

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann Thuaidh
North Tipperary County Council



PUCKANE

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

DEC 2007

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is a VDS?

The village of Puckane has a distinctive and diverse character, which is highly valued by its local residents. As the village continues to evolve, this process of change needs to be positively managed so that the unique qualities that contribute to the village's identity can be protected and enhanced, whilst managing future growth and new development.

A 'Village Design Statement' (or VDS for short) provides an account of the distinctive character of the village. The VDS helps all those involved with the future planning and enhancement of the village to understand what is important to local people and what aspirations the community has for the village.

Through a series of Design Guidelines, the VDS identifies what is worthy of protection and where improvements should be made. The VDS reflects the views and requirements of Puckane's residents who participated in the VDS process.

Although non-statutory, this VDS shall be noted by North Tipperary County Council as supplementary planning guidance for

use alongside the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans. The VDS may also be used by the community to approach various funding organisations to fulfill various community aspirations and desires.

1.2 Who is the VDS for?

This VDS is a valuable resource of information about Puckane for reference by individual householders and businesses, builders, developers, architects and statutory bodies.

1.3 How will the VDS work?

This guidance should be viewed as a stimulus for encouraging any new development or other proposals to respect and enhance, rather than compete with, the valued character features that define the village. Rather, the document highlights the unique qualities of architectural, historical and natural importance that contribute to the village's character, and provides broad design guidelines to both safeguard its distinctive character and enhance quality of life within the village.

These recommendations should be viewed as a stimulus for encouraging any new development or other proposals

to respect and enhance, rather than compete with, the valued character features that define the village. This will require careful consideration of how key elements (such as building design and materials, street and plot arrangements, road and footpath design, street furniture, open spaces and landscape features, and important views) inter-relate at different levels of scale, and how they contribute to the wider context of the character of the village as a whole.

1.4 How has the VDS been produced?

This VDS has been produced through an extensive community consultation programme, including an introductory meeting, community workshop, and questionnaires. This has been in partnership with the residents of Puckane, North Tipperary County Council, and with the support of The Heritage Council.



Puckane community workshop

2.0 VILLAGE PROFILE

2.1 Location and Profile

A little inland from Lough Derg is Puckane (*Pocán*), an attractive and busy village. Its traditional style cottages are interesting and attractive.

Puckane is a village in northern County Tipperary, lying 10km north of Nenagh and close to Lough Derg and Dromineer.

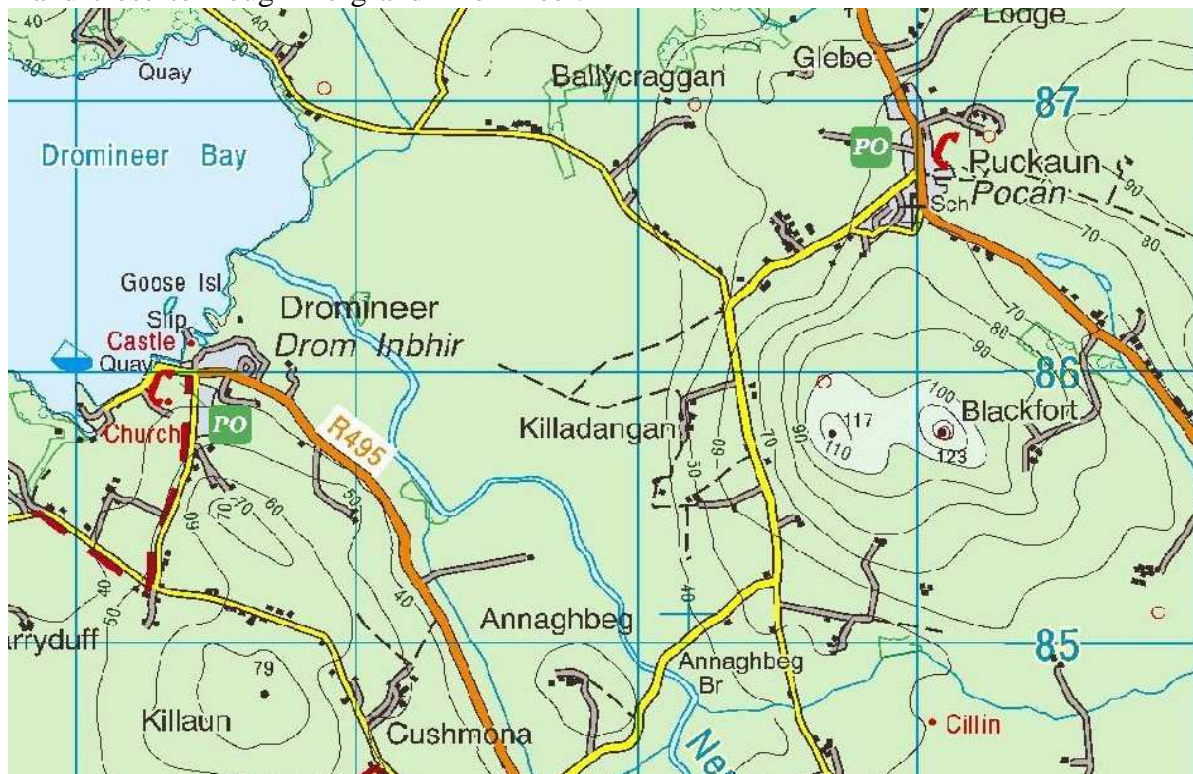
Puckane nestles between the unspoilt shores of Lough Derg and the bustling shopping town of Nenagh.

The songwriter Shane MacGowan spent much of his childhood here and has immortalised a number of local places in his songs. The village was also mentioned in a well-known Christy Moore song.

It should not be confused with the eponymous fictional village in Spike Milligan's novel *Puckoon*, though the novel and the village were probably both named after Puckane.

It is also sometimes (though rarely) spelt as *Puckaun* and is known as *Pocán* in the Irish language.

2.2 Population



| Table 1: Population | | | | |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | 1991 | 1996 | 2002 | 2006 |
| Puckane* | | 256 | 269 | 239 |
| Knigh DED | 620 | 593 | 678 | 703 |
| Western Area | 6,146 | 6,487 | 7,449 | 8772 |
| North Tipperary | 57,854 | 58,021 | 61,068 | 66,023 |

* Figures quoted from local historian Daniel Grace

Table 1 shows the percentage population increase for Knigh District Electoral Division (DED) between 1991 and 2006. This demonstrates that during this period the population of the Knigh DED grew by 13.4%. In fact there has been a higher increase in population in Knigh between

the 1996/2002 Census (14.3%) and the 2002/2006 Census (3.7%).

The 2006 census reports a population of 239 for the village of Puckane which is a decrease of 11.2% from the previous census.

2.3 Brief History

The village was the first to be chosen in North Tipperary for the development of twelve Rent an Irish Cottage units in the early 1970s. This development led to a Craft Shop being developed a little north of the village, which is still vibrant. The stone entrance once served as the main entrance to the former Johnstown House, built in 1770s and long demolished.



Early map of Puckane

The church was built in 1859 and has a Harry Clarke studio stained glass window of interest. In 1957 Puckane Grotto was blessed.

Peg's Cottage has stood at the heart of the sleepy, tranquil Tipperary village of Puckane for over 300 years.

Commercial interests are strong in the village, which is now one of a few with its own main dealer garage. The village also has two pubs and local grocery.



Old photo of residence

2.4 Village Life today

Given that the settlement is a popular tourist destination it is subject to the seasonal fluctuations associated with tourism. Puckane is a difference place in

the winter than in the summer. While there may be a great many visitors during the month May to September, the village is quieter during the other months of the year. This should be respected in the scale and type of development to be undertaken in the future.

2000 Map of Puckane



Puckane has a thriving community spirit, and it is clear the residents take great pride in the unspoilt nature of the village and the surrounding landscape.

Sports and recreation are well catered for in the village. The surrounding landscape is also suited for extensive walks, cycling, horse riding, and fishing in the lake.

2.5 Facilities and Services

Currently existing in the village are:

Residents

B & B's

Pubs

Public Phone Kiosk

Post Box

Tidy Towns/Community Association

Sporting Facilities

Recycling Facilities

Tourist Facilities

School

Church

Kennedys Pub as designed and crafted by Craft Shop



Post office, petrol station and banking facilities can all be found within short distances, and generally the residents do

not mind traveling to use these. Were the village to expand, additional facilities may need to be considered.

2.6 Environmental Issues

There are recycling facilities in Puckane. Currently residents can also use the facilities in the next village.

Pollution on land and in the river should be prevented. Vehicle emissions and air quality should also be monitored.

As in most villages the existing sewerage system has limited capacity. This is of serious concern to the community. Prior to the addition of new housing to the village sewage issues need to be addressed.

The application of sustainable design principles, which recognise energy efficiency, lifetime cost of materials, non-toxicity, wastewater treatment, and water and waste reduction will produce buildings that are environmentally friendly. Guidelines on environmentally friendly buildings cannot be all-inclusive, but aim to pinpoint the main considerations for the energy conscious architect/designer and user.

The objective is to provide a template for future sustainable rural development. The application of appropriate planning and design strategies can significantly lower energy consumption. This can be achieved by reducing heat loss, providing ventilation control and the installation of efficient heating systems which take account of climate, site and the use of sustainable alternatives to conventional building methods. The end result can be a superior home that is more comfortable and convenient, with significantly reduced energy costs and which aims to be non-polluting.

2.7 Employment

There are a number of small businesses in the area, but most residents commute elsewhere for work. Zoning of land within the settlement plan for Puckane under the Western Area Local Area Plan to allow for employment uses such as commercial facilities enhance amenities for locals and tourists.

The need for facilities may be assessed in terms of the scale and character of the village and the amenities provided in the near by areas of Dromineer and Nenagh. These facilities may include health and beauty, heritage centre, gallery, café,

antiques, bicycle shop, angling shop, open farm, workshops for fly fishing, painting, etc.

KEY POINTS

- **Thriving active community.**
- **Current limited services and facilities. Any new development will need to include additional services.**
- **Environmentally conscious community.**

3.0 VILLAGE STRUCTURE

3.1 Shape of the village

This is a historic village with a well defined and distinctive character and is centre around the core of the village. The physical character of the village is dominated by cottages, stone wall boundaries, mature trees and holiday developments (see following map).

Puckane’s overabundance of traditional style cottages are interesting and attractive. The village was the first to be chosen in North Tipperary for the development of twelve Rent an Irish Cottage units in the early 1970s.

The village is fairly tightly developed around its centre. However, local people consider the village to extend much farther to the southwest to include the GAA grounds and the adjacent residential development and southeast where there are ribbons of residential development.

3.2 Street pattern and built form

Generally the original houses form a small terrace, and one and two storey dwellings front the road. Their vernacular style and arrangement along the street is key to the character of the village centre.

Newer residential development takes the form of detached houses within cul-de-sacs. A line of one-off detached houses has recently been built on the approach road to the village.

The streets in the core of the village maintain their original layout and are often quiet busy because they are through routes for traffic. Also, current parking arrangements are ad hoc. The existing on-street parking tends to conflict with pedestrians in nodal areas; near the two pubs and at the school and Catholic Church.

“We greatly cherish our village and its quality of life and we would like to maintain this and enhance it for future generations”.

Quote from Submission on Issues Paper.

3.3 Scale and Dominance

The village is currently developed at a low density and most of the buildings have a traditional vernacular character.

The traditional buildings of the village sit on the road, with some just set back

from the road. The more modern houses are detached and semi-detached and set back further to accommodate parking.

3.4 New Development Areas

Several fields are zoned for development in the area, although this is dependent on landowner’s intentions and the planning application process which is open to the local community participation.

New development should respect the traditional style and structure of the village, and follow good practice.

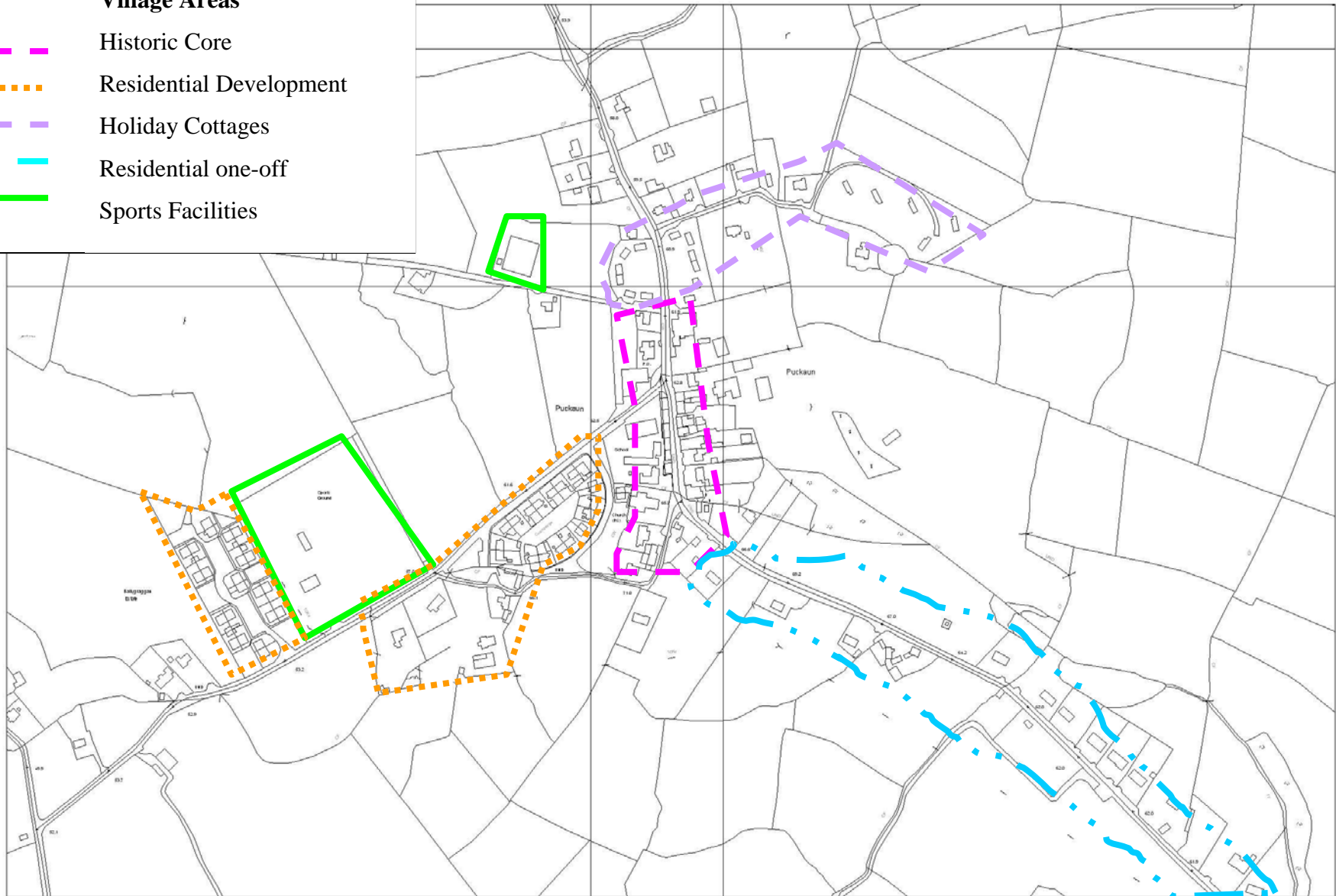
The issue of parking should be addressed with planning applications for residential/commercial/ leisure development. Parking may be accommodated off the road and behind the buildings.

KEY POINTS

- **Variety of building scales and patterns, mostly two storey and detached or terraced.**
- **Individual buildings nestle inconspicuously in the surrounding Puckane area.**
- **Potential for new development to provide a range of tourism-leisure-recreational facilities for the village.**

Village Areas

- Historic Core
- Residential Development
- Holiday Cottages
- Residential one-off
- Sports Facilities



3.5 Design Guidelines

The setting and views of the historically important Church, Grotto and Thatch Cottages and distant views of Lough Derg should be preserved and respected when considering the design and location of new development.

The existing structure and shape of Puckane should be respected as a product of the village's evolution. New development should be of a scale that does not overwhelm or engulf this settlement pattern.

In line with the Specific Objectives of Western Area Local Area Plan new development should consider opportunities to

- improve pedestrian access and links around the village,
- to provide and improve roads, footpaths, traffic calming, public lighting and signage.
- protect and enhance the character of the approach roads to the village including the earthen banks, mature trees and stone walls.
- provide and improve linkages via new access roads and footpaths as part of new development.

- provide village green/parks as part of new development
- provide for new streetscape as part of new village centre development to provide and enhance village character



Puckane Church, Grotto and thatch cottages as designed and crafted by Craft Shop.

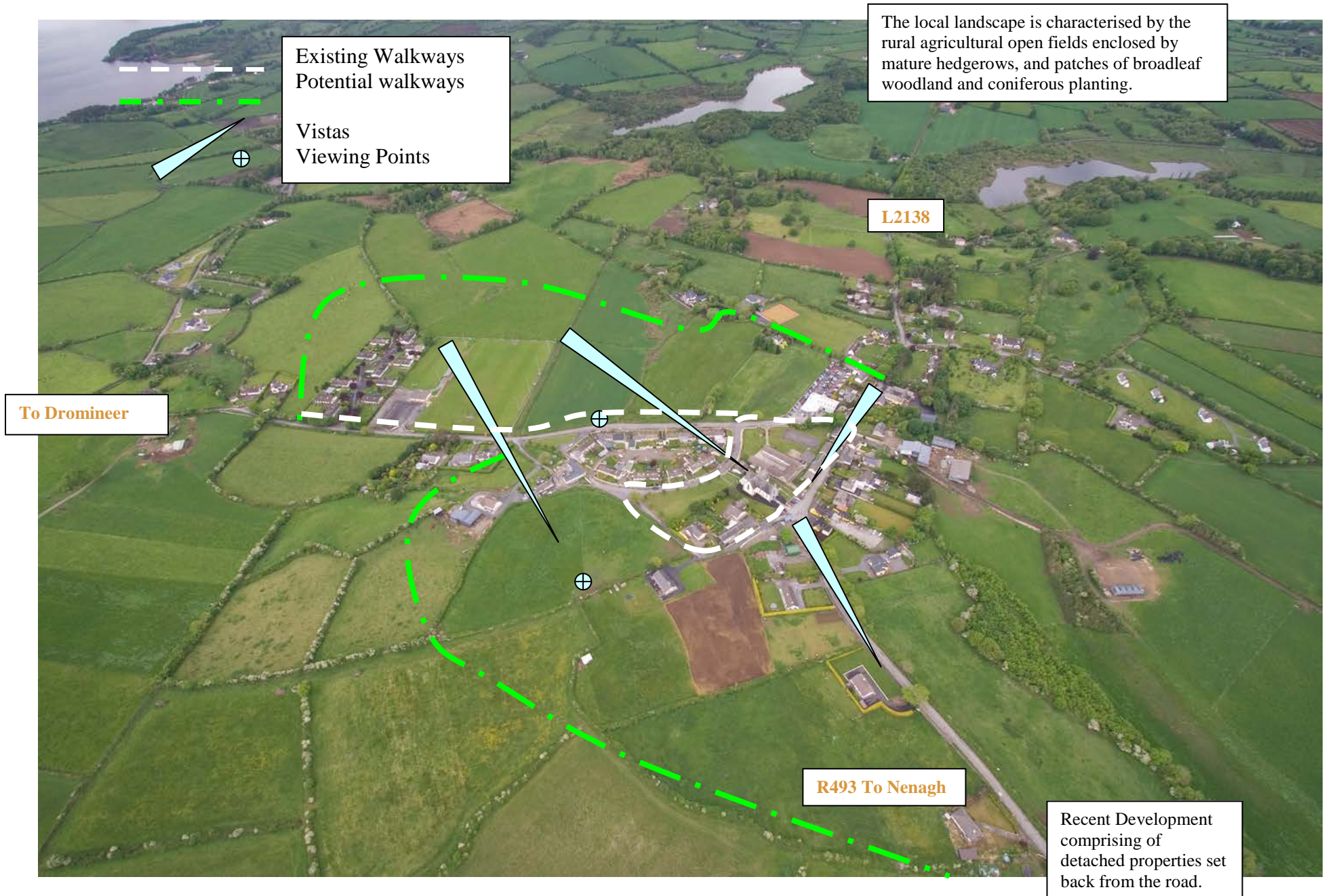
Puckane has a strong rural tradition and within a small village accommodates a surprising level of diversity with regard to house style and character.

Therefore, all aspects of new developments in the village should have regard to this existing established and recognised character of the village.

Whether infill or new development, building orientation and plot layout

should reflect existing styles and patterns and an appropriate balance should be maintained between residential areas and green spaces within individual developments. Similarly, the proportion, scale and design of buildings and materials used should compliment the existing village character. The monotony typical of many modern residential developments can be avoided through the use of a variety of building types and the careful use of colour and other building features.

4.0 SETTING & APPROACH



Existing Walkways
Potential walkways
Vistas
Viewing Points

The local landscape is characterised by the rural agricultural open fields enclosed by mature hedgerows, and patches of broadleaf woodland and coniferous planting.

L2138

To Dromineer

R493 To Nenagh

Recent Development comprising of detached properties set back from the road.

4.1 Broad Landscape Setting

Outside the village at Johnstown Gates there is a craft shop, and surrounding the village there are a number of historic properties including Lodge House, Ballycraggan House, Lisduff, Kilodiernan, Rookview, Wood Park, and formally Johnstown House. The location of these houses has influenced the historic development of Puckane in terms of origin and development as a village.

Puckane lies a little inland from the shores of Lough Derg, located in the scenic rolling hills. The soil is likely to be composed of till derived from Lower



Palaeozoic rocks. The southern side of the village rises and the northern side is more lush with vegetation, and there are areas of deciduous woodland surrounding the village.

“It is the combination of the visual mix of working land, low-key housing, a small amount of commercial property, the distinctive sound of rural life and the sense of relative peace, security and community which give Puckane its character”.

Quotation from submission on Proposed VDS.



The landscape is designated as an area of high amenity, which runs along the shores of Lough Derg.

The junction of the main and Urra road in the village is about 62.8 metres above Ordnance Datum, with the land rising to about 67m a.o.d within the immediate vicinity of the village. To the south of the village the land inclines gradually towards Blackfort and beyond to become the Killadangan Hill at 123m a.o.d as the highest point in the immediate vicinity

4.2 Important Views and Vistas

The location of Puckane with the surrounding gentle and steeper hillsides provides great vantage points throughout the area.

The rural setting with rolling hillsides and deciduous and coniferous woodland obscures some parts of the village, and as you travel through the area the landscape opens out to give some great vistas.

One of the most recognisable sites on the lake is the Church, prominent in the landscape, provides an important landmark for users of the lake.

The thatch cottages are landmarks for the village on approach to the village from Coolbawn. The existing landscaping and mature trees offers a sense of tranquility and charm.

Travelling up into the village on the Urra Road, hedgerows obscure most views, but past the GAA Grounds the road bends gradually towards the village and a picturesque view of Lough Derg opens out.



There are also good views travelling down on the back road from Church onto the Urra Road.

4.3 Planting

There are many mature trees and hedgerows within and around the village. The canopies and foliage provide important green backdrops, as well as

acting as important wildlife habitats. Local residents value these existing mature planting features as important character features, and wish them to be retained and enhanced.

Seasonal displays such as the many daffodils, which surround the area in spring, add colour and interest and should be encouraged.

4.4 Important Open Spaces

Important open spaces need to be managed and maintained appropriately, and the parties with responsibility for this maintenance need to be identified. Details of the management and maintenance of open spaces, roadways, paths, etc. associated with new developments should be submitted at planning application stage.



The trees and associated green areas around the Church, the Urra Road and in front of the Thatch Cottages are the main open spaces in the village.

The key to maintaining the visual character of the village is to maintain the important open spaces around it. It is important to protect the setting of the Grotto and existing trees on the Coolbawn Road and open up potential walks around the village and provide new open spaces.



4.5 Permeability and Connectivity

Permeability and connectivity is important for pedestrians and cyclists even where intersections or junctions have had road closures. Share-ways can also be a means of assisting permeability and connectivity.

A number of elements were identified within the village that were of sufficient importance to feed into the overall character and setting as follows:

- Gently undulating landform is a distinctive feature within the area.
- The lake as a village edge.
- Varied topography provides an opportunity to make a major contribution to the public realm and reinforce the identity of the area.

The vision for the VDS is to facilitate and provide for ease of movement through the village and to promote connectivity and permeability. This must be addressed by way of:

- Improving, developing and prioritizing pedestrian and cyclist routes.
- Improving and developing bus services within the area.
- Managing parking provision.
- Limiting car access to one-way.

Each element of movement is layered to make a pattern of development in relation to desire lines between uses:

- Road Hierarchy
- Pedestrian Permeability
- Linkages to the countryside

- Open Space Network

KEY POINTS

- **Lake and hillsides give opportunities for views over the whole village.**
- **Broadleaf trees, hedgerows, planting, and open fields are essential to the village’s character.**
- **Encourage tree, shrub, and bulb planting in the newer areas of the village.**
- **Avoid development that encroaches on the views and vistas.**

4.6 Design Guidelines

New development, infrastructure and land management should respect the attractive, scenic ‘rural’ character and distinctive landscape setting of the village and avoid visual intrusion into key views to and from the village, especially looking towards the lake. It should avoid direct or indirect damage to sites of known ecological and archaeological interest surrounding the village, including hedgerows and trees, ringforts and enclosures.

New developments should be integrated into the landscape such as to maintain all vistas. Development proposals should be

accompanied by visual impact assessments and designs should ensure that any development shall have a minimal impact on all vistas defined in this document. Visual impact assessments should include photo montages and photo renderings to adequately convey any development in context.

New development should be of a low density and a location that consolidates and strengthens the core of the village.

Amenity/Open Space areas should be retained and well maintained with the addition of lighting and seating to encourage their use and ensuring the safety of users. The current green areas at the rear of the Church should be protected from any infringement and maintained for the enjoyment of all.

Developments should provide for a high level of connectivity and permeability, to encourage walking and cycling and to promote linkages between areas.

Walking routes in and around the village should be established wherever possible to provide improved access to the countryside, including access to and along the forest north of the Nenagh Road.

Promotion of routes should be encouraged by means of improved signage and local tourism initiatives.

Existing established planting, including mature trees should be preserved and managed to maintain them in good health. New and replacement planting in the village should be of species appropriate to the location and scale of the space. Open lawn areas around developments should be planted with trees where possible.

Landscaping adds greatly to an area and should be encouraged. The use of appropriate native trees, as a cost effective and environmentally friendly method of 'livening up' and visually improving the character of areas is recommended. In particular, the screening of unattractive features such as ESB boxes or telephone exchanges is encouraged. Where undertaking such works always liaise with the appropriate body.

The Western Area Local Area Plan sets out briefly a number of native species that are commercially available and can be appropriately used in planting schemes. The planting of native species is important particularly as they play an important role in maintaining local wildlife and ecology.

Close liaison between all groups in the village including the Tidy Towns Committee should be maintained to ensure all resources are used to maximum effect.

New development should learn from and improve on what has already been done - it should take its proposed form and scale from the existing village structure, and new development should innovate by reinterpretation – making it look new and local.

Whether infill or new development, building orientation and plot layout should reflect existing styles and patterns. Similarly, the proportion, scale and design of buildings should compliment the existing village character.



5.0 VILLAGE STREETScape

5.1 What is a 'Streetscape'?

The term 'streetscape' refers to the look of a particular road, regarding the arrangement and design of

- plots,
- buildings and materials,
- roads and footpaths,
- street furniture,
- open spaces and planting.

Attractive and coherent streetscapes happen when all of these features reinforce and work with one another.

The aim should be to consider the whole streetscape in the same way as we consider the conservation of an individual historic building. Building conservation specialists ensure that historic buildings are useful

and viable in a modern context but unspoilt. The whole street should be given the same attention.

5.2 Street Elements

Within the village core, the main road demonstrates a strong sense of enclosure reflecting a distinctive 'traditional' character, created by a dense arrangement of plots and buildings that have a close relationship with the design and layout of the road.

This creates a near-continuous building line, with occasional gaps providing glimpses out to the wider landscape setting. These gaps also provide access to the rear of the property. The roof ridge, front facade and any front boundary treatments (such as a garden

wall or pavement) of these buildings all tend to run parallel to the edge of the road.

Continued improvements to the visual appearance of some buildings should be encouraged, perhaps with the provision of floral displays (such as window boxes, and wall-mounted baskets) to provide seasonal interest and enliven the village streetscapes.

5.3 Street Furniture

The style and location of street furniture in the village is generally regarded as satisfactory. Seating on the green areas/open space areas would be well used and appreciated by locals and tourists.

Street furniture refers to such items as litter bins, benches, picnic areas, bollards, railings, lighting, signposts, CCTV, electricity substations and wiring, cycle stands, post boxes and any other utility items 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.



VILLAGE STREETSCAPE



Street lighting



Timber seating to Lakeside open space



Timber bollards



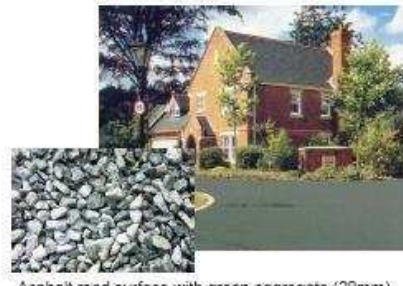
Traffic calming



Footpaths—Small Unit P.C. slabs



Conservation kerb



Asphalt road surface with green aggregate (20mm) dressing (Criggion or similar)



Reinforced grass surface



Self binding gravel informal paths of open spaces

5.3.1 Design Guidelines

Clutter is made up of lots of bits and pieces. The only way to reduce clutter in the streetscape is to look at each individual item and consider whether it really is necessary and whether it can be removed, hidden, replaced in a less noticeable position or at least painted a less obtrusive colour.

Local residents put forward several suggestions, including ideas for overhead electricity wiring to be accommodated underground wherever and whenever possible, and for the provision of more co-ordinated cast iron or heritage-style street furniture and traditional and ‘old world’ street lighting to reflect the historical and rural character of the village.



Similarly, street furniture should be provided with cognisance for the existing street layout and style.



In general, the provision of street furniture can raise the somewhat difficult question of maintenance. The variety of ‘shareholders’ in this aspect of the ‘streetscape’ including private residential owners, private commercial ventures, the ESB and the County Council makes the organisation and co-ordination of design and maintenance often difficult.

However, there are a number of key principles to be observed:

- Temporary and permanent street furniture should be organised to minimise clutter. This is important in relation not only to appearances but also

to the ease with which a mobility impaired person or person with a pram or wheelchair can realistically navigate.

- Street furniture such as lamp standards should compliment the area and in general overly ornate designs should be avoided.



- A schedule of maintenance should be drawn up with particular references to painting and regular maintenance.
- A co-ordinated approach to providing these facilities throughout the village should be considered. In particular, a uniform approach should be taken to the provision of lamp standards, seating, litter bins and any fencing or boundary treatment with the historic core of the village.
- The Tidy Towns Committee should be consulted.

5.4 Surfacing

Roads and paved areas impact greatly on the streetscape. Streets in the village are generally tarmac with cul-de-sacs generally gravel. Road edges are poorly maintained and generally in poor repair and often without footpaths.

Similarly, there are a number of locations – such as the road edges, where the poor quality of roads or cracked pavements – due again to heavy traffic volumes, reduce the overall quality of the street.



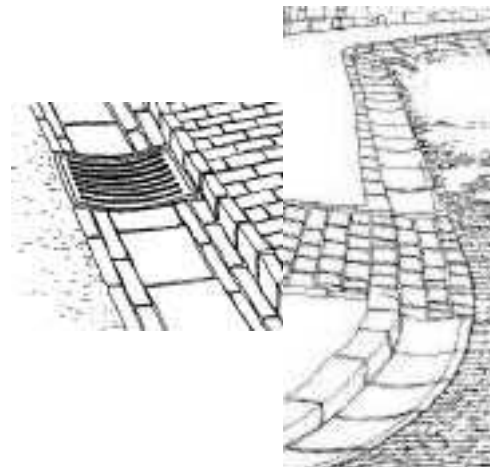
5.4.1 Design Guidelines

A good road surface for walking, cycling and driving contributes to both comfort and safety. The surface should be

adequately drained, and without hollows where puddles may form.

Material for Cul-de-sacs and Mews

- combined surface for roads and footpaths, using block paviors or coloured macadam
- low level boundaries to public areas (plinth wall and railings)
- continuity of 'family' of street furniture including seating and bollards
- street tree planting where appropriate
- tree and shrub planting to visible private areas (front gardens etc.)



Materials for Primary Neighbourhood Roads

- blacktop macadam road surface with concrete kerbs
- kerbside parking
- grass margin for tree planting
- street tree planting (min. size 12-14cm girth) to provide structure and enclosure
- high quality boundary treatment to private (walls) and public areas (plinth wall and railings)
- continuity of 'family' of street furniture including bus shelters, seating, litter bins etc.

5.5 Footpaths & Roads

Footpaths are rare throughout the village and vary in appearance, width and materials.



The new and old pathways do not always link up or extend any great distance throughout the village. This is an especially important issue in relation to safety.



5.5.1 Design Guidelines

In an ideal world, all footpaths would be clear and accessible throughout their length, but unfortunately this is not always the case.

Walkers vary immensely in agility. Please apply the test 'Can this right of way be

used safely and easily by everyone who is likely to walk it'.

Footpaths away from the kerb in major roads are preferred because of safety issues and visual amenity of the streetscape. Alternative designs that provide for better stormwater management are encouraged.

Design considerations of all footpaths will:

- design and maintain surfaces to be stable, firm, even, and slip resistant to ensure safety for all users of footpaths
- design footpaths with the principle of enhancing accessible journeys
- ensure footpath designs consider linkages to kerb and channel, stormwater, vehicle crossings,



Crazy pavement

grass berms, street furniture, carriageway light poles, trees and road signs

- ensure all renewal or upgraded footpaths will provide a minimum width of useable footpath
- use materials that can be sourced for the intended life of the footpath asset
- use the texture and colour of materials to provide interest in new or upgraded streets
- ensure that materials used in high volume pedestrian locations are of the highest quality and amenity
- ensure pedestrian/cyclist priority is clearly indicated at vehicle crossings.



5.6 Lighting

With the need for extensions and improvements to footpaths, street lighting needs to be considered. This should be limited to the key areas of the village, as light pollution to the surrounding rural area is a concern.

However, low lighting along the minor roads near houses may need to be considered for safety reasons.



5.6.1 Design Guidelines

For a lighting scheme to be successful, we need to understand the way in which the architecture - including buildings and townscape features - affect the character of the external space which we occupy. A well designed scheme can offer security, drawing attention to key elements and developing a new character to the space, or it can be modest, in sympathy with the existing architecture. In both cases shadows and darkness are as important as light.



One approach is to light only the most interesting features of a facade: after all, why draw attention to the boring bits?

Cornices, windows, doorways, columns and so on can be picked out with small, narrow-beam, close-set luminaires, leaving the rest in relative darkness. As well as enhancing the architectural form, this largely avoids glare to users and visitors.

5.7 Signs

Signs should be clear and accurate, and appropriately placed. Presently some signs around the village are ambiguous, for example the signs on the Grotto.

Too many signs on one post can be confusing and unclear.



Signs – both commercial and road signage, can have a particularly strong impact on the quality of a streetscape.

In general, advertising in the village does not detract from the visual quality of the area.

5.7.1 Design Guidelines

Place names and signage should reflect local trends and traditions.

Appropriate signage of amenity areas – such as indicating walks and trails, is encouraged, as is the on-going use of walking path maps and information packs.

Signs at the approach into a village should be clearly visible and made from an appropriate material. However, these should not be excessively dominant or bright. Within the village, the retention of bi-lingual street signs should be encouraged.

New signage should mimic the small proportions of older signs. Metal and wood should be used in preference to plastic.

5.8 Traffic

Traffic is a big problem in Puckane, especially at the school during peak hours and in the holiday season. Apart from the width of the roads, the speed of traffic

makes walking around the village dangerous. Speed restrictions and calming methods are currently lacking.



Also of concern for pedestrian safety is the blind bend in the approach road, as vehicles tend to speed around the corner into the village.

5.8.1 Design Guidelines

Traffic calming measures and enhanced pavements to improve pedestrian safety should be a high priority for implementation throughout the village, especially on the approach roads, at the junction near the Grotto and at the Church and School where provision is required for a safe drop-off and collection area and for turning of school bus.



Traffic Calming Measures

- Raised Junction Platforms
- Small Radii Corners with Over-runable Strips
- Surface Treatments
- On Street Parking
- Pull-out/set out areas/islands

5.9 Parking

There are is no public parking area with



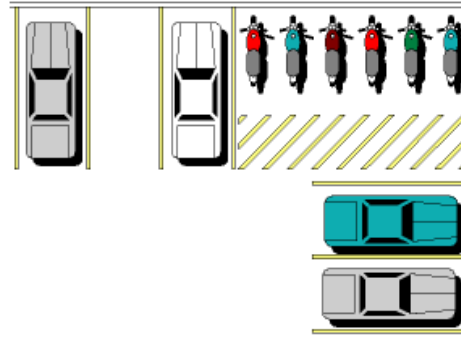
designated and lined car parking spaces provided within the village,

In the main part of the village, where the houses have little or no setback, parking is difficult. Back lanes may alleviate this in some places, and should be considered in any new development.

There is no designated parking areas for bicycles or motorbikes.

5.9.1 Design Guidelines

Parking Areas should be identified, sign posted and designated and lined for bicycles, motorbikes and cars. The sign shall be the standard parking sign, showing a white letter P on a blue background on reflectorised material.



5.10 Boundary Treatment

Within the central village area few residential properties have private front gardens. Therefore direct frontage onto the street is characteristic in these areas, with small walls containing small front gardens.

The most important boundary walls in the village are those of the cottage, which are a dominant and attractive feature. These walls consist of natural stone and are well maintained.

Other un-coursed stone walls are evidenced in the village and these tend to use locally sourced material. These are attractive and many remain. Where they do exist they should be carefully maintained and repaired as required.

5.10.1 Design Guidelines

Attractive, safe and comfortable outdoor spaces should be created within the public realm. These should be permeable, easy to access, and include provision for pushchair users and those with mobility impairments. Such spaces should have appropriate paving, lighting, seating and signage features, which compliment the character of Puckane.

Modern walls tend to be constructed from breezeblock. These can look bare and unsightly but can be greatly enhanced by careful planting of appropriate native trees.



KEY POINTS

- Traffic calming measures such as speed restrictions signage, sensibly placed narrowing or rumble strips could be considered.
- Provision of adequate footpaths throughout the village, with associated lighting.
- Overhead wires are unsightly and should be placed underground where possible.
- Parking is difficult in the older parts of the village and has to be on roads which can cause obstructions.
- Provision for parking off road, behind or alongside buildings should be made where possible.

The Design Guidelines are based on a thorough analysis of the qualities and characteristics of Puckane which contribute to its distinctive identity, and which are appreciated and valued by local residents.

The design guidelines aim to preserve and enhance the important character features identified within the VDS, and seek to encourage proposals for new development to be based upon a considered understanding of the village's unique character.

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| Table 1 Characteristic Features These should be maintained in existing buildings and complimented by new development. |
| Relationship with the countryside |
| Clusters of Single and Two-Storey dwellings on short cul-de-sacs |
| Painted Plinths |
| Use of natural stone |
| White or limited palette of bright colours painted on plaster finished building facades |
| Significant place names, e.g. Kennedy's, Peg's Cottage, etc. |
| Dark colours on door and window surrounds |
| Wooden windows and doors with a vertical emphasis |
| Uniform roof pitches (while possibly accommodating variations in height) |
| Chimney stacks |
| Thatch and slate roofs |
| Native species and planting |
| Subtle signage using wood, stone and small metal signs as appropriate |
| Traditional pub/shopfronts with advertisements painted directly onto the facade |

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| Table 2 Uncharacteristic Features Where possible, these features should be avoided in both existing and new developments. |
| Flat roofs |
| Red brick finishes |
| Painting or stone facing of original facades |
| uPVC doors and windows and doors |
| Swing-out windows in all buildings |
| Removal of render |
| Use of strong colours as the primary colour on building facades |
| Inappropriate place names |
| Plastic and corporate shopfronts |
| Overhead wiring |
| Large-scale and plastic signage |
| Removal of and re-organisation of building facades |

6.0 BUILDINGS AND DETAILS

6.1 Buildings and Features of Interest

Puckane has a diverse and varied built environment, which has evolved over the years. Although few buildings and sites in the village are of regional architectural and historical interest, they have played an important role in the evolution of the village.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) has listed *Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Chapel* as a site of architectural and historical interest. It is highly valued by the local community and should be sensitively preserved and maintained as part of the local distinctive character, sense of place, and cultural heritage of Puckane for future generations.

It is a detached T-plan gable-fronted church, dated 1859. Its main features include:

- two-bay side elevations to nave,
- single-bay transepts and modern two-bay single-storey lean-to sacristy to north-west elevation
- Pitched artificial slate roofs with stone bellcote and cross to front and cross finials to other gables.

- Front gable of snecked limestone with skew vertical joints and stone plinth.
- Diagonal buttresses with pinnacles to all corners.
- Rendered walls elsewhere, with buttresses to nave.
- Cut stone date plaque over entrance.
- Pointed-arch openings with chamfered limestone surrounds with hood mouldings.



- Coloured and stained glass windows and timber matchboard doors.
- Marble reredos to altar end.
- Snecked limestone boundary wall with cut stone piers and cast-iron gate.



Saint Patrick's Church is enhanced by many artistic and architectural features such as the diagonal buttresses, hood mouldings and coloured and stained glass.

Located at the south end of the village of Puckane, the church occupies a dominant location in the surrounding landscape when seen from the southern approach road.

6.2 Traditional

Puckane is a relatively small village with the historical buildings based around the main street. The village was the first to be chosen in North Tipperary for the development of twelve Rent an Irish Cottage units in the early 1970s. This development led to a Craft Shop being developed a little north of the village, which is still a strong tourist attraction.



There are a many early houses from the 19th and 20th century surviving. These older houses and buildings tend to have been repaired, extended and reused over

the last century with minor changes and extensions. Many of the original openings remain in these buildings and many retain their original sash windows. Doors have also largely been retained.



Pat's Cottage is set on a small piece of land on main street and Peg's Cottage has also stood at the heart of the village for over 300 years.



There are very good examples of original timberwork and ancillary features such as ridge tiles that show the richness, style and skills of the original builders.

Many of the walls and finishes of the older buildings remain with roughcast renders or dash most used. These often have modern painted finishes applied today. The external finish to several older buildings has been removed to expose their original stone construction.



The roofs are generally pitched and several buildings retain their natural slates and ridge tiles with traditional guttering.

The older buildings lines usually front the road directly with little or no garden frontage, the older buildings are generally located in centre of village. Unusually the village does have a church but does not act as a focus to the village. The Grotto is more of a focus/meeting point.



6.3 Newer Buildings

Later residential development in the village typically consists of semi-detached and detached dwelling with simple footprint, rendered walls, and roof tiles. Set in larger plots, these buildings are set back from the road line, with separate entrances or and have access via a cul-de-sac to the local road.

In terms of materials these are usually simple rendered finish with modern windows in both material and style.



6.4 Variation and Innovation in New Development

Modern design can play an essential role within the traditional streetscape, by contributing an element of variety, so long as it is based upon a careful consideration of the main characteristics found locally.

Subtle variations in the design of buildings and their key elements is desirable in creating an interesting and attractive streetscape and in perpetuating an identity for the village.

It is essential that such variation is based within limits, and on the careful consideration of a common design style. New buildings should respect the strict relationship between types of construction (i.e. stone or blockwork)

and the proportion of elements and materials used.

KEY POINTS

- **Shape, size, proportion, materials and colours should all be considered in the construction of new buildings, extensions, windows and doors in the village.**
- **The design of new development should seek to enhance visually and physically the character of Puckane by using the prevailing architectural detailing and appropriate local materials as a stimulus for creative interpretation.**

6.5 Design Guidelines

Design proposals for new development should respect the local characteristics of the site and its wider context, by working with rather than against key features including the existing contours of the site, lake, and established boundaries. Development should be adapted to the site and its natural features and characteristics, and not the site adapted to the development.

New developments should be phased in pace with improvements to local infrastructure, village facilities and

services, such as the sewage system, roads, pavements, lighting, open space and community facilities.

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

Within the historic core of the village, development should aim to complement visually and physically the established traditional character of the buildings.

The Church, water pump, traditional buildings and Grotto should be conserved and maintained as key assets of the village.



Property owners should be encouraged to retain, maintain, and restore original vernacular and architectural details (such as ornate window frames and stone work, roof slates, rendered wall finishes etc) as important character features of the village.

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 minimise running costs.

Alterations to Existing Buildings

All works undertaken on an existing building should reflect the character of the building and its vicinity. In particular, the building style should be reflected through the façade elements – such as windows, doors, etc. Roof styles and pitches should similarly compliment the existing structure.

The use of appropriate materials is critical and all aspects such as - texture, colour, proportion, etc. should reflect the

established character of the area and compliment existing buildings and styles.

Where possible, un-used materials from older buildings should be recycled for re-use.

Building Maintenance

Building maintenance plays an essential role in ensuring the built tradition of the village is protected. This is important for *all* village buildings.

All owners of buildings in the village should appreciate the importance of maintenance through regular painting, retention of boundaries and original features is important in preserving the village’s character.

Materials

The type of materials to be used in new development or improvements to existing properties should:

- (i) fit in with the prevailing character of the village, and be designed to reflect and respect nearby colours, textures, materials, shapes, styles and proportions;
- (ii) take account of other materials used in the immediate vicinity;
- (iii) utilise materials for extensions which match those of the existing property;

- (iv) ensure that replacement windows and doors respect the age and character of the existing building - in particular, the use of uPVC is considered to be inappropriate for use in a designated historically or architecturally important building;
- (v) encourage the re-use of appropriate building materials from buildings which have been unavoidably demolished.



Extreme caution should be exercised in combining different external materials in the same building – in general there should be one principal external material.



New development designs should avoid monotonous repetition by inclusion of subtle variation, and should use materials, which compliment the established variants of design, silhouette, scale, density, materials and colour within the village.

External Renders

This is the main feature of many of the characteristic buildings in the village. Traditionally these would have been lime based renders that would have been painted with lime washes. Today these are often replaced with harder cement based renders with modern synthetic paint systems. These are both physically harder and can look sharper compared to the softer and subtler colours available with lime washes.

Lime based renders should be encouraged and in any event the external renders should be in keeping the existing character of the village.

Wall Construction

Within the historical parts of the village (such as the main road) the majority of the buildings have a render coat to the underlying construction.

The use of brick and concrete blocks is mostly confined to the recently constructed buildings. New buildings should have some sort of render (either coloured, white or pebble-dashed) to conceal the use of brick and blocks and should compliment existing buildings.

Roof Features & Construction Materials

Roof construction styles and materials have a direct association to the predominant building construction type.

The most common verge detail for roofs within the village is a barge edge to the slate and render or walling.

Windows & Door Openings

In most buildings in the village, the door openings are vertically aligned, which is particularly important on buildings with small facades. On smaller houses and cottages, first floor windows are often set just below the eaves line, with only the top-plate or several courses of stone or brick over the openings. Most window openings are also vertically orientated. Recent development has been designed with this in mind and this trend should be encouraged.



Cills

A range of window cills are found in the village all of which relate to the walling material. The important characteristic is the profile and thickness of the front edge or face.



Window Frames & Door Leafs

The window frame should be set back from the face of the building to give a shadow line. The presence and design of glazing bars should be suited to the opening size, the position of the window in the building, and the overall form of the house.

The type of door proposed should suit the building type and the position of the door within the building. Simple vertical plank doors are generally suited to smaller vernacular type buildings and moulded panel doors to larger houses. Glazing on doors should follow the same pattern as the windows. The use of uPVC is not considered appropriate.

Shopfronts Signage

The over-riding principle for the design of shopfronts and the design and placement of advertisements and signs should be restraint. The aim should be to create an environment in which the buildings and activities themselves are the principle attraction and visual interest, not the advertisements and signs. Shopfronts, signs and



advertisements should therefore work within the overall form and structure of a building and should be subservient to it.

A shopfront should suit the type and style of the building as a whole. If for example, the building is symmetrical, the design of the shopfront should maintain the overall symmetry.



Illumination of Buildings

External lighting of buildings and signs should normally be avoided, but the sensitive and selective lighting of key features such as the Church and Grotto, and key distinctive buildings should be encouraged. Light fittings should be as small and unobtrusive as possible.

7.0 COMMUNITY ACTION LIST

Throughout public information sessions a number of issues arose about which the local community felt extremely strongly. While some of these suggestions are beyond the remit of the VDS they are nonetheless included as part of a comprehensive community ‘Action List’.

Providing for the Local Community

There should be a coordinated programme to increase pedestrian safety through adequate provision of street lighting, pavements and cycle paths, particularly in the vicinity of widely used public areas such as the pub/grocers and community fields.

Existing and new community facilities for all ages should be developed in line with future growth and development of the village, including provision of services for the elderly, and space and facilities for children and teenagers.

| <i>Community Action List</i> |
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| 1. In the absence of a off-street parking, some measures should be employed to reduce the dominance of traffic in the village. |
| 2. Additional pedestrian crossings are required particularly from the GAA ground to the Tennis Grounds. |
| 3. There is a need to provide defined short-term and long-term parking areas, especially for the peak time at Church and School. There is the possibility of reserved parking for short-term parking at the school only with a 'Pay and Display' system brought in. Similarly, commuter and long term parking needs should be met by the provision of a suitable parking area. |
| 4. Action should be taken immediately to reverse the decline of key areas and buildings within the village. In particular, the County Council should act for the preservation of the village’s built environment. |
| 5. There is no dedicated children’s play facility in the village and this would be a welcome addition to the area. |
| 6. New development is welcome but services and infrastructure should be provided to ensure these integrate with the physical and social environment. |
| 7. The heritage and tourism potential of the area should be realised by the development of heritage trails and information points. |
| 8. An integrated plan should be drawn up for the development of footpaths and roads in light of the damage caused by passing traffic. This plan should consider the need to ‘standardise’ the appearance of paved areas with the used of appropriate materials. |
| 9. Where buildings fall into disuse or are under-utilised their possible use as a community facility should be investigated. |

8.0 YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THEIR SAY



The younger people of the village had the opportunity to draw or write about their village.

This Village Design Statement, undertaken in partnership with the community of Puckane, was produced by North Tipperary County Council, with support from The Heritage Council.

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