

Social Housing Development, Ferganstown, Navan, Co. Meath

‘Ferganstown and Ballymacon’ townland

Site Area: Approx. 1.50 hectares

ITM: 689127 / 767919 (centre)

Record of Monuments and Places: None

Record of Protected Structures: None

Architectural Conservation Area: None

Desk Based Review and Assessment
Niall Roycroft
30th September 2019

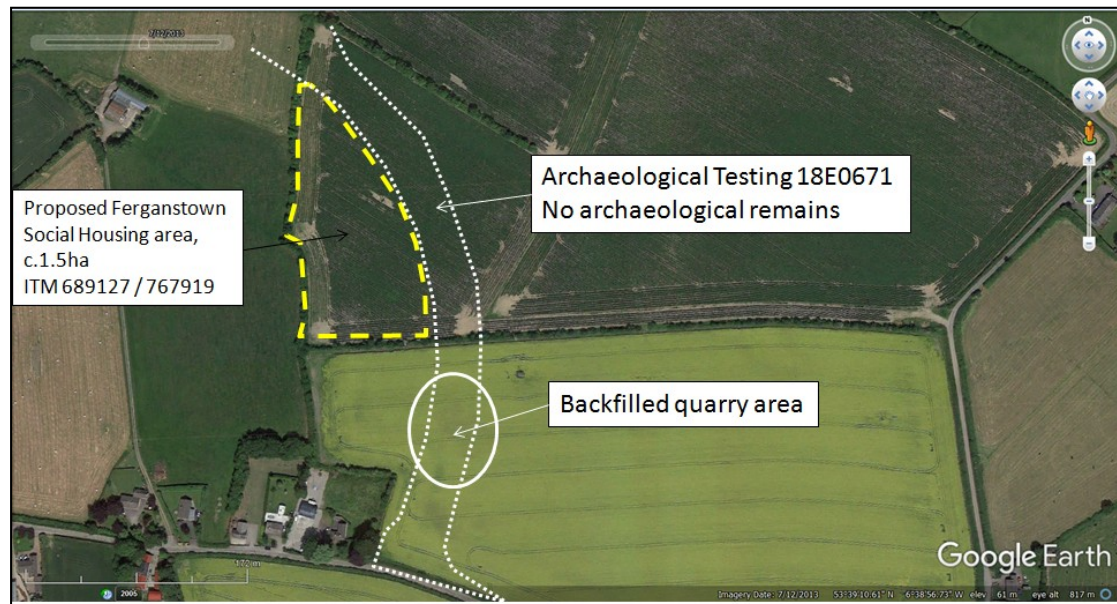
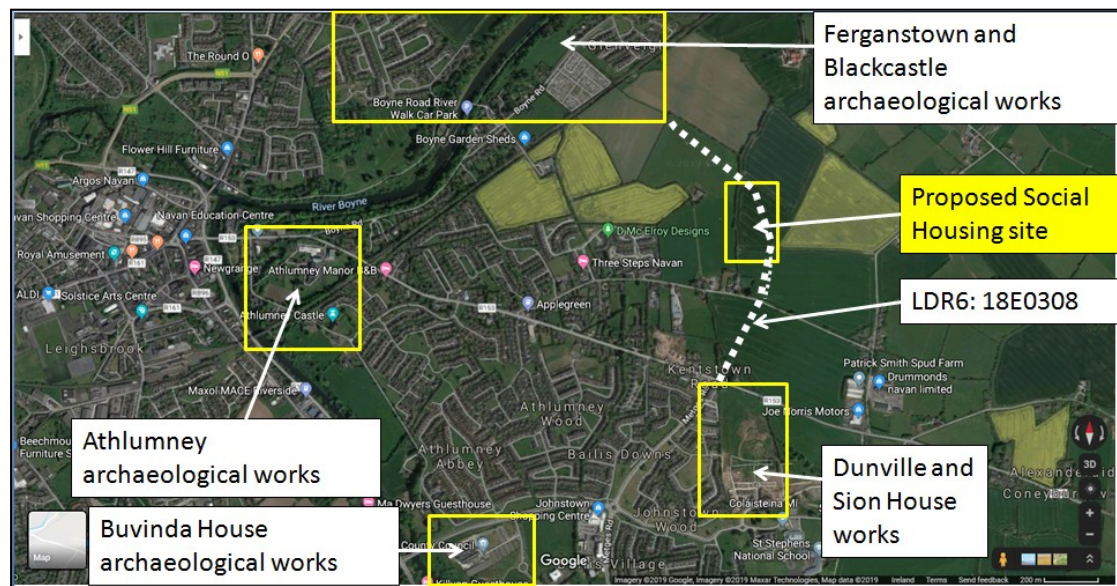
Non-Technical Summary

Meath County Council is proposing a c.1.5 hectare Social Housing Development at 'Ferganstown and Ballymacon' townland on the NE side of Navan Town ITM 689127, 767919. The site is a green field under tillage and lies adjacent to the proposed Navan Local Distributor Road 6 (LDR6) that was archaeologically trial trenched by Archer Heritage under Licence 18E0308 (Liam Coen). The lands for LDR6 were trial trenched to 10.2% of the area and no archaeological remains were found. A series of anomalies approximately 75m SE from the proposed housing site were found to be a backfilled modern stone quarrying area. Bedrock in this area is high with a fairly thin covering of post-glacial till.

The proposed Social Housing Development lies between the 50m OD and 60m OD contour on sloping ground facing from NW to S. The W boundary is a drainage ditch that runs to the north. There are no recorded archaeological sites in the immediate vicinity. There is general archaeological activity in the vicinity of the River Boyne / Boyne Road 800m-1km to the NW and recent archaeological works (16E0268, 16E0449) in the area of the Dunville housing estate 850m to the S have exposed an early medieval to post-medieval settlement with a burial ground.

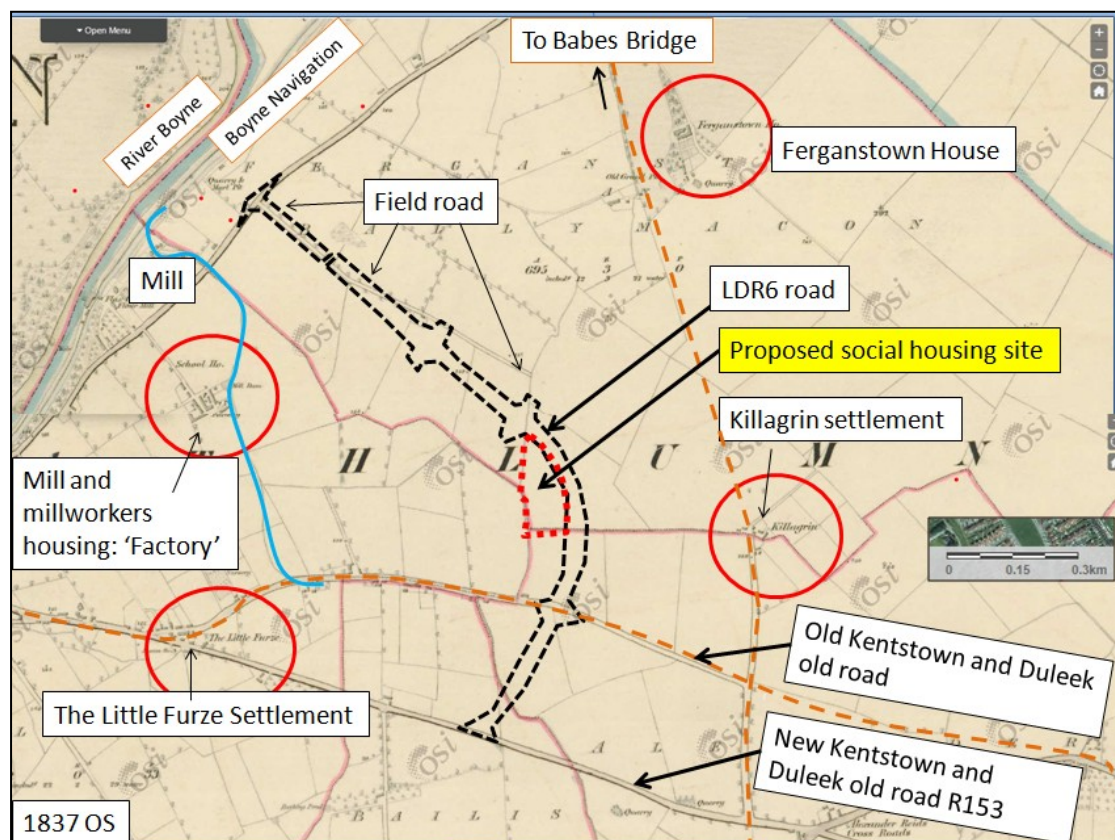
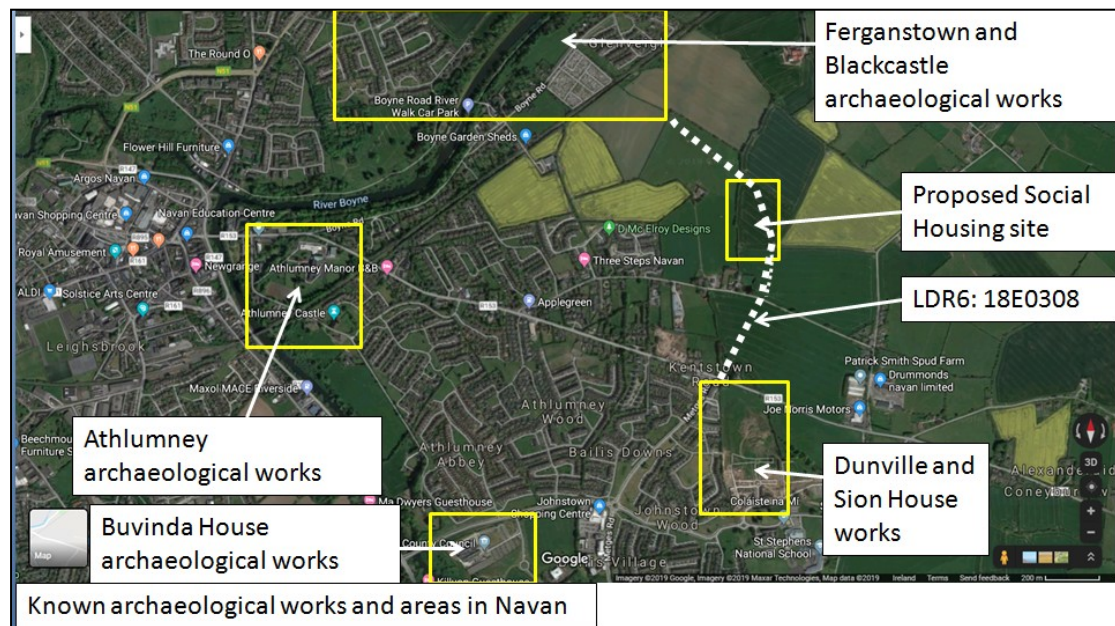
The proposed Social Housing Development is shown as open fields on the 1812 Larkin and all the OS maps. The trigger for any archaeological planning condition / archaeological works comes from the size of the proposed development of c. 1.5ha, not from its known or presumed archaeological potential.

1 Introduction



Meath County Council is proposing a c.1.5 hectare Social Housing Development at 'Ferganstown and Ballymacon' townland on the NE side of Navan Town ITM 689127, 767919. The site is a green field under tillage and lies adjacent to the proposed Navan Local Distributor Road 6 (LDR6) that was archaeologically trial trenched by Archer Heritage under Licence 18E0308 (Liam Coen). The lands for LDR6 were trial trenched to 10.2% of the area and no archaeological remains were found. A series of anomalies approximately 75m SE from the proposed housing site were found to be a backfilled modern stone quarrying area. Bedrock in this area is high with a fairly thin covering of post-glacial till.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



The River Boyne between Navan and Slane exhibits a clear concentration of archaeological remains along its northern and southern banks. Typically the prehistoric monuments are funerary in nature and consist of cist cemeteries, barrows, a passage tomb etc. This arrangement reflects monuments that have been deliberately placed to be viewed from, or to be part of if not visible from, the major routeway of the River Boyne. Routeways along the northern and southern banks, as well as along

the channel itself, can all be imagined. The monuments typically lie on the higher ground overlooking the River and their concentration and consistency seems to indicate that the banksides of the River Boyne was as much a popular place to live in the past as it is today.

Early medieval evidence alongside the River Boyne is largely ecclesiastical in nature with the National monuments of Donaghmore and Ardmulchan as excellent examples. Between these stone-built sites there were possibly farm settlements, but the typical location of an early medieval site would be higher up and further away from the River Boyne. Early medieval sites typically wished to be located where they could see the River, but were often as much as 500m or so from it. The major archaeological site at eg Buvinda House is from 200m to 250m from the river Boyne. This positioning allowed a certain degree of security at a time when all rivers were a boundary of one sort or another. Souterrains such as those at Buvinda House or that at Ferganstown Water Treatment works are often located some distance from an actual settlement and closer to the river itself (100m or so).

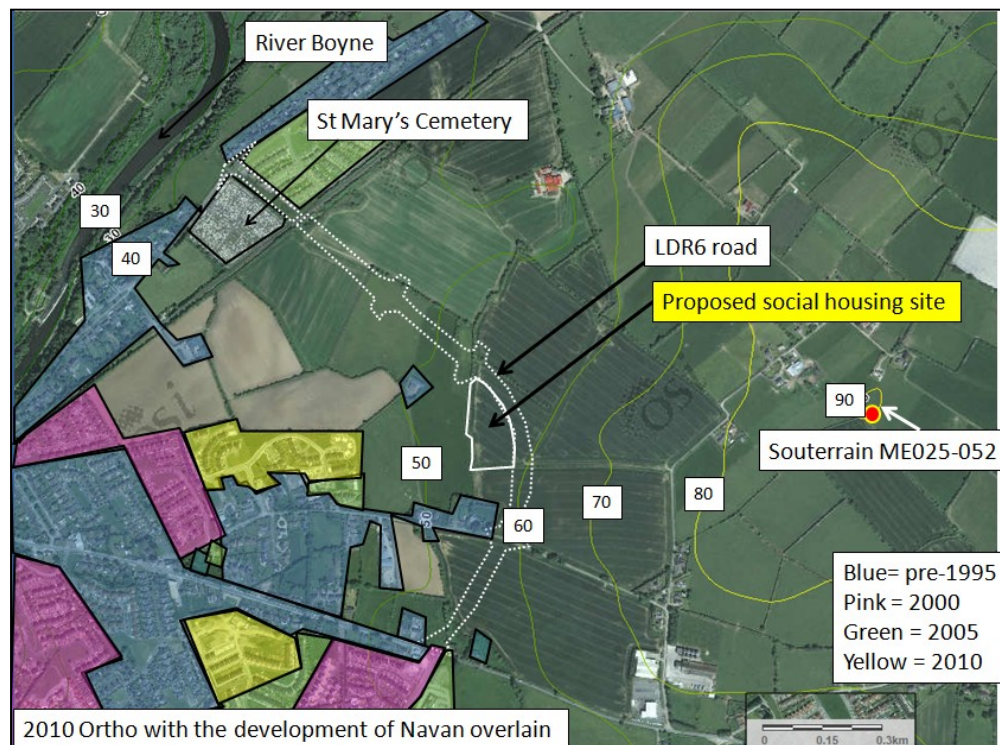
Another attraction to early medieval and medieval settlement was a road-route. A north to south routeway from Donaghmore to Kilcarn via Johnstown is known. The routeway crossed the River Boyne at Babes Bridge below Donaghmore and probably ran south past the Ferganstown Water Treatment works, perhaps to Ferganstown House (1837 OS) Killagrin settlement (1837 OS), just west of the Alexander Reid Cross Roads and on to Johnstown village.

It should be noted that the 'Old Road' to the north of Alexander Reid Cross Roads is the original Navan to Kentstown Road as shown on the 1812 Larkin Map. The present R153 Navan to Kentstown Road was not constructed until the beginning of the 19th century. Taylor & Skinner 1777-85 Road Maps of Ireland only shows the Boyne Road from Athlumney to Slane in this area (Maps 45L, 50, 246R).

In terms of map evidence, there is nothing significant in the localised area of the proposed site. The only feature on the 1837 OS is a field road from the Boyne Road past the present St Mary's cemetery and heading to Killagrin settlement. The road is still marked on the 1913 OS and still partly survives as a field boundary for around 700m. The Ferganstown and Ballymacon and Alexander Reid Townland Boundary is located at 689209, 767849 and appears to be a modern hedge to large, open fields that have had their internal boundaries removed.

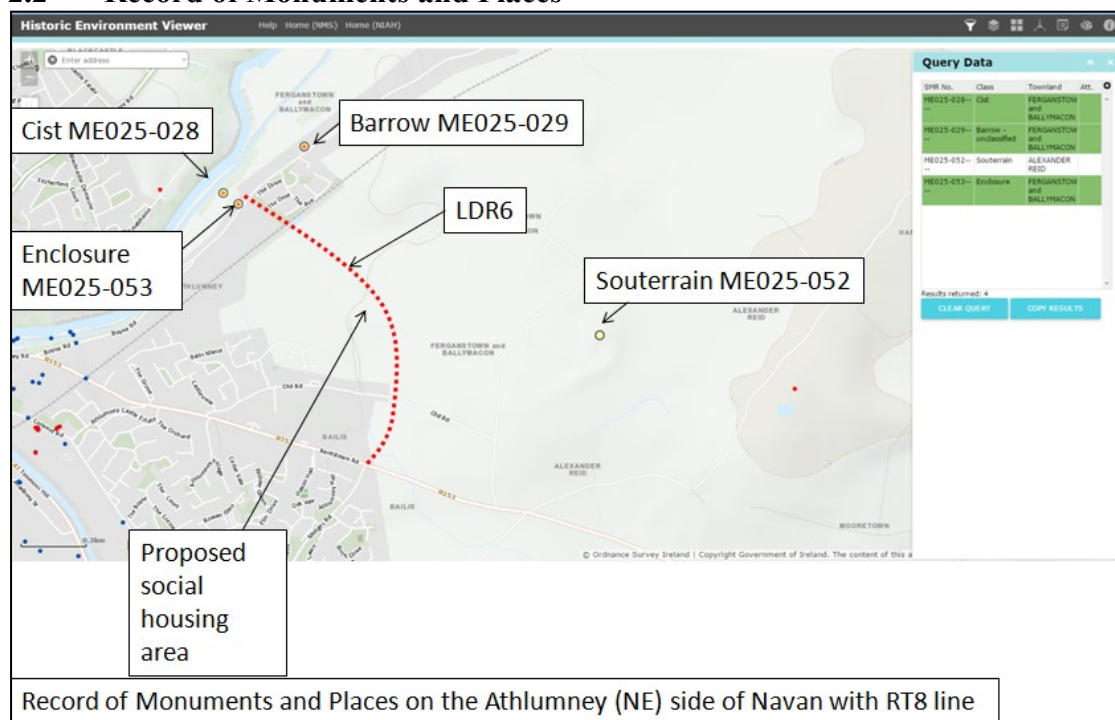
The 'Factory' on the 1812 Larkin is also on the 1837 OS as a Mill, Mill Pond, Mill Dam, Mill race approaching from the south and leaving to the north, School and other buildings. This complex is much altered and reduced by the 1913 OS and the Western range of workers cottages appears to survive today. But the rest of the 'Factory' is gone with the exception of the Mill Race that can still be traced as field boundaries.

2.1 Topography



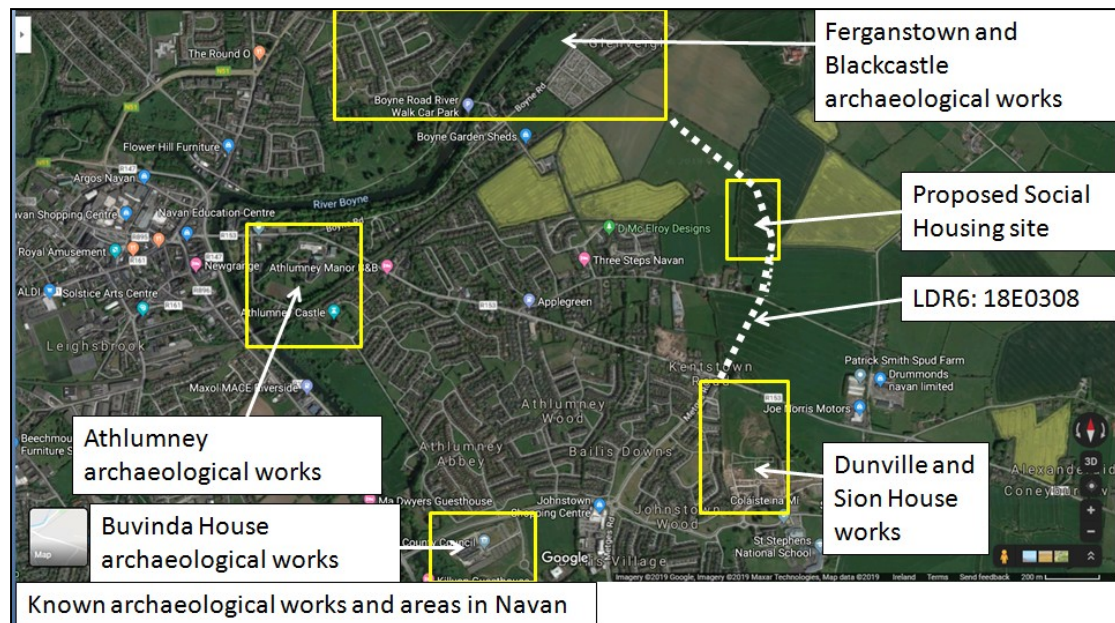
The proposed Social Housing Development lies between the 50m OD and 60m OD contour on sloping ground facing from NW to S. The W boundary is a drainage ditch that runs to the north.

2.2 Record of Monuments and Places



There are no recorded archaeological sites in the immediate vicinity. There is general archaeological activity in the vicinity of the River Boyne / Boyne Road 800m-1km to the NW and recent archaeological works (16E0268, 16E0449) in the area of the Dunville housing estate 850m to the S have exposed an early medieval to post-medieval settlement with a burial ground.

2.3 Summary of the Excavations.ie entries



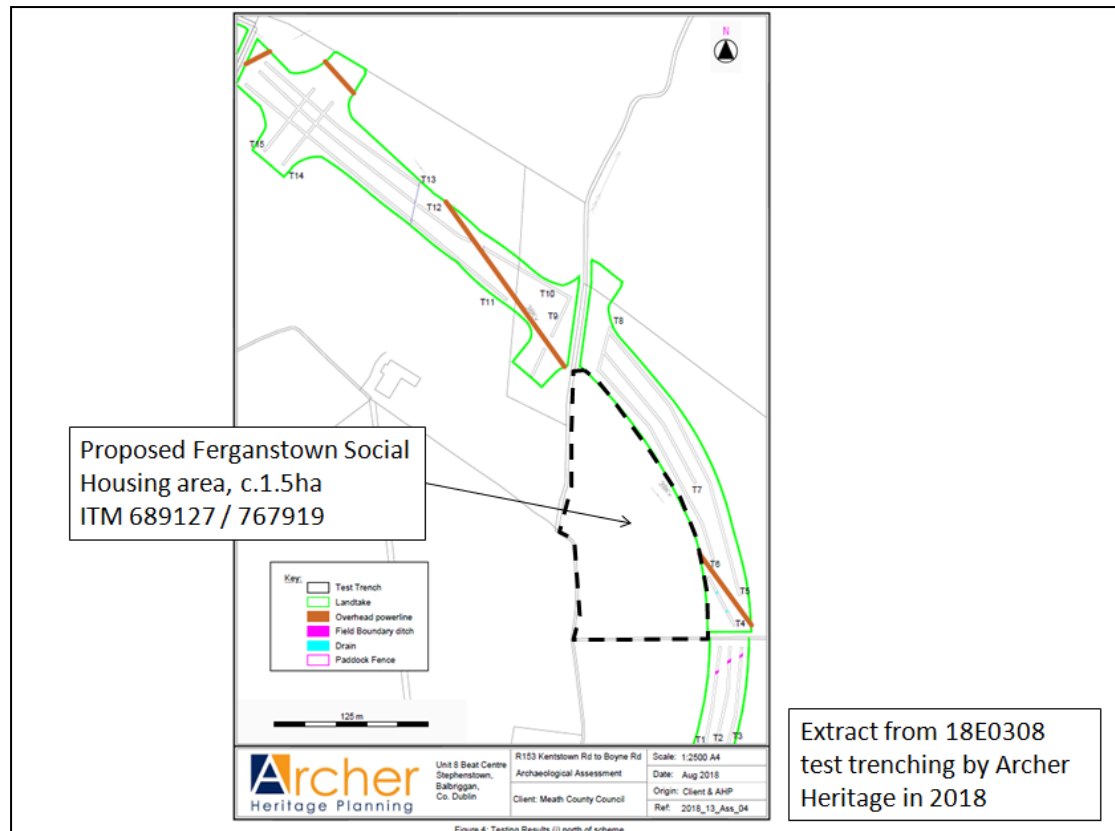
18E0308

SUMMARY

A total of 25 trenches (2323 linear metres or 10.2% of the land-take) were excavated across the testing area. Trench locations had been agreed with the National Monuments Service in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland.

The project is divided into two parts and this application concerns the archaeological testing of Area 1 (sections 1-6) that lies to the north of the Kentstown Road (R153) and runs for approximately 1.4km, 6.77 hectares (sections 1-6: 1.15km; 3.95 ha), to the Navan-Drogheda Railway.

Topsoil was removed to a depth of 30-60cm exposing a yellow brown gravel subsoil – no archaeological features were uncovered.



For nearby archaeological works 16E0449 and 16E0268 at the Dunville housing estate please follow links below:

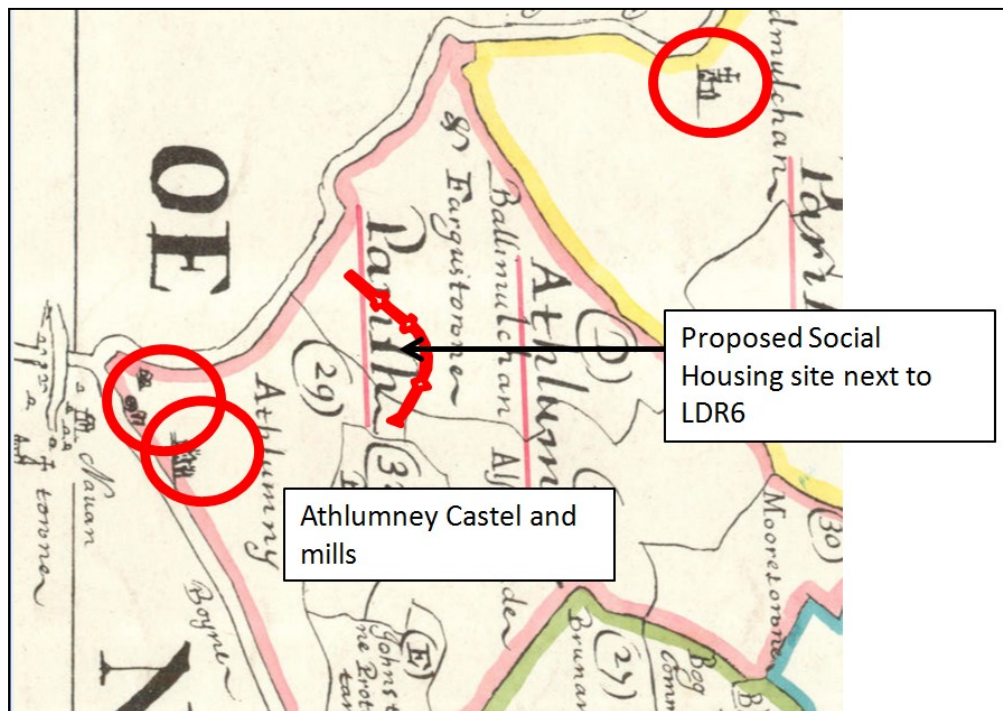
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https://excavations.ie/advanced-search/?exca_a=advanced_search&y=&c=&a=&snu=&sna=&st=&rtc=&itm=&smrn=&eln=16E0268

2.4 Map regression

The proposed Social Housing Development is shown as open fields on the 1812 Larkin and all the OS maps. The trigger for any archaeological planning condition / archaeological works comes from the size of the proposed development of c. 1.5ha, not from its known or presumed archaeological potential.

1650s Down Survey

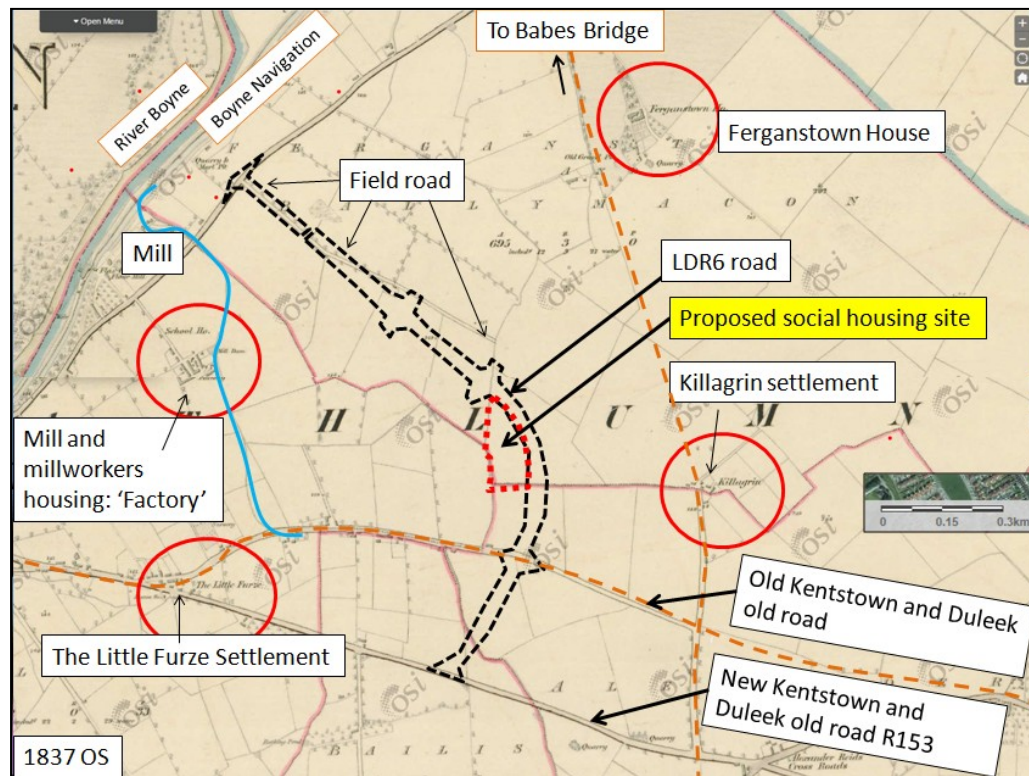


Nothing shown in the area on 1650s Down Survey mapping

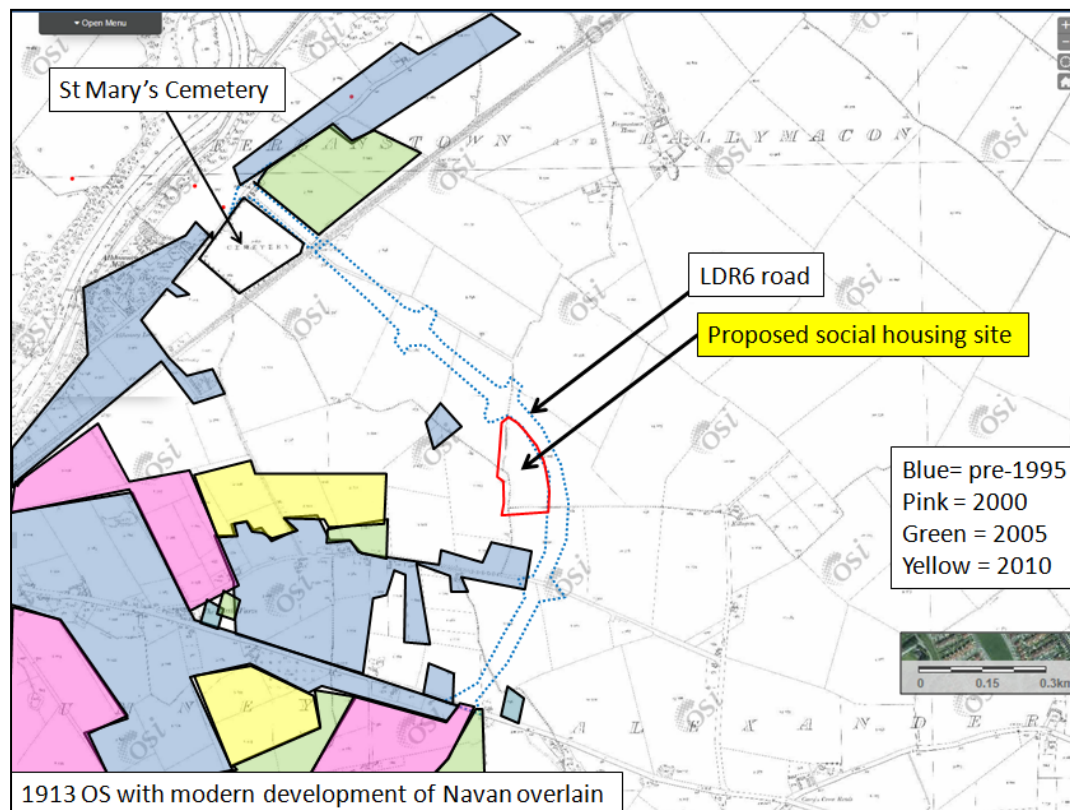
William Larkin Map 1812-17



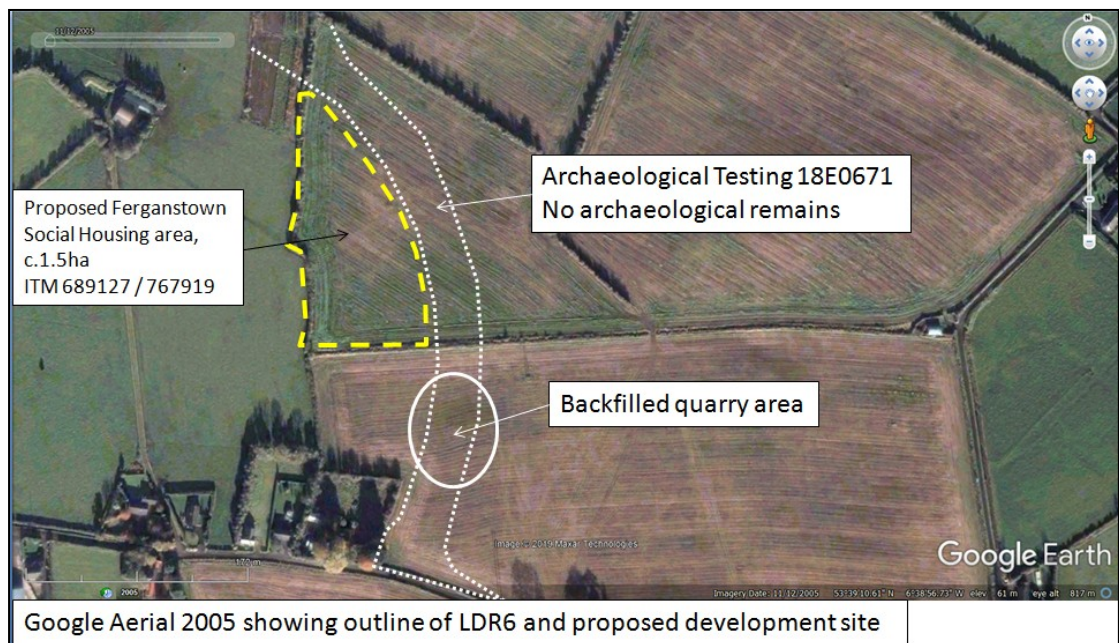
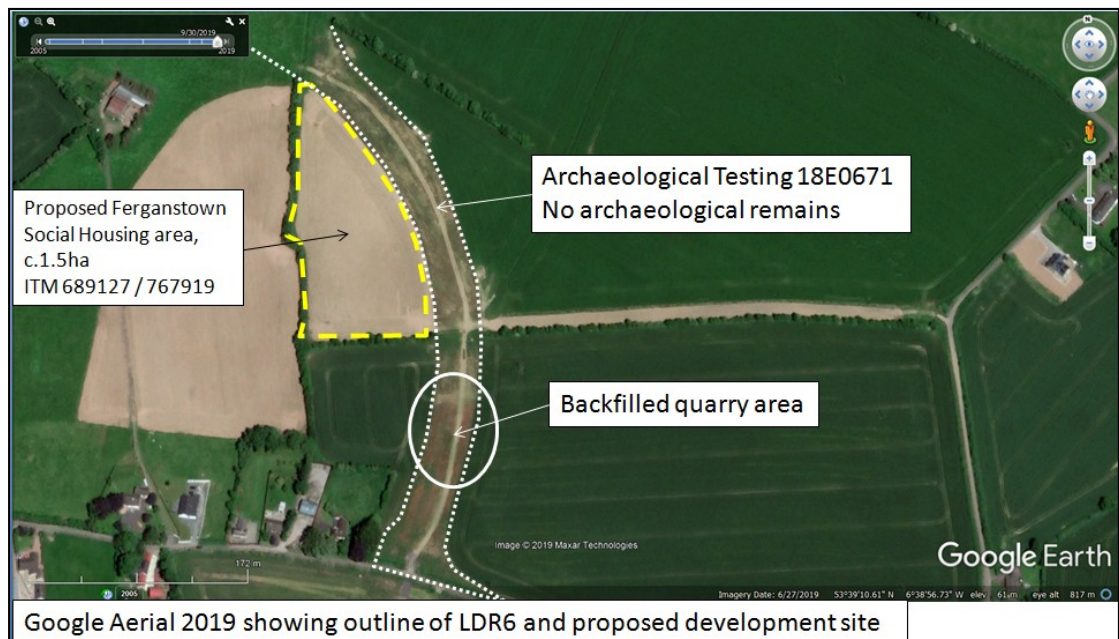
1837 OS



1888-1913 OS



Modern mapping and aerial images



3 ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

3.1 Record of Protected Structures

None

3.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage: Buildings and Gardens

None

3.3 Architectural Conservation Area

None

4 SITE VISIT

The site was visited during the LDR6 works in 2018.



The field is under regular tillage and has no visible anomalies. There are overhead power lines running across the site. The southern boundary is a large, hedged ditch that is the townland boundary between Ferganstown and Alexander Reid. This boundary continues from the SW corner of the site to the kink half way up. This ditch was cleared out during the LDR6 works which shows it acts as a large drain.





Photo 2: Facing W. LDR6 cleaned out S townland boundary ditch

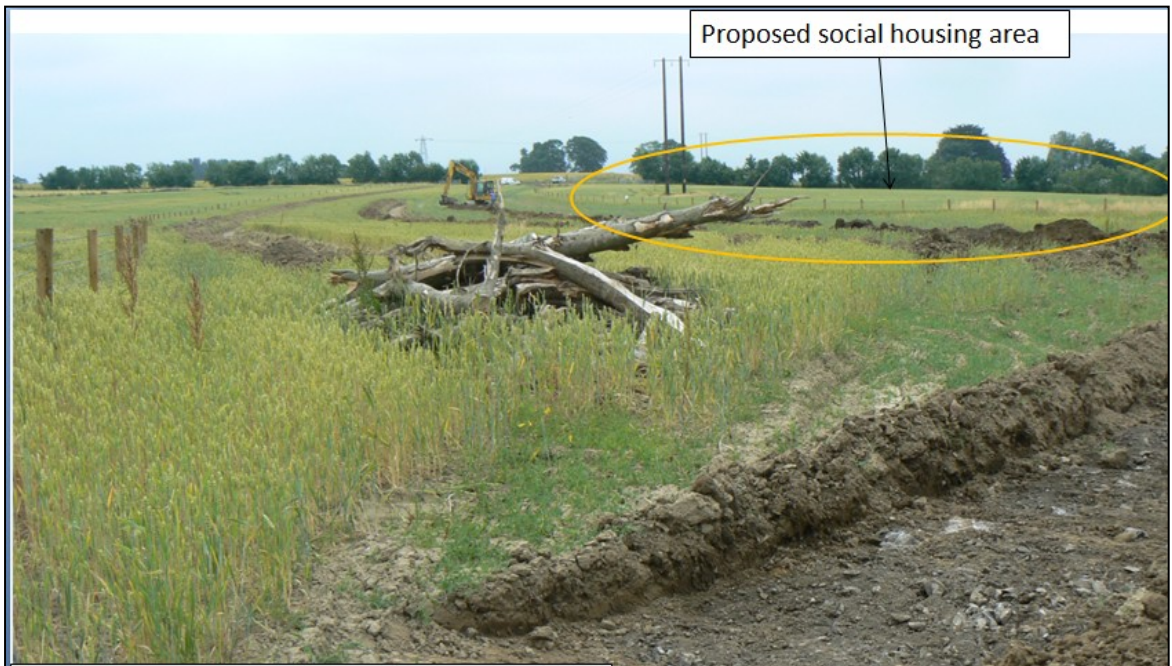
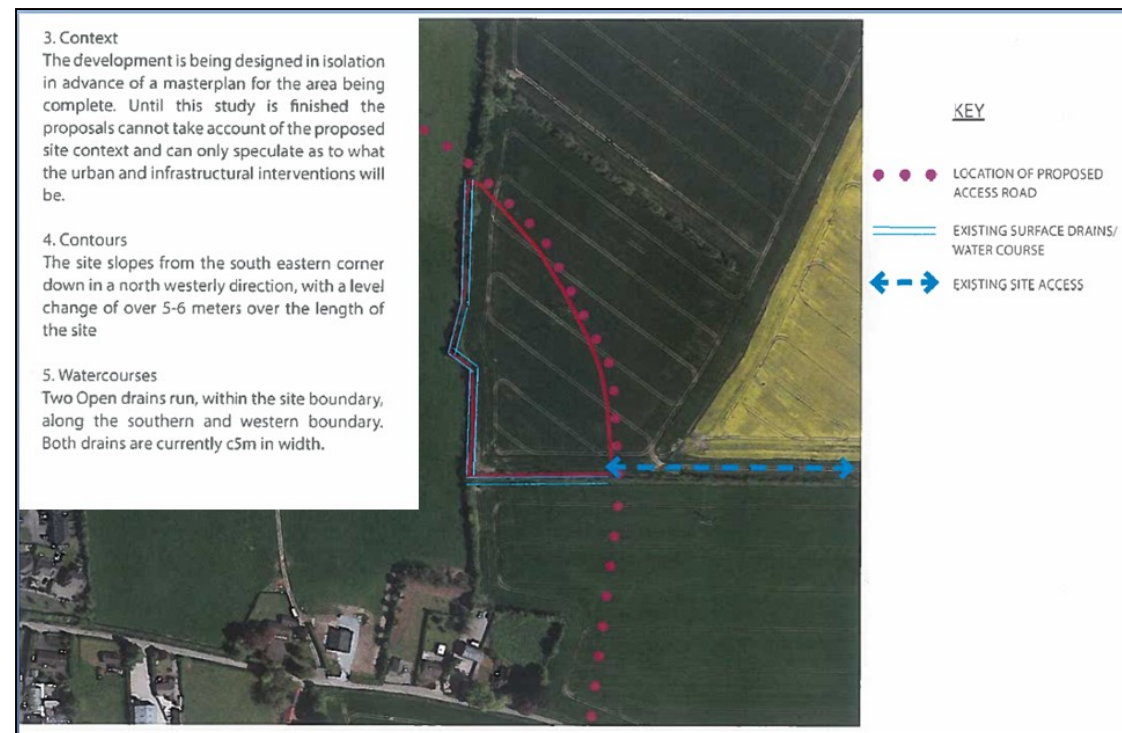


Photo 3: During trial trenching for LDR6, Facing S

5 Proposed Works



Proposed works comprise social housing.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

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7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Paul Barrell, Executive Engineer, Housing Department Technical, Meath County Council

8 REFERENCES

Electronic Sources

www.excavations.ie – Summary of archaeological excavation from 1970–2009.

www.archaeology.ie – National Monuments Service website listing all SMR sites with aerial photographs.

www.osi.ie – Ordnance Survey aerial photographs (1995, 2000 & 2005) and historic OS mapping (first edition 6” and 25”). <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html>

<http://www.logainm.ie/> - Placename index

<http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/> -National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

<http://countydevelopmentplan.meath.ie/adoptedplan/> - Meath County Council 2013, Meath County Council County Development Plan 2013-2019

Environment Protection Agency website

<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

<http://downsurvey.tcd.ie/down-survey-maps.php> Down Survey mapping

http://digitalcollections.tcd.ie/home/index.php?DRIS_ID=LCN14679989_001

Taylor & Skinner 1777-85 Maps of the Roads of Ireland

Google Maps

Bing Maps