

Glebe townland, Rathmolyon, Co. Meath

Archaeological Impact Assessment

Client: Meath Co. Co.

Licence No: 21E0315

Archaeologist: Aidan O'Connell

Report Date: 14th June 2021

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Archaeological Impact Assessment

SITE NAME	Glebe townland, Rathmolyon, Co. Meath
CLIENT	Meath Co. Co.
INVESTIGATION TYPE	Archaeological Assessment
LICENCE NO	21E0315
PLANNING REF	pre-planning
TOWNLAND(S)	Glebe
IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR	679390, 749195
RMP NO	N/A
RPS NO	N/A
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANT	Archer Heritage Planning Ltd.
ARCHAEOLOGIST	Aidan O'Connell
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SUMMARY

A site in Glebe townland, Rathmolyon, Co. Meath is proposed to be developed for social housing by Meath Co. Co. Test-excavations under licence no. 21E0315 took place as part of an archaeological impact assessment of the site that 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 assessment:

- The site is moderate in scale, c. 0.6 ha in size.
- RMP site ME042-020003 metalworking site lies along the eastern boundary while the site is within the Zone of Notification for other sites associated with the medieval Church and settlement of Rathmolyon
- No stray artefacts in the NMI topographical files are recorded for the townland of Glebe.
- No new archaeological features were recorded in cartographic sources relating to the subject site.
- No new archaeological features were recorded in aerial photos relating to the subject site.
- Excavations under licence 07E0922 revealed evidence for medieval and Iron Age activity that may extend into the subject site
- Test excavations under licence 21E0315 revealed no finds or features of archaeological significance and that large parts of the site had been subject to previous construction activity.

Despite the disturbed nature of large parts of the site and the lack of archaeological features or material revealed during test excavation, given the proximity to known archaeological sites it is recommended that groundworks for the development be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

The conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are subject to the approval of The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH; in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland) 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	June 2021	LC (Archer) SENIOR ARCHAEOLOGIST	AOC (Archer) ARCHAEOLOGIST	C. Mc Guinness

1. INTRODUCTION

This archaeological assessment report for a proposed development at Glebe townland, Rathmolyon, Co. Meath (Figure 1) has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd for Meath County Council. Test-excavations, undertaken under Licence No. 21E0315 by Aidan O'Connell, took place in May 2021. The report 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 Developments

The site is to be developed for social housing with 22 units in a mix of detached, semi-detached, terraced and duplex forms and including landscaped areas, parking, etc (Figure 2).

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site lies to the north of an existing housing estate, Churchview, in the village of Rathmolyon (Glebe townland; Rathmolyon Civil Parish, Moyfenrath By.; Meath OS Sheet 42; ITM 679390, 749195). The site is mostly comprised of an overgrown field with some mature trees present though includes a landscaped margin bordering the estate and the footpath area along the R159 road. The roughly triangular site of c. 0.65 ha is bounded by the R159 road to the east, Churchview estate to the south and a mature hedgerow to the west.

3. METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 Introduction

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
- The Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland.
- 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).

¹ Archive Unit National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Housing, Floor 2, Block 6, Irish Life Centre

- 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).

3.2 Test excavation methodology

It was proposed to excavate 4 trenches (231 linear meters) by mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision. It was proposed to use a 16-ton tracked excavator (or similar) with a 2m grading bucket to excavate the trenches. The trenches were to be targeted on assessing the archaeological potential of the general area. Excavation was to proceed in level spits no greater than 0.2m to the subsoil or top of the first archaeological horizon if present. Each revealed surface was to be inspected for archaeological remains and any features present recorded appropriately. All features identified within the trenches were to be tested to determine their extent, composition and depth and to ascertain potential dating material.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Brief archaeological & historical background

The following section is taken from a desktop review of the site undertaken by Meath County Council archaeologist Niall Roycroft (2021). The subject site at Rathmolyon was acquired by Meath County Council in 1974. It has been vacant since and lies in close proximity to the Church View housing estate on the southern outskirts of Rathmolyon village. Rathmolyon settlement focuses on the cross-roads of the N-S R159 (Trim Road 7km) and E-W R156 (Summerhill Road 5km). The village was probably designed to be roughly square and measures approx. 150m (N-S) x 200m (E-W). The village focuses on St Michael's and All Angels Church of Ireland on the S side of the R165, which is situated on a natural knoll, presumably occupied by the Rath of Rathmolyon. This knoll is presumably the reason that medieval Rathmolyon village was founded as a control point on the local road network. Opposite the church to the N is Rathmolyon House and grounds: perhaps located on an earlier large or fortified house. St Michael's Church, RMP ME042-020 / RPS MH042-109 is roughly 75m distant at the closest point, is originally medieval in origin (some remains survive), but the present church dates from 1797. St Michael's is associated with the Vicarial Glebe within Rathmolyon village and the townland immediately to the S is named 'Glebe'. Rathmolyon Church is referenced in the 14th century as a droving and market area. One function of villages in medieval Ireland was to supervise and defend the road network and the local mound or knoll of St Michael's Church would make an excellent location for a church, perhaps with a tower, to oversee the surrounding countryside. The village was probably once rampart defended and is shown around the cross-roads with large buildings and the church on the 1650s Down Survey. There is no significant nearby stream in the village, so water supply was probably through wells or some now-

defunct water supply system. There is a large, linear bog / drained wetland along the E of the town, part of which is shown on 1650 mapping that is now being infilled. There have been few archaeological works in the immediate area. The nearest was associated with the extensive Trammon Quarry c.1.5-1.8km from the centre of Rathmolyon where a ringfort, two burial grounds a burnt mound and a prehistoric building were found (later transferred to RMP as ME042-033 to ME042-037). The surrounding general area has the usual Bronze Age burial mounds, ring-ditches and early medieval enclosures and ringforts both as standing monuments and ploughed- out crop-marks.

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). 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. Newly added sites on this 'emerging' list do not have the same statutory protection as those in the published RMP, although they are protected under general provisions of the National Monuments Acts. Appendix 1 lists the RMP/SMR sites in the vicinity of the subject site (see Figure 3).

Recorded Monument ME042-02003 metalworking site lies along the eastern boundary. This was discovered during excavations for a drainage scheme under licence 07E0922 (see 4.6 below). The metalworking site was excavated in a cutting located under the current roadway R159 that lies along the eastern boundary of the subject site. Three subsoil cut pits, possible bowl-furnaces with a possible quenching trench were identified and further associated features may extend into the subject site. An early medieval radiocarbon date was produced from one of the bowl-furnaces though it was thought that the other features may be from the later medieval period.

The northern part of the subject site lies within the Zone of Notification for the medieval Church (ME042-020), graveyard (ME042-020001) and settlement (ME042-020004) of Rathmolyon. This highlights the increased archaeological potential of the subject site.

4.3 National Museum of Ireland Topographical Files

The National Museum of Ireland Topographical Files is the national archive of all known antiquities recorded by the National Museum, listed by county and townland/street. These files relate primarily to artefacts but also include references to monuments and contain a unique archive of records of previous archaeological excavations. The Museum files present an accurate catalogue of objects reported to that institution from 1928². There are no entries in the NMI Topographical files listed for Glebe townland, Rathmolyon.

4.4 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 consulted cartographic sources are described in Table 1 (Figure 4).

Map	Date	Description
Down Survey map	1670	No clear details on site. While Glebe townland is not titled on the Barony map of Moyfenrath or Parish map of Rathmolyon (spelt Rathmullian), it's location can be gleaned from the rough shape of the parcel of land south of the cluster of buildings representing the Church and settlement of Rathmolyon on the Barony map. Andrew Aylmer, Irish Papist, is noted as the landowner in the townland.
1st edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey	1837	The subject site is located in a portion of a large field to the south of the village of Rathmolyon. No potential archaeological features noted
Historic 25 inch	1906-11	No significant change from earlier. No potential archaeological features noted

Table 1: Cartographic sources relating to the site

4.5 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 Earth). Details of the consulted sources are outlined below in Table 2. No potential archaeological sites or features were noted (see Figure 5).

² The NMI Topographical Files search was undertaken by the Irish Antiquities Division of the NMI on behalf of Archer Heritage and is gratefully acknowledged,

Aerial Photograph	Date	Description
OSi Aerial	1995	The site is shown as agricultural land. No potential archaeological sites or cropmarks were noted
OSi Aerial	2000	No change.
OSi Aerial	2005	No change.
OSi Aerial	2005-12	The land directly east of the subject site is disturbed from adjacent construction works. Otherwise, no change
Google Earth	2019	No change.

Table 2: Aerial photography of the site

4.6 Previous Archaeological Excavations

The Excavation Bulletin is a database of summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland and Northern Ireland from 1970 to date. 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.

Only a handful of excavations have taken place in and around the subject site. Details from the Excavation Bulletin are presented in Appendix 2. Prehistoric activity has been identified in the footprint of a quarry development, c. 1.8 km to the west in the townland of Tromman. This comprised the remains of a circular structure and burnt mound. Of more relevance is an excavation under licence 07E0922 ext. (Shine 2009) that produced a series of ditches and other features showing a range of activity from the Iron Age to the late medieval likely centred around the modern site of the Saint Michael and All Angels Church of Ireland church. The excavation cutting was investigated in advance of a pipeline construction under the R159 road that lies along the eastern boundary of the subject site. It was 220m in length though only 1.2-1.3m in width making interpretation of the features difficult. The earliest identified activity comprised a ditch producing an Early Iron Age radiocarbon date that lay just to the north of the subject site. Several radiocarbon dates from the excavation indicated the construction of substantial enclosure ditches during the Early Medieval period with continuing settlement activity into later and post-medieval periods. The features are likely to be associated with an earlier ecclesiastical site at Rathmolyon that may have been located at the current Church. It is also noted that two burials and some disarticulated bone were revealed during the excavation suggesting the graveyard is likely to have once been more extensive than the current boundaries indicate. The excavator proposed a projected continuation of the enclosure ditches (Figure 6) and the outermost is likely to have once been present within the footprint of the subject site.

4.7 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 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 within or immediately adjacent to the subject site (see Appendix 3 & Figure 7). The closest Protected Structure Saint Michael and All Angels Church, RPS ID ref. MH042-109, lies c. 80m to the north-west. There will be no direct impact from the proposed development on this structure though there may be an indirect, i.e. visual, impact on the structure. This will need to be assessed by a suitably qualified individual such as a landscape architect.

5. TEST-EXCAVATION, LICENCE NO. 21E0315

Test-excavations took place on 26 May 2021 in dry sunny conditions (Figure 8; Plates 1-7). Five trenches (203 linear metres) were excavated using a 13-tonne mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.8m grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Several amendments to the proposed test trench layout were made. Trenches 1, 3 and 4 were shortened to avoid underground services while Trench 1 was also realigned slightly to preserve a mature tree. A new trench, no. 5, was excavated to make up for lost metres from the original proposal.

Excavations revealed that extensive parts of the site had been previously disturbed. The central area had been previously the site of a percolation area for the sewage or drainage infrastructure of the residential estate of Churchview that lies to the south. This accounts for the deep deposits of introduced soils seen in portions of Trenches 1, 2 and 3. The existing topography of this area, i.e. overlooked by higher ground to the north, south and east, may not reflect the situation as existed prior to the construction of the percolation area. The site had also been used as a construction compound for a local drainage scheme in the mid-2000's (A. Coyle, pers. comm.) and a thin layer of crushed stone was encountered at points during the excavation of trenches through the central area of the site.

Relatively undisturbed areas of the site were encountered in the southern portions of Trenches 1 and 3 and the entirety of Trenches 4 and 5. Topsoil frequently contaminated with modern debris and overlaid with mounds of ashes, grass and hedge cuttings and other domestic refuse was generally 0.2-0.4m in depth. A transitional or plough-zone deposit of 0.2m in depth generally overlay a mottled orange/brown and grey limestone till subsoil.

Trench	Dimensions (m; l x w x d)	Orientation	Results
1	73 x 1.8 x 0.3-1.1	SE/NW	Shallow topsoil at higher SE end, introduced soils at central & N end. No archaeology found.
2	30 x 1.8 x 0.7-1.3	NE/SW	>1m in depth of introduced soil. Subsoil not encountered at some points. No archaeology found.
3	53 x 1.8 x 0.4-1.2	NW/SE	Introduced soils at NW end. No archaeology found.
4	23 x 1.8 x 0.4-0.6	NE/SW	No archaeology found.
5	24 x 1.8 x 0.4-0.55	NW/SE	No archaeology found.

Table 3: Details of test-trenches

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This assessment report 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 assessment:

- The site is moderate in scale, c. 0.6 ha in size.
- RMP site ME042-020003 metalworking site lies along the eastern boundary while the site is within the Zone of Notification for other sites associated with the medieval Church and settlement of Rathmolyon
- No stray artefacts in the NMI topographical files are recorded for the townland of Glebe.
- No new archaeological features were recorded in cartographic sources relating to the subject site.
- No new archaeological features were recorded in aerial photos relating to the subject site.
- Excavations under licence 07E0922 revealed evidence for medieval and Iron Age activity in the townland of Glebe
- Test excavations under licence 21E0315 revealed no finds or features of archaeological significance and that large parts of the site had been subject to previous construction activity.

Groundworks for development are likely to negatively impact on any archaeology that may survive on the site. The following recommendation is offered to mitigate the impact of development on the site.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The subject site is in proximity to an archaeologically significant site associated with the medieval Church and settlement of Rathmolyon and the northern portion may possibly be within it. Despite the disturbed nature of large parts of the site and the lack of archaeological features or material revealed during test excavation, given the proximity to known archaeological sites it is recommended that groundworks for the development be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

The conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are subject to the approval of The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland 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.

8. REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

- Roycroft, N. 2021 'Rathmolyon Churchview Potential Housing Scheme Rathmolyon, Co. Meath. Desk-based review and assessment'. Unpublished report prepared by Niall Roycroft on behalf of Meath Co. Co.
- Shine, D. 2009 'Final Report on Archaeological Excavations at Rathmolyon, Co. Meath on Contract B, Bundled Wastewater Collection System for Co. Meath, Licence no. 07E0922 ext.' Unpublished report prepared by CRDS on behalf of Meath Co. Co.

8.2 Web references

- Down Survey map [Down Survey Maps | The Down Survey Project \(tcd.ie\)](https://www.tcd.ie/archaeology/DownSurveyMaps/) [Accessed 10th June 2021]
- Online Excavations bulletin www.excavations.ie [Accessed 10th June 2021]
- Online Archaeological Survey of Ireland www.archaeology.ie [Accessed 10th June 2021]
- Cartographic sources www.geohive.ie [Accessed 10th June 2021]
- Co. Meath Record of Protected Structures
[Microsoft Word - Appendix 08 Record of Protected Structures.docm \(meath.ie\)](#) [Accessed 10th June 2021]



Aidan O'Connell

14th June 2021

APPENDICES

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

RMP No.	Class	Townland	ITM
ME042-016----	Ringfort - rath	COOLDERRY	679865, 750160
This is a subcircular domed (H c. 2m) and grass-covered area (dims 54m NE-SW; 42m NE-SW) defined by a scarp (at NW: Wth 5m; H 1.5m; at SE: Wth 4m; H 2m), with a slight outer fosse or drain S-N-E. An entrance is not identified but it is overlain by a NE-SW field bank towards the perimeter at SE. Rath (ME042-017----) is c. 30m to the NNE.			
ME042-018----	Ringfort - rath	COOLDERRY	680539, 750085
Located on the broad summit of Coolderry Hill. This is a raised D-shaped and grass-covered area (dims 58m NNE-SW; c. 50m NW-SE) that slopes down to the SE defined by an earthen bank and outer fosse N-SE, with an outer bank ESE-S. A NW-SE field bank truncates the monument at SW and a NNE-SSW field bank truncates it at W. The original entrance (Wth of base 4m) and causeway (Wth of top 6m; H 0.4m) are at E.			
ME042-020----	Church	RATHMOLYON	679454, 749324
<p>Situated on a slight rise in a fairly level landscape. The earliest reference is from 1212 when the church of Moyllach was confirmed to the Knights Hospitallers of Kilmainham (DU018-020026-) (Sheehy 1962 vol. 1, 148-9), and in the ecclesiastical taxation (1302-06) of Pope Nicholas IV (Cal. Doc. Ire., 5, 257) the church of Ratamolechan was still held by the Hospitallers and exempt from taxation. At the suppression of Kilmainham in 1541 it still held the church, 35 acres and five messuages or house plots at Rathmolyon (White 1943, 114). Bishop Ussher in his visitation (1622) describes the church and chancel of Rathmullyan as ruinous (Erlington 1847-64, 1, lxxxvii). According to the Dopping (1682-5) and Royal (1693) visitations St Michael's church had been in disrepair since 1641 but the chancel and some of the church had been repaired by 1693. At that time the windows were glazed and it had a slate roof, but the floor was bare and most of the necessary liturgical paraphernalia was missing, apart from a font (Ellison 1972, 11). The names of some of the clergy from the 16th century are known (Cogan 1862-70, 2, 374). The present Church of Ireland church was built in 1797 (Lewis 1837, 2, 504). The site of the medieval parish church is within its subrectangular graveyard (dims c. 75m NW-SE: c. 45m NE-SW at NW to c. 80m NE-SW at SE) defined by masonry walls, with headstones dating from c. 1780 to the present. There is one piece of window surround (H 0.52m) from the medieval church re-used as a grave-marker. Archaeological monitoring (07E0922) by D. Shine (excavations.ie 2008:960, 961) of trenches for a water pipe under the road W of the graveyard identified an enclosure (ME042-020002-) centered on the graveyard that is probably the rath after which the townland and the parish are named. Numerous other ditches that are related to the medieval settlement (ME042-020004-) and evidence of medieval metal-working (ME042-020003-) was also encountered. (Shine 2009)</p> <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cal. doc. Ire. - Calendar of documents relating to Ireland 1171-1307, ed. H.S. Sweetman (5 vols., London, 1875-86). 2. Cogan, Rev. A. 1862-70 Ecclesiastical history of the diocese of Meath: ancient and modern. (3 vols) Dublin: John Fowler, Joseph Dollard 3. Ellison, Rev. C. C. 1971-5 Bishop Dopping's Visitation Book 1682-5, Ríocht na Mídhe, 5, 1, 28-39; 5, 2, 3-13; 5, 3, 3-11; 5, 4, 98-103; 6, 1, 3-13. 4. Erlington, C. R. (ed.) 1847-64 The whole works of the most Reverend James Ussher. 17 vols. Hodges and Smith, Dublin 5. Lewis, S. 1837 A topographical dictionary of Ireland, 2 vols. London. Lewis and Co. 6. Sheehy, M. P. (ed.) 1962-5 Pontificia Hibernica – Medieval Papal Chancery Documents concerning Ireland 640-1261. 2 vols, M. H. Gill, Dublin 			
ME042-020001-	Graveyard	RATHMOLYON	679446, 749302
Situated on a slight rise in a fairly level landscape. The site of the medieval parish church of Rathmolyon (ME042-020----) is within a subrectangular graveyard (dims c. 75m NW-SE: c. 45m NE-SW at NW to c.			

RMP No.	Class	Townland	ITM
<p>80m NE-SW at S) defined by masonry walls, with headstones dating from c. 1780 to the present. Archaeological testing and excavation (07E0922) by D. Shine of trenches for a water pipe encountered human remains on the W side of the N-S road that is W of the graveyard (excavations.ie 2008:960, 961). Two burials, one of a woman with a smoker's kit including flint nodule, strike-a-light and a pipe bowl dated c. 1640-1660, were recorded. The other burial, a probable male, yielded a C14 date of 1410-1470 cal. AD. A ditch roughly parallel with the W graveyard wall may be an earlier version of this boundary. A clay-bonded wall and its robber trench on the line of the S graveyard wall indicates that the road truncates a graveyard that originally extended further W, and ditches on the same line are probably earlier than the wall. On the 1836 edition of the OS 6-inch map a rectangular area W of the road is included with the unidentified graveyard (total dims c. 180m NE-SW; c. 75m NW-SE) and described as the 'Vicarial Glebe'. The cobbled surface of a road (L c. 65m) found in the trench stops short of the graveyard as represented on a Scalé map of 1767, but the current extension to the cross-roads had been achieved by 1812 according to Larkin's map. (Shine 2009)</p> <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shine, D. 2009 Final Report on Archaeological Excavations at Rathmolyon, Co. Meath. Licence: 07E0922. Unpublished report, CRDS 			
ME042-020002-	Ringfort - rath	RATHMORE (?)	679428, 749313
<p>Situated on a slight rise in a fairly level landscape. Archaeological monitoring (07E0922) by D. Shine of trenches for a water pipe encountered human remains on the W side of the N-S road that is W of Rathmolyon graveyard (ME042-020001-) (excavations.ie 2008:960, 961). This warranted an excavation under the same licence along the roadway c. 5m from the graveyard wall but within the confines of the pipe-trench (L 220m; Wth 1.2-1.3m), with some features occurring at depth (up to 3m). The excavation recorded an area of metal-working (ME042-020003-) as well as eight ditches or fosses. Some of the ditches relate to small plots of a settlement (ME042-020004-) but it is very likely that some of those at the N end of the trench are sections of the same curving fosse encircling the W part of the graveyard cut at two points by the pipe trench. This is undoubtedly the rath after which the townland and the parish are named. One of the other ditches (Wth 2m; D 1m) was S of the rath and unconnected with it, producing a C14 date of 380-200 cal. BC (Shine 2009, 11).</p> <p>Beginning at the NW angle of the graveyard, the section recorded a large ditch (Wth of top 6m; D 2m) that has no indication of an accompanying bank but its 19 layers represent silting periods interspersed with slumping from its sides and deliberate closing deposits at the top. This fosse was cut by two later ditches, one of which had disarticulated human bones while the other was roughly parallel with the graveyard wall and may be an earlier version of this boundary. South of the large ditch two pits and some furrows were encountered. Two burials, one with a smoker's kit dated c. 1640-1660, were recorded further S with a small ditch between them. This ditch was almost obliterated by a larger ditch (Wth of top 2.4m; max. D 1.9m) with 15 fills consisting of silts, including a lengthy primary silting, interspersed with dumped layers. Large quantities of animal bones were recovered from the fosse and some disarticulated human remains from its upper levels. Redeposited natural on the W side together with its dimensions and alignment suggest it is the same ditch that was encountered at the N end of the trench c. 26m distant. The excavation trench cut these features at two points at the W edge of the enclosure and it enables the size and sequence of the enclosures to be calculated. The innermost enclosure (diam. c. 65m) is defined by a large fosse, and radiocarbon dates suggest a construction date of 660-800 cal. AD. From pottery and artefacts in the ditches it continued in use into the thirteenth or fourteenth century when the ditches were deliberately closed. Other ditches are probably re-cuts or could represent an ecclesiastical enclosure which would have encompassed a much greater area (diam. c. 100m), and a fosse (Wth 1.4m; D 0.5m) discovered in a trench of this scheme on the E side of the graveyard could add support to this</p>			

RMP No.	Class	Townland	ITM
(Shine 2009a, 11, 13). (Shine 2009) References: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shine, D. 2009 Final Report on Archaeological Excavations at Rathmolyon, Co. Meath. Licence: 07E0922. Unpublished report, CRDS 2. Shine, D. 2009a Full and Final Report on Archaeological Monitoring at Rathmolyon, Co. Meath... Licence: 07E0922. Unpublished report, CRDS 			
ME042-020003-	Metalworking site	RATHMOLYON	679420, 749212
Archaeological monitoring and excavation (07E0922) by D. Shine of a trench for a water pipe W of the graveyard (ME042-020001-) of Rathmolyon church identified a metal-working: south of the plots of the settlement (excavations.ie 2008:960, 961). The cuts of three bowl furnaces (dims 0.38-0.4m; D 0.12-0.14) set into the subsoil were recorded. What is probably a quenching gully (dims 1.6m x 1.1m D 0.2m) and a post-hole were nearby. One of the furnaces returned a C14 date of 770-900 cal. AD but the other features are thought to be late medieval. (Shine 2009, 14, 20-2) References: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shine, D. 2009a Full and Final Report on Archaeological Monitoring at Rathmolyon, Co. Meath... Licence: 07E0922. Unpublished report, CRDS 			
ME042-020004-	Settlement cluster	RATHMOLYON	679393, 749349
The church of Rathmolyon was held by the Knights Hospitallars of Kilmainham (DU018-020026-) since the early thirteenth century (Sheehy 1962, vol. 1, 148-9), and a settlement may have developed around it. In the Civil Survey (1654) Rathmullian is described as 'a church and Divers Farm houses' (Simington 1940, 178), and it is represented as a church with some cabins on the Down Survey (1656-8) barony map. The settlement is depicted as an E-W street village on a Scalé map of 1767, and the present cross-roads first appears on Larkin's map of 1812. Archaeological monitoring and excavation (07E0922) by D. Shine of a trench for a water pipe W of the graveyard recorded the rath (ME042-020002-) after which the townland and parish are named as well as evidence of metal-working (ME042-020003-) and tillage plots related to the settlement (excavations.ie 2008:960, 961). A band of E-W furrows (Wth c. 10m) overlies the interior of the rath, and just S of the graveyard a large ditch (Wth of top 2.1m; max. D 1.13m) was recorded from which a medieval blade was recovered. This might have formed a field boundary with a single post-hole just S of it, and only agricultural activity represented further S by a smaller drain and five furrows. This created a narrow field (Wth c. 20m) and could represent another plot or messuage of the settlement that was probably centered on the church and the E-W street. (Shine 2009, 16-19) References: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shine, D. 2009a Full and Final Report on Archaeological Monitoring at Rathmolyon, Co. Meath... Licence: 07E0922. Unpublished report, CRDS 			
ME042-022----	Ringfort - rath	ISAACSTOWN	680681, 748753
Located on a small hillock in a gently undulating landscape. This is a raised, circular, grass and scrub-covered area (diam. 39m E-W; 38.5m N-S) defined by an earthen bank, with an outer fosse S-NW and an outer bank S-W-NE that morphs into a field bank with an outer drain NE-ESE. The original entrance (Wth of base 4.7m) is just E of S. An old grass-covered quarry trench (Wth 3-3.5m; D 1-1.2m) with no spoil mound cuts off the SE quadrant, cutting through the defining scarp at E and S. At the centre of the rath is a large rectangular grass-covered area (int. dims 12m x 5.7m) defined by a wide bank (Wth 3m; H 0.3m) with an entrance (Wth 1.7m) towards the E end of the S side, which may be a house site. Archaeological testing (10E0372) by C. Duffy c. 100m to the NNW produced no related material (excavations.ie 2010:521).			
ME042-022001-	House - indeterminate date	ISAACSTOWN	680674, 748752

RMP No.	Class	Townland	ITM
Located on a small hillock in a gently undulating landscape. At the centre of rath (ME042-022----) is a large rectangular grass-covered area (int. dims 12m x 5.7m) defined by a wide bank (Wth 3m; H 0.3m) with an entrance (Wth 1.7m) towards the E end of the S side, which may be a house site.			
ME042-032----	Burnt mound	RATHMOLYON	679891, 749954
<p>Situated on a SW-facings slope with a canalised SE-NW stream c. 80m to the SW. Topsoil stripping (02E0194) in advance of a gas pipeline identified patches of burnt mound material (BGE: 1A/32/1) but it was too ephemeral to excavate. (Tobin 2003)</p> <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tobin, R. 2003 Archaeological Monitoring, Gas Pipeline to the West, Section 1a, Ballough, Co. Dublin to Kinnegad, Co. Westmeath. Licence No. 02E0194. Unpublished report, Margaret Gowen and Co. 			

Appendix 2 Table of previous excavations in vicinity of site

Licence No.	RMP	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
07E0667	N/A	679271, 751073	Tromman Quarry, Rathmolyon	2007:1380	S. Halliday
<p>Test-trenching was undertaken as part of a request for further information from Meath County Council in response to a planning application for an extension to Tromman Quarry, Rathmolyon, Co. Meath. In total 48 trenches were excavated across the southern area of the proposed development. A significant level of potential archaeology was identified, mainly in the east and south of the area.</p> <p>Fields 1 and 2 were relatively void of archaeological features of potential, with the exception of one or two possible ditches. These were not investigated during this phase of work. Therefore, at this stage it is impossible to say whether they are archaeological or not.</p> <p>Remains of archaeological significance were identified in Field 5 (the middle field of the proposed development), with c. 25 features being identified. The most significant of these comprised part of a circular ditched structure with internal post-holes and a central hearth. This structure appears to be typically prehistoric in date and could potentially be associated with other (as yet unidentified) structures and an associated landscape. Other features identified in this area include possible pits and post-holes, and ditches that may or may not be archaeologically significant.</p> <p>To the east of Field 5, Field 3 reveals a very high number of archaeological features. Most significant of these is the presence of a number of human remains. Within the confines of three trenches located on the high ground, 29 separate concentrations of human bone were identified. While some of these may be part of the same burial, the visible remains indicate that there is likely to be a burial-ground of some significance in this area. Furthermore, their east–west orientation indicates a potentially early medieval graveyard. Typically, with similar excavations undertaken in Ireland, the scope of this graveyard could be extensive. Two things are of note with regard to these remains. Firstly, they lie within the remains of what appears to be (both from geophysical survey and testing results) a circular enclosure measuring up to 45–50m in diameter. This ditch was investigated and was found to be up to 5m in width and 1.5m in depth. Secondly, some of the grave-cuts identified were found to truncate linear features, indicating that the linear features were earlier in date. If the burials were found to be early medieval in date, the underlying earlier ditches clearly represent an earlier phase of occupation across this area. Other features identified in the area of the burials suggest that there may be a secondary enclosing ditch within the confines of the outer ditch.</p> <p>A number of other features were also identified in Field 5. Within the confines of the testing programme, none of these features was investigated and it is therefore impossible to interpret them at this stage. However, it was possible to identify a number of pits, post-holes and kilns as being archaeologically significant.</p> <p>The final field assessed during this phase of work (Field 4) also produced a significant burial-ground. Centred upon the high point of the mound and surrounded in part by a ditch, a minimum of fourteen individual grave-cuts, along with other burials identified during testing, were recorded which comprised infant and neo-natal burials to the north and adult burials to the south. As with those identified in Field 3, all were oriented east–west, indicating an early medieval date at the earliest.</p> <p>To the south of these burials, potential fulachta fiadh material was found close to the stream. Such material is typical of this location and is typically prehistoric in date.</p> <p>Discussions were entered into with the DoEHLG and the proposed development was altered to ensure that the archaeological remains will be preserved in situ and will not be impacted upon by the development.</p>					
07E0922	ME042-020	679404, 749327	Glebe/Cherryvalley/Formal / RathmoYlan	2008:960	D. Shine
CRDS Ltd have been retained by Meath County Council to act as the archaeological consultants on the					

Licence No.	RMP	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
<p>bundled wastewater collection system for County Meath, to be carried out in eight towns: Athboy, Donore, Duleek, Kilmainham Wood, Moynalty, Rathcairn, Rathmoylan and Summerhill. This project is expected to continue until 2009. A total of 2759 metres of pipe will be laid in and around Rathmoylan. With the exception of 156m excavated in Greenfield, all this work will be on roads. The pipeline will enter the constraint circle of an early church (ME042-020).</p> <p>On 3 March 2008, while monitoring to the direct west of the existing Church of Ireland church (ME042-020), human remains were encountered. An excavation of a 220m portion of the pipeline trench was subsequently undertaken between 26 March and 9 May 2008 under the existing licence (see No. 961 below).</p> <p>The human remains on-site consisted of two burials as well as an amount of disarticulated bone. A range of medieval and post-medieval ditches, pits, gullies and furrows was encountered as well as some possible bowl furnaces. In addition to features recorded during the excavation, a single ditch was encountered to the east of the main village crossroads. This was originally thought to represent a simple field boundary but it is now believed it could be related to the main site. Similarly, deposits recorded to the north of the church originally thought to be laid in advance of the construction of the modern road may be related to the site. CRDS Ltd were subsequently awarded the 'Design Build and Operate' contract for the scheme. This consists of wastewater treatment plants, pump stations and outflow pipes in each of the eight towns. A revised method statement was submitted to the NMS and the NMI for the monitoring associated with a wastewater treatment plant in the townland of Formal in Rathmoylan. These works were to be completed under the existing licence. The footprint for the development measured c. 120m by 65m. In addition, an associated access road c. 5m wide and 325m long was stripped to the site. These works were undertaken in July 2008 and no archaeologically significant features were encountered.</p>					
07E0922	ME042-020	679399, 749318	Glebe, Meath	2008:961	D. Shine
<p>CRDS Ltd have been retained by Meath County Council to act as the archaeological consultants on the bundled wastewater collection system for County Meath, to be carried out in eight towns: Athboy, Donore, Duleek, Kilmainham Wood, Moynalty, Rathcairn, Rathmoylan and Summerhill. This project is expected to continue until 2009.</p> <p>On 3 March 2008, while monitoring next to the existing Church of Ireland church (ME042-020), human remains were encountered. Following a revised method statement, excavations were undertaken from 26 March 2006 to 9 May 2008 along a 220m portion of the development/pipe trench. The trench, which averaged 1.2–1.3m wide and up to 3m deep, requiring shuttering. The archaeological features were confined to the northernmost 150m of the trench.</p> <p>These features consisted of eight ditches (three of which contained recuts and one of which was revetted), ten furrows or gullies, five pits, two burials, a boundary wall, two post-holes, a possible quenching trench, a probable slot-trench, a hearth, three bowl furnaces and an early modern road surface as well as a range of deposits.</p> <p>An examination of the finds indicates the features are mainly later medieval and post-medieval in date, with the most common pottery being Leinster cooking ware and Dublin-type ware, dating to the 12th–14th centuries.</p> <p>The width of the excavation, c. 1.2m, makes its interpretation difficult but it is currently thought that some of the ditches represent a substantive enclosing element around the medieval church and settlement in Rathmoylan. A medieval foundation by the Hospitallers in Rathmoylan is recorded in a letter from Pope Innocent III dating to 26 June 1212 (Sheehy 1965, 148–9). The exact location of this foundation was not previously known, although it was speculated that it could be at the site of the current Church of Ireland structure. The weight of archaeological evidence uncovered at Rathmoylan seems to confirm there was settlement in this area in the 13th and 14th century which could potentially be related to this foundation. Several of the ditches appear to divide the site into 'areas of activity', with possible light industry represented by the slot-trench, hearth, bowl furnaces and quenching trench and cultivation or agriculture</p>					

Licence No.	RMP	OS Ref	Location	Ex. Bulletin Ref.	Author
<p>represented by two concentrations of furrows and gullies. All these areas are clearly defined and appear to be bounded by ditches. Post-excavation analysis is ongoing but the absence of post-medieval finds from these areas seems to infer that most of these features are later medieval in date.</p> <p>These features are more likely to represent a mixed-use settlement rather than a distinct ecclesiastical site associated with the Hospitallers. However, in the post-medieval and early modern periods the church precinct was certainly bigger than it is at present. Two intact burials as well as quantities of disarticulated bone were recovered from the pipe trench immediately west of the present churchyard. One of these burials, identified as a female, was buried with a smoker's kit, including a flint nodule, strike a light and a clay-pipe bowl. This bowl has been dated to c. 1640–1660, probably giving an approximate date for both burials.</p> <p>In addition to the burials the boundary wall of the graveyard was shown to continue originally west across the current road. A ditch to the immediate south of this wall may have acted as an earlier boundary on the graveyard. An early modern road surface was also recorded in both section faces. This terminated where the southern boundary of the graveyard extended underneath the current road. This appears to correspond to a map produced in 1767 by Bernard Scalé, which seems to show that the road originally only came to the southern boundary of the graveyard before turning east around the church precinct. By 1812 Larkin's map shows that the current crossroads in Rathmolyon were established and the graveyard had contracted east. It seems likely that this may have happened around 1797, when the current Church of Ireland structure was constructed.</p> <p>References</p> <p>Sheehy, M.P. 1965 Pontifica Hibernica: medieval papal chancery documents concerning Ireland 640–1261, vol. 1.</p> <p>Larkin, W. 1812 A map of the County of Meath in the province of Leinster in Ireland.</p> <p>Scalé, B. 1767 The glebe of Rathmalion. In A survey of the Lordship of Athboy in the Barony of Lune and County of Meath. The Estate of the Right Honourable John Earl of Darnley.</p>					
16E0131	N/A	679427, 749387	Rathmolyon, Meath	2016:831	R. Meenan
<p>An archaeological assessment of this site was requested prior to construction of two houses. It lies to the north-east of a 19th-century church (ME042-020); this may stand on the site of an earlier church which is recorded in Dopping's Visitation Book 1682-5 (Moore 143).</p> <p>Four trenches were excavated. There was evidence for redeposition of boulder clay along the western half of the site possibly to provide good standing for a yard. The rest of the site was covered with a layer of garden soil that contained loose stone and some pieces of brick. A narrow east-west running brick drain was exposed in Trench 1. Boulder clay was exposed at approx. 0.6m below present ground level. The eastern half of the site had been disturbed by insertion of a septic tank.</p> <p>No features of archaeological interest were exposed in the trenches. The only artefacts were sherds of 19th/20th-century white earthenware.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <p>Moore, M. 1986 Archaeological Inventory of County Meath.</p>					

Appendix 3 Table of entries from Record of Protected Structures in vicinity of site

RPS ID no.	Structure Name	Street/Townland	Town	Building Type	Description	NIAH reg. No.	Distance from site
MH042- 103	Cherryvalley House	Cherryvalley	Rathmolyon	House (detached)	Detached three-bay two-storey house, built 1877, with return.	14332007	510m to WNW
MH042- 104	Saint Michael's Roman Catholic Church	Rathmolyon	Rathmolyon	Church (R.C.)	Detached gable-fronted church, built 1967. Pitched copper clad roof with rendered chimneystack. Freestanding square profiled roughcast rendered bell tower.	14332006	360m to NW
MH042- 105	Rathmolyon Villa	Rathmolyon	Rathmolyon	House (detached)	Detached three-bay two-storey over basement house, built 1836. Rendered gate piers with stone name plaques and caps, having wrought-iron double gates. Stone outbuilding to rear with pitched slate roof.	14332004	380m to NW
MH042- 106	Nenthorne	Rathmolyon/ Glebe	Rathmolyon	House (detached)	Detached single storey 1940's house.	-	580m to NNW
MH042- 107	Haman's Pub	Glebe	Rathmolyon	Thatched house	Detached three-bay single-storey house with attic accommodation, built c.1880, with gabled porch. Hipped thatched roof with brick chimneystack. Rendered and roughcast rendered walls. Timber sash windows.	14332005	100m to NW
MH042- 108	Rathmolyon House	Rathmolyon	Rathmolyon	House (detached)	Detached six-bay two-storey house, built c.1800, with three storey return. Rubble stone boundary walls with lugged and pedimented stone architrave and wrought-iron gate.	14332003	140m to N

RPS ID no.	Structure Name	Street/Townland	Town	Building Type	Description	NIAH reg. No.	Distance from site
MH042- 109	Saint Michael and All Angels	Glebe	Rathmolyon	Church (C of I)	Detached L-plan church, built 1797, with single-bay apse and vestry additions to the east. Three-stage tower with ashlar limestone spire added to the north-west corner, c.1857.	14332002	80m to NE

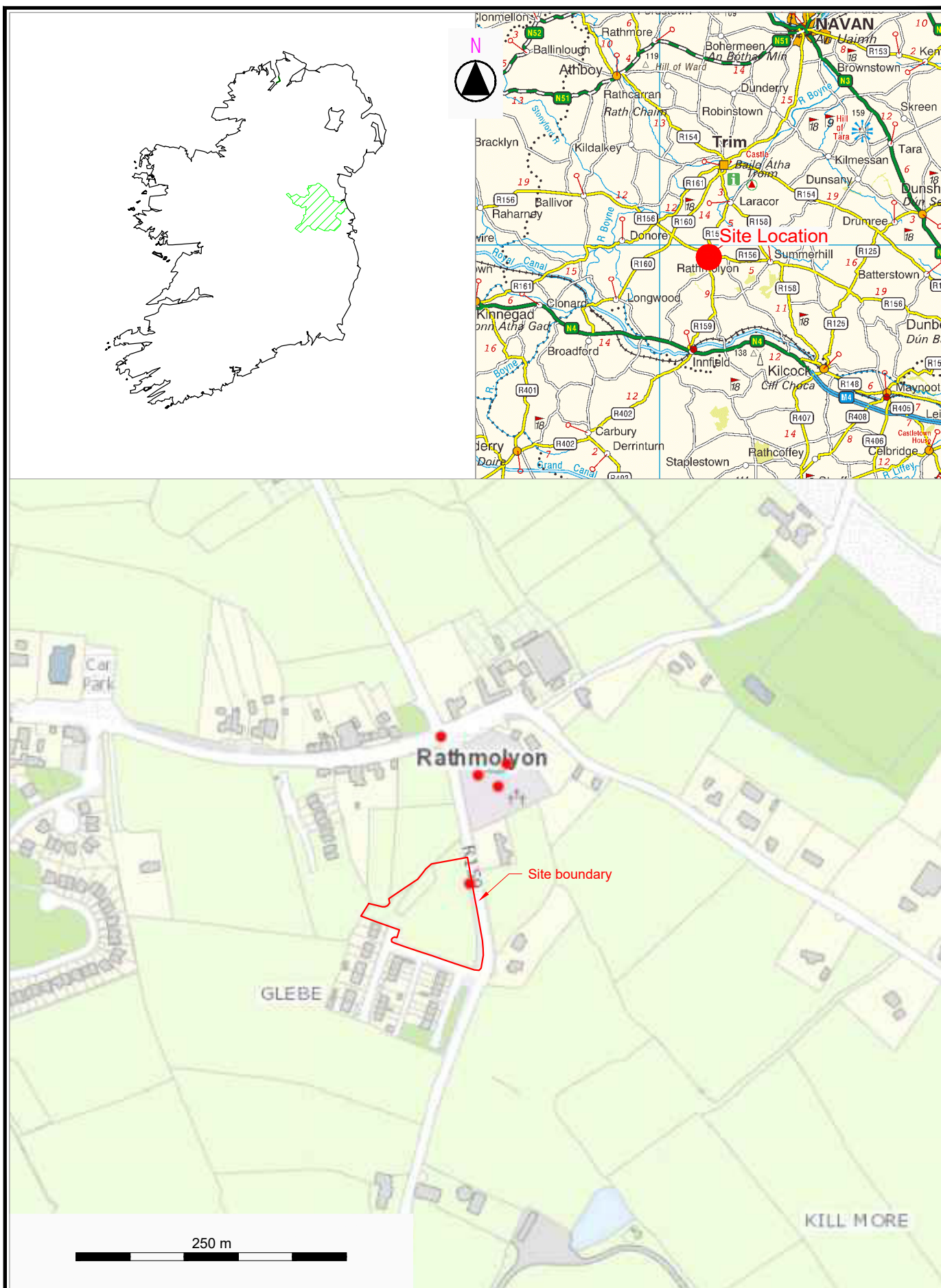
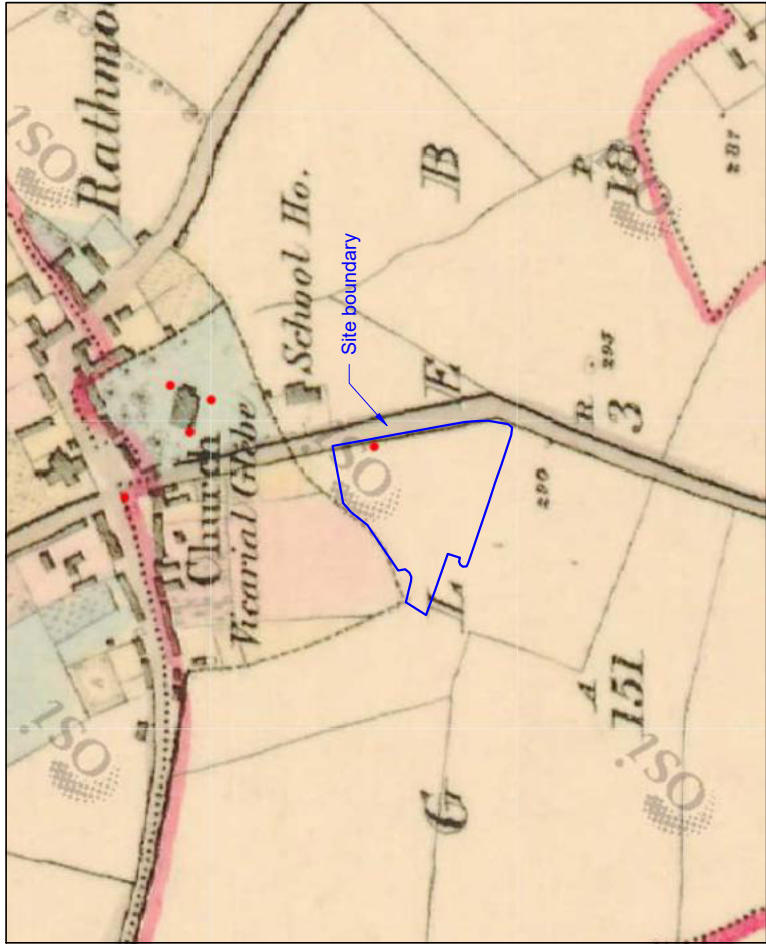
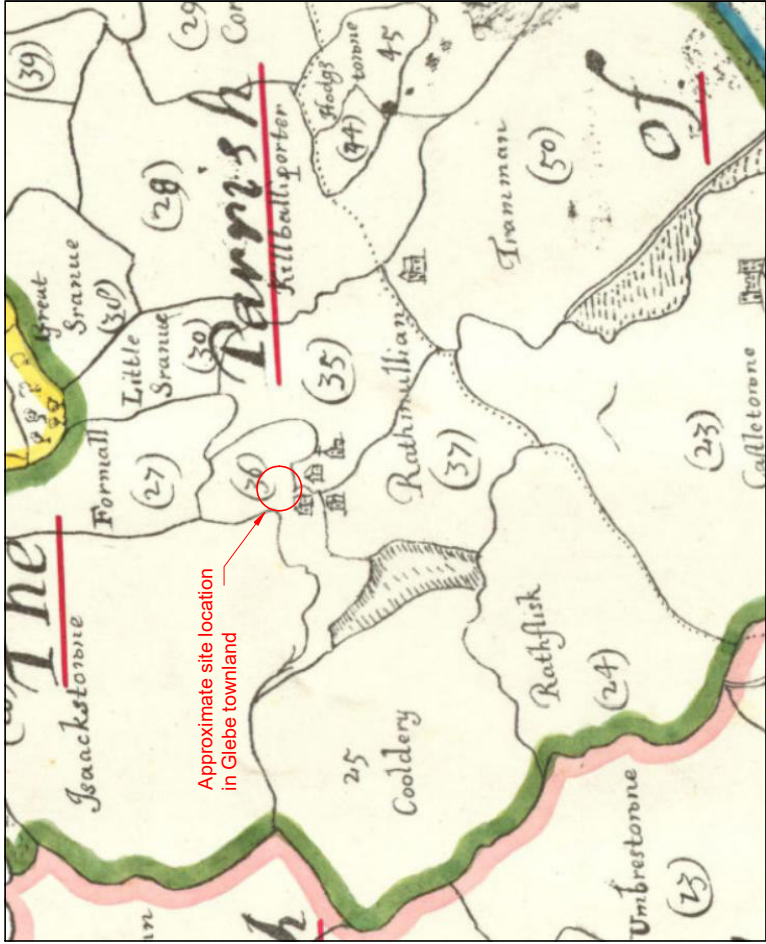


Figure 1: Site location





Figure 3: Surrounding RMP/SMR sites with Zones of Notification



(l) 1656 Down Survey Map of Moyferath Barony

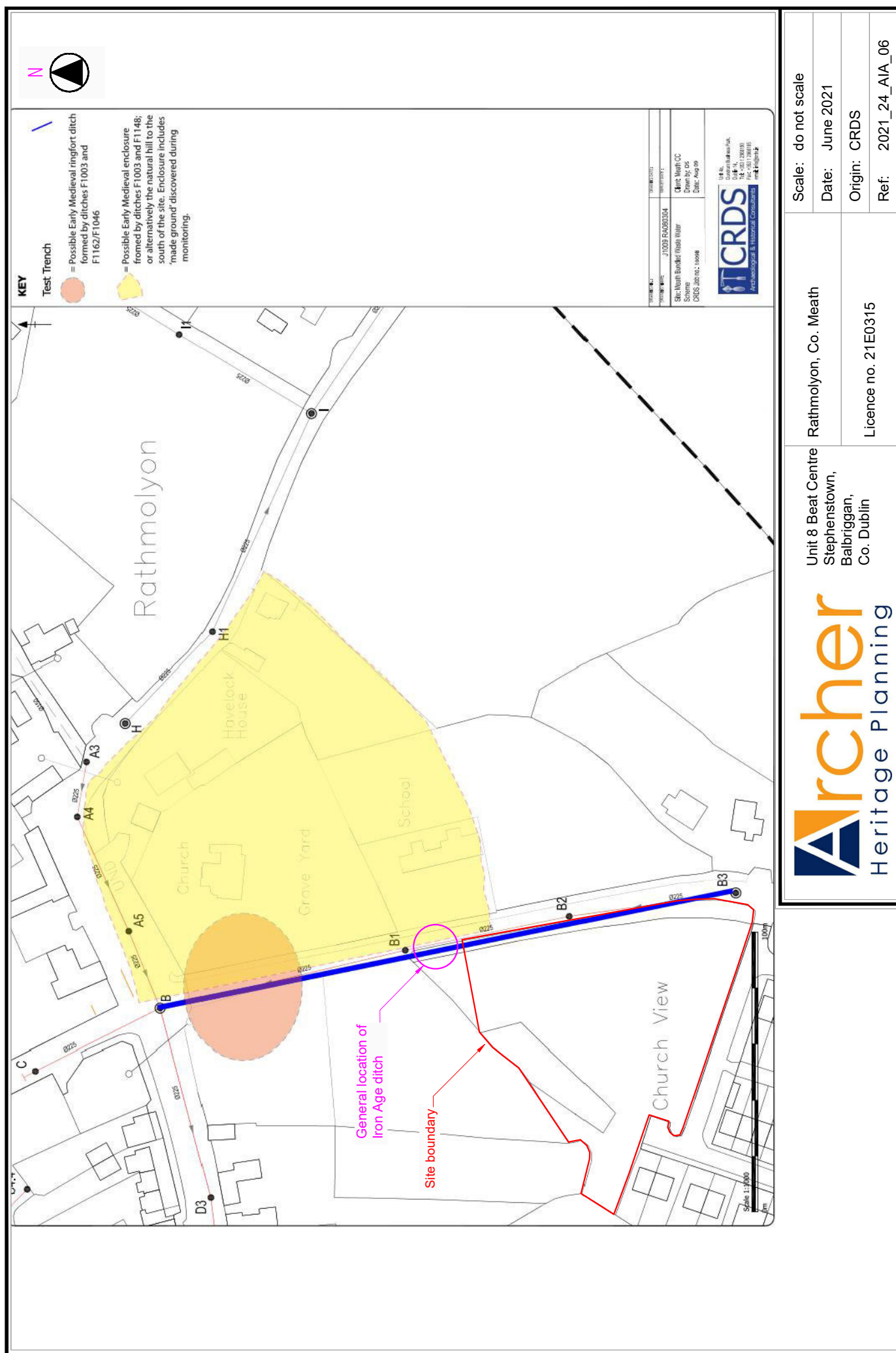
(r) 1837 1st edition OS map

Figure 4: Extracts from cartographic sources



- (l) 1995 OSI aerial
(r) 2005 OSI aerial

Figure 5: Extracts from aerial photography



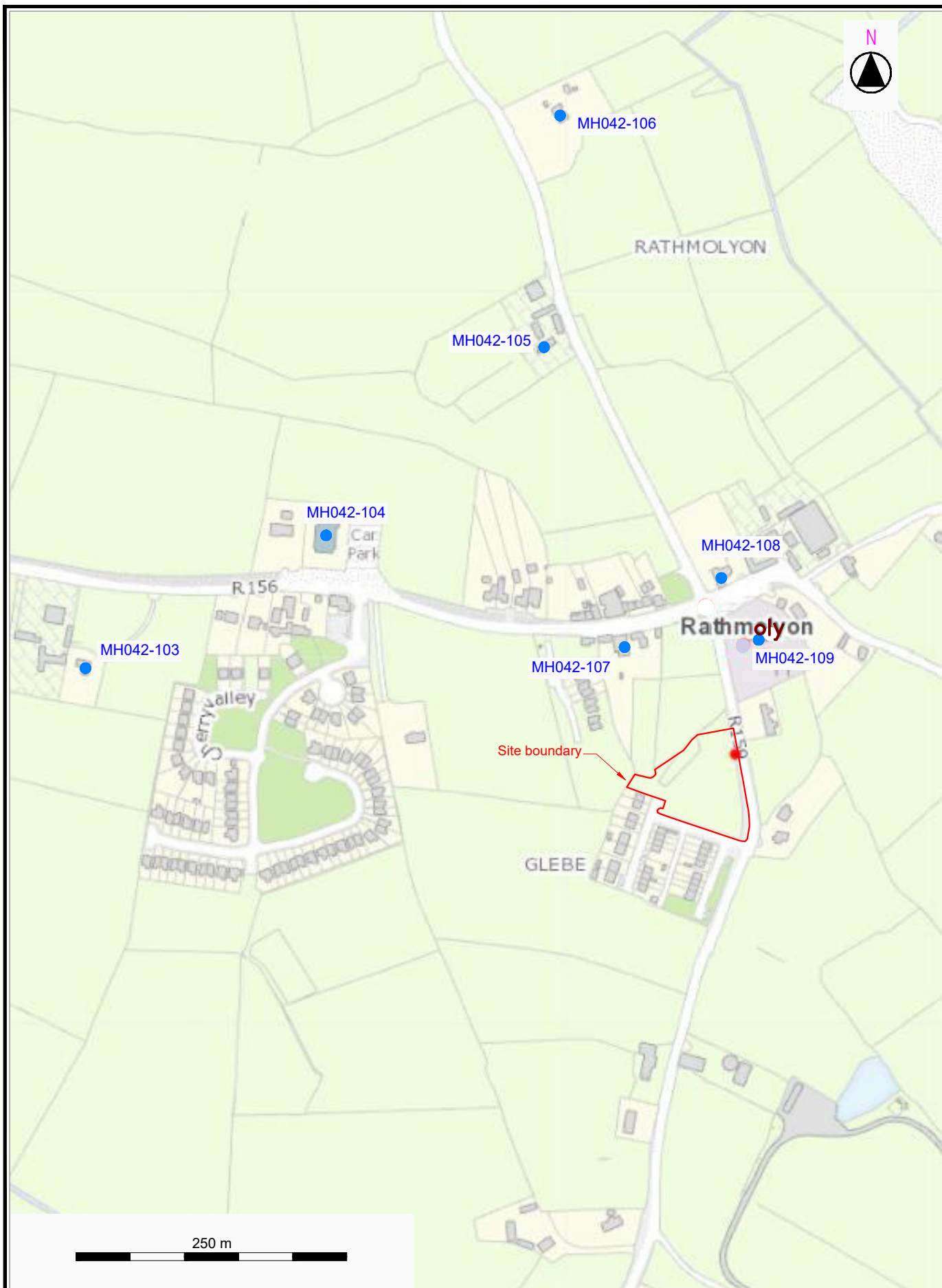


Figure 7: Protected Structures in vicinity of site

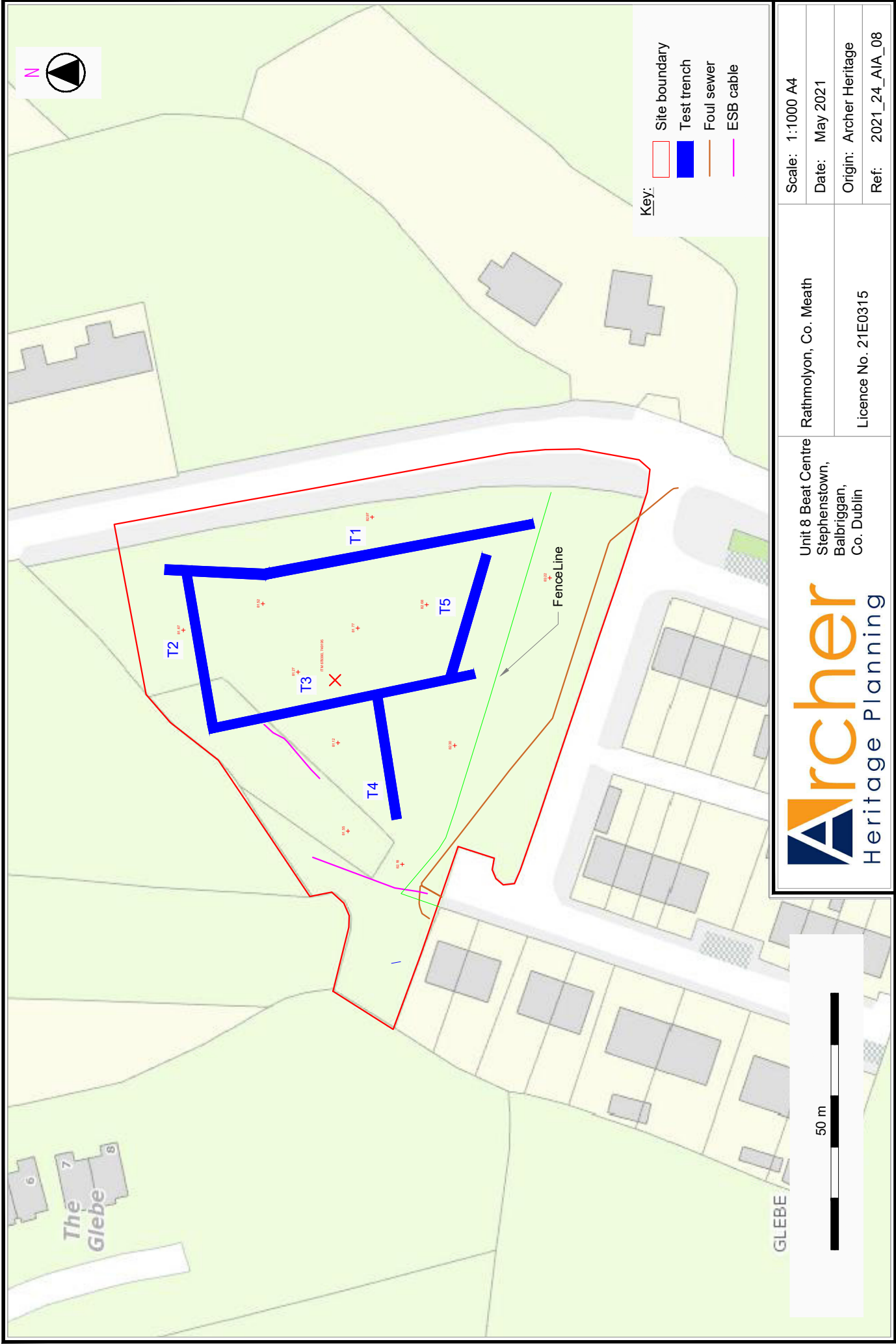


Figure 8: Test trench layout 21E0315



Plate 1: Trench 1 from south-east



Plate 2: Trench 1 from north



Plate 3: Trench 2 from west



Plate 4: Soil profile in Trench 2 showing layer of introduced soils



Plate 5: Trench 3 from south-east



Plate 6: Trench 4 from south-west



Plate 7: Trench 5 from east