

Fethard Town Wall Capital Works Programme

Application for funding for Capital Works 2012

SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

March 9, 2012

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Introduction:

Fethard town in County Tipperary SR is of outstanding significance as a medieval defended town with an almost complete circuit of medieval town walls and other medieval buildings remaining intact.

Fethard's historic town walls has seen the benefit of funding from the Heritage Council through the Irish Walled Towns Network with a Conservation and Management Plan prepared for the Walls in 2009 and programmes of conservation based repair works undertaken annually on the town walls from 2007-2010. These works have seen physical and visual condition of the wall improve greatly.

Funding is now being sought to undertake a capital works programme centered on further improving the physical and visual condition of the wall at key locations and centered on promoting an increased appreciation and public awareness of the Fethard Town Wall as a heritage asset.



Pic 1: Repaired Section of Fethard Town Walls at Watergate, Fethard.

Proposal

The areas proposed for funding are set out as follows:

1. Works at site of East Gate (Burke Street), Fethard.
2. Marking of line of Wall in Public Roadway and where buried and erection of explanatory signage.
3. Further Works West of the North Gate.
4. Works at site of Southern Gate (Watergate), Fethard.
5. Further Works at the Mart Site

The works are described in the following subsections. A map showing the location of the works is provided in Appendix A. Appendix B sets out the relevant extracts from the Fethard Town Wall Conservation & Management Plan where they relate to the works proposed. Key references are highlighted.

1. Works at Site of East Gate (Burke Street), Fethard.

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 South Tipperary County Council). This area of wall requires removal of vegetation, stabilisation, raking out and pointing. In addition the removal of the derelict building façade and replacement with an appropriate boundary 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.

The area of wall presently hidden from view underwent a comprehensive repair programme in 2009.

The existing building façade that obstructs views of the town wall is in a visually poor condition and its structural stability is uncertain. The removal of the façade and the replacement of an appropriate boundary treatment that will allow views through to the town wall will visually enhance the site and defer positively to the importance of the wall in the towns public realm.

This proposal will be complimented with the making of the line of the wall in the street at this location. A signage board can be erected explaining the relevance of the road markings, and highlighting the circuit of the wall and the site of the East Gate.

The area to the rear of the façade is currently unused grassland. This area can be landscaped and maintained as a compliment to the setting of the town wall. This landscaping work can be undertaken as a community initiative.



Pic 2: Façade and Wall Behind at Burke Street. Removal of façade will open town wall to public view.



Pic 3: Wall hidden from view at Burke Street.

2. Marking of line of Wall in Public Roadway and where buried and erection of explanatory signage

Marking the Line of the Wall in the Public Roadway and erection of associated marker signage is to be based on similar such projects undertaken in Dublin City, Limerick City and Waterford City. Marker signage can be erected freestanding on the footpath or inset into the public footpath.

The aim is to identify the buried line of the Town Wall and signify the entrances to the historic walled town. This proposal will compliment the proposed works to the North Gate, East Gate, and Watergate.



Pic 4: Example of wall marking in public street.



Pic 5: Burke Street Approach. Town Wall Behind Façade. Line of Wall to be Marked in Road and Footpath to signify entry to historic walled town. Works will open wall to view on approach to town.



Pic 6: Watergate. Line of wall to be marked in roadway to signify historic southern entrance to town. Red line denotes proposed marking line of wall.



Pic 7: West Gate. Line of wall to be Marked in roadway to indicate historic entrance to town. Red line denotes proposed marking line of wall.



Pic 8: Barrack St. Line of wall to be Marked in roadway to indicate historic entrance to town

3. Further Works West of the North Gate.

To the west of the North Gate is a length of wall that has not been subject to any conservation works. This detracts visually from the comprehensive programme of repair works undertaken on the North gate between 2008-2010.

It is proposed that this section of the wall have vegetation removed, be raked out and pointed. Wall head to be flanchued. This proposal will enhance the one remaining upstanding historic gate to the town.



Pic 9: Wall West of North Gate Inside face.



Pic 10: Wall West of North Gate Outside face.

4. Works at site of Southern Gate (Watergate), Fethard

It was identified in the Completion Report on the 2009 Fethard Town Wall Capital Works Programme prepared by Carrig Conservation that the section of the Town Wall to the west of Watergate is in poor condition and requires consolidation and repair. It was further identified in the Completion Report on the 2010 Fethard Town Wall Capital Works Programme prepared by Ivor McElveen & Associates Conservation Consultants that the large breach and the stones lost from close to ground level should be replaced to stabilise the remains of this section of the town wall.

This outer and inner face of this section of the town wall subject to conservation works in 2007. Since then significant overgrowth and debris and a lean to shed have been removed from the outer face of the wall and the area has been landscaped. These works have revealed a section of wall that was previously hidden from.

The proposed works seek to further enhance this key historic gate to Fethard.



Pic 11. Showing exposed wall at Watergate with evident breach. Note grassed area to fore of wall.

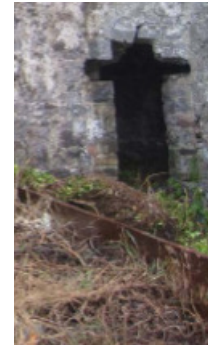


Pic 12. Showing site of wall Watergate with lean to structure obscuring town wall.

5. Further Works at the Mart Site

It was identified in the Completion Report on the 2010 Fethard Town Wall Capital Works Programme prepared by Ivor McElveen & Associates Conservation Consultants that further works be undertaken on the wall at the Mart Site.

The completion report identifies that there remains one length of wall in the Mart area together with the associated Corner Turret that has not been conserved on either side. It is proposed that this section of wall have vegetation removed, be raked out and pointed. Also the Corner Turret entrance door has no lintel, needs stabilising and a grille fitting.



Pic 12 & 13: Section of wall at Mart Site and entrance to turret.

Costings and Methodology

The works programme, save the proposed works at Pierce's Gate, has been costed by Ivor McElveen Conservation Consultant and a cost breakdown for the work as follows:

- Works at East Gate €10,700 ex VAT
- Works at Watergate (Jimmy Ryan's) €9,700 ex VAT
- Marking of line of wall in road and signage €9,500 ex VAT
- Further works at Mart Site €16,600 ex VAT
- Further works to wall west of North Gate €11,700 ex VAT

Although the costings are provisional same provide an indicative cost breakdown of the proposed work programme.

The Costings and Methodology for the proposed works prepared by Ivor McElveen Conservation Consultants is attached separately.

Conclusion

This grant application is made to the Heritage Council for funding for works under the Irish Walled Town Networks Capital Grant Scheme.

It is concluded that the works proposed would build on previous capital works programmes undertaken from 2007-2010, will physically and visually enhance key sections of the town wall, will promote an increased awareness and appreciation of the town wall as a heritage asset and will further consolidate the importance of the town wall within Fethard's public realm.

This grant application is being made by South Tipperary County Council in conjunction with the Fethard Town Wall Steering Committee.

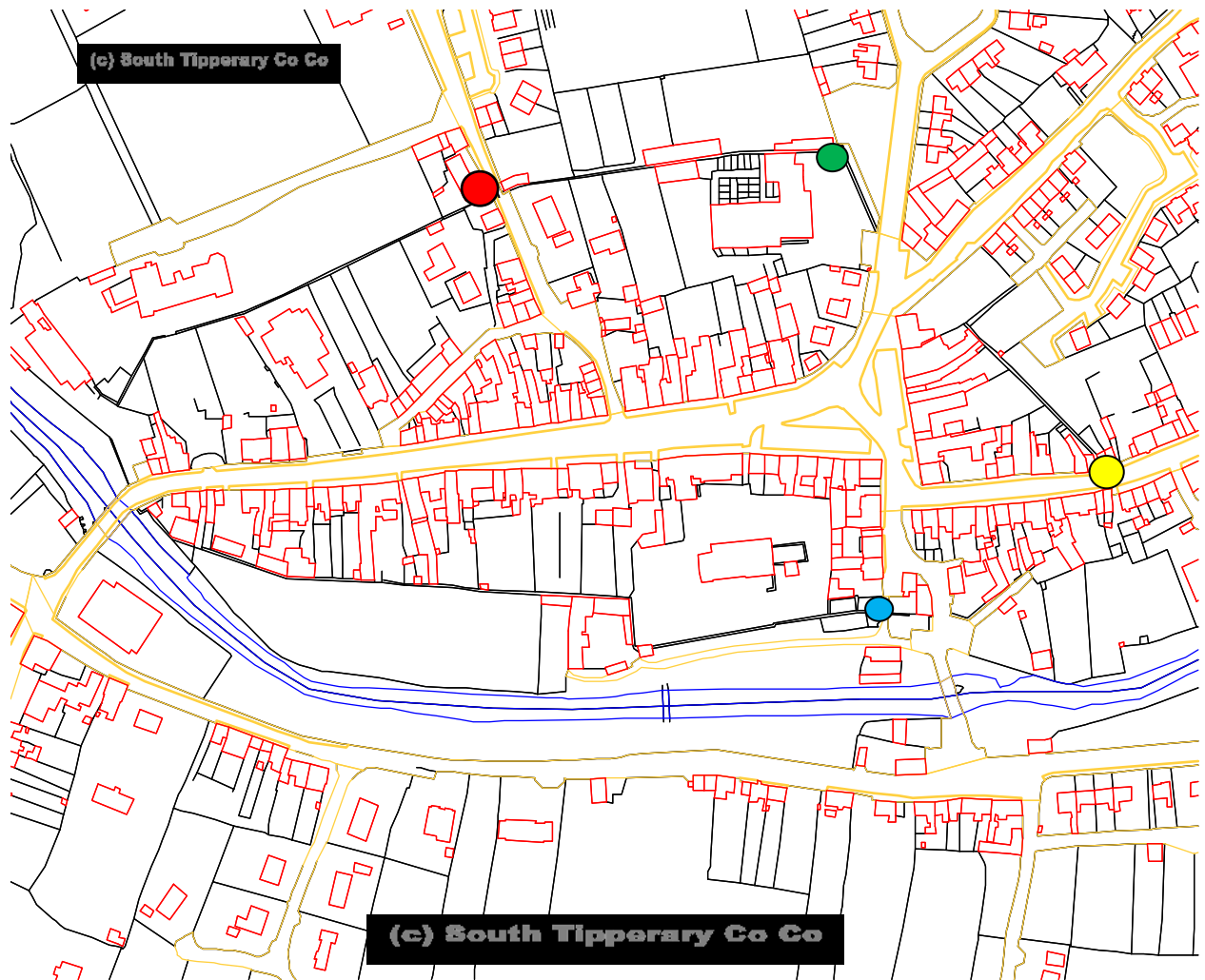
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Appendices

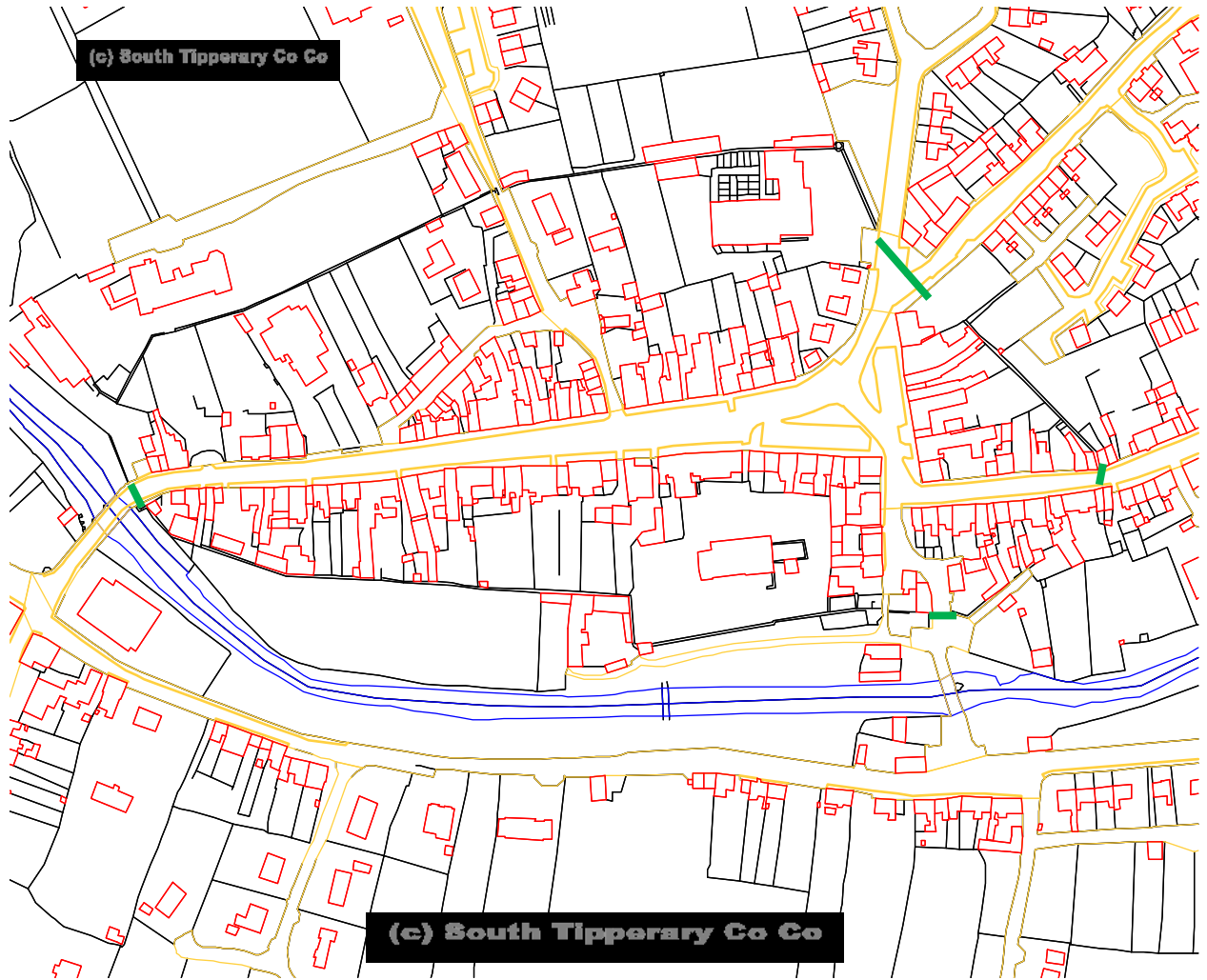
- Appendix A- Map of location of proposed works
- Appendix B – relevant Extracts from the Fethard Town Wall Conservation & Management Plan 2008.

Appendix A- Map of works



Area for Wall repair:

- Wategate ●
- Burke St ●
- North Gate ●
- Mart Site ●



Area where line of wall to be marked in public roadway demarcated by 

**Appendix B-
RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM THE FETHARD TOWN WALLS CONSERVATION &
MANAGEMENT PLAN 2008, GAZETTEER.**

Areas relevant to the proposed works highlighted.

Wall West of Watergate, Map Ref 2.18

Condition

Exterior - very poor

Condition (exterior) - Visibility of this section of wall is obscured by dilapidated sheds, enclosing walls and large amounts of rubbish. The walls themselves are in a poor state and are in danger from tree roots growing at the base. There are large cavities at the base of the wall almost all the way across and an access way has been knocked through in the centre. To the right of this the lower part of the wall has fallen away to such an extent that the facing on the other side is exposed. The top of this wall has been partially rebuilt to form a gable for the sheds and it appears to be very structurally unsound and in need of urgent repair. The section of wall to the left of the access way has also been partially rebuilt at the top but this also is in poor condition and much of it has crumbled away.

Interior – poor

Condition (interior) - The left side of this wall has been built up a further 2m to form part of a gable for dilapidated out-buildings which obscure its visibility from outside. Access to this part of the wall is very much restricted by large piles of house-hold rubbish which have been dumped against it. The wall in the interior of the building has been lime-washed but it is in questionable condition and may need to be re-pointed. The part of the wall outside this building is in poor condition as all of the facing has fallen away. There is a tree growing directly out of the wall and there are concrete breeze blocks and other debris piled against the bottom. The wall has been knocked through in the centre to provide access to the back yard of the property. On the right side of this access-way, there is a tree growing against the base of the wall and it is likely that its roots are affecting the buried part of the wall. The top of the wall appears to have been topped with concrete at some point but most of this has fallen away along with some of the stones. There is a small window feature at the top of the wall which is at risk from ivy growth. There is an old oil tank and a large pile of vegetation against the wall at the right side and there is a cavity in the wall where the dividing wall abuts it. It is very likely that there is a large amount of stones from the wall lost in the debris on the property and a careful investigation may be necessary during any future clean-up of the area.

Issues/vulnerability

- The condition of the exposed ends of the walls either side of the gap and the north and south faces should be assessed and minimal repair works carried out as necessary. These should maintain the integrity of the Medieval structure.

- If the land to the south of this section of wall was tidied and cleared the southern town wall could be viewed in its entirety from the south. The land is in private ownership therefore the owner's co-operation would be required.
- Vehicles are being driven and parked on the grassy area to the south of the town wall and consideration could be given to physically restricting vehicular access of the road in the 2.18 area.
- Continued commitment to the maintenance of the walls.
- A walled yard and building to the south of 2.18 at the river's edge is currently disused and in private ownership. Apart from this yard the area south of the wall is open space and a clear view of the town walls from the south and medieval bridge is potentially available, if this land was dedicated to public open space.
- The repair of this wall, and closing of the breach, together with the recreation of the wall to the west could be part of a major enhancement of this area, and completing the previous phase of restoration along the south walls. The metal shed leaning against the wall should be removed.

Watergate and Watergate Bridge, Map Ref 2.19

Description [Exterior Fig 20]

There are now no standing remains of Water Gate but Watergate Bridge led to it and brought traffic across the River Clashawley from the South. There was possibly also a bastion in this area of the town (see 2.20).

Watergate Bridge is a stone bridge with four arches. The two northern arches are possibly late medieval and those to the south of 18th to 19th century date (O'Keeffe 1995, 72)

Status

Buried remains of the Water Gate. Standing medieval and post-medieval remains contained in the present bridge.

Significance

The Water Gate was one of the main entrances of the Medieval walled town. Together with the Bridge it ensured that people coming across the river were directed towards a certain point in the town walls which was a focus for economic and social activities as well as defence.

Condition

Uncertain

Issues/vulnerability

- Watergate Bridge is potentially at risk from unsympathetic repairs and any works carried out to it should include a programme of archaeological building recording.
- The buried remains of the Water Gate are vulnerable to destruction from any development or groundworks for services and road works in this area.
- Any works in and around the site of the Water Gate and Watergate Bridge should

include a programme of archaeological excavation and recording.

- The area of the Water Gate may be investigated by non-intrusive archaeological investigation. The site could then be identified to enable visitors to appreciate the size and location and its relationship with the Bridge.
- There are grassed areas near the Water Gate site which could provide a location for an explanatory information board, or similar information media.

Site of East Gate Map Ref 2.26

Description

The line of the town wall at the south-east corner of the town leads to the south side of Gen. Thomas F. Burke Street. A further line of the wall runs from the north side of the same street. At this point there is also a change in the line of the street which turns slightly northwards. It was also noted by O’Keeffe that there is a change in ground level at this point which rises towards the town (O’Keeffe 1997, 27). This all suggests that this is the site of the East Gate of the town.

Buried remains in the road. The road is in the ownership of South Tipperary County Council.

Significance

1. The East Gate was one of the entrances into the medieval town and would have been the access used by pedestrians and traffic from the east.
2. The road to the east also leads to the Augustinian Friary, its church is known to have been built in the 14th century, suggesting that this town entrance was in existence by then.

Condition

Uncertain.

Issues/vulnerability

- Archaeological excavation of the site would enable the extent of any remains to be discovered and investigated to obtain information about the East Gate.
- The site is vulnerable to damage or destruction by services and roadworks and future development.
- Once the precise location of the remains is known, action could then be directed towards their preservation.
- The site is readily accessible by the public.
- The former location of the East Gate could be marked out on the surface of the road.
- Information about the East Gate could be incorporated in a Town Guide.

Wall to North of Burke Street, Map Ref 2.27

Condition

Exterior – Fair

This section of walls forms the gable wall of a ruin facing onto Burke Street and could possibly have been part of a gatehouse in the past. Much of the facing has been knocked away to form two fireplaces and a chimney which was built in red brick. Large areas of the wall are still obscured by plaster and there is a wood and plaster unit built into at the base next to the fireplace. Large cavities in the wall are visible around these fireplaces. A section of the wall at the base has been rebuilt with concrete breeze blocks. The ground in this area is very uneven and dangerous with piles of debris and an open sewer. Clearance of this area and an archaeological investigation may be necessary.

Issues/vulnerability

- The alterations caused by the house which was built onto the eastern (external) side of the wall need to be rectified.
- The land on the external side of the wall is in County Council ownership and so potentially accessible by the public.
- The ground to the exterior of the wall needs to be cleared of rubbish.
- This section of wall, along with the next section (2.28), could be opened to the public so that the full extent of the remains of the eastern wall can be viewed.
- The wall could be further revealed by removal of plaster and careful repointing.

Site of Pierce's Gate, Map Ref 2.31

Description

There are no existing standing remains of Pierce's Gate however there may be buried evidence of the Gate under Barrack Street.

Status

Buried remains. Site of lost Town Gate. The land is in the ownership of South Tipperary County Council.

Significance

Pierce's Gate was one of two northern entrances into the Medieval Town (the early northwestern gate was superseded by the current North Gate).

Condition

Uncertain

Issues/vulnerability

- As the land is a road in public ownership, public access is available and archaeological investigation could take place to determine the location and condition of the remains.
- The buried remains are vulnerable to destruction from services and roadworks and any future development.
- Health and Safety is an issue in respect of Visitors as the road is at present in constant use.
- The location of Pierce's Gate and the line of the Town Wall could be marked out on the

road surface for Visitors to view, and further information could be provided in a leaflet or nearby information board and could be included as a location in a Town Walk.

- This feature should be dealt with in conjunction with 2.32.

East Wall, North of Barrack Street, Map Ref 2.32

Significance

This section of wall was the junction between the older Town Wall and the 16th to 17th century wall, which encompassed the extension of Fethard to the north (O’Keeffe 1997, 17). It also joined with Pierce’s Gate.

Further investigation of this section could provide information of important transitions of the Town.

Condition

Uncertain, but remains likely to survive.

Issues/vulnerability

- As the land is a road in public ownership, public access is available and archaeological investigation could take place to determine the location and condition of the remains.
- The buried remains are vulnerable to destruction from roadworks and any future development.
- Health and Safety is an issue in respect of Visitors as the road is at present in constant use.

• The location of the line of the Town Wall and Pierce’s Gate could be marked out on the road surface for Visitors to view, and further information could be provided in a leaflet or nearby information board and could be included as a location in a Town Walk.

- This feature should be dealt with in conjunction with 2.31.

Mart Site, Map Ref 2.33

Status

Standing remains. The land is in the ownership of the GAA (outside the walls) and P.F. Quirke (within the walls).

Significance

Part of a near-complete circuit of medieval town walls of Fethard, adjoining the corner town, and adjacent to the site of an important town house and its garden.

Condition

Reasonable externally, ivy covered internally.

Issues/vulnerability

- A number of trees have been planted along the exterior of the town wall and unfortunately as the roots of these grow towards the wall they will undermine and

damage it. The trees need to be removed, perhaps replaced with a flowerbed.

- The Mart is still in use but outside the opening hours of the Mart the area is locked. It is not open to the public and the interior of the town wall is not generally accessible.

Wall West of North Gate, Map Ref 2.02

Status

Standing remains. Land in the ownership of Jim McGrath (outside the wall) and Chris Nevin (within the wall).

Significance

Part of a near-complete circuit of medieval town walls of Fethard.

Condition

Interior – fair.

There is a large gap in the wall between the properties of Olwyn Wall and Chris Nevin. On Olwyn Wall's property, there is a large cement building built against the wall which is likely to be keeping it steady. Immediately to the right of this, the wall has fallen away exposing the rubble interior and a concrete wall has been built against it and in line with the missing section.

Issues/vulnerability

- The vegetation and trees growing on the wall need to be identified and the growth of any species destructive to the wall should be stopped. All removal of vegetation and roots should be carried out without causing further damage to the wall.
- The breach in the wall which has been filled using breeze blocks provides the potential for a further access through the wall into the town by their removal. As the land is in private ownership permission for such access would need to be obtained.

Lost Wall & River Side Wall, Map Ref 2.05

Status

Lost wall in former tanyard and low riverside wall. Land is in the ownership of Fethard Community Council (yard within riverside wall) and the riparian owner of River Clashawley (river banks outside riverside wall).

Significance

There is the potential to uncover the hidden remains of the original town wall. It is very significant as this area of the town would have been one of the main entrances to the medieval Town, the west gate, and would have been the approach to the town from both south and west.

Condition

There are no standing remains of the medieval town wall. The southern part of the modern riverside wall probably marks the line of the wall.

Issues/vulnerability

- Any permission for development should be conditional upon an archaeological investigation and recording of the site.
- The site is currently derelict and future development is likely which would pose a threat to buried remains of the wall.
- Traffic is also a potential danger to visitors entering the site as there is no footpath.
- Any unidentified buried remains would be vulnerable to indiscriminate groundworks.
- This site is owned by the Community Council and is adjacent to the public open space south of the town. It has potential for public display of any excavated archaeological remains of the town walls which are exposed in this area.
- The possibility of marking out the line of the wall on the road and footpath surfaces and inclusion of an information board could be considered.
- Any work carried out on this site in respect of public heritage information should also consider the adjoining lost wall to the north of Madam Castle.

Madam Castle Gate Tower, Map Ref 2.06. Status

Significance

Part of a gate in the near-complete circuit of medieval town walls of Fethard. This building is of considerable significance as it provides an example of one of the entrances to the medieval town, the only other example is that at the north gate. Madam's Castle is unique being the only surviving Fethard river gate. There is the potential to uncover buried remains of the demolished part of the castle and the medieval bridge.

Condition

The standing remains are in reasonable condition.

Issues/vulnerability

- Access is restricted by a garage or fuel store built against the Castle remains.
- In its present form the garage detracts from the Castle and the building should be archaeologically assessed to identify its origin with a view to removal or alteration.
- Any unidentified buried remains would be vulnerable to indiscriminate groundworks.
- The building is vulnerable to the heavy traffic which continually uses the Bridge.
- The building requires continuing maintenance to preserve its structure.
- Access to this feature is restricted by the heavy traffic which poses a danger to visitors and to the Castle.
- This site is owned by the Community Council and is adjacent to the public open space south of the town. It has potential for public display of any excavated archaeological remains of the town walls which are exposed in this area.
- Any work carried out on this site in respect of public heritage information should also consider the adjoining lost wall to the north of Madam Bridge.