Background Report
on the Proposed Deletion of the
Paragon Bar, Clones
from the Record of Protected Structures
for County Monaghan
RPS REFERENCE: LOCAL 30

Sections 54 & 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

September 2025

Contents	Page No.

1.0: Introduction	2
2.0: Legislative Context	2
3.0: Description of Subject Building	3
4.0: Structural Condition and Demolition	3
5.0: Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)	4
6.0: National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)	4
7.0: Design Proposal	4
8.0: Conclusion and Recommendation	6

1.0: Introduction

1.1: The principal mechanism for the statutory protection of architectural heritage is via the inclusion of structures within the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The RPS identifies and provides recognition of buildings of special architectural, historical, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, gives a very high level of protection as well as giving potential access to the Conservation Grants Scheme on foot of the provisions of Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

1.2: Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) allows a Planning Authority to review its RPS on a continual basis. The RPS may be amended by the addition or deletion of entries independently of the development plan review process in accordance with Section 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

2.0: Legislative Context

2.1: Section 54(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states that a Planning Authority may add to or delete from its record of protected structures, a structure, a specified part of a structure or a specified feature of the attendant grounds of a structure, where:

(a) the authority considers that—
   i. in the case of an addition, the addition is necessary or desirable in order to protect a structure, or part of a structure, of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, whether or not a recommendation has been made under section 53, **or**
   ii. **in the case of a deletion, the protection of the structure or part is no longer warranted, and**

(b) the addition or **deletion is made** when making a development plan under Part II or **in accordance with section 55.**

2.2: The making of an addition to, or a deletion from, a record of protected structures is a Reserved Function and Section 55(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states that a Planning Authority which proposes, at any time other than in the course of making its development plan under Part II, to make an addition to or a deletion from its record of protected structures shall:

(a) serve on each person who is the owner or occupier of the proposed protected structure or the protected structure, as the case may be, a notice of the proposed addition or deletion, including the particulars,
(b) send particulars of the proposed addition or deletion to the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands and to any other prescribed bodies, and
(c) cause notice of the proposed addition or deletion to be published in at least one newspaper circulating in its functional area.

2.3: Section 55(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states that before making the proposed addition or deletion, the Planning Authority shall:

(a) consider any written submissions or observations received within the 6-week inspection period, and
(b) have regard to any observations received from the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, concerning those submissions or observations, within 4 weeks after the receipt by that Minister of a copy of the submissions or observations.

2.4: Within 12 weeks after the end of the period allowed for inspection, the planning authority shall decide whether or not the proposed addition or deletion should be made.

3.0: Description of Subject Building

3.1: Prior to its demolition in 2021, the Paragon Bar was located along Fermanagh Street, Clones, refer to site location plan below. The street frontage of Fermanagh Street was substantially developed by the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey c1838 including the Paragon Bar site. The Paragon's block footprint remained largely unchanged between then and the second edition OS map in 1860.

Site location plan outlining location of subject site.

3.2: The building appeared to originally have been two separate buildings identified by stepped floor and roof levels which were later joined as a single ground floor unit, possibly in the late 20th century. Like many urban buildings of its age, historic photographs suggest the building was altered over time. A carriage arch evident in photos throughout the 20th century was no longer visible at the time of demolition. Likewise, early shopfronts had long been replaced by a modern metal framed shopfront.

3.3: The Paragon Bar building was extended and altered in the late 20th century with various planning applications lodged between the 1990s to 2001 for alterations to the bar and its extension to the rear as a flat roofed structure to facilitate nightclub use. The extended area appeared to incorporate part of a pitched roof outbuilding that first appears in the backlands of the site on the c1900 Ordnance Survey.

4.0: Structural Condition and Demolition

4.1: A structural condition survey was undertaken by Alan Traynor Consulting Engineers in May 2021. The report determined that the building was structural unsound and a danger to the public. Immediate protections were put in place for public safety including structural propping to the façade, erection of hoarding and the closure of the footpath.

4.2: The report found that the building had been significantly altered at ground floor level with internal walls removed. Inappropriate structural propping to facilitate the changes had resulted in considerable movement of the front façade, boast render and structural cracking throughout. Refer to images below.

4.3: The building was demolished in May-June of 2021 following concerns in relation to public safety.

Images illustrating the external condition of the Paragon Bar viewed from Fermanagh Street prior to demolition

Images illustrating the internal condition of the Paragon Bar prior to demolition

5.0: Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

5.1: Three Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) are located within the defined settlement limit of Clones Town, namely the Diamond, Ball Alley and McCurtain Street. Notably the subject site is located outside the boundary of all three ACAs.

6.0: National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

6.1: The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a national initiative to identify, record and evaluate the post 1700 architectural heritage of Ireland. Notably the Paragon Bar building is not included within the NIAH.

7.0: Design Proposal

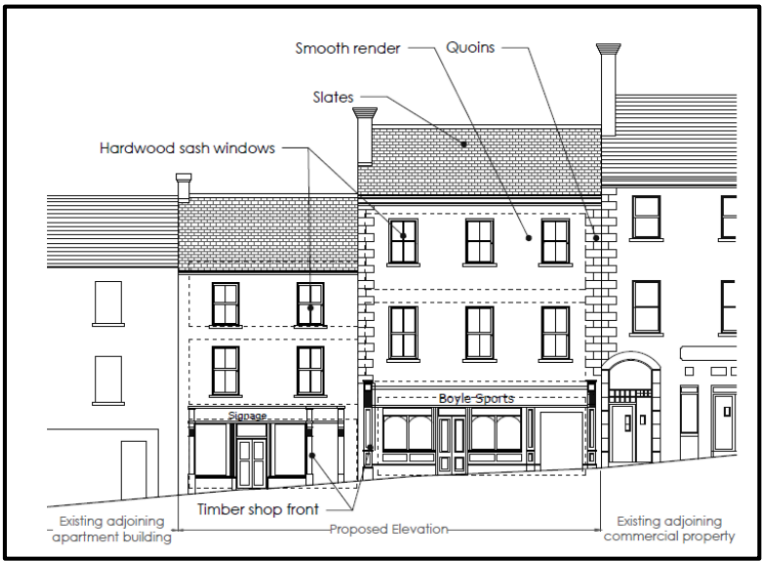
7.1: A planning application (25/60017) is currently under assessment by the Planning Authority. It is now proposed to construct a three-storey structure over a basement level to match the scale of the original building as it faced Fermanagh Street. Refer to images below for details of the design proposal. The proposed development will, if constructed, include a retail unit at ground floor, and the provision of 5 number apartments. The proposed front elevation will reinstate the dual layout, size and scale of the shopfronts on the former Paragon Bar. Access to the proposed apartments will be from a central stair core rising up from an entrance to the rear of the building thus avoiding the need to change the door configuration of the previous front elevation.

7.2: The roofscape as viewed from Fermanagh Street will match the previous building and will include

a stepped brick chimney as per the previous building. To the rear the roofscape will have returns similar to the previous building and the proposed front elevation will reinstate the shopfronts here with the proposed units utilising the same shopfront locations as the previous building.

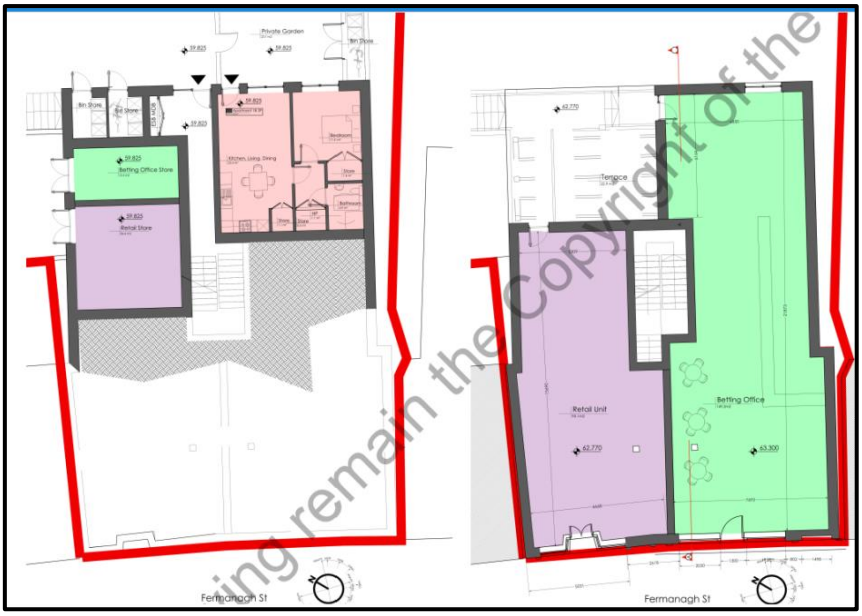
7.3: The front block features a pitched slated roof. Traditional hardwood sash windows are proposed to match the original elevation. The original step in window levels between the two buildings has been replicated to match the original building. The shopfronts will be reinstated to match the original building façade with functioning doors where they were previously, and timber sash windows will be reinstated.

7.4: The reinstatement of streetscape details to Fermanagh Street are also proposed including plaster quoins and profiled cornice detail (above the betting office unit), ruled plaster lines (above the former bar unit) and corbelled brick gable chimneys.



Proposed elevation fronting onto Fermanagh Street

3D Image of proposed elevation fronting onto Fermanagh Street



Proposed ground floor plans

Proposed first and second floor plans

8.0: Conclusion and Recommendation

8.1: The Paragon Bar was demolished in 2021 following concerns over public safety. There is no legal provision within the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to retain permission for the demolition of a protected structure and therefore the owner of the subject site is seeking to have the Paragon Bar removed from the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) so as to enable them to develop a replacement building.

8.2: A presentation prepared by Craftstudio Architects was given to the Elected Members of the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District at the July Municipal District Meeting, following which the Elected Members of the Municipal District resolved to proceed with the process of deleting the Paragon Bar from the Record of Protected Structures. Consent is now being sought from the Elected Members of Monaghan County Council to proceed to public consultation in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

8.3: Presently the site comprises a vacant plot within the streetscape of Clones Town Centre. The proposed development, when viewed from Fermanagh Street, will replicate like for like, the original façade of the protected structure, thus ensuring that the significance of the architectural presence of the building and its contribution to the streetscape of Fermanagh Street is reinstated.

8.4: The redevelopment of this site to afford for the introduction of retail and residential development within the Town Centre will result in multiple benefits to the wider area, including significant visual improvements to the streetscape as a result of good quality architectural design. Additionally, the introduction of residential use above commercial premises whereby community services, retail provision and public transport are locally accessible, will increase the vibrancy of Clones and reflects the thrust of the Town Centre First Policy. This predicted public benefit is therefore seen to outweigh the loss of the building from the Record of Protected Structure.

8.5: For the reasons stated above, it is recommended that the Elected Members proceed with the process of deleting the Paragon Bar from the Record of Protected Structures and proceed to public consultation in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).