

Abbeylands Cavan Invasive Species Survey Report



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Bare and disturbed ground in one of the areas under survey, September 2022

Statement of Authority

Survey and reporting was carried out by Ecologist Billy Flynn, MCIEEM, CEnv. who is suitably qualified and experienced to carry out invasive species assessments.

1. INTRODUCTION

Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants were commissioned by Cooney Architects and DHB Architects to undertake an invasive species assessment of a site and adjacent areas for an urban redevelopment project in Cavan town. The purpose of this project is to effect the regeneration of an area of backlands in the 'Abbey Quarter' of Cavan. This will involve the demolition of some former commercial buildings, the refurbishment of other buildings and the redevelopment of public realm. This last will include a former graveyard site which is in use as parkland. This survey was undertaken to determine whether any legally controlled or otherwise relevant invasive species are present on this site or adjacent areas.



Fig. 1. Areas at Abbeylands under Survey

2. METHODS

Surveys of the entire site was carried out by the ecologist on 9 and 13 September 2022. Survey followed guidance by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII, 2020) and Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2019). All of the area under survey was examined for the presence of invasive species. A particular target of the survey was any non-native invasive species that are listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations and are subject to legal controls.

3. RESULTS

By far the greater proportion of the site is built environment – buildings, walls, roads, pavements and hard surfaces. ‘Green’ areas – i.e. areas having communities of plants, trees and shrubs - make up the lesser proportion of the site. The largest of these areas is the former graveyard (now in use as a park) which would be described as amenity grassland. There are also some scattered trees within this. All other areas were built or paved lands. Some ground has been disturbed recently to allow archaeological investigation. These (including the spoil thereof) were also surveyed. Plants found included Colt’s Foot (*Tussilago farfara*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), Scented Mayweed (*Matricaria chamomilla*), Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*), Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), native grasses and mosses.

No non-native invasive species were found in any of the habitat types within the area under survey. No species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), were found within the site, adjacent or within 10 metres of the site boundary.

4. DISCUSSION

Access to all areas within the survey area was generally good. Access was allowed by Cavan County Council to all of the areas proposed for development, including the interior and roofs of buildings. Visibility was very good on days of survey with bright sunshine throughout. The author would therefore have a high degree of confidence in the results.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Whilst no legally controlled invasive species were identified on site, bio-security measures to prevent potential infestation should be strictly adhered to. Possible pathways of introduction of invasive species onto the site include machinery and importation of contaminated topsoil. All machinery, particularly tracked machinery, should be sufficiently checked and cleaned prior to entering the site. If topsoil is being imported into the site at any stage during construction or landscaping, the soil needs to be certified as having been treated for invasive species and / or the source of the topsoil needs to be confirmed as being invasive species free.

REFERENCES

CIEEM (2019) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine*, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011. S.I. No. 477 of 2011
www.irishstatutebook.ie/pdf/2011/en.si.2011.0477.pdf

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (2006). *The Management of Invasive Alien Plant Species on National Roads*. TII, Dublin

Appendix A: Some Photographs of Site

Fig. 1 Ruderal weeds and grass in archaeological trenches



Fig. 2 Native Ivy on gable of building under survey



Fig. 3 View of amenity grassland and trees at the former graveyard



Fig. 4 Coltsfoot among the plants of spoil behind the Credit Union building.



Fig. 5 Native plants on spoil from test trench.

