

Carrigtwohill & District Historical Society

Newsletter and General Circular

Proposed Demolition of Historic Ballyadam Bridge



We have recently been advised by Alan O'Connor, a longstanding member of our society, of a plan to develop the railway line between Glounthaune and Midleton including twin tracking of the line. Their plan incorporates the demolition of the bridge at Ballyadam House.

While the application is being made by CIÉ, Iarnród Éireann (IÉ), a wholly owned subsidiary of CIÉ, has developed the proposed development from concept to application stage.

Is the removal of the bridge really justified, particularly, as it doesn't appear to be necessary. This bridge is a fine example of bridge building using local limestone, and an enduring testament to the craftsmanship of those who built them. All the bridges along the line are of similar construction.

We do not have a clear image of the bridge at Ballyadam, so have used an image of Carrigtwohill's Station Road bridge taken by Jim Barry prior to the reopening of the line, to illustrate their typical limestone construction.



Sadly, this consortium has a poor reputation of respecting local heritage, having removed the fine original stone walls on the roadways leading to at Station Road bridge, Wisers bridge, Halys bridge, and Killacloyne bridge, replacing them with ugly mass concrete walls. The side walls of all these bridges were increased in height using a different stone, with the original chisel cut Limestone coping stones not being reinstated, and subsequently disappeared. As a consequence of Iarnród Éireann's previous redevelopment, Carrigtwohill have lost the unique features of these bridges! Something that cannot be easily replaced. This destructive work was completed before the line was reopened to rail traffic, 30th July 2009, after 46 years absence, following a €75m refurbishment!

Investment in rail services and its infrastructure is always a welcome development, and one as an historical society we do not object to. However, item 2.2 of our constitution states we are 'To preserve and protect all our remaining historical features.' The bridge at Ballyadam is an excellent example of our locally built heritage.

The Cork and Youghal Railway company were granted legislative sanctions to construct rail links between Cork City and Youghal in 1854. The first section of rail line was opened between Midleton and Dunkettle in 1859 by the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Carlisle. Then, the official opening of the Cork to Youghal passenger line took place, 23rd May 1860, serving Dunkettle, Little Island, Queenstown Junction, Carrigtwohill, Midleton, Mogeely, and Killeagh en route.

The history of the railway and its importance to the local community, equally contributes to Carrigtwohill's heritage. These development plans do not consider the significant historical nature of the Ballyadam Estate, or the fact that Ballyadam bridge is as old as railway itself. Constructed using locally quarried stone, it provided access between Ballyadam House and farmyard with its land, which the railway bisected. The land either side of the bridge no longer forms part of the original estate, and is now split between two owners. This argument is being used as justification for its removal by CIE.

The bridge is not a Protected Structures, but has been a topic of frequent discussion at our regular monthly meetings. However, the old station and station house are recorded as such by the National Inventory of

Archological Heritage, 20907551.

You will recall our society submitted a petition to save Barrett's Forge from the demolition squad, and with the assistance of our members and society friends who signed it from our online application, we were successful. We similarly seek your kind assistance again. If you wish, please sign by coping below link to your browser.

<http://carrigtwohillhistoricalsociety.com/Local%20History/Ballyadam/Ballyadam.aspx>

Ballyadam is also the location EirGrid has selected on which to build a converter station for the Celtic Interconnector, they say is a key component of their €1 billion electricity supply project. It is currently unknown how this may affect local ancient structures.

