

Nine 18th-century Milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’ from Gort to Galway.

Conservation Report



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Nine 18th-century Milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’ from Gort to Galway. Conservation Report August 2022

1. Introduction

This report is prepared at the request of Ardrahan Heritage Group.

The purpose of the report is to prepare for the planned conservation, preservation and management of nine milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’ from Gort to Galway. It makes proposals for necessary repairs to the stones and suggests options for the enhancement of their settings which would increase their visibility and aesthetic appearance. It is hoped that greater awareness and appreciation by the general public will ensure their proper place in local and regional history.

This report will also augment the clear case for proper statutory protection for all the stones.

I am grateful for information in the comprehensive report on the stones by Jerry O’Sullivan, archaeologist, (December 2021) *Nine 18th - century Milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’*, A Report for Ardrahan Heritage Group, a member organisation of the Labane and Ardrahan Community Development Association. To save constant cross referencing between this report and that of Jerry O’Sullivan, I have included direct quotations from his report, particularly in relation to the location and description of the stones. Direct quotations are shown in contrasting font. I have followed the same numbering system for the stones as in Jerry O’Sullivan’s Report

Ardrahan Heritage Group also commissioned a 3D Laser Scanning survey which provides a full measured and photogrammetric survey of each stone. This survey was provided by Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit (August 2022) *Laser Scanning of Nine 18th Century Milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’*. This survey provides the detailed information required for the quantifying and planning of repairs.

This Conservation Report contains a discussion on

- (i) the significance of the stones,
- (ii) the condition of the stones,
- (iii) the on-going and potential future threats to the stones,
- (iv) the conservation needs and design options for the future preservation of the stones
- (v) each individual stone and its setting and proposals for its conservation and repair if needed.

2. Significance of the stones

The Burra Charter¹ defines *cultural significance* as follows. “*Cultural significance* means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations.

Cultural significance is embodied in the *place* itself, its *fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places* and *related objects*.”

Places, structures, objects, “may have a range of values for different individuals or groups”.

The nine milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’ have significance under the above headings individually, collectively, and as part a wider network.

The stones are designed objects with *aesthetic* value in themselves, principally because of the craftsmanship and careful detailing in their execution. The stones are all of a common design which is simple but suitable for its use, and the lettering appears particularly attractive today, though it would have been standard for the time. Their aesthetic value is embodied in their fabric but also in their settings, or more accurately, potentially in their settings, as it is apparent that the settings would benefit from some further consideration and care. Some work to the settings has obviously been

¹ The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013.

undertaken in the recent past and this has gone some way towards protecting the stones and improving their settings.

The stones provide a strong physical link with the past and the *history* of Irish roads, and this history is linked with the development of roads in Britain. The Milestone Society of Britain has featured Peadar O’Dowd’s article² on these milestones in their own journal *Milestones and Waymarkers*, which first appeared in the *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*. A preliminary review of information available online reveals widespread interest and connection in the history of milestones and the roads which they measure. The roadside setting of the stones is an important part of their historic significance.

Milestones are part of the *scientific* pursuit of map making and the physical record of the geography of place. See J O’Sullivan’s record³ of map evidence.

The milestones have important *social* value as a physical record of the development of our roads and of a past way of life. These nine milestones are situated on the road still known as the ‘Old Galway Road’. They embody a living memory of the past. It is said locally⁴ that the damage around the top which is common to many of the stones may have been deliberately caused. Local man, Mr Michael Helly, Rooanmore, Co. Galway has information that, according to his own father, it was the local defence forces who were ordered out during World War II (The Emergency) to deface the milestones with sledge hammers, for the purpose of confusing potential invaders (presumably German forces as the British would have had detailed first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps available to them). The Helly’s own land with road frontage including one of the stones. When considering the possible future repair of the stones this possible historic action will have a bearing on any decision as to the extent of repair.

The stones were used in the past as part of everyday life. They were important but low-key objects, unobtrusive, but necessarily visible in their settings,

The cultural significance of the stones can also be assessed using the criteria of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH).

The NIAH is compiled and updated in an online database by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The NIAH *Handbook, Edition September 2017*, uses the criteria as set out in The Planning and Development Act 2000 to assess the importance of a structure or object. The Act defines the architectural heritage to be “structures or parts of structures which are of **Architectural (A), Historical (H), Archaeological (Ag), Artistic (Ar), Cultural (C), Scientific (Sc), Social (So) or Technical (T)** interest. The Categories of Special Interest can be seen as a list of criteria to be considered when evaluating a structure. The categories are not mutually exclusive and a structure may be attributed with several of the categories. Generally the majority of sites/structures/groups of structures included in NIAH surveys will be considered to be of Architectural (A) or Artistic (Ar) interest, although on rare occasions a structure of no architectural or artistic interest may have been included purely for its historical, archaeological, cultural, scientific, technical or social interest”.

The NIAH Handbook goes on to state “The attribution of **Categories of Special Interest** should lead the Recorder to consider the architectural heritage significance of a structure and to rate that significance. The NIAH rating values are **International, National, Regional, Local** and **Record Only**. Structures which are considered of **International, National, and Regional** significance are

² On roads and milestones in County Galway, Ireland’, in *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. 53 (2001), 105–119.

‘On roads and milestones in County Galway, Ireland’, in *Milestones and Waymarkers* (= *Journal of the Milestone Society*), Vol. 2 (2006), 28–38.

³ Jerry O’Sullivan, *Nine 18th-century Milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’*

⁴ Information from J O’Sullivan

recommended by the Minister to the relevant planning authority for inclusion in their RPS” (Record of Protected Structures).

2.1 Importance Rating for the milestones

The importance of the milestones can be assessed using the NIAH criteria, though none of them are at present listed in the NIAH database.

As discussed in relation to the evaluation using the Burra Charter, Categories of Special Interest can be attributed to the milestones under the headings *Architectural/Artistic, Historical, Cultural, Scientific, Social* interest

It is apparent that these nine milestones have Local importance in the Kilcolgan/Ardrahan/Gort area, being part of the history of the area.. They provide a physical link with the past use of the road when travel was at a slower pace and one mile was a significant part of a journey. They serve as reminders of past associations attached to the old road - events and significant places along the road. The fact that the milestones survive as an uninterrupted series adds to their importance

The stones have *Regional* importance as part of a network of surviving stones in the Galway area (including stones around Mountbellew and east Galway, and in Athlone). They are connected as part of the wider group to the many milestones which survive throughout the island of Ireland, and to the numerous surviving examples in Britain⁵. This national and international connection adds to their significance.

3. Condition of the stones and on-going and potential future threats

Jerry O’Sullivan has discussed the condition of the milestones, and threats to the stones, in his Report⁶. He attributes much of the damage to seasonal verge cutting and this is an on-going threat to the stones. He cites the danger of the stones being engulfed by vegetation. He refers to their susceptibility to weathering and erosion. He records that some of the stones have been moved from their original locations due to road widening or other road works. This also is an on-going risk.

4. Conservation needs and design options for the future preservation

The perceived significance of the milestones will inform decisions regarding their future. The risk of future damage to, or possible future deterioration of the condition of, the stones also have a bearing.

The condition of each stone will be discussed individually but the following questions and considerations arise.

- Most of the stones are damaged to some degree. Many have lost much of their inscriptions which means the understanding of their meaning to the passerby is reduced. Should the stones be fully repaired or partially repaired (inscription only)?
- Similarly, their nature, being made of limestone, means they blend into their surroundings, or they are overgrown, and are not visible to the passerby which means their importance is not known. Should the stones be painted to give them more visibility? (This has been frequently done elsewhere in Ireland and in Britain and was most likely their original condition.)
- To what degree (if at all) should their settings be altered to increase visibility/ for aesthetic reasons /to highlight the fact that the stones are part of a group /for protection of the stones from possible future damage?

⁵ Recorded and referred to in the Milestones and Waymarkers journals.

⁶ Jerry O’Sullivan, Nine 18th-century Milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’, page 10.

Any proposed interventions for repair and protection must be designed to be in line with DAHG ‘Architectural Heritage Protection, Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ at the broader and detailed levels, to ensure the success of the conservation strategy. As outlined in the Guidelines, the principles of design should include

- i. strategies for the protection of the special interest of the structure and its features,
- ii. promote minimum intervention,
- iii. respect earlier alterations of interest,
- iv. repair rather than replace,
- v. promote honesty of repairs and alterations,
- vi. use appropriate methods and materials,
- vii. ensure reversibility of alterations as much as possible,
- viii. avoid incremental damage.

4.1 Conservation and Repair:

4.1.1 Vegetation.

Lichen and algae are generally not harmful to the stone and need not be removed unless necessary as part of the preparation for treatments such as mortar repair or painting.

Moss build up generally indicates water lodging and it should be removed and the conditions for water retention addressed. (Cracks filled etc.)

Vegetation growth around the stones obstructs their visibility and vigorous growth of woody plants could dislodge or disturb the base of the stones.

Vegetation should be removed by hand or with hand-held tools only. It should be possible in this situation to avoid the use of weed killers. In isolated cases large woody stumps may be dealt with using ‘ecoplugs’.

4.1.2 Need for repair of the stones:

Where cracks are allowing ingress of water and dust/debris and therefore the possible build-up of algae, moss or other vegetation, and in winter, possible frost damage which would eventually lead to spalling of the stone, then a mortar repair should be undertaken.

Where mechanical damage is extensive and stones are to be repaired for aesthetic or legibility reasons, a mortar repair should be used rather than the insertion of new stone pieces by grafting or pinning, which would involve the necessary cutting back of the existing stone fabric to make a clean and regular cut for the insertion. A mortar repair would be possible with a minimal amount of redressing of the stone, and if the proper lime based material is used, the repair would be reversible. The lifespan of a mortar repair should be in excess of 30 years. St. One repair mortar made by the St Astier company is likely to be suitable. Manufacturer’s advice and specifications should be closely followed. When the mortar is set the lettering/numbering can be carved in the mortar repair in the same way as for stone. The colour of the mortar can be carefully matched to that of the stone but painting may be considered, see discussion below.

In my view a mortar repair sufficient to restore the legibility of the text is desirable. This would constitute *reconstruction*⁷ as defined by the Burra charter and would be justified as it would restore an aspect of the cultural significance of the stones and increase the public’s understanding of that significance.

Removal of algae and lichens from the areas to be repaired would be required. This should be done using water and a stiff bristle brush initially, followed by surface preparation in line with mortar

⁷ *Reconstruction* means returning a *place (object)* to a known earlier state and is distinguished from *restoration* by the introduction of new material.

manufacturer's specifications. Redressing of original stone should be kept to an absolute minimum. Skilled tradespeople should be used to undertake the work.

4.1.3 Painting

Painting the stones could contribute positively to their conservation. It would improve visibility, which would help safeguard them from accidental damage (verge trimming would seem to be the main hazard). It would also highlight their presence and thus promote interest in them and their history. Painting would also hide any repairs which may have to be made.

Paint must be carefully chosen to ensure no negative effect on the surface of the stone. The milestones are limestone. Lime washes are compatible with limestone, and would have been a traditional finish. However, lime washes have a short lifespan and reapplication would be needed probably at least every 2 years.

A proprietary lime wash coating with a small acrylic content would provide greater longevity.

Acrylic emulsions or silicate paints may also be suitable. The correct paint would provide protection from environmental pollution.

Evidence suggests that the stones were traditionally often painted (usually white) with the letters picked out in contrasting colour (usually black). It also seems to have been common for the margins to have been highlighted in black in some designs⁸. Traces of paint were visible on the lettering on milestones nos. 2 and 6.

4.1.4 Setting

The settings of the stones are rural, with the exception of Milestone 1 which is urban, in the town of Gort.

At minimum the stones need to be protected against future damage and their settings have a bearing on this. As things stand, the stones in rural areas are susceptible to mechanical damage due to verge cutting with large machinery, and there may still be some risk of damage from grass mowing in urban areas. Any proposals for work to the stones might include proposals for suitable alterations to their settings which would enhance their immediate surroundings aesthetically, but should also serve to lessen the risk of mechanical damage. No option for the surrounds can be expected to be maintenance free but the degree of maintenance required for any proposal is an important consideration.

Improvements should be fairly low-key in keeping with the stones being modest everyday objects. Some of the stones have been moved from their original locations as part of road widening or other projects. This may give some flexibility in conservation practice terms in those particular cases if there were a desire to alter their setting further.

Ideally, stones should not be moved if they are in their original positions except in exceptional circumstances. The accuracy of bench marks ('crows feet') and distances is important in conservation terms. The height above sea level and position along the road should be accurately preserved where possible, or if not possible, a suitable record of the alteration should be made, preferably in the immediate vicinity of the stone. It would be regrettable if a benchmark on a milestone were robbed of its meaning by relocation.

The setting of each stone should be considered individually but there may be a case for a standard treatment of the setting of all the stones if such treatment is suitable for all situations. This would provide a visual theme which would promote the stones and their story and improve their

⁸ Illustrations and information in Milestone Society journals, particularly see examples of stones in articles in Vol.1 . Terry Keegan, *The Society's County Structure – The Worcestershire Model*; Roger Long *the Milestones of Jersey*; and in Vol 2. Carol Haines, *Surveying Norfolk's Milestones*.

understanding as a group by the general public. It is noted that in almost all cases the backdrop to the stones is a rubble stone wall.

Possible options for the settings of the milestones.

1. At minimum, for practical reasons, the area around the stones should be maintained. They should be cleared of overgrowth and the grass and vegetation in the immediate surroundings should be kept cut. Cutting should be done with a hand driven mower – ideally by a local nearby resident or landowner if this can be arranged. This would avoid the risk of damage by large hedge cutting machines.
2. There may be an opportunity for an alternative ground finish around the milestones. The vegetation growing around some of the stones has already been cut back and the soil removed for a distance of about 2 or 3 metres either side and a rough stone chip introduced. This does serve to improve the visibility of the milestones but the chip is unattractive in itself and somewhat sterile in appearance. A rounded gravel would be more attractive. It should be a limestone gravel native to the area. Some definition between the road and the grass verge/bank either side would probably be desirable. A kerb of roughly hewn limestones would be suitable, possibly set to be level or almost level with the road to maintain a simple look. Maintenance to keep the gravel weed free would be required or it would soon become overgrown again, even if underlain with ‘Terram’ or other suitable underlay.

Natural limestone paving or cobble might provide a suitable alternative treatment to gravel. In this situation perhaps native dwarf species of wall colonising plants might be encouraged to grow in the joints. This would soften the look of the surround which could be attractive

This option would suit an urban or rural situation.

3. Though it is preferable in conservation terms to interfere with an artefact/structure as little as possible, there may be a case for raising the level of the milestones to increase their visibility and in some cases it would give more protection to the stones. Native materials should be used – perhaps raise the milestone and an area around it enclosing it in roughly hewn limestone kerbing. The raised area surface could be finished with an appropriate treatment as suggested in 2 above, or with grass. Some maintenance would be required.

This option would suit an urban or rural situation.

4. Instead of, or in conjunction with any of the above, it might be desirable to introduce some sort of very simple and low key barrier around the stones. This might be done with a simple iron ‘railing’ using the vocabulary of traditional rural iron fences and gates.

This could be done in a rural or urban situation.

5. Proposals for the milestones

Comments and proposals for individual stones follow. Photographs for illustrative purposes are included, but see photogrammetric survey by Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit *‘Laser Scanning of Nine 18th Century Milestones on the ‘Old Galway Road’* for accurate measured record of each stone including 3d images.

Photographs of each stone in the following pages include photograph(s) viewing the stones in their settings followed by close-up views of left, front and right sides of the stones (as viewed from the road side), then a ‘plan view’ of the top of the stone, and other detailed views which may be of interest.

Milestone No. 1

Location

Northern outskirts of the town of Gort on east side of R458 and north of local road to Lidl supermarket parking. Set in grass verge against the stone boundary of a private house. Map evidence indicates this stone was originally 50 m further north (towards Galway) on this same side of the road but has been moved.

Gort townland

ITM grid refs: 545032 702354 (originally 545015 702405)

Public record and protected status: SMR GA122-098, RMP GA122-098



Views on approach from Gort centre and from Galway side





Close up views of stones



Tooled chamfer on front edge

Description

Limestone pillar with flat top and trapezoidal cross-section. Wider at the rear and tapering to the front. Generally well-dressed stone with a narrow chamfer to the front angles. Severe spalling to face and angle on upper left side; lesser spalling to top and right angle. Lichens. Inscription badly damaged by spalling but would probably have read '17 From Galway'.

Damage appears to be historic as spalled edges and damaged faces are weathered and not sharp, and lichens have already colonised the broken areas.

Proposals

A mortar repair should be undertaken on the face and angle on the upper left side, and possibly in the area on the right side of the face approximately half way down. This would allow the missing text to be re-carved on the stone. It would involve a small amount of redressing of the edges of the damaged parts to allow insertion of the repair. A more conservative option might be to omit the mortar repair on the right, where damage is less severe and simply paint in the text on this side.

At minimum the stone should then be protected against future damage. Its urban site means it is unlikely to be susceptible to mechanical damage due to verge cutting with large machinery but there is still some risk of damage from grass mowing if the area around it is left as grass. Other surface treatments may be preferred as discussed above.

There would appear to be no need to raise the stone or the area around it in this particular situation unless for consistency of treatment if proposed for all the stones.

However, perhaps moving this stone should be considered. Evidence suggests it has already been moved. Where it is situated at present it is lost among other miscellaneous street furniture. If it were moved to between the nearby two entrances as indicated in the photograph below it would enjoy greater prominence and a visually calmer setting. It would also be closer to its original position.



Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but it may be desirable to paint the entire stone white and pick out the text in black. This approach would cover any variations in colour between the stone and the repair mortar, thus aiding the appreciation of the object as a whole.

Milestone No. 2

Location

At the entrance to Coole Park. On the west side of the R458 and immediately south (2 m) of the junction with the local road L85312 (formerly an avenue) to Coole Park and adjacent (2 m) to an old water pump. Set in grass verge by coursed rubble stone boundary wall to the paddock of a private house. Map evidence indicates that this stone has been moved and was formerly on the opposite (east) side of the road and nearer Gort.

Townland: Coole Demesne

ITM grid refs: 545048 704333 (originally 545057 704269)





Description

Limestone pillar with flat top and trapezoidal section, Wider at back and tapering to front. Dressed stone with even surfaces and narrow chamfer to front angles. Inscription '16 From Galway' on front is well preserved. Ordnance Survey bird's foot benchmark deeply inscribed on top with square recess and central bore (for a surveying instrument?). Traces of white paint remain where in recent years the inscription was picked out in paint. Slight spalling to upper right and left angles. Very heavy recent spalling to the rear. Cracks running top-to-bottom on front and left sides of the stone indicate a heavy impact, possible a vehicle collision. Lichens.

Proposals

There is severe damage to this stone. Cracks and spalling need to be repaired to avoid possible future disintegration of the damaged parts of the stone. Prior to mortar repair it will be necessary to inject the cracks with a 2 part stone glue (by 'Sika' or other agreed, to spec.). This will mean the careful drilling of holes along the cracks to facilitate the injection. It may also be necessary to use stainless steel pin(s) to reinforce the repair – to be agreed following further examination. Finishing with a mortar repair on the rear left side would then ensure that water does not lodge in the damaged areas. As mortar repair involves a small amount of redressing of stone, it is preferable to confine it to areas where it is necessary. Mortar repair simply to regularise the profile of the stone is not essential.

Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but it may be desirable to paint the entire stone white and pick out the text in black. This approach would cover any variations in colour between the stone and the repair mortar, thus aiding the appreciation of the object as a whole.

At minimum the stone should then be protected against future damage. Its particular site adjacent to the water pump enclosure means it is unlikely to be susceptible to mechanical damage due to verge cutting with large machinery but there is still some risk of damage from grass mowing if the area around it is left as grass. Other surface treatments may be preferred as discussed on page 6.

There would appear to be no need to raise the milestone stone or the area around it in this particular situation unless for consistency of treatment if proposed for all the stones.

Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but it may be desirable to paint the entire stone white and pick out the text in black. This approach would cover any variations in colour between the stone and the repair mortar, thus aiding the appreciation of the object as a whole.

Milestone No.3

Location

West of the old churchyard at Kiltartan (c. 200 m from the entrance) on the same north side of a local road. Set deep in an earth embankment forming the road boundary (which suggests that the milestone pre-dates the embankment).

Townland: Kiltartan

ITM grid ref: 545036 706112



Plan view of top



View looking down at back of stone



Description

Limestone pillar with flat top and trapezoidal section. Wider at back and tapering towards the front. Well dressed with flat faces and narrow chamfer to outer angles. Inscription on front face: 15 From Galway. Upper part of numerals damaged by heavy spalling to upper margin and angles. Very heavy spalling to rear. Lichens.

Proposals

A mortar repair should be undertaken on the face and upper margins on front angles. Repair at the back of stone is not essential. This minimal repair would allow the missing text to be re-carved on the stone. It would involve a small amount of redressing of the edges of the damaged parts to allow insertion of the repair.

At minimum the stone should then be protected against future damage. Some planned rearrangement of the setting of this milestone has already been undertaken which has gone much of the way to affording it protection. The earthen bank has been cut back to form a recess with the stone sitting centrally, and the area has been floored with a rough chip. As referred to in the discussion on page 6, this finish is not particularly sympathetic and an alternative finish should be considered. However the stone stands out in its setting and the gap in vegetation means that it is clearly visible and can be avoided by verge cutters. Maintenance using hand held tools would be required.

There would appear to be no need to raise the milestone or the area around it in this particular situation unless for consistency of treatment if proposed for all the stones.

Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but it may be desirable to paint the entire stone white and pick out the text in black. This approach would cover any variations in colour between the stone and the repair mortar, thus aiding the appreciation of the object as a whole.

Milestone No.4

Location

At T-junction on east side of the road. Set in grass verge against rubble boundary wall, between road sign on its north side (safety chevrons), a telegraph pole on its south side and two group water scheme marker pillars in front. Map evidence indicates that the stone has been moved and was previously up to 20 m further south (towards Gort) on the same east side of the road.

Townland: Raheen Kilkelly

ITM grid refs: 544577 707994 (formerly 544585 707972)





Description

Limestone pillar, trapezoidal in section, wide at rear and narrowing to the front. The upper part is well dressed with flat faces and thin chamfers to the front margins. There are some fine tooling marks (ribbing) on the north face. Spalling to the top and upper margins; not severe. Inscribed on three faces: (north) '3 From Gort'; (front or west) '14 from Galway'; and (south) '9½ From Oranmore'. On the north face a thin light fillet or moulding separates the numeral 3 (above) from the text (below); the face of the stone above the fillet is cut back by < 1 cm. Was there a flaw in the stone? An error by the sculptor? We can only speculate. Towards the base, the roughly hewn lower part of the stone (0–46 cm) is exposed and was clearly intended to be the buried or below-ground part of the stone originally.

Proposals

As the spalling on this stone is not severe and the inscription is clearly legible, no mortar repair is proposed.

While this milestone has been moved from its nearby original position to its present position in a prominent setting on the axis of the T junction, its surroundings are somewhat cluttered by other street furniture and signs. Therefore painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but painting the entire stone white and picking out the text in black would highlight the stone in its context more effectively. In this particular situation, raising the wall locally behind the milestone to further emphasize it in its setting might be desirable.

In this location the earthen bank along the roadside has been cut back, as it has with milestone 3 and some of the other stones, and, as in that case, an alternative finish on the ground, and the possible introduction of kerbstones could be considered.

There would appear to be no need to raise the milestone or the area around it in this particular situation unless for consistency of treatment if proposed for all the stones.

Milestone No.5

Location

East side of local road in grass verge, set against rubble field wall.

Townland: Ballyglass West

ITM grid refs: 543927 709894



Description

Limestone pillar. Trapezoidal on plan. Wider at back and tapering to front. Well dressed even faces with slight chamfer (1 cm) to front angles. The upper part of the stone, all around the top and at the front margins, is very badly spalled. The inscription is weathered and partly obliterated by spalling but would have read: '13 From Galway'.

Proposals

A mortar repair should be undertaken on the face and upper margins on front angles. Repair at the back of stone is not essential. This minimal repair would allow the missing text to be re-carved on the stone. It would involve a small amount of redressing of the edges of the damaged parts to allow insertion of the repair.

Removal of algae and lichens from the areas to be repaired would be required. This should be done using water and a stiff bristle brush initially, followed by surface preparation in line with mortar manufacturer's specifications. Redressing of original stone should be kept to an absolute minimum. Skilled tradespeople should be used to undertake the work.

At minimum the stone should then be protected against future damage. Some planned rearrangement of the setting of this milestone has already been undertaken which has gone much of the way to affording it protection. The earthen bank has been cut back to form a recess with the stone sitting centrally, and the area has been floored with a rough chip. As referred to in the discussion on page 6, this finish is not particularly sympathetic and an alternative finish should be considered. However the stone stands out in its setting and the gap in vegetation means that it is clearly visible and can be avoided by verge cutters. Maintenance using hand held tools would be required.

There would appear to be no need to raise the milestone or the area around it in this particular situation unless for consistency of treatment if proposed for all the milestones.

Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but painting the entire stone white and picking out the text in black would highlight the stone in its context more effectively.

Milestone No. 6

Location

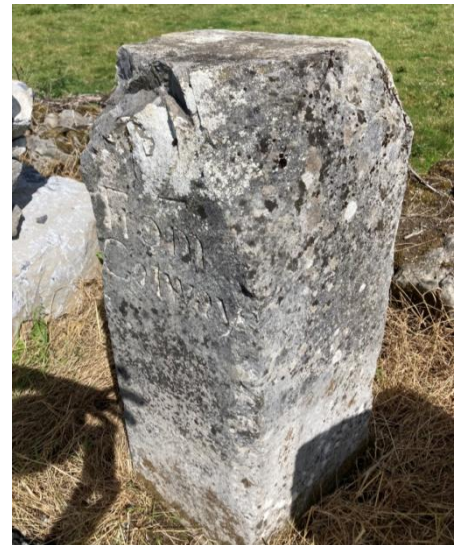
East side of local road, in grass verge against rubble field wall. But temporarily removed by Galway County Council during road improvements in October 2021.

Townland: Rooanmore

ITM grid refs: 543169 712014

Public record and protected status: RMP GA113-189 (Record of Monuments and Places)

SMR GA113-189 (Sites and Monuments Record)



View of top of stone
Rear of stone

Description

Limestone pillar. Trapezoidal section. Wider at rear and tapering to front. Well-dressed upper part with narrow chamfer (< 1 cm) to front margins. Lower part more massive, roughly hewn base, clearly intended to be buried. Heavy spalling to the crown, some evidently recent; also lighter spalling to the front margins. Inscription '12 From Galway' but numerals partly obliterated by spalling. Faint traces of white paint (modern) where inscription picked out. Lichens, mosses.

Proposals

A mortar repair should be undertaken on the face and left hand and central upper margins on the front of the stone. Repair at the back and on the right of the stone is not essential. This minimal repair would allow the missing text to be re-carved on the stone. It would involve a small amount of redressing of the edges of the damaged parts to allow insertion of the repair.

The setting of this stone has been altered to some degree during the road improvements referred to above. The stone walls along the road margins were rebuilt with the aid of machines using very large stones and boulders. A gap of about 1.5m was left in the wall and the milestone was set into this gap. This succeeds in highlighting the presence of the stone to a degree, but as the stone is in line with the wall it does not stand out as one approaches from either side. The large stones and boulders also dwarf the milestone in scale, which is unsatisfactory aesthetically.

This could be addressed by perhaps cutting back the existing wall for a greater distance (say 1 – 2 m more?) either side of the milestone and reintroducing a dry stone wall of traditional style and scale which could curve gently behind the milestone. The curved space around the milestone could be attractively gravelled or paved as suggested for other milestones.

On-going maintenance to keep the paved area weed-free would be required.

There would appear to be no need to raise the milestone or the area around it in this particular situation unless for consistency of treatment if proposed for all the milestones.

Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but painting the entire stone white and picking out the text in black would highlight the stone in its context more effectively.

Milestone No.7

Location

South side of local road c. 100 m from Keamsellagh junction. Set in grass verge against rubble field wall.

Townland: Keamsellagh East

ITM grid refs: 543200 713750



Description

Limestone pillar. Trapezoidal section. Wider at rear and tapering to front. Well dressed stone with flat, even faces and narrow chamfer (< 1 cm) to front margins. Very heavy spalling to the crown and upper front margins and part of the upper front face. Inscription weathered and partly obliterated. Probably: '11 From Galway'. Lichens.

Proposals

A mortar repair should be undertaken on the face and upper margins on front angles. Repair at the back of the stone is not essential. This minimal repair would allow the missing text to be re-carved on the stone. It would involve a small amount of redressing of the edges of the damaged parts to allow insertion of the repair.

At minimum the stone should then be protected against future damage. Some planned rearrangement of the setting of this milestone has already been undertaken which has gone much of the way to affording it protection. The earthen bank has been cut back to form a recess with the stone sitting centrally, and the area has been floored with a rough chip. As referred to in the discussion on page 6, this finish is not particularly sympathetic and an alternative finish should be considered. However the stone stands out in its setting and the gap in vegetation means that it is clearly visible and can be avoided by verge cutters. Maintenance using hand held tools would be required.

There would appear to be no need to raise the milestone or the area around it in this particular situation unless for consistency of treatment if proposed for all the stones.

Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but painting the entire stone white and picking out the text in black would highlight the stone in its context more effectively.

Milestone No. 8

Location

East side of the R458 road c. 15 m south of a junction with the L85602 on the opposite, west side.

Set in grass verge against rubble field wall.

Townland: Caherpeak East

ITM grid refs: 543327 71590?



Description

Limestone pillar. Trapezoidal in section. Wider at rear and tapering to front. Well dressed stone with even faces. Very slight chamfer to front margins (< 0.5 cm). One major spall to top right of front face. Lichens. Inscription on front '10 From Galway' but numeral 0 partly removed by spall. Ordnance Survey bird's foot benchmark to top with three deeply engraved lines radiating from a shallow square recess.

The position of this milestone is very low compared to the level of the road which has obviously been raised considerably over time. In conservation terms, as it includes a benchmark, it would generally be considered undesirable to move it. However, as it stands, it is vulnerable to damage from verge cutting, and it enjoys minimal visibility from the road. For these reasons it may be justifiable to move it but the alteration should be properly recorded.

Proposals

A mortar repair should be undertaken on the face and upper margins on front angles. Repair at the back of the stone is not essential. This minimal repair would allow the missing text to be re-carved on the stone. It would involve a small amount of redressing of the edges of the damaged parts to allow insertion of the repair.

In this particular case moving the stone forward somewhat and setting it in a defined paved/gravelled area at the level of the road may be desirable. As the grass margin is particularly wide in this case, enclosing the area with a wall or a simple railing on three sides might be considered.

Maintenance using hand held tools would be required to maintain the paved area weed-free.

Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but painting the entire stone white and picking out the text in black would highlight the stone in its context more effectively.

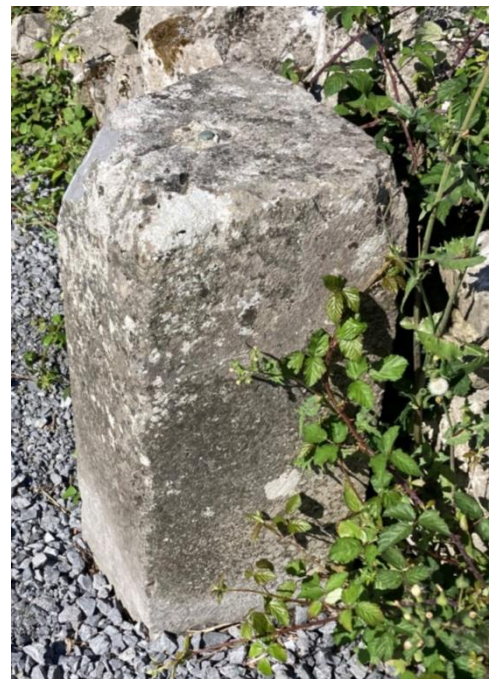
Milestone No. 9

Location

East side of R458 south of Kilcolgan

Townland: Caherpeak East

ITM grid refs: 542325 717294



Description

Limestone pillar. Trapezoidal in section. Wider at rear and tapered to front. Well dressed even faces with slight chamfer to front margins (< 1 cm). Inscription to front '9 From Galway'. Ordnance Survey bird's foot benchmark on top: here deep lines radiating from circular recess with round bronze boss still in situ in circular recess. Moderate spalling to mid right margin and around crown at front and right. Severe spalling at top left. (This is evidently recent.) Lichens.

Proposals

A mortar repair is not necessary in order to ensure legibility. In this case the inscription is intact. However the recent damage on the top has left some indents which might hold water and a limited mortar repair to ensure effective water run-off may be advisable.

At minimum the stone should then be protected against future damage. Some planned rearrangement of the setting of this milestone has already been undertaken which has gone much of the way to affording it protection. The earthen bank has been cut back to form a recess with the stone sitting centrally, and the area has been floored with a rough chip. As referred to in the discussion on page 6, this finish is not particularly sympathetic and an alternative finish should be considered. However the stone stands out in its setting and the gap in vegetation means that it is clearly visible and can be avoided by verge cutters. Maintenance using hand held tools would be required.

There would appear to be no need to raise the milestone or the area around it in this particular situation unless for consistency of treatment if proposed for all the stones.

Painting the milestone should be considered. A low-key approach might find only the lettering picked out with paint (white? black?), but painting the entire stone white and picking out the text in black would highlight the stone in its context more effectively.