



ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Report	Archaeological and cultural heritage assessment
Project	Athlone Public Realm
Date	09/03/2021



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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Westmeath County Council proposes to undertake Development of Public Realm Enhancement Works, encompassing approximately 0.6HA at Mardyke St, Pump Lane and Sean Costello St, Athlone, Co. Westmeath (figures 1 and 2), including the following public realm improvements:

- Provision of upgraded footpaths and realignment of existing carriage way along Mardyke Street, including 120m of a shared surface and pedestrianisation of 90m of Sean Costello Street, from its junction with Pump Lane to its junction with Mardyke Street, to take account of the access needs of pedestrians, mobility impaired persons and service vehicles;
- Provision of an enhanced public realm and landscape improvements, including street furniture, incidental play equipment, cycle parking, trees, and soft landscaping to enhance biodiversity;
- Provision of a priority signalised junction, including enhanced pedestrian facilities, at the junction of Mardyke Street, Gleeson Street, Pump Lane, and St Mary's Square;
- Upgrade to public lighting, including focal lighting to Sean Costello Street; and
- all necessary accommodation works, including utility provision, drainage, signage, and other ancillary works.

This report forms an archaeological and cultural heritage assessment for the development. It describes the archaeological baseline of the site and the surrounding area and assesses the potential impact that the proposed scheme could have on the archaeological and architectural heritage in the vicinity.

2 Methodology

This cultural heritage impact assessment was conducted in two stages. Firstly a detailed desktop survey was undertaken. Known cultural heritage sites were reviewed along with aerial photography and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) First Edition Mapping (Circa 1830) and Second Edition Mapping (circa 1900). Previously recorded cultural heritage sites reviewed included the following:

- National Monuments, be they in the ownership or guardianship of the State, in the ownership of a local authority or monuments under preservation orders;
- Record of Monuments & Places (RMP) and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) from www.archaeology.ie;
- Architectural Conservation Areas;
- Records of Protected Structures;
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH); and

- Demesnes Landscapes and Historic Gardens indicated on the OSI First Edition Mapping.
- Excavations Bulletin;
- Cartographic Sources;

This information was assessed in relation to the potential impact of the proposed development on cultural heritage. Having assessed the potential impact upon cultural heritage, a mitigation strategy has been established.

3 Archaeological and Historical Baseline

3.1 Cultural heritage assets within the development area.

The desk top study has identified that the proposed development is located within the Zone of Archaeological Potential for Athlone as identified within the Urban Archaeological Survey for Westmeath (figure 3). This area corresponds with the Zone of Notification as shown on the National Monuments Service map-viewer. This area represents the historic core of the town and is the area within which it would be expected that sub-surface archaeological deposits may survive.

The development of Athlone owes much to its location on a strategic crossing point on the River Shannon. The ford at this point on the River Shannon has been in use from prehistoric times as attested to by number of Neolithic and Bronze Age artefacts recovered from the river here. While Iron Age activity is largely absent from the area, evidence of Early Medieval habitation may be seen in the discovery of high quality grave slabs, which may point to the existence of an undocumented church site.

The surrender of the Munster fleet at Athlone in 1087 signified the power shift towards the Ua Conchobair of Connacht and Toirrdelbach Ua Conchobair built the first bridge here in 1120. The bridge was defended by a castle, constructed in 1129 and which was destroyed by lightning strike and subsequent fire in 1131.

The importance of Athlone grew with the arrival of the Anglo-Normans who recognised the strategic importance for the crossing. The Normans constructed a stone bridge and the first motte and bailey castle on the western bank of the river. This was replaced by a stone structure built by Bishopp John de Gray in 1210. It is likely that at this time the town wall was also constructed, providing protection to the area east of the river. The Anglo-Norman settlement was subject to numerous attacks and was significantly burnt in 1315 which led to a period of abandonment of the town until the 16th century.

Athlone re-established its importance under the Tudors following refurbishment of the castle in the 1540s and the construction of a new stone bridge in the 1560s. The establishment of the new bridge allowed the town to revive and develop as an economic hub over the next century. New gatehouses were constructed in the east town in the 1570s and the medieval town walls were subsequently repaired. These defences were enhanced further by Cromwell through the introduction of bastions and the western down was defended by an earthen embankment.

During the wars that took place in Ireland during the seventeenth century, Athlone held a strategic position, holding the main bridge over the Shannon into Connacht. In the Irish Confederate Wars (1641–1653), the town was held by Irish Confederate troops until it was taken late in 1650 by Charles Coote, who attacked the town from the west, having crossed into Connacht at Sligo. Forty years later, during the Williamite war in Ireland, the town was again of strategic importance, being one of the remaining Jacobite strongholds after they had retreated west following the Battle of the Boyne. At the first battle of Athlone in 1690, the Jacobite forces of Colonel Richard Grace repelled an attack by 10,000 men led by Commander Douglas. The following year the Siege of Athlone saw a further assault in which the troops of King William III eventually prevailed against the outnumbered defenders.

There are no recorded archaeological sites within the red line area for the development. Similarly there are no protected structures recorded in the Records of Protected Structures or National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) within the redline boundary for the development. There are however seven recorded protected structures fronting onto the development area (figure 4). Table 1 provides a summary of these structures with full details found in Appendix 1.

NIAH/RPS No.	Location	Summary
15009142/ 162	Dublin Gate Street	Moran’s Bar
15009143/ 163	Dublin Gate Street	Moran’s Bar
15009364/ 213	30 Mardyke Street	House
15009365/ 214	32 Mardyke Street	House
15009366/ 215	34 Mardyke Street	Carey’s Public House
15009392/220	Mardyke Street	Wall mounted post box
15009390	Mardyke Street	O’Neill’s Bar

Table 1: Protected structures fronting onto the development area.

An inspection of the early edition OS maps shows the continuing urbanisation of the town from its medieval origins. The area of the development site is shown to be fully developed with properties fronting onto a streetscape which matches that of today (figure 5).

A large number of archaeological investigations have been conducted throughout the historic town. The vast majority of these investigations have been conducted in areas well away from the development site, however a number have been conducted in relatively close proximity to the development area. Archaeological monitoring of the Athlone Drainage Scheme (10E0186) identified sub-surface remains at the junction of Northgate Street/Church Street to the path on the opposite side of the road. These consisted of the remnants of the market place. The records for this project note “The abundance of pipes and services in this area made any excavations difficult and increased the possibility of disturbance to archaeological layers. However, the excavation of the slit-trench indicated that archaeological layers and features do survive below the ground in this area”.

Archaeological monitoring of a replacement water main scheme (14E0078) identified archaeological remains in the Dublin Gate Street area. These consisted of a wall located 0.2m below the road surface. It was 1.2m wide and was exposed to a depth of 1.15m and was roughly built using un-worked limestone cobbles and boulders.

A number of archaeological investigations have been conducted within Sean Costello Street (98E0383, 99E0125, 02E0273, 03E1489, 07E0073 and 07E0130). None of these investigations identified any archaeological deposits.

In addition to those archaeological investigations located in close proximity to the development site, a number of additional investigations have been conducted on projects of a similar nature to the proposed public realm scheme.

Archaeological monitoring (03E0978) was conducted for the Athlone Broadband project which saw cables laid throughout the town. The cables were mostly inserted within the existing infrastructure of the town and the monitoring identified that much of the upper levels of the underlying ground strata have been heavily disturbed by modern activity. The monitoring did identify some features of archaeological interest. A wall, possibly part of the defences erected in advance of the siege of Athlone in 1691, was discovered at the junction of Northgate Street and Abbey Road. Two further walls were exposed in the south-east section of the trench on Barrack Street.

Archaeological monitoring of the ground-reduction works associated with the Athlone Westside street enhancement project identified that much of the underlying ground was heavily disturbed but was still capable of producing a small number of artefacts of medieval and post medieval date.

3.2 Cultural heritage assets beyond the development area.

Given the location of the development within the historic core of Athlone, the desk top survey focused on the area of the National Monuments Service-Zone of Notification for the town which in essence represents its zone of archaeological potential.

3.2.1 Record of Monuments and Places

A total of 74 cultural heritage assets recorded in the RMP were identified within the search area. These include the town walls (WM029-042020); the castle (WM029-042002); the priory (WM029-042003), the former 17th century church and graveyard at St Mary's (WM029-042021); the site of the Dublin Gate (WM029-042062) and the site of the North Gate (WM029-042063). Full details of these monuments are contained within appendix 2. None of these assets will be directly impacted upon by the proposed greenway.

3.2.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and Records of Protected Structures

In addition to those structures fronting on to the development site, the survey identified a further 161 cultural heritage assets recorded within the search area in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and the Record of Protected Structures (figure 4). None of these assets will be directly impacted upon by the proposed greenway.

3.2.3 Excavations Database

In addition to those archaeological investigations noted in section 3.1, the excavations database identified 45 further excavations within the search area for the desk top survey. Fifteen of these identified archaeological deposits and they are detailed within appendix 3.

4 Assessment of Archaeological Potential

The desk top survey has established that the proposed development site is located within an area of high archaeological interest focused on the historic town of Athlone. The entire site is located within the National Monument Services Zone of Notification for the historic town of Athlone. This reflects the medieval origins of the town and its expansion through to the 17th century. The desk based sources clearly suggest that this area has a high level of archaeological potential. Given the nature of the scheme, this potential may be somewhat reduced by the level of disturbance which may have occurred to the underlying strata as a result modern utilities provisions. However, the historic importance of the town and the level of known surviving archaeology here indicate that any works in this area have a high potential for further archaeological discoveries. Indeed, previous archaeological investigations on schemes of a similar nature, have confirmed the potential for archaeological survivability within the existing townscape. As such it possible that the groundworks associated with the proposed scheme could lead to further sub-surface archaeological deposits being identified. Should sub-surface archaeological remains be identified in the area of the proposed scheme then they may be subject to their total loss as a result of the construction requirements. The level of this impact can be off-set by the application of the mitigation measures set out in section 5 of this report.

5 Mitigation and Its Effectiveness

The desk top survey has identified that the principal archaeological mitigation should relate to the potential for sub-surface archaeological remains to be identified during the course of the construction works. Given the high archaeological potential of this area, monitoring of all ground penetrating works should be conducted within the area of the proposed scheme.

The works are to be conducted within the National Monuments Service-Zone of Notification for the historic town of Athlone. We recommend that in the first instance an application should be made for an archaeological licence. The licence application should be made to cover the initial GI works as well as the main scheme. Following submission of the licence application, the National Monuments Service will advise if Ministerial Consent is required for the works.

Should Ministerial Consent be required it should be applied for at least 12 weeks in advance of the site works starting. The application should include a detailed method statement setting out how the archaeological monitoring will be conducted.

Upon completion of the works a final report should be prepared detailing the findings of the monitoring and submitted to NMS.

Figure 1: location of proposed development site.

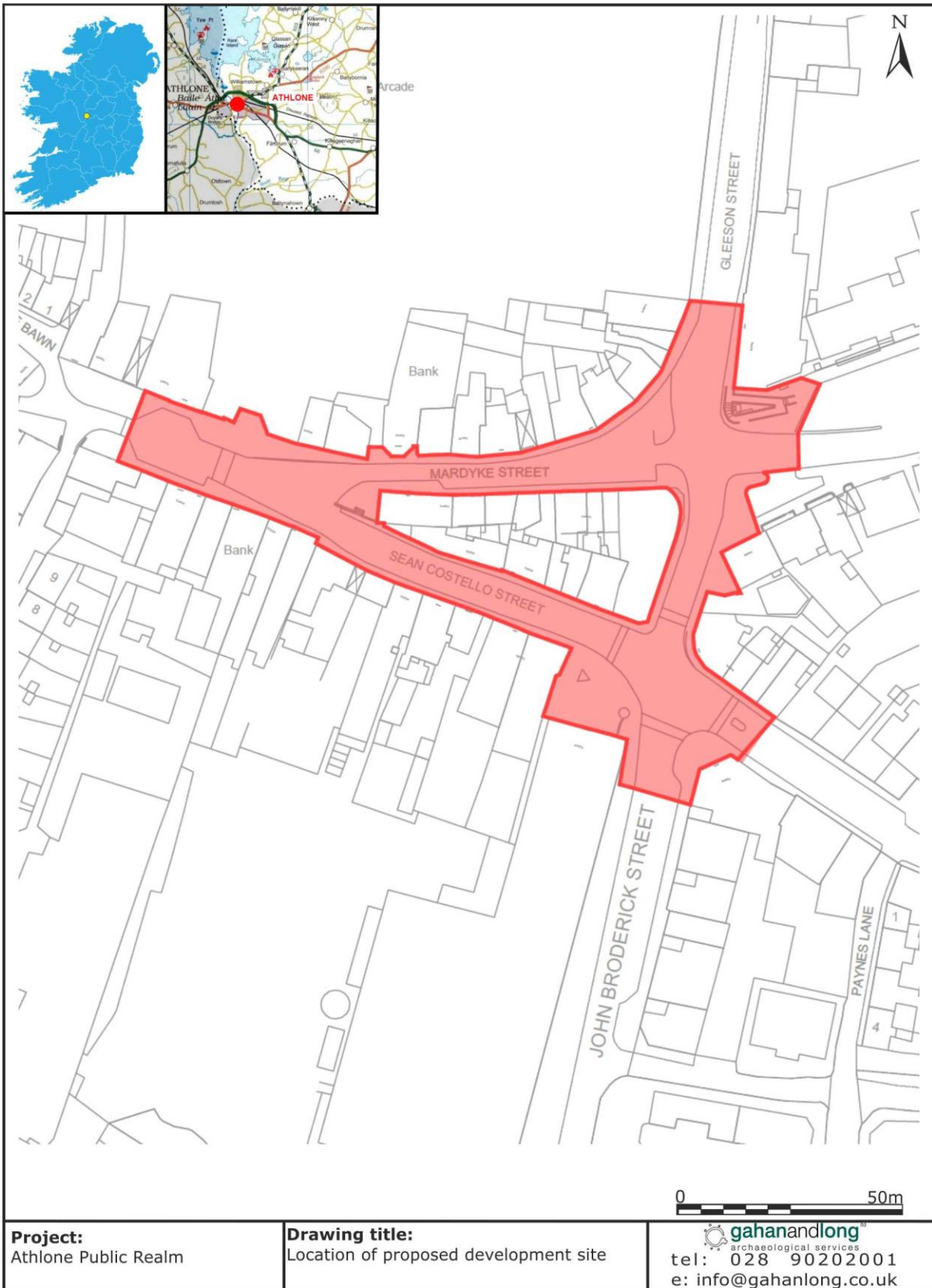


Figure 2: preferred concept layout.



Figure 3: known archaeological sites within the zone of notification for Athlone.



Figure 4: protected structures within the zone of notification for Athlone.



Figure 5: early edition OS map showing the layout of early 19th century Athlone.



Appendix 1: Protected structures fronting onto the development area

RPS No.	NIAH No.	Location	Type	Description
162	15009142	Dublin Gate Street	Moran's Bar	End-of-terrace three-bay two-storey house, built c.1850, with shopfront, c.1920 to ground floor. One of a terrace of four. Pitched artificial slate roof with brick chimneystacks, cast-iron rainwater goods and projecting eaves course. Ruled and lined rendered walls with raised quoins to corners at first floor level. Square-headed window openings to first floor with one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows and cut-stone sills. Shopfront to ground floor with plate glass window with three casement windows over, glazed timber double doors with overlight and timber fascia with raised lettering over. Round-headed doorcase to western bay with timber panelled door with radial fanlight over. Road-fronted.
163	15009143	Dublin Gate Street	Moran's Bar	Terraced three-bay two-storey house, built c.1850, with ground floor converted to public house, c.1970. One of a terrace of four. Pitched artificial slate roof with brick chimneystacks, cast-iron rainwater goods and projecting eaves course. Ruled and lined rendered walls with raised quoins to corners at first floor level. Square-headed window openings to first floor with one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows and cut-stone sills. Square-headed doorcase to ground floor with timber door flanked by square-headed plate glass windows. Road-fronted.
213	15009364	30 Mardyke Street	House	No longer registered
214	15009365	32 Mardyke Street	House	No longer registered
215	15009366	34 Mardyke Street	Carey's Public House	No longer registered
220	15009392	Mardyke Street	Wall mounted post box	Wall-mounted cast-iron post box, c.1940, with raised 'P&T' monogram in Gaelic script. Set into wall of former post office on Mardyke Street.

RPS No.	NIAH No.	Location	Type	Description
	15009390	Mardyke Street	O'Neill's Bar	Corner-sited five-bay two-storey late Victorian public house with oriel window above chamfered corner at street junction, built c.1900. Hipped natural slate roof with terracotta ridge tiles, moulded brick eaves cornice, cast-iron rainwater goods and brick chimneystacks. Constructed of brick over rendered plinth with ashlar surrounds to windows, ashlar relieving arches above first floor windows and a flush ashlar string course at first floor level. Segmental-headed window openings to ground floor, square-headed above to first floor, all with replacement windows. Modern shopfront to west end of Mardyke Street elevation with replica traditional shopfront. Road-fronted.

Appendix 2: known archaeological sites the wider search area

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042078	Barracks	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Custume Barracks. Temporary accommodation for 1000 cavalry and 1500 infantry built in 1691. Cavalry stables, riding house, infantry barracks of four blocks built c. 1697 and demolished by 1793 (Murtagh 1994, 10-11). Garda Station and government offices built in 1935-47 on partial site of barracks facing onto Barrack's St. and the church of Saints Peter and Paul built 1930 on SE corner of barracks.
WM029-0	Castle	Athlone & Bigmeadow	No surface remains visible of a medieval tower known as the Connacht tower which was located to the N of Athlone Castle (WM029-042002-). This building appears to have been a feature of the west town defences on the Connacht side of Athlone and was known in medieval documents as the Connacht Tower. Described by Bradley as a rectangular structure with two circular towers at N angles, linked to Athlone Castle by defensive wall or ditch, perhaps the 'great fosse' to form the riverside bawn (Bradley et. al. 1985, 38). In 1581, the crown granted Thomas, earl of Ormond and Ossory 'an old ruinous tower called Connaghte tower covered with straw, near the castle of Athlone (WM029-042002-), with a parcel of land on the south side containing 90 feet [27m], and a garden plot with certain ruined cottages on the north side, and a parcel of land in the great foss[e] on the west, from the tower to the river Shennen [Shannon]' (Nicholls 1994, 511). The Connacht Tower was partially demolished by the artillery of the Williamite army in 1691 (Murtagh 1994, 10). The partial remains of the Connacht Tower are depicted on Thomas Sherrard's map of Athlone dating from 1784 (Murtagh 1994, map 7a). Langrishe records that its ruins survived into the mid-nineteenth century and that it was removed during the Shannon improvements and the construction of Grace Road.
WM029-042070	N/A	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Demi-bastion to NE on Connacht side. There was a demi-bastion at the NE end, in the vicinity of the present main gate of Custume Barracks, from which the rampart continues W for about 90m before coming to an acute-angled bastion (WM029-042071-).

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042071	N/A	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Acute angled bastion to NW corner of the West town.
WM029-042064	N/A	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Connaught Gate. At the junction of Barrack Street and Pearse Street which was the the main passage through the West of the town, there was a gate. Unnamed 1685, 'Connaught Gate' 1722. (
WM029-042076	Castle	Athlone & Bigmeadow	No surface remains visible of a medieval tower known as the Connacht tower which was located to the N of Athlone Castle (WM029-042002-). This building appears to have been a feature of the west town defences on the Connacht side of Athlone and was known in medieval documents as the Connacht Tower. Described by Bradley as a rectangular structure with two circular towers at N angles, linked to Athlone Castle by defensive wall or ditch, perhaps the 'great fosse' to form the riverside bawn (Bradley et. al. 1985, 38). In 1581, the crown granted Thomas, earl of Ormond and Ossory 'an old ruinous tower called Connaghte tower covered with straw, near the castle of Athlone (WM029-042002-), with a parcel of land on the south side containing 90 feet [27m], and a garden plot with certain ruined cottages on the north side, and a parcel of land in the great foss[e] on the west, from the tower to the river Shennen [Shannon]' (Nicholls 1994, 511). The Connacht Tower was partially demolished by the artillery of the Williamite army in 1691 (Murtagh 1994, 10). The partial remains of the Connacht Tower are depicted on Thomas Sherrard's map of Athlone dating from 1784 (Murtagh 1994, map 7a). Langrishe records that its ruins survived into the mid-nineteenth century and that it was removed during the Shannon improvements and the construction of Grace Road.
WM029-042082	Memorial stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Rectangular memorial stone. Located just outside the entrance to Athlone Castle Museum, lying against the wall. There appears to be an inscription on it but it is impossible to decipher. Appears to be pre-1700 but exact date uncertain.

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042017	Armorial plaque	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Athlone Museum. Rectangular sandstone plaque. Two corners are broken but the achievement of arms in high relief is complete. The mantling is elaborate with helm and very tall feathered cap of maintenance. The shield has a cross with a lion rampant in the first quarter and a hand in the second. Incised motto partly damaged ...VENI REDEO. Lightly incised inscription on the upper corners: BUILT BY THE RIGHT WORSH.../ SIR THOMAS BOVRKE KNIGHT. 1639. Mr. Thomas Walker informed us that this plaque was removed from the bridge by his father. Dims. H 96cm, W 73cm, D 18cm.
WM029-042099	Castle-motte	Athlone & Bigmeadow	The Kingdom of Míde [Meath] was granted to Hugh de Lacy in 1172 (Mills and McEnery 1916, 177) and the process of sub-infeudation and settlement began soon afterwards but it is unlikely that any effective inroads were made as far west as Athlone for some time. The original Anglo-Norman grantee of Athlone was Geoffrey de Costentin who was granted a cantred in Connacht adjoining Athlone in 1200 (Cal. doc. Ire., no. 137; Orpen 1907, 259; Claffey 1970-1, 55). In this year, King John of England granted Geoffrey de Costentin, 'a cantred in Connaught called Tirihegrachbothe' (Cal. doc. Ire., 22). If a motte castle had been constructed in Athlone then Geoffrey would have been responsible for the construction of this earth and timber castle (WM020-042098-) between the years 1191 and 1199 (Orpen 1911-20, II, 129; Graham 1980, 53; Bradley et. al. 1985, 35). In 1199 the annals recorded that a 'depredation was comitted on the Foreigners by Cathal Crobhderg, who burned the bódhún [bawn] of Ath [Athlone], and killed many persons; and they carried with them many cows to their homes' (ALC). The use of the word bódhún [Cow fort] anglicised as bawn to describe an Anglo-Norman fortification suggests that the fortification may have been a ringwork type earthwork rather than a motte. Alternatively the bawn may have been a reference to the bailey or courtyard adjoining the motte castle. Graham (1980, 52-3) suggests that Athlone formed a part of the final western frontier of the Liberty of Meath, a frontier which also included the motte castles of Granard (LF010-080001-), Co. Longford, Kilbixy (WM011-041----) and Rathconrath (WM018-093----), Co. Westmeath. The construction dates of the latter two motte castles, in 1192 and 1191 respectively, dates the formation of this frontier in his view. Accordingly a date between 1191 and 1199 could be proposed for the construction of the Athlone motte castle (Bradley et. al. 1985, 36). Claffey (1970-1, 55) has suggested that de Costentin may not have built a motte but merely reused

			<p>the Ua Conchobhar [O'Conor] fortification (WM029-042098-) in Athlone. This suggestion finds some support in the Annals of Loch Cé reference to the Bishop of Norwich building in Athlone a new bridge (WM029-042004-) and a 'castle (WM029-042002-) instead of 'Ua Conchobhar's [O'Conor's] castle (WM029-042098-)' in 1210. Even if the survival of the Ua Conchobhar castle until 1210 were accepted, however, this does not exclude the construction of a motte because mottes were frequently built on top of ringforts and other pre-existing settlements (Graham 1980, 51). Claffey (1970-1, 55) further suggests that de Costentin's settlement was sited on the east bank of the Shannon but Orpen (1907, 263-4) was of the opinion that the original motte was built, and could still be detected, on the site of the present stone castle (WM029-042003-). The visit of King John to Ireland in 1210 marks a turning point in the development of Athlone. John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, was appointed justiciar of Ireland as part of John's efforts to improve the administration of the colony and he appears to have recognized the strategic importance of Athlone as the gateway between the Anglo-Norman liberty of Meath and Connacht, still effectively in Irish hands (Orpen 1911-20, II, 281; Claffey 1970-1, 56). De Grey appears to have desired to establish Athlone as the joint seat (with Dublin) of English administration in Ireland (Claffey 1970-1, 56) and the first step in this plan was the construction of new stone castle (WM029-042002-) and bridge (WM029-042004-) at Athlone in 1210. The 13th century Anglo-Norman stone castle may have been built on the site of the 12th century motte castle which in turn was built on the site of the Gaelic earth and timber fortification of the O'Conor's.</p>
WM029-042085	Stone head	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>Currently in Athlone Museum. Carved stone head of uncertain date discovered at Hodson Bay. Slight damage to the nose. On loan from the Lenihan family, Athlone. Original location - Co. Roscommon.</p>
WM029-042002	Castle-Anglo-Norman masonry castle	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>National Monument in State Ownership No. 520. Athlone Castle was built as a Royal Castle in 1210 to control an important fording point over the River Shannon which may have had a pre-Norman fortification (WM029-042098-) at this location. The Anglo-Norman stone castle was built on lands originally granted in 1200 to Geoffrey de Costentin who was then granted other lands in Connacht due to the construction of Athlone Castle which became the demesne lands of King John. The king of England then ordered Geoffrey de Costentin to maintain and keep possession of the castle on</p>

			<p>behalf of the king. In the year 1200 as part of the Anglo-Norman settlement of Connacht, King John of England granted Geoffrey de Costentin, 'a cantred in Connaught called Tirieghrachbothe' (Cal. doc. Ire., 22). The castle of Athlone and the western side of Athlone town were located on these lands called 'Tirieghrachtbothe'. In 1214 shortly after the construction of the Royal Castle of Athlone, King John allowed Geoffrey de Constantin to exchange the lands containing Athlone Castle for the cantred of Trithweth also located in Connacht (Cal. doc. Ire., 92). The lands of Trithweth were described as being located 'more remote from the castle, and nearer to the Irish' (Cal. doc. Ire., 257). In this year following a petition submitted by Geoffrey to the Archbishop of Dublin, King John commanded the 'exchange for the cantred in which the Castle of Athlone is situated, the Archbishop cause Godfrey [Geoffrey] to have another cantred of equal value in the marches' (Cal. doc. Ire., 81). In 1215, King John granted a mandate to 'Godfrey [Geoffrey] de Constantin to safely keep the castle of Aslon [Athlone], as he previously kept it' (Cal. doc. Ire., 95). In 1220 Geoffrey de Constantin was appointed to maintain 'the custody of the K.'s land and castles in that country, which custody shall be surveyed by counsel of the Archbishop of Dublin, Thomas Fitz Adam, and Richard de Burgh' (Cal. doc. Ire., 144). The present structure traces its foundation to John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich and Justiciar of Ireland, who commenced construction of Athlone castle in 1210 (ALC; Ann. Clon. sub 1208-9). In this year King John of England, ordered the Bishop to erect three castles in the province of Connacht. The Annals of Loch Cé recorded in the year 1210 that the Bishop of Norwich came along with the forces of Meath and Leinster to Athlone where a 'bridge (WM029-042004-) was constructed by him across Ath-Luain, and a castle instead of O'Conchobhair's [O'Conor's] castle (WM029-042098-)' (ALC). The following year in 1211 a stone tower (possibly the keep or donjon) collapsed killing Richard de Tuite and eight others (Gilbert 1884, ii, 232, 279) and Orpen (1907, 262-3) has suggested that this disaster might have resulted from the construction of a Keep on top of a motte (WM029-042099-) which had not settled sufficiently to hold the weight. This event was recorded on the Annals of Clonmacnoise in the entry for the year 1210 which stated that the English Bishop who 'was Deputy, and Richard Tuite founded a stone castle in Athlone, wherein there was a tower of stone built, which soon after fell & killed the said Richard Tuite with eight Englishmen more' (Ann. Clon.). The stone castle of Athlone was built on monastic lands belonging to the priory (WM029-042003-) of Saints Peter and Paul situated to the south. In 1213 the King of England commanded 'Henry Archbishop of Dublin to cause the monks of Athlone to have the tenth</p>
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			<p>part of the expenses of the castle in that town, in exchange for their land in which the castle is situated, as the Bishop of Norwich undertook when fortifying the castle' (Cal. doc. Ire., 80). In 1216, King John commanded the Justiciar of Ireland to exchange with the 'Prior of Athlone, for the 4 cantreds in the fee of Logseuethy [Lough Sewdy] assigned to the Prior by John Bishop of Norwich in compensation for the site of the K.'s castle of Athlone' (Cal. doc. Ire., 106-07). The King also commanded the Justiciar to 'cause competent satisfaction to be given to the Prior touching an exchange for his meadow, his fisheries of 12 marks, and the tithes of the castle' (Cal. doc. Ire., 107). In 1235 the King of England discovered by inquisition that the 'monks of Adlon [Athlone] have been wont to receive at the Exchequer, Dublin, an annuity of 10 marks of the vill (WM029-042----), castle, mill (WM029-042056-), and fishery (WM029-042081-) towards Connaught, which John Bishop of Norwich, when [justiciary], constructed in the their land, the K. commands the monks to have this annuity' (Cal. doc. Ire., 340-1). Work on the castle is sporadically recorded during the thirteenth century, in 1232-4 (35th Rep. Deputy Keeper Public Records Ireland, 37) and 1251 when the King ordered to 'employ 80 marks of the K.'s money in aid of the inclosure (WM029-042020-) of the K.'s vills of Adlon [Athlone] and Rendun [Rindown, Co. Roscommon], and repair of their castles (Cal. doc. Ire., 469). In 1270-72 the Exchequer paid 5 marks in wages to 'Nicholas of Gloucester, carpenter of the castle of Athlone' (Cal. doc. Ire., 150). In 1273-4, the justiciar, Geoffrey de Geneville, spent over £3,500 on various projects including 'repairs of the castle and houses of Athlone' (36th Rep. Deputy Keeper Public Records Ireland, 40). In 1276-7 Robert d'Ufford, the succeeding justiciar, spent £2,136 on fortifications and buildings at the castles of Rindown (RO046-004002-), Co. Roscommon and Athlone (36th Rep. Deputy Keeper Public Records Ireland, 35; Cal. doc. Ire., 267) and a further £3,200 in 1278-9 on work at Roscommon (RO039-043001-), Rindown (RO046-004002-) and Athlone castles (36 Rep Deputy Keeper Public Records Ireland, 48). In 1277-78 Robert de Ufford spent money on 'repairing houses of the castle of Athlone' (Cal. doc. Ire., 267). In 1281 the Exchequer made a payment to Thomas de Isham 'for works of the castles of Roscommon, Raundun [Rindown, RO046-004002-] and Athlone' (Cal. doc. Ire., 406). In 1284 the Exchequer made a payment of £11 13s 4d. to William 'the carpenter, spent in works of the castle of Athlone' (Cal. doc. Ire., 541). In 1290 the chief justiciary of Ireland went to 'the castle of Athlone, and remaining there to treat with the Irish of those parts, to inspect the defects of the works of the castle and bridge (WM029-042004-)' (Cal. doc. Ire., 326). Between 1286 and 1290 the Exchequer made a payment to 'Geoffrey</p>
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			<p>Brun, clerk, of £300, to be spent on fortifications of the castles of Roscommon (RO039-043001-), Randown (RO046-004002-), and Athlone, in works of those castles' (Cal. doc. Ire., 370). It is likely that much of the surviving medieval fabric of the castle, particularly the river wall with its three-quarter-round towers at each angle dates to this period (Orpen 1907, 271; Claffey 1970-1, 57; Leask 1951, 42). Parts of the castle had fallen into neglect by 1305 and repairs were carried out in 1306 by Richard de Exeter, constable of Roscommon castle (38th Rep. Deputy Keeper Public Records Ireland, 103). The Annals of St. Mary's, Dublin, note the burning of the castle and town by Ruaidri O Conchobhar in 1315 but Orpen (1907, 272), using the Irish annals, has suggested that the castle was not captured at this time. Little is known of the castle in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries although it is clear that it was frequently in Irish hands until recovered by the Crown in 1537. In this year it was recorded that the 'castle of Athlone, standing upon a passage betwixt Connaught and these parts, is recovered, which has long been usurped by the Irish' (Gardiner 1891, 47-85). Thereafter the castle remained in English hands serving as the residence of the Presidents of Connacht after 1569 (Murtagh 1980, 81). In 1547, the Annals recorded that the 'castle of Athlone was repaired by the English, namely, by William Brabazon, the King's Treasurer in Ireland, and the English and Irish of Meath, in despite of O'Kelly (Donough, the son of Edmond) and the Irish of Connaught' (AFM). These works involved the construction of a building or house described in the annals as a 'court' in 1552 when recording the death of William Brabazon (AFM). This court was probably the range of buildings on the east side of the castle known as the president's apartments. In 1574 the castle was described as 'this castle of Allon [Athlone] is on the Shannon, and is of great strength. It is held by the English, but by way of munitions it has but two very small pieces of artillery' (Rigg 1926, 148-69). In 1589 Athlone Castle was captured by a Spanish army of 2,000 men who 'did break the bridge (WM029-042004-) of Athlone, and told that when your Lordship understood of their fortifying there you went against them with 8,000 soldiers as far as Athlone, and finding the bridge of Athlone broke by the Spaniards that your Lordship did return again to Dublin, and that they hold the fort' (Cal. S. P. Ire., 136). In 1590 the castle is described as 'Her Majesty's manor house' to which was attached the customs of 'the bridge (WM029-042004-) and market of Athlone' (Cal. S. P. Ire., 374). In 1592 there is a reference to 'restoration to the house of Athlone of half of the bawn or strength which Sir Edward Waterhouse hath gotten' (Cal. S. p. Ire., 443). The reference to the bawn probably refers to the curtain wall of the stone castle. In 1641 the castle is</p>
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		<p>placed under a siege by Catholic forces and around 1642 the custody of Athlone Castle is surrendered to lord viscount Dillon of Costelloe (Vallancey 1786, 97). In 1663 there was a payment made of £1,000 to Viscount Dillon which was described as ‘being one year’s pay on the annuity granted said Viscount in consideration of a surrender made by him of the Presidentship of Connaught, the Constablenesship of Athlone Castle’ (Shaw 1904, 504). In 1684 the King sent a warrant to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland ‘reciting the grant dated 17 April, 1674, to the Earl of Ranelagh of the office of Constable and Governor of Athlone Castle and Governor of Athlone and the barony of Athlone and the half barony of Moycarn, co. Roscommon, and the territory of the Brawney, co. Westmeath, with a fee of 100l. per annum, for, at the request of the said earl, giving all necessary and effectual orders for inserting the said fee in the Military List of the present establishment for Ireland, making it payable to him from 25 March last during his continuance in the said government, and also for giving effectual orders for payment to him of whatsoever is due to him of the said fee from 29 Sept., 1682, to the said 25 March last’ (Blackburne Daniell and Bickley 1938, 109-32). According to Piers (1981, 86) the president’s apartments were in the east wing overlooking the river. Between 1689-91 the castle in Athlone was described as ‘the castle is yet in good repair, but no one dwelling in it, it will run to decay’ (Hardy 1900, 21-80). The castle buildings were largely destroyed in the 1691 siege when the castle suffered considerable damage as a result of bombardment by Ginkel’s artillery (Murtagh 1972-3, 176). These apartments are shown by Thomas Phillips in a drawing of 1685 and have been attributed to Sir William Robinson the architect of the Royal Hospital at Kilmmainham, Dublin (Loeber 1981, 96). In 1693 a royal warrant was issued by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for a ‘patent to pass the great seal of Ireland for a release and discharge to the said Earl of Ranelagh of the covenant to keep the Castle of Athlone in good repair’ (Shaw 1935, 1-5). In 1697, Richard the earl of Ranelagh submitted a petition to the King ‘showing that he was a great sufferer by the late war in Ireland, having lost nearly 12,000l. of rent, and his castles of Roscommon and Athlone being utterly ruined, his mansion in Dublin being pulled down for timber to build a mass house there; praying for a grant of 500l. per ann. out of the forfeitures in the counties of East and West Meath, and in the province of Connaught; also the inheritance of his house at Chelsea, with the 23 acres thereto belonging, already granted to him for 99 years; in order that he might make a settlement in his family’ (Redington 1871, 18-37). In this year there was given ‘an account of a violent tempest at Athlone, accompanied by thunder and</p>
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			<p>lightning; the town and castle have been burnt and blown down, the magazine having been fired by lightning' (Hardy 1927, 454-97). The castle appears to have remained in a ruinous condition until the 1790's when the possibility of French invasion drew the attention of the British authorities to the defence of Athlone. The castle was considerably rebuilt following a survey by Lt. Col. Tarrant in 1793 and further modifications took place during the nineteenth century (Kerrigan 1980, 182-5). In 1682 the castle was described by Sir Henry Piers who wrote that 'one tower on the castle wall is so advantageously seated that it commandeth the whole bridge (WM029-042004-), which nevertheless hath a great drawbridge on that end' (Vallancey 1786, 86). Piers (ibid.) describes the siting of the castle as being built 'on an high raised round hill (WM029-042099-; WM029-042098-), resembling one of our Danish raths or forts, the walls whereof do almost shut up the whole ground; in the centre whereof is an high-raised tower, which overlooketh the walls and country round about; on the side that faceth the river are the rooms and apartments which served always for the habitation of the lord president of Connaught, and governor of the castle; the middle tower being the repository or store-house for ammunition and warlike provisions of all sorts. Of late, since the presidency was dissolved, this castle and the demesnes of it an all revenues are granted in fee by his gracious majesty now reigning, to the right honourable Richard Jones, earl of Ranelagh, grandson to Roger lord Ranelagh, who was president of Connaught in 1641, and his heirs. The presidents heretofore here held their courts of justice, which are now dissolved'. The 1685 plan of the town by Thomas Phillips (NLI Ms. 3137(32); Murtagh 1994 Map 4) depicts the castle as a polygonal-shaped keep standing in the W quadrant of the castle ward which is protected by a polygonal-shaped curtain wall. A square-shaped mural tower on the SW side of the curtain wall is depicted along with the remains of a square-shaped tower on the SE angle overlooking the medieval bridge (WM029-042004-). A long rectangular building known as the president's house runs along the full length of the E wall of the castle ward overlooking the river and bridge below. This plan shows a wall running N off the centre of the N wall of the curtain wall of the castle keep/donjon. This second curtain wall runs onto the W angle tower of a medieval castle known as the Connaught Tower which is described in 1581 in a land grant to the earl of Ormond and Ossory as an 'an old ruinous tower called Connaghte tower covered with straw, near the castle of Athlone, with a parcel of land on the south side containing 90 feet [27m], and a garden plot with certain ruined cottages on the north side, and a parcel of land in the great foss[e] [ditch] on the west, from the tower to the river Shennen'</p>
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			<p>(Nicholls 1994, 511). On Phillips' plan of 1685 the Connacht Tower is depicted as a rectangular-shaped building with circular angle towers on the N and W angles. The castle is shown standing on the W bank of the River Shannon in an area that roughly corresponds with the present location of the Father Mathew Hall now Athlone Library. No surface remains survive of this medieval castle that was located on the S side of Barrack Street immediately beside the river Shannon and to the S of a boat slip known as the 'Barrack Slip' as shown on Thomas Sherrard's map of 1784 (RCB Library Ms 151; Murtagh 1994, Map 7(a)). On this 1784 map only a short section of upstanding wall belonging to the Connaught Tower is depicted standing amongst a range of buildings fronting onto the S side of Barrack Street. A drawing of the E elevation of the castle and bridge (WM0239-042004-) by Thomas Phillips in 1685 (NLI Ms. 3137 (33)) shows the crenellated square-shaped angle tower on the SE angle of the crenellated curtain wall along with a view of the square-shaped SW angle tower in the background. The polygonal-shaped keep or donjon with conical roof is shown standing high above the curtain walls of the castle. The 'presidents house' running along the E side of the curtain wall is shown with a dormer fronted roof overlooking the River Shannon, the remains of chimney stacks on the later W wall of the building can be seen rising above the roof line of this building. Jean Goubet's plan of the castle (NLI Ms. 2742; Murtagh 1994, Map 5) dating from 1691 depicts a similar range of buildings inside the curtain wall, however on this plan a new four-sided bastion or tower has been built against the W face of the curtain wall of the castle and a new circular tower or bastion has been built against the E face of the SE angle tower of the curtain wall. The remains of a third polygonal-shaped tower or bastion depicted on Goubet's plan may have been added to the NE angle of the curtain wall between 1685 and 1691. The 1784 plan of the castle by Thomas Sherrard depicts the freestanding polygonal-shaped keep enclosed by a polygonal-shaped curtain wall with the partial remains of a circular angle-tower on the SE angle, a circular tower on the NE angle and a square tower projecting outwards from the N wall to the W of the NE angle tower which protects the entrance into the castle ward on the N side. A second entrance into the castle ward is shown on the E side of the castle where a gap in the curtain wall located at the S end of the E wall may mark a second entrance into the castle. On this plan the S section of the curtain wall appears to have been destroyed and is not depicted as upstanding. This section of the curtain wall may have been destroyed in the 1691 siege of Athlone. In 1837 the castle was described as 'the oldest of the works is a tower of decagonal form, which, from the massive structure of the walls, was probably the keep</p>
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			<p>of the ancient castle, though having a new exterior; it is situated on a lofty mound (WM029-042099-) supported on the side next the river by a stupendous wall, but overlooked on the opposite side by the houses in the upper part of the town. The platform on which this tower, now used as a barrack, is bounded on the side next the lower town by dwellings for the officers, and walls of imposing appearance; and on the others by modern works mounted with cannon, commanding not only the approach on the Connaught side of the river but also the bridge itself; and the strong circular towers at irregular intervals, with the carefully fortified entrance, give to the whole place a very formidable appearance' (Lewis 1837, 86). According to Orpen (1907, 265) during the late 13th century the 'three-quarter-round towers at the angles of the river frontage, and the great retaining wall (or its predecessor) between them' were added to the main tower of the castle. Orpen (ibid.) goes on to state that 'these towers were, no doubt, originally higher than they are now, and were probably furnished at the top with battlements or wooden bretesches for archers. They have since been lowered for cannon, while the parapet of the wall has been furnished with embrasures. Though I call these structures at the angles towers, they might now be more properly described as rounded bastions; for it is to be noted that the whole space enclosed by the outer walls is a solid platform of earth, only a little lower than the top of the parapet on the river side, and from 20 to 25 feet [6 - 7.6m] above the level of the present roadway outside. This platform of earth represents the earlier mote (WM029-042099-)'. The main tower or keep of the castle was described by Orpen (ibid.) as 'the decagonal keep or donjon, which rises from near the landward edge of the mote or platform, was also probably much higher than at present, and the present top, with a bastard machicouli on each face, is modern work. I see no reason to doubt, however, that the plan and much of the lower masonry of the keep - the walls of which above its spreading plinth are 8 feet [2.4m] thick - may date from the early part of the thirteenth century'. The castle presents itself to the present-day viewer as a Napoleonic fortification but behind the artillery embrasures and Martello tower-style keep, the outline of its medieval defences can be distinguished. In plan the castle consists of a pentagonal-shaped or five-sided curtain wall with a decagonal or ten-sided keep or donjon placed just west of centre within the curtain wall. The entrance is approached from the north by a ramp constructed in the rebuilding after 1793. It is likely that the medieval entrance was on the north side but its exact location is unknown. The curtain wall is thickest on the east (riverside) where it also appears to have been considerably rebuilt. Two circular bastions project from the east curtain wall</p>
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			and there may be the remains of a third in the north-west angle. These may have formed part of the thirteenth century defences but they are now almost totally hidden by later masonry (Orpen 1907, 265). The keep is decagonal-shaped and its base is concealed by a plinth. The upper stories of the keep were removed in the 1793 works and, while the wall fabric may be medieval, all visible features date from that time.
WM029-042059	Cross-Wayside cross	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Fragment of a possible 17th century wayside cross (dims. H 0.43m; Wth 0.42m; D 0.17m) located outside Athlone Castle Museum. Decorated in low false relief with quarter of a ringed cross having incised crosses on the stem. Inscribed with INRI on the ring and the date 16.. is in one corner. Exact provenance unknown.
WM029-042088	Inscribed stone (present location)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	On display in Athlone Castle Museum. One of two stones (WM029-042089-) (dims. H 0.35m, Wth 0.46m, D 0.15m) removed from gateway to St. Peter's Port (see also WM029-042089-). The inscription reads 'WILL O' WISP AND JACK THE PRINTER'. Will O' Wisp and Jack the Printer refer to two prominent men with whom a man named Booth was in dispute. They were William Sproule, a Quaker merchant, and John Potts, a printer and owner of Saunders' newspaper. Booth owned the property and was otherwise known as 'Copper Fisted Jack', who levied a toll on all produce brought through the port. Stones probably date from the 18th century.
WM029-042089	Inscribed stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	On display in Athlone Castle Museum. Two arch stones (dims. H 0.32m, Wth 0.46m, D 0.13m) removed from the gateway to St. Peter's Port (see also WM029-042088-) which was the water gate to the south harbour of the west town of Athlone. The inscription reads 'O may not Satan's Agents enter' and 'Wil o'Wisp & Jack the Printer'. According to the information panel in the museum, a local man named booth was responsible for the inscription, which arose from a property dispute he had in Athlone with William Sproule, a local merchant, and John Potts, a colourful newspaper proprietor, who died in 1795. Probably dates from the 18th century.
WM029-042052	Stone head (present location)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	On display in Athlone Castle Museum. Keystone of an archway into which has been set the medieval head of a tonsured cleric possibly of granite, with the words "St. Peter's Port" and initials 'I.B'. 'I.B' refers to a man named Booth, a property owner otherwise known as 'Copper Fisted Jack' who levied a toll on all produce brought through St. Peter's Port. (See also WM029-042088-). Head (dims. H 0.19m; Wth 0.13m; T 0.33m) has a long pointed face with damaged chin.

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042053	Sheela-na-gig	Athlone & Bigmeadow	On display in Athlone Castle Museum. Abraded sandstone squatting figure (dims. H 0.4m; Wth 0.21m; Wth 0.21m; D 0.2m). The hands are clasped around the legs which are drawn up under the chin and the vulva or anus is openly displayed. The face has protruding lips and slanting eyes. According to the information panel in the museum this sheela-na-gig originally came from the keystone of the archway belonging to the water gate known as St. Peter's Port which was part of the Cluniac priory dedicated to SS. Pater and Paul (WM029-042003-/ WM029-042091-) (Bradley et. al. 1985, 48-9; Weir 1980, 64). Described by Freitag as a 'sculptured almost in the round. Strong face with pursed lips, and a striated pattern incised across left cheek. With arms embracing tightly flexed knees. Big V-shaped vulva' (Freitag 2004, 122).
WM029-042043	Cross-slab (present location)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Early Christian cross-inscribed slab (dims. Dims. H 0.82m, Wth 0.59m, T 0.13m) discovered in 1978, and one of four cross-slabs (WM029-042044-;045-;047-) found in the graveyard (WM029-042092-) of the Franciscan friary (WM029-042001-) (Fanning and Ó hÉailidhe 1980, 7-8). Now on display in Athlone Castle Museum. The cross-slab contains an inscription to Ailill Ua Dunchatho, King of Connacht who died in 764 AD (Fanning and Ó hÉailidhe 1980, 7). Roughly rectangular sandstone slab missing a small section of one corner. The decoration consists of an almost equal-armed ringed cross within a rectangular frame. The centre of the cross consists of a square enclosing a circle; the terminals are also square and bear foliage decoration. The arms of the cross have a fret pattern of interlocking T type while the frame consists of a broad band of continuous fret pattern of the interlocking L type. Incised inscription above the panel: AILILL AUE DUNCHATHO (Bradley et. al. 1985, 45-6).
WM029-042045	Cross-slab (present location)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Early Christian cross-slab (dims. H 0.37m, Wth 0.72m, T 0.1m) discovered in 1979, one of four cross-slabs (WM029-042043-;044-;045-) originally found in the graveyard (WM029-042092-) of the Franciscan friary (WM029-042001-) (Fanning and Ó hÉailidhe 1980, 9). Now on display in Athlone Castle Museum. Sandstone cross-inscribed slab that is broken into two parts. The upper half survives in Athlone and the lower left corner is in the National Museum of Ireland. Highly decorated ringed cross in false relief. The cross has a square panel at the centre filled with interlace and rectangular terminals at the end of lozenge-shaped arms. The arms and terminals are also decorated with interlace and spiral motifs. The ring is ornamented with pelta designs. Outside the

			ring are the winged lion of St. Mark and the winged calf of St. Luke each of which hold a book. Above the symbols of the evangelists are the pocked letters OR DO. The fragment in the National Museum of Ireland depicts a winged figure, presumably St. Matthew, and bears the incised letters MUIR M below (Bradley et. al. 1985, 46; Fanning and Ó hÉailidhe 1980, 9).
WM029-042044	Cross- slab (present location)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Early Christian cross-slab (dims. H 0.76m; Wth 0.52m; T 0.08m) discovered in 1974, one of four cross-slabs (WM029-042043-;045-;047-) found in the graveyard (WM029-042092-) of the Franciscan friary (WM029-042001-) (Fanning and Ó hÉailidhe 1980, 5-6). Now on display in Athlone Castle Museum. Damaged sandstone slab decorated with an incised three-line Latin cross with a central circular expansion, containing a tetraskelion, and semi-circular terminals ornamented with worn key patterns. The cross is outlined by a two-line border with knots at the external angles. Incised inscription flanking the stem reads: OR DO CONLOC DO CHADAL.
WM029-042039	Armorial Plaque (present location)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Unidentified Heraldic Plaque. Seventeenth century. Currently on display in Athlone Castle Museum. Rectangular limestone plaque with heater-shaped shield and mantling similar to WM029-047----. Removed from Hogan's on the S side of Church Street. Engrailed shield with a bend sinister and a lion rampant overall. The family have not been identified but it could be either Gray, Lloyd, Price or Grace. Dims. H 0.5m, Wth 0.46m, T 0.16m (Bradley et. al. 1985, 28). According to the information panel in the museum this armorial plaque was erected by a member of the Jones family in the 17th century. The plaque was recovered from the external wall of premises in Church Street which was the residence of the Jones family.
WM029-042040	Armorial Plaque (present location)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Amorial plaque that is now on display in Athlone Castle Museum may be the Dillon memorial recorded in the Urban Survey of Athlone (Bradely et. al. 1982, 28). According to Bradley a stone mural tablet carrying the Dillon arms is mentioned in the Burgess Papers (Bradley et. al. 1985, 28; English 1974-5, 256). Partially damaged armorial plaque decorated with a shield and lion rampant with the letter D on right side of shield and the letters 620 beneath the shield with partial inscription carved in relief. According to the information panel in the museum this plaque dated 1620, bears a coat of arms possibly belonging to the Jones family and may have been inserted into the external wall of a premises belonging to this family in the town of Athlone. The partial Latin inscription has been interpreted as meaning MAKE ME JOYFUL, O LORD.

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-040238	Armorial plaque (present location)		Armorial plaque from the house of John Waple dating from 1621. Currently on display in Athlone Castle Museum. Rectangular block of limestone originally from Church Street. Carved in false relief with a heater shaped shield and an inscription in Roman lettering. The shield has two bends and three cross crosslets per fess. The date 1621 is incised below. Inscription: 'ERECTED BY JOHN/WAPLE MARCHANT'. Dims. H 0.41m, Wth 0.37m, T 0.12m (Bradley et. al. 1985, 28). According to the information panel in the Athlone Castle Museum the armorial plaque was recovered from an external wall in Custume Place, which may have been the location of the merchants premises.
WM029-042087	Inn	Athlone & Bigmeadow	'Sean's Bar' was originally a two storey high building with thick walls, an additional third storey in brick was added later. Preserved on the premises is a section of wattle partition removed from a first floor wall. This could be of seventeenth century date but it is not securely dated.
WM029-042086	Architectural feature	Athlone & Bigmeadows	On the premises of Sean's Bar (WM029-042086-), 13 Main Street, is a late medieval stone built fireplace from a house on an island in Lough Ree.
WM029-042072	Bastion (<i>Redundant record</i>)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Large bastion-shaped projection through which ran the principal western exit from the town. The present Bastion Street derives its name from this feature and the shape of the bastion is preserved in the line of the houses at the W end of Grattan Street. Bastion Street marks the central axis of the lost W bastion built during the Cromwellian period. The nose of the bastion was at the junction between O'Connell St and Grattan Row, and the southern flank is outlined by Grattan Row itself. The bastion was built as part of the earthen ramparts, between 1652-4, at the same time as the stone bastions of the E town were constructed. It seems to have been built as the W gate of the town and is shown as the principal western entrance on Phillip's 1685 map.
WM029-042073	Corner bastion (<i>redundant record</i>)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Small corner bastion to S, just outside Abbey Lane near Goldsmith Terrace.
WM029-042091	Sheela-na-gig	Athlone & Bigmeadow	On display in Athlone Castle Museum. <i>See WM029-042053.</i>

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042003	Religious house-Cluniac monks	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>The priory of Athlone appears to have been known by several names including the priory of Saints Peter and Paul, the monastery de Innocentia and the priory of St. Peter and Benedict. This priory was the only Cluniac house in Ireland which according to tradition was founded by Turlough O’Conor, King of Connacht in 1150 (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 110). The priory was referred to as the monastery ‘de Innocentia’ in 1280 (Cal. doc. Ire., 351) and again in 1391 when a letter was sent to the ‘prior of the monastery of St. Peter, Athlone (de Innocentia)’ (Cal. papal letters 1362-1404, 417). The priory was also known as the monastery of St. Peter and Benedict as recorded by Sir James Ware in 1626 (Gilbert 2012, civ-cv). Some discussion surrounds the date of its foundation. In the late 17th century Alemand recorded that this abbey was founded in 1150 and was dedicated to St. Peter and St. Benedict on the basis of the writings of the monastic historian Gaspar Jongelin (Stevens and Moll 1722, 196). Gaspar Jongelin based his dating on the writings of Sir James Ware who in 1626 compiled a table of the foundation dates of the Cistercian monasteries in Ireland (Gilbert 2012, civ-cv). Sir James Ware recorded in his table of Cistercian foundation dates, that the abbey of Athlone was founded in 1150 (ibid., 220). There is no mention in either source that this monastery was founded under the patronage of Turlough O’Conor, king of Connacht. Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 110) question the reliability of the tradition that it was founded c.1150 by Toirrdelbach Ua Conchobair [Turlough O’Conor], king of Connacht, pointing to the confusion of Athlone with the Cistercian monastery of “Benedictio Dei” [God’s Blessing] at Kilbeggan, which was founded in 1150. Conlan (1980, 74-5) argues the view that it was founded by Toirrdelbach [Turlough] c.1150 on the basis that a Cluniac foundation is unlikely to date any later because the Cluniac Order was rapidly eclipsed in Ireland by the Cistercians after that date. The abbey was clearly in existence before the building of Athlone Castle (WM029-042002-) in 1210 because the priory received compensation in the year 1214 for the land on which the castle was built. In this year, King John commanded Henry de Loundres, Archbishop of Dublin, to pay compensation to the ‘monks of Athlone’ as their lands had been taken for the construction of Athlone Castle. In this year the crown papers recorded that the monks of Athlone were to ‘have the tenth part of the expenses of the castle in that town, in exchange for their land in which the castle is situated, as the Bishop of Norwich [John de Grey] undertook when fortifying that castle’ (Cal. doc. Ire., 80). In 1235, crown documents recorded that</p>

			<p>‘the monks of Adlon [Athlone] have been wont to receive at the Exchequer, Dublin, an annuity of 10 marks for the vill (WM029-042----), castle (WM029-042002-), mill (WM029-042056-) and fishery (WM029-042081-) towards Connaught, which John [de Grey] Bishop of Norwich, when [justiciary], constructed in their land, the K. commands the justiciary to cause the monks to have this annuity’ (Cal. doc. Ire., 341). In the year 1280 there is a reference in crown papers to ‘Brother Gilbert, a monk de Innocentia (St. Peters) near Athlone’ (Cal. doc. Ire., 351). In 1284 King Edward I, commanded the justiciary of Ireland ‘not to injure the Prior and convent of St. Peter of Athlone regarding the pool which they were wont anciently to have. The justiciary had constructed 2 mills (WM029-042056-) upon the pool for the K.’s use, and the prior and convent had consequently taken nothing in the pool’ (Cal. doc. Ire., 564). In 1290 the treasurer of Ireland paid ‘Gilbert, monk of Athlone, 40s. of silver for the losses which the monks had sustained for 3 years in their pools of Athlone by the construction of the K.’s mills (WM029-042056-) there’ (Cal. doc. Ire., 325). In 1290 a second payment was made to ‘Gilbert, monk of Athlone, for 10 marks of the K.’s yearly alms granted to the Prior and convent of St. Peter of Athlone’ (Cal. doc. Ire., 325). In 1362 William O’Tumulty was elected prior, apparently the first native Irishman to obtain the position (Grattan-Flood 1913, 54) but it is noteworthy that every subsequent prior seems to have been of Irish blood (Conlan 1980, 77-80). In 1428 a papal indulgence was granted to ‘penitents who on the feast of SS. Peter and Paul [June 29], from the first to the second vespers, visit and give alms for the repair and conservation of the church of the Benedictine monastery of SS. Peter and Paul de Innocentia near Atholoy[n] [Athlone], in the diocese of Elphin, which is threatened with ruin on account of the wars which have afflicted those parts’ (Cal. papal letters 1427-47, 22). There is no formal record of the dissolution of the priory but Conlan (1980, 80) feels it was probably suppressed by Sir William Brabazon, vice-treasurer of Ireland and constable of Athlone Castle after 1547 (Bradley et. al. 1985, 47). The priory was joined to the castle as an estate and it was generally held by the vice-treasurers of Ireland until 1569 when it was assigned to the presidents of Connacht (Murtagh 1994, 91). Between 1569-70 the priory church was converted into a government storehouse and the conventual buildings of the priory were converted into a dwelling house for Sir Edward Fytton, President of Connacht (Grattan-Flood 1913, 56). In 1572, when Athlone was burned by James FitzMaurice FitzGerald and the sons of the Earl of Clanricard, the priory church was in use as a store. In 1572 the Lord President of Connacht wrote to the Lord Deputy, stating that ‘the rebels, with Scots, have burnt Athlone wholly</p>
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			<p>to the ground. The steeple of the Abbey, where the store is, was well defended' (Cal. S. P. Ire. 1509-73, 477). John Crofton also wrote in the same year to the Lord Deputy stating that the rebels and Scots have burnt Athlone, and the body of the church, where he had his malt, biscuit, and beer, and all his brewing and baking vessels which are consumed' (Cal. S. P. Ire. 1509-73, 477). In 1584 the Crown granted a 21 year lease to George Alexander of the 'site of the priory of St. Benedict of Cistercian monks of Athlone, co. Roscommon, the demesne lands, a mill in the tenure of O'Fallon, lands in Clonnalve, 7 weirs in the river Shennen, with the tithes thereof, the tithes of the rectory of Athlone, extending to Athlone and Duffer, the tithes of the rectories of Dromyne, Kiltome, Kinerboy and Kilmyan, Taghoe alias S. John Baptist, Aleake, Teaghfratrane, Teaghane Dyserte, Camnaghe, Ratharrowe, Assafraghe, Kilsalen, Kyllaghamba, and Kilcrowlen, co. Roscommon, and all other possessions of the priory. To hold for 21 years. Rent, £60 1s 9d.' (Nicholls 1994, vol. II, 611). In 1606-07 a survey of the Crown lands and tithes which were leased by the King to people in Ireland, included a lease between the King and George Alexander of the 'Cistercian monastery of St. Benedict, of Athlone' (Cal. S. P. Ire., 69). This presumably is to be equated with the Cluniac house because there is no evidence for a Cistercian monastery in Athlone and the reference to St Benedict explained on the basis that the Cluniac monks were Benedictines (Bradley et. al. 1985, 48). In 1670s the priory buildings and its lands passed into the ownership of Richard Jones, first earl of Ranelagh (Conlan 1980, 82). In 1759 the Ranelagh estate passed into the ownership of the Incorporated Society for the promotion of Protestant Schools in Ireland (ibid.). A church building depicted on the site of the priory on the first edition OS 6-inch map was built in 1804 (Murtagh 1994, 10). This church was demolished in the mid 19th century and replaced by a coach factory in 1856 that was then converted into a saw mills (ibid., 12). The saw mills was demolished and replaced by St. Peter and Paul's national school built in 1934 which now stands on the site of the Cluniac priory that is depicted on Phillips map of 1685 (Murtagh 1994, map 4). The priory was situated on the west bank of the Shannon located between Abbey Lane and Excise St., 110m S of Athlone Castle (WM029-042002-). Phillips map of 1685 depicts the upstanding remains of the priory as a long narrow rectangular building aligned E-W with a small N transept located off centre to the E on the N wall of the building (ibid.). The building depicted appears to have been the S range of conventual buildings belonging to the priory and not the priory church. On the 1685 map the surviving building of the priory is shown located close to the S wall of the town defences with</p>
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			<p> the W end of the priory building standing in the entrance to the SW bastion of the town wall. The present national school stands immediately to the S of the priory building with the N boundary wall of the school playground running along the S wall of the priory building that is depicted on Thomas Sherrard's map of Athlone dating from 1784. The kink at the lower end of the present Abbey Lane represents the junction of the street with the W end of the S wall of the priory building as shown on the 1784 map of Athlone. According to Conlan (1980, 81) this kink in the laneway marked the point where the conventual buildings joined onto the priory church. Conlan (1980, 81) suggested that the priory church 'had the standard cruciform ground-plan, i.e. the sanctuary and the high altar at the east end with two transepts and a squat tower at the crossing. As was normal, the conventual buildings were to the south of the church, covering much of the area now occupied by the residence of the Sisters of Mercy, the old girls' school and the oratory. These conventual buildings would have been gathered around a huge central cloister garth'. There is no cartographic evidence which supports the proposed layout of the priory as suggested by Conlan and it is likely that he confused the building depicted on the historic maps of Athlone with the priory church rather than the S range of conventual buildings of the priory. The 1685 and 1784 maps of Athlone suggest that the cloister area may have been to the N of the upstanding building in the area shown as the abbey garden on Sherrard's map of 1784. Phillips map of 1685 shows no room for conventual buildings between the town defences and the upstanding remains of the Priory. It is possible that the building depicted on the 1685 and 1784 maps was the S range of conventual buildings belonging to the priory and not the priory church which would explain the lack of a cruciform plan. If this was the case the priory church would have been located on the N side of the abbey garden depicted on Sherrard's map of 1784. Thomas Sherrard's map of Athlone depicts a long rectangular building with a smaller rectangular building aligned E-W on the NE angle and a formal walled garden known as the 'abbey garden' immediately to the N of the rectangular building (Murtagh 1994, 9, map 7(a)). The priory probably occupied the block which runs east-west between Abbey Lane and Excise St. No trace of any medieval buildings survives with the exception of a possible fragment of the north-west wall of the nave or the W end of the narrow building depicted on the 1784 map of Athlone in the present Abbey lane. This fragment consists of two different widths of wall at a high level above the present school yard. The western stretch is 1.3m long and 0.7m wide while the north side is 1.18m long and 0.62m wide (Bradley et. al. 1985, 48). No surface traces of the domestic buildings of the priory </p>
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			<p>survive. The construction of the C of I church in 1804 and the levelling of the site in 1930s would have destroyed any standing remains of the conventual buildings to the S of the priory church if this is the correct layout of the buildings in Athlone Priory. To the SE of the priory there was a small inlet in the River Shannon which may have acted as a harbour for the priory or for the nearby castle (ME019-042002-). A group of mortars from the site of the priory are said to be in Elphin, Co. Roscommon. A carved stone head (WM029-042052-) of a tonsured cleric with the words 'St. Peter's Port' which is now housed in Athlone Castle museum may have come from the priory. A sheela-na-gig (WM029-042091-) on display in Athlone Castle museum may also have come from the priory.</p>
WM029-042060	Castle	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>The castle known as Cox's Castle (Murtagh 1994, 10) is depicted on Thomas Sherrard's map of Athlone dating from 1784 where it is shown located on the corner of St. George's Lane now Excise St.</p>
WM029-042074	Demi-bastion <i>(Redundant record)</i>	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>Demi-bastion beside the Shannon in the vicinity of the modern lock.</p>
WM029-042015	Armorial plaque	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>In National Museum of Ireland. Rectangular plaque with a heater shaped shield and garter with HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE. The centre of the shield has a ragged staff set diagonally which is considered to be the arms of Thomas Radcliff, Earl of Essex. Dims. H 64cm, W.</p>
WM029-042016	Memorial stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>In National Museum of Ireland. Rectangular panel with a tooled surface and a male figure in relief. He wears a long gown, loosely belted at the waist over a shirt with sleeves caught into a tight fitting wrist-band. He has a short square cravat and the sleeves of the outer garment are wide and pleated at the shoulders. His left hand is on his chest and the right outstretched hand holds a small animal on a twisted rope. At his feet there is an incised inscription: PETRO LEWYS/ CLERICO DOMUS NR Q DISPENSA/ HUJUS OPIS Ps SICLE. This stone may belong to the 1730 rebuilding of the bridge. Dims. H 75cm, W 60cm.</p>

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042005	Memorial stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Rectangular. A demi-figure holds a plaque with the letters E.R. and a crown surmounted by scroll-work and knots in relief. It is slightly damaged and the head of the figure is missing. Dims. H 23cm, W 26cm, D 20cm.
WM029-042006	Inscribed stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Rectangular stone with a Tudor rose, and ivy spray. Inscribed in false relief: GEVE TO CESAR THAI W/ IS CESARS AND TO GOD/ THAT WHICHE IS GOIS MAT 22. Dims. H 21cm, W 81cm, D 10cm.
WM029-042007	Inscribed stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Three stone fragments. Incised inscription: GOD SAVE * QWEN ELIZAB. The ornament after 'SAVE' is a Tudor rose. Dims. H 21cm, W 156cm, D 9cm.
WM029-042008	Inscribed stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Worn rectangular panel with a bearded man wearing a long fur-trimmed mantle over a tunic. His right hand holds a ?pleated purse which may be suspended from his neck and his left hand is outstretched holding an animal which looks like a badger but has been described as a rat (Joly 1881, 62-3). It has a very worn inscription: E R/ PETRVS/ LEWYS. Dims. H 67cm, W 49cm.
WM029-0420009	Armorial plaque	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Rectangular. Carved in high relief with a male demi-figure in a narrow-waisted armour of lames with cowters at the elbows. He holds a sword in an upright position in his right hand and his left hand rests on his waist and touches the garter which is worn knotted over his left shoulder. The head is missing. Below the figure is a small grotesque head with leavy swags protruding from his ears and held down by chains. On his left side is a coat of arms surrounded by the garter with the legend HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE. The end of the garter rests on a parchment with an ivy spray and the motto INV/ DIA. NOTI/ OB. Dims. H 62cm, W 86cm.

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042010	Memorial stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. The main inscription. Carried on six stones (4 panels) in relief. There are commas between words and some letters are conjoined: THIS BRYGE OF ATHLONE FROM THE MAINE/ EARTH VNDER THE WATER WAS ERECTED AND MA/ DE THE NINTH YEARE OF THE RAIGN OF OVR MO/ ST DERE SOVERAIGNE LADIE ELIZABETH BY THE GRACE OF GOD QVENE OF ENGLAND FRAVNCE &/ IRELAND DEFNDER OF THE FAITHET & BY HE DEVICE AND OR/ DER OF SIR HENRY SIDNEY KNIGHT OF HE MOSTE NOBIL/ ORDER THE 20 DAIE OF IVLIE THEN REINGE OF THE AYGE OF 38/ YERE L PRESIDENT OF THE COVNSEL IN WALLS AND MA/ RCHIS OF THE SAME AND L DEPVTIE GENERAL OF THIS HIR/ MAIESTIS REALM IR AND FINSHED IN LES THEN ONE YEAR BI/ THE GOOD INDVSTRI AND DIILIGENS OF SIR PETIR LEWYS/ CLERKE CHANTOR CATHEDRAL CHVRCH OF CHRIST/ CHVRCH IN DVBLIN AND STEWARD TO THE SAID L DE/ PVTIE IN Wc YEARE WAS BEGONE AND FINISHED THE FAI/ RE NEWE WOVRKE IN THE CASTHEL OF DVBLIN BESIDIS/ MANY OTHER NOTABLE WORK IS DONE IN SODRI O/ THER PLACIS IN HIS REALME ALSO THE ARCHE REBEL/ (SH)ANE O NEY; OVER THROVEN HIS HEAD SET ON THE/ GATE OF THE SAID CASTEL COYNO AND LIVRY ABOLESHED/ AND THE HOLE REALME BROVGHT INTO SVCHE OBEDIENCE/ TO HIR MAISTE AS THE LIKE TRANQVILITIE PEACE AND... Dims. (a+b) H 46cm W 116cm. (c+d) H 50cm, W 117cm. (e+f) H 30.5, W 118cm.
WM029-042011	Memorial stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Rectangular plaque decorated in false relief with a man wearing late 16th century armour and a dog. The figure holds a ceremonial axe in the left hand and an arrow in the right. His sword is suspended from a belt behind his back. The name ROBARTS/ DAMPORT is in false relief and AN OWER/ SEER OF THY/ S WORKYS is incised below. Dims. H 52cm, W 54cm.
WM029-042012	Armorial plaque	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Rectangular plaque with a shield in relief on which there is a porcupine, said to be the crest of Henry Sidney, surrounded by the garter and the words HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE. The initials H S are on either side below. Dims. H 69cm, 49cm.

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042013	Armorial plaque	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Rectangular plaque set with WM029-042014- in an elaborate surround decorated with renaissance style palmettes and foliage in false relief. Heater shaped shield with Henry Sidney's achievement of arms. It has elaborate mantling and the garter inscribed as WM029-042012-. The letters H S occur below the shield. The shield is quartered with a pheon or broad arrow in the first and fourth and a lion rampant with bars in the second and third. Dims. H 95cm, W 81cm.
WM029-042014	Armorial plaque	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In National Museum of Ireland. Plaque with the arms of England on a heater shaped shield: three lions statant guardant and three fleur-de-lis in false relief. Above the shield on the chamfer are the incised words QVO ME FATA VOCANT and on the plaque a crown and the letters E. R. This may be the plaque removed to the bridge from the North gate. Dims. H 95cm, W 81cm.
WM029-042004	Bridge	Athlone & Bigmeadow	he present town of Athlone developed around the Anglo-Norman stone castle (WM029-042002-) and medieval bridge which offered a crossing point over the River Shannon connecting the medieval kingdom of Connacht to the kingdom of Meath. In 1682 Sir Henry Piers described the siting of the town and bridge when he wrote that Athlone town was situated 'on both banks of the Shannon. The part on this side [east] the river was better built. The other part [west] together with the king's castle (WM029-042002-) situated on the western banks, is in the county of Roscommon, both parts united into one town, by a very strong, high-raised and well-built bridge' (Vallancey 1786, 85). There appears to have been a sequence of bridges built over the River Shannon possibly at the same location which may have been located close to a natural fording point over the river since prehistoric times. In the year 994 the Annals of Clonmacnoise records that Maelsechlainn [king of Mide] and Cathal O'Connor [king of Connacht] 'made a bridge at Athlone over the Synan' (Ann. Clon., 165). It has been suggested that this reference to a bridge may be describing the construction of a ford instead (Murtagh 1994, 12). In the year 1001 the Annals of Ulster recorded that the 'causeway of Ath-Luain [was made] by Maelsechlainn (high king of Ireland), and by Cathal son of Conchobar' (AU, 509). This causeway may have been a wooden bridge built on the site of the fording point over the River Shannon. At least six bridges were built over the River Shannon at Athlone between the years 1120 and 1159. The first of these, built in 1120 by Toirdealbach Ua Conchobhar [Turlough O'Conor], was destroyed in 1125. The second bridge was built in 1129

			<p>together with a protecting castle. A third bridge was constructed by Toirdealbach in 1132. In 1133 both bridge and castle were destroyed and a fourth bridge was built in 1140 and lasted until 1153 when it was destroyed by Maelsechlainn, king of Mide. This was replaced by a new bridge (the fifth) in 1155 but destroyed in the same year. A sixth bridge was constructed in 1159 but it was destroyed in 1162. Around the year 1210 the Anglo-Normans commenced construction of the stone castle (WM029-042002-) of Athlone and the adjoining bridge which connected the castle located on the W side of the River Shannon to the Anglo-Norman settlement on the E side of the river. In 1210 a bridge was built by John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich who was the justiciar of Ireland and who was also responsible for the construction of the stone castle (WM029-042002-) at Athlone. In this year the annals recorded the arrival of the Bishop of Norwich, who came to Athlone where 'a bridge (WM029-042004-) was constructed by him across Ath-Luain, and a castle (WM029-042002-) instead of O'Conchobhair's castle (WM029-042098-)' (ALC). Work is again recorded at the bridge in 1232-4 when masonry work was suspended on the ward of Rindown castle (RO046-004002-), Co. Roscommon. In 1233 in order to permit the completion of the bridge at Athlone. Whether this work involved the completion of de Grey's bridge, begun twenty years earlier, or the construction of a new bridge, is unclear but it suggests that the bridge was of stone. In this year the state papers recorded that the 'justiciary of Ireland notifies that the bridge of Athlone can be completed for 80 marks, 30 marks to be employed on carriage, and 50 marks on works. As it would be advantageous to Ireland that this bridge should be finished, the K. commands the treasurer to pay the money out of the K.'s treasure, the masonry work of the ward of the castle of Reindown (Rinndown, Co. Roscommon) to be suspended' (Cal. doc. Ire., 304). A stone bridge is specifically referred to in the accounts of the justiciar, Geoffrey de Geneville for 1274-5 but again it is unclear whether this represents the rebuilding of the old bridge destroyed in 1272 or its replacement by an entirely new one. In 1290 John FitzThomas, Archbishop of Dublin, keeper of Ireland led an army against the K.'s enemies of Offaly and Leys [Laois]. During this campaign he heard of news on the feast of the Apostles Philip and James [May 6, 1290] 'that the Irish had transgressed against the peace at Athlone, and that the bridge of Athlone was falling; he then prepared himself and went to those parts. The expenses thereof begin on Saturday aforesaid as appears by accounts, and he was 9 days in going, remaining, and returning' (Cal. doc. Ire., 273). In the same year there is a receipt for payment of the expenses of 'John Archbishop of Dublin, holding the place of chief justiciary of</p>
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			<p>Ireland, in going to the castle of Athlone, and remaining there to treat with the Irish of those parts, to inspect the defects of the works of the castle and bridge, and to expedite public affairs there' (Cal. doc. Ire., 326). By 1305 the bridge was again in need of repair. In this year the crown recorded that it 'is agreed also that the houses of the King's Castle (WM029-042002-) of Athlon[e], which are much ruined and broken, and the bridge between the castle and the town (WM029-042----) there, be repaired out of the issues of the county of Connacht, in a competent manner. Therefore let a writ be made to the Sheriff of Connacht directing him to pay to Ric.[hard] de Oxon' sheriff of Roscommon, 20 marks. And let Ricard sheriff of Roscommon receive said money and spend it in repair of said houses and bridge, by advice of Ric. de Exon' justice, by the hands of lawful workmen'(Cal. justic. Rolls, Ire. Edw. I, 65). A year later in 1306 Richard de Exeter, constable of Roscommon castle, received payment for 'making a bridge at Athlone with a gate at the end thereof', presumably at the western end. This is the last record of the Anglo-Norman bridge and its subsequent fate is unknown (Bradley et. al. 1985, 30). The 13th century Anglo-Norman stone bridge presumably fell into disrepair over the centuries and was replaced by a new stone bridge in the 16th century. In 1557 the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, ordered a new stone bridge to be built and although it suffered much at the hands of both sides in the sieges of 1690-1 it survived until 1844 when the present bridge was constructed 50m to the N of it. In 1557 a new bridge was built but despite a letter of 1567 which claimed that all Connacht had been tamed by the building of the bridge (Cal. S.P. Ire., 346). Piers writing in 1682, described it as 'a very strong, high raised and well-built bridge, in the middle whereof stands a fair monument with some figures well cut in marble, together with Queen Elizabeth's scutcheon of arms and some inscriptions declaring the time and the founders of the building. This bridge, tho' the arches thereof be wide and large, causeth the river, which here is very deep, to rise and swell backwards, so that under it the river hath a great fall, which giveth an advantageous situation to several undershaft mills (WM029-042079-; WM029-042080-; WM029-042100-) at each end of the bridge. One tower on the corner of the castle (WM029-042002-) wall is so advantageously seated that it commandeth the whole bridge, which nevertheless hath a great drawbridge on that end'. The presence of mills dates to at least 1578 when Edmund O'Fallone of Athlone was leased two watermills which he himself had built on the bridge. According to Joly (1881, 18) the bridge had nine arches and was 360 feet [110m] in length with a maximum of 14 feet [4.25m] in width. Sidney's bridge stood about 50m downstream of the</p>
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			<p>modern bridge just S of the castle, linking Bridge Street on the E with Main Street on the W. It is perhaps a reasonable assumption that the twelfth century bridges occupied this site also but this remains to be definitely established. The 16th century stone bridge was ornamented with a series of plaques which were removed prior to its demolition in 1844 and are now preserved in the National Museum of Ireland. In all thirteen plaques survive, eleven of which relate to the building of the bridge, (WM029-042005- to WM029-042017-) and the remaining two plaques refer to the repair of the bridge in the 18th century.</p>
WM029-106	Site of siege	Athlone & Bigmeadow, Golden Island, Loughnaskin	<p>This record relates to the siege of Athlone which took place between 20 and 30 June 1691. It was investigated in the course of the Irish Battlefields Project as having the potential to be interpreted as a ‘battle’. The evidence – as set out in the following account – was considered sufficient to warrant accepting it as a siege only and did not satisfy the project’s criteria for a ‘battle’ (SMR file). By the time the campaigning season opened in Spring 1691, the third year of the War of the Two Kings, the Williamites controlled nearly all of the country to within 20 miles to the east and south of the River Shannon. The Jacobites, for their part, held all territory to the west and controlled the crossing points on the river, itself a strong natural defence. Jacobite morale was lifted somewhat at the beginning of 1691 with the arrival of a new commander, Lieutenant-General Charles Chalmont, Marquis de St. Ruth, who came with a large shipment of stores and weapons. The Williamites, for their part, also had a new commander-in-chief, General Godart de Ginkel, appointed by William of Orange towards the end of the previous (1690) campaigning season. Ginkel was intent on ending the war in Ireland during this season as it had become a drain on William’s military resources: these were needed in Spanish Flanders, the main theatre of the war against the French. Ireland was Ginkel’s first major independent command, and he now decided to strike at the heart of the Jacobite strongholds west of the Shannon. His plan was to take Athlone and then Galway. Having captured the isolated Jacobite outpost of Ballymore on 8 June (see WM024-191----) the Williamites waited there ten days before marching towards Athlone. This town, a major crossing point of the River Shannon, was of great strategic importance. It was divided into two parts separated by the river (see attached map of the siege). Not long after their victory at the Boyne in July 1690 the Williamite army had attempted to take the town and had burned the eastern part on the Leinster side. This siege, however, proved unsuccessful and was abandoned. On the night of 18 June 1691</p>

			<p>Ginkel’s army camped at Ballyboran (in the townland of Creeve), c. 8.5km north-east of Athlone. Here he was joined by the duke of Württemberg and Count Nassau with reinforcements of 7,000 men. Ginkel now commanded an army of between 18,000 and 20,000 men and had an artillery train of 32 pieces and six mortars. On the following day they marched to Athlone and arrived before the town in the evening. By the 19 June, St. Ruth, who now was in overall command of the Jacobite army in Ireland, had brought his force of c. 16,000 foot, 3,000 horse and 2,000 dragoons towards Athlone from Loughrea and set up camp on a ridge between two bogs c. 3.5km to the west of the town. Initially the garrison at Athlone was commanded by Colonel Nicholas Fitzgerald, until St. Ruth placed the French General, the Marquis d’Usson, in overall charge of its defences. During the siege c. 1,500 troops were garrisoned in the town but the units were regularly relieved in accordance with St. Ruth’s desire to accustom as many soldiers as possible to combat. The Jacobites had stationed four companies of foot in the eastern or Leinster side of the town in order to defend this side and delay Ginkel until the main Jacobite army could come to its defence on the west. On 20 June the Williamites set up a battery to the north of this side of the town and soon opened a major breach in its defensive wall near the north-east corner bastion. Later that evening, at about 6 o’clock, they stormed this breach and easily overran the town on this side suffering very few casualties. The Jacobite garrison retreated across the river into the Connacht side of Athlone and as they went they broke down one of the arches on the stone bridge that linked the town across the Shannon. Having captured the eastern (Leinster) section of the town the Williamites erected several batteries and commenced to bombard the other side across the river. The western part of the town, on the Connacht side of the river, was less strongly defended than the eastern ‘Leinster’ part. It lacked adequate walls and was overlooked by the town on the east bank which was now controlled by the Williamite army. Its defences – besides the River Shannon – were restricted to the 13th-century castle (WM029-042002-) and some small, hastily-constructed defensive works. The river remained a formidable obstacle and the Jacobites’ destruction of the stone-bridge prevented the Williamite army from using this main crossing point. On the morning of 22 June the Williamite batteries on the east bank began to fire across the river upon the castle and by evening had made a great breach in its wall. By 23 June one whole wall of the castle had been demolished by the artillery fire so that it was largely unserviceable to the besieged. The barrage also demolished the small defensive works that the Jacobites had raised and the defenders now lacked any major shelter from the continuous</p>
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			<p>bombardment. That same day, Ginkel’s men attempted to construct a pontoon bridge across the Shannon to the south of the town but Jacobite fire forced this project to be abandoned. Despite having destroyed much of the town’s defences, Ginkel did not let up the artillery assault and by 26 June seven batteries on the east bank were firing on the Connacht part of the town. This barrage lasted for nine days (from 22 June to 30 June) and, according to the Williamite chronicler, George Story, some ‘12,000 cannon bullets, 600 bombs, nigh 50 ton of powder and a great many ton of stones’ were fired off by their artillery during this siege. (Story 1693, 115). A further 3,600 rounds were fired by the field-guns. Despite the success of this bombardment, Ginkel was still faced with the problem of how to get his army across the river. On 24 June he sent some troops to reconnoitre a crossing near Lanesborough but this party indulged in raiding into Connacht and in doing so alerted the Jacobites to their presence. The Jacobites immediately threw up defensive earthworks at this crossing point on the Shannon. Consequently, on 26 June, Ginkel commenced his efforts to force a passage across the bridge at Athlone. Opposing troops at either end of the bridge quickly became engaged in an intense fire-fight with one another, and the Williamite army painstakingly fought their way along the bridge throughout the night. By 27 June the Williamite troops had gained possession of all the bridge except for one of the last arches that had been broken previously by the retreating Jacobites. Under cover of darkness, the Williamite engineers began to lay beams and planks across the broken arch in an effort to bridge it. On the following day this work was almost completed when a small party of Jacobites under Sergeant Custume charged onto the bridge to destroy the newly-repaired arch. These men were all quickly cut down by Williamite fire but a second Jacobite party took their place and succeeded in breaking the repairs to the arch. The Williamites made a renewed effort to repair the broken arch, this time using fascines to fill in the gap in the bridge. However, the Jacobites easily burnt these and the bridge remained uncrossable for the moment. Though the details vary about the clashes on the bridge, all accounts agree that the fighting during these particular days was extremely intense, with one Jacobite commentator, John Stevens, remarking that ‘what with the fire and what with the balls and bombs flying so thick that spot was a mere hell upon earth’ (Murray 1912, 208). On 28 June, following the repulse of his attempt to take the bridge, Ginkel convened a council-of-war where it was debated whether to retreat or to make a second assault on the town. After considerable discussion it was decided to attempt a crossing on the following day (30 June) at the ‘Old Ford’ downstream of the bridge. This</p>
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		<p>ford was defended on the west or Connacht side by some form of earthwork which appears to have been unfinished. The decision by the Williamite forces to attempt a crossing here coincided with a changing of the Jacobite garrison in Athlone. At 6 o'clock in the evening on 30 June some 2,000 Williamite soldiers began their assault across the ford. The vanguard was made up of 60 grenadiers who waded across, 20 abreast, the water coming up to their armpits. Following immediately behind came the bulk of the Williamite force. The Jacobite garrison was startled by this assault but, recovering from their surprise, opened fire on the Williamite troops crossing the river. Their fire, however, proved too weak and was badly directed, resulting in few casualties. On the opposite bank, the Williamite army provided covering fire for their troops. The main part of their assault force reached the far-bank and scrambled ashore unopposed through a small breach in the defensive earthwork. The Jacobite garrison appointed to guard this point fled their posts. Once the Williamite advance troops had crossed the river, a detachment immediately headed to the broken bridge, and together with colleagues on the Leinster side, they were able to repair the broken arch with planks. The bulk of Ginkel's troops now began to cross the bridge and, as other Williamite troops succeeded in completing the pontoon bridge, this enabled further troops to cross and head into the town. In less than half an hour, the Jacobite garrison in the Connacht part of Athlone was overwhelmed and retreated. Williamite casualties during this assault (30 June) were low; between 13 and 35 dead. In contrast the defeated Jacobite garrison may have lost up to 500 men in this assault. Upon hearing of the fall of Athlone, St. Ruth sent a body of soldiers to the town to see if they might recover it but found that the Williamite army already had manned the western ramparts and were too well entrenched to be easily removed. In the wake of this defeat the Jacobite army fell back to Ballinasloe. Overall Jacobite casualties at Athlone were estimated at c. 1,000-1,200 persons: they also lost two large and six or seven small artillery pieces. Overall Williamite casualties throughout the entire siege were less than 100. According to Story there were only about 60 killed and 120 wounded (1693, 121). The fall of Athlone was a serious blow to Irish morale and fueled the growing mood of defeatism in some sections of the Jacobite army. This victory gave the Williamites a bridgehead across the Shannon which they exploited by advancing west into Connacht, forcing St. Ruth to give battle at Aughrim (see GA087-127----) with fatal consequences for himself and Jacobite Ireland. (IBP Report 2010 - Athlone)</p>
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Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042100	Watermill	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>One of three mills (WM029-042079-; WM029-042080-) built onto the S face of the 16th century bridge (WM029-042004-) of Athlone. This mill was located at the W end of the bridge built onto the S face of the final arch of the 16th century bridge (WM029-042004-) and is shown on Thomas Sherrard's map of Athlone dating from 1784 (RCB Ms. 151; Murtagh 1994, map 7(A)). A flour mill known as Mabbot's flour mill was built on the site of the 16th century mill and may have incorporated fabric of the earlier mill. This flour mill was demolished c. 1840 (Murtagh 1994, 12). Sir Henry Piers writing in 1682, described several undershaft mills (WM029-042079-; WM029-042080-) located at either end of the medieval bridge (WM029-042004-) of Athlone. In 1682 he wrote that 'this bridge, tho' the arches thereof be wide and large, causeth the river, which here is very deep, to rise and swell backwards, so that under it the river hath a great fall, which giveth an advantageous situation to several undershaft mills (WM029-042079-; WM029-042080-; WM029-042100-) at each end of the bridge' (Vallancey 1786, 86). This mill on the W side of town may have been the same mill referred to in 1619 when the Crown granted 'John Trestian, esq. – Roscommon Co. – a mes. and mater-mill, lately Hugh Magauly's' (Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Jas I, 421). There is also documentary evidence to suggest that there were four corn mills, the location of which is unknown, in 1675 (Murtagh 1994, 12). Three watermills located on the medieval bridge of Athlone are depicted on Thomas Sherrard's map (RCB Ms. 151; Murtagh 1994, map 7(A)) of Athlone dating from 1784. On this map two watermills are located at the E end of the bridge built up against the S face of the bridge, a third bridge is shown at the W end of the bridge built up the S face of the bridge. The two mills at the E end of the bridge were probably the same mills that were constructed in the 1570s by Edmund O Fallon of Athlone. The other mill was located at the W end of the bridge and was built onto the S face of the final arch of the 16th century bridge (WM029-042004-)</p>
WM029-042080	Cornmill	Athlone & Bigmeadow	See WM029-042100

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042079	Cornmill	Athlone & Bigmeadow	See WM029-042100
WM029-042081	Fish weir	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>In the late 12th or early 13th century the fish weirs of Athlone were built by the monks of St Peter and Paul's Priory (WM029-042003-). These fish weirs were taken into the possession of the Crown in the early 13th century as part of the Anglo-Norman settlement of Athlone. In 1216 King John commanded Geoffrey de Mariscis, justiciar of Ireland 'to cause an exchange to be made to the Prior of Athlone, for the 4 cantreds in the fee of Logseuethy [Lough Sewdy] assigned to the Prior by John Bishop of Norwich in compensation for the site of the K.'s castle of Athlone (WM029-042002-); the Prior was disseised of these 4 cantreds when the K. restored Walter de Lascy's land of Meath. The K. further commands the justiciary to cause competent satisfaction to be given to the Prior touching an exchange for his meadow, his fisheries of 12 marks, and the tithes of the castle. Protection for the Prior' (Cal. doc. Ire., 107). The precise location of these weirs have not been identified. The weirs may have been located along the west side of the River Shannon in close proximity to the Anglo-Norman castle (WM029-042002-) and close to St Peter and Paul's Priory (WM029-042003-) for in 1235 the crown recorded that 'the monks of Adlon [Athlone] have been wont to receive at the Exchequer, Dublin, an annuity of 10 marks for the vill (WM029-042----), castle (WM029-042002-), mill (WM029-042056-) and fishery towards Connaught, which John [de Grey] Bishop of Norwich, when [justiciary], constructed in their land, the K. commands the justiciary to cause the monks to have this annuity' (Cal. doc. Ire., 341). The construction of two watermills (WM029-042056-) at Athlone by the Anglo-Normans in the 13th century had a detrimental effect on the fisheries which previously belonged to the monks of St Peter and Paul's priory (WM029-042003-). In 1284 King Edward I, commanded the justiciary of Ireland 'not to injure the Prior and convent of St. Peter of Athlone (WM029-042003-) regarding the pool which they were wont anciently to have. The justiciary had constructed 2 mills (WM029-042056-) upon the pool for the K.'s use, and the prior and convent had consequently taken nothing in the pool' (Cal. doc. Ire., 564). The fisheries at Athlone were rented by the Prior of St Peter and Paul's Priory from the Crown who now controlled</p>

		<p> this important economic asset. In 1286 the Crown received payment of £15 6s. 8d. for the 'rents of pools, and pontage of Athlone, by the prior thereof' (Cal. doc. Ire. 3, 125). In 1290 the treasurer of Ireland paid 'Gilbert, monk of Athlone (WM029-042003-), 40s. of silver for the losses which the monks had sustained for 3 years in their pools of Athlone by the construction of the K.'s mills (WM029-042056-) there' (Cal. doc. Ire., 325). In 1292 the exchequer received payment of £12 5s. from 'Peter Tuyt, of issues of pools of Athlone' and 34s. 5½d. for the 'farm of the burgh of Athlone' and 100s. for the 'prisage of beer of the burgh of Athlone' and 1 mark 'for the mills (WM029-042056-) of Athlone' (Cal. doc. Ire., 504). The following year in 1293 the exchequer received payment of £7 from 'Stephen Ailmer of issues of pools [gurgites] of Athlone' , 17s 2¼d. rent of the burgh (WM029-042----) of Athlone, 10s. rent for the land of Clocheran, 20s. for the mills (WM029-042056-) of Athlone, and 4s. for rent of 8 acres of land of the demesne of the K. near the castle (WM029-042002-)' (Cal. doc. Ire., 9). The economic importance of this fishery is illustrated in 1293 when the exchequer received £4 16s. from 'Thomas de Pykering (keeper of Athlone Castle), out of 3,600 eels sold at Athlone' (Cal. doc. Ire., 29). In 1570 the Crown granted a 30 year lease to Andrew Brereton which included the "site of the house of friars of Athlone, and land in Caltre by Athlone, two fishing weirs on the river Shryninge [Shannon] (Nicholls 1994, 209-10). In the same year the Crown granted a 21 year lease to 'Edmund O'Fallone, of Athlone, merchant; of a messuage in Athlone with gardens, two houses on the south side of the castle (WM029-042002-) there occupied by the present lessee, an eel weir on the river Shynnen in Connaght, of the possessions of the late monastery of S. Peter of Athlone (WM029-042003-)' (Nicholls 1994, 218-9). In 1578 a condition of a Crown lease to Edmund Fallon of Athlone, stated that the 'president of Connaght having the house of Athlone in keeping shall have his grist ground toll free at the mill which the lessee hath builded upon the said weir, and shall two nights in each month have the use of the weir, O Fallon supplying nets, boats, poles and other necessaries' (Nicholls 1994, 467). In 1584 a Crown lease to George Alexander, included the 'site of the priory (WM029-042003-) of St. Benedict of Cistercian monks of Athlone, co. Roscommon, the demesne lands, a mill in the tenure of O'Fallon, lands in Clonnalve, 7 weirs in the river Shennen' (Nicholls 1994, 611). In 1841-9 during the Shannon navigation works 19 eel weirs were removed from the River Shannon in Athlone (Murtagh 1994, 11). </p>
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Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042065	Demi bastion (<i>Redundant record</i>)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Demi-bastion to SE. A demi-bastion, constructed in the Cromwellian period, was built onto made ground, on the E bank of the river. The demi-bastion abutted the medieval wall, which ran SW - NE along the E side of the back of the original Friary complex. There are no traces of the demi-bastion which was located on the riverbank.
WM029-042069	Demi-bastion (<i>Redundant record</i>)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Demi-bastion to N. From the N gate (WM029-042063-) the wall continued to the Shannon where a demi-bastion, set on a slight promontory, jutted into the river.
WM029-042001	Religious house- Franciscan friars	Athlone & Bigmeadow	The Annals of the Four Masters record the founding of the monastery (WM029-042042-) of St. Francis at Athlone by Cathal Crobderg O Conchobhair in 1224 but this date has been rejected by Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 243) on the basis that the Franciscans did not arrive in Ireland until c.1224-6, when their first house was established at Youghal. The consecration of the church of the Friars Minor of Athlone in 1241 by Albert of Cologne, archbishop of Armagh, suggests that it was not founded until c. 1240 (Ann. Conn.; AFM; Ann. Clon.; ALC). The friary was apparently destroyed in 1567-8 and its site was leased to Andrew Brereton of Monketon, Co. Meath, in 1570 (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 243). A Franciscan residence was re-established in 1626 (Millett 1972-3, 161) and in the late seventeenth century, probably the 1680s, work began on a new friary church (WM029-042001-). This building was never completed because of the fall of James II and the consequent political upheavals (Conlan 1978, 79; Grannell 1978, 52-3). This 1680s Franciscan friary church is to be seen on the north side of the town, where it is delimited by the Abbey lane at the south end of the graveyard (WM029-042092-), Abbey road and Coosan Road and the back of the houses in Lucas Lane. Of the five Early Christian cross-inscribed slabs (WM029-042095-; WM029-042096-; WM029-042097-; WM029-042047-) found in Athlone, four were found in the graveyard (WM029-042092-) of the Franciscan Friary graveyard. The cross-slabs date from the mid-eighth to eleventh centuries (Fanning and Ó hÉailidhe 1980). The present 17th century friary church and graveyard may stand on the site of the 13th century friary which in turn may have been built on the site of an Early Christian monastery (WM029-042050-). Alternatively the medieval friary may have been located elsewhere within the town of Athlone. Grannell (1978, 13) recorded the tradition that the 13th century

			<p>Franciscan Friary (WM029-042042-) may have been located on the W side of Northgate St., on part of the site of the 19th century Athlone Woollen Mills also known as the 'Shannon Mills' (Murtagh 1994, 9,12). According to the Urban Survey of Westmeath the present 17th century Franciscan friary church and graveyard (WM029-042092-) 'almost certainly lie on the site of a pre-Norman church (WM029-042050-), whose existence is attested by the discovery of early grave slabs and traces of an enclosure. This is to be seen on the south side, where it is delimited by the lane at the south end of the graveyard, Abbey road and the back of the houses in Lucas lane (Bradley et. al. 1985, 44). The present remains consist of a long rectangular friary church (int. dims. 20.9m E-W; 9.4m N-S; wall T 0.92m; H 4.5-5m) aligned east-west which stands in the N quadrant of sub-rectangular shaped graveyard now a town park, which was cleared of its graveslabs in order to provide space for a park during the 1980s. The church was rebuilt as part of the park clean up scheme in the 1980s and the graveslabs were removed from their location and placed around the walls and along both sides of the lane to the south and west of the church. The church was built with roughly coursed limestone rubble with alternating long and short quoins, the building has been robbed of all its dressed jambs around the doorway and window openings. The east wall appears to have been completely rebuilt and the only features are two post-medieval recesses constructed to accommodate wall-memorials. The north wall may have had a door near its west end but the masonry is too badly disfigured to be certain; a narrow round arched opening is situated in the centre of this wall and is flanked by two round arched recesses. The west wall shows signs of large-scale rebuilding and has an inserted flat-headed door of brick. The south wall has a blocked-up door at its west end and three round-arched windows with a slight internal splay. A round-arched recess is present between the first-and-second and second-and-third windows from the east; the westerly example has been filled with a 19th century wall memorial.</p>
WM029-042092	Graveyard	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>In 1626 a Franciscan residence was re-established in Athlone (Millett 1972-3, 161) and in the late seventeenth century, probably the 1680s, work began on a new friary church (WM029-042001-). This building was never completed because of the fall of James II and the consequent political upheavals (Conlan 1978, 79; Grannell 1978, 52-3). This 1680s Franciscan friary church is to be seen on the north side of the town, where it is delimited by the Abbey lane at the south end of the graveyard, Abbey road and Coosan Road and the back of the houses in Lucas Lane. Of the five Early</p>

			<p>Christian cross-inscribed slabs (WM029-042095-; WM029-042096-; WM029-042097-; WM029-042047-) found in Athlone, four were found in the graveyard of the Franciscan Friary graveyard. The cross-slabs date from the mid-eighth to eleventh centuries (Fanning and Ó hÉailidhe 1980). The present 17th century friary church and graveyard may stand on the site of the 13th century friary which in turn may have been built on the site of an Early Christian monastery (WM029-042050-). Alternatively the medieval friary may have been located elsewhere within the town of Athlone. According to the Urban Survey of Westmeath the present 17th century Franciscan friary church and graveyard (WM029-042092-) 'almost certainly lie on the site of a pre-Norman church (WM029-042050-), whose existence is attested by the discovery of early grave slabs and traces of an enclosure. This is to be seen on the south side, where it is delimited by the lane at the south end of the graveyard, Abbey road and the back of the houses in Lucas lane (Bradley et. al. 1985, 44). The present remains consist of a long rectangular friary church (WM029-042001-) which stands in the N quadrant of sub-rectangular shaped graveyard (dims. 50m N-S; 50m E-W) now a town park, which was cleared of its graveslabs in order to provide space for a town park during the 1980s. In 1815 the graveyard was enclosed by a stone wall (Murtagh 1994, 10) the remains of which can only be seen along Abbey lane which forms the boundary of the graveyard from S to W. A stone plaque commemorating the enclosing of the graveyard with a boundary wall which was paid for by public subscription has been incorporated into the N wall of the mortuary chapel in SE quadrant of graveyard. A second stone plaque bears the inscription 'This Abby Founded AD 1240' has also been built into the external face of N wall of mortuary chapel. The friary church was rebuilt as part of the park clean up scheme in the 1980s and the headstones were removed from their location and placed around the walls and along both sides of the lane to the south and west of the church where they can still be seen today. The memorials mainly date from the 18th and 19th centuries. Burial inside this graveyard mainly ceased in 1871 with occasional burials after this date (Murtagh 1994, 10).</p>
WM029-042090	Graveslab	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>A stone, said to have been taken from the friary (WM029-042001-), lies in the back garden of the public house at Coosan Point (WM029-042051). The owner refused to give permission to see it but examination of a photograph indicates that it is a small coffin-shaped stone decorated in low relief with a pointed arch on which is incised: GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO. In the spandrels on either side of</p>

			the arch are angels' heads and a leafy spray while inside the arch is a three storeyed battlemented castle with two animals on either side as supporters and another animal on top (Bradley et. al. 1985, 45).
WM029-042050	Ecclesiastical site	Athlone & Bigmeadow	The discovery of four Early Christian cross-inscribed slabs (WM029-042043-/-44-/045-/047-) between 1845 and the 1970s in the graveyard (WM029-042092-) of the Franciscan abbey (WM029-042001-) suggests that the abbey church may have been built on the site of an Early Christian monastery. Three of these cross-slabs are now on display in Athlone Castle Museum while the fourth cross-slab (WM029-042047-) has been missing since the late 1800's.
WM029-042048	Tomb- table tomb	Athlone & Bigmeadow	In the mortuary chapel at the SE end of the graveyard (WM029-042092-) of the Franciscan abbey (WM029-042001-). Large rectangular slab (dims. L 2.16m, Wth 0.77m, D 0.15m) from a table tomb with a vertebrate border of stems and fleur-de-lis in false relief. The centre of the slab has two oval medallions within a rectangular frame with a spray of foliage in the spandrels. Inscription in Roman capitals in the left medallion: HEERE LYETH THE BODYES/ OF BRIAN MAC GANLEY & BENMON HIS WIFE. The inscription in the right medallion was added later: PRAY FOR THE SOVL OF CHRIS GANLY DEESESD Ye/ 16 OF MARCH 1701 & ANN RYAN/ HIS WIFE. The left end of the slab was subsequently smoothed down and carries and incised inscription in Roman capitals: PRAY FOR Ye/ SOVL OF MA/ RK BEGG WHO/ DEPARTED Ys/ LIFE AVGVST/ Y 11 16.. AG/ ED 36 YEARS/ & MARGRETT/ MC DERMOTT/ HIS WIFE.
WM029-042042	Religious house- Franciscan friars	Athlone & Bigmeadow	The precise location of the 13th century Convent of the Observantine order of Friars Minor has not been identified. The friary church of this convent was dedicated to St. Mary. The Annals of the Four Masters record the founding of the monastery of St. Francis in Athlone by Cathal Crobderg O Conchobhair in 1224, but this date has been rejected by Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 243) on the basis that the Franciscans did not arrive in Ireland until c.1224-6, when their first house was established at Youghal. The consecration of the church of the Friars Minor of Athlone in 1241 by Albert of Cologne, archbishop of Armagh, suggests that it was not founded until c. 1240 (Ann. Conn.; AFM; Ann. Clon.; ALC). In 1617 Father Donatus Mooney wrote that the the friary church was consecrated in 1241 and that Athlone was one of the first convents of the Rule of the Friars Minor in Ireland (Jennings 1934, 102). Father Mooney recorded that its was unclear who the founder of the

			<p>abbey was but the Dillon family claimed patronage of the abbey, based on the presence of an effigial tomb belonging to the Dillon family which was located in the choir of the church (ibid.). The friary church was rebuilt or repaired in the early 15th century after it had been burnt in the 14th century. In 1398 the Pope granted a 'relaxation of three years and three quadregene of enjoined penance to penitents who at Christmas, Easter, Whitsuntide, and the Assumption, visit and give alms for the repair of the Friars Minors' church of St Mary, Adloyn [Athlone], in the diocese of Clonmacnoise, which with its books and ornaments has been burnt by certain sons of iniquity' (Cal. papal letters, 143). The friary was apparently destroyed in 1567-8 and its site was leased to Andrew Brereton of Monketon, Co. Meath, in 1570 (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 243). In 1591 the Crown granted a lease of 'two tenements late of Robt. Damporte, in Athlone near the north gate beside the house of friars, containing in breadth 106 feet (32m), and from the street to the walls of the town in length 160 feet (48m), in co. Westmeath, parcel of the queen's ancient inheritance' (Nicholls 1994, 140). In 1617 Father Mooney wrote that only the walls of the firary church and part of the convent buildings survived and that any family willing to pay for the rebuilding of the church whould be entitled to claim its patronage (Jennings 1934, 102). According to Bradley (1985, 44) the reference in the Tudor fiants suggests that the medieval Franciscan friary was located inside the town walls of Athlone, in close proximity to the North Gate of Athlone. Grannell (1978, 13) recorded the tradition that the 13th century Franclsican Friary (WM029-042042-) may have been located on the W side of Northgate St., on part of the site of the 19th century Athlone Woollen Mills also known as the 'Shannon Mills' (Murtagh 1994, 9,12). No evidence of the 13th century Franciscan friary has been uncovered in the town of Athlone. In the 17th century the Franciscan's built a new friary church (WM029-042001-) which stands today in the centre of the town park on the W side of Coosan Road.</p>
WM029063-	Gate (<i>Redundant record</i>)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>The North Gate was situated at the junction of Lucas Lane and North Gate Street. Unlike Dublin Gate its builder is not known but until 1578 it was in the possession of Robert Damport, provost-marshal of Connacht, when it was leased to Henry Brande of Trim. It is possible that Damport, who acted as overseer for the construction of the bridge in 1566-7, was the builder as Joly and Murtagh suggested. Joly suggests that the older of the two tablets representing Peter Lewis, another figure prominently associated with the construction of the bridge, was originally mounted on the N gate. [RIA 1844]. It would appear that the construction of the gatehouse is related to the building of the</p>

			bridge and therefore a date between 1566 and 1578 may be suggested. A print of c.1820 by George Petrie shows that the gate was rectangular and had three floors with battlements above. (Bradley, J., Urban Archaeological Survey - Co. Westmeath, Office of Public Works, Dublin, p. 40). Nothing of the actual gate remains. There were remnants of the wall to the S of the gate remaining in a factory site on the S side of the road but these were removed during the building of the Radisson hotel (See licence number 98E0210).
WM029-042068	Bastion (<i>Redundant record</i>)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Part of the largest bastion of the town on Lucas Lane. This bastion was constructed during the Cromwellian period. A long section of wall stretches from the rear of the Prince of Wales Hotel to Lucas Lane. It is 1.5 - 1.6m wide, 1.85m high and survived in good condition with one complete bastion (WM029-042067-), portion of a second (WM029-042068-) and a semi-circular tower (WM029-042075-). The wall of the incomplete bastion is 74cm wide and 2.4m high. It carries a plaque which states: The Old Wall of Athlone 1251. From here the wall ran westwards along Lucas Lane to the site of the N gate.
WM029-042035	17 th century house	Athlone & Bigmeadow	This house was built by George Devenish c. 1628 the house was the scene of an engagement in 1648 during the Confederate wars (Stokes 1980-1, 207). The house and lands of Athlone which belonged to George Devenish were forfeited and granted to the Earl of Ranelagh c. 1650 who had difficulty in securing the possession of these forfeited lands. In 1681 the Treasury of Ireland received a petition from the Earl of Ranelagh which recited 'a grant by letters patent of 18 Dec., 1675, to the petitioner in fee simple of several houses and lands within the Corporation of Athlone and the liberties thereof, forfeited to his Majesty by the Acts of Settlement and Explanation, some of which formerly belonged to George Devenish and are now in the possession of Thomas Fitz-Gerald by virtue of an extent on a statute staple of 800l. in 1629, acknowledged by the said George Devenish to Thomas Allen and since assigned to the said Fitz-Gerald, and stating that, as some doubt may arise whether the said houses and lands may not be part of the security for the arrears of the '49 officers, the petitioner, to avoid lawsuits and for the better securing of his interest, is willing to compound for the same with the Commissioners for disposing of the remaining part of the said security and to place such unsatisfied part of '49 debentures thereon as shall be agreed on between them and him, but that they are restrained by their instructions from granting any part of the said security except to persons who are in possession thereof and shall deliver the same, but they are also to observe

			<p>such further instructions as shall be given them by the Lord Lieutenant, and praying that, as the petitioner has already passed the grant of the said houses and lands, and is kept out of the possession thereof by the said extent and other pretences and his Majesty has in the said letters patent promised the further assurance of the said grant and the petitioner desires only some further security of his title by compounding with the said Commissioners, that his Majesty would signify his pleasure to the Lord Lieutenant that he forthwith give a further instruction to the said Commissioners to compound and agree with the petitioner, if he shall so desire, for the said houses and lands and to grant him their certificate in order to his passing new letters patent thereon, in the same manner as they might do, were he now in the actual possession thereof' (Blackburne Daniell 1921, 152-89). In 1697 a petition was submitted by Thomas Osborne to the Treasury Lords of Ireland 'against the passing of a grant of the estate of William Devenish late of Athlone, County Westmeath until he be heard' (Shaw 1933, 162). The architectural quality of this house was sufficiently outstanding in 1682 to merit special mention by Sir Henry Piers (1981, 87) who described Court Devenish as 'one house built backward from the street by one Devenish exceeded all the rest for politeness of architecture; but this beauty was all without doors, for within they were ill shapen and ill contrived'. Court Devenish is depicted in 1685 by Thomas Phillips and in 1691 by Jean Goubet as a rectangular block with projecting wings flanking the centrally placed entrance on the S facade of the house (NLI Ms. 2742; Murtagh 1994, maps 4 and 5). The house was partially destroyed during the 1691 siege of Athlone and is depicted in 1784 as the 'Ruins of Court Devenish' on Thomas Sherrard's map of Athlone (RCB Ms. 151; Murtagh 1994, Map 7(a)). Situated in the grounds of the modern Court Devenish immediately inside the north wall of the town defences (WM029-042020-); access is via Preaching (or Lucas) Lane. The south facade survives together with parts of the east and west returns. The fabric is in poor condition, overgrown and in need of repair; there is an earthen build-up of about 1 m over the ground floor and modern lean-to structures have been built in the interior. Some windows are missing transoms or mullions and the first floor west window is partially blocked with bricks. Seven window jambs are strewn on the ground around the building. The structure appears to have suffered heavily in Ginkel's 1691 siege and many of its stones have been used in the walls and rookery of the present garden and it is likely that they were re-used in constructing the modern dwelling also. The house was three storeyed and built of evenly coursed mixed masonry with dressed quoins and jambs. Most of the quoins are missing but the surviving examples have</p>
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			<p>horizontal and vertical tooling. The windows, of two or three lights, are rectangular, mullioned and transomed with external hood moulding; all splay internally and have a flat rear arch. The window jambs are grooved for glass and have bar-holes. The house was originally half-H plan as depicted on Jean Goubet's map of 1691. The main entrance was centrally placed in the south wall; its jambs are now missing. There are the remains of a window in the section west of the door but otherwise the external ground level is quite plain. Internally there are two wall cupboards in the east and west sections. On the first floor there is a fine triple light above the door. The east section has two surviving windows and the jamb of a third, an arrangement which seems to have been repeated on the west side. The first floor arrangement of the east side is duplicated on the second floor. There may have been similar windows in the west section but it has been considerably altered. Two inscribed pieces of graffiti record early visitors: J.P. WITFORD 1857-63 (on the chamfer of the south-west window on the first floor), and 1737 A.D. R.H. (on a stone east of the entrance).</p>
WM029-042030	17 th century house	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>17th century house that was known as "Ginkel's House" named after the Dutch General Godart de Ginkel who took part in the 1691 Siege of Athlone and who for a while resided at this house. This structure was built c. 1626 and demolished in 1939 and originally appears to have been built as the residence of John Waple (Murtagh 1994, 15). This may be the same residence as mentioned in a 1619 land grant to Thomas Waple which included the 'gardens, and curtilages, near the market place, 32 yards [29.2m] broad and 48 [43.9m] long, lately John Brandan's and Tho. Waple's' (Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Jas I, 421). In 1912 the house was described as located 'at the corner of Northgate Street, in which it is said the Dutchman-the famous general "who seems to have had no idea of chivalry"-lived at the time of the siege of 1691' (Mitton 1912, 179-80). The house was three storeys high and appears to have had a cellar or undercroft. The house was entered through a round arched door, approached from the street via a short flight of steps. The door had an external hood moulding with the date 1626 in false relief set into the spandrels of the arch. The moulded jambs ended in a chamfered stop decorated with a fleur-de-lis topped hourglass motif.</p>
WM029-042031	Inscribed stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>Datestone above the doorway of 'Ginkel's House' (WM029-042030-) recorded 1626 as the foundation date of the building. Unfortunately the house was demolished in 1939, and as a result, the present whereabouts of the datestone is unknown (English 1972-3, 187).</p>

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042037	Amorial plaque (present location)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	The Wilmot Plaque which was located to the rear of the property but was moved to its current location as a result of the development works carried out in 2006 to the rear of the property. Seventeenth century armorial plaque (dims. H 0.8m, Wth 0.6m) located over doorway of building on N side of Church Street opposite building immediately W of Lloyd's Lane. Rectangular plaque decorated with an achievement of arms in relief. Heater-shaped shield with a mantling consisting of a torn and folded parchment decorated with rosettes. Three eagles heads couped and three scallops per fess. The arms may be those of Charles Wilmot, Lord President of Connacht (1616-25) or Henry Wilmot, Commissioner of the Presidency of Connacht (1644).
WM029-042067	'Garden' or 'Royal' bastion (<i>redundant record</i>)	Athlone & Bigmeadow	The largest surviving bastion of Athlone, preserved as a garden wall for a house. This bastion was constructed during the Cromwellian period. All four sides of it are preserved. This bastion also has an exterior batter. ('Athlone Town Walls & Defences Conservation Plan - An Action of the Co. Westmeath Heritage Plan 2003-2007', Athlone Town Council, Oxford Archaeology, 2005, 50). A long section of wall stretches from the rear of the Prince of Wales Hotel to Lucas Lane. It is 1.5 - 1.6m wide, 1.85m high and survived in good condition with one complete bastion, portion of a second (WM029-042068-) and a semi-circular tower (WM029-042075-). The complete bastion, known as the Garden or Royal Bastion, is pentangular and its wall is 2.25m high with an external batter to a height of 1.5 - 2m.
WM029-042020	Town defences	Athlone & Bigmeadow	The following description of the town defences is mainly taken from the Urban Survey of Co. Westmeath (Bradley et. al. 1985, 37-41) with additional material from the Athlone Town Walls Conservation Plan 2005. In 1251 the King of England ordered the payment of '80 marks of the K.'s money in aid of the inclosure of the K.'s vills (WM029-042----) of Adlon [Athlone] and Rendun [Rindown, Co. Roscommon], and repair of their castles (WM029-042002-) (Cal. doc. Ire., 469). It is not clear however whether this money was applied to the Leinster or Connacht side or to both. Further information on the walls is lacking until the late sixteenth century by which time the walls had probably fallen into considerable disrepair. Proposals to rebuild the wall were made by Sir Nicholas Malby in 1576 but these appear to have remained in the draft stage. Some work however was carried out on the defences at this time, particularly on the E and N gates. Extensive rebuilding of the wall may been completed 1619 when the walls of the Leinster town were reconstructed as

		<p>part of Wilmot's rebuilding scheme for the town. The walls may have been completed by 1619 for in this year a land grant to Robert Dillon included 'a house and garden, lately Tho. Wolfe's and Shane Bragan's, and the parcel of Clonen, 2a, near the town wall' (Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Jas I, 421) and also 'a garden near the N. wall, lately Mich. Pickering's; all in Athlone' (ibid.). The state papers of Charles I records the role Lord Wilmot, President of Connacht played in the walling of Athlone town. An undated submission (possibly c. 1627) sent to the King by Lord Wilmot concerning Athlone records that 'I am chiefly charged with building and walling the town and making away with certain lands and rents from the Crown. Most of the things menioned were done 17 years ago, and I cannot make present answer in regard to them' (Cal. S.P. Ire., 323). The submission goes on to state that 'this disposes all charges except one regarding 200 or 300 acres given by your Majesty to every school house in the plantation and given by King James to the inhabitants on condition they built the town with brick and stone and walled it well. This building work is done' (ibid.). In 1630 the state papers recorded that 'the walling of Athlone for guard of the bridge (WM029-042004-) there, since which plantations the English have regained part of their ancient power in the inland parts which were most offensive' (Cal. S.P. Ire., 150). It is clear that the walling of Athlone was an integral part for the successful Crown plantation of Westmeath and the adjoining regions during the first quarter of the 17th century, possibly between 1610-1619. In the wars of 1641-53 some improvements were made to the fortifications, notably the construction by the confederates of a wall and gatehouse along the Leinster waterfront in 1643, demolished soon afterwards by the Cromwellians. The Cromwellians themselves considerably strengthened the town's defences between 1651 and 1654 and several bastions were added to the Leinster town while the Connacht side was fortified with earthen ramparts. In 1682 Sir Henry Piers (1981, 86-7) described the fortifications as follows: 'The town on both sides of the river was in time of the late usurpers [the Cromwellian Commonwealth] very well fortified. The part on this [Leinster] side hath very strong walls with very large flankers of lime and stone, according to the rules of modern fortification. The inside of these walls and bulwarks was lined with a large rampart of stone and earth, the outside was made not easily accessible by a large deep graff ; round about on the flankers were mounted several great guns. The town on the other [Connacht] side was also fortified with great ramparts of earth flanked, and a large deep graff. The works here were set with a quick-set hedge, which was well kept and neatly shorn and had obtained a considerable growth at the time of his majesty's happy restoration, so that there was a living</p>
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			<p>strength both pleasant and useful. But all this beauty, all this strength is of late vanished, especially that on the other side, and the old castle (WM029-042002-) only after the old fashion is upheld'. Piers goes on to state that the town of Athlone 'had walls and two towers or gate-houses, or tower that scoured [secured] the principal streets' (Vallancey 1786, 88). Although improvements were carried out by the Jacobites in 1689-91, these were essentially the fortifications assailed and largely demolished by Ginkel in 1691. The course of the medieval defences on the Leinster side appears to have been incorporated into the early seventeenth century wall constructed for Wilmot but the line of the medieval defences on the Connacht side has been completely obliterated. There is good information on the course of the seventeenth century defences however. A feature of the defences on the Connacht side was the Connacht Tower which stood to the N of the castle (WM029-042002-). This was a rectangular structure with two circular towers at N angles, linked to Athlone Castle by defensive wall or ditch, perhaps the 'great fosse' to form the riverside bawn. Little is known of its history and the earliest references occur in the late sixteenth century. In 1581, it is described as 'an old ruinous tower' which would suggest that it was built considerably earlier. Langrishe records that its ruins survived into the mid-nineteenth century and that it was removed during the Shannon improvements and the making of the Grace Road (Bradley et. al. 1985, 38). East side of Athlone : The town wall on the E side of Athlone enclosed an area of 14 statute acres. The works of 1552-4 appear to have largely obliterated earlier work except in one clearly visible section near Court Devenish. The wall was penetrated by two gates and had five bastions in addition to an outwork protecting the Dublin Gate. There is no indication of a river wall despite the reference to the construction of such wall in 1643. A demi-bastion, set on a slight promontory, jutted into the River Shannon on the Leinster side of the town. The wall continued in a E direction for approx. 87m where it met the North Gate. The North Gate was situated at the junction of Lucas Lane and North Gate Street. Unlike Dublin Gate its builder is not known but until 1578 it was in the possession of Robert Dampart, provost-marshal of Connacht, when it was leased to Henry Brande of Trim. It would appear that the construction of the gatehouse is related to the building of the bridge and therefore a date between 1566 and 1578 may be suggested. A print of c.1820 by George Petrie shows that the gate was rectangular and had three floors with battlements above. Nothing of the actual gate remains. There were remnants of the wall to the S of the gate remaining in a factory site on the S side of the road but these were removed during the building of the Radisson hotel (See licence</p>
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			<p>number 98E0210) (Wheeler et. al. 2005, 54). From here the wall ran eastwards along Lucas Lane for 70m to the site of an incomplete bastion, 0.74m wide and 2.4m high. Part of the largest bastion of the town on Lucas Lane. This bastion was constructed during the Cromwellian period. It carries a plaque which states: 'The Old Wall of Athlone 1251'. A long section of wall, approx. 1.9m, stretches from Lucas Lane to the rear of the Prince of Wales Hotel. It is 1.5 - 1.6m wide, 1.85m high and survived in good condition with a semi-circular tower, portion of a bastion (see above) and a complete bastion. This latter bastion is known as the 'Garden' or 'Royal' Bastion. The largest surviving bastion of Athlone, preserved as a garden wall for a house. This bastion was constructed during the Cromwellian period. All four sides of it are preserved. This bastion also has an exterior batter (Wheeler et. al. 2005, 50). The wall continued to the N of Court Devenish (WM029-042035-) where a semi-circular tower survives. This stretch of wall and the tower are of different masonry to the seventeenth century bastions and may be sixteenth century work. A musket-loop in the tower would also support such a date. At this point there is a 2m difference between the ground level inside the town and that outside. The complete bastion, known as the Garden or Royal Bastion, is pentangular and its wall is 2.25m high with an external batter to a height of 1.5 - 2m. From here the wall turned SE through the Old Rectory grounds. The boundary wall of St. Mary's churchyard (WM029-042022-) is composed of the town wall. Here it is 0.75m thick and stands to a height of 2.8 - 3m with modern rebuilding on top. Two sides of a pentangular bastion survive at the N end of this wall. The wall marks the boundary of the E side of the churchyard and continued from the Dublin Gate, N towards the E bastion. This part of the wall may be on the line of the 13th century wall. The bastion is the smallest bastion on the walls, of which all four sides can be seen. It was constructed in the Cromwellian period, as an addition onto the existing earlier town wall (Wheeler et. al. 2005, 46, 48). It stands to a max height of 2.5m and is 1.4m wide at the base. 75m S of this was the Dublin Gate whose site alone survives. The gate was built by Edmond O'Fallon in or before 1578 when it was leased to him. A lease of 1603 notes that it contained two chambers. It was demolished between 1691 and 1784. The gate was protected by a pentangular outwork whose line is preserved in the back of the houses on the S side of Dublin Gate Street and it is possible that parts of its wall are preserved in the modern buildings here and in the 'Bawn' on the N side of the street. From here the wall ran in a SW direction for 130m through the grounds of the present Franciscan Friary. Here survives a plain section of wall 0.64m wide. The upper sections are modern but the lower courses</p>
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			<p>are similar to other surviving sections of the wall. No trace survives of the demi-bastion which stood beside the Shannon on the SE corner of the town. A demi-bastion, constructed in the Cromwellian period, was built onto made ground, on the E bank of the river. The demi-bastion abutted the medieval wall, which ran SW - NE along the E side of the back of the original Friary complex. There are no traces of the demi-bastion which was located on the riverbank (Wheeler et. al. 2005, 43).</p> <p>West side of Athlone: The town defences on the W side or Connacht side of Athlone consisted of earthen fortifications surmounted by a hedgerow as described by Sir Henry Piers in 1682. The town defences were roughly rectangular in shape, 640m long and enclosed an area of approx. 4.3 hectares (11 acres). As with the Leinster town the defences do not appear to have extended along the waterfront. No trace of the earthen banks or ditches survive but their outline can be traced from seventeenth century plans. Phillip's plan shows an opening in the S wall which probably represented the exit known as Peter's Port. In the vicinity of the modern lock there was a SE terminal at a demi-bastion beside the Shannon. West of this, just outside Abbey Lane, there was a small corner bastion near Goldsmith Terrace. From here the defences continued N for approx. 60m where there was formed a large bastion-shaped projection through which ran the principal western exit from the town. The present Bastion Street derives its name from this feature and the shape of the bastion is preserved in the line of the houses at the W end of Grattan Street. Bastion Street marks the central axis of the lost W bastion built during the Cromwellian period. The nose of the bastion was at the junction between O'Connell St and Grattan Row, and the southern flank is outlined by Grattan Row itself. The bastion was built as part of the earthen ramparts, between 1652-4, at the same time as the stone bastions of the E town were constructed. It seems to have been built as the W gate of the town and is shown as the principal western entrance on Phillip's 1685 map (Wheeler et. al. 2005, 58). From this large bastion, the defences continued N for a distance of 85m. at which point there was a gate at the junction of Barrack Street and Pearse Street. This gates was known as Connaught Gate. At the junction of Barrack Street and Pearse Street which was the the main passage through the West of the town, there was a gate. Unnamed 1685, 'Connaught Gate' 1722 (Murtagh 1994, 10). The defences continued N for approx. 80m where they made a right angled turn to the E. At this point there was an acute-angled bastion. From here, a rampart continues E for about 90m to the point of a demi-bastion at the NE end, in the vicinity of the present main gate of Custume Barracks (WM029-042078-).</p>
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WM029-042075	Semi-circular tower and wall <i>(Redundant record)</i>	Athlone & Bigmeadow	To the N of Court Devenish a semi-circular tower survives. This stretch of wall and the tower are of different masonry to the seventeenth century bastions and may be sixteenth century work. A musket-loop in the tower would also support such a date. At this point there is a 2m difference between the ground level inside the town and that outside.
WM029-042066	Pentangular bastion <i>(redundant record)</i>	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Pentangular bastion St. Mary's. The wall marks the boundary of the E side of the churchyard and continued from the Dublin Gate, N towards the E bastion. This part of the wall may be on the line of the 13th century wall. The bastion is the smallest bastion on the walls, of which all four sides can be seen. It was constructed in the Cromwellian period, as an addition onto the existing earlier town wall. ('Athlone Town Walls & Defences Conservation Plan - An Action of the Co. Westmeath Heritage Plan 2003-2007', Athlone Town Council, Oxford Archaeology, 2005, 46, 48). It is 75cm thick and stands to a height of 2.8 - 3m with modern rebuilding on top.
WM029-042028	Wall memorial <i>(redundant record)</i>	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Ann and Richard St. George wall memorial dating from 1686. On the E end of the N wall of the nave of the 19th century St. Mary's C of I church. It consists of large blocks of stone painted black with some gold decoration. The centre tablet is divided in two with an achievement of arms above and an inscription below. The monument (dims. H c. 4m; Wth 2.58m) is flanked by pilasters which support a cornice with triangular pediment. A heart-shaped panel rises from a central console within the pediment, and protrudes above the apex. The panel is decorated with a shield bearing a golden lion rampant and a small heart below. There are two rosette-like roundels on either side of the panel. The achievement of arms is in six quarters. (1) Per fess a lion gules with a crown or overall. (2) Argent an equal armed cross with fleur-de-lis terminals sable. (3) Three covered cups argent gules. (4) Six circles and a rectangle gules argent. (5) Six scallops azure and a fess dancette argent. (6) The sun or an estoile sable argent. The crest is a demi-lion rampant gules with a crown or. The inscription is in gold conjoined script: NEER THIS PLACE LYETH THE BODYS OF CAPTAIN RICH/ ST. GEORGE AND HIS PIOUS WIFE ANN ELDEST DAUGHTER/ OF MICHAEL PENNOCK OF TURROCK IN THE COUNTY OF/ ROSCOMON ESQ. HE WAS FOR SEVERAL YEARS GO/ VERNOR OF ATHLONE THIRD SON OF SR RICHARD ST GE/ ORGE KNT CLARENCEUX KING OF ARMS BY ELIZABET/ HIS WIFE DAUGHTER OF NICHOLAS ST IOHN OF LIDI/ ARD TREGOZ IN WILTSHIRE ESQ BROTHER TO SR HENRY/

			ST GEORGE KNT GARTER PRINCIPALL KING OF ARMES/ AND TO ST GEORGE ST GEORGE OF CARRICK DRUMROOSK. IN THE COUNTY OF LETRIM KNT BORN AT HALLY ST GEO/ RGE IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE THE 27TH MARCH 1590/ AND DEPARTED THIS LIFE IN ATHLON THE 24TH APRIL/ 1667 THE SAID ANN HIS WIFE WAS BORN AT TURR/ OCK THE 18TH OF NOVEMBER 1606 AND DYED IN/ ATHLONE THE 4TH OF OCTOBER 1643 TO WHOSE MEMO/ RYS THEIR SONS ARTHUR AND HENRY ERECTED THIS MONUMENT ANNO DOMINI 1686.
WM029-042023	Church	Athlone & Bigmeadow	St. Mary's C of I church located in the centre of Athlone which was built in 1826-7 (Murtagh 1994, 10) replacing the 17th century church (WM029-042021-) that was located immediately to the S of the present church. There are four 17th century wall memorials (WM029-042025----; WM029-042026----; WM029-042027----; WM029-042028-) located inside the C of I church. The 19th century church stands in the W quadrant of a rectangular shaped graveyard (WM029-042022-) enclosed by a stone wall. The E section of graveyard wall incorporates part of the 16th/17th century town walls of Athlone.
WM029-042027	Memorial stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Abigail Handcock wall memorial 1680. On the S wall of the nave of the 19th century St Mary's C of I church. Rectangular white marble tablet (dims. Wth 1.26m; H 2m) flanked by black pilasters with free standing white marble columns in front and flanking foliate scroll brackets. The columns support a black marble cornice with a black hour-glass painted on to a red and white marble. The cornice is flanked by scroll brackets and the apex is topped by a covered bowl. An achievement of arms is painted below the tablet which is flanked by white marble scrolls and supported on a black marble pedestal. Heater shaped shield divided per pale with argent, two cocks and a hand in chief sable with argent ermined sable on the dexter while the sinister has three deer's heads or on a bend azure background argent and a crown or on gules in the sinister chief. The motto is VIGILATE ET ORATE and the crest consists of a lion rampant holding a lozenge shaped medallion upon which there is a cock. The inscription is in script with Roman capitals: THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED IN MEMORY OF/ MS ABIGAIL HANDCOCK/ DAUGHTER OF THE REVERnd/ THOMAS STANLEY & LATE WIFE/ OF WILLIAM HANDCOCK OF/ TNYFORD ESQW, BY WHOM HE/ HAD ISSUE 9 SONS & 7 DAUGH/ TERS WHO DEPARTED THIS/ LIFE/ THE 21ST OF NOVbr ANo DOm/ 1680 IN THE 53RD YEAR OF HER/ AGE & LYES INTERRED/ UNDERNEATH THIS PLACE.

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042021	Church	Athlone & Bigmeadow	<p>Only the bell-tower survives of the 17th century St. Mary's parish church. The 17th century church was probably built on or incorporated the remains of the medieval parish church of Athlone. This church is mentioned in a number of 17th century documents as being near the East Gate [Dublin Gate] of the walled town of Athlone (Erck 1846-52,67-8, 728). There is a reference in 1452 the church of 'Athluain' (Cal. papal letters, 541) and in 1484 there is a mention of St. Mary's when Cornelius Odelay [O'Daly] was the vicar (Cal. papal letters, 90). This church was almost certainly established in the thirteenth century (Bradley et. al. 1985, 41). In 1578 a 21 year lease was granted to Edmund O Fallon a merchant of Athlone, which included the 'castle in Athlone called the east gate [Dublin Gate], near the church yard (WM029-042022-) of the parish church, and a parcel of land adjoining the said castle, lying in breadth from the east towards the market place of the town 60 feet [18m], and in length towards the Shynnyn 200 feet [61m]' (Nicholls 1994, 467). The medieval church was rebuilt around 1620 by Lord Grandison, while he was President of Connacht (Stokes 1890-1, 184). The 17th century church building was replaced by the present church in 1826-7 (Murtagh 1994, 10) although the bell-tower of the 17th century church still survives free standing in the SW quadrant of the graveyard (WM029-042022-) (Stokes 1890-1, 180). Described by Bradley (1985 41-2) as the 17th century church site is situated in the SW quadrant of the graveyard on the north side of Dublin Gate Street immediately inside the town wall. The seventeenth century bell-tower stands to the SW of the present C of I church (WM029-042023-) and is rectangular in plan with four floors and battlements above. The masonry is of coursed limestone with limestone quoins. The exterior has been heavily repainted and the east wall appears to have been substantially rebuilt. The base has a low uneven batter. The ground floor is entered on the S through a round-arched door with external hood moulding. It has a barrel vault and a single window in the west wall which has been blocked up. Access to the first floor is via a wooden ladder. Externally, large round-headed windows are present in each wall of the third floor (belfry stage). The bell is reputed to be of seventeenth century date.</p>

Number	Site Type	Townland	Description
WM029-042026	Memorial stone	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Wall memorial of Mathew De Renzi who died in 1634. Only a small fragment of a much larger wall memorial survives inserted into the W end of the S wall of the nave of the 19th century St Mary's C of I church (WM029-042023-). The surviving fragment (dims. Wth 1.26m; H 0.24m) consists of an apron and shelf in black marble. The inscription is on the apron in incised gold capitals: THIS MONVMENT WAS ERECTED BY THE RIGHT WORSHIPVLL SIR MATHEW DE RENZI KNIGHT WHO DEPARTED THIS/ LIFE THE 20 OF AVGVST 1634 BEINGE OF THE AGE OF 57 YEARS BORNE AT CVLLEN IN GERMANY AND DISCENDED FROM/ THAT FAMOVS AND RENOWNED WARRIER GEORGE CASTRIOTT, ALS SCANDERBEGE (WHO IN THE CHRISSTIAN WARRE .OV/ 52 BATTLALIES WITH GREAT CONQVEST AND HONNOR AGAINST THE GREAT TVRKE) HE WAS A GREAT TRAVE;ER/ AND GENERALL LINGVIST: AND HE KEPT CORESPONDENCY WITH MOST NATIONS IN MANY WEIGHTY AFFAIRES: AND IN THE THREE YEARS GAVE GREAT PFECTION TO THIS NATION BY COMPOSEINGE A GRAMMER DICTIONNARY AND CHRONICLE IN THE/ IRISH TONGVE: AND IN ACCOMPTS MOST EXPERT AND EXCEEDINGE ALL OTHERS TO HIS GREAT APPLAV../ THIS WORKE WAS ACCOMPELISHED BY HIS SONNE MATHEW DE RENZI ESQR AVGVST THE 22 1635.
WM029-042029	Graveslab	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Possible 17th century graveslab the location of which is now unknown. A small graveslab was described by Bigger (1901-3, 272) as lying at the E end of the churchyard (WM029-042022-). It was decorated with a ringed cross on a step with the letters RM and I H S. Probably seventeenth century.
WM029-0420962	Dublin Gate <i>(redundant record)</i>	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Site alone survives. The gate was built by Edmond O'Fallon in or before 1578 when it was leased to him. A lease of 1603 notes that it contained two chambers. It was demolished between 1691 and 1784. The gate was protected by a pentangular outwork (WM029-042077-) whose line is preserved in the back of the houses on the S side of Dublin Gate Street and it is possible that parts of its wall are preserved in the modern buildings here and in the "Bawn" on the N side of the street.
WM029-042077	Bastion <i>(redundant record)</i>	Athlone & Bigmeadow	Bastion projecting from the SE side of the Dublin Gate was built in the Cromwellian period. The position of the bastion is preserved in the current street alignment.

Appendix 3: excavation conducted within the historic town of Athlone.

Licence number	Site name	Details
04E0594	Strand Street, Athlone	<p>Three trenches were mechanically excavated in the course of pre-development testing at Strand Street, Athlone. In Trench A the removal of sod (0.15m in depth) and topsoil (0.2m in depth) uncovered a light-grey sandy subsoil. This layer extended for a depth of 0.4-0.5m and overlay an orange/brown sticky boulder clay. No features of archaeological significance were encountered in this trench. Excavation of Trench B commenced at the south end and the stratigraphy here consisted of topsoil (0.25m deep) overlying a grey sandy clay (0.45m deep) that overlay the orange/brown boulder clay. Four linear features orientated east-west were identified in this trench, cut into the boulder clay, with similar fills of dark clay with occasional stones. The features were found at a depth of at least 1m below the ground surface. F4 had been disturbed and the remains of a human skull were visible in the section of the trench. A number of other human bones were recovered from the immediate area. At the north end of Trench C topsoil (0.2m deep) overlay a loose sandy clay (0.45-0.55m deep), which in turn overlay the natural boulder clay. Two modern dumps were revealed in this trench.</p>
1991:124	Athlone Castle	<p>In January 1991 Archaeological Development Services Ltd carried out a short excavation on behalf of Athlone Urban District Council in Athlone Castle. The purpose of the excavation was to determine the date of a wall within the castle yard, which the Council proposed to demolish in the course of preparing an Exhibition Centre for the Athlone 1691 Tercentenary celebrations. The wall, located in the south-west corner of the castle yard, ran between an armaments store and a domestic building, both of late 18th/early 19th-century date; it was 1.05m-1.2m thick at the base and built of coursed, roughly dressed limestone blocks with a limestone rubble core. Its maximum surviving height was c. 4.2m, but a wall-line on the south wall of the armaments building indicates that it originally abutted this building to a height of c. 6m. Two cuttings were opened on either side of the wall at its junction with the armaments building. This confirmed that the foundations of the wall rested on redeposited boulder clay and sand/gravel layers, apparently laid down in order to level up a depression or sharp slope in the area, and almost certainly in preparation for the construction of the wall. It was clear from the foundation details that the wall was contemporary with the armaments building (of late 18th- or 19th-century date) to the north.</p>

Licence number	Site name	Details
06E0832	10 Church Street	<p>A programme of test-trenching and subsequent monitoring was completed in advance of a proposed development at 10 Church Street, Athlone. The development involved refurbishment and internal alterations to the building that fronts on to Church Street, the demolition of return buildings to the rear and the construction of a three-storey development near to Preacher’s Lane. All archaeological material within the area of impact of the proposed development was fully resolved. The results of the archaeological works confirmed the historical and cartographic sources for the area. Evidence for a pool or watercourse (at 10.79m OD) and garden soils (at 10.87m OD) on the higher ground to the north-west dating to the medieval period were found, suggesting that the site was not developed at this time.</p> <p>Early post-medieval (possibly 17th-century) consolidation layers and a cobbled surface in the rear yard of the property documented the urbanisation of this part of Athlone and the establishment of Church Street. Further evidence for domestic occupation dating to the 18th century was found. A number of standing stone and brick walls bounded the rear of the site near Preacher’s Lane, and these were fully surveyed. Human remains in the form of a single articulated foot (or at least the toe-bones of a foot) were encountered immediately below the rear yard of No. 10 Church Street below a modern brick-lined drain. These were fully excavated but their origin is unclear.</p>
09E0443	Grace Road	<p>Monitoring of geotechnical investigations at the site was undertaken on a phase basis during November 2009 and January 2010. The site is located between Grace Road and the River Shannon and comprises a former temperance hall (Father Matthew Hall), constructed in 1897, and a terraced embanked landscaped area to the immediate north. This latter area was originally created in the late 19th century by land reclamation and was further landscaped in the 1980s. It is the intention of Athlone Town Council to create an art galley on the site, by means of converting much of the existing building and constructing an extension to the north. Other works will include a service yard and creation of a boardwalk along a section of the riverfront. The site is situated within the zone of archaeological potential established for Athlone. A defensive feature – Connaught Tower –was located within, or in the immediate environs of, the site. This was constructed in the 16th century and was described in 1581 as ‘an old ruinous tower covered with straw’. It is illustrated on Thomas Phillip’s map of 1685 as comprising a rectangular structure with two circular towers at north angles, linked to Athlone Castle to the south by a defensive wall or ditch. Although the tower was largely demolished by Williamite bombardment in 1691, its location was marked on maps up to the late 18th century. Research indicates that the tower was located at the south-western corner of the site at the junction formed by Grace Road, Market Square and the road leading west from the bridge. All trial-</p>

		<p>pit and borehole investigations were monitored and the spoil generated from such was subjected to ‘raking over’ to increase the chances for artefact recovery. A number of wall remains were encountered to the immediate north and south of the existing building. The form, nature and dates of the walls encountered during the site investigations were not ascertained due to the ‘monitoring’ nature of the works. Historical research indicates that part of the site, particularly the southern area, including Father Matthew Hall, was previously constructed in the 18th century and that all the previous buildings were demolished as part of the preparation/construction works associated with the construction of the adjacent Town Bridge. The remaining areas of the site to the north originally formed part of the shallow riverbed and were reclaimed in the 19th century. Given the historical background to the site and environs, together with the limited evidence uncovered by the programme of monitoring, it is difficult to determine whether any of the walls uncovered by the site investigations are of archaeological interest. Consequently, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, additional archaeological investigations will be undertaken in 2010.</p>
E4398	Athlone Castle	<p>Following further consultation with the National Monuments Service, it was agreed that all ground reduction works required of the development, including general removal of existing internal and external surfaces, foundation and service trench excavations, be monitored. In addition, it was agreed that two test trenches be excavated by hand within the courtyard and that protective measures be put in place in order to protect the base plinth of the keep from damage by machinery.</p> <p>Two subsurface features of archaeological interest were uncovered during the course of the works. A service trench along the riverside edge of the courtyard revealed a wall face truncated by modern disturbance. It is suggested that this wall may represent the basal foundations of a structure constructed in the 16th/early 17th century, when the castle was used as the official residence of the ‘Presidents of Connaught’, whose apartments were in the east wing overlooking the river. Furthermore, the truncated remains of a wall was uncovered running north from the existing entrance gate and across the existing access ramps. This may be associated with a former entrance feature, illustrated on later 17th-century maps of the town. A number of artefacts, mostly pottery sherds and fragments of clay pipes of 19th/20th-century date, were recovered, particularly within the courtyard area of the site.</p>

Licence number	Site name	Details
17E0266	Garrycastle	<p>This green field site is located c. 2km due east of Athlone town centre on a site north of the Athlone Business and Technology Park. The area in question is about 1ha in size and roughly rectangular in shape. In the north-east of the site are the ruins of Garrycastle tower-house (WM029-025). The site is intended for industrial development. A comprehensive series of assessments comprising desktop study, geophysical survey and test trenching was undertaken to provide further information on the archaeological remains at the site and to inform any future planning decision. The standing archaeological remains comprise the masonry structure of the castle and a possible associated earthwork at the north. Eight test trenches (540 linear metres) were opened by a 16t mechanical excavator fitted with a 2m-wide ditching bucket. The trenches were laid out with reference to the results of the geophysical survey in order to test anomalies/potential archaeological features recorded therein. Trenches 1, 6 and 7 were positioned adjacent to the standing remains of the tower-house in order to ascertain if archaeological features associated with this structure extend into the potential development lands. Archaeological features recorded comprise 2 possible pits, a series of linear features and remains of a 19th-century settlement as depicted on early edition OS mapping. There does not appear to be evidence for late medieval land-division or agriculture at the south and south-west of the structural remains of the tower-house.</p>
17E0516	Athlone Flood Relief Scheme	<p>Monitoring took place of geotechnical investigation bore holes within Flood Cell 1 and Flood Cell 3, and subsequent archaeological testing was undertaken within Flood Cell 3 and Flood Cell 4, of the Athlone Flood Alleviation Scheme, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. The monitoring and testing was conducted by AMS Ltd on behalf of RPS and their client Westmeath County Council and the Office of Public Works.</p> <p>Monitoring of four bore holes, one in Flood Cell 1 (113) and three in Flood Cell 3 (301-304), was undertaken in October and November 2017. The bore holes ranged in width from 0.3m to 1m and ranged in depth from 0.8m to 1.4m. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered.</p> <p>Testing was undertaken in Flood Cell 3 and Flood Cell 4 in April 2018. A total of seven trenches were excavated along the line of the proposed flood wall in Flood Cell 3. The trenches were positioned, where possible, immediately along the line of the proposed flood wall. However, Trenches 302, 306 and 307 had to be repositioned slightly due to the presence of walls and railings along the quay. The remains of a possible earlier quay wall (Wall 3) were encountered in Trench 303. This was identified at 1m below the present ground level (PGL). The south-western face of this wall was identified in this trench and a sondage was excavated into material abutting the wall. This sondage revealed a series of clay deposits and finds of possible seventeenth-century date. Another wall (Wall</p>

		<p>4) was encountered at c.1.2m below PGL in Trench 304. This occupied the entire base of the excavated trench and the trench was not excavated below this level. This may also be an earlier quay wall but it is also at the location of the south-western end of the sixteenth-century bridge (WM029-042004) and it is possible that this represents remnants of the foundations of that bridge. Another wall (Wall 5) in Trench 306, located at c.1.9m below PGL, may again represent an earlier quay wall. In addition to these, a post-medieval culvert and eighteenth-/nineteenth-century walls were recorded in Trench 301. These walls (Walls 1 and 2) are likely to be remains of structures demolished between 1840 and 1849 for the Shannon Navigation works. Similar remains were identified in the 10E0186 excavations (Fitzpatrick 2017, Trench 11.7 and 11.8) undertaken to the north-west of Trench 306, which are in line with the proposed flood wall. With the exception of the walls detailed above, the remainder of the trenches were characterised by deposits of rubble and ‘fill’ material. A total of four trenches (Trenches 401, 402, 408 and 409) were excavated within the footprint of the proposed flood defence embankments in Flood Cell 4. Nothing of archaeological significance was discovered during testing in Flood Cell 4. The only features identified were two post-medieval ditches which are in line with field boundaries as depicted on c.1900 mapping for the area. The area tested is named on this mapping as “Brick Island” which is suggestive of brick-making activity in this area; however, there was no indication or evidence for brick-making activity in the testing.</p>
E005135	Abbey Graveyard and St Vincent’s Hospital	<p>A metal detection survey was carried out as part of Stage (i) Test Excavations and Survey Services in two areas within the lands available for the proposed ‘Whitegates to Marina Building Athlone Shared Cycleway and Footway’ scheme. The findings of the archaeological testing, carried out under Ministerial Consent C000954 and Reg. No. E005135, are recorded separately (Excavations Bulletin No. 2020:153). The two subject areas were located adjacent to each other in the town of Athlone within the grounds of St Vincent’s Hospital (the former Athlone Union Workhouse complex) and the Abbey Graveyard (WM029-042092), respectively. The latter site contains the extant remains of a seventeenth-century Franciscan Friary building (WM029-042001). The testing programme was carried out in two phases, with Phase 1 comprising the hand excavation of eight test trenches to a depth of 0.25m within the Abbey Graveyard, covering a total area of 8m². Phase 2 comprised the hand excavation of the remainder of the cycleway footprint in the Abbey Graveyard for a total length of 87.5m, a width of 0.9–2.9m and a depth of 0.25m, covering a total area of 116m². Works within the grounds of St Vincent’s Hospital consisted of two machine-dug test trenches (Trench A and Trench B), which represented the footprint of a new hospital boundary wall and cycleway pavement, respectively. Trench A measured 86m x 1.2m with a depth of between 0.6–</p>

		<p>0.7m, while Trench B measured 123m x 3.1m with a depth of between 0.3–0.5m. Both trenches were largely excavated through modern deposits. All soils and sod excavated from the test trenches were subject to metal detection using a Fisher F22 Research Labs 7.69khz detection device. The discrimination settings on the metal detector were set to ‘All Metal’. The systematic metal detection survey retrieved a total of four iron nails, tentatively interpreted as coffin nails, from the excavated spoil of the Phase 1 and 2 test trenches within the Abbey Graveyard and Trench A within the grounds of St Vincent’s Hospital respectively. Three nails were recovered from the Abbey Graveyard and one from Trench A within the former Athlone Union Workhouse complex.</p> <p>The investigations were confined to two adjacent areas within Athlone town: Abbey Graveyard (WM029-042092) and St Vincent’s Hospital (former Athlone Union Workhouse complex). The former contains the extant remains of a seventeenth-century Franciscan Friary building (WM029-042001). Human remains (and wall foundations) had previously been encountered within the grounds of the hospital by M. Fitzpatrick (Licence No: 10E0186Ext.; Excavation Bulletin Nos: 2016:342; 2017:429) and J. Tierney (Licence No: 19E0409). Phase 1 testing within the Abbey Graveyard involved hand excavation of eight trenches (2m x 0.5m, total area 8m²), to a depth of 0.25m (Plate 1; Figure 1), followed by Phase 2 hand excavation of the remaining cycleway footprint (87.5m x 0.9–2.8m, total area 116m²) to a depth of 0.25m. Two machine-dug trenches (Trench A and Trench B) were excavated within St Vincent’s Hospital along the footprint of a new boundary wall and cycleway, respectively. Trench A measured 86m x 1.2m with a depth of 0.6–0.7m; Trench B measured 123m x 3.1m with a depth of 0.30–0.50m. Beneath the sod, the hand-excavated trenches within Abbey Graveyard revealed a c.0.15m thick layer of yellowish grey clayey silt (C2) overlying a dark brownish black clay (C3) at a depth of c.0.25m. Small fragments of disarticulated human bone were noted within C3 and both deposits contained modern finds. C2 is interpreted as a soil capping layer brought in for landscaping purposes during works at the graveyard in the mid-1980s. The disturbance noted in C3 is also believed to be the result of 1980s clearance works. A section of the original nineteenth-century graveyard boundary wall uncovered in the Phase 2 Trench marked a notable change in the soils within the investigated area, with the area to the north of the wall dominated by twentieth-century gravel deposits. The boundary wall was protected and preserved in situ. Trenches excavated within the hospital grounds revealed considerable modern disturbance with infill deposits and a large number of services recorded. A single grave cut (C14) orientated west-east was uncovered at a depth of 0.7m, located close to articulated human remains previously identified at a similar depth (Figure 1). The burial had been truncated by modern activities exposing part of a cranium and mandible of a child. The remains were protected and preserved in situ.</p>
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Licence number	Site name	Details
97E0039	Pearse Street	<p>Five trenches were mechanically excavated. Trench 1, located 22m south of the north-east corner of the site, was perpendicular to the wall at the rear of the property line fronting Bastion Street. It was orientated approx. south-east/north-west and measured 22m by 2m. The following profile and features were recorded: 0m–3m: dark brown soil with small stones and brick fragments (0–0.5m), and yellow clay containing small stones (0.5–1.5m+); 3–22m: compact dump of gravel and rubble deposits mixed with dark brown clay (banded) (0–1.1m), dark brown clay with charcoal flecks and small stones (1.1–1.5m), and yellow clay containing small stones (1.5m+). A south-west/north-east linear ditch, 13.2m wide, was located 5.3m north of the property wall boundary. The feature cuts the natural yellow clay subsoil and is characterised by a dark brown clay fill containing charcoal flecks and small stones. A possible division or berm composed of yellow clay, several metres in width, was located within the feature at a position 12m north of the property wall boundary. The feature appears to represent a parallel double line of fortification ditches. Trench 2, positioned at a right angle to the wall forming the northern boundary of the site at the rear of properties fronting Connolly Street, lay c. 28m from the north-east corner of the site along a recessed portion of the wall. It measured 17.3m by 2m. The following profile and features were recorded: 0–6.5m: concrete and hard-core infill (0–0.2m), yellow clay mixed with numerous red brick fragments and small stones (0.2–0.45m), grey-brown clay (0.45–1m) (exposed to diesel/oil seepage), and dark brown/black clay containing small stones and charcoal flecks (1m+) (this represents a continuation of the counterscarp ditch); 6.5–17.3m: concrete and hard-core infill (0–0.2m), yellow clay mixed with red brick fragments and small stones (0.2–1m), and yellow clay (1m+). Trench 3 was positioned at a right angle to the wall forming the northern boundary of the site at the rear of properties fronting Connolly Street. It is located c. 34m from the north-west corner of the development, orientated north-east/south-west, and measures 19m by 2m. The deposits revealed were dark brown/black soil containing brick rubble (0–0.4m), yellow clay mixed with red brick fragments and small stones (0.4–1m), grey-brown clay containing red brick fragments and small stones (1–1.2m), and yellow clay (1.2m+). Features uncovered included an east–west linear ditch positioned 4.5m south of the boundary wall cut into natural clay. The ditch is 2.8m wide and filled with dark brown/black clay and small stones. It probably represents a continuation of the counterscarp ditch. An east–west linear wall foundation was located 8.7m south of the boundary wall and 0.5m below present ground level. The wall is composed of rough-cut stone blocks and red brick, 1.1m wide and 0.8m+ high, representing a 19th/20th-century property division. Trench 4 was positioned at the northern corner of the development site parallel with the Pearse Street frontage. It was orientated north–south, measuring 13m by 2m. It</p>

		<p>contained dark brown soil mixed with brick rubble (depth 0–0.2m), and yellow clay (depth 0.2–0.5m). Trench 5 was positioned across the site entrance to the south on the Bastion Street/O’Connell Street confluence. It was located 16.3m north of the street, orientated north-east/south-west, and measured 4m by 2m. Owing to the nature of the deposits uncovered in this area, the sides of the trench were very unstable and so the measurements given below are approximate: dark brown soil/clay heavily mixed with domestic rubbish and brick rubble (0–1.5m), dark brown soil containing numerous stones (1.5–2.7m), and yellow clay (2.7m+) (darker and drier than that observed in other trenches). The test excavation results clearly uncovered portions of the external ditch of the rampart in Trenches 1–3. The excavation did not reveal any evidence for remains of the earthen rampart forming either the central bastion or the ravelin believed to overlie Pearse Street. Monitoring of rubble and soil clearance over the remainder of the site did not reveal any features or soils of archaeological significance.</p>
1998:642	Bastion Street	<p>Archaeological monitoring took place in October 1998 at a housing redevelopment at No. 16 Bastion Street, Athlone. The site lies on the northern side of Bastion Street, south of the 17th-century bastion wall, which runs parallel to the street and at right angles to the medieval town wall. The development area measures 19m north-south by 8m. Development was in progress when archaeological monitoring was requested; no demolition or alteration to existing walls was planned; however, subsurface works were undertaken close to the wall, and these were all subject to an archaeological monitoring clause. In fact, only one trench was available to archaeologically monitor; however, all standing walls were visible. The trench was opened for a foul water main supply and lay in the centre of the building on the site. The trench was 6m long, 1m wide and 0.4-1m deep and revealed two linear features of 17th/18th-century date below the existing property. These were revealed at a depth of 0.3-0.4m below ground level. The line of the bastion wall appeared to be substantially altered and contained several phases of masonry and brick. No intact portion of the original bastion wall was noted during the assessment. Analysis of the other face of the wall revealed that the bastion wall had been rebuilt from a point east of the property, where it was listing and buttressed. It is therefore likely that the wall fell and was rebuilt using existing stone and brick additions.</p>

Licence number	Site name	Details
99E0109	Athlone Westside drainage scheme	The Athlone Westside Main Drainage Scheme was situated on the western periphery of Athlone town. The project area was bounded to the east by a canal, part of which forms the western extent of the zone of archaeological potential associated with the town. The only feature of note was the remains of a wall foundation uncovered in the 'Batteries' area. This was 0.8m wide and stood up to 0.6m high. The location and line of the wall would indicate that it was associated with the fortifications mentioned above. No other features or structures were identified within the area of the project, and a number of post-medieval sherds of pottery were recovered.
01E0130	Garrycastle	Testing was undertaken at a proposed development site within the IDA Industrial Estate in the eastern suburbs of Athlone. A number of linear features in the immediate environs of the farmhouse were tested; the results indicated that these features were the remains of drive/ laneways which were subsequently disturbed by ploughing. Additional testing undertaken in the area of the farmhouse indicated that the basal courses of the external walls, which were 0.6m wide, were of stone, with the remainder of the structure constructed in brick. All internal walls were 0.4m wide and were of brick. All walls stood to a height of 0.4–0.6m over foundation level. The house had a maximum length of 17.7m and a maximum width of 15m. There was evidence of an internal chimney along the western wall, and doorways on the southern, eastern and northern walls. In addition, there was evidence for brick, stone-cobbled and possibly timber floors on the inside of the house, with some external stone cobbling. No additional features, structures, deposits or finds of archaeological/historical interest were uncovered during the course of the testing.

Licence number	Site name	Details
00E0275	Church Street/Dublin Gate Street	<p>A total of nineteen trenches were opened by a combination of both machine- and hand-excavation. Such investigations uncovered a number of possible pit features within the original walled area. However, owing to previous ground reductions at the site, only the basal remains of such features remain in an undisturbed subsurface context. Similarly, only tentative evidence of the postulated line of the town wall was uncovered. Testing in the area of the small bastion, however, did uncover additional walls associated with this feature, confirming its location and outline detail. In addition, a number of features were uncovered associated with the former Glebe House.</p> <p>An additional programme of testing was undertaken on 15 August 2002. A narrow trench was excavated from the wall remains described above along the external face to determine the exact external line of the town wall and part of a demi-bastion feature. The testing indicated that the proposed civic centre is slightly less than 3m from the subsurface wall remains. The building line was moved farther from the wall remains to facilitate the establishment of an agreed buffer area.</p>