

## APPENDIX 13.2.3

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### List of previous archaeological investigations in the vicinity of Galway Harbour

#### LOUGH ATALIA, RENMORE, GALWAY FULACHT FIADH 13111 22519

##### SMR 94:115 05E0989

Excavation of a fulacht fiadh took place over six successive weekends in the months of August and September 2005. All the digging was carried out manually in often very wet conditions. Excavation took the form of initially stripping a 4m<sup>2</sup> area between the arms of the mound in the area most likely to locate the trough. Following a trowel-back and further investigative work, excavation was concentrated on a 1.5m by 2m sondage in the south-eastern corner of the test area. The stratigraphy exposed was a sod and topsoil layer overlying a sterile dark-brown peat 0.3m in depth. Below this was a compact layer of fire-shattered stones in a charcoal-enriched silty matrix, with occasional roots and larger stones 0.4m in length.

No finds or datable evidence were retrieved from this context. At the very base of the mound was a shallow artificial cut that sloped gradually southwards towards the baulk line. This cut broke to an uneven base and was backfilled with wood fragments, samples of which were taken for further analysis. The cut may have been the outer edge of a sunken trough, but this interpretation could not be confirmed. The mound material measured c. 0.6m in depth and bottomed out to a grey/white natural boulder clay. Further excavation was not possible due to tidal flooding and the site was backfilled and resodded to the original contours.

Billy Quinn, Moore Archaeological & Environmental Services Ltd, Corporate House, Ballybrit Business Park, Ballybrit, Galway.

#### AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY, TOWNPARKS, GALWAY 12986 22525

##### SMR 94:100 05E0132

Trial-trenching was carried out at the rear of the Augustinian priory in Galway city on 22 March 2005. Three trial-trenches were excavated. A layer of compacted mortar was uncovered in one trench but could not be examined further due to restricted space. Testing did not result in the discovery of any heretofore unknown structural remains.

#### ST AUGUSTINE STREET, TOWNPARKS, GALWAY URBAN M297247

A three week excavation commenced on the 23 April 1990. The site, intended for redevelopment, covered an area of 1010 sq. in. The excavation was funded by O'Malley Construction Company. Most of the site was investigated during the excavation. The main feature located was a 33m stretch of the city wall. Built of roughly coursed limestone, bonded with a rough mortar it was approximately 1.5m high and 2m wide.

Two possible gun loops were located on the wall, c. 0.8m wide on the inner face and splaying to almost a point on the outer face. Some mortar was visible on the base indicating that they were floored.

Built up against the inside of the city wall was a foundation wall of rough limestone, which probably dates to the late 19th century as there were buildings on the OS. maps which would relate to it. However, the inner face of the city wall was strengthened with a buttress in late medieval times and this could have been the foundation of this strengthening wall.

The area outside the city wall was very disturbed and contained only modern rubble deposited as a result of land reclamation in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Inside the city wall were some medieval layers, from which eight sherds of late medieval Saintonge ware were found.

The few finds in general from the site included some sherds of late medieval stone ware and some fragments of post-medieval wine bottles.

Carol O'Regan, 95 Clybawn Heights, Knocknacarra, Galway.

### TOWNPARKS, GALWAY 12986 22525

#### SMR 94:100 05E0132

A second phase of pre-development testing was carried out at Middle Street and St Augustine Street, Galway, on 30 May 2005. No archaeological material was discovered during the initial phase of testing carried out by Anne Carey in March 2005 (see No. 604 above). The development comprised a programme of alterations and renovations to the Augustinian church and priory, which are located within the zone of archaeological potential around the historic town of Galway. The original Augustinian friary in Galway was founded by Margaret Athy and Stephen Lynch FitzDominick in 1508. It was built on a hill south-east of the medieval walled town. Following the suppression of the monasteries in the mid-16th century, the friars set up house next to Athy Castle in Market Street. In 1602–3 a fort was built on the site of the old friary on the hill, since known as Forthill, in order to protect the town and its harbour. The fort changed hands a couple of times during the wars of the confederation (1641–5) before it was finally demolished on account of its strategic importance in the event of an attack on the town. The Augustinians subsequently moved to a large house on the present site in Middle Street, where they erected a chapel in 1760. The chapel was enlarged c. 1820 and subsequently replaced by the present church in 1855.

The second phase of testing was carried out following the demolition of a small conservatory building attached to the north-west wall of the priory. A single trench revealed that the ground in this area was built up to a depth of c. 1m above an old garden soil deposit. Traces of old concrete slab and cobbled surfaces were recorded in the built-up ground above the garden soil deposit. The only find of interest was a large architectural stone, which was identified as a coping stone similar to those used on the gables of the mid-19th century church. Results from the two phases of testing clearly show that the church and priory are built on an artificial platform of made ground and that the ground levels around the buildings have also been built up over the years.

Dominic Delany, Dominic Delany & Associates, Unit 3, Howley Court, Oranmore, Co. Galway.

### RINMORE, THE DOCKS, GALWAY POSSIBLE MIDDEN 13050 22475

#### 01E0148

This project is concerned with the proposed development of the harbour area, and more specifically the development of a new pier in the area of the former isolation hospital. In 1996 an assessment and pre-development testing of the area revealed traces of a possible midden site. In the archaeologist's report it was recommended that the area be manually excavated to record the location and extent of the possible midden feature.

During February 2001 three trenches were manually excavated in the area to the east of the former isolation hospital. The stratigraphy mainly consisted of redeposited soils and debris overlying bedrock. It also contained a well-compacted, redeposited subsoil, which was dark brown/black in colour, with occasional shell inclusions. No artefacts or features of archaeological significance were encountered. The development of a new pier will not affect any archaeological deposits.

Fiona Rooney, Arch. Consultancy Ltd, Ballydavid South, Athenry, Co. Galway.

## **GALWAY DOCKS, GALWAY DREDGING 1299 2240 01E0791**

This project involved the monitoring of dredging at a number of areas in Galway Harbour, at the request of the Galway Harbour Commission, after recommendations were made by Dúchas. Both the docks and navigational channel had been dredged previously in 1992.

Monitoring was undertaken at five locations: the commercial dock, the area of the north quay, and three areas along the navigational channel. An underwater team was on standby in the event of any deposits, artefacts or features being uncovered. In the area of the docks the target depth of dredging was 3.5–3.8m, while in the channel the depth dredged was 3.4m. The vast majority of the material dredged consisted of silt, which had the appearance of sludge when deposited on the vessel. The dumping of spoil material was also undertaken while an archaeologist was on board the vessel.

The monitoring of dredging operations found no artefacts/features of archaeological significance.

Martin Fitzpatrick, Arch. Consultancy Ltd, Ballydavid South, Athenry, Co. Galway.

## **SPANISH ARCH, TOWNPARKS, URBAN MEDIEVAL M297249**

A half acre site became available for redevelopment in the area around the 'Spanish Arch', Galway City and Galway Corporation funded an excavation on part of the site in order to determine its archaeological potential. The excavation took place over a period of 20 weeks during the summer.

The site covers an area which included the south-western corner of the medieval quayside. The town walls were mostly pulled down during the 18th and 19th centuries, and much of the land outside them was reclaimed in the early 19th century. Before the excavation started, all that could be seen above the ground was a 25m length of the outer face of the southern curtain wall and the 'Spanish Arch', which was thought to be part of a 16th century extension of the wall.

A total of 17 trial trenches were dug in all open parts of the site. A further 50m of the southern curtain wall was uncovered, as was a 15m length of the western wall. The wall is built of random coursed ashlar limestone masonry along the outer face and it has a rubble core. It averages 3.1m thick and survived from only 50mm below the present ground surface to a depth of 2.65m. It stands on a crude plinth of limestone and granite, which in turn stands on the esturine gravel.

Two sea gates lead through the wall, one from the sea which until the 18th century ran along the outer face of the curtain wall and the other from the river which ran along the outside of the western wall. These had been blocked up in the 16th century, when an extension was built out onto the river, creating a harbour along the eastern banks of the Corrib. Outside the wall lay redeposited material laid down mainly in the early 19th century when the area was being reclaimed. Most of it was archaeologically sterile and no trace of the quayside as depicted on the 1651 map of the city was found.

Inside the wall were the remains of up to four levels of a cobbled roadway which ran around the perimeter of the 'Spanish Parade', the main market place for the city in the Middle Ages. The earliest of these is well

preserved, and was constructed with a steep camber and drains which ran along the sides and exited through the sea gates. This road pre-dates the blocking-up of the sea gates which probably occurred in the middle of the 16th century. The base of a small turret which can be seen on the 1651 map was also uncovered, as were traces of stone steps that led up to the wall-walk. There was no trace of the corner tower which stood at the south western return of the two walls before the 16th century extension was built.

Beneath the cobbled roadway were levels containing much environmental material and many fragments of worked wood. Nearby, 1.5m beneath the roadway, lay a short length of walling, possibly part of the original quay wall or the earliest wall that surrounds the town. These features have not yet been dated securely, but they may pre-date the building of the curtain walls in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Finds consisted mainly of late-medieval and post-medieval pottery, with blackware and tin glazed earthenwares predominating. Stoneware, gravel-tempered ware, sgraffito and slipwares were also found as was some late medieval glass. Other finds included leather, wood and metal objects and some medieval cut stone fragments.

In all about 30% of the total area expected to contain material of archaeological value has been excavated. The excavation will continue in 1989.

Markus Casey, Archaeological Corporation, City Hall, Galway.

#### SPANISH ARCH, GALWAY URBAN 2298 1250 97E0014

A five-week pre-development excavation was undertaken at the Spanish Arch, Galway, from 16 January 1997 in order to assess the suitability of the location for a proposed development.

Two main trenches were excavated immediately adjacent to the south-west and south-east walls of the Spanish Arch. The first, that adjacent to the south-west-facing wall, was excavated in order to investigate the stability of that wall. It became obvious at an early stage that the wall did not have any foundation and further excavations in that area were not carried out, owing to safety considerations. Excavation adjacent to the south-east-facing wall revealed it as an impressive sea-facing wall constructed of ashlar blocks. The ashlar blocks at the southernmost corner of the south-east wall were staggered irregularly, suggesting later interference.

The excavations adjacent to the south-east-facing wall produced the remains of four stone walls and a stone-faced rubble fill. The four walls can be dated to the 19th century, but the stone-lined rubble fill seemed to be considerably earlier. Owing to both the archaeological brief and safety considerations, the stone and rubble feature could not be fully investigated, but excavation revealed it to be a probable causeway or jetty leading south-eastwards to a setting of stone steps. The causeway was built directly adjacent to the south-east-facing wall but was not keyed in. The most vivid cartographic parallel for this structure is the depiction of this area by Thomas Phillips in 1685. Though it could not be securely dated, it seems likely that the steps would have served as an access either to a causeway or onto the tidal flood-plain itself. The structure could therefore pre-date 1690, when the Long Walk was beginning to be established.

The stratigraphy consisted entirely of redeposited fills of mixed materials. Finds discovered ranged in date from the 15th to the 20th century, with no sealed medieval or post-medieval layers uncovered. The pottery is mainly post-medieval English imported ware, and a small number of late medieval or early post-medieval French imports were also present.

Anne Connolly, Archaeological Services Unit Ltd, Purcell House, Oranmore, Co. Galway.

### SPANISH ARCH, GALWAY URBAN 12986 22525 97E0014

A 5m (north-west/south-east) by 3m (north-east/ south-west) area was mechanically excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m below ground level, adjacent to and adjoining the south-west-facing wall at the Spanish Arch. A rubble foundation was revealed, directly underlying the wall. However, no significant dating evidence emerged from material removed under the south-west-facing wall.

### SPANISH PARADE, GALWAY MEDIEVAL URBAN M297247

Pre-development archaeological assessment of the Spanish Parade site took place between 24th August and 11th September 1992. The site measured 24m north—south and 23.5m east—west. Three trial trenches (15m x 1.5m) were excavated in order to assess the archaeological potential of the area.

The inner face of the medieval town wall ran north-east/ south-west along the southern boundary of the site. The wall face is composed of roughly-coursed limestone, rhyolite, sandstone and granite masonry and contains some very large boulders as well as numerous small packing stones. The wall survives to an average height of 2.15m and it rests on a compacted sand and gravel base. Archaeological deposits survived between 0.5m and 2.5m below the modern ground level. Compacted organic clay deposits were located at a depth of c. 1m. These may represent primary land fills deposited here some time after the construction of the medieval town wall. The only dateable finds recovered were 2 unstratified sherds of late medieval Saintonge pottery.

The town wall is abutted by 2 substantial wall foundations, representing the east and west building lines of medieval and/or post-medieval house sites. These wall foundations were located in each of the 3 trial trenches and are similar in their method of construction. The eastern building line consists of a foundation composed of limestone and rhyolite boulders which are set in a light yellowish brown sticky daub. The western building line survives to a greater height, consisting of 2—4 courses of worked limestone masonry, with a narrow plinth, 0.2m wide, beneath which is a foundation similar to that on the east side. The remains of a rubbish pit, 2.15m x 2.15m, were also located. The edge of the pit is defined by the town wall on its south-east side and by the house wall foundation on its south-west side. The pit contained a substantial quantity of post-medieval pottery, mainly of Irish and English manufacture. Continental imports were represented by 3 sherds of westerwald pottery.

NOTE: No excavations or demolition work were undertaken in the south-east corner of the site, pending the removal of an oil tank from the adjoining property.

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