

# Visitor Management Proposal

## Carran Church



**GeoparkLIFE:**  
Tourism for Conservation

### INTRODUCTION

Pressures on heritage attractions are increased through visitor promotion in tourism destinations.

Changes occur in visitor numbers, popularity of sites and pressures on attractions over time.

Good management must be able to recognise and measure these changes and adapt appropriately to implement effective conservation practice while ensuring visitor satisfaction.

Only through understanding all the pressures that impact on an attraction can effective management actions be designed and implemented.

Initial management decisions are often made with a degree of uncertainty as to the future impact of the action proposed. Adaptive management is a structured process which can reduce this uncertainty over time through continuous monitoring, reviewing of the changes and adaptation of actions where required. Through the implementation of this process the management team become very familiar with all the integrated aspects of the site and can adapt their actions quickly to address negative changes.

The Burren & Cliffs of Moher GeoparkLIFE programme developed a set of guides, toolkits and case studies to facilitate tourism destination managers to reconcile tourism development with the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage. Included in the toolkits are a Heritage Site Visitor Management Plan Template and a Heritage Site Monitoring app and portal website.

<http://www.burrengeopark.ie/geopark-life/guides-and-toolkits/>

The Heritage Site Visitor Management toolkit development was based on practical application at seven demonstration sites within the Burren region. This document has been compiled to illustrate the practical use of the toolkit for the Carran Church demonstration site and to provide a Visitor Management Planning Proposal for the attractions located within this site.

**Zena Hctor**

**GeoparkLIFE Sites and Monuments Co-Ordinator**

**May 2018.**

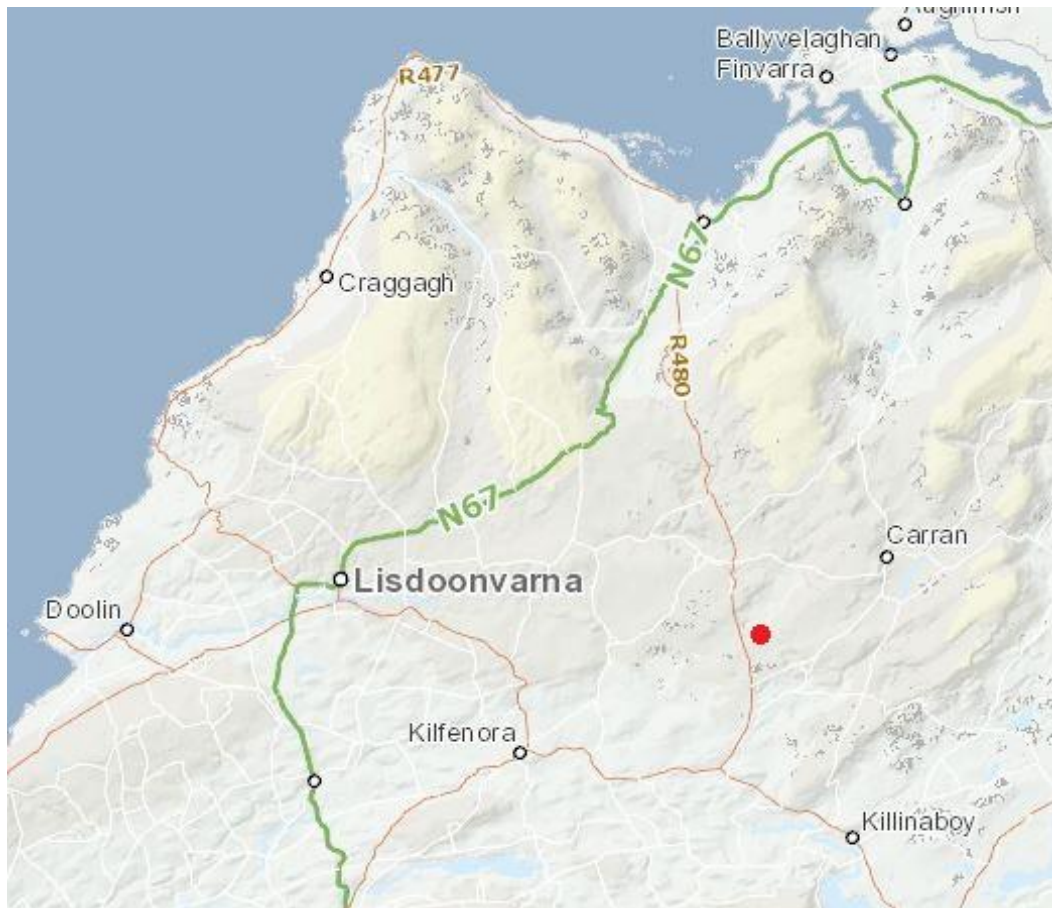
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## SECTION ONE: SITE IDENTIFICATION

### 1.1. Name and Location

Site Name	Carran Church
Townland	Poulacarran
ITM E	523960
ITM N	697418
OS Discovery Series Sheet No.	51
OS 6 - inch Series Sheet No.	CL009

Site location map.



Map 1: Carran Church location marked in red

## SECTION TWO: SITE SIGNIFICANCE

### 2.1. Site type and features

From the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century this was the site of the primary church of the largest parish in the Burren. Carran Church as it exists today, consists of the remains of a 16<sup>th</sup> century fortified parish church, set along the north boundary of a rectangular graveyard where burial still occurs. The church is orientated east-west and retains many original features of interest.



Photograph 1: View of Carran Church from south

It is constructed of undressed, rubble, field limestone set in erratic courses with lime mortar. The side walls are battlemented above the wall plate level with a narrow parapet wall broken by narrow splayed loops. The north-west corner carried a pair of machicoulis, each resting on a pair of curved corbels, one of which is extant today. There is evidence to suggest that the wall-walk extended around the west gable and may have supported a belfry. A finely carved south doorway has a moulded external architrave rising to a pointed arch, covered with a carved hooded dripstone. An incised consecration cross is carved on the west side of the inner doorway and a plain water stoup is located on the east side. The altar of the church was located beneath the east window. All three remaining windows have tall narrow openings with carved stone surrounds. The exterior of the ogee headed arch in the most easterly window in the south wall is decorated with floral motifs. Only the sill stone remains of the second window in the south wall. On the interior north wall a small carved head of a soldier or knight projects from a plain block of stone. On the west gable protruding corbels indicate where the floor of an upper storey rested. In the surrounding field are two house sites of indeterminate age, a settlement cluster and three stone cairns associated with traditional burial customs.





**Photograph 2: South Doorway of Church**  
church interior.

**Photograph 3: Medieval sculptured head in**

### 2.2. Specific features of Visitor Interest

Carran Church is visible from the R480 road, a busy tourist route which runs through the central Burren. There are several archaeological and geological features of interest along this route which are accessible to visitors as commercial centres (e.g. Aillwee Cave Centre) or state provided public access points (e.g. Poul nabrone Portal Tomb). Carran Church is signposted at the roadside entrance and is often visited by tourists 'passing along this route' who see the monument from the road. Features of visitor interest include the 16<sup>th</sup> century architectural features of the Church, the headstones and burial within the graveyard and church and the remains of house sites and stone cairns within the surrounding field.

### 2.3. Regional Context of the Site

Carran Church was the focal point of the largest Medieval Parish in the Burren from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The agricultural field in which the church and graveyard are located contains the archaeological remains of two house sites of indeterminate age, an undefined settlement cluster, associated field walls and five stone cairns. The site overlooks the geologically important closed Carran Meggah Depression, which extends for 2km to the northeast below the church site and covers an area of approximately 7km<sup>2</sup>. It is a spectacular example of a large complex doline and is one of the oldest geomorphological features in the Burren. The rocky slopes and cliffs surrounding the depression are, in places, buried with boulder clay indicating that it is older than the last glaciation. It is suggested that the depression began to be formed when this whole area was covered in shale and a surface river cut down through the shale and into the limestone, eventually disappearing underground. The resulting valley would have acted as a focus for runoff, enlarging the depression by dissolution. Carran Church is situated on rocks belonging to the Ballyelly Member of the Slievenaglasha Formation – some of the youngest limestone layers in the Burren. The stones used in the construction of the Church were most likely sourced locally. (Ref: Geological Survey of Ireland, Clare County Geological site reports)

### 2.4. Associated local Folklore and /or Traditions

T.J. Westropp in 'A Folklore Survey of County Clare' 1910-1913, states that the north-west corner of Carran church overhangs and is destined to fall on the wisest man that shall pass below it.

Within the field that surrounds Carran Church and graveyard there are a number of small stone cairns. These may have been used as penitential stations in the past. An old custom was to carry the coffin around the largest cairn, located to the south of the church, before bringing it into the graveyard for burial.

### 2.5. Associated Placenames and their meanings

O'Donovan in the Ordnance Survey Letters of 1839 states that 'the old Church Teampull a Chairn, i.e., the Church of Carn, or the Sepulchral Heap'. The townland name Poulacarran translates to 'the hollow of the Cairn'.

### 2.6. Social and Cultural History of the site

Carran Church graveyard has been used for burial possibly as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It is still in use today by the local community. Local resident, Martin Fitzgerald is the official caretaker of the graveyard.

### 2.7. Reports/Research

Architectural Conservation Professionals 2009 '*Carran Church – Recommendation's for Measures to Stabilise the Fabric*' Burren Connect Project, Clare County Council.

CAAS Ltd. 2015 '*Pilot Visitor Observation Studies of Environmental Impacts at the Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark, Co. Clare*'. GeoparkLIFE project, Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark, Clare County Council.

Dowd, A., B. Crumlish, O'Gorman D. 2007 '*A Landscape Survey of Carran Church in the Burren, County Clare*' Unpublished Thesis Masters of Landscape Archaeology NUI Galway

Frost, James, 1893 '*The History and Topography of County Clare*'

Hector, Z. (2015) '*Carran Church Site Assessment Report*' GeoparkLIFE, Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark, Clare County Council. <http://www.burrengeopark.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Carran-Church-Site-Assessment-Report.pdf>

Lewis, S. 1837 '*County Clare: A History and Topography*'

O'Donovan J., Curry, E. 1839 'Ordnance Survey Letters'

Parkes, M., McAteer, C. & Engering S. 2005. *The Geological Heritage of Clare. An audit of County Geological Sites in Clare.* Geological Survey of Ireland. Unpublished Report.

Saunders, J. 2015 '*Buses in the Burren 2014 – A study of the Impacts and Issues*' Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark

UaCróinín, R. 2017 '*Archaeological Excavation Report – Carran Medieval Church, Poulacarran, Carran, Co. Clare*' Clare County Council.

Westropp T.J. 1916 '*Archaeology of the Burren*'

Westropp T.J. 1900 '*The Churches of County Clare*'

Westropp T.J. 1910-1913 '*A Folklore Survey of County Clare*'

## SECTION THREE: BASELINE SITE CONDITION ASSESSMENT

The site condition data presented in this section has been compiled through the GeoparkLIFE baseline survey of Carran Church in 2014. <http://www.burrengeopark.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Carran-Church-Site-Assessment-Report.pdf>

### 3.1. Approach to the Site

Describe the approach roads to the site

Carran Church is approached from a north-south axis on the R480. The road is narrow and problems can occur when large coaches are passing in opposite directions.

Is there directional road signage to the site?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, enter the ITM co-ordinates for its location

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the condition of the signage?

[Choose an item.](#)

Timescale for action required

[Choose an item.](#)

Is there a roadside site name sign present?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, enter the ITM co-ordinates for its location

523912 697359

What is the condition of the signage?

Good

Is the sign damaged?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, describe the damage and its cause

Timescale for action required

[Choose an item.](#)



Photograph 4: Road site entry sign



## Visitor Management Proposal

Are there parking facilities available at the site?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, is it

Official ☐ Unauthorised ☒

How many spaces are currently available?

3

How many spaces are reserved for disabled visitors?

0

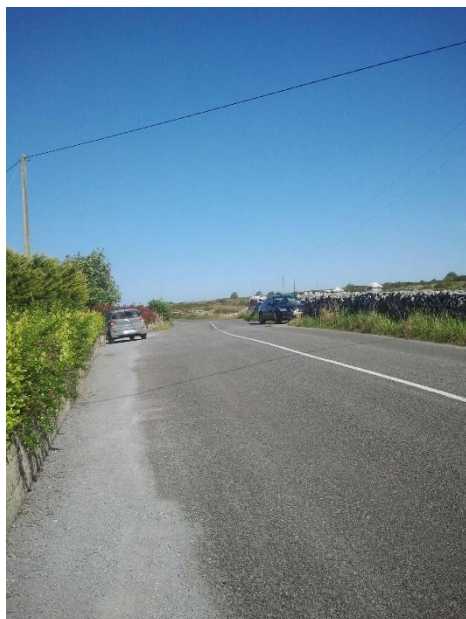
Enter the number of spaces available for

Coaches 0

Cars 3

Motor Bikes 0

Push bicycles 0



Photograph 5: Unofficial roadside parking at Carran Church

Are the current parking facilities adequate?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If no, what is the estimated number of spaces

required for

Coaches [Click here to enter text.](#)

Cars 10

Motor Bikes [Click here to enter text.](#)

Push bicycles [Click here to enter text.](#)

### Additional Comments re Approach to Site

There is no damage to the road site sign but it carries the symbol of the state management agency 'Dúchas' which is no longer operational. The sign needs updating.

Limited and unofficial parking occurs along the road verge, in front of the Fitzgerald's family home, which is on the opposite side of the road from the Church. This pull in area can accommodate 3-4 cars. If coaches park here they create traffic congestion. However it is very unusual for coaches to park at this site. Occasionally visitors approaching from the north (Ballyvaughan direction) park in a roadside gateway entrance to the north of the church, thereby blocking the entrance to a private dwelling access laneway.

## 3.2. Site Entry

Select the site entrance type

Gate	Stile	Gap in wall	Other
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		If other, please specify

Is there an access Path?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, specify

the surface covering

Grass

the incline

Level

Are there steps present?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, specify how many

2 at road entrance stile and 3 at graveyard entrance stile

Are there resting points along the path?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, specify the type and number

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Are there areas of erosion along the path/trail?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, take photographs of these areas, note the location (ITM E; ITM N) and measure the width of the path at this point in metres.

### Additional Comments re Site Entry

The site is entered from the R480 roadway into a pasture field in which the Church is located. The entry from the road is via a pedestrian gate (which is locked except when burials are taking place) or via an adjacent 2 stepped stone stile. The visitor walks across the grass field for approximately 500m to the boundary wall of the graveyard. Entry into the graveyard, within which the Church is located is via a pedestrian gate (which is locked except when burials are taking place) or via an adjacent 3 stepped stone stile.

## 3.3. Way Finding

### 3.3.1. Site Signage

Specify the type of **on-site signage** present

Directional	Interpretive	Health & Safety	Fógra	Private Property	Environmental Information	Other
✓	✓	✓	✓			If other, please specify

Note any damaged signs and fill in the following table

Type of sign	Location (ITM E; ITM N)	Damage description	Source of Damage	Action Required	Timescale for Action required
Interpretive	523960 697392	Text is faded and sign is discoloured	Natural	Replacement of sign with updated interpretation	2-6 months



Photograph 6: Interpretive sign at Carran Church

### Additional Comments re on-site signage

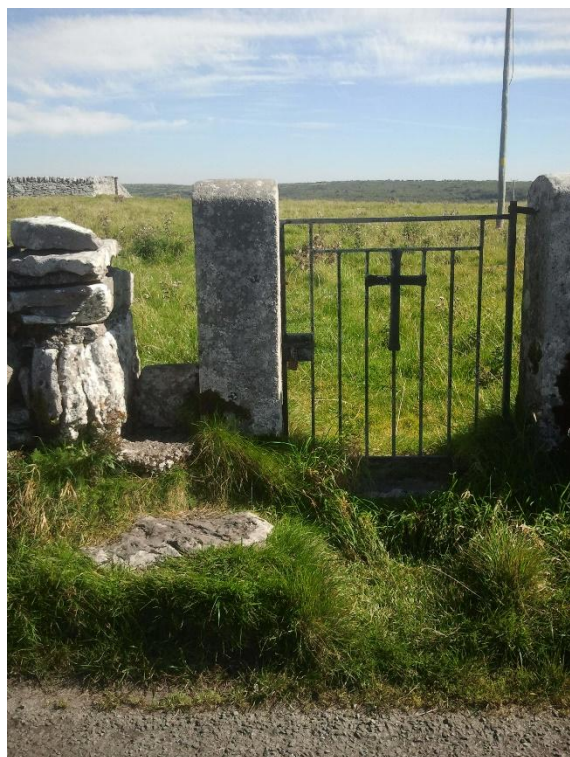
The current directional road signage to the site and the interpretive panel both carry the 'Dúchas' symbol. The amalgamation of state agencies that operated under the name 'Dúchas' is no longer operational and the site is not managed by any state agency. Both signs should be replaced and the correct management logo (i.e. Clare County Council) inserted.



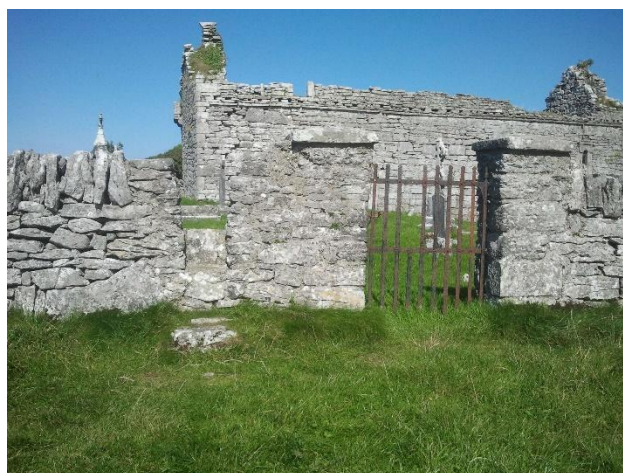
## 3.3.2. Restrictions to Visitor Access

Note any **restrictions to access** that may cause difficulty for the visitor as they move around the site filling the detail into the following table.

Description of restriction on access	Location (ITM E; ITM N)	Difficulty caused	Action Required	Timescale for Action
Narrow stepped stile at road entrance	523911 697358	Difficult for less abled bodied to enter as adjacent entry gate is kept locked and only opened when burials are taking place.	Unlock gates for continuous entry	Immediate
Narrow stepped stile at graveyard entrance	523964 697392	As above	As above	Immediate



Photograph 7: Stepped stile at road entry



Photograph 8: Stepped stile at graveyard entrance

## Additional Comments re restrictions on acces

To alleviate the problem with access via the existing stiles, the gate at both the road entrance and graveyard entrance should be unlocked to allow least restrictive access to the site for all visitors.

## 3.3.3. On Site Visitor Facilities

Note any **on-site visitor facilities**

Guides	Site Warden	Toilets	Coffee Shop	Viewing Platform	Other
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	If other, please specify

Note any damage to any facilities and take photographs. Provide written detail in the table below.

Facility type	Location (ITM E; ITM N)	Description of damage	Action Required	Timescale for Action

### Additional Comments re on-site visitor facilities

Directional signage and an interpretive panel are currently provided on site. As this site attracts a relatively small number of visitors (see section 3.4.) and the average stay time is approximately 8 minutes, none of the other facilities listed above are currently required.

## 3.4. Structural Condition

In 2005, the Conservation Officer of Clare County Council, Risteard UaCróinín inspected Carran Church and submitted a condition report to Clare County Council concluding that the building was suffering from the effects of settlement, weather and the elements. He recommended that essential conservation works be carried out as soon as possible to alleviate this condition and that the building should be assessed by an approved conservation engineer to determine the methods and materials that would be required to carry out immediate remedial works.

In 2009, the Burren Connect Project (Clare County Council) commissioned Architectural Conservation Professionals, Limerick to complete a study of the building and make recommendations for its stabilisation. (ACP, 2009)



### 3.5. Visitor Numbers

#### 3.5.1. Bus Survey

As part of the GeoparkLIFE '*Buses in the Burren 2014 – A study of the Impacts and Issues*' (Saunders, J. 2015), the access routes and direction of travel of buses in the Burren was determined for July 17, 2014 by undertaking a driver/guide survey at the Cliffs of Moher and combining the results with data from a Clare County Council Road Traffic Census carried out on the same day. The results showed that 48 buses travelled along the R480 on this day (10 public day trips, 38 private tours). There are no details available as to the number of buses that stop at Carran Church but the number is likely to be very low due to the lack of parking facilities.

<http://www.burrengeopark.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Burren-Coach-Tourism-Study-Final-Report.pdf>

#### 3.5.2. Footfall Counters

The GeoparkLIFE project installed a footfall counter inside the road entry stile to Carran Church, on September 11, 2014 to measure visitor numbers and times of visit. Data is collected and analysed on a regular basis by GeoparkLIFE staff and shared with relevant site managers. An estimated 4,000 people visit Carran Church annually. (Detailed numbers in Table 2 page 21)

### 3.6. Visitor Attitudes

A Visitor Attitudes Survey was conducted at Carran Church between 5<sup>th</sup> September and 11<sup>th</sup> October 2014 as part of a wider survey of all seven GeoparkLIFE project demonstration sites.

<http://www.burrengeopark.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Milward-Brown-Visitor-Survey.pdf>

45 people were interviewed. The purpose of this survey was to record visitor's attitudes to the infrastructure at Carran Church and to the wider Burren. The results indicate:

- 61% of visitors interviewed gave a rating of between 8-10 for signposting to the site (1 being poor and 10 high):
- 44% rated physical entry between 8 and 10
- 11% rated parking facilities between 8 and 10
- 98% arrived by car to the site
- 64% noticed the information; 69% read them entirely and 22% partially; of those that read the boards 63% felt that they added to their understanding of the Burren.
- 24% were very satisfied with the site and the remaining 67% were satisfied.
- 80% were travelling in hired cars; 18% in their own car and 2% by pushbike.

(Appendix I)

### 3.7. Visitor Behaviour and Impacts

Two sets of Visitor observations were carried out at Carran Church in September 2014 under the GeoparkLIFE project to determine visitor movement around the site and how visitor behaviour is impacting on the site.

- On September 6, 2014 44 visitors were observed.  
The results indicate that:
  - 66% arrived by car – no coaches were recorded
  - 48% read the information board
  - 77% were involved in low impact activity (i.e. one which has no discernible, lasting damage on the site)
  - 73% of visitors had no effect on the environment of the site; 4% were involved in light littering and 23% in the movement of material (stones rooted vegetation, fauna).

<http://www.burrengeopark.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/CAAS-Monitoring-Report.pdf>
- On September 10, 2014 visitor observations were carried out by GeoparkLIFE between 11am and 4pm.  
The results of these observations indicate:
  - 100% of visitors arrived by car
  - 60% read the information board
  - 33% of groups were observed parked in private residential gateways
  - 86% of visitors were involved in low level impact activities with no effects on the environment of the site observed.
  - 14% were involved in high impact activity i.e. climbing over boundary walls to gain access to field surrounding site and walking off the designated access track.
  - The average time spent by visitors at the site was 8 minutes(Appendix I)

## SECTION FOUR: SITE MANAGEMENT

### 4.1. Ownership

Name of Site Owner(s)

Clare County Council

Name of Site Manager(s)

Clare County Council. Martin Fitzgerald, Graveyard Caretaker.

### 4.2. Legal Properties

Are there any Rights of Way on the site?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Provide detail

There is a right of way across the field from the road entrance gateway to the entrance gateway to the graveyard. The land through which this right of way passes is the property of John Marrinan, Clooncoose.

Are there any Legal Burdens on the site?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Provide detail

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### 4.3. Protective Designations

Is the site a designated National Monument?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, what is its status?

National Monument in Local Authority ownership

Are any feature(s) of your site recorded in the:

(a)Record of Monument and Places (RMP)

Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, insert its Registration Number

Church CL009-075001  
Graveyard CL009-075002  
Clearance cairn CL009 – 075003  
Settlement Cluster CL009- 075005  
House (indeterminate age) CL009 - 075011  
House (indeterminate age) CL009 – 075010

(b) Record of Protected Structure (RPS)

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, insert its Registration Number

[Click here to enter text.](#)

(c)National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) Yes ☐ No ☒

## Visitor Management Proposal

If yes, insert its Registration Number

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Is the site located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, insert the name of the ACA

[Click here to enter text.](#)

If the site contains natural heritage features are they within the following designated areas?

(a) Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, insert the Site Name and Code

East Burren Complex Special Area  
of Conservation (SAC 001962)

(b) Special Protection Area (SPA)

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, insert the Site Name and Code

[Click here to enter text.](#)

(c) Natural Heritage Area (NHA or pNHA)

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, insert the Site Name and Code

[Click here to enter text.](#)

#### 4.4. Current Visitor Management Structure

The Carran Church site is owned and managed by Clare County Council as a National Monument in Local Authority Care and as a community graveyard. Local resident Martin Fitzgerald is employed on a retainer as the graveyard caretaker by Clare County Council.

#### 4.5. Potential Future Visitor Management Issues

Provide detail of any issues with the current management structure and/or actions being taken which may have implications for the future visitor management of this site

For the future management of Carran Church as a visitor attraction, the following issues will need to be addressed:

- The North-west corner of the Church is unstable and has been identified as being in danger of collapse. Conservation repairs are required to prevent this occurring and to stabilise the rest of the structure.
- Currently there is no official visitor parking at this site. Parking occurs along the roadside causing potential safety hazards.
- The landowner of the surrounding agricultural field is concerned with visitors accessing the site by climbing over the drystone boundary walls of the field and causing damage. He is also concerned with visitors wander randomly through the field to reach the church while farm animals are grazing.
- Any actions undertaken need to be carefully monitored in terms of their future impact and to inform any adaptive management adjustments which may be necessary to alleviate negative impacts.

## SECTION FIVE: SUMMARY OF SITE VISITOR MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Through the GeoparkLIFE project baseline studies (2014) and working group consultation, the following issues for visitor management at Carran Church were identified.

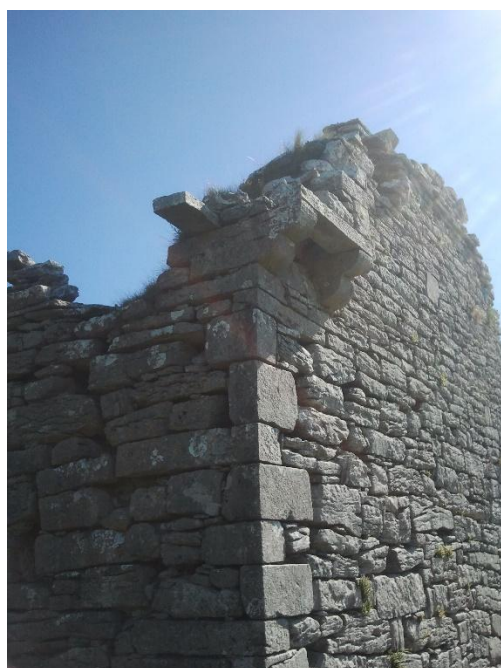
	Issue	Detail
1a	Deteriorating condition of NW corner of church building	In 2014, the GeoparkLIFE project through its baseline assessment of Carran Church identified that there had been significant structural movement in the NW corner of the Church, beneath a machicoulis which appeared to be in danger of collapse. Several structural stones were located lying in the field beneath this corner. Mortar had been washed out of the joints of the walls in several areas. Stones in the south-east corner wall of the Church had been pushed outwards.
1b	Consent requirements for repair works - Protective Designations	Carran Church is a designated National Monument in the care of the Local Authority (Clare County Council). As such, the prior written <u>consent of the Minister</u> is required for any works at or in proximity to the monument.
2	Outdated directional Signage to the site	The directional road site sign carries the symbol of a management agency 'Dúchas' which is no longer operational. It should be updated.
3	Outdated and damaged On-site interpretation	The current interpretive panel located in the graveyard opposite the entrance doorway to the Church is faded and damaged. It carries the 'Dúchas' symbol for a state agency which is no longer in operation. The site is managed by the Clare County Council. The interpretive panel needs replacing and the information needs to be updated.
4	Lack of Parking Facilities	Limited and unofficial parking exists in front of the Fitzgerald's family home, which is on the opposite side of the road from the site. This area can accommodate 3-4 cars. If coaches park here they create traffic congestion. Occasionally visitors approaching from the north (Ballyvaughan direction) park in the roadside gateway entrance to the north of the church, thereby blocking the entrance to a private dwelling access laneway.
5	Restrictions to visitor access	Access to the site via narrow stepped stiles at both the road entrance and graveyard entrance causes difficulty for less abled bodied persons. The adjacent pedestrian entry gates are locked except when burials are taking place on site.
6	Visitor confusion over official entry point and climbing boundary walls to gain entry	The landowner of the agricultural field in which the church is sited, is concerned with regard to visitor's entering site by climbing the boundary walls and causing damage and wandering through surrounding field when livestock present.
7	Potential of increased visitor numbers at site	Monitoring of visitor numbers to the site should be continued using the footfall counters installed under the GeoparkLIFE project. Site assessment as per the methodology used during the GeoparkLIFE project should be undertaken on an annual basis to determine the impact of physical actions undertaken at the site and of visitors to the site. The results of this monitoring will inform the future determination of a carrying capacity for the site and adaptive management decisions.



## SECTION SIX: ACTION AGREEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The following section details the actions agreed through the GeoparkLIFE project to address the issues identified in the 2014 baseline assessment of the Carran Church site; how and when those actions were implemented through GeoparkLIFE and who was responsible for their implementation.

<b>Issue 1</b>	<b>Deteriorating condition of NW corner of church building</b>
<b>Agreed Action</b>	Carry out repair work to north-west corner of the Church
<b>Tasks</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commission Conservation engineers report, method statement and safety plan to carry out required repairs.</li> <li>2. Obtain Ministerial consent to carry out repairs.</li> <li>3. Carry out archaeological excavation to locate original stones.</li> <li>4. Employ contractor to undertake work.</li> <li>5. Sign off on completed works.</li> </ol>
<b>Responsible person/group</b>	Conservation Officer Clare County Council and GeoparkLIFE project
<b>Date Action Completed</b>	November 2017
<b>Results</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invitation to tender for the Design of Repairs, Preparation and Evaluation of tender documents for the employment of a contractor for the repairs and final report prepared October 2016.</li> <li>2. Architectural Conservation Professionals Limerick contracted for above work March 2017.</li> <li>3. Conservation engineers report, method statement and safety plan completed April 2017.</li> <li>4. Ministerial consent obtained (No. C000793)</li> <li>5. Tender documents for contract work issued and contractor employed August 2017.</li> <li>6. Archaeological excavation report completed September 2017.</li> <li>7. Repair works undertaken September-October 2017</li> <li>8. Report on completion of works December 2017.</li> </ol>



Photograph 9: NW corner of Carran Church September 2014



Photograph 10: NW corner of Carran Church following conservation repair  
November 2017



Photograph 11: Conservation repairs underway October 2017



Photograph 12: Repairs to gable barge



Photograph13: Corner stonework repointed



## Visitor Management Proposal

<b>Issue 2</b>	<b>Damaged and outdated interpretive panel</b>
<b>Agreed Action</b>	The interpretive panel located within the graveyard should be removed and an updated version installed.
<b>Tasks</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compile text and illustrations for new panel with agreement on content with site managers.</li> <li>2. Agree panel design to GeoparkLIFE universal design template for Burren heritage sites with site managers.</li> <li>3. Commission graphic design</li> <li>4. Commission sign manufacturer</li> <li>5. Complete sign and install on site</li> </ol>
<b>Responsible person/group</b>	GeoparkLIFE
<b>Date Action Completed</b>	October 2017
<b>Results</b>	New updated GeoparkLIFE/Clare County Council branded panel installed on existing supports to minimise ground disturbance to archaeological site. Installing the panel on existing posts did not require ministerial consent to be obtained. Advice was sought through the National Monuments Service.



Photograph 13: Dúchas Interpretive Panel at Carran Church September 2017



Photograph 14: Replacement GeoparkLIFE Interpretive panel at Carran Church October 2017

## Visitor Management Proposal

<b>Issue 3</b>	<b>Outdated signage and interpretation.</b>
Agreed Action	Update directional finger post road sign to the site
Tasks	Provide new site signage at road side entrance point
Responsible person/group	Clare County Council
Date Action Completed	To be completed
Results	

<b>Issue 4</b>	<b>Lack of parking facilities</b>
Agreed Action	Undertake road survey to determine the possibilities for parking provision at the site.
Tasks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carry out road survey</li> <li>2. Analyse data</li> <li>3. Evaluate possibility of location and size of parking area.</li> </ol>
Responsible person/group	Clare County Council
Date Action Completed	June 2016
Results	<p>Road survey analysis was completed by the Road Section Engineer of Clare County Council June 2016.</p> <p>Results show that due to limited sightlines from both approach to the site, it is not currently possible to allow for a parking pull-in or parking bay along this line of road. A clear sightline in either direction was only 160m in distance. Under the Road Safety Act sightlines must have a minimum clearance of 250m for parking facilities.</p>

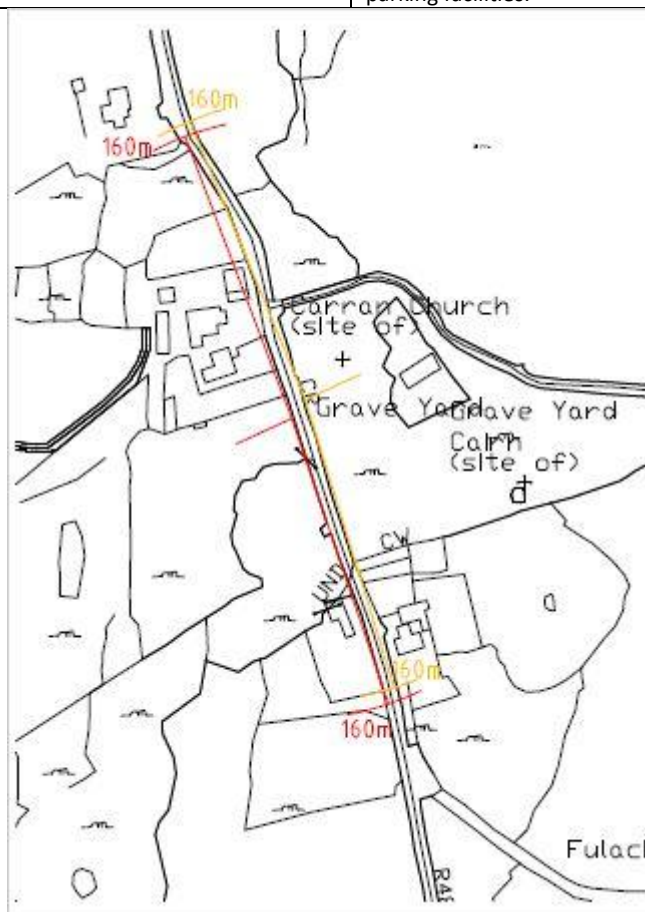


Figure 1: Analysis of Road survey for parking purposes at Carran Church

<b>Issue 5</b>	<b>Visitor confusion as to entry point to site and landowner concern over visitors</b>
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## Visitor Management Proposal

	<b>gaining access over stone walls and wandering through surrounding field while livestock present.</b>
Agreed Action	Fence pathway from road entry to graveyard entrance creating a highly visible access route to the Church
Tasks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agree fence design and location with landowner.</li> <li>2. Obtain Ministerial consent to install fencing</li> <li>3. Employ contractor to install.</li> </ol>
Responsible person/group	GeoparkLIFE and landowner
Date Action Completed	November 2017
Results	Ministerial consent obtained (October 2017). Wooden post and timber fence (providing visitor access along the existing right of way) incorporating two opposing field gates to allow animal passage across field, when required, installed November 2017.



Photograph 15: Entry to site September 2014



Photograph 16: Fencing installed by GeoparkLIFE between road entry and graveyard entry at Carran Church November 2017.

Issue 6

Difficulty of entry for some visitors due to stile design.



## Visitor Management Proposal

Agreed Action	Pedestrian entry gates at road and graveyard entry to remain unlocked once official access pathway has been fenced.
Tasks	Unlock gates.
Responsible person/group	Clare County Council/Graveyard Caretaker
Date Action Completed	To be completed
Results	

<b>Issue 7</b>	<b>Potential of increased visitor movement through site</b>
Agreed Action	Collect baseline data with regard to visitor numbers and monitor increase/decrease. Develop a site monitoring app for collection and analysis of data with regard to the condition of the building, visitor behavioural impacts and access path.
Tasks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect and analyse data from footfall counter (installed September 2014) at regular intervals.</li> <li>2. Agree specification for app development to allow collection of data from three sources and to operate in both online and offline scenarios with technology company MAC Ltd. Limerick</li> <li>3. Identify and supply functional requirements for the app</li> <li>4. Field test prototype</li> <li>5. Refine as required</li> <li>6. Field test and refine</li> <li>7. Develop web portal for viewing of uploaded data to agreed specification</li> </ol>
Responsible person/group	GeoparkLIFE project and MAC Ltd. Limerick
Date Action Completed	Footfall counter installed September 2014 and data collected on regular basis up to December 2017 (see table below).  Site monitoring app and web portal completed November 2017.
Results	The Footfall counter installed under the GeoparkLIFE project at Carran Church is showing an average annual visitor number of 4,000. The working app and portal were completed to the agreed specification for the GeoparkLIFE project and demonstrated at the end of project Conference in November 2017. Data collected during the testing phase for the Carran Church site is uploaded to the portal. Agreements are now required as to the future management of this tool in terms of users and storage of data.

**Table 2: Visitor Numbers to Carran Church recorded by the GeoparkLIFE footfall counter**

	Year			
Month	2014	2015	2016	2017
January		41	52	38
February		80	82	240
March		84	145	224
April		268	478	378
May		551	490	553
June		572	683	633
July		700	716	669
August		1019	973	564
September	259	397	270	345
October	101	354	214	94
November	152	76	47	17
December	32	24	68	83
		<b>4,166</b>	<b>4,218</b>	<b>3,838</b>

## SECTION SEVEN: MONITORING PLAN

The following plan details where future monitoring is required to inform the ongoing adaptive management of this site.

Issue	Action taken	Monitoring data to be collected	Monitoring tool to be used	Frequency of monitoring	Responsibility for monitoring
Deteriorating condition of NW corner of church building	Repair works completed in November 2017 as per conservation engineers recommendations and method statement	Condition of structural walls	GeoparkLIFE site monitoring app	Every 2 years	Clare County Council
Damaged and outdated interpretation	New updated panel installed on existing supports to minimise disturbance to archaeological site.	Condition of signage	GeoparkLIFE site monitoring app	Annually	Clare County Council
Visitor confusion as to entry point to site and landowner concern over visitors gaining access over stone walls and wandering through out surrounding field.	Wooden post and timber fence (providing visitor access along the existing right of way) incorporating two opposing field gates to allow animal passage across field (when required) installed November 2017.	Condition of fence	GeoparkLIFE site monitoring app	Annually	Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark/ Clare County Council
Difficulty of entry for some visitors due to stile design.	Gates to be maintained unlocked.	Status of access through pedestrian gates	GeoparkLIFE site monitoring app	Annually	Clare County Council
Potential of increased visitor movement through site	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Footfall counter installed to provide visitor numbers data.</li> <li>2. Site monitoring app developed.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visitor numbers to site.</li> <li>2. Visitor behavioural impacts at site</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. GeoparkLIFE Footfall counter.</li> <li>2. GeoparkLIFE site monitoring app</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Every three months.</li> <li>2. Annually</li> </ol>	Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark/ Clare County Council

## SECTION EIGHT: ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

To ensure that the site management process is 'adaptive' the results of site assessments and monitoring sessions must be evaluated and management actions adjusted on the basis of what is learnt.

ACTION	METHODOLOGY	RESPONSIBILITY
Analysis and Evaluation of Data collected	All data with regard to the condition of the site can be stored on the GeoparkLIFE monitoring app web portal	Clare County Council
Data Storage	It is recommended that data collected be stored on the GeoparkLIFE monitoring app web portal. Management agreements have yet to be made as to who will have access to this data and how it will be managed.	Clare County Council and other users to be agreed
Feedback to Management Group	It is recommended that site details and monitoring activity be made available through the GeoparkLIFE Burren Map Viewer created in conjunction with and hosted by the Heritage Council. Data to be updated must be forwarded to the Heritage Council for upload.	Clare County Council/Heritage Council
Review of effect of actions taken by Management Group	It is recommended that the various section of Clare County Council involved in the maintenance of Carran Church meet on an annual basis for review of actions taken, monitoring results and future planning.	Clare County Council
Agree strategy for adjustment of actions when and where required	A strategy to be agreed	Clare County Council

## APPENDIX I

### VISITOR ATTITUDES SURVEY Carran Church 2014 (MWB)

1. How long do you intend visiting this site?

Less than 1 hour	1-2 hours	3-4 hours	5-6 hours	Full day
96	4	0	0	016

2

- How would you rate the signposting for directions to this site on a scale of 1-10 (1=poor; 10=very good)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
16	2	0	4	7	0	11	36	16	9

2. How would you rate the physical entry to this site (including stiles and footpaths)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	0	4	4	9	9	20	24	18	2

3. How would you rate the parking facilities at this site? (Scale 1-10)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
22	4	7	4	16	16	20	7	2	2

4. Have you noticed any information boards at this site/location?

Yes	No
64	36

5. Have you read the information on them?

Yes	Partially	No
69	24	7

6. Did the information add to your understanding of the Burren?

Yes	No
63	37

7. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with your visit to this site?

Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
2	2	4	67	24

8. What is the main type of transport you are using to travel within the Burren?

Own car	Hired/rented	Public transport	Motorbike	Coach day tour	Coach guided tour	Private chauffeur tour	Bicycle	Other
18	80	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

## APPENDIX II

### Visitor Observation survey at Carran Church

Surveyor: Zena Hctor

#### 1. Survey Detail

Site Id : CC	Date Of Survey	Day of Week	Duration of Survey	Weather	No of people observed
	10-9-14	Wednesday	11am-4pm (5 hours)	Dry and Sunny	28

#### 2. Number of Observations, gender and group breakdown

Number of people observed	Total number of females	Total number of males	Number of observations	Average group size
28	14	14	15	2

Comment: Group size did not exceed 2

#### 3. Mode of transport, Time Spent on Site and Main activity, group and age demographic

Date of observation	Obs group id	Time spent on site (hours:minutes)	Group type	Age demographic	Mode of transport	Main activity	Observed impacts
10-9-14	CC1	00.15	M/F	Adult	Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	Parked in adjacent farm gate (north)
	CC2	00.11	F/F		Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	None
	CC3	00.10	M/F		Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	None
	CC4	00.17	M/F		Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	Male climbed wall to exit site
	CC5	00.12	M/F		Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	Parked in adjacent farm gate (north); Male and female climbed wall to enter site; walking off track
	CC6	00.10	M/F		Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	Male climbs over wall to enter; walking off track
	CC7	00.05	M/F		Car	Viewing church from road	Walked along farmyard lane to



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							north of church.
	CC8	00.05	M/F		Car	Viewed church from road and took photos	Parked in adjacent farm gate (north):
	CC9	00.02	M/F		Car	Viewed church from road and took photos	Standing in centre of road taking photos
	CC10	00.02	M		Car	Viewed church from road and took photos	Parked in farmyard entrance to south; standing in road taking photos
	CC11	00.01	M		Car	Takes photos from parking position	Parks in farmyard entrance to south
	CC12	00.01	M/F		Car	Taking photos from car	Stalls car in centre of road with engine running and takes photos
	CC13	00.10	M/F		Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	First went to farmyard entrance to north before realising entrance was further down the road
	CC14	00.13	M/F		Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	First went to farmyard entrance to north and along access lane before realising entrance was further down the road (saw other couple exiting)
	CC15	00.11	M/F		Car	Viewing site; taking photos; reading panel	None

## Conclusions

Average time spent on site: 8 minutes

## Level of Activity

### 4. Time spent reading Information Boards

Observation group Id	Time spent reading information boards (mins:secs)
CC1	02:00
CC2	03:00
CC3	02:00
CC4	0
CC5	01:00
CC6	00:40
CC7	0 (did not enter graveyard)
CC8	0 (did not enter graveyard)
CC9	0 (did not enter graveyard)
CC10	0 (did not enter graveyard)
CC11	0 (did not enter graveyard)
CC12	0 (did not enter graveyard)
CC13	00:06
CC14	00:03
Cc15	00.01

Average time spent reading panel by visitors who entered the graveyard: 1 minute

### 5. Effects Observed

Parked in adjacent farmyard gate (5 out of 15 cars observed - 33%)

Walking along private access road north of site (6 out of 28 visitors observed - 21%)

Climbing over site boundary walls and walking off the designated track  
(4 out of 28 visitors – 14%)

Causing obstruction in road while taking photos (3 out of 28 visitors – 11%)

Comment: Sample size is too small to use percentage as reliable result.

### 6. Time of day of arrival at site (observation study duration: 11.00-16.00 hours)

Observer Group ID	Time of Arrival at site
CC1	11.15
CC2	11.35
CC3	11.36
Cc4	11.42
CC5	13.06
CC6	13.17
CC7	13.31
CC8	13.44

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CC9	13.46
CC10	13.53
CC11	14.02
CC12	14.06
CC13	14.25
CC14	14.32
CC15	15.18

Comment: Times of arrival indicate a continuous flow of visitors throughout the observation period.

### 7. Visitor Movement Pattern



Observed movement patterns – dark blue line show core movement area; lighter blue peripheral area.