

ROSSMORE MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN THE DIAMOND - MONAGHAN

Conservation Specification



CARRIG
CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL LTD

Atlantis Building, South Cumberland Street, Dublin 2, Ireland

T: +353 15529080 E: info@carrig.ie W: www.carrig.ie

Carrig UK, 70Cowcross Street, London, EC1M6EL, England

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Report prepared on behalf of Monaghan County Council and prepared by:

PREPARED FOR:	PREPARED BY:	CHECKED BY:
Monaghan County Council	Timothy Dowling MRIA G3 Conservation	

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1 GENERAL

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Specification defines the materials and workmanship required for the remedial conservation works to the Rossmore Memorial Fountain, The Diamond, Monaghan ("the Monument"), a protected structure erected 1875–76 by Robinson & Son of Belfast. It is to be read with: the Condition Survey (Carrig, January 2026); the Historic Research Report (Carrig, August 2026); the Outline Conservation Method Statement; the Schedule of Works by Priority; the pricing document; and the Contract. In case of conflict, the order of precedence shall be as stated in the Contract.

1.1.1 WORKS

The works are conservation works. The overriding objectives are: the protection of the public; the retention of the maximum amount of historic fabric; the stabilisation of decayed elements; and the reduction of the moisture-driven decay mechanisms identified in the Condition Survey. Nothing in this Specification shall be construed as requiring or permitting conjectural restoration.

1.1.2 CONTRACTOR

The Contractor shall allow for executing all works under the direction of the Conservation Consultant ("the CC"). Where any provision of this Specification cannot be met, or site conditions are found to differ from those described, the Contractor shall stop the affected work and seek the CC's written direction before proceeding.

All operatives executing conservation work (cleaning, repointing, consolidation, plastic repair, stone repair) shall be the skilled personnel accepted at tender stage. Substitution of key personnel requires the prior written approval of the Contracting Authority.

1.1.3 STONE/ MATERIALS

The stone types on the Monument are, per the Historic Research Report: Newry granodiorite (steps, polished columns, basin); Peterhead red granite (central fountain column); 'white Glasgow' freestone/sandstone (general superstructure, arches, vault); 'blue Cumberland' stone (heraldic plaques, sculptured panels, small upper columns); with copper elements and a later stainless steel spire tie. Final identifications are subject to petrographic confirmation under Section 5. The severely decayed elements are cut from the softer freestones; the granodiorite and granite elements are generally sound and are principally to be protected.

2 STANDARDS, GUIDANCE AND CONSENTS

2.1 WORKS

The works shall be executed in accordance with the conservation principles of the ICOMOS Venice Charter and subsequent ICOMOS doctrine, and with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage).

2.2 STANDARDS

The following standards apply insofar as relevant: I.S. EN 16096 (condition survey of built cultural heritage); I.S. EN 459-1 (building limes); I.S. EN 13139 (aggregates for mortar); BS 7913 (conservation of historic buildings — guidance); I.S. EN 17187 (characterisation of mortars used in cultural heritage); and the product standards cited in Section 6.

2.3 CONSENTS

The monument is a protected structure; the obligations arising under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), including any Section 57 declaration issued by the Council, apply to the works. The monument is not a Recorded Monument, and no consent from the National Monuments Service is required under the National Monuments Acts. Works shall comply with all conditions attaching to any statutory consents, which take precedence over this Specification.

2.4 PSCS

The works are subject to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations. The Contractor acts as PSCS and shall prepare the construction stage safety and health plan. The risk of falling stone at the vault soffit identified in the Condition Survey shall be addressed in that plan before any other site activity.

3 SUPERVISION, TRIALS, SAMPLES AND HOLD POINTS

3.1 TRIALS

No cleaning, consolidation, mortar repair, plastic repair, coating investigation or stone repair technique shall be applied generally until the corresponding trial (Appendix A) has been executed in an inconspicuous location agreed with the CC, left for the review period stated, and approved in writing. Approved trials constitute the benchmark standard for the works.

3.2 SAMPLES

The Contractor shall submit for approval: sample panels of each mortar mix (cured min. 28 days where practicable); samples/data sheets of each consolidant, grout, fixing and lead; and CVs of each operative not previously approved. Approved samples shall be retained on site for comparison.

3.3 HOLD POINTS

The activities listed in Appendix B shall not proceed beyond the stated point without the CC's written release. The Contractor's programme shall allow for inspection at each hold point.

3.4 RECORD KEEPING

The Contractor shall maintain a daily site diary, progress photography keyed to elevations/elements, and a repairs register recording for every intervention: location, date, operative, materials (product, batch, mix), and method. The register shall be handed over at completion per clause 7.15.

3.5 RETAINED FRAGMENTS

All detached or removed historic material shall be catalogued, labelled, photographed and stored securely on site in trays; no historic material shall leave the site without the CC's written instruction. Fragments suitable for reinstatement shall be identified in the repairs register.

4 SITE ESTABLISHMENT, PROTECTION AND TEMPORARY WORKS

4.1 SITE ESTABLISHMENT

The Monument stands in a live public square. The Contractor shall provide and maintain: a fully boarded, debris-netted, weather-protected independent scaffold with controlled access; hoarding/pedestrian barriers; signage and lighting; and safe public circulation routes around the works, all to the approval of the Contracting Authority and in accordance with the construction stage safety and health plan.

Interim overhead protection to the vaulted interior (crash deck or equivalent) shall be established as the first site activity, before scaffold erection over the structure, given the risk of falling stone from the vault soffit.

4.2 SCAFFOLDING

The scaffold shall be independent and free-standing. No ties, fixings or bearings into historic fabric are permitted without the CC's prior written approval; where unavoidable, they shall be located in mortar joints only and made good on removal to clause 7.5.

4.3 PROTECTIONS

Polished granodiorite and granite surfaces (steps, columns, basin, central column) shall be protected throughout with breathable, non-staining, mechanically fixed protection (no adhesive tapes to stone; no impermeable wrappings in prolonged contact). Paving shall be protected from point loads and mortar/lime staining. Any staining or damage shall be reported immediately and made good at the Contractor's expense using methods approved by the CC.

4.4 WATER RUN-OFF

Water and run-off: cleaning water shall be controlled, collected and disposed of lawfully; no discharge across public paving; no saturation of the interior. Works generating dust or spray shall be screened.

4.5 WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather limitations: no lime mortar, grout, consolidant or plastic repair shall be applied when the air or substrate temperature is below 5°C and falling, above 30°C, or when frost is forecast within the curing period; new lime work shall be protected from rapid drying, direct sun, wind, rain and frost with damp hessian and breathable sheeting, and tended (dampened) as necessary during curing.

5 RECORDING AND INVESTIGATION

5.1 PRIOR TO WORKS

Before any intervention: full photographic record of the Monument (all elevations, interior, and each element listed in Section 8), rectified or scaled where directed; and detailed recording of each individually carved capital and each heraldic plaque (high-resolution photography; photogrammetry where directed).

5.2 STRUCTURE

The vault soffit slabs shall be inspected by a conservation-accredited structural engineer (appointment to be confirmed by the Council) before any works to the vault; the engineer's direction governs clauses 7.9–7.10.

5.3 MOISTURE

Trace and record water ingress pathways from the superstructure to the vault soffit and to the heraldic plaque recesses, by inspection of joints, dome, hood mouldings and concealed interfaces. Opening-up shall be minimal, justified in writing, and approved in advance.

5.4 ANALYSIS

(a) mortar analysis of representative historic bedding and pointing mortars to I.S. EN 17187 (number of samples as directed); (b) petrographic examination of detached fragments to confirm stone types for repair matching (no sampling of sound in-situ stone without approval); (c) analysis of the suspected historic surface treatment on the heraldic plaques (documented 1905 'stone preserving solution') to establish composition and moisture behaviour. Results shall be submitted to the CC and shall inform the final mortar mixes and repair methods.

6 MATERIALS AND WORKMANSHIP

6.1 6.1 LIME AND MORTARS

- 6.1.1** Binders: natural hydraulic lime (NHL) to I.S. EN 459-1, or lime putty (CL90-S, matured min. 3 months) as scheduled. Cement, including white cement and masonry cement, is prohibited in any mix.
- 6.1.2** Aggregates: washed, well-graded sharp sands and stone dusts to I.S. EN 13139, selected to match the colour and texture of the historic mortars as established by analysis; grading generally coarse: fine as directed following analysis.
- 6.1.3** Water: clean and potable.
- 6.1.4** Additives: no plasticisers, accelerators, waterproofers or bonding agents. Pozzolans (e.g. brick dust, metakaolin) only where directed by the CC following mortar analysis.
- 6.1.5** Indicative mixes, subject in every case to confirmation by mortar analysis (clause 5.4) and approved trials (Appendix A):

Application	Indicative mix	Notes
Repointing – freestone/sandstone superstructure	1 : 2.5, NHL 2 : sand blend	Softer than adjacent stone; sacrificial; vapour-open
Repointing/bedding – granodiorite, granite, plinth, paving joints	1 : 2.5, NHL 3.5 : sand blend	Exposure at ground level; joints remain sacrificial
Plastic repair to carved freestone	1 : 3, NHL 2 (or putty/NHL blend) : matched stone dust & sand	Layered application; toned to adjacent stone
Grout for pinning/void filling	Proprietary hydraulic lime injection grout or site-batched NHL grout	Free of cement and resins; flow-tested at trial

6.2 6.2 STONE

- 6.2.1** Replacement stone (last resort only, clause 7.10): matched to the existing in geological type, colour, texture and durability, based on the petrographic results — Newry granodiorite for granodiorite elements; Peterhead granite for the central column (no replacement anticipated); a compatible Scottish or equivalent freestone for the 'Glasgow stone' superstructure; and a compatible stone for any 'Cumberland stone' elements (sources to be identified and approved; samples required). All stone laid on its natural bed unless directed otherwise.
- 6.2.2** Each replacement stone requires the CC's written approval of source, sample and dressing before cutting; profiles shall replicate the existing precisely (including the Y-profile of vault slabs) without embellishment.

6.3 CONSOLIDANTS

- 6.3.1** Stone consolidants: vapour-permeable, mineral (alkoxysilane/ethyl silicate) systems specifically formulated for the stone type, applied strictly to manufacturer's instructions by or under the direct supervision of the accredited stone conservator. Acrylic, epoxy and other film-forming consolidants are prohibited. Product selection subject to trials and the CC's approval.

6.4 6.4 FIXINGS, DOWELS AND LEAD

- 6.4.1 Pins/dowels: austenitic stainless steel grade 316 (or non-ferrous equivalent approved by the engineer), threaded or profiled for grout key, set in lime-based grout; fully concealed and set back from faces; diameter and embedment to the engineer's design.
- 6.4.2 Lead for water-shedding details: rolled lead sheet to I.S. EN 12588, code as directed Code 4/5; patinated after fixing; fixed without adhesives and without cutting of sound historic stone except as approved.

6.5 CLEANING MATERIALS

- 6.5.1 Water for cleaning: clean, low-pressure (misting/nebulous spray); brushes: soft natural or synthetic bristle only (no wire). Steam/superheated low-pressure systems (e.g. DOFF-type) may be proposed for trial. Chemical cleaners, abrasives (wet or dry), and high-pressure washing are prohibited except that a specific poulticing or micro-abrasive proposal may be trialled only with the CC's prior written approval where water methods prove insufficient at trial.
- 6.5.2 Biocides: none, except a specific proposal approved by the CC following trials, applied to manufacturer's instructions and kept clear of joints awaiting repointing.

6.6 PROHIBITED MATERIALS

- 6.6.1 See Appendix C. The presence on site of prohibited materials for use on the Monument constitutes a breach of this Specification.

7 7 WORKMANSHIP

7.1 CLEANING

- 7.1.1 Objective: reduction of biological growth, soiling and moisture retention — not uniform appearance. Historic surface patina, tooling marks and use-staining (including the pink staining to the fountain trough) shall be retained; cleaning ceases at the point directed at trial.
- 7.1.2 Method: pre-wet lightly; soft-bristle brushing with low-pressure water misting, working from top down in controlled sections; fragile, hollowed or friable areas (capitals, plaques, vault) shall be cleaned only under the stone conservator's supervision, and not at all where cleaning risks loss of fabric.

7.2 VEGETATION REMOVAL

- 7.2.1 Remove vegetation by hand with full extraction of root systems; no pulling of established roots through joints — sever, treat locally only as approved, and extract on decay; make good disturbed joints to clause 7.5.

7.3 REMOVAL OF CEMENTITIOUS AND DEFECTIVE REPAIRS

- 7.3.1 Remove failing, cementitious or damaging patch repairs and pointing by hand using fine tools; no disc cutters or mechanical percussion on or adjacent to historic stone except that a small oscillating tool may be trialled for thick cementitious pointing only with the CC's approval. Where removal would damage the stone more than retention, stop and seek direction. Sound, sympathetic earlier repairs identified in the Condition Survey shall be retained.

7.4 RAKING OUT

- 7.4.1 Rake out decayed/open joints by hand to a minimum depth of twice the joint width or to sound mortar, whichever is greater; square backs; no widening of joints; no damage to arrises; dust and debris flushed/blown clear.

7.5 REPOINTING

- 7.5.1 Dampen backgrounds; place mortar in firm layers, well compacted; finish flush or slightly recessed to the historic profile as directed at trial (no strap or ribbon pointing, no feathering over stone faces); beat back with stiff brush at initial set to expose aggregate and close shrinkage; cure to clause 4.6.

7.6 CONSOLIDATION

- 7.6.1 Consolidate friable stone only where directed following trials: apply consolidant to the approved trial standard (rates, cycles, timing) to a dry-as-practicable substrate within manufacturer limits; protect from rain and sun during cure; record consumption per location in the repairs register. Consolidation shall precede any adjacent mortar repairs where the two interact.

7.7 MORTAR REPAIR

- 7.7.1 Mortar repairs are limited strictly to: stabilising vulnerable edges and undercut fragile areas; filling voids and water-traps that hold moisture against the stone. They shall not recreate lost ornament (capitals, plaques, bosses except as clause 7.7.3).

- 7.7.2** Preparation: remove only material that is detached or beyond retention; undercut edges lightly for key without enlarging the loss; non-ferrous armatures only where necessary and approved. Apply in layers max. 10–15 mm, scratch-keyed between coats; final surface profiled to shed water, set slightly below adjacent arrises, and toned with mineral pigments to read quietly against the stone; no feather edges.
- 7.7.3** Bosses and displaced carved elements (outer arches): re-bed or re-fix in situ in lime mortar; limited plastic repair to reinstate overall form only where reliable physical or documentary evidence exists and the CC directs.

7.8 HISTORIC SURFACE TREATMENT (HERALDIC PLAQUES)

- 7.8.1** Following analysis (clause 5.4c), where the historic treatment is demonstrated to be trapping moisture, its reduction or removal may be directed on a trial-first basis, executed by the stone conservator using the gentlest effective method; otherwise it shall be left undisturbed and recorded.

7.9 REMOVAL OF LOOSE STONE AND PINNING (VAULT SOFFIT AND PLAQUES)

- 7.9.1** Remove imminently unstable fragments by hand under controlled conditions from protected access, catalogued to clause 3.5; no bars or levers against sound stone.
- 7.9.2** Pinning/dowelling of cracked vault slabs only where the engineer directs: drill positions in joints or losses where possible; wet diamond drilling at slow speed; dowels to clause 6.4.1 set in grout to clause 6.1.5; entry points made good to match; each pin recorded (location, size, embedment) in the repairs register.

7.10 STONE REPLACEMENT (LAST RESORT)

- 7.10.1** Only where stone has lost structural integrity and cannot be safely retained, and only with the CC's written direction element-by-element. Cut out minimum extent; new stone to clause 6.2, bedded and pointed in lime mortar; existing adjacent fabric protected from cutting; removed historic stone retained to clause 3.5.

7.11 DRAINAGE AND WATER-SHEDDING

- 7.11.1** Execute the approved subtle improvements at: plinth/column base interfaces (falls, joint profiles); arch-gable junctions (joint integrity, discreet lead or stone water-shedding details to clause 6.4.2); and above plaque level. All such details reversible, visually recessive and approved by sample/mock-up before general execution.

7.12 REDUNDANT SERVICES

- 7.12.1** Survey, drain, cap and make safe redundant fountain pipework without disturbance of historic fabric; record routes as found; no removal of concealed pipework unless directed.

7.13 MONITORING INSTALLATIONS

- 7.13.1** Where directed, install discreet crack-monitoring (tell-tales/stud arrays) at the marble/limestone column base cracks and vault slabs; locations approved; baseline readings recorded and handed over.

7.14 COMPLETION CLEANING AND DEMOBILISATION

- 7.14.1** On completion: remove all protection, temporary works and materials; leave the Monument and its surrounds clean and free of lime residues; make good any scaffold-related disturbance; joint inspection with the CC against the recording set.

7.15 RECORDS AND HANDOVER

- 7.15.1** Hand over: the complete repairs register; final photographic record; as-executed schedules/drawings; product and batch data; analysis and trial results; monitoring baselines; retained fragment catalogue; and contribute to the 10-year cyclical inspection and maintenance plan prepared with the CC.

8 SCHEDULE OF WORKS BY ELEMENT

Cross-references are to the workmanship clauses above. Priorities per the Schedule of Works by Priority. Quantities and pricing are in the pricing document.

Element	Works	Clauses
Vault soffit (P1)	Engineer inspection; recording; removal of loose fragments; consolidation trials/execution; pinning of cracked slabs as directed; repointing of joints above vault; moisture-pathway repairs; replacement only as last resort.	5.1–5.3, 7.6, 7.9, 7.5, 7.10
Heraldic plaques (P1)	Recording; treatment analysis; removal of unstable fragments; consolidation; void/water-trap infill only; water-shedding above; no re-carving.	5.1, 5.4, 7.8, 7.9.1, 7.6, 7.7, 7.11
Lower internal capitals (P2)	Recording each capital; controlled cleaning; drying-potential improvements; consolidation trials/execution; minimal edge-protection repairs; no replication of lost foliate detail.	5.1, 7.1, 7.6, 7.7
Column bases, plinth, drainage (P2)	Ground/falls investigation; removal of cementitious repairs; raking out and repointing; discreet localised repairs; crack monitoring; drainage improvements.	5.3, 7.3–7.5, 7.7, 7.11, 7.13
Outer arches & gables (P3)	Cleaning; vegetation removal; localised repointing; re-fixing/re-bedding of displaced bosses; water-shedding at gable junctions.	7.1, 7.2, 7.5, 7.7.3, 7.11
Upper body & lettered shields (P3)	Cleaning; localised repointing; retain sound applied facing repairs (record); no coatings.	7.1, 7.5, 3.4
Central fountain assembly (P3)	Protection of granite column; record and discreet make-good at missing spout; trial cleaning of basin (retain patina); cap redundant pipework.	4.4, 7.7, 7.1, 7.12
Pinnacle & upper colonnade (P3)	Light cleaning where intrusive; inspect earlier repairs and stainless tie (no alteration); include in maintenance plan.	7.1, 3.4, 7.15
Plinth & paving (P3)	Careful cleaning avoiding joint damage; minor maintenance; protection throughout works.	7.1, 4.4
Whole monument	Recording before/during/after; site protection; completion cleaning; records and handover; maintenance plan.	5.1, 4.1–4.6, 7.14, 7.15

9 APPENDIX A – SCHEDULE OF TRIALS

Trial	Scope	Review period
T1 Cleaning – freestone	Min. 0.5 m ² per method proposed, inconspicuous location; establishes end-point standard	7 days
T2 Cleaning – polished granodiorite/granite/basin	Small discrete areas; confirms no loss of polish/patina; includes basin staining reduction trial	7 days
T3 Mortar mixes	Sample panels per mix following analysis; colour/texture match assessed dry	28 days
T4 Repointing	Min. 1 m of joint per exposure/stone type incl. finishing profile	14 days
T5 Consolidation	Discrete area per stone type/product; absorption and appearance assessed	28 days
T6 Plastic repair	One repair per repair type incl. toning	14 days
T7 Historic treatment reduction (plaques)	Only if directed following analysis; smallest practicable area under conservator supervision	As directed
T8 Grout flow/injection	Bench trial plus first in-situ pin/void as trial	As directed

10 APPENDIX B – SCHEDULE OF HOLD POINTS

No.	Hold point — work shall not proceed beyond	Release by
H1	Start of any works: until interim overhead protection to the interior is complete and the recording set (clause 5.1) is approved	CC + PSCS
H2	Any works to the vault soffit: until the engineer's inspection and direction are issued	Engineer + CC
H3	General application of any cleaning, mortar, consolidant or repair: until the corresponding trial (Appendix A) is approved	CC
H4	Consolidation or plastic repair of any carved work (capitals, plaques, bosses): until element-specific approval	CC
H5	Any pinning, dowelling or stone replacement: until the engineer's design/direction and the CC's written approval	Engineer + CC
H6	Removal of any historic material from site	CC (written instruction)
H7	Striking of interior overhead protection: until the vault stabilisation works are complete and inspected	Engineer + CC + PSCS

11 APPENDIX C – PROHIBITED MATERIALS AND PRACTICES

- Cement (including white/masonry cement) in any mortar, grout or repair.
- Impermeable coatings, sealants, water repellents, anti-graffiti coatings, or film-forming consolidants (acrylic, epoxy) anywhere on the Monument.
- Resin injection or rigid epoxy structural repairs.
- High-pressure washing; abrasive blast cleaning (wet or dry) except an approved micro-abrasive trial; wire brushes; aggressive chemical cleaners.
- Disc cutters or percussive mechanical tools on or immediately adjacent to historic stone (limited exception per clause 7.3.1).
- Ferrous fixings, armatures or dowels.
- Re-carving or conjectural reconstruction of lost ornament (capitals, heraldic plaques, inscriptions).
- Adhesive tapes or impermeable wrappings in prolonged contact with stone; fixings into stone for temporary works without approval.
- Application of lime works outside the temperature/weather limits of clause 4.6.
- Biocides, except a specific approved proposal per clause 6.5.2.

