

RINN DÚIN CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN



March 2012

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



RINN DÚIN CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

This Conservation and Management Plan was commissioned by

St. John's Parish Heritage Group

The Plan has been prepared by

Blackwood Associates Architects

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St. John's Parish Heritage Group

The Plan has been funded by

The Irish Walled Towns Network

March 2012

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Project

In the summer of 2011 St. John's Parish Heritage Group, funded by the Heritage Council, commissioned Blackwood Associates Architects to update the existing Management Plan for Rinn Dúin which dates from 1998. Where sections have been retained from the earlier Plan, the relevant authorship is noted in the text.

Since 2008, the St. John's Parish Heritage Group, have initiated and facilitated extensive emergency conservation works including the Town Wall, St. John's Hospital, the Parish Church and Windmill. Although invaluable, these works have illustrated the extent of work still to be done at the site, and the fragility of the surviving medieval walls. All the medieval structures on the site continue to be vulnerable, some critically so.

In this context, this revised Conservation and Management Plan seeks to re-examine the site and its significance with a view to creating a practical tool to guide its management and plan its conservation in the coming decade.

1.2 Site Location and Maps

Figure 1.02 shows the location of the Rinn Dúin peninsula, on the shores of Lough Ree, 9 miles north of Athlone and close to the village of Lecarrow.

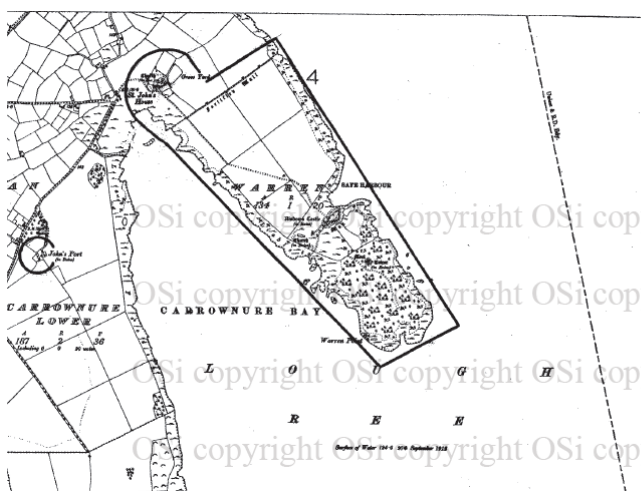


Figure 1.01

RMP Map of Rinn Dúin

1.3 Statutory Context

Statutory Protection

The archaeology of the Rinn Dúin peninsula is protected under the terms of the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004. It is included in the Record of Monuments and Places for County Roscommon, as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994. It is so entered as Recorded Monument *RO046-004— and described as "Settlement Deserted "* (see figure 1.01 below). It is also a Registered Historic Monument in accordance with Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1987.

Two months' notice in writing must be given to the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht of any proposed works at, or in relation to the monument.

Any archaeological investigation (excavation), geophysical survey and underwater investigations require to be licensed in accordance with the National Monuments Acts 1920–2004.

Any archaeological investigation should take into consideration published State Policy:

Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage Government Press 1999

Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation Government Press 1999

The Record of Monuments and Places lists the monuments of Rinn Dúin as follows:

RO046-004—	Warren	Settlement Deserted
RO046-00401-	Warren	Promontory Fort, Possible
RO046-00402-	Warren	Castle
RO046-00403-	Warren	Ecclesiastical Remains
RO046-00404-	Warren	Town Wall
RO046-00405-	Rinnagan	Church and Graveyard
RO046-00406-	Warren	Windmill
RO046-00407-	Warren	House Site
RO046-00408-	Warren	House
RO046-00409-	Warren	House
RO046-00410-	Warren	House
RO046-00411-	Warren	Harbour Possible

The monuments have never been taken into guardianship by either the Commissioners of Public Works, or the local authority, and remain in the ownership of the two landowners.

Information regarding the known monuments at Rinn Dúin is also available on www.archaeology.ie and includes features which have been identified since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places. These are shown in Figure I.03. As further research and investigation is done at Rinn Dúin, more elements of archaeological heritage will come to light, deepening our understanding, and necessitating a revision of the RMP.



Figure I.02

The Location of Rinn Dúin, on the west shore of Lough Ree

Environmental and Wildlife Legislation

Refer to Figure 5.06. The lakeshore margins of the Rinn Dúin peninsula, and the entirety of Rinn Dúin Wood lie within the Lough Ree SAC (Special Area of Conservation, ref. 00440) and Lough Ree Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). As an SAC it is protected under the EU Habitats Directive.

Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site [a Natura 2000 site] but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Initially a screening process may be carried out. Screening must establish beyond reasonable scientific doubt that a plan or project will have no significant effect on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site. Otherwise an Appropriate Assessment is required.

The pNHA designation only provides limited protection, but enables the landowner to claim payments under whatever scheme is current. At the time of writing this Plan this was the REPS 4 Scheme (until 2013) and the Agri Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS).

The lakeshore margin, excluding the interior of Rinn Dúin Wood, lies within the Lough Ree SPA (Special Protection Area ref. 004064). This is thereby protected under the EU Birds Directive.

Roscommon County Council Planning Legislation

In the '**Roscommon Common Vision**' the County Council have identified Rinn Dúin as one of three sites which should be assessed during the period 2009-2012 for the development of cultural tourism in the county. This includes the following:

*Cultural Priority Actions 2009-2012.
Theme: Cultural Tourism.*

Aim: To build on County Roscommon's rich culture to develop the county as a viable tourism destination.

Objective: To ensure that cultural tourism is prioritised in the new County Tourism Strategy as a means by which to strengthen the viability of the cultural sector in the county.

Action 5: Identify 3 cultural tourism sites in the county and undertake an audit of the standard of amenities and facilities provided.

Action 6: Prepare a work-plan for the improvement of facilities at the 3 sites in conjunction with the Council Area Office.

The '**Roscommon Tourism Strategy 2010-2014**' identifies Rinn Dúin as an important heritage site and includes the following strategies and actions:

Strategic Objective 3: Access to the countryside and signposting – physical access and way-finding.

Action 3: Heritage Access.

Process: Identify important heritage sites with tourism potential, including heritage sites that have been underdeveloped to date. Prepare tourism plans to address issues such as access. Identify funding and marketing opportunities.

The '**Roscommon County Development Plan 2008-2014**' includes the following objectives, applicable to Rinn Dúin :

Objectives for Tourism.

Objective 321: Support and promote with the co-operation of private landowners, public access to heritage sites and features of archaeological interest, coastal areas, mountain areas, rivers, lakes and other natural amenities.

Policy in terms of Built Heritage.

Policy 244: Identify and protect the architectural heritage of the county and to manage any change to that heritage in such a way as to retain its character and special interest.

The '**County Roscommon Heritage Plan 2012-2016**' includes the following objectives, applicable to Rinn Dúin :

Objective 2: To promote best practice in heritage conservation and management - 'Care' - To promote and advise on best practice standards for heritage conservation and management within the county.

Action 12: Support the implementation of the Rinn Dúin Conservation and Management Plan.

The aim of the Plan is summed up in the words 'Notice – Care – Enjoy'. The plan shall encourage people to notice the rich built, natural and cultural heritage all around them by implementing actions to collect and disseminate information on all aspects of heritage.

The Plan incorporates the County Roscommon Biodiversity Action Plan.

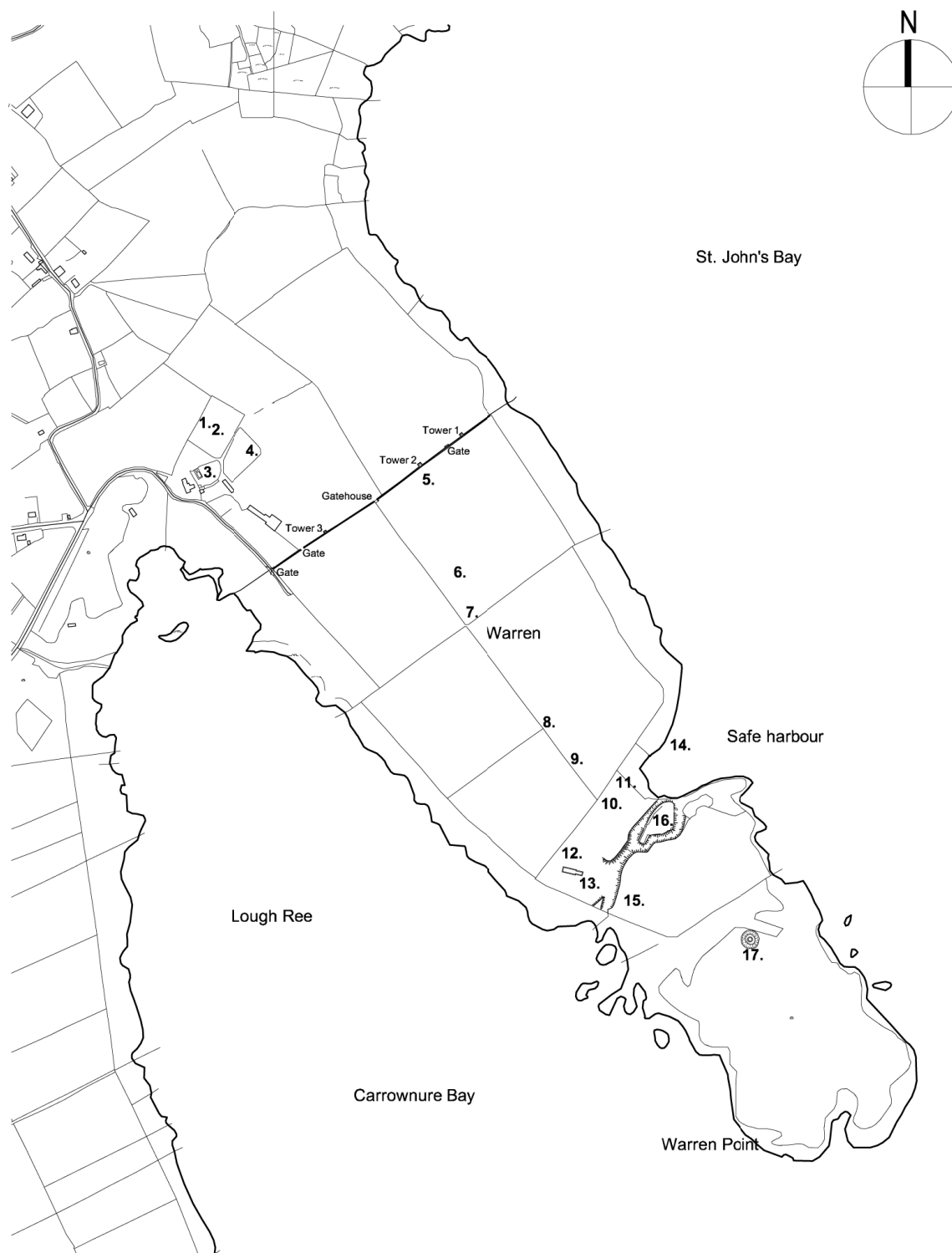


Figure I.03

Location of Recorded Monuments on the Rinn Dúin peninsula

Key to Sites and Monuments Record

As recorded on archaeology.ie

1.	Bee-Boles	R0046- 004027
2.	Walled Garden	R0046- 004026
3.	Religious house - Fratres Cruciferi	R0046- 004005
	Church of the Crutched Friars of St. John	R0046- 004028
	Graveyard	R0046- 004029
	Architectural fragment	R0046- 004030
	Graveslab	R0046- 004037
4.	Graveyard	R0046- 004023
	Cross-slab	R0046- 004024
	Architectural fragment	R0046- 004025
	Church	R0046- 004036
5.	Town Defences	R0046- 004004
6.	Historic Town	R0046- 004- - -
7.	House	R0046- 004007
8.	House	R0046- 004008
	Field Boundary	R0046- 004012
9.	House	R0046- 004009
	House	R0046- 004033
10.	House	R0046- 004010
11.	Enclosure	R0046- 004035
12.	Ecclesiastical Enclosure	R0046- 004034
13.	Church	R0046- 004003
14.	Slipway	R0046- 004031
15.	Promontory Fort	R0046- 004001
	Linear Earthwork	R0046- 004018
16.	Castle	R0046- 004002
	Gatehouse	R0046- 004015
	Building	R0046- 004017
17.	Windmill	R0046- 004006
	Mound	R0046- 004032

1.4 Methodology

This Plan is a full revision and update to the 1998 Plan. The following parts of the current Plan are taken directly from the 1998 document, and have not, as yet, been updated. The authorship of these sections is noted in the text. In each case we have added any essential clarifications when understanding or situations have changed.

Part Two, Section 2.1	Site History
Part Three	Underwater Archaeology
Part Five	Natural Environment
Appendix A	Geophysical Survey

The following sections have been used from the 1998 Plan but with additional information added, where appropriate.

Part Two:

Section 2.3 Archaeological Inventory

Section 2.4 Archaeological Problems and Potential

All other sections of the Plan have been researched and developed, based on the current condition of the site and the monuments, and informed by participation in the recent emergency conservation works which have been executed by Blackwood Associates.

Central to the process has been consultation with, and consideration of the interests of, all the various stakeholders in the site. We have also reviewed the statutory context and how this impacts on the management of the site. The current condition of the entire site has been reviewed, and records of all the recent conservation works are included in the Appendices, at the end of the Plan.

1.5 Stakeholders

There are a number of stakeholders, with diverse interests and responsibilities, who have an interest in the future of the site. They have all been contacted during the creation of this study and their continuing participation in the planning of the future of the site is essential.

The Landowners

Most of the Rinn Dúin peninsula is in the ownership of P.J. Grady, who has been operating an efficient and well run farm on the land since the early 1970s. Richard and Liz Collins, of St. John's House, which they run as a Bed and Breakfast, own the right of way onto the peninsula and an area of land at the north west end of the site.

In each case the landowners are committed to the interests of the natural and man-made heritage of the site, but they also have their own interests: the preservation of their ability to make a good living from their property, the continuation of their quality of life, and the upholding of the value of their respective properties.

Both landowners have been consulted and their input has been essential to the production of this Plan. Both have been provided with a final draft of the Plan, to ensure they are happy with the practicalities of its recommendations with regards to their lives and livelihoods.

St. John's Parish Heritage Group

In recent years the St. John's Parish Heritage Group, an entirely voluntary body, has been responsible for activating interest in the site. They have enabled and managed the emergency conservation works to some of the recorded monuments by appointing specialist consultants and contractors. They have been strongly supported by Roscommon County Council and have accessed grants from a number of state bodies. The Group also raise funds from private sources. These have been used to fund works to the Parish Church and have also been put towards the establishment of the looped walk.

The Group have supported and encouraged the establishment of the looped walk at the peninsula, and have organised heritage days which have had a significant impact on raising public awareness of the site, as well as entertaining, informing and inspiring those who have taken part. The St. John's Parish Heritage Group commissioned Blackwood Associates to produce this Conservation and Management Plan.

Irish Walled Towns Network

Funding for emergency works to the town wall has been provided through the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN), of which Rinn Dúin is a member town, represented by St. John's Parish Heritage Group. The IWTN has also provided the funding for this Conservation and Management Plan and are principal funders for the Walled Town Days (Heritage Days).

The Heritage Council

The Heritage Council have provided state funding for the emergency works via the Irish Walled Towns Network and monitored the progress and execution of the works. They have also provided funding for works to the graveyard wall adjacent to the Hospital of St. John the Baptist (Fratres Cruciferi) and for works to the Mill. Liam Mannix has been the official most closely involved in the preparation of this plan.

The National Biodiversity Data Centre, established by the Heritage Council in 2007, have an interest in the status and condition of Rinn Dúin Wood.

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (until 2010 Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government) have provided funding for emergency works to the Parish Church via the Civic Structures Conservation Grants.

National Monuments Service,

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

As the various elements on the site are Recorded Monuments, any work to them has to be approved by the National Monuments Service who must be given at least two months notice prior to commencement. Pauline Gleeson, senior state archaeologist, and Frank Donnelly, Senior Architectural Advisor have assisted in the preparation of this plan.

NPWS,

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

The National Parks and Wildlife Service are responsible for the parts of the Rinn Dúin peninsula that lie within the Lough Ree SPA and SAC, including the shores of the lake and the Rinn Dúin woodland. They have been consulted on the wildlife and biodiversity aspects of the site. Those involved have been Judit Keleman, Pádraig O'Donnell, Deputy Regional Manager, and Niall Cribben, Wildlife Ranger.

Roscommon County Council

Roscommon County Council currently supports Rinn Dúin as follows:-

- by paying St. John's Parish Heritage Group's annual membership fee to the Irish Walled Towns Network.
- assisting the Group with legislative and grant aid requirements.
- covering insurance for the Looped Walk, and elements of Heritage Day events, where necessary.
- provision of directional signage.
- assisting St. John's Parish Heritage Group with the project where possible, within its available resources. This has included a conservation grant towards works to the Hospital.

Roscommon County Council are very interested in Rinn Dúin and have included it in several of their strategic documents for the County (refer to 1.3). Nollaig Feeney, Heritage Officer for Roscommon County Council has been closely involved in the preparation of this plan.

Academic Community

Kieran O'Connor of the Department of Archaeology, NUI Galway has a particular interest in Rinn Dúin. He uses the peninsula as the location for student fieldwork. His core subject as lecturer is "*The countryside and frontier in medieval Ireland*" and as such he is ideally informed to give insights into the importance of Rinn Dúin. He has advised on the significance and integrity of the site. If funding is available he hopes in 2012 to carry out an architectural survey of the Castle and a geophysical survey on both sides of the town wall to ascertain the extent of further defensive works that would have augmented the stone wall that survives today.

Looped Walks Scheme

The Rinn Dúin walk, officially called the Warren Point Looped Walk, was established under the National Walks Scheme in 2010. The scheme runs for five years after which time it has to be reviewed and re-negotiated. The scheme provides an annual payment to the two landowners in return for allowing public access to the footpath, and thereby the monuments. No statutory Right of Way is established. The cost of insurance for the walk is paid by Roscommon County Council and the provision and upkeep of waymarks and stiles is provided by Fáilte Ireland. The scheme is successful in allowing public access to the site, along viable routes, while also protecting the interests of the landowners, and minimising interference in the practical operations of the farm.

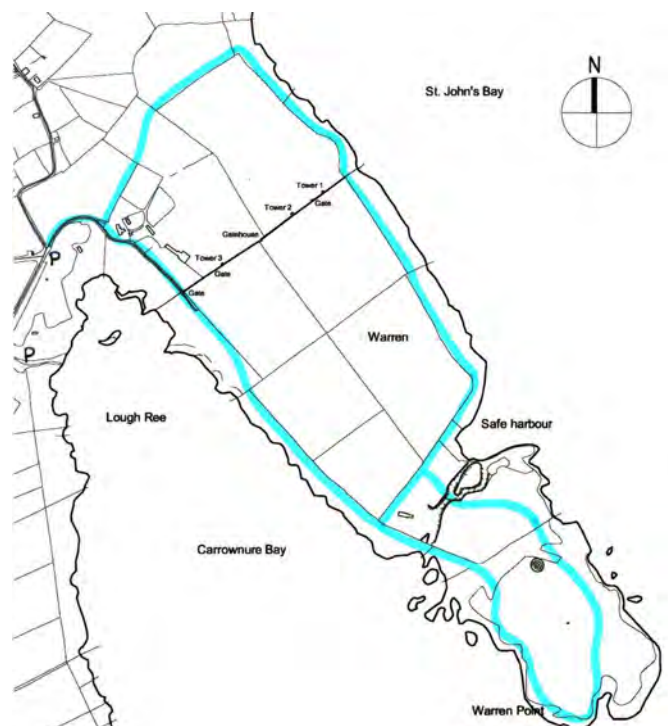


Figure 1.04 The Rinn Dúin Castle Loop and longer Warrenpoint Loop

1.6 Limitations

The following additional surveys are proposed to take place in the near future and may provide further information which could impact on this Plan:

- 2011 **Waterways Ireland**
Hydrographic Survey
It is hoped this will lead to the installation of “No Mooring” notices outside Safe Harbour.
- 2012 **University of Ulster**
Underwater Archaeological Survey
This may provide more insight into the medieval harbour and quays, or earlier, possibly Viking, remains.
- 2012 **NUI Galway**
Geophysical Surveys to front and rear of the town wall
This is hoped to provide insights into possible additional defensive structures outside of, or integrated into, the inside of the wall
- 2012 **NUI Galway**
Geophysical Surveys around the houses.
This may shed light on the actual age of the houses and how they relate to other features of the site
- 2012 **NUI Galway**
Survey of the Castle to investigate, record and interpret the various historical stages of building

It is hoped that collectively the information gathered in the above surveys, and its interpretation by experts will add significantly to our understanding of the site.

Our understanding of the Castle is critically limited by the dense vegetation concealing much of the structure. No subsequent review of the 1998 assessments of Rinn Dúin Wood, and associated natural habitats has been made, nor has any further investigation of the underwater archaeology been carried out.

1.7 The Team

Blackwood Associates Architects, Conservation Architects

The lead consultants have drawn on their experiences as both designers and conservation experts to interpret and collate the available information and assess the quality, potential and constraints of the site in its entirety. They have also visited a number of equivalent sites to assess their success and carried out a desktop study of similar sites in other countries.

Kevin Blackwood	Director
Alice Bentley	Project Architect
Michael Halpenny	Survey and Drawings
Stephen Murphy	Survey and Drawings

David Sweetman, Archaeologist

David Sweetman is the former Chief State Archaeologist and head of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. He is a specialist in medieval castles and has been responsible for numerous excavations as well as publishing a number of works on the subject, including the book “The Medieval Castles of Ireland”.

He continues to work as a consultant archaeologist, and also works with Ivor McIlveen, Conservation Engineer. David specialises in medieval buildings.

St. John’s Parish Heritage Group

The Group, in particular Richard Collins, as well as enabling the emergency conservation works at the site to date, have participated fully in the production of this plan, drawing on their extensive knowledge and practical understanding of the site, and liaising with P.J. Grady, the principal landowner.

Acknowledgements

In addition to members of the team and the stakeholders who have contributed so significantly to the production of this Plan, we would like to acknowledge the co-operation and contribution of the following individuals:-

John Beirne	Archaeologist
Joe Curtin	Teagasc Agricultural Advisor
Ivor McIlveen	Conservation Engineer

In January 2012 the Irish Army carried out an aerial photographic survey of the Rinn Dúin peninsula. A number of these photographs are included in this Plan. We would like to extend our thanks to the Irish Army for providing this invaluable addition to the records of the site.

SITE HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

John Bradley, with additional material by Blackwood Associates

With the exception of sections 2.2 and 2.4, this part of the Conservation and Management Plan was prepared by John Bradley for the Conservation Plan of 1998. Any observations and clarifications added in 2012 are given in *italics*.

2.1 Site History

John Bradley

The deserted town of Rinn Dúin is situated on the peninsula of St. John's Point, on the western shore of Lough Ree, some nine miles north of Athlone. The surviving remains constitute one of the most important complexes of Medieval monuments in the country. There is little physical evidence to indicate settlement before the coming of the Normans but the place-name Rinn Dúin, "the fort of the promontory", is itself an indication of pre-Norman settlement.

In 1156 Ruaidhrí Ó Conchobhair drew his ships over the ice from Bhean Gaille to Rinn-duin, during a particularly hard winter. The pre-Anglo Norman fort was most likely a promontory fort, consisting of that part of the peninsula south of the castle, where it is cut off by a bank and ditch. The discovery of an Early Christian cross-slab in the graveyard adjoining the Medieval hospital of the Fratres Cruciferi indicates that this was an early church site, and it was almost certainly here that two hand bells and a bronze crucifixion plaque, now in the National Museum of Ireland, were found.

Rinn Dúin's possibilities as a bridgehead into Connacht first came to the attention of the Anglo-Normans in 1200-1 when John de Courcy spent a week ferrying his men across Lough Ree from Rinn Dúin, following his defeat in Connacht (ALC).



Figure 2.01

Rindown: Outline Plan showing Principal archaeological Monuments and Field boundaries

Rinn Dúin was not occupied by the Anglo-Normans until 1227 when Toirdelbach Ó Conchobhair and Geoffrey Marisco erected a castle at Rinn Dúin.

The town was evidently founded about this time because its market cross, bawn and ditch are mentioned in 1236 when Phelim Ó Conchobhair attacked the town (A Conn). No charter of incorporation survives but references to a portreeve indicate that it was administered by a corporation. The town's first account to the exchequer was in 1241. In 1259 the town was assessed for £8-5-8 per annum. By 1285 this had risen to £320 per annum and the town was supplied with corn, cloth and wine from Bordeaux (Harbison 1995, 141-2). Rinn Dúin underwent a series of attacks from 1229 until 1321/3, and it is last mentioned in 1342-3 when it was described as being in Irish hands (Berry 1907, 335).

In 1544 the earl of Clanrickarde petitioned for the land of St. John's of Rinn Dúin. The castle may have been in ruins by this time because the grant eventually made to Christopher Davers and Charles Egingham mentioned only the hospital of the Crutched Friars and cottages in the town (11 RDKPRI, no. 1483).

By 1574 Rindoon was back in Irish hands but in 1578 it was granted to Thomas Chester and George Goodman on condition that they maintained one English archer there (13 RDKPRI, no. 3241).

In 1605-6 it was granted to Edward Crofton as "the monastery of St. John the Baptist, alias the Crotched Friars of St John the Baptist ... a slated church, belfry, cloister and all other buildings, gardens ... 6 waste cottages in the town of St. John's . . . " (Erck 1846-52, i, 186). This and subsequent grants in 1608 indicate that the town had ceased to function and was now simply an estate (Erck 1846-52, i, 442-3; Russell and Prendergast 1874, 458).

2.2 Regional Historical Context

Blackwood Associates

It is important to understand the Rinn Dúin peninsula, not as an isolated medieval site, but in the context of settlement patterns in the Shannon basin. Until recent centuries, and the development of a increasingly reliable road system, the Shannon river, and the lakes through which it passes on its way to the sea, have been the most important channel of communication and trade through the heart of the country. They were also used by armies for conflict and conquest.

The lands surrounding Lough Ree between Lanesborough, in the north, and Athlone, in the south, are well drained and fertile. As such, they have been settled since pre-historic times. Evidence of this is provided by bronze weapons and artefacts that have been found in the lake mud and rivers in the area. In total there are 132 monuments of archaeological interest recorded in this area, in the Record of Monuments and Places.¹

Around the shores of Lough Ree there is ample evidence of the settlement patterns of the Early Medieval Period (400-1169AD), with at least 19 ringforts and 20 enclosures identified.² The rising ground south of Lanesborough, on the west shore of Lough has a noted concentration of identified settlements. This is also the period when the early Christian foundations were established, principally located on the islands in Lough Ree, including Inchbofin, Inchmore and Inis Clothran (Inchcleraun, or latterly Quaker's Island).

The islands may have been chosen for security, as well as contemplative peace, for the religious orders, but they were of limited effect against the Viking raiders, who were active during the 9th and 10th Centuries, and set up semi permanent residence in the area for a while. Hoards of Viking treasure were found on Hare Island and it is likely there was a Viking presence at Rinn Dúin at some time during this period. The Annals of the Four Masters and the Annals of Clonmacnoise record battles and conflicts amongst the native Irish kings and their followers, in the Lough Ree area, during the 9th and 11th Centuries.³

It is during the High to Late Medieval Period (1169-1600AD) that Rinn Dúin comes to prominence, located approximately halfway along the length of Lough Ree between the important Castle and Anglo Norman settlement of Athlone and the medieval borough of Lanesborough, another important strategic base for the Anglo-Normans. The Castle of Roscommon is to the north west, across raised ground.

1, 2 Waterways Corridor Study, A Study of the area surrounding Lanesborough to Shannonbridge.
3 Ask About Ireland The Islands of Lough Ree An Chomhairle Leabharlanna

Evidence of extensive medieval vernacular settlement around Lough Ree are found at Corrool, Ballynaclicffy, Muckanagh and Portlick.⁴

The religious foundations continued to flourish on the islands during this period, and the culture and society of Rinn Dúin would have had connections with these island and lakeside settlements, possibly more significant than their relationship to Irish communities in the lands to the west.

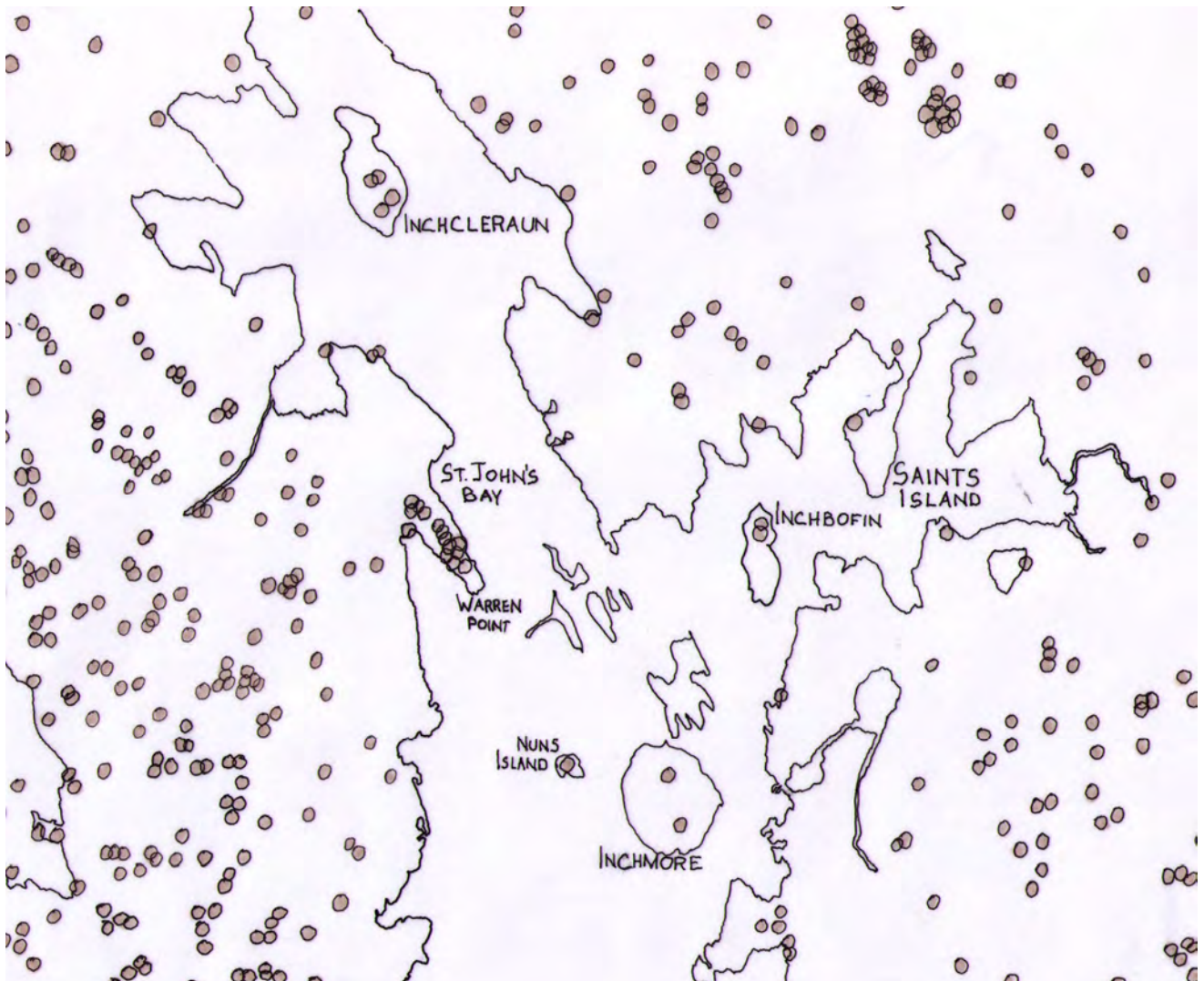


Figure 2.02

Plan of Lough Ree showing extent of Recorded Sites and Monuments close to Rinn Dúin. Source: archaeology.ie

2.3 Archaeological Inventory

2.3.1 Street Pattern and Market Place

John Bradley

The site of the Medieval town of Rinn Dúin lies in the fields which are now used for grazing between the castle and the town wall (Figure 2.01). The street pattern was almost certainly linear, running from the gatehouse on the town wall to the entrance to the castle. The surviving house foundations lie along this line.

There is now no trace of the whereabouts of the market place. The market cross is specifically referred to in 1236 (A Conn), and in 1292-9 the burgesses of Rinn Dúin accounted to the exchequer for the profits of the market (38 RDKPRI, 48).

2.3.2 Domestic Houses

The foundations of four houses survive, and these are probably to be identified with the cottages mentioned in the sixteenth century sources, mentioned above. House 2 pre-dates the field boundaries, which are of eighteenth century date and its ground plan does not conform with that of rural vernacular architecture of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.

Both Kieran O'Connor and David Sweetman query the age of these houses, recommending further archaeological investigation. Both the stone construction and plan form of these structures as well as their location directly on the route from the Gatehouse to the Castle suggest they may be later, and not even necessarily for human habitation.

House 1 (figure 2.03)

The poor remains survive of an approximately square stone structure with present overall dimensions of 11.4 (NE-SW) by 10.9m (NW-SE). The only original wall facing is evident on the NE side while the line of the SW and SE sides is shown by grassed-over wall footings.

House 2 (figure 2.04)

The site consists of two conjoined rectangular stone structures with their long axes orientated NESW. The fainter outline of two, or possibly three, further structures of similar shape are joined to their NW sides. Portion of a rotary quern disc was located in the course of the survey on the internal ground surface.

House 3 (figure 2.05)

A low D-shaped cairn which represents collapse from a rectangular house. Only the east corner and a small stretch of the NE wall survive. dimensions of cairn 20.6 (NW-SE) by 11.5m (NE-SW). 42 metres NW is the remains of a collapsed stone wall, now grassed over, which may represent the remains of an earlier field system associated with this house.

House 4

About 1978 the landowner removed the remains of a house which he described as consisting of 5 to 6 rectangular rooms. The stone was incorporated into clearance cairns in the NE end of the present field.

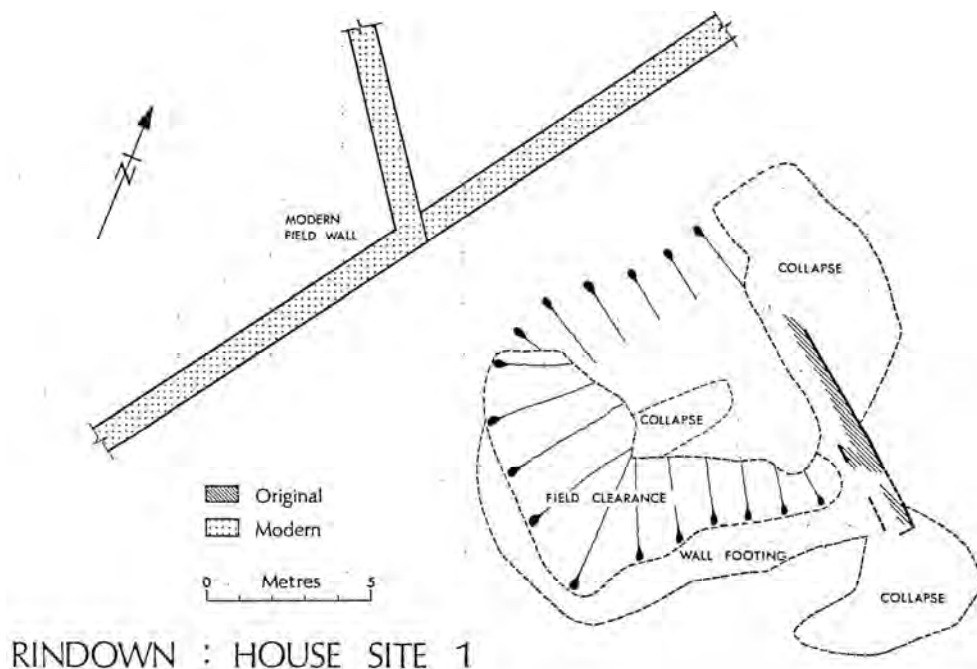


Figure 2.03

Ground Plan of House 1

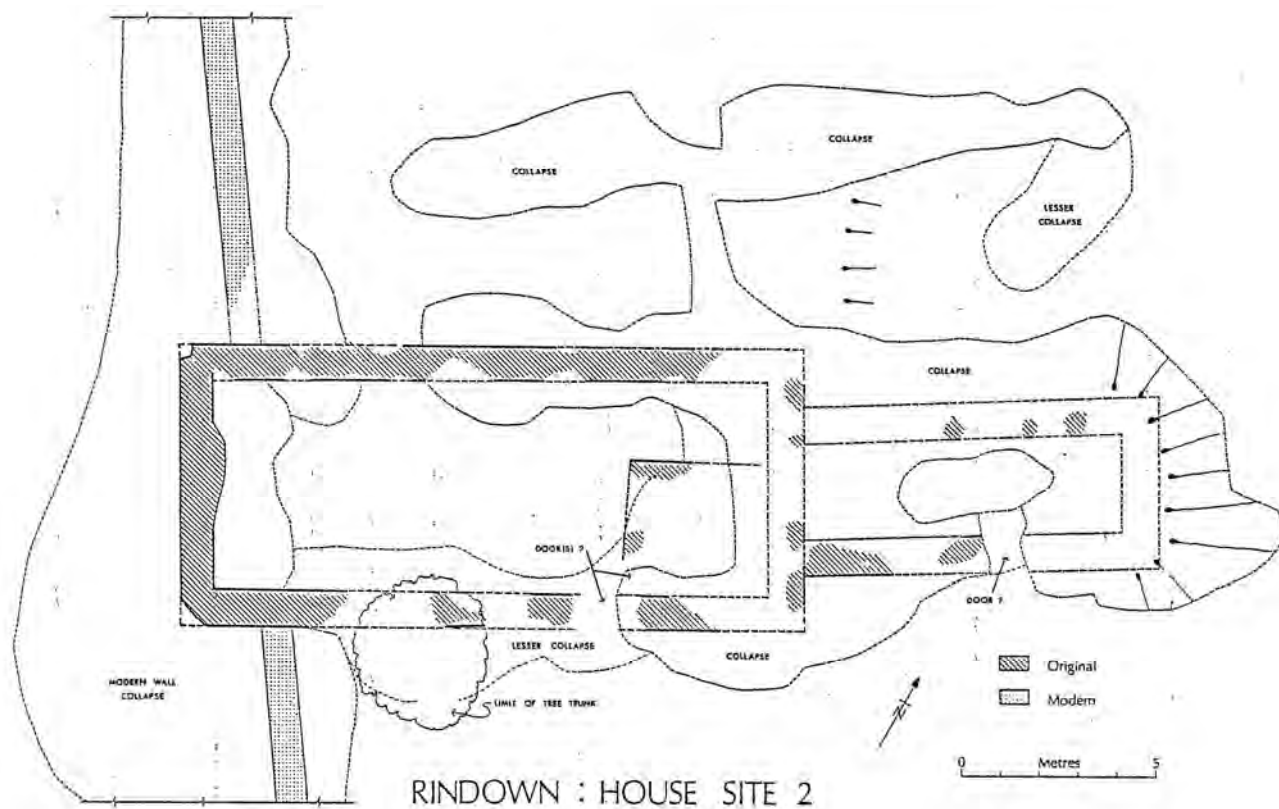


Figure 2.04

Ground Plan of House 2

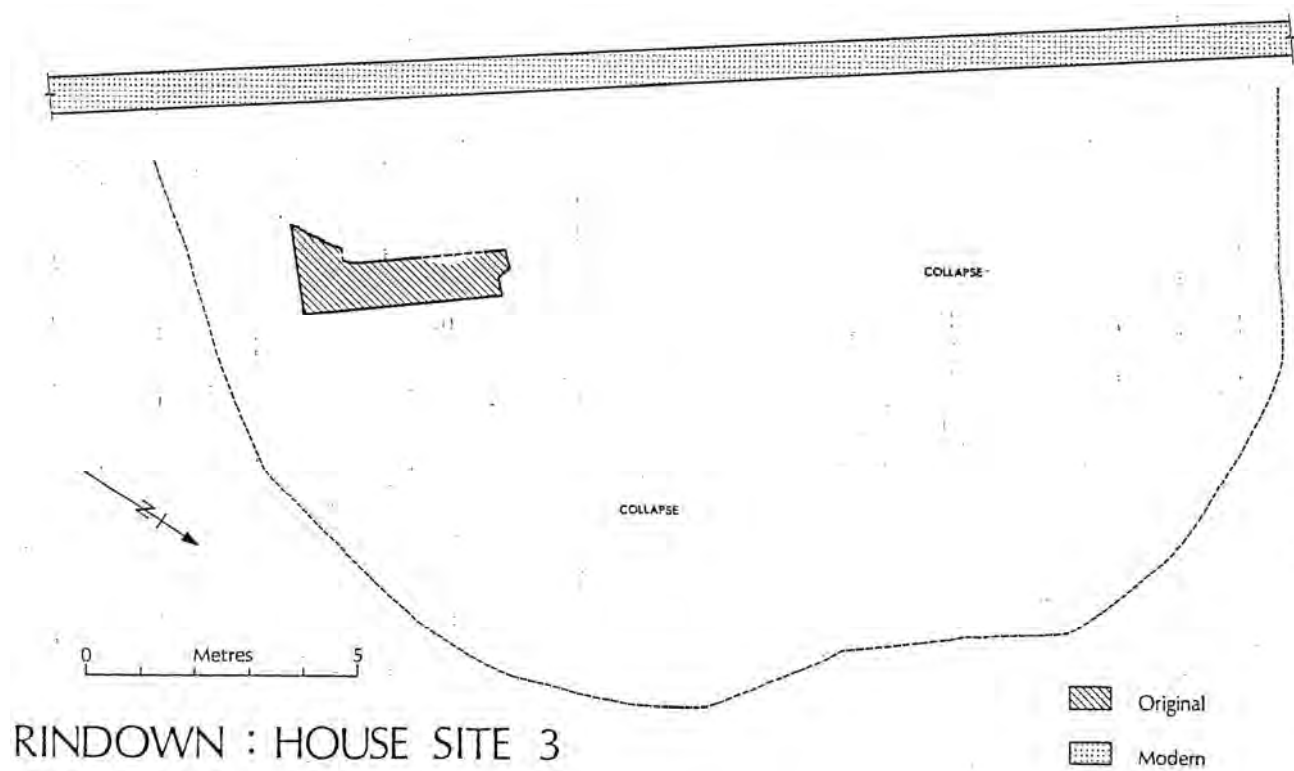


Figure 2.05

Ground Plan of House 3

2.3.3 Quays

There are a number of documentary references to ships at Rinn Dúin which indicate the former presence of a harbour. A ferry, linking Roscommon and Westmeath, is mentioned as operating out of Rinn Dúin in 1302-3 and 1315-16 (38 RDKPRI, 69; 39 RDKFRI, 55. See section 3).

See Part 3 for a detailed discussion of these remains



Figure 2.06 Safe Harbour:
The shores reveal remains of the medieval quays and slipway

2.3.4 Mill

A mill is recorded at Rinn Dúin in 1273 when 45s were paid to Richard le Charpentier for materials to construct the mill (Claffey 1980), and this can be identified with the 'mill, lately constructed at Randown, referred to in 1276 (Sweetman 1875-86 ii, no. 1022).

Two maps accompanying the 1636 Books of Survey and Distribution show a windmill on the promontory, which can be identified from its position with the surviving remains. These consist of a cylindrical stone tower set on top of a round mound, surrounded by a ditch with an external bank. The cylindrical tower is of three floors and survives to its original height. The tower is of seventeenth century type but the mound on which it is built may have formed part of the Medieval mill. *The fact that the mill survives in such good condition indicates it may have continued in use at least well into the 19th Century.*

The role of the mill will have varied from its medieval manifestation to its later one. A licence was required for the operation of a mill in medieval times creating a source of revenue for the government. The location of such a substantial mill in this location in the 17th Century, where there was no nearby centre of population, suggests the extensive growing of grain in the area, and the likelihood that it may have been transported away (and possibly to?) the mill by water, continuing the use of the medieval Safe Harbour.

2.3.5 Bridge

References to a bridge in 1280-1 and 1305-6 relate to a structure which spanned the ditch separating the castle from the town (36 RDKFRI, 48). The masonry piers which supported the castle drawbridge still survive together with the foundations of the outer gate which protected the bridge on the town side.

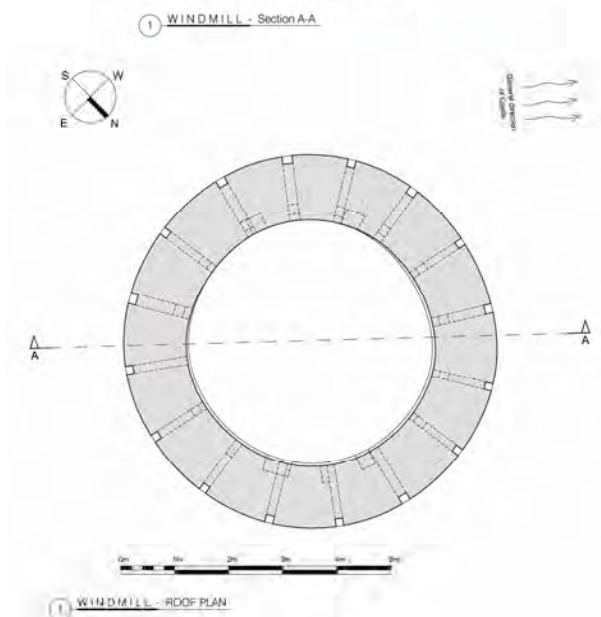
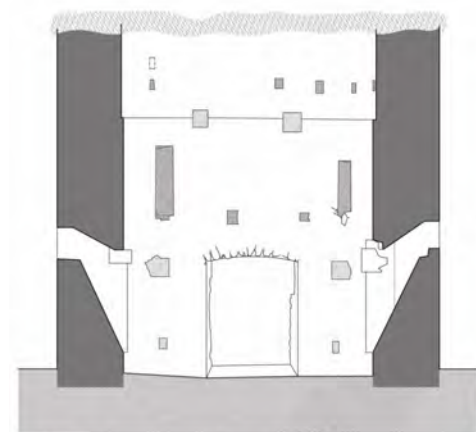


Figure 2.07 Roof Plan and Section of the Windmill

2.3.6 Town Defences

The following description of the town wall, prepared in 1998 by John Bradley, describes the wall, and its gatehouse and towers as they existed at that time. Extensive works have been carried out since then. Detailed descriptions of these works are given in Appendix B. A full elevation of the town wall, as currently standing, is given in Figure 4.15.

In 1236 Felimídh Ó Conchobhair attacked Rinn Dúin and captured the area within the bawn and ditch (dar in mbadun agus dar clasaig) but failed to seize the castle (A. Conn). This would suggest that the town was protected by earthen defences. In 1251 Henry III granted aid for the enclosure of Rinn Dúin and the surviving wall almost certainly dates to this period (Sweetman 1875-86, i, no. 3159).

The remains consist of a stone wall, incorporating a gate and three mural towers, that extends NE-SW across the peninsula and which now forms the townland boundary between Rinnegan and Warren.

At the NE tip a modern field wall represents rebuilding along the original line but a stretch of original wall survives between 20.7 and 25.2m from the shore where it connects with a modern field wall running parallel to the shore. Between this modern field wall and Tower 1 the wall survives to an external height of 3.15m and has a base batter.

The masonry consists of medium to large limestone boulders which are coupled with spalls to achieve a rough coursing. A continuous building course line is evident at a height of 1.65 to 2.1 m.

Tower 1 (figure 2.09)

Rectangular at ground level, but open-backed above. At first floor level each wall contains an internally splayed loop, the arches of which do not survive. The wall between towers 1 and 2 undulates in external height between 2.9 and 0.9m. The external batter is present and the building course line is evident at 1.1 to 1.3m above ground level.

Tower 2 (figure 2.09)

Rectangular at ground level, but open-backed above. At first floor level each wall has a splayed loop. Each of the loop's rear-arches originally possessed a wooden lintel, whose slots still survive. The external batter is evident on all sides. The stretch of wall between tower 2 and the gatehouse is the best surviving section of wall but there is one gap of 13m where it has been levelled and a modern gate inserted. Outside this gap is a ditch with slight external bank but these appear to be the result of modern machine quarrying. Portions of a wall-walk survive immediately adjacent to tower 2.

The western corner of this tower collapsed between the writing of the 1998 Plan and Conservation Works to the tower in 2011.

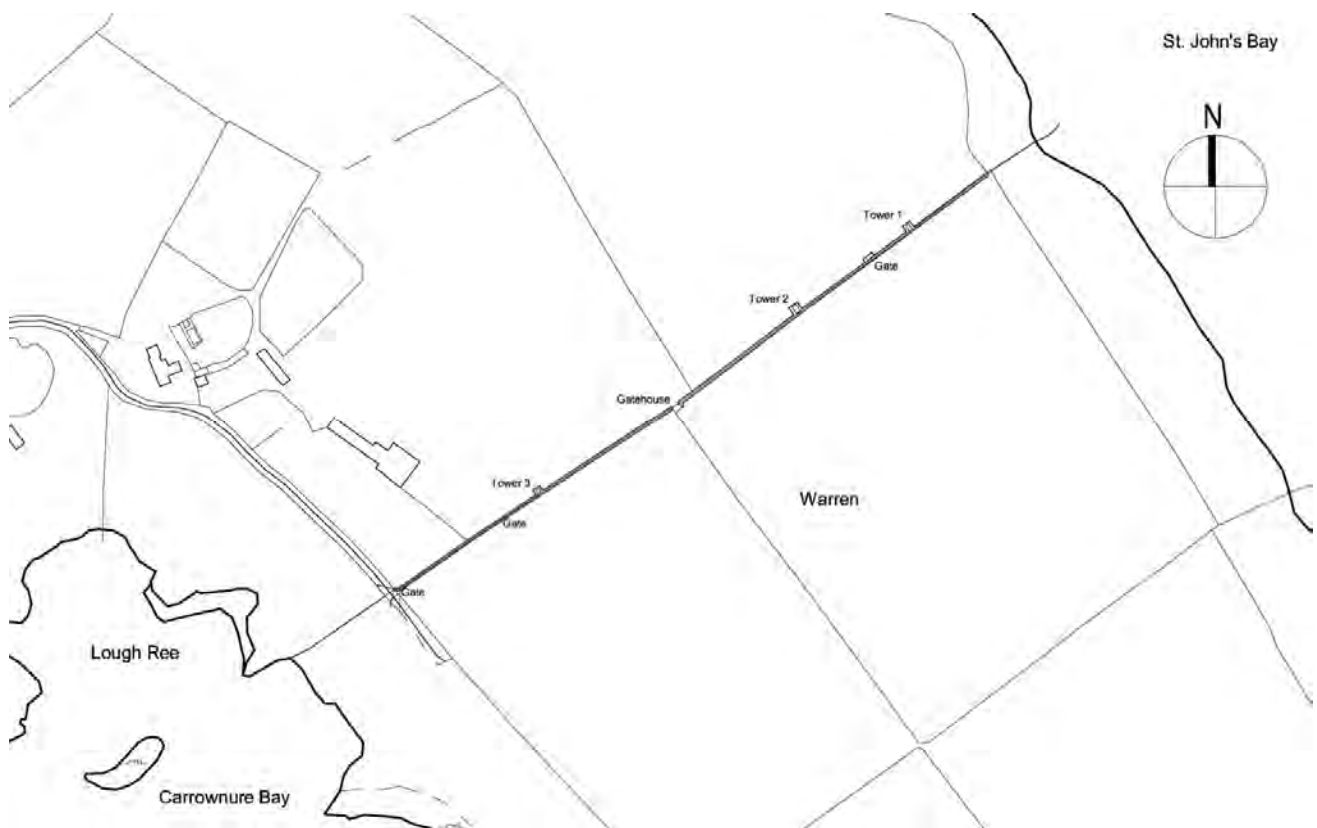


Figure 2.08

Map of the Town Wall

Gatehouse (figure 2.09)

Originally a rectangular structure with a round arch on the exterior, represented now by a couple of springing stones. Part of the portcullis groove survives at a height of 2.2m above ground level. The wall between the gate and tower 3 has a gap of 25m midway where it has been levelled and lies collapsed. Elsewhere on this stretch the wall stands to an external height ranging between 3.75 to 4.05 m. The building course line noted elsewhere is evident in places.

Tower 3 (figure 2.09)

Open backed rectangular tower. The ground floor is filled with loose stone almost to the height of the put-logs which held the joists for the first floor. At first floor level there is a loop, with internal splay, in each wall. The rear-arches had timber lintels similar to tower 2. Between tower 3 and the modern field boundary running parallel to the shore the wall decreases in height from 2.6 to 1.15m and there are gaps and areas of total collapse, with the original wall surviving only in short blocks. The wall no longer survives between this boundary and the shore, and it was presumably removed to build the nearby St. John's House.

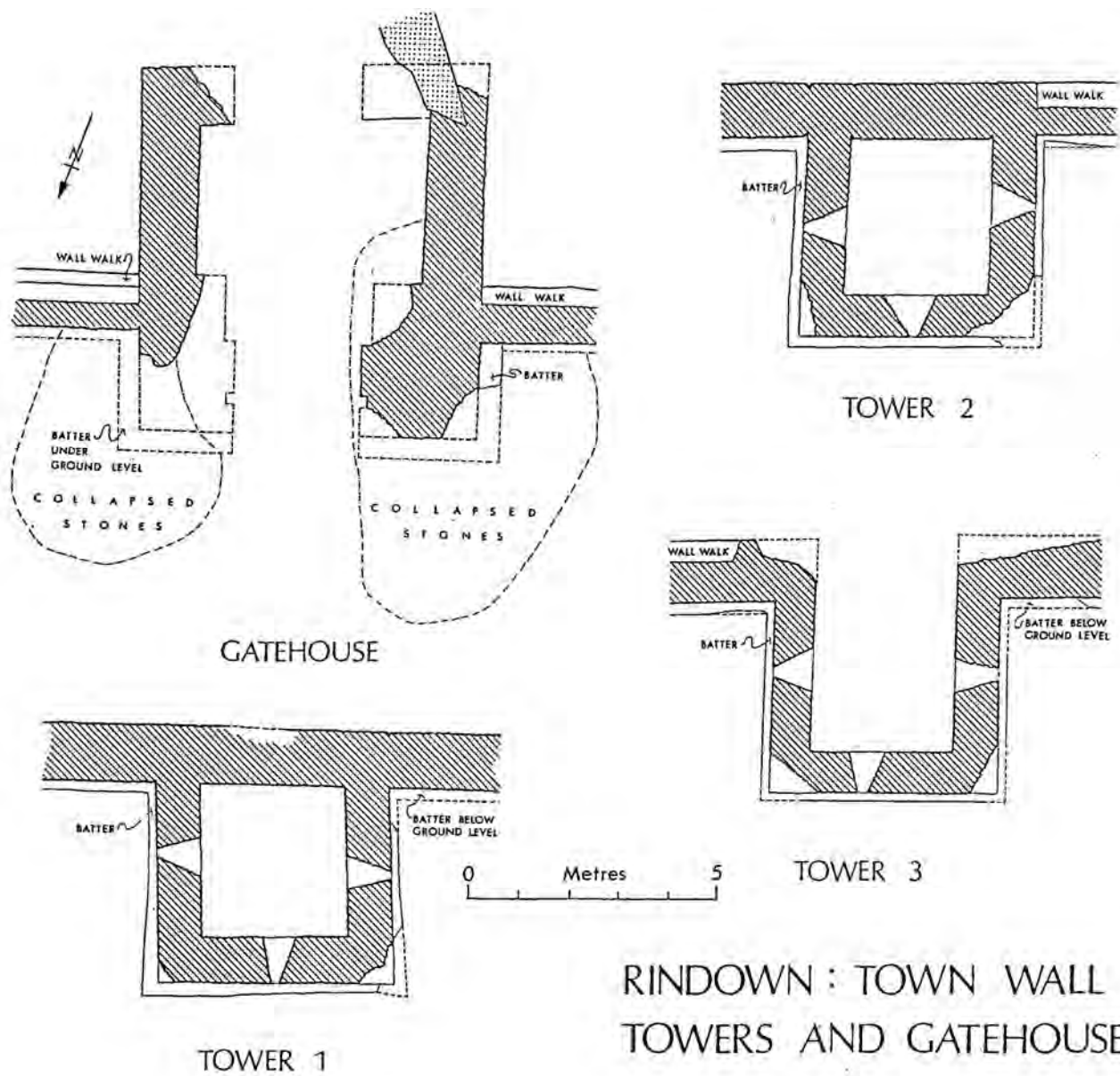


Figure 2.09

Ground Plan of the Town Wall, mural Towers and Gatehouse

2.3.7 The Castle

Situated on a knoll at the north-east point of the peninsula's waist where it overlooks a natural harbour of Lough Ree to the north and is separated from the town by an earthen bank and ditch.

Historical Background

The castle was one of the most important Anglo-Norman fortifications in Connacht and remained in royal hands throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A constable was appointed by the crown and he was responsible for its upkeep and defence. It was the scene of much building activity throughout the thirteenth century and particularly from 1275 until 1302 when there are repeated references to expenditure on the castle.

The history of the castle in the fourteenth century is one of decline and after 1344, when it was in Irish hands, it passes out of history until the middle of the sixteenth century.

Some form of fortification was probably present in 1201 when John de Courcy spent one week shipping his men and horses across Lough Ree from Rinn Dúin (ALC; A Clon. sub 1200) but the earliest direct reference to a castle is in 1227 when Geoffrey de Marisco and Toirdealbach Ó Conchobhair, son of Ruaidrí Ó Conchobhair, commenced building a stone castle on the peninsula (ALC; AFM; A Clon. sub 1226). In that same year Phillip de Angelo was granted a robe and fur cape as custodian (Harbison 1995, 140). Two years later, in 1229, Rinn Dúin was burned by Feilimid Ó Conchobhair, leader of a rival Ó Conchobhair faction (ALC). It is not clear if the castle was burnt on this occasion or not but it is evident that the building was still unfinished four years later.

In 1232 Rinn Dúin was granted to Peter de Rivaux, son of the Bishop of Winchester (Otway-Ruthven 1968, 96). On 15 July 1233 lack of funds compelled the suspension of masonry work on the castle ward in favour of the completion of Athlone bridge (Sweetman 1875-86, i, 2043). This reference indicates that the curtain wall with battered plinth was probably constructed in the 1230's (cf. Stalley 1987, 42). Work on the castle was picked up again in 1234-5 (35 RDKPRI 37).

The castle was not captured in the 1236 raid on Rinn Dúin by Feilimid Ó Conchobhair which resulted in the sack of the town (ALC; AFM; A Clon.). Feilimid became king of Connacht in 1237 and there was peace with the Anglo-Normans until his death in 1265. In 1256 Aed Ó Conchobhair met the justiciar, Alan de la Zouche, at Rinn Dúin to make peace. In 1251 Henry III ordered the justiciar, John Fitzgeoffrey, "to emply 80 marks of the King's money in aid of the enclosure of the villis of Ath-

lone and Rinn Dúin and the reapis of their castles" (Harbison 1995, 141).

Feilimid's successor, Aed (d. 1274) was a ruthless warrior who captured Rinn Dúin twice in 1270 (ALC; AFM; A Clon. sub 1271) and 1272 (AU). That year he also "put a large fleet on Lough Ree, where he burned much and did other damage" (A Conn.). The raid of 1272 appears to have been particularly severe because Rinn Dúin was described as levelled "leagadh" (AL; of CDI, V, no. 437). James de Bermingham was fined 400 marks for failing to keep the castle safe for the crown and "through his default it was thrown down by the Irish" (36 RDKPRI, 50).

The government endeavoured to counter Aed by strengthening its castles at Athlone and Rinn Dúin and building a new one at Roscommon. In 1271 Henry III issued orders "to pay debts owed for the purchase of meat, fish, salt, wine and iron and other stores at Athlone, Rinn Dúin and Roscommon and carriage of same, together with pay and drink for the constables and ballisters and drink and pay for the mercenaries". The justiciar, John d'Audley, relieved the garrison of Rinn Dúin with £1601-18-8 which he transported with an army of Welsh mercenaries (Harbison 1995, 142).

Repair work was carried out at Rinn Dúin in 1273-5 by the justiciar, Geoffrey de Geneville (36 RDKPRI, 40-1), and continued in 1276-8 by his successor Robert d'Ufford (36 RDKPRI, 35, 36). This included the construction of timber towers and the improvement of the fosse (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, no. 1412). In 1278-9 d'Ufford spent a further £3200-2s-5d on the castles of Rinn Dúin, Roscommon and Athlone which included repair of the castle, houses and bridge of Rinn Dúin (36 RDKPRI, 48).

In 1285 Robert de Wollaston accounted for £67-3s-0d spent on the castles of Athlone and Rinn Dúin (37 RDKPRI, 30). In the same year 100 Welshmen were transported to Rinn Dúin, either to serve as a mercenary garrison or as labour to rebuild the castle (Harbison 1995, 144).

In 1299-1302 Richard of Oxford, sheriff of Roscommon, was allowed £113-1s-2d to build a new hall, and a further 20s for superintending its construction (38 RDKPRI, 54). This hall is to be identified with the building extending south from the curtain wall, as Orpen (1907, 275) pointed out. In 1306 carpenters were employed to build 2 new boats in the Rinn Dúin boatyard and to repair two older boats (Harbison 1995, 144).

In 1310 Richard de Burgh asked for the guard of the castle as part of his plans to expand his holdings in Connacht (Sayles 1979, no. 86) but it is not known whether he received its custody or not.

In 1321 the walls of Rinn Dúin were destroyed by the O Reillys and the O Naghlans (Harbison 1995, 145).

In 1332 Alexander Bicknor, Archbishop of Dublin petitioned for expenses incurred in the guard of Rinn Dúin while he was lord treasurer (1307-?; 1313-?) (Sayles 1979, no. 173). That same year the Sheriff of Meath was ordered to pay the Bishop of Elphin £50 for making a parapet for the Rinn Dúin ferry (Harbison 1995, 145).

The burning of Rinn Dúin in 1315 by Ruaidrí Ó Conchobhair, during the invasion of Edward Bruce, probably resulted in the capture of the castle as well because references to the castle subsequently decline (ALC; A Clon.).

The last reference to a constable occurs in 1327 (Carew Cal. Misc., 442) and by 1342-3 the castle was out of royal control. In that year the Irish Parliament complained that the castles of Rinn Dúin, Roscommon, Athlone and Bunratty were in the hands of Irish enemies because of the delays made by the Irish Treasurers in paying the constables their fees (Berry 1907, 335).

In 1578 the land was granted to Thomas Chester and George Goodman on condition that they maintained one English archer (13 RDKPRI, no. 241). It is unclear whether any of these individuals lived in the castle or not but it is evident from the architecture that parts of the castle were refortified in the sixteenth or early seventeenth century and it is likely that the colonists were responsible. It is referred to in 1574 as the "bare castle" and belonged to the queen in 1603 (Cal. Carew Mss. 1601-3, 450, 476). There are no subsequent references to the castle and it is likely that it ceased to function in the early seventeenth century.

Description

The castle consists of an ovoid curtain wall with a rectangular extension on the south-west. It is entered through a gatehouse on the north which is overlooked by the keep to the east. Much of the curtain wall and the interior is heavily overgrown with ivy. The foundations of three cottages with the footings of associated buildings and a dividing wall of nineteenth/ early twentieth century date are also present.

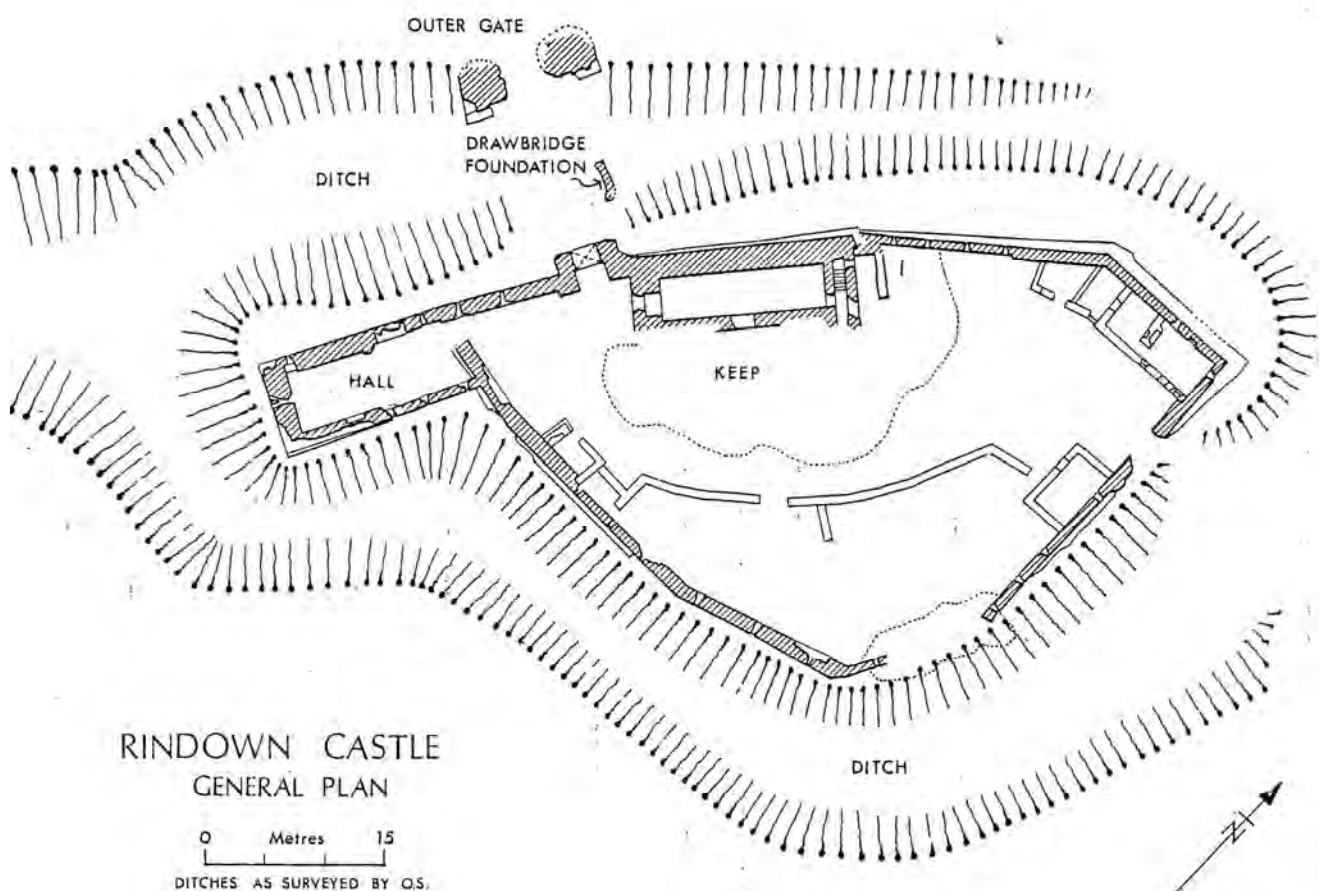


Figure 2.10

Ground Plan of Rindown Castle

The earliest part of the castle is the keep (Figs. 32-4), perhaps to be identified with the "stone castle" constructed by Geoffrey de Marisco in 1227. The curtain wall was being constructed in 1233 and it is clearly an addition to the keep on the east side. The hall, on the west, is an addition to the curtain and is probably to be identified with the new hall mentioned in 1299-1302. The castle seems to have been abandoned in the fourteenth century when it is evident that parts of the curtain wall were demolished. The broken down parts of the curtain were rebuilt in the sixteenth century but the wall was thinner and not as high as in the thirteenth century; it is also characterised by the presence of plain rectangular gun loops. In addition the sixteenth century wall does not always follow the line of its thirteenth century predecessor.

The masonry is of coursed limestone with limestone quoins. With the exception of the keep the standing remains are densely overgrown with ivy. The interior is further obscured by the presence of large areas of collapse, particularly the fallen southern side of the keep. The curtain wall survives best on the south side where it stands to its original height. Elsewhere parts have collapsed and rest upon the inner slope of the enclosing fosse. There is clear evidence of a deliberate attempt to destroy the fortifications with explosives on the external south face of the hall.

Kieran O'Connor summarises the phases of development of the Castle as follows:

- (1) *The masonry castle seems to be built on a pre-existing D-shaped earthwork*
- (2) *The first masonry phase dating to the late 1220s and early to mid 1230s. This includes the keep, gatehouse, curtain wall which has evidence for plunging loops and timber hourding.*
- (3) *In the 1270s the curtain wall was raised and a new timber houred was put in place at a higher level.*
- (4) *A new hall was added on to the south side of the castle in 1300.*
- (5) *The castle was destroyed and partially knocked down by the local Irish around 1340. The castle was then deserted.*
- (6) *The castle wall was partially rebuilt and gunloops were inserted at some stage in the late 16th century. The castle was deserted again, probably in the early 17th century.*
- (7) *A late 19th century farmstead was inserted into the castle.*

2.3.8 Parish Church

The dedication of this church is not known and there are few documentary references to it. It was taxed at 15s. in the taxation of 1302-5 (Sweetman 1875-88, v, p. 224). On the O.S. first edition it is titled "R.C. chapel". North and west of the church are the remains of an L-shaped boundary wall which may have encircled the building originally.

The building consists of a relatively plain nave and chancel, linked by a pointed arch. There is clear evidence that the chancel was an addition but both the nave and chancel are probably of thirteenth century date. The masonry of the chancel consists of split limestone rubble and angled spalls with little or no coursing; the nave consists of roughly coursed limestone. The building is much overgrown while some parts, notably the west end of the nave, stand their full height, the building is in poor condition.

The east wall and the east ends of the chancel's north and south walls have an external base batter. The base of the east window, which consisted of two lancets, is present but the jambs are missing. The nave had a door in both the north and south walls but they are badly damaged lacking jambs and arches. There are two windows in the south wall but only one survives in the north wall. North of the nave are the ruins of a small rectangular structure, which may have functioned as a penal chapel.

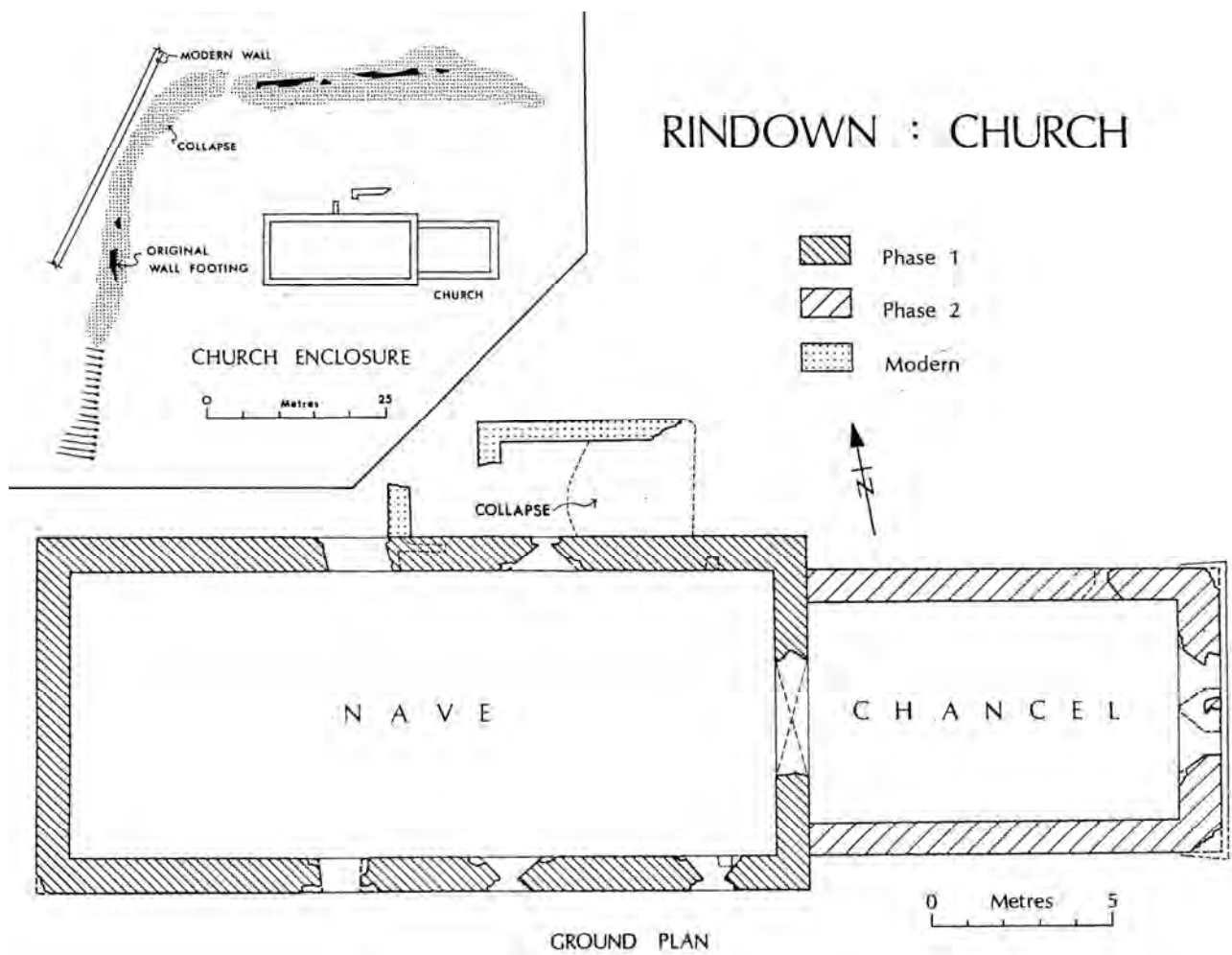


Figure 2.11

Ground Plan of the Parish Church

2.3.9 Hospital of St. John the Baptist (Fratres Cruciferi)

The founders of this hospital were King John and Philip d'Angulo, according to Ware. If this is correct it means that it was founded before 1216. There are few references before the fifteenth century except for the occasional notice of a burial. By 1487 its revenues were insufficient for its maintenance. After the dissolution it was granted successively to a number of English colonists. In 1596 it was described as being roofed with shingles, and as having a cloister and three decayed buildings (Morrin 1861-2, ii, 158, 364). A belfry is mentioned in 1605-6 (Erck 1846-52, i, 186).

The remains of this building are situated about 200m NW of the town wall (see Figure 2.01). Only the church, which is oriented almost due south, survives. It is a rectangular structure with an unusual buttressed addition at the north end.

This may be indicative that the building is the surviving south transept of a larger structure, and the unusual buttresses could have related to the structure of a crossing.

A number of alterations were made in the eighteenth century, particularly to the windows, but some of the original jambs, dressed in thirteenth century style survive. Externally the building has chamfered quoins at the NE and NW angles. The masonry consists of limestone rubble, poorly coursed.

The building was entered from the north through a centrally placed, lightly splayed doorway which is considerably obscured by the buttressed structure. The principal window was in the south wall but it has been altered utilizing red brick and reused jambs. Two windows survive in the west wall. These mark original openings because part of their jambs survive.

There are surface undulations in the graveyard immediately east of the church which indicate the outlines of former structures but no recognisable pattern can be determined. Within this graveyard are eight architectural fragments including parts of door/window jambs and arches. The finest of these is a multi-moulded base for a cloister column.

In the adjoining Catholic graveyard, to the north-east of the church, there are seventeen further fragments, including a cloister column, tracery fragments, the head of a single-light ogee-headed window and the head of a two light window. All are of limestone. A fragment of an Early Christian cross-slab came to light here during a clean-up scheme. It bears the letters AR from a broken inscription.

The D-shaped graveyard within which the church is located contains numerous burials from the Hodson and Gunning families who owned and farmed the Rinn Dúin peninsula from the late 17th Century until 1970. It is also the location of the earliest identified dated burial found in Ireland. This 16th Century graveslab has a raised Roman inscription commemorating John Clyst, who died in 1539. It was discovered by Richard Collins in 2007.



Figure 2.12 The Graveyards:
The Catholic graveyard in the foreground, to the North West of the earlier D-shaped graveyard, enclosing St. John the Baptist's Hospital,

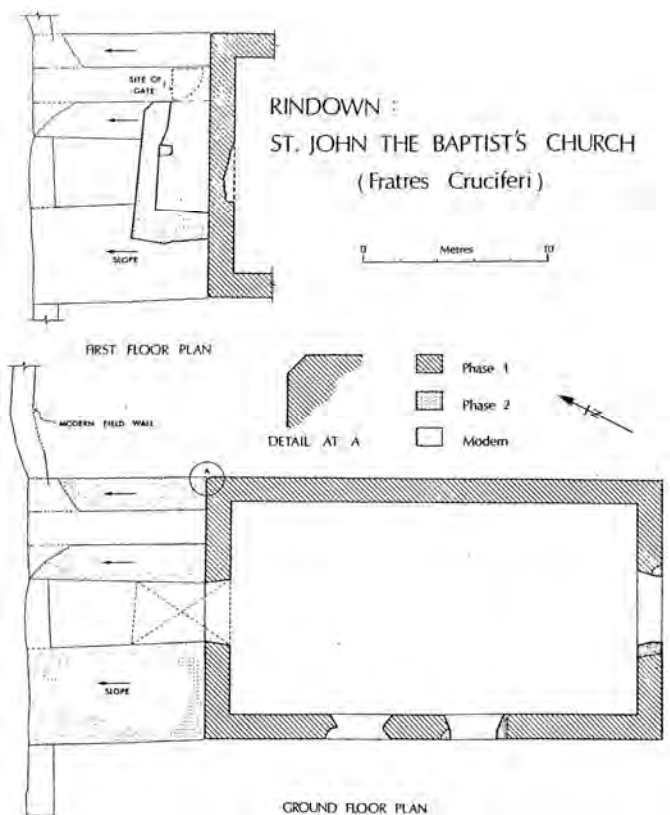


Figure 2.13 Ground Plan of St. John the Baptist's Hospital

2.3.10 Other Archaeological Features

Church of the Premonstratensian Canons

Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 207) note that this was founded by Clarus MacMailin, the founder of Lough Key Abbey, who died in 1251. They suggest that it should be identified with the parish church. The foundation seems to have been short lived.

Promontory Fort / Bank and Ditch System

A NE-SW orientated bank-and-ditch system extends across the peninsula's waist just west of the castle, cutting off the tip. (See Figure 2.14) It consists of two inner banks, a broad ditch, and an outer bank. Interpretation would suggest that it was originally a promontory fort, re-cut at the north-east end to form a surround for the curtain wall of the castle. The date of the fort is unclear, but the place-name indicates that it has a pre-Norman origin. It may have been built in the twelfth century by Toirdelbach Ó Conchobhair or, indeed, it may even be the site of the fortress constructed by the Vikings of Lough Ree in the mid-ninth century.

Whether the earthworks mentioned above are actually a promontory fort is open to question. A promontory fort by definition is located on a defensible site, but Rinn Dúin, although a peninsula almost entirely surrounded by water, is not particularly easy to defend. The shores of the peninsular slope gently in the lake, making landing relatively easy from a simple flat bottomed boat, at many locations along the lake shore.. There is room for further investigation and interpretation of this complex of earthworks.

Ringwork

It has been suggested that the earthwork surrounding the castle was a ringwork in origin (Barry 1987, 52-3). This is likely as there are at least eight known examples of Norman Castles in Ireland which are located on earlier ringworks, and this is a standard pattern of settlement by the Normans in Ireland.



Figure 2.14

Map of the Bank and Ditch Systems that cross the peninsula adjacent the Castle and Parish Church

Fishpond

The flooded area, to the south east of the parish church, visible in Figure 2.15, below, has been identified as a fish-pond, dating from the medieval settlement of the peninsular. Its boundaries are related to the banks and ditches described above.

Miscellaneous

Walled garden and Bee Boles

To the north west of the Hospital and Graveyard is a walled garden with three bee boles. The latter are in the form of pointed stone niches located in the north west wall, into which the skeps (woven baskets containing the bee colony) would have been placed. The niches gave some protection to the bees, which would have been kept not only for their honey, but also as pollinators of the fruit trees in the garden. These bee boles are thought to date from around 1700, when the Hodsons owned the land.



Figure 2.16

Bee-boles

Clearance Cairns

Eleven large clearance cairns are present in the fields between the town wall and the castle. While these must include stone from normal agricultural clearance they may also contain stone from former archaeological structures.



Figure 2.15

Fish Pond with the Parish Church (prior to recent conservation works) in the foreground

Possible Medieval Field Boundaries

A number of collapsed drystone wall boundaries are evident in the wooded area at the SSE end of the peninsula. These predate the wood which was already established when the first O.S. map was published in 1837.

2.3.11 List of Archaeological Finds

1. Bronze crucifixion plaque. From St. John's, near Athlone. NMI R554.
- 2-3. Two iron ecclesiastical bells. From St. John's, near Athlone. NMI Wk.205 R5553, Wk. 210.

A number of rotary quern fragments were noted within the walled area during the course of the survey. Some of these had been used as building stone in the field walls.



Figure 2.17

8th Century Crucifixion Plaque, found in St. John's Graveyard

John Bradley

Rinn Dúin is without doubt one of the finest examples of a deserted Medieval town in Ireland and, as an urban archaeological site, it is of national importance. It is significant on a number of counts.

Secondly it is important for what preceded the Anglo-Norman borough. It is clear that Rinn Dúin was the findspot of the bronze crucifixion plaque commonly known as the "Athlone plaque", one of the best known pieces of Early Christian Irish metalwork. Together with the bells and the graveslab it indicates that the pre-Norman monastery was an important one.

The particular archaeological importance of Rinn Dúin, however, rests in the fact that the site has not been built on to any significant degree since the fourteenth century. Accordingly the disturbance to archaeological deposits within the wall has been minimal by comparison with that in many of Ireland's modern built-up towns. It is to be anticipated that traces of the original house foundations, refuse pits, property boundaries, etc. survive below modern ground level.

Within recent decades, however, a great deal of disturbance has been caused by the systematic plundering of the site by metal detector users. Their activities were particularly noticeable in the field immediately outside (or NW) of the promontory fort ditch, but it was also noted in the other field within the wall. It is unlikely that the castle ditch or the castle interior has escaped metal detecting. The standing remains of the castle are quite solid but much work needs to be undertaken to stabilize the structure and render it less dangerous.

Parts of the town wall were removed in the past, probably to provide stone for building St John's House.

The nearby church also requires stabilizing. By contrast the windmill is in a good state of repair.

The harbour is a likely location for a future cabin cruiser jetty. Such a development, should it occur, must take into account the fact that this is also the situation of the Medieval harbour and that the remains of it are likely to survive in the lakemud.

The area of archaeological potential within Rinn Dúin consists simply of the area of the peninsula cut off by the town wall together with an area around the churchyards at St. John's House, the site of the Early Christian monastery and Anglo-Norman hospital.

The area, shown in Figure 2.18, and recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places is protected under the 1994 Act.



2.5 Archaeological Zoning Plan

Given the importance and richness of the peninsula in its entirety as a historic entity, it is not recommended at this time to produce a zoning plan, as this would give undue importance to individual elements over each other and over the integrity of the whole. This could lead to important evidence in the landscape, such as plough marks or fishponds which provide invaluable evidence and understanding of the operation of the settlement being ignored. There may be extensive evidence below ground, underwater, or within later elements which is, as yet, unrecognised.

It would be useful to keep a map, of the whole peninsula, as part of a Rinn Dúin archive, on which are marked all known historic and archaeological elements, as well as possible elements, from later periods as well as the medieval period and their estimated ages.

2.6 Summary Timeline for Rinn Dúin

Early Medieval Period (400-1169AD)	Extensive settlement around Lough Ree. Ecclesiastical Foundations established on the islands. Settlement at Rinn Dúin indicated by the name: “fort of the promontory”.
9th-10th Century	Viking raids and occupation of Lough Ree. Possible presence at Rinn Dúin.
1156	Record of a pre-Anglo Norman fort at Dúin.
1171	Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland.
1200-1	John de Courcy spends a week ferrying his defeated troops across Lough Ree from Rinn Dúin.
1227	Toirdelbach Ó Conchobair and Geoffrey Marisco commence erection of a castle at Rinn Dúin.
1229	Feilimid Ó Conchobair burns Rinn Dúin. Attacks by the native Irish continue sporadically until 1323.
1232	Rinn Dúin granted to Peter de Rivaux. Record of construction of curtain wall and battered plinth in the 1230s.
1236	Phelim Ó Conchobair sacks the town. Record of a market cross, bawn and ditch. Castle not captured.
1251	Henry III granted aid for enclosure of Rinn Dúin. Town Wall probably dates from this time.
1259	Town assessed for £8-5-8 per annum.
1272	Raid on Rinn Dúin by Aed Ó Conchobair. Rinn Dúin described as “levelled”.
1275-1302	Records of extensive expenditure on construction of the Castle. The southern hall dates from 1302.
1285	Town assessed for £320 per annum, and importing corn, cloth and wine from Bordeaux.
1315	Rinn Dúin burned by Ruaidrí Ó Conchobair.
1321	Walls of Rinn Dúin destroyed by the O'Reillys and the O'Naghlan.
1342-3	Town in Irish hands.
1544	Castle granted to Christopher Davers and Charles Egingham. Only the hospital and cottages recorded.
1574	Rinn Dúin in Irish hands. Described as a “bare castle”.
1605-6	Rinn Dúin granted to Edward Crofton. Records indicate it had ceased to function as a town.
17th Century	Hodson family buy the Rinn Dúin Peninsula. Build 17th Century Farmhouse.
Late 18th Century	Gunning family marry into the Hodson's. Farmhouse extended.
1970	P.J. Grady buys the farmland on the Rinn Dúin Peninsula.
1971	17th Century House demolished.



Figure 3.01

Aerial view of Safe Harbour with the Castle in the foreground



Figure 3.02

Safe Harbour

UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY

Colin Breen, with update by the Underwater Archaeology Section of the DoAHG

This part of the Conservation and Management Plan was prepared by Colin Breen for the 1998 Conservation Plan. An update of the current situation is given in 3.5.

3.1 Introduction

The archaeological and historical importance of the deserted Medieval town of Rinn Dúin has long been recognised and has been summarised above. Founded by the Normans, probably on a pre-existing promontory fort, the town played a major strategic role in the politics and conflicts of the midlands into the sixteenth century. The town owed its strategic importance to its position on the shore of Lough Ree, the large expanse of inland waterway which has been a major focus of settlement and communications throughout the historic period. While it is recognised that Rinn Dúin was associated with much water based activity and that there must have been waterfront facilities to deal with it, no such structures had been recognised until recently.

The existence of the promontory defence at the site would appear to indicate that the site was fortified and occupied prior to the Medieval period. Undoubtedly there would have been boating activity associated with this early settlement but there need not have been extensive waterfront structures to facilitate it. Few such early structures have been noted in a maritime context in Ireland, while evidence for landing stages on the inland waterways comes primarily from crannogs. Small timber jetties have been recorded at a number of sites, normally consisting of a run of parallel uprights forming a linear or curvilinear landing feature. These would not have been able to accommodate large vessels but rather would have facilitated logboats, rafts and small planked boats. A number of logboats have been found in association with lacustrine sites but no planked boats have been identified to date. Larger craft that would have been in use at this time could be beached or simply drawn up above the high water mark and do not necessarily require berthing accommodation.

The Annals of the Four Masters record the first reference to water based activity at Rinn Dúin when in 1156 Ruaidhri O'Connor drew his boats and men across Lough Ree from Gailey Bay to Rinn Dúin across the ice. While there may not necessarily have been a settlement here at this time Rinn Dúin was obviously well known as a crossing point to be specifically referred to.

Later, in 1200, John de Courcy spent a week ferrying men and horses across Lough Ree in boats after they became trapped at Rinn Dúin. Again formal landing facilities need not have been present to enable this operation to take place. It was obviously undertaken with haste and was ill conceived as a great many men were drowned/killed and the pursuing Irish forces caught up with them at Rinn Dúin, resulting in further casualties. One only has to look at the Bayeux tapestry, produced over a century earlier, to examine the logistics of the movement of a large military force by water. The vessels on the tapestry lie in shallow water while goods and equipment are carried out to them and soldiers wade out to board the craft. Similarly, when it comes to disembarkation, the vessels are brought very close to shore and men and goods leave by the means of planks or wading.

De Courcy would not have had such a fleet available to him and probably used craft that he appropriated in the vicinity and other small craft that would have been carried with the force. There are continuous references in the annals to vessels being carried with military forces on the move. These were most likely lightweight wickerwork craft covered with hides and other coverings. The material for the construction of rafts would have been readily available as well and it is unlikely that such a rapid and easily constructed craft would not have been used. In 1235 the Annals of Connaught record that the English, while attacking a stronghold on Lough Key, built rafts from the wood taken from the houses of the district. Barrels were attached to the rafts to give them buoyancy, while a large boat was used to tow them to their destination. Given the haste with which the operation was undertaken and the likelihood that even if there was a small settlement or garrison at Rinn Dúin it would have been limited in size, extensive water based facilities were unlikely to have been in existence at this time.

As the military settlement began to develop in the middle of the 13th century it is likely that the water front was developed in tandem. The safest and quickest way to travel must have been by water, especially on such a large expanse of water as Lough Ree and the Shannon. In 1302-3 and 1315-16 a ferry is mentioned operating out of Rinn Dúin linking Roscommon and Westmeath. This surely highlights the importance of Rinn Dúin as a crossing and focal point on the Lough matched only by the bridgehead at Athlone.

However the local Irish, particularly the Offergyles and their followers, were a constant threat. "They make from day to day a great multitude of boats" with which they plundered the lands surrounding Rinn Dúin. To counter this local threat the "Justiciar and whole Council of the King in this land that a galley be made of at least 32 oars which shall constantly remain at Randon, for the defence of the castles of Athlone and Randon if it shall be necessary" (Cal. Just. Rolls Id., Edward I).

This galley would have been a double ended clinker built wooden vessel. The galleys of this time would have had a shallow draught, probably not more than 50cm. The text refers to the galley having 32 oars indicating an internal layout of 16 oars on either side each manned by a soldier. Few of these inland galleys would have carried sails but it would not have been unusual for the vessel to have carried one. This type of craft was not highly manoeuvrable and would have been used for linear patrol duties on the Lough and River. Galleys of this type were probably the most common large wooden military craft used in Ireland at this time.

In 1205 King John had a fleet of 5 galleys based in Ireland while in 1234 6 galleys were ordered to be built in Irish ports, two with sixty oars and four with forty oars. Seven years later the men of Drogheda were ordered to build a second galley to accompany their existing one while Waterford was to build two and Cork and Limerick one each. It appears that a galley was considered essential protection for any port town and Rinn Dúin would have been no different.

3.2 Archaeology

Archaeologists Charles Mount and Kieran O'Connor visited the sit on behalf of the Heritage Council. During the course of this visit the archaeologists noticed a number of linear stone features on the foreshore area of the sheltered inlet below the castle wall marked 'Safe Harbour' on the 0.5 inch map, which they considered to be of archaeological importance and associated with the Medieval landing place.

The Heritage Council requested that the diving unit within National Monuments Service visit the site to examine the foreshore features and look at the lake bed within the inlet to assess its archaeological potential. The diving unit subsequently visited the site on 12 August 1997 and carried out a rapid visual and underwater survey of the harbour area. The survey team from the Discovery Programme were employed to produce a drawn survey of the harbour area (Figure 3.03).

Safe Harbour is located on the northern shore of the promontory of Rinn Dúin (Fig. 2.01). It is a good sheltered inlet open only to the north east. This protects the inside of the harbour from the predominant south westerlies which can affect boat traffic adversely. The inlet is ideally suited as the landing place and anchorage for the promontory and seems to have been used as such during the site's occupation.

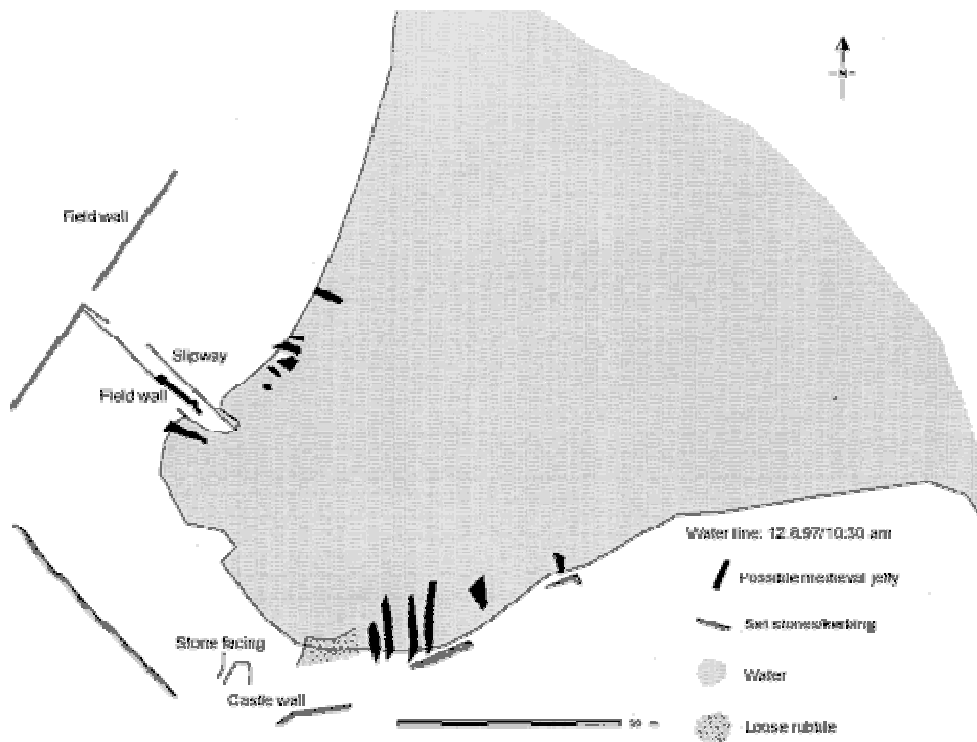


Figure 3.03

Plan of the Harbour at Rinn Dúin

Two distinct channels can be seen entering the inlet, one on the northern side and the second on the southern side. Much of the central part of the inlet is heavily silted up and has a dense weed cover while the channels have been kept open and are free of stones. It is suggested that these have been dredged in the past or at least partially excavated to keep the channels open. These two channels border this central area and lead to two foreshore areas of activity.

A large number of foreshore features are immediately obvious. There appears to be an internal division within the harbour area with the northern shore accommodating larger craft and the southern shore facilitating smaller narrower craft. The most striking feature on the northern shore is a large stone slipway which runs from the slight eminence overlooking this shore down beyond the low-water. This slipway has the appearance of a slightly raised earthen rampart bordered on either side in places by stone kerbing. This kerbing has been added to in more recent times to heighten it and make a field boundary or wall out of it. This is particularly obvious on the lower south western side. The general slope and width, averaging over 4m, are in keeping with the general nature of a slipway. Rollers or winches would have made the launching and recovery of vessels easier. This slipway is by far the largest waterfront feature on the site. It is interesting to speculate that it was used with the 32 oar galley introduced sometime after the 1305 reference.

Wooden boats cannot be left in the water continually. A boat left at anchor for a long period in the water will become heavily fouled regardless of the timber hull and makes the movement of the vessel through the water more difficult. Most wooden vessels will be taken out of the water every few months to undergo cleaning and general repair work. A second consideration that should be introduced here is the sheer size of galley which was probably between 20-30m in length and would take up a considerable portion of the inlet. It may have been more convenient for the inhabitants to take the vessel out of the water frequently and launch it when needed for patrol duties.

The presence of the slipway of this size would certainly argue for regular usage. The slipway leads to a relatively flat area on top of the eminence. This must have some significance, possibly indicating a boat repair area or indeed a boat building area. The 1305 reference implies that boats were probably made locally given that it was the local council which took the decision. Certainly when the men of Drogheda were ordered to build galleys in the 13th century they built them themselves.

The remains of a small wet docking area and associated hard can be seen directly west, running roughly parallel to the end of the slipway. A hard in nautical terms is any

hard stratum which is laid down on wet or marshy ground to accommodate boat related activity at the land water interface. Craft could be brought in between the slipway and the spread of stones to the west and could be safely docked and off loaded. The channel between the two features appears to have been deliberately cleared and may have been excavated or deepened for this purpose and could have accommodated vessels with a beam of c.2-3m. The hard appears to have a deliberate splay outwards at the rear of the structure in order to cover more wet ground and to provide more space for loading and offloading activity.

Further east, some 12m from the slipway, the foundations for a small rectangular shaped stone quay can be seen lying under the water. This small quay, less than 10m in length, fronts onto the inlet and has two small boat docking areas on either side of it. Most of the features on this side of the inlet are associated with waterfront activity. It seems that most of the loading, launching and other types of manual and commercial activity took place here. The other side of the inlet appears to be more specialised and it might be that the military activity took place here.

There has always been clear divisions in harbour sites to differentiate between commercial and military activity. Naval vessels will have their own berths and their own support facilities. The southern shore at Rinn Dúin has a series of waterfront features which appear to be somewhat different than those on the northern shore. While they display similarities in constructional technique and are most probably contemporary they appear to have differing functions. A series of linear narrow stone walls run from the shore northwards for about 15m below the slope upon which the castle wall stands. These features run parallel to each other from an area of low kerbing which possibly delimits a stony hard area. These can be interpreted as a series of stone jetties running out from the shore with a wet docking channel between each jetty. The channels could have accommodated boats with a beam of c.3m and seems to have been a well organised feature. Could this arrangement have been the berthing of the castles' small military flotilla? Certainly similar type features have been noted in association with tower houses along the west coast of Scotland, particularly in Argyle.

3.3 Threats

It has been recognised for a number of years that the monuments and land at Rinn Dúin are under serious threat from a number of differing sources. The foreshore and lakebed at Safe Harbour is similarly threatened. While foreshore features have now been recognised, the nature and extent of any submerged archaeology on the bed of the inlet is unknown. There is a large build up of silt on the lake bed in this area which has buried any noticeable artefacts or features. Rapid underwater visual survey failed to locate anything of significance on the inlet bed.

However, because of the nature of the site it has to be assumed that there is material of historical interest on the harbour bed and its survival is threatened. The primary threat is probably related to the huge upsurge in boating activity on the Lough and the subsequent pressures that this causes on the nearshore area.

In the late 1980s it was proposed by Roscommon County Council that a mooring facility be established at Safe Harbour. *This proposal has not been pursued, and Roscommon County Council are committed to the preservation of Rinn Dúin and would no longer consider this as a possibility.* The effect of vessels casually anchoring at the site is also highly visible on the lake bed. These anchors are dragging through the anchorage area and are causing deep cuts in the bottom silt. The fact that this is such a low energy site means that these cuts remain open for a considerable period without silting. The wash from the boats propellers as they are being brought to anchor, will also have an effect on submerged archaeology.

That the small stone jetties functioned well in the past is demonstrated by the fact that the cruisers are still using them to come ashore. On the day of the survey a number of tenders were tied up on these features and a number were hauled up on them, resulting in the displacement of stones and hastening the erosion of the structures. Boaters who were using the jetty stones to surround barbecue fires. A large number of similar modern hearths could be seen lying about with all the stone having been taken from the historic waterfront. Would a similar practice be allowed with stone from the castle?

3.4 Recommendations

1. Mariners should be prevented from landing at this inlet. A 'No Stop' notice should be issued by the Shannon Commissioners and this should be posted to the relevant marina and hire companies.
2. No landing signs should also be posted on both sides of the entrance. It may also prove beneficial to install a No Stop buoy at the site.
3. The contemporary moorings should be removed and any plans for future moorings should be abandoned.
4. A more detailed survey and research programme of the harbour site and indeed the whole foreshore of the promontory is required. This should include plans of the individual features within the harbour, a foreshore survey of the promontory, shallow water geophysics in the area of the promontory and targeted diver survey.

3.5 2012 Update

The Underwater Archaeology Unit of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has made the following comment:

The Underwater Archaeology section presented in Parts 3.1-3.4 above, is based on a survey carried out by the UAU (under Colin Breen) in 1997. The report is useful providing a description of the known archaeological features associated with the harbour. However, further detail is required in order to produce an up-to-date record of the site which will help inform the current management strategy and assist in ensuring that this important site is protected from potential impacts in the future.

The report essentially recommends that the harbour be closed off to boating traffic and mooring activities (recommendations 1-3) in order to prevent impacts to known or potential archaeology. It also recommends that further survey work and research be carried out at the harbour and along the length of the shore of the promontory.

Further work is therefore required in order to formulate a more detailed management strategy for the harbour area. For example restrictions on boating activity in the harbour would require a defined exclusion zone. Such a zone should be defined based on up to date information. There would also be a need for ongoing discussion and communication with all the relevant stakeholders such as Waterways Ireland/Shannon Navigation, the local authorities and other lake users, such as anglers, leisure craft users etc. Any proposals for restrictions would have to consider legislative requirements and a strategy for protecting the archaeology of the site. There may also be safety issues to consider in restricting use of a traditional harbour site.

It is recommended that further survey work be carried out in order to ascertain the full nature and extent of the archaeology at the harbour site and to assess and quantify any damage that has been done to the site in recent years. More detailed recording of the known features in the harbour, as recommended by Mr Breen, should be carried out, including plans of the individual features. It is recommended that a detailed geophysical survey be carried out of the site including a bathymetric survey of the harbour and its channels. This should be carried out in tandem with a dive and metal detection survey to see if any new features have been uncovered. An assessment should be carried out defining the impact that boating activities (including prop wash, mooring posts and buoys and anchor dragging) is having on known or potential archaeology. This will help inform the overall management strategy of the site.

The survey area may also need to be expanded to include all areas of the promontory. It is likely that previously unrecorded archaeological features are present along the shoreline of the promontory associated with the town and it would be important that these features are located and mapped to ensure that these too are protected.

It is advised that a meeting be arranged with Waterways Ireland and the local authority to see how further damage may be prevented at this location.

Please Note: Any of the policies in relation to underwater archaeology should be informed by the full underwater archaeological assessment as recommended above. No vegetation removal or consolidation works should take place at the slipway prior to completion and approval of this assessment. The Underwater Unit of DAHG will advise on any proposals in relation to the underwater archaeological heritage and notification in accordance with section 12 (3) is required for any works to slipway.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION, CONDITION , INTEGRITY AND VULNERABILITY OF THE MONUMENTS

For ease of use, the numbering of this Part (and Part 7.) concurs with the archaeological inventory in Part 2.

4.1 Summary of the Place

The innate quality and interest of Rinn Dúin, as well as its historic integrity, lies in the entire landscape of the peninsula. The form of the landscape is integral to an understanding of the monuments and the monuments contribute fundamentally to the landscape quality.

Knowledge and understanding of the history of the site is limited, and it is likely that there remain features of the historic settlement, and associated agriculture, as yet unidentified, and there is plentiful archaeological evidence yet to be interpreted.

The Rinn Dúin peninsula is a discrete and easily definable area, that has remained an entity throughout its history, not influenced by either multiple ownership or later settlement. Some of the elements are spectacular, like the Castle and Town Wall, others are more humble, but all are related in time and space and add to the overall understanding of the place and appreciation of its qualities.



Figure 4.01

The Rinn Dúin Peninsula, Black Islands in Lough Ree beyond.

4.2 Summary of the Recorded Monuments

4.2.1 Street Pattern and Market Place

Description

There is more or less nothing, visible to the naked eye, to indicate the pattern of streets within the medieval town. The large fields which are the site of the town are currently used for grazing livestock. Other sites of towns of a similar period may display house platforms and sunken roadways, but nothing of this nature is readily visible. There are likely, however, to be subterranean remains that could be indicative of the urban form of the town or of the houses, and other buildings, that constituted the settlement. It is possible, but not proven, that some of the modern field boundaries are indicative of former features.

It is presumed that there was a direct road link between the Gatehouse in the Town Wall and the bridge that spanned the ditch and led into the Castle, and the town would have related to this in some way. However, the area between the Town Wall and the Castle is extensive and there could have been settlement anywhere in this area, and it may even have relocated during the life of the town, following the destructive attacks recorded in the 13th and 14th Centuries.

Integrity

The site of the medieval town is of considerable integrity, having been apparently abandoned by the end of the 16th Century, and never resettled. During many centuries as a farm, however, the land would have been ploughed repeatedly and surviving masonry cleared.

Within the plough zone this will inevitably reduce the level of intactness of possible subterranean remains.

Vulnerability

So long as the large area of land between the Town Wall and the Castle and ditch is used for livestock grazing, what archaeological evidence which may survive below ground is relatively secure from disturbance. (The unauthorised use of metal detectors may continue to pose a threat however).

The precise location of the urban settlement has never been identified, and there could be archaeological evidence of settlement, agricultural practice or other activities associated with the settlement anywhere on the peninsula. The site between the Town Wall and the Castle far exceeds, in area, any enclosed urban settlement in medieval Ireland, it is a challenge to suggest where to begin to look for evidence of the urban elements.



Figure 4.03 Looking towards the Town Wall from the Church: Livestock grazing in the fields where the town may have been located.

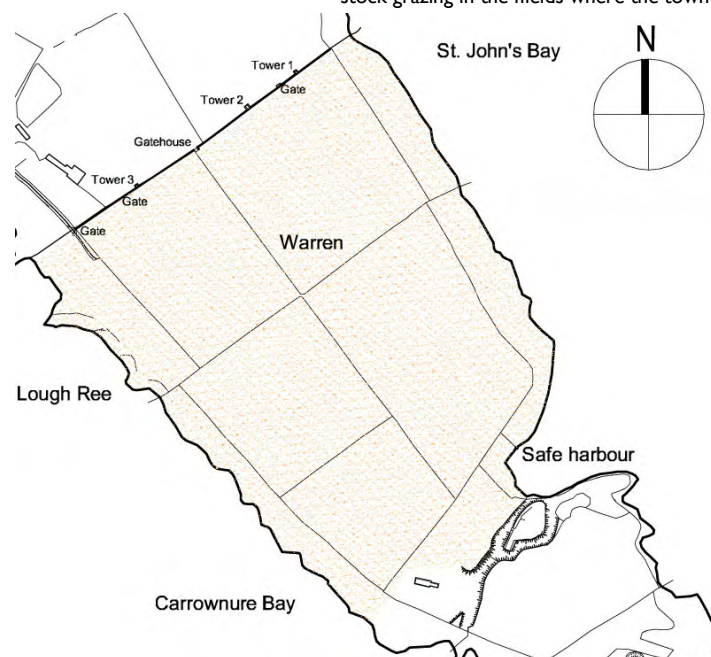


Figure 4.02 Map showing the extent of area within which the town may have been located

4.2.2 Domestic Houses

Description, Condition and Integrity

With the exception of House Two, the remains of these houses present, to the untrained eye, very little in the way of indication of what form the original structures may have taken. Grassed over, and the masonry largely fallen such that there is no further to fall they are not readily recognisable as houses. There is considerable question over the actual age of these remains, or if they were houses at all; it is possible they are the remains of animal sheds or seasonal bothies for herdsman, and could date from as recently as the mid 19th Century. On the other hand they could be far earlier.

Both the form of the stone walls, and their location directly on the route between the Gatehouse and the Castle suggest it is unlikely that they are the remains of medieval structures. Only archaeological excavation, and interpretation, or further geophysical surveys, could shed more light on these matters and suggest an accurate date for these structures.

Vulnerability

The houses are chiefly vulnerable in that so little is understood of either their age, or original form and function. The scantiness of the remains, in the case of House 3, and the level of collapse in the case of Houses 1 and 2 make all sites vulnerable to further loss of standing masonry, dislodged by unwary livestock, farm machinery or feet.



Figure 4.04 Site of House 1



Figure 4.05 Site of House 2

4.2.3 Quays

Description and Condition

A detailed description of the extant historic features surviving around the shore and shallow waters of Safe Harbour is given in Part 3 of this Plan.



Figure 4.06 Trees indicate the line of the slipway descending the hill



Figure 4.07 The Slipway



Figure 4.08 The end of the slipway entering the lake.

The most easily visible feature is the slipway, which is illustrated in photographs 4.06 - 4.08. This feature, around 4m in width extends up the hillside to a level area at the top. It has been retained and added to as a field boundary, and the stone walls are heavily colonised by trees, which, while clearly marking its location, may also be undermining its structure. The underwater remains of quays and jetties described in Part 3. are harder to identify for the amateur observer, and some require entering the water to see clearly. There is need for further archaeological investigation.

Integrity

The surviving slipway and jetties have a considerable degree of historic integrity, having been assumed to be disused for a time, when the Castle and town ceased to be inhabited.

The presence of the 17th Century Mill suggests there could have been boating activity at a later period. Long after the medieval period the waterways continued to be more efficient than land as a means of transporting goods. The scale of the mill suggests more grain may have been processed there than was either grown or consumed in the immediate vicinity. Grain and flour could have been transported via Safe Harbour.

Vulnerability

The underwater archaeology is under threat from boats that anchor in the Safe Harbour, as anchors may be dislodging or damaging archaeological evidence lying in the silt. The on-shore remains at Safe Harbour are also currently under threat from the activities of small boat owners, who land here and use the available stone to build barbecues. The simple act of landing in a small light boat at the harbour however should be considered no more of a threat than the feet of people and animals on the land. The greatest vulnerability, however, may come from the lack of recognition and understanding of the surviving features in this location.



Figure 4.09 Small craft visiting Safe Harbour

4.2.4 The Windmill

The windmill dates from the 17th Century, and is located on a raised mound. This mound may be formed of the remains of the earlier medieval mill. The building is currently surrounded by mature trees, but must have been in more open ground when functioning, in order to catch the wind and have space for the sails to rotate.

The openings within the masonry walls are indicative of the original floor structures and mechanics of the windmill, and there is room for further research into, and interpretation of these. The entrance doorways are interesting in that they align exactly with the four cardinal points of the compass.

Condition and Integrity

The masonry of the mill building is in good condition with most of the original masonry structure surviving, and also some of the internal and external plaster.

The recent conservation works, completed in November 2011, involved removal of vegetation from the stonework, and stabilisation of the masonry at the wall heads and at the ground floor door openings..

No new masonry was required to repair the wall heads but additional stone was necessary to fully repair the ground floor openings.

A detailed written and illustrated description of the works is provided in Appendix E.



Figure 4.11 Masonry recesses and surviving plaster in the interior



Figure 4.10

The Windmill in context, following conservation works, 2011

Fred Hamond, Industrial Archaeologist, made the following interpretation of the structure:

“I think the holes were to accommodate a timber frame (maybe around 6-inch cross-section and upwards of 4ft high). This would have served a dual purpose: (1) to consolidate the wall head, and (2) to form a platform to which a circular timber curb could be affixed, and around which the cap would have slid. See Figure 4.16. There is also the possibility that the inside ends of the bottom radial members of this frame projected beyond the inside face of cap floor wall and served as anchor points for a pulley system to rotate the cap, similar to many Mediterranean tower mills. This would have done away with the need for a tail pole or fantail. I wonder were the putlog holes about 9ft up from the ground on the outside face for construction purposes, or the radial supports for a staging from which the sail cloths could be adjusted (but why they need to go all the way through is a mystery).

If the latter, and presuming the tower to be c.20ft high, the sails (probably 4 in number) would have had a diameter of around 20-22ft. The only difficulty is in accessing them. Usually, there are 2 doorways out to the stage at whatever floor level it was positioned. In this case, there are no such doors, so if it was a stage, access would therefore have been by ladder. Given that the holes go all the way through the wall, I doubt if they are a later insertion into an existing building (if converted to a windmill), or an afterthought (if originally erected as a windmill). However, if they were for some other purpose, the sails would have been upwards of 40ft diameter. Comparative statistical work on mills elsewhere would be needed to decide which is the more likely span in this particular instance’.

Vulnerability

It is likely that the significant damage to the ground floor door openings was caused by livestock rubbing against the masonry, which had been already weakened by loss of mortar. Although these openings have now been repaired and thereby stabilised, sheep have been observed continuing to use these corners as a convenient scratching post, and in the long term this could lead to further damage to the structure.



Figure 4.15

Repairs to the wall head

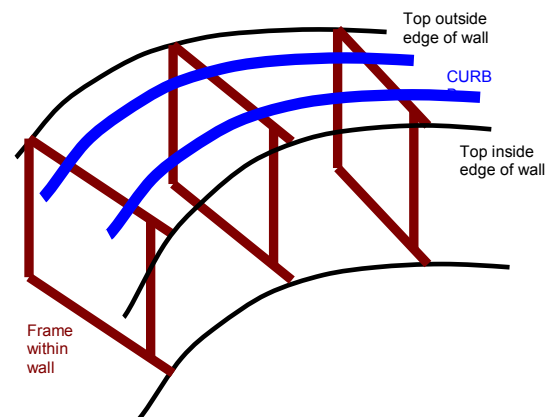


Figure 4.16

Sketch by Fred Hamond:
Possible form of timber structure at wall head of the Windmill

4.2.5 Bridge

The masonry piers which supported the castle draw-bridge still survive together with the foundations of the outer gate which protected the bridge on the town side.

Vulnerability

Further study of the extant remains is recommended as this is one of the least apparent historic elements at the site, to the untrained eye.



Figure 4.12 Damaged opening, prior works



Figure 4.13-14



Windmill before and following conservation works completed in 2011

4.2.6 Town Defences

A full set of survey drawings, describing the completed emergency conservation works to Towers 1, 2 and 3, and their adjacent lengths of wall, is provided in Appendix B. Figure 4.21 illustrates the current form of the Wall on the site. Below is given a description of the form, integrity and vulnerability of the entire structure, followed by descriptions of the towers and gatehouse.

Description and Condition

The town wall, is a remarkable structure, in the form of a linear wall across the entire width of the peninsula. This line is punctuated by three towers and only one original point of entry at the Gatehouse. Three further breaches have been made subsequently; one to the south of Tower 2, another south of Tower 3, and a third where the medieval structure gives way to a field wall at the south west end of the wall. (see Figure 4.22)

Lower, field walls at the lake ends of the wall are from a later date, but it is assumed that the original town wall would have extended into the lake at each shore. The height and condition of the wall varies along the length of the structure. Just to the southwest of Tower 2 the wall is 4.4m high, which is close to what was probably its original height. Elsewhere the wall is little more than a pile of rubble with trees and ivy marking its line.

There are a number of notable architectural features which give insights into the construction and functioning of the wall.

Wall Walk

In many parts of the wall, but not for its entire length, there is evidence of a wall walk. This would have been a timber structure along which the towns' defenders could walk. It is indicated by a ledge in the stonework of the upper part of the wall, and putlogs below which could have provided locations for the supporting timber structure. Further interpretation of this feature is recommended.



Figure 4.18 Wall walk between Tower Two and the Gatehouse



Figure 4.17

The Town Wall, seen from the air. Tower One is on the far left.

Putlogs

This is the term used to describe constructed recesses in the stonework to locate timber structure. Sometimes they are evidence of scaffolding used during construction, but may also be evidence of permanent timber structures such as floor beams, or the workings of the gate. More interpretation of these features would be valuable to our understanding of the Town Wall



Figure 4.19 Putlogs below the wall walk ledge, adjacent to Tower Two

Battering

The outer face of the towers and the main wall are battered. This is a thickening of the base of the wall to provide strength.



Figure 4.20 Battering at the base of Tower Two and adjacent wall



Figure 4.21 Stone course line in the wall adjacent to Tower Two

Coursing

There is a distinct horizontal line of stones evident in much of the wall approximately 2foot above the top of the base batter. This may indicate a construction joint, or stage.

Further Archaeological Potential

There is a record from 1236 of a bawn and ditch at Rinn Dúin. (Refer Section 2.3.6). It is also possible there was a palisade as a first line of defence outside the town wall. Archaeological investigation and interpretation could shed light on the location and age of such defensive measures. It is possible that during the life of the town there existed an Irish settlement somewhere outside of, but close to, the town wall. Local people could have gained economic advantage through trade with and provisioning those within the wall.

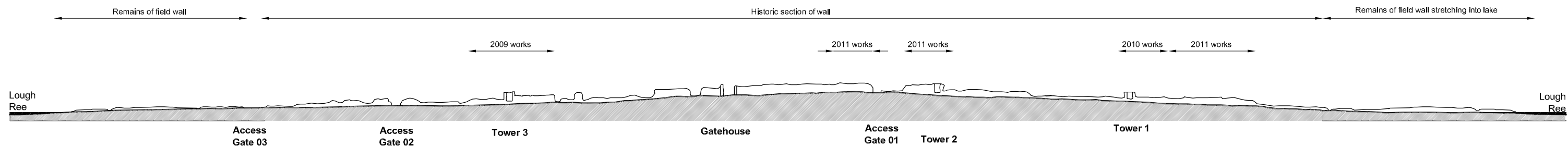
Survey and Record 2011

Blackwood Associates Architects completed a full record of the entire length of the Town Wall in late 2011. This took the form of 8 no. AI drawings showing the elevations of the wall in the form of a rectified photograph at scale 1:100. This is an invaluable resource, in that it records the condition of the monument at that time, and can be used to prioritise the next phases of conservation works to the wall. Extracts from this survey are given in Figure 4.27.

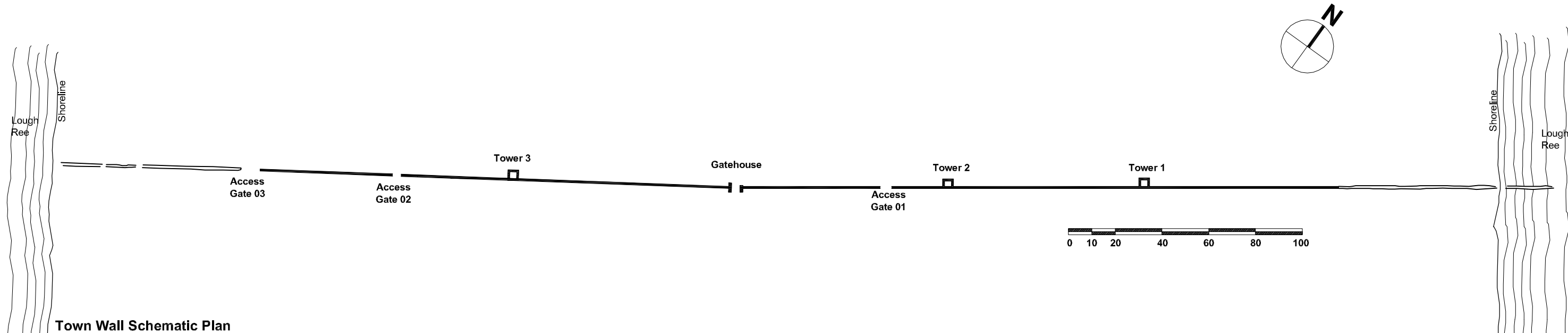
Integrity

Although it may have been robbed for building materials (for St. John's House, and maybe some of the associated farm buildings) the town wall survives remarkably intact, and is one of the best preserved medieval town wall in Ireland, and unusual in its isolated rural location.

Up until the 18th Century town walls in Ireland were sources of revenue, in that visitors to, and traders entering, a town were taxed at this point. They often therefore survived long after they ceased to be essential for defensive purposes, as a source of income for the town.



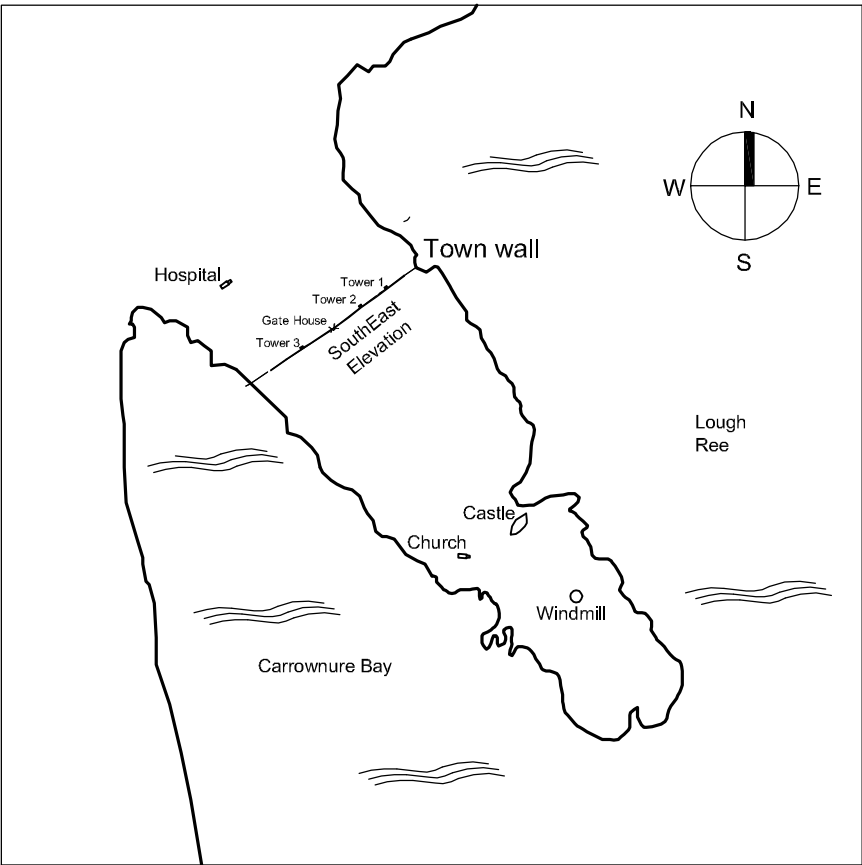
SouthEast Elevation



Town Wall Schematic Plan



Aerial Image: Tower 3 in foreground to Tower 1 in background



Key Plan

Figure 4.22
The Town Wall in the context of the Rinn Dúin peninsula

However, subsequently, such taxation was abolished, and town walls around urban settlements came to be seen as barriers to trade, development and prosperity, and a rather handy source of building material. Therefore the fabric of many Irish town walls was only lost relatively recently in their long histories. The absence of settlement, at Rinn Dúin, and therefore of people requiring shelter, meant the demand for readily available stone was minimal. This was a major factor contributing to the survival and integrity of the wall.

Vulnerability

The vulnerability of the Town Wall is emphasised by recent serious collapses at sections of the wall. A corner of Tower Two collapsed between the preparation of the 1998 Plan and the Conservation Works of 2011. Most recently a section of the Gatehouse has collapsed in February 2012. Just because a wall has stood for hundreds of years does not mean it will continue to do so. Once weakened catastrophic collapse happens in an instant, and historic fabric is lost. (Refer Figures 4.46, 4.47, 7.01, 7.02).

Figure 4.23 is a good illustration of the vulnerability of the Town Wall. The central section, including Tower Three, is in stable condition, and close to its original height, having been the site of the first phase of emergency conservation works to the wall in 2009.

In contrast the length of wall to the right (northeast) of this is in very poor condition. There are shrub trees and ivy flourishing in the wall and their roots have burst open the wall structure which has collapsed across the adjacent field. That parts of this collapse are relatively recent is evidenced by the pale colour of much of the fallen stone, indicating unweathered surfaces from the heart of the wall.

The length of wall to the left (southwest) of the conserved section is in much better condition. However if the ivy growth in the top of this length of wall is left unchecked, the roots will spread, and in time this length of wall will share the same fate as that nearby.



Figure 4.23 Tower Three, and adjacent wall. This illustrates the variation in condition of the surviving wall. The central section and Tower Three underwent emergency conservation works in 2009, and survive close to their original height, and have a wall walk ledge in the masonry. The length of wall immediately to the left (south west) survives to a reasonable height but is in need of stabilisation. Much of the wall to the right (north east) has largely fallen and has been seriously overrun and undermined by trees and ivy growth.

The extent of the growth of vegetation within the Town Wall at Rinn Dúin means that the work has to progress in small steps at a time. In some places the ivy roots are effectively holding the rubble stone structure together. Killing of the ivy will mean it ceases to perform this function. Work needs to proceed with removal of small sections of ivy, followed by examination and recording of the stonework, then completion of stabilisation works to that section of stonework, and recording the extent of works executed before proceeding to the next section. If the work were not carried out in this manner there would be a considerable risk of collapse, and loss of original medieval fabric. It is important that the wall heads are fully stabilised using a lime mortar and joints between the stones repointed also using a lime mortar. This will prevent ingress of water into the wall and slow the weathering and washing away of mortar.

Works must continue to be carried out using best conservation practices, and include analysis, interpretation and recording of the structures and adjacent ground. The works, should involve the minimum interventions necessary to secure the structure, to minimise the loss of medieval workmanship and the patina of time. The process must be an active collaboration between conservation architect, archaeologist, conservation engineer, and, if appropriate, an architectural historian.

The survey completed in 2011 in the form of a full rectified photographic record of the entire wall, is a vital tool in identifying priorities for the next phases of the works. The on-going deterioration of the wall illustrated in Figure 4.23 underlines the urgency of continuing the programme of conservation works to prevent further loss of medieval wall fabric.

Figure 4.27 shows extracts from the 2011 survey, identifying the most vulnerable sections of wall at that time. All these sections of wall are at risk and works should be instigated at these locations at the earliest opportunity.



Figure 4.25 Tower Three prior to Conservation Works: The battered corners dangerously lost.



Figure 4.24 Wall loss at field gate opening

Access Points

In its original form, the only point of entry through the town wall would have been via the gatehouse. However this would have proved inconvenient over the years for those farming the land. There have therefore been three further breaches made in the wall in subsequent years.

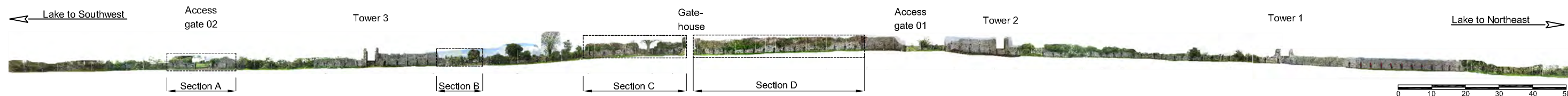
These openings, while necessary for the functioning of the land, do undermine, somewhat, the historic reading of the town wall form. They have also contributed to the acceleration of the collapse of the wall. This is particularly evident at the gate opening to the southwest of Tower Two.

Other Possible Sources of Deterioration

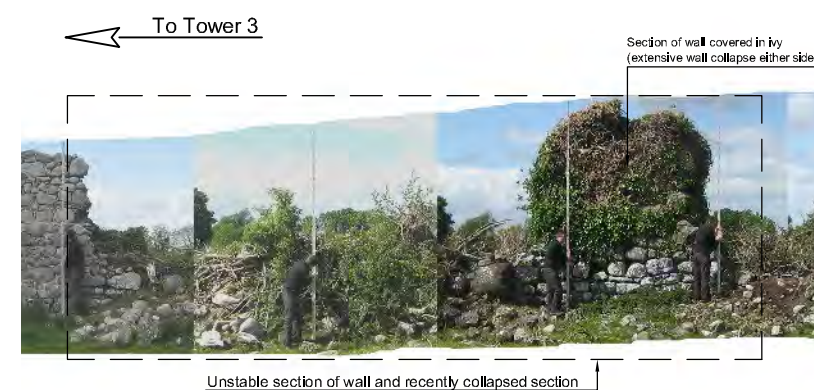
Corners are weathered from two sides, and the mortar is therefore likely to be lost sooner at these locations. This in turn makes the structure less stable. Corners also provide an ideal scratching post for livestock, and this could have expedited the loss of corner stonework illustrated in Figure 4.25. All the towers have now been stabilised, and therefore less vulnerable to cattle rubs, but the gatehouse is in need of urgent conservation work. It would be useful to monitor the condition of these corners over the coming years.



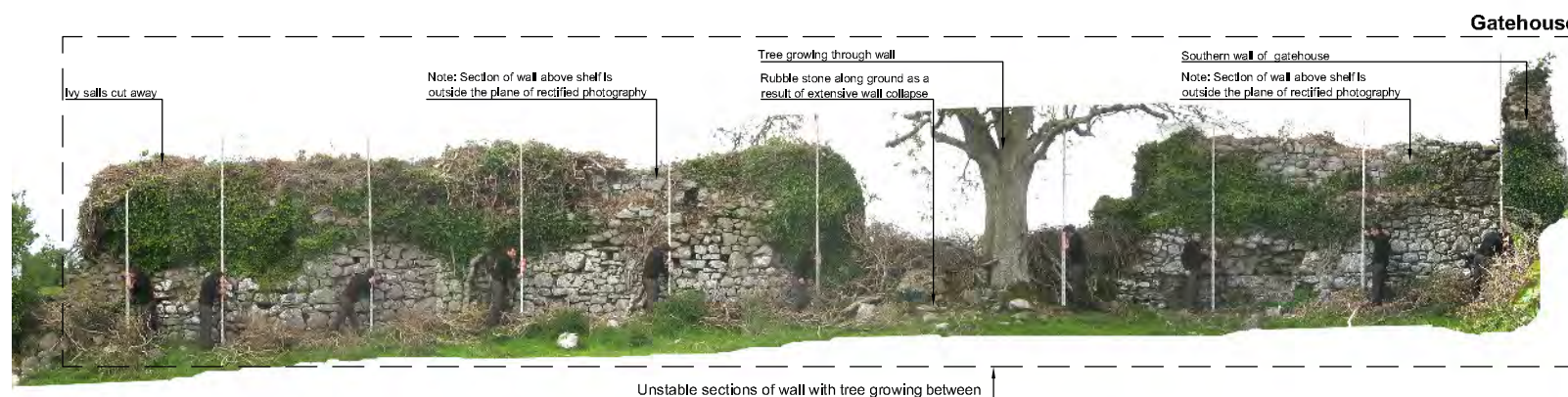
Figure 4.26 Tower Two. Cattle possibly loitering with intent to have a scratch.



SECTION A



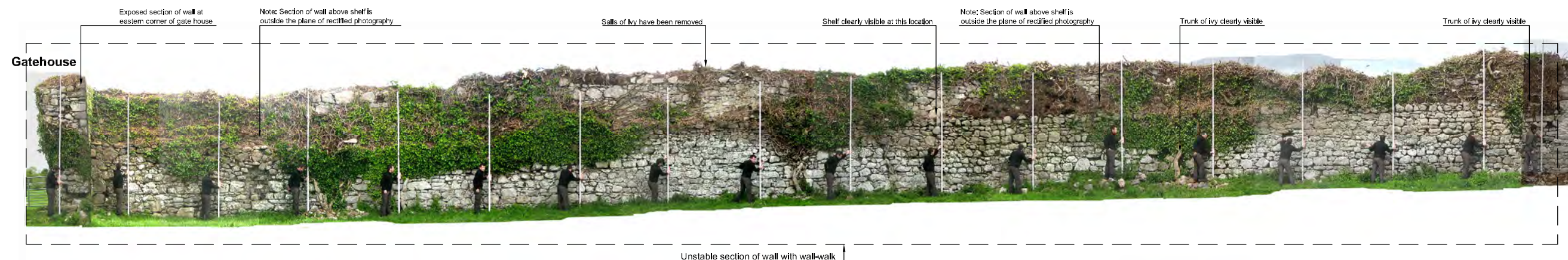
SECTION B



SECTION C



NORTH-EAST PIER OF GATEHOUSE FOLLOWING COLLAPSE



SECTION D

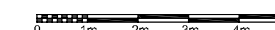


Figure 4.27
Identification of the most vulnerable lengths of the Town Wall 2011

Tower One

Tower One underwent extensive emergency conservation works in 2010. Detailed drawings and photographs summarising these works are provided in Appendix B1.

The rough coursing of the tower and batter at the base follows that of the main wall and the repair work followed this coursing. Additional stone required for the repair work was sourced from the site where the field stones are the same or similar to those used on the wall. Both lower corners of the tower required some repair work as the stonework has been dislodged, perhaps by cattle, and removed.

The sections of wall adjacent to the tower have also been repaired where a large section of the facing stone and core had failed and had significantly weakened the wall. Works to the north east of the tower were completed in 2011.

The recent works have secured this tower and section of wall for the immediate future, but it is essential that the structures continue to be monitored, and maintenance executed as soon as it is required to ensure their continuing survival.



Figure 4.28-9 North East side of Tower I before and after Conservation



Figure 4.30-31 South East of Tower I before and after Conservation



Figure 4.32



Plan of the conserved Tower One and adjacent wall

Tower Two

Tower Two and the adjacent length of wall underwent extensive emergency conservation works in 2011. See Appendix B2 for detailed summary of these works.

The western corner of Tower 2 had completely collapsed; this appears to have happened since the conservation plan was produced in 1998, as the tower is shown intact on the survey drawings. The corner had collapsed as far as the central opening on both elevations and there were sections of unstable and dangerous stonework at high level. The northern corner had localised fabric loss at low level, possibly expedited past by live-stock rubbing against the corner. Fabric loss had also occurred on the internal surface of the north-eastern elevation. Stone required for the repair work to Tower 2 came from fallen material at the base of the tower. Any additional stone required was selected from the site, where the field stones are the same, or similar, to those used on the wall.

Generally only minor fabric repairs were required to the town wall, mainly at high level following the removal of all ivy roots and other vegetation from the top of the wall. A small section of wall had to be rebuilt at the farm gateway as it was found to be unstable and dangerous.

The rebuilding of the northern corner of Tower 2 took place in several phases so that the rebuilding came up to a suitable height to ensure the stability of the remaining standing fabric.



Figure 4.33 Collapsed North West corner, before Conservation

This process involved the structural engineer to ensure the tower was stabilised to avoid further fabric loss. The entire cill and position of the head was clearly visible on the south-western elevation so it was possible to rebuild the opening to the same proportions as the original. The position of the head of the north-western opening was clearly evident but the cill width could not be ascertained in the remaining fabric. Therefore this reveal was built at a straighter angle to indicate it is not original.



Figure 4.34-35

South East of Tower Two before and after Conservation



4.36 View from the North, in context of the wall

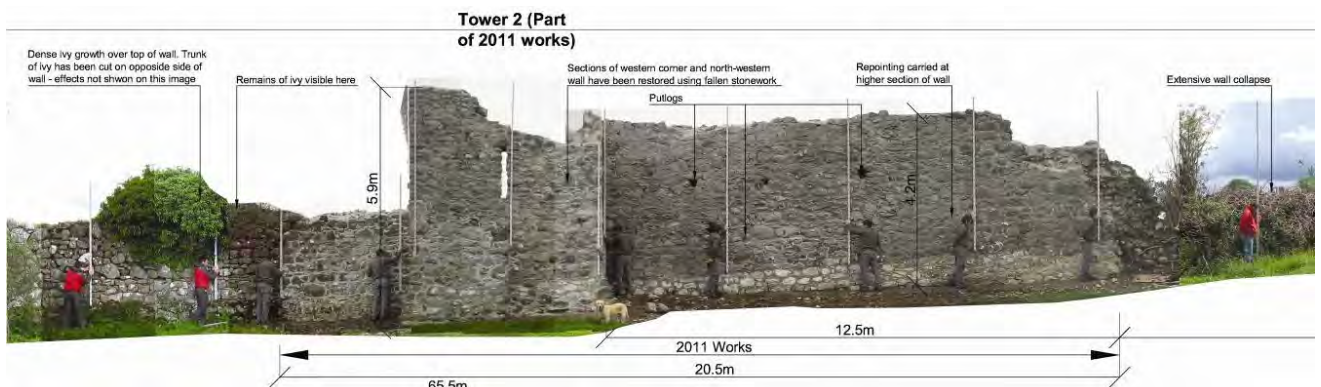


Figure 4.37

Rectified Photograph showing 2011 Conservation Works to Tower 2 and adjacent wall

Tower Three

Tower Three and the adjacent length of wall underwent extensive emergency conservation works in 2009. A detailed summary of these works are provided in Appendix B3.

Close investigation of the west elevation of the west tower revealed that this section of wall was in a very precarious state and in danger of collapse. The upper part of the wall was held together by ivy and the lower part fallen away completely.

In order to retain as much of the medieval craftsmanship as possible, a methodology was developed, with the structural engineer, whereby the stonework would be drilled and stainless steel rods inserted and then grouted in position. Unfortunately between inserting the stainless steel rods and grouting them in, the lowest portion of the wall still in place at the southern end became unstable and collapsed leaving a large section of overhanging walling suspended in mid-air. Upon close examination it was decided, on the grounds of safety, to dismantle this upper section. Fortunately most of the upper wall had been enumerated and recorded prior to the works commencing.



Figure 4.38-9

South East elevation before and after works



Figure 4.40-41 South West wall before and after conservation works

The lowest section of wall was rebuilt including the previously missing portion and the top was reinstated according to the records. In total approximately 20-25% of this wall section was lost. Additional stone required in the rebuilding work was sourced from the field stones in proximity to the site which are identical to those used in the original construction. The rough coursing and batter at the base follows that of the retained wall section.

A medieval chisel was found at Tower 3 during 2010. It is now in the National Museum of Ireland.



Figure 4.42 North West view of Tower 3 and adjacent wall, after completion of conservation works

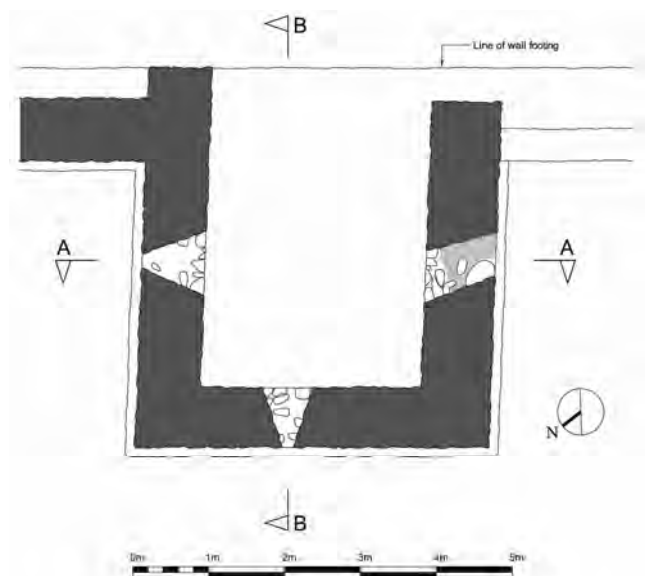


Figure 4.43

Plan of Tower Three

Gatehouse

The Gatehouse has not been the subject of any conservation works to date, nor has a detailed survey drawing been made of it. It is, however included in the overall rectified photographic survey completed in November 2011, which will be an essential tool in facilitating accurate reconstruction. This work must be informed by expert consultation, analysis, interpretation and collaboration between the conservation architects, archaeologist, conservation engineer, and, if appropriate, an architectural historian.

It is likely that the gatehouse was originally an arched structure, and this arch may have been lost relatively recently to ease farm traffic through the opening. Analysis of the remaining structure and adjacent fallen stones may be able to confirm this matter. The gatehouse walls and adjacent walls display a number of putlogs and other masonry features which may be indicative of the timber structures that were part of the original.

The corners of the structure on the North West side are seriously fallen away and could lead to the further loss of wall here if not conserved soon. (Figures 4.48)



Figure 4.44 Aerial View of Gatehouse from the North West

There is a serious crack in the North West elevation of the more extensive structure on the South East side of the Town Wall. (Figure 4.46). This was in urgent need of attention. Sadly, no emergency works had been commissioned at this part of the Town Wall and a large section of the Gatehouse collapsed in early February 2012. (Figure 4.47, 7.01, 7.02)

As the only original entry point to Rinn Dúin, the gatehouse is of particular significance.



Figure 4.45 South East side of wall



Figure 4.46 South East side of wall: North East Elevation of Gatehouse



Figure 4.47 South East side of wall, following collapse of February 2012



Figure 4.48 North West side of Town Wall: Details of the decayed stonework

4.2.7 Castle

4.2.7.1 1998 Assessment

The following assessment of the Castle was made of the Castle fabric for the 1998 Management Plan by Alistair Lindsey.

Introduction

At the request of the Heritage Council an initial inspection to determine the state of the fabric, based on concerns for the safety of both human and animal life of Rindoon castle was completed on Friday 25 July 1997. The weather conditions were fine and sunny and some rain had fallen in the previous 48 hours. The inspection was undertaken at ground level and no opening up or other investigation works were undertaken. For the purposes of this report the inspection was confined to the castle, but the church was inspected as a further reference.

While the access to the peninsula from the west or landward side is difficult, involving a distance from the public roadway through fields, access from the Lough is relatively easy and it has been reported that many people, from the cruisers that ply the River Shannon System, visit the castle each year, particularly as it forms an attractive feature in the landscape when viewed from the Lough. Indeed, during the inspection, there were a number of such people in the immediate environs of the castle.

Evaluation of the Fabric

The evaluation of the fabric was very difficult due to the heavy growths of vegetation and plant life and the lack of access to the higher areas of the fabric. Therefore this assessment cannot be construed in any way as being complete. However, a number of matters can be reported, which must be reviewed when access is available. Wherever possible, these matters have been illustrated photographically.

Vegetation and Plant Growths

While the vegetation and plant growth obscured much of the fabric, their presence on the fabric is a matter for concern. Many areas supported dense ivy growths and small trees were observed to be rooted in the walls, particularly above the barbican gate. The concern at such growths has three aspects. In the first place, the development of the rooting systems can and does dislodge stone. Secondly, the rooting systems feed on the fertile nutrients provided by the breakdown of the lime mortar in the construction, a process aided by the development of the plants themselves which keep the fabric damp. Thirdly, certain plants secrete weak acids which contribute to the decay of the masonry. These mechanisms are of particular concern at the most vulnerable parts of the fabric and the exposed heads of the walls would be particular element in this concern.

The proper course of action is to kill the plant life and allow it to dry out before attempting to remove it to inspect the underlying fabric. However, this can be a very difficult operation if, as may be the case in Rinn Dúin, the growths, having damaged the fabric, now support the structure. In addition, it is often deemed desirable that such growths continue to exist on such buildings and special receptacles have been constructed at the heads of walls to allow plant growth to be supported without damaging the fabric.

The general growth of trees, bushes, ivy, brambles etc. at lower level tends to obscure the condition of the bases of the walls and any foundation problems that may exist. Again, a degree of clearance will be required to fully assess these elements. However, it must be recognised that the rooting systems of these growths may be contributing to the stability of the ground and their removal may have a deleterious effect.

In conclusion, the heads of the walls must be inspected and repaired if necessary, as will the structure and bases of the walls. This will necessitate the removal of the plant growths. At that time, the desirability, or otherwise, of making provision for the controlled recolonisation of the plant life could be decided. Clearance at the lower levels may not need to be as all encompassing as that of the higher levels with less attendant hazard. In the final analysis, the degree of clearance necessary can only be determined as work progresses.

The Structure

The structure was built of limestone, probably local, laid in lime mortar. The walls were the normal Medieval construction consisting of random rubble outer and inner leafs with smaller stone hearting or core. Given the age and exposed nature of the buildings as roofless ruins, they seem in reasonable condition for their age, but this cannot be assumed to be definitive until the complete structure is accessible. Within this overall generalisation, there are a number of matters which are a cause for concern.

In addition to the affect of the plant growths, a number of precariously balanced individual stones and sections of stonework were noted, structural cracking was evident in a number of places, particularly in the blind arcaded section of the curtain wall and the west window of the hall, voussoir stones were missing from a number of arches and isolated 'holes' in the outer or inner random rubble leaves were noted. The general condition of the walling was variable, some areas where the joints appeared to be well filled, even to the extent that it might be assumed that some of the render had survived, while in other areas, the joints between the stones appeared to be quite open.

A number of areas where it was possible that the stone could detach or fall were noted. Equally, the presence of individual stones and larger 'lumps' of masonry at ground level, which must have fallen from the buildings, were a matter for concern. From a positive point of view, the surviving lime mortar seemed to be in remarkably good condition, given the age and history of the structures and isolated panels of wall plaster seem to have survived.

Also, where missing inner or outer leaves of stone had exposed the hearting of the walls, this seemed to retain a degree of consolidation. It would appear that one corner of the keep split into two enormous sections of masonry when it fell, attesting to the quality of the lime mortar. It must, however, be stressed that these matters can only be termed as impressions until such time as access permits a thorough examination.



Figure 4.49 The approach to the Castle from the North West: The defensive ditch lies between



Figure 4.50 The interior of the Castle looking South East. Note the abundance of plants obscuring the ruins.



Figure 4.51

The Castle from above, with its abundance of trees

Findings

The extant fabric seemed to be in reasonable condition given its age and history. However, there are a number of areas where concerns as to the safety of life and the stability of the structure exist. As a preliminary inspection, these findings cannot be conclusive and it is recommended that extant fabric should be the subject of careful examination when access is made available. There does exist a number of situations where it must be assumed that a danger exists.

4.2.7.2 2012 Assessment

The relative briefness of this section with respect to the Castle is in no way indicative of its relevant importance, or vulnerability. The Castle is a huge structure, and is in urgent need of a full Conservation Plan in its own right. The density of vegetation at the Castle, the potential instability of its stone walls and the complexity of its form and architectural history have precluded a fuller consideration of the Castle being included in this Conservation and Management Plan.



Figure 4.52 The Gate House into the Castle, Note the level of surviving fine detail and the invasive ivy growth and fallen masonry.

Condition

As no structural or conservation work has been carried out at the Castle in the thirteen years since the above report was written, the same issues apply, with respect to the condition and deterioration of the structure. The concerns about the stability of the structure, have become more urgent. Plants that have been growing from the structure of the wall, and thriving on the environment provided, continue to do so, and there is ample evidence, in the form of recently fallen stones, to illustrate that decay and loss of the structure is on-going.

Integrity

The only recorded changes to the medieval structure of the castle are the alterations to the Castle Wall carried out in the late 16th—early 17th Century, and the insertion of cottages into the structure, probably in the 19th Century. (see Figure 6.01). There is no record of any 19th or 20th Century restoration works which could have compromised the integrity of the structure. Therefore it can be deduced that the structure is of the highest historic integrity.

Vulnerability

To some extent the ivy and other plants growing on and in the walls are holding the structure together, and are best left in-situ until such time as conservation works can proceed. However the numerous scrub trees which are growing within the Castle and adjacent to its walls are an immediate and continuing problem. With each year the underground root systems are extending and may be undermining the walls, possibly lifting the ground and destroying the archaeological stratigraphy.

The Castle is also made vulnerable by the lack of knowledge and understanding about the structure. It is in urgent need of research, investigation and interpretation in parallel with essential works to safeguard its structure.



Figure 4.53 The highest section of Castle walls: A wealth of interesting masonry features, vulnerable wall heads and invasive plant growth.

4.2.8 Parish Church

Description and Integrity

The Parish Church consists of a nave and chancel linked by a pointed arch. According to local historian Jack Kilcline, St John's got its name from a St John who lived on an island in Lough Ree.

A reference on 1837 O.S. map to "R.C. Church" could be indicative of its use for worship, due to its remote location. It could alternatively indicate that it had never been converted to use by the protestant Church of Ireland. It has been suggested that the remains of a small rectangular stone structure to the north of the church may have been a penal chapel, which would favour the earlier explanation.

According to John O' Beirne,¹ there is evidence that the chancel was an addition. This is seen in the masonry of the chancel consisting of split limestone rubble and angled spalls with little or no coursing while the nave consists of roughly coursed limestone. The nave had a door in both the north and south walls but only the openings exist at present. There are the remains of two windows in the southern wall.

John Beirne has also surveyed the ecclesiastical enclosure that surrounds the church. Figure 4.54 is his survey of the area. The enclosure is visible on the aerial photograph in Figure 4. 53.



Figure 4.54 Aerial view of the Parish Church, the enclosure faintly visible



Figure 4.55

The Parish Church, viewed from the Castle: The bank of the ecclesiastical enclosure visible in the foreground

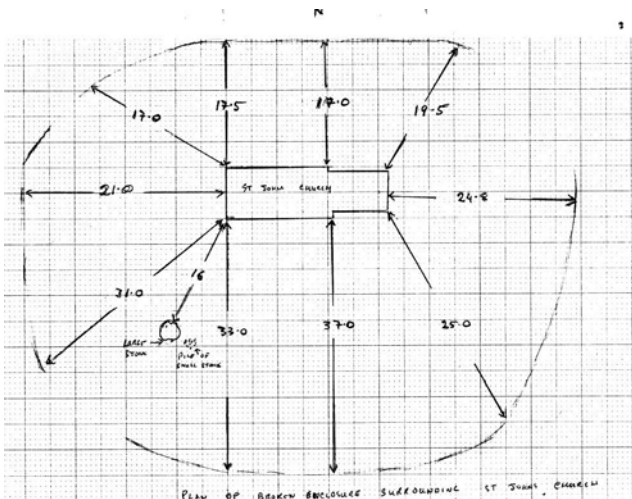


Figure 4.56 John Beirne's survey of the Ecclesiastical Enclosure

Condition

Conservation works to the Parish Church were carried out in 2010. A detailed summary of works is included in Appendix C.

Although the entire structure was in ruinous condition, the chancel arch was identified as the most vulnerable, as well as a very important, element of the surviving building.

Following initial cutting back and killing off of the ivy the arch was found to be in a perilous state. Much of the stonework at the bottom of the arch was loose or had fallen out and there was a danger that the entire arch could be lost. It was literally being held together by the ivy roots.

The brief was to undertake stabilisation work only; to preserve the arch in its current form without rebuilding it conjecturally or otherwise. Scaffolding was erected and the underside of the arch was carefully propped and braced with small sections of timber.



Figure 4.57, 4.58 The Chancel Arch before and after emergency conservation works

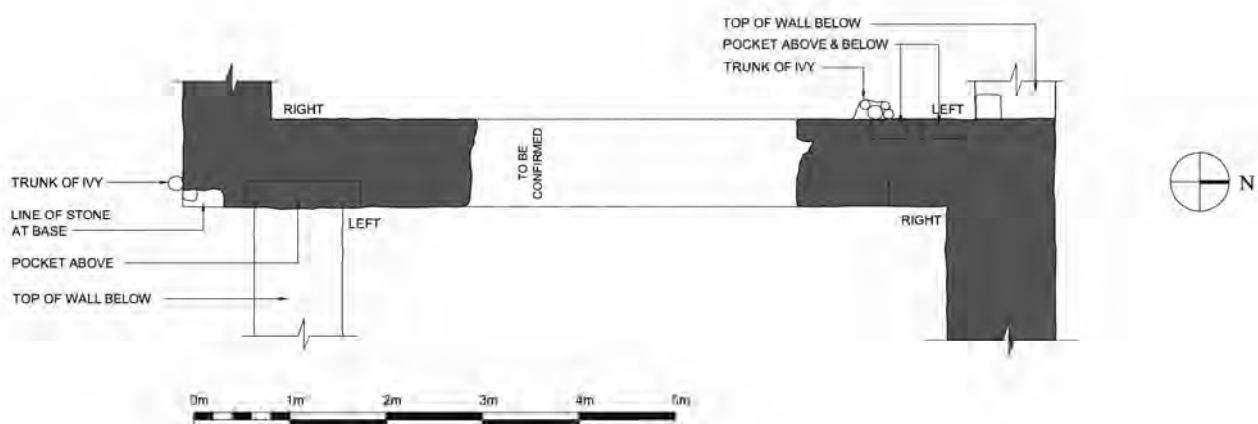


Figure 4.59

Plan of the Chancel Arch, principal subject of the 2010 Conservation Works

Work was carried out in small increments, as the mortar in each section of rebbeded/ repointed stonework had to set before starting to work on the next section; otherwise there would have been a danger of the arch collapsing.

After the work to the chancel arch had been completed a small amount of repair work consisting of localised pointing was carried out to the door and two window openings of the south elevation in order to prevent further loss of stonework. Emergency stonework repairs were carried out to the external southwest corner where cattle had knocked out the stonework.

Vulnerability

The emergency conservation works of 2010 were executed as being absolutely essential and there is still the necessity to carry out other conservation work to the structure of the church. Walls are still in need of stabilisation. There are still piles of fallen masonry adjacent to the walls, which, as well as containing the original rubble stones from the walls could contain elements of cut masonry from windows and doorways. The low wall to the north of the church is in danger of disappearing. Animals like to use masonry corners and doorways as scratching posts, this is a particular problem where the stonework has not yet been stabilised.

The enclosure boundary is hard to identify on the ground, and as such could be vulnerable from works to the land such as ploughing, the formation of footpaths, or fencing works.



Figure 4.60

Aerial view of the Church: 2012

4.2.9 Hospital of St. John the Baptist (Fratres Cruciferi)

Condition and Integrity

Conservation works to the Hospital of St. John the Baptist were carried out in 2009. A detailed summary of works is included in Appendix D.

An earlier archaeological assessment in 2003, by Theresa MacDonald, had identified the south west corner of the building as particularly vulnerable. When the condition of the building was assessed, prior to the 2009 works, it was evident that this corner was being prised apart through vigorous ivy growth which would lead to the eventual collapse and loss of the entire section of the church.

The ivy was killed off and cut back and a full photographic and drawn survey executed. The structural damage caused by the ivy was greater than anticipated necessitating the localised unstitching of the stonework at the corner, the careful removal of the embedded roots and the reassembly of the stonework to match the existing.



Figure 4.61 The South West corner of the Hospital before conservation



Figure 4. 62 The South West corner of the Hospital before conservation

The loose stonework to the two apses was conserved in situ re-mortaring and re-pointing the loose and fallen stonework. The repairs were only localised and no full-scale rebuilding took place.

Vulnerability

The works to the hospital of 2009 only addressed the most urgent works, in order to prevent loss of medieval fabric. It is important that further stabilisation works are carried out to the remaining walls in order to fully safeguard the building's future.

Not only is the hospital building vulnerable, but so too are the graveyard in which it is located, and the Catholic graveyard to the north west. As well as containing important burials, graveslabs and architectural fragments, these burial grounds are also the location of the overall foundation of the Fratres Cruciferi, and are likely to be rich in archaeological evidence.

In 2010 during emergency works to a section of the graveyard wall, which had collapsed a carved stone head was found which had been built into the heart of the wall as ballast. (see Figure 4.66)

Graveyards are also important habitats for wildlife, both flora and fauna.



Figure 4. 63, 64



The Hospital viewed from the North, before and after the conservation works of 2009

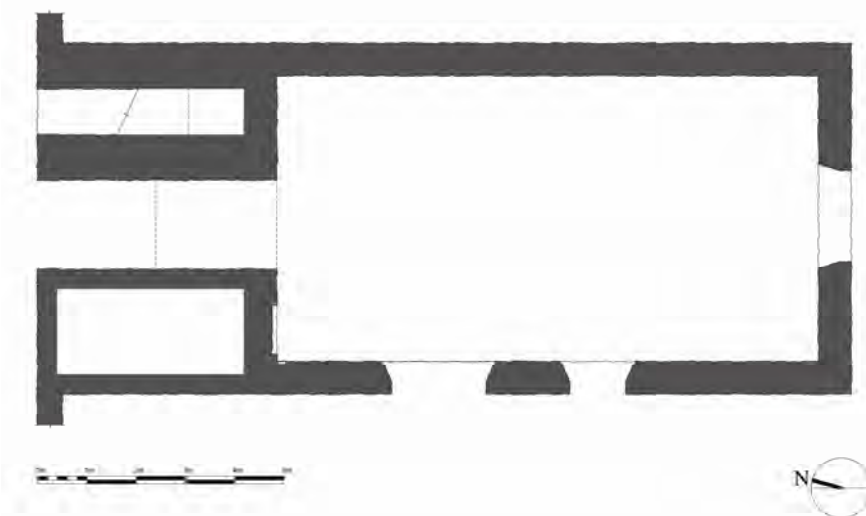


Figure 4. 65



Figure 4.66

Stone Head

4.2.10 Other Features

Promontory Fort / Bank and Ditch System / Ringwork / Fishpond

Condition and Integrity

The remains of the promontory fort and bank and ditch system are integrated into the Castle and its associated defences and it is open to interpretation the date at which they were first formed. The fishpond is probably medieval in origin.

The exact definition of the bank and ditch system has been lost. Whatever bank existed has been used to fill in an area of the ditch. The bank has also been flattened, and possibly ploughed into the general ground level. As a result, much of the integrity of the bank system has been lost. By contrast, the ditch should have maintained much of its subterranean intactness and is likely to contain archaeological material key to the understanding of life in medieval Rinn Dúin.

Vulnerability

Being essentially man-made enhancements of natural land features they are not vulnerable to the same danger of collapse as the stone constructed monuments. However, they are vulnerable in terms of lack of understanding and recognition. They are also vulnerable to damage by heavy farm or construction machinery, particularly given the waterlogged nature of some of the ground. Any proposal to plough the land in this vicinity should be discouraged.



Figure 4.67 The Bank and Ditch System crossing the peninsula, the Fishpond in the background and the Castle on the raised ground of a

Graveyard Wall at the Hospital

Emergency works were completed in 2010, to the enclosing wall to the graveyard at the Hospital, following a partial collapse there. Further work will be necessary to safeguard the wall.

Walled Garden and Bee-Boles

The walled garden and bee-boles date from a later period than the medieval ruins but are still important and in need of conservation. The garden walls are dense with ivy which is damaging the walls and will lead to their eventual collapse if this remains unchecked.



Figure 4.68 Bee-boles: note the ivy trunk penetrating the stonework in the bee-hole

Clearance Cairns

These are vulnerable to being further used as a source of stone for the mending, enhancement or extension of field walls, or for other constructional purposes. It is important that the landowner be made aware of the potential importance of these cairns.



Figure 4.69 The walled garden in the foreground, with the Catholic graveyard beyond, St. John's House and the Hospital and D-shaped

Possible Medieval Field Boundaries

There has been no further investigation, or clarification of these boundaries since the Conservation Plan of 1998.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Andrew Bleasdale and John Conaghan

This part of the Conservation and Management Plan was prepared by Andrew Bleasdale and John Conaghan for the 1998 Conservation Plan. Section 5.7 provides a brief update on the condition of the natural environment of Rinn Dúin in 2012. Any clarifications of the current situation in the body of the text are given in *italics*.

5.1 Introduction

In September 1997, the Heritage Council commissioned an ecological study of an area of woodland at Rinn Dúin, Co. Roscommon. The woodland adjoins Lough Ree and has been included within the proposed Lough Ree SAC (Special Area of Conservation). The primary aim of this study is to determine the extent and quality of the woodland present and to devise a suitable management strategy to ensure the maintenance of the woodland habitat. *SAC established in 1998.*

Scope of the Study

This report will assess the following issues in relation to the woodland at Rinn Dúin:- (a) historical and recent evidence for woodland at Rinn Dúin; (b) the vegetation of the site; (c) the representivity of this woodland type both regionally and nationally; (d) the current farming practices and (e) suitable management strategies.

Location and Environment

Rinn Dúin Wood, Co. Roscommon is located on the western shores of Lough Ree (N 01 54), approximately 13 kilometres north of Athlone (Fig 5.07). The woodland occupies an area of approximately 12 hectares and lies at the tip of the Rinn Dúin peninsula. This peninsula extends into Lough Ree, running in a north-west to south-east direction (Fig 5.01). Map details are as follows: O.S. sheet 1/2 inch: 12; O.S. 1:50,000 No: 33/34; O.S. 1:10,560, Co. Roscommon No: 46.

Climate, Geomorphology and Soil

The mean annual rainfall in the area varies between 800 and 1000 mm (Rohan, 1986). At Birr, some 55 kilometres south of Rinn Dúin, the mean annual rainfall is 875 mm. The annual mean daily air temperature is c. 9.5 C (ibid. 1986). The geology of the site and surrounding areas is comprised of Lower Carboniferous limestone, which is overlain by till. The soil at the site can be described as a sandy clay, with pockets of acid soil in places.

Legal status

The woodland is part of the proposed Lough Ree Natural Heritage Area (Code number 440). Recently the site has been selected as a proposed candidate Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Code number 800000440). *Lough Ree was adopted as a SAC soon after this report was written in 1998.*

Fig. 5.06 shows the location of the site in the context of SPAs, SACs and pNHAs in southern, Co. Roscommon. The site is owned by a local resident, Mr P.J. Grady.

Organisations Involved in Site Conservation

Within the confines of the study area there are a number of prominent archaeological features. The protection of these features is the responsibility of the National Monuments Service. The ecological condition of the site is the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) monitored by the local Wildlife Ranger, Mr Niall Cribben, (087 6228649). The other members of NPWS staff with a local input are Mr Padraig O'Donnell, Deputy Regional Manager (044 934 2661) and Judith Keleman, Regional Manager.

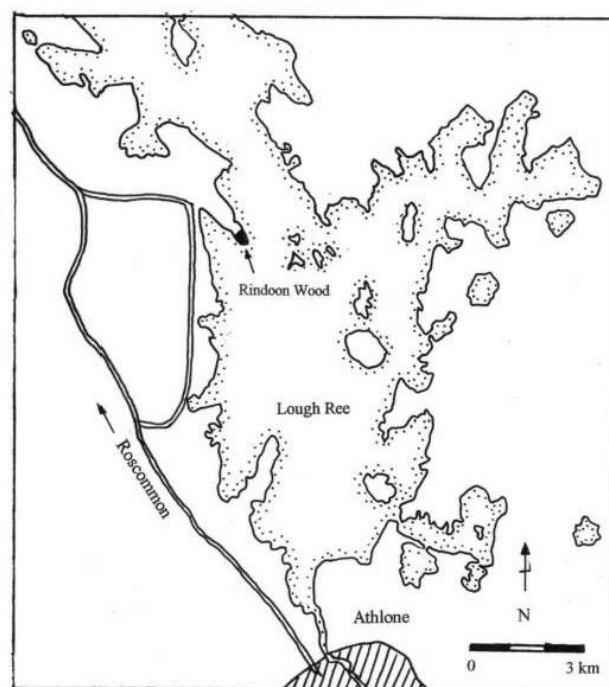


Figure 5.01

Location Map of Rinn Dúin Wood

5.2 Historical and Recent Evidence for Woodland

McCracken (1971) states that there was a good deal of woodland in the past extending from Athlone to the Shannon's source, particularly in the land adjoining Loughs Ree and Allen. She states that "on the westward side of Lough Ree lay the Fews, which stretched westwards to the 500ft contour. Above this altitude the oak gave place to hazel scrub". County Roscommon had 6% cover of woodland during the Civil Survey of Ireland in 1654-6, second only to Co. Clare (7%) (ibid.).

It would appear that the area around Lough Ree was historically a good locus for semi-natural native woodland. At present, however, only a few isolated remnants remain, most notably St John's Wood, Rinn Dúin Wood and Hare Island, which lies in the southern part of Lough Ree (S. Heery, pers. comm.).

It has been suggested by Rackham (1995), a noted British woodland expert, that the woodland at Rinn Dúin and the closely associated St John's Wood, together constitute a particularly fine example of ancient woodland. He states that these are 'the best preserved ancient woods' that he has seen in Ireland. He noted the inclusion of these woods in the Civil Survey of 1656, suggesting a continuity of woodland cover at the site since that time.

The proximity of the woodland to the Medieval town of Rinn Dúin suggests that the woodland was actively managed in the Middle Ages and perhaps before this. The extent of the wood at Rinn Dúin is shown on both the 1836 (Figure 6.04) and 1898 Ordnance Survey maps (Figure 5.04) and from these it is seen that the extent of woodland cover did not change markedly during that time period.

Furthermore, when the 1898 map is compared with the 1975 aerial photograph, (Figure 5.02) little, if any change in woodland cover can be discerned. This suggests that from 1836 to 1975 the extent of woodland cover at Rinn Dúin remained relatively unchanged. When the 1975 and 1995 (Figure 5.02) aerial photographs are compared, however, it is seen that approximately 1.5 hectares of woodland/scrub along the north-western edge of the woodland have been reclaimed. Many of these trees have been incorporated into a large bank which runs in an east-west direction across the peninsula.

Thus, in conclusion, it can be stated conclusively that the woodland at Rinn Dúin was already well established in 1836, which suggests that the woodland has been in existence for at least the last 200 years. For most of the intervening time woodland cover has remained constant and it is only within the last 20 years that substantial clearance of woodland has occurred.

Land Use

Good quality agricultural grassland, which is presently grazed by both cattle and sheep, lies to the north-west of the wood while the remainder of the woodland is surrounded by open water (Figure 5.03). The woodland is currently being grazed by Mr. Grady's livestock and there is no stockproof boundary between the adjacent farmland and the woodland proper.

Stephen Heery (pers. comm.) related that the main locus of woodland in the Lough Ree SAC is on the lake islands and that the only two good examples of intact woodland on the lake shore are St John's Wood and Rinn Dúin Wood. At present the entire woodland area at Rinn Dúin is in poor condition due to heavy grazing and trampling by cattle. The cattle appear to have unrestricted access to the woodland area and, as a result, tree regeneration is poor throughout with few seedlings or saplings noted during the survey. The cattle disturbance may also account for the large numbers of ruderal species, e.g. *Urtica dioica* and *Lapsana communis*, present in the ground flora of Rinn Dúin (see following section).

Since 1998 Mr. Grady has built a large stock shed which is now being used for over-wintering of his cattle, so the woodland is no longer being used for this purpose. He no longer places any feeders within the woodland. There is currently only light grazing of the woodland and shores by sheep. This change has resulted in a marked improvement of the quality of the woodland, with regeneration of trees and improvement in ground flora. However there has been no scientific monitoring of the regeneration which would be valuable.



Figure 5.02 Aerial photographs of the Rinn Dúin peninsula in 1975 (above) and 1995 (below). Note the decrease in woodland cover along the northern edge of the woodland, the decrease in scrub along the western side of the peninsula and the general decrease in tree / shrub cover in the hedgerows in the time between the two photographs.

5.3 Vegetation of the Woodland and Associated Habitats

Survey Method

A field survey of the woodland at Rinn Dúin was conducted in September 1997. The primary aim of the survey was to assess the ecological status of the site in terms of flora and habitat quality/diversity. A list of higher plants and cryptogams for the woodland proper is presented in 5.8.1. This list is by no means exhaustive and further survey at the site will invariably add to this list. Target notes were recorded in a variety of locations in order to give an outline of the woodland and main associated habitats. (See 5.8.2 and Figure 5.05).

Detailed descriptions (relevé's) of the woodland vegetation were made at three locations within Rinn Dúin woodland (Figure 5.05) and at one location in St John's Wood (Table 1). Vegetation was recorded using the Braun-Blanquet system of vegetation description and cover abundance estimated using the Domin scale (Mueller-Dombois and Ellenberg, 1974).

The three Rinn Dúin relevé's are very similar in structure and composition and it is felt that these samples gave a good representation of the woodland proper. In addition, nine relevé's (Cover/abundance values in these relevés is expressed using the Braun-Blanquet scale) from St. John's Wood, recorded in 1986 were kindly given to us by Dr Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington, University College Galway (Table 2).

A habitat map of the woodland and surrounding area was compiled with the aid of a recent aerial photograph acquired from the Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1995, 1:40,000) and the relevant 1898 Ordnance Survey. Ground photographs were taken at the time of survey.

Vegetation Description

The habitats present at the study area can be divided into three broad types. These are as follows.

1. Hazel woodland/scrub (in terms of surface area, by far the main habitat present).
2. Rocky lake shore (variants noted as one moves inland).
3. Aquatic communities (mostly emergent swamp vegetation).

Along the lake edge there is a rather abrupt and well defined zonation from open water with sparse aquatic vegetation dominated by *Eleocharis palustris*, to rocky shore, which supports a species-rich vegetation type dominated by *Potentilla anserina*, *Agrostis stolonifera* and *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (See Target Note 1). There is then a gradual transition to dry grassland, low scrub woodland and finally to tall woodland.

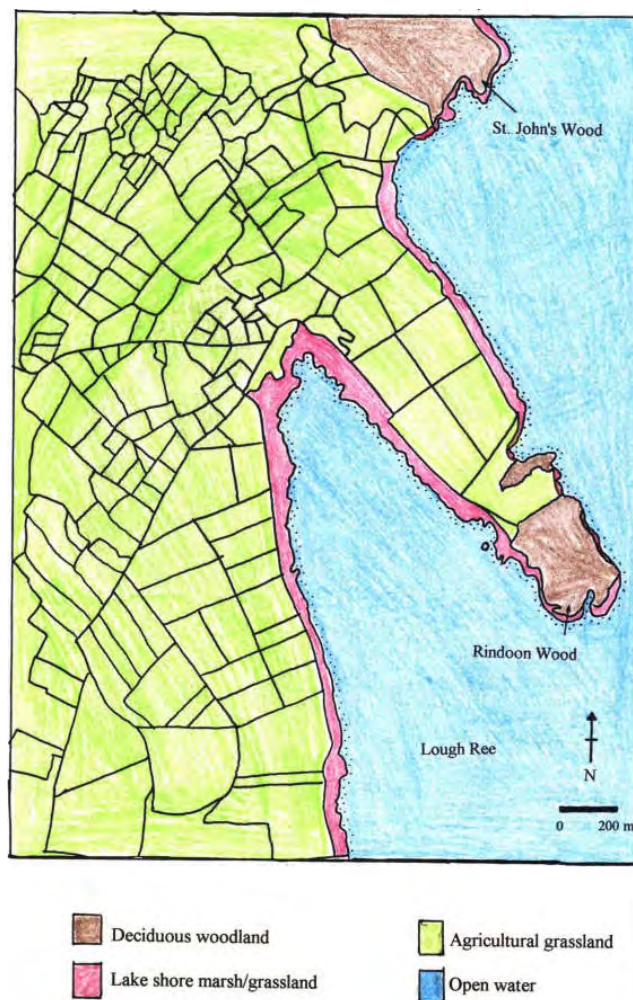


Figure 5.03

Habitat Map of Rinn Dúin Wood and Environs

The wetland vegetation along the lake shore is of particular ecological interest due to its species-richness and the presence of *Teucrium scordium*, a nationally rare plant which in Ireland, which is virtually confined to the shores of Lough Ree and Lough Derg.

In general terms, the woodland can be described as a low-growing *Corylus avellana* (Hazel) wood which has no shrub layer and an open ground layer. Other tree species present include *Fraxinus excelsior* (Ash), *Sorbus aucuparia*; *Quercus robur* (English oak), *Crataegus mongyna* and *Populus tremula*, however with the exception of *Fraxinus*, these species are generally minor components of the canopy. The average height of the canopy varies between 8 and 15m, however, when present, individual trees of *Fraxinus* or *Quercus* may exceed 15m.

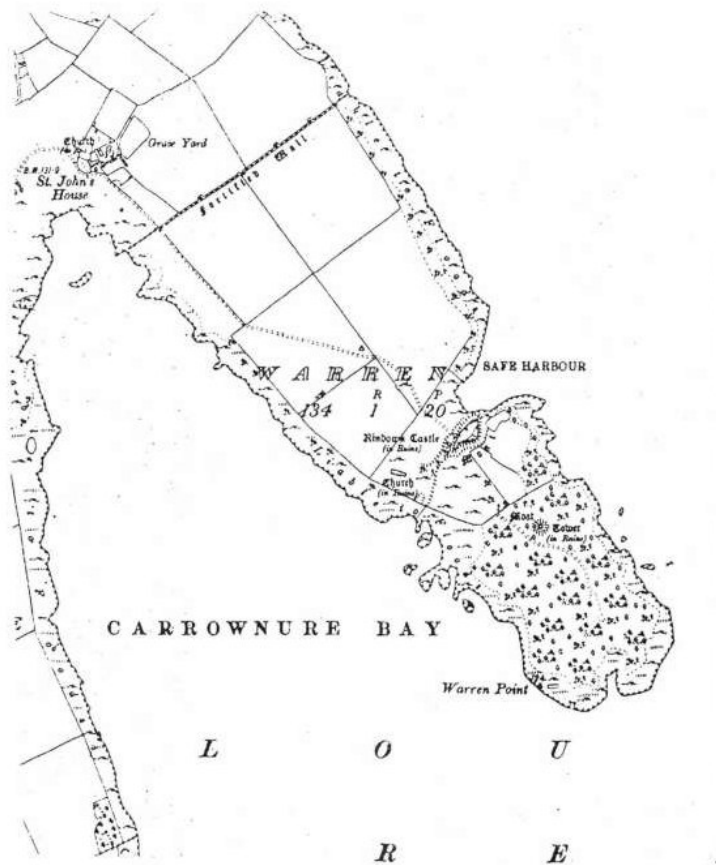


Figure 5.04

The 1898 Ordnance Survey Map of Rinn Dúin Peninsula and Wood

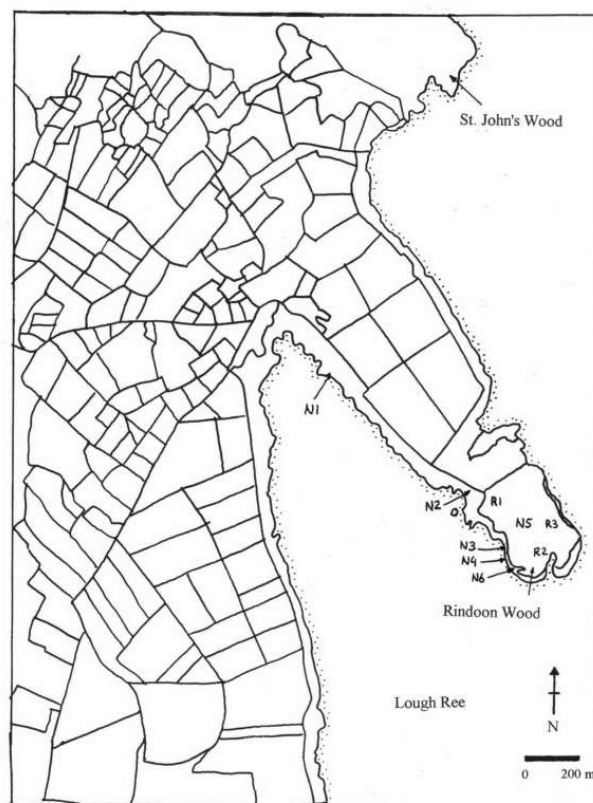


Figure 5.05

Target Note and Relevé Location

In terms of species composition, the associated ground flora is rather uniform throughout the woodland with herb cover ranging between 50 and 75%. The most frequent vascular species in the ground layer include:

Hedera helix, *Viola riviniana*; *Sanicula europaea*, *Geum urbanum*, *Geranium robertianum*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Veronica chamaedrys*; *Lapsana communis*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Circaea lutetiana* and *Urtica dioica*.

Moss cover is low, covering on average c. 20% of the ground and species diversity is also low. The most commonly occurring species is *Thamobryum alopecurum* with *Brachythecium rutabulum*, *Plagiomnium undulatum* and *Eurhynchium striatum* occurring less frequently.

In terms of phytosociological affinities this vegetation is clearly ascribable to the *Corylo-Fraxinetum*, which is placed in the alliance *Circaco*. The association has been described fully from Ireland by Kelly and Kirby (1982) and they divided the association into 3 floristically distinct sub-associations, the *typicum*, the *neckereto sum* and the *veronicetosum*. On the basis of structure and floristic composition it is clear that the woodland at Rindoon is most similar to the *typicum* sub-association which is the most species-poor of the three subassociations.

When comparison are made with the recently described National Vegetation Classification system in Britain (Rodwell, 1991) it is seen that the woodland has a relatively close affinity with the typical subcommunity of the *Fraxinus excelsior*-*Sorbus aucuparia* *Mercurialis perennis* community (W9).

Table One

Quadrat code	Rindoon 1	Rindoon 2	Rindoon 3	John's Wood 1
Quadrat size (m)	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10
Tree cover (%)	85	95	85	95
Tree height (m)	6 to 8	12 to 15	10 to 18 (Av. 13)	8 to 10
Herb cover (%)	75	65	50	Jan-00
Herb height (cm)	c. 20	c. 25	c. 15	30
Bryophyte cover (%)	25	17	20	100
Bryophyte height (cm)	<5	<5	<5	10
Bare ground/ litter	15	30	25	0
No. of species	25	23	24	14
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	9	8	8	9
<i>Hedera helix</i>	4	5	1	7
<i>Thamnobryum alopecurum</i>	5	5	4	
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	5	5	4	
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	5	3	5	
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	4	5	4	
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	4	3	5	
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	4	4	3	
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	4	4	1	
<i>Lapsana communis</i>	3	3	3	
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	3	1		6
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	2		1	1
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>		6	7	4
<i>Carex sylvatica</i>		1	1	1
<i>Sanicula europea</i>	5	5		
<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	3	3		
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	1	3		
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	1	+		
<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>	3		4	
<i>Plagiomnium affine</i>			6	

Table One (cont.)

Quadrat code	Rindoon 1	Rindoon 2	Rindoon 3	John's Wood 1
Agrostis Cap / 1 / ads		5	6	
Rumex sanguineus		5	2	
Hyacinthoides non-scripta		1	+	
Euonymus europaeus		1	3	6
Crataegus monogyna (seedlings)			1	4
Prunus spinosa	5			
Agrostis can/na	5			
Dactylis glomerata	3			
Tortula spp	3			
Orobanch hederæ	2			
Fraxinus excelsior (seedlings)	1			
Torilis japonica	1			
Arum maculatum	1			
Populus tremula		3		
Stellaria media		1		
Eurhynchium striatum			3	
Brachythecium rutabulum			3	
Lysmachia nemorum			1	
Plagiochila asplenoides			1	
Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus				8
Dryopteris dilatata				4
Quercus robur				4
Thuidium tamariscinum				4
Dryopteris filix- mas				3
Lonicera periclymenum				1

Comparisons with St. John's Wood

For comparative purposes, St. John's Wood (also part of the Lough Ree SAC and located some 3km to the north of Rinn Dúin, Figure 5.07) was also visited. A 10 x 10m relevé was described just off the main woodland path in the northern part of the woodland (see column 4 of Table 1). This relevé is augmented by data recorded in 1986 by Dr Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington (Table 2).

St John's Wood has long been recognised as being of considerable scientific importance and Rinn Dúin should be viewed as an extension of this larger woodland area. Prior to the designation of Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), St John's Wood was deemed to be an Area of Scientific Interest (ASI) of International Importance (the only one in Co. Roscommon). The largest trees in the woodland are *Quercus robur* (English Oak), recently felled examples of which, have been dated to 1895-1930 (Daniel Kelly, pers. comm.). The canopy of the woodland consists mostly of *Corylus avellana* (Hazel), interspersed with *Fraxinus excelsior* (Ash), *Salix* spp. (Willows) and numerous other indigenous species including *Taxus baccata* (Yew). The ground flora includes two rare saprophytes, *Lathraea squamaria* (Toothwort) and *Neottia nidus-avis* (Bird's-nest Orchid), which are thought to be indicators of ancient woodland (Rackham, 1980).

Close to the shores of Lough Ree there is an interesting area of fen woodland which contains the trees/shrubs *Frangula alnus* (Alder Buckthorn), *Rhamnus cathartica* (Buckthorn) and *Prunus padus* (Bird Cherry) (see columns 7-9, Table 2). Both *Frangula alnus* and *Prunus padus* are protected under the 1987 Flora Protection Order (Curtis and McGough, 1988) At St. John's Wood the average number of species in a 10 x 10 relevé was only 14 compared to an average of 24 at Rindoon (in the 1997 quadrats). Although only one relevé was recorded in St. John's Wood during the present survey, it is considered to be reasonably representative of the woodland vegetation present. The observed reduction in species number at St. John's Wood is probably due to the current low levels of grazing within the woodland. This low grazing pressure has allowed a thick moss carpet to develop and, as a result, vascular species find it difficult to germinate and grow. In the dry St. John's Wood quadrats (relevé's 1-6) recorded in 1986, however, the average number of species per relevé is 20.

From these findings it appears that both Rinn Dúin and St John's Wood are being improperly managed. Rinn Dúin is being overgrazed at present, resulting in a poor understorey development and poor tree regeneration. On the other hand, St John's Wood is largely ungrazed and, as a result, the diversity and abundance of certain plant species appears to have diminished between 1986 and 1997, although further research is needed in this area.

Table Two

Quadrat Code	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Quadrat Size (m)	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10
No. of Species	23	15	21	30	18	18	18	13	9
Canopy Species									
<i>Quercus Robur</i>	2	3	1	1	2	3	2	2	*
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	*	*		2	2	1	2		*
<i>Betula pubescens</i>		*			*	2			*
<i>Ulmus glabra</i>							1		
<i>Frangula alnus</i>									4
Shrub Species									
<i>Viburnum opulus</i>			*	*	1	1			*
<i>Coryllus avellana</i>	2	2	4	3	*	1	1	2	
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	2	2	*	3	1		3	3	
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	*	1	*	*	*	1		2	
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>		1	2	1		1		1	
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	*		*			*			
<i>Prunus padus</i>				*	2	3			1
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>		*	*	1					*
<i>Salix atrocinerea</i>					2				
<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>						1			
Ground Species									
<i>Hedera helix</i>	1	3	2	2	2	*	3	2	
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	1		1	*	1	*	1		
<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	3		2	1	2	*	1		
<i>Rosa spp.</i>				*					
<i>Rubus saxatile</i>	1					1			
Fern Species									
<i>Dryopteris filixmas</i>	1			*					
<i>Dryopteris diltata</i>	1		1	1	1		*		
<i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i>	*			*	*		*	3	
<i>Athyrium filixfemina</i>	*			1					
<i>Dryopteris aemula</i>	*			*	*				
<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>			1						
<i>Dryopteris pseudomas</i>		*	*				1		
Other Herbs									
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	1								
<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	*		*	1			1		
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	*	*		1	1	1			
<i>Arum maculatum</i>		*	*	1			*		
<i>Orchis mascula</i>	*			*			1		
<i>Viola spp.</i>				*		2			
<i>Allium ursinum</i>				1					

Table Two (cont.)

Quadrat Code	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Quadrat Size (m)	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10	10 x 10
Other Herbs (cont.)									
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i>				*			*	4	
<i>Succisa pratensis</i>									1
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>		*						*	
<i>Brachypodium sylvatica</i>						*			
Moss Species									
<i>Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus</i>	2		2	3	1	4	2		3
<i>Thamnobryum alopecurum</i>	1	1	2	1			2	1	
<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>	3		2	2			2	1	
<i>Eurhynchium praelongum</i>	*	2	1						
<i>Mnium hornum</i>					*				
<i>Plagochila asplenoides</i>	1			1				1	
<i>Polytrichum spp.</i>								1	
<i>Lophocolea cuspidatum</i>				*					
* = <1% cover/a									

5.4 Assessment of SAC Suitability

The site is currently within the Lough Ree SAC and SPA (providing protection for birds in Lough Ree). See Figure 5.06. The generic Conservation Objectives for the Lough Ree SAC are given in 5.8.4. The 1998 assessment is still relevant in providing a clear description of the qualities of the site.

Background

As Rinn Dúin Wood has been designated part of a larger SAC, Article 6.1 of the Habitats Directive requires that "member states shall establish the necessary conservation measures involving, if needs be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans, and appropriate statutory, administrative and contractual measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the natural habitat types in Annex I and the species in Annex II present on the sites". In part fulfilment of this directive, a management plan for all of the Lough Ree SAC has been compiled by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). In this plan mention was made of the retention of woodland habitats within the site, but it was felt that a separate management plan is required for the appropriate management of each individual woodland area. To this end, the Heritage Council commissioned a report on the SAC status of Rinn Dúin woodland, incorporating possible management options.

Site Quality

The intrinsic qualities of the site and its ecological value in terms of botanical diversity and other criteria have been assessed under the following criteria:

Naturalness, Size and Diversity of Habitat

In common with most semi-natural woodland sites in Ireland, Rinn Dúin Wood has been modified by grazing in the past and would not be considered as a wholly natural site. It must be noted, however, that lack of large scale disturbance at some stage in the past is very rare in woodlands in western Europe (Fuller and Peterken, 1995).

At present the woodland does not appear to have a particularly high species diversity in terms of its woodland flora but the site has the potential to recover upon the implementation of a sensitive woodland management plan. In a regional and national sense, Rindoon woodland is one of the few woodlands for which there is long-term documentary evidence and for this reason alone the woodland must be deemed to be of considerable importance.

The site (c. 12 ha) is small in size, however areas of semi-natural woodland in excess of 12 hectares are relatively rare in the Irish midlands. Overall, there is a moderate habitat diversity at the site, vis-à-vis the size of the

site. Three broad habitat types are identified, as discussed in the previous section. The transitions/zonations from wetland to woodland vegetation are of particular interest.

Presence of Rare Species

The only nationally rare plant species encountered during survey was *Teucrium scordium*. However, the survey was conducted in September and there is a possibility that some of the plant species had died back at that stage. A survey of the woodland during the months of June or July is recommended. It must also be pointed out that the heavy grazing at the site mitigates against the development of a varied and species-rich woodland ground flora. It is possible that future reduction of grazing pressure at the site may lead to the eventual recruitment of rare/protected species, e.g. *Lathraea squamaria*, *Neottia nidus-avis*, *Frangula alnus* and *Prunus padus*, from the nearby St John's Wood.

Habitat Rarity

Due mainly to agricultural reclamation, this woodland habitat is becoming increasingly less common in an area that would have had a good woodland cover in the past. Outside of the Burren region of Co. Clare and parts of the west midlands, intact examples of this habitat are relatively rare in Ireland (Kelly and Kirby, 1982).

Proximity to Other Sites of Interest

Rinn Dúin Wood is situated on the shores of Lough Ree which contains a number of important habitats listed as worthy of conservation by the European Union, namely Natural Eutrophic Lakes, Alkaline Fens, Old Oak Woodlands, Orchid-Rich Calcareous Grasslands and Residual Alluvial Forests. As previously discussed, St. John's Wood is situated close to Rinn Dúin and it is possible that these isolated woodland fragments were part of a larger woodland complex in the past.

Sensitivity to Disturbance and Vulnerability

All woodlands are sensitive to disturbance, particularly when activities severely alter the structure and composition of the ground flora and shrub layer. At Rinn Dúin, the structure of the woodland proper has been severely damaged recently by heavy grazing throughout the site. However, the woodland has the potential to recover, as the canopy is still relatively intact and it is likely that the seed bank of woodland species is still present.

Educational, Amenity and Scenic Value

This site and its environs are relatively easy to access and thus the complex is of high educational value, especially in terms of ecological and archaeological interest. At present the archaeological remains on the peninsula are visited by people, although visitors of this nature are trespassing. The setting of the site, at the end of a peninsula which juts into Lough Ree, is exceptional.

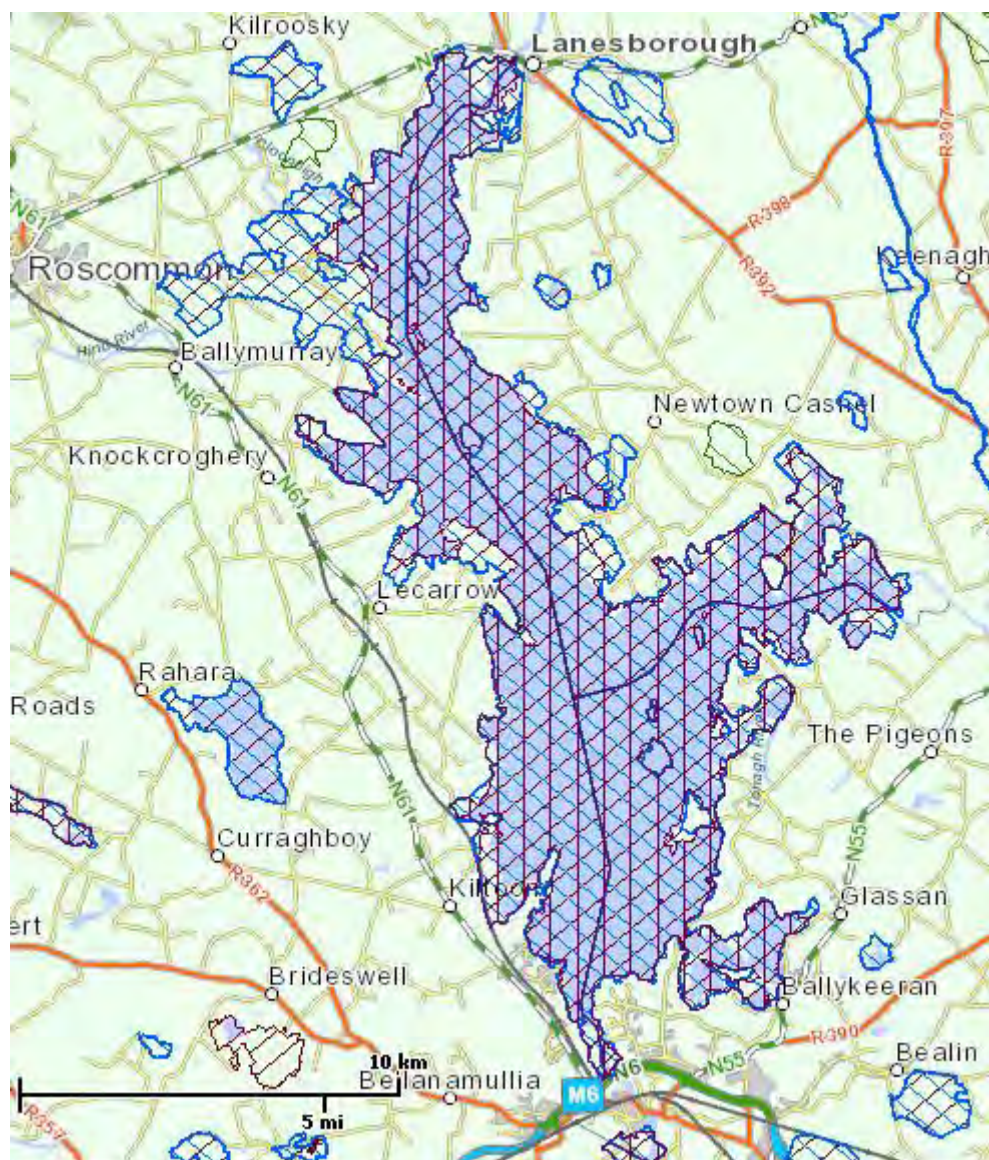


Figure 5.06

Map describing the extent of SPAs, SACs and pNHAs in the Lough Ree Area.

5.5 Management Recommendations

Background

In the previous section, it was established that the site should be retained as part of the Lough Ree SAC because of its status as an ancient woodland. The woodland is currently being quite heavily grazed, however, and the understorey is in poor condition. If the woodland is to recover, strict management guidelines will have to be adhered to.

Objectives of Management

The following objectives are deemed to be achievable: to protect the site from further damage;

- to allow regeneration of the woodland flora through appropriate management strategies;
- to liaise and co-operate with the landowner in gaining an appreciation of the importance of the woodland;
- to monitor the recovery of the woodland in the short, medium and long term, and to provide for the acceptable use of the site (education, research, demonstration etc.).

There are some constraints to the achievement of these aspirations. The major obstacle is that the site is not state owned/managed and therefore it is less easy to implement the desired management strategies. A mitigating factor, however, is the designation of the site as an SAC and therefore the landowner is obliged to manage the site in an environmentally friendly manner. Compensation for any potential loss of income will be provided, either through the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS) or as a separate SAC payment.

Management Strategies

The management of the site is now outlined in relation to the objectives mentioned above:

- (1) Protection of the site from further damage.
 - Exclude all domesticated grazing animals from the woodland for a period of five years.
 - Do not allow the removal of scrub or woodland for agricultural purposes.
 - No felling of trees.
- (2) Regeneration of the woodland flora.
 - Grazing may be permissible at low stocking intensities after an initial five year recovery period, provided there is a significant improvement in cover and diversity of the woodland flora.
 - Only limited activity and access should be permitted in the woodland proper to prevent disturbance.

- (3) To liaise and co-operate with the landowner and the community in gaining an appreciation of the importance of the woodland.
 - Information should be given to the landowner explaining the ecological importance of the site and his role in managing it. The landowner should be included in the management planning process.
 - Participation by the farmer in the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS) should be encouraged.
 - Talks should be held with relevant interested parties and groups, giving them more detailed information on management and obtaining their support.
- (4) To monitor the recovery of the woodland in the short, medium and long term.
 - Regular field checks should be carried out to monitor woodland recovery, change in botanical composition and the impacts of the management programme. The management regime will need to be revised at some stage based on observations of initial woodland recovery.
- 5) To provide for acceptable use of the site (education, research, demonstration etc.).
 - If the woodland recovers sufficiently, then the site would be a valuable resource in terms of education and research. The site provides a locus for a variety of interests; ecological, historical and archaeological, and would be a useful study site for third level students. The implementation of a management regime would provide a useful focal point for discussion on the restoration of a site of conservation interest.

Discussion

The major management issue here is the use of the woodland for grazing and shelter by the landowner. Heavy grazing is, without doubt, having a detrimental effect on the habitat structure and botanical diversity of the woodland. Below the canopy, the characteristic woodland stratification of shrub and ground layers are no longer evident. Visible signs of heavy grazing and poaching are visible throughout the woodland at present. In view of this damage it is imperative that some management priorities should be established and a woodland management plan adhered to.

The main priorities for the management of this woodland are as follows.

1. The removal of grazing pressure for at least five years or until the vegetation recovers.
2. Full liaison with the owner.
3. A review of the progress of the management regime after two years to reassess the progress.

The primary and initial concern is to address the serious grazing problem that exists in the woodland. To this end, the woodland should be fenced off to exclude grazing animals for a period of at least five years. The woodland will undoubtedly recover in time and management techniques can be applied to control the encroachment of exotic species such as beech and sycamore.

A programme of coppicing would not be advisable at this stage as it would be quite labour intensive. There is already a high cover of hazel at the site and coppicing may lead to an increase in hazel cover at the expense of other species. The farmer presumably values the woodland not only as a source of grazing for his stock but also as shelter for his cattle. It may be possible to allow cattle into a narrow band of woodland close to the agricultural ground along the northern margin of the wood for shelter over the initial five years. After an initial two year period, the condition of the woodland should be reassessed and vegetation recovery evaluated and reviewed. It may be desirable at some stage in the future to allow light stocking to take place in the woodland, under a controlled and monitored system of management. The farmer, however, will be obliged to control the timing and extent of any future stocking of the woodland because of the woodlands SAC status. In addition, any further clearance of woodland or scrub would not be permitted.

Initial impressions would suggest that the farmer should consider entering the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS) and benefit from the NHA and SAC payments that are available to manage these high priority conservation sites. The basic REPS payment is £50/acre, with an additional top up of £12/acre for NHA land, up to a ceiling of 100 acres. An additional £15/acre is paid on SAC land. The farmer, therefore, would qualify for £77/acre on and up to 100 acres if he entered REPS.

He would also be obliged to adopt a grassland management plan, a watercourse protection plan, a farm and field boundary maintenance plan, a plan to retain archaeological and historical features on the farm and, importantly for this site, a plan for the retention of wildlife habitats.

The major area of concern for many farmers entering REPS is Measure 1, i.e. the waste management, liming and fertilisation section of the plan. The control of farmyard pollution may require a significant capital outlay on items such as slatted houses, effluent tanks and adequate housing. Assuming that pollution in the farmyard is already under control and that the farmer is not overstocking the rest of his land, he should have no problem entering the REP scheme. Under Measure 4, however, the farmer would be obliged to manage any habitats on his farm in accordance with NPWS specifications (see list

of notifiable operations for woodlands and scrub in 2.8.3). The current management of the woodland is not in compliance with REPS specifications and the farmer would have to adopt a management plan similar to that suggested above in order to participate.

If the farmer does not wish to enter REPS, he can still get an SAC payment but he would be obliged to have a management plan drawn up for his SAC lands by NPWS staff. This would include all of the woodland and the lake shore around the peninsula. Again, the priority here would be to improve the condition of the woodland. It is suggested that, irrespective of which option the farmer takes, he will be obliged to manage the woodland in a sensitive and environmentally friendly way in the future.

For current status of payments see 5.7 below. For the current farming practices of Mr. Grady see 5.7 below and 5.2 above.

5.6 Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank those people who gave freely of their time to discuss management issues in relation to the woodland at Rinn Dúin. We would especially like to thank Dr Micheline Sheehy Skeffington, Dept. of Botany, University College Galway, who allowed us to use relevé's collected by her students in St. John's Wood in 1986. This data provided a useful comparison with the floristic data from the nearby Rinn Dúin Wood.

Dr Daniel Kelly, School of Botany, Trinity College Dublin kindly gave us his impressions of St. John's Wood and listed some of the species he had noted on his numerous visits there. We would also like to express our thanks to Dr Alleen O'Sullivan, National Parks and Wildlife Service, and Mr Stephen Heery for giving us their insights into the extent of semi-natural woodland in the area. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Heritage Council for commissioning this project.

5.7 2012 Update

The farmer P.J. Grady is currently in receipt of REPS 4 payments which run until 2014. At the time of writing it has not been clarified the nature of the payment scheme that will be introduced to replace REPS 4. In order to continue the good husbandry of the land, for the mutual benefit of both the wildlife interests of the land, and those of the farmer, it is essential that such schemes continue. Mr. Grady currently receives advice from Teagasc. This service is invaluable if the farmer, and the land, are to benefit from the intricate payment schemes made available by the government and the EU.

Teagasc view the current status of the land as an exemplar of the land being used for the mutual interests of wildlife, heritage and farming.

As an SPA and SAC, the site is currently monitored on an annual basis by the NPWS. Any more in depth monitoring of the regeneration of the woodland, as recommended above, would, however, require additional funding.

There is a recorded resident population of around 200 bats recorded around St. John's House and the Hospital of St. John the Baptist. Species include Liesler's, Daubentons and Pipistrelle. The Rinn Dúin peninsula is ideal bat country; combining trees, darkness and water. It will therefore be essential to carry out bat surveys, apply for statutory derogation orders, and plan works to the ruins, with respect to the life cycle of any resident bats. This could be a major issue at the Castle.

There are also important populations of common terns and scoters nesting on the nearby Black Islands.

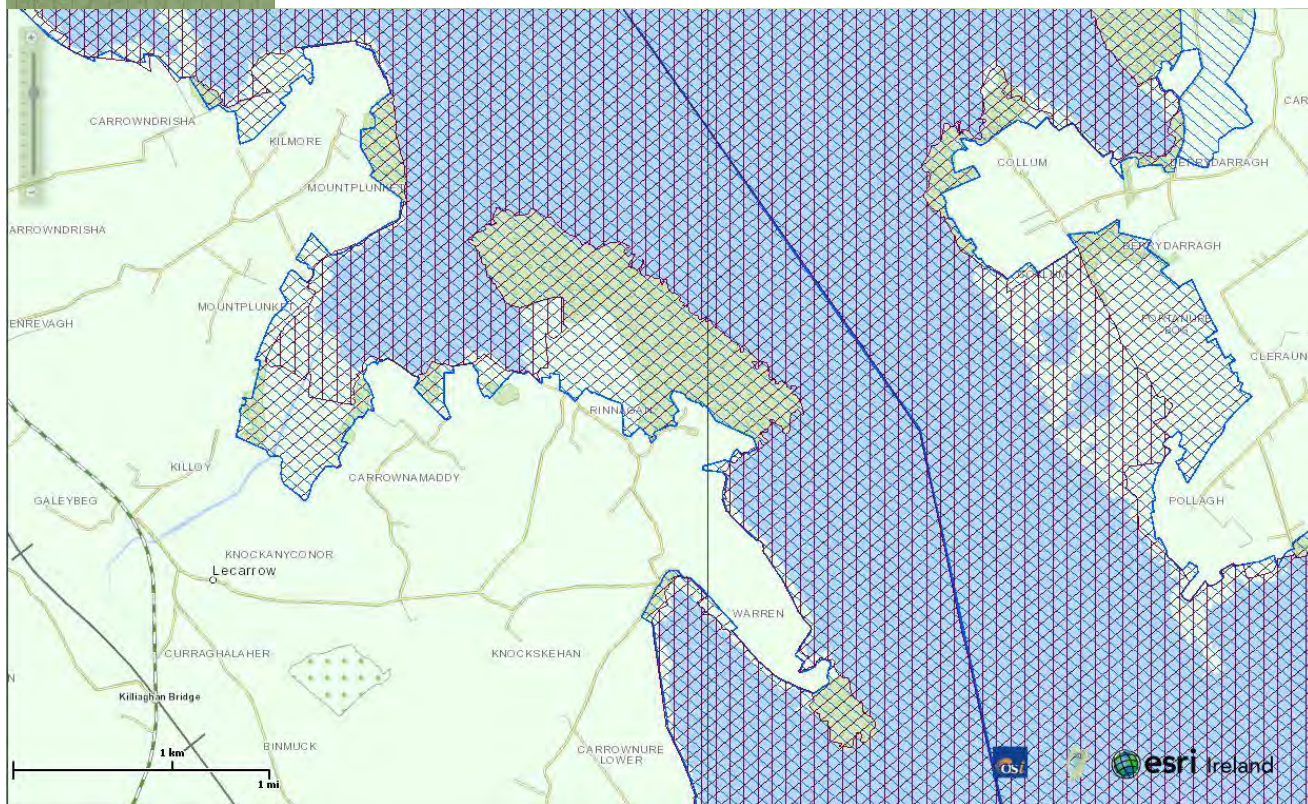


Figure 5.07 Map describing the extent of SPA, SAC and pNHA in proximity to Rinn Dúin. Note St. John's Wood to the north and the Black Islands to the South East.

5.8 Supporting Information

5.8.1 List of Plant Species Recorded within Rindoon Wood

Canopy species

Fraxinus excelsior; Populus tremula; Quercus robur

Low Canopy /Shrub species

Acer pseudoplatanus; Alnus glutinosa;
Betula pubescens; Corylus avellana; Crataegus
monogyna; Euonymus europaeus; Prunus spinosa;
Rhamnus catharticus; Salix cinerea; Viburnum opulus

Grass species

Agrostis capillaris; Agrostis canina; Dactylis glomerata

Sedge species

Carex sylvatica

Ground species

Hedera helix; Lonicera periclymenum;
Rubus fruticosus agg.

Pteridophyta (Ferns)

Divopteris dilitata; Dryoptensfilix-mas

Understorey herbs

Arum maculatum; *Circaea lutetiana*; *Fragaria vesca*; *Geranium robertianum*; *Geum urbanum*; *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*; *Lapsana communis*; *Lysimachia nemorum*; *Orobancha hederaceae*; *Oxalis acetosella*; *Primula vulgaris*; *Rumex sanguineus*; *Sanicula europea*; *Stellaria media*; *Taraxacum officinale*; *Torilis japonica*; *Urtica dioica*; *Viola riviniana*; *Veronica chamaedrys*; *Vicia sepium*; *Glechoma hederacea*

Mosses and Liverworts

Brachythecium rutabulum; *Eurhynchium praelongum*; *Eurhynchium striatum*; *Plagiochila asplenoides*; *Plagiomnium undulatum*; *Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus*; *Thamnobryum alopecurum*; *Uluidium tamariscinum*; *Tortula* spp.

5.8.2 Ecological Target Notes

For locations see Figure 6.04

N1

The rocky lake shore at this point along the lake edge contains a well developed flora which is dominated by *Mentha aquatica*, *Littorella uniflora* and *Potentilla anserina*. Other common species include *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Juncus articulatus*, *Achillea ptarmica*, *Senecio aquaticus*, *Carex demissa*, *Leucanthemum vulgare*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Carex nigra*, *Leontodon autumnalis*, *Lythium salicaria*, *Rumex crispus*, *Equisetum palustre*, *Polygonum maculosa*, *Filipendula ulmaria* and *Linum catharticum*. The prominent black moss *Cinclidotus fontinaloides* covers boulders in the flood zone of the lake edge. The shallow water along the edge of the lake is dominated by patches of low growing *Eleocharis palustris* swamp. There are few associated species apart from *Mentha aquatica*, *Scirpus lacustris* and *Juncus articulatus*.

N2

The dry, semi-natural grassland in from the lake edge is dominated by the grasses *Cynosurus cristatus* and *Agrostis capillaris* with *Thymus repens* also abundant. Other common grassland species include *Luzula campestris*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Briza media*, *Cardamine pratensis*; *Ranunculus acris*, *Cynosurus cristatus*, *Cerastium fontanum*, *Galium verum*, *Hieracium pilosella*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Bellis perennis*, *Lolium perenne*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Trifolium pratense* and *Rumex acetosa*.

N3

Between the lake shore and the closed woodland, there is a narrow (3 to 5m) zone of species-rich scrub woodland. The most frequent tree species include *Corylus avellana*, *Crataegus mongyna*, *Populus tremula*, *Viburnum opulus* and *Sorbus aucuparia*. Other common vascular species include *Ilex aquifolium*, *Rosa pimpinellifolia*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Galium verum*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Carex flacca*, *Geranium robertianum*, *Dactylis glomerata*, *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, *Sanicula europea*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Solidago virgaurea*, *Hedera helix*, *Primula vulgaris*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Arum maculatum*, *Campanula rotundifolia*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Thymus praecox* and *Festuca rubra*. Common bryophytes include *Thuidium tamariscinum*, *Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus*, *R. squarrosus* and *Dicranum scoparium*

N4

The vegetation along this stretch of the lake edge is very similar to that outlined in N1. Additional species noted include *Gahum boreale*, *Vicia cracca*, *Eupatorium cannabinum* and *Phalaris arundinacea*.

N5

The woodland on the peninsula is dominated by *Corylus avellana*, the canopy of which varies between 5 and 10 metres in height. Other tree species are rare, however there is some occasional *Crataegus monogyna*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Populus tremula* and *Quercus robur*. The understorey is somewhat open as a result of disturbance by cattle trampling and grazing. Weedy species are prominent in the understorey. Common species include *Hedera helix*, *Primula vulgaris*, *Sanicula europea*, *Geum urbanum*, *Dactylis glomerata*, *Taraxacum officinale*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Veronica chamaedrys*, *Urtica dioica*, *Lapsana communis*, *Oxalis acetosella*, *Arum maculatum*, *Circaea lutetiana*, *Torilis japonica* and *Orobancha hederacea*. The cover and diversity of moss species is low for woodland. The most common species is *Thamnobryum alopecurum* with *Brachythecium rutabulum* and *Eurhynchium striatum* occasional. See Table One for a more detailed account of woodland cover.

N6

This is a small pool cut off from the rest of the lake by a low grassy ridge. The vegetation is dominated by *Eleocharis palustris*, *Apium nodiflorum* and *Agrostis stolonifera*. Other frequent species include *Alisma plantago-aquatica*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Apium inunaatum*, *Lythrum salicaria*, *Equisetum fluviatile*, *Scirpus lacustris*, *Oenanthe fistulosa*, *Meiyanthes trijoliata*, *Mentha aquatica*, *Chara* spp., *Senecio aquaticus* and *Littorella uniflora*.

5.8.3 Notifiable Actions

Under STATUTORY INSTRUMENT 94 of 197, made under the EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES ACT 1972 and in accordance with the obligations inherent in the COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 (the Habitats Directive) on the conservation of the natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora, all persons must obtain the written consent of the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands before performing any of the operations listed below on, or affecting, the habitat of *woodlands*, where it occurs on these lands/water areas except where such operations are subject to consent under other enactments.

Where a landowner has a current approved plan under the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme or any scheme which the Minister considers to be equivalent he/she need only notify the Minister of activities not covered in the plan.

The activities which should not be undertaken before consent are;

- Grazing of livestock
- Grazing by livestock treated within the previous week with a pesticide which leaves permanent residues in the dung
- Supplementary feeding of stock
- Adding lime
- Adding fertiliser of any sort
- Reclamation, infilling, ploughing or land drainage
- Reseeding, planting of trees, removal of timber
- Removal of foliage, moss or other materials
- Alteration of the banks, bed or flow of water-courses
- Operation of commercial recreation facilities (e.g. bird watching tours) Introduction (or re-introduction) into the wild of plants or animals of species not Please note that the activities listed below may require a licence or consent from another statutory authority (e.g. the local planning authority, the Minister of the Environment, or the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry). The activities below must be notified to the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands when they are not regulated by another statutory authority
- Developing leisure facilities including golf courses, sports pitches, caravan or camping facilities
- Pollution of the site
- Removal of soil, mud, gravel, sand or minerals
- Developing roads or car parks
- Construction of fences, buildings or embankments
- Felling trees for reafforestation

5.8.4 Generic Conservation Objectives Lough Ree SAC 000440

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain at favourable conservation status sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing, and
- the ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective 1: To maintain the favourable conservation status of the Qualifying Interests of the SAC, or the Special Conservation Interests of the SPA.

- ☐ Otter (*Lutra lutra*) [1355]
- ☐ Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation [3150]
- ☐ Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco Brometalia*)(*important orchid sites) [6210]
- ☐ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]
- ☐ Alkaline fens [7230]
- ☐ Limestone pavements [8240]
- ☐ Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in British Isles [91A0]
- ☐ Bog woodland [91D0]

Objective 2: To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.

Objective 3: To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.

(16 June 2010)

THE CONTEXT AND THE PLACE

6.1 Post Medieval History

The main body of this document has been concerned with the history, form and condition of the recorded monuments on the site. However, the history of the site does not end in the early 17th Century, the latest recorded dates in the history set out in Part Two. In the subsequent centuries there may have been no links to nationally important events, or major upheavals or urban development, but this very peaceful, and uneventful existence is central to the current survival of the monuments and the nature of the place.

For nearly three centuries, the entire peninsula was farmed first by the Hodson family, and later the Gunning family who married into the Hodsons in 1794. The land was never let out to tenants but run as a farm, though there may have been employees of the farm living on the land. The only record of such habitation of the land is that of the Leonard family who were employed as herds-men on the land for approximately 100 years until they finally left the land in 1948. Figure 6.01 shows their home; a thatched stone cottage integrated into the Castle walls.

The Hodson / Gunning family home was a 17th Century farmhouse which was extended around 1800. The current St. John's House is this Georgian extension, the older part of the house having been demolished and replaced in 1971. The house is currently in the ownership of Richard Collins, a relative of the Gunnings.



Figure 6.01

The Leonard Family home. c. 1900



Figure 6.02 19th Century farm buildings: gable of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist behind



Figure 6.03 19th Century farm buildings may include stone robbed from the town wall

The 19th Century stone farm buildings and farmyard, located close to St. John's House, the Graveyards and Hospital, are fine examples of their type, but are currently in declining condition. The REPS 4 Scheme, allowed for payments to assist the financing of the conservation of traditional farm buildings. This scheme is now closed, but a future scheme may be used to assist in the preservation of these fine buildings.

The graveyards contain the graves of generations of Gunnings and Hodsons. The 8th Century Crucifixion Plaque (see Figure 2.10) was found in the graveyard by one of the Gunnings and given to William Sproule, a cousin, who sold it for £10. It is now in the Treasury section of the National Museum of Ireland.

6.2 Farming

During the entire Hodson / Gunning tenure, the land was farmed as a largely arable, mixed farm. The current layout of field boundaries is largely the same as that shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1837 (see Figure 6.04). The construction of the stone field walls suggests they have been rebuilt since that time, however.

The land is likely to have been ploughed many times, over the centuries, reducing and dispersing the archaeological evidence within the ground. Remains of stone structures may have been cleared and integrated into field walls. Overall, however, the nature of the farming, and the low density of human habitation at the site contributed significantly to the survival of the monuments as we see them today.

Since 1970 the land has been farmed by the current farmer P.J. Grady. It is a well managed livestock farm, of 80 Hectares of which 20 are woodland and shoreline, protected as part of the Lough Ree SAC.

The farm has significant numbers of sheep and cattle, and some fields being cut for hay and silage. In the past the land has been fertilised, reducing the variety of indigenous flora, and by extension the overall biodiversity of the land. With support from REPS payments and advice from Teagasc, Mr. Grady has modified grazing patterns, and controlled manuring, to safeguard the natural conditions of the lake shores and woodland. Teagasc see the site as a successful example of the land being managed for the mutual benefit of wildlife, heritage and agriculture.

The main continuing impact of livestock on the land is during extended periods of wet weather when heavy cattle will compress and stir up soft land. Livestock may also dislodge loose masonry.

Grazing of livestock within the woodland may have either a positive or negative impact on the biodiversity within the woodland, dependant on the intensity of grazing, and the size of the livestock. This issue is discussed in detail in Part 5.

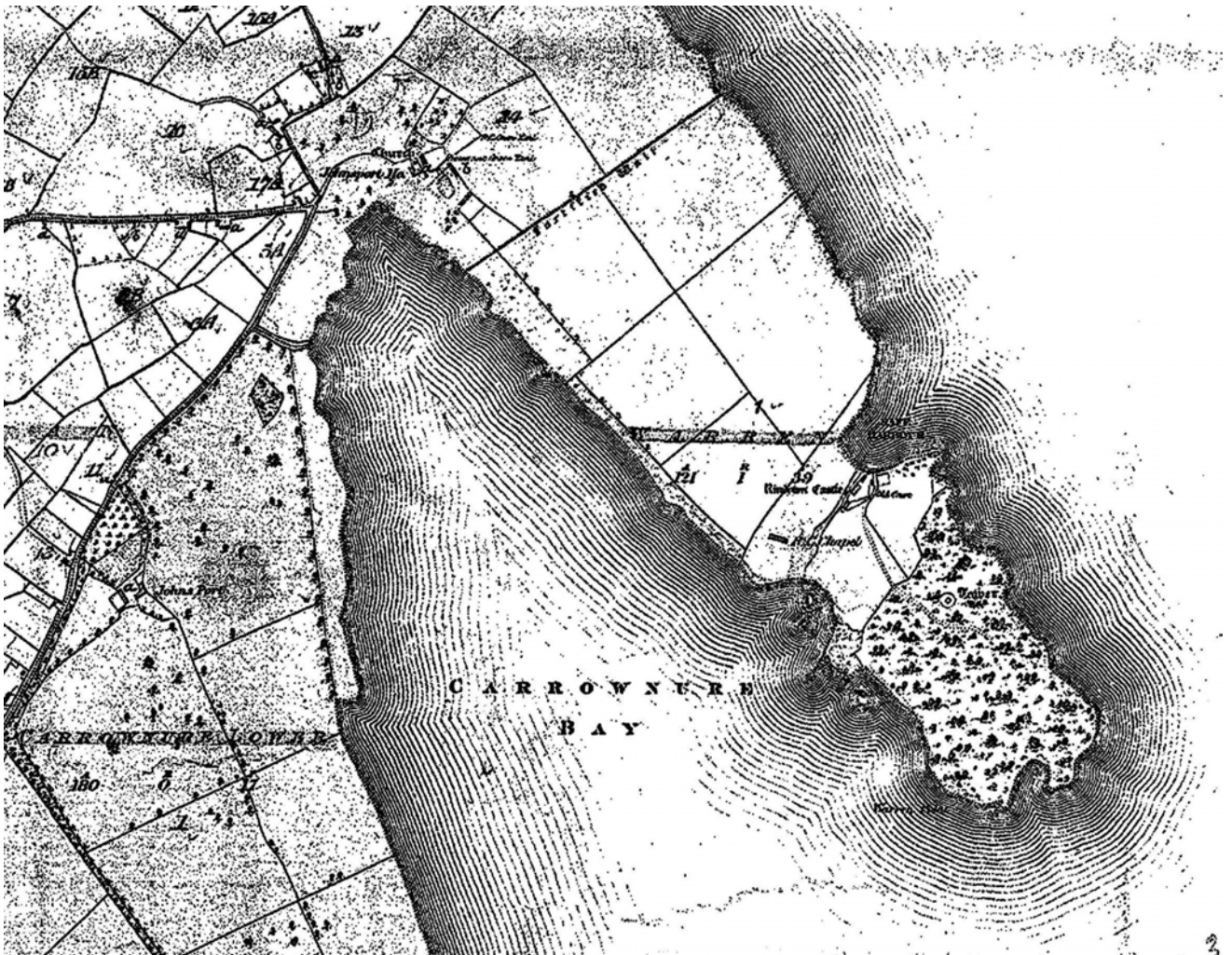


Figure 6.04

1837 Ordnance Survey Map of Rinn Duin

Since 2008 new slatted sheds have been constructed on the land between the old farm yard and the town wall. These involved the excavation of a significant volume of ground to form the tanks for collection of animal waste.



Figure 6.05

Slatted Sheds

Any further constructions of this nature should be effectively planned so as to have as little impact as possible on the integrity of the archaeological resource. If further change is required to farm facilities and structures, all reasonable efforts should be made to reuse existing farm infrastructure.

The construction of the slatted sheds have had a positive impact on the land in that the cattle no longer over-winter on the woodland, with the result that the trees are regenerating naturally, and the ground flora is also recovering its natural biodiversity.



Figure 6.06

The Rinn Dúin peninsular as a landscape entity: viewed from the south-west looking across Lough Ree

Overall, the farming of the land, has had a positive impact on the survival of the overall complex of Rinn Dúin. With the exception of the slatted sheds, no houses or other permanent structures have been built there that would have impacted negatively on the overall integrity and presentation of the site, and its underlying archaeology.

The privacy, inaccessibility, and lack of habitation at the location, has led to the remains being little known and rarely visited, contributing to the survival of the whole.

6.3 Landscape Character and Quality

Rinn Dúin peninsula is a distinctive and memorable place. Even were there no medieval ruins on the land, the place is of exceptional aesthetic and landscape value; the form of the land, its lack of development for habitation, its relative remoteness, the quality and rareness of the woodland habitat and the relationship between land and water, with views across to the islands and the various distant shores of Lough Ree, all contribute to its significant landscape quality.

The symbiosis between the form and location of the medieval monuments and the landscape is the essence of the place.

This site was selected for the location of the fortified town and Castle due to its relative defendability; surrounded by water on all sides but one. The landward approach is defended by the remarkable town wall; a single line of masonry punctuated only by three towers and a single point of entry at the gatehouse. Approaching the town wall, the sense can still be felt of this long defensive structure, an outpost of the colonial forces facing the hostile west. More than being just a town wall it is literally a boundary between the Anglo-Norman dominated east of the island and the Gaelic West.

The views across the peninsula towards Lough Ree and the views from the peninsula looking back across the town wall towards the west, as well as being intrinsically “beautiful” are also important in terms of an understanding of the historical context of the settlement and should be considered as valuable in themselves.

In the County Development Plan 2008 –2014, Roscommon County Council produced a Landscape Character Assessment for the entire County. In this document Rinn Dúin lies within the ‘Mid Lough Ree Pastureland’ Area. (Roscommon LCA 7)

The landscape is identified as being of the River Corridor character type and designated as being of “Very High Value”. Within the mid Lough Ree Pastureland Warren Point is identified as the most important of the peninsulas and states:

*“The Rindoon peninsula and associated bays are highly sensitive and applications for development within this area should also be accompanied by a **Visual Impact Statement** recognising the high value of this cultural landscape.”*

The Landscape Character Assessment also identifies proposed designated Scenic Routes and Scenic Views. Rinn Dúin and the Warrenpoint peninsula are important parts of the backdrop to Scenic Route R8, and Scenic View V20, both located to the west, and at a higher elevation to the Lake. Any alteration to these views are subject to Planning Control,



Figure 6.07

The Parish Church, and frozen Lough Ree beyond: the unique beauty of Rinn Dúin

6.4 Access

Access by land

Prior to 2009, when the Looped Walk was established the only access to the monuments and the woodland was by “permissive access”: This involved asking the landowners for permission to walk on the land, with potential disruption of farming activities. Whereas the majority of the peninsula belongs to the farmer P.J. Grady, access into the land (for the farmer as well as the public) is through land belonging to Richard and Liz Collins of St. John’s House.

There are in fact two walks established: the shorter Rinn Dúin Castle Loop (3km) and the Warren Point Loop (4.5km) which extends to the end of the peninsula and includes access to the woods. The Walks are a positive development, allowing public access to this interesting and beautiful place. As well as one-off visitors, it enables locals to build up a relationship with the monuments and the place. This should encourage an on-going connection with Rinn Dúin and an interest in its survival.

From the land owners’ point of view they are given an annual payment in return for their co-operation, which also encourages a respectful and positively collaborative approach between the landowners and other stakeholders, such as Roscommon County Council.

The Looped Walk scheme is funded by central government, with Roscommon County Council paying for insurance. Upkeep of stiles and signage are funded by The walk is entirely dependent on this continuing financial support. No statutory Right of Way has been established. Monitoring and inspection of the route is carried out by the Rural Recreation Officer, whose post is supported by Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

Currently there is space for 10 cars at the beginning of the Looped Walk, and further spaces for 25-30 cars available at Judy’s Harbour, 250m to the west. During 2011 a number of coach parties came to visit the site, with the coach using up most of the available parking space.



Figure 6.08

The sheltered inlet of Safe Harbour is an enticing location for those travelling by boat on Lough Ree

Access by water

The very title “Safe Harbour”, combined with the beauty and interest of the site is an invitation to curious boat users, of which there are an increasing number on Lough Ree.

Approaching the site by water must give another insight into the nature of the place. Whereas light-weight flat bottomed rowing craft pose little threat to the site, the laying of anchors has the potential to be particularly destructive to underwater archaeology.

A Viking landing at Safe Harbour was a feature of the 2011 Heritage Day at Rinn Dúin.

6.5 Community Involvement

St. John's Parish Heritage Group have been the driving force behind all of the extremely important emergency conservation works that have happened since 2008. They have raised funds, provided management of the works and organised the awareness raising Heritage Days. Without their commitment, energy and imagination Rinn Dúin would be more at significantly more risk than it is today.

It is essential that whatever future strategies are followed for the management and conservation of Rinn Dúin, the efforts of St. John's Parish Heritage Group, are acknowledged and encouraged. The commitment and pride of the local community is an invaluable commodity, on which a price cannot be placed.

Over one hundred locals were involved in the 2011 Heritage Day, and increase of 50% over the previous year. The Heritage Days are part of Irish Walled Towns Day which is a part of Heritage Week each year.

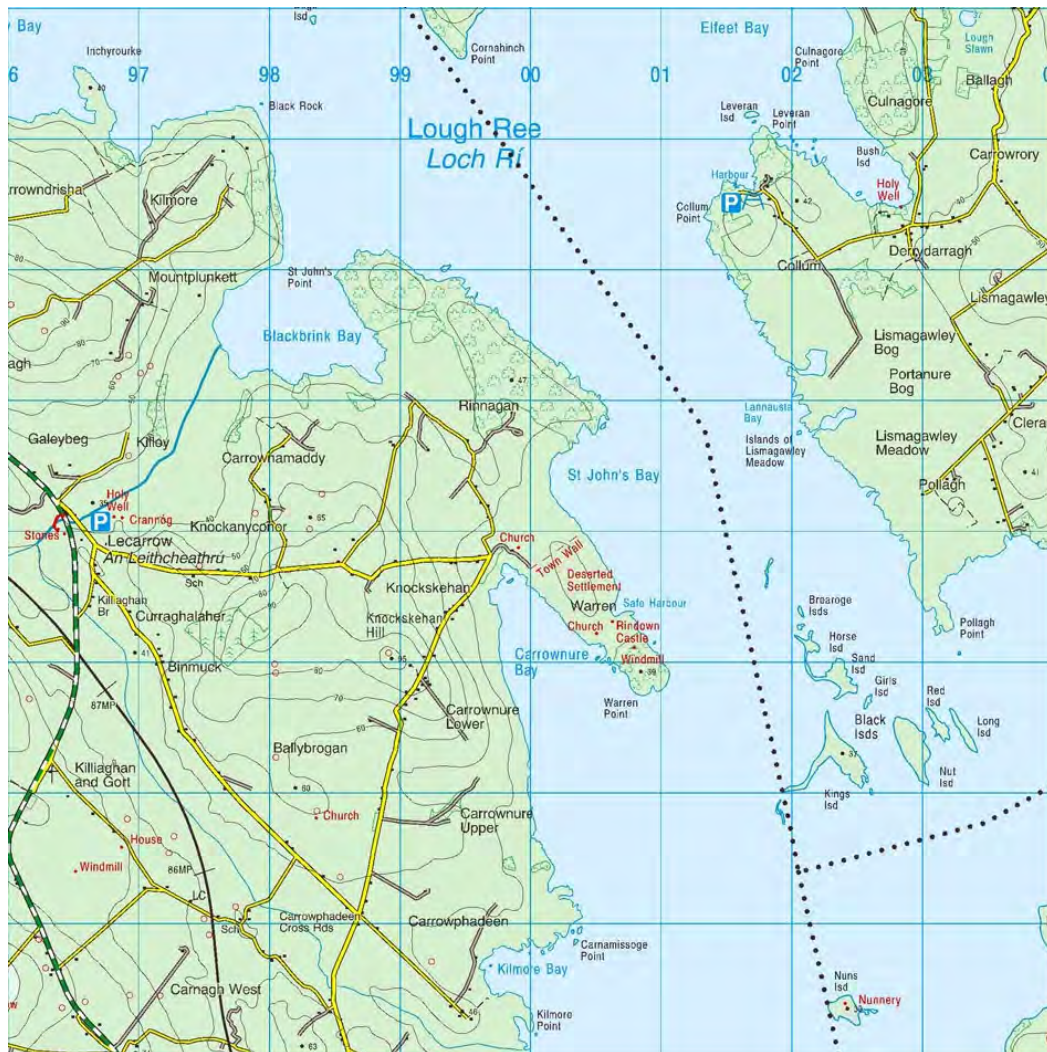


Figure 6.09

Rinn Dúin in the context of Lough Ree, and nearby islands and historic sites.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: THE RINN DÚIN COMPLEX AND INDIVIDUAL SITES

7.1 Previous Assessments

The Rindoon Management Plan of 1998 summarises its findings in the following Statement of Significance:

Rindoon is of high cultural and natural significance as it is a largely undisturbed Medieval settlement which preserves its landscape integrity, and is of high aesthetic, architectural, historic, scientific and social value. Its architecture is highly significant. It is significant in the history of Medieval Ireland. It is of high scientific value, archaeologically, historically and naturally. It also possesses one of the few surviving semi-natural woodlands in Ireland.

The level of significance is described as follows:

In comparison to other Irish Medieval town sites Rindoon is of high significance because it has not been disturbed by later development, is relatively well preserved and preserves its landscape integrity. In natural terms it is important as it is one of the few identified semi-natural woodlands surviving in Ireland.

John Bradley considers the significance of the site in more detail in Parts 2.3 and 2.4.

7.2 Assessment of Significance of Rinn Dúin as a Complex

Discussion

The 1988 ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance, otherwise known as the *Burra Charter*, sets down the principles for assessing the cultural significance of an historic site. This charter defines cultural significance as “the aesthetic, historic, scientific or social values for past, present or future generations”.

Basis of the Assessment

The assessment of the significance of Rinn Dúin needs to reflect the ecological as well as the cultural aspects of the site as a whole. This needs to be done with a knowledge and understanding of equivalent medieval sites elsewhere in Ireland and Britain, as well as in the context of the Shannon corridor, within which the site is located.

As well as the physically manifested remains the site needs to be considered in the context of surviving records and academic research and also in terms of its cultural, social and spiritual meaning for current day visitors to the land.

Levels of Significance

The National Monuments Service does not apply levels of significance. As a National Monument the entire Rinn Dúin complex is of national significance.

Below we consider various aspects of the significance of the overall site and in 7.3 we summarise, in brief, the significance of the individual standing remains.

In terms of the various aspects under which the significance of a site may be categorised, the significance of the Rinn Dúin peninsula may be summarised as follows:

Historical and Archaeological Significance

- Rinn Dúin is the site of a prosperous settlement, established in the 13th Century, complete with many of the features necessary to its survival and operation: defensive wall, places of worship, hospital, castle, harbour, mill, fishpond, woodland (for building materials and fuel). The entire peninsula has the potential to provide archaeological evidence that could inform a deeper understanding of the site.

- That the town wall is so substantial, but a long way from the castle, maybe seen as unusual and is open to further historical analysis and interpretation. The area between the two is far larger than any contemporary urban settlement in medieval Ireland, and still relatively vulnerable to attack from the lakeshores. Further research, or possibly excavation would be necessary to deepen the understanding of the form of the town, and how it may have functioned.
- The site is unique within Ireland, having been abandoned as a town by the 16th Century and never redeveloped as an urban centre, or even as tenanted land. This fact, combined with its definition as a place, resulting from its location within a lakeshore peninsula give the site a historical and archaeological completeness and purity which is of exceptional national significance.
- In regional terms the site is of considerable significance, being located on the shores of Lough Ree, at the heart of the inland Shannon waterway which was the focus of both settlement, trade and communications throughout the Medieval period.
- There are indications of pre-Anglo-Norman settlement at Rinn Dúin, in the earthworks related to the Castle, from the place name “Rinn Dúin”, and also suggested by the important archaeological finds at St. John’s graveyard. What preceded the Anglo-Norman settlement is of considerable significance.
- The fact that the land has been largely uninhabited since the abandonment of the town, means that archaeological evidence in the ground has been largely undisturbed, except by ploughing, in the subsequent centuries. It is possible that there survive considerable amounts of archaeological evidence at any location on the peninsula. These could provide further enlightenment on urban patterns, house forms, agricultural activities, or other activities supporting life on the peninsula.
- Overall the site is of national significance. The interpretation and understanding of the upstanding remains should be prioritised in the context of the conservation programme. This interpretation can inform the prioritisation of archaeological investigation.
- Further geophysical surveys could assist in identifying areas to be prioritised for archaeological investigation.
- An overall archaeological strategy should be developed and agreed with the National Monuments Service.
- Areas already identified as of importance for archaeological interpretation include the land either side of the town wall, the enclosure at the parish church, and the houses.

Artistic Significance

- The item of most artistic significance associated with Rinn Dúin is the 8th Century bronze crucifixion plaque found in St. John’s graveyard. The extant buildings are largely lacking in sculpture or architectural embellishment but the architectural fragments in the graveyard to the hospital are of interest.
- The site may be seen as of artistic significance in the quality of its landscape and picturesque beauty, judged by the cultural values of the present time.

Architectural Significance

- The town wall at Rinn Dúin is the most substantial example of a medieval town wall, in Ireland, in an isolated rural setting. It is therefore of exceptional national significance.
- The Castle has been described by David Sweetman as neither particularly unusual, nor advanced in design, in comparison to other Norman castles in Ireland dating from the same period. It is still, however of considerable significance, having been uninhabited, and therefore unaltered since the early 17th Century. Having been the subject of relatively little historical or architectural study in the past, it is in need of further recording, analysis and interpretation, which may reveal features of significance, previously unidentified.

Cultural Significance

- Rinn Dúin is an excellent example of an Anglo-Norman medieval town, harbour, and defensive structures which never evolved into a modern settlement.
- Rinn Dúin is one of the most important of the few Anglo-Norman Castles within Connaught. If more is understood about this unique site and the form and scale of the settlement, this would deepen the understanding of the culture of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland and their relationship to the indigenous culture, in a location distant from the principal colonial settlements.
- Located on what appears to be an earlier pre-Anglo-Norman settlement, Rinn Dúin embodies the relationship between the pre-Anglo-Norman (Gaelic, and possibly Viking) cultures of Ireland and the later colonial culture.

Scientific Significance

- The woodland at Rinn Dúin, is one of a very small number of areas in the region for which documentary proof of its long term existence is available. It is therefore of regional significance.
- The narrow transitional strip between the woodland and wetland at the edges of the lake is particularly species rich.

- Overall the woodland is not exceptionally species rich, but it has been proposed that modification of grazing patterns could lead to the re-establishment of a more diverse flora, similar to that in St. John's Wood.
- The relationship of the woodland to the nearby, and more extensive, St. John's Wood, which is recognised to be of national importance, adds to the significance of the woodland at Rinn Dúin.
- Undeveloped for housing, enhanced by the historic ruins, the location of rare semi natural woodland and providing open views of Lough Ree, the site may be considered as exceptional.
- The peninsula land form is the *raison d'être* for the location of the medieval town and castle. There is therefore an inherent significance to the geology and physical geography of the site.

Technical Significance

- The form of the town wall is interesting: the surviving ledge for the wall walk and putlogs in the wall suggests there may have been a cantilevered timber platform on the town side of the wall. This would be unusual and technologically advanced for its time.
- Putlogs and other formations in the masonry around the towers in the town wall, could be indications of further defensive structures.
- Much of the construction of the Castle is currently obscured by vegetation. It has been noted, based on comparison with other Irish Castles of similar date, that the construction is not notably advanced in terms of Castle form or design. It is interesting to observe, however, the contrast in wall construction between the medieval walls, and those rebuilt in the 16th Century. A detailed survey of the buildings, following clearance of vegetation, is likely to reveal construction and details of technical interest.
- The Mill, which probably dates from the 17th Century, has well preserved locations for the types of mill machinery in use at the time. There is room for further analysis of this structure by industrial archaeologists.

Social Interest

- The location of an Anglo-Norman settlement in such relative isolation, although directly on the central link of the Shannon waterway, raises the possibility of further research leading to insights into the nature of society in medieval Ireland
- The site has recently been used as the location for occasional, unique, cultural events. The interest and commitment of the local community has enabled both the recent emergency conservation works as well as the establishment of the looped walk providing public access to the place.

Landscape Significance

- Rinn Dúin is a place of considerable landscape quality, as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment in the Roscommon County Development Plan 2008-2014.

Overall Significance

Although it is valuable to evaluate the significance of Rinn Dúin in terms of the various aspects described above, they shouldn't be considered as exclusive. It is the *symbiosis* of all the above aspects that generates the overall significance of Rinn Dúin, the place.

7.3 Assessment of the Significance of All Standing Recorded Monuments

For clarity the same order has been used as in the Archaeological Inventory, Part 2.3, and the descriptions of the monuments in Part 4. The order in no way reflects the relative significance of the Monuments. In the case of all the recorded monuments further research or archaeological investigation could lead to an enhanced understanding of their significance.

7.3.1 Street Pattern and Market Place

Although almost no indication of any street pattern survives as visible remains, there is the potential for archaeological evidence of the form of the settlement, at any point within the area between the town wall and the earthworks which separate the castle from the western part of the peninsula. As an area that has not been the site of any further settlement since the abandonment of the medieval town, the whole of this area can be considered of considerable historical and archaeological significance.

7.3.2 Domestic Houses

Until further research has been done into the houses, to ascertain their age, it is not possible to define their significance in relation to the medieval town. Whatever their age, however, they have some historical and archaeological significance in relation to interpretation of the place.

7.3.3 Quays

The Safe Harbour, and associated remains of marine activity in the form of quays and slipway are of historical, archaeological and technical significance in terms of their association with the Castle and medieval town. It appears that the area has not been developed for maritime use since that time, and so what remains has a purity and completeness. There is the potential for underwater archaeological investigation to reveal further historic material or insights into the operation of the harbour.

Throughout the medieval period (400 A.D.—1600 A.D.) it was easier, to move through the country by boat than across the land. The Safe Harbour was therefore a central and crucial feature of the medieval settlement. There are records of boats being constructed here too.

This site has historical significance in the context of the network of settlements around the shores, and on the islands of Lough Ree, and as a part of the all important trade route of the Shannon corridor.

7.3.4 Windmill

The mill is an excellent, well preserved, example of a 17th Century mill tower. Its location on a raised mound probably indicates the site of the earlier mill mentioned in medieval records, this being the ideal raised point on the peninsula to catch the wind, if there were no trees surrounding it. This particular mill is unusual in that the four openings align with the Cardinal Points. The building is technologically interesting, providing evidence of fixings points that give insight into the original mechanical installation. There is scope for further research into the surviving evidence.

7.3.5 Bridge

The site and remains of the bridge are historically and archaeologically significant as an integral element of the Castle and defensive ditch. There is room for further interpretation of the remains to provide technical insights into the former structure.

7.3.6 Town Defences

The town wall with its towers and gatehouse constitutes one of the best preserved medieval town walls in Ireland. It is unusual in that it is located in an isolated rural setting.

The scale of the wall, stretching almost 700 metres across the entire peninsula, is remarkable, even more so in relation to the likely scale of settlement it protected.

The form and details of the wall suggest it may have included a sophisticated cantilevered timber structure which would be of further technical interest.

Given all of the above, the town wall and its context, can be seen as of national historical, architectural and archaeological significance.

7.3.7 The Castle

Rinn Dúin Castle was one of the most important Anglo-Norman fortifications in Connaught up until the point in 1344 when it passed into Irish hands and out of the history books. Apart from some rebuilding of the curtain wall in the 16th Century, and some small domestic buildings integrated into the structure in the 19th Century, the Castle is a good representation of a largely 13th Century Castle built on an earlier ringwork.

Unlike many more accessible and famous Norman castles in the UK and Ireland, Rinn Dúin has never been subjected to restoration, and as such all the surviving structures are an authentic example of medieval construction, without later interventions.

Relatively little research has been completed with respect to the Castle, and many of its features are currently largely concealed by vegetation. It is likely that further analysis of the structure will reveal further aspects of its significance.

Given all of the above the Castle, in its context, can be seen as of National Significance in terms of historical, architectural, technical and archaeological significance. It also has landscape significance in its contribution to its setting on the peninsula.

7.3.8 The Parish Church

The Parish Church is not particularly remarkable in form, but is very significant as a key element of the medieval settlement. Of interest, as well as the building itself is its enclosure; both as the historic setting of the church and the possibility it presents of extant archaeological remains in the ground, which could further deepen our understanding of the history of the settlement and how it functioned.

It is of historical, Archaeological and architectural significance.

7.3.9 Hospital of St. John the Baptist

The ruins of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist are all that remains of what would have been a more extensive complex. The north south configuration of the surviving building suggests it may have been the south transept of a larger church building. There may be archaeological evidence, indicative of the form of the overall foundation, within the surrounding lands and adjacent graveyards.

This building, located outside the town wall, is significant as part of the medieval complex, and as the location of the finding of the 8th Century bronze crucifixion plaque, but also because of the later use of the graveyard for burials, including the earliest dated grave slab in the country. The graveyard is also the location where architectural fragments, including the carved head in Figure 4.65 were found.

John Bradley (see part 2.4) suggests that the finding of the plaque is indicative of an important pre-Norman religious foundation in this location. It is of course, also possible that this early artefact was brought to Rinn Dúin at later date.

The hospital and associated graveyards and walls are of historical, Archaeological, architectural and artistic significance.

7.3.10 Other Archaeological Features

Promontory Fort / Bank and Ditch System

The Promontory Fort and bank and ditch system, which may predate the castle, are features of great antiquity. They form part of the defensive system and setting of the site. They are of significance as a part of the overall historic place, and within the wider region of Lough Ree and the Shannon corridor. They are of historical and archaeological significance.

Fishpond

This feature is of significance as an integral part of the overall medieval complex providing insight into how such a settlement may have operated, and therefore of historical and archaeological significance.

Ringwork

Integrated into the surviving defensive works to the Castle the ringwork is of historical and archaeological significance in understanding the occupation and evolution of the site.

Walled Garden and Bee Boles

Although of later date to the medieval remains these are of significance as unusual features that contribute to an understanding of the later history of Rinn Dúin peninsula. They are of historical, technical and social significance.

Clearance Cairns

These are of significance in that they may include cut or shaped stone fragments that could provide some evidence of former structures on the site. They are of historical and archaeological significance.

Possible Medieval Field Boundaries

As with all features on the peninsula these are of historical and archaeological significance in contributing to an understanding of the whole.

7.4 Summary of the Significance of Rinn Dúin

The most extensive and memorable built elements at Rinn Dúin date from the medieval period, and are thereby linked as a historic entity, which together provide an insight into the history of the settlement. However, these cannot be viewed, or understood, in isolation. The land formation, underlying geology, the natural vegetation and the potentially pre-Norman earthworks, all contribute to an understanding of the medieval settlement; its *raison d'être* and how it functioned as a place to live.

Rinn Dúin largely disappears from the written history of Ireland after the early 17th Century. However, the quiet post-medieval centuries that followed are also part of the story and account for the survival of the extensive medieval remains on the peninsula. The c. 17th Century Mill, (almost certainly on the site of an earlier mill), as well as later farm buildings and field patterns, all contribute to an understanding of Rinn Dúin as a place.

The site is an important example of the symbiosis of history, culture, society and landscape. The very location of the site that led to it being chosen for settlement in time of conflict, has since made it untenable for urban settlement in more stable times. Where once there was an oasis of urbanity, and a colonial culture, literally “out on a limb” within the distinctly non-urban Gaelic West of Ireland, the land now provides a rural contrast to the urban setting of most contemporary lives: ruins, a sense of isolation and peace, surrounded by water in an otherwise ordered, and inhabited rural landscape.

The overall significance of Rinn Dúin lies in its completeness. Defined by its peninsula landform, it contains the remains of an important Anglo-Norman colonial settlement and defensive structures, which have lain, largely undisturbed, and without an overlay of later buildings and development, in the 600 years since they were abandoned.

In order to retain this significance and to protect any further extant archaeological evidence, the understanding of the site should include the band of fields across the neck of the peninsula as these would probably have been used for agriculture, or settlement during the years the town was occupied.

As well as the dramatic remains of the town wall and castle, complemented by the harbour, parish church and hospital, the entire landscape includes clues and evidence that contribute to the understanding of both the medieval settlement and the pre-Anglo-Norman and post medieval history of the place.

Rinn Dúin Wood at the end of the peninsula, is of significance as a relatively rare example of native semi-natural woodland of that scale. As well as including a good variety of native species, it is a surviving feature that would have been a crucial resource for the medieval settlement. As such it is a good example of the symbiosis of the natural and man-made categories under which the significance of the place has been assessed.

In conclusion it must be recorded that the entire Rinn Dúin peninsula is of national significance.



Figure 7.01

Rinn Dúin

7.5 Threats to the Significance of Rinn Dúin / Vulnerabilities

The vulnerabilities of the individual monuments are considered in Part 4. 2

Weathering, Decay and Structural Collapse

The single most serious and immediate threat to the survival of the significance of Rinn Dúin is the on-going decay of the masonry of the Town Wall, Castle, Parish Church and Hospital of St. John the Baptist. This vulnerability has been recently illustrated by the collapse of a part of the Town Wall Gatehouse in early February 2012.

Emergency conservation works, have recently been completed at the Town Walls, Parish Church and Hospital of St. John the Baptist and the Windmill, involving removal of vegetation, re-pointing and rebuilding of loose masonry using lime mortars. Full details of these works are given in Appendices B, C, D and E. These works need to be continued as a matter of priority. The majority of the length of the town wall, is still in urgent need of stabilisation, and there is the very real possibility of losing substantial lengths of medieval masonry here in the next couple of years. Figure 7.04 illustrates the poor condition of a length of wall towards the south west end.

The Parish Church and Hospital are also in need of further works.

The urgency of the need for on-going conservation work is illustrated in Figures 7.02, 7.03 below. This shows the East wall of the Town Wall Gatehouse before, and after the collapse which occurred in early February 2012.



Figure 7.04 The south west end of the Town Wall: In places the wall is little more than a mound of stones, a fully mature tree flourishing in its midst.

The Castle has had no maintenance or stabilisation in living memory. To some extent the extensive ivy growth on the walls is fulfilling the function of binding the walls together and this should only be removed in conjunction with a planned programme of conservation works. Of immediate concern are the numerous scrub trees growing close to and into the Castle walls. These should be managed, and or removed, as a matter of urgency as their roots are extending annually and may be undermining the walls, possibly lifting the ground and destroying the archaeological stratigraphy.

The Castle may have stood for hundreds of years, and its surviving masonry does not seem to have decreased its profile significantly since the photograph was taken at the turn of the last century. (Figure 6.01). However this is no indication that the structure will continue to survive for centuries more. Quite the opposite. Catastrophic structural collapse happens in an instant and the integrity of the monument is lost.



Figure 7.02, 7.03.

The Eastern Gatehouse wall, on the southeast side of the Town Wall; before and after the collapse of February 2012

Conservation works to medieval masonry needs to be carried out and supervised by experienced and qualified operatives and professionals. Building work which is not properly planned, specified executed and recorded can seriously damage the integrity of an historic structure.

Safety

The potential for structural collapse is a safety issue for visitors to the site. If structures are unsafe the public should be prevented from accessing close to them. This lessens the quality of their experience, and preventative measures could detract from the presentation of the site. People as well as the significance of the monument are vulnerable to the potential for collapse.

Lack of Regular Inspection and Maintenance

Emergency conservation and stabilisation are only effective in the long term if a programme of regular inspection and on-going maintenance is established for the structures. Otherwise the loss of significance is only being deferred to a later day. Current inspection is largely dependent on the voluntary commitment of the St. John's Parish Heritage Group.

Currently, effective inspection of the Castle is impossible due to the density of trees and other plants in, on and around the structure.

Lack of Recognition

Rinn Dúin is not well known in Ireland. This lack of recognition may have contributed to the lack of investment in its preservation and protection in the half century since it was first recognised as a National Monument.

Archaeology and Incomplete Understanding of the Site

There are wide gaps in the understanding of the site, in particular the location, form and extent of the medieval town; there could be evidence of temporary structures, or agricultural or other activities almost anywhere. The entire peninsula must be considered as having archaeological potential, and any works be planned accordingly if we are not to risk further loss of archaeological significance.

To avoid uninformed actions at Rinn Dúin, further research and study of the place should be encouraged and a central archive formed where all information, research and surveys relating to the site are readily available.

It is also important that research in contrasting areas of expertise, such as natural history, architectural conservation and archaeology are made available to each other. There are important links between all these fields.



Figure 7.05 The Castle: in effect a wood, it is so overgrown with trees. The density of growth prevents full inspection of the stability of the structure

Boats and Moorings

The very title “Safe Harbour”, combined with the beauty and interest of the site is an invitation to curious boat users, of which there are an increasing number on Lough Ree. The biggest threat to the underwater archaeology is the dropping of anchors in the harbour. Other threats associated with people arriving by boat are the building of barbecues on the shore, using stones, including the potential remains of medieval quays.

Development

Currently the land is farmed and is likely to continue to be so for many years by the landowner. This use of the land has protected it from the kind of development, particularly residential, which has become such a feature of the modern Irish landscape. Retaining this land in agricultural use would be the best option for this land, as only the taking into state care of the entire land area could provide better protection to the integrity of the place.

Access: Vehicular, Livestock

Currently the only vehicular access to the land is by tractors and other farm machinery. Any intensification of vehicular access would threaten the presentation of the site and potentially the underlying archaeology. There are currently three breaches in the town wall for farm gates, under no circumstances should this number be increased.

Livestock provide a threat to the upstanding monuments where these are in a poor state of repair. This can currently be seen at the Parish Church and the Castle, and was evident at the tower bases at the Town Wall, and doorways to the Windmill, prior to recent emergency conservation works (see Appendices B & E). In very wet weather intensive livestock use can degrade the land. Minor interventions to minimise or prevent such damage should be investigated.

Access: Pedestrian

Public access has recently been made possible to the land through the National Looped Walks Scheme. The landowners are given a payment to recompense them for the public access to their land and the Roscommon County Council cover the insurance of the walk. The scheme currently allows members of the public to visit this important historic and natural site, and continuation of this access is dependent on the continuation of funding for the scheme.

With current visitor numbers there are no significant signs of erosion, except during particularly wet weather. This could change however if numbers increased significantly. Signage for the walk needs to be designed and maintained to avoid detracting from the appearance and interpretation of the monuments.

Agriculture

Agriculture, as currently practiced at Rinn Dúin provides little in the way of on-going threat to the standing historic monuments and archaeology of the site. The land is currently a livestock farm which involves minimal disturbance of the land, but any new boundaries or further new sheds could potentially impact negatively on the site, unless carefully planned and designed.

Intensive grazing of the woodland, in the past, has been identified as contributing to the relatively narrow spread of ground cover species and curtailing the regeneration of the woodland trees. The farmer has modified grazing patterns in recent years with positive results for the quality of the woodland and biodiversity. Good agricultural practice with respect to wildlife is currently supported by REPS payments.

Popularity

In contrast to the earlier considered threat of *lack of recognition* of the site, this is maybe another issue which constitutes a potential threat to the survival of the significance of Rinn Dúin; *excessive interest*.

Visitor numbers currently stand at around 6,500 per year. However, if there were to be a significant increase in these numbers there could be a major impact on the place. There could be degradation of footpaths, increasing their impact on the landscape, and also the need for increased requirements for signage. There could also be a negative impact on the agricultural operations of the landowner.

It is estimated by St. John’s Parish Heritage Group that given existing footpaths and presentation, the site could accommodate up to 10,000 visitors per year without a negative impact on the setting and integrity of the site.

Increased numbers could be associated with increased demands by the public, and further consideration needing to be given to safety. This could potentially lead to fencing and signage that could detract from both the presentation and interpretation of the ruins. An extensive car park could be required and maybe toilets, all of which would detract from the *genius loci* outlined in Part 6.

CONSTRAINTS, MANAGEMENT ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SITE

8.1 Constraints Arising from the Significance

In Part 7 we have analysed and summarised the significance of Rinn Dúin as an entity, and concluded that it is of national significance, not only as a rich and well preserved site of an abandoned medieval settlement, but as a unified place, with earlier and later layers of history, and with unique landscape value and (protected) qualities of natural environment.

Therefore the site should be managed such that any works, or changes at the site, should only be undertaken in so far as they contribute to the retention and enhancement of the integrity and significance of Rinn Dúin, and in order to ensure its survival for future generations. Any proposed increase in visitor numbers, or intensification of activities at the site needs to be managed carefully, with a full assessment of the potential impact on the environment and survival of the monuments prior to the implementation of any changes.

8.2 Guiding Heritage Principals

The following issues are identified as the key principals which must guide the future of Rinn Dúin.

Conservation of Standing Remains and their Context.

Although important emergency conservation works have been carried out over the last three years, most of the town wall, including the gatehouse, the entire Castle, most of the Parish Church and Hospital are still in urgent need of further works. If this is not addressed soon, extensive areas of medieval masonry could be lost in the very near future.

Emergency works need to be identified and prioritised, and funding found at the earliest opportunity. These works must only be executed by experienced operatives, and the appropriate nature and extent of works researched, specified and recorded by qualified and experienced conservation professionals, requiring close collaboration between conservation architects, archaeologists, conservation engineers, and in some specific locations architectural historians.

The building remains are not isolated objects but exist in their landscape context and in relation to each other. Some are almost certainly built on top of earlier structures or earthworks. There are only limited surviving records and historic references to Rinn Dúin, and much may yet remain to be learnt and interpreted from the remains both above and below ground, at any location throughout the peninsula. Given the above, the standing remains should not be conserved as isolated objects but their context and the underlying archaeology given equal respect and care.

On-going Maintenance and Inspection

Emergency works are the immediate requirement. However, these are of limited use unless followed up by a regular programme of inspection and maintenance so that potential threats to the survival and condition of the structures can be identified and addressed before they manifest themselves in deterioration of the structures.

Increasing Understanding and Recognition of the Site

Rinn Dúin is relatively unknown in comparison to many other medieval sites in Ireland. This may have contributed to its survival on one level; it was never submitted to misguided restoration, or transformed into a tourist site with all the trappings. However this low profile has also contributed to the almost complete lack of investment in its preservation, until the very recent past.

In order to be given the investment in care and conservation that it deserves it is important that the site is given full recognition of its significance, and that further research is carried out to deepen understanding of the site. Resulting publications and information need to be made readily accessible to the interested public as well as the academic community.

Conservation and Enhancement of the Ecology of the Site, including Rinn Dúin Wood

As well as the rare woodland at the end of the peninsula, the location of the site within Lough Ree SAC makes the entire site of importance for flora and fauna. The site should be managed so that the historical significance of the site can be preserved, and agricultural activities continued, in such a way that they prosper in harmony with the natural environment, and where feasible, enhance the biodiversity of the site.

Management of Public Access

It is important that public access continues to be supported and maintained to this important site through the Looped Walk Scheme. However, the vulnerability of both the natural environment and the historic monuments is such that their survival could be threatened, should there be a significant increase in the number of visitors to the site. It is therefore essential that numbers are monitored and promotion of the site reviewed systematically to ensure numbers do not exceed the capacity of the site.

Balance

It is possible that in certain instances there could be conflict between the preservation of the architectural, archaeological and natural heritage. It is even possible that in following the statutory requirements with regards the preservation of one aspect of the natural, archaeological or architectural heritage one may be in direct opposition to other statutory requirements.

Examples of potential conflict include:

- if there were bats roosting within the Castle walls.
- birds or bats nesting in vegetation that is damaging the walls of the monuments.
- archaeological excavation proposed in an area of rare natural habitat.
- Medieval walls, still awaiting historical and archaeological interpretation, but in need of immediate support or emergency works to prevent collapse and loss of historic fabric.

In these instances, timely investigation, collaboration and consultation, involving all relevant specialists, will be required and the short and long term implications for the various aspects of significance weighed up and balanced. Effective mitigating measures will need to be implemented to minimise any negative impacts on the varying aspects of the heritage and significance.

8.3 Management Issues

8.3.1 Ownership

The site is entirely in private ownership: the majority of the land belongs to P.J. Grady, with an area of land at the north western end of the peninsula, and access onto the peninsula, owned by Richard and Liz Collins. The single ownership of most of the land has been an important factor in the survival of the integrity of the overall site and continuation of the land in agricultural use, and managed as a single farm unit is the ideal situation.

In some similar cases, Recorded Monuments, located on privately owned land, have been taken into state care.

This is no guarantee of state funds being available for the safeguarding, conservation and long-term maintenance of the Monuments, but it does make the State directly responsible for these matters.

It also has the advantage of releasing the landowners from any responsibility or liability with regards to ownership of the monument. Access to the Monuments still has to be negotiated with the landowner.

Both landowners have been exemplary in their facilitation of recent conservation works at various locations, and in participating in the Looped Walk Scheme. The farm is well managed, and current agricultural practices pose few threats to the monuments.

However, this positive situation is entirely dependent on the goodwill and responsible approach of the individuals involved, something that cannot be guaranteed for the coming centuries of the life of the monument. So long as the land remains in private ownership there is no public right of way to the monuments.

8.3.2 Current Site Use: Working Farm

The site is currently a well run livestock farm. Throughout recent emergency conservation works the landowner, P.J. Grady has been helpful and co-operated with those responsible for executing the works. Without his assistance the works would not have been possible.

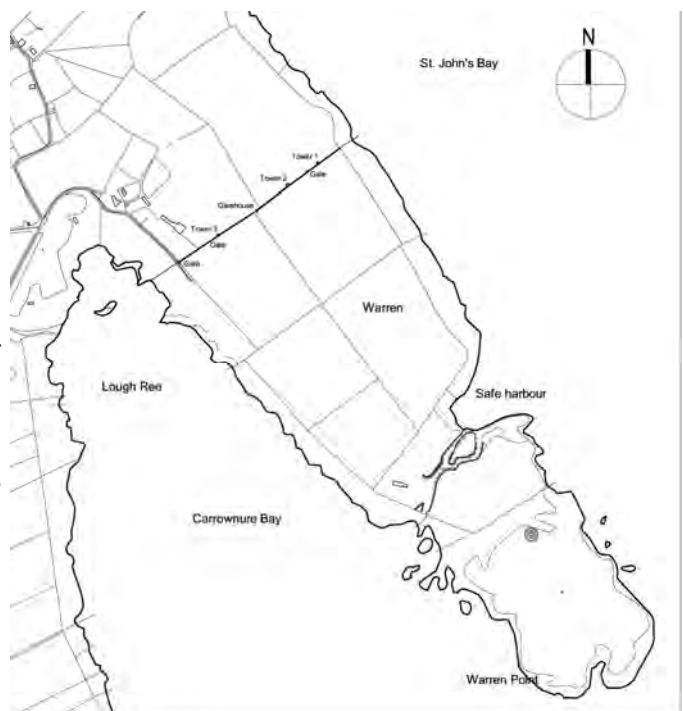


Figure 8.01

Rinn Dúin

Overall the use of the land for livestock grazing is compatible with the preservation and presentation of the historic remains. However, there are a number of issues related to the working farm that need to continue to be sensitively and appropriately addressed and managed in the interests of the presentation and survival of the historic monuments.

Grazing of woodland and its impact on regeneration of trees and the ground flora

Since the Assessment of the Natural Environment in Part 5 was written in 1998, the farmer has modified his farming patterns to the benefit of the natural environment of the shoreline and woodland. He has been compensated for this via the REPs payments. Continuation of such schemes will be important to facilitate the continuation of wildlife friendly farming practices.

Cattle rubbing against stonework

Livestock get itches and irritations like the rest of us. To relieve these they will use any appropriate object; in this case medieval masonry is a readily available remedy. Where the masonry is loose, following centuries of weathering of the mortar this can lead, over time, to masonry becoming dislodged, and in the long term, whole corners and reveals destroyed.



Figure 8.02 Loss of masonry at corners



Figure 8.03 Light weight signage, damaged by livestock

This has been noted as an issue at the Castle, the Town Wall and the Parish Church, and sheep have been seen using the door reveals of the Windmill for similar purposes.

Figure 8.02, below shows Tower Three prior to recent emergency conservation works with both lower corners of masonry fallen away. These corners have now been reinstated, but cattle are still using them for scratching purposes. It needs to be observed the effect of such action is on stabilised masonry.

Protection may need to be provided, to vulnerable masonry elements, which may not be conserved for some time. This protection needs careful design and consideration: protective measures could detract from the presentation of the monuments or the landscape. Careful balance of the relative impacts of precautionary measures need to be made.

Other Livestock Issues

- Cattle damaging signage (Figure 8.03) This may be best dealt with by more robust signage, located to be less vulnerable
- Degradation of land in wet weather may be caused by humans as well as heavy cattle. (Figure 8.04)



Figure 8.04 Muddy path, made more so by heavy feet

Farm Buildings

Modern elements may detract from presentation of the historic monuments. Any further requirement for buildings needs to be carefully planned, to best serve the practical needs of the farmer and also the presentation of the monuments. (Figure 8.05). It should be noted however, that the creation of the cattle sheds has had a direct positive impact on the environment of the wood, as the farmer no longer needs to use the wood for overwintering of his cattle.



Figure 8.05 Cattle Sheds a field away from the Town Wall

8.3.3 Current Management of the Site and Instigation of Emergency Conservation Works

Here is summarised a brief history of the recent emergency conservation works at Rinn Dúin.

The works were first instigated in 2008 by the St. John's Parish Heritage Group. At this time no further action had been taken since the production of the 1998 Management Plan, and the earlier Urban Archaeology Survey of the buildings by the Office of Public Works. The monuments had been untended and unpublicised for over ten years.

In many ways the works since 2008 can be seen as an exemplar of how the energy and initiative of a voluntary group, with the support of various state bodies can take a crucial role in saving a unique National Monument.

Having first contacted Katriona Byrne, the then Conservation Officer of Roscommon County Council, St. John's Parish Heritage Group invited Kevin Blackwood, conservation architect, to visit the Town Wall. Having inspected the severely overgrown and endangered structure, the westernmost tower of the wall (Tower 3) was selected for a pilot scheme on the basis that it was one of the most endangered sections of the overall structure.

Other consultants involved from the beginning were Ivor McIlveen, the conservation engineer, and David Sweetman, the archaeologist. The works, which were executed in 2009 are described in detail in Appendix Biii.

Rinn Dúin became a member of the Irish Walled Town Network in 2009. Funding for works to the wall has been attained through the Network. The Heritage Council invited Oxford Archaeology to carry out a peer review of the 2009 works, and these were judged to be excellent. Conservation works to Tower 1 followed in 2010 and to Tower 2 in 2011.

In parallel to works to the Town Wall, St. John's Parish Heritage Group have applied for grants for, and instigated emergency repairs to, the St. John's Hospital in 2009, the chancel arch of the Parish Church in 2010, and the Windmill in 2011. Details of all these works and funding are given in Part 4, and in Appendices C, D and E. Emergency works were also completed in 2010, to the enclosing wall to the graveyard at the Hospital, following a partial collapse there.

The most recent task completed in November 2011, is a full rectified photographic survey of the entire town wall, to record its current condition and fragility. This can enable an interpretive report to be executed in order to generate an appropriate programme for the completion of the emergency works to the Town Wall. The most vulnerable sections of the Wall have been identified and are shown in extracts from this survey in Figure 4.27.

The St. John's Parish Heritage Group have achieved remarkable things since 2008. It is hoped that, with continuing state support for the works, their continued commitment and energy will see the completion of emergency works to safeguard the Town Wall within the next three years.

To date, an essential body of work has been instigated and executed as a result of the energy and enterprise of the St. John's Parish Heritage Group, working on a voluntary basis. This remarkable effort has certainly rescued significant elements of the site from tangible loss of both historic structures and significance. However, the long term sustainability of relying on the commitment and energy of private individuals to safeguard the survival of such an important site must be queried. A site of such scale and national significance requires a long term commitment of responsibility and funding from the State, if its long term survival is to be guaranteed.

8.3.4 Conservation of the Castle

The works required to safeguard the entire site are a herculean task. The Castle has not had any emergency conservation work carried out to date, and is seriously at risk. The conservation of this complex, substantial, and little known structure is an onerous, but exciting prospect. This needs to be carried out on the basis of a full understanding of the history of the structure, in order to prioritise for conservation and stabilisation work the elements most at risk, and to ensure works do not have any negative impacts on the rich significance of the structure. St. John's Parish Heritage Group, as a voluntary body, do not have the resources to instigate such a complex proposal.

The entire Castle, and associated earthworks, need to be the subject of their own Conservation Plan, prepared with the collaboration of conservation architects and engineers, archaeologists, architectural historians and wildlife experts. The plan should be commissioned and ideally funded by the State. The plan will enable conservation works to be properly planned, based on a more thorough understanding of the evolution of the structure, and its history than currently exists.

The preparation of this plan is an urgent priority if this National Monument is to be preserved for future generations. Ideally the plan should be complete prior to commencement of any work to the Castle. However, the commissioning and production of a fully researched, and therefore effective, plan could potentially take a year, or even more. As already identified in Part 4, (both the 1998 and 2011 assessment), the trees and foliage, currently growing within the Castle are damaging the structure and potentially destroying the archaeological stratigraphy on an annual basis. The longer they are left the more damage done.

Kieran O'Connor, of NUI Galway, has proposed, if funding is made available, to lead a survey and interpretation of the Castle in 2012. The continued presence of the trees, as well as the unassessed stability of the overall structure, put considerable constraints on the level of access necessary to carry out a full survey of the building.

Any removal of vegetation, or management of the trees must be executed with the utmost care: the rooting systems may be acting to hold the masonry together at the same time as contributing to their eventual collapse. It can only be considered if fully informed and planned by an experienced team including conservation architect and engineer, archaeologist and wildlife expert.

It would be worth considering a programme of works supervised by the same team appointed to prepare the Conservation Plan. All works would, of course, have to be fully in compliance with statutory requirements with respect to the National Monument and underlying archaeology.

8.3.5 On-going Maintenance

Emergency works are the immediate requirement, but these are of limited use unless they are followed up by a regular programme of inspection and maintenance so that potential threats to the survival and condition of the structures can be identified and addressed before they manifest themselves in deterioration of the structures. Such a programme requires a long term commitment of baseline funding.

8.3.6 Funding

To date, funding of the emergency conservation works to the Town Wall at Rinn Dúin has come from the Heritage Council, via the Irish Walled Town Network. Roscommon County Council, have also provided some funding for specific elements of conservation works and management at the site, as has the Department of the Environment via its urban and rural development programme. St. John's Parish Heritage Group, have been responsible for instigating all of these works. As a voluntary body, they have no funds of their own, and their capacity for fund raising through private donation is limited.

The work so far has been carried out as a series of finite short programmes of work. It may be possible to complete the remaining emergency works to the Town Wall using this model, but it is not a viable method for the conservation of the Castle or the overall site.

Roscommon County Council only have very limited funds available. The Heritage Officer is currently able to allocate up to €3000 per year to Rinn Dúin. In 2012 this will cover €2000 Irish Walled Towns Network Membership fee and the proposed underwater archaeological survey of Safe Harbour. In the past, Conservation Grants operated by Roscommon County Council were funded from central government, but these schemes are currently 'paused'.

At some other heritage sites funding has been allocated by the county LEADER Partnerships, but current rules require organisations to provide match funding which St. John's Parish Heritage Group are not in a position to provide. The Roscommon County Council Heritage Officer could apply to Heritage Council Heritage Plan funding scheme, for specific elements of the project that are beyond the normal scope of day to day RCC funding.

However, such projects would have to be approved by Roscommon Heritage Forum and a maximum of one project per year could be undertaken in this way as the Heritage Forum have to give due consideration to all the other actions in the Heritage Plan.

The current regime by which most government funding is allotted on an annual basis creates particular problems for the type of work required at Rinn Dúin. It makes appropriate long term planning and prioritising of the works impractical. All conservation and stabilisation works to medieval masonry involve the use of lime mortars, which can only be successfully used, during the months of March to October. Even work carried out in the latter part of this period vulnerable to early frosts, and elongated curing times. If funding is not agreed sufficiently early in the year there can be a serious impact on the practicalities of executing and completing work.

The identification of appropriate funding for the conservation of this unique site is the key issue of this Plan. However this funding is sourced, the State will have to continue to, and ideally significantly increase, its involvement through fulfilling its statutory obligations to the National Monument.

8.3.7 Research and Archaeological Investigation

Currently knowledge and understanding of the medieval settlement of Rinn Dúin and its Castle is extremely limited. Very little is understood about the nature of life for those who lived there. Extant documentary evidence may be subjected to further research and interpretation. However, unless further contemporary documents are identified, it is principally through archaeological interpretation and excavation, that it may be possible to significantly increase our understanding.

The site is of interest to academics and specialists in a number of diverse areas, including medieval history, medieval and pre-medieval archaeology, local history, marine and industrial archaeology, woodland history, natural history and sciences. These areas are not exclusive but intersect and influence each other.

Research in a number of fields has been carried out over the years, at Rinn Dúin, and this Plan identifies many further topics which would benefit from further in-depth investigation and analysis. Currently research may be carried out in one field without the knowledge of specialists in other aspects of the site.

Ideally there would be established a central point of contact, which would enable communication, and cross fertilisation, between all the disciplines and state bodies interested in, or with a responsibility for the site. There would also be a database into which all findings would be logged.

8.3.8 Visitor Management

Public access is currently provided through the looped walk, which is a successful method of allowing people to visit this important site, while providing the landowners with no significant disruption of farming activities, and a fair reimbursement for use of their lands. It is important that funding continues to be made available for this scheme, so that access can continue to be available to the public, and potentially, be extended to include further features such as the bee-boles and walled garden.

Parking constraints

There are currently 10 parking spaces, adjacent to the public road, close to the beginning of the looped walk. Additional spaces are available at Judy's Harbour 250m to the west. On occasions that coach parties have visited the site, the coach has taken up the entire available space and also blocked the main access gate onto the land. No additional space is available close to the start of the walk, unless land was taken out of agricultural use.

Visitor Expectations

Although not well known, the site is gaining recognition with 6,500 visitors coming to the site in 2010. The greatest number of these were concentrated in the summer months. These numbers have been recorded by an automatic counter at one of the stiles near the beginning of the Looped Walk. The establishment of the Looped Walk in 2009 has done much to generate this popularity, notably among local people, as have local events such as the Heritage Day, organised by St. John's Parish Heritage Group.

According to St. John's Parish Heritage Group current visitors to the site appear to be surprised and inspired by both the quality and extent of the site. However, if the site were to be inappropriately promoted, this could lead to disappointment for different kinds of visitors who may expect gift shops, and toilets, and a visitor centre, or a more conventional "visitor attraction".

The promotion of the site needs to be sensitively managed, and overseen by those with a thorough understanding of the significance of the site. Lines of communication and co-ordination need to be established between stakeholders, including the landowners, Roscommon County Council Heritage Officer, Bord Fáilte, St. John's Parish Heritage Group and National Monuments.

Visitor Numbers

It would appear important that visitor numbers continue to be monitored and are only encouraged to increase at a slow, steady rate. The monuments are still largely in an unstable and vulnerable state, and pose a potential threat to the public, should they ignore warnings, and climb on the masonry. Such risks increase with an increase in visitor numbers.

The livelihoods and quality of work and life for the land-owners must also continue to be a consideration. It has been estimated by St. John's Parish Heritage Group that annual visitor numbers could increase to around 10,000 before their impact on the land and its owners became problematic.

8.3.9 Interpretation and Information

Interpretation is a vital element of the experience of visitors to the site. Currently there are seven Heritage Council funded information boards at Rinn Dúin. These provide information on the archaeology of the site. As understanding of the site is increased, through further research and investigation, it would be valuable to revisit the presentation of information, with a view to enhancing the experience of visitors. All aspects of the site's history, archaeology and natural history should be covered.

It would be useful to carry out a full review of the nature, content, and design of the Interpretation of Rinn Dúin. This could take the form of an Interpretation Plan, complementary to this Conservation and Management Plan. As with this plan, it will be important to consult with all stakeholders and compare alternative approaches to ensure the most appropriate conclusions are reached.

There is a limit to how much information can be provided on site, but many visitors may have their curiosity raised and wish to seek out further information about Rinn Dúin. Currently there is very little information available on the web, and no dedicated location where available information and research is collected together in one place. In considering the best response to this issue, the needs of both curious amateurs and specialist academics and researchers need to be addressed.

It would be a great asset to the site if a Rinn Dúin website could be developed, where comprehensive information about both the history, and natural history, of the site could be accessed, as well as information about current events and conservation of the site. Links could also be provided to more specialist research and data.

At the time of compiling this plan, studies, reports, records, data, research and drawings of Rinn Dúin are to be found in a number of scattered locations through the country. Considerable effort is required by anyone with an interest or responsibility towards Rinn Dúin to find all the available relevant information. It is important that a coherent approach is developed to the collation of this information in one location within the National Monuments Service. It would be valuable for a copy of the contents of this archive to be provided to the Roscommon County Library Service and the Irish Architectural Archive.

8.3.10 Overall Management

Rinn Dúin is a complex site. This plan has attempted to provide an outline of all aspects of this complexity. There are a significant number of stakeholders with an interest in, and responsibility for the site. There is also a wide locus of aspects of significance of the site, all of which require management input, investigation and interpretation by different specialists. It is vital, in such a site, that ordered, regular communications are established between all of these parties, to ensure an informed and balanced approach to the management of the site, and that best practice is employed in all activities and interventions.

To this end it is proposed that a Rinn Dúin Implementation Group be established. The Group would need to include representatives of all the stakeholders described in Part One of this Plan, and also conservation consultants and archaeologists who are able to provide an understanding of the technical and practical challenges of the site. Meetings would have to be convened on a regular basis, but a minimum of two a year. Information would need to be circulated to all members. This Group could most appropriately be co-ordinated by a representative of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, but would require a not insignificant commitment of time from all members.

8.4 Heritage Planning Context

The Statutory Context of the site and current Roscommon County Council Planning Legislation is considered in detail in Part One, Section 1.3. Below is a summary of the Acts and Charters affecting the site.

Built and Archaeological Heritage

- National Monuments Acts 1930-2004

The following International Conventions and Agreements have been signed and ratified by Ireland:

- UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (ratified, 1992)
- European Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe. (Granada Convention), 1997
- European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta Convention), 1997.
- European Charter of the Architectural Heritage 1975

ICOMOS Charters:

- The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter)
- The Charter on the Protection and Management of Underwater Cultural Heritage (1996)
- ICOMOS Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (1990)

Natural Heritage:

- Wildlife Acts 1976 - 2000
- Bat Legislation: Bats are protected under
 - 1996 Wildlife Act
 - 2000 Wildlife (Amendment) Act, Stat Ist 94 of 1997, Stat Ist 378 of 2005,
 - The Habitats Directive,
 - The Bonn and Bern Convention,
 - The Euro bats agreement.
- Lough Ree SAC: Natura 2000 Site legislation: requirement for Appropriate Assessment.
- Lough Ree SPA: EU Birds Directive
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area: limited protection

The following International Conventions and Agreements have been signed and ratified by Ireland:

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), 1974.
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention), 1971 (ratified, 1984)

- Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Berne Convention), 1979 (ratified, 1982)
- Convention of Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention), 1979 (ratified, 1983)
- Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992 (ratified, 1996)
- Agreement on Conservation of Bats in Europe (Bonn Convention), 1993 (ratified, 1995)
- International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1994 (1996)
- Agreement of the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) (Bonn Convention), 1996
- Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (endorsed 1995)
- European Landscape Convention, 2000 (ratified, 2002)

8.5 Potential and Opportunities for the Site

St. John's Parish Heritage Group organised a "Heritage Day" on the 28th August 2011. As well as the aforementioned Viking raid (defeated by the Irish) there were sheep dog demonstrations, donkey rides, medieval stocks, a herb walk, including information on medieval medicines and a choral concert held in the Parish Church.

The previous year's Heritage Day involved traditional music, a children's medieval trail, archery demonstrations and field wall building demonstrations and won the Heritage Council prize for best event organised by a community group. For the purposes of these open days, P.J. Grady kindly permitted full access including vehicular access to the Castle area of the peninsula.

These days have been a great success in raising awareness, of the site, particularly amongst local people. Such events work very well when they are annual, or even biennial and so do not lose their excitement, energy and novelty value. However, such intensity of use over an extended period could lead to degradation of the land and changes that would transform the character and integrity of the place.

The current use of the land for agricultural purposes and for recreational and heritage walks is very compatible with the survival of the significance of the monuments and the character of the place. Overall the significant intensification of the use of the land would not be seen as advantageous.

A number of uses of the land which could be considered, encouraged, or expanded are given below. The nature of these should be guided by the policies and observations of this Conservation and Management Plan.

- Wildlife Walks: arranged by, or supported by the NPWS.
- School Visits.
- Further and higher education field trips.
- Research: archaeology, history, architecture, natural history and sciences.
- Guided tourist visits: historic and natural heritage.
- Other Community and Cultural Events
- Extension of the looped walk to include bee boles, the walled garden, and maybe longer stretches of the shoreline of Lough Ree. A walk connecting Rinn Dúin to St. John's Wood along the shores of Lough Ree would be a nature lover's dream.

The suggestion has been raised of the possibility of, following appropriate research, reconstructing a section of wall walk, at the Town Wall, based on medieval timber technology. This would be a fascinating and informative project. It would, however, have implications relating to safety and management of visitors, and the archaeological integrity of the site. It could only be pursued following full research and analysis and the approval and participation of the National Monuments Service. It can only be considered as a long term project rather than one for the immediate future.

8.6 Educational and Research Value

The site has the potential to be of huge educational value to students of all backgrounds, from primary school children, through university researchers to interested amateurs of all ages. The site gives the opportunity to study historic settlements and structures, in the context of their geographical *raison d'être*. The symbiosis of different fields of knowledge at this site is particularly inspiring.

A non-exhaustive summary of research opportunities at Rinn Dúin would include:

- Identification of the form of medieval settlement on the peninsula.
- Interpretation of any evidence that contributes to an understanding of life in the medieval settlement
- Full architectural survey of the Castle.
- Investigation of the Church enclosure.
- Identification of the extent of the site of the foundation of the Crutched Friars.

- Industrial Archaeology of the Windmill.
- Woodland History.
- Underwater archaeology of Safe Harbour, and the shores of Lough Ree.
- Regeneration of the woodland, and links with grazing patterns.
- Migratory birds on Lough Ree.
- Analysis of wall walk and other structures at the Town Wall
- Identification of related defensive measures at the Town Wall.

An activity pack for schools has already been developed and there are lots of potential to explore and expand the educational and experiential opportunities for children who visit the site.

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND ACTIONS

9.1 Aims of the Policies and Actions

The conservation and management policies have been formulated with a view to acting as a practical tool to aid in the protection and enhancement of the Rinn Dúin peninsula, and the identified monuments found there, ensuring their survival for the enjoyment and enlightenment of future generations. This objective is to be achieved through meeting both the immediate need for action and a more long-term approach to maintaining the significance of the site.

Through providing a framework for decision making the policies aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- To protect and enhance the historic remains and their landscape setting in a way that retains all aspects of their significance.
- Highlight the **URGENCY** of the need for action to conserve the historic remains.
- To provide an overall philosophy to inform **ALL** actions that may have an impact on the site.
- Should any development, or alteration of any nature be proposed at the site, to provide established criteria against which a proposal may be assessed.
- To ensure the landowners are involved, and considered, in all decision making processes that affect their interests.
- Establish an appropriate balance between the conservation of the monuments, the site, its natural environment and biodiversity; the continued use of the land for agriculture; and the meeting of public expectations in terms of access and information.
- To provide practical guidance for appropriate farming practices and woodland management with respect to preserving the significance of the site, enabling the landowner to continue to operate a sustainable and profitable farm.
- Communicate to the wider public, as well as existing interested parties, an understanding of the significance of the site and promote enjoyment of the monuments, their setting and their meaning.
- Establish an Implementation Group to oversee the implementation of the policies and review and update the Conservation and Management Plan on an annual basis

The policies provide the governing principals and ambitions that should inform all activity and change at Rinn Dúin. In contrast, the actions provided in 9.2.3 are specific actions proposed in order to fulfil the aims of the Policies.

The governing principals are summarised as policies 1 to 8 in section 9.2. In section 9.3 these general policies are expanded in more detail.

9.2 General Conservation and Management Policies

Policy 1: Protection

To ensure that the conservation of the recorded monuments, the natural environment and archaeology of the Rinn Dúin peninsula is central to all planning for and management of the place.

Policy 2: Conservation and Maintenance

To implement a planned regime of repair and maintenance, based on best conservation practice, that protects all aspects of the significance of the site and its historic integrity and archaeology.

Policy 3: Enhancement of the Place

To enhance the historic character of the site, its presentation and its natural habitats and biodiversity.

Policy 4: Access

To retain public access to the site of a scale and character that does not threaten the significance of the site.

Policy 5: Interpretation

To encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the site.

Policy 6: Extending Knowledge and Understanding of the Place

To encourage further, informed, architectural, archaeological, scientific and historical research into Rinn Dúin, and ensure the resulting information is made accessible through a Rinn Dúin archive. To promote the site as a historic and scientific resource for learning about the past and about the natural environment.

Policy 7: Management

To develop practical and sustainable management regimes for the site.

Policy 8: Finance

To identify and implement practical and sustainable methodologies for raising funds to facilitate the implementation of all Conservation and Management policies.

9.3 Detailed Conservation and Management Policies and Actions

9.3.1 Policies for Protection of the Place and its Archaeology

To ensure that the conservation of the recorded monuments, the natural environment and archaeology of the Rinn Dúin peninsula is central to all planning for, and management of the place.

Policy I.1

To protect the character and historic fabric of all built elements, archaeology and surviving land features that give insight into the historic functioning of the site.

- Ensure all stakeholders, particularly potential state funding bodies, are aware of the urgency of the task of preventing further deterioration of the built elements.
- As an overarching principal protect and preserve archaeology in-situ.
- Ensure recognition of the wider landscape, and its importance to Rinn Dúin.
- Ensure any new elements, in terms of signage, protection or pathways, do not detract from the historic character, presentation or interpretation of the site. Planning permission must be sought for any new elements, or alterations at the site and the Minister notified.
- Investigate, as a long term possibility, the feasibility, and practical implications for all stakeholders, of taking the monument into State care.
- Due to its vulnerability and the finite nature of its form, the Castle could be prioritised for consideration in this respect.

Policy I.2

Minimise the risk of damage to the historic fabric of the remains above and below ground, and below the water, arising from the current daily use of the site.

- Continue to work with the landowners, ensuring practical, informed guidance is available, to ensure farming practices are followed that do not pose a threat to the physical security of the remains.

- Instigate a programme of removing the vegetation growing close to, and within, the Castle and the Town Wall, based on recommendations of an appointed team, including conservation architect, archaeologist, and conservation engineer.
- Provide effective management regimes for the physical security of the monument.
- Provide physical protection, where necessary, to prevent access by humans or animals that could damage the monument and archaeology.
- Make a regular review of visitor numbers, in terms of protection of the site. Do not encourage increased access to the site beyond a point where density of footfall could threaten the survival of the monuments.
- Provide signage buoys forbidding anchoring in Safe Harbour.

Policy I.3

To protect the natural environment of the site, in particular Rinn Dúin Wood.

- Continue to practice limited grazing of the woodland, and provide appropriate advice to the landowner.
- Review the impact of current grazing practices on the bio-diversity and woodland quality of the site, on the basis of a scientific assessment of the current quality of the site and comparison with previous studies. Make recommendations on the basis of the scientific findings.
- Develop an on-going programme of monitoring of the woodland.
- Ensure any removal of vegetation and trees, carried out to protect the monument, is carried out with due consideration of ecological concerns, and in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Ensure the landowners are able to access any available grants in relation to environmental management of the land.

Policy I.4

To meet all statutory and legal requirements with respect to protection of the monument and the safety of visitors and operatives.

- Ensure repairs are carried out as soon as possible, and using appropriate methodology to prevent further loss of historic fabric
- Prioritise repairs to those parts of the structures that are potentially unsafe, or in danger of collapse.
- The Minister to be notified, in accordance with the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004, in relation to any proposal which will impact on the Recorded Monument.
- Any archaeological investigation (excavation), geophysical survey and underwater investigations

must be licensed in accordance with the National Monuments Act 1930-2004.

- Any archaeological investigation should take into consideration published State Policy:
Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage Government Press 1999
Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation Government Press 1999

Policy 1.5

To protect the archaeology of the site.

- As far as possible protect and preserve archaeology in-situ.
- Piecemeal impacts to the subterranean archaeology are to be avoided.
- Any proposed excavation should have a strong rationale and be designed to contribute to the understanding and interpretation of Rinn Dúin.

9.3.2 Policies for Conservation and Maintenance of the Place and its Archaeology

To implement a planned regime of repair and maintenance, based on best conservation practice, that protects all aspects of the significance of the site, its historic integrity and archaeology.

Policy 2.1

To establish an effective and regular programme of inspection and repair, to prevent future deterioration of the structures and their significance.

- Establish a site maintenance archive into which records of all observations and repairs are logged.
- Establish an annual cycle of monitoring of all standing remains, to identify any deterioration or potentially damaging vegetation growth, or erosion. Inspection to be executed by suitably experienced personnel, logged into the maintenance archive and forwarded to the Implementation Committee. (see Policy 7.1)
- Establish a suitably qualified and experienced team to undergo minor works and control of vegetation using best conservation practice. Any minor works to be logged in the maintenance archive.
- Establish a three yearly inspection by a Conservation Architect with experience of medieval structures. Report to be forwarded to the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group.
- Commission an outline review of all built structures. Where a historic element is identified as being in danger of collapse, agree an expedited programme of works, in order to save that element from potential loss, while proceeding within statutory requirements to minimise any potential threats to archaeological significance.

Policy 2.2

To ensure that all conservation and maintenance works are informed by a thorough and detailed understanding of the monument, retaining the significance, avoiding loss of original fabric, and archaeology, and executed using historically accurate materials, design and workmanship.

- All professionals and on-site workers participating in conservation work are to be made aware of the significance of Rinn Dúin, the reasons behind the conservation work, and the archaeological sensitivity of the place.
- Ensure that the standing remains, and associated loose material, are fully investigated, surveyed, recorded and interpreted, prior to the commencement of the works. This process to be executed by suitably experienced conservation architect, and conservation engineer and in conjunction with a suitably qualified archaeologist, with relevant experience. An architectural historian, may also need to be consulted, where appropriate.
- An appropriate methodology is to be created and submitted to the National Monuments Service for approval.
- Only suitably experienced and qualified Conservation Architects and Conservation Engineers to be employed to design, specify, record and supervise the works.
- Only experienced conservation operatives to be employed for the execution of the works.
- All works to comply with statutory requirements. (Refer **Policy 1.4**)

Policy 2.3

To ensure all conservation works are fully recorded, before, during and on completion of the works.

- The records of works to the Town Wall (Appendix B) may be used as a guide.
- Documentation to include survey drawings with both the areas and nature of the proposed interventions clearly illustrated.
- All records to be placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.
- Records to be also placed in a site maintenance archive.

Policy 2.4

To establish a regular programme of monitoring the regeneration of the woodland, including seasonal flora.

- Regular field checks to be carried out to monitor woodland recovery, change in botanical composition and impacts of the management programme.

Policy 2.5

All works to be carried out with consideration of their ecological impact.

- Adhere to provisions of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2001 when removing trees, shrubs or hedgerows.
- Carry out a bird and bat survey prior to the removal of vegetation.
- Allow for the retention / return of non-destructive plant life to the walls.

Policy 2.6

To prioritise the completion of emergency conservation works to the Town Wall.

- Continue the programme of vegetation removal and consolidation of masonry at the Town Wall and Gatehouse, based on the methodologies developed at recent works to Towers 1, 2 and 3 and adjacent lengths of wall.
- The most vulnerable sections of wall, to be prioritised for emergency conservation works are identified in Figure 4.27 of this plan.
- Continue to fully record the works in the manner of the completed works to the Town Wall. (refer Appendix B)

Policy 2.7

To plan and commence a programme of conservation of the Castle.

- Given the significance of the structure, a full separate Conservation Plan should be prepared for the Castle, including associated earthworks, moat and bridge. This will inform the conservation of the entire structure.
- An initial outline assessment of the structure should be carried out by a conservation architect, archaeologist and conservation engineer to identify any particularly vulnerable, or unstable elements, which could be in particular danger of collapse, and to plan the removal of vegetation, where deemed essential.
- Only if necessary to safeguard precious medieval fabric, limited emergency conservation works including structural propping, or stabilisation works, could be recommended, in advance of the completion of the Conservation Plan.
- Following the management of the trees, which currently threaten the survival of the structure, investigate, survey and record the Castle following best conservation practice.

Policy 2.8

To plan and continue a prioritised programme of consolidation of masonry at the Parish Church.

- Complete the stabilisation of the masonry of all standing walls, completing the works commenced in 2010.
- It should be the long term aim to establish and mark the original enclosure of the Parish Church.

Policy 2.9

To plan and continue a prioritised programme of consolidation of masonry at St. John's Hospital (Fratres Cruciferi).

- Complete the stabilisation of the masonry of all standing walls, completing the works commenced in 2009.

Policy 2.10

Following the completion of the underwater survey of Safe Harbour, and informed by its findings in 2012, prepare a prioritised plan for the conservation of historic stone quays and slipway.

- Plan to be prepared by marine archaeologist and conservation architect.
- Plan and commence, in accordance with the recommendations of the above plan, vegetation removal and consolidation of masonry at the Slipway.
- Consolidate, if appropriate, and in accordance with the above plan, the quays, to prevent further removal of stone elements.

Policy 2.11

There are a number of very low stone walls, located at the houses and at the later rectangular structure north of the nave of the Parish Church. Following a detailed archaeological and historical investigation and interpretation of the ruins, design and implement the most appropriate methodology for stabilising very low wall remains to prevent these features being lost.

Policy 2.12

To plan and continue a prioritised programme of consolidation of masonry at the enclosing stone walls to the graveyards adjacent to St. John's Hospital (Fratres Cruciferi).

- Complete the stabilisation of the masonry of all standing walls, that was commenced in 2010.

Policy 2.13

To plan and execute a prioritised programme of vegetation removal and consolidation of masonry at the walled garden.

- Prioritise the safeguarding of the wall at the beeboles.

9.3.3 Policies for Enhancement of the Place

To enhance the historic, and visual character of the site, its presentation, its natural habitats and biodiversity.

Policy 3.1

Encourage the continuance of farming practices that are in harmony with the conservation of both the natural and man-made heritage at the site.

- Continue to practice limited grazing of the woodland, and shoreline, and provide appropriate advice to the landowner for the overall management of his land in the interests of wildlife and biodiversity.
- Ensure the landowners have access to all the available information regarding grants available to support the use of good environmental practices.
- Hold annual review with the landowners to address their concerns and provide advice and assistance with regards the interface between farm management, the presentation of the monuments, access and wildlife issues.

Policy 3.2

Ensure any new elements necessary for the safety, information or management of visitors are designed and sited to minimise disruption of the historic interpretation and natural vegetation of the site.

- Avoid surfaced paths or boardwalks, unless essential to prevent the erosion of the land or to preserve identified habitats.
- Review proposed alterations and designs with the Implementation Committee.
- Apply for Planning Permission, where required.
- Give two months notice to the minister for any works that could affect the National Monument.
- Carry out Appropriate Assessment if proposal could impact on the SPA or SAC.
- Develop a design approach for protection of sections of masonry which are vulnerable to human or livestock damage.

9.3.4 Policies for Access to the Place

To retain public access to the site of a scale and character that does not threaten the significance of the site.

Policy 4.1

Participate in the continuation of the current Looped Walks scheme, assuming the necessary funding for maintenance, signage, monitoring and payments to landowners continues to be available.

- In addition to regular inspections of the route, ensure that any detrimental effects on the historic features are recorded and communicated to those responsible for the monuments.

- Keep a record of numbers of visitors to the site for interpretation purposes.
- Encourage use of the walk by locals, increasing understanding and a sense of ownership.
- Ensure a conservation expert with detailed knowledge of the site is involved in the review process.
- Lobby the relevant government department should there ever be any question of reducing or removing State funding of the scheme.

Policy 4.2

Liaise on a regular basis with Roscommon County Council, Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland and local tourism networks, in terms of an overall tourism strategy, and the portrayal of the site in promotional and information literature.

- Ensure all parties who may be involved in promoting the site are fully aware of its significance and the importance of conserving its significance and integrity.
- Review visitor numbers, and plan strategies to ensure that these do not expand to a level where they may threaten the conservation of the site.
- Ensure that promotional material does not raise unrealisable visitor expectations.
- Ensure that all parties are fully aware of safety and accessibility issues at the site

Policy 4.3

Ensure signage is accurate, easy to use and appropriately designed.

- Ensure signage is located and designed to survive proximity to farm animals.
- Ensure signage does not interfere with either the underlying archaeology or the presentation of the historic buildings.
- Ensure signage indicates to visitors the potential dangers at the site and the visitor's own responsibility to act accordingly in the interests of their own safety and that of the monuments.

Policy 4.4

Investigate extending, or modifying the looped walk to include further features and enhance understanding of the site.

- Consider the inclusion of the walled garden and bee-bole.
- Consider extending, or modifying the route to lead through the Gatehouse, and link to the Castle, once the Gatehouse has undergone emergency conservation works.
- Routes to be negotiated with land owners to minimise disruption to agricultural operations.
- Information to be provided to walkers at key locations.

Policy 4.5

Control, as far as possible, the numbers accessing the site to a level that does not threaten the survival of its significance.

- Carry out a regular review of visitor numbers, and their impact on the historic monument and natural environment.
- Only increase the number of parking spaces if research has confirmed that the site has the capacity to support the increased numbers.
- Encourage occasional events that cater for larger numbers, in an appropriately managed way.

9.3.5 Policies for Interpretation of the Place

To encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the site.

Policy 5.1

To ensure that information about the site is readily available to all, enabling understanding of the site, and highlighting the significance of the site and the importance of its conservation.

- Prepare a Rinn Dúin Interpretation Plan.
- Ensure signage at the site is legible, accurate and located in appropriate proximity to what it describes.
- Ensure recognition of the wider landscape, and its importance to Rinn Dúin.
- Provide information as to where to locate off-site information (i.e. the Rinn Dúin Archive)
- Develop a web-site for Rinn Dúin.

Policy 5.2

Establish the site as a resource for learning about history and natural history through an educational outreach programme.

- Establish on-going liaison between the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group (see Policy 7.1), St. John's Parish Heritage Group, the Roscommon County Council Heritage Officer, N.P.W.S. and local schools.

Policy 5.3

Increase understanding of the site amongst the local community.

- Build on the existing good will and commitment established through the St. John's Parish Heritage Group and the Heritage Days.
- Encourage involvement by local people, increasing a sense of understanding and ownership of the place.

Policy 5.4

Provide well designed, robust signage for the site, which enhances the visitor experience and understanding of the site, while being located and scaled to not detract from the presentation of the historic and natural environment.

- Carry out as a stand alone project.
- Rinn Dúin Implementation Group to approve content and design.
- Content to be checked for accuracy by historian, archaeologist and wildlife expert.
- All necessary statutory approvals to be obtained.

Policy 5.5

Investigate the feasibility of reinstating a length of wall walk at one of the towers in the Town Wall.

- Any such reconstruction can only be considered with the full participation and approval of the National Monuments Service.
- If a reconstruction is considered feasible, it must be based only on a detailed study including in depth research and interpretation of the available evidence.
- Any proposal to be subject to all the policies of the current Conservation and Management Plan.

9.3.6 Policies for Extending Knowledge and Understanding of the Place

To encourage further, informed, archaeological, scientific and historical research into Rinn Dúin, and ensure the resulting information is made accessible through a Rinn Dúin Archive. To promote the site as a historic and scientific resource for learning about the past and about the natural environment.

Policy 6.1

Establish a Rinn Dúin Archive in which all extant and future research and surveys of the place should be collected.

- Ideally copies of all documents should be located
 - With St. John's Parish Heritage Group
 - Roscommon County Archive / Library
 - Irish Architectural Archive
- Copies of all documentation must be placed with the National Monuments Service.
- An individual should be named responsible for ensuring the archive is kept up to date.
- Archive should include all available information and research about the archaeology, history and natural history of the peninsula.

Policy 6.2

Establish a Website for Rinn Dúin.

- Website to be regularly updated as to current works and research into the site
- Basic information about the overall site, the individual features, its history and significance to be included.

- Up to date information about the walking route, and safety and access issues to be included.
- Website content to be fully approved by the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group

Policy 6.3

Establish a research framework for Rinn Dúin, to identify and prioritise research themes for the future.

- Establish contact list of all academics and specialists with an interest in the site.
- Research framework to be co-ordinated through the Implementation Group.

Policy 6.4

The academics and specialists, within the framework described in 6.3, to advise the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group in order to create a prioritised list of research questions for archaeological, architectural, historical and natural environment investigations in order to extend understanding of site. Areas already identified include:

- Overall research, informed by archaeological investigation and further historical research the arrangement and functioning of the medieval town in relation to the Castle and the hinterland. Questions within the scope of this broad field could include:
 - Why did the town decline?
 - What were the daily relations between the inhabitants and the Gaelic Irish?
 - Were there related settlements outside the Town Wall
 - Did the quality of life of the residents change over time?
 - Where did the burgages come from?
- Archaeological investigations / geophysical surveys adjacent to the wall to identify related defensive measures and settlement.
- Archaeological investigation / geophysical survey to clarify the age of the houses.
- Detailed survey of the Castle.
- Further interpretation as to the phasing of construction of the Castle.
- Industrial Archaeological investigation of the Windmill.
- Further research into the enclosure to the Parish Church.
- Further archaeological investigation in the graveyards and land adjacent to St. John's Hospital to try to identify the footprint of the more extensive religious foundation.
- Survey of the historic farm buildings, to record structures and investigate the possible presence of medieval masonry re-used in the structures.
- Underwater archaeological survey and update of 1998 plan for the Safe Harbour Area.
- Hydrographic Survey of the Lakeshore

- Assessment of changes in the regeneration of the Woodland and understorey biodiversity since the previous study of 1998.
- Investigation of the Promontory Fort / Bank and Ditch Earthworks.

Policy 6.5

Establish a Rinn Dúin record map, kept in the Rinn Dúin archive within National Monuments, to be annually updated to record and locate all any new or potential features as they are found.

- Input to include natural history and ecological data as well as archaeological observations and findings.
- Hard copy to be kept on site, by St. John's Parish Heritage group, this can manually updated during the year.

9.3.7 Policies for Overall Management of the Place

To develop and establish a practical and sustainable management framework for Rinn Dúin.

Policy 7.1

Establish a Rinn Dúin Implementation Group to oversee the implementation of the policies, and to review and update the Conservation and Management Plan on an annual basis.

- This group should include
 - the landowners
 - St. John's Parish Heritage Group
 - Heritage Officer for Roscommon County Council
 - Representative of the Heritage Council
 - Representative of the National Monuments Service (National Monuments Service and / or Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit)
 - Representative of the National Parks and Wildlife Service
 - Technical Advisors (i.e. Conservation Architects, Archaeologists etc.)
- The group should meet on a twice yearly basis, at a minimum.
- All members should be informed of any works proposed at the site.

Policy 7.2

Provide readily available advice for the landowners to answer any queries on a timely and informed basis.

- This should be provided by the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group.

9.3.8 Policies for Finance

To develop practical and sustainable methodologies for raising funds to facilitate the implementation of all Conservation and Management policies.

Policy 8.1

Identify and pursue funding from State bodies in order to finance an on-going programme of emergency repairs in order to safeguard the survival of all the monuments. .

- Currently applications must be made on an annual basis.
- Investigate the possibility of a more long term funding regime, given the implications for the appropriate execution of works of the current annual system.

Policy 8.2

Ensure regular finance is also in place to fund annual inspection and maintenance. (Policy 2.1)

Policy 8.3

Ensure landowners are fully informed of accessible grants to cover any modifications to the management of their land required by conservation, ecological or access requirements of the Conservation and Management Plan.

Policy 8.4

Ensure funding continues to be available for the Looped Walk Scheme.

9.4 Implementation of the Policies

9.4.1 Introduction

The policies itemised above provide the governing principals that should inform all activities, proposals for change, and management strategies at Rinn Dúin. They also express overall aims that should ideally be achieved, in order to safeguard the significance and unique qualities of the site into the future.

In contrast, the actions are specific activities that are proposed in order to fulfil the ambitions set out in the policies. The actions do not, therefore relate directly to the policies on a one to one basis: some actions are fulfilling the aims of more than one policy, and in turn, some of the policies inform more than one action.

For practical purposes the table in **9.4.3** groups the actions proposed in order to fulfil the aims of the preceding policies into the following types:

- Management Actions,
- Formal Protection Actions,
- Physical Protection Actions,
- Conservation, Repair and Enhancement Actions
- Actions for Access
- Actions for Facilitating Research, Information and Understanding of the Site.

Recorded in the table are the Action; the policies to which it relates; who should (or could) be responsible for executing the action; potential funding for the action; the target time frame for the action to be instigated, and indicators which will embody the action being commenced, or completed.

Actions are also colour coded on the basis of their urgency.

This table can be the basis for regular review of the Conservation and Management Plan.

9.4.2 Responsibility

The majority of the site is owned and farmed by P.J. Grady. A small area, including the only access onto the Rinn Dúin peninsula is owned by Richard and Liz Collins.

Guardianship of the site is vested in the current owners, but state funding is essential to enable the appropriate conservation and preservation of the significance of the site, most urgently the endangered built structures. If the state is funding, or enabling, works at the site, it is essential that the landowners are fully involved and consulted, and any impacts on their lives, or livelihoods, fully considered and compensated, if necessary.

Currently the efforts to conserve Rinn Dúin and preserve its significance are being led by the St. John's Parish Heritage Group, with funding largely from state bodies, with a particular interest and input from Roscommon County Council, and the full co-operation of the land-owners.

9.5 Actions

The recommended actions arising out of these policies are summarised in the tables in the following pages.

Actions are defined in one of two categories:

Those contained in bold black text (e.g. **C4**) are finite actions that once completed can be recorded and removed from the “to do” list.

Those contained in bold brown text (e.g. **MI**) are actions that once established will have to be continued for the duration of the Management Plan, at least until reviewed at the next revision of the Conservation and Management Plan

Actions are also rated by the target period for their completion or inception.

Actions which are considered to be **critical** are shaded yellow and should be instigated in Year 1 of the adoption of this Conservation and Management Plan in order to safeguard the survival and significance of the site.

					Critical	
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Actions which are considered to be **urgent** are shaded mauve and should be instigated in Years 1-3 of the adoption of this Conservation and Management Plan.

					Urgent	
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Actions which are considered to be **important** are shaded green and should be instigated within 10 years.

					Important	
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Actions which are already happening but need to be continued at least until the Conservation and Management Plan is reviewed after 5 years are shaded grey.

					Continuing	
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Management Actions						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
M1	Establish the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group to oversee the implementation of the policies, and to review and update the Conservation and Management Plan. Group to meet at least twice a year. Designate a central person responsible for obtaining and circulating all relevant information to members. Implementation Group to monitor and approve content of the Rinn Dúin Website. In addition to the regular meetings a representative of the group will need to attend liaison meetings with other bodies, as necessary during the year. (e.g. see Action A3)	7.1 7.2 8.1 8.3	The landowners St. John's Parish Heritage Group Representative of the National Monuments Service / Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit Heritage Officer, Roscommon County Council Representative of the Heritage Council Representative of National Parks and Wildlife Service Technical Advisors (e.g. Conservation Architect, Archaeologist, Naturalist etc.)	Roscommon County Council to provide venue. NMS or AHAU to take responsibility for co-ordinating and recording. No further outside funding essential	Critical	Group established and meeting on a regular basis. Regular communications between members.
M2	Establish an annual review with the landowners to address their concerns and provide advice and assistance with regards the interface between farm management, the presentation of the monuments, access and wildlife issues, and available grants to promote good practice.	1.2 1.3 3.1 7.2 8.3	Landowners Teagasc N.P.W.S. St. John's Parish Heritage Group Representative(s) of the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group	No additional external funding necessary.	Urgent	Continuing good agricultural practice at the site. Landowners in receipt of appropriate grants.
M3	Continue to keep an accurate record of visitors to the site	1.2	St. John's Parish Heritage Group	No additional external funding necessary.	Continuing	Records kept and passed to Rinn Dúin Implementation Group and Archive.
M4	Install signage buoys, in approved location, forbidding anchoring in Safe Harbour	1.2	Waterways Ireland	Waterways Ireland	Critical	Buoys in place
M5	Establish a regular programme of field checks of the regeneration of the flora of the woodland.	1.3 2.4	NPWS	NPWS (DoAHG) Heritage Council	Urgent	Annual Report submitted to Rinn Dúin Implementation Group. Report in Rinn Dúin Archive

Management Actions						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
M6	Establish an annual inspection of the Monument. Appoint a suitably experienced person to carry out inspections, identify incipient deterioration of the structures and maintain a maintenance archive. Existing records to form the basis of this.	2.1 8.2	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group	Roscommon Co. Co. can fund a professional for a day a year	Urgent	Inspection carried out annually. Observations logged in Maintenance Archive and forwarded to Rinn Dúin Implementation Group.
M7	Establish a suitably qualified and experienced team to undergo minor works and control of vegetation using best conservation practice. Any minor works require notification to the Minister, and must be logged in the maintenance archive. Instructions to act to be issued by Rinn Dúin Implementation Group.	2.1 6.1	Approved Maintenance Operatives	DoAHG Conservation Grant Scheme, as available. Heritage Council can provide training.	Important	Minor repairs being carried out as and when necessary, following best conservation practice, and statutory notification.
M8	Establish an on-site maintenance archive.	2.1	To be managed by St. John/s Parish Heritage Group on site.		Urgent	Archive established. Archive regularly updated. Updated copy sent annually to Rinn Dúin Archive
M9	Establish a three yearly inspection by a Conservation Architect	2.1	Conservation Architect	Heritage Council	Important	Personnel appointed. Inspections being carried out and recorded annually.
M10	Continue to ensure a designated person makes regular inspections of the looped walk, with particular heed to erosion of the routes, and any detrimental effects on the historic features.	4.1	National Trails Office Roscommon LEADER Partnership Landowners	Roscommon LEADER Partnership	Continuing	Regular reports made back to the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group. Records in Rinn Dúin Archive.
M11	Establish a regular liaison between the Implementation Group, and relevant bodies to review tourism and visitor numbers and their impact on the site.	4.2	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group. Roscommon County Council, Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland Local tourism networks	No additional funding necessary	Urgent	Regular reports made back to the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group. Records in Rinn Dúin Archive. Visitor numbers retained within manageable numbers.

Formal Protection Actions						
	Action	Policy/ Policies	Who	Funding	Target	Indicators
FPI	The possibility of the monuments being taken into State Care should be the subject of a Feasibility Study.	1.1	National Monuments Service of the DoAHG	Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Important	Feasibility Study Completed
FPI.1	Due to its scale, complexity, and vulnerability and the finite nature of its form, the Castle could be prioritised for consideration in this respect.	1.1	National Monuments Service of the DoAHG	Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Urgent	Feasibility Study Completed
FP2	Ensure all professionals and operatives employed on the site are aware of the requirement to comply with statutory requirements with regards to the conservation of wildlife, and the overall significance of the site.	1.3 2.5 1.4 2.2	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group. Funding Bodies	No additional funding required	On-going	Best practice followed in all works at the site.
FP3	Prior to any action that will have an impact on the monuments two months notice to be given to the Minister. Any archaeological excavations, geophysical surveys or underwater investigations to apply for licence in accordance with the National Monuments Acts 1930 –2004. Any works impacting on the archaeology of the site should be in compliance with the <i>Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage</i> (Government Press 1999) and the <i>Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation</i> (Government Press 1999)	1.4	St. John's Parish Heritage Group Heritage Council Archaeological Researchers	No additional funding required	On-going	All statutory requirements complied with.

Physical Protection Actions						
	Action	Policy/ Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
PPI	Circulate this Conservation and Management Plan to all stakeholders, and potential funding bodies. Emphasise the urgency of the need for action in order to safeguard the built remains.	1.1 1.4	St. John's Parish Heritage Group The Heritage Council	The Heritage Council	Critical	State bodies show an interest in funding conservation or other actions proposed in the Plan
PP2	Prepare a plan for the removal of the scrub trees growing close to, and within, the Castle. Ensure works, do not further endanger the integrity of the structure and are compliant with statutory provisions with regards to National Monuments, wildlife and archaeology legislation and governed by a Health and Safety Plan, prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced conservation engineer. The plan should be prepared in parallel to the Conservation Plan for the Castle (Action C6, Policy 2.7) by the same conservation architects, engineer and archaeologist. Where trees are identified as presenting an acceptable minimal threat to the monument, they should be retained for wildlife and landscape value.	1.2 1.3 2.5 2.7 1.4	Conservation Architect Archaeologist Conservation Engineer to prepare Safety Plan. N.P.W.S. to authorise.	The Heritage Council DoAHG	Critical	All trees and are removed that provide an immediate threat to the stability of the Castle and the town wall and the stratigraphy of enclosed and adjacent land.
PP2.1	Complete survey of birds and bats prior to any removal of vegetation.	1.3 1.4	N.P.W.S. or Suitably qualified consultant	The Heritage Council	Critical	Survey delivered. Statutory requirements complied with.
PP3	Provide physical protection, where necessary, to prevent damage to the monuments by either humans or animals.	1.1 1.2 3.2	Development of design by Conservation architect in consultation with Archaeologist	Conservation Grants Scheme of the DoAHG	Important	No further damage to monument due to humans or animals.
PP3.1	Review all standing monuments to identify any features vulnerable to damage by either animals or humans.	1.1 1.2 3.2	St. John's Parish Heritage Group Conservation Architect	Roscommon Co. Co. can fund a professional for a day a year, combined with Action M6 .	Urgent	As PP3 above

Physical Protection Actions						
	Action	Policy/ Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
PP3.2	Appoint a conservation architect to work in consultation with archaeologist and historians to propose, and, if necessary, design protection measures that do not detract from the historic interpretation of the buildings.	1.1 1.2 2.2 3.2	Conservation Architect Archaeologist	The Heritage Council Conservation Grants Scheme of the DoAHG	Important	As PP3 above
PP3.3	Execute the proposed measures following approval by the Implementation Group and required statutory bodies.	1.1 1.2 3.2	Implementation Group Conservation Architect Archaeologist Conservation Contractor	The Heritage Council Conservation Grants Scheme of the DoAHG	Important	As PP3 above
PP4	Install signage buoys, in approved location, forbidding anchoring in Safe Harbour	1.2	Waterways Ireland	Waterways Ireland	Critical	Buoys in place
PP5	Ensure the short term survival of any critically endangered structures	1.4 2.1	See below		Critical	See below
PP5.1	Carry out a brief survey of entire site, excluding the Castle, (PP6) and Town Wall (C41), to identify any critically endangered structures.	1.4 2.1	Conservation Architect Archaeologist Conservation Engineer	The Heritage Council Roscommon Co. Co. D0AHG	Critical	Survey complete
PP5.2	Carry out emergency support / repair works, only as essential, to prevent collapse until such time as full conservation can occur as described in Policy 2.2.	1.4 2.1	Conservation Architect Archaeologist Conservation Engineer	National Monuments Service of the DoAHG Heritage Council	Critical	Temporary supports / emergency stabilisation in place. Access restricted for safety of visitors, landowners, animals.
PP6	In parallel with the preparation of the Conservation Plan for the Castle (Action C6 , Policy 2.7), and plan for vegetation removal (Action PP2), carry out a brief survey of the Castle, to identify any critically endangered structure. Carry out any emergency support / repair works only as essential in order to prevent collapse.	1.4 2.1 2.7	Conservation Architect Archaeologist Conservation Engineer	National Monuments Service of the DoAHG Heritage Council	Critical	Temporary supports / emergency stabilisation in place. Access restricted for safety of visitors, landowners, animals.

Conservation, and Repair and Enhancement Actions						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
C1	Continue to practice limited grazing of the woodland.	1.3 3.1	Landowner	Grants (REPS or equivalent)	Continuing	Regeneration of the woodland. Increased biodiversity.
C2	Ensure appropriate methodology for all conservation works to built remains, as defined in Policy 2.2.	1.4 2.2	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group Funders for specific Actions Professionals employed to fulfil specific actions	No specific funding required: best practice by all involved	Continuing	Records placed in Rinn Dúin Archive.
C3	Ensure full records are made of all conservation works and placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.	2.3	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group Funders for specific Actions Professionals and Contractors employed to fulfil specific actions	No specific funding required: best practice by all involved	Continuing	Conservation works completed to best practice.
C4	Complete emergency conservation works to the entire Town Wall, including removal of all vegetation and consolidation of all masonry.	2.6	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, in consultation with an archaeologist and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Heritage Council Conservation Grant Scheme of the DoAHG	Critical	All emergency stabilisation of the Town Wall completed
C4.1	Complete emergency conservation works to the critically endangered sections of the Town Wall, identified in Part 4, Figure 4.27.	1.4 2.3 2.6	Conservation Architect Conservation Engineer Archaeologist	Heritage Council Conservation Grant Scheme of the DoAHG	Critical	Proposal submitted and approved
C4.2	Complete work to the Gatehouse, which partially collapsed in February 2012, and remains critically endangered.	1.4 2.3 2.6	Conservation Architect Conservation Engineer Archaeologist	Heritage Council Conservation Grant Scheme of the DoAHG	Critical	Gatehouse and adjacent wall re-built and in stable condition. Record of works in Rinn Dúin Archive.
C4.3	Complete remaining phases of emergency conservation works to sections of the town wall.	1.4 2.3 2.6	Conservation Architect Conservation Engineer Archaeologist	Heritage Council Conservation Grant Scheme of the DoAHG	Urgent	Entire Town Wall in stable condition. Record of works in Rinn Dúin Archive.

Conservation, and Repair and Enhancement Actions						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
C5	Prepare a full Conservation Plan for the Castle and associated earthworks. This should conclude with a outline programme for consolidation of the masonry, prioritising the most vulnerable areas.	2.7	Conservation Architect Historian Archaeologist Conservation Engineer Ecologist / Wildlife specialist Quantity Surveyor	Heritage Council DoAHG	Critical	Conservation Plan completed.
C6	Following completion of the Conservation Plan, and any emergency stabilisation and removal of trees, (PP2, PP6) survey and record the entire Castle and associated earthworks to best conservation practice, and in line with the recommendations of the Conservation Plan.	1.4 2.3 2.7	Conservation Architect Architectural Historian Archaeologist Conservation Engineer	Heritage Council DoAHG	Important	Full survey and record in the Rinn Dúin Archive. Format allows for future updates of data as conservation work progresses.
C7	Following completion of the Conservation Plan (C5), and in accordance with its recommendations, and policies, commence a prioritised programme of stabilisation and conservation works to the masonry of the Castle. Following best conservation practice as proposed in Policy 2.2 and fully recorded as proposed in Policy 2.3.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.7	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, in consultation with archaeologist and Conservation Engineer, and executed by experienced conservation operatives, and supervised by the archaeologist and conservation engineer.	Heritage Council DoAHG	Important	Conservation works commenced. As required works are so extensive, they are unlikely to be complete prior to the next review of the Conservation Plan in 2021.
C8	Complete emergency conservation works to the entire Parish Church, including removal of all vegetation and consolidation of all masonry. Work may be phased.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.8	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Heritage Council DoAHG	Urgent	All emergency stabilisation of the Parish Church completed. Records placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.

Conservation, and Repair and Enhancement Actions						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
C8.1	Indicate location of the ecclesiastical enclosure on the site, on the basis of the research carried out as Action U4 . Methodology to be developed and agreed to provide insight while not reducing the interpretation of the historic landscape.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.8	Conservation Architect in consultation with Archaeologist and the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group	Heritage Council DoAHG	Important	Enclosure indicated on the site.
C9	Complete emergency conservation works to the entire St. John's Hospital Building, including removal of all vegetation and consolidation of all masonry. Work may be phased.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.9	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, in consultation with archaeologist and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Heritage Council Conservation Grant Scheme of the DoAHG	Important	All emergency stabilisation of St. John's Hospital completed. Records placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.
C10	Conservation of the extant features around Safe Harbour.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.10	Marine Archaeologist Conservation Architect	Heritage Council DoAHG Marine Institute	Important	
C10.1	Completion and interpretation of the underwater survey planned for 2012,(Action U9.10)	1.4 2.10	Marine Archaeologist	Funding approved by Roscommon Co. Co. Heritage Office	Important	Survey Complete.
C10.2	Prepare a prioritised plan for conservation of the extant features around Safe Harbour.	1.4 2.10	Marine Archaeologist Conservation Architect	Heritage Council DoAHG		Recommendations made to Rinn Dúin Implementation Group.
C10.3	Following completion of survey and plan described in C10 , commence vegetation removal and consolidation works to the Slipway at Safe Harbour. Work may be phased.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.10	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, discussed, agreed and approved by the National monuments Service, overseen by archaeologist and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Heritage Council Conservation Grant Scheme of the DoAHG	Important	All emergency stabilisation of Slipway completed. Records placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.

Conservation, and Repair and Enhancement Actions						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
CI0.2	Complete vegetation removal and consolidation works to features at Safe Harbour. Work may be phased.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.10,	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, informed by archaeologist and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Heritage Council Roscommon Co. Co.	Important	All emergency stabilisation of Harbour features completed. Records placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.
CII	To take appropriate measures to safeguard low wall remains, based on further archaeological investigation and interpretation. (Refer U4, U5, U6, U9.3)	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.11	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, in consultation with an archaeologist and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Heritage Council DoAHG	Urgent	Walls stabilised. Records placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.
CII.1	To safeguard low wall remains at the Church.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.11	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, in consultation with archaeologist and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Heritage Council Conservation Grant Scheme of the DoAHG	Important	Walls stabilised. Records placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.
CII.2	To safeguard low wall remains at House 1.	2.11, 1.4	As CII.1 above.	Heritage Council DoAHG	Important	As CII.1 above.
CII.3	To safeguard low wall remains at House 2.	2.1, 1.4	As CII.1 above.	Heritage Council DoAHG	Important	As CII.1 above.
CII.4	To safeguard low wall remains at House 3.	2.11, 1.4	As CII.1 above.	Heritage Council DoAHG	Important	As CII.1 above.
CI2	Complete emergency conservation works to the Graveyard Walls adjacent to St. John's Hospital, including removal of all vegetation and consolidation of all masonry. Work may be phased.	1.4 2.2 2.3 2.12	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, in consultation with archaeologist, and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Roscommon Co. Co. Cemetery Improvement and Maintenance Scheme, subject to available funding.	Important	All emergency stabilisation of graveyard walls at St. John's Hospital completed. Records placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.

Conservation, and Repair and Enhancement Actions						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
CI3	Complete emergency conservation works to the Walled Garden, including removal of all vegetation and consolidation of all masonry. Priority to be given to the section of wall containing the bee-boles. Work may be phased.	1.4, 2.2 2.3 2.13,	Work to be designed, specified and fully recorded by Conservation Architect, in consultation with archaeologist and executed by experienced conservation operatives.	Heritage Council Conservation Grant Scheme of the DoAHG	Important	All emergency stabilisation of Walled Garden completed. Records placed in the Rinn Dúin Archive.

Actions for Access						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Funding	Target	Indicators
A1	Continue to support the Looped Walk Scheme which facilitates public access to the site. Ensure a member of the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group is present at review meetings	4.1 8.4 7.1	Landowners Roscommon Co. Co. Rinn Dúin Implementation Group Fáilte Ireland	Government Funding Fáilte Ireland	Continuing	Looped Walk continues to be funded and in good order
A2	Continue to encourage local participation in and awareness of Rinn Dúin.	4.1 5.3	St. John's Parish Heritage Group Roscommon Co. Co. Heritage Officer	No additional funding necessary	Continuing	Local people making regular use of the Looped Walk, and participating in activities of St. John's Parish Heritage Group. Local children aware of and interested in Rinn Dúin.
A3	Establish a liaison group including a representative of the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group, Roscommon County Council Heritage Officer and Rural Development Officer, representatives of Fáilte Ireland and Waterways Ireland and local Tourism Networks. This group to facilitate Policy 4.2. Group to meet Annually.	4.2 4.5	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group, Roscommon Co. Co. Heritage Officer Roscommon Leader Partnership Rural Recreation Officer, Fáilte Ireland Waterways Ireland Local Tourism Networks.	No additional funding necessary	Urgent	Group established and meeting annually.
A4	Carry out a review of Signage at the site. Design and install new signage installations to provide accurate and enlightening information for visitors while ensuring no negative impact on the presentation of the historic site. This could be in the form of a Rinn Dúin Interpretation Plan.	4.3 1.1 3.2 5.1 5.4	Historian Archaeologist Graphic Designer Conservation architect N.P.W.S.	Heritage Council Fáilte Ireland	Important	Signage in place and of a very high standard of design, location and accuracy.
A5	Investigate and implement, if appropriate the extension of the Looped Walk Scheme. This could include the walled garden and bee-boles,	4.4	Roscommon County Council Landowners St. John's Parish Heritage Group Fáilte Ireland National Trails Office	Fáilte Ireland	Important	Investigation complete. Walk extended

Actions for Facilitating Research, Information, Understanding						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
U1	Establish the Rinn Dúin Archive. All extant and future research and records of the site to be placed in the Archive. An updateable map to be created onto which all extant features are logged and onto which new finds can be added. Copies to be located within <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Monuments Service St. John's Parish Heritage Group Roscommon County Archive / Library Irish Architectural Archive 	6.1	National Monuments to appoint an appropriately experienced person to be responsible for ensuring archive is kept up to date. Roscommon Library Service to provide the appropriate support in county.	National Monuments	Urgent	Copy of full archive is available within National Monuments, Roscommon County Library Irish Architectural Archive
U2	Establish a Rinn Dúin Website.	5.1 6.2	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group, National Monuments Roscommon Co. Co.	Roscommon LEADER Partnership Heritage Council	Important	Rinn Dúin Website up and running and regularly updated.
U3	Carry out a scientific review of the woodland quality and bio-diversity of the Rinn Dúin Wood. Compare with study of 1998. Make recommendations on the basis of the findings. Place report in Rinn Dúin archive.	1.3 3.2 6.4	N.P.W.S. or Academic researcher National Biodiversity Data Centre	Heritage Council	Urgent	Review complete. Recommendations made to Rinn Dúin Implementation. Group. Report in Rinn Dúin Archive.
U4	Carry out further archaeological investigation of the original ecclesiastical enclosure. Make proposals as to how best this can be communicated in the context of the site	1.4 1.5 2.8 6.4	Archaeologist	Heritage Council Academic funding	Important	Archaeologists report completed. Report in Rinn Dúin Archive.

Actions for Facilitating Research, Information, Understanding						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
U5	Establish a regular liaison and exchange of information between the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group and educational bodies, in order to promote Rinn Dúin as an educational resource.	5.2	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group St. John's Parish Heritage Group N.P.W.S. Education Officer National Biodiversity Data Centre Academic Institutions NUI Galway Local Schools Educational Outreach Officers	No additional funding necessary	Important	Appropriate educational visits to Rinn Dúin established.
U6	Establish a research framework for Rinn Dúin. This should be co-ordinated by the Rinn Dúin Implementation Group and establish a network of communications between specialists and academics in all disciplines.	6.3	Rinn Dúin Implementation Group Academic Institutions NUI Galway National Biodiversity Data Centre N.P.W.S. National Monuments Specialists	National Monuments to provide a co-ordinator.	Urgent	Framework established. Regular communications between all members. Prioritised list of key areas to be researched agreed.
U7	Carry out research in key areas. Some of those identified during the preparation of this Plan are listed in the sub actions below. The identified research in no way precludes or prioritises over other potential areas of research which may be identified during the life of this Plan.	6.4	Academics and Academic Institutions Individuals with specialist knowledge	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	Research in Rinn Dúin Archive. Research read and digested by Rinn Dúin Implementation Group
U7.1	Overall research, informed by archaeological investigation and further historical research, into the arrangement and functioning of the medieval town in relation to the Castle and the hinterland, how people lived in the town and their relationship to the wider landscape and culture.	1.1 1.5 6.4	Academics Archaeologists Historians	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	Research in Rinn Dúin Archive. Research read and digested by Rinn Dúin Implementation Group

Actions for Facilitating Research, Information, Understanding						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
U7.2	Archaeological investigations / geophysical surveys adjacent to the Town Wall to identify associated defensive structures and adjacent settlement. All investigations to be carried out under licence and in compliance with statutory requirements.	1.1 1.4 1.5 5.5 6.4	Academics Archaeologists Architectural Historians	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above
U7.3	Archaeological investigation / geophysical survey to clarify the age of the houses. All investigations to be carried out under licence and in compliance with statutory requirements.	1.1 1.4 1.5 3.3 6.4	Academics Archaeologists Architectural Historians	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above
U7.4	Detailed survey of the Castle.	6.4	Academics Archaeologists Architectural Historians Conservation Architect	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above
U7.5	Further interpretation as to the phasing of construction of the Castle.	6.4	Academics Archaeologists Architectural Historians	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above
U7.6	Industrial Archaeological investigation of the Windmill.	1.1 1.4 1.5 6.4	Academics Industrial Archaeologists	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above
U7.7	Further research into the enclosure to the Parish Church.	1.1 1.4 1.5 3.3 6.4	Academics Archaeologists	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above

Actions for Facilitating Research, Information, Understanding						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
U7.8	Further archaeological investigation in the graveyards and land adjacent to St. John's Hospital to try to identify the footprint of the more extensive religious foundation.	1.1 1.4 1.5 6.4	Academics Archaeologists Architectural Historians	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above
U7.9	Survey of the historic farm buildings, to record structures and investigate the possible presence of medieval masonry re-used in the structures.	6.4	Archaeologists Architectural Historians Conservation Architect	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above
U7.10	Underwater archaeological survey and update of 1998 plan for the Safe Harbour Area.	2.10 6.4	Academics Underwater Archaeologists Naval historians	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U9.1 above
U7.11	Hydrographic Survey of Lakeshore and Safe Harbour	2.10 6.4	Hydrographic surveyors Academics Underwater Archaeologists	Waterways Ireland Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Urgent	As U7.1 above
U7.12	Assessment of changes in the regeneration of the Woodland and understorey biodiversity since the previous study of 1998.	6.4	Academics Naturalists N.P.W.S.	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council N.P.W.S	Important	As U7.1 above
U7.13	Investigation and Interpretation of the Promontory Fort / Bank and Ditch Earthworks.	1.1 1.4 1.5 6.4	Academics Archaeologists	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U7.1 above
U7.14	Investigation of the woodland history and its relationship to the rest of the site.	6.4	Academics Naturalists Woodland Historians	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U7.1 above

Actions for Facilitating Research, Information, Understanding						
	Action	Policy / Policies	Who	Potential Funding	Target	Indicators
U8	Investigate the feasibility of reinstating a length of wall walk adjacent to one of the towers in the Town Wall. Commission study following further research adjacent to the wall and of the putlogs, wall walk and other evidence in the Town Wall structure.	1.1 1.4 1.5 5.5	National Monuments Academics Architectural historians Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Academic Institutions Academic funding bodies Heritage Council	Important	As U7.1 above
U9	Prepare an Interpretation Plan for Rinn Dúin, to explore and propose the most appropriate approach to Interpretation at the site. Plan is to be prepared with the input of all stakeholders and selected specialists.	5.1	Archaeologist Conservation Architect Historians Wildlife Consultant / Ecologist	Heritage Council DoAHG	Important	Plan completed
U10	Keep a record map within the Rinn Dúin Archive to be regularly updated to record all archaeological and ecological finds and observations.	6.5	Archaeologist / Archivist	DoAHG	Urgent	Map in place and regularly updated

SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Picture Sources

Cover

Aerial Photograph, Con Brogan,
Office of Public Works / Dept. of the Environment

Part One

- 1.01** RMP Map. National Monuments Service
- 1.02** Ordnance Survey Map
- 1.03** Map: Blackwood Associates Architects, produced under licence from Ordnance Survey of Ireland. Sheets 2759, 2760
- 1.04** Map: Blackwood Associates Architects, produced under licence from Ordnance Survey of Ireland. Sheets 2759, 2760

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- 2.01** Map of Rinn Dúin. Urban Archaeological Survey OPW
- 2.02** Map by Blackwood Associates. Source: archaeology.ie
- 2.03** House Site 1. Urban Archaeological Survey OPW
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- 2.15** The Parish Church and Fishpond. Irish Army Aerial Survey January 2012
- 2.16** Bee Boles. Photograph Richard Collins
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Part Three

- 3.01** The Castle. Irish Army Aerial Survey January 2012
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- 3.03** Plan of Safe Harbour. Urban Archaeological Survey OPW

Part Four

- 4.01** Irish Army Aerial Survey January 2012
- 4.02** Map of Site of Town Blackwood Associates Architects, produced under licence from Ordnance Survey of Ireland. Sheets 2759, 2760
- 4.03** Photograph Blackwood Associates Architects
- 4.04** Photograph House 1 Blackwood Associates Architects
- 4.05** Photograph House 2 13.10.11 Blackwood Associates Architects
- 4.06** Photograph 13.10.2011 Blackwood Associates Architects
- 4.07** Photograph 26.10.2011 Blackwood Associates Architects
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- 4.09** Photograph. 26.10.2011, Blackwood Associates Architects
- 4.10** Photograph. 02.11. 2011. Richard Collins
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- 4.13** Photograph. 06.04.2011 Blackwood Associates Architects
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- 4.37** Rectified Photograph. November 2012.
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- 4.47** Photograph. 13.02. 2012. Richard Collins
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- 4.49** Photograph. 11.02.2010
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- 4.54** Aerial Photograph. Source: John O'Beirne
- 4.55** Photograph. 21.04.2011
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- 4.56** Survey Sketch. Source: John O'Beirne
- 4.57** Photograph. 13.02. 2012. Richard Collins
- 4.58** Photograph. Blackwood Associates Architects
- 4.59** Drawing. Blackwood Associates Architects
- 4.60** The Parish Church.
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- 4.69** The Graveyards and Walled Garden.
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Part Five

- 5.01** Map. Source: Andrew Bleasdale and John Conaghan
- 5.02** Aerial Photographs 1975 / 1995.
Source: Andrew Bleasdale and John Conaghan
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- 5.04** Map. 1898. Ordnance Survey of Ireland.
- 5.05** Map. Source: Andrew Bleasdale and John Conaghan
- 5.06** Map. Source: NPWS
- 5.07** Map. Source: NPWS

Part Six

- 6.01** Photograph c. 1900. Source: The Leonard Family
- 6.02** Photograph. 13.10.2011
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- 6.03** Photograph. 13.10.2011
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- 6.04** Map 1837. Ordnance Survey of Ireland. Check source
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- 6.06** Photograph. 13.10.2011
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- 6.07** Photograph. 22.12.2010. Richard Collins
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- 6.09** Map Ordnance Survey of Ireland

Part Seven

- 7.01** The eastern end of the Rinn Dúin peninsula
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- 7.02** Photograph. 09.09.2011
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- 7.03** Photograph. 13.02. 2012. Richard Collins
- 7.04** Photograph. 13.10.2011
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- 7.05** The Castle
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Part Eight

- 8.01** Map: Blackwood Associates Architects,
produced under licence from
Ordnance Survey of Ireland. Sheets 2759, 2760
- 8.02** Photograph. 25.11.2008 Associates Architects
- 8.03** Photograph. Richard Collins
- 8.04** Photograph. Richard Collins
- 8.05** Photograph. 26.10.2011 Associates Architects

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This bibliography accompanies Parts Two, Three and Five of this Conservation and Management Plan

ABBREVIATIONS

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