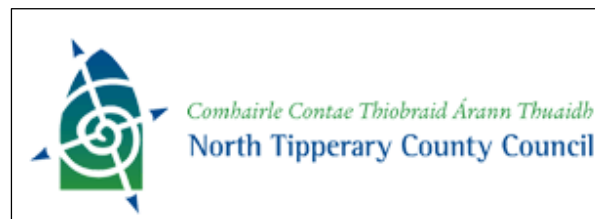


BIRDHILL

village design statement

December, 2010

"The beauty of the surroundings have a more halting effect on the motorist than the speed limit"



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Introduction

1.1 What is a Village Design Statement?

A village design statement describes the character of a settlement, highlights qualities which local residents consider worthy of protection and provides design guidelines to inform future development.

A village design statement is a document that is prepared in partnership with the local community. The document seeks to recognise local knowledge and the views of the community to encourage ownership of the document between all stakeholders.

The VDS is a contract of commitment between all the stakeholders to achieve the best possible design solutions for the community as a whole.

1.2 How was the Village Design Statement prepared?

North Tipperary County Council has prepared this Village Design Statement in consultation with the local residents. Desktop analysis, site visits and community consultation programmes were carried out.

1.3 How will the Village Design Statement work?

The Planning Process

The planning process operates within a hierarchical tier of national and local strategies and plans. The village design statement is a non-statutory document that complements higher tier plans, including primary planning documents as set out below.

National Spatial Strategy
Mid-West Regional Guidelines
County Development Plan
Western Local Area Plan
Birdhill Village Design Statement

The County Development Plan 2010-2016 set out the strategic vision for the development of North Tipperary. North Tipperary has a strong rural base, and the plan places a key importance in the sustainable development of rural villages and rural communities.

"The Council recognises the essential role that villages perform in sustaining rural communities in North Tipperary. They are the hub of community life in many areas of the County and provide the essential services to sustain community life in rural areas"

- County Development Plan, 2010-2016

The Western Local Area Plan, 2006 provides a land-use framework for the village of Birdhill, in the form of a zoning map and specific development objectives for the village. The relevant zoning maps can be found overleaf.

The Community through the consultation process have strongly put forward their desire that their village is developed in a manner which complements its existing function. The Community have also put forward that development should be in

manner that is scale appropriate, that protects its character, visual amenity and the natural landscape of the area.

This community vision is supported under land use policies and objectives in the County Development Plan, 2010-16, whereby proposals for significant housing development must be accompanied with a design statement and must conform with the DoEHLG 'Sustainable and Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities', 2009

This Village Design Statement, which will be noted by the elected members, seeks to provide supplementary planning guidelines to ensure that new development is informed by local character.

The Village Design Statement will also be a key document to inform the settlement plan for Birdhill during the preparation of the Western Local Area Plan when it is reviewed in the coming years.

The Community

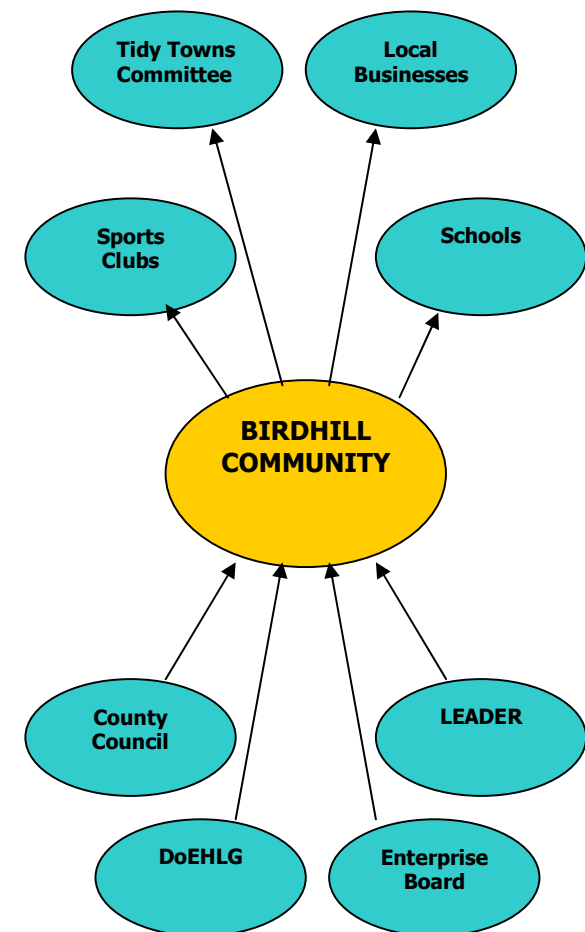
The Village Design Statement recognises that Birdhill through the Tidy Town Committee and other community

organisations has a strong history of community led development. This civic pride and community activism is also part of its identity. Initiatives such as the development of the community park, the pollagh trail, the development of the church grounds are all projects which have enhanced the built fabric and natural setting of the village.

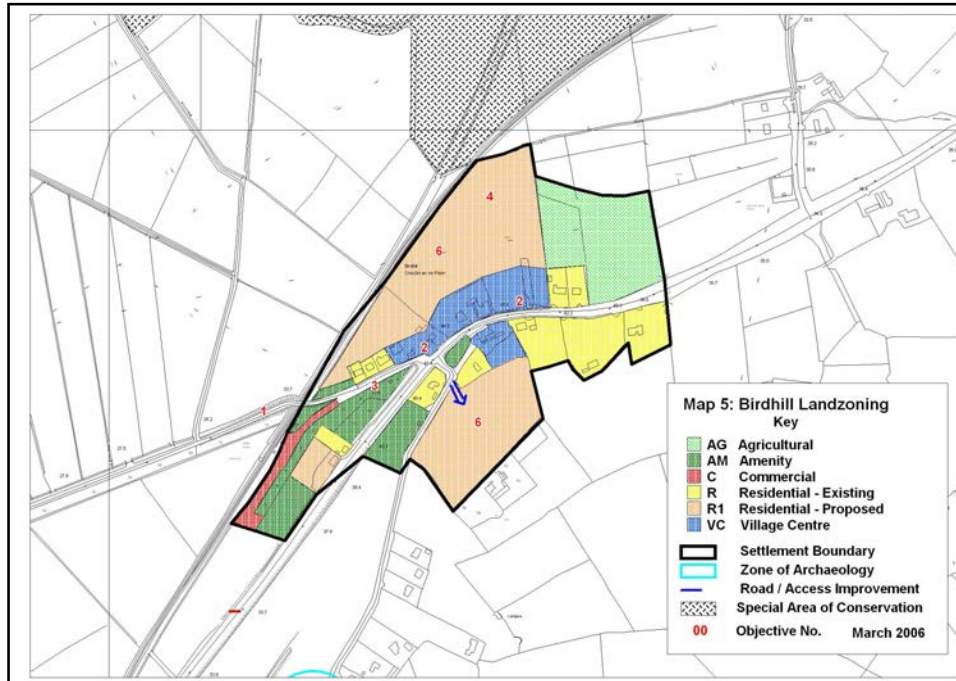
Therefore, this document also may be seen as a basis for further community led development, particularly in enhancing local amenities in a way, which builds on the local distinctiveness and character.

The diagram on this page, illustrates some of the agencies and groups, which can contribute to such development.

The future development of Birdhill...An Integrative Approach



Western Local Area Plan 2006-2012 – Birdhill Land-Use Development Framework



Zoning Plan: Birdhill School

This zoning plan includes two master plan development briefs:
 Master Plan 1: Development should consist of low density housing while preserving land ensuring the expansion of the school.
 Master Plan 2: Development should consist of low density housing while developing an amenity area, landscaped to promote active use.

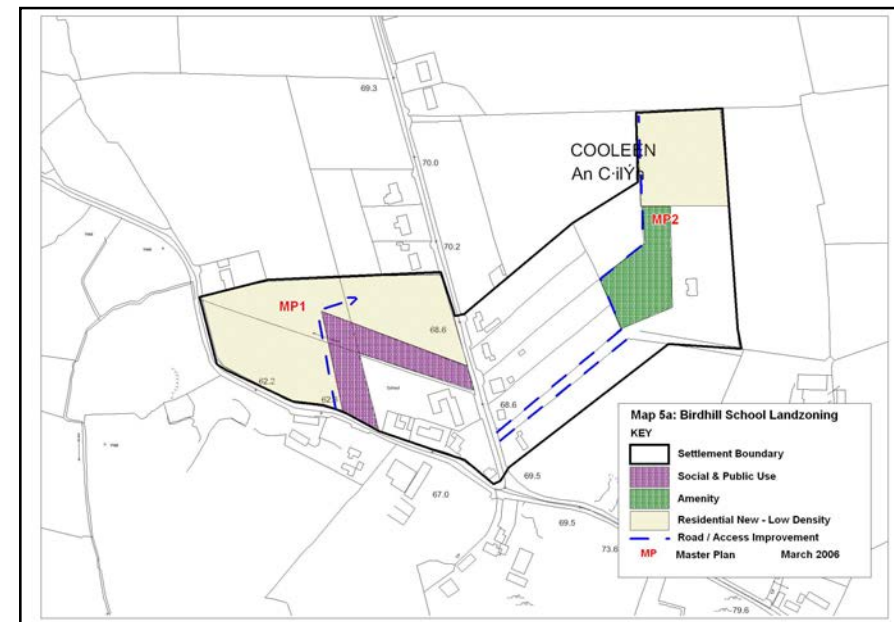
Zoning Plan: Village Core

Three key sites were identified under the Plan for development:

Site 1: Lands to the rear of Cooper’s Pub. These lands have been subject to a grant of planning permission for a mixed-use development.

Site 2: Lands to the rear of Matt the Thresher Public house and restaurant. Development brief suggests mixed-use development along the streetscape and low-density residential development to the rear.

Site 3: Lands at the old creamery site: Nursing home/retirement village is suggested as a development option.



Village Profile

2.1 Village Context

The village of Birdhill is located mid-way between Limerick City (20km) and Nenagh Town (19km).

Ballina/Killaloe is situated c. 5km to the north west while Newport is situated c. 6km to the south west.



The Community have strongly highlighted by way of submissions during the public consultation phase, that Birdhill is more than its village core. Therefore, while the document will generally focus on the natural and physical environment of the village, the document also recognises that Birdhill is a rural community, with many of its local residents living in its wider hinterland.

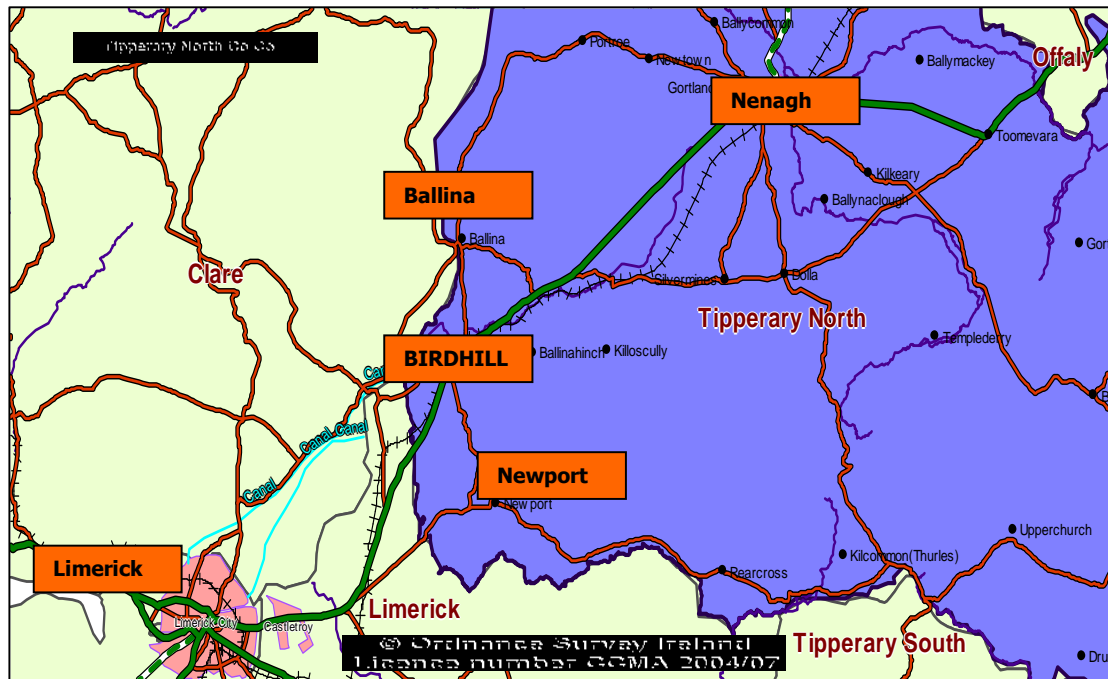
2.2 Demographic Trends

The demographic trends, illustrated by recent censuses, show a significant increase in the population of the rural hinterland of Birdhill in recent years. The population of Birdhill electoral division as outlined below has increased by 9.5% between 1996 and 2002 and by 14% between 2002 and 2006

TABLE 1: POPULATION TRENDS

Year	No. of People	% Increase
1996	537	
2002	588	9.7%
2006	671	14%

LOCATIONAL CONTEXT



2.3 Brief History of Birdhill

The Origins of the Name of Birdhill

Birdhill has many features of historical interest which allows the village to be traced back to its origins.

Birdhill, as legend tells it, got its name from a mythical encounter between Oisín and a large bird which was causing havoc in the area. The site of this encounter is 'Carrigeen Rock' at the top of the hill south of the village.

In Medieval Times the area was ruled by the O'Brien clan where a castle was built in the 1400s. The ruins of the castle were used to build the Twiss Family home during the 1800s which was known as; 'Birdhill House'. The Twiss Family was the principle landowner in Birdhill in the 1800s and 1900s and the ruins of the family home remain.

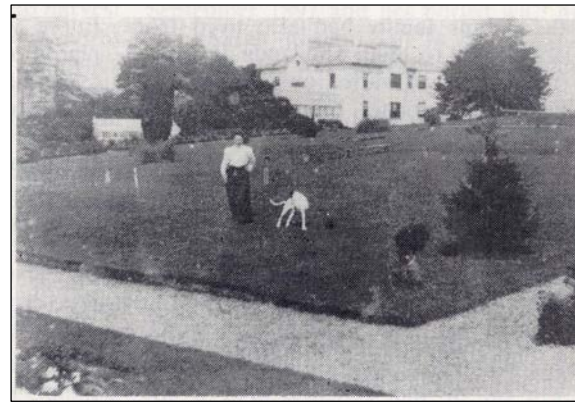


Photo of the Twiss Family Home, 1800's.

Birdhill in the early 1900s, like many rural villages had a strong agricultural base and one of the many focal points in this era was the Co-Operative Creamery.



The agricultural economy continues today.....



2.4 Village Life Today

The key role of the village is to act as a local service centre for the community of Birdhill. Further given its location on the N7 and its proximity to Lough Derg the village attracts passing trade and visitors.

Commercial and Business Service Provision

The centre of the village is served by two local pubs, a restaurant self-catering apartments and a furniture shop and form the hub of economic activity.

This service provision could be enhanced, and the village would benefit by the development of services such as a local shop, crèche and playschool, arts and crafts workshops, medical services and consultancy businesses.

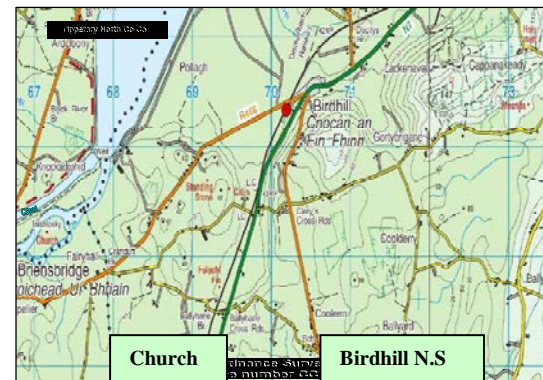
The Western Local Area Plan under the land use zoning map has identified suitable land for development of such services.

The Shannonside Business Park located on the Ballina Road, includes a range of commercial enterprises offering opportunities for local employment. This site is identified as a strategic employment location under the County Development Plan 2010, which will into the future facilitate its future expansion. Its location outside the village envelope ensures that it does not impact adversely on the traditional urban grain and visual amenities of the village.



Community Service Provision

Key community buildings are located in the wider hinterland of the village. The local church and graveyard is located on the N7 approximately a mile from the village, while the local primary school is located on the Newport Road.



The are no community facilities in Birdhill: the Village Design Statement should support the provision of services such as a meeting room for community and voluntary groups, a heritage centre, or tourism information centre.
- Community Submission



Social and community provision could also be enhanced by looking at ways to improve facilities for children, teenagers, adults and the elderly including indoor and outdoor community and recreational facilities.

Water Services Infrastructure

There is no public sewerage treatment plant in the village and individual houses and commercial businesses are dependant on the use of septic tanks or proprietary waste water treatment plants.

The development of a public sewerage system and plant is currently beyond the resource capabilities of the North Tipperary County Council. However, the mixed-use development permitted on the Newport Road made provision for a treatment plant designed with a treatment capacity for the village. Therefore, in the long term this may provide an opportunity to address current sewerage deficiencies.

The village is served by a water supply from the Newport Regional Water Supply Scheme. The up-grade of this scheme, is included in the 'Water Services Investment Programme 2010-2012' for North Tipperary County Council.

Transport

Birdhill as outlined in the introduction to this document has a 'Strategic Location'. What makes the village strategic in nature

is that it benefits from various transport nodes: Road, Rail and Bus Services.

Road Infrastructure

The village is well known for its current location on the N7, main Limerick to Dublin carriageway. Birdhill has benefited commercially from this location; however, the residents have also had to be tolerant of high traffic volumes.

The new opening of the M7 will bring the 'best of both worlds' to the village. Birdhill has benefited from a new link road, which provides a new 'vista' coming into the village but also presents an opportunity for Birdhill to become promoted as a tourism 'Gateway' to Lough Derg.

The de-classifying of the N7 to a regional road will significantly reduce noise and disturbance and will allow local residents to 're-claim' the village.



The village as identified by the community in submissions to the document would benefit from traffic calming scheme a pedestrian crossing and an extension to the footpath network in the village. The development of a traffic management scheme is outside the scope of this document and would be subject to local authority resources.

However, the document strongly encourages that any traffic calming scheme is complemented by high quality materials, paving and planting serves both a traffic safety function and a means of enhancing the visual amenities of the village.



The document also supports the new provision of street lighting which should be traditional in design, to reflect existing traditional style used for lighting on premises in the village.



Example of Traditional Street Lighting

Rail and Bus Services

The village has a key advantage in being located on the Limerick-Ballybrophy-Dublin railway line which provides daily services.

The village, given its location on a national route, benefits from very regular bus services to nearby settlement and beyond.

The maintenance and enhancement of these services is important to the economic and social sustainability of the settlement.



Landmarks in Birdhill



Village Structure

3.1 Shape of the Village

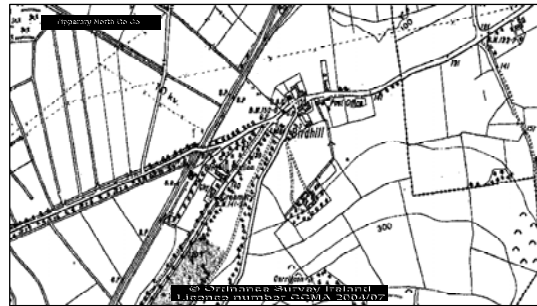
Birdhill has predominantly a linear shape, the central core of the village has developed along the N7 and from there the village expanded outwards along the routes of the Newport road R504, the R494 (Ballina Road) and the R466 (Coosane/Shannon Crossing).

“Historically Birdhill developed as a consequence of the transport network, both road and rail”

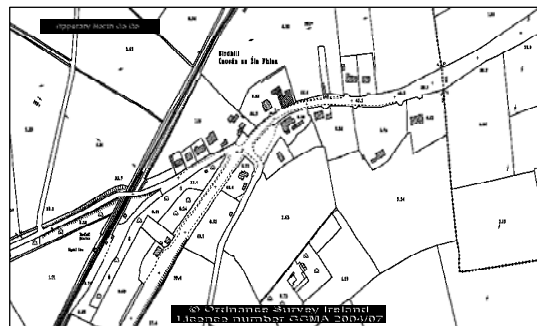
The village core unlike most traditional villages is not formed by a ‘street’ but rather a series of detached buildings with a mix of residential and commercial units.

It is noteworthy that the built fabric of the village core has not altered significantly over the past 100 years, as illustrated by the historical and most recent ordinance survey maps of the settlements.

O.S. Map, Birdhill, c. 1900



O.S. Map, Birdhill, c.2007



3.2 Buildings and Structures of Architectural and Historical Heritage

Birdhill despite its scale has many features of architectural and historical interest,

which provide a link to its past and contributes to its character.

The Planning Authority is required under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to keep a record of protected structure and such structures are included in the County Development Plan, 2010-2016.

Protected Structures are defined under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) as a structures which are "of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest".

Under the legislation, many minor works to buildings or structures do not normally require planning permission. However, for a protected structure, such works can be carried out only if works would not affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special character.

All owners of structures protected under the plan should consult with the planning authority prior to carrying out works to such properties, whereby the Planning Authority will provide advice and guidance on the work and outline any necessary procedures which need to be followed.

Building considered worthy of protection and other buildings/features of note in and around the village are illustrated below.

Browser's Furniture Company Protected Structure (S 711)



The building is as a detached three-bay two-storey former RIC barracks, built c. 1820.

The external finishes of the building include an M-profile slate roof with stone eaves course, rubble limestone walls with dressed voussoirs over windows.

Matt The Threshers Protected Structure (S712)



This well established building has been operating as licensed premises since 1890 and has served many purposes through the years. In the past it has served as the village post office, bakery, grocery, pub and hardware outlet.

The Coopers

This prominent village building has passed through six different families in the 20th century before the Cooper family purchased the establishment in 1987. It was heralded to be a frequent resting spot

of Daniel O'Connell when he travelled from Kerry to Dublin.



Birdhill Co-op Creamery



This once flourishing enterprise served 100 local milk suppliers in the region. Unfortunately the service amalgamated with larger conglomerates and eventually closed completely.

Birdhill Railway Station Protected Structure (S 709)



The above historic single arch limestone bridge dates back to 1860 and is used to carry the roadway over the railway lines. Other structures of interest in the vicinity include the signal box and platform.

Cast Iron Water Pump Protected Structure (DPS 710)

This cast iron pump was the communal water source and played an important functional and social role in the village. Dating back to 1870 it illustrates the high

standard of industrial design achieved during the 19th century.



Milestone Protected Structure (S708)

This historical reminder of the coaching era in Ireland indicates the number of miles to Nenagh, Dublin and Limerick from that point. During this time the post office operated a coach-based system of postal distribution.



Community Sculpture

This beautiful example of modern art was erected in 2002 and is located in the village green. It recalls the legend of how Birdhill got its name. On top of the stainless steel structure a depiction of a wounded bird is presented. This symbolizes the mythical slaying of a large bird by Oisín of Na Fianna.



3.3 A Changing Environment

The introduction to this section highlighted that Birdhill has remained largely undeveloped in the last century. Developments which have been constructed have consisted of detached dwellings on large plots, such as the example presented below.



In 2009 a significant residential development with associated commercial uses was permitted on the Newport Road. This development if constructed will change both the urban grain and social fabric of the village.

Local residents during the workshop process raised concerns that such a large scale development may negatively impact

on the village. However, it is hoped that the new development will contribute toward the vibrancy of the settlement and in turn will aid the delivery of commercial and community services. The scheme as granted permission was architecturally designed and incorporates a range of housing units, retail units, village green and crèche.

Scheme Layout



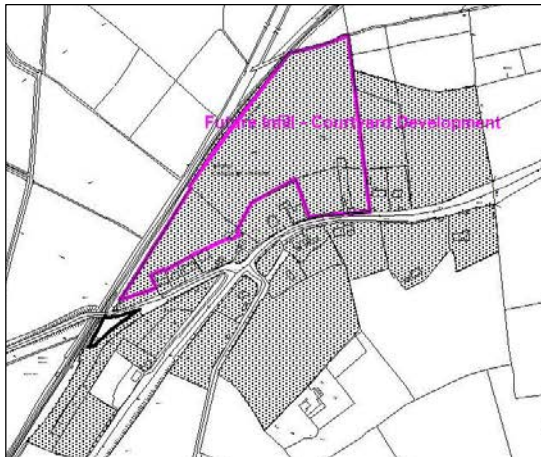
Masterplan



3.4 Future Development – New Opportunities

Lands in the heart of the village, as outlined in the map below, provide an important opportunity for an appropriate village scheme.

The purpose of the section is to present how the site should be approached from a



design perspective and present ideas to promote high quality design in character with the existing village. However, it is not the purpose that such ideas would be prescriptive and the document encourages designers to present a range of potential

options. The document also encourages local consultation to establish the views of the community and local consensus.

The Character Appraisal

The first stage of any development proposal should be a Character Appraisal of the site. This character appraisal should take reference from local characteristics as highlighted in this village design statements.

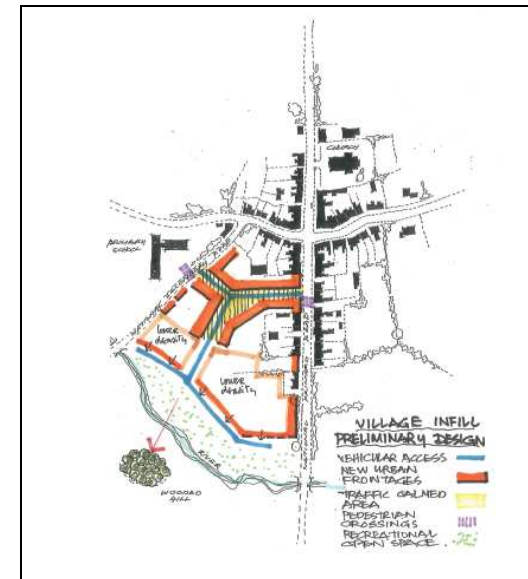
Character Appraisal

- Survey of Existing Landscape Features and Contours*
- Survey of Built Structures on the Site*
- Visual and photographic survey of local architecture types and materials*
- Analysis of Existing layouts and arrangements of buildings*
- Photographic survey of views both into and out of the site – highlighting visual links*

The Concept Proposal

The best way to come to the best possible design solution is to sketch up a series of options that demonstrate different interpretations of the design brief.

Below is one example, taken from the Urban Design Manual as published by the DoEHLG, 2009 as to how a street frontage site and backlands can be developed while maintaining the urban grain of a village.



Design Brief for Development

- A traditional streetscape which maintains where possible the front boundary wall and trees.
- Buildings which respect the scale, massing and design of existing buildings in the village.
- The creation of a civic space, designed for active public use.
- Protection of public vistas to Lough Derg.
- Retention of Existing Structure on the site.
- Landscaping of native species and incorporating flower beds indicative of the area.



Traditional Streetscape, painted render



Creation of public spaces



Rural Streetscape, framed by front boundary wall.



Retention of Buildings

Traditional Design, Style Natural Materials

Finishes: Stonework and Render



Windows



Roof Finishes and Chimneys



Signage



Surfacing/Boundary
Treatment



Landscape Setting

4.1 Broad Landscape Setting

Birdhill is located among rolling countryside of gentle and steeper hillsides. The village boasts panoramic views of Lough Derg to the north. Deciduous and coniferous woodlands obscure points of the village, however, as you travel through, the landscape opens out to give exceptional vantage points of the wider countryside.

4.2 Important Views and Vistas

Birdhill has a strong and intimate relationship with its wider rural landscape setting which gives rise to important views and vistas. Views and vistas of particular importance, which include all approach roads to the village have been identified and are included in a map at the end of this section.

“The beauty of the surroundings may have a more halting effect on the motorist than the speed limit.”

“The approach roads to Birdhill signal a unique experience. Birdhill happens so quickly and has disappeared so quickly that the importance of these approach roads cannot be over stressed”

“The Newport Road is also a Gem.”

“The railway bridge announces Birdhill from the Clare side.”

- Tidy Towns Adjudication Report 2007

4.3 Important Open Spaces and Walkways

Birdhill Community Park

The village of Birdhill is home to attractive open spaces including Pairc an Éin Fhinn (Birdhill Community Park) and the Picnic area. The park was developed by the community on council land in 2003 and financed by Birdhill Tidy Village Committee. The park is funded through a range of fund raising activities and donations and is also supported by Mulcair Credit Union.



The Pollagh Trail

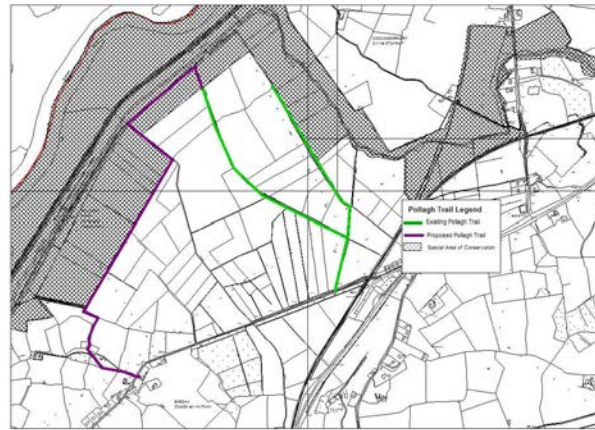
The Pollagh trail, developed by the Birdhill Tidy Village Committee is located off the O'Briens Bridge Road. The 4km trail winds through an area of low lying meadow land.



The walkway not only provides a passive recreational facility, it also provides an educational facility with information boards along the way depicting flora and fauna indigenous to the area.

The Tidy Towns Committee was recently given grant approval by LEADER for the further development of this walkway. The works, which have been completed, have created a continuous loop leading to the Shannon Callows and back to the regional road.

Pollagh Trail

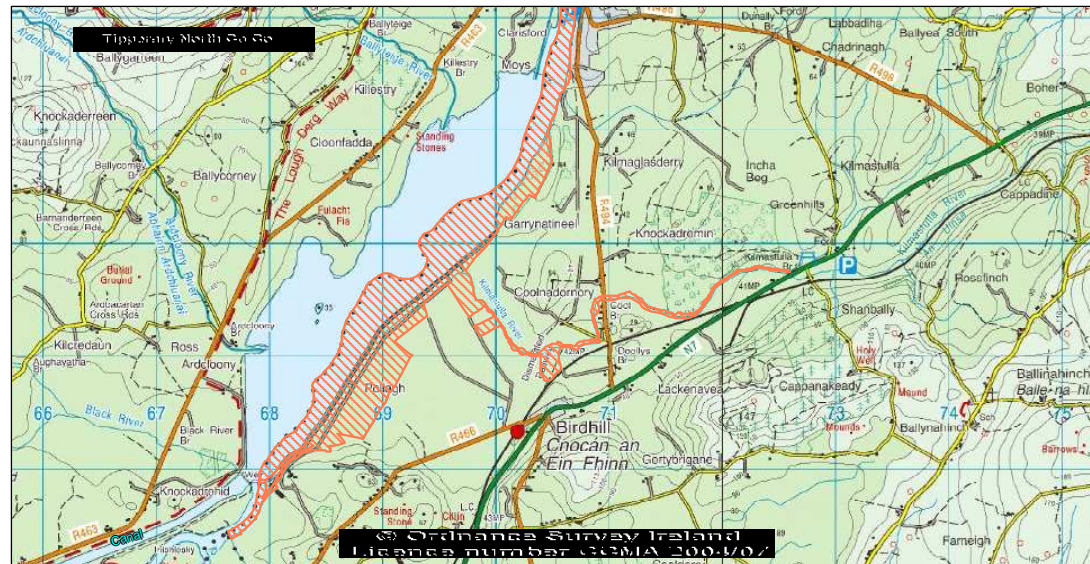


Lower Shannon SAC

Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation

The freshwater lower reaches of the River Shannon at the mouth of Lough Derg is part of the 'Lower River Shannon' Special Area of Conservation as designated by the DoEHLG and protected under the EU Habitats Directive.

The site is of great ecological interest as it contains a significant number of habitats and species listed on Annex I and Annex II of the EU Habitat Directive. Development proposed in this area or development in proximity to this area which may have an impact on these protected habitats should



not be carried out without prior consultation with the Planning Authority and the National Parks and Wildlife Section of the DoEHLG.

4.4 Hedgerows and Planting

The planting in and around Birdhill is typical of many agricultural landscapes. Scattered woodland and a mosaic of mixed size fields with hedgerows and hedgerow trees, contribute strongly to the essence of the area.

Hedgerows are important wildlife habitats and are home to a range of wild flowers, fruiting trees and shrubs. They also support invertebrates such as butterflies, provide a place of nesting for two thirds of bird species and support other mammals like hedgehogs and badgers.



.....*The Flowers of Birdhill*

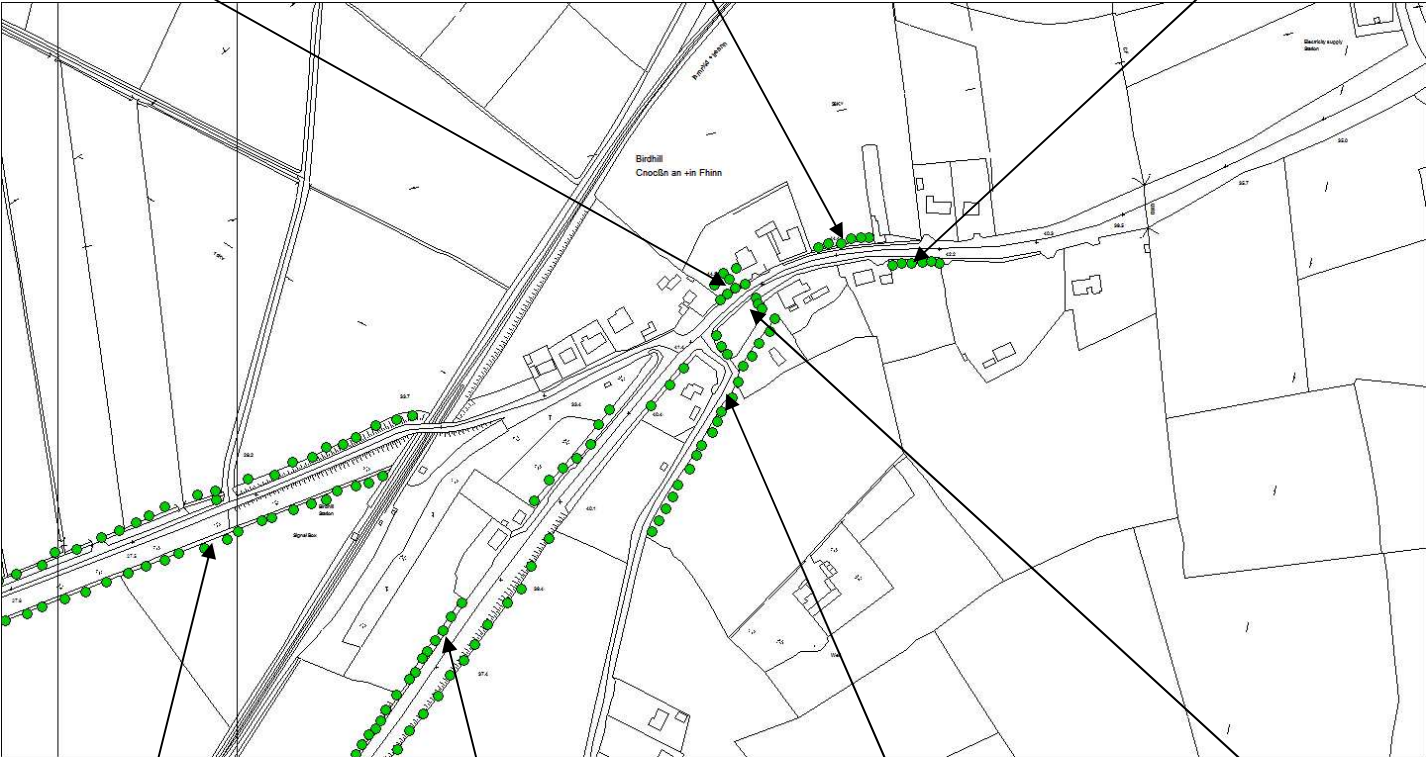
The planters, flower beds and baskets that dot the village have become very much part of the physical and natural landscape and have contributed greatly to the village's continued success in the annual Tidy Town Competition.

The importance of natural hedgerows, landscaping and hedgerows and the array of flower, is best summed up by the Tidy Town's Adjudication report in 2009:

"Your poor adjudicator has run out of superlatives to appropriately describe your success...The sheer volume of grass cutting, planting, shrubs and colourful flowers is almost overwhelming"



IMPORTANT TREE STRANDS



4.5 The Roundabout: An Opportunity for a New Public Vista...

The community during the consultation process identified the new roundabout on the approach to the east of the village as a significant opportunity to enhance the local landscape.

The design statement supports the development of the roundabout and recognises the opportunity to create a new entrance point and public vista both to the village and the Lough Derg area.

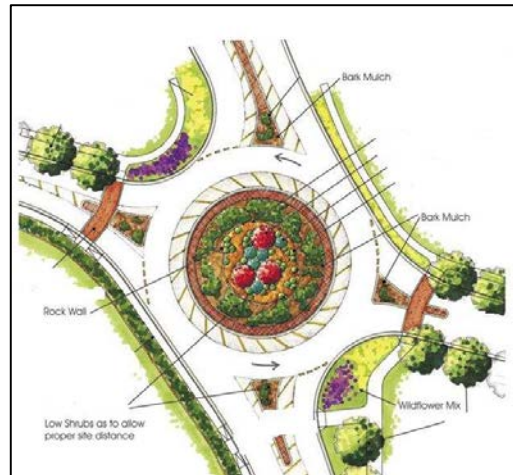
Urban Design Objectives for the new roundabout:

- Creation of a focal point when viewed approaching and leaving the village
- Design to incorporate a local referenced public art feature.
- Hard and soft landscaping of native species which promotes pedestrian linkages and safety.

The Existing Roundabout



Roundabout Landscaping Design, should also consider the approach roads....



Use of Public Art

Public Art has been very successfully used, in many locations to enhance roundabout features. Below are some examples, which while site specific, provide an illustration of how a traffic management mechanism can become something much more.

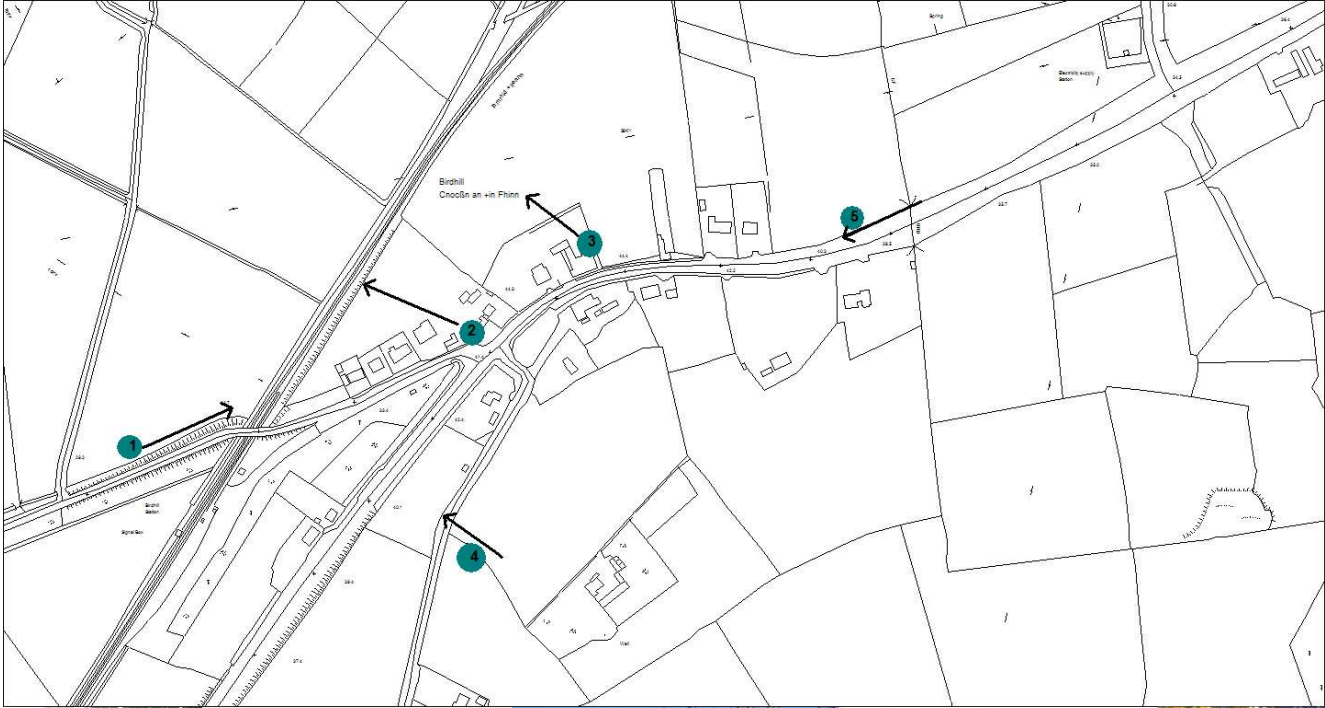


'Polestar' in Letterkenny
Artist: Locky Morris



'Journey's End', Clackmannan, UK
Artist: Andy Scott

Key Views and Vistas



1. Approach from O'Briens Bridge Road



2. View to west from junction of O'Briens bridge road and the N7



3. View of Lough Derg



4. View to the north west from the Newport road



5. Birdhill Village Sign at approach

Design Guidelines

5.1 Introduction

The design guidelines are based on an analysis of the visual, structural and built quality and characteristics which contribute to Birdhill's identity. The design guidelines aim to provide a framework for the preservation and enhancement of the important character features identified in the VDS and seek to ensure that new proposals are based on a considered understanding of the village's unique character.

5.2 Built Environment and Streetscape

Building Maintenance

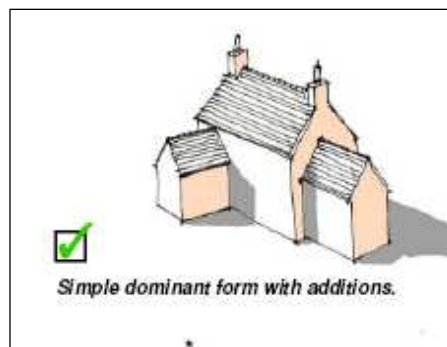
Building maintenance plays an essential role in ensuring the built tradition of the village is protected. All owners of buildings play a vital role through regular painting, retention of boundaries and original

features and enhancement through flower planting etc.

DG1 Works undertaken to an existing building should respect and harmonise with the existing structure, such as the replication of the windows, doors, external finishes, roof proportions.

Extensions

DG2 Extensions should be designed to respect the design form and scale of the primary structures. Combining different architectural styles should be avoided which would create a visually disharmonious structure.



DG3 External finishes should use matching materials in a style to complement the existing structure.

Signage and Lighting

DG4 New shop fronts should be sympathetic to the traditional character of the building and to the streetscape.

DG5 Signs should be hand painted. Plastic signage is discouraged. A proliferation of advertising signs should be avoided as it can detract from the overall structure.



Hand painted signs which can be easily removed protect the character of the buildings

DG6 External lighting of building and signs should be avoided. However, subtle lighting with unobtrusive fixtures and fittings may be considered for key commercial buildings.

Street Furniture

Street furniture includes items such as litter bins, benches, bollards, railings, lighting, signposts etc., found within the public realm of streets and roads. Such items are generally owned and managed by different bodies, which can give rise to a lack of co-ordination and their placement can be over-influenced by meeting road standards rather than pedestrian requirements.

DG7 Birdhill currently has a small number of benches throughout the village as well as an attractive cast iron pump. A coherent palette of street furniture should be agreed, installed and retained so to avoid an uncoordinated appearance.



5.3 Landscape Setting and Open Space

DG8 Design proposals for new development should respect local landscape characteristics of the site. Developments should work with the existing contours of the slope and established boundaries. Developments should be adapted to the site – not the site adapted to the development.

DG9 Developments should ensure that key views as identified in the statement are protected and incorporated as aspects in any proposed development.

DG10 Development should incorporate the planting of native species (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, ash, oak)

DG11 The important open spaces and scenic routes in Birdhill need continued appropriate management and maintenance.

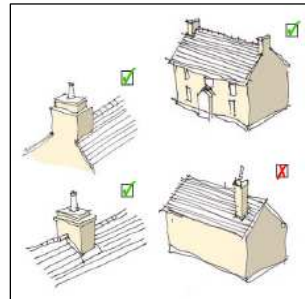
DG12 The hedgerows on rural approach roads and lands should be protected through appropriate management. Hedgerows should not be cut back or trimmed during the bird breeding season, i.e. from the beginning of March to the end of August.

5.4 Design and Implementation of New Development

DG13 The established patterns of development within the village should be used to guide the design of new development proposals. Careful consideration should be paid to complementing the pattern of plot arrangements, building lines, setback levels, plot enclosure, building scale and massing, proportion of architectural features and the height/pitch and ridge of roofs.

DG14 Established traditional methods of construction and architectural detailing should be respected and used as appropriate for new development within or near the historical parts of Birdhill, including the design of roofs, windows, doors, chimneys and boundary features (such as stone walls) and the use of appropriate local materials. Development should aim to

visually and physically complement the established "traditional" character of these areas.



DG15 Materials used in any proposed new development should fit in with the prevailing character of the village and be designed to reflect and respect nearby colours, textures, shapes, styles and proportions.

DG16 Provision should be made within new development proposals to use any existing but redundant buildings that contribute significantly to the village's character. Such buildings and features should be

sympathetically restored back into active use.

DG17 Monotonous repetition of standard housing types and designs should be avoided. Variation in new building design should be encouraged within defined limits and based upon a common design "theme" appropriate to the location. All new development should complement the character of Birdhill and contribute towards the village's distinctive sense of place.

DG18 Any new agricultural or industrial buildings should be carefully sited and designed to reduce their apparent mass so as to minimise impact upon the wider landscape setting of the village and should be of appropriate height and scale to blend into the wider landscape setting. Large shed structures should be discouraged as being of an inappropriate scale within the village context and setting of Birdhill.

DG19 The total energy used in development should be minimised as far as possible to encourage sustainable development practices in line with government initiatives and current legislation. This should encourage the use of locally sourced, environmentally friendly and energy efficient materials for construction as well as to minimise waste and pollution.

5.5 Detail of Construction

The detail and finishes of a building are fundamental to the overall success of a building within its environment although frequently over looked and under thought. Materials which are traditionally prevalent in the area should be used, the use of an inappropriate mix building materials may cause visual overload.

Buildings: Form, Scale and finishes

Traditional buildings in Birdhill demonstrated basic functional scale and little or no decorative detailing.

Roof Finishes

DG20 Roofs of Birdhill tend to be simple shapes: hipped or gabled with a general pitch of 35-45°. Blue-grey slate is a dominate roofing material in Birdhill.

DG21 The construction of roof edges is critical to the successful appearance of a house. Minimal eaves and verges are low maintenance and give new houses a more immediate connection with neighbouring buildings and maintain a rural vernacular context.

DG22 Simple black round plastic rainwater goods are recommended. Such finishes pose attractive lines reminiscent of cast iron and do not become discoloured over time. White plastic or square section rainwater food should be avoided.

DG23 Chimney stacks are an integral element of a house. Rural chimneys were generally strong in appearance and were positioned through and across the ridge. Chimneys positioned off the ridge, with a thin appearance should be avoided.

DG24 Avoid the use of white PVC side cladding, box fascias and soffits to dormers. Stained timber or slates are a more attractive alternative.

Windows and Doors

Windows of Birdhill traditionally were sliding sash, had a vertical emphasis and were of timber construction. Dormers are a feature in the architectural landscape of Birdhill.

DG25 Large openings should generally be avoided. New buildings should have a high solid to void ratio. Openings should be arranged to maximise the high solid to void appearance where it matters

i.e. living areas should have the more sun



- Vertical emphasis
- Timber Sash window
- Substantial Sill

DG26 Doors should be hardwood timber, in sheeted or panelled design. The front door can be used to enrich a dwelling of simple structure and finish.

External Finishes

DG27 Plastered or wet dash walls have dominated the materials used in Birdhill's buildings and today remain the most versatile and appropriate finish.

DG28 The use of brick and stone cladding should be avoided as generally appear fussy and present an overcomplicated façade.

Boundaries, Entrances and Gates

Boundaries, entrances and gates introduce new development. The treatments of these elements play an important role in the integration of new development in Birdhill.

DG29 The retention of hedgerows and trees softens the visual impact of new development on the landscape. Augmentation of hedgerows and planting of additional trees significantly enhances the setting of new development.

DG30 The planting of Native species (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, ash, oak) should be encouraged in Birdhill

DG31 Stone walls and piers are a distinctive feature of Birdhill. Existing stone walls should be preserved. New stone walls should be of local, natural materials. Elaborate frills and brick mixed with stonework



should be avoided.

DG32 Wrought and cast iron gates were commonly used in Birdhill and fussy and over elaborate entrance gates, lights and frill should be avoided.

Useful Document and Reference Websites

Design Documents

North Tipperary Rural Design Guidelines, 2009

Beat Practice Urban Design Manual, 2009

Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009

Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2004

Useful websites

North Tipperary County Council – www.tipperarynorth.ie

Birdhill Tidy Towns - www.birdhilltidytowns.ie

Department of the Environment and Local Government - www.environ.ie

National Parks and Wildlife - www.npws.ie

The Heritage Council - www.heritagecouncil.ie

North Tipperary Leader Partnership - www.ntlp.ie