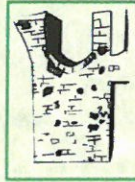


**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
AT HEADFORD ROAD,
CASTLEGAR,
CO. GALWAY.**



Arch Consultancy Ltd.
Professional Archaeological Services

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**Martin Fitzpatrick M.A.
October 2005**

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Client: Galway City Council, College road, Galway.

Statutory Bodies: National Monuments Division, Department of Environment
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Galway City Council.

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II ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS USED IN TEXT

Barony, Parish, Townland These terms refer to land divisions in Ireland. The barony is the largest land division in a county, which is formed from a number of parishes. These parishes are in turn made up of several townlands, which are the smallest land division in the country. The origins of these divisions are believed to be in the Early Medieval/Christian period (AD500-AD1000), or may date earlier in the Iron Age (500BC-AD500).

First Edition This relates to editions of the OS 6 inch maps for County Galway. The first edition map completed for the area dates to the early 1840s and this is referred to in the text as the "first edition".

GA - This number is the number of the site on the SMR/RMP map (see below). It begins with the county code, here GA for Galway, the 6-inch sheet number, followed by the number of the archaeological site.

M Metres, all dimensions are given in metres or part of a metre
OS Ordnance Survey

RMP Record of Monuments and Places. A record on which all known archaeological sites are marked and listed in an accompanying inventory. This resource is based on all publicly available material and cartographic sources and is read in conjunction with constraint maps. The RMP records known recorded monuments and the sites of such monuments (if the monument no longer survives).

Sheet This relates to the six-inch map for county Galway, which are divided into sheets. This project is concerned with sheet number 82.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The following report was compiled at the request of Galway City Council, College Road Galway and involves a general archaeological assessment of a portion of land in the townland of Castlegar on the outskirts of Galway City. The property which is owned by Galway City Council will be developed in the near future however the exact details of nature and extent of the development proposed is not known at this stage.

1.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BRIEF

The writer was contacted by Galway City Council to undertake an archaeological study of the proposed development at Headford Road, Castlegar to the N of Galway city. This report details the archaeological significance of the area in general and in particular the area of the proposed development.

The following items will be addressed by the archaeological assessment:

1) The nature, extent and locations of archaeological material on the site of the proposed development.

2) Where archaeological material is shown to be present, archaeological recommendations will be included within the report highlighting the potential impact of the proposed development on the archaeology within the site.

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

The survey consisted of the following three phases:

Phase One: Paper Survey

- This involved the research of relevant files and the study of historical references which are housed in the Office of Public Works, 51 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.
- Cartographic sources such as the Ordnance Survey Maps of 1837 and 1937 and earlier antiquarian maps of the area were examined.
- The Topographical files of the relevant townlands in the National Museum of Ireland were examined with particular attention paid to stray finds.

Phase Two:

The second phase consisted of a detailed field inspection of the entire area of the proposed development. This allowed the opportunity of first hand observation of the terrain, which can often result in the discovery of hitherto unrecorded sites and finds.

Phase Three:

Phase three involved the collation and assessment of the material and the production of a report on the conclusions. This includes the potential impact on any archaeological features in the general environs of the proposed development. Hitherto unrecorded sites are often discovered in the course of fieldwalking. Archaeological monuments in the adjoining townlands of the sites were recorded so as to understand the type of archaeological landscape.

1.4 LOCATIONAL DETAILS

Townlands Castlegar
Parish St Nicholas
Barony Galway
O.S. 6" Sheet No. 82

2. GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The development of Galway City and its history is best understood in terms of its geographical location and its prominence in the medieval and post medieval periods was a result of the ability of merchants to capitalise on its natural setting. Galway is located at the northern shore of the bay at the mouth of a short river which was anciently known as Gailleamh but is now known as the River Corrib. High natural ridges and the course of the river dictated the location of Galway as a settlement. The shallow valley between the northern ridge and Terryland formerly contained a tract of wet, marshy ground and bog that extended eastwards from the river towards the townlands of Castlegar and Ballindooly. Before the construction of an embankment along its western edge in the early 19th century (which gave its name to the Dyke Road), this expanse was drained by the Terryland River which at its eastern end enters a swallow hole – Poll an Mhuirín) to exit into the sea near Orammore.

3. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

Very little is known about the early settlers in the Castlegar area as there are reasonably few traces of their existence surviving above the ground. The only pre-Christian sites in the area are the megalithic tomb sites at Mionlach and the Ballybrit racecourse.

Evidence of Mesolithic habitation in County Galway is scarce however there have been some notable discoveries. Mr. Jim Higgins and Michael Gibbons uncovered a late Mesolithic presence near the junction of High Street and Cross Street while stone artifacts of the late Mesolithic and early Neolithic were found only a few miles away near Menlough Graveyard, between Menlough wood and Terryland castle during the late 1970s” (Spellissy, 1999, 29).

After the Anglo-Norman invasion Richard de-Burgo obtained a grant of the Western kingdom of Ireland which comprised of the province of Connacht and the county of Clare. De Burgo kept the lands of Galway and Mayo and granted lands elsewhere in

the kingdom to colonies of Welshmen, Flemings as well as other foreigners, however these settlers did not stay long and soon these areas returned to living by the Gaelic order. The first recorded invasion in the Castlegar parish took place in 1256 when Walter de Burgo Lord of Connacht marched against Roderick O'Flaherty whom he defeated at Tirellan castle. In January 1296 Hugh Rua O'Donnell led an army of Northern Irish southwards towards Galway town. Having failed to take the town his army returned northwards through Castlegar pillaging its inhabitants and leaving many townlands levelled to the ground (O'Laoi, P. 1996 History of Castlegar Parish. Galway, P17 – 18)

After the English civil war fears that the French and Spanish armies would use Ireland as a base from which to attack Britain led to the arrival of Oliver Cromwell who decided to attack the island and subdue its people. The Earl of Clanrickard attempted to defend the city of Galway from the invading Cromwellites by stepping up fortification around the city and in surrounding townlands and quartered many soldiers from Castlegar. Cromwell's Lieutenant in the North Coote began to move his troops South in the summer of 1651 capturing Athenry, Loughrea, Portumna and Athlone. He then moved westward intent on taking Galway town. The army of Clanrickard and the Army of Coote's Cromwellites stationed themselves around the parish of Castlegar as they maneuvered into position for the battle. The castle at Mionlach was soon taken by the invading force and the castle at Tirellan was abandoned when recruits from Cromwell's southern Lieutenant Ireton arrived to aid the advance. This led to a siege of the walled town of Galway which lasted from August 1651 to April 1652. Fears that the Galway resistance could resurface, aided by the Spanish, Cromwell decided that the area should be filled with loyal Cromwellites, thus Castlegar was planted with English Protestant planters. The area remained largely devastated until the restoration of Charles II to the English crown. He reintroduced many of the benefits the town and environs had enjoyed in the time preceding the Cromwellian siege. These advantages however did not come into effect in many areas until 1685 when James II succeeded Charles II. This year marked the return of Clanrickard as Governor and a catholic as Mayor of the town. In 1691 the town was again attacked, this time it was the army of the Protestant King William, which was at this point being led by General Ginkle. The Williamite Army marched from Aughrim through Castlegar to attack the town and returned through the parish after

taking the city sometime later. (O'Laoi, P. 1996 History of Castlegar Parish. Galway, P 18-20)

The name Castlegar is derived from Caislean Ghearr, the short castle. The ruins of the former tower house are located on a small road previously known as bothrin na-h-Oiste (or Bothrin an Coiste) which skirts an area of low-lying land which was formerly a lake. It was constructed by the Clanricarde de Burgos sometime before they moved their principal residence to Portumna. The tower house was constructed, like that of Ballindooly to the NW, to dominate the routes by water and land into Galway City. The building is located on a raised platform overlooking the headwaters of Terryland River. The building was in existence in 1574 when it was in the possession of 'Rolland Skeret' (Nolan 1901,115). The structure is poorly preserved with no traces of the SE and SW walls surviving above ground level. The plan of the tower house was similar to that of most 15th-16th century tower houses in County Galway and comprised of a main chamber and subsidiary chamber at each level except the top which may have been one large chamber (Spellissy, 1999, 29).

4. PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK IN THE AREA.

In 1997 archaeological testing was undertaken in the field across the road from Castlegar castle. The archaeological predevelopment testing was undertaken by Mr. Jim Higgins, 18 College Road, Galway (Licence No. 97E0341). Three trenches were excavated in the course of testing with no archaeological features uncovered in the course of testing (Bennett, 1998, 64). Archaeological monitoring of the Terryland River Drainage Scheme in the townlands of Ballinifoile, Glenanail and Castlegar was undertaken by Mr. Billy Quinn in 2000 (License No. 00E0144) with no archaeological features uncovered (Bennett, 2001, 127). Monitoring of the laying of a pipeline in the area of Coolagh, Castlegar, Ballybrit, Parkmore, Cappanabornia, Glenanail and Ballybaan Beg was undertaken by Mr. Richard Crumlish in 2001 (License 01E0992) and revealed no archaeological features (Bennett, 2002, 148).

5. RECORDED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The following archaeological monuments in the surrounding countryside are included to highlight the type of sites which survive in the general area of the residential development site. It should be stressed that none of these monuments are directly affected by the development.

Townland	Site Type	SMR
Coolagh	Unclassified Earthwork	82:031

COOLAGH

SMR GA 82:031

Location Details

Classification: Unclassified Earthwork
OS Sheet: 82
Plan: 10
Trace: 6

National Grid Ref: 13045 22830

Site Description:

Initially thought to have been an archaeological monument subsequent examination has meant that this site is of no archaeological significance.

6. RECORDED ARTEFACTS IN THE VICINITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT.

The following archaeological artefacts are included to highlight the type of archaeological activity in the area and the importance of archaeological monitoring as stray finds are frequently found in the course of monitoring of groundworks. A study of the topographical files in the National Museum of Ireland yielded the following archaeological artefacts:

LIST OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRAY FINDS

Stone axehead, found at Galway. *Cat. Coll. Crofton Croker* (1854), p.10: lot 52.
Three polished stone axeheads. *From Galway. NMI 1930:76-8.*
Flat bronze axehead. *From Galway. NMI W. 89.*
Two bronze axeheads. *From Galway. NMI W3, F399, F400.*
Bronze dagger. *From Galway. BM:WG 1603.*
Bronze spearhead. *From Galway. Cat. Coll. Crofton Croker* (1854), p.12: lot 201.
Two bronze socketed axeheads. *From Galway. NMI 1937: 3673-4.*
Iron axehead. *From River Corrib. NMI: WK. 21.*
Two iron swords, spearhead and pike. *From River Corrib. NMI WK. 24; F502; F503; F501.*
Iron pike-head. *From River Corrib. NMI WK. 39.*
Coin hoard found at the Court House. *NMI 2196-2203.*

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7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

The proposed development site at Castlegar, Co. Galway is located on the W side of the Galway-Headford roadway and incorporates seven fields of mixed grassland and scrub (Fig. 4). The property rises sharply from E to W with the W end of the site having commanding views over the surrounding countryside especially to the E (plate No. 2). The site is bordered on all sides by limestone fieldwalls which are poorly preserved and partially overgrown with vegetation. The property is bordered by the townland boundary between Castlegar and Ballindooly in the N and the Castlegar-Coolagh townland boundary in the W. Dense vegetation and scrub predominate in the E end of the site (Plate No. 3).



Plate No. 1: General view of the E end of site from the NE.

A comparison of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of the area and subsequent editions indicates that the field system layout has changed considerably since the 19th century with the present property having considerably more divisions (Fig. 4). The first edition Ordnance Survey map also indicates a possible circular feature to the W of the development site in the adjoining townland of Coolagh (Fig. 2). This feature is also indicated on the Sites and Monuments Record for County Galway (Fig. 3) where

it is recorded as an unclassified enclosure (GA82:031). The files of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland and the published Archaeological Inventory of Galway, Vol. 1 both conclude that this does not represent an archaeological monument.



Plate No. 2: General view to the E from the W end of the site.

The walkover survey of the proposed development was incomplete due to the dense vegetation and scrub in the E of the site (Plate No. 3). The survey of the remainder of the site revealed no features of archaeological significance. In the E of the site a possible cairn feature was located in an area of scrubland. The feature consisted of a large pile of stones which was partly overgrown (Plate No. 4) and may represent an archaeological monument. It is recommended that vegetation in this end of the site be removed or cut back to enable a complete survey of this area.



Plate No. 3: Detail of scrub in the W of the site



Plate No. 4: Possible cairn feature in the W of site.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

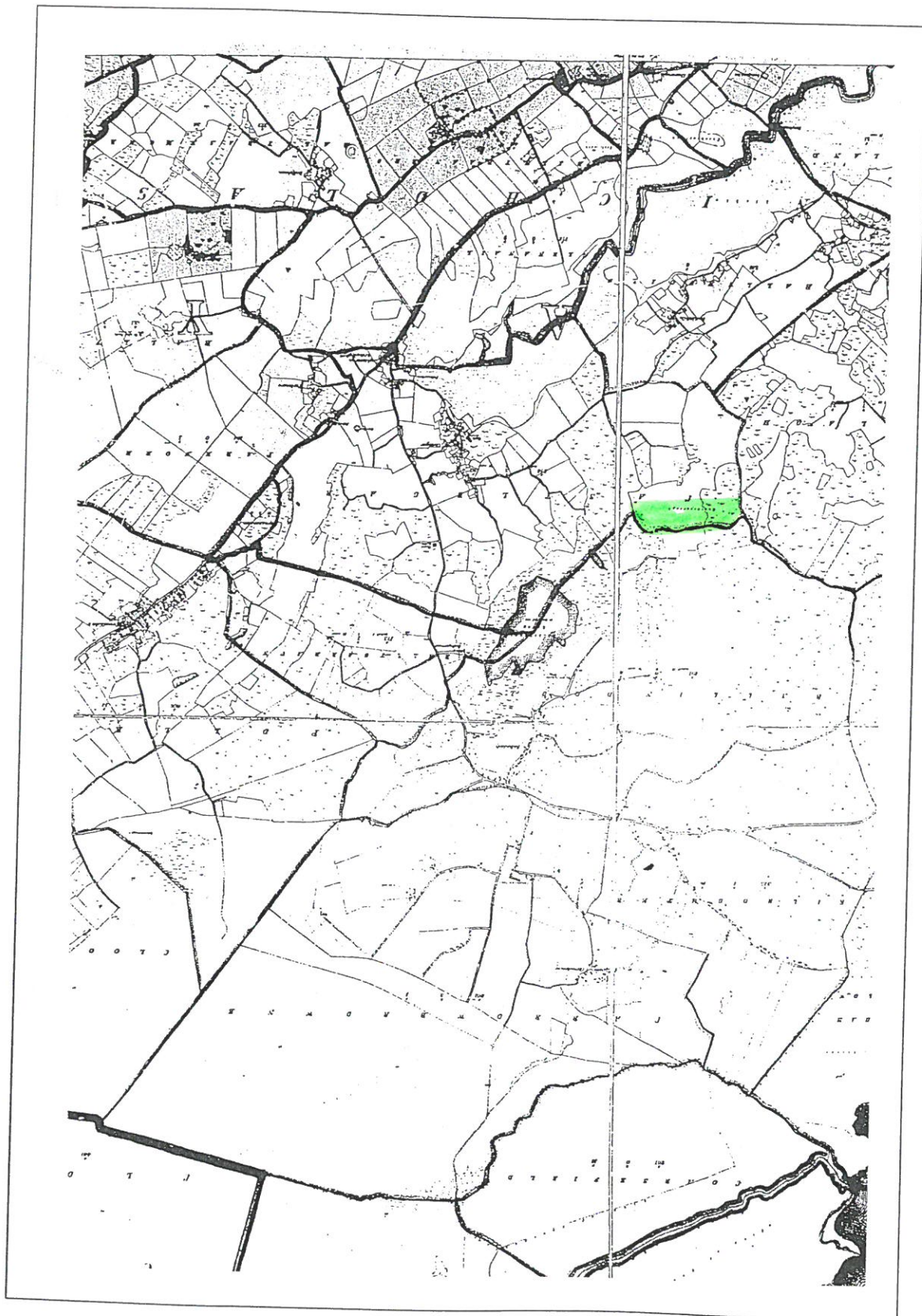
The archaeological assessment at Castlegar found that the property consists of a rectangular tract of land which rises sharply from E to W. The site is located in an archaeological landscape with Ballindooly tower house located 800m to the NE. The walkover survey was restricted to four fifths of the site with dense scrubland in the upper fifth preventing access. No features of archaeological significance were noted in the areas where vegetation was sparse.

A possible archaeological feature was noted in the area of scrub where access was possible. This consisted of a large pile of stones which may represent a cairn feature (Plate No. 4). Its upland location is typical of this monument type and it is recommended that the E end of the site and most especially the area in the vicinity of this possible monument should be cleared of scrub to enable a more thorough examination. The cutting back of vegetation in this area will enable the archaeologist to examine the cairn and surrounding area. The vegetation should not be cleared by a large bulldozer or mechanical excavator as this is likely to remove sub-surface features of archaeological significance which may survive in this area. The clearing of scrub should be undertaken well in advance of any development at this site to allow sufficient time for any archaeology to be resolved.

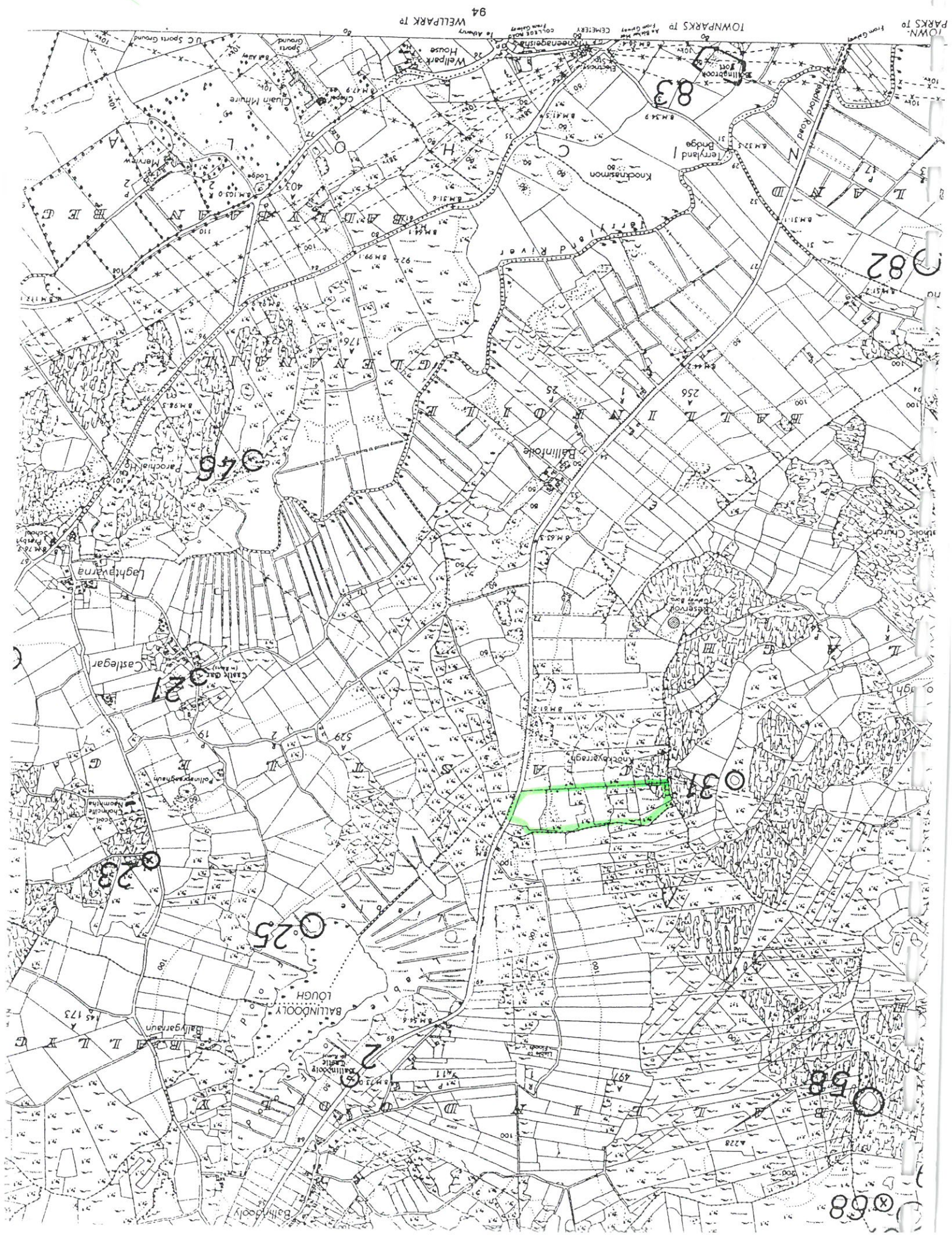
Please Note: Any recommendations made in this report are subject to ratification from the National Monuments Division, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

This is a detailed topographical map of the Galway region in Ireland. The map shows the city of Galway, including the city center, the harbor, and the surrounding areas. Key locations marked include Salthill, Ballycroy, Ballyvaughan, and the surrounding hills and valleys. The map includes numerous place names in both Irish and English, as well as geographical features like hills, rivers, and the sea. A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances in miles and kilometers.

Fig. 2:



Extract from Record of Monuments and Places Map, Sheet No. 82.



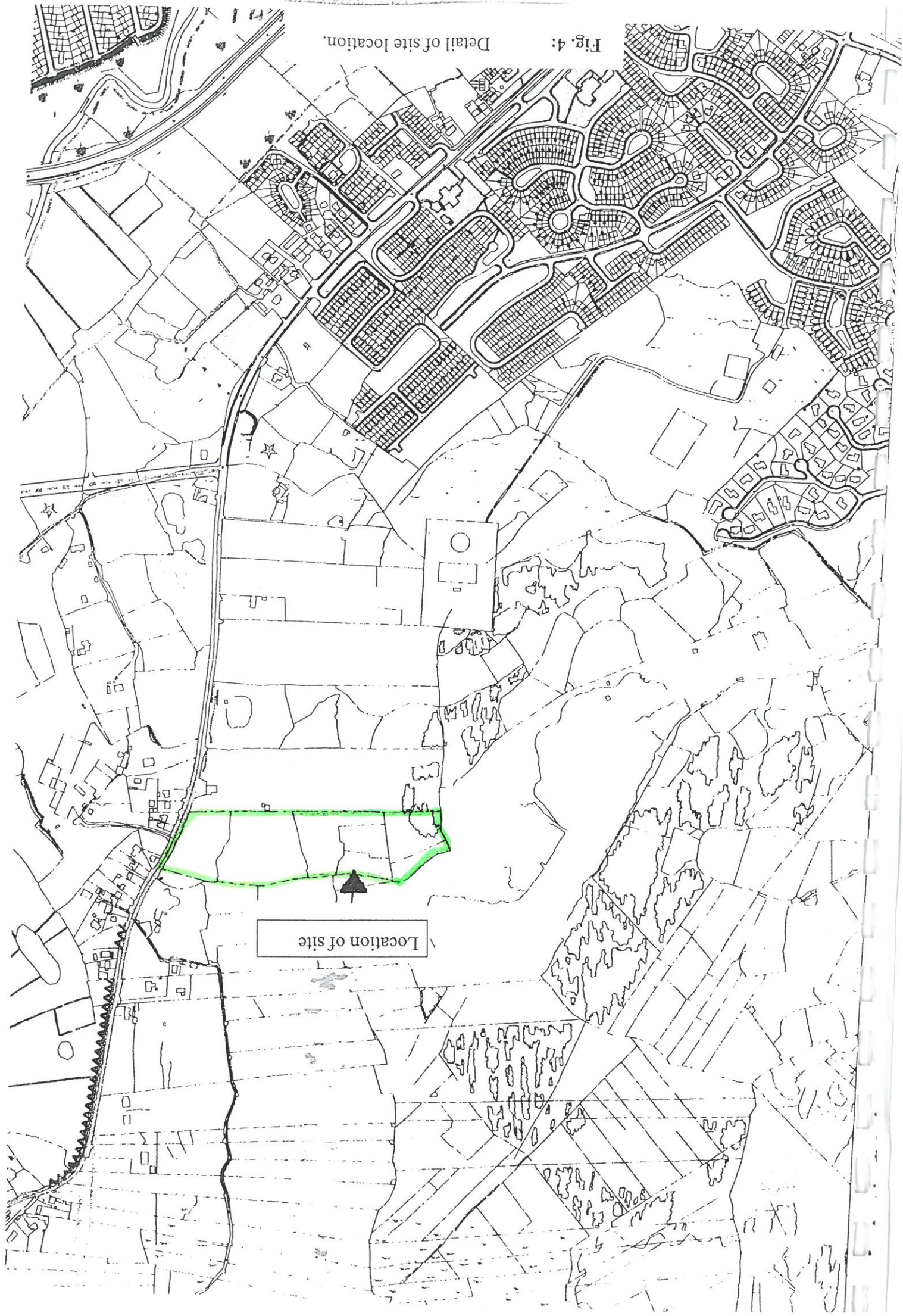


Fig. 4: Detail of site location.