

Development Plan Submissions,
Strategic and Economic Development,
Cork City Council, City Hall,
Anglesea Street, Cork T12 T997.
Submitted to the on-line consultation portal
at: <https://consult.corkcity.ie/>

28 April 2022

Re: Material Alterations to the Draft Cork City Development Plan: Amendment No. 1.313. (Zoning Amendment 2.84); Amendment No. 1.322; and Zoning Amendment 2.88.

Dear Sir / Madam,

This submission to the Material Alteration Proposals to the Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (DCCDP) has been prepared by McCutcheon Halley, in collaboration with Southgate Associates Heritage Conservation Architects and Forestbird Design on behalf of Blarney Castle Estate (BCE).

BCE own lands adjacent to Blarney GAA Club at Shean Lower, Blarney, which are subject to Amendment No. 1.313 (Zoning Amendment 2.84) in the DCCDP.

Amendment No. 1.313. (Zoning Amendment 2.84) proposes to change the zoning objective of lands owned by Blarney GAA Club at Shean Lower, Blarney, from ZO 17 Sports Grounds & Facilities to ZO 5 Mixed Use Development.

Amendment 1.322. proposes to adjust the minimum density target for Blarney from 25-35 dwellings per hectare to 35-50 dwellings per hectare.

We object to the proposed amendments no. 1.313. and no. 1.322. on the following grounds:

1. Amendment no. 1.313. is contrary to sustainable planning objectives for Blarney as no alternative land area for a Sports Ground and Facilities for Blarney have been identified in the DCCDP. The re-zoning to mixed use would deprive the population of Blarney and environs of sports grounds and facilities which are in an ideal location in terms of accessibility and connectivity to the town centre and existing and future residential neighbourhoods.
2. Amendment no. 1.313. proposes a mixed-use zoning at a key entry point to the historic Blarney Town centre, which is part of the historic demesne and its designed landscape and town plan.

A potential mixed-use development at this location will have significant implications on the traffic infrastructure of Blarney Town centre. It will furthermore seriously injure the historic

setting of Blarney Castle and historic demesne and key views to and from the Castle, having a negative impact on Blarney as a tourist attraction.

3. Amendment no. 1.322. should be rejected or modified to recognise the rural and historic setting of Blarney West, where the increase in residential density is inappropriate given the context of the existing Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), recorded and protected monuments and their curtilage and the importance of the overall landscape setting.

We furthermore submit that Zoning Amendment 2.88 should be subject to landscape objectives and assessment objectives which recognise that the Hollyhill site is part of long-distance views from Blarney Castle, enabling mitigation measures i.e. a landscape masterplan.

Forestbird Design supports this submission by outlining the key view sheds from Blarney Castle and argues that the Blarney GAA site is one of the key entrance points to the town centre and part of the historic demesne lands. Mixed-use development as proposed by amendment no. 1.313. would have a visible long-term negative impact on the Blarney Castle demesne and diminish the town centre character. It would also set precedence for further development south of Castle Close road.

The addended submission by Southgate Associates details the reasoning for rejecting proposed amendment no.1.313. from a conservation heritage standpoint and the potential damage to the integrity of the historic environment of Blarney, which is unique in a national and international context.

This submission is structured as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Amendment No. 1.313. (Zoning Amendment 2.84)
3. Amendment No. 1.322
4. Zoning Amendment 2.88
5. Conclusion

1. Introduction

The historic town centre of Blarney, including Blarney Castle and demesne is the focus of heritage led tourism of major importance for Blarney, Cork City, and the wider Munster region, with national and international significance. The success of this tourism is based on respecting the architectural, archaeological and cultural significance, which is intrinsically linked to the overall landscape character of the town setting, the approach points and wider pastoral landscape setting.

This submission recognises that Blarney will grow in population and change overtime, however it is the responsibility of the Cork City Development Plan to allow such growth in a manner that does not eradicate the important amenity of the existing Blarney GAA grounds without identifying an alternative location. A mixed-use development at the GAA ground would also do significant harm to the village as an 18th century designed landscape, would detract from the Village Landscape character and the ACA at an important approach point to Blarney and detract from Blarney as a centre for heritage-led tourism which is critical for the local economy.

We therefore submit that Amendment No. 1.313 and Amendment No. 1.322. be rejected and that Zoning Amendment No. 288 be modified, to allow future generations of Blarney and visitors alike to retain the historic and unique sense of place and to allow them the opportunity to further explore and develop the outstanding contribution Blarney has to offer in terms of architectural, archaeological and cultural significance.

2. Amendment No. 1.313. (Zoning Amendment 2.84)

Amendment No. 1.313. (Zoning Amendment 2.84) proposes to change the zoning objective of lands owned by Blarney GAA Club at Shean Lower, Blarney, from ZO 17 Sports Grounds & Facilities to ZO 5 Mixed Use Development (see figure 1).

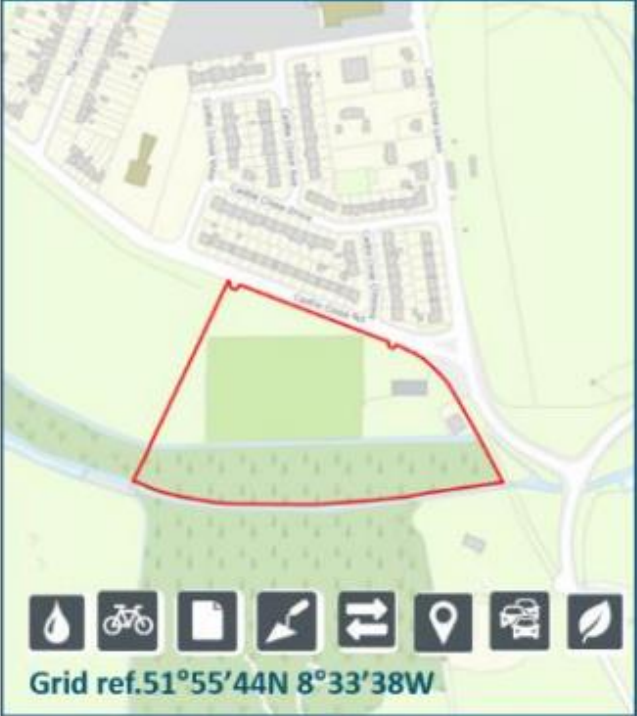
1.313.	NDS	440-442	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insert new <i>Neighbourhood Development Site at Shean lower, Blarney</i>
<div style="background-color: #004a7c; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <p>Neighbourhood Development Site 5 Address: Shean Lower, Blarney Site area: 2.6 Ha Zoning: Mixed Use Potential Land Use: Mixed use based on Retail impact assessment, site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and design statement</p> </div>  <p>Grid ref. 51°55'44N 8°33'38W</p>			

Figure 1: Proposed Material Alteration to the DCCDP under Amendment No. 1.313.

2.1 Importance of Blarney GAA at the existing grounds

The existing Blarney GAA grounds were transferred to Blarney GAA by Sir George Colthurst the granduncle of Sir Charles Colthurst, the present owner of Blarney Castle, on the understanding of providing a vital community facility for the local population.

The GAA's location in close proximity to the town centre and adjacent residential neighbourhoods is in adherence to sustainable planning objectives, easily accessible by walking or cycling. The continued existence of the GAA grounds at this location will be of even greater importance in the medium and long term of Blarney's development, allowing the integration of future residential development at Ringwood and Stoneview.

In line with the National Planning Framework Strategic Outcomes of Compact Growth, Strengthened Rural Economies & Communities, Access to Quality Childcare, Education & Health Services and Sustainable Mobility, the DCCDP provides with Strategic Objective SO2 – Delivering Homes & Communities:

Provide densities that create liveable, integrated communities by using a mix of house types, tenures and sizes linked to active and public transport. Provide amenities, services and community and cultural uses to enable inclusive, diverse and culturally rich neighbourhoods.

The DCCDP notes in section 3.85 that a city-wide 'Active Recreation Infrastructure Study' will appraise existing facilities and provide recommendations on policy objectives, the enhancement or expansion of existing facilities, and the provision of new facilities. The Development Plan will seek to incorporate the recommendations and take them forward to implementation.

The proposed amendment fails to address the issue of the provision of such vital services for Blarney and its environs in line with Strategic Objective SO2 and the anticipated recommendations of 'The Active Recreation and Infrastructure Study'. By not identifying a possible alternative location, the merits and flaws of such a possible location cannot be scrutinised and compared to the existing facility, and the locational benefits of the existing facilities, accessible to the existing and future population of Blarney and benefitting from the proximity to the parklands of Blarney Castle, would be seriously undermined.

The zoning proposed for the Blarney GAA lands as part of Stage 1 and 2 of the Draft City Development Plan is **ZO17 – Sports Grounds and Facilities**. Zoning Objective 17 provides:

“to protect, retain and enhance the range and quality of sports facilities and grounds.”

ZO17.1 further specifies:

“This zone includes a wide range of sports grounds and facilities. The primary purpose of this zone is to preserve all land in this zone for sports facilities and grounds”

ZO 17.2 provides:

“There is a presumption against the loss of land zoned Sports Grounds and Facilities to other forms of development. Only development that is ancillary to the principle use of the site for sports and which will only affect lands incapable of forming part of the playing pitches, courts, tracks, courses or similar will be considered in these areas. Ancillary uses include other sport and leisure facilities such as clubhouses, changing rooms, meeting rooms, gyms, sports training halls, catering facilities, caretaker accommodation and

appropriate car parking facilities. Creches and community uses are open for consideration, provided they are linked to the sports use.”

The ZO17 Sports Grounds and Facilities is the appropriate zoning objective for the lands of Blarney GAA and there should be ‘a presumption against the loss of land zoned Sports Grounds and Facilities to other forms of development’.

We therefore submit that the ZO 17 zoning should be applied to the Blarney GAA lands and that amendment no. 1.313. be rejected, recognising that the existing facility is ideally placed to provide vital sports and amenity facilities for Blarney and because no clarity for a compensatory alternative location has been given.

We further suggest that lands north east to the existing grounds are ideally placed to facilitate expansion for the GAA grounds and contain an additional sports pitch. Connectivity issues and further expansion could be accommodated on these lands for the benefit of Blarney and the wider area, as they are in close proximity to planned residential development at Stoneview and Roundwood.

2.2 Potential Implications of proposed Mixed-Use Development Zoning

We submit that Amendment No. 1.313 should be rejected as it has serious negative implications for the population of Blarney, the key eastern entrance point to the historic town centre and the overall historic landscape setting and the Architectural Conservation Area, including view sheds to and from Blarney Castle, leading to a fragmentation of the heritage values of Blarney.

2.2.2 Traffic Implications

A mixed-use development at the GAA Grounds, based on a Retail Impact Assessment, could potentially facilitate the future development of a supermarket chain at a location which is highly sensitive in terms of traffic volumes, being a key entry point for tourists to Blarney. Supermarket shopping typically requires the use of private transport to accommodate bulk buying and will attract additional car-based traffic to this sensitive area of Blarney, making the town centre less attractive for the enjoyment of the local population and visitors, and pupils of Blarney National School, along St. Ann’s Road, the Square, Shean Lower and Castle Close Road. Adding additional traffic to the R617, will furthermore exacerbate the current capacity issues of the R617.

2.2.3 Implications on the ACA and the wider historic setting

In recognition of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the National Planning Framework Strategic Outcomes, the DCCDP provides with Strategic Objective SO7 – Heritage, Arts and Culture for the protection and enhancement of the unique character and built fabric of the city, its protected Structures, archaeological monuments and heritage, Architectural Conservation Areas and intangible heritage. It also provides that Cork’s heritage, culture and arts are celebrated and developed to create an attractive, vibrant and inclusive place to live, work and visit (see figure 2).

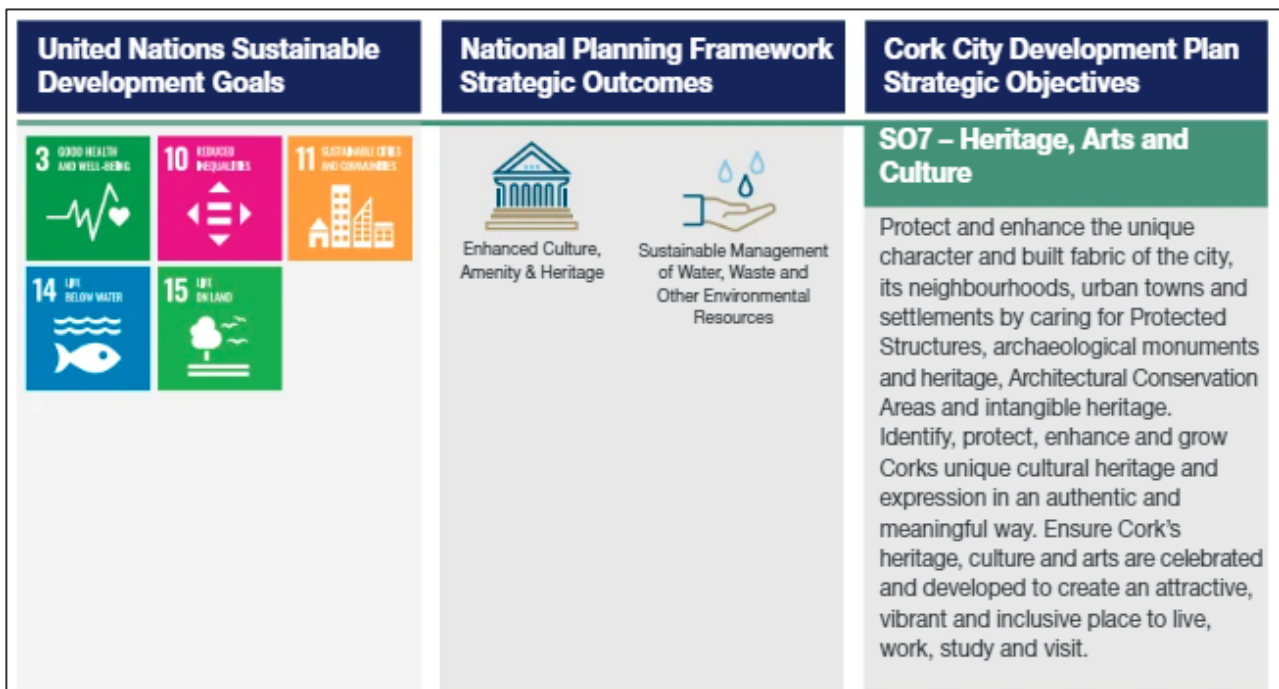


Figure 2: Strategic Objective SO7 aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and the National Planning Framework Strategic Outcomes.

The DCCDP recognises Blarney Castle and Gardens as being within the top-10 of fee-charging visitor attractions in the State in 2019 (Section 7.68, page 234).

Section 7.69 proposes that the economic contribution of tourism is maximised,

"while protecting the invaluable assets that are our natural, built and cultural heritage"

(Volume 1, Chapter 7, page 234).

The draft plan notes, that the tourist attraction, which is Blarney Castle, relies on the quality and attractiveness of the built and natural heritage of the local area and that there is need to have regard to the impacts of proposed development on both Blarney Castle and the wider Blarney Estate (see Section 10.245 and section 10.246).

The draft Plan states that:

"Future development within the vicinity of the (Blarney Castle) Estate should not compromise the landscape and heritage character of the area on which the local tourism economy relies."

(Volume 1, Chapter 10, Section 10.246, p.395).

The Blarney GAA Grounds are directly adjacent to the ACA and include ACA designation on the southern part of the site including the wooded area adjacent to the Mill Stream. This designation recognises the historic land and townscape of Blarney. In line with the stated objectives of the DCCDP, *"Future development within the vicinity of the (Blarney Castle) Estate should not compromise the landscape and heritage character of the area on which the local tourism economy relies"*. We submit that mixed-use development at the subject site would compromise the landscape and heritage character of the area and would negatively impact the local tourism economy.

Given that there are no safeguards for the heritage setting and the tourism economy in regard to proposed Amendment No. 1.313 (Zoning Amendment 2.84), and its potential of harming the special character and integrity of Blarney, we submit that Amendment No. 1.313 be rejected.

As pointed out in the attached submission and document by Southgate Heritage Consultants “The Significance of the 18th century development of Blarney Village and Demesne”, the historic landscape of Blarney risks to be seriously undermined and fragmented, should the re-zoning proposal to mixed use be allowed to be adopted. The report notes that Blarney has immense potential as a heritage site of rare integrity in the national and indeed international context, and that the GAA Site, is indeed part of the 18th century designed landscape. It is evident that the heritage of Blarney, and its connection to the surrounding landscape is so powerful and relevant, that it merits protection from potentially incompatible use.

Forestbird Design further illustrates in the attached observaton (Landscape Character of Blarney Town and Blarney Castle Demesne), that the subject site is one of the key entrance points to Blarney’s historic centre. Its current use for recreation has a low visible impact on this location. The introduction of structures would however result in visibility of a built environment that creates a new edge and permanently change the historic demesne lands, setting a precedence for further development south of the Castle Close road. Long term, this would have visible negative impact on the Blarney Castle demesne and diminish the town centre character.

Please note that the base map has been altered in the proposed zoning amendment 2.84 (Amendment No. 1.113), as seen in Figure 3, with the amendment proposing a change from ZO 17 to ZO 5. The previous map includes the woodland on the southern site area as part of the ACA and zones the adjacent lands to the west as ZO 17 Sports Grounds & Facilities. The ACA area and the adjacent land zoning must be adhered to as proposed in Part 2 of the DCCDP (see figure 4 and attached as Appendix A).

Zoning Amend.	Location	From	To	Map
2.84	Blarney GAA club, Shean Lower, Blarney	ZO 17 Sports Grounds & Facilities	ZO 5 Mixed Use Development	

Figure 3: Zoning Amendment No. 2.84 with altered Base Map

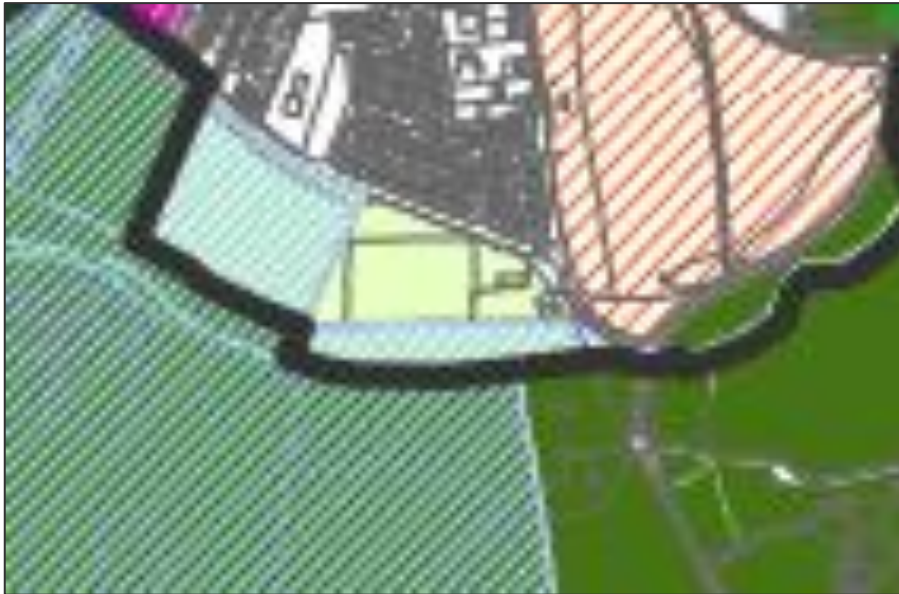


Figure 4: Excerpt of Zoning Map as published for the DCCDP, Part 2 Consultation, showing ACA designation and Sport and Leisure Zoning for the Subject Site and lands adjacent to the west.

3. Amendment No. 1.322

Amendment 1.322. proposes to adjust the minimum density target for Blarney from 25-35 dwellings per hectare to 35-50 dwellings per hectare (see figure 5).

Amend. No.	Ref.	Page No.	Proposed Material Amendments
1.322.	Table 11.2	467	<p><i>Amend Table 11.2: Cork City Density and Building Height Strategy as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust the minimum density target for <u>Blarney</u> from 25 to 35 dwellings per hectare (i.e. the density range will now be “35-50” dph). • Adjust the minimum density targets for the <u>Outer Suburbs</u> from “35 to 40 dwellings per hectare (i.e. the density target range will now be “40-60dph”. <p><i>Non material</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend title to Table 11.2 to “Cork City Density and Building Height Standards”

Figure 5: Amendment No. 1.322. (Excerpt of Part 1: Proposed Material Amendments to Volume 1 and 3 of the Draft Cork City Development Plan,

We submit that Amendment No. 1.322 has serious implications for the overall historic landscape setting surrounding Blarney Castle and Estate, as increased density provision could negatively affect the rural setting of the historic core of Blarney. Future residential development near the historic town centre requires to be assessed in respect of its potential impact on the ACA as identified by Southgate Heritage Consultants in BCE’s submission to the Draft Cork City Development Plan (Submission Ref. CRK-C155-DEV21-343).

We submit in line with our previous submission, that the DCCDP must provide for the following objectives in relation to West Blarney and sensitive view sheds of the wider landscape:

- I. Provide a sustainable tourism objective to support the unique setting of the built heritage tourist attractions of Blarney and to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage associated with them, by careful control of new additions or alterations to their immediate and wider setting.
- II. Provide a historic landscape objective to carefully control the siting, design, materials, use and scale of development where it would be visible from the ACA, to ensure that views and vistas to and from the ACA are respected.
- III. Provide a development objective to ensure that the character and integrity of the ACA is maintained by recognising that new development adjacent and at a distance from the ACA can affect the ACA’s character. The siting, design, material and use of such development should be carefully considered not to have a negative impact.
- IV. Provide a development objective for public realm improvements within the historic core to ensure that they are designed to enhance and support the historic character.

- V. Reduce in size Tier 3 lands on the eastern approach to Blarney's historic core to provide a 15m buffer zone, controlling development in a manner similar to an ACA.
- VI. Include the requirement for development and associated landscaping to be of sympathetic scale, materials, use and design, which is visible from and connects to the ACA, as an addition to Section 1.133.
- VII. In addition to Section 1.135, recognise that enhancing the historic character and integrity of the ACA should be at the core of larger-scale residential and mixed-use development.

The proposed amendment no. 1.322. does not recognise the historic relevance of Blarney West and would seriously hinder the pursuit of supporting and further developing the historic legacy of Blarney West. We therefore submit that the proposed amendment no. 1.322. be rejected.

The high density housing needed to fulfil the growth strategy for Blarney should instead be directed and prioritised to the north and east of the historic core where its impact can be managed in line with sustainable development goals and not to the detriment of Blarney's historic core, the viewshed to and from the Castle and the historic landscape setting of the village.

4. Zoning Amendment 2.88

Zoning Amendment 2.88 proposes to change the zoning objective from ZO 10 Light Industry & Related Uses to ZO 11 Business & Technology (see figure 6).

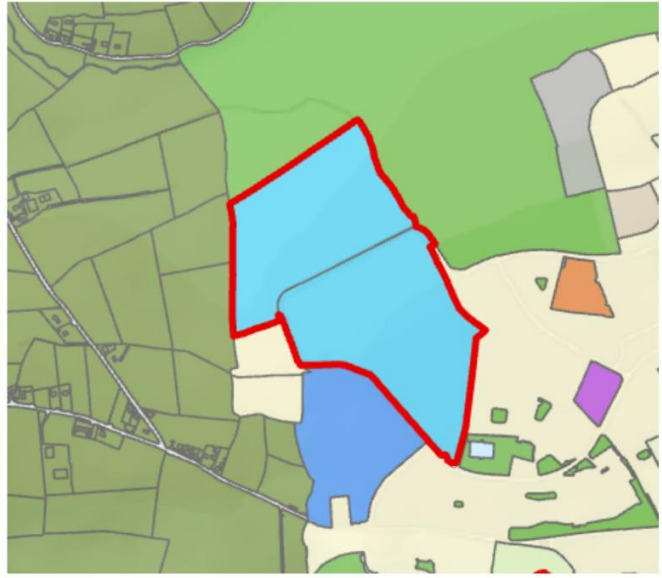
Zoning Amend.	Location	From	To	Map
2.88	Hollyhill, Cork	ZO 10 Light Industry & Related Uses	ZO 11 Business & Technology	

Figure 6: Amendment No. 2.88 (Excerpt of Part 2: Proposed Amendments to Volume 2 of the Draft Cork City Development Plan)

The existing Apple Facility at Hollyhill is located on a prominent hilltop position, in direct line of views from Blarney Castle and demesne, affecting long distance views from Blarney Castle. The proposed extension of the industrial park north of the existing facility will exacerbate the detrimental visual impact on long range views from BCE, which is part of the ACA and includes protected structures and recorded archaeological monuments, seriously affecting the integrity of the landscape setting, and eroding its special character.

We note that City Council did not remove the proposed expansion area north of the existing Apple centre of the Hollyhill Industrial Estate, as we had proposed in our previous submission (Submission Ref. CRK-C155-DEV21-343), however we welcome the proposed change of zoning to ZO 11 Business & Technology. We further submit that the ZO 11 Business & Technology Zoning should be subject to landscape objectives that mitigate the potential negative effects on long distance views from Blarney Castle.

5. Conclusion

Blarney Castle Estate welcome the opportunity to participate in the review of the Draft Cork City Development Plan.

In recognition of the role of BCE and Blarney as a visitor attraction of international importance, new development must have regard to the setting and wider landscape, as well as to the townscape and ACA within the vicinity of the Castle. This will benefit the integrity of the cultural heritage, the experiences of visitors and locals alike, and the continued success of Blarney as an international tourism asset.

We therefore submit that the Draft Cork City Development Plan should ensure the following:

1. Reject Amendment no. 1.313, as it proposes to change the zoning objective of lands owned by Blarney GAA Club at Shean Lower, Blarney, from ZO 17 Sports Grounds & Facilities to ZO 5 Mixed Use Development.

This proposed amendment is contrary to sustainable planning principles as no alternative land area for a Sports Ground and Facilities for Blarney have been identified in the DCCDP. The re-zoning to mixed use would deprive the population of Blarney and environs of sports grounds and facilities which are in an ideal location in terms of accessibility and connectivity to the town centre and existing and future residential neighbourhoods.

2. Reject Amendment no. 1.313., which proposes a mixed-use zoning at a key entry point to the historic Blarney Town centre, which is an internationally renowned tourist attraction due to the presence of Blarney Castle and demesne.

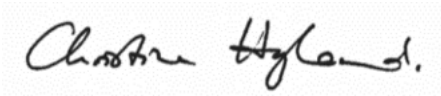
The potential mixed-use development (for e.g. a discount super market) at this location will have grave implications on the traffic infrastructure of Blarney Town centre. It will furthermore seriously injure the historic setting of Blarney Castle and historic demesne and key views to and from the Castle, having a significant negative impact on Blarney as a tourist attraction.

3. Amendment no. 1.322. which proposes a higher minimum density for Blarney of 35-50 dwellings per hectare should be rejected or modified to recognise the rural and historic setting of Blarney West, where the increase in residential density is inappropriate given the context of the existing ACA, recorded and protected monuments and their curtilage and the importance of the overall landscape setting.

4. Zoning Amendment 2.88 proposes to change the zoning objective from ZO 10 Light Industry & Related Uses to ZO 11 Business & Technology Zoning Amendment 2.88. We submit that the new zoning should be subject to landscape objectives and assessment objectives which recognise that the Hollyhill site is part of long distance views from Blarney Castle, enabling mitigation measures i.e. the implementation of a landscape masterplan.

On behalf of Blarney Castle Estate, we thank you for considering this submission to the Cork City Development Plan.

Sincerely yours



Christine Hyland

McCutcheon Halley

Appendix A

- Map 11 of the Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

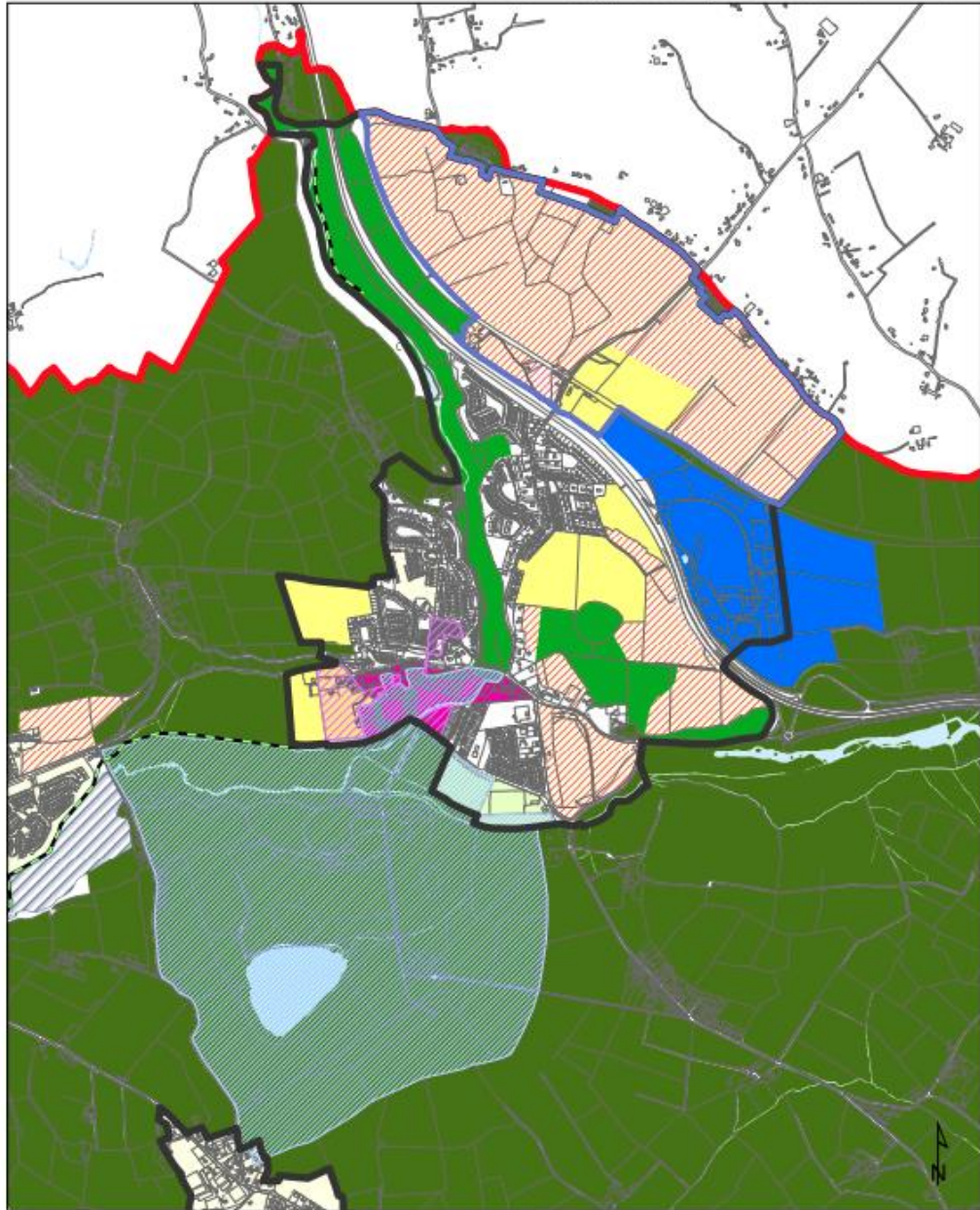
Enclosure:

- Observation from Forestbird Design (Landscape Architecture, Landscape Planning, Environmental Design), "Landscape Character of Blarney Town and Blarney Castle Demesne".
- Addendum to the Draft Cork City Development Plan submission on Heritage grounds from Southgate Associates Heritage Conservation Architects, including as Appendix 1, Report: "The Significance of the 18th century Development of Blarney Village and Demesne" (Lysaght, K; 2022).

Appendix A

MAP 11

Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022 - 2028



Base map © OSI, all rights reserved.





RE: Material Alterations to the Draft Cork City Development Plan
Observation on Amendment no. 1.313 / Zoning Amendment 2.84
On behalf of Blarney Castle Estate

28th April 2022

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF BLARNEY TOWN and BLARNEY CASTLE DEMESNE

The town of Blarney acquires much of its cultural significance through a clear definition between the town centre and the Blarney Castle Estate (BCE) demesne. The Castle Close Road is a defining physical boundary. The proposed rezoning of the GAA grounds sets precedence for diluting this clear definition.

The current use of the lands for recreation has a low visual impact at this location and is an acceptable amenity, given the access and proximity to existing and zoned residential lands. Even if no longer in ownership, visually, the BCE demesne appears to reach its historic extent. The Introduction of structures would result in visibility of a built environment that creates a new edge to the extent of the demesne. This would be an edge with historical inconsistencies.



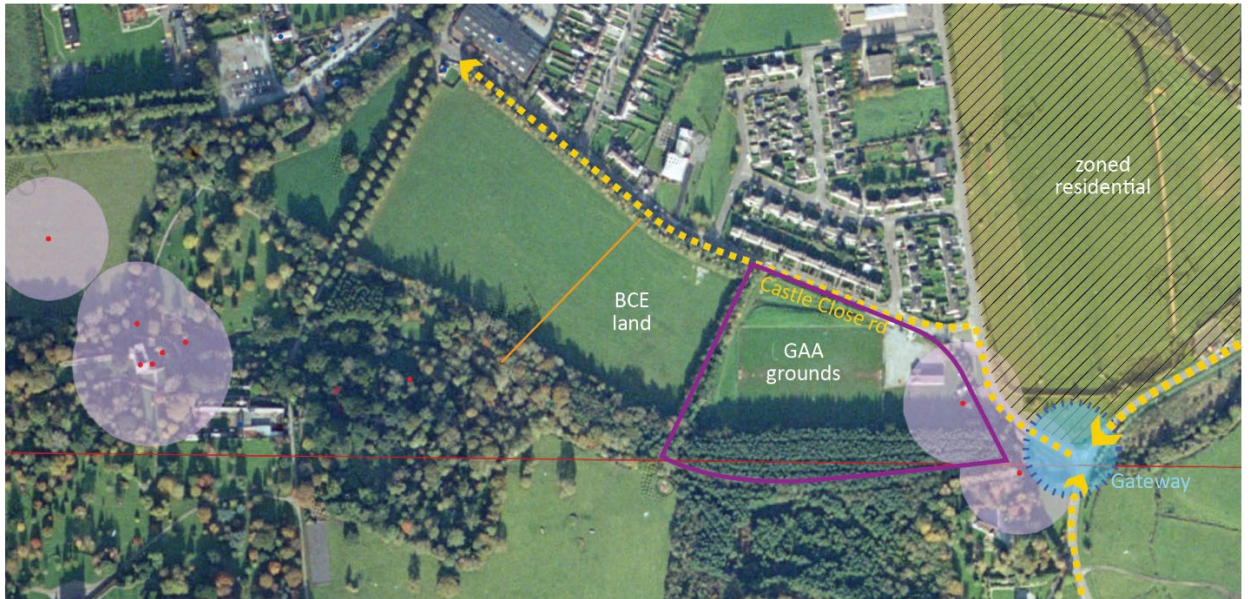
Figure L1 – View from the Blarney Castle Tower looking northeast. The town centre has a distinct proximity, while residential neighbourhoods trail off into the background and are filtered by multiple layers of trees. Currently, the recreational use of the GAA grounds is not a visual detraction as viewed from the tower. However, housing within this parcel would be visible and reduce the visual extent of the demesne grounds.

Beyond the view from the castle tower, the most significant impact arises from the Castle Close road itself. Arriving from the Clogheen road, this junction forms an important eastern gateway to town. In simple terms, lands north of Castle Close appear as contiguous housing estates (particularly with adjacent zoned lands). Lands south of the road appear as tree-lined open space hinting at the demesne. By introducing housing south of the road, this distinction would be permanently muddled. The maps on the following pages illustrate the area proposed for rezoning in context of modern and historic development.

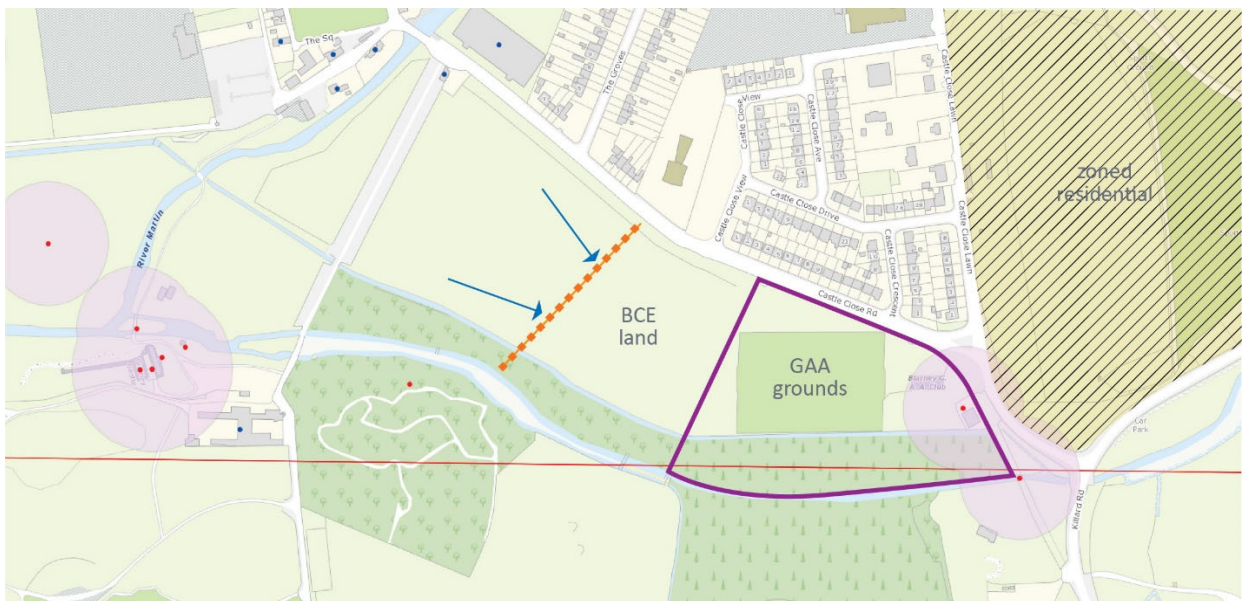


Forestbird Design

landscape architecture landscape planning environmental design



Current Aerial Photograph - The GAA grounds proposed for rezoning are highlighted by a purple line. The dashed yellow lines identify the points of arrival and the Castle Close road. Residential development is clearly north of this line, while lands to the south are green and amenity in nature.



Current Ordnance Survey Map - The GAA grounds proposed for rezoning are highlighted by a purple line. The area includes a coniferous woodland at the south end. The yellow hatch to the east identifies lands already zoned residential. The dotted orange line represents the old hedgerow boundary (refer below, no longer extant).



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OS 6-inch map (1845) - The western boundary of the GAA grounds is not based on a long-standing historic land division. The blue arrows indicate an original land division that is no longer extant. Historically, the river naturally changes course over time. This parcel proposed for rezoning clearly forms part of the demesne, defined by the access road to town.

Based on the town planning overview highlighted above, it would be our strong opinion that the current GAA lands be retained as *ZO 17 Sports Grounds & Facilities* and **NOT** be rezoned *ZO 5 Mixed Use Development*. Such an alteration would result in permanent change to the historic demesne lands and set precedence for further development south of the Castle Close road. Long term, this would have visible negative impact on the Blarney Castle demesne and diminished town centre character.

Kind Regards,

Mike Waldvogel

Principal



IRISH LANDSCAPE INSTITUTE
INSTITIÚID TÍRDHREACHA NA hÉIREANN

Full Member, Irish Landscape Institute (ILI no. P07008)

28th April, 2022

McCutcheon Halley,
Chartered Planning Consultants,
6, Joyce House,
Barrack Square,
Ballincollig,
Co. Cork.

RE: Submission to Draft Cork City Development Plan, 2022-2028: Objection to re-zoning Blarney GAA Club Grounds, Castle Close Road, Shean Lower, Blarney

Dear Sir/ Madam,

We write in relation to the above proposed re-zoning of Blarney GAA Club Grounds from ZO-17 Sports Grounds and Facilities to ZO-05 Mixed-use development. We make the following observations:

Point 1: The GAA grounds are part of a Nationally and Internationally Important Heritage Landscape (Draft Cork City Development Plan - 1.133 p78 of Vol 3 Specific Built Heritage objectives)

Tangible evidence¹ (Lysaght, Southgate Associates 2022, please see Appendix 1) has recently been discovered to reveal that an elaborate classical estate village plan, and an associated designed landscape was constructed on the grounds of the Blarney Castle Estate between 1756 and 1777. The delivery of this plan included a whole series of coordinated actions, including the remodeling of the 1650s Mc Carthy mansion in front of Blarney Castle in Georgian Gothic style. In addition, the development of the pleasure gardens were part of this scheme, with

¹ The Significance of the 18th century developments at Blarney Village and Demesne *Karen Lysaght, B.S.S.C., Ph.D.*

the creation of a whole series of mysterious and frivolous follies, placed around the pleasure grounds for the entertainment of visitors as they walked in the gardens, enjoying the picturesque landscape.

These include ancient watchtowers, the wishing steps, the dolmen/the rock close, the druids circle, the witches cave, the witch's stone among other entertainments. Included in this group of follies is one whose position has been become divided from the castle grounds, as the result of land releases by the Castle, such as that to the GAA, given in an attempt to support the local need for a sportsground.

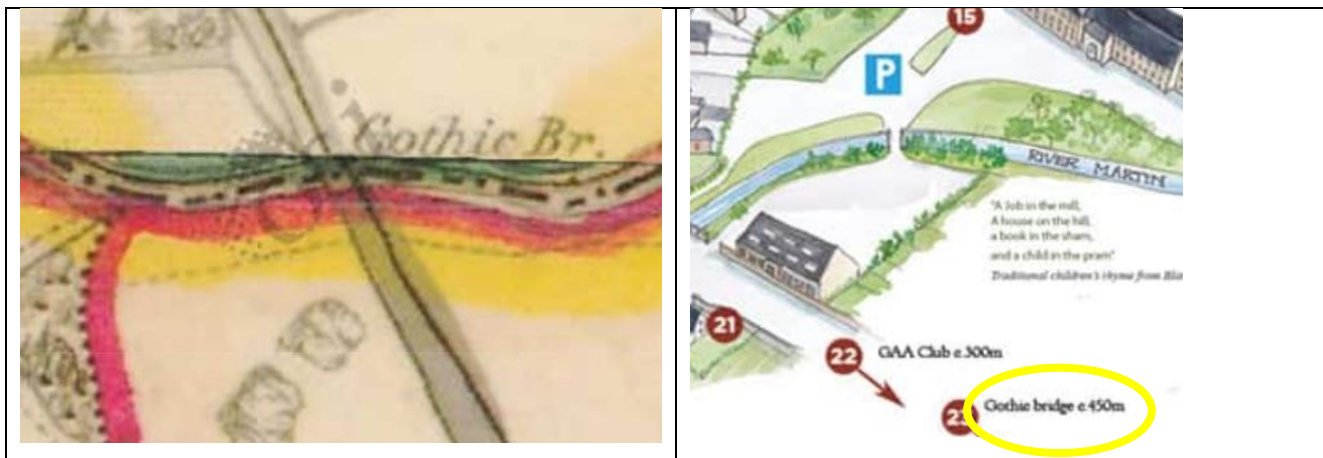
This folly is called The Gothic Chapel or the Gothic Bridge, and is an 18th century folly included on the Record of Monuments and Places (CO073-081), which was reputed to hold a little chapel within its internal fabric, which could have been designed by the English architect Christopher Myers, known to have remodeled the mansion house in Blarney Castle demesne in Georgian Gothic style in 1762. Myers was known for his work in the gothic style, particularly in the north-east of Ireland, on great estates such as Hillsborough and Glenarm for the Marquis of Downshire and the Earl of Antrim respectively. The Gothic Chapel sits on the boundary of the GAA lands, which makes it highly vulnerable to the impact of a rezoning decision. The bridge once sat within the demesne of the Blarney Castle Estate, an obvious 18th century folly which belongs in the pleasure gardens of the castle. This landscape memory is preserved by its position in the green landscape of the GAA grounds, but rezoning threatens to permanently destroy the legibility of the 18th century scheme on the Blarney landscape.



The Gothic Chapel/bridge is one of the playful follies of the Blarney Castle Estate, probably designed by the English architect Christopher Myers, currently accessed via the footpath from the village past the GAA grounds

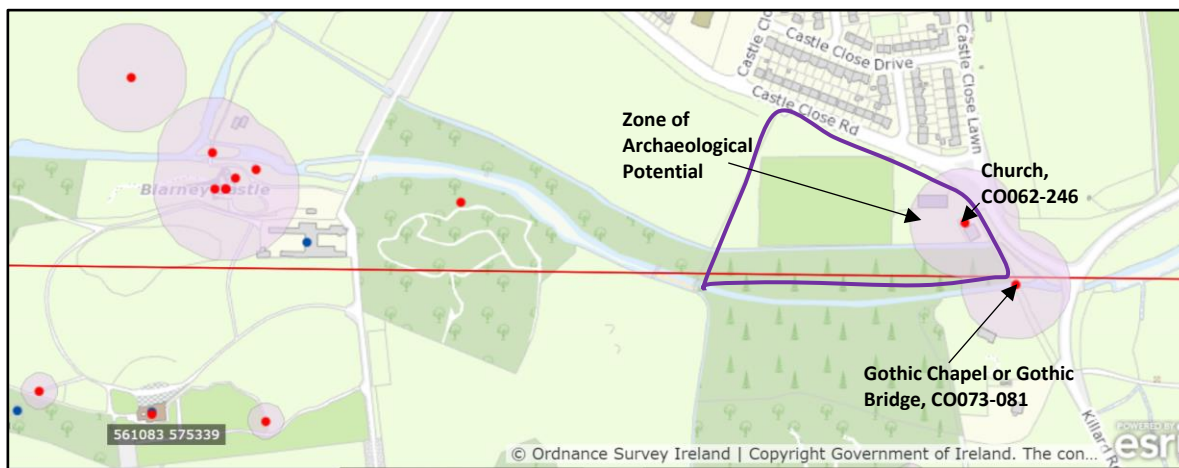
The research contained in Appendix 1 was carried out as part of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Church of Ireland on Blarney Square, in 2020/2021, which explored the significance of the church as one of the oldest buildings in the village. The CMP was part-funded by Cork City Council, who were aware of its findings when the Draft Development Plan was written. It was found that the church was built as the final 'eyecatcher'

element in the construction of the village as a privately-owned linen manufactory, with the whole settlement being built in a mere 12 years, on the grounds of the Blarney Castle Estate. Cork City Council have recognized the importance of this designed landscape and town plan through their acknowledgement of its National and International Significance within the ACA policy of the most recent 2022 draft development plan.



First edition Ordnance Survey map showing the gothic bridge, and a contemporary village heritage walking tour map (OSI heritage maps), 'A Load of Old Blarney', available for collection in the village green.

Current research also suggests that the archaeological monument recorded to the north of the Gothic Chapel or the Gothic Bridge and listed as a church (CO062-246) may in fact be another folly, as the medieval church was located outside the village, and parishes only had one church per parish. While this research is in its infancy, the possibility of a more extensive and connected historic and built heritage landscape still remains. It should also be noted that the church and its Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP) is located in the GAA Grounds, and consideration of the re-zoning would have to be cognisant of the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004).



Ordnance Survey Ireland mapping, showing the location of the church and its ZAP in relation to the GAA Grounds, in purple

It is not unusual for the Colthursts and owners of similar estates (e.g., Lismore) to provide lands for pleasure and recreational purposes and the lands in ownership and use by the GAA are appropriate for public leisure uses. Southgate Associates have long been arguing for a landscape plan for Blarney village to preserve the significance of Blarney as a Heritage Tourism centre for the benefit of the local public and visiting tourists.

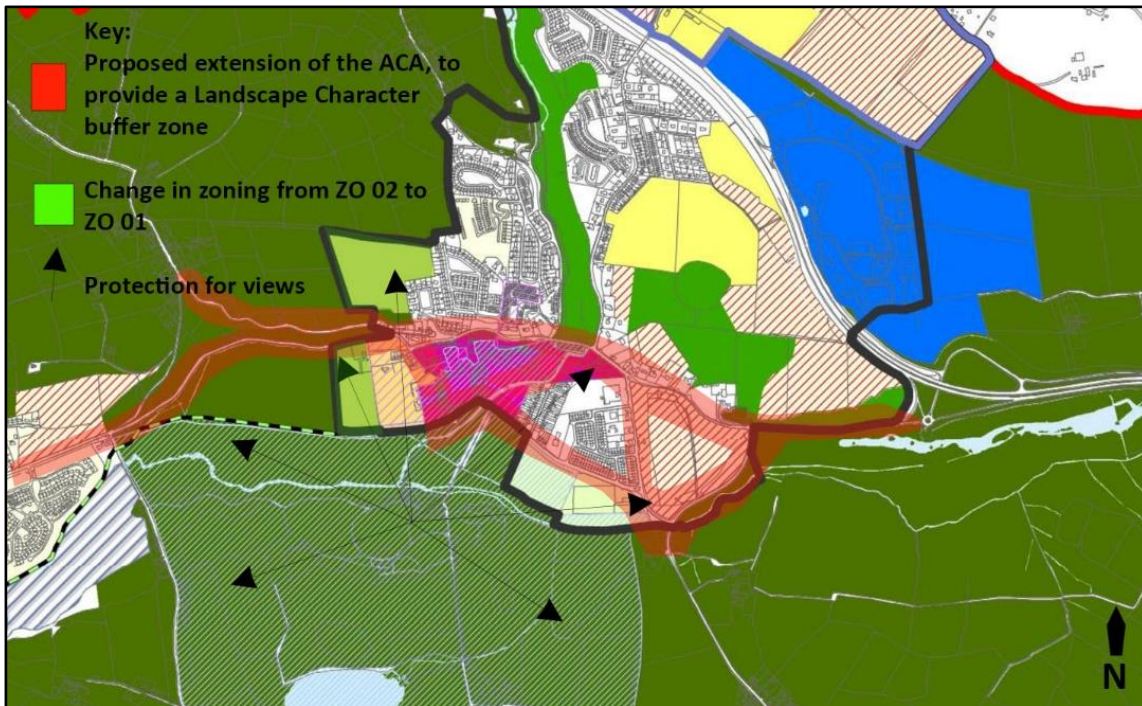
The heritage landscape is now under its greatest threat because the GAA lands will be read as separate from the heritage landscape, where in fact they are in a most significant area not only as the approach to the village and castle but also on a public footpath to one of the highly significant 18th century follies within the 18th century demesne. Future development in this location as part of a proposed mixed-use development site will have a completely negative impact on the legibility of the historic development of the Blarney Castle demesne and its associated village.

Point 2.1: The lands in question are on the visitor approach to Blarney and detract from the village landscape character

The location of the existing Blarney GAA Club Grounds is on the main approach to Blarney village, on the final stretch of road leading to the Blarney Castle Estate Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and Blarney Village ACA. These areas are designated by virtue of their special character, as set out in Section 1.25 and 1.26 of Volume 3 of the Draft Development Plan and are identified as existing ACAs on Map 11 of Volume 2 of the Draft Development Plan. Re-zoning land for mixed use development in such close proximity to the ACA's will have an incremental negative effect on the approach to the village and to Blaney Castle Estate, which is out of character with the setting.

Point 2.2: Visual impact of developing in close proximity to an Architectural Conservation Area

The *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities* provide detailed guidance on how to manage protected structures, Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) and historic demesnes from a conservation and new development perspective. The guidelines are of particular relevance in this context in relation to new development in close proximity to an ACA and should be taken into account as 'large buildings, sometimes at a considerable distance, can alter views to or from the protected structure or ACA and thus affect their character' (Section 13.8.3).



Section from Map 11 of the Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, Vol 2 marked up showing landscape sensitivity (Southgate Associates recommendations to the CCDDP, Sept 2021)

Point 3: The proposed zoning detracts from the significance of Blarney’s intangible cultural heritage

In 2016 Southgate Associates wrote an Historic Landscape Characterisation for Blarney, which focused on the intangible cultural heritage of Blarney and the legends associated with the Blarney Stone. The folkloric elements of Blarney Castle’s history are largely responsible for its international significance and its huge popularity as a tourist destination. The HLC aims to promote places which are alive with human culture and creativity and good for people to live in, and to feel a sense of belonging and inclusion and hold a local sense of identity rooted in the past. These intangible assets are unprotected, and rely instead on something more fleeting and ephemeral – a sense of place and atmosphere - created by the castles surroundings, and its picturesque environment. Blarney is not merely a local tourism centre, but an international one attracting nearly half a million annual visitors, and as such is a catalyst for employment opportunities for many beyond those working in the Castle itself (Avison Young, 2019). The focus of tourism in Blarney town is the Blarney Castle Estate – it is heritage-led tourism, which relies heavily on respecting the architectural, archaeological and cultural significance, and this necessitates the careful management of any future development in its proximity. The landscape character is a vital part of this significance and will be eroded further by the proposed re-zoning to mixed-use of the GAA Club Grounds.

As set out in Point 1, owners of estate lands frequently provided land on the edge of the villages to meet community needs, such as civic buildings or recreational facilities (eg. Lismore where the garda station, playground and sports pitches are all located on Lismore Castle grounds, where the castle lands meets the village). The land which it is proposed to re-zone in Blarney is in the ownership and use of the GAA as a result of a similar civic responsibility on the part of the owners of the Blarney Castle Estate, but their transfer to the GAA was with the understanding that the land use would be for public sporting activities and recreational benefit and that it would remain a natural green landscape with appropriate small-scale supporting structures, such as the club house, which would be sympathetic to the surrounding designed landscape.

Conclusion

1. The rezoning of land for mixed-use in this location is unacceptable and does not take into account the importance of the village as an 18th century designed landscape, recognized as being of national and international significance in the most recent Cork City Draft Development Plan 2022. (Issues 1.133 p78 of Vol 3 Specific Built Heritage objectives);
2. It is an inappropriate development on the approach to Blarney and not only detracts from the Village Landscape Character but also detracts significantly from the ACA more generally;
3. Rezoning for the GAA Club House Grounds as a mixed-use development would detract from Blarney as a centre for heritage-led tourism, which is critical to the local economy and which relies heavily on respecting the architectural, archaeological and cultural significance of the location and requires the careful management of any development in its proximity.

The negative visual impact of the proposed re-zoning in this location is significant, and would alter the perception that you are entering an area of special character, with its historic demesne and designed village Square. The rezoning of this land is not only contrary to Section 1.133 of Volume 3 of the Draft Development Plan (Issues 1.133 p78 of Vol 3 Specific Built Heritage objectives) and will have a negative impact on the local economy, upon which many local businesses rely. We recommend that the re-zoning request is refused.

Yours sincerely,

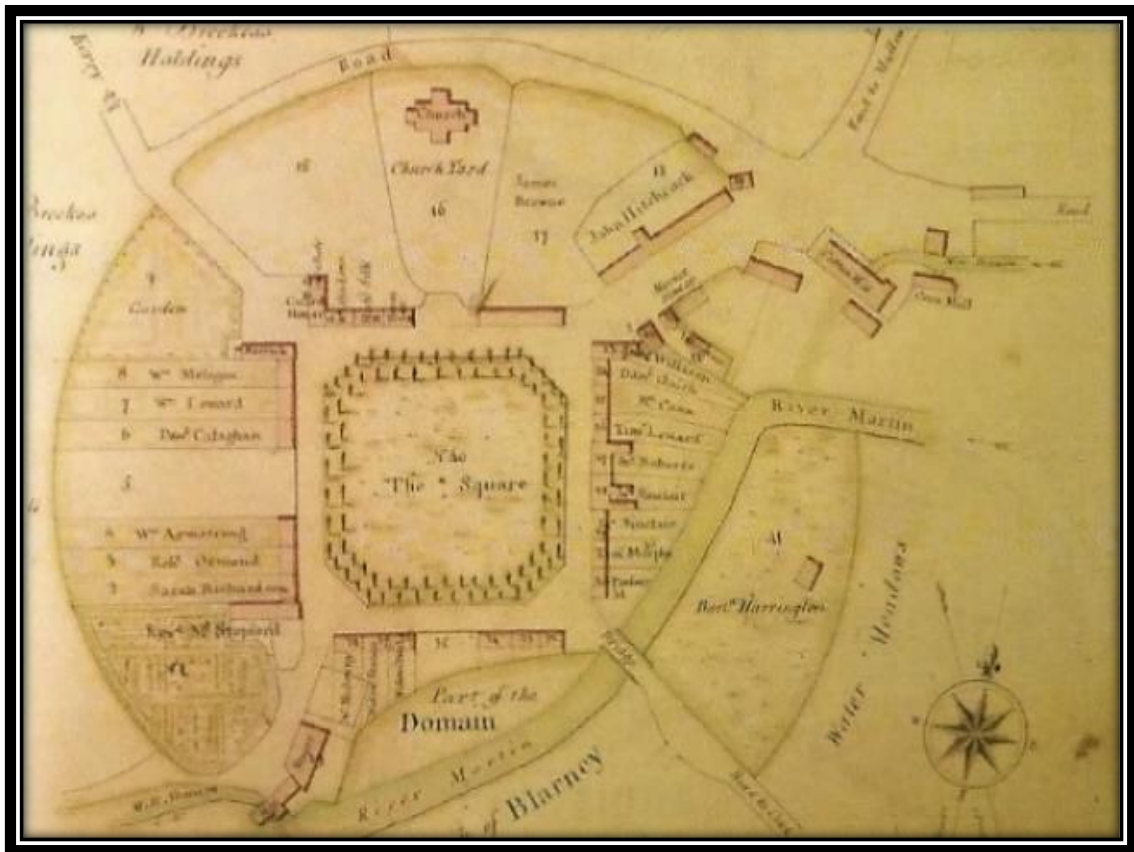


Christopher Southgate, MA (Cantab), FIEI, M.I. Struct E., C.Eng
DIRECTOR
SOUTHGATE ASSOCIATES

Enc. Appendix 1

The Significance of the 18th century developments at Blarney Village and Demesne

**Appendix 1: The Significance of the 18th century
Development of Blarney Village and Demesne**



Prepared by: Karen Lysaght, B.S.S.C., Ph.D.

April 2022

Understanding the Significance of the Blarney Castle Demesne and Village



Image: Blarney Castle

Executive Summary

The designed landscape of Blarney Castle Estate and Village was constructed over a brief period, the key works probably extending from 1759 to 1777, to a highly detailed scheme. This plan was created on the property of the owners of Blarney Castle, James St John Jeffreyes M.P. and Arabella Fitzgibbon Jeffreyes. This was a plan which incorporated a complete remodel of the demesne grounds, but also the construction of a dedicated linen manufactory within the grounds of the estate, probably intended as a settler village for skilled textile workers encouraged to move to Blarney from the north-east 'linen triangle'.

The initial works concentrated on the creation of a highly picturesque landscape, with a very strong Gothic theme. 'The Court', the 17th century mansion house in front of the great old fortification of Blarney Castle, was remodelled in Georgian Gothic style, and the grounds were decorated with a variety of follies, each one more mysterious and magical than the last, including druid circles, witches stone, wishing steps, gothic chapel bridge among others. The ancient tales of haunted castles, witches, treasure, and magical stones were obviously material to this creation in this period, and were doubtless cultivated for best effect. This was the period in which the Gothic novel emerged, and it is hard to know whether Blarney was influence or influenced in its creation of such a quintessential Gothic landscape.

The estate village was created over a mere 12 years, and involved a massive leverage of public funds into the new linen manufactory, (possibly as an act of mischief in answer to the English colonial laws which destroyed the settlers ability to trade in particular items such as woolen products, a source of much anger among the settlers). The village was built to a classical style, showing knowledge of good town planning principles, and a humane design for this early period with a central green and long gardens. Each house was in itself a unit of production, with linen workers and hosiers taking up residence, and training apprentices. The final addition was an 'eyecatcher church', classical in style, built on rising ground above the village, positioned exactly to allow for views of the demesne and castle from the landlord's gallery through the clear glass windows.

Following evidence suggested by Fredrick O' Dwyer (2005), stylistic detailing combined with genealogical connection made it possible to identify the architect responsible for at least two aspects of the scheme (the Georgian Gothic 'Court' and the classical church) as Christopher Myers, an English engineer/architect, who was involved in several similar schemes in the north-east. These schemes were carried out on behalf of a highly politically active network of settlers, an elite group who were of aristocratic backgrounds. From available information, it has been possible to identify Arthur Trevor Hill as possibly the lead investor in the scheme in Blarney, and probably the person responsible for bringing Christopher Myers to create the scheme there. The Hills of Hillsborough had a long-standing working relationship with Myers, who is seen as responsible for many aspects of 18th century Hillsborough, a place which possibly could inform a greater understanding of the scheme at Blarney.

One of Myers chief talents was his ability to manipulate water (previously working on bridges, harbours, canals), and at all of his identified schemes there was a very active manipulation of the water courses, for not merely the purpose of manufacturing, but more importantly for the creation of the designed landscape. The rivers running through the village and the grounds of Blarney show signs that they were redirected for this purpose, including the evidence of mill races and mill ponds, bridges such as the Dry Bridge which never saw a river, and the confluence of the river at the Gothic Chapel Bridge (folly) which suggests an active division of the river at this point.

The scheme can be understood through the work of Arthur Young, who recorded Blarney's development in detail, but who also saved a set of drawings, which have been revealed as the early scheme for the village. The plan was never completed, possibly due to Jeffreyes early death at the

age of 45, and the drawings raise certain questions. In particular, given the similarity to Hillsborough, the drawings might suggest the intention to build a new classically styled manor house adjacent to The Square, which would have left 'The Court' as a Gothic folly in the grounds, as was the case at Hillsborough, but the exact intention is unknown. Such a course of action would have been appropriate, as new homes were more often built as classical structures, while Gothic might be suitable for an ancient family home or a garden building. Such an extensive Gothic treatment made a large political statement, at a time when Ireland's settler classes were divided between 'patriot' and 'court' parties, debating their future desired relationship to England, often using architectural metaphors.

Gothic was seen in this period as a statement of protest, drawing affinity with an ancient Gothic constitution, an ancient set of rights and liberties, which emphasised personal liberty and checks on absolute power. The scheme would appear to have tied into this debate, and represents a highly important Gothic statement on the constitutional questions of the period. Evidence of the symbolic nature of the construction are given added weight through the recognition that the gothic castle in Hillsborough was the resting place of King William of Orange on his way to fight the Battle of the Boyne, the individual seen as responsible for the protection of these ancient liberties in the face of feared autocratic rule. In addition, O' Dwyer, in his examination of the work of Myers (and those he is suspected to have worked on) identifies the existence of Gothic elements on the sea facing side of Glenarm Castle and Castleward, which might indicate that the Gothic message about liberty was intended for those across the Irish Sea.

Adding additional weight to such a premise, a set of 12 prints, (thought to have been commissioned by the Marquis of Hillsborough), celebrate the achievement of Irish Parliamentary Independence under Grattan's Patriot Party, with images of the steps in the production of linen, and name those individuals and groups responsible for delivering legislative independence for Ireland. Several of these prints are dedicated to individuals, most of whom can be identified (or suspected to be) Christopher Myers clients in these town building initiatives. Named among these individuals is Arthur Trevor (Hill), Viscount Dungannon, the man suspected to be the key developer of the Blarney Castle Estate. While some of these individuals held differing opinions on the exact working nature of Irish legislative independence, it would appear that these linen building schemes can be read as an element in the campaign to deliver this outcome.

The scheme ultimately failed in Blarney, and the settlers left. The Jeffreyes were also to leave Blarney to settle in Midleton, after a fire in the house in 1821. The result was a seeming entire loss of personnel and with it a certain loss of memory of the story and its meanings. Unusually, the scheme at Blarney remains intact, as a result of the stewardship of the Colthurst owners, the key elements remain in relationship to one another. This is a designed landscape of both national and international importance, which would appear to tell an important story of Ireland's struggle for legislative independence, and the (somewhat clandestine) actions of an elite political group among the settlers. It reveals much of the vision of bucolic plenty, good town planning and harmonious living envisaged in these town creations, but it also reveals the stresses in the relationship between settler and English colonial administration, which would ultimately be responsible for the failure of the Blarney linen manufactory. This is a story of international significance, as it illuminates a highly similar situation to that of the American settlers in the same period, in their lead up to American Independence.

1.0 Introduction

In 2020/1, Southgate Associates compiled a conservation management plan for the Church of the Resurrection in the centre of Blarney village square, commissioned by the Church under the advice of the conservation department of Cork City Council, a process which demanded that the significance of the church be ascertained. In order to do this, it was necessary to explore the history of the church as one of the oldest buildings in the village and uncover the origins and by extension significance of the settlement. The early history of the village of Blarney is largely masked by the presence of three dominant elements of built heritage, which includes the 15th castle of the Mc Carthy's (pictured above) with its famous stone, the 19th century mansion of the Colthursts, owners of the Blarney Castle estate, and the 19th century Blarney Woolen Mills in the centre of the village. While there is a vague acknowledgment that the village had its origins in the linen industry, this history is largely overshadowed by these structures, and as a result poorly understood.

On exploring the dates for the construction of the various buildings on The Square, it was found that they were all built within a 12-year time-frame (1765 – 1777). Extending the examination to the various built structures on the 'demesne lands' (excluding Blarney Castle), it was discovered that both the demesne and village-building activities could be understood to possibly fit within a 21-year period (1756 and 1777). Such an accelerated construction programme necessitated further investigation.

2.0 'The Most Elegant Plan of a Village that I ever did see in the British Dominions'

Through an examination of the literature, it was clear that the owners of the Blarney Castle Estate, the Jeffreyes, had constructed a dedicated linen manufactory ON the grounds of the Blarney Castle Estate in the period from 1765 to 1777, as a private enterprise. The Linen Board Inspector, Robert Stephenson records in his notes that in 1764 James St. John Jeffreyes, MP¹ of Blarney Castle had drawn up 'the most extensive plan for establishing a linen manufactory, and the most elegant plan of a village, that I ever did see in the British Dominions'².



James St John Jeffreyes³, owner of the Blarney Castle Estate during its 1756 to 1777 development⁴

While the town building project is dated to have begun in 1765, other landscape interventions would appear to have occurred at an earlier stage, which would indicate that the delivery of a designed landscape scheme had begun from possibly as early as the mid-1750s, when there are suggestions that 'The Dry Bridge⁵' was constructed, with its obvious connotation of active water manipulation in

¹ See the Dictionary of Irish Biography on James St. John Jeffreyes at <https://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a9241>

² See pp. 400 of Dickson, D. (2005) *Old World Colony: Cork and South Munster 1630-1830*. Cork: University College Cork.

³ See <https://www.dib.ie/biography/jeffereyes-jeffereys-jeffries-jeffreys-james-st-john-a9241>

⁴ Image courtesy of the Blarney Castle Estate

⁵ A bridge built beside the main entrance gates to the castle, possibly intended to be part of a bridged entrance, but which never saw a river, demolished mid-20th century.

Blarney⁶. Indeed, in Henchion's paper⁷, he notes that the Jeffreyes took out a mortgage on their property in 1759, which could be tied to the start of the demesne works, as a plaque in the Rock Close was noted which bore the inscription of 'James St. John Jeffreyes 1759'⁸.



The 'Dry Bridge' in Blarney, as painted by Nathaniel Grogan the Elder in the 1790s, a good view of the classically styled bridge, supposedly built in 1756, with an important detailed view of the Georgian Gothic mansion beyond.

The works which would appear to follow, include the enclosure of the demesne with an associated Capability Brown-style landscaping project, and the development of the pleasure gardens. An important consideration in building Blarney was an emphasis on the picturesque⁹, including the active manipulation and control of the rivers as decorative features, and the creation of a playful series of magical and mysterious follies dotted through the demesne lands, whether the megalithic Rock Close,

⁶ Fig. The mill race and sluices outside Blarney village – the harnessing of existing resources, such as the power of rivers, and increasing their power through innovative techniques – to drive industry. This millrace is recorded on the 1837 OS map of Blarney, which raises questions of its date of construction.



⁷ See Henchion (2009)

⁸ See Hillyard, M.P. (1961) 'Blarney Castle and Rock Close'.

⁹ Indeed, many artists and poets were invited to Blarney to capture its beauty in the 1770s (See Beranger watercolour below as example).

the Druids Circle, the Gothic Chapel/Bridge, the Wishing Steps, or the Witches Cave, all designed to provide destinations for promenading through the pleasure gardens, walks centered on the vistas provided by or from such structures. In addition, a group of life-sized Greek statues stood in the pleasure gardens of the castle, while Hercules stood at the centre of the village square, two locations in the same decorative scheme¹⁰. Other possible decorative schemes are supposed from the statements of various authors of the village scheme¹¹



¹⁰ These statues are named in the song, 'The Groves of Blarney' as Neptune, Plutarch, and Nicodemus. They were sold in the auction of goods which followed the fire in the mansion house in 1821.

¹¹ Rev. Horatio Townsend notes in 1810 that the planned village was 'rather too refined for a little manufacturing town in Ireland' (1810), while in 1844 The Parliamentary Gazetteer mocks the ruined village centre of Blarney, depicting it as a vanity project on the part of the Jeffreyes, and describes it as too fancy for the operatives, obviously referring to aspects of the scheme which no longer exists.

Follies Of the Blarney Castle Demesne – Cultivating the Magical and the Mystical in the 1750s/60s.

Demesne improvements are noted in 1759, when it is noted that the Rock Close is formed, possibly pointing to the period in which the demesne was enclosed, and the designed landscape and pleasure gardens were created, along with its various avenues leading to follies and magical entertainments – including left to right (above)– the lookout, the megalithic rock close, the wishing steps and (below) left to right the Witches Stone, kissing the Blarney Stone, the Lookout Tower and below lower (from left to right) the Gothic Chapel/Bridge from below, and crossing the 18th century Gothic Chapel Bridge by path.

Immediately prior to building the village, in 1762, the 17th century mansion house of the Mc Carthy's, was remodeled in the highly decorative, and highly unusual Georgian Gothic style, after the marriage of James St. John Jeffreyes to Arabella Fitzgibbon, daughter of the highly successful barrister, John Fitzgibbon. It was only the second building in Ireland to be styled in this way, and the first residence. The first building was the old Hillsborough castle, restyled in Georgian Gothic as a garden folly, by the Viscount Hillsborough in the mid 1750s¹².



Blarney Castle, showing the Mc Carthy Mansion, remodeled in Georgian Gothic in 1762, after the marriage of James St. John Jeffreyes to Arabella Fitzgibbon, the daughter of the very wealthy Irish barrister, John Fitzgibbon. The watercolor was painted by Thomas Beranger, in the 1770s, when many artists and poets were invited to Blarney to record its beauty. Note the crumbling bridge and watchtower, deliberate cultivation of an 'ancient' landscape, in line with much of the landscape design of the period

¹² ¹² See O' Dwyer, F. (2008) 'In Search of Christopher Myers: Pioneer of the Gothic Revival in Ireland', in Karina O' Neill (ed.) *The Gothic Revival: Essays in Honour of Michael Mc Carthy*. Four Courts Press: Dublin, pp. 51-111.



Georgian Gothic Ruin in front of Blarney Castle – ‘ruin tidied’ in the 1970s for safety purposes

The village scheme was begun in 1765, with the construction of a classically designed village square, surrounding a village green, together with an inn, markethouse, 11 mills, bleach works, 80 houses and finally a church¹³. The classically styled church represents an ‘architectural set piece¹⁴’ within the designed landscape, completing axial views from The Square and the Demesne. The church was built as an ‘architectural eyecatcher’ on high ground above the village square, with works completed in 1777.



Left to right. survey showing the unusual classically styled church, which was recorded by James Pain for the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1835. Left: Fig 1.3: 1835 Floor Plan of Blarney Church, by James Pain, paper copy

¹³ Arthur Young’s A Tour in Ireland; with general observations on the present state of that kingdom, made in the years 1776, 1777, and 1778 and brought down to the end of 1779. [copy with unique drawings]

¹⁴ See Prunty and Clarke for a discussion of the use of architectural set pieces in landed estates in Ireland.

held in the RCB, available online through the RCB Library - see the following link: https://archdrawing.ireland.anglican.org/search?query=garrycloyne&query_type=keyword&record_types%5B%5D=Item&record_types%5B%5D=File&record_types%5B%5D=Collection&submit_search=Search

Nowhere is the emphasis on vistas and the relationship of the village to the picturesque landscape clearer than at the church. This building is situated very precisely on the hillside, in order to provide a view of the castle, the remodeled mansion house and the demesne lands through the clear glass windows of the church, when viewed from the private gallery of the landlord. There was an obvious mistake made when positioning the church, however, as when the gallery was built, it obviously proved slightly too high to appreciate the view, and as a result the balustrade of the gallery had to be of an open style, and not matching with that of the west gallery, which is of a closed style. This allows the view to be appreciated through the balustrade from a sitting position, but doubtless was a cause of anger for the client. It does indicate that the church was probably built to a plan from an architect, and that the architect was not present for construction.



Top Left: View of Blarney Church from centre of The Square, Top Right: View of Blarney Castle through the balustrade of the landlord's private gallery in the Church, the building being placed at this position on the hill in order to allow the landlord to enjoy the vistas of the castle, mansion house and demesne through the clear glass windows (yellow outline on left photograph marks the location of this window). Lower Left: Gallery with Open Balustrade Lower Right: Gallery with Closed Balustrade (image from before the galleries were painted).

The entire infrastructure of the village was intended to be not merely functional, but also attractive. As such, the new village must be understood to be an inextricable part of the designed landscape of Blarney, forming one unit with the demesne, and cannot be viewed as a separate entity or as a place ‘outside’ the walls¹⁵. Rather, the picturesque estate village would appear to have been designed to add to the picturesque qualities of the Blarney Castle Estate. The 1801 survey also demonstrates that this scheme for the village square displayed knowledge of best practice in town planning for the period (see image below), with a central green and long gardens in individual house, revolutionary and even utopian design at a time when most Irish workers lived in cabins without windows.

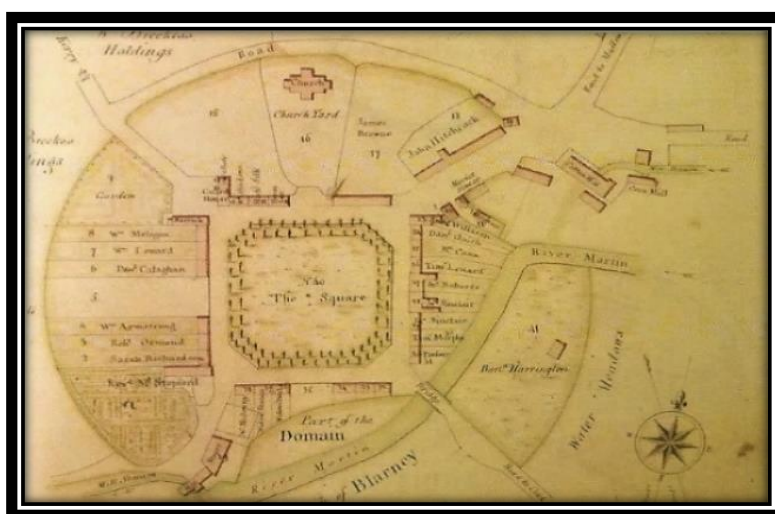


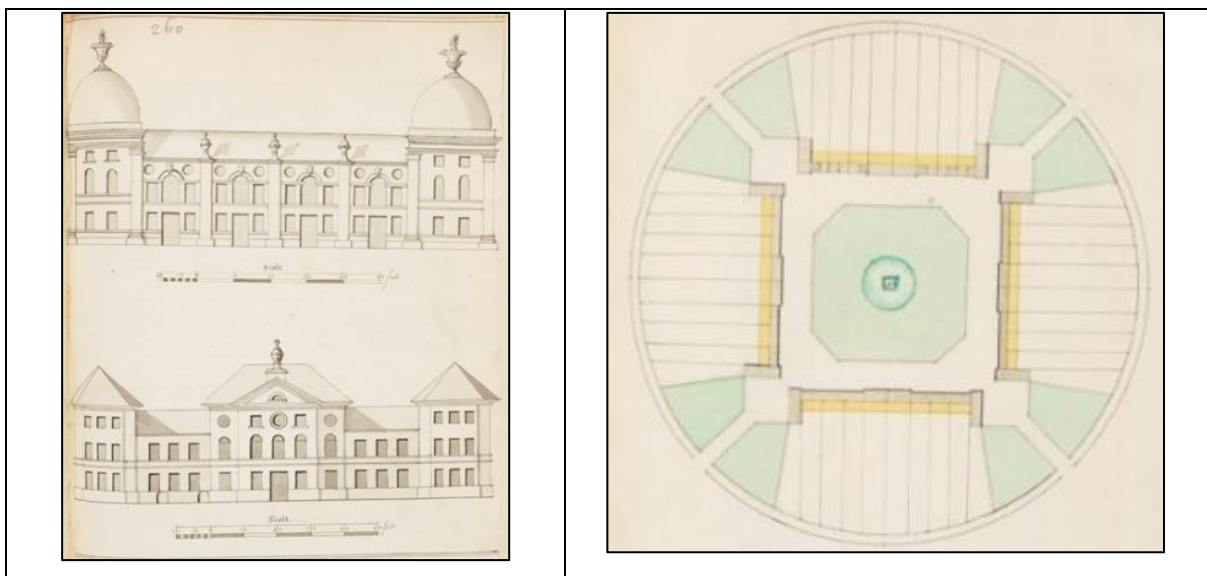
Fig. 1801 estate map of Blarney Village, as carried out by the renowned cartographer David Aher, on the commission of George Charles Jeffreys, owner of the Blarney Castle Estate. This survey demonstrates the built scheme, as opposed to the original plan. Image: Blarney Castle Estate.

¹⁵ The survey which records the built scheme in 1801 shows that part of the village on the north side of the river Martin, is named as being ‘part of the domain’, showing that the demesne and village were entirely overlapping constructs. Indeed, this part of the village was referred to colloquially as ‘The Bleach’ showing that it was in fact an active location in the linen manufacturing, used for the bleaching of linens by the river

3.0 Understanding the Scheme: Arthur Young's Written Account and Drawings

What is highly unusual in the Blarney situation is that the importance of the scheme can be fully revealed, as several highly important pieces of evidence have survived that provide an understanding of the town-building model. Of utmost importance is the contemporary account gathered by the English agricultural commentator and diarist, Arthur Young, who visited the village in 1777, and recorded in detail the nature of the linen manufactory, including the numbers of people, houses, the types of employment, outlining the percentage of financial contributions provided by both manufacturers and by the Jeffreyes in the development of the manufacturing base¹⁶. He describes the source and extent of the highly significant level of public finance leveraged into the scheme from organisations such as the Dublin Society, the Irish Linen Board, First Fruits, Grand Juries among others.

As a result of the Conservation Management Plan process for the church, a set of drawings included in certain versions of Young's text were discovered in an online collection at the library of the National University of Ireland at Galway (NUIG), described as 'buildings on the Blarney Castle Estate' which on examination would appear to be the early scheme for the village, or the 'plan for the linen manufactory' as seen by Stephens in 1764. Not all of the scheme was built, possibly due to the premature death of the owner, James St. John Jeffreyes, at the age of 45. The drawing for the main ranges of buildings in Blarney Square, were in fact built, and a photographic comparison to the scheme sits below (see photograph of contemporary square).



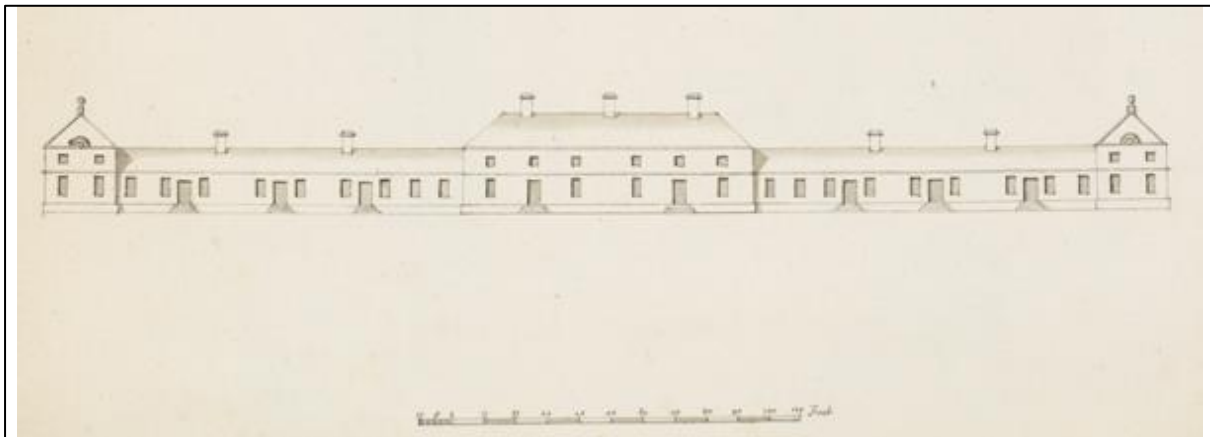
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¹⁶ See Appendix 1 for Young's description of Blarney in 1777

From left to right: both drawings are from the Arthur Young collection on NUIG's library website, the first image showing the design for a mansion house which was obviously never constructed, and right, described as a possible garden feature at Blarney Castle Estate, but now understood to have been a plan for the village centre (note in contrast to the 1801 survey (above) of the built village, that the church was not envisaged in its final position in the early scheme).



Other drawings from Arthur Young's 'Tour', as found in the NUIG collection – show buildings which were probably never constructed, possibly the central ranges could have been intended as a covered market or market house.



The Arthur Young drawings of buildings now identified as the original plans for 'The Square'¹⁷.

¹⁷ Arthur Young drawings, or drawings for the scheme entrusted to Young by Jeffreyes. See NUIG website for the drawings and the text on Blarney textile manufactory - 'Arthur Young's (1780) *A Tour in Ireland*' drawings and text on Blarney available on: https://ttce.nuigalway.ie/irelandillustrated/?ttce_function=5&object_type=person&id=ii_person_1310664994



The west side of 'The Square' in Blarney, shows that much of the original scheme has survived. Image: Southgate Associates.

4.0 Identifying an Architect for the Scheme at Blarney - Demesne and Classical Village

The drawings for the Blarney scheme are unsigned, and no architect is known as having an engagement in Blarney in this period, which has left the existence of a greater scheme unnoticed. However, in recent years, the former lead architect of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Fredrick O' Dwyer¹⁸, in a highly important academic paper examining the subject of Georgian Gothic in Ireland, suggested that the English engineer/architect Christopher Myers might have been the designer responsible for the remodeling of the mansion house in front of Blarney Castle. Working on stylistic evidence, he suggested that as Myers was the individual who had transformed the first structure known to be remodeled in Georgian Gothic style, the 17th century Hillsborough Fort, that he may also have been responsible for the second, the mansion at Blarney Castle. Hillsborough Fort lay on the property of Wils Hill, future Marquis of Downshire, possibly the most powerful politician in Ireland in this period, and close relative of the Jeffreyes of Blarney Castle. Indeed, O' Dwyer's suspicions were confirmed during the conservation management plan process on the church in Blarney, when more concrete evidence for Myers presence in Blarney came through the identification (with confirmation by Fredrick O' Dwyer's) of carved detail on the entablature of the church, completed in 1777, which was identical to work on several churches designed by Christopher Myers, namely at Ballycastle and Whitehaven, and exclusive to the work of Myers in Ireland.



¹⁸ See O' Dwyer, F. (2008) 'In Search of Christopher Myers: Pioneer of the Gothic Revival in Ireland', in Karina O' Neill (ed.) *The Gothic Revival: Essays in Honour of Michael Mc Carthy*. Four Courts Press: Dublin, pp. 51-111.

Repeating rosettes on the entablature of the North Gallery, the Jeffreyes Gallery – as found in Ballycastle Church and in Whitehaven, where Myers previously worked

Therefore, Myers presence in Blarney was confirmed, not merely once, but twice, as we can place Myers in two particular buildings with an extended time lapse between. The first building was completed in 1764 and the second in 1777. There is clear evidence that the two buildings were not merely designed at the same time, as they reflect different periods in Myers architectural career (as he was working extensively in Georgian Gothic in 1764, (largely in the north-east) and working in the classical style in 1777 in Dublin when the Church of Ireland in Blarney was constructed).

5.0 Christopher Myers

From available evidence it would seem that Myers came to Ireland possibly between 1751 and 1753, to work on a variety of projects, which included building canals, bridges and harbours, but he appeared to be simultaneously involved in the building and re-modelling of mansion houses and associated estate buildings and estate churches in places such as Glenarm and Ballycastle and Belvoir for an aristocratic network in the North-East, centered on Wils Hill. Myers sits in a tradition of skilled engineer/architects who came to Ireland to take up such roles, including Richard Cassels, Davis Ducart, Thomas Omer among others. Myers work remains largely unattributed, and his name is largely remembered as a result of his eventual elevation to the position of lead architect of the Barrack Board, (making him the most senior architect in Ireland), and in this role was responsible for constructing part of the Royal Barracks (now Collins Barracks, the National Museum) and Trinity College's Examination Hall (to a design initially drawn by William Chambers, the celebrated English architect of the period, though the eventual building is reputed to be more the result of Myers design than Chambers).



Examinations Hall Trinity College Dublin – construction begins 1777 with Christopher Myers in charge, working to a William Chambers design, the same year that construction completed on Blarney Church. Image: NIAH website – see <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/building/50020380/examination-hall-trinity-college-dublin-2-dublin-city>.

While there is generally a lack of written evidence for Myers involvement in architectural projects, O' Dwyer outlines various locations where Myers is definitely known to have worked, which include Glenarm, Ballycastle, Belvoir, Hilltown and Hillsborough, and also other possible houses (where there is no known architect) but which are linked through their being of a common social network, and also through their use of Georgian Gothic elements or styling. In examining these locations, it is possible to see that there are distinct similarities between the work carried out in all of the locations, and while O' Dwyer links Myers to work on specific buildings, usually mansion houses and churches, all of the towns in questions were undergoing significant programs of town building, which followed very similar

schedules of work, and design emphasis. All of these locations were places where manufacturing was being developed, largely with water power assistance, and all have newly designed demesnes and pleasure gardens with a high emphasis on the creation of a picturesque landscape.

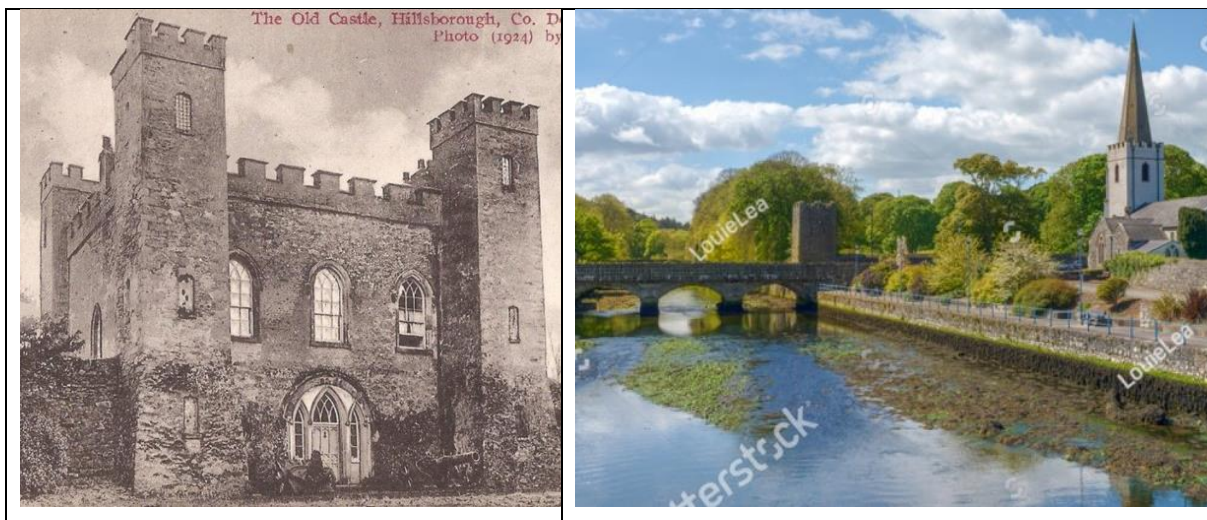
For example, at Glenarm, O' Dwyer credits Myers with remodeling of Glenarm Castle in the early 1750s, and after a decade having returned to build the church. In addition, a host of other similarities to Blarney are present, an active period of demesne clearance and pleasure garden establishment preceded the village building, remodeling of the mansion house, Hercules on the lawn, the active manipulation of the rivers for both pleasure and practical (manufacturing) purposes, the building of the village and the final placement of an 'eye catcher' church.

Similarly, Hillsborough was undergoing an active town building programme under the patronage of Wils Hill, where the 17th century fort was remodeled in Georgian Gothic, pleasure gardens created, an artificial lake made by manipulation of the rivers, the construction of a new mansion house, the building of a village, centered on 'The Square', the development of manufacturing, the building of a market house and finally the remodeling of the Church in Gothic style.

It is impossible to definitely say that Myers was responsible for all aspects of any given scheme, but what is clear is that he was party to a series of town building projects on the estates of Ireland's settler social elite, which followed a very similar methodology.

6.0 The Hills of Hillsborough

Of particular note to the development of Blarney are the Hills of Hillsborough. Wils Hill, the Viscount of Hillsborough and soon to be elevated to be Marquis of Downshire, one of the most powerful politicians in both Ireland and England in this period, and highly influential in the development of the linen industry in Ireland, and the key individual behind the development of the 'linen triangle' in the north-east¹⁹. The Hill's were doubly related to the Jeffreyes of Blarney Castle, and there is ample evidence that the Hills were highly involved in supporting the Jeffreyes, not least because James St. John Jeffreyes father died when he was merely 5, leaving his mother (a Hill granddaughter) to cope alone. The Hill family, and in particular Arthur Hill (later to be knighted Viscount Dungannon), James' granduncle and uncle to Wils, was particularly important, acting as mentor to the young Jeffreyes as an MP in the Irish Parliament, and in other civic institutions, such as the Irish Linen Board and the Dublin Society of which he was a founder member.



Left: Hillsborough Fort, remodeled by Myers in Georgian Gothic. Right: Glenarm Church by Myers – picturesque town building projects in locations where Myers was active

Arthur Hill inherited a vast fortune on the death of his uncle, and he changed his name to Arthur Trevor to acknowledge this debt. Henchion, in an article examining the finances of the Blarney Castle Estate²⁰, notes that in 1762, (the year that Arthur Hill inherits his fortune and changes his name), an Arthur

¹⁹ Hill built a new linen manufactory in Hilltown in 1765 with Myers as engineer, the same year that Blarney manufactory was constructed. This was also an area with very good water power, and comparison of both schemes could provide a lot of understanding of the methodology in use.

²⁰ See Richard Henchion (2009) 'Gravestone Inscriptions in County Cork XVII: Blarney Church of Ireland Cemetery'. Journal of the Cork Archaeological and Historical Society

Trevor is noted as having bought a considerable interest in the Blarney Castle Estate. In addition to money, it would seem that Hill brought Christopher Myers to Blarney to assist in the development of Blarney demesne and village. Given the relative youth of the landlord in Blarney, James St. John Jeffreyes (21 when this scheme began), the possibility that this scheme was largely the product of the political vision, entrepreneurship, financial investment and technical knowhow (Myers) of the Hills may be quite likely.



Left: Hillsborough Market House (note the similar design to one of the Blarney drawings above) and Right: St. Malachi's Church, Hillsborough on rising ground above The Square²¹.

²¹ While O' Dwyer feels that Myers is not responsible for the earliest stages of the market house, and the remodelling of the church, there is disagreement on this point, and Reeves-Smith (2015) sees Myers as the likely architect to the works of this period on both buildings.

7.0 The Linen Industry, Metropolitan Control and Settler Discontent

The reason that there were such generous funds available for the development of a 'linen manufactory' was that it represented a key emphasis of colonial policy for Ireland in the 18th century, as dictated by the Parliament in London. In an effort to protect the English woolen industry, at the turn of the 18th century, the English Parliament placed certain controls on Irish woolen exports which effectively destroyed the very successful Irish woolen industry. In its place it offered to instead support Ireland as a location for linen production, and put in place a variety of financial incentives to support its development. The limited linen production that had occurred in Ireland prior to this point had been carried out by farmers, on quiet periods of the agricultural season, and the linen produced was coarse and basic. There were no skills for the production of fine linens, except for some Huguenot refugees, who brought these skills to Ireland. There was considerable anger among the settlers in Ireland at the destruction of their woolen trade and the controls placed by the English Parliament on their ability to trade²².

In the mid-18th century, an elite, politically engaged group of settlers embraced the development of linen manufacturing on their private estates, as part of a programme of investment. While this is often labelled under the general term of 'improvement', widespread in England in the same period, it is important that these actions are understood to be occurring in a colonial settler situation. Indeed, in this period this elite network were highly engaged in the more general actions of building the infrastructure of the colony, with an active engagement in the opening up of the interior of the country to markets, with active participation in the various bodies which oversaw the construction of new canal networks, harbours, roads and bridges on and through their lands. In addition, they were developing Dublin and all of its civic buildings surrounding the Irish Parliament and its life, but they were equally active in the construction of new towns²³, which were seen as essential elements of building the infrastructure of the country. In addition, this network were busy identifying and tapping natural resources on their lands, whether that involved coal mining, rock quarrying or harnessing the power of water.

Where there was water, the creation of a linen manufactory proved a possible route to development, as it did in Blarney, and at its most successful in in the north-east of Ireland, in the area known as 'the

²² This was also relevant to other industries and exports which were damage by English Parliamentary trade embargoes, designed to protect the English economy.

²³ The Dublin Society was actively involved in encouraging landowners in the building of towns on their properties - see John Heuston 'The Weavers of Shronell – 250 years ago', in the Tipperary Historical Journal 2002, p. 104.

linen triangle', and among a tightly knit group of settlers, centred on the Hill family of Hillsborough. It was here at Hillsborough that Myers identifies the first piece of Georgian Gothic architecture, the remodelled Hillsborough Fort, or 'the old castle' as it was known. While the building was remodelled as a garden building for the entertainment of visitors, and it was not unusual to use Georgian Gothic in such situations²⁴, it is highly important to note that this building held huge symbolic importance, and so the motivation to gothicise it may have been different. This was the building in which King William of Orange rested on route to fight the Battle of the Boyne, an individual and a battle with huge symbolic importance, as William was seen by this group as the defender of the faith and a liberator from autocracy. Both William and the Battle of the Boyne hold huge symbolic importance to the settlers of the north-east, and in the fraught period of the mid-18th century, the work to the building must be read as potentially symbolic and political in intent.



Hillsborough Fort, remodelled in Georgian Gothic, alongside St. Malachi's Church, Hill intended his remodelled Gothic St. Malachi's to be the new Cathedral for the Down Diocese, emphasizing the symbolic importance even more

Indeed, recent scholarship has been interpreting the use of the Georgian Gothic style as an architecture of 'protest' in an English context. The use of Georgian Gothic was often assumed to be about expressions of antiquity, drawing continuity with one's family's (or institution's²⁵) ancient pedigree. Indeed, many elites continued to utilise gothic when it was highly unfashionable and even

²⁴ Georgian Gothic could be used on garden buildings to 'give a frisson of romance' according to Worsley, G (1993) *The Origins of the Gothic Revival: A Reappraisal*. The Alexander Prize Essay. In *Transaction of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 3: 105-50.

²⁵ As such, the old collegial colleges of Oxford and Cambridge continued their use of gothic, while classical was in the ascendant.

ridiculed elsewhere, an issue which various recent commentators have highlighted as necessary to interrogate²⁶. Worsley²⁷ (2002) provides an answer, arguing that Georgian Gothic was a politically charged style, which provided a way of criticizing the mainstream, through drawing a contrast between an ideal past and a corrupt present. Indeed, many of these critiques revolved around notions of citizenship, and freedoms. The theme of Liberty is one which is associated with the Georgian Gothic style, with its links to ideas of royal authority, the English constitution which limited royal power and the possibility of an autocracy. The theme of Liberty is also a powerful theme in the north-east of Ireland, and the location of the first Georgian Gothic structure credited to Myers was built in a highly symbolic location, at a fort associated with King William of Orange, on his way to fight the Battle of the Boyne. This location is one which is highly symbolic of the liberty which was seen as having been delivered by King William, liberty from the tyranny of religious or political autocracy. Other buildings that Myers notes display gothic elements when viewed from sea²⁸, which could also indicate that this was an architecture of protest aimed at the English Parliament, and their laws which limited Irish settler freedom to trade, and by extension to prosper. At a time when such expressions of liberty were being expressed in similar fashion by settlers in the Americas, it is a not unfamiliar story.

Indeed, there is strong evidence that it might be understood in the same way in Blarney and in Ireland more generally. The possibility would appear likely that this elite group were engaged in the active development of the linen industry as in many ways a protest against Imperial policy toward Ireland, which limited settlers' ability to trade. The highly active drawing down of public funds and the creation of this economic base (particularly successful in the north-east) was an important step toward Irish financial and economic independence. Indeed, it was noted in the English Parliament that nothing appeared to happen in Ireland without an English grant being involved²⁹.

Legislative independence was achieved in 1783 under Grattan's Parliament, and a set of prints celebrating the fact were released in 1791, which depicted the 12 steps of producing linen³⁰. These images are noted as unique in depicting agricultural and manufacturing processes³¹, not normal subjects for fashionable prints. Each print is dedicated to those deemed responsible for achieving legislative independence, including many different bodies and groups, but also naming particular

²⁶ See Michael Hall (2016) Georgian Gothic is no longer the eccentric style it used to be'. In *Apollo: The International Art Magazine*'.

²⁷ See Worsley, Giles (2002) in Hall, Michael Hall (2002) *Gothic Architecture and its Meanings, 1550 – 1830*.

²⁸ ie. the Myers remodel of Glenarm Castle and the Gothic face of Castleward

²⁹ See Gill's treatment of the development of the Irish Linen Industry.

³⁰ It is thought that Wils Hill commissioned the set.

³¹ The Forgotten story of Irish Linen. *The Irish Times*, January 31st, 2015.

individuals. Those named reads as a who's who of Christopher Myers known (or suspected) clients³². Included among them is the print dedicated to Arthur Trevor, one of the key developers of Blarney village.



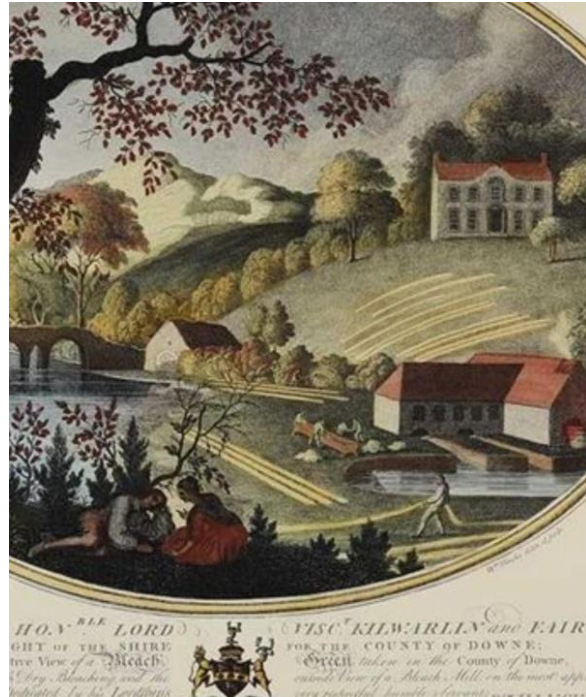
One of the 12 William Hincks (1791) prints depicting the linen industry, linking it to the achievement of Irish Parliamentary independence for Ireland, under 'Grattan's Parliament' in 1782. This particular print acknowledges the efforts of Arthur Trevor, Viscount Dungannon, one of the developers of Blarney village. See illustrations of the Young text in the Appendix for more of the images from this collection.

³² According to O' Dwyer's examination of the elite network in the north-east who were associated with the use of Georgian Gothic style architecture in this period, many of whom sat on the Lagan Navigation Committee together.

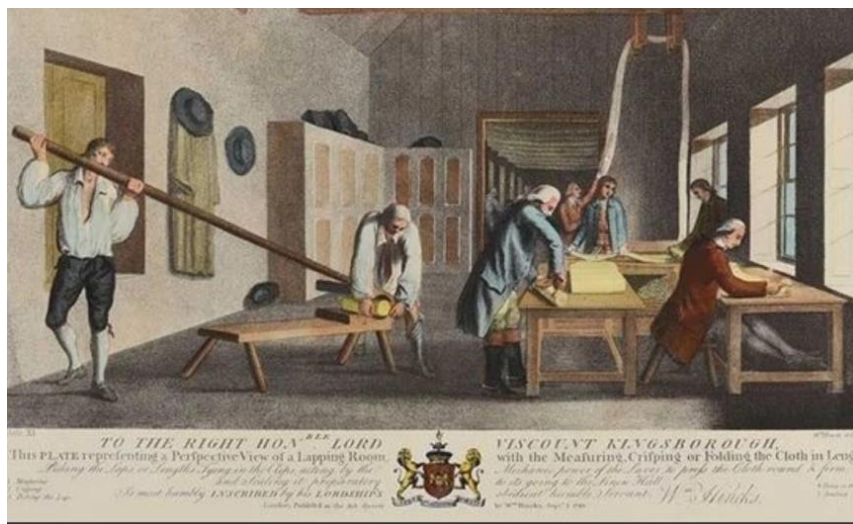


This Hincks print is dedicated to 'The Right Hon. Members of the Irish Parliament, and Glorious Volunteers of Ireland, The Protectors of our Liberty and Commerce'. The print features a picturesque rural scene, as with so many of the prints, with an image of linen workers busy at their tasks, with the image of the Gothicised St. Malachi's Church of Hillsborough, the building Hill remodelled as a Cathedral³³, a place of extremely high symbolic importance to the settler population, and to the Hill's in particular, given its location alongside Hillsborough Fort, linked inextricably to King William of Orange and the Battle of the Boyne.

³³ As Down Cathedral was in ruin in the mid-18th century, Hill hoped to bring the cathedral to Hillsborough, and created a highly prized example of Georgian Gothic architecture in his remodelling of St. Malachi's, complete with a Bishop's Cathedra. He was unsuccessful in this attempt, and was later a leading member of the group who rebuilt Down Cathedral in Downpatrick, in Gothic 'Planter' style.



The Bleach – one of the 12 Hincks linen prints, in this case dedicated to Wils Hill’s son and heir. The image of a linen manufactory was much at odds with later images of mills and industrial settings, and instead presented a highly picturesque settings, of seeming order, civility and industry.



The only print dedicated to an individual aristocrat who was outside the north-east of the country, was interestingly Viscount Kingsborough, who was also engaged in a large-scale town building endeavour in this period, and had an active linen industry. It is also of note that several of those mentioned by name were at some point the Grand Master of the Freemasons of Ireland, which could be an important connection. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Lodge_of_Ireland.

8.0 Myopia caused by personnel loss:

Ultimately the linen manufactory failed in Blarney, and the settlers left for other locations, possibly even leaving for the other great English settler society of the period, America. The scheme was the victim of the combination of various factors, which included the death at the age of 45 of the landlord, James St. John Jeffreyes, leaving his wife and young family to manage the still partially incomplete scheme. There were other challenges, however, which possibly resulted from the difficulty of making a model of development from the north-east of Ireland work in Cork. These include the difficulty of attracting settlers/skilled textile workers to live in the southern areas of Ireland, where the number of fellow Protestants were small, and where skilled labour was always at risk of departure for other opportunities and other locations.

While the Jeffreyes were well placed to recruit labour given their connections to the 'linen triangle' manufactories of the north-east³⁴ an economic down-turn which did significant damage to the linen industry in the 1780s, worker disputes with manufacturers which led to the departure of many, a disproportionately high level of tithe payments in the province of Munster, which did much to destroy the linen industry in the area. A fire in the mansion house in the early 1820s saw the Jeffreyes permanently leave Blarney, living instead on a family property near Midleton. By the 1830s Blarney Square was reputed to be in ruin, a crop of barley ripening in The Square³⁵. The entire loss of personnel from this period of Blarney's history goes a long way to explain the loss of social memory for the historical detail of the establishment of the village as a linen manufactory.

³⁴ Including Jeffreyes close family relationship to the O' Neill's of Shane's Castle (his maternal aunt married into this family) in County Antrim, and whose family seat in Parliament Jeffreyes held in the years before his death, possibly as an aid to recruiting skilled labour for the manufactory. Shane's Castle underwent a similar scheme of designed landscape creation.

³⁵ See Thomas Crofton Croker 1837.

9.0 Further Research Needed:

This study was the result of a minor examination of the material arising from a conservation management plan and therefore can only be a cursory examination of easily accessible material. It is necessary to carry out a more in-depth examination of this subject, in order to have a more definitive set of facts. Further insight into the development of Blarney could be profitably gained through a greater examination of the development of Hillsborough, Banbridge, Newry, Glenarm, Hilltown and Ballycastle as locations Myers is known to have definitely worked in the same period, in order to better understand the town building model utilized at Blarney from a comparative perspective. Given the inclusion of Lord Kingsborough of Mitchelstown among the 1791 prints, the building project in Mitchelstown and the connection of Arthur Young to the town, it would be important to examine the development of Mitchelstown in this period³⁶.

While the Jeffreyes archive would appear to be lost, and the Colthursts severely depleted through the unfortunate clear-out of a solicitor's office on the South Mall in the mid-20th century, some of these other town building schemes possess greater records, some held in the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (P.R.O.N.I.), most notably the extensive archive of the Marquis of Downshire, prolific town builder, long-term employer of Christopher Myers and possible inspiration for the Blarney model. Comparative examination of locations where Myers was engaged should be carried out, including an examination of the industrial archaeological evidence. In particular, the impressive feats of water engineering carried out by Christopher Myers in various locations should be compared to the systems in Blarney, in order to determine the nature of the 'powerful control of water' achieved in the village, as described by Arthur Young in 1777, and whether the water control systems in Blarney may be earlier than currently supposed.

³⁶ And to explore whether there might be a Freemason linkage between the schemes, as Freemasons were very keen on the theme of liberty, and the 'gothic constitution' in this period

10.0 Threats to the significance of the scheme:

What is unusual in Blarney is not the model itself, which would appear to have been rolled out quite widely, but rather the survival of the scheme in a relatively intact condition, with many of the key elements still sitting in their original relationship to one another, thanks to the continued stewardship of Blarney Castle by the Colthurst's, who have protected the various elements to date. While it can be understood to be in large part a story hiding in plain sight, an investigation of its significance reveals that it is a development of national and international importance, whose memory on the landscape must be protected.

The 18th century scheme is now facing its greatest threat, however, with the extension of Cork City, and pressure to place housing and commercial developments within the designed landscape, whether on the old demesne lands at the GAA grounds or surrounding the village square which will permanently destroy this largely intact mid-18th century scheme, threatening the loss of a wonderful repository of Ireland's history. The 18th century scheme necessitates greater recognition of its significance, and greater legislative protections to safeguard its future against intrusive development. The preservation of this story on the landscape (of both demesne and village) preserves this 'picturesque' creation for generations to come, as not merely a high quality landscape for city residents to treasure, but also a piece of social history to which they can connect and find a sense of belonging.

11.0 Opportunities arising from the significance of the scheme:

The recognition of the existence of the scheme is of more than merely academic interest. It is not only a fascinating piece of Irish history written on the landscape, and preserved in a relatively intact condition, it is an intriguing story, which merits both interpretation (on site) and also the possibility of dramatization (in a television serial). Both opportunities, together with the opportunity for cross-border tourism cooperation with some of Northern Ireland's key tourism destinations could lead to a possible Myers trail, and /or a Cork/Munster linen trail³⁷, which could increase the visibility/desirability of the wider Cork tourism package, thereby increasing dwell times considerably, and with it increased job opportunities for the region.

³⁷ With the possibility of incorporating other key linen weaver settlements in the Cork region, such as Dunmanway, Innishannon, Douglas, Clonakilty, Mitchelstown etc

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APPENDIX 1

Text of Arthur Young's Description of Blarney, from his Visit in 1777³⁸:

S. J. Jefferys, Esq; of whose great works in building a town at Blarney, I cannot give so particular an account as I wish to do; for I got there just as he and his family were on the point of setting out for France. I did not however let slip the time I had for making some enquiries, and found that in 1765, when Mr. Jefferys began to build this town, it consisted only of two or three mud cabins; there are now 90 houses.



³⁹Right: Beetling, Scutching and Hackling the Flax

He first established the linen manufactory, building a bleach-mill, and houses for weavers, and letting them to manufacturers from Corke, who have been so successful in their works, as to find it necessary to have larger and more numerous edifices, such as a large stamping mill for printing linens and cottons, to which is annexed another bleach-mill, and since there has been a third erected; ...the work carried on is that of buying yarn, and weaving it into linens, ten pence to thirty pence white; also

³⁸ YOUNG, A. (1780) *A Tour in Ireland (1776-1779)*. Cadell, London.

³⁹ Print is one of 12 prints published from drawings by William Hincks, published in 1893, they are a unique set of drawings in Irish print history, as they represent an agricultural/manufacturing process. The images depict the stages of the process that is involved in the production of linen, Ireland's largest export product in the late 18th century. Each image also acknowledges particular individuals and organisations which were instrumental in creating the successful industry. Many of the individuals named are clients of Christopher Myers, and one of those named is Arthur Trevor (Hill), Viscount Dungannon, one of the developers of Blarney.

diapers, sheeting, ticking, and linens and cottons of all sorts printed here, for common use and furniture.

These several branches of the linen, employ 130 looms, and above 300 hands. Another of Mr. Jefferys objects has been the stocking manufacture, which employs 20 frames, and 30 hands, in buildings erected by him; the manager employing, by covenant, a certain number of apprentices, in order by their being instructed, to diffuse the manufactory.

Likewise, a woollen manufactory, a mill for milling, tucking, &c. broad cloths; a gigg mill for glossing, smoothing, and laying the grain; and a mill for knapping, which will dress above 500 pieces a year, but will be more, when some alterations now making are finished. A leather mill for dressing shamoy, buck, or skins, fully employed. A large bolting [flour sieving] mill, just finished, and let for £132 a year. A mill, annexed to the same, just finishing, for plating; and a blade mill for grinding edged tools. A large paper mill, which will be finished this year. He has been able to erect this multiplicity of mills, thirteen in all, by an uncommon command of water.

The town is built in a square, composed of a large handsome inn, and manufacturers houses, all built of excellent stone, lime, and slate. A church, by the first fruits, and liberal addition of above £300 from Mr. Jefferys. A market-house, in which are sold a hundred pounds worth of knit stockings per week.



Spinning, reeling with the clock reel, boiling the yarn

Four bridges, which he obtained from the county, and another (the flat arch) to which he contributed a considerable sum⁴⁰. Much has been done yet is not the design near finished.

To shew the magnitude of these works, and the degree of public good resulting from them, I shall mention the expense at which they have been executed. Respecting the principal bleach mill, Messrs. Forest and Donoghue, under the linen act, took 15 acres, at a guinea an acre, upon which they have expended £5000 in erecting a linen mill and bleach green, twenty-five houses for twenty-five weavers families, four looms in each house, a large dwelling-house for themselves or their director; in each house a man, his wife, three apprentices, two girls and two boys, besides young infants.



Ploughing and sowing the Flax Seed

In a short time, the farm was increased, and land, which before had only brought half a guinea, then let for a guinea. The linen board advanced £500 to this work, and Mr. Jefferys repaid them £1400 of the £5000. The old rent of the premises was £40 a year, the new rent £71.

Another bleach mill, which cost Mr. Jefferys £300. to which the board added 300l. and the person to whom it is let £600, 40 acres of land, formerly let at £10 a year, go with them. The whole rent now £80.

To this mill is since added an oat-mill, which cost £300 two tuck-mills, £200 a leather mill and kilns, £150, two dwelling-houses, £300. A stamping-mill, which cost Mr. Jefferys £2,300 to which the board added £300. promising £1000. more when the works should be finished, which they have been these two years.

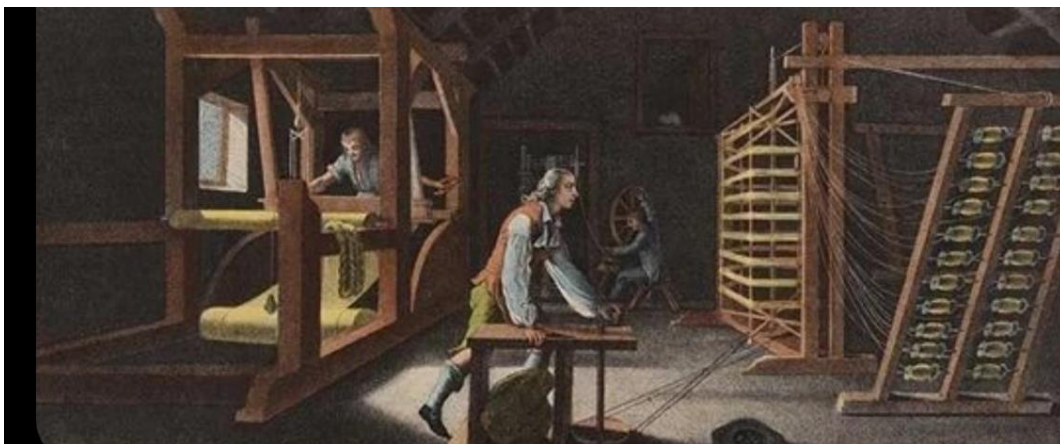
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Twelve printing tables are kept going, and sixty-five hands employed. Twelve printers. Twelve tire boys. Three print cutters. Eighteen bleachmen. Six pencillers. Two tubmen. One clerk. One calendar. One manager. Two draughtsmen. Four copper men. Three carters. Besides the above sums, the manufacturer has laid out £500. The quantity of land occupied is 25 acres: old rent, £6 10s. new, £113 15s.

A stocking factory, for which Mr. Jefferys lent £200. The man laid out £300. himself; he occupies 50 acres, before let at £20 a year; now at £76 11s. A gigg-mill, for which Mr. Jefferys lent £300 till repaid by the Dublin Society, who granted £300 towards it, and the tenant laid out £200, the quantity of land he has is eleven acres, let at £5 10s. now at £36.

A manufactory of tape is established, by which means 6 acres of land are advanced, from £2 8s. to £9. They have three looms going, which makes 102 pieces a day of 36 yards each. The Dublin Society gave £20 to it. A paper mill, which has cost Mr. Jefferys £1100 and is not yet let. A bolting mill on which he has expended £1100, the tenant £500 on adding an iron mill. Twenty acres of land, rent before 9 10s. rent of the whole now £132 13s.

The church has cost Mr. Jefferyes £500 and the first fruits £500 more. The new inn, £250 and the tenant £300 more. Seventy acres of land, before at £20 a year, now at £83 9s. A dwelling-house, £250 to which the tenant added £500. Ninety acres of land, before let at £54, the new rent is £74. Twelve cottages, and a lime-kiln, which cost £280. Two dwelling-houses and a forge, which cost him £150, and to which parliament granted £250 more.



Winding, warping and weaving

Upon the whole, therefore, Mr. Jefferys has expended £7,630 in these establishments. Of public money there has been added £2,170 and the tenants themselves laid out £9,050 in all, expended here £18,850. besides what Mr. Jefferys laid out on bridges &c. in the whole, very near, if not full, 20,000 upon matters of a public nature.

In all these establishments, he has avoided undertaking or carrying on any of the manufactures upon his own account, from a conviction that a gentleman can never do it without suffering very considerably. His object was to form a town, to give employment to the people, and to improve the value of his estate by so doing; in all which views it must be admitted, that the near neighbourhood of so considerable a place as Cork very much contributed: the same means which he has pursued would, in all situations, be probably the most advisable, though the returns made might be less advantageous.

Too much can scarcely be said in praise of the spirit with which a private gentleman has executed these works, which would undoubtedly do honour to the greatest fortune. To animate others to tread in such laudable steps, I may remark, that even the profit of these undertakings is too much to be entirely forgotten; the expenses are by no means barren ones; 327 acres let before these works at £167. 18s. let afterwards at 682l. 8s. Profit 508l. 10s. without reckoning anything for two dwelling-houses, a forge, twelve cottages, and a lime-kiln, which may moderately be reckoned at £25. a year, and yet let at rents of favour, in all £533. 10s. which from £7630. is 7 per cent.

There, however, is no agriculture improvement that would not, with much greater certainty of continuance, pay 17. At the same time, however, there is a greater reversionary advantage in the benefit resulting from the increasing of the rents at the expiration of the leases, upon undertaking these works, the longest of which is for no more than three lives.

Another advantage which is felt already, is the rise in the prices of products at Blarney, which is a direct premium to agriculture, to the farmer, and to the landlord. Dairy cows, on all the adjacent farms, arose in two years from 3l. to 4l. a cow, as the weavers were happy to get milk and butter at the same price it sold for in Corke. The same rise took place on corn, potatoes, &c.

Mr. Jefferys, besides the above establishments, has very much improved Blarney Castle and its environs; he has formed an extensive ornamented ground, which is laid out with considerable taste; an extensive plantation surrounds a large piece of water, and walks lead through the whole; there are several very pretty, sequestered spots where covered benches are placed. [pp. 259-261].