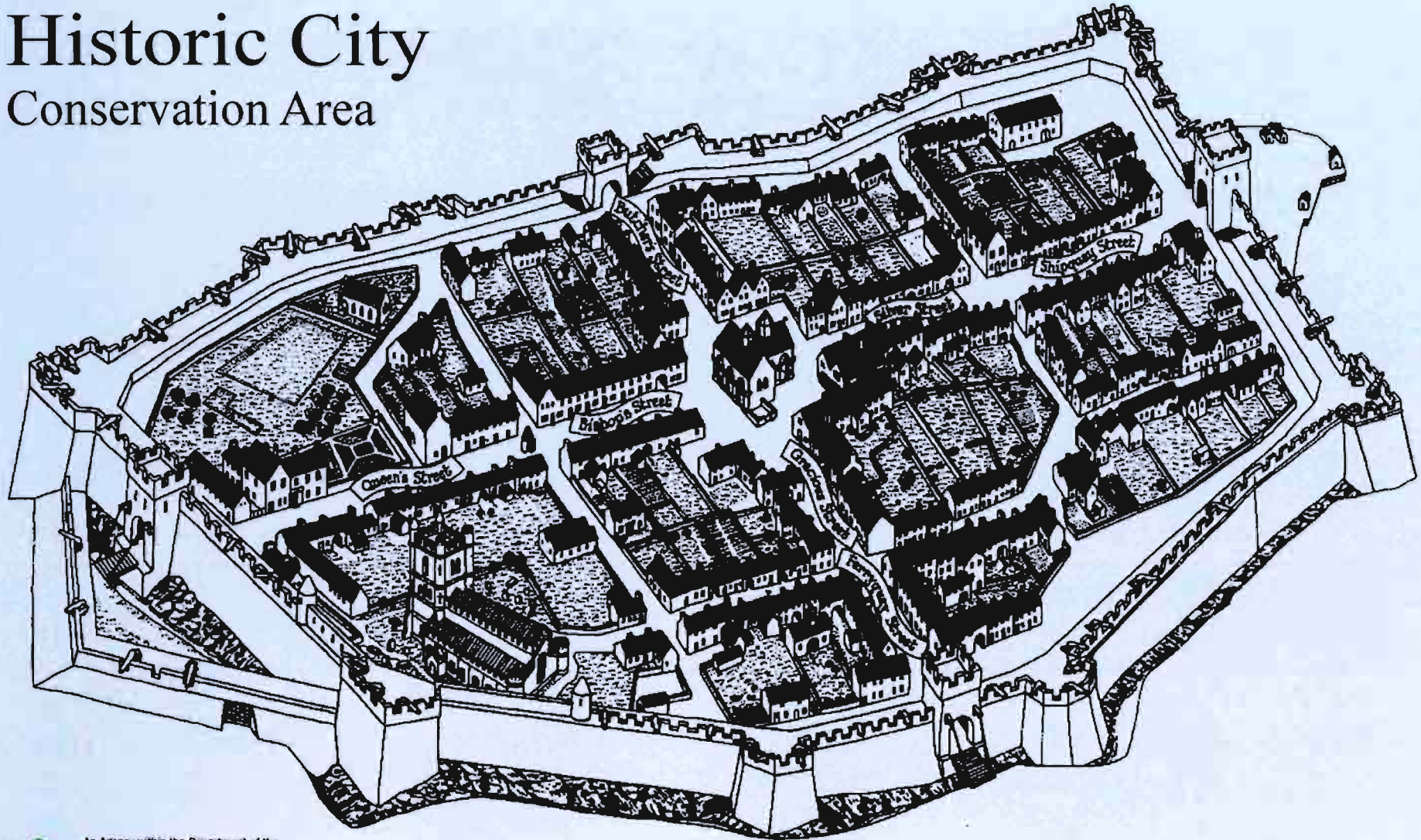




LONDONDERRY

Historic City

Conservation Area



An Agency within the Department of the

Environment

www.doeni.gov.uk



The aims and policies set out in this booklet are for the guidance of District Councils, public bodies, local residents, landlords and tenants, intending developers and amenity and other groups.

PART I sets out the general objectives of designating Conservation Areas and the principles of designation.

PART II describes and delineates the Conservation Area of Londonderry.

PART III contains a developers brief for the designated area.

This booklet should be regarded as **but a first step** in securing the special architectural or historic interest of the designated Area. It is anticipated that local initiative and discussion will give rise to proposals for repair and restorative works and developments which will not only preserve but will positively enhance the Area's special character. Designation will be of little practical value without this local support.

A. Introduction

1. The Planning (NI) Order 1972 provided legislation for the first time in Northern Ireland for the protection of the Province's heritage of buildings of special architectural or historic interest and for the designating of whole areas of similar interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
2. While responsibility for the statutory listing of Historic Buildings and for the designating of Conservation Areas rests with the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland one vitally important principle needs to be established at once. The task of conserving the heritage of Ulster cannot be left solely to Government Departments, a sprinkling of voluntary bodies and a band, albeit a growing one, of responsible conservationists.
3. The message that "conservation in Northern Ireland is the concern of everyone" must find its way into board rooms of every kind, into public and voluntary bodies with diverse aims and objectives, into schools and universities, into factories and shops and into the homes of every citizen whether they be in large conurbations or in lonely rural settings.
4. The aim of conservation must not be confined simply to keeping areas and buildings pleasant to look at or as a record of some aspect of history. It must additionally involve the continuing life and function of the areas in a present day context.

B. Development Control

Development within a Conservation Area will be controlled with the primary aim of ensuring the retention and importance of the Area's character. Every possible effort will be made to preserve the individual buildings and groups of buildings on which that character

depends.

This control will be exercised as follows:—

1. Where permission is sought to demolish or alter a building which has been listed under the Planning (NI) Order 1972 as of special architectural or historic interest it will be necessary to demonstrate that such works would in themselves be an enhancement or that they are required for overriding and exceptional reasons relating to the development of the Area.
2. New buildings will be expected to take account of the character of their neighbours. They should, in mass and outline, continue (where applicable) the rhythm of a street scene.
3. Materials should generally be sympathetic in texture, colour and quality to traditional local usage.
4. Changes of use necessitating a planning application which are likely to have an adverse effect on land or buildings which contribute significantly to the character of Conservation Areas will not normally be permitted.
5. The siting of new open spaces will be carefully considered to ensure that they make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and that proper provision is made for their maintenance.
6. It is desirable that applicants should consult informally with the Divisional Planning Office before the preparation of detailed plans to avoid unnecessary expense because the Divisional Planning Office will normally expect planning applications, submitted in respect of sites or buildings within Conservation Areas, to be submitted with full details in order to ensure at the initial planning stage that the development is satisfactory in all respects to the needs of the Conservation Area.

7. Development near, but not inside a Conservation Area and visually related to it, should be sited and designed in size, form and materials, to be in harmony with the buildings and general appearance of the Conservation Area.

8. Under the Planning (General Development) Order (NI) 1973 certain types of development do not require specific planning permission. However the Department has power to direct that in any particular area these types of development should require planning permission. Such directions could be applied in Conservation Areas.

C. Positive Action

Schemes will be encouraged to initiate and, where appropriate, to undertake works for the visual improvement of buildings and sites. It is anticipated that District Councils may play a leading role in the formulating of such schemes. These would include the re-painting of neglected buildings, the removal or replacement of rusted and broken fences and the clearing away of rubbish.

Appropriate steps will be expected to be taken by those responsible to tidy up, improve and enhance the appearance of Conservation Areas by the control of street furniture, overhead transmission lines of all kinds and to ensure the removal of undesirable examples of the latter where at all possible.

Existing advertisements and signs of all types displayed in the Area will be the subject of special consideration and it is hoped that with the co-operation of local business men the number of advertisements displayed within a Conservation Area could be reduced to a discreet level.

Preservation Orders will be made to protect trees or groups of trees which form an essential feature in the

character of the Conservation Area. The general appearance of many of these will be further enhanced by the selective planting of additional trees and sowing of grass areas.

In some Conservation Areas, schemes for pedestrianisation might be appropriate and as such would be carried out by the Department. Present security arrangements have accustomed people to the concept of vehicle-free areas and it is widely accepted that the opportunity should now be taken to create permanent pedestrian zones. It will be the intention of the Department to carry out works for the improvement of the amenity of such areas.

The Roads Service will take all possible action to ensure the management of pedestrian and vehicular traffic movement in the interests of the amenities existing in a Conservation Area. Action will also be taken wherever possible to ensure that the parking of motor vehicles and the location of car parks is carried out in such a manner as to have the minimum effect on the character of an Area.

The use of floodlighting at night could in many cases be particularly effective.

If, before designation of an Area, individual listings of buildings of special architectural or historic interest have not already been considered early action will be taken by the Department after consultation with the Historic Buildings Council and the appropriate District Council to consider appropriate listings.

D. Financial Assistance

In considering schemes for conservation the potentials for self-financing operations should not be lightly ignored and the fullest consideration should be given at an early stage to the use of voluntary contributions, gifts, income from sales and leases, etc. – see under “other grants” below.

Department of the Environment (NI)

The Department may give financial assistance towards the cost of repairs or maintenance of buildings which have been listed as being of special architectural or historic interest. There is no fixed rate of grant and each case is considered on its merits. Grants are made on the recommendations of the Historic Buildings Council for Northern Ireland. Churches in use for ecclesiastical purposes are not eligible for grant-aid.

The Department may also on the recommendations of the Historic Buildings Council consider for grant-aid expenditure to be incurred in connection with the preservation or enhancement of a Conservation Area. Such expenditure is normally expected to be part of a co-ordinated scheme.

Details from

Historic Monuments & Buildings Branch
Department of the Environment (NI)
1 Connsbrook Avenue
BELFAST BT4 1EH
(Telephone Belfast 653251)

Department of Education

District Councils have a duty to secure for their areas adequate facilities for recreational, social, physical and cultural activities and the approved expenses of a District Council for such purposes may be grant-aided under the Recreation and Youth Service (NI) Order 1973.

The acquisition of lands for public open spaces for these purposes may also be grant-aided by the Department of the Environment (NI).

Grants of up to 75% may be made under

Section 16 of the Local Government Act (NI) 1966.

Details from

Sports & Recreation Branch
Department of Education
Londonderry House
Chichester Street
BELFAST BT1 4JJ
(Telephone Belfast 34898)

Conservation Branch
Department of the Environment (NI)
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3SS
(Telephone Belfast 768716)

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

The Housing (NI) Order 1976 enables the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to pay grants of 75% of the approved cost of Improvement and Conversion subject to a maximum grant of £2,400 for Improvement and £2,775 for Conversion.

Grants may also be paid to help meet the cost of improving houses by providing for the first time such standard amenities as a fixed bath, a wash-hand basin, water closet, hot and cold water supply at certain fixed points.

Grants towards repairs may also be paid subject to a maximum grant of £600.

All grants are subject to certain conditions and full details may be obtained from any office of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Headquarters Address 10 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8EN
(Telephone Belfast 28411)

Londonderry Address 5 Bishop Street
 Londonderry
 (Telephone Londonderry 46221)

Other Grants Charitable Trusts are sometimes willing to help with conservation of buildings in charitable or other non-profit making ownership. The **Pilgrim Trust** may be prepared to give grants of this sort. The **Landmark Trust** is interested in purchasing properties of historical or architectural interest which can be converted into lettable holiday houses. They particularly favour buildings of individual character. The **Carnegie United Kingdom Trust** makes grants to support countryside projects of various kinds. These include schemes for practical conservation but not for the preservation of buildings. Details may be had from:

- (a) Pilgrim Trust, Fielden House, Little College Street, London, SW1P 3SH;
- (b) Landmark Trust, Shottesbrooke, White Waltham, Berkshire;
- (c) Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, Comely Park House, Dunfermline, Fife.

For details of other grant-giving bodies, reference may be made to "The Directory of Grant-Making Trusts" published by the National Council of Social Services.

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General

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H.M.S.O., *The Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1972*

Scottish Civic Trust *Policies for Conservation Areas, 1969* : a digest of Scottish local authority planning statements

Shaffrey, P., *The Irish Town : an approach to survival, 1975* : a study of the problems of planning in Irish Towns

Ulster Countryside Committee *Buildings in the Countryside, 1976* (H.M.S.O.) : a guide to the design of buildings in Ulster's countryside, with reference to appropriate materials and details

Caldwell, P. and Dixon, H., *Building Conservation in Northern Ireland, 1975* : includes a directory of Conservation Organisations in Northern Ireland.

Part 2

LONDONDERRY

Derry-Calgach formed part of the territory of Aimire, Prince of Hy-Neill, in 546 when St. Columba founded a religious settlement on the 'Island of Derry'. The name, Derry-Columbkille, survived until the area was granted to the City of London under Charter from James I.

In the period from the 8th to the 11th centuries the monastery was subject to attack from the Norsemen who eventually took possession until driven out in the 12th century by Murtagh O'Brien.

An English garrison was established in 1566 but an explosion of gun-powder in the Cathedral the following year made the position untenable and troops did not reappear until 1600 when Sir Henry Docwra fortified the town re-using the remnants of the mediaeval buildings. In 1608 the fort and town were destroyed by the Irish under Cahir O'Doherty. In 1613 construction of the town was begun by the Irish Society, the body responsible for the development and management of lands in Ulster at the Plantation and with special responsibility for Londonderry and Coleraine.

The walls, which were to withstand three sieges within the century, were completed in 1618. By 1622 over 100 houses and a small market house had been built and the street pattern had taken shape.

The original city gates have been replaced and a further three added, otherwise the defences and layout are basically of the early 17th century. Beside the Double Bastion to the north of the stump of Governor Walker's monument the wall passes close to the site of St. Columb's Monastery and the iron pump which now covers one of the three wells.

St. Columb's Cathedral, begun in 1628 and completed in 1633, is the only important structure remaining above ground from before the siege of 1689. The site of the New Market House in the Diamond, built in 1692 to replace the structure destroyed in the last siege, is now occupied by the War Memorial of 1927.

Development did not extend to any great extent beyond the walls until the end of the 18th century. Within,

Shipquay Street was the centre of trade and an early 18th century building, once used as a Customs House, stands at the lower end. Towards the Diamond the Derry Journal Offices and Nos. 6 and 8 were erected thirty years later in the 1770s. The Georgian character of the street survives with a sprinkling of later banks and offices, notably the Belfast Bank by Charles Lanyon in 1853 and the Bank of Ireland built to the design of Sandham Symes of Dublin in 1868.

The buildings of Bishop Street span a period of two hundred years. The Irish Society Offices were erected in 1768, the Courthouse by John Bowden of Dublin dates from 1817 and the Deanery of 1833 was built to replace a former building of 1720 in London Street. Frederick Hervey, later Earl of Bristol, was translated from the see of Cloyne to the Bishopric of Derry in 1768 and among many building ventures caused several improvements to be made to the Street; a restoration of the Cathedral included the erection of a stone spire later to be taken down and rebuilt. The Bishop's Palace, now the Masonic Hall, was largely reconstructed. The Bishop's Gate, in the form of a triumphal arch, was erected by the Corporation in 1789 to the memory of William III. The first stone was laid by the Earl Bishop.

By the early 1800s the pattern within the Area had been fully established and groups of architecturally distinguished houses, such as those in Pump Street and Magazine Street had been erected. In Upper Magazine Street the First Derry Presbyterian Church of 1780 had the present facade added in 1903 and the Apprentice Boys' Hall of 1877 was extended in 1937. The architectural liveliness of the area was very much enhanced by Victorian and Edwardian efforts such as Saint Columb's Hall, Commercial Buildings, the General Post Office, Northern Counties Club, Austin's Department Store, No. 2 Butcher Street, the former Imperial Hotel and the Provincial Bank.

Outside the walls the area between the City Wall and the Foyle was developed in the second half of the 19th century. Significant buildings include the Northern Bank by Thomas Turner in 1866 and the Guildhall reconstructed in 1912 to the design of M.A. Robinson. At the southern end of the Conservation Area, on the site of the early Monastery, St. Columba's Church forms the centrepiece of

the Long Tower Precinct named after the mediaeval round belfry of the Cathedral left standing for a time after Docwra's clearance.

Part of the walled city was chosen in 1974 as one of four model schemes for European Architectural Heritage Year. A co-ordinated re-painting scheme for London Street has been carried out.

THE DESIGNATION

Notice is hereby given that the Department of the Environment (NI) in pursuance of powers conferred upon it by Article 37 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 has designated the area outlined on the attached map as a Conservation Area being an area of special architectural or historic interest the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

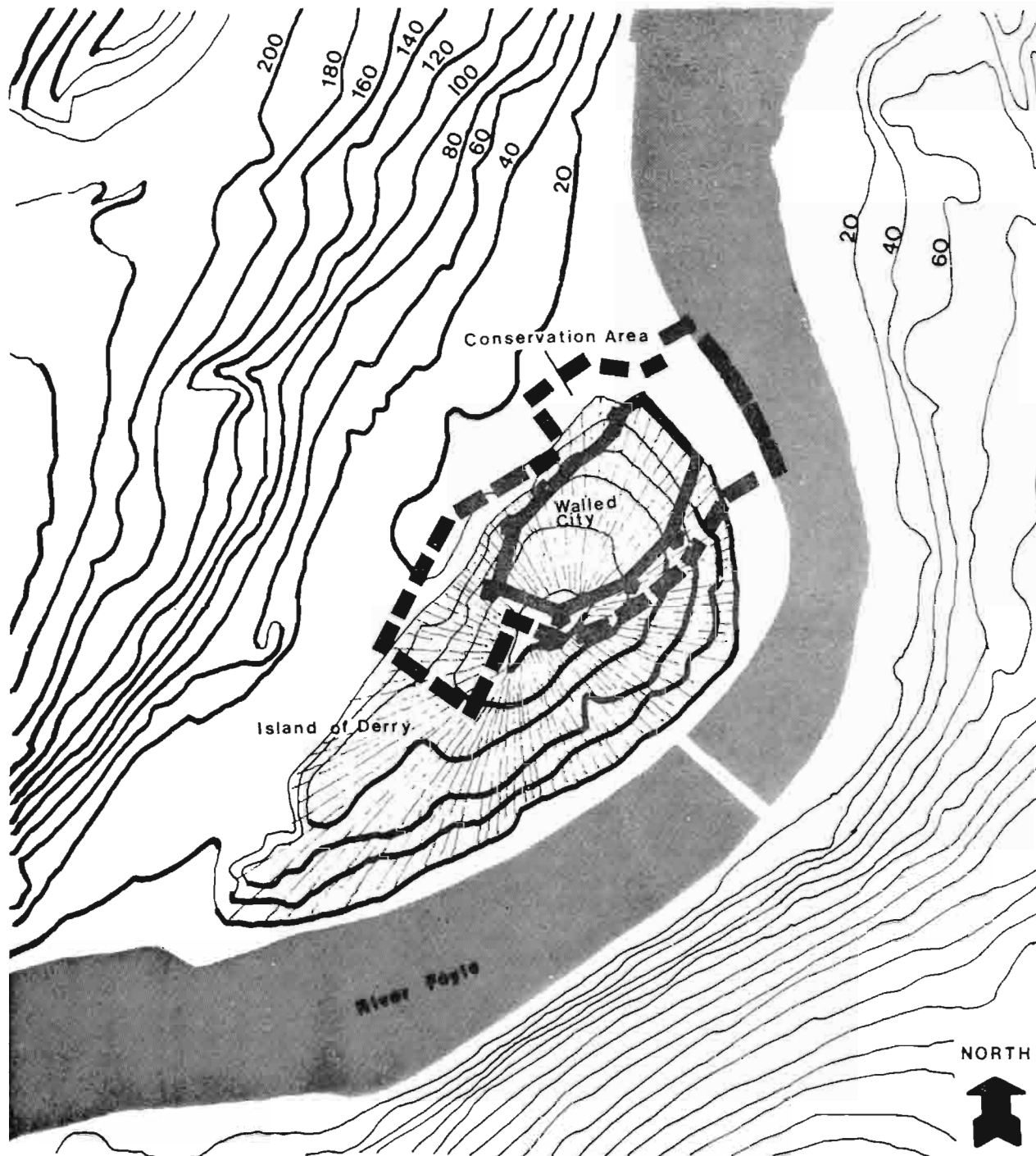
A map of the designated area has been deposited at the City Council Offices, the Development Office and at the Divisional Planning Office at the addresses indicated below

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Londonderry City Council | Central Offices
Rectorry Field
Limavady Road
LONDONDERRY
(Telephone Londonderry 41011)
and
The Guildhall
Londonderry |
| Development Office | Central Offices
Rectorry Field
Limavady Road
LONDONDERRY
(Telephone Londonderry 46521) |
| Divisional Planning Office | Central Offices
Rectorry Field
Limavady Road
LONDONDERRY
(Telephone Londonderry 41323) |

Londonderry
Historic City Conservation Area

Part 3

Brief for Developers



1. DESCRIPTION OF PRESENT SITUATION

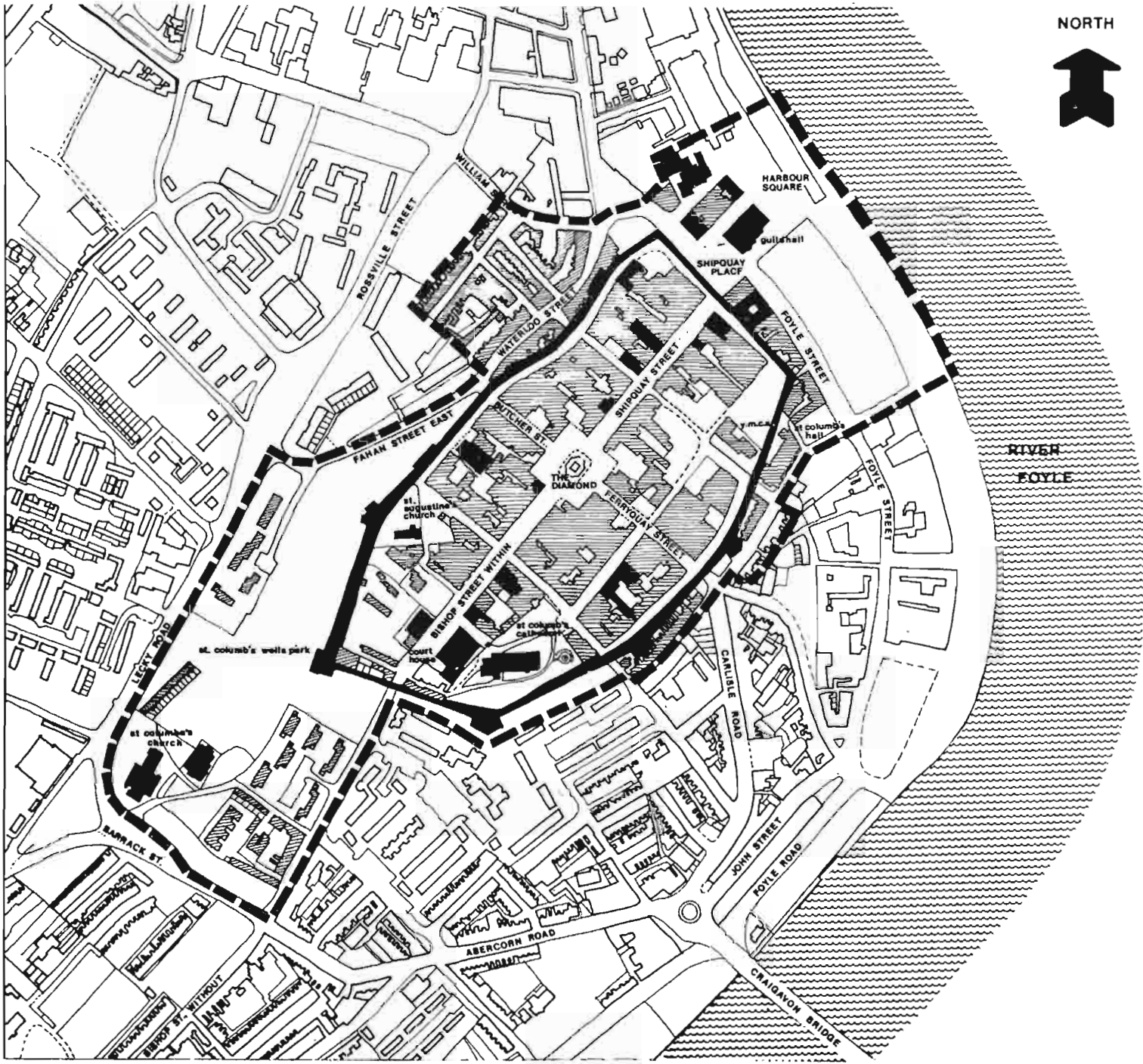
The Conservation Area covers the summit and north east end of the oval-shaped hill of the Island of Derry on the west side of the River Foyle. It includes the whole of the Walled City and its immediate environs built on the north east slope of the Island, together with two extensions. The first occupies the narrow strand lying between the face of the Walls and the River and contains Shipquay Place, Harbour Square and part of Foyie Street. The second occupies part of the slopes lying beyond the south-west face of the Walls containing the neighbourhoods of Long Tower and St. Columb's Wells. The Conservation Area therefore encompasses the historic core of the City and the dramatic, intimately interrelated topography and townscape which distinguishes it.

Viewed from outside, the original Island hill remains the dominant visual feature. It is clad in a dense texture of development climbing up its sides and culminating in a continuous, even skyline broken by a few, but important, vertical features which add interest and grace to its profile. This texture accentuates the dark, inaccessible, citadel character of the old City already created by the juxtaposition of River, Hills and Walls.

From within there are splendid outward glimpses and vistas of the River, the steep urbanized slopes of the remainder of the City, the open countryside and hills beyond. The elegant planned street pattern within the Walls is given additional interest by the slopes on which the streets and the Walls are laid out.

With the exception of a few of the civic, ecclesiastical and commercial buildings, the scale of development remains largely domestic with a uniformity of building height produced by narrow frontage, three and four storey blocks.

Within the Walled City the original street pattern remains virtually intact. Apart from St. Columb's Cathedral, however, the architectural styles belong to much later periods and are predominantly Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian with a few modern buildings. Other features of the Area are the late Georgian and Victorian developments immediately outside and adjacent to the walls which include the residential enclave



NORTH



Londonderry
conservation area
boundary ■■■

St. Columba's Church



St. Columb's Cathedral

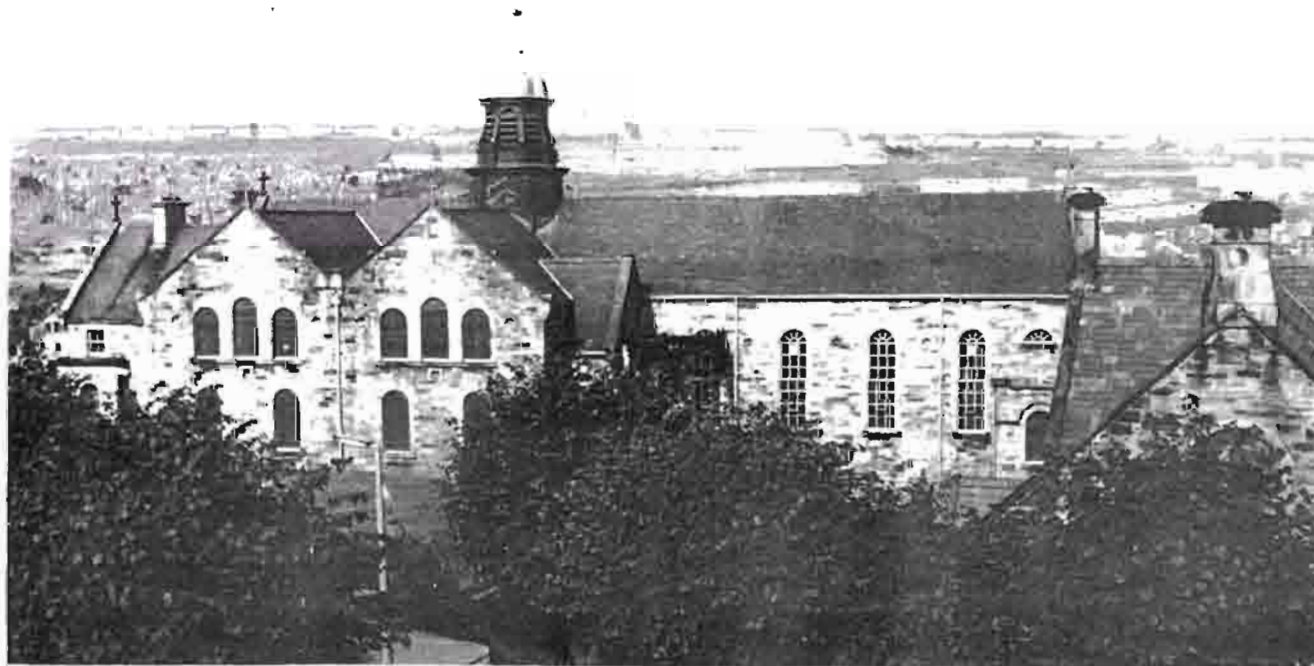


of Harvey Street, Chamberlain Street, High Street and part of William Street. These present attractive polychrome brick walls, stepped roofs and a variety of domestic chimneys all adding charm and pleasing scale and giving an insight into the social and historical expansion of the City.

The most common facing treatment is smooth plaster painted in pastel shades of blue, beige or grey with contrasting reveals and cornices. Other materials used, mainly in civic, commercial and ecclesiastical buildings, are grey schist, Portland stone, sandstone and red brick. Roofs are generally pitched and slated and windows mainly sliding sash. Some of the Victorian and Edwardian commercial buildings contain a range of sculpted features. Occasional attractive wrought and cast iron railings and gates remain.

Outside the Walls, the predominant uses in the Shipquay Place, Harbour Square and Foyle Street precinct are civic and commercial and in the Long Tower and St. Columb's Wells area are residential and ecclesiastical. Within the Walls some of the elements of the original land use pattern remain quite well defined, for example the ecclesiastical and civic functions of Bishop Street Within and residential functions of Pump Street, London Street and Artillery Street. The general use pattern of buildings within the Walls, however, consists of commercial premises on the ground floor with storage, offices or, occasionally, residential uses in the floors above.

First Presbyterian Church



Saint Columba's Church

2. POLICY FOR CONTROL OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The overall objective of control of development in the Conservation Area will be to ensure that, so far as possible, its essential traditional character can be retained to a degree compatible with the improvement, renewal and, where necessary, replacement of the existing building fabric. This will involve careful consideration of the uses of land and buildings which can be permitted as well as the physical change of the appearance of existing and new buildings themselves.

In broad terms, the uses of land and buildings permitted within the Walls will be traditional town centre activities including civic, ecclesiastical, cultural, residential, shopping, office and light industrial uses. As it will be policy to prevent all non-essential vehicular traffic from penetrating the Walled City, no heavy traffic-generating uses will be encouraged. Unsuitable changes of use of buildings of particular architectural and historic interest will not be permitted so as to ensure that their quality and character can be maintained. Uses permitted in the St. Columba's Wells and Long Tower neighbourhood will be confined to ecclesiastical, educational, residential and urban park uses. A wider range of civic and commercial uses can be permitted in the Harbour Square, Shipquay Place, and Foyle Street area. The present skyline profile and relatively dense texture of development supporting it will be maintained. This means that only under exceptional circumstances will new buildings be permitted to exceed the existing predominant three or four storey scale. It also means that no permanent clearance of extensive sites or their redevelopment in the form of large, homogeneous, undifferentiated masses will be accepted, especially within the Walls. Existing street patterns will be maintained and traditional building lines respected, particularly within the Walled City. Existing outward views will be protected.

New buildings should maintain the rhythm of the street in which they are built in storey height, frontage width, window proportions, detailing and roof treatment. Materials should be chosen to blend with those of the street as a whole. These constraints should not necessarily inhibit the production of good modern designs and replica rebuilding should not normally be necessary.



Saint Columb's Court

Where buildings are renovated their original character should be respected by the retention of basic features of proportions, finishes and details. Roofs of new or renovated buildings should generally be pitched and covered with slates or plain dark tiles. Elevational finishes other than smooth rendering and painting will need to be chosen with particular care in respect of colour and weathering quality. As much vernacular detail as possible should be retained on renovated buildings, and new buildings should endeavour to incorporate appropriate detail sympathetic to the local scene.

As the predominant uses within the Conservation Area will be of a commercial nature a widespread use of signs and advertisements must be anticipated. However, a careful policy of restraint in terms of the size, design, illumination and location of signs will be pursued, especially within the Walls, to maintain a standard of dignity and taste and to avoid garishness and crudity. Applications will be subject to careful scrutiny to ensure that all signs meet good design criteria and are appropriately located.

No extensive landscaping schemes are anticipated within the Conservation Area except for the St. Columb's Wells park. Existing green spaces, confined mainly to Church precincts, will be protected as will existing street tree planting. Additional intensive landscaping will be carried out as pedestrianization of Shipquay Place, Waterloo Street and Castle Street proceeds. This landscaping will take the form of street floor treatment, planting and street furniture arrangement. A policy for the general improvement of the design and location of street lighting and street furniture throughout the Conservation Area will be advocated.

Deanery Door Bishop St.



Artillery St.



Control of development will place special emphasis on protection of the Walls. Sympathetic landscape treatment for those sections already cleared of abutting development will be sought. Careful evaluation of all proposals for the replacement or improvement of existing development against the face of the Walls will be observed to avoid the creation of incongruous new features and, as opportunities arise, to eliminate existing incompatibilities. A more sensitive treatment of the walkway and bastions on top of the Walls will be encouraged.



Magazine Gate & Guildhall



London St.



Palace St.

Bishop Street



Austins



Archway Shipquay Street

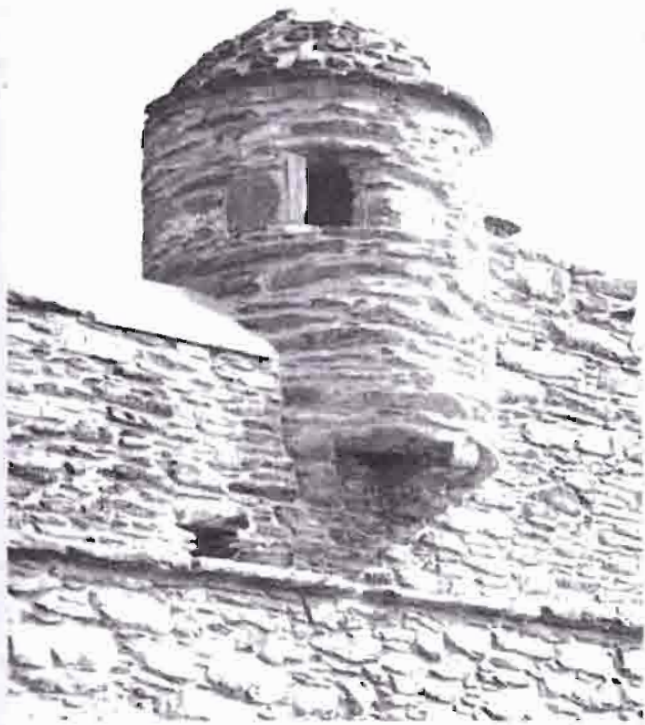


Shipquay St.



Georgian Shopfront Shipquay St.

Church Wall



Pump St.



Shipquay St.



