

**CONSERVATION STUDY  
DRUMSNAT GRAVEYARD  
COUNTY MONAGHAN**



**ON BEHALF OF  
MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL**

**February 2020**



**IAC** Archaeology





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

As the primary output of the Early Christian Monaghan Project, Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd has compiled this study on behalf of Monaghan County Council to assess the significance and identify conservation issues associated with the early medieval elements of the site at Drumsnat, which is located within the townland of Mullanacross in the Barony of Monaghan, County Monaghan (OS Sheet 13). This study was undertaken by Paul Duffy, Ross Waters and Christina O'Regan of IAC Archaeology Ltd. with specialist input from Dr Paul Stevens (IAC Archaeology Ltd). The resultant reconstruction drawing was drafted during the Conservation Study process by Philip Armstrong of Paint the Past, Archaeological Reconstruction.

### Summary of objectives

The Conservation Study for Drumsnat, County Monaghan, provides a framework for the conservation and management of the historic church (MO013-002003), graveyard (MO013-002004), cross (MO013-002001) and mass-rock (MO013-002005) while setting out the key objectives and future vision for the management of the early medieval built heritage of Drumsnat.

The objectives of the Conservation Study are to:

- outline the significance of the monuments;
- present a brief history and description of the surviving features of early medieval Drumsnat;
- identify the issues that affect the core values of the various components of the site and of the site in its entirety;
- deliver a practical programme, operable within community networks, to enable communities to take responsibility for and participate in the development and conservation of their heritage assets.

### Summary of Significance

Drumsnat is a site of great antiquity with evidence to suggest that it provided a focus for continuing Christian worship from the early medieval period. The surviving above ground elements along with features that have the potential to survive below ground as suggested by local topography and evidence from historic maps, are valuable heritage assets which possess a spectrum of significance across a number of designations including archaeological, historical, social and artistic.

- No early architectural fabric survives on the site. The graveyard enclosure drystone wall is likely to be 18th century or later in date. The entrance and associated steps are modern;
- The site appeared to remain a special place of Christian practice and tradition in the locality, from the 17th-century (represented by the possible 17th-century cross MO013-002001) to the present day. Several headstones within the graveyard date to the early 18th century and several more, unmarked headstones may be earlier in date;

- The presence of nine recorded early medieval settlement sites (raths) within 2km of Drumsnat is evidence for a significant early medieval population within the area;
- Drumsnat burial ground is an archaeological site of historical significance listed on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP MO013-002). It is therefore subject to statutory legal protection and notice is required in advance of any groundworks or conservation works. There is a high potential for surviving sub-surface archaeological deposits, soils, features or artefacts to exist due to lack of any significant development or excessive disturbance from recent burials;
- The graveyard is significant to the local population given that it contains some plots still tended by descendants of the people interred there;
- The value of the graveyard and the hedgerows must be recognised as a habitat which is not subject to agricultural practices, therefore encouraging biodiversity, a positive outcome, with particular relevance to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

### Summary of Conservation Issues

A number of conservation issues challenge the continued integrity of Drumsnat graveyard. These include:

- Vegetation damaging masonry elements;
- Upkeep and maintenance of memorials;
- Inadvertent damage to habitats of protected species;
- Potential damage to bedrock associated with Mass Rock;
- Lack of appropriate interpretative signage;
- Potential damage to sub-surface Archaeology.

### Summary of Policies/Recommendations

The following general policies have been set out in the Conservation Study with the aim of protecting the unique heritage assets discussed and addressing the conservation issues and potential threats outlined:

- **Policy 1:** Protection and Retention of the Historic Integrity of the Site – To place the conservation of all elements of early medieval Drumsnat, both known and unknown, and the protection of the significance of its various elements at the heart of planning and management of the monuments.
- **Policy 2:** Conservation, Repair and Maintenance – To implement effective regimes for maintenance and repair, while protecting the significance and historic integrity of the various elements of early medieval Drumsnat while observing exemplary standards of conservation practice.
- **Policy 3:** Enhancement and Improvement – To enhance the historic character and visual qualities of the various elements of early medieval Drumsnat by

consolidating eroding elements, removing intrusive elements and addressing impacts upon setting.

- **Policy 4:** Access and Interpretation – To encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the various elements of early medieval Drumsnat, by promoting both physical and intellectual access to the monuments and meeting the needs of a broad variety of users.
- **Policy 5:** Research, Education and Tourism – To develop an understanding of the various elements of early medieval Drumsnat through informed archaeological investigation and research, ensuring their preservation in an accessible form.

A series of recommendations for specific programmed actions which will support the policies contained within the Conservation Plan have been made. The recommendations are summarised as follows:

- **Recommendation 1.** That the Drumsnat Heritage Committee, with the support of the Heritage Office of Monaghan County Council, establish a Steering Group.
- **Recommendation 2.** That the Steering Group develop a Graveyard Maintenance/ Management Scheme which should incorporate rostered maintenance of the grounds, fence and structures.
- **Recommendation 3.** That Monaghan County Council commission ecological and wildlife habitat surveys in order to characterise the species present within the graveyard with a view to safeguarding any protected species or the habitats of such that have the potential to exist within the graveyard.
- **Recommendation 4.** That Monaghan County Council commission new interpretative signage at the graveyard.
- **Recommendation 5.** That the Steering Group build upon the Early Christian Monaghan Project to include Drumsnat in a county-wide cycling trail.
- **Recommendation 6.** That Monaghan County Council commission a geophysical survey of lands immediately surrounding the graveyard.
- **Recommendation 7.** That the Steering Group organise a community-based graveyard survey aimed at recording the condition of the headstones.
- **Recommendation 8.** That the Steering Group investigate the possibility of dismantling the circular stone wall within the centre of the graveyard with the aim of identifying any marked/inscribed stones which may be old gravemarkers.

- **Recommendation 9.** That the Steering Group take steps to remove the ‘Mass Rock’ writing which has been painted on the bedrock adjacent to the Mass Rock.
- **Recommendation 10.** That the Steering Group make efforts to align with Action 26 of the Monaghan Heritage Plan, to ‘Develop a series of heritage booklets and make them available on the internet’ with reference to Drumsnat Graveyard.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

In the summer of 2016, the Monaghan County Heritage Officer conceived and launched the 'Early Christian Monaghan Project' with the aim of promoting and safeguarding four sites of early medieval significance within the county – Innishkeen Round Tower and Graveyard, Killahear Graveyard, Clones Round Tower, Graveyard and High Cross and Errigal Truagh Church and Graveyard. IAC Archaeology, with specialist input from Dr Paul Stevens, was appointed to undertake this work. Conservation Studies were produced for all bar Errigal Truagh, where one was already in existence. Community workshops were organised for all four sites, though the workshop at Errigal Truagh did not proceed. A second phase of the Early Christian Monaghan Project was launched and following a successful tender bid, IAC Archaeology, again with specialist input from Dr Paul Stevens, was appointed to produce Conservation Studies and undertake community workshops based around three new sites: Drumsnat graveyard; Old Donagh graveyard and cross and Killeevan church and graveyard.

This conservation study has been developed in line with international best practice guidelines as outlined in James Semple Kerr's *The Conservation Plan – Seventh Edition* (2013) and endorsed and upheld by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Venice (1964), Washington (1987) and Burra (1981) charters. The study addresses cultural heritage issues in an integrated manner and has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders including the Drumsnat Heritage Committee and Monaghan County Council Heritage.

Officer.



**Figure 1:** Modern Drumsnat

### 1.1.1 Note on nomenclature

The terms Early Christian and early medieval are used within this text, however these are not interchangeable terms. In Ireland, the former is an outmoded term and no longer in general use, with both Irish and international academic research preferring 'early medieval' – a more generic temporal term for use in reference to archaeological monuments and artefacts from the period dating between AD 400 and AD 1100. Exceptions include use in the County Monaghan Early Christian Trail – which related to the name of the trail, as well as specific references to earlier documents.

More accurately the Early Christian Period dates is from AD <200-300, and in Ireland, the introduction of Christianity is only roughly dated to the 5th century, but gradually spread throughout the island, with widespread – but no universal adoption after the 9th century. Many early medieval Irish settlements and monuments were not solely occupied by Christians – not all ecclesiastical sites were totally religious and not all secular sites totally absent of religious significance. In addition, archaeological

evidence of the burial rite has shown cremation and un-orthodox practices continued well into the 10th century (prior to the arrival of the pagan Scandinavians (Vikings)).’

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES

The Conservation Study for Drumsnat, County Monaghan, provides a framework for the conservation and management of the historic church (MO013-002003), graveyard (MO013-002004), cross (MO013-002001) and mass-rock (MO013-002005), while setting out the key objectives and future vision for the management of the built heritage of Drumsnat. The purpose of the study is to ensure the long-term conservation and preservation of these important monuments to international standards by putting in place a management framework that will protect the unique qualities of the individual elements in addition to the combined significance of these features in the context of the early medieval landscape.

The study aims to ensure that the site’s unique qualities and significance are understood in order to conserve and safeguard the inherited cultural and historical assets. The project aligns with Section 6 of the 1995 Heritage Act to promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in, and facilitate the appreciation and enjoyment of the national heritage, and with the actions outlined in the County Monaghan Heritage Plan 2012–2017.

The objectives of this Conservation Study are to:

- outline the significance of the monuments;
- present a brief history and description of the surviving features of early medieval Drumsnat;
- identify the issues that affect the core values of the various components of the site and of the site in its entirety;
- draft policies for effective management of the early medieval components of Drumsnat into the future while maintaining and highlighting the integral part that these elements play in the social and cultural significance of the modern local landscape;
- deliver a practical programme, operable within community networks, to enable communities to take responsibility for and participate in the development and conservation of their heritage assets.

The study will inform the day-to-day and long-term management of the various elements discussed. It will be a working document that is open to periodic review, with additions or amendments being made as conditions change.

## 1.3 PROJECT TEAM

The following is a summary of the team involved in developing and delivering this study.

- Paul Duffy BA, MIAI – IAC Archaeology.
- Christina O'Regan MSc, BA, MIAI – IAC Archaeology.
- Dr Paul Stevens PhD, BA, MIAI – IAC Archaeology.
- Ross Waters BA, MA – IAC Archaeology.

#### Paul Duffy BA Hons, MIAI

Paul is a licence eligible archaeologist with over 12 years' field experience. In recent years, Paul's focus has been on community archaeology. He has extensive experience designing, co-ordinating and delivering on archaeological survey, research projects, outreach events and excavations which prioritise community involvement and community ownership. Paul's understanding of and passion for community archaeology was fostered during his time on numerous international projects. These include supervising community-based excavations in Southern France as well as leading many large-scale heritage surveys and rock shelter excavations in tandem with Aboriginal communities in Western Australia. Prior to this, Paul spent several years working on large infrastructure projects supervising numerous prehistoric and medieval excavations throughout Ireland. Paul has lectured widely on his work and has published work in several peer-reviewed journals including the international *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*. Paul is currently serving on the board of the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland. Paul holds a first-class BA (Hons) in Heritage Studies from GMIT.

#### Christina O'Regan BA, MSc, MIAI

Christina has over 18 years' experience of working in the archaeological sector in Ireland. Community Archaeology is one of Christina's passions and she recently spent two years developing and delivering archaeological workshops for schools on both sides of the border. She has developed a particular expertise in managing such projects with seven years' experience as Project Manager in both the Republic and Northern Ireland. Christina holds a BA (Hons) degree in Archaeology with History from University College Cork and an MSc in Environmental Archaeology from Queen's University Belfast. She served as the Events Organiser for the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland from 2014–2016 and is a full member of the Institute. She also serves on the Historic Monuments Council for Northern Ireland.

#### Paul Stevens BA, PHD, MIAI

Paul is an archaeologist and leading scholar in the field of the early medieval Church in Ireland. In addition to his academic career, Paul has extensive experience as a project manager, publication manager, heritage resource management consultant, site manager, editor, author and researcher with a large scale archaeological consultancy. He has conducted 78 licenced excavations in Ireland (1995–2016), notably directing the important ecclesiastical monastic enclosure site of Clonfad 3 where a significant assemblage of early historical artefacts and ironworking activity were recovered. He has published widely on the early medieval period in Ireland.

Paul has been awarded Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship funding and was awarded his doctorate from University College Dublin in 2018. The title of his thesis is *Doing God's work? The role of the church in the expansion of the early medieval Irish economy, AD 400–1100*.

#### Ross Waters BA (Mod), MA

Ross is a graduate of University College London where he completed a Masters degree in Managing Archaeological Sites. He obtained his undergraduate degree, Ancient and Medieval History and Culture, from Trinity College Dublin. He has been working with IAC Archaeology since 2017 and is involved in compiling archaeological assessments and EIAR chapters for projects around Ireland.

### 1.4 CONSULTATIONS

Following initial research, a number of statutory and voluntary bodies were consulted to gain further insight into the cultural background of the individual monuments and the overall site. These were as follows:

- Monaghan County Council Heritage Officer, Shirley Clerkin
- Drumsnat Heritage Committee
- Office of Public Works, Ana Dolan, Senior Architect, Trim District
- Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs – the Heritage Service, National Monuments and Historic Properties Section: Record of Monuments and Places; Sites and Monuments Record; Monuments in State Care Database; Preservation Orders; Register of Historic Monuments and the database of current licences (2009–2011);
- National Museum of Ireland, Irish Antiquities Division: topographical files of Ireland;
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage: County Monaghan;
- Trinity College Dublin, Map Library: Historical and Ordnance Survey Maps;
- National Library of Ireland.

## 2 CONSERVATION STUDY METHODOLOGY

The Conservation Study seeks to set out what is significant in a place and identify what policies are appropriate to enable that significance to be retained in its future use and development. In the words of James Semple Kerr, the most influential proponent of the Conservation Plan, Conservation Plan methodology is particularly applicable to the 'study of complex or composite monuments in vulnerable, dynamic and changing environments' (1999). This Conservation Study is very much based upon the precepts of Kerr's Conservation Plan.

Conservation Plan methodology involves two principal stages, namely Stage I – Understanding the Place. Stage I of the process seeks to set out:

- What the current location, physical composition and current presentation of a monument or place is;
- Why that monument or place is culturally or materially significant;
- How that significance may be vulnerable.

And Stage II – Conservation Policy and its implementation which seeks to:

- Assess the source of the issues faced by a monument or place;
- Evaluate the potential impact or change and development on or close to the monument or place;
- Advise and manage that change in order to conserve by adding value.

Gathering evidence for the Conservation Study (Stage I) has been undertaken in three phases. The first phase comprised a paper survey of all available archaeological, architectural, historical and cartographic sources. The second phase involved a field inspection of the monument, the overall site and its overall setting. The third phase consisted an open workshop was held at Threemilehouse GAA Centre, 9th May 2018.

### 2.1 PAPER SURVEY

The following sources were examined to provide background, context and specific detail on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage of the monument, and the overall site of Drumsnat:

- Record of Monuments and Places for County Monaghan;
- Sites and Monuments Record for County Monaghan;
- Monuments in State Care Database;
- Preservation Orders;
- Database of current archaeological investigation licences (2014–2015);
- Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland;
- Cartographic and written sources relating to the study area;
- County Monaghan Development Plan 2013–2019;

- County Monaghan Heritage Plan 2013-2017;
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage;
- Place name analysis – Logainm.ie;
- Schools Folklore Collection Co. Monaghan;
- Aerial photographs;
- Excavations Bulletin (1970-2020)

**Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)** is a list of archaeological sites known to the National Monuments Section, which are afforded legal protection under Section 12 of the 1994 National Monuments Act and are published as a record.

**Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)** holds documentary evidence and field inspections of all known archaeological sites and monuments. Some information is also held about archaeological sites and monuments whose precise location is not known e.g. only a site type and townland are recorded. These are known to the National Monuments Section as ‘un-located sites’ and cannot be afforded legal protection due to lack of locational information. As a result these are omitted from the Record of Monuments and Places. SMR sites are also listed on the recently launched website created by the DAHG – [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie).

**National Monuments in State Care Database** is a list of all the National Monuments in State guardianship or ownership. Each is assigned a National Monument number whether in guardianship or ownership and has a brief description of the remains of each Monument.

The Minister for the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht may acquire national monuments by agreement or by compulsory order. The state or local authority may assume guardianship of any national monument (other than dwellings). The owners of national monuments (other than dwellings) may also appoint the Minister or the local authority as guardian of that monument if the state or local authority agrees. Once the site is in ownership or guardianship of the state, it may not be interfered with without the written consent of the Minister.

**Preservation Orders List** contains information on Preservation Orders and/or Temporary Preservation Orders, which have been assigned to a site or sites. Sites deemed to be in danger of injury or destruction can be allocated Preservation Orders under the 1930 Act. Preservation Orders make any interference with the site illegal. Temporary Preservation Orders can be attached under the 1954 Act. These perform the same function as a Preservation Order but have a time limit of six months, after which the situation must be reviewed. Work may only be undertaken on or in the vicinity of sites under Preservation Orders with the written consent, and at the discretion, of the Minister.

**Database of current archaeological investigation licences** is a list held by the National Monuments Section of the DAHG that provides details of licences issued that have yet to appear within the Excavations Bulletin (2014–2015).

**Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland** is the national archive of all known finds recorded by the National Museum. This archive relates primarily to artefacts but also includes references to monuments and unique records of previous excavations. The find spots of artefacts are important sources of information on the discovery of sites of archaeological significance.

**Cartographic and Pictorial sources** are important in tracing land use development within the development area as well as providing important topographical information on areas of archaeological potential and the development of buildings. Cartographic analysis of all relevant maps has been made to identify any topographical anomalies or structures that no longer remain within the landscape.

- *William Petty's Down Survey Map, Monaghan, Barony of Monaghan, 1656-8*
- *William McCrea's Barony Map of Monaghan, 1793*
- *First Edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey Map, 1837, scale 1:10560*
- *Ordnance Survey Map, 1909, scale 1:2500*

**Documentary sources** were consulted to gain background information on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage landscape of Drumsnat.

**Aerial photographic coverage** is an important source of information regarding the precise location of sites and their extent. It also provides initial information on the terrain and its likely potential for archaeology. A number of sources were consulted including aerial photographs held by the Geological Survey of Ireland, the Ordnance Survey and Google Earth.

**Place Names** are an important part in understanding both the archaeology and history of an area. Place names can be used for generations and in some cases have been found to have their root deep in the historical past.

**County Monaghan Development Plan 2013-2019** contains a catalogue of all the Protected Structures and archaeological sites within the county. The County Monaghan Development Plan was consulted to obtain information on cultural heritage sites in and within the immediate vicinity of Drumsnat.

**County Monaghan Heritage Plan 2013-2017** contains an action plan for the heritage of the county up to 2017. It also contains a synopsis of the relevant legislation governing sites and an explanation of the levels of protection afforded to different monuments.

**The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage** is a government based organisation tasked with making a nationwide record of significant local, regional, national and international structures, which in turn provides county councils with a guide as to what structures to list within the Record of Protected Structures. The architectural survey for County Monaghan was completed during 2011 and 2012. The NIAH have also carried out a nationwide desk based survey of historic gardens, including demesnes that surround large houses. This has also been completed for



County Monaghan and was examined in relation to the surviving demesnes within the surrounding area of Drumsant.

**Place name analysis – Logainm.ie** is a comprehensive management system for data, archival records and place names research conducted by the State. The website is made available as a public resource and administered by DCU and DAHRRGA.

**Schools Folklore Collection - Ducas.ie** In 1937 the Irish Folklore Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, initiated a revolutionary scheme in which schoolchildren were encouraged to collect and document folklore and local history. The website makes these entries available as a public resource and administered by UCD, the National Folklore Collection, the National Folklore Foundation, DCU and DAHRRGA.

**Excavations Bulletin** is a summary publication that has been produced every year since 1970. This summarises every archaeological excavation that has taken place in Ireland during that year up until 2010 and since 1987 has been edited by Isabel Bennett. This information is vital when examining the archaeological content of any area, which may not have been recorded under the SMR and RMP files. This information is also available online ([www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)) from 1970–2020.

## 2.2 FIELD INSPECTION

Field inspection is necessary to determine the extent and nature of archaeological and architectural remains, and can also lead to the identification of previously unrecorded or suspected sites and portable finds through topographical observation and local information.

- Visiting and assessing the condition of each of the monuments;
- Walking the graveyard of Drumsnat and its immediate environs;
- Noting and recording the terrain type and land usage;
- Noting and recording the presence of features of archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage significance;
- Verifying the extent and condition of recorded sites;
- Visually investigating any suspect landscape anomalies to identify potentially unrecorded features of cultural heritage significance.

## 2.3 CONSULTATIONS

Consultation was undertaken with Shirley Clerkin, the Heritage Officer for County Monaghan upon IAC Archaeology's appointment to the project. A meeting was undertaken on the 27th July 2016 in Monaghan County Council offices in order to formalise IAC Archaeology's appointment and to outline timescales and expand upon projected outputs of the project. Particular emphasis was placed upon capturing the social and cultural significance of the monuments and the sites within the modern landscape.

In furtherance of this objective, an open workshop was held at Threemilehouse GAA Centre, 9th May 2018. Representatives from the Drumsnat Heritage Committee were present in addition to the Monaghan County Council Heritage Officer, Shirley Clerkin, and members of the general public.

Ana Dolan, senior architect with the Office of Public Works, Trim District and Pauline Gleeson, senior archaeologist with the National Monuments Service were also consulted during the drafting of the Conservation Study.

### 3 UNDERSTANDING THE MONUMENT

#### 3.1 TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

Drumsnat, as it is known locally, is located within the townland of Mullanacross in the Barony of Monaghan, County Monaghan (OS Sheet 13). The site overlooks Drumsnat Lough. In the Life of Molua it is written that it is situated between Lough Erne and Lough Neagh (Ó Dufaigh 2017, 175-6).

The graveyard is located on a hill overlooking Drumsnat Lough to the east, the elevation of the site is c. 226m. Drumsnat Lough is connected to the Ulster canal which passes by the graveyard to its north. The canal runs from Charlemont, Co. Armagh to Lough Erne, Co. Fermanagh. The canal partially travels along the boundary between Mullanacross and Liscat and Mullanacross and Cooldarragh. The graveyard is located at the southern boundary with Cooldarragh.

The drift geology of the region is carboniferous limestone and the site is located in a lowland region (Hegarty 2017, 69). This area is known as the 'Monaghan Corridor' and it is defined by to the northwest by the Slieve Beagh uplands and to the southeast by hilly uplands formed from Ordovician strata. Tehallan parish, most of Clones parish, eastern portions of Errigal and Donagh parishes, and the northern sections of Monaghan, Kilmore, and Drumsnat parishes are included in this corridor. The counties best soils are located in the southern lowlands and the Monaghan Corridor, well-drained grey and brown podsolics and brown earths. The topography of the region is characterised by drumlins and knolls interspersed with small lakes, rivers, and inter-drumlin wetlands (McDermott 2010, 9-11).

#### 3.2 OWNERSHIP OF THE SITE

The ownership of the monument and the legislative requirements governing the site are key factors in understanding and implementing any recommendations made by the Conservation Study. Drumsnat graveyard is in the ownership of Monaghan County Council. The lands surrounding the graveyard however are within private ownership and permission would need to be granted prior to any non-invasive studies being undertaken, such as geophysical survey.

While the graveyard is within County Council ownership, the site, as a recorded monument, falls within the remit of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DofCHG) as per the National Monuments Act (1930-2004). Any works to any elements of the Graveyard would therefore require written notification to the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under section 12 of the National Monuments Act.

### 3.3 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

#### 3.3.1 Early Documentary Sources

The earliest cartographical source of Ireland is a gazetteer of lakes, rivers, settlement and people in c. AD 150, and comes from the Classical Greek Geographer *Claudius Ptolemy*, who identified a *Voluntii* tribe in the northeast region—believed to be *Ulaid*, from which the root name of Ulster is derived. Two important settlements also identified are *Regia* (Clogher) and *Isamnion* (*Emain Macha* / Navan Fort), both of which have been subject to extensive archaeological excavation revealing significant later prehistoric and Iron Age ceremonial and settlement evidence (Warren 1974; Waterman 1997; Mallory 2000; Lynn *et al.* 2013).

Both Clogher and *Emain Macha* were important early royal centres and regional caput of the Ulaid. However, early documentary sources list their decline with Fergus Fogha (†AD 392) as the last king of *Emain Macha*, and the Ulaid contracted and were forced into the northeast, to the modern Counties Down and Armagh. *Emain Macha* was largely forgotten to be replaced by Armagh, which ultimately became the primatial ecclesiastical centre for Ireland.

Following the battle of *Achadh Leithdheirg* in the Barony of Farney, which took place as recorded in the Annals in AD 333, Fergus Fogha, the last king of Ulster was defeated by the three Collas who also burned *Emain Macha* (AU 331). The men were kin of the Connacht King Muiredach and gathered a large army for the invasion of Ulster. The spoils of the battle were divided among the three Collas, to form the new territory of Oirghialla/ *Airgialla* (later known as *Oriel* / *Uriel*). With the emergence of a new powerful polity, Clogher became the Royal seat of *Oirghialla*, allied to the powerful ruling High Kings of Tara, the Northern and Southern *Uí Neill*, carving lands that at its most expansive stretched from Lough Erne to Lough Neagh, including modern Cos south-Londonderry, Tyrone, Fermanagh and most of Monaghan.

County Monaghan, *Muineachán* in Irish, was formed in AD 1585 and comprised the five baronies of Cremorne, Dartree, Farney, Monaghan and Truagh, from the counties of *Iriell*, *Dartrey*, *Loghtie*, and *Trow*. According to the Annals, the region took its name from the 4th-century *Manaigh* or *Monaigh*. It was part of the larger ancient territory of *Oirghialla* (also known as *Oriel*) overseen, until the 12th century, by *Uí Cremthainne* (Cremorne) and *Clan Colla* dynasties and originally ruled from Royal caputs of Clogher (west) and *Emain Macha* (east). During the later medieval period, it was known as ‘Mac Mahons country’.

The Barony of Monaghan was known as *Uí-Meith* in the Irish annals, the ancient territory of the *Uí-Meith-Macha* and the *Uí-Meith-Tire*. The last entry in the Annals of the Four Masters about the *Uí-Meith* was in 1178 when O’Hanvy, Lord of *Uí-Meith-Macha* was defeated in battle alongside 150 of the Irish in Louth. During the 15th century it was known as ‘The Loughteye’, or the Barony of Loughty. This reflected the name of the Loughtee MacMahons appointed to govern the region. In 1591 the Barony’s 21 ballybetaghs were divided between Ross bane MacMahon and Patrick MacArt Moil MacMahon. The termon consisted of an additional three ballybetaghs

and was given to English adventurers (Shirley 1879, 194-5; Mac Cathmhaoil 2017, 199). Other important family names included the Burnet of Ballyleck, the Cairnes of Monaghan, Lucas of Castle-Shane, the Fleming of Derry, the Forster of Tullaghan, the Richardsons, the Owens of Monaghanduff, the Coles of Brandrum, the Wrights of Golagh, the Montgomery of Ballyleck, the Mitchells of Drumreask, and the Hamiltons of Cornacassa.

Mullanacross contains the ancient and current parish church of Drumsnat. The lost Book of Drumsnat, *Cín Droma Sneachta*, was written here during the 8th century and it is the oldest known manuscript to contain Old Irish saga material (Ó Dufaigh 2017, 175).

An *Uí Cremthainne* family group, descended from Nadsluag, known as the Fernmag advanced their kingdom from Lough Ooney and became the most powerful *Uí Cremthainne* group by the early 12th century by infringing on the kingdoms of the *Uí-Meith* to the east and the Mugdornai to the southeast (McDermott 2010, 48).

### 3.3.2 Ecclesiastical History

The Civil Parish of Drumsnat is in Co. Monaghan in the Diocese of Clogher. The Ecclesiastical Taxation of Ireland of 1306 records that Co. Monaghan was divided into 12 parishes. The parish of Drumsnat was at that time annexed to Kilmore and known as *Ecclesia de Celmor cū capella de Droymseta* (Shirley 1879, 289). In 1591 the parish was given to freeholders under Ross bane MacMahon. The Vicarage of Drumsnat and the Rectory and Vicarage of Kilmore were joined together by the Bishop of Clogher in 1661 and remained as such until 1795 (Shirley 1879, 318, 448). Drumsnat was a focal point of secular learning in the early monastic period but this changed, potentially when the parish was annexed, resulting in the ruinous state of the ancient parish church (MO013-002003) by 1795 (Mac Cathmhaoil 2017, 199). A nearby field, Friars Garden, is further potential proof of the ecclesiastical use of the area (Clerkin 2009, 8).

The Abbey of Clones appropriated two parts of the great tithes of the patronage of Drumsnat. O'Daly's *Tribes of Ireland* references the poor state of the church:

Drum-Sneachta, the soft town,  
without a[n] erenagh – without a bishop,  
having but two priests in the church  
on a broad low stone

The graveyard and site of the church were gifted to the Roman Catholics of the area in the 19th century (Shirley 1879, 319).

Drumsnat Monastery was founded by Molua Mac Oche of Kyle, of Killaloe, and of Drumsnat in the 6th century. It is unknown when this transformed into the secular parish church (MO013-002003). His feast day is the 4th of August. The details of his life are archived in Fleming's *Collectanea Sacra*. The calendars of Aengus, Marian Gorman, and Donegal situate the monastery of *Druimsnechta* in the barony of Farney,

in the east of the county. An abbot of *Druimsnechta*, Saint Cuimmein, is celebrated on the 4th September (Shirley 1879, 318; Ó Riain 2011, 490; Smith 2017, 319).

Molua's ancestors, the Corcha Oiche, were descendants of Ír son of Míl. His mother, Sochla or Coic or Cochmhas, was part of the Dál mBirn and his father may have been Carthach, disciple of Ciarán at Seirkieran. Carthach for this sin had to go on a pilgrimage to Rome. The rest of Molua's family comprise a sister, Cróine, two brothers, Lughar and Ioain, and a first cousin, Cainnear of Clooncaura (Ó Riain 2011, 490).

The saint studied with Comhgall at Bangor and performed a plethora miracles at an early age; resuscitation and curing deafness. It was at Bangor that he was named 'Servant of the three nines'. At Drumsnat monastery an angel offered Molua authority of an area approximately equal to that of the archdiocese of Armagh due to his chastity, though he rejected this. Instead he went on to become the head of the church at Kyle where he died in 609 at the age of 55 (Ó Riain 2011, 491-2).

### 3.3.3 Later Medieval Sources

There is still some debate as to the nature of early church organisation in Ireland, from the early missionaries and hermitic foundations to the emergence of diverse and complex ecclesiastical settlements and episcopal-monastic centres. The early medieval church could be characterised as a range of pastoral churches, private foundations, hermitic and powerful ecclesiastical estates, episcopal *civitates* in Latin, meaning 'Cities of God', with no clear governing central authority, and dynastic appointments, intertwined with secular ruling families and ambitions up until the AD 1001 Synod of Cashel, which abolished inheritance, and clerical marriage reducing dynastic influences. After the AD 1101 Synod of Rathbressail and the AD 1152 Synod of Kells, the Primacy of Armagh was formally recognised and a national ecclesiastical administrative system of Parish, Diocese, and Arch-diocese or Metropolitan units established that broadly continues unchanged to this day. The ancient parish church was located on the site of an earlier monastic structure. This fell into disrepair as recorded by the 1622 visitation of Bishop Spottiswood. The 1733 visitation recorded that Drumsnat parish no longer had a parish church in use because it was joined to Kilmore parish (Scott *et al.* 2017, 418). Fabric of these earlier ecclesiastical structures is no longer visible at Drumsnat graveyard though architectural fragments of the gable wall of a church and another building dating from the 15th/16th century were discovered in the 1940s and 1970s.

TABLE 1: Historical Chronology of Drumsnat

DATE	DETAIL
†AD 553	Birth of St. Moulua recorded in Annals of Ulster (Ó Dubhthaigh 1966, 33)
†AD 559	Reference to St. Molua's education by Comyall of Bangor, Co. Down (McKenna 1984, 9-10).
6th Century	Founding of Drumsnat, by St. Moulua Mac Oche (Shirley 1879, 318).
†AD 609	Death of St. Moulua aged 55 (Ó Riain 2011, 491-2).
AD 1306	Union of Drumsnat and Kilmore parishes (Shirley 1879, 289).
AD 1427	Pope Martin V issues mandate to confer Kilmore onto Patrick O'Duffy, vicar of Drumsnat, from a Nicholas O'Keegan who had held the position with no canonical title (McKenna

DATE	DETAIL
	1984, 11).
AD 1429	Thomas O'Carrol appointed to benefice of Kilmore and Drumsnat by papal Bull ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 1440	Benefice of Kilmore and Drumsnat collated to John O'Hanratty ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 1540	Drumsnat Parish Church most probably destroyed or ruined as recorded in Annals of Connacht (Ó Dubhthaigh 1966, 32).
AD 1591	Parish given to freeholders under Ross bane MacMahon (Shirley 1879, 289)
AD 1605	Grave of Robert Owens is the earliest recorded headstone inscription in Drumsnat Cemetery (Ó Dubhthaigh 1966, 39).
AD 1617	Drumsnat Parish Church is described the one of the poorest of MacMahon's Country by poet Aonghus na a-aor Ó Dálaigh in his work <i>The Tribes of Ireland (ibid,28)</i> .
AD 1622	Bishop Spottiswood reports church as ruinous (Scott et al. 2017, 418).
AD 1646	Church lands are confiscated and protestant France Sympson signs himself as Rector Ecclesiae (McKenna 1984, 12).
AD 1661	Vicarage of Drumsnat and Rectory of and Vicarage of Kilmore are joined by Bishop of Clogher (Shirley 1879, 318-448).
AD 1670	Rev. Hugh Duffy is pastor of Kilmore (McKenna 1984, 13).
AD 1704	Patrick Duffy is registered as a popish priest in Kilmore and Drumsnat apparently avoiding penal persecution ( <i>ibid.</i> ).
AD 1733	A visitation records that Drumsnat no longer had a parish church in use (Scott et al. 2017, 418).
19th Century	The graveyard and site of the church were gifted to the Roman Catholics of the area (Shirley 1879, 319).

### 3.4 CONDITION ASSESSMENT

A number of important upstanding elements of the Christian ecclesiastical site and burial ground of Drumsnat survive as upstanding features scattered throughout the graveyard. These include the 17th-century cross, the 18th-century mass-rock, and a large collection of 18th-century tombstones. Architectural fragments of a 15th/16th-century medieval church identified in 1940 and 1979 have since been removed.

#### 3.4.1 The Cross MO013-002001

Located within the graveyard (MO013-002003-) is a 17th-century, disc-headed (height 1m; span 0.65m) cross bearing no inscription. It has a sub-rectangular solid ring (diameter 0.51–0.53m; T 0.16m) with a rectangular cross-section at the base (0.33m x 0.13m). The eastern face of the cross has four D-shaped depressions (0.1m x 0.1m; depth 0.02m) which emphasise the cross. The short sides of the cross are pock-dressed. At the time of visiting in early 2018, the top of the cross was covered with a thick layer of lichen (Plate 1).

#### 3.4.2 The Church MO013-002003

There is no evidence of the church within the graveyard but on Mc Crea's map of Monaghan of 1793 the ruins of a structure are visible. This was the church of Drumsnat, under the patronage of Saint Molua of Kyle, Co. Laois. The ecclesiastical taxation of Pope Nicholas IV (1302-6) lists the Capella (chapel) de Druymsnetta as the parish church along with the church of Kilmore. The church was in ruins by 1622 as recorded by the visitation of Bishop Spottiswood.

### 3.4.3 The Graveyard MO013-002004

This sub-rectangular graveyard (c. 60m east–west; c. 28-35m north–south) no longer contains evidence of the parish church of Drumsnat and is located on a knoll overlooking Drumsnat Lough, c. 60m to the northeast (Plate 2). The perimeter of the graveyard is defined by low stone walls, post-and-wire fence, banks and hedges (Plates 3 & 4). The graveyard is accessed by low tarmac steps edged with flat stones (Plate 5). The graveyard is characterised by relatively flat ground which slopes to the south and east. Several of the headstones are worn and covered in lichen (Plate 6). In the centre of the site is a *leylandii* tree which is surrounded by a low wall of stone (Plate 7). It is known locally that a former parish priest had all of the loose stones within the graveyard gathered up and arranged into a pile. Later these stones were made into the circular wall surrounding the tree. An extension to the graveyard to the east was opened in the 1950s. This is located at a lower level and is separated from the older part of the graveyard by a retaining stone wall (Plate 8). Access to the extension is via a wrought iron gate off the main entrance lane. The site is accessed through a gate and masonry piers at the east connected to a public road to the northeast by a short lane. A modern survey by Irish Graveyard Surveys recorded that the earliest legible headstone is dated to 1705 (Plate 9). There are however several unmarked/worn headstones which may date to before the 1700s (Plate 10).

### 3.4.4 The Mass-rock MO013-002005

Since c. 1800 there has been a mass-rock (1.1m x 0.36m; T 0.1m) beside the entrance of Drumsnat graveyard just under its canopy/*bothóg*. Beside the mass-rock is an area of exposed bedrock that is traditionally used to rest coffins before they entered the graveyard (Plate 11). The mass-rock is a stone in a masonry pier (height 0.7m) in an arched alcove (1.12m x 1.1m; height 1.6m) with a small recess (width 0.3m; height 0.42m; depth 0.21m) in the back wall of the alcove. It is thought that the mass rock was originally located at the southwestern corner of the graveyard and was accessed by Liscat Lane.

## 3.5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

There are 16 archaeological sites within a 2km radius of Drumsnat graveyard. The landscape is predominately characterised by early medieval secular settlement, with a total of nine *rath*/ringfort sites and an enclosure. However, there is evidence of megalithic land use in the surrounding environment, four megalithic tombs and a redundant record that might represent orthostats but are more likely to be spoil. There is a redundant record marked within the graveyard itself - the 15th/16th-century architectural fragments recorded have since been moved to the Monaghan County Museum.

TABLE 2: Adjacent Recorded Archaeological Sites (RMPs) in Mullanacross townland (Source: archaeology.ie)

RMP. NO.	TOWNLAND	CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE TO COMPLEX/ITM
MO013-002002	Mullanacross	Redundant record	In 1940 Oliver Davies recorded (ITA Survey) a fragment of a chamfered jamb stone from a	0m



RMP. NO.	TOWNLAND	CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE TO COMPLEX/ITM
			<p>doorway and a stone corbel or skewstone, decorated with a stone head and dating from the 15th or 16th century, from the graveyard (MO013-002004) at the site of Drumsnat parish church (MO013-002003). A second corbel decorated with a head from the coping of the medieval church gable was identified in 1979 (McMahon). The two carved corbels (dimensions Length 0.69m; Width 0.33m; Tall 0.27m: Length 0.67m; Width 0.34m; Tall 0.29m) are now kept in the Monaghan County Museum store in Clontibret (Acquisition No: 1984.348; 1984.349) together with the chamfered jamb stone (dimensions Length 0.63m; Width 0.3m; Tall 0.21m) (Acquisition No: 1984.350). This entry has been reclassified as redundant as the architectural fragments are no longer located inside the graveyard.</p> <p>See (MO013-002003) for views of the corbels.</p>	
MO013-001----	Liscat	Ringfort - rath	<p>Situated on top of a drumlin and the likely location of the fort suggested by the townland name. A small rectangular enclosure (dimensions c. 20m NE–SW; c. 20m NW–SE) defined by field banks is depicted on the 1834 edition of the OS 6-inch map and a similar field is represented on the 1907 edition. It was described in 1946 a raised D-shaped area or half a hexagonal area (dimensions c. 25m NW–SE; c. 15m NE–SW) defined by scarps (Height c. 1m), but the NE part had been removed (SMR file). It was then planted in trees and it might not have been an antiquity, but it had been removed by 1995 (OSAP).</p>	660715/830490 c. 280m southwest
MO013-011----	Mullanavannog	Ringfort - rath	<p>Situated just west of the northern summit of a north–south drumlin ridge. Although it is not recorded on any map a rath at Mullanavannog is mentioned in the IFC Schools' MSS (953) 313-4:</p>	661170/829950 c. 765m south-southeast

RMP. NO.	TOWNLAND	CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE TO COMPLEX/ITM
			<a href="https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes">https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes</a> ) and the location was known locally, although it had been removed in the early 1980s. No archaeological feature is visible now in improved pasture.	
MO009-046----	Tullykenny	Ringfort - rath	Located north of the summit of a NE–SW drumlin ridge. This was described in 1968 as a raised and slightly dished D-shaped grass and rush-covered area (dimensions 39m NW–SE; 28.8m NE–SW) that sloped down slightly to the NE (height 1.4m). It was defined by an earthen bank (at SW: Width 5m; internal height 0.4m; external height 1.4m) SSW–north, with traces of a fosse outside it west–north and a farm track SSW–west. The perimeter was represented by a field bank with farm buildings immediately outside it to the SE–SSW, and the monument was cut at the east by a NW–SE field bank. The original entrance was not identified. The monument had been removed by 2000 (OSAP).	661208/831735 c. 960m north-northeast
MO012-013----	Skervan	Ringfort - rath	Located on a shoulder at the south end of a north–south drumlin ridge. This is a subcircular overgrown area (diameter 33m NNE–SSW; c. 30m WNW–ESE) defined by an earthen bank (Width c. 3m; internal height 0.9m; external height 1.5m) NW–NE and by a scarp (at south width 1.5m; height 1.45m) elsewhere, with an outer fosse or drain (Width of base 1.8m; depth 0.3m) NNW–NE. The original entrance is not identified.	959997/830298 c. 975m southwest
MO008-027----	Skeagh	Enclosure	Located on top of a drumlin. It is depicted as a D-shaped field attached to the west side of a farm lane only on the 1907 edition of the OS 6-inch map. This is a D-shaped area (dimensions c. 40m east–west; c. 35m north–south), now occupied by a modern dwelling and used as garden (OSAP).	660237/831870 c. 1.25km northwest
MO009-047----	Tullykenny	Ringfort - rath	Situated towards the bottom of the east-facing slope of a NE–SW	661621/831946 c. 1.3km northeast

RMP. NO.	TOWNLAND	CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE TO COMPLEX/ITM
			ridge. This was described in 1967 as a raised subcircular grass and scrub-covered area (dimensions 30m north–south; 25.5m east–west) rising towards the centre (height above field 2.8-3.2m) defined by an overgrown scarp (at north, width 1.7m; height 1.5m), with a berm (at north, width 5.6m) on top of the scarp SW–N. An original entrance was not identified and there was an old grass-covered quarry hole in the eastern quadrant. The monument had been removed by 2000 (OSAP).	
MO013-012----	Roosky	Ringfort - rath	Situated at the eastern tip of a west–east spur. This is a slightly raised circular grass-covered area (diameter 25.7m east–west; 25.2m north–south) defined by a scarp (at east, height 0.45m). There is no visible fosse or entrance. The monument is overlain by a north–south field bank towards the perimeter at the west, and does not survive west of this feature which turns SW at the south so that the perimeter only survives NNW–E–SW.	661611/829540 c. 1.31km southeast
MO013-013----	Carnbane	Megalithic tomb - unclassified	Located on a shelf towards the bottom of a SE-facing slope. A megalithic structure consisting of six upright stones (height c. 0.7-1.15m) was first recorded by Oliver Davies in 1942 (SMR file), but no pattern was discerned. There were other prone stones that were probably field stones, and two smaller stones were set in the ground c. 2m to the east. The stones were removed between 1968 and 1984.	661482/829255 c. 1.5km north-northwest
MO013-014----	Carnbane	Megalithic tomb - court tomb	Located at the southern summit of a north–south drumlin ridge. It is not recorded on any map but is mentioned in the Schools' Manuscripts (IFC, Schools' Mss (953) 375: <a href="https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes">https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes</a> ). This is a cairn (length 23m; width 11m) orientated NE–SW,	661240/829125 c. 1.58km south-southeast

RMP. NO.	TOWNLAND	CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE TO COMPLEX/ITM
			incorporating at the NE end the fairly full remains of a three-quarter court (width 5.5m NW–SE; depth 6m NE–SW). Single façade stones (height 1.1m) survive at either side of the court. A NNE–SSW orientated field boundary crosses the cairn and partly defines the NW extent of the court. The gallery (length 7.2m; width 1.5m) narrows from the front to the rear and is divided into three chambers by two sets of jambs.	
MO013-050----	Carnbane	Ringfort - rath	Located towards the bottom of an E-facing slope. An oval cropmark (dims c. 35m N-S; c. 30m E-W) defined by what might be a single bank feature is visible as a parchmark on the OSi orthophotos (2000).	661440/829145 c. 1.61km south-southeast
MO013-046----	Coolcorragh	Redundant record	Located towards the bottom of a W-facing slope. Some large stones are lying in the field, suitable for use as megalithic orthostats. The location is described as a <i>Gravel Pit</i> on the 1834 edition of the OS 6-inch map and it is more likely that they are spoil. A house has been built on the location since 2005 (OSAP).	661569/829125 c. 1.67km southeast
MO012-030----	Killina	Megalithic tomb - court tomb	Located on a slight shelf of a SE-facing slope. This is a grass and scrub-covered trapezoidal cairn (Length 40m; width 23m at east) orientated ENE–WSW. Six stones to the north and two to the south define the extent of a broad, probable three-quarter court (width 9m) at its eastern end. To the north and south of the court and about 1-2m east of it are two large blocks, perhaps vestiges of the façade. The gallery entrance and adjoining court stones are apparently covered by the cairn. The gallery has three stones; a north side-stone and jamb-stone of the chamber and to the west, the southern side-stone of the adjoining, inner chamber. A single subsidiary chamber opens to the west at the rear of the cairn. To	659738/829404 c. 1.74km southwest

RMP. NO.	TOWNLAND	CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE TO COMPLEX/ITM
			the south of this is a set block which may mark the back of the cairn. A portion of a drystone kerb (length 3m) survives along the SW edge of the cairn (de Valera 1960, 123).	
MO012-012----	Cornafaghy	Ringfort - rath	Located at the southern end of a short north–south drumlin ridge. A circular embanked enclosure is depicted only on a revision of the 1834 edition of the OS 6-inch map dated 1858 where it is described in gothic lettering as a ‘fort’. It is visible as a slightly raised grass-covered area (diameter c. 23m NE–SW) with a curving field bank on the perimeter north–east–south.	659321/829780 c. 1.82km southwest
MO013-047----	Annaghbrack	Megalithic tomb - unclassified	Situated in a low-lying landscape between drumlins, with a small canalised north–south stream c. 10m to the east. This is a long and overgrown wedge-shaped mound (length 18m north–south; width at SE 17m; width at NW 9m), much of which appears to be the result of rock outcropping. There are some exposed blocks near the SE end, but no pattern can be discerned. It was listed by de Valera as a possible court-tomb in 1951 (p. 196) but excluded from his list in 1960.	661576/828917 c. 1.88km south-southeast
MO008-024----	Killydonnelly	Ringfort - rath	Situated at the southern end of a north–south drumlin ridge. This is a subcircular grass and scrub-covered area (dimensions 36.8m NW–SE; 30.6m NE–SW) defined by an overgrown earthen bank (width c. 4m; internal height c. 1m; external height 1.5m) NW–NE, which is reduced to scarp (at east, width 1.5m; height 1.5m) elsewhere. The original entrance is at SSE.	660423/832687 c. 1.94km north-northwest

### 3.6 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

A review of the Excavations Bulletin has revealed that no licenced-archaeological investigations have taken place within a 2km radius of Drumsnat graveyard.

### 3.7 CARTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

#### William Petty's Down Survey Map, Monaghan, Barony of Monaghan, 1656-8

The Down Survey was the first attempt in the world to systematically map an area as large as Ireland at a scale of 40 perches to one inch. The townland of Mullanacross is included as part of Lissduffscatte within the parish of Drumsnat therefore the location of the church and graveyard are difficult to discern but they are likely the church marked in the south of Lissduffscatte between two bogs.

#### William McCrea's Barony Map of Monaghan, 1793

This mapping is more detailed than Petty's with rivers, lakes, and topographical features being shown more clearly. The townland of Mullanacross is recorded on this mapping as are Drumsnat Lough and the local road that runs northwest-southeast to the east of Drumsnat graveyard (MO013-002004). The church is marked as in ruins (MO013-002003).

#### First Edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey Map, 1837, scale 1:10560

This is the first accurate historic mapping coverage of Drumsnat. The intended path of the Ulster Canal is hashed in to the north of Drumsnat graveyard (Figure 2). Saint Mollua's Church, a schoolhouse, and the glebe house are depicted c. 260m and 220m to the northwest and northeast respectively along with a small number of houses. In the northwest corner of the graveyard a rectangular structure is marked which may represent the ruins of the church (MO013-002003). However, the structure is not orientated east-west as is the tradition with Christian churches.

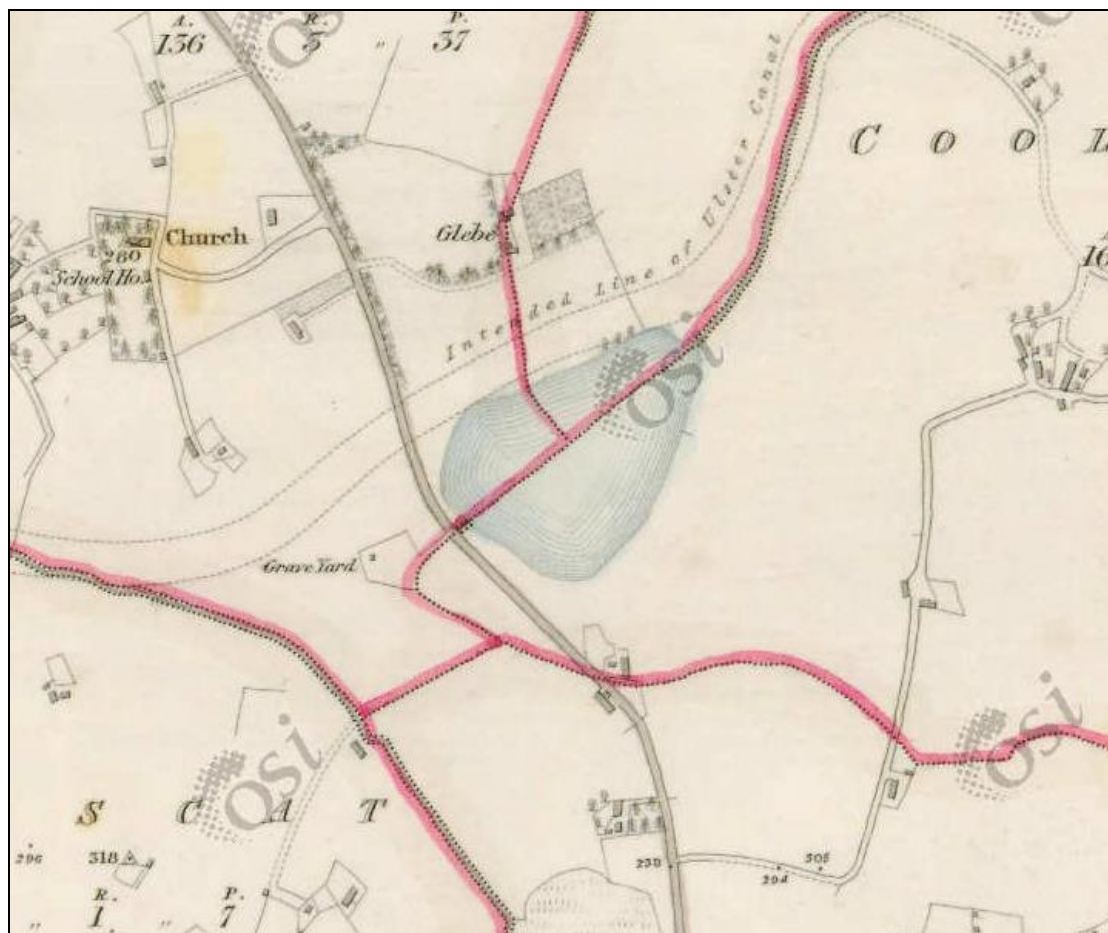
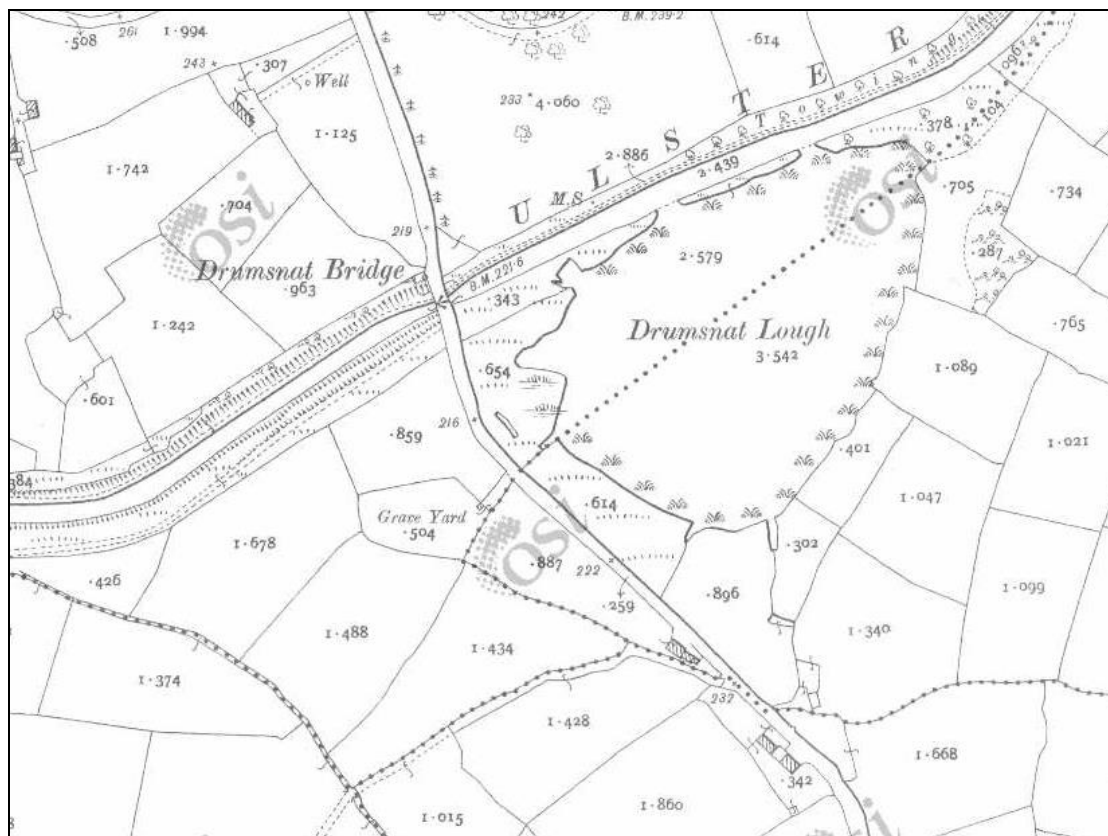


Figure 2: Extract from 1st Edition OS map, 1837

#### Ordnance Survey Map, 1909, scale 1:2500

Very little has changed in the wider landscape since the previous historic mapping of the area (Figure 3). The Ulster Canal has been built and the structure in the corner of the graveyard (MO013-002004) is no longer depicted. The fields to the north of the Canal have been sub-divided and a small pocket of land with a curving western boundary has been created. This is known locally as the 'Friar's Garden' and is believed to have been associated with the ecclesiastical site at Drumsnat. However, its absence from the 1st Edition OS map would suggest that this was a thoroughly modern creation with no relevance to the early medieval landscape.



**Figure 3:** Extract from 25-inch map, 1909. Friar's Garden located north of the Canal (centre left)

### 3.8 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Inspection of the aerial photographic coverage for Drumsnat area held by the Ordnance Survey, Google Earth and Bing Maps was undertaken with the goal of identifying any features of archaeological potential surrounding the site of the graveyard. Inspection of the aerial photographic coverage did not reveal any previously unidentified archaeological features.





**Figure 4:** Aerial view of the graveyard

### 3.9 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY/HERITAGE

Drumsnat graveyard is located within the townland of Mullanacross. The surrounding townlands consist of Aghnamallagh, Brookvale, Cooldarragh, Liscat, Skervan, Thornhill, and Tullykenny. These townlands are located within the parish of Drumsnat, Barony of Monaghan, Co. Monaghan.

#### 3.9.1 Place Name Analysis

Townland and topographic names are an invaluable source of information on topography, land ownership and land use within the landscape. They also provide information on history; archaeological monuments and folklore of an area. A place name may refer to a long-forgotten site and may indicate the possibility that the remains of certain sites, such as ringforts or burial grounds, may still survive below the ground surface. The Ordnance Survey surveyors wrote down townland names in the 1830s and 1840s, when the entire country was being mapped. Some of the townland names in the study area are of Irish origin and over time have been anglicised. The main reference used for the place name analysis is Logainm.ie. A description and possible explanation of each townland name in the environs of Drumsnat are provided below.

Mullanacross: *Mullach na Croise* in Irish, meaning ‘hill of the cross’. Potentially a reference to the 17th-century cross in Drumsnat graveyard which is located on a hill (MO013-002004). Also recorded as Mullmacross (1659), Mullanacrosse (c. 1660), Mullynacross (1726), Mulnacross (1793-1827), Mullnacross (1835) (logainm.ie). The townland used to be referred to as Drumsnat, *Droim Sneachta* in Irish, meaning ‘hill of snow’ by locals in the early 1900s (Schools’ Folklore Collection MSS 951, p. 293). It is thought that when Saint Molua was searching for a place to establish his monastery,

he was sent a sign of snow on a hill in June. It was at this place (Drumsnat) that he should build his monastery.

The surrounding placenames in the area are numerous references to topographical features, and demonstrate a landscape of pastoral farming, e.g. Brookvale; Aghnamallagh, *Achadh na Mallach* in Irish, meaning 'ford of the curses'; Cooldarragh, *Cúil Darach* in Irish, meaning 'back hill of the oak'; Liscat, *Lios Cat* in Irish, meaning 'Fort of the cats'; Skervan, *Scearbhán* in Irish, meaning 'white rock'; Thornhill, *Cnoc na Sceiche* in Irish, meaning 'thorn hill'; Tullykenny, *Tulaigh Choinne* in Irish, meaning 'Kenny's hill' (logainm.ie).

### 3.9.2 Cultural Heritage Sites

The term 'cultural heritage' can be used as an over-arching term that can be applied to both archaeology and architecture. However, it also refers to more ephemeral aspects of the environment, which are often recorded in folklore or tradition or possibly date to a more recent period. No individual sites have been identified that could be defined as purely Cultural Heritage. However, a tradition does exist that Drumsnat Lough is home to a serpent and a treasure chest and that Drumsnat graveyard's origin lies in miracle.

### 3.9.3 Folklore

The religious miracle associated with the foundation of the graveyard is recounted below:

Drumsnat graveyard is one of the most ancient and historical spots in this district. In the penal days the Catholics of this parish had no place in which to bring their dead and their Protestant neighbours would not give them a piece of ground.

A lot of quarrelling and fighting took place to secure the price of land. Guided by their priest they prayed earnestly to God to secure a piece of land.

God heard their prayers. One morning in June the people were astonished to see this little plot of ground covered with snow, while the surrounding hills were covered with fresh green grass. The people knew that this was the place God wished them to make the graveyard. From that day forward it was the burying place and was named Drumsnat which means in English the ridge of the snow. At the entrance to this graveyard there is a large flat stone where the coffin used to be left when Holy mass was being celebrated for the deceased person. Near it are the ruins of a monastery. (Schools' Folklore Collection MSS 945, pp. 248-9)

The graveyard is supposedly blessed by God who delivered it to the people when they were in need. This blessing means that no worms or slugs live in the ground and so your remains will not be eaten by them:

Drumsnat Graveyard is one of the oldest graveyards in Ireland. It is situated about a mile from Threemile house and a half a mile from Smithboroug. The meaning of Drumsnat is the hill of the snow.

It is very deep soil and at present it is covered with grass. There is a flat stone about six feet by near the entrance on which the coffins are laid for a moment before burying. One time the priest told the people to make a novena to find out a burying place. The morning after the novena was made. There was one hill covered with snow. Then they made that place the Graveyard. It is very old now but there is a lot of aged tomb stones there yet. The road leading from Three-mile-house church to Drumsnat Graveyard is a hilly road. There are four people in this part of the country including myself who have friends buried there. The ground of the Graveyard is very dry. It is said neither worms or slugs are found in it. In summer from both far and near many people travel to see this lonely resting place and pay tribute to the dead (Schools' Folklore Collection MSS 953, pp. 238-9).

There is a legend relating to Drumsnat Lough about a serpent, a treasure chest, and Saint Patrick:

Serpent supposed to be in Drumsnat Lake (near leading road from Monaghan to Clones about 5 miles from Monaghan). Guarding treasure of gold. Hasn't been seen – just an old tale that it will guard it till judgement Day (Schools' Folklore Collection MSS 951, p. 304).

When St Patrick banished serpents out of Ireland a great chest of gold fell down into the bottom of Drumsnat Lake. There a serpent coiled around it and is supposed ... until ... day of judgement (Schools' Folklore Collection MSS 951, pp. 309-11).

Supposedly a priest was murdered outside the graveyard at the location of the mass-rock during the Penal Days.

During the Penal Days the people went to Drumsnat Graveyard to hear mass once a priest was murdered here while saying mass (Schools' Folklore Collection MSS 953, p. 382).

A 'funny' story about an old woman wishing for a sheep from a fairy resulted in the local minister and his boy being scared by a sheep in the graveyard. The story reveals that the graveyard appears to have been used as a base by thieves at one point.

In olden times there were such things as fairies in this country. If you could catch hold of them they would give you three wishes to get away. One time there was an old woman and she had two servant boys living with her. She (got) caught a fairy and he gave her a wish to get away. She was very glad to hear that. One night her servant boys came and she said "I wished I had a sheep", and that night the two boys went to the grave-yard in Drumsnat. It was the custom to hide there when anyone went to steal. The two boys went this night and had a white sheet to put round the sheet [sheep]. One of them went to steal the sheep and the other watched. This night a Minister's boy was passing by the grave-yard and he saw the sheet. He was afraid to go past

and went home and told the Minister what he saw, and this old man was sick and could not walk. The servant boy carried him on his back and the Minister said fat or lean there he is to you. They could not speak after the fright. The Minister could not [walk] going but he could run coming home (Schools' Folklore Collection MSS 953, pp. 273-4).

#### 3.9.4 Drumsnat Workshop

An open workshop was held in the Threemilehouse GAA centre on 9th May 2018. Representatives from the Drumsnat Heritage Committee were present in addition to the Monaghan County Council Heritage Officer, Shirley Clerkin, and members of the general public.

Following on from presentations by Christina O'Regan and Paul Stevens on the early medieval history and archaeology of the wider area, in addition to some preliminary conservation issues, a recent chronology of works at the site was related by participants.

#### 3.9.5 Drumsnat Reconstruction Drawing

The reconstruction drawing of Drumsnat was completed following extensive consultation and discussion amongst the project team. A number of drafts were produced and annotated and commented upon before the final layout was agreed.

In order to comply with the 'Early Christian' element of the brief, it was required to depict the site sometime between c. AD 400 and c. AD 1100. Every effort was made to incorporate elements that could be reasonably assumed to have been present in the early medieval period. Through a process of consultation and consensus, it was agreed that the following features should be included in the drawing. As with any re-imagining or reconstruction process, a large degree of conjecture and imagination was required to arrive at the final drawing. This conjecture, it is hoped, has been tempered to some degree with careful consideration of the archaeological and historic context of the period.

- **Timber Church** – At the beginning of the early medieval period in Ireland, churches were constructed of timber, later being replaced by simple, single-roomed stone structures. Although none of these timber examples remain, the outlines, surviving archaeologically, resemble the later stone examples. This church has been represented with ornately carved and painted embellishments modelled on the surviving art from the period seen on more permanent stonework and surviving manuscripts.
- **Illumination** – Irish illuminated texts from the early medieval period remain to be some of the finest decorated manuscripts from this period. It was alleged that a manuscript was produced at Drumsnat around the 8<sup>th</sup> century. The artistic rendering depicts a member of the religious community producing an element of this document.



Figure 5: Artistic rendering of Drumsnat c. AD 600.

## 4 ASSESMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.1 HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Examination of each of the elements that make up the whole of an historic place provides a wider perspective and context for the whole site. This assessment of significance is based on the various elements which distinguish Drumsnat as a special place and an analysis of the combination of these various elements and the ways in which they combine.

#### 4.1.1 Drumsnat is a sacred place of great antiquity

Drumsnat is a site of great antiquity with evidence to suggest that it provided a focus for continuing Christian worship from the early medieval period. The place retains a sense of serenity, peace and tranquillity, and remains relatively untouched by modern life.

#### 4.1.2 Fragmentary Documentary History is Significant

There is little (or no) surviving documentary evidence relating to the early medieval or Medieval church at Drumsnat. Saint Molua is traditionally associated with the early medieval monastery at Drumsnat though it is a matter of debate as to where this monastery was established, with some sources suggesting it was located in the Barony of Farney, in the east of modern Co. Monaghan. An 8th-century manuscript is alleged to have been written at Drumsnat though there is no physical evidence for such a document. The site appeared to remain a special place of Christian practice and tradition in the locality, from the 17th-century (represented by the possible 17th-century cross MO013-002001) to the present day. A number of plain gravestones and slabs possibly incorporated into the circular wall may represent pre-18th century burials.

### 4.2 ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTIC SIGNIFICANCE

#### 4.2.1 Regional Artistic Significance of 18th–19th Century Memorials

The collection of 18th, 19th and 20th-century decorated gravestones provide an important local collection with nuanced variation in iconography and style worthy of preservation. These memorials range from decorated stone memorials to simple undecorated, unhewn stones and iron gravemarkers. While not as significant as other collections of memorials in the South Ulster style (such as Clones or Errigal Truagh) the gravemarkers at Drumsnat are of regional interest from an artistic and archaeological perspective.

### 4.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

#### 4.3.1 Early Medieval Landscape Setting

The presence of nine recorded early medieval settlement sites (raths) within 2km of Drumsnat is evidence for a significant population within the area. It is also worth

noting that there are no other recorded ecclesiastical sites of this period within the catchment area of Drumsnat, further supporting the likelihood that an early church was established at Drumsnat to serve the local population.

#### 4.3.2 A Recorded Monument of Historical Significance

Drumsnat burial ground is an archaeological site of historical significance listed on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP MO013-002). It is therefore subject to statutory legal protection and notice is required in advance of any ground-works or conservation works. There is a high potential for sub-surface archaeological deposits, soils, features or artefacts to survive due to lack of any significant development or excessive disturbance from burials.

TABLE 3: Artefacts and stray finds (Source: National Museum of Ireland Topographic Files).

<b>MUSEUM NO</b>	1942:119
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Mullanacross
<b>PARISH</b>	Drumsnat
<b>BARONY</b>	Monaghan
<b>FIND</b>	Flint Flake
<b>FIND PLACE</b>	From an artificial looking mound on site
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Flint flake (24mm x 19mm) with prominent dorsal ridge
<b>REFERENCE</b>	NMI Topographical Files

#### 4.4 SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE – HIGH

There is a Vibrant Folklore associated with the region. The site is of acute local significance and a very active and engaged local heritage group is in place with a mission to maintain and promote the site in a local and national context.

#### 4.5 ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE – MODERATE

The habitat value of the graveyard and the hedgerows must be recognised as a habitat which is not subject to heavy agricultural practices, therefore encouraging biodiversity.

##### *Flora*

The hedgerows comprise of mature trees, saplings, hawthorn and bramble. Several large trees have taken hold within the site including cypress and leylandii.

##### *Fauna*

The graveyard is likely to provide a habitat for larger mammals such as foxes, badgers or rabbits.

The mature trees along the boundary of the graveyard and within the graveyard interior are certain to provide a home for nesting birds though these were not identified during the site visit. It is possible that bats are also present living within gaps in the drystone walls.

The less well-maintained areas, notably around the boundary and in the west and north of the graveyard, can provide a valuable habitat that should not be entirely removed without due consideration of potential ecological impacts. All vegetation clearance should take due cognisance of the prohibitions on such works during the nesting season.

Under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2000, all bats (10 species) and bat roosts are protected. All birds, nestlings and active nests are protected. Broad-scale spraying of herbicides is prohibited and hedge cutting/ scrub removal etc. is only allowed from September to March.

Under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives a number of bats (e.g. Lesser Horseshoe Bat) and birds: (e.g. Peregrine Falcon) are afforded protection. Adopted in 1992, the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. It forms the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy with the Birds Directive and establishes the EU wide Natura 2000 ecological network of protected areas, safeguarded against potentially damaging developments.

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, an initiative of the National Biodiversity Data Centre, promotes the preservation and creation of safe habitats for Ireland's pollinator population. While a certain amount of vegetation clearance/management is essential at Drumsnat, it is also important that parts of the site are allowed to remain untended in a bid to encourage pollinators to the site.



## 5 ASSESSMENT OF CONSERVATION ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### 5.1 ISSUES AND VULNERABILITIES

#### 5.1.1 Vegetation damaging masonry elements

The retaining wall to the east and the enclosing wall to the west are at risk of destabilising through unchecked vegetation growth. The weight of soil pressing against the retaining wall to the east is of particular concern and efforts should be made to prevent the wall from weakening.

#### 5.1.2 Upkeep and maintenance of memorials

Several of the memorials are in a state of disrepair and their condition is likely to further deteriorate without intervention.

### 5.2 POTENTIAL THREATS

#### 5.2.1 Damage to Subsurface Archaeology

Archaeological features associated with the earliest phases of activity have the potential to survive within and around the current graveyard at Drumsnat. The area possesses high potential for previously unrecorded subsurface archaeology to survive. This potential archaeology is at risk from ad hoc works or development.

#### 5.2.2 Damage to Bedrock associated with the Mass Rock (MO013-002005) at Entrance

The laneway approaching the graveyard gate is periodically used as a car parking facility and occasionally cars park over the exposed bedrock adjacent to the mass rock. There is potential for this rock, which is an integral part of the recent history of the graveyard, to become soiled or damaged by fluids leaking from cars. Rubber from car tyres could also stain the bedrock.

#### 5.2.3 Inadvertent Damage to Habitats of Protected Species

There is potential for the presence of protected bat, bird or insect species within the graveyard at Drumsnat. Without identifying the habitats of such species that may be present, the potential remains for inadvertent damage or destruction of such.

### 5.3 RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS

#### 5.3.1 Nature and Extent of Archaeological Remains Below Ground

From our current knowledge of the archaeological and historical status of the site, it is impossible to accurately define the extent of antiquity of the Drumsnat site, or the existence and possible extent of an original ecclesiastical site. The 1st Edition OS map indicates the presence of a building on site though it is not annotated as a church *in ruins* as is normally the case. A raft of potential (non-intrusive and/or intrusive) archaeological techniques could be used to provide clarity. Traces of earthworks, no longer visible above ground, have been successfully detected using non-intrusive

techniques, such as geodetic topographic contour surveys, and Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) survey. Although Monaghan County Council has a particularly extensive range of LiDAR coverage, Drumsnat is not presently covered.

Sub-surface features such as walls and ditches can be detected using various geophysical survey methods, which may clarify if a building/church had existed on the site.

### 5.3.3 A Community Catalogue of Gravestones

A survey of the burial ground's collection of 18th, 19th and 20th century grave inscriptions, location and condition has been conducted though this only lists the details on each legible gravestone ([irishgraveyards.ie](http://irishgraveyards.ie)). Updating this to include information regarding the condition of each headstone would prove invaluable as a research tool for historians, local studies and genealogical studies.

## 5.4 TOURISM, INTERPRETATION AND SITE ACCESS

### 5.4.1 Tourism Potential

Tourism to the graveyard is very difficult to quantify given that the site is accessible for free without any requirement for a visitor to log their presence. The biggest potential attraction for tourists comes in the form of genealogical and local historical research. If Drumsnat were to be included in an Early Christian Monaghan trail, this would strengthen its tourist draw. The site is located immediately adjacent to the Ulster Canal which is currently undergoing development in the form of the Ulster Canal Greenway. The opening of this pedestrian/cycling highway will improve the tourism potential of the site while adequate interpretation onsite would add to the tourist experience of the graveyard.

## 6 POLICIES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

### 6.1 POLICIES

#### 6.1.1 Policy 1: Protection and Retention of the Historic Integrity of the Site

To place the conservation of all elements of early medieval Drumsnat, both known and unknown, and the protection of the significance of its various elements at the heart of planning and management of the monuments.

#### 6.1.2 Policy 2: Conservation, Repair and Maintenance

To implement effective regimes for maintenance and repair, while protecting the significance and historic integrity of the various elements of early medieval Drumsnat while observing exemplary standards of conservation practice.

#### 6.1.3 Policy 3: Enhancement and Improvement

To enhance the historic character and visual qualities of the various elements of early medieval Drumsnat by consolidating eroding elements, removing intrusive elements and addressing impacts upon setting.

#### 6.1.4 Policy 4: Access and Interpretation

To encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the various elements of early medieval Drumsnat, by promoting both physical and intellectual access to the monuments and meeting the needs of a broad variety of users.

#### 6.1.5 Policy 5: Research, Education and Tourism

To develop an understanding of the various elements of early medieval Drumsnat through informed archaeological investigation and research, ensuring their preservation in an accessible form. To promote the various elements as an integral site of interest and a historical resource for learning about the past.

### 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A series of recommendations for specific programmed actions which will support the policies contained within the Conservation Study have been made.

**Recommendation 1.** That the Drumsnat Heritage Committee, with the support of the Heritage Office of Monaghan County Council, establish a Steering Group which includes representatives of all key stakeholders (Monaghan County Council, Drumsnat Heritage Committee, National Monuments Service), to oversee the implementation of the Conservation Study policies and recommendations.

**Recommendation 2.** That the Steering Group develop a Graveyard Maintenance/Management Scheme which should incorporate rostered maintenance of the grounds, fence and structures. The Scheme should also address biodiversity aspects of the site, in line with the Monaghan County Heritage Plan, and include management schemes for flora and fauna and should follow the guidelines issued by the Heritage Council (2010). Undertake any proposed conservation and repair with reference to the principles outlined in the ICOMOS Venice, Burra and Washington Charters, promoting an approach of minimum intervention rather than restoration.

**Recommendation 3.** That Monaghan County Council commission ecological and wildlife habitat surveys in order to characterise the species present within the graveyard with a view to safeguarding any protected species or the habitats of such that have the potential to exist within the graveyard. The survey should be conducted during the summer months with input from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

**Recommendation 4.** That Monaghan County Council commission new interpretative signage at the graveyard, incorporating information from the Conservation Study and the reconstruction drawing commissioned as a part of the Early Christian Monaghan Project. It is envisaged that the signage would be installed at the entrance to the graveyard.

**Recommendation 5.** That the Steering Group build upon the Early Christian Monaghan Project to include Drumsnat in a county-wide cycling trail comprising of the sites at Killeevan, Old Donagh, Clones, Iniskeen, Killahear and Errigal Truagh with potential for further additions during the scoping phase. The future development of the Ulster Canal Greenway creates additional tourism potential for the site as the Canal passes to the immediate north of the graveyard.

**Recommendation 6.** That Monaghan County Council commission a geophysical survey of lands immediately surrounding the graveyard. Use the survey and the results of such as an instrument to garner community interest and local support. It is recommended that the results of the survey be used in conjunction with the information within the Conservation Study to design the interpretation panels for the site.

**Recommendation 7.** That the Steering Group organise a community-based graveyard survey aimed at recording the condition of the headstones. This survey should provide recommendations for future maintenance of the headstones and be conducted in collaboration with a suitably qualified archaeologist and Monaghan County Council Heritage Officer.

**Recommendation 8.** That the Steering Group investigate the possibility of dismantling the circular stone wall within the centre of the graveyard with the aim of identifying any marked/inscribed stones which may be old gravemarkers. This work should be carried out in collaboration with a suitably qualified archaeologist and the Monaghan County Council Heritage Officer.

**Recommendation 9.** That the Steering Group take steps to remove the ‘Mass Rock’ writing which has been painted on the bedrock adjacent to the Mass Rock.

**Recommendation 10.** That the Steering Group make efforts to align with Action 26 of the Monaghan Heritage Plan, to ‘Develop a series of heritage booklets and make them available on the internet’ with reference to Drumsnat Graveyard.

### 6.3 IMPLEMENTATION

The Conservation Study is not a statutory document. However, it will assist in the implementation of existing statutory policy and law. The Conservation Study is the beginning of a long-term process and its successful implementation will depend on its wide acceptance and active local support. In preparing the Study, consultation was held with a range of interest groups and statutory bodies. Further consultation and dialogue will be necessary at times during the life of the Study.

#### Management Procedures

It is essential that any works carried out to the various elements of Drumsnat are done so by suitably trained and experienced professionals. Irreparable damage can be caused to historic monuments by inexperienced or inadequate professional advice. The implementation of procedures and policies contained within the Conservation Study can only be successfully achieved if conducted under the advice and guidance of suitably experienced individuals.

Architects, where employed, should have demonstrable experience of working on historic monuments and should have an accreditation in conservation from a professional body or possess a third-level qualification in building conservation.

#### Statutory Provisions and Procedures

Any works affecting the various elements of Drumsnat Graveyard are governed by the requirements of the National Monuments Act 1930 – 2004. These are necessary constraints which delimit the type and nature of any work planned for the various elements of the site. Any enhancement of the visitor experience will ultimately require funding, and the sourcing of such funds is a key constraint to any planned works.

#### Maintenance

The historic fabric which comprises the graveyard will require an ongoing Graveyard Maintenance/ Management Scheme, which should be based on the OPW biennial inspection and should follow the guidelines on the care of historic graveyards issued by the Heritage Council (2010), particularly the following points:

- Draw up a management plan with your Conservation Officer/Heritage Officer.
- Set out policy and strategy for management of the physical attributes of the graveyard such as painting of the graveyard ironwork, maintenance of

graveyard wall etc. Identify qualified conservation practitioners where required

- Implement multi-annual plan, such as cutting grass regime, ivy control, cypress control and control of other deep rooting species that may cause damage to memorials and other masonry structures within a graveyard. Be sure to obtain the relevant permissions to fell trees using a qualified and insured tree surgeon. Be sure to respect the regulations and restrictions upon vegetation clearance during the nesting season.
- Identify who has responsibility for implementing the plan and its associated works.
- Undertake quinquennial (5 year) inspection of masonry structures within the historic graveyard. These include the gate structure and steps and the drystone graveyard wall.

Do not attempt major conservation works on masonry structures, maintain them as they are – ivy clad ruins should be maintained as ivy-clad ruins – such work is expensive and can only be undertaken by a professional conservation team (Heritage Council 2010).

The below actions can serve as a basis for the drafting of a Graveyard Maintenance/ Management Scheme.

<b>General inspection of monument</b>	
Task	Visual inspection to identify any sudden changes such as vandalism, development of potential risks etc
Location	Graveyard, headstones
Equipment	None
Frequency	Monthly
Comments	This task will ensure that any potentially damaging changes are captured in the short term.

<b>Dry cleaning of surfaces</b>	
Task	Inspection of horizontal surfaces to remove accumulation of leaf litter, general litter, dust, etc
Location	Access track to graveyard, bedrock, entranceway, headstones
Equipment	Brush, protective clothing, rubbish bags
Frequency	Monthly
Comments	This task will reduce the risk of slips and trips which may occur due to the accumulation of mossy growth, leaf litter etc. Also help to improve the general appearance of the graveyard.

<b>Treatment of snow and ice</b>	
Task	Application of 'salt' to slippery surfaces
Location	Access path to front of graveyard
Equipment	None
Frequency	When required
Comments	This task should be carried out when there is a possibility of

	snow/ice accumulation. Consideration should be given to the visual impact of the 'salt' residue.
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<b>Treatment of minor vegetation such as weeds</b>	
Task	Removal of weeds
Location	Access path, wall
Equipment	Spraying equipment, hand tools
Frequency	Annually
Comments	Due cognisance should be given to the fact that any work, including vegetation clearance, directly affecting a recorded monument will need to be reported first to the National Monuments Service.

<b>Redecoration of metalwork</b>	
Task	Repainting metalwork
Location	Gate
Equipment	Painter's equipment and suitable paint
Frequency	Biennial
Comments	It should be established who is currently responsible for this work in order to avoid duplication of treatment.

#### 6.4 IMMEDIATE/SHORT TERM ACTIONS

The Conservation Study has made recommendations for short term actions which should be implemented by the Steering Group and Monaghan County Council at an early stage. These are:

- Seek consultation with the National Monuments Service to inform of intended works;
- General vegetation maintenance;
- Commission an ecological habitat survey within the Drumsnat graveyard precinct in order to investigate the presence of any species or habitats that require protection;
- Finalise site management plan using template provided;
- Engage tree surgeon and conservation professionals as required and ensure that all permissions are in place before works commence.

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[www.duachas.ie](http://www.duachas.ie)

[www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie) – Summary of archaeological excavation from 1970–2019

[www.osiemaps.ie](http://www.osiemaps.ie) – Ordnance Survey aerial photographs dating to 1995, 2000 & 2005 and 6"/25" OS maps.

[www.googleearth.com](http://www.googleearth.com) – Aerial photographs of the proposed development area

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<https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes> (Schools' Folklore Collection MSS 945, 951, 953)



Plate 1 Cross MO013-002001, facing northwest



Plate 2 Drumsnat Lough, facing east



Plate 3 Graveyard boundary wall, facing west



Plate 4 Graveyard boundary hedge, facing southeast



Plate 5 Entrance steps, facing northwest



Plate 6 Gravestones, facing northwest



Plate 7 Circular wall of stone, facing east



Plate 8 Retaining graveyard wall, facing southwest



Plate 9 1705 gravestone, facing west



Plate 10 Undated/worn headstone, facing west



Plate 11 Bedrock beside Mass Rock, facing southwest

