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ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Relating to proposed
Sligo City Public Realm Enhancement Project at:
**Stephen Street, Holborn Street, Rockwood Parade,
Tobergal Lane & Water Lane**

Client: BDP

Inspections: 10th & 16th November 2020

Our Ref: 10-163

BDP.



Document prepared by:

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Issue: November 2020

Contents

1. Introduction & Purpose of the Report
2. Understanding the Buildings & Setting
 - Historical Background/ Context
3. Significance of the Buildings & Setting
4. Historical References & Bibliography
5. Impact of proposals on the heritage including its setting
6. Recommendations
 - Mitigation/ adjustment of the proposed scheme
 - Methodology to be adopted in connection with implementation

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

Sligo City Public Realm Enhancement Project at: Stephen Street, Holborn Street, Rockwood Parade, Tobergal Lane & Water Lane

1. Introduction & Purpose of the Report

This assessment relates to a 'Part VIII' planning application by Sligo County Council for: Public realm Improvements to a number of streets within the Sligo City Centre which form part of a wider Public Realm Plan prepared by BDP for Sligo County council in 2018.

We have been instructed by BDP to prepare an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment to be submitted with the Part VIII planning application.

Our assessment of the impact of the new proposals is based on the following information: Drawings SPR (90) 201 to 208 inclusive, showing the general arrangement of the proposals; and site visits on 10th & 16th November 2020.

In addition to the observations made at the site visits, we have made reference to the NIAH, record of protected structures, National Library of Ireland, Trinity College library and the National Archives of Ireland. A detailed condition survey has not been carried out as part of this assessment, although some observations have been made on the condition of buildings and their settings, where relevant.

The report is submitted in the form recommended in "Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities" and is intended to provide sufficient documentation to assist the Planning Authority in making an informed decision on the potential impact on the heritage and its setting by providing background information, analysis and supplementary photographic information. The report also contains recommendations based on a review of the proposals taking into account the likely impacts and any mitigating measures that should be incorporated into the design during the course of the design development and consultation process, or at the implementation stages of the project in due course.



Figure 1 – general arrangement plan showing the extent of the streetscape included within the current Part VIII planning application and to which this assessment relates.

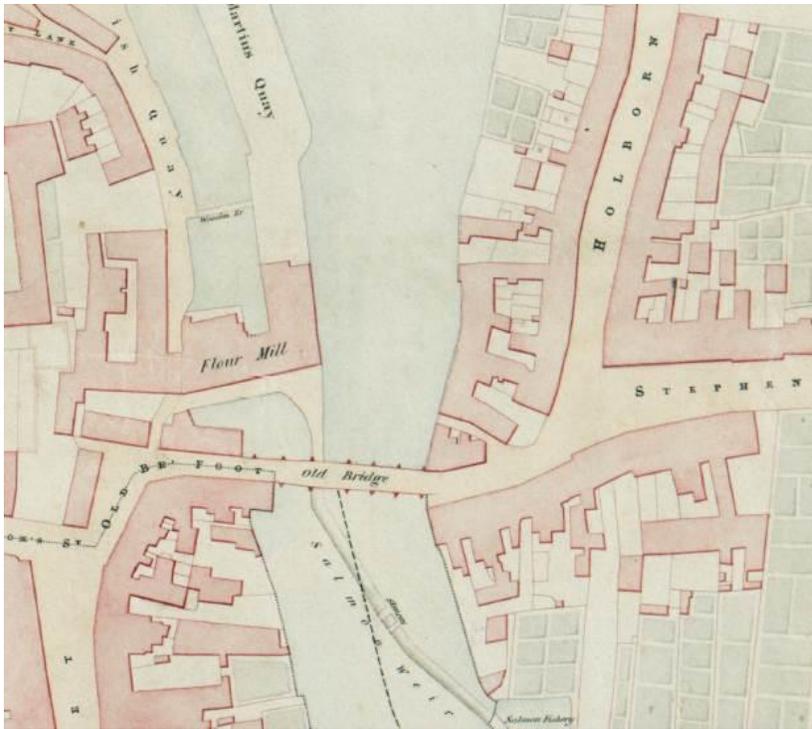


Figure 4 – detailed map 1837 showing the ‘old’ bridge. Building lines along lower Stephen Street and Holborn Street predate this period, with the exception of the group to the west of Holborn Street which were redeveloped in the mid-19th century © IHTA

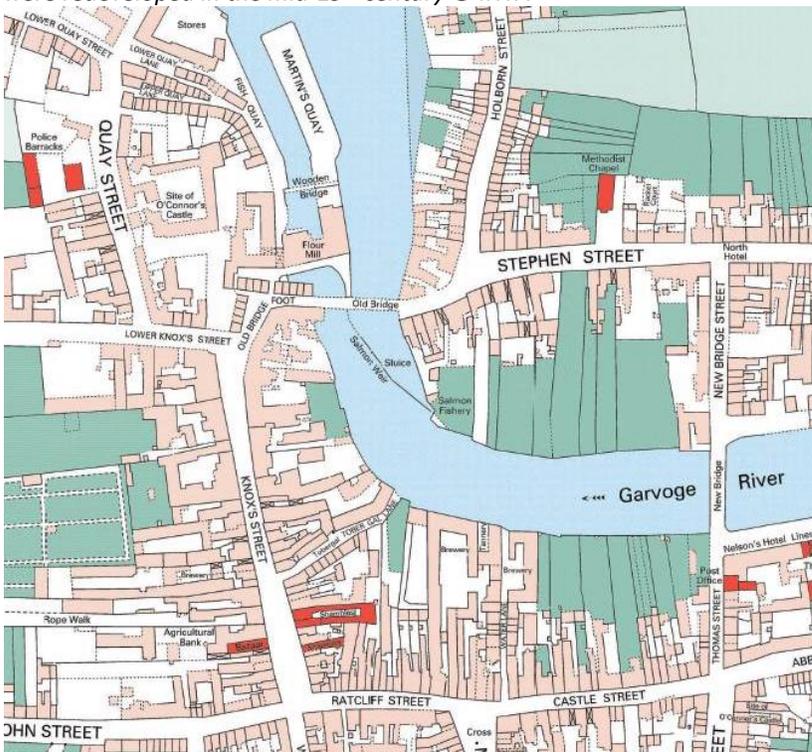


Figure 5 – composite map, 1837, prepared for the Historic Towns Atlas, based on mapping information from Ordnance Survey first edition and other detailed mapping from the period. Note the broken lines showing buildings on the west bank, immediately to the south of the ‘old’ bridge which formed a block which was comprehensively redeveloped later in the century © IHTA



Figure 6 – detailed map 1861 showing the Victoria bridge (later renamed Hyde Bridge, which replaced the 'old' bridge, and Victoria Road, a new riverside embankment to the north of the bridge constructed on the east bank; later renamed Markievicz Road © IHITA

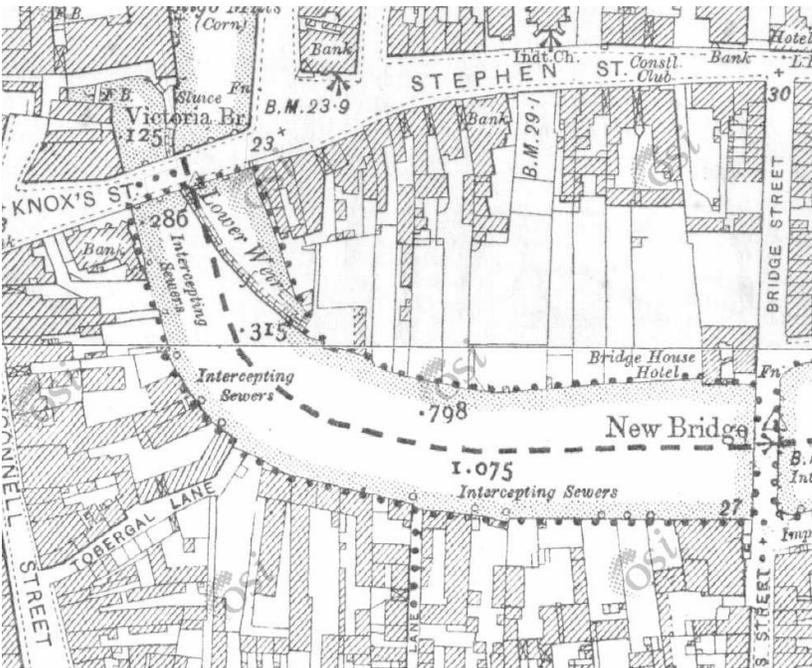


Figure 7 – 25" Ordnance Survey map circa 1900 showing the modern 'Victoria', now Hyde Bridge, and start of the 'Victoria', now Markievicz Road embankment to the north © OSI



Figure 8 – Stephen Street looking along east towards the Mall, and Calry church. These historical photographs provide critical information as to the extent of survival of historic fabric and to inform its restoration where appropriate ©NLI



Figure 9 – Bank of Ireland, Stephen Street. Detail shows elements such as the low first riser to the entrance step, also present today, has been a feature of the building for over a century ©NLI



Figure 10 – Stephen Street, showing character of stone paved surfaces prior to the existing concrete material ©NLI



Figure 11 – former Methodist chapel, Stephen Street now in use as the Sligo Museum and Library ©NLI



Figure 12– detail confirms surviving ironwork, hinge stones and stops as being part of the original building and would inform restoration of the wooden gates if that were considered desirable in future ©NLI



Figure 13– Stephen Street looking east; the previously continuous 17th & 18th century building line is broken by the bank building on the left in the foreground and the Methodist chapel in the distance ©NLI



Figure 14– Stephen Street, detail of 18th century buildings, that are still present today ©NLI



Figure 15– former 'Victoria', now Hyde, Bridge & Stephen Street ©NLI



Figure 16 – Hyde Bridge & Belfast Bank, now the Yeats Society ©NLI



Figure 17 – Hyde Bridge & Belfast Bank, now the Yeats Society ©NLI



Figure 18 – the salmon weir and the riverside buildings which form the building line of the Rockwood Parade ©NLI



Figure 19 – 'New' Bridge. Note that the bridge comprised eight arches originally ©NLI

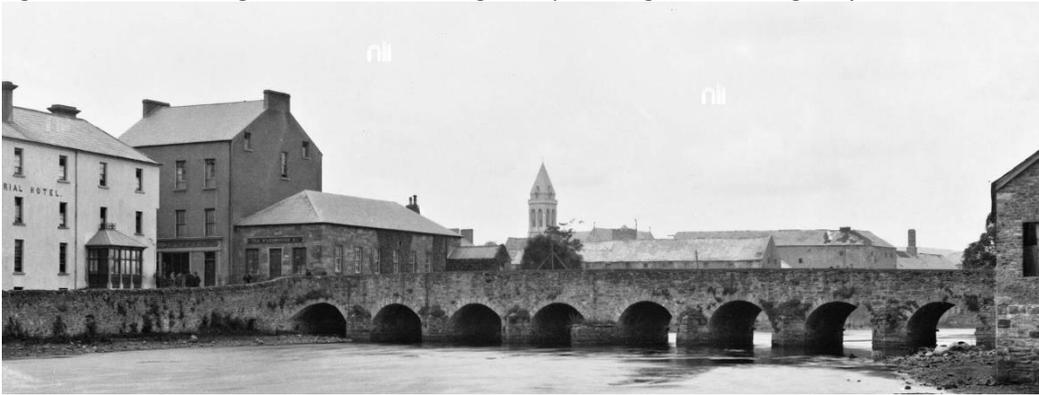


Figure 20 – 'New' Bridge, constructed circa 1680 ©NLI



Figure 21 – the 'New' Bridge looking towards Thomas Street. The furthest arch, on the south side, is no longer visible under the ramped approach from Rockwood Parade. ©NLI

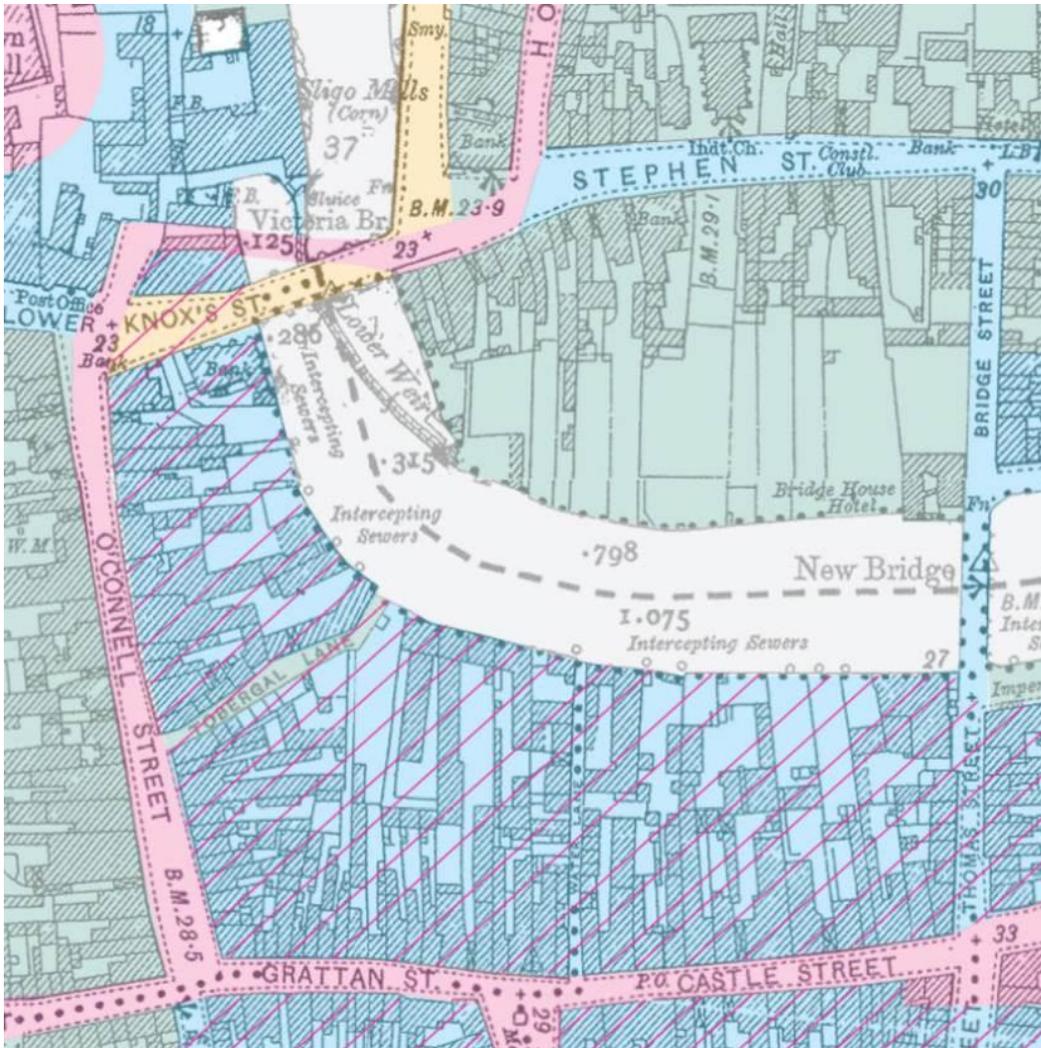


Figure 22 – unhatched blue area is thought to have established between 1601 & 1750; the hatched area pre-1600 is the medieval core. Source: IHTA

Details of Structure

Planning Applicant:	Sligo County Council – Part VIII Application
Planning authority:	Sligo County Council
Assessor:	Duncan McLaren BSc Dip Arch RIBA MRIAI, RIAI Accredited Conservation Architect (Grade I) Dedalus Architecture
Date of Inspection:	10th & 16th November 2020
Declarations relating to structure:	n/a
Planning Reference No.	TBC
Location/ Address:	Stephen Street, Holborn Street, Rockwood Parade, Tobergal Lane, Water Lane - Sligo
ITM Coordinates:	Refer to NIAH entry for each building
County:	SL
Map Type:	OS 1/2500 Map
Map Sheet:	014
NIAH Registration Number:	Stephen Street – 14 no entries Holborn Street – 1 entry Rockwood Parade – 1 entry Tobergal Lane – 1 no. entry Water Lane – 1 no. entry
	Interest categories: Architectural Social Technical & Architectural Historical Technical

Protection Status

Under Planning & Development Act 2000 Record of Protected Structures:	Stephen Street – 12 no entries Holborn Street – 1 no entry Rockwood Parade – 3 no entries Tobergal Lane – 0 entry Water Lane – 1 no entry
Architectural Conservation Area:	Yes – upper part of Tobergal Lane & Water Lane
Under National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 Record of Monuments & Places:	SL014-065---- “Historic Town” Entire proposal area
Zone of Archaeological Potential:	Yes – entire proposal area.

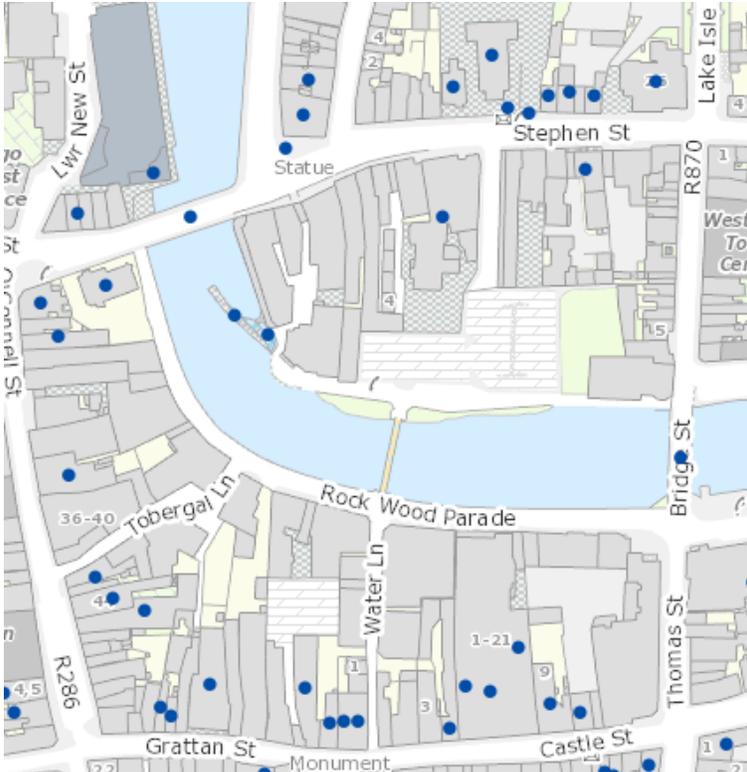


Figure 23 –map showing buildings and features recorded in the NIAH ©OSI



Figure 24 – map from SEDP showing RPS entries & Conservation Area Boundaries

Brief Description & Analysis of the Historical Setting

The following series are outline descriptions of the streetscapes and historic buildings, on a Street by Street basis, which form the setting of the Part VIII planning application. A separate table, in the Appendix, sets out details of the individual protected structures provide a description of individual structures, and an insight into their historic value.

General:

Whilst the individual structures affected by this application are of undoubted historical significance in their own right they form part of a larger group. In Stephen Street, the buildings, collectively, adjoin the site of a medieval river crossing rebuilt in the 19th century, a salmon weir, site of a water-powered flour mill and a well-preserved 18th & 19th century streetscape leading to the Mall and Calry Church. Holborn Street is the medieval thoroughfare leading from the town centre and river crossing towards Donegal. Tobergal Lane & Water Lane are medieval passageways connecting the original town core to the riverside and later industrial buildings on its west bank, prior to construction of the Rockwood Parade. Rockwood Parade is a late 20th century riverside route reclaimed from the river as part of a drainage improvement scheme also connecting the original medieval river crossing point, rebuilt in the 19th century, with the 'new' 17th century bridge to the east. One of the original arches of the latter was either removed, or has been concealed by construction of Rockwood Parade, in the late 20th century, which has narrowed the width of the river along this stretch.

Seventeen buildings within, or immediately adjoining the application area are protected structures, and a further two also appear on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. This is approximately 18% of the total number of buildings directly affected by the proposal. Whilst the remaining buildings are not protected, the traditional nature of much of their building fabric, their scale and continuation of the original street pattern emphasise the historical character of the streetscape with the exception of Rockwood Parade, although even here the building frontages follow the line of earlier industrial buildings backing onto the river.

The entire site, part of which is embodied in its historic street pattern, plot sizes and building lines, is located within the once fortified town area of Sligo and is designated as a 'zone of archaeological potential' requiring that most proposals which involve excavation will require an archaeological impact assessment which will consider both the long term material impact of development and also the impact of the means, or methodology, by which any interventions are made. This will have a bearing on the extent and depth of any excavation works, drainage and work in re-routing of other services.

The Garavogue River is part of Lough Gill Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). The method of execution of building works and the potential risk to the protected waters in particular may need careful planning and space set aside on site to control the run-off of surface water during and post construction. The management of these issues will also need to be reviewed during the implementation phases to ensure the possibility of any impact on historic building fabric is avoided.

Separate reports are to be prepared in relation to archaeological and natural heritage at the site that deal with these matters in detail.

Site & Landscape

Whilst there are many potential effects on the historic environment at a level of detail, the greatest impact is on the setting of individual historic buildings and the historic streetscape as a whole.

Historical photographs show some of the variety and detail of street finishes and paving materials in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In many respects these are relatively unrefined but are vernacular in character and are made from local stones and other geological materials that are particular to the locality.

Much of the character of this has disappeared and replaced with concrete, tarmacadam and other universal materials, and renewal is an opportunity, not only to improve the use and appearance of the place but also to reconnect the town and historic building fabric with its setting. Where, as along part of the east side of Holborn Street, some stone kerbs have survived these should be retained and reused in the scheme, and inform the material detail of new work.

The immediate site is discussed above in relation to its historical development. The townscape setting of the site is also significant as it terminates the vista to and from the town centre over the Hyde Bridge to Calry Church and the Mall, from the south; and views east and west between the two historic bridges.

Building by Building Review

Current proposals generally do not involve direct impact on the buildings in the sense of altering or changing historic building fabric, with the exception of the modern bronze sculpture of WB Yeats, which is proposed to be relocated. Works proposed are otherwise limited to altering street surface and materials and associated building services. This work would be carried out directly adjacent to historic building fabric and whilst drawings do not yet show exactly how every building will be affected, this will be a necessary step in future as the detail of works is developed. Issues include, but not limited to:

- The level of excavations and avoiding undermining of shallow foundations or smaller features such as front steps & railings
- Physical protection & other measures to prevent damage to historic stonework, ironwork and other original building material during the implementation stages
- New finishes – entry levels, impact on stepped entrances, drainage falls and prevention of ponding and flooding.
- Rainwater disposal – drainage at thresholds, discharge of rainwater from building rainwater systems to channels & gullies; method for cleaning & maintenance
- Substrate to new finishes – French drains or permeable fill to control dampness to lower floor levels

Whilst any changes associated with this development to individual buildings may only be small, they may need to be considered at a level of detail to ensure that damage, particularly to the protected buildings, does not occur inadvertently. Aspects that may have an impact may not yet be fully realised as post planning detail design work has yet to be undertaken. For this reason it is recommended that a 2-stage process is adopted, where the principle of any change is assessed at this stage, but that there is an opportunity for detailed aspects of the proposals to be considered at the appropriate stage, in due course. This process should only be applied to elements where change has already been identified and is included in the planning application documentation.

A selection of photographs is included for reference and to illustrate observations in connection with design development noted above.

A table is also included in the appendix which identifies individual buildings, the level of protection applicable, impact of proposals and any recommended mitigation. In this case 'building' also includes a single bronze sculpture of WB Yeats which it is proposed to be relocated as part of the work.

It is noted that where opening up work is undertaken during the course of development a photographic record of any exposed structures should be made to confirm that measures taken below ground are implemented as necessary.

Photographs

(This section gives an external & internal overview of the buildings)

Stephen Street



Figure 25 – view E along north side of Hyde Bridge RPS107



Figure 28 – former salmon weir



Figure 26 – view over headrace of former flour mill site, now the Glasshouse hotel



Figure 29 – Hyde Bridge parapet & deck modified to suit building construction circa 1995



Figure 27 – Hyde Bridge parapet modified to facilitate building of Rockwood Parade circa 1995



Figure 30 – Victoria, now Markievicz Road embankment



Figure 31 – continuation of Hyde Bridge parapet to form the parapet to the river embankment



Figure 32 – view E along Stephen Street



Figure 33 – Ulster Bank RPS151 & WB Yeats Statue RPS152



Figure 34 – concrete slab footpath typical of entire Stephen Street frontage



Figure 35 – statue currently placed that passers-by are forced into observing the sculpture



Figure 36 – rainwater drainage discharges directly underground along this frontage



Figure 37



Figure 38 –riser to bottom step (not in use currently) compromised by level of concrete surface



Figure 39 – sealed access at base of pipework is potential risk to stonework when pipework blocks, allowing water to back up



Figure 40 – pipework discharges to channel within depth of paving



Figure 41 – level change and disruption to bridge ramp on south side facilitates building to right of view circa 1995.



Figure 42 – rainwater pipework discharges directly below ground with no access for cleaning



Figure 43 – hopper head to this building is visible in c.19 photograph



Figure 44 – 18th century buildings unprotected but which characterise the streetscape



Figure 45



Figure 46 – unprotected 18th & 19th century buildings which characterise the streetscape



Figure 47 – rainwater pipe discharges to gully, allowing inspection and cleaning



Figure 48 – rainwater pipe discharges over paved surface



Figure 49 – dead zone between buildings where refuse accumulates



Figure 50 – Bank of Ireland RPS153



Figure 51 – riser to first step to entrances have been compromised by level of footpath finish



Figure 52 – low riser at this entrance is shown as compromised in c19 photographs



Figure 53



Figure 54



Figure 55 – rainwater pipe discharges directly onto footpath



Figure 56 – Constitutional Buildings RPS161



Figure 57



Figure 58



Figure 59



Figure 60 - Gilroy Gannon RPS158, 159 & 160



Figure 62 – rainwater pipe discharges to channel in footpath



Figure 61 – rainwater pipe discharges to channel in footpath

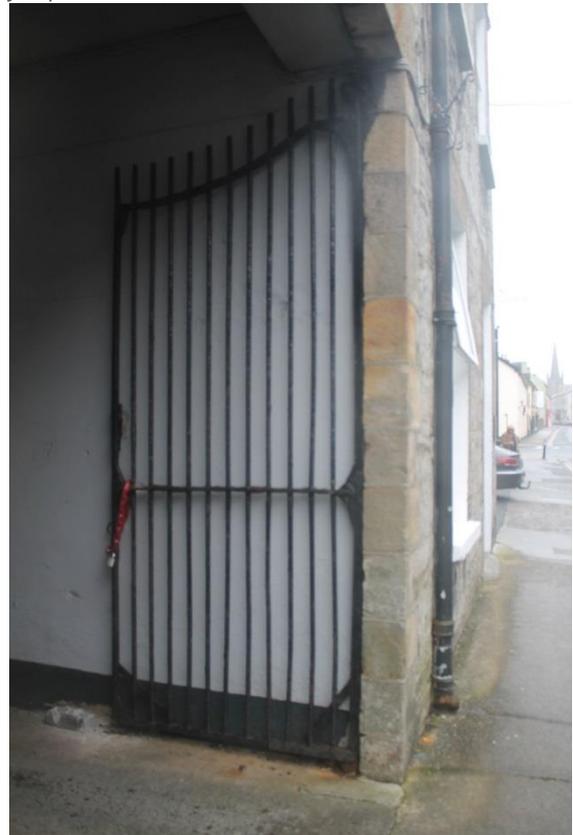


Figure 63 – gate swing tight to footpath



Figure 64 – County Museum & Library RPS154&155



Figure 67



Figure 65



Figure 68



Figure 69



Figure 66 – original ironwork visible in c19 photograph; original gate stops & pivot stones intact



Figure 70 – modern ironwork; foundation stones to wall base exposed



Figure 71 –AIB Bank RPS157



Figure 72



Figure 73



Figure 74



Figure 75



Figure 76



Figure 77

Holborn Street



Figure 78



Figure 79 – a characterful traditional street, with only one protected building



Figure 80



Figure 81 – RPS65 Thomas Connolly



Figure 82



Figure 84 – this short section on east side of Holborn Street is the only section within the entire study area where stone kerbs still survive



Figure 85



Figure 83 – typical traditional buildings which although unprotected contribute to the streetscape; currently in need of repair



Figure 86 – detail of stone kerb stones



Figure 87



Figure 90



Figure 88 – former home of comic, Spike Milligan's, father



Figure 91 – rainwater channel by-passed & discharges onto footpath



Figure 89

Rockwood Parade



Figure 92



Figure 93



Figure 94



Figure 95



Figure 96 – Yeats Memorial Building RPS105



Figure 97



Figure 98 – boundary wall was originally the riverside retaining wall & is part of the protected structure



Figure 99



Figure 102



Figure 103



Figure 100



Figure 104 – the frontage to Rockwood Parade follows the line of earlier industrial buildings approximately



Figure 101



Figure 105



Figure 106 – 'New Bridge' RPS4



Figure 110



Figure 107 – only seven arches are now visible; the eighth was located under the position of the ramp up rhs of view. Section of parapet also removed



Figure 111 – part of parapet on east side removed to facilitate construction of adjacent Kennedy Parade



Figure 108



Figure 112 – carved street name plaques RPS66; unaffected by work unless lighting & CCTV equipment are changed; providing an opportunity for better presentation



Figure 109

Water Lane



Figure 113 – medieval period alleyway with virtually no surviving historic fabric, except at south end, part of conservation area



Figure 114



Figure 115

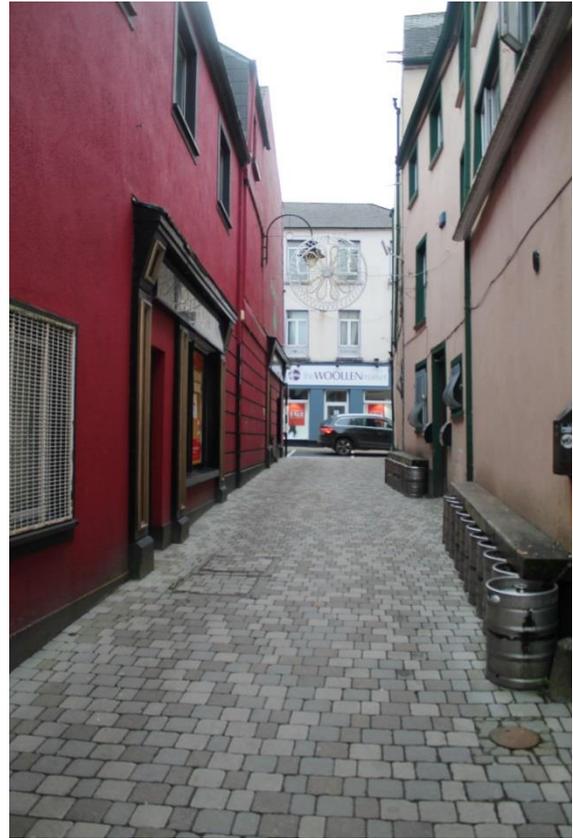


Figure 116



Figure 117 – side wall of Shoot the Crows RPS51; rubbing stones, designed to protect the lower wall from cart wheel abrasions

Tobergal Lane



Figure 118



Figure 119 – Carraig Donn/Cavanagh's Bar
NIAH32007042



Figure 120



Figure 121



Figure 122



Figure 123



Figure 124— medieval period alleyway with virtually no surviving historic fabric, except at south end, part of conservation area

Impact Assessment of Proposals & Recommendation

A table is also included in the appendix which identifies individual Protected Structures and structures included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, the impact of proposals on these, and any recommended mitigation.

General Observations

Observations and recommendations are listed in relation to protected buildings in the Appendix to this document. Observations are also equally applicable to other traditional buildings which, whilst not protected, contribute to the historic character of the streetscape. Several buildings and associated features, which are unprotected but are considered to have some heritage value area highlighted in the photograph section of the report; these are concentrated around Holborn Street.

At a level of detail, proposals should be designed to be reversible and have minimum impact on the existing structures. The impacts which we have identified above are based on our site inspections and reading of the drawings supplied; it will be the responsibility of the architects for the design of proposals to ensure that the documents submitted are exhaustive in their description of the proposed works.

The recommendations that are proposed are based on an assumption that the proposed new public realm improvements are positive in enhancing the setting of the historic buildings, as a means of ensuring that they continue to be desirable places to live and work. The protection of their cultural value also rests in ensuring that their function and layout can still be clearly be observed regardless of any changes that are permitted to be made to the setting.

Conclusion

The assessment report has undertaken a review of the existing historic streetscape, undertaken a brief exploration of significance of the historic buildings, and their setting, that are affected by the proposals, and the possible impacts that may result in undertaking the proposed work.

Some recommendations have been made in connection with scheme, mostly at a level of detail, which may be applied as part of the preparation of working drawings, and in method statements for undertaking elements of the work in due course.

Overall, the proposed development is expected to have a positive impact in enhancing the historic town centre, assisting in supporting a sustainable future for the historic buildings in maintaining their setting, in providing vitality to the streetscape and encouraging complementary new activities within the neighbourhood.

The impact on the fabric and thus also the visual character of the buildings, subject to adoption of recommendations of this report, and execution in line with best practice, is considered to be minimal, and therefore acceptable in terms of architectural conservation.

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