

Athenry Rd, Loughrea, Co. Galway

Archaeological Impact Assessment

Client: Vincent Hannon Architects

Licence No: n/a

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SITE NAME	Athenry Rd, Loughrea, Co. Galway
CLIENT	Vincent Hannon Architects
INVESTIGATION TYPE	Archaeological Impact Assessment
LICENCE NO	N/A
PLANNING REF	N/A
TOWNLAND	St. Laurence's Fields
IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR	560782, 716981
RMP NO	N/A
RPS NO	N/A
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANT	Archer Heritage Planning Ltd.
ARCHAEOLOGIST	Maeve McCormick
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SUMMARY

This archaeological impact assessment was undertaken on a site at Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway (St. Laurence's Fields townland, Centre of site ITM 560782, 716981, Figure 1). The desk-based study and field survey for this assessment was undertaken in July 2024 by Maeve McCormick of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd. It aims to identify and describe known and potential archaeological and cultural heritage constraints within the site and offer recommendations for the mitigation of such impacts. The following factors were identified in the course of the study:

- The subject site is relatively small in scale, 0.457 Hectares in extent
- There are no Recorded Monuments within the subject site, the nearest is a Cillin (GA105-184) and Enclosure (GA105-233) 300m to the west of the site.
- The subject site lies 870m NW of the Zone of Archaeological Potential for GA105-150 Historic town of Loughrea
- No new potential archaeological features were noted in cartographic sources or aerial photography
- Aerial photography shows that the site has been disturbed in previous years
- No previous archaeological excavation were undertaken within the subject area with little archaeology found in local excavations outside of the medieval core of Loughrea
- There are no Protected Structures located within or adjacent to the subject site
- Nothing of archaeological significance was noted during the site visit.

These factors indicate that there is low potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains at this site. Construction groundworks for the development are likely to have an adverse impact on any currently unknown archaeological material that may survive on the site

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that topsoil stripping for the development be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Should any archaeology be identified then works around it should cease and the relevant authorities should be informed to agree an appropriate mitigation strategy.

NOTE: All conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are subject to the approval of The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and the relevant local authorities. As the statutory body responsible for the protection of Ireland's archaeological and cultural heritage resource, the DHLGH may issue alternative or additional recommendations.

Revision	Status	Date	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1	Final	15/07/24	MMC (Archer)	AOC (Archer)	CMG

1. INTRODUCTION

This archaeological impact assessment undertaken on a site at Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway (St. Laurence's Fields townland, Centre of site ITM 560782, 716981, Figure 1) has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd for Vincent Hannon Architects. The desk-based study and field survey for this assessment was undertaken in July 2024 by Maeve McCormick of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd. It aims to identify and describe known and potential archaeological and cultural heritage constraints within the site and offer recommendations for the mitigation of such impacts.

1.1 Proposed Development

The proposed design of the new fire station is 379.7m² and is located on the east side of the site to facilitate good sightlines for the fire appliances exiting the building.. The layout is presented in Figure 5.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposed site is located to c.1km west of Loughrea Town centre on a greenfield site on the southern side of the Athenry Rd with an area of 0.457 Hectares. The site currently comprises a green area sandwiched between the Athenry Rd and a housing estate.

3. METHOD STATEMENT

The following sources were consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)/ Sites and Monuments Record¹
- Aerial photography
- Historical maps
- Documentary research
- Relevant on-line databases (e.g. Excavation Bulletin; NRA Archaeological Database).
- Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021
- Loughrea LAP

¹ Archive Unit National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht ,

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Brief archaeological & historical background

Despite the presence of three crannogs in Lough Rea, an early ecclesiastical site around St Brigid's Church to the east of the town and a possible early church at St. Brendan's in the town itself, there are no pre-Norman documentary references to Loughrea and it is not until after the invasion of Connacht that it first appears in historical documents. After this invasion Loughrea became the principal manor of Richard de Burgh's and the intended capital of Anglo-Norman Connacht. The principal reason affecting de Burgh's choice of site would have been Loughrea's strategic controlling position at the gap between the Sliabh Aughty Mountains and the Williamstown–Kilreekil Ridge.

The topography of the medieval town appears to have been slightly different from what is seen today. Environmental evidence suggests that the level of the lake seems to have been higher and it encroached more on the southern side of the town than currently. The street pattern of the medieval town was linear, comprising of two main east–west streets, Main Street and Barrack Street, with a series of short north–south lanes connecting the two streets. However, it appears that Barrack Street did not extend originally as far to the west as it does today. A map of Loughrea dated 1791 shows it terminating at the foot of Castle Street. The southern side of today's modern town is of early 19th-century date when Barrack Street was widened northwards and realigned so as to bypass the medieval town gate, the market square was evidently created about this time also. There is little doubt that the medieval town had a market, the medieval marketplace was located in Main Street which was known until 1821 as Market Street.

The town's defences, apart from a reference dated 1574 that mentions that the town was well trenched and that the wall was unfinished in 1574, are not listed in any other documentary references. In John Bradley's and Noel Dunne's Urban Archaeology Survey of County Galway, they state that medieval Loughrea's defences formed a rectangular area which is still defined today by a feature known as the 'watercourse' which is in fact the remains of the medieval water-filled fosse that protected the town. This water-filled fosse runs from Mahoney's Bridge, beside the Court House, where it enters Lough Rea on the west to Dolphin Street on the north, following the line of 'The Walk' to where it joins the stream which connects it up once more with Lough Rea on the south. The watercourse averages 2.5m in width but test work by Paul Gosling along the southwest sector of the town in 1986 revealed that it was originally 1.5m wide.

Gwynn and Hadcock also suggest the presence of a hospital associated with medieval Loughrea and that there was a chapel or house of lepers in Loughrea in the Middle Ages and if so it was probably dedicated to St Laurence; however, nothing further is known about it and its location is unclear.

Outside the town is also the Church of St Brigid, the remains of which are located immediately east of the town. Traces of a potential early ecclesiastical enclosure can be determined in the line of the

townland boundary to the south-east of the church, between the townland of Loughrea and Farranalynch, and also in the curve of Danesfort Road, west of the church site. When complete this would have defined a rough circular area of 200m. The church itself measures 15m by 7.5m. The east gable has a base batter and the remains of a late medieval window. The shrine of St Brigid's Shoe seems to have been associated with this church and when the Carmelite nuns established themselves at Loughrea in 1680 they appear to have been first based here or near here.

4.2 Record of Monuments & Places

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is a statutory inventory of archaeological sites protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 (Section 12, 1994 Act), compiled and maintained by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI). The inventory concentrates on pre-1700 AD sites and is based on a previous inventory known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which does not have legal protection or status (see www.archaeology.ie).

There are no recorded monuments within the subject site. The closest are a Cillin or children's burial ground known as Kilnablasty Graveyard (GA105-184) and an Enclosure (GA105-233) located 300m west of the subject site. The site is located 870m north-west of the Zone of Archaeological Potential for RMP site GA105-150 Historic town of Loughrea. Details of the RMP/SMR sites in the vicinity of the subject site are presented in Appendix 1 (see Figure 2).

4.3 Cartographic Sources

Analysis of historic mapping can show human impact on landscape over a prolonged period. Large collections of historical maps (pre- and early Ordnance Survey maps as well as estate or private maps) are held at the Glucksman Map Library, Trinity College and other sources (UCD Library, Ordnance Survey Ireland, local libraries and published material). The development of the site and its vicinity recorded through the seventeenth to twentieth century cartography are described below. (Figure 3)

No new potential archaeological features were noted in cartographic sources.

Map	Date	Description
Historic 6inch	1841	The subject area is depicted as a large field on the western edge of Loughrea town. It is bordered on the north by the townland boundary between St Laurence's Fields and Cosmona to the north. No archaeological potential is noted (Figure 3)
Historic 25inch	1915-20	The field has now been divided in two further to the south of the subject site. No archaeological potential is noted (Figure 3)
Cassini	1930-48	No change

Table 1: Cartographic Sources

4.4 Aerial photography

Aerial photography (or other forms of remote sensing) may reveal certain archaeological features or sites (earthworks, crop marks, soil marks) that for many reasons may not be appreciated at ground level. Online orthostatic photographs of the site were examined (Ordnance Survey Ireland 1995, 2000 & 2005; Google Earth).

No new potential archaeological features were noted in aerial photographic sources. However, aerial images show that the site has been significantly disturbed in previous years. This is likely to have significantly reduced its archaeological potential (Figure 4).

Map	Date	Description
OSi B&W	1995	The site is shown as a green field with St. Laurence's Fields estate recently constructed to the south and single private houses to the east
OSi	2000	The subject site is shown as green field with a boundary wall constructed to the east and further housing to the SW.
OSi	2005	A possible site compound is visible in the S and some disturbance to the ground around it too
OSi	2005-12	The site appears to have been stripped and denuded off vegetation
Digital Globe	2011-13	Same as earlier
Aerial Premium	2013-18	The grass has been reinstated and the site looks like current situation

Table 2: Aerial photographic sources

4.5 Previous Archaeological Excavations

The Excavation Bulletin is a database of summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland and Northern Ireland from 1970 onwards. Summaries relating to archaeological excavations undertaken by the National Roads Authority are also available on-line and were consulted for any adjacent sites. Reports on licensed archaeological works are also held by the Archive Unit of the National Monuments Section.

No previous archaeological excavation was undertaken within the subject area. Details of previous excavations undertaken in the vicinity of the subject site are presented in Appendix 2. Outside of the medieval core of Loughrea, many of the excavations have failed to identify archaeological material. Excavations were undertaken at the cillín burial-ground in Laurencefields, to the east of the subject site to allow a sculpture to be erected by the Loughrea Environment Group. The cillín is well defined by remnants of an enclosing wall and numerous rough grave markers (undressed fieldstones

set on end). The test-pit, measuring 2m by 1m, was opened 15m east of the cillín and nothing of archaeological significance was found.

4.6 Architectural Heritage

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to safeguard architectural heritage in accordance with Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Under S.51 (1), a County Council must compile a Record of Protected Structures (RPS), which lists all structures which are of special *architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical* interest. The protection, unless otherwise stated, includes the exterior and interior of the structure, lands lying within its curtilage (boundary), other structures and their interiors within the curtilage, plus all fixtures and fittings which form part of the interior or exterior of any of these structures. Buildings can be added to, or deleted from the RPS at any time, though generally this occurs when the county development plan is being reviewed.

There are no Protected Structures located within or adjacent to the subject site

4.7 Site Visit

The site was visited by Maeve Mc Cormick of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd on 20th February 2022 in wet, overcast conditions (Plates 1 - 4). The site is occupied by a small public open space area which is accessed from Athenry Rd and extends to the St. Laurence's Fields housing estate to the south in a roughly triangular shape. The site slopes gently from north-west (Athenry Rd) to south-east i.e. towards the lake which is 500m to the south. The site is laid out in short grass with little or no hedging, trees or any other vegetation indicating that it may have been cleared in the recent past. A low limestone wall (circa 75cm high) which has been extensively repaired and altered forms the northern boundary along the Athenry Rd, with post and rail fencing and a concrete block wall to the west and a concrete block boundary wall to the east.. A pedestrian path links Laurence's Fields residential estate to the Athenry Rd. along the site's eastern side.

No potential archaeological features were noted during the site visit.

5. IMPACTS

This archaeological impact assessment was undertaken on a site at Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway (St. Laurence's Fields townland, Centre of site ITM 560782, 716981, Figure 1). The desk-based study and field survey for this assessment was undertaken in July 2024 by Maeve McCormick of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd. It aims to identify and describe known and potential archaeological and cultural heritage constraints within the site and offer recommendations for the mitigation of such impacts. The following factors were identified in the course of the study:

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- Aerial photography shows that the site has been disturbed in previous years
- No previous archaeological excavation were undertaken within the subject area with little archaeology found in local excavations outside of the medieval core of Loughrea
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These factors indicate that there is low potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains at this site. Construction groundworks for the development are likely to have an adverse impact on any currently unknown archaeological material that may survive on the site

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that topsoil stripping for the development be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Should any archaeology be identified then works around it should cease and the relevant authorities should be informed to agree an appropriate mitigation strategy.

NOTE: All conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are subject to the approval of The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and the relevant local authorities. As the statutory body responsible for the protection of Ireland's archaeological and cultural heritage resource, the DHLGH may issue alternative or additional recommendations.

7. REFERENCES

7.1 Bibliography

Gwynn, A. & Hadcock, R. N. 1988. *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*. Irish Academic Press. Dublin.

7.2 Web References

Online Excavations bulletin www.excavations.ie [accessed 28th Feb 2022]

Aerial Photography <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html> [accessed 28th Feb 2022]

Online Archaeological Survey of Ireland www.archaeology.ie [accessed 28th Feb 2022]

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage www.buildingsofireland.ie [accessed 28th Feb 2022]

Placename information <https://www.logainm.ie/ga/1432452>

Record of Protected Structures <https://www.galway.ie/en/services/planning/planspolicy/lap/lough/>



Maeve McCormick MSc

15th July 2024

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Table of RMP/SMR sites in vicinity of site

SMR No	Class	Townland	ITM	Distance to site
GA105-066----	Burial ground	COSMONA	561591, 717146	800m E
No information currently available				
GA105-067----	Redundant record	COSMONA	560780, 717345	380m N
This record relates to a field boundary; it is not an archaeological monument.				
GA105-068----	Kiln - lime	COSMONA	561136, 717386	500m NW
No information currently available				
GA105-069----	Mass-rock	COSMONA	561565, 717006	760m E
No information currently available				
GA105-077----	Prison	CUSCARRICK	561602, 716559	910m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-078----	Stone head	CUSCARRICK	561627, 716675	880m SE
A finely carved head reputedly that of a local man called 'Stoney Brennan'. Below the head is a plaque bearing the legend 'Stoney Brennan / In sweet remembrance / of his curative powers / to his many friends / in old Loughrea.' On a modern explanatory plaque the following is recorded: 'In the mid-nineteenth century, Stephen (Stoney) Brennan was hanged in Loughrea, reputedly for stealing a turnip.' The head was re-erected in its present location in 2013.				
GA105-150----	Historic town	LOUGHREA	561949, 716611	1200m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-150005-	Designed landscape - summer house	LOUGHREA	561638, 716589	910m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-151001-	Religious house - Carmelite friars	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-151002-	Graveyard	LOUGHREA	561940, 716768	1160m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-151003-	Graveslab	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-151004-	Graveslab	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-151005-	Graveslab	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-151006-	Graveslab	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-151007-	Graveslab	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-151008-	Graveslab	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-152----	Stone head	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-152001-	Architectural feature	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE

SMR No	Class	Townland	ITM	Distance to site
No information currently available				
GA105-152002-	Architectural feature	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-152003-	Cross	LOUGHREA	561912, 716764	1130m SE
No information currently available				
GA105-184----	Children's burial ground	ST LAURENCESFIELDS	560458, 716889	300m W
This burial ground is named 'Kilnabasty Graveyard' on the 1st ed. OS 6-inch map (surveyed 1838) and 'Kilnabasty Children's Burial Ground' on the most recent edition of the 6-inch map. It is situated in rough pastureland at the W edge of a large field. It consists of a roughly D-shaped area (37m N-S; 24m E-W) defined by a modern field boundary at W and a low rubble wall foundations on the remaining sides. A break in this remnant enclosure wall suggests an entrance on the E side. Within the interior, numerous small rough grave-markers in the form of earth-fast fieldstones set on end indicate graves aligned E-W. A mature hawthorn tree grows near the centre. According to local tradition, an adult male was buried here on one occasion and that it was in use as a burial place for unbaptised children until about 100 years ago. It has been suggested that this site served as the burial ground for Loughrea's medieval leper hospital (GA105-202----) (O'Sullivan 2009, 21-2). A test-pit was excavated adjacent to the burial ground to allow a commemorative sculpture to be erected at the site. This stone was erected in 2007 and the inscription reads: ST LAURENCE'S FIELDS OF THE INNOCENTS / THIS STONE WAS ERECTED IN 2007 IN MEMORY OF THE UNRECORDED GENERATIONS OF INFANTS WHO WERE BURIED AT THIS PLACE FROM MEDIEVAL TIMES UNTIL THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY. Nothing was found in the test-pit (O'Sullivan 2009, 20-1). (OSL Co. Galway, Vol. 2, 87) References: 1. OSL - Ordnance Survey Letters. Letters written by members of the Ordnance Survey's 'Topographical Department' (T. O'Connor, A. O'Curry, E. Curry, J. O'Donovan and P. O'Keeffe) sent to headquarters from the field (1834-41). MSS in Royal Irish Academy. 2. O'Sullivan, J. 2009 A note on a killeen burial ground in St Laurencesfields and the lepers of Loughrea. Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society 61, 16-23.				
GA105-192----	Redundant record	TULLAGH UPPER	560546, 716536	460m SW
The record was classified as Uncertain Earthwork in the SMR (1987) and as Earthwork Unclassified in the RMP (1997). Test excavations in 2008 revealed that the feature was a remnant ad-hoc bank that had utilised and augmented limestone outcrop to demarcate an area of the field (Delaney 2011, 178, No. 585). It is not an archaeological monument. References: 1. Delaney, D. 2011 Tullagh Upper. In I. Bennett (ed.), Excavations 2008: summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland, 178, No. 585.				
GA105-233----	Enclosure	ST LAURENCESFIELDS	560462, 716937	300m W
This enclosure was discovered in 2007 in the course of a survey of this area. It is situated in rough pastureland at the W edge of a large field immediately N of Kilnabasty Children's Burial Ground (GA105-184----) and possibly conjoined with it. It is defined by a low circular bank (O'Sullivan 2009, 18, 20, Fig. 2). References: 1. O'Sullivan, J. 2009 A note on a killeen burial ground in St Laurencesfields and the lepers of Loughrea. Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society 61, 16-23.				
GA105-234----	Architectural fragment	LOUGHREA	561816, 716594	1070m SE

SMR No	Class	Townland	ITM	Distance to site
Found on the side of an old ruined out-building, this neat rectangular limestone block (L 0.44m; Wth 0.23m) with slightly battered sides and a slightly dished surface is decorated with relief carvings on each side face. The carvings include a dragon, a pair of animals confronting each other, a single-horned animal with a chain and a pair of trefoil terminals connected by a chain. The stone was not in situ but had been in the yard for as long as anyone could remember and locally it was believed to be from the old castle (GA105-150006-). It appears to have been part of a larger structure and of 16th-century date.				

Appendix 2: Table of previous excavations in vicinity of site

Licence No.	RMP/SMR	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
-	N/A	561959, 717031	Fairgreen, Loughrea, Galway	1987:19	A. Hayden
The site lies in the garden of a 19th-century house in the south-western corner of the medieval part of Loughrea town. It is bounded on the west by a stream flowing northwards from the lake, c. 50m to the south. The site was due for development and during the digging of engineer's test pits a watching brief undertaken by Mr Paul Gosling (Director, Arch. Survey of Co. Galway), recorded the existence of a wall running north-south adjacent to the stream. As this wall lay on the line of the old town wall, an excavation was undertaken from 13-18 April 1987 to establish the date and nature of this wall and of a building marked 'Turret' (OS. 1st ed.) located on the line of this wall. The excavation was funded by the developer, G. McInerney Ltd, Loughrea, and by a grant from the Dept. of Archaeology, U.C.G. Three trenches each measuring 2m by 3-3.5m were opened along the line of the wall on the east bank of the stream. The southernmost trench lay adjacent to the 'Turret'. A Wall 0.65m wide was uncovered. This stood on a low footing laid on natural. Its eastern side, including the footing, survived to a height of 0.3m while its western side was offset on a footing 0.7m high, which also served as a revetment to the east bank of the stream. The wall was not located in test pits to the south of the 'Turret'. The material overlying the wall appears to have been produced by the reclamation of the area from the lake and by the construction of a garden in the 19th century. No finds of pre-late 19th-century date were recovered. The 'Turret' proved to be a 19th-century red brick structure – hence its description as a 'Summer House' (OS. 2nd ed.) This 'Summer House' was built on a small bridge that cut through the wall. The wall, judging by its position and extent and by early maps of Loughrea, would appear to have been built in the 16th or 17th century. At this time the lake level may have been dropping and was no longer providing a natural defence to this part of the town. All the early maps show that this area was uninhabited until the lake reclamation in the 19th century. This would explain the absence of finds contemporary with the wall					
98E02220	N/A	561104, 716636	MOANMORE, LOUGHREA, Galway	1998:258	M. Fitzpatrick
This involved the monitoring of ground disturbance associated with the development of a dwelling-house at Moanmore, Loughrea, Co. Galway. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in the course of monitoring.					
00E0004	N/A	561104, 716636	BALLYGASTY AND GRAIGUE, Galway	2000:0371	R. Crumlish
Monitoring of topsoil-stripping as part of the Loughrea Wastewater Disposal Scheme took place between 5 and 24 January 2000. The development consisted of the construction of a new treatment plant and associated outfall pipe, located close to the main Loughrea–New Inn/Mountbellew Road (L11). The proposed treatment plant was located to the south of the existing one. The 900mm outfall pipe ran north-west for 400m from the existing plant in Graigue townland to a stream in Ballygasty townland. The areas monitored comprised the proposed treatment plant, the access road into the plant and the line of the outfall pipe. The area of the new treatment plant measured 100–125m x 154–165m. The access road measured 130m. The first 60m of the outfall pipe at the treatment plant was located within the area of the access road. The stratigraphy encountered in the area of the proposed treatment plant and the access road consisted					

Licence No.	RMP/SMR	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
of topsoil overlying natural subsoil and sterile, grey, sandy loam. The natural subsoil occurred in the south half of the area only, on the higher ground, and was 0.1–0.2m thick. The grey, sandy loam contained frequent stones and lay below the topsoil in the north half of the area and below the natural subsoil in the south half of the area. The stratigraphy encountered along the outfall pipeline consisted of topsoil, tarmac and rubble fill, located on the surface, above grey, sandy loam. A number of pottery sherds of modern date were recovered from the topsoil. The removal of topsoil within the development area revealed mostly natural, undisturbed stratigraphy, apart from those locations where the outfall pipe crossed the main road and the area immediately south-east of it. It revealed nothing of archaeological significance.					
CO00157, E2468	GA105-150	562176, 716647	Loughrea, Galway	2006:820	M. Fitzpatrick
Monitoring of broadband installation was undertaken over a period of four months from July 2006. The work involved the excavation of a trench 0.55–0.6m wide and 0.8m deep to facilitate the installation of broadband cables in the area of Loughrea town. The trenches were excavated in the vicinity of the town wall and in the streets surrounding the town centre. Manual excavations in the area of the possible town gates/walls at Dunkellin Street and Main Street revealed no traces of these features. Excavations throughout the remainder of the town revealed no features of archaeological significance. The stratigraphy indicated that the areas had previously been disturbed with pipes, cables and services encountered throughout.					
E003193	N/A	562176, 716647	Loughrea, Galway	2007:652	M. Fitzpatrick
Monitoring of ground disturbance associated with the laying of pipes through Loughrea town was undertaken over a period of six months in 2007. The pipes were laid through Dunkellin Street and Main Street in the centre of the town. The excavations commenced at the west end of Dunkellin Street and involved the excavation of the entire roadway to a depth of c. 2–3m. Throughout the scheme the stratigraphy generally consisted of a tarred surface overlying subsoil that overlay a natural boulder clay. In a number of areas archaeological features were encountered. At the west end of Dunkellin Street a stone wall feature was encountered c. 0.3m below the surface. While it was disturbed by service pipes in the north, the remainder of the wall survived. The feature was located immediately west of the former town moat and may represent the remnants of the town gate. The remains of the wall are comprised of three distinct sections, all of which have mortar throughout. The first two sections extend from the modern bridge over the moat and run parallel to each other for a distance of c. 1.5m. They run in a roughly east–west direction and are c. 4.6m apart. Both walls terminate at roughly the same distance from the bridge and facing stones are visible on both. The third wall was found to the east of the other two and measured 1.25m by 1.1m. The feature was cleaned back, recorded and backfilled, leaving the walls undisturbed. Along Main Street a number of shallow pits containing animal-bone fragments and a number of culverts of 19th-century date were encountered. At the east end of Main Street, where the pipeline terminated, a small number of wooden timbers were recovered at a depth of c. 2.2m. The area had been previously disturbed by the laying of both sewer and water pipes. Three of the timbers recovered had pointed ends and appear to have functioned as stakes to support a structure or maybe a bridge, which may have spanned the moat at this end of the town.					
07E0691	GA105-184	560464, 716881	Laurencefields, Loughrea, Galway	2007:654	J. O'Sullivan

Licence No.	RMP/SMR	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
A test-pit was hand-excavated immediately east of a cillín burial-ground in Laurencefields, on the outskirts of Loughrea. This was to allow a sculpture to be erected by the Loughrea Environment Group. The sculpture commemorates the infants and juveniles buried in the cillín, and is also intended to promote the protection of the site from encroaching housing developments. The cillín is well defined by remnants of an enclosing wall and numerous rough grave markers (undressed fieldstones set on end). The test-pit, measuring 2m by 1m, was opened 15m east of the cillín but, apart from a shallow loam topsoil over limestone bedrock, nothing was found.					
08E0601	GA105-192	560546, 716536	Tullagh Upper, Galway	2008:585	D. Delany
Test excavations by hand took place at Tullagh Upper townland on the western outskirts of Loughrea town on 14 July 2008. Three test-trenches were opened along the length of a curving bank which had been observed in the course of compiling an archaeological assessment to accompany a planning application. The bank feature coincides with the location of GA105-192, but not with the description contained in the monument file. Testing was proposed to clarify the nature and extent of the feature. Three trenches, each measuring 2m by 1m were opened along the length of the curving bank. Stone which appeared on the surface was found to survive to a maximum of two courses, the basal layer being natural outcrop. It was concluded that the feature was a remnant ad-hoc bank which had utilised and augmented limestone outcrop to demarcate an area of the field. No related features were found. Modern finds were retrieved from Trench 2.					
C338, E4005	GA105-049, GA105-150, GA105-151	562176, 716647	CAHERWALTER/ FARRANLYNCH/ LOUGHREA, Galway	2009:388	D. Delany
The Bord Gáis networks feeder and distribution mains for Loughrea town and environs involved the laying of a gas distribution main within Loughrea Town and a feeder main which extended for a distance of 10km westwards to connect to the Craughwell distribution network. Fifteen test-trenches were opened along the route of the distribution main in late May/early June 2009. These trenches were located within the areas of constraint around GA105-150 (historic town of Loughrea), GA105-151 (ecclesiastical remains) and GA105-049 (ecclesiastical remains) prior to development. Twelve test-trenches were opened at various locations within Loughrea. These included six trenches adjacent to bridges over the Watercourse, four trenches along The Walk, which runs parallel to the Watercourse and adjacent to the Carmelite abbey and graveyard (GA105-151), and two trenches adjacent to St Brendan's Church and graveyard on Church Street. Disarticulated human remains were uncovered in one of the test-trenches located immediately south of the Carmelite abbey and graveyard at The Walk. The absence of human remains in the trenches located to the east and west indicated that the possible burial area did not extend for any considerable distance along The Walk. Furthermore, as it was already proposed to directional-drill this section of the route, preservation in situ was achievable. The drilling depth was set at 2m and launch and receiving pits for the drill were opened at previously tested locations, thereby ensuring preservation in situ of all archaeological material. Two possible pits were identified in one of the two trenches opened adjacent to St Brendan's Church and graveyard on Church Street. No archaeological material was uncovered in any of the other trenches within the historic town of Loughrea, nor in the three trenches excavated within the area of constraint for GA105-109, an					

Licence No.	RMP/SMR	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
					ecclesiastical site located to the east of the town. Monitoring of development works was carried out from July to October 2009. All excavations within areas of archaeological constraint and in the environs of the historic town were subject to full-time monitoring, while excavations along the N6 from Loughrea to Craughwell were monitored intermittently. A number of features were identified during the monitoring programme. Several pits and stone culverts were recorded within the historic town but the main feature was a substantial wall extending east-west along the north side of Barrack Street. Cartographic evidence suggests that this wall is associated with the old constabulary barracks. The first-edition OS map shows an elongated building on the north side of Barrack Street. This building appears to be part of the barracks complex and its alignment corresponds with the walling uncovered during trenching on Barrack Street. It is possible that the wall is associated with Loughrea Castle, which is recorded as having been located in this part of the town. Indeed there are many instances throughout the country where castles were used by the constabulary as sites for their barracks. The exposed sections of walling were recorded and preserved in situ. Features uncovered outside the historic town include a possible ditch, 9m wide and 1.8m deep, which was recorded in the west part of the area of constraint around GA105-049 (ecclesiastical remains) at Danesfort Road. This may represent part of an enclosing element around St Brigid's Early Christian foundation. However, there was nothing to date this feature and its dimensions, profile and singular fill are not indicative of an Early Christian date. Furthermore there was no corresponding feature on the projected line of the ditch to the south of St Brigid's Church at The Hill. A spread of burnt material, 3.4m long and 0.3m thick within the trench, was exposed in section in the townland of Colesgrove some 2.5km south-east of consisted of sod and topsoil overlying subsoil which Craughwell. This was interpreted as part of a possible fulacht fiadh.
18E0568	GA105-192	560478, 716534	Tullagh Upper, Galway	2018:401	R. Crumlish
					Monitoring of topsoil stripping at a development in Tullagh Upper townland, on the western outskirts of Loughrea, Co. Galway, took place between 18 September and 9 October 2018. The project consisted of the construction of seventy-six residential units, two commercial units and a creche. The monitoring was a condition of planning and was necessary due to the location of GA105-192 within the development site. The monument, previously recorded as an Uncertain Earthwork in the SMR (1987) and as Earthwork Unclassified in the RMP (1997), was classified as a redundant record on the Historic Environment Viewer of the National Monuments Service website. Test excavations carried out by Dominic Delaney in 2008, under Excavation Licence No. 08E0601, revealed that the feature was a remnant ad-hoc bank that had utilised and augmented limestone outcrop to demarcate an area of the field. It was not an archaeological monument. The development was located across two fields of pasture. The topsoil was stripped from the entire site, an area of 3.097ha. This reduced levels by 0.1-0.45m. Forty pits were also excavated for concrete bases for a security fence around the site compound. The pits measured 1-2m long, 0.5-1.1m wide and 0.2-0.8m deep. Below the topsoil across the site area were natural subsoils, limestone bedrock and modern dumped material. A number of land drains and a water service crossed the site. The topsoil contained modern artefacts, as well as six pottery sherds of post-medieval date. No features or deposits of archaeological significance were in evidence. The removal of a dry stone wall, which divided the two fields, revealed two architectural fragments (see

Licence No.	RMP/SMR	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
photo attached). The first was part of a mullion. The second was a cut and dressed rectangular limestone block with a stop chamfer. The dressing suggested a 19th-century date. The stripping/removal of the feature (GA105-192) showed it to be partly a dry stone wall and partly a low earthen bank sitting directly on natural subsoil and of no archaeological significance.					

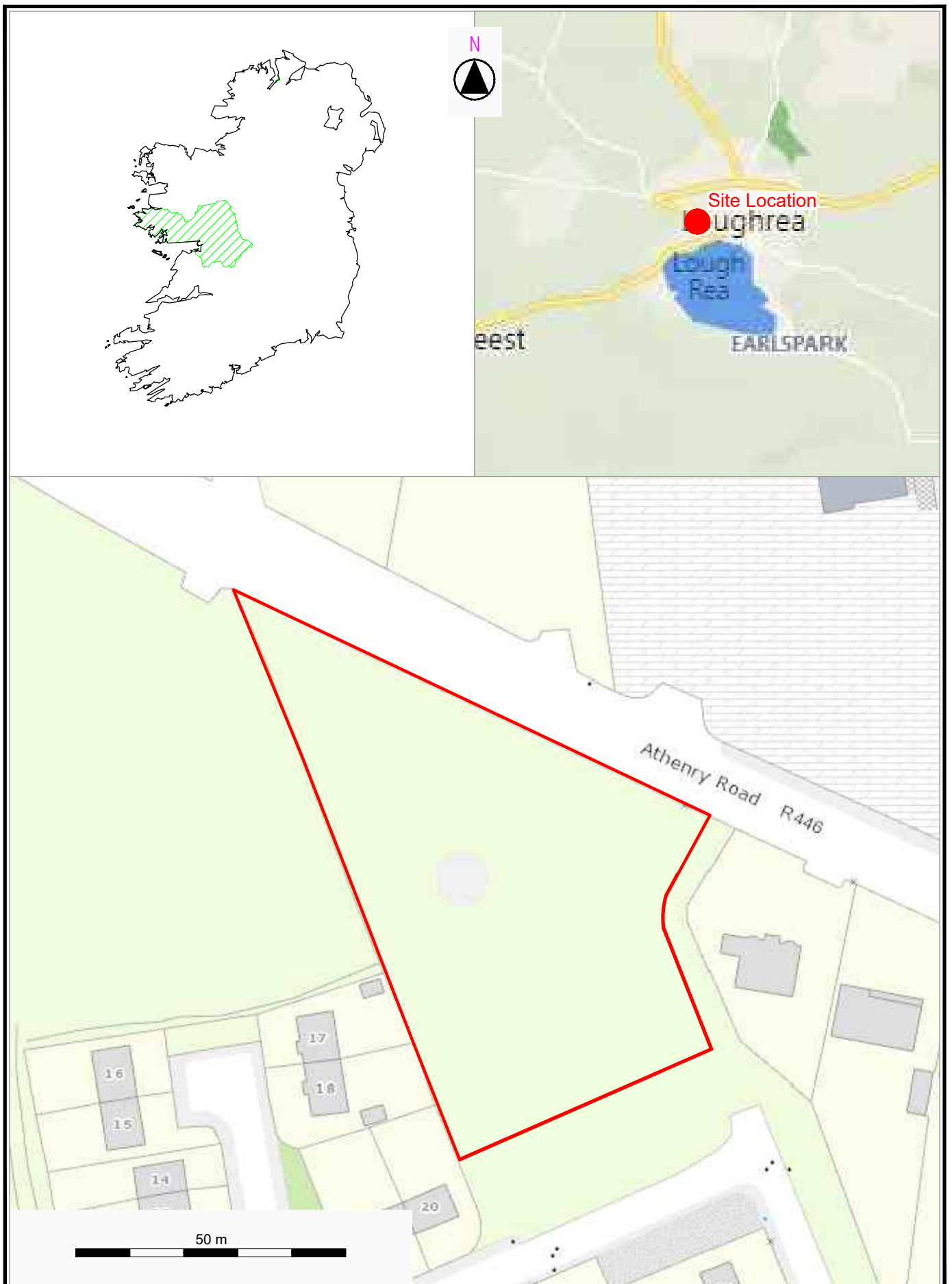
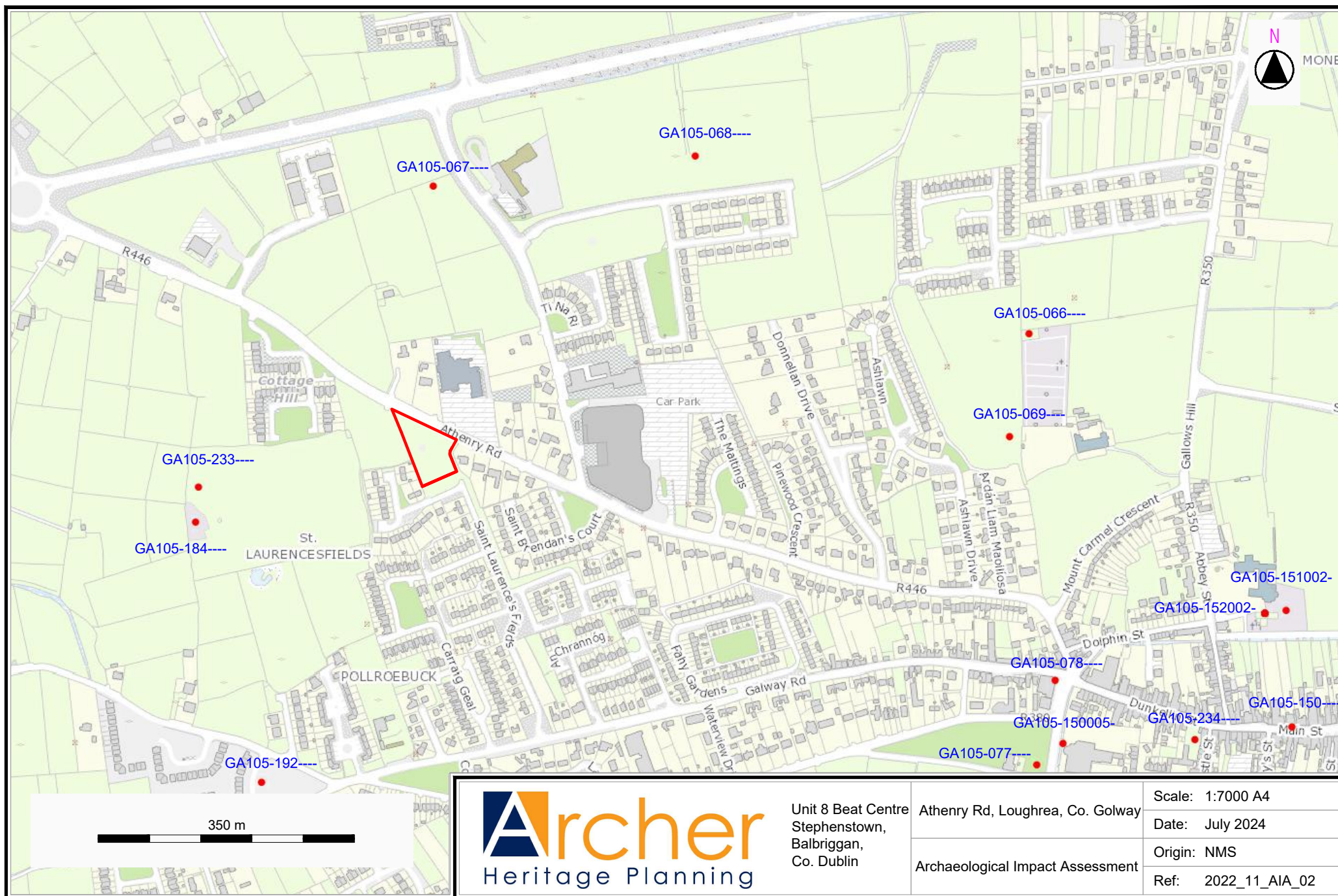
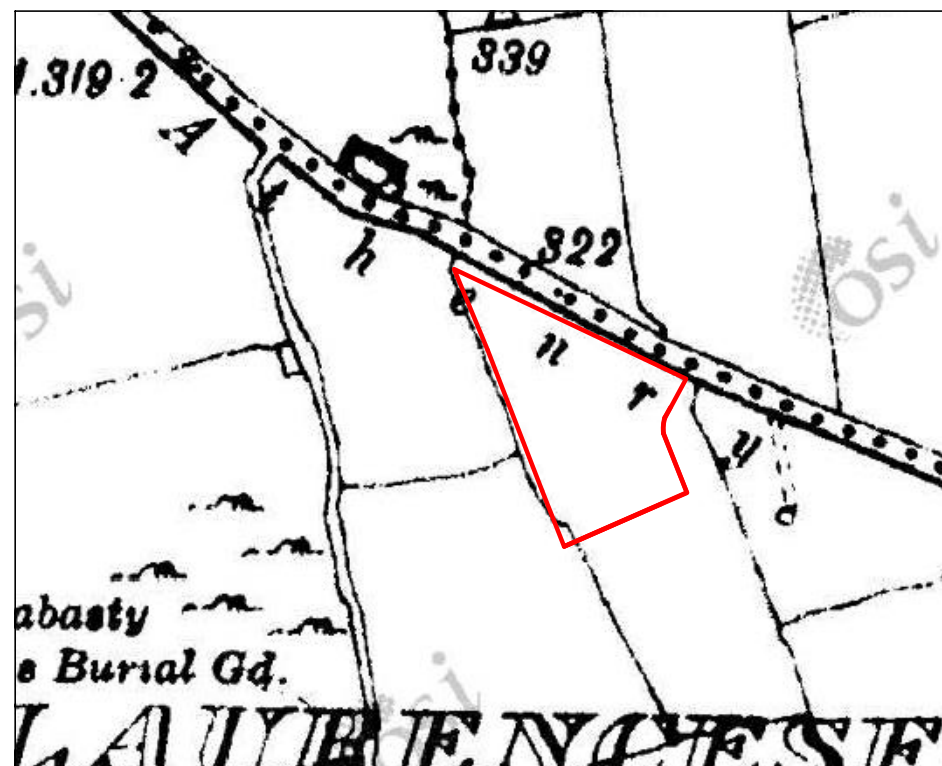
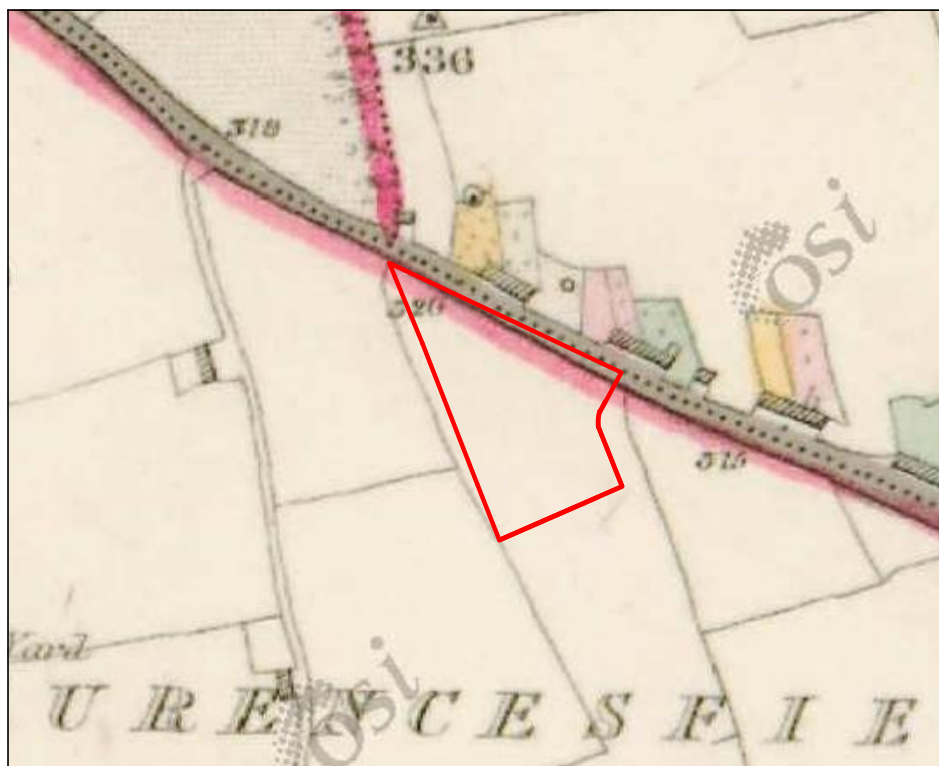


Figure 1: Location of site





(l) 1st edition OS - 1841

(r) Cassini - 1930-48



Unit 8 Beat Centre
Stephenstown,
Balbriggan,
Co. Dublin

Athenry Rd, Loughrea, Co. Galway
Archaeological Impact Assessment

Scale: Not to scale

Date: July 2024

Origin: NMS

Ref: 2022_11_AIA_03

Figure 3: Extracts from cartographic sources



(l) 1995 OSi Aerial

(r) 2011-13 Digital Globe Aerial



Unit 8 Beat Centre
Stephenstown,
Balbriggan,
Co. Dublin

Athenry Rd, Loughrea, Co. Galway
Archaeological Impact Assessment

Scale: Not to scale

Date: July 2024

Origin: OSI

Ref: 2022_11_AIA_04

Figure 4: Extracts from aerial photographs

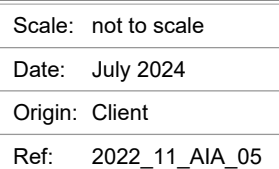


Figure 5: Proposed site layout



Plate 1: Site from NW corner looking south towards St. Laurence's Fields housing



Plate 2: NE corner of site looking south-west from Athenry Rd



Plate 3: Looking north-west (towards Athenry Rd) from SE corner of site



Plate 4: Looking NE from south-west corner of site