

informal green areas worthy of note. The Old Vicarage, however, stands well back from the highway and has a significant area of lawned garded.

- 12.7 A stream that runs through the village, extends along the Baltic Road and passes under the main road to emerge on Balleira Road. It then flows through Glen Balleira until it reaches the sea. Along the path of the river on the Baltic Road and Balleira Road/Glen Balleira, there are extensive areas of mature and semi-mature trees, which provide a peaceful haven away from the busy road through the centre of the village.
- 12.8 The contribution played by trees in Kirk Michael is important. Whilst there are no significant areas of woodland, a valuable contribution to the ambience of the area is made by the trees along the main road.
- 12.9 This is true at the southern end of the area, particularly in the grounds of Erinville, and at the northern end within the grounds of White House Farm.
- 12.10 Several dwellings have trees within their garden areas, for example: The Warbuck; the driveway leading to Aniwa is lined with mature trees; and also The Old Vicarage. From the original small coppice sandwiched between the new development and the railway line, only a few now remain. There are also trees adjacent to the main road in front of St Michael's Church.
- 12.11 In several areas of the village there are extensive areas of wild gorse, which provide a 'blaze' of colour. Areas where this is particularly noted are: the sod banks at the approaches to the village and along the disused railway line.

13. **Prevalent and Traditional Building Materials, Textures and Colours**

- 13.1 There is no prevalent style of construction within the conservation area of Kirk Michael. The majority of properties within the area are built in stone, and some of these retain exposed stonework. Examples are: the former station; the Park View Methodist Chapel; the current Methodist Chapel; the Isle of Man Bank; the Youth club; the Church Hall; and several cottages including the majority of the Whitehouse Cottages. However, most of the stone-built properties now have a cement-render coat.
- 13.2 The majority of render coats are smooth, some being left natural whilst others are painted. Fortunately, the majority of decorative finishes to render within the area proposed for designation are subtle, and are white or shades of beige or cream. Some render finishes, however, are a heavier stucco-type finish, whilst there is some pebble dashing and also spa dashing. Three properties that have been attributed to Kelly Brothers, namely: Kerroo Coar, The Old Manse and Avonmore are all stone built, but with extensive use of red brick for decorative features.
- 13.4 Most roofs within Kirk Michael are pitched, with many having traditional clipped eaves. Roof coverings again vary in type, probably the most prevalent being asbestos man-made slate. Only one property was noted to retain an original Manx slate roof, this being Greystone Cottage. A large number of properties have Welsh blue slate roofs, whilst there are a limited number of other roofing materials, for example: rosemary tile and concrete interlocking tile.
- 13.5 Many properties retain either their original windows, or windows dating back to the late Victorian or Edwardian periods. However, a substantial number now have white uPVC windows. Whilst some of these uPVC windows are not too incongruous, others - particularly those with stick-on Georgian-style glazing bars - are completely out of character with the properties in which they are fitted.



- 13.6 Many timber replacement windows fitted in more recent years are equally out of character.
- 13.7 Generally, however, the blend between the exposed stonework and smooth-render, with occasional punctuations of pebble dash and spa dash, serve to give a pleasing impression when passing through the village. Occasionally one finds the use of beach boulders incorporated into buildings. This is particularly true of the former Bazley's Bakery.
- 13.8 On Station Road between Ivydene and Park Villa, there is a small access lane. Its boundary walls are constructed using beach boulders, as is the wall between the car park and the main road adjacent to the bank.
- 13.9 There are cases where inappropriate materials have been used, noticeably on the property between Laburnum Cottage and the semi-derelict Ash House. This property with its shiplap timber front elevation, uPVC door and windows could hardly be more out of keeping.
- 13.10 Both the Island Saddlery and Hardware Supplies premises and the original Methodist chapel, which is now Ballaconley Engineering, have roofs that are clad in sheet asbestos.
- 13.11 This does appear to be inappropriate in the case of the latter premises, where originally one would have expected to see a slate roof. In the case of the former premises, which may have been a Knockaloe Camp hut, the asbestos sheeting is a reasonable replacement for what may once have been a felted roof.

## **14. Vernacular Architectural Details**

- 14.1 The name of Kelly Brothers is inexorably linked to Kirk Michael. Once a major employer of labour within the village, Kelly Brothers, founded by Mr J D Kelly, had its workshops in what is still known as Kelly's Yard, and many properties within the village were built by the company.
- 14.2 Three properties in particular stand out due to their construction, being built principally in stone but with extensive use of brick for decoration in the way of quoins, arches and surrounds to windows and doors. These three properties are: Kerroo Coar and Avonmore on Main Road; and Ingledene, also known as The Old Manse, on Station Road. Kerroo Coar was the Kelly family home, and the family formerly traded from the shop, which is now two units containing The Village Pharmacy and the Post Office.
- 14.3 Kelly Brothers are responsible for much of the intricate wood carving within St Michael's Church, and also in many other churches on the Island.
- 14.4 Kelly Brothers are also understood to have been responsible for the building of the terrace of houses on Station Road. This is an unusual terrace comprising five, bay-windowed two-storey houses. At one end there is a double-fronted property built in a similar style around an access way leading to the rear. At the opposite end of the terrace is Tower House, which once again reflects the same style. It is built with a return frontage over three storeys, and features a tower that separates the two-storey and three-storey sections. This property was formerly a hotel and has also been used as a school in the past.
- 14.5 Each property on the terrace, and also Tower House, feature intricately carved barge boards surmounted by finials. There are also some pleasing mouldings particularly above windows and door entrances, and diamond-shaped Cameo-style mouldings are used to either side of first-floor windows.



## **15. Shop Fronts, Advertisements and Street Furniture**

- 15.1 There are a limited number of retail premises within Kirk Michael having shop fronts. The Convenience Store retains what appears to be an original shop front with entrance doorway to one half of the building, whilst on the other half the shop window has been blocked-up and has been replaced with an advertisement. Country Cookers shop adjacent also retains what appears to be an original shop front, but at the opposite end of the terrace the Antique Shop has a replacement aluminium shop front which is out of keeping.
- 15.2 Earlier photographs indicate that both the Post Office and The Village Pharmacy now have extensively altered shop fronts from those present at the turn of the century, when they were a single shop.
- 15.3 The butcher's shop has an interesting front elevation, with a very simple central display window, whilst the hairdressers has no merit.
- 15.4 The Village Shop at the opposite end of Kirk Michael, which is now closed, appears to retain a shop front from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It would be beneficial to the conservation area if this were retained, even if the use of the premises is changed in the future.
- 15.5 There are few items of street furniture of any historical value, but those noted include: a K6 telephone kiosk situated in front of the telephone exchange, and an Edward VII post box at Douglas Road Corner. Also in front of the telephone exchange is the disused village pump, which up until the 1930s was used to discharge water and was fed from a near by spring.
- 15.6 There are two bus shelters within the village, a steel and glass framed one between the telephone exchange and the Methodist chapel, and a concrete one at the opposite end of the village adjacent to the small parking area. Whilst

these are by no means architectural gems, they are certainly more in character with the area than the modern glass and steel units now appearing throughout the Island. Almost opposite the telephone exchange is a milestone.

15.7 When travelling down Station Road, the lines of the disused railway are clearly visible within the road surface at the former level crossing. These are considered to be of historical importance, and should be retained and remain visible even if the road is resurfaced in the future. The stone-built railway bridge on Balleira Road is considered worthy of retention.

15.8 There are no advertisements of any note within the conservation area, those that are present are considered to offer a negative contribution and will be dealt with under a separate heading.



16. **Boundaries**

- 16.1 There is no single consistent boundary treatment within the conservation area. There are, however, a number that are considered to be worthy of preservation due to the special character they add to the area. On the southern approach to the village from Douglas, there is extensive use of sod banks to both sides of the road. These are considered to be of importance and should be retained, not replaced with alternative boundary treatments.
- 16.2 At the southern end of the village, it has been necessary to include several properties in the conservation area merely to protect the sod banks in front of them. This situation applies to the majority of the properties between Cass A Lergey and Cronk Froy on the eastern side of the main road, and two modern bungalows on the western side of the road between Glendale and Ballachrink.
- 16.3 There are a number of Manx stone walls throughout the village, and at Douglas Road Corner these are topped with metal railings and provide the boundary to the school playing field. This wall and its railings provide one of the most photographed TT Racing backdrops on the whole course.
- 16.4 Throughout Kirk Michael there are various areas where original cast iron railings have been retained, some of these include: The Ebenezer Methodist Hall; various properties on Station Road, on the south side of which all properties have identical cappings on the gate pillars; Whitehouse Cottages; and Avonmore. Unlike the United Kingdom, where the majority of railings were removed as part of the 'war effort', a large proportion have survived on the Isle of Man and particularly within Kirk Michael.
- 16.5 St Michael's Church has an attractive timber fence to the front boundary wall. The current stone wall and the timber fence above was probably constructed at the same time as the Lych-gate. The fence certainly compliments the Lych-gate structure, and is unusual in the fact that it is held together using oak pegs rather than nails.

- 16.6 An interesting pair of gate pillars are noted on Station Road, adjacent to the pavement in front of a modern house. It has not been possible to determine the age or purpose of these pillars.
- 16.7 The Old Vicarage has an entrance worthy of note, being formed with two octagonal pillars. There is a pedestrian gate to one side, and a small return wall terminated by a semi-octagonal pillar to the other.
- 16.8 In front of White House Farm is a low stone wall, with an in situ cast concrete coping that has been replaced in recent years. Old photographs shows that cast iron railings once surmounted this wall, but these have now been removed. The wall at its present level, however, affords a fine view over the parklands to the hills beyond.
- 16.9 Road widening within the centre of the village has led to some alterations in boundary treatments. In particular Clematis and Rambler Cottages now have enclosed forecourts, whereas on old postcards they are shown to be open. Two large semi-detached properties to the other side of the original school building now abut the pavement, whereas prior to road widening these had enclosed forecourts.



## 17. **NEGATIVE FACTORS**

17.1 During the course of this study, a number of areas have been noted that can be categorised as detracting from the conservation area.

### 17.2 **Traffic**

17.3 Without doubt, traffic is the major negative factor affecting Kirk Michael at the present time. In the Kirk Michael Local Plan Written Statement of 1994, it was stated: 'little scope for improvement or alteration of traffic flows exists with the exception of a possible by-pass.'

17.4 There are various areas along the main road where either the road narrows, or there is regular on-street parking. At these points traffic problems occur and heavy vehicles need to pass onto the opposite side of the carriageway in order to progress.

17.5 Since the Written Statement of 1994, it is likely that the situation has worsened, although there may be some relief when the incinerator comes into effect and the amount of landfill in the north of the Island substantially decreases.

17.6 Traffic at the present time is both dangerous and intrusive within the conservation area. This is not only from a visual aspect, but also due to traffic noise mainly from heavy vehicles. There is little scope to improve the situation by means of road widening in the centre of the village, where the majority of properties either abut the rear of the pavement or are a short distance back from it. Therefore, it seems likely that the situation will either have to be tolerated, or in the future a decision made regarding bypassing the village.

## **17.7 Parking**

- 17.8 Linked to the through-traffic problem, is the severe shortage of off-street parking within the village. There is a public car park between the premises of the Isle of Man Bank and the Michael Car Centre, although this often has few vacant spaces, as it seems to have become an overspill car sales' area for the adjacent premises.
- 17.9 The main problem with on-street parking occurs adjacent to The Convenience Store, and in the vicinity of the Post Office. It would be of great benefit to the village in the future, if some off-street car parking in this vicinity could be provided, for example: within the Kelly's Yard complex.
- 17.10 There is also a small amount of off-street parking in front of Merton Villa at the north end of the village, but on-street parking is not so much of a problem in this part of the village.

## **18. Miscellaneous Negative Factors**

- 18.1 Street furniture within the conservation area could be improved. Lamp standards are modern, galvanised steel and particularly unattractive. In the future, if these are replaced, consideration could be given to using a more appropriate type. Similarly, there are plastic litterbins throughout the area and it would be beneficial if these were replaced with for example: cast iron bins.
- 18.2 There are a number of properties where inappropriate, but well-meaning alterations have taken place. The most widespread example of this is the installation of uPVC windows of a totally inappropriate type.
- 18.3 Whilst in most cases roofing materials do not significantly detract from the visual appearance of the area, in a few cases improvements could be made that would have a substantial positive benefit. Examples are: the corrugated asbestos roof