

# Archaeological Desktop Assessment Public Realm Space at VISUAL, Centre for Contemporary Art & The G. B. Shaw Theatre, Carlow

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## Non-Technical Summary

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An archaeological desktop assessment was prepared by Shanarc Archaeology Ltd. in respect of public realm upgrade works at VISUAL, Carlow Town's Centre for Contemporary Art & The George Bernard Shaw Theatre, which has operated in Carlow since 2009.

The archaeological desktop assessment is based on a desk-top study of readily available archaeological, architectural, cartographic, and literary records and sources, supported by a visual inspection of the proposed works site.

VISUAL is sited on grounds donated by Carlow College, St Patrick's, outside, and to the north-east of the historic core of Carlow Town (CW007-018). Carlow College was developed on greenfield land to the east of College Street from the late 18th century. The College, along with the adjacent Carlow Cathedral, and the existing VISUAL complex are landmark buildings in Carlow Town.

The public realm upgrade works at VISUAL lie wholly outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential associated with the historic town of Carlow (CW007-018). With the exception of the medieval town defences (CW007-018006), which at their closest are postulated to align with College Street, no recorded archaeological sub-element of the historic town is recorded in immediate proximity of the VISUAL complex and no recorded archaeology will be impacted by the proposed works.

A review of the site layout plan relating to the original development of the VISUAL complex has established that most of the public realm upgrade works are to occur within the footprint of the original VISUAL development site, which involved comprehensive archaeological and built heritage mitigation as part of its development. Nothing of archaeological significance was found during archaeological test-excavation and archaeological monitoring within the footprint of the existing VISUAL complex.

The archaeological desktop assessment concludes that groundworks associated with a new site layout of outdoor public space at VISUAL will have no archaeological or built heritage impacts. No additional archaeological mitigation is recommended in relation to the new public realm site layout proposed at VISUAL.

## 1. Introduction

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This archaeological desktop assessment has been prepared by Shanarc Archaeology Ltd. for Carlow County Council. The assessment relates to proposals for a new site layout of outdoor public space at VISUAL, Carlow Town's Centre for Contemporary Art & The George Bernard Shaw Theatre (Figure 1).

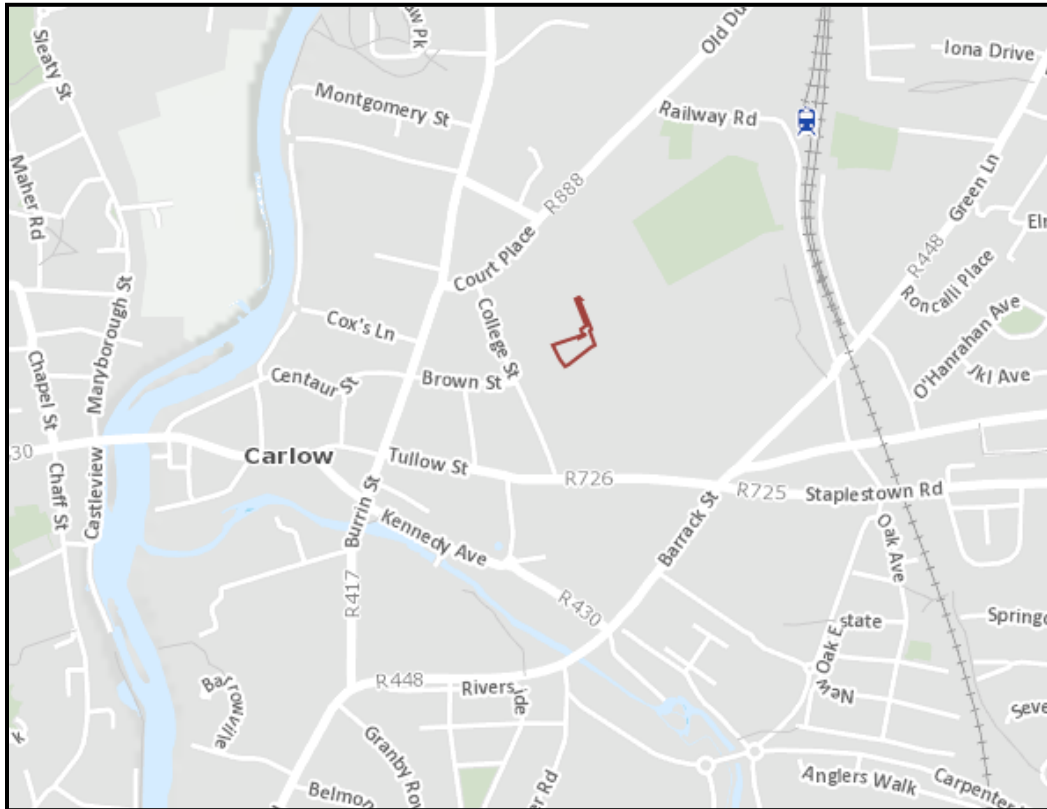
The purpose of the archaeological desktop assessment is to:

- (i) evaluate the nature and extent of known archaeological, built heritage or other cultural heritage assets at the site;
- (ii) address potential impacts on archaeological, built heritage or other cultural heritage assets, including on potential sub-surface archaeological remains; and
- (iii) provide mitigation recommendations to address potential impacts on archaeological, built heritage or other cultural heritage assets.

Most of the outdoor public space where development works are to occur at VISUAL formed part of the original VISUAL development site, the planning of which entailed comprehensive archaeological and built heritage mitigation. The pre-existing range of structures demolished to provide for the VISUAL complex comprised 18th century farm buildings, 19th century handball alleys and a 20th century house, which were surveyed and recorded prior to their removal. Nothing of archaeological significance was found across the VISUAL development site during the archaeological mitigation process.

### 1.1 Site Description

VISUAL, the Centre for Contemporary Art & The George Bernard Shaw Theatre has operated in Carlow Town since 2009, constructed on grounds donated by Carlow College, St Patrick's (Figure 2). Carlow College, situated to the north-east side of the town centre, was constructed in the late 18th century, on a greenfield site outside the core of the historic town at Carlow (CW007-018). VISUAL, Carlow College, and nearby Carlow Cathedral, all on College Street, are landmark buildings within Carlow Town.



**Figure 1 Location of proposed public space works at VISUAL (outlined in red) in wider Carlow Town context (OSi Licence No. EN0077921).**

The historic town contains a number of sub-elements, including an Anglo-Norman masonry castle (CW007-018002) and town defences (CW007-018006). There is no surviving trace of the town defences, and the exact course is unknown, although there have been consistent suggestions that the defences formed an irregular-shaped triangle, with the eastern section postulated to follow a circuit northward from the River Burren by way of Tullow Gate, on Tullow Street, at an unknown point between the Potato Market and College Street junctions. Carlow College, having its main entry off College Street, lies, as a result, partly within the Zone of Archaeological Potential for the historic town.

VISUAL is sited to the north-west end of the College, to the north side of landscaped grounds, laid out as a quad, between College Street and the College, to the immediate east of the Zone of Archaeological Potential for the historic town. Vehicle entry to VISUAL, and to the College, is via Court Place/Old Dublin Road (R417), with parking provided in large carparks to the north and east sides of the VISUAL complex. The main facade of the VISUAL building faces south, overlooking the College quad, with a stepped concrete forecourt above public space currently laid out with a wide concrete footpath and grassed areas on the edge of the College quad.



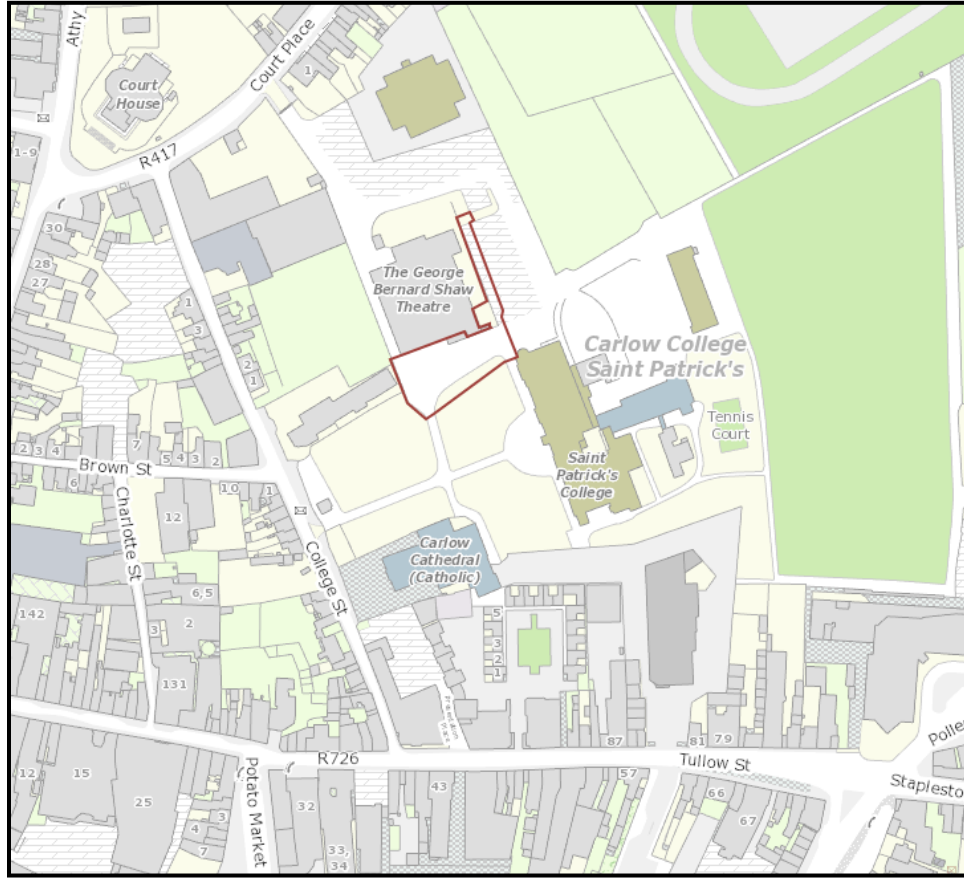


Figure 2 Location of proposed public space works at VISUAL (outlined in red) in local context in Carlow Town and relative to Carlow College (OSi Licence No. EN 0077921).

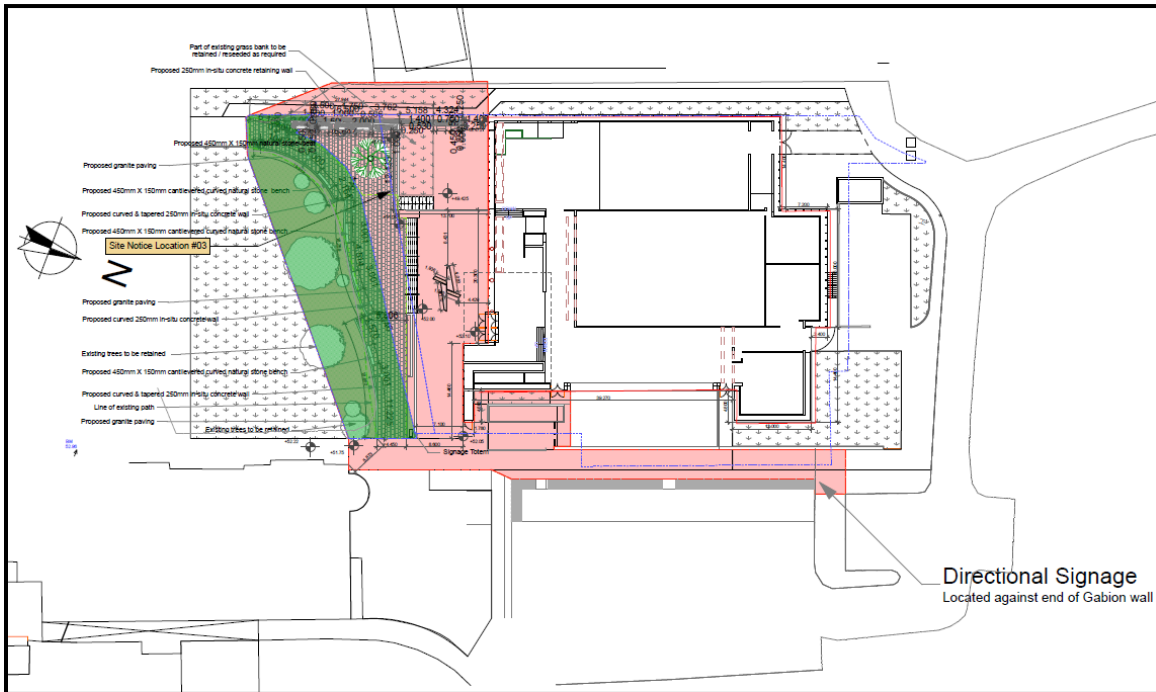


Figure 3 Proposed site layout plan (Source: Carlow County Council).

## 1.2 Development Description

The works for a new site layout of outdoor public space at VISUAL will involve upgrading existing hard- and soft-landscaping to the south side of the complex, outside the main entry (Figure 3). The works will include (a) removing an existing concrete/tarmacadamed footpath surface and replacing with granite paving; (b) removing an existing grass area around a sculpture to the south-west end of the entry, and replacing with granite paving; (c) installing new 250mm wide x up to 1.1m high concrete retaining walls with 450mm x 150mm natural stone seats, delineating the paving, including curved and tapered walls, with cantilevered seats, on the edge of the grassed College quad; and (d) installing additional structures on the stepped concrete forecourt, including movable steel visitor information points, movable limestone benches and an approximately 8m high signage totum of concrete and opal glass. Additional works will comprise the installation of services, including drainage (100mm dia. pipework with associated gully traps and manholes; slot drains; and a soakaway 2m x 2m x 2m), and directional signage at an existing carpark to the east side of VISUAL complex. Retaining and curved wall foundations will be installed in the order of 0.60m below the existing ground surface, in 0.60m wide cuttings, increasing to 1 sqm cuttings to either end of cantilevered seats.

## 2. Assessment Methodology

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This assessment report is based on a desk-top study of relevant archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage sources, supported by an on-site inspection. The assessment is guided by relevant legislation, standards and guidelines in respect of archaeology, architecture and cultural heritage, as follows.

### 2.1 Legislative Protection for Archaeological, Architectural and Industrial Heritage

Ireland has ratified several international and European conventions on the protection of cultural heritage, principally:

- UNESCO World Heritage Convention 1972;
- Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice) 1964;

- European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valetta Convention) 1992;
- European Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage (Grenada Convention) 1985; and
- European Council Directive on Environmental Impact Assessment (85/337/EEC) (as amended).

National legislation protecting cultural heritage sites comprises:

- National Monuments Act 1930, amended 1954, 1987, 1994, 2004 and 2014;
- Heritage Act 1995;
- Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999; and
- Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The following standards and guidelines were also consulted as part of this assessment:

- Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999), Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht & the Islands;
- Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation (1999), Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht & the Islands;
- The Heritage Council, 2000. Archaeology & Development: Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers (2000), The Heritage Council;
- Guidance on the preparation of the EIA Report, 2017, European Commission;
- European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018;
- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (Draft) (August 2017), Environmental Protection Agency;
- Advice notes on current practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements (2003), Environmental Protection Agency;
- Guidelines for the Assessment of Archaeological Heritage Impacts of National Road Scheme (2005), National Roads Authority; and
- Guidelines for the Assessment of Architectural Heritage Impacts of National Roads Schemes (2005), National Roads Authority; and

- Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011), Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht & the Islands.

## **2.2 Desktop Study**

The following were the principal desk-based sources consulted:

### **National Monuments**

Under the National Monuments Act (1930), and its various amendments, archaeological sites in the ownership or guardianship of the state or a local authority and sites under preservation orders are designated as National Monuments and offered the highest level of protection under Irish Legislation.

### **Record of Monuments & Places and Sites and Monuments Record**

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is a list of archaeological monuments, generally predating AD 1700, known to the National Monuments Service at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, which receive statutory protection. The RMP was established under Section 12 of the 1994 National Monuments (Amendment) Act, and is based on the earlier Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) files housed at the National Monuments Service. The record is updated on a constant basis.

### **Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland**

The topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) are the national archive of all known antiquities recorded by the NMI. These files relate primarily to artefacts, but also include references to monuments and contain a unique archive of records of previous excavations. The find-spots of artefacts can be an important indication of the archaeological potential of an area.

### **Excavations Bulletin and Excavations Database**

The Excavations Bulletin is both a published annual directory and an on-line database that provides summary accounts of all archaeological investigations and excavations carried out in Ireland – north and south – from 1969. The on-line database has been compiled from the published Excavations Bulletins from the years 1970-2010, with additional online-only material from 2011 onwards, and is updated on a constant basis.

## **Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2012 - 2018 Incorporating the Carlow Town Development Plan 2021-2018 (as extended)**

The Joint Spatial Plan was compiled in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000. It comprises a Town Development Plan as set out under Sections 9-12 of the Act and two Local Area Plans as set out under Sections 18-20. The Plan was prepared jointly by Carlow Local Authorities and Laois County Council on a shared-service basis. It includes a Record of Protected Structures (a list of buildings which cannot be materially altered or demolished without grant of permission under the Act) and Architectural Conservation Areas (to protect and enhance the special character of an area). The Joint Spatial Plan provides a framework for the management and regulation of spatial development and use of land. Part 3, Section 9 outlines policies and objectives in regards to built and natural heritage, including archaeological heritage. Appendix 4 consists of the Record of Protected Structures.

### **National Inventory of Architectural Heritage**

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is an ongoing survey within the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The work of the NIAH involves identifying and recording the architectural heritage of Ireland, from AD1700 to the present day and includes country houses, churches, mills, bridges and other buildings of note. Carlow Town has not been included in the County Survey for Carlow, having been compiled as a Pilot Study by the Office of Public Works in 1991. While this study is not currently available in digital format, the results have been incorporated into the Record of Protected Structures as it appears in the Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2021 - 2018.

### **Cartographic Sources**

Information gathered from cartographic sources is fundamental to the identification of archaeological and architectural heritage sites, including cultural landscapes e.g. demesne landscapes, which, based on the level of landscape change, are now often identified from cartographic records alone. The earliest Ordnance Survey maps date to the late 1830s and early 1840s, but much change has occurred in the use and treatment

of the landscape in the intervening years, particularly during the second half of the 20th century, making these a valuable resource in tracing the development of an area.

### **Toponymy Sources**

A townland name may preserve information relating to its archaeology, history, folklore, ownership, topography or land use. Most placenames were anglicised by the Ordnance Survey, which began in the 1830's. Despite some inaccuracies in translation, the Gaelic, Viking, Anglo-Norman and English origins of placenames are generally recognisable. The Placenames Database of Ireland website ([www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie)) hosts online bi-lingual placename research and archival records for townlands.

### **Documentary Sources**

Documentary sources are a valuable means of completing the written archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage record of an area, and of gaining insight into the history of the receiving environment. A list of all consulted documentary sources is provided in bibliographic form.

## **2.3 On-Site Inspection**

On-site inspection offers the opportunity to examine a study area in light of desk-based research and evidence. Inspection is essential in determining the nature and extent of any surviving above-ground evidence, and in predicting the potential effects of a proposal on potential below-ground remains. A site inspection was conducted at VISUAL by Shanarc Archaeology Ltd. on 25th February 2021.

## **3. Receiving Environment**

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### **3.1 Archaeological and Historical Background**

There is little record to date of prehistoric activity in Carlow Town, and the nature of settlement at the confluence of the River Barrow and River Burren prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans remains unclear (Wiggins 2012, 1). The river confluence probably provided a crucial focus on a major routeway in prehistory, and some evidence for prehistoric activity has been found in the wider environs of the town, including in

Kernanstown, where prehistoric burial remains (CW007-063) were discovered in 1981 during the construction of Presentation College, approximately 1.2km to the east of the subject site. Further east, the Kernanstown portal tomb (CW007-010), of Neolithic origin (c. 4000-2400 BC), is one of the best-known archaeological monuments in the county.

Research by Judith Carroll & Company Ltd. (2013, 8-12), as part of the Carlow Main Drainage Scheme, has shown that there was an ecclesiastical site on the high ground overlooking the River Barrow, in the area recognised as Castle Hill. Records suggest an abbey, known as St Mary's Abbey, was founded in *circa* the 6th century, and that ruins of the abbey still remained in the 16th century. 14th/15th century burials unearthed during archaeological monitoring associated with the Carlow Main Drainage Scheme have confirmed the location of the little known medieval abbey, which was sited directly north of the later castle (Wiggins 2012, 2). The abbey became the principal place of worship of the medieval town (Carroll 2013, 12).

The strategic nature of the confluence of the River Barrow and River Burren was quickly realised by the Anglo-Normans, and in the latter part of the 12th century they erected an earth and timber fortification on a small island of high ground at the confluence (Wiggins 2012, 1). That the Anglo-Normans held Carlow is recorded in a charter that shows the land was held in the late 12th century by a John de Clahull, probably granted to de Clahull by Strongbow (O'Connor 1997, 15 in Wiggins 2012, 1). Historical sources suggest that the original earth and timber castle was constructed by Hugh de Lacy in c. 1180 (Sweetman 2000, 39; Leask 1951, 47), on behalf of de Clahull.

The Anglo-Norman fortification became the nucleus of a new settlement (Feeley & Sheehan 2004, 16), and when the lordship of Leinster was granted to William Marshal in the early 13th century Marshall replaced the earth and timber defences with a permanent castle in stone (Wiggins 2012, 1-2). Work on the stone castle began in 1210 (Sweetman 2000, 39). Remains of the earlier fortification, or ringwork, at the castle was found during excavations by Kieran O'Connor in 1997, when post-holes were found inside the line of a curving fosse located beneath the walls of the stone castle (Sweetman 2000, 5, 39).

The castle was morphologically the same as other Leinster castles built by, or for Marshall (the elder or the younger, or both), such as Ferns, Co. Wexford, Lea, Co. Laois and Terryglass, Co. Tipperary (Sweetman 2000, 39). The stone castle was constructed as a large rectangular shaped keep with a round tower at each corner (*ibid*), referred to as a

'towered or turreted keep' by Leask (1951, 47). Its siting on a slight rise allowed it to overlook the confluence of the River Barrow and River Burren, and to control traffic on those rivers, particularly the movement of traffic on the Barrow down to New Ross.

The town that developed in association with the castle developed to its east. It too, developed on an area of high ground, which was separated from the castle by an area of bog, known as the 'Moneen' (Wiggins 2012, 2; Feeley & Sheehan 2004, 16). As a result, town defences were also external to the castle. The centre of the medieval town was located at the intersection of Castle Street, Dublin Street and Tullow Street. In 1247, the town is recorded as having 160 burgages, at which time the town passed to the Bigods, Earls of Norfolk (Byrne 2017, 15). The town was returned to the Crown in 1306, was held by Thomas de Brotherton from 1312 to 1338, and in 1361 was selected as the new seat of Government in Ireland by the Duke of Clarence (*ibid*). Carlow subsequently passed to the Seagraves, and later to the Dukes of Norfolk - Mowbray 1377-1475, and Howard 1483-1537 (*ibid*). The absentee nature of the town's administration - which was effectively executed by deputies - was a factor in encouraging native Irish families to attach the town in the 14th century (*ibid*).

The significance of Carlow Town in the medieval period is attested to by the construction of town defences, which were built in the latter part of the 14th century (Wiggins 2012, 2). The town defences consisted of a wall with a number of town gates. Documentary references to the defences include a report in 1373-74 that the Irish had destroyed the countryside 'right up to the city walls' of Carlow (Watt 1987, 369 in Wiggins 2012, 3). One cartographic source, a map of Leix/Offaly dating from 1563, depicts the defences around the town, while there are further 16th century documentary references to the presence of walled defences at this time. All upstanding trace of the town defences were gone by the early 17th century (Wiggins 2012, 2), and to date no sub-surface remains of the town defences have been found through archaeological excavation.

The 17th century was a turbulent time in Irish political history, and there are documented attacks on Carlow castle as well as the town at this time. In 1641, Sir Morgan Kavanagh and Dermott MacDowlin Kavanagh took possession of all of Carlow, with the exception of the castle, and burned Carlow Town (Wiggins 2012, 4). The castle was battered by the artillery of General Thomas Preston in 1646, who eventually took possession in 1647. The castle was re-taken by the Parliamentarians in 1650, during the Cromwellian wars. At this time, the town was not the focus of Cromwellian attacks, and in the surrender of the



castle it is recorded that 'the inhabitants of the town should not be in any way molested' Fitzgerald 1909-11, 369 in Wiggins 2012, 4). This did not protect the town from being burned two years later, in April 1652, by an Irish force led by Cahir and Art Kavanagh (Wiggins 2012, 5).

A picture of the walled medieval town of Carlow has been postulated by a number of authors based on available documentary and cartographic sources. Ken Wiggins (2012, 8) details the accepted circuit of the town's defences. The southern side was bounded by the River Burren, but was not walled. Dublin Street was encompassed in its entirety within the defences, and Dublin Gate lay at its north extent. Tullow Street and Castle Street ran generally west to east across Dublin Street, and Tullow Gate and Castle Gate lay at the ends of these streets respectively. Speculation suggests a fourth turnpike gate was possibly sited on the crossing of the River Burren from the south.

In terms of the modern street plan of Carlow Town, authors generally agree that the Castle Gate was sited in the vicinity of the Kennedy Street and Castle Street junction (Wiggins 2012, 8). There is less agreement on how much land was incorporated within the walled town to the west of Dublin Street, and on the line of the wall between the Dublin Gate and Tullow Gate on the north-east and east side of the town. Bradley & King (1990), in the *'Urban Archaeological Survey, Part X, Co. Carlow,'* places Dublin Gate at the Dublin Street junction with Athy Road and Court Place, and judge that the line of the wall ran west of College Street to the intersection of Tullow Street with the Potato Market, where Tullow Gate was located. Thomas (1992), in *'The Walled Towns of Ireland,'* similarly places Dublin Gate at the Dublin Street junction with Athy Road and Court Place, but alternatively suggests the wall followed the line of Court Place to College Street, where it then ran the full length of College Street to the Tullow Gate on Tullow Street. Suggested alignments also differ for the south-east section, linking Tullow Street to the River Burren. Bradley & King (1990) align the wall to the west of the Potato Market; Thomas (1992) aligns the wall to the east of the Potato Market.

Horner (1978) and Feeley & Sheehan (2004) have also suggested plans for the Carlow Town wall circuit. Ken Wiggins (2012) too, can offer new suggestions in light of the Carlow Main Drainage Scheme. In relation to Castle Gate, archaeological monitoring of digging on Castle Street has shown that the conjectural location of Castle Gate on Kennedy Street, short of the Castle Street junction, puts the gate within the margin of Moneen bog (Wiggins 2012, 24). Wiggins (2012, 25) suggests that the gate would more logically have

been built on the edge of the high ground overlooking the bog, and that a conjectural location may more accurately be placed on the brow of Castle Street, a little short of its western limit. Wiggins (2012, 29), by considering property frontages and a change in alignment on Tullow Street, also suggests that the position of Tullow Gate may have been at the junction with the Potato Market, which is in line with the postulated siting put forward by Bradley & King (1990). However, no remains have been found to date, to support any conjecture on the town wall circuit put forward by any author(s).

The earliest documented reference to a bridge crossing on the River Barrow is in the 16th century (Wiggins 2012, 2), prior to which ferries were used to cross the Barrow and Burren Rivers (Feeley & Sheehan 2004, 16). One bridge linked the medieval town to the west bank of the River Barrow, and it was here that an Irish settlement, known as Graigue (latter Graiguecullen), developed (Wiggins 2012, 2). A timber bridge may have spanned the River Burren in the mid 16th century (Feeley & Sheehan 2004, 17). The River Barrow and River Burren were important contributors to the development and prosperity of Carlow Town. Quays developed on the Burren, where there was no town wall (*ibid*), and a number of mills were established. According to Feeley & Sheehan (2004, 17) three mills existed on the Burren in 1370, downstream of the present bridge.

The two rivers had a lot to do with Carlow's commercial growth in the 18th century, reflected in the construction of several mills in the town. Many of Carlow's most impressive buildings today date from the latter part of the 18th century and throughout the 19th century, including Carlow College, and the nearby Carlow Cathedral, the origins of which are linked, related to the acquisition of leasehold land here by the Catholic Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin in the late 18th century.

The College was originally developed as a seminary or Diocesan College following the relaxation of the penal laws in the 18th century (Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2021 - 2018, 105). It was founded in by Bishop James O'Keefe, who took a 999-year lease of a four-acre field in 1786 and commenced building the College (Hickey 1954, 27). The College took its first admissions in October 1793. The delay in accepting admissions was as a result of resistance from the local Church of Ireland Bishop, but the need for his permission was removed by the passing of the Relief Act of 1792 ([en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)). The College functioned from 1793 until 1892 as both a seminary and a lay college of the humanities ([www.carlowcollege.ie](http://www.carlowcollege.ie)), with lay learners being transferred to College property at St Mary's, Knockbeg in 1892. From 1892 to 1989, Carlow

College operated exclusively as a seminary, recommencing third level courses in the humanities and social sciences in 1990.

The foundation stone of the nearby Cathedral, to the south-west of the College, was laid in March 1828 to a gothic revival design originally planned by architect Joseph Lynch and taken over by architect Thomas Alfred Cobden in 1829 ([www.dia.ie](http://www.dia.ie)). Cobden was later architect and builder of expansions to Carlow College, of the lay college in the south wing 1817-1819 and of the north wing 1821-1835; he is also credited as the likely designer of the College entrance gates and lodge. Completed in 1833, the Cathedral was built on the site of an earlier Catholic parish church, erected in 1787 by Dr. Henry Staunton, Parish Priest of Carlow ([carlowcathedral.ie](http://carlowcathedral.ie)). Part of the fabric of the 18th century structure was incorporated into its 19th century replacement, which was built around the earlier structure (Hickey 1954, 27). The Cathedral has been the Mother Church of the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin since its completion in 1833.

The Christian Brothers were invited to Carlow in 1858, by the then Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, Dr. Walsh, originally taking charge of a school in Montgomery Street in 1859 before acquiring the old parochial primary school in College Street in 1863. The school stood fronting College Street, to the north side of the College quad and north of the Cathedral. By 1961, the school on College Street no longer had the capacity for the numbers of students attending it, and a replacement school was built at Railway Road. The former school has since been redeveloped and functions as the Parish Centre of Carlow Cathedral.

## 3.2 Toponymy

Carlow Town is situated within the townland of the same name, which has the validated Irish name *Ceatharlach*. The meaning of the placename has been interpreted with varying meanings. According to Flanagan and Flanagan (2002, 188), 'Ceatherlogh' translates as meaning 'Quadruple Lake,' part derived from the root Irish word *ceathru*, meaning quarter. Comerford (1886, 33 in Carroll 2013, 8) also suggests the origin of the name is 'four lakes.' However, Carroll (2013, 8) states that a more convincing translation is 'city/town on the lake.' Feeley & Sheehan (2004, 17) make reference to this interpretation when they note that the levels of the River Barrow and River Burren were higher in the past, allowing for the formation of a lake (or lakes) from which the town acquired its

name. The 'city/town on the lake' would have been a good description of the oldest part of Carlow at Castle Hill (Carroll 2013, 8).

### 3.3 Cartographic Analysis

The following historic maps were consulted, of which relevant extracts are presented below.

- Down Survey map of County Carlow, 1656-58 (Figure 4);
- Down Survey map of the Barony of Catherlough, 1656-58 (Figure 5);
- Down Survey map of the Parish of Catherlough, 1656-58;
- Thomas Moland's Survey of Carlow Town, 1703 (Figure 6);
- Carlow Town by Charles Colombine, 1735 (Figure 7);
- Thomas Larcom's map of Municipal Boundary changes, 1820s (Figure 8);
- First edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map, 1838 (Figure 9);
- Griffith's Valuation map, 1847-64 (Figure 10);
- Ordnance Survey Town Series map, 1873 (Figure 11)
- Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, 1907 (Figure 12); and
- Ordnance Survey 6-inch map, 1940 (Figure 13).

#### Down Survey maps, 1656-58

The Down Survey is a mapped survey carried out between 1656 - 1658 under the direction of Sir William Petty, which recorded land forfeited after the Cromwellian Wars, recording townland boundaries, their areas and proprietors with precision throughout Ireland. The resultant maps contain other detail, such as on roads, rivers, towns, churches, castles, houses and fortifications, as well as topographic and landuse detail.

The Down Survey map of County Carlow depicts the town of 'Catherlogh' on a bridge at the confluence of the River Barrow with the River Burren (Figure 4). The town appears to be laid out on a principal main street, orientated roughly north-south. The Barony (Figure 5) and Parish maps both show 'Catherlogh' castle and town on the east side of the Barrow River and north of the Burren River, with defences depicted around the castle on the Barony map, but no town defences on the Parish map. Both maps also show the existence of two bridges in the town, a stone bridge on the Barrow and a timber bridge

on the Burren. The bridge on the Burren is likely to have been aligned on the principal north-south orientated street in the town, present day Dublin Street.



Figure 4 Extract from the Down Survey map of the County of Carlow 1656-58, showing the town of Catherlogh (Source: [downsurvey.tcd.ie](http://downsurvey.tcd.ie)).

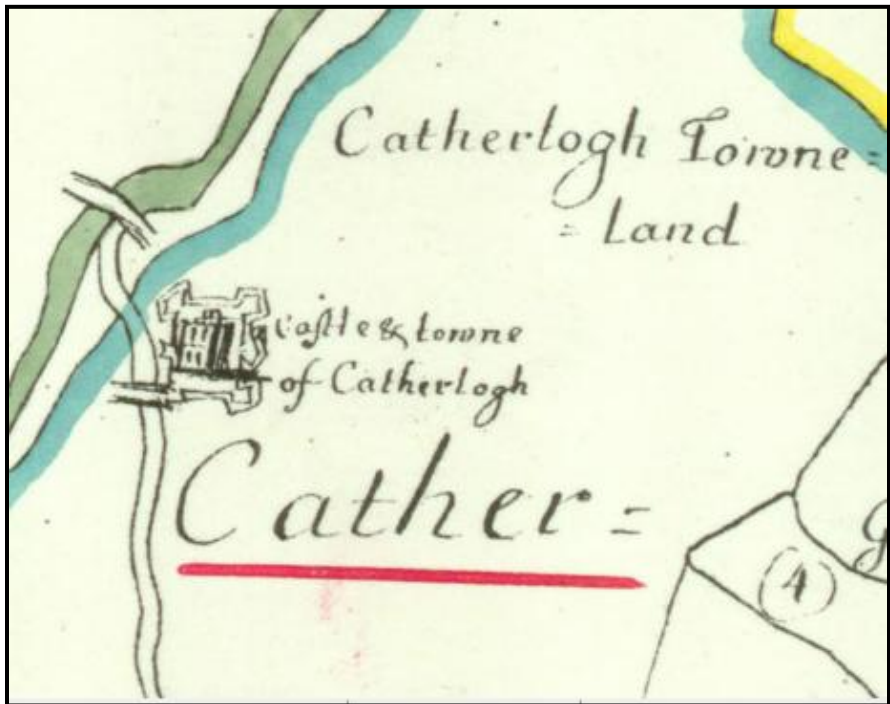


Figure 5 Extract from the Down Survey map of the Barony of Catherlogh 1656-58, depicting the castle at the town of Catherlogh (Source: [downsurvey.tcd.ie](http://downsurvey.tcd.ie)).

### Thomas Moland's Survey of Carlow Town, 1703

Thomas Moland's survey of Carlow Town, dating from 1703 (Figure 6), depicts the developed street network and location of key buildings or structures present at this time. The map names five streets - Dublin Street, Tullow Street, Castle Street, Chapel Street and Bridewell Lane - and highlights the locations of the castle, the barracks and St. Mary's Church. No trace of the medieval town wall or associated gates is shown by Moland, indicating that all upstanding traces had been removed. The line of College Street is shown, but Moland records no buildings lining the street. While some undeveloped land outside the core of the town is annotated, such as the tenements with gardens to the south side of Tullow Street, or a holding held by Rockford to the north-west side of the Old Dublin Road, no structures or landuse is recorded by Moland on the land enclosed by the line of the Old Dublin Road to the north, the line of College Street to the west and Tullow Street to the south.

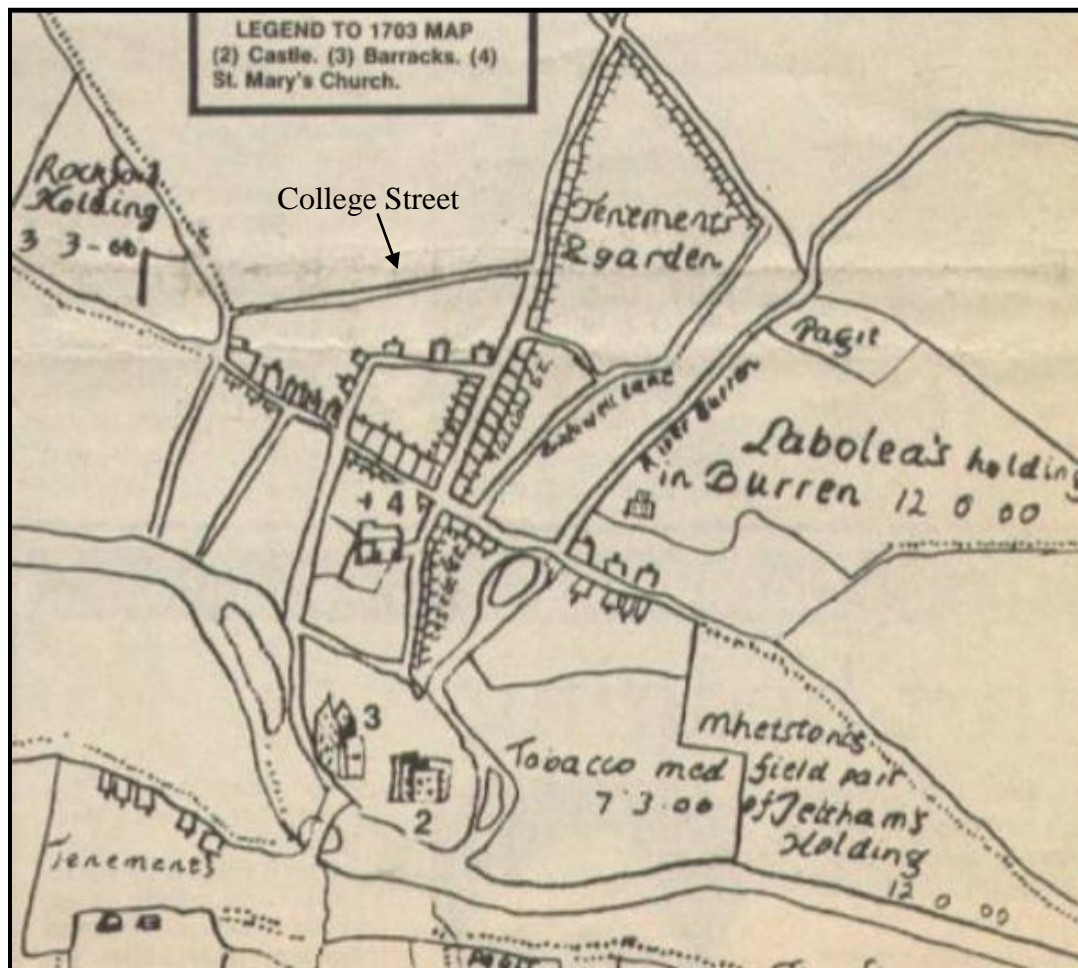


Figure 6 Extract from Moland's Survey of Carlow Town 1703, showing the layout of Carlow Town, which includes the alignment of College Street (Source: libguides.ucd.ie).

## Carlow Town by Charles Colombine, 1735

The town's layout as recorded by Charles Colombine on his 1735 map of Carlow Town is similar to that of Moland's, but Colombine records many more street names, and shows the streets of the historic core much more developed. Brown Street is first shown, linking Cuckow Lane with the line of College Street, named by Colombine as 'Chappel Lane', and both sides of these streets are lined with buildings (Figure 7). Colombine also depicts key buildings present at this time, including a relatively large, L-shaped building to the east side of College Street/'Chappel Lane.' No further detail of the landuse to the rear, or east of the buildings fronting the east side of College Street/'Chappel Lane' is recorded by Colombine.

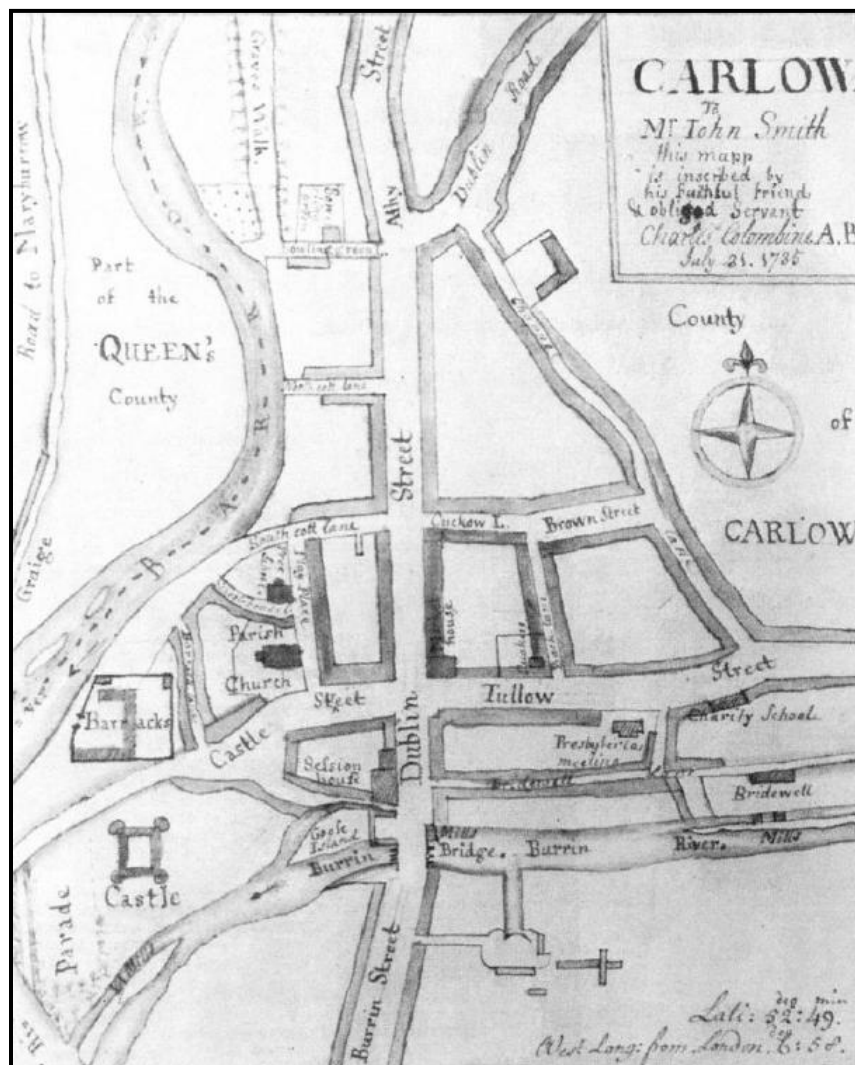


Figure 7 Extract from Colombine's map of Carlow Town 1735, showing the layout of the town and the developed nature of College Street, named 'Chappel Lane' (Source: libguides.ucd.ie).

## Thomas Larcom's pre-Ordnance Survey map of Municipal Boundary changes in Carlow Town, 1820s

Thomas A Larcom's pre-ordnance survey map of municipal boundary changes in Carlow Town was prepared to accompany a report by Thomas Mould on the proposed municipal boundary of Carlow (Figure 8). Larcom's map records the developed nature of the grounds of Carlow College for the first time, recording the location of the College with two smaller structures between it and the Roman Catholic Chapel, the forerunner of the present Carlow Cathedral. A laneway leads from College Street between two building ranges to the north-west end of the College. The map records the expansion of development eastwards of College Street from the late 18th and into the early 19th centuries.

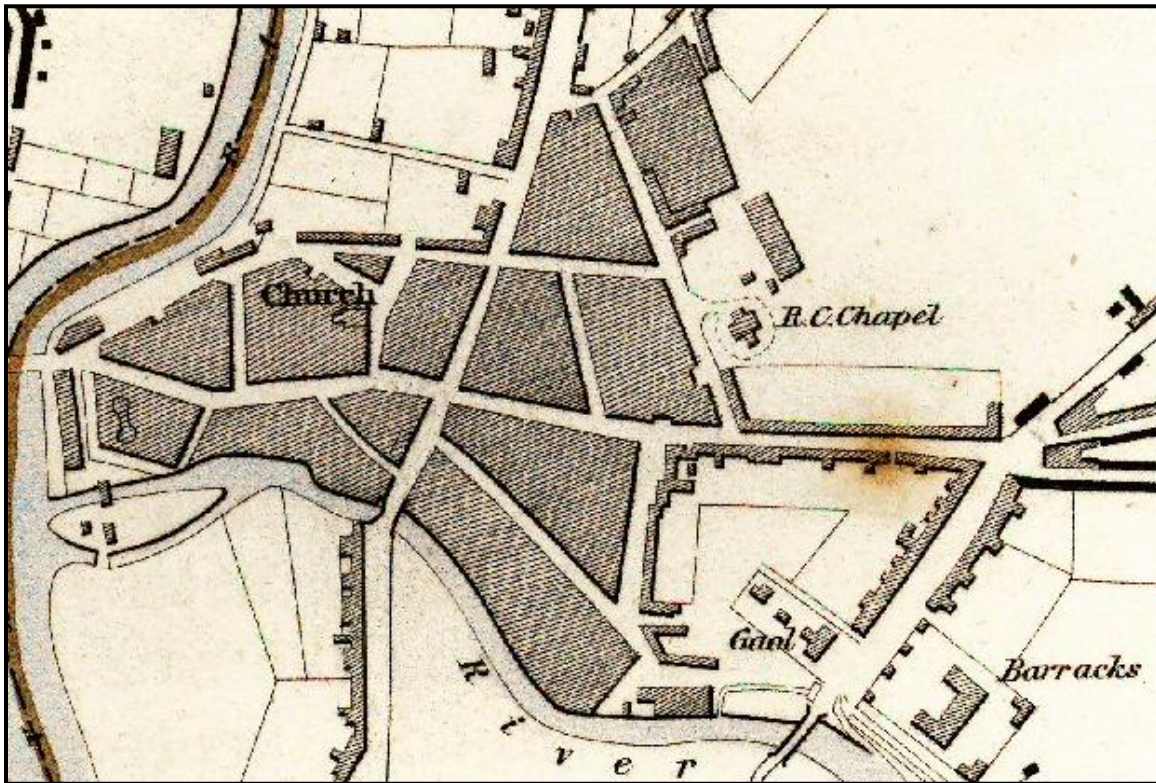


Figure 8 Extract from Larcom's pre-Ordnance Survey map of municipal boundary changes in Carlow Town (Source: [www.askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie)).



### First Edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map, 1838

The first ever large-scale survey of Ireland was undertaken by the Ordnance Survey between 1829 and 1842, producing highly accurate maps at different scales. The first edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map of Carlow Town, surveyed in 1838 and published in 1840 (Figure 9), depicts the layout of the medieval town as it existed near the mid-19th century. Key public buildings in the town include the Roman Catholic College of St. Patricks and the nearby Roman Catholic Cathedral, sited to the east of College Street. The grounds of the 'R.C. College' is recorded in detail, and the map depicts the footprint of a large college block, oriented north-north-west to south-south-east, with its main facade facing west, at the end of a long, straight entrance avenue from a gate lodge on College Street. With the exception of the 'R. C. Chapel,' sited to the south side of the entrance avenue, the grounds to the front of the College provide an open vista, containing only accessways and a number of trees. To the north side are a collection of associated institutional buildings, which include an infirmary for boys, infirmary for young men and a National School House, the latter fronting College Street. Features at the infirmary for boys include a yard and two ball courts.

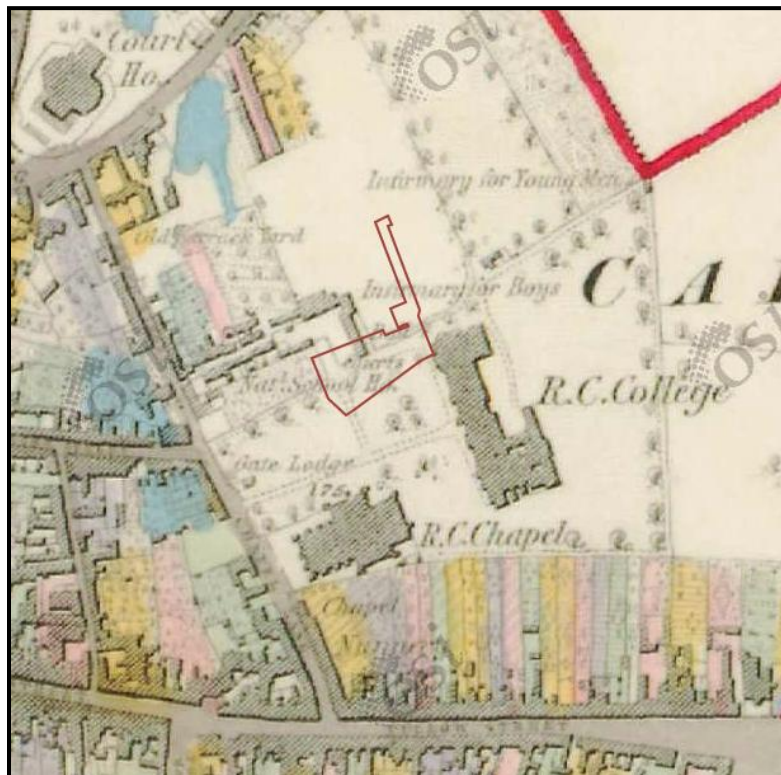


Figure 9 Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map, surveyed 1838, showing approximate location of proposed works at VISUAL (in red) (OSi Licence EN 0077921).

## Griffith's Valuation, 1847-1864

Griffith's Valuation is the name widely given to the Primary Valuation of Ireland, a property tax survey carried out in the mid-19th century under the supervision of Sir Richard Griffith. The survey involved the detailed valuation of every taxable piece of agricultural or built property on the island of Ireland and was published county-by-county between the years 1847 and 1864. The extract covering Carlow College (Figure 10) records the layout of the buildings to the north-west end of the College, where the infirmary is annotated as a hospital, and laid out similarly within a yard and next to ball courts, as shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map. Notable change has occurred in the grounds of the National School to the west, which has a new build school building occupied by the Christian Brothers.

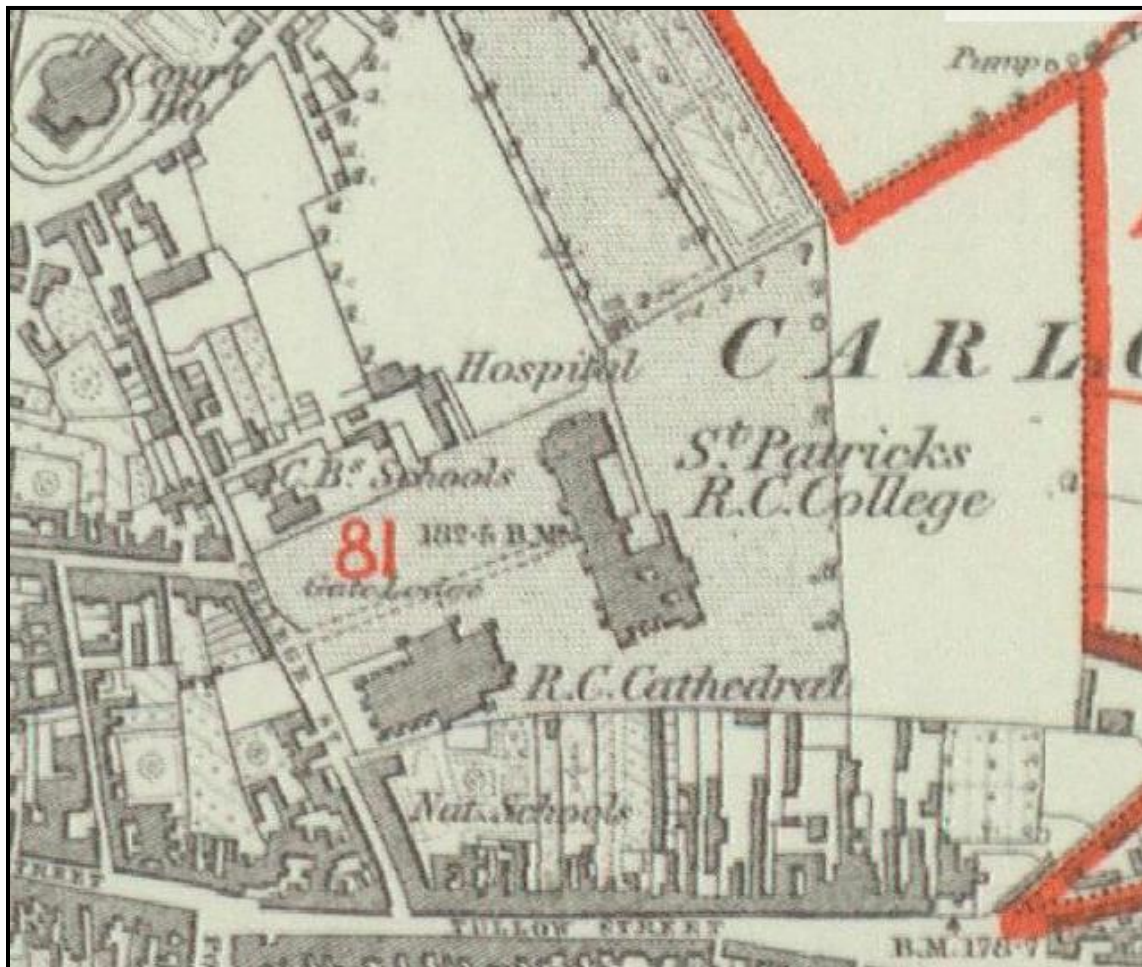


Figure 10 Extract from Griffith's Valuation map, 1848-64 (Source: [askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation](http://askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation)).

## Ordnance Survey Town Plan Series, 1873

Town plans were surveyed at either five or ten foot to one mile scale between 1837 and 1896. The large scale at which they were surveyed means that great detail can be seen. Carlow College can be viewed on Sheet 12 of the Carlow Town Plan map series, which was drawn in 1873 (Figure 11). More detail of the footprint of buildings and locations of walls at the complex of buildings to the north-west end of the College, including the layout of the adjacent Christian Brothers' Schools, can be seen, but the overall layout remains as per Griffith's Valuation map.

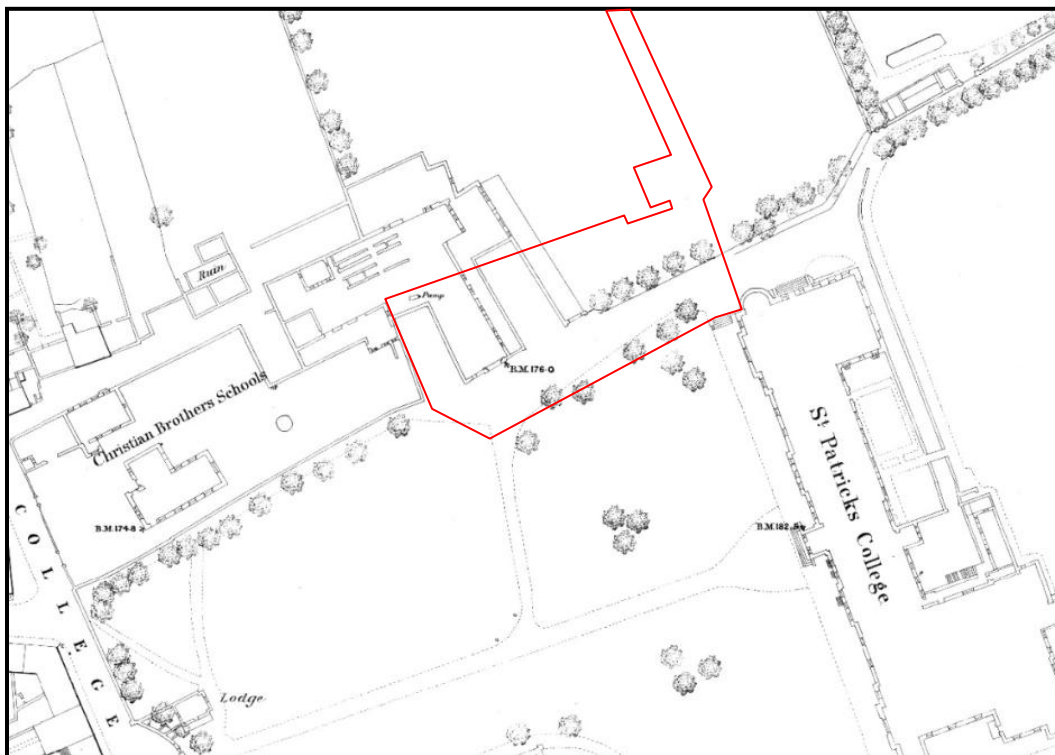


Figure 11 Extract from Sheet 12 of the Ordnance Survey Town Plan series, 1873, showing approximate location of proposed works at VISUAL (in red) (Source: digital.ucd.ie).

## Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, 1907 and 6-inch map, 1940

The 25-inch Ordnance Survey map, surveyed in 1907 and published in 1908, records a similar layout as its 19th century precursors (Figure 12). The general layout of associated buildings to the north-west end of the College remains unaltered, as do the grounds of the Christian Brother's Schools. No additional detail on the function of the buildings is annotated. A notable expansion of the College is reflected in the addition of a Chapel linked to the back of the College. Later mid-20th century Ordnance Survey maps, such

as the 6-inch map levelled in 1940 and published in 1942 provide no additional relevant detail (Figure 13).



Figure 12 Extract from Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, surveyed 1907, showing approximate location of proposed works at VISUAL (in red) (OSi Licence EN 0077921).

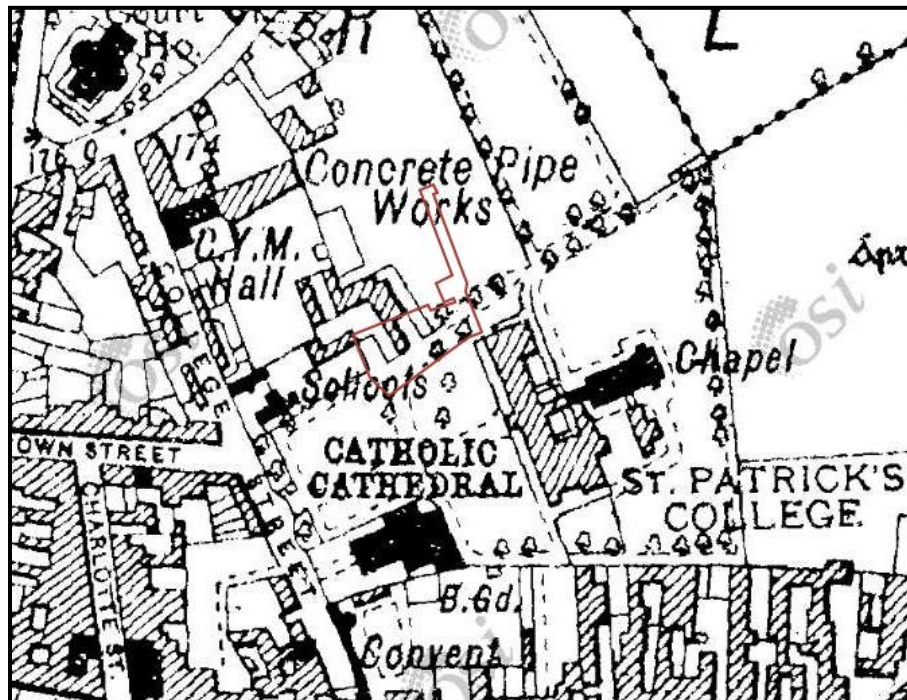


Figure 13 Extract from 6-inch Ordnance Survey map, 1940, showing approximate location of proposed works at VISUAL (in red) (OSi Licence EN 0077921).

## 3.4 Archaeological Heritage

### 3.4.1 National Monuments

A National Monument is a monument or the remains of a monument, the preservation of which is a matter of national importance by reason of the historical, architectural, traditional, artistic, or archaeological interest attaching thereto. Carlow Castle (CW007-018002), overlooking the River Barrow, is currently in the guardianship of the State (No. 306). Carlow's Town Defences, of which the exact circuit remains unsubstantiated, but which lay in proximity of College Street, are also considered to be a national monument under the meaning of the National Monuments Act (1930) (as amended). National Monuments in Carlow town are recorded on Table 1.

**Table 1 National Monuments in Carlow Town.**

Name	Description	Townland	Legal Status	RMP No.	National Monument Number
Carlow Castle	Castle	Carlow Town	Guardianship	CW007-018002	306
Carlow Town Defences	Town Defences	Carlow Town	Ownership of Carlow County Council	CW007-018006	-

### 3.4.2 Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)

The proposed works at VISUAL lie 15m east of the Zone of Archaeological Potential associated with the historic town of Carlow (CW007-018), which corresponds approximately with the extent of the medieval town defences (CW007-018006) (Figure 14). With the exception of the medieval town defences, which at their closest were aligned along College Street, no recorded archaeological sub-element of the historic town is recorded in immediate proximity of the grounds of Carlow College. Table 2 lists recorded monuments within a 500m radius the proposed works at VISUAL.

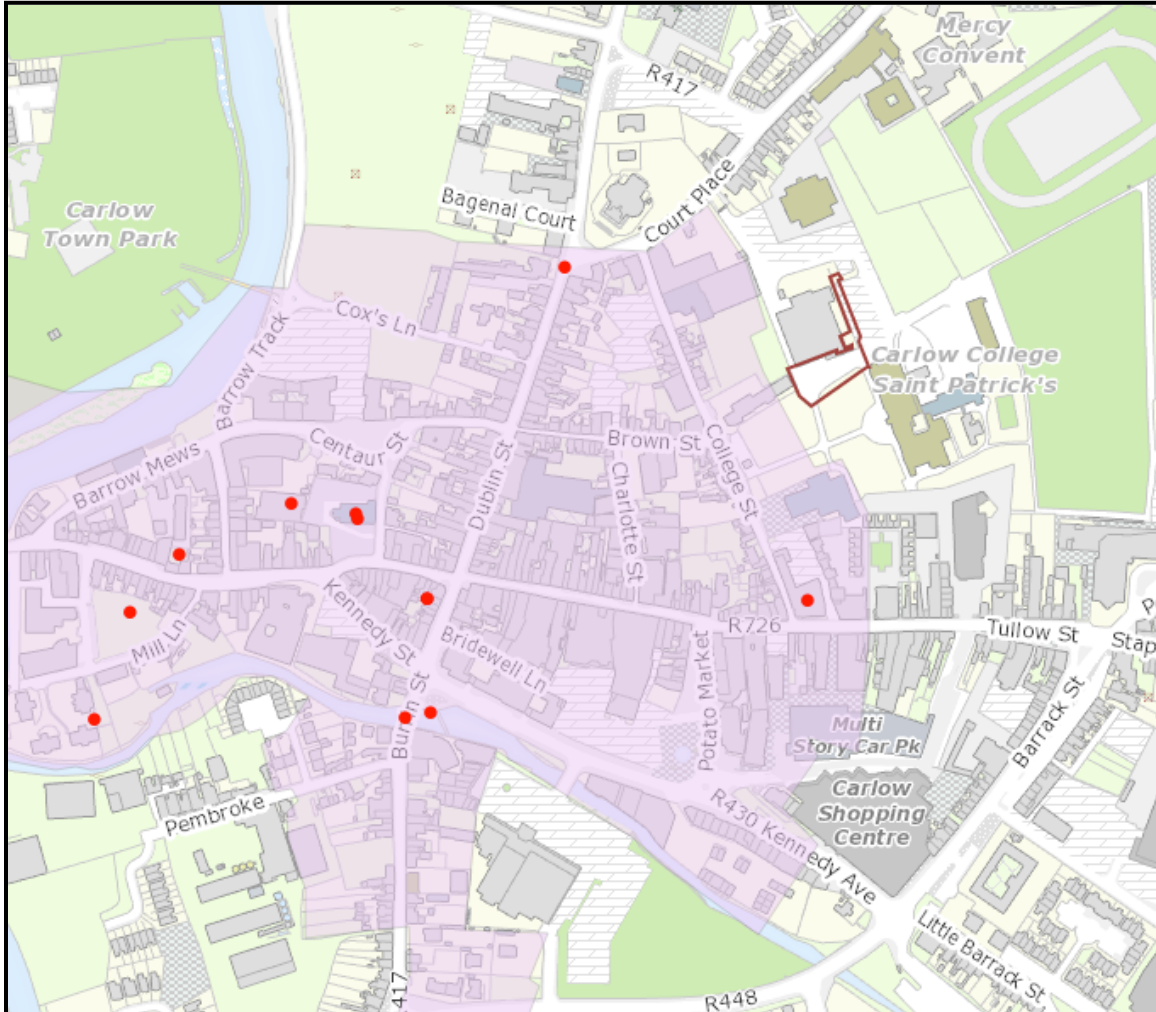


Figure 14 Distribution map of sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (red dots) relative to the proposed works at VISUAL (in red) (OSi Licence EN 0077921).

Table 2 RMP sites within a 500m radius of proposed public space works at VISUAL.

RMP No.	Class	Townland	Irish Grid Reference (E,N)	Proximity to Site (m)
CW007-018	Historic town	Carlow, Graigue	671932, 676690	15m
CW007-018004	Bridge	Carlow	671915, 676598	386m
CW007-018006	Town defences	Carlow	672038, 676953	Unknown
CW007-018007	Church	Carlow	671876, 676756	442m
CW007-018009	Graveyard	Carlow	671738, 676726	490m
CW007-018010	Graveyard	Carlow	671826, 676765	395m
CW007-018011	Redundant	Carlow	671934, 676602	N/A

RMP No.	Class	Townland	Irish Grid Reference (E,N)	Proximity to Site (m)
	record			
CW007-018016	Tomb - effigial	Carlow	671877, 676752	442m
CW007-018017	Battlefield	Carlow	671932, 676690	c. 300m
CW007-167	Stone head (present location)	Carlow	672228, 676689	135m

### 3.4.3 Previous Archaeological Investigations

A suite of archaeological investigations and have been undertaken in Carlow town since 1995, recording its urban medieval and post-medieval heritage. Of immediate relevance are archaeological investigations carried out as mitigation in association with the original development of the VISUAL complex by Carlow County Council in the mid 2000s (Figure 15). All archaeological mitigation was carried out by Headland Archaeology Ltd. beginning with an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) (Janes 2005), which established the nature of the complex of buildings depicted on historic maps to the north-west end of Carlow College. These buildings were identified as a mixed complex of 18th century farm buildings, 19th century handball alleys and a 20th century house. The AIA recommended that the complex of buildings be subject to an architectural survey prior to demolition, which was subsequently undertaken by Headland Archaeology Ltd. in January 2007 (MacDomhnaill *et al* 2007). To address potential impacts on sub-surface archaeological remains pre-dating the development of Carlow College in the late 18th century, given the proximity of the development to Carlow Town's historic core, the AIA report also recommended that groundworks at the site be subject to archaeological monitoring. Archaeological monitoring was preceded by archaeological test-excavation, carried out by Headland Archaeology Ltd. in March 2007 in advance of the demolition of standing buildings at the site. Test-excavation was carried out under licence 06E1075, comprising five test trenches excavated to the previously undeveloped eastern part of the VISUAL development site. The stratigraphy comprised dark brown silty-clay topsoil, c. 0.30m deep, above dark red-brown silty-sandy clay subsoil, c. 0.20m deep, overlying yellow-brown sandy-clay natural (Bunce & Janes 2007, 2). North-south orientated furrows were recorded in trenches, but nothing of archaeological significance was found during test-excavation. Archaeological monitoring across the previously developed west and south-west part of the VISUAL development site (NMS Ref. 08N032)

was carried out by Headland Archaeology Ltd. in September 2007. It revealed a comparably stratigraphy to that recorded during test-excavation, with the stratigraphy across the area formerly occupied by buildings comprising a layer of modern overburden ranging from 0.30-0.60m in depth (Janes 2008, 2). Again, nothing of archaeological significance was found during monitoring.

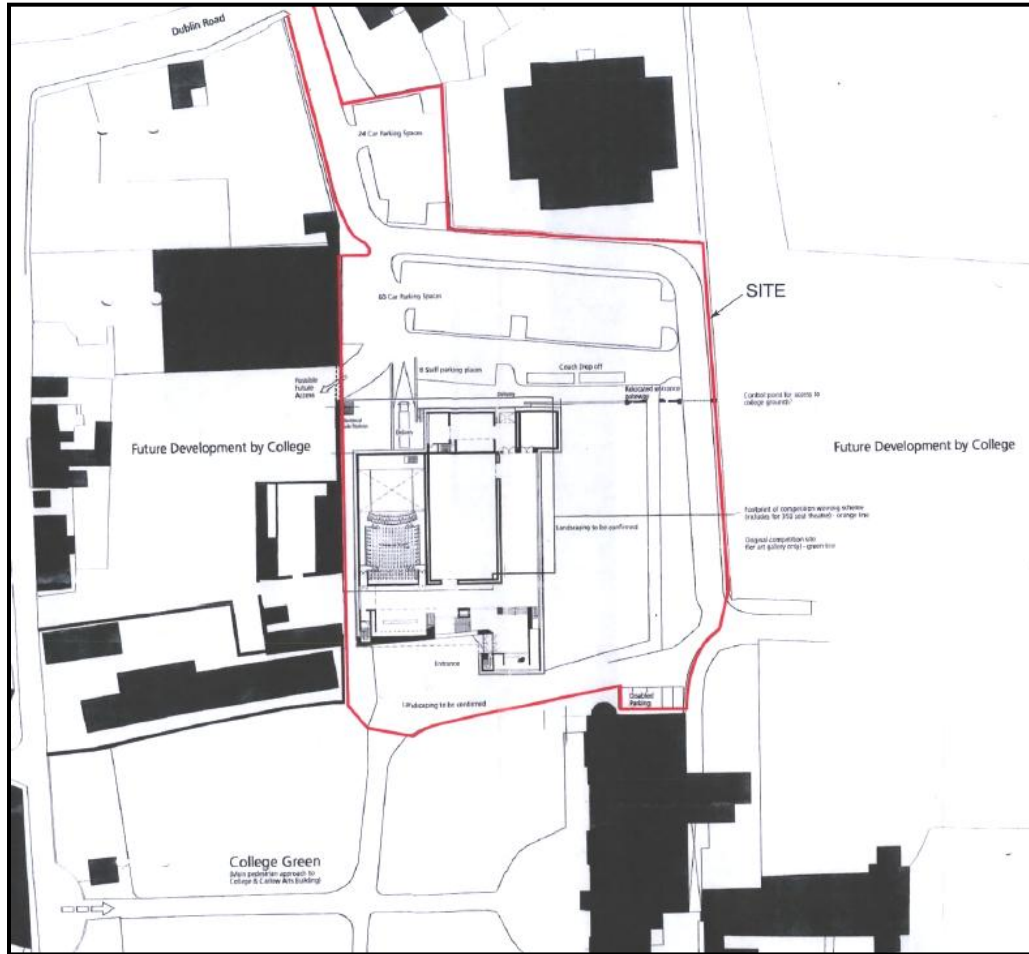


Figure 15 Site layout plan of permitted VISUAL development (Source: Janes 2005).

A neighbouring property to the west, the former Christian Brothers' School on College Street, now the Cathedral Parish Centre, was subject to pre-development archaeological test-excavation under Carlow Town Council Planning Ref. PD 5145. Test-excavation was carried out by Alan Hayden under licence no. 04E0895 in July 2004, in advance of the extension and renovation of the former school building for the provision of a Parish Centre. The majority of the property lies within the Zone of Archaeological Potential Zone associated with the historic town of Carlow (CW007-018), sited just outside a postulated line of the town defences on the edge of the medieval town. Four trenches



were mechanically excavated on the site; to the rear, closest to the VISUAL complex, subsoil was found up to 1m below modern ground level, overlain only by modern deposits (Hayden 2004, 2). Nothing of archaeological significance was found during test-excavation, including any evidence of defenses associated with the town wall.

### 3.4.4 Previous Archaeological Finds recorded in Topographical Files

While a large number of finds are recorded for Carlow townland in the Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland, no find spot is provenanced to College Street or to the grounds of Carlow College. A number of iron spears and stone axeheads have been recovered from the River Barrow in Carlow, providing some evidence of prehistoric activity at the confluence of the Barrow and River Burren.

## 3.5 Architectural Heritage

### 3.5.1 Record of Protected Structures

As per Appendix 4, Section 1, of the Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2012 - 2018:

*"A protected structure is a structure that a local authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view."*

Objective HERO07 of the Joint Spatial Plan (pg. 143) seeks to:

*"Ensure the protection of the special interest or character of all structures on the Record of Protected Structures within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area."*

The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) details a number of protected structures forming part of a complex in the grounds of Carlow College, and includes specified buildings fronting College Street. The structures include well known and significant structures within the town, including Carlow College and Carlow Cathedral. These structures are listed in Table 3.

Table 3 RPS structures in the vicinity of proposed public space works at VISUAL.

RPS No.	Name/Location	Description	NIAH Ref.	Proximity (m)
CT72	Parish Hall, College Street	Early Victorian Gothic revival building of two storeys, with plaque dated 1859; former school utilised by the Christian Brothers.	10000434	~2m
CT73	St. Patricks College, College Street	Originally freestanding four storey late 18th century building advancing forward at centre and sides. Late Georgian extensions to flanks with larger windows (excludes rear Extension); 1785- 1793.	10000437	0m
CT74	Rear Extension St. Patrick's College, College Street	Victorian 'Romanesque' building extending to rear of seminary and linked to it by modern narthex, part of full and radical reconstruction of older work; 1887- 1888.	10000438	51m
CT75	Entrance Gates St. Patrick's College, College Street	Entrance gates to St Patrick's College in rusticated granite ashlar, limestone and curved rendered walls with granite coping. Central carriageway topped with iron arch over iron gates; 1789- 1793.	10000435	75m
CT76	Gate Lodge, St Patrick's College, College Street	Well detailed single storey late Neoclassical Doric gate lodge. Two pedimented fronts, that to gate with in antis baseless columns between square piers; 1820- 1833.	10000436	63m
CT77	Carlow Cathedral College Street	Cruciform cathedral in late English gothic style, with tower at the southern end of the transept surmounted by a lantern, 151 feet high; 1820- 1833.	10000188	59m
CT78	Railings & Gates, Carlow Cathedral College Street	Railings and gates fronting the Cathedral of spiked tops surmounting a low granite wall. Oil lamps sit on top of the piers which are in turn decorated with shields of the Diocese; 1832- 1839.	10000439	89m
CT79	Wine Bar College Street	Two storey three bay 18th century house with Victorian alterations	10000440	110m
CT80	Various Units College Street	Late Georgian three storey five bay warehouse renovated as modern commercial premises	10000441	143m

### 3.5.2 Architectural Conservation Areas

Seven Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) have been identified within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, all located within the functional area of Carlow Town. The purpose of an ACA is to preserve the character of "a place, area, group of structures

*or townscape which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures...*" College Street forms one ACA within the town, focused principally on the structures forming the street frontage along the street. VISUAL, Carlow College, Carlow Cathedral and Carlow Court House are identified landmark buildings focused on, or close to College Street.

### **3.5.3 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage**

The NIAH survey of Carlow Town was carried out as a pilot survey in 1991 and is not available in digital format. The original, hard copy survey was unavailable for consultation at the time of this study due to COVID 19 restrictions. However, the results have been incorporated into the Record of Protected Structures as it appears in the Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2021 - 2018. The AIA report (Janes 2005) prepared in association with planning for the VISUAL complex notes that the Inventory recorded the pre-existing late 18th century farm complex and hand ball courts at the site.

## **3.6 On-Site Inspection**

A site inspection at VISUAL was carried out on 25th February 2021 by Shanarc Archaeology Ltd., which noted the existing hard- and soft-landscaping provided at the site of the proposed public realm upgrade works (Plates 1-3). The nature of the ground is level, with the exception of a sloped grass area at the south-west end of the entry, which provides access to a cafe at the complex (Plate 4); ground levels in this area in particular will have been modified during the construction of the VISUAL complex. This part of the site is also bordered by a stone boundary wall at the rear of the former Christian Brothers' School on College Street, now the Cathedral Parish Centre, which does not form part of upgrade proposals and will not be impact. There is no visual or surface trace of any other archaeological or built heritage features at the site.



Plate 1 Proposed public realm upgrade works location, viewed from north-east to south-west (25.02.2021).



Plate 2 Approach to proposed public realm upgrade works location, viewed from the south, with Carlow College to right of picture (25.02.2021).



Plate 3 Proposed public realm upgrade works location, viewed from south-west to north-east (25.02.2021).



Plate 4 View to south-west from VISUAL forecourt to stone boundary wall with neighbouring Cathedral Parish Centre (25.02.2021).

## 4. Conclusion and Recommendation

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The proposals for a new site layout of outdoor public space at VISUAL, Carlow town's Centre for Contemporary Art & The George Bernard Shaw Theatre, are principally sited to the south side of the complex, outside the main entry. A review of the site layout plan relating to the original development of the VISUAL complex has established that most of the outdoor public space where development works are to occur formed part of the original VISUAL development site, which involved comprehensive archaeological and built heritage mitigation from the mid 2000s, in advance of its development.

The proposed public realm works at VISUAL lie wholly outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential associated with the historic town of Carlow (CW007-018). With the exception of the medieval town defences (CW007-018006), which at their closest are postulated to align with College Street, no recorded archaeological sub-element of the historic town is recorded in immediate proximity of the VISUAL complex.

Available documentary and cartographic evidence suggests that the land around the existing VISUAL complex, within the grounds of the late 18th century Carlow College, was greenfield prior to the eastward expansion of Carlow town from College Street in the 18th century. There is no evidence for extra-mural medieval activity east of College Street, which is likely to have been cultivated land in the medieval period.

No recorded archaeology will be impacted by the proposed public realm works at VISUAL, and nothing of archaeological significance was found during a comprehensive programme of archaeological and built heritage mitigation carried out in advance of, and during the construction of the existing complex. As such, it is concluded that groundworks associated with a new site layout of outdoor public space at VISUAL will have no archaeological or built heritage impacts. No additional archaeological mitigation is recommended in relation to the new site layout proposed at VISUAL.

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Ordnance Survey of Ireland 19th and 20th century 6-inch, 25-inch and Town Series maps of Carlow Town

## Electronic Sources

<a href="http://www.excavations.ie">www.excavations.ie</a>	Summary accounts of archaeological investigations
<a href="http://www.archaeology.ie">www.archaeology.ie</a>	Website listing RMP sites and NIAH sites
<a href="http://heritagemaps.ie">heritagemaps.ie</a>	Cultural heritage datasets
<a href="http://www.logainm.ie">www.logainm.ie</a>	Placenames database
<a href="http://www.downsurvey.tcd.ie">www.downsurvey.tcd.ie</a>	Down Survey maps
<a href="http://www.carlow.ie">www.carlow.ie</a>	Development plan publications
<a href="http://www.downsurvey.tcd.ie">www.downsurvey.tcd.ie</a>	Down Survey Maps
<a href="http://www.askaboutireland.ie">www.askaboutireland.ie</a>	Griffiths Valuation
<a href="http://www.digital.ucd.ie">www.digital.ucd.ie</a>	Ordnance Survey Town Plan series map
<a href="http://libguides.ucd.ie">libguides.ucd.ie</a>	Historic Carlow maps
<a href="http://www.igp-web.com/Carlow/Car_1703.jpg">www.igp-web.com/Carlow/Car_1703.jpg</a>	Moland map
<a href="http://www.carlowcollege.ie">www.carlowcollege.ie</a>	History of Carlow College
<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/">https://en.wikipedia.org/</a>	History of Carlow College
<a href="https://carlowcathedral.ie/">https://carlowcathedral.ie/</a>	History of Carlow Cathedral
<a href="https://www.dia.ie/">https://www.dia.ie/</a>	Dictionary of Irish Architects 1720-1940