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TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

1- Introduction

The aim of this short report is to objectively and professionally assess how the proposed development will affect the townscape and visual amenity of the Diamond, Donegal Town.

The terminology and glossary is based on those used in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (2013).

The magnitude and significance of any effect is determined by the scale and shape of the proposed development and any resulting contrast between this and the existing townscape setting and visual amenity. A further consideration is not just its proximity to adjacent buildings or areas but also the number of people who use or pass through this area who may feel that the visual and townscape quality of the area could be affected by this proposal.

2- Existing Landscape Character

Direct Views across the Diamond are currently possible from most vantage points, when existing Trees are in full leaf, the direct view can be somewhat interrupted, however the Trees offer a natural and warm texture to the hard landscaping of the Diamond.

The Monument to the Four masters (1938) is a Sandstone Ashlar Construction with attractive details and inscriptions (see further context note), the monument adds significantly to the Diamond in terms of landscaping, cultural relevance, History and indigenous materials.

The Diamond is surrounded on 3 sides by mainly commercial buildings. 12 Buildings on or close to the Diamond are protected Structures and are included in the RPS for County Donegal. These buildings add enormously to the Townscape Character While the proposed works to the Diamond are isolated to the space within the Diamond centrally.



Fig. 1- The town scales on the Diamond in 1890. View looking to the South-East



Fig. 3- Aerial view from 1954 showing the Diamond being used as a car park and trees around the perimeter



Fig. 2- The Diamond being used as a market in 1890. View looking towards AIB to the South-West



Fig. 4- Aerial view from 1955 looking west across the River Eske to the Diamond

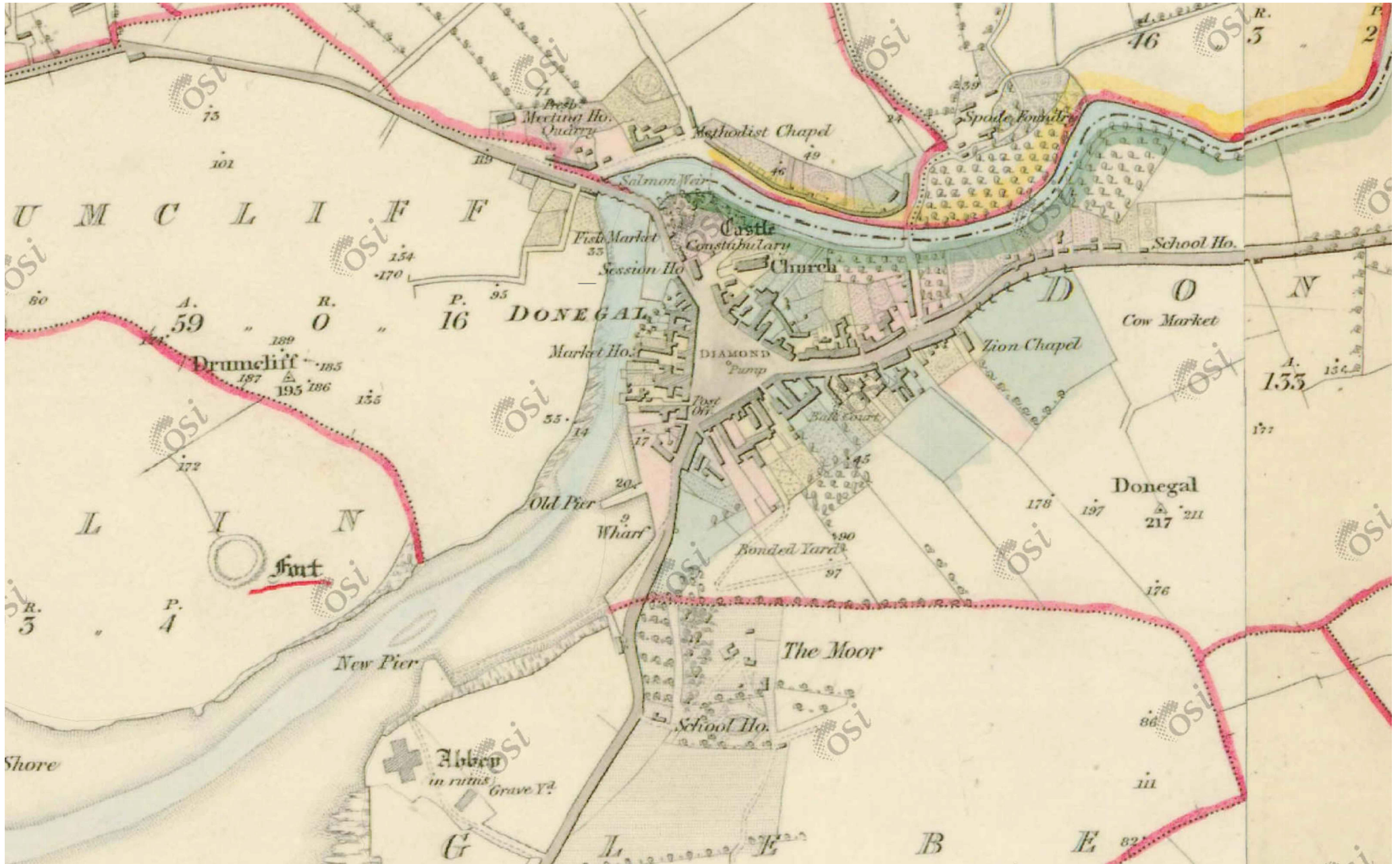


Fig. 5- Historical Ordnance Survey Ireland map (1829 - 1841)

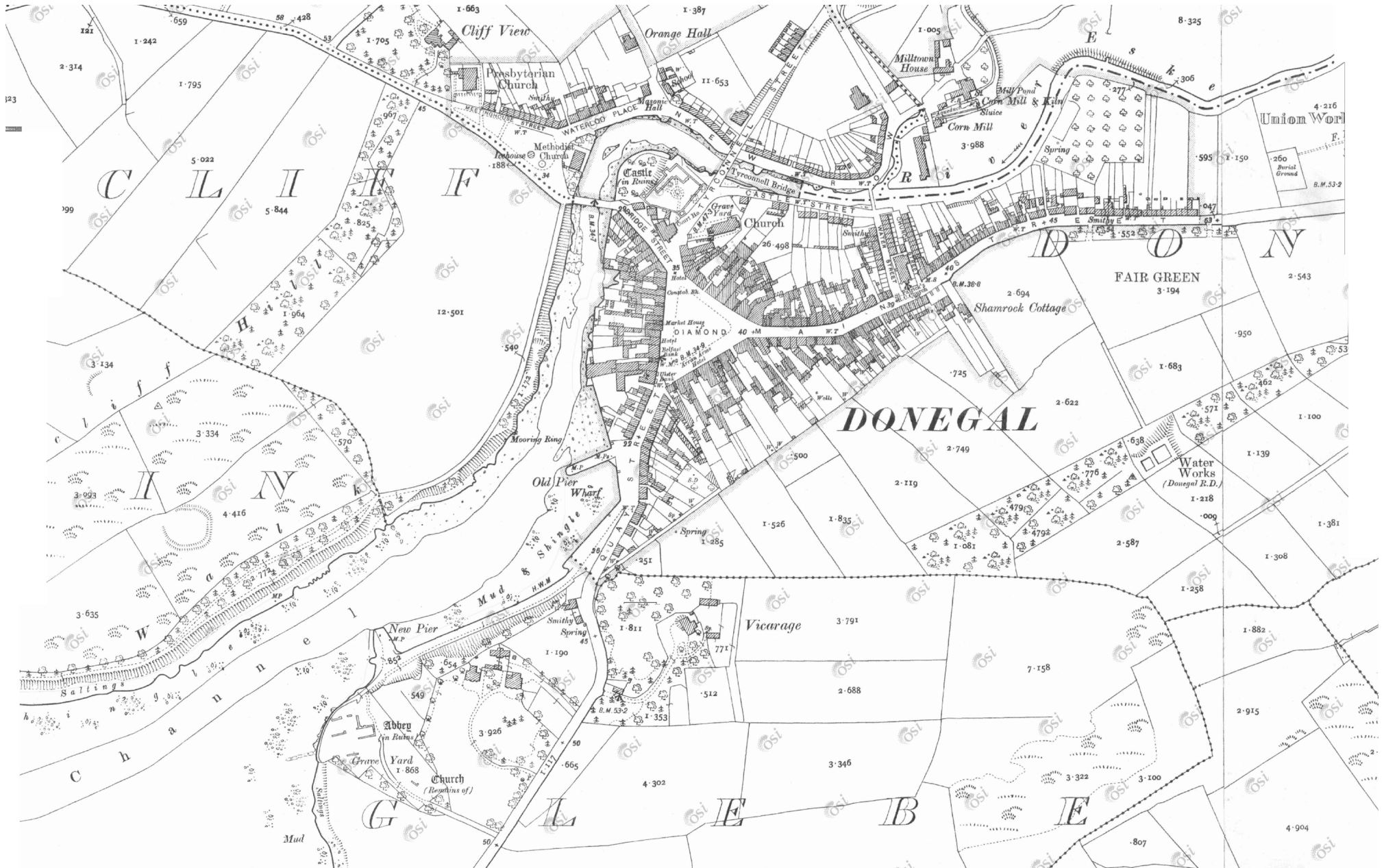
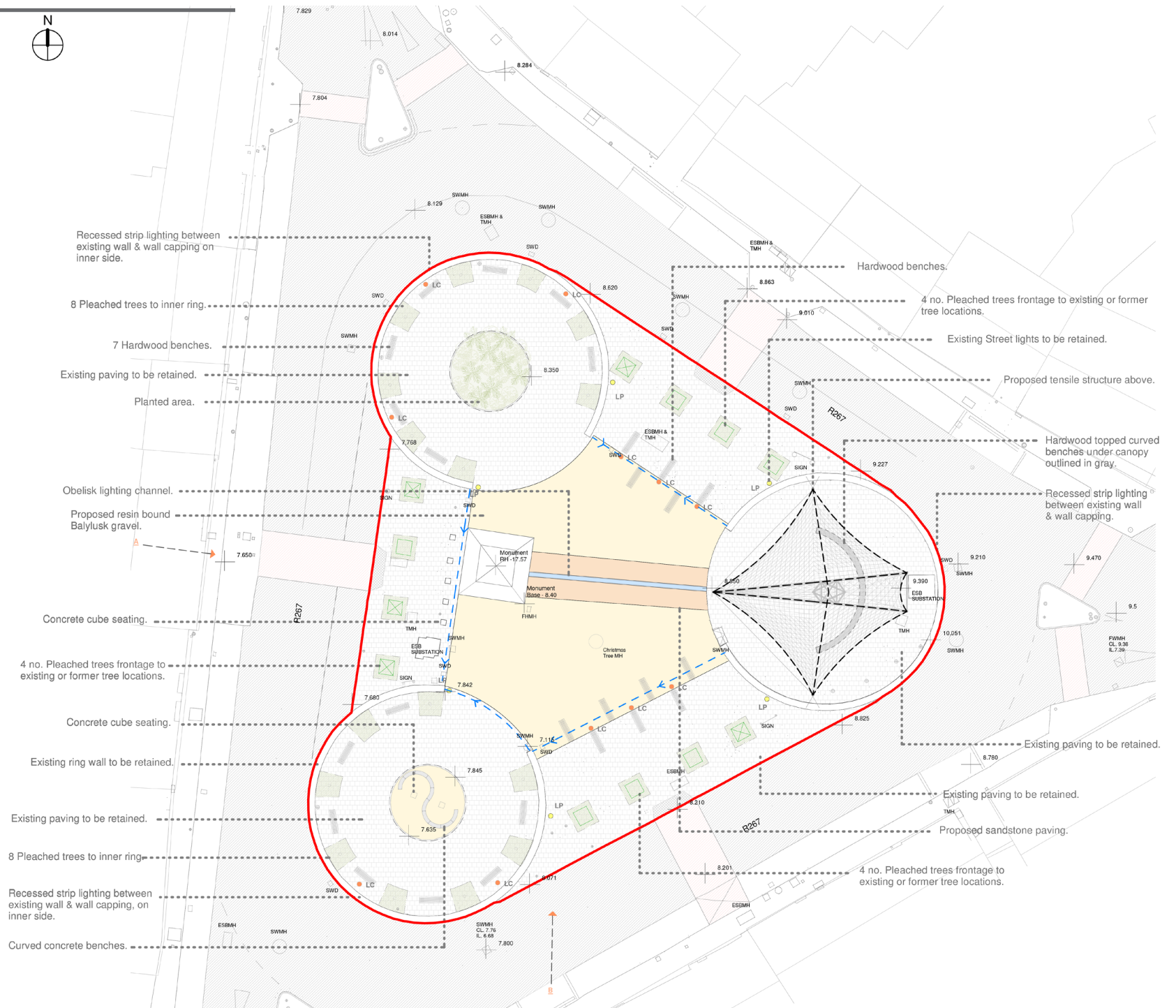


Fig. 6- Historical Ordnance Survey Ireland map (1897- 1913)

1:5000





Existing view from Bridge Street Vs. Proposed View





Existing view from Quay Street Vs. Proposed View



1.3- Construction Stage

Visual impacts, which are potentially adverse in nature, will derive from the following:

- Presence and operation of construction traffic, cranes, plant and equipment;
- Removal and changes to local built structure and paving; and
- Lighting for safety and security.

1.4- The site will be bound by hoardings to clearly delineate working areas on the Diamond Road and also obscure views from low-level street areas. There will be a temporary reduction in townscape quality to facilitate demolition works, tree removal, construction activity, external realm building works and land-take associated with gantries, in particular associated with the construction of the Canopy and including scaffolding and hoardings. As the construction of the masts associated with the canopy commences, there will be a high degree of exposure with significant effects to the immediately adjacent roads where they abut the Diamond Site.

1.5- The removal and construction works will represent a temporary substantial change to the Diamond, but are moderate temporary adverse effects rated as significant during the construction phase only.

1.6- To areas across the wider town, the construction phase will have negligible effects in the earlier stages of removal (minor demolition) and construction. Being a town centre location and surrounded by 2 lanes of Traffic and a Parking lane, effects deriving from construction traffic would not represent a significant change, in landscape or visual terms, from the existing situation. As the mast and canopy are constructed, the construction works will inevitably become more evident in open views across this part of the Diamond with slight to moderate effects but, given context of built environment and distance, the effects would be of a low magnitude and not categorised as significant.

1.7- Townscape Effects on completion Phase

Any assessment must be measured against that of the situation that pertains at present and the current site to a positive street character but would be considered a setting that has not reached potential and is underused.

1.8- In broad terms, a proposal of this nature and scale will become part of the integrity, legibility and identity of the Diamond which is already a landmark in its own right. As part of the planning consultation process, there was a reduction in the number of trees proposed around the perimeter of the Stone Rings.

1.9- Application Site

In terms of the Diamond, there is a monument to the Four Masters which is a registered Monument, with its protection mandated in legislation.

The initial loss of trees will have some slight adverse effects in the short term. However it is envisaged that they are only removed following the planting of the new perimeter Trees. This therefore would have no significant effects on local townscape character. While the street pattern will be unaffected, the proposal will change the character of the Application Site due to the overhead enclosure of 1 No. Ring with the proposed tensile Canopy Structure.

1.10- The scale will ensure it has a profound effect of high magnitude on the Application Site itself but this is not something that should be seen as adverse in townscape character terms. The proposal will increase use and activity on the Diamond giving it a more productive and appropriate town centre use.

1.11-

- The site enjoys primary frontage to 3 sides of the Diamond providing opportunities for a positive contribution of a commercial and public character to the streetscape.
- The site is located in a central location within the urban streetscape – the design principle is to provide a public plaza and landmark venue in the form of a Canopy, that is evolved and re-freshed/rejuvenated from that which was initially created in 1991.

1.12- The proposed development will be similar in overall height than the Monument to the Four Masters, and smaller than all existing buildings around the Diamond.

However its design will be in keeping with the architecture, form and contemporary style of Irish Town Centres that have developed around the Country.

Summary- The proposed development has a negligible to moderate affect to visual amenity from fixed view points at Dun Leavy's Giftworld and Magee Dept. Store.

Close to the site, there will be positive effects on the local environment, welcoming people and allowing them to stay, Play and eat in a reimagined central Public Plaza.

RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Donegal Town is designated as a Historic Town by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. There are 29 structures on the Record of Protected Structures within Donegal Town. Due to the historic nature of the buildings, structures and streets, Donegal Town has also been identified as a 'Area of Townscape Character' under the Local Area Plan 2018 – 2024. This means that any new buildings or interventions in the existing fabric of the town will be required to safeguard and enhance the special existing townscape character. Donegal Town is known as a 'Zone of Archaeological Potential' and is an area where intense archaeology is present and it is the policy of the Council AH-P-2 to conserve and protect it.

The County Development Plan 2018 – 2020 states that it is the aim of the Council 'to conserve and protect the County's archaeological heritage for present and future generations while encouraging appreciation and enjoyment of these valuable, non-renewable, cultural resources through sustainable management, sensitive enhancement and appropriate development'.

1. Donegal Methodist Church - Reg. No. 40843005
2. Eske Bridge - Reg. No. 40843011
3. Donegal Castle - DG093-013001
4. Donegal Courthouse - Reg. No. 40843010
5. Donegal Church - Reg. No. 40843009
6. Outbuilding - Reg. No. 40843013
7. Warehouse- Reg. No. 40843014
8. House - Reg. No. 40843015
9. Four Masters Memorial - Reg. No. 40843016
10. House - Reg. No. 40843014
11. Allied Irish Bank - Reg. No. 40843017
12. Dunleavys - Reg. No. 40843020
13. House - Reg. No. 40843019
14. House - Reg. No. 40843018



Fig. 7- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage map showing buildings and monuments on the Record of Protected Structures around the Diamond

1. Donegal Methodist Church - Reg. No. 40843005

DATE: 1850- 1860

DESCRIPTION

Detached three-bay double-height over basement Methodist church, built between 1857 and 1859, having four-bay side elevations (east and west) and stepped cut stone bellcote with machicolations over entrance gable (south) having wrought-iron finial over. Pitched artificial slate roof (fibre cement) having raised cut stone verge over the entrance elevation (south gable) having ashlar skew blocks to the eaves; cut stone corbels to the east and west elevations. Some remaining sections of cast-iron rainwater goods. Squared limestone rubble walls, snecked in places, with flush ashlar sandstone block-and-start quoins to the corners, and having cut stone plinth course. Pilaster strips/piers between bays to side elevations (east and west), and flanking doorway and to corners of main elevation (south), having roughly dressed irregular sandstone quoins to the corners. Cut stone corbel course above window openings to the south elevation. Cut stone detailing to bellcote having round-headed opening flanked by engaged cut stone columns, and with machicolation-type detailing over. Roughcast rendered walls at basement level. Round-headed window openings to side elevations (east and west) and flanking central doorway to south elevation having ashlar sandstone surrounds, cast-iron lattice windows having top-hung outward-opening toplights having coloured glass, and with chamfered stone sills. Central paired round-headed openings to the entrance gable (south), above entrance, having ashlar sandstone surrounds with engaged moulded cut stone columns and central moulded cut stone mullion, cast-iron lattice windows with coloured glass to margin panels, cut stone sill course and stringcourse at arch springing point, and having circular window opening over with cast-iron petal glazing pattern. Paired round-headed openings to the north gable end having plate tracery, ashlar sandstone surrounds, cast-iron lattice windows with coloured glass to margin panels, and having circular window opening over with cast-iron petal glazing pattern. Square-headed window openings at basement level having flush sandstone block-and-start surround, cut stone sills and replacement timber casement windows. Central round-headed doorway to the south gable having timber double-doors, overlight with cast-iron margin glazing, moulded staged arch over with flush cut sandstone voussoirs, cut stone stringcourse at arch springing point, and having cut stone surround with engaged cut stone columns to

reveals. Square-headed doorway to the north end of the west elevation at basement level having flush ashlar sandstone block-and-start surround and recessed timber door. Set back from road to the north-west of Donegal Town centre, adjacent to the west bank of the River Eske. Modern stepped terrace adjacent to riverbank. Site slopes away to the north with mature trees to rear of church and tarmacadam yard to the west. Rendered rubble stone boundary wall surrounding site. Iron railings to site, adjacent to main doorway. Main entrance gateway to the south-west of site comprising a pair of cut stone gateposts with wrought-iron gate.

APPRAISAL

This elegant and well-composed mid-nineteenth century Methodist church/chapel retains its original form and character. The round-headed openings give this building a Romanesque architectural style, while the front elevation has a Norman Revival architectural character. Well-maintained, this building also retains many of its early fittings, including fine cast-iron windows with coloured glass, which adds to its architectural integrity. It is well-built using good quality masonry with extensive cut stone detailing throughout, particularly to the impressive entrance gable (south), which is crowned by an unusually elaborate bellcote, and to the window and door openings. This handsome bellcote helps to articulate the roofline, and is a landmark in the skyline along the main approach road into Donegal Town from the west. The contrast between the dark grey masonry and the crisp yellow sandstone detailing, particularly to the openings, creates a pleasing tonal and textural variation to the exterior. The church hall is placed in the basement of the building, which makes use of the slope away to the north to conceal this feature to the main elevation (south). The form and detailing of this building is very similar to that found at a number of contemporary Methodists chapels in Ulster, including those at Cookstown in County Tyrone (built in 1858), at Newtownards in County Down (built 1854), and at Ballymoney in County Antrim (built 1861) in particular, suggesting that these churches were built to a 'pattern book' design and possibly to designs by the same architect. The Norman-style of the front elevation, and the pilaster strips/piers between the openings to the side elevations, is reminiscent of the detailing found at the Church of Ireland churches at Ballyshannon (40852016) and at Pettigoe (40850022), both built to designs by William Farrell (d. 1851). The present Methodist chapel in Donegal Town replaced an earlier one in the town (extant in 1837 – Ordnance Survey first edition six

inch map; Lewis Topographical Dictionary), which was located at the corner of Waterloo Place and New Row a short distance to the north-east of the present edifice on the site now occupied by the Masonic Lodge (see 40943006). This present Methodist chapel represents an interesting historical reminder of the religious diversity that existed in Donegal in the nineteenth century, and still exists in the Donegal Town area today. Sited in a pleasing location adjacent to the main bridge over the River Eske (40843011), this building is an important element of the built heritage of County Donegal, and it makes a positive contribution to the streetscape of Donegal Town. The simple boundary walls, the iron railings to the south, and the handsome main gateway complete the setting of this notable composition.



2. Eske Bridge - Reg. No. 40843011

DATE: 1840- 1870

DESCRIPTION

Three-arch road bridge over the River Eske, built c. 1855, having footpath extension to the south elevation, added c. 1975. Segmental-headed arches having dressed cut stone voussoirs to arches, and having ashlar construction to piers with ashlar cutwaters (on semi-circular plan) having rounded cut stone coping over, and ashlar stringcourse at arch springing point level, running under arch barrels. Ashlar construction to arch barrels and spandrels. Cut stone stringcourse at road deck level. Roughly squared and coursed stone construction to parapets having cut stone coping over. Metal memorial plaque to the centre of the north parapet commemorating Revd. John Boyce, died 1864. Concrete beams, supports and spans to extension to the south elevation having modern rendered parapet wall with metal railings over. Located to the west end of Donegal Town, a short distance to the north-west of The Diamond. River Eske flows into Donegal Bay a short distance to the south/south-west of the bridge.

APPRAISAL

This elegant bridge, of mid-nineteenth-century appearance, retains much of its original character and form despite the construction of a modern pedestrian extension to the south elevation. It is well-built using predominantly high quality ashlar masonry that is testament to the skill of the masons involved in its construction. The low graceful segmental arches give this bridge a vaguely Italianate architectural character, while the stringcourses add an element of decorative interest to the main elevations. The simple memorial plaque to the northern parapet commemorates Revd. John Boyce (1810 – 1864), a priest who was born in Donegal but moved to the United States in 1845, where he served until his death. Boyce was also a noted novelist (under the assumed name of 'Paul Peppergrass') and a lecturer. The present bridge replaced an earlier six(?)-arch bridge (DG093-013009-), which was located adjacent to the north-east of the present structure. Both bridges appear to have co-existed for a period c. 1860 (earlier bridge indicated as 'old bridge' on the Griffiths Valuation map, c. 1860). The location of this earlier bridge adjacent to Donegal Castle suggests that the earlier bridge(s) may have dated to pre-1700 period. The present bridge still serves as an important river crossing carrying the main approach road into the town from the west, and is an integral element of the built heritage of the town.



3. Donegal Castle - DG093-013001

DATE: 16th / 17th Century

DESCRIPTION

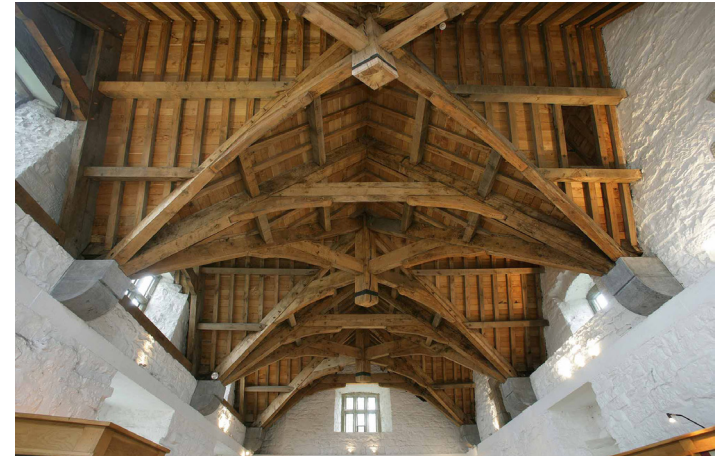
Donegal Castle is a National Monument (No.174) in State care. Hugh Roe O'Donnell, who died in 1505, is credited with having first erected a castle at Donegal (AFM 1505). The 'old castle' and a 'new tower' at Donegal are mentioned in a domestic conflict of 1564 (AFM 1564); the nature of this tower is uncertain. Two years later, the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, described the castle as 'one of the greatest that ever I saw in Ireland in any Irishman's lands, and would appear in good keeping one of the fairest. . . .' (Caulfield 1870-1, 22). Though burned in 1589, and partly demolished, possibly in 1595, to prevent it being garrisoned by English forces (CSPI 1588-92, 123; O'Rahilly 1927, 208), it must, soon after, have been repaired; it fell into the possession of the English in 1601 (Murphy Ed., 1895, 261, 281, 291). Whether or not it was subsequently repaired by Rory O'Donnell is unknown. Captain Basil Brooke, knighted in 1616, received a grant of the castle in 1611, had it renewed in 1620 and made permanent in 1623 (Hill 1877, 324; Petrie 1840, 186). He is described in 1611 as having 'a fair bawn built with flankers' within which was 'a strong house of stone' (Hill 1877, 514). The Coats of Arms on the over-mantel of the fireplace confirm that it was he who converted the whole, with the addition of a gabled wing, into a Jacobean manor-house. During the 1641 rebellion it was held by Sir Basil's heir, Henry Brooke, though Clanrickarde took it for a short period in 1651. Henry Brooke subsequently resided there (de Breffny and ffolliott 1975, 44-5). It fell to decay in the 18th century and was placed in the guardianship of the Office of Public Works in 1898 (Leask 1932, 12). It is now a National Monument (no. 174).

For the purposes of clarity and to aid the description, the manor-house (DG093-013007-) is taken as attached to the W wall of the keep. The remains consist of a much altered tower-house (DG093-013001-) and adjoining early 17th century manor-house (DG093-013007-) at the NE end of a bawn (DG093-013006-). They are protected by the River Eske on the N and E. Two distinct building periods are evident. Little remains of the original O'Donnell keep above first floor level, the surviving features confirming it as a typical if not large tower-house of the later 15th/16th century period. Brooke's early 17th century alterations included the insertion of numerous mullioned windows with horizontal hood-moulds, a bay frontage about the original entrance and several fireplaces in the E wall. That he first altered the keep is indicated by the partly blocked-up N window in the W wall and at second storey level (see below); this is also borne out by the fact that the alterations to the keep were defensive in character. All the ground-floor windows are small and narrow and it is only at first-floor level, some 6m

up, that the large mullioned windows are inserted. The architecture indicates that the manor-house was added soon after, and the same masons undoubtedly worked on both buildings. The walls of the four storey keep rise from battered lower courses. They are built of roughly-quarried blocks and some rubble laid in mortar and have ashlar quoins. The original ground-floor entrance was in the centre of the S wall and the lower section of the E chamfered jamb is in situ. Brooke added a bay front to this wall and fitted it with three narrow windows. On the E of the original door is a small guard-chamber with a wall-press. On the W, a spiral stairs with twisted octagonal stone newel led to the upper apartments. The main chamber on the ground floor was vaulted N-S; only the S half survives. The vault was probably raised on wicker centering, at the springing of which are a number of corbels in the E and W walls and corresponding beam holes in the corners of the N and S walls. It was lighted on three sides by narrow windows set in sub-rectangular embrasures and had two deeply splayed loops in the W wall; all have 17th century inserted dressings and the embrasure to the N of the loops was enlarged re-using a chamfered, pointed door as an entrance to the manor-house. There is a chamber above the original S entrance and below first-floor level. It has a narrow window in the centre of the 17th century bay frontage and a circular pistol-loop in the W splay. A small garderobe chamber beside it on the E is entered by a lintelled door and has an embrasure of room-width set into the E wall of the keep with a corresponding chute, dropping to ground-floor level; the discharge opening is blocked. The first-floor is entered from the stairs by a chamfered door with tudor-arched head and ornate stops; the arch chamfer is carved in relief with lozenge and pellet designs and the spandrels have a false relief foliage pattern. This room, undoubtedly the principal chamber in the 17th century house, was lighted by a large bay window in the S wall, now completely fallen, though in existence in the early 19th century (sketch in OS Memoirs), and a large four-light window with double transom in the W wall. The line of an earlier window embrasure is visible in the masonry to the N of the latter window. Opposite it, in the E wall, is the large Brooke fireplace whose overmantel rises to full room height. The pedestals are carved with cloisonné-like designs and the pilasters have ornate hinge-like strapwork with flower and foliage patterns on the sides. The fireplace jambs are carved with tasselled garlands hanging from a double chain and the mantel is decorated with a double festoon suspended from chain links, the ends of which are wrapped about a figure on either side of the fire-place; all in high relief. The frieze comprises alternate plain and strapwork panels. The overmantel is divided into two large panels by three sets of inverted double consoles, each carved with a human mask and projecting leaf curling down the face of the console; the N console is missing and a mullion or transom fragment inserted. The left-hand panel bears the armorial escutcheon of Brooke impaling those of his wife, Leicester; the right hand panel bears the Brooke

arms alone. Beside the fireplace on the N is a small window, set in a subrectangular embrasure. This floor undoubtedly had an E-W cross wall for there is another smaller fireplace at the N end of the E wall. It has moulded stop-chamfered jambs flanked by pilasters with false relief strapwork patterns and the lintel is carved with two opposing fish-like creatures; the moulded mantelpiece is broken out on decorated corbels over the pilasters and projecting keystone. This fireplace may be in the original entrance to a mural stairs. The remains of such are visible on the floor above descending in that direction. Leask noted that there might have been a staircase in the NE angle but it was then blocked-up and exploration was impossible on account of the defective condition of the masonry (1932, 13). This room is lit by two two-light windows in the N wall, the E having a transom. The tudor-arched door with rebuilt, blunt-pointed rear-arch in the W wall communicated with the second floor of the manor-house; the masonry indicates that there was probably an original window embrasure in this position. The second floor was probably divided into at least two rooms and subsequent to the Brooke alterations must have communicated with the floors above and below by a wooden staircase. There are two fireplaces in the E wall and between them a window embrasure with descending mural stairs in the N ingoing. The N window in the W wall was partly blocked up to accommodate the roof line of the manor-house. This probably indicates the two-period nature of Brooke's alterations; the keep was first converted into a fortified dwelling and the manor-house then added. There is a wall-press in the E and W corners of the second floor.

The main N and S gables of the altered keep were at third-floor level and each had a three-light transomed window; only the E ingoing of the former and the lower half of the latter survive. The E and W walls had each three smaller gables; the N and S of the former contained fireplaces and were crowned with chimney stacks. Each of the remaining gables contained a three-light transomed window; only the central W gable window is complete. The water spouts between the gables are supported on decorated corbels. There remains the whole of one (the SW) of the four heavy square bartizan-like turrets supported on decorated corbels. W of the manor-house are the NW fragmentary remains of a building with battered lower courses incorporating a blocked-up discharge shaft. The masonry and construction are very similar to that in the O'Donnell keep and they are possibly coeval. Some lengths of the bawn wall with splayed loops survive on the E, S and W, which together with the SW gatehouse-tower are probably not earlier than the 17th century. The other sections of enclosing wall, particularly on the W and S, probably stand on original foundations. The two-storey gate-tower has a bartizan above the SE corner. The present external entrance is possibly modern, the original access being from the parapet walk on the E where there is a pointed doorway; it is fitted with numerous loops.



4. Donegal Courthouse - Reg. No. 40843010

DATE: 1825 - 1895

DESCRIPTION

Detached corner-sited four-bay single-storey double-height courthouse on complex plan, built 1833, having two-storey over basement offices and former bridewell under same roofline to the rear (north-west). Extended in 1891 having single-bay porch to the front elevation (south-east) and two-storey split level extension to the north-west. Single-bay single-storey porch to the north-east elevation. Reconstructed in 1925 following fire damage in 1922. Now also in use as chamber of commerce offices. Hipped natural slated roofs having ashlar eaves course with modillions to front face (south-east) of original building. Ashlar sandstone chimney-stack to the south-east block having stepped cut stone coping and terracotta pots over. Pitched roof to rear at north-west corner having rendered chimneystack and raised rendered verge. Plain ashlar sandstone eaves course to front (south-east) and north-east elevations. Rendered eaves course to the south-west elevation. Some remaining cast-iron rainwater goods including profiled gutters to the front elevation (south-east) of original block. Ashlar sandstone construction to the front elevation of the main block, and to the north-east elevation, with raised ashlar sandstone pilaster/quoin strips to the corners. Recessed rectangular panel above window opening to recessed bay to front elevation (south-east). Ashlar plinth to base. Ashlar sandstone construction to front porch having ashlar sandstone pilasters to corners with recessed rectangular panels, segmental-headed ashlar panel over window openings having moulded cornice, and ashlar blocks to parapet hiding flat roof. Ashlar sandstone construction to porch to north-west having ashlar sandstone pilasters to corners with recessed rectangular panels, moulded tassel motifs to head of pilasters, and with moulded cornice over. Smooth rendered walls to the south-west and north-east elevations of original block, and to the rear (north-west). Square-headed window openings having stone sills and replacement windows. Some two-over-two pane timber sliding sash windows remain to rear (north-west) elevation and to the recessed block to the north-east end of front elevation (south-east). Plain flush ashlar sandstone surrounds to window openings to front elevation (south-east) and flush ashlar sandstone block-and-start surrounds to the window openings to the north-east side elevation of original block. Tripartite arrangement to window openings to front face of porch; semi-circular window opening to front face of original building, over porch, having ashlar sandstone surround and spoked/radial glazing to window. Square-headed door opening to the north-east elevation of main porch having ashlar sandstone surround with lintel over having cornice and egg-and-dart detailing to frieze, replacement timber double-doors, and having

overlight. Square-headed door opening to north-east face of porch to the north-east having flush ashlar surround and timber door. Square-headed door opening to the south-west elevation of original block having timber door and overlight. Doorway reached by flight of steps over basement level having wrought-iron railings. Gateway to the south-west side of main elevation (south-east) having cut stone gate posts and decorative wrought-iron gate. Wrought-iron railings over basement level to the north-west end of south-west side elevation; rendered boundary wall to the south-east end of south-west side elevation. Set back from road in prominent corner site facing the Diamond, Donegal Town, to the south-east. Yard to the east having modern railings. Interesting interior to courtroom having fixed timber bench seating, panelled dock, pedimented panel to rear of judge's chair, gallery with cast-iron supports and timber panelled balustrade. Cast-iron fireplace to jury room.

APPRAISAL

This fine early nineteenth-century classical-style courthouse retains its early form and character. It is well-built to the main elevation (south-east) with good quality ashlar sandstone masonry and has some high-quality cut stone detailing, particularly to the main porch, which was apparently added in 1891. The subdued classical detailing and its prominent location in the streetscape of Donegal Town overlooking The Diamond give it a strong presence and air of authority that befits an important civic building such as a courthouse. The loss of the original window fittings, although regrettable, fails to detract substantially from its architectural integrity. The interior retains some interesting timber joinery and carving, which probably dates to c. 1925 (see below). This building was originally built in 1833 at a cost of £800, and originally had a bridewell or jail to the basement level. The original architect is not known. The present building replaced an earlier courthouse in Donegal Town, which was repaired in 1810 and 1830 (IAA) by John McGuiggan, which may have been the upstairs section of the market house (now demolished), on the west side of the Diamond Bridge Street (Pigot's Directory). The present courthouse was later extended and 'repaired' in 1891 to designs by Frederick Gahan (c. 1822 – c. 1904), who was the County Surveyor for Donegal (initially in the 'southern division' of the county) from 1864 until 1891. The courthouse was later set alight and damaged by the IRA in 1922, a fate suffered by many buildings of its type throughout Ireland between 1919 and 1923. It was later 'reconstructed' by William James Doherty (1887 – 1951), an architect from Derry City who worked extensively in County Donegal from the 1920s. Occupying a prominent site, this building is a notable and imposing feature in the Streetscape of Donegal Town, and an integral element of the built heritage of

the town. The simple railings and gates to the south-west complete this composition and add to the setting. As an important public building within the town, this courthouse is a structure of merit, not simply for its impressive architectural design, but because it represents historical and social significance to the local area.



5. Donegal Church - Reg. No. 40843009

DATE: 1820- 1840

DESCRIPTION

Detached Church of Ireland church, built c. 1828 – 31 and extended in 1890, comprising three-bay nave elevations to east, three-stage tower (on square-plan) to the west end having spire over (on octagonal-plan), shallow projecting chancel to the east (added 1890), shallow transept/organ extension attached to the west end of the north elevation of the nave, and lean-to vestry (c. 1890) attached to chancel. Pitched natural slate roofs having raised cut stone coping to the gable ends, projecting cut stone eaves course, cast-iron rainwater goods, ashlar stone chimney-stack, and having moulded corbelled sandstone kneeler stones to gable end of chancel and to transept to north. Squared rubble sandstone construction to tower and west elevation of nave having chamfered cut stone plinth to base, moulded stone string-courses, and with clasping squared rubble sandstone pilasters/buttresses (on square-plan) to corners of tower at first stage level rising to chamfered cut stone buttresses over terminating in cut stone pinnacles (on octagonal-plan) at parapet level having cut stone detailing. Ashlar construction to spire. Squared rubble sandstone pilasters to corners of nave at west gable end rising to cut stone pinnacles over having cut stone detailing. Cut stone 'gabled' parapet to west face to tower having moulded cut stone stringcourse and coping, and rising to cut stone pinnacle to centre; cut stone crenellated parapet to other faces of tower. Clockface (on circular-plan) to west elevation of tower between second stage and belfry level having cut stone surround forming part of stringcourse to tower. Roughcast rendered walls to side elevations of nave (north and south), to chancel, and to transept/organ extension to the north; chamfered cut stone plinth to transept. Pointed arched window openings to north and south elevations of nave having plain ashlar sandstone surrounds, timber Y-tracery and timber transoms, cut stone sills and multi-pane windows. Triple-light window opening to chancel gable having cut stone plate tracery with multifoil window to head with cut stone surround and stained glass windows. Trefoil-headed window opening to the north elevation of transept/organ extension having chamfered ashlar sandstone surround, chamfered stone sill and leaded diamond-pane window; quatrefoil opening over to gable apex having cut sandstone surround. Pointed-arched window opening to west face of tower at first stage level having chamfered ashlar sandstone surround, cut stone hoodmoulding, and cast-iron multi-pane window opening; lancet openings to north and south faces of tower at second stage level

having plain raised chamfered ashlar sandstone surrounds and timber multi-pane windows; pointed-arched window openings to tower at belfry stage having chamfered sandstone surrounds, hoodmouldings, and timber louvers. Tudor-arched doorway to the south face to tower having ashlar sandstone surround, and timber door with overlight. Interesting interior with barrel-vaulted boarded timber roof, Victorian encaustic tiled floor, chamfered staged limestone(?) chancel arch (added 1890), timber organ to pointed-arched opening to transept, gallery to the entrance gable supported on cast-iron Doric columns and having moulded timber balustrade/parapet with pierced panels, and timber altar fittings. Set back from road in own grounds a short distance to the north of the Diamond, Donegal Town. Graveyard to site; three-bay single-storey modern Sunday school to the south of site. Set bounded on road-fronted to the west and the north by rubble stone boundary wall having crenellated coping over. Pedestrian gateway to the west of site comprising a pair of moulded cast-iron gate posts (on octagonal-plan) and wrought- and cast-iron gate. Flight of stone steps to gateway. Gateway flanked to either side by sections of roughly dressed and squared walling having cut stone coping and with iron railings over with fleur-de-lis finials. Railings terminated to either side (north and south) by cut stone gate piers (on square-plan) having cut stone coping over.

APPRAISAL

This appealing early nineteenth-century Church of Ireland church, built in a Gothic Revival style, retains its early form and architectural character. This church is notable for the quality of the cut stone detailing to the west end, particularly to the tower, spire and pinnacles. The lower stages of the tower and the west end of the nave may have been originally rendered. The rather austere side elevations of the nave are enlivened by the openings that retain elegant cast-iron multi-pane windows with timber Y-tracery, while the later chancel is lit by a good quality triple light window opening with complex cut stone plate tracery and stained glass windows. The layout of this church is typical of the standard three-bay hall and tower church, which were built in large numbers, particularly between 1808 - 1830, using loans and grants from the Board of First Fruits (1722 - 1833). The elegant needle spire is a typical feature of Board of First Fruits churches built in urban locations, and is a landmark feature in the skyline of Donegal Town. This church was originally constructed to designs by William Graham, an architect or builder who also built the Church of Ireland church at Killymard (40909304) in 1830, which is located a short distance to the north-west of Donegal Town. These two churches are the only ecclesiastic

commissions known to have been built by Graham. The simple plain cut sandstone surrounds to the openings and the timber Y-tracery windows are very similar to those found at Killymard Church. Differing dates between 1825 and 1828 are given for its construction but it was consecrated in 1831 (Ordnance Survey Memoirs). The now ruinous former Franciscan Friary (DG093-013002-) to the south-west of the town - and later probably the also now ruinous small church building (DG093-013003-) known as the 'Glebe Church' in its grounds to the south-east of the abbey - functioned as the Church of Ireland parish church(es) prior to the construction of the present edifice. Lewis (1837) records that this church 'is a handsome structure, built in 1825, by aid of a donation of £100 from John Hamilton, Esq., and a loan of £1300 from the same Board [Board of First Fruits], while the Ordnance Survey Memoirs record that it was 'erected by Mr Graham of Donegal...and does considerable credit to the architect'. John Hamilton, who donated money towards the construction of this church, also built (between 1824 – 26) a fine residence at nearby St. Ernan's (40909919) on an island in Donegal Bay. This church was later extended in 1890 by the addition of organ chamber, chancel and vestry room (architect unknown). The interior is distinguished by the fine cut stone chancel arch, added in 1890, the intricate tiled floor, the organ chamber, and the finely carved and pierced timber balustrade/parapet. This building is an important element of the built heritage of Donegal Town, and is an integral element of the social history of the town. The simple boundary walls, and the iron gates and railings complete this composition and add to the setting.



6. Outbuilding - Reg. No. 40843013

DATE: 1840- 1880

DESCRIPTION

Detached three-bay two-storey outbuilding, built c. 1860. Now out of use. Pitched natural slate roof with grey clayware ridge tiles. Random rubble walling to west elevation (facing river) and south elevation having remains of render over; Roughly squared and coursed masonry to the east elevation with render over. Square-headed openings with stone lintels, and having timber doors and battened timber shutters. Square-headed loading bay to the centre of the east elevation at first floor level having battened timber double doors and remains of metal winch/pulley over. Square-headed doorway to the north end of the west elevation having batten timber door. Rubble stone staircase adjacent to doorway, leading down to River Eske, having cut stone steps and wrought-iron railings. Coursed and rubble stone quay walls to riverfront. Located in back yard of building facing onto The Diamond, Donegal Town, and having west elevation built onto bank of the Eske.

APPRAISAL

Despite being now out of use, this simple outbuilding survives in relatively good condition and retains its early form and character. It is robustly constructed in local rubble stone and its plain form is indicative of its original utilitarian purposes. Its location adjacent to the River Eske and the steps leading down to the riverfront to the west elevation suggests that this building was originally associated with maritime trade etc. during the second half of the nineteenth, and it represents a rare surviving example of this past industry and economic activity in Donegal Town. Slater's Directory of 1881 records that boats/ships of three hundred tons could moor at the quay at Donegal Town with iron, timber, coal and groceries the chief imports and the chief exports being eggs, butter and grain. This simple outbuilding/warehouse acts as a subtle historical reminder of this period in Donegal Town's history, and it represents a modest addition to the built heritage of the town.



7. Warehouse- Reg. No. 40843014

DATE: 1820- 1860

DESCRIPTION

Attached nine-bay five-storey former warehouse/store, built c. 1830, having projecting single-bay gable-fronted block attached to the rear elevation (west) at the north end, and with full-height series of vertically-aligned loading bays/doors to the centre of the front elevation (east) having projecting gable-fronted canopy over formerly housing winch/hoist mechanism. Two-storey buildings attached to either end of the front elevation (east) running perpendicular (east-west) from the main building. Now with retail outlet to the ground floor; upper floors in use as stores. Pitched corrugated-cement roof with smooth rendered chimneystacks and raised smooth rendered verges/coping to either gable end (north and south). Some remaining sections of cast-iron rain-water goods to the west elevation. Roughcast rendered walls; render removed at ground floor level to east elevation exposing rubble stone construction. Square-headed window openings with stone sills, and having timber pivoting windows and timber loading doors. Timber shutters/battened loading doors to a number of window openings. Square-headed openings to loading bays to centre of front (east) elevation having battened timber doors. Square-headed doorway to east elevation at first floor level having replacement timber door; doorway reached up flight of concrete steps with modern metal railings. Segmental-headed carriage-arch opening at ground floor level to the main (east) elevation having roughly dressed voussoirs to arch. Modern shopfront inserted into archway. Set back from road in backyard of buildings fronting onto the west side of the Diamond, Donegal Town. Rear elevation (west) faces yard and quay wall along River Eske.

APPRAISAL

This substantial and imposing mid-nineteenth century warehouse/store retains much of its earlier character and industrial form. Despite some alterations at ground floor level, it remains intact to the upper floors. The survival of the early loading bays and the canopy formerly housing the winch/hoist are interesting features that add to its architectural and historical integrity. Its location adjacent to the River Eske suggests that this building was originally associated with maritime/mercantile trade. It is also located a short distance to the north of the site of the former market house (now demolished). Slater's Directory of 1881 records that boats/ships of three hundred tons could moor at the

quay at Donegal Town with iron, coal, groceries and timber the chief imports and the chief exports being eggs, butter and grain. It is very likely that this substantial warehouse was used in this trade. The name of the yard to the front (Hamilton's Yard) hints that this building may have some association with the Hamilton Family during the nineteenth-century (perhaps John Hamilton (1880 – 1884) who built a fine residence at nearby St. Ernan's Island (40909919) between 1834 – 26). This imposing industrial structure acts as an historical reminder of this period in Donegal Town's history, and it represents an integral element of the built heritage of the town and is a significant element of the social/economic/commercial history of the region.



8. HOUSE - REG. No. 40843015

DATE: 1800 - 1840

DESCRIPTION

Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1830 with modern shopfront to the ground floor and integral segmental-headed/basket-arched carriage-arch to the north end of the front elevation (east). Possibly formerly in use as a constabulary barracks c. 1900. Pitched natural slate roof with projecting eaves course, and having smooth rendered chimneystack to the south gable end. Roughcast rendered walls with smooth rendered bands to margins and smooth rendered band to eaves. Square-headed window openings having rendered architrave surrounds and one-over-one pane horned timber sliding sash windows. Modern shopfront to the ground floor having glazed door, square-headed window openings with fixed-pane display windows, and having fluted timber pilasters support timber fascia over with console brackets to either end and with dentil course to head. Road-fronted to the centre of Donegal Town overlooking The Diamond to the east.

APPRAISAL

This substantial terraced building, of early-to-mid nineteenth-century appearance, retains its early form and much of its early character despite the insertion of a modern shopfront in recent years. Its form having an integral carriage-arch is a typical feature of many buildings of this type in urban contexts in Ireland, and originally gave access to outbuildings and yard to the rear. Its visual expression is enhanced by the retention of features such as the natural slate roof and the timber sliding sash windows, while the rendered architraves to the window openings on the upper floors adds an element of decoration to the otherwise plain main elevation. This building is the best surviving example along a terrace of three three-storey buildings to the north-west corner of The Diamond, and it makes a positive contribution to the streetscape at the centre of Donegal Town. This building may have been in use as a constabulary barracks c. 1900 (appears to be indicated as such on a twenty-five inch map of the town). This building is a modest addition to the built heritage of Donegal Town.



9. FOUR MASTERS MEMORIAL - REG. NO. 40843016

DATE: 1935 - 1940

DESCRIPTION

Freestanding four-sided obelisk/memorial, erected 1934, having cruciform-plan capping/finials to top with gabled/triangular projection to the centre of each face. Constructed of ashlar sandstone and set on ashlar sandstone plinth with chamfered ashlar sandstone coping over. Inscribed with names of authors of the Annals of the Four Masters to base; inscribed Celtic cross motif and Celtic interlacing motifs to each face and having Celtic interlacing motif to each gabled projection. Located in the pedestrianised central square in the centre of the Diamond, Donegal Town.

APPRAISAL

This attractive and conspicuous memorial monument dominates the centre of The Diamond, Donegal Town, and acts as a focal point in the centre of the town. It was erected to commemorate the four monks (Michael O'Clery, Peregrine O'Clery, Peregrine Duigan and Fearfeasa O'Mulconroy) from the Franciscan friary in Donegal Town that compiled the Annals of the Four Masters between 1630 and 1636 (the Annals themselves are thought to have been compiled at Rosfriar), and whose names are incised into the monument (one to each face). Its form is enhanced by the quality of the ashlar sandstone (from nearby Mountcharles) used in its construction and by the appealing incised Celtic cross and Celtic interlacing motifs that adorn each face of the memorial and give it a vaguely Romanesque character. It was designed by the Dublin architectural firm O'Callaghan and Giron, and was unveiled in 1938 by the Bishop of Raphoe, The Most Revd. Dr MacNeely, at the bequest of Patrick M. Gallagher, solicitor and noted historian, who bequeathed £5,000 for the erection of a monument in honour of the Four Masters in Donegal Town. The monument was estimated to cost £980 with the remainder of the bequest used for the erection of an altar and furnishings at the new Catholic church (Church of the Four Masters - see 40843029) at Donegal Town. This monument is of high artistic merit, and is an integral element of the built heritage of the town.



10. House - Reg. No. 40843014

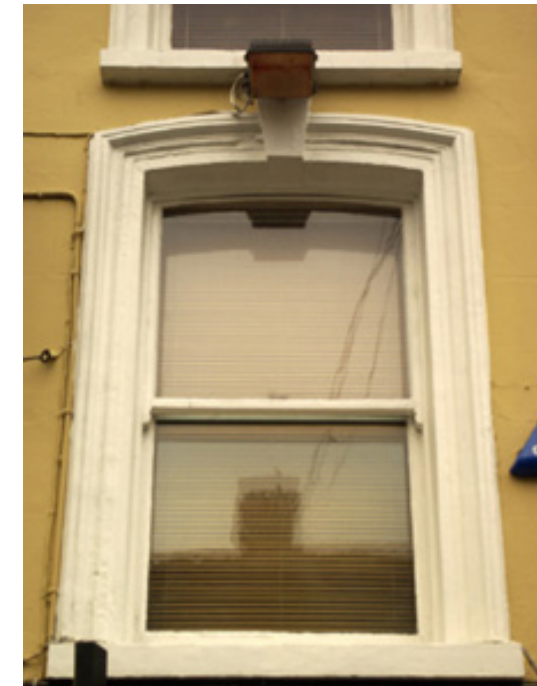
Date: 1860 - 1890

Description

Attached two-bay three-storey house, built c. 1875, having former retail outlet at ground floor level with tiled shopfront c. 1970. Possibly built as a pair with the building adjoining to the east (not in survey). Pitched natural slate roof with smooth rendered chimneystacks to either end (east and west). Cast-iron downpipe with hopper and replacement gutters. Smooth rendered ruled-and-lined walls to upper floors. Shallow segmental-headed window openings to upper floors having rendered architrave surrounds, stone sills, and one-over-one horned timber sash windows. Keystone detail to first floor windows. Square-headed door opening to the east end of the main elevation (south) with replacement timber panelled door and glazed overhead. Shopfront to ground floor with tiled walling, timber fascia board with raised lettering, central recessed square-headed doorway, and fixed-pane display windows. Large projecting double-faced clock to first storey. Fronts directly onto street to the west end of Lower Main Street, and short distance from The Diamond at the centre of Donegal Town.

Appraisal

This simple terraced building retains its original form and character to the upper floors. Its architectural integrity is enhanced by the retention of features such as the timber sliding sash windows and the slate roof, while the heavy architraved surrounds to the window openings at upper floor level adds a decorative element to the otherwise plain front elevation. It displays classical proportions in the diminishing windows to its façade. Buildings of this type were, until recently, a ubiquitous feature of Irish towns but are now becoming increasingly rare due to alteration and demolition. The modern tiled shopfront detracts somewhat from its appearance at ground floor level. The proportions and scale of this building, and the detailing to the upper floors suggests that it dates to the second half of the nineteenth century. The form of the building adjacent to the east (now heavily altered) hints that these buildings may have been built as a pair. This building is a modest addition to the built heritage of Donegal Town, and makes a positive contribution to the streetscape towards the centre of the town.



11. Allied Irish Bank - Reg. No. 40843017

DATE: 1860 - 1880

DESCRIPTION

Attached five-bay two-storey bank, built c.1875, having carved stone (former) balcony over central doorway to the main elevation (east). Single-storey flat-roofed extension to the rear (west). Hipped artificial slate hidden behind raised parapet with moulded coping over. Moulded cut stone eaves cornice. Two rendered chimneystacks, aligned parallel to roof ridge, having render cornice detailing. Ashlar sandstone construction over moulded plinth course; moulded cut stone stringcourse at first floor level. Ashlar balcony over main doorway having moulded cut stone console brackets supporting cut stone lintel over; railings/parapet now removed. Roughcast render to rear elevation (west). Round-headed window openings at ground floor level having cut stone architraves with keystone detail, cut stone sills with cut stone brackets, and having one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows; square-headed window openings at first floor level having moulded ashlar reveals, cut stone sills with cut stone brackets, and having one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows. Window opening to the north end of the main elevation (east) at ground floor level now altered with insertion of ATM machine. Central round-headed doorway to the main elevation (east) having moulded cut stone architraved surround with keystone detail, carved cut stone foliate decoration to spandrels to door head, carved cut stone plinth blocks (on quadrant profile) having foliate decoration, and having modern glass doors and overhead. Cut stone step to entrance. Timber architrave to internal doorway inside of entrance hall. Road-fronted to the south-west side of the Diamond, Donegal Town.

Appraisal

This good-quality, well-proportioned and imposing Italianate-style mid-nineteenth century bank building retains its original form and much of its architectural character despite some alteration at ground floor level. The imposing nature of this structure is in keeping with its purpose-built function as a bank. It is well-built in high-quality ashlar sandstone masonry with some sophisticated cut stone detailing, particularly to the former balcony, the openings, and eaves cornice, and the stringcourse. The round-headed openings to the ground floor almost creates the impression of an arcade, and is a feature found on many bank buildings of its date in Ireland. It has a commanding presence in the streetscape, reflecting the period when bank buildings were designed to express the solidity and wealth of the institution through their architecture. This building was originally constructed as a branch of the Belfast Bank (in existence in 1881; indicated as 'Belfast Bank' on map c. 1900) but it may have been a branch of the Royal Bank of Ireland at some stage. Slater's Directory of 1894 records that this branch of the Belfast Bank 'draws on the Union Bank, London'. The original architect is not known. This fine classical building is one of the principal elements of the built heritage of The Diamond, Donegal Town, and makes a strongly positive contribution to the streetscape at the centre of the town.



12. DUNLEAVYS - REG. No. 40843020

DATE: 1840 - 1880

DESCRIPTION

End-of-terrace three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1860, with later Vitrolite shopfront to ground floor, added c. 1950. Pitched artificial slate roof (fibre cement) with slightly sprocket eaves, four rendered chimneystacks (two to centre and one to either gable end), profiled metal gutters and cast-iron downpipes. Dentilated eaves cornice/course with paired brackets over supporting gutter. Roughcast rendered walls with smooth rendered bands to the margins, smooth rendered band above second floor window openings, smooth rendered sill course at first floor level, and with render/stucco cornice above shopfront. Square-headed window openings to upper floors having rendered reveals, stone sills, and with one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows to upper floor and replacement fittings at first floor level. Square-headed display windows to shopfront having chrome surrounds. Central square-headed doorway to the main elevation having replacement timber panelled door with overhead. Recessed square-headed doorway to shopfront to the east end of the main elevation (north-west); square-headed doorway to the shopfront to the west end of the main elevation. Black Vitrolite cladding at ground floor level having chrome detailing and raised chrome lettering to fascia to the eastern shopfront. Building faces onto easternmost angle of The Diamond in the centre of Donegal Town. Outbuildings to the rear (south-east).

APPRAISAL

This well-proportioned building, of mid-nineteenth-century appearance retains much of its early character and form. It retains some of its early fabric, including sash windows to the upper floors, but the replacement of the roof and the replacement window fittings detracts somewhat from its visual expression. The decorative bracketed and dentilated eaves cornice adds an element of decorative interest to the otherwise plain upper floors. The mid twentieth-century Vitrolite shopfront is a particularly interesting feature and is a rare surviving example of its type in County Donegal. The use of black Vitrolite with raised chrome lettering represents the modern design spirit of the twentieth century with plain functional detailing in new materials. This building is an addition to the built heritage of Donegal Town, and adds variety to the streetscape at the centre of the town.



13. HOUSE - REG. No. 40843019

DATE: 1830 - 1860

DESCRIPTION

Attached end-of-terrace two-bay three-storey house, built c. 1840, having retail outlet with modern shopfront to ground floor. One of a pair with the building adjacent to the west (see 40843018). Pitched natural slate roof having projecting stone eaves course and with smooth rendered chimney-stack to the west end shared with adjacent building. Some remaining sections of cast-iron rainwater goods. Coursed squared sandstone walls with roughly dressed sandstone voussoirs over window openings. Square-headed window openings with cut stone sills, and having six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows at first floor level and three-over-three pane timber sliding sash windows at second floor level. Modern shopfront at ground floor level having central square-headed doorway with multi-paned overlight, multi-pane timber display windows, and with timber shopfront having timber pilasters with consoles over to margins and timber fascia with cornice over. Road-fronted to the south side of the Diamond, Donegal Town. Laneway adjacent to the east gable end.

APPRAISAL

Despite alteration at ground level, this appealing and well-proportioned building retains much of its early architectural character and form. The retention of the early sash windows and the natural slate roof adds to its architectural integrity and visual expression. It is robustly-built in good quality local sandstone masonry, possibly from the nearby quarries at Mountcharles. Its forms part of a pair of buildings along with its neighbour adjoining to the west (see 40843018), which together make a strongly-positive contribution to the streetscape to the south side of The Diamond, Donegal Town. The modern shopfront is sympathetic to the original structure and does not distract substantially from this structure. This building and its related neighbour may have been built as a single property (possibly as an hotel) and later subdivided. This building is an integral element of the built heritage of the town



14. HOUSE - REG. No. 40843018

DATE: 1830 - 1860

DESCRIPTION

Attached two-bay three-storey house, built c. 1840, having retail outlet with modern shopfront to ground floor. One of a pair with the building adjacent to the east (see 40843019). Pitched natural slate roof having projecting stone eaves course and with smooth rendered chimneystack to either end (east and west); chimneystack to the east shared with adjacent building. Some remaining sections of cast-iron rainwater goods. Coursed squared sandstone walls with roughly dressed sandstone voussoirs over window openings. Render finish to the west gable end. Square-headed window openings with cut stone sills, and having six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows at first floor level and three-over-three pane timber sliding sash windows at second floor level. Square-headed window opening at ground floor level having replacement window. Modern timber shopfront over ground floor window opening. Square-headed doorway to the west end of the front elevation (north-west) having replacement double-leaf timber door with herring bone pattern, triple-pane overhead, and with cut stone plinth blocks to base. Road-fronted to the south side of the Diamond, Donegal Town.

APPRAISAL

Despite alteration at ground level, this appealing and well-proportioned building retains much of its early architectural character and form. The retention of the early sash windows and the natural slate roof adds to its architectural integrity and visual expression. It is robustly-built in good quality local sandstone masonry, possibly from the nearby quarries at Mountcharles. Its forms part of a pair of buildings along with its neighbour adjoining to the east (see 40843019), which together make a strongly-positive contribution to the streetscape to the south side of The Diamond, Donegal Town. This building and its related neighbour may have been built as a single property (possibly as an hotel) and later subdivided. This building is an integral element of the built heritage of the town.



CONCLUSION

The importance of the Diamond as part of the urban fabric of Donegal town is fully understood, both in its role as a meeting and socialising space, as well as its importance to the surrounding buildings and promoting Townscape Character.

Every effort has been made throughout the design process to ensure there will be no negative impact on either the Diamond itself, or the surrounding buildings. While there will be some visual impacts during the construction stage, as outlined in the beginning of this document, they will be both minor and temporary. During this stage there will also be interventions to mitigate the risk of any damage to the Four Masters monument. These will include, but not be limited to, hoarding it off for protection, preventing any machinery from operating in close proximity to it and ensuring plant operators are aware of the monument and its significance at all times. Extensive survey work of the site has been undertaken to ensure that any and all works to the Diamond during the demolition, removal and construction stages will not cause any structural or cosmetic damage to the Four Masters Monument. This includes works both above and below the current ground line.

Much of the existing surface paving of the Diamond is to be retained. The paving around the three rings will be retained with the exception of any paving which must be removed for tree planting and any ground works required for the proposed tensile structure. The existing tree pits at the three sides of the Diamond (many of which are empty), will be reused for new trees and therefore will not result in any additional paving being removed.

The proposed surface treatments to the centre of the Diamond will include local Mountcharles sandstone paving and a resin bound Ballylusk quartzite. These stones have been chosen as their colour and texture compliment the Four Masters monument.

The height of the proposed tensile structure has been considered and designed specifically so as not to visually detract from the monument. While the centre structure pole marginally exceeds the height, the main canopy structure is

considerably lower than the monument. This can clearly be seen in the elevations on drawing 21-22-PL-101.

The proposed trees which will be planted around the perimeter of the Diamond were specifically chosen so as to cause as little visual obstruction as possible. *Carpinus Betulus* (Hornbeam) has a clear stem height of 2-2.5 meters, meaning views across the diamond from ground level will not be adversely impacted. It is also a deciduous tree and will therefore lose its foliage in the winter leaving unobstructed views across the Diamond, and also means they are suitable for decorating with lights at Christmas time. Hornbeams naturally do not grow particularly high, and will therefore not detract from the Four Masters monument as the focal point of the Diamond.

The removal of any existing trees will be done in a careful and controlled manner to ensure the trees themselves, or their root system do not cause any damage to the Diamond. Also, all new trees will be planted with root control barriers to ensure that their root do not damage any of the surrounding paving, roads or structures. The tree pits will also be covered with resin bound stone which is a flexible surface material which will not crack or lift as the tree's roots grow. There are also a number of memorial plaques on the Diamond, namely Terence O'Callaghan, Joe Mundy, Dom & Mary Breslin, Mary B (Dee) Crossan, Packie McGrath, Hanna, MacCauley and James Anthony McGroary, as well as a number of plaques donated by Donegal County Council, Donegal Tidy Towns Committee and Donegal Town Community Chamber. These will all be incorporated into the proposed furniture on the Diamond.

These carefully considered design element will not only ensure the surrounding area suffers no negative impact from the proposed works, but enhance Donegal's standing as an area of townscape character and heritage.