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# Archaeological Impact Statement

## for the development of a relief road at Thurles, Co. Tipperary



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**Client:** c/o Michael Devery,  
SEE Road Design,  
North Tipperary County  
Council,  
Civic Offices,  
Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

**Date:** October 2013



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to:**

Client — C/o Michael Devery, SEE Road Design, North Tipperary County Council,  
Civic Offices, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

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**Please note...**

That the archaeological recommendations, mitigation proposals and suggested methodology followed in this report are similar to those used on previous similar projects approved by the Archaeological Planning and Licencing Unit National Monuments Service, Room G50, Custom House, Dublin 1 The National Monuments Acts 1930-2004, The Planning and Development Act 2002 (plus any amendments) and the most recent EPA guidelines were consulted. Guidelines and Plans issued from time-to-time by the statutory bodies have been consulted. These are listed in the reference section of this report. Every effort has been taken in the preparation and submission of this report to provide as complete an assessment as possible within the terms of the brief, and all statements and opinions are offered in good faith. However, ÆGIS cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from the data supplied by any third party, for any loss or other consequences arising from decisions made or actions taken on the basis of facts and opinions expressed in this report, (and any supplementary information), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived, or as the result of unknown and undiscovered sites or artefacts.

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ÆGIS acknowledges the information supplied by the client and information gathered from the Archaeological Survey of Ireland supplied SMR information.

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**Cover Image**

View of subject site. Taken by F. Coyne 2013.

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## II. Glossary of Terms

<b>ASI</b>	Archaeological Survey of Ireland, a division of the DoAHG
<b>Barony, Parish, Townland</b>	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)
<b>DoAHG</b>	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The governmental department whose heritage remit includes a range of policy, regulatory, educational and promotional roles.
<b>E</b>	East
<b>First Edition</b>	This relates to editions of the OS 6 inch maps for each county. 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"
<b>KM</b>	Kilometre
<b>M</b>	Metres, all dimensions are given in metres or part of a metre, unless otherwise stated
<b>N</b>	North
<b>NGR</b>	National Grid Reference
<b>NIAH</b>	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
<b>NMI</b>	National Museum of Ireland
<b>NMS</b>	National Monuments Service. Regulatory body with the DoAHG with responsibility for archaeological heritage. A division of the DoAHG.
<b>OS</b>	Ordnance Survey
<b>OSI</b>	Ordnance Survey of Ireland
<b>RMP</b>	Record of Monuments and Places. An update of the older SMR, (sites and monuments record), on which all known archaeological sites are marked and listed in an accompanying list. The sites marked afford legal protection under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004. The record is based on the 6-inch map series for the country and is recorded on a county basis. Each archaeological monument on the RMP has a unique code known as the RMP number prefixed by TS for Tipperary (South Riding).
<b>RMP Number</b>	This code is the number of the site on the RMP constraint map. It begins with the county code, the 6-inch sheet number, followed by the number of the archaeological monument on that sheet
<b>RPS</b>	Record of Protected Structures
<b>S</b>	South
<b>Sheet</b>	This relates to the 6-inch map for each county, which is divided into sheets
<b>SMR</b>	Sites and Monuments Record. The precursor of the RMP, the SMR now commonly relates to the archive paper files of known archaeological monuments maintained by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI). These files are arranged according to RMP number
<b>TB</b>	Townland Boundary
<b>W</b>	West

# 1. Scope of Study

This report identifies and assesses the potential direct and indirect impact(s), if any, on the potential archaeological environment of a proposed relief road in the townlands of Clongower and Monakeeba, Glebe and Mullauns, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

This report fulfils the usual criteria of an archaeological impact assessment and follows the most recent EPA guidelines on the compilation of an EIS (2002; 2003). Pertinent guidelines published from time-to-time have also been consulted and are listed in the project references given at the back of this report. A brief historical introduction to the area is provided and archaeological features in the vicinity, including any standing remains, are discussed. The report details the potential archaeological and/or cultural heritage features on the site and in its vicinity and discusses the impacts, if any, of the development on that archaeology and/or cultural heritage.

No intrusive archaeological investigations (test-trenching or excavation) have been undertaken at this stage or as part of this desktop assessment. However a geophysical assessment has been carried out under licence number 13R11 at the location of RMP TN041-043--- enclosure.

The site inspection on which this report is based was carried out on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013.

## 2. Method of Study

The following resources and methods of establishing the archaeological status of the site of the stone quarry were used:

- The subject site was visited and inspected by a qualified archaeologist;
- The Record of Monuments and Places constraint maps and lists (RMP) and the sites and monuments record archive (SMR) were examined;
- A wide range of local historical and archaeological records relevant to the study area were consulted, including the Ordnance Survey First Edition six-inch map (c.1840), the Ordnance Survey twenty-five inch map and aerial views;
- Thurles and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015;
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage;
- Topographical Files held in the National Museum of Ireland;
- Archaeological Survey of Ireland files and publications;
- A review of any archaeological investigations in the vicinity was also undertaken.



### 3. Existing Environment

The subject site lies on the south-eastern side of Thurles town, in an area of open fields through the townlands of Clongower and Monakeeba, then along the roadway which is also the townland boundary between Glebe and Monakeeba, and Mullauns and Monakeeba.

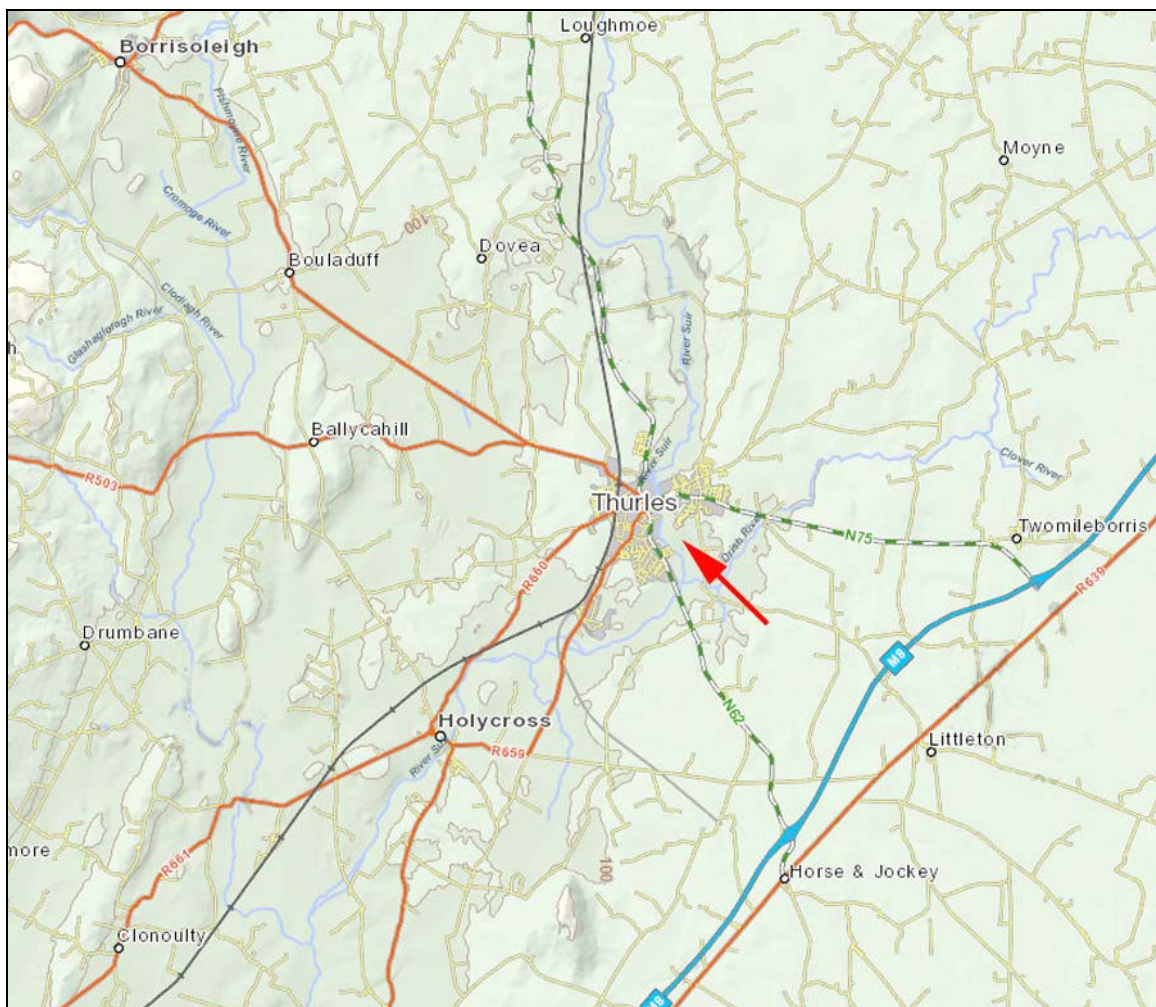


Figure 1. Site Location, Ordnance Survey Ireland©



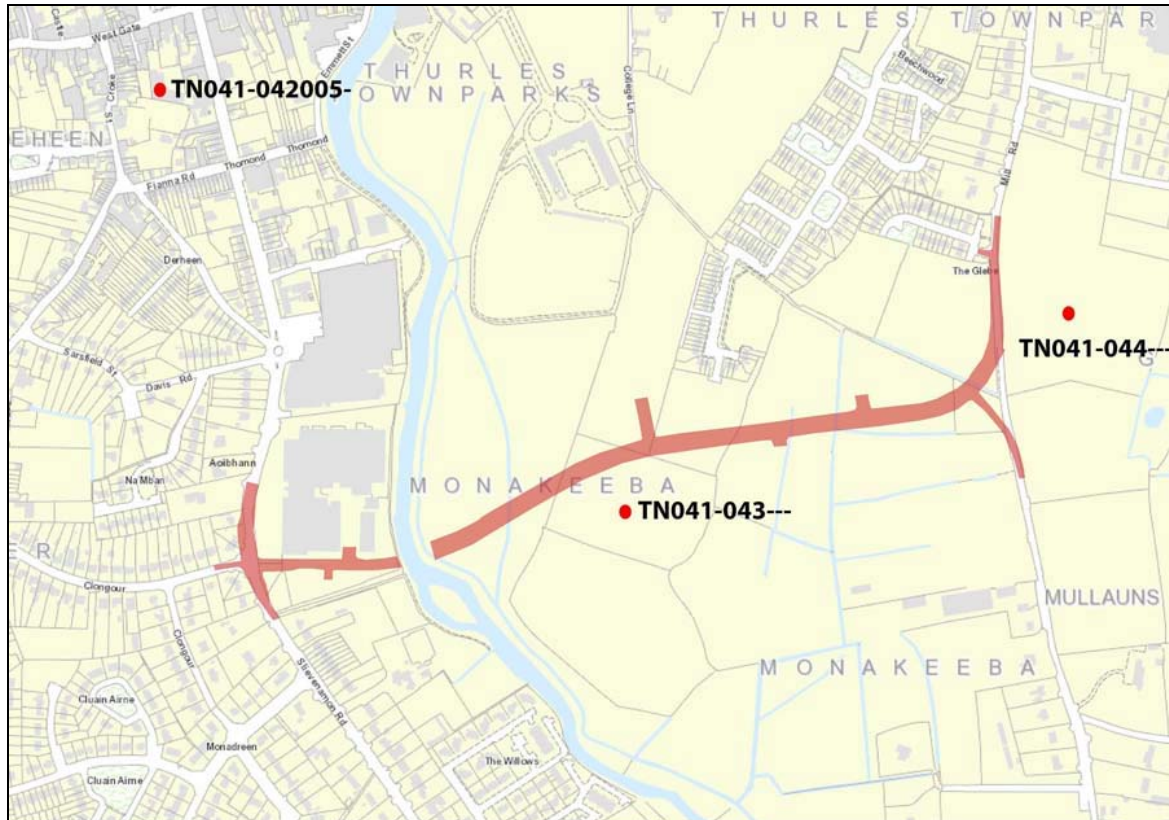


Figure 2. Location of road in red at Thurles, after Ordnance Survey Ireland©.

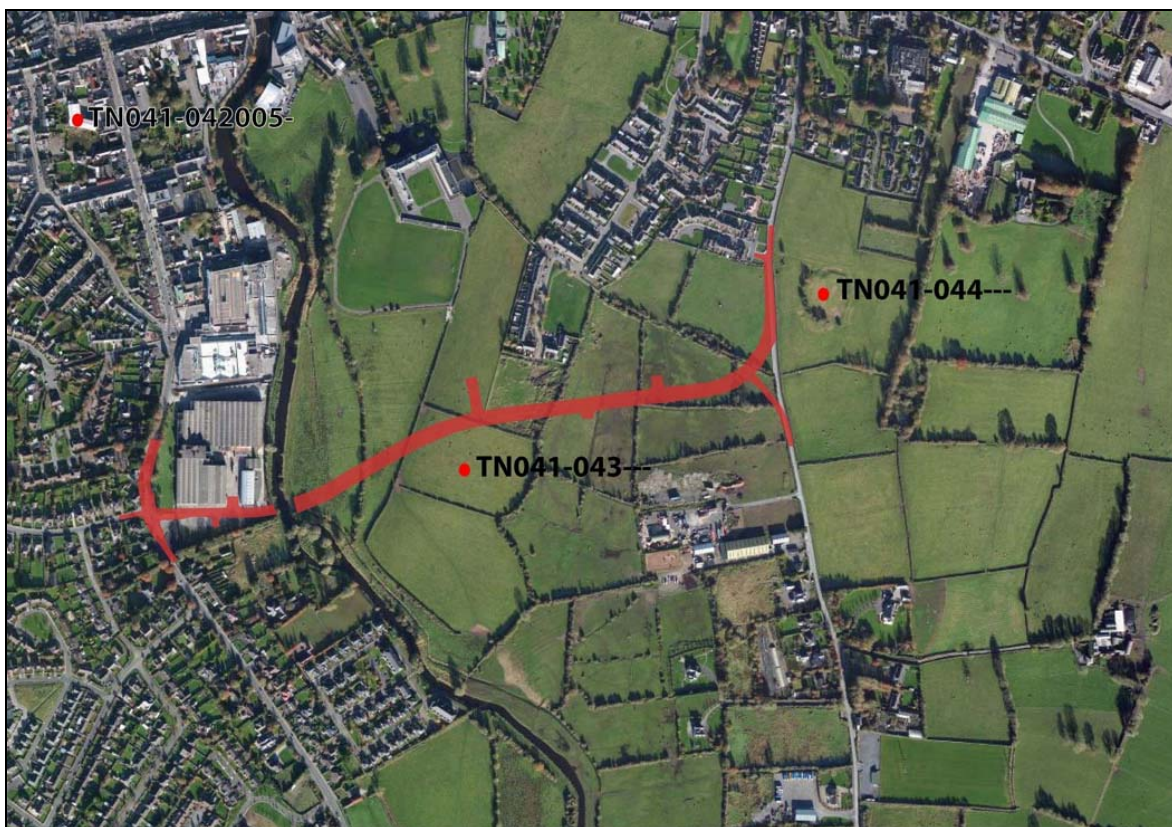


Figure 3. Aerial view of site on, location of road in red, after [www.bing.com](http://www.bing.com)

### 3.1 The Site Inspection (plates 1-16)

The subject site was inspected on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013. Weather conditions were showery. The subject site is a series of fields. For ease of reporting they were numbered in the direction in which they were walked, from east to west, (see figure below), and numbered F1 to F9.

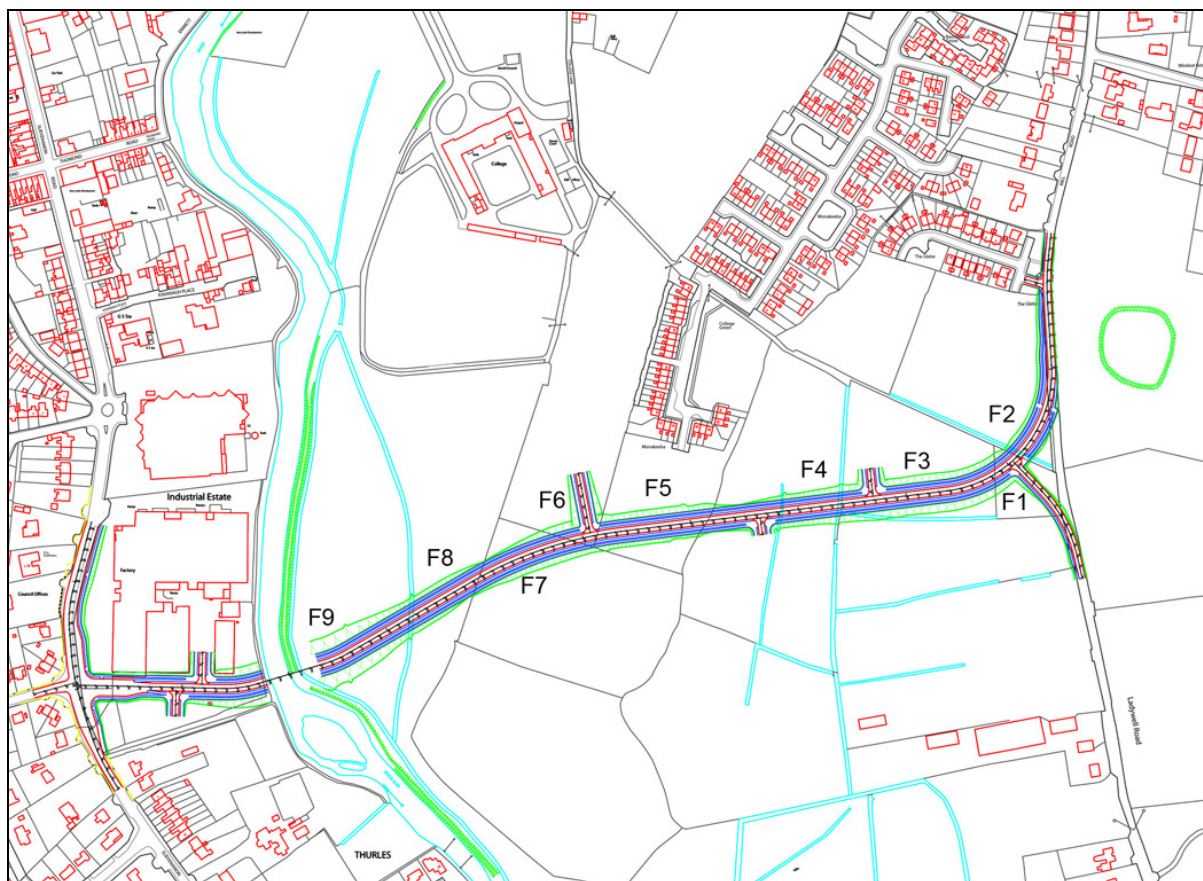


Figure 4. Location map with fields numbered (supplied by client, annotated by writer)

The proposed road will run along Mill Road, past RMP TN41-044---, before entering the green field area.

Field 1 is a small field, covered in short grass and grazed by horses.

Field 2 is a large open grassy field, covered in short grass and grazed by horses.

Field 3 is a large open grassy field, covered in short grass and grazed by horses. It is very wet underfoot.

Field 4 is a large open grassy field, covered in short grass and grazed by horses. It is extremely wet underfoot.

Field 5 is a rectangular grassy field, located to the rear (south) of a housing estate. It is covered in short grass and grazed by horses. Mounds of rubble and topsoil are located at the eastern side of the field. Traces of cultivation ridges are to be seen throughout this field.

Field 6 is a large open grassy field, covered in short grass and grazed by cattle. It is located along a natural ridge which runs in a general north-south direction, and is drier than the land to the east and west.

Field 7 is a large open grassy field, covered in short grass. It is located along a natural ridge which runs in a general north-south direction, and is drier than the land to the east and west. The RMP TN041-043--- is located in this field along the crest of this ridge.

Field 8 slopes from a high at east to lower ground at west, where rushes grow in abundance, possibly marking an old pond area. Traces of an old field boundary, running in an east-west direction was also noted in this field.

Field 9 contains several undulations, growths of rushes and is wet underfoot, and is adjacent to the river. It has the potential to contain previously unrecorded wetland archaeological sites, such as *fulachta fiadh*. The eastern side of the proposed bridge will be located in this field.

The proposed road will cross the River Suir at the location of a new bridge. At the western side of the river, it will run through the car park area of an industrial estate, before joining with the Slievenamon Road.

No previously unrecorded archaeological monuments were recorded during the inspection.





Plate 1. Field 1, from E



Plate 2. Field 2, from E





Plate 3. Field 3, from E



Plate 4. Field 4, from E





Plate 5. Field 5, from E



Plate 6. Ridges in Field 5, from W





Plate 7. Field 6, from W



Plate 8. Field 7, from E





Plate 9. Field 7, general location of RMP TN041-043--- from E



Plate 10. Field 8, from E





Plate 11. Field 9, from E



Plate 12. Field 9, mounds and rushes, from E



Plate 13. RMP TN041-044---, from NW



Plate 14. View along Mill Road adjacent to TN041-044---, from N





Plate 15. View along Mill Road close to Field 1, from S



Plate 16. Location of proposed road through car park area at industrial estate, Slievenamon Road, from W

### 3.2 The Proposed Development (Figures 4-5)

The proposed scheme comprises approximately 1.1 km of new road with a new signalised junction on the Slievenamon Road at its junction with Clongour Road, a new priority junction with Mill Road and 4 intermediate priority junctions to provide access to traversed lands. The scheme includes a 50 metre span tied bowstring arch crossing of the Suir along with ancillary services drainage, ducting, water mains and services.

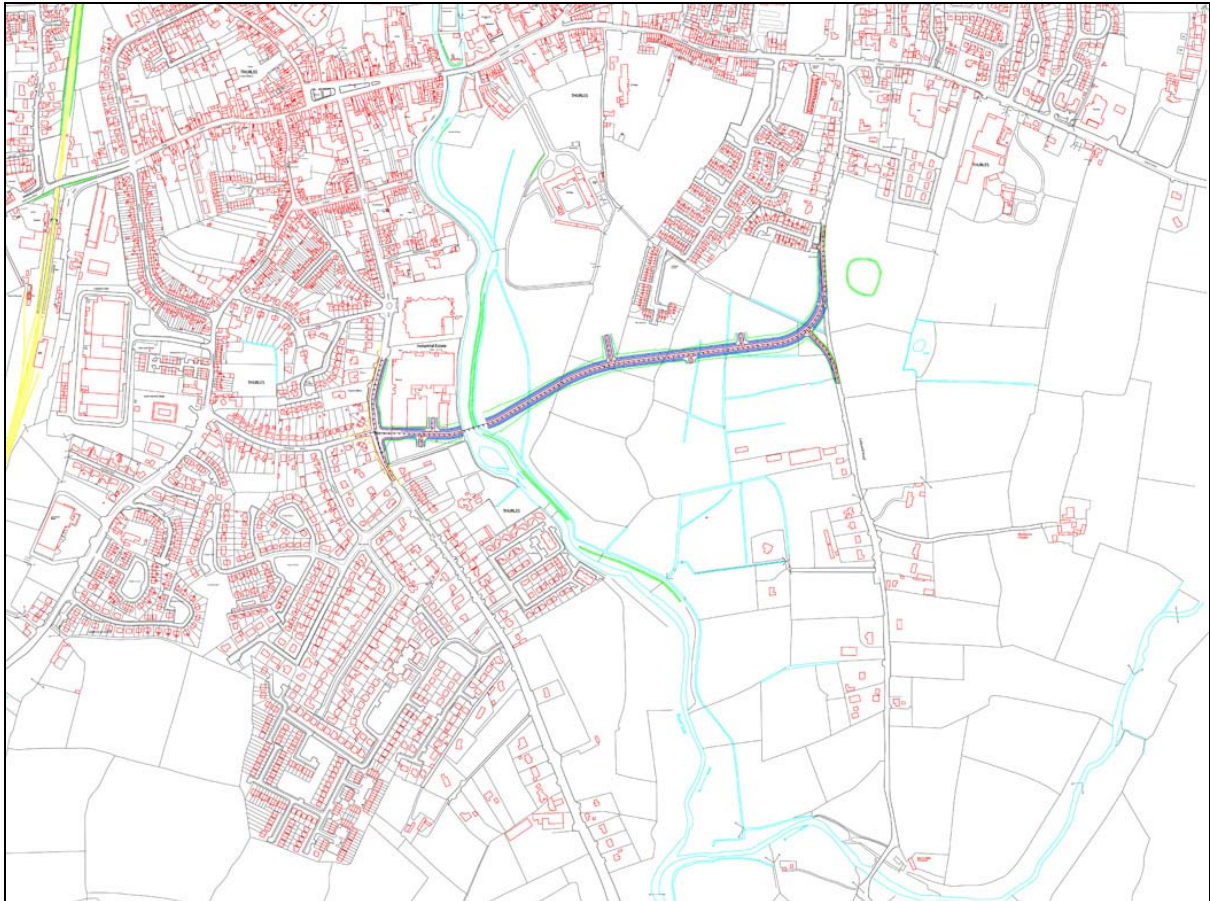


Figure 5. Location of proposed relief road (supplied by client)

## 4. History & Archaeology of the Site & Vicinity

### 4.1 Historical and Archaeological Background (Figures 5-8)

The earliest reference to Thurles or *Durlas* -meaning strong fort (O'Donovan 1840) is in AD844 when Saint Ciarán visited *Durlas* to punish *Feidhlimid mac Crimthain* for a raid on Clonmacnoise. Subsequent battles in Thurles in AD1174 and AD1192 are recorded in the Annals. The first indication of settlement is noted in a charter granted by Theobald Walter prior to 1206.

The castle at Thurles was besieged in 1208. It is believed to have been located close to the present day location of the fifteenth/sixteenth century 'Black Castle', a rectangular tower house. By the early fourteenth century the motte castle was at the centre of a complex of buildings including a courtyard (bailey) and service buildings. This complex was replaced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with the Civil Survey recording a house 'with a castle and several turrets upon the bawne' (Simington cited in Carey & Farrelly 1994).

There is mid to late fourteenth century murage evidence for Thurles, although no trace of the town wall survives. Both fifteenth century tower houses at Black Castle and Bridge Castle may have been mural towers associated with gates along the town wall. The proposed line of the town wall, noted in the Urban Survey, is based on surviving street patterns and property boundaries. Thomas (1992) has noted a difference in the structures and functionality within Thurles, noting that the east side of the river contained the churches - such as the fourteenth century friary and the later sixteenth century church - while the west side contained the market place, castle and gates. This is in a sense mirrored today with the urban/industrial centre with housing located to the west and the more residential and church associated buildings in the east of the town.

The Ursuline convent in Thurles was founded in AD1787 ([www.utc.ie](http://www.utc.ie)). A woman called Anastasia Tobin came back to her native Thurles having been professed as Sr Clare Ursula in the Ursuline Convent, Cork. She took up residence in a thatched cottage on the site of the present convent, and



thus was founded the convent and teaching institution (*ibid.*). Prior to 1970 the convent ran a farm to the rear of the existing convent building (O'Brien 2008). That farm is no longer extant, and it is these buildings and yard that comprise the subject site for the proposed development. The farmyards are located directly to the west of a partially walled garden, the latter's design believed to be based on one of Sir Walter Raleigh's gardens (Ursuline Sister, pers. comm.). The western wall of this garden will be incorporated into the design of the proposed building (O'Brien 2008).

The Urban Archaeology Survey records a number of archaeological monuments in the town (Carey and Farrelly 1994). These are:

Monument	Date	Location
Tower house 'Black Castle'	15 <sup>th</sup> /16 <sup>th</sup> century	North of West Gate/ Friar Street
Tower house 'Bridge Castle'	15 <sup>th</sup> century	East of Liberty Square near Barry's Bridge
Church (site) and Graveyard 'St Bridget's'		West of town to north of Garryvicleheen road
Motte (site)	12 <sup>th</sup> century	West end of town near Black Castle
Sheela-na-gig		Back stone wall of Lyons' Tyre & Batteries centre opposite former bank (GAA museum/office)
Bridge (possible)		Over river Suir, joining the Square & Cathedral Street
Town Wall (possible site)	14 <sup>th</sup> century	unlocated
Carmelite Friary (site)	13 <sup>th</sup> /14 <sup>th</sup> century	On site of Cathedral of the Assumption to east of river
Church and graveyard a Archer Tomb b Graveslab c Wall memorial	16 <sup>th</sup> /17 <sup>th</sup> century 17 <sup>th</sup> century 17 <sup>th</sup> century	400m east of Barry's Bridge
Castle (possible site) 'Croak Castle'		Was depicted on south side of Garver Clahen Street (now Friar Street). The site of this castle is in the vicinity of the development. See figure 3b

**Table 1. Monuments in Thurles taken from the Urban Archaeology Survey (Farrelly and Carey 1994)**

The Archaeological Inventory of County Tipperary (Farrelly and O'Brien 2002, 333) provides a comprehensive account of the historic town of Thurles (inventory number **2249**). The town itself is situated in the townlands of Garryvicleheen, Monacocka and Thurles Townparks and was founded in the late twelfth century when the motte at Thurles was constructed (inventory **2068**).



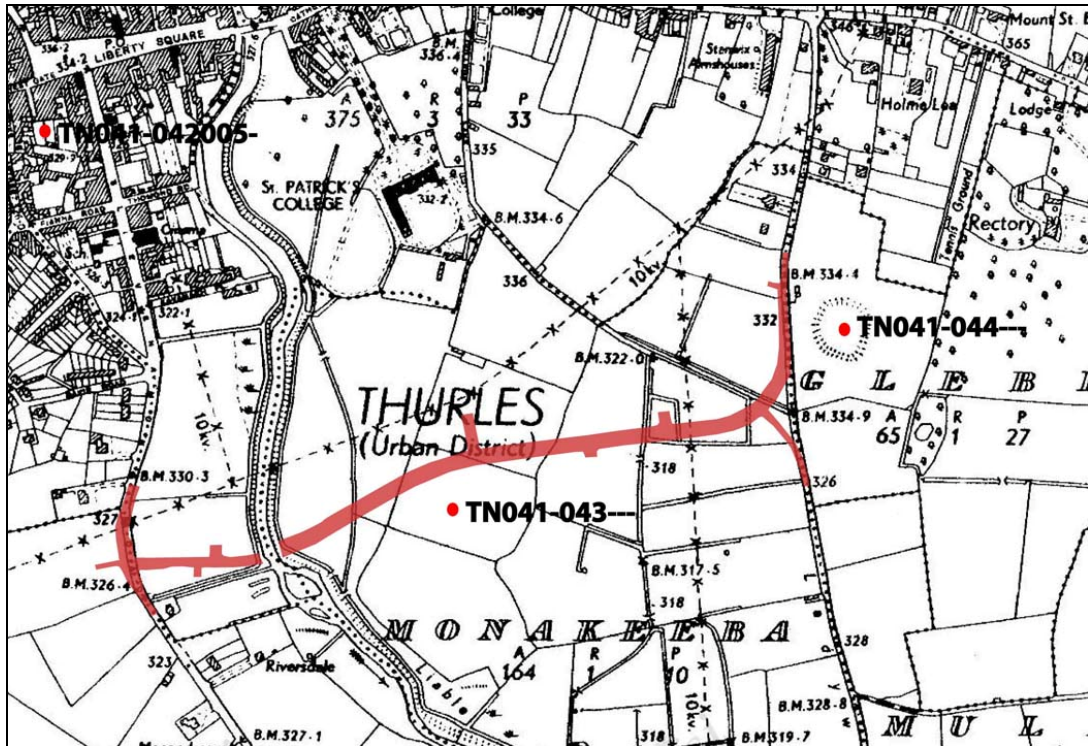


Figure 6. Map (after ASI) showing closest recorded archaeological monuments (red dots) to proposed road (red line)

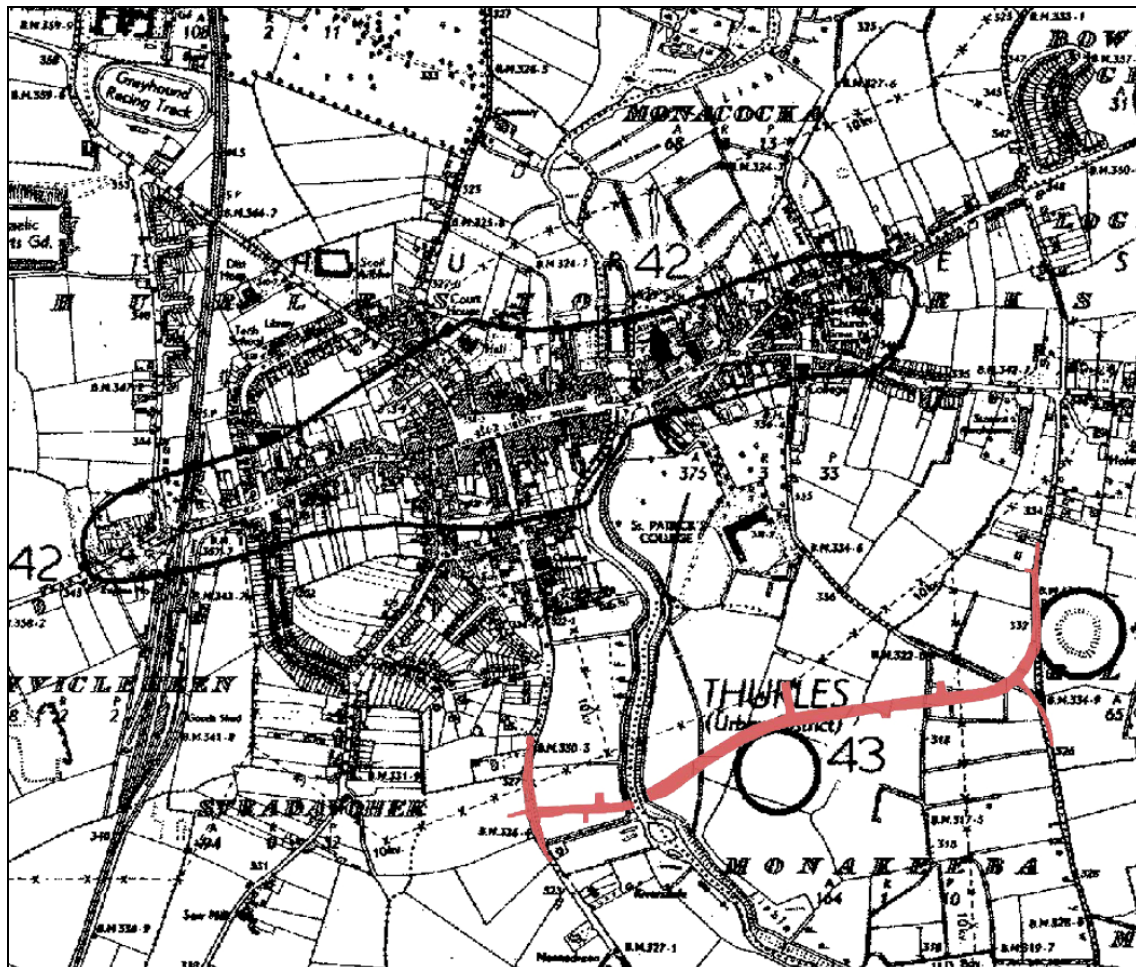


Figure 7. RMP Map showing location of proposed road in relation to the historic town of Thurles (TN041-042---)

The proposed roadway is located to the south of the historic town of Thurles (TN041-042---).

The following description of the monuments closest to the proposed roadway (**TN041-043** and **TN041-044---**) is taken from the ASI accessed via the National Monuments Service website ([www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie), accessed October 2013).

**N041-043-----**

**Class: Enclosure**

**Townland: Monakeeba**

**Description:** Situated on summit of flat-topped ridge running NNE-SSW, in lush pasture. Site not depicted on 1st (1843) or 2nd (1952-53) ed. OS 6-inch map but shows up as a circular crop mark on aerial photograph (6156/6157 Ordnance Survey photo?). No visible trace of site. According to farm manager (site owned by St. Patrick's college) the field had been tilled previously to a depth of 9" but he never noticed any circular feature in this field.\* **Note; A geophysical survey was carried out at this site in 2013 as part of this project (see below)**

**Compiled by: Jean Farrelly and Caimin O'Brien**

**Date of upload/revision: 22 September 2008**

**TN041-044---**

**Class: Enclosure**

**Townland: Glebe (Thurles Ph.)**

**Description:** Situated on a gentle SE-facing slope in gently undulating terrain. A large D-shaped area (dims. 79m N-S; 72.5m E-W) enclosed by an earth and stone bank (Wth 2.8m; int. H 0.63m; ext. H 1.44m). The SE side is almost straight although on the 1st ed. (1843) OS 6-inch map it is depicted as being circular. Evidence of a wide shallow external fosse exists in the SE sector only (Wth 5.8m; D 0.2m). A gap (Wth 3m) in the bank at S may be the original entrance and other gaps are broken through the bank at W and NW. Portion of the bank has been quarried out at NNE. The site is known locally as 'Killahilla' according to a priest at St Patrick's College.

The above description is derived from 'The Archaeological Inventory of County Tipperary. Vol. 1 - North Tipperary' compiled by Jean Farrelly and Caimin O'Brien (Dublin: Stationery Office, 2002).



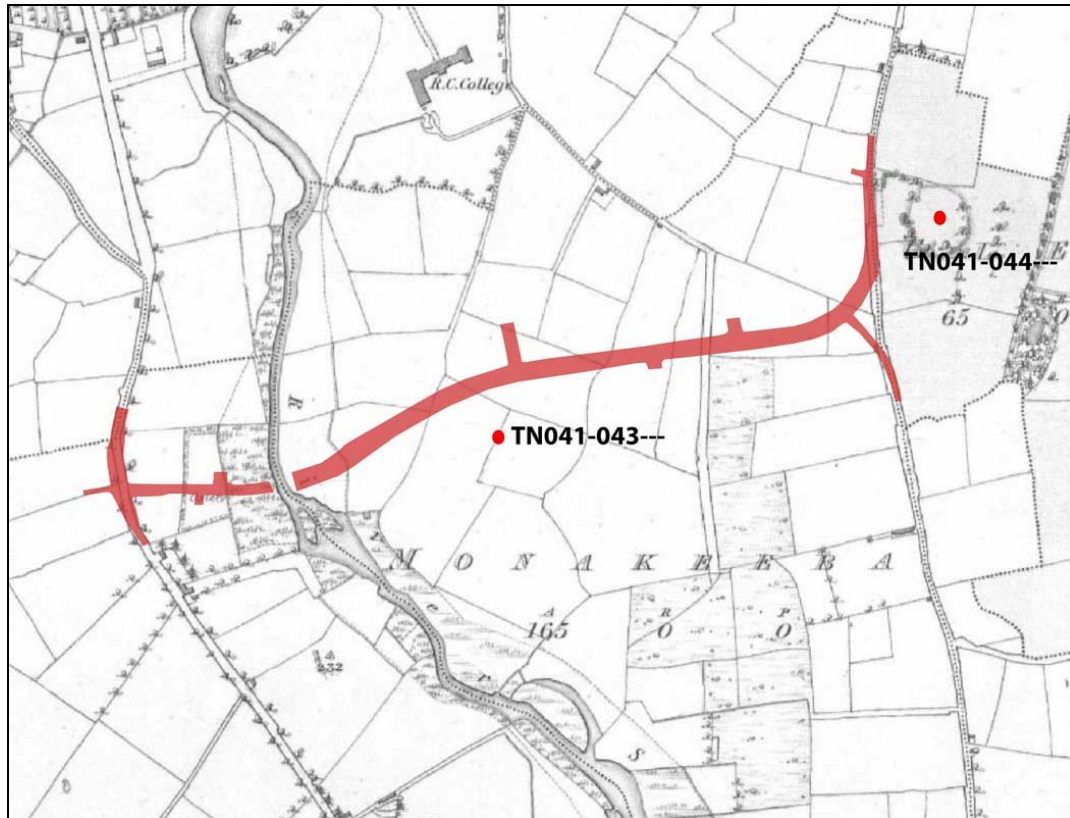


Figure 7. First Edition map c. 1840, site indicated in red(after [www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie) ).

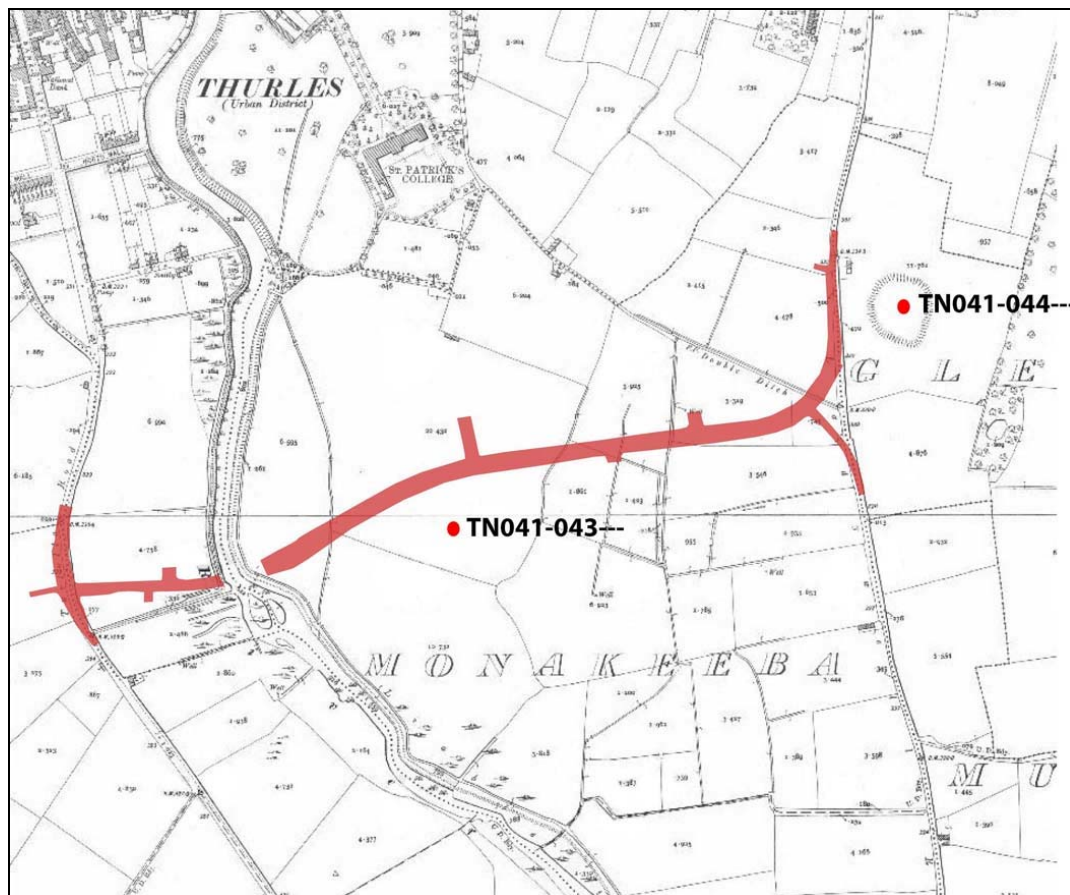


Figure 8. 25 inch map, proposed road in red (after [www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie)).

There is one archaeological artefact/find from the townland of Monakeeba, recorded in the National Museum of Ireland files, and a number from Thurles and nearby.

Reg. Number	Find Location	Description
1996:54	Monakeeba	Bronze socketed spearhead found in a boggy field
IA:184:88	Thurles	Sheela-na-Gig, in a wall in Liberty square
5076:W45	Thurles Abbey	Copper Alloy key
1941:1121	Bog near Thurles	Copper alloy three-legged ewer, 14 <sup>th</sup> /15 <sup>th</sup> century
6881:W87	Near Thurles	Bronze mortar
R2561	Between Thurles and Templemore	Bronze Axehead, found in a railway cutting

Table 2. List of finds from the vicinity of the proposed road

## 4.2 Previous Archaeological Work in the Vicinity

A geophysical survey was carried out on RMP TN041-043--- in February 2013, in which the location of the crop mark visible on an aerial photograph was assessed under licence number 13R11.

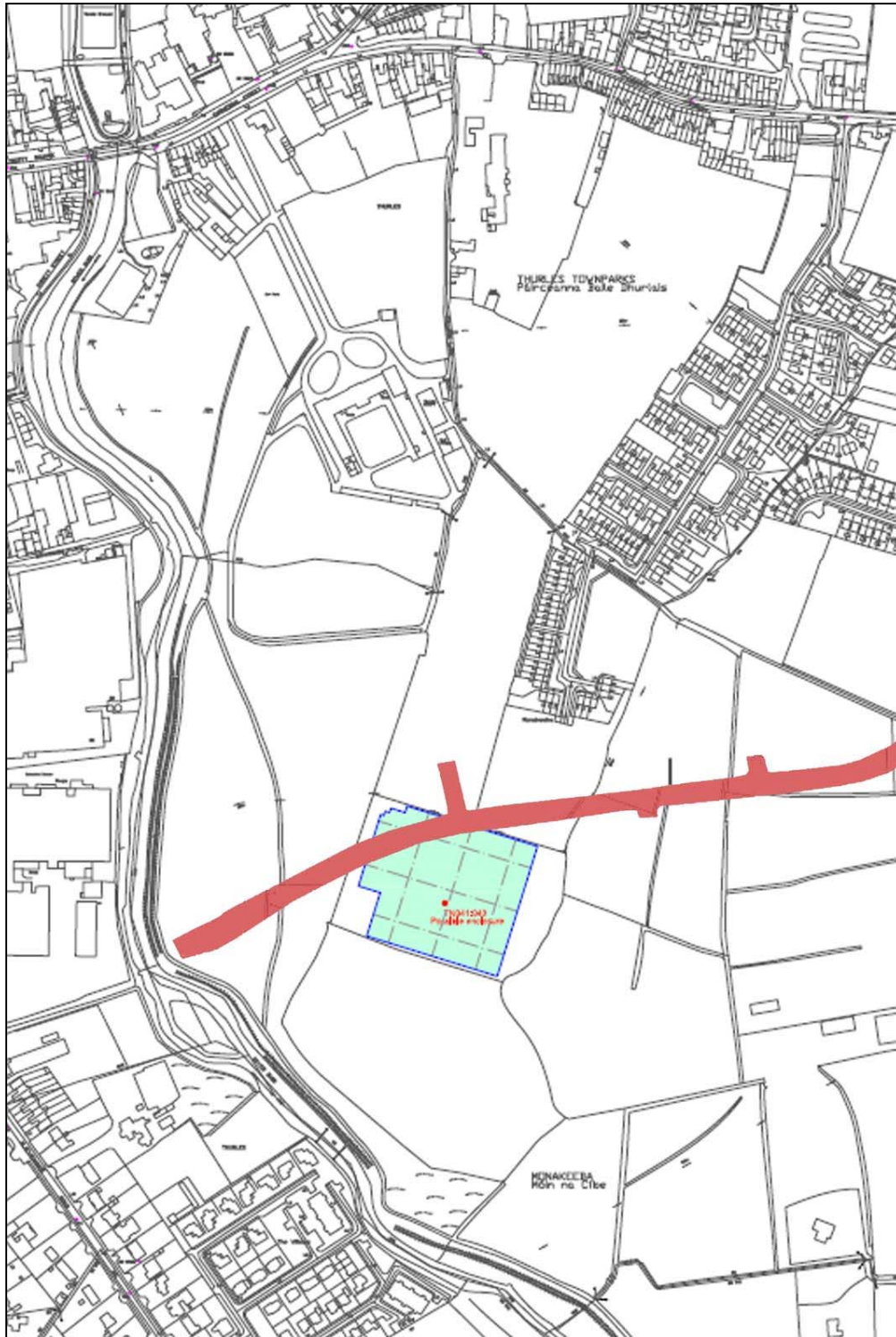


Figure 9. Location of geophysical survey (after J.M. Leigh Surveys 2013)

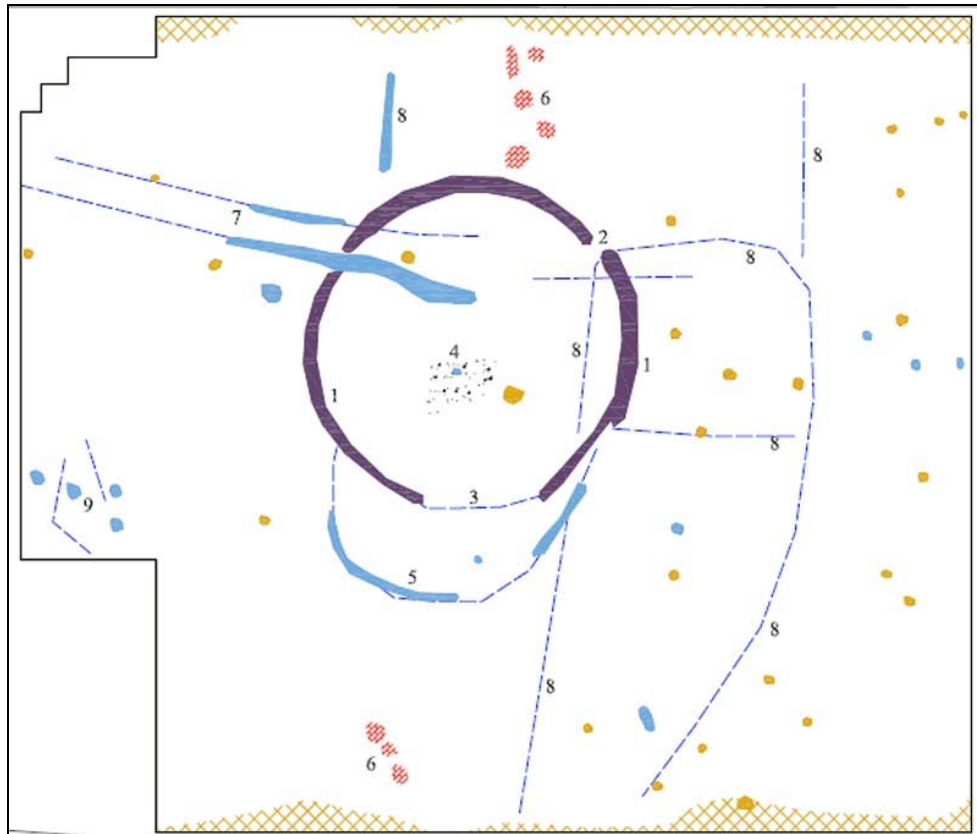


Figure 10. Detail of geophysical survey (after J.M. Leigh Surveys 2013)

The conclusions of the Geophysical Survey report (Leigh 2013, 4) state;

- The possible enclosure (RMP TN041:043) has been clearly identified as a circular ditched enclosure with a diameter of c.47m, which corresponds with the feature identified through aerial photography. Although there are no clear responses evident within the enclosure, there is an area of increased response, indicative of burning activity. A 'gap' in the enclosure ditch is suggested in the north-east and may represent an entranceway.
- A faint curvilinear response appears to extend south from the main circular enclosure, and may represent an annex feature.
- Magnetically strong isolated responses to the north and south of the enclosure and are located on the ridged plateau, and are of clear archaeological interest. They may represent clusters of pits, possibly containing burnt material. Another cluster of responses to the west, and located down slope, is also of possible archaeological interest. Although the responses are less well defined, another cluster of pit type features may be located here.



No other previous licenced archaeological work was found to have been conducted within the boundaries of the proposed development site as per a review of [www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie) (the database of licenced archaeological work (accessed October 2013) which is updated yearly and currently contains summary accounts of all excavations from 1970 to 2010).

Several other licenced archaeological works have been carried out in Thurles and its immediate vicinity, and are detailed below, as included on the list of licenced archaeological work included on the [www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie) database.

### **Tipperary**

**1995:261**

**Black Castle Theatre, Thurles**

**Urban**

**S128588**

**95E150**

An archaeological assessment was carried out on a small development site close to the northern side of the Black Castle, Thurles. The assessment was carried out after planning permission had been granted for a theatre and community arts centre building and in response to a request by the Office of Public Works to the local authority.

The site lies within the 'zone of archaeological potential' as defined by the OPW Urban Archaeological Survey and also lies within the supposed circuit of the medieval town defences. Black Castle, near the site, is a substantial, well-preserved, 15th/16th-century tower house which lies off Liberty Square in the centre of Thurles. The tower house has part of an enclosing bawn wall still surviving. The development is positioned on the north-east side of the tower, less than 5m away from what is thought to represent the eastern bawn wall. To the north-west of the site, less than 50m from the development area, lies the site of a motte, a late 12th-century earthen castle which had substantial precincts by the 14th century. In addition, documentary sources suggest that Thurles was a walled town in the medieval period. The line of the town wall is thought to have run some distance to the west of the proposed development site, but the location has not been confirmed by archaeological investigation.

The development site measures roughly 23m north-south by 19m east-west and is bordered on all sides by light limestone walls. It lies outside the bawn area and also some 3-5m inside the supposed line of the town wall. The assessment sought to establish:(i) whether the western boundary wall might coincide with the line of the town wall;(ii) whether a small semicircular arc in the southern boundary wall of the site, which appeared to be at variance with the general orientation of the surrounding walls, might be associated with the tower



house (perhaps forming part of an outer medieval bawn wall) ;(iii) whether archaeological deposits exist on the site. The proximity to the supposed location of the Anglo-Norman motte was also borne in mind.

Prior to the archaeological assessment four trial-holes had been opened for engineering site investigation purposes in the four corners of the site. These indicated that there was a deep deposit of grey/black silt at the southern end of the site and a natural gravel deposit at the northern end. The archaeological testing revealed that:(i) both the southern and western boundary wall are post-medieval in date; neither are associated with the castle bawn or city wall;(ii) the semicircular arc in the southern site boundary wall was inserted possibly to facilitate the inward opening of the gate;(iii) the upper levels of rubble and stones with the remains of the mortar floor are also post-medieval in date, as was a pit in the south-west corner of the site;(iv) the possible remains of a wall, probably orientated east-west, were badly disturbed at the east of the site (Trench 2, which was positioned parallel to Trench 1, did not pick up the line of a deep masonry foundation recorded in the engineers' site log, indicating that it did not extend as far north as Trench 2);(v) a deep deposit of dark grey silt with brown organic lenses beneath the upper rubble and stones extended to a depth of 3.7m below the present ground level.

Although the organic silt material excavated was intensively searched for artefactual finds, no pottery or other small items were retrieved. Of note, no animal bone or shell were recovered from this deposit. The silt extended for 13m north of the boundary wall and could represent a ditch or fosse associated with the tower house or the motte. The inclusion of fragments of twigs in the organic fill may suggest that it silted up over time. The natural deposits at the north side of the site are gravels, lying just 1.2m below present ground level. The silt, therefore, could simply represent a portion of an active natural watercourse in this area. No other archaeological layers or features were located.

**Margaret Gowen, Rath House, Ferndale Rd, Rathmichael, Co. Dublin.**

**Tipperary**

**1996:377**

**Racecourse, Thurles**

**Quarry**

**S100600**

**SMR 41:45**

**96E278**

Test excavation was carried out to locate and investigate a site classified as an 'enclosure' in the SMR. The site is represented as an oval shape, using a broken line, on the first-edition OS map (1843).

Three test-trenches identified two quarry areas in the position of the 'enclosure'. The smaller of the two had been infilled with quarry waste and topsoil once quarrying had finished. The other appears to have remained

open until relatively recently, when it was finally infilled with domestic rubbish and covered in topsoil. There was no evidence of an earlier enclosure in this area into which the quarries cut.

**Jo Moran, Sonas, Rathduff, Fethard, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**1997:560**

**BOWLING GREEN, THURLES**

**Vicinity of ringfort**

**2137 1492**

**SMR: 41:41**

**97E0282**

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken in May 1997 at the request of Dúchas The Heritage Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, at the site of a ringfort on the outskirts of Thurles. Unconditional planning permission for development on the site had been granted 30 years ago following excavations carried out for the OPW. Construction of a single-storey dwelling by the south-east bank of the ringfort was proposed. After consultation with the National Monuments Service, the location of the proposed house was moved 6m from cutting the line of the bank, within the limits of the property boundary.

Mechanical excavation of four 1m-wide external wall-footing trenches, two 1m-wide engineering test-trenches and two internal 0.3m-wide slot trenches revealed the line of the external ditch or fosse to the fort, measuring from 4.5m to over 6m in width, curving around the eastern perimeter of the fort. An engineering test-trench revealed the fosse to be V-shaped in profile and to cut the yellow-brown boulder clay to an excavated depth of over 1m. The bank of the ringfort was partly revealed in the wall-footing Trench 1 and appeared to have been artificially scarped to increase the slope of the ditch. Modern disturbance by bulldozing had removed a large portion of the bank to the north and appeared to disturb part of the above-ground bank on the east side. Trench 1 also revealed evidence for an unassociated linear ditch aligned north-west/south-east and measuring over 4m in length and 1.3–2m in width, containing charcoal flecks and animal bone, and filled by reddish-brown silty clay with cobbles.

No further excavation was undertaken; the development did not require further ground disturbance except for the insertion of a septic tank which was located away from the line of the ditch in an archaeologically sterile area.

**Paul Stevens, Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd, Rath House, Ferndale Road, Rathmichael, Co. Dublin.**

**Tipperary**

**1998:625**

**THE MUNSTER HOTEL, CATHEDRAL STREET, THURLES**

**Urban medieval**

**S130586**

**SMR 41:42**

**98E0598**

An archaeological assessment took place in December 1998 in advance of redevelopment of a site on the east bank of the River Suir, opposite the site of the Camelite Friary (c. 1291-1300) and within the eastern medieval suburb of Thurles. The original Hotel Munster (two neighbouring properties and No. 22 Cathedral Street) was demolished following approval by Dúchas.

The assessment consisted of eleven test-trenches across the development area of 7100m<sup>2</sup> and revealed a substantial concentration of archaeological features cut into subsoil across the site. They include a cluster of pits, linear slots and post-holes parallel to the street frontage, representing medieval and post-medieval structures, with ancillary structures and features to the rear. A series of furrows revealed to the rear probably represents medieval or post-medieval ploughing, within burgage plots. Further work was recommended.

**Paul Stevens for Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd, 2 Killiney View, Albert Road Lower, Glenageary, Co. Dublin.**

**Tipperary**

**1999:835**

**THE MUNSTER HOTEL, CATHEDRAL STREET, THURLES**

**Urban medieval**

**S130586**

**SMR 41:42**

**98E0598 ext.**

Excavation was carried out between February and March 1999 at the site of the Munster Hotel redevelopment, Thurles. The site measures 53m north-south by 24-28m and is on the southern side of Cathedral Street, opposite the site of the Carmelite friary, built in 1291-1300 (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 29). Excavation was at the request of the developers, to facilitate the construction of a larger hotel building with basement on the same site.

The street-frontage area (Areas A and B) was found under 18th/19th-century and modern hotel buildings. It revealed archaeological features cutting natural, yellow boulder clay, 0.2m below the level of the present pavement, including the truncated beam-slots and post-holes of a square medieval structure, orientated south-east/north-west, over 7m long and 4.4m wide. A second, rectangular medieval structure was represented by a truncated informal hearth and measured over 11m east-west (continuing under the road outside the area of excavation to the north). In between these was a truncated medieval ironworking furnace. All three features were cut by a number of in-cutting east-west gullies and ditches, probably representing a formal widening and realignment of the main Dublin road.

Area C, 13-23m from the street frontage, contained an intense concentration of rubbish and cesspits dating to the medieval, later medieval, post-medieval and even early modern periods. Amongst them was a fine but undated stone-, cobble- and moss-lined square pit and an early modern limestone well. However, this area saw the most truncation by intrusive concrete foundations.

The southern portion of the site was represented by Areas D-F, between 23m and 52m from the street frontage. This southern area also revealed a high concentration of rubbish pits, including a pit lined with coppiced hazel and ash (identified by I. Stuijts), wickerwork, a rough limestone well and a stone wall footing. The last contained two sterling silver English pennies of Edward I, dated 1302-7 (identified by M. Kenny, NMI).

The southern half of the site was also cut by a number of north-south-running boundary ditches/ gullies, dividing the site into four long, linear burgage plots, dating to the medieval period. These burgage plots were 5.5-6m wide to the east and 15m wide to the west. The western plots appeared far wider than the eastern two. However, there was also some evidence to suggest that the two westernmost plots had originally been one and were subdivided in the later medieval or early post-medieval period.

The rear 10m of the site (Area F) was sealed by 0.8m of garden topsoil and contained an unusual and undated multiple dog burial (two adults and a juvenile), within a north-south linear gully and marked by post-holes extending south into the baulk. This area also contained medieval pits and gullies continuing beyond the area of excavation. An extension to the east of Area F (Area G) revealed no further evidence of archaeological features east of the fourth north-south burgage plot gully.

The excavation produced a large assemblage of local and imported pottery from the medieval period onwards, as well as animal bone, glass, leather and rope (from early modern contexts), clay pipe and handmade brick. However, the best find from the site was a Class 3b (after Deevy 1998) gilt-edged silver ring brooch.

The results of this excavation show near-continuous, if heavily truncated, occupation on the site from at least the early 13th century, around the time of the foundation of the Carmelite friary opposite. It also indicates evidence for a relatively wealthy and semi-industrial eastern suburb to the medieval town, referred to as 'Brogmal' in the 17th century (Simington 1931, 385-8; Bradley 1985, 54; Carey and Farrelly 1985, 85), but it does not rule out the possibility of a twin town as suggested by Thomas (1992, 192-3).  
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**Paul Stevens for Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd, 2 Killiney View, Albert Road Lower, Glenageary, Co. Dublin.**

**Tipperary**

**1999:836**

**CROTTY'S BAKERY, FRIAR STREET, THURLES**

**Urban**

**S124586**

**SMR 41:42/1**

**99E0678**

Assessment was undertaken for a proposed development at Crotty's Bakery, Friar Street, Thurles. The site was in use as a bakery from the late 19th century and continued to be until recently. However, all buildings on the site post-date J. Rocque's Map of Thurles of 1755, and most are late 19th- and early 20th-century in date.

Two linear test-trenches were opened for this assessment, in the front courtyard area and the rear garden area. No archaeological soils or features were encountered.

**Paul Stevens for Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd, 2 Killiney View, Albert Road Lower, Glenageary, Co. Dublin.**

**Tipperary**

**1999:837**

**KICKHAM STREET, THURLES**

**Urban**

**2238 1590**

**SMR 41:42**

**99E0488**

The redevelopment of a site in Kickham Street, Thurles, required archaeological testing. The site is close to St Mary's Church, possibly the site of the medieval parish church. This area may have been a suburb of the medieval town.

Two trenches were opened, only one of which produced finds, all of which were 19th/20th-century in date.

**Florence M. Hurley, 8 Marina Park, Victoria Road, Cork.**

**Tipperary**

**1999:838**

**1-2 PARNELL STREET, THURLES**

**Urban**

**S125586**

**SMR 41:42:1**

**98E0563**

Monitoring was undertaken of a development at 1-2 Parnell Street, Thurles. The site is a mid-19th-century yellow brick townhouse and yard, backing onto the Black Castle, a 15th/16th-century tower-house and partial bawn, within the medieval walled town of Thurles.

Monitoring of a foundation trench, 11.5m by 8-9m and 0.5m deep, at the rear of the townhouse on 13 and 14 July 1999 revealed no archaeological features or deposits across the site. During construction, demolition of a lean-to exposed a portion of the Black Castle wall and revealed a blocked arrow-loop at ground-floor level. The loop was of cut and puckered-finished grey limestone and was splayed towards the base, with the opening recessed from the outside to allow greater cover. It measured 1.33m in height, 0.55m in sill width, 0.3m in lintel width and 0.12m in ope width and was blocked with yellow, handmade bricks. The arrow-loop and wall are outside the area to be developed.

**Paul Stevens for Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd, 2 Killiney View, Albert Road Lower, Glenageary, Co. Dublin.**

**Tipperary**

**2000:0967**

**BEAKSTOWN, THURLES**

**Ditch/pits**

**S102571**

**SMR 41:62**

**00E0892**

Testing was carried out on the site of a proposed house at Beakstown townland, on 7 December 2000, in response to a condition of planning. Three 2m-wide test-trenches were mechanically excavated c. 30m from the levelled enclosure, SMR 41:62. Within two parallel trenches, evidence for a large, subsoil-cut ditch feature was found. This feature was c. 3.7m wide and east-west-orientated. A possible associated hearth was found near the ditch in Trench 2. A burnt post, found at the edge of the ditch in Trench 3, may have been associated with the ditch activity. The ditch was not investigated further, and no finds were recovered. The relationship between the ditch and the nearby levelled enclosure was not established. However, the finding of these features highlighted the presence of unknown archaeological features peripheral to recorded monuments.

**Richard O'Brien, ADS Ltd, Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3.**

**Tipperary**

**2000:0968**

**CROKE STREET/FRIAR STREET, THURLES**

**Urban medieval**

**S21251584**

**00E0540**

Pre-development testing was required on this site as it lay within the zone of archaeological potential for Thurles town. The testing was undertaken in two phases from August to September 2000. The first area tested

was to the north-west, a greenfield site with no history of prior use. Nine test-trenches were opened. The stratigraphy uncovered within the trenches was very similar. Topsoil, beneath which was ploughsoil, showed evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation, overlying subsoil.

In the second phase of testing, a further nine test-trenches were opened. The first of these trenches was within another greenfield area and produced deposits similar to the first phase of testing. The remaining trenches were within the area of the site that fronted onto Croke Street. This part of the site had previously been used as an abattoir. Evidence for the foundations of those buildings was recovered.

There was no evidence found from this site to suggest that there was medieval or post-medieval settlement or activity in this area.

**Anne Marie Lennon, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 24 Queen Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2001:1230**

**Bowling Green, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21389 15921**

**RMP 41:41**

**01E0884**

This development entailed the construction of a garage to the rear of a domestic dwelling. Excavation of the foundations for this structure was monitored, as it is near a ringfort. Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered.

**Anne Marie Lennon, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 24 Queen Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2001:1231**

**Croke's Street, Thurles**

**Urban post-medieval**

**S122586**

**SMR 41:42**

**01E0542**

The site at Croke Street was tested prior to the redevelopment of the property. A T-shaped test-trench was inserted at the rear and side of the building before demolition, and this revealed the presence of a former floor layer composed of yellow brick and wood (99.76m OD), over a pale greyish brown, sandy silty clay layer (99.91m OD). No datable finds were retrieved from the sediment, but the floor layer is thought to date from the late 18th/early 19th century. It is thought locally that a coachyard was located in this area. A pair of



blacksmith's tongs was recovered from the trench nearer the street front. Further monitoring was recommended.

**John Tierney, Eachtra Archaeological Projects, Unit 2F, Dungarvan Business Park, Shandon, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford.**

**Tipperary**

**2001:1232**

**Emmet Street, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21276 15866**

**RMP 41:42**

**01E0793**

Pre-development testing was carried out on the site of a proposed housing development on this street, as it lies within the zone of archaeological potential for Thurles. A series of test-trenches were opened across the site using a mechanical digger. Each of the trenches was excavated into the underlying subsoil. Nothing of archaeological interest was uncovered.

**Anne Marie Lennon, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 24 Queen Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2002:1763**

**Croke Street, Thurles**

**Urban post-medieval**

**212600 158500**

**SMR 14:42**

**01E0542 ext.**

Monitoring of the excavation of foundation trenches was carried out at Croke Street, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The site, on the eastern side of Croke Street, is within the zone of archaeological potential as outlined in the Urban Archaeological Survey. The development proposal involved demolishing the buildings on the site and constructing a larger retail unit with car-parking facilities to the rear. Testing of the site had been carried out by John Tierney as part of an assessment (Excavations 2001, No. 1231, 01E0542). However, the locations of the foundations for the new building were not tested, as the demolition of the old structures had not taken place, so the assessment recommended that all groundworks associated with the development be monitored. Seven foundation trenches were excavated for the development.

Although historical research pointed to the possibility of finding the enclosing wall of the medieval town of Thurles, no evidence of medieval activity was discovered on the site. The sediments removed from the foundation trenches were mainly relatively modern or late post-medieval. Only one context showed any likelihood of being earlier, and this was inconclusive: a layer of rubble that may be the remnants of a

demolished wall. It was in the centre of the site and consisted of limestone blocks held within dark brown/black, mortar-enriched clay. It was 0.9m deep. The average dimensions of the stones were 0.22m by 0.1m by 0.08m. No coursing was evident, but the wall may have been demolished to create a level ground surface. It is possible that any medieval layers were removed at the time of the construction of the original retail unit. At the eastern end of the site, under the upper modern layers, the sediments were largely natural.

**Áine Richardson, Eachtra Archaeological Projects, Unit 2F, Dungarvan Business Park, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford.**

#### **Tipperary**

**2002:1764**

**Friar Street, Thurles**

**Urban**

**212405 158580**

**02E0775**

An assessment was carried out before an extension to the rear of street-front premises. The proposed development lies within the zone of archaeological potential of the medieval town of Thurles, adjacent to the Black Castle and within a suburb that had developed outside the West Gate of the town. Rocque's map of Thurles (1755) indicates that the northern part of Friar Street, where the site lies, was then part of the ornamental castle gardens laid out in a geometric baroque style. The north side of the street was subsequently built on.

Two test-trenches (5.5m by 1m and 1.5m by 1m) were excavated to cover the area of the proposed rear extension. They revealed that subsoil, beige and orange sandy clays, sloped down from north to south (97.49–97.11m OD). It was covered by the original topsoil, a grey/brown silty clay (0.75m thick) containing a single piece of animal bone. The edge of a pit or and east–west-running ditch (0.6m deep) was cut into this layer. It was filled with orange sand, which also covered the original topsoil to the south of the pit. It was suggested that this may relate to landscaping of the formal garden. Farther south and directly behind the existing dwelling a sump (1.25m deep) containing stone and some red brick was exposed. It was probably constructed to prevent flooding from the sloping yard. The sump and the sand layers were covered by clay and stones (0.3–0.6m thick), which formed a base for the concrete yard surface. No finds of archaeological significance were recovered.

**Brian Shanahan, for Cultural Resource Development Services Ltd, Unit 4, Dundrum Business Park, Dundrum, Dublin 14.**

#### **Tipperary**

**2002:1765**

**Liberty Square, Thurles**

**Urban**

**22026 12237**

**SMR 41:42**

**02E1841**

Pre-construction testing was undertaken on a site known as Bridge House at Liberty Square, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The site is opposite a tower-house, known as Bridge Castle. It backs onto the River Suir. The owners of the site have obtained planning permission to demolish the existing building and construct a mixed residential and retail development.

Three trenches were opened on the footprint of the proposed building. Results from the testing revealed that the river had been wider than at present. This was based on the large number of water-rolled stones and sedimentation found at the bottom of the trench nearest to the river. Testing also revealed a structure on the site pre-dating the demolished building (which dated to the early 19th century). The newly revealed structure was confined to the western part of the site, farthest from the river. No conclusive dating evidence emerged to indicate when the walls were built. However, the structure appears to be on Rocque's 1755 map and the 1819 Llandaff estate map, but the date of construction remains unknown. Cobbled surfaces were found to extend beneath the walls.

Given the nature of the archaeological features—the walls and cobbled surfaces—further investigative works will be carried out on this site in 2003.

**Mary Henry, 24 Queen Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2002:1766**

**Townparks, Thurles**

**Post-medieval**

**21276 15866**

**SMR 41:42**

**02E1397**

Pre-development testing was carried out at this site after the demolition of the existing structure. No evidence of settlement earlier than the 18th century was uncovered.

**Anne-Marie Lennon, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 24 Queen Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1807**

**Cathedral Street, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21256 15862**

**SMR 41:42**

**03E0084**

A series of engineering trial- and boreholes for municipal buildings at Cathedral Street, in the centre of Thurles town, were monitored. Seven boreholes with a diameter of 0.2m were opened. Seven trial-pits were opened measuring, on average, 2.5m by 0.5m. Nothing of archaeological significance was discovered in any of the boreholes or trial-holes.

**Mary Henry, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1808**

**Cathedral of the Assumption, Cathedral Street, Thurles**

**Cathedral and burial ground**

**21276 15866**

**SMR 41:42(08)**

**03E1514**

During the refurbishment of the cathedral a new baptismal font was installed, which required a small amount of ground reduction. This was confined to a very small area, of 1.8m in diameter, in the west transept and was carried out by hand. A portion of a broken headstone was revealed at a depth of 0.27m below the cathedral floor. The inscription was partially legible; it was commemorating the death of a priest in 1840. No human remains were revealed and the slab was left undisturbed. A portion of a wall, two courses high, of sandstone slabs and concrete was also revealed. The wall and the headstone were protected with heavy-duty plastic and the baptismal font was erected.

**Avril Purcell, Sheila Lane & Associates, AE House, Monahan Road, Cork.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1809**

**Liberty Square, Thurles**

**Urban post-medieval**

**11285 15870**

**02E1841**

This site lies at the eastern end of Liberty Square, Thurles. The River Suir lies to the east, while across the road to the south is the tower-house known as the East Gate. Testing of the site was carried out in early 2003 revealing a series of walls in the central part of the site along with two other walls close to the southern boundary. Two possible cobbled surfaces were also found, in the centre and northern part of the site. No datable material was found.

It was subsequently requested that the walls be completely uncovered to determine if they might be medieval or whether any medieval deposits were present on-site. The proximity of the tower-house and the fact that its northern wall contains the springing for an arch also prompted the additional investigation. This work was

carried out over a three-day period. A machine was used to remove modern overburden, with the remainder of the work being carried out by hand.

The earliest wall uncovered ran north-south across the centre of the site and had two short walls abutting its western face. A cobbled surface lay under the short walls but did not run under the north-south wall. A dark-grey sandy silt lay on top of the cobbles. This produced a bronze stick-pin, a Dublin trade token of 1794 and two sherds of pottery, one post-medieval, the other a very worn piece of local medieval ware. Part of a limestone mullion came from the rubble infill above the walls.

No medieval deposits were found. An examination of cartographic sources suggests that the walls belong to a narrow building of early or mid-18th-century date occupying a similar footprint to that which previously stood on the site.

**Florence M. Hurley, 8 Marina Park, Victoria Road, Cork, for Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1810**

**Liberty Square, Thurles**

**Urban**

**21256 15862**

**SMR 41:42**

**02E01841 ext.**

Piling was monitored at Bridge House, Liberty Square, in the centre of Thurles town, to ensure that walls which had been previously discovered on the site by Flor Hurley (No. 1809 above) would be avoided by the piles.

The piles avoided hitting known walls on the site. The relative ease with which they were driven suggested no new structures were encountered during the process. As regards archaeological layers, it was not possible to determine any stratigraphy due to the waterlogged nature of the site (located on the banks of the River Suir). All displaced material from the piles was a homogenous sludge.

**Mary Henry, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1811**

**Liberty Square, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21276 15866**

**SMR 41:42**

**03E0194**

Monitoring was undertaken of all ground disturbance associated with the development, as the site lies within the zone of archaeological potential for the town of Thurles. Nothing of archaeological interest was uncovered.

**Anne Marie Lennon, for Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1812**

**St Mary's Avenue, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21256 15862**

**SMR 41:42**

**03E0269**

Testing was undertaken here in advance of construction works. The site is within the zone of archaeological potential for the town of Thurles and 100m from St Mary's Church, the supposed site of the medieval church. Its location between the town wall and the medieval parish church site might indicate that it is within an area of extramural suburbs. No archaeological evidence was found to suggest the presence of settlement. The site was entirely devoid of archaeological remains and consisted of modern infill intermixed with soil, no more than 0.4m thick, overlying sterile subsoil and natural depositions.

**Mary Henry, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1813**

**St Mary's Avenue, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21276 15866**

**SMR 41:42**

**03E0843**

Monitoring was undertaken of all ground disturbance associated with this housing development, which lies within the zone of archaeological potential for the town of Thurles. Nothing of archaeological interest was uncovered.

**Anne Marie Lennon, for Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1814**

**Slievenamon Road, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21256 15862**

**SMR 41:42**

**03E00795**

Monitoring was undertaken for a building extension at the rear of a structure fronting Slievenamon Road in Thurles. No archaeological remains were recorded.

**Mary Henry, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2003:1815**

**Westgate/Friar Street, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**03E0806**

Monitoring was undertaken for groundworks associated with the laying of service pipes in Friar Street/Westgate, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The development was located within the vicinity of the zone of potential for Thurles town, SMR 41:42. The area monitored included a 12m-long by 4m-wide stretch of roadway on the east side of Croke Street and the entire 45m length of Westgate. The work involved the laying of two water mains and a sewer. An existing three-inch water main was located towards the centre of Croke Street and Westgate. It was located 0.5-0.6m below ground level. A second water pipe, laid in the last 30 years, was present some 1.2m below ground level and running along the north side of Westgate. Existing ducts (ESB, etc.) ran along the south side of Westgate and the east side of Croke Street at a depth of 0.4m below ground level. The medieval wall of Thurles was believed to cross the road at the junction of West Gate and Friar Street. During excavation there was no trace of the wall in this area. It is probable that any wall in this location would have been destroyed during the laying of the original service pipes. Nothing of an archaeological nature was noted during the works.

**Avril Hayes, Aegis Archaeology Ltd, 16 Avondale Court, Corbally, Limerick.**

**Tipperary**

**2004:1632**

**THURLES**

**19th-century burials**

**21205 15930**

**04E0599**

The Mid-Western Health Board had undertaken to demolish the existing community hospital and to erect a new community hospital, site entrance, car parking and site works at the Hospital of the Assumption, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The hospital is located on the site of the earlier Thurles Union Workhouse. Ground disturbance works associated with the construction were monitored.

During the course of monitoring a pipe trench in the south-western corner of the site, a number of grave-cuts were uncovered. After consultation with the National Museum of Ireland, it was determined that six of the grave-cuts required excavation. This resulted in the removal of the skeletal remains of nine individuals, five

adults and four juveniles, that dated to the famine period in the mid-19th century. All of the graves were orientated east-west, in the Christian fashion, and all but one of the grave-cuts contained the fragmentary remains of wooden coffins. Osteoarchaeological analysis of the remains undertaken by Linda Fibiger determined that the adults buried on the site had all suffered from some form of degenerative joint disease and dental problems, both indicators of poor health. The four excavated juveniles all showed signs of suffering from longstanding disease. No archaeological finds were recovered from any of the excavated grave-cuts. The remaining grave-cuts were recorded and covered with terram and sand.

**Bruce Sutton, Eachtra Archaeological Projects, Ballycurreen Industrial Estate, Kinsale Road, Cork.**

**Tipperary**

**2004:1633**

**CATHEDRAL STREET, THURLES**

**Urban post-medieval**

**212930 158620**

**SMR 41:40**

**04E1022 ext.**

Monitoring of groundworks before construction of an arts centre on the east bank of the River Suir just beyond the route of the medieval town walls of Thurles was requested. Trenches for storm drains revealed a 19th-century ditch and piled foundations yielded nothing but 19th-20th-century pottery as a result of large-scale reclamation activity at this time.

**Emma Devine, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2004:1634**

**CATHEDRAL STREET CARPARK, THURLES**

**No archaeological significance**

**212930 158620**

**SMR 41:42**

**04E1022 and ext.**

An assessment of a proposed civic development at Cathedral Street Carpark, Thurles, was requested by the client, Tipperary North Riding County Council. Desk-top assessment indicated that the majority of the site was a marshy inlet of the River Suir until at least the mid-19th century. This was confirmed by testing, which, beneath the modern tarmac and hardcore, revealed 19th-century rubble reclamation deposits overlying an organic river mud, which in turn covered the substratum. Nothing of archaeological interest was noted.

**C—il'n î Drisceoil, Kilkenny Archaeology, Three-castles, Kilkenny.**

**Tipperary**

**2004:1635**



## **FRIARS' STREET, THURLES**

### **Post-medieval**

**212396 158420**

**SMR 41:42**

**04E1194**

Testing was carried out at Friars' Street. Test-trenches revealed 18th-century plough furrows and a 19th-century pit, but nothing of archaeological significance.

**Emma Devine, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

### **Tipperary**

**2004:1636**

## **THURLES CBS, O'DONOVON ROSSA STREET, THURLES**

### **No archaeological significance**

**S125589**

**04E0521**

A new school hall was to be built for the Thurles Christian Brothers school. The small-scale development is sited within the zone of archaeological potential for Thurles, SMR 41:42. The site of the new hall is in the vicinity of the medieval town defences and has the potential to uncover subsurface features associated with it.

Three test-trenches were mechanically excavated across the footprint of the building. Several modern, stone-filled soak pits were uncovered. No finds or features of archaeological significance were uncovered.

**Ellen O'Carroll, The Archaeology Company, 17 Castle Street, Dalkey, Co. Dublin.**

### **Tipperary**

**2004:1637**

## **SLIEVENAMON ROAD, THURLES**

### **Urban medieval**

**21256 15862**

**SMR 41:42**

**04E0820**

Pre-construction testing took place on 12 July 2004 and uncovered archaeology of a medieval date in two of the three test-trenches opened. Underneath the modern construction rubble hardcore and tarmac of the existing yard/carpark lay the site's medieval origins. A rich organic layer containing medieval pottery, a possible pit and post-holes was identified.

A sheela-na-gig was also noted built into the fabric of the west boundary wall of the site. According to the OS letters, this came from the West Gate in Thurles, as it was known as Geata na gCoileach (the Gate of the Old Woman) and had a carving of an old woman chiselled on a stone on one of its sides.

Testing also identified post-medieval garden soil beneath the 19th-century building, now demolished.

**Emma Devine, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2004:1638**

**SLIEVENAMON ROAD, THURLES**

**Urban medieval**

**21256 15862**

**SMR 41:42**

**04E0820 ext.**

Testing carried out in July revealed archaeology of a medieval date and excavations were undertaken on 17-21 August 2004. Four trenches corresponding to the footprint of the strip foundations were excavated mechanically to remove the modern overburden of builders' rubble, which was c. 0.6m deep, to expose the subsoil and any subsequent archaeological features and/or materials.

The two trenches located to the north and east contained nothing of archaeological significance. It became clear during monitoring that this area of the site had been disturbed in more recent times and the subsoil scarped out. Fortunately this activity was confined to the northern area of the site and the areas within the south and west trenches appeared undisturbed. The earliest activity defined on the site was that of three narrow linear features or gullies running north-south across the south and west trenches. Two of these gullies were interpreted as burgage plot boundaries, due their distance apart (8m) and the similarity of their fill and morphology: V-shaped in profile with a dark silty fill, very similar to ones uncovered in an earlier excavation in Thurles town by Paul Stevens at the site of what is now the Munster Hotel (Excavations 1999, No. 835, 98E0598). Also, cartographic and documentary evidence shows that this area was comprised of burgage plots running at right angles to the medieval town wall during that period; the route of the medieval town wall corresponds exactly to the southern boundary of the site, running east-west. The third linear feature was U-shaped in profile and contained a very sterile silted fill in contrast to the others and its function is as of yet unknown.

A large pit, 0.7m deep and 5m wide, was located to the north of the west trench; it was probably square in plan but, as only part of it was exposed in the trench, it is impossible to say for sure. Its primary fill was of sub-angular limestone chunks that appeared to have been deliberately dumped; all subsequent fills were sterile silts and the pit was interpreted as a soak pit. This pit and the most western gully were sealed beneath a layer of post-medieval plough furrows that criss-crossed each other, similar again to the excavations at the Munster Hotel. Nothing was recovered from these features to date them conclusively, but the fact that they enclosed the earlier 13th-14th-century remains found during testing and lay beneath post-medieval furrows makes a medieval, possibly 13th-14th-century, date highly likely. An additional test-trench was also required, as a

separate planning permission given to build directly beside the route of the medieval town wall was not included in the original remit. This licence was extended to cover it. Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered; the modern wall/site boundary that currently exists appeared to have removed any evidence of the medieval defences.

**Emma Devine, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

**Tipperary**

**2004:1639**

**WOLFE TONE PLACE, THURLES**

**No archaeological significance**

**21276 15866**

**04E0562**

Monitoring of groundworks took place on 29 April 2004 at a development in Wolfe Tone Place, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The proposed development is within the constraint for the town of Thurles (SMR 41:42). The extant three-storey building on the site was derelict. It formerly housed a butcher's hall on the ground floor with residential accommodation above. The building was retained as part of the new development.

The groundworks comprised a reduction in the ground-floor level of 0.3m in an area measuring 10.2m east-west by 6.1m wide. It also involved the excavation for two pads which measured 1.4m by 1.4m by 0.5-0.6m deep and 1.6m by 1.5m by 0.5m deep.

Below the concrete floor was a fill that consisted of sand and red and yellow brick. Below this was mid- to dark-brown friable silt loam, which covered grey loose sand and gravel. The fill contained modern artefacts and occasional animal-bone fragments.

The concrete and fill were associated with the existing modern building on the site. The mid- to dark-brown friable silt loam could have represented the original topsoil. The grey loose sand and gravel was a natural deposit. Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered.

**Richard Crumlish, 61 An Cladrach, Castlebar Road, Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo.**

**Tipperary**

**2006:1925**

**Thurles Train Station, Garryvicleheen, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21215 15835**

**06E0495**

Monitoring here was carried out on an intermittent basis from May to July 2006. The development comprised the excavation of two pits for a large diesel tank and associated auxiliary drainage. The area of the site to the

east of the railway line was used as a carpark and monitoring of a large sump hole took place, as well as trenching of associated auxiliary works. The sump hole measured 20m by 18m by 5m in depth. Tarmac, 0.2m thick, lay over hardcore, 0.1m thick, which covered the natural brown silty clay, 0.2m deep. The natural boulder clay was light-yellow and was evident at the base of the excavated hole. A trench was excavated along the length of the carpark oriented north-south. The trench varied slightly in depth but measured on average 1.5m. The stratigraphy of the trench was uniform. The tarmac and hardcore measured 0.4m in thickness. Beneath this was a soft brown silty clay which measured on average 1.1m in thickness. To the west of the railway line another sump hole was excavated. This measured 20m by 20m by 5m in depth. Topsoil measured 0.1m in depth and the subsoil was a yellowish-brown silty clay. No features or deposits of archaeological significance were identified.

**Maedbh Saunderson, Arch-Tech Ltd, 32 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2.**

**Tipperary**

**2007:1729**

**Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**21291 15847**

**TN041-042**

**07E0585**

Test-trenching was carried out in June 2007 in advance of the development of a carpark at St Patrick's College, Cathedral Street, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. Nothing of archaeological significance was found on the site.

**Linda Hegarty, Poulcarroll House, Tulligmore, Ballinhassig, Co. Cork.**

**Tipperary**

**2008:1162**

**Ursuline Convent, Brittas Road, Thurles**

**No archaeological significance**

**212784 158779**

**TN041-042**

**08E0676**

An impact assessment (including testing) was undertaken on this site prior to the proposed construction of a new convent. The site is located within the town of Thurles and to the north-west and within the grounds of the Ursuline Convent (established 1787). The latter is a protected structure, while two other protected structures are located to the south. These are Hayes' Hotel and Devlin's Medical Hall. The proposed development is located in the former farmyards of the convent. Extant farmyard buildings were demolished prior to testing.

Five trenches were opened across the site. These varied from 14m to 20m in length. A series of modern drainage features were uncovered in the trenches, as well as the foundation of a modern structure (concrete blocks), and a large volume of modern levelling fill. Nothing of an archaeological nature was uncovered in the trenches.

**Linda G. Lynch, Aegis Archaeology Ltd, 32 Nicholas Street, Kings Island, Limerick.**

#### **Tipperary**

**634S**

**Mary's Avenue, Thurles**

**Urban**

**212760 156660**

**TN041-042**

**10E044**

Testing was undertaken subsequent to a request for further information as part of planning retention for the demolition of a garage and store and to build a new garage/utility room and connect to services. The new building had been partially built. The site was located to the east of Thurles town centre, along the south side of St Mary's Avenue and close to St Mary's Church and graveyard. St Mary's Avenue is within the zone of archaeological potential for Thurles town.

Two trenches were opened within the site to the south and south-west of the partially constructed building, on lines of proposed services. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed, although a rubble floor and pit were recorded both dating to the modern period. It was noticeable the rubble floor was sealed with a layer of redeposited natural imported from outside the immediate vicinity, which was covered with gravel to form a hard surface. The rubble floor was also immediately above the natural deposition and it was considered that this area was stripped prior to the laying of the floor.

Local information revealed this site was a brewery until the latter half of the 20th century, with a large lean-to shed aligned north-south along the eastern boundary wall. It was therefore considered the features identified during the archaeological testing are associated with this structure.

**Mary Henry, Mary Henry Archaeological Services Ltd, 17 Staunton Row, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.**

### 4.3 Protected Structures

There are no protected structures located on the subject site. There are a number of Protected Structures on Slievenamon Road. None of these will be impacted by the proposed road.

RPS No	name	Address
RPS 110	22312110	Coláiste Éile, Slievenamon Road
RPS 111	2231211	Dwan, Slievenamon Road
RPS 112	2231212	Lár na Páirce, Slievenamon Road
RPS113	2231213	16 <sup>th</sup> Heavy Mortar Battery Hall, Slievenamon Road
RPS114	2231214	Carrigan & Co. Solicitors, Slievenamon Road
RPS115	2231214	Slievenamon Road
RPS120	2231220	Bamboo Garden Restaurant, Slievenamon Road
RPS121	2231221	Slievenamon Road
RPS122	2231222	Slievenamon Road
RPS123	2231223	Terrace, Slievenamon Road
RPS124	2231224	Elm Lea, Slievenamon Road
RPS125	2231225	Terrace, Slievenamon Road
RPS126	2231226	Dwelling, Slievenamon Road
RPS133	2231233	Slievenamon Road
RPS136	2231236	Slievenamon Road
RPS38	2231238	Slievenamon Road
RPS141	2231241	Dún Aoibhinn, Slievenamon Road
RPS144	2231244	Slievenamon , Slievenamon Road
RPS145	2231245	Thurles Town Council Offices , Slievenamon Road

**Table 3. List of Protected Structures on Slievenamon Road (taken Thurles and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015)**

## 5. Impact of the Proposed Development

### 5.1 The Predicted Impacts

This section might be more accurately described as the prediction of impacts on the cultural heritage, including archaeology, since the impacts by definition have not yet occurred (EPA 1995a, 23; 2002; 2003)..

The description and evaluation of the predicted impacts are as follows (these follow the suggested layout in the EPA Guidelines document 2002):

Impact Number 1 (Physical)
<p><b>Character:</b> Construction of 1.1 km of new roadway and 50m span bowstring arch crossing of River Suir.</p> <p><b>Impact Type:</b> Direct.</p> <p><b>Magnitude:</b> Entire subject site.</p> <p><b>Duration:</b> Permanent (that is in excess of sixty years; EPA 2002).</p> <p><b>Consequences:</b> Potential loss of information on previously recorded and unrecorded archaeological sites, features and/or objects.</p> <p><b>Significance:</b> Significant. There is one known Recorded Monument (RMP) TN041-043--- (enclosure) located in a field through which the proposed road will pass, and one Recorded Monument (RMP) TN041-044--- (enclosure) immediately adjacent to the proposed roadway, on the eastern side of Mill Road.</p> <p><b>Certainty:</b> Definite. If the construction works are carried out without appropriate mitigation measures, it may result in a loss of archaeological historical and cultural heritage information.</p>

### 5.2 The 'Worst Case' Scenario

In this instance the worst case scenario would be the loss of valuable cultural heritage resource.

### 5.3 Interaction of Impacts

It is important to realise that the impacts relating to different disciplines (such as the ones listed above for archaeology) may have parallel impacts in other disciplines, such as general visual, noise or public health impacts which have not been specifically addressed in this report.



## 6. Conclusions & Suggested Mitigation

The proposed scheme comprises approximately 1.1 km of new road with a new signalised junction on the Slievenamon Road at its junction with Clongour Road, a new priority junction with Mill Road and 4 intermediate priority junctions to provide access to traversed lands. The scheme includes a 50 metre span tied bowstring arch crossing of the Suir along with ancillary services drainage, ducting, water mains and services.

To mitigate against future impacts, it is suggested that it is suggested that;

- **A programme of test trenching be carried out along the route of the proposed roadway, with particular attention (increased density of trenches) paid to where the proposed roadway passes close to RMP 041-043--- (enclosure) identified in the geophysical report.**
- **An assessment should be carried out at the location of the proposed river crossing of the Suir, which should include a dive survey with hand held metal detector, and should include the river banks and river bed.**
- **That all topsoil stripping be monitored by a qualified archaeologist at construction stage.**

It is also suggested that the test trenching should be carried out post CPO / land acquisition, in advance of the main construction contract. This would allow for the route to be fenced off. This testing should be carried out in the green field areas of the site, with a trench along the centre line of the route with regular 90 degree off-sets. The dive survey and metal detection of the river crossing should be carried out at the same time.

In relation to the area to the west of the river bank, in the existing industrial estate, , this should be monitored at the topsoil stripping phase of the development.

These suggestions are to mitigate the predicted physical impact as set out in section 5 of this report.

It is very important to note that it is the National Monuments Service (details below section 7) in consultation with the planning authority, who will formulate and ratify any archaeological mitigation, should it be required, and this report can only make suggestions and report on the desk-top assessment and site inspection carried out.

The attention of the client, client agents and the developer is drawn to the relevant portions of the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004) which describes the responsibility of the site owners and procedures to report the finding of archaeological items, if any should be discovered during the course of quarrying at the site, to the National Museum of Ireland and the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

This legislation also outlines the developer's obligation to facilitate and fund all archaeological works that may be considered necessary by the National Monuments Service and/or the National Museum of Ireland in respect of development proposals.

## **7. Non-Technical Summary**

### **7.1 Scope of Study**

This is a desktop study to assess the potential direct and indirect impact(s), if any, on the potential archaeological environment which can reasonably be expected to occur.

### **7.2 Method of Study**

The site was visited by a qualified archaeologist and recorded in the proper fashion on the Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013. A desktop study was undertaken which consulted all immediately available material relating to the site as listed in the project references.

### **7.3 Existing Environment**

The proposed relief road is located to the southeast of the town of Thurles, Co. Tipperary, in the townlands of Monakeeba, Glebe, Mullauns and Clongower.

### **7.4 Historical and Archaeological Environment**

One known archaeological monument is located in a field through which the proposed roadway will pass. This is TN041-043---. There is one monument adjacent to Mill Road, namely TN041-044--- (enclosure). No previously unrecorded archaeological monuments were noted on the site during the site inspection.

### **7.5 Impacts of the Proposed Development**

Future impacts were identified as having the potential to occur on the potential subsurface unrecorded archaeology of the site. This has been detailed above (section 5).

## **7.5 Conclusions and Suggested Mitigation**

A method of archaeological mitigation has been suggested (section 6). It is the remit of the National Monuments Service, however, to legally recommend any one or a combination of these mitigation measures and perhaps to make recommendations that have not been suggested above. These recommendations may be sent directly to the applicant or more usually through the local authority in question.

## **7.6 Further Information & Inquiries**

Any enquiries regarding the above or the archaeological mitigation on the proposed development, should it be required, may be directed to:

*Archaeological Planning and Licencing Unit,  
National Monuments Service,  
Customs House,  
Dept. Of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin 1.  
Phone: 01-8883177.*



## 8. Signing-Off Statement

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**Client:** Michael Devery,  
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Civic Offices,  
Nenagh,  
Co. Tipperary

**Signed:**   
for ÆGIS ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED

**Dated:** October 2013

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