



BRACKLYN WIND FARM EIA REPORT ANNEX 10.1

Assessment of the Predicted Impact of the Proposed Wind Farm on Bracklyn Demesne

for Bracklyn Wind Farm Ltd

21/07/2021

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July 2021

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DR STEPHEN CARTER



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ASSESSMENT OF THE PREDICTED IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED WIND FARM ON BRACKLYN DEMESNE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1. This annex to Chapter 10 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) provides an assessment of the likely effect of the proposed Bracklyn Wind Farm on Bracklyn Demesne. The scope of the assessment includes the demesne, as defined by the designed landscape that evolved around Bracklyn House from the late 18th century (NIAH Survey ID 4129), and three contemporary Protected Structures located within this designed landscape: Bracklyn House (15401405), a gate lodge (15401322) and a mausoleum (15401406).
- 1.1.2. Bracklyn Demesne is located 4km south of Delvin and occupies a low north-west to south-east aligned ridge rising only 25m above the surrounding landscape. It is defined by minor roads to the west and north and surrounded by bog to the east and south. The demesne extends approximately 3.5km east to west and 2km north to south. Bracklyn House is located in the western part of the demesne on the south-west facing side of the ridge and its main approach was along a driveway leading from the gate lodge at the western edge of the demesne. The mausoleum is located 500m to the north-east of the house on the northern side of the ridge.
- 1.1.3. The proposed wind farm would be located in the eastern half of the demesne but all three Protected Structures are outside the planning application boundary for the proposed development. The likelihood for effects on the heritage significance of the demesne therefore relates to impact on the settings of the individual Protected Structures and impact on the historic character of the demesne landscape as a whole.

2. STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY

- 2.1.1. Stephen Carter is a Senior Heritage Consultant with Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, based in Edinburgh. He holds academic degrees in Botany and Geography (BSc Joint Hons.) and Environmental Archaeology (PhD); he is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.
- 2.1.2. He has specialised in cultural heritage impact assessment over the past 20 years, with a workload dominated by onshore wind energy developments. This has led him to develop a particular interest in the setting of heritage assets, which remains the key cultural heritage issue for onshore wind. He was the chair of a working party on setting for the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) between 2008 and 2011; more recently he has been a member of the steering group for a wider project to define principles for good practice in cultural heritage impact assessment on behalf of CIfA, IHBC and IEMA.
- 2.1.3. He has worked on projects throughout the UK and Ireland, providing experience of wind farm development in a wide range of landscapes and affecting many different types of heritage asset. In addition to his experience of impact assessment, he has appeared as an expert witness in over 50 public inquiries and hearings relating to wind farms since 2005.

3. METHODS

- 3.1.1. The assessment was based on a desk-based review of published information relevant to the history of the demesne. Key sources were:

Maps

- Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 Map (Westmeath 1st Edition 1838)
- Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 Map (Westmeath 1st Edition 1911-1913)
- Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 Map (Westmeath 3rd Edition 1914)

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

- Bracklin House, Killulagh, Co. Westmeath (NIAH Survey ID 4129)
- Gate lodge, Bracklyn House (NIAH 15401322, RPS 013-021)

- Bracklyn House (NIAH 15401405, RPS 014-019)
- Freestanding mausoleum, Bracklyn House (NIAH 15401406, RPS 014-020)

Record of Monuments and Places

- WM014-018: tower house

- 3.1.2. NIAH records for Bracklyn are reproduced in an appendix to this report, relevant map extracts are included as Annex 10.1 Figures 1 and 2.
- 3.1.3. Desk-based research was followed up by a site visit to establish the current condition of the demesne and to fully understand the manner in which the Protected Structures are experienced in their settings. Assessment of the predicted impact of the proposed wind farm was undertaken during the site visit, based on plans of the development and on a photomontage illustrating the appearance of the wind turbines in the view from the gate lodge towards Bracklyn House (see Annex 10.2).

4. HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE DEMESNE

- 4.1.1. Detailed information regarding the extent and nature of the demesne is not available until the date of the earliest Ordnance Survey map (1838) and, as a result, the origins and early development of the demesne are poorly understood. Further development from the mid-19th century to the present day is more clearly documented.
- 4.1.2. The probable origins of the demesne can be traced back to the construction of a castle at Bracklyn for the Nugent family, Anglo-Normans that arrived in Ireland with Hugh de Lacy and possessed Delvin Castle (built in 1181), as part of the newly-created Lordship of Meath. The date of construction for a castle or tower house at Bracklyn (probably on the site of the present Bracklyn House) is not known but it is documented by the mid-16th century and was still owned by the Nugent family in 1641 according to the Down Survey. This provides the earliest information on the nature of the landscape around Bracklyn Castle, stating that *"In Bracklyne there is a castle in repaire with an orchard & garden & some ash trees"*. This suggests relatively modest garden enclosures around the castle at that time with some mature trees. The lands were confiscated following the 1641 rising and Cromwell's campaigns of 1649-51, passing to the Pakenham family who appear to have retained the existing building, ultimately selling Bracklyn to the Fetherston-Haugh family in the late 18th century.
- 4.1.3. The old castle was demolished and Bracklyn House was built on its site in about 1790. The demesne as recorded by the Ordnance Survey in 1838 is assumed to have been created by the Fetherston-Haugh family in this first the 50 years of their ownership of Bracklyn and it appears to be a 'work in progress' in 1838 (Annex 10.1 Figure 1)
- 4.1.4. The boundaries of the demesne are defined to the north, east and south by narrow belts of woodland with larger areas of tree planting on the lower ground at the eastern end of the demesne. This woodland would have had an economic value for the estate but also functioned as a screen and shelter belt around the demesne. Most of the land within these woodland belts is recorded in 1838 as enclosed fields with hedgerow trees. There is some evidence for removal of boundaries at this time, particularly to the north and west of Bracklyn House, where the map records lines of trees forming partial boundaries within larger enclosures. The impression is that of a changing demesne landscape, still dominated by agricultural fields but with some removal of small enclosures for creation of parkland in the immediate vicinity of Bracklyn House. The area around the house has a concentration of mature trees, particularly on the west side where they appear to screen what would later be the main designed view from the house to the west. It is possible that much of this planting pre-dates Bracklyn House and relates to the setting of Bracklyn Castle.
- 4.1.5. The formal carriage drive approach to the house is mapped in 1838 and must have existed by 1821, which is the date inscribed on the gate lodge. Starting at the lodge, the drive runs through woodland at first. It then divides with one route running directly up to the house through parkland and a second continuing through woodland before reaching the service buildings to the south of the house. Both of these routes could have been created post-1790; a potentially earlier track relating to Bracklyn Castle approaches the house from the north where it clearly forms part of the enclosed agricultural landscape.
- 4.1.6. The newest feature in this changing landscape recorded on the 1838 map is probably the mausoleum, only constructed in 1836. It is sited, rather incongruously, within a small double enclosure surrounded by tree lines, at the centre of one of the fields to the north-east of the house. It was not visible from the house and the map

records no defined access drive or path leading to it. Its precise location is therefore difficult to understand, but it appears to have been placed within a pre-existing enclosure of unknown date or function.

- 4.1.7. The Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1911-13 (published at 1:10,560 in 1914) records the demesne landscape following a further 70 years of development (Annex 10.1 Figure 2). The same general layout can be observed but the landscape design has clearly evolved. It may be noted first that the north-western part had been removed from the demesne and now formed two separate small agricultural holdings with farm steadings named Fortview and Ballykenny. This land remains in separate ownership to the Bracklyn Demesne up to the present day.
- 4.1.8. The enclosing woodland belts that surround the slightly reduced demesne are still present to the north, east and west but there has been considerable change in the extent of the different blocks of planting, with a general introduction of more conifer plantations. This presumably reflects the on-going cycle of growth, felling and re-planting and changes in the economics of timber production during the latter part of the 19th century. Within the demesne, many of the fields recorded in 1838 were still present but the area of parkland around Bracklyn House had been expanded and consolidated. By 1911-13 the house was surrounded by parkland which primarily extended to the south and west where there were numerous specimen trees and informal groups. There was also a strip of parkland running north-east from the house to the boundary of the demesne in this direction. The outer parts of the demesne to the north and east remained divided into fields with little change since 1838. The mausoleum by this date only sits in a single small square wooded enclosure but, as before, there is no record of how it was accessed from the house. The presence of a tomb from c.1860, beside the mausoleum, confirms that there was continued use of the site for family burials later in the 19th century.
- 4.1.9. The parkland to the south-west of the house provided an attractive landscaped setting for the main driveway leading up to the house from the gate lodge. The house itself was enlarged in 1855 and again in c.1910 and the garden grounds re-modelled to create terraces to the west with an open vista out over the parkland with the wider rural landscape of Westmeath beyond.
- 4.1.10. In the century following the Great War and separation from Britain, the demesne landscape has continued to evolve with three main trends apparent, all of which reflect a shift to more intensive landuse within the demesne. Firstly, the peripheral woodland belts have continued to evolve as felling and re-planting has continued, with a tendency to overall expansion and a dominance of conifers. Within the demesne, agricultural fields have been amalgamated, leading to the loss of tree-lined boundaries, as part of a shift to arable cultivation. Finally, most of the parkland, as mapped in 1911-13 has reverted to agricultural use and now forms large open areas of arable farmland. The parkland is reduced to a small area of grassland between the gate lodge and the house, with most of the mature specimen trees and other ornamental planting lost. Agricultural intensification is also reflected in the construction of two new groups of agricultural buildings in the 20th century along with a separate farm access from the road to the west of the demesne, linking to a new network of surfaced farm tracks. Most recently, a pig rearing unit has been added, 600m to the east of the house.

5. THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF BRACKLYN DEMESNE

- 5.1.1. The preceding section has provided a history of the origins and evolution of the demesne that surrounds Bracklyn House. The purpose of this section is to describe those surviving features of the demesne that contribute to its present-day heritage significance.

5.2. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

- 5.2.1. Three historic buildings survive from the main period of development in the demesne (late 18th to early 20th century) with no known losses of other important historic buildings.
- 5.2.2. Bracklyn House remains the principal house of the demesne and continues to be an important contributor to the character of the demesne. It is an attractive neo-classical country house of late-18th century date with sympathetic later additions that collectively reflects the character and fortunes of this relatively modest country estate in the period from 1790 to 1910. Although its siting was determined by the former position of Bracklyn Castle (which it replaced), a parkland landscape was created around the house through the 19th century to provide an attractive setting for the house. That parkland has largely been destroyed by conversion of the land to arable agriculture in the 20th century but enough survives to still appreciate the designed west-facing view out over the park from the house and its garden terraces. Similarly, the designed view of the house,

approaching up the drive from the gate lodge can still be experienced, albeit in a modified form. The original early 19th century layout led the visitor through woodland and the driveway only emerged into the park relatively close to the house. Loss of woodland means that this 'reveal' is no longer experienced as intended.

- 5.2.3. The gate lodge (1821) still retains its original function, providing the main formal entrance to the demesne and Bracklyn House in a wooded setting. As a result it is experienced only at close range, beside the public road.
- 5.2.4. The mausoleum (1836) is less readily appreciated. Its location, to the north-east of the house, appears to have always been detached and isolated from other activities in the demesne. It was not intended to be a landmark within the demesne (unlike some other visually prominent mausoleums on other estates) and today it is entirely hidden within an isolated clump of trees set in a very large area of arable farmland. In this setting, it contributes nothing to the character of the demesne and is only experienced at close-range within the clump of mature yew and lime trees.

5.3. LANDSCAPE FEATURES

- 5.3.1. The historic extent and character of the demesne is now primarily reflected in the surviving pattern of woodland. The peripheral woodland belts have been greatly modified in terms of their composition and, to a lesser degree, their extent but they continue to mark the limits of the demesne at the transition from cultivated slopes to the surrounding level bog land. This allows the historic extent of the demesne to be readily identified on modern maps and aerial photographs, but the short-cycle conifer plantations that now dominate provide little of the historic demesne character of the mixed woodland belts recorded on the 1838 map.
- 5.3.2. A few small blocks of woodland also survive within the demesne along with some mature trees around the house and along field boundaries. Only a very few mature parkland trees remain and, overall, the wooded character of the demesne landscape recorded 100 years ago has been considerably diminished through the agricultural intensification of the demesne.
- 5.3.3. Loss of mature trees over the past century has been closely associated with the removal of field boundaries and the loss of parkland around the house. The result of these changes is that the character of much of the demesne is dominated by large areas of arable cultivation. This contrasts with the 19th century pattern of parkland around the house with a patchwork of enclosed pasture fields in more outlying parts of the demesne. This change in character may be contrasted with the two smaller farms, created out of the north-western part of the demesne, which largely retain their 19th century field patterns. Within the demesne, only the small area to the west of the house retains some sense of the 19th century parkland character and some smaller fields survive at the outer margins to the east, just inside the enclosing plantations.

5.4. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.4.1. Bracklyn Demesne, in its most developed form at the end of the 19th century provided an attractive but relatively simple landscape setting for Bracklyn House. A single gate lodge and modest mausoleum were the only subsidiary buildings of architectural note. Much of the demesne remained in productive agricultural land or forestry and the areas of parkland contained only naturalistic planting with no complex design. The historic extent of Bracklyn Demesne can still be identified from its enclosing woodland belts but the landscape character of the demesne has changed considerably since the end of the 19th century. Over the past century, change in the composition of the enclosing woodland to conifer plantations, substantial loss of trees across the demesne and extensive conversion of parkland and enclosed pasture fields to large open areas of arable cultivation has greatly diminished the historic character of the demesne. The three main historic buildings have survived and their architectural importance is recognised in their status as Protected Structures. However, it is only in the area between the gate lodge and the house that the historic character of the demesne landscape can now be readily experienced. It is only this area that is considered to be sensitive to change.

6. PREDICTED IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED WIND FARM ON BRACKLYN DEMESNE

- 6.1.1. The proposed layout of the Bracklyn Wind Farm is illustrated in Figure 10.1 of Chapter 10. All nine wind turbines, associated infrastructure and the substation would be located within the eastern side of the historic demesne. T2 and T3 would be located in large arable fields, created in the 20th century from smaller enclosures. T1 and T4 would be located in surviving smaller pasture fields adjacent to the enclosing woodland

belts. T5 to T11 and the substation would be located in peripheral conifer plantations on the southern edge and at the eastern end of the demesne.

- 6.1.2. Of the three Protected Structures within the demesne, the mausoleum would be closest to the wind farm with T2 located c.370m to the east. The closest turbine to Bracklyn House would be T3, c.750m to the east. The gate lodge, located at the western edge of the demesne would be at least 1.8km from any wind turbine.

6.2. IMPACT ON PROTECTED STRUCTURES

- 6.2.1. The proposed wind farm would be located within the setting of the three Protected Structures and has the potential to affect our experience of these buildings, diminishing the positive contribution that setting makes to their heritage significance.
- 6.2.2. The mausoleum is currently experienced only at very close range within the dense clump of trees that now surrounds it. This building has no visual relationships to other parts of the demesne and the other buildings within it that contribute to our appreciation. It is considered that the presence of the wind farm, including a wind turbine less than 400m to the east, would not be likely to materially affect its architectural importance and our ability to appreciate this early 19th century mausoleum for the owners of Bracklyn House.
- 6.2.3. Bracklyn House has been the focal point of the demesne since 1790. It is sited in a prominent position on a south-west facing slope where it dominates the view of anyone visiting the demesne and approaching up the historic carriage drive from the early 19th century gate lodge. The house is not visible from most other parts of the demesne and the only important view of the house is this historic formal approach from the west. There also appears to be only one important designed view out from the house. This is from the west-facing (entrance) front looking over the 19th century garden terraces to the remains of the historic parkland and out into the rural landscape of Westmeath. The appearance of the view of the house and from the house have changed materially since the 19th century when they were first designed. However, both retain some of the character that was intended, despite the loss of trees and woodland and both make a positive contribution to the significance of Bracklyn House.
- 6.2.4. The view out from the house would be unaffected by the proposed wind farm but sequential views of the house approaching along the driveway from the gate lodge would be changed. The nine proposed wind turbines would appear above the skyline of the ridge behind the house, dominating the view by virtue of their height and movement, and distracting attention from Bracklyn House. This effect is illustrated by a photomontage for the view from the gate lodge (Annex 10.2) but a similar effect would be experienced along the driveway. The visual dominance and distraction caused by the turbines would diminish the contribution that the demesne setting for the house makes to its heritage significance for the duration of the operational life of the wind farm.
- 6.2.5. The significance of the gate lodge would also be adversely affected by the appearance of wind turbines above the house but to a lesser degree, again with the impact lasting for the operational life of the wind farm. The gate lodge and its curious picturesque architectural design is only appreciated at close range and this experience would remain essentially unchanged in the presence of the wind farm. It is an appreciation of the historic functional relationship between the gate lodge and the main house of the demesne that would be affected, with the wind turbines again distracting attention from the house. It should be noted that whilst appreciation of this view (as illustrated at Annex 10.2) contributes to how we appreciate these buildings today, it is clear from 19th century mapping that this was not the original intention. Woodland would have screened this view from the gate lodge into the 20th century.

6.3. IMPACT ON THE DEMESNE

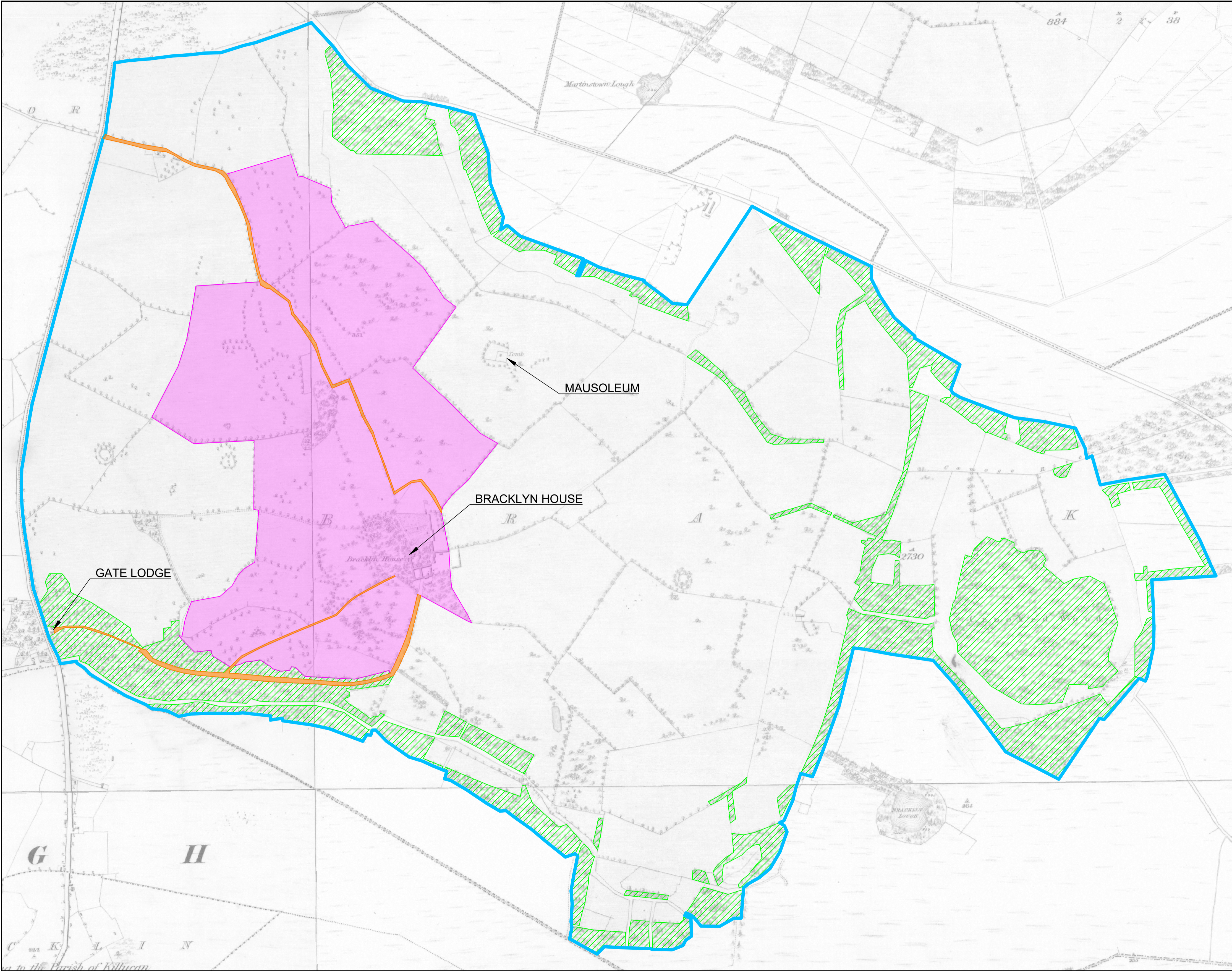
- 6.3.1. The location of the proposed wind farm in the eastern half of the demesne will not result in physical damage or loss to any important historic element in this landscape. However, the wind farm would be visually dominant over the eastern side and prominent from all other parts of the demesne and represent a considerable change in the character of the demesne.
- 6.3.2. As noted above, change over the past century in the composition of the enclosing woodland, substantial loss of trees across the demesne and extensive conversion of parkland and enclosed pasture fields to large open areas of arable cultivation has greatly diminished the historic character of the demesne. It is only in the area between the gate lodge and the house that the historic character of the demesne landscape can now be readily experienced. It is only this area that is sensitive to change.

- 6.3.3. It is considered that visibility of wind turbines from the surviving area of parkland between the gate lodge and the house will likely adversely affect the historic character of this part of the demesne for the operational life of the wind farm. The change in character caused by the wind farm in other parts of the demesne, where historic character has already been substantially eroded, would not likely lead to significant further loss of historic character.
- 6.3.4. Following the decommissioning of the proposed wind turbines after their operational life of 30-years the likely impact will be fully reversed.

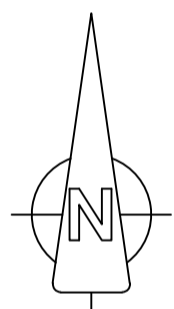
7. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS ON IMPACT

- 7.1.1. The presence of the Bracklyn Wind Farm in the eastern part of Bracklyn Demesne would likely have an adverse impact on the setting of Bracklyn House, the gate lodge and the historic character of the area of demesne that lies between these two Protected Structures. It would have no impact on the setting of the mausoleum.
- 7.1.2. These effects are closely linked and relate to the greater survival of historic layout and character in this south-western area of the demesne. The partial retention of the 19th century parkland character of this part of the demesne contributes to an appreciation of the relationship between the gate lodge and Bracklyn House and to the experience of approaching the house along the historic main driveway. The presence of the proposed wind farm would both diminish the historic character and be a distraction in views of the house from the gate lodge and sequentially along the driveway.
- 7.1.3. Applying the terminology set out in Table 10.1 of Chapter 10:
- Impact on the setting of Bracklyn House is considered to be a **moderate effect**.
 - Impact on the setting of the gate lodge is considered to be a **slight effect**.
 - Impact on the historic character of Bracklyn Demesne is considered to be a **slight effect**.
 - There would be no impact on the setting of the mausoleum.
- 7.1.4. All of these effects would last for the operational life of the proposed wind farm and would be fully reversed on decommissioning.

FIGURES



- LEGEND:**
- BOUNDARY OF DEMESNE
 - ENCLOSING TREE BELTS AND PLANTATIONS
 - AREA AROUND HOUSE WHERE ENCLOSURES HAVE BEEN REMOVED
 - DRIVEWAYS TO HOUSE



Date:	Rev:	Description:	Drawn By:
Prepared By:			



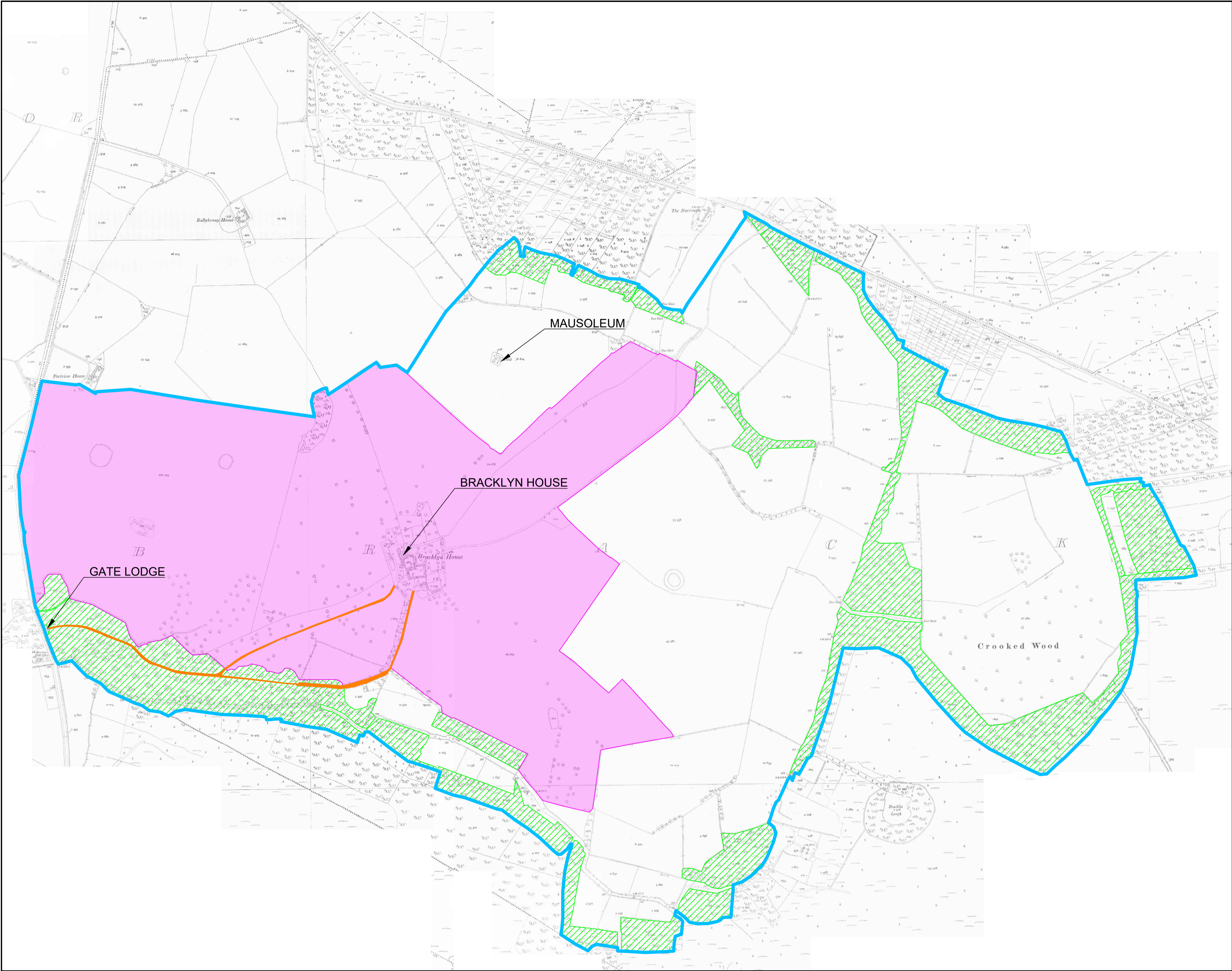
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Client: Bracklyn Wind Farm Ltd.

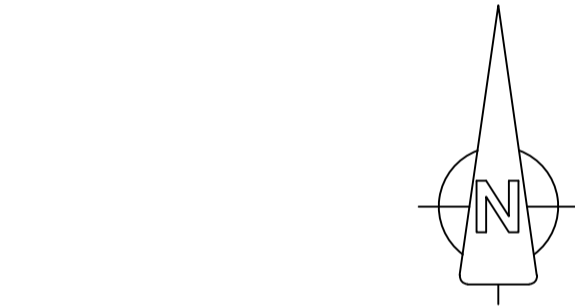
Job Title: Bracklyn Wind Farm

Drawing Title: Annex 10.1
Figure 1. Bracklyn Demesne as recorded on OSI 6"
Historic Mapping (1838)

Drawing No. BRK_PAS_HIS-0.01	Revision No. Rev00
Scale: (A1) 1:6,000	Date: 15/07/2021
Drawn By: J.B.	Checked By: D.O.
	Confirmed By: D.O.



- LEGEND:**
- BOUNDARY OF DEMESNE
 - ENCLOSING TREE BELTS AND PLANTATIONS
 - PARKLAND AROUND HOUSE
 - DRIVEWAYS TO HOUSE



Date:	Rev:	Description:	Drawn By:
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Client:		Bracklyn Wind Farm Ltd.	
Job Title:		Bracklyn Wind Farm	
Drawing Title:		Annex 10.1 Figure 2. Bracklyn Demesne as recorded on OSI 25" Historic Mapping (1911-1913)	
Drawing No.		Revision No.	
BRK_PAS_HIS-0.02		Rev00	
Scale:		Date:	
(A1) 1:6,000		15/07/2021	
Drawn By:		Checked By:	Confirmed By:
J.B.		D.O.	D.O.

APPENDIX 1: NIAH RECORDS FOR BRACKLYN DEMESNE

NIAH RECORDS FOR BUILDINGS IN BRACKLYN DEMESNE

Gate Lodge, Bracklyn House

Description

Detached three-bay single-storey gate lodge, built c.1821, comprising central segmental-headed carriage with pyramidal-shaped bellcote over, flanked by single-bay single-storey 'lodges' to either side (north and south). Hipped slate roofs to each lodge with curved ridges. Constructed of rusticated water-weathered limestone with a rusticated water-weathered pier on square-plan surmounted by a pinnacle to either side of each 'lodge'. Cut stone shield motif over bellcote with incised date '1821'. Single segmental-headed opening set in segmental-headed recesses to each lodge, pointed-arched opening to bellcote with brick surround. Modern wrought-iron double gates with raised lettering reading 'Bracklyn Estate' to main opening. Gateway flanked to north and south by modern wrought-iron pedestrian entrances and by quadrant sections of rusticated water-weathered limestone walling terminated by piers on square-plan with pinnacles over. Road-fronted to west of Bracklyn House (15401405).

Appraisal

This curious entrance gateway is one of the most elaborate water-weathered features in Ireland and has a rather grotesque, yet picturesque, appeal. It is built in a very unusual combination of a Palladian-style plan with grotto-like Gothic detailing and is more like a folly than a gate lodge. This structure must be one of the most unusual gate lodges in Ireland and is a quirky addition to the architectural heritage of Westmeath. It contrasts attractively with the rigid neoclassical form of Bracklyn House itself and forms part of an important group of structures associated with this demesne, along with the main house (15401405) and the mausoleum (15401406).

Bracklyn House

Description

Detached five-bay two-storey over basement neoclassical country house, built c.1790, with projecting single-bay Doric porch to the centre of entrance front (west), c.1855, and single-storey bow-ended wings to either end (north and south), built c.1910. Shallow-hipped natural slate roof with rendered chimneystacks and an ashlar limestone eaves course. Raised parapet with ashlar limestone coping over to entrance front (west). Smooth rendered walls with projecting stone string course at ground floor level. Projecting porch constructed of ashlar limestone with extensive ashlar detailing, including Doric pilasters and columns having cornice over. Square-headed window openings with cut stone sills, plain stripped architraves and six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows. Replacement windows to flanking wings. Round-headed doorcase to projecting porch with ashlar limestone surround. Round-headed window openings with one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows to side elevations of porch (north and south). House bounded to front by low ashlar limestone plinth wall. Set back from road in extensive landscaped grounds to the south of Delvin with gate lodge (15401322) to west, mausoleum to north (15401406) and an extensive complex of outbuildings to rear (east) and to south side, many contemporary with the house. Three-storey extension to rear of house, c.1855.

Appraisal

A substantial and delicately detailed neoclassical country house, which retains its early form, character and much of its early fabric. It is built in a typically plain but well-proportioned Neoclassical idiom and represents an early example of this type of architecture in Westmeath. The later Doric porch, added c.1855, is correctly proportioned and well-detailed in crisp ashlar limestone and it creates a pleasant contrast with the plain detailing of the main body of the house. The regular form and restrained detailing of this country house is also in stark contrast with the boldly detailed water-weathered gate lodge to the west (15401322). Bracklyn House was built by a branch of the Fetherston-Haugh Family in the late eighteenth-century on land acquired from the Pakenham Family of Tullyally Castle, Castlepollard. The Fetherston-Haughs were an important landholding family in Westmeath during the nineteenth century and had further country seats at nearby Rockview House, at Griffithstown (near Kinnegad) and at Newpass (near Rathoath). The present house occupies the site of a fifteenth century tower house. It is quite likely that some of the fabric of this earlier structure may have been used in the construction of the main house or, more likely, in the construction of the complex of outbuildings to the rear. Bracklyn House forms the centrepiece of an important group of structures with the gate lodge (15401322), the mausoleum (15401406) and the extensive collection of ancillary outbuildings to the rear (east) and to the south.

Freestanding Mausoleum, Bracklyn House

Description

Freestanding mausoleum, erected c.1836, comprising vaulted semi-sunken single-cell structure on square-plan with raised pinnacles to corners and a segmental-headed opening to the south face. Constructed of rusticated water-weathered limestone. Pentagon-shaped plaque to west side of entrance reads 'This tomb was erected by J. F. T. Esq. in 1836, N. Kiernan Builder'. A classical style granite tomb, c.1860, on square-plan with Doric detailing is located adjacent to southwest. Located to the north of Bracklyn House within former demesne parkland grounds.

Appraisal

An eccentric and deliberately picturesque early nineteenth-century mausoleum and a later neoclassical-style tomb, which form part of an interesting group of structures associated with Bracklyn House (15401405). The construction and detailing of the mausoleum is very similar to that of the gate lodge/folly to the south west (15401322), which was also built using heavily rusticated water-weathered limestone. The later Neoclassical style tomb, built using robust granite masonry, has a carved coat-of-arms of the Fetherston-Haugh Family. This tomb and mausoleum are built into a purpose-built mound, on polygonal plan, to the north of Bracklyn house and is thickly planted with yew trees. They represent unusual and romantic additions to the architectural heritage of Westmeath.

APPENDIX 2: NIAH SUMMARY RECORD OF BRACKLYN DEMESNE

Initial Overview

Site Footprint Visible	Yes
Boundary Defined	Yes
Significant Development	Yes
General Comments	Farm buildings around the principal building.

Architectural Features

Principal Building	Yes
Garden Structures	No
Gateways and Gatehouses	No
Buildings of Indeterminate Purpose	No

Movement Within Site

Entrances have changed	No
Drive position has changed	No
Avenues	No
Woodland Drives or Walks	No

Landscape Features

Woodlands	Yes
Woodland Footprint Changed	Yes
Orchards	No
Parkland	Yes
Formal Garden	Yes
Kitchen / Walled and Productive Gardens	No
Vistas	No
Allees	No
Natural and Naturalistic Water Features	No
Artificial Water Features	No
Other Features	No



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