

**CONSERVATION PLAN** 

**CLONES GRAVEYARD, ROUND TOWER, HOUSE-SHAPED SHRINE  
AND HIGH CROSS**

**COUNTY MONAGHAN**



**ON BEHALF OF  
MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL**

**DATE OCTOBER 2016**



**IAC** Irish Archaeological  
Consultancy





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

As the primary output of the Early Christian Monaghan Project, Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd has compiled this plan on behalf of Monaghan County Council to assess the significance and identify conservation issues associated with the early Christian elements of the monastic site at Clones, which is located within the townland of Crossmoyle in the Barony of Dartry, County Monaghan (OS Sheet 11). This plan was undertaken by Paul Duffy and Christina O'Regan of IAC Ltd. with specialist input from Paul Stevens of the School of Archaeology, UCD. A reconstruction drawing was drafted during the Conservation Plan process by Philip Armstrong of Paint the Past, Archaeological Reconstruction.

### Summary of objectives

The Conservation Plan for Clones, County Monaghan, provides a framework for the conservation and management of the historic graveyard (MO011-010003), Round Tower (MO011-010002), House-shaped Shrine (MO011-010004) and High Cross (MO011-010005), while setting out the key objectives and future vision for the management of the early Christian built heritage of Clones.

The objectives of the Conservation Plan are to:

- outline the significance of the monuments;
- present a brief history and description of the surviving features of early medieval Clones;
- identify the issues that affect the core values of the various components of the site and of the site in its entirety;
- draft policies for effective management of the early Christian components of Clones into the future while maintaining and highlighting the integral part that these elements play in the social and cultural significance of the modern town of Clones;
- deliver a practical programme, operable within community networks, to enable communities to take responsibility for and participate in the development and conservation of their heritage assets.

### Summary of Significance

Clones, as a sacred place of great antiquity with over 1000 years of Christian burial practice visible, has provided a focus for continuing Christian worship from the early Christian period. The ensemble of early Christian elements and associated features at Clones are valuable heritage assets which possess a spectrum of significance across a number of designations. These are:




- Clones has a substantial rich and important ecclesiastical history, which is tied into the region and the Diocese, with numerous documentary references enabling a detailed chronology to be compiled, in addition to being the

provenance one of Ireland's most important book shrines, the *Domnach Airgid*;

- Vibrant Folklore Continuity of early Christian veneration of St Tighernach in the regional traditions of the area, as witnessed by his continued association with the town, the Church of Ireland church, the High Cross, graveyard and shrine;
- The House-shaped Shrine (MO011-010004) is a unique feature in the lexicon of early Romanesque sculpture in Ireland and is a monument of international significance;
- The Round Tower (MO011-010003) and High Cross (MO011-010005) are recorded monuments and are also designated as National Monuments in State Care (Nos 111 and 112) representing three of the six listed National Monuments in State Care in County Monaghan;
- The graveyard MO011-010003 is also a recorded monument and contains a collection of 18th, 19th and 20th century decorated gravestones which are of regional artistic significance as they bear motifs and forms analogous with the South Ulster style. The graveyard is therefore a significant repository of regional Folk Art;
- The identification of burials (MO011-010009-10) in several areas within the town indicates to what degree sub-surface archaeology has the potential to survive beneath the surface. Any such archaeology is of national significance and is automatically protected under the National Monuments Act 1939–2004;
- The ensemble of early Christian elements at Clones are of high social significance and they form an integral part of the urban landscape. In addition, a number of traditions and folk beliefs survive in relation to these monuments;
- The habitat value of the graveyard and the hedgerows must be recognised as a component of the urban biodiversity of Clones, though its significance is limited given the small space and urban context. The central area of the site is dominated by grass or lawn which is tended periodically.

### Summary of Conservation Issues

A number of conservation issues challenge the continued integrity of the early Christian elements of Clones and their respective settings. These include:

-  Erosion of the House-shaped Shrine;
- Erosion of the High Cross;
- Structural Fatigue at the Round Tower; 
- Inappropriate Interventions at the Round Tower;
- Failure of retaining wall at graveyard;
- Inadvertent damage to habitats of protected species;
- Significant knowledge gaps particularly with regard to the House-shaped Shrine;
- Current inappropriate interpretative signage;
- Inappropriate setting at the House-shaped Shrine and the Round Tower;
- Erosion at entranceway to the graveyard;
- Anti-social behaviour at the graveyard; 



- Potential vehicular interaction with the High Cross.
- Potential damage to sub-surface Archaeology;

### Summary of Policies/Recommendations

The following general policies have been set out in the Conservation Plan with the aim of protecting the unique heritage assets discussed and addressing the conservation issues and potential threats outlined:

- **Policy 1:** Protection and Retention of the Historic Integrity of the Site – To place the conservation of all elements of early Christian Clones, both known and unknown, and the protection of the significance of its various elements at the heart of planning and management of the monuments.
- **Policy 2:** Conservation, Repair and Maintenance – To implement effective regimes for maintenance and repair, while protecting the significance and historic integrity of the various elements of early Christian Clones while observing exemplary standards of conservation practice.
- **Policy 3:** Enhancement and Improvement – To enhance the historic character and visual qualities of the various elements of early Christian Clones by consolidating eroding elements, removing intrusive elements and addressing impacts upon setting.
- **Policy 4:** Access and Interpretation – To encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the various elements of early Christian Clones, by promoting both physical and intellectual access to the monuments and meeting the needs of a broad variety of users.
- **Policy 5:** Research, Education and Tourism – To develop an understanding of the various elements of early Christian Clones through informed archaeological investigation and research, ensuring their preservation in an accessible form. To promote the various elements as a significant site of interest and a historical resource for learning about the past.

A series of recommendations for specific programmed actions which will support the policies contained within the Conservation Plan have been made. These recommendations take into account that, as National Monuments in State Care, the Round Tower and High Cross at Clones are subject to biennial surveys by OPW architects. The recommendations are summarised as follows:

- **Recommendation 1:** Establish a Steering Group which includes representatives from the key stakeholders, to oversee the implementation of the Conservation Plan policies and recommendations; 
- **Recommendation 2:** That consideration be given to the House-shaped Shrine coming into the ownership of the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, in order that the monument benefit from biennial survey and in-house OPW stonework conservation expertise; 
- **Recommendation 3:** Carry out a costed feasibility study for the definitive removal of the House-shaped Shrine and High Cross from their current locations for public display within a covered space within the town and their

replacement with high-quality replicas as per examples at Downpatrick and Clonmacnoise.

- **Recommendation 4:** Carry out remedial works at the graveyard boundary wall immediately to the north of the Round Tower where the wall is failing;
- **Recommendation 5:** Commission a bat and bird survey in order to characterise the species present within the graveyard and Round Tower with a view to safeguarding any protected species or their habitats;
- **Recommendation 6:** Commission a community based graveyard survey;
- **Recommendation 7:** Develop a Graveyard Maintenance/Management Scheme;
- **Recommendation 8:** Consult the ESB to explore the possibility of re-routing the current overhead cables that traverse the site;
- **Recommendation 9:** Remove the leaded granite slab adjacent to the House-shaped Shrine;
- **Recommendation 10:** Design new interpretive panels incorporating information contained within the Conservation Plan;
- **Recommendation 11:** Explore the feasibility of developing a number of dedicated car parking spaces immediately north of the graveyard;
- **Recommendation 12:** Build upon the early Christian Monaghan Project to include Clones in a county-wide driving trail comprising initially of the sites at Clones;
- **Recommendation 13:** Commission geophysical survey of lands immediately west of the Round Tower and graveyard. Use the survey and the results of such as an instrument to garner community interest and local support;
- **Recommendation 14:** Explore the feasibility of rebuilding the concrete block portion of the graveyard boundary wall, south of the eastern entrance;
- **Recommendation 15:** Seek to control and manage the overgrown areas immediately south of the graveyard boundary;
- **Recommendation 16:** Develop a series of leaflets and/or guidebooks detailing the history of early Christian Clones;
- **Recommendation 17:** Develop educational questionnaires based on early Christian/monastic Clones for distribution to i) primary school teachers and to ii) junior cycle secondary school teachers within the wider area to encourage school visits to the various elements of early Christian Clones.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

In the summer of 2016, the Monaghan County Heritage Officer conceived and launched the 'Early Christian Monaghan Project' with the aim of promoting and safeguarding four sites of early Christian significance within the county. Following a successful tender bid, IAC Archaeology with specialist input from Paul Stevens (UCD), was appointed to undertake a series of community workshops based around these four sites as well as produce Conservation plans for three sites: Clones Round Tower, High Cross, House-shaped Shrine and Graveyard, Killahear Graveyard and Innishkeen Round Tower, MacMahon Vaults and Graveyard.

This conservation plan has been developed in line with international best practice guidelines as outlined in James Semple Kerr's *The Conservation Plan – Seventh Edition* (2013) and endorsed and upheld by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Venice (1964), Washington (1987) and Burra (1981) charters. The plan addresses cultural heritage issues in an integrated manner and has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders including the Clones Community Forum and Monaghan County Council Heritage Officer.



Figure 1: Modern Clones

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES

The Conservation Plan for Clones, County Monaghan, provides a framework for the conservation and management of the historic graveyard (MO011-010003), round tower (MO011-010002), shrine (MO011-010004) and high cross, while setting out the

key objectives and future vision for the management of the early Christian built heritage of Clones. The purpose of the plan is to ensure the long-term conservation, preservation of these nationally and internationally important monuments to international standards by putting in place a management framework that will protect the unique qualities of the individual elements in addition to the combined significance of these features in the context of early Christian Clones.

The plan aims to ensure that the site's unique qualities and significance are understood in order to conserve and safeguard the inherited cultural and historical assets. The project aligns with Section 6 of the 1995 Heritage Act to promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in, and facilitate the appreciation and enjoyment of the national heritage, and with the actions outlined in the County Monaghan Heritage Plan 2012–2017.

The objectives of this Conservation Plan are to:

- outline the significance of the monuments;
- present a brief history and description of the surviving features of early Christian Clones;
- identify the issues that affect the core values of the various components of the site and of the site in its entirety;
- draft policies for effective management of the early Christian components of Clones into the future while maintaining and highlighting the integral part that these elements play in the social and cultural significance of the modern town of Clones;
- deliver a practical programme, operable within community networks, to enable communities to take responsibility for and participate in the development and conservation of their heritage assets.

The plan will inform the day-to-day and long-term management of the various elements discussed. It will be a working document that is open to periodic review, with additions or amendments being made as conditions change.

### 1.3 PROJECT TEAM

The following is a summary of the team involved in developing and delivering this plan.

#### **Paul Duffy BA Hons, MIAI**

Paul is a licence eligible archaeologist with over 11 years' field experience. In recent years, Paul's focus has been on community archaeology. He has extensive experience designing, co-ordinating and delivering on archaeological survey, research projects, outreach events and excavations which prioritise community involvement and community ownership. Paul's understanding of and passion for community archaeology was fostered during his time on numerous international projects. These include supervising community-based excavations in Southern France as well as

leading many large scale heritage surveys and rock shelter excavations in tandem with Aboriginal communities in Western Australia. Prior to this, Paul spent several years working on large infrastructure projects supervising numerous prehistoric and medieval excavations throughout Ireland. Paul has lectured widely on his work and has published work in several peer-reviewed journals including the international *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*. Paul is currently serving on the board of the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland. Paul holds a first class BA (Hons) in Heritage Studies from GMIT.

#### Christina O'Regan BA MSc MIAI

Christina has over 14 years' experience of working in the archaeological sector in Ireland. Community Archaeology is one of Christina's passions and she recently spent two years developing and delivering archaeological workshops for schools on both sides of the border. She has developed a particular expertise in managing such projects with seven years' experience as Project Manager in both the Republic and Northern Ireland. Christina holds a BA (Hons) degree in Archaeology with History from University College Cork and an MSc in Environmental Archaeology from Queen's University Belfast. She served as the Event Organiser for the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland from 2014–2016 and is a full member of the Institute. She has also been recently appointed to the Historic Monuments Council for Northern Ireland.

#### Paul Stevens BA, PHD Candidate UCD School of Archaeology

Paul is an archaeologist and leading scholar in the field of the early Christian Church in Ireland. In addition to his academic career, Paul has extensive experience as a project manager, publication manager, heritage resource management consultant, site manager, editor, author and researcher with a large scale archaeological consultancy. He has conducted 78 licenced excavations in Ireland (1995–2016), notably directing the important ecclesiastical monastic enclosure site of Clonfad 3 where a significant assemblage of early historical artefacts and ironworking activity were recovered. He has published widely on the early Christian period in Ireland.

Paul has been awarded Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship funding and is currently completing a PhD in UCD with one year remaining. The title of his research is *Doing God's work? The role of the church in the expansion of the early medieval Irish economy, AD 400–1100*.

## 1.4 CONSULTATIONS

Following initial research, a number of statutory and voluntary bodies were consulted to gain further insight into the cultural background of the individual monuments and the overall site. These were as follows:

- Monaghan County Council Heritage Officer, Shirley Clerkin
- Clones Community Forum
- Office of Public Works, Ana Dolan, Senior Architect, Trim District

- Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs – the Heritage Service, National Monuments and Historic Properties Section: Record of Monuments and Places; Sites and Monuments Record; Monuments in State Care Database; Preservation Orders; Register of Historic Monuments and the database of current licences (2009–2011);
- National Museum of Ireland, Irish Antiquities Division: topographical files of Ireland;
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage: County Monaghan;
- Trinity College Dublin, Map Library: Historical and Ordnance Survey Maps;
- National Library of Ireland.

## 2 CONSERVATION PLAN METHODOLOGY

A Conservation Plan seeks to set out what is significant in a place and identify what policies are appropriate to enable that significance to be retained in its future use and development (Kerr 2013). The most influential proponent for the preparation and implementation of the Conservation Plan model, James Semple Kerr, has stated that the methodology of the Conservation Plan is particularly appropriate to the 'study of complex or composite monuments in vulnerable, dynamic and changing environments' (1999).

Conservation Plan methodology involves two principal stages, namely Stage I – Understanding the Place. Stage I of the process seeks to set out:

- What the current location, physical composition and current presentation of a monument or place is;
- Why that monument or place is culturally or materially significant;
- How that significance may be vulnerable.

And Stage II – Conservation Policy and its implementation which seeks to:

- Assess the source of the issues faced by a monument or place;
- Evaluate the potential impact or change and development on or close to the monument or place;
- Advise and manage that change in order to conserve by adding value.

Gathering evidence for the Conservation Plan (Stage I) has been undertaken in three phases. The first phase comprised a paper survey of all available archaeological, architectural, historical and cartographic sources. The second phase involved a field inspection of the individual monuments, the overall site and its overall setting. The third phase consisted of a workshop in Clones with the aim of consulting the relevant local stakeholders.

### 2.1 PAPER SURVEY

The following sources were examined to provide background, context and specific detail on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage of the component monuments and the overall site of Clones:

- Record of Monuments and Places for County Monaghan;
- Sites and Monuments Record for County Monaghan;
- Monuments in State Care Database;
- Preservation Orders;
- Database of current archaeological investigation licences (2009–2011);
- Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland;
- Cartographic and written sources relating to the study area;
- County Monaghan Development Plan 2013–2019;

- County Monaghan Heritage Plan 2013-2017;
- Clones Town Development Plan 2013–2019;
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage;
- Place name analysis (Logainm.ie);
- Schools Folklore Collection Co. Monaghan;
- National Library of Ireland;
- Aerial photographs;
- Excavations Bulletin (1970–2015)

**Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)** is a list of archaeological sites known to the National Monuments Section, which are afforded legal protection under Section 12 of the 1994 National Monuments Act and are published as a record.

**Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)** holds documentary evidence and field inspections of all known archaeological sites and monuments. Some information is also held about archaeological sites and monuments whose precise location is not known e.g. only a site type and townland are recorded. These are known to the National Monuments Section as ‘un-located sites’ and cannot be afforded legal protection due to lack of locational information. As a result, these are omitted from the Record of Monuments and Places. SMR sites are also listed on the recently launched website maintained by the DAHRRGA – [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie).

**National Monuments in State Care Database** is a list of all the National Monuments in State guardianship or ownership. Each is assigned a National Monument number whether in guardianship or ownership and has a brief description of the remains of each Monument.

The Minister for the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht may acquire National Monuments by agreement or by compulsory order. The state or local authority may assume guardianship of any national monument (other than dwellings). The owners of National Monuments (other than dwellings) may also appoint the Minister or the local authority as guardian of that monument if the state or local authority agrees. Once the site is in ownership or guardianship of the state, it may not be interfered with without the written consent of the Minister.

**Preservation Orders List** contains information on Preservation Orders and/or Temporary Preservation Orders, which have been assigned to a site or sites. Sites deemed to be in danger of injury or destruction can be allocated Preservation Orders under the 1930 Act. Preservation Orders make any interference with the site illegal. Temporary Preservation Orders can be attached under the 1954 Act. These perform the same function as a Preservation Order but have a time limit of six months, after which the situation must be reviewed. Work may only be undertaken on or in the vicinity of sites under Preservation Orders with the written consent, and at the discretion of the Minister.

Database of current archaeological investigation licences is a list held by the National Monuments Section of the DAHG that provides details of licences issued that have yet to appear within the Excavations Bulletin (2014–2015).

Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland is the national archive of all known finds recorded by the National Museum. This archive relates primarily to artefacts but also includes references to monuments and unique records of previous excavations. The find spots of artefacts are important sources of information on the discovery of sites of archaeological significance.

Cartographic and Pictorial sources are important in tracing land-use development within the development area as well as providing important topographical information on areas of archaeological potential and the development of buildings. Cartographic analysis of all relevant maps has been made to identify any topographical anomalies or structures that no longer remain within the landscape.

- *A Plot of Cloneys an Abbey in McMahan Countrey c. 1591*
- *Laurence and Robert Jackson Down Survey Map, Barony of Dartry 1657*
- *A View of Clones, anno 1741*
- *First Edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey Map, 1837, scale 1:10560*
- *Ordnance Survey Map, 1909, scale 1:2500*

Documentary sources were consulted to gain background information on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage landscape of Clones.

Aerial photographic coverage is an important source of information regarding the precise location of sites and their extent. It also provides initial information on the terrain and its likely potential for archaeology. A number of sources were consulted including aerial photographs held by the Geological Survey of Ireland, the Ordnance Survey and Google Earth.

Place Names are an important part in understanding both the archaeology and history of an area. Place names can be used for generations and in some cases have been found to have their roots deep in the historical past.

County Monaghan Development Plan 2013–2019 contains a catalogue of all the Protected Structures and archaeological sites within the county. The County Monaghan Development Plan was consulted to obtain information on cultural heritage sites in and within the immediate vicinity of Clones.

County Monaghan Heritage Plan 2013–2017 contains an action plan for the heritage of the county up to 2017. It also contains a synopsis of the relevant legislation governing sites and an explanation of the levels of protection afforded to different monuments.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage is a government based organisation tasked with making a nationwide record of significant local, regional,



national and international structures, which in turn provides county councils with a guide as to what structures to list within the Record of Protected Structures. The architectural survey for County Monaghan was completed during 2011 and 2012. The NIAH have also carried out a nationwide desk-based survey of historic gardens, including demesnes that surround large houses. This has also been completed for County Monaghan and was examined in relation to the surviving demesnes within the surrounding area of Clones.

**Place name analysis – Logainm.ie** is a comprehensive management system for data, archival records and placenames research conducted by the State. The website is made available as a public resource and administered by DCU and DAHRRGA.

**Schools Folklore Collection – Ducas.ie** In 1937 the Irish Folklore Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, initiated a revolutionary scheme in which schoolchildren were encouraged to collect and document folklore and local history. The website makes these entries available as a public resource and is administered by UCD, the National Folklore Collection, the National Folklore Foundation, DCU and DAHRRGA.

**National Library of Ireland** contains photographic collections dating back to the 19th century. A number of these collections which are available online at <http://sources.nli.ie/>, including several 19th-century images of Clones Round Tower.

**Excavations Bulletin** is a summary publication that has been produced every year since 1970. This summarises every archaeological excavation that has taken place in Ireland during that year up until 2010 and since 1987 has been edited by Isabel Bennett. This information is vital when examining the archaeological content of any area, which may not have been recorded under the SMR and RMP files. This information is also available online ([www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)) from 1970–2015.

## 2.2 FIELD INSPECTION

Field inspection is necessary to determine the extent and nature of archaeological and architectural remains, and can also lead to the identification of previously unrecorded or suspected sites and portable finds through topographical observation and local information.

The archaeological and architectural field inspection entailed:

- Visiting and assessing the condition of each of the monuments;
- Walking the graveyard of Clones and its immediate environs;
- Noting and recording the terrain type and land usage;
- Noting and recording the presence of features of archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage significance;
- Verifying the extent and condition of recorded sites;
- Visually investigating any suspect landscape anomalies to identify potentially unrecorded features of cultural heritage significance.

### 2.3 CONSULTATIONS

Consultation was undertaken with Shirley Clerkin, the Heritage Officer for County Monaghan upon IAC Archaeology's appointment. A meeting was undertaken on the 27th July 2016 in Monaghan County Council offices in order to formalise IAC Archaeology's appointment and to outline timescales and expand upon projected outputs of the project. Particular emphasis was placed upon capturing the social and cultural significance of the monuments and the sites within the modern landscape.

In furtherance of this objective, an open workshop was held in the Cassandra Hand Centre, Ball Alley, Clones on 10th August 2016. Representatives from the Monaghan Heritage Forum and the Clones Canal Stores centre were present in addition to members of Killeevan graveyard group and members of the general public.

Ana Dolan, senior architect with the Office of Public Works, Trim District and Pauline Gleeson, senior archaeologist with the National Monuments Service were also consulted during the drafting of the Conservation Plan.

### 3 UNDERSTANDING THE MONUMENT

#### 3.1 TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

A landscape character assessment of Clones was conducted in 2008 by TKB Southgate Associates. This assessment stated that:

Clones town is set in pristine rural countryside with undulating fields bordered by hedgerows and interspersed with occasional pockets of native woodland and lake. There are two principal characteristics of this landscape. The first is that it retains the traditional scale of field size and hedgerow boundary which is becoming increasingly rare as the landscape is changing as a result of the intensification of agriculture. The second is the contour of the landscape, as one hill gives way to another, resulting in a horizon that is always close.

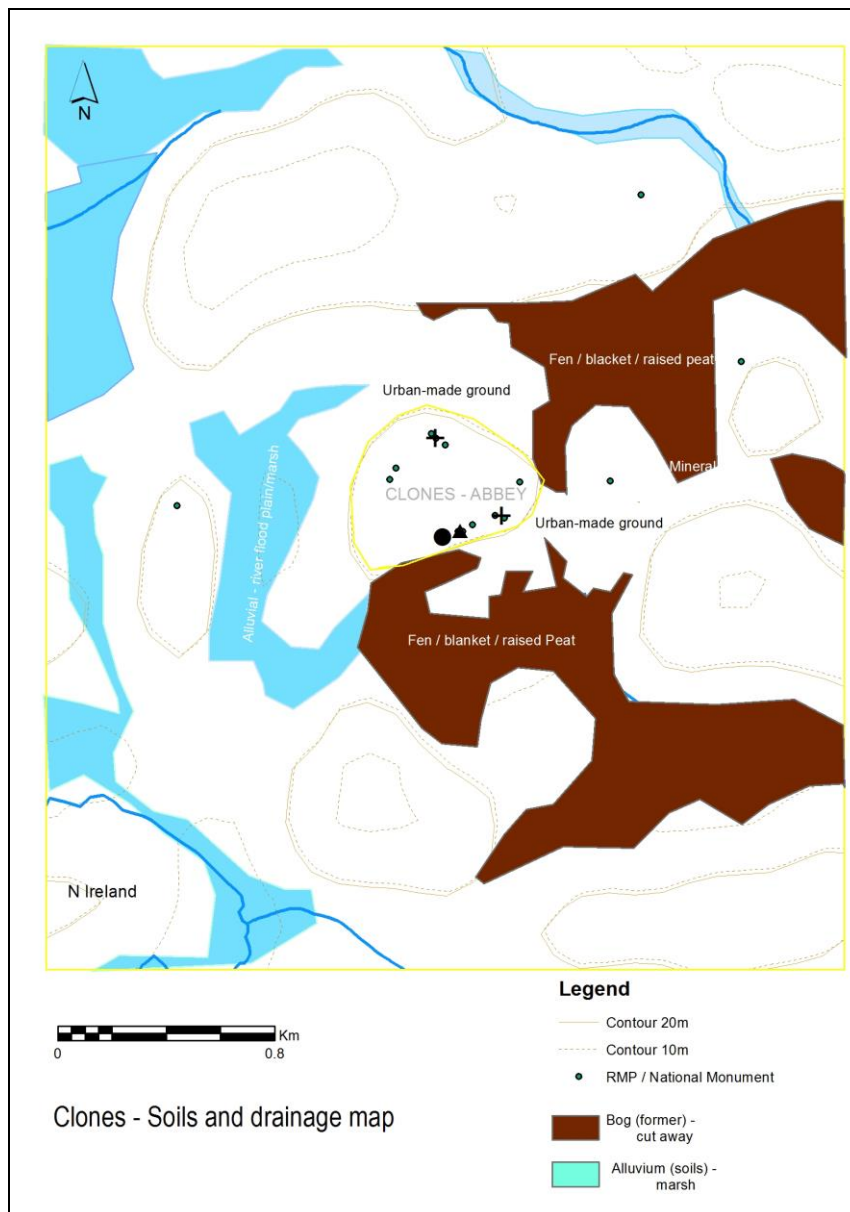
The natural landscape setting of the town lends itself to showing off Clones' unique assemblage of monuments and its special architectural character. Equally, the town's position on a hill provides several vantage points from which to appreciate the surrounding countryside.

This has resulted in planned effects, such as the siting of the two main churches in the town, and unplanned effects such as the wealth of prospects within the town of historic streetscape and roofline, tree borders and clusters, and glimpses out to the countryside.

The character of the landscape setting – its natural contour, fertile soil and lakes – has determined significant land use in Clones over its history, from the presence of early farming enclosures, the **Liserggtor** **annóg**, to the siting of St Tighernach's monastery in the 6th century and the later development of the Plantation town on the hill in the 17th century. The location of the 19th century railway and canal was also determined by town's morphology.

Clones is located within the townland of Crossmoyle in the Barony of Dartree, County Monaghan (OS Sheet 11). In terms of drift geology of the region, Clones lies at the northeastern extent of the limestone plateau that characterises much of the Irish midlands, extending from south Co. Tyrone to Mallow, Co. Cork, and Ballina, Co. Mayo to Dublin. To the east lies a later Ordovician narrow strip of shale, sandstone, basalt and rhyolite. The local site topography is characterised by small post-glacial drumlins, known as the Monaghan corridor, orientated northeast–southwest in an area of low-lying accessible grasslands sandwiched between two upland and extensive wetland areas (McConnell et al. 2003; Geological Survey of Ireland 2008; McDermott 2010). The extensive Lough Erne lake system lies across the border 5km to the west in Co. Fermanagh, and forms important navigable routes into the west and the Atlantic Ocean. The immediate site topography of the Round Tower and Graveyard in Clones shows that the sites lie in a hollow area of lower ground surrounded to the northeast

and southeast by two low, albeit steep hills, and on all sites by higher ground within a 200–300m radius.



**Figure 2:** Clones soils and drainage map

## 3.2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### 3.2.1 Early Documentary Sources

The earliest cartographical source of Ireland is a gazetteer of lakes, rivers, settlement and people in c. AD 150, and comes from the Classical Greek Geographer, Claudius Ptolemy, who identified a *Voluntii* tribe in the northeast region—believed to be *Ulaid*, from which the root name of Ulster is derived. Two important settlements were also identified: *Regia* (Clogher) and *Isamnion* (*Emain Macha*/Navan Fort). Both sites have been subject to extensive archaeological excavation and revealed significant later

prehistoric and Iron Age ceremonial and settlement evidence (Warren 1974; Waterman 1997; Mallory 2000; Lynn et al. 2013).

Both were important early royal centres and regional caputs of the Ulaid. However, early documentary sources list their decline with Fergus Fogha (†AD 392) as the last king of *Emain Macha*, and the Ulaid contracted and were forced into the northeast, to the modern counties of Down and Armagh. *Emain Macha* was largely forgotten, to be replaced by Armagh, which ultimately became the primary ecclesiastical centre for Ireland. With the emergence of a new powerful polity, Clogher became the Royal seat of *Oirghialla/Airghialla* (later known as *Oriel/Uriel*), allied to the powerful ruling High Kings of Tara, the Northern and Southern Uí Neill, carving lands that at its most expansive stretched from Lough Erne to Lough Neagh, including modern Cos Londonderry (south), Tyrone, Fermanagh and most of Monaghan.

County Monaghan, *Muineachán* in Irish, was formed in AD 1585 and comprised the five baronies of Truagh, Dartree, Monaghan, Cremorne and Farney from the counties of *Iriell*, *Dartrey*, *Loghtie* and *Trow*. The territory is often referred to as Mac Mahon's. According to the annals, the region took its name from the 4th-century *Manaigh* or *Monaigh*. It was part of the larger ancient territory of *Oirghialla* (also known as *Oriel*) overseen, until the 12th century, by the *Uí Cremthainne* (Cremorne) and *Clan Colla* dynasties and originally ruled from the Royal caputs of Clogher (west) and *Emain Macha* (east). During the later medieval period, it was known as 'Mac Mahon's country'.

The barony of Dartree or Dartry, *Dairtre* (AD 1730), *Dartraí* in Irish, has been interpreted as meaning 'Calf People' (O'Donovan cited in Shirley 1879, 165). An alternative meaning has also been proposed deriving from *Dartaíge Coininnsi* meaning Dog's Island (ibid.). The name refers to a group exiled from Munster, and is referred to in the 9th-century Latin and Irish *Life of St Laisrén mac Nad Froích* (†AD 564), who founded the Devenish Island monastery in Lower Lough Erne. The *Dartraí* lands originally included parts of Cos Monaghan (south), Roscommon (north), Sligo (east) and Leitrim (west), and fell under the control of the *Airghialla*. In the early medieval period, the *Ó Baoigheallain* (O'Boylan) were recorded as the early kings of Dartry and over lords of *Airghialla*, however, their influence waned in Monaghan as a result of the rise of the Mac Mahons.

### 3.2.2 Ecclesiastical History

Dartree is first referenced in AD 867 in the *Annals of the Four Masters* (AFM) which records the death of the Abbot of Clonmacnoise and Devenish Island, Martin—a scribe from Dartree. Four early ecclesiastical foundations are mentioned in the *Annals of Ulster* (AU) up to AD 600, the monasteries of Louth, Devenish, Clones and Killeevy, and Armagh, with the addition of Killyman before AD 700. In the 8th to 9th century, the region largely escaped the early Viking rampages wrought on the east coast, with waves of Viking incursions and raids between AD 795–835 and 836–902. However, the closest Viking raid was at the monastery of Louth.

An important ecclesiastical centre in Clogher developed and became the seat of the 12th-century Diocese of Clogher, which was roughly co-extensive with ancient territory. The ancient Sees of Clones, Ardsrath and Louth were later appended to it and under Bishop David O'Brogan the diocese was reduced in size, with parts of Co. Tyrone given to *Ardstraw/Rathlure*, (later to Derry), and most of Co. Louth to the Archbishopric of Armagh. The modern Diocese of Clogher now comprises Co. Monaghan, and most of Co. Fermanagh, and parts of southern Tyrone, plus small parts of Cos Donegal, Louth and Cavan.

There is still some debate as to the nature of early church organisation in Ireland, from the early missionaries and hermitic foundations to the emergence of diverse and complex ecclesiastical settlements and episcopal-monastic centres. The early Christian church could be characterised as a range of pastoral churches, private foundations, hermetic and powerful ecclesiastical estates, episcopal *civitates* in Latin, meaning 'Cities of God', with no clear governing central authority, and dynastic appointments, intertwined with secular ruling families and ambitions up until the AD 1001 Synod of Cashel, which abolished inheritance, and clerical marriage reducing dynastic influences. After the AD 1101 Synod of Rathbressail and the AD 1152 Synod of Kells, the Primacy of Armagh was formally recognised and a national ecclesiastical administrative system of Parish, Diocese, and Archdiocese or Metropolitan units was established that broadly continues unchanged to this day.

The monastery of Clones was founded by its 6th-century patron St Tighernach (†AD 549; feast day 4th April). Tighernach was the godson of St Brigid (Kildare) and educated by Ninian in either Wales or Scotland. According to the Annals, Tighernach was credited as the Bishop of Clogher and was affiliated with *Cáirthinn* of Clogher, and *Mo Laisse* of Devenish Island, in the secular polity of the *Fernmag* ruled by *Uí Nad Sluaig*, a branch of the *Uí Chremthainn* dynasty (CELT). St Tighernach also founded monasteries in Galloon Island, Upper Lough Erne, Co. Fermanagh, and Abbeyleix, Ashmacart, Co. Laois, in the 6th century. Tighernach's *Life* records an impressive aristocratic pedigree and was also inferred by the association of the important royal seat of Clogher—born *Coirpre* the (illegitimate) son of *Der Fraích* (Dervail), daughter of King *Eochaid* of the *Ui Chremthainn* and a warrior of the *Ui Briúin*, a branch of *Uí Bairrche* of Leinster. Tighernach was brought to Kildare, fostered, given his name Tighernach meaning 'Princely' by St Brigit of Kildare, and baptised by her bishop, Conleth. Tighernach's maternal uncle was *Cairpre Daim Argat*, King of the Airgíalla (†AD 514) and his many other cousins/relatives included St Enda of Aran, St Damhnat of *Slieve Betha* and St Cinnia of *Drum Dubhain*.

Following pilgrimage to Rome to obtain relics needed to found a church, Tighernach returned to Kildare to become a bishop in his homeland, where he went into a mountain retreat. After a vision and performing the miracle of *Doach*, former archbishop of Armagh, raised from the dead, he founded monasteries at Galloon, which he offered to Comgall of Bangor, succeeded St MacArti[a]n as Bishop of Clogher in AD 506, after first attending to problems and is said to have 'fixed his See at Clones', where he lived like a hermit and died in AD 549-50 of plague (*Vita ST*; Plummer 1910; Heist 1965; OSH; Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164; AU). The following


three bishops of Clogher resided at Clones, with St Ultan buried at Clogher AD 563, possibly suggesting a return to some political norm. The Annals record a continuous line of abbots of Clones, plus its destruction at least twice before AD 1100, and also the presence of the *Celi Dé* or Culde Reform Movement (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 32, 153, 164).

Two artefacts of immense importance are often associated with the monastic site at Clones. These are the *Domnach Airgid* and the Clones Missal. The first of these is the shrine of St Patrick's Gospels, known in Irish as the *Domnach Airgird* meaning Silver Church, which is also mentioned in the Annals as being inscribed with the name John O'Carbry, Coarb of Clones, and given to St Mac Carten of Clogher in AD 1353 (AFM, Shirley 1879, 167). The wooden box-shrine has gilt-silver and bronze panels depicting the three apostles, Archangel Michael and Virgin and Child, Saints Columba, Brigit and Patrick, and Patrick giving the bible to Mac Carten. It was made by John O'Bardan, but commissioned by Clones Abbot John O'Carbry. It was recently described as 'a splendid exercise in medieval retro...not just an antique: it is a very deliberate display of self-conscious antiquity' by O'Toole (2013) and is dated to the mid-14th century, but was a remodelling of elements, some of which date to the 8th century. The front contains a large worn bronze crucifix, with a rock crystal above.



**Figure 3:** The Domhnach Airgid, National Museum of Ireland

The second artefact is the manuscript known variously as the Clones Missal or the Corpus Missal, which is an Irish liturgical text currently housed in Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Much uncertainty surrounds this manuscript and scholars have disagreed on the date of its production since the first substantial study of the

manuscript was published in 1879 by F. E. Warren. Warren inferred from certain passages of text that this manuscript was produced in the Abbey of Saints Peter and Paul in Clones. The most authoritative dating of the manuscript, asserted in 1964 by Françoise Henry, proposes a date of between AD 1120 and 1130 (Henry and Marsh-Micheli 1963, 140). However, successive studies of the manuscript have concluded that it was not, in fact, produced in Clones (Henry and Marsh-Micheli 1963; Gwynn 1964; Holland 2001; Flanagan 2010). The text contains no direct allusion to a provenance in Clones and, furthermore, in a list of venerated saints contained within the text, there is no mention made of Saint Tighernach, the founding saint of Clones (Gwynn 1964). 

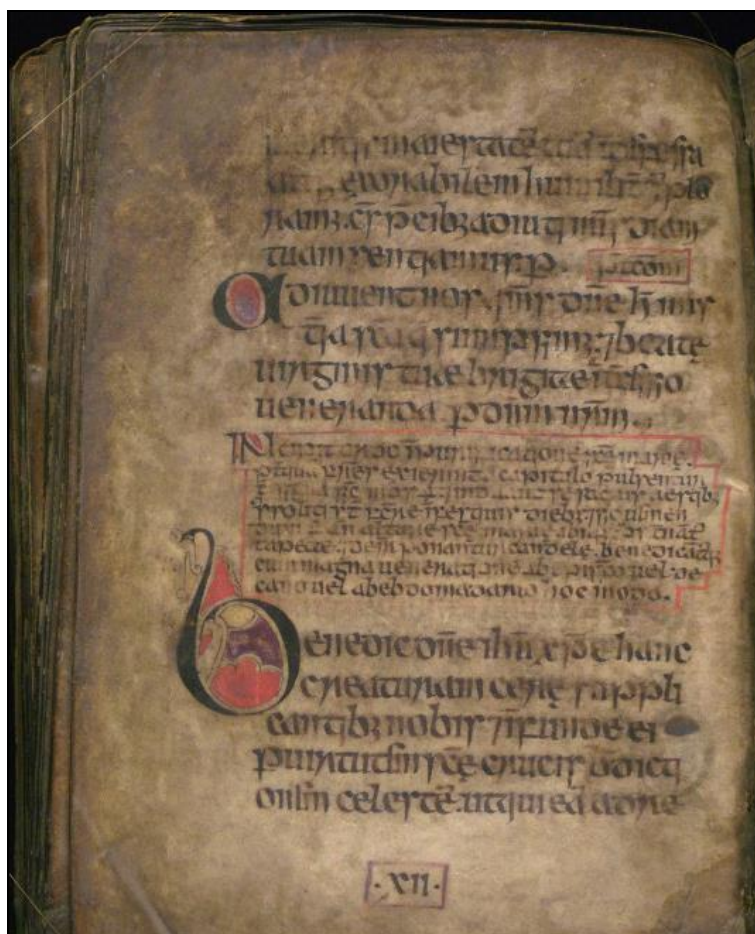


Figure 4: The 'Clones Missal' Oxford, Corpus Christi College (MS. 282, fol.130v)

### 3.2.3 Later Medieval Sources

Clones has close affiliations with Armagh and Clogher, and was an early Augustinian foundation, possibly before AD 1140, when the Church of St Tighernach became the abbey of St Peter and St Paul, incorporating an earlier monastic element as the rectory. In AD 1183, Christinus O Muccaran, Abbot of Clones, attended the consecration of St Mary's church Clogher, and in AD 1187 became Bishop of Clogher. In AD 1207, Hugh de Lacy II attacked and burned the town and abbey, the latter rebuilt in AD 1212, along with a large Anglo-Norman castle, however, the abbey remained under Irish control throughout the next two centuries. Valued at 6m in AD 1302, this had jumped to 24m by 1429 following repairs granted for the abbey and



cloister in AD 1414. The abbots were mentioned in 1454 and again in 1504, when Nicholas, Abbot of Clones, was made Bishop of Clogher in Rome, but died shortly after returning. An inquisition of 1586–7 found Clones abbey contained a ‘partly-thatched church, a stone-walled cloister, a hall, kitchen and other buildings’ (in ruins) and holdings including 2,000 acres of land and five rectories worth 90 shillings. During the dissolution of the monasteries, the manor of ‘the abbey of St Tierney’ was granted to Sir Henry Duke (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 164). The missing/lost foundations of towers from the castle could still be traced in the plateau between the ‘present church and fort’ and a holy well associated with St Tighernach or ‘Tubber Tierney’ was said to be located in the ‘meadow below’ (Shirley 1879, 167).

TABLE 1: Historical Chronology of Clones

DATE	DETAIL
AD 500–550	Tighernach born, fostered in Kildare, educated in Britain, pilgrimaged to Rome, returned to Kildare then Clogher, followed by a mountain retreat. Founded monasteries at Galloon, which he offered it to Comgall of Bangor, Clones, Co. Monaghan, Abbeyleix and Aghmacart, Co. Laois (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 1).
AD 506	Tighernach succeeded St Mac Carten Bishop of Clogher after fixing his See at Clones, where he lived like a hermit ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 548 (549–50)	Tighernach died of plague, in Clones. ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 549–563	Bishops of Clogher resided at Clones.
†AD 563	St Ultan, Abbot of Clones/Bishop of Clogher, buried at Clogher—possibly suggesting a return to some political norm. The Annals record a continuous line of abbots ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 700	Death of Diucuill, Abbot of Cluain-Eois (Shirley 1879, 166).
†AD 714	Death of Cele-Tighernach (servant of T.), Abbot of Cluain-Eois (AFM; Shirley 1879, 166).
†AD 746	Death of Nuada, Abbot of Cluain-Eois ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 773	Death of Finan, Abbot of Cluain-Eois ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 805 (810)	Death of Gormghal Son of Dindaghaigh, Abbot of Ard Macha and Cluain-Eois ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 836	Churches of Lough-Eirne, plus Cluain Eos and Daimhinis (Devenish Island) ‘burned by foreigners’ ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 839	Death of Joseph of Rosmor, Bishop and ‘distinguished scribe’ Abbot of Cluain-Eois and other churches ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 877	Death of Duibhlitir, Abbot of Cluain-Eois and Tigh-Airindan (Tyfarnham, WM) ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 912	Death of Maelciarain, Son of Eochagan (foster son of Archb. Fethghna), Abbot of Cluain-Eois and Mucnamh (Muckroe) ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 929	Death of Ceannsaeladh, Son of Lorcan, Comharba of Cluain-Eois and Clochar-mac-Daimhenini (Clogher) ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 943	Death of Maeltuite, son of Dunan, successor of Tighernach ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 956	Death of Flann, son of Mochloingseach, successor of Tighernach ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 961	Death of Caen-Comhrae, son of Caran, distinguish Bishop and Abbot of Cluain-Eois ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 978	Death of Rumann, Ua h-Aedhagain, Abbot of Cluain-Eois ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 1010	Death of Flaithbhertach Ua Cethenen, successor of Tighernach, at his own church at Cluain-Eos, a distinguished senior Bishop, mortally wounded by the man of Breifne ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
†AD 1030	Death of Eochaidh Ua Cethenen, successor of Tighernach, chief paragon of Ireland

DATE	DETAIL
	in wisdom, died at Ard-Macha (ibid.).
†AD 1039	Death of Ceileachair Ua Cueileannain, successor of Tighernach (ibid.).
†AD 1084	Death of Muiredhach Ua Cethenen, Archinneach of Cluain-Eos (ibid.).
AD 1095	Cluain-Eos burned (ibid.).
AD 1100	Clones, destruction recorded 'at least twice' before 1100 (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
†AD 1139	Death of Cathal Mac Maelshinn, successor if Tighernach of Cluain-Eos, 'fountain of the prosperity and affluence of the North of Ireland bestower of food upon the laity and the clergy' (AFM, Shirley 1879, 166).
AD 1140	Arroasian Augustinian Canons founded Church of St Peter and St Paul at Clones, incorporating an earlier monastic element as the rectory from abbey of Tighernach. (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
AD 1183	Christinus O Muccaran, the abbot of Clones attended the consecration of St Mary's Church, Clogher (ibid.).
AD 1187	Abbot O Muccaran became Bishop of Clogher (ibid.).
AD 1207 (1208)	Hugh de Lacy II attacked and burned the town and abbey. Later routed in Tyrone by Hugh O'Neill and Meyler FitzRobert slaughtered (ibid.).
AD 1211	'English' Castle of Clones erected by Lord Deputy of Ireland, and Bishop of Norwich John de Gray, (AFM, Shirley 1879, 166–7).
AD 1212	Clones Castle attacked by Hugh O'Neill and the North of Ireland (AFM, Shirley 1879, 167).
AD 1212	Abbey rebuilt alongside (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
†AD 1247	Death of Hugh Mac Conchaille, Abbot of Clones (AFM, Shirley 1879, 167).
†AD 1257	Death of Mac Robbias, Abbot of Clones (ibid.).
AD 1302	Taxation Valuation Abbey valued at 6m (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
†AD 1353	Death of John O'Carbry, Coarb of Tugernach of Cluain-Eois (AFM, Shirley 1879, 167).
†AD 1435	Death of Don, son of Cuconnacht Maguire, in canonical orders in Clones (ibid.).
†AD 1444	Death of Manus Mac Mahon heir to the Lordship of Oriell, interred at Clones (ibid.).
†AD 1453	Death of Mac Mahon, Hugh Roe, son of Rory, interred at Clones (ibid.).
†AD 1486	Death of Philip Mac Mahon, son of the Coarb James son of Rury son of Ardgall, a Canon Chorister of Clogher and Coarb of Clones (ibid.).
†AD 1499	Death of Mac Donnell of Clan Kelly, interred in Clones (ibid.).
AD 1302-6	Clonooy's (Papal Tax 212 – Logainm.ie).
15th century	Clandaedha (CPL IX, 91), Clayndacyga (CPL XI, 220), Cunaci (CPL XI, 550), Clancha (15th century – Reg. Oct. 124). Alternative placename associated with St Eachaidh of Drumard, a forgotten saint, alluded to in the 15th century Papal records (Ó Dufaigh 1960–1, 8).
AD 1414	Repairs granted for the abbey and cloister (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
AD 1429	Cloeaineoy's (AU 33.4 – Logainm.ie).
AD 1429	Valuation 24m (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
AD 1430–1	Cluayneis (AU 35.4 – Logainm.ie).
AD 1454	Eugenius O'Connolly, Abbot of Clones was mentioned (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
AD 1471	Clunos, Cluenoy's (AU 39.1/2 – Logainm.ie).
†AD 1502	Death of James, son of Rury son of Mac Mahon Coarb of Clones (AFM, Shirley 1879, 167).
†AD 1504	Death of Gillapatrik O'Connolly, son of Henry, Bishop of Clogher and Abbot of Clones (ibid.).

DATE	DETAIL
AD 1504	Nicholas, abbot of Clones was made Bishop of Clogher, in Rome, but died shortly after returning (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
†AD 1506	Death of Thomas Boy Mac Cosgraigh, Erenach of Clones (AFM, Shirley 1879, 167).
AD 1550	Cloineiys (F 528 – Logainm.ie).
AD 1586-7	An inquisition found Clones abbey contained a ‘partly-thatched church, a stone-walled cloister, a hall, kitchen and other buildings’ (in ruins) and holdings including 2,000 acres of land and five rectories worth 90 shillings. During the dissolution of the monasteries, the manor of ‘the abbey of St Tierney’ was granted to Sir Henry Duke (Gywnn and Hadcock 1970, 164).
AD 1610	Chloonys Moanaster (MEC 1.2 – Logainm.ie).
AD 1623	Clonishe (Inq Uls – <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 1636	Cluín Eoais, easpcop Cluana hEoais (FNÉ – <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 1655	Clonish (Downe Survey – <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 1659	Clonish/Clonish (Census 155 – <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 1793	Clones (McCrea – <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 1835	Clones (OS – <i>ibid.</i> ).

### 3.3 CONDITION ASSESSMENT

A number of important elements of the early Christian monastery at Clones survive as upstanding features scattered throughout the town. These include the 9th- or 10th-century High Cross (MO011-010005), the c. 10th-century Round Tower, the c. 12th-century House-shaped Shrine and the 12th-century Stone Church, plus a significant collection of a large number of 18th–20th-century tomb stones.

#### 3.3.1 The Graveyard Boundary Walls

The current graveyard comprises an uneven, roughly oval-shaped area of approximately 0.3Ha in surface size. The graveyard is located on the southwestern edge of the modern town of Clones c. 100m to the southwest and downslope of the central Diamond. The boundary wall defining the graveyard is of multi-period construction with several different building materials used. The northern boundary comprises a rubble-built wall which fronts onto a street named ‘Ball Alley’. This wall is topped with concrete capstones (Plate 1). The wall has been repointed in recent times with ribbon pointing evident. Some ivy and lichen growth on the walls enhance the setting and do not pose a threat to the fabric of the wall. The graveyard entrance is located in the eastern wall of the enclosure and is flanked by two coursed cut-stone pillars topped with concrete capstones (Plate 2). A fragment of an 18th-century headstone has been used in the fabric of the southern pillar (Plate 3). The entrance is barred with a wrought iron gate which is bracketed to the pillars. An interpretive information board is located on the southern pillar.

The boundary wall runs south from this entrance down a side lane visible on the 25-inch OS mapping (1909) which curves around the southern boundary of the graveyard. Immediately south of the entrance pillars, the boundary wall is composed of concrete blocks (Plate 4). This block wall continues along the southern perimeter for a distance of c. 15m. The laneway becomes very overgrown and is blocked off while the block wall transitions into an older stone and lime mortar wall which

increases in height towards the west (Plate 5), indicating that the area immediately south of the graveyard has been scarped to some extent.

Beyond the blocked off area, the laneway opens out into a yard space which contains a dilapidated outbuilding with a collapsed galvanised roof (Plate 6). It was not possible to assess the nature and condition of the retaining wall to the west of this point due to the level of vegetation immediately south of the graveyard (Plate 7). The western boundary wall is of lime mortar construction and an access stile is located in the wall close to the southwestern corner of the graveyard (Plate 8). This presents as a V-shaped aperture in the fabric of the wall and is lined on the western side with machine-made red bricks (Plate 9). The ground level to the west of the wall is c. 1m lower than that within the graveyard. Two concrete steps of probable mid-20th-century date give access to the stile from the west.

The western boundary wall abuts the Round Tower on its southern and northern sides and has been attached in the past with lime mortar (Plate 10). The join to the south is intact and the section of wall between the tower and the stile is stable. The join to the northern side of the tower has failed and has been patched with cement in the recent past. This too has failed and there is now a fissure open between the wall and the tower (Plate 11). The boundary wall to the north of the tower is bulging significantly westwards under the weight of the soil within the graveyard (Plate 12) and is in some danger of failure. The wall itself is likely to post-date 1797 given that a depiction of the tower by Austin Cooper, dated to this year, shows the Round Tower unencumbered with adjoining walls, while Cooper accurately depicts the Kells tower in Co. Meath adjoined to later walls (Figure 11).

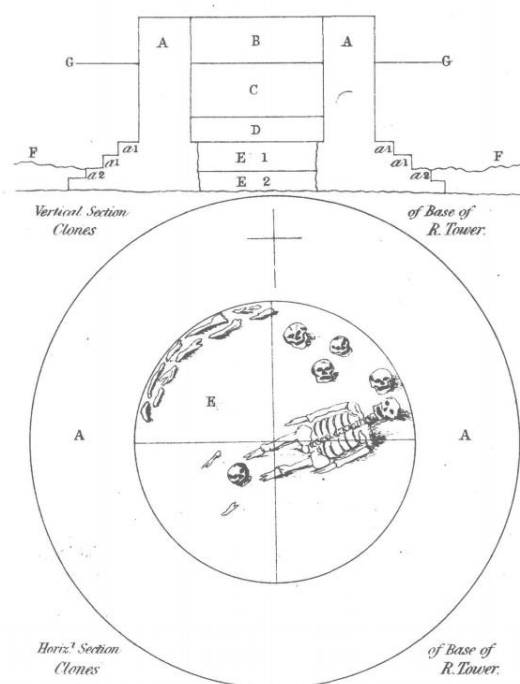
The northern boundary is a continuation of the stone and lime mortar wall which also forms the rear boundary of a number of properties which front onto Cara Street to the north. A tall, stone-built outbuilding visible on the 1909 25-inch OS map abuts the boundary wall (Plate 13). Immediately to the west of the graveyard, a concrete and gravel path arcs around the Round Tower at a distance of c. 10m, mirroring its shape and highlighting the curve of the monument (Plate 14). This path can be seen on an aerial photograph taken in 1966 and is currently in a state of partial disrepair. The graveyard contains a wide array of finely carved 18th–20th-century headstones bearing motifs and forms analogous with the South Ulster style (Plate 15). These memorials are largely in good condition and most are upright or tilting slightly. The motifs are, in general, well-preserved and of a very high quality. The ground surface across the site is broadly level with the usual undulations encountered within historic graveyards. The exception to this is the eastern corner of the graveyard adjacent to the entranceway which is at the level of Ball Alley, c. 1m lower than the western part of the graveyard. When the site was visited in June 2016 the grounds were found to have been recently tended. Several areas of encroaching vegetation were, however, noted. These included a large sprawling elder bush in the centre of the graveyard (Plate 16) and an area of encroaching bush and bramble with established ash saplings in the southwest corner of the site adjacent to the stile.

A gravel path running from the graveyard entrance towards the Round Tower has been almost completely subsumed by grass. Some level of erosion is visible on the ground surface along the route of this path, particularly adjacent to the gateway. An overhead powerline runs across the northern part of the graveyard (Plate 17).

### The Round Tower MO011-010002

Situated in the western extremity in the current graveyard, the Round Tower stands at a height of c. 40m with a diameter of c. 4.5m (Plate 18) and is constructed of roughly coursed rubble sandstone of local origin (Lalor 1999, 205). The tower is accessed by a lintelled, east-facing doorway situated c. 3.5m above the level of the base plinth of the tower, visible at the western side of the tower on the lower ground level outside of the graveyard. There are three small lintelled windows within the body of the tower, one of them in line with the entrance. It has been suggested that the tower originally had five floors (SMR file), with the second, third and fourth floors lit by a single small quadrangular opening.

Human remains were discovered beneath the floor during the 19th century (Wakeman 1874–5, 327–40). Two of the usual four opes encountered at the top level of round towers survive. The conical roof, which is visible on the 16th-century representation of the town (discussed below in section 3.6), is now absent.



**Figure 5:** Sketch plan of the 1875 excavations at Clones Round Tower (UJA, 4 1856, 69)

Several indicators of potential structural fatigue were noted. Most obvious is the cracked lintel above the door (Plate 18). One significant fracture runs through the centre of the lintel while two subsidiary fractures run from this, running laterally along the lintel. A small portion of the face of the stone has also shorn away (Plate 19). This crack is not mentioned or depicted by Wakeman but does appear in photos within publications by Lalor (1999) and O’Keeffe (2004), though not discussed. The exterior

of the tower exhibits evidence of fire damage. Many of the stones are heat-cracked and have lost some of their external faces (Plate 20). This heat damage is pronounced on the eastern and northern sides but is largely absent on the western side. No specific record of fire at the tower is recorded in the sources, however, Clones is recorded as being burned in AD 836, 1095 and finally in 1207 by Hugh de Lacy II. The damage visible on the tower may, therefore, date to the late 11th century, the early 13th century or to some unspecified event in the tower's history (836 is too early to be of consequence to the Round Tower).

As discussed above, the western graveyard wall is fixed to the exterior of the tower and the ground level to the east of the tower is c. 1m higher than that to the west. The weight of this soil is exerting pressure on the western boundary wall which is buckling under the resultant pressure. The weight of this soil is also applying an unevenly distributed pressure on the eastern side of the tower. The tower exhibits a slight but perceptible lean to the northwest. The base plinth visible on the west of the tower at the current ground level has been damaged with two of the large projecting plinth stones broken at the level of the tower wall (Plate 21). This damage may have occurred due to the pressure being exerted on the opposite side of the tower by the weight of the graveyard soil. A report of an excavation undertaken at the base of the tower in 1845 contains a schematic elevation drawing of the tower and shows that the base plinth visible today is the top course of four stepped plinth courses (Figure 5).

The tower has seen a succession of repointing with lime mortar and also, later with modern cement/concrete-based mortar (Plate 22). A rectangular area of cement to the south of the door opening marks the location of an earlier sign affixed to the exterior of the tower. A sparse, evenly spaced cover of ivy-leafed toad flax has colonised the exterior of the tower (Plate 23). The lintel over the eastern window at the top floor is in place (Plate 24) but all other opes on this level are no longer extant.

#### House-shaped Shrine MO011-010004

Situated in the southwest quadrant of the graveyard (MO011-010003), a house-shaped shrine is located north of the boundary wall and south of a stand of ash saplings. It measures 1.85m long, 0.67m wide and 0.95m high. The shrine is carved from a single block of reddish/buff coloured sandstone and is in two pieces with badly weathered figures and decoration carved on it. A figure on the eastern gable with outstretched arms holding what appears to be a staff and wearing a conical hat has been interpreted as representing a bishop (Harbison 1999). The entire block has been split in antiquity. The shrine is currently placed upon an underlying rectangular plinth of the same material and appears to be affixed with recent cement (Plate 25). This plinth of sandstone is also broken in several places and has been repaired with cement. The full extent of this base block is not apparent and it is unclear if this piece is contemporary with the shrine itself or if it is of later date. While some detail of the ornamentation on the shrine can be discerned, notably the finials and the 18th-century legend on the southern side of the shrine, the figure of the bishop on the eastern gable is barely perceptible (Plate 26). A small figure and projecting features

just below the roof are visible on the southern side of the shrine (Plate 27). These latter features may be representative of hinges that would have occupied this location on a wooden sarcophagus on which the shrine may have been modelled. There is 18th-century graffiti carved into both sides of the roof, though this is no longer clearly legible. Harbison records the inscription as reading:

*'Here Lyeth Ye Body of [removed in antiquity]  
This Life Ma..Y...1769 Aged 62(?) yrs Renewed'  
(Harbison 1999, 12).*

Recent interventions dating to the second half of the 20th century have changed the setting of the shrine which is now surrounded by ornamental blocks of granite set flush with the ground level. These blocks are, in turn, surrounded by a paving of black sedimentary flags which appear to be Liscannor stone or some similar type. Evidently part of this phase of intervention, a plaque in the form of a granite headstone with applied lead lettering stands abutting the northern side of the shrine. This plaque bears a carved representation of a ringed cross at its head (Plate 28). The lettering reads:

*'Here lies the remains of St. Tiernach  
Of the royal house of Oriel  
First abbot of the Clones Monastery (sic)  
Bishop of Clogher  
500AD to 4th April 548'*

### High Cross MO011-010005

The High Cross at Clones is situated in the Diamond which was the 17th-century marketplace within the town. The ground level slopes steeply from north to south and the cross has been erected halfway up the slope beneath St. Tighernach's Church of Ireland church (Plate 29). A plinth has been built to counter the slope of the ground onto which the cross has been set and bedded with cement which has been repaired in modern times (Plate 30). The plinth is built with cut limestone (Plate 31). The cross is surrounded by a wrought-iron railing which exhibits barley-sugar twisted square pillars to four corners and arrow-topped balusters between with a lower rail resting on turned cast-iron feet around the entire monument. The plinth is visible in its current form in a late 19th-century photo of the cross (National Library of Ireland WEL29) while the railing in its current form can be seen on a slightly later photograph dating to some time before 1914 (National Library of Ireland L\_CAB\_08607). Two floodlights have been installed within the enclosed area, one in the southeast corner and the other in the northwest corner. These are powered via insulated cables screwed into the plinth (Plate 32). An interpretive panel has been attached to the northern side of the fence while a second has been installed on the stainless steel frame immediately to the east of the fence. These bear explanations of the scenes represented on the cross while the eastern panel also shows a 19th-century photo of the cross (National Library of Ireland WEL29).

The cross shaft is set into a large, stepped sandstone cross base. Any decoration that may have adorned this portion of the cross has been effaced by weathering. It is unclear whether this base is the original base associated with the shaft or if it is from a different, now lost monument. An Ordnance Survey bench mark (colloquially known as a 'crow's foot') has been carved into the eastern side of the base (Plate 33). As part of the benchmark, a lead stud has been inserted into the cross base and this has caused a crack in the stone. This benchmark is not noted on the first edition OS map of 1837, but appears on the 1909 25 inch mapping. The degree to which this recent feature has weathered within a century provides a good indication of the damage being inflicted on the exposed cross panels.

The southern face is slightly better preserved than the northern face and the carvings are more readily identifiable. Depictions of Adam and Eve and the Sacrifice of Isaac and Daniel in the Den of Lions (Plates 34 and 35) are visible on the southern face while the northern face displays illustrations of the Adoration of the Magi, the Marriage Feast of Cana, the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes and the Crucifixion. The two sides are decorated with geometric designs and bosses (Harbison 1992, 274). Beaded decoration runs up the sides of the two faces and also around the distinctive collar at the top of the shaft (Plate 36).

The crown of the cross appears to be a fragment from an 18th-century gravestone. The skull visible on this fragment bears many of the hallmarks used by the 'puppy skull carver' who was operating in Monaghan from c. 1720-40 (Mytum 2009). A high cross is also represented in relief carving on the northern wall of the 'Wee Abbey' (Plate 37).




**Figure 6:** Northern face of Clones High Cross, Discovery Programme 3D icons (Reg. No.:41304037)



### 3.4 Archaeological sites in the surrounding landscape

The archaeological landscape surrounding Clones is dominated by early medieval secular settlement evidenced by *rath*/ringfort sites, a crannóg site and enclosure (probable *rath*) sites. Within the town are various elements associated with the ecclesiastical settlement and the Anglo-Norman fortifications and associated late medieval urban settlement.

TABLE 2: Adjacent Recorded Archaeological Sites (RMPs) in Clones (Source: archaeology.ie) 

RMP. NO.	TOWNLAND	CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE TO COMPLEX/ITM
MO011-0008001	Crossmoyle	Castle – motte and bailey	Truncated cone-shaped mound (landscaped-terraces) & fosse. Sub-rectangular bailey w/ bank. AD 1212.	300m northwest 649951/825800
MO011-0008002	Crossmoyle	Castle – unclassified	Clones Castle c. 1640. N and W corner towers visible	300m northwest 649964/825832
MO011-0002001	Crossmoyle	Church (in ruins) 'Clones Abbey'	Drystone rectangular single bay gabled church, aligned east–west, 6.3m north–south x 12.9m. Dated (Lalor) 12th century	300m northwest 649951/825800
MO011-011	Largy	Enclosure	Circular 26m diam. bank & ditch? Landscaping.	340m northeast 650428/825809
MO011-009	Altartate Glebe	Ringfort - Rath	'Fort', 1835 OS map	700m northeast 650703/826071
MO011-007	Clonboy	Enclosure	Rectangular, raised platform 19m x 19m with ditch.	1km west 649491/825746
MO011-006	Largy	Enclosure	Circular feature noted on 1907 OS 25-inch plan. No visible remains.	1.45km northeast 650487/826426
MO011-004	Liseggeston	Crannóg	Circular mound measuring c. 18m diameter.	2km north 649949/826843
MO016-003	Cloncurrin	Enclosure	Circular area, diameter c. 19m, surrounded by earthen bank, external fosse. Landscape feature?	2.4km southwest 649311/824503
MO017-001	Clontreat	Rath – ringfort	Oval, 50m x 33m bank & ditch.	2.5km southeast 651250/824797

### 3.4 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

A review of the Excavations Bulletin has revealed that a total of 11 archaeological investigations have taken place within the immediate vicinity of the Clones complex. The closest assessment took place at the junction of Ball Alley and Abbey Lane, where human remains were encountered (Delaney 2006a; Licence Ref.: C146, E2335). The

site lies immediately outside the graveyard wall to the east. The remains were presumed to have been associated with the 'wee abbey' located immediately to the east. A total of seven articulated human skeletons and a small quantity of disarticulated bone was uncovered. All of the burials were extended in a supine position and were orientated west–east in the standard Christian burial manner.

In 1998 at Cara Street, c. 50m north of the boundary wall of the graveyard, a test trench, measuring 9m x 1.8m on a northeast–southwest axis, contained the remains of a flat-bottomed ditch. The ditch was c. 1.3m wide at the top and c. 1.1m at its base. It measured 0.3m deep. Artefactual evidence, including green-glazed pottery and clay pipe stems, indicated that the ditch dated to the 17th century. Two pits containing modern rubbish were also uncovered (Moore 1998; Licence Ref.: 98E0245).

A programme of archaeological testing was undertaken in advance of the construction of the Tower View houses c. 50m east of the Round Tower and graveyard boundary. Four trenches were excavated across the site on 1 April 2005. It was discovered that the site had been built up in the recent past with clay imported from elsewhere and a layer of hardcore on top, which has resulted in the ground being at a higher level than the surrounding fields to the east, west and south. Based on the proposed development involving piling for the foundations, which would be a maximum of 0.6m below the present ground level, and the site services being totally within the imported dumped material, it was not deemed necessary to test-trench areas outside of the houses. The trenches were excavated to depths varying from 2.1–2.6m, onto natural yellow clay in the northern part of the site and peat in the southern end. Between 0.9 and 1.3m of topsoil overlay the natural clay and peat, and this in turn was sealed by 0.8–1.5m of dumped clay and building debris and 0.2m of hardcore. No features or finds of archaeological significance were uncovered in any of the test-trenches (McLoughlin 2005; Licence Ref.: 04E0531).

In 2000, testing was carried out in the Diamond in advance of the construction of a new Credit Union (Moore; Licence Ref.: 00E0301), c. 100m northeast of the graveyard. Three test trenches were excavated. A 19th-century drain and the remains of a stone wall were uncovered. The exposed extent of the wall was c. 9.6m long north–south and c. 3.2m high. An overhanging stone lip feature was present on top of the length of the wall. An east-facing doorway c. 2.8m high was also exposed (the full width of the doorway was not uncovered). This wall was interpreted as the remains of the 17th/18th-century curtain wall of Clones Castle. A further section of wall was uncovered to the east of the castle wall. This was interpreted as the remains of a 17th/18th-century tower wall. These walls were not disturbed by the development and were preserved *in situ*.

A single test trench was excavated across the site of a proposed development in The Diamond c. 100m northeast (Duffy 2007; Licence Ref.: 07E0615). It measured 8m long x 2m wide and was located to the rear of the existing building, in a green space. At the southern end of the trench there was a substantial L-shaped wall. The top of the wall was 0.55m below ground level. It projected out of the southern face of the trench and was c. 1m in width north–south; it measured c. 4.5m long, east–west. It survived up to

0.75m high. At 2.4m from the east end of the trench another wall, which was bonded to the first, ran northwards for 1m, which was the limit of excavation. It was not possible to continue the trench west of this wall due to a tree growing on the site. The wall was well constructed of stone, bonded with mortar. No artefacts or datable material were associated with the wall. In the northeast of the trench, layers of domestic waste were encountered. No artefacts were recovered from these layers. The walls were preserved *in situ*.

In 2008 monitoring of groundworks associated with the reconstruction of part of the stone boundary wall at St Tighernach's Church of Ireland church, The Diamond, Clones, was undertaken, c. 200m northwest of the graveyard and Round Tower. The scheme involved the removal of the collapsed debris and the construction of a reinforced concrete wall, with the original wall stones replaced as a cladding over the new concrete structure. Removal of the collapsed material exposed a c. 3.5m-high section face consisting of 1.4–1.8m of graveyard soil overlying firm natural sandy clay which forms the hill on which the church is built. The graveyard soil had a fairly uniform appearance and contained numerous bones but only one *in situ* burial was evident. All human remains found in the collapsed material were collected and subsequently reinterred as directed by the Church Vestry. Very few artefacts were recovered during the investigation. Two fragments of roof ridge tile, both with a similar hard, sandy fabric, glazed dark-purple/brown and decorated with a single incised wavy line, were recovered. These were interpreted as dating to the 17th or 18th century and likely to have come from one of the earlier churches on the site. One damaged clay pipe bowl, glazed yellow, with a rouletted rim and a leaf pattern along the mould seam front and back, is an import datable to the early 18th century (Campbell; Licence Ref.: 08E0807).

Testing and excavation was carried out in 2012 at an extension to a factory at the site of the former Clones Union Workhouse, c. 500m south of the Clones graveyard and Round Tower (O'Donovan; Licence Ref.: 12E0262). Coffined burials were discovered in one of the new foundation trenches at the rear (eastern) of the site during the construction of the new building. The full excavation revealed a total of 26 *in situ* burials on the line of the required foundations. Of the 26 burials, the skeletons of 23 were removed or partially removed. At least two phases of burial were identified. Phase 1 burials were interred in mass burials pits, measuring c. 2.5m<sup>2</sup> and containing up to eight burials. These were left *in situ* as far as was practicable. Phase 2 burials were stratigraphically later and were characterised as single inhumations or burials, not interred in burial pits. A minimum number of 35 individuals was recovered from the site. This comprised 17 non-adults and 18 adults, the latter of which included seven males and four females. Identified pathologies included indicators of considerable metabolic disorders (scurvy, cribra orbitalia, Harris lines), as well as degenerative joint disease and dental disease.

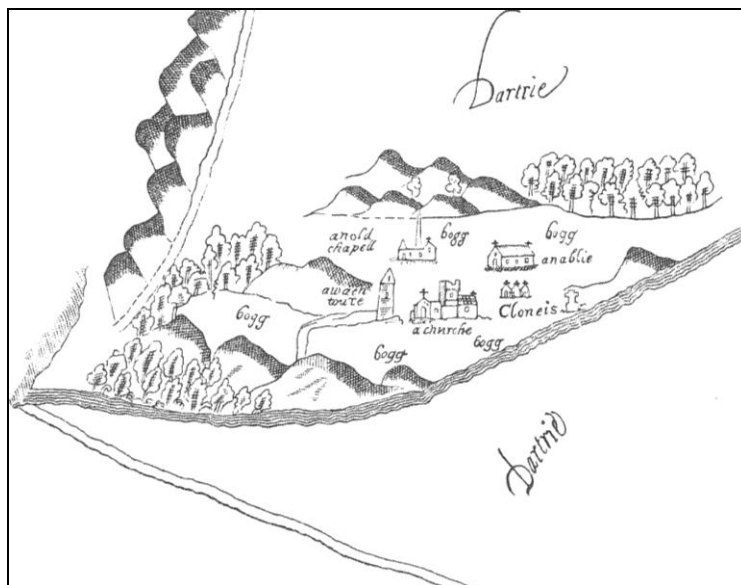
Other investigations in the area which did not produce anything of archaeological significance included further testing at Cara Street adjacent to the Round Tower (Clarke 2001; Licence Ref.: 01E0869), testing at Fermanagh Street, close to the High Cross (O'Carroll; Licence Ref.: 04E0531), testing at Analore Street (Gahan 2006;

Licence Ref.: 06E0488) and testing at 98 Avenue (Delaney 2006b; Licence Ref.: 06E0608).

### 3.5 CARTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

A number of historic cartographic sources have survived for Clones. These provide invaluable detail on elements of early medieval Cones which have since disappeared.

#### A Plot of Cloneyes an Abbey in McMahan Countrey c. 1591



**Figure 7:** A Plot of Cloneyes an Abbey in McMahan Countrey c. 1591 (published in Shirley 1879, 173)

Clones is depicted as a cluster of ecclesiastical buildings on an area of dry ground surrounded on all sides by ground annotated as 'bogg'. The site is further fringed by a river which swings around the southern boundary of the site, running from northeast to southwest. Drumlins or ridgelines are shown to the west and north with forested areas to the northeast and southwest. The overall area is annotated as 'Dartrie' while the settlement is annotated as 'Cloneis'. A substantial road or boundary runs from southeast to northwest in the southern half of the map, south of Clones and the river.

The buildings at Clones are depicted as entirely ecclesiastical with no sign of domestic residences or any other industry or agricultural activity evident. A road which runs roughly along the current location of Cara Street leads to Clones from the southwest. The Round Tower is depicted where this road terminates. The tower is annotated as 'awatch toure'. A small rectangular window is depicted c. 2/3rds up the tower while the conical roof is still intact. Immediately to the east of the tower a large church is depicted with its western doorway orientated on the tower. This building is annotated as 'a churche'.

Though crudely rendered, the draftsman has captured a number of interesting features. The church building can be divided into three portions; the western portion

contains a high, Romanesque arched doorway in its gable and appears to be unroofed. Though unclear, it appears that there is the slight suggestion of projecting antae shown at the northwestern corner of the building. This is a feature particular to early medieval Irish churches and would be very much associated with an arched doorway of the type shown. It could be suggested, therefore, that the eastern portion represents the partial survival of an early church that may have been contemporary with the tower. A high rectangular tower is shown adjoined to the western portion. This tower appears to be set back or corbelled at the level of the roof of the western portion with a square headed window shown in the upper floor with a potentially corbelled, crenellated wall walk at the top. The final portion of the church, presumably the chancel, adjoins the tower to the east. This portion is shown as roofed and the roofline is depicted as slightly lower than the eastern portion of the church. In all, the church is very reminiscent of Saint Doulagh's in Kinsealy, County Dublin, a church which retains a section of early 12th-century (Gaelic Irish) construction, to which has been added a 15th century tower and extension (Figure 8).

A collection of connected cells is shown to the east of the church. It is unclear what these enigmatic structures may depict. Perhaps these are old corbelled cells, which seems unlikely, or perhaps it is a clumsy rendering of a dilapidated cruciform structure with three upstanding gables. Alternatively, this may represent a baptistery over a holy well, though no such feature is known from the area. The 'Wee Abbey' (MO011-010001) is depicted as a large, simple rectangular church without a chancel or any attendant structures, cloisters or enclosures. This church retains its roof and is presumably in use for some purpose or other at this time.



**Figure 8:** Saint Doulagh's Church, Kinsealy, County Dublin c. 1860–1883 (National Library of Ireland STP\_0240)

An 'old chapell' is depicted to the northwest in the vicinity of the current Saint Tiernach's Church. This chapel is shown without a roof. A small road appears to run north from this chapel towards the hills beyond. A high cross can be seen to the east of the settlement, close to the river at a presumed fording point and approach to the

site from the east. This is perhaps the original location for at least some elements of the cross now situated in the Diamond.

#### Laurence and Robert Jackson Down Survey Map, Barony of Dartry 1657

Very little detail relating to the town of Clones can be discerned on this mapping. 'Clonish Castle and Fort' is annotated and what appears to be a star-shaped fort and a tower house are depicted with an indistinct scatter of smaller buildings shown surrounding these. No specific features relating to the early medieval or later medieval monastery at Clones is apparent.

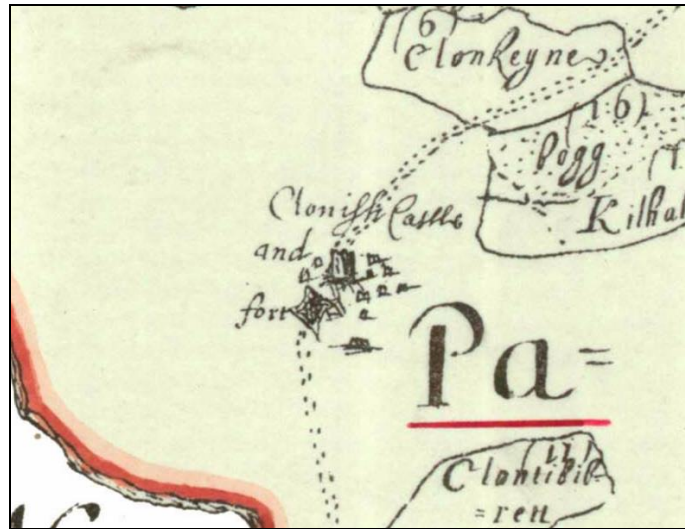


Figure 9: Extract from the Down Survey Barony of Dartry 1657

#### A View of Clones, anno 1741

This is a very detailed representation of Clones in the mid-18th century. The view is dominated by the Round Tower which has lost its conical roof. The lintel over the eastern window on the upper floor is also absent. The door of the tower is visible from this perspective and the graveyard boundary abuts the tower at its southern side in the same place as the present wall. This boundary, however, does not appear to be a wall and the significant drop in ground level from the eastern side of the tower (within the graveyard) to the western side is not apparent. The graveyard is depicted in roughly its modern shape. The House-shaped Shrine (MO011-010004) is depicted in its current location, while, interestingly, a potential second shrine is depicted close to the current entrance to the graveyard, orientated north-south. A number of graves are also shown to the east of the Round Tower. The curving southern boundary of the graveyard is visible while a dense, enclosed area of planting, possibly an orchard, is shown abutting the boundary to the south.

While an open space is shown in the location of Ball Alley, this does not appear to open onto Maccurtain Street, rather, there is a suggestion that the boundary to the graveyard continues to the east to encompass the ruined 'Wee Abbey' and its associated graveyard. A small structure, possibly a cottage, is shown occupying the current location of the northern boundary wall at Ball Alley.

The river is still evident to the south of the town while the principal thoroughfare seems to run southwest–northeast, leading to the Diamond, where the High Cross has been installed. The town is overlooked by the motte and Saint Tighernach’s Church.



**Figure 10:** Detail from A View of Clones, anno 1741 (published in Elmes 1975, 84)

#### First Edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey Map, 1837, scale 1:10560

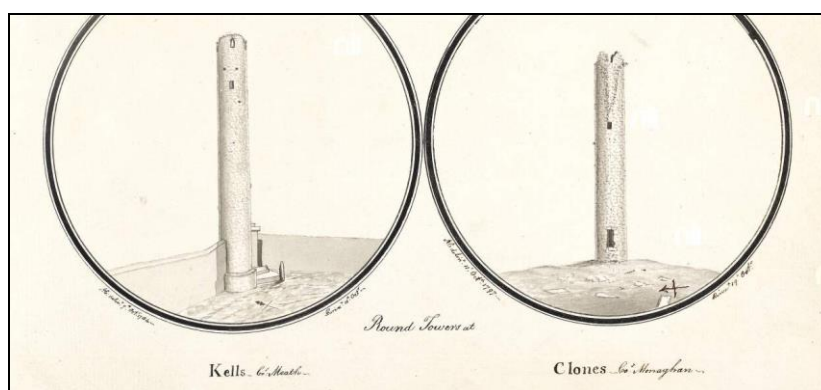
This is the first accurate historic mapping coverage of Clones. The town is shown as a well-developed nucleus clustered around the Diamond and the market cross with the graveyard and Round Tower occupying the southern fringes of the town. The graveyard is shown depicted very close to its current ground plan with yards and outbuildings abutting it to the north and garden areas and orchards abutting the southern and western sides, right up to the Round Tower. The beginnings of the laneway which currently runs outside of the southern boundary of the graveyard can be seen. The House-shaped Shrine is not depicted. The river depicted on earlier mapping is shown as a stream which has been partly culverted. The intended line of the Ulster Canal is dotted east–west to the south of the town. The surrounding landscape is characterized by small lakes, including Cloneen Lough, and it is bisected in Cloolnalong by the Finn River.

#### Ordnance Survey Map, 1909, scale 1:2500

This mapping shows the graveyard in its current form with the laneway to the south depicted. A number of outbuildings are shown abutting, and immediately to the south, of the graveyard. A smithy is annotated immediately north of the graveyard on Ball Alley which is depicted and annotated. The Round Tower is shown with the graveyard boundary wall abutting the tower to the north and south as per the present day. A small rectangular field or yard is shown immediately west of the tower. A very small rectangular structure is shown built against the graveyard wall to the south of the tower. This feature is not visible on other mapping and the area is currently heavily overgrown. This feature may survive onsite, currently inaccessible. The High Cross is depicted in its current location and the benchmark is annotated at the cross base. The Ulster Canal is depicted to the south of the town.

### 3.6 PICTORIAL ANALYSIS

A detailed representation of the Round Tower at Clones dating to c. 1797 was drawn by the antiquarian Austin Cooper and published in a book of drawings alongside depictions of other towers. It has been noted that the date of this drawing (1797) is significantly later than the dates noted for other drawings in Cooper's book and there is a possibility that this date is erroneously late. Cooper's depiction of the Round Tower illustrates two important chronological pieces of evidence. Firstly, the lintel, currently in place above the eastern window at the summit of the tower, is not depicted on Cooper's drawing. A growth of ivy is shown beneath the window suggesting that, at this time, the tower was not being maintained. The wall itself is likely to post-date 1797 given that a depiction of the tower by Austin Cooper, dated to this year, shows the Round Tower unencumbered with adjoining walls, while Cooper accurately depicts the Kells tower adjoined to later walls (Figure 11).



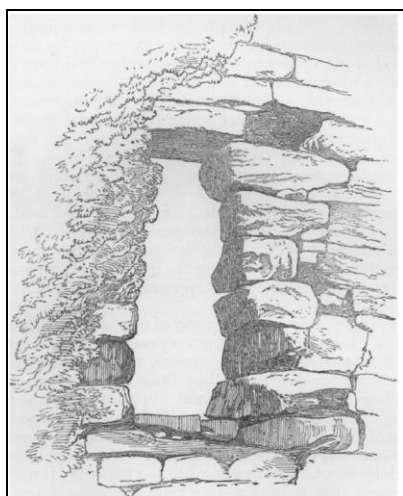
**Figure 11:** Austin Cooper's depiction of Kells Round Tower (left) and Clones Round Tower (right) c. 1797 (published in Lennox Barrow 1979, 171–172.)

Wakeman's drawing of the tower shares many parallels with Cooper's though executed almost a century later (Figure 12). Wakeman shows the tower clad in a heavy growth of ivy and without the lintel to the upper storey window. The graveyard walls abutting the tower are shown and the level of the ground surface relative to the doorway is very high, much higher than is the case today. The lintelled doorway is also visible. Wakeman also provides a close-up drawing of the doorway but this version shows an unstable looking doorframe and a very short lintel with a stone absent to the right of the lintel (Figure 13). The reason for this discrepancy between his two drawings, published in the same article, is unclear.





**Figure 12:** Round Tower of Clones, Co. Monaghan (Wakeman 1874, 328)



**Figure 13:** Lintelled doorway of Round Tower at Clones (Wakeman 1874, 329)

A photograph from the Lawrence collection held by the National Library of Ireland shows the tower sometime close to 1900 with the upper window reconstructed and a scar from the removal of ivy evident (Figure 14). Interestingly, this image shows the graveyard under a growth of heavy bush c. 1m high with only the upper parts of some memorials visible above the vegetation. A slight base batter is evident on the western side of the tower. The doorway appears in good condition and the lintel solid.



**Figure 14:** Round Tower, Clones, Co. Monaghan by Robert French, c. 1865–1914  
(Lawrence Photograph Collection L\_CAB\_08614)

Several late 19th- and early 20th-century photographs of the High Cross at Clones are also held in the National Library of Ireland (Figure 15). As discussed above, these images show to what extent the cross had eroded in the succeeding years and allow for a close dating of the wrought iron railings which currently surround the monument.



**Figure 15:** High Cross at Clones c. 1900 (National Library of Ireland WEL29)

### 3.7 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Inspection of the aerial photographic coverage for Clones area held by the Ordnance Survey, Google Earth and Bing Maps was undertaken with the goal of identifying any features of archaeological potential surrounding the site of the monastery. Inspection of the aerial photographic coverage did not reveal any previously unidentified archaeological features. The area to the west of the Round Tower, currently the

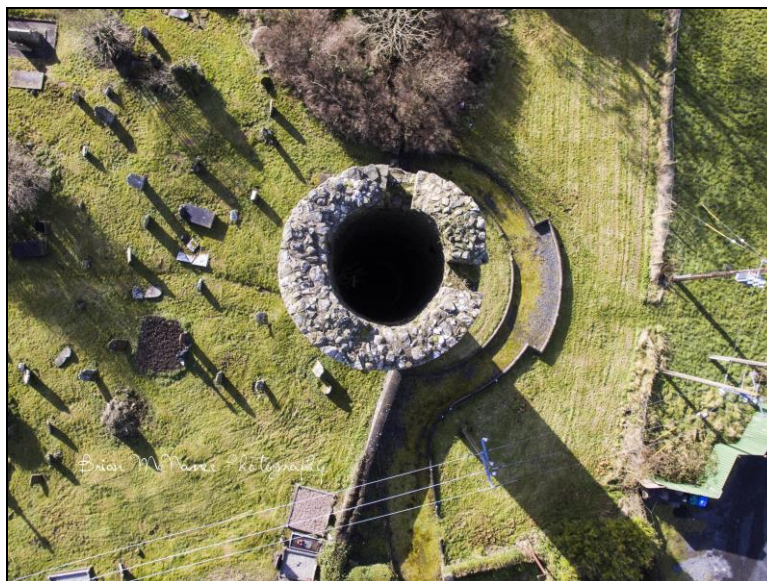
location of the Tower View housing development, can be seen on the 1995 photography as greenfield. By 2000, this area has been levelled and is covered in a yard of tarmac or some such hardstand.



**Figure 16:** Extract from CUCAP: ASV061

The Cambridge University Aerial Photographic Archive (CUCAP) was also consulted. While no previously unidentified features of archaeological potential were identified, the arching concrete and gravel path immediately west of the Round Tower was visible in a photo taken in 1967, providing a latest possible date for this feature (Figure 16).

During the consultation/workshop associated with the project at the Cassandra Hand centre, there was much discussion of an aerial photograph dating to the 1970s or '80s which shows the graveyard with a noticeable parch mark, a rectangular shape in the presumed location of the original early Christian stone church.



**Figure 17:** Drone photograph of Round Tower (Brian McNamee Photography)

Local Drone photographs provided by Brian MacNamee Photography, show detail of the upper portions of the tower and give an appreciation of the width of the walls in the upper portion of the tower (Figure 17). No previously unidentified features are visible in this photography.



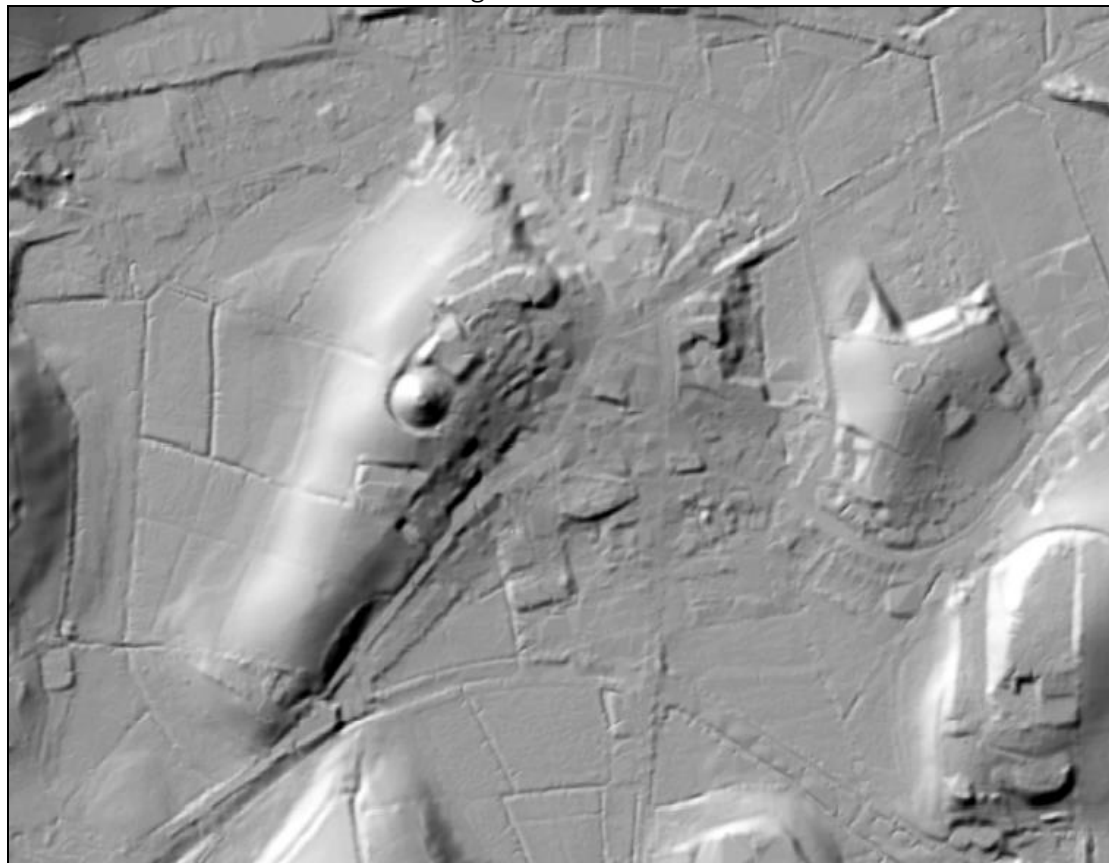
**Figure 18:** Oblique drone photograph of Round Tower and graveyard (Brian McNamee Photography)

An oblique drone image in low sun highlights a sunken linear east–west running feature in the southern portion of the graveyard (Figure 18). A number of uneven

shapes and humps are visible to the east and west of this feature though no pattern is discernible to these.

### 3.8 LIDAR AND TOPOGRAPHICAL IMAGING

The available LiDAR data for Clones shows urban topography around the town and sharp natural slopes running from north to south. No clear evidence of any unknown earthworks or features of archaeological interest were identified.



**Figure 19:** LiDAR imagery of Clones and surrounding environment

### 3.9 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY/HERITAGE

Clones is located within the townland of Crossmoyle. The surrounding townlands consist of Largy, Carn, Teehill, Clonboy and Legarhill. These townlands are located within the parish of Clones, Barony of Dartry, County Monaghan.

#### 3.9.1 Place Name Analysis

Townland and topographic names are an invaluable source of information on topography, land ownership and land use within the landscape. They also provide information on history, archaeological monuments and folklore of an area. A place name may refer to a long forgotten site, and may indicate the possibility that the remains of certain sites may still survive below the ground surface. The Ordnance Survey surveyors wrote down townland names in the 1830s and 1840s, when the entire country was mapped for the first time. Some of the townland names in the study area are of Irish origin and through time have been anglicised. The main reference used for the place name analysis is *Irish Local Names Explained* by P.W

Joyce (1869). A description and possible explanation of each townland name in the environs of Clones are provided below.

Crossmoyle, *An Chrois Mhaol* in Irish, meaning the ‘cross or crossroads of the bare (derelict) flat-topped hillock’ (Joyce 1869 Vol 1, 338). Also recorded as Crefole (AD 1621), Crasmole (AD 1623), Grossmoyle (AD 1629), Crossmoyle (AD 1641), Crossmolye (AD 1738; 1821; 1833), *cros maol* (‘bald cross’) (AD 1833) (Logainm.ie). Clones, *Cluain Eois* in Irish, meaning ‘the meadow of Eois’, purported to be a pagan chief who raised a great fort, which may indicate an earlier pre-monastic phase of settlement and likely refers to the hill overlooking the town and the site of the later Anglo-Norman castle motte (Joyce 1869, Vol. 1, 233–4; Farmer 1987; Flanagan and Flanagan 1994, 192). However, Ó Dufaigh suggested an alternative meaning as meadow of the hilltop, as the early root of the name, *uas* or *uais* may be related to an un-glossed Old Irish topographical feature similar to the Old Welsh *awch* meaning ‘tip or point’ (1960–1, 6). The placename is variously recorded as Cluain Auis (*Book of Armagh*) and Cluain Auiss (AU), Cluain Eois (AD 1022, AU), Clonooyes (AD 1302–6), Cloeaineoys (AD 1429), Cluayneis (AD 1430–1), Clunos, Cluenoys (AD 1471), Clandaedha (15th century – CPL IX, 91), Clayndacyga (15th century – CPL XI, 220), Cunaci (15th century – CPL XI, 550), Clancha (15th century – Reg. Oct. 124). Cloineiyis (AD 1550), Chloonys Moanaster (AD 1610), Clonishe (AD 1623), Cluín Eoais, easpcop Cluana hEoais (AD 1636), Clonish/Clonish (AD 1659), Clones (AD 1793, AD 1835) (ibid., 6; Logainm.ie). An alternative placename associated with St Eachaidh of Drumard, a forgotten saint, alluded to in the 15th-century Papal records (Ó Dufaigh 1960–1, 8).

### 3.9.2 Cultural Heritage Sites


The term ‘cultural heritage’ can be used as an over-arching term that can be applied to both archaeology and architecture. However, it also refers to more ephemeral aspects of the environment, which are often recorded in folklore or tradition or possibly date to a more recent period. No individual sites have been identified that could be defined as purely Cultural Heritage. However, a tradition does exist that the Clones was the scene of a battle during the time of Eoin Roe O’Neill (MacMahon 1937) and also the location of a pubic hanging in 1798 (ibid.).

### 3.9.3 Folklore

A number of traditions survive in Clones which are associated with the monastery and the early medieval monuments of the town. Potentially the most repeated relates to the House-shaped Shrine, which, given its uniqueness, has given rise to an evolved tradition about its former uses. The crux of the tradition is encapsulated in the mid-19th-century account recorded during the excavations at the Round Tower. It is reproduced below. The ritual described brings to mind the quick lime sarcophagus of Cashel, also 12th-century in date:

Among the tombs, in the burying-ground near the tower, is shown that of the McMahan family, once the powerful chieftains of this part of Ireland. The top of the sepulchre, which is above ground, is very heavy, and shaped like the roof of a house, with inscriptions on each of the sloping sides. The mode of sepulture, according to the tradition of the country, was curious. When the body of any of the family was brought hither for

interment, it was taken out of the coffin and deposited in the tomb, and the empty coffin was buried in a separate place. A quantity of lime was then thrown over the body for the purpose of consuming it, and the roof of the tomb replaced, until it was taken off to admit another tenant. On pursuing the inquiry, it was stated by several intelligent persons, that the name of the family was MacDonnell, not McMahan, and that on several occasions the right of interment here had been litigated by parties claiming to be the lineal descendants of the original party. The bones found in the stone coffin, when a fresh interment is to be made, are carefully removed, and, being afterwards placed in a wooden coffin, wherein the recent body was brought to the graveyard, are buried near the stone sepulchre. Several men who were in the crowd at the examination of the tower, affirmed that they had witnessed an interment here, where all the ceremonies above-mentioned were strictly observed. It was considered the duty of the heir of the lately deceased person, after having cleared out the tomb by removing the bones, to raise the body of his relative, and, without any aid from others, to deposit it in its temporary resting-place. This occurred within the last fifteen years, [1842] but it is not expected that any other similar interment will take place, as the person considered as the last lineal descendant of the family, which claimed this honour, is believed to have died lately in Scotland (UJA, 1856).

Many entries from the schools' folklore collection contain references to historic Clones and the abbey is mentioned specifically in some of these, usually in association with a tunnel  which there are a great many tales:

It is said that a stone drops off the monastery every year and this is true as this can be seen and as a result of this the abbey is getting lower (Kearns 1937).

The tradition of the falling stones is repeated in the below transcript, this time with a prophecy attached:

Outside Clones, there is the crumpled ruin of a round-tower. Near the top is a small window. It is said that when the people of Clones saw the Danes coming. They ran and hid valuables – books and gold Chalices here, and as these savage barbarians had no ammunition they could not enter the Tower.

Near the Tower stand the ruins of a monastery and Church. The foundation of the monastery is still to be seen. It is said to have been founded by St. Tigernach, and it is commonly believed that when the last stone of this monastery falls, the end of the world will be near (Anon 1937).

## 4 ASSESMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.1 HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Examination of each of the elements that make up the whole of an historic place provides a wider perspective and context for the whole site. This assessment of significance is based on the various elements which distinguish Clones as a special place and an analysis of the combination of these various elements and the ways in which they combine.

#### 4.1.1 Clones as a sacred place of great antiquity

Clones is a site of significant antiquity with over 1000 years of Christian burial practice visible and evidence to suggest that it provided a focus for continuing Christian worship from the early Christian period. The place retains a sense of serenity, peace and tranquillity, despite an extensively urban surrounding. Architectural aspects of the 10th–12th-century monastery still remain *in situ* relative to each other, whilst other aspects are preserved and displayed *ex situ* in the town.

#### 4.1.2 Rich documented history

Clones has a substantial, rich and important ecclesiastical history, which is tied into the region and the Diocese, with numerous documentary references from the Annals and later medieval taxation and census data, directly relating to the town, enabling a detailed chronology to be compiled (Table 1). Toponymy (placename) evidence is significant and insightful in both confirming the presence of early Christian worship in the vicinity, and linking the site directly to an 8th-century secular ruler or topographical feature, *Eois*, rather than the founding Saint.

#### 4.1.3 Vibrant Folklore

Continuity of early Christian veneration of St Tighernach in the regional traditions of the area, can be best characterised by his continued association to the town, the main Roman Catholic church, the High Cross, graveyard and shrine. Numerous pictorial references occur in the significant and unique collection of 18th-century carved gravestones that show a skull, cross-bones, bell and bible or alternatively an hour-glass. St Tighernach is depicted as one of the four main patrons of the County (alongside Sts Ceara, Dymrna and MacArtan), in a Harry Clarke stained glass window of St Joseph's church, Carrickmacross. In addition, local traditions surrounding the House-shaped Shrine and the McMahon and McDonnell families still excites debate in Clones.

## 4.2 ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTIC SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.2.1 House-shaped Shrine – International Significance

The Clones House-shaped shrine is a recorded monument (MO011-02004) as recognised by the National Monuments Acts 1939–2004 and is designated as a protected structure (Monaghan County Council RPS 2) in the County Monaghan Development Plan 2013–2017. It was carved from a single solid block of hard red/buff sandstone, similar to the stone used in the Abbey church (MO02-001001). The




interior was described as hollow, the exterior is aligned east–west and measures 1.86m in length, 0.7m in width, and 0.92m in height, and unlike the Gable-shrines of Co. Kerry it is conceivably long enough to contain an outstretched adult inhumation (White-Marshall and Walsh 2005, 55). Originally a solid hollow-block, but split in two in antiquity.

The Clones stone shrine is, however, unique in design and decoration, and Ó Floinn has paralleled the ‘butterfly finials’, at each end of the sarcophagus roofline, to the two semi-circular gold finials, with animal and interlacing patterns, from a (now-lost) wood and metal-panelled Irish shrine of similar size, now in the Museum of St Germain-en-laye, France (Crawford 1923, 93 [No. 7]v; Ó Floinn 1994, 15 Pl9; 25, Pl12). The eastern gable has decoration of a figure with out-stretched arms and a triangular head covering, probably a mitre (A Bishop?); the south face contains two animal heads just below the eaves, of grotesque form similar to carvings on the round tower of Ardmore and an unintelligible sculpture; north and western faces are plain (Wakeman 1975, 32–4). The Romanesque grotesque style of the oval heads on the northeastern roof are the primary stylistic evidence for dating the monument to the Romanesque period and by-association the Augustinian remodelling of the site before AD 1140 (Harbison 1999; Ó Carragáin *pers comm.*; Bourke 2005). The faint and badly-weathered carvings have been interpreted as scenes from the Life of St Tighernach, and ‘Samson toppling the pillar’ and have been compared to the High Cross at Monasterboice (Harbison 1999, 14–15). In addition, to the 18th century graffiti carved into both sides of the roof, diagonal lines in the northeastern upper roof are natural striations of the bedrock. The graffiti is believed to be related to two local 18th-century families, that both laid claim to the sacred burial space beneath the shrine, appropriating the shrine by carving an inscription – the name subsequently erased by their rival (Wakeman 1975, 34; Harbison 1999, 12).

The origins of the house-shrines and tombs lay in the Late Antique period, where Mediterranean examples of rectangular open-air stone mausolea known as *cella memoriae* were used to house the bones of the Saints to be venerated in public rituals (White-Marshall and Walsh 2005, 55). Examples from Europe are ornate gold and jewelled boxes, such as the French Limoges *chasses* or the German St Heribert’s shrine, at Deutz Cathedral, Cologne. Irish tombs or house-shaped reliquaries resembled early wooden churches with steep sided hipped roofs, and ridges ending in curiously shaped finials, and early forms are known either in wood and bronze, or depicted in the Book of Kells and even as many of the capstones of stone High Crosses. It has been suggested these were attempted representations of the Temple at Jerusalem, such as the Clonmacnoise Model of Solomon’s Temple, stolen in AD 1129. However, St Tighernach’s Shrine as a large decorated early Romanesque solid stone sarcophagus, would appear to be unique in European Christian art and architecture and of international significance.



The Annals made specific mention of the shrines of important saints throughout the early Christian period, from AD 784[789] to AD 1293, but make only occasional reference to the composite materials and mostly when it concerns coverings of gold or silver (AD 796[801], 799[800], 1166, 1170) (Crawford 1923, 79–81). The 7th-

century *Life of St Brigid* made reference to a shrine ‘adorned with a reined protrusion of gold, silver, gems and precious stones’ placed by the main altar at Kildare, in which contained the remains of St Brigid and Archbishop Conlaed (Ó Floinn 1994, 15). A total of three reliquary shrines are noted from Co. Monaghan: the *Dumnach Airgird* (see below) from Clones, the Cross of Clogher, (originally from Gewalt or Toora), in St MacArtan’s  minary, Monaghan town and one near Donaghmoyne (carried off by foreigners in AD 830) (Crawford 1923, 76, 79, 155). Harbison (1999, 12–16) believed the sarcophagus was a skeuomorph or a stone copy of the (earlier) composite metal and wood precursors, and dated it to the early 12th century, based exclusively on stylistic comparisons of the carved figures; an interpretation generally agreed with by most commentators despite relatively little recent attention (Ó Carragáin and Ó Floinn *pers comm.*).

The nearest Irish comparative example of a similar size is at Banagher, Co. Londonderry, an undated masonry shrine of similar size, but devoid of decoration, possibly also at Saul, Co. Down and a fragmentary example from Slane, Co. Meath (Wakeman 1975, 34; Harbison 1999, 16). A number of much-smaller, plain undecorated stone slab structures known as Gable Shrines are particularly common in the west of Ireland e.g. Termon, Co. Clare, Killabuonia or Illaunloughan Island (off Valentia Island), Co. Kerry. The latter dated by excavation to the 8th–9th century (Manning 1995, 33; White-Marshall and Walsh 2005, 61–6). Wakeman (1975, 32) paralleled the shrine with the shrine of St Ethelreda, in Ely Cathedral, and other examples from the St Ninnian’s Island, Orkney and Scotland, the corner-post shrines, may also be from a distant but related tradition with the Pictish sarcophagus of St Andrews (Foster 1998).

#### 4.2.2 Standing Structures - National Significance

The Round Tower (National Monument No.: 111; MO011-010003) comprises a cylindrical slightly tapering structure, the top partially truncated at the fifth floor level, missing its conical roof and three windows. It has four opes at the top level but parts of these along with the conical roof are now missing. It measures c. 40m in height, c. 4.5m in diameter, with an east-facing doorway, positioned c. 3.5m above the plinth. Originally it had five floors, with the second, third and fourth floor lit by a single small quadrangular ope. There are written references to fire damage on the lower masonry stonework, with some evidence of surface heat-cracking but there is no visual evidence of discolouration (O’Keeffe 2004, 141). Archaeological excavation discovered human remains beneath the floor during works in the 19th century (*JRSAI* 1875, 327–40). The Round Tower was said to have a ‘decided inclination toward the north’ in the late 19th-century account which also recorded the loss of the conical roof cap, shown in the AD 1591, *Plan of Cloneys*, which also shows the original location of a High Cross by the ‘banks of the stream to the east of the monastic buildings’ (Shirley 1879, 168).

Clones Round Tower is one of only two such monuments in Co. Monaghan, located at either end of the county, the other being Innishkeen, though Clones is significantly larger. However, it forms part of a cluster of four surrounding—probably later—sites near the Lough Erne system at Devenish, Co. Fermanagh, Tomregan and Drumlane,

Co. Cavan. Clones Round Tower was dated on architectural grounds to shortly before AD 1100—the plain flat-headed windows and opes predate later more elaborate examples. The elevated door is not seen at Scatterry or Downpatrick, which may therefore be earlier precursors, however, Clones remains significant as one of the most complete examples of early architecture of the period.

The High Cross (National Monument No.: 111; MO011-010005; NIAH Ref.: 41304037) contains two conjoined (head and base/shaft) *ex situ* 9th- or 10th- century sandstone High Cross fragments creating a single composite Market Cross. The High Cross stands 4.57m in height with a stepped stone-built plinth and is part of the important Ulster group of high crosses. However, the iconography and art-style of the head resembles the Midlands/Leinster High Cross style of the mid-late 9th century. Now located at the top of the Diamond, its original location is unknown, but may have been near the stream and/or associated with the sarcophagus (see section 4.2.1). The two component parts do not fit or belong together. The artwork shows a combination of simple geometric designs on the sides and the faces have depictions from the Old Testament, including ‘Daniel in the Lions’ Den’, ‘The Sacrifice of Isaac’, ‘Adam and Eve/The Fall of Man’, ‘The Adoration of the Magi’, ‘The Wedding at Cana’ and ‘The Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes’. Harbison (1992, 274) believed the Cross head to be later than the shaft, and contained a depiction of the Crucifixion (1992, 274; 45-7; No. 48/49).

The Abbey Church: (National Monument No.: 111; RMP Ref.: MO011-020001), is the only surviving upstanding medieval building. The church is still known locally as ‘the Wee Abbey’. The church building is a rectangular, single bay, gabled drystone church, aligned east–west, measuring 12.9m in length x 6.3m in width. There is no other fabric visible or any evidence of a masonry scar for the ‘stone-walled’ cloister referred to in AD 1587. The church is early-Romanesque and quite plain in style and decoration, and can be dated to the 12th century (Lalor 1999, 205). One significant, possibly unique, feature is a small image of a high cross carved in high relief at waist height on the northern external wall, c. 1m from the north-eastern corner of the church (Wakeman 1975, 32) (Plate 36).

#### 4.2.3 18th-Century Headstones – Regional Artistic Significance

The collection of 18th-, 19th- and 20th-century decorated gravestones are of particular interest from an artistic and archaeological perspective and provide an important complete local collection with nuanced variation in style, iconography and style worthy of preservation. The earliest headstone is dated to 1708 (Clerkin 2009) and many of the memorials exhibit themes paralleled in the graveyard surrounding the ‘Wee Abbey’. The collection of early 18th-century Skull and Crossbones discoid headstones, with the iconography of a coffin, handbell and reliquary also shown as a bible or hour-glass, likely to be a representative of St Tighernach, also continued into the Abbey graveyard, surrounding the church of St Peter and Paul, and is unique to the town and the County. Similar examples of high relief sculpture are found elsewhere in the County including Clontibret, Tydavnet, Errigal Truagh and Old Donagh (historicgraves.com).

The majority of the gravestones are in a stable condition, the decorations are clearly discernible and all are easily accessible. A number have been damaged or broken in antiquity. Many of the slabs are leaning, generally forwards due to the looser compaction of the soil within the grave they are marking. These leans should not be corrected as they contribute to the historic character of the site.

### 4.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

#### 4.3.1 Multiple Features are National Monuments and Recorded Monuments of High Significance

Clones Round Tower, (old) Church and High Cross are National Monuments (No.s 111 and 112) and represent three of the six listed National Monuments in County Monaghan in the ownership of the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The present St Tighernach's church (MO011-010006), the 1696 inscribed stone (MO011-010007), St Tighernach's (medieval) graveyard (MO011-010003), shrine (MO011-010004), (undated) burials from Ball Alley (MO011-010010) and corner of McCurtain Street (MO011-010009) are all archaeological sites of historical significance listed on the Record of Monuments and Places. They are therefore subject to statutory legal protection and advance notice is required prior to any ground-works or conservation works. There is a high potential for surviving sub-surface archaeological deposits, soils, features or artefacts to exist due to lack of any significant development or excessive disturbance from burials.

#### 4.3.2 Artefacts Associated with the Site

One of most significant artefacts associated with Clones is the shrine of St Patrick's Gospels, known as the *Domnach Airgird* in Irish meaning 'Silver Church', which is also mentioned in the Annals as being inscribed with the name John O'Carbry, Coarb of Clones, and given to St Mac Carten of Clogher in AD 1353 (AFM; Shirley 1879, 167). The wooden box-shrine has gilt-silver and bronze panels depicting the three apostles, Archangel Michael and Virgin and Child, Saints Columba, Brigit and Patrick, and Patrick giving the bible to Mac Carten. It was made by John O'Bardan, but commissioned by the Abbot of Clones, John O'Carbry. It was recently described as 'a splendid exercise in medieval retro...not just an antique: it is a very deliberate display of self-conscious antiquity' by O'Toole (2013) and is dated to the mid-14th century, but was a remodelling of the elements from the 8th century. The front contains a large worn bronze crucifix, with a rock crystal above.

Of particular interest is a local tale from the time of the Reformation that recounts how the Bell of Clones Abbey was removed—reputedly the finest in all Ireland at the time and fashioned in silver—for its protection from the abbey. However, having only reached half-way across the lake the bell was thrown from the boat, near Legar Hill, in order to avoid it 'falling into enemy hands'. Furthermore, a pure-silver tongue believed to be from the Bell was apparently discovered by a labourer in a trench and subsequently melted down (Wakeman 1875, 36).

Analysis of the NMI Topographic Files show a number of prehistoric finds from the Bronze Age, and undated artefacts recovered from the general area around Clones (Table 3).

TABLE 3: Artefacts and stray finds (Source: National Museum of Ireland Topographic Files).

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	1933:759
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Clones
<b>PARISH</b>	Clones
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Ornamental Wooden Cauldron
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	1758m NE of Clones (Church)
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Ornamental Wooden Cauldron
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	1959:94
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Clones
<b>PARISH</b>	Clones
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Axehead
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	Unknown
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Bronze axehead. Small. Patinated. Rounded butt end, now slightly flattened, presumably by hammering. Widely splayed cutting edge. Side flanges but no stop-ridge. Length 8.5cm, width at cutting edge 5.5cm. Width at butt end 1.8cm. Max thickness 1.6cm.
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	1959:138
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Clones
<b>PARISH</b>	Clones
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Axehead
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	Unknown
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Socketed bronze axehead. Slightly splaying cutting edge and rectangular–oval socket-mouth. The socket mouth has a thickened rim for a depth of 1cm, below which, on one side, there is a loop. There are no cutting-ridges in its interior. Damaged on one side of the socket. Length 7.2cm, width at cutting edge 4.4cm. Socket mouth 3.9cm x 3.4cm (ext.).
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	AL/L/1963:1
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Clones
<b>PARISH</b>	Clones
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Gold Dress Fastener

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<b>FIND PLACE</b>	Unknown
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Gold dress fastener
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	1965:128
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Clones
<b>PARISH</b>	Clones
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Axehead
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	Unknown
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Flint axehead. Barbed-and-tanged. White flint. Tang and barb of equal length. Fine secondary working all over both wide faces. Pointed oval in cross-section. Length 3.1cm, width 2.3cm, thickness 3.5mm. Length of barb and tang 8mm.
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	1897:1271
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Carn
<b>PARISH</b>	Aghabog
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Axehead.
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	3 miles from Newbliss
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Stone axehead
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	RIA1908:2
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Carn
<b>PARISH</b>	Aghabog
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Axehead
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	3 miles from Newbliss
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Stone axehead
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	RIA1908:3
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Carn
<b>PARISH</b>	Aghabog
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Axehead.
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	Newbliss
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Stone axehead
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	RIA1908:4
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Carn

<b>PARISH</b>	Aghabog
<b>BARONY</b>	Dartree
<b>FIND</b>	Axehead or tool
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	Newbliss
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Stone axehead or tool. Oval in shape. Slightly wider at one end than the other. Rounded corners. Narrow end more pointed.
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

#### 4.4 SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE – HIGH

Of perhaps the most social significance to the town is the High Cross which is an integral part of the urban landscape of Clones, having presided over the Diamond since the mid-18th century and perhaps even before that. The cross, in its role as a Market Cross, encapsulates the former function of the Diamond as a dynamic trading place, central to the identity of the town. As a centre point to the Diamond, upon which all of the local public institutions front, the High Cross is of high social significance and is an extremely valuable heritage asset. The National Inventory of Architecture notes the fact that ‘a publicly accessible artefact at the heart of the town is a sign of the local regard for this rare piece of monumental stone sculpture that contributes immensely to the cultural heritage and identity of the town and the broader region of south Ulster’ (NIAH ref. 41304037). The High Cross is used in the crest of the Clones GAA club and Clones FC.

The Round Tower, while less central to the life of the town, is an important symbolic presence in a social sense, acting as a visual reminder of the ancient heritage shared by the inhabitants of the town.

The graveyard is significant to the local population given that it contains functioning plots tended by relatives and loved ones. The graveyard has been in use for burials throughout the 20th century and many of the graves are tended. The existing graveyard enclosure walls are not intrinsically important, although they are symbolically important in defining the modern graveyard.

A public consultation/workshop was held during the drafting of the Conservation Plan in the Cassandra Hand Centre, Ball Alley adjacent to the graveyard at Clones. The consultation enforced a sense of the public appreciation of, and the social significance of, the Round Tower, High Cross and, to a lesser extent, the House-shaped Shrine in the contemporary landscape.

#### 4.5 ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE – LOW

The habitat value of the graveyard and the hedgerows must be recognised as a component of the urban biodiversity of Clones, though its significance is limited given the small space and urban context. The central area of the site is dominated by grass or lawn which is tended periodically.

Flora

There are some stands of vegetation which have taken hold within the graveyard. The bole of a large ash tree which was felled some years ago occupies the centre of the graveyard and is currently surrounded by ash saplings and elder bushes.

Around the fringes of the site, notably in the southwest portion of the graveyard, a substantial growth of bramble, ash and elder bush has taken hold. While not identified within the graveyard precinct, buddleia was noted immediately to the south of the graveyard wall. It is imperative that this woody, pernicious species be prevented from establishing itself within the graveyard or on the graveyard wall.

Substantial ivy growth has established itself on the high stone walls along the northern boundary of the graveyard and the adjoining two-story stone walls of adjacent outbuildings. Ivy has significant wildlife value as a native, broadleaved evergreen and it provides cover and shelter for birds and bats. Ivy also functions as an important pollen source for pollinators in autumn. Control of ivy should be undertaken during the winter months only and it is illegal to disturb nesting birds.

A sparse, evenly spaced cover of ivy-leaved toad flax has colonised the exterior of the tower. Wall flora of this kind is not damaging to masonry and can add life and colour and interest to built structures.

### Fauna

The bramble, elder and ash undergrowth may provide home to larger mammals availing of the urban food source, notably foxes, though no dens were identified during the site visit.

The Round Tower provides a home for nesting birds including crows and pigeons. It is likely that bats are also present within the tower or within cracks in the masonry and in the higher adjoining graveyard boundary walls.

The less well-maintained areas can provide a valuable habitat that should not be entirely removed without due consideration for potential ecological impacts. All vegetation clearance should take due cognisance of the prohibitions on vegetation clearance during the nesting season.

Under the Wildlife Acts 1976–2000, all bats (10 species) and bat roosts are protected. All birds, nestlings and active nests are protected. Broad-scale spraying of herbicides is prohibited and hedge cutting/scrub removal etc. is only allowed from September to March.

Under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives a number of bats (e.g. Lesser Horseshoe Bat) and birds (e.g. Peregrine Falcon) are afforded protection. Adopted in 1992, the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. It forms the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy with the Birds Directive and establishes the EU



wide Natura 2000 ecological network of protected areas, safeguarded against potentially damaging developments.


## 5 ASSESSMENT OF CONSERVATION ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### 5.1 ISSUES AND VULNERABILITIES

#### 5.1.1 Erosion of the House-shaped Shrine


The most pressing and irreparable conservation issue with relation to the early Christian fabric at Clones is the erosion of the sandstone, through environmental agency, of the House-shaped Shrine within the graveyard. While the primary concern arising from the project workshop centred on the erosion to the High Cross, the House-shaped Shrine is a unique feature within the medieval Irish sculptural lexicon and is of international significance. To put this monument in context, there are over 230 surviving High Crosses in Ireland, in the region of 97 Round Towers in various states of preservation but only three potentially comparable examples of the House-shaped Shrine at Clones, and none exhibit the same level of decoration. Its carvings represent a snapshot of the early Romanesque style in Ireland and continuing loss of definition needs to be addressed in the short term.

#### 5.1.2 Erosion of the High Cross

Examination of historic photography of the High Cross illustrates that a significant amount of erosion of the sculpted features has taken place within the last century. The severity of this erosion can be seen also in the deteriorated condition of the 19th-century Ordnance Survey benchmark in the cross base. 

#### 5.1.3 Structural Fatigue at the Round Tower

As noted in the condition assessment, there is some cause for concern in relation to the structural integrity of the Round Tower. While the tower is generally in a good overall state of preservation, the lintel over the doorway has developed a significant crack. The crack runs through the centre of the lintel while two subsidiary fractures run from this and a small portion of the face of the stone has shorn away. The dominant crack has not been addressed in previous literature but photographic evidence shows this crack in evidence from at least as early as 1999.

The tower exhibits a slight but perceptible lean to the northwest. The base plinth visible on the west of the tower at the current ground level has been damaged with two of the large projecting plinth stones broken at the level of the tower wall. Due to a build-up of soil within the graveyard over successive centuries, the ground level to the east of the tower is c. 1m higher than that to the west. The weight of this soil is exerting pressure on the western boundary wall which is buckling under the resultant pressure. The weight of this soil is also applying an unevenly distributed pressure on the eastern side of the tower. This damage may have occurred due to pressure being exerted on the opposite side of the tower by the weight of the graveyard soil. 

#### 5.1.4 Inappropriate Interventions at Round Tower

The tower has seen a succession of repointing episodes with lime mortar and later with modern cement/concrete-based mortar. A rectangular area of cement to the south of the door opening marks the location of an earlier sign affixed to the exterior

of the tower. The western graveyard wall is fixed to the exterior of the tower. Due to failure of the wall, recent modern cement/concrete-based mortar has been applied to the emerging crack.


#### 5.1.5 Failure of retaining wall at graveyard

The bulging of the western graveyard wall to the north of the Round Tower suggests that this wall is in imminent danger of collapse. Without intervention, this wall will fail. Failure of this portion of the wall presents a threat to the stability of the soil abutting the wall. The integrity of graves would be at risk from a collapse, as would the integrity of archaeological deposits that have the potential to survive beneath the surface in this area.

Such a collapse would also have implications for the stability of the Round Tower, relieving/shifting the weight of the soil currently leaning against the eastern side of the tower. It is very difficult to assess these implications which could be minor, or more significant given the height and complexity of the monument.

## 5.2 POTENTIAL THREATS

### 5.2.1 Vehicular Interaction with High Cross

While the threat of a vehicular impact with the Clones High Cross is very low given the position of the High Cross within the Diamond, the wrought iron railing and the raised plinth, and the modern bollards fringing the pedestrian island of the Diamond, Clones experiences a significant amount of HGV pass-through and collision with such a vehicle would result in catastrophic damage to the monument. 

### 5.2.2 Damage to Subsurface Archaeology

Archaeological test excavations were carried out c. 50m to the west of the Round Tower in advance of the construction of Tower View Crescent in 2005 and did not identify any archaeology. These investigations, however, were limited to specific areas dictated by the nature of the development. The remaining greenspace immediately west of the Round Tower is within private ownership. The area possesses high potential for previously unrecorded subsurface archaeology to survive. This potential archaeology is at risk from ad hoc works or development, particularly given the prevalence of ESB poles in the area.

### 5.2.3 Anti-social Behaviour at the Graveyard

During the field visit to the graveyard, a number of broken beer bottles and the remnants of a small fire were visible close to the base of the Round Tower. A makeshift shelter was also observed within the small copse of elder bush and ash sapling that have grown up around the stump of the felled ash tree in the centre of the graveyard. While in a different bracket of activity entirely, the taking of refuge within the graveyard of a homeless person would need to be addressed by the relevant social services.

### 5.2.4 Erosion at Entranceway to Graveyard

The level of the gateway and access path from the east of the graveyard to the west appears to have caused some erosion of the ground surface. A distinct pathway can

be traced from the gateway in the west to the foot of the Round Tower. This pathway has been formed by pedestrian traffic at the site and has resulted in some erosion to the ground surface of the graveyard. If the visitor numbers to the site increase, there is potential for this erosion to increase.

### 5.2.5 Inadvertent Damage to Habitats of Protected Species

There is potential for the presence of protected bat, bird or insect species within the Round Tower and graveyard at Clones. Without identifying the habitats of such species that may be present, the potential remains for inadvertent damage or destruction of such.

## 5.3 RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS

### 5.3.1 House-shaped Shrine

There is almost no academic research to date on the artwork, art-style and iconography represented on Romanesque stone sarcophagi in Ireland. However, a number of passing comparisons by Wakeman (1875), Ó Floinn (1994) and Harbison (1999) provide an important basis for a comprehensive academic, art-historical and scientific analysis of the Clones sarcophagus. Despite availability of resources, the monument was not included in the ICON project (Discoveryprogramme.ie), when recently visiting Clones to record the High Cross, and only poor early pictographic and photographic records are currently available to scholars (*ibid.*, 15). Furthermore, no new insights or artistic interrogation of this work has taken place in nearly 20 years since Harbison's work (Harbison 1999, Ó Carragain and Ó Flíonn *pers comm.*). This is particularly apparent, given the uniqueness of the object, and the terminal decline in visibility of the carvings, either from human or natural agencies.

### 5.3.2 The Abbey Church and Round Tower

Round Towers are the subject of perhaps the most long-running academic discourse (Petrie 1845), however, it is no longer believed these monuments were either pagan, built as lookouts for Viking raiders or even are uniquely insular constructions. The monuments have been adopted and appropriated at various times, as important political symbols of identity and Nationalism (O'Keeffe 2004). Recent research into European and Middle Eastern contemporary architecture, archaeology and iconography by O'Keeffe (2004), Lalor (1999) and Stally (2000) has transformed our knowledge of these monuments in terms of possible function, chronology and agency. These monuments originally formed part of an ecclesiastical landscape, ceremonial ritual and sacred space, directly referencing the contemporary architecture of Jerusalem and Rome and incorporating other monuments such as churches, crosses and shrines, now lost. The early 10th-century Round Tower of Clones is currently located at the far western end of an 18th-century walled graveyard, containing a 12th-century sarcophagus and located 90m west of the 12th-century stone church—part of the Augustinian rebuilding of the monastery. The early Christian monuments and upstanding architectural fabric provides us with an incomplete chronological understanding of the changing form and symbology of the early Christian monastic landscape. Therefore, any attempt to interpret or explain the site form and layout must be cognisant of changing perceptions of monumental expression throughout time.

### 5.3.3 Subsurface Archaeology

Archaeological test excavations to the north and northeast of the graveyard have indicated that archaeological features and deposits have the potential to survive beneath the surface within the vicinity of the graveyard and Round Tower. The existence of features of archaeological potential beneath the surface, particularly in lands to the west of the Round Tower, is currently an unknown. Geophysical survey in this area has the potential to identify sub-surface features and to enhance the current available knowledge on the Abbey. A number of burials have been discovered during groundworks in close proximity to the graveyard indicating that burial practices once likely extended from the graveyard to the 'Wee Abbey' (see MO011-01009-10). Survival of further burials and archaeology to the north and northeast of the graveyard is also likely.

### 5.3.4 The Missing High Crosses of Clones

The recent 3D-photographic recording for the ICON project (Discoveryprogramme.ie) of the composite High Cross currently located at the top of Diamond, provides an important record of its art and inscriptions. What is not known is the original location of the two crosses (either inside or outside of Clones) from which the composite is now constructed. Early documents of monasteries, such as St Mullins, show the precinct was delineated by four crosses and an enclosing earthwork or *vallum*. A number of monasteries that became later medieval urbanised centres, contained a late market cross, often located at the formal entrance to the ecclesiastical precinct and, although providing the focus for medieval commerce, this was not its primary purpose or design. Excavation in advance of burial and/or conservation at the graveyard would facilitate the opportunity to undertake key-hole archaeological investigations that may assist in more accurate interpretation. Equivalent work at Clonmacnoise, during the conservation and removal of the High Crosses, revealed important evidence of a wooden precursor to the stone cross, alongside associated and later clerical burials (King 1997; forthcoming).

### 5.3.5 Early Medieval Irish Monasteries in Urban Settings and Settlement Patterns


From the current state of archaeological and historical geographical research, it is impossible to accurately define the full extent of the early Christian monastery or the later 12th-century Augustinian rebuild of Clones. The presence of adjacent excavated burials, outside the present graveyard walls of both urban burial grounds, indicates they are possibly medieval but also that the modern graveyards do not represent medieval extents. Surrounding topography, existing street pattern, and the cluster of medieval and early ecclesiastical sites provides tantalising indications of the extent and form of the early monastery. Currently, there is no evidence of an enclosing monastic precinct bank or wall, and although High Crosses often define the 'inner sanctum' of an early monastery, the Clones High Crosses are not in their original positions. A number of non-intrusive and/or intrusive archaeological techniques could be used to provide additional clarity. Traces of low enclosing earthworks, no longer visible above ground, have been successfully detected using non-intrusive techniques, such as ground penetrating radar and geophysical survey. Furthermore, the potential exists for further archaeological discoveries from assessment and careful monitoring of piecemeal development and new research.

### 5.3.6 A Community Catalogue of Gravestones

A comprehensive graveyard survey of the burial ground's important collection of decorated 18th-, 19th- and 20th-century graves inscriptions, location and condition was published by the Clogher History Society in 1988 but is not generally available (McMahon et al. 1988). Digitally updating this and making it openly accessible would prove invaluable as a research tool for historians, local studies and genealogical studies. An increasing number of Irish examples are now completed and digitally accessible, including several in Co. Monaghan (e.g. Annaghkilly, Camaghy, Donagh, Errigal Truagh, Gallagher and Tydavnet; see [www.historicgraves.ie](http://www.historicgraves.ie)). Surveys have been undertaken using non-intrusive basic technology of a GPS-enabled Smart phone with camera, with local communities being encouraged to assist in conducting archaeological surveys across the country (see Co. Laois and Co. Cork). Various models are possible for the results to be made available free online, for a fee or via local studies facilities.

## 5.4 TOURISM, INTERPRETATION AND SITE ACCESS

### 5.4.1 Inappropriate Interpretation

The current interpretive signage at the entrance to the graveyard is inappropriate. The text fails to convey the sense that the graveyard and Round Tower belong to a much larger complex encompassing the core of the town and including the High Cross. Interpretations linking the construction of Round Towers to Viking activity and their use as places of refuge and as strong rooms for valuables are foregrounded in the text. These interpretations are no longer acceptable in light of scholarly research over the past few decades. Similarly, the significance of the House-shaped Shrine is not convincingly communicated and reference to the connection with the 'Wee Abbey' is absent. This text should be replaced. 

### 5.4.2 Tourism Potential

Tourism to the Round Tower, House-shaped Shrine and High Cross is very difficult to quantify given that these are freely accessible structures within the town. While the conservation of the monuments at Clones is unlikely to see a direct benefit from an increase in tourism to the sites, raising the awareness of the significance of these features locally, nationally and internationally has the potential to provide increased revenue for the town and could be used as a justification for investment in remedial, maintenance or enhancement works at these monuments.

### 5.4.3 Site Access

The High Cross in the Diamond is fully and freely accessible and presents no impediment to people with disability. The graveyard and Round Tower are also accessible (though the Round Tower may not be entered) via a grassy pathway that exhibits some evidence of having been covered in tarmac at some stage in the past. The pathway transitions into a grassy trail between graves as the visitor progresses west. This trackway is unsuitable for wheelchair access. The site is deemed to be unsuited for compliance with disability access requirements. Proposals to improve disability access should be considered in the context of potentially adverse changes to the character of the site.

There are a number of informal car parking spaces available immediately to the north of the graveyard, to the side of the Tower Bar. This area is in use as a loading bay for the Tower Bar. There is also a small area of tended greenspace abutting the northern wall which is presumably in council ownership. These areas could be considered for the creation of a number of parking spaces dedicated to the graveyard and the Cassandra Hand centre.

## 5.5 PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE SETTING

### 5.5.1 Inappropriate Setting at House-shaped Shrine

The House-shaped Shrine is surrounded by a setting of non-local stone designed to enhance the context of the monument in the recent past. While there are no overly adverse effects of the granite kerbing and Liscannor(?) flags, the positing of the headstone-like slab bearing an inscription asserting that the shrine marks the burial place of St Tighernach is not appropriate. The slab makes no mention that the shrine actually dates to the 12th century and that the presence of burials within or beneath the shrine remains conjecture at present. In addition, this slab is set far too close to the monument and detracts from the setting of the monument, affecting the context and the visitor experience of the House-shaped Shrine as a free-standing, independent feature of international significance.

### 5.5.2 The Graveyard

Several issues affect the setting of the graveyard and the Round Tower. Primary among these are the overhead electrical wires which traverse the site and pass very close to the Round Tower. These wires have a distinct visual impact upon the site and affect views to and from the Round Tower in particular. Given that the Round Tower is a National Monument, the proximity of these wires undermines to some extent the national significance of the tower.

While the boundary wall of the graveyard which fronts onto Ball Alley is well maintained with coping stones intact and a partial cladding of ivy enhances the setting of the site on approach from the north, the boundary wall to the south of the principal entranceway, constructed of bare concrete block detracts from the setting of the site.

Similarly, the chronically overgrown nature of lands immediately south of the graveyard contain pernicious species and contribute to a general unkempt and untended impression to the site.

Similarly, the concrete and tarmac curving pathway to the west of the Round Tower is in poor condition and detracts from the setting of the tower itself. While the form of this feature – a semi-circular pathway, concentric to the western curve of the tower – has the potential to enhance and amplify the shape of the tower, its broken and dilapidated state has the opposite effect. Similarly, the weed-grown chain link fence that defines the western extent of the plot of land which contains the western portion of the tower is not sympathetic to the setting of the site.

### 5.5.3 The High Cross

The High Cross stands within the Diamond on a raised pedestrian area and is protected by wrought iron railings of c. 1900 date. The setting is marginally affected by the visible electrical wiring feeding the floodlights associated with the Cross and also by the public bench which has been installed c. 1m east of the railings. These, however, are not serious issues and require no remedial work. Any new developments within the Diamond will need to take into account any potential visual impacts upon the High Cross.



## 6 POLICIES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

### 6.1 POLICIES

#### 6.1.1 Policy 1: Protection and Retention of the Historic Integrity of the Site

To place the conservation of all elements of early Christian Clones, both known and unknown, and the protection of the significance of its various elements at the heart of planning and management of the monuments.

**Policy 1.1** A Steering Group should be established, which includes representatives of the key stakeholders, to oversee the implementation of the Conservation Plan policies and recommendations.

**Policy 1.2** Recognise the protected status of the Round Tower and High Cross as National Monuments. Recognise the designation of the Round Tower, High Cross, House-shaped Shrine and graveyard as recorded monuments in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). Recognise the status of the Round Tower, High Cross and House-shaped Shrine as Protected Structures and acknowledge that any works affecting these monuments are governed by the requirements of the National Monuments Act 1930–2004 and the Planning and Development Act 2000.

**Policy 1.3** Acknowledge the House-shaped Shrine as an internationally important heritage asset contributing to defining the historic status of Clones.

**Policy 1.4** Acknowledge the Round Tower and High Cross as nationally important heritage assets which contribute to defining the historic status and the modern iconography of Clones.

**Policy 1.5** Develop a definitive solution to safeguard the House-shaped Shrine and the High Cross from further natural weathering and erosion.


**Policy 1.6** Place the identity, significance and safeguarding of the Round Tower, High Cross and House-shaped Shrine at the heart of future planning and development for the town.

#### 6.1.2 Policy 2: Conservation, Repair and Maintenance

To implement effective regimes for maintenance and repair, while protecting the significance and historic integrity of the various elements of early Christian Clones while observing exemplary standards of conservation practice.

**Policy 2.1** Undertake any proposed conservation and repair with reference to the principles outlined in the ICOMOS Venice, Burra and Washington Charters, promoting an approach of minimum intervention rather than restoration.

**Policy 2.2** Develop programmes for structural maintenance and repair at the graveyard boundary wall, with particular attention given to priority actions and statutory requirements under the National Monuments Act 1930–2004 and the Planning and Development Act 2000.

**Policy 2.3** Design a schedule of regular monitoring and checks by qualified conservation engineers and architects in order to address the effects of natural forces such as frost, rain, UV radiation etc. on the House-shaped Shrine and the boundary wall of the graveyard. These should be based on the biennial surveys carried out by the OPW on National Monuments including the Round Tower and High Cross at Clones. 

**Policy 2.4** Develop a sustainable Graveyard Maintenance/Management Scheme for the upkeep of the graveyard.

**Policy 2.5** Carry out a lime mortar analysis at the Round Tower and western retaining graveyard wall to inform all future interventions where these are deemed necessary.

#### 6.1.3 Policy 3: Enhancement and Improvement

To enhance the historic character and visual qualities of the various elements of early Christian Clones by consolidating eroding elements, removing intrusive elements and addressing impacts upon setting.

**Policy 3.1** Enhance the visual character of the monuments through the removal of inappropriate features impacting upon their settings.

**Policy 3.2** Protect the visual character of the monuments from inappropriate development.

**Policy 3.3** Endorse the proposal from the 2008 Clones Historic Landscape Characterisation for a walking trail from the Canal Store to the Round Tower and Diamond.

**Policy 3.4** Utilise the research undertaken and network created by the early Christian Monaghan Project to design an early Christian Monaghan trail, comprising initially of the sites at Clones, Inishkeen, Killahear and Errigal Truagh with potential for further additions during development phase.

#### 6.1.4 Policy 4: Access and Interpretation

To encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the various elements of early Christian Clones, by promoting both physical and intellectual access to the monuments and meeting the needs of a broad variety of users.

**Policy 4.1** Align with Section 6 of the 1995 Heritage Act to promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in, and facilitate the appreciation and enjoyment of the national heritage.

**Policy 4.2** Redraft interpretative signage at each of the monuments, incorporating information from the Conservation Plan and reconstruction drawing commissioned as a part of the early Christian Clones Project.

**Policy 4.3** Introduce new interpretative signage at the site of the House-shaped Shrine and Round Tower.

**Policy 4.4** Maintain public access to the graveyard and Round Tower site and explore the possibility of establishing a number of dedicated car parking spaces immediately to the north of the graveyard boundary.

**Policy 4.5** Explore the possibility of commissioning a 3D laser scan of the House-shaped Shrine, either through the Discovery Programme's 3D Icons initiative or through alternative means.

**Policy 4.6** Explore the feasibility of replacing the concrete block portion of the graveyard wall with sympathetic lime and mortar wall in order to enhance the setting of the graveyard.

**Policy 4.7** Seek to control and manage the overgrown areas immediately south of the graveyard boundary (either directly or indirectly) in order to prevent the establishment of pernicious species within the fabric of the graveyard wall and to improve the overall setting of the graveyard.

#### 6.1.5 Policy 5: Research, Education and Tourism

To develop an understanding of the various elements of early Christian Clones through informed archaeological investigation and research, ensuring their preservation in an accessible form. To promote the various elements as an integral site of interest and a historical resource for learning about the past.

**Policy 5.1** Develop a research framework and partnership with academic institutions for future archaeological, architectural and historic research and targeted investigation to increase understanding of the separate monuments and their place within the overall context of monastic Clones.

**Policy 5.2** Explore the possibility of adding the House-shaped Shrine to the Discovery Programme's 3D Icons database.

**Policy 5.3** Identify and protect any protected species or the habitats of such that have the potential to exist within the graveyard and Round Tower at Clones.

**Policy 5.4** Explore the available options for a graveyard survey (including detailed recording of House-shaped Shrine using photogrammetry/illustration as appropriate) using digital resources with a view to making it openly accessible, with the local community being encouraged to assist in conducting the survey.

**Policy 5.5** Explore the feasibility of a geophysical survey of the lands immediately west of the Round Tower in an attempt to identify any sub-surface archaeology that may be associated with the early monastery of Clones.


**Policy 5.6** Align with Action 26 of the Monaghan Heritage Plan, to 'Develop a series of heritage booklets and make them available on the internet' with reference to early Christian Clones.


**Policy 5.7** Develop teaching aids for distribution to local primary and post-primary schools.

## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A series of recommendations for specific programmed actions which will support the policies contained within the Conservation Plan have been made. These recommendations take into account that, as National Monuments in the ownership of the Minister, the Round Tower and High Cross at Clones are subject to biennial surveys by OPW architects and are as follows:

**Recommendation 1.** Establish a Steering Group which includes representatives of the key stakeholders, to oversee the implementation of the Conservation Plan policies and recommendations.

**Recommendation 2.** That consideration be given to the House-shaped Shrine coming into the ownership of the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, in order that the monument benefit from biennial survey and in-house OPW stonework conservation expertise. 

**Recommendation 3.** Carry out a costed feasibility study for the definitive removal of the House-shaped Shrine and High Cross from their current locations for public display within a covered space within the town and their replacement with high-quality replicas as per examples at Downpatrick and Clonmacnoise. It is recommended that this study proposes a costed interim conservation strategy for the prevention of further erosion to these vulnerable monuments, as per interventions at Kells and Moone, while funding and permissions for such relocation and replica production are sought. It is recommended that this study investigate the feasibility of erecting a roof over the 'Wee Abbey' and using the protected space within to display the original monuments. 

**Recommendation 4.** Carry out remedial works at the graveyard boundary wall immediately to the north of the Round Tower where the wall is failing. The National Monuments Service will need to be consulted prior to any such works and it is recommended that all ground disturbances be carried out under archaeological licence. The reattachment of the graveyard wall to the Round Tower, which is a National Monument, cannot be condoned. It is recommended that the boundary wall in this portion of the graveyard be reduced to ground level, grassed over, and the

boundary be pushed c. 1.5m to the west, allowing for a freestanding wall to be constructed which does not require to be mortared to the side of the Round Tower. It is recommended that such a replacement wall be constructed with appropriate lime mortar and local stone in a manner sympathetic to the upstanding heritage assets on site.

**Recommendation 5.** Commission a bat and bird survey in order to characterise the species present within the graveyard and Round Tower with a view to safeguarding any protected species or the habitats of such that have the potential to exist within the graveyard and Round Tower at Clones. Survey should be conducted during the summer months with input from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

**Recommendation 6.** Commission a community-driven graveyard survey (including detailed recording of House-shaped Shrine using photogrammetry/illustration as appropriate) using digital resources with a view to making the results openly accessible with the local community being encouraged to assist in conducting the survey, as per previous surveys at Clontibret, Tydavnet, Errigal Truagh and Old Donagh.

**Recommendation 7.** Develop a Graveyard Maintenance/Management Scheme which should incorporate rostered maintenance of the grounds and structures. The Scheme should also address biodiversity aspects of the site, in line with the Monaghan County Heritage Plan, and include management schemes for flora and fauna and should follow the guidelines issued by the Heritage Council (2010).

**Recommendation 8.** Consult the ESB to explore the possibility of re-routing the current overhead cables that traverse the site with a view to improving the overall historic setting of the graveyard, Round Tower and House-shaped Shrine.

**Recommendation 9.** Remove the granite slab adjacent to the House-shaped Shrine and relocate to a more peripheral location with a view to improving the specific historic setting of the House-shaped Shrine.

**Recommendation 10.** Design new interpretive panels incorporating information contained within the Conservation Plan with particular emphasis on highlighting the interconnected nature of the disparate early Christian elements of Clones.

**Recommendation 11.** Explore the feasibility of creating a number of dedicated car parking spaces immediately north of the graveyard.

**Recommendation 12.** Build upon the early Christian Monaghan Project to include Clones in a county-wide driving trail comprising initially of the sites at Clones, Inishkeen, Killahear and Errigal Truagh with potential for further additions during the scoping phase.

**Recommendation 13.** Commission geophysical survey of lands immediately west of the Round Tower and graveyard. Use the survey and the results of such as an

instrument to garner community interest and local support. It is recommended that the results of the survey be used in conjunction with the information within the Conservation Plan to redesign the interpretation panels for the various elements of early Christian Clones.

**Recommendation 14.** Explore the feasibility of rebuilding the concrete block portion of the graveyard boundary wall, south of the eastern entrance.

**Recommendation 15.** Investigate the current status and ownership of the lands immediately adjoining the graveyard to the south. Seek to control and manage the overgrown areas immediately south of the graveyard boundary (either directly or indirectly) in order to prevent the establishment of pernicious species within the fabric of the graveyard wall and to improve the overall setting of the graveyard.

**Recommendation 16.** Develop a series of leaflets and/or guidebooks detailing the history of early Christian Clones. These should be made available online and through local tourist facilities.

**Recommendation 17.** Develop questionnaires based on early Christian/monastic Clones for distribution to i) primary school and to ii) junior cycle secondary school teachers within the wider area to encourage school visits to the various elements of early medieval Clones.



### 6.3 IMPLEMENTATION

The Conservation Plan is not a statutory document. However, it will assist in the implementation of existing statutory policy and law. The Conservation Plan is the beginning of a long term process and its successful implementation will depend on its wide acceptance and active local support. In preparing the Plan, consultation was held with a range of interest groups and statutory bodies. Further consultation and dialogue will be necessary at times during the life of the Plan.

#### Management Procedures

It is essential that any works carried out to the various elements of early Christian Clones are done so by suitably trained and experienced professionals. Irreparable damage can be caused to historic monuments by inexperienced or inadequate professional advice. The implementation of procedures and policies contained within the Conservation Plan can only be successfully achieved if conducted under the advice and guidance of suitably experienced individuals.

Archaeologists employed to work on the various elements of early Christian Clones should have demonstrable experience of work on similar monuments.

Tradespersons and craftspeople should be informed of the significance of the monuments prior to conducting any works. Ideally, they will have past experience of conducting restoration/remedial works on similar monuments and have used, or receive training in the use of lime mortar.

Architects, where employed, should have demonstrable experience of working on historic monuments and should have an accreditation in conservation from a professional body or possess a third-level qualification in building conservation.

### Statutory Provisions and Procedures

Any works affecting the various elements of early Christian Clones are governed by the requirements of the National Monuments Act 1930–2004. In the case of the Round Tower and the High Cross, and the ‘Wee Abbey’, these are also classed as National Monuments and, as such, any work affecting these monuments will also require Ministerial Consent. These are necessary constraints which delimit the type and nature of any work planned for the various elements of the site. Any enhancement of the visitor experience will ultimately require funding, and the sourcing of such funds is a key constraint to any works planned.

### Maintenance

Given their status as National Monuments in State Care, the OPW conduct biennial inspections of the Round Tower and High Cross at Clones. The historic fabric which comprises the graveyard, including the House-shaped Shrine, will require an ongoing Graveyard Maintenance/Management Scheme, which should be based on the OPW biennial inspection and should follow the guidelines on the care of historic graveyards issued by the Heritage Council (2010), particularly the following points:

- Draw up a management plan with your Conservation Officer/Heritage Officer.
- Set out policy and strategy for management of the physical attributes of the graveyard such as painting of the graveyard ironwork, maintenance of graveyard wall etc.
- Implement multi-annual plan, such as grass-cutting regime, ivy control, sycamore control and control of other deep-rooting species that may cause damage to memorials and other masonry structures within a graveyard.
- Identify who is going to carry out the plan every year and at what time this work needs to be carried out.
- Undertake quinquennial (5 year) inspection of masonry structures within your historic graveyard.
- Do not attempt major conservation works on masonry structures, maintain them as they are – ivy clad ruins should be maintained as ivy-clad ruins – such work is expensive and can only be undertaken by a professional conservation team (Heritage Council 2010).

The below actions can serve as a basis for the drafting of a Graveyard Maintenance/Management Scheme.

General inspection of monument	
Task	Visual inspection to identify any sudden changes such as vandalism, development of potential risks etc
Location	Roundtower, House-shaped shrine, headstones, access, High Cross
Equipment	None
Frequency	Monthly

Comments	This task will ensure that any potentially damaging changes are captured in the short term.
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#### Dry cleaning of surfaces

Task	Inspection of horizontal surfaces to remove accumulation of leaf litter, general litter, dust, etc
Location	Access paths to front and rear of graveyard, plinth of High Cross
Equipment	Brush, protective clothing, rubbish bags
Frequency	Monthly
Comments	This task will reduce the risk of slips and trips which may occur due to the accumulation of mossy growth, leaf litter etc. Also help to improve the general appearance of the graveyard.

#### Treatment of snow and ice

Task	Application of 'salt' to slippery surfaces
Location	Access paths to front and rear of graveyard
Equipment	None
Frequency	When required
Comments	This task should be carried out when there is a possibility of snow/ice accumulation. Consideration should be given to the visual impact of the 'salt' residue.

#### Treatment of minor vegetation such as weeds

Task	Removal of weeds
Location	Access paths, wall, High Cross
Equipment	Spraying equipment, hand tools
Frequency	Annually
Comments	Due cognisance should be given to the fact that any works, including vegetation clearance, directly affecting a National Monument will need to be carried out under Ministerial Consent.

#### Redecoration of metalwork

Task	Repainting metalwork
Location	Access gateways, railing around High Cross
Equipment	Painter's equipment and suitable paint
Frequency	Biennial
Comments	It should be established who is currently responsible for this work in order to avoid duplication of treatment.

## 6.4 IMMEDIATE/SHORT TERM ACTIONS

The Conservation Plan has made recommendations for short term actions which should be implemented at an early stage. These are:

- Devise and implement interim protection for the House-shaped Shrine and the High Cross;



- Seek consultation with the National Monuments Service and the Office of Public Works with a view to giving due consideration to the House-shaped Shrine coming into the ownership of the Minister;
- Commission a costed feasibility study for the removal of the House-shaped Shrine, its storage off-site and its replacement with a high quality replica;
- Stabilise and redesign the western graveyard boundary wall, detaching it definitively from the fabric of the Round Tower while taking every care to preserve the archaeological deposits retained by the wall and implementing a site appropriate intervention;
- Commission a survey of bats and birds roosting within the Clones graveyard and Round Tower in order to investigate the presence of any protected species;
- Redesign the interpretation of the early Christian elements of Clones using information from the Conservation Plan and incorporating the reconstruction drawing commissioned as a part of the early Christian Monaghan project.

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