MEDIA RELEASE

COUNTY CLARE'S MARITIME AND BUILT HERITAGE TO BE STUDIED IN MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

- Study to feature coastal structures of Lough Derg, Fergus & Shannon Estuaries, industrial buildings & traditional houses

County Clare, IRELAND, 2nd May 07 – The Heritage and Conservation Office of Clare County Council, supported by the Heritage Council, has announced an expansion of its study of the Banner County's maritime and built heritage.

The '*Architectural Heritage Research Project*', which was commenced last year, will now be extended to include a survey of all coastal structures, traditional stone-roofed houses and industrial structures in East and South Clare. It is anticipated that the completed project will deliver a comprehensive published survey available for public viewing.

Above: Disused landing place in North Clare

Above: Former mill near Ennistymon

The main feature of last year's Architectural Heritage Research Project was a survey of coastal structures such as piers, harbours, lighthouses, martello towers and coastguard buildings. This review covered most of Clare's Atlantic Coastline, from Aughinish in North Clare to the Loop Head Lighthouse in South West Clare. The survey also included a number of vernacular or traditional stone-roofed houses (also known as Liscannor and Moher slate/flag) and industrial structures, including mill buildings and quarry buildings. Last years survey is available to view in the Local Studies Centre of the Clare County Library, The Manse, Harmony Row, Ennis.

Following the success of the 2006 project, Clare County Council received additional funding from the Heritage Council, under the implementation of the Clare Heritage Plan 2007. The new study will feature an expansion into the present coastal survey to include the Shannon Estuary, the Fergus estuary, and the Shannon river/Lough Derg area, including its inland 18th century navigational system.

The project will also expand and develop on the present survey of Industrial buildings throughout the county, including structures related to mining and minerals, horizontal and vertical water mills, warehouses, corn-stores, canals, creameries, mines and hydraulic rams. Another element of the study will be to expand and develop on the present survey of Moher slate/stone slate buildings to encompass more of the county. At present these buildings are most often affiliated with the Liscannor area where there

has been a long tradition of working the stone. However, numerous examples have also been identified in North and South Clare.

Commenting of the survey Acting Heritage Officer, Tomás Mac Conmara stated, *"The Clare Heritage Office is delighted to be in a position to consolidate and build on the work completed in 2006 in North and West Clare. We possess a significant amount of architectural history in the county, which in the context of East Clare helps to paint a picture of the socio-economic development of the region over the last number of centuries."*

According to Sarah Halpin of Clare County Council's Heritage and Conservation Office, "*The 2006 study revealed the richness of architectural heritage in Clare and I am confident that the findings will be equally impressive in the South and North East Clare area."*

Miss Halpin indicated that the Heritage and Conservation Office of Clare County Council had recently commenced the expanded survey in the Lough Derg area.

"*We are interested in hearing from anyone who may have any information regarding coastal, industrial or stone slate buildings in their locality. We look forward to meeting the people of the area during the project and benefiting from their valuable local knowledge*", she added.

The project will culminate in the compilation of a comprehensive published survey (hardcopy and electronic) of all coastal structures, industrial heritage structures and stone roofed structures in County Clare. This work will pull together all previous work carried out in these areas and provide baseline information about these otherwise little known aspect of the County's Architectural Heritage. It will also lay the foundation of all future work such as information booklets raising awareness of these otherwise little known aspects of the county's built heritage.

The completion of the '*Architectural Heritage Research Project'* will realise part of the aims and intentions of Objective 3 of the County Clare Heritage Plan (2003-2007), which identified that a programme of survey of built heritage be carried out on an ongoing basis (target 3.2.1). It will also realise the objective of conducting a survey of Moher slate/stone slate buildings and industrial sites (target 3.2.2).

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Above: Hags Head Signal Tower.