

Asset Ref No.	Mongavlin: Fortified House (DG063-009)	
Heritage Type	Built	
	<i>Late Medieval Site</i>	
Location	OS 6-inch map sheet	063
	Townland	Mongavlin
	Parish	Taughboyne
	LCA	River Deelee to Lifford
	ITM Coordinates	635060, 906422
	NG Coordinates	235116, 406432
Protection Status	RMP	
Condition	Poor	
Ownership (if known)		
Site Description	<p>Description: Mongavlin Castle: The lands of Mongavlin were granted to the Duke of Lennox in 1610. His assignee, Sir John Stewart, had built a house there before 1619, though it was still incomplete in 1622 (Hill 1877, 293, 505; Treadwell 1953-5, 45). The manner in which these lands subsequently passed into the hands of the Abercorn family was recorded on a slab (now missing but in existence c. 1905; Lecky 1905, 105) which bore the inscription 'The Honble Elizabeth Hamilton, daughter of John Lord Colepeper, widow of Coll James Hamilton, who lost his life at sea in the service of his King and Country, purchased this Mannor and annexed it to the opposite estate of the family which paternal estate itself was improved by her prudent management to rere the yearly income of the dower she received thereout. She hath also settled her younger son William Hamilton in an estate acquird in England of equal value in purchase to this, and given everyone of her numerous offspring, descended from both branches some considerable mark of her parental care. Her eldest son James, Earle of Abercorn, and Viscount Strabane, hath caused this inscription to be placed here for the information of her posterity, from whom she hath merited the most grateful acknowledgements and to whom she hath set so valuable an example. Anno 1704'.</p> <p>The inscription and date recorded from a stone in the early 19th century (J.A.H. 1836, 240) and confirming Mongavlin Castle as Sir John Stewart's house must be treated with caution in view of an extended though somewhat incoherent reading preserved among the as Memoirs (See Jope 1954, 169). The ruins of this fortified house, 12.85m by 5.3m internally, are rapidly crumbling and the interior is filled with rubble and clearance from the adjoining field. Though virtually complete and retaining its roof in 1846, the upper section of both gables and most of the W wall had fallen by the turn of the century (photo in Lecky, 1905, 35). In 1954, there was a breach in the N gable and much of the E wall had collapsed. Since then, the NW corner has fallen to c. 2m in height and many of the ingoings and dressings noted on Jope's plan are missing (1954, 171).</p> <p>The three-storey house was built with random rubble with hard sandstone dressings laid in a coarse mortar. It originally had four corner turrets in Scottish style on moulded corbels high up on the angles of the building; only those on the S gable survive. A number of joist-holes are visible at first and second floor levels and the close spacing and depth of the surviving examples indicate that the others must have been responsible to some extent for the collapse of the walls. There is a scarcement at second-floor level. No evidence for any internal divisions remain and the stairs were probably made of wood. Both gables had plain chimneys (Fagan Bk. 11, 1). The rectangular windows had cut-stone dressings with slightly splayed ingoings and the remaining examples pre-serve sinkings for vertical iron bars and the interior sills have shallow chases for wooden frames. The N gable had two windows (Fagan Bk. 11, 1); these were probably above one another on the first and second floors. There is no evidence for a fireplace on the ground floor; it was probably at first floor level to the W of the window. The main entrance to the house was about midway along the E wall; only the N ingoing and lower jamb-stone survive. There is a gun-loop and window N of the doorway, and there were undoubtedly corresponding examples on the S side. The W wall had eight windows (Fagan Bk. 11, 1) but apart from fragments at the S end of the first and second floors no visible trace of these remain. The S gable is the most complete section of the building, and preserves a large kitchen fireplace with adjoining brick-lined oven, on the ground floor. The ragged opening to the E is probably the position of a window; Fagan notes the existence of three in this gable. The other two survive intact; that at the second floor is blocked up. Beside it is a small fireplace; the jambs and lintel have a simple roll-moulded aris.</p> <p>There are three bonding stones projecting from the exterior face of the S gable at the corners on the ground-floor level; they do not appear to be insertions. The roof-line of a single-storey building c. 5.5m wide, visible on this face, and some stone footings in line with the N gable are the remains of secondary structures; those are depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map. (Jope 1954, 169-172).</p>	

Landscape Context (setting) Sited on good pastureland on banks of river Foyle, with good views over same and eastern (NI) side of river LCA area.


Site Appraisal The site of Mongavlin Castle, lands and house is stated to be in the ownership of the Marquis of Abercorn and occupied by Robert Alexander in Griffiths Valuation (1847-1864) – see mapping and table below. An interesting site, it is a somewhat rare example of a fortified house of the plantation period located within the LCA area.



**VALUATION OF TENEMENTS.
PARISH OF TAUGHBOXTLE.**

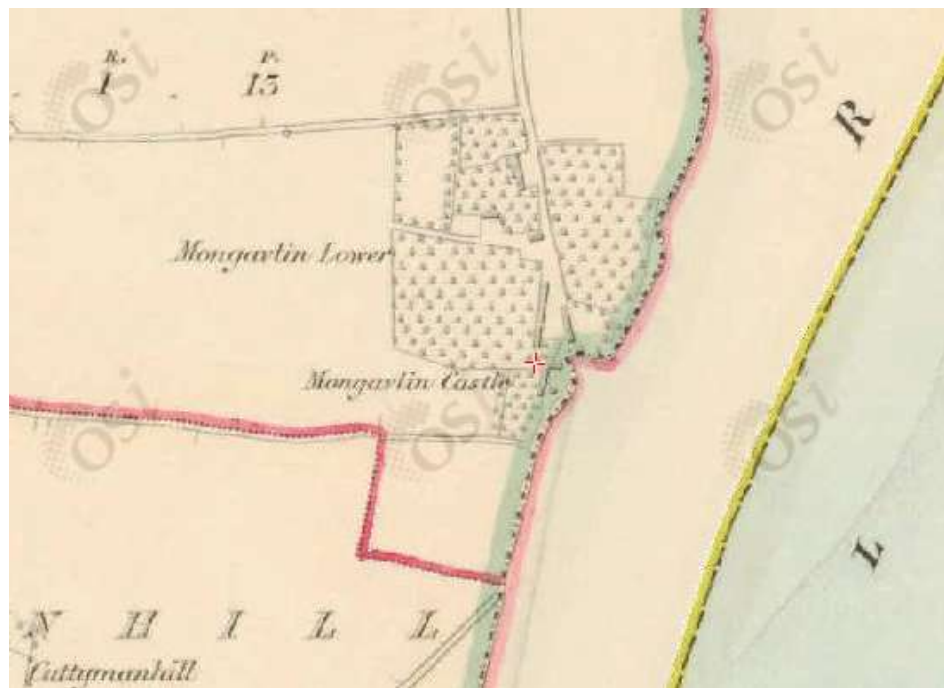
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No. and Letters of Reference to Map	Names.		Description of Tenement.	Area.	Rateable Annual Valuation.		Total Annual Valuation of Rateable Property.	
	Townlands and Complexes.	Immediate Lessees.			Land.	Buildings.		
MONGAVLIN. (Ord. S. 63.)								
1 a	Mongavlin Upper	Robert Alexander, . . .	Marquis of Abercorn, . . .	House, office, and land.	63 0 25	50 0 0	4 0 0	65 10 0
2 b		James Taylor, . . .	Robert Alexander, . . .	Land,	3 2 22	1 10 0	—	
3		Anne Crawford, . . .	Marquis of Abercorn, . . .	House, office, and land.	8 0 5	3 10 0	0 5 0	
4		Edward Doberty, . . .	Same,	House, office, and land.	5 2 55	4 0 0	0 10 0	
5		William McCausland, . . .	Same,	House, offices, and land.	10 3 10	10 10 0	0 15 0	
6		John McLaughlin, . . .	Same,	House, office, and land.	13 2 8	9 0 0	1 10 0	
7		Daniel Bentley, . . .	Same,	House, office, and land.	13 0 0	7 15 0	1 0 0	
8		Kearns Alexander, . . .	Same,	Land,	2 1 25	2 0 0	—	
Londonderry & Enniskillen Railway Co., (Jan. K. Arthur, Sec.)				In fee,	Railway (126ft in perimeter)	1 3 10	—	46 15 0
LOWER MONGAVLIN. (Ord. S. 63.)								
				Total	100 0 10	88 5 0	0 0 0	144 0 0

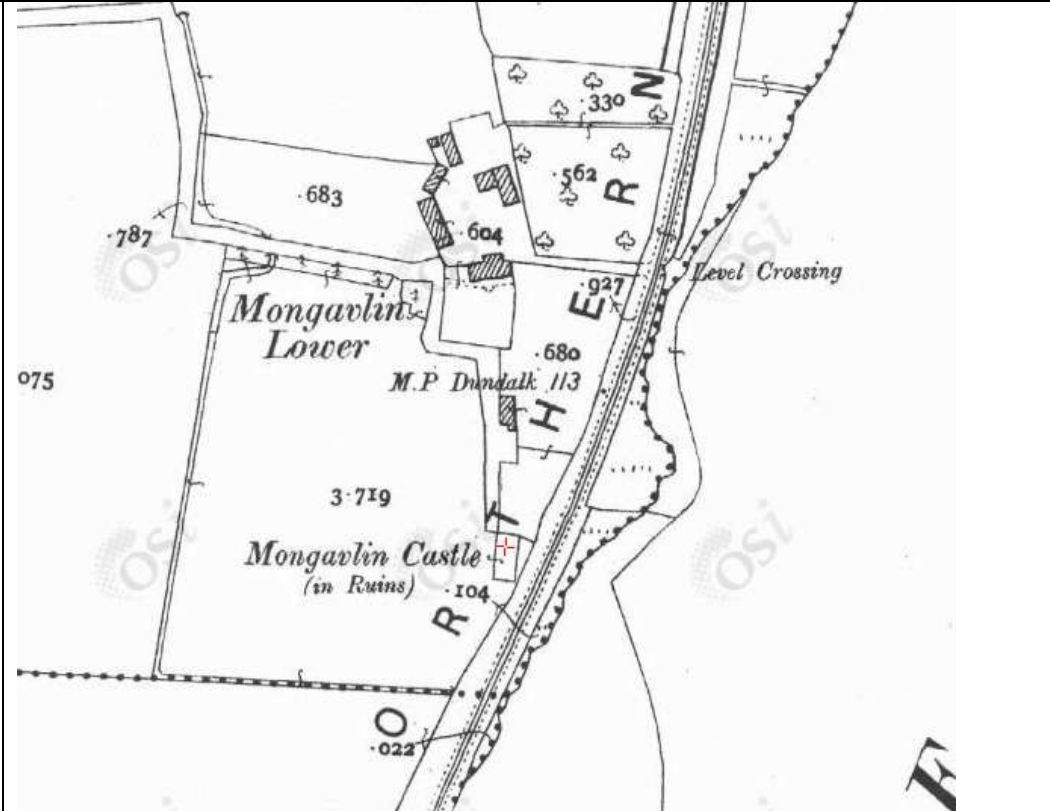
Sensitivity	In ruins, this site is subject to wall collapse and is in a poor state.
Associations	Townland name is also Mongavlin. Farm complex located to the north, indicated on 1 st ed OS. Remains of the Great Northern Railway line traverses along the riverbank adjacent the castle site.
Recommendations	This site is in a poor state of repair. In an idyllic setting on the banks of the River Foyle, it has fair potential as a demonstration site for use of the landscape setting to facilitate its fortified purpose, its plantation connections as well as the problems that are encountered when dealing with ruined stone-built sites that suffer decay.
Mapping	 <p data-bbox="472 1318 927 1346"><i>Present-day mapping extract (www.osi.ie)</i></p>



Present-day aerial view extract (www.osi.ie)



Extract from 1st edition OS map (1820-1840)

	 <p>Extract from 2nd OS map (1890s - 1900s)</p>
References	http://www.archaeology.ie
Plates	
Additional Notes	