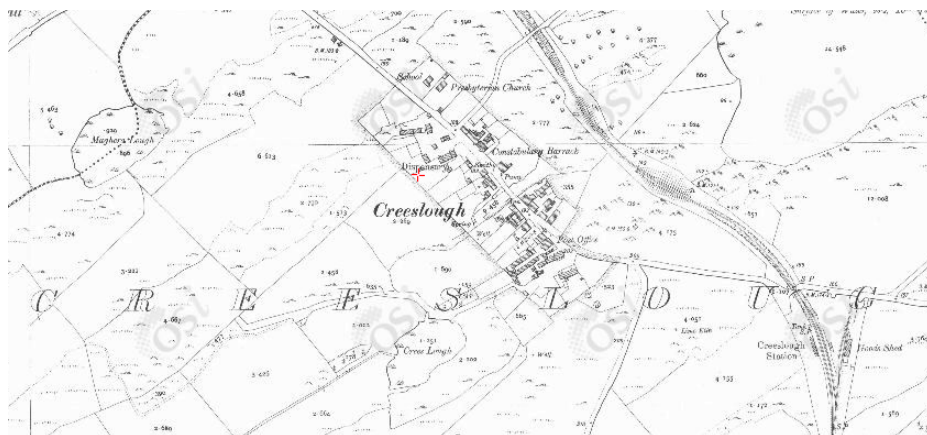
5.4 Creeslough



Context

A small town located close to Sheephaven, and of a traditional linear form straddling the N56. Land use within the settlement is mainly residential development with a range of local for the immediate rural hinterland.

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The social and cultural history of the built fabric is noted within this particular landscape enriched by its natural heritage which is in close proximity to Ards Forest Park just over 4km away.

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie.

Ards forest park is an exceptionally important area consisting of deciduous woodland, vegetation and rivers. The entire coastline at this location abuts Sheephaven SAC (001190), designated for a multitude of features of interest.

Lough More, to the North east of the Main Street above provides a tranquil setting, an important recreational resource and a connection with the physical landscape while also affording an encounter with the wilderness and a degree of remoteness.

Donegal Railway ran along the outside the village; the railway closed in 1947 however elements of the line, including some of the arches remain and constitute important features in the landscape.

Important historical structures to note include two recorded archaeological monuments are located within the settlement boundary; a megalithic tomb and a graveyard. St. Michaels Church is on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and provides a visually important focal point in the town.

Landscape characteristics

Creelough is located within a scenic rural setting in LCA unit 23 Ards Coast characterised by rolling topography which is a key feature of the villages' relationship with its landscape. A layout which exploits views of local lake and distant hill tops. Ards Forest LCA 23 extends from the bog covered foothills of Muckish, in a north east direction across rolling agricultural lands where it meets Sheephaven Bay as three peninsulas separated by large, long estuaries. Kill Mountain and the upland areas around Muckish are covered in upland bog and have a number of lakes of varying sizes throughout, The N56 traverses this area near to the coast and forms part of the Wild Atlantic Way; Creelough straddles this road in the south of this LCA Unit. Whilst the area is predominantly agricultural, there is a strong tourism, amenity and recreational aspect focused on the beaches, coast, Ards Forest Park and fishing.

Identification of Settlement Type (Throat Lake)

The village itself is surrounded by a mixture of dwellings and commercial premises providing an immediate sense of place and having arrived. Rural housing is prominent in this landscape particularly on approach to this settlement.

Townscape features



The townscape is distinctive in character in terms of layout which exploits local views with notable townscape quality along the Main Street providing an immediate sense of place and having arrived.

- Presence of terraces and semi detached properties along the main street typically 2-2.5 storey, contribute to a townscape of human scale with the use of traditional materials.
- Building frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.

- On street car parking is a feature of the streetscape as the village evolved over time before the arrival of the motor car.
- Local shop, church and school form nodes where people can congregate and provide a focus for the settlement.
- Streetscape defined by a tarmac road and pavements with occasional street furniture.
- Mature deciduous planted areas.
- Quiet and peaceful residential village with a spacious character due to the relatively wide street proportion.
- Elevation of landscape provides fairly open vistas.
- Recent developments including the Wild Atlantic Camp provide a multifunctional open space that encourages outdoor socialising.
- Forest trails are also provided over 4km away at Ards Forest which contributes greatly to the natural heritage aspect.

Views and prospects



Views along the street are framed by a strong building line and views projecting out to scenic rural landscape setting further contribute to a sense of place. In terms of visual constraints whereby they may have significant adverse effects on important views the following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the village from either end.
- Views channelled towards the landscape setting including Lough More and Muckish mountain ranges which contribute to a sense of place.
- Views of landmark buildings including churches
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
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- Mature trees located within the main street which enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscape.

5.5 Dunfanaghy

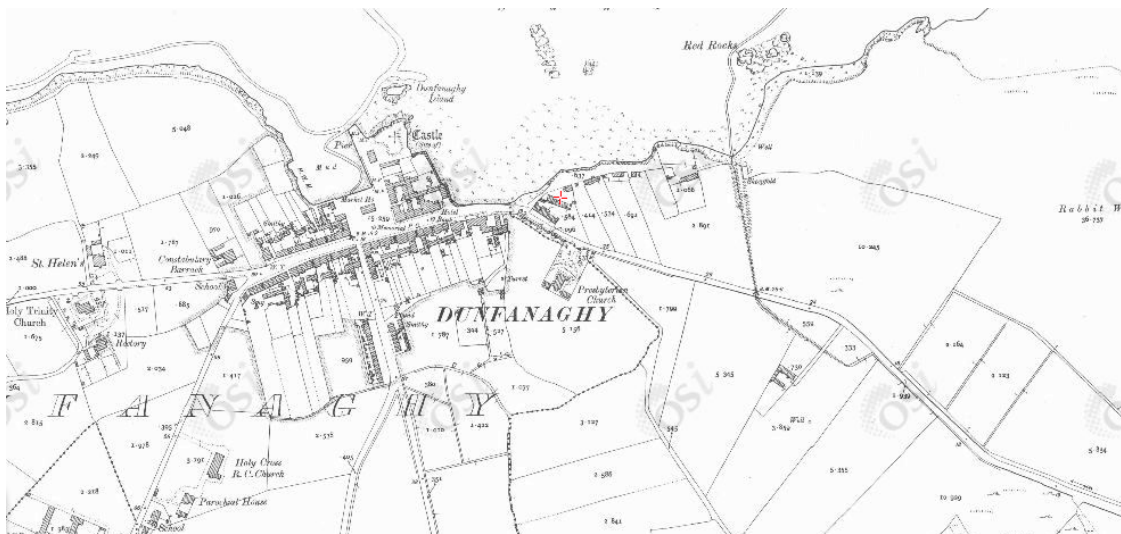


Context

Dunfanaghy is a coastal settlement in the north of the County. The town consists of a good range of local level services and facilities and has an identifiable core area including Main Street. It performs a local function in terms service provision but has a significant tourism role notable in the extent of holiday home developments in the area, the existing level of hospitality and leisure services including the golf course at the eastern end of the settlement.

The town is located approximately 2 km from Portnablagh, which consists of dispersed pattern of residential units and a significant holiday home element. Its location also benefits from the coastal position where notable views towards Horn Head can be found.

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There are five RPS structures located within the settlement boundary; a detached Victorian 3 bay house, Dunfanaghy Presbyterian Church, a Georgian Rectory, a semi-detached vernacular house and Holy Trinity Church. There are also 21 structures on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

A 'Castle Site' within the settlement boundary is recorded archaeological Monument and Horn Head which is visible from the shore of Dunfanaghy opposite are rich in historic remains including stone walls contributing significantly to the visual experience of the town.



There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; these are listed below, the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie .

- Hornhead & Rinclevan: pNHA:000147
- Hornhead & Rinclevan: SAC: 00147
- Hornhead to Fanad Head: SPA: 004194

Landscape characteristics

Dunfanaghy is located within LCA Unit 26 Tory Sound a Gaeltacht area defined by an extensive coastline fronting the Atlantic Ocean including Horn Head peninsula and the offshore islands of Inishboffin, Inishdooley, Inishbeg and Tory to the north and the dominant Derryveagh Mountains and iconic Muckish Mountain to the south and east.

Undulating agricultural lands lie between the bog covered mountains and uplands and the coast. A number of rivers including the Gleanna River, flow through fertile valleys into Ballyness Bay contributing to the unique estuarine inlet at Falcarragh. The patchwork of hedgerow bound fields varies between different locations within this LCA, with tighter sinuous fields to the west and along rivers, ladder farms evident in areas around Falcarragh and larger geometric shaped fields around Dunfanaghy.

There is a dispersed pattern of one off residential dwellings peppered throughout the agricultural lands within this LCA and a degree of linear development along County roads. The coastal location and long sandy beaches make this area an attractive tourist destination and there are associated holiday home developments throughout this area.

There is a varied underlying geology within this LCA: quartzite along the eastern edge of the LCA, schist at Dunfanaghy and Hornhead.

Mainland has an undulating coastal landscape of predominantly agricultural land slopes from the Derryveagh Mountain range with distinctive field patterns including ladder farms bound by hedge and stone walls to the north and open bog with areas of commonage to the south. There is a series of biodiversity rich river valleys flowing down from the Derryveagh mountains towards the coast.

Identification of Settlement Type (Fort of the White Field)

Dunfanaghy is a small coastal town, centred around a market square dating to 1847. It began as a coastal market town and fishing port and contains several heritage structures which add to the character of the town.

A former fishing port, quay built in 1831, was mainly used to export corn, and the arrival of Dunfanaghy Road Railway gave access to wider markets, including tourism, operating from 1903 to 1947. The tourism industry has continued to expand in Dunfanaghy and contributes greatly to the local economy .

Townscape features



As a town, Dunfanaghy displays a generally linear town centre form which has evolved over the years around its coastal location. The core area is identifiable around the market square (pictured above).

- Water based activities available to residents and tourists along with horse riding facilities and a golf course.
- Attractive pedestrian environment with streetscape elements including street lights, bollards, formal planting and street trees which contribute to a stimulating environment adding colour and life perceptually breaking up large paved areas.
- Dominated by active frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- Variations in rooflines also contribute to a stimulating environment and effectively break up the elevation adding to the towns' distinctive character due to the topography at one end of the street.
- Mix of uses along the main street including residential, commercial and retail provide active and passive surveillance all day long contributing to sense of vitality within the settlement.
- Townscape enhanced by the visual links of the sea, the stone wall surrounding the shorefront and the outward views towards Hornhead and beyond.
- Churches provide a focal point in the town.
- Market square provides a valuable focus in the townscape and enhances the retail and social experience for locals and tourists alike.
- Houses within the townscape are typically terraced giving a high sense of enclosure to the street.

- Strong Tourism and leisure industry focused on the landscape, seascape, mountains and Islands.
- Outside the town centre there is a more dispersed pattern of residential development and a significant holiday home element.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires visible from outside the town form local landmarks which are important in
- Views projecting out to the coastline which provide a connection with the settlement and the landscape which contribute to a strong sense of place.
- Mature trees located in the town centre which enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value, damage to this element has the potential to alter the coherence of this locality.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- The town centre layout and traditional streetscapes.

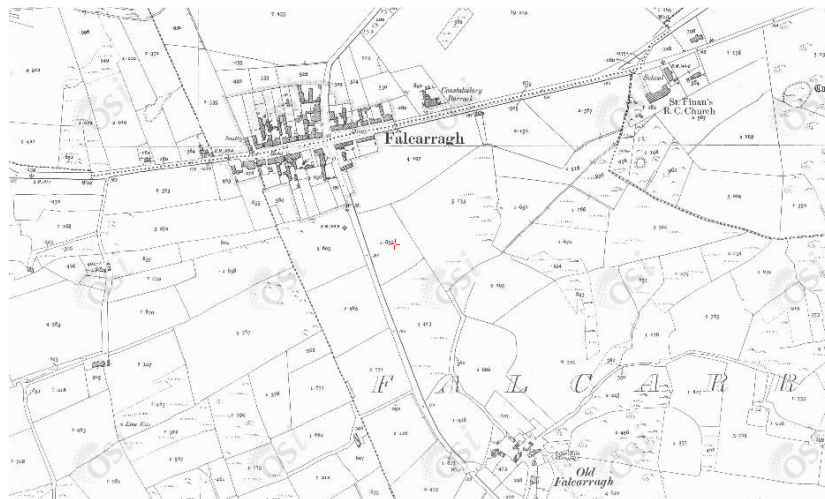
5.6 Falcarragh



Context

Falcarragh is a vibrant market town in the heart of the Gaeltacht that offers a wide and varied range of facilities and services, both to the town and the wider rural Gaeltacht hinterland. The town is centred on a 'crossroads' of a County road and the N56 National Road that forms the 'Main Street' of the town and has an identifiable 'town centre' within which most of the retail and service offer are located.

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This town sits within a wild rural yet coastal landscape with a sense of remoteness. The Tullaghobegley graveyard (pictured above) is a dominant elevated structure and the walled enclosure is an interesting vernacular feature in the landscape. The town has traditional rhythm in layout, scale, buildings and finishes. Additional features to note within this particular townscape include:

Two enclosure sites within the settlement are recorded archaeological monuments on the Record of Protected Structures, reflecting a long association of settlement within this landscape.

Natural Heritage:

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; these are listed below, the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie.

- Ballyness Bay: pNHA (001090)
- Ballyness Bay: SAC (001090)



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Traditional Irish culture is very much evident in this Gaeltacht town and has informed the community's identity leaving an imprint on the landscape. It is from the remoteness and location of this landscape type that the Irish language was able to remain strong and survive and not be influenced by the English language. Its traditions and culture is still very much alive. The railway station which served the town was closed in 1947. This is important in terms of its association with the landscape as it integrated many of the remoter areas into wider market networks.

Landscape characteristics

Falcarragh is located within LCA Unit 26 Tory a Gaeltacht area defined by an extensive coastline fronting the Atlantic Ocean including Horn Head peninsula and the offshore islands of Inishboffin, Inishdooley, Inishbeg and Tory to the north and the dominant Derryveagh Mountains and iconic Muckish Mountain to the south and east.

Undulating agricultural lands lie between the bog covered mountains and uplands and the coast. A number of rivers including the Gleanna River, flow through fertile valleys into Ballyness Bay contributing to the unique estuarine inlet at Falcarragh. The patchwork of hedgerow bound fields varies between different locations within this LCA, with tighter sinuous fields to the west and along rivers, ladder farms evident in areas around Falcarragh and larger geometric shaped fields around Dunfanaghy.

There is a dispersed pattern of one off residential dwellings peppered throughout the agricultural lands within this LCA and a degree of linear development along County roads. The coastal location and long sandy beaches make this area an attractive tourist destination and there are associated holiday home developments throughout this area. Railway line extended through this LCA with stations at Falcarragh and Cashelnagor.

Iconic mountain range acts as a backdrop to settlement and is the main influence on landscape character. Its topography enables spectacular views of natural settings which are valued by local residents and visitors alike, which is part of its character and identity. There are sweeping vistas down Main Street to the hinterland on either ends of the town.

Identification of Settlement Type (The Stone Boundary)

Falcarragh is a market town which serves the wider Gaeltacht hinterland. It is centred around a crossroads, the town was formerly known as Crossroads Village. It is close to Ballyness Bay Conservation Area, and is rich in archaeological monuments. There is a market day every Friday a tradition which has survived through time.

Townscape features



This particular townscape is characterised by a crossroad linear settlement which serves a large hinterland hosting a range of functions. The Gaeltacht language is the foremost uniquely defining feature of this settlement which has maintained a rich social and cultural heritage. Additional features include:

- Mix of uses along the main street including residential, commercial and retail provide active and passive surveillance all day long contributing to sense of vitality within the settlement.
- Modern detached properties, townhouses and housing estates on fringes of town while more traditional terraced residential units exist in the centre.
- 2-3 storey properties along main street
- There are few street trees, but ornamental planting within small front gardens of residential properties contribute positively to the streetscape.
- Buildings frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.
- Attractive pedestrian environment with streetscape elements including street lights, bollards and formal planting which contribute to a stimulating environment adding colour and life perceptually breaking up large paved areas.
- Mix of uses along the main street including residential, commercial and retail provide active and passive surveillance all day long contributing to sense of vitality within the settlement.
- Along the routes emanating from the town centre, new enclosed residential developments have appeared alongside older linear streetscapes of terraced dwellings interrupted with individual housing units.
- The street pattern has developed historically and reflects the role of the village as a market place up until early this century.
- Markets take place every Friday providing a space for social interaction and active community engagement.

- Another distinctive feature of the streetscape is the number of arched laneways between terraced properties along the main street which may have been used for horse and carts to access the back of properties or for the delivery of goods to businesses.
- Close visual connection with the islands. There is a ferry service at Magharoarty to Tory Island.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires visible from outside the town form local landmarks.
- Views out to the coastline provide a connection with the settlement and the landscape which contribute to a strong sense of place.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- Views to Mount Errigal and Muckish which are a defining feature of this settlement and provide an important back drop to the landscape setting.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscapes.

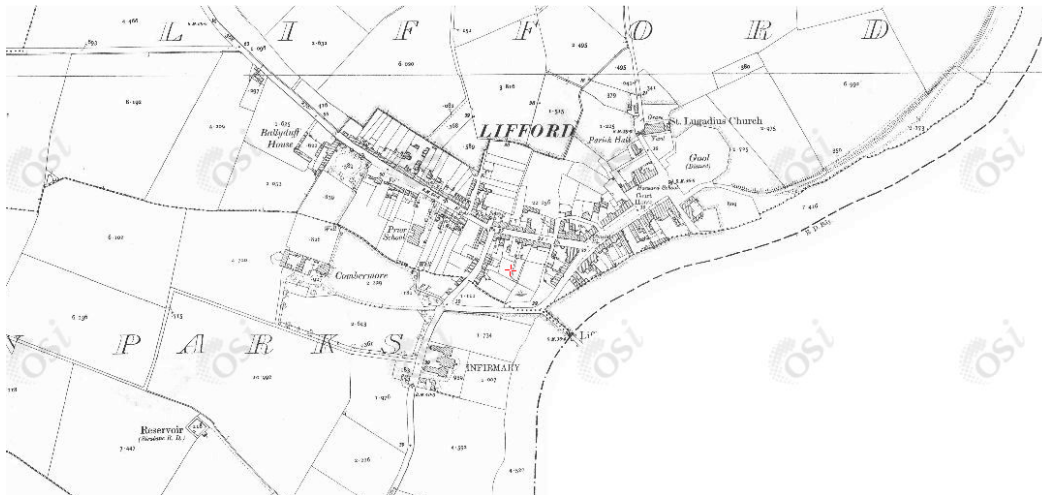
5.7 Lifford



Context

Lifford functions as the seat of governance within the County, and is strategically located on the border with Northern Ireland, immediately adjacent to Strabane, yet physically divided by the River Foyle. These border towns fulfil complimentary roles, and both centres benefit from cooperation (e.g. Lifford Strabane Development Commission). Service provision in Lifford is evidenced through activities such as the hospital/health centre, primary school, cinema, Greyhound Track, athletics, soccer and GAA Clubs and a diverse range of retail and professional services.

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Lifford Town centre is a Designated Archaeological Complex. There are seven buildings on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) located within the settlement boundary; the Church of St Lugadius, church hall, the Old Courthouse Visitor Centre, Garda Station, Bridge Street House, Rehab Hostel and Ballyduff House. In addition there are 23 structures on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

The modern town grew around Lifford Castle, built in 16th Century, and has remained a strategically located town and a centre of governance; it was a garrison town, had a gaol and also a courthouse. During the plantation the town and surrounding lands were granted to Sir Richard Hansard and the layout of the designed town centre was created.

There is however evidence of earlier settlement in and around Lifford, most notably the site of a portal tomb on Croaghan Hill southwest of the town.



Lifford has eight monuments on the Record of Protected Structures including an archaeological zone in the town centre.

The railway operated from 1885 to 1960 and Lifford was an important and strategic location on the network, allowing greater access to the County's Governance from more remote parts of the County.

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie.

Landscape characteristics

Lifford is located within LCA 13 Foyle Valley which is a broad river valley extending from outside Lifford in the south of the area to the border with Northern Ireland on the outskirts of Derry City in the north of this LCA including the 'border villages' of Ballindrait, Carrigans, Lifford and St. Johnston. This LCA is characterised by undulating fertile agricultural lands with a regular field pattern of medium to large geometric fields, bound by deciduous trees and hedgerow. There is a dispersed scatter of rural residential development within this LCA comprising of farmsteads and one of rural dwellings along with areas of ribbon development along the county road network; there are a number of large detached historic houses and associated grounds within this landscape, particularly along the Foyle.

This LCA has a strong visual connection to its mirror landscape on the opposite side of the River Foyle in Northern Ireland in terms of the similar landscape type and also that the Northern Ireland landscape inherently informs the views within and without of this LCA.

The river Foyle is an, ecologically, strategically and historically (including the fishing economy) important feature in this landscape with an undulating rural agricultural

landscape and underlying schist geology in the north and Quartzite in the south that consists of one half of a large broad river valley that slopes gently towards the Foyle.

Identification of Settlement Type (Side of the Water)

Lifford is the gateway to Donegal, on the border with Northern Ireland, it has a complementary relationship with Strabane, separated by the River Foyle, and functions as a service centre for the rural surround. It is an Historic Town with multiple archaeological sites in and around the town, in addition to numerous traditional buildings in the town centre, positively contributing to the visual experience and historic character of the town.

Townscape features



A small historic town on the border with Northern Ireland, it first developed around the site of Lifford Castle, built in 16th Century at a strategic crossing point on the River Foyle. The centre of Lifford is a designated zone of archaeological interest and protected as a National Monument, and other important structures include the Lifford Courthouse and Church of St. Lugadius. This town has a strong historical built form and rich archaeology. In addition, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government has identified Lifford as a Historic Town for general protection.

- The presence of trees softens the line of buildings, act as wildlife habitats and provide scale to buildings and streets.
- Rich architectural and streetscape detailing, presence of landmarks and hierarchy of streets and spaces which ensure the environment is stimulating.
- Dominated by active frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- Buildings frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.
- Attractive pedestrian environment with streetscape elements including street lights, bollards, formal planting and street trees which contribute to a stimulating environment adding colour and life perceptually breaking up large paved areas.
- Houses within this townscape are typically terraced and closely spaced giving a high sense of enclosure to the street and provides active surveillance while businesses are closed.
- Existing buildings include a mixture of public/private, vernacular and domestic.
- Existing public square facilitate communal gathering.

- The town is well served with both estate-type development of varieties of housing and looser ribbon- type of individual houses and bungalows along approach roads.
- Variations in rooflines also contribute to a stimulating environment and effectively break up the elevation adding to the towns' distinctive character.
- Mix of uses along the main street including residential, commercial and retail provide active and passive surveillance all day long contributing to sense of vitality within the settlement.
- Churches provide a focal point for residents and as well as a local landmark.
- Recreational and open space in the town consists of River walkways and the large sports ground in the Northern part of the town.
- The modern stadium of 'Lifford Dog Track', is an iconic structure visible from the urban surround and which is a local landmark as well as an important commercial entity within the town.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires and Lifford Dog Track stadium are visible from outside the town forming a local landmark and define the skyline of the town.
- Views projecting out to the surrounding landscape provide a connection with the settlement and the landscape which contribute to a strong sense of place.
- Mature trees located in the town centre which enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscapes.

5.8 Manorcunningham

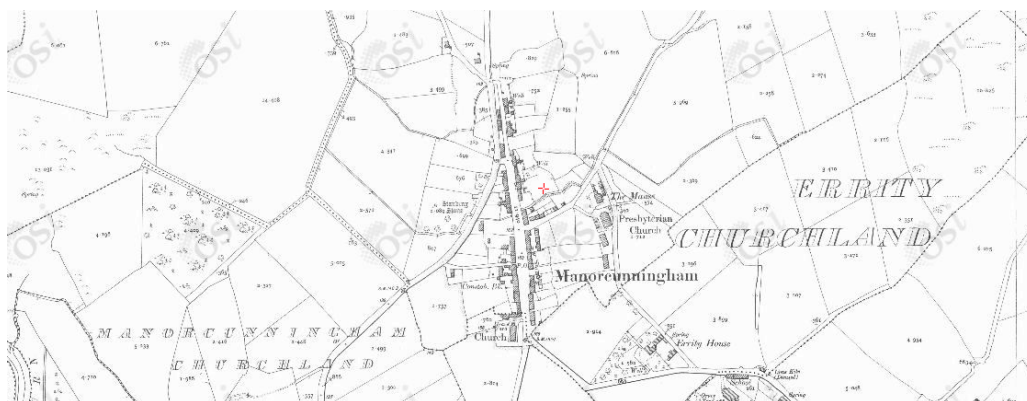


Context

Manorcunningham functions as a self-sufficient historic rural settlement and is an important service centre, located off the N14 along the Letterkenny – Derry Gateway Corridor. The town has a limited range of local level activities including a health centre.

The town functions as a satellite and commuter centre for both Letterkenny and Derry, as many residents have moved to Manorcunningham from Derry over the past decade, when new residential areas were built in the town.

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The town takes its name from James Cunningham who was granted lands in and around this area during the plantation of Ulster, and has a remaining historical linear core with traditional vernacular buildings juxtaposed with more recent development. There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie.

Landscape characteristics

Manorcunningham is located within LCA 12 Lagan Valley which is a vast undulating agricultural landscape of good quality pasture and arable land characterised by large, geometric, hedge trimmed agricultural fields extending over a wide geographical area, with a long shore along Lough Swilly. Often described as a 'Plantation Landscape', this good quality farming land was confiscated from Gaelic Lords in the early 1600s and colonised by settlers from England and Scotland as part of the wider colonisation of Ulster. This LCA is permeated by a network of national, regional and county roads that

connect the large farms and plantation towns of Manorcunningham, Convooy and Raphoe, within this LCA to the wider hinterland.

Identification of Settlement Type (Manor House of John Cunningham)

Manorcunningham is a self-sufficient historic rural settlement and small commuter town situated on the Derry/Letterkenny corridor. A 17th Century Plantation town, was once a small linear settlement but in the last decade has seen rapid growth especially in residential developments due to close proximity to Letterkenny and Derry, acting as a node for the gateway. Former railway closed in 1953. Centre has several heritage buildings, including two protected churches and 4 structures on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

Townscape features



- The recent opening up of the sports grounds along the main road has made the settlement more open and identifiable as a town for passers by.
- There is a Church of Ireland and Presbyterian Church, a health centre national school and other local services and recent expansion in residential developments as well as active community groups in the town.
- Dominated by active frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- Building frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.
- The Main Street area remains the retailing, service, and entertainment, cultural and social heart of the town and demonstrates a vitality and vibrancy and diversify not evident elsewhere in the town centre.
- Existing buildings include a mixture of public/private, vernacular and domestic.
- The town is well served with both estate-type development of varieties of housing and looser ribbon- type of individual houses and bungalows.
- Elements of mature trees and vegetation enhance the visual amenity of the town.
- Variations in rooflines also contribute to a stimulating environment and effectively break up the elevation adding to the towns' distinctive character.
- Mix of uses along the main street including residential, commercial and retail provide active and passive surveillance all day long contributing to sense of vitality within the settlement.

- Churches provide a focal point for residents and a landmark for visitors locating the area.
- Elevation of landscape provides open vistas.
- Spacious character of streetscape due to a relatively wide street proportion.
- Traditional shop fronts and vernacular buildings add character to the streetscape.
- The town expresses a well defined setting and compact centre
- Open space in the town is provided by a large sports ground which ultimately connects the people with the landscape and provides a point where residents and visitors can congregate.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires visible from outside the town form local landmarks which are important in terms of a focal point for the community to congregate and ensure the place is easy to navigate and locate.
- Views projecting out to the surrounding landscape and Lough Swilly which provide a connection with the settlement and the landscape which contribute to a strong sense of place.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- Mature trees located in the town centre which enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscape.

5.9 Milford



Context

Milford is a small town which is strategically positioned at the entrance to both the Fanad and Rosguill peninsulas and serves a significant part of the large rural hinterland. The town has a clear central core originating in the 18th Century. Important services for the town include, the Public Service Centre, Library, 2 Secondary Schools, Hotel, Adult Education Centre, Fire Station and 3 supermarkets, while more localised services include post office, health centre, community centre, veterinary practice, 3 pubs, Church and National School.

The Main Street has an eclectic mix of 2 and 3 storey buildings of traditional proportions that house a diverse range of business and residential units, although there are a number of vacant units within. More recent developments at the edges of the town comprise multiple residential developments, discount retail and one-off houses along the approach roads to the town.

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There one protected structure in Milford is St. Peter's Church; a detached three-bay single-storey Catholic church built 1961, internal gallery with sanctuary to east and porch to west, hexagonal sacristy to south-east corner and prayer chapel, extension to

north, 1990; with plant room to northwest corner. A further 24 buildings are listed as National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The survival of these buildings is of particular importance as they define the townscape type, impose a strong pattern on the land form and influence the definition of the character area.



Landscape characteristics

Milford is located within LCA Unit 18 Lough Fern which consists of predominantly low-lying gently undulating land which rises slightly in elevation to the west. The landcover consists mainly of fertile agricultural land with straight sided fields bounded by hedges with large contrasting patches of scrub and areas of forestry which are more frequent to the west as the land rises in height.

There are two large Loughs within this agricultural area called Lough Fern and Lough Keel which characterise the north of the area as well as a number of smaller lakes mainly dotted on the eastern side.

Rivers form an important element of this landscape which comes down from the mountains to the west and the river Leannan runs from east to west along the south of the area leading into Lough Fern. There are three main settlements of Milford, Kilmacrennan and Kerrykeel which serve this area. There are also one-off houses and a series of large farms spread throughout what is a working agricultural landscape with more dispersed development along roads to the south towards the outskirts of Letterkenny.

Identification of Settlement Type (Town of the Gallowglass)

Milford is a small town which serves wider hinterland beyond Mulroy Bay. The historic core of the town was established in the 18th Century by the Clement family, with one protected structure in the centre and eight NIAH listed. Surrounding area contains 2 archaeological sites.

Townscape features





Milford town expresses a well defined setting and compact centre and displays an area of both urban and rural characteristics. Additional townscape features include:

- The Main Street area remains the retailing, service, and entertainment, cultural and social heart of the town and demonstrates a vitality and vibrancy and diversify not evident elsewhere in the town centre.
- Rich architectural and streetscape detailing, presence of landmarks and hierarchy of streets and spaces which ensure the environment is stimulating.
- Dominated by active frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- Buildings frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.
- Ample Car parking provided which lessens the impact of on street parking.
- Attractive pedestrian environment with streetscape elements including street lights, bollards, formal planting and street trees which contribute to a stimulating environment adding colour and life perceptually breaking up large paved areas.
- Houses within this townscape are typically terraced and closely spaced giving a high sense of enclosure to the street and provides active surveillance while businesses are closed.
- Existing buildings include a mixture of public/private, vernacular and domestic.
- Variations in rooflines also contribute to a stimulating environment and effectively break up the elevation adding to the towns' distinctive character.
- Churches provide a focal point for the town.
- Square at the top of the main street provides a focal point in the town.
- Elevation of landscape provides open vistas
- Spacious character of streetscape due to a relatively wide street proportion
- Narrow footpaths give a sense of rurality and distinctiveness to the streetscape with no modern interventions to disrupt the character.
- A variety of building materials and colours are present in both older and modern styles of buildings.
- Townscape enhanced by the visual links created by the strong linear feature of the stone wall at the grave yard.
- River provides a tranquil setting the character of the townscape.

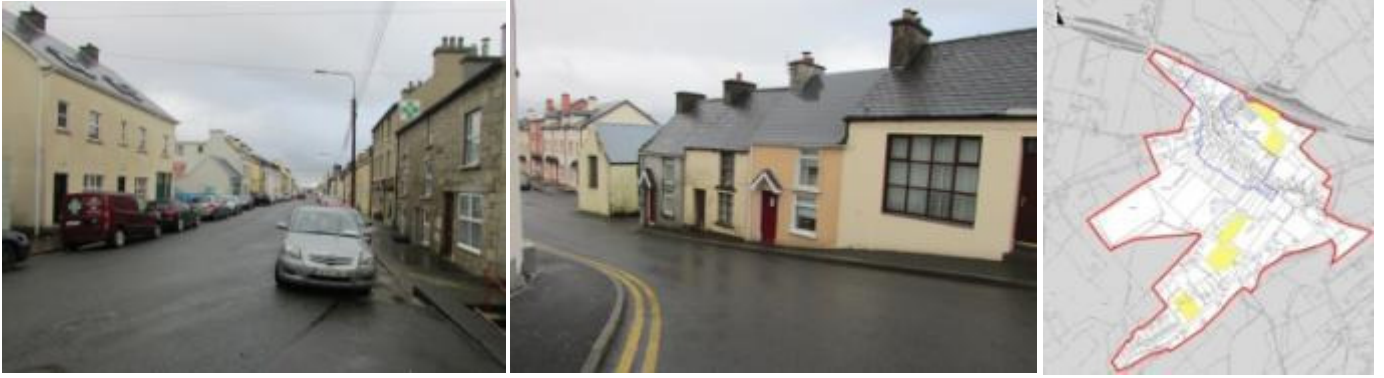
Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires visible from outside the town form local landmarks.
- Views projecting out to the surrounding landscape provide a connection with the settlement and the landscape which contribute to a strong sense of place.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street.
- Mature trees located in the town centre enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscape.

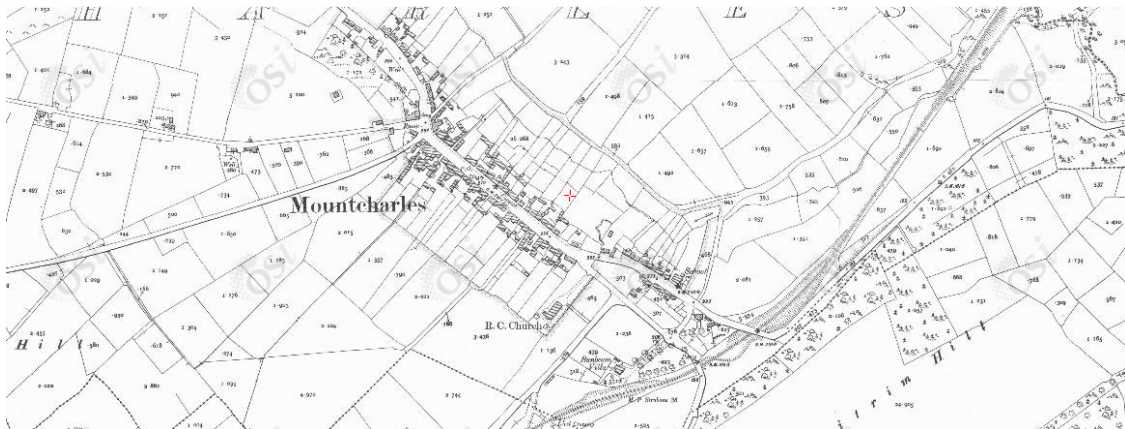
5.10 Mountcharles



Context

Mountcharles is a well-established village located off the N56 bypass. It is located close to a scenic bay and to the southeast are former wooded lands of a large estate house. The village has experienced steady growth in residential development since 2000 together with terraced housing in the centre of the village and low density housing on the edges. The village has a long linear historic core based around the Main Street and has a good range of services and facilities.

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This historic, traditional linear town has an interesting streetscape that retains a vernacular rhythm and plot size along the frontages, this includes 3 buildings on the Record of Protected Structures and 27 structures identified on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; these are listed below, the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie.

- Donegal –Bay: SPA 004151
- Donegal –Bay: NHA 000133
- Donegal –Bay: SAC 9999

There is a long history of mining in and around the Mountcharles area, of both salt and stone. Salt mining and quarrying were key to the area's economy from the 17th Century onwards and quarrying remains an important industry to the present day. The railway

passed alongside the town and Mountcharles station operated from 1893 until 1960; the track runs along the south east of the village, and many of its features remain.

Landscape characteristics

Mountcharles is located within Donegal Bay Drumlins LCA Unit 37 which consists of a of a large distinctive drumlin belt that flow along a northeast-southwest axis from the Blue Stack Mountains and the Pettigo Plateau east towards Donegal Bay. The drumlin formation is more prominent in the north converging at the head of Donegal Bay becoming less prominent and obvious towards the south. The drumlins are draped in a patchwork of fertile agricultural fields of various sizes bound by deciduous hedgerow and trees that are interspersed with patches of woodlands and conifer plantations. Loughs are a common feature amongst the drumlins and a large number of streams and rivers rise in higher lands to the north and east and course along valleys through the drumlins towards the sea.

This LCA is framed by the Bluestack Mountains to the north, the bog covered uplands to the east, and the meandering coastal edge curled around the mouth of Donegal Bay, with Donegal Town in the centre. The good soils, coupled with ready access to fresh water and proximity to the sea have meant this area has been settled for a long period of history as evidenced by the many archaeological and historic sites throughout the landscape.

Agriculture and fishing remain a dominant land use in this area, however tourism also contributes significantly to the local and wider economy. The tourism product is based on the landscape, seascape, history and cultural qualities of the area with a focus around the coast including the 'Wild Atlantic Way' that follows the route of the N56.

There are a series of biodiversity rich river valleys flowing down from the Bluestack Mountains that run from east to west to the coast including the protected rivers of Eske and Drummery to the north.

Identification of Settlement Type (Searlais' Bog)

The historic, mixed use centre contains many historic buildings, including three buildings on the Record of protected Structures and 27 listed on the National Inventory of Architectural heritage. The formal town was built in the 17th Century by Charles Conyngham, the landlord of the area during the Plantation, from whence the town gets its name.

Townscape features



In terms of townscape features Mountharles is a well established village, with a long curved linear historic core. Details which inform the image of the town have to do with topography where a number of buildings along the main street were built in a stepped down fashion working with the landscape instead of building on top of it.

- Houses within this townscape are typically terraced and closely spaced giving a high sense of enclosure to the street and provides active surveillance while businesses are closed.
- Defining elements within the streetscape include the water pump at Boscós' Corner which enhances the visual amenity of the town. It commemorates the life of Seumas Mac Manus an Author and Seanachai 1869-1960 who was born near this location.
- Dominated by active frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- Buildings frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.
- Spacious character of streetscape due to a relatively wide street proportion.
- Presence of terraces and semi detached properties along the main street typically 2-3 storey, contribute to a vibrant townscape.
- Elements of mature trees and vegetation enhance the visual amenity of the town and take away from the busy N56 which runs in parallel to the settlement.
- Mix of uses provided giving residents greater access to a number of retail services.
- Churches provide a focal point for residents and a landmark for visitors to the area.
- Townscape enhanced by the visual links created by the strong linear feature of the stone wall (pictured above) surrounding Sacred Heart Catholic Church and parochial House on Station Road and the Hall Demesne Church of Ireland.
- An estate landscape to the north adjacent to Mountharles include the Salthill Demesne and Hall Demesne.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires visible from outside the town form local landmarks which are important in
- Views projecting out to the surrounding landscape provide a connection between the settlement and the landscape contributing to a strong sense of place.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- Mature trees located in the town centre which enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscapes.

5.11 Merville



Context

Merville functions as a self-sufficient settlement and is an important strategic service centre for north and east Inishowen. The town has a strong built and maritime heritage and enjoys spectacular views of Lough Foyle from Montgomery Park, and along the pier and shore.

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Merville has been designated a Heritage Town under the Heritage Towns scheme. The special architectural and historic character of the area is recognised through a number of notable properties including the 3 Protected Structures in the town Church of St. Pius X, St. Columbs Church and Carnagarve House and 69 structures on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, in and around the town.





Important historical structures to note include 3 recorded monuments within the town centre; a holy well (DG022-007), bridge (DG021-009) and cross slab (DG021-011).

In terms of maritime history the Small fishing harbour within the settlement is a pivotal element of the town's past, playing a part in the emigration during the 18th century due to the Penal Laws, emigration to America and Canada in the 19th Century as a result of the famine and the 'Scottish Boat' during the 20th Century up until the 1960s that forged lasting connections between Donegal and Scotland that continue still.

Landscape characteristics

Coastal settlement located along the coastal edge of LCA 7. The topography and landscape components in this area primarily the Lough Foyle River as well as the vast open harbour have provided the opportunity for human settlement and development of this coastal town.

Important feature of this settlement is the integration of the sea, coastline and land components together and the relationships that co exist. Its topography enables spectacular views of natural settings and buildings which are valued by local people.

LCA Unit 7 is characterized by rolling fertile agricultural lands trimmed in hedgerow and trees intersected by a network of minor county roads. The western edge of the landscape character area is a high mountainous area that slopes towards the western shore of Lough Foyle. A Regional road follows the shoreline of Lough Foyle and runs through the bustling market town of Moville.

There is a very strong visual and physical connection to Northern Ireland as it forms most of the view out of this area; the international boundary runs through Lough Foyle.

Coastal landscape of generally sloping agricultural lands that begin at the foothills of the mountains and fall gently towards a low, silty shoreline and scattered with associated residential and agricultural buildings. There is a series of biodiversity rich river valleys flowing across the landscape character area into Lough Foyle.

Identification of Settlement Type (Plain of the Sacred Tree)

Moville is a small port town located on Lough Foyle, which functions as a self-sufficient settlement Inishowen and is an important strategic service centre for North and East Inishowen. In terms of residential size Moville would be of medium density with housing estates planned to accommodate families and restrict urban sprawl. Land uses within the town consist of two primary schools, a health centre and a diverse range of retail and professional services.

In terms of the Lough Foyle River which is a special protection Area there is a strong visual impact from the river itself and the relationship between the river and the terrace of buildings below which gives the area a very high quality townscape.

Townscape features



- Presence of terraces and semi detached properties along the main street typically 2-3 storey, contribute to a vibrant townscape.
- Building frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.
- Streetscape defined by a tarmac road and pavements with occasional street furniture.
- Spacious character due to the relatively wide street proportion.
- Open nature of landscape provides open vistas across to Magilligan along the shorefront.
- Important recreational and open space along the shore side of Moville including parklands and a shore walk that extends to nearby Greencastle.
- Notable structures and public realm within Moville include the churches, the market square, the shore front Victorian Terrace and the expansive parklands.
- Commercial buildings front onto principle streets resulting in a vibrant character.
- One way traffic system in place along the shore front to alleviate heavy traffic along shoreline and protect the character of the area.
- Road linear at top of street and curves in middle to open up the view of the Lough Foyle.
- Street dominated by active and diverse frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- The presence of mature vegetation has remained in Montgomery Park, preserving the leafy character along with the river which provides a tranquil setting.
- The presence of schools, churches, community centres and shops contribute to a diversity of land uses and act as important congregation points within the area.
- There is a high recreational use of the sea especially within the summer months with water based sports activity including rowing, kayaking and fishing.
- The tourism industry has long been associated with this landscape due to the natural heritage and supply of beaches and pedestrian routes.
-

Views and prospects



The town includes a hierarchy of views channelled along streets by buildings on either sides and secondary views up James's Street and occasional views down narrow alleyways. Due to the coastal nature of this town important views need to be protected which have a main influence on the landscape character. The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end and views channelled towards the coastline and from the coastline
- Views of landmark buildings including Church of St. Pius X and St. Columbs Church
- Mature trees located within the main street which enhance the visual amenity of the town and have a particular individual value.
- Large mature Victorian style park on the shores of Lough Foyle is an invaluable natural and recreational asset to the town.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.

5.12 Newtowncunningham



Newtowncunningham is a small town located within a rural hinterland at the southern end of the Inishowen Peninsula. The town occupies a strategic position astride the N13 Derry to Letterkenny National Primary Route at a point almost equidistant between those urban centres. Newtowncunningham primarily functions as a dormitory town for Derry and provides local scale retail and commercial functionality. The town also has a primary school and a health care centre and has evolved over time as a linear settlement.

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Typical stately Anglo-Irish architecture reflects the Presbyterian history of the settlement, and contains 3 buildings on the Record of Protected Structures and 16 structures listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The railway passed through Newtowncunningham station from 1883 until 1953.

Historical structures include Church of All Saints Roman Catholic, All Saints Church of Ireland, Colehill and the Old Rectory, all on the Record of Protected Structures and important in terms of defining the landscape contributing to the character of the area, as do a number of church halls. There are a number of archaeological sites in and around Newtowncunningham including the ruins of an old castle, within a cluster of archaeological sites.

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie.

Landscape characteristics

Newtowncunningham is located within LCA 11 Grianan Slopes and Lowland which is a fertile green agricultural landscape of great environmental, historical and archaeological importance, with an extensive boundary along the border with Northern Ireland to the east and along the shores of Lough Swilly to the west. The topography is such that higher lands within the centre east of this area slope downwards on all sides to an undulating lower agricultural landform affording extensive and panoramic views out over the surrounding landscape and Lough Swilly. Low lying agricultural land with a gentle slope towards south east of the town

Identification of Settlement Type (The New Town of John Cunningham)

Newtowncunningham is a small 17th Century Plantation town located in the Laggan district close to Lough Swilly, the town was named after John Cunningham (nearby Manorcunningham was also within his estate), who was granted the lands during the Plantation. In terms of settlement the town had traditionally had a low-density linear development form with development typically arranged along its long main street. However in recent years new residential development has sprung up at right angles to the Main Street and coalesced into 2 largely separate development nodes at the western and eastern end of the town with limited commercial development within each node. In addition, there are large retail outlets on the edge of the settlement.

Townscape features



This particular townscape is very distinctive in character in terms of the active engagement of community members in relation to the towns' sense of identity



- Its strong association with the tidy towns' competition has greatly enriched the landscape at a local level and is an important asset with great pride undertaken in individual garden plots as seen in the picture above.
- Although small in scale individual private gardens have an effect of providing a visual interest in the area
- A majority of open space within the town takes the form of incidental spaces in housing developments and semi wooded areas.
- Walking routes extend from the town into the rural surround offering views over the Newtoncunningham and Burt areas.
- There are a number of traditional and new-build developments along the Main Street that house a variety of retail, community and service facilities providing a varied town centre of considerable vitality.
- Churches within the settlement provide a focus and shared social space
- Street furniture and ornamental planting enhance the environment .
- Elements of mature trees planted along main road act as a good sound buffer for established and newly developed residential units

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires visible from outside the town form local landmarks.
- Views channelled to open countryside including popular tourist destinations An Grianan of Aileach, Burt Castle and Blanket Nook.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.

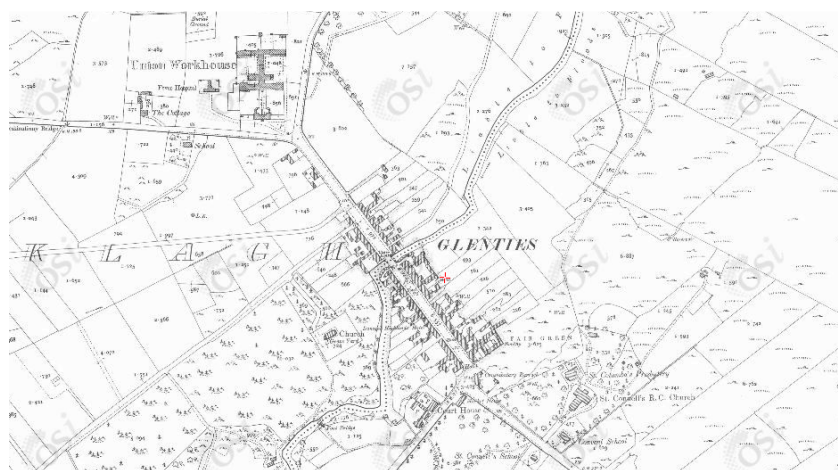
5.13 Glenties



Context

Glenties is a vibrant, medium sized town in the heart of the Gaeltacht that offers a wide and varied range of facilities and services, both to the town and the wider rural Gaeltacht hinterland. The town has a strong 'town centre,' within which most of the retail and service offer are located with small scale local level commercial activity, and includes higher service provision including secondary level education, full time Garda station and a court house.

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There is evidence of settlement in and around this area from Neolithic times, including dolmens, standing stones and earthen ring forts, there is a standing stone in the town that is recorded on the Record of Monuments and Structures.

The town straddles both sides of the linear Main Street and retains a vernacular quality in the building pattern, plot sizes, roof line and colours and finishes of the buildings, informed by a number of quality vernacular buildings. There are 3 buildings on the Record of Protected Structures within the settlement boundary; the Church of Ireland Church, Glenties Court House and St. Conall's RC Church, and a further 20 structures identified on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town, the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie. The town falls within the protected Fresh Water Pearl Catchment Area and there are recorded populations of Fresh Water Pearl Mussel close to the town.



There is some religious significance for the residents of the area with the striking modernist church and religious statue on the approach road into town symbolises the spiritual link between this community and the landscape. Statue is a good addition in order to enhance the public realm

Landscape characteristics

Glenties is located within LCA 30 Ardara Bays and coast which is characterised by a low lying undulating area with an open aspect, framed by the higher uplands of the surrounding LCAs and by a long and varied coastline indented by long sandy tidal estuaries. The area has a myriad of landscape types; the inland landscape is predominantly bog and lake interspersed with fertile riverine agricultural corridors to the south following the Owenea and Owentocker Rivers and large commercial coniferous forestry plantations within the east. Agricultural lands along river valleys and in the hinterland of Ardara and Glenties are characterised by larger hedgerow bound geometric fields, at variance with the coastal farmland of a more open nature with historic fields patterns of note at Loughros and Portnoo.

Identification of Settlement Type (The Glens)

This particular townscape expresses a well defined setting and a compact centre providing an example of an area with both urban and rural characteristics. The town has an important role in providing a range of local functions to its rural hinterland and established population. The Gaeltacht language is the foremost uniquely defining feature of this settlement which has maintained a rich social and cultural heritage. There is also evidence of the railway line that was extended from Ballybofey in 1895; the old railway line dismantled along with the remains of railway buildings (one in use) adds to the heritage of the town. Underlying geology is predominantly granite with softer politic, small sections of schist and quartzite along the peninsulas and also along the north of the Gweebarra River and to the southern edge of the area.

Townscape features



The key feature of this settlement is the historic character which runs throughout the town centre with many buildings dating to 19th Century. The core area is identifiable around the main street area from the courthouse to Dr. McCloskey Crescent (housing developments). Additional townscape features include:



- Water feature located at the start of the main street is a good addition to the streetscape which has enhanced the pedestrian environment.
- Commercial buildings front onto principle main street resulting in a vibrant character
- Definitive settlement boundary.
- Tree lined avenue along main street adds to a stimulating environment and breaks up the streetscape
- Traditional shop fronts and vernacular buildings add character to the streetscape.
- Mixture of retail and residential properties provides active and passive surveillance day and night.
- Highly detailed frontages and variation in rooflines create a stimulating streetscape.
- Dominated by active frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- The design of the street façade breaks up the elevation and has the effect of enlarging the historic footprint of the town with two three storey buildings at either end of the town pictured above.
- Buildings along the main street combine residential, commercial and retail uses.
- On street car parking provided to ensure activity in the town centre.
- River Owentocker provides a tranquil setting.
- Town well served with both estate type development of housing and looser ribbon type of individual houses and bungalows to accommodate a growing population.
- Garda station property frames the southern exit of the main street.
- There is generally a dispersed rural settlement pattern between the settlements which is concentrated along the main road network.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Church spires visible from outside the town form local landmarks.
- Views channelled to open countryside down narrow alleyways and between buildings.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscape.

5.14 Muff



Context

Muff is located immediately adjoining the border with Northern Ireland and as a result, the town has experienced significant growth in residential development since 2000 due to the urban influence of

Derry and resulting pressure for housing within commuting distance of the City. The town has positively developed in a compact manner and has a good range of services and facilities at a local level and an identifiable main street area.

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The Historical core of this settlement has a level of character to it, with 1 building on the Record of Protected Structures and 11 structures are listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. Kilderry House is located on the edge of the settlement envelope, built in 1770 and set amongst a mature demesne landscape between the road and Lough Foyle, both the House and the grounds contribute significantly to the visual and heritage quality of the town.

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie.

Landscape characteristics

Muff is located within LCA 10 South Inishowen Farmland characterised by good quality agricultural land in a pattern of medium to large sized fields separated by hedgerow and deciduous trees against the backdrop of Scalp Mountain to the north and the suburbs of Derry City (Northern Ireland) to the south-east. Inch Island is connected to the

mainland by 2 embankments created to hold water drained from the adjoining flat agricultural re-claimed land that has, in turn, created Inch Lake. One of these causeways constitutes the only vehicular access into the island from the mainland.

The area is well connected to adjoining areas by a Regional road that cuts right through the length of the LCA and a network of county roads that provide permeability throughout the area and linkages between the settlements. This area has been settled for millennia, and there are many remaining national monuments evident in the landscape. Scalp Mountain slopes southwards into this LCA and is covered in blanket bog, some forestry and agriculture on the lower slopes.

Identification of Settlement Type (Plain)

The town is located on the border between Northern Ireland and Donegal. The town began as a traditional linear development close to Lough Foyle. The settlement has seen substantial growth in residential development in the last decade, becoming a commuter town for Derry and dealing with the overspill from the city. In terms of infrastructure the town is served by a good road network which is critical for the local and regional economy.

Townscape features



Muff displays a traditional linear development form and expresses a well defined setting and compact centre. It is another example of an area with both urban and rural landscape characteristics and competing needs in terms of housing supply and preservation of distinctive visual elements.

- Visual and physical connection with the village green in the centre of the settlement which provides a social space for the community.

- Park is enhanced by the visual links created by the strong presence of linear feature of the stone wall within the settlement.
- Pedestrian experience enhanced by the introduction of crossing points to make traffic more aware of other road users.
- Defining elements within the streetscape include an eclectic mix of vernacular buildings, a water pump located on the R239 and the impressive Killderry House.
- Dominated by active frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- Buildings frontages open directly onto the street resulting in a vibrant character.
- Spacious character of streetscape due to a relatively wide street proportion.
- Attractive pedestrian environment with streetscape elements including street lights, bollards, formal planting and street trees which contribute to a stimulating environment adding colour and life perceptually breaking up large paved areas.
- Town well served with both estate type development of housing and looser ribbon type of individual houses and bungalows to accommodate a growing population.
- Houses within this townscape are typically terraced and closely spaced giving a high sense of enclosure to the street and provides active surveillance while businesses are closed.
- Recent addition of a high quality playground on the approach road into Muff has provided a place of public amenity for local residents.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

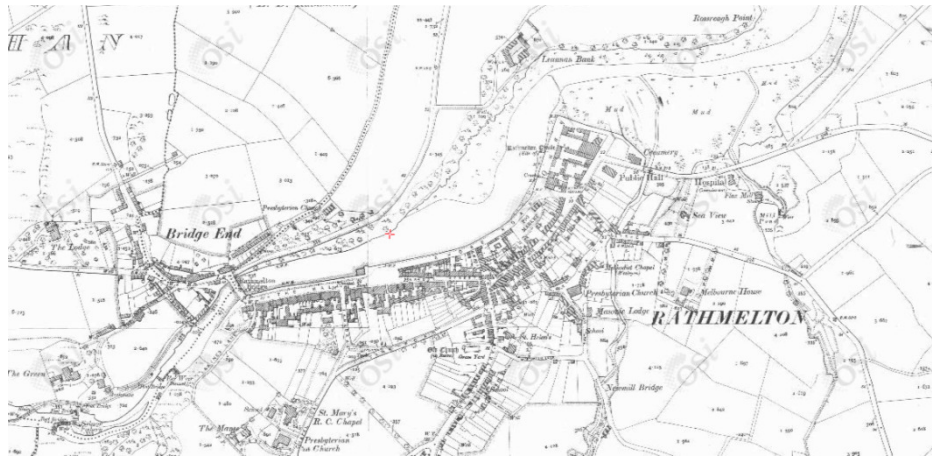
- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- The Church of Ireland on the western approach to the town and the open space around it gives a positive entrance to the town from the western approach road.
- Views projecting out to the coastline which provide a connection with the settlement and the landscape which contribute to a strong sense of place.
- Views of Scalp Mountain which retains the rural character of the area.
- Occasional views between buildings along the main street which provide glimpses of the surrounding landscape setting.
- Killderry woods in the east of the town and individual mature trees located in the village centre enhance the visual amenity of the town (pictured above) and have a particular individual value.
- View of Killderry House and grounds from the Main road.

5.15 Ramelton



Ramelton is a historic town of immense heritage, architectural and archaeological value, and was designated as a 'Heritage Town' by Donegal County Council in September 2000. Ramelton was founded as a town in the early 1600s on the site of 'O' Donnell Castle' and was an important port located at a point where the River Lennon flows into Lough Swilly. Ramelton was a prosperous town during the 18th and early 19th century during which most of its distinctive Georgian architecture was built, and continued to be the centre of governance for County Donegal until the late 19th Century.

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The historic affluence of this settlement is still evident in the present character of the area, with a very large number of historic heritage buildings throughout the town; including 30 buildings on the Record of Protected Structures and 115 structures listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. These buildings define the townscape type, impose a strong pattern on the land form and influence the definition of the character area..



There are 5 recorded archaeological Monuments located within and adjacent to the settlement boundary; this includes a protected zone of Archaeological potential covering an area of over 28 acres within the town centre as well as a Stone Sculpture a Graveyard, a Bawn and a Castle.

The River Lennon runs through the town towards Lough Swilly and is navigable along this length, the relationship between the river, the bridge and buildings adjoining which gives merge to form high quality townscape which in turn contributes to the communities' identity. Furthermore, the setting within a wooded and undulating agricultural landscape contribute to a strong uniqueness of place and individual identity for the town.

In addition the heritage walkway contributes to the natural heritage and is a way of connecting people with nature and the landscape.

There are a number of environmental designations within and around the town; these are listed below, the detail of which can be sourced at www.npws.ie .

- Lough Swilly SAC: 002287
- Lough Swilly SPA: 004075
- Lough Fern pNHA: 001162

Landscape Characteristics

This landscape type is characterised by open aspects looking over the River Lennon and natural woodland surrounding the settlement. The town is located within LCA 19 Ramelton Swilly Coast characterised by undulating agricultural lands crisscrossed by valleys formed by streams and rivers rising in higher inland areas, flowing over rolling more fertile agricultural lands towards the silty coastal edge of Lough Swilly. The rural landscape within this LCA is lush and fertile with miles of hedgerow interspersed with deciduous trees lining roads, laneways, rivers, streams, and the coastal edge and framing fields. Native and ancient woodland are evident throughout this landscape including substantial wooded areas outside Ramelton and at Ray, whilst isolated conifer plantations are sparingly located on higher less fertile lands within this area. Owing to the topography and vegetation cover, the scatter of farmhouses, farm buildings and one off residential dwellings tend to integrate well into the landscape.

A large tidal shallow estuary indents the eastern area of this area, and all the surrounding lands slope towards it; the River Leannan flows out through Ramelton, a natural port, through the deep Ramelton channel and into the Lough.

There is a heavy dispersal of deciduous and ancient woodland throughout the area, most notable along the shore and river valleys, the hillside to the north of Ramelton and at Ray wood on the northern shores of the LCA.

Identification of Settlement Type (Mealtan's Fort)

Ramelton is an historic heritage town located on the River Lennon which was founded in early 1600s on the site of 'O'Donnel Castle.' Settled by English and Scottish planters during the 17th Century Plantation, the towns' industrial and mercantile heritage can still be seen today, with a very large number of historic heritage buildings throughout the town.

Ramelton itself is a vibrant town serving a wider rural hinterland and has a wide range of services, functions and facilities. The high quality built environment and natural setting

of Ramelton as well as its historical and archaeological heritage give it strong potential to grow within the tourism sector.

Townscape features



This particular townscape offers a very distinctive in character in terms of architecture and layout with notable townscape quality along Main Street which provide an immediate sense of place and having arrived. Additional features include:

- The rich architectural and streetscape detailing, presence of landmark buildings and hierarchy of streets ensure that the environment is stimulating
- The buildings around this area provide a fine backdrop to the space itself with commercial uses fronting onto principle streets resulting in a vibrant character.
- Variation in roof lines create a stimulating streetscape
- Attractive pedestrian environment and Ramelton Heritage Walk which connects users with nature and the surrounding landscape
- Part of the Donegal cycle route.
- Considered layout exploits views of the river
- Elevation of the landscape provides open vistas
- Intimate nature of the landscape which is complemented by the presence of mature trees and shrubs.
- Unity is provided by the consistent palette of materials and time depth of protected buildings. Conventional buildings in the town blend within the surrounding landscape.
- Traditional shop fronts dominated by active frontages contribute to a sense of vitality
- River provides a tranquil setting and the stone bridge provides a seamless connection between the natural and built fabric of the town.

- Formal recreational open spaces are located along the river edge in front of residential properties
- Seating areas overlooking the River Lennon along Shore Road provides a place of public amenity for local residents and visitors to the area which takes advantage of the scenic views.
- Settlement well served with a variety of housing in close proximity to centre along with looser ribbon type development on approach roads.
- Heritage walkway is an important node for the community.
- Historic streetscape, historic buildings and the traditional historic footprint of the settlement, and in particular how it addresses the River Lennon are fundamental elements that define the character of the town.
- The River Lennon has been core to the development of the town since it was first settled industry in the town which has enabled the town to evolve. It is important to retain the rich culture and history associated with it.

Views and prospects



In terms of visual constraints whereby they may have significant adverse effects on important views the following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- Views channelled to open countryside down narrow alleyways and between buildings.
- The setting of listed buildings.
- Views from the town of the River Lennon, from both sides of the river and in particular those across the mall, into the town centre and over to the natural woodland from the quay.
- Views along the streetscapes and from within that provide interesting end vistas.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscapes.

5.16 Raphoe



Context

Raphoe is a thriving market town of immense heritage, architectural and archaeological value, and was designated as a 'Heritage Town' by Donegal County Council in September 2000. Raphoe is a typical Ulster plantation town based around a 'diamond' layout that has a unique architectural and streetscape character. The 16th Century Bishop's Palace, a protected structure, is an iconic and dominant feature within the overall landscape and is located just outside the settlement framework boundary, and constitutes an integral element of the town's identity. The plantation town of Raphoe was built on an earlier settlement; St Colmcille and St Eunan founded churches here in the 5th and 6th Centuries. There are 6 Recorded archaeological sites within the settlement boundary including a large area designated as an 'Archaeological complex' that covers an area within the east of the town centre.

Raphoe serves as an important service centre to the wider rural hinterland offering a wide range of services, facilities and functions including banks, schools, an agricultural college and a weekly livestock market in the 'mart'. The town provides a strong and versatile role meeting the demands of a contemporary society within a heritage town setting, comfortably marrying the old and the new.

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This historic town has 12 buildings on the Record of Protected Structures within the settlement boundary, and an additional 39 structures are identified on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, reflecting the extent of the quality built architectural heritage in Raphoe.

The town also has 6 recorded archaeological sites on the Record of Monuments and Places within and adjacent to the settlement boundary these include an archaeological

complex of archaeological remains, a standing stone site, Church and Graveyard, a stone sculpture and a round Tower site and the Bishops Palace. The town was served by the railway from 1909 until 1960 that extended from Strabane to Letterkenny.

Landscape characteristics

Raphoe is located within LCA 12 Lagan Valley which is a vast undulating agricultural landscape of good quality pasture and arable land characterised by large, geometric, hedge trimmed agricultural fields extending over a wide geographical area, with a long shore along Lough Swilly. Often described as a 'Plantation Landscape', this good quality farming land was confiscated from Gaelic Lords in the early 1600s and colonised by settlers from England and Scotland as part of the wider colonisation of Ulster. This LCA is permeated by a network of national, regional and county roads that connect the large farms and plantation towns of Manorcunningham, Convooy and Raphoe, within this LCA to the wider hinterland.

Plantation history is evident in the field formation within this LCA and the plantation towns and villages of Convooy, Manorcunningham and Raphoe. Set on slopes overlooking fertile valley and Estate landscape.

Identification of Settlement Type (Fort of the Hut)

Raphoe is a market town with much heritage and architectural value. Synonymous with religion, St Colmcille and St Eunan founded churches in the settlement in 5th and 6th Centuries. The settlement lends its name to the Catholic and Church of Ireland dioceses. The present town layout and urban form developed as a plantation town centred around a diamond and retains many historic heritage structures around the town. The 16th Century Bishop's Palace is key to the town's identity. The town is set within a wider landscape of archaeological and heritage significance to which it is closely related including Beltany Stone Circle (dating from 2000 BC) on the outskirts of the town. Raphoe is referred also as a plantation town imposed on a medieval centre and has many archaeological, historical and architectural assets.

Townscape features



- Townscape enhanced by the visual links created by the strong linear feature of the stone wall (pictured above) on Sheep Lane leave an everlasting imprint on the landscape which
- Houses within this townscape are typically terraced and closely spaced giving a high sense of enclosure to the street and provides active surveillance while businesses are closed.
- Spacious character of streetscape due to a relatively wide street proportion.
- Presence of terraces and semi detached properties along the main street typically 2-3 storey, contribute to a vibrant townscape.
- Churches contribute positively to the town, within the Diamond and on the Convoy road.
- Highly detailed frontages and variation in rooflines create a stimulating streetscape.
- Dominated by active frontages contributing to a sense of vitality.
- The design of the façade breaks up the elevation and has the effect of enlarging the historic footprint of the town providing a quality backdrop to the public realm.
- Soft landscaping generates a people orientated space and a place of public amenity.
- Attractive pedestrian environment with streetscape elements including street lights, bollards, formal planting and street trees which contribute to a stimulating environment adding colour and life perceptually breaking up large paved areas.
- High sense of intactness, enclosure and tranquillity through survival of boundary walls.

Views and prospects



The following perspectives are considered to be of particular importance in terms of landscape setting and the protection of views:

- Views of the settlements skyline, particularly from strategic approaches to the town from either end.
- The Bishops Palace to the east of the town.
- Views projecting out to the surrounding countryside provide a connection with the settlement and the landscape contributing to a strong sense of place.
- Occasional vistas from the town centre provide short and long views of the townscape and the surrounding landscape setting.
- The layout of the town centre and traditional streetscapes.