

Chapter 4:

# Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

## 4.0 CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This Cultural Heritage and Archaeology assessment undertaken at a site off the Colpe Road at Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd for Shannon Homes (Drogheda) Ltd. The desk based study of existing sources and field survey for this assessment was undertaken by Aidan O'Connell of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd. and supplemented by test-excavations (Licence no. 18E0089 & 18E0597), geophysical surveys (Detection licence no. 18R0011 & 18R0181) and full archaeological excavation (Licence no. 18E0615ext.). It seeks to identify and record the location, nature and dimensions of any archaeological or cultural heritage features, fabric or artefacts that may be impacted by the proposed works. The assessment gauges the level of development impact and includes recommendations for the mitigation of any sites or features of cultural heritage interest present within the development area.

The assessment was undertaken by Aidan O'Connell BA MIAI, Senior Archaeologist, Archer Heritage Planning Ltd, an excavation licence eligible archaeologist with 20 years experience in archaeological assessment.

### 4.2 STUDY METHODOLOGY

#### 4.2.1 Desktop Study

The Desktop study availed of the following sources:

- Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)/ Sites and Monuments Record<sup>1</sup>
- Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland
- Aerial photography
- Historical maps
- Documentary research
- Relevant on-line databases (e.g. Excavation Bulletin; NRA Archaeological Database).

#### 4.2.2 Field-based assessments

The desktop study has been augmented by numerous field-based assessments used to further define the archaeological potential of the site:

- A field inspection took the form of a non-intrusive walkover survey to assess land-use patterns, site topography and the identification of sites of archaeological and cultural heritage interest.
- Geophysical surveys were undertaken across the site in order to identify sub-surface magnetic anomalies indicative of areas of archaeological potential with no surface expression. This work was undertaken under licence to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland (NMI). The geophysical surveys were undertaken by J Nichols of Target Archaeological Geophysics (TAG) under licence 18R0011 & 18R0181 (Nichols 2018a & b).
- Two phases of archaeological test excavations were undertaken at the site with the first in the footprint of the access road and commercial development granted planning permission under ref LB180620, Meath Co. Co. and the second in the footprint of the residential development subject to a Strategic Housing Development application, planning reference ABP-303309-1. The test excavations were licensed (18E0089 & 18E0597 respectively) by the DCHG and NMI under National Monuments Acts 1930–2004 (Coen 2018a & b). The aim of test excavations was to ascertain the location, nature, date, character, extent and significance of potential archaeological features discovered initially through geophysical survey and in the general area and to reveal the horizontal extent of all archaeological sites/features/deposits and the vertical extent of any archaeological stratigraphy.
- Full archaeological excavation of the linear features of early medieval date identified in the test-excavations has been completed on site and the post excavation works are on-going. This work was undertaken under licence (18E0615ext.) to the DCHG in consultation with the NMI.

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<sup>1</sup>Archive Unit National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht.

Preliminary and final reports will be lodged with the relevant statutory bodies as per licensing conditions.

### 4.2.3 Guidance and Legislation

Archaeological and cultural heritage protection in Ireland is provided by a number of international and national mechanisms. These include but are not limited to:

- National Monuments Acts 1930-2004;
- Architectural Heritage & Historic Properties Act. 1999.;
- Planning & Development Act. 2000, as amended;
- European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage. 1992.

The Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999) outlines the State's general principles in relation to the management and protection of archaeological heritage. This document outlines that avoidance of developmental impacts on archaeological heritage and preservation in situ of archaeological sites and monuments are always the preferred option. When a site, or part of a site, has to be removed due to development, then preservation by record must be undertaken, i.e. through excavation and recording.

Meath County Council recognises the value and significance of the county's archaeological heritage, and the importance of fostering a greater public appreciation of this heritage. Through policies contained in the Meath County Development Plan (2013-2019, Volume 1, Chapter 9), they seek to ensure the effective protection, conservation and enhancement of archaeological sites, monuments and their settings. Stated policies and objectives include

- CH POL 6 To promote awareness of, and access to, the archaeological inheritance of County Meath.
- CH POL 7 To ensure that development in the immediate vicinity of a recorded monument is sensitively sited and designed so that it does not significantly detract from the monument. Where upstanding remains exist, a visual impact assessment may be required.
- CH POL 9 To inform and seek guidance from the National Museum of Ireland if an unrecorded archaeological object is discovered, or the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in the case of the discovery of an unrecorded archaeological site, in accordance with National Monuments legislation.
- CH OBJ 7 To protect archaeological sites and monuments, underwater archaeology, and archaeological objects, which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, and to seek their preservation in situ (or at a minimum, preservation by record) through the planning process.
- CH OBJ 8 To seek to protect important archaeological landscapes from inappropriate development.
- CH OBJ 11 To encourage and promote the appropriate management and maintenance of the County's archaeological heritage, including historical burial grounds, in accordance with conservation principles and best practice guidelines.

In the production of this Environmental Impact Assessment report, guidance was sought from relevant publications. These include but are not limited to:

- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2018) (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government)
- Guidelines on the information to be contained in environmental impact assessment reports, EPA, 2017 (Draft)
- EIA Directive 2014/EU/52
- Advice notes on current practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements, EPA, 2003.
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Guidance for Consent Authorities Regarding Sub-Threshold Development (DoEHLG 2003).
- Development Management Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2007).
- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements, EPA, 2002

## 4.3 EXISTING RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

### 4.3.1 Brief historical & archaeological background

Colp became a borough in the late twelfth century, when Augustinian canons from Llanthony, Wales were granted lands by Hugh de Lacy (Casey & Rowan 1993). Although the canons used the earlier monastic site, Colp was never a substantial priory but rather a farming cell or grange (Bradley 1988). Mill Road takes its name from a water mill in this area, referred to in the Llanthony Cartularies, Gormanston Register and the Civil Survey (D’Alton 1844; Simington 1940; Mills & McEnery 1916).

In 1540, at the time of the Dissolution of the Irish monasteries, the grange comprised 120 acres with “a great stone house” (a tower house). In 1559, the grange was granted to Henry Draycott, Controller of the Pipe in the Irish Exchequer, and political ally of the Lord Deputy, Anthony St. Leger (D’Alton 1844; Gwynn & Hadcock 1988; Barnewall 1977). The Draycotts quickly integrated with the Old English community of the Pale, and in 1641 the family sided with the Irish forces resulting in the temporary forfeiture of their lands (they were regained in 1663; D’Alton 1844). Following the rebellion, the settlement of Colp had dwindled to the castle and a number of cabins (Simington 1940). By the 1860s, all trace of the medieval church had vanished, most of it being removed during the construction of the Church of Ireland church in 1809 (Bradley 1985).

### 4.3.2 Record of Monuments & Places

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is a statutory inventory of archaeological sites protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 (Section 12, 1994 Act), compiled and maintained by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI). The inventory concentrates on pre-1700 AD sites and is based on a previous inventory known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which does not have legal protection or status (see [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)). The proposed development is located outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential associated with the historic town of Drogheda. A selection of RMP entries relevant to the site and the wider area are presented in Table 4.1 below and Figure 4.2.

The proposed development area is in proximity to three recorded monuments; ME021-016 (fulacht fia), which was identified during archaeological monitoring of the gas pipeline in 1988. It was observed as a patch of heat-cracked sandstone mixed with charcoal in a ploughed field and measured 25 x 20m. These are common prehistoric sites (overwhelmingly Bronze Age) in which stones were heated on a hearth and placed into water-filled pits or troughs and are believed to have fulfilled a number of functions including feasting, bathing, sauna, industry and brewing.

Immediately south of ME021-016 is a substantial cemetery (ME021-011001) and enclosure (ME021-011002) where the remains of over one hundred individuals were excavated. A substantial ditch was identified by air photography (Gowen 1988).

There are no visible remains of the medieval church of Colpe (ME021-012004-) the location of which lies approximately 100m east of the easternmost point of the access road.

SMR No	Class	Townland	ITM
ME020-043001	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043002-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043003-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043004-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043005-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043006-	Ringfort - rath	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043007-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043008-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043009-	Burial	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043010-	Kiln - corn-drying	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043011-	Souterrain	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
<b>ME021-011001-</b>	<b>Burial</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712167, 774698</b>
<b>ME021-011002-</b>	<b>Enclosure</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712167, 774698</b>
ME021-012----	Settlement cluster	COLP EAST, COLP WEST, MORNINGTON	712607, 774478

SMR No	Class	Townland	ITM
ME021-012001-	Castle - unclassified	MORNINGTON	712601, 774527
ME021-012003-	Earthwork	MORNINGTON	712539, 774510
ME021-012004-	Church	COLP WEST	712616, 774443
ME021-012005-	Cross - High cross	COLP WEST	712616, 774443
ME021-012006-	Cross	COLP WEST	712635, 774446
ME021-012007-	Ringfort - rath	COLP EAST	712616, 774615
ME021-012008-	Graveyard	COLP EAST, COLP WEST	712616, 774443
<b>ME021-016----</b>	<b>Fulacht fia</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712197, 774827</b>
ME020-043001-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043002-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043003-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043004-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043005-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043006-	Ringfort - rath	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043007-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043008-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043009-	Burial	COLP WEST	711911, 774412

**Table 4.1: Archaeological sites in the wider area of the proposed development**

### 4.3.3 Topographical Files

A significant quantity of prehistoric, early medieval and late medieval artefacts was retrieved during archaeological excavations in Colp West and Painestown townlands between 1988 and 2008. Also, archaeological monitoring of dredging works on Boyne, north of Stagrennan townland recovered over 3,000 pieces of worked flint, medieval and post-medieval pottery, roof and floor tile, clay pipes, glass, leather off-cuts and possible ship timbers. Four significant objects were found: an antler hammer or mace head; a worked bone toggle-like item, a copper alloy pin and a copper alloy socketed and basal-looped spearhead (Whitaker 1999). A significant amount of this material may have been transported downstream from Drogheda.

The National Museum of Ireland Topographical Files is the national archive of all known antiquities recorded by the National Museum listed by county and townland/ street. These files relate primarily to artefacts but also include references to monuments and contain a unique archive of records of previous archaeological excavations. The Museum files present an accurate catalogue of objects reported to that institution from 1928. The following entries were recorded for Drogheda town:

Location	Museum No.	Description
River Boyne, Drogheda	2010:323	Wooden trough
Drogheda Port	2009:163	Iron Cannon
Drogheda	2005:50-51	Iron cannon balls
Drogheda (?)	2004:42	Flint arrowhead
Drogheda	1989:76	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1981:9.1	Pottery (base sherd of manganese mottled ware; 18C)
Building site at Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1980:22	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1979:93	Pottery
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1979:91-2	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1330-2089	Pottery (medieval and post-medieval surface finds)
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1272-1329	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1262-1271	Iron nails
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1261	Iron horseshoe
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1260	Bone pin
Millmount, Drogheda	1977:1258	Pottery
Dyer Street, Drogheda	1977:1256-7	Pottery

Location	Museum No.	Description
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1977:1255	Pottery
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1977:1253-4	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:527-531	Pottery (surface finds)
John Street, Drogheda	1976:525-6	Clay tiles
John Street, Drogheda	1976:506-24	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:505	Leather object
John Street, Drogheda	1976:504	Leather shoe
John Street, Drogheda	1976:503	Antler tine
John Street, Drogheda	1976:250-502	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:227-249	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:224-6	Iron objects
John Street, Drogheda	1976:223	Slag
John Street, Drogheda	1976:222	Flint flake
John Street, Drogheda	1976:221	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:219-20	Slate (stone)
John Street, Drogheda	1976:218	Clay pipe
John Street, Drogheda	1976:167-217	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:166	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:162-5	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:161	Iron nail
John Street, Drogheda	1976:151-60	Pottery
River Boyne (near Drogheda)	1968:297	Bronze axehead
Bessexwell Lane, Drogheda	1954:76-82	Pottery
Bessexwell Lane, Drogheda	1954:74-5	Ceramic tile
Drogheda	M1951:11-12	Leather shoe
Drogheda	1940:72	Iron grissit
Drogheda (Moneymore)	1936:1900	Cu alloy dagger
Drogheda	RIA1914:49	Cu alloy token
Drogheda	SA1913:141	Token
5 miles NW of Drogheda	SA1909:1	Cast of high cross of Monasterboice
Drogheda	1882:96	Ceramic tile
Drogheda	1000:69	Object
River Boyne near Drogheda	R4015	Bronze brooch
Near Drogheda	R3088	Lead alloy seal
Drogheda	R2017	Iron cleaver
Drogheda	R1828	Bronze harp peg
Near Drogheda	R1693	Cu alloy coin
Between Oldbridge and Drogheda	R1574	Wooden boat
Near Drogheda	1275:W1275	Flint object
River Boyne between Oldbridge and Drogheda	3596:Wk729	Wooden boat
Near Drogheda	E191:373	Iron razor
Near Drogheda	7801:W282	Lead bulla
Near Drogheda (Boylan Fields)	1900:Wk182	Iron object
Near Drogheda	1840:Wk123	Iron gun
Near Drogheda	1839:Wk122	Iron gun
Near Drogheda	2191:W23	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2190:W22	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2189:W21	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2188:W20	Stone whetstone
Near Drogheda	2187:W19	Stone whetstone

**Table 4.2: Stray archaeological finds in the vicinity of the site**

#### 4.3.4 Cartographic Sources

Analysis of historic mapping can show human impact on landscape over a prolonged period. Large collections of historical maps (pre- and early Ordnance Survey maps as well as estate or private maps) are held at the

Glucksman Map Library, Trinity College and other sources (UCD Library, Ordnance Survey Ireland, local libraries and published material). The development of the site and its vicinity recorded through the seventeenth to twentieth century cartography are described in Table 4.3 below (Figure 4.3).

Map	Date	Description
Down Survey	1670	Drogheda is depicted as a walled town with a singular bridge crossing over the River Boyne. Colp townland (and Parish) is marked on this map. A structure with a cross on top and a small square building is depicted within Colp Townland. This is most likely referring to the old monastery and castle described in the 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS map.
Taylor and Skinner Map	1777	Drogheda is depicted as a large town with a singular bridge crossing the Boyne. A road runs east and divides in two, one road turns south (corresponding with the modern R132 road), while the other continues eastward. A windmill is depicted between the two roads.
1st edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey	1835	The townland boundary is depicted bordering the north, east and south of the area of interest (with Stameen, Mornington and Colp East townlands). The development area itself is depicted as open green fields, lined with trees. There is a farm complex (six linear buildings in a cluster within a property boundary) depicted to the south east which lines a road running in an east-west direction (across the SE corner of the development area). The surrounding countryside is open farmland. Directly to the SE of the area of interest is a church and associated graveyard. Marked on this map in the same area is 'site of monastery', ' site of old castle' and 'site of Colpa Fort'
3rd edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey	1888-1913	The railway now runs NW-SE forming the southern side of the site. The small roadway which passed by the farmyard now terminates at this farm, as the railway line cuts it off. The area of interest otherwise remains unchanged from the previous map. The 'site of monastery' to the south of the area of interest has been developed into a farming complex.
Cassini	1909-13	No change from previous map

**Table 4.3: Cartographic sources relating to the site (Figure 4.3)**

#### 4.3.5 Aerial photography

Aerial photography (or other forms of remote sensing) may reveal certain archaeological features or sites (earthworks, crop marks, soil marks) that for many reasons may not be appreciated at ground level. There are a number of available collections including the National Monuments Section, Geological Survey of Ireland (1970–73), Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1995, 2000, 2005), National Museum of Ireland (St Joseph CUCAP Collection) and Air Corps (1950’s–1970’s). Online orthostatic photographs of the site were examined (Ordnance Survey Ireland 1995, 2000 & 2005; Google Maps 2019, Figure 4.4).

Map	Date	Description
Ordnance Survey	1995	The area of interest appears much the same as it is today, an open triangular green field site. However the housing

Map	Date	Description
		estate to the south of the railway line and the school in the NE corner has not yet been built.
Ordnance Survey	2000	Nothing has changed from the earlier photograph
Ordnance Survey	2005	The housing estate to the south of the railway line has been built since the 2000 photograph.
Ordnance Survey	2011-2013	The school in the NE corner has been built since the previous photograph. The farm complex in the centre of the area of interest (as marked on the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition OS map) has been partially demolished.
Ordnance Survey	2013-2019	Nothing has changed from the earlier photograph

**Table 4.4: Aerial photographs relating to the site**

### 4.3.6 Previous Archaeological Excavations

The Excavation Bulletin is a database of summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland and Northern Ireland from 1970 to 2008. Summaries relating to archaeological excavations undertaken by the National Roads Authority are also available on-line and were consulted for any adjacent sites. Reports on licensed archaeological works are also held by the Archive Unit of the National Monuments Section. There have been numerous archaeological investigations adjacent to the subject site.

Licence	OS Ref	Townland/ Street	Ex. Bull. Ref.	Author
N/A	711468, 774166	Colp West	1988:51	M. Gowen
The site in a field adjacent to the 'Mill Road' some 500m to the north-west of the well known medieval foundation of Colp with its nearby fort and castle. Multiple ditches uncovered and partially excavated may point to the existence of a multi-vallate enclosure or may indicate a series of overlapping enclosures of differing dates. The remains of over one hundred individuals were exposed, excavated and retrieved for study. All burials were aligned east-west, many placed on top of earlier burials and fourteen were placed in stone-lined graves				
05E0019	711468, 774166	Colp West	2005:1163	D.Murphy
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				
07E0891	711577, 773668	Colp West	2007:1288	R O Hara
Two multiphase curvilinear ditch sequences were recorded. Two drystone souterrains were also excavated				
08E0302	712327, 774843	Colp West	2008:947	S Linnane
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				
13E0255	712300, 774830	Colp West	2013:423	R OHara
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works (An Bhradan Feasa)				
99E0472 99E0472 ext 01E0931 03E0641 03E0660	711468, 774166	Colp West	1999:679 2000:0748 2001:952 2001:953 2001:954 2002:1441 2003:1374 2003:1375 2003:1376	D. Murphy E. Corcoran R. OHara
1999:679- Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				



Licence	OS Ref	Townland/ Street	Ex. Bull. Ref.	Author
<p>2000:0748- During monitoring of a housing development a previously unknown prehistoric and Early Christian settlement, which covered an area of 2 acres, was unearthed. A full archaeological excavation was carried out on this site from October 2000 to February 2001. The prehistoric phase of settlement at Colp West was defined by a linear ditch, which ran north–south across the site. All the prehistoric features lay to the west of this ditch. It was a probable ritual site; the majority of the features discovered comprising pits and post-holes. The principal features uncovered within the Early Christian area of the site consisted of a ringfort, the cut for a souterrain, four enclosures and a large rectangular enclosure. Four sub rectangular/D-shaped enclosures were annexed to the ringfort.</p> <p>2001:952- An extensive site was revealed at Colp West, which incorporated a small ringfort, six associated enclosures, a Bronze Age enclosure, an Iron Age enclosure, kilns, possible robber trenches, post-holes, spreads and pits. Four broad phases of activity were identified, and can be dated to the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Early Christian and post-medieval–modern periods respectively</p> <p>2001:953- Three fulachta fiadh were exposed during the monitoring of the topsoil-stripping and were subsequently excavated. No other features of archaeological significance or finds were recovered during the monitoring</p> <p>2001:954- Three fulachta fiadh were exposed during the monitoring of the topsoil-stripping and were subsequently excavated.</p> <p>2002:1441- Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of works</p> <p>2003:1374- Remains of a Fulacht Fia (03E0641) and numerous post holes (03E0660) uncovered during monitoring.</p> <p>2003:1375- Fulacht Fia</p> <p>2003:1376-The site consisted of a circular arrangement of posts c. 7m in diameter built without a footing trench, with a number of internal posts forming wall or roof supports. A number of pits were found both internally and externally. Bronze age in date.</p>				
14E0091	712044, 774042	Colp West	2014:106	A O Connell
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				

**Table 4.5: Archaeological excavation in the surrounding area**

### 4.3.7 Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) was established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. Its purpose is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. It is intended to provide a basis for recommendations of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to Local Authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in Records of Protected Structures (RPS).

The nearest structures to the residential development which are recorded on the NIAH are Colpe House (Reg No. 14317002, RPS number MH021-103) 500m to the south-east and Colp Church of Ireland (Reg No. 14317001 RPS number MH021-103) 500m to the south-east. The description of these protected structures in the Record of Protected Structures for Co. Meath is given as;

- Colpe House: Detached irregular-plan house, built c.1900, with pedimented central entrance bay flanked by recessed bay and projecting pedimented bay. Pitched slate roofs with rendered chimneystacks.
- Colp Church of Ireland and Castle site: Board of First Fruits church, built c. 1790, now in use as shop. Graveyard to side. Rubble stone boundary wall and piers with cast-iron gates to side.

### 4.3.8 Toponyms

Local tradition links the name Colp with an early Irish myth involving the Sons of Mil, one of whom, Colpa of the Sword, drowned at the mouth of the Boyne and was buried locally, reputedly within a flat topped mound in Colp East known as *Rath Colpa* (ME021-012007). *Inbher Colpdaí*, ‘the port of Colp’, is mentioned in the eighth-

century AD *Lives of St Patrick*, as the place where Patrick disembarked before making his way to confront the legendary King Loeguire at Tara (Lewis 1837). The name appears elsewhere in Irish toponyms (Racolpa in Co. Tyrone; Joyce 1910, vol. 3, 535), where the root is given as *colptach* ('a two-year old heifer'). Mill Road takes its name from a water mill in this area, referred to in the Llanthony Cartularies, Gormanston Register and the Civil Survey (D'Alton 1844; Simington 1940; Mills & McEnery 1916) but not marked on any of the maps consulted in Section 4.3.4 above.

#### 4.3.9 Site Visit

The site was visited by Aidan O' Connell of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd on 6th December 2017 in overcast conditions (Plates 4.1-4.4). The site comprises open tillage areas surrounding Fortfield House and running northwards towards the rear of *An Bhradan Feasa* school to the NE of the site. The land is currently laid out in crops with mature hedgerows forming any of the remaining field boundaries, generally flat and low-lying there is a notable ridge running NW to SW through the centre of the proposed road.

#### 4.3.10 Geophysical Survey

A geophysical survey was commissioned in advance of proposed test-excavations for the commercial and access road development under Planning ref. LB180620, Meath Co. Co. This geophysical survey, under licence 18R0011 incorporated the results of an earlier survey, Detection Licence no. 09R0057 (Nichols 2018a). Several potential archaeological features were identified and the test-trench layout for test-excavation 18E0089 was designed to investigate these features.

A second geophysical survey was commissioned in advance of test excavations for the current residential development, planning reference ABP-303309-1 (Nichols 2018b). This survey, under detection licence no. 18R0181, also identified several potential archaeological features and the test-trench layout was designed to investigate these features.

#### 4.3.11 Test trenching of road and commercial area in March 2018 (Licence number 18E0089)

Sixteen (16) test trenches with a combined length of 1720 linear metres were excavated within the site (Coen 2018a & Figure 4.5, Plates 4.5 & 4.6). Topsoil was quite uniform; 0.20-0.30m in depth across the area, subsoil was compact mixed yellow, grey and brown boulder clay. The main Dublin-Dundalk gas pipeline runs through the site. The southernmost field had been altered to build a football pitch and the natural boulder clay lay, at points, up to 1.2m below the current ground surface. Trenches 7 and 8 were abandoned as the area had been used as a yard and contaminated with construction debris. The remains of several field boundaries or drains were identified throughout the site but only three were deemed worthy of further attention due to their identification on the geophysical surveys of the site and proximity to the enclosure, ME021-011002-.

Trench 18 revealed a shallow (0.12 m deep x 0.85 m wide) E/W running ditch contained mid-brown stony silty clay. Trench 17 uncovered a deeper (0.35m deep x 0.9m wide) E/W running ditch containing a similar fill which may be part of the same feature and they appear to correspond to feature number 3 identified in the geophysical report (Nichols 2018 a). The geophysical report indicates a linear feature of over 100m in length in this area. Trench 17 revealed a N/S running ditch (0.4m deep x 1.3m wide) contained greyish brown stony silty clay and appears to be part of a series of features that may be a field system or an annex associated with the enclosure, ME021-011002-. This feature was highlighted in the geophysical report (*ibid.*) as feature 9.

#### 4.3.12 Test trenching of Areas 1A and 1B in October 2018 (Licence number 18E0597)

Twenty (20) trenches with a total length of 2980 linear metres and two 5m x 5m areas centred on geophysical anomalies were excavated (Coen 2018b & Figure 4.6, Plate 4.7). Topsoil was quite uniform; 0.25-0.40m in depth across the area, subsoil was compact orangey brown boulder clay. The main Dublin-Dundalk gas pipeline runs through the north-eastern corner of the subject area. A single area of interest was identified. In Trench number 10, a shallow (0.17m deep x 0.7m wide) E/W running ditch, F.1, contained mid-brown stony silty clay with a single piece of struck flint recovered. The ditch, F.1, appears to correspond to Feature A in Geophysical Survey 18R0181 (Nichols 2018 b) and is along the same alignment of anomaly number 3, identified in an earlier geophysical survey by Target (Nichols 2018 a, 5, Fig. 4, Detection licence number 18R0011).

The combined geophysical survey and test trenching of the road area, the commercial area and residential areas 1A and 1B revealed four linear features that may be associated with the enclosure, ME021-011002-. No

other archaeological monuments, deposits or material were identified during these assessments within the footprint of the proposed developments.

#### 4.3.13 Archaeological Excavation in April 2019 (Licence number 18E0615ext.)

The features identified comprised a series of ditches representing a field system associated with a large Early Medieval Enclosure, RMP no. ME021-011002, that contains a cemetery, RMP no. ME021-011001. Two cuttings (Figure 4.7) were opened centred on features identified in the test-excavations and informed by the geophysical surveys. Cutting 1, to the north of the Enclosure, revealed two ditches, C4 and C10, aligned north-south (Plate 4.8) while Cutting 2, to the west of the Enclosure, also contained two ditches, C16 and C18, aligned east-west. In Cutting 1, ditch C4 extended for 14.6 m north/south, between 1.3-2.2m in width and 0.82-1.08m in depth with steeply sloping sides and a U-shaped profile. It extended beyond the edge of excavation to the south. Seven fills were identified in the ditch, C5-9, 13 & 14, containing a moderate amount of animal bone. A narrow gap separated it from ditch C10 that extended along the same alignment for 16.7m, 1.35-2.55m in width and 0.35-0.55m in depth though with a broader, shallower U-shaped profile. It continued beyond the edge of excavation to the north. Only two fills were identified, C11 & C12, with a moderate amount of animal bone present too. In Cutting 2, ditches C16 and C18 were broadly similar in shape, averaging 0.8-0.9 m in width and 0.3-0.35 m in depth. They were aligned east/west with C16 traced for 66m in length and C18 for 53.5m. They both contained a single similar fill, C17 and C19 respectively, a greyish brown silty clay with frequent stone and only very occasional animal bone inclusions. A full excavation report will be produced following the completion of on-going post-excavation works that include faunal analysis of the animal bone assemblage and soil-sieving and analysis of the bulk soil samples.

#### 4.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development, under planning ref. ABP-303309-1, consists of a residential development comprising 357 no. residential units, a childcare facility and associated outdoor play area, road infrastructure, a pedestrian bridge over the railway line and associated pathways, all associated open space, cycle and pedestrian infrastructure, services and all other associated development on a site of c. 13.44 hectares.

The 357 no. residential units proposed consist of 169 no. houses, 52 no. duplex apartments and 136 no. apartments.

The 169 no. houses will consist of the following:

- 104 no. 3 bedroom units
- 65 no. 4 bedroom units

The 136 no. apartment units will consist of the following:

- 58 no. 1 bedroom units
- 78 no. 2 bedroom units

The 52 no. duplex units will consist of the following:

- 52 no. 3 bedroom units

The proposed childcare facility is a two storey building with a GFA of 439 sq.m. The proposed houses are 2/3 storeys in height and the duplex/apartment blocks are 3 - 6 storeys in height.

The development includes road infrastructure comprising of a link street approximately 652m in length (including changes to the previously permitted road infrastructure under Reg. Ref.: LB/180620), including bus stops, 1 no. roundabout, pedestrian crossings and c. 246m long connection of the link street to the east to facilitate a connection to the existing school on Mill Road (Gaelscoil an Bhradáin Feasa). The road infrastructure also includes the realignment of a section of Colpe Road and the realignment of the southern section of Mill Road, and includes proposed cycle lanes/paths, footpaths, grass verge, and the provision of a footpath and cyclepath / cycle lane on Colpe Road to tie-in with the existing shared footpath / cyclepath, to the south-west of the railway line.

The proposed new pedestrian bridge will cross the existing Dublin to Belfast railway line and will link the proposed SHD development to the existing Grange Rath housing development to the south-west.

The development includes associated site and infrastructural works including all associated road infrastructure, foul and surface / storm water drainage (including upgrading of water services on Mill Road), surface water management including attenuation and storage features, a pumping station, watermains and utilities, 592 no. car parking spaces, 532 no. cycle parking spaces, public open space including a linear park, bin and bike stores, 2 no. substations, landscaping consisting of new tree planting, hedges, berms and grass planting, boundary treatments, public lighting, and all associated site and infrastructural works.

## 4.5 POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This cultural heritage assessment has employed a variety of sources in conjunction with non-intrusive surveys and archaeological excavation to make a coherent assessment of the cultural heritage risk associated with the project. The following conclusions are presented in order to ascertain any likely significant potential direct and indirect impacts which the proposed development may have:

- The proposed residential area is in proximity to three recorded monuments; ME021-016 a Fulacht Fia; ME021:011001 a cemetery; and ME021:011002 an enclosure. The cemetery and enclosure were partially excavated in 1988, where the remains of over 100 individuals were buried over several generations. A separate Conservation and Management plan for this feature has been prepared.
- Aerial photographs show the double ditched enclosure of ME021-011002 approx. 150m to the rear of *An Bhradan Feasa* School.
- The field survey identified a NW/SE aligned ridge running through the road which had the potential to contain archaeological features- subsequent test excavations proved it to be non-archaeological.
- No potential archaeological features were recorded in historical maps of the subject site.
- There are no visible remains of the medieval church of Colpe (ME021-012004-) the location of which lies approximately 500m south- east of the residential development.
- Two protected structures, Colpe House (Reg. No. 14317002, RPS number MH021-103) and Colp Church of Ireland are located 500m to the south-east of the residential development.
- Previous excavations to the immediate south and west of the site (Grange Rath housing estate) revealed a large range of archaeological features including a small ringfort with eight additional enclosures and cereal-drying kilns indicating an extensive and prosperous settlement (Clarke & Murphy, 2001)
- Test trenching (licence number 18E0089) and geophysical survey (licence numbers 09R0057 and 18R0011) for a proposed road and office development (Planning Ref. LB180620) revealed three linear features probably associated with the enclosure ME021-011002.
- Further test trenching of the subject site (licence number 18E0597) comprising a total of twenty (20) trenches (2980 linear metres) and two 5m x 5m areas centred on geophysical anomalies (18R0181) were mechanically excavated across the site under archaeological supervision. A single archaeological feature, a shallow linear ditch in Trench 10, was identified that may correspond to a linear feature (Feature A) highlighted in the geophysical survey (18R0181).
- Following consultation with Mr. Tom Condit of the Department of Cultural Heritage and the Gaeltacht a licence to excavate the linear features found in the test-excavations (18E0089 & 18E0597) was received (18E0615ext.). Full archaeological excavation of these features, in two cuttings, was undertaken on 5-24 April 2019.

### 4.5.1 Construction Phase Impact

The greatest threat to unrecorded, buried archaeological sites/ features occur during the construction stage and include all ground disturbance works undertaken at this stage. The current development proposal will involve considerable ground disturbance works across the subject site including excavations and other groundworks (e.g. provision of access roads and service trenches), movement of machines and storage of material in sensitive areas.

The potential impact is based on Appendix 4 of the *Guidelines for the Assessment of Archaeological Heritage Impact of National Road Schemes* (Anon. 2006, 54). It is concluded that, in the absence of the mitigation measures described below, significant likely impacts on the archaeological remains at the site would be direct, negative and permanent.

#### 4.5.2 Operational Phase Impact

No potential negative impacts are identified at this moment during the operational phase as it is anticipated that issues of archaeological and cultural heritage interest will have been resolved prior to or during the construction phase.

A positive indirect impact is anticipated by the adoption of the Conservation and Management Plan for the enclosure, ME021-011002-, and burials, ME021-011001 (see Appendix 1). The archaeological features will be preserved under an appropriately landscaped and maintained green area and their presence will be highlighted by a suitable interpretation panel describing the nature and significance of the archaeological features in text and illustration to be erected at an appropriate location near to the archaeological features. It is anticipated that it will increase awareness and appreciation of the local cultural heritage environment. While it is generally acknowledged that access to green spaces in urban areas has a positive physical and mental health benefit (King, in Irish Times 25/07/2019), the addition of the cultural heritage element in this place will further enhance such benefits. ‘Archaeology enriches our quality of life and wellbeing by contributing to place-making, helping to create identities, connecting communities, fostering civic engagement, developing societal understanding, and contributing to knowledge. The benefits of archaeology to health, education and community cohesion have been demonstrated in a number of UK studies.’ (RIA 2017 p. 15)

#### 4.5.3 Cumulative Impacts

No potential negative cumulative impacts are identified from the current residential application and road and commercial development as it is anticipated that matters of archaeological and cultural heritage interest at this site will have been resolved prior to or during the construction phase of this proposal, namely the preservation by record, *i.e.* licensed archaeological excavation, of affected archaeological sites uncovered or preservation in situ of other sites such as the burials ME021-01101- and enclosure ME021-011002-. The burials ME021-01101- and enclosure ME021-011002- are subject to a Conservation and Management plan entailing the erection of a post-and-wire fence around an appropriate exclusion zone for these features prior to the commencement of construction activity in the area and to remain in place for the duration of works. Upon completion of the construction works the post-and-wire fence will be removed and the area will be appropriately landscaped to be retained as a green area for the development.

However, future development in the vicinity of the burials ME021-01101- and enclosure ME021-011002- within the overall land-block may have a negative impact on the buried archaeological remains. It is anticipated that should development proceed in the area surrounding the archaeological features, namely to the east of the access road granted permission under Planning ref. Meath Co. Co. LB180620, then a physical barrier may need to be re-erected. This would be similar to that envisaged in the Conservation and Management plan and would ensure the exclusion of construction activity from entering this landscaped green area over the buried archaeological feature, thus mitigating any potential negative impacts on the archaeological material.

#### 4.6 DO NOTHING IMPACT

If the proposed residential development were not undertaken, the Early Medieval ditches excavated under licence 18E0615ext. would be preserved-by record. Any other archaeological sites within the subject site would be preserved in-situ beneath the existing ground surface.

#### 4.7 AVOIDANCE, REMEDIAL AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This is a large green-field site within an area of considerable archaeological potential containing confirmed archaeological remains. The following recommendations are made subject to the approval of The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG). As the statutory body responsible for the protection of Ireland’s archaeological and cultural heritage resource, the DCHG may issue alternative or additional recommendations.

**ARCH CONST1:** It is recommended that archaeological monitoring, under licence, should be undertaken during topsoil removal for the construction works of the access road, under Planning ref. Meath Co. Co. LB180620. This is currently being undertaken under licence number 18E0089ext.

**ARCH CONST 2:** A conservation strategy for the enclosure, ME021-011002-, and burials, ME021-011001 has been submitted to the Licensing Section and the Developments Applications Unit (DAU) of DCHG. This entails the establishment of a fenced exclusion zone around the site of the enclosure, ME021-011002-, and burials,

ME021-011001 prior to, and continuing through, any construction phase of the development. This area within the exclusion zone will be appropriately landscaped and maintained as green area to preserve the buried archaeological material (see Appendix 1).

**ARCH CONST3:** A *fulacht fia* site (RMP ME021-016) is located at the north-eastern boundary of the development area. It is recommended that this site should be preserved-*in-situ* and it is noted that it will be located under green space in the final development plan. An exclusion zone should be established around this site for the duration of construction works. It is further noted that all groundworks for the proposed access road and, in particular, the attenuation area, will be monitored under licence 18E0089ext. Should the *fulacht fia* extend into this area, an appropriate mitigation strategy will be agreed with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland (NMI). This may involve either preservation *in situ* or preservation by record, *i.e.* full archaeological excavation.

**ARCH CONST4:** It is recommended that archaeological monitoring, under licence, should be undertaken during topsoil removal for the construction works of the residential area.

**ARCH CONST5:** It is recommended that the school site be further assessed using geophysical survey followed by test trenching under licence, should be undertaken prior to development of the area.

#### 4.8 PREDICTED IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

No potential negative impacts are identified for the proposed development as it is anticipated that issues of archaeological and cultural heritage interest will have been resolved prior to or during the construction phase. There will be a positive cumulative impact arising from the highlighting of the archaeological features preserved within the development.

#### 4.9 MONITORING

All archaeological test-excavations, monitoring and excavations undertaken under licence from the DCHG in consultation with the NMI require the production of a report as per the licence conditions. These will be published after an appropriate period allowed to complete, amongst others, all the necessary specialist reports used to compile a full archaeological report. The production of a full archaeological report and deposition of copies to the DCHG and NMI ensures compliance with the licence condition as well as the mitigation measure of preservation by record.

#### 4.10 REINSTATEMENT

In the event that the development doesn't proceed there will be no specific measures proposed as it is anticipated that all archaeological material will be preserved undisturbed in its current state.

#### 4.11 INTERACTIONS

There are no anticipated interactions with other environmental factors in this development.

#### 4.12 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN COMPILING

None encountered

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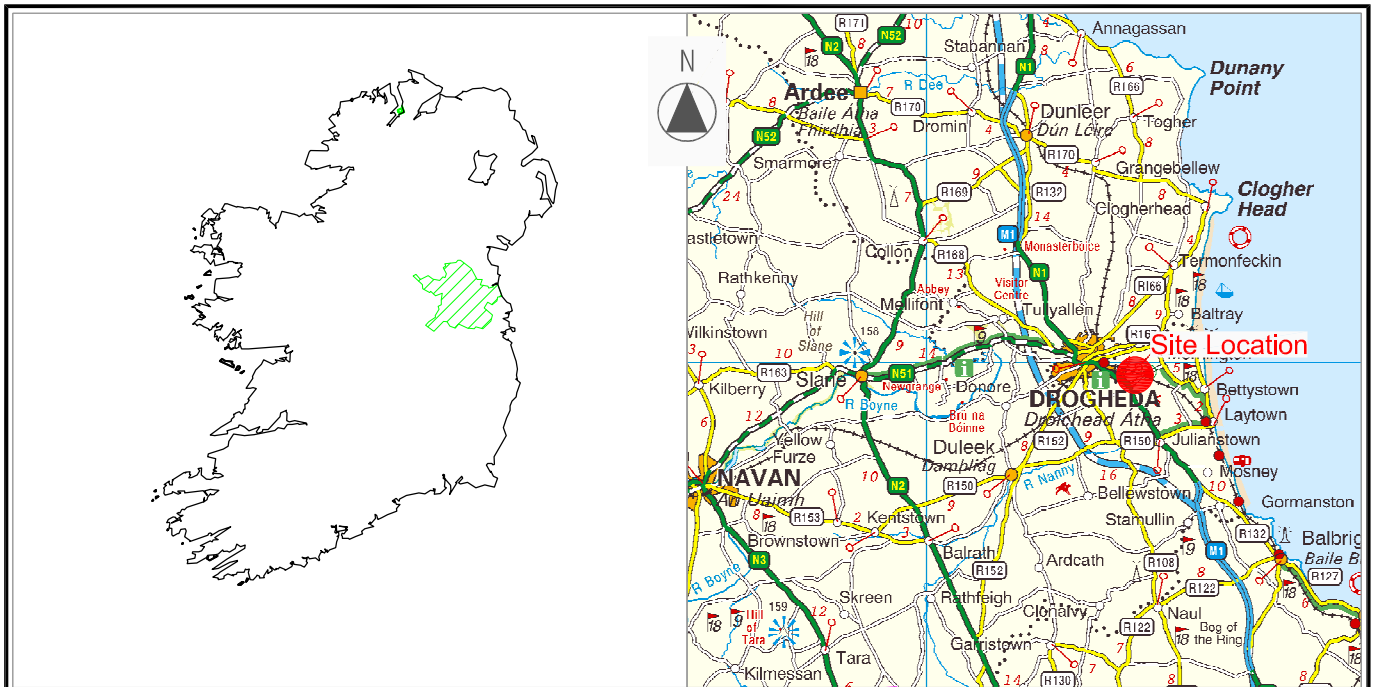
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**PLATES AND FIGURES**



Unit 8 Beat Centre  
 Stephenstown,  
 Balbriggan,  
 Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath  
 Archaeological Impact Assessment  
 Client: Shannon Homes

Scale: 1:7500 A4  
 Date: Oct 2019  
 Origin: Client, OSI  
 Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 4.1: Site Location with previous archaeological works

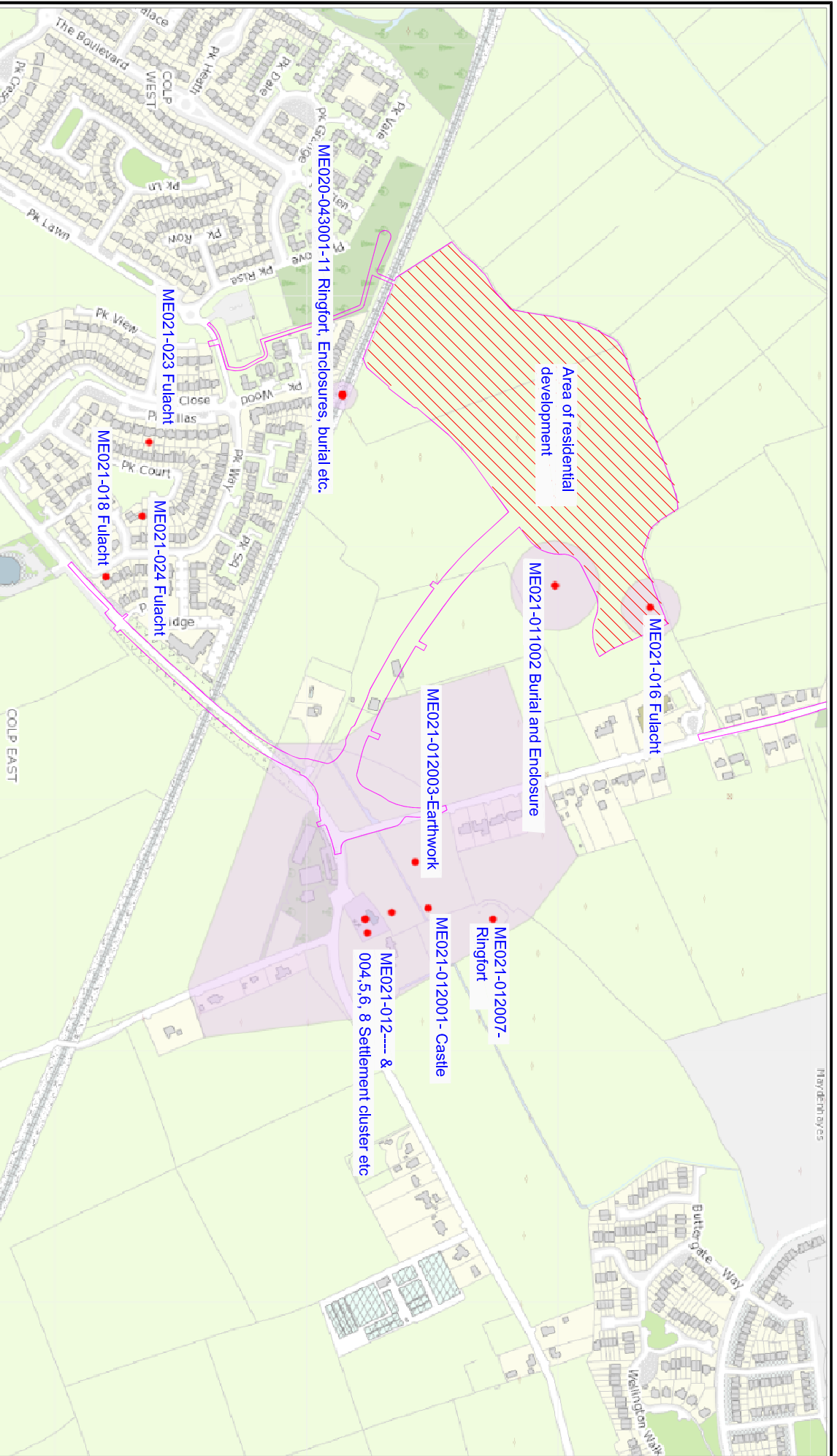
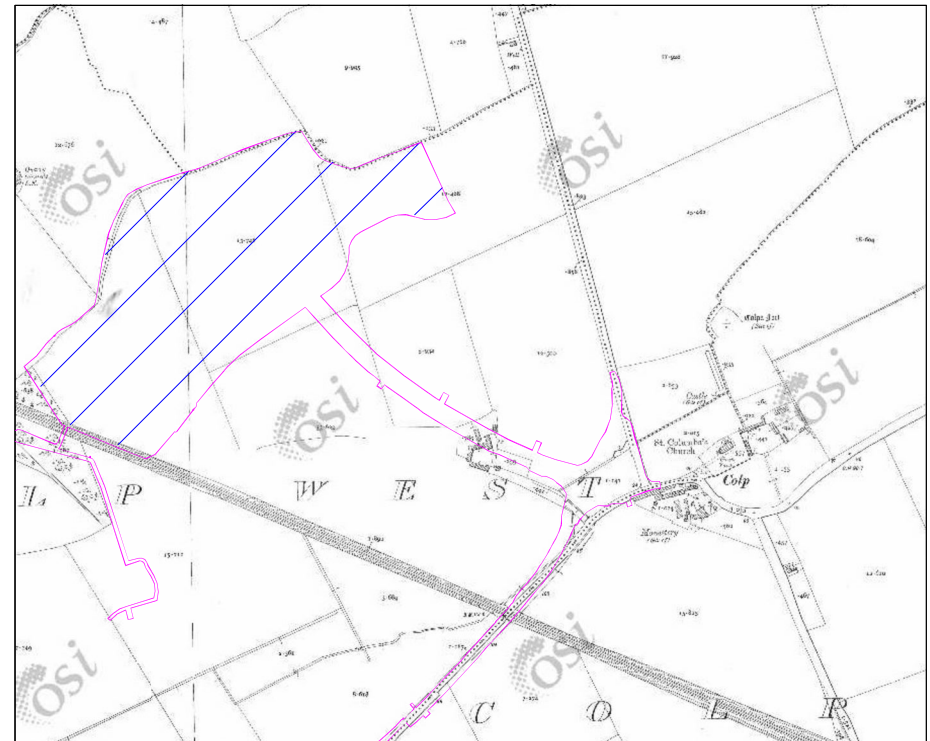
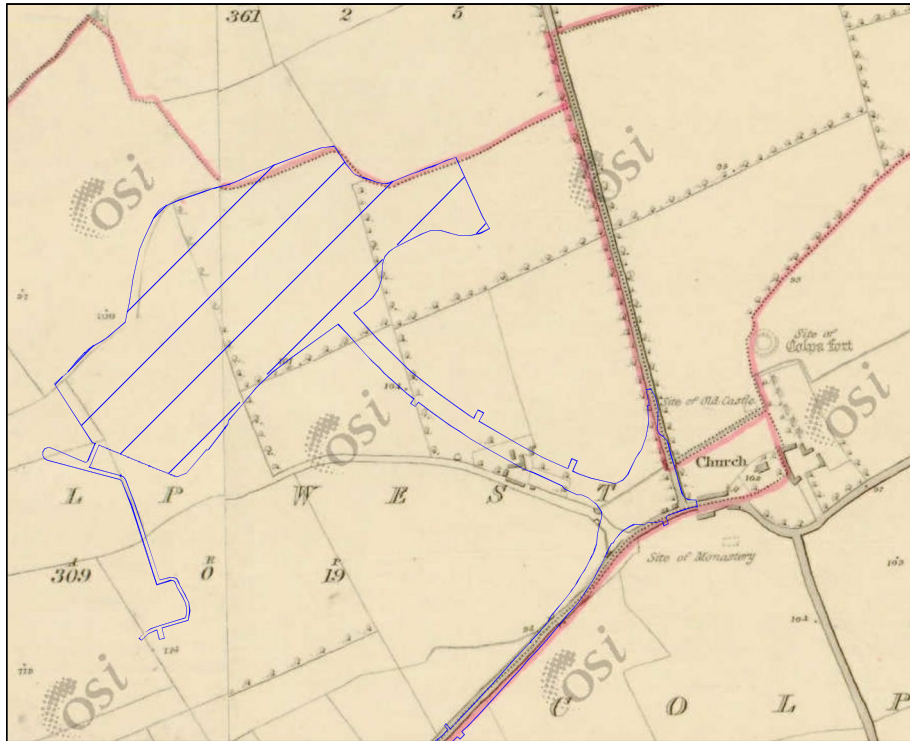



Figure 4.2: Surrounding RMP/SMR sites with Zones of Notification



(l) 1st Edition OS Map (1835)

(r) 3rd Edition OS Map (1907-09)

Key:

 Proposed area of residential development



Unit 8 Beat Centre  
Stephenstown,  
Balbriggan,  
Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co Meath

Archaeological Impact Assessment

Client: Shannon Homes

Scale: Not to scale

Date: Oct 2019

Origin: OSI

Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 4.3: Extracts from early historical maps



(l) OS Aerial Photograph (1995)

(r) Digital Globe (2013-17)

Key:  Site boundary



Unit 8 Beat Centre  
Stephenstown,  
Balbriggan,  
Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath  
Archaeological Impact Assessment  
Client: Shannon Homes

Scale: Not to scale
Date: Oct 2019
Origin: OSI
Ref: 2017_55

Figure 4.4: Aerial Photographs

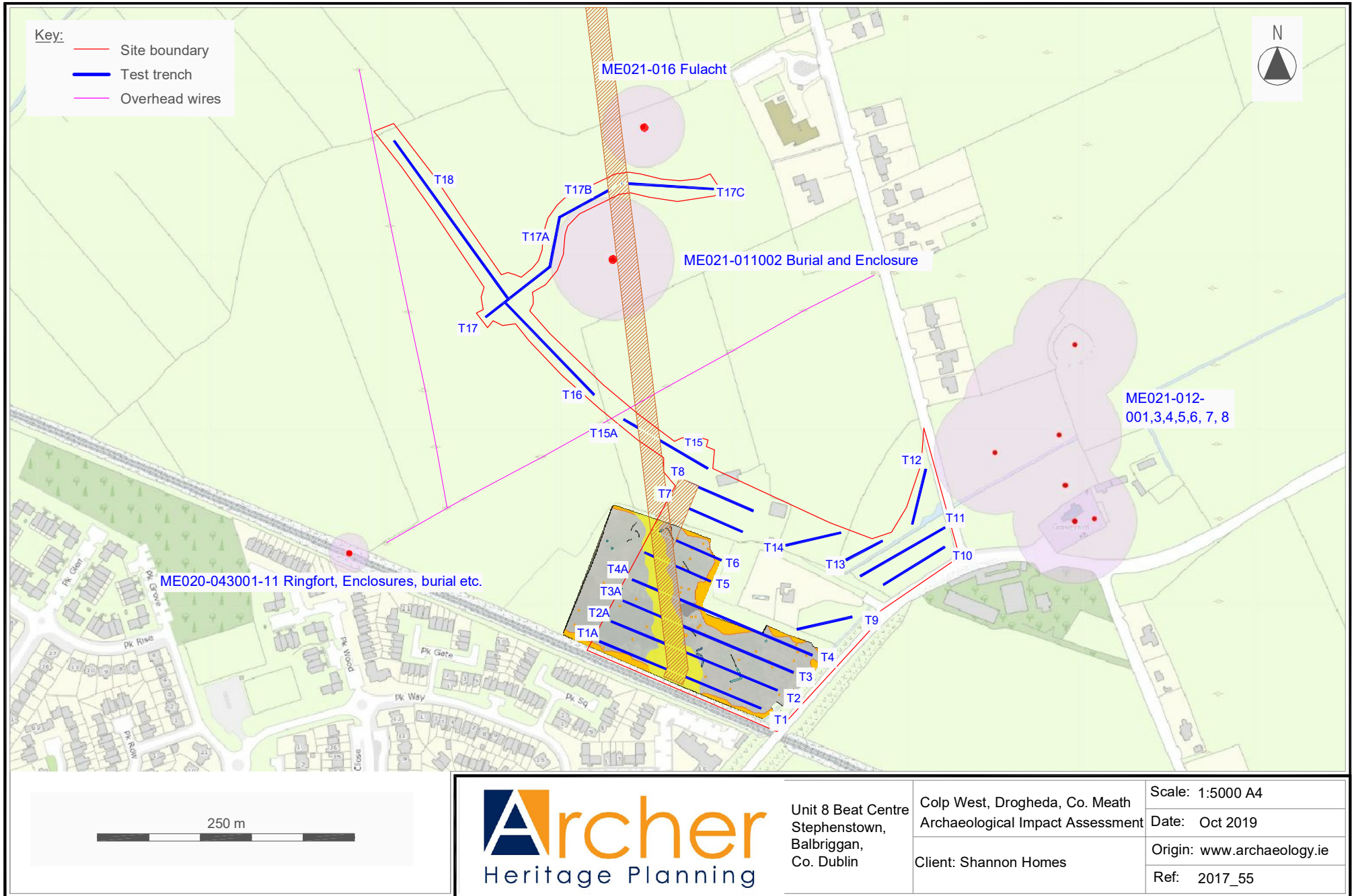
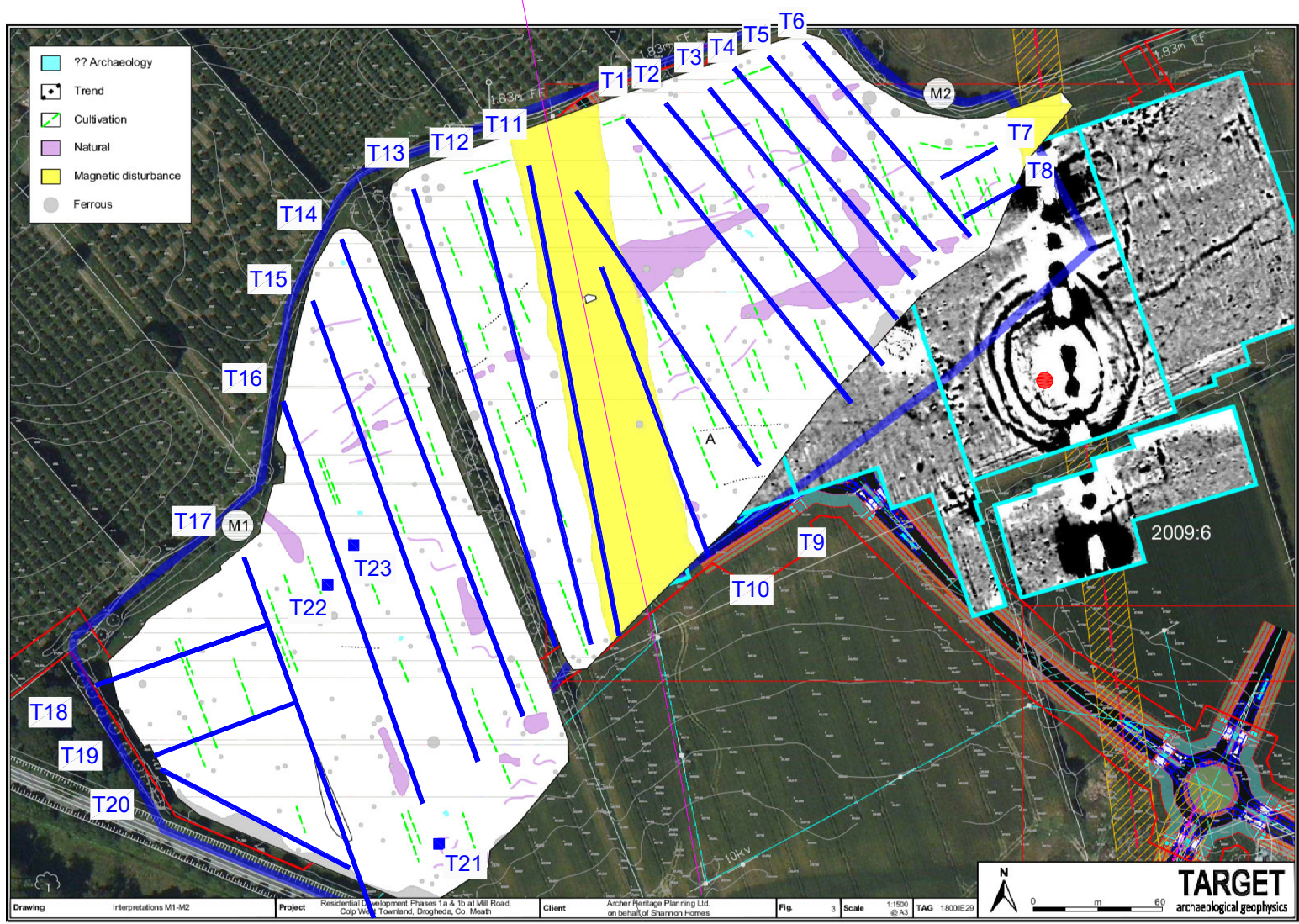


Figure 4.5: Trench Layout (18E0089) with Geophysical survey data (18R0011)




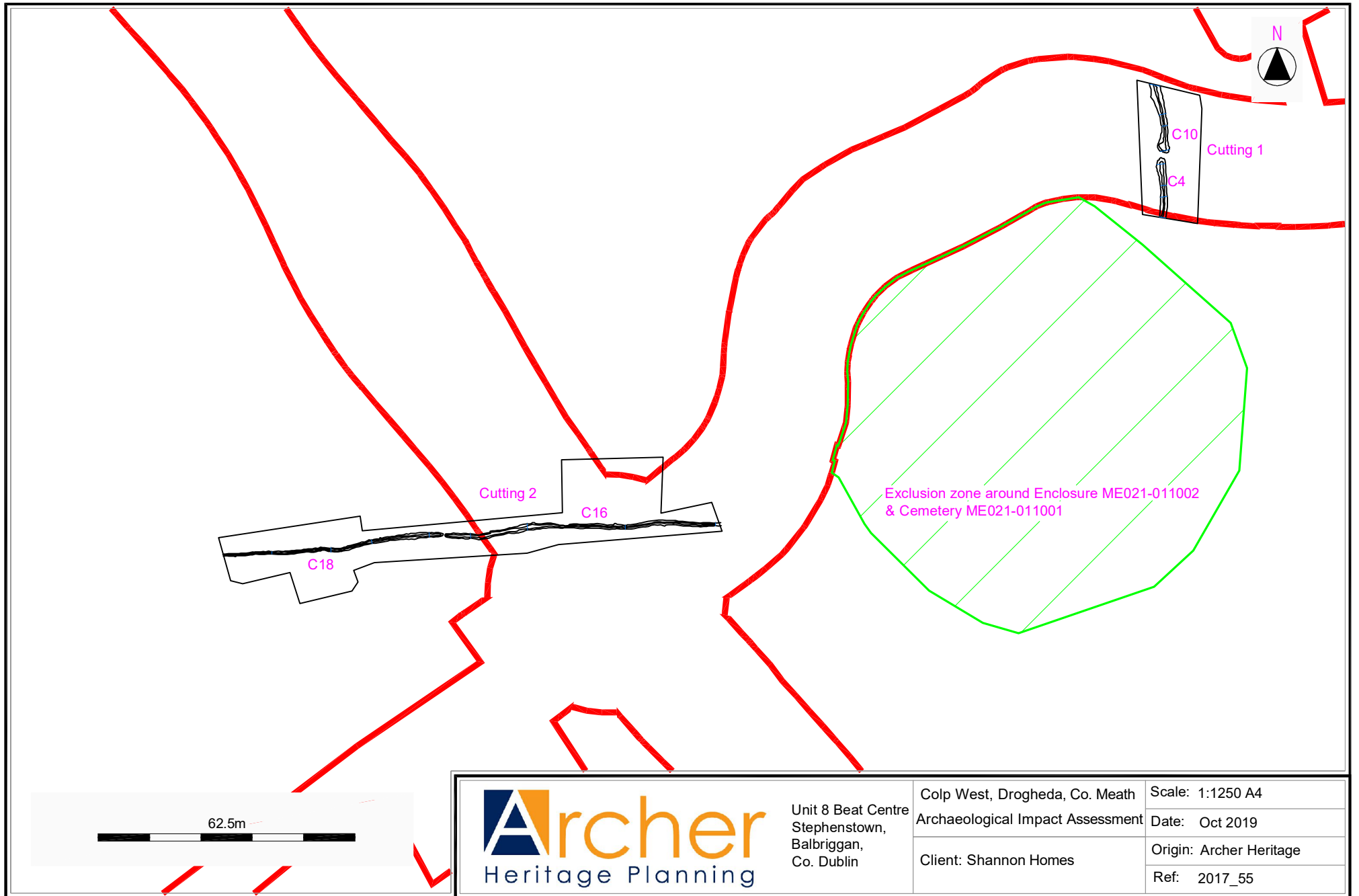
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		Archaeological Impact Assessment	Date: Oct 2019
		Client: Shannon Homes	Origin: Target Geophysics
			Ref: 2017_55

Figure 4.6: Test trench layout 18E0597 & geophysical survey data 09R0057 & 18R0181




	Unit 8 Beat Centre Stephenstown, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin	Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath	Scale: 1:1250 A4
		Archaeological Impact Assessment	Date: Oct 2019
		Client: Shannon Homes	Origin: Archer Heritage
			Ref: 2017_55

Figure 4.7: Post-excavation plan of Cuttings 1 & 2, Licence no. 18E0615ext.





Plate 4.1: Field 1 from east at rear of existing school



Plate 4.2: Field 1; northern boundary from west



Plate 4.3: Field 2 from northwest; showing rail line to right



Plate 4.4: Field 2 from east



Plate 4.5: Trench 1, 18E0089, looking east



Plate 4.6: Trench 11, 18E0089, looking north-east



Plate 4.7: Trench 12, 18E0597, looking north-west



Plate 4.8: Overhead aerial view of Cutting 1, 18E0615ext.

**APPENDIX 1 – CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath**  
**Conservation and management plan for Cemetery ME021-**  
**011001- and Enclosure ME021-011002-**

**Client:** Shannon Homes (Drogheda) Ltd.  
Fortfield House,  
Colpe East,  
Drogheda.

**Archaeologist:** Liam Coen

**Plan date:** 29th Jan 2019

**Our Ref:** 2017\_55

**Planning ref:** ABP-303309-18,

**DAU ref:** G Pre00003/2019

**Townland:** Colp West

**ITM:** 712167, 774698

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Figure 1: Site location with surrounding RMP sites

Figure 2: Proposed development layout with geophysical survey data for Cemetery & Enclosure

## SUMMARY

This conservation and management plan for Cemetery ME021-011001- and Enclosure ME021-011002- has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd for John Spain Associates on behalf of Shannon Homes (Drogheda) Ltd., Fortfield House, Colpe East, Drogheda.

The location of these archaeological features were first identified during archaeological monitoring of the construction works for a gas pipeline in 1988 and their extent delineated during a series of geophysical investigations (Detection licence no. 09R0057 & 18R0011) by Target Archaeological Geophysics. The route of an access road, under Planning Ref. LB/180620, was designed to avoid the archaeological features informed by the geophysical survey results.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

We have recommended the following steps be taken to ensure the protection of the Cemetery ME021-011001- and Enclosure ME021-011002-;

1. We have advised the client and their planners of the location and extent of the Cemetery ME021-011001- and Enclosure ME021-011002- and recommend establishing an exclusion zone of 10m from the edge of the Enclosure ME021-011002- using the ITM data from the geophysical surveys.
2. We have further recommended that a temporary post and wire fence with appropriate no entry signage be erected around this exclusion zone prior to groundworks commencing and that this should be carried out under archaeological supervision.
3. Monitoring is recommended for all groundworks in the overall development to be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Should archaeology be uncovered a mitigation strategy will be agreed with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) which may include excavation or preservation *in situ*.
4. On completion of the overall development the temporary post and wire fencing and signage may be removed and the exclusion zone may be seeded with grass and/or planted with low rooting shrubs in order to demarcate the area and prevent damage due to recreational use in the future.
5. A suitable interpretation panel (see example attached) describing the nature and significance of the monument in text and illustration be erected at an appropriate location near to the monument.

## 1. SITE DESCRIPTION

### 1.1 Receiving environment

This green field site is located c. 3.5km south-east of Drogheda town centre on a site beside the Dublin-Belfast rail line (Colp West Td, Colp Parish, Lower Duleek By, Meath, Sheet 21, ITM 712135, 774578, Figure 1). It comprises 9.8ha of undeveloped green field site used for crops bounded by mature hedgerows. A gas pipeline runs underground through the north-eastern corner of the site and the excavations associated with that development revealed the location of the cemetery and enclosure, ME021-011001/002.

### 1.2 Archaeological Background

Colp is said to have derived its name from Colpa, one of the sons of Milesius and St. Patrick is said to have landed there on his way to Tara (Lewis 1837). Colp became a borough in the late twelfth century, when Augustinian canons from Llanthony, Wales were granted lands by Hugh de Lacy (Casey & Rowan 1993). Although the canons used the earlier monastic site, Colp was never a substantial priory but rather a farming cell or grange (Bradley 1988). Mill Road takes its name from a water mill in this area, referred to in the Llanthony Cartularies, Gormanston Register and the Civil Survey (D'Alton 1844; Simington 1940; Mills & McEnery 1916).

In 1540, at the time of the Dissolution of the Irish monasteries, the grange comprised 120 acres with "a great stone house" (a tower house). In 1559, the grange was granted to Henry Draycott, Controller of the Pipe in the Irish Exchequer, and political ally of the Lord Deputy, Anthony St. Leger (D'Alton 1844; Gwynn & Hadcock 1988; Barnewall 1977). The Draycotts quickly integrated with the Old English community of the Pale, and in 1641 the family sided with the Irish forces resulting in the temporary forfeiture of their lands (they were regained in 1663; D'Alton 1844). Following the rebellion, the settlement of Colp had dwindled to the castle and a number of cabins (Simington 1940). By the 1860s, all trace of the medieval church had vanished, most of it being removed during the construction of the Church of Ireland church in 1809 (Bradley 1985).

## 2. CEMETERY ME021-011001- & ENCLOSURE ME021-011002-

The site was discovered when removal of topsoil during construction works for a gas pipeline revealed a concentration of articulated and disarticulated human skeletal remains, some of which were placed in stone lined graves. All *in situ* remains had an east/west orientation. The burial activity appears to have been carried out over a long period of time with several levels of burials and many burials either cut, disturbed, or completely displaced by later burials. A spread of dark humus soil containing animal bone and charcoal was also noticed some 10m to the south of the skeletal remains. Excavation revealed that the pipeline had crossed through a cemetery which was found to lie in the north-east quadrant of a

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substantial enclosure ditch. Further enigmatic features revealed included an annular gully and some possible post-holes which appear to pre date the burials here.

Within the pipeline corridor two arms of an enclosure ditch, to the north and south of the cemetery concentration, were located at a maximum of 37m apart internally. These were partially excavated. However, during the trenching operation, two further ditches, lying 4m-5m apart up to 20m to the north and south of the portions excavated, came to light. The fill in the southern portion comprised numerous well defined layers of humic, dumped soils and silty clays which yielded sherds of both E-ware (predominantly), some sherds of B-ware and also contained numerous animal bone fragments.

Geophysical survey of the site was undertaken in 2009 by Target Archaeological Geophysics (J. Nichols 2009, Detection Licence no. 09R0057). This identified a trivallate enclosure with maximum dimensions of 82m north/south by 76m east/west (Figure 2).

### 3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE

The Cemetery ME021-011001- and Enclosure ME021-011002- are Recorded Monuments. Informed by the publication 'Guidelines for the Assessment of Archaeological Heritage Impacts of National Road Schemes' (National Roads Authority 2005) we can state that given its scale; the presence of human remains; the abundance of burials recorded; the possible links to documentary sources associated with *Colp/Inber Colpa* and the relative scarcity in the archaeological record of sites with such a combination of characteristics that it is of **regional significance**.

Several other enclosed Early Medieval cemeteries have been discovered in eastern Ireland such as at Ninch and Laytown, Co. Meath and Oldtown, Mount Gamble and Cabinteely, Co. Dublin.

### 4. IMPACTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cemetery ME021-011001- and Enclosure ME021-011002- has been accurately located and the development proposal allows for the preservation-*in situ* of this monument under green space. It is therefore noted that:

1. We have advised the client and their planning consultants of the location and extent of the cemetery and enclosure (Figure 2) and have recommended establishing a 10m exclusion zone from the perimeter of the Enclosure using ITM data from the geophysical surveys.



2. We have further recommended that a temporary post and wire fence with appropriate no entry signage be erected around this exclusion zone prior to groundworks commencing and that this should be carried out under archaeological supervision.
3. Monitoring is recommended for all ground-works in the overall development to be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Should archaeology be uncovered a mitigation strategy will be agreed with DCHG which may include excavation or preservation *in situ*.
4. On completion of the overall development the temporary post and wire fencing and signage may be removed and the exclusion zone may be seeded with grass and/or planted with low rooting shrubs in order to demarcate the area and prevent damage due to recreational use in the future.
5. A suitable interpretation panel (see example attached) describing the nature and significance of the monument in text and illustration be erected at an appropriate location near to the monument.

Signed

*Liam Coen*

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Liam Coen BA  
Licensed Archaeologist  
29<sup>th</sup> Jan 2019



Example of suitable interpretation panel

**APPENDIX 2 – PRELIMINARY REPORT**

**Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath**  
**Archaeological excavation**  
**Preliminary Report**

Licence No: 18E0615ext.

Archaeologist: Liam Coen

Report Date: May 2019

Our Ref: 2017\_55

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## SUMMARY

This report has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd. detailing the results of the excavation of archaeological features previously identified following geophysical survey (detection licence numbers 09R0057, 18R0011 & 18R0181) and test-excavation (excavation licence numbers 18E0089 and 18E0597). Excavation of this site was carried out by Liam Coen of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd under licence (18E0615ext.) from the Department of the Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland (NMI).

The features identified comprise a series of ditches representing a field system associated with a large Early Medieval Enclosure, RMP no. ME021-011002, that contains a cemetery, RMP no. ME021-011001. Two cuttings were opened centred on features identified in the test-excavations and informed by the geophysical surveys. Cutting 1, to the north of the Enclosure, revealed two ditches, C4 and C10, aligned north-south while Cutting 2, to the west of the Enclosure, also contained two ditches, C16 and C18, aligned east-west.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd detailing the results of an archaeological excavation undertaken in Colp West townland in advance of the construction of an access road, commercial and residential development. Excavation was undertaken on 5<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2019 by Liam Coen of Archer Heritage Planning Ltd. under licence (18E0615ext.) from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland (NMI).

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

### *2.1 Receiving environment*

The two excavation cuttings were located in a large green field site c. 3.5km south-east of Drogheda town centre beside the Dublin-Belfast rail line (Colp West Td, Colp Parish, Lower Duleek By, Meath, Sheet 21, ITM 712135, 774578, Figure 1). The development site consists of large fields used for crops with a house, yard and a low-lying pasture field near the Colpe Road/Mill Road junction. The soil is a fine loamy drift with limestones of the Elton soil association<sup>1</sup>.

The two cuttings are to the north and west of an exclusion zone around a large Early Medieval Enclosure, RMP no. ME021-011002, that contains a cemetery, RMP no. ME021-011001. This

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<sup>1</sup> <http://gis.teagasc.ie/soils/map.php> [accessed 10/05/2019]

previously unknown site was first discovered during the works associated with a gas pipeline in 1988 and ensuing archaeological excavations recorded over one hundred burials within the construction way-leave (Gowen 1988).

Colp became a borough in the late twelfth century, when Augustinian canons from Llanthony, Wales were granted lands by Hugh de Lacy (Casey & Rowan 1993). Although the canons used the earlier monastic site, Colp was never a substantial priory but rather a farming cell or grange (Bradley 1988). Mill Road takes its name from a water mill in this area, referred to in the Llanthony Cartularies, Gormanston Register and the Civil Survey (D'Alton 1844; Simington 1940; Mills & McEnery 1916).

In 1540, at the time of the Dissolution of the Irish monasteries, the grange comprised 120 acres with "a great stone house" (a tower house). In 1559, the grange was granted to Henry Draycott, Controller of the Pipe in the Irish Exchequer, and political ally of the Lord Deputy, Anthony St. Leger (D'Alton 1844; Gwynn & Hadcock 1988; Barnewall 1977). The Draycotts quickly integrated with the Old English community of the Pale, and in 1641 the family sided with the Irish forces resulting in the temporary forfeiture of their lands (they were regained in 1663; D'Alton 1844). Following the rebellion, the settlement of Colp had dwindled to the castle and a number of cabins (Simington 1940). By the 1860s, all trace of the medieval church had vanished, most of it being removed during the construction of the Church of Ireland church in 1809 (Bradley 1985).

## 2.2 Record of Monuments & Places

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is a statutory inventory of archaeological sites protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 (Section 12, 1994 Act), compiled and maintained by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI)<sup>2</sup>. The inventory concentrates on pre-1700 AD sites and is based on a previous inventory known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which does not have legal protection or status. The proposed development is located outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential associated with the historic town of Drogheda. A selection of RMP entries relevant to the site and the wider area are presented in Table 1 below and Figure 2.

**The proposed development area is in proximity to three recorded monuments; a *fulacht fia*, RMP no. ME021-016, that was identified during archaeological monitoring of the gas pipeline in 1988. It was observed as a patch of heat-cracked sandstone mixed with charcoal in a ploughed field and measured 25 x 20m. These are common prehistoric sites (overwhelmingly Bronze Age) in which stones were heated on a hearth and placed into water-filled pits or troughs and are believed to have fulfilled a number of functions including feasting, bathing, sauna, industry and brewing.**

**Immediately south of ME021-016 is a substantial cemetery, ME021-011001, within an enclosure,**

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<sup>2</sup> [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) [accessed 10/05/2019]

ME021-011002, where the remains of over one hundred individuals were excavated. A substantial ditch was identified by air photography (Gowen 1988).

There are no visible remains of the medieval church of Colpe (ME021-012004-) the location of which lies approximately 100m east of the subject site.

SMR No	Class	Townland	ING
ME020-043001	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043002-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043003-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043004-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043005-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043006-	Ringfort - rath	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043007-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043008-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043009-	Burial	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043010-	Kiln - corn-drying	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043011-	Souterrain	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
<b>ME021-011001-</b>	<b>Burial</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712167, 774698</b>
<b>ME021-011002-</b>	<b>Enclosure</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712167, 774698</b>
ME021-012----	Settlement cluster	COLP EAST, COLP WEST, MORNINGTON	712607, 774478
ME021-012001-	Castle - unclassified	MORNINGTON	712601, 774527
ME021-012003-	Earthwork	MORNINGTON	712539, 774510
ME021-012004-	Church	COLP WEST	712616, 774443
ME021-012005-	Cross - High cross	COLP WEST	712616, 774443
ME021-012006-	Cross	COLP WEST	712635, 774446
ME021-012007-	Ringfort - rath	COLP EAST	712616, 774615
ME021-012008-	Graveyard	COLP EAST, COLP WEST	712616, 774443
<b>ME021-016----</b>	<b>Fulacht fia</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712197, 774827</b>
ME020-043001-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043002-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043003-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043004-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043005-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043006-	Ringfort - rath	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043007-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043008-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043009-	Burial	COLP WEST	711911, 774412

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



### 3. METHOD STATEMENT

The overall aim of the excavation was to preserve by record any archaeological features in the two cuttings whose locations were informed by the results of geophysical survey (detection licence numbers 09R0057, 18R0011 & 18R0181) and test-excavation (excavation licence numbers 18E0089 and 18E0597).

#### 3.1 General Excavation Methodology

An open area rescue excavation strategy was employed. The recording techniques used are based on a system that best suits a rural environment as outlined in Barker (1977). This was supplemented by the recording system described in the Museum of London Archaeological Service Site Manual (Spence 1990). A single context recording system was used to record the site and multi-context plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50 (plans) & 1:10 or 1:20 (sections) as appropriate. Artefacts were labelled in accordance with NMI guidelines.

The topsoil was removed by mechanical excavation and then the site was hand cleaned to clearly establish the archaeological material. The material was assessed *in-situ* by archaeologist Liam Coen BA. All archaeological features were planned, photographed and sectioned. Each feature was photographed and recorded with drawn and written records of the cut/fills before the remaining deposits were excavated. The principal goals of the excavation were:

- Establish the stratigraphical sequence of the site;
- Determine the various phases of activity;
- Examine the morphology of the various features/structures; and
- Establish the date & function of the features.

In the discussion of the site accompanying the final excavation report, the archaeology of the site will be considered against in its local and wider archaeological context, comparing the material to other excavated sites and assemblages. The excavation was carried out within the agreed timeframe and to the specifications agreed with the licensing authorities.

#### 3.2 Recording

All archaeological features and deposits encountered during the works were given a unique number in a continuous system recorded in the site archive. Entries were backed up by site-note books, and annotated multi-context drawings at appropriate scales. Site plans showed the location of all features recorded in the course of the excavation. Annotated sections/elevations were drawn at scales of 1:10 or

1:20 as appropriate. Heights of all principal features and levels were calculated relative to Ordnance Datum, correct to two decimal places. Site drawings were scanned and digitised using AutoCAD 2018 and geo-referenced to ITM projection. Digital photographs were taken of all archaeological features and deposits.

### 3.3 Sampling

Environmental sampling was undertaken in accordance with recent professional guidelines (e.g. Environmental Sampling: Guidelines for Archaeologists IAI 2007). Eight bulk samples were taken from stratified, undisturbed deposits, targeting potentially environmentally rich deposits.

## 4. RESULTS

The features identified comprise a series of ditches representing a field system associated with a large Early Medieval Enclosure, RMP no. ME021-011002, that contains a cemetery, RMP no. ME021-011001. Two cuttings were opened (Figure 3) centred on features identified in the test-excavations and informed by the geophysical surveys. Cutting 1, to the north of the Enclosure, revealed two ditches, C4 and C10, aligned north-south while Cutting 2, to the west of the Enclosure, also contained two ditches, C16 and C18, aligned east-west. No artifacts were recovered during the excavation while geophysical survey shows these features appear to respect the adjacent enclosure.

In Cutting 1, ditch C4 extended for 14.6 m north/south, between 1.3-2.2m in width and 0.82-1.08m in depth with steeply sloping sides and a U-shaped profile. It extended beyond the edge of excavation to the south. Seven fills were identified in the ditch, C5-9, 13 &14, containing a moderate amount of animal bone. A narrow gap separated it from ditch C10 that extended along the same alignment for 16.7m, 1.35-2.55m in width and 0.35-0.55m in depth though with a broader, shallower U-shaped profile. It continued beyond the edge of excavation to the north. Only two fills were identified, C11 & C12, with a moderate amount of animal bone present too.

In Cutting 2, ditches C16 and C18 were broadly similar in shape, averaging 0.8-0.9 m in width and 0.3-0.35 m in depth. They were aligned east/west with C16 traced for 66m in length and C18 for 53.5m. they both contained a single similar fill, C17 and C19 respectively, a greyish brown silty clay with frequent stone and only very occasional animal bone inclusions.

## 5. ARTEFACTS

No artifacts were recovered during the excavation.

## 6. ENVIRONMENTAL REGISTER

Bulk soil samples of 20 litres were taken from each feature to retrieve environmental data and material for radiocarbon dating.

Sample #	Context #	Volume (litres)	Flot Weight (g)	Retent Weight (g)	Details	Results
1	3	20			Only fill of pit C15	
2	14	20			Basal fill of ditch C4	
3	8	20			Basal fill of ditch C4	
4	7	20			Middle fill of ditch C4	
5	11	20			Upper fill of ditch C4	
6	12	20			Basal fill of ditch C10	
7	17	20			Only fill of ditch C16	
8	19	20			Only fill of ditch C18	

**Table 2:** Environmental register

## 7. POST-EXCAVATION SCHEDULE

The features identified comprise a series of ditches representing a field system associated with a large Early Medieval Enclosure, RMP no. ME021-011002, that contains a cemetery, RMP no. ME021-011001. Two cuttings were opened (Figure 3) centred on features identified in the test-excavations and informed by the geophysical surveys. Cutting 1, to the north of the Enclosure, revealed two ditches, C4 and C10, aligned north-south while Cutting 2, to the west of the Enclosure, also contained two ditches, C16 and C18, aligned east-west. No artifacts were recovered during the excavation while geophysical survey shows these features appear to respect the adjacent enclosure. An excavation to the south within Colp West townland revealed multi-period activity (Murphy 2011), part of which comprised an Early Medieval ringfort. This ringfort had an almost square 20m x 20m annex to the south and a sub-rectangular annex to the north interpreted as possible animal enclosures. This illustrates the pattern of demarcation and enclosure adjacent to the main locus of activity we often find in the Early Medieval period and appears to be reflected in the archaeological features excavated in the two cuttings here.

A full digital photographic, written and drawn record was produced for each feature and deposit. The written archive and drawings will be digitized with all section drawings and plans published using AutoCAD 2018.

A total of eight bulk soil samples were collected from secure deposits on site. These will be processed by floatation and relevant material will be sent for identification and analysis to an appropriate specialist. This material will provide the basis for an environmental report for the site and also to provide material

suitable for radiocarbon dating. Animal bone was recovered from both ditches in Cutting 1 with a small amount from ditch F16 in Cutting 2 and will be subject to a faunal analysis. The radiocarbon dating, faunal and environmental reports will form part of the Final Report.

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## 8.2 Web References

Record of Monuments and Places [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) {accessed 10/05/2019}

Irish Soil Information [www.teagasc.ie](http://www.teagasc.ie) [Accessed 10/05/2019]

*Liam Coen*

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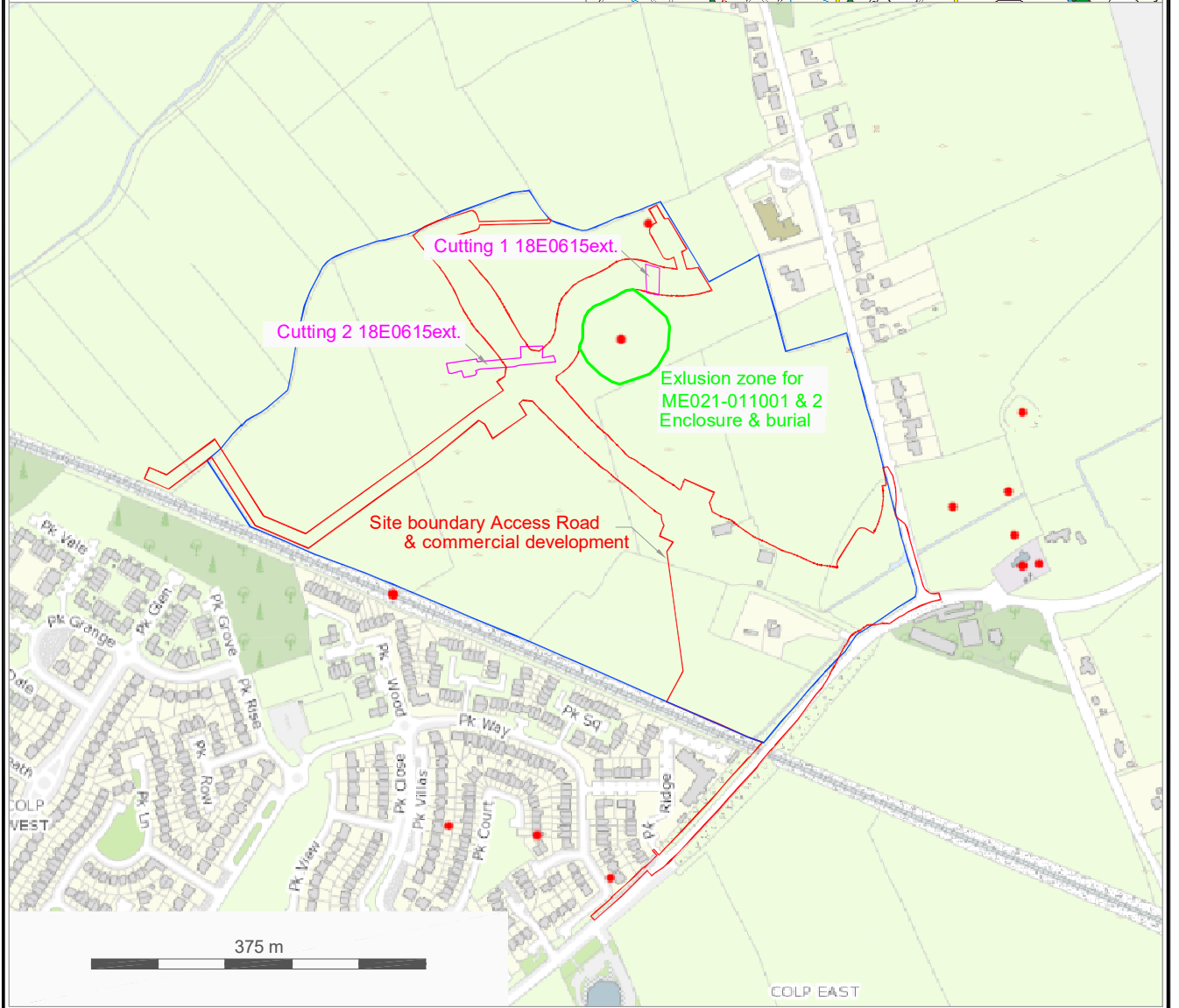
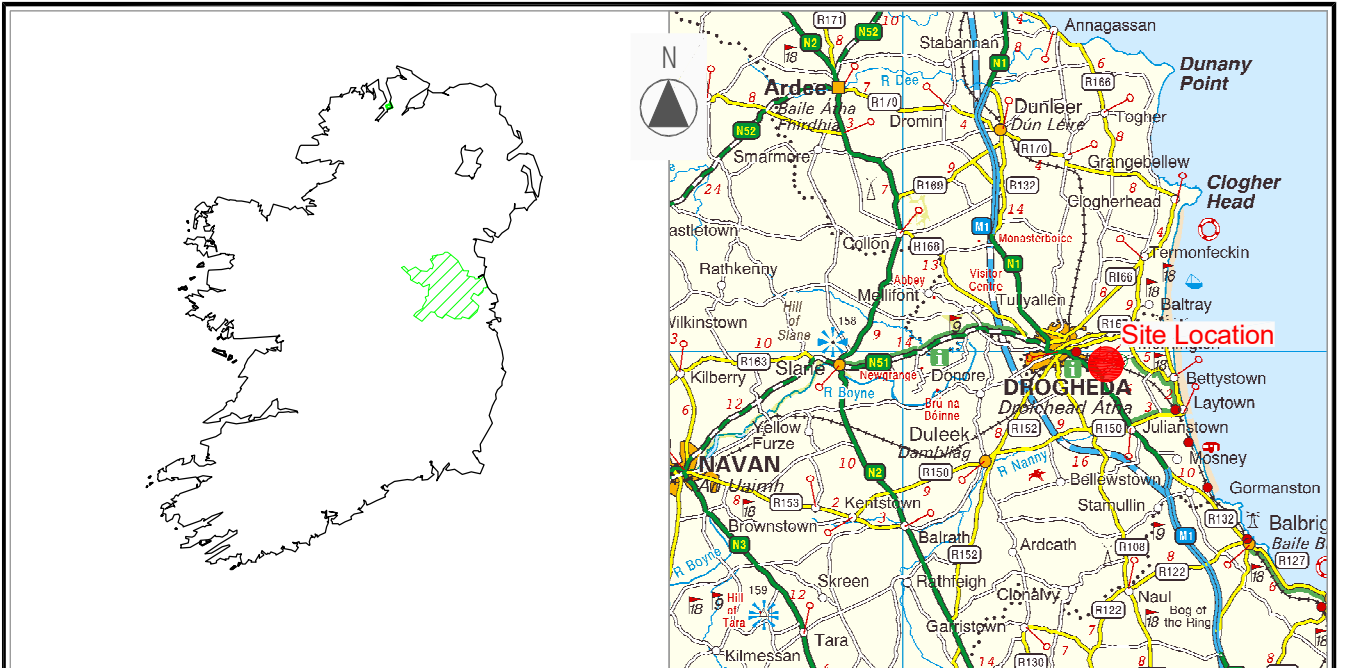
Liam Coen BA

10<sup>th</sup> May 2019

**Archer**  
Heritage Planning



Plate 1: Overhead aerial mid-excavation view of Cutting 1



Unit 8 Beat Centre  
 Stephenstown,  
 Balbriggan,  
 Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath  
 Archaeological Excavation  
 Excavation Licence no.  
 18E0615ext.

Scale: 1:7500 A4  
 Date: May 2019  
 Origin: Client, OSI  
 Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 1: Site Location

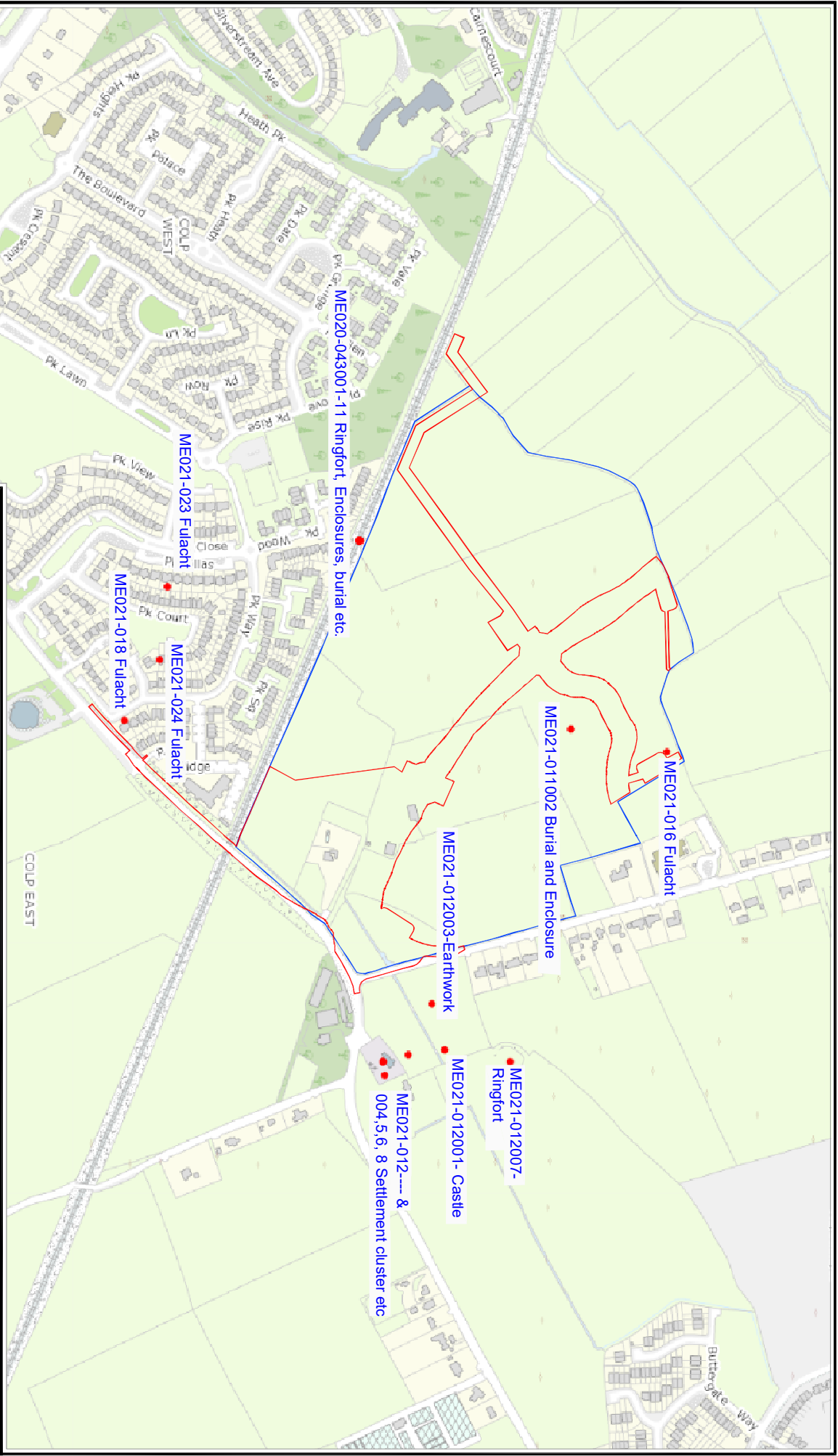
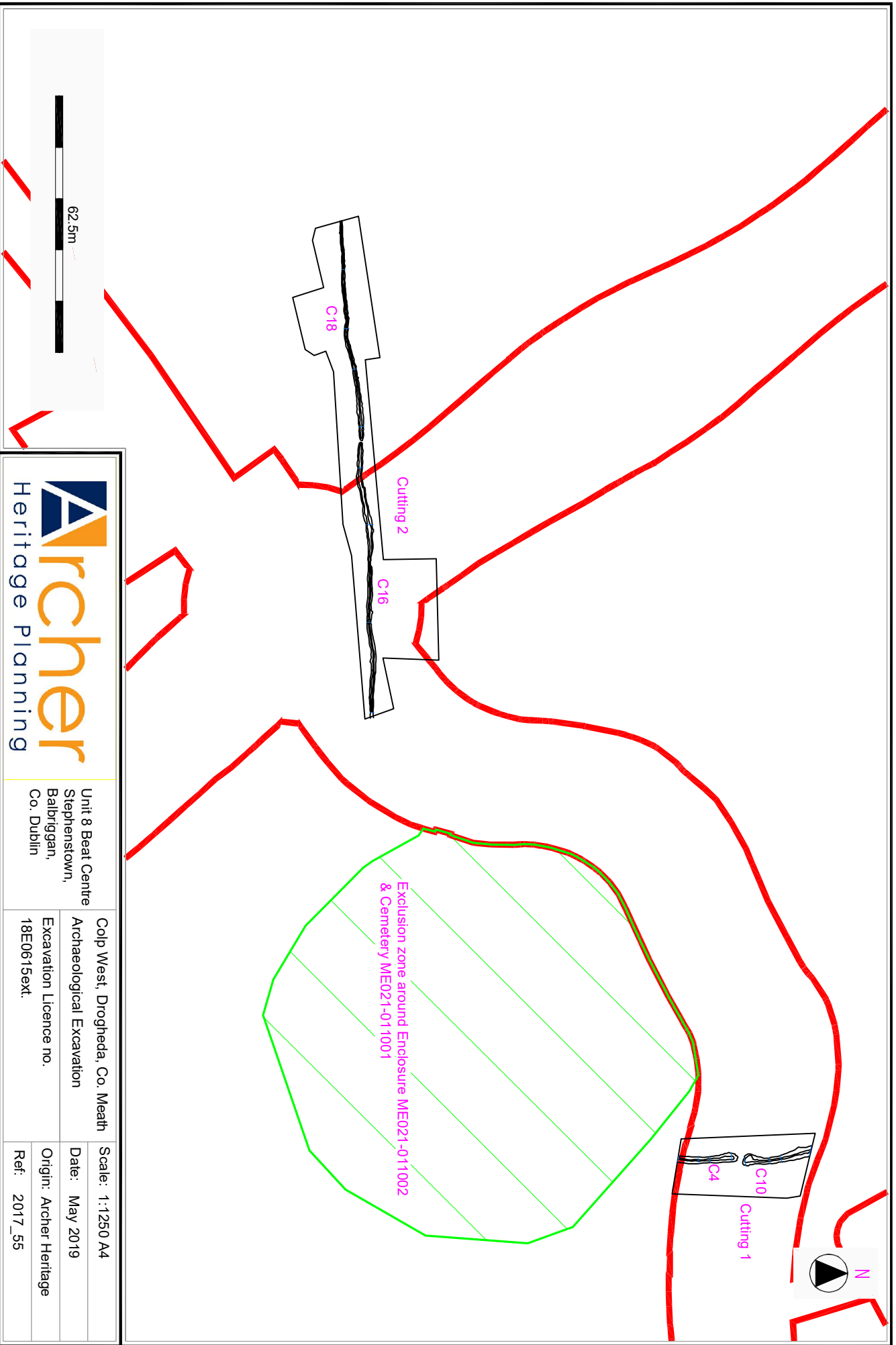


Figure 2: Surrounding RMP/SMR sites



Unit 8 Beat Centre  
 Stephenstown,  
 Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath  
 Archaeological Excavation  
 Excavation Licence no.  
 18E0615ext.

Scale: 1:1250 A4  
 Date: May 2019  
 Origin: Archer Heritage  
 Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 3: Post-excavation plan of Cuttings 1 & 2



**APPENDIX 3 – TESTING REPORT**

# Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath

## Test Excavation Report

**Client:** Shannon Homes (Drogheda)  
FortField House,  
Colpe Road,  
Drogheda,  
Co.Meath

**Licence No:** 18E0089

**Planning ref.** LB180620 Meath County Council

**Archaeologist:** Liam Coen

**Author:** Liam Coen

**Report Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018

**Our Ref:** 2017\_55

# Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath

## Test Excavation Report

<b>SITE NAME</b>	Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath
<b>CLIENT</b>	Shannon Homes (Drogheda)
<b>INVESTIGATION TYPE</b>	Test Excavation
<b>LICENCE NO</b>	18E0089
<b>PLANNING REF</b>	LB180620 Meath County Council
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Colp West
<b>IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR</b>	712135, 774578
<b>RMP NO</b>	Proximity to ME021-011001-, 002- & ME021-016-
<b>RPS NO</b>	n/a
<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANT</b>	Archer Heritage Planning Ltd.
<b>ARCHAEOLOGIST</b>	Liam Coen
<b>DATE OF ISSUE</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2018
<b>JOB REF.</b>	2017_55

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**SUMMARY**

The subject site is located at Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath (ITM 712135, 774578). The site covers an area of c. 6.5ha comprising a green field site located to the south-east of Drogheda Town Centre. The proposed development area contains three recorded monuments; a Fulacht Fia (ME021-016) and a cemetery within an enclosure (ME021-011001/002), however the north-eastern road has been modified to avoid the Zones of Notification surrounding these monuments. The application is for planning permission for a commercial development and its associated relief road (LB180620 Meath County Council).

Test trench locations were agreed in advance with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG, Excavation licence 18E0089). A total of sixteen (16) trenches (1720 linear metres) were mechanically excavated across the site under archaeological supervision. Three areas of archaeology were identified comprising linear features highlighted by the geophysical survey and are likely to be associated with the nearby enclosure.

**Recommendation:**

Extensive archaeological assessment comprising geophysical survey, Detection licence # 09R0057 and 18R0011, followed by machine assisted test-excavation was undertaken at this site. Three areas of interest were identified in proximity to the enclosure. The construction works for the development will have a profound negative impact on the archaeological features therefore **it is recommended that they be preserved by record**, *i.e.* archaeological excavation, in advance of construction, under licence from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in consultation with the National Museum (NMI).

Furthermore, **archaeological monitoring**, under licence, should be undertaken during topsoil removal for the construction works of the current phase of development in the northern field surrounding the enclosure, ME021-011002-, and burials, ME021-011001. Development of the wider landholding (outside the current application) should be subject to archaeological appraisal and mitigation where appropriate.

Revision	Status	Date	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1	Final	Mar 2018	Coen (Archer) ARCHAEOLOGIST	O'Connell (Archer) SENIOR ARCHAEOLOGIST	C. Mc Guinness

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This archaeological test excavation report for a proposed access road and commercial development has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd for Shannon Homes (Drogheda). The test-excavation was undertaken on 23<sup>rd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

### *1.1 Proposed Development*

The proposed development (LB180620 Meath County Council) will consist of the demolition of the existing buildings on site including a habitable house construction of 1 no. 4 storey commercial/office building consisting of 2 no. blocks with a shared corner entrance/reception area and a screened plant area and equipment at roof level, providing a total GFA of 11,253 sq.m,

The proposal also includes new road infrastructure, site access roads and existing road realignment, ESB substation and switch room, gas skid, landscaped surface car park to the rear of the building, cycle parking, landscaping, and all associated site and infrastructural works on an application site area of c. 4.78 hectares.

Block 1 provides a GFA of approximately 6,943sq.m over four levels.

Block 2 provides a GFA of approximately 4,310sq.m over four levels.

The proposed new road infrastructure will include a circa. 6.5m wide carriageway approximately 630m in length, to include cycle lanes/paths, verge, public lighting, footpaths, 3 no. roundabouts, realignment of a section of Mill Road and Colpe Road, provision of footpath and cycle path / cycle lane on Colpe Road, and extension of a circa 6.5m wide road, with cyclepath and footpath to facilitate a connection to the existing school on Mill Road (Gaelscoil an Bhradáin Feasa).

The associated site and infrastructural works include the demolition of the existing buildings on site including a dwelling, removal of a number of existing trees, provision of foul water drainage, surface water drainage including surface water storage facilities above and below ground, watermains and utilities, 280 no. total car parking spaces, including 6 no disabled parking spaces, 94 no. cycle parking spaces, landscaping consisting of new tree planting, hedges, berms and grass planting, public lighting, bin stores, signage, boundary walls and fences, cycle paths and footpaths.

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## 1.2 Archaeological Requirements

The archaeological works are being undertaken in response to planning condition number 9 of planning permission reference number LB180620 Meath County Council;

- a) The applicant is required to engage the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist (licensed under the National Monuments Act 1930-2004) to carry out pre- development testing at the site where ground disturbance is to take place. No sub surface work shall be undertaken in the absence of the archaeologist without his / her express consent.
- b) The archaeologist is required to notify the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of site preparations. This will allow the archaeologist sufficient time to obtain a license to carry out the work.
- c) The archaeologist shall carry out any relevant documentary research and may excavate test trenches at locations chosen by the archaeologist, having consulted the proposed development plans.
- d) Having completed the work, the archaeologist shall submit a written report to the Planning Authority and to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for consideration
- e) Where archaeological material is shown to be present, avoidance, preservation in situ, preservation by record (excavation) and / or monitoring may be required and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht will advise the Applicant / Developer with regard to these matters.
- f) No site preparation or construction work shall be carried out until after the archaeologist's report has been submitted and permission to proceed has been received in writing from the Planning Authority in consultation with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

This green field site is located c. 3.5km south-east of Drogheda town centre on a site beside the Dublin-Belfast rail line (Colp West Td, Colp Parish, Lower Duleek By, Meath, Sheet 21, ITM 712135, 774578, Figure 1). It comprises 6.5ha of undeveloped green field site surrounding Fortfield House. The site is predominantly under crop but includes the previous location of a football field, with some areas of pasture near the Colpe road and disturbed ground surrounding a concreted yard to the rear of Fortfield House. A gas pipeline runs underground through the site and the excavations associated with that development revealed the location of the cemetery and enclosure, ME021-011001/002.



### 3. METHOD STATEMENT

Sixteen (16) trenches totalling 1720 linear metres were excavated under constant archaeological supervision to determine the archaeological potential of the location of the proposed development (Figure 5). Two trenches originally proposed were abandoned due to site conditions. Two geophysical surveys, 09R0057 & 18R0011, were conducted to inform the layout of the access road in relation to the cemetery and enclosure, ME021-011001/002, in particular, and also investigate the general archaeological potential of the footprint for the current phase of development. Test trenches were also situated to investigate the anomalies highlighted in these surveys.

Excavation proceeded in level spits no greater than 0.2 m to the subsoil or top of the first archaeological horizon where present. Each revealed surface was inspected for archaeological remains and any features present were recorded appropriately. All features identified within the trenches were tested to determine their extent, composition and depth and to ascertain potential dating material. All trenches were reinstated on completion of the works.

### 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

#### *4.1 General Archaeological Background*

Colp became a borough in the late twelfth century, when Augustinian canons from Llanthony, Wales were granted lands by Hugh de Lacy (Casey & Rowan 1993). Although the canons used the earlier monastic site, Colp was never a substantial priory but rather a farming cell or grange (Bradley 1988). Mill Road takes its name from a water mill in this area, referred to in the Llanthony Cartularies, Gormanston Register and the Civil Survey (D'Alton 1844; Simington 1940; Mills & McEnery 1916).

In 1540, at the time of the Dissolution of the Irish monasteries, the grange comprised 120 acres with "a great stone house" (a tower house). In 1559, the grange was granted to Henry Draycott, Controller of the Pipe in the Irish Exchequer, and political ally of the Lord Deputy, Anthony St. Leger (D'Alton 1844; Gwynn & Hadcock 1988; Barnewall 1977). The Draycotts quickly integrated with the Old English community of the Pale, and in 1641 the family sided with the Irish forces resulting in the temporary forfeiture of their lands (they were regained in 1663; D'Alton 1844). Following the rebellion, the settlement of Colp had dwindled to the castle and a number of cabins (Simington 1940). By the 1860s, all trace of the medieval church had vanished, most of it being removed during the construction of the Church of Ireland church in 1809 (Bradley 1985).

#### 4.2 Record of Monuments & Places

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is a statutory inventory of archaeological sites protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 (Section 12, 1994 Act), compiled and maintained by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI). The inventory concentrates on pre-1700 AD sites and is based on a previous inventory known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which does not have legal protection or status (see [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)). The proposed development is located outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential associated with the historic town of Drogheda. A selection of RMP entries relevant to the site and the wider area are presented in Table 1 below and Figure 2.

**The proposed development area is in proximity to three recorded monuments; ME021-016 (fulacht fia), which was identified during archaeological monitoring of the gas pipeline in 1988. It was observed as a patch of heat-cracked sandstone mixed with charcoal in a ploughed field and measured 25 x 20m. These are common prehistoric sites (overwhelmingly Bronze Age) in which stones were heated on a hearth and placed into water-filled pits or troughs and are believed to have fulfilled a number of functions including feasting, bathing, sauna, industry and brewing.**

**Immediately south of ME021-016 is a substantial cemetery (ME021-011001-) and enclosure (ME021-011002-) where the remains of over one hundred individuals were excavated (see below Table 5). A substantial ditch was identified by air photography (Figure 4).**

**There are no visible remains of the medieval church of Colpe (ME021-012004-) the location of which lies approximately 150m east of the subject site.**

SMR No	Class	Townland	ITM
ME020-043001	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043002-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043003-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043004-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043005-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043006-	Ringfort - rath	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043007-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043008-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043009-	Burial	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043010-	Kiln - corn-drying	COLP WEST	711911, 774412

ME020-043011-	Souterrain	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
<b>ME021-011001-</b>	<b>Burial</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712167, 774698</b>
<b>ME021-011002-</b>	<b>Enclosure</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712167, 774698</b>
ME021-012----	Settlement cluster	COLP EAST, COLP WEST, MORNINGTON	712607, 774478
ME021-012001-	Castle - unclassified	MORNINGTON	712601, 774527
ME021-012003-	Earthwork	MORNINGTON	712539, 774510
ME021-012004-	Church	COLP WEST	712616, 774443
ME021-012005-	Cross - High cross	COLP WEST	712616, 774443
ME021-012006-	Cross	COLP WEST	712635, 774446
ME021-012007-	Ringfort - rath	COLP EAST	712616, 774615
ME021-012008-	Graveyard	COLP EAST, COLP WEST	712616, 774443
<b>ME021-016----</b>	<b>Fulacht fia</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712197, 774827</b>
ME020-043001-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043002-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043003-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043004-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043005-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043006-	Ringfort - rath	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043007-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043008-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043009-	Burial	COLP WEST	711911, 774412

**Table 1:** Archaeological sites in the wider area of the proposed development

### 4.3 Topographical Files

A significant quantity of prehistoric, early medieval and late medieval artefacts was retrieved during archaeological excavations in Colp West and Painestown townlands between 1988 and 2008. Also, archaeological monitoring of dredging works on Boyne, north of Stagrennan townland recovered over 3,000 pieces of worked flint, medieval and post-medieval pottery, roof and floor tile, clay pipes, glass, leather off-cuts and possible ship timbers. Four significant objects were found: an antler hammer or mace head; a worked bone toggle-like item, a copper alloy pin and a copper alloy socketed and basal-looped spearhead (Whitaker 2000). A significant amount of this material may have been transported downstream from Drogheda.

The National Museum of Ireland Topographical Files is the national archive of all known antiquities recorded by the National Museum listed by county and townland/ street. These files relate primarily to artefacts but also include references to monuments and contain a unique archive of records of previous archaeological excavations. The Museum files present an accurate catalogue of objects reported to that institution from 1928. The following entries were recorded for Drogheda town:

Location	Museum No.	Description
River Boyne, Drogheda	2010:323	Wooden trough
Drogheda Port	2009:163	Iron Cannon

Drogheda	2005:50-51	Iron cannon balls
Drogheda (?)	2004:42	Flint arrowhead
Drogheda	1989:76	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1981:9.1	Pottery (base sherd of manganese mottled ware; 18C)
Building site at Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1980:22	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1979:93	Pottery
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1979:91-2	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1330-2089	Pottery (medieval and post-medieval surface finds)
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1272-1329	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1262-1271	Iron nails
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1261	Iron horseshoe
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1260	Bone pin
Millmount, Drogheda	1977:1258	Pottery
Dyer Street, Drogheda	1977:1256-7	Pottery
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1977:1255	Pottery
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1977:1253-4	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:527-531	Pottery (surface finds)
John Street, Drogheda	1976:525-6	Clay tiles
John Street, Drogheda	1976:506-24	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:505	Leather object
John Street, Drogheda	1976:504	Leather shoe
John Street, Drogheda	1976:503	Antler tine
John Street, Drogheda	1976:250-502	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:227-249	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:224-6	Iron objects
John Street, Drogheda	1976:223	Slag
John Street, Drogheda	1976:222	Flint flake
John Street, Drogheda	1976:221	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:219-20	Slate (stone)
John Street, Drogheda	1976:218	Clay pipe
John Street, Drogheda	1976:167-217	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:166	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:162-5	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:161	Iron nail
John Street, Drogheda	1976:151-60	Pottery
River Boyne (near Drogheda)	1968:297	Bronze axehead
Bessexwell Lane, Drogheda	1954:76-82	Pottery
Bessexwell Lane, Drogheda	1954:74-5	Ceramic tile
Drogheda	M1951:11-12	Leather shoe
Drogheda	1940:72	Iron grist
Drogheda (Moneymore)	1936:1900	Cu alloy dagger
Drogheda	RIA1914:49	Cu alloy token
Drogheda	SA1913:141	Token
5 miles NW of Drogheda	SA1909:1	Cast of high cross of Monasterboice
Drogheda	1882:96	Ceramic tile
Drogheda	1000:69	Object
River Boyne near Drogheda	R4015	Bronze brooch
Near Drogheda	R3088	Lead alloy seal
Drogheda	R2017	Iron cleaver

Drogheda	R1828	Bronze harp peg
Near Drogheda	R1693	Cu alloy coin
Between Oldbridge and Drogheda	R1574	Wooden boat
Near Drogheda	1275:W1275	Flint object
River Boyne between Oldbridge and Drogheda	3596:Wk729	Wooden boat
Near Drogheda	E191:373	Iron razor
Near Drogheda	7801:W282	Lead bulla
Near Drogheda (Boylan Fields)	1900:Wk182	Iron object
Near Drogheda	1840:Wk123	Iron gun
Near Drogheda	1839:Wk122	Iron gun
Near Drogheda	2191:W23	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2190:W22	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2189:W21	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2188:W20	Stone whetstone
Near Drogheda	2187:W19	Stone whetstone

**Table 2:** Stray archaeological finds in the vicinity of the site

#### 4.4 Cartographic Sources

Analysis of historic mapping can show human impact on landscape over a prolonged period. Large collections of historical maps (pre- and early Ordnance Survey maps as well as estate or private maps) are held at the Glucksman Map Library, Trinity College and other sources (UCD Library, Ordnance Survey Ireland, local libraries and published material). The development of the site and its vicinity recorded through the seventeenth to twentieth century cartography are described in Table 3 below (Figure 3).

Map	Date	Description
Down Survey	1670	Drogheda is depicted as a walled town with a singular bridge crossing over the River Boyne. Colp townland (and Parish) is marked on this map. A structure with a cross on top and a small square building is depicted within Colp Townland. This is most likely referring to the old monastery and castle described in the 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS map.
Taylor and Skinner Map	1777	Map 3. Drogheda is depicted as a large town with a singular bridge crossing the Boyne. A road runs east and divides in two, one road turns south (corresponding with the modern R132 road), while the other continues eastward. A windmill is depicted between the two roads. There is a windmill depicted on the 1835 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS map to the north of Colp in Stameen townland in roughly this location. Colp castle and monastery are not depicted on this map.
1 <sup>st</sup> edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey	1835	The townland boundary is depicted bordering the north, east and south of the area of interest (with Stameen, Mornington and Colp East townlands). The development area itself is depicted as open green fields, lined with

		trees. There is a farm complex (six linear buildings in a cluster within a property boundary) depicted to the south east which lines a road running in an east-west direction (across the SE corner of the development area. The surrounding countryside is open farmland. Directly to the SE of the area of interest is a church and associated graveyard. Marked on this map in the same area is 'site of monastery', 'site of old castle' and 'site of Colpa Fort'
3rd edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey	1888-1913	The railway now runs NW-SE forming the southern side of the site. The small roadway which passed by the farmyard now terminates at this farm, as the railway line cuts it off. The area of interest otherwise remains unchanged from the previous map. The 'site of monastery' to the south of the area of interest has been developed into a farming complex.
Cassini	1909-13	No change from previous map

**Table 3:** Cartographic sources relating to the site (Figure 3)

#### 4.5 Aerial photography

Aerial photography (or other forms of remote sensing) may reveal certain archaeological features or sites (earthworks, crop marks, soil marks) that for many reasons may not be appreciated at ground level. There are a number of available collections including the National Monuments Section, Geological Survey of Ireland (1970–73), Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1995, 2000, 2005), National Museum of Ireland (St Joseph CUCAP Collection) and Air Corps (1950's–1970's). Online orthostatic photographs of the site were examined (Ordnance Survey Ireland 1995, 2000 & 2005; Google Maps 2016, Figure 4).

Map	Date	Description
Ordnance Survey	1995	The area of interest appears much the same as it is today, an open triangular green field site. However the housing estate to the south of the railway line and the school in the NE corner has not yet been built.
Ordnance Survey	2000	Nothing has changed from the earlier photograph
Ordnance Survey	2005	The housing estate to the south of the railway line has been built since the 2000 photograph.
Ordnance Survey	2011-2013	The school in the NE corner has been built since the previous photograph. The farm complex in the centre of the area of interest (as marked on the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition OS map) has been partially demolished.
Ordnance Survey	2013-2015	Nothing has changed from the earlier photograph

**Table 4:** Aerial photographs relating to the site

#### 4.6 Previous Archaeological Excavations

The Excavation Bulletin is a database of summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland and Northern Ireland from 1970 to 2008. Summaries relating to archaeological excavations undertaken by the National Roads Authority are also available on-line and were consulted for any adjacent sites. Reports on licensed archaeological works are also held by the Archive Unit of the National Monuments Section. There have been numerous archaeological investigations adjacent to the subject site.

Licence	OS Ref	Townland/ Street	Ex. Bull. Ref.	Author
N/A	711468, 774166	Colp West	1988:51	M. Gowen
The site in a field adjacent to the 'Mill Road' some 500m to the north-west of the well known medieval foundation of Colp with its nearby fort and castle. Multiple ditches uncovered and partially excavated may point to the existence of a multi-vallate enclosure or may indicate a series of overlapping enclosures of differing dates. The remains of over one hundred individuals were exposed, excavated and retrieved for study. All burials were aligned east-west, many placed on top of earlier burials and fourteen were placed in stone-lined graves				
99E0472 99E0472 ext 01E0931 03E0641 03E0660	711468, 774166	Colp West	1999:679 2000:0748 2001:952 2001:953 2001:954 2002:1441 2003:1374 2003:1375 2003:1376	D. Murphy E. Corcoran R. OHara
<p>1999:679- Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works</p> <p>2000:0748- During monitoring of a housing development a previously unknown prehistoric and Early Christian settlement, which covered an area of 2 acres, was unearthed. A full archaeological excavation was carried out on this site from October 2000 to February 2001. The prehistoric phase of settlement at Colp West was defined by a linear ditch, which ran north-south across the site. All the prehistoric features lay to the west of this ditch. It was a probable ritual site; the majority of the features discovered comprising pits and post-holes. The principal features uncovered within the Early Christian area of the site consisted of a ringfort, the cut for a souterrain, four enclosures and a large rectangular enclosure. Four sub rectangular/D-shaped enclosures were annexed to the ringfort.</p> <p>2001:952- An extensive site was revealed at Colp West, which incorporated a small ringfort, six associated enclosures, a Bronze Age enclosure, an Iron Age enclosure, kilns, possible robber trenches, post-holes, spreads and pits. Four broad phases of activity were identified, and can be dated to the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Early Christian and post-medieval-modern periods respectively</p> <p>2001:953- Three fulachta fiadh were exposed during the monitoring of the topsoil-stripping and were subsequently excavated. No other features of archaeological significance or finds were recovered during the monitoring</p> <p>2001:954- Three fulachta fiadh were exposed during the monitoring of the topsoil-stripping and were subsequently excavated.</p> <p>2002:1441- Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of works</p> <p>2003:1374- Remains of a Fulacht Fia (03E0641) and numerous post holes (03E0660) uncovered during monitoring.</p> <p>2003:1375- Fulacht Fia</p> <p>2003:1376-The site consisted of a circular arrangement of posts c. 7m in diameter built without a footing trench, with a number of internal posts forming wall or roof supports. A number of pits were found both internally and externally. Bronze age in date.</p>				
05E0019	711468, 774166	Colp West	2005:1163	D.Murphy

Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				
07E0891	711577, 773668	Colp West	2007:1288	R O Hara
Two multiphase curvilinear ditch sequences were recorded. Two drystone souterrains were also excavated				
08E0302	712327, 774843	Colp West	2008:947	S Linnane
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				
13E0255	712300, 774830	Colp West	2013:423	R OHara
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works (An Bhradan Feasa)				
14E0091	712044, 774042	Colp West	2014:106	A O Connell
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				

**Table 5:** Archaeological excavation in the surrounding area

#### 4.7 Toponyms

Local tradition links the name Colp with an early Irish myth involving the Sons of Mil, one of whom, Colpa of the Sword, drowned at the mouth of the Boyne and was buried locally, reputedly within a flat topped mound in Colp East known as *Rath Colpa* (ME021-012007). *Inbher Colpdaí*, ‘the port of Colp’, is mentioned in the eighth-century AD *Lives of St Patrick*, as the place where Patrick disembarked before making his way to confront the legendary King Loeguire at Tara (Lewis 1837). The name appears elsewhere in Irish toponyms (Racolpa in Co. Tyrone; Joyce 1910, vol. 3, 535), where the root is given as *colptach* (‘a two-year old heifer’). Mill Road takes its name from a water mill in this area, referred to in the Llanthony Cartularies, Gormanston Register and the Civil Survey (D’Alton 1844; Simington 1940; Mills & McEnery 1916) but not marked on any of the maps consulted in Section 4.5 above.

## 5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL TESTING

### 5.1 Methodology

A total of sixteen (16) test trenches were excavated across the site under the constant archaeological supervision of the licensee with two more originally proposed but abandoned during the excavation due to site conditions. The trenches were targeted to assess the general potential of the location of the proposed development as well as anomalies highlighted in two geophysical surveys undertaken in the site, Detection licence no. 09R0057 and 18R0011. Excavation proceeded in level spits of 0.20m. Each trench was inspected for archaeological remains and all trenches were reinstated on completion.



## 5.2 Results

Sixteen (16) test trenches with a combined length of 1720 linear metres were excavated within the site (Figure 5; Plates 1-12). The results are listed in Table 6 below. Topsoil was quite uniform; 0.20-0.30m in depth across the area, subsoil was compact mixed yellow, grey and brown boulder clay. The main Dublin-Dundalk gas pipeline runs through the site. The southernmost field had been altered to build a football pitch and the natural boulder clay lay, at points, up to 1.2m below the current ground surface. Trenches # 7 and 8 were abandoned as the area had been used as a yard and contaminated with construction debris. The remains of several field boundaries or drains were identified throughout the site but only three were deemed worthy of further attention due to their identification on the geophysical surveys of the site and proximity to the enclosure, ME021-011002-.

In Area 1, Trench #18, a shallow (0.12m deep x 0.85m wide) E/W running ditch contained mid-brown stoney silty clay. In Area 2, Trench #17, a deeper (0.35m deep x 0.9m wide) E/W running ditch containing a similar fill may be part of the same feature and they appear to correspond to feature #3 identified in the geophysical report (Nichols 2018 5, Fig. 4). The geophysical report indicates a linear feature of over 100m in length in this area.

In Area 3, Trench #17C, a N/S running ditch (0.4m deep x 1.3m wide) contained a greyish brown stoney silty clay and appears to be part of a series of features that may be a field system or an annex associated with the enclosure, ME021-011002-. This feature was highlighted in the geophysical report (*ibid.*) as feature # 9.

Trench	L x B x D	Orientation	Description
1	78m x 2m x 0.3-0.75m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
1A	70m x 2m x 0.5-1.2m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
2	95m x 2m x 0.4-0.6m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
2A	56m x 2m x 0.5-0.8m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
3	116m x 2m x 0.35-0.5m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
3A	40m x 2m x 0.4-0.75m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
4	140m x 2m x 0.4-1m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
4A	26m x 2m x 0.4-0.5m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
5	36m x 2m x 0.4-0.6m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
6	47m x 2m x 0.4-0.7m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
7		NW/SE	Abandoned
8		NW/SE	Abandoned

9	54m x 2m x 0.4-0.65m	NE/SW	No archaeology found
10	70m x 2m x 0.4-0.9m	NE/SW	No archaeology found
11	95m x 2m x 0.35-0.5m	NE/SW	No archaeology found
12	55m x 2m x 0.4-0.5m	NNE/SSW	No archaeology found
13	40m x 2m x 0.4-0.55m	NE/SW	No archaeology found
14	55m x 2m x 0.45-0.65m	NE/SW	No archaeology found
15	54m x 2m x 0.4-0.55m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
15A	16m x 2m x 0.4-0.55m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
16	125m x 2m x 0.35-0.5m	NW/SE	No archaeology found
17	78m x 2m x 0.4-0.7m	NE/SW	No archaeology found
17A	50mx 2m x 0.4-0.65m	NNE/SSW	Area 2, ditch 0.35m D x 0.9m W
17B	54mx 2m x 0.4-0.6m	NE/SW	No archaeology found
17C	84mx 2m x 0.4-0.6m	E/W	Area 3, ditch 0.4m D x 1.3m W
18	190m x 2m x 0.4-0.6m	NW/SE	Area 1, ditch 0.12m D x 0.85m W

**Table 6:** Testing results

## 6. IMPACTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Extensive archaeological assessment comprising geophysical surveys, Detection licence # 09R0057 and 18R0011, followed by machine assisted test-excavation was undertaken at this site. Three areas of interest were identified.

The construction works for the development will have a profound negative impact on the archaeological features therefore **it is recommended that they be preserved by record**, *i.e.* archaeological excavation, in advance of construction, under licence from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in consultation with the National Museum (NMI). An excavation cutting of *c.* 75m x 15m encompassing Area 1 and Area 2 and an excavation cutting of *c.* 22m x 12m for Area 3 are proposed (Figure 6).

Furthermore, **archaeological monitoring**, under licence, should be undertaken during topsoil removal for the construction works of the current phase of development in the northern field surrounding the enclosure, ME021-011002-, and burials, ME021-011001. Development of the wider landholding (outside the current application) should be subject to archaeological appraisal and mitigation where appropriate.

**Note:** The conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are subject to the approval of The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) and the relevant local authorities. As the statutory body responsible for the protection of Ireland's archaeological and cultural heritage resource, the DCHG may issue alternative or additional recommendations.

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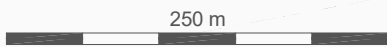
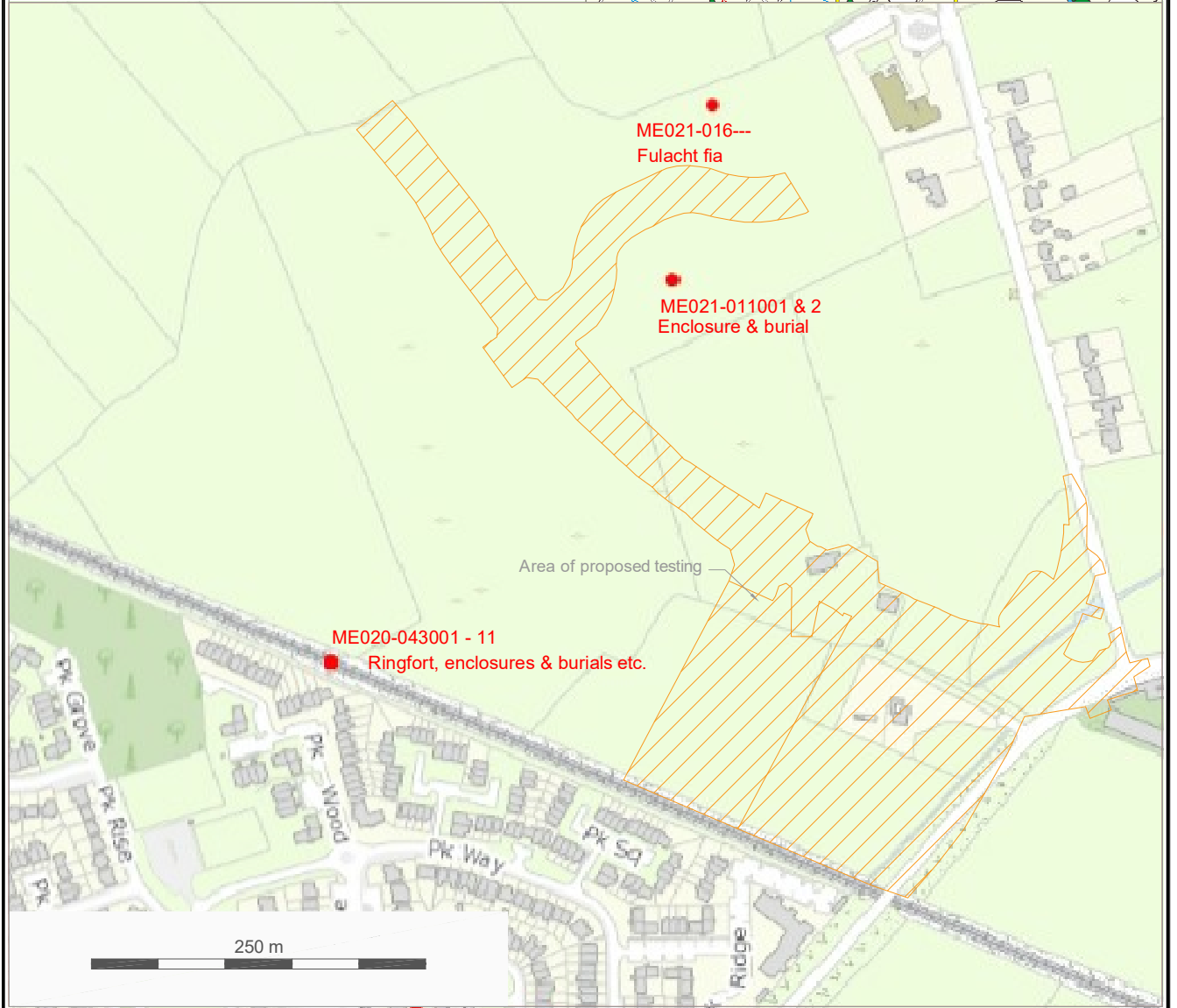
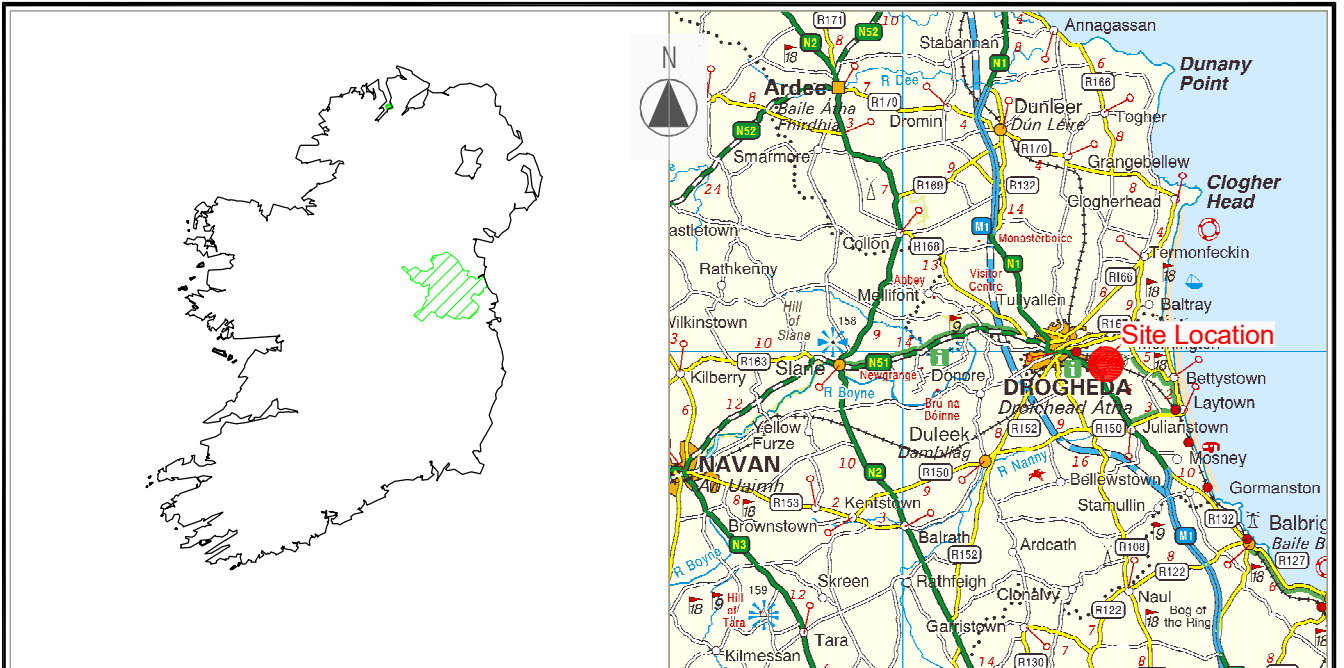
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- Aerial Photography <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html> [accessed 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018]
- Online Excavations bulletin [www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie) [accessed 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018]
- Online Archaeological Survey of Ireland [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) [accessed 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018]
- Meath County Development Plan  
<https://meathcountydevelopmentplan.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/appendix-08-record-of-protected-structures-maps-20-29.pdf>

*Liam Coen*

Liam Coen BA 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018



Unit 8 Beat Centre  
 Stephenstown,  
 Balbriggan,  
 Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath  
 Archaeological Assessment  
 Client: Shannon Homes

Scale: 1:5000 A4  
 Date: January 2018  
 Origin: Client, OSI  
 Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 1: Site Location

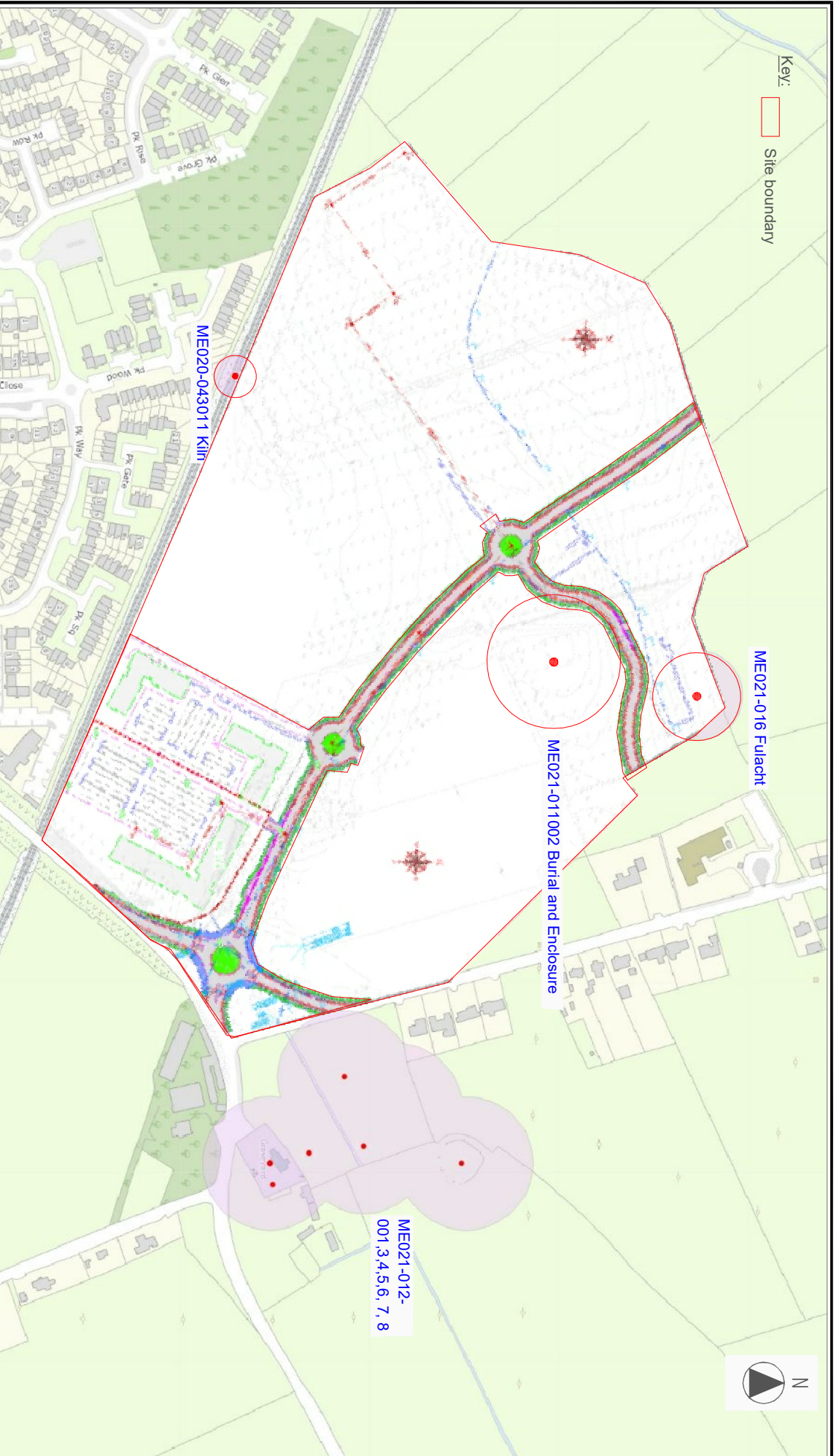


Figure 2: Layout of site with RMPs and Zone of Notification





(i) OS Aerial Photograph (1995)

(r) Digital Globe (2013-17)

Key:

Site boundary



Unit 8 Beat Centre  
 Stephenstown,  
 Balbriggan,  
 Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath  
 Archaeological Test Excavation

Client: Shannon Homes (Drogheda)

Scale: Not to scale

Date: March 2018

Origin: OSI

Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 4: Aerial Photographs

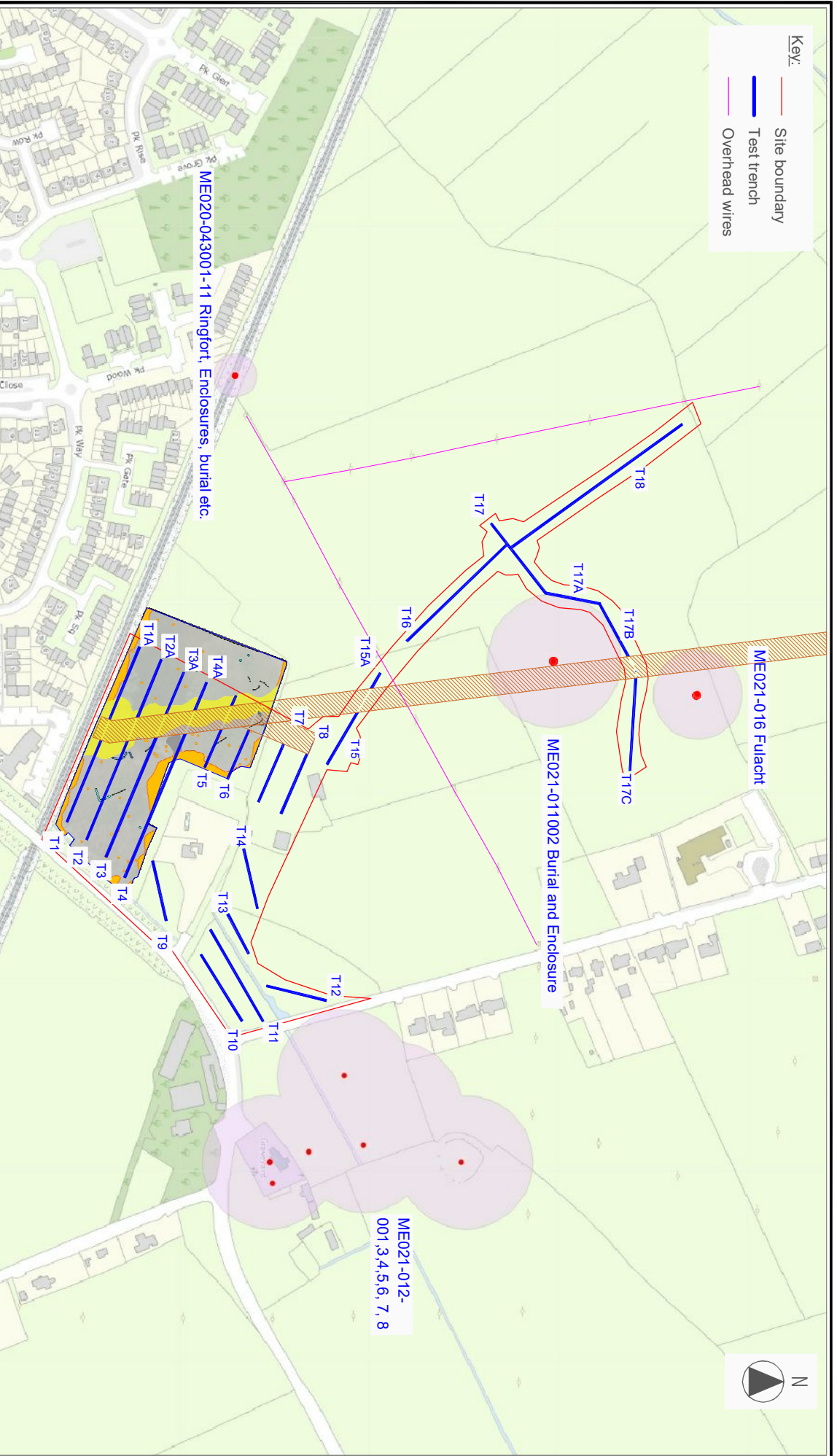


Figure 5: Trench Layout with Geophysical survey data and RMPs



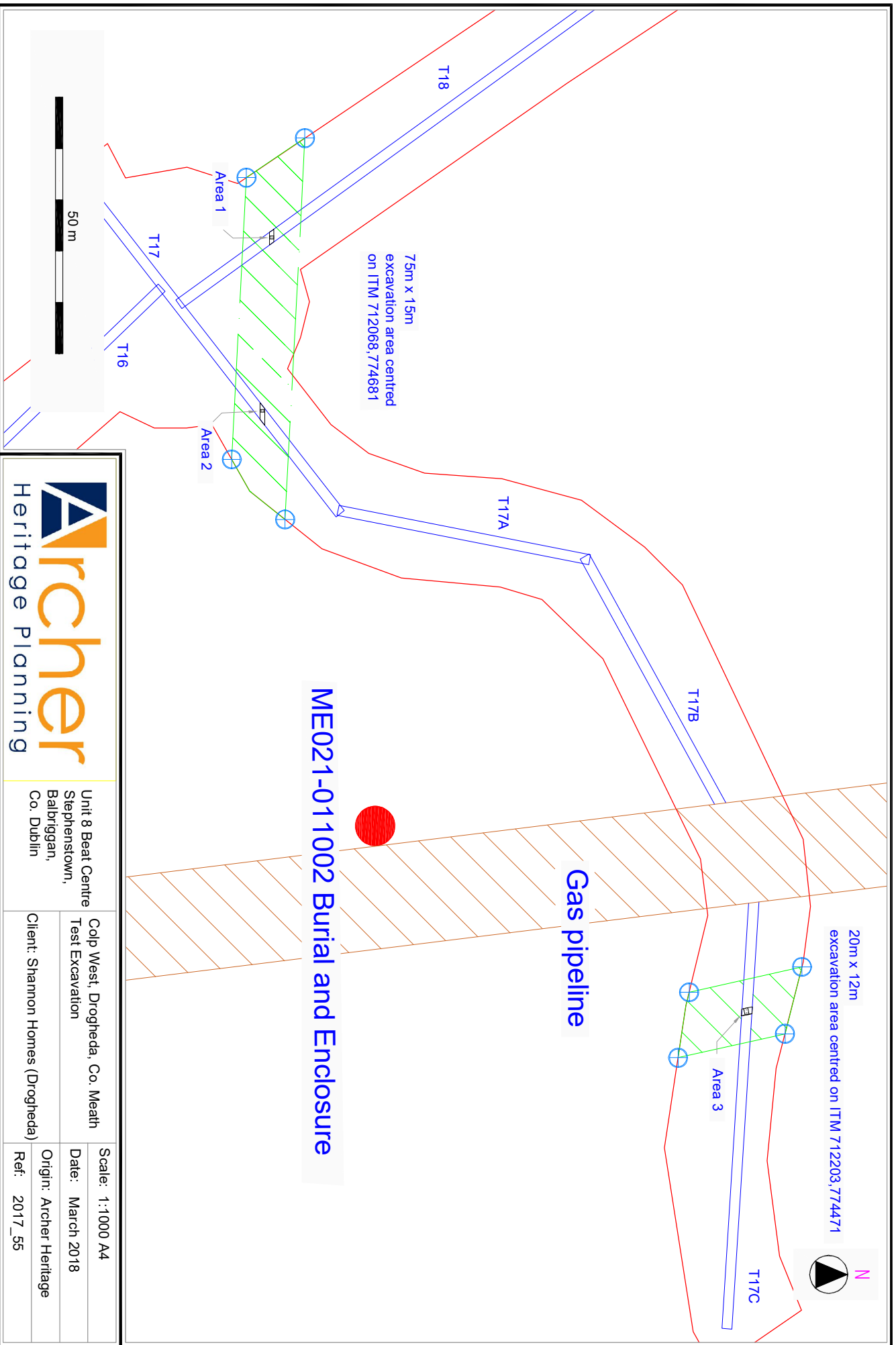


Figure 6: Detail of archaeology



Plate 1: Trench #1A looking south-east



Plate 2: Trench #2 looking north-west



Plate 3: Trench #4A looking south-east



Plate 4: Trench #3 looking south-east



Plate 5: Trench #11 looking north-east



Plate 6: Trench #13 looking north-east



Plate 7: Trench #14 looking south-west



Plate 8: Trench #16 looking south-east



Plate 9: Trench # 18 looking south-west



Plate 10: Section in ditch, Area 1, Trench #18



Plate 11: Section in ditch, Area 2, Trench #17



Plate 12: Section in ditch, Area 3, Trench #17C

**APPENDIX 4 – EXCAVATION REPORT**

# Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath

## Test Excavation Report

Client: Shannon Homes (Drogheda)  
FortField House,  
Colpe Road,  
Drogheda,  
Co.Meath

Licence No: 18E0597

Planning ref. n/a

Archaeologist: Liam Coen

Author: Liam Coen

Report Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018

Our Ref: 2017\_55

# Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath

## Test Excavation Report

<b>SITE NAME</b>	Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath
<b>CLIENT</b>	Shannon Homes (Drogheda)
<b>INVESTIGATION TYPE</b>	Test Excavation
<b>LICENCE NO</b>	18E0597
<b>PLANNING REF</b>	n/a
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Colp West
<b>IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR</b>	712135, 774578
<b>RMP NO</b>	Proximity to ME021-011001-, 002-&ME021-016-
<b>RPS NO</b>	n/a
<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANT</b>	Archer Heritage Planning Ltd.
<b>ARCHAEOLOGIST</b>	Liam Coen
<b>DATE OF ISSUE</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2018
<b>JOB REF.</b>	2017_55

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**SUMMARY**

The subject site is located at Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath (ITM 712135, 774578). The site covers an area of c. 9.8ha comprising a green field site located to the south-east of Drogheda Town Centre. The excavation was undertaken as part of a pre-planning Strategic Housing Development process. The proposed development area contains three recorded monuments; a Fulacht Fia (ME021-016) and a cemetery within an enclosure (ME021-011001/002). A proposed access road (Planning ref. LB180620 Meath Co. Co.) was modified to avoid the Zones of Notification surrounding these monuments.

Test trench locations were agreed in advance with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG, Excavation licence 18E0597). A total of twenty (20) trenches (2980 linear metres) and two 5m x 5m areas centred on geophysical anomalies were mechanically excavated across the site under archaeological supervision. A single archaeological feature, a shallow linear ditch in Trench 10, was identified that may correspond to a linear feature (Feature A) highlighted in a geophysical survey (18R0181).

**Recommendation:**

Extensive archaeological assessment comprising geophysical survey, Detection licence # 18R0181, followed by machine assisted test-excavation was undertaken at this site. A single area of interest was identified. The construction works for the development will have a profound negative impact on the archaeological feature therefore **it is recommended to be preserved by record**, *i.e.* archaeological excavation, in advance of construction, under licence from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in consultation with the National Museum (NMI).

Furthermore, **archaeological monitoring**, under licence, should be undertaken during topsoil removal for the construction works of the current phase of development. Development of the wider landholding (outside the current application) should be subject to archaeological appraisal and mitigation where appropriate.

Revision	Status	Date	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1	Final	Oct 2018	Coen (Archer) ARCHAEOLOGIST	O'Connell (Archer) SENIOR ARCHAEOLOGIST	C. Mc Guinness

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This archaeological test excavation report for a proposed housing development has been prepared by Archer Heritage Planning Ltd for Shannon Homes (Drogheda). The test-excavation was undertaken on 10<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

### 1.1 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises housing undertaken as part of a Strategic Housing Development process. It is divided in to Site A, to the south-west of the access road, comprising 30 apartments, 26 duplexes and 161 houses; and Site B, to the north-east of the access road, comprising 156 apartments and all associated works and services.

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

This green field site is located c. 3.5km south-east of Drogheda town centre on a site beside the Dublin-Belfast rail line (Colp West Td, Colp Parish, Lower Duleek By, Meath, Sheet 21, ITM 712135, 774578, Figure 1). It comprises 9.8ha of undeveloped green field site used for crops. A gas pipeline runs underground through the north-eastern corner of the site and the excavations associated with that development revealed the location of the cemetery and enclosure, ME021-011001/002.

## 3. METHOD STATEMENT

Twenty (20) trenches totalling 2980 linear metres and two 5m x 5m areas centred on anomalies identified during a geophysical survey (18R0181) were excavated under constant archaeological supervision to determine the archaeological potential of the location of the proposed development (Figure 2). Another 5m x 5m area originally proposed was abandoned due to proximity to overhead powerlines. The geophysical survey, 18R0181, was conducted to inform the test-trench layout and to investigate the general archaeological potential of the footprint for the current phase of development.

Excavation proceeded in level spits no greater than 0.2 m to the subsoil or top of the first archaeological horizon where present. Each revealed surface was inspected for archaeological remains and any features present were recorded appropriately. All features identified within the trenches were tested to determine their extent, composition and depth and to ascertain potential dating material. All trenches were reinstated on completion of the works.

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## 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

### 4.1 General Archaeological Background

Colp became a borough in the late twelfth century, when Augustinian canons from Llanthony, Wales were granted lands by Hugh de Lacy (Casey & Rowan 1993). Although the canons used the earlier monastic site, Colp was never a substantial priory but rather a farming cell or grange (Bradley 1988). Mill Road takes its name from a water mill in this area, referred to in the Llanthony Cartularies, Gormanston Register and the Civil Survey (D'Alton 1844; Simington 1940; Mills & McEnery 1916).

In 1540, at the time of the Dissolution of the Irish monasteries, the grange comprised 120 acres with “a great stone house” (a tower house). In 1559, the grange was granted to Henry Draycott, Controller of the Pipe in the Irish Exchequer, and political ally of the Lord Deputy, Anthony St. Leger (D'Alton 1844; Gwynn & Hadcock 1988; Barnewall 1977). The Draycotts quickly integrated with the Old English community of the Pale, and in 1641 the family sided with the Irish forces resulting in the temporary forfeiture of their lands (they were regained in 1663; D'Alton 1844). Following the rebellion, the settlement of Colp had dwindled to the castle and a number of cabins (Simington 1940). By the 1860s, all trace of the medieval church had vanished, most of it being removed during the construction of the Church of Ireland church in 1809 (Bradley 1985).

### 4.2 Record of Monuments & Places

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is a statutory inventory of archaeological sites protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 (Section 12, 1994 Act), compiled and maintained by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI). The inventory concentrates on pre-1700 AD sites and is based on a previous inventory known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which does not have legal protection or status (see [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)). The proposed development is located outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential associated with the historic town of Drogheda. A selection of RMP entries relevant to the site and the wider area are presented in Table 1 below.

**The proposed development area is in proximity to three recorded monuments; ME021-016 (fulacht fia), which was identified during archaeological monitoring of the gas pipeline in 1988. It was observed as a patch of heat-cracked sandstone mixed with charcoal in a ploughed field and measured 25 x 20m. These are common prehistoric sites (overwhelmingly Bronze Age) in which stones were heated on a hearth and placed into water-filled pits or troughs and are believed to have fulfilled a number of functions including feasting, bathing, sauna, industry and brewing.**

**Immediately south of ME021-016 is a substantial cemetery (ME021-011001-) and enclosure**

(ME021-011002-) where the remains of over one hundred individuals were excavated(see below Table 5).A substantial ditch was identified by air photography (Figure 4).

There are no visible remains of the medieval church of Colpe (ME021-012004-) the location of which lies approximately c. 400m south-east of the subject site.

SMR No	Class	Townland	ITM
ME020-043001	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043002-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043003-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043004-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043005-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043006-	Ringfort - rath	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043007-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043008-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043009-	Burial	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043010-	Kiln - corn-drying	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043011-	Souterrain	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
<b>ME021-011001-</b>	<b>Burial</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712167, 774698</b>
<b>ME021-011002-</b>	<b>Enclosure</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712167, 774698</b>
ME021-012----	Settlement cluster	COLP EAST,COLP WEST,MORNINGTON	712607, 774478
ME021-012001-	Castle - unclassified	MORNINGTON	712601, 774527
ME021-012003-	Earthwork	MORNINGTON	712539, 774510
ME021-012004-	Church	COLP WEST	712616, 774443
ME021-012005-	Cross - High cross	COLP WEST	712616, 774443
ME021-012006-	Cross	COLP WEST	712635, 774446
ME021-012007-	Ringfort - rath	COLP EAST	712616, 774615
ME021-012008-	Graveyard	COLP EAST,COLP WEST	712616, 774443
<b>ME021-016----</b>	<b>Fulacht fia</b>	<b>COLP WEST</b>	<b>712197, 774827</b>
ME020-043001-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043002-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043003-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043004-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043005-	Enclosure	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043006-	Ringfort - rath	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043007-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043008-	Excavation - miscellaneous	COLP WEST	711911, 774412
ME020-043009-	Burial	COLP WEST	711911, 774412

**Table 1:** Archaeological sites in the wider area of the proposed development

### 4.3 Topographical Files

A significant quantity of prehistoric, early medieval and late medieval artefacts was retrieved during archaeological excavations in Colp West and Painestown townlands between 1988 and 2008. Also, archaeological monitoring of dredging works on Boyne, north of Stagrennan townland recovered over 3,000 pieces of worked flint, medieval and post-medieval pottery, roof and floor tile, clay pipes, glass, leather off-cuts and possible ship timbers. Four significant objects were found: an antler hammer or mace head; a worked bone toggle-like item, a copper alloy pin and a copper alloy socketed and basal-looped spearhead (Whitaker 2000). A significant amount of this material may have been transported downstream from Drogheda.

The National Museum of Ireland Topographical Files is the national archive of all known antiquities recorded by the National Museum listed by county and townland/ street. These files relate primarily to artefacts but also include references to monuments and contain a unique archive of records of previous archaeological excavations. The Museum files present an accurate catalogue of objects reported to that institution from 1928. The following entries were recorded for Drogheda town:

Location	Museum No.	Description
River Boyne, Drogheda	2010:323	Wooden trough
Drogheda Port	2009:163	Iron Cannon
Drogheda	2005:50-51	Iron cannon balls
Drogheda (?)	2004:42	Flint arrowhead
Drogheda	1989:76	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1981:9.1	Pottery (base sherd of manganese mottled ware; 18C)
Building site at Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1980:22	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1979:93	Pottery
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1979:91-2	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1330-2089	Pottery (medieval and post-medieval surface finds)
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1272-1329	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1262-1271	Iron nails
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1261	Iron horseshoe
John Street, Drogheda	1977:1260	Bone pin
Millmount, Drogheda	1977:1258	Pottery
Dyer Street, Drogheda	1977:1256-7	Pottery
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1977:1255	Pottery
Freeschool Lane, Drogheda	1977:1253-4	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:527-531	Pottery (surface finds)
John Street, Drogheda	1976:525-6	Clay tiles
John Street, Drogheda	1976:506-24	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:505	Leather object
John Street, Drogheda	1976:504	Leather shoe
John Street, Drogheda	1976:503	Antler tine
John Street, Drogheda	1976:250-502	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:227-249	Clay tile

John Street, Drogheda	1976:224-6	Iron objects
John Street, Drogheda	1976:223	Slag
John Street, Drogheda	1976:222	Flint flake
John Street, Drogheda	1976:221	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:219-20	Slate (stone)
John Street, Drogheda	1976:218	Clay pipe
John Street, Drogheda	1976:167-217	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:166	Clay tile
John Street, Drogheda	1976:162-5	Pottery
John Street, Drogheda	1976:161	Iron nail
John Street, Drogheda	1976:151-60	Pottery
River Boyne (near Drogheda)	1968:297	Bronze axehead
Bessexwell Lane, Drogheda	1954:76-82	Pottery
Bessexwell Lane, Drogheda	1954:74-5	Ceramic tile
Drogheda	M1951:11-12	Leather shoe
Drogheda	1940:72	Iron grist
Drogheda (Moneymore)	1936:1900	Cu alloy dagger
Drogheda	RIA1914:49	Cu alloy token
Drogheda	SA1913:141	Token
5 miles NW of Drogheda	SA1909:1	Cast of high cross of Monasterboice
Drogheda	1882:96	Ceramic tile
Drogheda	1000:69	Object
River Boyne near Drogheda	R4015	Bronze brooch
Near Drogheda	R3088	Lead alloy seal
Drogheda	R2017	Iron cleaver
Drogheda	R1828	Bronze harp peg
Near Drogheda	R1693	Cu alloy coin
Between Oldbridge and Drogheda	R1574	Wooden boat
Near Drogheda	1275:W1275	Flint object
River Boyne between Oldbridge and Drogheda	3596:Wk729	Wooden boat
Near Drogheda	E191:373	Iron razor
Near Drogheda	7801:W282	Lead bulla
Near Drogheda (Boylan Fields)	1900:Wk182	Iron object
Near Drogheda	1840:Wk123	Iron gun
Near Drogheda	1839:Wk122	Iron gun
Near Drogheda	2191:W23	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2190:W22	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2189:W21	Stone object
Near Drogheda	2188:W20	Stone whetstone
Near Drogheda	2187:W19	Stone whetstone

**Table 2:** Stray archaeological finds in the vicinity of the site

#### 4.4 Cartographic Sources

Analysis of historic mapping can show human impact on landscape over a prolonged period. Large collections of historical maps (pre- and early Ordnance Survey maps as well as estate or private maps) are held at the Glucksman Map Library, Trinity College and other sources (UCD Library, Ordnance Survey Ireland, local libraries and published material). The development of the site and its vicinity recorded through the seventeenth to twentieth century cartography are described in Table 3 below (Figure 4).

Map	Date	Description
Down Survey	1670	Drogheda is depicted as a walled town with a singular bridge crossing over the River Boyne. Colp townland (and Parish) is marked on this map. A structure with a cross on top and a small square building is depicted within Colp Townland. This is most likely referring to the old monastery and castle described in the 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS map.
Taylor and Skinner Map	1777	Map 3. Drogheda is depicted as a large town with a singular bridge crossing the Boyne. A road runs east and divides in two, one road turns south (corresponding with the modern R132 road), while the other continues eastward. A windmill is depicted between the two roads. There is a windmill depicted on the 1835 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS map to the north of Colp in Stameen townland in roughly this location. Colp castle and monastery are not depicted on this map.
1st edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey	1835	The townland boundary is depicted bordering the north, east and south of the area of interest (with Stameen, Mornington and Colp East townlands). The development area itself is depicted as open green fields, lined with trees. There is a farm complex (six linear buildings in a cluster within a property boundary) depicted to the south east which lines a road running in an east-west direction (across the SE corner of the development area). The surrounding countryside is open farmland. Directly to the SE of the area of interest is a church and associated graveyard. Marked on this map in the same area is 'site of monastery', 'site of old castle' and 'site of Colpa Fort'
3rd edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey	1888-1913	The railway now runs NW-SE forming the southern side of the site. The small roadway which passed by the farmyard now terminates at this farm, as the railway line cuts it off. The area of interest otherwise remains unchanged from the previous map. The 'site of monastery' to the south of the area of interest has been developed into a farming complex.
Cassini	1909-13	No change from previous map

**Table 3:** Cartographic sources relating to the site (Figure 4)



#### 4.5 Aerial photography

Aerial photography (or other forms of remote sensing) may reveal certain archaeological features or sites (earthworks, crop marks, soil marks) that for many reasons may not be appreciated at ground level. There are a number of available collections including the National Monuments Section, Geological Survey of Ireland (1970–73), Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1995, 2000, 2005), National Museum of Ireland (St Joseph CUCAP Collection) and Air Corps (1950's–1970's). Online orthostatic photographs of the site were examined (Ordnance Survey Ireland 1995, 2000 & 2005; Google Maps 2016, Figure 5).

Map	Date	Description
Ordnance Survey	1995	The area of interest appears much the same as it is today, an open triangular green field site. However the housing estate to the south of the railway line and the school in the NE corner has not yet been built.
Ordnance Survey	2000	Nothing has changed from the earlier photograph
Ordnance Survey	2005	The housing estate to the south of the railway line has been built since the 2000 photograph.
Ordnance Survey	2011-2013	The school in the NE corner has been built since the previous photograph. The farm complex in the centre of the area of interest (as marked on the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition OS map) has been partially demolished.
Ordnance Survey	2013-2015	Nothing has changed from the earlier photograph

**Table 4:** Aerial photographs relating to the site

#### 4.6 Previous Archaeological Excavations

The Excavation Bulletin is a database of summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland and Northern Ireland from 1970 to 2008. Summaries relating to archaeological excavations undertaken by the National Roads Authority are also available on-line and were consulted for any adjacent sites. Reports on licensed archaeological works are also held by the Archive Unit of the National Monuments Section. There have been numerous archaeological investigations adjacent to the subject site.

Licence	OS Ref	Townland/ Street	Ex. Bull. Ref.	Author
N/A	711468, 774166	Colp West	1988:51	M. Gowen
The site is in a field adjacent to the 'Mill Road' some 500m to the north-west of the well known medieval foundation of Colp with its nearby fort and castle. Multiple ditches uncovered and partially excavated may point to the existence of a multi-vallate enclosure or may indicate a series of overlapping enclosures of differing dates. The remains of over one hundred individuals were exposed, excavated and retrieved for study. All burials were aligned east-west, many placed on top of earlier burials and fourteen were placed in stone-lined graves				

99E0472 99E0472 ext 01E0931 03E0641 03E0660	711468, 774166	Colp West	1999:679 2000:0748 2001:952 2001:953 2001:954 2002:1441 2003:1374 2003:1375 2003:1376	D. Murphy E. Corcoran R. OHara
<p>1999:679- Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works</p> <p>2000:0748- During monitoring of a housing development a previously unknown prehistoric and Early Christian settlement, which covered an area of 2 acres, was unearthed. A full archaeological excavation was carried out on this site from October 2000 to February 2001. The prehistoric phase of settlement at Colp West was defined by a linear ditch, which ran north-south across the site. All the prehistoric features lay to the west of this ditch. It was a probable ritual site; the majority of the features discovered comprising pits and post-holes. The principal features uncovered within the Early Christian area of the site consisted of a ringfort, the cut for a souterrain, four enclosures and a large rectangular enclosure. Four sub rectangular/D-shaped enclosures were annexed to the ringfort.</p> <p>2001:952- An extensive site was revealed at Colp West, which incorporated a small ringfort, six associated enclosures, a Bronze Age enclosure, an Iron Age enclosure, kilns, possible robber trenches, post-holes, spreads and pits. Four broad phases of activity were identified, and can be dated to the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Early Christian and post-medieval-modern periods respectively</p> <p>2001:953- Three fulachta fiadh were exposed during the monitoring of the topsoil-stripping and were subsequently excavated. No other features of archaeological significance or finds were recovered during the monitoring</p> <p>2001:954- Three fulachta fiadh were exposed during the monitoring of the topsoil-stripping and were subsequently excavated.</p> <p>2002:1441- Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of works</p> <p>2003:1374- Remains of a Fulacht Fia (03E0641) and numerous post holes (03E0660) uncovered during monitoring.</p> <p>2003:1375- Fulacht Fia</p> <p>2003:1376-The site consisted of a circular arrangement of posts c. 7m in diameter built without a footing trench, with a number of internal posts forming wall or roof supports. A number of pits were found both internally and externally. Bronze age in date.</p>				
05E0019	711468, 774166	Colp West	2005:1163	D.Murphy
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				
07E0891	711577, 773668	Colp West	2007:1288	R O Hara
Two multiphase curvilinear ditch sequences were recorded. Two drystone souterrains were also excavated				
08E0302	712327, 774843	Colp West	2008:947	S Linnane
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				
13E0255	712300, 774830	Colp West	2013:423	R OHara
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works (An Bhradan Feasa)				
14E0091	712044, 774042	Colp West	2014:106	A O Connell
Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the works				
05E0019 ext.	712619, 774461	Colp West	2016:458	Deirdre Murphy and Jon Stirland
No archaeological features or deposits were identified during monitoring and no finds were recovered.				

**Table 5:** Archaeological excavation in the surrounding area

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#### 4.6.1 Test Excavation Colp West, Licence no. 18E0089

The test excavation took place on 23<sup>rd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> March 2018 as part of planning permission for a commercial development and its associated relief road (LB180620 Meath County Council). Extensive archaeological assessment comprising geophysical survey, Detection licence 09R0057 and 18R0011, followed by machine assisted test-excavation, excavation licence 18E0089, was undertaken at this site (c. 6.5ha). A total of sixteen (16) trenches (1720 linear metres) were mechanically excavated across the site under archaeological supervision. Three areas of archaeology were identified comprising linear features highlighted by the geophysical survey and are likely to be associated with the nearby enclosure ME021-011001-/002-.

In Area 1, Trench 18, a shallow (0.12m deep x 0.85m wide) E/W running ditch contained mid-brown stoney silty clay. In Area 2, Trench 17, a deeper (0.35m deep x 0.9m wide) E/W running ditch containing a similar fill may be part of the same feature and they appear to correspond to feature #3 identified in the geophysical report (Nichols 2018a 5, Fig. 4). The geophysical report indicates a linear feature of over 100m in length in this area.

In Area 3, Trench #17C, a N/S running ditch (0.4m deep x 1.3m wide) contained a greyish brown stoney silty clay and appears to be part of a series of features that may be a field system or an annex associated with the enclosure, ME021-011002-. This feature was highlighted in the geophysical report (*ibid.*) as feature # 9.

#### 4.7 Toponyms

Local tradition links the name Colp with an early Irish myth involving the Sons of Mil, one of whom, Colpa of the Sword, drowned at the mouth of the Boyne and was buried locally, reputedly within a flat topped mound in Colp East known as *Rath Colpa* (ME021-012007). *Inbher Colpdai*, 'the port of Colp', is mentioned in the eighth-century AD *Lives of St Patrick*, as the place where Patrick disembarked before making his way to confront the legendary King Loeguire at Tara (Lewis 1837). The name appears elsewhere in Irish toponyms (Racolpa in Co. Tyrone; Joyce 1910, vol. 3, 535), where the root is given as *colptach* ('a two-year old heifer'). Mill Road takes its name from a water mill in this area, referred to in the Llanthony Cartularies, Gormanston Register and the Civil Survey (D'Alton 1844; Simington 1940; Mills & McEnery 1916) but not marked on any of the maps consulted in Section 4.5 above.

## 5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL TESTING

### 5.1 Methodology

Test trench locations were agreed in advance with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG, Excavation licence 18E0597). A total of twenty (20) trenches (2980 linear metres) and two 5m x 5m areas centred on geophysical anomalies were mechanically excavated across the site under archaeological supervision. Another 5m x 5m was originally proposed but abandoned during the excavation due to site conditions. The trenches were targeted to assess the general potential of the location of the proposed development as well as anomalies highlighted in a geophysical survey undertaken in the site, Detection licence no. 18R0181. Excavation proceeded in level spits of 0.20m. Each trench was inspected for archaeological remains and all trenches were reinstated on completion.

### 5.2 Results

Twenty (20) trenches with a total length of 2980 linear metres and two 5m x 5m areas centred on geophysical anomalies were excavated (Figure 2; Plates 1-12). The results are listed in Table 6 below. Topsoil was quite uniform; 0.25 -0.40m in depth across the area, subsoil was compact orangey brown boulder clay. The main Dublin-Dundalk gas pipeline runs through the north-eastern corner of the subject area. A single area of interest was identified.

In Trench #10, a shallow (0.17m deep x 0.7m wide) E/W running ditch, F.1, contained mid-brown stoney silty clay with a single piece of struck flint recovered. The ditch, F.1, appears to correspond to Feature A in Geophysical Survey 18R0181 (Nichols 2018 b) and is along the same alignment of anomaly #3, identified in an earlier geophysical survey by Target (Nichols 2018 a, 5, Fig. 4, Detection licence # 18R0011).

Trench	L x B x D	Orientation	Description
1	170 x 2 x 0.35-.45	NW/SE	No archaeology found
2	160 x 2 x 0.35-.4	NW/SE	No archaeology found
3	140 x 2 x 0.3-.4	NW/SE	No archaeology found
4	130 x 2 x 0.25-.45	NW/SE	No archaeology found
5	120 x 2 x 0.35-.45	NW/SE	No archaeology found
6	120 x 2 x 0.35-.45	NW/SE	No archaeology found
7	30 x 2 x 0.3-.45	NE/SW	No archaeology found
8	30 x 2 x 0.3-.45	NE/SW	No archaeology found
9	155 x 2 x 0.35-.45	NW/SE	No archaeology found
10	145 x 2 x 0.3-.45	NNW/SSE	Area 1, linear feature, F.1, 0.7 in width x 0.17 in depth, contained struck flint artifact.
11	225 x 2 x 0.25-.45	NNW/SSE	No archaeology found

12	225 x 2 x 0.35-45	NNW/SSE	No archaeology found
13	225 x 2 x 0.35-.5	NNW/SSE	No archaeology found
14	240 x 2 x 0.3-.4	NNW/SSE	No archaeology found
15	230 x 2 x 0.3-.4	NNW/SSE	No archaeology found
16	200 x 2 x 0.35-45	NNW/SSE	No archaeology found
17	180 x 2 x 0.35-45	NNW/SSE	No archaeology found
18	85 x 2 x 0.3-.45	ENE/WSW	No archaeology found
19	70 x 2 x 0.3-.4	ENE/WSW	No archaeology found
20	100 x 2 x 0.3-.4	NW/SE	No archaeology found
21	5 x 5	-	Abandoned
22	5 x 5 x 0.3-.45	-	No archaeology found
23	5 x 5 x 0.3-.45	-	No archaeology found

**Table 6:** Testing results

## 6. IMPACTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Extensive archaeological assessment comprising a geophysical survey, Detection licence # 18R0181, followed by machine assisted test-excavation was undertaken at this site. One area of interest was identified.

The construction works for the development will have a profound negative impact on the archaeological feature therefore **it is recommended that it be preserved by record**, *i.e.* archaeological excavation, in advance of construction, under licence from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in consultation with the National Museum (NMI). An initial excavation cutting of 15m x 15m is proposed centred on F.1 in Trench 10. If F.1 extends beyond this cutting a series of test-trenches across the possible line of the F.1 will be mechanically excavated in 5m intervals to fully expose the extent of this feature. A final excavation cutting will be established along the length of the feature with a minimum clearance of 5m either side of the feature (Figure 6).

Furthermore, **archaeological monitoring**, under licence, should be undertaken during topsoil removal for the construction works of the current phase of development. Development of the wider landholding (outside the current application) should be subject to archaeological appraisal and mitigation where appropriate.

**Note:** The conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are subject to the approval of The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) and the relevant local authorities. As the statutory body responsible for the protection of Ireland's archaeological and cultural heritage resource, the DCHG may issue alternative or additional recommendations.

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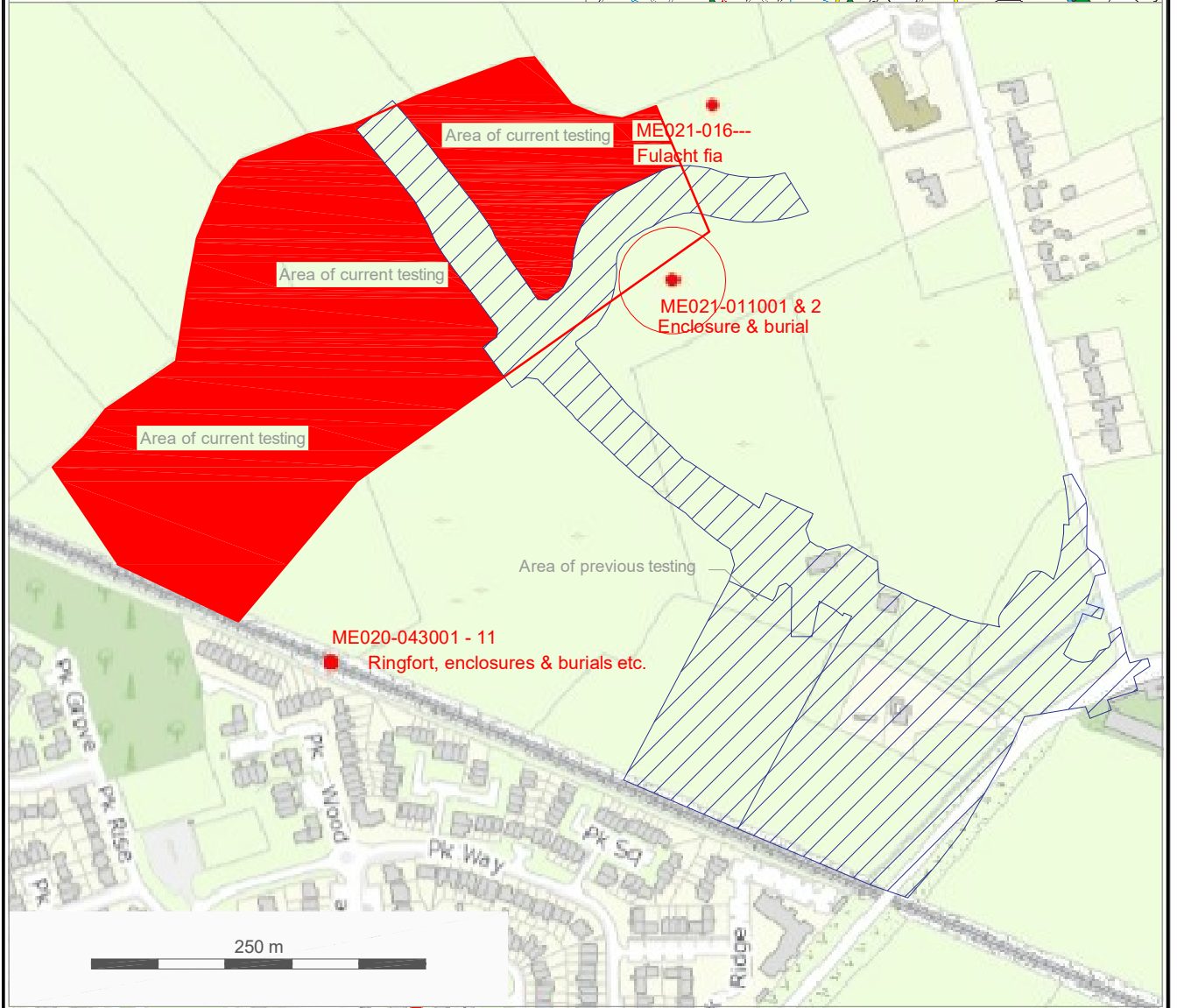
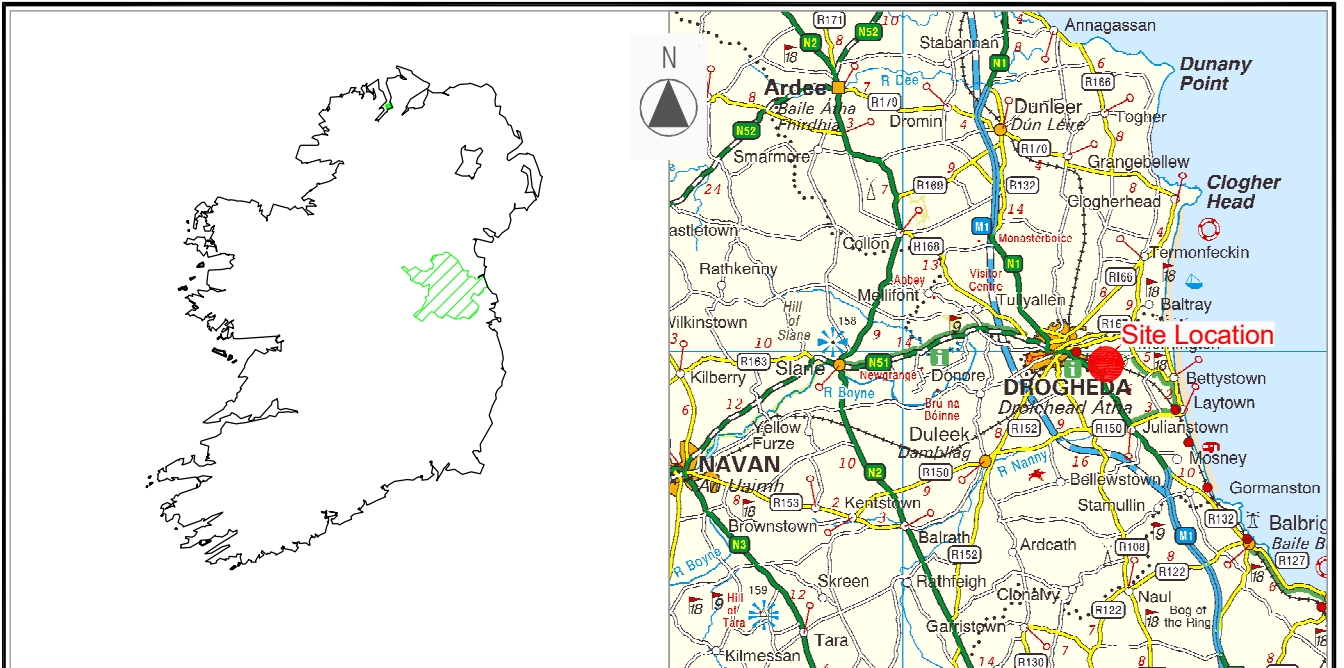
### 7.2 Web references

- Online Excavations bulletin [www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie) [accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018]
- Aerial Photography <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html> [accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018]
- Online Excavations bulletin [www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie) [accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018]
- Online Archaeological Survey of Ireland [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) [accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018]
- Meath County Development Plan  
<https://meathcountydevelopmentplan.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/appendix-08-record-of-protected-structures-maps-20-29.pdf>

*Liam Coen*

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Liam Coen BA 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018



Unit 8 Beat Centre  
 Stephenstown,  
 Balbriggan,  
 Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath

Archaeological Assessment

Client: Shannon Homes

Scale: 1:5000 A4

Date: August 2018

Origin: Client, OSI

Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 1: Site Location showing previous testing (blue) and proposed testing (red)

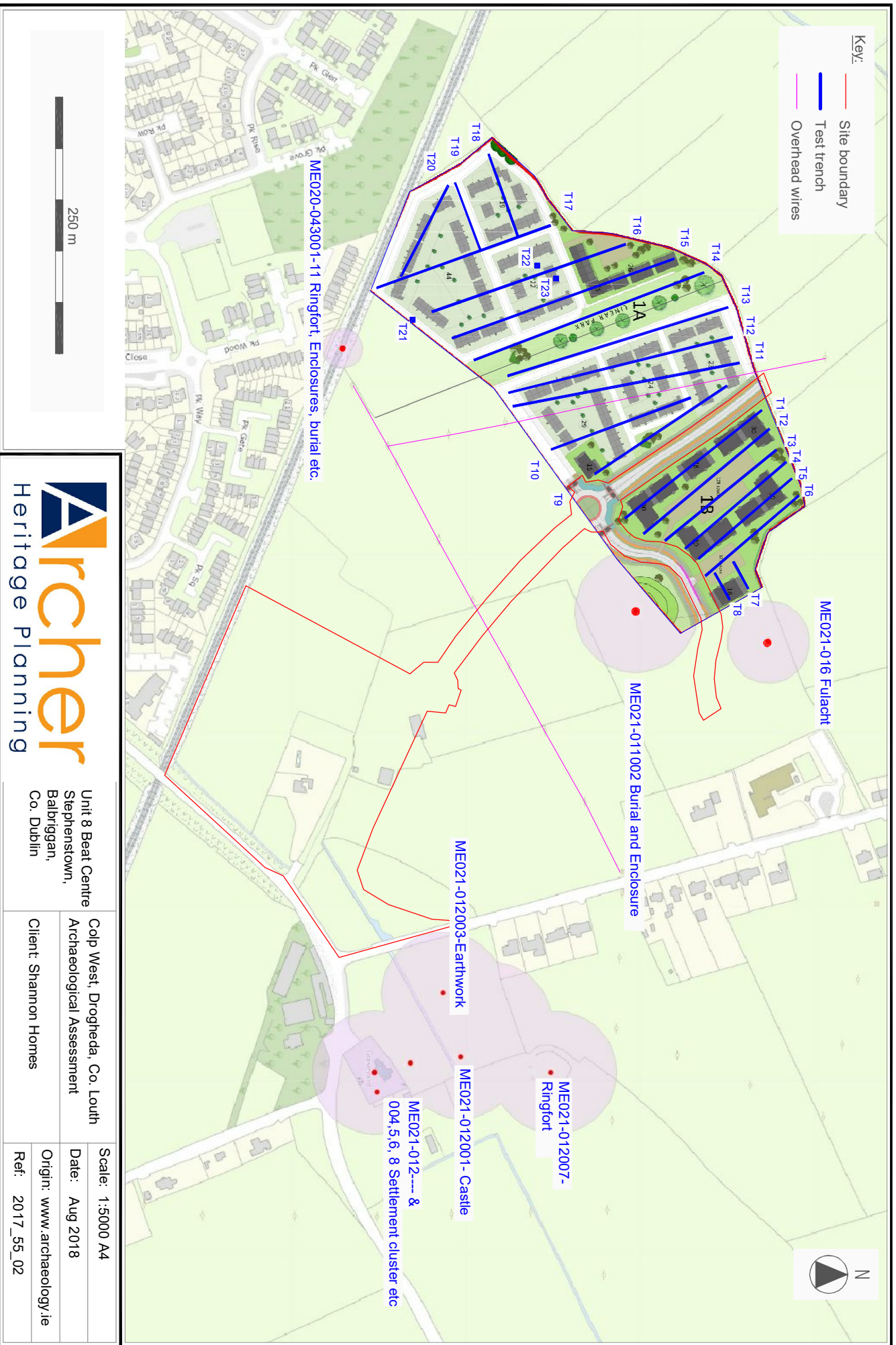
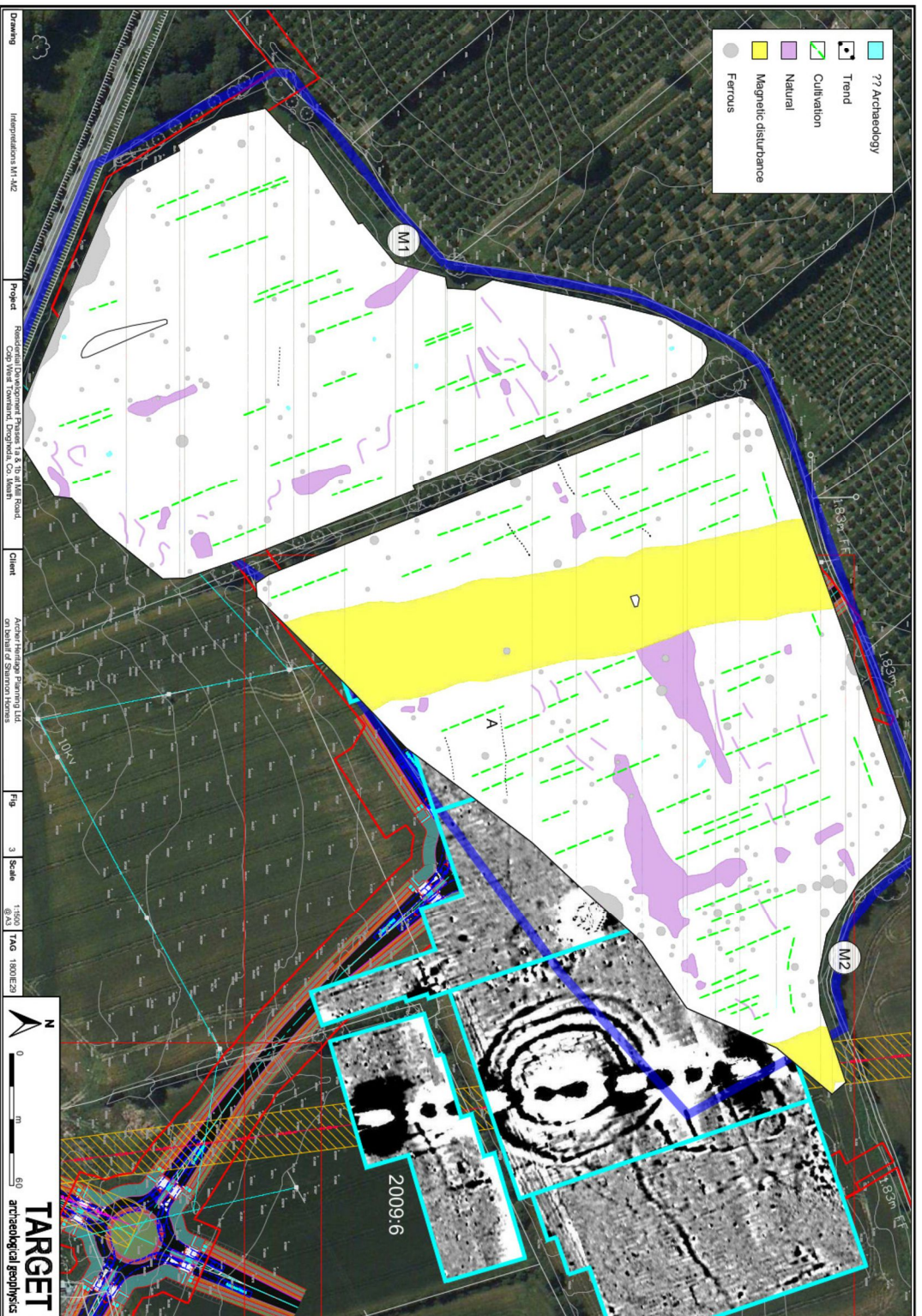


Figure 2: Trench Layout with proposed housing and RMPs





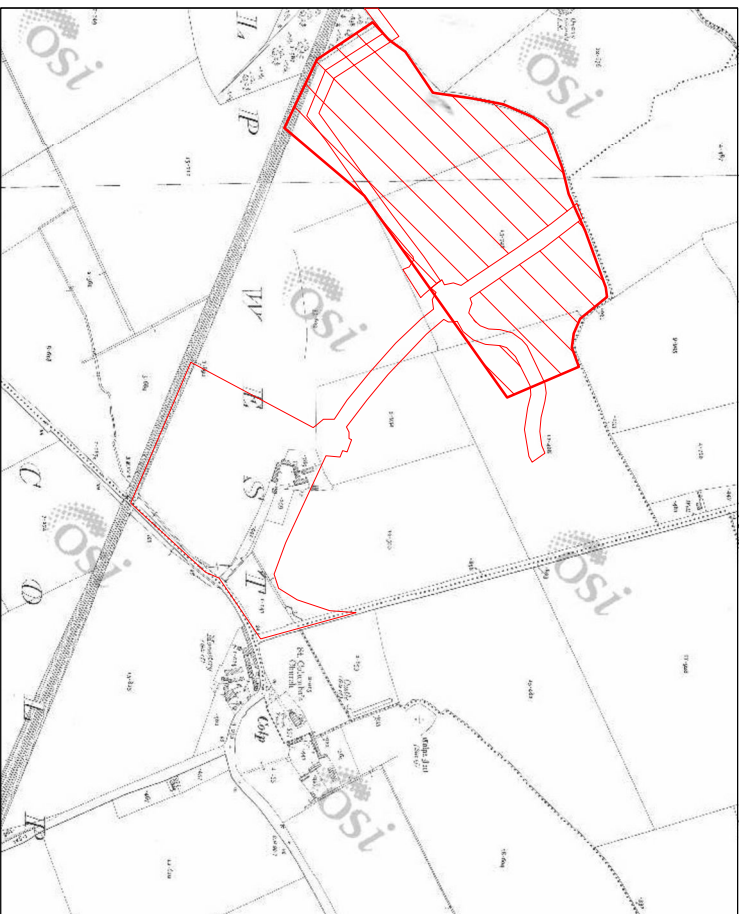
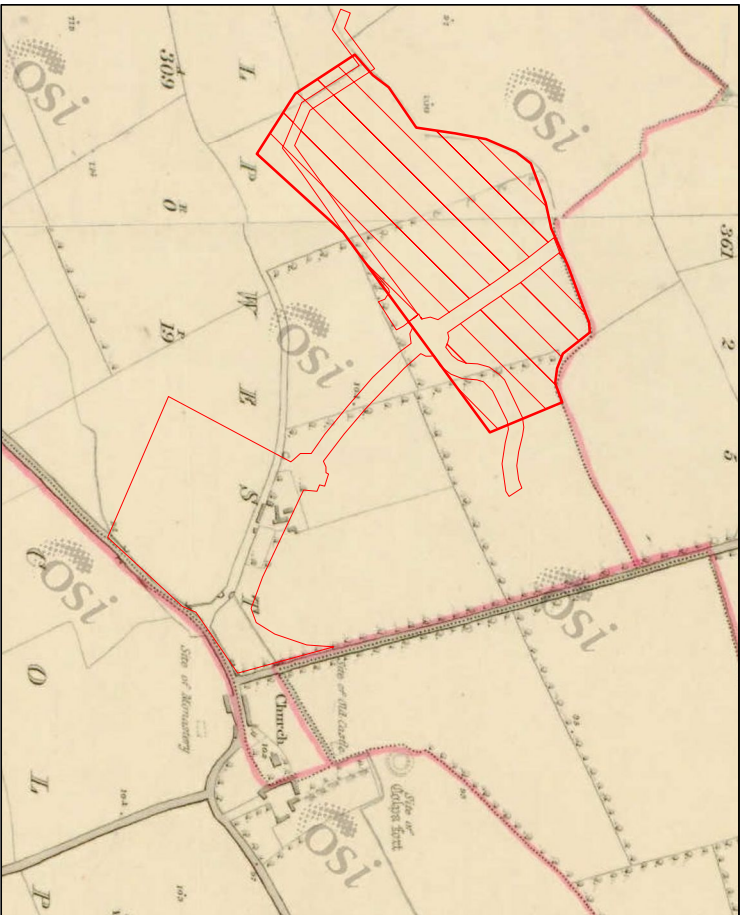
**Archer**  
Heritage Planning

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Co. Dublin

Colp West, Drogheda, Co. Meath  
Archaeological Assessment  
Client: Shannon Homes

Scale: DNS  
Date: Aug 2018  
Origin: TAG  
Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 3: Geophysical survey data 18R0181



- (l) 1st Edition OS Map (1835)
- (r) 3rd Edition OS Map (1907-09)


Key:  Area for testing

Figure 4: Extracts from early historical maps



(i) OS Aerial Photograph (1995)

(r) Digital Globe (2013-17)

Key:  Site boundary



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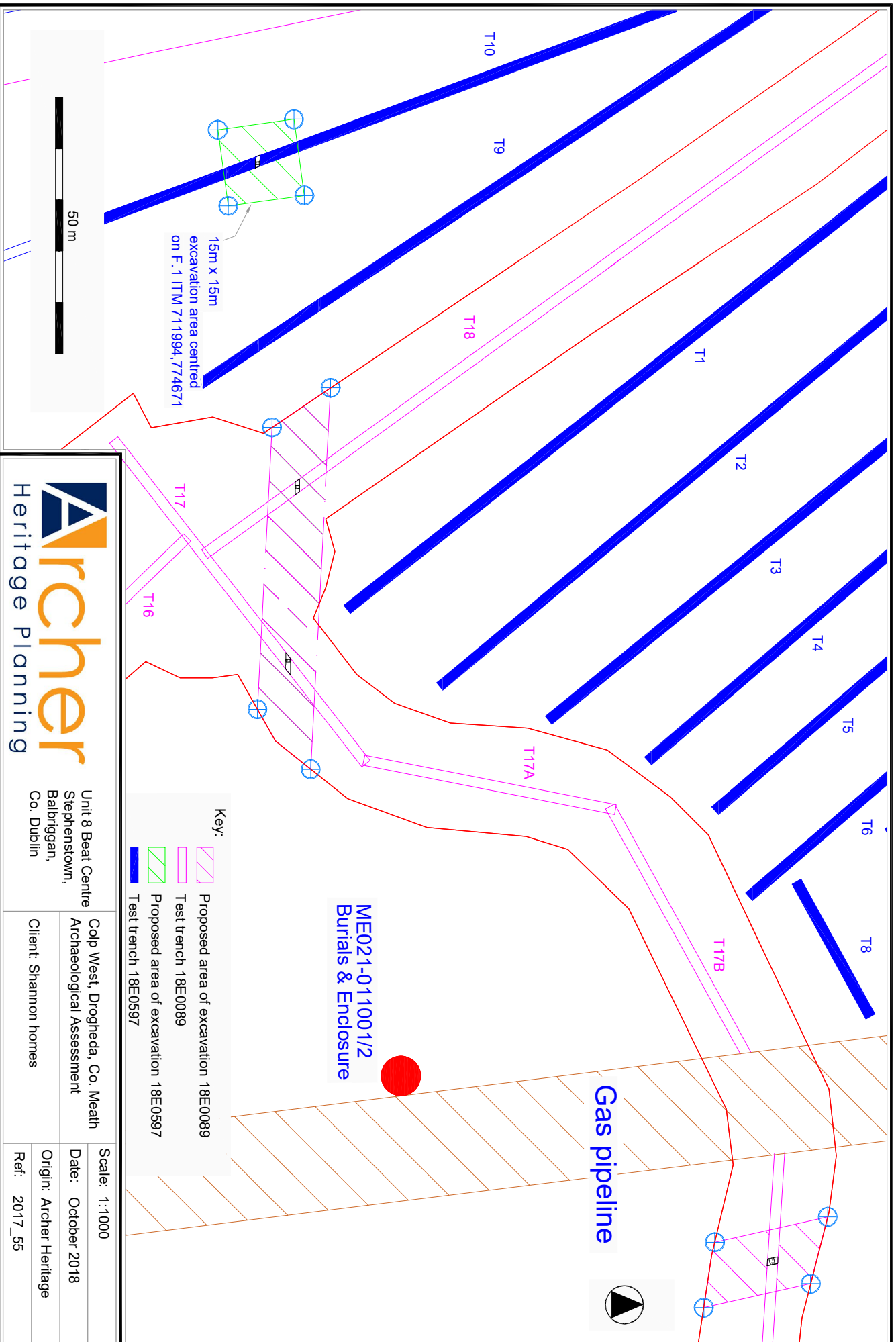
Colp West, Drogheda, Co Meath  
Archaeological Assessment

Client: Shannon Homes

Scale: Not to scale  
Date: October 2018

Origin: OSI  
Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 4: Aerial Photographs



**Key:**

- Proposed area of excavation 18E0089
- Test trench 18E0089
- Proposed area of excavation 18E0597
- Test trench 18E0597

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Archaeological Assessment

Client: Shannon homes

Scale: 1:1000

Date: October 2018

Origin: Archer Heritage

Ref: 2017\_55

Figure 6: Details of archaeology



Plate 1: Trench 1 looking north-west



Plate 2: Trench 4 looking north-west



Plate 3: Trench 6 looking north-west



Plate 4: Trench 9 looking south-east



Plate 5: Trench 10 looking north-west



Plate 6: Trench 12 looking north-west



Plate 7: Trench 15 looking north-west



Plate 8: Trench 17 looking north-west



Plate 9: Trench 18 looking north-east

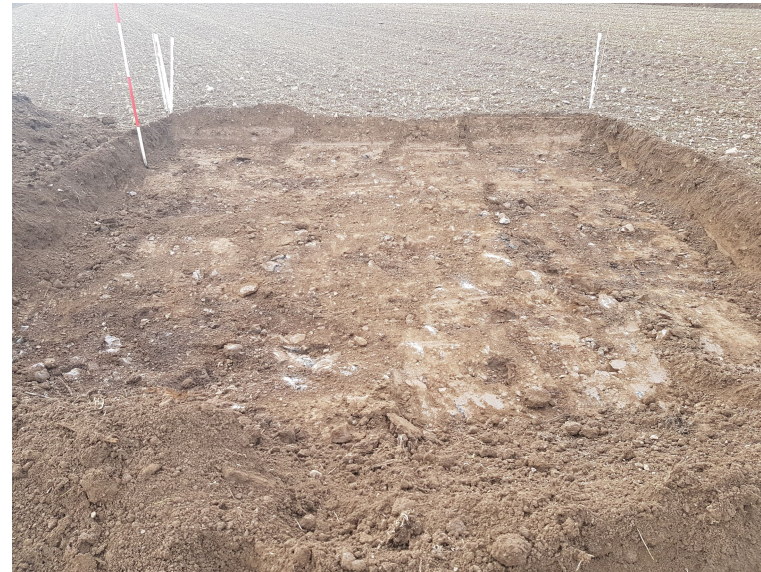


Plate 10: Trench 22 looking south



Plate 11: Trench 23 looking north



Plate 12: Section in ditch, F.1, in Trench 10