



Introduction

Monaghan County Council has commissioned The Paul Hogarth Company to identify and assess potential sites in the town of Clones for a proposed Bikers' Memorial and Garden.

Locations with potential have been independently identified and assessed using an agreed set of criteria. This report concludes with a series of recommendations for consideration by the elected members of Monaghan County Council.

The Paul Hogarth Company is one of Ireland's leading Landscape Architecture, Urban Design and Planning consultancies. Established in 1990, the practice has been responsible for a wide range of award winning landscape and public realm projects. It has worked for Monaghan County Council on a number of projects and worked with the Clones Town Team in 2021 to produce the Clones Heritage and Economic Plan. The Paul Hogarth Company also provided consultancy advice to Waterways Ireland for the activation of the Clones Marina in 2023/4.

The practice is not currently appointed to any projects in Clones and this report has been written independently of all organisations involved.

Memorial & Garden

A permanent memorial for motorbikers lost to road traffic collisions has been proposed by a committee of the Gone But Not Forgotten organisation. Founded in 1985 the group has organised annual memorial services since 2003, which from 2010 have taken place at the Sacred Heart Church in Clones.

The proposed memorial will be funded by the Gone But Not Forgotten Bikers Memorial Committee through public donations. In 2025 Monaghan County Council published a Public Art Commission Opportunity on the group's behalf and invited artists to submit proposals for *"an imaginative and contemporary sculptural work which encapsulates the natural beauty of the location landscape, the history of the Bikers Memorial in Clones, and is a worthy addition to the many heritage sites in the town area"* (Monaghan County Council, 2025).

The memorial would be placed in a purpose designed garden, likely to comprise planting, seating, pathways and lighting. The size of such a memorial and garden could vary and would be determined by a site specific design process. It is assumed that planning consent would be required, depending on the selected site.

It is envisaged that the memorial garden would mostly be visited by individuals and family groups in small numbers throughout the year. Large gatherings are unlikely, except at the time of the annual mass where this would be possible.

Prior to this assessment, discussions took place between the Gone But Not Forgotten Committee and officers of Monaghan County Council about a potential site at Clones Marina. But after opposition to that location was expressed by residents via the Clones Town Team, those discussions and the artist procurement process have been paused and this independent assessment commissioned.

The Process

Meetings - The Paul Hogarth Company visited Monaghan in 19 March 2025 for the purposes of this assessment. On that day they met with a representative of Monaghan County Council. Online meetings were subsequently held with the Gone But Not Forgotten Memorial Committee (15 April) and Clones Town Team (2 May). The purpose of these meetings was to explain the proposed assessment process and to listen to the opinions of each group. Correspondence was subsequently received from the Town Team but no further dialogue took place.

Methodology - the assessment methodology has been designed by The Paul Hogarth Company and approved by Monaghan County Council.

Site Selection - The consultant team has identified 20 potential sites for a memorial and garden. These are all located within the town of Clones and were deemed to offer some potential, albeit with various issues that would need addressed if chosen. The long list of sites was not made public prior to the assessment, as no allowance was made for public consultation at that interim stage.

Criteria Development - a set of criteria were developed by the consultancy team (see opposite). These were shared with the 3 organisations named above. Displacement and Additionality were suggested and subsequently added after due consideration.

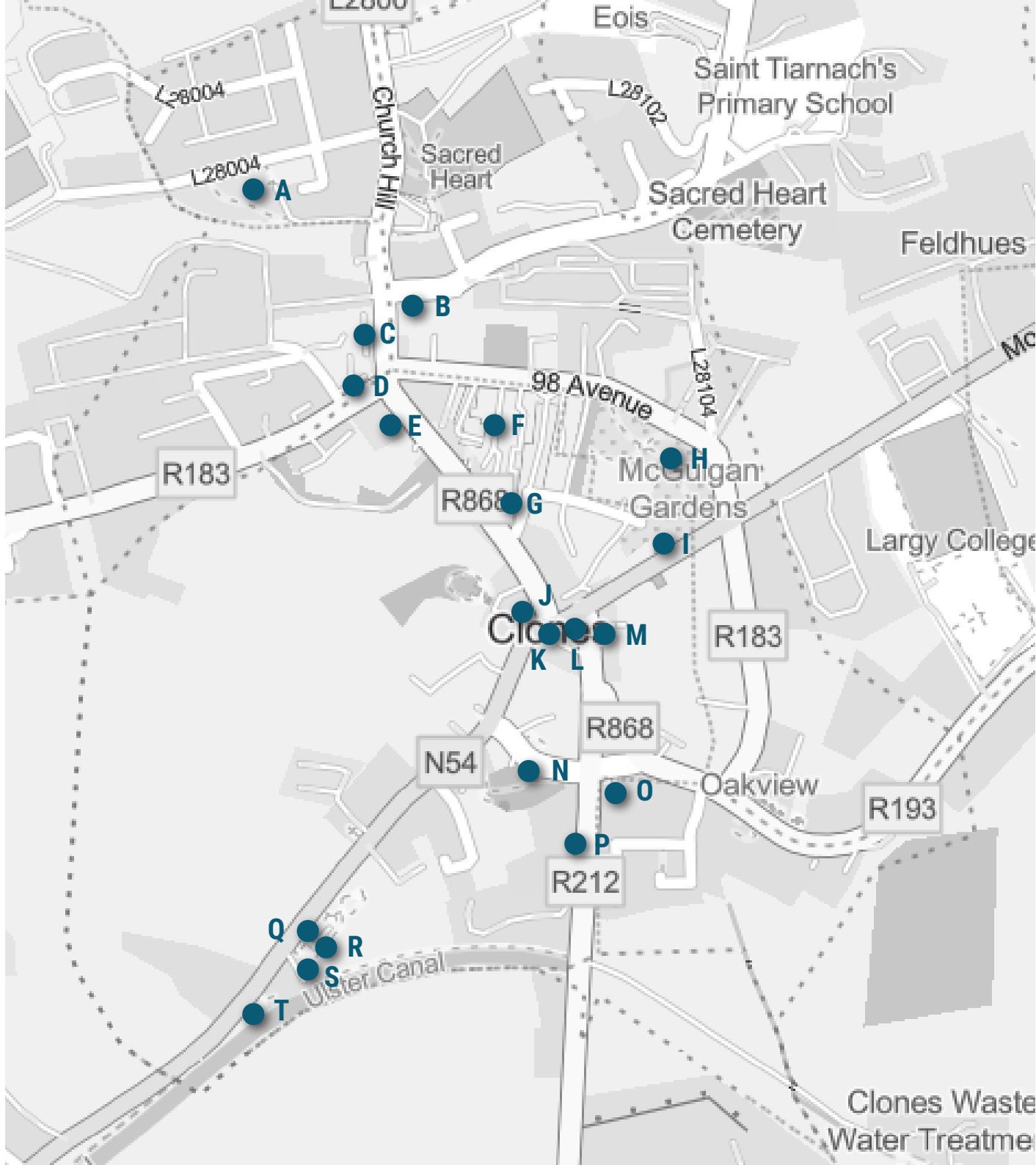
Assessment - the 20 sites were independently scored by the consultancy team, from 1 (low) to 5 (high). The total number of scores was tallied and a shortlist of 3 sites identified.

Assessment Criteria

Criterion	Assessment Question
Area	Is there adequate space for a memorial and garden and circulation space for occasional gatherings?
Visibility	Is the site visually connected with its surroundings, giving it prominence while keeping it safe?
Accessibility	Is the site suitable for all users, including potential for wheelchair accessibility and proximity to car parking?
Setting	Would the setting of the location be appropriately attractive and calm in a manner that is befitting for a memorial garden?
Lack of Displacement	To what extent would the garden development minimise the loss or reduction of an important current use of the site?
Additionality & Regeneration	Could a memorial garden in this location add value to the immediate area and contribute positively to the town as a whole?

The following factors have not been assessed but should inform any design and planning process.

- land ownership & leases
- ground conditions
- utility infrastructure
- road safety
- flood risk
- ecology
- archaeology & heritage
- planning
- impact on site neighbours
- public opinion



Potential Memorial Sites

I.D	Location
A	O'Neill Park and Playground/Carn View
B	Roslea Road Car Park at Junction with Church Hill
C	Lower Fermanagh Street (Courtyard)
D	Fitzpatrick Square Car Park
E	Fermanagh Street car park
F	Clones Library
G	Fermanagh Street corner with mural
H	Barry McGuigan Park
I	Council Plaque/ Entrance to Barry McGuigan Park
J	Northern section of the diamond
K	Area of footpath along N54 within The Diamond
L	Grassy Area of The Diamond
M	Car park along R212 in front of shops
N	Ball Alley
O	Existing plaque/memorial and seating area at junction with Abbey Street
P	Clones Courthouse, McCurtain Street
Q	Patch of grass along border of the fenced area
R	Clones Marina Car Park
S	Area within Clones Marina car park on the border of fenced area with Canal Stores
T	Grassy area within Canal Stores car park.



Assessment

Photo	I.D	Location	Description	Area	Visibility	Accessibility	Setting	Lack of Displacement	Additionality & Regeneration	Total	Comment
	A	O'Neill Park and Playground/Carn View	Residential area along O'Neill park. Grassy area alongside O'Neill playground.	3	1	2	1	4	1	12	There is ample room; however, parking is limited and the location is in close proximity to a residential area. The area is outside of the town centre, therefore would not be visible from surrounding areas, and also would unlikely contribute to the regeneration of the town.
	B	Roslea Road Car Park at Junction with Church Hill	Council owned car park on Roslea Road at junction with Church Hill.	4	3	5	3	2	4	21	This site is in an existing car park within walking distance of the town centre, and is visible from surrounding areas due to being on a road junction. It is a short distance from the Sacred Heart Catholic Church. While parking would be removed, a garden here could improve the area's attractiveness.
	C	Lower Fermanagh Street (Courtyard)	Clones Farmyard Project on Lower Fermanagh Street. Off street gravel area hosting a weekly local market.	2	1	4	2	2	1	12	This site is gated so therefore may not be accessible at all times - the space is also not visible from the road. This area has been recently developed, any further development would not significantly contribute to the area.
	D	Fitzpatrick Square Car Park	Car park to the rear of Creighton Hotel on the junction between Fitzpatrick Square and Newtownbutler Road.	3	1	4	3	1	4	16	This site is in an accessible location, and relatively close to the Sacred Heart Catholic Church. The square is a large open space primarily used for parking and could benefit from development, although well used parking spaces for adjacent businesses would need to be removed.
	E	Fermanagh Street car park	Off street car park on Fermanagh Street historically known as the Butter Yard. Pavement outside the area is populated with trees and the Leap Frog sculpture.	2	2	3	3	1	3	14	This site is small and has an existing sculpture, seating and planters on the pavement outside. Parking is available on site - and is within walking distance of nearby shops. The site has heritage value - sensitive development could contribute to the regeneration of the town, although hotel parking would be displaced.
	F	Clones Library	Area of hardstanding at the rear of the Clones Library building on the R183 (98 Ave) road.	4	1	4	4	2	1	16	There is parking and ample space for a memorial monument; however, the site would be perceived as being 'around the back'. The seating area has recently been improved, therefore any further development would not have a significant impact on the regeneration of the town.
	G	Fermanagh Street corner with mural	Fermanagh Street - newly refurbished seating area and mural.	2	3	3	3	2	2	15	This site is small, but at a visible location on a busy narrow street. As the area has been developed recently, a memorial here would displace the existinig mural and garden.

Assessment (continued)

Photo	I.D	Location	Description	Area	Visibility	Accessibility	Setting	Lack of Displacement	Additionality & Regeneration	Total	Comment
	H	Barry McGuigan Park	Gardens dedicated to the boxer Barry McGuigan, located on the R183 next to Clones Primary Care Centre.	4	3	4	5	4	3	23	The site has ample space and is visible from passing cars on the nearby road, as well as visitors to the park. The area is a peaceful and attractive setting, although a slight walk from nearby parking.
	I	Council Plaque/ Entrance to Barry McGuigan Park	Entrance to Barry McGuigan gardens on Monaghan Street with council plaque in pavement.	3	2	1	3	4	3	16	This site is small and is currently host to a council plaque. There is no nearby parking, and this space is in close proximity to the main road. The site is located at the entrance to the Barry McGuigan park and any development would only contribute somewhat to the regeneration of the area.
	J	Northern section of the diamond	Hardstanding in front of St Tiarnach's Church of Ireland at the top of The Diamond.	3	4	3	1	2	3	16	This area is highly visible from surrounding areas, and has views onto surrounding roads and shopfronts. There is space for a monument; however, it is busy and populated with existing monuments and benches, which could reduce the impact of a memorial.
	K	Area of footpath along N54 within The Diamond	Area of hardstanding within The Diamond beside the grassy area.	2	5	1	3	2	2	15	This site is small and highly visible from most of the town centre. There is parking nearby and accessible for most users although next to a busy road which could give rise to safety issues.
	L	Grassy Area of The Diamond	Grassy area within The Diamond by water fountain and seating.	3	5	4	3	2	2	19	This location is in a highly visible area in the centre of the town and is able to accommodate a moderately sized monument, alongside seating and planting, with existing parking nearby.
	M	Car park along R212 in front of shops	Hardstanding in front of shops used for car parking outside shops (surrounding The Diamond).	2	4	4	3	1	2	16	This central location has parking on site, and is in a highly visible area, within close proximity to The Diamond, although next to a busy road. This location has space for redevelopment but would require the removal of car parking that would likely affect adjacent properties
	N	Ball Alley	Grassy area along Ball Alley overlooking the Clones Round Tower.	1	2	4	4	2	2	15	This site is modest; however, has views to Clones Round Tower and Cassandra Centre . Its location could feel slightly hidden, although the quiet setting could also bring benefits.

Assessment (continued)

Photo	I.D	Location	Description	Area	Visibility	Accessibility	Setting	Lack of Displacement	Additionality & Regeneration	Total	Comment
	O	Existing plaque/memorial and seating area at junction with Abbey Street	Memorial bench and plaque surrounded by planting on corner between Abbey Street and McCurtain Street.	2	3	3	4	3	2	17	This area could offer a large space for development if the car parking to the rear of the existing monument, was utilised. The location is situated on a junction, therefore is visible to passers by.
	P	Clones Courthouse, McCurtain Street	Area of hardstanding outside the Courthouse building on McCurtain Street	1	2	2	4	3	1	13	The area to the front of Clones Courthouse is limited, and has little access to nearby parking; this space is also moderately visible due to close proximity to the road. The historic and attractive building provides a suitable setting; however, any development of the area may encroach onto the Courthouse.
	Q	Patch of grass along border of the fenced area (populated with picnic benches)	Patch of grass along border of the fenced area (populated with picnic benches)	3	3	4	2	3	3	18	This area is up against a fence and close to the main road. There is a large amount of space available and there is existing parking on site. The views to and from the area are limited due to an existing seating and planting area, and views onto the space are predominantly from the roadside.
	R	Play Area Garden at Clones Marina	Area within existing planting, seating and hardstanding.	4	4	4	5	3	2	22	This location, which is already a garden alongside a play area, would provide a large space for the memorial. There is a car park on site, and the attractive views are out over Clones Marina whilst there are interrupted views from the roadside due to planting.
	S	Area within Clones Marina car park on the border of fenced area with Canal Stores	Open grassy verge against stone wall. North-Eastern facing patch of grass.	3	3	4	3	4	2	19	This section of grass has space for a memorial, seating and planting. The space has views onto the marina and is also visible from the road. There is parking on site, although the design would need to account for the vehicular entrance nearby.
	T	Grassy area within Canal Stores car park.	Triangular shaped area within car park for Canal Stores on N54.	1	2	4	3	2	1	13	This location is within a car park by a main road and provides little space for the monument, but potentially could host a small memorial. The space is covered by trees and has signage within the space, limiting the views out onto surrounding areas.

Shortlisted Sites



Location H. Barry McGuigan Park

Score: 23

Pros

- + An existing green space, minimising displacement of other uses
- + Ample space for the creation of a garden

Cons

- Limited car parking immediately adjacent to the area

Summary

This is one of the largest sites considered, meaning that the memorial garden could be placed at a number of locations within the park. This would require good landscape design to ensure the garden fitted within its context. Interpretation within the park would need carefully considered so that the memorial could co exist other information about Barry McGuigan and the park's wildlife.



Location R. Play Area Garden and Clones Marina

Score: 22

Pros

- + An existing garden therefore no change of use
- + Ample parking and next to other amenities, such as the canal and play area

Cons

- Limits the potential to enlarge the adjacent play area in the future

Summary

This garden site has clear potential to be upgraded into a memorial garden, with access to car parking and other amenities close by. A design here would need to take into account proximity to the adjacent play area.

While not part of the scoring criteria, strong local feelings about this site will require addressed to inform the decision making process.

Shortlisted Sites



Location B. Roslea Car Park at Junction with Church Hill

Score: 21

Pros

- + Centrally located in relative close proximity to Sacred Heart Church
- + Significant potential to improve the quality of the site and area

Cons

- Loss of car parking that could affect local businesses

Summary

This site has significant potential, turning a hard and unattractive area into a green and welcoming space. While some car parking spaces would need to be removed to enable development, some could be retained, perhaps for disabled and family parking.

Recommendations

Following this assessment, The Paul Hogarth Company make the following recommendations

1. The 3 short-listed sites should be considered in greater detail to enable a final decision to be made by democratically elected members. This should be further informed by a high level review by Council of points not assessed, as noted on Page 3. As the project will be largely funded by monies raised by the Gone but Not Forgotten committee, their views should also be taken into account in the decision making process.
2. Consideration should be given to a form of public consultation, so that local people and groups can have their say. This should not, however, be a referendum on sites, but an opportunity for representations to be made. Public engagement will also be key to the development of a design, so that a memorial garden in the chosen location can be visualised, and the outcome informed by members of the public.
3. The memorial and garden should be designed together and specifically for the chosen site, rather than be designed in isolation and placed in one of the locations. The three short-listed sites warrant different designs that make the most of their site characteristics and features.
4. The memorial should be sympathetically designed to pay tribute to those that have been lost, without being too literal that could risk upsetting members of the public. Memorial gardens do not need to look and feel like graveyards, but can be vibrant spaces that are used and enjoyed by everyone.
5. Use of the garden should be managed to allay any local concerns around the possibility of noisy gatherings, road safety issues or antisocial behaviour. Open communication and cooperation between the organisers, council and community will be key to this.
6. While a sensitive and emotive subject, the memorial garden should be a positive addition to the town of Clones. To succeed this will be reliant on high standards of collaborative planning, design, construction, maintenance and management.