

**Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage
Assessment**

**Monaghan Civic Offices
Roosky Lands
Monaghan**

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Archaeology
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Non-Technical Summary

This assessment of the existing Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage environment (the baseline) of the proposed development site and its surroundings was completed in order to determine any significant impacts that might arise as a result of the proposed development and to highlight any potential effects this might have on those elements of the site's heritage.

The assessment commenced with a desktop study / paper survey (Myles 2022) which considered all available archaeological, architectural, historical, and cartographic sources pertaining to the site. This information was used in order to assess any potential impact on the receiving environment and to identify measures to ensure the conservation of any relevant monuments, features or structures therein. The assessment also included both an archaeological and architectural walk over survey of the receiving environment and the redline boundary of the proposed development.

There are no known archaeological monuments within the area investigated, however the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Monaghan (MO009-060) forms a section of the site's southwestern boundary at the back plots on Dublin Street. The walkover survey conducted as a part of this assessment identified two sites of archaeological potential (Site 1 and Site 2) however in both instances these have been discounted by further inspection and by archaeological testing, carried out under licence ref. 22E0956 (Kyle 2023).

There is a single protected structure, RPS No. 41001248 -the location of a fort, listed within the redline boundary of the development, however the walkover survey confirmed that there are no upstanding remains or traces of any remains present at that location. As part of the archaeological test trenching an investigation of the locus point for that protected structure was undertaken. That archaeological investigation confirmed that no such structure or elements relating to a structure of that type were present. Furthermore, there was nothing identified in the documentary sources, the historical background or the cartographic research conducted as part of this assessment which would suggest that the locus point for RPS No. 41001248 is anything other than erroneous.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) lists no sites within the redline boundary of the application area. The proposed development site does not impinge of the Architectural Conservation Areas of Glaslough Street, The Diamond and Dublin Street and at its closest point the redline boundary of the proposed development is 60m, 80m and 60m respectively to the rear of each of those ACAs.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report details the results of the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage assessment of the lands of proposed development site known as the Roosky Lands, located in Roosky townland, Monaghan town, County Monaghan. The lands are located on Infirmery Hill between Glaslough Street/N54 and Roosky Vale, in the townland of Roosky, c.120m northeast of the centre of Monaghan Town (Figure 1). These lands have been acquired by Monaghan County Council for the development of the Civic Offices and associated infrastructure as part of the Roosky Lands Masterplan. The initial assessment and background research was undertaken by Franc Myles of Archaeology & Built Heritage Ltd. on behalf of Monaghan County Council on 19th September 2022, with a subsequent inspection of Area 5 undertaken on 4th December 2022. Archaeological testing was carried out under licence ref. 22E0956 and a further assessment of the lands was undertaken by James Kyle of Archaeology & Built Heritage Ltd, 30th January 2023.



Figure 1 Site location (Google Maps)

- 1.2 The archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage assessment took the form of a desk-based assessment, walk-over surveys and a review of the historical literature and documentary sources pertaining to the site. There are no known archaeological monuments within the application area, however the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Monaghan (MO009-060) forms a section of the site's southwestern boundary at the back plots on Dublin Street.

The area investigated has within its boundaries the site of the old County Infirmery, which was constructed soon after 1768 and replaced by a new hospital on the site of the county gaol in 1896. In addition, given the topography of the site, it is likely that there survives evidence for earlier settlement along the ridge line.

The initial walk-over survey identified two such areas (Site 1 and Site 2), however in both instances these have been discounted by further inspection and archaeological testing (see below).

- 1.3 Site 1 was discounted upon further inspection. The targeted archaeological testing of Site 2, which was identified during the walkover survey, took place 30th January 2023, under licence ref. 22E0956. As part of that test trenching, an investigation of the locus point for the Protected Structure RPS No. 41001248, listed as the location of a fort which is situated in Area 4 (Figure 12) was carried out. Furthermore, a small investigative trench (Trench 4, Figure 11) was also excavated adjacent to the recently constructed Ulster Canal Greenway in order to inspect for the possible presence of the former canal structures beneath the greenway. The Ulster Canal is not listed as a protected structure by the RPS for County Monaghan, however it is arguably a structure which merits inclusion in that record, where the canal and its associated elements are well preserved.
- 1.4 This assessment and the targeted archaeological testing (Licence ref. 22E0956) were conducted to provide an appraisal of the receiving environment and the potential for the proposed development to impact any archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage elements within the associated redline boundary. There have been no archaeological investigations undertaken within the red-line boundary, prior to this, as the one investigation which is currently mapped by the excavations.ie resource within the boundary (licence ref. 07E0575) refers to lands subsequently developed to the north of Glaslough Street, and it is therefore erroneously mapped in its present location by that resource.

2 Receiving Environment

- 2.1 The subject site is on the western side of a glacial drumlin which rises from the back plots on Dublin and Glaslough Streets, with the Shambles River flowing in a deep culvert along its base to the south. The south- and west-facing slopes are considerably steeper, where the County Infirmery building would appear to have been excavated into the slope. The actual summit of the drumlin is somewhat further to the north within the grounds of St. Davnet's Hospital. The lands are presently predominantly under pasture, with the newly constructed Ulster Canal Greenway traversing the southern edge of the development lands and the carp park of Monaghan Harps GAA club and St. Davnet's Hospital to the east.
- 2.2 The application area can usefully be subdivided into five areas (Figure 2): Area 1 partly includes the overgrown site of the County Infirmery, the historic curtilage of which is considered here *in toto*; Area 2 is the large sloping field immediately to the north, divided by a hedgerow from Area 3; Area 4 incorporates the highest ground on the site and slopes off more gradually to the northwest. It is separated from Area 2 and 3 by two phases of walling. Area 5 extends to the southeast between Monaghan Harps' car park and the housing at Roosky Vale and expands to an area just across the Shambles River, terminating at the southern bank of the former Ulster Canal, now part of the Ulster Canal Greenway.

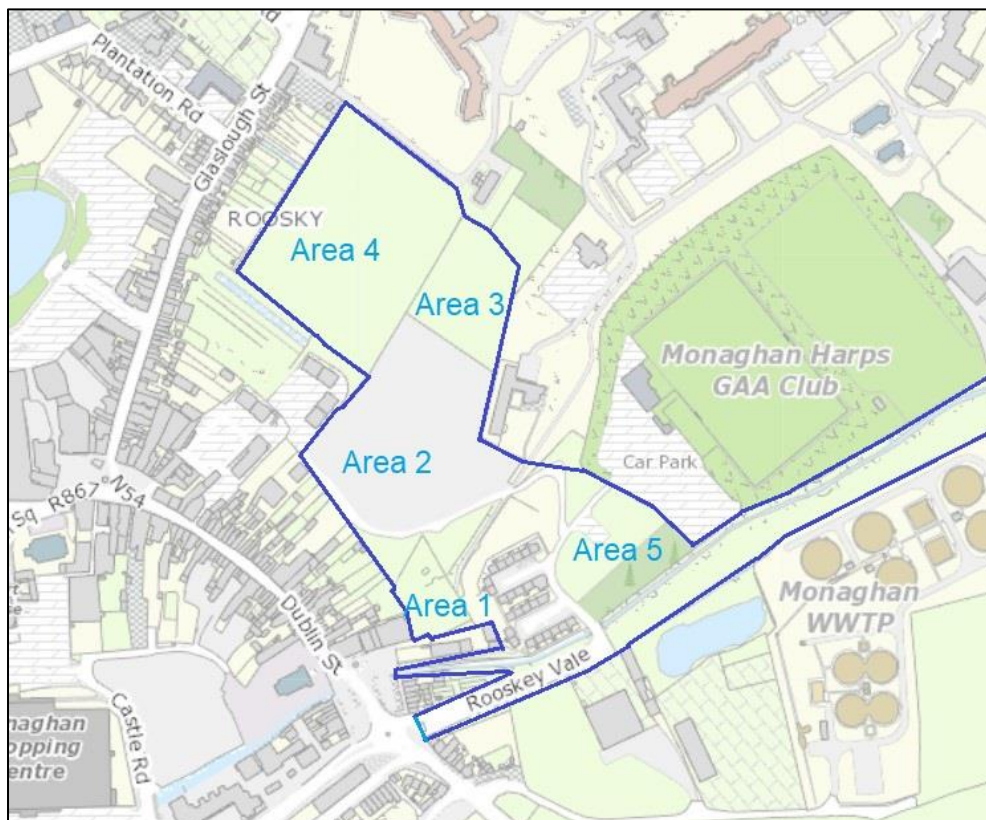


Figure 2 Area discussed in walk-over survey, with lands in Monaghan CoCo ownership in blue (ASI)

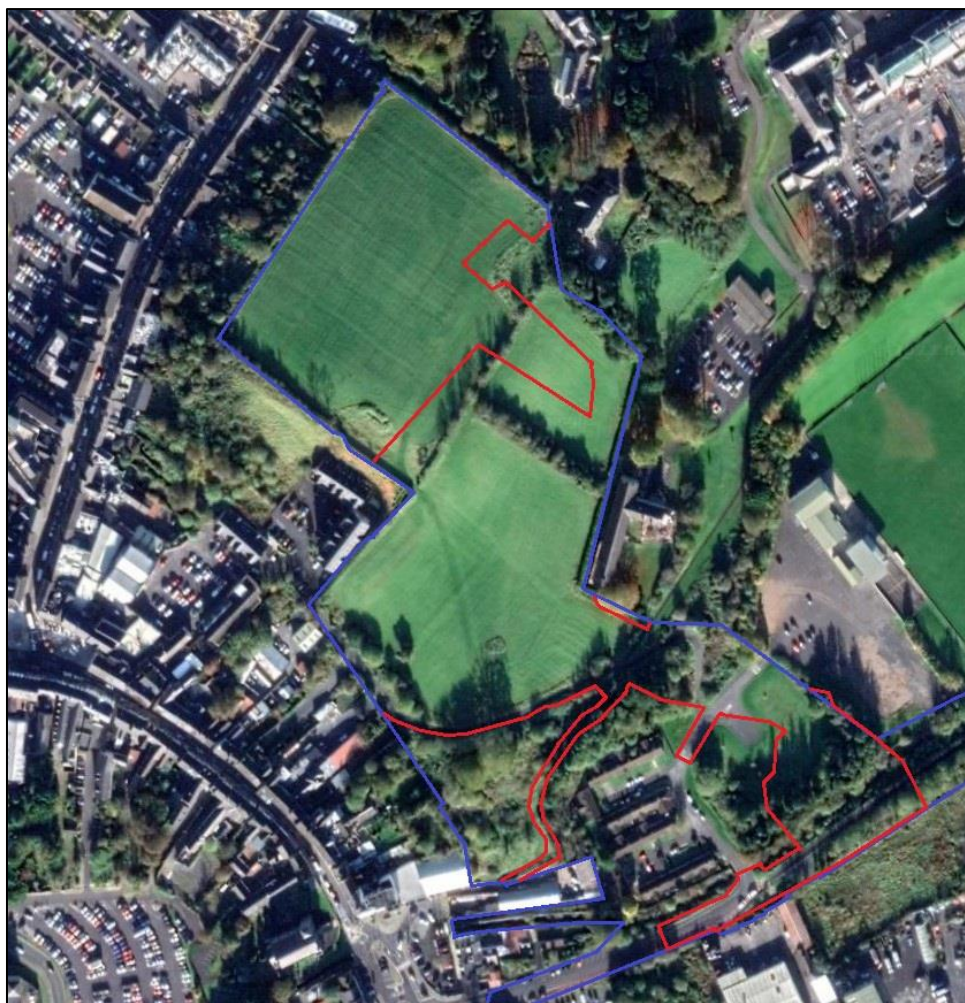


Figure 3 Lands in CoCo ownership with redline boundary of proposed development in red

3 Proposed development summary

- 3.1 The proposed development comprises the construction of a new civic office building distributed over three floors which will encompass office accommodation, a Council chamber and a series of supporting spaces, plant, ESB substation and services enclosures. The development will be served by a surface car park, drop-off area and bicycle parking spaces. Infrastructural works to the existing vehicular route on Slí Ógie Uí Dhufaigh, including the provision of a new clear span bridge over the River Shambles and a new vehicular access 'Quarry Walk' are also proposed. Permeability will be enhanced by a series of pedestrian and cycle links. Ancillary development works include signage, earthworks, drainage, watermain, utilities, landscaping, boundary treatments, lighting and solar PV panels.

4 Archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage background

4.1 The Irish name *Muineachán* derives from a diminutive plural form of the Irish word *muine* meaning "brake" (a thickly overgrown area) or sometimes "hillock", something that was interpreted by Joyce(1870) as "a place full of little hills or brakes" as such it is no surprise that the subject site is located on the western side of a glacial hillock. That drumlin rises from the back plots on Dublin and Glaslough Streets, with the Shambles River flowing in a deep culvert along its base to the south. The south and west-facing slopes are considerably steeper and to the south the site of the County Infirmary building would appear to have been excavated into the slope. The actual summit of the drumlin is somewhat further to the northeast within the grounds of St. Davnet's Hospital. The townland name Roosky is the anglicised version of the Gaelic *Rúscaigh*, meaning Rush or Rushes, presumably after members of the *Juncaceae* family of plants.

4.2 Prehistoric Period

The Mesolithic period (c. 9000-4000BC) currently presents the earliest widespread evidence for the human occupation on the island of Ireland and although there are no sites dating to this period in the immediate environment of the subject site artefacts dating to this period have been found in County Monaghan, at Newbliss, in Annaghmakerrig Bog, 17km southwest of the subject site. The type of flint blade typically dates to c. 7,000 to 4,000 BC and represents the evidence for the typical transitory hunter-gatherer nature of these early occupants, who adapted themselves and their lifestyle to fit their landscape and habitat. The landscape of drumlins and associated lakes would have represented rich hunting grounds for these early hunter gatherer inhabitants of the island.

Although no archaeological remains or sites dating to the Neolithic Period (c. 4000-2800BC) have been recorded or discovered on or in close (500m) proximity to the permitted development, the wider landscape of the county contains the full suite of megalithic tomb types dating to this period- a court tomb at Edergole (MO00575) 10km to the southwest, a passage tomb at Mullyash 10km to the southeast (MO00443) and a wedge tomb (MO00377) at Calliagh 5km to the southwest. On the other hand, the evidence for habitation of the county during this period comes in the form of the three Neolithic Houses excavated by Fintan Walsh as part of the Carrickmackross bypass, which dated to c.4000BC, 30km to the southeast of the subject site.

Closer to the subject site the Bronze Age (c.2800BC-800BC) is represented by the three burnt spread/burnt mound type sites which were excavated along the town's bypass 600m to the east of the subject site in Annahagh and Tullyhirm. These multipurpose sites typically date to the late Bronze Age 1200-800BC, however the 04E1159 site in Tullyhirm townland returned a radiocarbon date of 2140-1740 Cal. BC, with the two sites in Annahagh townland, 04E1161 and 04E1160 returning radiocarbon dates of 1690-1490

Cal. BC and 2340-2020 Cal. BC respectively, meaning these sites in the immediate locality of the subject site date from the early to middle Bronze Age. Although there are no obviously Iron Age (c.800BC-500 AD) sites in the locale however, the absence of evidence for archaeological sites or monuments dating to this period in close proximity to the subject site should not be viewed as evidence of their absence.

4.3 Historic period

Early Medieval Period c.AD500-1100

The area surrounding the subject site is relatively rich in evidence relating to the occupation and use of the immediate part of the landscape of County Monaghan within this period. Settlement patterns dating from this period are evident in the surrounding landscape with numerous crannogs, such as MO009-037 in Convent Lake, 300m to the southwest, recorded in the waters of the nearby lakes and arguably the most common, or at least well known, monument type of this period ringforts (also known as raths), which are widely distributed across the surrounding landscape. These are interpreted as enclosed farmsteads, and they generally consist of an enclosing ditch outside an earthen bank and they broadly date from 500 to 1000 AD. Larger examples may have more than one ditch and multiple banks forming the enclosure, and the closest confirmed example of this site type is MO009-064, located in Gortakeeghan townland, 2km to the southwest of the subject site.

Medieval Period C.AD1100-1600

There are several sites in the immediate locale which evidence the occupation of the area around the subject site during the medieval period, with references to a McMahon 'caisleán' or castle at Monaghan dating to 1492 AD. This is suggested to probably be the crannog in Convent Lake (MO009-037), which is described on a map of c. 1590 as 'McMahon's house'. The foundation of a Franciscan friary (MO009-060002) nearby in 1462 would have added to the developing nucleus of settlement. Monaghan was incorporated as a county with five baronies in 1585, and this location where there was already a friary and a strongpoint of the MacMahons as well as a small settlement may have been selected then for future development as the county town.

In 1589-91 the lord deputy, Sir William Fitzwilliam, took advantage of a MacMahon dispute to establish a garrison in the town at the then dissolved friary. This was part of a political and land settlement that effectively abolished the Mac Mahon chieftainship and the use of Brehon law in the territory. The land settlement was generally accepted by the larger Gaelic magnates as it secured their personal estates, and it also ensured that the county escaped plantation where the other Ulster counties did not after 1603.

Post-Medieval period and cartographic sources

Although the garrison at Monaghan was successfully re-supplied after the government defeat at the battle of Clontibret in May 1595, it was probably abandoned soon afterwards, and it was not re-established until 1602 when its commander John Berkley built the small fort (MO009-060007) north of the town. In 1604 Sir Edward Blayney was appointed seneschal or governor of the county and the garrison, and two years later he received extensive grants of land around the town and around what would become Castleblayney. These were confirmed in 1612, although the castle at Monaghan was specifically excluded. In 1606 Sir John Davies, the attorney general, described the town of Monaghan as *'consisting of divers scattered cabins or cottages, whereof the most part was possessed by the cast soldiers of that garrison. In the northmost part thereof there is a little fort, which is kept by the foot company of Sir Edward Blayney, who is seneschal or governor of the county by patent. In the midst of this village there is a foundation of a new castle, which being raised ten or twelve feet from the ground, and so left neglected for the space of two years, is now ready to fall into ruin again'*. The town was incorporated in 1613 and by 1640 it had up to 100 houses. In the census of c. 1659 Monaghan town had an adult male population of 32 English and Scots and 101 Irish.

4.4 The Ulster Canal

The line of the disused Ulster Canal forms the southeastern boundary of the proposed application area. This is a significant piece of industrial archaeology although it is not under the protection of the National Monument Acts. The route of the canal, linking Lough Neagh and Lough Erne, with the latter being linked already to Limerick, effectively facilitated transport between Belfast and Limerick. The route was surveyed in 1814 but it wasn't until 1825 that the Ulster Canal Company was set up. Construction on the canal commenced in 1831, with the works contract awarded to William Dargan, arguably the most important Irish engineer of the 19th century, with the excavation of the canal beginning at the Charlemont end. Bizarrely and ultimately unwisely, the width of the locks was reduced to 3.66 metres (the minimum width on the dependent Newry and Lagan canals was 4.57 metres).

The Ulster Canal opened in 1842 at a total cost of £230,000 but the canal failed to live up to expectations. Narrow locks, shortage of water and the fact that the canal was too narrow in places to permit boats to pass were only some of the problems which plagued the route. By 1851 the Ulster Canal Company was in serious financial difficulty and the Board of Works took control of the canal, leasing it to William Dargan, for the sum of £400 per year, with Dargan operating a freight service between Enniskillen and Newry. Direct competition from the railways forced Dargan to surrender his lease to the Dundalk Steam Navigation Company which had no success in running the canal either. By 1865 the Board of Works had re-taken control of the canal and over the next eight years they spent £22,000 on trying to improve its navigability. The canal was re-opened in 1873 but this

proved to be another false dawn; during the 1870s the tolls averaged £163 per year while the annual maintenance costs were a multiple of that at £1,250 per annum. Between 1878 and 1880 the income from tolls fell further to £87 per annum on average and two years later a government commission recommended the canal be sold, however no buyer could be found.

The canal enjoyed a brief resurgence following its 1888 takeover by the Lagan Navigation Company, traffic peaked on the canal with the revenue from tolls increasing from £150 per year in the 1880s to over £700 in the 1890s, but running costs remained cripplingly high and over the course of the next 40 years the canal became derelict, with the last lighter entering the canal on 29th October 1929, and the canal being officially abandoned in 1931.

The first edition Ordnance Survey mapping of the Roosky Lands (not shown here) does not depict anything of archaeological significance, with the location of Site 2 being the nexus of several field boundaries. Additionally, the Ulster Canal route is delineated either side of the Shambles River, but it is otherwise lacking detail, as presumably this stretch had not been constructed until after 1835. There is little change to the depiction of the lands on the subsequent 25-inch mapping of 1910 (Figure 4), where the Roosky Lands remain as primarily agricultural holdings and the nexus of field boundaries has become part of an enlarged hedgerow boundary at the location of Site 2. However, this addition affords greater detail of the now complete Ulster Canal, which on the basis of this mapping was suggested to lie beneath much of the route of the newly constructed Ulster Canal Greenway.

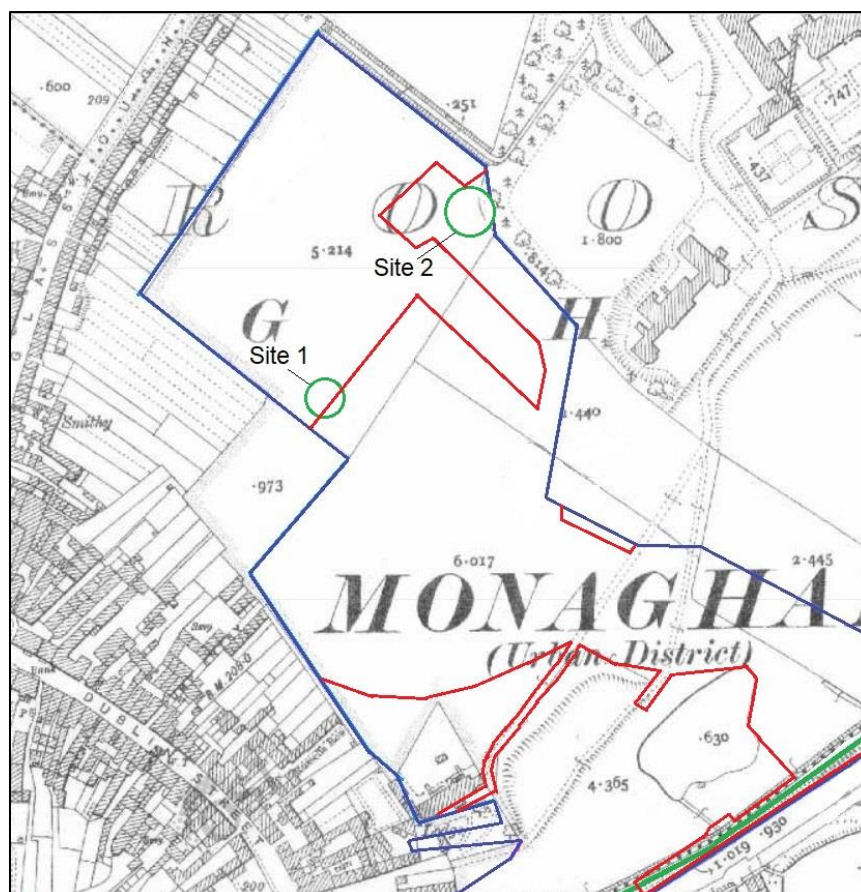


Figure 4 Extract of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map showing redline boundary & location of the possible archaeological sites and the Ulster Canal in green 1910 (ASI)

4.5 Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) sites

As noted above there is no record of any site or monument within the lands of the subject site listed by the statutory RMP, however the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Monaghan (MO009-060) forms a section of the site’s southwestern boundary at the back plots on Dublin Street(Figure 5). In addition to that designation the RMP records a further 10 locations within 200m of the subject site and these are listed in the table below:

RMP no.	Class	Townland	Distance from the subject site
MO009-060001	Burial	Mullaghmonaghan	190m west
MO009-060004	Town defences	Roosky	120m west
MO009-060010	House- 16 th Century	Roosky	110m west
MO009-060005	Burial	Roosky	180m Southwest
MO009-060011	Graveslab	Roosky	170m Southwest
MO009-060012	Church	Roosky	160m Southwest
MO009-060009	Graveyard	Roosky	160m Southwest
MO009-060003	House-Fortified house	Roosky	150m Southsouthwest
MO009-060013	Bawn	Roosky	150m Southsouthwest
MO009-060006	Cross- Market Cross	Tirkeenan	100m South

Table 1 List of RMP sites within 200m of the subject site

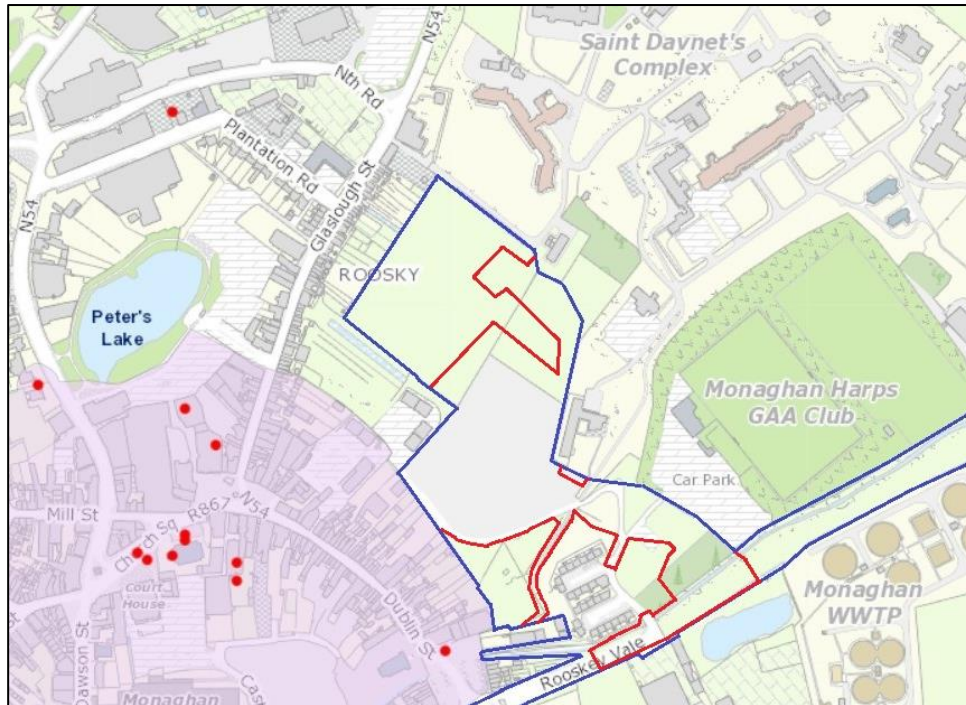


Figure 5 Copy of RMP map showing Zone of Notification and site ownership outline in blue (ASI)

4.6 Archaeological excavations

A search of the online database www.excavations.ie records multiple excavations located within 0.3 kilometres of the site location primarily along the line of Dublin Street and Glaslough Street. However, those investigations conducted under licence ref.s 96E366, 98E0144, 99E0141, 99E0161, 01E0527, 01E0607, 01E0624, 02E0457, 03E1500, 03E1736, 04E0637, 05E0136, 06E0460 and 07E0750 did not reveal anything of archaeological significance. The locus of the investigation carried out under licence ref. 07E0575 is recorded in the Roosky Lands, however an examination of the report pertaining to that licence reveals that the currently mapped locus point to be erroneous.

4.7 Topographical Files

The National Museum of Ireland is the repository for the archive records of all known antiquities recorded by that institution, the files relate primarily to artefacts but also contain references to monuments and in some cases previous archaeological excavations. There is no information recorded by the Topographical files within Roosky townland.

4.8 Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

The locus for the protected structure RPS 41001248 is within the acquired Roosky lands (Figure 12), however no such structure or elements relating to a structure of this type were observed during the field inspection of the site, indeed there is nothing in the research undertaken for the historical background and cartographic analysis, conducted as part of this report, which would add any veracity to the 'Site of Fort' being located on

this site. Furthermore, the results of the archaeological testing conducted under licence ref. 22E0956 firmly suggest that the location point for this record is erroneous and that the older section of the boundary, wall noted on Figure 12, is possibly the most likely structure to which RPS 41001248 might refer. That being said, although that boundary wall is presumably the one illustrated on the Ordnance Survey 1st-edition mapping (not shown here) it is not an indicator of the presence of a fort, nor does it merit the inclusion as any element of said protected structure in the record.

4.9 **National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)**

There are no sites listed by the NIAH within the redline boundary of the proposed development. The closest site is the early-20th century building of the former Nurses Home (Reg. No. 41303048) of the St. Davnet's Hospital complex. The remaining sites listed by the NIAH in close proximity to the subject site are either part of the St. Davnet's complex or they front onto Dublin Street or Glaslough Street, with the sole exception being the 1820-1840 built bridge over the Ulster Canal (Reg. No. 41303165) at the entrance to the Roosky Vale.

4.10 **Intangible cultural heritage**

Intangible cultural heritage is an important factor when one considers the background of any potential development and as such a survey of the available sources was undertaken as part of this assessment. A search of the www.duchas.ie national folklore database was undertaken, which revealed one record pertaining to Roosky townland in County Monaghan¹. The townland name is understandably quite common throughout Ireland, with three examples in County Monaghan alone and the record itself is from a Mr. J. Hall of Newbliss, County Monaghan. Therefore, proximity would suggest that the record refers to Roosky townland in the Civil Parish of Killeevan, County Monaghan.

No specific references were found to any folklore or legends associated with the lands of the subject site.

¹<https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes/4758592/4757506/4781311?HighlightText=roosky&Route=stories&SearchLanguage=ga>

5 Walkover survey

- 5.1 Area 1 was quite overgrown (Plate 1) with a fenced-off compound towards the western boundary containing modern services. The area is defined by a high limestone rubble wall to the west, which has been reduced to ground level towards the northern point of the infirmary grounds and which picks up again halfway along the eastern side where it terminates at a brick pier (Plate 2). The wall along the southern boundary is more pronounced where it acts as a retaining wall for the slope behind (Plate 3). A fine cut stone gate pier survives at the entrance (Plate 4), which also forms the terminal of the southern precinct wall is all that remains of the County Infirmary building and grounds (see below).
- 5.2 Areas 2 and 3 are under grass and are bordered to the south and west by a laneway (Plate 5). The northwestern boundary of Area 2 is formed by a limestone wall which returns to the northwest forming the western boundary of Area 4 (Plate 6). Where there is a gap formed at the corner, a more recent wall in shuttered concrete continues uphill, separating Areas 2 and 3 from Area 4. The southern part of Area 4 forms a plateau which rises gently to the north, where the general slope of the drumlin falls off more sharply further to the northwest.
- 5.3 Area 5 extends from the base of the slope across the floodplain of the Shambles River. Historical mapping suggests here the presence of a large, backfilled quarry, which possibly supplied water to the canal. Most of the area is under grass and wet underfoot and could in archaeological terms be considered 'wetland'; any archaeological material has however quite possibly been truncated by nineteenth-century quarrying and the belt of trees along the northern bank of the Shambles.

The line of the disused Ulster Canal forms the southeastern boundary of the study area. This is a significant piece of industrial archaeology although it does not appear to enjoy the protection of the National Monument Acts. The feature has been historically backfilled and is present only in the name of the greenway which has been recently constructed on top of it.



Plate 1 Overgrown site of infirmary building, looking southwest



Plate 2 Brick pier terminating eastern precinct wall, Area 1



Plate 3 Exterior view of southern precinct wall, Area 1



Plate 4 Entrance gate pier



Plate 5 Area 2 looking north



Plate 6 Entrance from Area 2 to Area 4. Note different types of walling

6 Architectural Heritage

- 6.1 The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires planning authorities to include in their development plans, policies and objectives for the protection, enhancement and preservation of the built heritage in their functional area. The principal means of doing this is by maintaining a Record of Protected Structures (RPS); this record identifies buildings of special architectural, historical, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.
- 6.2 The Record of Protected Structures for County Monaghan does not list the buried section of the former Ulster Canal which travels along the southern boundary of the development lands.
- 6.3 The Record of Protected Structures for County Monaghan does not list the site of the former County Infirmary located in Area 1, which was established in 1768 on a sloping site off Old Cross Square. A consequence of the 1765 'Foundling Act',² the infirmary had a much wider remit than the accommodation of orphans and was effectively a general hospital for those without the financial wherewithal to engage private physicians.

A board of governors was appointed in 1767 and the infirmary was financed by central government, with an annual levy from £50 to £100 from the Grand Jury (the precursor of the county council) to supply food and medicine.³ Other subventions included the interest on a substantial bequest of £4000 left by a Francis Ellis, £100 per annum left by Bishop Stearne and a rent charge of £20 a year, left by James Wright. Lewis (1837) described the infirmary as a 'good building occupying an open and elevated site'. In 1834 it accommodated 286 patients in-house and treated 900 out patients.⁴

The infirmary was closed in 1896 and the building became Division 12 of the Monaghan District Lunatic Asylum until c. 1967, after which it would appear to have become disused. Charles Brett reported three years later that it had become 'unbelievably derelict and vandalised'.⁵ It was demolished by the Urban District Council in August 1988, where the gate lodge had been removed some time before 1943. The building had a date inscribed in an arched doorway of '1768' and a lintel above was inscribed 'County Monaghan Infirmary'. This was retained and is apparently in the collection of the county museum.

- 6.4 The building was mapped by the Ordnance Survey, the most useful depiction being the 1860 revision (Figure 8). The mapping depicts the long *Infirmary* structure across the centre of the walled trapezoidal precinct, with an upper level forming a formal garden retained by a wall immediately to the rear of the infirmary and accessed by a flight of

² 5 George III, c.20.

³ Livingstone, P. 1980. *The Monaghan Story*. Monaghan, 317.

⁴ Lewis, S. 1837. A topographical dictionary of Ireland.

⁵ Ulster Architectural Heritage Society and An Taisce. 1970. *Historic Buildings, Groups of Buildings, Areas of Architectural Importance in the town of Monaghan*. Belfast, 26. The exteriors were photographed at the time by Paddy Rossmore and the images are held in the Irish Architectural Archive.

steps. Two other structures are present, a lodge to the north of the entrance gate and a rectangular building to the rear of the principal structure but possibly on the same level. The main building has a breakfront in the centre of the façade, where the ground plan is somewhat misleading.

Aerial photographs from the 1970s (Figures 7 and 8) confirm the arrangement and depict a typical Georgian institutional building with a hipped principal roof structure with hip-roofed single storey wings to either side of the elevation. Photographs taken prior to demolition three levels over a basement, with a brick pier which still survives in the eastern precinct wall against the east wing.

The area was quite overgrown, with no obvious upstanding fabric at the time of the walkover survey. It is likely however that the foundation courses remain *in situ* and it is possible that the basement level was backfilled with demolition rubble.

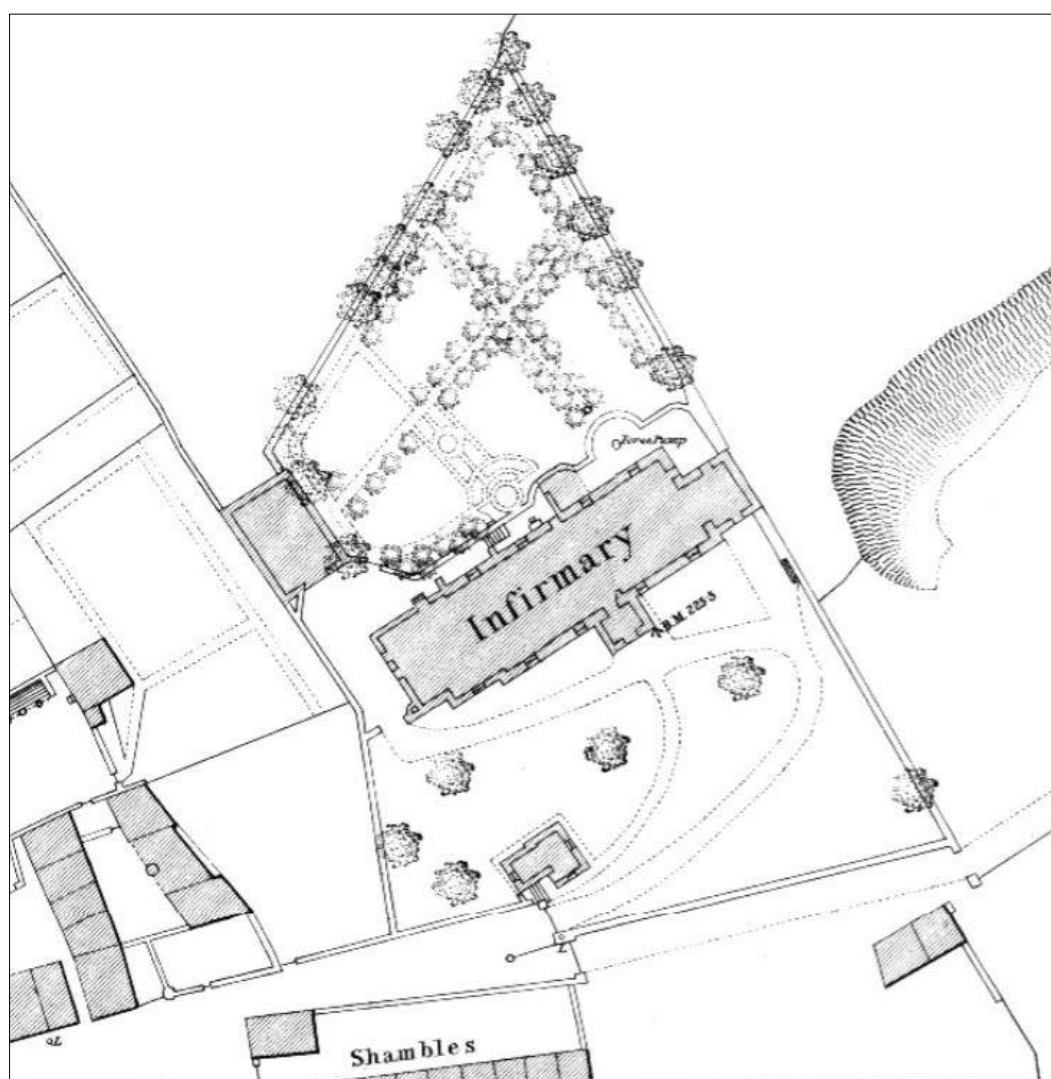


Figure 6 Ordnance Survey, Monaghan town, sheet 9, 1860



Figure 7 Old Cross Square, c. 1975



Figure 8 Monaghan County Infirmary, c. 1975

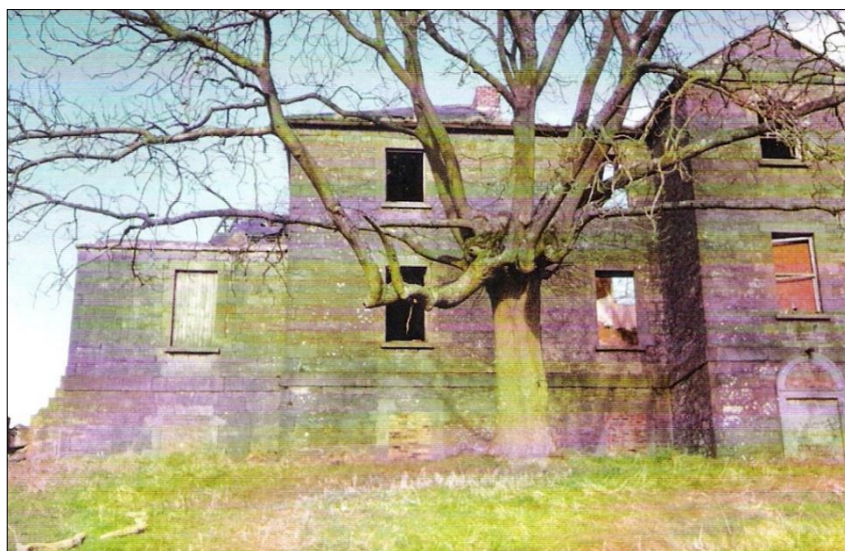
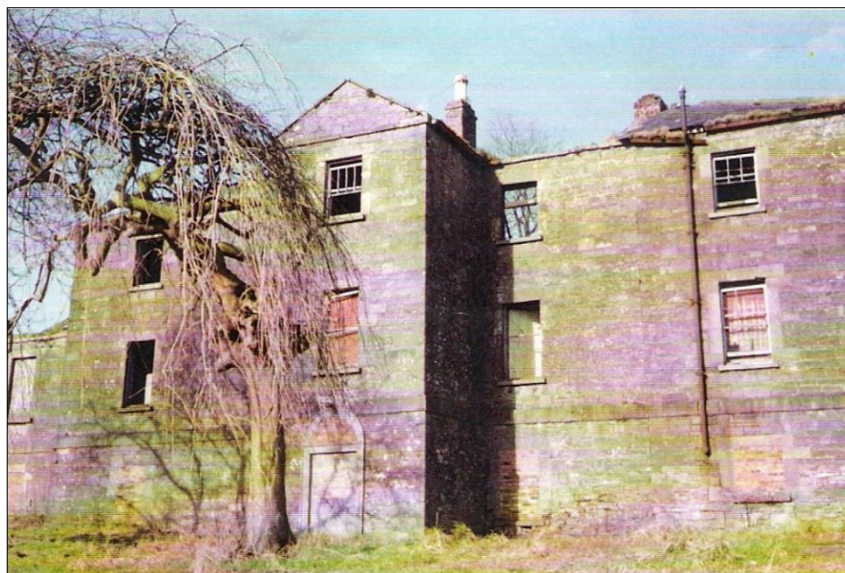


Figure 9 Monaghan County Infirmary, c. 1985

7 Archaeological Heritage

- 7.1 The initial walkover survey identified two discrete sites within Area 4 which were thought to potentially be of archaeological significance (Figure 10). Neither site is listed on the SMR or the RMP, and they do not enjoy the statutory protection of the National Monuments Acts (as amended). Equally, there was nothing on the available cartographic or in the documentary sources which suggested anything of archaeological significance being present historically at either location.



Figure 10 Sites of archaeological potential in Area 4

- 7.2 Site 1 (Plates 7-9) was located at the break of slope and comprised a raised, slightly curvilinear bank, approximately 25m in length, with the ground level considerably lower to the interior (south). The ovoid plan, partially formed, was truncated by the cut stone wall which demarcated the asylum lands. The slope appears to be considerably steeper on the southern side of the wall, where a modern development has been cut into the hillside. Subsequent inspection of Site 1 found it to be non-archaeological in nature.



Plate 7 Site 1 from the northwest



Plate 8 Site 1 from the northeast



Plate 9 Site 1 from the southeast

- 7.3 Site 2 (Plates 10-12) was located on level ground just below a local spot height. Again, it presented as an ovoid, uncultivated area, with a slightly raised area towards the centre. Measuring approximately 25m in diameter, the feature was thought to possibly extend under the concrete wall into Area 3, although there was little or no surface indications present.

The archaeological testing of this feature under licence ref. 22E0956 (see below) established categorically that this was not an archaeological feature, but rather an uncultivated area where a concrete built shed structure had previously stood.



Plate 10 Site 2 from the northeast



Plate 11 Site 2 from the west



Plate 12

Site 2 from the northwest

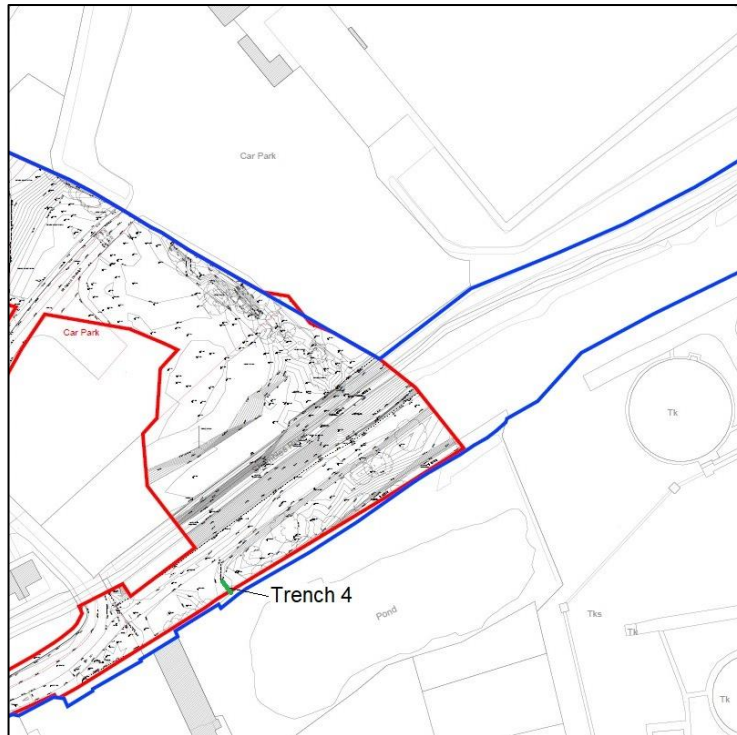


Figure 11 Location of Trench 4 in green, adjacent to the Ulster Canal Greenway in Area 5 (HJL)

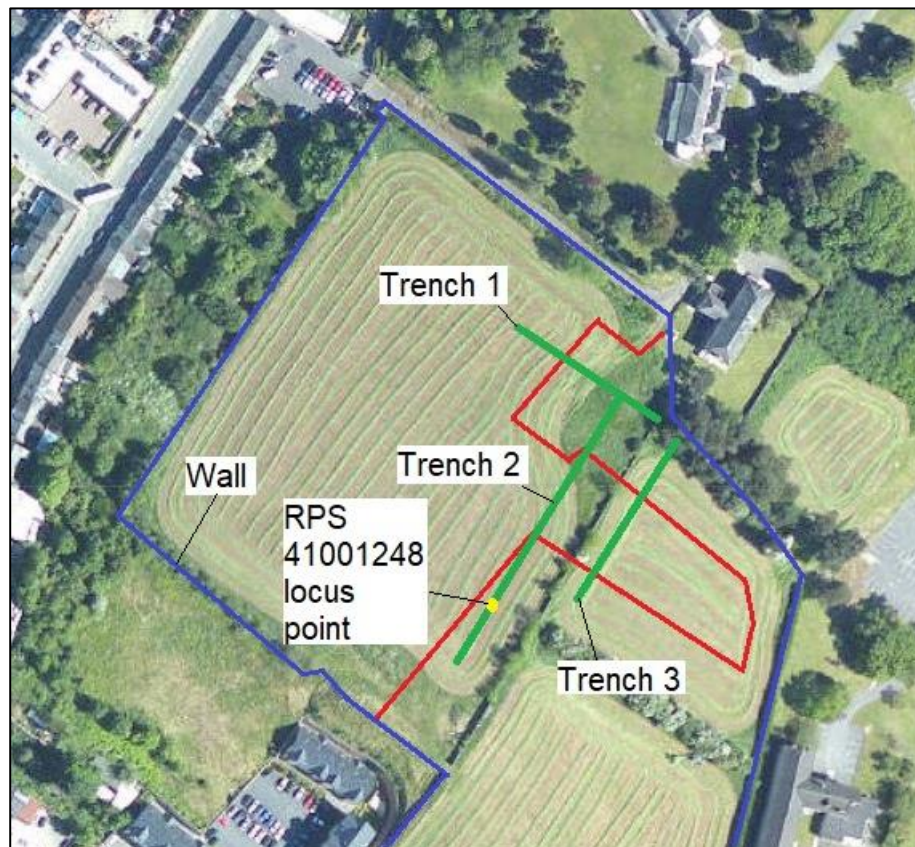


Figure 12 Close up aerial photograph of Areas 2,3 & 4 with excavated trench locations 1-3 in green (ASI)

8 Results of archaeological testing

8.1 The excavation of the targeted archaeological test trenches on site (Figure 12) took place on 30/01/2023, in dry, bright conditions using a 10-tonne mechanical excavator equipped with a flat-lipped toothless bucket and all excavated trenches were 1.8m in width. The results of the archaeological testing were as follows:

8.2 *Trench 1* NGR: 667482/833986-677450/83999

Trench 1 (Plate 13) was 40m in length and excavated on a Nw-Se orientation, at its southeastern end it was 0.6m in depth and 0.35m at its northwestern end. The topsoil horizon was a mid-grey, brown silty clay, which had been augmented with dumped materials (re-deposited topsoil and 20th-century refuse) at its southeastern end, leading to the differential height and growth in this area. The only man-made departure from the otherwise sterile mid-tan brown coloured silt clay subsoil were two parallel concrete foundations located centrally in the trench and 6m apart. These were both 0.3m in width x 0.3m in height and probably represented the remains of a small 20th-century shed at this location. Trench 1 was excavated in the field designated as Area 4 by the archaeological assessment in order to investigate the feature identified as Site 2, however nothing of archaeological significance was present in this trench.

Trench 2 NGR: 667469/83988-667427/833926

Trench 2 (Plate 14) was 72m in length and excavated on a Ne-Sw orientation at a right angle from Trench 1. At its northeastern end it was 0.55m in depth and 0.35m at its southwestern end. The topsoil and subsoil were of the same composition as Trench 1 and whilst two stone drains were present on an east-west orientation in the trench nothing of archaeological significance was encountered in this trench. The trench was deliberately excavated to also investigate the locus of RPS no. 41001248, however, no remains of any kind were present at that location. Trench 2 was excavated in the field designated as Area 4 by the archaeological assessment in order to investigate the feature identified as Site 2 and also the alleged location of RPS no. 41001248, but again nothing of archaeological significance was present in the trench.

Trench 3 NGR: 667490/833982-667468/833945

Trench 3 (Plate 15) was 40m in length and excavated on a Ne-Sw orientation, to the south of the concrete block-built wall between the fields designated as Area 3 and Area 4. The topsoil and subsoil profile of the trench location was the same as the above, with the topsoil layer being 0.4m in depth along the length of the trench. Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered in trench 3.

Trench 4 NGR: 667634/833674-667635/833671

Trench 4 (Figure 11, Plate 16) was excavated in Area 5 to inspect for the presence of, or any remains relating to, the Ulster Canal on the southern side of the newly constructed Ulster Canal Greenway. The short trench (2m in length) was located 1.8m south of the

southern edge of the Greenway's tarmac, so as not to damage that feature, and at a depth of 0.15m below the present ground level (composed of gravel and hardcore) the top of a what appeared to be a faced wall (Plate 16), suggested to be the southern wall of the Ulster Canal, was encountered.



Plate 13 Trench 1, facing north



Plate 14 Trench 2, facing southeast



Plate 15 Trench 3, facing northeast



Plate 16 Potential face of wall in Trench 4, facing east along the Ulster Canal Greenway



Plate 17 Wall at western boundary of Area 4

9 Cultural Heritage

9.1 The County Monaghan Development Plan 2019-2025⁶ only lists one structure within the lands of the subject site, RPS 41001248- 'Site of Fort', however there are no visible above ground traces of the protected structure within the acquired Roosky lands and additionally there were no below ground traces pertaining to that structure within the excavated trench (Figure 12). The fact that there was nothing in the research undertaken for the historical background and cartographic analysis, conducted as part of this report suggests that the locus point for that structure is erroneous in its listing within the lands of the subject site.

Conversely, the Record of Protected Structures for County Monaghan does not list the buried section of the former Ulster Canal which travels along the southern boundary of the development lands or the site of the former County Infirmary located in Area 1.

9.2 As stated previously, there are no sites or objects of archaeological interest which have been recorded or identified within the lands of the subject site and there have been no records of any elements of intangible heritage identified in association with the site.

⁶ <https://monaghan.ie/planning/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/04/Monaghan-County-Development-Plan-2019-2025-%E2%80%93-Written-Statement.pdf>

10 Discussion and recommendations

10.1 The site designated as 'Site 1' above was discounted as being non archaeological and modern in nature. The three trenches (Nos. 1-3, Figure 12), which were excavated to investigate the possible archaeological feature designated 'Site 2' by the initial walkover survey revealed that feature to be completely non archaeological in origin and simply the result of a combination of field clearance and differential grass growth/grass not being cut for silage. Trench 2 also inspected for the presence of any structural or subsurface remains at the locus of RPS No. 41001248 but nothing whatsoever was present at that location. Equally, there was nothing present in the available historic, cartographic or documentary sources which suggested the presence of a 'fort' or 'site of a fort' at this location. Thus, it is suggested that the listing and location of RPS No. 41001248 in the Roosky lands is entirely erroneous.

The archaeological testing also established the presence of what appeared to be part of the southern wall of the Ulster Canal in Trench 4 (Plate 4). A subsequent program of geotechnical test pitting conducted by IGSL (02/05/2023) further delineated the Ulster Canal's subsurface survival, below the line of Ulster Canal Greenway, albeit in a very piecemeal fashion.

The site of the County Infirmary lies just outside of the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Monaghan (MO009-060). The infirmary site is not on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) or the statutory Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), thus the site is not protected by the latter, under heritage legislation.

The proposed new access route to the Roosky lands will be constructed on a small section of the line of the greenway/ former canal in this area. Again, this element of built heritage only survives subsurface, and it is not on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) or the statutory Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and thus the canal structure is not protected by the latter, under heritage legislation.

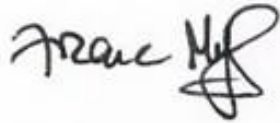
10.2 Recommendations

Given the size and nature of the proposed development, it is considered appropriate that a full program of licenced archaeological testing should be undertaken within the redline boundary of the proposed development. This would further inspect the locus of RPS No. 41001248 and additionally those lands of the proposed development, where only targeted archaeological testing has thus far been conducted. In the event of the discovery of archaeological features further case appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place (e.g., avoidance/preservation in situ or excavation/preservation by record), through consultation with the regulatory authorities.

Following the program of archaeological testing it is recommended that licenced archaeological monitoring be undertaken as part of the groundworks on site. In the event

of the discovery of archaeological features further case appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place through consultation with the regulatory authorities.

Where there are no records of burials on the site, burials in such institutions are not unknown and is highly likely that archaeological monitoring will be recommended by the Department as a mitigation measure. In line with that probability, it is recommended that any ground investigations and investigation in Area 1 and Area 5 are undertaken under archaeological supervision, to assess and record the extent of buried foundation courses and basement levels associated with the County Infirmary and to assess and record the surviving subsurface extent of the Ulster Canal in the latter area.



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