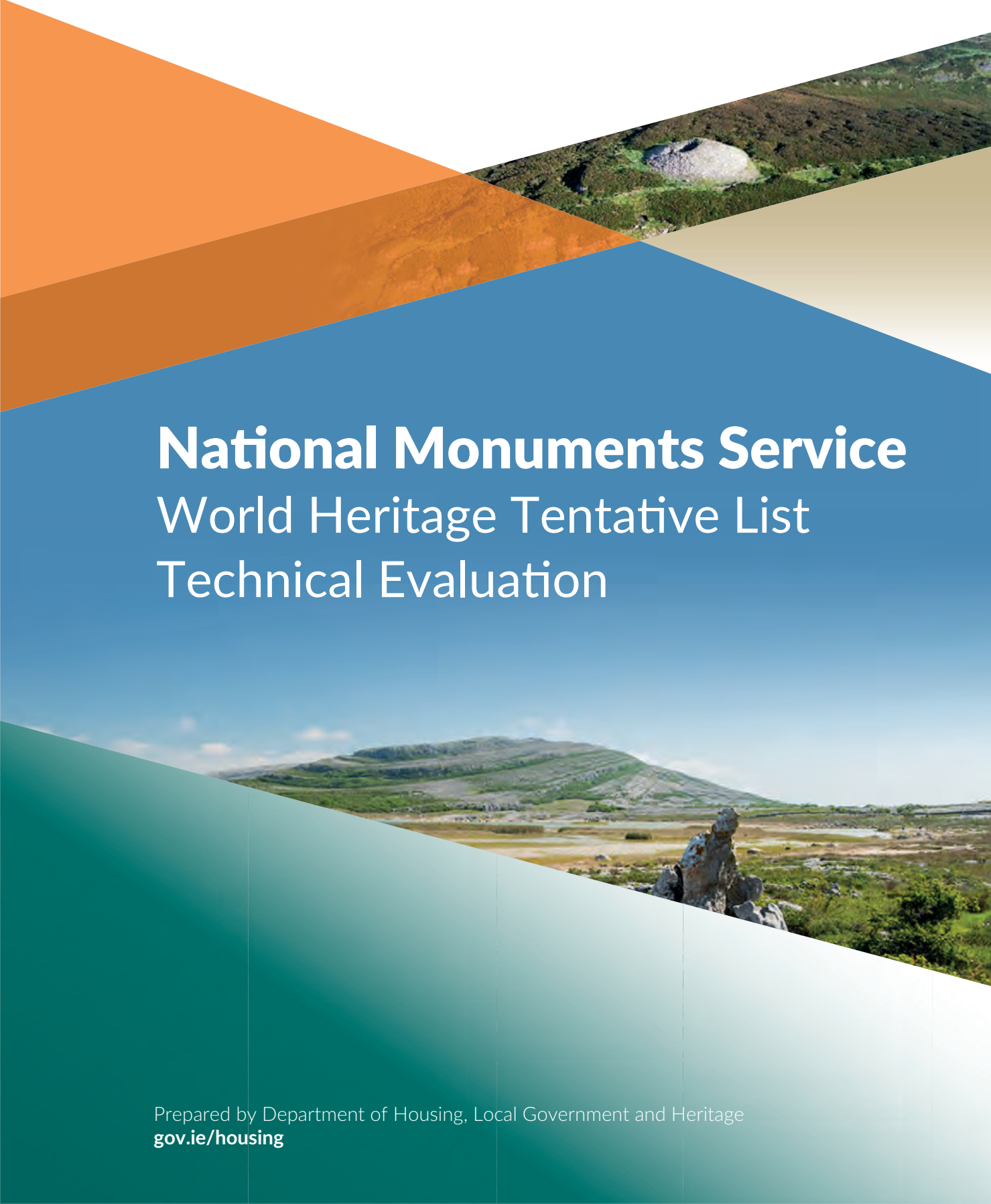




Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



# National Monuments Service

## World Heritage Tentative List

### Technical Evaluation

Prepared by Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
[gov.ie/housing](http://gov.ie/housing)





# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Figures</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Overview of Tentative List (TL) Review Process</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Expert Advisory Group (EAG) .....	5
Technical Evaluation .....	5
Composition of a New TL for Ireland .....	6
<b>Technical Evaluation</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>1. The Passage-Tomb Landscape of County Sligo</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Potential OUV Statement per TL Application .....	8
EAG Recommendations (November 2021).....	9
Technical Evaluation.....	10
<b>2. Iniscealtra (Inis Cealtra), County Clare</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Potential OUV Statement per TL Application .....	12
EAG Recommendations (November 2021).....	13
Technical Evaluation.....	15
<b>3. Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia, County Kerry – Heart’s Content, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Potential OUV Statement per TL Application .....	18
EAG Recommendations (November 2021).....	19
Technical Evaluation.....	21
<b>4. The Cultural Landscape of The Burren Uplands, County Clare</b> .....	<b>23</b>
Potential OUV Statement per TL Application .....	23
EAG Recommendations (November 2021).....	24
Technical Evaluation.....	26

5. Royal Sites of Ireland, Counties Kildare, Westmeath, Tipperary, Roscommon, Meath, and Armagh (Dún Ailinne, Hill of Uisneach, Cashel, Rathcroghan Complex, Tara Complex And Navan Fort).....	29
Potential OUV Statement per TL Application .....	30
EAG Recommendations (November 2021).....	31
Technical Evaluation.....	33
<b>Appendix I: Technical Group World Heritage Experts .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Appendix II: Synopsis of Tentative List Applications .....</b>	<b>39</b>
The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo .....	39
Iniscealtra (Inis Cealtra / Inishcaltra / Holy Island).....	46
Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia-Heart’s Content .....	53
The Cultural Landscape of The Burren Uplands .....	61
The Royal Sites of Ireland.....	69
<b>Appendix III: Nomination Timeline .....</b>	<b>82</b>



## Table of Figures

<b>Figure 1</b>	Carrowkeel, Co. Sligo. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	8
<b>Figure 2</b>	Carrowmore, Co. Sligo. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	9
<b>Figure 3</b>	Carrowmore looking towards Knocknarea, Co. Sligo. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	10
<b>Figure 4</b>	Knocknarea, Co. Sligo. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	11
<b>Figure 5</b>	Iniscealtra Island, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	12
<b>Figure 6</b>	St. Caimín’s Church, Iniscealtra, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	13
<b>Figure 7</b>	St. Caimín’s Church, Round Tower, and Saints’ Graveyard, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	14
<b>Figure 8</b>	Grave-slab within St. Caimín’s Church, Iniscealtra, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	17
<b>Figure 9</b>	Valentia Cable Station and Cable Terraces, Knightstown, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. (Alan Landers) .....	18
<b>Figure 10</b>	First Message Building and Slate Yard, Knightstown, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. (Alan Landers) .....	19
<b>Figure 11</b>	Valentia Cable Station, Knightstown, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. (Alan Landers) .....	20
<b>Figure 12</b>	Heart’s Content Cable Station, Newfoundland, Canada. (Provincial Historic Sites, Government of Newfoundland & Labrador) .....	22
<b>Figure 13</b>	Mullaghmore, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	23
<b>Figure 14</b>	Poul nabrone Dolmen, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	24

<b>Figure 15</b>	Burren National Park, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	25
<b>Figure 16</b>	Flora in the Burren National Park, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	28
<b>Figure 17</b>	Dúma na nGiall (Mound of the Hostages), Tara Complex, Co. Meath. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	29
<b>Figure 18</b>	Dún Ailinne, Co. Kildare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	29
<b>Figure 19</b>	Hill of Uisneach, Co. Westmeath. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	31
<b>Figure 20</b>	Rathcroghan Complex, Co. Roscommon. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	32
<b>Figure 21</b>	Navan Fort, Co. Armagh. (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council).....	32
<b>Figure 22</b>	Rock of Cashel, Co. Tipperary. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).....	34

# Overview of Tentative List (TL) Review Process

Ireland ratified the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1991 and Ireland's two World Heritage properties, Brú na Bóinne and Sceilg Mhichíl, were inscribed on to the World Heritage List in 1993 and 1996 respectively.

In line with UNESCO advice that World Heritage TLs be reviewed at least every ten years, the National Monuments Service (NMS) opened a call for applications in January 2019 to update Ireland's TL of World Heritage properties. Six applications were received by the deadline of 30 June 2021 (See Appendix II for a synopsis of applications):

1. **The Passage-Tomb Landscape of County Sligo**
2. **Iniscealtra (Inis Cealtra), County Clare**
3. **Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia, County Kerry–Heart's Content, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada**
4. **The Cultural Landscape of the Burren Uplands, County Clare**
5. **The Royal Sites of Ireland**
6. **Glendalough Valley, County Wicklow<sup>1</sup>**

## Expert Advisory Group (EAG)

An EAG was established by the NMS to evaluate each of the applications based on their ability to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), integrity and/or authenticity, long-term protection and management frameworks and evidence of local stakeholder support – all critical components of a future nomination dossier. The recommendations of the EAG were issued to the applicants in November 2021. (See Appendix I for membership of the EAG.)

## Technical Evaluation

After NMS engagement with the applicants on issues identified in the EAG recommendations, the NMS established a Technical Group to further consider the applications and recommendations and offer specific guidance to the applicants in terms of understanding the wider implications of World Heritage status and the future management of a World Heritage property. The Technical Group consisted of former members of the EAG, with representation from the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Ireland and the World Heritage Unit of the NMS.

<sup>1</sup> Wicklow County Council paused their application pending completion of the Glendalough Master Plan. It was not therefore included in the technical evaluation.

The Technical Group held two meetings with each TL applicant, the first to consider the specific EAG recommendations issued to the applicant in November 2021, and the second to allow the applicant to give a presentation based on a predefined set of questions, followed by a question-and-answer session. The Technical Group also considered various questions posed by the applicant and provided guidance on useful resources and further research. By working through all the issues raised, this technical evaluation enabled the NMS to make a final decision on the composition of a new TL.

### **Composition of a New TL for Ireland**

Having considered all issues raised and discussed during the technical evaluation, the issues identified in the EAG recommendations and ongoing engagement with the applicants, it was determined that the new World Heritage TL for Ireland would include the following three sites:

- 1. The Passage-Tomb Landscape of Sligo**
- 2. Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia, County Kerry–Heart’s Content, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada**
- 3. The Royal Sites of Ireland**

Further work is required in relation to the Cultural Landscape of the Burren Uplands, County Clare, which, if undertaken, will be reconsidered for inclusion in the TL. It was concluded that Iniscealtra (Inis Cealtra), County Clare, while nationally significant, does not merit inclusion on the TL.



# Technical Evaluation

This section sets out how each application was evaluated and outlines the basis for inclusion in Ireland's new World Heritage TL.



# 1. The Passage-Tomb Landscape of County Sligo



Figure 1 Carrowkeel, Co. Sligo. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

## Potential OUV Statement per TL Application

Neolithic monumentality on the western Atlantic seaboard is an expression of an extraordinary cultural efflorescence following the onset of agriculture. The passage tomb landscape – on which this Property is based – represents the most westerly and one of the most dramatic expressions of a remarkable flourishing of the construction of ritual monuments across Europe between five and six millennia ago. The interconnectivity of stone monuments and varied local topographies – typically involving upland cairns and megalithic tombs with high intervisibility across striking landscapes – is a potent expression of a long disappeared cultural milieu, which fostered an intense and enduring dialogue between architecture and landscape that remains unmatched in world terms.

This cultural landscape has an extraordinary density of undisturbed and unexcavated megalithic sites of the passage tomb tradition, providing an unrivalled exemplar of a Neolithic ritual landscape with an exceptionally high level of completeness, thus illuminating a significant stage in human history.

The monuments were consciously and actively merged with the physical topography in which they are located, and crucially, they remain so; the lives and consciousness of the modern residents of County Sligo daily permeated by living beneath and among these time-honoured monuments and landscapes.



## EAG Recommendations (November 2021)

The EAG noted that the potential OUV of this application had been well illustrated and recommended that the passage tombs of Sligo be placed on the TL.

### Synopsis of EAG Recommendations

The application is proposed as a cultural landscape, but it is also a cultural site. The proposed OUV is well phrased but should clearly indicate how the cultural-landscape aspect (with sightlines) translates into the boundaries and buffer zones of the proposed World Heritage property, as all the relevant attributes demonstrating the OUV should be included. The applicant should clarify why precisely this selection of monuments has been chosen, as well as their individual contribution to the proposed OUV, by elaborating on the association between the upland tombs and the other megalithic tombs in the landscape. It is crucial to be clear about what monuments and sightlines are needed to convey the proposed OUV. The EAG could see the potential for criteria (iii) and (iv). The narrative, as written, is most relevant to criterion (iii), while (iv) could emphasise that the ensemble of sites demonstrates, in an outstanding way, the development of the Neolithic sacred landscape over a millennium. Authenticity could be argued more strongly with reference to historical records, literary references (e.g. W.B. Yeats) and folklore. Past damage and significance of reconstruction are a challenge. Reference to visual integrity is also an essential aspect of the OUV. Threats and how they are dealt with should be further discussed in the management plan. Engagement and stakeholder support has been clearly demonstrated. The comparative analysis is effective as a starting point, but needs to be expanded from both a national and international perspective, with reference to sites on the World Heritage List and TLs, as well as other relevant sites.



Figure 2 Carrowmore, Co. Sligo. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).



Figure 3 Carrowmore looking towards Knocknarea, Co. Sligo. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

## Technical Evaluation

It was concluded, in line with original EAG recommendations and a further review of the application, that the Passage-Tomb Landscape of County Sligo application has demonstrated potential OUV and, accordingly, should be placed on the new TL.

The following key items will require consideration in the preparation of a nomination dossier:

- i.** A long-term vision for the Passage-Tomb Landscape of County Sligo should be refined, with buy-in and support from the local authority, local councillors and stakeholders.
- ii.** Clarification on mapping and buffer zones for the proposed World Heritage property is required, with a particular focus on potential impacts to sightlines and viewsheds of and from the monuments.
- iii.** The rationale for including all elements of the proposed World Heritage property, with reference to their contributions to OUV, requires clarification.
- iv.** The inclusion of all components is dependent on stakeholder and landowner support and the final statement of OUV should take account of this.



- v. Natural values (natural environment, landscape, biodiversity, etc.) should also be considered in the nomination dossier (although the site will not be presented as a mixed site).
- vi. The proposed management structure requires additional granularity.
- vii. The engagement with academia to date is very positive and should be maintained and strengthened going forward.
- viii. Building World Heritage capacity in Sligo County Council to support existing heritage expertise will be critical to support the progression of this application.
- ix. The importance of protecting potential OUV should be reflected in the draft County Development Plan 2023–2029. This should include the protection of component sites and explain how issues, including aforementioned visual impacts, might be mitigated.
- x. Ongoing liaison with the NMS/the Office of Public Works (OPW) will be required in respect of conservation plans and management structures.
- xi. The principles of sustainable development, sustainable tourism and mitigation against climate change all need to be reflected in the development of the nomination dossier.



Figure 4 Knocknarea, Co. Sligo. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

## 2. Iniscealtra (Inis Cealtra), County Clare



Figure 5 Iniscealtra Island, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

### Potential OUV Statement per TL Application

Iniscealtra's five churches, round tower, shrine (the Confessional), and exceptionally large, varied corpus of carved stones combine with its island landscape to form an outstanding example of an early medieval monastic complex. Few other Irish sites contain so many iconic elements while encapsulating the concept of the sacred city. Its prestige is evidenced by excavation finds and historic sources, while it boasts a range of scholars who interacted with ideas across the Christian world.

The Saints' Graveyard, with its many 11th- and 12th-century grave-slabs laid out in organised rows in their original positions, is one of the most outstanding testimonies to elite burial practices in Western Europe. The variety of forms and decoration within the carved stone corpus, frequency of inscriptions, and immense proportion retained in situ demonstrate Iniscealtra's significance as a powerhouse of stone craftsmanship and special place for high-status burial, while also expressing evolutionary changes in Christian beliefs, rituals, and ways to remember the dead.

The island sustained a diverse and relatively large population, and its remarkably well-preserved architecture, earthworks, and pathways illustrate how, inspired by biblical models, sacred space was orchestrated for the community. Iniscealtra's continuing use for pilgrimage and burial today adds to its significance.



## EAG Recommendations (November 2021)

The EAG recommended that Iniscealtra (Inis Cealtra) only be placed on the TL if the potential OUV were clearly demonstrated. EAG suggested a revised deadline of 1 October 2024 for a revised application to be made.

### Synopsis of EAG Recommendations

The application is proposed as a cultural site. The importance of the site is evident; the proposed OUV, however, is not. The OUV needs to be expressed more strongly by defining what makes Iniscealtra unique and of international significance. Particular care should be given to the definition of the attributes that define OUV. This will then inform the delineation of the criteria, the evaluation of authenticity and integrity, the configuration of management and protection frameworks and the drafting of the comparative analysis.

The EAG could see the potential for criteria (iv) and possibly (iii) and (vi) if they were more strongly argued and better defined in relation to the OUV. The applicant should: under criterion (iii), indicate what makes this example of monastic patronage unique both nationally and internationally and worthy of inscription on the World Heritage List; under criterion (iv), clearly indicate what makes it of international significance; and, under criterion (vi), outline to what extent it is still a major pilgrimage destination and place of burial.



Figure 6 St. Caimin's Church, Iniscealtra, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

The property's authenticity can be argued more strongly with reference to written sources and the continuance of pilgrimage and burial. The period covered by the application seems to be the tenth century until the twelfth, but structures adapted and constructed outside of this period may disrupt the narrative. There is some reference to threats in the application, like the roof of the church or the emergency conservation procedures for the carved stones. The applicant should clearly indicate whether all the relevant attributes that make up OUV are still there and represented.

There is also the question as to whether Iniscealtra should be a component of a serial nomination.

The site seems well protected and the applicant is currently working on establishing an overarching management system, but it is important to get the balance right between visitor management and conservation of the site. It is crucial that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the process.

The comparative analysis needs to be much stronger and made on a national and international level, with reference to sites on the World Heritage List and TLs, as well as other relevant sites. In order to be able to do this properly, it is vital to establish the potential OUV. If pilgrimage is the key OUV element, then the comparative analysis needs to feature pilgrimage sites. As religious sites are well represented on the World Heritage List, the applicant must demonstrate that this site is unique in comparison to those. A non-European perspective could help.



Figure 7 St. Caimín's Church, Round Tower, and Saints' Graveyard, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).



## Technical Evaluation

Following a technical review of the EAG recommendation and the issues raised, it was concluded that Iniscealtra should not be added to the TL. While Iniscealtra is a site of national and possibly European significance, it was considered that the narrative for OUV is not adequately robust.

Any future proposal to submit Iniscealtra to the TL should be based on a strong comparative analysis, supported by more detailed research and possibly part of a coherent and credible serial site application. The following issues would need to be addressed in any future application:

- i. It is not clear from either the application or from the technical evaluation what the OUV narrative of Iniscealtra is based on. The argument that the OUV narrative should focus on pre-Carolingian reform might not be sufficiently strong in a global context.**
- ii. It is possible that the OUV narrative would be strengthened as part of a serial application, but considerable work is still required to identify plausible comparative sites and obtain support from relevant local authorities, partners and associated stakeholders.**
- iii. Whatever narrative is chosen, the OUV statement needs to be supported by strong tangible evidence, including a clear mapping of physical attributes and values identified in the statement of OUV, which also should highlight the site's global significance.**
- iv. The fact that the site is well preserved does not mean it is globally unique. Christian sites are overrepresented on the World Heritage List and the framing of the application should take this into account. A very strong and detailed comparative analysis is essential, including not only an Irish or western Judaeo-Christian perspective, but also a global perspective.**
- v. Any future approach should have full involvement from neighbouring local authorities, particularly in relation to buffer zones, sightlines and other factors that could affect conservation and management.**
- vi. A long-term vision for Iniscealtra as a potential World Heritage property would be required if it were to be resubmitted as a serial site, with buy-in and support from relevant local authorities, local councillors and stakeholders.**

- vii.** The application is strongly focused on the economic benefits of World Heritage designation, but it is not clear on the other implications. The development of additional tourism infrastructure may affect the authenticity and integrity of the site.
- viii.** Depending on how the OUV is framed, all threats to integrity and authenticity should be provided for. Mitigation measures should also be considered.
- ix.** The engagement with academia is welcomed and should be expanded and strengthened going forward. In particular, alternative approaches to a possible future application should be examined.
- x.** Building World Heritage capacity in Clare County Council to support existing heritage expertise will be critical to support any future consideration of this site as a potential World Heritage property.
- xi.** Ongoing liaison with the NMS/OPW will be required to support any future consideration of this site as a potential World Heritage property.
- xii.** The principles of sustainable development, sustainable tourism and mitigation against climate change all need to be reflected in any future TL application.



Figure 8 Grave-slab within St. Caimín's Church, Iniscealtra, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).



### 3. Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia, County Kerry – Heart’s Content, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada



Figure 9 Valentia Cable Station and Cable Terraces, Knightstown, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. (Alan Landers).

#### Potential OUV Statement per TL Application

Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia-Heart’s Content (Ireland-Canada) is a transnational serial property of the two shore-end termini (cable stations) of the world’s first permanent trans-oceanic submarine electric telegraph: The Eastern Terminus, Valentia Island (one component part) and The Western Terminus, Heart’s Content, Newfoundland (two component parts). In 1866 ‘the Wire that changed the World’ made the shortest submarine connection between Europe and North America and marked the successful emergence of our modern global telecommunications era.

Valentia Cable Station (1868-1966) is the world’s first permanent trans-oceanic telegraph station. Its layout illustrates full social and technical organisation and provided a model for all cable stations worldwide. Heart’s Content Cable Station (1875-1965) is one of the world’s most intact historic cable stations and retains in situ original equipment to illustrate the technical heritage of the technology. The adjacent eastern foreshore of Trinity Bay exhibits eleven relic submarine cables.

The well-preserved and highly authentic ensemble (the two end points of the transatlantic system) provides vivid testimony to one of the most important scientific accomplishments of the nineteenth century. Global communications and diplomacy, commercial and financial markets, news media and social institutions were changed forever - a prelude to the Information Age and our modern networked world.



## EAG Recommendations (November 2021)

The EAG recommended that the Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia, County Kerry–Heart’s Content, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada should be on the TL as a transnational nomination with Canada once it has clearly demonstrated potential OUV.

### Synopsis of EAG Recommendations

The application is proposed as a cultural site and as a potential transnational nomination with Canada. There would be value in the proposed OUV containing all the associated elements, possibly including the Slate Yard and ‘First Message’ Building (1857–1860), the Telegraph Field and Relay Station (1865–1868) and White Strand landing point, Ballycarbery (1857). The attributes that make up the OUV should be at the centre when defining the criteria, evaluating the authenticity and integrity, proposed management and protection framework and making the comparative analysis. Further work should be done on the proposed OUV and the attributes that go with it. The potential for criteria (ii) and (iv) are well explained and presented.

It is important to indicate under integrity whether all the attributes necessary to fully understanding and expressing the potential OUV are present within the property. Currently, there is mainly reference to the Valentia Cable Station, but if the potentially associated sites are part of the potential OUV, they should be referred to in this section as well. Whilst the authenticity and integrity of the Valentia Cable Station seem to be in order, this is not necessarily the case for some of the potentially associated sites.



Figure 10 First Message Building and Slate Yard, Knightstown, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. (Alan Landers).



Figure 11 Valentia Cable Station, Knightstown, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. (Alan Landers).

Threats and how they are dealt with should be further discussed in the management plan. Points of attention here are the visual impact of the proposed development at the Royal Hotel on the Slate Yard and the existing planning permission for the Cable Station. The proposed site seems well protected, but this protection could be expressed more clearly, as it should apply to all attributes relevant to the OUV.

The comparative analysis is well focused and a good starting point. While there is currently no management plan in place, the proposed management system seems sensible. Support from all key stakeholders, including private owners, is crucial. There is still some work to be done here and the applicant is dealing with this. As a proposed transnational nomination focusing on industrial heritage and meeting the UNESCO Initiative on Heritage of Astronomy, Science and Technology, the application does indeed seem to fill a gap on the World Heritage List. Closer engagement with Canada will be critical.

## Technical Evaluation

Following a technical review of the EAG recommendations and a presentation by the applicant, it was concluded that this site would be included on the TL. This will enable the applicant to formally engage with their Canadian counterpart and develop a joint statement of OUV and commence work on a nomination dossier.

The following items need to be addressed in the preparation of the nomination dossier:

- i. All components required to write a joint OUV with Canada should, where possible, be included in the nomination bid.**
- ii. All potential components should be carefully evaluated to determine whether they are essential to the OUV. It is recognised, however, that the inclusion of all components depends on stakeholder and landowner support and the final statement of OUV will take account of this.**
- iii. A buffer zone or similar designation is required to protect the setting of the cable station and any potential associated sites.**
- iv. Stakeholder engagement is essential, particularly in relation to the owners of the Cable Station Terraces and all other potential associated sites. A clear communication plan is essential and it is important to ensure that clear terminology or non-technical language is used to engage stakeholders and the local community going forward. Emphasis should be on creating and building a meaningful and sustainable relationship between all parties.**
- v. The overall vision and next steps for the site will require extensive engagement with Canada (at federal and provincial level). A joint transnational management structure and a financial framework will need to be put in place so the applicant can adopt a long-term approach to building up resources.**
- vi. The noticeable shift from a tourism-led bid to a sustainable conservation-based approach is welcomed. The development of a sustainable tourism model will be essential to the success of this application. Continued careful consideration of the impact of increased visitors on the local community and island is strongly advised.**
- vii. Protecting the OUV of this site should be reflected in the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans, including how any problems or risks might be mitigated.**



**viii.** Building World Heritage capacity in Kerry County Council to support existing heritage expertise is critical to support the progression of this application.

**ix.** Ongoing engagement with academia and review of existing research is essential to progress and inform this application and is strongly recommended.

**x.** The principles of sustainable development, sustainable tourism and mitigation against climate change all need to be reflected in the development of the nomination dossier.



Figure 12 Heart's Content Cable Station, Newfoundland, Canada. (Provincial Historic Sites, Government of Newfoundland & Labrador).



## 4. The Cultural Landscape of the Burren Uplands, County Clare



Figure 13 Mullaghmore, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

### Potential OUV Statement per TL Application

The Burren plateau is a classical karst landform with the consequent near- universal contradiction of being attractive to humans for settlement yet having the problems of limited and patchy soils, isolated and often unreliable water supplies and a rocky 'difficult' terrain.

The Burren has preserved a near continuous record of the way in which successive settlers and cultures have interacted with this terrain over a period of 6,000 years. Reverse-transhumance pastoralism, known as 'winterage', is the most effective and appropriate use of the seemingly barren karst environment. It is underpinned by traditional knowledge which has developed over millennia, taking into account the natural constraints and opportunities of the landscape, often varying on a farm by farm basis. Farming has evolved with and has moulded the natural landscape which has resulted in a symbiotic and sustainable interaction between humans and the natural environment.

The archaeological landscape provides one of the highest concentrations of farming archaeological and architectural sites in the world. The archaeology is of global significance as it shows evidence of each stage in human history from the Late Mesolithic to present day. The Burren is an outstanding example of a Temperate Oceanic climate karst developed to a large extent under cold climate conditions during the Quaternary (periglacial and glacial) and under warmer climates prior to the Quaternary. A chronological sequence of karstic landforms is present ranging from recent (post-glacial times) to pre-Quaternary times.



Figure 14 Poul nabrone Dolmen, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

### **EAG Recommendations (November 2021)**

The EAG advised that this application has potential to fill a gap on the World Heritage List and could be included on a new TL once more work is carried out to fully demonstrate the potential OUV, with a particular focus on the criteria for assessment of OUV, authenticity and integrity, protection and management of a potential World Heritage property.

### **Synopsis of EAG Recommendations**

The application was proposed as a cultural landscape but is also presented as a mixed site (cultural and natural). For the OUV to be properly demonstrated as a mixed cultural landscape, it would have to include all the relevant elements of the karst landscape, which extends into County Galway. The narrative of the OUV needs to be convincingly brought across with a better-argued description of all relevant attributes that would



demonstrate the uniqueness, authenticity and integrity of the proposed site. This may involve amending the statement of OUV to create a simpler narrative. Furthermore, the OUV should be demonstrated with a more evidence-based approach. For example, the claim of unchanged land-use traditions over six millennia needs to be substantiated, and if (as is suspected) it cannot, it needs to be dropped or amended to fit with what is clearly demonstrable – the link between intangible traditions and the archaeological and agricultural landscape. Additionally, the link between past and present needs to be more clearly demonstrated.

In relation to criterion (viii), cooperation with County Galway is needed, as the karst landscape expands into that county. Boundaries would need to be expanded if the site was being considered as a mixed site.

The involvement of the farming community is crucial, as they are the ones maintaining this landscape. They should support the project as a long-term commitment.

The application is very transparent and honest about potential issues.

A management system is a prerequisite for a World Heritage property. How the preservation and maintenance of the landscape will work and how the entire nominated site will be protected should be clearly indicated. It is furthermore important to outline the decision-making processes that will offer protection through the planning process. The proposed site overlaps with a UNESCO Global Geopark and the application needs to set out how these overlapping designations will be managed.



Figure 15 Burren National Park, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).



## Technical Evaluation

Having further considered the EAG recommendations, the presentation given by the applicant and a detailed technical evaluation of the issues raised, it was considered that the Burren application offers considerable potential as a future World Heritage property. However, the Burren should not be added to the TL until the issues outlined below are addressed. The NMS suggests October 2024 or another mutually agreed date for Clare and Galway County Councils to submit a revised application for consideration. The input of both local authorities, along with the participation of key stakeholders, is critical to the success of any application.

The following issues will need to be addressed in any revised application:

- i. The proposed property type of cultural landscape can be either cultural or mixed. The World Heritage criteria for each of these should be considered further, as they will inform the type of further research needed, as well as the final boundaries and buffer zone of the site. A decision is required on whether natural environmental characteristics are to be part of the OUV or not. Attributes need to be clearly defined and all claims strongly supported by evidence. All of the above will need to be reflected in an updated statement of OUV.**
- ii. The inclusion of Galway County Council in the technical-evaluation process is welcomed. However, as the original application was submitted by Clare County Council, a revised application should be drafted to incorporate aspects of the Galway Burren. This will ensure a coherent, mutually balanced approach. Clare County Council should lead in any revised TL application.**
- iii. Reengagement with academia and up-to-date research on the Burren are essential to progress and inform this application and are strongly recommended.**
- iv. The level of engagement and commitment shown by local-authority senior management in the technical-evaluation process is to be commended. Maintaining and expanding this to include the support of local councillors will be crucial going forward if the Burren is to progress towards potential nomination.**
- v. A long-term vision for the Burren is required, with buy-in and support from both local authorities, local councillors and all other relevant stakeholders.**

- vi.** While good progress has been made on setting out how the proposed Burren World Heritage property might be managed, further consideration is required as to how this will be achieved, given the extent of the Burren and existing problems such as the lack of infrastructure for tourists and capacity to sustainably manage visitor numbers. The management plan should be informed by how the OUV and boundaries are eventually defined.
- vii.** The ways in which the World Heritage property will integrate with the UNESCO Global Geopark and National Park need to be considered further, since UNESCO and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature will take a particularly close interest in how any interplay of designations will be managed. Ongoing liaison with the NMS and the National Parks and Wildlife Service will be required in respect of the National Park.
- viii.** Further in-depth stakeholder consultation will be essential, particularly to gain local support. The inclusion of the Galway Burren will require consultation with stakeholders in that local-authority area. This is regarded as a critical step in advancing the application. The inclusion of all components depends on stakeholder and landowner support and the final statement of OUV will take account of this.
- ix.** Building World Heritage capacity in both Clare and Galway County Councils to support existing heritage expertise is critical to support the progression of this application.
- x.** The principles of sustainable development, sustainable tourism and mitigation against climate change all need to be reflected in any future TL application.



Figure 16 Flora in the Burren National Park, Co. Clare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).



## 5. Royal Sites of Ireland, Counties Kildare, Westmeath, Tipperary, Roscommon, Meath, and Armagh (Dún Ailinne, Hill of Uisneach, Cashel, Rathcroghan Complex, Tara Complex and Navan Fort)



Figure 17 Dúma na nGiall (Mound of the Hostages), Tara Complex, Co. Meath. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).



Figure 18 Dún Ailinne, Co. Kildare. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

## Potential OUV Statement per TL Application

From the eighth century CE, at least, Navan Fort, Dún Ailinne, the Rock of Cashel, Rathcroghan, have been the traditional royal centres of the North, East, South and West provinces, together with Tara, the seat of the High Kings, and the Hill of Uisneach, the symbolic central point of Ireland, forming a globally unique group of archaeological ceremonial complexes. They demonstrate in physical form the development of power, ceremony and religion in a Celtic society minimally influenced by the Romans. Great value is added to the sites by the surviving legends and myths about these places which make it possible to know something of the relationships between them. As a group, they are still perceived as the historic power and spiritual centres of Ireland. Tara in particular is still a symbol of Irish national unity and cultural identity.

Also significant is the time-depth of most of these places showing the changing ways in which their spiritual and ceremonial importance were displayed through more than four millennia. It is clear that during the Iron Age (600BCE-400CE) and Early Medieval period (400-1100CE), a range of ceremonial structures were constructed in most of them in various combinations, including large circular enclosures with internal ditches, large timber structures, and ceremonial ways. All are situated on prominent hills or plateaux so that they are dominant features in the landscape and all of them are parts of larger associated cultural landscapes. They are set apart from their wider landscapes by the scale and intensity of their use, their dominant positions, and by their obvious ceremonial, symbolic and ritual function.

Much of north-western Europe was either included within the Roman Empire or strongly influenced by proximity to it. Despite evidence of contact with the Empire, such as occasional artefacts found on the Royal Sites, Ireland is very unusual in that it was not influenced strongly (until after conversion to Christianity) so that the function of these six places into the early centuries of the Common Era enables us to see how such Celtic traditions evolved outside Roman influence, and also (particularly at the Rock of Cashel) how they could eventually be adapted to the needs of Christianity.



Figure 19 Hill of Uisneach, Co. Westmeath. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).

### **EAG Recommendations (November 2021)**

The EAG advised that the Royal Sites of Ireland have potential as a serial transboundary nomination and could be included in a new TL once more work is carried out to fully demonstrate the potential OUV, particularly in relation to the authenticity and integrity, protection and management and comparative-analysis aspects of the application.

#### **Synopsis of EAG Recommendations**

The application is proposed as a cultural site. There are, however, in the proposed OUV statement, references to cultural-landscape elements. It might be worth further investigating whether this could be presented as a cultural landscape and reconsidering the wording of the OUV accordingly.

The EAG feels that this proposal will only be able to potentially demonstrate OUV if all six component parts are included, thus making it a serial transboundary nomination.

In order to be able to properly evaluate the application, it is essential that the boundaries, including buffer zones, are defined. They should reflect the true extents of the sites as identified by both surviving features and subsurface geophysical and remote survey undertaken in recent years, thus encompassing all the attributes needed to constitute the OUV. As this is currently not the case, it is not possible to give a definite assessment of the application.



The integrity and authenticity of the proposed application cannot be properly assessed, as no indicative boundaries were defined. All potential issues need to be identified in the application.

There is no overarching management system included in the application. The application needs to demonstrate that there is at least some level of protection across all the proposed components of the potential World Heritage property. The sites are very clearly described insofar as each exists within a wider landscape, but only the monuments are mapped.



Figure 20 Rathcroghan Complex, Co. Roscommon. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).



Figure 21 Navan Fort, Co. Armagh. (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council).

## Technical Evaluation

The applicant undertook significant work in addressing the EAG recommendation. This included determining how the boundaries of the serial sites will be mapped, defining a clear OUV statement, creating an appropriate management structure and planning for an academic framework. The strong support for the project shown by the relevant local authorities is to be commended. It was considered, therefore, that the Royal Sites of Ireland should be added to the TL.

The following issues will need to be addressed in the preparation of the nomination dossier:

- i. The final wording of the joint statement of OUV will need to present a clear narrative of all six components.**
- ii. A long-term vision for all six component parts is required, with buy-in and support from all local authorities, local councillors and stakeholders. This overall vision and the next steps for each site will require engagement with Northern Ireland and the UK focal point. In due course, a joint transboundary management structure will need to be put in place.**
- iii. The identification of boundaries and credible buffer zones will be critical to the success of this application. The NMS notes that the applicant has begun to address this.**
- iv. Stakeholder collaboration and buy-in is critical in developing an overarching management plan and shared approach for each component site. The joined up interpretation and presentation of the six sites will need to be carefully developed and managed.**
- v. Ongoing liaison with the NMS/OPW will be required in respect of conservation plans and management structures.**
- vi. Programmes (such as the European Innovation Partnership at Rathcroghan) should be considered across all sites as tools for protection and conservation and may be advantageous in obtaining stakeholder support from the agricultural sector.**
- vii. The transboundary nature of this application will require ongoing engagement between the applicant, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland, with support from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in the UK.**



**viii.** Continued support for and engagement with all component sites essential for telling the story of the serial property coherently in relation to its OUV are crucial.

**ix.** Building World Heritage capacity in the relevant local authorities to support existing heritage expertise will be critical to support the progression of this application.

**x.** Ongoing engagement with academia and up-to-date research on the royal sites will be essential to inform this application and are strongly recommended.

**xi.** The principles of sustainable development, sustainable tourism and mitigation against climate change all need to be reflected in the development of the nomination dossier.



Figure 22 Rock of Cashel, Co. Tipperary. (Photographic Archive, National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland).



# Appendices





# Appendix I: Technical Group World Heritage Experts

## **Dr Carol Westrik – Chair Heritage Consultant, Westrik Consultancy**

Dr Carol Westrik has more than 20 years' experience working with the World Heritage Convention, having reviewed and developed many aspects of World Heritage policy and practice. She was a member of the Dutch delegation when they were on the World Heritage Committee (2003–2007). She was a programme specialist with Nordic World Heritage Foundations in Norway. Her main responsibility there was the Sustainable Tourism Project, in cooperation with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. In 2015 Dr Westrik was individual specialist at the World Heritage Centre, UNESCO, tasked with providing advice aimed at strategic decision-making, particularly on specialised topics and themes including sustainable development and the global strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List. Another responsibility was analysing heritage trends and providing a global perspective.

## **Jane Jackson Principal Adviser and Lead Specialist, Historic England**

Jane Jackson currently leads on a number of regeneration programmes in the north of England and is part of Historic England's team supporting the government's Culture Recovery Fund, helping organisations recover from the pandemic. From 2008 to 2016, Ms Jackson was principal heritage consultant with Capita Property and Infrastructure, coordinating a great variety of projects, from options appraisals for sensitive or scheduled structures and sites to project management of archaeological evaluations and refurbishment schemes, such as Category A-listed Dunoon Pier on the Clyde Estuary. From 1995 to 2000 she was World Heritage coordinator with Telford and Wrekin Council, where she coordinated the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Strategy and Management Groups and co-authored the first World Heritage Site Management Plan in 1999. She was responsible for conservation guidance and advice within the district and managing the building-repair grants scheme for the Ironbridge Gorge. From 2005 to 2008 she was World Heritage officer for the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site, specifically managing delivery of the management plan through a targeted action plan, leading discussions on major development and infrastructure projects and promoting the values and significance of the two towns.

**Dr Alison Sheridan****Research Associate, National Museums Scotland, Honorary Fellow,  
School of Classics, History and Archaeology, University of Edinburgh and  
Corresponding Fellow, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut**

Dr Alison Sheridan is a prehistorian and specialist in the Mesolithic–Neolithic transition, and in the Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Bronze Age material culture of Britain and Ireland. She worked at National Museums Scotland from 1987 to 2019, latterly as principal archaeological research curator. She is a former president of the Prehistoric Society and a current vice-president of Archaeology Scotland. Dr Sheridan was awarded the British Academy Grahame Clark Medal 2018 and the Prehistoric Society Europa Prize 2019, and was voted Current Archaeology’s Archaeologist of the Year 2020. In December 2020 she delivered the Rhind Lectures on Neolithic Scotland to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

**Dr Will Megarry****Senior Lecturer in Archaeology, School of Natural and Built Environment,  
Queen’s University Belfast**

Dr Will Megarry is a member of ICOMOS Ireland and an expert member of the International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management. He has over 15 years’ experience working with World Heritage in a range of capacities, including drafting and reviewing nomination dossiers, contributing to management plans and site assessments and responding to site-specific challenges including over-tourism and the impacts of climate change. He has worked on projects at World Heritage properties on five continents, including the Giant’s Causeway and Brú na Bóinne in Ireland and Machu Picchu in Peru. He is currently leading the DCMS–UK Research and Innovation-funded Climate Vulnerability Index Africa Project, providing foundational training and exploring climate-change vulnerability at World Heritage properties in Tanzania and Nigeria. He is the Climate Change Focal Point at ICOMOS and head of their Climate Action Working Group. He remains an active field archaeologist, with a current project exploring Neolithic communities on the Shetland Islands, Scotland.



**Dr Claire Cave**  
**Lecturer in World Heritage Management, School of Archaeology, University College Dublin (UCD)**

Dr Claire Cave is a lecturer and coordinator of the World Heritage Management programme at UCD. The UCD World Heritage programme includes a PhD in World Heritage Studies, an MSc in World Heritage Management and online postgraduate courses in World Heritage Conservation. Dr Cave holds a PhD in zoology from UCD, with a focus on conservation biology. Her work centres on protected area management in view of globalisation and sustainable development. She has supervised research projects on the implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention in countries all around the world. Dr Cave participated in the development of the global training strategy for UNESCO World Heritage and regularly attends UNESCO World Heritage Committee meetings. Dr Cave co-authored the book *World Heritage Conservation: The World Heritage Convention Linking Culture and Nature for Sustainable Development* (2017) and is co-editor of the Springer series 'Heritage Studies'.

**Grellan D. Rourke (representing ICOMOS Ireland)**  
**Conservation Architect**

Grellan D. Rourke is an architect with a diploma in conservation and a UNESCO expert in the preservation and treatment of stone. He embarked on his career with the OPW in Ireland in September 1978 and recently retired. He has teaching and lecturing experience in Ireland, at UCD and Trinity College Dublin, and he continues to share his experience and specialist knowledge both in Ireland and internationally. Mr Rourke has held offices on the board of ICOMOS Ireland (1993-2019), was a member of the Board and Vice-President of ICOMOS International in Paris (2011-2020). He has been a working member of the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel on the assessment of cultural World Heritage nominations (2016-2019). He was a member of the Council of ICCROM in Rome (2005-2013), acting as its Chair for the last four years and he was awarded the prestigious ICCROM Award in 2019.

## Appendix II: Synopsis of Tentative List Applications

The following are abbreviated versions of the original TL applications received July 2019. Certain data have been removed because of the General Data Protection Regulation and the layout of the forms has been simplified.

<b>The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo</b>
<b>Location / Address:</b> Serial property with multiple locations in County Sligo.
<b>Site Category:</b> Cultural landscape
<p><b>Provide a brief description of the proposed site, including its main heritage features and relevant geographic characteristics. The main focus should be on those features which are relevant to its Outstanding Universal Value.</b></p> <p>County Sligo possesses one hundred intensely interconnected megalithic passage tomb sites and undisturbed cairns in often dramatic topographical environments. The Property can initially be visualised as two circles (of 100 km<sup>2</sup> each) containing dense monument concentrations.</p> <p>The northern concentration – anchored by the Carrowmore complex – is in the coastal region of the Cúil Iorra peninsula; the southern concentration is centred on the Carrowkeel complex in the Bricklieve Mountains. These areas, 23 km apart, are geographically connected by the Unshin River, but also by an intimate and dynamic interaction between landscape, ritual and ancestral connections.</p> <p>The proposed inscribed Property encompasses six major Property Units and a further twenty smaller Units, as a serial property (totalling 16 km<sup>2</sup>). This intact Neolithic landscape contains wilderness areas and hills of varied geology, the whole infused by a rich corpus of medieval Gaelic myth – much of which directly relates to these monuments and places. Many of the monuments are unopened and in an excellent state of preservation. The passage tomb tradition of County Sligo is characterised by an intense dialogue between monuments and landscape, but also by construction, distribution patterns and longevity of use.</p>
<p><b>Propose why the site may have Outstanding Universal Value</b></p> <p>Neolithic monumentality on the western Atlantic seaboard is an expression of an extraordinary cultural efflorescence following the onset of agriculture. The passage tomb landscape – on which this Property is based – represents the most westerly and one of the most dramatic expressions of a remarkable flourishing of the construction of ritual monuments across Europe between five and six millennia ago.</p>

The interconnectivity of stone monuments and varied local topographies – typically involving upland cairns and megalithic tombs with high intervisibility across striking landscapes – is a potent expression of a long disappeared cultural milieu, which fostered an intense and enduring dialogue between architecture and landscape that remains unmatched in world terms.

This cultural landscape has an extraordinary density of undisturbed and unexcavated megalithic sites of the passage tomb tradition, providing an unrivalled exemplar of a Neolithic ritual landscape with an exceptionally high level of completeness, thus illuminating a significant stage in human history. The monuments were consciously and actively merged with the physical topography in which they are located, and crucially, they remain so; the lives and consciousness of the modern residents of County Sligo daily permeated by living beneath and among these time-honoured monuments and landscapes.

**State which one or more of the 10 criteria for Outstanding Universal Value are being proposed for this site and describe briefly why each was chosen.**

**Criteria (iii) & (iv)**

As one of the best preserved and densest prehistoric monumental landscapes in Europe, the passage tombs of Sligo bear exceptional testimony to the worldview and sacred geography of Neolithic people, notably their ability to use architecture to transform a large geographical area in accordance with their religious beliefs and sentiments.

**Describe the authenticity of the site. Authenticity concerns the measure of how well and how truthfully a site's features express potential OUV.**

The state of preservation of the Property is unparalleled for a prehistoric cultural landscape in northwest Europe. A recent analysis of the proposed WHS monuments demonstrates exceptionally high levels of authenticity – 79% in Good or Fair condition (see SM2 & SM3). Analysis of historical records indicates very few destroyed monuments (see SM2). The wide range of monuments within the Property represent a cross-section of the distinctive features that characterise the Irish passage tomb tradition with regards to monument platforms, cairn kerbing, boulder circles, cairn revetting, corbelling and megalithic art. Many of these features are highly probable to be early or foundational examples nationally.

Gneiss is consistently employed as a building material at Cúil Iorra, with limestone used selectively; at Carrowkeel and the southern area, limestone dominates. Their geological variation lends a distinctive quality to the monuments in each area. All monuments retain their original materials (bar Carrowmore 51, the only site subjected to significant reconstruction). The landscape setting of the monuments and the line of sight between the sites is largely intact, thus maintaining the intrinsic relation between landscape and monument, as well as demonstrating the cohesiveness of this Property.



**Describe the integrity of the site. Integrity is a measure of the completeness or intactness of the features that convey proposed OUV. Key areas to consider are wholeness, adequate size, and absence of threats.**

The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo is a serial site and a cultural landscape. It is comprised of 101 monuments (the attributes) distributed across 26 individual property units covering a total area of 16 km<sup>2</sup>. The monuments and landscapes represent a complete and intact assemblage of the Neolithic passage tomb tradition and preserve a diverse range of morphological features in terms of complexity, size and landscape integration.

- a) The Property includes all the attributes necessary to express and jointly convey Outstanding Universal Value. All monuments lie within the inscription Property boundary. The monuments and their landscape setting are predominately in good condition.
- b) The Property is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the Property's significance. The Property boundaries are tightly drawn yet encompass the wider landscape setting of the monuments which provides their essential context.
- c) The Property does not suffer from the adverse effects of development and/or neglect and is afforded statutory protection both at national and local level. Only two potential passage tomb sites have been (historically) impacted or destroyed by the development of Sligo town (Abbeyquarter North and The Sligo Stones).

**Indicate what distinguishes this site from other similar heritage properties around the world, including other properties on the World Heritage List**

Five properties bear comparison with The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo, only the first four of which are currently on UNESCO's WHS list:

1. The Gochang, Hwasun and Ganghwa Dolmen Sites, South Korea
2. The Antequera Dolmens site, Spain
3. Heart of Neolithic Orkney, UK
4. Brú na Bóinne – Archaeological Ensemble of the Bend of the Boyne, Ireland.
5. The megalithic region of Locmariaquer/Gavrinis, Carnac, France.

Site 1 can be set aside as it represents a considerably later tradition unconnected to the broad social impetus underpinning the Property. The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo stands apart from 2. Antequera, 3. Orkney and 5. the Carnac site in that:

- Within this singular tradition of monumental construction an extremely wide range of design complexity occurs.
- It represents a unified and coherent ritual tradition expressed by strictly adhered to monument building criteria.

- It exhibits explicit and active integration of the terrain through the placement of monuments in conspicuous locations.
- The number and density of passage tombs, together with a long chronology of primary use.

Though of the same cultural tradition, the Property in question is clearly distinguished from 4. Brú na Bóinne by:

- Its wider range of passage tomb form and design, from small simple dolmens to complex chambers in massive cairns.
- Its longer period of construction and use, at least 3750-2500BC, with a significant emphasis on the earliest phase of the Irish passage tomb tradition.
- The larger number of passage tomb monuments (c. 100) including a higher percentage of un-excavated and unreconstructed sites.
- The monument's explicit and active integration with the terrain through the choice of conspicuous locations in dramatic landscapes, and a high degree of intervisibility between monuments.

In contrast to Brú na Bóinne, The Passage tomb landscape of County Sligo is nominated in the category of 'Cultural Landscapes', to encompass the multi-layered values of the landscape that these monuments represent.

Other significant and related locations in Ireland include the Loughcrew complex, Co. Meath, with remains of only 15 unambiguous passage tombs over a more limited area, and the prehistoric settlement site Céide Fields, Co. Mayo, which has long been proposed as a site of Neolithic and Bronze Age farming. This cultural landscape is distinguished from the comparative sites above in terms of outstanding universal value, authenticity and integrity and its scale and cohesiveness as a representation of global Neolithic heritage.

**Identify whether the site addresses a particular gap or under- represented area or theme on the World Heritage List.**

The tradition of constructing ritual/funerary monuments with large stones is found in different parts of the world – notably in Europe, India and Korea – and across different time periods. In Neolithic Europe, the megalithic tradition represented a major and widespread belief system, its rituals linking life, ancestors and death. Only three Neolithic sites on the UNESCO WHS list can be said to directly represent this cultural milieu. This phase in human history, distinguished by extraordinary monumental architecture over large parts of the European continent for almost 3000 years, is clearly under-represented in the UNESCO WHS list.

Cultural Landscapes is a category of property significantly under-represented in the UNESCO WHS list ( $\leq 10\%$  of sites). The Passage tomb landscape of County Sligo not only expresses an explicit and active integration of the physical landscape in the wider role of megalithic sites but, additionally, holds many related Neolithic monuments and sites, including varied categories of megalithic monument (e.g., court & portal tombs) and Neolithic enclosures, notably the exceptionally early Magheraboy causewayed enclosure. The totality of this intact passage tomb landscape and overall Neolithic geography is unrivalled, evoking strong spiritual feelings and associations, allowing a visitor to sense the Neolithic world and life.

**Describe the current state of conservation of the site, including details on any potential environmental or development threats to the site, or risks presented by natural disasters. Indicate any mitigation measures in place for the threats identified.**

The following key threats to The Property have been identified:

- Threats to the archaeological resource (e.g., unlicensed digging, metal detecting, walking scars on cairns, graffiti in chambers)
- Threats arising from lack of visitor management (as above)
- Threats to the landscape, ecological heritage and visual amenity of the area
- Threats arising from lack of understanding of the international importance of The Property and the interconnectedness of the monuments in this bid.
- Threats arising from lack of agreed action and the partnerships required to deliver the conservation of The Property.

The measures required to mitigate these threats will be addressed through the preparation of a Management Plan. This will be informed by the results of 'A Baseline Study of the Passage Tombs of County Sligo' (undertaken by the Sligo Neolithic Landscapes group; funded by the Heritage Council. This major work is due for completion in September 2021 (see SM3). This study will assess the physical condition of the Property, threats and conservation measures. The information gathered will provide a critical pathway necessary to monitor the state of conservation of the nominated property in the future.



**Demonstrate how the property has adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection. If protection measures are not currently in place, indicate what protection mechanism will be afforded the property in the near future.**

The protection and conservation of The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo is controlled by a range of international charters and conventions, by national legislation, local planning mechanisms and statutory and non-statutory guidance. These legislative provisions include, amongst others, the National Monuments Act 1930–2004, the Wildlife Acts, 1976 and 2000, the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended), various EU Directives and international instruments. The National Monuments Act is the primary policy framework for the protection and management of Ireland's archaeological heritage.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides a national legislative framework for forward planning and development management within administrative boundaries. The Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 sets out the planning policy for the administrative area of County Sligo. Chapter 7 of the Sligo County Development Plan outlines Sligo County Council's policies and proposals for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the heritage of Sligo. The Development Plan includes a specific objective (O-AH-1) to: Identify and protect internationally important archaeological landscapes such as the Carrowkeel and the Cúil Iorra Peninsula (which includes the core areas of Knocknarea, Carrowmore and Cairns Hill), in co-operation with landowners and relevant stakeholders and statutory agencies.

The Sligo County Heritage Plan 2016-2020 was produced in response to a key action contained in the National Heritage Plan 2002. This action required Local Authorities to provide for heritage at a local level through the preparation and adoption of County Heritage Plans.

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) on the conservation of natural and semi-natural habitats requires Member States to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in order to protect particular habitats and species listed in Annexes to the Directive. SACs, together with SPAs, designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000, a network of protected areas or 'European Sites' throughout the EU. The Property centered at Carrowkeel is enclosed within the Bricklieve Mountains and Keashcorran SAC.

Two international conventions signed by Ireland are relevant. The Granada Convention (1985) and the Valletta Convention (1991) confirmed the State's desire to protect its architectural and archaeological heritage, firstly by their identification through the establishment of architectural and archaeological inventories and secondly through the provision of statutory procedures for their designation for protection.

The above legislative and policy framework demonstrates that The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo has adequate long-term legislative, regulatory and institutional protection.

**Describe whether a management plan is in place, or how it would be developed, that specifies how the Outstanding Universal Value of the property would be protected, presented and transmitted to future generations.**

The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo Management Plan (MP) will provide a broad framework for the management, conservation and enhancement of the Property. The MP will provide a mechanism to protect, present and transmit the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Property to future generations. It will do so by setting out shared aims and objectives to guide those that are involved in making decisions affecting the management of the site.

The property is in the care of a number of key stakeholders both public and private. A MP will be prepared for the site by the State Party in consultation with the Partners who share responsibility for managing the Property and access to it: National Monuments Service, Office of Public Works, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Coillte, Sligo County Council and key landowners. The Steering Group responsible for implementing the MP will comprise representatives of the Partners. The MP will be delivered on behalf of the Steering Group by a WHS Co-ordinator.

Stakeholders drawn from local landowners, the tourism industry, the archaeological community and local communities will have the opportunity to participate in Delivery Groups reporting to the Steering Group in order to contribute to actions related to access and interpretation, research and education, conservation and protection, and tourism and marketing.

A State of Conservation Survey (SM3) is underway for each of the monuments within the Property and describes the current state of conservation of the sites. Management of tourism will seek to develop sustainable approaches to tourism. Key approaches include visitor management, restricting access to vulnerable monuments and improved dispersal of visitors around the monuments and other sites in the wider area.

The wider landscape setting and inter visibility of the monuments that support the Outstanding Universal Value are potentially at risk from change and development in the countryside. The MP will support the provision of appropriate planning policy and planning guidance that will ensure that proposed developments have no significant negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Property.

The MP will incorporate Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) and climate change adaptation and mitigation measures to ensure the resilience of the Property in the long term. Sligo County Council as a Partner is willing to invest in the management plan for the WHS and in the partnerships required between the parties to develop and implement same.

## Iniscealtra (Inis Cealtra / Inishcaltra / Holy Island)

**Location / Address:** Iniscealtra, Lough Derg, Co. Clare.

**Site Category:** Cultural

**Provide a brief description of the proposed site, including its main heritage features and relevant geographic characteristics. The main focus should be on those features which are relevant to its Outstanding Universal Value.**

Iniscealtra is strategically located on an island in Lough Derg in the River Shannon. Founded c.500 AD, historical records and excavation indicate a monastic community flourished here, with links far afield, reflected by finds of East Mediterranean and Gaulish ware.

From c.1000–c.1200 AD Iniscealtra assumed its distinctive architectural character, when its patrons, Brian Boru's dynasty, funded the building of a civitas or heavenly Jerusalem, inspired by pan-European Gregorian reforms, producing four churches, a round tower, two high crosses, and c.110 grave-slabs, many still in their original positions in the Saints' Graveyard. Manuscripts such as St Caimín's Psalter reflect the scholarship Irish clerics brought to Europe.

When Ireland lacked urban centres, Iniscealtra was distinctive in sustaining a large, diverse population. The various enclosures with their churches not only supported a single-sex monastic element, but also other clergy, and sub-communities of all ages and genders such as labourers and craftworkers. This model of mixed ecclesiastical site existed in Europe before the Carolingian reforms and continued to evolve in Ireland until the 12th century. The building of a church and remodelling of 'the Confessional', an early shrine, in the later/post-medieval period reflect Iniscealtra's continuing veneration and importance as a pilgrimage destination.

**Propose why the site may have Outstanding Universal Value**

Iniscealtra's five churches, round tower, shrine (the Confessional), and exceptionally large, varied corpus of carved stones combine with its island landscape to form an outstanding example of an early medieval monastic complex. Few other Irish sites contain so many iconic elements while encapsulating the concept of the sacred city. Its prestige is evidenced by excavation finds and historic sources, while it boasts a range of scholars who interacted with ideas across the Christian world. The Saints' Graveyard, with its many 11th- and 12th-century grave-slabs laid out in organised rows in their original positions, is one of the most outstanding testimonies to elite burial practices in Western Europe. The variety of forms and decoration within the carved stone corpus, frequency of inscriptions, and immense proportion retained in situ demonstrate Iniscealtra's significance as a powerhouse of stone craftsmanship and special place for high-status burial, while also expressing evolutionary changes in Christian beliefs, rituals, and ways to remember the dead. The island sustained a diverse and relatively large population, and its remarkably well-preserved



architecture, earthworks, and pathways illustrate how, inspired by biblical models, sacred space was orchestrated for the community. Iniscealtra's continuing use for pilgrimage and burial today adds to its significance.

**Proposed Outstanding Universal Value by criteria State which one or more of the 10 criteria for Outstanding Universal Value are being proposed for this site and describe briefly why each was chosen.**

Criteria (iii) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

Irish monasticism was singular in terms of lifestyle, site layout, architecture, art, and contribution to Europe's evangelisation and Iniscealtra is unique amongst Irish sites of its type. Its patrons promoted Iniscealtra as a church of national significance, manifest in its well-preserved wealth of monuments and exceptional high-status cemetery.

Criteria (iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

Iniscealtra is an unparalleled embodiment of early medieval Irish monasticism. It contains iconic elements unique to Ireland such as the round tower, high crosses, and a distinctive form of enclosure that delineated sacred space and organised the community. The monuments and carved stones combined constitute an outstanding and authentic survival.

(vi) to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.

One of Ireland's most illustrious monastic sites, Iniscealtra grew with the patronage of Brian Boru's successors to reflect an idea of the heavenly city, evidenced by the wealth of surviving structures and sculpture. A major medieval pilgrimage destination, it continues to attract pilgrims to its largely intact sacred landscape.

**Describe the authenticity of the site. Authenticity concerns the measure of how well and how truthfully a site's features express potential OUV.**

Iniscealtra was uninhabited for centuries due to its island location. This, along with local veneration, has ensured the exceptional preservation of its medieval archaeology, authenticating its OUV. The site has been continually used for pilgrimage and burial as well as occasional worship since the medieval period. The sensory experience of the island for the modern visitor is much as it was for the medieval traveller: key ecclesiastical areas and monuments are linked by a network of earthworks and pilgrims' paths, providing a palimpsest of well-preserved medieval remains that allow a profound insight into how space was used communally. Folklore, a rich historical record, and archaeological research add to this understanding.

The stone shrine known as 'the Confessional' underwent modification in the later medieval/post-medieval period but this has not concealed its original form, and is a tangible manifestation of continued patronage and veneration. There have been necessary conservation interventions by the State since the 1870s, including the repointing of St Caimín's Church, but the structures retain their original form. Excavation in the 1970s was carefully recorded, and key features such as the Saints' Graveyard remain unexcavated. Recent works are limited to the minimum required to achieve structural integrity and public safety.

**Integrity of the site (for both cultural and natural criteria). Describe the integrity of the site. Integrity is a measure of the completeness or intactness of the features that convey proposed OUV. Key areas to consider are wholeness, adequate size, and absence of threats.**

The physical integrity of the early medieval monastic site at Iniscealtra lies in the advantage of its natural boundaries as an island in a lake setting. The island is c.20 hectares in area and the ecclesiastical site occupies c.6 hectares. There is no modern development on the island, save a wooden caretaker's cabin and fences, therefore the visual impact of the monastic monuments, apparently rising out of the lake, contributes to the illusion of a heavenly city. The round tower, multiple churches, and shrine are the physical manifestations of the monastic way of life and the grave-slabs, a very particular way of death. This extant and well-preserved material expression of the medieval Irish Christian experience over centuries demonstrates the OUV of Iniscealtra.

Iniscealtra's island position affords it strong physical protection, while its land use, limited grazing away from the vicinity of the monuments, poses little threat. Rising lake waters in the early 20th century reduced the area of the island slightly but this has not had a major impact on the monuments apart from an early medieval bullaun stone, now situated in situ in the lake, 10m from the eastern shore.

**Indicate what distinguishes this site from other similar heritage properties around the world, including other properties on the World Heritage List?**

**Sceilg Mhichíl, Ireland:**

A difficult-of-access offshore island occupied by a small community who lived in corbelled drystone structures on manmade terraces from c.800 into the 1200s.

Principal differences:

- It demonstrates an extreme of eremitic monasticism, while Iniscealtra was a larger, extensive site with a diverse community that not only included monks/nuns but also other clerics such as priests and bishops, scholars, scribes, anchorites, and pilgrims, penitents, workers and their families, who were legally and socially all considered part of the monastic family but did not necessarily follow a monastic rule or lifestyle. Illustrious sites such as Iniscealtra were the largest settlements outside of Viking port-towns in early medieval Ireland.

- It was inaccessible for much of the winter season, while Iniscealtra could be reached by boat throughout the year.
- It was non-congregational and inward-looking, while Iniscealtra was a major powerhouse of religious and royal authority.
- It features early medieval corbelled drystone building, a different architectural style from that of the mortared stone buildings at Iniscealtra.
- A small number of burials have been excavated on the site, while Iniscealtra had a major function as an elite cemetery.

#### **Monastic Island of Reichenau:**

- An influential Benedictine monastery with three churches representative of Carolingian, Ottonian, and Salian architecture.

#### Principal differences:

- Reichenau was the quintessential Benedictine site, where monks lived within a purpose-built monastery of claustral plan. Ireland was not subject to Carolingian monastic reforms such as the introduction of the cloister. Therefore the physical layout of Iniscealtra with its dispersed churches, inspired by ideals of the heavenly Jerusalem, is entirely different in style to Reichenau, as was the lifestyle of its inhabitants. It was not until the 12th century that Irish monasticism became more aligned with European norms.
- Unlike Reichenau, Iniscealtra offered pastoral care in the early medieval period.

#### **Durham:**

- Durham Cathedral was built between the late 11th and early 12th centuries to house the bodies of Cuthbert and Bede. It had a Benedictine community and is the largest, finest example of Norman architecture in England.

#### Principal differences:

- The architecture is of 'Norman' style and a potent symbol of the Norman conquest. Iniscealtra is a uniquely Irish site type which, while open to external influence, evolved a distinctly Irish style of building and planning influenced by biblical models.
- The community were Benedictine. Iniscealtra's monastic community were unreformed and, as noted above, diverse in nature.
- The chronology is different. Iniscealtra was founded c.500 AD.

#### **Identify whether the site addresses a particular gap or under-represented area or theme on the World Heritage List.**

Iniscealtra represents one of the most well-preserved and coherent monastic complexes in the North Atlantic world. Sacred ideals and secular patronage combined to produce an early medieval ideal of the heavenly city as conceived on the northwest fringes of the known world, a site type that has not yet been nominated for World Heritage status. Its monuments, earthworks, and landscape



combine to form an outstanding example of this distinct site type, which epitomises the 'golden age' of pre- Norman Irish culture. The island boasts an exceptionally large and well-preserved corpus of c.200 early medieval carved stones, crosses, and other mortuary monuments that are independent in style but exhibit subtle parallels with stonework from Anglo- Saxon England, Wales, and the Mediterranean. The devotional landscape of the island has been reinterpreted over the centuries without suffering major development. While some restoration works such as limited rebuilding of walls and repointing have been carried out, the buildings have retained their original forms. Iniscealtra therefore continues to function as a place of pilgrimage and burial today while retaining its early medieval character.

**Describe the current state of conservation of the site, including details on any potential environmental or development threats to the site, or risks presented by natural disasters. Indicate any mitigation measures in place for the threats identified.**

Uninhabited for centuries, Iniscealtra is in an excellent state of conservation with many of its monuments remaining intact, preserving original fabric. St Caimín's Church was restored in 1879–1880 and underwent further works in the 1970s, including cementitious repointing and the rebuilding of the Romanesque doorway in its west wall. While the church is in relatively good condition, this wall features a dark saturated band: careful removal of the intrusive render and replacement with a historically appropriate mortar will alleviate this issue. The church was roofed in the 1990s creating a microclimate leading to dampness in the interior. Recently addressed were the vegetation growth and loose stones at the top of the round tower. Weathering is an issue with spalling noted in the doorway to St Brigid's Church and delamination affecting many of the in-situ grave-slabs. In St Caimín's and St Mary's Churches carved stones were fixed to the walls in the 19th and 20th centuries using cementitious render and metal brackets.

The OPW inspect the monuments regularly and undertake necessary remedial works, which adhere to best practice, are kept to a required minimum, carefully recorded, and do not in any way threaten the medieval character of the site.

**Demonstrate how the property has adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection. If protection measures are not currently in place, indicate what protection mechanism will be afforded the property in the near future**

Iniscealtra is a National Monument (no. 5) in State ownership. More than 200 monuments on the island are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and a small number of other items, removed from the island, are also in the RMP. National Monuments or those prescribed RMP status are protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930–2004, while legal protection also extends to other features within their curtilages. Any works involving the recorded monuments or

in their surrounding zones of notification must be carried out in accordance with Section 14 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004, requiring consent from the Minister of State for Heritage. Iniscealtra's monuments came into State care in 1869 and the remainder of the island, privately-owned, was purchased by Clare County Council in 2015. An expert management group was put in place in 2019, adding another level of protection.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 is the current statutory land-use framework for the county; it was commissioned by Clare County Council in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and was informed by various ICOMOS charters and relevant EU directives. It identifies Iniscealtra as an 'Area of Special Control' and a 'Heritage Landscape'. The latter designation seeks to prioritise and sustain the natural and cultural heritage of these landscapes, which it envisions as the most valued part of the county. The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-23 lists in its objectives the implementation of Inis Cealtra: Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism Development Plan, published by Clare County Council in July 2017. Protecting the OUV of Iniscealtra is thus enshrined in all local government initiatives.

Iniscealtra's island location means that universal access is not feasible, while weather conditions restrict visitor numbers; these factors protect the island's cultural heritage. A further level of protection is afforded by the island's ecological status within a 'Special Protection Area' (no. 004058), part of the EU Natura 2000 network, designated a marsh habitat supporting populations of breeding and wintering birds and providing foraging for bats and other native mammals listed under the EU Habitats Directive, which protection is transposed to Irish statutes.

A robust legal framework, land use policies, and various designations, combined with its island location and full State ownership, will safeguard all aspects of the heritage of Iniscealtra and ensure that conservation methodologies conform to the guiding principles set out in the ICOMOS charters.

**Describe whether a management plan is in place, or how it would be developed, that specifies how the Outstanding Universal Value of the property would be protected, presented and transmitted to future generations.**

In 2016–17 Clare County Council commissioned a visitor management and sustainable tourism development plan, which was produced by a team of archaeologists, conservation architects, ecologists, tourism, planning consultants, and engineers. The main objectives of the plan is for the conservation of the history and culture of the island and for the development of a sustainable visitor destination in Mountshannon. It calculated the maximum threshold of visitor numbers and daily capacity limits, and implemented a limited, sustainable, and continually monitored stocking and grazing plan. This plan involved a condition survey of the buildings, as well as detailing threats and mitigation measures which supported a phased and cautious approach to all conservation; as a result, some short-term issues have been resolved.

As part of a five-year action strategy outlined in the 2017 plan, a site management group was established in 2019 comprising relevant bodies and experts to efficiently co-ordinate the day-to-day management of Iniscealtra and liaise with interest groups. The five-year strategy recommended the creation of an archaeologically informed conservation management plan, with multi-agency and expert input to ensure long-term preservation to international best practice standards. This plan is underway and is largely informed by the 2017 plan. The management plan will be a cohesive living strategy that will adjust to contemporary conditions. It will detail regular monitoring of the archaeological and cultural heritage of the site; periodic reporting of the condition of the archaeological remains; liaising with local community groups; improving public appreciation of Iniscealtra; collecting visitor statistics; establishing a research framework strategy; and scheduling of plan reviews.

Clare County Council was successful in securing €920,500 funding in 2019 from Department of Rural and Community Development to implement the management plan. To develop a detailed design for a visitor centre on the mainland in Mountshannon, a design for a new boat landing point including visitor trails and the production of an interpretation strategy for the project. Plans are in place to undertake this work at present in consultation with the site management group.

As part of the plan, it is anticipated that emergency conservation procedures will be created for the more vulnerable monuments, the carved stones. These are highly susceptible to environmental, human, and animal impacts but it was beyond the scope of the 2017 plan to assess individual condition within the c.200-piece corpus. For the many pieces that are in situ, solutions will be found that will maintain them in their original positions while addressing their deteriorating state in their outdoor settings. Ex-situ carved stones inappropriately attached to walls or unsecured, and at risk of theft, will be stored and displayed in a more fit-for-purpose manner. A geophysical surveying of the island to reveal the true extent and complexity of the earthworks, and an underwater archaeological survey were completed in May 2021. The evolving conservation strategy of the plan, combined with an ongoing review of visitor numbers for compatibility with site protection, will ensure that the OUV of this exceptional site is maintained.



## Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia-Heart's Content

**Location / Address:** Valentia Cable Station, Farranreagh, Knightstown, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry.

**Site category:** Cultural

**Provide a brief description of the proposed site, including its main heritage features and relevant geographic characteristics. The main focus should be on those features which are relevant to its Outstanding Universal Value**

Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia-Heart's Content is a transnational series comprising the shore-end termini of the world's first permanent trans-oceanic submarine electric telegraph: Eastern Terminus, Valentia Island, County Kerry (Ireland, one component part) and Western Terminus, Heart's Content, Newfoundland (Canada, two component parts). Both ends of this pioneer cable route are represented by corresponding well-preserved historic Cable Stations together with supporting sites\*.

Valentia Cable Station (1868-1966) is an architectural set-piece in spacious grounds facing the sea at Knightstown. It represents the social and technical organisation of a model cable station and comprises the central telegraph 'office' (1868), a two-storey square block in 'ecclesiastical Gothic' style, flanked symmetrically by terraces of married staff housing (1870). Extensions to the office date from the late nineteenth century (rear) and early twentieth century (sides). An additional terrace is from 1880.

Heart's Content Cable Station (1875-1965) is located on the eastern shore of Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. The 1½-storey red brick building with Gothic bargeboard and steep slate roof (1875) is complemented by an extension (1918) which retains original in situ equipment to illustrate the technical heritage of the technology and allow an understanding of the practice of electric telegraphy. The adjacent foreshore exhibits eleven relic submarine cables.

The application of electricity to telegraphy is one of the great scientific achievements of the industrial revolution, especially the technological breakthrough of trans-oceanic telecommunications where magnitudes of distance and depth multiplied difficulties. Prior to 1870 the fastest transatlantic communication by steamship took 9 days (one way). The first transatlantic telegraphic message of 1858 sent from Valentia represents a turning point in world history while the permanent Valentia-Heart's Content connection from July 1866 revolutionised global communications.

Valentia and Heart's Content represent the cradle of our global telecommunications era. Historic cable stations at two remote locations mark the termini of the first commercially viable 3,492-kilometre transatlantic submarine cable of 1865-66. They have an inseparable history, an engineered system under single ownership. Early attempts, while not technically sustainable or commercially successful, were key to development. Temporary cable stations were succeeded by permanent

stations in 1868 and 1875, respectively. They provide testimony to the profound development of practical technology from the 1860s to the early 1880s, and to the entire technological development of submarine cable operations until closure in the mid-1960s. Extensions at Valentia and Heart's Content reflect peak operations.

Significant original equipment survives in situ at Heart's Content Cable Station, while the intact architectural ensemble at Valentia Cable Station includes former staff accommodation. Valorisation, protection, and conservation at each site led to revived transnational collaboration and this joint proposal for World Heritage listing.

\* The associated sites are the 'First Message' building, situated in the Slate Yard, Knightstown and the Relay Station in the Telegraph Field, Foilhommerum. Discussions are ongoing with the property owners in relation to the possible addition of these sites as components to the nomination.

### **Propose why the site may have Outstanding Universal Value**

Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia-Heart's Content (Ireland-Canada) is a transnational serial property of the two shore-end termini (cable stations) of the world's first permanent trans-oceanic submarine electric telegraph: The Eastern Terminus, Valentia Island (one component part) and The Western Terminus, Heart's Content, Newfoundland (two component parts). In 1866 'the Wire that changed the World' made the shortest submarine connection between Europe and North America and marked the successful emergence of our modern global telecommunications era.

Valentia Cable Station (1868-1966) is the world's first permanent trans-oceanic telegraph station. Its layout illustrates full social and technical organisation and provided a model for all cable stations worldwide. Heart's Content Cable Station (1875-1965) is one of the world's most intact historic cable stations and retains in situ original equipment to illustrate the technical heritage of the technology. The adjacent eastern foreshore of Trinity Bay exhibits eleven relic submarine cables. The well-preserved and highly authentic ensemble (the two end points of the transatlantic system) provides vivid testimony to one of the most important scientific accomplishments of the nineteenth century. Global communications and diplomacy, commercial and financial markets, news media and social institutions were changed forever - a prelude to the Information Age and our modern networked world.

### **State which one or more of the 10 criteria for Outstanding Universal Value are being proposed for this site and describe briefly why each was chosen.**

Criteria (ii) The property represents the world's first permanent trans-oceanic electrical telecommunications system, vivid testimony to remarkable advances in communication technology made during the nineteenth century. It proved that telegraphic communication beneath oceans was indeed possible, and established telegraphy as the principal form of long-distance telecommunications for the next one hundred years.

Criteria (iv) This outstanding technological and architectural ensemble represents the scientific and technical achievements of the mid to late nineteenth century in telecommunications: the ability to communicate between continents and beneath oceans instantly and accurately. This established our modern global telecommunications era and had a profound social effect evident to this day.

**Authenticity of the site (\*for cultural criteria only). Describe the authenticity of the site. Authenticity concerns the measure of how well and how truthfully a site's features express potential OUV.**

The Authenticity of Valentia Cable Station is high. In terms of location, setting, and key views, a compatible environment conveys the historical situation exceptionally well, contributing positively to spirit and feeling. This favourable situation reflects circumstances of comparative remoteness (yet proximity to Knightstown), sensitive ownership, lack of development pressure, and comprehensive legal protection for the complex and adjacent coastal and open water environment. Form and design, materials and substance of the cable station are highly authentic, from principal constructions to well-crafted internal joinery.

Externally, authenticity of the terraces and historical landscaped grounds is high, including boundary wall, gateways, carriageway and pathways. All equipment was removed from the cable room, part of the ground floor being re-used for light industrial purposes, although installations are light-touch and substantially reversible.

The first floor remained unused after 1966, preserving substantial original features. Spatial arrangement and structure remain faithful to operational evolution, and many original fittings survive (glazing and sash windows, staircase and balustrading, doors, fireplaces, ironmongery, central heating, wooden floors, bathrooms).

Loss of use and function came with the closure of Valentia Cable Station in 1966, although terraced housing remained in occupation. Knowledge of the property is founded on extensive primary archive material, an extensive photographic collection, supported by a conservation-led buildings survey.

**Integrity of the site (for both cultural and natural criteria) Describe the integrity of the site. Integrity is a measure of the completeness or intactness of the features that convey proposed OUV.**

Integrity of Valentia Cable Station is met in the context of the series. Functional integrity is conveyed by intact spatial layout of original buildings and extensions from the peak period of operation (including rooms and circulation spaces). Ancillary buildings also remain, all set in landscaped grounds with flanking terraced housing, access ways, tennis court and gardens.



Lack of original equipment in the cable room (much table-top/floor-mounted), while undeniably impacting on integrity, is compensated for by the in-situ survival of equipment at the sister Heart's Content Cable Station. A future concept comprises reinstatement of technically credible and contemporary historical equipment loaned by Heart's Content. Flanking cable terraces, gardens and recreational spaces reference a tangible socio-technical dimension of highly educated and well-paid staff, and their families, brought to this remote part of Ireland.

Structural integrity spans the operational period from profound development of practical technology during the late 1860s to the early 1880s, to the entire technological development of submarine cable operations until the 1960s.

Building extensions reflect peak operations. Terraces, in broadly symmetrical composition, are by the same architect (T.N. Deane) as the main station block. Visual integrity of the cable station in the landscape is high, and the property is not threatened by inappropriate development.

**Indicate what distinguishes this site from other similar heritage properties around the world, including other properties on the World Heritage List? Give details on its significance in relation to a maximum of 5 properties of comparable heritage value found worldwide.**

Comparative analysis established a clear framework and criteria. A holistic, rigorous, and pragmatic approach pursued a comprehensive thematic study on telecommunications by an international Expert Panel. (WHIRCA Report 2021 attached). This focussed on the relevant chronology of commercial electric submarine telegraphy from the 1850s to the end of the nineteenth century. The geocultural region was appropriately worldwide, but a special focus was placed on the Atlantic region.

Scoping work for comparative analysis necessarily considered properties on a like-for-like basis and encompassed properties on the World Heritage List, Tentative Lists, and properties not on either list. Robust comparators were systematically applied in the analysis.

Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia-Heart's Content is distinguished from all other surviving submarine telegraph stations in that it is testimony to the earliest permanent successful trans-oceanic cable (1866, implicitly also the first commercially successful transatlantic cables connecting Europe and North America), a significant milestone in the history of communications. It is also notable in comparative study of cable stations, worldwide, for high authenticity and integrity, state of conservation and protection and management. (See letters from the international institutions: IET and IEEE)

The property comprises two cable stations - uniquely, both ends of the engineered system - out of a total of seven that survive from around twenty that were built on both sides of the Atlantic during the period of pioneering activity from the 1860s to the 1890s. Of the other five, two are well-conserved as cable museums: Porthcurno

(UK, Cornwall, 1870/1909-1970, terminus of 'Eastern Group' cables) and Orleans (USA, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, 1891, terminus of a single French cable as opposed to multiple cables in the nominated property); while three have long been converted to private residences.

Valentia Cable Station stands out worldwide as the first permanently built trans-oceanic cable station (1868) and a model of socio-technical organisation, while Heart's Content Cable Station (1875, the other terminus of the submarine cable system, with original cables still accessible on the shoreline) is the second oldest cable station and stands out as one of the most intact and best-preserved with its original in situ equipment. It is also the only one that is owned and operated by a government entity providing the highest degree of protection and management.

The only partly comparable property on the World Heritage List is Grimeton Radio Station, Varberg (Sweden). This shares the transatlantic telecommunications theme but is fundamentally different as it was built in 1922-24 and represents, albeit pre-eminently, 'wireless' pre-electronic technology. No closely comparable sites are currently on State Party Tentative Lists.

**Identify whether the site addresses a particular gap or under- represented area or theme on the World Heritage List.**

While industrial heritage remains broadly underrepresented on the World Heritage List (around 4% of inscribed properties), the significant sub-theme of telecommunications is only represented by the 1920s site of Grimeton Radio Station, Varberg (Sweden). This property is testimony to twentieth century 'wireless' or radio communication technology (in this case transatlantic, also) that does not use an electrical conductor as a transmission medium. Although this came much later than electric cable telegraphy, interestingly its origins stem from the wireless telegraph system successfully developed in the mid-1890s by Marconi: the long-distance radio transmission from Cornwall (UK) to Newfoundland in 1901 demonstrated the 'wireless telegraph' as potential competition with transatlantic telegraph cables.

The nominated property provides eloquent testimony to the pioneer successful trans-oceanic system from which truly global telecommunications developed. This notable scientific achievement of the industrial revolution marks a major milestone in communications history, one which fundamentally reconfigured human society without being responsible for intolerable working conditions, incurring mass unemployment or causing widespread pollution.

The continued evolution of telecommunications technologies, its contemporary importance and universal relevance, further supports the notion for Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia-Heart's Content to fill a discrete and significant gap – a 'missing heritage' - on the World Heritage List.

**Describe the current state of conservation of the site, including details on any potential environmental or development threats to the site, or risks presented by natural disasters. Indicate any mitigation measures in place for the threats identified.**

Valentia Cable Station is in an overall fair to good state of conservation. Timely intervention by Kerry County Council and Valentia Island Development Company in recent years to repair the roof under the DCH&G Buildings at Risk Scheme has protected the building from deterioration.

Conservation management planning informs proposed major architectural conservation works to the building and wider site, based on the principle of minimum intervention. These works are being implemented under the supervision of a Grade I Conservation Architect; a trajectory from good to excellent is planned. Light industrial use in the cable room and part of the ground floor will continue. The introduction of a technological and museum dimension entitled 'Eighth Wonder ☐ Transatlantic Cable Station', will be located in the former ground floor billiard room; this will feature telegraphic equipment loaned by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador from its Heart's Content Cable Station stores via Kerry County Museum.

A community innovation hub will be located on the first floor which will be accompanied by the restoration and public presentation of selected single officers' accommodation.

Sea-facing landscaped grounds, boundary walls, original gateways, lamp posts, carriageway and pathways are in a good state of conservation. So, too, Cable Station terraces. This essential context, exemplary in terms of socio-technical organisation of a model cable station, will also receive conservation.

**Demonstrate how the property has adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection. If protection measures are not currently in place, indicate what protection mechanism will be afforded the property in the near future.**

Valentia Cable Station and the adjoining Cable Terrace are legally 'protected structures' of historic, architectural, cultural, scientific and artistic interest, and are listed in the Kerry County Development Plan, 2015-21. Valentia Cable Station (KCDP RPS ref. 79-014) is recorded in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) as NIAH ref. 21401331. The categories of Special interest are listed as Architectural, Artistic, Historical, Social, and Technical.

Additional protection is provided in Kerry County Council's West Iveragh Local Area Plan, 2019-2025.

Section 2.7.2. states:

In addition, an architectural conservation area that includes the three main sites associated with the history of the Trans-Atlantic Cable has been included in this

plan. This ACA will serve to preserve the character of the place that contributes to the appreciation of the protected structures.

Objective VI-05 in the same plan commits the Council to:

- (a) Protect the key cable sites at the old Slate Yard and 'First Message' building (1858) in Knightstown including the visual corridor from the harbour, the Cable Station building (1868), Knightstown, and the remains of the 1866 building on the Telegraph Field at Foilhommerum\*
- (b) Facilitate and support the conservation and presentation of these sites in accordance with Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht and UNESCO guidance.

The ground floor of the Cable Station is currently being used as an educational facility where a series of events are held annually, such as the Annual Globalisation Lecture Series organised by the Valentia Trans-Atlantic Cable Foundation, Innovation Workshops, and various cultural events. Light industrial use also occupies a portion of the ground floor and external buildings. It is managed by Valentia Island Development Company CLG.

A multi-disciplinary design team, led by a Grade 1 Conservation Architect, will shortly (July '21) commence work on the detailed conservation plan for the building. The works that follow will be on the principle of 'minimum intervention' as guided by the Joint ICOMOS – TICCIH Principles for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage Sites, Structures, Areas and Landscapes (known as the 'Dublin Principles', adopted by the 17th ICOMOS GA in 2011) and compatible with a future nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage List. This will provide a conservation-led foundation for future management of a museum and interpretation centre on the ground floor, selected restored and presented single officers' accommodation on the first floor, together with innovation spaces. This aligns with celebrating the heritage, ethos, and function of the original building. It has a designated high-speed broadband facility for local community access.

**Describe whether a management plan is in place, or how it would be developed, that specifies how the Outstanding Universal Value of the property would be protected, presented and transmitted to future generations**

Management systems for World Heritage sites are already well-developed in Ireland and Canada. In the process of the development of a transnational nomination to the World Heritage List, an overarching Property Management Plan (PMP) will be produced for Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia-Heart's Content. Local Management Plans (LMP) will serve component parts in Ireland and Canada.

The PMP will guide delivery of strategic objectives and joint single property actions, including monitoring, conservation initiatives such as restoration of equipment at Valentia Cable Station, together with presentation and transmission to future generations in a harmonious approach both virtually and on the sites. The PMP will be supported by LMPs in each country that reflect aspects such as site specificities, variations in national legislation, and local initiatives.



UNESCO's COMPACT (Engaging Local Communities in the Stewardship of World Heritage) community-driven approach strongly advises the involvement of local people in governance and management. It highlights that supporting community-led initiatives require trust, flexibility, and patience. 'Transparent processes and broad public participation are key to ensuring community engagement and strengthening civil society' (WHC 2014:21). Local community governance requires strong leadership, specialised capabilities, and capacity as well as a solid financial structure which can put enormous pressure on a local community. Shared structure governance allows state parties to bring a level of expertise and financial security which enhances the local community. A commitment to capacity-building and networking activities will support the local community's contribution to the process.

A community perspective can ensure a broad understanding of the site's proposed Outstanding Universal Value as well as local knowledge which will contribute to authenticity as well as management of the broader landscape.

The COMPACT highlights '...the important step in making the link between universal and local values' (WHC 2014:40). Engagement with the community needs to be meaningful and constant, seeking different methods to capture perspectives. These can include interviews, surveys, focus groups, public meetings, awareness campaigns and celebrations. All these actions have been undertaken consistently in Valentia since 2013 and will continue.

## The Cultural Landscape of the Burren Uplands

**Location / Address:** The Burren Region, County Clare, Ireland.

**Site category:** Cultural Landscape

**Provide a brief description of the proposed site, including its main heritage features and relevant geographic characteristics. The main focus should be on those features which are relevant to its Outstanding Universal Value.**

The Burren is a vibrant living landscape, which displays outstanding cultural and natural heritage characteristics. The area is internationally important for ecology, botany, geology, speleology, archaeology and agriculture.

The Burren Uplands is defined by a series of terraced limestone hills which reach a plateau at 150m and a maximum height of 330m. These hills are characterised by exposed limestone terraces and pavements, with light, free draining soils and subterranean water drainage. It is a karst landscape bordered by Galway Bay to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the west and the Low Burren to the east and south.

Land use traditions, unchanged in millennia, are practiced here to this day. The Burren is evidence of an ancient agricultural and a pastoral farming economy. Early field systems and habitation sites among other field monuments, are uncommonly well preserved as a palimpsest on the landscape's surface.

The distinctive karst terrain contains over 70% of Ireland's native flora and is host to a mosaic of significant habitats which have been formed and sustained through human interaction and farming practices.

The Burren and its remarkable limestone geology is a source of great inspiration resulting in a rich cultural legacy as shown by the people through art, music and literature. The natural and manmade features as well as intangible elements combine to make up the character of the nominated property.

**Propose why the site may have Outstanding Universal Value.**

The Burren plateau is a classical karst landform with the consequent near- universal contradiction of being attractive to humans for settlement yet having the problems of limited and patchy soils, isolated and often unreliable water supplies and a rocky 'difficult' terrain. The Burren has preserved a near continuous record of the way in which successive settlers and cultures have interacted with this terrain over a period of 6,000 years.

Reverse-transhumance pastoralism, known as 'winterage', is the most effective and appropriate use of the seemingly barren karst environment. It is underpinned by traditional knowledge which has developed over millennia, taking into account the natural constraints and opportunities of the landscape, often varying on a farm by farm basis. Farming has evolved with and has moulded the natural landscape which has resulted in a symbiotic and sustainable interaction between humans and the natural environment.

The archaeological landscape provides one of the highest concentrations of farming archaeological and architectural sites in the world. The archaeology is of global significance as it shows evidence of each stage in human history from the Late Mesolithic to present day.

The Burren is an outstanding example of a Temperate Oceanic climate karst developed to a large extent under cold climate conditions during the Quaternary (periglacial and glacial) and under warmer climates prior to the Quaternary. A chronological sequence of karstic landforms is present ranging from recent (post-glacial times) to pre-Quaternary times

**Proposed Outstanding Universal Value by criteria. State which one or more of the 10 criteria for Outstanding Universal Value are being proposed for this site and describe briefly why each was chosen.**

Criteria (iii) The Burren as a cultural landscape is an exceptional testament to ongoing cultural traditions, in particular the tradition of reverse-transhumance, which have evolved and developed over a period of 6000 years. This is demonstrated by the historic fabric and wealth of archaeological sites and the present agricultural practices in the Burren Uplands. The Burren is the only site in Ireland where this specific tradition has survived and the tradition is now rare throughout Europe.

Criteria (iv) The landscape of the Burren represents one of the highest concentrations of farming archaeological and architectural sites in the world. These sites are of global significance as they represent each era in human history as far back as the Mesolithic.

(Criteria (v) The Burren is an outstanding example of continuous human settlement and land use, which spans over a period of 6000 years. The traditions have evolved with and have moulded the natural landscape which has resulted in a symbiotic and sustainable interaction between humans and the natural environment.

Criteria (viii) The Burren exhibits an outstanding karst landscape, considered to be a model of its kind and is of global significance for its ability to track the evolution of extensive karst development from youth to mature under tropical, glacial and most recently temperate climatic conditions. The karst development is still active

**Authenticity of the site (\*for cultural criteria only). Describe the authenticity of the site. Authenticity concerns the measure of how well and how truthfully a site's features express potential OUV.**

The continuing cultural traditions throughout the Burren region have upheld for millennia and are a testament to its authenticity as an outstanding cultural landscape.

The 'winterage' traditions are carried out in the same manner as in the past and the architecture and archaeology are well preserved due to the low soil cover and rocky topography of the region. The cultural significance of Burren winterage was formally recognised in 2019 when it was included in Ireland's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage; it is also informally celebrated every year through a local festival.

The region is not conducive to high intensity or mechanised farming practices. This is threatened, however, by changing EU CAP and external economic pressures. These issues are being combated by efforts from the Burren Programme, the Burrenbeo Trust, local and national authorities and the local communities.

The Burren retains a strong sense of place and local identity, and this local pride of place is integral to the protection of the landscape as well as the continuation of traditions which have created the cultural landscape we see today.

**Integrity of the site (for both cultural and natural criteria). Describe the integrity of the site. Integrity is a measure of the completeness or intactness of the features that convey proposed OUV. Key areas to consider are wholeness, adequate size, and absence of threats. The proposed 350km<sup>2</sup> property of the Burren Uplands encapsulates all the cultural and physical attributes which apply to its OUV.**

The attributes that define the Burren Upland's potential OUV display a high level of intactness. The cultural attributes are inextricably entwined within the natural landscape. Thus the protection of the natural environment is fundamental to the integrity of the built heritage and cultural traditions. Land marginalisation has led to scrub encroachment in some areas which undermines the regions biodiversity and cultural heritage values.

The archaeological attributes are intact and are among the best preserved in Ireland. This is in part due to the continuous reuse of structures by subsequent generations of farmers using sympatric traditional techniques and materials and also the natural characteristics of the landscape.

The glaciokarst attributes are generally in a good state of conservation due to the high level of protection that these features, in particular limestone pavements and turloughs, are offered under the EU Habitats Directive as Priority Habitats, and by the provisions of the County Development Plan 2017-2023.

The proposed buffer zone encompasses the Low Burren and part of the Cliffs of Moher & Lahinch Landscape Character Areas to the south and the Clare county border to the east, see Map 2. The proposed buffer zone includes part of the semi-relict karst landscape of the Low Burren and the subterranean drainage and the related hydrological system of the Burren Uplands.



**Indicate what distinguishes this site from other similar heritage properties around the world, including other properties on the World Heritage List? Give details on its significance in relation to a maximum of 5 properties of comparable heritage value found worldwide.**

The Burren Uplands have many individual attributes that can be compared to other World Heritage sites, such as the archaeology, living cultural traditions and its geology. The combination of all its attributes within the one site makes the Burren unique from other sites on the World Heritage List. However, the remarkable sequence of continuous occupation from Mesolithic to present day that is preserved as a palimpsest in an apparently inhospitable karst landscape lacking good water supply and soil resources is its main OUV.

The following comparisons refer to cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List with a continuous history of human settlement, a long standing interaction with the environment, two with a karst environment, and traditional agricultural systems.

Perhaps one of the most similar sites to the Burren Uplands is the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland in Sweden, which has many of the same attributes in relation to the vast limestone plateau and continuous human settlement over the last 5,000 years. The cultural traditions are very much centred on farming as is the case in the Burren. The Burren Uplands differ, however, in the method of its farming which incorporates its own unique form of pastoral transhumance.

The Orkhan Valley in Mongolia is similar to the Burren in its cultural landscape and traditions of pastoralism. It hosts a large display of archaeological monuments and evidence of human settlement, however, the Burren contains evidence from each era from the Late Mesolithic to present day which the Orkhan Valley does not.

The Hortobágy National Park: The Puszta in Hungary is comparable to the traditional agricultural uses being present for several millennia. The Burren, however, shows evidence of its presence and practices 3,000 years longer. Both sites contain many burial monuments, however, the High Burren succeeds the Puszta in the number of intact archaeological complexes, monuments and settlements.

Similar to the Burren, the Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical landscape in South Africa is managed and owned predominantly by local communities. The landscapes of both are reliant on the traditions of pastoralism to conserve and maintain the floral and habitat diversity which are dependent on seasonal grazing. Both sites are evident of cultural traditions which have evolved in their respective locations. The Burren differs climatically and in the archaeological evidence of six millennia of human settlement.

The Causses and the Cévennes in France is a cultural landscape and one of the few places in Europe where traditional summer transhumance is still practiced. Unlike the Burren it is an unglaciated karst plateau with a barren, waterless landscape and the Burren differs, through its reverse transhumance practice of winterage. The Burren also differs in the fact that cows are used instead of sheep and shows evidence of 6,000 years of agricultural use compared to the 3,000 years of the Causses and the Cévennes.

The caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst of Slovenia and Hungary, which is a typical temperate zone karstic system, are made up of 712 identified caves. Similarly to the Burren it displays an extremely rare combination of tropical and glacial climate effects. The Burren, however, is coastal and has a rich cultural heritage attached to the landscape.

**Identify whether the site addresses a particular gap or under- represented area or theme on the World Heritage List.**

The Burren Uplands represent living and cultural traditions that have survived for thousands of years and are still practiced to this day. It is an uncommon attribute, found on the World Heritage List, for a display of cultural tradition to be continuously practiced for as long as is the case in the Burren.

A universal gap exists on the World Heritage list which the Burren could fill is that of a significant karst area contributing to an outstanding cultural landscape, being the combined works of nature and man. The Burren represents a remarkable European karst type region that is currently inadequately represented on the World Heritage List according to the IUCN global review of World Heritage Caves and Karst (p.18.). Ireland is known to contain the most significant proportion of limestone pavement in the EU, most of which is found in the Burren.

The Burren would add to the list of cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List of which there are currently only 112 sites, within the 1121 total properties (869 cultural, 213 natural, 39 mixed). Of these 112 cultural landscapes, few represent the same number of attributes as the Burren.

**Describe the current state of conservation of the site, including details on any potential environmental or development threats to the site, or risks presented by natural disasters. Indicate any mitigation measures in place for the threats identified.**

The Burren in its current state remains in a relatively good state of conservation. However the primary concern for the conservation of the site is the need to support farmers to ensure that the ancient cultural tradition of reverse transhumance is sustained and continued.

Educational initiatives such as the Burren Programme, Burrenbeo Trust and the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark have made an impact in terms of a greater awareness of the conservation value of the landscapes and features.

The Cliffs of Moher had 1.6 million visitors in 2019. Tourism issues that affect the Burren will be examined by Clare County Council supported by Failte Ireland in the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040, which is under development. The Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark Strategic Management Framework 2019-2023 also seeks to address sustainable tourism in the area.

Other threats include traffic management, land marginalization and intensification, undiscovered and thus undesignated archaeological sites, quarrying of limestone pavement, the potential effects of climate change and a lack of a coordinated approach to management of the landscape and a lack of management capacity on the ground.

**Demonstrate how the property has adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection. If protection measures are not currently in place, indicate what protection mechanism will be afforded the property in the near future.**

The high cultural and natural value of the Burren is reflected in the numerous protective designations and legislation assigned to it. As a geographic area it has no single protection mechanism, but is guided by numerous International Treaties and Conventions, national legislation, local mechanisms and statutory and non-statutory guidance (see Annex 3).

For the protection of natural heritage and biodiversity the most important policy instruments is the EU **Habitats Directive** and **EU Birds Directive**, together forming **Natura 2000** sites. Under Section 31 of European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997, Natura 2000 sites are subject to an 'Appropriate Assessment' when any plan or programme likely to have a significant effect on their conservation objectives is being considered.

The most important national legislation underpinning biodiversity and nature conservation in Ireland is the **Wildlife Act, 1976. The Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000** allows for the designation of Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), National Nature Reserves and refuges for fauna, as well for the making of Flora Protection Orders. There are two National Nature Reserves within the proposed property.

60% of the property (20,000 ha) is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), in addition protection is provided to areas designation as Special Protection Areas (SPA) within the site boundaries. The main Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in the Burren include the 'big three'; Blackhead- Poulsallagh Complex (00020), Moneen Mountain (000054) and the East Burren Complex (001926). The Burren National Park covers an area of 1,500 ha and is designated as an IUCN Category II National Park.

The most important protective legislations for the cultural heritage is the **National Monuments Acts** and its amendments. **The National Monuments Acts 1930-2014** provide numerous protective mechanisms for sites and structures of historic, archaeological or architectural value. Monuments included in the statutory Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) are legally protected. There are constantly new discoveries of archaeological sites and monuments that have not yet been placed on the RMP, thus not under the protection of National Monuments Acts.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 is the current statutory land- use framework for the county; in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and was informed by various IUCN and ICOMOS charters and relevant EU directives. It identifies the Burren as an ‘Area of Special Control’ and a ‘Heritage Landscape’, the latter which are areas where natural and cultural heritage are given priority and where development is not precluded but happens more slowly and carefully. UNESCO World Heritage Sites are included in Section 14.3.20 of the plan and policies CDP 14.23 and CDP 14.24 deal with the protection of OUV.

An objective of The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-23 is to support efforts to progress the Burren as a World Heritage Site in partnership with all the stakeholders. Further planning is required for the development of a comprehensive and sustainable land use and management plan, including a traffic management plan for the region.

**Describe whether a management plan is in place, or how it would be developed, that specifies how the Outstanding Universal Value of the property would be protected, presented and transmitted to future generations.**

A Burren management plan is not currently in place and will be developed in the event of a successful application.

A partnership model and approach will be adopted under the joint auspices of the Clare County Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and lead by a steering group made up of the Burren IFA, Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, Burren Programme, Burrenbeo Trust, Burren Ecotourism Network and the Local Community.

A small professional team will support the implementation and delivery of the management plan. The steering or partnership group will oversee the work of the professional team and will be responsible for the development of the management plan and setting the policy.

The management plan will build on the successful conservation work carried out to date by the Burren Programme (developed through Burren EU LIFE biodiversity farming for conservation project) and Burren and Cliffs of Moher GeoparkLIFE programme. The management plan will be subject to periodical reporting.

There will be a local place based approach, similar to the progression of the Burren Programme which begun with research initiated by the Burren IFA, NPWS, Department of Agriculture and undertaken by Dr. Brendan Dunford. This approach has been farmer led, results based, and flexibly managed where farmers create their own simple farm plans tailored to suit the needs of the individual farm.

The Burren Community Charter model from 2010 will be considered where the Burren Farming programme, Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, Burrenbeo Trust and Burren IFA worked in conjunction with Clare County Council, Government Departments and the Heritage Council.



Partnerships of all relevant stakeholders involved in land management, conservation and tourism will be developed in accordance with best practice models. The management plan will be comprehensive and strategic and provide for the social and economic needs of the local population. This will serve to protect the living landscape and conserve the cultural identity of the Burren.

The management structure will strengthen integration between landownership, indigenous businesses, tourism and environmental agencies. It will include a sustainable transport plan in the context of local needs and in the wider strategic regional planning. Communication of both the policy and the operational requirements of different interest groups will be collaborative and resonate best practices in conservation management.

## The Royal Sites of Ireland

### Location / Address

The six Royal Sites of Ireland are associated from the eighth century CE in their link to the myth, legend, and early historical accounts of the development of kingship in Ireland. Four of the places are reputed to have been the provincial royal capitals of Ireland; Rathcroghan, Co. Roscommon in Connaught; Navan Fort, Co. Armagh in Ulster; Dún Ailinne, Co. Kildare, in Leinster; Cashel, Co. Tipperary, in Munster. Tara, Co. Meath had a special status as the seat of the High King and in all cases, their kings, 'Rí Temro', had claim to supreme kingship. The sixth site, Uisneach, Co. Westmeath, was seen as the omphalos or centre of Ireland and the point at which the provinces converged. It had a symbolic function that bound the provinces together spiritually.

Five of these places are the subject of this application for inclusion on the Irish Tentative List. Information is provided for the sixth – Navan Fort (Eamhain Macha), Co Armagh. This site in Northern Ireland is included because it is an essential part of the group. It is not yet included on the United Kingdom Tentative list. The latest (2011) review of that Tentative List, accepted by the United Kingdom government, considered Navan Fort and concluded that: The Government should consider adding the Royal Sites of Ireland-Navan Fort to this [ie UK] Tentative List once there are firm proposals to proceed with a transnational nomination of the Royal Sites of Ireland provided that it can be demonstrated that the site could make a substantial contribution to the OUV of the series as a whole.

Work carried out so far demonstrates very clearly that Navan Fort is one of these royal provincial centres. Its inclusion therefore will make a major contribution to the Outstanding Universal Value of the series as a whole, and the authorities responsible are working with the teams for the other five components to develop this World Heritage nomination.

**Location / Address:** Dún Ailinne, Whitehall, Kilcullen, Co Kildare.

Uisnagh Hill, Mweelra, Kellybrook, Rathnew, Co. Westmeath.

Rock of Cashel Moor, Cashel, Co. Tipperary

Rathcroghan, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon

Tara Complex, Hill of Tara, Castleboy, Co. Meath

Navan Fort (Eamhain Macha), Navan, Armagh, Co. Armagh

**Site category:** Cultural

### **Description of Site**

The six Royal Sites of Ireland have been recognised in Irish myths and legend since the eighth century CE as the principal royal seats in Ireland., Dún Ailinne (Knockaulin), the Rock of Cashel (Caiseal), Rathcroghan (Ráth Cruachan), and Navan (Eamhain Macha) were reputed to be respectively the capitals of the four traditional provinces of Ulster, Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, while Tara (Teamhair) was the seat of the High King of Ireland, and the Hill of Uisneach was seen as the omphalos or central point of Ireland. Surviving archaeology and excavated evidence of buildings and other structures show that the sites were used extensively for ceremonial, religious and funerary purposes. At some of them, such activity started in the Neolithic and all, except Cashel, were very active in the Iron Age, with massive ceremonial complexes.

All were sited on the top of hills or plateaux so that they could be seen from far away and had panoramic views of the surrounding areas. All are part of larger cultural landscapes which were focused on them. The character of the structures linked to their ceremonial function changed over time until their abandonment following the spread of Christianity, though The Neolithic period use was characterised by burial mounds. Burial use was also prominent in the Bronze Age on some sites. In the Iron Age, large enclosures with internal ditches, figure-of-eight enclosures, and many wooden structures were used for ceremony. The Rock of Cashel, the latest of these sites to develop, uniquely continued into the Medieval period and was given to the Church and is now characterised an iconic complex of stone-built churches and associated structures.

### **Knockaulin (Dún Ailinne)**

Dún Ailinne is situated close to Kilcullen in Co. Kildare, also an early Christian ecclesiastical centre. It is sited on the rounded summit of the highest hill in the area and is a dominant feature in the landscape with panoramic views. The most visible feature today is a massive bank with an internal ditch surrounding the hill top. Major excavations from 1968 – 1974, smaller interventions since then coupled with extensive geophysical survey provide evidence for the complex archaeology of the site.

The earliest activity was a Neolithic enclosure with remains of a burial and there was some Bronze Age activity. The surviving ditched bank is Iron Age. Within it, a series of enclosures were constructed The earliest White phase was a circular palisade. The Rose phase had a funnel-shaped entrance leading to a figure-of-eight structure with three concentric palisades. It was linked with a ditched enclosure circling the summit, discovered by geophysical survey. These were succeeded by the Mauve phase with a single circular structure around a small central timber circle with a timber structure inside it. All these opened to the east-northeast. The last activity was evidence of feasting. The latest scientific dates for these phases are centred on the second century BCE for the Rose phase. Subsequent excavation and geophysical survey have discovered some ring shaped features which may be burials of any date from the Bronze Age through to the Early Medieval.

### **Rathcroghan (Ráth Cruachan)**

Rathcroghan is the summit area of a limestone plateau sloping to the east with steep slopes on all but its western side. There are panoramic views. The plateau has a large number of surviving archaeological sites ranging from the Neolithic to the Medieval, with the densest use in the Iron Age and Early Medieval period. Rathcroghan has not been the subject of major excavations but has been assessed on the basis of what is visible and on geophysical surveys.

The primary focus of this site is Rathcroghan Mound. This is broad and flat topped, 5.5m high, and 80m in diameter. Geophysical surveys have shown the Mound to have a complex internal structure constructed in several phases. Deep inside are two circular stone settings or stone walls, of 22m and 35m diameter respectively. On top of the mound, geophysics revealed a double circle of pits, 32m in diameter, possibly once holding a timber circles.

The Mound is surrounded by an enclosure ditch 360m in diameter. There are some small monuments visible in its immediate vicinity, including two standing stones, one sited on a burial mound. The large enclosure also contains many buried features including at least ten ring barrows, a ring fort, and three very small earth and stone mounds.

### **Tara (Teamhair)**

The Hill of Tara is a north-south limestone ridge 2kms long, and falling steeply away to the west. It has extensive distant views as well as being prominent in the landscape. Over 30 monuments are visible on the Hill and many more are known, particularly as the result of geophysical survey. There have also been excavations on the Hill. The surrounding landscape is thickly populated with ritual and funerary sites.

The earliest use of the hilltop was a 3rd millennium BCE Neolithic enclosure, succeeded by a passage tomb (Dúma na nGiall). This was approached by a formal avenue. In the early Bronze Age an embanked enclosure (Rath Maeve) was added and the Hill became a focus for Bronze Age ring-ditches and bowl barrows. In the Iron Age, principal monuments include the Ráith na Rig, an embanked enclosure with internal ditch constructed, probably around the same time as the palisaded enclosures and cemetery underneath the later Ráith na Senad enclosure. Within the Ráith na Rig is the Forradh, a flat topped mound, with the Lia Faidh, the Stone of Destiny to its north. The Forradh is 36m in diameter, within a bivallate enclosure, and abutted by the Teach Cormaic enclosure. The hilltop is approached by two cursus-like earthworks forming a ceremonial approach. From the 12th century CE at least, there was a Christian church on the hill.



### **The Rock of Cashel (Caiseal)**

The Rock of Cashel is a prominent rock outcrop just north of Cashel town, rising almost 100m above the surrounding plain. It is a dominant feature in the landscape with extensive views.

While recognised from the 8th century CE as one of the provincial capitals of Ireland, the Rock does not as yet appear to have had lengthy earlier use as a centre for ritual and assembly. The earliest material found on the hilltop suggests occupation from around 400/500 CE. There are traces of apparent defensive works around the perimeter of the rock including walls, the scarping of the natural rock, ditches and possible enclosures. The name Cashel also suggests fortification.

It also became a centre for intense religious (Christian) activity unlike the other provincial capitals, possibly because the kings of Munster adopted Christianity early on, and the Rock was given to the church in 1101. The surviving structures date mostly from the 12th/ 13th centuries CE and form one of the most remarkable assemblages of Celtic art and architecture to be found anywhere in Europe. These include an imposing Round Tower, a High Cross, a unique Hiberno-Romanesque chapel, a Gothic cathedral, a fifteenth-century tower and a Hall of the Vicars Choral (restored) which is the long-standing point of entry to the complex.

### **Uisneach**

The Hill of Uisneach is a broad and prominent ridge, in Co. Westmeath, with extensive views and also visible from far away. 35 archaeological monuments are known, about half visible above ground. Most are located on the plateau summit of the ridge. In early Irish histories, Uisneach is perceived as the symbolic central point of Ireland where the provinces came together.

The earliest feature is a Neolithic enclosure of the fourth millennium BCE, over which was placed a passage grave. The burial tradition continued through the Bronze Age, with large mounds, ring barrows and ring ditches. In the Iron Age, the large mound on the eastern summit was surrounded by an enclosure nearly 200m across. Another ditched enclosure was found c100m to the south. Both are close to the summit lake of Lough Lugh which may have been modified to form a ritual pond. Another feature is the Cat Stone, a massive fragmented glacial erratic over 4m high, within an earthen enclosure c21m in diameter.

There was much Early Medieval activity from c400CE with four ringforts. Rathnew is the most dominant with two adjoining ditched enclosures, and an overall diameter of 112m. They were occupied from the late seventh/eighth to the eleventh centuries and contained two souterrains and the remains of several houses and evidence of metal-working debris.

### **Navan (Eamhain Macha)**

Navan Fort is located on a rounded hilltop just west of Armagh and it may be no coincidence that Patrick traditionally chose to found his early church so close to the earthworks. The site is visible from a distance and has panoramic views. Visible remains are a massive enclosing bank, with an internal ditch, around the hilltop, within which are a large mound (Site B) and a ring ditch (Site A). Excavation over the past 50 years and more recent geophysical survey has revealed a much more complex sequence, though features revealed by non-intrusive methods can be difficult to date.

Excavation has revealed evidence for Neolithic activity, but the earliest substantive use of the hilltop, in the Late Bronze Age, was the construction of a ditched enclosure with an internal palisade. Within that palisade and its successors, there were a series of figure-of-eight timber buildings, possibly representing circular structures and attached enclosures. Around 95BCE the massive enclosing bank and internal ditch were constructed along with a huge timber building, 40m in diameter on site B. Soon afterwards this was filled with limestone boulders, deliberately burnt down and mounded over. The ring ditch at site A surrounded a double-walled timber building, possibly of early medieval date, although it partially overlay a series of figure-of-eight structures, similar to those below Site A, also dated to the Iron Age and approached by a palisaded avenue. The geophysical surveys identified a number of potential ring-ditch burials and possible rectangular buildings which could be early medieval.

Further evidence for Iron Age activity has also been found at Loughnashade, immediately to the east, where the discovery of four bronze trumpets and human remains have been interpreted as evidence for ritual deposition.

### **Propose why the site may have Outstanding Universal Value.**

From the eighth century CE, at least, Navan Fort, Dún Ailinne, the Rock of Cashel, Rathcroghan, have been the traditional royal centres of the North, East, South and West provinces, together with Tara, the seat of the High Kings, and the Hill of Uisneach, the symbolic central point of Ireland, forming a globally unique group of archaeological ceremonial complexes. They demonstrate in physical form the development of power, ceremony and religion in a Celtic society minimally influenced by the Romans. Great value is added to the sites by the surviving legends and myths about these places which make it possible to know something of the relationships between them. As a group, they are still perceived as the historic power and spiritual centres of Ireland. Tara in particular is still a symbol of Irish national unity and cultural identity.

Also significant is the time-depth of most of these places showing the changing ways in which their spiritual and ceremonial importance were displayed through more than four millennia. It is clear that during the Iron Age (600BCE-400CE) and Early Medieval period (400-1100CE), a range of ceremonial structures were constructed in most of them in various combinations, including large circular enclosures with internal ditches, large timber structures, and ceremonial ways. All are situated on prominent hills or plateaux so that they are dominant features in the landscape and all of them are parts of larger associated cultural landscapes. They are set apart from their wider landscapes by the scale and intensity of their use, their dominant positions, and by their obvious ceremonial, symbolic and ritual function.

Much of north-western Europe was either included within the Roman Empire or strongly influenced by proximity to it. Despite evidence of contact with the Empire, such as occasional artefacts found on the Royal Sites, Ireland is very unusual in that it was not influenced strongly (until after conversion to Christianity) so that the function of these six places into the early centuries of the Common Era enables us to see how such Celtic traditions evolved outside Roman influence, and also (particularly at the Rock of Cashel) how they could eventually be adapted to the needs of Christianity.

**Proposed Outstanding Universal Value by criteria. State which one or more of the 10 criteria for Outstanding Universal Value are being proposed for this site and describe briefly why each was chosen.**

Criteria (iii) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared; The Royal Sites of Ireland are an outstanding example of a group of places demonstrating a social system based on kingship and assembly with strong ritual and ceremonial aspects. By the early medieval period, these places were recognised in myth, legend and the earliest historical writings as the most important places in Irish kingship. These writings describe a cultural tradition of kingship, assembly and ritual which is manifested in the archaeological remains at the six sites. The combination of documentary and archaeological evidence is truly exceptional testimony to the culture of Ireland in the early medieval period.

Taken together, the sites provide an unparalleled record of the changing structural responses to the needs of Irish society, for central places of ritual, ceremony, and the display and exercise of power from the Neolithic through to the early Christian period. These complexes of monuments, with shared key elements and features, point to a common set of belief systems at various stages in Irish history. These beliefs related to the sacred nature and power of kingship and the power of ancestors. The combined material and literary evidence feeds into a wider canon of testimony worldwide of belief systems linked to the creation of sacral cultural landscapes and focal places of assembly. The size of the enclosure monuments suggests a public function in which the 'theatre' of kingship, power, inauguration and associated ceremonies took places.

Criteria (iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; As a group, the Royal Sites illustrate the development of monumental ceremonial and funerary architecture from the Neolithic through to the early medieval period. All six demonstrate a continuing wish to locate such places prominently on hill-tops so that they are visual foci for large landscapes. Five of the sites have well preserved archaeological evidence going back for up to several thousand years. Apart from the prominent visible monuments, excavation and non-intrusive investigations have shown extraordinary concentrations of major ceremonial, ritual and funerary structures. There are Neolithic enclosures and passage graves, with Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age burials in ring-barrows or ring-ditches. From the Iron Age there are massive circular enclosures with internal ditches, figure-of-eight shaped enclosures, large timber structures including concentric circular complexes, and ceremonial approaches. The Rock of Cashel shows how the ritual and ceremonial aspects were adapted to the needs of Christianity and Christian kings and there is evidence at Tara and Uisneach for later Christian associations. At Navan Fort the Christian successor is at Armagh on the next prominent hill.

Criteria (vi) to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria); The Royal Sites are directly and tangibly associated with ancient Irish myths, legends and traditions that reflect ancient Indo-European roots and universal belief systems, many of which are specifically related to these places. Because of these associations, the sites retain a special identity in modern Ireland. The great early Irish sagas of the Táin Bó Cúailgne and the Táin Bó Fraích are set at Rathcroghan and the great Ulster Cycle at Eamhain Macha, and there is mention of Uisneach, while the stories of St. Patrick's visits to Tara and other royal sites are chronicled in the Tírechán from 700 A.D. Navan Fort also retained a special status well into the medieval period, with Niall Og O'Neill building a house for the poets of Ireland within the enclosure in 1387. These legends and the places themselves have helped to maintain Irish identity through the centuries. Tara held a central place in the 'idea' of early modern Ireland and it retained its special identity to the extent that it was used as a meeting place during later political developments, for example in the rising of 1798 and Daniel O'Connell's "monster meeting" in 1843 (he also held one at Uisneach). The Royal Sites are an outstanding example of the use of specific places to encapsulate a sense of national identity.



**Authenticity of the site (\*for cultural criteria only). Describe the authenticity of the site. Authenticity concerns the measure of how well and how truthfully a site's features express potential OUV.**

The Sites all retain their prominent hill-top positions with panoramic views across their surrounding cultural landscapes. All the sites are characterised by surviving prehistoric and early medieval earthworks and masonry monuments. Their overall authenticity is high.

Archaeological investigation over the last 50 years, including both excavation and extensive non-intrusive surveys (aerial, field, geophysical, LiDAR) in the last 20 years, has provided unequivocal evidence for the entirely authentic and unique nature of the sites, and continues to do so. Medieval historical texts testify to the essential collective identity of the sites and their lexicon of mythical and legendary attribution.

The only instances where post-excavation reconstruction of earthwork features has been undertaken is at Navan Fort (Site B) (where part of the mound was unexcavated, allowing an accurate recreation of its dimensions and profile) and Tara (Dúma na nGaill). Elsewhere, excavations have been backfilled when completed.

Cashel's round tower was restored in 1874-5 and its roof was re-built to reflect those of similar surviving structures. Conservation in recent years has not involved significant reconstruction. The ecclesiastical remains on the site are presented in their ruined state, the remarkable survival intact of Cormac's Chapel and its painted interior being all the more significant for that fact.

**Integrity of the site (for both cultural and natural criteria) Describe the integrity of the site. Integrity is a measure of the completeness or intactness of the features that convey proposed OUV. Key areas to consider are wholeness, adequate size, and absence of threats.**

The series as a whole has high integrity since it includes all six of the sites regarded as being the Royal Sites of Ireland.

Each component will include its hilltop so that all key attributes of Outstanding Universal Value are included within the nominated areas. The visual links between each Royal Site and its cultural hinterland remain intact, despite occasional intrusions. Within each component the attributes, nearly all archaeological deposits, are in good condition.

Five of the sites are managed primarily as grassland. Despite some obvious localised natural erosion and material loss at most sites, largely due to livestock and to visitors at pinch points, overall archaeological deposits are well preserved and not threatened. The Rock of Cashel is owned by the State and managed by the Office of Public Works as a National Monument, so that there is no threat to the integrity of its attributes.

Parts of Tara, Rathcroghan, and two individual monuments at Uisneach are also managed by the Office of Public Works as National Monuments, while Dún Ailinne is the subject of a Preservation Order. Navan Fort is owned by the Northern Ireland Department of Communities with adjoining land owned by the local authority. The archaeological deposits of the other sites, all extensive areas of grassland, are not threatened except by localised erosion which is managed by landowners in consultation with the public authorities. There is the potential for threats to affect the visual links of the sites to their cultural landscapes but these are controlled through the spatial planning processes.

**Indicate what distinguishes this site from other similar heritage properties around the world, including other properties on the World Heritage List? Give details on its significance in relation to a maximum of 5 properties of comparable heritage value found worldwide.**

The six sites have been recognised since the eighth century CE as the principal royal sites in Ireland and are still perceived as historic power and spiritual centres. Archaeologically, they have evidence of use for ceremonies, funerary rites, and assemblies over exceptionally long periods of up to four millennia in some cases. Through that time span, the structural responses to spiritual and ceremonial needs and the display of power changed but remained focused on these places.

Individual elements can be paralleled elsewhere – for example circular earthworks with internal ditches (henges) and long linear ditched and embanked areas (cursus) are found across Britain during the Neolithic. Types of burial mound are also paralleled in many places across north-west Europe. There are also extensive ceremonial and funerary landscapes such as the World Heritage properties of Stonehenge and Avebury and Neolithic Orkney (both World Heritage, UK), or Carnac in Brittany, which parallel many of the structural features and landscape characteristics of the Irish Royal Sites though often at much earlier dates and for shorter timespans.

There are also open air assembly sites such as Thingvellir (World Heritage, Iceland) which is typical of a whole series of Viking assembly sites but dates only from the late 10th century CE. These tended to have temporary structures only and were all used for only a few centuries at most. Perhaps one of the closest parallels is Jelling (World Heritage, Denmark) which combines burial mounds with evidence of royal power (massive timber enclosure and runic inscriptions) and Christianisation, but was used for only a comparatively short time. There are also places like Dunadd and Kilmartin (UK) which mirror the Irish Royal Sites to some extent, because they were taken over by Irish settlers in western Scotland, and lesser royal sites in Ireland.

But while individual aspects of the Irish Royal Sites can be paralleled, they seem to be unique within their geo-cultural region (north-western Europe) in their time depth as a group demonstrating a continuing use of the same places for ceremonial and ritual purposes, and for the display of power for several millennia. They have exceptionally rich archaeological evidence. They are also very rare in that they are firmly associated with each other through legends and myths recorded in early history which gives them outstanding intangible significance. They also demonstrate within the European context the development of power centres in an area which was comparatively little influenced by Roman imperialism compared to its impact on Britain and mainland northern Europe.

**Identify whether the site addresses a particular gap or under- represented area or theme on the World Heritage List.**

The UNESCO region of Europe and North America is commonly reputed to be over-represented on the World Heritage List, particularly for cultural properties. Out of 869 cultural properties world-wide, 453 (52%) are in the region, while out of the total 1121 properties on the List 529 (47%) are in the region. Five states parties in Europe have between them 226 properties (43% of the total sites in the region). North America has 44 properties. The remaining 44 states parties in Europe have 259 sites between them meaning that large areas of Europe, including Ireland, have very few World Heritage properties.

Apart from geographical bias, certain categories of sites were recognised as being over-represented during the preparation of the World Heritage Global Strategy as long back as 1992. Historic towns and religious buildings were over-represented in relation to other types of property; Christianity was over-represented in relation to other religions and beliefs; and historical periods were over-represented in relation to prehistory and the 20th century. All this is certainly true of Europe while many potential equivalent sites in mainland Europe and Britain were heavily influenced by Roman culture. The Royal Sites of Ireland are evidence of a culture with much less Roman influence despite contacts having existed, and do not fall within the overrepresented categories.

The Royal Sites clearly meet two of the priorities of the World Heritage Global Strategy. Within the theme of HUMAN BEINGS IN SOCIETY they clearly illustrate Human Interaction and Spirituality and Creative Expression. They also represent the power of surviving traditional knowledge, legends and understanding of the past.

There are few if any such on the World Heritage List, particularly from the geo-cultural region of north-western Europe, which match the Royal Sites.

Within this region, the Royal Sites represent, in their later centuries particularly, continuing Celtic traditions of religion, ceremony and exercise of power which must have empowered the Irish influence on the development of Christianity in western Europe. The absence from the World Heritage List of properties evidencing such traditions is a gap which this nomination can help to fill.

**Describe the current state of conservation of the site, including details on any potential environmental or development threats to the site, or risks presented by natural disasters. Indicate any mitigation measures in place for the threats identified.**

The six sites are all in relatively good condition and intact. They are predominantly situated in pastoral land and all are largely managed by grazing, except for Navan Fort, in state care, where the grass is mowed, and Cashel which has standing masonry and is managed as a National Monument in state care. There is some obvious natural erosion and material loss at most of the rural sites, largely due to livestock, but fundamentally pasture is generally beneficial for the conservation of earthworks and buried archaeology. There is potential threat from development and grid connectors or large scale renewable energy projects and infrastructure which should be mitigated through the County Development Plans.

**Demonstrate how the property has adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection. If protection measures are not currently in place, indicate what protection mechanism will be afforded the property in the near future, and include a supporting letter from the relevant authority.**

Existing legislation, policy frameworks and planning guidelines for the historic environment provide protection for World Heritage Sites. The protection and conservation of the five components in Ireland are controlled by a range of national legislation, local mechanisms and international statutory and non-statutory guidance. These legislative provisions include, amongst others, the National Monuments Acts 1930–2014, Planning and Development Acts, various EU directives and international charters.

#### **National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014**

The major monuments in each component are either National Monuments or Recorded Monuments. The National Monuments Acts 1930–2014 provide for the protection and preservation of National and Recorded Monuments and for the preservation of archaeological objects in the state. These acts thus provide statutory protection for archaeological elements of the nation's built heritage.

National Monuments may be in national or local authority ownership or care. National and Recorded Monuments can be placed under a Preservation or Temporary Preservation Order. Under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 (as substituted by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2014) the prior written consent of the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage is required for a range of specified activities carried out in respect of a National or Recorded Monument of which the minister or a local authority are the owners or the guardians or in respect of which a preservation order is in force.



## **Planning and Development Act 2000**

Ireland has a modern and effective planning legislative code that offers comprehensive environmental and conservation protection. This is established under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the regulations made under that act (the Planning and Development Regulations 2001–19). It is mandatory to set objectives in county development plans for protection of the archaeological and natural heritage and there is a system of referral to expert statutory consultees (including the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage) of applications for planning permission with potential heritage implications.

The county development plans, revised regularly and approved by the elected members of each county council, in accordance with the legislation, are central to the planning system and provide the framework for consideration of development proposals that require planning permission. The revision and adoption of a development plan by the local authority involves participation by the general public and concerned bodies (both state and civil society) through a combination of specific consultations and invitations to comment on draft plans.

Furthermore, the process of applying for planning permission is also transparent and consultative, with applications available for consideration and comment by the public generally and also referred to expert consultees as specified under the Planning and Development Regulations.

Each of the Royal sites is listed in the relevant County Development Plans/Planning Policy Guidance which contains policies and objectives which seek to protect the sites.

Core groups of sites at Tara, Cashel and Rathcroghan are either National Monuments owned by the State or placed under guardianship and therefore in State care. Dún Ailinne is not a National Monument nor is it in State ownership or guardianship. However, it is protected by two Preservation Orders. Uisneach has just one National Monument (including two separate features) in state guardianship while the remaining sites in the complex are Recorded Monuments in private ownership.

Northern Ireland has a similar system of legal protection. The site of Navan Fort is owned and managed by the Department for Communities – Historic Environment Division and is protected under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (HMAO) as a monument in State ownership. Two further monuments in the Navan landscape are in the care of the State and a number of other monuments are protected as Scheduled Monuments, meaning that no works can take place without the consent of the Department. The Schedule of protected archaeological sites and monuments is compiled and maintained under Article 3 of the HMAO. In addition, several areas of land adjoining Navan are protected by being in the care of the local Council (Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council). Navan Fort also forms the focus of an Area of Significant Archaeological Interest, a non-statutory designation which means that the preservation of an archaeological site or monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

**Describe whether a management plan is in place, or how it would be developed, that specifies how the Outstanding Universal Value of the property would be protected, presented and transmitted to future generations.**

There is currently no integrated management system for all the sites as a serial nomination. There are moves towards coordinated management on some of the components. Management plans are currently in preparation for state owned lands at Tara and for Uisneach. At Rathcroghan, there is an European Innovation Partnership to support sustainable approaches to farming. One of its objectives is to:

Promote, preserve and conserve the archaeological,  
cultural and ecological heritage of the area.

If successful, this could be a model for other rural components.

An integrated management plan and the development of an integrated management system will be a priority once the sites are placed on the Tentative List. The establishment in 2014 of the local authority Steering Group to develop proposals for the nomination of the property is a basis for further development of a management system which ultimately will require an inter-governmental committee between Ireland and the UK since this will be a transnational property, an overall Steering Group of the local authorities and other key stakeholders who are managing the nomination process and will need to coordinate management of the components of the property.

An integrated management plan and the development of an integrated management system will be a priority when the sites are placed on the Tentative List. There will need to be an overall management plan or statement of management principles. Each component would require its own management structure and management plan according to its ownership structure and particular circumstances.

Any management structure will need to take account also of the policies of the World Heritage Committee on sustainable use of World Heritage properties and their relationship with local communities and other key stakeholders.

## Appendix III: Nomination Timeline

Timeline	Current situation (until 2026)	Preliminary assessment (mandatory from 2027 onwards – optional 2024-2026)
TL submitted to World Heritage Centre. Secretariat checks for compliance with Annex 2. TL registered if deemed complete. World Heritage Committee formally notes new TL during next committee meeting and subsequently updates UNESCO website.	Year 1	Year 1
Complete Preliminary Assessment requests sent to Secretariat.		15 September Year 2
Secretariat acknowledges receipt of each Preliminary Assessment request and informs state party whether it is considered complete.		15 October Year 2
Desk review by advisory body.		October Year 2 – September Year 3
Relevant advisory body delivers its assessment.		1 October Year 3
[Maximum gap of five years before restarting process]		
Earliest possible deadline to submit draft nominations.	30 September Year 2	30 September Year 4
Date by which World Heritage Centre responds concerning the completeness of the draft proposals. If proposal is incomplete, additions will be requested.	15 November Year 2	15 November Year 4
Deadline for sending complete requests.	1 February Year 3	1 February Year 5

Timeline	Current situation (until 2026)	Preliminary assessment (mandatory from 2027 onwards – optional 2024-2026)
World Heritage Centre verifies documentation received and informs state party about completeness of nomination dossier. Complete nominations sent for evaluation to the advisory bodies, which carry out necessary checks based on documentation sent and inspections carried out.	1 March Year 3	1 February–1 March Year 5
Evaluation by advisory bodies.	March Year 3– May Year 4	March Year 5– May Year 6
Date by which advisory bodies send a short interim report noting status of and any issues relating to the evaluation. Further information requested if necessary.	31 January Year 4	31 January Year 6
Deadline by which any required additions must be sent.	28 February Year 4	28 February Year 6
Six weeks prior to the annual session of the World Heritage Committee: advisory bodies send evaluation.	May/June Year 4	May/June Year 6
Annual session of the World Heritage Committee: nominations examined and decisions made on inscription.	June/July Year 4	June/July Year 6



