Archaeological Impact Assessment Report,

Ardshanavooly,

Killarney,

Co. Kerry.

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1 Introduction

This report relates the results of licensed archaeological testing undertaken as a component of an archaeological impact assessment (AIA) at a proposed development site (PDS) in Ardshanavooly, Killarney, Co. Kerry (**Figures 1** & **3**). The AIA will be included in a planning application to Kerry County Council (KCC). The developers, Ross-Park Residential HS Limited intend to construct a housing estate known as Deerpark, comprising of 188 units on a 3.654ha site situated in the townland of Ardshanavooly on the N limits of Killarney town (**Figure 3)**. There are no recorded archaeological monuments within or abutting the proposed development site (PDS) (**Figure 4**). Discussions with regard to the testing were held with Dr. Ml. Connolly, KCC archaeologist in advance.

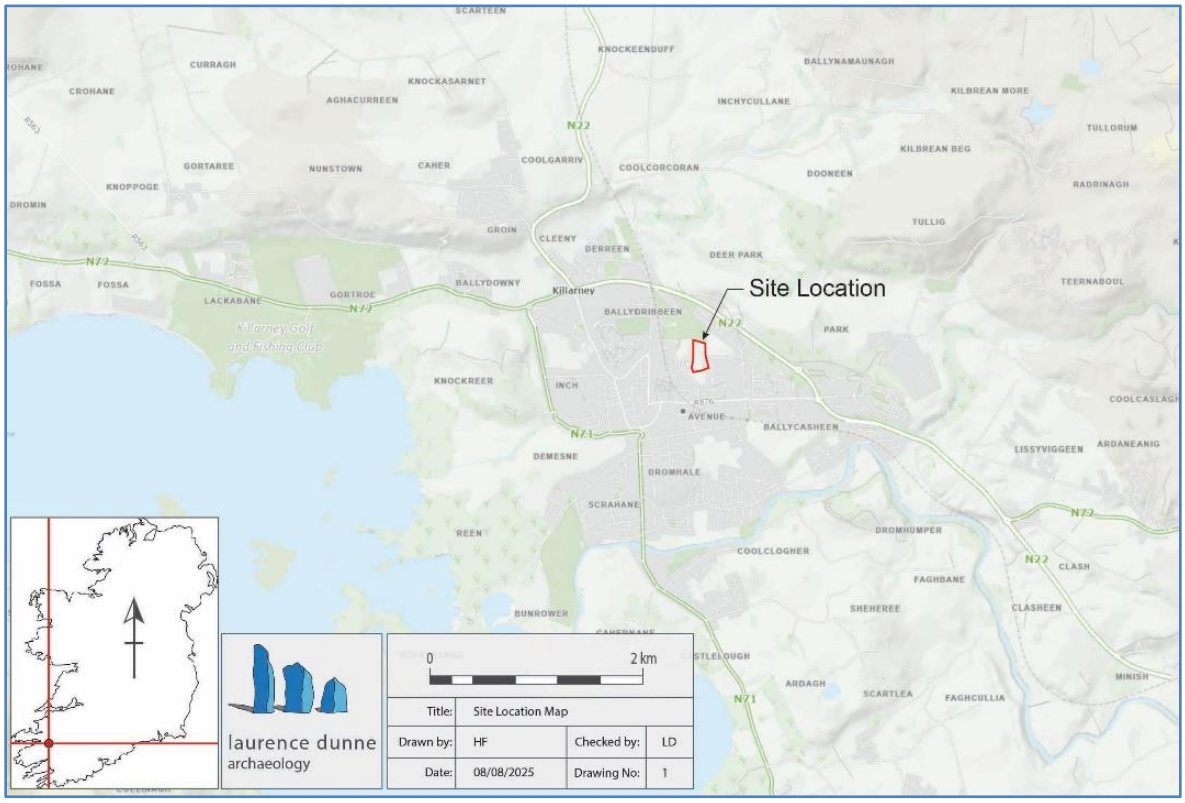


Figure 1: Site Location Map

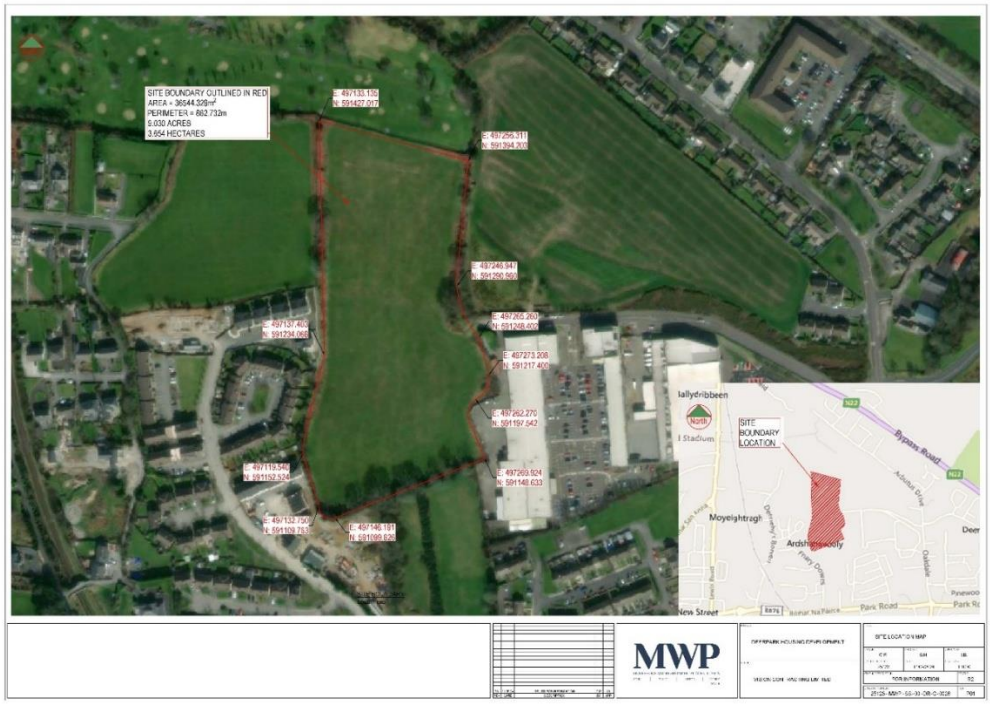


Figure 2: PDS redline boundary location.



Figure 3: Proposed development layout.

2 Site Location and Description

The PDS is located in the townland of Ardshanavooly in the NE limits of Killarney town (**Figures 1 - 2**). The site consists of one large irregularly shaped field in pasture surrounded by housing estates to the SW, Deerpark Shopping Centre abutting to the SE and a mini golf course bounding the PDS at the N (**Figure 4**).

3 Archaeological Context

Although there are no recorded monuments within the PDS, the site is situated within a rich archaeological and wider cultural landscape with evidence of archaeological activity from the Early Neolithic period recorded in the nearby townland of Ballydribbeen area of Killarney, situated *c.*0.62km to the NNW, (Dunne, Labaj & Ficner 2020). Up until the recent discovery of the Early Neolithic period, the earliest excavated archaeological evidence from the Killarney area was from the Early Bronze Age (*c.*2400BC). Previous test excavations by this author in Ardagh, Killarney revealed a complex of pits and stakeholes containing Beaker style pottery dating to the Early Bronze Age (Dunne 2001). Extensive excavations were undertaken at Ross Island Copper mines *c.*3km east of Ardagh by Prof. Wm O'Brien (O'Brien 2004 & 2005).

An excavation of a *fulacht fiadh* was undertaken in March 2018 in the nearby townland of Deer Park (Dunne, Labaj & Ficner 2018).

In the very recent past probable evidence of Bronze Age activity was recorded in Ballycasheen, Killarney, situated *c.*0.80km to the SE of the PDS (Labaj, Dunne & Ficner 2025). Test excavations in Ballycasheen in advance of a proposed housing development revealed two *fulachta fiadh* (burnt mounds).



Figure 4: Recorded monuments in proximity of the PDS (www.archaeology.ie).

3.1 Historic Mapping

Examination of the 1st Ed OS 1841/2 pre-famine 6" map (**Figure 5**) denotes the PDS as generally featureless farmland comprising of three fields bisected in a general E-W direction by an access trackway. Belleville house is located c. 150m to the S.

Very little change occurred during the 2nd half of the 19th century as denoted on the 25" 2nd Ed OS map of 1897 apart from the trackway now extending down the SE and S limits of the PDS (**Figure 6**).

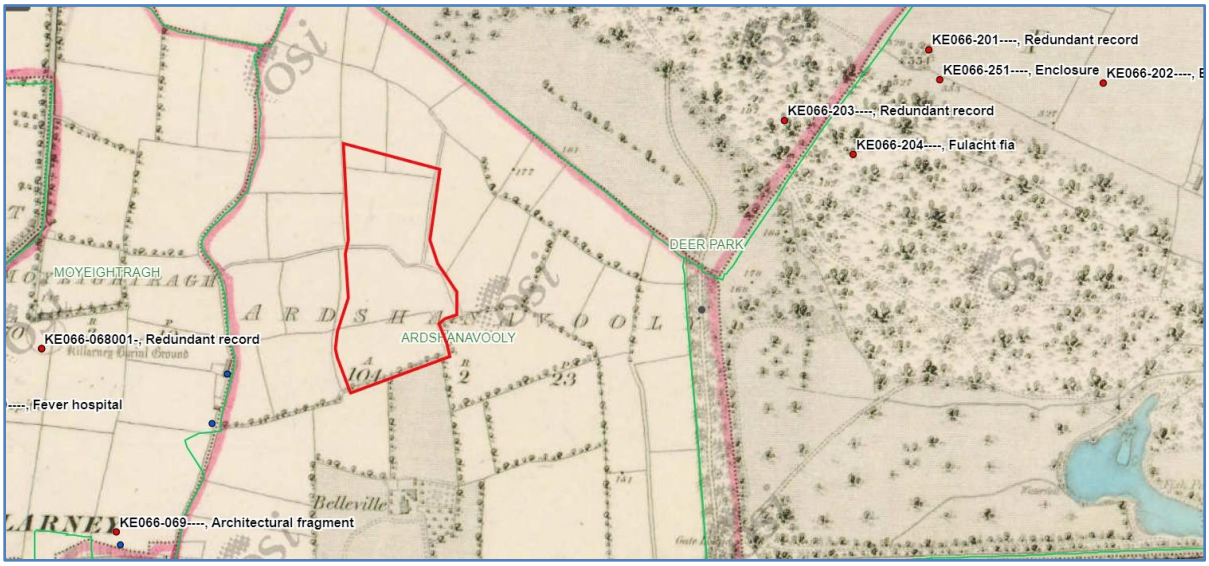


Figure 5: Extract from 1st ED OS map (1841/2). PDS outlined in red.

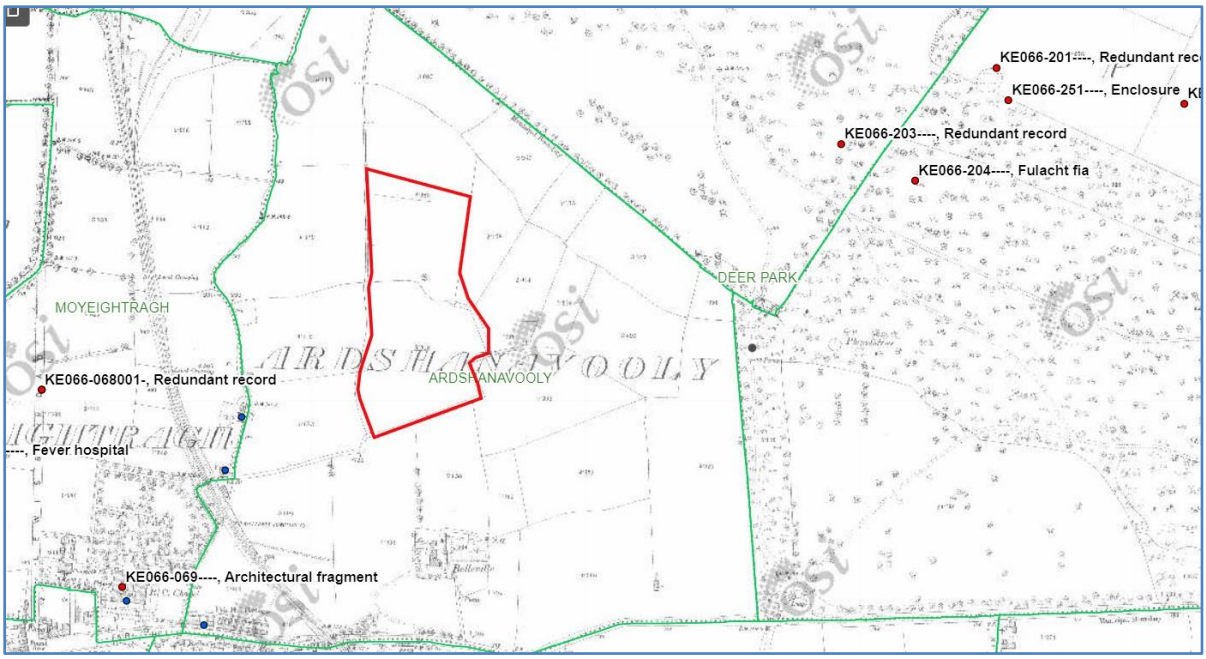


Figure 6: Extract from 25'' OSI Map (1897-1913). PDS outlined in red.

4 Results of Licensed Testing

A series of 24 linear test trenches (T1-T24), extending for *c.*2,250m was opened across the footprint of the proposed development site (**Figure 7 & Plates 1 - 2**). The ITM co-ordinates of all the test trenches were plotted into a global navigation satellite system (GNSS) and set out on the ground to *c.*20mm accuracy.

Topsoil was incrementally removed using a 13-ton track machine with a 1.8m wide flat grading bucket (**Plate 3**).

The topsoil comprised of mid-grey sandy material throughout with occasional small stones and occasional roots that varied in depth from 0.3m to 0.4m and achieved a max depth of 0.6m in test trench T1.

Subsoil comprised of mid-orange / brown sandy gravel natural subsoil material with frequent small stones throughout.

No archaeological features or deposits were noted or recorded.

A single clay pipe bowl was found in test trench T9 (**Plate 7** & see Section 5 below)



Figure 7: Test trenching layout across the limits of the PDS.



Plate 1: Oblique UAV view from SE of completed test excavations at Ardshanavooly, Killarney, Co. Kerry (LDARCH 2025).



Plate 2: Oblique UAV view from N of completed test excavations at Ardshanavooly, Killarney, Co. Kerry (LDARCH 2025).



Plate 3: View from W of licensed test trenching (T1) commencing in Ardshanavooly (LDARCH 2025).



Plate 4: View from E of completed test trench T1 (LDARCH 2025).



Plate 5: View from E of completed test trench T16 (LDARCH 2025).



Plate 6: View from W of completed test trench T17 (LDARCH 2025).

5 Clay pipe

A single clay pipe bowl from found in test trench T9 (**Plate 7**).



Plate 7: Clay pipe bowl found in test trench T8 (LDARCH 2025).

5.1 History

Tobacco smoking was first introduced to Europe in the late 16th century by returning explorers to the New World where the practice of smoking by natives in both North and South America was observed. The tobacco plant first appeared in the Portuguese court in Lisbon in 1540 and by 1570 it was recorded in Belgium, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and England (Wacke 2014, 5).

The first pipe bowls were very small as tobacco was very expensive at first. The early form of tobacco pipes was probably an adaptation of the wooden and reed pipes used by Amerindians. As tobacco became cheaper the size of the bowls became larger through time.

Clay tobacco pipes are commonly found on archaeological sites from the 16th century onwards and are a valuable and important artefact as their morphological evolution as well as distinctive stamps, decoration, etc can accurately date archaeological deposits.

In Ireland the clay pipe was known as a *'Dúidín'*. Pipe smoking in Ireland, as indeed in a worldwide context, spread through all classes of society and gender, becoming a part of everyday life and even death. An Irish wake was not complete without a tray of several clay pipes filled with tobacco and

passed out to the mourners, to compliment the whiskey and porter refreshments, and in that context, they were often referred to as 'Ha Mercy'.

5.1.1 Political Symbols and Slogans

Political slogans are a common occurrence on Irish clay pipes, particularly in the 19th century. Given the universal nature of pipe-smoking throughout the country at that time, they were ideal items to express political or social allegiance – being decorated with the Irish national emblems: harp and shamrock as well as other symbols of liberty.

The pipe bowl recovered from the test excavations at Ardshanavooly dates to the late 19th century morphologically based on the size, shape, verticality and particularly in this case, from the political slogan and motif incused on the bowl. The incused cartouche on the Ardshanavooly pipe bowl features the national emblem of the harp surrounded by the words *'Ireland For The Irish'* (**Plate 7**).

Similar pipe bowls with political symbols and slogans have been found by this author in Kerry, viz: at Castle Street, Tralee five bowls (CP1 - CP5) fall into the category of pipes bearing some political message. In Friary Lane Tralee, three complete bowls and another bowl fragment were found decorated with the Cap of Liberty on one side and the Harp of Erin on the other (**Figure 8,** & Dunne 2013). The Liberty Cap pipes found in Tralee can be accurately dated to 1898 as they commemorate the centenary of the 1798 rebellion. The United Irishmen used it as a symbol, most likely borrowed from the French revolutionaries, as it resonated in the context of their quest for Irish Liberty. Political symbols were also found on two bowls (CP12 & CP27) during testing at the former Workhouse / Hospital at Dingle depicting the Harp of Erin and Shamrock Leaves (**Figure 9**). Another pipe bowl is decorated on both sides with the words Home Rule surrounded by sprays of shamrock (Dunne 2021).



Figure 8: Political slogan on clay pipes found in Tralee for the centenary of the 1798 rebellion.

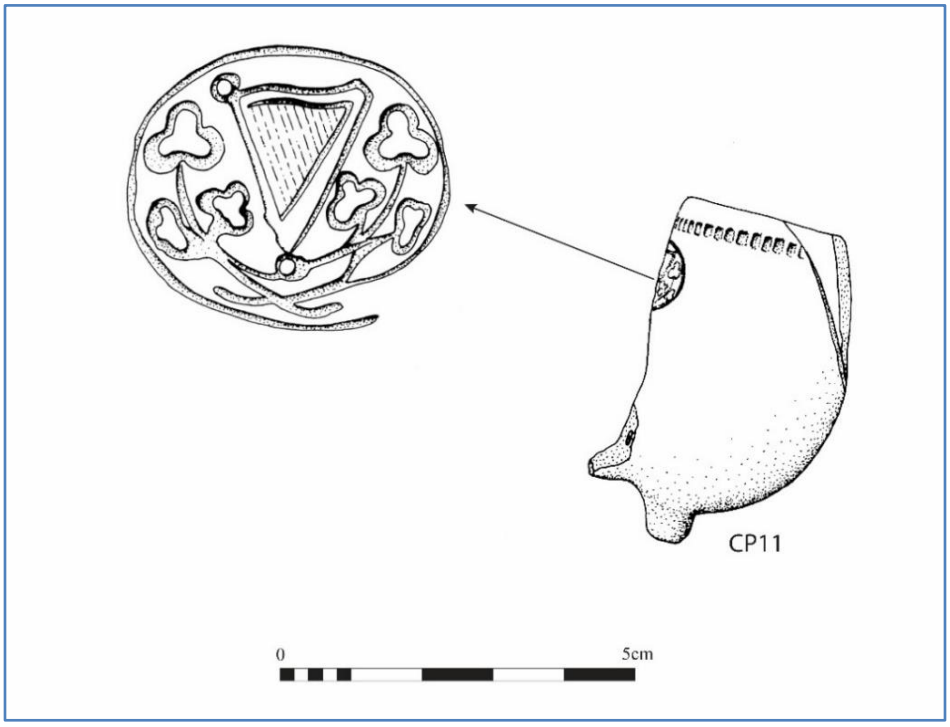


Figure 9: The Harp of Erin & Shamrock Leaves bowl CP11 (LDARCH 2022).

6 Conclusions

- Research has shown that there are no recorded archaeological monuments or built heritage features within or in close proximity to the PDS at Ardshanavooly.
- Extensive licensed test excavations across the footprint of the entirety of the PDS revealed no subsurface archaeology.
- A single 19th century clay pipe bowl was found in test trench T9.
- There are no archaeological constraints pertaining to this PDS.
- This report is therefore deemed final.

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