

**Archaeological Impact
Assessment for
Proposed Residential
Development at
Coollegrean, Killarney,
Co. Kerry**

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Client: Griffin Project
Management

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Date: March 2017

Abstract

The following report describes the results of a desk-based archaeological impact assessment undertaken in March 2017 to assess the potential impact on the archaeological resource of the development at Coollegrean, Port Road, Killarney, Co. Kerry. The assessment revealed a possible barrow site (KE066-066) is located in the south western corner of the proposed development site. The development site itself lies in a rich archaeological landscape with evidence from nearby excavations of continuous occupation from the Neolithic Period through the Bronze Age to the modern period. It is therefore recommended that, due to the archaeological sensitivity of the immediate and surrounding area and the significant potential for archaeological remains being discovered on the site, particularly in the area of the possible barrow, that a programme of pre-development testing be conducted by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

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1. Introduction

The proposed development site at Coollegrean, Port Road, Killarney, Co. Kerry is located to the northwest of Killarney town centre (**Fig.1**). The proposed development would involve the construction of 104 dwellings and 60 apartments on a c.12 acre site consisting mainly of pasture and rough scrub with a c.2 acre dump in the southeast corner (**Fig.2**).

The aim of this study is to determine the impact, if any, that the proposed development will have on any archaeological features, which may survive on the site. The survey was based on documentary and cartographic research as well as an on-site inspection.

The report is presented in a number of sections, focusing on the following: a review of the existing environment; the methodology adopted in the preparation of the report; an historical and archaeological account of the proposed development site; any cartographic evidence gleaned from the examination of historical maps; an inspection of the proposed development site. The final section details the mitigation measures necessary to ensure the protection of any archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage sites and/or deposits that may be impacted upon by the proposed development.

2. Existing Environment

2.1 *The Site*

The site of the proposed development is in a semi-urban setting on the outskirts of Killarney town (**Fig.1**). The site overlooks part of the national park and playing fields to the south. The proposed c12 acre development site can be divided into three distinct areas. The larger part, c.9 acres consists of good agricultural grassland, on a hill that slopes gently down to the north and east but has a much steeper downward slope to the west and south. The smallest area, c.0.5 acre, allows access from the hill to Port Road to the west. The final area, c.2.5 acres, consists of a largely overgrown dump, which according to the client is 30-foot deep. Evidence of freshly dumped material was visible along the east side of this area.

The development site is bounded to the north and east by existing housing, residential care facilities and commercial properties. These are separated from the site by a mixed boundary of fencing, formal hedges, walls and some earthen banks and hedgerows. The site is bounded to the south by a more typical sod and stone bank with wild native hedgerow, which separates the site from playing fields. The site is bounded to the west by a row of 14 houses, at least three of which date to the 19th century. Access to the site is from the Port Road (N71), which runs along the western boundary (**Fig.2**). A possible barrow (KE066-066) is located in the southwest corner of the pasture land (**Pl.1**).

2.2 *The Development*

The proposed works would involve the construction of 104 dwellings and 60 apartments over c.12 acre site along with associated roads, services and green areas. The proposed entrance allows access to the N71 to the west (**Fig.3**).

2.3 *Site Inspection*

The site of an unclassified barrow, RMP KE066-066, lies in the southwestern corner of the proposed development site (**Fig.4**). A visual survey of the site was carried out on 16 March 2017. Weather was dull and dry on the day but there had been substantial rainfall over the preceding days.

The possible barrow is situated in the southwest corner of the larger c.9 acre field in which the proposed development is located. It is not visible on the ground but appears as a slightly raised circular area, c.20m in diameter, in an aerial photograph taken in 1956 (ACAP, V 245/96-7).

Area 1

Consisted of low lying scrubland at the northwestern corner of the site (**Pl.1**). Bounded to the west by the Port Road (N72) the ground is mainly level until the east end where it slopes upwards quite steeply towards Area 2. There are private residences to the north and south of this area (**Pl.2**). The access road to the development will be built through this area. It was overgrown with willow, ash and gorse as well as long grasses.

Nothing of archaeological significance was noted within this area.

Area 2

This large field, c.9.5 acres, consisted of undulating pasture to the north and east that sloped down to the west and south. The land has been ploughed out and no visible surface features remain. Aerial photography identified a possible barrow (KE066-066) in the south-west corner of the site but no evidence was visible on the ground. The field boundaries vary from relatively recent formal hedges, walls and fences to older native hedgerow on earth and stone banks. Power lines cut across the site from north-west to south-east **(PI.6)**.

Nothing of archaeological significance was noted within Area 2.

Area 3

This 2 acre site was located to the south-east of Area 2 and was accessed through a gap in the hedgerow. It consists of a very large mound of deposited soil and stone, which when tested c.10 years ago was up to 5m deep. The area is overgrown with wild native trees and gorse and largely inaccessible.

Nothing of archaeological significance was noted within this area.

3. The Desk Based Study

3.1 Record of Monuments and Places

The primary source of information for the desk-based study was the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). The RMP, which was established under the National Monuments Acts (1930-94), is based upon the older Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and information from county archaeological inventories. It records known upstanding archaeological monuments, the original location of destroyed monuments and the location of possible sites identified through documentary, cartographic and photographic research. The RMP data is compiled from the files of the Archaeological Survey, which combines cartographic sources and all published, and publicly available documentary sources including periodicals, the records of the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) and GSI 1:30,000 vertical aerial photographs with field inspections of the sites.

3.2 Record of Protected Structures

The Record of Protected Structures for County Kerry lists all the buildings, structures and features that have been deemed to have special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest under the Planning and Development Act, 2000. There are over 800 protected structures on the list, which was compiled as part of the County Kerry Development Plan 2015-21. These include bridges, mansions, shop fronts, post offices, gate lodges and warehouses.

3.3 The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a state initiative under the administration of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The purpose of the NIAH 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. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to the planning authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

3.4 The Topographic Files of the National Museum of Ireland

The topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) identify all recorded stray finds held in the NMI archive that have been donated to the state in accordance with national monuments legislation. The files sometimes include reports on excavations undertaken by NMI archaeologists in the early 20th century. The finds are listed by townland and/or by street name.

3.5 Aerial Photographs, Dublin, Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)

The high altitude aerial photographs in this collection can show low visibility archaeological sites as cropmarks or soil marks that may not be visible from the ground. The collection dates to the 1970's, before the intensive development of residential housing and road building, and can also reveal subsequently destroyed archaeological sites.

3.6 *Excavation Reports*

This database contains summary accounts of all the excavations carried out in Ireland – North and South – from 1970 to 2015. It has been compiled from the published Excavations Bulletins from those years, with a similar format. The number of excavations carried out annually in Ireland has increased enormously during this period. To illustrate, Excavations 1970 has 41 reports, while Excavations 2004 contains over 1,850. The database gives access to almost 12,000 reports and can be browsed or searched using multiple fields, including Year, County, Site Type, Grid Reference, Licence No., RMP No. and Author.

3.7 *Cartographic Research*

The series of 6” Ordnance Survey maps were consulted in the course of this research.

3.8 *Documentary Research*

Various published sources, including local and national journals, were consulted to establish an historical background for the proposed development site.

4. Results

4.1 Record of Monuments and Places

A single RMP site is located in the south-west corner of the proposed development site (Fig.4):

RMP: KE066-066-- **Townland:** Coollegrean

Monument: Barrow (Possible) **NGR:** 10043/08609

Description: A barrow is an artificial mound of earth or earth and stone, normally constructed to contain or conceal burials. The term is used where it is not possible to identify the specific type. These are part of the Bronze/Iron Age burial tradition dating from c. 2400 BC to AD 400.

This possible barrow is located in pasture, on a low rise at the base of a hill. It was identified as a circular slightly raised area with a diameter of c. 20M surrounded by a fosse and a slight external bank. This possible barrow is not visible at ground level, nor is it marked on the OS maps, but is visible as a shadow site in an aerial photograph taken in 1956 (ACAP, V 245/96-7).

The following monuments are located within 500m of the proposed development:

RMP No.	Townland	Monument Type	NGR	Distance
KE066-067	Coollegrean	Ogham Stone	496148/591672	400m
KE066-099	Inch	Holy Well	495956/590925	400m
KE066-126	Ardnamweely	Workhouse	496007/591652	225m
KE066-127	Ballydowny / Derreen	Bridge	495554/591685	300m

4.2 Record of Protected Structures

There are no protected structures in the vicinity of the proposed development site.

4.3 The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

There are no structures listed in the NIAH within the bounds of the proposed development site. There are three structures along the western boundary of the site along Port Road and two on the southern boundary.

Name Port Cottages, Port Road, Killarney
Reg. No. 21400806
Date 1870-1880
Category Architectural, Artistic
Use House
Description Group of four terraced three-bay single-storey houses, built c. 1875

Name 1-4, Port Cottages, Port Road, Killarney
Reg. No. 21400805
Date 1830-1850
Category Architectural, Artistic
Use House
Description Group of four terraced four-bay single-storey houses, built c. 1850

Name 5-6, Port Cottages, Port Road, Killarney
Reg. No. 21400804

Date 1840-1860
Category Architectural, Artistic
Use House
Description Pair of semi-detached three-bay, single-storey houses with dormer attics, built c. 1840, with single-bay single-storey gabled projecting porches to centre having ogee-headed door openings.

Name Mercy Convent, New Road, Killarney
Reg. No. 21400812
Date 1845-1855
Category Architectural, Artistic, Social
Use Convent/Nunnery
Description Detached eight-bay two-storey Gothic Revival style convent with dormer attic, built 1850, on a quadrangular-plan about a courtyard.

Name John Paul II Pastoral Centre, New Road, Killarney
Reg. No. 21400813
Date 1885-1890
Category Architectural, Artistic, Social
Use School
Description Detached H-plan five-bay single-storey Victorian former schoolhouse with half-dormer attic, dated 1888, now in use as pastoral centre.

4.4 *The Topographical Files*

No finds are recorded for the townland of Coollegrean or its immediate environs.

4.5 *Aerial Photographs*

This possible barrow is visible as a shadow site in an aerial photograph taken in 1956 (ACAP, V 245/96-7).

4.6 *Excavation Reports*

An inspection of the Excavations Bulletins (Bennet, 1989-2015) revealed that there have been no archaeological excavations in the immediate vicinity of the site up to and including 2015.

There have however been a number of excavations conducted in the surrounding townlands:

2008:586 Ardnamweely/Ballydribbeen

Licence No.: 07E1123

Site Type: No Archaeological significance

Distance from Development: 450m NE

Test excavations undertaken prior to the construction of a primary care centre revealed no archaeologically significant deposit or artefacts. A number of earth-cut drains of unknown date as well as a post-medieval storm drain were discovered as well as numerous modern rubbish pits (Dunne 2008).

2002:0805 – Ballydowny

Licence No: 02E0055

Site Type: Prehistoric and historic site

Distance from Development: 900m NW

Monitoring of groundworks for a development of 118 houses resulted in nine distinct areas of archaeological remains being identified and excavated. The radio carbon results show occupation in these areas from the Neolithic period through the Bronze Age, Iron Age and into the early medieval period. Among the features excavated were a number of fulacht fiadhs, stakeholes, hearths and a ring ditch with a single cremation (Kiely 2002).

2007:716 Coollegrean, Killarney

Licence No: 07E0522

Site Type: No Archaeological significance

Distance from Development: 960m SE

As part of a major infrastructural project a trench was excavated within the constraint zone of a holy well (KE066-067). No archaeological deposits or artefacts were discovered (Dunne 2007).

2005:682 Derreen

Licence No: 05E0910

Site Type: No Archaeological significance

Distance from Development: 820m NE

Testing of a development site for 60 houses resulted in no archaeological deposits or artefacts being discovered (Quinn 2005).

2008:617 Derreen

Licence No: 08E0259

Site Type: No Archaeological significance

Distance from Development: 800m NE

Monitoring of groundworks associated with a housing development revealed no archaeological deposits or artefacts (Kiely 2008).

2015:314 Derreen

Licence No: 15E0550

Site Type: No Archaeological significance

Distance from Development: 1000m NE

Testing in advance of a residential development resulted in no archaeological deposits or artefacts being uncovered (Purcell 2015)

4.7 Cartographic Research

A search of the relevant maps for the area revealed nothing of archaeological significance in the area of the proposed development site, other than the possible enclosure referred to in the RMP.

4.8 Historical Background

The development site is located in the townland of Coollegrean, which is in the parish of Killarney and the Barony of Magunihy. It is part of the wider archaeological and historic landscape of south west Kerry with evidence of continuous occupation from the Neolithic to the modern period. The site is located on a low ridge to the north-west of Killarney town (**Fig.1**). The town is not listed as a national monument nor is it included in the Urban Archaeological Survey of Kerry.

The earliest evidence of sustained human settlement in the Killarney area dates back over 4000 years to the early Bronze Age when copper was first mined at Ross Island. Monastic settlements provide the majority of the evidence of occupation during the early medieval period. The most important of these was the monastery founded by St. Finian the Leper on Inisfallen. It was here that the Annals of Innisfallen, a major source on the early history of Ireland, were written from the 11th to the 13th centuries. Muckross Abbey was founded in 1448 by Donal McCarthy Mór. The abbey was burned in 1654 by Cromwellian forces commanded by General Ludlow. Throughout its early history the abbey was used as a burial place for Gaelic chieftains and in the 17th and 18th century for the famous Kerry poets Aodhgan O'Raithaile, Eoghan Rua O'Sullivan, Piaras Feiriteir and Seafraidh O'Donoghue.

I was unable to find any references in the historical record to the townland of Coollegrean, although some of the surrounding townlands are mentioned in passing. A study of the surrounding place names can provide some insight into the history of townlands that have left no impact on the written record. The name of Ireland's many townlands were recorded during the Ordnance Survey in the 1830's and 1840's when the entire country was being mapped for the first time. A variety of place names, whether Irish, Viking, Anglo-Norman, English or, in very rare cases of Anglo-Saxon, origin appear throughout Ireland and the appearance of the different languages is often a good indicator of the cultural heritage and therefore the archaeological record of the area.

The names of the townlands surrounding the proposed development site are simple toponyms, describing some physical aspect of the countryside such as Coollegrean (*Cúil le Gréin*), which may translate as the sunny/bright (*grian*) corners (*cúil*) or a corruption of woods (*coill*). Cleeny may refer to the sloping (*claen*) nature of the surrounding land. Inch is generally understood to describe a meadow along a river. Ardnamweely describes another hill, this time as either the height (*ard*) of the moyle cow (*na maoile*) or as a bald (*maol*) height (*ard*). Kncoreer may describe a fat (*reamhar*) hill. Kilcoolaght is often translated as *cill cualachta*, or the 'church of the colony. Derreen probably refers to a small derry or oak grove (*doirín*). Killarney itself may refer to a church or wood of the sloe bushes.

5. Impact of the Proposed Development

There is a possible barrow (KE-66-066), some 20m in diameter as indicated in the relevant aerial photograph, located in the south-west corner of Area 2 of the proposed development site. While there are no visible remains of the barrow on the ground the proposed development will have a significant negative impact on any archaeological remains or artefacts associated with the monument. It is highly likely that any groundwork undertaken on this site could impact directly upon any such subsurface archaeological remains associated with the monument.

It is unlikely that the development will have an impact on any possible subsurface remains in the main part Area 3 due to the depth of dumped material. This is dependent on the dumped material being left in situ during the development. If circumstances change and it is decided that the material is to be removed then this may have an impact on any possible subsurface remains.

6. Summary and Proposed Mitigation

The proposed development site includes a possible barrow in the south-west corner of Area 2. The proposed works are likely to impact directly on the possible barrow and surrounding area, where it is possible that associated archaeological features and/or artefacts are preserved.

It is therefore recommended that a series of test trenches be excavated to determine the extent and nature of the possible barrow site and further trenches be excavated across the remainder of Area 2. These test trenches will be excavated by a suitably qualified archaeologist. The number and extent of these test trenches will be agreed in advance with the National Monuments Service. Depending on the results of this testing it is possible that it will be necessary to monitor all remaining groundwork associated with development.

Unless the dumped material in Area 3 is to be removed it is unnecessary for any large scale testing in this area. It is proposed however that some test trenches be excavated in those areas where the original ground level will be impacted upon, specifically the eastern and western parts of Area 3.

The developer's attention is drawn to the relevant sections of national monuments legislation, the National Monuments Legislation 1930-1994, which state that in the event of the discovery of archaeological finds or remains that the relevant authorities, that is the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the National Museum of Ireland should be notified immediately. The developer should make provision to allow for, and fund, whatever archaeological work may be needed on the site if any remains are noted after testing. Adequate financial provision should also be made available for related post-excavation work, the conservation of artefacts and the publication of any archaeological testing and excavation results.

All recommendations in this report are subject to discussion with and approval from the relevant authorities, which will advise on any further remedial action that they may consider necessary.

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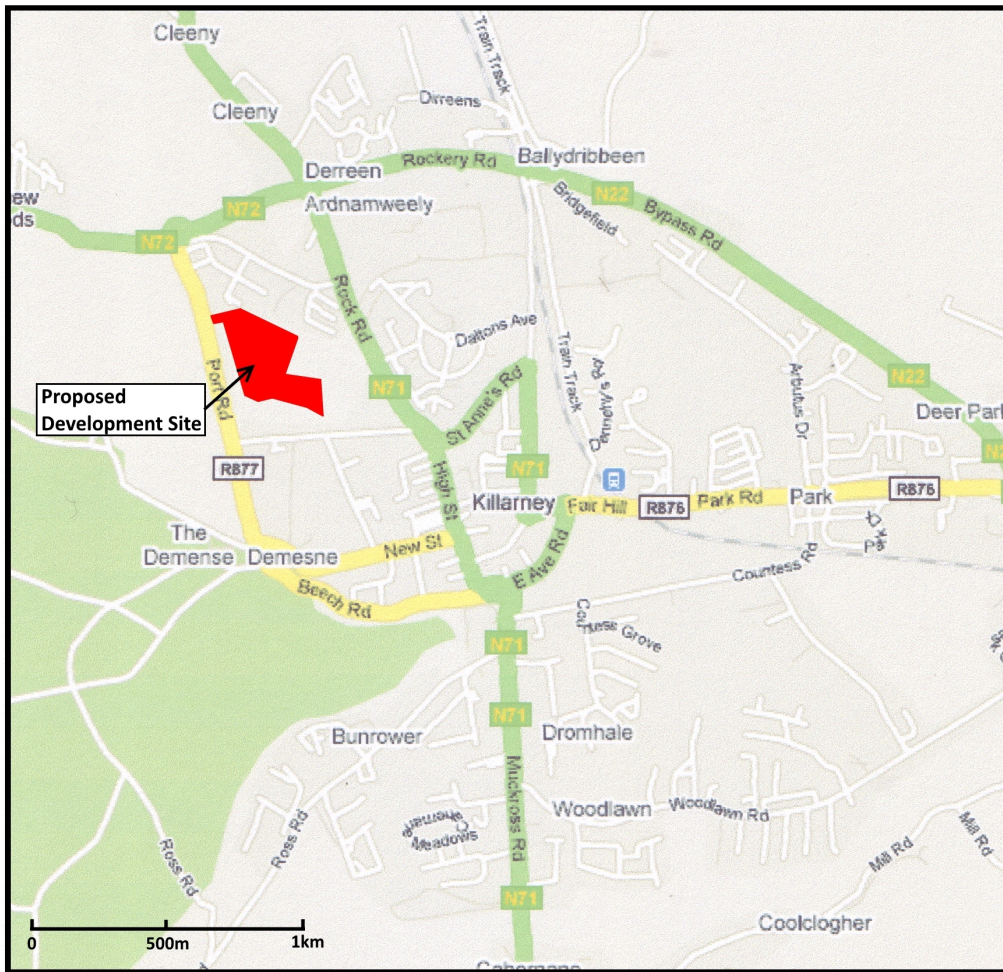


Fig.1 Site Location. (OS Map)

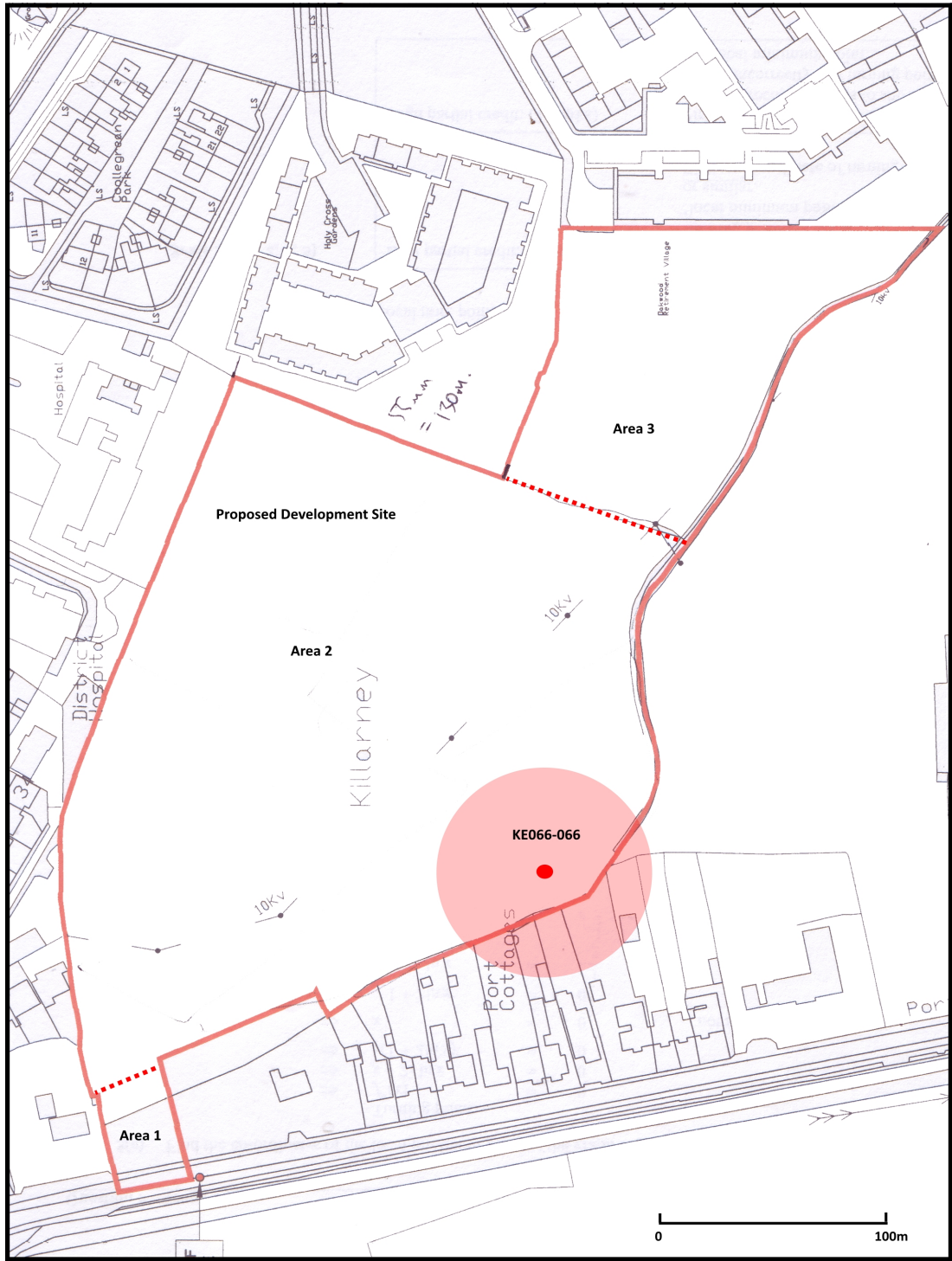


Fig.2 Site Location. (Griffin Project Management)



Fig.3 Site Layout (Griffin Project Management)

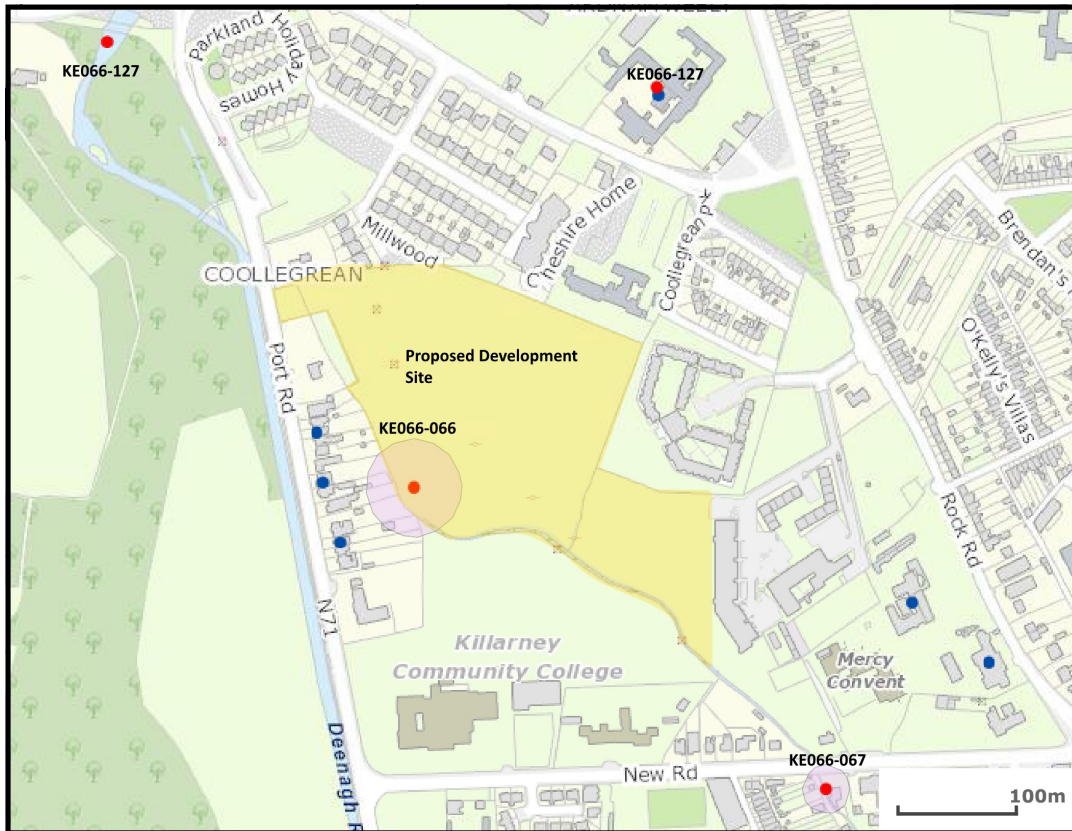


Fig.4 Extract from Archaeological Survey Map



Pl.1 Area 1, looking west, from highest point in Area 2



Pl.2 Area 1, looking north-west showing northern boundary



Pl.3 Area 2, looking north showing northern boundary an high point



Pl.4 Area 2, looking south to approximate location of barrow KE066-066



Pl.5 Area 2, looking SSE to approximate location of barrow KE066-066



Pl.6 Area 2, looking east, showing various field boundaries and power lines traversing the site



Pl.7 Area 2, looking north-west back towards highest point



Pl.8 Area 2, looking south-west towards field boundaries from approximate location of possible barrow



Pl.9 Area 2, looking south towards field boundaries from approximate location of possible barrow



Pl.10 Entrance to Area 3, looking east from Area 2



Pl.11 Example of overgrowth on dumped material in Area 3



Pl.12 Entrance to Area 3 from Rock Road at rear of Oakwood Retirement Village, looking east