

Note:

This document represents a submission to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in response to a call for proposing a new list of Irish sites for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage Site programme (for further details see: <http://www.environ.ie/en/Heritage/WorldHeritage/IrelandsTentativeList/>).

The content of the submission comprises contributions received from representatives of various organisations (e.g. Meitheal Mara, the Coastal and Marine Resources Centre – UCC) during a series of meetings held in January 2009.

The document should be considered as a work in progress and comments are welcome – please submit any comment or feedback to Cathal O'Mahony (c.omahony@ucc.ie / 021 4703111) by March 31st.



*The Cork Harbour replica 1796 Bantry long boat 'Fionnbarra'
at the finish line of the Ocean to City Race 2008*

City and Harbour of Cork - Provisions, Emigrant and Naval Port

WORLD HERITAGE SITES - IRISH TENTATIVE LIST

Submission to Minister / EHLG

Irish government aim to formally propose a new tentative list to
UNESCO in Seville in July 2009

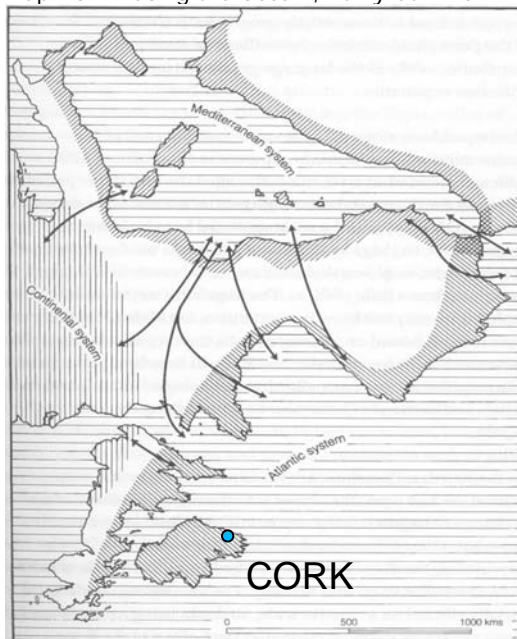
30th January 2009



Statio Bene Fide Carinis
A safe harbour for ships

1.0 City and Harbour of Cork Provisions, Emigrant & Naval Port

Map from 'Facing the Ocean', Barry Cunliffe



2.0 Location

Cork both is and is not where we think it is... It is at the same time the second city on the south-west coast of a small country but in the past it was also the last port before ships left Europe as they sailed out into the Atlantic. The city is located at the lowest bridging point of a sizeable river with a rich agricultural hinterland ideally placed to provision ships just before leaving and returning to Europe.

3.0 Description

Cork is one of Ireland's oldest cities and has been a maritime trading centre located at the lowest crossing point of the River Lee since earliest times. While the city traces its origins back to early Christian times, its modern urban form evolved from a Norse island settlement, through the Norman conquest into a medieval walled town. While this history is of great interest to the people who live here, the city is one of several Hiberno-norse towns around the Irish coast located at the mouths of navigable rivers.

4.0 Justification for its Outstanding Universal Value

What makes Cork uniquely interesting on an international scale is the part it played in a larger story – the expansion of European peoples westward from the late 17th to the early 20th centuries. The city and harbour were uniquely placed to serve as a provisioning port for ships heading west because of its geographical context. It has an enormously large safe natural harbour set in a rich agricultural area at the edge of Western Europe just before the sea routes from Britain leave the coast and head out into the open Atlantic.

18th and 19th century provisions port

Cork people are still known today for their attachment to tripe and drisheen, the parts of an animal not suitable for curing or preservation to victual a ship setting out on a long sea voyage. Other former provisions ports in western Europe such as Porto in Portugal have similar tastes. The more valuable salted butter and spiced beef, on the other hand, for which Cork was also famous, were better able to tolerate the long voyages of 18th century sailing ships.

Many structures survive in Cork which tell of its 18th and early 19th century economic and social history as a provisions port:

The lines of the 'butter roads' into the city, the butter market, Firkin Crane, Civic Trust House (a former quayside cooperage), the Crawford Art Gallery (1724 old Custom House), the Port of Cork building and bonded warehouse, the 1760 navigation wall, the former Port of Cork workshops, harbourmaster's house, graving dock and ship grid, the city quay walls among others located only in the city itself.

The distinctive 18th century architectural style of the city and harbour area has more in common with the south of England, the Low Countries and with the American colonies – the places the merchants and the ships traded with - than with the more sober styles of the rest of the island.

The great number of different dissenter religious meeting houses in Cork (Huguenots, Unitarians, Quakers, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists among others) are evidence of the influx of merchants engaged in trade during the 18th and 19th centuries. As only members of the established state church could enter the higher status professions, members of other churches concentrated on trade. Many of these people and their descendants subsequently moved on to the North American and Caribbean colonial settlements, resulting in the creation of trans-Atlantic networks of business communities as well as cultural and architectural transferences.

The effects of the provision trade in Cork live on today in the importance of the food industry in the city and county. UCC's Department of Food Science began in the 19th as the Munster Institute on the 'Model Farm' Road while the Honan family of butter merchants endowed the Honan Chapel at the college, buildings which still exist

19th century passenger port

Cobh and Cork Harbour, forever associated as they are with the loss of the *Lusitania* and of the *Titanic*, might be seen not just as the 'cove of Cork' but also of Liverpool

especially in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Structures which survive as evidence of the great movements of people through the port include:

The railway infrastructure, tunnel, stations, viaducts, Cobh heritage centre (the railway station); the terraces of tall 4-storey houses which served as lodgings for passengers coming and going on the ships.

Shipping company offices such as those of the former (Liverpool-based) White Star Line (now the Cobh post office), St. George Steampacket Company whose headquarters was at Penrose Wharf (and whose ship the '*Sirius*' was the first ship to sail from Europe to America under steam-power alone in 1838). Cobh was also the location of the American Consulate (now Cobh Town Council offices), an institution of great importance in a time of mass emigration to the US.

Spike Island in its long history as well as containing Westmoreland Fort (now Fort Mitchell) was a prison and a point of departure for less voluntary emigrants in the mid-19th century, serving as a gathering point for prisoners sentenced to transportation. The most famous transported prisoner was probably John Mitchell, author of '*Jail Journal*' after whom the fort takes its modern name. The prison is intimately associated with the famine years when thousands of prisoners were held here for trivial crimes, committed while trying to survive. The mass graveyard on the island from those years is testament to the other side of European mercantile expansion, the effects on economies and societies in the home countries which led to mass disruption of settled communities and in the worst affected countries, famine and mass emigration.

Of national importance is the catholic Cathedral of St. Colman's built between 1868 and 1914 during the peak years of Irish emigration from Queenstown (as Cobh was known until national independence). The spire of the neo-gothic church, designed by EW Pugin and George Ashlin, dominates the harbour when seen from a ship leaving the harbour at Roche's Point. Also of note on the seafront of Cobh is the former Royal Cork Yacht Club (the oldest in the world founded in 1720 and whose clubhouse is now the Sirius Arts Centre). The 1919 Fordson tractor plant on its wharf at the Marina is one of the earliest single-storey vehicle assembly plants anywhere. Built by Henry Ford, the grandson of Famine emigrants from Cork, it was his first overseas factory, perhaps the first example in the country of American direct foreign investment.

Naval port & sea defences

Blackrock Castle was first built in the 16th century at a narrow point in the upper harbour to protect the old walled city of Cork. Nearby are the ruins of Dundanion Castle associated with William Penn who left Cork for America in the 17th century. Ballincollig gunpowder mills are located on the River Lee well to the west of the city for safety. Closer to the city is Wellington Square, originally a magazine fort, as was Rocky Island adjacent to Haulbowline. Guarding the entrance to the harbour at Roche's Point are the forts of Camden, Carlisle and Westmoreland (now known as Davis, Meaghar and Mitchell) while dotted along the channels are the five Martello towers with the British Royal Navy base dating from Napoleonic times on Haulbowline Island opposite the town of Cobh.

Usefulness of designation

The intertwined strands of provisioning, emigrants and naval still exist in the city and harbour both in the surviving physical evidence listed above and, less tangibly, in the sense of identity and place of the people who live here. The Port of Cork Company continues to be one of the principal institutions in the city and harbour area. The strength of the river and coastal rowing clubs, the sailing history, Cork Week, 'Ocean to City' and the Great Island 'Round the Island' rowing races are evidence of the sense of the connection with the water.

Cork is a place that is justifiably proud of and connected to its history – that the great majority of the structures listed above are either protected structures, recorded monuments or are on official inventories is ample evidence of that. The city and harbour do not require further levels of protection for individual sites; what is necessary is to understand the connections between all the various elements so that we understand the larger story.

World heritage site designation for the city and harbour would support and assist efforts to understand the significance and importance of the place. Working together in partnership towards the achievement of the designation would help to clarify what is important for the people of Cork about their place, it would focus research and resources to where they are most needed, and, most importantly, will allow us to plan for the future without losing our past.

Cork Harbour already has a broad-based harbour forum with strong stakeholder participation including community groups as well as local authorities and state agencies.

The UCC Coastal and Marine Resources Centre, with the participation of the Harbour Forum members, led the now completed Coastal Research and Policy Integration (COREPOINT) project, and more recently, the Innovative Management for Europe's Changing Coastal Resource (IMCORE) Project. Both projects contribute to the objective of promoting a more integrated approach to understanding and developing the Harbour's resources.

Cork Harbour contains several sites of natural heritage conservation interest, and is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) both as a wetland habitat and for the important numbers of birds it supports.

The main habitats of conservation interest are the sheltered tidal mudflats and Atlantic salt meadows, which are listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. The site is extremely important for the number of wintering waterfowl and waders it supports e.g. Shelduck, Teal, Godwit, Redshank and Dunlin.

5.0 World Heritage Criteria

Criteria (ii) & (iii)

- The Harbour bears testimony to the colonialism of the first British Empire in the north and mid-Atlantic world where peoples and places were connected by sea in an intimate way that is nearly impossible to appreciate today.

This represents the interchange of human values through the interchange of peoples in terms of religious, trading, commercial, manufacturing, cultural and

architectural traditions. This is also a testament to a cultural tradition and a civilization.

- The Harbour bears testimony in a unique way, as the last port of call, to the international phenomenon of 19th century mass-emigration to North America by the poor of Europe which gave rise to the great diasporas.

The Great Famine, 1845-1848, initiated mass-emigration from Ireland to north America which lasted until the early 1900s. Paradoxically, Cork City and County remained a provisioning exporter during the period which saw it one of the worst affected areas in the country with a loss of nearly 40% of its population.

Criteria (iii)

The Harbour and City may be said to have shared in, and benefited indirectly from, the slave commerce of the 18th century and the First British Empire with strong trading links to the Caribbean and close connections to Liverpool and Bristol, and without which the city would not have prospered or developed in the way it did.

Criteria (iv)

The Harbour and City played a significant role in the infrastructure of colonialism in its importance to the British Navy who had a significant base in Cork, taking advantage of its natural defensive qualities and location at the edge of the Atlantic.

- The harbour is the cultural legacy of human co-existence within this land- and sea-scape.

It is a continuum of monuments and phenomena which address the harbour and river along the length of the channels in a planned and deliberate way, taking advantage of the variety of sloping and outcropping topography along the route.

- The type and variety of architectural and archaeological monuments along the navigation channels are directly connected to the functions of the river and harbour including:
 - A series of defensive forts associated with the British Royal Navy (with strong stylistic links to other naval bases at other sites including Gibraltar and the Caribbean)
 - Urban settlements (housing, retailing, religious, educational, commercial, industrial buildings)
 - Port and railway infrastructure
 - Countryside villas, follies and designed landscapes
 - Architecture associated with port commerce and regulation
- It exhibits a variety of architectural style that includes
 - Austere neo-classical naval defense buildings
 - Picturesque follies that take advantage of the Romantic idea of the edge of land and sea, en-route to the great unknown ocean beyond
 - 18th & 19th century villas, uniform terraced-housing in the Georgian style
 - 19th century Gothic Revival Churches, including the great cathedral of St. Colman
 - Victorian and Edwardian railway buildings and public buildings
 - 20th century industrial sites on quaysides associated with shipping

6.0 Authenticity

The sheer number of surviving sites in the city and harbour directly associated with the provisions trade, emigrant port and naval base are an original and authentic testament to the story of Cork. The structures and places are original and unaltered to an extent that a returning visitor would have little difficulty in recognising today.

7.0 Integrity

The sites that survive are not fragmentary, they are original, authentic and surprisingly complete. The elements sufficient to express the outstanding universal value exist for each of the three strands, provisions, emigrant and naval and defence port. Several of the most significant are still in their original use, e.g. the railway infrastructure to Cobh, St. Colman's Cathedral, the Port of Cork buildings, the Cathedral, Naval Base, while others have new but compatible uses, the old Custom House is now the Crawford Art Gallery, and the Royal Cork Yacht Club is now the Sirius Arts Centre.

8.0 Comparison with other similar sites

Sites with direct links to Cork Harbour

Liverpool – maritime mercantile city

World Heritage Site, (2005), home port to slaving ships in the 18th Century which provisioned in Cork and many of the passenger liners which used Cork Harbour in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

Historic town of St. George & related fortifications, Bermuda,

World Heritage Site (2000), founded 1612, the earliest English urban settlement in the new world, with fortifications from 17th to 20th Centuries.

Angra do Heroismo, Azores

World Heritage Site (1983), obligatory port of call for sailing ships from 15th Century to the advent of the steamship in the 19th Century.

Historic district of old Quebec

World Heritage Site (1985) and first port of call for emigrants to Canada until the late 19th Century. The Irish Memorial National Historic Site which commemorates the Irish emigrants to Canada during the famine years is on Grosse Ile, the island where newly-arriving emigrants were received located just to east of the city on the St. Lawrence River.

Sites with similarities but not a direct connection to Cork Harbour

Historic Centre of Porto

World Heritage Site (1996), known as a provisions port, its citation states that it looks outward to the west for its cultural and commercial links.

Bordeaux, Port of the Moon

World Heritage Site (2007), western French port with historic links to the growth of European mercantile trade.

Budapest, Buda Castle district, Andrassy, Banks of the Danube

World Heritage Site (1987 and 2002), is a very different site, but like Cork City and Harbour involves three strands in single world heritage designation.

9.0 Legal protection in place

The elements already listed under the Provisions, Emigrant and Naval Port headings in Section 4.0 above are all either protected structures in the respective Cork County and Cork City Council Records of Protected Structures, are recorded monuments in the Record of Monuments and Places, or have been identified on Local Area Plan inventories as elements of heritage importance.

10.0 Threats to property or site

Given that the individual elements listed in Section 4.0 already have legal protections in place, the principal threat facing the Harbour is from piecemeal development occurring in a way that erodes the overall significance of the place. The dispersal of the important structures and the size of the Harbour, the multiplicity of planning authorities and state agencies with responsibility for aspects of the Harbour, have led to problems of co-ordination of development in the past.

11.0 Management Issues

The potential problems or threats outlined above have led to the development of a Cork Harbour Forum representing a very wide range of public, private and community stakeholders. In May 2008 the *Cork Harbour Integrated Management Strategy*, agreed by all the forum partners was launched in the Sirius Arts Centre in Cobh. Further information is available on <http://www.corkharbour.ie>, the integrated information resource for Cork Harbour. The Harbour Forum provides an ideal framework to work towards the designation of City and Harbour of Cork - Provisions, Emigrant and Naval Port, in a way that is inclusive and useful for all stakeholders.

The Harbour represents an understanding, interpretation and perception of a world created from the primacy of access by water. This perspective, though it is the generator of the place, is not widely understood even in port cities today. However, many people in the harbour area of Cork still retain this understanding which greatly contributes to the unique character and quality of the place.

Appendix 1

Key to Map of Cork City and Harbour

Provisions port shown in red

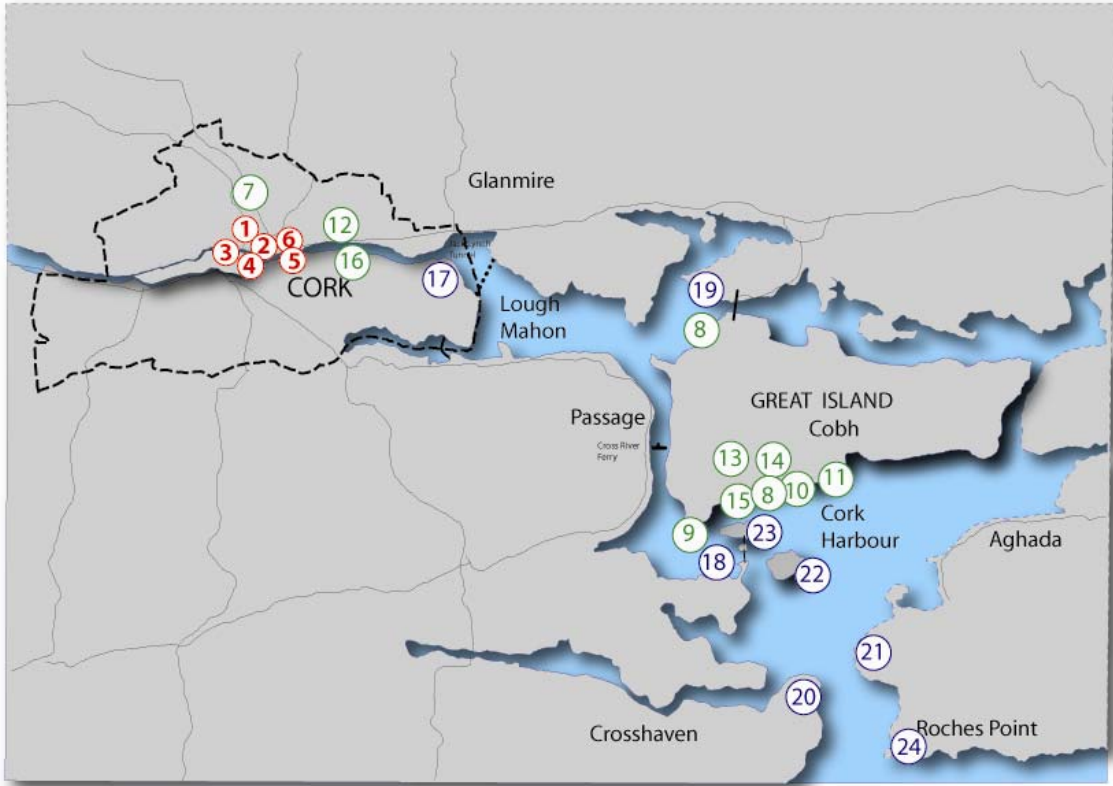
1. Butter Market, Shandon
2. Civic Trust House
3. Crawford Art Gallery (old Custom House)
4. Port of Cork Building & Bonded Warehouse
5. 1760s Navigation Wall
6. Port of Cork workshops, Harbour master's house, graving dock & ship grid

Emigrant Port shown in green

7. Railway tunnel
8. Cobh railway station
9. Dockyard, Rushbrooke
10. Victorian terraced boarding houses
11. White Star Line offices (Cobh Post Office)
12. St. George Steampacket Co. building
13. American Consulate (Cobh Town Council)
14. St. Colman's Cathedral
15. Sirius Arts Centre (former RCYC)
16. Fordson Tractor Plant

Naval Port and Sea Defences shown in blue

17. Blackrock
18. Rocky Island
19. Martello towers
20. Camden Fort
21. Carlisle Fort
22. Westmoreland Fort on Spike Island
23. Haulbowline Naval Base
24. Roche's Point Lighthouse and former Coastguard Station



Name and Contact Details of Submitter

Name: 1. Cathy Buchanan 2. Cathal O'Mahony

Status: 1. Manager 2. Senior Researcher

Address: 1. Meitheal Mara, Crosses Green House, Crosses Green, Cork
2. Coastal and Marine Resources Centre, Environmental Research Institute, University College Cork, Haulbowline Naval Base, Cobh, Co. Cork

Tel: 1. 021 4316813 2. 021 4703111

Fax: 1. 021 4316813 2. 021 4703132

Email: 1. mmara@iol.ie 2. c.omahony@ucc.ie

Signed:

Submitter

Signed:

County Manager etc. (where applicable)

Please forward completed applications to
Ms Anne Costello
Heritage Policy and Architectural Protection Section
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
1, Ardcahan Business Park
Ardcavan
Co. Wexford
worldheritagetentativelist@environ.ie

Closing date for receipt of submissions: 30 January 2009