

Fethard Town Walls Capital Works Program 2010

Completion Report



11th November 2010

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1.0 Introduction

Core Data.

Property:	Fethard Town Walls, Fethard, South Tipperary
Status:	Protected Structure S645, Recorded Monument No. TS070-040032
Project:	Capital Works Programme 2010
For:	South Tipperary County Council
Owner:	South Tipperary County Council
Consultants:	Ivor McElveen Associates, Conservation Consultants. David Sweetman, Archaeologist

Ivor McElveen Associates has been commissioned by South Tipperary County Council in partnership with the Heritage Council through the Irish Walled Towns Network to form the Project Team for the Fethard Town Walls Capital Works Programme 2010. This report is a Completion Report for the Conservation and Maintenance of the section of the walls identified for attention in 2010. This report refers to and follows on from 'Fethard Historic Town Walls Conservation Management Plan' as prepared by Oxford Archaeology in June 2009.

The town of Fethard is on the Record of Monuments and Places, and is also protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004). Many buildings in the town are protected as Recorded Monuments and/or Protected Structures under the Planning and Development Act (2000-2010), and inasmuch as parts of the wall belong to South Tipperary County Council (as successor to the Corporation) they are also National Monuments under the National Monuments Act (1930-2004).

A condition survey was carried out on 4th August 2010, and Ministerial Consent was granted on 2nd September 2010. All works were completed in compliance with the Ministerial Consent, the following report details the works.

2.0 Conservation Approach

The conservation works carried out were predominately no more than heavy maintenance, the buildings are conserved as ruins following the best practice conservation principles as outlined by the International Conference on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in The Venice Charter (1964) and Burra Charter (1999). In one area stone was rebuilt to preserve the structural integrity of the surrounding wall. All works were carried out using traditional techniques and materials where possible.

2.1 Mortar Analysis and Design of Mortar

Results of the mortar analysis carried out in 2009 for the Fethard Town Walls - Capital Works Program 2009 were used to inform the design of the mortar used in the pointing, capping and limited re-building works carried out in 2010.

2.2 Photographic Record.

A Photographic record was maintained throughout the works for all areas. Photographs were taken prior, during and after the completion of each stage of the works.

2.3 Condition Assessment

The condition assessment of the areas identified for works was carried out prior to the commencement of the works, and this assessment was revised where appropriate due to discoveries made as the works continued. The condition assessment was used to inform the method statement supplied as part of the application for Ministerial Consent.

The areas identified for works are as follows with an outline of the works planned. See also Appendix A: Site Plan

1. **Section A-2010** - Works to the North Tower. Gazetteer 2.01, The North Gate and Currikeen Castle, Fethard Town Walls Conservation Management Plan (CMP).
2. **Section B-2010** - Section of Wall to the east of the North Tower (both sides). Gazetteer 2.36 & 37, North-east Wall, central & western section, CMP.
3. **Section C-2010** - Section at Mart. Gazetteer 2.35, North Wall, eastern section, CMP.



Fig. 1 View of Section A-2010 (Gazetteer 2.1)



Fig. 2 View of Section B-2010 (Gazetteer 2.37)



Fig. 3 View of Section B-2010 (Gazetteer 2.36)



Fig. 4 View of Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35)

2.4 Commencement of Site Works

Ministerial Consent was granted on 2nd September 2010 and site works commenced on 20th September 2010, works were completed by 2nd November 2010.

2.4.1 Exemplar Panels

Exemplar panels were prepared by the contractor for inspection and approval. These were approved at the second site meeting on 28th September 2010 by the conservation consultants and by Jonathan Flood of South Tipperary County Council Also on 30th September 2010 by Nessa Roach of the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government.

2.4.2 Archaeology.

Upon clearing the vegetation growth around the south side of Currikeen Castle (Section A-2010 *Gazetteer 2.1*) a blocked first floor window was found, as this was loosely filled with rubble stonework the fill was removed and the stones stored inside the window aperture. (See figures 5 and 6)



Fig.5 (Section A-2010 Gazetteer 2.1) Blocked window when first discovered



Fig.6 Window after removal of fill

No other archaeological finds were made, no excavation was carried out either at ground level or elsewhere on the walls themselves.

2.4.3 Progress

The conservation was carried out as follows, in each Section, vegetation was removed, loose mortar was raked out, all surfaces were sprayed twice with approved biocide, wall heads were flanchéd or pointed as appropriate, open joints were pointed. Other works were carried out as required, see review of works that follows. Works were completed by 2nd November 2010, the site was cleared and left tidy.

3.0 Heritage Compliance.

All works were carried out to a high standard, and in accordance with the Ministerial Consent No. C000433. Issued 2nd September 2010

3.1 Deviation from Ministerial Consent.

On 1st November 2010 a request for deviation from the Ministerial Consent was forwarded to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Appendix C) requesting an alteration to the planned use of limestone and sawn slate in the stabilisation of the window ope in the east wall of Currikeen Castle (Section A-2010)

and the substitution of steel members to achieve a cost effective and discrete solution. On 8th November 2010 a response from Eamon Coady accepted the proposed deviation. (Appendix D)

4.0 Review Of Works

4.1 Section A-2010 - Works to the North Tower. Gazetteer 2.01, The North Gate and Currikeen Castle, Fethard Town Walls Conservation Management Plan (CMP).

In Section A – Currikeen Castle, additional works were carried out as follows. Upon removal of vegetation a previously unknown ogee window was discovered on the south elevation. When this was cleaned for pointing, the decision was taken to remove the loose material filling it. The filling stones were stored within the ope. (See Fig. 13, also section 2.4.2)

Further works were carried out with the installation of a steel plate and column to stabilise the window ope in the east elevation of the castle.



Fig. 7/8 Section A-2010 (Gazetteer 2.01) Currikeen Castle before conservation, and after.



Fig. 9/10 Section A-2010 (Gazetteer 2.01) Vegetation on Currikeen Castle, and after conservation, see also rendered block area.



Fig. 11/12 Section A-2010 (Gazetteer 2.01) West side. Missing stones by roadway, and after conservation



Fig. 13. Section A-2010 (Gazetteer 2.01) South side. View of newly discovered window in south wall of Currikeen Castle, after conservation.

**4.2 Section B-2010 - Section of Wall to the east of the North Tower (both sides).
Gazetteer 2.36 & 37, North-east Wall, central & western section, CMP.**



Fig. 14 Section B-2010, (Gazetteer 2.37) North side. Before conservation.



Fig. 15 Section B-2010, (Gazetteer 2.37) North side. After conservation.



Fig. 16 Section B-2010 (Gazetteer 2.37) South side (Joe Kenny's garden). Before conservation.



Fig.17 Section B-2010 (Gazetteer 2.37) South side. After conservation. Note remains of stair to left side.



Fig 18 Section B-2010 (Gazetteer 2.37) South side. Base of stairway after conservation.



Fig 19 Section B-2010, (Gazetteer 2.36) North side. Before conservation.



Fig 20 Section B-2010 (Gazetteer 2.36) North side. After conservation.



Fig 21 Section B-2010 (Gazetteer 2.36) South side (Gerald Manton's garden), before conservation.



Fig 22 Section B-2010 (Gazetteer 2.36) South side (Gerald Manton's garden) After conservation. Note replacement of stones in parapet.

4.3 Section C-2010 - Section at Mart. Gazetteer 2.35, North Wall, eastern section, CMP.



Fig. 23 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) North side. Before conservation.



Fig. 24 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) North side. After conservation.



Fig 25/26 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) North side. Loss of mortar below cap stones and around possible rafter holes. Before conservation.



Fig 27/28 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) North side. Rafter holes after conservation.



Fig. 29 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) Mart area, east end. Before conservation.



Fig. 30 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) Mart area, east end. After conservation.



Fig. 31 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) Mart area, east end. During conservation.



Fig. 32 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) Mart area inside barn. Before conservation.



Fig. 33 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) Mart area inside barn. After conservation.



Fig. 34 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) Mart area, centre. Prior to conservation.



Fig 35 Section C-2010 (Gazetteer 2.35) Mart area, centre. After conservation.

5.0 Future Maintenance

Future maintenance of the areas conserved should consist of regular removal of vegetation, at least annually, followed by inspection and localised patch pointing where required, using mortar as developed for the works carried out this year. See Appendix B.

A written record of the inspection should be lodged with the County Council when completed.

6.0 Recommendations for Future Works

It is recommended that subject to agreement by the Steering Committee the following areas be conserved in the 2011 Capital Works Program.

6.1 East Gate (Gazetteer Section 2.27)

The remains of the wall to the north of the site of the east gate is presently hidden from view from Burke Street by a derelict building (belonging to the council). This area of wall requires removal of vegetation, stabilisation, raking out and pointing. In addition the removal of the derelict building would reveal the only major length of the wall that is hidden at present, showing the extent of the walled town when entering from Burke Street.



Fig. 36 (Gazetteer Section 2.27) Wall north of East Gate site.



Fig. 37 View from Burke Street of wall north of east gate site.

6.2 Pierce's Gate (Gazetteer Section 2.30/2.29)



Fig 38 Pierces Gate. (Gazetteer Section 2.30/2.29) Short length of wall not conserved in 2008.

There is a short portion of wall south of Barrack Street that was not conserved in 2008. This area needs vegetation removal, structural assessment and stabilising as necessary, raking out and pointing. The wall head will require flaunching.

6.3 West of North Gate (Gazetteer Section 2.2 and un conserved part of 2.3)

To the west of the North Gate is a length of wall that has not been conserved. This should have vegetation removed, be raked out and pointed. Wall head to be flaunching



Fig. 39 Wall to the west of North Gate north side. (Gazetteer Section 2.2) *Fig. 40 South side. (Gazetteer Section 2.2)*

Note There is a further part not illustrated.

6.4 Watergate. (Gazetteer Section 2.18)

The length of wall to the west of Watergate Street that was partially conserved in 2008, the large breach and the stones lost from close to ground level should be replaced to stabilise the remains of the wall.



Fig. 41 Wall to the west of Watergate Street. (Gazetteer Section 2.18)

6.5 Mart Area Wall and Corner Turret (Gazetteer Sections 2.33 and 2.34)

There remains one length of wall in the Mart area together with the associated Corner Turret that has not been conserved on either side. This as elsewhere should have vegetation removed, be raked out and pointed. Also the Corner Turret entrance door has no lintel, needs stabilising and a grille fitting.

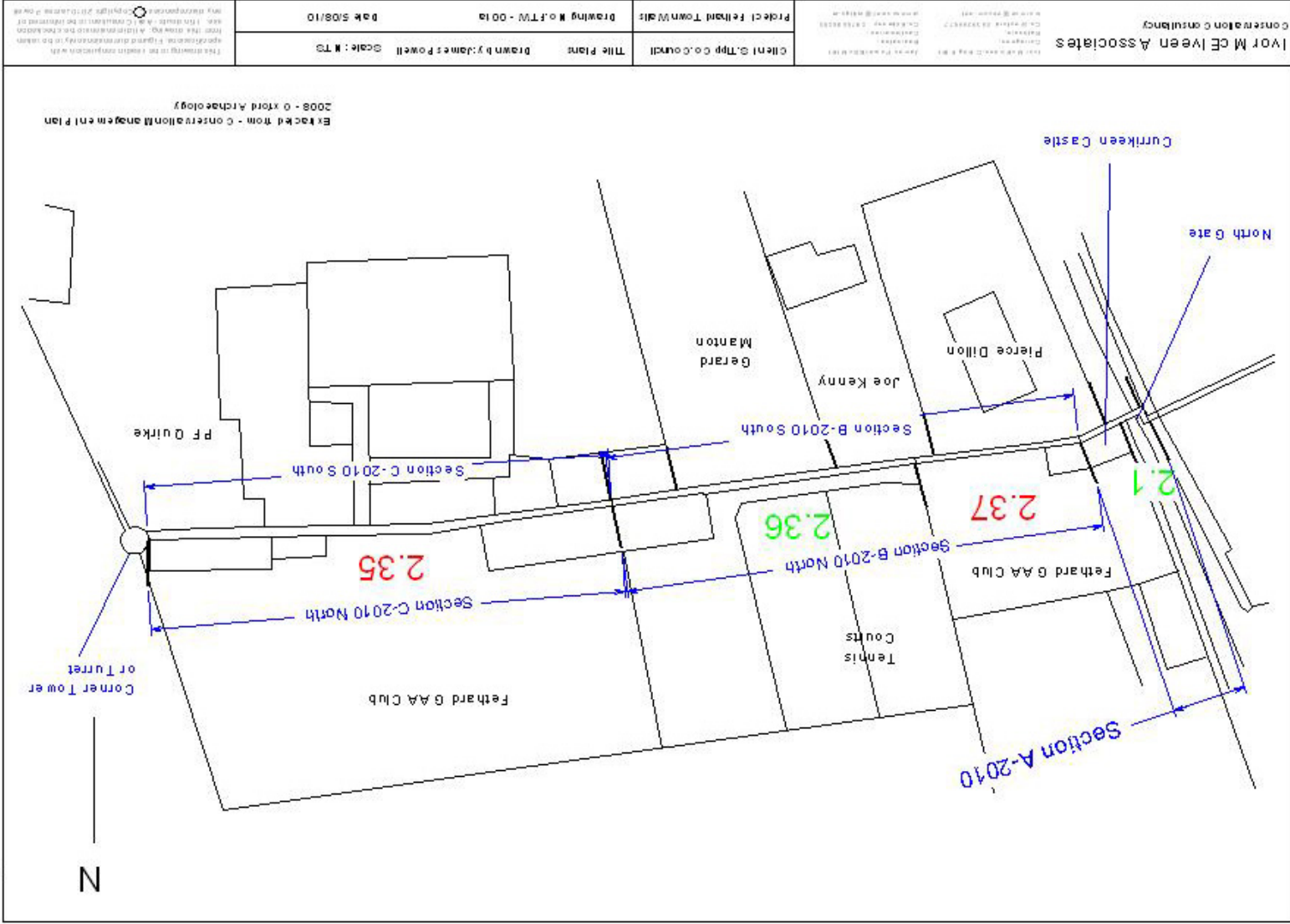


Fig. 42 Mart Area. (Gazetteer Section 2.33)



*Fig. 43 Entrance to Turret
(Gazetteer Section 2.34)*

Ivor McElveen Associates
Conservation Consultants.



Appendix A

Appendix B.

Mortar Composition as used in construction.

Round Tower NHL 3.5 - 1 Part

Wexford Sand – 2 Parts

5mm down, washed sharp well graded silica based estuary Wexford sand, natural forming (not crushed)

Aggregate 10mm – 0.5 parts.

Clonmel stone 7mm natural.

Water – As required to give stiff working.

Appendix C

Ivor McElveen Associates Conservation Consultancy

**Baurnafea,
Castlewarren,
Co.Kilkenny**

**Ivor McElveen BAI MA CEng FIEI
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1st November 2010

Nessa Roach
Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government,
Customs House,
Customs House Quay
Dublin.

Re: Ministerial Consents C000433 and C000434 – Clonmel and Fethard Town Walls

Dear Nessa,

We would like to request permission for a deviation from the Method Statement as supplied with each of the above Ministerial Consents as detailed in the following short report.

It has become clear that in the case of the North West Tower in Clonmel, additional support is needed for the larger of the two ragged opes as mentioned in section 2.1 b)
Equally in Fethard it is felt necessary to support the ragged window ope in the east wall of Currikeen Castle, and a similar system is proposed for both situations.

I hope that the proposal detailed overleaf is acceptable to the Department and that we can proceed as planned.

Best wishes

Ivor McElveen.

**Re. Ministerial Consent No. C000434 Registration No. W86
Clonmel Town Walls.**

Condition c) “It is proposed to treat the ragged opes (as per section 2.1 (b)/ fig 5.of report) on the north west wall by means of pointing the masonry. If on commencement of work a different method of securing the masonry of the opes is found necessary, details should be forwarded to the Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit of the Department for approval.”



Fig 1 Prior to conservation



Fig 2 after pointing and with steel lintel in place

In the Method Statement we stated: ‘There are opes at first floor level in the south west and north west walls where the cut stone reveals have been lost leaving ragged openings liable to further loss of stone. Pointing as required around opes’

However upon closer inspection the stability of the masonry above the right hand opening on the north west wall of the North West Tower was felt to be poor and thus the decision was taken to install a steel lintel with two steel supports with a small area of masonry above in order to support the loose stonework. As can be seen from the enclosed photograph the steel support is very discrete it can also be readily removed and the intervention reversed if necessary.

After consultation with David Sweetman our Architectural Archaeologist, it was felt that the use of steel allowed a clearly modern and yet visually unobtrusive support to be added to the structure so as to stabilise the masonry. If it is considered by the Department that this method of stabilisation is unsuitable it is readily reversible and an alternative method may be substituted.

The Steel has been suitably treated and painted matt black to give maximum longevity with minimal visual intrusion.

Furthermore **Ref. Ministerial Consent No. C000433 Registration No. W85**
Fethard Town Walls.

It is proposed to treat the ragged ope in Currikeen Castle in a similar fashion using discretely placed steel plate and a steel column, painted black. The use of suitably painted steel creates a lintel for the ope in a limited space and the steel column provides support for the block to the right hand side giving an unobtrusive and effective solution. As can be seen from the photo below the previous solution using sawn slate and limestone would potentially create a greater visual impact as the properties of those materials require larger sections to be used. In any case the supporting elements would be recessed from the surface of the stonework to make them less noticeable. It must also be noted that economic constraints have a bearing here and the proposed solution is the only practical solution available.



Fig.3 Currikeen Castle Fethard, initial proposal

No proposal was put forward in the method statement supplied for Ministerial Consent for the stabilisation of this ope.

Ivor McElveen

Ivor McElveen Associates

Appendix D

From: Eamon Cody [mailto:eamonn_cody@environ.ie]
Sent: 08 November 2010 09:49
To: jamespowell@indigo.ie
Subject: Clonmel and Fethard town walls

James

Variations as set out in your e-mail of 1 Nov 2010 in respect of works at above town walls are in order

Regards
Eamon