

**Refurbishment of Temple Bar Square for Dublin City Council
Conservation Report | June 2017**



Merchant's Arch towards Crown Alley, 1969 | The Wiltshire Photographic Collection, NLI

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Introduction

This report has been prepared by GKMP Architects to form part of the Part 8 Planning Submission for the Refurbishment of Temple Bar Square. This work is being undertaken by Redscape Landscape and Urbanism and GKMP Architects on behalf of Dublin City Council Parks Department.

Project Area

The project area consists of Temple Bar Square, Crown Alley and Temple Bar between the square and the corner of Temple Lane South (refer to Fig. 1). The brief for the project encompasses the refurbishment of the public realm within this area to include pavement and road surfaces, drainage, street furniture and public lighting.

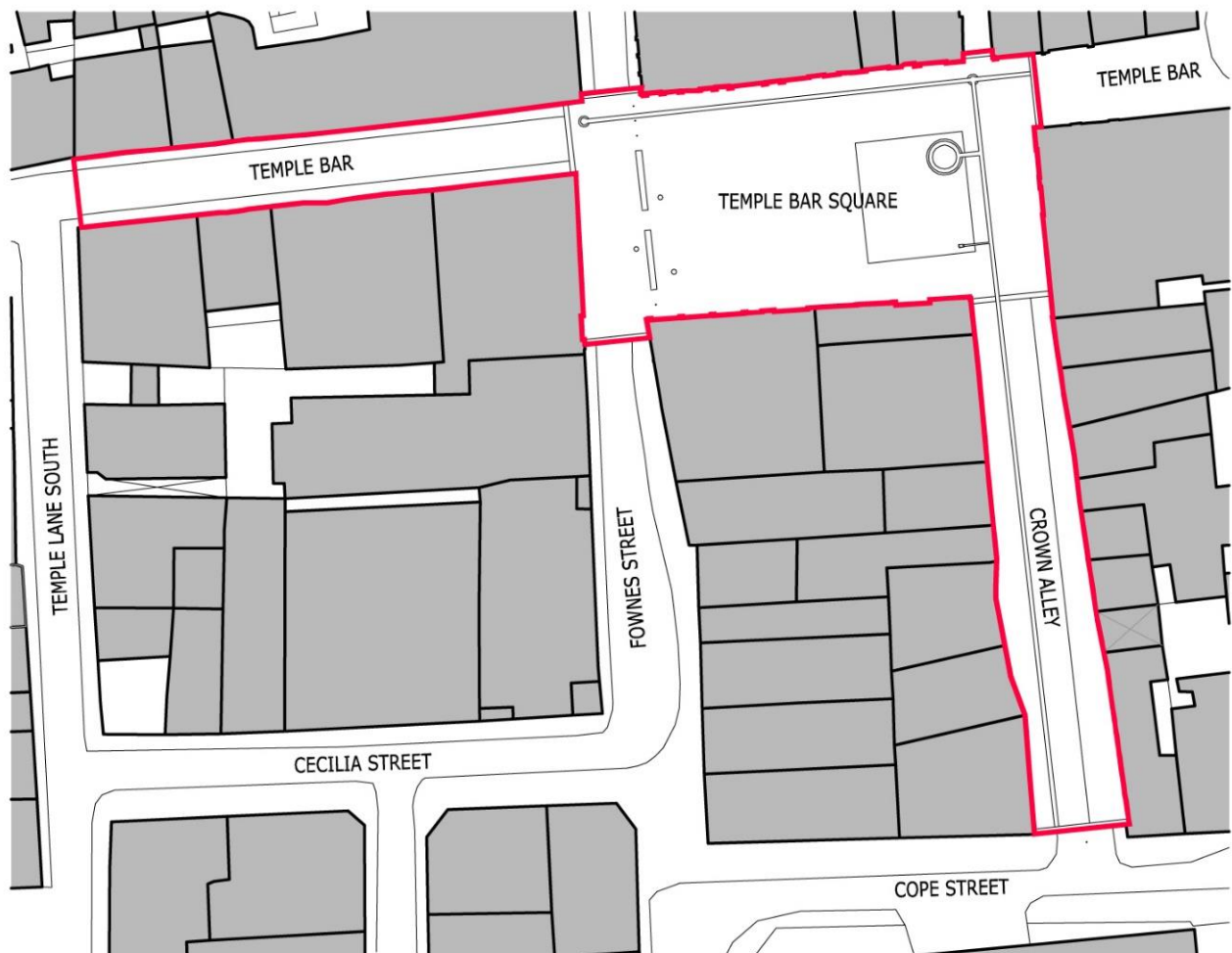


Fig. 1 Project Area



Fig. 2 Aerial view showing River Liffey, Temple Bar Square and former Central Bank

There are a number of Protected Structures (Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022) within the project area as follows:

- 1340 3 Cecilia Street, Dublin 2 Three-storey brick warehouse*
- 1341 4 Cecilia Street, Dublin 2 Cecilia House (stucco building)*
- 2084 1a Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Warehouse façade*
- 2085 2 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Business premises*
- 2086 3 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Business premises*
- 2087 4 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Business premises*
- 2088 7 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Early 20th century Telephone Exchange Building*
- 2089 9-11 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Buildings*
- 2090 14 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Building*
- 2091 14a Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Building*
- 7995 12 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Licensed premises*
- 7996 13 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Building*
- 8000 23 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Building*
- 8002 41-42 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Buildings, including 7 Fownes Street Upper*
- 8003 48 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Licensed premises*
- 8030 20 Temple Lane South, Dublin 2 Building*
- 8374 47 Wellington Quay, Dublin 2 Commercial premises (adjoining Merchants' Hall)*

These are indicated in Figure 3.



Fig. 3 Protected Structures within the Project Area

History

The area known as Temple Bar lies to the east of the old medieval city of Dublin and was not developed before the late 17th Century. The granting of leases along the river frontage by the city's corporation in that period fostered the development of the adjacent lands and led to the laying out of Aston Quay in about 1680. This, in turn, encouraged the expansion of the Temple Bar area eastwards, with the laying out of Fownes Street and Crown Alley in the 1720s and Cope Street a little later. Temple Bar itself was somewhat earlier, forming part of an eastward route from the city via Essex Gate, Essex Street and Fleet Street on its way towards Lazer's Hill and the coast.

During the mid-20th Century a plan for a central bus station in the Temple Bar area led to a considerable degree of planning blight, with buildings that were proposed for demolition for the project let out on a short-term basis on low rents. Upkeep of the buildings and of the area declined.

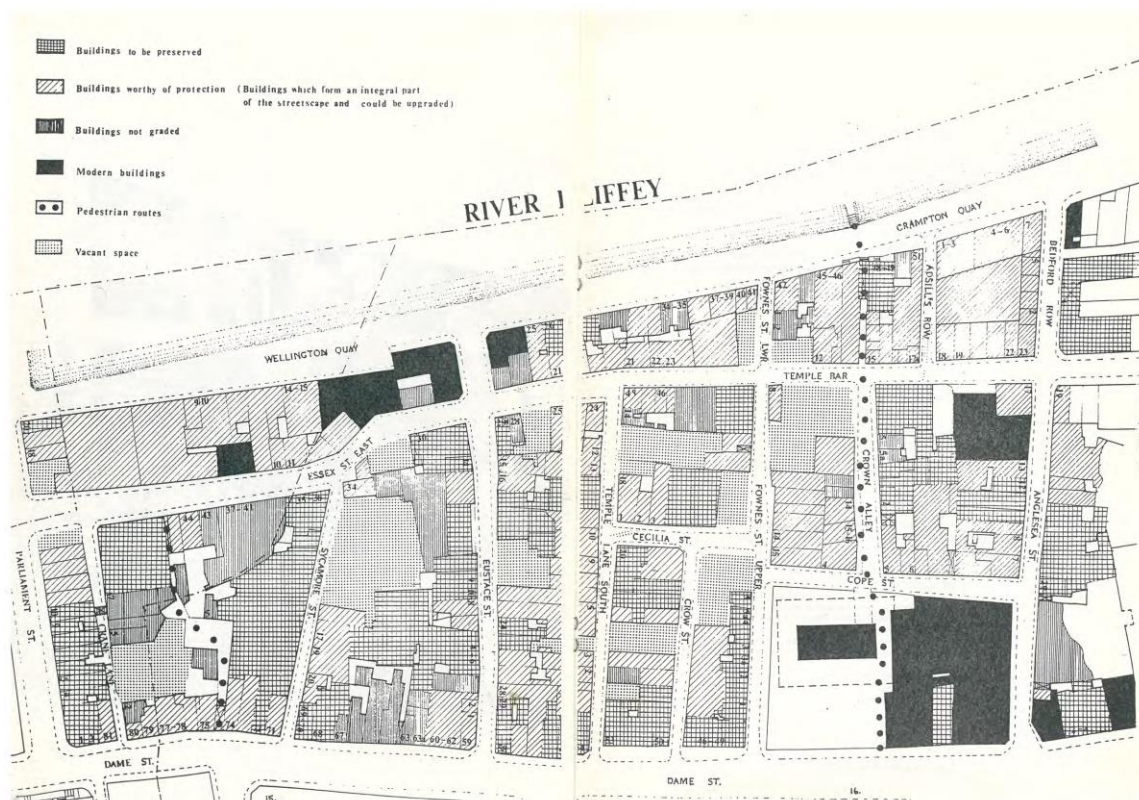


Fig. 4 Map of historic buildings (excerpt) from Pearson, P. Sugrue, U., Doddy, M., O'Sullivan, J.; Byrne, M.; Colgan, J.; Genocky, P.; Lumley, I. (1985), *The Temple Bar Area. Dublin: An Taisce.*

Following substantial public protest the plan for the bus station was dropped and the area entered a new era of threat with neither plans for future development nor investment in maintaining the existing fabric. In the early 1990s, following the publication of the Temple Bar Action Plan by Dublin Corporation, government funding was put in place and a company, Temple Bar Properties, was established to develop the area as a cultural quarter, retaining as much of the existing fabric as possible while constructing new buildings and spaces where appropriate.

One of the projects implemented by Temple Bar Properties was the formation of Temple Bar Square, achieved by clearing a surface car-park and one building along Temple Bar between Crown Alley and Fownes Street and laying out the site as an urban space. As part of this project the space was given hard landscaping and raised above the level of the street in Temple Bar due

to the gradient across the site. The new space is open on three sides to Fownes Street, Temple Bar and Crown Alley, with the fourth side given a new building to achieve a unified façade. The square and new building were designed by Grafton Architects and completed in the mid-1990s.

Temple Bar Square

The square measures 46m x 23m between the facades of its surrounding buildings and is formed by three streets on its west, north and east sides, and a new building on its south side. The streets project past the square in both directions creating a dynamic absent in most other urban spaces. The contours of the streets and pavements of Fownes Street and Crown Alley follow the underlying natural topography and slope downwards toward the river to the North. As Fownes Street and Crown Alley descend going northwards a tapered flight of steps is formed between them and the main square. At the north corners of the main square the steps have three risers which run east-west along its north boundary. The square also contains a row of five tall silver birch trees and several bespoke lamp standards. The cobbles to the three streets are re-used Dublin Corporation stock, laid as part of the 1991 scheme. These have been laid with wide joints which are deeply recessed and have a smooth surface which can be slippery when wet. The third surface, which is on the 1992 pedestrian area, is made from Donegal quartzite flagstones. This is laid in a staggered bond with narrow joints.

There are 8 buildings surrounding the square: The entire south side comprises one building designed by Group 91 (Grafton Architects) and was part of the original Square planning application. This is used as four small shops, an ATM facility and, on its southwest corner a large hamburger restaurant. On the west side is a single red-brick building which is a McDonalds restaurant. On the northwest corner is the Temple Bar Gallery and Studios. Along the north side of the square are four buildings, all of which are Protected Structures. Occupying the entire east side of the square is the five-bay 1897 Telephone Exchange, which has a three-bay arcade to the square, but with a floor level some 400mm above the pavement at its mid-point.

Conservation Issues

From our meeting of 16th May 2017 with representatives from DCC Conservation we would identify the main Conservation Issues to be addressed in the project and our Conservation Impact Assessments as follows:

1. Historic Paving

There is a large amount of historic paving material within the project area, mainly consisting of Dublin cobbles to the existing carriageways, Leinster Granite kerbs and some Leinster Granite slabs to the existing pavements. Most of this material was moved to this location and re-laid in the 1990s. The traditional setts, of Dolerite, are typically 95mm x 165mm to 235mm on the visible face and of a dark blue / green colour. These are often interspersed with granite setts which have a reddish colour. The setts were traditionally laid in a tight stretcher bond pattern with a lime mortar, though reinstatements in Temple Bar are varied in quality generally utilising a wide poured tar grouting. The varying and sometimes poor-quality approach to relaying and repair of the setts have contributed to the Universal Access issues present in Temple Bar. The map and inventory prepared by An Taisce in their report from the mid-1980s (*Figs. 9,10,11,12*) clearly shows the historic paving still in place at that time. Within the Project Area Fownes Street was shown to have the most significant amount.

Fownes Street Upper	<p><i>East side (Dame St. - Cope St.)</i> Entire pavement replaced by concrete after construction of Central Bank. Forecourt of Central Bank paved with fan type overlapping circles of granite.</p> <p><i>East side (Cope St. - Temple Bar)</i> Granite kerbstones intact except for No. 15 and 75% of original granite paving stones remain, but uneven and in poor condition. Cobblestone passageway No. 9 intact.</p>
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Fig. 9: Inventory of historic paving (excerpt) from Pearson, P. Sugrue; U., Doddy; M., O'Sullivan, J.; Byrne, M.; Colgan, J.; Genocky, P.; Lumley, I. (1985), The Temple Bar Area. Dublin: An Taisce.

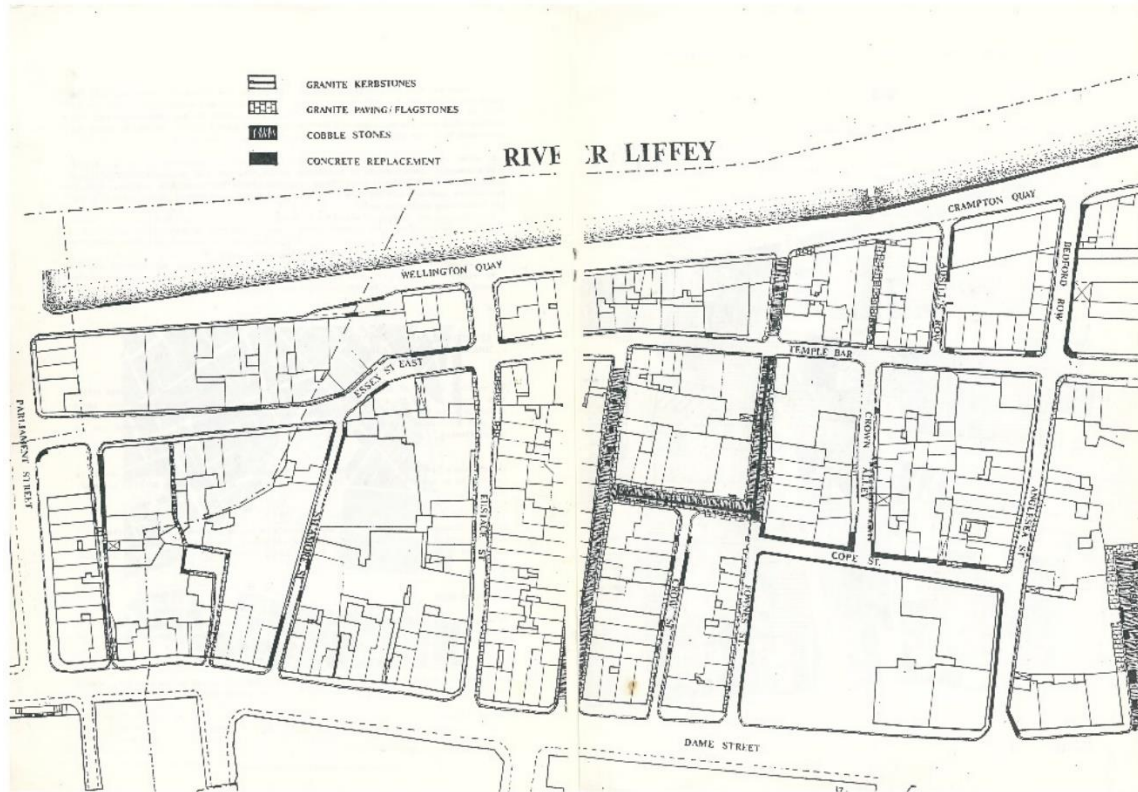


Fig. 10 Map of historic paving (excerpt) from Pearson, P. Sugrue; U., Doddy; M., O'Sullivan, J.; Byrne, M.; Colgan, J.; Genocky, P.; Lumley, I. (1985), *The Temple Bar Area. Dublin: An Taisce.*

Fownes St. Upper (Cont.)	<p><i>West side (Dame St. - Cecilia St.)</i> Almost entire length, 90% of original kerbstones and paving stones intact.</p> <p><i>West side (Cecilia St. - Temple Bar)</i> 80% of stone kerbs intact. Cobbled stone passageway to gate intact.</p> <p><i>Features</i> Half of street from Temple Bar to Cecilia Street cobbled stone surface marred by a road repair cutting for the entire length. String course of limestone channel or gutter pieces.</p>
Fownes Street Lower	<p>Original cobblestone road with 95% intact.</p> <p><i>East side</i> Granite kerbs intact. 70% granite paving stones intact.</p> <p><i>West side</i> All granite kerbs and paving stones intact.</p>

Fig. 11: Inventory of historic paving (excerpt) from Pearson, P. Sugrue; U., Doddy; M., O'Sullivan, J.; Byrne, M.; Colgan, J.; Genocky, P.; Lumley, I. (1985), *The Temple Bar Area. Dublin: An Taisce.*

Temple Bar	<i>North side</i> Almost entire stock of granite kerbs intact. Concrete paving slabs. One gate passage in cobblestones.
	<i>South side</i> Almost entire stock of granite kerbs intact. Concrete paving slabs.

Fig. 12: Inventory of historic paving (excerpt) from Pearson, P. Sugrue; U., Doddy; M., O'Sullivan, J.; Byrne, M.; Colgan, J.; Genocky, P.; Lumley, I. (1985), *The Temple Bar Area. Dublin: An Taisce.*

The photographs from the 1970s (Figs. 13 and 14) also show the extent to which the historic paving had been removed from Crown Alley and what is now Temple Bar Square, with the carriageways formed in asphalt and most of the pavements being concrete.



Fig. 13: View of Crown Alley, 1970s. Source: *Manahan Planners Temple Bar Square Planning Report (2015)*



Fig. 14: View of Temple Bar Square, 1970s. Source: *Manahan Planners Temple Bar Square Planning Report (2015)*

The historic paving that was re-laid in the project area is now considered to be of importance to establishing the character of the area and as such should be maintained as much as possible as outlined in the DCC Advice Series: *Paving; The Conservation of Historic Ground Surfaces (2015)*. New materials introduced should be respectful of this material character. The *Temple Bar Public Realm Plan (August 2016)* prepared by DCC and Áit includes a map of the material quality and surfaces in the area and shows the extent of historic paving within the project area (See excerpt Figure 14)



Fig. 14: DCC, Áit (2016) Temple Bar Public Realm Plan Figure 2.5 - Material Quality: Surfaces

Conservation Impact Assessment: Historic Paving

1. We have endeavoured to reuse the historic paving wherever possible. This includes the re-laying of the cobbles in the carriageways of Crown Alley and Temple Bar, the re-use of the historic kerbs and the re-laying of the small amounts of Leinster Granite slabs in the pavements;
2. Where new paving is required we are proposing to use either Leinster Granite or new Dolerite to maintain the character of the historic materials. Leinster Granite slabs are proposed for the new pavements on Crown Alley and Temple Bar and Dolerite setts are proposed for Temple Bar Square.
3. The Dublin cobbles will be re-laid in line with the recommendations in the DCC Advice Series: *Paving; The Conservation of Historic Ground Surfaces* (2015), removing the existing wide tar jointing and achieving a more level surface for improved accessibility. The example of the re-laid cobbles in May Lane, Dublin 7, has been used as a reference.



Fig. 15 Re-laid Dublin cobbles in May Lane

2. Curtilage of Protected Structures

The curtilage of each of the Protected Structures needs to be carefully considered as described in the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022:

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(d) Not cause harm to the curtilage of the structure; therefore, the design, form, scale, height, proportions, siting and materials of new development should relate to and complement the special character of the protected structure

11.1.5.3 Protected Structures - Policy Application Page 166

The curtilage of a Protected Structure is often an essential part of the structure's special interest. In certain circumstances, the curtilage may comprise a clearly defined garden or grounds, which may have been laid out to complement the design or function. However, the curtilage of a structure can also be expansive and can be affected by development at some distance away. The protected structure impact assessment should also include an appraisal of the wider context of the site or structure and the visual impact. The design, form, scale, height, proportions, siting and materials of new development should relate to and complement the special character of the protected structure. The traditional proportionate relationship in scale between buildings, returns, gardens and mews structures should be retained, the retention of landscaping and trees (in good condition) which contribute to the special interest of the structure shall also be required. Any development which has an adverse impact on the setting of a protected structure will be refused planning permission. The removal of rear gardens to permit underground accommodation is permitted only in limited circumstances. An appropriate garden size to that of the structure should be retained. The total removal of historic boundary features or subdivision of rear gardens or original communal front gardens will generally not be permitted. Car parking will be permitted within the curtilage in accordance with standards as set out in the Development Plan.

Given the nature of this project this relates specifically to the design of the thresholds with the buildings, paving materials and any elements such as vents, drain covers, etc. that may form part of the historic character of these structures.

Note: Please refer to Appendix A for an Inventory of the Curtilage of the Protected Structures

Conservation Impact Assessment: Curtilage of Protected Structures

1. The existing levels at all thresholds to the Protected Structures will be maintained to avoid any changes in the relationship between the facades and the pavements;
2. Where possible we have kept the same materials in the curtilage of the Protected Structures. The pavements on Crown Alley and Temple Bar are being maintained as Leinster Granite slabs;
3. In Temple Bar Square we are proposing a single continuous surface of Dolerite setts. This constitutes a change to the paving material abutting the facades of the Protected Structures, but we consider this necessary to achieve a more generous and unified public space. The use of Dolerite is intended to attain a continuity with the historic setts. The granite paving in the curtilage of the Protected Structures on Temple Bar Square is not original and was laid in the 1990s, as illustrated above. We consider that the change of material does not adversely affect the curtilage of the Protected Structures;
4. All elements in the public realm associated with the Protected Structures (covers, drains, etc.) will be retained and incorporated into the new paving. These are described in Appendix A.

3. Historic Street Pattern

Temple Bar Square was formed in the 1990s, but the street patterns of Temple Bar, Fownes Street and Crown Alley date from the 18th Century as described previously. The historical significance of Temple Bar as an important east-west artery through the city needs to be considered in the design.

Conservation Impact Assessment: Historic Street Pattern

1. The proposal does not significantly alter the historic street pattern from the existing situation;
2. We have designed the new surface of Temple Bar Square so that it appears like a widening of the historic streets, within the Northern European tradition of urban spaces. The use of Dolerite to match the existing cobbles reinforces this reading. We consider that the removal of the delineated carriageways from Temple Bar Square is justified in order to make a more generous and usable public space at this critical junction in the city;

3. We are proposing to use two strong drainage channels along Crown Alley and Temple Bar to reinforce the continuation of these historic streets. These will serve to draw the eye across the new square. The drainage channel on Crown Alley is aligned with the view through Merchant's Arch to the Liffey, allowing for an association between the water infrastructure of the street and the river;
4. The line of Fownes Street will be reinforced by the placement of the new trees and benches.

4. Historic Patterns of Use

The existing and historic uses of the public realm and surrounding buildings need to be carefully considered in the proposal. As the main space of Temple Bar Square was only created in the 1990s, this does not represent a historical use. Nevertheless, the proposed uses need to be assessed in terms of their impact on the character of the area. The uses of the buildings in the mid-1980s are described in the An Taisce report (*Figure 16*). These have been updated in the Temple Bar Public Realm Plan (2016) to reflect the current situation (*Figure 17*). The public character of Temple Bar Square is currently greatly compromised by the presence of semi-enclosed terraces that are licenced to the businesses on the south side of the square. These occupy a large proportion of the public space and diminish the possible uses of the square for public events.

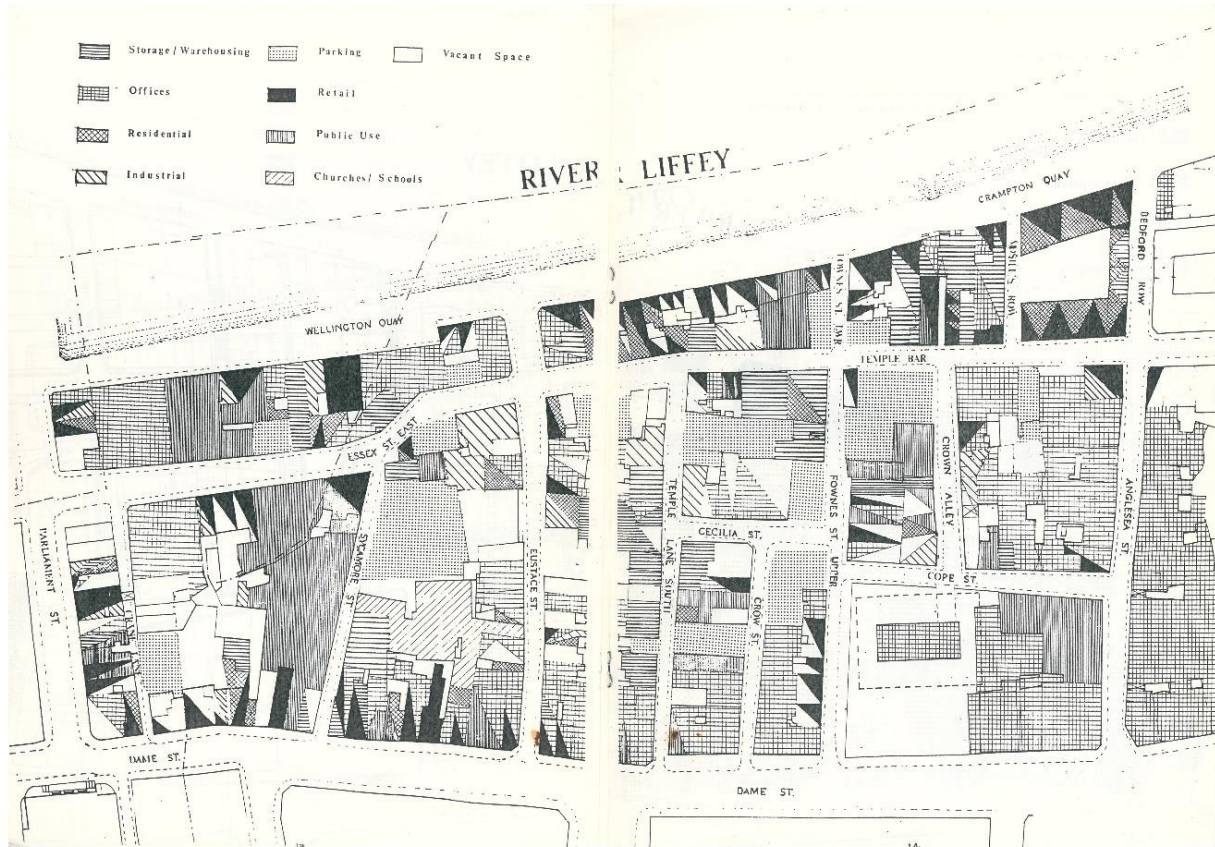


Fig. 16 Map of historic uses (excerpt) from Pearson, P. Sugrue; U., Doddy; M., O'Sullivan, J.; Byrne, M.; Colgan, J.; Genocky, P.; Lumley, I. (1985), *The Temple Bar Area. Dublin: An Taisce.*



Fig. 17: DCC, Áit (2016) *Temple Bar Public Realm Plan Figure 2.5 - Functions*

Conservation Impact Assessment: Historic Patterns of Use

1. The proposal aims to restore the public space of Temple Bar Square by removing the existing licences for semi-enclosed structures;
2. The use of a continuous surface across the whole space of the square is intended to greatly increase the opportunities for public events and activities in line with the original Temple Bar Framework Plan;
3. It is not within the scope of the project to alter/affect the uses of the surrounding buildings.

5. Maritime Character

The historical maritime character of Temple Bar needs to be considered and respected in the design.

Conservation Impact Assessment: Maritime Character

1. We consider that the use of the Dolerite setts will reinforce this reading of the maritime character of the area;
2. The design of Crown Alley and Temple Bar is being kept largely as existing in order to maintain its existing character;
3. The use of robust materials, in terms of paving, street furniture, fittings and street lighting will serve to respect the existing character and create associations with other maritime areas;
4. We have deliberately adopted a direct and straightforward approach to the design of the public realm, in keeping with an unadorned and pragmatic maritime character.

Appendix A: Inventory of Curtilage of Protected Structures

2085/2086/2087 2/3/4 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Business premises

Paving Materials	<p>Mixture of historic and replacement granite kerbs</p> <p>Mixture of Leinster Granite and replacement granite slabs</p> <p>Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows)</p>
Elements	<p>Granite steps at thresholds</p> <p>Vents and covers to cellars</p> <p>Relieving arches to cellars at pavement level</p>



2088 7 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Early 20th century Telephone Exchange Building

Paving Materials	Mixture of historic and replacement granite kerbs Replacement granite slabs (Chinese?) Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows)
Elements	Granite steps at thresholds Old cast iron rainwater pipe protruding from pavement Low level openings at pavement level



2089 9-11 Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Buildings

Paving Materials	Mixture of historic and replacement granite kerbs, one area covered with tarmac Mixture of Leinster Granite and replacement granite slabs Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows)
Elements	Cuts in pavements for drainage outlets Brass horseshoes set into pavement



2090/2091 14/14a Crown Alley, Dublin 2 Building

Paving Materials	Historic granite kerbs Mixture of Leinster Granite and replacement granite slabs Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows)
Elements	Cast iron fittings for shutters at both entrances



7995/7996 12/13 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Licensed premises

Paving Materials	Mixture of historic and replacement granite kerbs Mixture of Leinster Granite and replacement granite slabs Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows)
Elements	Cast iron service cover Drainage channel in pavement



8000 23 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Building

Paving Materials	Historic granite kerbs Mixture of Leinster Granite and replacement granite slabs Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows)
Elements	Granite steps at thresholds



8002 41-42 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Buildings, including 7 Fownes Street Upper

Paving Materials	Historic granite kerbs (Temple Bar) and replacement kerbs (Fownes Street) Replacement granite slabs and limestone setts/small slabs at corner Wide Dolerite edging forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (Fownes Street) Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows) (Temple Bar)
Elements	Granite steps at doorway on Fownes Street Vents (2no.) at low level on Temple Bar



8003 48 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 Licensed premises

Paving Materials	Historic granite kerbs and replacement kerbs Mixture of Leinster Granite and replacement granite slabs Tactile paving to Temple Lane South Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows)
Elements	Granite bollard at corner



8374 47 Wellington Quay, Dublin 2 Commercial premises (adjoining Merchants' Hall)

Paving Materials	Mixture of historic and replacement granite kerbs Mixture of Leinster Granite and replacement granite slabs Perpendicular Dolerite setts forming drainage channel to edge of carriageway (3no. rows)
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