

Appendix 13.2

Descriptions of Archaeological Monuments

SITE CH-1

SMR No:

OF013-007

TOWNLAND:

Cloniffeen

CLASSIFICATION:

Church & Graveyard

ITM:

597767 724338

PROTECTION:

RMP; OCDP

Church – OF013-00701

Situated on a low rock outcrop on the low-lying floodplains of the river Shannon. A small rectangular church (ext. dims. 6.7m N-S; 13.2m E-W; wall T 0.8m) built with roughly coursed rubble limestone with only E end of S wall surviving and wall footings elsewhere. At the W end of the church are the wall footings of a cross wall indicating possible priests room (ext. dims. 6.7m N-S; 5.2m E-W). No architectural features evident.

Graveyard – OF013-00702

The church is situated within a roughly square shaped area (33m N-S; 34m E-W) enclosed by a bank of earth and stones (Wth. 1.5m; ext. H. 0.5m) which is best preserved at N elsewhere it has been reduced to a scarp. There are rows of upright unmarked stones aligned in N/S rows in the S sector of the enclosure. These are the grave-markers of unbaptised children according to the ITA Survey (1942). Graveyard associated with the medieval church ruins that may have been re-used as a children's burial ground in the post medieval period.



Site CH-1

SITE CH-2

SMR No:

OF013-010

TOWNLAND:

Raghra; Cloniffeen

CLASSIFICATION:

Castle - unclassified

ITM:

596764 725450

PROTECTION:

RMP; OCDP

Unlocated castle within the townland of Raghra (Shannonbridge) that is mentioned in the OS letters (O'Flanagan 1933, vol. 1, 181; Loeber 1988, vol. 5, 59-60). The Constabulary Barracks marked on the 1838 ed. OS 6-inch map is thought to be the site of Raghra Castle. Constabulary Barracks has been levelled and replaced by a modern bungalow which served as a Garda Station. Walled perimeter of Constabulary Barracks may contain cut stone from levelled castle.



Site CH-2 Eastern perimeter wall to Garda Station

SITE CH-3

SMR No:

OF013-037001

RO056-018001

TOWNLAND:

Raghra; Cloniffeen

CLASSIFICATION:

Bridge

ITM:

596625 725477

PROTECTION:

RMP; OCDP; RCDP

Sixteen-arch road bridge, completed in 1757, spanning the River Shannon, with an extra span completed soon afterwards on E (Shannonbridge) ban. In 1845 Thomas Rhodes designed a cast iron swivel bridge to replace this span, which itself was replaced by a concrete span in 1983-4, (Barry 1985). Random coursed limestone walls with ashlar voussoirs to round-headed arch-rings. Stone corbels to rendered soffits. Cut stone string courses to parapets surmounted by cut stone coping. Full-height upstream and downstream V-cutwaters with pedestrian refuges to parapet. Limestone plaque to east end gives dates for bridges construction and opening to navigation. Modern metal lamp standards to road surface.

Listed in NIAH – Reg. No: 31956004

Listed in Roscommon RPS – Reg. No.: 05600027

See SITE CH-9 below



Site CH-3 – downstream from E

SITE CH-4

SMR No:

A: OF013-037003

RO056-018003

B. OF013-037002

RO056-018002

TOWNLAND:

Raghra; Cloniffeen

CLASSIFICATION:

A. Weir – Fish

B. Ford

ITM:

596620 725424

PROTECTION:

RMP; OCDP; RCDP

A. Weir – Fish

A manuscript in the RIA (Ms. G. 1. 2) by a Col. Roy on a short tour of Ireland, which is undated but probably 18th century, says that there are several fords on the River Shannon between Athlone and Banagher, but that roads do not lead to them, except to Raghra (Shannonbridge) and Ballaghna, two miles below the Seven Churches. Ballaghna is not identified, but it may be the ford at Cloonburren (RO056-011003-). This fording point along a route from Mac Coghlan's country to Athlone was described by Matthew de Renzy in 1620 as 'a fowle and dangerous waye betwixt it and Belanasloye [Ballinasloe] westward through wods [woods] and bogs and likewise to the north-east and north-west whether [you] would passe through Cluainmacnoise or to Delvin Mc Coghlan'. De Renzy goes on to state that 'This [castle and lands] (OF013-010) must needs be planted also with undertakers in regard it lyeth upon the Shenon [Shannon] and that there is a ford (OF013-037002/RO056-018002-) over that river

weare (RO056-018003-) in somer [summer] time foote men may wade over.' (Mac Cuarta, B. 1987, 178-9). In 1622 the commissioners appointed by the English Crown for the Plantation of Kings County granted Thomas Rotheram the lands and ownership of the fishing weirs of the town and lands of Raghra [Shannonbridge]. The 'Eel Weir' indicated on the first edition OS 6-inch map to the south of the bridge at Shannonbridge may have been built on the site of or may even be the fish weir described in the 17th century.

B. Ford

A manuscript of 1766 in the RIA (Ms. G. 1. 2) by a Col. Roy on a short tour of Ireland, says that there are several fords on the River Shannon between Athlone and Banagher, but that roads do not lead to them, except to Raghra (Shannonbridge) and Ballaghna, two miles below the Seven Churches. Ballaghna is not identified, but it may be the ford at Cloonburren (RO056-011003-). The ford of Raghra was described in 1620 by Mathew de Renzy as a 'foule and daungerous waye over that reiver weare (RO056-018003-)' between Mac Coughlin's country in Co. Offaly and Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. (Mac Cuarta 1987, 178-9)

SITE CH-5

SMR No:

RO056-016

TOWNLAND:

Raghrabeg

CLASSIFICATION:

Bastion Fort

ITM:

596396 725433

PROTECTION:

RMP; RCDP

At the E end of a NW-SE section of the Esker Riada and guarding the W approaches to the bridge (RO056-018001-) at Shannonbridge. An earthwork of two redoubts was built in 1804 and upgraded to the present works by 1817 to a plan of Lt. Col. Fisher. It was built, together with a barracks on the E side of the River Shannon, to provide a bridgehead into Connaught in the event of a Napoleonic invasion, and it was probably utilised up to the 1870s.

An earthwork battery (RO056-017----) survives on Lamb Island in the River Shannon c. 130m to the NE. The main works consist of two blockhouses of three storeys, vaulted over the first and third, at either side of the approaches to the bridge from Ballinasloe, but only that on the S side survives. Each blockhouse supported three pieces of artillery on its vaulted roof and had two levels of musket loops, but that on the S covered the Ballinasloe road which approached from the NW on the SW side of the esker. A sunken road (L c. 70m) led W to a forward redoubt (dims c. 42m N-S; c. 30m E-W), entering a sunken court (dims c. 15m E-W; c. 10m N-S) from which stairs led up to vaulted firing-chambers which covered an ashlar-faced fosse (Wth of base c. 7m; D c. 4m) beyond which a glacis (L c. 180m E-W) led down to the esker. Four guns over the firing chambers also covered the glacis, while at the ground floor, which contained magazines, a caponniere projected into the fosse. The caponniere was protected by flanking fire from a gallery on the ground floor of the redoubt. (Kerrigan 1974; 1980, 178-181; 1995, 222-5)

Flanking walls connect the redoubt to the blockhouses in the rear; that at S being broken by the road to Ballinasloe, and further walls with musket loops connected the blockhouses to the river where there were half-bastions.

Listed in NIAH – Reg. No: 31956005

Listed in Roscommon RPS – Reg. Nos: 0560028/0560029



Site CH-5 from E

SITE CH-6

SMR No:

RO056-017

TOWNLAND:

Lamb Island

CLASSIFICATION:

Bastion Fort

ITM:

596570 725607

PROTECTION:

RMP; RCDP

On the W side of Lamb Island and just N of the ford which was replaced by a bridge in 1757. It is also c. 130m NE of the Napoleonic-era battery (RO56-016-- --) which formed the later, unrelated, defences. This is a rectangular grass-covered area with some bushes (dims 23m E-W; 20.5m N-S) defined by fosses at N (Wth of top 5.8m; Wth of base 2.5m; int. D 0.8m; ext. D 1.2m) and S (Wth of top 5.8m; Wth of base 2.5m; int. D 1m; ext. D 0.6m), and by earthen banks at E (Wth 2.6m; H 0.4m) and W (Wth 7m; int. H 1m; ext. H 1.6m). In plan the fosses are indented at the centre so that there are small corner bastions, and there is a raised platform (Wth 6.5m; H 0.7m) inside the bank at W, which has two double-splayed openings (min. Wth 1.2-1.5m) through the W bank for artillery.



Site CH-6 from SW

SITE CH-7

SMR No:

OF006-107

TOWNLAND:

Clonfinlough

CLASSIFICATION:

Road – Class 3 Togher

ITM:

603101 727575

PROTECTION:

OCDP

The site (Wth 0.5m; D 0.1m) was orientated ENE-WSW and consists of several longitudinal birch roundwoods which were laid in an irregular manner. There was previously some birch wood scrub in the vicinity and it is possible that the structure was modern.

There are now no visible traces of this feature which was located at the north-eastern extent of the existing ADF site.

SITE CH-8

SMR No:

OF013-016

TOWNLAND:

Clonfinlough

CLASSIFICATION:

Road – Class 3 Togher

ITM:

602257 727849

PROTECTION:

RMP; OCDP

The site (Wth 1m; D 0.3m) was originally identified by the Irish Archaeological Westlands Unit, who noted that it was orientated N-S and composed of four longitudinal roundwoods (diam. 0.10-0.15m) of ash and birch tightly packed with brushwood (diam. 0.01-0.05m) and twigs and that some of the brushwood was burnt and bundles of twigs covered the upper surface of the site.

There was no visible evidence for this feature at the recorded ITM location.