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**Geophysical Survey of a Proposed Development
at Newtown, Marsh Road, Drogheda,
Co. Louth**

Client

J. Murphy Developments,
Bryanstown Centre,
Drogheda
Co. Louth

ITM: 710451, 775062

Planning Ref.: ABP-302215-18

Licence No.: 19R0005

Donald Murphy & Robert Breen

14th January 2019

ACSU Ref.: 1837

HEAD OFFICE

Unit 21
Boyne Business Park
Greenhills, Drogheda
Co. Louth
Tel: 041 9883396
Tel: 041 9835422
Fax: 041 2130310
info@acsu.ie
www.acsu.ie

PROJECT DETAILS

Project	Geophysical Survey of a Proposed Development at Newtown, Marsh Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth
Report Type	Geophysical Survey
Archaeologist	Donald Murphy and Robert Breen
Client	J. Murphy Developments, Bryanstown Centre, Drogheda, Co. Louth
Site	Newtown, Marsh Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth
Townland	Newtown
ITM Ref.	710451, 775062
Planning Ref. No.	ABP-302215-18
RMP No.	N/A
Detection Device Licence No.	19R0005
Report Date	14 th January 2019
ACSU Ref.	1837





NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report details the results of a Geophysical Survey carried out on behalf of J. Murphy Developments, Bryanstown Centre, Drogheda, Co. Louth, on a proposed development at Newtown, Marsh Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth (ITM 710451, 775062). The geophysical survey and subsequent testing are being carried out in response to a request for same from the National Monuments Service on foot of a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) application (Ref: ABP-302215-18). The site does not contain any Recorded Monuments.

The geophysical survey was conducted by Donald Murphy and Robert Breen of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit (ACSU) from 2 to 9 January 2019 under license 19R0005. A full detailed gradiometer survey was undertaken throughout the application area (Fields 1 and 2) using a Bartington GRAD 601-2 dual sensor fluxgate gradiometer system. Detailed survey was conducted with a sample interval of 0.25m and a traverse interval of 1m for all the survey areas within the site of the proposed development with variations in the magnetic field (between -100nT to +107.834nT). Both fields serve agricultural purposes and have been ploughed relatively recently. The northern half of both fields decline in gradient towards the R150 road, which runs perpendicular to the site.

Field 1

The southern end of Field 1 produced an E–W band of disturbed results, likely as a result of the power lines that cross over the site. These disturbances are the result of high amounts of magnetic variations which are evidently focused to this lower half of Field 1.

A large sub-oval band of magnetic disturbance was identified in the eastern portion of the field and is likely the result of underlying geology or resting ground water. This will be investigated further in the testing phase of the development.

A number of curvilinear anomalies were identified in the west and northern portion of the field although none of these have produced results that are strong enough to confirm their archaeological potential with any certainty. Possibilities for such anomalies may be small enclosures, dwellings, agricultural scars such as plough marks, or simply variations in the natural subsoil.

Isolated anomalies, such as those identified towards the middle of the field, may represent features of archaeological potential such as pits, spreads, or kilns. They may, however, also represent ferrous anomalies within the topsoil, as a result of agricultural debris from farming activities.

A potential circular anomaly was identified towards the north-eastern portion of the field and may represent a small enclosure.

Field 2

As in Field 1, the southern half of Field 2 also produced a number of magnetic anomalies most likely associated with the overhead powerlines. These will be investigated during the testing phase of the project to confirm their nature.

A circular enclosure of archaeological importance has been identified along the eastern boundary of Field 2. This enclosure measures c. 30m in diameter and appears to feature an internal structure, possibly a house site or animal pen. The nature and depth of this enclosure will be fully investigated during the testing phase of the development.

A number of magnetic disturbances were also identified directly west of this enclosure site and may represent smaller features of archaeological significance, such as refuse pits, post-holes, kilns, etc. A faint N–S linear anomaly identified among these features may represent the line of an historic boundary, a field drain, or a plough mark.



A number of larger anomalies were identified scattered towards the northern end of Field 2, where it begins to slope downwards towards the R150. These may represent ferrous anomalies in the topsoil, larger areas of refuse, burning or agricultural debris. The nature of these will also be investigated during the testing phase of the project.

It is therefore recommended that targeted archaeological assessment in the form of test trenching be carried out in order to assess the nature and extent of these identified features, in particular the nature of the enclosure identified in Field 2. A large number of the stronger magnetic anomalies identified elsewhere will also be tested in order to ascertain their archaeological significance.



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1. INTRODUCTION

This report details the results of a Geophysical Survey carried out on behalf of J. Murphy Developments, Bryanstown Centre, Drogheda, Co. Louth, on a proposed development at Newtown, Marsh Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth (ITM 710451, 775062; Figures 1–2). The geophysical survey and subsequent testing are being carried out in response to a request for same from the National Monuments Service on foot of a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) application (Ref: ABP-302215-18). The site does not contain any Recorded Monuments.

The geophysical survey was conducted by Donald Murphy and Robert Breen of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit (ACSU) from 2 to 9 January 2019 under license 19R0005. Fields 1 and 2 serve agricultural purposes and have been ploughed relatively recently. The northern half of both fields slope significantly towards the R150 road and the River Boyne to the north.

2. METHODOLOGY

A full detailed gradiometer survey was undertaken throughout the application area (Fields 1 and 2; see Figure 6) using a Bartington GRAD 601-2 dual sensor fluxgate gradiometer system. Detailed survey was conducted with a sample interval of 0.25m and a traverse interval of 1m for all the survey areas within the site of the proposed development with variations in the magnetic field between (-100nT to +107.834nT).

3. THE DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Proposal

Planning permission is currently being sought for a residential development at Newtown, Marsh Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth. The proposed development is classed as a Strategic Housing Development (Ref. No ABP-302215-18). and a pre-SHD consultation resulted in the request for an archaeological assessment.

3.2 Archaeological Requirements

The geophysical survey and subsequent testing are being carried out in response to a request for same from the National Monuments Service on foot of a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) application (Ref: ABP-302215-18).

4. SURVEY OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this geophysical survey is to establish the presence of any archaeological features within this site, and to inform a program of test trenching to be carried out across the development area.

5. SOILS, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

The overall landscape of the Boyne Valley area has developed upon a geological base of rock formation formed by the folding and development of the Caledonian phase of mountain building. The physical landscape we associate with the Boyne Valley area today has,



however, been largely modelled by the blanket covering of glacial deposits during the last Ice Age. Lower Palaeozoic sedimentary slates are the oldest rock type within the Boyne landscape. The lower Palaeozoic slates form two ridges located to the east and west on the northern edge of the valley. Located to the north of the valley is carboniferous limestone. Stratigraphically, above the lower Palaeozoic rock formations are carboniferous sedimentary rock formations. The lower Boyne Valley landscape is built upon this carboniferous syncline, which is aligned on a northeast–southwest axis. This syncline consists of Namurian shale and sandstone deposits (Stout 2002).

The undulating landscape of the Boyne Valley has been moulded by glacial movement and deposition. It appears that during the last Ice Age two glaciers would have influenced the development of the landscape. One formed in the north central midlands and the other formed in the Irish Sea basin. It would appear that a large ice sheet developed somewhere in the northwest and in the centre of Northern Ireland and that this moved over the Boyne Valley and the Drogheda area in a northwest–southeast direction. The Boyne Valley landscape contains frequent deposits of glacial tills, gravels and silts (Stout 2002).

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

6.1 Archaeological & Historical Background

The earliest evidence for human presence in the Boyne Valley was found by archaeologists working at Newgrange and Knowth, where stone tools associated with the Mesolithic were discovered, such as a broad blade or Bann flake from Newgrange (Stout 2002) and two unusual ‘butt-trimmed forms’ from Knowth (Warren & Little 2017). If we consider the landscape of the Boyne Valley and compare it to the pattern of currently-known Mesolithic sites in Ireland, the Boyne Valley has all the suitable characteristics to suggest a possible location for Mesolithic activity. There is every reason to believe that there may have been a sizeable Mesolithic community within the Boyne Valley area.

In recent years, a number of development-led excavations have located evidence of Early Neolithic activity within the surrounding landscape of the Boyne Valley, dating to approximately 4000 BC. Early Neolithic settlers may have been drawn to the landscape of the Boyne Valley because of the rich fertile soil and the river itself, which would have provided food and a method of communication. Early Neolithic settlement patterns appear to form an impression of scattered individual farmsteads, each perhaps containing one extended family. The Middle and Later Neolithic farming communities created a longer lasting impression on the landscape of the Boyne Valley. Although they probably differed very little in their daily activities to the Early Neolithic population, it is possible that the distribution density of settlements became larger and that the size of the population also grew. The lasting remainders of this period’s activity are, however, the megalithic tombs located within the Boyne Valley landscape, centred around the three mega mounds of Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth.

The end of the Neolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age (2500–700 BC) would have seen the first appearance of metal working within the landscape of the Boyne Valley. The megalithic tombs were being replaced by new types of monument (standing stones, timber circles and henges) as different and diverse burial practices were developed. The landscape of the Boyne Valley would have seen organised into field systems, which was accompanied by large-scale deforestation and a growth of the human population. Generally, from the archaeological evidence found in the Boyne area, settlement patterns still appeared to be dispersed.



During the Early Medieval period (c. AD 400–1100), rural settlement patterns were dominated by the presence of protected enclosed farmsteads (ringforts), many of which are still traceable in the fields around the Boyne landscape today. Unfortunately, most have been levelled and appear only as cropmarks on aerial photographs. A feature often associated with ringforts is the souterrain. These underground passageways are usually built of dry stone and are sometimes found apparently independent of any enclosure. They may have been used as places of refuge and possibly also for storage. In the Early Medieval period, the lower Boyne Valley formed part of the kingdom of Brega, a territory that comprised much of the present county of Meath and north County Dublin. In AD 688, the territory was split into two kingdoms: Northern Brega and Southern Brega.

Medieval Town of Drogheda

The medieval town of Drogheda was established in the 12th century as a distinct plantation town. In 1172, the tithes of land in the modern counties of Meath, Westmeath, and parts of Longford and Offaly, together with lands in Dublin, were granted by Henry II to Hugh de Lacy's favoured house of Llanthony, situated on his estates in the valley of Ewyras in Wales. The establishment of two urban parishes in 1186, and the importation of clergy to fill them, shows that Drogheda was being considered as a town site in the 1180s (Bradley 1978). This would indicate that de Lacy made a decision to establish a town and therefore Drogheda did not develop organically. The earliest surviving archaeological feature from this period is the Millmount motte, probably established by de Lacy before 1186 (Orpen 1911–20). He also seems to have been instrumental in setting up the parish churches of St Mary and St Peter, and this connection shows him to be founder of the town on both sides of the River Boyne. The earliest charter is from 1194 and the offer of an internationally recognised set of burgess rights emphasises the notion that colonists were being sought out. The walled area of medieval Drogheda enclosed 113 acres, making it one of the largest walled towns in medieval Ireland (Bradley 1978).

Streets and Street Pattern

On the north side of the River Boyne, the plan of the medieval town of Drogheda appears to have survived almost completely intact into modern times. The street plan forms a chequered pattern made by four pairs of streets running parallel to the river: Dyer Street and Bessexwell Lane, West Street and Laurence Street, Fair Street and William Street, and finally Rope Walk and Upper Magdalen Street. These streets are intersected by one main north–south route, Shop Street and Peter's Street. They are also intersected by a series of cross streets, of which Scholes Lane, Bolton Street, Stockwell Lane, Duke Street, Patrickswell Lane, Dominick Street, Mayoralty Street, and Freeschool Lane are the most obvious examples. West Street is the broadest of the streets and it is evident that it was intended to function as the main market place on the north side of the river.

The earliest reference to a street on the north side of the river is to Bothe (Shop) Street, mentioned in 1214. The name is derived from the booths or shops that would have been found along this street. Towards the end of the 13th century the Llanthony canons were receiving dues from a placea (plot) on the west side of Shop Street, perhaps to be identified with the plot held by the Llanthony canons in 1355 (Bradley 1978).

The names of tenants for six plots on the east of Shop Street and five on the west are known during the 14th century, some of which can be located exactly. On the south side of the junction between Batchelor's Lane and Shop Street (where the open area in front of the Augustinian friary lies) stood two Preston properties, to the south of which lay a tenement of le Boweneyns and next to that, one belonging to the Cosyns. Unfortunately, all traces of these were removed during the construction of the present friary. On the south side of the junction with Bessexwell Lane lay another Preston property, next to which on the south was another belonging to le Boweneyns. The Prestons also held a house across from this, on the south side of the junction with Dyer Street, with the Llanthony canons directly to the south of them. These latter plots still survive (Bradley 1978).



The Tholsel (an important public building) stood at the northwest end of Shop Street and the tenement of the parish church of St Mary, mentioned in the extent of 1381, probably lay to the south of it, since the Prestons held the property on the west. There were also cellars beneath the Tholsel, which were held by the Llanthony canons of St Mary's. The Tholsel was occasionally referred to as the Guildhill. It is shown on Newcomen's plan as a tower house.

The change in name from East Street to St Laurence Street seems to have occurred about 1350, but the existence of the street may be inferred from a charter of c.1206 mentioning the East Gate of the town. The street is not specifically named until the middle of the 13th century when both stone and timber houses are mentioned there. A plot belonging to the Hospital of St John the Baptist, Dublin, is referred to in 1298 as located along St Laurence Street and the names of nine tenants on the north side of the street and of eleven on the south side survive from the 14th century. Only one of these can be tentatively identified – the plot of John FitzRobert, which would appear to have been the final plot on the south side of the street and separated from the town wall by the lane leading to St Elena's well.

The house of John Jordan is mentioned in 1396 and was perhaps connected with the clothier of the same name two generations before. Two plots are referred to in the 15th century, of which that belonging to Joneta Swayne on the west side of Freeschool (Frumboldes) Lane may still be identified. Frobolles Inn also stood in this street. Indeed, in view of the similarity between the names it may have been located on the east end of Frumboldes Lane. There is also the possibility that the 'particularly skilled goldsmith' who repaired the cross of Michael Tregury, archbishop of Dublin, had his workshop in this area. All of the medieval burgage plots along Laurence Street are of a long narrow nature, except where they form the junction with Shop Street and Peter's Street (Bradley 1978).

Peter's Street, known as Great North Street, is first mentioned in 1331. The Prestons held four properties here during the mid-14th century and the house of St Mary d'Urso had at least one property (Bradley 1978).

On the south side of the River Boyne, much of the original street pattern of Drogheda has been changed and interfered with. Only by studying the maps of Newcomen and Ravell can the original street pattern be revealed. Barracks Street and Mary Street are post-medieval additions. The original plan was composed of two north-south streets, Pitcher Hill and Cornmarket Hill, and one east-west route, James Street and John Street. Curry's Hill ran immediately inside the east wall and Newcomen's survey indicates that a road ran westwards behind John Street to the Butter Gate.

Archaeological Background of Nearby Townlands

A number of recent excavations in the vicinity of Colp village to the east have shown the area was an important Early Medieval centre (Gowen 1989; Clarke & Murphy 2001; O'Hara 2008), while also exposing a largely unrecognised prehistoric heritage, particularly a hidden Bronze Age landscape (Clarke 2001; Clarke & Murphy 2001; O'Hara 2003a, 2003b). Bronze Age activity was recorded at a number of locations in the townland of Colp West during 2001 and 2003. A total of four disturbed burnt mounds or *fulachtaí fia* were excavated, three of which were radiocarbon dated to the mid-third millennium BC (2585–2205 BC, 2470–2120 BC, 2580–2200 BC; Clarke 2001; O'Hara 2003b), with a fourth dated to the mid-first millennium BC (780–390 BC; Clarke 2001). A disturbed burnt mound (ME021:016) located in the townland of Colp West, adjacent to the site under discussion, joins other excavated Bronze Age features in that townland, including a D-shaped enclosure (1520–1310 BC), a circular structure (1428–1046 BC) and a linear ditch that may have functioned as a boundary feature that was potentially still visible in the Early Medieval period, as enclosures of that date appeared to avoid it (Clarke & Murphy 2001). A post-built circular structure from the period 1020–790 BC (O'Hara 2003a) also provides evidence for unenclosed Late Bronze Age settlement in the area, possibly contemporary with some of the burnt mound sites noted above (Clarke



2001). Other features, primarily isolated pits and post-holes, were identified across the townland and dated broadly from the tenth to the third centuries BC (Clarke & Murphy 2001).

Various Iron Age features were also recorded in Colp West, predominantly cereal-drying kilns and pits but also a circular structure (50 BC–AD 210) and a semi-circular enclosure (Clarke & Murphy 2001). The nature and extent of Iron Age settlement around Colp remains unclear however. Early Medieval historian, Thomas Charles-Edwards (2000), has suggested a Roman trading settlement may have been located in the area but there is as yet no concrete evidence for this. It is plausible, however, given the prominence of the Boyne River and its navigability inland. The current understanding, albeit limited, of a site at Drumanagh, Co. Dublin, suggests it was a Roman trading colony, or emporium, during the second century AD (Raftery 1994). Contemporary Roman accounts highlight intercourse across the Irish Sea in the early centuries AD; Tacitus recorded that Agricola, the Roman governor of Britain (AD 78–84), had acquired knowledge of the approaches and harbours of the east coast of the island from traders and merchants. *Inbher Colpdaí*, the port of Colp, is mentioned in the 8th-century AD text, the *Lives of St Patrick*, as the place where Patrick disembarked before making his way to confront King Loeguire at Tara. The area also formed the setting for an earlier myth involving the legendary Sons of Mil, one of whom, Colpa, reputedly drowned at the mouth of the Boyne and was buried locally, reputedly within at a flat-topped mound in Colp East (ME021-012007) known as Rath Colpa, which may be an Early Medieval raised rath.

The archaeological evidence of a curving field boundary suggesting a circular enclosure, as well as a decorated cross head and base, suggest an Early Medieval monastic site existed at Colp (Bradley 1985). This ecclesiastical settlement may have been affiliated with a bishop, St Aitheachain (or Aithcain), who is listed in the late 8th-century Martyrology of Tallaght but otherwise unknown. An unprovenanced church site, *Cluainaithcain*, may bear this saint's name (though this was disputed by Lanigan (1829), and the text in which it occurs, the *Calendar of Cashel*, was probably compiled in the 12th century AD. Colp was well positioned to be among the first ecclesiastical sites to develop during the initial structured Christian mission following the dispatch of Palladius 'to the Irish believing in Christ', by Pope Celestine in AD 431, to safeguard the orthodoxy of existing Irish Christians and provide active leadership in the conversion of the island (Charles-Edwards 2000). Orthodox bishops, Palladius, Auxilius, Isernius, and perhaps Secundinus, were sent from Gaul and seem to have been most active along the east coast where they were actively ministering and proselytising, a generation or so before the Patrician mission. Secundinus is accredited with establishing a cell at Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath, and his obit was recorded in the mid-5th century at this church (Hughes 1966; de Paor 1993). Dunshaughlin would later develop as a monastery in the 7th century, but the relationship between the early and later site is not clear. Perhaps a similar model can be applied to Colp, and the early foundation may not have been extant when the monastic settlement was operating there in the 8th or 9th centuries AD.

A substantial cemetery (ME021-011001) and an enclosure (ME021-011002) were partially excavated in Colp West in 1988, where the remains of over 100 individuals were buried over several generations. The presence of B-ware and E-ware pottery suggested settlement from at least the 5th to 7th centuries (Gowen 1989). In 2001, an extensive Early Medieval site was excavated in advance of the Grange Rath housing development in Colp West. A small ringfort with eight additional enclosures, cereal-drying kilns and other related features, were the surviving indicators of an extensive and prosperous settlement radiocarbon dated to the 7th century AD date (AD 598–684; Clarke & Murphy 2001). Artefacts included metal objects such as iron hooks, nails and knives and a copper-alloy pin, as well as a whetstone and bone/antler handles. Pottery identified as Normandy ware in the excavation report was probably E-ware, as it is a similar type fabric but belongs in the 7th century. Contemporary features exposed within the ringfort included a robbed-out souterrain, a hearth and two pits. Annexed enclosures associated with this ringfort contained further E-ware sherds and were also radiocarbon dated to the 7th century AD (AD 569–679). At least four cereal-drying kilns out of a total of 17 identified within the excavation area returned dates



that extended from the 3rd into the 7th century (AD 400–650; AD 240–610; AD 400–640; AD 240–610) and may have been contemporary with the Early Medieval settlement.

The River Boyne and the Marsh Road; post-medieval Drogheda

Regular navigation of the River Boyne between Drogheda and the sea began in 1761 by Thomas Omer. This led to the issue of stock, by the Boyne Navigation Company in 1789, of a canal upriver to Navan. An iron foundry and breweries were soon founded on the South Quays. The textile industry was by far the most important industry in the town between 1780 and 1820. It was the leading factor in the growth in size and wealth of Drogheda in the late 18th century. Industrialisation in the early 19th century drew Drogheda ever more firmly into the wider economy. The foundry and engineering works of Thomas Grendon and Son, the Drogheda Chemical Manures Co., Frederick Smyth's shipyard, McCann and Hill's flour mills and the Drogheda Oatmeal Company were all important sources of employment. A gas works was set up as early as 1832 and the Drogheda–Dublin railway connected the town to the capital city in 1844, including the building of a viaduct spanning the River Boyne. A large pool of skilled labour, especially weavers, became available. Archaeological evidence of the textile manufacturing is scarce, however, Bradley (1988–89) suggests that 'the water-logged soils adjoining the River Boyne contains organic deposits which will yield an answer to questions such as this'. By the 1850s, five linen mills were in operation and local entrepreneurs had developed larger and more efficient units of production in numerous small industries, such as shoe making, milling, brewing and distilling.

Along the Marsh Road, which lies c. 100 m north of the site under discussion, mudflats fringed the river, hence it was shallower and wider than at present. Today the mudflats or slob-lands are still evident at Queensboro and Baltray and bordering the Mornington Road. The quays were constructed along the shoreline to confine the course of the river into a much narrower and deeper channel, scouring it and facilitating the passage of ships to their berths at the quayside. The southern shore was reclaimed to provide additional quayside facilities and accommodation for housing and industrial use. This was a gradual process, accomplished over several centuries. Along this river bank the first edition Ordnance Survey map shows that the riverside was lined with mud-flats in 1835. People traversing the roadway that runs parallel to the south bank of the river seemingly had difficulty picking their way along the swampy terrain, and hence named it the 'Marsh Road'.

These mud flats were filled in after 1835 and Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of 1837 states that a 'very extensive mill for spinning flax has recently been erected by the company of proprietors'. The recovered ground space on the south bank has been utilised over the years to accommodate a wide variety of industrial enterprises, from ship building to a foundry, gas works, chemical manures, edible and technical oils, brewing, linen-processing and also printing, footwear and margarine-manufacturing. These large mills provided employment to almost 2,000 workers when Drogheda was at the forefront of the linen industry. St. Mary's Mills was located west of the viaduct. The area was once one of the most important industrial districts of the town.

The Marsh Road area has been an important location for the importing and exporting of goods from medieval times to the 20th century. A number of important buildings and industries have made an enormous impact on the history of the South Quays. A coasting steamer service was established along the east coast of Ireland in 1905 and on arrival the ships docked at the Foundry Wharf adjacent to the South Quay, where varied cargo was off-loaded for the local merchants and factories in the vicinity. This service was withdrawn in August 1907, despite requests from the Drogheda Chemical Manure Company to continue the service. Grendon's Foundry and Engineering Works was established in 1835 at the South Quay. According to the *Irish Times* in 1921, 'In 1845 when the first locomotive was built, the Drogheda Foundry was one of the most famous of its kind in the Three Kingdoms, employing between 600 and 700 workers turning out ships, locomotives, weighing machines and all classes of ironworks'. The facility was also used for repairing ships.



The lane which led from James's St to the shipyard was called Graves Lane. Some sources say that the street was named after a former inhabitant, Mr. Graves, however graving is a nautical term that describes the cleaning of a ship's hull and the application of a pitch coating. There was also a graving slip for repairing barges at Ship St, east of the site under discussion.

In the 19th century, due to a cholera and typhoid epidemic, a separate fever hospital was located on the Marsh Road as a temporary expedient. It was reported in the *Drogheda Conservative Journal* on 16 October 1847 that 'Disease is on the increase, with 170 patients in the Marsh Fever Hospital and there is no more room for applicants.

Domestic dwellings are also an important element of the cultural heritage of the area. An area of the riverbank remained untouched allowing access to the shore until recent times and housewives living on the Marsh Road and Scotch Hall (the original Scotch Hall which comprised a series of abject tenements) would pick their way across the muddy foreshore with their baskets of clothes for laundering at the riverside; the flowing tide of the River Boyne continued to be their only 'running water'. Along with tenements, houses were constructed on Ship St. to accommodate industrial workers. The south riverbank was later a recreational area.

The 20th Century

Drogheda was a strategically important town during 'the Emergency', which existed in the state of Ireland during the Second World War. Precautions were taken to safeguard the town in the event of an invasion. This included the removal of Drogheda from the title names of factories and businesses such as the Drogheda Gas Works and the Drogheda Chemical Manures Company. After the war, Drogheda was in a better position than many other towns as it was more industrialised. Factories such as the Irish Oil and Cake Mills and the Cairnes Brewery, however, failed to fully absorb the available workforce and a combination of rationalisation and external competition saw the gradual demise of each of these industries. In contrast to the North Quays, the South Quays remained unscathed from the redevelopments undertaken during the 1970s and 1980s. In later times, the area hosted much smaller self-contained companies concentrated in industrial units situated in the former Oil and Cake Mills facility. Today, many of its factories lie empty and have fallen into a state of decay. Scotch Hall, a 257,000 sq. ft retail centre was constructed in 2005 on a plot of land bordered by the Dublin Road, South Quay and New South Quay.

6.2 Recorded Monuments

The site contains no Recorded Monuments listed within the Record of Monuments and Places and there are no recorded monuments located in close proximity to the site (Figure 2). The following is a list of the nearest recorded monuments that demonstrate the overall archaeological potential of the site of the proposed development and its surrounding townlands. These descriptions are derived from the published *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth* (Buckley 1986), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* (Buckley & Sweetman 1991) and *Archaeological Inventory of County Meath* (Moore 1987), but in some instances have been revised and updated (<http://webgis.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/>).

**LH024-041**

Townlands: Yellowbatter, Ballsgrove, Lagavooren, Moneymore

Site Type: Historic Town

Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP: Yes

Description: These defences enclosed an area of c. 45 hectares and had a circumference of 2.35km. The best cartographic evidence of the defences takes the form of a 16th-century plan of Drogheda on which the main medieval features are represented although this must be treated with some caution. The town is divided east–west by the River Boyne which also acted at one time as the county boundary between Louth and Meath.

There appear to have been ten gateways: six in the northern sector of the town and four in the south. The remains of only two survive: St Laurence's Gate and the Butter Gate. Besides the gateways, there were also a number of towers along the walls and the northern bank of the river. Six or seven of the mural towers were south of the river, while in the northern sector there appear to have been between seven and ten. No remains of these can be seen on the ground and the only surviving portions of the wall are a large stretch at the western side of the town, a short fragment close to St Laurence's Gate, and a long section to the south of St Mary's Church. A subsidy was conceded in 1279 for a stone enclosure and another in 1316 for the repair of the wall and town, so we can safely assume that the town walls and towers were built by the end of the 13th century.

LH024-030004-

Class: Cross

Townland: YELLOWBATTER

Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP: Yes

Description: A gargoyle was noted lying beside the N wall of the mortuary chapel when inspected by ASI in 1966, it may originally have belonged to the church (LH024-030001-). Composed of sandstone (L 0.88m; Wth of face 0.32m; D of channel 0.22m), only the upper part of the face remains and the underneath side has human arms carved on it.

LH024-030001-

Class: Church

Townland: YELLOWBATTER

Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP: Yes

Description: The church is almost entirely levelled with only the E gable in any way complete. It contains the remains of a large window which has a two-centred arch of moulded sandstone springing from decorated impostes. The jamb stones are also of sandstone, are chamfered and contain glazing grooves. The wall is constructed of poorly coursed blocks and boulders of limestone and greywacke. There is a small rectangular ope immediately above the centre of the arch. There are no remains to indicate the number of lights in the window and there is no evidence of tracery. Some of the sandstone blocks clearly show the remains of diagonal tooling, indicating that the building is early medieval. It was reportedly founded c. 1206 and was the hospital priory of St Lawrence and Martyr. A gargoyle (LH024-030005-) lying beside the N wall of the mortuary chapel may have belonged to the church. In the N return of the E gable there is a fragment of limestone (0.44m by 0.40m by 0.24m) which is thought to be part of a market cross (LH024-030004-) and could be of late medieval date. There is a portion of a large granite memorial slab (LH024-030003-) with a date of 1613 lying on the ground immediately to the S of the standing remains. It has a cross with a stepped base and crosslets on the arms. There is a skull and cross-bones in each of the upper angles of the cross, and scrolls and triangles near its broken base. There is lettering and the date around the remaining margin of the slab.

**LH024-039****Class:** Mound**Townland:** BRYANSTOWN**Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP:** Yes

Description: Situated in a field on the S outskirts of Drogheda. Circular mound (max. diam. c. 35m, H 4m) truncated to the N by a modern laneway and to the W by a paddock. The mound bears the popular title of 'Cromwell's Mount' and is traditionally the site of a Cromwellian artillery bastion. However, the site is shown as a cairn with external fosse on the 1835 ed. of the OS 6-inch map. Owing to its prominent position with extensive views over the River Boyne to the N, coupled with its unlikely strategic value as an artillery bastion, this site has been reclassified as either a barrow or a denuded passage grave.

ME020-006**Class:** Church**Townland:** STAGRENNAN**Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP:** Yes

Description: Situated on a rise on a slight N facing slope with the W–E estuary of the River Boyne c. 400m to the N. 'Stagrennan of St. James' is a possession of the Augustinian priory of Llanthony in Gloucestershire at the Suppression in 1540 (White 1943, 315), and a church is represented at Stagrennan on the Down Survey (1656–8) barony map of Duleek while the terrier or commentary records 'an old church at Stagrennan' (D'Alton 1844, vol. 2, 447). However, Stagrennan is not recorded in the visitations of Ussher (1622) or Dopping (1682–5) as a church in the Duleek deanery (Erlington 1847–64 1, lxi-lxviii; Ellison 1971, 33–7). Sixty acres at Stagrennan were held by John Bellew of Stammeen in 1640 (Simington 1940, 3).

The remains of a rectangular building (ext. dims c. 9m E–W; c. 6m N–S) can be traced within a rectangular graveyard (dims c. 50m NE–SW; c. 30m NW–SE) with some 19th century headstones and deciduous trees. The E gable survives but the cut stone from its pointed window arch is robbed.

ME020-006001**Class:** Graveyard**Townland:** STAGRENNAN**Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP:** Yes

Description: The church at Stagrennan (ME020-006) is within a rectangular graveyard (dims c. 50m NE–SW; c. 30m NW–SE) with some 19th century headstones and deciduous trees.

6.3 Previous Excavations

Within the wider landscape a number of archaeological assessments have been carried out previously, some of which were associated with the development of housing estates and retail units to the south of Drogheda (Figure 2). They demonstrate the overall archaeological potential of the site under discussion and its surrounding townlands. The following information was taken from the Database of Irish Excavation Reports (www.excavations.ie).

**2000:0661 - MARSH ROAD / SOUTH QUAY, DROGHEDA, LOUTH****RMP No.:** 24:41**Licence number:** 00E0729**Author:** Billy Quinn, Archaeological Services Unit Ltd, Purcell House, Oranmore, Co. Galway**Site type:** Urban medieval

Description: Testing took place of a proposed development on the site of the properties currently occupied by Lakeland Dairies and McGowan's Engineering on the South Quay/Marsh Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth. The site contains a section of the medieval town wall.

Pre-development testing as agreed with Dúchas, The Heritage Service, consisted of the mechanical excavation of eight trenches, three on the McGowan's site and five in the Lakeland Dairies site. The trenches were dug by a 12-tonne Hymac Excavator with a toothed bucket (owing to ground conditions a grading bucket was unsuitable).

The trial-trenches demonstrated the presence of an upper rubble layer overlying deposits containing medieval finds throughout the site. More specifically, the testing programme was able to confirm the line of the medieval town wall that would have extended north from St James's Gate to the river's edge.

In terms of composition, the upper deposits varied considerably from trench to trench, though they all generally consisted of redeposited material dating from the modern to the post-medieval period (red brick, metal fragments, modern pottery). These disturbed fills represent the industrial and commercial development of the site's history, as well as the structural changes (extensions and demolitions) that the site has undergone.

The lower deposits (c. 1m below the surface level) had an inconsistent profile; however, testing did produce externally green-glazed pottery of medieval aspect and fragments of worked leather. Other than the town wall, no features contemporary with the lower fills were in evidence.

2001:846 – THE MARSH ROAD, DROGHEDA, LOUTH**RMP No.:** N/A**Licence number:** 01E0337**Author:** Billy Quinn, Archaeological Services Unit Ltd, Purcell House, Oranmore, Co. Galway**Site type:** Urban

Description: Pre-development testing of a site currently occupied by McDonnell's on the Marsh Road, Drogheda, was carried out over a three-day period between 23 and 29 May 2001. The site is located immediately outside the medieval town wall to the east, along the line of the archaeological constraint zone for RMP 24:41.

The proposed development involves the construction of a multi-unit retail/commercial and residential centre occupying a block stretching west to east from the McGowan's site at the South Quay through the present Lakeland Dairies Site and along the Quayside to the rear of McDonnell's. Prior to testing the site consisted of a disused open concrete yard fronting on to the river.

Three trial-trenches were excavated through the site. Trenches 1 and 2 were side by side and ran parallel to the river; they measured 30m and 40m respectively. The third trench measured 25m and was located to the west of Trench 2. All were dug to an average depth of 1.5m and contained a number of rubble fills and composite charcoal-rich layers under a concrete slab.

All the finds recovered were of modern date and included white ware, pipe fragments, red brick and slate. The only feature of note was a wall foundation, first exposed to the north of Trench 3 along its east-facing section. The wall, orientated north-south, was built of squared limestone blocks and was exposed along its length for 7.4m. All the layers exposed during the excavations consisted of



redeposited fills with modern inclusions. Flooding caused problems on site and limited the depth of excavation; however, on the evidence of the above, the upper levels of the site to a depth of 1.5m contain a mix of relatively modern deposits.

2001:848 – SOUTH QUAY, DROGHEDA, LOUTH

RMP No.: N/A

Licence number: 01D077

Author: Niall Brady, 2 Vale Terrace, Lower Dargle Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow, for The Archaeological Diving Company Ltd

Site type: Medieval warehouse and quay wall

Description: Intertidal survey in advance of the proposed Lakelands/Marsh Road Development Schemes, Drogheda, Co. Louth, indicated that the development area retains two sites of interest: a medieval riverfront warehouse (previously unrecorded), and a long area of existing quay walls on South Quay, Lagavoreen.

2002:1315 - MARSH ROAD, DROGHEDA, LOUTH

RMP No.: 24:41

Licence number: 02E1510

Author: Elizabeth Connolly, Glenbonniv, Feakle, Co. Clare.

Site type: Urban medieval/post-medieval

Description: Monitoring of engineering boreholes and trial-pits took place in October 2002 on the site of the proposed Scotch Hall 2 development, which involves the construction of a hotel, a cineplex, a multi-storey carpark and apartments. The boreholes and trial-pits were excavated in the Campbells and McDonnells sites on the south side of the River Boyne, to the north of the Marsh Road, Lagavoreen.

Eight trial-pits and six boreholes were excavated. They revealed a fairly uniform stratigraphy throughout the site, with several layers of mixed rubble fills overlying a mixed brown clay fill. Beneath the clay was a natural orange clay that lay on an alluvial silt. Beneath this was bedrock. The rubble fills were c. 1m deep, as was the mixed brown clay fill. Finds from the mixed clay included shell, animal bone, clay-pipe fragments, modern glass and modern delft. In Trial-pit 6, c. 25m north of the back wall of Campbells Soups, the possible rubble foundation of a wall was found, 0.8m deep and 0.5m wide. In Borehole 6, near the Marsh Road entrance to McDonnells, a concentration of red brick was recorded, indicating the presence of a wall or a wall foundation.

2003:1239 - LAKELANDS DAIRY, DROGHEDA, LOUTH

Site name: Lakelands Dairy, Drogheda

RMP No.: 24:41

Licence number: 03E0688

Author: Thaddeus C. Breen, 13 Wainsfort Crescent, Dublin 6W, for V.J. Keeley Ltd

Site type: Urban medieval

Description: Between May and December 2003, investigations were carried out on a large site in the centre of Drogheda as part of the planning conditions for a mixed-use development. The site consisted of the former Campbell's, Lakelands Dairy, and McGowan's Engineering properties and included a short street called Graves' Lane. It was situated on the south bank of the River Boyne to the east of South Quay, between the river and Marsh Road. The development was to have piled foundations, which would leave much of the



archaeology of the site undisturbed. For the most part, therefore, only the areas to be disturbed were investigated. The one exception was the town wall.

The excavation was carried out as a joint venture between V.J. Keeley Ltd and ADCO. Niall Brady, on behalf of the latter company, which undertook the underwater component of the work, had carried out previous work on the site (01D077). Because previous investigations on the site by Billy Quinn had shown that a substantial length of the town wall appeared to be present (01E0337), Dúchas requested that the full extent of the remains should be established by exposing the wall for its entire length, investigating at intervals the depth of the surviving wall and the stratigraphy on either side.

The total length of the wall within the site was 72m. Of this, a 17m stretch lay under modern grain silos and had not yet become accessible by the end of the year. However, it was obvious that the foundations of the silos would have destroyed most of the wall. The remainder was intact and, for the most part, in good condition. Over most of the site it survived to within 0.5m of the surface. It ranged in thickness from 1.8m at the northern end to 1.4m at the south.

The wall was built of limestone, roughly squared on the faces, with unshaped rubble within the core. Most of the fabric was bonded with a yellowish-white mortar containing shell fragments, but the lower courses were bonded with sticky orange clay. For most of its length, only the upper courses were exposed, but, where the depth was investigated, the wall was found to survive to a height of 1.8m above its base.

The ground surface on which the wall was built varied. Near its southern end, it was built directly on bedrock; in the middle of the site, it was built on stony clay; near the river, it appeared to have been dug into the river silt. At another point, also in the middle of the site, it was built on a wide footing of loose rubble revetted by timber.

Surviving stretches of wall elsewhere in the town have a walkway on the inner face carried on arches supported by buttresses. The bases of similar buttresses were found in an earlier excavation to the south of the present site. With the exception of one buttress found near the southern edge (1.3m square), there was no trace of this internal arcading on the Lakeland site. However, the ground on either side was not dug to its full depth, except in a few locations. Over much of the site the material on either side had suffered recent disturbance, with a preponderance of slag and other foundry waste near the river. Where medieval layers were found, they were 1.25m below the top of the surviving wall. A number of brick culverts were found, some of which crossed the wall. Channels had also been cut through the top of the wall for iron pipes and plastic conduits carrying electrical cables.

At the northern end of the wall, where it met the river, the base of a circular tower was found. It was slightly over 4.5m in diameter. It was not centrally placed on the wall but extended to the east (outside) of it. The east face of the wall proper continued within the masonry of the tower, suggesting that the latter was a later addition. The northern side of the tower had been truncated and a rough straight face had been left in the masonry. A stone wall ran northwards from this, joining it to the present quay wall.

The previous excavations to the south of the site had suggested the presence of a rock-cut fosse outside the wall. A deep cutting near this area showed that, while the wall was built on bedrock, which was only about 2m below the surface in this area, on the east side of the wall the bedrock formed a narrow shelf, 1.6m wide, beyond which was an abrupt drop of over 4m. The area immediately east of the wall at this point was the mouth of a deep valley called The Dale. The Dale Stream, which flowed at the foot of this, may have cut into the rock here, but the size and width of the cutting suggest that it was used as a quarry, probably when the wall was being built. It was filled with a thick black deposit containing organic debris, leather, textile and pottery of 13th-century type, so it appears to have been used as a dump for town refuse from an early period.



Two features of medieval date were found adjoining the wall: an area of cobbling and a small structure of unknown use. The cobbling consisted of two levels, of which the lower, earlier, one was of better quality, with a straight edge or kerb along one side. An area 2m by 2.3m was exposed.

The other feature was a small subrectangular structure, 3.7m by 2m, oriented north-south, abutting the town wall. It was divided into two smaller chambers. The town wall served as the eastern wall; the remaining walls were 0.22-0.38m thick, of rubble masonry which was mostly clay-bonded but with mortar pointing used in places. The walls sloped inwards towards the base at an angle of up to 22°. The chambers were floored with flat stone flags. They filled up with water at high tide, and the fill suggested that they had gradually silted up. In the upper fill of the southern chamber, a human burial was found. It had been disturbed by later building, but the presence of post-medieval pottery and animal bones, above 0.7m of fill, suggests that it was an unofficial and perhaps clandestine burial which took place when the structure had long gone out of use.

At the western end of the site, between Graves' Lane and South Quay, the remains of a medieval house were excavated. The exterior of this building had been identified in the course of the previous ADCO intertidal survey. The northern wall of this house was on the edge of the river and had survived to a height of 1.68m above ground level as part of the river wall. A central round-headed doorway gave access to the river. At either end of this wall was a garderobe in a curved alcove. When the south wall of the house was excavated, a garderobe chute, perhaps from an upper floor, was found, discharging into a lintelled drain which sloped down to meet one of the garderobe chutes in the north wall. The west wall had been subjected to numerous alterations and repairs, but patches of original masonry survived above ground level, including three chamfered stones which probably originally formed the side of a window.

The overall dimensions of the house were c. 20.5m by 7.5m. A number of putlog holes were visible, and one of the stone corbels which would have held the soleplates for the first floor survived. The foundations of two walls aligned with either side of the central doorway were found, and in places there were remains of a floor consisting of cobbles with a thin plaster or mortar layer over it; this appeared to be contemporary with the doorway. Behind this house were the remains of a later stone extension and some more recent brick structures, including brick floors with a thick layer of coal dust.

To the south of this house, further inland from the present river edge, a post-and-wattle fence was found, forming a revetment behind which was a thick deposit of black organic soil containing wood chips and fragments of rope, textile, leather and pottery. To the north of the revetment was grey silt mixed with black organic material alternating with layers of pure silt. This revetment was not found in another trial-trench to the west, where the ground level was higher, so it must have been a small, local feature straightening irregularities in the riverbank.

In the area between the town wall and Graves' Lane, fourteen trial-pits were dug on the proposed locations of pile caps. Stone walls of probable medieval date were found in three (two were probably related); an area of paving was found in another. Small patches of wicker matting and timber were found in further pits. Some engineer's trial-pits dug in this area uncovered the pre-1870 stone quay wall, 7m back from the modern equivalent.

At the eastern end of the site, outside the town wall, three large trial-trenches were mechanically excavated. A number of engineer's trial-pits and boreholes dug in the area between this and the town wall were monitored. The foundations of some demolished portions of the 19th-century brewery were found, and the uppermost deposits consisted of recent rubble. Below this were layers of silt and mud deposited by the river. There was little archaeological material in these, apart from occasional random sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery.

A series of slot-trenches across the Marsh Road were monitored, but they revealed only recent pipes and cables.

**2003:1240 - RIVER BOYNE, LAKELANDS / SCOTCH HALL, DROGHEDA, LOUTH****RMP No.:** N/A**Licence number:** 03D037; 03R052**Author:** David A. McCullough, 41 The Orchard, Kilkenny, for The Archaeological Diving Company Ltd**Site type:** Riverbed deposits and quayside features

Description: An underwater, intertidal archaeological and metal-detector survey of the South Quay at the former Lakelands Dairies and Scotch Hall sites in Drogheda, Co. Louth, made a detailed record of the quay wall and associated areas of riverbed as part of the archaeological requirement for the enabling works associated with the development of this site. The landside was resolved under the direction of Thaddeus Breen (No. 1239 above) as a joint venture between ADCO and V.J. Keeley Ltd.

The riverbed has been subject to dumping from both the quayside and from the vessels using this area over time and is covered with modern debris. Continuous metal-detector readings were encountered throughout the surveyed area, and, while most of the targets identified were of modern date, several archaeological items were recovered as stray finds. These objects were concentrated on the riverside of a medieval waterfront building on South Quay discovered by Niall Brady in a previous assessment (01D077), at the upstream end of the works area. The survey identified the extension of the medieval town wall to the modern waterfront and concluded that the larger area of present-day riverfront is not ancient, and dates mainly from the 19th century.

2005:1054 - MARSH ROAD, DROGHEDA, LOUTH**RMP No.:** N/A**Licence number:** 05E0396**Author:** Fintan Walsh, Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd, 8 Dungar Terrace, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin**Site type:** Urban medieval

Description: The site of the proposed development is located c. 150m outside and to the east of the medieval town of Drogheda and is outside the constraint zone for the town (SMR 24:41). The area has experienced considerable industrial development since the mid-19th century. There are no known medieval sites in the immediate area.

Test-trenching took place on 11 and 12 June 2005. Three test-trenches were excavated, where possible, in the yard area to the south of the main mill building. The northern half of the site was unavailable for testing, due to the presence of a 19th-century mill building.

Trenches 1 and 3 failed to produce any material of archaeological significance. Both trenches consisted of fill (dump) material overlying sterile silty clays. Trench 2 contained possible garden soils, which, although they did not produce any medieval finds, may equate well with the possible garden soils discovered by Archaeological Projects Ltd during the monitoring of Test-pit 10, located c. 10m to the south of Trench 2. In this test-pit a dark-green/brown clay with shell, bone and medieval pottery was encountered between 1m and 2.8m below present ground level. These garden soils may be the same deposit as the clays in Trench 2.

It was recommended that additional test-trenches be excavated in the south-west of the site after the demolition of the buildings fronting onto Marsh Road. It is envisaged that this work will take place sometime in 2006.

2005:1060 - SCOTCH HALL, LAGAVOOREN, DROGHEDA, LOUTH**RMP No.:** 24:41**Licence number:** 03E0688**Author:** Thaddeus C. Breen, for Valerie J. Keeley Ltd, Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny



Site type: Urban

Description: A small amount of additional monitoring took place at this site this year, when service trenches were being dug (see Excavations 2003, No. 1239, for earlier work on this site). One trench ran parallel to the riverbank and then turned southwards to meet the Marsh Road. This mostly cut through disturbed layers with demolition rubble, probably of 19th–20th-century date, but three stone walls were encountered. Further stone walls were found in a trench which followed the line of James's Street to the Bull Ring junction. These ran at right angles to the line of the road. Here, grey silt with medieval pottery was found at c. 1.5m depth. At the Bull Ring itself, nothing of archaeological significance was found; the fill was very recent.

A programme of assessment and testing was carried out at the site of Caffrey's Monumental Works, the former Edible Oils Ltd and Drogheda Chemical Manure Company on the Marsh Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth. The proposed development entails the construction of mixed retail, office, leisure, hotel and approximately 470 residential units. Testing concluded that the site was not developed until the 19th century. Since then, the site evolved from ornamental gardens to an industrial use. The entire development area could not be tested; however, five test-trenches were excavated; these did not reveal the presence of any archaeological features or deposits. Although the proposed development on the subject site is large, testing and assessment appeared to indicate that much of the area has previously been developed. These former developments appear to have impacted on and removed any archaeological material which may have been present.

2011:424 - MARSH ROAD, DROGHEDA, LOUTH

RMP No.: N/A

Licence number: 11E0002

Author: Edmond O'Donovan

Site type: Urban post-medieval

Description: Monitoring was carried out at Marsh Road in Drogheda in response to the construction of a car park for Irish Rail. The work was carried out for Courtney Deery Heritage Consultancy. The monitoring revealed that the site was used extensively during the construction of the Boyne Viaduct between 1851 and 1855. A series of engineering test pits were excavated to assess the soils and locate potential services. Seventeen test pits were excavated at regular intervals throughout the site. Four trenches were also excavated to expose existing services. The test pits measured approximately 1.5m in length, 0.5m in width and were generally 0.9m in depth. A soil profile across the site, based on the test pits, shows a varying amount of modern dumped construction material, e.g. concrete, stone and redeposited clays, spread over the site, up to 0.9m in depth at Marsh Road but thinning out to the south of the Boyne Viaduct embankment.

6.4 Cartographic Evidence

The earliest mapping of the area is the Down Survey of 1654–56, where the approximate area of the proposed development does not contain any features of an archaeological nature, although it does illustrate the townland of Newtown (Figure 3). Ordnance Survey maps of the area were also examined (County Louth, sheet 24) in order to identify any possible archaeological features and to trace the development of the site during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The cartographic evidence shown on these maps does not reveal any features of an archaeological nature located within the area of the proposed development.

The cartographic review of the Ordnance Survey maps including the first edition historic 6-inch map dated 1835 (Figure 4), and the 25-inch OS map dated 1907–09 (Figure 5), shows that since the early 19th century there has been some alteration to the field systems



within which the site of the proposed development is located, although the overall layout is largely the same. The first edition 6-inch map shows that the southern boundary of both Fields 1 and 2 was moved slightly after 1835, as a result of alterations made during the construction of the railway line. Indeed, the southwest corner of the western field (Field 1) was clearly acquired by the railway company and had the new railway line constructed across it.

The larger western field was originally subdivided by a WSW–ENE oriented field boundary, extending roughly across the middle of the field. This boundary was already removed prior to the 25-inch map in 1907–09 (Figure 5). The narrower eastern field (Field 2) was originally larger, as its eastern boundary did not continue all the way to the north but opened out eastwards, encompassing what by 1907–09 was already a separate adjacent field.

Already evident in the first edition OS map of 1835 was a pair of buildings, quite possibly a small farmyard, located roughly in the middle of southern end of Field 2 (Figure 4). These are located within a small angular enclosure and a road or track is depicted leading southwest from the buildings, towards the southwest corner of the field. These structures are still apparent on the 25-inch map of 1907–09, although the surrounding enclosure appears to be gone (Figure 5). Instead, a sub-oval feature is depicted to the northwest of the buildings and represents the pond that is still visible on the site today. Aerial photography shows this area to be somewhat overgrown in recent times, suggesting the possible remains of this relict farmyard, along with the pond. The road or track leading from the possible farmyard appears to be visible on the Ordnance Survey 2005 Ortho aerial photograph as a faint cropmark.

It is also apparent from the historic mapping that the northwestern boundary of Field 1 backed on to the rear of the property associated with Weirhope House. The map of 1907–09 shows a well situated on the southern boundary of Field 2 (Figure 5), beside the road now known as McGrath's Lane and west of Newtown Lodge.

6.5 Aerial Photography

Aerial photographs dating between 1995 and 2013 from the Ordnance Survey of Ireland were also reviewed. These revealed two possible cropmarks, near the north end of both fields, that may represent archaeological features (Figure 7). One consists of a possible sub-rectangular enclosure in Field 1, measuring 100m east–west by 75m north–south (identified on OSI ortho photo 2005). It appears to have a sub-circular or rounded annex at its southeast corner and may contain a smaller rectangular enclosure with a circular annex to the west. A second, smaller rectangular enclosure measuring 50m east–west by 38m north–south may be visible in Field 2 (OSI ortho photo 1995). Both cropmarks are very faint and do not necessarily represent archaeological features. It was anticipated that the geophysical survey of the area would help to determine whether or not these were of archaeological significance.

6.6 National Inventory of Archaeological Heritage (NIAH) and Protected Structures

There are no structures listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) located within the site of the proposed development.

A protected structure listed within the *Louth Development Plan 2015–2021* as DB 345 Stone Borough Boundary Marker, is located c. 100 m northwest of the potential development area on the Marsh Road. The following is a description of the Stone Borough Boundary Marker, which is also listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) as follows:

Marsh Road, Drogheda, County Louth



Reg. No.:13620021

Date: 1840–1845

Townland: Newtown (Louth By.)

Rating: Regional

Description: Limestone marker, erected 1843. Tooled rectangular slab with half-round head, inscription partially eroded "BOROUGH BOUNDARY 1843 SAINT LAWRENCE GAATE WARD THOS CARTY ESQR" set in footpath against south parapet of bridge.

Appraisal: This stone marks the historical boundary of St. Lawrence Gate Ward. This interesting artefact charts the changing divisions of land in Drogheda and is a piece of street furniture which adds to the diversity of the Marsh Road streetscape.

6.7 Field Survey

A site inspection was carried out on 16 May 2018 in good clear conditions. The site contains two fields that rise gradually from the south to the top of an east–west ridge that extends to the south side of the Marsh Road, overlooking the River Boyne. Both fields were in crop at the time of inspection. The only feature of note within the development consisted of the overgrown pond indicated on the 1907–09 OS map (see Figure 5). A small farmyard or buildings are also shown at this location on both the 1835 and 1907–09 maps and there may be traces of their foundations left in the overgrown area. These buildings are unlikely to be of archaeological significance. No features of archaeological potential were noted in the field survey and the only ploughsoil finds visible consisted of clay pipe fragments, black glazed earthenware and modern ceramics.

7. METHOD OF DATA INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of the results was made by examination of the raw data as greyscale images, XY trace, relief and data plots. Archived raw data is presented in Figure 7 and an interpretation is presented in Figures 8 and 9.

8. SURVEY RESULTS

The geophysical survey was conducted by Donald Murphy and Robert Breen of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit (ACSU) between 2 and 9 January 2019 (Figures 6–9). A full detailed gradiometer survey was undertaken throughout the application area using a Bartington GRAD 601-2 dual sensor fluxgate gradiometer system. Detailed survey was conducted with a sample interval of 0.25m and a traverse interval of 1m for all the survey areas within the site of the proposed development with variations in the magnetic Field (between -100nT to +107.834nT). Both Fields 1 and 2 serve agricultural purposes and have been ploughed relatively recently. The northern half of both fields decline in gradient towards the R150 road, which runs perpendicular to the site.

Field 1

The southern end of Field 1 produced an E–W band of disturbed results, likely as a result of the power lines that cross over the site. These disturbances are the result of high amounts of magnetic variations which are evidently focused to this lower half of Field 1.

A large sub-oval band of magnetic disturbance was identified in the eastern portion of the field and is likely the result of underlying geology or resting ground water. This will be investigated further in the testing phase of the development.

A number of curvilinear anomalies were identified in the west and northern portion of the field although none of these have produced results that are strong enough to confirm their archaeological potential with any certainty. Possibilities for such anomalies may be small enclosures, dwellings, agricultural scars such as plough marks, or simply variations in the natural subsoil.



Isolated anomalies, such as those identified towards the middle of the field, may represent features of archaeological potential such as pits, spreads, or kilns. They may, however, also represent ferrous anomalies within the topsoil, as a result of agricultural debris from farming activities.

A potential circular anomaly was identified towards the north-eastern portion of the field and may represent a small enclosure.

Field 2

As in Field 1, the southern half of Field 2 also produced a number of magnetic anomalies most likely associated with the overhead powerlines. These will be investigated during the testing phase of the project to confirm their nature.

A circular enclosure of archaeological importance has been identified along the eastern boundary of Field 2. This enclosure measures c. 30m in diameter and appears to feature an internal structure, possibly a house site or animal pen. The nature and depth of this enclosure will be fully investigated during the testing phase of the development.

A number of magnetic disturbances were also identified directly west of this enclosure site and may represent smaller features of archaeological significance, such as refuse pits, post-holes, kilns, etc. A faint N–S linear anomaly identified among these features may represent the line of an historic boundary, a field drain, or a plough mark.

A number of larger anomalies were identified scattered towards the northern end of Field 2, where it begins to slope downwards towards the R150. These may represent ferrous anomalies in the topsoil, larger areas of refuse, burning or agricultural debris. The nature of these will also be investigated during the testing phase of the project.

9. CONCLUSIONS

The geophysical survey has identified clear signs of archaeological potential, particularly in Field 2. The survey of Field 1 produced disturbed readings as a result of the powerlines but also a number of curvilinear anomalies that may prove to be of archaeological significance upon further investigation. Numerous scattered anomalies were also present but are likely the result of isolated features, such as pits or modern disturbances as a result of ferrous materials in the plough soil.

In Field 2, the same band of magnetic disturbance was picked up from the overhead powerlines, however, the nature of these anomalies will have to be confirmed during test trenching. A c. 30m diameter enclosure was identified along the eastern boundary of Field 2, with evidence for internal components such as that of a house or pen. Another anomaly further west may suggest a field division / boundary, drain or plough mark. Magnetic anomalies scattered throughout the rest of the site may be the result of smaller features such as kilns, refuse pits or areas of burning. Isolated ferrous anomalies identified throughout the survey area may represent smaller features of archaeological significance or more modern agricultural debris, such as iron objects dispersed throughout and within the ploughsoil. Faint undefined linear responses identified in the greyscale data may simply represent magnetic variations in the subsoil and may not be identified during testing.

It is therefore recommended that targeted archaeological assessment in the form of test trenching be carried out in order to assess the nature and extent of these identified features, in particular the nature of the enclosure identified in Field 2. A large number of the stronger magnetic anomalies identified elsewhere will also be tested in order to ascertain their archaeological significance.



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Summary Accounts of Archaeological Excavations in Ireland (www.excavations.ie).

Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

1836 Ordnance Survey first-edition six-inch map.

1907–11 Ordnance Survey third-edition twenty-five-inch map.

Ordnance Survey Ortho (aerial photography) series, 1995, 2000, 2005.



Report Status:	Final
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Issue/Revision Date:	14 th January 2019
Prepared by:	Donald Murphy & Robert Breen
Signed:	<i>Donald Murphy Robert Breen</i>
Approved by:	Linda Clarke
Signed:	<i>Linda Clarke</i>



Appendix 1 - Summary Technical Information & Glossary of Terms

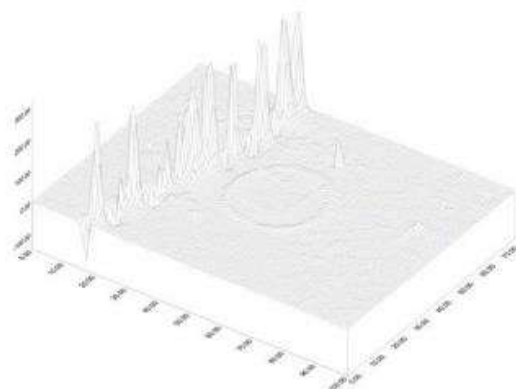
Fluxgate Gradiometer Survey: Surveys are undertaken using the Bartington Grad 601-2 survey instrument which was specifically designed for archaeological prospection. It includes sensors that are highly stable, minimizing requirements for excess data processing. The instrument has a vertical 1 m sensor separation permitting finite resolution of buried archaeological features. Surveys can be undertaken in scan or detailed (zig-zag traverse) modes for reconnaissance or high-density mapping. The fluxgate enables reliable flexibility during fieldwork. Frequent realignment of the instruments and zero drift correction ensure a constant high quality of data. Extremely sensitive, these instruments can detect variations in soil magnetism to 0.1nT, affording diverse application throughout a variety of archaeological, soil morphological and geological conditions. The instrument can be employed in both commercial and research-based investigations allowing for completion of projects within short timescales. Regular grid sample densities from standard 1600 readings to 12800 readings per 20m by 20m grid are permitted. A constant high quality of data is assured by experienced field staff operating in accordance with English Heritage Research & Professional Guidelines No. 1, *Geophysical Survey In Archaeological Field Evaluation* (David 1995).



Bartington Grad 601-single axis dual sensor gradiometer.

Data Display Formats

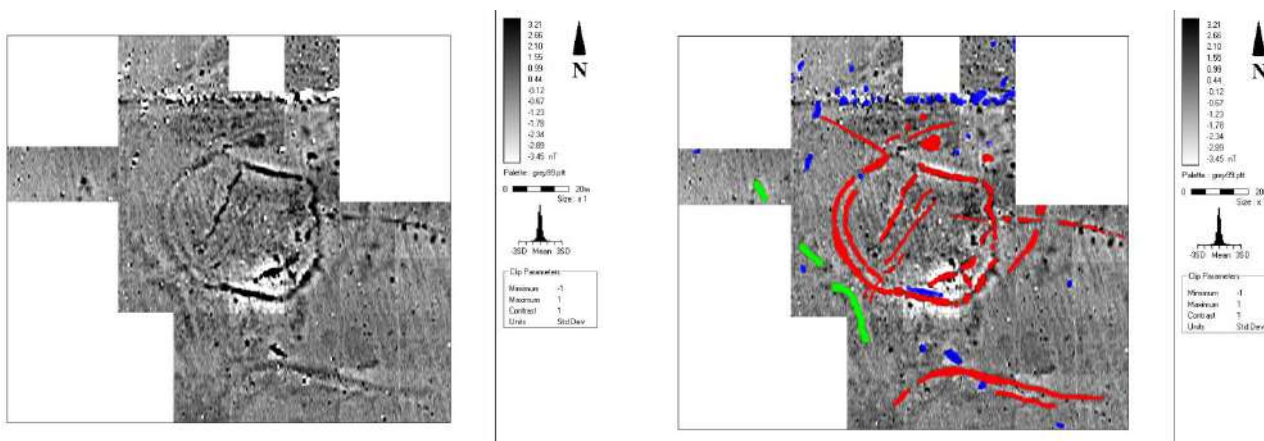
XY Trace: The data are presented as a series of linear traces, enabling a semi-profile display of the respective anomalies along the X and Y axes. This display option is essential for distinguishing between modern ferrous materials (buried metal debris) and potential archaeological responses. The XY trace plot provides a linear display of the magnitude of the response within a given data set.



XY Trace of enclosure site

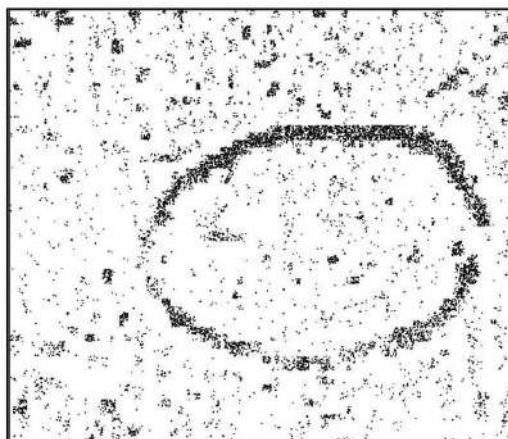


Greyscale: As with dot density plots, the greyscale format assigns a cell to each datum according to its location on the grid. The display of each data point is conducted at very fine increments, allowing the full range of values to be displayed within the given data set. This display method also enables the identification of discrete responses that may be at the limits of instrument detection.



Early medieval enclosure grey scale

Dot Density Plot : Each datum is assigned a cell in which the intensity or number of dots displayed is proportional to the magnitude of the individual response. The visibility or presentation of responses within a given survey area is governed by numeric parameters specific to both soil morphological and archaeological conditions observed on site. Typically, the range of weak to strong responses is manifested by a low to high level of dot density. The format is useful for displaying gradiometer and resistance data particularly for identifying low-level responses.



Dot Density plot of oval shaped enclosure

Glossary of Interpretation Terms

Archaeology: This category refers to responses usually supported by comparative archaeological evidence (i.e., photographic transcriptions, excavation, etc.). The term is generally associated with significant concentrations of former settlement, such as ditched enclosures, storage pits and associated features.

Archaeology ?: This term corresponds to anomalies that display typical archaeological patterns where no record of comparative archaeological evidence is available. In some cases, it may prove difficult to distinguish between these and evidence of more recent activity also visible in the data.

Industrial: Such anomalies generally possess a strong magnetic response and may equate with archaeological features such as kilns, furnaces, concentrations of fired debris and associated industrial debris.



Area of Increased Magnetic Response: These responses often lack any distinctive archaeological form, and it is therefore difficult to assign any specific interpretation. The resulting responses are site specific, possibly associated with concentrations of archaeological debris or more recent disturbance to underlying archaeological features.

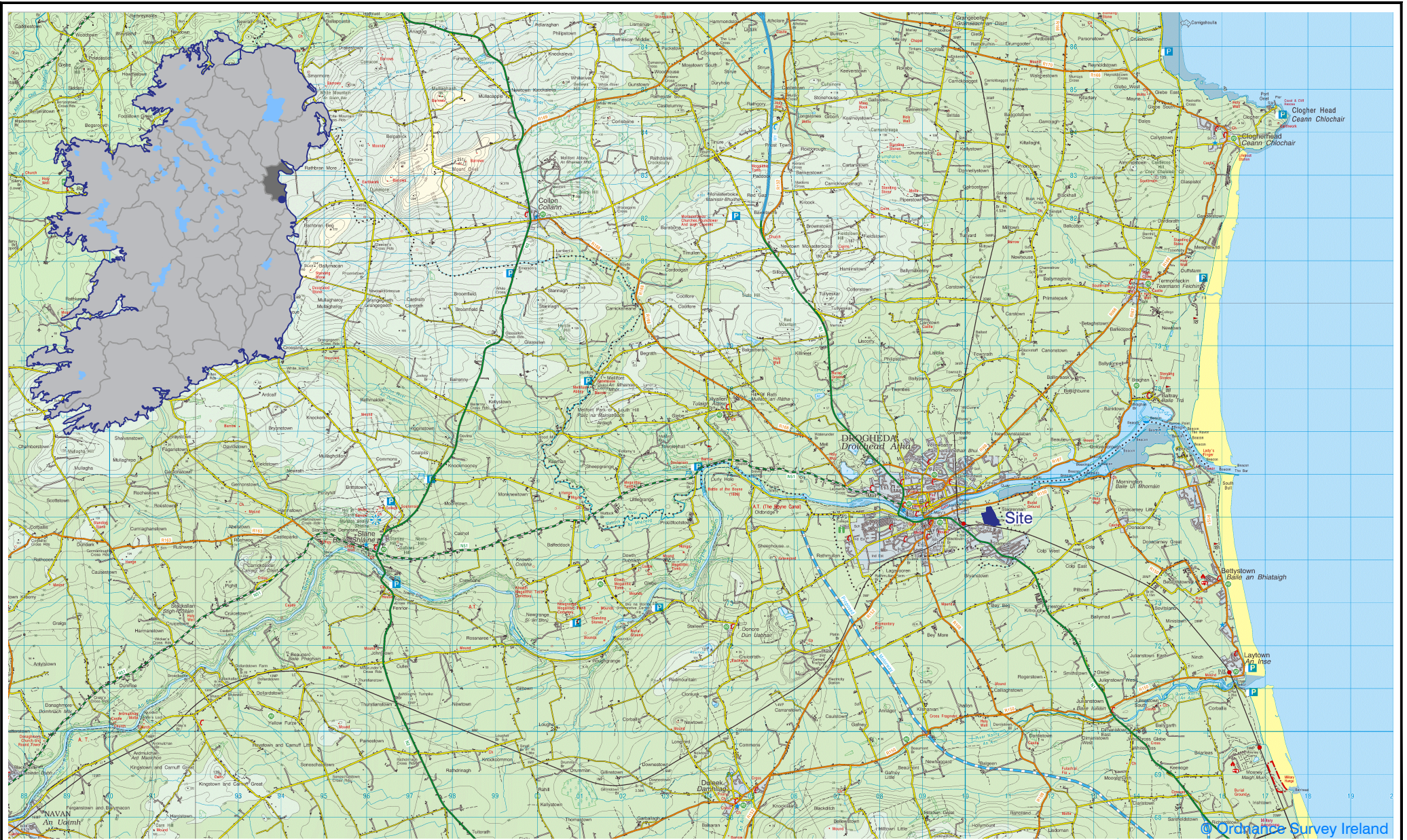
Trend : This category refers to low-level magnetic responses barely visible above the magnetic background of the soil. Interpretation is tentative, as these anomalies are often at the limits of instrument detection.

Ploughing/Ridge & Furrow : Visible as a series of linear responses, these anomalies equate with recent cultivation trends.

Natural?: Resulting from localised natural variations in the magnetic background of the subsoil, these responses are often recorded in areas of low-lying land prone to flooding.

Ferrous : These anomalies exhibit a typically strong magnetic response, often referred to as 'iron spikes,' and are the result of modern metal debris located within the topsoil.

Area of Strong Magnetic Disturbance: This term refers to large-scale magnetic interference from existing services or structures. The extent of this interference may in some cases obscure anomalies of potential archaeological interest.



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Site: Newton, Drogheda, Co. Louth

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Scale: 1:120,000 @a4

Figure 1: Location of site

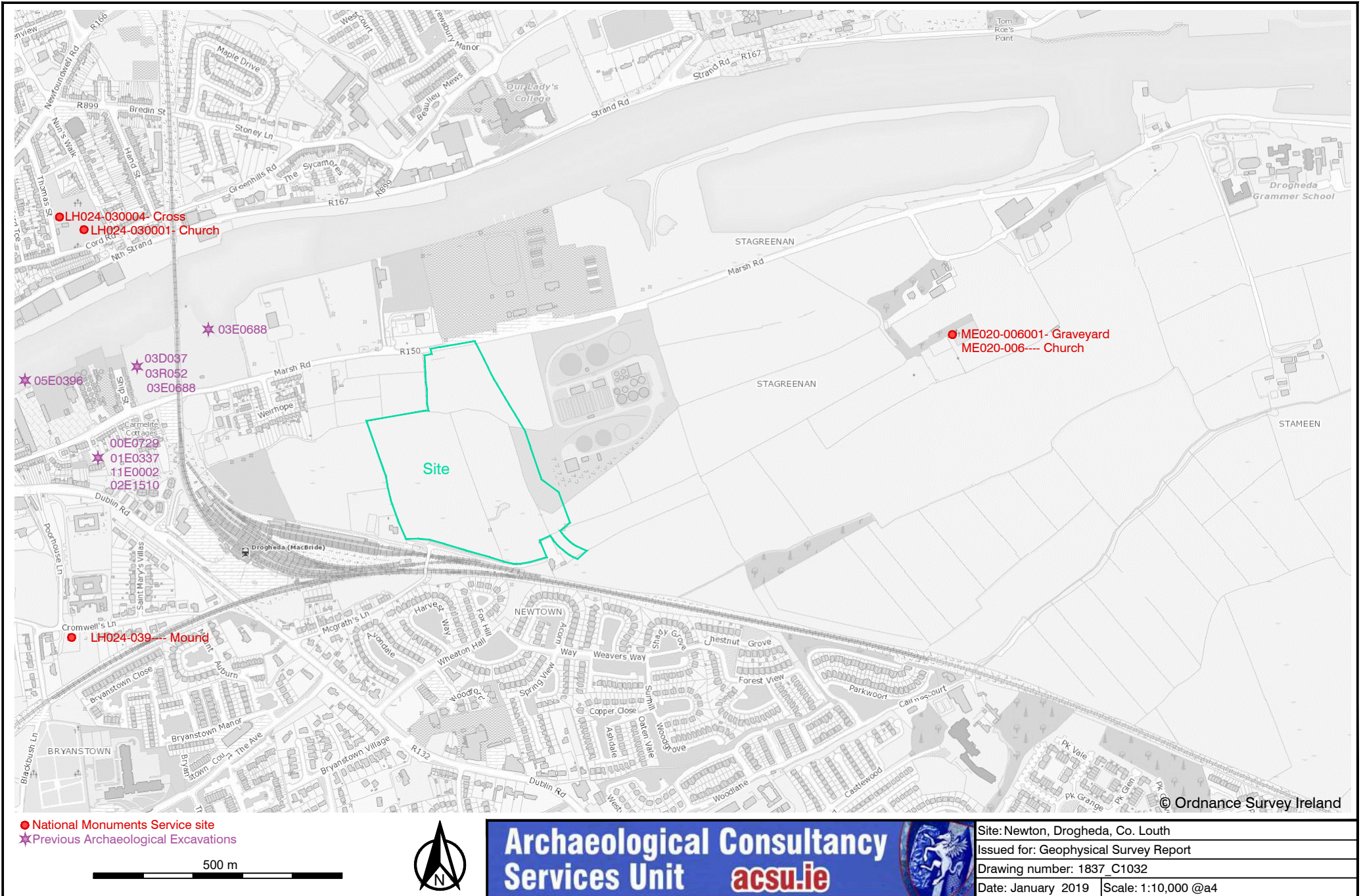
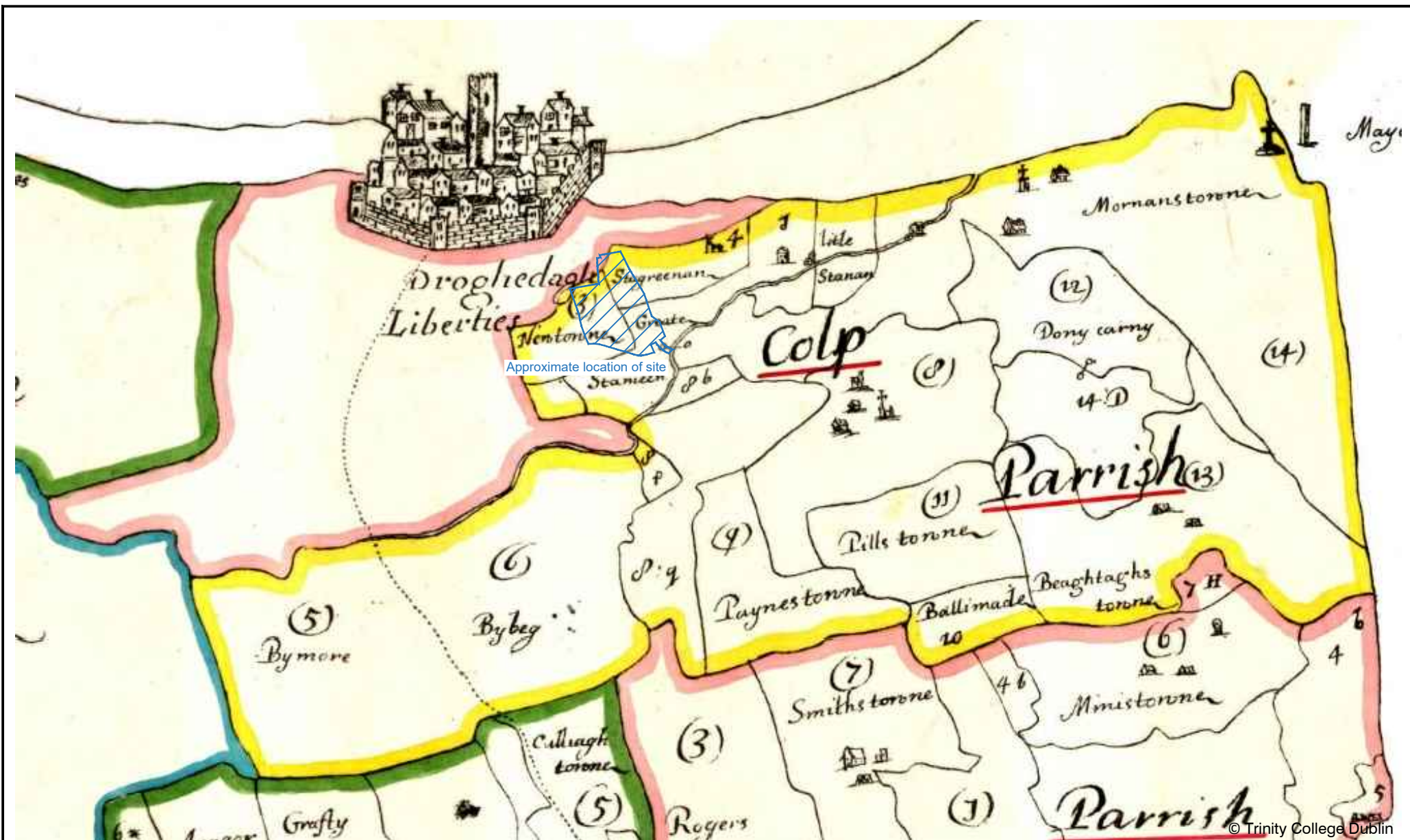


Figure 2: Location of site and nearby Recorded Monuments



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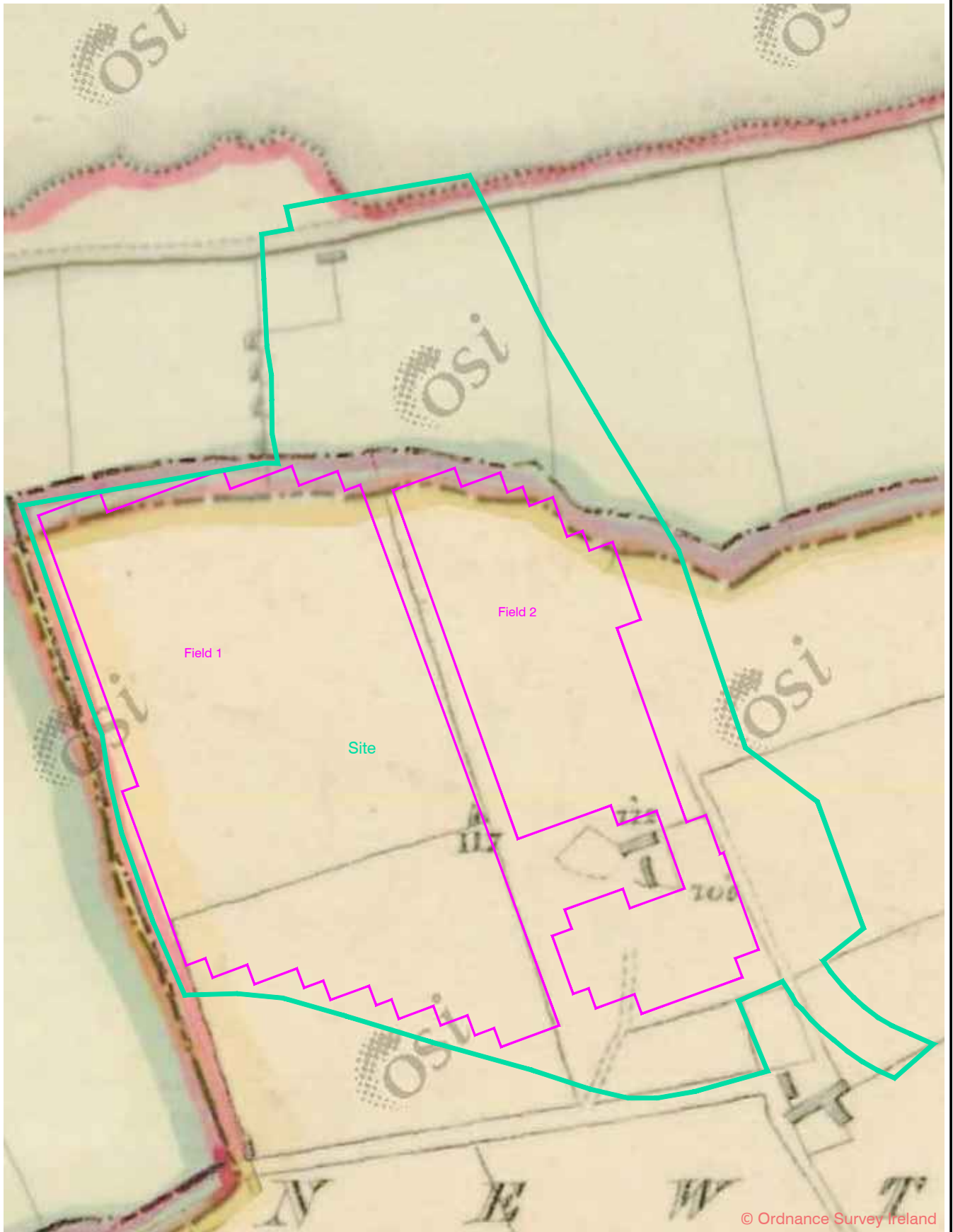
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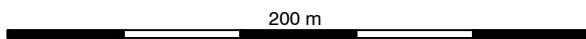
Date: January 2019

Scale: Do not scale

Figure 3: Extract from Down survey (1654-56), showing approximate location of site



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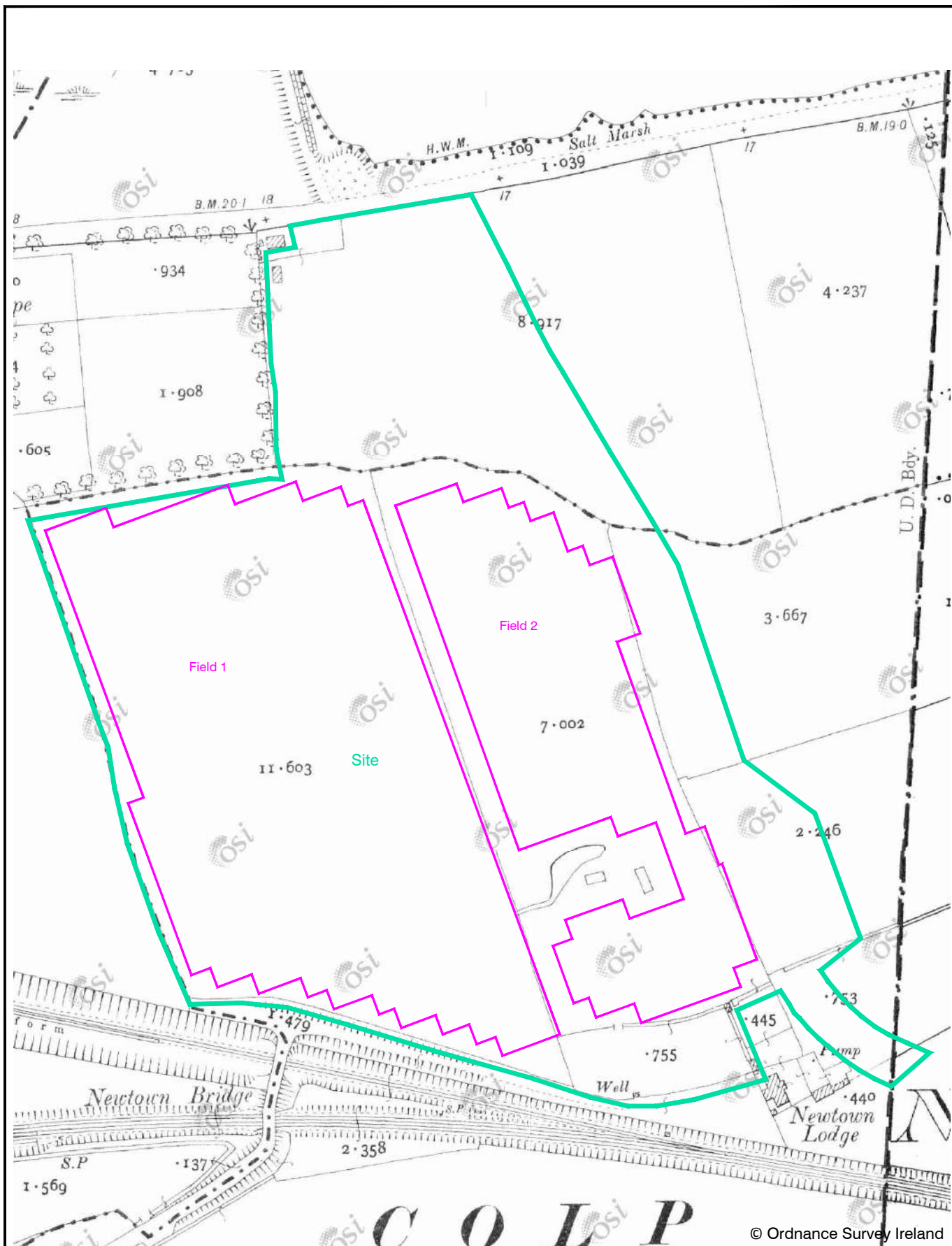
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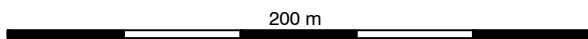
Date: January 2019

Scale: 1:2,600 @a4

Figure 4: Extract from first edition OS 6-inch map (1835), showing location of site



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Figure 5: Extract from 25-inch OS map (1907-9), showing location of site

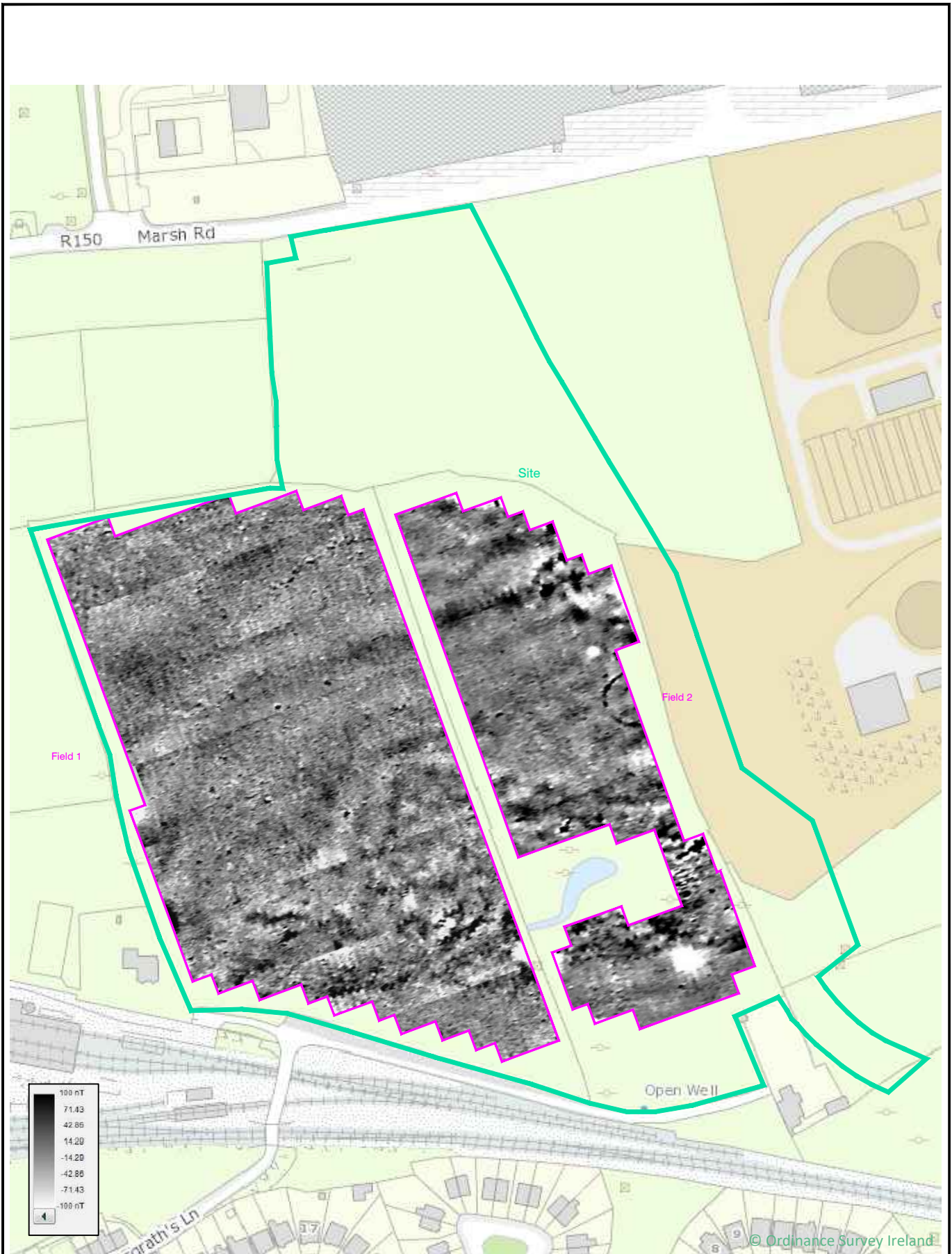


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Figure 6: Details of proposed development, showing geophysical survey areas (in pink)



200 m

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Figure 7: Geophysical survey results (grey scale image)

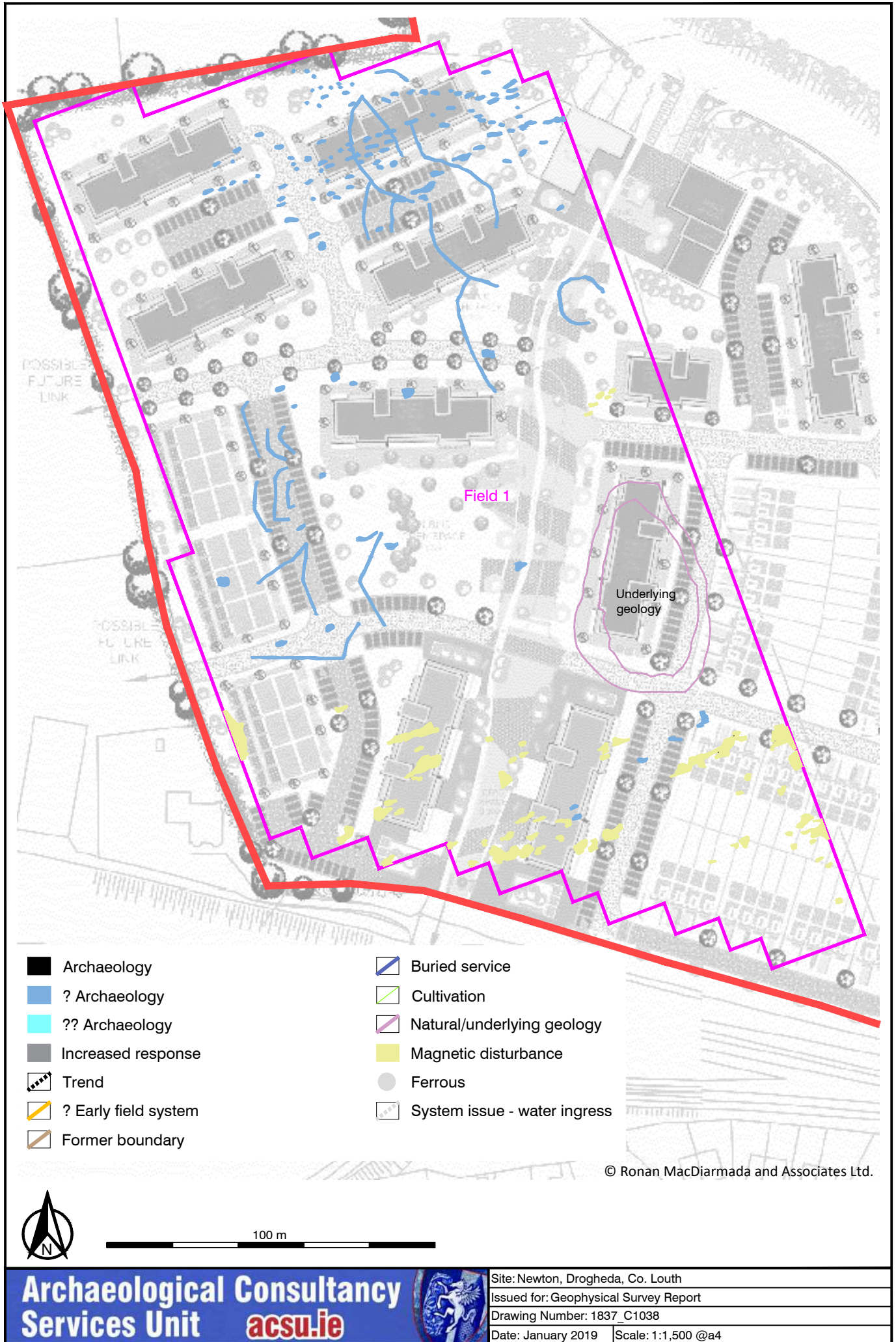


Figure 8: Interpretation of geophysical survey, Field 1

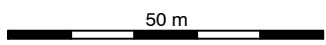
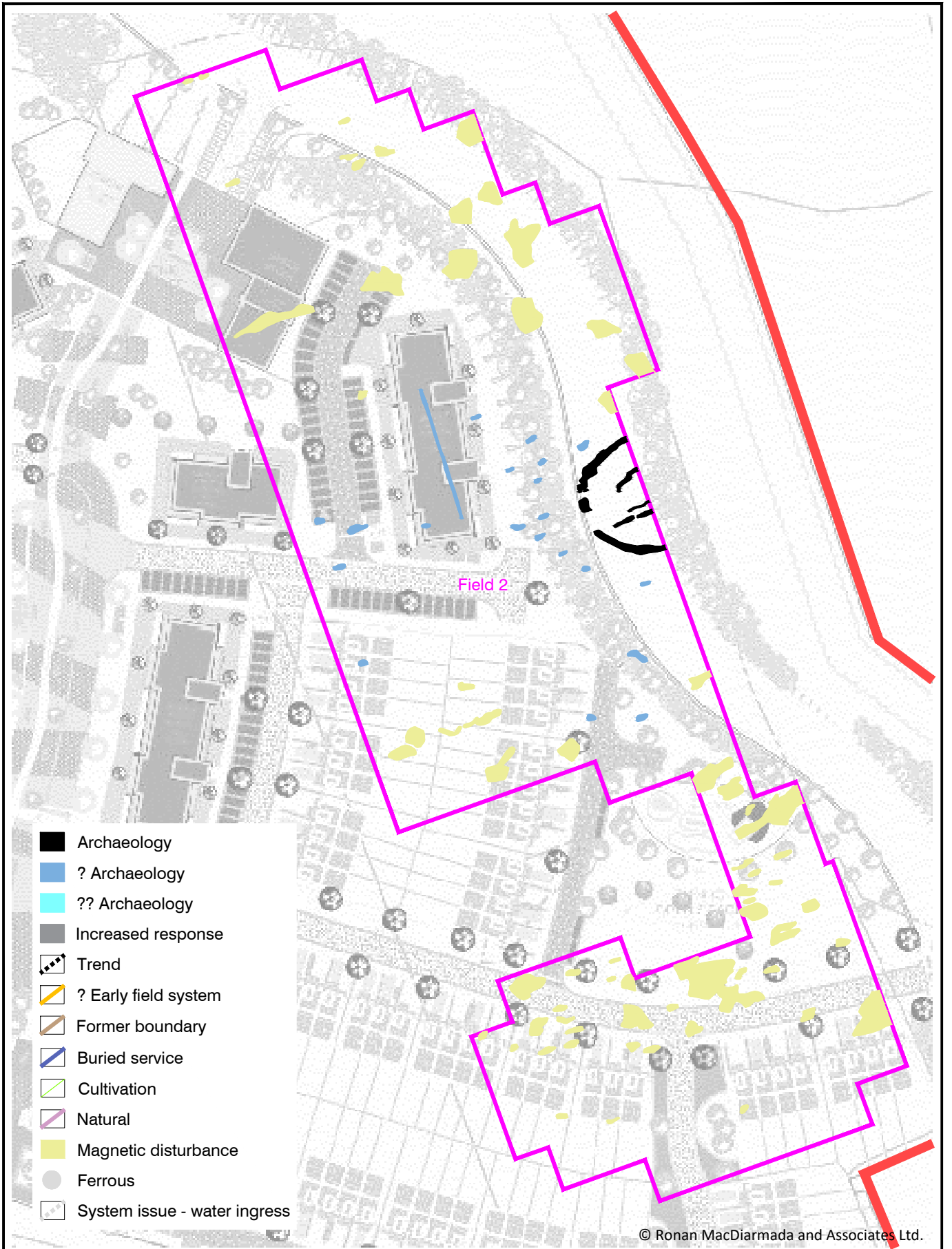


Figure 9: Interpretation of geophysical survey, Field 2