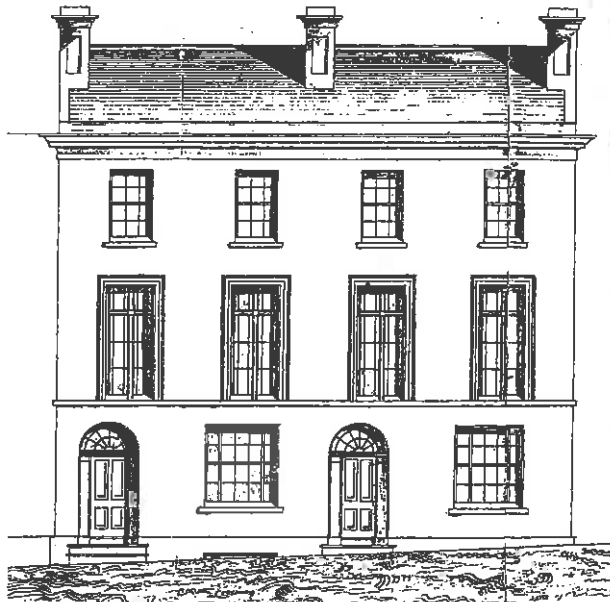


# UPPER DOUGLAS

## WINDSOR ROAD CONSERVATION AREA

### *Character Appraisal*

*To be read in conjunction with the  
Windsor Road Conservation Area Order  
1<sup>st</sup> September 2003*



**Department of Local Government and the Environment**  
*Rheynn Reiltys Ynnydagh as y Chymmyltaght*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In order to justify the selection of an area for Conservation Area status, it is necessary to undertake an appraisal of such an area's character and appearance. The intention of this procedure is to clearly set out the justification for Conservation Area designation, with the added aim of summarising a practical, distinct and factual assessment of the area in a working document. The character appraisal has been the subject of consultation with The Advisory Council on Planning and the Environment, The Douglas Corporation and many other interested parties. The Town and Country Planning Acts place a duty upon the Department of Local Government and the Environment to determine which parts of the Island are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate such areas as Conservation Areas.
- 1.2 The unique and cohesive character which Douglas possesses as a fine seaside town has long been recognized, not only by the Island's local community, but possibly to an even greater extent, by visitors to our shores, who readily compare the variety and quality of the Capital's architecture, to some of the finest townscapes throughout the British Isles.
- 1.3 The Island has always tended to 'wait and see' before adopting patterns of living and approaches to legislation and commerce. The same may be said of the historical development of architectural fashions in the Island. We find architectural styles or 'periods' identified by reigns of various English Monarchs, taken up at a leisurely

pace and still remaining in use for years after such styles were abandoned for new approaches, outside of the Island. This tendency can be a little confusing when trying to date a property, but it has also been instrumental in achieving the unique blend of buildings remaining today.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 Douglas occupies a choice location on a wide, east-facing bay, marked by headlands to the north and south, and backed by steeply sloping brooughs to the west.

2.2 The town had confirmed its position as the principal trading harbour of the Isle of Man during the eighteenth century. The majority of buildings were sited in a triangle around the harbour which, during the late 1700s and early 1800s, was the fashionable area. However, during the nineteenth century, a number of developments were to occur which encouraged the rapid growth of the town and Douglas was to prove attractive to residents from other parts of the Island, as well as “second home” owners and tourists alike.

2.3 Along with the development of major sections of the town’s infrastructure, the relocation from Castletown to Douglas in 1869, of the House of Keys, was probably one of the most important influences on the subsequent growth of the settlement.

2.4 In response, people increasingly chose Douglas as their main place of dwelling and the town gradually spread along the shore front and uphill onto the brooughs behind. Initially, access was very difficult, but major works afforded access to areas behind the

promenades and the opening of the former Ballabrooie, Ballakermeen and Ballaquayle estates for development saw further increases in the number of residences constructed during the Victorian period.

### **3.0 ORIGINS, TOWNSCAPE AND CHARACTER**

3.1 Upper Douglas is characterised by a number of small areas and distinctive neighbourhoods, which possess fine examples of terraced properties. It is a common feature that within such areas, a wide variety of house designs can be found and the influence of Georgian, Regency, Victorian, Edwardian, and Arts and Crafts Periods are all recognisable and this unique mix gives vibrance and vitality to the built fabric of the Island's Capital.

3.2 The townscape of upper Douglas is distinguished by a number of fine, and often very elegant, civic spaces in the form of squares and gardens, which provide a focus for surrounding terraced properties. Additionally, the avenues and other approach roads to these spaces are lined with carefully designed terraces, whose architectural language, detailing and rhythms provide a foretaste of the overall approach adopted in the enclosing architecture of the squares themselves. These early examples of town planning, although rigorous in their approach to detail, form and layout, succeed in creating a sense of spaciousness, charm and gentility which is now synonymous with the identity of substantial, predominantly residential, areas of Upper Douglas.

3.3 From the mid nineteenth century onwards, impressive Victorian terraces gradually developed north of the main town centre and away from the busy, and heavily populated, harbour area. Many were arranged to both create and enhance frontal views, being laid out around green spaces and gardens. The approach to 'period' architectural styles adopted in the Island does not always take on a text book format in terms of design detail or expected dating: this again adds a Manx flavour to the resulting architecture such as is not found elsewhere.

#### **Terraces North of Crellin's Hill : Windsor Park**

3.4 John Crellin from Ramsey purchased a large part of Joyner's Ballakermeen Estate from Marie Steuart, daughter-in-law of George Steuart, Architect of Marina Lodge (Villa Marina Grounds), in 1846. He laid out the estate – Windsor Park- such as to have a principal thoroughfare (albeit initially a private one) running from Ramsey Road through to Finch Road. The eastern part of this group - Windsor Road - cut directly through one of the steepest sections of Broogh following the line of an existing gully. Crellins Hill as it became to be known, is said to have been dug by hand. Its retaining walls remain as evidence of this remarkable feat of engineering. Initially it was gated at either end being the entrance to a private estate. A distinct feature of this area is the existence of a high estate wall, which marks the extent of the northern boundary of this section of the Steuart Estate with other legal estates. The boundary wall was in part formed by the northern most wall of Albion Terrace and was continued down the rear lane serving Cambridge Terrace down the steep broogh to meet with the Villa Marina curtilage itself.

3.5 John Crellin engaged the eminent architect John Robinson to design his “piece de resistance” Windsor Terrace which stands at the top of the escarpment. Crellin himself subsequently lived at Number 1, Windsor Terrace. Together with Albert Terrace (1847) now largely demolished and replaced by Reayrt ny Baie, these Terraces were substantially complete by 1849 (although the Northern half of Windsor Terrace was built at a much later date and in a completely different manner). The main frontage of Windsor Terrace is reached either by using the private paths up through the gardens on the front of the broogh or through a covered passage which provides each house with access to the front of the property. While the terrace as a whole towers above the junction of Finch Road and Church Street because the broogh at this point is entirely wooded in nature, the overall impact which is of a striking and high order cannot be fully appreciated. Other terraces in this group were controlled in layout and fitted into the remaining available land using Crellins principle of the cul-de-sac. A covenant stipulated that the view of the bay from the earlier Albert Terrace must not be blocked by any subsequent buildings. Accordingly, both Osborne and Cambridge Terraces were laid out at right angles to Albert Terrace. Raby was the architect who was employed to design Osborne Terrace, which was built in the years 1851 to 1862. An other device that was employed was that blind gables were used fronting onto the thoroughfare to avoid overlooking use of neighbouring back yards.

3.6 Standing at the entrance to what used to be known as Windsor Park is the Registered Building known as Number 1, Albert Terrace which was built in 1849 for Robert Boardman, operator of the Monarch Steamboat Offices on Douglas Quay Side. The roof-level parapet was once graced by Liver Birds indicating links of the port of Douglas with

Liverpool: unfortunately, this feature was removed by previous owners, prior to the property being Registered.

3.7 Whilst in 1869 the corners of the Square are shown as having house plots laid out, it is evident that these were never built. Stables and Coach-houses were built in at least some of these corner plots given that no stables were permitted at the rear of individual properties. However, it is understood that the incidence of commercial delivery stables presumably serving residents outside of the square as well, did not meet with all the residents' accord.

3.8 It was originally agreed that the central square would be walled with a railing above and the land laid out as a plantation or shrubbery. This was done, shown in a plan dating from 1868. Whilst it would seem that some of the original trees remain along with the central flag mast, a more geometrical layout around the outer edge of the gardens with straight pathways running diagonally between gates, has replaced the original and softer more informal layout.

3.9 The original layout of winding walks would likely have derived from the immensely influential works and writings of Humphrey Repton who advocated such an approach to disguise the limits of town parks and the use of shrubberies to divide the planted area into discreet and characteristic private spaces.

3.10 Derby Square was being developed just as Douglas was expanding rapidly. Whilst these houses have no private gardens to speak of, they do have access to the park with a yard in

the rear. In the early years when the properties were predominantly in single owner occupancy, the gardens were owned by the residents and used as an amenity for the occupants. This use was later coincided to the borough of Douglas when the properties had substantially changed to tourist use and the square was then viewed as a public asset.

- 3.11 The properties and also the gardens have not all fared well over the last half century mostly due to their age and also the accession that new is good. The application of new technologies to older fabric can be very unsuccessful and the use of hard cement in place of lime renders fail to allow the building to breathe and problems become compounded with time. In recent years it has become more evident that the older, original techniques have a great degree of merit and properties are now reverting from multiple occupancy back to single occupancy, convenient and commodious town houses within easy walking distance of the commercial centre of the capital.

## **4.0 ARCHITECTURE**

### **Windsor Park and Windsor Terrace**

- 4.1 This is the principal terrace that towers above from the Promenade, Church Street and the Villa Marina, although the most familiar building is number one and can be viewed from the Chester Street car park and the Manx Museum, others in the terrace are not seen to full advantage. Number one is unpainted and more austere than its adjoining neighbours.
- 4.2 It is difficult to appreciate the impact of the entire terrace as a complete work of architecture, however there is a very grand presence achieved from the use of



monumental Classical Orders, which although not rare in the Island, is seldom employed to such a level of excellence as seen in Windsor Terrace.

4.3 The group has a delightful change of scale when approached from the rear access road where the houses have an altogether different and more domestic character, although the gates and railings ensure that the architectural presence is maintained on the streetscape. Number 4, Windsor Terrace is considered to be the most complete and original which should be held in high regard being used as a pattern for any future works of conservation. An interesting detail on the roadside elevation is the use of the double box sash window to provide a wider opening with glazing bars dividing smaller panes to help keep the proportions of the glazed opening in response to opening sizes at first floor level. The majority of properties retain late Georgian fanlights over the main entrance doors.

4.4 On the seaward elevation the use of giant orders of ionic columns mounted on rusticated plinths serve to enhance the feeling of grandeur. The highly decorative cast iron balconies project to provide access from first floor French windows at “piano nobile” level; above this level windows reajust in scale and proportion as would be expected in this approach to neo-classical design. This terrace is certainly one of the most outstanding architectural statements that the Island possesses and undoubtedly desires Conservation Area Status and in due course, Registered Building Designation.

### **Osborne Terrace**

4.5 This terrace, whilst less imposing than Windsor Terrace, has equal importance to the structure of the area. The terrace is built orientated east/west and faces directly onto the Manx Museum (historically Kingswood Terrace) with the steep Crellins Hill between. The long front gardens allow the terrace to be viewed from the main Windsor Road and give an air of formality. The shrub planting and trees add character and offer a degree of privacy to the residents of Osborne Terrace: the greenery and gardens add to the sense of place. The terrace first appears as an entire architectural unit but on closer examination it has at least 2 house types of which the two-bay style is considered to be the earlier in date. These houses have a very Georgian feel, but are in fact mid Victorian. Number 4, retains the most original form of glazing pattern, although given the changes which have taken place within the terrace as a whole such details are debatable. Most of the facades have been re-rendered and some mouldings may have been lost, possibly replaced at a later date by the circular laurel motifs, which appear on several of the properties. Some properties have pedimented hooded moldings over the first floor windows, although number 6 has lost the scroll details. Number 5 has during its recent life suffered considerable structural problems, which has led to its collapse and present re-building. It is hoped that Conservation Area Designation may affirm the importance of reinstatement of the frontage of this property. Number 1, which makes up the western end of the terrace has in recent years been restored to much of its earlier and original elegance. All would have had decorative iron work balconies and number 4 retains an original design, which might be utilised on the other frontages in due course. Number 1 in the terrace has blank windows in the gable elevation in order to satisfy the earlier mentioned covenants, whilst number 6 has chimney pieces let into the gable wall, suggesting that a 7<sup>th</sup> property was planned. The roof line of the group has a number of

dormers of varying success and 2 houses remain unpainted. The whole terrace unpainted would be harsh, and there may be justification for suggesting that a uniform program of painting would enable the high quality of the architecture to be more readily visible within the area.

### **Cambridge Terrace**

4.6 This terrace is more modest than its neighbours Windsor and Cambridge Terraces, but properties have a similar garden size, although the principal frontage looks onto the rear elevations of Osborne Terrace. An early edition of the 1869 Ordnance Survey Plans suggests that the first half, numbers 1-6 may have had a canopy, possibly with cast iron columns in the center of the elevations. This would explain the rather plain frontage, which has now been enhanced in some cases by the addition of square bays. The double sash at ground floor level on the front elevation to number 2 may well be the original window format. The three storey terrace steps down to two storeys at number 7 where a boundary wall demarcates a change of ownership of the plots as they would originally been developed. The lower level houses retain an unusual triangular bay detail on numbers 9 and 11, which is also evident on the above mentioned, 1869 plan. Numbers 9 and 11 also retain a central dormer which appears contemporary: Numbers 8 and 9 have moldings which would appear original. Although the curved head around the square opening is most unusual, it may be an attempt to distinguish these building architecturally. If this were correct Number 9 would be a truest example of the original format of these buildings. The original bracketed eaves detail is an important feature of this section of the terrace. Numbers 1 – 6 have had a variety of alterations and additions including replacement windows, external shutters and some dashing of front elevations.

This variety has a charm, which may in fact be its saving grace. Number 1 maintains a blind window façade onto Albion Terrace and its railing and well trimmed hedge are a major feature of the footpath as one progresses in a northerly direction towards Derby Square.

### **Albion Terrace**

4.7 Albion Terrace has a bearing on the whole chronological development of the area and whilst in itself has some unsatisfactory elements such as the displacement of windows in the end pedimentated building, which is not successful, this group faces onto the main route through the Conservation Area and its omission and its opportunities for enhancement would be a loss.

4.8 The remaining properties in Albert Terrace including Number 1 Albert Terrace together with Reayrt ny Baie presents an unusual problem. Albert Terrace pre-dated Windsor Terrace and had covenants, which affected the further development of the area. Given the public ownership of Reayrt ny Baie there might be an opportunity for enhancement to this later unsympathetic building by the provision of railings or possibly hedging to help draw this building into the sense of neighbourhood with its immediate context. The blank gable to the two remaining properties on Albert Terrace might also be an opportunity for enhancement.

### **Derby Square**

4.9 As with Windsor Park the land was part of the Villa Marina Estate. Although purchased in 1836 by John Puttnam, it was however not laid out as plots for building until 10 years

later by a consortium of developers which included Charles Swinnerton, a monumental mason who prepared the plans for layout and the house types.

4.10 Again, covenants were employed extensively to control the appearance of the proposed buildings and included the forbidding of stables to the rear of individual properties, as well as the use to which individual properties could be put and rules governing the use of communal gardens by the residents of the Square.

4.11 By 1849, most of the north side and half of the west side of the square was complete. On the ground it is evident that the original style of houses with the incorporation of cast iron balconies was different on these two sides from those developed later, which often have basements and bay windows.

4.12 By 1869, the west side was also complete along with part of the south and east sides. Whatever the reason for the lengthy delay of completing the whole square, it would appear despite an agreement to have a uniform painting scheme, this approach to the piece-meal development of the square contributed to some loss of architectural cohesion that was probably not envisaged or intended at the outset.

#### **North side of Derby Square : No's 63-77**

4.13 The houses on this side of the square are 3 storey, often with an additional attic storey with large, flat-roofed dormers. Some properties also have basements. None of the houses in the terrace retain their decorative iron work balconies which would have been accessed from first floor level French windows. The front walls and railings are largely

intact although the spiked elements of the railings have been removed possibly for safety reasons. Intermediate railings sometimes have their spikes remaining. Most gardens have disappeared under concrete and all properties have suffered some alteration in the form of different window fenestration or the application of a finish of pea gravel dashing. Of these changes the dormers are probably the most intrusive and this terrace has probably suffered more than the other 3 faces of the Square.

#### **East Side of Derby Square :No's 10-24**

- 4.14 At this corner of the square we find Vine Villa which although not shown in its present form on the 1869 map, the garden is present and may be an indication of what was intended at the four corner plots. The houses on this lower side of the square all have bays and no balconies: the distinctive feature of some of the remaining original windows is the single horizontal glazing bar in the lower sash. The infilling of the main entrance door opening on number 10 is most unfortunate and some degree of change has occurred in most properties along this side of the square. There are a number of dash-finished elevations, which are too utilitarian and mask the detail of this style of architecture. The bays allow the terrace to be read as a group and accordingly the integrity of the terrace still remains considerably intact. Some properties have unfortunate dormer windows, which also detract from the overall integrity, however there has been, in recent years most praiseworthy work by some property owners, in reverting properties from multiple to single occupancy and restoring the magnificent internal architectural detailing: this approach is one which will be encouraged as it is seen a helping to retain the very special qualities of the Square.

### **South Side of Derby Square : No's 31 - 40**

- 4.15 The 1869 map shows the south side being built with numbers 37 to 40 and 31 to 32 completed, but the remaining land set out as gardens in a similar fashion to the corner plots in the square. Even today, number 34 remains undeveloped although until recently there was a conservatory erected on this plot serving number 33. It may be that commercial incentive to develop the area was already diminishing by the time that the Square was being completed.
- 4.16 Number 31, has a fine enclosed porch with door case and is designed in such a way so as to suggest that this corner of the square was in fact developed to the original designs. The deeds for the plots of Derby Square include drawings from proposed elevations for both square and terraced that latter refers to the two storey houses on the top square of Derby Road, but the main 3 storey elevation includes first floor windows in a regency style which some properties retain. In some properties the fenestration pattern remains the same however it has been adapted to a vertical sliding slash style of opening with a mid rail transom as opposed to a transom at high level as in a French window layout found in number 31. It is thought that the bays to numbers 37, 38 and 39 may have been added as the remaining houses were constructed on this side of the square. Some alterations have occurred in the form of pebble dash finish or square bays to one property and the alterations of window styles however recently there are indications that owners of various properties on this side of the square are willing to revert to a format and external appearance more reminiscent of the original design of this side of the square.

**West side of Derby Square: No's 47 – 58**

4.17 The properties face onto the busiest road in the square, which have immediate access to both Windsor Road and Derby Road. Being on the higher level of the site and looking out to sea these properties might be viewed as the main elevation by status within the square over the gardens. Some of these buildings have suffered structurally possibly to the large openings on the seaward side. All properties have steps up to the front door and vary from the suggested elevation significantly. The properties all had balconies at one time and although some properties in this block have been lost recently they are being reinstated so far as impossible to replicate the original properties. A conversion of use has crept into the corner elements of the square shown as vegetable plots on the 1869 plan. It would be hoped that these key sites might give an opportunity for change of use or regeneration and enhancement within the square more suited to the historic character and period of the building, which make up this section of the Conservation Area. Some mouldings have been lost from the above window heads and it would be possible for the balcony for the entire length to be reinstated. A distinctive attraction can be the installation of large dormers at roof level and reversion to an original format of dormer would have been seen as an enhancement. This comment could be levelled at other properties around the square and along the continuance of the road with its junction with Derby Road.

4.18 In Derby Square gardens, presently the footpaths encourage use of the gardens simply as a thoroughfare. It is not entirely appropriate as a place of play as the footpath leads automatically to the open gates at the corner position. Consideration may be given to a revision of the planning scheme which might enable better views and visitors across the



square this might help maintain security and enhance the architectural appearance of the square and enabling the four faces to be seen as one unified whole. Mature trees in the area are a feature which enriches the sense of a peaceful haven amid the bustle of nearby streets.

- 4.19 Bowling Green Hotel on Derby Road as the name suggests, at one time had a bowling green located at the rear of the property. The Victorian building still retains an air of elegance and enhancement. Lower down Derby Road, we see a very decorative elevation featuring yellow Ruabon brickwork, together with projecting bays and a lively mix of window designs in the Edwardian style. Derby Road forms a fitting end-stop to the Conservation Area.

## **TERRACES SOUTH OF CRELLIN'S HILL**

### **Kingswood Grove, Richmond Grove And Osborne Grove**

- 4.20 This area was laid out by Philip Christian in the 1870s. Kingswood Grove (originally Elizabeth Grove) was also designed as a cul-de-sac and all three terminated at the boundary wall of the 'House of Industry' which in 1957 became the Ellan Vannin Residential Home. These Groves are tightly packed with features such as splayed bays, dormer windows, arched headed windows with decorative mouldings repeated to give a sense of well-ordered unity. The Ellan Vannin Home is set back from the main building line and with Harris Terrace, survive from the early development of the area from 1837 onwards. The ancient boundary wall which separated Joyner's Estate from Finch Hill Estate, is still evident today opposite Harris Terrace.

### **Manx Museum – Former Nobles Hospital**

- 4.21 Donated by the noted benefactor Henry Bloom Noble the original hospital offered a greatly improved standard of health care contained within a skillfully designed ‘Arts and Crafts’ building. The property became the home of the Manx Museum in 1922 and has since seen considerable extension to house the growing collection and facilities now administered by Manx National Heritage. The Building whilst making its own, individual architectural statement, acts as an anchor in the Conservation Area and makes a positive contribution in this important location.

### **Mona Terrace**

- 4.22 This striking and very prominent terrace was laid out as fourteen plots in 1832, by Calcott Heywood. The designs vary from house to house, some owing much to the Regency style and the total composition is united by a sense of grandeur and order. Calcott lived with his sister in Clifton House at the north end of the terrace: this is now part of the Manx Museum. It is hope that Conservation Area designation will ensure the survival of this important and attractive group and encourage reinvestment in the building fabric.

### **Albert Street, Mona Street and Christian Road**

- 4.23 These wide streets orientated east-west, offer important vistas through to Finch Road and Douglas Bay beyond. The area was laid out from 1854 to the designs of John Robinson and they complete the disciplined formal layout of Victorian terraces which are judged worthy of designation in this locality. Some property owners have begun the painstaking

restoration of long neglected buildings and the area is now beginning to show signs of this sense of neighbourhood. It is considered that Conservation Area status will encourage further upgrading and enhancement.

## **5.0 OVERALL GENERAL COMMENTS**

5.1 The Conservation area offers a comprehensive collection of town houses from the early Victorian period, giving good quality examples of the development of architectural and approaches to planning and layout. Many buildings still retain a high level of original features which are fortunately in many cases being conserved and enhanced.

5.2 There is also a balanced approach towards occupation in the area: This gives us a mixed occupation of single occupancy units and quality apartments in semi-basement versions. The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are stone built with stucco facades and timber vertical sliding sash windows. They were embellished with moldings, columns and cast and wrought iron balconies. The designs were often original, taking ideas seen in Liverpool or in books available at the time and adapting designs to local skills. Details can be identified as being repetitive not just in this area but elsewhere in Douglas. Pattern books were readily available and used by property developers to attract the more affluent residents. As with modern designs options for variations from property to property were available and were chosen by means of these pattern books. Later building of this period had projecting bays whilst earlier properties are flat faced in elevation, and tend to have more elaborate door cases and fan lights. Nicholas Taylor in his book "Tracing the Development of Housing", quotes "Village in the City", refers to the development of front bays in the Victorian era as representing the need to emphasize

their individual house within the terrace. Early houses, especially those set in grounds or those with ground front gardens, did not need such elaboration.

5.3 When these estate layouts gave way to squares, the houses were terraced around a shared garden and the architecture of the terraces was understated in order to create the grand effect. However, the anonymous approach to unifying the architecture of an entire terrace was not always as successful as we might imagine and developers did start to emphasize individual houses with the large bay front window to accommodate popular tastes.

5.4 The growing popularity of Douglas as a resort made the area less attractive for private residential use and properties were built or adapted for use as boarding houses. Elaborate glass dormers to exploit the sea view can be seen in some early brochures. The large glass panes were also introduced to replace the older multi-paned window styles and the houses were modified to accommodate current tastes of the day, either to offer modern facilities for tourists, or to express individual affluence. Whilst the older dormers often complement the building, the more modern of these are intrusive and destroy the scale of both the individual house and the terraces as a whole. Later modifications to windows and render have been made in various properties throughout the area and to effect an economic repair or under the guidance of the building trade as being modern maintenance free materials. Such an approach is often unsympathetic and detracts from the architectural merit and character of not only individual buildings but from groups as a whole.

## **DAMAGE**

- 5.5 The most vulnerable features are windows, traditional pitched roof forms and cast iron balconies : the majority of these have disappeared and some gates and railings have also being damaged and lost. A pragmatic attitude to re-decoration has encouraged dash as an alternative to painted stucco this is partly the failure of modern paints to last on a rendered stone finish which needs to breath to release trapped moisture below maintenance textured paints and issues can also detract from the quality of architectural detail and also become dirty in roadside situations.

## **WINDOWS**

- 5.6 The development of the much publicised PVC windows which seeks to replace the drafty timber slash has seen the demise of many original windows throughout the Island. Some of this replacement could be contributable to the lack of understanding to the quality of original windows in that timber used when the properties were originally constructed was air dried seasons timber much more resistant to rot and modern softwoods. It is now possible to upgrade and overhaul original windows giving them an enhanced life expectancy well comparable with a modern replacement window but giving an advantage that neither planning approval is required and that the window enhances the architectural merits and character of the building. Sliding sash windows and other period windows are a vital and integral part of the character of the Conservation Area.

## **ROOFSCAPE**

5.7 Another significant building feature in the area as a whole is the roofscape. A number of the buildings included within the area have parapets (although some have lost this feature), with slate roofs behind. These have often been altered to include or extend over-large dormer windows. A full size dormer, which adds the full storey height to the front of the building, is a disaster if the intention is to provide some historic sense of the mid-Victorian. The parapet line is essential to the composition of terraces developed in this form. Whilst removal of some of these inappropriate dormers would be encouraged when opportunities arise or alteration, an appropriate colour scheme of painting which would unify the appearance of some of these properties, might make a major difference. This might be adopted especially on the North side of Derby Square.

## **REAR ELEVATIONS AND BACK LANES**

5.8 It is a typical approach that care and attention to detail were taken to a high level on major principal elevations but did not apply to the rear of buildings. Perhaps this was the domain of the servants and as such this does not apply in our modern world. Perhaps the sense of theatre was applied to the front elevation and was not seen as necessary to the rear of the property. Some of the rear service lanes provide a confusing assortment of rear external alterations and editions, walls of varying heights and materials, electricity poles, overhead lines and bins. This is probably at its poorest where one of the historic estates meets another, as with Cambridge Terrace back lane, where a dividing boundary wall between one estate and another has been removed resulting in a very wide back lane, putting this collection of clutter on view to all who pass by. Some means of rationalising

and enhancing the appearance of these service lanes could be addressed in programs for Conservation Area Enhancement Schemes.

## **PUBLIC HIGHWAYS**

5.9 Major routes through the Conservation Area are firstly in an East – West direction, Windsor Road and Crellins Hill; and then in a North – South direction, along Albert Terrace and through Derby Square to Derby Road. Traffic usage is very heavy and there is a proliferation of traffic signs and directions. Virtually all of the streets in the area, with the exception of Crellins Hill are used for car parking including some of the back lanes, which are technically too narrow for this use without some obstruction being caused. This can at times be further complicated by the presence of garages and forms of car fitting establishments at corner locations within Derby Square, which necessitates additional on/off road movements. It is apparent that much of the parking within the square during office hours is a result of the gradual radiating out from the centre off parking requirements or office and commercial use. It is judged that the impact of traffic movements within the Conservation Area is of a major order and the gradual resolution of traffic management and parking solutions within the Douglas Area will hopefully see the impact of traffic reduced over future years.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

6.1 Negative elements identified are largely judged to be reversible, given time, appropriate guidance and support. As such, they are not considered to be of sufficient weight so as to deflect from the overall special quality and character of the Windsor Road Conservation

Area. Many problems can be rectified and features improved with careful consideration and appreciation of the urban environment. The support of appropriate planning policies and improved levels of grant assistance, now in place, is of great importance to this initiative. Conservation Area designation aims to maintain and improve the unique qualities of a particular area, whilst also allowing it to prosper and consolidate.



