

Newtownstewart and Sion Mills- Heritage Audit



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Background and Scope of Works

Background and Strategic Context

Heritage Tourism and Environmental Consultants (HTE) have been commissioned by Derry City and Strabane District Council to undertake a heritage audit of the settlements of Sion Mills and Newtownstewart, Co .Tyrone.

Since 2017, Historic Environment Division has been working closely with partners to develop a 'compelling narrative' to demonstrate how heritage can contribute to our economy, society and environment. This responds to a new way of working first presented in the draft Programme for Government 2016. One resultant outcome has been the development of a joint website- www.niheritagedelivers.org, a booklet of the same name, a sectoral action plan, and the publication of joint statistics. (DCSDC Heritage Plan 2022-2027)

In 2022, DCSDC in partnership with HED, developed a Heritage Plan 2022-2027 to capture the significance of heritage assets and assist in realising the social, economic and environmental value which heritage assets provide. The Plan sets out eight key objectives considered necessary to make the most of the area's heritage potential, as follows:

1. Increase knowledge and awareness by promoting the appreciation of and enjoyment of the historic environment in the Council area to reinforce a sense of place
2. Collect data on the historic environment to inform decision making.
3. Ensure appropriate designation of heritage assets across the council area
4. Develop best practice in the conservation and management of our built heritage
5. Tackle heritage at risk
6. Sustainably develop, encourage and deliver heritage led regeneration schemes that demonstrate the benefit of investment in the historic environment
7. Encourage the use of heritage assets that demonstrate long-term viability
8. Increase participation and engagement with the historic environment

Objective 2 of DCSDC's Heritage Plan- specific actions 2.2 and 2.3 are as follows:

2.2- Carry out heritage audits of DEAs to provide accessible and comprehensive summaries of the heritage assets and potential to local communities. These should include an understanding of the amount of rural vernacular buildings that remain.

2.3- Ensure that relevant heritage data compiled as part of this plan is publicly available online and accessible to all so that opportunities to utilise and explore technology to showcase and animate heritage sites and assets are grasped.

Scope of Works:

In line with the above objectives, Heritage, Tourism and Environmental Consultants have been commissioned by Derry City and Strabane District Council to deliver the following scope of works:

- To identify, audit and assess the conditions of the key-built heritage sites/features within Newtownstewart and Sion Mills and their historical significance.
- To engage with identified local historical societies and relevant stakeholders as part of the initial research phase.
- To identify relevant heritage themes where there is commonality, or it is considered relevant to place attractions/features into particular groups i.e. industrial, cultural, ecclesiastical, natural etc.
- To geographically map each of the identified attractions/features by location, theme etc.
- To produce a summary report of the findings of the heritage audit, which provides a short narrative of the historical/architectural/cultural significance of each of the identified heritage assets in the Sion Mills and Newtownstewart area to conclude any thematic links, general visitor information such as public access, opening hours and admission fee.
- To design, develop and produce a digital brochure and a digital interactive map of the agreed built heritage attractions/features capable of being reproduced/displayed in print form and electronically.

Study area

Sion Mills

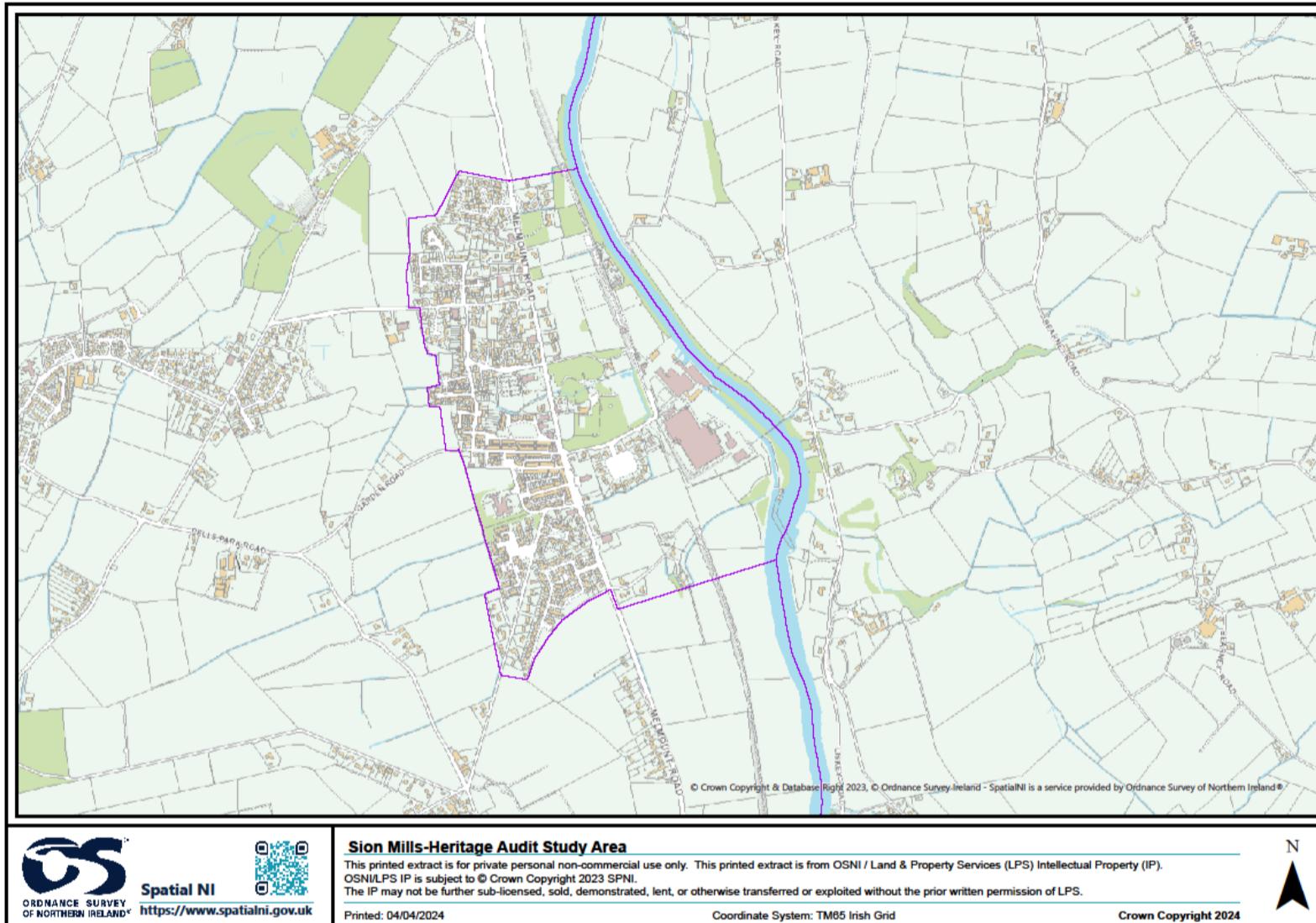
The Sion Mills study area selected for this commission is the area within the Super Data Zone boundary for the Village.

Super Data Zones (SDZ2021) are a new statistical output geography, introduced in Northern Ireland after the 2021 Census

NISRA has developed two new statistical output geographies to support the dissemination of Census 2021 statistics, namely Data Zones and Super Data Zones.

There are 850 Super Data Zones (SDZ2021) across Northern Ireland and the 3,780 Data Zones (DZ2021) nest within this geography. These two geographies nest within the 80 District Electoral Areas (DEA2014) and 11 Local Government Districts (LGD2014). ([Super Data Zones \(Census 2021\) | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/super-data-zones-census-2021))

Map- Sion Mills- Heritage Audit Study Area



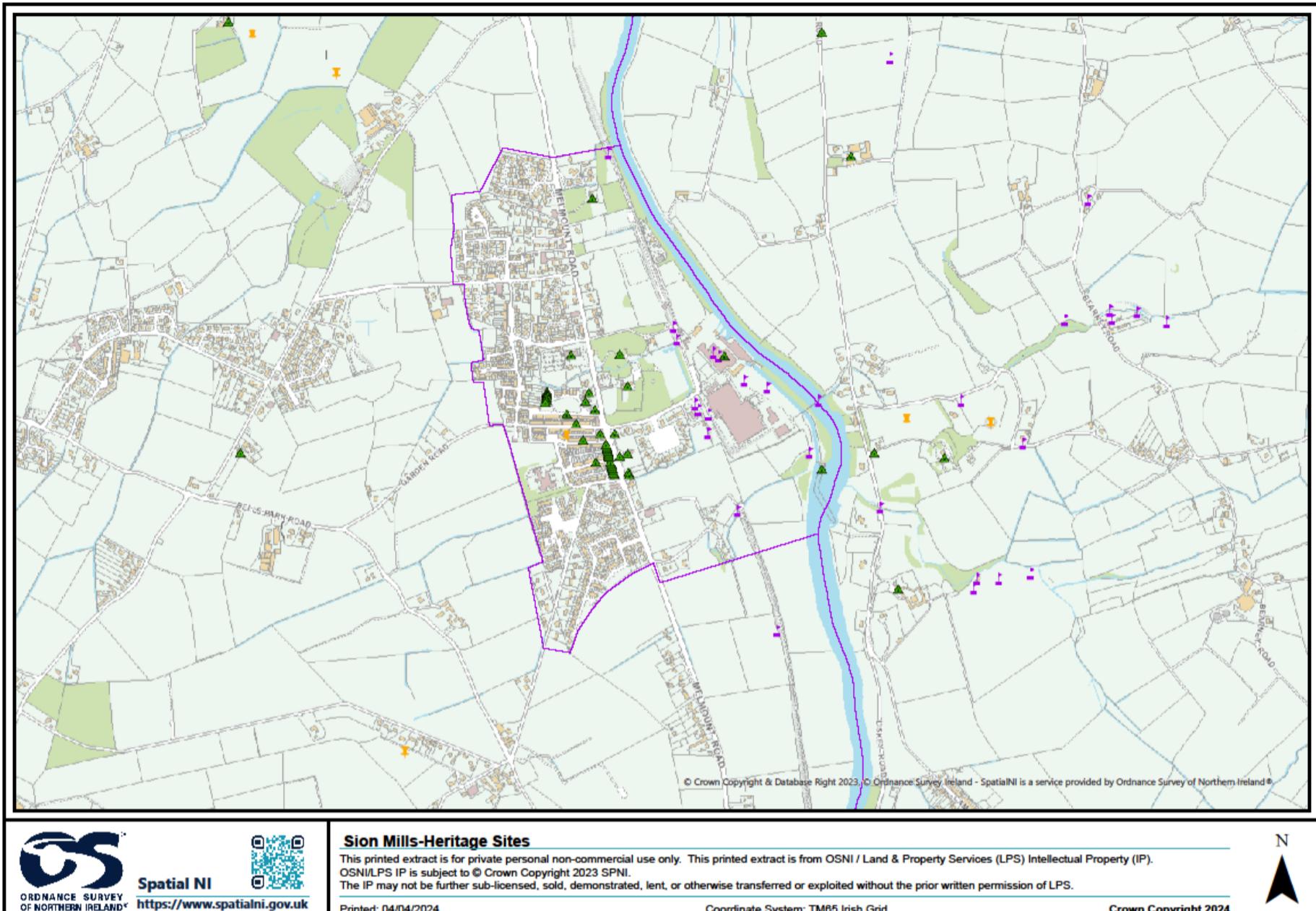
Using the Spatial NI Mapping tool, the following layers were selected to inform the heritage audit for Sion Mills:

Layer Type	Record
Historic Environment	Defence Heritage Record
Historic Environment	Sites and Monuments
Historic Environment	Listed Buildings
Historic Environment	Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest
Historic Environment	Industrial Heritage Record

The numbers of sites identified in the above layers was 43, as follows:

Layer Type	Record	No. Identified
Historic Environment	Defence Heritage Record	0
Historic Environment	Sites and Monuments	1
Historic Environment	Listed Buildings	29
Historic Environment	Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest	0
Historic Environment	Industrial Heritage Record	13
	Total	43

Map- Identified Heritage Sites of Interest



Sion Mills- Listed Buildings

Table Sion Mills- Listed Buildings Records

Object ID	HB Reference	Current Grade	Address	Extent	Date Constructed	Current Use	Former Use	Townland	Irish Grid Reference	Main ID
3484	HB10/07/004	B+	Herdmans' Mill, Mill Avenue Sion Mills Liggartown Strabane Co Tyrone BT82 9HE	The following buildings as described in the Exterior Description - A.1,A2 and A3; B1, B2, B3 and B4; C1 and C4.	1880-1899	Mill	Mill	Liggartown	H3437 9335	5,913.00
9763	HB10/07/022	Record Only	Mourneside Walk, Liskey Road, Liggartown, Sion Mills	Not Listed	1880-1899	Mill	Mill			14,435.00
196	HB10/07/008 B	B1	124 Melmount Road Sion Mills Co. Tyrone BT82 9EU	House and walling to front	1900-1919	House	House	Liggartown	H3410 9299	4,544.00
195	HB10/07/008 A	B2	122 Melmount Road Sion Mills Co. Tyrone BT82 9EU	House and walling to front	1900-1919	House	House	Ligartown	H3410 9298	5,947.00

191	HB10/07/002 A	B+	Church of the Good Shepherd Melmount Road Sion Mills Co. Tyrone BT82 9ET	Church and Walling	1900-1919	Church	Church	Liggartown	H3409 9306	15,992.00
3483	HB10/07/002 B	B1	Ricardo Monument, Church of the Good Shepherd, Melmount Road Sion Mills, Co Tyrone BT82 9ET	Memorial	1920-1039	Memorial	Memorial	Liggartown	H3406 9304	15,993.00
193	HB10/07/006	B2	1 Mill Avenue Sion Mills Co. Tyrone BT82 9ET	Hall, walling, gate and gate piers	1880-1899	Hall	Church	Liggartown	H3405 9312	5,509.00
4535	HB10/07/001 A	B2	ZION HOUSE 120 MELMOUNT ROAD SION MILLS CO.TYRONE	House	1880-1899	House	House	Liggartown	H3398 9336	11,232.00
4729	HB10/07/001	B+	Gatelodge at Sion House, 118 Melmount Road	Gatelodge	1880-1899	Gate/Screen s/Lodges	Gates/Screen s/Lodges	Liggertown	H33989336	1,735.00
3515	HB10/07/021	B+	St Theresa's RC Church 145 Melmount Road Sion Mills Strabane Co. Tyrone BT82 9EX	Church	1960-1979	Church	Church	Liggartown	H3391 9336	9,826.00
200	HB10/08/013	B1	'The Brae' 104 Melmount Road Sion Mills Co Tyrone BT82 9PY	House and Outbuilding	1900-1919	House	House	Ballyfatten	H3398 9384	16,118.00
3505 3506 3507 3508 3509 3510 3511	HB10/07/010/ A HB10/07/010/ B HB10/07/010/ C HB10/07/010/ D HB10/07/010/ E HB10/07/010/ F HB10/07/010/ G	B2(all)	Nos 1-7 Sion Terrace, Sion Mills, Co Tyrone, BT82 9HB	Houses	1860-1879	House-Terrace	House-Terrace	Sion Mills	H3383 9325	4,400.00
194	HB10/07/007	B1	Sion Mills (Former) Elementary School 147 Melmount Road Sion Mills County Tyrone BT82 9EX	Former school, pedestrian access gate and boundary wall.	1860-1879	Hall	School	Liggartown	H3397 9323	5,946.00
9183	HB10/07/003	B1	Presbyterian Church, 149 Melmount Road Sion Mills, Co Tyrone BT82 9EX	Church, gates, gate piers and boundary wall	1860 - 1879	Church	Church	Liggartown	H3396 9321	16,051.00
192	HB10/07/005	B2	Sion Mills Recreation Club 151 Melmount Road Sion Mills Co Tyrone BT82 9EX	Hall	1880-1899	Recreational Club	Recreational Club	Liggartown	H3399 9318	5,945.00
9757	HB10/07/011	Record only	Church Square, Sion Mills, Strabane, Co Tyrone BT82 9HD							15,043.00
9758	HB10/07/012	Record Only	Main Street, Sion Mills, Strabane, Co Tyrone BT82 9HG	Not Listed						15,044.00
9761	HB10/07/015	Record Only	Victoria Place, Sion Mills, Strabane BT82 9HL	Not Listed						15,046.00
9759	HB10/07/013	Record Only	Albert Place, Sion Mills, Strabane, Co Tyrone BT82 9HN	Not Listed						15,045.00
193	HB10/07/006	B2	1 Mill Avenue Sion Mills Co. Tyrone BT82 9ET	Hall, walling, gate and gate piers	1880 - 1899	Hall	Church	Liggartown	H3405 9312	5,509.00

9760	HB10/07/014	Record Only	New Street, Sion Mills, Strabane, Co Tyrone BT82 9HS	Not Listed		House-terrace	house-terrace			15,161.00
3485	HB10/07/009 A-T	Record Only	Nos1-20 Alexandra Place, Sion Mills, Co Tyrone, BT82	Not Listed	1880-1899	House-Terrace	House-Terrace	Liggartown	H3404 9302	5,711.00
200	HB10/08/013	B1	'The Brae' 104 Melmount Road Sion Mills Co Tyrone BT82 9PY	House and Outbuilding	1900-1919	House	House	Ballyfatten	H3398 9384	16,118.00

Sion Mills- Industrial Heritage Records

Table- Sion Mills- Industrial Heritage Records

Object ID	County	Townland	IHR	Location	Grid Ref	Type
9076	Tyrone	Ballyfatten	000017:068:00	GNR Branch Line, Portadown-L'Derry	H34239344	Level Crossing
9077	Tyrone	Ballyfatten	000017:069:00	GNR Branch Line, Portadown-L'Derry	H34249340	Bridge and Footbridge
14649	Tyrone	Liggartown	04181:001:00	Corn Mill-Flax Spinning Mill	H3435593359	Mill Buildings
5234	Tyrone	Liggartown	04181:000:00	Sion Mills	H34379335	Herdman's Flax Spinning Mills Site
102	Tyrone	Liggartown	00017:077:00	GNR Branch Line, Portadown-L'Derry	H343932	Sion Mills Station Site
14651	Tyrone	Liggartown	04181:003:00	Flax Pits	H344493271	Flax Mill
14318	Tyrone	Liggartown	00017:077:01	Station	H3430893183	Railway Station
14650	Tyrone	Liggartown	04181:002:00	Millrace	H3452193252	Millrace
14320	Tyrone	Liggartown	00017:077:03	Goods Shed	H3433993168	Railway Goods Yard
14319	Tyrone	Liggartown	00017:077:02	Milepost	H3433693110	Milepost
5235	Tyrone	Bearney Glebe/Liggartown	04182:000:00		H34689321	Footbridge
5281	Tyrone	Sion Mills	04216:000:00		H34659305	Slate Quarry
106	Tyrone	Liggartown	00017:078:00	GNR Branch Line, Portadown-L'Derry	H34439287	Level Crossing

Sion Mills- Sites and Monuments Records

Table-Sion Mills- Sites and Monuments Records

Ob-ject ID	X	Y	MonID	SMR No	Type	Period	Townland	Irish Grid Reg	Council	Located
16525	233,900.00	393,100.00	16,556	TYR010:020	SETTLEMENT	Post-Med; C17th	Liggartown	H3390093100	DCSDC	Located

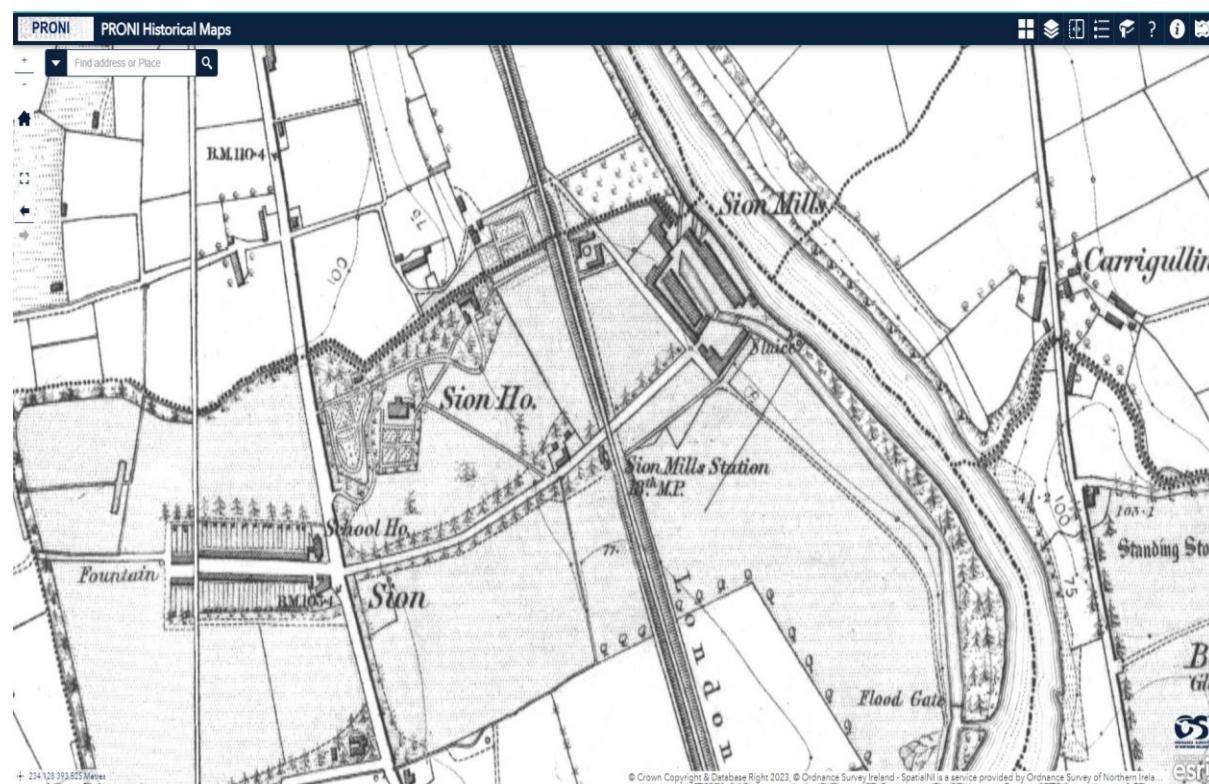
Sion Mills- Historical Overview

Sion Mills

Sion Mills was laid out as a model linen village by the Herdman brothers, James, John and George in the 1830s. The River Mourne has powered industrial machinery in the area since 1640, according to civil surveys from the mid-17th century this was also the site of a former corn mill. The model village which was created by the Herdman family also incorporated recreational amenities for locals such as a community centre, cricket, bowling and football clubs. In 1835 the Herdmans converted an old flour mill on the River Mourne into a flax spinning mill, and erected a bigger mill behind it opening in 1853 which worked until 2004. The mill was built with grey ashlar stone which was quarried locally in Douglas Bridge, the building was designed as a fireproof mill. The architectural company of Lanyon, Lynn and Lanyon were hired to extend the mill and the builder of the new mill was John McCracken. The village was laid out as a model linen village and many of the buildings are now listed. While the most

prominent building in the village is the mill by Lanyon Lynn & Lanyon, which has unfortunately been badly damaged by arson, there are a number of other significant architectural buildings in the village many of which are listed.

Map- Sion Mills- OSNI Historical 2nd Edition- 1846-1862



Herdmans Mill & Mourneside Riverwalk

The Herdmans purchased land from the Marquis of Abercorn in 1835 to build their flax mill. Sion Mills being chosen as a rural area of high employment and with enormous waterpower in a prolific flax growing region. Heavily influenced by the concept of the planned settlement of 'New Lanark' in Scotland which was built around an 18th century cotton mill, the Herdmans' vision was to create an educated and non-sectarian community around a flax-spinning business. They built a model village, a school, churches, recreational and sporting facilities and succeeding in creating a community where everyone, of both religious traditions, lived, were educated and worked together. At its height the Old Mill employed 1500 people. Unfortunately, due to competition from overseas suppliers Herdmans Ltd closed down all production in 2004. In 1853 the Herdmans built a new mill from stone quarried at Douglas with a top story added to it in 1879. The great mill chimney, built in 1877, is still a landmark today standing at 152 feet high and visible for miles.

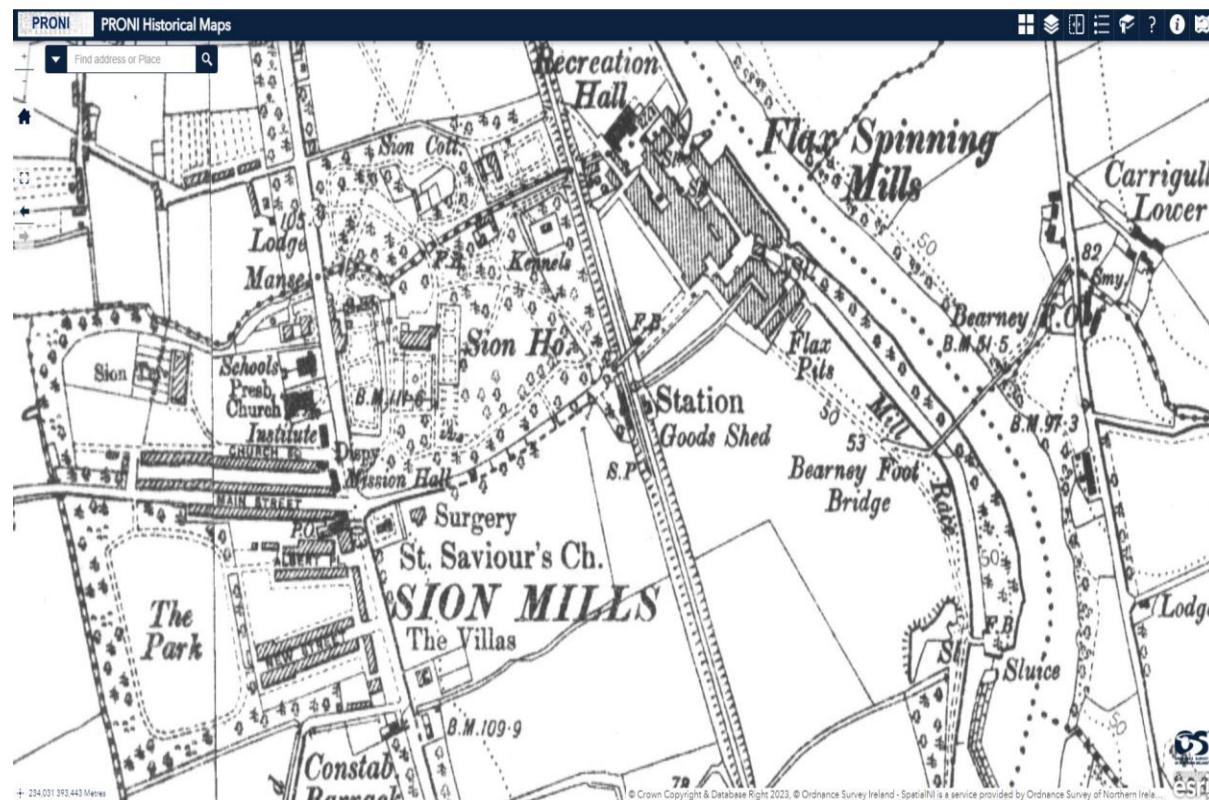


Picture 1 : The disused Herdmans Mill

The mill complex is situated on the west bank of the Mourne River, within the village of Sion. The main entrance lies roughly to the south west corner of the site and is sandwiched between the large 'main mill' grouping (to the north west) and the admin. block (to the south east). It consists of a high sandstone wall with a large elliptical arched carriage entrance with timber sheeted double doors. The wall is topped with a cornice and blocking course with 'springing course' to the arch and the date '1835' inscribed on the 'keystone' voussoirs. This gateway appears to be all that

remains of the original mill of the 1830s. To the south west of the tower is a large part two, part single storey section in yellow brick which was added between 1884 and c.1907. To the SE of the tower is a four storey gabled extension, also in yellow brick, dating from 1907. To the north west is a double gabled single storey block, mainly in red brick, which spans the former mill race and probably dates from c.1900. To the south west is a large four storey gabled section of 1907 mainly in yellow brick, which with its austere classical appearance and thick buttresses, has a Post War Eastern Bloc Constructivist feel. A.1 The original portion of the main mill is four storeys high with an attic floor and topped with a slated double pile hipped roof. The façade is mainly in light brown sandstone (which was quarried at Douglas a few miles to the south). To the west of the original mill is a large area with a bowling green and tennis court, with a small timber pavilion to the west of these. This whole area appears to have been laid out in the early 1900s. To the north is a cricket pitch, laid out c.1864, and football pitches of more recent vintage. Far to the south (on the Mourne River) is the weir which was originally constructed for the pre 1832 corn mill, but has been much modified in more recent years.

Map- Sion Mills- OSNI Historical 3rd Edition- 1900-1907



One of the most important reasons the Herdmans chose this site for their mill was its close proximity to the River Mourne. The Herdmans commissioned the prominent 19th century industrial engineer Sir William Fairbairn, to construct a waterpower system including the mill stream and weir to drive the waterwheels to power the mill. Derry City & Strabane District Council have developed a 0.7 miles circular riverwalk along the banks of the Mourne River, the walk skirts the perimeter of the mill and crosses the river in a few locations offering panoramic views of the 19th century weir, the old mill and the swinging bridge, originally built to facilitate mill workers. The current bridge was built in 1988 replacing earlier bridges built in 1871 and 1929 respectively.



Picture 2 : Trailhead signage for the Mourneside River Walk



Pictures 3 & 4 : Panoramic view of Herdman's Mill from the Mourneside Riverwalk and The 'Swinging Bridge'



Pictures 5 & 6 : The Mill Race and the River Mourne.

There are currently a number of complex legal issues surrounding ownership of the Mill and access to the site. Sion Mills Preservation Trust have completed a 'Masterplan' for the site and are keen to restore the Mill to its former glory including restoration works to the turbines and weir. The group would also like to extend the current Mourneside Walk up the river bank to the old railway bridge (adjacent to Camus Church & Graveyard) and provide access to the 'Holm Field' which previously provided recreational and sporting facilities for the mill workers and village residents.

Sion House & Gatelodge

Sion House & Gatelodge were both designed in the 1840s by the architect W.F. Unsworth, the son in law of James Herdman, one of the founders of the mill and served as the home of the Herdman family. The 18 acre gardens of Sion House included terraces and statues, box hedging, a splash pool, wishing bridge with waterfall and a glasshouse. Sion House and Gate Lodge are unfortunately in private ownership at present and going into dereliction, public access does not currently exist to the house, gardens or Gatelodge. The Gatelodge is recorded by DFC Historic Environment Directorate as being 'heritage at risk'.



Picture 7 : Sion House



Pictures 8 & 9 : Sion Gatehouse



Sion House is a large, visually complex, mainly two and a half storey Elizabethan style 'manor house' gentleman's residence- with mock timber framing, gables, dormers, high pitched tiled roof and various single to two storey projections. The house is set within extensive grounds to the east of Melmount Road, with a matching 16th century style gatehouse over the entrance (to north west of the house itself). The property is largely finished in mock timber framing (using real timber), but with the exposed basement level in roughcast and brick, and a significant portion of the front west and rear elevations in brick also. Much of the rear (south) elevation is in poor order with a section of the basement and first floor façade having been removed exposing some rooms to the elements. A large section of the roof to this side has been lowered a storey, and a veranda, which originally ran almost the whole length of this elevation, has completely disappeared as has a conservatory which existed. Gables of various sizes predominate to all sides and the largely pan tiled (and generally chimneyless) overhanging roof is punctuated with gabled and hipped roof dormers. The window openings are largely original with many sporting leaded lights within mullioned and transomed timber frames. One opening to the ground floor front has been enlarged slightly, another close by now blocked up, and some others have relatively modern plain glazed frames.

Sion Stables & Museum

The stable block was built in 1884, also designed by architect W.F. Unsworth. The clock on the roof of Sion Stables was an important civic amenity and a focal point of the village. Sion Stables Museum is currently housed within the period horse stalls which were fabricated in the late 19th century by Musgraves of Belfast.



Picture 10 : Sion Stables

The exhibitions in the museum tell the story of this historic linen village and cover the themes of Family, Mill and Village. The museum exhibitions has many artefacts from the days when the Mill was operational as well as recorded stories of the mill-owners, the mill-workers and the history of the production of Irish Linen.

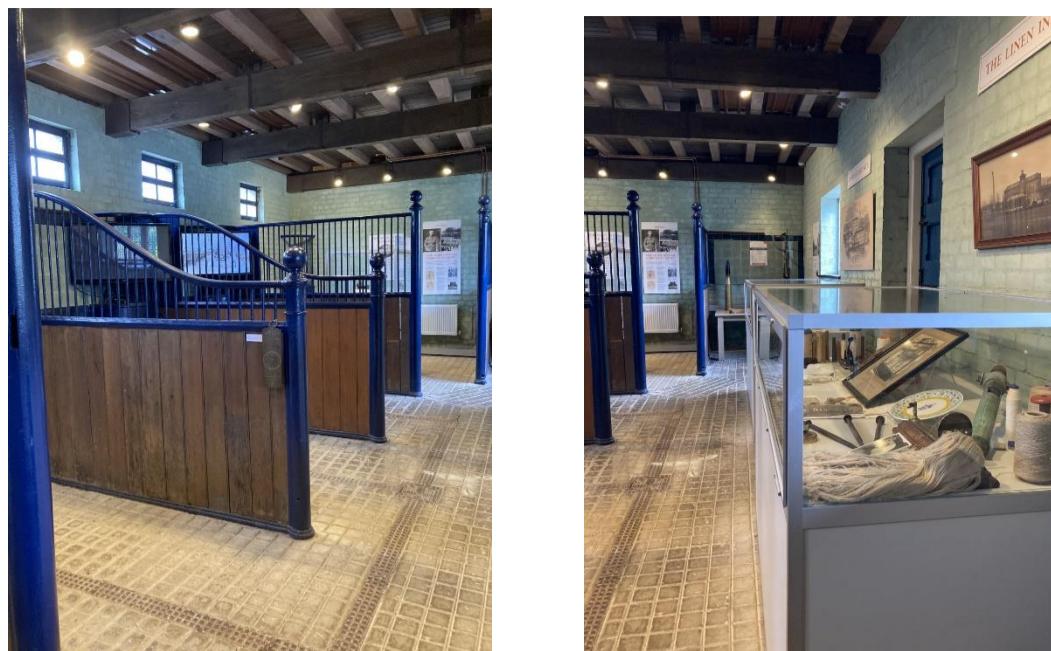


Picture 11 : Sion Stables Clock

The restoration of Sion Stables was started in 2014, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Headley Trust, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the NI Rural Development Programme (DAERA). This consisted of the restoration of the Stable building as a restaurant, museum and offices, along with construction of a new-build classroom to provide additional meeting space.



Picture 12 : The restored Sion Stables



Pictures 13 & 14 : Sion Stables Museum

Conservation area (streetscape and mill cottages)

The Herdmans started building houses in 1835 and added more as the Mill workforce grew and by 1900 they had built 250 houses in the village. The terraced mill workers cottages extend both along the north axis of the road and also westwards off the main road. North of the main group of terraced mill houses is Church Square an open area with the Presbyterian Church and Mens Institute to the east.



Pictures 15 & 16 : Mill Workers Cottages



Presbyterian Church, Old School House & War Memorial

The Herdmans built an integrated school in 1879 in which all sections of the community were educated together which is now the Presbyterian Church Hall. An attractively detailed former elementary school in a Picturesque style located at the north end of the Sion Mills Conservation Area. The composition is symmetrical, with double-gable form containing a twin hall layout contained within a principal M-profile elevation of rubble stone and accessed by porches on either side. Recent refurbishment has been sympathetically carried out with unobtrusive extension to rear, and the school remains a prominent historic feature in the village streetscape. Although no longer in use as a school, the building continues to perform an important social function within the village as the Schoolhouse now serves as the Church Hall for the adjacent Presbyterian Church which was built in 1866. DCSDC intend to carry out environmental improvement works to the War Memorial once ownership of the memorial located in front of the old schoolhouse has been confirmed.



Pictures 17 & 18 : Presbyterian Church & War Memorial

A double-height Gothic Revival Presbyterian Church, dated 1866, and located on the west side of Melmount Road, in the Sion Mills Conservation Area. The church has a rectangular nave and three-stage steeple to east, and has a double-height church hall (dated 1905) attached to south; there is a single-storey porch to west (west side of hall and porch are also abutted by lean-to additions. Roof is pitched natural slate with angled clay ridge tiles, stone verges on cavetto moulded kneelers and a filigree Cross finial raised on a tapered plinth to apex; quatrefoil chimneystack to south gable; ogee cast-iron rainwater goods on corbel blocks. Walling is random coursed rubble blackstone with cement pointing over a slightly battered plinth; diagonal buttresses with offsets are located to main body of church and steeple. Windows are margin-paned cast-iron diamond lattice lancets with chamfered blocked stone surrounds and sills (unless otherwise stated). East gable faces the road and has a single Decorated tracery window, detailed as others. South elevation is abutted by steeple to right of centre, and has one window to right, three to left. The tower is detailed as church with steep yellow brick spire; it is square on plan rising to an octagonal cement rendered third stage over offset spurs. First stage has (to south), a double-leaf pointed-arched headed timber sheeted door with strap hinges set in chamfered reveal with hood mould and rubble stone voussoirs; window to east; second stage has a central trefoil opening to each face; third stage has a louvred lancet to alternate faces with small aperture to remaining elevations. West gable is completely abutted by hall (see later). North elevation consists of four windows with north porch at right end. Porch has a hipped roof and square-headed timber sheeted door in stop-end chamfered stone reveal to east; north elevation is abutted by later cement rendered lean-to (in poor repair and of little interest); south elevation is abutted by hall. Hall is rectangular on plan, projecting beyond the church by a single bay to south-west. Roof and walling is detailed as church (without buttresses). Windows are paired pointed-arch headed with coloured diamond lattice glazing. Entrance to east consists of pointed-arch headed double-leaf door in projecting surround with stone lean-to roof. Five pairs of windows to west; single window to south gable; north gable abutted by later lean-to (as before); small louvred openings to gable apexes. The church occupies a compact roadside site enclosed by rubble stone boundary walls with soldier coping; accessed from road at east by a pair of cast-iron gates on square piers.



Picture 19 : Old Schoolhouse, now the Presbyterian Church Hall

The old school house is a detached symmetrical two-bay stone building dated 1879 and located on the west side of Melmount Road at the north end of Sion Mills Conservation Area. The school is T-shaped on plan (tail of the 'T' consists of a road-facing double-pile gabled hall) with small return and modern extension to rear and single storey hipped-roof entrance bays to either side. Roof is pitched natural slate with angled clay ridge tiles and ventilation stacks on leaded plinth to ridges; tall brick chimney to rear and further brick chimney to south gable. Decorative painted timber bargeboards to principal gables having carved timber brackets and drop finials. Half-round cast-iron gutters and box downpipes over exposed rafter tails; painted cast-iron water spout to principal elevation. Walling is uncoursed squared rubble (built to courses at porches) over a chamfered stone plinth and having brick quoins; wide brick eaves band with dentil detail extending to window surround. Rear elevation and extension are painted roughcast. Window openings are segmental-headed (unless otherwise stated), with painted masonry sills; all openings have chamfered brick surrounds with moulded stone imposts and keystones, except those to rear, which are plainly detailed. Multi-pane replacement timber casements throughout. Principal elevation faces east and is gabled M-profile with porches slightly recessed to either side. Projecting datestone ("Sion Mills / Public Elementary / School / 1879") is affixed to centre (downpipe passes through centre). Each gable has a triple round-headed window opening (central opening taller) with shared sill on masonry corbels. Each porch has a round-headed door opening containing a replacement diagonally-sheeted timber door with strap hinges accessed by a stone step. Side elevation of each porch has a pair of square-headed windows with shared brick surround and sill; rear elevation blank. South elevation is abutted by the porch at right; rear section projects and is roughcast. Hall section is eight windows wide. Rear section is gabled and has two windows to gable. Rear elevation is abutted by an extension to right and has a return to left of centre. Exposed original elevation has two windows to right of return, three to left; return is blank with the exception of a small square window to rear. North elevation is detailed as south, with the exception of rear block, which is four windows wide

The 'Flax Spinner' statue

The 'Flax Spinner' shows a woman spinning flax at her spinning frame and was created by artist Eamon Doherty. The statue sits at the top of the avenue where workers in the past would have made their way down to the mill.



Picture 20 : The Flax Spinner Statue

Church of the Good Shepherd & General Ricardo's tomb.

Designed by W.F. Unsworth the Church of the Good Shepherd is based on a church in Pistoia near Florence in Italy. The church contains Devonshire marble on the Chancel and Connemara marble on the pulpits. Brigadier General Ambrose Ricardo's tomb is in the grounds of the church. A prominent veteran of both the Boer War and World War I General Ricardo married into the Herdman family. St Saviors Hall is adjacent to the church.

The building is a triple height Byzantine style Church of Ireland church, built 1909 to designs by William F. Unsworth, located on the east side of Melmount Road, Sion Mills. The church is rectangular on plan with semi-circular projections comprising a full-height apsidal chancel to east, double-height stair tower to west, double-height store and vestry to north and south respectively; the stair tower is further flanked by lean-to porches and there is a campanile tower to north-east corner. Roof is pitched natural slate, angled clay ridge tiles, stone verges on moulded stone kneelers. Rainwater goods are profiled aluminium over dentilled eaves course. Walling is coursed rubble limestone with ashlar Bath stone dressings. Each elevation (except chancel end) is divided into panels framed by lesene strips with arcaded frieze over (raking to gables). Windows are generally round-headed, all have lattice glazing with lead cames, ashlar surrounds and flush splayed sills. The clerestorey is lit by a continuous series of semi-circular windows (one spanning each panel) with continuous moulded lead-capped sill course. Entrance gable faces west, with central stair tower surmounted by a large circular window, and porches surmounted by a single clerestorey window. Porches are identically detailed, each with stepped ashlar quoins and containing a central square-headed door opening having shallow triangular-headed lintel and deep ashlar reveals; cheeks have a paired rectangular window with central mullion and ashlar chamfered surround. The stair tower has a semi-conical roof over arcaded upper level framed by colonettes (recessed arches are alternately blind and glazed); the main body of the tower contains staggered window openings lighting the stairwell. North elevation consists of five panels, each with clerestorey window. Lower level is as follows: right panel has a tripartite rectangular window; left panel is abutted by store block; remainder each have a round-headed window. Vestry has an arcade over string course at two-thirds height, blind with the exception of two round-headed windows; lower section has small square windows, north by a square-headed door reached by four steps. East end is abutted by the apse to centre and a square tower to left. Chancel has a half-conical roof; walling is divided into panels with string course; upper section has a roundel to each panel, round-headed windows to north and south. Tower has a shallow pyramidal roof and is plainly detailed with loop windows.



Pictures 21 & 22 : Church of the Good Shepherd and General Ricardo's tomb



The tomb is a classically styled limestone sarcophagus memorial, erected 1923 in memory of Brigadier General Ambrose Quintin Ricardo, and located to the west front of the Good Shepherd Church. The memorial is rectangular on plan, raised on a 3-stage podium. It is classically detailed with cornice, pedestal, and carved framed plaques flanked by corner pilasters having egg-and-dart mouldings and fluted shafts. The memorial is topped by a stepped block finished with a cast bronze wreath.

St Savior's Hall

Freestanding single-cell double-height gable-fronted Tudoresque half timbered former church, built c.1895, now in use as a hall and located on a corner site at the east side of Melmount Road within the Sion Mills Conservation Area. Rectangular on plan, with gabled porch to west, small catslide outshot to east, and full height gabled projection to south. Pitched tiled roof with timber eaves-brackets and bargeboards, aluminium rainwater goods. Redbrick chimney stack to catslide projection; redbrick bellcote on western end. Walling is narrow panelled applied half-timbered with rendered infill panels over a high squared rock-faced uncoursed sandstone plinth having sandstone buttresses at regular intervals; angle buttresses at west. Windows to main block are dipartite cusped-headed leaded lattice windows set in square-headed timber frames all have secondary glazing; those to projections are divided by a single timber transom and mullion, replacement leaded glazing; continuous painted lead capped sill course throughout. Principal entrance elevation faces north and consists of four equally-spaced windows with catslide outshot at left end. Outshot has two windows to north and a replacement timber sheeted door to left cheek accessed by three pavoired steps. East gable has quadripartite window, detailed as others (external metal grille over). South elevation has gabled right bay, slightly projecting. Four windows to main section, one window to gable. West gable has a diminished gabled extension with central window; transomed and mullioned window to right cheek; hardwood sheeted door to left cheek. Setting: The former church is set slightly back from the road on an open plot and surrounded by paved perimeter paths; there is a lawn with single-storey shed (constructed in similar style) to southeast. Bounded to west by a low stone wall and to the north by a low red brick wall with iron railings; red-brick gate piers with decorative concrete cap; timber gate with metal knob. Accessed

from the road at north via a painted timber pedestrian gate supported on red brick piers. Situated to the southeast is the replacement church, The Church of the Good Shepherd



Pictures 23 & 24 : St Savior's Hall



The Working Men's Institute

The 'Institute' was designed by W.F. Unsworth and built in 1895 as a recreation club for male workers in the mill. It was built for the men of the village to socialise with a library and reading room and a billiard room. The 'Institute' was the social hub for the village.



Picture 25 : The Working Men's Institute

Detached multi-bay two-storey stone and applied timber frame former Working Mens' Institute, built c.1895, now known as Sion Mills Recreational Club. Rectangular on plan, facing east on the west side of Melmount Road with external stone stair to south gable and flat-roofed rear extension. Pitched terracotta tiled roof with roll-moulded terracotta ridge tiles, sprocketed eaves with exposed rafter feet and timber bargeboards to the gables. Steel rainwater goods to rafter feet. Random coursed rock-faced sandstone ashlar walling to ground floor and staircase, with continuous moulded timber course and timber-framed to upper floor with pebbledash rendered panels. Symmetrical multi-bay two-storey front elevation, four square-headed window openings to ground floor with stone relieving arches and timber casement windows with lead-lined timber sills; series of tripartite timber casement windows to first floor with leaded glazing and some steel casements. To the centre of the front elevation is a large redbrick chimneystack laid in Flemish bond, projecting beyond the stone wall as a narrow flue to the ground floor, corbelled out in redbrick and forming a large blind breakfront to the first floor before narrowing again as a chimney above the roof. South gable is pebbledash rendered above ground floor and is abutted by an external stone staircase, built on a T-plan in random course rock-faced sandstone ashlar with tooled stone ashlar coping and concrete steps. Steps lead to a single door opening to the first floor with vertically-sheeted timber door. Below the steps at ground floor level is a round-headed door opening with voussoired stone arch and vertically-sheeted timber door. Rear elevation is abutted by a large flat-roofed extension having decorative single-pitched terracotta tiled canopy. Ten tripartite windows with leaded lights are visible to the first floor with the continuous timber sill and timber framed wall below. Gable-ended north elevation has a large landscape window opening to both floors with timber casement windows having leaded lights. Random coursed rock-faced sandstone ashlar walling to ground floor with continuous moulded timber course and elaborate timber frame and pebbledash rendered finish to first floor and gable with overhanging eaves and carved timber barge-board. Set back from the road with a paved front area enclosed by a low rubblestone wall with stacked coping, continued to the north of the site forming the boundary between the Club and the Church

Newtownstewart

Newtownstewart-Study Area

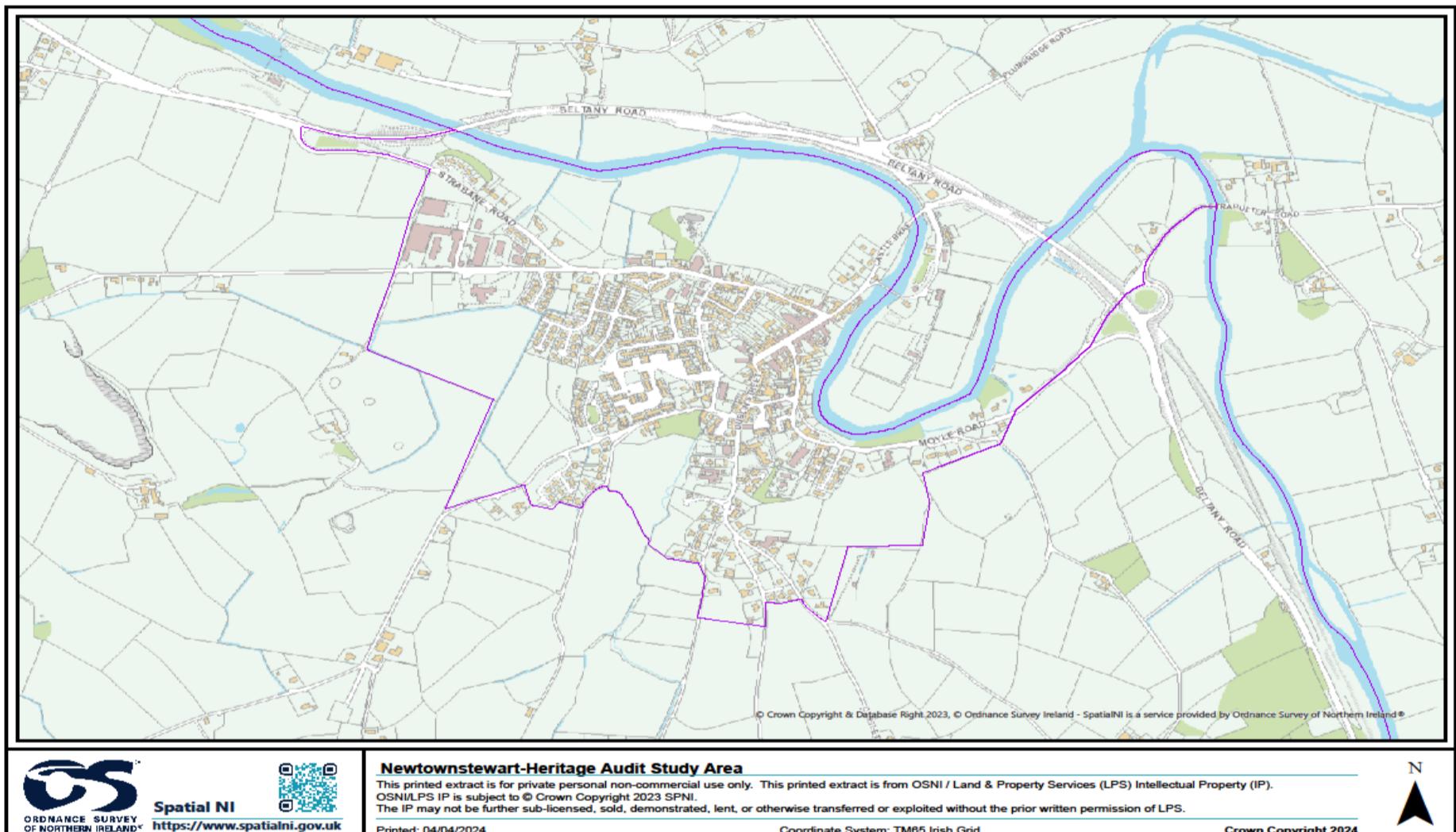
The Newtownstewart study area selected for this commission is the area within the Super Data Zone boundary for the Town and those sites which lie immediately outside of the Super Data Zone boundary which merit inclusion.

Super Data Zones (SDZ2021) are a new statistical output geography, introduced in Northern Ireland after the 2021 Census

NISRA has developed two new statistical output geographies to support the dissemination of Census 2021 statistics, namely Data Zones and Super Data Zones.

There are 850 Super Data Zones (SDZ2021) across Northern Ireland and the 3,780 Data Zones (DZ2021) nest within this geography. These two geographies nest within the 80 District Electoral Areas (DEA2014) and 11 Local Government Districts (LGD2014). ([Super Data Zones \(Census 2021\) | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/super-data-zones-census-2021))

Map- Newtownstewart Study Area



Following consultation with key groups and stakeholders in the Newtownstewart area, the study area was expanded to include monuments of significance and community value in the vicinity of Newtownstewart, as follows:

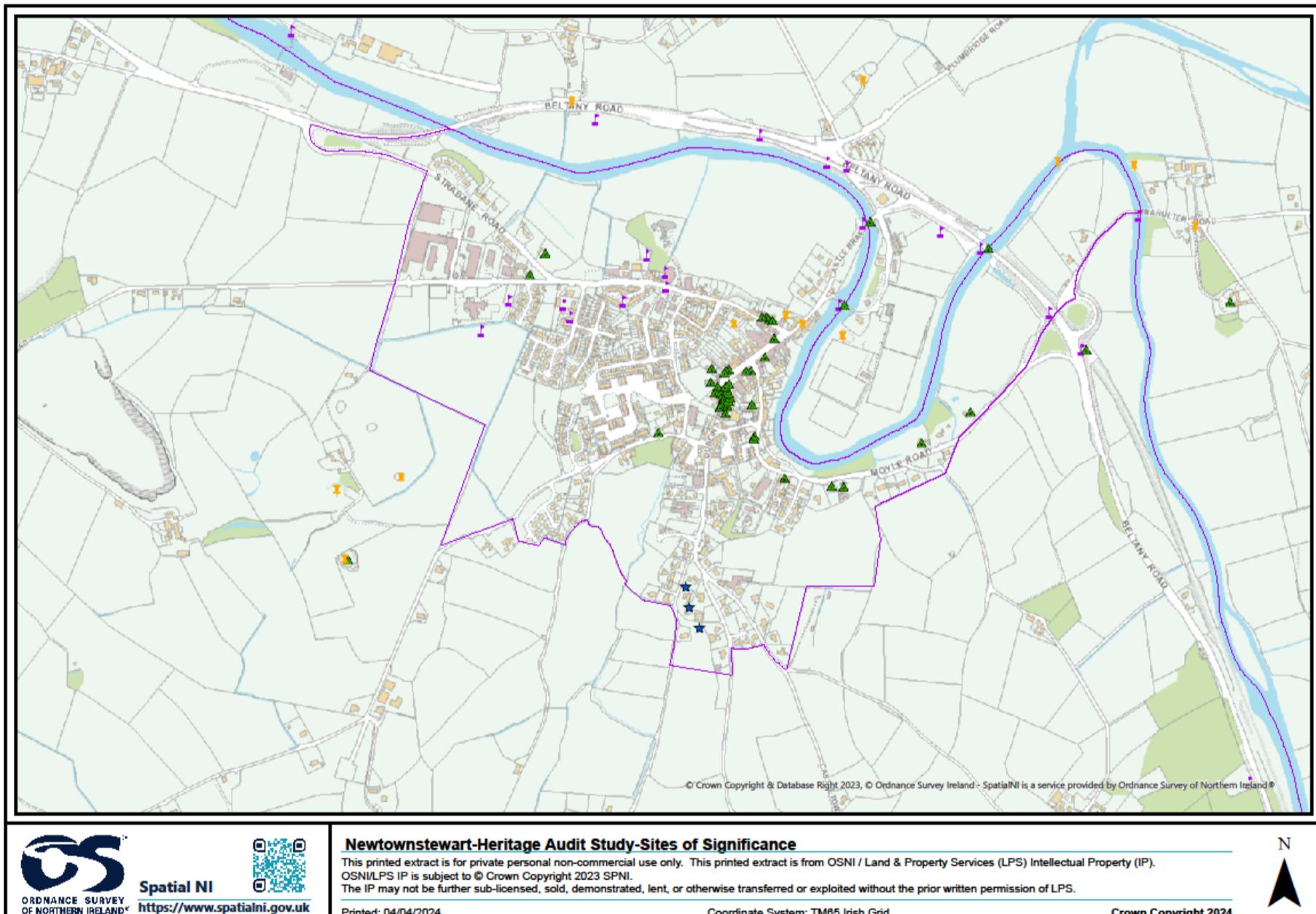
Item No.	Site Name
1.	Harry Avery's Castle
2.	Camus Church and Graveyard
3.	Lisky Court Tomb
4.	Ardstraw Monastery and Graveyard
5.	Ballyrenan Portal Tomb
6.	Pubble Graveyard
7.	Glenock Portal Tomb
8.	Corick Abbey and Graveyard
9.	Newtownstewart Castle

Using the Spatial NI Mapping tool, the following layers were selected to inform the heritage audit for Newtownstewart:

Layer Type	Record
Historic Environment	Defence Heritage Record
Historic Environment	Sites and Monuments
Historic Environment	Listed Buildings
Historic Environment	Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest
Historic Environment	Industrial Heritage Record

Layer Type	Record	No. Identified
Historic Environment	Defence Heritage Record	3
Historic Environment	Sites and Monuments	5
Historic Environment	Listed Buildings	33
Historic Environment	Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest	0
Historic Environment	Industrial Heritage Record	12
	Total	53

Map- Newtownstewart- Identified Heritage Records



Newtownstewart- Industrial Heritage Record

Table- Newtownstewart Industrial Heritage Record

Object ID	County	Townland	IHR	Location	Grid Ref	Type
14806	Tyrone	Middle Deerpark	04388:003:00	Millrace	H 39478 85785	Millrace
14805	Tyrone	Middle Deerpark	IHR 04388:002:00	Mill Pond	H 39545 85859	Dam
5444	Tyrone	Middle Deerpark	IHR 04388:000:00	n/a	H39688585	Saw Mill site
14804	Tyrone	Middle Deerpark	IHR 04388:001:00	Saw Mill	H 39695 85819	Mill (Saw Mill)
14781	Tyrone	Newtownstewart	IHR 04367:002:00	Mill Pond	H 39828 85857	Dam
14782	Tyrone	Newtownstewart	IHR 04367:003:00	Millrace	H 39887 8597	Millrace
5424	Tyrone	Newtownstewart	IHR 04367:000:00	n/a	H39938593	Corn Mill site
14780	Tyrone	Newtownstewart	IHR 04367:001:00	Corn Kiln- Corn Mill	H 39933 85894	Kiln
5425	Tyrone	Croshballinree/New- townstewart	IHR 04368:000:00	n/a	H40428605	Bridge
5426	Tyrone	Croshballinree/New- townstewart	IHR 04369:000:00	n/a	H40368585	Bridge
143	Tyrone	Croshballinree/Grange	IHR 00017:098:00	GNR Branch Line, Porta- down-L'Derry	H40718599	Bridge
145	Tyrone	Grange	IHR 00017:099:00	GNR Branch Line, Porta- down-L'Derry	H40888583	Level Crossing

Newtownstewart- Listed Buildings Record

Map- Newtownstewart-Listed Buildings Record

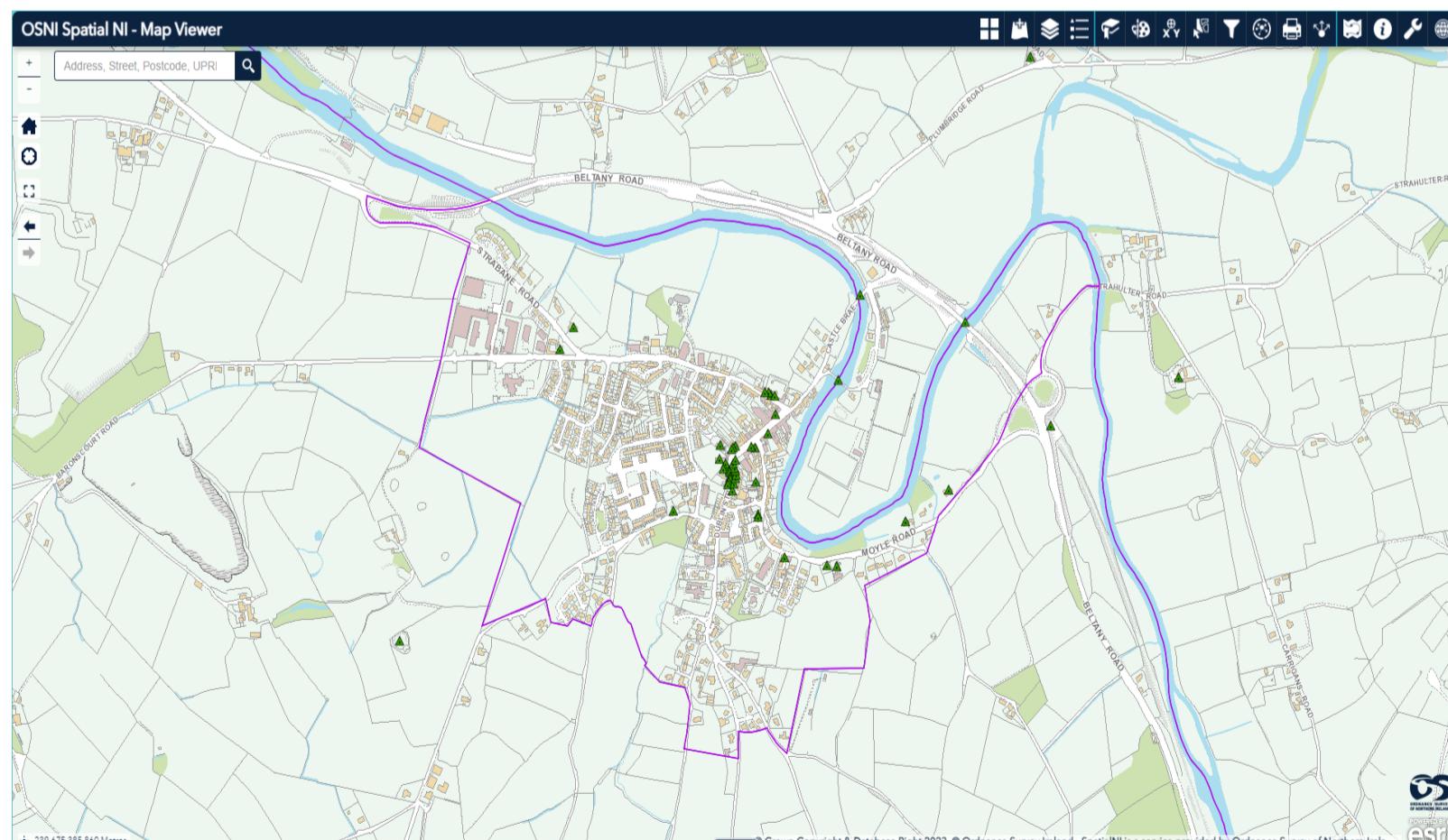


Table- Newtownstewart- Listed Buildings

Object	HB Reference	Grade	Address	Status	Date Constructed	Cur- rent Use	Former Use	Townland	Irish Grid Ref	Main ID	Com- ments
9738	HB10/04/073	Rec- ord Only	1 Baronscourt Road, New- townstewart, Co Tyrone BT78 4EX	Not Listed	1920- 1939	House	House			15,033.00	
3466	HB10/04/018	B2	Bellevue Villa 21 Strabane Road New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AZ	House	1860- 1897	House	House	New- townstew- art	H3963 8597	5,960.00	
9737	HB10/04/072	Rec- ord Only	Abercorn Bridge, castle Brae, New- townstewart, Omagh BT78 4AS	Not Listed		Bridge	Bridge			17,002.00	
177	HB10/04/007	B+	Newtownstewart Old Bridge Doug- las Road New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4NE	Bridge	1720- 1739	Bridge	Bridge	New- townstew- art/Cross- Balinree	H4036 8585	5,751.00	
3476	HB10/04/045 C	B2	9 Townhall Street New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AX	House	1880- 1899	House	House	New- townstew- ard	H4017 8578	5,901.00	
3475	HB10/04/045 B	B2	7 Townhall Street New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AX	former town- hall	1880- 1899	house	house	New- townstew- art	H4017 8578	1,433.00	
3474	HB10/04/045 A	B2	5 Townhall Street New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AX	Former house	1880- 1899		house	New- townstew- art	H4017 8578	5,898.00	
9685	HB10/04/006	Rec- ord Only	Former Hotel 3 Townhall Street New- townstew- art Omagh Co. Tyrone BT78 4AX	Not listed						15,010.00	
9686	HB10/04/009	Rec- ord Only	The Abercorn Arms 44A Main Street New- townstew- art Omagh Co. Tyrone BT78 4AA	Not Listed						1,735.00	
178	HB10/04/008	B2	Former New- townstewart County Primary School 2 Main Street New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AA	School- house, walling and railings	1860- 1879	Library	school	New- townstew- art	H4004 8569	4,716.00	
3469	HB10/04/025	B2	4 Main Street New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AA	House	1840- 1859	House	House	New- townstew- art	H4007 8568	5,962.00	
3468	HB10/04/024	B2	6 Main Street, New- townstewart, Co Tyrone, BT78 4AA	Former house	1840- 1859	Office	House	New- townstew- art	H4008 8568	5,961.00	
3467	HB10/04/023	B2	McFarland Arnold & Co. Chartered Accountants and Registered Audi- tors 8 Main Street New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AA	House and Of- fices	1860- 1879	Office	Post Office	New- townstew- art	H4008 8569	3,071.00	
3462	HB10/04/004 B	B1	15 Main Street, New- townstewart, Co Tyrone, BT78 4AB	House	1840- 1859	House	House	New- townstew- art	H4013 8569	5,959.00	
175	HB10/04/003	B1	St Eugene's Church of Ireland Church Ardstraw Parish Church Main Street New- townstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AA	Chruch, walling, steps and gates	1720- 1739	Church	Church	New- townstew- art	H40038566	3,118.00	
3470	HB10/04/026 A	B2	1 Dublin Street, New- townstewart, Co Tyrone, BT78 4AE	House, steps and walling	1740- 1759	House- terrace	house- terrace	New- townstew- art	H4006 8565	15,203.00	
3471	HB10/04/026 B	B2	3 Dublin Street, New- townstewart, Co Tyrone, BT78 4AE	House, steps, railings, walling and out- building	1740- 1759	House- terrace	house- terrace	New- townstew- art	H4006 8565	15,204.00	

181	HB/10/04/027	B2	5 Dublin Street, Newtownstewart, Co Tyrone, BT78 4AE	House, steps, railings, walling and out-building	1840-1859	House	House	Newtownstewart	H4007 8564	5,963.00	
9759	No. 7-HB10/04/028/A No. 9-HB10/04/028/B No.11-HB/10/04/029 No.13-HB10/04/030 No.15-HB10/04/031 No.17-HB10/04/032	Record Only	Dublin Street, Netownstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AE	Not Listed	1820-1839	House	House	Newtownstewart	H40068576	1,432.00	
9688	HB10/04/012	Record Only	Former Farm-house, Cowmarket Street) No 15 Old Castle Road, Newtownstewart, Co Tyrone							15,012.00	
950	HB10/07/014	B2	3 Moyle Road Newtownstewart BT78 4AP	House and Walling	1820-1839	House	House	Newtownstewart	H40158553	5,881.00	
3465	HB10/04/016B	B2	5 Moyle Road Newtownstewart	House, out-building and boundary wall	1820-1839	House	House	Newtownstewart	H40158553	5,884.00	
9687	HB10/04/011	Record Only	Grange Court, Nos 21,23,25 & 27	Not Listed						15,011.00	
9739	HB10/04/074	Record Only	Parochial House, 41 Moyle Road Newtownstewart BT78 4AP	Not listed	1920-1929	House	House	Newtownstewart		14,433.00	
180	HB10/04/014	B2	Newtownstewart Presbyterian Church 39 Moyle Road Newtownstewart Co. Tyrone BT78 4AP	Church, gates, railings and walling	1900-1919	Church	Church	Grange	H40378540	5,882.00	
9740	HB10/04/075	Record Only	52 Moyle Road, Newtownstewart, Co Tyrone BT78 4JT	Not Listed	1900-1919	House	House			15,034.00	
183	HB10/04/076	B1	The Old Manse 56 Moyle Road Newtownstewart Strabane Co.Tyrone BT78 4JT	House, gate screen and gates	1900-1919	House	House	Moyle Glebe	H40508550	14,734.00	
9728	HB10/04/056	Record Only	Harry Avery's Castle, Oldcastle Road, Newtownstewart BT78 4BS	Not listed						14,430.00	Outside Boundary

Newtownstewart-Sites and Monuments Records

Map- N'Stewart- Sites and Monuments

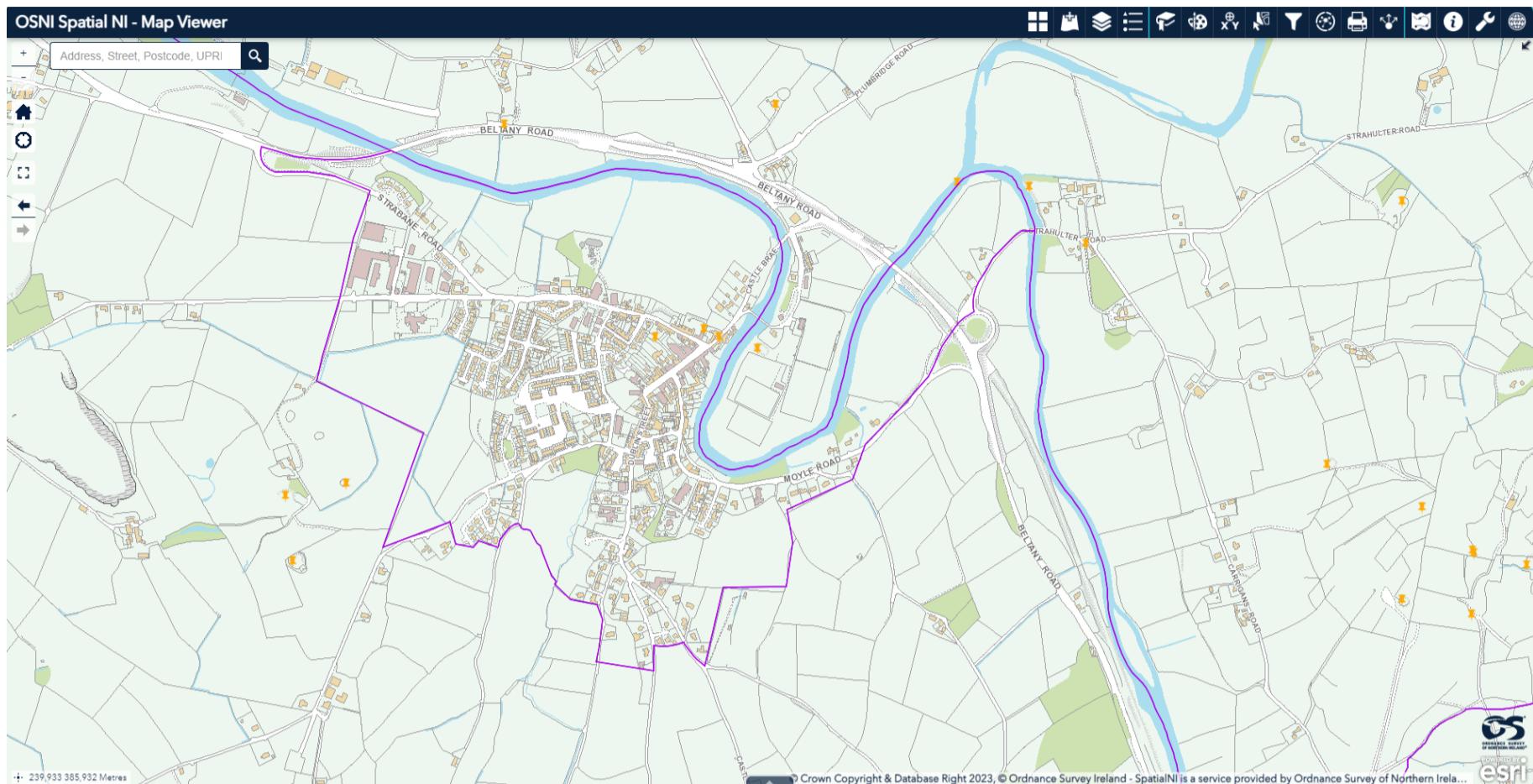


Table- Newtownstewart- Sites and Monuments

Ob- ject ID	Shape	X	Y	MonID	SMR No	Type	Period	Pro- tec- tion	Townland	Irish Grid Reg	Coun- cil	Lo- cated
13847		240,100.00	385,800.00	14,321	TYR017:066	Historic Settlement:Newtownstewart	Modern; C17th		Newtownstewart	H4010085800	DCSDC	Lo- cated
13828		240230	385820	14302	TYR017:047	Castle and Bawn:Newtownstewart Castle	Post-Med	State Care and Sched- uled	Newtownstewart	H4023085820	DCSDC	Lo- cated
13846		340270	385800	14320	TYR017:065	Stone Head	Uncertain		Newtownstewart	H4027085800	DCSDC	Lo- cated
13794		240370	385770	14266	TYR017:011	Castle Site (Mound and Foundation): Pigeon Hill	Uncertain	Sched- uled	Croshball-inree	H4037085770	DCSDC	Lo- cated
13795		239140	385220	13795	TYR017:012	Castle and Bally:Harry Avery's Castle	Med/LMED	State Care	Upper or New Deerpark	H3914085220	DCSDC	Lo- cated

Newtownstewart- Additional Sites and Monuments

Table- Additional Sites and Monuments (following consultation)

Ob- ject ID	Shape	X	Y	MonID	SMR No	Type	Period	Pro- tec- tion	Townland	Irish Grid Reg	Coun- cil	Lo- cated
13830		234,970		14,304		Ecclesiasti- cal site Pre-Nor- man Medi- eval Chruch (site of) & Graveyard: Ard Sratha, Ardstraw	Modern; Early Christian; Me- dieval/Late Medieval		Ardstraw	H3497087490	DCSDC	Lo- cated
			387,490		TYR017:049							
13644		234,730		14,110		Church and Graveyard: Camus Church	Post Medi- eval; Medi- eval/Late Medi- eval	Sched- uled	Camus	H3473091600	DCSDC	Lo- cated
			391,600		TYR010:007							
13798		239,700		14,270		Franciscan Friary (site of) and Graveyard	Late Medieval		Pubble	H3970086350	DCSDC	Lo- cated
			386,350		TYR017:015							
13863		245,190		14,338		Franciscan Friary & Graveyard: Corick Ab- bey	Late Medieval	Sched- uled	Corickmore	H4519088170	DCSDC	Lo- cated
			388,170		TYR018:012							
16150		237,335		14,290		Portal Tomb:Bal- lyrenan Cham- bered Grave or Cloghole	Megalithic Tomb- Neo- lithic; Prehis- toric	Sched- uled	Ballyrenan	H3733583171	DCSDC	Lo- cated
			383,171		TYR017:035							
13792		241,179		14,264		Portal Tomb; Druid's Al- ter or Clog- hole	Megalithic Tomb. Prehis- toric; Neo- lithic	State Care and Sched- uled	Glenknock or Cloghole	H4117987944	DCSDC	Lo- cated
			387,944		TYR017:009							

13643		235,750		14,109		Court Tomb: Giant's Grave	Megalithic Tomb. Prehistoric; Neolithic	State Care and Scheduled	Lisky	H3575090510	DCSDC	Located
		390,510			TYR010:006							

Newtownstewart- Defence Heritage Record

Map- Newtownstewart- Defence Heritage Record

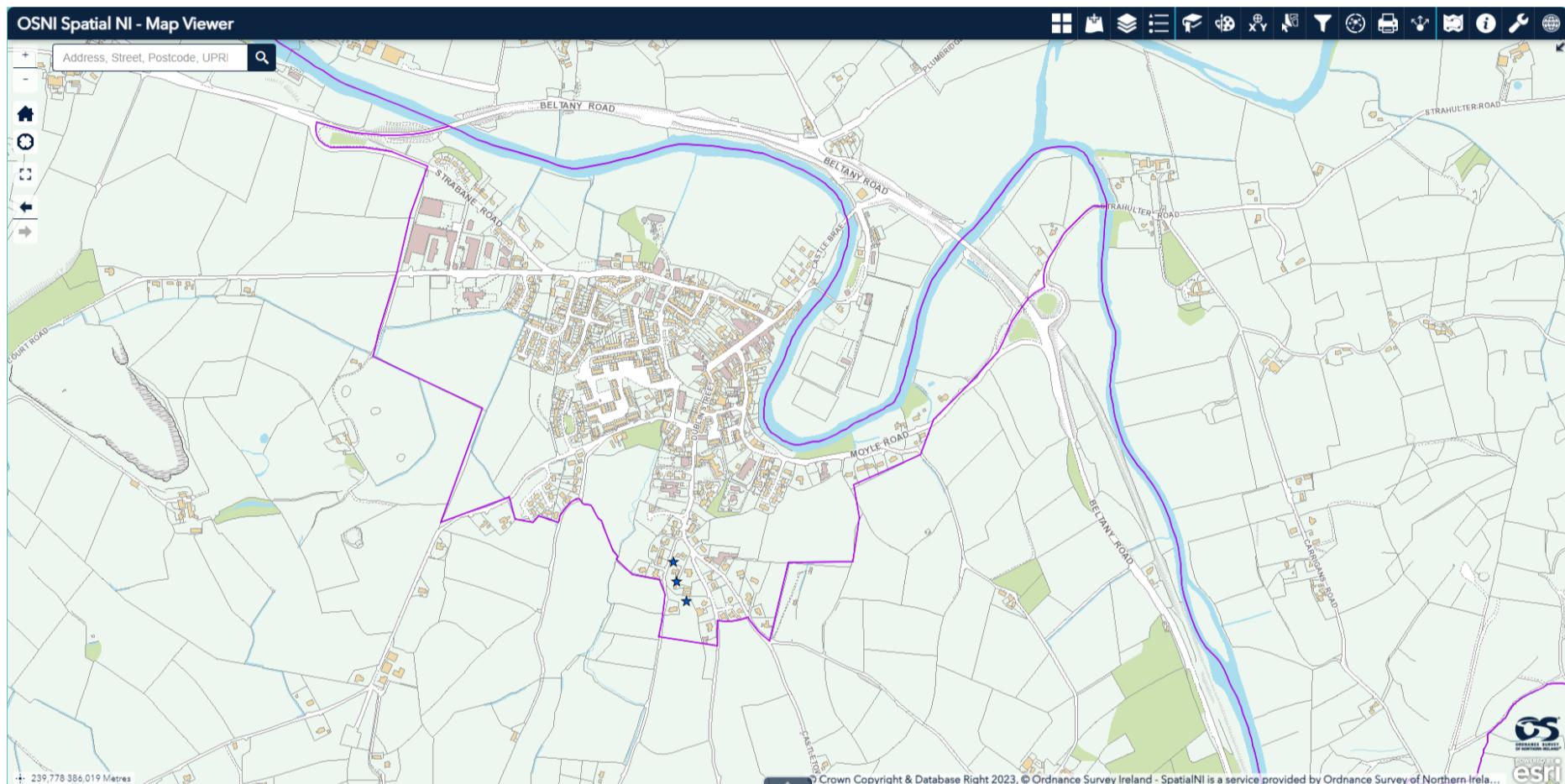


Table-Newtownstewart-Defence Heritage

Ob- ject ID	DHR Num- ber	Site Type	Period	General History	Sie De- scription	Con- dition	Condition Further De- Details	Acces- sibility	Land use around the Site	Grid ref
1529	00523:001	Nissen Hut	WW2	The Nissen hut was invented in 1915 by Canadian Col. P. N. Nissen. Prefabricated and designed to be erected quickly, in WW2 the Nissen hut became one of the standard forms of temporary building for all types of accommodation. The 16 foot span hut was semi-circular in section and could be built to any length in multiples of 6 foot bays, normally 6. The frame of steel ribs was covered with corrugated steel sheets held in place by the ribs and straining wires. The end walls could be timber or brick, containing 2 windows and a door. Type A huts were for officers and consisted of 4 rooms and one for servants. Type B huts were for sergeants and were a single room accommodating 8 men. Those for other ranks or airmen accommodated 12 men in a single room. A 24 and 30 foot span design were constructed in the same way but had dormer windows and door cheeks fitted along the sides.	This 16 foot span Nissen hut appears to be in good condition	sub- stan- tial_re mains	Appears to be in good condition	Visible from the Road	Private Garden	H 39980 85155

422	00523:002	Nissan Hut	WW2	Ditto	Nissen hut with no windows, likely used as a store.	Substantial Re-mains	Site appears in good condition	Visible from the Road	Private Garden	H 39991 85104
1957	00523:000	Military Camp	WW2		A military camp was constructed on the site during WW2 to provide accommodation for military personnel. Likely a series of nissen huts with brick domestic structures providing ablution and mess facilities. Approx.. 16 structures originally on site. Only two huts remains	Traces only	A single Nissen hut remains in good condition. A second brick structure may have been incorporated into a dwelling	Visible from the Road	Private Garden	H400178 5053

Newtownstewart- Historical Overview

Newtownstewart

Newtownstewart was recorded at the start of the 17th century by Sir Josias Bodley as Baille Nua (Newtown). The settlement owes its origins to the ford across the River Mourne controlled by the Castles which overlooked it. The site of the Ford is now occupied by a six arch bridge built in 1727. Four Castles in and around Newtownstewart are all thought to have been founded by members of the O'Neill clan.

Newtownstewart Castle

Built in 1619 on the site of an older edifice by Sir Robert Newcomen & described in the 1622 survey as "a Castle of lyme & stone of good strength, 4 stories high..." It is similar to contemporary English Manor houses, with little defensive equipment. It was burned in 1641, then rebuilt. It was occupied for a night by James II in 1689 on his return from the Siege of Derry and was dismantled on his orders the next day. Excavations on the site in 1999 recovered four large burnt posts from the doorway in the east curtain wall, which have been dendro-dated to 1616/1617.

The castle was rectangular with a thick central wall. It had three storeys above a basement but only its north and west walls and a little of the south survive. The most distinctive feature is the triple gables to the street, with the tall chimney stack over the smaller centre gable. The stepped gables are a Scottish feature while the eight pointed star shaped brick chimney stack is derived from England. Half of a fine door survives near the south corner. Other features include the mullioned windows, which were domestic not defensive, fireplaces, a circular projecting stair tower and a rectangular tower at the north-east corner, perhaps a flanker tower on the bawn wall. On the main front there are doorways on all three floors with a scar of stairs leading to the doors. This indicates a building which would have blocked a strip of the façade either a timber stair turret or possibly a service block. Another possibility is that the house was divided into two separate residences.

The 19th century arcade in the middle of the house belongs to the corn exchange, part of the local market. Excavation in the late 1990s also revealed a Bronze Age cist with cremation burials and pottery south-west of the castle, attesting to very early human activity on this site above the river.

The site is currently locked with no access. Discussions are commencing between HED and the local community with regard to keyholding arrangements. Once this has been agreed then access can be promoted.



Pictures 26 – 29 : Newtownstewart Castle

Harry Averys Castle

The site is on a prominent hill commanding important river routes 1.2 km south-west of Newtownstewart. It is named after Henry Aimbreidh O'Neill, who died in 1392, and dates to the 14th century as excavation revealed a 14th century window head. It is one of the few native built stone castles in Ireland. An artificially scarped natural mound formed an elevated ‘bailey’ or courtyard surrounded by a polygonal curtain wall with at least two projecting towers, all now ruined to a low level. At its south-west end is a tower that looks like a gatehouse defended by a bridge pit and entered between high D-shaped towers, but the only way into the courtyard behind was up a stair and through the hall at first floor level.



Picture 30 (Harry Avery's Castle) and Picture 31 (Signage and Pedestrian Access Gate)



Pictures 32 & 33 : Harry Avery's Castle



Picture 34 : Access to Harry Avery's Castle across open farm grazing land

There is no parking at this monument but the site has a kissing gate and directional signage to the monument, which was installed in the 1980s. HED have confirmed that there is currently no right of way to the monument although the landowner has no issue for informal access across the open field. Cattle and in some instances a bull has been present in the field however and given recent advice from the Health & Safety Executive (November 2023) HED may need to temporarily close access to this site.

In regards to Livestock Management in areas where members of the public have access the Health & Safety Executive have made the following recommendations;

- Remove livestock from grazing in areas where the public have access to, therefore negating the risk.
- If this is not possible, erect adequate stock proof fencing along pathways used by members of the public to ensure livestock cannot come into contact with them.
- Signage and maintenance of signs in such areas is critical.
- Emergency procedures must be in place, documented and agreed between all parties.
- Formal agreements with livestock owners and councils/government bodies or others is essential to ensure all parties are fully aware of their legal obligations.
- All agreements and risk assessments must be reviewed on a yearly basis. If landowners or owners of livestock change, new agreements should be drawn up and the livestock owner asked to complete a risk assessment to share with the relevant parties.
- It is entirely inadequate to merely put up a number of signs indicating livestock are in the area, all parties must have very robust control measures in place to ensure the safety of members of the public in relation to livestock.

Camus Church & Graveyard

The post-medieval church & graveyard have been cut through by the now disused railway line. The church is orientated east to west. The east gable survives to almost full height. The oldest legible gravestone in this graveyard is dated 1742.



Picture 34 : Ruins of Camus Church



Picture 35 : Camus Graveyard



Pictures 36 & 37 – Railway Bridge at Camus (offering a possible connection with the Mourneside walk from Sion Mills)

The access lane to Camus Church and Graveyard from Lisky Road is an uneven farm lane, more suitable for agricultural vehicles than private cars, the legal public access on this laneway is undetermined. There may be a possibility of including Camus Church and Graveyard as part of the potential extension to the Mourneside walk from Sion Mills to the Railway Bridge at Camus which is one field length from the old church, see photos above. The site is currently maintained by DCSDC.

Lisky Court Tomb

On a rocky knoll on the north bank of the Mourne River lies a court tomb chamber. Despite a dense covering of trees & bushes, the site survives aligned east-west consisting of a split boulder backstone to the east and four slabs set two on either side forming the chamber walls. Six very large stones make up a long chamber running east-west, with a low stone sill closes the west end of the chamber. This is probably the remains of a court tomb, but without excavation the original form is uncertain. Court tombs, also known as 'horned cairns' have been dated by archaeologists to have been used between 3800 BC and 2500 BC. Court tombs are so called because they incorporate in their structure a ritual roofless court. The area of this court is usually marked by a wall constructed of upright stones. The cairn covered the chamber and filled the area between the kerbs, the front of the chamber and the court. Court tombs were generally built with their entrances facing east. The most common method of burial in court tombs was cremation. There are over three hundred and ninety known court tombs in Ireland and these occur almost exclusively in the northern half of the island.



Picture 38 : Lisky Court Tomb

HED have confirmed that there is currently no right of way to the monument. However the surrounding landowner is content for public to visit and has agreed that cars can park in his business premises adjacent to the monument.

Ardstraw Monastery & Graveyard

Site of a pre-Norman medieval Church the graveyard is said to mark the site of an earlier church founded in the 6th century by St. Eugene which continued as the seat of a bishop until the 12th century when it became part of the See of Derry.



Picture 39 : Interpretative Panel at Ardstraw Monastery & Graveyard



Picture 40 & 41 : Ardstraw Monastery & Graveyard (located either side of a narrow road at the entrance to Ardstraw)



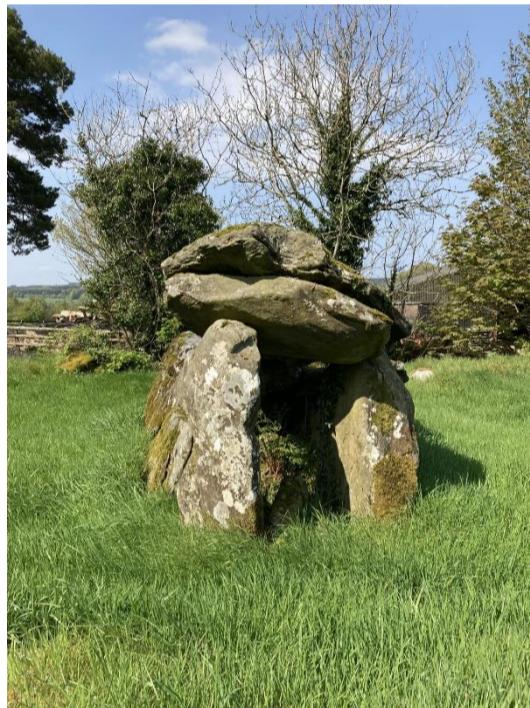
The monastery and graveyard are located at the entrance to Ardstraw village, either side of the road. There is parking for approximately one or two cars with access gates and interpretative boards on site. The site is currently maintained by DCSDC.

Ballyrenan Portal Tomb

The remains of two megalithic tombs are evident at Ballyrenan. To the east of the site a single portal tomb stands with the portals and side stones intact, however, the capstone is no longer evident. To the west stands a double portal tomb of which the western tomb appears intact. The eastern tomb has a pair of side stones and a lintel over the entrance. All of this is surrounded by cairn material. When excavated in 1907, a flint arrowhead & stone beads were found. Further excavations in 1936 uncovered sherds of at least four Neolithic pots, worked flints & beads. Two of the capstone are decorated with a series of well-formed cup-marks on their upper surfaces. There are almost two hundred portal tombs in remaining in Ireland. They are easily the most clearly recognisable type of Irish megalithic monument. Portal tombs are generally classified by a kind of entrance feature, the 'portal' or doorway opening into the burial chamber. This portal or entry is often found closed by a blocking stone. The most characteristic feature of a portal tomb is the massive capstone or roofstone, often weighing tens of tons and usually inclined at an angle with the highest portion over the entrance or portal. Archaeologists have dated portal tombs to c4000BC – c3000BC.



Picture 42 : Ballyrenan Portal Tombs



Pictures 43 and 44 : Portal Tombs at Ballyrenan.

HED have confirmed that this monument is not currently a State Care Monument and is in private ownership and scheduled for protection. As such there is no public access at present.

Pubble Graveyard

Located immediately off the Beltany Road stands the remains of a late medieval Franciscan Friary and graveyard. There are no visible remains of the abbey, which was founded by Franciscans (3rd Order) in the 15th Century. The graveyard consists of a rectangular walled enclosure. The interior is split level, which may relate to an internal structure.

The site is accessible from a public layby adjacent to the A5. The site is maintained by DCSDC with some health and safety repair works planned to be carried out to the entrance gate. The site itself is quite steep with an uneven surface and trip hazards and therefore not suitable for all.



Picture 45 : Entrance to Pubble Graveyard.



Picture 46 : Pubble Graveyard

Glenock Portal Tomb

Located 2.4 km north-east of Newtownstewart east of the minor road leading north off the B46 (Plumbridge) road at St Eugene's church. The megalith is disturbed but among the leaning stones it is possible to detect two portal stones at the north-west and a back stone. The capstone is shattered into five pieces and there are many field stones now set at the monument. The site is named "Cloghogle", meaning raised stone.



Pictures 47 & 48 : Glenknock Portal Tomb



HED have confirmed that while there is public access to State Care Monuments this access can be closed at any times on health and safety grounds by government or the landowner. At present there is no right of way to Glenknock Portal Tomb.

Corick Abbey & Graveyard

A religious foundation has existed here since the 6th century. The present ruins are of a Franciscian (3rd Order) Friary established in the 15th century. It is beautifully situated at the end of a low ridge near the confluence of the Owenkillew and Glenelly rivers.



Picture 49 : Access Gate at Corick Abbey & Graveyard



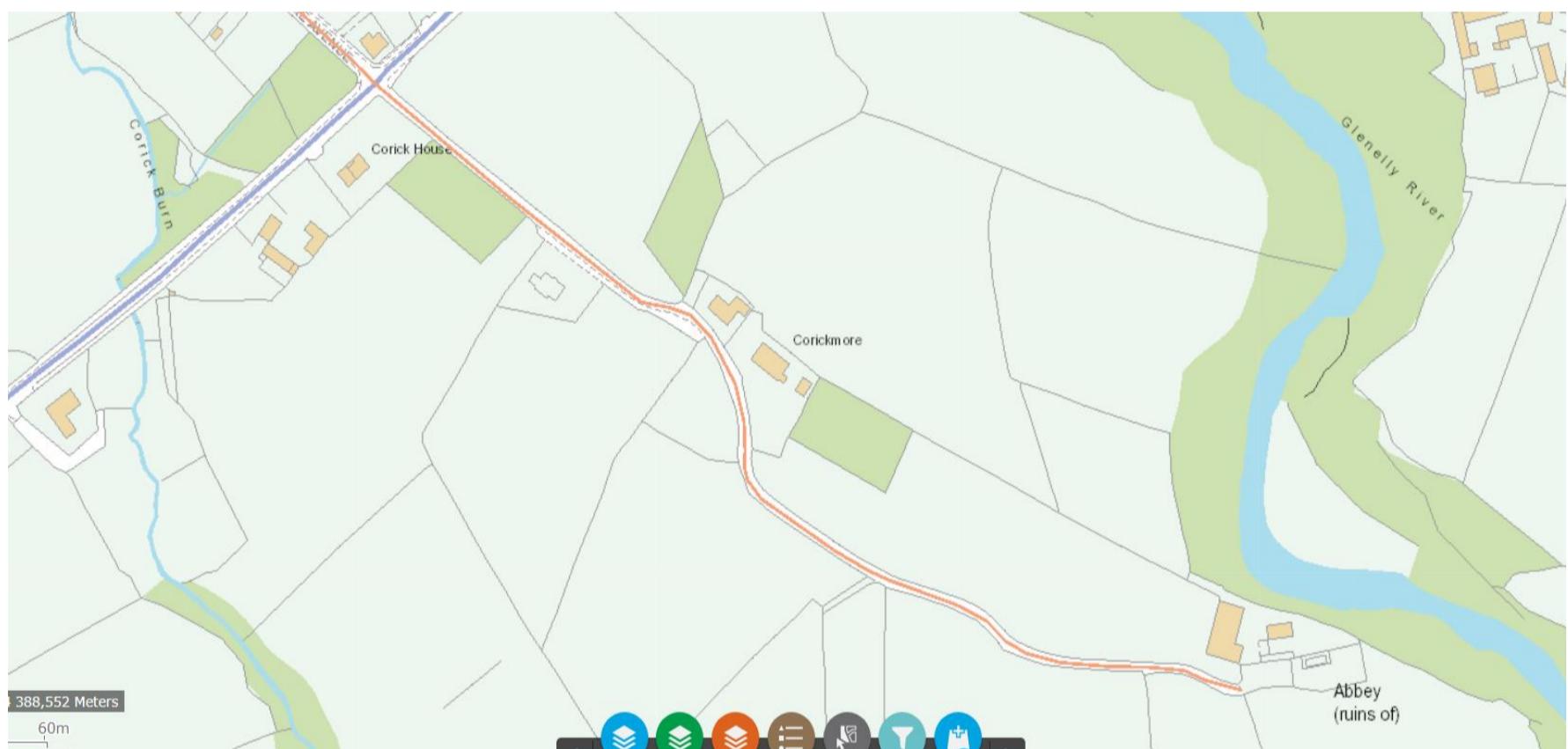
Picture 50 : Gable wall of Corick Abbey

Located off the Newtownstewart to Plumbridge road the site is accessed down a long access lane (there is currently no directional signage from the main road) which has been adopted by DFI roads service approximately 620m, up to the farm yard bitmac surface just before the graveyard entrance. The site is located adjacent to a working farm yard and the gable wall of the Abbey is structurally unsound potentially being a health and safety hazard. The site is currently maintained by DSCDC who have plans to carry out some improvements to the site in terms of access.



Picture 51 : Corick Abbey & Graveyard

Access Map to Corick Abbey and Graveyard from the B47 Newtownstewart to Plumbridge Road.



Derrywoon Castle



Derrywoon Castle is a Plantation Bawn originally built in 1622 by Sir George Hamilton of Greenlaw, brother of the James Hamilton the first Earl of Abercorn. Derrywoon castle and its environs are located within Baronscourt Estate in an undulating landscape surrounded by woodland and overlooking Lough Catherine which is to the west. The demesne is bound, c. 100m to the east of the castle, by Golf Course Road which also forms the boundary between Baronscourt and Ballyrenan townlands.

Newtownstewart History Group

There is a very vibrant history group within Newtownstewart who are keen to develop a number of projects around local heritage, stories, oral tradition, natural heritage, cultural heritage and ecclesiastical heritage. In addition to the built heritage sites listed above other potential projects include the following:

- Exploring the connection between Baronscourt and the village. Baronscourt was an important stop for visitors and led to the development of the railway station in the village. The railway has played an important role in the social life of the village over the years eg taking people out for emigration and then later welcoming people back as tourists for angling etc. GNR Railway station and the disused tracks and bridges.
- Local sites of interest : Buttermarket (Stone archway beside Roche's Solicitors). Mourne Bridge beside GAA grounds. Station Arch near Somme Hall. 'Majors Wall' on Moyle Road.
- 'Childrens graveyard' – (possibly famine?) on Sessiagh road.
- Stories/Oral tradition eg the bank robbery at the Northern Bank and the last man hanged in Omagh Jail (Thomas Montgomery 1873).
- Bessie Bell – Windfarms – this could provide walking access to the mountains.
- Old Bridges – Ardstraw Bridge (River Derg, 6 arches), Douglas Bridge (Douglas Burn, 1 arch), Old Newtownstewart Bridge (River Mourne 1727, 5 arches), Milbrook Bridge (River Derg, 5 arches), Moyle Bridge (River Strule, 1750, 3 arches), Abercorn Bridge (River Mourne 1891-1929), A5 Bridge 1 (crosses River Mourne near Pubble Graveyard), A5 Bridge 2 (crosses River Mourne near Strahulter Road).
- Ecclesiastical Heritage – Church of Ireland (St Eugene's 1622, 1723), Glenock (St Eugene's 1785), Presbyterian Church (1804, 1910), Methodist Church (1818, now a funeral home).
- Natural Heritage – mountains (Bessie Bell, Mary Gray, Legfordrum), Rivers (Strule, Derg, Mourne, Owenkillew, Glenelly)

Historic Environment Division – Accessing State Care Monuments

DFC Historic Environment Division has published the following basic rules for visitors to State Care Monuments to follow;

- Children and vulnerable adults should be supervised at all times
- Dogs must be kept under control on a lead while on site
- Always follow The Countryside Code (see below)
- State Care Monuments are protected under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Object (NI) Order 1995 and any interference with the monument may result in prosecution and criminal conviction.

The Countryside Code



Your guide to enjoying parks and waterways, coast and countryside

Respect everyone

- be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside
- leave gates and property as you find them
- do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking
- be nice, say hello, share the space
- follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available

Protect the environment

- take your litter home - leave no trace of your visit
- take care with BBQs and do not light fires
- always keep dogs under control and in sight
- dog poo - bag it and bin it - any public waste bin will do
- care for nature - do not cause damage or disturbance

Enjoy the outdoors

- check your route and local conditions
- plan your adventure - know what to expect and what you can do
- enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory

www.gov.uk/countryside-code



The Countryside Code

Follow advice and local signs

Footpath (Yellow arrow): Shows a path for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders. A red 'no access' symbol is shown for horse riders.

Bridleway (Blue arrow): Shows a path for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, and horse-drawn carriages. A red 'no access' symbol is shown for motorbikes.

Restricted Byway (Purple arrow): Shows a path for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, and horse-drawn carriages. A red 'no access' symbol is shown for motorbikes.

Byway Open to All Traffic – BOAT (Red arrow): Shows a path for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, horse-drawn carriages, and motorbikes.

National Trail
National Trails are all open for walking and some trails are also suitable for other users
www.nationaltrail.co.uk

Open Access
Areas of mountain, moorland, heathland, downland and registered common land are available to people to walk, run, explore, climb and watch wildlife, without having to stay on paths

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