

Proposed N51 Navan Park and Ride Facility

Archaeological Assessment

Client: Meath County Council

Licence No: N/A

Archaeologist: Aidan O'Connell

Report Date: 8th May 2020

Our Ref: 2020_27



PROPOSED N51 PARK AND RIDE FACILITY

Archaeological Assessment

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|----------------------------------|---|
| SITE NAME | Navan Park and Ride Facility; Moathill, Navan |
| CLIENT | Meath County Council |
| INVESTIGATION TYPE | Archaeological Assessment |
| LICENCE NO | N/A |
| PLANNING REF | N/A |
| TOWNLAND(S) | Moathill |
| IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR | 686052, 767819 |
| RMP NO | ME025-023 (adjacent to) |
| RPS NO | N/A |
| ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANT | Archer Heritage Planning Ltd. |
| ARCHAEOLOGIST | Aidan O'Connell |
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CONTENTS

CONTENTS I

SUMMARY III

1. INTRODUCTION 1

 1.1 SITE DESCRIPTION 1

 1.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS 1

2. METHOD STATEMENT 1

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND 2

 3.1 BRIEF ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 2

 3.2 RECORD OF MONUMENTS & PLACES 4

 3.3 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES 5

 3.4 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS 5

 3.5 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS 6

 3.6 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY 9

 3.7 SITE INVESTIGATIONS 9

 3.8 CONTOUR SURVEY 9

 3.9 RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES 10

4. SITE INSPECTION 11

5. DESCRIPTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL 11

6. IMPACTS & RECOMMENDATIONS 12

7. REFERENCES 13

 7.1 BIBLIOGRAPHY 13

 7.2 WEB REFERENCES 13

 7.3 OTHER REFERENCES 13

List of Tables

Table 1: Archaeological sites in the surrounding area of the proposed development

Table 2: Cartographic sources relating to the site

Table 3: Aerial photography of the site

Table 4: Archaeological excavations within the area

Table 5: Protected Structures entries in the vicinity of the subject site

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location with surrounding RMPs

Figure 2: Extracts from historical maps (i)

Figure 3: Extracts from historical maps (ii)

Figure 4: Extracts from aerial photographs

Figure 5: Previous archaeological investigations adjacent to the site

Figure 6: Development proposal and contour survey

Figure 7: Proposed alterations to existing ground surface

SUMMARY

An archaeological desktop assessment comprising was carried out at the site of a proposed park and ride facility at Moathill, Navan, Co. Meath. The following factors were identified in the course of desktop study:

- The site is relatively large in scale occupying an area of c. 0.62 hectares.
- There are no recorded monuments located within the site. However, the site is located adjacent to Navan Moat, an Anglo Norman Motte (RMP ME025-023).
- No potential new archaeological features were recorded in cartographic sources relating to the subject site.
- No new potential archaeological features were recorded in aerial photos of the subject site.
- There are no protected structures located within the subject site. There are 2 protected structures adjacent to the subject site, the Anglo Norman motte and St. Patricks School.
- No archaeological excavations have been undertaken previously within the subject site.
- Archaeological excavations undertaken adjacent to the site in advance of the N51 Navan Inner Relief Road uncovered an extensive early medieval enclosed settlement. Associated archaeological features may extend into the subject site.
- Geophysical survey undertaken within the subject site recorded potential archaeological features in the form of two parallel potential east-west aligned ditches and numerous pit-like features. These may be associated with archaeological features recorded in previous excavations recorded at the NW of the site in advance of the N51 Navan Inner Relief road.
- Geotechnical test pits suggest existing topsoil deposits of c. 0.6m above natural gravels.
- The southern and south-eastern portions of the site appear to have been previously terraced, indicating some potential ground disturbance adjacent to higher ground.
- There is variation in the extent to which existing ground levels will be built up or reduced. The northern and central portions of the site will be built up by c. 0.2-1.13m, while there are modest ground reductions proposed elsewhere.

The proposed development area is identified as a site of high archaeological potential. It is likely that buried archaeological deposits survive within the subject site. However, the high potential is somewhat mitigated by relatively low proposed ground disturbances.

Recommendations

It is recommended that should development proceed at this location, it should be conditional on further archaeological assessment in order to better define the site's archaeological potential. Further assessment should take the form of licensed archaeological test trenching targeted on recorded geophysical anomalies and undertaken across an appropriate sample of the remainder of the site. The aim of proposed test excavation will be to identify the location, date, nature, extent and depth/level of

any buried archaeological remains within the site. This information shall inform future strategies for the appropriate treatment of any buried archaeological remains.

The conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are subject to the approval of DCHG; in consultation with the NMI 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 | Draft | 8 May 2020 | O'Connell (Archer) SENIOR ARCHAEOLOGIST | B Korfaenty(Archer) ARCHAEOLOGIST | C. Mc Guinness |

1. INTRODUCTION

This archaeological assessment report for a proposed Park and Ride facility at Moathill, Navan, Co. Meath has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd for Meath County Council. The desk based study was undertaken in May 2020 by Aidan O'Connell 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 Site Description

Moathill occupies a circular hill above the 60m OD contour. This hill is approximately 1km outside the medieval town of Navan. The subject site consists of a Greenfield area, south of and bounded by the N51 Navan Inner Relief Road. The topography of the site slopes down from south to north and northeast, towards the N51. The southern part of the field has been terraced into the hillside and the southeast side is bounded by a 2m high bank (Roycroft 2019).

1.2 Proposed Developments

The area is proposed for car parking facilities with associated surface drainage. A section of the existing modern fenced boundary between this site and St. Patricks School will be taken down and rebuilt as an access gate

2. METHOD STATEMENT

This assessment aims to establish the archaeological potential of the proposed development area, to determine the potential impact of the proposed development and if necessary design a suitable mitigation strategy. The following sources were consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)¹
- Aerial photography (various collections including National Museum of Ireland, Geological Survey of Ireland and/or Ordnance Survey Ireland)
- Historical maps (including early edition Ordnance Survey (OS) maps and pre-Ordnance Survey held at Trinity College Map Library).
- Reference material (journals, papers, books *etc*) held by the National Library of Ireland, local libraries and/or on-line search facilities/collections (*e.g.* JSTOR *etc*)
- Relevant on-line databases (*e.g.* Excavation Bulletin; NRA Archaeological Database).

The desk based assessment was not supported by walkover survey due to restrictions on movement brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. However the site was visited by Meath County Council

¹ Archive Unit National Monuments Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and the Gaeltacht, Floor 2, Block 6, Irish Life Centre

archaeologist Niall Roycroft in February 2017 and July 2019. His subsequent archaeological assessment (Roycroft 2020) was made available for this study and incorporated into this report.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Brief archaeological & historical background

A small group of prehistoric objects known from the Navan area indicate that it was probably used in early prehistory as a natural fording point of the Blackwater and Boyne Rivers (see Bradley 1985). Prehistoric material within the town is unusual, however a large number of prehistoric settlements/sites (Neolithic–Iron Age) have been identified to the south and east of the town (on the route of the M3 motorway; see O'Connor 2008, 83–95) and also in Athlumney townland. Athlumney (*Áth Luimnigh*), suggests a river ford in this general location, and there are historical references to the River Boyne being forded during the early eighteenth century, before New Bridge was constructed. Navan has traditionally been identified with *Nuachongbail*, an early medieval monastery established by St Fechín (Gwynn & Hadcock 1970, 399). The Abbey of St Mary was in existence before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, probably c.1147 AD (O'Murchadha, 1992-3, 117), and was subsequently patronised by the Anglo-Normans.

Jocelin de Angulo was granted the baronies of Navan and Ardraccon by Hugh de Lacy before 1186 (Orpen 1911–20, 84), and quickly fortified both territories, at Navan their motte was situated at Moathill, west of the town and apparently built on top of the originally mound of *Odhba* (O'Murchadha ibid, 119). It was the de Angulo's (the family later adopted the surname Nangle) who were responsible for the initial foundation of the town at the confluence of the Boyne and Blackwater Rivers. The medieval settlement was located on a triangular ridge overlooking the river junction, with a three streets (Trimgate Street, Ludlow Street and Watergate Street) converging on Market Square in a Y-shaped pattern. On the basis of a largely intact burgage plot pattern, the area of medieval town is estimated at about 5.2 hectares (Bradley 1985;). The nature of the walls up to the fifteenth century is a matter of speculation (Thomas 1992, 172-3), however there is clear documentary evidence in 1462, of a parliamentary grant to continue collecting murage taxes levied during the reign of Henry VI (1422–61; Berry 1914, 25).

Very little is known of the early development of the Anglo-Norman town of Navan and the first reference to its status as a borough is in 1423 when the provost and community were among those asked to assist the town of Trim which was coming under threat from the depredations of native Irish clans (Murphy 2007). A sixteenth-century market cross bears the arms of the Nangle and Dowdall families and has an inscription which refers to the grant of Navan to the first de Angulo baron (Bradley 1985, 97), which may reflect a genuine historical association of the first barons of Navan with the foundation of a market in the town. In 1409 Nicholas Fleming, Archbishop of Armagh granted forty days indulgence

from penance to everyone who contributed towards the cost of rebuilding the bridge of Navan which had recently been broken down by a flood (Smith 2003, 90).

Corporate charters were granted in 1494, 1605 and 1679 that refer to markets and fairs and there is little doubt that the importance of the town in the medieval period rested on its function as the market place for its hinterland (Cogan 1862, 223). In 1470 King Edward IV issued letters patent authorizing the burgesses of Navan to levy tolls on all goods coming for sale into the town, or for three miles around in order to build the walls and maintain the pavements (Moore 1863 1, 59). Navan and surrounding areas received a significant setback in 1539 when the locality came under attack by the Irish forces of O'Neill and O'Donnell. The dissolution extents made the following year report many buildings burnt and lands wasted (Murphy 2007). A letter of the period described the destruction of Navan, described as 'the wealthiest...English market town' in Meath (Moore *ibid*) It appears that the walls of the town were never properly repaired and it seems likely that some surrounding settlements were deserted in the wake of this attack.

The 18th century witnessed the removal of the town gates and the demolition of much of the walls which heralded the industrialisation of the town and its environs, with the construction of the various mills and associated industries along the Boyne and Blackwater, and also the construction of the Boyne Navigation Canal in the second half of the eighteenth century between Drogheda and Navan (Coyne 1902). The town's growth through the early nineteenth century was certainly due to its importance as a trading centre, in particular as a corn market. In these early decades of the nineteenth century, Navan's mills (including Fay's 6-storey mill on the Blackwater, and Delaney's 7-storey mill on the Boyne adjacent to New Bridge) were sending 5000 tons of corn per annum to Drogheda, and a further 900 ton to Dublin (Connell 2004, 112). Further industries included one of Ireland's first mechanised flax mills in Athlumney (built 1806), two whiskey distilleries and a paper mill. Despite the increase in industry, there remained a relatively small number of wealthy families in Navan in this period, with over 85% of households living in one storey houses (Connell 2004, 113). This is reflected in descriptions of the town in this period; in 1809 for example, the centre of the town was described as 'tolerably well-built...but the extremities are chiefly composed of a line of mud cabins'. Wilde (1849) also described the town as a "dirty, ill-built straggling collection of houses", perhaps reflecting his visit to the town being chiefly concerned with the banks of the Boyne and Blackwater (see Ellison 1963, 33–56). Lewis (1837, 421-2) records a thriving market town of over four thousand people, with flour, oat, flax and paper mills on the river banks, as well as a whiskey distillery and an extensive weaving industry.

Navan has two Anglo-Norman mottes within its limits. The first motte (ME025-033) is located in a commanding position overlooking the north bank of the Boyne in Athlumney townland to the southeast of the town centre. It has been truncated at the top due to quarrying but still stands to a height of 5m with a basal diameter of 32m (Sweetman 1987, 156, 160). The second motte (ME025:023) is adjacent to the subject site. This survives as a flat-topped earthen mound 4–7m high with a basal diameter of

37m. It is defined by a fosse and a small lunate bailey lies to the northwest. The Anglo-Norman town of Navan was established a short distance away from the motte at the exact location where control of the river crossings at the confluence of the Rivers Boyne and Blackwater could be maintained. However archaeological works in 1997 and 2006 along the Navan Inner Relief Road have demonstrated that there was a substantial enclosed settlement of early medieval date adjacent to the motte. It would appear that the site was deliberately appropriated by the Anglo Normans in asserting control over the area during their initial colonisation.

3.2 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). It is compiled and maintained by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) and comprises descriptive lists and maps of all sites, monuments and zones of archaeological potential, recorded to date in the country. 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. A current initiative of the NMS has been the establishment of a publicly accessible website (www.archaeology.ie) containing details of the recorded holdings of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI). It includes recently discovered sites recorded in the course of development-led archaeological assessments and excavations as well as the on-going work of the ASI.

| RMP No | Class | Townland | ITM | Distance to site |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| ME025-023001- | Castle - motte and bailey | MOATHILL | 685907, 767688 | 40m N |
| Situated on top of a fairly high ridge. This is an overgrown, flat-topped and scrub-covered earthen mound (diam. of top 15m N-S; diam. of base 37m N-S; H 4.5m at N to 6.8m at S) defined by the remains of a fosse (at N: Wth of top c. 10m; ext. D 1.5m). There is a small lunate bailey (dims 7m N-S; c. 20m E-W) defined by a steep scarp (at N: ext. H 4m) at NW. The area to the S has been quarried since the 19th century and this has extended around to the E, but the old quarry is now developed for housing. Archaeological testing c. 70m to the NW recovered the remains of two inhumations, a male (aged 18-23) and a female (aged 31-45) in a disturbed condition at the summit of the ridge. | | | | |
| ME025-023002- | Architectural fragment | MOATHILL | 685943, 767662 | 85m NW |
| No information on www.archaeology.ie | | | | |
| ME025-023003- | Graveslab | MOATHILL | 685943, 767662 | 85m NW |
| There is a record of a 17th century limestone graveslab in three pieces (dims 0.15m x 0.12m; T 0.12m) kept at St Patrick's Classical School. The fragmentary inscription reads: HERE UN../ ISE / FETH AVE... (Bradley and King 1985, 101). | | | | |
| ME025-044011- | Excavation - miscellaneous | ABBEYLAND SOUTH | 686711, 768174 | 750m SW |
| No information on www.archaeology.ie | | | | |
| ME025-044012- | Excavation - | ABBEYLAND SOUTH | 686721, 768184 | 765m SW |

| RMP No | Class | Townland | ITM | Distance to site |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| | miscellaneous | | | |
| No information on www.archaeology.ie | | | | |
| ME025-044016- | Building | ABBEYLAND SOUTH | 686741, 768192 | 785m SW |
| No information on www.archaeology.ie | | | | |
| ME025-044017- | Excavation - miscellaneous | ABBEYLAND SOUTH | 686741, 768192 | 785m SW |
| No information on www.archaeology.ie | | | | |
| ME025-044019- | Burnt spread | ABBEYLAND SOUTH | 686741, 768192 | 785m SW |
| No information on www.archaeology.ie | | | | |

Table 1: Archaeological sites in the surrounding area of the proposed development

3.3 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 following historical maps were consulted in the compilation of this assessment (Table 2). No previously unrecorded cultural heritage features were noted in the examination of historical mapping.

| Map | Date | Description |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Down Survey | 1655-8 | The town of Navan is depicted. The subject site is shown as agricultural land with no features marked. Moathill motte is not marked. |
| Taylor & Skinner | 1777-85 | Navan is shown on numerous maps. Moathill motte not marked. |
| William Larkin | 1812-17 | Navan is depicted. The subject site and its surrounding topography is depicted. However, the motte at Moathill is not marked. |
| 1st edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey | 1837 | The site is depicted as agricultural land adjacent to the motte at Moathill, which is marked as 'Navan Moat'. The site is hachured and a gravel pit is marked to the south. One relict field division noted at the west of the subject site. No additional potential archaeological features were noted. |
| Historic 25 inch | 1888-1913 | No change |
| Cassini | 1888-1913 | No change |

Table 2: Cartographic sources relating to the site

3.4 Aerial Photographs

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. There are a number of available collections including the National Monuments Section, Geological Survey of Ireland (1970–73), Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1995, 2000, 2005), National Museum of

Ireland (St Joseph CUCAP Collection) and Air Corps (1950's–1970's). Online orthostatic photographs of the site were examined (Ordnance Survey Ireland 1995, 2000 & 2005; Google Maps 2016-18).

| Aerial Photograph | Date | Description |
|-------------------|---------|--|
| OSi Aerial | 1995 | Black and white aerial photography of the area shows the site as agricultural land before the construction of the N51 Relief Road. No archaeological features noted. |
| OSi Aerial | 2000 | No change. |
| OSi Aerial | 2005 | No change |
| Google Earth | 07_2008 | N51 newly constructed with some disturbance/soil storage noted beyond the western end of the subject site. No archaeological features noted. |
| Digital Globe | 2005-13 | Clearance of field boundary at west of site. No features noted. |

Table 3: Aerial photography of the site

3.5 Previous Archaeological Excavations

The Excavation Bulletin is a database of summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland and Northern Ireland from 1970 to 2018. 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. Archaeological excavations undertaken in advance of the N51 Inner Relief Road have indicated the presence of significant archaeological deposits in the area. 'Site 1' (06E0274), which was west of and adjacent to the proposed car parking area consisted of an early medieval settlement including enclosure ditches, boundary ditches and a series of circular huts and associated pitting. Additional adjacent works identified human remains along the route of the N51 in 1997 (97E0101). Finally, Sites 2 and 3 (06E0024) which were also excavated in advance of the N51 provided further evidence for extensive settlement on the Moathill hillsides.

| Licence | RMP | OS Ref | Location | Ex. Bulletin Ref. | Author |
|--|-----------|----------------|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 99E0653 03E1389 | ME025-023 | 685700, 767739 | Moathill, Navan | 1999:702 2003:1438 | M Conway R O'Hara |
| <p><u>1999:702:</u> Test excavation in advance of housing development located directly SE of Moathill motte and south of the sports ground at St. Patricks College. Four trenches excavated. No archaeological stratigraphy was encountered in any of the test-trenches. The presence of extensive early modern dump deposits over most of the north-eastern portion of the site points to ground reduction within this area. From the late 19th century extensive gravel quarrying has been undertaken in the immediate environs of this site, and even the motte itself has been quarried during the recent past.</p> <p><u>2003:1438:</u> Monitoring in advance of residential development. No archaeology found.</p> | | | | | |
| 97E0101 | ME025-023 | 685913, 767669 | Navan Moat (Vicinity of), Moathill, Navan | 1997:427 | TC Breen |
| <p>Test excavation in advance of N51 Navan Inner Relief Road. Six cuttings, A–F, were excavated along the route. They were 1.5m wide and varied in length from 15m to 30m. In cuttings A, E and F nothing of archaeological relevance was found. In the remaining three cuttings traces of cultivation ridges were found. Human skeletal remains were found in two</p> | | | | | |

| Licence | RMP | OS Ref | Location | Ex. Bulletin Ref. | Author |
|--|-----------|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <p>cuttings: a skull fragment and tooth in Cutting C, and more substantial remains in Cutting D. The latter were situated at approximately the highest point on a small hillock. The remains of two human skeletons were found, representing a male aged 18–23 and a female aged 31–45. Muscular development and wear on the vertebrae showed the latter to have been accustomed to constant bending and lifting. The skeletons had been disturbed by later agricultural activities, but they appear to have been crouched inhumations, oriented east–west, with the head towards the left. There were no definite grave-goods, but two nondescript pieces of quartz and iron were found.</p> <p>The cutting was widened, but no other burials were found.</p> | | | | | |
| 06E0274 | ME025-025 | 685883, 767769 | Site 1 Navan Inner Relief Road | 2006:1611 | A Giacometti |
| <p>An excavation at Site 1, Navan inner relief road, Co. Meath, was conducted in the summer of 2006. The site was identified through a series of archaeological and geophysical assessments, as the proposed new road passed very close to Navan Moat. Three areas of archaeological interest were excavated in 2006 along Phase IIB of the Navan inner relief road. These were Site 1 (discussed here), located in the south-east corner of a field north-west of Navan Moat, and Sites 2 and 3 (excavated under Licence No. 06E0024 by Stuart Halliday, see No. 1612 below), located in a field to the west of Navan Motte. Site 1 comprised a settlement near the top of a small hill, and a lower-lying area of craftwork.</p> <p><i>The settlement near the top of the hill</i></p> <p>The excavation revealed a complex of archaeological features on the north-west-facing slope of a small hill that probably represent an enclosed settlement. The settlement was defined (and possibly defended) by a ditch to the east that followed a topographical line. A smaller ditch a few metres inside it, slightly higher up the hill, may have been contemporary with it and added to the impression of a clearly bounded and circular-shaped settlement when viewed from the lower parts of the hill. To the west, near the top of the hill, the features defining the settlement were much less clear and the boundaries were more fluid and less circular in shape.</p> <p>The main entrance to the settlement was located to the south-east. It was clearly defined on one side by the terminus of the main ditch and on the other uphill side by a large pit that mimicked the shape of the ditch terminus. A feature in the entrance may have been a gate or similar entrance structure. Evidence for burning and a large amount of animal bone were found in the large pit forming the upper side of the entrance. This may have represented the reuse of the entrance feature later as a kiln or fire-pit, or else it may relate to a ritual or offering marking a particular time in the settlement's history.</p> <p>Inside the settlement enclosure five fire-pits, fire-pit dumps, occasional post-holes and part of a rectangular structure were found. No artefacts were found that might indicate a date for the enclosure. On the whole, the features indicate a residential settlement similar in size to a regular or small ringfort (i.e. able to hold a single extended family). The large quantity of animal bone found in this area contrasts markedly with the very limited amount of bone found in the lower-lying craft working part of the site, and supports the interpretation of the enclosure being a residential settlement.</p> <p><i>Marking boundaries</i></p> <p>A large T-shaped ditch ran through the site and appeared to have marked an important boundary. From its shape, it might be supposed that three separate areas were being defined: one to the west of the ditch (being the area exposed in this excavation), one to the east of the ditch and one to the north. The ditch (or ditches) was in a continuous process of redefinition along its course, and it was the largest and most long-lived feature found on the site, both pre-dating the rest of the activity in its earliest incarnation and continuing in use after activity elsewhere ceased. The various phases of the ditch or ditches formed the basis for the phasing of the lower-lying part of the site.</p> <p>The ditch is likely to have marked field boundaries during the earlier and latest phase of its use. During the time when the craft working areas to the immediate west of the ditch were in use, however, the ditch appears to have provided an important drainage channel (and perhaps source of water) for the metallurgical, craftwork and processing taking place here, as well as marking a possible property boundary.</p> <p>Evidence for two possible structures was found on the western side of the boundary ditch. These were very different from everything else on the site and their date and function was unclear. Of most interest about these features was that they respected the lines of the surrounding ditches, in particular the large boundary ditch, from which they were 4–5m</p> | | | | | |

| Licence | RMP | OS Ref | Location | Ex. Bulletin Ref. | Author |
|---|-----------|----------------|---|-------------------|-------------|
| <p>distant. This distance would have allowed for, and is suggestive of, the presence of a large bank formed by excavated earth to the east of the ditch. It was also noted that later ditches often respected the line of infilled earlier ditches, suggesting these may have been marked above the ground in some way, such as by a bank, hedge or fence.</p> <p><i>Craftworking at the base of the hill</i></p> <p>Several distinct areas of craft working were situated at the base of the hill and to the west of the large boundary ditch. From west to east, these were: (i) a long-lived curving ditch incorporating a fire-pit and water-management features; (ii) a series of intercutting linear drainage features; (iii) a cluster of three craft-huts, one of which replaced an earlier one; and (iv) a short-lived area of casual ironworking.</p> <p>The most interesting feature was the ditch with a distinctive curve to the west. It seems to have been in use for a long period of time, spanning several minor phases of the larger boundary ditch into which it ran. Frequent evidence of maintenance and alterations found along its base demonstrated that it was well maintained. The burnt pit located at the west of the ditch contained numerous episodes of burning noted in the pit fills, which confirms that the pit was used over and over again and suggested that it was not constructed simply to enclose or for carrying water. The post-holes and deeper gully to the east of the ditch may have formed a structure such as a sluice, to manage and limit the flow of water through the ditch. No evidence for the purpose of the ditch was found, although it must have been used in a process involving both heat and water, perhaps cereal processing of some sort.</p> <p>This ditch also contained the most interesting (if mixed) artefact assemblage, consisting of several fragments of post-medieval pottery, three tanged iron knives or knife blades and a bone pin. The pin and knives might suggest a broad early medieval date sometime in the first millennium, and the post-medieval pottery may be intrusive; however, we will need the results of the radiocarbon dates to date the site with any certainty. For the moment, a broad early medieval (first millennium) date fits well with the evidence for the site as a whole, including the enclosed settlement at the top of the hill and the material found in Sites 2 and 3 further to the west.</p> | | | | | |
| 06E0024 | N/A | 685700, 767739 | Sites 2 and 3, Navan Inner Relief Road | 2006:1612 | S. Halliday |
| <p>Testing was undertaken by ACS Ltd in January 2006 in advance of construction of the next phase of the Navan inner relief road. The testing was completed under licence 06E0024. Three areas of archaeological significance were identified and Arch-Tech Ltd was commissioned by Meath County Council to undertake full resolution. Site 1 was excavated by Antoine Giacometti under licence 06E0274 (see No. 1611 above). Sites 2 and 3 were fully resolved under licence 06E0024.</p> <p>The results of the excavation of Site 2 indicated multi-phase activity on the site, with part of two separate enclosures being recorded. Only a portion of each enclosure was resolved, as the remainder continued beyond the limit of the proposed road-take and remains preserved in situ. The first ditch was presumed to be circular in shape and was truncated by a larger rectangular enclosure from which a fragment of bone comb was retrieved. The later ditch is presumed to date to the early medieval period. No definite date was attained for the earlier ditch, but it is possible that it was prehistoric in date.</p> <p>Of the other features resolved, a kiln and a series of parallel intercutting ditches were excavated at the north-east end of the site but yielded no datable evidence.</p> <p>Site 3 was located to the south of Site 2 and a number of features of archaeological significance were resolved, including part of a probable prehistoric ring-ditch burial with central cremation pit, two kilns and a probable early medieval D-shaped enclosure, with evidence of two highly truncated circular structures within the confines of the enclosure and two kilns outside the perimeter.</p> <p>Post-excavation works are currently ongoing and reports will be produced in due course.</p> | | | | | |
| 06E0627 | ME025-023 | 685991, 767724 | St Patrick's Classical School, Moathill, Navan. | 2006:1613 | F Myles |
| <p>Four trenches were excavated across a tarmacadam football pitch just to the north-east of Navan Moat. An initial visual assessment of the site suggested that the whole area had been truncated by quarrying and this indeed proved to be the</p> | | | | | |

| Licence | RMP | OS Ref | Location | Ex. Bulletin Ref. | Author |
|---|-----|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| case. The trenches were excavated to assess the site prior to the construction of a sports hall with foundations in the region of 0.6m in width and depth. It was found that the subsoil directly underlay the made-up ground below the playing surface. | | | | | |
| 18E0635 | N/A | 686008, 767915 | Moathill, Meath | 2018:228 | F Bailey L Kavanagh |
| A programme of test trenching was carried out at the site of a proposed residential development at Moathill, Navan, Co. Meath. The assessment was undertaken as part of a pre-planning assessment of the site. A total of five trenches measuring 245 linear meters were excavated in the footprint of the proposed development area on 20 November 2018. No features of archaeological significance were identified during the course of testing. Evidence of substantial ground disturbance by previous construction activities is present throughout the site. | | | | | |

Table 4: Archaeological excavations within the area surrounding the site

3.6 Geophysical Survey

Geophysical survey was undertaken across the site by Earthsound Archaeological Geophysics under Detection Device Consent 19R0127 (Garner and Gimson, 2019; see Figure 5). Magnetic anomalies of potential archaeological origin were recorded across the area. These were as follows:

- Anomaly 11 (isolated magnetic responses) consisted of four possible pits/postholes at the northern end of the site.
- Anomaly 12 (parallel linear responses) consisted of two possible ditches which may have formed a field boundary. These appear to extend eastwards from archaeological excavation Site 1, recorded along the route of the N51 Inner Relief Road.
- Anomaly 13 (multiple isolated magnetic responses) consisted of 4 possible pits or postholes in the southwestern area of the subject site. There was also modern disturbance and multiple modern cultivation furrows recorded here.

3.7 Site Investigations

Three test pits were excavated at the eastern and central portions of the site for the purposes of geotechnical investigations. An indicative test pit log is reproduced in Roycroft 2020. This indicates 0.1m of sod and topsoil above 0.5m of possibly made ground/introduced topsoil. These deposits (0.6m deep) overlay the natural gravelly clay.

3.8 Contour Survey

A contour survey was undertaken across the site in relation to the proposed development and incorporating existing and proposed ground levels. The highest areas of the site are located along the eastern site boundary and range from 54.5m OD to 51m OD (Figure 6, 7). However, these areas appear to have been previously terraced into the hillside adjacent to the subject site (Roycroft 2020).

Consequently, there is potential that some truncation has previously occurred here. From this eastern high point, land slopes down westwards towards the N51 and also towards the north.

In terms of proposed ground disturbances, the current proposal provides for the greatest ground disturbance/ground reduction (c. - 0.2- -0.5m) at the south-eastern end of the site (see Figure 7; red zone). By contrast it is proposed to build up a substantial portion of the centre and northern sections of the site (c + 0.2-1.13m; Figure 7 green zone). A band of largely neutral ground reductions (c. - 0.2-+0.2m) is noted elsewhere (Figure 7; orange zone).

3.9 Record of Protected Structures

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 that 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 that 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. 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 for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to Local Authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in Records of Protected Structures (RPS). There are no Protected Structures within the subject site. Navan Moat (RMP ME025-023) is listed in the Record of Protected Structures for Navan town.

| RPS | NIAH | Location | Name | Details |
|---------------|----------|---------------|----------------------|--|
| NT0 25-166 | 14008044 | Moathill | Navan Motte | Remains of motte and bailey earthworks c. 1185. |
| NT0 25-172 | 14008009 | Kells Road | St. Patrick's School | Detached three-bay two-storey Edwardian style house c. 1915. Two-storey former coach house at rear, wrought iron entrance railings and gates. Gabled front with projecting bays at ground floor. |

Table 5: Protected Structures entries in the vicinity of the subject site.

4. SITE INSPECTION

Due to restrictions of movement caused by Corona Virus Covid-19 pandemic the site inspection was not carried out. Information compiled from previous walkover surveys was extracted from Roycroft 2020 (see above).

5. DESCRIPTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

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 relatively large in scale occupying an area of c. 0.62 hectares.
- There are no recorded monuments located within the site. However, the site is located adjacent to Navan Moat, an Anglo Norman Motte (RMP ME025-023).
- No potential new archaeological features were recorded in cartographic sources relating to the subject site.
- No new potential archaeological features were recorded in aerial photos of the subject site.
- There are no protected structures located within the subject site. There are 2 protected structures adjacent to the subject site, the Anglo Norman motte and St. Patricks School.
- No archaeological excavations have been undertaken previously within the subject site.
- Archaeological excavations undertaken adjacent to the site in advance of the N51 Navan Inner Relief Road uncovered an extensive early medieval enclosed settlement. Associated archaeological features may extend into the subject site.
- Geophysical survey undertaken within the subject site recorded potential archaeological features in the form of two parallel potential east-west aligned ditches and numerous pit-like features. These may be associated with archaeological features recorded in previous excavations recorded at the NW of the site in advance of the N51 Navan Inner Relief road.
- Geotechnical test pits suggest existing topsoil deposits of c. 0.6m above natural gravels.
- The southern and south-eastern portions of the site appear to have been previously terraced, indicating some potential ground disturbance adjacent to higher ground.
- There is variation in the extent to which existing ground levels will be built up or reduced. The northern and central portions of the site will be built up by c. 0.2-1.13m., while there are modest ground reductions proposed elsewhere.

6. IMPACTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

No pre-development archaeological test excavations have been undertaken at the site. The location of ME025-023 (motte), the extensive medieval settlement recorded in advance of the N51 Navan Inner Relief Road and the geophysical anomalies recorded within the subject site indicate that the proposed development area can be identified as a site of high archaeological potential. It is likely that buried archaeological deposits survive within the subject site. However, the high potential is somewhat mitigated by relatively low proposed ground disturbances.

Recommendations

It is recommended that should development proceed at this location, it should be conditional on further archaeological assessment in order to better define the site's archaeological potential. Further assessment should take the form of licensed archaeological test trenching targeted on recorded geophysical anomalies and undertaken across an appropriate sample of the remainder of the site. The aim of proposed test excavation will be to identify the location, date, nature, extent and depth/level of any buried archaeological remains within the site. This information shall inform future strategies for the appropriate treatment of any buried archaeological remains.

The conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are subject to the approval of DCHG; in consultation with the NMI 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.

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Aidan O' Connell

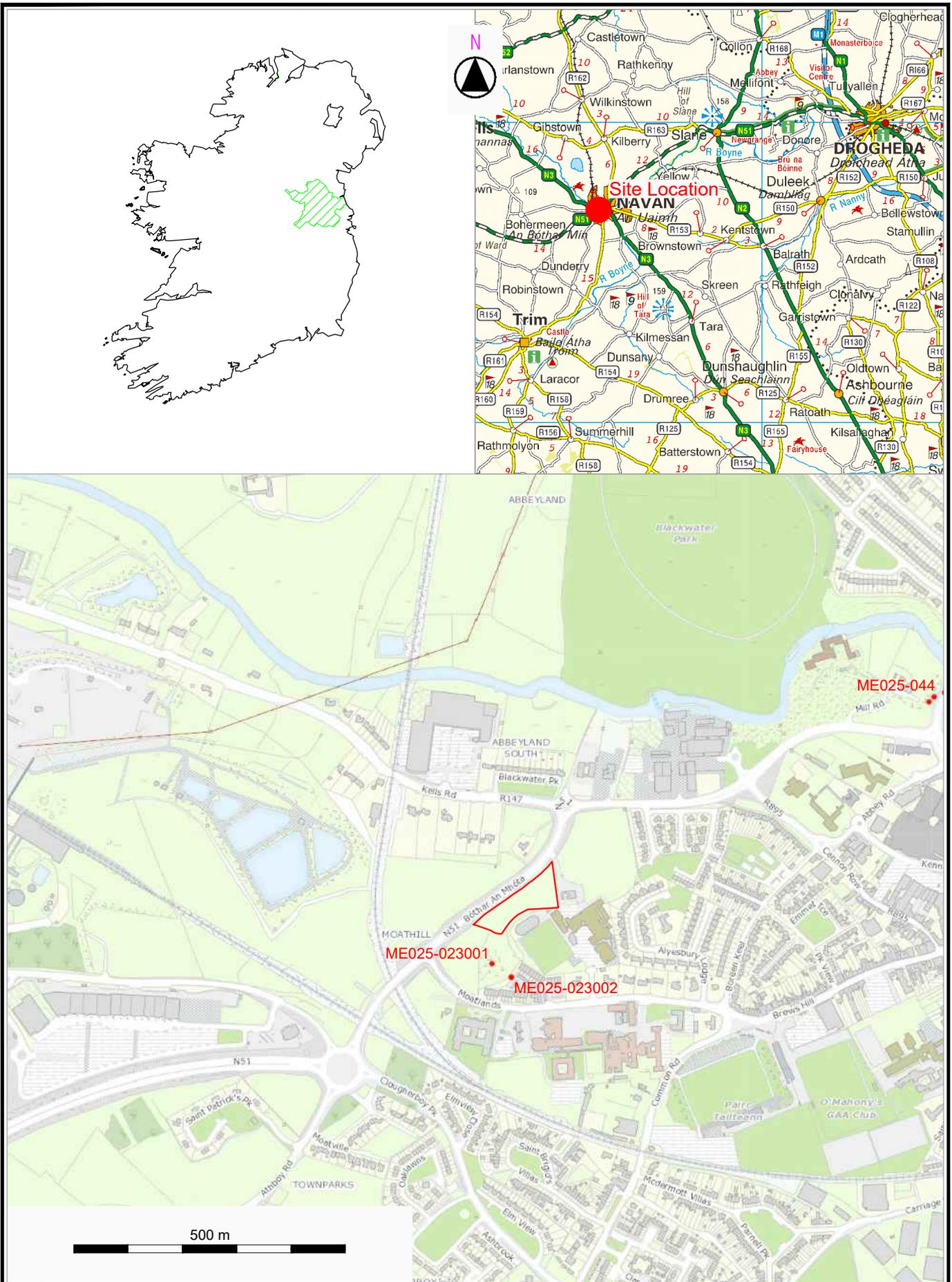


Bart Korfanty

8th May 2020



The logo for Archer Heritage Planning features a stylized 'A' composed of a blue triangle on the left and an orange triangle on the right. To the right of the 'A', the word 'Archer' is written in a blue, sans-serif font, and 'Heritage Planning' is written below it in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font.



Archer
Heritage Planning

Unit 8 Beat Centre
Stephenstown,
Balbriggan,
Co. Dublin

N51 Navan Park and Ride
Impact Assessment

Client: Meath County Council

Scale: 1:10000 A4

Date: May 2020

Origin: archaeology.ie

Ref: 2020_27_AIA_01

Figure 1: Location of site and surrounding RMP's



(l) Down Survey 1655-8
(r) William Larkin 1812-17



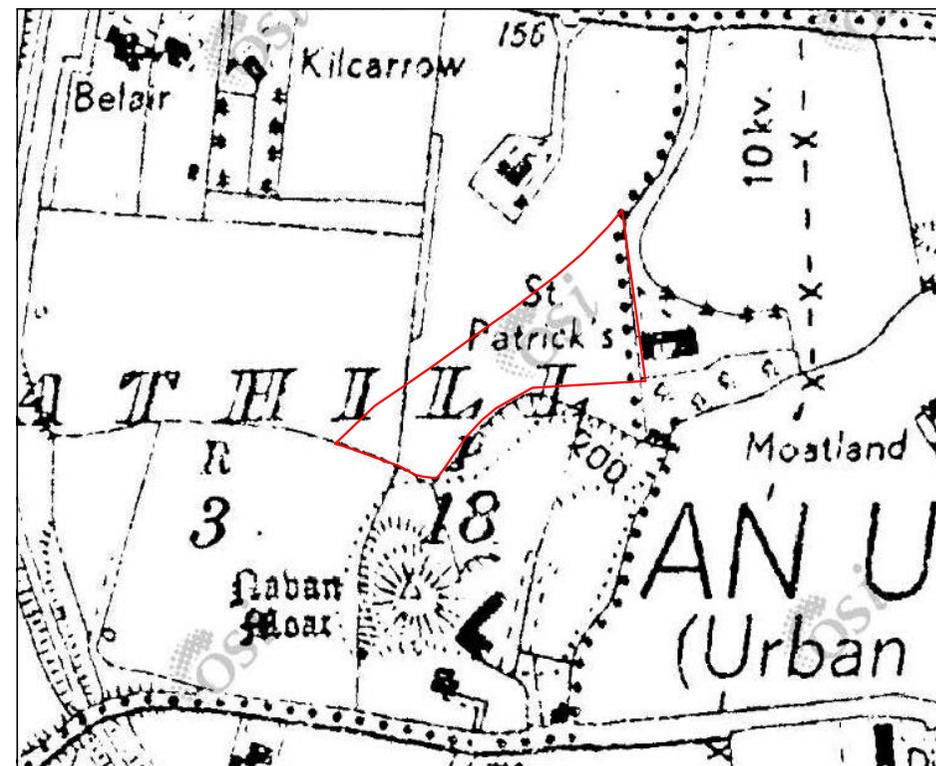
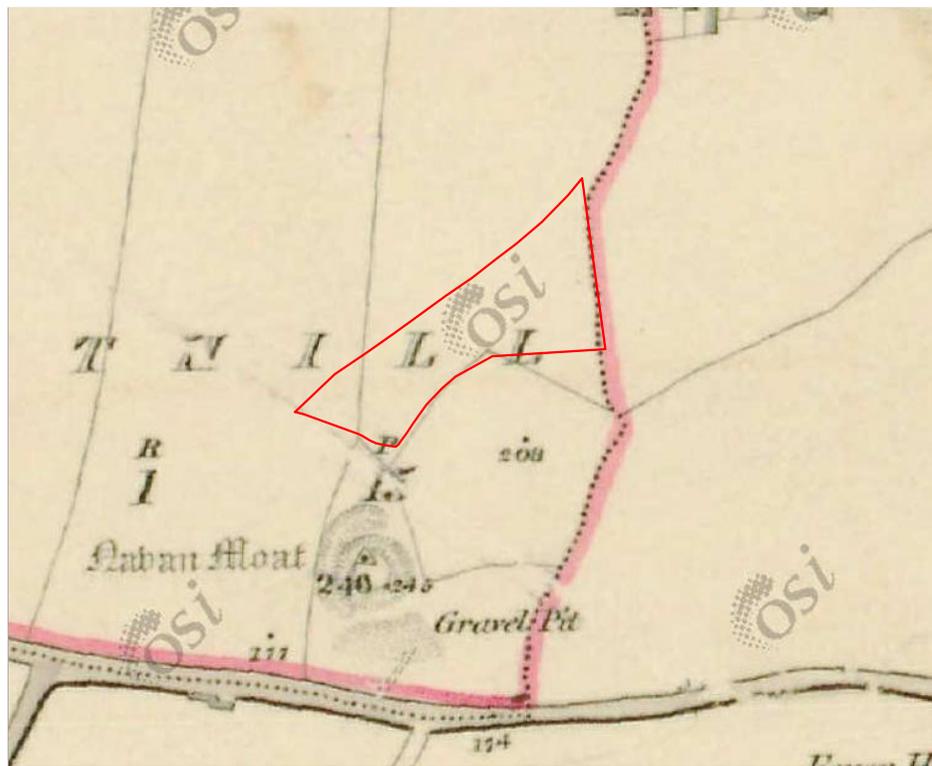
Unit 8 Beat Centre
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Balbriggan,
Co. Dublin

N51 Navan Park and Ride
Impact Assessment

Client: Meath County Council

| |
|-----------------------|
| Scale: Not to scale |
| Date: May 2020 |
| Origin: TCD & Logainm |
| Ref: 2020_27_AIA_02 |

Figure 2: Extracts from cartographic sources



(l) 1st Edition OS 6" map (1837)

(r) Cassini 6" map (1888-1913)



Unit 8 Beat Centre
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N51 Navan Park and Ride
Impact Assessment

Client: Meath County Council

Scale: Not to scale

Date: May 2020

Origin: OSI

Ref: 2020_27_AIA_01

Figure 3: Extracts from cartographic sources (ii)



(l) Google Earth July 2008

(r) Digital Globe 2005-13



Unit 8 Beat Centre
Stephenstown,
Balbriggan,
Co. Dublin

N51 Navan Park and Ride
Impact Assessment

Client: Meath County Council

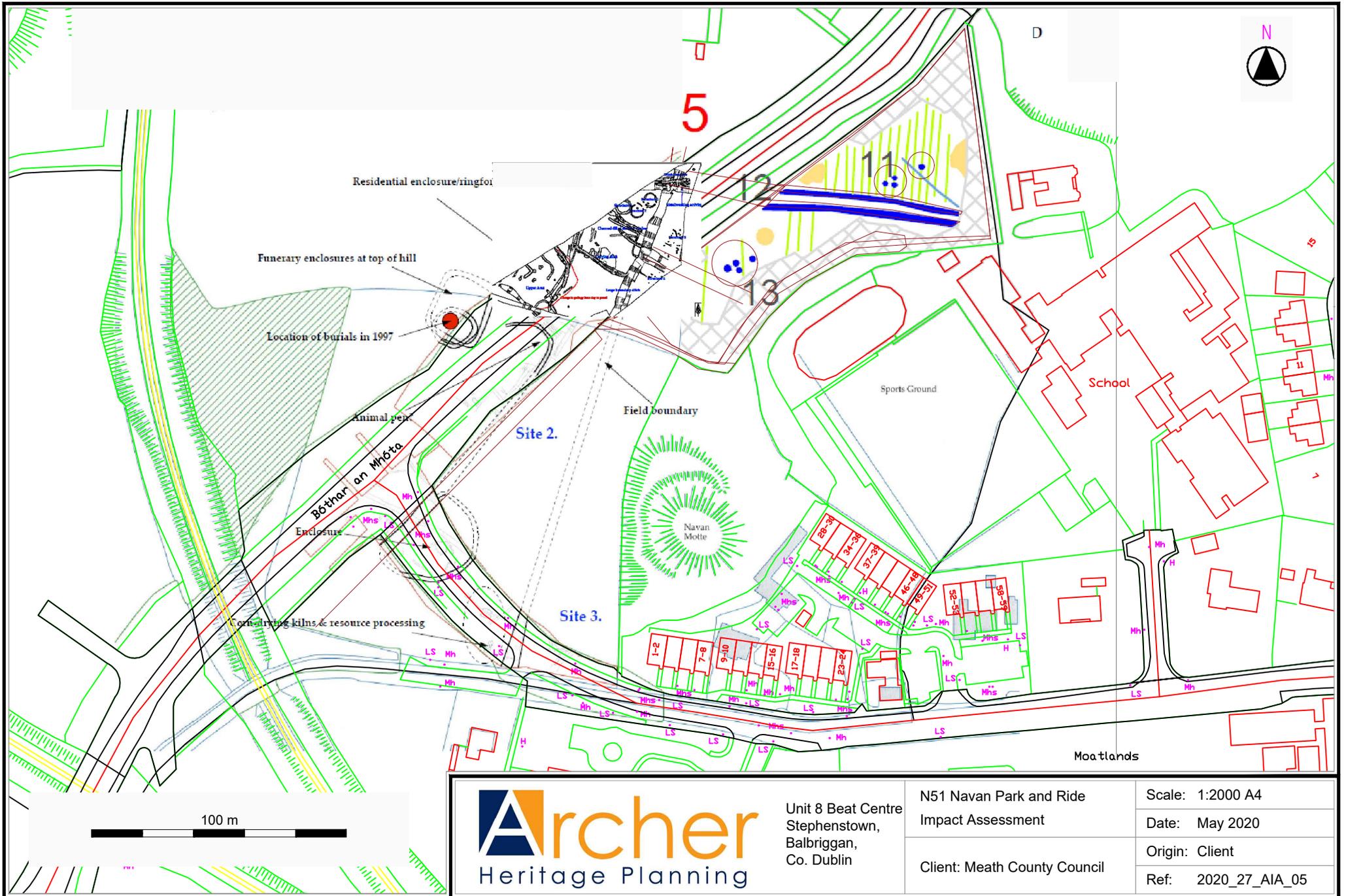
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Date: May 2020

Origin: Google Earth & OSI

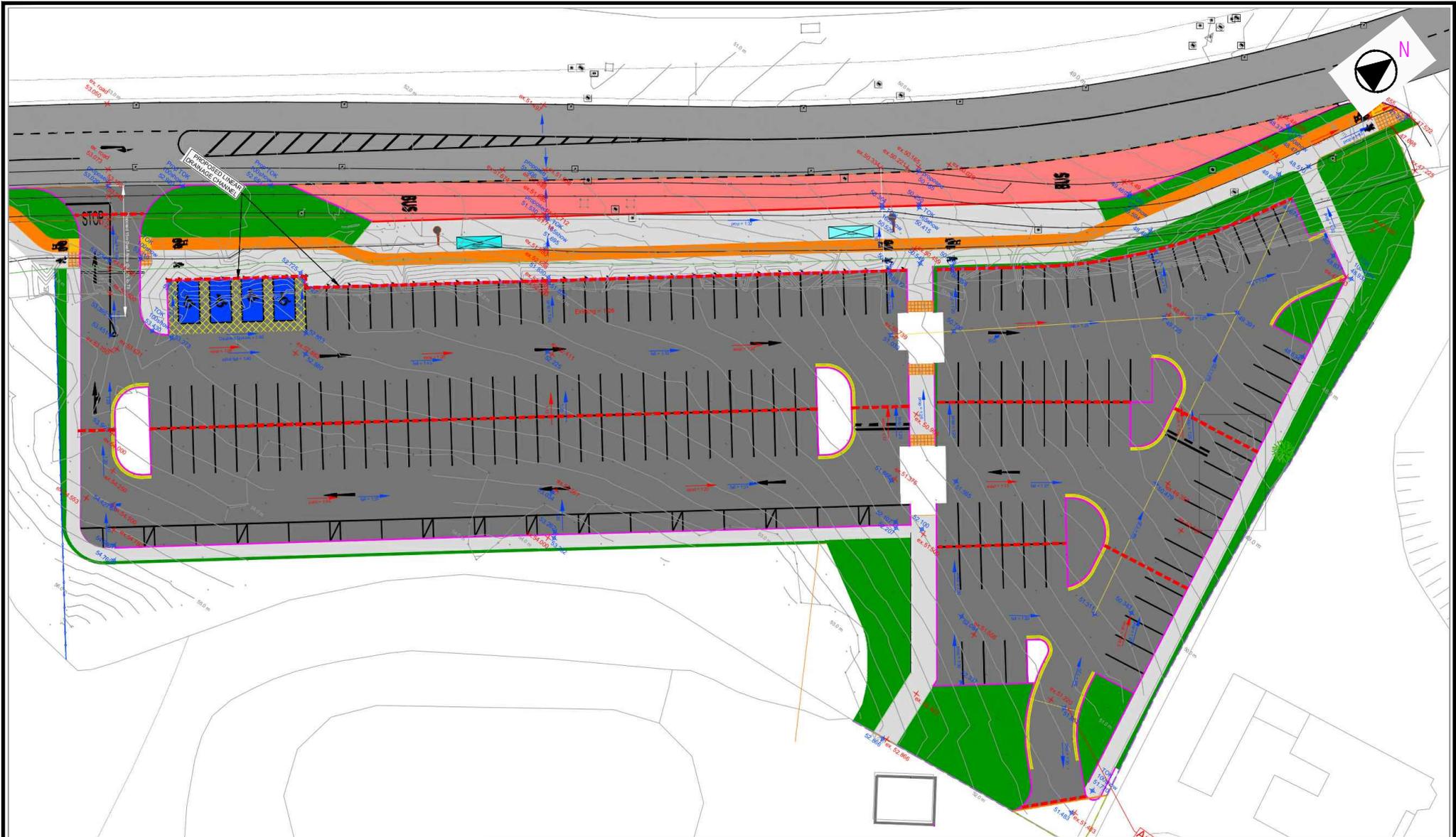
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Figure 4: Extracts from aerial photographs



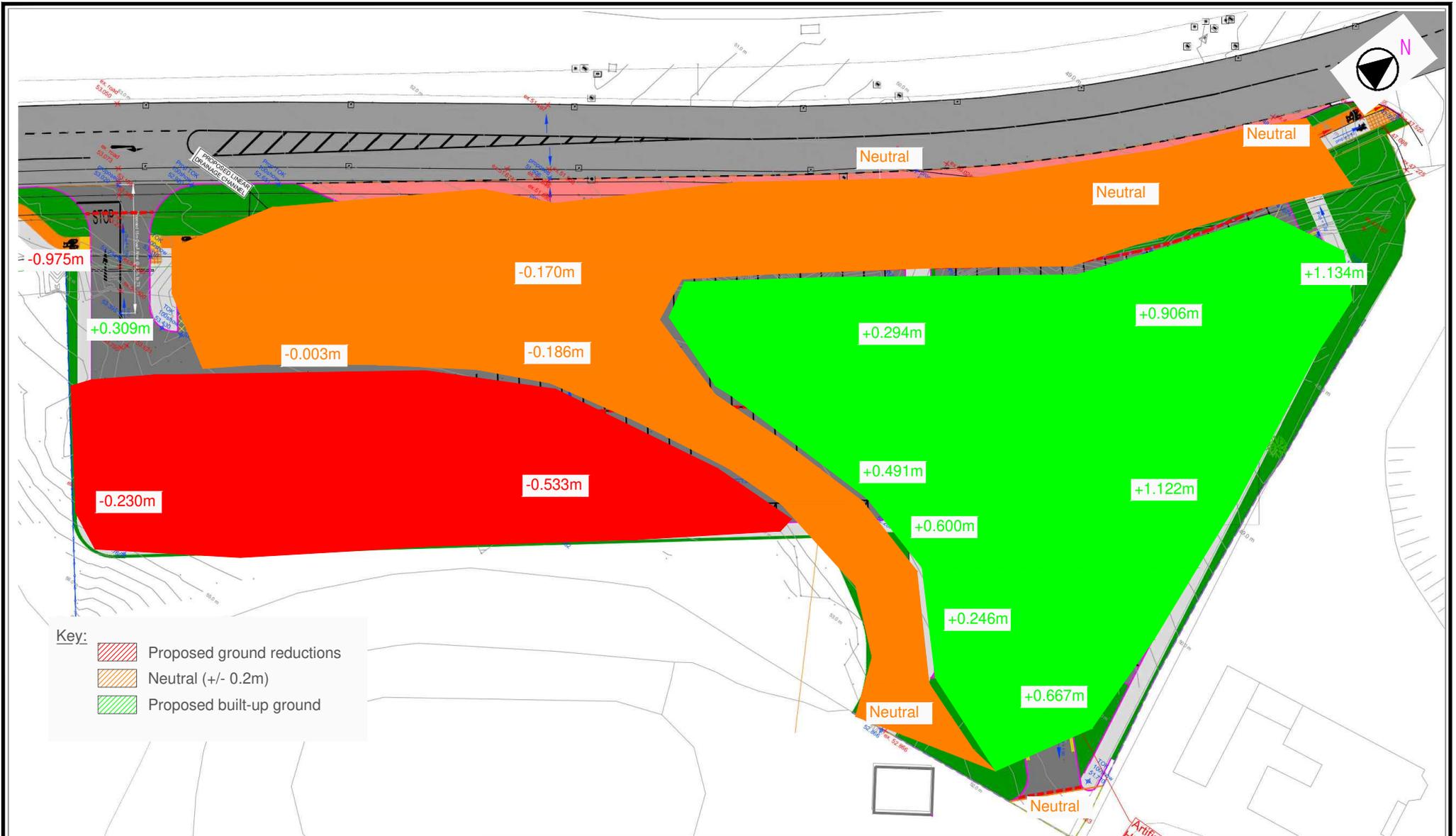
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|  | Unit 8 Beat Centre Stephenstown, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin | N51 Navan Park and Ride Impact Assessment | Scale: 1:2000 A4 Date: May 2020 |
| | | Client: Meath County Council | Origin: Client Ref: 2020_27_AIA_05 |

Figure 5: Previous archaeological investigations adjacent to the site



| | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
|  | Unit 8 Beat Centre Stephenstown, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin | N51 Navan Park and Ride Impact Assessment | Scale: Not to scale Date: May 2020 |
| | | Client: Meath County Council | Origin: CSEA Ref: 2020_27_AIA_06 |

Figure 6: Development proposal and contour survey



| | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | Unit 8 Beat Centre Stephenstown, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin | N51 Navan Park and Ride | Scale: Not to scale |
| | | Impact Assessment | Date: May 2020 |
| | | Client: Meath County Council | Origin: CSEA & AHP |
| | | | Ref: 2020_27_AIA_07 |

Figure 7: Proposed alterations to existing ground surface