

APPENDIX D – ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY

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**Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
in advance of a proposed upgrading of
Carrickmacross WWTW, Co. Monaghan**

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September 2004

**Client: T.J. O'Connor & Associates, Consulting Engineers, Corrig House,
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1. Introduction

This report assesses the impact of a proposed extension to a sewerage treatment works facility on the archaeological landscape of Magheross townland, Carrickmacross, County Monaghan. The proposed extension for the sewerage treatment works will utilise the existing facility and also extend into a previously undeveloped area. The development site is located c. 0.5km south-east of Carrickmacross town (Fig. 1) and six known archaeological sites are recorded in the environs of the site (Fig. 2; Appendix 1). The development will involve ground disturbance during the site preparation works and the construction phases of the proposed sewerage treatment works extension.

2. Study Methodology

This report was compiled using the following sources

1. Desk top study
2. Field-walking

1. A desktop study of the proposed development area was carried out in order to assess the developments impact on the archaeological potential of Magheross townland and the surrounding area. The desktop study included a review of the first and second editions of the six inch scale Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for County Monaghan. All of the available archaeological and historical literature for the area was also consulted. All local historical and archaeological journals were checked to establish if any new information on the area was published in the recent past.
2. Field-walking was carried out in September 2004 by Kerri Cleary on behalf of the Archaeological Services Unit UCC.

3. The Receiving Environment

The existing waste water treatment facility is located south-east of Carrickmacross town in the townland of Magheross, in the barony of Farney (Fig. 1). The town of Carrickmacross is a district market town, located in the south of County Monaghan on the N2. It is surrounded by hills and lakes and has been termed the gateway to County Monaghan and to Ulster. The physical topography is undulating countryside formed of Ordovician and Silurian slates with a profusion of large and small lakes. Drumlin swarms, which are low whale-backed ridges of glacial boulder clay formed beneath ice sheets, dominate the landscape and the long axis is parallel with the direction of the ice movement towards the south east which terminated at the Kells moraine. This glacial activity took place during the Pleistocene Period (or the Midlandian phase of the last Ice Age), which lasted up to 12,000 years ago. Thereafter the climate improved and the probability is that the area became wooded.

The development site opens onto the Ardee road to the south-west and a new road is under construction along the north-western boundary. The River Proules and a shelter belt of tall trees run along the north-eastern boundary blocking the existing pump house from view (Plate 1). There is a greenfield site on the south-eastern side of the site separated from the development by a hedge of trees. A concrete and wire fence surround the development site on three sides with the south-western side fenced in with iron fencing and a large iron gateway (Plate 2). Lough Naglack is to the east and the old Carrickmacross Branch of the Great Northern Railway is to the north and north-east.

The existing WWTP and the proposed area of development was originally a boggy greenfield site. The existing treatment plant has since disturbed most of this ground. That which has not been built on has been landscaped (Plate 3), covered with concrete (Plate 4) or stone gravel and used as a storage area (Plate 5).

4. Development Proposal

The proposed development consists of the extension of an existing waste water treatment works facility (Figs. 3 and 4). This project is one part of a large sewerage scheme collection system for Carrickmacross town. The development incorporates an existing treatment facility and a previously undeveloped area to the north-west.

The location of oxidation ditch No.1, settling tank No. 1 and associated sludge chambers (Plate 6) will be redeveloped into a new membrane bioreactor comprising an oxidation ditch and a membrane tank, and an inlet pump station. South of this a blower building, an administration building, inlet works and storm tanks will all be erected in a previously undeveloped area currently under stone gravel and used for storage (Plate 7). A landscaped embankment will also be erected around the new additions to the treatment plant.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

The Irish name for Carrickmacross is 'Carraig Mhacaire Pois' which translated means 'The Rock of the Wooded Plain'. It derives its name from a large white Limestone Rock, which was visible near the Bridge up to the end of the seventeenth century. The South Monaghan area is within the ancient Gaelic kingdom of Oriel who were ruled by the O'Carroll clan and who in turn owed allegiance to the Uí Néill dynasty of Ulster. This kingdom is recorded from the fifth century AD (Early Christian period) and continued until the O'Carroll's were superseded by the McMahan, another Gaelic dynasty. The McMahons divided Monaghan into four separate chieftainships and one was Farney, the area around Carrickmacross. The territory remained part of Gaelic Ireland until the Ulster and Elizabethan plantations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Carrickmacross was a noted market town since the sixteenth century and housed the principal pig and butter market for the region. The town is recorded as being over 350 years old, dating to the Elizabethan period and Third Earl of Essex erected a castle there in the 1630s and the town developed thereafter. The site of the castle is in the grounds of the convent of St. Louis.

The proposed sewerage treatment works facility is located in the townland of Magheross,

in the barony of Farney, south-east of Carrickmacross town. The proposed development does not incorporate any recorded archaeological sites, however, there are at least six known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the development (Fig. 2; Appendix 1).

There are three recorded sites to the north-west of the development site within the town of Carrickmacross, these are a church with graveyard, the site of a castle and an old bridge. The surviving church and graveyard (RMP MO031-035; Plate 8), in the townland of Magheross, dates to the late 17th century but is recorded as located on the site of an Early Christian period monastery, which burnt down in AD 685. The Irish church was dominated by scattered rural monasteries from the 6th century onwards. Many of these were surrounded by large enclosures (vallum), either circular or oval in plan, which are fossilised in the landscape as curving field boundaries, roadways or laneways. As well as the church and graveyard these enclosures included dwellings and ancillary buildings. Most of these buildings were of timber construction and no longer survive above ground. Ground disturbance may uncover the foundation levels. Other monastic sites were simple and contained little more than a church and graveyard. It is also recorded that the church site was destroyed in the 1641 Rebellion and rebuilt in 1682 and this church in Magheross survives today. Previous investigations related to the sewerage scheme in this area opened a trial pit (TH 26) on the street directly outside the graveyard and did not contain features of archaeological interest (McCarthy 2003).

Carrickmacross castle (RMP MO031-034), in the townland of Drummond Otra, was built by the Third Earl of Essex, Robert Devereux in 1628-33 and was destroyed during the Williamite wars in 1688-89. It is most likely that this was a seventeenth century fortified house. In the late sixteenth century, with the influx of Elizabethan Planters, there was a change in architectural styles. The old-style tower house gave way to a roomier better-lit more comfortable fortified house. They retained some defensive features such as machicolations but also included new innovations such as wooden stairs in projecting blocks and a larger number of private rooms. The majority of these were built by Gaelic or Old English (Norman) families, although some were also built as part of the Plantations. The castle was located at a prominent position, a commanding point on the principal road through Farney, one of the main routes into Ulster. The site of the castle is now located in the Convent of the Sisters of St. Louis.

The third recorded archaeological site is that of a bridge (RMP MO031-105) in the townland of Drummond Etra. This bridge is seventeenth century in date and was recorded in 1634 by Thomas Raven. The bridge was replaced, although structural elements may remain *in situ* on the riverbanks. Previous investigations (Slit Trenches 24 & 32) related to the sewerage scheme in this area revealed a wall and a timber plank and while these are not likely to be part of the original structure it is possible that remnants of the bridge may be encountered during more extensive ground disturbance (McCarthy 2003).

Three crannógs (RMP MO 031-037, 038 and 082) are also recorded to the east and north-east of the development area in the townlands of Lisanisk (Plate 9) and Drummond Otra. This term refers to man-made islands in lakes, artificially raised above the water level to provide a safe area of habitation or as metal smith's workshops in the Early Christian period. From excavated examples it appears that these were constructed by driving a ring of closely set vertical wooden piles into the mud of the lake and within this palisade, layers of timber, peat, brushwood etc were laid down. Access to the site was probably by boat or a causeway. In 1965 a number of finds were acquired by the National Museum of Ireland from Lough Naglack where one of these crannógs (RMP MO 031-082) is located (Lucas 1968). These finds included a portion of a slate spearhead, a bronze socketed axehead and a bronze dagger from the lake and from the crannóg came a stone disc, a bronze halberd, two bronze daggers, a bronze ring, fourteen bronze pins and an iron axehead, spade and ploughshare, bone pins, glass and amber beads etc.

Previous investigations related to the sewerage scheme were undertaken along the public roadway defining the western boundary of the proposed development site. Both a strip trench and a trial hole were excavated and nothing of archaeological significance was noted (McCarthy 2003).

6. Impact of Proposed Development on the Archaeological Landscape

Visual impact

The proposed development will not have any visual impact on the known archaeological sites in the environs of Magheross townland.

Archaeological Impact

The proposed sewerage treatment works extension is within the environs of six known archaeological sites (Fig 2; Appendix 1). However, it is about 0.75km away from the nearest of these recorded sites. The site has already been extensively developed and landscaped when the existing waste water treatment plant was erected. Therefore, due to the already disturbed nature of the site no further archaeological input is proposed.

Impact Summary

The impact of the proposed sewerage treatment works extension on the archaeological landscape of the area was assessed using all of the available documentary and cartographic sources. There are six recorded monuments in the vicinity of the proposed development area. The development site has already been partially developed and landscaped, therefore no further archaeological input is proposed.

7. Non-Technical Summary

A number of sources were consulted in order to assess the archaeological potential of the proposed development area. Field walking was also carried out to assess the proximity and therefore impact of the development on the archaeological monuments and to record any other potential monuments which are not marked on the SMR and RMP maps. There is no direct impact on the recorded archaeological monuments within the vicinity of the development area and the site has already undergone extensive development and landscaping due to the existing treatment plant. No further archaeological input is proposed for this site.

8. Bibliography

Brindley, A. 1986. *Archaeological Inventory of County Monaghan*, The Stationery Office, Dublin.

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Lucas, A.T. 1968. National Museum of Ireland: Archaeological Acquisitions in the year 1965. *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 98, 93-160.

McCarthy, M. 2003. *Archaeological monitoring of site investigation works for proposed Carrickmacross Sewerage Scheme, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan*. Report submitted to Consultant Engineers T.J. O'Connor.

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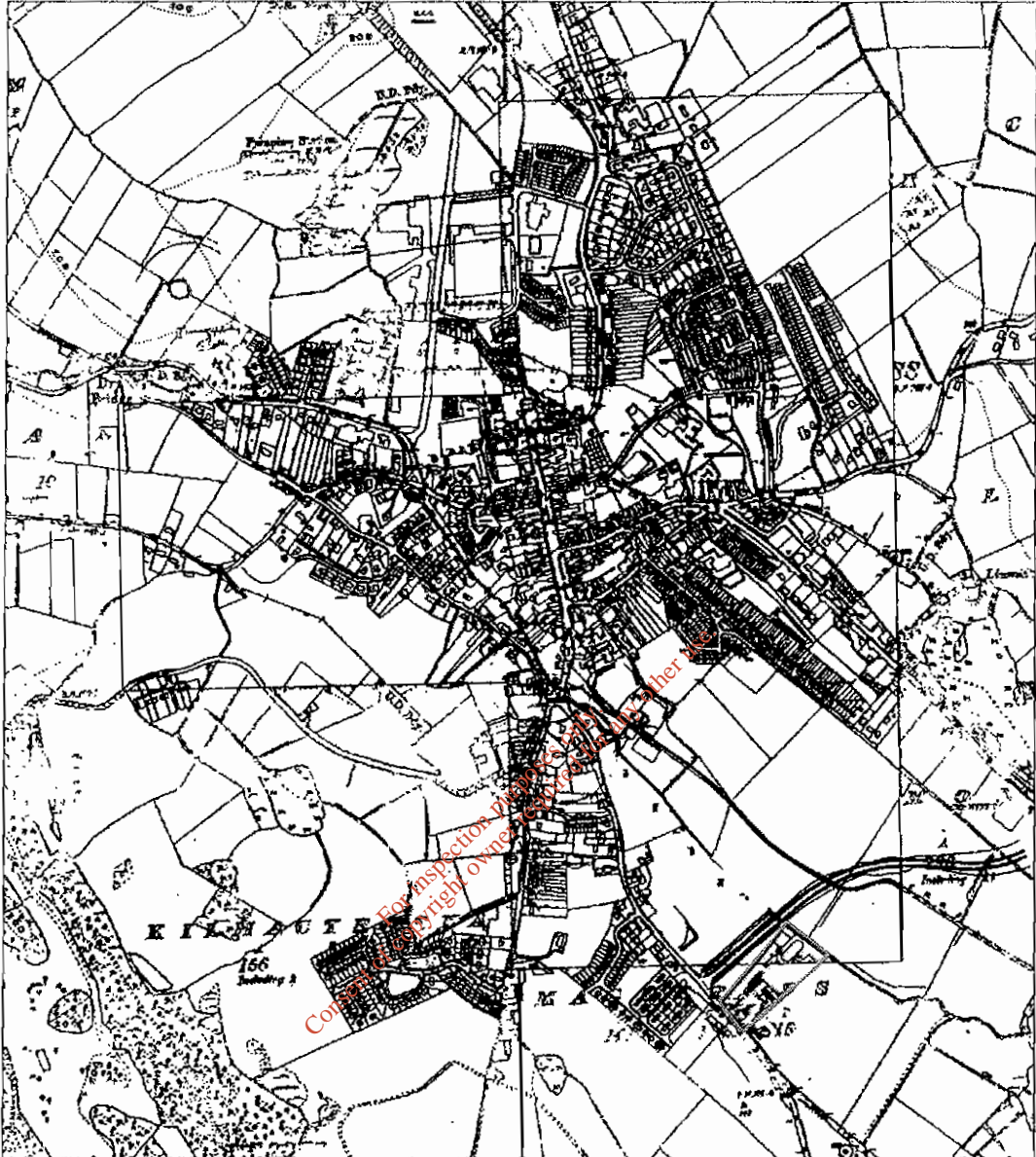


Figure 1: Location of development site

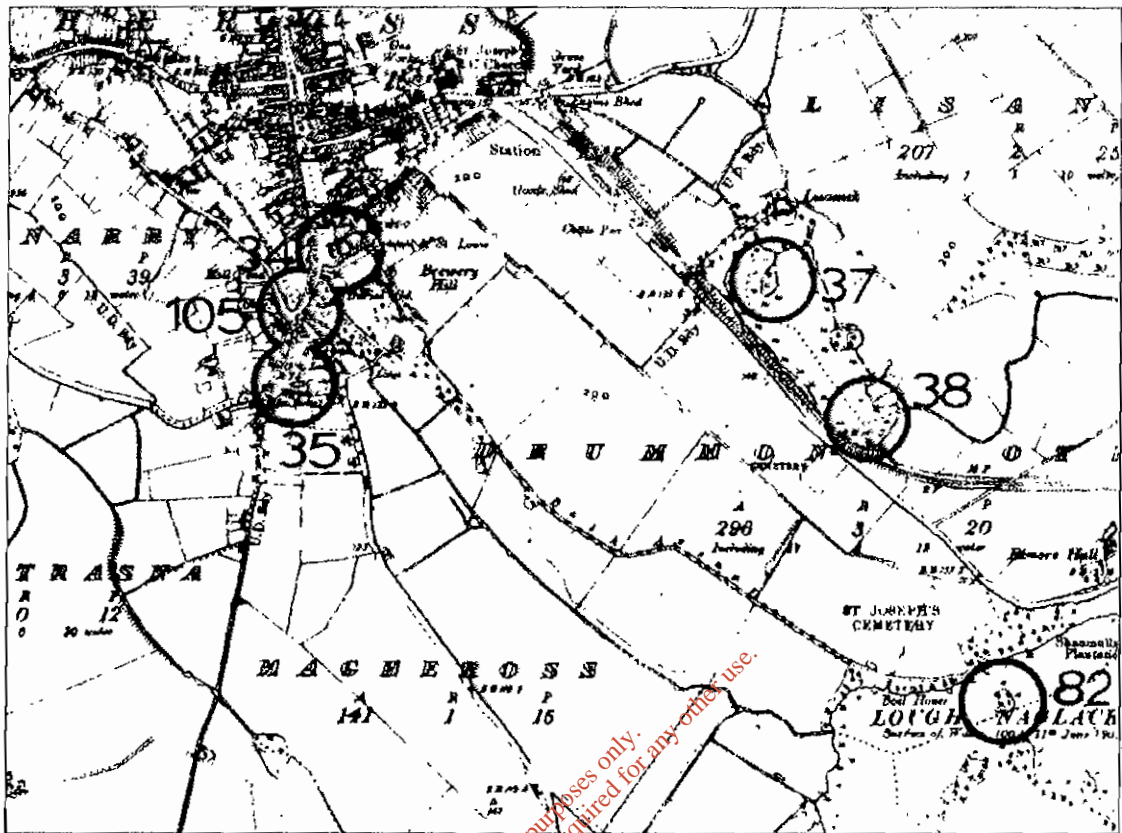
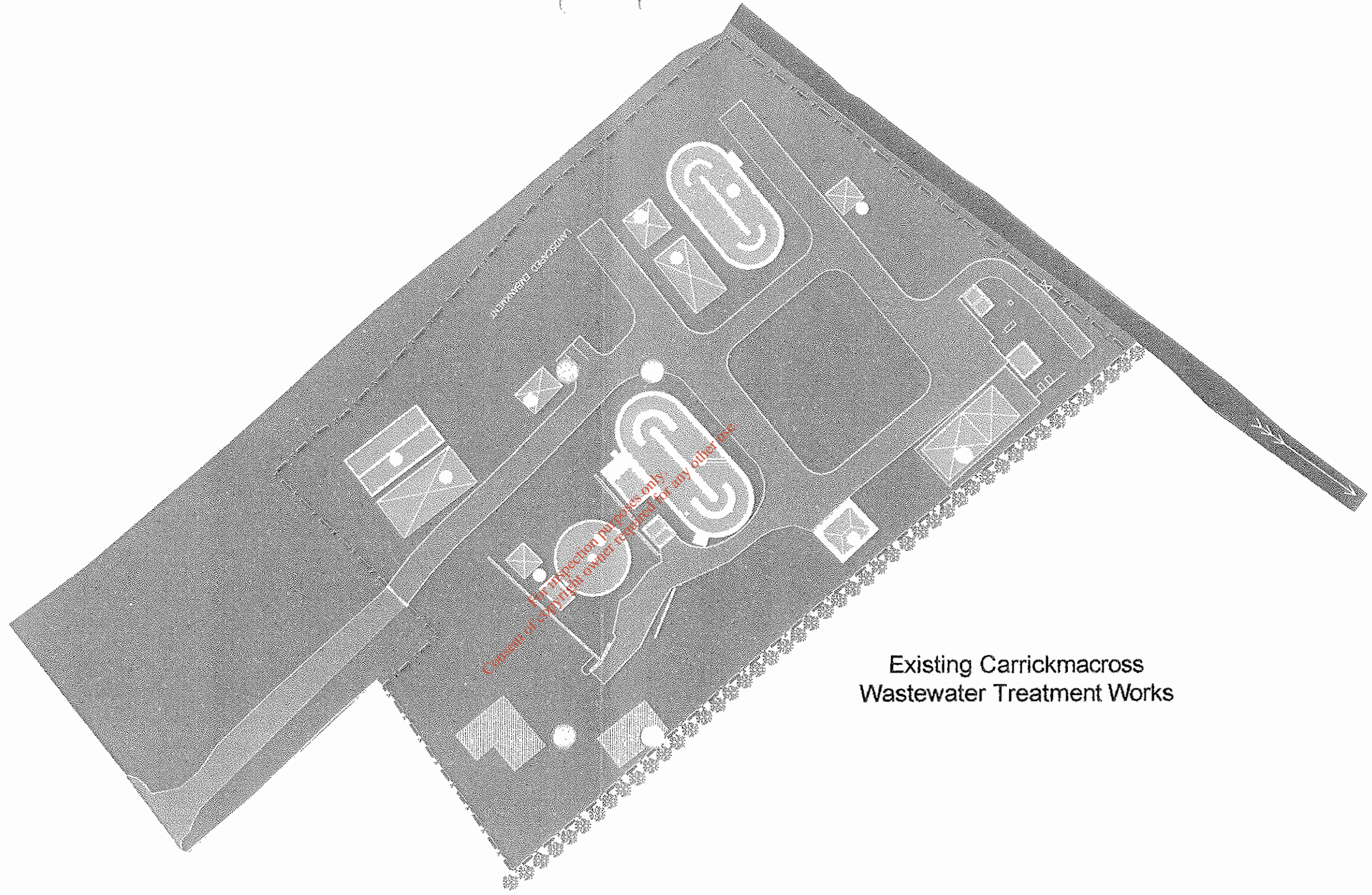
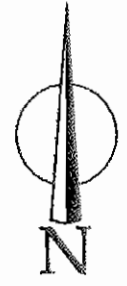
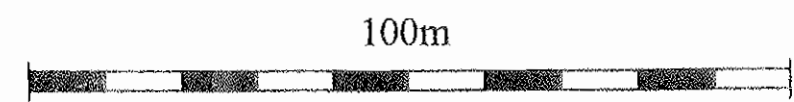



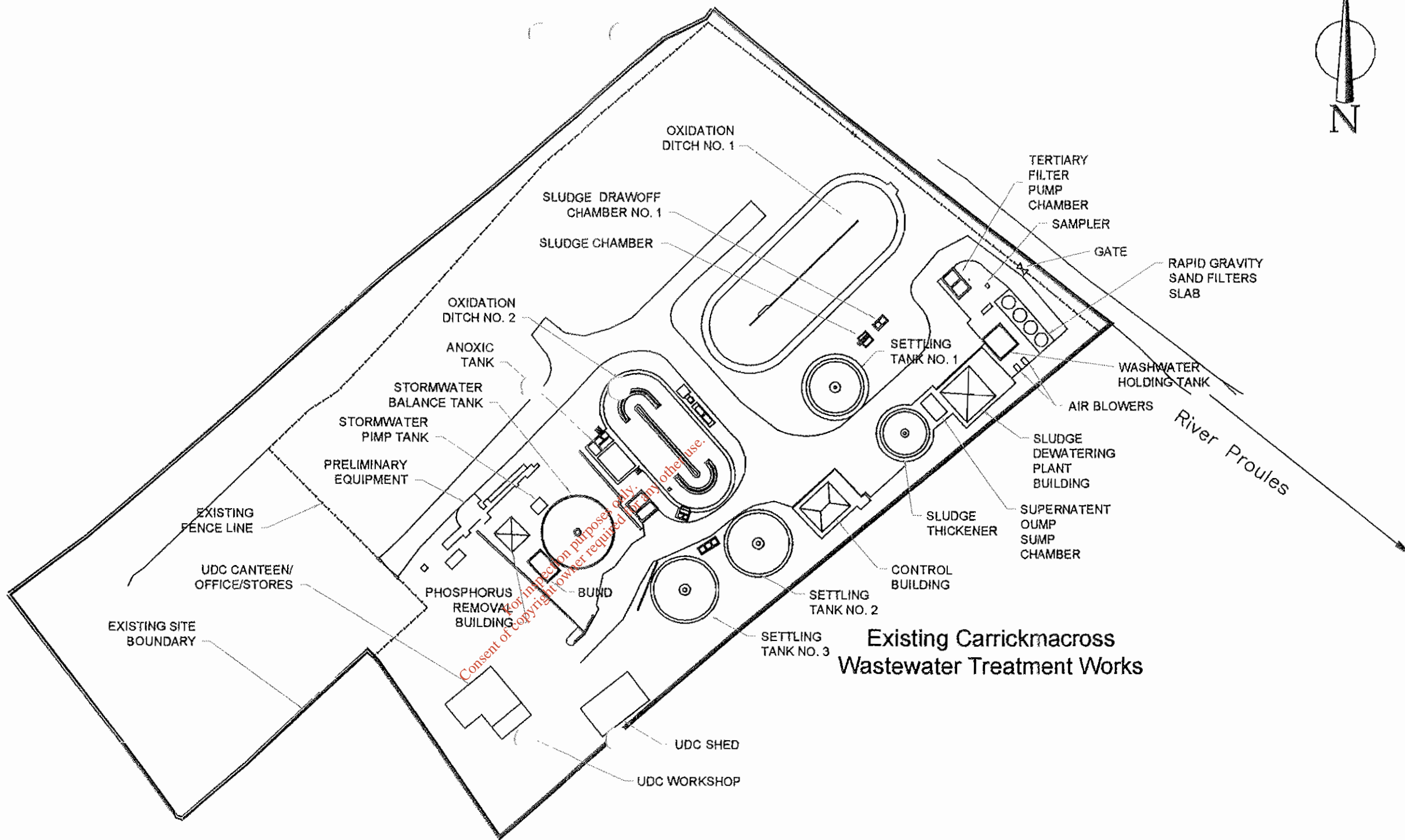
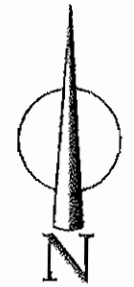
Figure 2: Extract from RMP map M0031 showing known archaeological in environs of the development site



Existing Carrickmacross
Wastewater Treatment Works



 The Archaeological Services Unit Department of Archaeology Tel: 021 4904020 Coláiste na hOllscoile, Corcaigh, Éire University College Cork, Ireland	Project Carrickmacross Wastewater Treatment Plant	Title Proposed Development	Date 23:09:04	Surveyed by OS/TJOC	Job/Exc No. N/A
		Client T.J. O'Connor	Scale 1:1000	Compiled by HK	Fig No. 4



Existing Carrickmacross
Wastewater Treatment Works

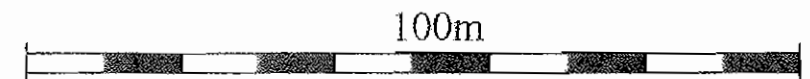




Plate 1: Trees along the north-eastern boundary blocking the existing pump house from view.



Plate 2: Entrance to existing treatment plant with iron fencing and gateway, looking north-east.

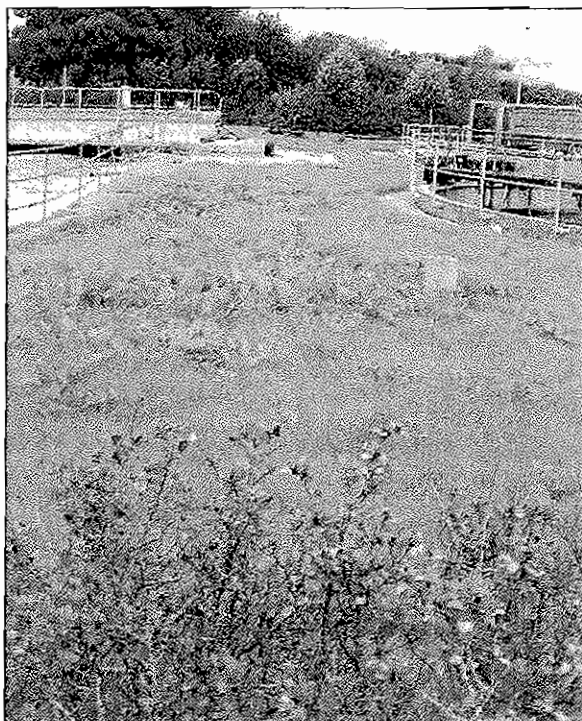


Plate 3: Landscaped area between settling tank and oxidation ditch, looking north-east.



Plate 4: Existing storm water tank with concrete surrounds, looking west.



Plate 5: Undeveloped area covered in gravel and used for storage.



Plate 6: Oxidation ditch, settling tank and sludge chambers to be redeveloped.



Plate 7: Location of proposed blower building, administration building, inlet works and storm tanks, currently under stone gravel and used for storage, looking south.

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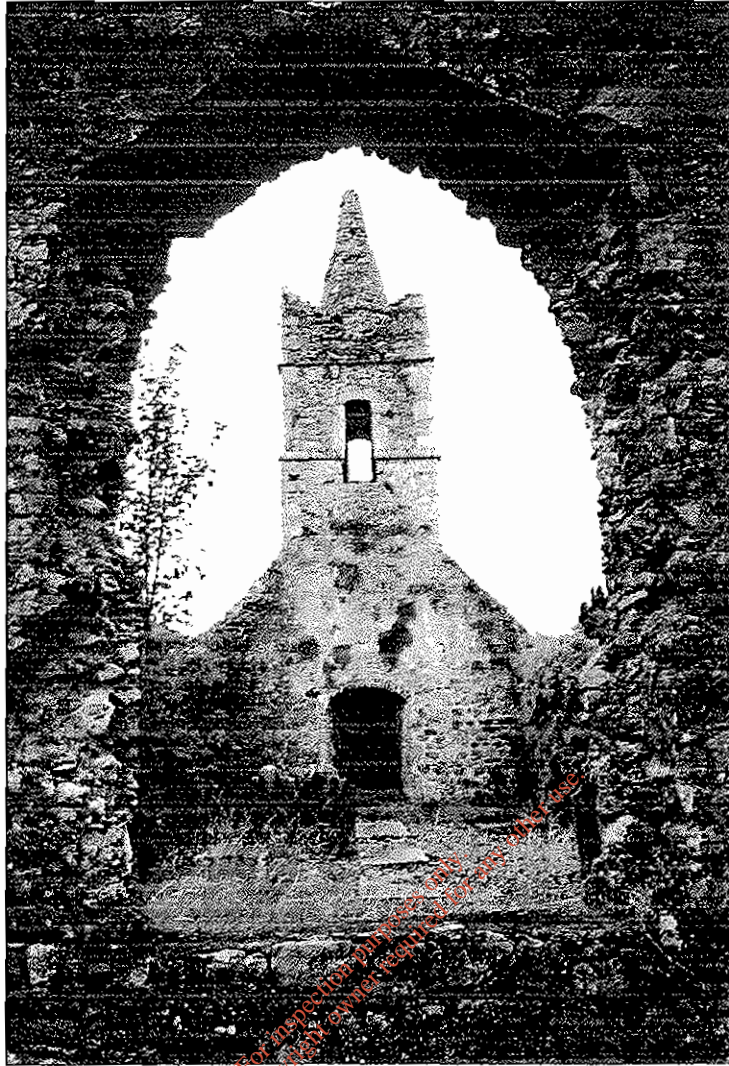


Plate 8: Carrickmacross church and graveyard (RMP MO031-035).



Plate 9: Lisanisk crannog (RMP MO 031-037).