

Archaeological Impact Assessment Report Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare

Jeanne Rochford
January 2026
Report Status: Final
ACSU Ref.: 25179

ACSU
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT

HEAD OFFICE
Unit 21
Boyne Business Park
Greenhills, Drogheda
Co. Louth

041-9883396
041-2130310
info@acsu.ie
www.acsu.ie

PROJECT DETAILS

Project	Residential Development at Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare
Report Type	Archaeological Impact Assessment
Townland(s)	Southgreen & Kildare
RMP/SMR No.	N/A
RPS Id./NIAH Reg. No.	N/A
ITM Ref.	672177, 713388
Consultant	Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit, 21 Boyne Business Park, Greenhills, Drogheda, County Louth
Archaeologist	Jeanne Rochford
Report Author(s)	Jeanne Rochford
Report Status	Final
Report Date	22nd January 2026
ACSU Ref.	25179

VERSION CONTROL

Revision	Date	Description	Status	Author	Reviewed	Approved
1.0	22.01.26	Archaeological Impact Assessment	Final	J.R.	L.C.	D.M.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of an archaeological impact assessment prepared for a site at Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare (ITM 672177,713388). The site measures c. 5.75 hectares and lies to the north of Kildare town. The assessment was carried out at the request of the client in relation to a Stage II Large Residential Development (LRD) submission for C2 lands, Southgreen, Co. Kildare. It is based on the findings of a study of available archaeological, historical, cartographic and photographic sources, as well as a site visit. It aims to identify and describe known and potential archaeological and cultural heritage constraints within the site and its wider environs, and, where present, to offer recommendations for mitigation measures.

The site contains no monuments as listed in the *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) or *Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR). The nearest monument to the site is located c. 0.5km to the north and is a mound (KD022-012----), and there are a further seven monuments associated with a religious house – Carmelite friars (KD022-029007-), including tombs, inscribed stones and a graveyard (KD022-029061-66) located c. 0.5km to the south. There are no Protected Structures as listed in the *Kildare County Development Plan 2023– 2029* or sites listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) located within the site. The nearest such structure is Kilcumney House (RPS No. B22-31; NIAH Reg. No.11817082), located c. 75m to the southwest of the site. The site was not previously subject to archaeological investigations.

Cartographic sources and aerial imagery were examined as part of the site assessment. The site is illustrated as agricultural fields, with the townland and parish boundary between Kildare and Southgreen traversing the site, which was realigned by the subsequent map. No features, nor anomalies of archaeological significance were noted on the examined aerial imagery.

The site visit was carried out in January 2026 by Jeanne Rochford of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd (ACSU). The site consists of two pasture fields and one overgrown, narrow strip of land situated directly northeast of an excavation site that exposed 35 burials (representing 36 individuals) and three ring ditches, only one of which was complete. This excavation was carried out under Licence 19E0009 by ACSU in 2020. These types of monuments often occur in groups, and therefore, the site has the potential to contain previously unknown archaeological remains.

It is therefore recommended that an assessment, including a geophysical survey and a programme of archaeological testing, should be carried out in advance of any development of the site. This must be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist working under licence from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Archaeological material identified may require further mitigation, including in situ

preservation (avoidance) or preservation by record (excavation), following consultation with the National Monuments Service.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 8
2. THE DEVELOPMENT 8
2.1 Proposal 8
2.2 Archaeological Condition/Requirement 10
3. METHODOLOGY 10
4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT 11
4.1 Archaeological & Historical Background 11
4.2 Previous Archaeological Investigations 14
4.3 Recorded Monuments 16
4.4 Record of Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage 20
4.5 Finds listed within the Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland 20
4.6 Cartographic Evidence 21
4.7 Aerial Photography 22
4.8 Field Inspection 22
5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT 23
6. CONSTRAINTS 23
7. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS 23
8. REFERENCES 25

List of Figures

Figure 1 Location of site

Figure 2 Location of site, previous excavations and nearby *Sites and Monuments Record* sites

Figure 3 Extract from Down Survey (1656), showing approximate location of site

Figure 4 Extract from 1st edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 6-inch map (surveyed 1836 - published 1839), showing location of site

Figure 5 Extract from 3rd edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 25-inch map (surveyed 1908 - published 1909), showing location of site

Figure 6 Aerial view of site

Figure 7 Detail of proposed site development

Figure 8 Detail of site development

List of Plates

Plate 1 Field 1, facing west towards Southgreen road

Plate 2 Field 1, facing northwest, showing undulating terrain

Plate 3 Field 1, facing north-northeast, showing southeast boundary

Plate 4 Field 1, facing north

Plate 5 Field 2, facing southwest towards Kildare substation

Plate 6 Field 2, facing south

Plate 7 Field 2, facing east from highest point in field

Plate 8 Field 2, facing northeast

List of Tables

Table 1 Previous archaeological investigations within the environs of the site

Table 2 Recorded Monuments in the environs of the site

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of an archaeological impact assessment prepared in relation to a site located at Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare (ITM 672177,713388; Figures 1-2). The site is adjacent to and north of the Southgreen Internal Link Road; it is bounded from the west by Southgreen Road and from the east by Old Road and private dwellings, with agricultural, grassed fields to the north. Kildare 38kV substation is located along the southwest boundary.

The site contains no monuments listed in the *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) or the *Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR). There are no Protected Structures as listed in the *Kildare County Development Plan 2023– 2029* or sites listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) located within the site.

This assessment was carried out to accompany the planning application for a proposed residential development. This impact assessment is based on the findings of a study of available archaeological, historical, cartographic, and photographic sources. It aims to identify and describe known and potential archaeological and cultural heritage constraints within the site and its wider environs, and, where present, to offer recommendations to mitigate potential impacts.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Proposal

Pousterle Limited intend to apply for permission for development of a Large - Scale Residential Development (LRD) on a site of approx. 6.13 ha at Southgreen Road, Kildare, Co. Kildare (Figure 7). The site is generally bounded to the north by agricultural fields; to the south by the recently constructed Southern Internal Link Road; to the west by Southgreen Road and an existing Electricity Station; and to the east by Old Road and existing residential properties.

The proposed development will consist of:

- The construction of a new residential scheme of 146 no. residential units ranging in height from 1-3 storeys as follows:

  - 136 no. houses (7 no. 2 bed units; 102 no. 3 bed units; and 27 no. 4 bed units) in a mixture of bungalow, detached, semi-detached, and terrace style units ranging in height from 1 – 2 storeys.
  - 10 no. duplex apartment units (5 no. 1 beds, 3 no. 2 beds, and 2 no. 3 beds) in new Block A ranging in height from 2-3 storeys

- Each residential unit will be afforded with private open space in the form of a front/rear/side garden for houses or terrace / balconies for duplex apartment units.
- The provision of a new creche facility (approx. 161 sq m GFA) and associated areas of external open space (approx. 60 sq m) located at Block A.
- Public open space (approx. 6,992 sq m) is proposed in the form of 2 no. new large public open space areas within the site (approx. 3,046 sq m and 3,946 sq m respectively).
- Communal open space (approx. 82 sq m) is proposed adjacent to Block A.
- A total of 321 no. car parking spaces (305 no. for residential units and 16 no. for the creche facility) are provided. This provision includes 2 no. accessible spaces and 17 no. visitor spaces.
- A total of 527 no. cycle parking spaces (517 no. for residential units and 10 no. for the creche facility) are provided. This provision includes 75 no. visitor spaces. Resident cycle parking is proposed in the form of secure bicycle store enclosures to the front of terraced units; on curtilage spaces to the rear of units with side access; and a bicycle store for apartment units located within Block A. Visitor parking is proposed in the form of Sheffield stands.
- The development shall be served via 2 no. new vehicular access points from Southgreen Road. An additional private vehicular access point is proposed via Old Road to service 1 no. new bungalow (4 no. bed residential unit). Provision is also made for future vehicular access via Southgreen Road to serve the open space and amenity zoned lands to the north of the main development site.
- Pedestrian and Cyclist access is also proposed via Southgreen Road and via a new secondary access point from the Southern Internal Link Road to the south of the site and Old Road to the east of the site.
- Upgrades/widening to Southgreen Road including the provision of 2 no. directional single lane cycle tracks and pedestrian footpaths on either side of the Southgreen Road, together with amendments to the existing cycle tracks and footpaths on Southgreen Road north of Southern Internal Link Road are proposed.
- A new pedestrian/cycle link is also delivered to the north of the main development site connecting South Green Road to Old Road.

- The associated site and infrastructural works include provision for an ESB Sub Station; water services; foul and surface water drainage and connections; attenuation proposals; permeable paving; all landscaping works; boundary treatment; PV/Solar Panels; internal roads and footpaths; waste storage areas, all electrical services and all associated site development works.

2.2 Archaeological Condition/Requirement

An Archaeological Impact Assessment is required to provide an archaeological and historical background for the proposed development site, which is a Large-Scale Residential Development currently at Stage 2 and to provide information on existing archaeological evidence in relation to the site. The study aims to determine whether there is likely archaeological interest in the site and whether any further archaeological site investigations may be required.

3. METHODOLOGY

This assessment comprises a literature review and consultation of various written, cartographic and photographic sources. This included the *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) and *Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR), compiled and updated by the National Monuments Service and the National Historic Properties Service. The RMP is comprised of manuals that list all known archaeological sites and monuments in a county with accompanying maps (based on Ordnance Survey (OS) six-inch maps), locating these sites. All sites included in the RMP are protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930–2004). The SMR consists of all records stored in the Archaeological Survey of Ireland national database and is presented in the Historic Environment Viewer, which also includes sites listed in the *National Inventory of Architectural Heritage* (see below). The last published RMP for County Kildare is dated 1996, and as such, many of the sites listed in the SMR are scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP.

The Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland were also consulted to assess the area's archaeological potential. These files list on a townland basis all archaeological artefacts in the care of or known to the museum. Such a record can provide evidence for human settlement or activity in the absence of physical remains or documentary references. The results of previous and ongoing archaeological investigations were also considered in order to evaluate the level of archaeological remains coming to light in the area. This was primarily achieved by searching the *Database of Irish Excavation Reports* (www.excavations.ie), which

contains summaries of all investigations carried out under licence from 1970 to the present. Unpublished reports were also accessed through the National Monuments Service's Virtual Reading Room.

Historical maps, including those held by the Map Library of Trinity College Dublin and Tailte Éireann (previously Ordnance Survey Ireland) were also consulted, as well as aerial and orthophotography imagery from Tailte Éireann and Google Earth. These sources can indicate areas of archaeological potential through features like curving field boundaries, crop marks and soil marks, and can provide information regarding the nature and extent of recorded archaeological sites that have become denuded since the early 19th century. Historical maps are also useful in identifying other features of cultural heritage significance.

The *Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029* was also consulted as this contains, among other things, a Record of Protected Structures (RPS). A Protected Structure is a structure that a planning authority thinks is of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical point of view. The structure is recognised as important and is protected from harm under legislation. Every local authority in Ireland must keep an RPS in their development plans. Further buildings and features of architectural interest in the area that are not included on the RPS are detailed in the *National Inventory of Architectural Heritage* (NIAH). The NIAH was developed by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and identifies, records, and evaluates the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland in order to protect and conserve our built heritage. It is under the administration of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It also forms the basis for a list of structures that should be included in the Record of Protected Structures compiled by local authorities.

As part of the assessment, a site visit was also carried out. The aim of which was to assess whether the site contained any visible evidence of any previously unrecorded areas or features of historical or archaeological significance.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

4.1 Archaeological & Historical Background

The site is located within the townland of Kildare (Cill Dara) and Southgreen (An Fhaiche Theas). The townland of Kildare encompasses the town of Kildare and the area to the north of the railway line. The site lies in the Barony of Offaly East and West and the Civil Parish of Kildare and Tully.

An examination of the Placenames Database of Ireland (www.logainm.ie) can reveal important information about the natural and cultural heritage of an area. The townland of Kildare was first mentioned in 525 as Cill

Dara (Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters I-VII, ed. J. O'Donovan) and can be translated as 'church of oak', it was frequently mentioned in sources thereafter. The only monument recorded on the northside of the railway line in proximity to the site is a mound (KD022-012----), however there is no visible surface trace of the monument, it was depicted as hachured on both the 6-inch and 25-inch Ordnance Survey maps, a number of monuments associated with Religious house – Carmelite friars (KD022-029007-) are located c. 0.5km to the south of the site, with the zone of archaeological potential associated with Kildare Historic Town (KD022-029) and its town defences (KD022-029001-) located c. 0.57km to the south.

Ring ditches and barrows

Excavation under licence 19E0009 (Murphy, Gibney, 2021) identified a previously unknown site consisting of multi-phase prehistoric ring ditches and Iron Age – Early Medieval burials. The site was located adjacent to the southwestern extent of the present application site, where the roundabout is now and to the south of it. The investigations exposed 35 burials (with 36 skeletons). These burials were orientated east to west in a mixture of simple and stone-lined graves. Three ring ditches, 11 pits, 3 kilns and 3 postholes were also recorded. A radiocarbon dating programme was also carried out, confirming that the pits in the northern portion of the site were of Early Bronze Age date. The unenclosed cemetery was Late Iron Age/Early Christian with two phases of activity recorded. This was indicated by the construction of ring ditches (mid-3rd century) and a later phase (5th– 6th century), with the presence of kilns indicating settlement nearby. It is very likely that the archaeological activity recorded extends into the application site as ring ditch C7, excavated under licence 19E0009, extended to the east. The excavated portion of ring ditch C7 measured a maximum depth of 0.14m, suggesting the monument was likely levelled and truncated by previous agricultural activities.

Towards the end of the Neolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age, features known as 'barrows' emerged. These are defined as earthen or earth/stone construction mounds with a surrounding ditch or ditches, sometimes with a low external bank, typically less than 30 metres in diameter, and most commonly associated with cremation burials (O'Sullivan and Downey 2012). Ring ditches are defined by a circular or nearly circular ditch that is usually less than 20m and might be the remains of ploughed out barrows or round houses, and can be interpreted through an examination of associated features if found.

In 2002, in advance of the gas pipeline works from North Dublin to Limerick, ring ditches/barrows were excavated at Flemingtown, Co. Meath, Dalystown 1, Co. Westmeath, Knockuregare, Co. Limerick and Rath, Co. Dublin (Grogan et al. 2007). All these sites had substantial ditches, the largest having an external diameter of 38.75m. The excavations provide evidence for this type of funerary site occurring throughout the Bronze Age

(2450–800 BC) and highlight the significance of liminal space for death and burial in the form of ceremonial enclosures. McGarry (2009) states that of all the barrows excavated in Ireland, about half of them have produced the remains of a single person, most commonly found under the mound and central to the barrow. Almost all sites, however, produce cremated human remains spread throughout the fill of the barrow ditches; as can be seen at sites such as Ballybeen, Co. Antrim (Mallory 1984) and Ballydribbeen, Co. Kerry (Dunne 2003). Another interesting feature of barrows is the presence or absence of an 'entrance' or break in the ditch, which provides a causeway into the monument. Entrances are present in a number of ring-ditches and ring-barrows, and although the entrance may be orientated in any direction, there is a clear preference for them facing either east or south-east. It must be noted, however, that there are also many instances in which entrances are absent, such as Donacarney, Co. Meath (Stirland 2017).

Kildare

Kildare Town is located on the western fringes of a fertile drift-covered limestone ridge, on the western limits of the agriculturally productive areas of the central plain. The town is in the watershed between the Rivers Liffey and Barrow, east of the peat bogs of the upper Barrow basin and west of the Curragh of Kildare.

The earlier name for the town was Druim Craig, denoting the ridge on which the town is built. The placename Kildare, or Cill Dara, means "the church or cell of oak," or "the oak tree," although there were likely earlier pagan roots to the settlement. The oak is thought to mark a pagan shrine. The first reference to Kildare is in AD 520.

St Brigid founded a monastery there for nuns in the early fifth or sixth century at the dawn of Christianity in Ireland. The foundation developed as a double monastery, with nuns under an abbess and monks under an abbot or bishop; they were in separate residential buildings but with common worship areas, though sexes were separated in the church by a screen (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 320). In the twelfth century, Geraldus Cambrensis recorded the still-held tradition of the perpetual flame at the shrine to St Brigid.

The monastery appeared to be influential in early Irish politics, with alliances to the Uí Failgi and the Uí Dúnainge (later Kings of Leinster), and claims in the seventh century by Cogitosus as a 'Treasury of Kings' (Andrews 1986). The various annals record sequences of bishops, abbots, and abbesses, as well as the numerous destructions and burnings suffered at the hands of factional dynasties.

Kildare had strong connections to the Uí Cennselaigh, a dominant Leinster family (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 83). In the early twelfth century, Kildare became one of the five Episcopal sees of Leinster, signifying the

growing importance of the town. Kildare was a manorial settlement of the de Clare / Marshall family at the end of the twelfth century; this transferred to the de Vesci family. County Kildare was formed by King John in 1210 along with the counties of Dublin, Louth, Meath, Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford. Kildare was formed from the ancient Gaelic territories of Carbury, Offelan, Omurethi and Ophaley. By 1216, the town was referred to as a borough, with burgesses mentioned in 1297. By then, the town of Kildare could boast a fine castle, a cathedral, Franciscan and Carmelite friaries, and a further church and hospital. It had passed to the FitzGeralds by 1319. During the fourteenth century, John FitzGerald was created Earl of Kildare, and the association with the FitzGerald family continues to the present day. Throughout the Middle Ages, Kildare was primarily a market town, with milling as one of its main activities (Thomas 1984).

The earlier pre-Norman medieval layout would have consisted of an inner perimeter enclosure around the monastery and a circular outer enclosure around the settlement, possibly as far as Market Square to the south-east and Priest's Lane to the northwest (Andrews 1986, 2). Although there is a record of a murage grant in 1515, Kildare is not listed as a walled town in the description of Ireland in 1598, and no maps survive from the seventeenth-century survey of the town. However, the circuit of the walled town can be estimated from a combination of placenames and cartographic evidence of street patterns. The cathedral stands in the northern quarter of the medieval town plan, according to Thomas. The line of the town wall would have extended from the cathedral perimeter wall, west to Fire Castle, then south to Clare Gate along the Black Ditch, and east to White Gate and the site of the castle. The park was probably originally the castle bailey. The northeastern wall extends from the park to join Ellis Gate; it then continues from this gate to the cathedral perimeter wall, north of Market Square, and through the site (Thomas 1984).

Kildare failed to develop in the medieval period and was used by neither the Marshalls nor the FitzGeralds as their centre. Its location was unsuitable: it had no river access and was vulnerable to attack, being at the southwest edge of the Pale, close to the uncolonised Bog of Allen. Nonetheless, it was the recorded meeting place of parliaments in 1276-7 and 1310, and in 1599, Kildare was referred to as a city. The nunnery too declined after the Anglo-Norman conquest but continued until the general suppression of religious establishments under Henry VIII (Thomas 1984; Gwynn and Hadcock 1988).

4.2 Previous Archaeological Investigations

Field 3, located within the south-eastern portion of the site, was previously subject to a geophysical survey under Licence 18R0254 (Murphy & Breen 2019). In addition, during road improvement works associated with

the construction of the adjacent Southgreen Link Road, a previously unknown archaeological site was excavated under Licence 19E0009. This site consisted of prehistoric ring ditches and Iron Age–Early Medieval burials. This site was located adjacent to the south-western extent of the current site, encompassing the area of the present roundabout and land to its south.

The investigations exposed 35 burials (representing 36 individuals), oriented east–west, comprising a mixture of simple and stone-lined graves. Three ring ditches were recorded, along with 11 pits, three kilns, and three postholes. Radiocarbon dating indicated that pits in the northern portion of the site dated to the Early Bronze Age. The unenclosed cemetery was identified as Late Iron Age/Early Medieval in date, with two distinct phases of use: an earlier phase in the mid-3rd century, and a later phase dating to the 5th–6th centuries. The presence of kilns suggests nearby settlement activity.

These findings indicate that the site lies within a sensitive archaeological landscape. However, a subsequent geophysical survey (Licence 22R0414; Murphy, Donald 2023) and later test trenching (Licence 23E0053; Murphy, Deirdre 2023) did not identify any archaeological remains in a site adjacent to and south of the current proposed development.

Listed below are the nearest previously conducted archaeological investigations in the environs of the site (see Figure 2), which further demonstrate the site's overall archaeological potential and that of its surrounding townlands (Table 1). The following information was taken from the *Database of Irish Excavation Reports* (www.excavations.ie), and associated reports were accessed through the National Monuments Service's (NMS) Virtual Reading Room.

Table 1: Previous archaeological investigations within the environs of the site

Excavation.ie reference	Licence No.	Site-Type	Investigation Type
2020:182 - KILDARE: Southgreen Road, Kildare	19E0009	Ring-ditch and Burials Period/Dating: Prehistoric (12700 BC-AD 400)	Geophysical survey Test Trenching Excavation
2023:179 - KILDARE: Southgreen Road, Kildare	22R0414 23E0053	No archaeology found	Geophysical survey Test Trenching
2019:530 - SOUTHGREEN, Kildare	18R0254	No archaeology	Geophysical survey

Excavation.ie reference	Licence No.	Site-Type	Investigation Type
	18E0734	found	Test Trenching

4.3 Recorded Monuments

The *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) and *Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR) are compiled and updated by the National Monuments Service and the National Historic Properties Service. The RMP is comprised of manuals that list all known archaeological sites and monuments in a county with accompanying maps (based on Ordnance Survey (OS) six-inch maps), locating these sites. All sites included in the RMP are protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930–2004). The SMR consists of all records stored in the Archaeological Survey of Ireland national database and is presented in the Historic Environment Viewer. The last published RMP for County Kildare is dated 1996, and as such, many of the sites listed in the SMR are scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP.

The site contains no monuments listed in the *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) and/or the *Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR). The nearest monument to the site is located c. 0.5km to the north and is recorded as a mound (KD022-012----), there is no visible surface trace of the monument. It was depicted as hachured on both the 6-inch and 25-inch Ordnance Survey maps.

Below (Table 2) is a list of the recorded monuments located in the environs of the site (Figure 2). These descriptions are derived from the National Monuments Service Archaeological Survey Database (https://heritagedata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/).

Table 2: Recorded Monuments in the environs of the site

KD022-012----	Mound	KILDARE
On a hilltop in improved pasture, with moderately steep slopes on all sides. Shown on the latest ed. (1939) of the OS 6-inch map as a raised circular area (est. diam. c. 25m) with a Trigonometrical station (OD 419 feet) on the NE sector, and a depression or possible quarry pit on the site limits NW-NE. The Trigonometrical station is no longer extant, and an ESB pole stands on or close to its former location. The depression has been infilled, and there is no visible surface trace of a mound. Six-Inch First edition: Hachured Six-Inch Latest edition: Hachured ITM Coordinates: 671815, 713901		

Latitude and Longitude: 53.170738, -6.925873

KD022-029007-	Religious house - Carmelite friars	KILDARE

Located to the WNW of St. Brigid's Cathedral (KD022-029005-) in a graveyard (KD022-029061-). The Carmelite Priory of St Mary, founded by William de Vesci in 1290. In 1539, it consisted of a church, belfry, dormitory, hall, and two chambers. All the buildings except the church and messuage were burned in 1540 (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 290). According to Bradley et al. (1986 vol. 3, 243-6), a late-18th century drawing by Cooper shows a roofless, single-aisled church, with two small traceried roundels above in the E wall, six pointed lancets and a flat lintelled doorway towards the W in the S wall (JKAS 1971-6, 436, 490). There are no visible remains of the priory, but it is indicated on Rocque's 1757 map immediately S of the modern Carmelite church. Late medieval limestone panels (KD022-029062-, KD022-029063-, KD022-029064-, KD022-029065- and KD022-029066-) set in the N transept wall of the modern church may have originated in the earlier church.

Compiled by: Gearóid Conroy

Date of upload: 23 January 2012

Six-Inch First edition: Not indicated

Six-Inch Latest edition: Not indicated

ITM Coordinates: 672477, 712608

Latitude and Longitude: 53.159030, -6.916266

KD022-029061-	Graveyard	KILDARE

Located to the WNW of St. Brigid's Cathedral (KD022-029005-), just S of the modern Carmelite church (which contains late medieval limestone panels: (KD022-029062-, KD022-029063-, KD022-029064-, KD022-029065- and KD022-029066-), and the probable location of the now levelled Carmelite Priory of St Mary (KD022-029007-).

Compiled by: Gearóid Conroy

Date of upload: 8 February 2012

Six-Inch First edition: 'Grave Yard'

Six-Inch Latest edition: 'Grave Yd.'

ITM Coordinates: 672477, 712594

Latitude and Longitude: 53.158904, -6.916269

KD022-029062-	Tomb - unclassified	KILDARE

Late medieval limestone panels (KD022-029062-, KD022-029063-, KD022-029064-, KD022-029065- and KD022-029066-) set in the N transept wall of the modern Carmelite church may have originated in the earlier Carmelite Friary (KD022-029007-) immediately to the S, however, according to Bradley et al. (1986 Vol. 3, 244-6), they are said to have come from the Franciscan Friary (KD022-029006-).

KD022-029062-: two rectangular end panels from a 16th century tomb; one (H 0.72m; Wth 0.66m) decorated in false relief with a depiction of Christ stripped of his garment, crowned with thorns and tied hand

and foot, with an incised Roman capital inscription 'ECCE HOMO' (Hunt 1974, no. 84, pl. 234); the second panel (H 0.73m; Wth 0.66m) decorated in false relief with a crucifixion in an ogee-headed panel: Christ is nailed to a Latin cross, and is flanked by John and Mary (Hunt 1974, no. 83, pl. 233).

Compiled by: Gearóid Conroy

Date of upload: 8 February 2012

Six-Inch First edition: Not indicated

Six-Inch Latest edition: Not indicated

ITM Coordinates: 672441, 712650

Latitude and Longitude: 53.159412, -6.916795

KD022-029063-	Tomb - chest tomb	KILDARE

Late medieval limestone panels (KD022-029062-, KD022-029063-, KD022-029064-, KD022-029065- and KD022-029066-) set in the N transept wall of the modern Carmelite church may have originated in the earlier Carmelite Friary (KD022-029007-) immediately to the S, however, according to Bradley et al. (1986 Vol. 3, 244-6), they are said to have come from the Franciscan Friary (KD022-029006-).

KD022-029063---- is a 16th century broken panel (H 0.42m; Wth 0.29m) decorated in false relief with the upper part of a figure holding a patriarchal cross in the right hand, set in an ogee-headed panel. (Hunt 1974, 160, 243)

Compiled by: Gearóid Conroy

Date of upload: 8 February 2012

Six-Inch First edition: Not indicated

Six-Inch Latest edition: Not indicated

ITM Coordinates: 672447, 712647

Latitude and Longitude: 53.159384, -6.916706

KD022-029064	Inscribed stone	KILDARE

Late medieval limestone panels (KD022-029062-, KD022-029063-, KD022-029064-, KD022-029065- and KD022-029066-) set in the N transept wall of the modern Carmelite church may have originated in the earlier Carmelite Friary (KD022-029007-) immediately to the S, however, according to Bradley et al. (1986 Vol. 3, 244-6), they are said to have come from the Franciscan Friary (KD022-029006-).

KD022-029064---- is a rectangular panel (H 0.4m; Wth 0.6m) decorated with an animal in high relief. The head is turned back against the body with bared teeth and curved snout. The hair on the back is curled, the tail is foliated, and the feet are clawed.

Compiled by: Gearóid Conroy

Date of upload: 9 February 2012

Six-Inch First edition: Not indicated

Six-Inch Latest edition: Not indicated

ITM Coordinates: 672450, 712649

Latitude and Longitude: 53.159402, -6.916661

KD022-029065-	Tomb - chest tomb	

Late medieval limestone panels (KD022-029062-, KD022-029063-, KD022-029064-, KD022-029065- and KD022-029066-) set in the N transept wall of the modern Carmelite church may have originated in the earlier Carmelite Friary (KD022-029007-) immediately to the S, however, according to Bradley et al. (1986 Vol. 3, 244-6), they are said to have come from the Franciscan Friary (KD022-029006-).

KD022-029065- is a rectangular panel (H 0.49m; Wth 0.61m) decorated in relief with undulating grape vine on the left and two animals. On the right is a centaur-like figure with a man's head and long beard, a long neck and body with two human hind legs. The knotted tail ends in a fleur-de-lys. There is a small animal, possibly a monkey, at the base of the panel.

Compiled by: Gearóid Conroy

Date of upload: 9 February 2012

Six-Inch First edition: Not indicated

Six-Inch Latest edition: Not indicated

ITM Coordinates: 672451, 712649

Latitude and Longitude: 53.159402, -6.916646

KD022-029066-	Inscribed stone	KILDARE

Late medieval limestone panels (KD022-029062-, KD022-029063-, KD022-029064-, KD022-029065- and KD022-029066-) set in the N transept wall of the modern Carmelite church may have originated in the earlier Carmelite Friary (KD022-029007-) immediately to the S, however, according to Bradley et al. (1986 Vol. 3, 244-6), they are said to have come from the Franciscan Friary (KD022-029006-).

KD022-029066- is a small rectangular panel (H 0.29m; Wth 0.20m) decorated in relief with an angel in a round-necked, pleated garment, wearing a head-band, and with hands joined. Possibly a depiction of St. Gabriel or St. Michael. (Hunt 1974, 160, no. 85)

Compiled by: Gearóid Conroy

Date of upload: 9 February 2012

Six-Inch First edition: Not indicated

Six-Inch Latest edition: Not indicated

ITM Coordinates: 672443, 712646

Latitude and Longitude: 53.159376, -6.916766

KD022-029001-	Historic town	GREYABBEY,KILDARE,TULLY EAST,TULLY WEST

On a low ridge at the W-edge of the Curragh. According to Bradley et al. (1986 vol. 3, 196-265), the name Kildare is derived from Cill Dara, 'the church of the oak', a tree which, according to the 7th century writer Cogitosus, stood beside St. Brigid's early-6th century monastery (KD022-029002-). The Annals of

Clonmacnoise record that in 1012, 'all the Towen of Kildare was burnt by a thunderbolt but one house', suggesting a secular, urban-type settlement had developed in association with the monastery. A borough was established at Kildare before 1176 and became the principal manor of Strongbow's Lordship in north Leinster, and the earliest fortification may have been a motte (KD022-029025-). By the end of the 13th century, Kildare contained a castle (KD022-029004-), a cathedral (KD022-029005-), and both Franciscan (KD022-029006-) and Carmelite friaries (KD022-029007-). A parliament was held there in 1309-10. In 1316, John Fitzthomas, newly created earl of Kildare, was granted the town and castle. Bradley et al (op. cit., 199) suggest a population of about 1,000 in the town in the early-14th century. In 1515, the town received a new charter, and a weekly market and burgesses were licensed to enclose the town with walls and a fosse (KD022-029009-). It was the scene of an engagement in 1598, during the Nine Years War, when it was so badly damaged that it was described by Fynes Moryson (1907, ii, 351) as, 'altogether disinhabited'. The cathedral was ruined and roofless in 1604, and a number of properties were described in 1607 as 'ruinous' or 'lately burned'. However, the town recovered to become an important garrison site during the Confederate War of 1641-53. Around 1659, the Census of Ireland noted a population of 359 (Pender 1939, 395). (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 320; Orpen 1911-20, 374-381; Gilbert 1884, ii, 339)

4.4 Record of Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) identifies, records, and evaluates the post-1700 architecture of Ireland in order to protect and conserve our built heritage. It is under the administration of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It also forms the basis for a list of structures to be included in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) compiled by local authorities.

A Protected Structure is a structure that a planning authority think is of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical point of view. The structure is recognised as important and is protected from harm under legislation. Every local authority in Ireland must keep an RPS in their development plans.

The site contains no buildings/features that are Protected Structures, as listed in the *Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029*, as well as no sites listed in the NIAH (Figure 2). The nearest such structure is Kilcumney House (RPS No. B22-31; NIAH Reg. No.11817082), located c. 75m to the southwest of the site.

4.5 Finds listed within the Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland

The Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland list all archaeological artefacts in the care of or known to the museum. Such a record can provide evidence for human settlement or activity in the absence of physical remains or documentary references. These consist of 180 finds listed for Kildare town and environs.

These are mostly recorded as found in the vicinity of Killdare Barracks, the outskirts of Kildare town and from the vicinity of Kildare town. The latter includes a number of copper alloy buttons, seals, mounts, harness fittings, pendants, silver and copper coins, copper tokens, copper alloy buckles, buttons, badges, whistles, pipe tamper and many more.

4.6 Cartographic Evidence

A review of available historical mapping for the area was carried out, including The Down Survey Barony Map (1656), A Map of the County of Kildare by Lieutenant Alexander Taylor of His Majesty's 81st Regiment. 1783, the Ordnance Survey (OS) of Ireland (now Tailte Éireann) 6-inch (surveyed 1836 - published 1839) and 25-inch (surveyed 1908 - published 1909) maps. Potential archaeological or cultural heritage features are often marked on such maps, and they can be a useful resource for identifying sites, particularly when there are no above-ground remains.

The townland of Southgreen is not illustrated on The Down Survey Barony Map (Figure 3); however, several buildings are depicted and annotated for the town of Kildare, including the Abbey, Cathedral and Castle. On the Map of the County of Kildare by Lieutenant Alexander Taylor of His Majesty's 81st Regiment. 1783, the town of Kildare is depicted in considerably greater detail, with the cathedral and round tower illustrated in the northern part of the town, alongside several clearly defined streetscapes, roads, and individual buildings. Southgreen is not annotated on this map; however, several roads are shown leading into Kildare town that likely correspond to what are now known as the Southgreen Road and the Old Road, to the west and east of the site, respectively.

The site is illustrated as comprising portions of large agricultural fields on the 1836 map (Figure 4), with the townland of Southgreen annotated as ‘Belonging to the Parish of Tully’. The townland of Southgreen is divided into two parts by a townland boundary on the 1836 map, which is also the boundary between Fields 1 and 2; by the 1908 map (Figure 5), this boundary is shown as a field boundary, with no townland division indicated.

The two roads are shown immediately adjacent to the site and to the east and west of it, and retain the same alignment and layout today.

No monuments or features of archaeological significance were noted on the examined mapping.

4.7 Aerial Photography

A review of available aerial photography for the area was also undertaken as part of this assessment. Aerial photographs from the Tailte Éireann dating between 1995 and 2018, along with Google Earth imagery from 2009 to 2025, were assessed. Unrecorded archaeological sites can often be identified in aerial photographs as cropmarks or differential growth in a field, particularly during periods of drought, such as the summer of 2018. In built-up or urban areas, such as towns and cities, aerial images can help trace changes in building and road layouts.

The site and surrounding areas consist of agricultural fields with a small number of scattered residential dwellings. By the 2017 aerial imagery, a transformer station had been constructed adjacent to the site. Late 2019 imagery shows the works associated with the Southgreen Internal Link Road underway, with construction completed by 2021. Lands west of the site have been developed for housing, while lands to the east and south are also being developed.

Nothing of cultural heritage significance was identified within the site on the examined aerial imagery.

4.8 Field Inspection

A site inspection was carried out on the 16th January 2026 by Jeanne Rochford of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit (ACSU) Ltd (Plates 1–11). This was carried out in accordance with the *IAI Code of Professional Conduct* (Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland, 2006).

Field 1 (Plates 1-4) comprises the southern portion of a pasture field and is accessed from the western side via the Southgreen Road. The field reaches its highest elevation along the western boundary and slopes gradually downward towards the east.

Field 2 (Plates 5-8) comprises a pasture field that is bounded by dwellings along its eastern side, the Southgreen road along its western side and the Southgreen Internal Link Road to the south. The Kildare 38 kV substation is located in the south-west corner of the field, resulting in a high density of overhead cables and utility poles within the field. The substation is located at the highest point within the field, with a sharp slope descending towards the eastern portion of the field.

Field 3 comprises a narrow strip of overgrown land and is bounded by modern fencing adjacent to the Southgreen Internal Link Road. The area had been previously subject to a geophysical survey under Licence 18R0254 by ACSU.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this impact assessment was to establish whether the site contained any evidence of previously unrecorded areas or features of historical, built heritage, or archaeological significance.

The site contains no monuments as listed in the *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) or *Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR). There are also no Protected Structures as listed in the *Kildare County Development Plan 2023– 2029* or sites listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) located within the site.

The site consists of two pasture fields and one overgrown, narrow strip of land situated directly northeast of an excavation site that exposed 35 burials (representing 36 individuals) and three ring ditches, only one of which was complete. This excavation was carried out under Licence 19E0009 by ACSU in 2020; these types of monuments often occur in groups. Hence, the site has the potential to contain previously unknown subsurface archaeological remains. If not appropriately mitigated, any groundwork associated with the proposed development has the potential to impact archaeological remains (if present).

In line with national policy, as set out in the *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (1999), there should always be a presumption in favour of avoiding developmental impacts on the archaeological heritage (Part III, pages 23–25). Appropriate measures to allow for preservation *in situ* of archaeological features/materials cannot be established, however, without an adequate definition of the location and extent of any potential subsurface remains. Hence, further archaeological assessment is required.

6. CONSTRAINTS

No constraints are anticipated on any proposed further archaeological assessments in Field 1. However, Fields 2 and 3 contain several overhead cables traversing the site, with associated utility poles, and may also contain below-ground services. Any future test trenching layouts will therefore need to be designed to avoid these features, and up-to-date service maps will be required in advance of works.

7. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents the findings of an archaeological impact assessment prepared in relation to a site in Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare (Figures 1–7; Plates 1–11).

The site consists of two pasture fields and one overgrown, narrow strip of land situated directly northeast of an excavation site that exposed 35 burials (representing 36 individuals) and three ring ditches, only one of which was complete. This excavation was carried out under Licence 19E0009 by ACSU in 2020. These types of monuments often occur in groups, and therefore, the site has the potential to contain previously unknown archaeological remains.

It is therefore recommended that an assessment, including a geophysical survey and a programme of archaeological testing, should be carried out in advance of any development of the site. This must be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist working under licence from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Archaeological material identified may require further mitigation, including in situ preservation (avoidance) or preservation by record (excavation), following consultation with the National Monuments Service.

8. REFERENCES

Andrews, J. H. (ed) (1986) Irish Historical Towns Atlas Kildare. Royal Irish Academy.

Dunne, L. (2003) Excavation of a ring-ditch in Ballydribbeen, Co. Kerry. Unpublished report prepared by Eachtra Archaeological Projects.

Grogan, E., O'Donnell, L. and Johnston, P. (2007) The Bronze Age Landscapes of the Pipeline to the West: An integrated archaeological and environmental assessment. Wicklow: Wordwell Ltd.

Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R.N. (1988) Medieval Religious Houses Ireland. Irish Academic Press. Dublin

Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (IAI). 2006. *IAI Code of Professional Conduct*. IAI, Dublin.

McGarry, T. (2009) Irish prehistoric ring-ditches. In G. Cooney, K. Becker, J. Coles, M. Ryan and S. Sievers (eds), Relics of Old Decency: archaeological studies in later prehistory. Festschrift for Barry Raftery, 413–421. Bray: Wordwell Ltd.

Murphy, Donald, Breen, R. (2019). Final Report on Geophysical Survey of a Proposed Development at Dunmurry Road, Southgreen, Kildare Town, Co. Kildare (18R0254), unpublished report by ACSU.

Murphy, Donald, Gibney, G. (2021) Archaeological Excavation at Southgreen Link Road, Kildare, Co. Kildare (19E009); unpublished report by ACSU

Murphy, Donald, (2023) Report on Geophysical Survey of Southgreen Rd., Kildare, Co. Kildare (22R0414), unpublished report by ACSU.

Murphy, Deirdre, (2023) Archaeological Assessment (Test Trenching) at Southgreen Rd., Kildare, Co. Kildare (23E0053); unpublished report by ACSU.

O'Sullivan, M. and Downey, L. (2012) Burial Barrows. Archaeology Ireland, Vol. 26, No. 4, 33–37.

Stirland, J. (2017) Donacarney Little and Mornington, Co Meath. Unpublished report prepared by Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd.

Thomas, A. (1984) The Walled Towns of Ireland.

Other Sources

Database of Irish Excavation Reports (www.excavations.ie).

Extract from Down Survey 1656.

Extract from the First edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 6-inch map, 1836.

Extract from the Third edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 25-inch map, 1908.

Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage 1999 (https://www.archaeology.ie/sites/default/files/media/publications/framework-and-principles-for-protection-of-archaeological-heritage.pdf, accessed January 2026)

Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources map viewer, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/).

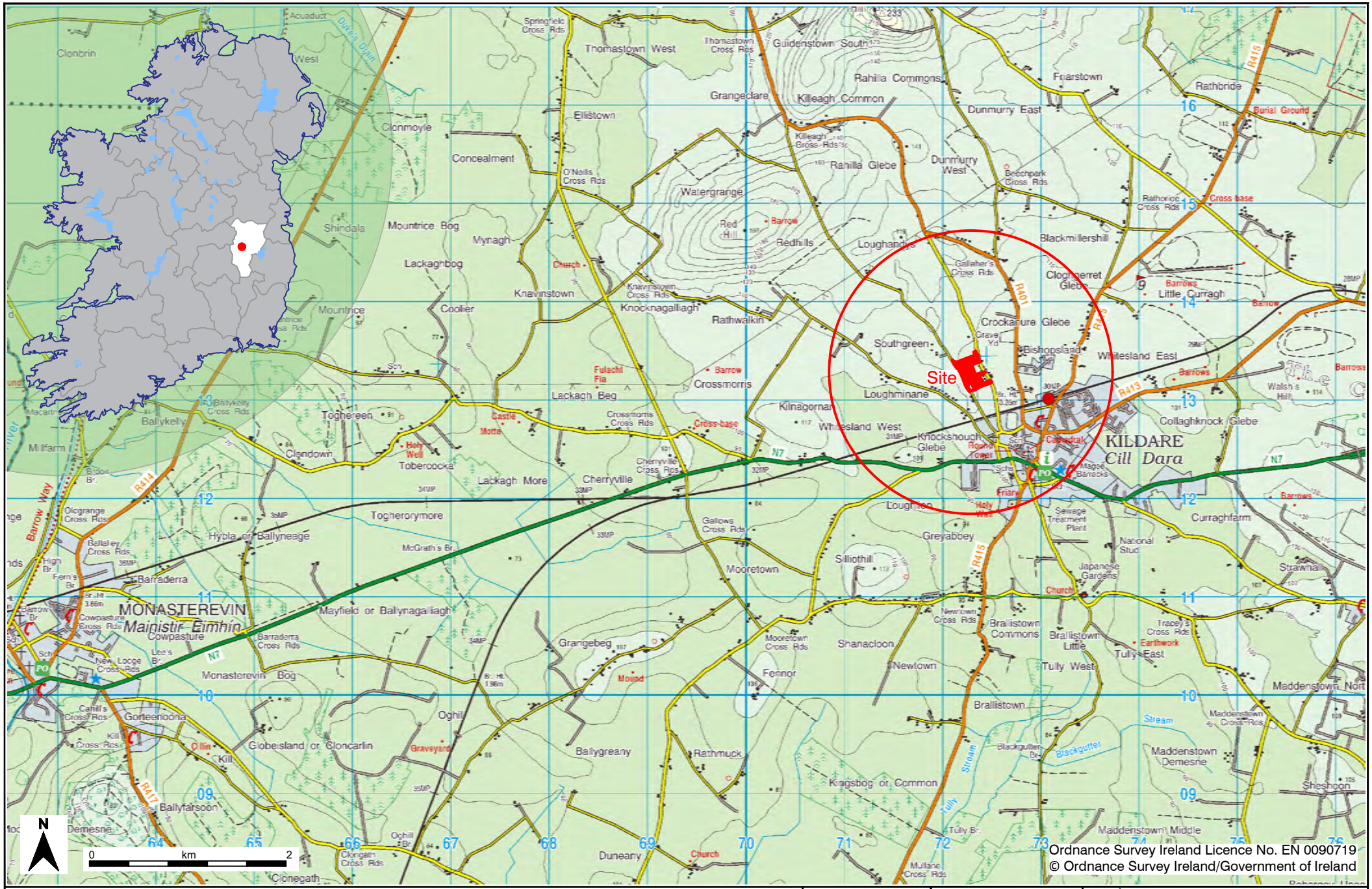
National Monuments Service's (NMS) Virtual Reading Room.

Placenames Database of Ireland, developed by Fiontar & Scoil na Gaeilge (DCU) and The Placenames Branch, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (www.logainm.ie).

Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and Sites and Monuments (SMR), the Heritage Service, 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2 (https://heritagedata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/).

Teagasc, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Cranfield Institute 2016 Teagasc Soil Information System (Soil Association).

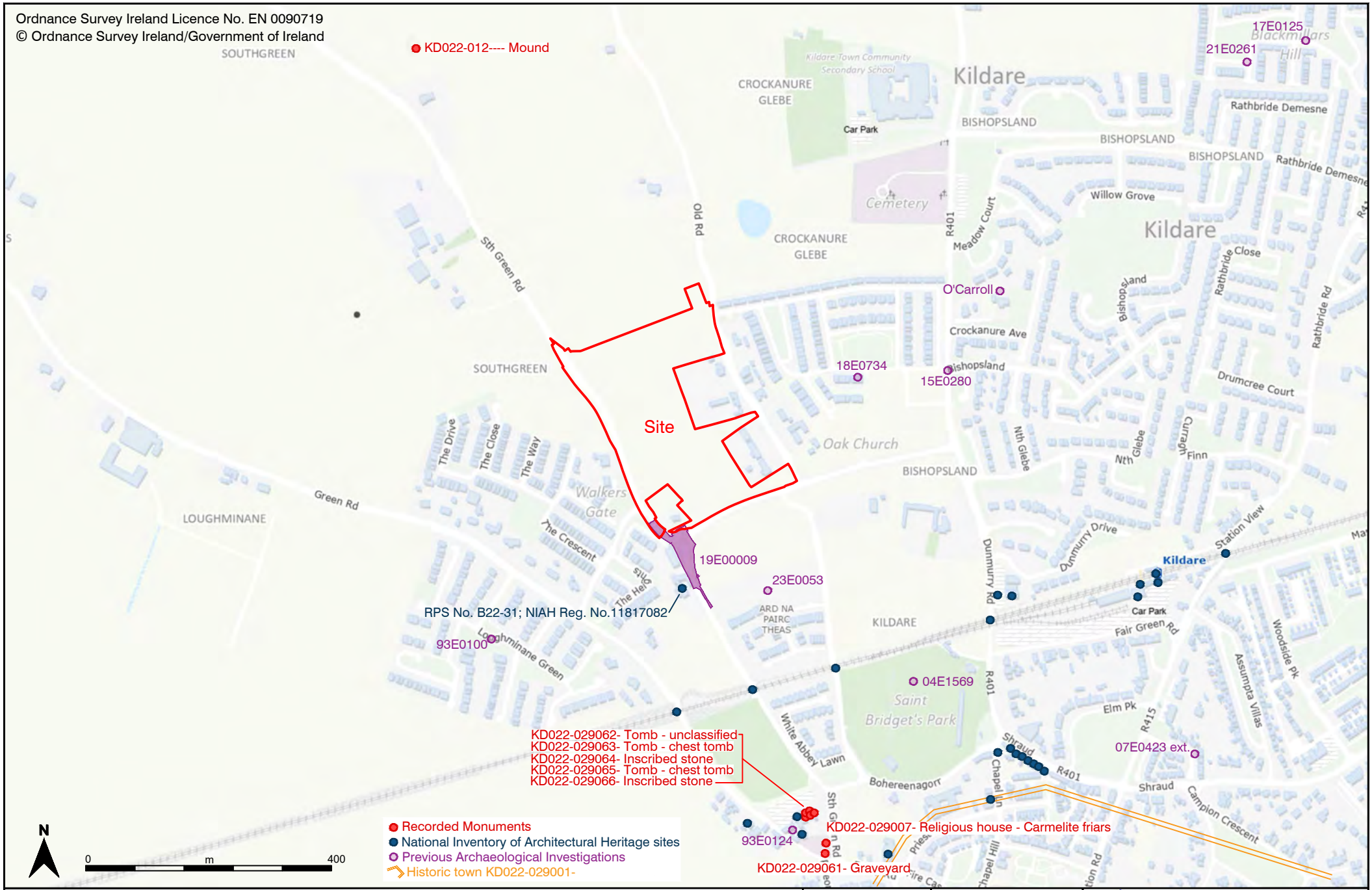
Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland.



Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence No. EN 0090719
© Ordnance Survey Ireland/Government of Ireland

Project Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare	**Date** February 2026	**Drawing No.** 25179_AIA01	ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT
Figure 1 Location of site		**Scale** 1:50,000 @ A4	

Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence No. EN 0090719
© Ordnance Survey Ireland/Government of Ireland



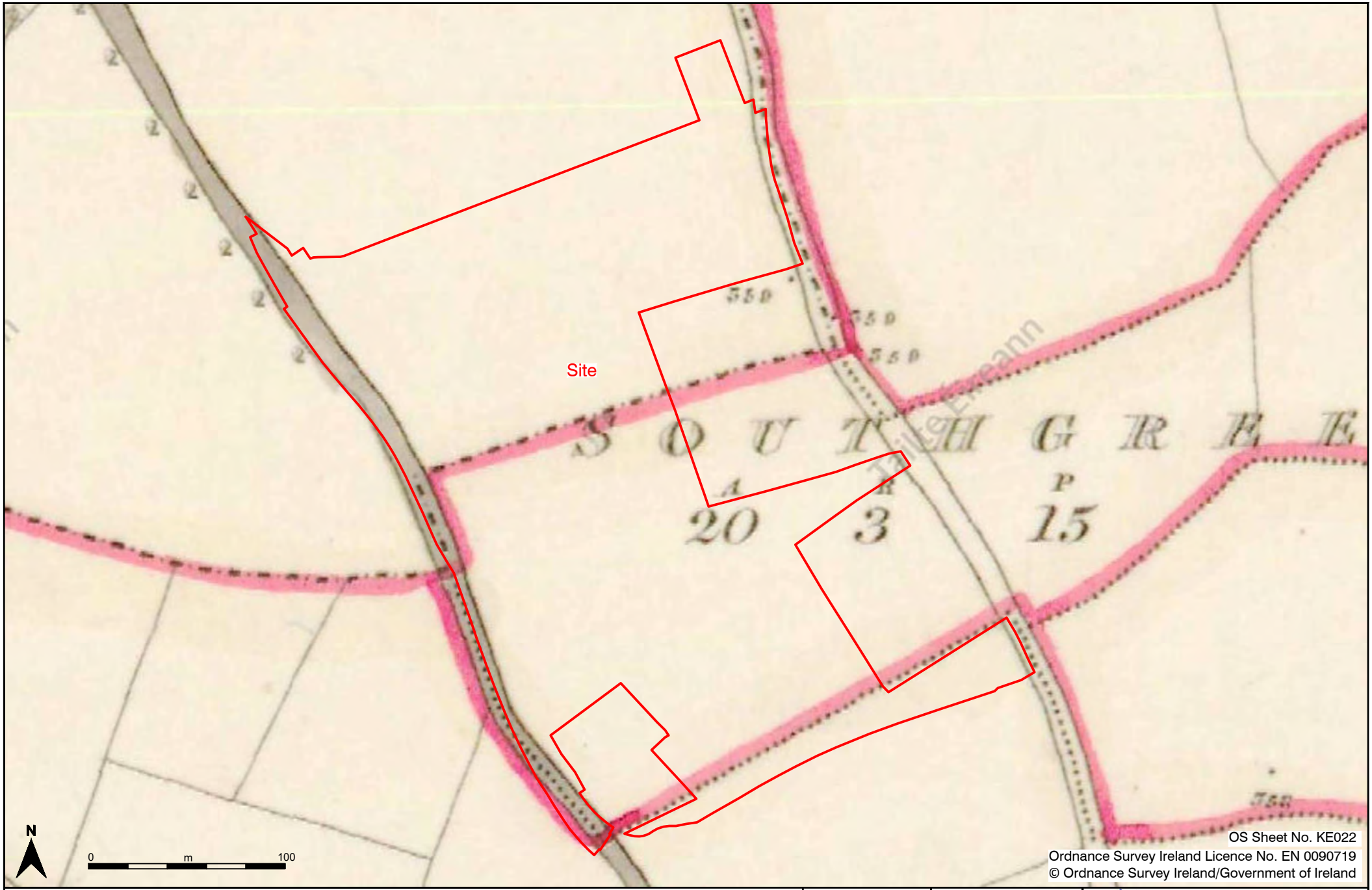
Project Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare		**Date** February 2026	**Drawing No.** 25179_AIA002
Figure 2 Location of site, previous archaeological investigations and nearby *Sites and Monuments Record* sites			**Scale** 1:8,000 @ A4

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT

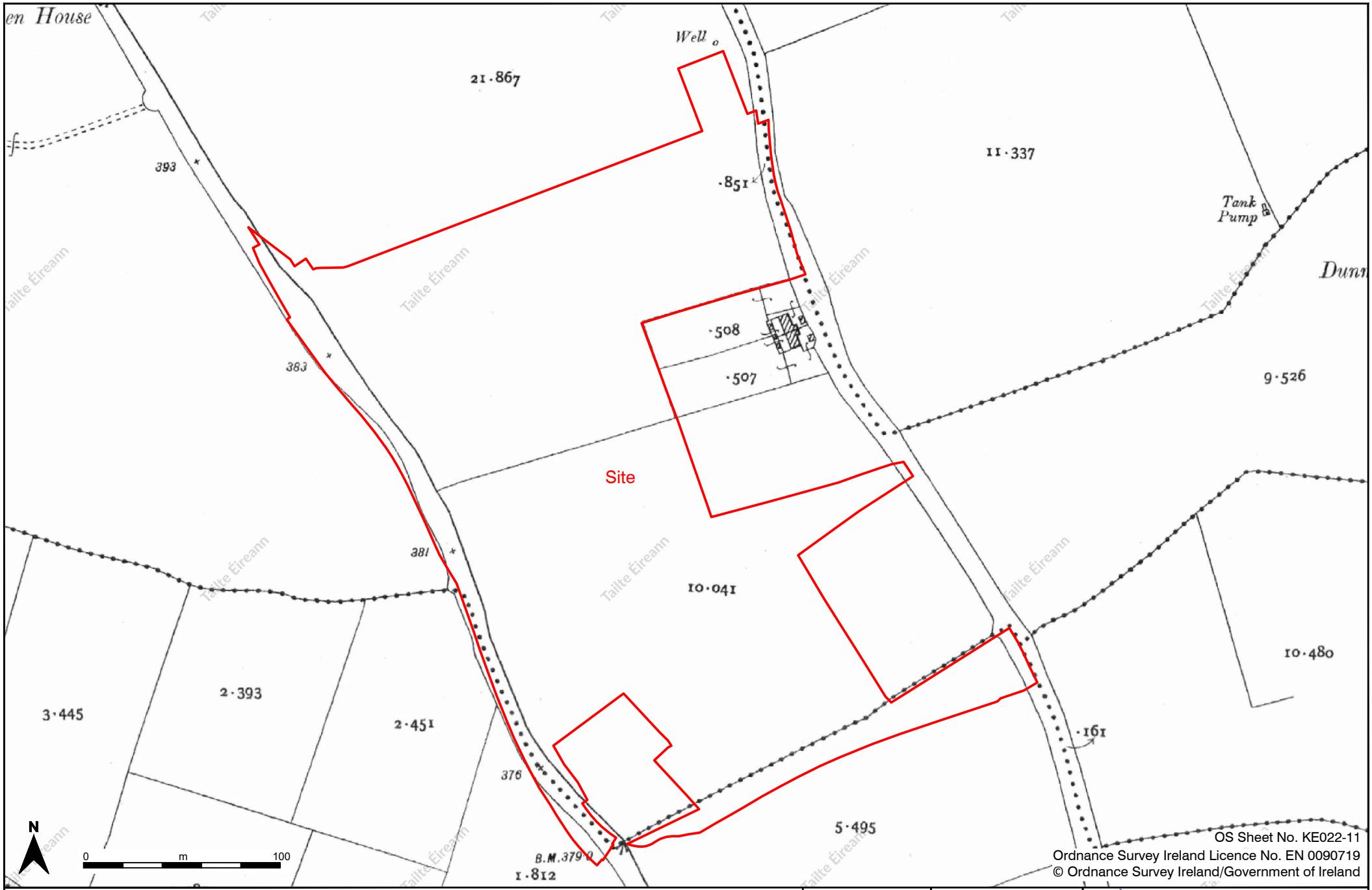


© The Down survey of Ireland, Trinity College of Dublin

Project Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare	**Date** February 2026	**Drawing No.** 25179_AIA03	ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT
Figure 3 Extract from Down Survey (1656), showing approximate location of site		**Scale** Not to scale	



Project Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare	**Date** February 2026	**Drawing No.** 25179_AIA04	ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT
Figure 4 Extract from 1st edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 6-inch map (surveyed 1836 - published 1839), showing location of site		**Scale** 1:2,500 @ A4	



Project Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare		**Date** February 2026	**Drawing No.** 25179_AIA05
Figure 5 Extract from 3rd edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 25-inch map (surveyed 1908 - published 1909), showing location of site			**Scale** 1:2,500 @ A4

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT



Project Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare	**Date** February 2026	**Drawing No.** 25179_AIA06	ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT
Figure 6 Aerial view of site		**Scale** 1:2,500 @ A4	



*Proposed development plan courtesy of client

Project Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare		**Date** February 2026	**Drawing No.** 25179_AIA07
Figure 7 Detail of proposed site development			**Scale** 1:2,500 @ A4

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT



Plate 1: Field 1, facing west towards Southgreen road



Plate 2: Field 1, facing northwest, showing undulating terrain



Plate 3: Field 1, facing north-northeast, showing southeast boundary.



Plate 4: Field 1, facing north



Plate 5: Field 2, facing southwest towards Kildare substation



Plate 6: Field 2, facing south



Plate 7: Field 2, facing east from highest point in field



Plate 8: Field 2, facing northeast