

GRAVEL/SAND PIT REINSTATEMENT WORKS BOHERKILL, RATHANGAN, Co. KILDARE

CULTURAL HERITAGE REPORT

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**Report Commissioned by
Kildare Architects & Design Ltd.,
Abbey House,
White Abbey Road,
Kildare**

**For
Mr. Michael Ennis**

MAY 2015

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides a Cultural Heritage Assessment/Appraisal with respect to proposed reinstatement works at an existing gravel/sand pit at Boherkill, Co. Kildare. It was commissioned by Kildare Architects & Design Ltd., Abbey House, White Abbey Road, Kildare for Mr. Michael Ennis.

1.1 Definition of Cultural Heritage

Cultural Heritage, in respect of a project, is assumed to include all humanly created features on the landscape, including portable artefacts which might reflect the prehistoric, historic, architectural, engineering and/or social history of the area. The Cultural Heritage of the area of the proposed development was examined through an Archaeological, Architectural and Historical study. The Archaeological and Architectural studies involved a documentary/cartographic search and field inspection of the area, while the Historical study involved a documentary search.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage Assessment components of the study comprise the results of a survey and evaluation of selected sites of archaeological, architectural and historical potential within, and in the immediate environs of, the proposed development area. The work consists of the results of a desk top survey and field inspection of the site and immediate surrounds

2.1 Desk Study

As part of a documentary/cartographic search, the following principal sources were examined from which a list of sites and areas of Cultural Heritage interest/potential was compiled:

- Record of Monuments and Places – Co, Kildare (RMP)
- Archives of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland - www.archaeology.ie
- Records of the National Museum of Ireland (NMI)
- Annual Archaeological Excavation Bulletin (up to 2013) – www.excavations.ie
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage – Co. Kildare (NIAH) – www.buildingsofireland.ie

- Historic and contemporary cartographic and aerial photographic sources of Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI)
- Documentary and cartographic sources in Kildare County Libraries (Appendix 2)
- Kildare County Development Plan 2011 - 2017 (KCDP).

In addition, the following EIS was consulted:

EIS for Extension and Retention of an Existing Gravel Pit at Boherkill, Rathangan, Co. Kildare – January 2007; prepared by Kildare Architects Ltd.

2.2 Field Inspection

From the preceding desk study, a list of cultural heritage sites/sites of cultural heritage potential was compiled for inspection. The subject development lands and a 100m wide area surrounding such was assessed for the presence of archaeological monuments and architectural heritage structures by reference to map and aerial photographic sources. A detailed reconnaissance survey of such areas was undertaken in late April 2015 during which the existing upper areas of the quarry edge-faces were visually examined.

An attempt was also made to identify previously unrecorded sites of cultural heritage potential within, and in the immediate environs of, the subject development area.

2.3 Assessment Methodology

The baseline criteria used to describe the impacts on Cultural Heritage Sites (based on NRA, 2003, 21) are presented in **Table**.

Type	Direct	Indirect
Severe	Cultural Heritage site is within a development area. Construction work will entail the removal of part or the entire cultural heritage site.	Cultural Heritage site is within a development area. Construction works will entail the destruction of the visual context of the site or isolate it from associated groups or features.
Potentially Severe	Cultural Heritage site is adjacent to a development area. There is potential for related remains being affected by development works.	Cultural Heritage site is adjacent to a development area. Construction works will greatly injure the visual context of the site or isolate it from associated groups or features.
Moderate	Existing access to a cultural heritage site will be severed. Development works will affect the context of a cultural heritage site.	N/A
No Predicted	The development will have no predicted impact.	N/A

Table : Description of Potential Cultural Heritage Impacts

3. RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Local History

The subject development lands are located in the townland of Boherkill, in the civil parish of Rathangan and in the barony of Offaly East. The field boundary to the east of the subject development area forms a townland boundary between Boherkill and Guidenstown North while that to the west/southwest forms a townland boundary with Thomastown East. The latter is also a parish boundary between Rathangan and Thomastown.

The townland name may derive from the Irish *An Bóthar Cúill* – The Hazel Road (Placenames Commission – www.logainm.ie). Lewis (1837) notes that the civil parish of Rathangan at that time comprised 8872 statute acres, as apportioned under the Tithe Act and that the principal seat within its limits was Tottenham Green, that of Geo. Tottenham, Esq. Griffith's Valuation of 1854 notes that the lands in the general area formed part of the estates of the Duke of Leinster and that the subject lands were leased by a Thomas Flood.

No events of historical interest were noted in any of the documentary or cartographic sources examined during research undertaken with respect to the preparation of this report.

3.2 Archaeological Heritage

The area under assessment is part of a landscape which is rich in historical and archaeological material. The general region has attracted settlement from early times as evidenced by the presence of monuments dating back to the prehistoric period. Continuity of settlement is illustrated by artefacts dating to the Later Mesolithic and by identified monuments ranging from Neolithic to Medieval and Post-Medieval remains.

The siting preferences of particular monument types are well documented. Broadly speaking, the general landscape along, and in the environs of, the existing line corridor offers a potential setting for the discovery of archaeological sites and remains, as follows:

- The localised upland areas of the site and environs are a favoured position for the location of prehistoric burial sites, ringforts and enclosure sites in the general region surrounding the subject development lands.

3.2.1 Relevant Archaeological Inventory

There are a total of two sites of archaeological interest/potential, both listed as a Recorded Monuments (see Appendix 1), as being located within the overall defined Cultural Heritage study area associated with the project (i.e. lands within the site boundaries and c. 100m surrounding such). These are designated CH-1 to CH-2 in *Table 2* and the locations are indicated in Figure CH-1.

SITE No.	SMR No.	TOWNLAND(S)	CLASSIFICATION	ITM
CH-1	KD017-026	Boherkill Guidenstown North	Moated Site	669985 717520
CH-2	KD017-038	Boherkill	Enclosure Site	669885 717570

Table 2: List of Archaeological Monuments within defined Study Area

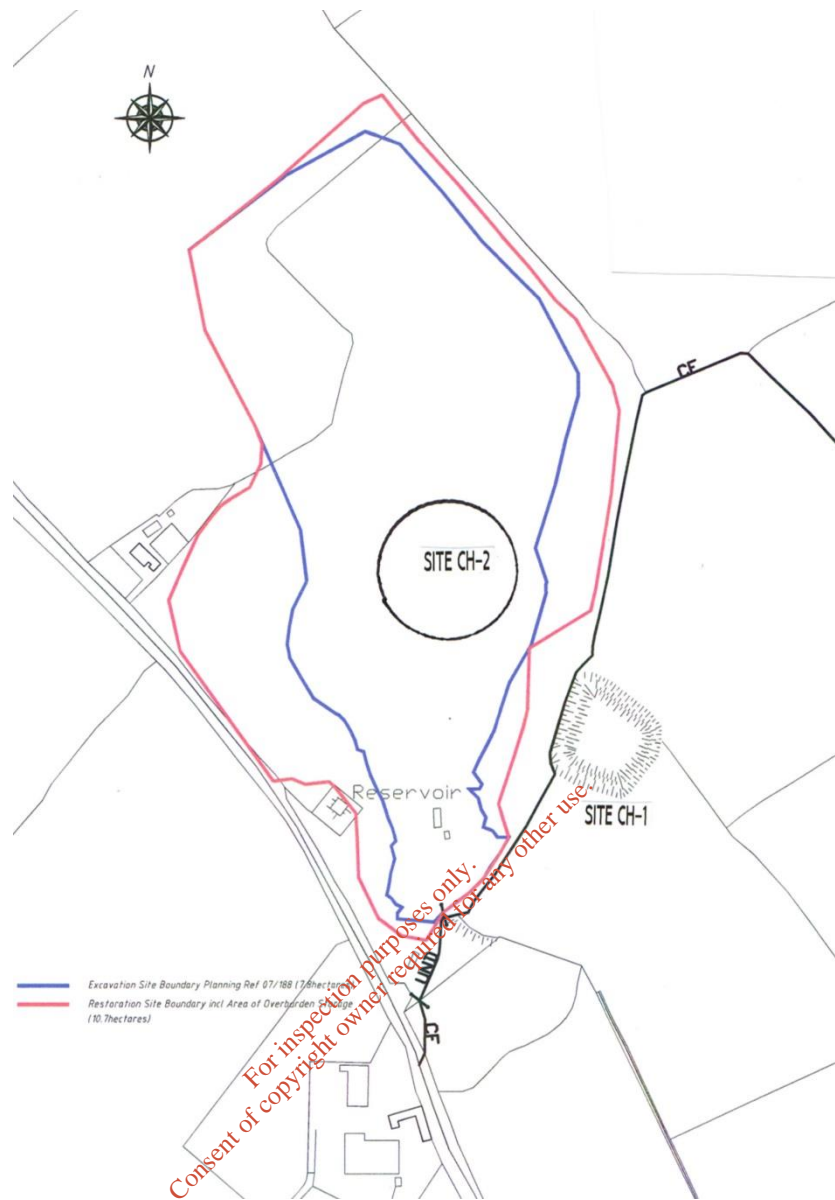


Figure CH-1 Locations of Archaeological Monuments CH-1 & CH-2
(Reproduced under OSI Licence No.: EN0074512)

These are described as follows:

Site CH-1	Description
<p>SMR No: KD017-026</p> <p>TOWNLAND: Boherkill Guidenstown North</p> <p>CLASSIFICATION: Moated Site</p> <p>ITM (from ASI): 669985 717520</p> <p>PROTECTION: RMP; KCDP;</p>	<p>This monument is located on a narrow tillage spur projecting west from the western foot of Grange Hill. It consists of a large fosse and bank, enclosing a rectangular area (c. 60m [NW bank] x c. 58m [NE bank]), with an entrance in the SW side. The bank is 1.5 – 1.7m high on the inside, dropping to c. 2.2m to base of fosse. The bank is steep sided and well defined; c. 2m wide at base and 1m wide at top. The base of the fosse is up to 1.3m below external ground level and is a broad U-shape in profile. It is 6-7m wide at ground level. Gaps in the NW bank close to the N corner and SE bank close to the E corner are probably modern. The interior is generally of a flat surface though very overgrown. Indeed, the banks and immediate area surrounding the site generally consists of dense growths of trees and bushes, as illustrated in Plate CH-1. A 30m buffer area along the western edge of the monument was established in advance of the commencement of quarrying activities, as illustrated in Plate CH-2. This is largely still intact although there has been some encroachment near the north-western corner of the monument by the establishment of a retaining bund for a silt pond, as illustrated in Plate CH-3. The base of this bund is located c. 15m from the external north-western corner of the fosse.</p>



Plate CH-1 SITE CH-1 (Moated Site) from southwest (Date: 2003)



Plate CH-2 Buffer Area along western edge of SITE CH-1 (looking south)



Plate CH-3 Silt Pond Retention Bund located close to north-western corner of SITE CH-1 (looking north)

Site CH-2	Description
<p>SMR No: KD017-038</p> <p>TOWNLAND: Boherkill</p> <p>CLASSIFICATION: Enclosure</p> <p>ITM (from ASI): 669885 717570</p> <p>PROTECTION: RMP; KCDP</p>	<p>A possible circular enclosure was identified on aerial photographs from the archives of the Geological Survey of Ireland (Refs. GSI N425 & N426). The site is not marked on any O.S. or other historic maps and there were no surface traces of the possible monument noted during any surface reconnaissance of the site undertaken in advance of the commencement of quarrying activities. A programme of archaeological testing (Figure CH-2), undertaken by the writer in November 2003 (Licence No.: 03 E 1891), did not reveal any subsurface features associated with this possible monument. Likewise, subsequent monitoring of topsoil stripping/general ground reductions onto the surface of the underlying subsoil did not reveal any subsurface features, deposits or material of archaeological interest/potential. However, it was noted that the topsoil cover in this area was noticeably deeper than elsewhere within the present quarry pit and it is speculated that such led to more vibrant crop growth at this location and it was this that was noticeable in the aerial photographs.</p>

3.2.3 Results of previous Archaeological Investigations

A programme of archaeological testing was undertaken at the site in November 2003 in compliance with a grant of planning (Kildare Co. Co. Plan Ref: 01/1270; ABP Reg. No.: PL 09.130086) with respect to the retention of an existing gravel pit and the extension of same to 2.83 ha for the extraction and dry screening of Grade 1c fill, new enlarged recessed entrance at existing double entrance, security hut with portaloo and all associated site works.

This comprised the excavation of five test trenches (Figure CH-2) within the overall extension area, with a concentration within the area of the possible enclosure site (SITE CH-2). Nothing of archaeological interest was uncovered during the course of such testing.

It had been noted that the topsoil was noticeably deeper within the general area of the possible enclosure site, and this was further verified during the course of topsoil stripping, undertaken on a phased basis from December 2003 – March 2006. It is speculated that the additional depth of topsoil in this area lead to a more vibrant crop growth in this area, relative to the immediate environs, and it was this variation that was noticeable in aerial photographs.

No features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological interest were uncovered during the course of either the Archaeological Testing or subsequent Monitoring programmes. Likewise, a subsequent surface reconnaissance survey of the remaining quarry lands, undertaken in 2006 in preparation of an EIS, did not reveal any possible features of archaeological potential.

3.2.4 Reported Archaeological Artefacts

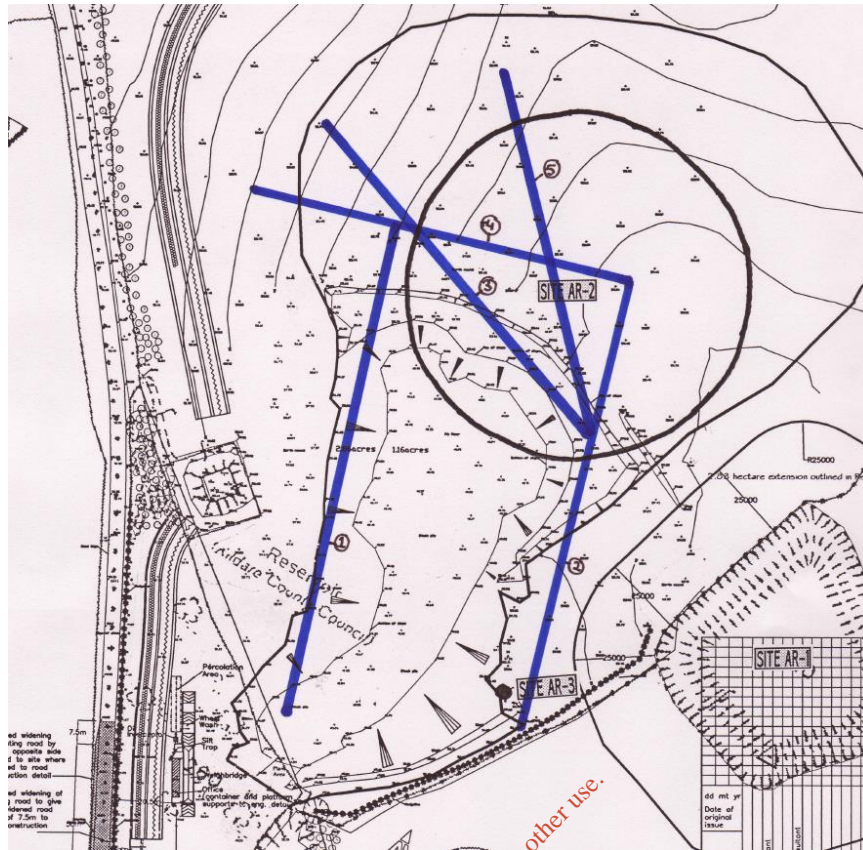


Figure CH-2 Locations of Archaeological Test Trenches excavated in 2003

3.3 Architectural Heritage

There are no protected structures within the meaning of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and listed in the Kildare County Development Plan, 2011 - 2017, situated within the defined Cultural Heritage study area. Likewise, no structures of interest are noted in such study area by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

4. DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

4.1 Local History

The general historical background to the subject development area was introduced above in Section 3.1. In summary, there are no significant historical events associated with the proposed development lands which have the ability to be impacted upon by the proposed development.

4.2 Archaeological Heritage

There are a total of two sites of archaeological interest/potential, both listed as a Recorded Monuments, located within the overall defined Cultural Heritage study area associated with the project (i.e. lands within the site boundaries and c. 100m surrounding such). One of these – SITE CH-1 – is a Moated Site located along the eastern edge of the overall landholding. A 30m buffer area between the outside edge of the external fosse to this monument and the quarry excavation area is in existence, although this has been slightly infringed by the construction of a silt pond retaining bund, the base of which is positioned c. 15m from the external north-western corner of the fosse to the monument. The other – SITE CH-2 – is an Enclosure Site, visible on specific GSI aerial photographs. Prior to the commencement of quarrying activities, there were no surface traces of this feature and no subsurface evidence was uncovered by a

programme of archaeological testing undertaken in 2003. Likewise, archaeological monitoring of topsoil stripping in the area of this feature did not reveal any subsurface remains of interest and/or potential.

It is considered that the reinstatement and restoration of the quarry pit to its pre-development levels will have a positive impact visual impact on SITE CH-1, as the temporary visual impact on the site, caused by the existing nature of the quarry pit, will be removed.

Works associated with the removal of the silt pond bund adjacent the north-western corner of SITE CH-1 could potentially result in damage to fosse, particularly by soil run-off into the feature. However, with the adoption and implementation of a specific mitigation strategy, it is considered that such moderate impact can be totally negated. Likewise, possible use of the buffer area for machinery access could cause a similar impact on SITE CH-1 but this too can be negated by the adoption and implementation of a mitigation measure.

4.3 Architectural Heritage

There are no protected structures within the meaning of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and listed in the Kildare County Development Plan, 2011 - 2017, situated within the defined Cultural Heritage study area. Likewise, no structures of interest are noted in such study area by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. Consequently, no impacts in this regard will occur.

5. MITIGATION MEASURES

As noted above in Section 4, it is not considered likely that the development, as proposed, will cause any direct impacts to previously identified monuments or structures of archaeological heritage interest or potential. Likewise, no impacts, direct or indirect, will occur to any items of architectural heritage or historical interest.

However, as noted above in Section 4.2, there is potential for indirect impacts to occur with respect to SITE CH-1 during removal of the silt pond bund adjacent its north-western corner or by the remains of the established buffer area being used as an access by construction vehicles. However, such possible impacts can be negated by the adoption of the following mitigation strategy and its inclusion as a specific condition of any Grant of Planning:

1. The existing buffer area between the western edge of the quarry pit and the eastern edge of the Moated Site (Site CH-1) shall be maintained during all reinstatement works. This should be marked by a series of temporary timber stakes. No construction of other vehicles should enter this area during the course of the subject reinstatement works, save for the works associated with Item 2 below.
2. Removal of the silt-pond bund should be undertaken under supervision of an archaeologist. Care should be taken to avoid soil run-off into the fosse of the Moated Site (SITE CH-1). In the event that such occurs then to should be removed by hand under archaeological supervision, ensuring that the present grass surface of the monument is not disturbed.

6. PREDICTED IMPACTS

6.1 Reinstatement Phase

The requirement for the continued retention of the 30m buffer zone adjacent SITE CH-1 will ensure that no impacts will occur to the monument. In addition, the requirement for archaeological supervision of the silt-pond bund presently located adjacent the north-western corner of the monument will ensure that no damage is caused to it during the course of such works.

6.2 'Worst-case' Scenario

A 'worst case' scenario with respect to archaeological heritage would arise where the development was permitted to commence without any archaeological mitigation requirements being included in a Grant of Planning, without the appointment of an archaeologist to undertake and mitigation requirements or without the attendance of the archaeologist. In such scenarios, there is potential for accidental damage to be caused to SITE CH-1

7. RESIDUAL IMPACTS

It is envisaged that the residual effect of the reinstatement of the quarry pit and its subsequent use for agricultural purposes will result in an enhanced visual setting to SITE CH-1 over that which presently exists.

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APPENDIX 1

RECORD OF MONUMENTS AND PLACES (RMP)

Section 12 (1) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 provides that the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government shall establish and maintain a record of monuments and places where the Minister believes there are monuments, such record to be comprised of a list of monuments and relevant places and a map or maps showing each monument and relevant place in respect to each county of the State. This is referred to as the 'Record of Monuments and Places' (RMP), and monuments entered into it are referred to as 'Recorded Monuments'.

Section 12(3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 provides for the protection of monuments and places in the record, stating that

“When the owner or occupier (not being the Minister) of a monument or place which has been recorded under subsection (1) of this section or any person proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such monument or place, he shall give notice in writing of his proposal to carry out the work to the Minister and shall not, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the Minister, commence work for a period of two months after having given the notice.

APPENDIX 2

DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

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