

Crokershill, Kilkenny

Archaeological Impact Assessment

CLIENT: Kilkenny County Council

DATE: 08.03.19

Crokershill, Kilkenny

SITE NAME	Crokershill
CLIENT	Kilkenny County Council
INVESTIGATION TYPE	Archaeological Impact Assessment
LICENCE NO	N/A
PLANNING REF	N/A
TOWNLAND	Crokershill
IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR	649641, 656027 (centre of site)
RMP NO	N/A
RPS NO	N/A
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANT	Archer Heritage Planning Ltd.
ARCHAEOLOGIST	Liam Coen
DATE OF ISSUE	8 th March 2019
JOB REF.	2019_16

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	1
SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	4
2. SITE DESCRIPTION	4
3. METHOD STATEMENT	4
4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	4
4.1 BRIEF ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	4
4.2 RECORD OF MONUMENTS & PLACES	5
4.3 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES	6
4.4 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY	7
4.5 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS	7
4.6 ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE	8
4.7 TOPONYMS	9
4.8 SITE VISIT	9
5. IMPACTS	10
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	10
7. REFERENCES	11
7.1 BIBLIOGRAPHY	11
7.2 WEB REFERENCES	11

List of Tables

Table 1: Archaeological sites within 1km of the proposed development

Table 2: Cartographic sources relating to the site

Table 3: Aerial Photographs

Table 4: Previous archaeological investigations in the wider area

Table 5: Recorded Structures from NIAH in vicinity of proposed development

List of Figures

Figure 1: Location of site

Figure 2: Surrounding RMP/SMR sites within 500m of the proposed development

Figure 3: Historical maps

Figure 4: Aerial photographs

List of Plates

Plate 1: From NE corner of site looking west

Plate 2: "Quarry" area

Plate 3: Central area of site looking east

Plate 4: Western extent of site showing land falling to stream to west (middle ground)

Plate 5: Shed in SE corner of site along Kennyswell Rd

Plate 6: Boundary wall looking west

Plate 7: Central area of site from the road (south)

Plate 8: Intact section of wall (opp. nos 13, 14 and 15 Kennyswell Rd)

SUMMARY

A desk-based study and field survey was carried out on a site located on the western outskirts of the town of Kilkenny (ITM 649641, 656027). The site covers an area of c. 2.5 hectares on the northern side of the Kennyswell Road (R695) on the edge of the town. This Archaeological Impact Assessment report sought to identify and describe known and potential archaeological or cultural heritage constraints within and/or immediately adjacent to the site. The following factors were identified in the course of desktop study:

- The site is moderate in scale occupying an area of roughly 2.5 Ha.
- There are no recorded monuments situated within the site boundaries.
- No potential archaeological features were recorded in aerial photos of the subject site.
- Examination of the cartographic sources indicates no archaeological features.
- No archaeological excavations have been undertaken previously within the subject site, however a number of excavations along the River Breagagh (north of the site) have highlighted the archaeological potential adjacent to the river.
- There are no Protected or Recorded structures in or adjacent to the site.

These factors indicate that there is high-moderate potential (based on the site's proximity to the river and the city to the east) for the survival of buried archaeological remains at this site.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the site be subject to further assessment consisting of test trenching prior to development.

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

Revision	Status	Date	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1	Final	8 th March 2019	LC (Archer)	AOC (Archer)	CMG

1. INTRODUCTION

This archaeological impact assessment undertaken for the Crokershill lands, Kilkenny (ITM 649641, 656027, Figure 1) has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd for Kilkenny County Council. The desk based study and field survey for this assessment was undertaken in March 2019 by Liam Coen 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

This site is being assessed for future residential development.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

This site is on the western outskirts of Kilkenny. It is bounded along the south by the Kennyswell Road and a semi-Kennyswell area of a single field laid out as rough grazing. The site is predominantly agricultural land with a cluster of domestic houses along the Kennyswell Road. The landscape is comprised of a low hill in the centre of the site with falls to the west, east and north where a substantial stream (Breagh River) runs between Crokershill townland and Bishops Demesne townland to the north.

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).

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Brief archaeological & historical background

Prehistoric sites and artefacts have been recovered from the hinterland of Kilkenny City. However, the earliest sustained settlement in Kilkenny City was connected with two early medieval monasteries Domhnach Mór and Cill Chainningh (Bradley 2000, 1). A substantial monastic town developed around the latter 'church of Canice', which would become the principal ecclesiastical power in Leinster outside

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

Dublin in the twelfth century (O'Drisceoil 2008, 80). The early monastery was defined by concentric Kennyswell ditched enclosures that survive in the curving street-pattern of Vicar Street, St. Canice's Place, Dean Street and Thomas Street (Hogan 1884, 157; Bradley 1990).

Richard de Clare constructed a motte castle in Kilkenny in 1173, which was burnt and rebuilt before the end of the century (Stokes 1895-7, 433) when William Marshall began construction of a large quadrangular stone castle, which led to the development of the city and liberty of Kilkenny (Crouch 1990, 92-106). The borough flourished and prospered during the 13th – mid-14th centuries, becoming the chief market place for the hinterland, resulting in the emergence of a wealthy merchant class. The success of the town led to a steep rise in its population and the rapid expansion of the urban area, into the flood-plains of the rivers Nore and Breagh and then into a series of suburban developments. At least five suburbs are documented; Irishtown, Donaghmore, linear extensions along Walkin's Gate and St. James's Gate, Flemingstown (south of the castle), and St. John's. The earliest reference to town walls is in the thirteenth century under the reign of Henry III (Thomas 1992, 128) and probably after 1288 (Bradley 2000, 8). There were also several murage grants or references to the wall into the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (these dates probably referring to the completion of the wall circuit or the enclosure of the suburb of St Johns), with on-going maintenance and improvement through sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Thomas *ibid*).

There was a general decline in population from the mid-fourteenth century, a result of the cumulative effects of poor harvests, the Bruce invasions and the 'Black Death' which resulted in the desertion of some suburbs and the abandonment of the wider countryside (Neeley 1989, 15-16). The fifteenth century was however, a period of consolidation and economic revival (*ibid*).

The Breagh which is directly north of the subject site flows into the west bank of the River Nore and takes its name from the Irish *bréagach*, meaning deceitful. It has been described as 'flanked almost continuously by significant archaeological sites' (O'Sullivan and Deevy, EIS 1999, 63) and served as the dividing line between the medieval boroughs of High Town and Irish Town. The river is fortified by the city wall, a mural tower and gates on the High Town side and is also crossed by a number of medieval and post-medieval bridges. It is also bordered by ecclesiastical sites and several mills.

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 located within the application area; there are a small number in the immediate area. The Zone of Archaeological Potential for Kilkenny City (KK019-026) lies 600m to the east of the site.

SMR No	Class	Townland	ITM	Distance to site
KK019-102	House	Kilcreen (Crannagh By.)	649350, 656156	180 m to NW
No description				
KK019-022001	Ring-ditch	Kilcreen (Crannagh By.)	649284, 656403	350 m to N
No description				
KK019-022002	Ring-ditch	Kilcreen (Crannagh By.)	649280, 656334	320 m to N
No description				
KK019-022003	Ring-ditch	Kilcreen (Crannagh By.)	649324, 656322	300 m to N
No description				
KK019-022004	Ring-ditch	Kilcreen (Crannagh By.)	649293, 656317	320 m to N
No description				
KK019-024	Ritual site - holy well	GARDENS (Kilkenny City By., St. Canice Par.)	649932, 656038	150 m to E
No description				

Table 1: Archaeological sites within 0.5km of the proposed development

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 nineteenth and twentieth century cartography are described in Table 2 below (Figure 3). **No potential archaeological features were recorded within the subject site.**

Map	Date	Description
Down Survey, City of Kilkenny	1656	This map shows the old town walls on both the east and west side of the River Nore. The course of the River Breagagh is not depicted on the map, the subject site lies within an area noted as "Robert Booths parkes"
Historic 6inch	1838	The site is comprised of two fields with a boundary in the centre running north-south. St. Canice's well KK019-024 is shown to the east. A small number of buildings are depicted on Kennyswell Road.
Historic 25inch	1909-10	Trees are shown on the site running along Kennyswell Road, on the boundary between the two fields and more heavily in the low area further to the north along the river. White Bridge is shown further to the SW outside the site boundaries. The shed which still stands in the SE corner of the site is shown with a yard to the rear.

Table 2: Cartographic sources relating to the site

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/Bing Maps 2018/9).

Aerial Photograph	Date	Description
OSi	1995	Black and white photograph. The site is shown in its current layout with a relict field boundary visible (N/S). The housing estate (Breagagh) to the east is not built. The eastern area of the site has been subject to groundwork's. A possible large Kennyswell feature is visible in the centre (raised) area of the site, with a further small Kennyswell feature to the NW.
OSi	2005	Quarrying is shown in its current location to the eastern third of the site. The wall along Kennyswell Road seems to be intact
Map Genie	2018	The land is in rough pasture. The wall along Kennyswell Rd has been partially demolished with the stones mounded in the field.
Google Earth	2019	No change

Table 3: Aerial Photographs

4.5 Previous Archaeological Excavations

There were no previous archaeological excavations within the subject site but several have taken place along the River Breagagh as it enters the city to the east of the site.

Excavation No.	RMP	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
00E0406	SMR 19:26	E 649960m, N 656093m	BANKS OF THE RIVER BREAGAGH, GARDENS, KILKENNY	2000:0535	Paul Stevens
<p>Four of eight proposed test-trenches were excavated on the north bank of the River Breagagh. Two structural features of archaeological significance were noted in two of the trenches. However, no artefact-bearing archaeological deposits were encountered in these trenches, and outcropping white sandstone bedrock was only noted in one trench.</p> <p>Trench 1 was excavated 50m south-east of Watergate and was 6m long. This revealed a substantial linear timber structure 2.6m wide, probably representing part of a possible late medieval timber weir, associated with an unnamed mill on the opposite bank.</p> <p>Trench 3 was excavated 60m south-west of Black Friars Bridge and revealed modern and early modern activity. This consisted of the eastern end of a stone rectangular building and an unassociated revetment wall, abutted by a plank fence with iron strapping to the riverside. Both features appeared to pre-date the existing river wall and probably date to the 18th century.</p> <p>Trench 4 was excavated to assess the archaeological potential of a semiKennyswell portion of river wall, close to the site of Blackmills Bridge. No archaeological soils were encountered in this trench, although no date could be established for the wall, which appears on Rocque's map of 1758 and the first edition 1840 OS map. River gravels were revealed in this trench at a depth of 3m. No archaeological artefacts were retrieved from the gravels.</p>					

Excavation No.	RMP	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
<p>Trench 5 was excavated 86m south-west of Black Friars Bridge and revealed early modern and modern activity but no archaeological soils or features. River gravels were revealed in this trench at 1.1m, overlying alluvial peat and muds, and an outcrop of white sandstone bedrock at a depth of 3m.</p> <p>The results of selective archaeological testing and an assessment along the banks of the River Breaghagh have revealed fourteen sites of archaeological significance and four previously unknown structures within the banks of the river, including a possible late medieval timber weir, a post-medieval stone structure, a possible medieval wall and timber foundations for an early modern bridge. The limited remit of this programme of testing was partly owing to access limitations. However, further testing in the riverbed is planned when water levels have dropped to workable levels. Archaeological survey of all upstanding features within the riverbanks is currently underway. Archaeological monitoring of construction and full excavation or preservation in situ of all areas of archaeological potential directly affected by development have been recommended.</p>					
00E0406 ext	SMR 19:26	E 650140m, N 656163m	Banks of the River Breaghagh, Gardens, Kilkenny	2002:1011	Paul Stevens
<p>Testing of the banks of the River Breaghagh was initially carried out in September and October 2000 (Excavations 2000, No. 535). Additional work was undertaken in April 2001 (Excavations 2001, No. 714) and again in August 2002. Work was carried out before construction of the River Breaghagh section of the River Nore (Kilkenny City) Drainage Scheme. The development involves the lowering of the riverbed, with additional selective widening of the river, and the installation of gabion walls and sheet piles.</p> <p>Trench RB-9 was excavated along the left bank of the River Breaghagh, against the river wall, and 23m north-east of Trench RB-3. The trench was dug to assess an area of riverbank marked on the 1839-42 OS map as a 'Corn Kiln'. Two floors and rooms were revealed: an eastern room with stone partition wall and cobbled surface leading to the doorway, through the river wall, and a western room with a paved floor (at a slightly higher level) and truncated concrete partition wall, extending back from the river wall. The northern section of the test-trench was severely truncated by a concrete foundation pad for the existing carpark and apartment development. The eastern room dated to the early 19th century, and the western to the 20th century. Further excavation of the cobbled floor was recommended and undertaken under a separate licence (see No. 1016 below, 02E1370).</p>					

Table 4: Previous archaeological investigations in the wider area

4.6 Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) was established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. Its purpose is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. It is intended to provide a basis for recommendations of the Minister of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) to Local Authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in Records of Protected Structures (RPS).

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 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 development plan is being reviewed.

There are no Protected Structures or Recorded Structures within the site.

The details are shown below in Table 5

NIAH Reg. No.	Address	Description	Date	Distance from site
12401927	Kilcreene Lodge	Detached four-bay two-storey house, redeveloped 1863, incorporating fabric of earlier house, c.1675, with two-bay two-storey recessed wing to right having single-bay single-storey lean-to advanced glazed porch leading to full-height gabled canted projecting bay, and three-bay two-storey higher return to west having bowed bay window to left ground floor. Completed, 1884-90.	1884-90	150m to NW
12005015	Handball alley	Pair of mass-concrete handball alleys, c.1950. Unpainted mass-concrete walls with square-headed door openings having no fittings, and rendered rounded coping having iron posts supporting iron mesh panels. Set back from line of road.	1945-1955	150m to east

Table 5: Recorded Structures from NIAH in vicinity of proposed development

4.7 Toponyms

Research into a site or areas place name (or toponym) can provide information relating to an areas heritage or previous land use. Many townland names were anglicised by the time the Ordnance Survey (OS) began in the 1830s and when townland names were standardised in the Townland Index (1851). The Place-Names of County Kilkenny by Owen O' Kelly (1969) simply includes Crockershill as; "Crockershill, Cnoc an Chroicigh, Croke's or Croker's hill. Area 25 acres." The OS townland name notes records the earliest mention of the townland as deriving from one Willemus Croker in 1385 and later referred to as "Kroakers land" then "Crockers Cross" and finally Crockers Hill.

Details were taken from www.logainm.ie.

4.8 Site Visit

The site was visited by Liam Coen of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd on 8th March 2019 in dry, overcast conditions (Plates 1–8). The site is comprised of a single field which is laid out in rough grazing with horses present. The land rises from a low point in the east via an area of former quarrying which runs N/S through the site, rising to a low hill in the centre of the site which overlooks the town to the east before falling away steeply to the west where it is bounded by the Breaghagh River. There is a small single story stone built shed in the SE corner of the site along Kennyswell Road (marked on the OS 1st edition). The remains of a fine stone wall form the boundary of the site with Kennyswell Road; it has

been knocked to a level of approximately 1m along much of its length apart from a 15m stretch at the western end of the site where it is largely intact (1.8m high). A single-storey pumping station lies near the eastern end of the site along Kennyswell Rd, north of the pumping station is an area of former quarrying.

There is one large overhead power line running E/W through the centre the site, with two smaller overhead lines to the west and east of the site through the site, their presence will restrict the available area for any potential geophysical survey. No further archaeological features were identified during the walk-over survey of the site

5. IMPACTS

A desk-based study and field survey was carried out on a site located on the western outskirts of the town of Kilkenny (ITM 649641, 656027). The site covers an area of approximately c. 2.5 hectares on the northern side of the Kennyswell Road (R695) on the edge of the town. This Archaeological Impact Assessment report sought to identify and describe known and potential archaeological or cultural heritage constraints within and/or immediately adjacent to the site. The following factors were identified in the course of desktop study:

- The site is moderate in scale occupying an area of roughly 2.5 Ha.
- There are no recorded monuments situated within the site boundaries.
- No potential archaeological features were recorded in aerial photos of the subject site.
- Examination of the cartographic sources indicates no archaeological features.
- No archaeological excavations have been undertaken previously within the subject site, however a number of excavations along the River Breagagh (north of the site) have highlighted the archaeological potential adjacent to the river.
- There are no Protected or Recorded structures in or adjacent to the site.

These factors indicate that there is high-moderate potential (based on the sites proximity to the river and the city to the east) for the survival of buried archaeological remains at this site.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the site be subject to further assessment consisting of test trenching prior to development.

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

7. REFERENCES

7.1 Bibliography

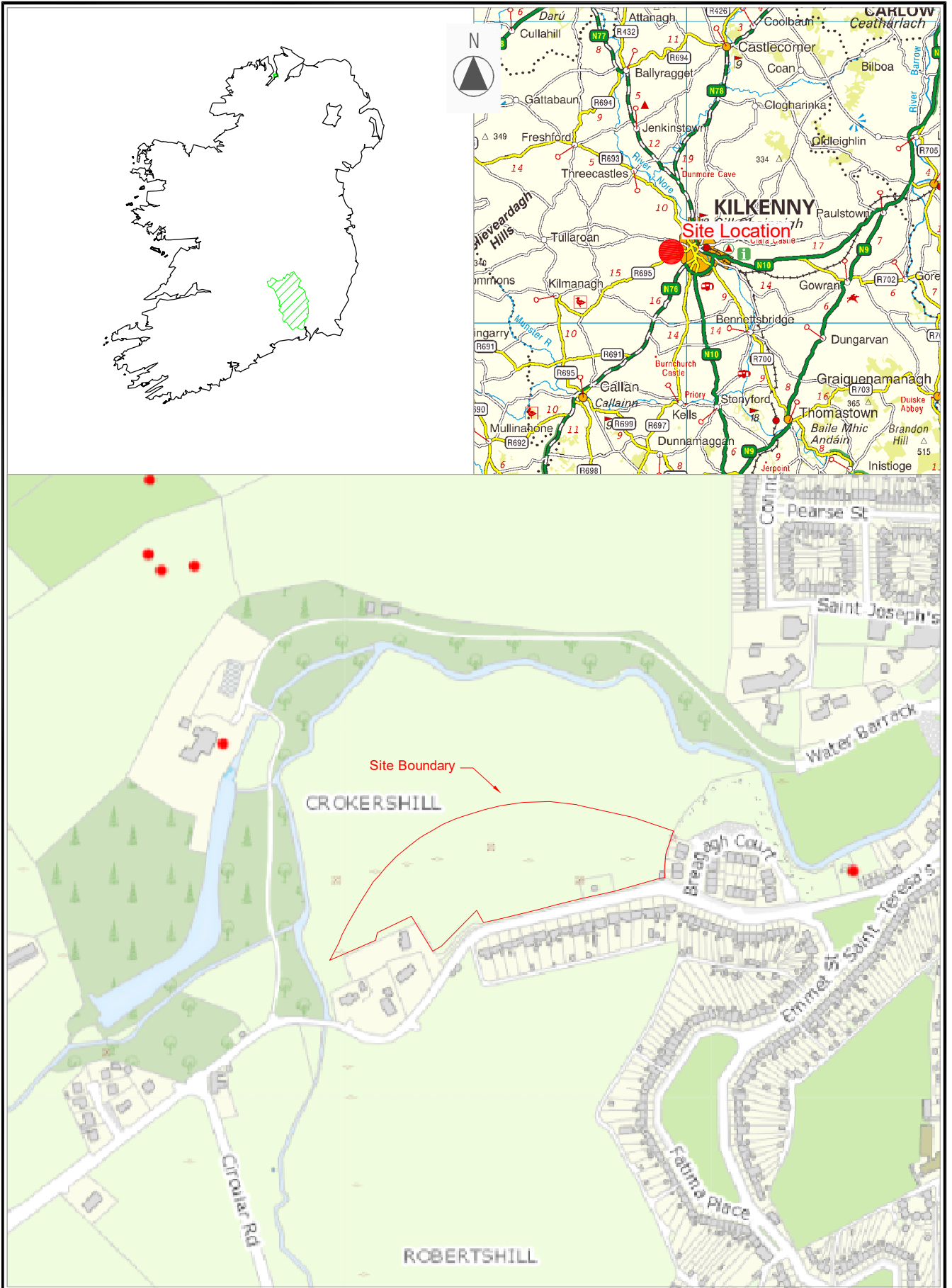
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- https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/resources/eng/Services/Planning/DevelopmentPlans/Appendix_C-G_City.pdf
- <http://kilkennyarchaeologicalsociety.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/OKelly-Place-Names-of-County-Kilkenny-Crannagh-Barony.pdf>

Liam Coen

Liam Coen BA 08th March 2019



Unit 8 Beat Centre
 Stephenstown,
 Balbriggan,
 Co. Dublin

CrokersHill, Kilkenny
 Archaeological Impact Assessment

CLIENT: Kilkenny Co. Co.

Scale: 1:5000 A4

Date: March 2019

Origin: www.archaeology.ie

Ref: 2019_16

Figure 1: Site location

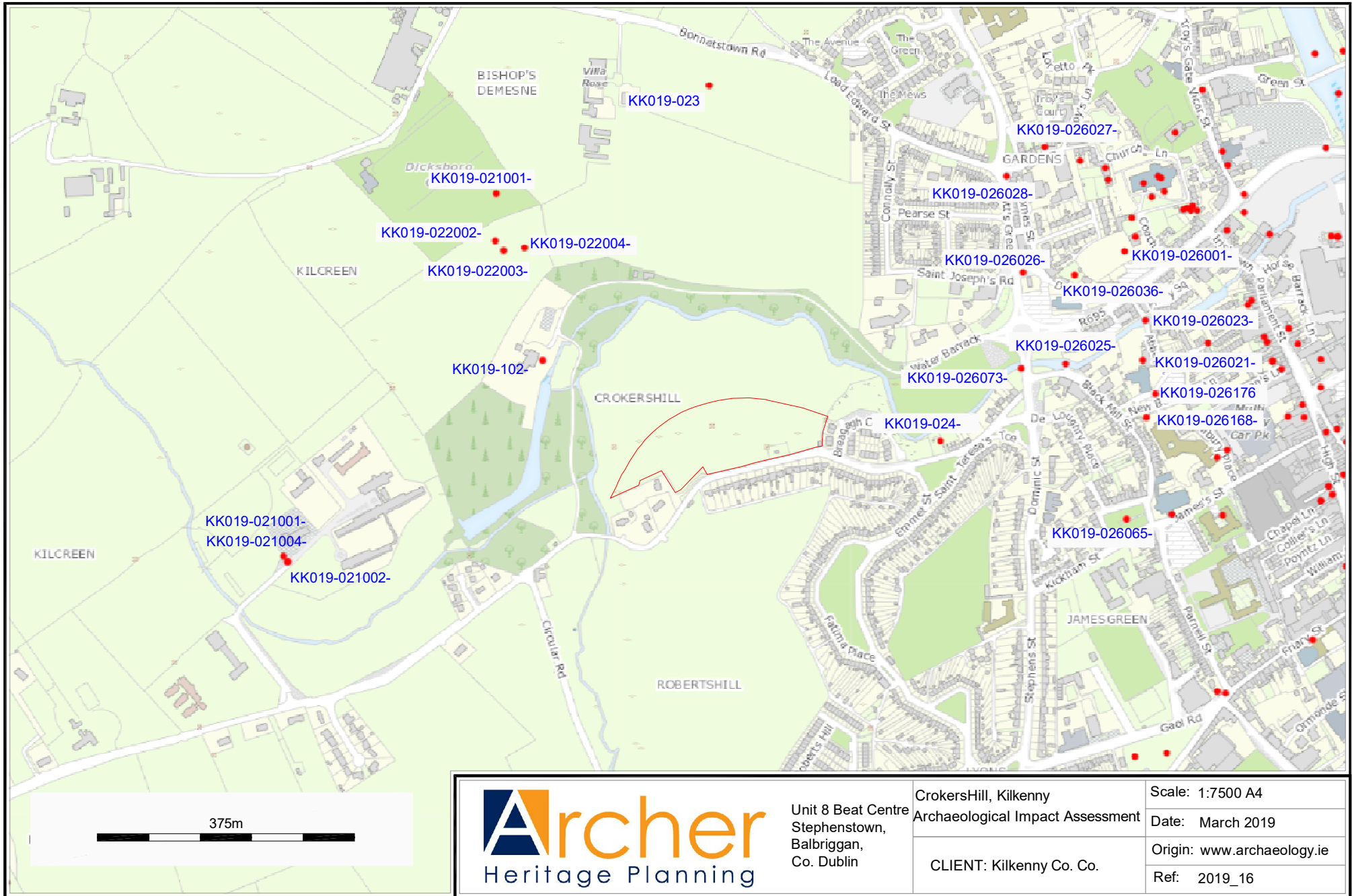
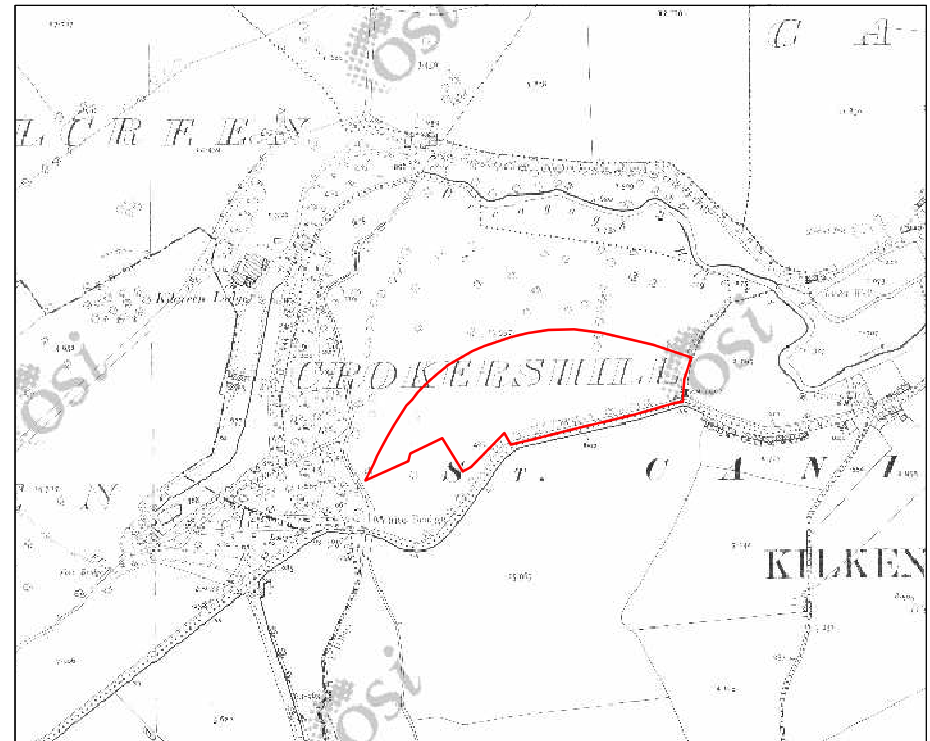
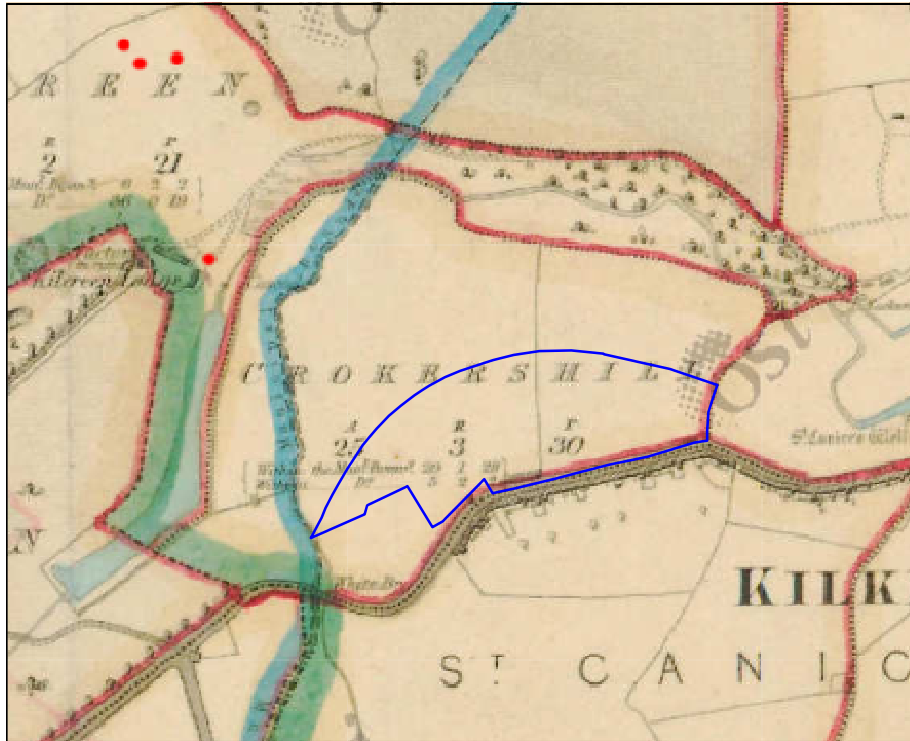


Figure 2: Surrounding RMP/SMR sites within 500m



(l) 1st Edition OS Map (1842)
 (r) 2nd Edition OS Map (1899-1902)



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 Co. Dublin

Crokers Hill, Kilkenny
 Archaeological Impact Assessment

CLIENT: Kilkenny Co. Co.

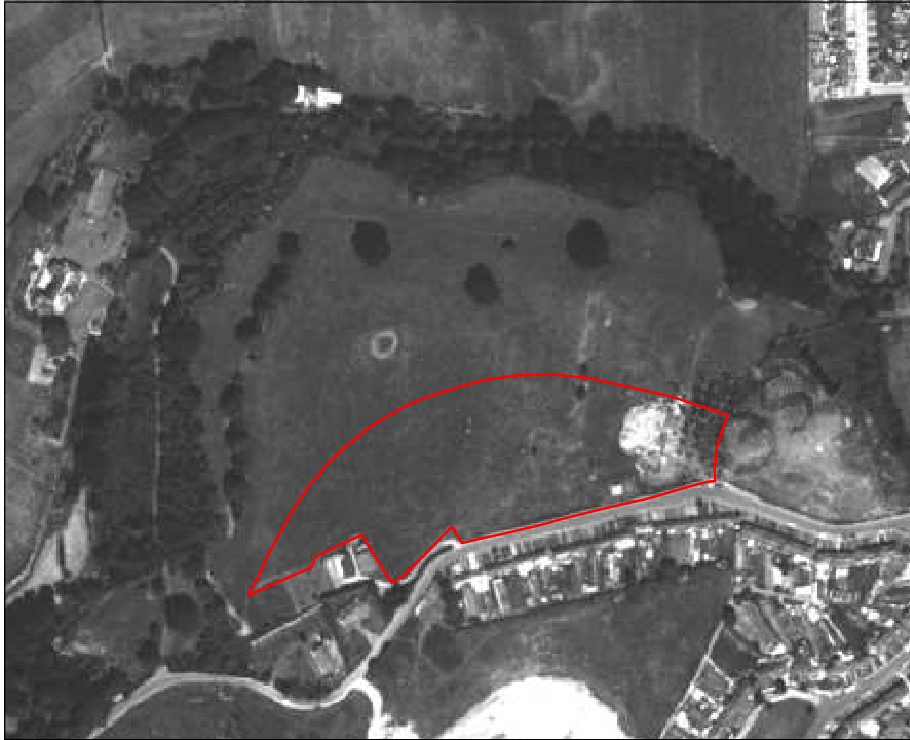
Scale: Not to scale

Date: March 2019

Origin: OSI

Ref: 2019_16

Figure 3: Extracts from early historical maps



(l) 1995 OSI Aerial Photograph

(r) 2019 Google Earth



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CrokersHill, Kilkenny
Archaeological Impact Assessment

CLIENT: Kilkenny Co. Co.

Scale: Not to scale

Date: March 2019

Origin: OSI/Google Earth

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Figure 4: Aerial Photographs



Plate 1: From NE corner of site looking west



Plate 2: "Quarry" area



Plate 3: Central area of site looking east



Plate 4: Western extent of site showing land falling to stream to west (middle ground)



Plate 5: Shed in SE corner of site along Circular Rd



Plate 6: Boundary wall looking west



Plate 7: Central area of site from the road (south)



Plate 8: Intact section of wall (opp. nos 13, 14 and 15 Circular Rd)