



Project code: CRLA19
Client: Fingal County Council
Date: March 2020

Archaeological Monitoring of Geotechnical Investigations at Church Road, Lusk, Co. Dublin

Director: James Hession
Report Author: James Hession
Licence No: 19E0161X
Planning Reference: In advance of planning
Co-ordinates (ITM): 721421, 754519

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological monitoring of geotechnical test pits associated with a proposed development at Church Road, Lusk, North County Dublin. The proposed development site covers an area of approximately 0.075 ha. The works were carried out on behalf of Fingal County Council.

The proposed development site is located within the historic town of Lusk in close proximity to the ecclesiastical centre, round tower and medieval church tower situated in the centre of the village. To the west of the proposed development site, a souterrain and burials were discovered during the widening of Church Road.

The results of a programme of archaeological test trenching undertaken in March 2029 indicated that there is sub-surface archaeological remains present within the footprint of the proposed development.

The 2019 test trenching programme identified 12 archaeological features, including a large ditch (011), which is believed to represent one of the ecclesiastical enclosure ditches (Hession, O'Dowd and Hanbidge 2019).

As such the development site as a whole has been recognised as an area of high archaeological potential, with the potential for construction groundworks to uncover previously unknown archaeological features, deposits or artefacts.

The test trenching report outlined the following mitigation measures:

1. The proposed development site should be fully archaeologically excavated under licence from the National Monuments Service in advance of any construction works.
2. Any essential enabling works or demolition works in advance of construction should be subject to a programme of archaeological monitoring, under licence, by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Note where possible enabling or other groundworks works should be deferred until after the full archaeological excavation has been completed.
3. All archaeological material encountered during such monitoring works will be investigated and fully recorded. However, if significant archaeological material is encountered then Fingal County Council will be notified. Resolution of any such significant material will be determined by the Fingal County Council in consultation with the National Monuments Service (DoCHG).

A written report should be prepared detailing the results of all archaeological work undertaken.

In line with mitigation measure No. 2, associated with essential enabling work; a series of geotechnical test pits were monitored under licence 19E0161X.

Four test pits were excavated within the footprint of the proposed development. One feature of archaeological merit was identified in Test Pit 4. This linear feature is believed to be the same linear feature (017), that was identified in Test Trench 2 during the test trenching undertaken in 2019. The location of Test Pit 4 was repositioned 1.5 m to the west, so as not to impact on the identified linear feature. No other features of archaeological significance identified during the investigation.

CONTENTS	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	II
1 SITE LOCATION	1
1.1 Site Location and description	1
2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY	2
2.1 Objectives	2
2.2 Methodology	2
3 THE RESULTS	3
3.1 Test Pit 1	3
3.2 Test Pit 2	3
3.3 Test Pit 3	3
3.4 Test Pit 4	3
3.5 Summary of archaeological findings	4
4 CONCLUSIONS	5
4.1 Summary of archaeological findings	5
4.2 Recommendations	5
REFERENCES	6

FIGURES

- Figure 1 Church Road: Site location and RMP mapping
Figure 2 Proposed test trench layout

PLATES

- Plate 1 Soil profile within Test Pit 1, looking northeast
Plate 2 Soil profile within Test Pit 2, looking west
Plate 3 Soil profile within Test Pit 3, looking north
Plate 4 Linear feature (017) adjacent to Test Pit 4, looking north
Plate 5 Soil profile within Test Pit 4, looking north

1 SITE LOCATION

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological monitoring of geotechnical test pits undertaken at a proposed site at Church Road, Lusk, North County Dublin (ITM: 721421, 754519) (Figure 1).

The archaeological monitoring took place on 11 February 2020 in accordance with Licence No 19E0161.

1.1 *Site Location and description*

The proposed development site is located within the historic town of Lusk in close proximity to the ecclesiastical centre (DU008-010006-), round tower (DU008-010003-) and medieval church tower (DU008-010004) situated in the centre of the village (Figure 1). The site is bounded to the south by Church Road, to the west by a private laneway, to the north by existing farm buildings and to the east by derelict farm buildings. Access to site is via a gate off Church Road.

To the west of the proposed development site, a souterrain (DU008-097002-) and burials (DU008-097002-) were discovered during the widening of Church Road and in the site immediately to the east, part of an enclosure ditch was identified during an archaeological assessment (NMS Licence Ref.: 17E0177). As such, there is high potential for the recovery of archaeological remains at the proposed development site.

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives

- The objective of the archaeological monitoring programme was to provide a watching brief during any topsoil removal at the site for the purpose of identifying any archaeological features, deposits or artefacts that might be present at the site and which could be impacted upon by the proposed development.

2.2 Methodology

The archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the conditions associated with an excavation licence. In addition, it complies with the following:

- *The National Monuments Acts 1930-2004.*
- *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage*, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (1999).
- *Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation*, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (1999).
- *Guidelines for Archaeologists*, Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (2013).

Topsoil was removed by a mechanical excavator under the supervision of an archaeologist until either undisturbed natural geological strata (subsoil) was reached or archaeological material encountered. Where archaeologically significant features were identified, mechanical excavation ceased, and the features were cleaned back and tested by hand (using mattocks, shovels or trowels as appropriate).

3 THE RESULTS

Four test pits were excavated across the proposed development site, located off Church Road, Lusk, Co. Dublin in association with geotechnical investigations (Figure 1).

The work was undertaken on 11/02/2020 and monitored under archaeological licence 19E0161, as issued by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

3.1 Test Pit 1

Test Pit 1 was located to the northeast of the former dwelling fronting onto Church Road. It measured approximately 2.50 m in length by 0.80 m in width and was excavated to a depth of 2.50 m. A sewerage pipe on a concrete foundation most likely associated with the former dwelling noted within the pit. No features of archaeological significance identified.

The following soil profile was recorded in Test Pit 1 (Plate 1):

0.00 – 0.35 m Topsoil
0.35 – 0.60 m Mid yellow brown silty clay (natural)
0.60 – 2.50 m Dark yellow brown silty clay with angular gravel and bounders (substrate)

3.2 Test Pit 2

Test Pit 2 was located to the west of the NW corner of the former dwelling. It measured approximately 2.50 m in length by 0.80 m in width and was excavated to a depth of 2.50 m. No features of archaeological significance identified.

The following soil profile was recorded in Test Pit 2 (Plate 2):

0.00 – 0.35 m Topsoil
0.35 – 0.60 m Mid yellow brown silty clay (natural)
0.60 – 2.50 m Dark yellow brown silty clay with angular gravel and bounders (substrate)

No features of archaeological significance identified.

3.3 Test Pit 3

Test Pit 3 was located to the north of Test Pit 2. It measured approximately 2.50 m in length by 0.80 m in width and was excavated to a depth of 2.50 to 3m. No features of archaeological significance identified.

The following soil profile was recorded in Test Pit 3 (Plate 3):

0.00 – 0.35 m Topsoil
0.35 – 0.60 m Mid yellow brown silty clay (natural)
0.60 – 2.50 to 3 m Dark yellow brown silty clay with angular gravel and bounders (substrate)

3.4 Test Pit 4

Test Pit 4 was located to the east of Test Pit 3. It measured approximately 2.50 m in length by 0.80 m in width and was excavated to a depth of 2.50 m. A linear feature of archaeological merit orientated north–

south, was noted along the eastern side of the trench (Plate 4). This feature is believed to correlate to a linear feature (017), that was identified during the test trenching programme undertaken on the 25 March 2019. The position of this test pit was repositioned 1.5 m to the west, so as not to impact on the identified feature. No other features of archaeological significance identified during the investigation.

The following soil profile was recorded in Test Pit 4 (Plate 5):

0.00 – 0.35 m Topsoil

0.35 – 0.60 m Mid yellow brown silty clay (natural)

0.60 – 2.50 m Dark yellow brown silty clay with angular gravel and bounders (substrate)

3.5 *Summary of archaeological findings*

A linear feature of archaeological merit was identified in Test Pit 4. This linear feature is believed to be the same linear feature (017) that was identified in Test Trench 2 during the test trenching undertaken in 2019. The location of Test Pit 4 was repositioned 1.5 m to the west, so as not to impact on the identified feature. No other features of archaeological significance identified during the investigation.

4 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 *Summary of archaeological findings*

Archaeological testing undertaken in 2019 identified 12 archaeological features within the footprint of the proposed development area. These are located in proximity to RMP listed sites DU008-097001, a burial site, DU008-097002 a souterrain and the early medieval monastic site in the historic town of Lusk. The most significant of the features identified is the potential middle enclosure ditch for the ecclesiastical site. It is likely that further archaeological features, deposits or artefacts remain *in situ*.

Archaeological monitoring undertaken in conjunction with a programme of geotechnical test pits identified a linear feature of archaeological merit in Test Pit 4. This linear feature is believed to be the same linear feature (017) that was identified in Test Trench 2 during the test trenching undertaken in 2019.

The location of Test Pit 4 was repositioned 1.5 m to the west, so as not to impact on the identified feature. No other features of archaeological significance identified during the investigation.

The development site as a whole is an area of high archaeological potential. There is a potential that construction groundworks could uncover previously unknown archaeological features, deposits or artefacts.

4.2 *Recommendations*

The current policy of the Minister for Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht is that preservation *in situ* of archaeological material is the preferred option. Where this cannot be achieved then a programme of full archaeological excavation should be implemented to ensure the preservation by record of all affected archaeological material.

The following mitigation measures proposed are subject to approval by Fingal County Council, the National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht.

1. Unless a minimum impact design solution has been agreed and approved by the National Monuments Service, the proposed development site should be fully archaeologically excavated under licence from the National Monuments Service in advance of any construction works.
2. Any essential enabling works or demolition works in advance of construction should be subject to a programme of archaeological monitoring, under licence, by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Note where possible enabling or other groundworks works should be deferred until after the full archaeological excavation has been completed.
3. All archaeological material encountered during such monitoring works will be investigated and fully recorded. However, if significant archaeological material is encountered then Fingal County Council will be notified. Resolution of any such significant material will be determined by the Fingal County Council in consultation with the National Monuments Service (DoCHG).
4. A written report should be prepared detailing the results of all archaeological work undertaken.

If development of the site proceeds, then the following general sequencing of works is advised in order to deliver the mitigation measures outlined above:

- 1 Demolition of any upstanding structures to ground slab level only (no ground reduction or other groundworks)
- 2 Removal of groundslabs and foundations under archaeological supervision; disconnection of any services (under archaeological supervision if groundworks required).
- 3 Full footprint archaeological excavation unless otherwise agreed with National Monuments Service on foot of an approved minimum impact design solution that facilitates preservation *in situ* of archaeological features and deposits.
- 4 Construction of development. Archaeological supervision at this stage should only be required if a minimum impact design solution has been agreed with the National Monuments Service and supervision is required to ensure appropriate preservation *in situ* of archaeological features and deposits is achieved.

Please note all the recommendations in this report are subject to approval of the National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

REFERENCES

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (DAHGI) 1999 Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, Stationery Office, Dublin

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (DAHGI) 1999 *Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage*, DAHGI, Ireland

Hession, J., O'Dowd, J and Hanbidge, R. 2019 *Report on Archaeological Testing at lands Church Road, Lusk, North County Dublin*. Rubicon Heritage Services Ltd. (unpublished report)

PLATES



Plate 1 **Soil profile within Test Pit 1, looking northeast**



Plate 2 **Soil profile within Test Pit 2, looking west**



Plate 3 **Soil profile within Test Pit 3, looking north**



Plate 4 **Linear feature (017) adjacent to Test Pit 4, looking north**



Plate 5 **Soil profile within Test Pit 4, looking north**

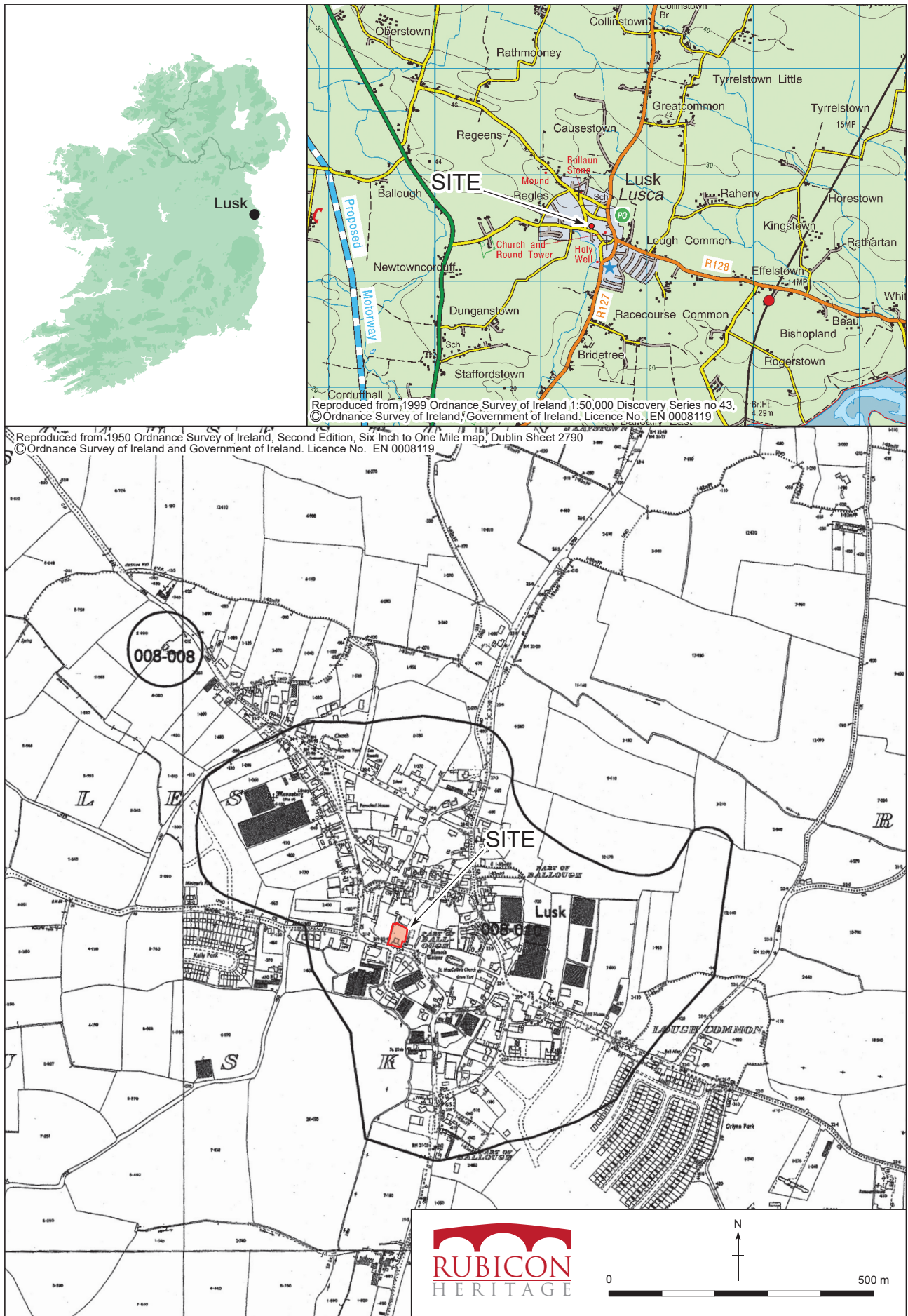


Figure 1 - Church Road: Site location and RMP mapping.

