

Excavations at Landsdowne Old Wesley Kilgobbin, Co. Dublin



MCGLADE

12/03/2015

LICENCE 14E339

PLANNING REF. D12/0206

SITE NAME

Landsdowne Old Wesley Grounds, Kilgobbin, Co. Dublin

CLIENT

Castlethorn Construction, Usher House, Dundrum, Dublin 16

LICENCE

14E339

PLANNING

South Dublin Co. Co. D12/0206

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

DAHG	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
NMI	National Museum of Ireland
NMS	National Monuments Service
OS	Ordnance Survey
RMP	Record of Monuments and Places
NIAH	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
LAP	Local Area Plan

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Steven McGlade, 12th March 2015

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Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Archaeological background	5
3	Cartographic background	22
4	Historical background	27
5	Archaeology on the site	35
6	Results of the archaeological excavation	42
7	Discussion	79
8	Specialist reports	100
9	Recommendations	101

	Bibliography	102
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Appendix A Context register

Appendix B Finds register

Appendix C Sample register

Appendix D Bone register

Appendix E Drawing register

Appendix F Archive register

Appendix G Planning conditions

Figure List

- Fig. 1.1 Site location
- Fig. 1.2 Location of Areas 1-3
- Fig. 1.3 Aerial photo of the site
- Fig. 1.4 Proposed development plan
- Fig. 1.5 Archaeological zones based on the results of the testing
- Fig. 2.1 RMP map close-up
- Fig. 2.2 RMP sites overlaid on the aerial photo
- Fig. 3.1 Rocque's map of Dublin County, 1760, north to right
- Fig. 3.2 First Edition Ordnance Survey
- Fig. 3.3 Third Edition Ordnance Survey
- Fig. 5.1 2008 geophysics results
- Fig. 5.2 Modern features and scarping evident from testing
- Fig. 5.3 Archaeological features identified in testing
- Fig. 5.4 Areas monitored highlighted in orange with Areas 1-3 excavated highlighted in blue
- Fig. 5.5 Areas to be monitored highlighted in orange with areas archaeologically resolved highlighted in blue
- Fig. 6.1 Post excavation plan of Area 1
- Fig. 6.2 Mid-excavation shot of structure C2, looking north
- Fig. 6.3 Mid-excavation plan of structure C2 and Kiln C10
- Fig. 6.4 Mid-excavation shot of drain capping C20 and central stone C21 within structure C2, looking west
- Fig. 6.5 Mid-excavation shot of western end of drain C6. Looking east
- Fig. 6.6 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C10, looking west
- Fig. 6.7 Post-excavation shot of kiln C10, looking east
- Fig. 6.8 West-facing section of kiln C10
- Fig. 6.9 Post-excavation shot of wall C11 within kiln C10, looking south
- Fig. 6.10 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C32, looking south
- Fig. 6.11 East-facing section of ditches C4 & C15
- Fig. 6.12 Post-excavation shot of ditches C4 & C15, looking east-northeast
- Fig. 6.13 Post-excavation plan of Area 2
- Fig. 6.14 South-west facing baulk through Area 2
- Fig. 6.15 Southeast-facing section of posthole C119
- Fig. 6.16 Post-excavation shot of posthole C119, looking north
- Fig. 6.17 East-facing section of cremation pit C225 and profile of posthole C119
- Fig. 6.18 Post-excavation shot of cremation pit C225 and posthole C119, looking west
- Fig. 6.19 Mid-excavation shot of spread C108 being removed with features visible beneath the spread
- Fig. 6.20 Plan of Area 2 focussing on the features in the vicinity of spread C108
- Fig. 6.21 Mid-excavation shot of posthole C156, looking north
- Fig. 6.22 South-facing section of posthole C156
- Fig. 6.23 Plan of possible structure represented by stake-holes
- Fig. 6.24 West-facing section of well-pit C136
- Fig. 6.25 Mid-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking east
- Fig. 6.26 Mid-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking west
- Fig. 6.27 Post-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking west
- Fig. 6.28 Post-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking north
- Fig. 6.29 Post-excavation shot of well C163 and pathway to the south, west and north, looking south
- Fig. 6.30 Mid-excavation of northern extension of pathway (C404), looking southeast
- Fig. 6.31 Post-excavation shot of linear pit C134 to right and well-pit C136 to left, looking southwest
- Fig. 6.32 Post-excavation shot of posthole C140 at southwest end of linear pit C134, looking southeast
- Fig. 6.33 South-facing section of pit C160 with upright stone pillar
- Fig. 6.34 Mid-excavation shot of pit C160, looking north
- Fig. 6.35 Pre-excavation shot of spread C129, looking north
- Fig. 6.36 Post-excavation plan of Area 3
- Fig. 6.37 Post-excavation plan of the northern portion of Area 3
- Fig. 6.38 Mid-excavation shot of the pond C243 and ditch C203, looking west
- Fig. 6.39 South-facing section of gully C239, post-medieval ditch C241 and pond C243
- Fig. 6.40 Post-excavation shot of gully C239 with pond C243 to the east, looking north
- Fig. 6.41 Mid-excavation shot of ditch C203, looking southwest
- Fig. 6.42 Northwest-facing section of ditch C203, bank C244 and pond inlet C252
- Fig. 6.43 Post-excavation shot of the northwest-facing baulk of the site showing the northwest-facing section of ditch C203, bank C244 and pond inlet C252, looking southeast
- Fig. 6.44 Post-excavation shot of the rise in the base (C361) of ditch C203 at the northern end, looking north
- Fig. 6.45 Southeast-facing section of ditch C203 and overflow channel C265 showing the distance between the two features.
- Fig. 6.46 North-facing section of overflow channels C156 and C167
- Fig. 6.47 Mid-excavation shot of metalworking pit C201, looking south
- Fig. 6.48 North-facing section of metalworking pit C201
- Fig. 6.49 Post-excavation plan of the central portion of Area 3

- Fig. 6.50 East-facing section of kiln C218 and re-cut C232
- Fig. 6.51 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C218 and re-cut C232, looking west
- Fig. 6.52 Post-excavation shot of kiln C218, looking north
- Fig. 6.53 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C298, looking southwest
- Fig. 6.54 Post-excavation plan of the southern portion of Area 3
- Fig. 6.55 Mid-excavation shot of barrow C311, looking southwest
- Fig. 6.56 Southwest-facing section of barrow C311
- Fig. 6.57 Northeast-facing section of barrow C311
- Fig. 6.58 Mid-excavation plan of barrow C311
- Fig. 6.59 Post-excavation shot of barrow C311, looking southwest
- Fig. 6.60 Mid-excavation shot of cremation pit C226 showing location of Beaker pottery, looking south
- Fig. 6.61 Mid-excavation shot of central hearth C278 and stake-holes C280, C282 and C284 within structure C279, looking west
- Fig. 6.62 Mid-excavation plan of structure C279
- Fig. 6.63 Mid-excavation shot of structure C279, looking north
- Fig. 6.64 Mid-excavation shot of section of slot trench C279 of structure, looking southwest
- Fig. 6.65 Mid-excavation of posthole C358 within slot trench C279 of structure, looking west
- Fig. 6.66 Mid-excavation shot of southwest-facing section through plank C302 within slot trench C279 of structure, looking northeast
- Fig. 6.67 Beaker pottery retrieved from structure C279 (Find No. 14E339:309:1)
- Fig. 6.68 Mid-excavation shot of gully C304, looking northeast
- Fig. 6.69 Post-excavation shot of structure C279 and gully C304, looking north
- Fig. 6.70 Post-excavation shot of structure C279 and gully C304, looking south
- Fig. 6.71 Southwest-facing section of pit C274
- Fig. 6.72 Mid-excavation shot of pit C274, looking northeast
- Fig. 7.1 Post-excavation plan of Area 1
- Fig. 7.2 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C10, looking east
- Fig. 7.3 Mid-excavation shot of structure C2, looking north
- Fig. 7.4 Plan of Area 2 focussing on the features in the vicinity of spread C108
- Fig. 7.5 Post-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking north
- Fig. 7.6 Post-excavation shot of well C163 and pathway to the south, west and north, looking south
- Fig. 7.7 Location of the possible cremation pits (in blue) and the associated marker posts (in red). The pit with the upright stone marker is highlighted in green
- Fig. 7.8 Plan of possible structure represented by stake-holes
- Fig. 7.9 Post-excavation shot of linear pit C134 (to right), well-pit C136 (to left) and smaller linear pit C158 in foreground. The small pits and postholes to the south of the well-pit are also visible. Looking southwest
- Fig. 7.10 Post-excavation plan of Area 3 with highlighted phasing
- Fig. 7.11 Post-excavation shot of barrow C311, looking southwest
- Fig. 7.12 Post-excavation shot of structure C279, looking northeast
- Fig. 7.13 Post-excavation shot with barrow C311 in foreground and structure C279 in background, looking southwest

Section 1 Introduction

Report summary

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological excavation on a development site on the former Lansdowne/Old Wesley grounds, Kilgobbin, Co. Dublin. The excavated areas were identified during a programme of archaeological monitoring conducted just prior to the excavation, which was requested by the Grant of Planning Permission (D12/0206) condition No. 25 and was carried out on behalf of Castlethorn Construction. The areas recommended for archaeological monitoring were informed by a programme of archaeological test-trenching carried out in 2013. The ensuing archaeological monitoring identified three areas that required archaeological excavation, Area 1 to the southwest, Area 2 to the northwest and Area 3 to the northeast.

The excavation was carried out from the 16th October to the 28th December 2014. Area 1 comprised a compact zone of medieval activity, likely to relate to industrial processing associated with settlement around Kilgobbin church to the south. Area 2 was a concentration of prehistoric activity focused on a natural hollow, with two wells identified, one associated with a possible pathway, together with three possible



Fig. 1.1 Site Location



Fig. 1.2 Location of Areas 1-3

cremations and other features. Both prehistoric and medieval activity were identified in Area 3, including an unusual C-shaped structure, a barrow and a cremation pit relating to prehistoric activity and a number of medieval and post-medieval water management features.

Site Location

The site is on the former grounds of the Lansdowne/Old Wesley Rugby Club, Kilgobbin, Co. Dublin (NGR 31915-/22460) and covers an area of 4.2 hectares. It comprises a sub-rectangular area formed by the current clubhouse grounds and associated carpark and three contiguous rugby pitches (long axes oriented NNE-SSW), which are tiered down the slope from south to north. It also encompasses a further area to the north of the pitches within a field divided from the rugby grounds by a large

ditched hedgerow and field access lane. The proposed site area also includes two short lengths of access road at its northwestern and southwestern corners, which will facilitate access from the newly erected Belarmine housing estate immediately to the west and from the new east-west road to the north.



Fig. 1.3 Aerial photo of the site

The site is located in the foothills of the Dublin Mountains, which rise gently southwards and which are visible from the site. New residential estates, interspersed by fields of rough sloping pastureland, characterise the wider landscape, and are bounded to the south by the less populated slopes of Three Rock Mountain and of Newtown to the south. The site area is thus situated at the edge of the expanding Dublin suburban area, which is rapidly encroaching upon formerly undeveloped rural lands.

The site is bounded to the north by a new primary school, and to the west by open ground reserved for future development and by the eastern edge of the Belarmine estate. The southern boundary of the site is a mature hedgerow and modern wall that separates the rugby grounds from those of two separate private houses that occupy the sub-triangular area between Kilgobbin Lane and the rugby grounds. The eastern site boundary follows the course of the western edge of the access lane leading from the Kilgobbin Road to the rear of the Protected Structure known as ‘Kilgobbin

Castle’. This boundary passes the house, following the existing property boundary, and kinks abruptly northeastwards around the protected barn (listed in association with the house) before once again following the field boundary separating the site from the field in which the ruins of Kilgobbin towerhouse (RMP DU025-01701) stand.

Development and planning

The development comprises the demolition of an existing ruined shed (not protected or of archaeological interest) and the construction of a residential development (126 dwelling units) structured around short internal roads. It is intended that c. 1 ha of the northern portion of the site, which at present lies within an unused field (previously used as pastureland) will be reserved for use as a playing pitch and this area



Fig. 1.4 Proposed development plan

will be raised up above the current ground level. Access will be via Belarmine Way in the southwest and Belarmine Vale in the northwest. The eastern field boundary of the existing site will be retained (as per the recommendations of the 2006 archaeological assessment & planning conditions).

The development has been granted planning permission (D12/0206) subject to archaeological condition No. 25 for geophysical survey, archaeological testing and an archaeological impact assessment prior to any groundworks. The testing and assessment programmes recommended a further programme of archaeological monitoring and excavation detailed in this report.

A desktop archaeological assessment was completed for this site in July 2003 by Arch-Tech Ltd. This was revised in 2006 (Ní Cheallaigh, 30th Nov 2006 Arch-Tech F039). Two programmes of archaeological geophysics have been carried out on the site: one to the north and south of the site (in the vicinity of Recorded Monuments) in 2002 (John Nichols 02R079), and one in 2008 in the interior of the proposed development site (Margaret Gowan 08R030, report dated 30/06/2008). The geophysical surveys noted no archaeological material within the site area, and recommended a programme of archaeological monitoring.

A programme of archaeological monitoring took place for the Belarmine estate development immediately east of the site (and slightly within the site in one area). This found no archaeological material extending eastwards into the site.

In 2013 an extensive programme of archaeological test-trenching was carried out on the site by Antoine Giacometti of Archaeology Plan (Giacometti 2013). The test-trenching programme found a cluster of archaeological features in the northeast of the site, but otherwise noted that most of the site had been heavily scarped. This scarping during the 1974-5 creation of the three playing pitches, significantly reduces the archaeological potential of the site. The testing report made a total of five recommendations based on the findings of the programme, summarised as follows:

Archaeological Recommendations Summary

Green	No further work
Yellow	Archaeological Monitoring
Orange	Archaeological Monitoring
Red	Archaeological Excavation
Purple	Archaeological Monitoring

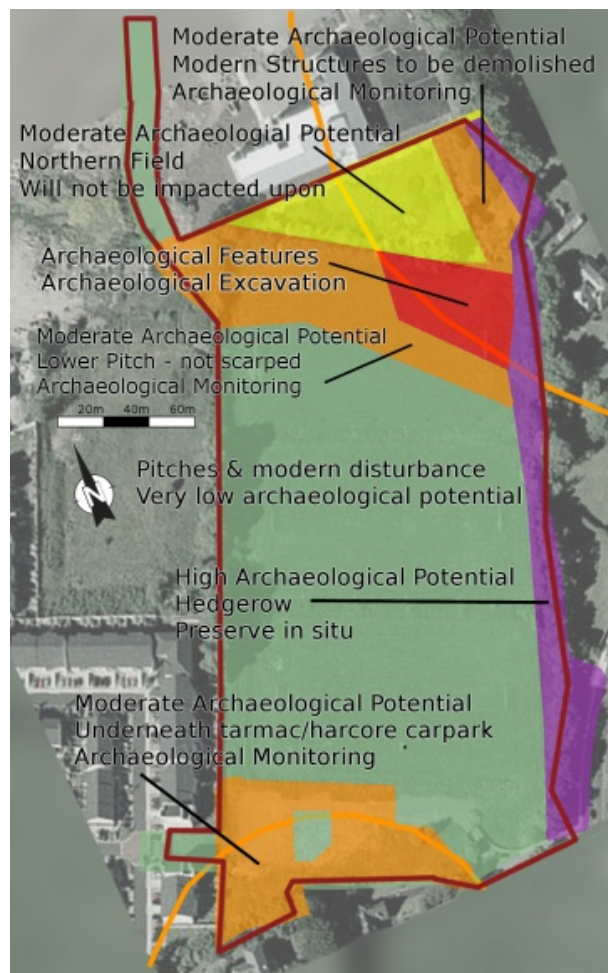


Fig. 1.5 Archaeological zones based on the results of the testing

Green zones

The areas shown in green correspond to areas of scarping and significant modern disturbance. In the central and southern playing pitch, this scarping removed the upper 1-2m of potential archaeological deposits. It is extremely unlikely that any archaeological material will survive in these areas.

Yellow zone

The northern field is shown in yellow. This is an area of moderate potential. However, the development proposals involve raising the ground up

to 110m OD, and the uppermost horizon of archaeological potential in this field is 108m-108.5m OD, thus burying any potential archaeological deposits by up to 1.5m of fill material. As a result there will be no archaeological impact so long as no sub-surface groundworks are undertaken prior to the raising of ground levels (for example, topsoil stripping or laying services).

Orange zone

Three areas of the site are shown in orange: (i) the southwestern corner, (ii) the northeastern half of the northern (lower) pitch, and (iii) the extant modern ruined buildings in the northern field. These areas have not been subject to the same level of scarping and disturbance as elsewhere on the site, and except for the latter their potential archaeological horizons are undisturbed. There are no known features of archaeological significance in these areas, and none was found during site inspection, geophysical survey or test-trenching. However, all three areas are located inside the archaeological constraint zones of Recorded Monuments, and should therefore be considered as areas of moderate potential archaeological impact.

Red zone

Two archaeological features (two undated pits, one containing iron-working waste) and one uncontexted find of medieval pottery were identified in a relatively small area in the northeastern part of the northern/lower field. These are the remains of probable early-medieval or later-medieval activity situated in the zone marked in red, and more archaeological features are very likely to survive within this zone. The development proposals impact heavily on this zone.

Purple zone

The field boundary at the east end of the site is of high archaeological potential, considering its likely antiquity, proximity to Protected Structures and Recorded Monuments, and importance in screening those historic buildings from the proposed modern development. This hedgerow/field boundary will be retained within the development so there should be no

archaeological impact, however any minor excavation groundworks in and around the hedgerow will have a high potential archaeological impact.

The archaeological monitoring and subsequent excavation carried out to date has completed the requirements for the main portion of the site. A further phase of archaeological monitoring is to be carried out at a later date during the excavation of a service trench in the northern field (yellow zone) and during the excavation of a number of storm drains into the eastern boundary of the site (purple zone). At present the farm building and farmyard to the east of the northern field is still extant. Archaeological monitoring will also be carried out when this is being removed (northeast orange zone iii).

Section 2 Archaeological Background

A complete archaeological background was included in the original desktop assessment (Ní Cheallaigh 2006) and the more recent testing report (Giacometti 2013) for the site. An updated version is included here for reference to give an overview of the receiving archaeological landscape of the current site.

Record of Monuments & Places

The Archaeological Constraint Maps, in conjunction with the County Record of Monuments and Places, provide an initial database for Planning Authorities, state Agencies and other bodies involved in environmental change. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) comprise the following elements: (i) Letter or Letters indicating County (ME = Dublin); (ii) A three digit number indicating the relevant Ordnance Survey 6" Sheet Number (e.g. 025); (iii) A three, four or five digit number indicating the dedicated number of the individual site or monument. The four closest monuments to the site are listed below.

The site as a whole occupies the entire diagonal approximately north-northeast/south-southwest area between the old church (RMP No. DU025-016) and the medieval castle and core of Kilgobbin (RMP No. DU025-017/DU026-121). Thus, the southwestern and the northeastern corners of the site lie within the constraint zones of both monuments. Any development within these areas will have a direct impact on the statutorily defined extent of those monuments. It should further be noted, that while no additional Recorded Monuments are located in the central portion of the site area, there is a moderate to high possibility that features associated with both monuments lie beyond the edges of the constraint circles within the boundaries of the site.

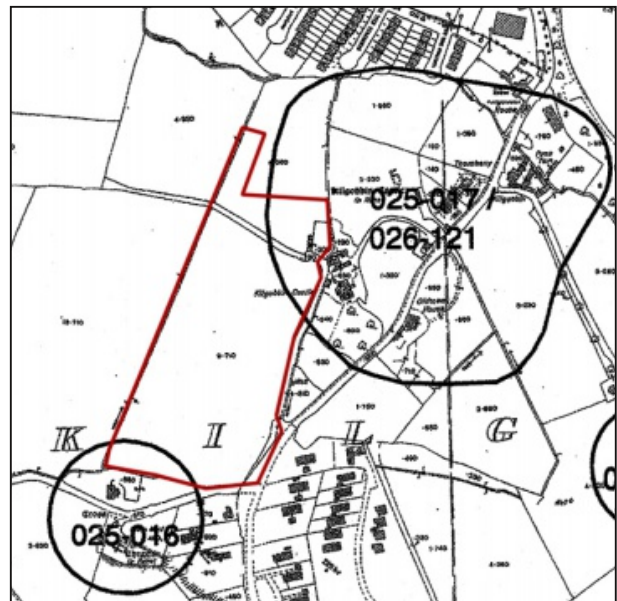


Fig. 2.1 RMP map close-up

As Kilgobbin sits at the junction of four of the Ordnance Survey Six Inch Sheets which determine the Recorded Monument number assigned to each identified monument, several of the monuments listed below have been given two Recorded Monument numbers. Where separate files under each number existed within the Record of Monuments and Places, both files were consulted, although the resulting information has been collated to provide coherent information on the single monument in question. It should also be noted that some of the Recorded Monument designations refer to monuments composed of a range of different elements, which have all been given separate numbers within the overall composite listing of the monument. In such cases, the overall number and designation has been indicated first, and all of the different elements comprising the monument have been separately listed.

List of RMP sites in the vicinity of the site

RMP Ref.	NGR Ref.	Location	Description	Distance
DU025-016--	31901/22436	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Ecclesiastical remains	0m
DU025-01601	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Church	0m
DU025-01602	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Graveyard	0m
DU025-01603	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Grave slab	0m
DU025-01604	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Grave slab	0m
DU025-01605	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Grave-slab fragment	0m
DU025-01606	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Quern stone frags .	0m
DU025-01607	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Cross fragment	0m
DU025-01608	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Inscribed stone	0m
DU025-01609	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Inscribed stone	0m
DU026-01610	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Architectural frags.	0m
DU025-01611	31901/22436	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Cross	0m
DU025-01612	31901/22434	Kilgobbin Graveyard	Bullaun Stone	0m
DU025-017- & 026-121	31933/22469	Kilgobbin	Settlement	0m
DU025-01701	31928/22474	Kilgobbin	Tower House	0m
DU025-01702	31929/22458	Kilgobbin	Inn	0m
DU026-017003	31934/22466	Kilgobbin	Cist	0m
DU026-12101	31939/22465	Kilgobbin	Settlement site	0m
DU026-12102	31945/22473	Kilgobbin	Linear earthwork	0m
DU026-161	31901/22490	Kilgobbin	Burnt mound	200m to NNW
DU026-123	31957/22442	Kilgobbin	Urn burial	340m to ESE
DU026-087	31973/22457	Kilgobbin	Linear earthwork	365m to E
DU022-069	31877/22505	Woodside	Tree ring	375m to NNW
DU026-156	31937/22389	Kilgobbin	Habitation site	500m to SE
DU026-128	31956/22383	Kilgobbin	Enclosure *redundant	625m to SSE
DU022-068 & 025-010	31827/22502	Woodside	Dwelling	800m to NW
DU023-025	31956/22556	Murphystown Road	Towerhouse	850m to NNE
DU026-003	31948/22352	Jamestown	Holy well	860m to SSE
DU026-004--	32009/22382	Kilgobbin	Ecclesiastical remains	1250m to SE
DU026-00401	32005/22381	Kilgobbin	Church site	1250m to SE
DU026-00402	32006/22380	Kilgobbin	Graveyard site	1250m to SE
DU026-00403	32012/22382	Kilgobbin	Holy well	1250m to SE
DU026-00404	32012/22382	Kilgobbin	Cross	1250m to SE

Ecclesiastical remains (RMP No. DU025-016-- & individual sites, Kilgobbin, within site area to the south)

This site comprises twelve separately listed artefacts and architectural remains which together are considered to form an ecclesiastical complex centring around the ruined church and graveyard in Kilgobbin. The southwestern corner of the site lies within the northern portion of the constraint area of this Recorded Monument.

The church (RMP No. DU025-01601), which lies at the heart of the site is situated on a low hill, which was previously interpreted as a man-made feature, but which has subsequently been determined to be a natural gravel ridge. Many of the individual artefacts and features that form part of the overall site listing (such as the grave-slabs, cross and bullauns stone) are considered to be characteristic of church sites founded in the early medieval period, and in the centuries following the advent of Christianity in the fifth century AD. However, the occurrence

of such a concentration of features at Kilgobbin indicates that the site was probably of more than ordinary significance. Its historical background is relatively well established and was summarised by F.E. Ball (1900, 190-91) and others throughout the nineteenth century. The historical background of the church is also described below (Historical Background section 4).

Despite the fact that Ball (1995, 191) dismissed the church ruins as possessing ‘no antiquarian interest’ due to the fact that they were all that survived of ‘a church erected in 1707’, it is likely that the fabric of the eighteenth century church incorporated at least some surviving features or fabric of a much earlier structure. The outer base of the east wall can be seen to be strongly battered and of somewhat exceptional thickness, indicating that it may date at the latest to the later medieval period and may equally represent twelfth century or earlier building phases.



Fig. 2.2 Recorded monuments overlaid on satellite image, from National Monuments Service, DAHG, www.archaeology.ie

Apart from the church ruin and its surrounding graveyard (RMP No. DU025-01602) the most important surviving element however is the high cross (RMP No. DU025-01611) and its base (RMP No. DU025-01612). The cross was described in 1914 as a 'plain wheel-cross of granite, with a figure of our Lord on each side of the head' and was stated to measure '8 feet in height, and 16 inches in thickness' (Anon 1914, 228). The cross has been badly defaced since then. It is missing one of its arms and has been severely weathered so that the decorative elements mentioned above may be discerned only with some difficulty. It is nevertheless one of the more elaborate and better preserved of such monuments in the south County Dublin landscape. O'Reilly (1901, 247) dated the cross to the tenth or twelfth centuries A.D. on the basis of certain details of the Crucifixion scenes depicted on the cross.

Although now forming a composite whole, the cross and its present base nevertheless must be considered as two distinct monuments, as it is unlikely that the present stone in which the cross is set is its original base. This stone is,

however, also a significant monument in its own right, identified as a bullaun stone (RMP No. DU025-01612) and dating perhaps from a period somewhat earlier than the cross itself. Bullaun stones generally occur as earthfast boulders, glacial erratics or rocky outcrops having one or more regular circular depressions set into their upper surfaces. These depressions generally measure up to 30cm in diameter and up to 15cm in depth. They are usually assumed to have functioned as 'grinding stones' in the manner of a pestle and mortar,

having had a large rounded boulder set into the depression to act as the pestle or pounding element. The vast majority of these objects are found in association with early ecclesiastical sites and have been objects of reverence and devotion since the early medieval period. Apart from this example and another comparable occurrence at Rathmichael such survivals in the Dublin area are quite rare and are therefore of major significance.

The architectural, and other worked stone fragments (RMP Nos. DU025-01606 to DU025-01610) as well as the graveslabs (RMP Nos. DU025-01603 and DU025-01604) and broken graveslab fragment (RMP No. DU025-01605) add to our awareness of the early medieval features of the site, such as the rotary quern fragments (RMP No. DU025-01606) indicating milling was taking place in the vicinity of the church. The two stones with incised decoration ((RMP Nos. DU025-01608 and DU025-01609) have been identified as Rathdown Slabs, Viking influenced grave markers dating from the eighth to tenth centuries AD, of which a concentration has been found at early church sites in southeast Dublin. They indicate not only the indigenous cultural context within which the site's inhabitants operated, but

also the multiple influences, including that of the Viking kingdom and hinterland of Dublin, which made up the early medieval world of what is now south Dublin. The fragments were originally recovered during maintenance and restoration work carried out at the church in 1983. They were subsequently affixed to the internal face of the south wall of the church (G. Stout, O.P.W. Field Report, 2-7-1994).

Settlement (RMP No. DU025-017--/DU026-121-- & individual sites; Kilgobbin; Within site area to the northeast)

As the dual numbering system of this settlement is somewhat unwieldy, for convenience, the sites listed separately as part of the settlement, namely a tower-house and an inn) are listed solely by their DU025-017-- number. It should be noted, however, that the separate RMP file concerning the settlement designated by the number DU026-121 does not contain any information regarding the settlement or associated linear earthwork (RMP No. DU026-121) which is not already contained within the DU025-017-- file. For ease of reference, the tower-house known as Kilgobbin Castle is referred to as RMP No. DU025-01701, while the inn is listed as RMP No. DU025-01702. A further account of the development of Kilgobbin is to be found in the historical background section of this report, see below.

The tower-house at Kilgobbin (RMP No. DU025-01701) is thought to have been constructed in the later fifteenth century by the Walsh family. It was apparently occupied during at least part of the eighteenth century, but was in ruins by the time it was visited in 1780 by the antiquarian Austin Cooper (Healy 1983, 1). Healy described the castle as 'a typical rectangular tower house with a stone vault over the ground floor and a winding stone stairs in a square projection at one corner' (ibid.). He also mentioned the evidence of a 'wide entrance gate-way' which 'led right through the northern end of the building, and probably gave access to an enclosed yard or garden'. The ruinous condition of the castle was commented upon in the Dublin Penny Journal in 1834 (Anon), and was in part the result of digging carried out by local people in quest of the legendary gold cache of the Gobán Saor, rather than seventeenth cen-

tury bombardment by Cromwellian troops.

The RMP file concerning this structure also contains an extract from O'Murchoe's *A History of Kiltarnan and Kilgobbin* (edited by J.B. Leslie, Dublin, 1934) which described the unearthing of 'a human skeleton enclosed in a mossy [?] subterranean dungeon formed of several large masses of stone on end and covered at top by another' (RMP No. 025-01703). This description, which might be interpreted as that of a prehistoric cist burial of possible Bronze Age date or earlier, was written by the Reverend George Goring Cuthbert in 1835, and concerned events which had taken place several years earlier. The location of this site was not, however, recorded by Cuthbert, who merely noted that it was unearthed in the immediate vicinity of Kilgobbin Castle. It is also uncertain whether the site was destroyed at the time of its discovery, or whether it was covered over once more.

The file referring to the Inn at Kilgobbin contains an extract from Goodbody's 1993 publication in which he identified RMP No. DU025-01702 as the White House Inn, which was thought to have been built in the 1690s. This structure is now in use as a private residence and is known as Oldtown House. The inn (in a similar fashion to 'The Step Inn', previously 'The Kilgobbin Inn' in the village of Stepside) would appear to have been situated to take advantage of passing trade generated by the main Dublin to Enniskerry road that travelled through Kilgobbin. The fact that Kilgobbin was also a Post Chaise stop in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was also likely to have contributed to the survival of the inn until that time. It would appear, however, that Mrs. Rose Field, who died in 1822 may have been the last innkeeper of the White House, as Stepside had by that date superseded Kilgobbin as the primary stopping point for coaches and travellers in the vicinity (Goodbody 1993, 75).

The linear earthwork (RMP No. DU026-12102) which is listed under the second of the two numbers applied to the overall settlement area of Kilgobbin refers to what is believed to be a section of the Pale ditch. The ditch, which represented fifteenth century crown-sponsored

attempts to define and protect the edge of the core lands of the Anglo-Irish administrative area extending from Dublin, was built in sections. It is not believed that the entire ditch circuit was ever completed, and its exact course is not fully known. Several sections of the ditch have, however, been identified and archaeologically tested, including a length of ditch which was identified some distance to the west of the study area within the Killcross housing development (RMP No. DU022-064). In the case of RMP No. DU026-12102, it is probable that the ditch followed or incorporated the course of the Ballyogan and Kilgobbin stream, which passes to the south of the present Sandyford View housing estate and originally passed to the north of the proposed development area through the fields that are now occupied by the Bellarmine housing estate.

Burnt mound (DU026-161, Kilgobbin; 200m NNW)

This was identified during archaeological investigations in advance of the Belarmine development and is recorded under the archaeological excavation section below (Excavation Licence No. 03E717, Excavations Ref. 2003:614).

Urn burial (RMP No. DU026-123, Kilgobbin; 340m to ESE)

This site is recorded as an urn burial by the Record of Monuments and Places and the relevant file contains reference to Samuel Lewis' Topographical Directory (1837, 99) which records the early nineteenth century recovery of an urn from 'the lawn of Kilgobbin Cottage'. Kilgobbin Cottage lies approximately 425m to the east of the southeastern corner of the proposed site. Lewis further noted that the urn was stated to have been placed in the museum of the Royal Irish Society. As many of the artefacts contained within that collection passed to the National Museum of Ireland after its foundation, it is possible that the urn fragments are currently stored within that museum. It does not appear, however, that the Food Vessel (NMI Reg. No. 1927: 45) and Encrusted Urn fragments (NMI Reg. No. 1927: 64) from Kilgobbin which form part of the present collections of the National Museum are identical to the vessels

recovered from the townland in the nineteenth century.

Possible linear earthwork (RMP No. DU026-087, Kilgobbin; 365m to E)

This earthwork, like RMP No. DU026-087 & DU026-12102, is thought to have formed part of the Pale ditch that was dug as part of medieval attempts to protect, define and fortify the lands of the Pale. Recent archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the Ballyogan tiphead to the south of Steppaside and in a portion of Jamestown have identified what are also probably sections of the feature.

Possible ringfort (RMP No. DU022-069, Woodside; 375m to NNW)

The file concerning this monument notes that it morphologically resembles a ringfort, in that it was identified as a circular embanked earthwork, with an external diameter of c. 29m. Its bank was stated to have tapered in width from 3.5m at its base to approximately 1.5m across its top, while it measured from 0.5m to 0.7m in height. Mature beech-trees stood along the course of its bank, while the internal area was overgrown with vegetation and brambles.

In 1998, three archaeological test trenches were excavated across this monument by M. Reid (Excavation Licence No. 98E0074; Excavations Ref. 1998:225). The absence of a clear entrance, the planting of ornamental (beech) trees, the lack of pre-seventeenth century finds and the very regular circular shape (evidenced by a Discovery Programme survey) all suggested that this monument may not be ringfort, but instead is likely to be a seventeenth century, or later, tree-ring. Goodbody (1993, 6-7) noted, however, that such a tree-ring would be an unusual feature within Woodside townland, as its lands do not appear to have ever formed part of a landscaped demesne. This view was shared by Patrick Healy in 1983 when he stated that 'the structure is obviously a ringfort of Iron Age or Early Christian date' (report held within the relevant Record of Monuments and Places file). It should be noted that these opinions predate Mr. Reid's archaeological test trenching, and are broadly contradicted by the results of the trenching programme.

Habitation site (DU026-156, Kilgobbin; 500m SE)

It would appear that this file also relates to an archaeological investigation turning up evidence of habitation, however, at present further information on this site is unavailable. It does not appear to relate to any of the excavations listed within Kilgobbin townland. It may refer to an excavation listed under Stepside village (Excavation Licence No. 97E0467, 1997:217), though the location for this is given as being further to the south on the south side of the Enniskerry Road. This could be an error on the part of the archaeology.ie website or the excavations.ie website. In this excavation evidence of settlement was based on a series of post-holes and wall slots. One of these charcoal samples (oak) produced a date of 3670 ± 50 BP, dating to the Bronze Age c. 1920 BC. Pottery, as well as struck and worked flints was found across the site. The flint assemblage was examined by Nyree Finlay of UCC, who concluded 'the chronological affinities of the assemblage are Neolithic-Bronze Age with a post-EBA date preferred for most of the material'. The pottery was identified as Leinster cooking ware, a 13th to early 14th century ware.

Enclosure (RMP No. DU026-128, Kilgobbin; 625m to SSE)

The file of the Record of Monuments and Places concerning this monument was not available for consultation. However, a note by G. Stout in the summary 'Entity Information Sheet' that has replaced the information contained within the original file contained the observation that the site 'was listed as an 'enclosure' in the 1998 RMP', although the site was not marked on the field map. It is possible that the site was identical to the site described by Healy (1975, n.p.) in his Second Report on Monuments and Sites of Archaeological interest in County Dublin and contained within one of his other files. This reference, although not comprising a full description of the site noted that it was identifiable as a 'ring feature' and stated that 'The site is now built on'. The file is now considered redundant.

Dwelling (RMP No. DU022-068/025-010, Woodside; 800m to NW)

Woodside House (RMP Nos. DU022-068 and DU025-010) is located on the western side of the Enniskerry Road. The rear portion of this house is likely to date from the 1690s, while the front facade was built in the 1890's. Woodside House can be seen on John Rocque's map of 1760 and is also listed as a Protected Structure in the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2010.

Towerhouse (RMP No. DU023-025, Murphystown Road; 850m to NNE)

Although little is known of the builders of this tower house or of the date of its construction, it is likely that it, like Kilgobbin Castle, was constructed in the fifteenth century. Although the structure is depicted on the Down Survey Map of the 1650s, it was not mentioned in the Civil Survey of 1654. By the later eighteenth century, when Gabriel Béranger depicted the towerhouse, it was already in a state of disrepair. Béranger's painting represents a valuable record of the towerhouse's original layout and of some of the techniques used in its construction, as his depiction includes details such as the barrel-vault that formed the first floor. This detail was frequently used in fifteenth century and later towerhouses and would confirm the probable later medieval date of the building (Ball 1995, 107; Goodbody, 1993, 23).

Holy well (RMP No. DU026-003, Jamestown; 860m to SSE)

The RMP file concerning this site contains extracts from several papers and learned articles which concerned the well, and Dublin holy wells in general. In one of these, it was noted that the cross associated with the well in Jamestown was considered by O'Reilly (1901, 252) to have formed part of a 'little group of Rathdown crosses'. In 1901, it was situated on what was considered to be an ancient road leading to a flattened piece of ground 'fronting a farm-house, to which access [could] be had by an avenue leading from the high road between Stepside and Golden Ball'. O'Reilly (ibid., 253) further noted that in 'the middle of this ancient roadway, [was] a rude crypt lined with undressed granite boulders an partially roofed by two small

undressed leacs' at the head of which stood 'an extremely curious cross'.

The cross marking the well was stated to have been four feet high and 'two feet high across the arms, which project only 4 or 4 ½ inches beyond a shaft that is 17 inches wide'. The cross may originally have been taller, as the weathered figure which was discernible on its southwestern face is represented in half- rather than full-length. The 'single-circle ornament' with which this cross was further decorated led the author to postulate some connection between the Jamestown cross and other example located at Kill-o'-the-Grange (ibid., 254). The compiler of the file containing information on this monument appears, however, to have equated the site with the well known as St. Patrick's well, also identified in Jamestown (see below).

Ecclesiastical remains (RMP No. DU026-004- & individual sites, Kilgobbin; 1,250m to SE)

This site, like that centred on Kilgobbin Church (RMP No. DU025-016--), is believed to represent the remains of an early medieval ecclesiastical site. While no visible traces of any church building survives (G. Stout, Field Report, 06/07/1994), human bones were recovered from a levelled but slightly raised platform that was consequently identified as the probable graveyard of the site. The early medieval date of the establishment and assertions of the existence of a church site in this area are primarily based on the existence of a holy well (RMP No. DU026-00403) and an unusual carved stone cross (RMP No. DU026-00404) which stand adjacent to an old laneway near the levelled area (C. Manning, Field Report, 30/07/1979). While the dedication of the well to St. James is unlikely to be of earlier medieval date, it has been suggested that it was originally dedicated to an older indigenous saint, whose patron day fell on the same date as one of the several St. James' (Typed extract from J. O'Reilly's 'Christian sepulchral leacs and free-standing crosses in the Dublin Half-barony of Rathdown', originally published in JRSAI 31 (1901), pp. 246-58).

The cross (RMP No. DU026-00404) is described as a low stunted, granite cross with

slightly projecting arms 1.22m in height and 0.61m in width, with a circular moulding in high relief on the northeast side and a Sheela-na-gig type figure on the opposing side (Caimin O'Brien and Geraldine Stout, 29/5/2012 on-line update). Various authors have argued whether the figure represents a sheela-na-gig type figure or an exhibitionist figure that has been mistakenly identified as a sheela-na-gig (Cherry 1992, 10; McMahon & Roberts 2001, 149; Freitag 2004, 142).

Topographical Files

Collectively known as the Topographical Files, these files form an important part of the archive material held within the National Museum of Ireland. As a body of information, they provide information on artefacts, their find spots, and any field monuments that have been reported to or investigated by officers of the National Museum.

The files contained information on several artefacts recovered from the townland of Kilgobbin. Information as to the exact find locations of these artefacts was not, in the case of most of these artefacts, recorded. Finds recovered from Kilgobbin included a small 'highly oxidised' iron tube of uncertain date and use (NMI Reg. No. 1972: 18) found on a river or stream bank, a stoneware sherd (NMI Reg. No. 1972: 17), fragments of Bellarmine jars and other post-medieval pottery sherds (NMI Reg. Nos. 1972: 16; 1972: 17 (A-L); 1972: 18 (A-F); 1971: 1126). Of these finds, a number (e.g. the sherds registered under NMI Reg. No. 1971: 1126) comprised material found on the surface of the field known as 'The Battlefield' near the castle in Kilgobbin, which local tradition identified as the site of a battle during the civil war of the 1640s. Also in Kilgobbin townland, a bronze ring (NMI Reg. No. 1971: 1050) composed of a loop of cast wire with an external diameter of 2.65cm was recovered as a surface find.

The archaeological wealth and the relative intensity of prehistoric activity in the wider area is further highlighted by the fact that a number of

finds of different dates were also recovered from the townlands bordering Kilgobbin on all sides. For example, in Jamestown townland to the south, a decorated Food Vessel (NMI Reg. No. 1927: 45) and sherds of an Encrusted Urn (NMI Reg. No. 1927: 64) were recovered. The exact provenance of these artefacts is unclear, although information contained within the Topographical Files records that fragments of calcinated bone and cinders were discovered within the Food Vessel. A number of finders were mentioned in the relevant files, and although the find location was uncertain, it was considered likely that the vessel and vessel fragments were recovered from Jamestown townland. This is marked on the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey map and is recorded as RMP No. DU026-015). Two further artefacts, a decorated stone (NMI Reg. No. 1968: 407) and a flint blade (NMI Reg. No. 1961: 142) of probable prehistoric date were recovered from Barnacullia townland on the hill slopes to the southwest, while a copper axehead (NMI Reg. No. 1928: 2) of probable Early Bronze Age manufacture was recovered from Newtown townland to the east. Further to the north in Murphystown, a polished stone axe (NMI Reg. No. 1979: 73) that indicated the probable presence of Neolithic inhabitants in the area, and another Early Bronze Age axehead (No NMI Reg. No. given) were recovered.

Archaeological investigations

Several licensed archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the vicinity of the proposed site, a more detailed account of the archaeological investigations within the bounds of the site itself is given in Section 5. References refer to the Excavations Bulletin published by Wordwell and edited by Isabelle Bennett, which lists all licensed excavations carried out since 1970, now also available at the dedicated website www.excavations.ie. For the purposes of this report summaries of the sites relevant to this excavation are included after the table.

Medieval and post-medieval to the north of Kilgobbin Castle (2002:605)

Archaeological investigations related to the opening of service trenches associated with a proposed residential development were opened in 2002 in a field to the north of Kilgobbin towerhouse (RMP No. DU025-01701). During these investigations a number of medieval and later features were identified, including post-medieval plough furrows, stone drains, drainage ditches and two partially dismantled post-medieval field boundaries. A fragment of granite quernstone was found among material from the dismantled stone boundary walls that had been used to block an entrance gap into the original field. A cobbled area was also identified on the southern side of one of these walls overlying a post-medieval ditch. Earlier activity, comprising two 'heavily truncated medieval pits' were uncovered within the southern limits of the excavated area, and were bounded on both east and west by substantial approximately north-south ditches of possible medieval date. The excavator further noted that the western of these two ditches ran 'adjacent to the present field boundary, which is a continuation of a beech-lined boundary to the west of Kilgobbin towerhouse. Finds recovered from these contexts included unburnt animal bone as well two small sherds of medieval pottery.

Bronze Age cremation burials at Belarmine (2002:606)

A 'small Bronze-Age cremation burial complex' was identified during archaeological monitoring of topsoil stripping in advance of the development of the extensive mixed residential 'Belarmine' estate immediately to the west of the proposed development area. The cremation complex was identified in 'an area reserved for residential buildings, bounded to the southwest and northwest by the townland boundary between Kilgobbin and Newtown Little'. The site lay on northeast-sloping ground overlooking Kilgobbin stream. Among the features identified, were two cremation burials, one of which included sherds of a largely intact pottery vessel of Middle to Late Bronze Age containing burnt bone and charcoal. A round flint scraper was identified within the centre of the single bone-rich fill of the second cremation burial, while the truncated remains of a small stake-

List of excavations undertaken in Kilgobbin townland

Excavations	Location	Excav Ref.	Licence No.	Director
Pale defences	East of site	2000:306	00E0247	T. Bolger
Pale defences	East of site	2000:306	00E0248	T. Bolger
Medieval and post-medieval North of	Kilgobbin Castle	2002:605	02E1173	I. Hagen
Bronze Age cremation burials	Belarmine, west of site	2002:606	02E1196	I. Hagen
Post-medieval activity	Belarmine, west of site	2002:607	02E1220	I. Hagen
Monitoring	Belarmine, west of site	2002:608	02E0906	I. Hagen
Bronze Age	Belarmine, west of site	2003:614	03E0717	A. Cryerhall
Medieval and post-medieval	North of Kilgobbin Castle	2003:615	02E1173	I. Hagen
Neolithic and Beaker habitation	Belarmine, west of site	2003:616	03E0306	I. Hagen
Monitoring	Belarmine, west of site	2003:617	02E0906	I. Hagen
Early Neolithic & medieval	Belarmine 7, west of site	2004:608	04E0566	E. Denehy
Early medieval at graveyard	Kilgobbin church, south of site	2004:644	04E0501	E. Larsson
Early medieval at graveyard	Kilgobbin church, south of site	2004:645	04E0777	E. Larsson
Early historic settlement	Kilgobbin church, south of site	2004:646	04E0981	E. Larsson
Environs of early ecclesiastical site	Kilgobbin church, south of site	2004:647	04E1373	T. Bolger
Medieval at Riverside Cottage	North of site	2005:527	05E0322	C. Moriarty
No archaeological significance	North of Kilgobbin Castle	2007:520	07E0413	T. Connell
Post-medieval field entrance	High-Level Water Scheme, east	2008:499	08E0427	T. Breen
No arch. Significance	Mountainview, Stepside, south	2009:359	09E0181	N. O'Flanagan
Geophysical Survey	Newtown Little, partially on site	n/a	02R079	J. Nicholls
Geophysical Survey	On site	n/a	08R030	B. Thébaudeau

hole were identified to the north. Other features identified at this time included a curving complex of small stake-holes. Further related stake-holes were found to the southwest of the main stake-hole complex, together with traces of a small pit.

Post-medieval activity at Belarmine (2002:607)

The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring of topsoil stripping carried out prior to the construction of a mixed residential development at a site 'bounded to the southwest and northwest by the townland boundary between Kilgobbin and Newtown Little'. During initial monitoring phases, two burnt spreads, two possible field boundaries and a system of four stone drains were identified. All of these features were thought to date to the post-medieval period, and may have been associated with land reclamation activities in the wider area between c. 1843 and 1875. It was also noted that no evidence of tillage was identified during the monitoring leading to the identification of these features, despite efforts which were made to clear the relevant fields of the large granite boulders which dotted them. The drains which cross the site were unaccompanied by any traces of associated field boundaries, leading the excavator to conclude that they had primarily been constructed for the removal of water from the field, rather than to demarcate particular areas.

Monitoring at Belarmine (2002:608)

In 2002 archaeological monitoring was carried out at a site bounded by the 'Enniskerry Road to the southwest, by Kilgobbin Lane and Lansdowne/Old Wesley Rugby Club to the south and southeast, and by Kilgobbin stream and Sandyford housing estate to the north'. The site, which was being stripped of its topsoil in advance of residential development, was previously in use as pasturage. Its area incorporated part of the constraint zone defining the extent of Kilgobbin settlement (RMP No. DU025-017/026-12101), and cartographic analysis indicated that 'a large tract of land was reclaimed along the central and western parts of the site' between 1843 and 1875. Some field boundaries were also removed during this period of land reclamation.

Three areas of archaeological interest were identified during the topsoil stripping, which were excavated under separate licences (2002:606 & 607 above). The excavator noted that the lands of the site lay on the southern slopes of Three Rock Mountain, and slope gently towards Kilgobbin stream. The field boundaries within and around the site contained 'both earth and stone, and there [was] evidence of stone facing, particularly along the townland boundary between Newtown Little and Kilgobbin'. Where breached, boundary banks were found to have been composed of 'redeposited, yellow/brown, dry, compact, sandy clay'. Evid-

ence of probable later 18th- to earlier 19th-century agricultural activity was found in the form of plough furrows with associated small finds. Earlier finds included a small amount of medieval pottery including 'Leinster-type cooking ware, Dublin-type ware and local ware'. However, most of the pottery assemblage recovered was of post-medieval date and included 'stone-ware, creamware, pearlware, black-glazed red earthenware, china and shell-edged ware'.

Activities during the post-medieval period also involved the construction of many 'cobble and French drains, some of which were still active'. The choice of drain type and construction reflected environmental conditions within different areas of the site, and differences in the purpose and builders of these features. Thus, the French drains along the Enniskerry road were 'considerably deeper' than drains elsewhere, while cobble drains, comprising trenches filled with tightly-packed granite stones and small boulders ran along the stream and townland boundaries. More recent agricultural activity was also identified within the site area, in the form of two areas of disturbance associated with 'farm access to the fields'. The disturbance took the form of dumped building material with an approximate depth of 0.4m to 0.45m deep, consisting of 'brick, mortar, tiles and wooden planks'.

Bronze Age at Belarmine (2003:614)

A burnt mound, which lay on a localised high point within marshy ground adjacent to the southern bank of Kilgobbin stream on the lower slopes of Three Rock Mountain was archaeologically investigated in 2003. The excavator noted that 'The site was part of a larger archaeological landscape that included Neolithic and Bronze Age structures, cremation burials and other features excavated by Ines Hagen' (see above). The burnt mound was identifiable as a horse-shoe-shaped spread of burnt granite and charcoal, and was associated with a 'sub-rectangular (1.1m by 0.8m) shallow cut or depression 50mm in depth which lay to the north of the spread. Two further features were identified at a distance of approximately 8m to the south of the spread, and comprised a fire bowl and hearth. A structure of post- and stake-holes that was associated with the hearth

was interpreted by the excavator as the possible remains of a wind-break or shelter. To the south of the burnt mound, a 'disturbed pit containing pottery fragments' was uncovered, and pending specialist analysis, preliminary study of these sherds suggested a date in the early to mid-Bronze Age. An oval-shaped structure with outer stake-holes surrounding a central post was found beside the pit and measured 1.5m by 0.8m.

The probable Bronze Age features also showed evidence of post-medieval and modern disturbance by ploughing and by drain-digging. The excavator further noted that the site should be 'viewed in the context of the wider Neolithic and Bronze Age landscape of this area'.

Medieval and post-medieval to the north of Kilgobbin Castle (2003:615)

This investigation was a continuation of investigative programmes centring on a medieval ditch that was 'revealed running alongside the eastern side' of an existing field boundary. This boundary was a continuation of the beech-lined boundary to the west of Kilgobbin Castle, and partly defined a field which lay immediately to the north of the towerhouse, and which lay within the constraint area associated with the monument (RMP No. DU025-017--/026-12101). The cleaning of a section of the north-facing baulk had revealed the partial remains of a human burial, although only the feet bones were recovered as the remainder of the skeleton lay outside the area of excavation. The body may have been placed in or in association with a further ditch which cut into the medieval ditch, and from which medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered. It is thought that the medieval ditch, which had gradually silted over time, and which had 'steeply sloping west sides, gently sloping east sides and a flat bottom' may have been associated with medieval settlement of Kilgobbin, and with the towerhouse to the south.

Neolithic and Beaker habitation at Belarmine (2003:616)

This programme of multiple archaeological investigations arose from initial monitoring of the large parcel of lands immediately to the west of

the proposed Lansdowne/Old Wesley rugby grounds. (2002:605 & 2003:617). They included the identification of a core settlement area of Neolithic to Bronze Age date, together with a range of medieval and post-medieval features in other areas.

Area 0 was 'located c. 100m north-west of Kilgobbin Church', and contained 'a keyhole-shaped corn-drying kiln of possible early medieval date'. It was orientated east-west and measured 1.6m by 0.9m and was 0.3m in depth. It was described as consisting of 'a sub-circular fire bowl, joined by a subrectangular drying chamber to the west'.

Area 1 was 'situated halfway between Enniskerry Road and Kilgobbin Stream at a distance of 75m south of Area 6'. Features identified within this area included an Early Bronze Age flat axe-fragment and cremation burial, a small medieval truncated pit which 'yielded Leinster Cooking ware', a medieval kiln, and 'a complex of ditches, pits and furrows [that] bear witness to the agricultural activities carried out in the area'. The kiln was 3.5m by 1.5m in size and 0.22m in depth, consisting of a fire bowl with an elongated flue on its upslope side. Surrounding the flue a series of stake-holes suggested that there may originally have been a timber superstructure over the fire bowl.

Area 2, which lay c. 40m to the north-west of Area 1, and straddled an east-west oriented field boundary contained fewer features. These, however, included three small pits, and a shallow curvilinear ditch which drained into the existing field boundary. Each of the pits contained small amounts of burnt bone, which were undergoing analysis at the time the bulletin was written.

Area 3 lay c. 30m to the south of Area 6, and contained a small pit that had been severely disturbed by a post-medieval furrow, but from which a sherd of Beaker pottery was recovered.

Area 4 also lay close to Area 6 and was thought to relate to activities carried out in that location. The primary features of archaeological interest within Area 4 were three small pits which 'possibly functioned as refuse pits associated with the nearby settlement [Area 6]'. None of the

fills of these pits contained any finds.

Area 5 contained two pits of Bronze Age date, from the larger of which a single sherd of Beaker pottery, a flint flake and a small barbed-and-tanged arrowhead were recovered. The second, sub-circular pit, although smaller was considerably deeper than the first pit, and yielded further finds of Bronze Age date.

Area 6 'represented the largest area investigated and contained the main concentration of pre-historic activity'. It measured 90m east-west by 60m 'and was located 60m south of Kilgobbin Stream on relatively flat ground'. It comprised three main structures, which were interpreted as the remains of a rectangular Neolithic house, and of two Bronze Age structures. The walls of the Neolithic house had been constructed of posts and planks, although no internal floor surfaces had survived subsequent post-medieval plough-related disturbance. Traces of a possible central hearth were, however, identified, as were a stony surface, several posts and a possible fence which lay close to the house. In addition to plough-damage, the house had been further disturbed by a large open drain which cut through its southeastern corner. Finds associated with this Neolithic phase of activity included sherds of pottery and worked flint including a leaf-shaped arrowhead. Further approximately coeval pits and features were also identified throughout the wider area.

The first of the two Bronze Age structures was identifiable as an approximate circle of postholes enclosing a space with a diameter of c. 3m. No artefacts were recovered from this structure, but it is thought to have been associated with the second and larger Bronze Age structure to the southeast and with a refuse pit to the northeast. A series of additional postholes and pits, including a cremation burial, were found near it. This larger structure was also circular in plan, but had a diameter of approximately 10m. It was defined by a foundation trench in which several load-bearing posts appear to have been set, and from which several abraded sherds of Beaker pottery were recovered. The excavator noted that 'A multitude of stake-holes and pits were present inside the structure, but neither a hearth nor an original floor survived'. In addition to these two

structures, two charcoal-rich spreads were recorded extending over an area of approximately 4.2m by 1.1m to 2.2m yielded a very large number of finds. The 1,400 artefacts recovered from these spreads and from the irregular pit which they covered represented over half of the entire find assemblage recovered from the site. Many of the deposited layers comprising the spread yield material consistent with later Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Beaker contexts. The small number of stake-holes which were found in the vicinity of the spreads were interpreted as the possible remains of a further associated timber superstructure. An additional spread of material containing Beaker pottery was noted, extending over the area for 27m, was interpreted as an old ground surface. It was found to partially lie within the interior of the larger house.

Area 7 was located approximately 60m to the southeast of Area 6, and consisted of 'a pit filled with charcoal-rich soil and burnt stone' which may have been associated with Bronze Age activity in the vicinity of Kilgobbin stream.

Early Neolithic and medieval at Belarmine (2004:608)

Excavations at 'Block 7' in the Belarmine development in Kilgobbin townland comprised the excavation of 25 features concentrating towards the western end of the site. Only one definitively prehistoric feature has been identified, a small sub-circular pit containing three sherds of late Bronze Age, coarse, flat-bottomed domestic pottery. The remaining features on site were predominantly early and mid-medieval in date, consisting of a keyhole-shaped kiln and a variety of pits used for smelting, cooking and the deposition of rubbish. The latter pit contained quantities of Leinster cooking ware and Dublin-type ware. The northern limits of the site were defined by two parallel shallow ditches which were accompanied by a parallel bank that was used to deliberately backfill the features on cessation of use. As with the pits, the fills of the ditch predominantly contained Leinster cooking ware and Dublin-type coarseware, indicating a time frame of use from the late 12th to mid-14th century. Both ditches also contained sherds of Early Neolithic carinated bowls, representing the remains of at least three vessels from 4000-

3600 BC. The sherds were fragmentary and abraded and although in a 'secondary position it probably represents outlying activity within the wider domestic landscape of Kilgobbin' (Grogan, 2004).

Monitoring at Belarmine (2003:617)

This investigation represented a continuation of archaeological activities at the extensive area of proposed residential development lying between the Enniskerry road and Kilgobbin Stream to the west of the Lansdowne/Old Wesley rugby ground. In 2003, topsoil removal and associated monitoring activities were 'concentrated on the central section of the development site'. Among the features identified at this time, was the Bronze Age burnt mound excavated by A. Cryerhall and described above. A number of post-medieval features related to land-reclamation and agricultural activities were also identified during this phase of stripping, including land drains, field boundary ditches, furrows and a spread of charcoal. Hagen further noted that 'A small number of post-medieval finds were retrieved, as well as two sherds of medieval pottery and three pieces of flint'.

Early medieval remains at Kilgobbin Lane South (2004:644)

Test-trenching for a residential development at Kilgobbin Lane/Enniskerry Road, Stepside in 2004 identified numerous archaeological remains. The site was subsequently monitored (see 2004:645 below).

Early medieval remains at Kilgobbin Lane South (2004:645)

Monitoring was undertaken at the site of a residential development at Kilgobbin Lane/Enniskerry Road, Kilgobbin in 2004. The site consisted of two fields situated directly to the west and south of Kilgobbin church (RMP No. DU025-01601) and associated ecclesiastical remains (RMP No. DU025-016--). The northern edge of this site thus lay some 45m to 100m to the north of the southern boundary of the Lansdowne/Old Wesley grounds. Fourteen areas of archaeological potential were identified during monitoring, including the two concentric ditches of the enclosure that surrounded the early medieval ecclesiastical associated with Kil-

gobbin church. A wide range of pits, probable keyhole shaped kilns, areas of burning and the foundation gully of a probable structure were identified within the enclosure. These features were investigated under licence by Teresa Bolger (04E1373).

Early historic settlement/fulacht fiadh at Kilgobbin Lane South (2004:646)

An excavation of nine areas of archaeological interest was undertaken as a result of a testing and monitoring programme (No. 644 & 645 above) at the site of a residential development at Kilgobbin Lane/Enniskerry Road, Kilgobbin, Stepside, Co. Dublin, in 2004. The sites were in two fields directly to the west and south of the Early Christian church of Kilgobbin and a re-positioned high cross. During monitoring, fourteen areas of archaeological significance were identified dispersed throughout the development, with a high concentration in the immediate vicinity of the church.

These yielded evidence of later prehistoric to early historic activities, including a portion of a fulacht fiadh, pits, postholes and ditches. Evidence for metal-working and a possible kiln were identified to the south of the church. Larsson also noted that the majority of the archaeological features were located in the northern part of the field and may indicate a secular addition to the adjacent Kilgobbin Church. A range of surface and other finds recovered during the monitoring programme supported indications that the site area had been used for early medieval/early historic habitation-relation activities. These included a large number of sherds from unglazed, local cooking ware and glazed medieval pottery as well as several pieces of flint, two possible iron knives, slag, a rotary quern and a rubbing stone.

Environs of early ecclesiastical site at Kilgobbin Lane South (2004:647)

Excavation was carried out in six areas that had been identified by a programme of monitoring undertaken by Ellinor Larsson (2004:644 above). The majority of the areas investigated during this phase of work appear to relate to the church site and to date to the 5th-12th centuries AD, and comprised a complex and dense

concentration of archaeological features and deposits, the most significant of which were a pair of curvilinear ditches, indicating the remains of successive circular or sub-circular enclosures. The most important parts of the site were preserved *in situ*. The excavator concluded (pers. comm. 2010) that the remains represented a c. 30m diameter ringfort replaced by an 8th or 9th century ecclesiastical enclosure. Metallurgical waste from the ecclesiastical site was identified, including numerous 7th to 10th century AD flat-bottomed ceramic crucibles in the area to the west of the church. A small industrial area was noted to the southwest with two kilns identified in that area.

Medieval remains at Riverside Cottage, Kilgobbin Road (2005:527)

An assessment was carried out at the site of a residential scheme within the constraint area of the settlement of Kilgobbin. Previous investigations carried out on the site included a geophysical survey (02R079), monitoring (2002:608) and an excavation (2002:605). Seven test-trenches were mechanically excavated across the footprint of the proposed development to a depth of 0.4–0.5m. These revealed 32 features of archaeological potential, the majority of which appeared to be the remains of linear cuts, probably representing ditches and drains. Though the dates for a number of the features identified remains uncertain, at least five appeared to be ditches dating to the medieval period. The area to the south of this site (that is – the area near the Landsdowne/ Old Wesley grounds and inside the constraint circle of Kilgobbin Settlement) did not reveal any archaeological remains.

Medieval pits and post-medieval drainage at Landsdowne/ Old Wesley rugby grounds (2013:046)

A programme of test-trenching was undertaken in 2013 on the current site, Landsdowne/ Old Wesley grounds, Kilgobbin. A feature identified during the earlier geophysical surveying was tested and turned out to be a late 18th century or 19th century field drain. The testing programme found archaeological features in the northeast of the site, just within the constraint circle of DU025-017 (Kilgobbin settlement).

These consisted of two pits containing charcoal and stones, one of which also contained iron-working remains, and a stray find of medieval pottery (Leinster Cooking Ware, 12th-14th century AD). Elsewhere the site was found to be extensively scarped during the construction of the rugby pitches in 1974-5.

Excavations in the wider vicinity

For the purposes of this report the archaeological excavations that have taken place in the townlands surrounding Kilgobbin are listed below. Where these are relevant to the archaeological discoveries of this excavation a short description of the findings is included after the table.

Jamestown townland

A number of archaeological investigations have

taken place in Jamestown townland to the east and southeast of Kilgobbin townland. Archaeological test-trenching was undertaken by Martin Reid at two locations in advance of the development of private housing and a proposed sewer outfall to service the housing (Excavation Licence No. 97E0467, 1997:080). One of these was a circular earthwork c. 23m in diameter near Stepside village. This site revealed a ditch and post-holes, with cultivation damage to the features. Finds included a flint scraper, fragments of coarse pottery and a fragment of a bronze blade. Most were found in disturbed contexts. This was subsequently excavated under the same licence (Excavation Licence No. 97E0467, 1998:217). Evidence of settlement was based on a series of post-holes and wall slots. One of these charcoal samples (oak) produced a date of 3670 ± 50 BP. Settlement was also represented by pottery, as well as struck and worked flints, which were found across the site. The flint assemblage was examined by Nyree Finlay of UCC, who concluded 'the chronological affinit-

List of excavations undertaken in the wider area

Excavations	Location	Excav Ref.	Licence No.	Director
Site of house, no archaeology	Ballyogan	1996:065	96E0265	T.C. Breen
Bronze Age /medieval	Ballyogan and Stepside	1997:080	97E0467	M. Reid
Pits, fulachta fiadh and Pale Ditch	Carrickmines and Jamestown	1998:126	98E0119	N. Brady
Pale Ditch	Ballyogan Road, Jamestown	1998:203	98E0119	L. Dunne
Pale Ditch	Ballyogan Road, Jamestown	1998:204	98E0119	M. Reid
Bronze Age/Medieval	Stepaside	1998:217	97E0467	M. Reid
Tree ring, possible ringfort	Woodside	1998:225	98E0074	M. Reid
Pale ditch	Jamestown	1999:249	99E0456	N. Brady
Post-medieval ridge and furrow	Site 6, Murphystown	2000:330	00E0099	S. Desmond
Pale ditch	Ballyogan Recycling, Jamestown	2001:434	01E0413	E. O'Carroll
Possible fulacht fiadh	Site 70, Ballyogan	2002:466	02E0481	T. C. Breen
Possible fulacht fiadh?	Site 80, Ballyogan	2002:467	02E1276	G. Conboy
Pale ditch	Ballyogan Rd., Jamestown	2002:601	01E0423	J. O'Connor
Drain	Ballyogan Rd., Jamestown	2002:602	02E0535	J. Ó Néill
Cemetery, fulacht fiadh, hearths etc.	Murphystown, Site 6	2002:631	02E0153	T.C. Breen
Fulacht fiadh	Murphystown, Site 73	2002:632	02E0699	T.C. Breen
Post-medieval charcoal spreads	Newtown Little	2002:638	02E1104	I. Hagen
No archaeological significance	Woodside	2002:681	02E1285	S. McCabe
Monitoring	Woodside	2002:697	02E1285	S. McCabe
Bronze Age hut, C18th structure etc.	Woodside	2002:698	02E1584	S. McCabe
Undated pit	Site 81, Murphystown	2003:647	03E1082	G. Conboy
No archaeological significance	Woodside	2003:680	02E1285	S. McCabe
Monitoring	Woodside	2003:681	02E1285 ext.	S. McCabe
Ring-ditch	Woodside	2003:682	03E0533	A. Wallace
Possible Pale ditch	Woodside	2003:683	03E0788	A. Wallace
No archaeological significance	Testing Site 18, Murphystown	2005:511	05E0069	L. Clarke
Prehistoric and medieval activity	Newtown Little	2005:513	05E0333	K. Ward
Neolithic settlement	Newtown Little	2005:514	05E0665	S. Phelan
No archaeological significance	Ballyogan Road/ The Gallops	2005:526	05E1310	N. O'Flanagan
No archaeological significance	Ballyogan	2006:565	06E0213	A. Johnston
No archaeological significance	Woodside	2006:680	02E1285	S. McCabe
Linear feature, pits	Woodside Road, Sandyford	2006:697	06E0528	F. Wilkinson
Burnt pits/ hearths	Sandyford High-level Water Scheme	2008:499	08E0427	T. C. Breen
Prehistoric settlement	Jamestown	2011:216	11E0085	J. Kyle

ies of the assemblage are Neolithic-Bronze Age with a post-EBA date preferred for most of the material'. The pottery was identified as Leinster cooking ware, a 13th to early 14th century ware. Later construction of field boundaries, agricultural cultivation and quarrying was also identified.

An archaeological excavation was carried out at Jamestown on a site immediately to the southwest of cist burial DU026-015, discovered in 1926 (Excavation Licence No. 11E0085; 2011:216). The excavation was divided over three areas, with Area A revealing a number of archaeological deposits, large pits, post-holes and stake-holes. Two Late Bronze Age dates were retrieved from this area, as well as pottery ranging from the Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age and Beaker period. In Area B a ring-ditch and a number of pits, hearths and post-holes were identified. Iron Age dates were returned from samples from the ring-ditch and a hearth. Cremated bone was retrieved from the base of the ring-ditch as well as a fragment from a Late Bronze Age/ Iron Age copper-alloy ring. In Area C two pits, a hearth and a number of post-holes were excavated with one of the post-holes at being dated to the Iron Age.

Jamestown and Carrickmines townlands

At the eastern end of Jamestown townland and extending into Carrickmines townland, archaeological monitoring and excavation was carried out in advance of the development of a sewage outfall at the Ballyogan tiphead, Co. Dublin (Excavation Licence No. 98E0119, 1998:126). Two sites were identified and subsequently excavated during this phase. The first consisted of two small pits, one associated with burnt bone located in Carrickmines townland. The second was a fulacht fiadh located in Jamestown townland. A sample of timber from the fulacht fiadh returned a dendrochronological date of 2852 BC±9.

Newtown Little townland

Newtown Little townland lies directly to the west of Kilgobbin townland. Monitoring of topsoil-stripping at Newtown Little in advance of a residential development uncovered seven areas of archaeological activity (Excavation Li-

cence No. 05E0333, 2005:513). The excavations uncovered two small structures. The first was indicated by a series of post-holes forming the outline of a roughly rectangular area 2.7 x 1.9m in size. The second structure consisted of the faint trace of an arcing semi-circular slot-trench with a stone hearth measuring up to 3m in diameter. This may have been a shelter or hut site, which was probably only used for a short time. This is supported by the minimal amount of burning that had occurred around the stone hearth as well as the footprint of the structure, which suggests a very flimsy construction. Ceramics retrieved from both structures initially suggested a Beaker date. However, radiocarbon dates indicated that both structures belonged to the Early Bronze Age, with the rectangular structure being slightly earlier. Up to 600 sherds of Beaker pottery were recovered from deposits further to the west.

On a natural platform further upslope, a burial pit was found containing the base of a vase food vessel and a complete accessory vessel or pygmy cup. Although it was a burial context, no bone was found. A second burial pit was also uncovered, which contained cremated bone and sherds of Late Bronze Age pottery. A number of other post-holes and pits were found to contain Late Bronze Age pottery, although no definite evidence for Late Bronze Age structures was found.

A number of medieval deposits were found on the site, which contained a large quantity of medieval pottery as well as a whetstone, a spindle whorl and a knife. Three pits containing medieval pottery and iron slag were uncovered nearby.

Archaeological excavation was undertaken of a Neolithic settlement site, which revealed sherds of early Neolithic pottery and flint artefacts (Excavation Licence No. 05E0665, 2005:514). The site consisted of a large probable Early Neolithic pit containing pottery and flint debitage, and seven pits of Middle Neolithic date with artefacts included a large highly decorative rim-sherd of impressed ware Middle Neolithic pottery and 25 flint artefacts, including a re-touched flint flake and a hammerstone. Although there is no definite structural pattern, all evidence so far points to a domestic site

spanning across the Early-Middle Neolithic period.

Ballyogan townland

Ballyogan townland lies to the northeast of the site. Archaeological investigations at Site 70, Ballyogan identified a group of five patches of black to dark brown soil during topsoil-stripping on the line of the South-Eastern Motorway (Excavation Licence No. 02E0481, 2002:466). Two of these may represent waste material from a destroyed fulacht fiadh.

At Site 80 of the same scheme, also in Ballyogan another possible fulacht fiadh was identified, though it had been badly damaged by drainage works and had suffered severe tree-root damage (Excavation Licence No. 02E1276, 2002:467). A number of possible features were identified but were found to be very damaged. The fill of these features consisted mainly of burnt stone and charcoal-rich soil. The shape of one feature suggested that it may have been a trough.

Woodside townland

Woodside townland lies to the northwest of Kilgobbin townland. Archaeological test-trenching was carried out by Martin Reid at a site in Woodside previously topographically surveyed by Barry Masterson and Paul Sinnott of the Discovery Programme (Excavation Licence No. 98E0074, 1998:225). Originally the site was believed to be a ringfort with an internal diameter of 24m, however the results of the testing suggest that it is a 17th-18th century tree-ring.

A programme of archaeological excavation was undertaken in Woodside by Susan McCabe (Excavation Licence No. 02E1584, 2002:698) on a site identified during earlier monitoring works (Excavation Licence No. 02E1285, 2002:697). Three discrete areas of archaeological activity were identified. Area A consisted of an isolated metal-working pit. A possible late-medieval copper-alloy cap of a weaving bobbin or button was found within the pit. Area B consisted of a sub-oval hut structure 5 x 4m internally supported by internal and external posts with a south-facing entrance. An additional external post may have supported a small external porch

or annexe. A large granite slab, suggested as a work surface was found within the hut. No datable artefacts were retrieved but based on comparative typology the hut may date to the Bronze Age. In Area C, several features were exposed, including an 18th century stone structure, two linear features, several areas of burning, pits, ditches and a possible relict field boundary. The nature and extent of the features in this area was ascertained and they were preserved *in situ*.

Further testing was undertaken in 'Area 3' of the development at Woodside the following year (Excavation Licence No. 02E1285, 2003:680). Nothing of archaeological significance was noted. Further monitoring in 'Area 6' (Excavation Licence No. 02E1285 ext., 2003:681) was undertaken, which noted the presence of a possible fulacht fiadh, though this feature was preserved *in situ*.

Excavation of a small penannular ring-ditch and associated pits and gullies was also undertaken in Woodside in 2003 (Excavation Licence No. 03E0553, 2003:682). The ring-ditch had an internal diameter of 4m, with an external diameter of 5.3m and was 0.26-0.42m in depth. A small shallow cremation pit was evident towards the south of the interior of the ring-ditch. Approximately 28m east of the ring ditch two additional cremation pits were uncovered. A further two pits were identified nearby, with evidence for *in situ* burning, however they appeared to have been cut from a higher level and may be of later date.

Murphystown townland

Murphystown lies to the north of Kilgobbin townland. Archaeological investigations were carried out at Murphystown Site 6, extending into the townlands of Carmenhall, and Leopardstown in 2002 (Excavation Licence No. 02E0153, 2002:0631). The site was discovered during pre-development topsoil-stripping. Fourteen potential features were discovered. One of these sites was an inhumation cemetery where seven wholly or partly intact skeletons were found, along with thirteen isolated bones or groups of bone. The burials were extended inhumations without grave-goods, oriented east-west, with the heads toward the west. One,

however, was oriented north-east/south-west. Added to this were three sites exhibiting fulacht fiadh-related activity and three isolated pits containing burnt clay, charcoal and fragments of burnt animal bone, one of which contained an incomplete human skeleton. Also uncovered where a figure-of-eight kiln containing some fragments of burnt animal bone and a number of patches of charcoal-rich material of uncertain date.

Archaeological excavation at Site 73M, Murphystown was undertaken (Excavation Licence No. 02E0699, 2002:632) when a spread of black to dark brown soil with traces of charcoal and decayed stone was identified near where a fulacht fiadh had previously been excavated (Site 53M). The deposit was discontinuously spread over an area, had been cut through by a number of recent drains and had been further disturbed by the erection of an electricity pole. One oval pit and a second possible pit was identified, mostly filled with similar burnt material. Peat had grown on the surface of this pit and the surrounding area. Four pieces of flint were found, three of which had been worked.

Archaeological monitoring at Site 81, Murphystown (Excavation Licence No. 03E1082, 2003:647) uncovered a large undated pit, possibly a charcoal-making pit. The pit was isolated with no other features identified nearby.

Excavations were undertaken in advance of the proposed LUAS B1 line, an extension of the LUAS Green Line from Sandyford to Cherrywood at Murphystown (Excavation Licence No. 06E0227, 2006:678). The development passes within 28m of Murphystown Castle (DU023–025). The archaeological features identified showed various phases of possible archaeological remains: 13th-14th century quarrying activity, 18th-19th century demesne landscaping activity, 18th century agricultural furrows and 19th century quarrying. Murphystown Castle seems to post-date the quarrying trenches containing the 13th-14th century pottery. The pottery evidence from the quarrying trenches may indicate that there could have been earlier activity in the area which required a source of building stone, possibly a residence or perhaps an earlier proto-tower-

house. Or there may already have been residual sherds of medieval pottery in the surrounding topsoil which could have been mixed in with the backfill of the trenches after quarrying had taken place in the 15th century.

Section 3 Cartographic Background

Down Survey map of 1654-6

No features or structures are shown in or near the approximate site area on the Down Survey map of 'The Barony of 1/2 Rathdown in the County of Dublin', of 1654-6. The fact that no structures were located within the parish, despite the historically attested presence of Kilgobbin within its bounds, may indicate that its decline as a centre of local importance had already begun by the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Thus, the compilers of the map may have been reflecting the pre-eminence of the larger population centres to the east, such as Carrickmines and Leopardstown, over their less prominent counterparts in the mountain foothills. It is further possible, however, that the absence of features within the area reflects its seventeenth century status as part of the extensive south Dublin estates of the Loftus family of Rathfarnham. As prominent new English Protestants, their lands were exempt from confiscation, and the map compilers may not have bothered to represent any features lying within the bounds of the Loftus estate.

John Rocque's map of 1760

Rocque's map 'An Actual Survey of the County of Dublin' of 1760 depicts the approximate area of the proposed development in considerably more detail than the Down Survey map of a century before. The map shows the church of Kilgobbin and its associated graveyard, which in the 1760s appears to have occupied the entire area extending eastwards from the church to the point at which the Kilgobbin Lane joins the Kilgobbin Road. The relative positions of the church and of the castle or towerhouse (which was depicted a short distance to the northeast) indicates that, by the eighteenth century, the proposed development area lay within an area



Fig. 3.1 Rocque's map of Dublin County, 1760, north to right

of agricultural fields to the west of the Kilgobbin Road and north of Kilgobbin Lane. The apparent absence of any standing medieval features within this area in 1760 does not, however, preclude their existence several centuries earlier, as the layout and size of the hamlet of Kilgobbin was likely to have fluctuated over time.

While the relative position of the stream that Rocque locates to the west of the site suggests that this feature was not identical with the straight streamcourse that presently lies along the western site boundary, it is possible that Rocque's depiction was not accurate. The distance between the approximate site area and the stream does, however, make it more likely that the present almost orthogonal stream or drainage ditch at the site's western edge was the result of later eighteenth or early nineteenth century land reclamation within the wider area. The configuration of the eastern site edge at this time is also uncertain, although it is likely that the large structure adjoining the western side of the Kilgobbin Road and to the southwest of the 'Castle' may have been intended to represent the Protected Structure now known as 'Kilgobbin Castle'. The position of the structure on the map at the road's edge probably reflects the map's inaccuracy rather than

changes in the road's course, as its location relative to other known eighteenth century and earlier structures (e.g. Oldtown House) further suggests that it was intended to mark the site of 'Kilgobbin Castle'. The possibility remains, however, that the present house had not yet been built by 1760, and that the structure on the map was intended to depict one of the other large old houses in Kilgobbin. A dotted line near the eastern edge of the proposed development may represent a pathway or informal lane in the position of the present old laneway along the eastern boundary of the site.

From an archaeological viewpoint, the most significant features depicted by Rocque in the vicinity of the proposed site are the two curving arcs of hachures which were marked to the south of the church. Comparison of Rocque's and later maps indicate that these arcs most probably represented the high ground around and across which the current road branch between Newtown Little and Stepside was constructed in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth century. However, the location of the northern hachured arc relative to Kilgobbin church may indicate that topographical considerations had dictated not only the position of the church, but the course taken by the associated enclosure which had surrounded it and its settlement in the early medieval period (RMP No. DU025-016; and see Larsson 2004). If this were the case, it is possible that the extent of the enclosure was potentially greater than that indicated by the current archaeological constraint area around the ecclesiastical site. This would further suggest that material associated with the ecclesiastical settlement may not be confined to the southeastern corner of the proposed development, but may extend further into the site area. This was not completely borne out in the results of the excavation and the large ecclesiastical ditch was not identified within the current development. Features likely to relate to the church site, probably lying outside the enclosure given their industrial nature, were however identified within the southern part of the site.

First edition OS map 1843

The Ordnance Survey First Edition six-inch (1:10,560) map of Dublin, Sheets 25 & 26, shows how by 1843 the overall sub-rectangular layout and orientation of the proposed site area had been established, including the course of its southern boundary, which subdivided the site area from the early nineteenth century school grounds that lay to the north of the kink in Kilgobbin Lane. By this date, the access laneway that forms the eastern boundary had also been established, as had the further short stretch of lane that divides the present rugby pitches from the additional area to the north. The status of both Kilgobbin church and the old towerhouse of Kilgobbin as antiquities had also been recognized, and were indicated by the use of Gothic script labels to mark their relative locations. The areas comprising the two short spurs of access roadway included within the proposed development site also lay within open and featureless agricultural fields, although both lay across the north-northeast/south-southeast course of the drain or stream that formed the western site boundary.

The contrast between upland and lowland agricultural areas to the southwest and northeast respectively is evident not only through the unenclosed slopes of Three Rock Mountain, but also through the different sizes of the fields along the mountain slopes and those on flatter ground to the northeast. As noted above, the orthogonality of the western field boundary

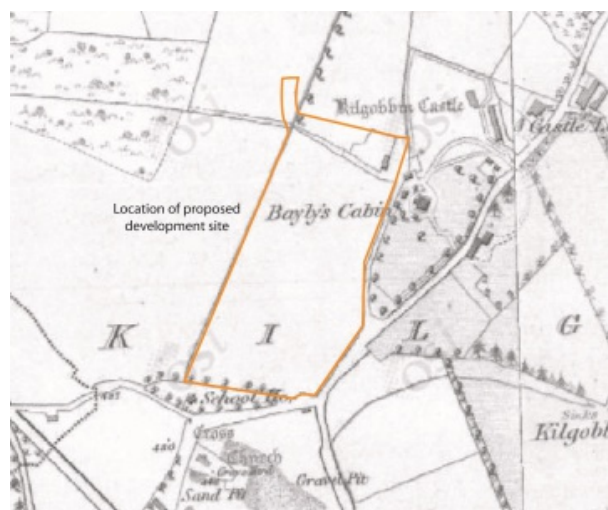


Fig. 3.2 First Edition Ordnance Survey

suggests that it represents the digging of a substantial field drain during later eighteenth or early nineteenth century land reclamation, rather than the course of an earlier stream. With its establishment, the greater part of the site area (comprising the present rugby grounds) was established within its existing bounds as a single large field. This probably reflects wider agricultural trends within the area, which involved efforts by local farmers to improve the productivity and drainage of hill-fields, and to more clearly define particular fields as bounded entities. The identification of extensive networks of surviving post-medieval drains during archaeological investigations prior to the construction of the Belarmino estate to the west reinforces this suggestion. It further suggests the possibility that similar features lie (or once lay) beneath the present ground surface of the proposed development area.

One of the farmers responsible for the reclamation of Kilgobbin's fields was likely to have occupied the house now known as 'Kilgobbin Castle', which was in 1843 known as 'Bayly's Cabin'. The name reflects that of the family of Emanuel Bayly, who purchased the lands towards the end of the eighteenth century, although it is uncertain whether the same individual was responsible for the house's construction. The secondary importance of the house within the wider area is also implied by the use of the word 'cabin', and by the fact that its grounds, although ornamental, were modest by comparison with the grand sweep and large extent of the Newtown Little demesne to the west. The application of the term 'cabin' (often used in the nineteenth century to denote the small single-storey homes of the poor) to what was, nevertheless a substantial building, indicates its status as a romantically conceived 'villa' or dwelling of at least middle-class status.

That it may also have lain at the centre of a working farm is further indicated by the existence of the small yard and cluster of outhouses to the west, including a small structure that stood in the approximate location of the protected barn. It should be noted that the structure shown on the 1843 map is considerably smaller than its present counterpart, suggesting that the present barn is of later date, or that it was extended along its long axis in fol-

lowing decades. A further structure, possibly an actual 'cabin' associated with a farm labourer or small farmer was depicted within the current development site, in the corner of the field that lies immediately to the north of the northern rugby pitch.

Although the cartographically represented location of the building appears different from that of the ruined house situated in approximately the same area, this may merely be an optical illusion caused by the extension westwards of the heavy vegetation cover of the eastern site boundary. The yard or garden that was shown extending to the west of the house on the 1843 map does not, however, appear to be identical to the ruined structure identified within this portion of the site during site inspection. Traces of this enclosure were found to survive below the present overgrown grass cover of the northern portion of the site, however it was not found to be of great antiquity.

Second edition OS map 1875

Comparison of the first edition of the Ordnance Survey in 1843 and the second edition of 1875 indicates that no substantial changes were made to the site area in the intervening period. The application of contour lines to the later map does, however, confirm the fall from south-southwest to north-northeast across the site, and positions the site at the interface between the 400 foot (c. 120m) and the 300 foot (c. 90m) contours. The only discernible change within the site area was the removal of the small enclosure to the west of the house that sat within the southwestern corner of the field to the north of the northern rugby pitch.

Third edition OS map 1912

The site layout and boundary configuration remained constant into the early decades of the twentieth century. This reflects the continuing role of Kilgobbin as an older subsidiary to the newer village of Kilgobbin within a wider landscape of hill farms into the later twentieth century. Thus, with the exception of minor

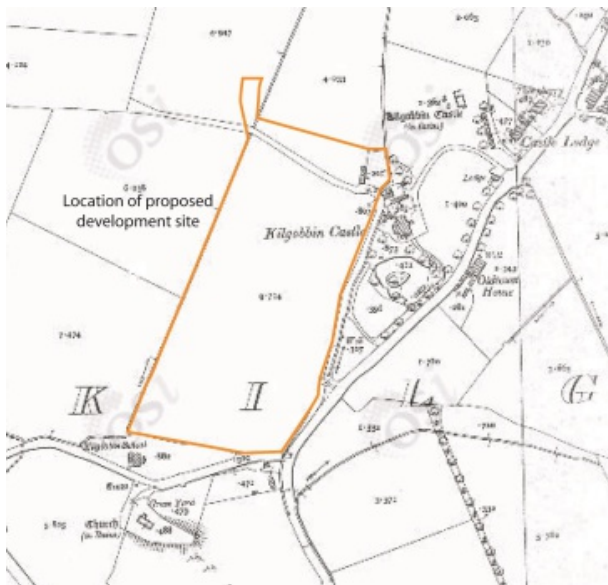


Fig. 3.3 Third Edition Ordnance Survey

changes associated with localised agricultural activities within the site area, the proposed site area is unlikely to have undergone any major disturbance until the establishment of the present rugby grounds. The present pitches and clubhouse post-date the joint purchase and development of the grounds by Old Wesley Rugby Football Club and by Lansdowne Football Club in 1974-5 (Old Wesley website).

Aerial Photography

The public map viewer of the Ordnance Survey, available on-line at www.map.osi.ie/publicviewer, also has three aerial photographs available for assessment. This can be useful in identifying previously unknown archaeological features in the landscape. The aerial photographs are dated 1995, 2000 and 2005 and show the development in the area around the site increase over time. For example, the extensive housing estate of the Belarmine development can be seen on the last Ordnance Survey aerial photograph from 2005.

The use of much of the proposed area as rugby and football grounds has meant that the layout of the site area has remained constant since c. 1975. The aerial photographs are not useful in this case due to the creation of the three artificial level terraces on which the rugby pitches lie. This relatively recent ground alteration is likely to mask any earlier archaeological features, or have removed them altogether. The lines of

shadow at the northern pitch edges reflect the drops in level between the terraces, and the patterns of surface wear that result from the playing of field sports within the area can also be seen. Various anomalies identified within the bounds of the playing fields were archaeologically assessed in the testing programme and none were found to be archaeological in nature.

The aerial photographs present a clear image of the field that lies to the north of the pitches, also within the proposed development site. The field surface as represented on the photographs indicate that it was less overgrown and was probably still being grazed when the photographs were taken. There is no indication of any immediately visible potential archaeological anomalies within this area, and there is also no evidence of any of the upstanding overgrown patches identified during site inspection. Faint linear anomalies similar to those within the northern playing pitch are discernible both within the northern part of the site area and in the neighbouring fields to the west. These were again investigated during the testing programme and found to be non-archaeological field drainage features.

The aerial photographs show the cluster of buildings and associated yard located immedi-



Fig. 3.4 Ordnance Survey aerial photograph, dated 2005

ately to the northeast of the rugby pitches and the structures depicted in the nineteenth century Ordnance Survey maps. While it is possible that the present ruined house may be identical to that shown on the 1843 map, the associated garden or small enclosure to the west of the house is no longer in existence. Traces of this were identified during the excavation to the north of Area 3.

Section 4 Historical Background

Placename evidence

The ‘Kil-’ element of the name Kilgobbin is generally translated to mean ‘church’ and is therefore thought to derive from an ecclesiastical site in the vicinity. The cluster of artefacts and other features (RMP Nos. DU025-01602 to DU025-01612) associated with Kilgobbin church (RMP No. DU025-01601) to the south of the study area suggests this site was originally founded in the early historic period. The exact identity of the St. Gobán to whom the church would appear to have been dedicated is not known (O’Reilly 1901, 255). Ball (1995, 71) identified this saint with a similarly named individual whose festival fell on the first day of April, and whose name appeared in the Martyrology of Tallaght. Goodbody (1993, 11), however, points out that there may have been traditions which associated the foundation of this site with the semi-mythological figure of the Gobán Saor, or the Kerry saint who ‘established Kilgobbain [sic] near Tralee’.

In light of the large numbers of early medieval architectural fragments, cross and grave slabs identified within the graveyard of the present church, and of the subterranean survival of at least part of the sub-circular early medieval ecclesiastical enclosure (Larsson/Bulger 2004) it would appear that the church at Kilgobbin lay at the heart of an extensive site. While no evidence of any additional early medieval structures have been identified within the present church grounds, it is noteworthy that the mythical Gobán Saor, who featured in many stories as a master mason, was occasionally proposed as the builder of round towers in traditional accounts. Whether a round tower ever stood at Kilgobbin or not, the potential association between the Gobán and the site may indicate the past existence of one or more substantial stone buildings within the bounds of the ecclesiastical site.

Unlike the townland of Kilgobbin in which the present village of Stepside is located, the use of the placename ‘Stepaside’ does not appear to extend much further back in time than the 18th century. Goodbody (1993: 81) asserts that the village of Stepside ‘grew up in the mid-eighteenth century’ and it is probably the case that the placename (whether coined during this period or earlier) began to be used with greater frequency and recognition. Goodbody cites two possible derivations of the name, the first of which (proposed by the Rev. O Murchoe in the 1920’s) asserted that the village took its name from the sign of a local inn. Goodbody preferred the second explanation, however, which was proposed by the officers of the Ordnance Survey in the 1830’s, who recorded that the name was generally held to be a corruption of ‘Steepside’. The nature of the topography and the fact that ‘the origin of the name was almost within living memory at that time’ (ibid, 112) makes this the most plausible explanation.

Prehistoric period

As can be seen from the archaeological investigations previously mentioned above, the wider landscape around Kilgobbin had been the scene of human activities over many millennia. While many prominent sites, mounds and graves, possibly dating from the Neolithic period (c. fourth millennium BC) onwards, dot the slopes of the Dublin Mountains, the prehistoric people who built and maintained these monuments were frequently absent from the record in the past as it was their great burial monuments that first attracted the attention of antiquarians and then archaeologists. This picture has changed in many ways now as archaeology conducted in the last twenty years or so have vastly added to our knowledge of our prehistoric ancestors, putting the people back into their monumental landscape. Recent archaeological investigations

carried out in advance of residential developments as well as road improvements in Kilgobbin and its surrounding townlands have shed light not only on the way in which prehistoric people treated their dead, but also on their daily lives.

While it is possible that the rectangular Neolithic post and plank house excavated by Abi Cryerhall in the lands immediately to the west of the Lansdowne/Old Wesley grounds (Excavation Licence No. 03E0717) served some ritual function, it is equally likely that it reflected the existence of established farming communities scattered across the slopes of Three Rock Mountain and further afield. It is possible that the structure served several functions simultaneously, as the lives and burial practices of prehistoric occupants of the Dublin Mountains were likely to have formed a single continuum of belief, narrative and practice.

It is also likely that there was considerable continuity of occupation of particular areas, although the large numbers of Bronze Age sites and artefacts that were identified within Kilgobbin and adjacent townlands might suggest an expansion of human settlement into the area in the mid-second millennium BC. This is consistent with the recovery of sherds of what are known as 'Beaker' pottery and other associated artefacts, which are thought to date to the first phases of metal use in Ireland. It is also consistent with the recovery of Early Bronze Age axes or axe fragments from the townlands of Kilgobbin and Murphystown some distance to the north. Further probable evidence of the domestic occupation of the lands of Kilgobbin during this period was also uncovered by Abi Cryerhall to the west of the proposed development area. This evidence consisted of the remains of two circular post-built structures thought to date from the Bronze Age, and probably associated charcoal spreads and pit, from which over 1,400 flint, pottery and other artefacts were recovered. (Excavation Licence No. 03E0717). Further to the west in Newtown Little townland, a further two structures dating to the Early Bronze Age were identified, the first a rectangular post-built structure and the second a semi-circular slot trench with central hearth (05E0333). To the south near Stepside village a settlement site represented by a series

of postholes and slot trenches was dated to the Bronze Age (Excavation Licence No. 97E0467). An undated hut site was uncovered in Woodside that was typologically suggested to be Bronze Age in date (Excavation Licence No. 02E1584).

Other investigations carried out adjacent to the banks of Kilgobbin stream to the north of the site yielded evidence of deposits of burnt stones and charcoal consistent with the use of fulacht fiadhs. These monuments are also thought to be primarily of Bronze Age date, and usually consist of a hearth, a mound of fire-cracked stones and burnt material and a trough (Waddell 2000, 174-5). It is thought that hot stones were dropped into the water-filled trough for cooking or other purposes, as many of these features were built into or near streambeds and water sources. Although Cryerhall did not find definitive evidence of a trough in the Kilgobbin example, the location of the associated horse-shoe shaped spread of burnt granite and charcoal adjacent to the streambed in marshy ground, together with a shallow hollow filled with further burnt material are consistent with fulacht fiadh morphology. The presence of what Cryerhall interpreted as a 'fire bowl' and adjacent pit in the vicinity of the probable fulacht may indicate that additional activities associated with manufacturing and food-processing may also have taken place close to fulacht sites. As Cryerhall further noted, such sites should not be considered in isolation, as they form part of wider local archaeological landscapes, and the site along Kilgobbin stream may be related in a broader sense to the similar fulacht remains identified by Larsson (2004) in the fields that bounded Kilgobbin Church to the south. The remains of fulacht fiadhs were also uncovered at Jamestown, with two identified in Ballyogan and two in Murphystown.

It has also been shown that the people of the mountain foothills also disposed of their dead in less visible ways than the larger megalithic tombs further up the slopes of the mountains to the south. Cremation burials, as well as the burial of unburned human remains was practised throughout the prehistoric period and up until the arrival of the extended burial practices associated with Christianity. In addition to the small complex of cremation pits and burnt bone deposits of probable Bronze Age date ex-

cavated by Ines Hagen (Excavation Licence No. 02E1196, 2002:606) in the fields immediately to the west of the proposed development area, cremation pits were also identified in close proximity to the Early Bronze Age structures at Newtown Little to the west of the site (Excavation Licence No. 05E0333). Other burial features such as a ring-ditch and possible cremation pits were also identified at a residential development in Woodside townland to the northwest (Excavation Licence No. 03E0533). A second ring-ditch was identified at Jamestown in close proximity to features suggesting occupation from the Beaker and Early Bronze Age (Excavation Licence No. 11E0085). Ring-ditches have a long period of use, from the Bronze Age through to the late Iron Age and into the early historic period. An additional cemetery site, probably of early medieval date, though this was not stated in the report, was excavated at Murphystown (02E0153) shows the change in burial practice by this time, with burials grouped together, extended and orientated east-west as per Christian tradition.

Early medieval period

The the Uí Chellaig Chualann and the Uí Briúin Chualann appear as the dominant landholders in the foothills of the Dublin mountains c. 900. The Uí Chellaig Chualann were a sept of the Byrne 1973, 288 and their ancestor, from which the family name derived, is listed as having been king of Leinster until 715 AD (Byrne 1973, 288). The Byrne 1973, 288 were in turn part of the Laigin, the overarching dynasty of southern Leinster, with origin legends suggesting connections with Gaul and Cornwall (Boazman 2010, 178). The Uí Maíl had been a dominant player in Leinster politics, however the death of Cellaig Chualann in 715 AD marked the end of their political superiority (ibid.). The area was in some flux during the early medieval period, with the Uí Dúnlainge, based to the west of the Dublin Mountains, given as the dominant clan in the region during the ninth century (Byrne 1973, 149). The lands at Kilgobbin would appear to have been on the borders between the two of the septs of the now weakened Uí Maíl, the Uí Chellaig Chualann and the Uí Briúin Chualann, whose territory continued to the

coast. It is perhaps for this reason that the area in the vicinity of Kilgobbin has limited settlement evidence during the early medieval period. Few ringforts are known from the area and the only settlement evidence is associated with ecclesiastic rather than secular settlement (Boazman 2010, 190), although there is a suggestion that a ringfort was present at the site of Kilgobbin Church prior to the ecclesiastic enclosure, it is unclear whether this would have been secular.

The primary direct evidence for the presence of early medieval populations within the wider Kilgobbin area is provided by the remains of the church site in that townland, and the similar (although less well preserved) site c. 1.25km to the southeast of the site area in Jamestown townland (RMP No. DU026-004--). In addition to reflecting the prevailing socio-religious context of the period, these sites would have served the religious needs of local people and communities. Although little evidence of such people survives above the ground within the present-day townland of Kilgobbin, it is likely that early medieval tradespeople, farmers and families inhabited the hill slopes and fields of the Kilgobbin landscape. While no potential domestic sites survive within the townland, three ringforts (now levelled) were identified in Jamestown townland to the south of present-day Stepside, three in Ballyedmonduff to the south-west as well as a further possible site located in Woodside townland some 375m to the north-northwest (RMP No. DU022-069).

The position of Dublin and its hinterland at the boundaries between the kingdoms of Meath and Leinster, and the increased trading opportunities introduced after the establishment of the Viking city of Dublin in the tenth century, meant that the lands of Kilgobbin were arguably more prone to social changes, dislocations and disruption than other parts of the island. The uncertainty regarding the foundation and dedications of the church sites in both Kilgobbin and in Jamestown may reflect such patterns of change, and it is of interest that in the years immediately following the Anglo-Norman incursion, Kilgobbin was referred to as *Tech bretnach*, translated as ‘the church of the Welshmen’. This may be a slightly garbled reflection of traditional accounts of the ancestry

of St. Gobán, to whom the church at Kilgobbin may have been dedicated, as he was thought to have been the nephew of St. David of Wales (Goodbody 1993, 11). The dedication of the site to a Welsh saint may, moreover, indirectly reflect growing Viking control over the Kilgobbin area, as other church sites in Dublin associated with them (e.g. the site of the priory of St. Mary on the northern Liffey bank) may have been dedicated to Welsh saints (Sweeney 1991, 48). This in turn may reflect the influence of Welsh and southwestern English trading contacts established by the Dublin Vikings and reinforced throughout the Anglo-Norman period (Gwynn 1949, 110, 118), though it may also reflect previously established Irish-Welsh connections during the early medieval period, not beyond possibility given that the Laigin had a presence in Wales and Cornwall during the early medieval period in places such as Brycheiniog.

In view of the influence of the Viking kings of Dublin on the organisation of the church in the Dublin area, and the possibility of Scandinavian influence or settlement in the Rathdown area, it is interesting to speculate that at least some of the pre-Norman inhabitants of the wider area were of Viking descent. The church at Balally within the grounds of the Bank of Ireland premises near Sandyford to the northwest of the study area may have been dedicated to the Norse Saint Olaf or Amhlaibh (Corlett 1999, 42), although a tradition (of probable eighteenth century origin) suggests that the church was built to mark the end of a family feud (Goodbody 1993, 9). Furthermore, the recovery of 'Rathdown [grave] slabs' - with their implications of Viking influence - from the graveyard of the church in Kilgobbin also suggests the presence of Scandinavians in the wider area. It is thus perhaps significant that according to Ball (1995, 66), the first recorded holders of Kilgobbin in the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman incursion were the descendants of a prominent south Dublin Viking family who had taken the surname Harold, and from whom Harold's Cross takes its name. Their control over Kilgobbin may, however, have been a product of Anglo-Norman reorganisation of tenure throughout the eastern part of the island, as Goodbody (1993, 15) asserts that the Harolds gained tenure of Kilgobbin from the Hacket family. This suggests that indigenous pre-Nor-

man élites in or near Kilgobbin, whether Gaelic or Hiberno-Norse, lost control over their holdings during the later twelfth century. Boazman (2010, 180) notes that a charter of 1202 in Alen's Register confirming the lands of Holy Trinity, which names the pre-Norman land donors, five of which are of the Meic Torcaill family, with the extent of their landholding approximating to the modern parishes of Tully and Kilgobbin.

Norman & later medieval period

In light of the fact that the lands of Kilgobbin (or at least those lands associated with the church) appear to have formed part of grant made to the Archbishopric of Dublin shortly after the Norman incursion, it is possible that the abbots or clerical office-holders of the pre-Norman ecclesiastical site controlled much of the present parish of Kilgobbin. Ronan (1930, 71, footnote 77) places Kilgobbin and 'Kilsallaghan' within the lands of Rathsalchan, which along with large tracts of what is now County Dublin, were granted to Laurence, Archbishop of Dublin by Pope Alexander III in 1179. The degree to which the lands then came under the control of the See of Dublin in the decades following this grant is unclear, as it would appear that it (the grant) was, to some degree, an opportunistic annexation of lands of the Diocese of Glendalough which were not at that time under Anglo-Norman control (*ibid.*, 60). Later documents record that Kilgobbin was subsequently a 'chapelry in the Deanery of Bray, dependent on the mother church of Taney, and consequently united therewith in the corps of the Archdeaconry of Dublin' (D'Alton 1976, 415).

Kilgobbin, recorded as Cell Gobain is mentioned in the *Crede Mihi*, written c. 1270 and edited by Gilbert (Hogan 1910, 194). It is recorded as being in the deanery of Tachny and the diocese of Dublin.

Historical records of grants confirmed to the Harold family, and other historical accounts of their tenure at Kilgobbin indicate that by the beginning of the fourteenth century at least, large expanses of the present townland were

under the control of secular tenants and overlords. At that time, inheritance disputes arose within the family, leading the guardians of Peter, son of Geoffrey Harold, and Peter's mother, Isabella, to enter into 'prolonged litigation' with Margaret, wife of Thomas Spencer and widow of John Harold, as the representatives of Sir Geoffrey Harold (Ball 1995, 66). The outcome of this litigation does not appear to have been an entirely happy one for the Harold family as a whole, as shortly thereafter, the Hacket family were subsequently listed as owners of Kilgobbin, 'one of whom, Sir William Hacket, had acted as guardian to Peter Harold' (ibid.). Other medieval families associated with, and potentially tenants of Kilgobbin at that time included members of the Howell family, while the Dawe family held lands in the neighbouring townland of Jamestown.

By the fifteenth century Kilgobbin had passed to a branch of the Walsh family of Carrickmines, who controlled and subsequently settled within the lands of Kilgobbin. Members of the family are generally accredited with the construction of the tower-house known as Kilgobbin Castle (RMP No. DU025-01701/DU026-12101) which forms part of the overall listing and lies within the constraint zone of Kilgobbin settlement. It is likely that the Walshes deliberately sought possession of Kilgobbin at that time, as ownership of its lands, and the fortification of its primary settlement core would have accorded a greater degree of protection to their primary landholdings in Carrickmines to the east. The construction of the castle also followed a broader medieval trend as, in this area of south Dublin, tower-houses were built to defend and mark 'the area of the frontier by their numerical quantity and architectural quality' (O'Keefe 1992, 69).

The frontier in question was that between the Crown-administered lands of the Pale and the neighbouring lands held and predominantly occupied by native Irish families, many of whom had been displaced southwards into the Wicklow hills by the Norman seizure of their former lands. Although the boundary between Pale and Irish lordships did not remain constant, but fluctuated to reflect political and social conditions in the border areas of the Pale, attempts were made at different historical points to fix its

extent. In 1488-9, for example, the Pale boundary was delineated by act of parliament, while in 1494, Poyning's parliament specified that the boundary be defined by the construction of a double ditch (ibid.). Despite the support given to the idea of a Pale Ditch by the Crown and administration of the Pale, its cost was likely to have prohibited some landowners from digging stretches of the ditch within their holdings. Despite the fact that a number of recent archaeological excavations in Jamestown and Ballyogan have not produced definitive evidence of the existence of such a ditch, it is likely that the construction of such a feature would, where undertaken, have taken advantage of the natural topography as much as possible.

This is consistent with the fact that the possible section of Pale ditch (RMP No. DU026-12102) which is listed as part of Kilgobbin settlement, together with the further possible stretch c. 365m to the east (RMP No. DU026-087) appear to have followed the course of Kilgobbin stream. The stream, which has recently been culverted to the northwest of the proposed development area following the construction of the housing estates to the west, followed the approximately east-west course of local springs. This is of interest, as Kilgobbin Castle and settlement would thus appear to have been located on the more vulnerable southern side of the Pale ditch. If this were the case, it would hint at some degree of contact and perhaps communication between Kilgobbin inhabitants and their Gaelic neighbours to the south. It would also suggest that the construction of the Kilgobbin sections of the ditch might have been intended more as a symbolic representation of Walsh control over the wider area, than as a serious barrier to incursions from further south.

This dual defensive and symbolic purpose may also be reflected in the construction and character of the towerhouse that acted as a focal point for higher status occupation within the settlement of Kilgobbin. The construction and architectural detailing of Kilgobbin Castle, as well as that of Murphystown towerhouse to the north, appears to follow the pattern of other turreted towers of the Pale (as set out by O'Keefe 1992, 69) and possibly predates the construction and definition of parts of the Pale Ditch in the later fifteenth century.

In light of the fact that the northern portion of the site lies within the zone of archaeological potential of Kilgobbin settlement, and within c. 75m of the castle itself, it should be noted that such structures were generally not isolated within their immediate surroundings. They were often set within or adjacent to a number of associated enclosures that were sometimes defined by walls, and termed 'bawns' (O'Connor 1998, 23-4). As the centres of domestic and agricultural complexes, they also tended to be flanked by various ancillary buildings, such as kitchens, halls, barns and other outhouses. It is thus possible, that the medieval and later medieval features associated with the occupation and use of Kilgobbin Castle spread beyond its immediate area and into the fields adjoining or within the proposed development area. It should further be noted, that the relative locations of church and castle at Kilgobbin may have promoted the development of medieval settlement structures and features along the roadway between the two buildings (see O'Connor 1998, 44). If this were the case, such structures and features would therefore have occupied part of the site area, particularly along its eastern half.

The seventeenth century

Goodbody (1993, 34) writes that during the rebellion and wars of the mid-seventeenth century, a widow living in Murphystown complained that the then occupant of Kilgobbin Castle, the rebel Matthew Talbot, had stolen her property, leaving her destitute. Talbot, a descendant of one of the branches of the prominent Pale family whose primary seat was at Malahide, was at the time a tenant of Sir Adam Loftus of Rathfarnham. Loftus' possession of Kilgobbin was of relatively recent date, as in 1615, members of the Walsh family were still the primary local landlords. In that year, Christopher Walsh held Kilgobbin Castle, to be followed shortly by 'Patrick, alias Pierce Walsh, a son of John Walsh, in whose time a court was held by order of the Exchequer at Kilgobbin' (Ball 1995, 67). The possession of Kilgobbin by Loftus therefore dated to some time in or after the 1620s, and reflects the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century opportunism of

Loftus' uncle, who as archbishop of Armagh and of Dublin had assembled a very extensive south Dublin estate from lands that had previously been part of the possession of the archbishopric of Dublin.

Despite Talbot's enthusiastic embracing of the Catholic Confederate cause in the wars of the early 1640s, the Loftus family as a whole proved extremely successful at negotiating the uncertainties, confiscations and wholesale land-sales of the time. During Talbot's occupancy, in January of 1642, a party of horse approaching Kilgobbin were fired upon by the castle's occupants, resulting in the death of one soldier and the mortal wounding of another. This action gave rise to the later designation of a field to the north of the castle as 'The Battlefield' from which 'cannonballs are said to have been dug up from time to time' (Goodbody 1993, 34). The castle was subsequently taken possession of and garrisoned by General Monk, but was not confiscated from Loftus, as he was at that time recognized both as knight and an English Protestant. As a result, he was exempt from the confiscation of lands suffered by some of his less fortunate neighbours.

In the mid-seventeenth century Civil Survey, the Loftus holdings at Kilgobbin were considerable, and encompassed the present location of the village of Stepside (Simington 1945, 274). The two townlands combined were recorded to have covered four ploughlands or seven hundred Irish acres. This is of interest, as the 'castle town and lands of Kilgobbin and Jamestown' were estimated to have contained only 300 acres at the time of the death of John Walsh in 1578 (D'Alton 1976, 415), suggesting that either Loftus had considerably expanded his holdings in the area, or that the earlier survey had been extremely inaccurate. It may also reflect an increased awareness of the potential of the scrubby hill-pasture that dominated the southern portion of Kilgobbin parish. For example, in 1654, of the 700 acres listed, only 20 acres were described as being 'meadow', while a further 200 acres were arable land. The remaining 480 acres, presumably those located towards the southern and western portions of the parish were described as 'Rocky & heathy pasture' (Simington 1945, 274). The 8 acres of 'shrubby wood' listed within the parish presumably lay

within this expanse of rocky terrain. The ability of Loftus to adequately 'improve' or develop these lands at the time was, however, likely to have been curtailed, not only by the unrest of the seventeenth century, but also by cash flow problems, as Kilgobbin was at that time mortgaged to Sir Maurice Eustace.

The primary structures within the parish were listed as 'one Castle thatcht, & a garden plott, & the Walles of a parish church', which were valued at the total sum of £20 (Simington 1945, 274). From this description, it would appear that the church of Kilgobbin was in poor condition and without its roof by the mid-seventeenth century. The Census of 1659 listed Kilgobbin and Jamestown separately, but the two townlands were recorded to have comprised 27 English and 10 Irish residents (Goodbody 1993, 36). The principal occupants were stated to have been Dr. John Harding, Anthony Straughton and 'William Straughton his son'. As Goodbody observes, these statistics are noticeable for two reasons, the first being that Kilgobbin was 'the only place in that entire district that lists three principal occupiers' (*ibid.*, 38). The second unusual characteristic of the parish was that English occupants outnumbered Irish, reversing the general county trend.

By the later seventeenth century, the Loftus family appear to have relinquished their hold on Kilgobbin, either due to foreclosure on the Eustace mortgage, or in order to generate further ready cash for purposes such as the development of their estate at Rathfarnham. According to Ball (1995, 190), shortly after the restoration of the English crown in the late 1660s, the castle was occupied by a Dr. John Harding. Harding's tenure was relatively short, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the lands of Kilgobbin were leased to Richard Nutley, 'who was one of the Judges in Queen Anne's reign'. Despite these disjunctions and changes of ownership, it is likely that the reformulation of Kilgobbin as part of a wider eastern region under Crown control meant that its integrative role as a '[bridgehead] between the cultures of the mountains and the plains' increased (Smyth 1992, 125). It is perhaps for this reason that the Baldwin family, who owned the hilly mountain lands of Redcross, County Wicklow, as well as other lands throughout Dublin, was sufficiently

interested in Kilgobbin to buy out the earlier Eustace mortgage.

Industrial and modern era

After their initial purchase of the Eustace mortgages in c. 1739, the Baldwin family held Kilgobbin throughout the eighteenth century. It is likely that throughout this period, and following the period established by the Loftuses, the castle itself was leased out to a variety of temporary tenants, while the lands were worked as part of the wider Baldwin estate. Various historical sources mention a number of different individuals who lived in, bought, sold inherited or rented lands in Kilgobbin. For example, in 1700, James Mac Donnell claimed a remainder in tail in Kilgobbin and other lands forfeited by Randal Mac Donnell (D'Alton 1976, 415). Other individuals, such as Christopher Taylor of Dublin also held lands in Kilgobbin, as evidenced by his will of 1720, in which his wife Anne (then pregnant), his eldest son Warneford and his younger children were named as the inheritors of lands within the parish (Eustace 1956, 89). In 1731, the leasehold interest 'for lives renewable for ever, in the manor, town, and lands of Kilgobbin' held by Richard Nutley since the later years of the seventeenth century was sold (D'Alton 1976, 415-16).

In the final years of the eighteenth century, however, the then representative of the family, Charles Baldwin reportedly 'ran into cash flow difficulties and sold the Kilgobbin property, presumably to meet [his] various financial obligations' (Goodbody 1993, 56). Although this sale cost the purchaser, Emanuel Bayly, £6812-10s, all of the land (including Kilgobbin) remained subject to a number of subleases and no change of lessors took place at that time (*ibid.*). One of these leases was held by the descendants of a local farmer, Morgan Maguire, who had also been granted further leases of parts of Woodside townland in the earlier eighteenth century. With the marriage of successive generations of Maguire's descendants throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, his holdings were subdivided and passed by marriage into numerous other families. These holdings were eventually reunited by the purchase in the early

1860's of the various shares by 'an outsider named Frederick Stokes' who then sold on his interest to Joseph Wilson of Kilmacud (ibid., 66). It is the Bayly family name that is recorded in the name of 'Bayly's Cabin' given to the building to the east of the current site on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map in the 1830s, which shares the grounds of the castle.

This fracturing and shifting pattern of land holdings and leases, and the resulting difficulty of improving productivity through large-scale agricultural improvements may have hastened the decline suffered by the old settlement of Kilgobbin following the early nineteenth century coach road through the area. The improved road layout effectively bypassed the old centre at Kilgobbin, and led to the development of the village of Stepside to the south, as traders and local institutions relocated to take advantage of passing trade. The decline of Kilgobbin continued throughout the nineteenth century, and was further exacerbated by the loss of up to 40% of the population during, and in the years immediately following the famine of the later 1840s.

The decline of Kilgobbin in favour of the new village of Stepside was not reflected in the local organizational structures of Church of Ireland. In the early eighteenth century, a new structure, also serving the parishes of Taney and Cruagh as well as Kilgobbin, had been erected at the old early medieval site under the direction of Archbishop King. It had been completed in 1707, and had replaced the earlier medieval church, which had lain derelict throughout the seventeenth century. Incumbents of this church in the eighteenth century included the Rev. Mervyn Archdall to whom Gabriel Beranger 'was indebted for guidance to the Brehon Chair at Glensouthwell' (Ball 1995, 71). The eighteenth century structure continued to be used as the Church of Ireland parish church until the construction of a new building in 1826, at which time the parishes of Kilgobbin and Kiltiernan were united (ibid., 72).

The old towerhouse of Kilgobbin also suffered the combined effects of Kilgobbin's loss of prominence, and the destructive effects of local stories that associated the castle with a cache of hidden treasure. In 1834, an account appeared in the Dublin Penny Journal (Anon 1834, 314),

in which the author remarked upon the ruinous condition of the castle and attributed this not to seventeenth century military activities but to contemporary excavations at the tower's base. These holes which were dug in and around the fabric of the castle reflected a local belief that the Gobán Saor had buried a treasure in gold in the castle, prior to going travelling overseas to carry out architectural works for the king of France. The unfortunate Gobán Saor was said to have carried out his work so well that the king of France beheaded him, rather than give any of the French nobles an opportunity to have work of as high a standard performed on their behalf. For this reason, it was believed that the Gobán Saor never returned to recover his gold, which was thought to lie under the castle. The author of the Penny Journal article complained that digging for this mythical gold led to the undermining of the castle walls to such a degree 'as materially to injure' them, and the walls were said to be 'cracked and rent'.

The article concluded with the observation that 'Whether any person has been benefitted [sic] by such exertions we cannot say, but it is implicitly believed in the vicinity that more than one family in Dublin have been made up by their golden dreams of Kilgobbin' (ibid.). Goodbody (1993, 22) records that two of the upstairs rooms of Kilgobbin Castle were known as money rooms, and he also recounts how a local farmer called Moran 'discovered the supernatural secrets of the hidden treasure in a dream and having laid hands on it moved away from the district to keep his secret'. The castle was also the setting of several ghost stories, one of which concerned 'a man in heavy armour' who was 'reported to pass by the doors of the cottages which formerly stood close to the castle' (Goodbody 1993, 22). A second story told of a woman in white who was believed to go into the ruins of the castle, to emerge 'with something, apparently gold, in her apron'.

Section 5 Archaeology on the site

Site inspections

Three archaeological site inspections have taken place on this site: the first on 1st July 2003. The weather at that time was wet with a low-lying mist that resulted in low visibility across the landscape. The second was carried out on 28th November 2006 in good weather conditions. The third, on 4th February 2013, in cold damp weather.

Access, parking and clubhouse

A carpark and clubhouse associated with the use of the site by the Lansdowne and Old Wesley football and rugby clubs were situated in the southern and southwestern part of the site between the southern edge of the highest (southern) pitch and the boundary of the private house situated immediately to the south of the site. The clubhouse was inspected in 2003 and noted to be of 1960s or 1970s construction and was not considered to be of any architectural significance. It was demolished prior to 2013, and its extent is not visible on the ground. The carpark and access road were surfaced in tarmac and were also constructed in the c. 1970s.

Tiered Pitches

The greater part of the proposed development area consists of three tiered rugby pitches that step downward in three artificially flattened terraces from south to north from the southern site area containing the clubhouse and carpark. These lie at approximately the same level as the road-surface of Kilgobbin Lane to the south of the development. The level surface of the southern rugby pitch lies approximately 1m below this, and has been further adjusted in order to allow for a further fall from west to east across the site. Thus, the difference in level between the carpark level and the southern pitch is greatest at the western site edge (approximately 1m), and decreases to

approximately 0.1m at the eastern site boundary. The greatest difference in level occurs between the southern and central pitches, with a sharp drop of up to 2m between the two. The natural fall of the land becomes less steep towards the northern part of the site, so that the surface of the northern of the three pitches is almost level with the natural ground level in the field to the north. The difference in level between central and northern pitches averages between 0.3 and 0.4m.

Northern area

The northernmost part of the development site is located in an overgrown field that lies immediately to the north of the rugby pitches. The area is bounded on the south by an established hedgerow, while the laneway dividing the site from Kilgobbin Castle extends along the southern edge allowing access to a derelict house located in the southeastern corner of the field. The present house remains are likely to be those of the structure depicted on the First Edition Six Inch Ordnance Survey map of 1843, or of a similarly situated later 19th century building. The present house remains form part of a small complex of three one-storey, stone built structures with corrugated iron roofs which have collapsed. It is possible that these were originally built as ancillary structures associated with the administration of the 'Kilgobbin Castle' farm. It would appear that the area adjacent to the structures may have continued in use for some period after the collapse of their corrugated-iron roofs, as a concrete yard lies to the east and north of the house. The entire complex is enclosed by a low boundary wall.

Low overgrown mounds were noted to the north of the house. These irregularities or anomalies were considered likely to be a result of modern disturbance as they do not appear to relate to any of the ground contours visible on the aerial photograph of the proposed site.

A low diagonal bank was noted running NE-SW through the centre of this area. It does not correspond to any field boundary recorded on cartographic sources.

Hedgerows

Well-established hedgerows containing mature trees bound the east side of the site (these are protected), run east-west through the centre of the site, and run along the northern two-thirds of the western site boundary. The density of the hedgerows meant that access to their interior was difficult, however they comprise ditch and bank field boundaries with no apparent features or anomalies of potential archaeological significance associated, or contiguous with them.

Geophysical survey

Introduction

Two programmes of archaeological geophysics were carried out on the site: one to the north and south of the site (in the vicinity of Recorded Monuments) in 2002 (Nichols 02R079); and one in 2008 in the interior of the proposed development site (Thébaudeau 08R030, report dated 30/06/2008).

2002 Geophysical Survey

This survey (Nichols 02R079) comprised a preliminary gradiometer scan in the north and south of the site, extending beyond the site footprint, within the constraint zones of Recorded Monuments DU025-016-- (Kilgobbin Church and Graveyard) and DU025-017-- (Kilgobbin Settlement and Castle). This extended up to 55m into the northern part of the site (equivalent to the northernmost triangular-shaped field, and into c. 35m in the southern part of the site (around the Landsdowne/ Old Wesley clubhouse).

Smaller areas showing potential were then subjected to detailed gradiometer scanning: a rectangular area 37m E-W by 25m N-S in the north and a narrow strip 83m E-W by 12m N-S running along the southern site boundary. No archaeological remains suggested by the results of this geophysical survey (Thébaudeau 2008,

1).

2008 Geophysical Survey

This survey (Thébaudeau 08R030) comprised a 4.8ha preliminary gradiometer scan of the entire site including northern access road but did not include the two areas scanned in 2002 (the northern field and area around the clubhouse). Strong magnetic interference was noted throughout due to the goal posts and lamp posts on the sides and between pitches, possibly masking or obscuring archaeological responses here (Thébaudeau 2008, 3). In addition there were numerous ferrous anomalies caused by modern metal debris within the topsoil (ibid.).

Three areas were then selected for detailed gradiometer scanning (Areas 1, 2 and 3 each centred on a playing pitch, 1 to the north). These three areas covered 1.16ha and were selected on the basis of the preliminary scan. They were: Area 1 – just a test; Area 2 – to investigate increased background response in the northwest of the central pitch; and Area 3 – to investigate increased background response in the south of the southern pitch.



Fig. 5.1 2008 geophysics results

No strong areas of archaeological interest were noted in the detailed survey, however a number of linear and curvilinear trends were recorded that may represent ephemeral archaeological remains or modern drainage features.

In general the linear trends run N-S (and veering towards NNW-SSE) and are probably field drains. A curvilinear response in the southern-most playing pitch appears anomalous and may be archaeological.

Test-trenching programme

The test-trenching programme was carried out over one week from 4/2/2013 to 8/2/2013. Weather was cold, with one day of constant heavy rain and one day of snow. Test-trenches were excavated across the site by a 16-tonne mechanical excavator with 1.8m wide flat grading bucket down to the natural subsoil or the top of any archaeological deposits. All sub-surface features were planned, photographed, hand-tested and recorded. The test-trenches were then backfilled.

Aims of the programme

The archaeological test-trenching programme had five specific aims:

1. To assess the nature of the stratigraphy of the three rugby pitches, and the nature and degree of the subterranean disturbance (whether through scarping or spoil dumping) caused by their establishment.

2. To test the low overgrown mounds noted during the site inspection in the northern field: to the north of the building and running diagonally across the field.

3. To test the linear and curvilinear geophysical anomalies noted in Areas 2 and 3 during the 2008 geophysical survey.

4. To assess the extent to which archaeological material associated with the two Recorded Monuments, DU025-016-- (Kilgobbin Church and Graveyard) and DU025-017—(Kilgobbin Settlement and Castle), exist within the site or may survive within the site.

5. To assess the overall archaeological potential of the site and confirm the findings of the geophysical survey.

Test Trenches

Twenty-three test-trenches were excavated across the site: trench 1 along the proposed access road, trenches 2-5 in the northern field, trenches 9-16 across the playing pitches and trenches 17-22 across the southern former clubhouse and carpark.

All 23 trenches were 2m in width and varied in length from 20m to 260m. Topsoil was relatively shallow throughout at between 100mm (on the pitches) and 600mm (in the northeast of the site).

Natural subsoil was variable, but generally comprised a pale yellowish-grey compact silty-clay with frequent stones. In places it was discoloured by decayed limestone and was dark in colour; in other places it became a grey gritty sand. The natural subsoil was badly disturbed by root damage from the adjacent hedge in Test-trench 8.

Modern

A large number of features were identified and were hand tested. Mostly these were associated with the 1970s construction of the playing pitches (machine cut drains and services), clubhouse, carpark, access road and associated features. In addition, modern disturbance was noted along the northern proposed access road, along the eastern side of the northern field adjacent to a ruined structure, and along the southern boundary wall of the site.

18th/19th century features

A large number of features were found to be agricultural stone-filled drains. These drains were identified in the geophysical survey. Generally, only the lower part of the drain survived due to scarping in the 1970s, and in the southernmost part of each pitch the drains did not survive at all, as the scarping was heaviest here. Two ditches were also identified: one running NE-SW through the western side of the site and another running at the same alignment in the northern field (the bank of which was vis-

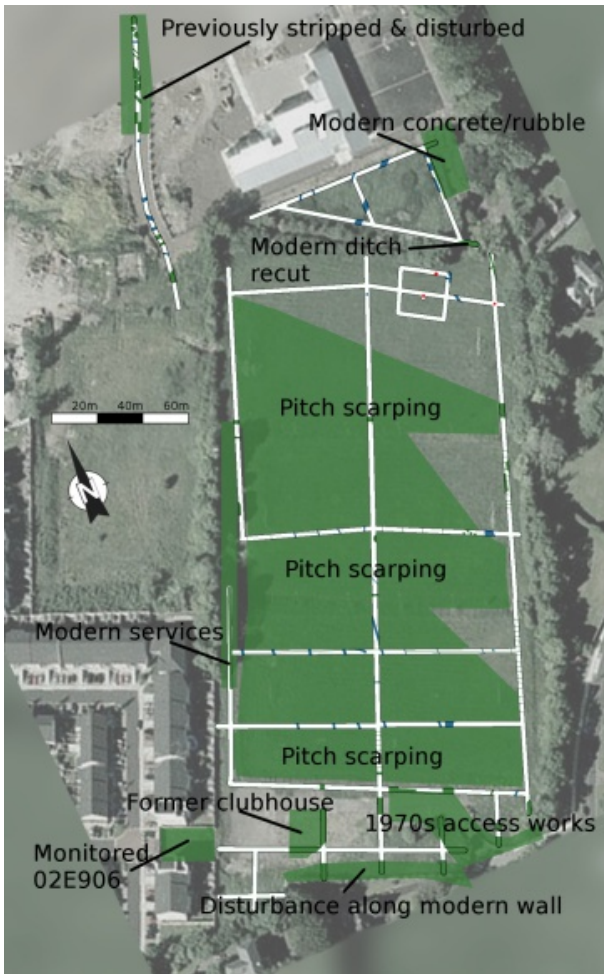


Fig. 5.2 Modern features and scarping evident from testing

ible on the surface).

One small, undated feature was excavated half-way along Trench 1. Although the feature had some resemblance to an archaeological posthole, the absence of charcoal or other occupation evidence in the fill and its location in an area of extensive modern disturbance suggests it is of recent date.

These features predate the construction of the playing pitches in the 1970s. Analysis of cartographic and aerial photographic sources confirms the lengthy continuities of site layout, boundaries and morphology throughout the post-medieval and industrial periods, and indicate that since at least the 1760s the site area was devoid of any standing earlier remains such as buildings or upstanding anomalies that might indicate earlier occupation of the site. They suggest that the sub-rectangular, straight sided morphology of the site area may have been the result of later 18th or earlier 19th century land

improvement practices. The 18th and 19th century field drains and ditches are not of archaeological interest.

Archaeological Features

Three archaeological features or finds were identified in the northeast of the site in Test-trenches 9 and 10, within the constraint zone of Recorded Monument DU025-027 – Kilgobbin Medieval Settlement.

Feature 1 was identified in Test-trench 9, 400mm below topsoil. It comprised a circular pit 900mm in diameter filled with dark greyish-black charcoal-rich silt. The pit was half-sectioned by hand and the northern half was excavated. The pit was bowl-shaped in profile with steep sides and rounded flattish base, and measured 250mm in depth. The pit was filled with packed stones (many burned) and fragments of metal slag in a grey silt matrix with

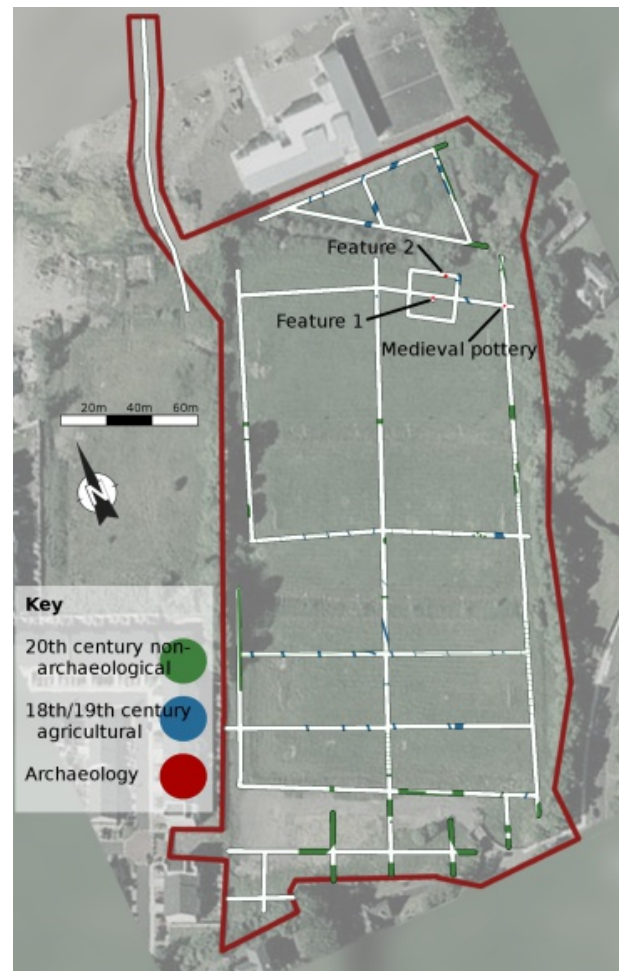


Fig. 5.3 Archaeological features identified in testing

frequent charcoal and fragments of burned clay. No evidence of in-situ burning was noted. No flint, pottery or bone was identified. The metal-working slag is ferrous and vitrified and is probably derived from local small-scale iron working. The feature is tentatively dated to the early-medieval or medieval period (but could conceivably date to anywhere between the Iron Age and the mid-20th Century). The excavation of this feature was later completed as part of Area 3 of the excavation (C201).

Feature 2 was identified in Test-trench 10, 11m NNE from Feature 1, below 600mm of topsoil. It comprised a sub-square pit 1.2m in diameter filled with dark greyish-black charcoal-rich silt. The pit was half-sectioned by hand and the southwestern half was excavated. The pit was bowl-shaped in profile with steep sides and rounded flattish base, and measured 350mm in depth. The pit was filled with gritty brownish-grey clayish-silt and gravels with frequent small rounded stones and occasional lumps of charcoal. Charcoal was heavier at the top of the pit fill. No evidence of in-situ burning was noted. No flint, pottery or bone was identified. This pit is likely to be associated with Feature 1 on account of its proximity and similar fill. This was later completed as part of excavation of Area 3 (C209).

A fragment of medieval pottery was identified in topsoil (not associated with any feature) 26m to the east of Feature 1, also in Test trench 9. It was found at 300mm below the topsoil, just above the natural subsoil. It is a rim-sherd of Leinster Cooking Ware, medieval and dating to c. 12th-14th century AD.

Testing Recommendations

A total of five recommendations were made based on the results of the archaeological test-trenching programme.

Recommendation 1 stated that no further archaeological work was required over the main part of the development site, shown in green on the accompanying figure. The areas included were the northwestern access road, the southwest half of the lower/north pitch, the central pitch, the upper/south pitch, the southern access road and entrance, and the former

clubhouse building. The assessment has demonstrated that these areas are heavily disturbed or scaped and that any potential archaeological deposits here would have been removed in the past.

Recommendation 2 stated that the development proposes to raise the level of the northern field by up to 1.5m thus preserving any potential archaeological remains *in situ*. In the event that any excavation groundworks are required before raising the ground level (for example laying sub-surface surfaces or stripping topsoil for temporary compounds or access roads) it was recommended that these should be subject to archaeological monitoring. Due to the fact that this ground-raising is taking place within the zone of a Recorded Archaeological Monument, an archaeologist should record the raising of the ground, including where the imported soil is from, final contours, and levels, to assist any future archaeological research in this area.

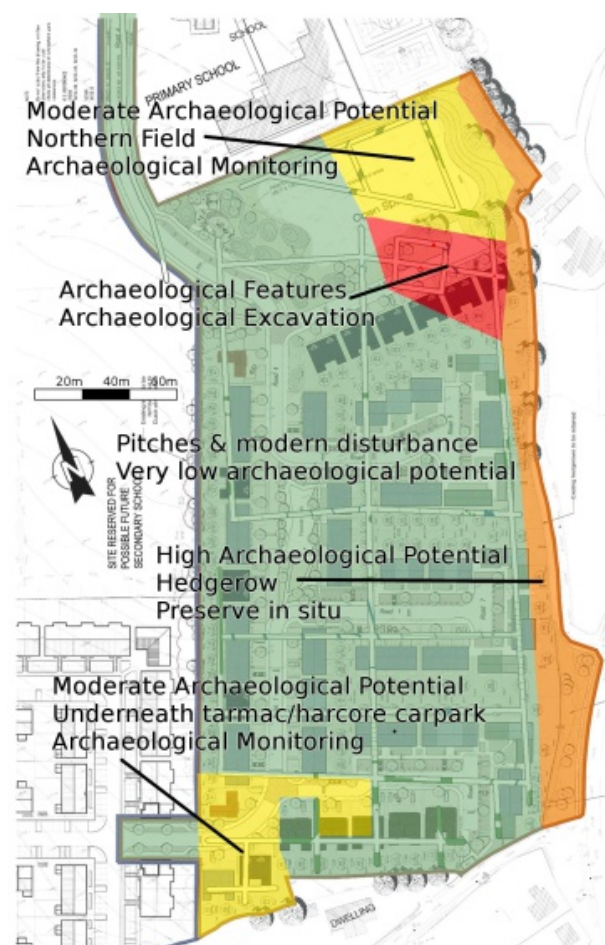


Fig. 5.4 Recommendations based on the results of the testing

Recommendation 3 stated that three areas (shown in orange on the accompanying figure) should be subject to archaeological monitoring:

i) The carpark in the southwest of the site. Here, a thin layer of tarmacadam on the surface lies over 240mm-340mm of stone sitting on a dense orange-yellow layer of gritty-clay subsoil which may contain archaeological features. An archaeologist should monitor the removal of the stone and exposing of this subsoil.

ii) The northeast half of the northern field. This area has been subject to scarping and may thus contain archaeological features. Topsoil stripping over this area should be archaeologically monitored.

iii) The ruined buildings in the northeast of the site, in the northern field. These buildings are due to be demolished, and their demolition may expose archaeological material below. Their demolition and associated groundworks should be archaeologically monitored.

Recommendation 4 related to the archaeological features identified in the northeast of the site, in the area shown in red on the accompanying figure. The undated (but probably medieval) features were identified below 350mm-600mm depth of topsoil, which contained one sherd of medieval pottery. Prior to any groundworks in this area (shown in red) topsoil should be stripped in a zone 20m around the features down to the top of the archaeological horizon, under supervision of an archaeologist. The two features previously identified, along with any other features, should be fully archaeologically excavated and recorded. Post-excavation analysis on the metalworking remains should then be undertaken, along with any other relevant post-excavation works.

Recommendation 5 stated that the hedgerow in the east of the proposed development will be retained as part of the scheme. Any groundworks in and around this hedge should be archaeologically monitored.

Monitoring programme

A programme of archaeological monitoring of topsoil removal was carried out from the 29th September to the 13th October 2014. A 13-tonne mechanical excavator with a 2-metre flat bucket was used to reduce topsoil and root disturbance down to the natural subsoil and archaeological levels, generally c. 500mm below the existing ground level. The monitoring programme covered the southwestern corner of the site and the area highlighted during the testing programme at the northern end of the main field. The zone of highest potential to the northeast of the main field was also stripped at this time, as was a triangular portion of the field to the west at the northwest end of the development, where the access road is to join with the main development site.

During the works three areas of archaeological activity were identified: the southwest corner, the northwest corner and the eastern side of the northern pitch. In the southwestern area a number of relatively shallow linear features and a feature with granite blocks was identified associated with medieval pottery. To the northwest a spread of charcoal-rich material was identified with a number of outlying pits of uncertain date. In the eastern side of the north-



Fig. 5.4 Areas monitored highlighted in orange with Areas 1-3 excavated highlighted in blue

ern pitch the two pits identified during the testing programme were again located. However they were found to be part of a much larger expanse of archaeological activity, with numerous linear features, pits, a possible barrow and a pond. It was recommended that all three areas should be archaeologically excavated.

No archaeology was encountered in the area to the west of the western field boundary. A section through the field boundary itself was monitored at this point to assess whether it was of any archaeological interest. It was found to be post-medieval in date and probably relates to the intensifying of agricultural activity in the area in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This area can now be seen as archaeologically resolved.

Archaeological monitoring of the removal of the field boundaries to the north and west of the northern area was later undertaken during the excavation. This revealed some additional archaeological activity to the northwest, which was subsequently excavated and the information was added to the results of the overall excavation in that area (Area 2).

Further archaeological monitoring is envisaged in the future in the northern triangular field. This is to include a service trench along the northern edge of the site to facilitate a drainage channel, as well as the removal of the extant buildings and farm yard to the northeast. A number of additional storm drains are planned along the eastern boundary of the site and these are also to be archaeologically monitored.



Fig. 5.5 Areas to be monitored highlighted in orange with areas archaeologically resolved highlighted in blue

Section 6 Results of the excavation

Area 1

Area 1 was excavated from 16th to 23rd October 2014. It was located in the southwest corner of the site and measured 20m east-west by 10m north-south. This area lay partially within the constraint zone associated with Kilgobbin Church and graveyard (RMP No. DU0125-016--). This area was bounded to the east by modern disturbance associated with the former rugby club house and ran to the site boundary to the west. The ground to the north of the area was monitored during ground reduction and no further archaeological features were noted during these works. The area to the south was not monitored. The area had previously been re-

duced and levelled for the Landsdowne/ Old Wesley rugby club car park. As a result a 200-300mm layer of gravel hard-core overlay the whole of Area 1 prior to excavation with a thin layer of topsoil surviving beneath this in patches (C1).

A number of features were uncovered in this area during the excavation. Given that a similar range of medieval pottery was found in almost every feature, these are likely to represent a complex of contemporary archaeological features all dating to the medieval period. Post-medieval pottery was only encountered in the overburden overlying the area suggesting that the use of this area did not extend into the post-medieval period.

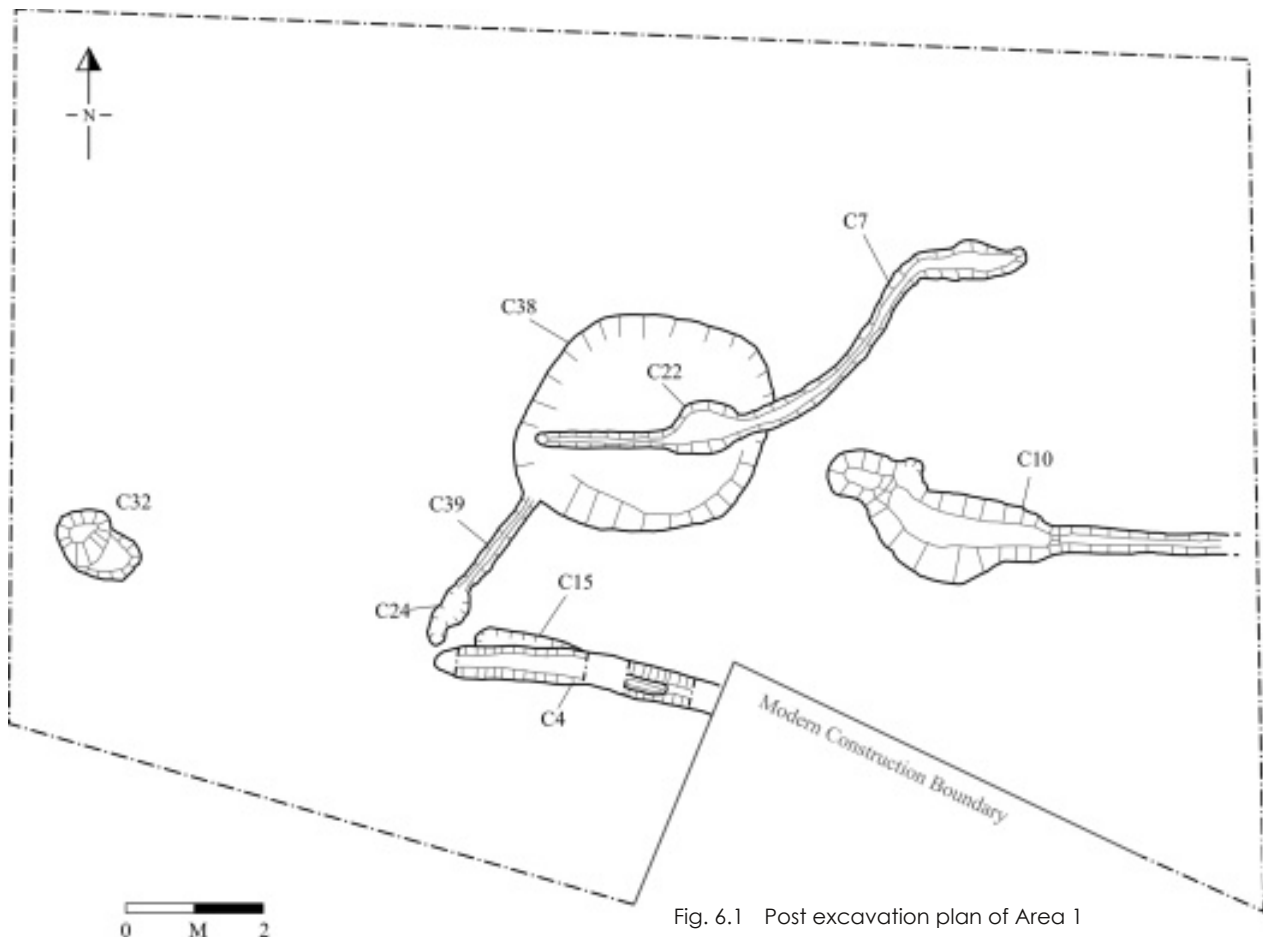


Fig. 6.1 Post excavation plan of Area 1

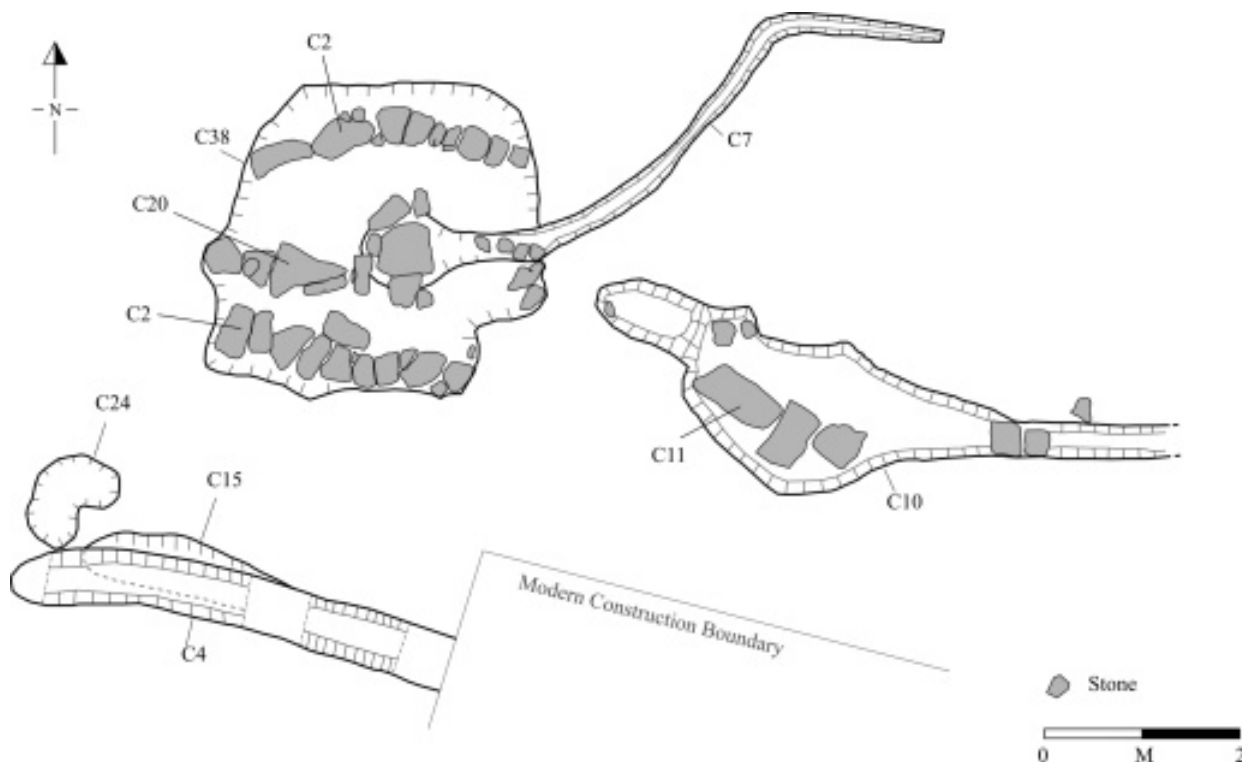
The underlying natural in Area 1 was a mottled greyish brown silty clay with occasional stones. A change in the natural was evident to the west, with more sand content in that area, however this largely lay outside the area and was not associated with any of the features. The high clay content in the natural was mirrored in the fills in this area, which were heavy and compact, which made it difficult to break up. There was some potential for small finds and ecofacts being missed due to this.

Medieval structure



Fig. 6.2 Mid-excavation shot of structure C2, looking north

Fig. 6.3 Mid-excavation plan of structure C2 and Kiln C10



The largest feature in Area 1 was a sub-rectangular medieval structure (C2), which was orientated east-west. This feature was constructed within a scarp construction cut (C38) that was generally sub-rectangular in plan with a saucer-like wide flat base. There was evidence for an initial fill (C37) likely to have been caused by trample during the construction of the structure. The structure itself consisted of an arcing row of granite slabs on the northern side placed directly on the base of the cut. Along the southern side a second row of granite slabs (C31) was identified, with a northeast-southwest running return at its eastern end. This side was constructed within a separate narrow construction cut (C30) that cut into the initial construction level, suggesting it was constructed after the northern side. The narrow construction cut for the southern side had an associated backfilling (C27). Despite the evidence of phasing, the entire structure was probably conceived and constructed in one go.

The central section of the structure had an east-west running channel (C6), which turned to run to north-east upon exiting the structure before turning once more to the east at its eastern end. The fill (C7) of the channel was uniform to the east of the structure, however within the struc-

ture itself the channel appears to have been altered a number of times. The western end of the channel was capped with flat granite slabs (C20). This was associated with a setting of granite slabs within a shallow construction cut (C19) surrounding a widening (C22) of the



Fig. 6.4 Mid-excavation shot of drain capping C20 and central stone C21 within structure C2, looking west

Fig. 6.5 Mid-excavation shot of western end of drain C6. Looking east



channel in the centre of the structure. The fill (C29) of the western end of the channel was truncated by the cut for the widened central pit (C22) and may suggest a change of function of this feature. The widened section is roughly pear-shaped with the widened central pit to the west tapering to the east. Five fills were identified within this feature and were suggestive of burning with some scorching evident on the base along the linear part of the pit. The earliest fills of this section appear to be two thin layers of mixed charcoal and re-deposited natural, one at the base of the bowl of the pit to the west (C42) and the other within the linear section of the pit (C23). Both were probably associated with cleaning out of burning activity from the pit. The eastern deposit was found to be partially overlaid by a deposit intentionally constricting the eastern end of the feature, at the point where the linear exits the structure (C41). The constricting deposit appeared to consist of re-deposited natural with evidence for *in situ* burning. A number of smaller granite stones capped the narrow channel formed by the constriction. The main fill in the linear section of the pit (C16) overlay the constriction and continued into the widened section of the pit to the west, where it was truncated by a re-cut within the central section (C43). This re-cut was only within the central section of the pit and the fill (C18) and was indicative of a fire pit or hearth, with layers of ash and charcoal. It was sealed by a large sub-rounded granite block (C21). The block was integrated into the paved section formed by the granite slabs overlying the linear feature to the west (C20), which also surrounded the central pit and the granite block. It was uncertain whether the granite block (C21) was put in place at the end of the use of the feature, or whether it was placed over the pit while it was empty, with the fills forming throughout the use of the structure. The integrated nature of the stones within the central area of the structure would suggest that the latter is a possibility.

It was unclear whether the stones forming the structure represent the foundations for stone or clay walls, evidence for which has been lost due to the reduction of the area for the creation of the car park in the 1970s. There was a slight break in the line of the southern stones to the northeast, it is unclear whether it originally con-

nected with the north-eastern return of the southern wall or not, however the curve in the northern wall would suggest that originally they would have converged at the exit for the channel (C6) to the east. The western end appears to have been open, and no evidence for an enclosing element was noted on this side. The northern and southern walls, and the channel end in a line along the western side giving the western limit of the structure.

Context	Type	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)
C2	Structure	2.7	2.4-2.6	0.09-0.12
C3	Deposit	3	2.6	0.04-0.10
C6	Cut	6.4	0.22-0.34	0.09-0.11
C7	Fill	4.7	0.22-0.34	0.9-0.11
C16	Fill	0.76	0.35-0.42	0.15-0.25
C18	Fill	0.52	0.44	0.13-0.5
C19	Cut	1.2	0.3	0.9-0.11
C20	Fill	1.2	0.8	0.07-0.1
C21	Stone	0.58	0.54	0.12
C22	Cut	1.19	0.57	0.23
C23	Fill	0.64	0.2-0.3	0.4
C27	Fill	3.71	0.23-0.38	0.09-0.12
C29	Fill	1.75	0.26	0.09
C30	Cut	3.71	0.23-0.38	0.12
C31	Wall	3.71	0.23-0.38	0.07-0.13
C37	Fill	3.25	2.6	0.8-1.1
C38	Cut	3.25	3.1	0.11
C41	Fill	0.3	0.21	0.15
C42	Fill	0.5	0.4	0.06
C43	Cut	0.52	0.44	0.13-0.5

Eastern kiln

At the eastern end of Area 1 a slightly irregular medieval kiln was encountered (C10), orientated east-west. It had a long flue to the east leading to a pear-shaped central chamber, which was stone-lined on its southern side (C11). A small oval-shaped pit was located at the western end of the feature, which was partially separated from the main chamber of the kiln by an incomplete row of stones set on the base between the two chambers. These stones were possibly intended to informally divide the end chamber from the main chamber of the kiln and may represent baffle stones. There was some suggestion of *in situ* burning along the base of the kiln, however this was not intense or consistent, suggesting the feature was well-cleaned. The kiln had three fills (C9, C14 and C26). The primary fill (C14) of the central chamber of the kiln was sealed by the upper fill (C9), which was found overlying the central chamber as well as filling the flue to the east. One fill (C26) was only located in the western chamber of the kiln.



Fig. 6.6 Mid-excitation shot of kiln C10, looking west



Fig. 6.7 Post-excitation shot of kiln C10, looking east

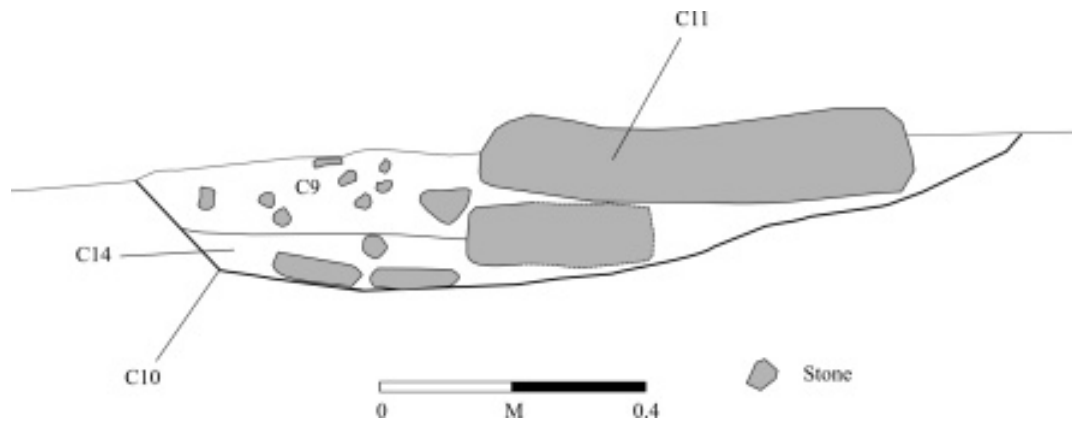


Fig. 6.8 West-facing section of kiln C10

Fig. 6.9 Post-excavation shot of wall C11 within kiln C10, looking south



The primary fill of the central chamber (C14) and the fill of the western chamber (C26) had higher charcoal contents and were quite similar. Medieval pottery was found throughout all fills of the kiln.

The stone-lining along the southern side of the central chamber (C11) consisted of a T-shaped dry-stone structure of 1-2 courses of granite slabs, built over a step in the southern side. The northern face of the lining was roughly faced and survived to two courses in height, while the southern side was not faced, and appeared to be placed to gain structural support from the stepped side of the chamber. It was unclear what function this provided and there was no evidence for lining elsewhere in the kiln. The unusual shape and layout of the kiln may be explained by the eastern end being truncated by the modern disturbance associated with the rugby club. It is possible that originally a firing pit had been situated to the east at the end of the flue. The pit to the west may have functioned as a secondary firing pit so the kiln could be used in two directions, depending on the wind direction. It is possible that the row of

stones between the western chamber and the main chamber represent baffle stones given the much shorter distance between the two chambers. It appears to have been well cleaned during its lifetime, with little cereal remains surviving within the fills.

Context	Type	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)
C10	Cut	5.8	0.25-1.25	0.09-0.25
C11	Wall	3.1	0.28-0.66	0.06-0.21
C14	Fill	2.5	0.6	0.06
C26	Fill	1.6	0.36-0.58	0.17

Western kiln

A figure-of-eight shaped kiln (C32) orientated east-west lay at the western end of Area 1. It had a slightly deeper chamber to the west, probably representing the firing chamber, while the eastern chamber was smaller and sloped down towards the west. No flue was evident associated with the kiln and it is possible this was removed during the ground reduction and levelling works during the installation of the car park in the 1970s. The kiln had two associated fills (C34 and C36). A further two context numbers (C33 and C35) were given to the base of the kiln where *in situ* burning was evident. One fill



Fig. 6.10 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C32, looking south

(C34) was only located in the eastern chamber of the kiln and was overlain by the second fill (C36), which was interpreted as representing a later disturbance of the kiln fills as it was much looser than the other fills and exhibited frequent root disturbance. While no finds were found within this kiln, given its close proximity to the other features of Area 1 and similar function suggests that this kiln was probably contemporary with the adjacent features in this industrial area.

Context Type	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)
C32 Cut	1.23	0.5-0.84	0.17-0.43
C33 Fill	0.54	0.33	0.08
C34 Fill	0.44	0.27	0.04-0.15
C35 Fill	0.78	0.5-0.7	0.01-0.33
C36 Fill	1.23	0.57-0.84	0.28

Southern drains

Two narrow medieval drains were identified at the southern end of the area. The first was orientated east-west and flowed towards the east (C15). It was filled with a single fill (C8), which had a relatively high charcoal content. This was truncated by a second drain (C4), running in a similar orientation and alignment at its eastern end but curving to the southwest slightly at its western end. This also had a single fill (C5). Both drains were truncated to the east by modern disturbance. They both sloped up and were lost to the

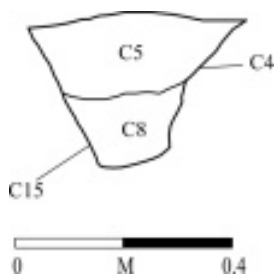


Fig. 6.11 East-facing section of ditches C4 & C15

Fig. 6.12 Post-excavation shot of ditches C4 & C15, looking east-northeast



west, suggesting a significant ground reduction at this point. A spring was located in the south-western corner of the site beyond the limit of excavation. It is possible that these drains served to manage water coming from the spring, directing it away from the structure and kilns to the north as well as providing a nearby water supply.

Context Type	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)
C4 Cut	4.1	0.5-0.7	0.1-0.15
C5 Fill	4.1	0.5-0.7	0.1-0.15
C8 Fill	3.5	0.2-0.3	0.13-0.5
C15 Cut	3.5	0.2-0.3	0.13-0.5

Additional features

Two additional features were recorded in Area 1. These were a shallow linear gully (C39) running northeast-southwest from the southwest corner of the cut for the structure (C38), and a shallow irregular pit (C24) that truncated the gully at its southwest end. Both features had single fills (C40 and C25 respectively). The relationship between the structure and the gully was unclear as the surviving depth did not allow for analysis of the relationship between the two features. The functions of the gully and irregular pit were unclear.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C24 Cut	0.9	0.4	0.05
C25 Fill	0.9	0.4	0.05
C39 Cut	2.17	0.23-0.25	0.05-0.06
C40 Fill	2.17	0.23-0.25	0.05-0.06

Area 2

Area 2 was excavated in two stages from 24th to 31st October and 25th to 28th November 2014. It was located in the northwest corner of the site at the base of the terraced playing fields. The initial phase of excavation here was focussed on a large spread of charcoal-rich material (C108), which seemed to have formed in a natural hollow at the base of the slope of the field. A number of outlying features were also encountered at this time. The later phase of excavation followed the removal of the field boundaries to the north and west of the area, however only limited activity was revealed. Ori-

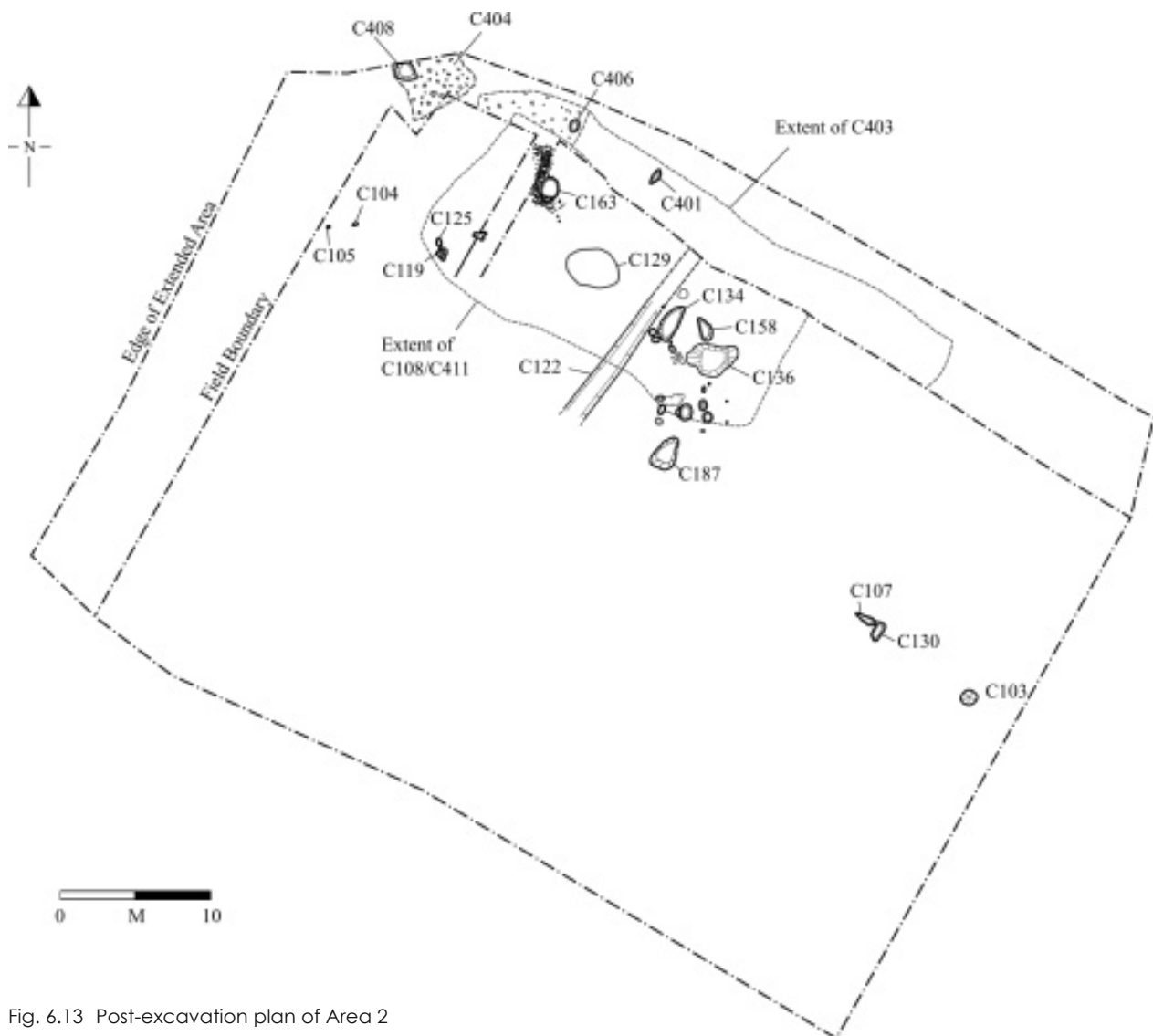


Fig. 6.13 Post-excavation plan of Area 2

ginally the second phase was recorded as Area 4, however for ease of reporting and due to the obvious interconnection between the areas it has been included as part of Area 2. Prior to excavation this part of the development had seen substantial levelling up to create the northern playing field, with a deep deposit of topsoil (C100/C400) evident overlying the original topsoil (C116). Below this an earlier subsoil was identified to the north (C115), which overlay the spread of charcoal-rich material (C108). This was identified in the northern area of the natural hollow at the base of the slope.

A post-medieval agricultural drainage ditch (C122) was also identified running northeast-southwest cutting through the spread. It was roughly perpendicular to the existing field boundary and was later than all other activity in the area.

The western field boundary (C412) consisted of a large bank with a ditch on the western side. The bank was partially revetted with stone along its western side, possibly to stop the bank collapsing into the ditch. One sherd of post-medieval pottery was retrieved from the fill at the base of the ditch (C413). A number of tree boles were identified beyond this, one of which (C414) contained a sherd of post-medieval pottery. This boundary appears to have been laid out in the latter part of the 18th century, based on cartographic analysis.

The underlying natural in Area 2 was a loose yellowish brown sandy silt, which had a high granite content. Moderately frequent stones, from small pebbles to boulders were encountered within the natural. The loose nature of this material caused some difficulty in identifying the true edges of some of the features. It

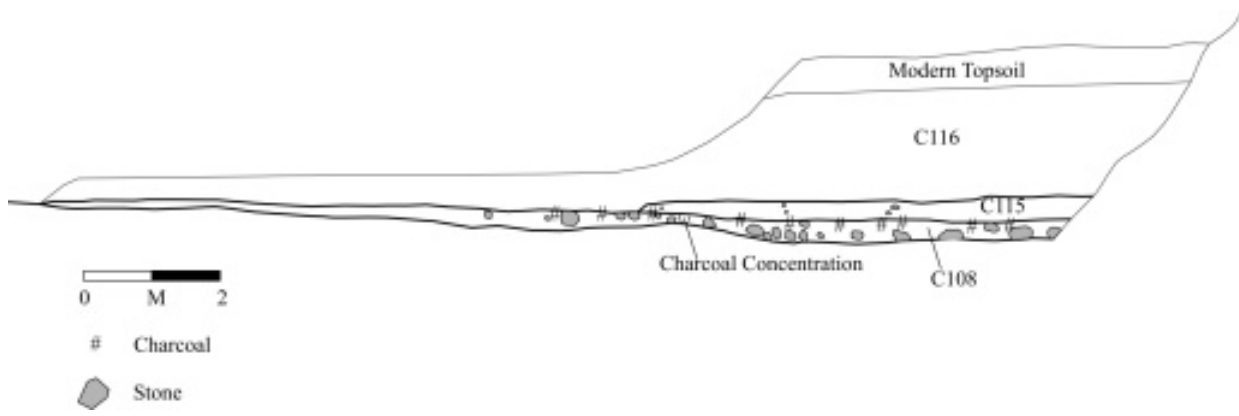


Fig. 6.14 South-west facing baulk through Area 2

is also apparent that when these features were originally dug the same difficulties would have been encountered and sides may have collapsed regularly. The weather conditions for the first phase of excavation were good and while digging was hampered in the deeper features due to them being below the water table, it was manageable. Later, during the excavation of Area 3 this area was completely submerged. The second phase of excavation beneath the field boundary was therefore more challenging, requiring significant water management, using the field lane to the north and the previously excavated portion of Area 2 to the south as run-offs for the water.

Outlying pits to the southwest

Cremation pit

A possible cremation pit (C125) was identified to the southwest of the main spread. This took the form of an oblong pit on the final slope before the hollow. A small amount of cremated bone was identified within the fill (C126) at the southern end of the pit with *in situ* burning evident along the base and sides at the northern end of the pit. Immediately to the south of the pit was a large posthole (C119), which partially truncated the fill of the cremation pit (C126). More cremated bone was identified within the fill of the posthole (C120) as well as a small sherd of prehistoric pottery. The post originally would have

stood in the northwestern corner of the posthole, with the sloped side to the south and east allowing for its insertion. A large stone located to the east may have helped support the post after it was erected. *In situ* burning was identified within the posthole in the northwest corner and the burning also effected the southern end of the fill of the cremation pit itself indicating that the cremation pit had been filled before the insertion of the post. It appeared during excavation that these two features were related with

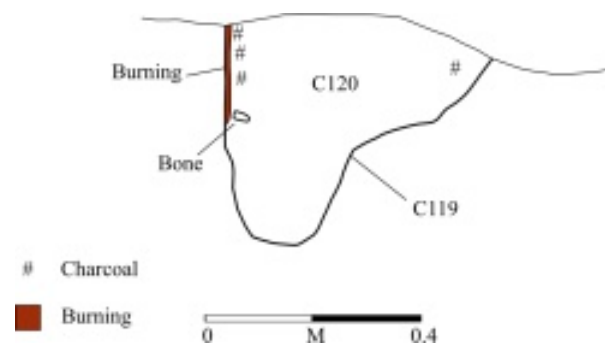


Fig. 6.15 Southeast-facing section of posthole C119

Fig. 6.16 Post-excavation shot of posthole C119, looking north



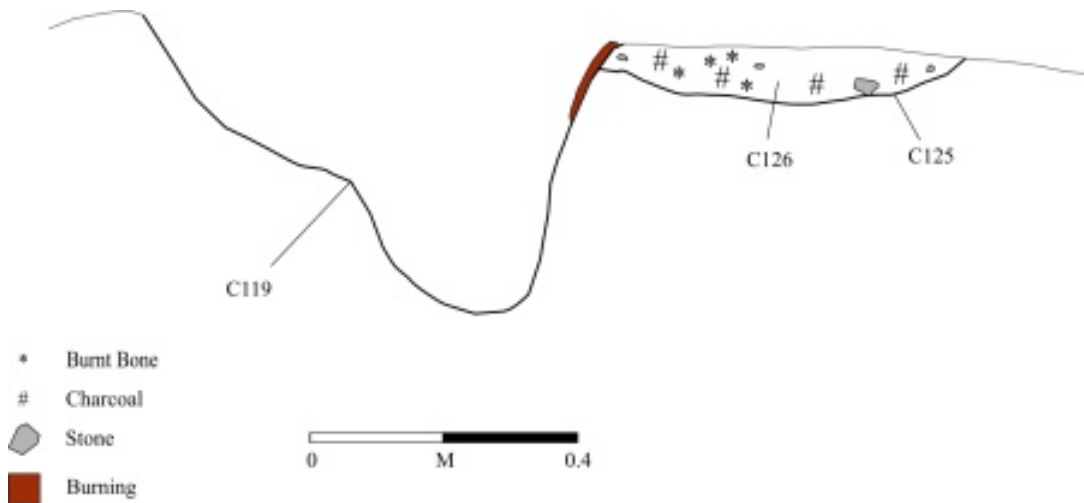


Fig. 6.17 East-facing section of cremation pit C225 and profile of posthole C119

Fig. 6.18 Post-excitation shot of cremation pit C225 and posthole C119, looking west



the posthole possibly representing a marker for the cremation pit, which was subsequently burnt.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)	
C119	Cut	0.65	0.54	0.43
C120	Fill	0.65	0.54	0.43
C125	Cut	0.59	0.34	0.09-0.11
C126	Fill	0.59	0.34	0.09-0.11

Other features

Another small outlying pit (C105) was identified further to the west beside the field boundary, however the nature and purpose of this small feature was unclear.

At the southwest edge of the main spread an irregular pit was excavated (C121). This was found to be filled with spread material (C108) and may have been a natural depression or have been unintentionally created through animal or human action.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)	
C105	Cut	0.24	0.18	0.13
C106	Fill	0.24	0.18	0.13
C121	Cut	0.71	0.24-0.6	0.25
C125	Cut	0.59	0.34	0.09-0.11
C126	Fill	0.59	0.34	0.09-0.11

Outlying pits to the southeast

A small number of outlying pits were excavated further up the slope of the field to the south-east. The furthest east was a simple sub-circular pit (C103) with a single fill (C104), which lay in isolation c. 22m from the main spread.

A further two pits (C107 & C130) were located c. 7m to the west of this. The southern pit (C130) was shallow and slightly irregular, orientated roughly east-west with scorching at its southwest end. Two fills were recorded within the pit (C127 & C128). The northern pit (C107) was separated from the southern pit by 0.1m. It was an oval pit orientated northwest-southeast, deepest to the southeast, with scorching along the northwest and west side. The fill of this pit (C133) contained patches of scorched sand as well as some charred hazelnut shell. The purpose of these outlying pits was unclear. They were the only archaeological features identified in an expansive area to the south and east of Area 2, indicating that the main focus of activity in the past was in the hollow at the base of the slope.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C103 Cut	0.94	0.5-0.84	0.1-0.18
C104 Fill	0.94	0.5-0.84	0.1-0.18
C107 Cut	1.22	0.54	0.17
C127 Fill	1.1	0.6	0.09-0.11
C128 Fill	1	0.6	0.07
C130 Cut	1.1	0.6	0.16
C133 Fill	1.22	0.54	0.17

Spread

The charcoal-rich spread of material (C108) that largely defined Area 2 covered an area c. 22m in length and up to c. 10m in width. It appears to have been formed within the natural hollow at the base of the slope and to relate to the wet and mucky nature of the ground at this point. The location seems to have attracted human, and possibly animal attention for an extended period in prehistory, indicated by the concentration of features sealed by the spread. This section of Area 2 was noticeably wet and was a point where water pooled on the site dur-

Fig. 6.19 Mid-excavation shot of spread C108 being removed with features visible beneath the spread



ing this mid-winter excavation. The hollow may have served as a watering hole, occasionally requiring deeper well-pits to be dug to access the water table during drier periods. The features below the spread were suggested by concentrations of charcoal-rich material evident on the surface of the spread. This suggests that the spread was not a solid sealing event. Instead it probably represents an extended period of activity, a mixed deposit churned up through human and animal action in the wet ground of the hollow. The nature of the deposit meant that a number of the pits below it were filled with material that was somewhat similar to the spread, which may well have infiltrated the upper levels of lower features. The majority of the pottery from this layer appears to date to the Beaker period (Eoin Grogan pers. comm. 2014), however due to the mixed nature of the deposit it is likely that its final phase of use is somewhat later than this. Following the removal of the field boundary to the northeast of the area it was noted that the spread (recorded as C411) only extended into this section for a short distance and was overlaid by another spread of material (C403).

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C108 Deposit	22	7.3-10.35	0.05-0.18
C411 Deposit	4.74	N/A	0.06-0.16

South of the spread

Immediately to the south of the spread on the final slope down to the hollow three features were identified (C111, C113 & C187), two of which were at the edge of the spread. A fourth pit (C131) situated just to the north of this was covered by the spread but appeared to be related to these features. These features are part of a concentration of small pits, post- and stake-holes seen along the bottom of the slope down to the hollow.

The southernmost pit (C187) was a shallow pit with two fills (C109 & C110), with the upper fill (C110) representing a concentration of charcoal to the northeast of the feature. Burnt bone was recovered from the main fill of the pit (C109). A second pit (C111) was a relatively shallow oval pit located directly north of this at the southern edge of the spread. Burnt bone and two sherds of prehistoric pottery was retrieved

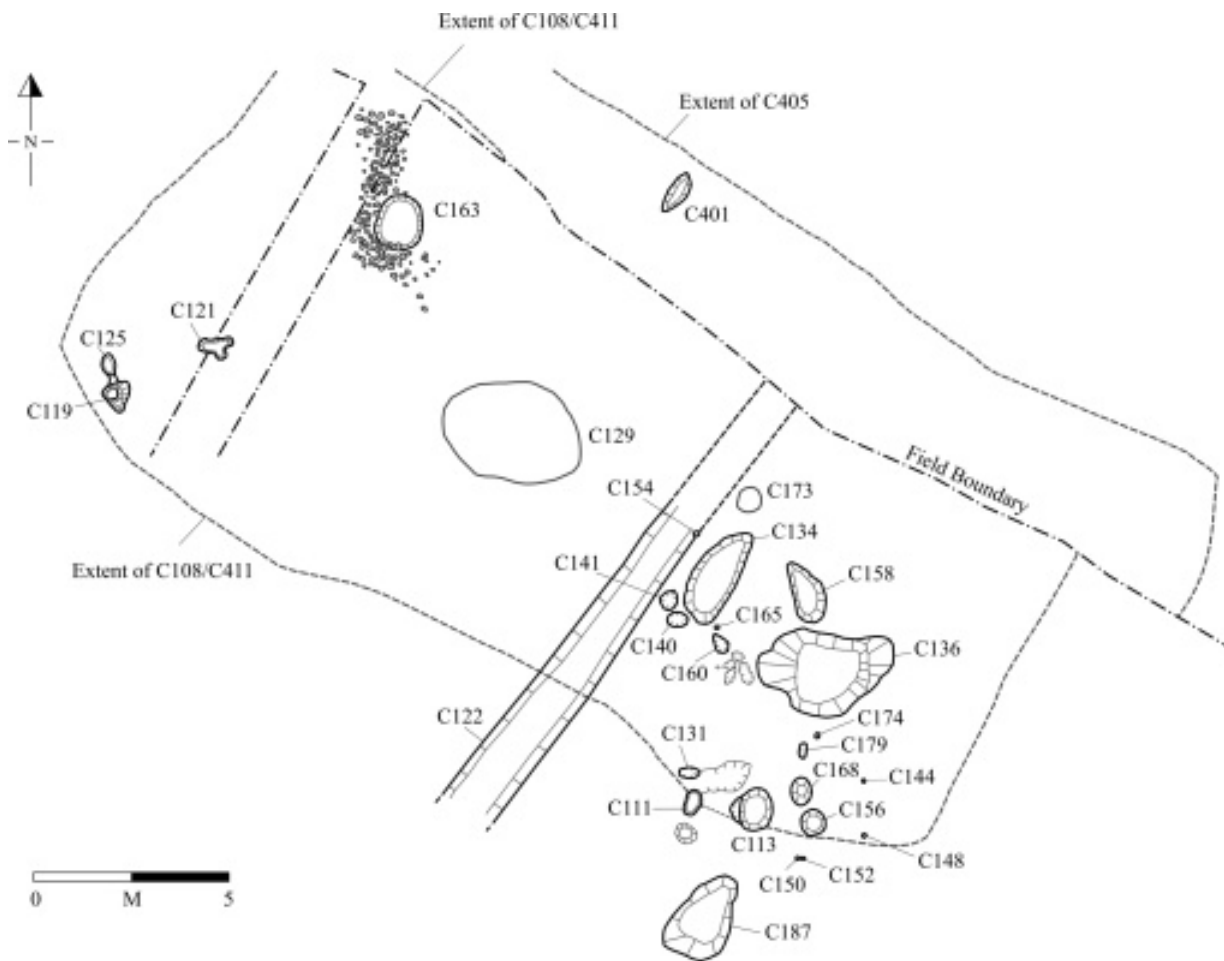


Fig. 6.20 Plan of Area 2 focussing on the features in the vicinity of spread C108

from the fill (C112) and the pit was suggested as a cremation pit by the excavator. Interestingly, to the east of this, also at the edge of the spread, lay the third feature (C113), a steep-sided pit, or possibly a posthole. The proximity of these two features, a relatively small shallow oval pit with a posthole in close proximity is reminiscent of the possible cremation pit and post to the southwest of the spread (C125 & C119). A small oval pit (C131) was also excavated just to the north of this, below the main spread, the fill of which contained a worked flint scraper and cremated bone (C132). This may be associated with the possible cremation pit (C111) and a natural depression was apparent between the two pits.

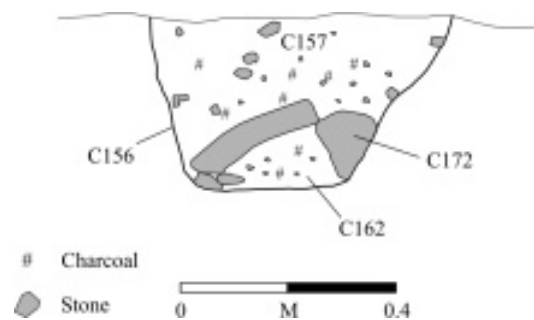
A number of other pits and postholes were uncovered beneath the southern corner of main spread (C108) at the base of the slope to the hollow.

A substantial sub-circular posthole (C156) was



Fig. 6.21 Mid-excavation shot of posthole C156, looking north

Fig. 6.22 South-facing section of posthole C156



identified with packing stones (C172) dividing the upper (C157) and lower fill (C162). A flint scraper of Beaker type was retrieved from the upper fill of this feature.

A north-south orientated sub-oval pit or natural depression (C168) was identified truncated by a posthole (C170) at its northern end. The posthole was angled at a c. 60-degree angle to the north.

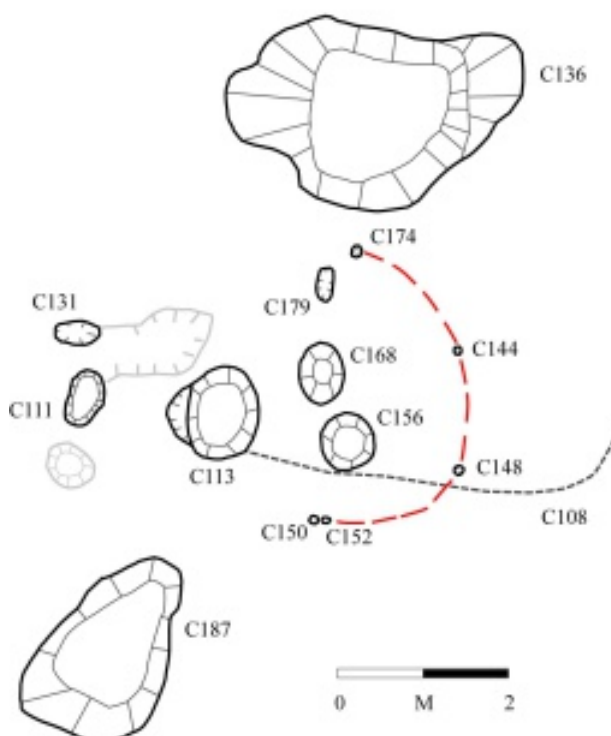
Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)	
C109	Fill	1.3	1.2	0.09
C110	Fill	0.8	0.7	0.09
C111	Cut	0.59	0.49	0.12
C112	Fill	0.59	0.49	0.12
C113	Cut	0.8	0.7	0.4
C114	Fill	0.8	0.7	0.4
C131	Cut	0.5	0.25	0.19
C132	Fill	0.5	0.25	0.19
C156	Cut	0.65	0.57	0.35
C157	Fill	0.65	0.57	0.19-0.25
C162	Fill	0.65	0.57	0.35
C168	Cut	1	0.45	0.05-0.14
C169	Fill	1	0.45	0.05-0.14
C170	Cut	0.31	0.3	0.31
C171	Fill	0.31	0.3	0.31
C172	Fill	0.36	0.36	0.13
C187	Cut	2.14	1.2	0.09

Possible structure

A total of five stake-holes were identified (C144, C148, C150, C152 & C174). They were all single fill (C145, C149, C151, C153 & C175 respectively) and were found to form an arc from the north (C174) curving to the east and back to a double stake-hole (C150 & C152) to the south. This may originally have formed part of a small structure, the other side of which was lost in the spread, or they may represent a complete structure forming a semi-circular windbreak or some such feature. The stake-holes were all very small and did not suggest a substantial structure. They were also located on sloping ground running down to the natural hollow, which would seem to be an unusual location for a structure. They partially encircled the pit (C168) and related angled posthole (C170), as well as the substantial posthole (C156), though the relationship between these features is at present unknown.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)	
C144	Cut	0.08	0.08	0.1
C145	Fill	0.08	0.08	0.1
C148	Cut	0.08	0.08	0.06
C149	Fill	0.08	0.08	0.06
C150	Cut	0.07	0.06	0.14
C151	Fill	0.07	0.06	0.14
C152	Cut	0.07	0.05	0.09
C153	Fill	0.07	0.05	0.09
C174	Cut	0.13	0.12	0.15
C175	Fill	0.13	0.12	0.15-0.17

Fig. 6.23 Plan of possible structure represented by stake-holes



Well-pit

At the base of the hollow a number of larger features were encountered. This area was dominated by two large well pits (C136 & C163) and a number of other features.

The largest feature within Area 2 was a large, slightly irregularly-shaped well-pit (C136) orientated east-west. This was located below the water table, which heavily influenced the excavation of the pit. It was necessary to cut a large sump into the base of the pit to allow for excavation. The pit was steep sided to the north, east and south while it gradually sloped up to the west, which can be seen as the access point for the well-pit. A gentle slope along the eastern side of the pit ended abruptly at a steep drop-off into the main body of the well pit forming a small ledge in the eastern side and may represent part of a natural hollow the well

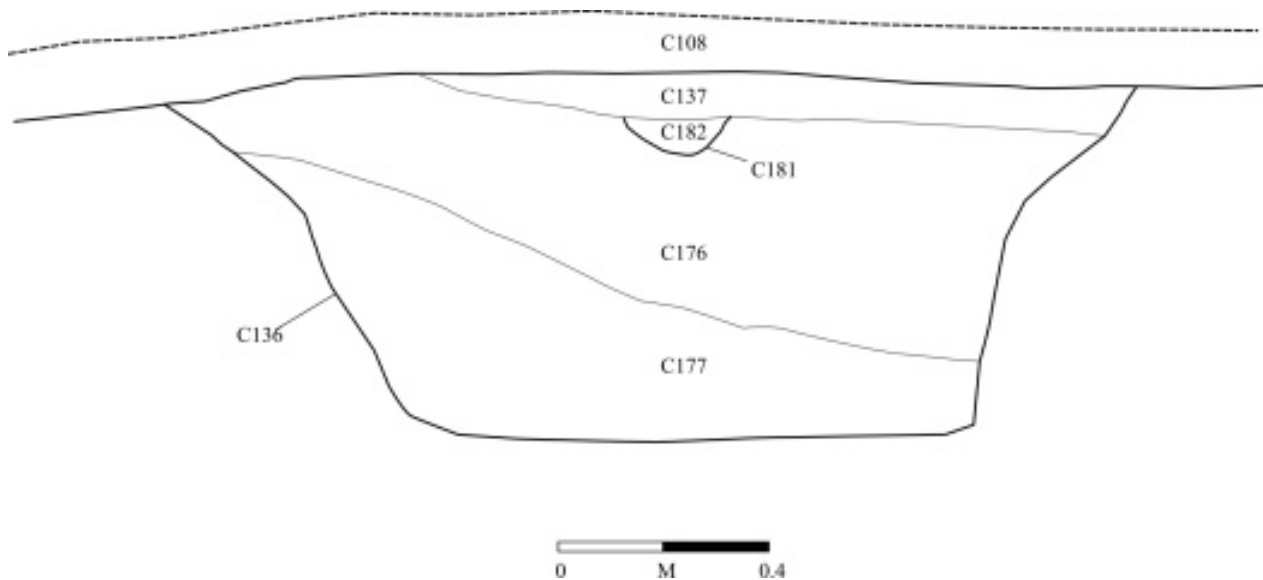


Fig. 6.24 West-facing section of well-pit C136

Fig. 6.25 Mid-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking east



pit was constructed within. The well pit had five fills (C137, C139, C176, C177 and C178). A further four smaller pits were cut into the fills of the well pit at various stages as it filled up (C179, C181, C183 and C185).

The primary fill was a stony deposit located within the main body of the well-pit (C177). It lay across the base of the pit and rose higher on the north side. This appears to have been intentionally deposited within the pit, possibly to create a more solid base for the feature, or the stone may originally have partially lined the pit to give it some structure. This was partially overlaid by a slump of re-deposited natural to the southeast (C178), presumably a partial collapse of the edge of the well pit along this side. Badly degraded animal bone and animal teeth were retrieved from these layers.

The main fill of the well-pit (C176) overlay this

and filled the main body of the well-pit. A number of degraded animal bones and teeth were retrieved from this fill along with a relatively large amount of burnt bone (when compared with the other samples of burnt bone retrieved from the site). The fill also contained a sherd of Late Bronze Age pottery (Neil Carlin



Fig. 6.26 Mid-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking west

pers. comm. 2014), another sherd of prehistoric pottery, a number of struck flints, a fragment of a possible broken saddle quern and two possible struck quartz objects. This fill appears to relate to natural silting up of this feature over time rather than an intentional backfilling of the feature, with significant inclusions of charcoal indicating burning events were taking place in the surrounding area while the pit was filling up.

After this stage the well pit appears to have no longer served a function as a well, probably appearing as a depression at the base of the natural hollow. A number of small pits or postholes were cut into the underlying fills (C176 and C177) at this point, three located to the southeast of the pit (C181, C183 & C185) and one to the west. Two of the features were identified only in section (C179 & C181). The largest posthole (C183) and another slightly smaller one (C185) were located immediately inside the edge of the sharp drop off to the main pit. The fills of the pits/ postholes (C180, C182, C184 & C186) were indistinguishable from the overlying fills so it was not possible to identify their full extents. It is unclear whether these pits/ postholes relate to activity associated with the well pit, or whether they relate to the other pits, post- and stake-holes lying to the south (C111, C113, C156, C168 etc.).

Overlying this sequence two final fills were identified. The first was located at the western end of the pit in the vicinity of the slope down to the main body of the well-pit (C177). It consisted of a re-deposited natural that was indistinguishable from the fill of the small posthole at the western end of the well pit (C180). This appeared to have been intentionally deposited. Though the relationship was somewhat unclear, it appeared that the final fill (C137) overlay this event. It filled the remaining depression over the well pit, including the shallow shelf to the east. It was indistinguishable from the fills of the three postholes at the southeast end of the well pit



Fig. 6.27 Post-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking west

Fig. 6.28 Post-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking north



(C182, C184 & C186). One sherd of undecorated prehistoric pottery, a flint scraper and a number of struck flints were retrieved from this fill, along with badly degraded animal bone and animal teeth and some burnt bone and burnt antler. This marked the final filling of the well pit and was overlaid by the general spread (C108).

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C136 Cut	3.1	1.9	0.8
C137 Fill	2.5	2.3	0.2
C139 Fill	1.4	1.25	0.1
C176 Fill	3	1.9	0.65
C177 Fill	1.9	1.4	0.45
C178 Fill	0.7	0.6	0.03-0.05
C179 Cut	0.15	0.15	0.05-0.14
C180 Fill	0.15	0.15	0.05
C181 Cut	0.2	0.2	0.05
C182 Fill	0.2	0.2	0.05
C183 Cut	0.6	0.5	0.3
C184 Fill	0.6	0.5	0.3
C185 Cut	0.3	0.2	0.05
C186 Fill	0.3	0.2	0.05

Prehistoric well and pathway

A sub-circular well (C163) was encountered at the northern end of the spread (C108) and the limit of excavation prior to the removal of the

field boundary. This was straight-sided, had a relatively flat base and extended below the water table. It was filled with a largely stony single fill (C164) with frequent charcoal inclusions in the silt surrounding the stones. The fill was similar to the initial fill of the well pit to the southeast (C177). The stones, mainly granite with occasional limestone, were generally 0.15 x 0.15 x 0.15m in size, though some larger slabs 0.45 x 0.25 x 0.15m were evident. The well was evidently intentionally backfilled as a single event.

Surrounding the south, west and northwest of the pit an intentionally laid rough stone pathway was identified. This appeared as a densely packed surface of angular and sub-rounded stones running roughly north-south and was clearly associated with the well itself. A scattering of stones were evident to the southeast of the well, however they were not as consistent. The pathway presumably marked an access for the well, possibly used to provide a better surface to access the well in this obviously wet and muddy area of the field. It continued into the area overlaid by the field boundary, which was

Fig. 6.29 Post-excavation shot of well C163 and pathway to the south, west and north, looking south



subsequently removed. Within this area to the north the pathway became less distinct, though a linear concentration of stones running north-west-southeast (C404) is likely to be a continuation of the pathway. A more sporadic deposit of stone was identified within the general overlying fill in this area (C403) to the north of the well, similar to that seen to the southeast of the well, though this does not seem to have been intentionally laid.



Fig. 6.30 Mid-excitation of northern extension of pathway (C404), looking southeast

A sub-circular flat-bottomed pit truncated the pathway in the northern corner of the area (C408). The fill of this pit (C409) was similar to the layer generally overlying the stones at this point (C403). The northern section of the pathway was constructed within a shallow linear cut with a thin layer of re-deposited natural clay (C410) at the base, possibly providing a bedding for the pathway stones.

Context	Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C163	Cut	1.25	1.15	0.44-0.47
C164	Fill	1.25	1.15	0.44-0.47
C404	Deposit	4.29	3.4	0.1-0.3
C408	Cut	1	0.87-0.95	0.13-0.2
C409	Fill	1	0.87-0.95	0.13-0.2
C410	Deposit	4.29	2.4-2.5	0.06-0.25

Linear pit and associated features

A northeast-southwest orientated linear pit (C134) was located to the northwest of the well pit. This pit lay mostly below the water table, which hampered its excavation. The fill (C135) contained a small amount of burnt bone and seemed to have been formed through the silting up of the pit.

Directly to the southwest of the pit was a substantial straight-sided posthole (C140) with a



Fig. 6.31 Post-excitation shot of linear pit C134 to right and well-pit C136 to left, looking southwest

single fill (C142). To the north of this a shallow oval pit (C141), the fill of which (C143) also contained a small amount of burnt bone.

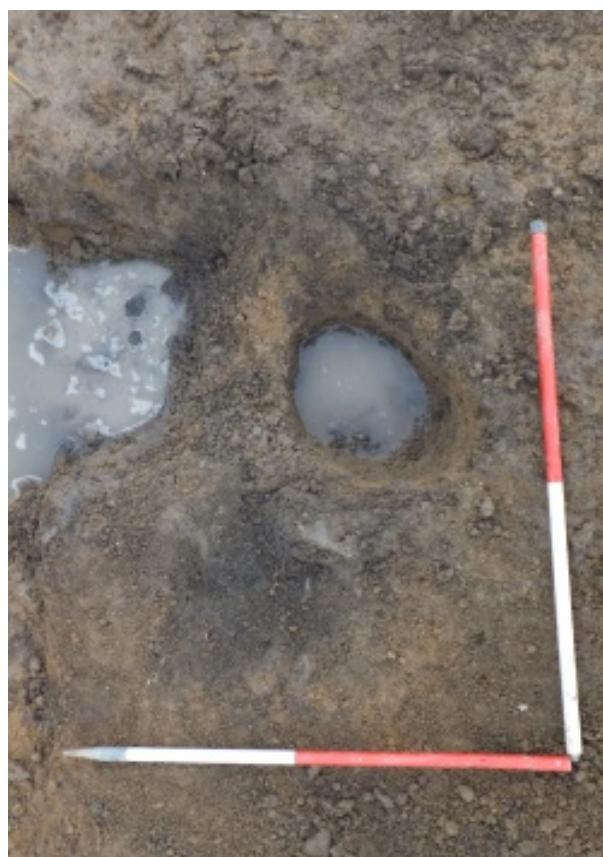


Fig. 6.32 Post-excitation shot of posthole C140 at southwest end of linear pit C134 with pit C141 unexcavated to north, looking southeast

Two stake-holes were also identified in close proximity to the linear pit, one to the north (C154) and one to the south (C165).

The positioning of the posthole at one end of the linear pit suggests that these two features, at

least, were located. The presence of the smaller oval pit with burnt bone beside a posthole here again mirrors what has been seen elsewhere in this area and may relate to some form of burial rite.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)	
C134	Cut	2.1	1.05	0.42
C135	Fill	2.1	1.05	0.42
C140	Cut	0.5	0.33	0.3
C141	Cut	0.33	0.33	0.08
C142	Fill	0.5	0.33	0.3
C143	Fill	0.33	0.33	0.08
C154	Cut	0.09	0.09	0.13
C155	Fill	0.09	0.09	0.13
C165	Cut	0.1	0.1	0.09
C167	Fill	0.1	0.1	0.09

Other features within the hollow

A small pit (C160) was identified to the south-east of the linear pit (C134). While this pit was quite small and shallow, the presence of a small upright stone pillar within the pit marked it as unusual and it is possible the upright stone was intended as some form of marker. The stone was rectangular in plan at the top and tapered to a thin wedge at the base. It was intentionally propped up within the pit with two smaller stone supporting it. The stone protruded 0.1m from the top of the pit and would have projected into the spread above (C108). A sherd of prehistoric pottery was also found within the fill (C161) against the edge of the cut and appeared to have been intentionally placed. To the south of this pit a number of small dips and depressions were identified. Upon investigation these were found to contain spread material from the overlying deposit (C108), however they gave the impression of a pockmarked surface, possibly suggestive of the movement of animals in a mucky part of the landscape.

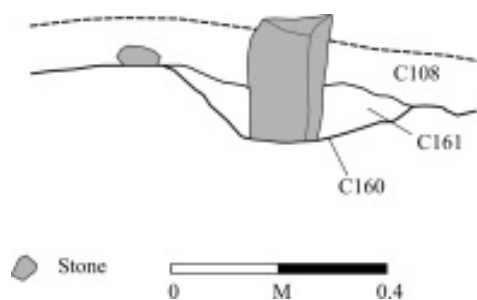


Fig. 6.33 South-facing section of pit C160 with upright stone pillar



Fig. 6.34 Mid-excavation shot of pit C160, looking north

To the northwest of the well pit a second smaller linear pit was excavated (C158), the base of which lay below the water table. The pit was orientated north-south and a struck flint was retrieved from the fill (C159).

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)	
C158	Cut	1.37	0.5-0.8	0.2
C159	Fill	1.37	0.5-0.8	0.2
C160	Cut	0.45	0.45	0.16
C161	Fill	0.45	0.45	0.16

North of the hollow

The general spread representing the hollow (C108/ C411) only extended for a short distance to the north beneath the existing field boundary. It was partially overlaid by a deposit which extended over much of this area (C403) to the north and may be equivalent to deposit C115 to the south. This layer was cut into by an oval pit with slightly irregular sides and base (C401) with a single fill containing burnt clay and charcoal, likely to have been a fire pit. The main deposit in this area (C403) extended over a considerable area and post-dated the pathway (C404) associated with the well (C163). While a number of finds were retrieved from it including a degraded crumb of prehistoric pottery, a flint scraper and a number of other possible struck flint and quartz objects, it was substantially less charcoal-rich and appears to mark the edge of the concentration of activity in this area.

A single sub-circular pit (C406) was identified beneath this layer (C403) to the north of the limit of the main spread. The fill of this pit (C407) contained some degraded animal bone and a burnt stone at the base.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C401 Cut	1.2	0.2	0.09
C402 Fill	1.2	0.2	0.09
C403 Deposit	35	3	0.2
C406 Cut	0.65	0.57	0.17
C407 Fill	0.65	0.57	0.17

Underlying deposits

Two underlying deposits were identified beneath the main spread. Both were relatively confined and did not extend across the entire area. They may originally have been more extensive, however the use of the area and the churning up of the overlying layer (C108) would have seen them being mixed with the overlying deposit. The first (C129) was a thin oval deposit situated to the southeast of the well (C163) and west of the post-medieval ditch (C122). Four sherds of prehistoric pottery were retrieved from the pit, two of which are possibly Early Neolithic (Eoin Grogan pers. comm. 2014) in date, along with a struck flint and a possibly struck quartz object. An animal tooth was also



Fig. 6.35 Pre-excitation shot of spread C129, looking north

retrieved from the deposit.

The second underlying deposit (C173) was located to the north of linear pit (C134) and east of the post-medieval ditch (C122). This also contained four sherds of Early Neolithic pottery (Neil Carlin pers. comm. 2014) and a small amount of badly degraded bone. These two layers were somewhat similar and it is possible that originally they formed parts of the same deposit, which was broken up and amalgamated with the layer above over time.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C129 Deposit	1.65	1.4	0.03-0.05
C173 Deposit	0.7	0.55	0.05-0.14

Area 3

Area 3 was excavated over three weeks from 3rd to 24th November. It was located in the northeast corner of the site on a slope at the base of the terraced playing fields. The area sloped from southeast to northwest. Part of this area lies within the constraint zone for the medieval settlement associated with Kilgobbin Castle (RMP No. DU025-017--) to the northeast. Archaeological activity in this area included prehistoric settlement and burial activity as well as medieval water management and post-medieval activity, likely to relate to field drainage. The medieval activity was limited to the northeastern portion of the site while the prehistoric activity was largely identified to the southwest. A number of as yet undated features were also encountered.

There was evidence for the ground level having been built up at the northeast end of the field in recent years, likely to have occurred during the laying out of the playing pitches. There was also evidence for ground reduction to the southwest with very little topsoil cover surviving above the subsoil and to the northwest where the bank of a medieval ditch (C244) was truncated at the top. In the central area of the site a number of modern pits were also identified and a large deep modern pit had been excavated through the western end of the medieval pond, which impacted upon the understanding of its relationship with the ditches to the west.

Additional works were carried out in Area following the removal of the northeastern field boundary, however few additional features were uncovered. A c. 19th century cobbled surface (C356) was identified to the west of the farm buildings to the north of Area 3, while the northern side of the field boundary was found to have been revetted in places (C357), similar to the revetment seen along the west side of the field boundary to the west of Area 2. Here the revetment appeared to be 19th century in date.

The natural subsoil in Area 3 was similar to that seen in Area 2, comprising a loose yellowish brown sandy silt with a high granite content. The sand was largely crushed granite and coarse grained. Moderately frequent stones, from small

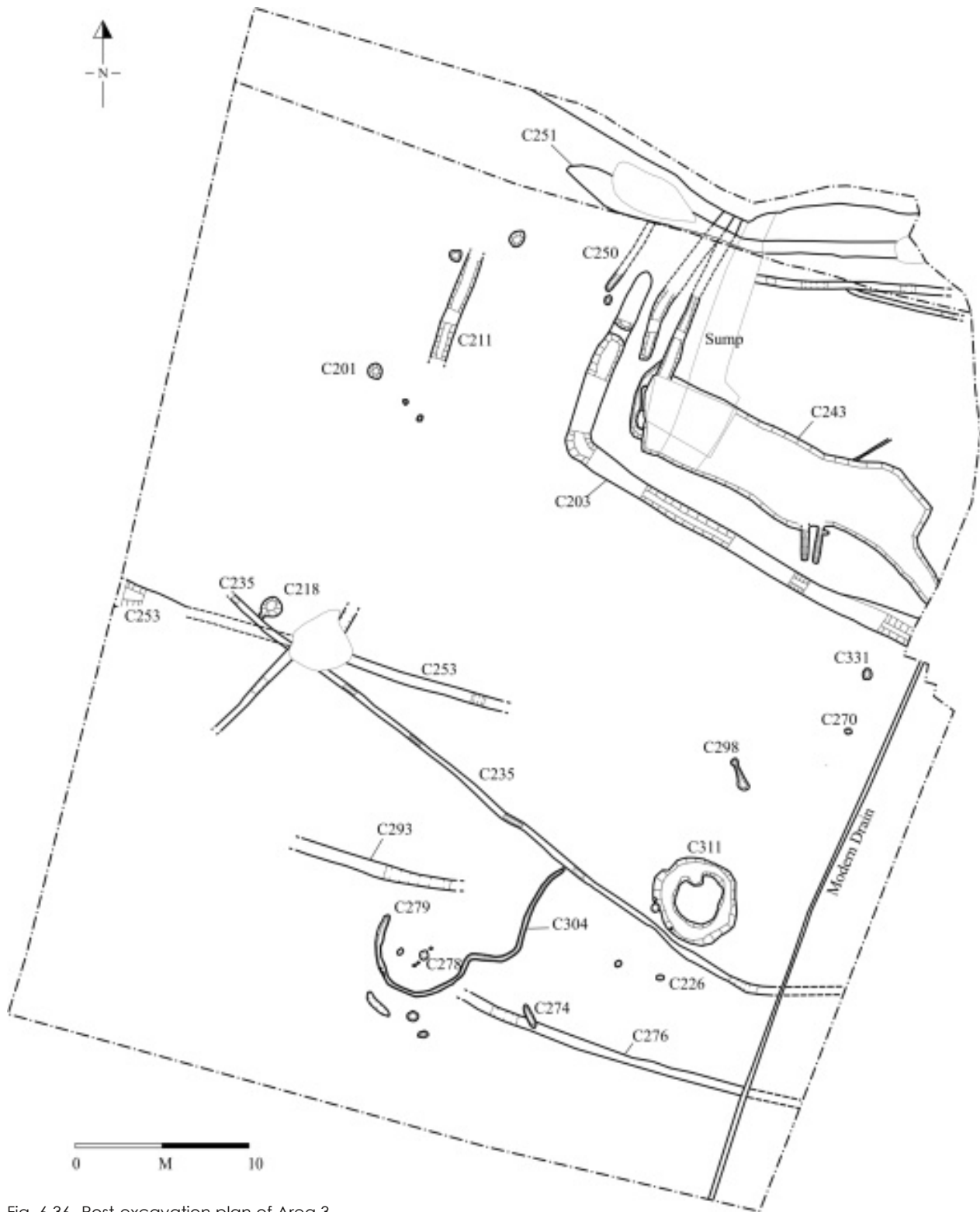


Fig. 6.36 Post-excavation plan of Area 3

pebbles to boulders were encountered within the natural. The loose nature of this material caused some difficulty in identifying the true edges of some of the features. It is also apparent that when the features were originally dug the same difficulties would have been encountered and sides may have collapsed regularly. A number of glacial and other natural

anomalies were identified across the site. Weather conditions deteriorated during the excavation of Area 3 with heavy rain and flooding at times. This was particularly challenging during the excavation of the pond and associated ditches to the north, and the barrow to the east, requiring a certain amount of water management. Even with this, the pond and barrow

were largely excavated with water in the features as at this time they lay below the water table.

Northern portion of Area 3

The northeast portion of the site was dominated by a series of drainage and water management features centred on the north-east corner of the site dating from the medieval to the post-medieval period. As this area was the lowest point of the excavation and lay at the bottom of the slope the development is situated upon, this part of Area 3 suffered significantly from flooding. Two large sumps were excavated to help drain the area as much as possible and allow excavation to proceed.

The medieval pond and water management features

A sub-rectangular medieval pond was identified (C243) orientated northwest-southeast associated with a number of water-management features. The pond itself was relatively shallow, flat bottomed and steep-sided. It was filled with a single fill (C262), which was a gritty silty sand and contained one large medieval strap handle and some degraded animal bone.

It truncated a narrow curvilinear gully (C239) to the west, which appears to be the earliest feature in this sequence. No finds were retrieved from the fill (C240) and no datable material was identified. It was truncated by a later ditch to the north (C241) leaving only an L-shaped portion of this gully, which ran east-west at its southern end before taking a distinct turn to run to the northeast. It was also unclear what the gully may represent. The shape of the gully, being narrow and steep-sided, was different to the other water management features in this area and it is possible that this feature served a different function, possibly a slot trench for a structure.

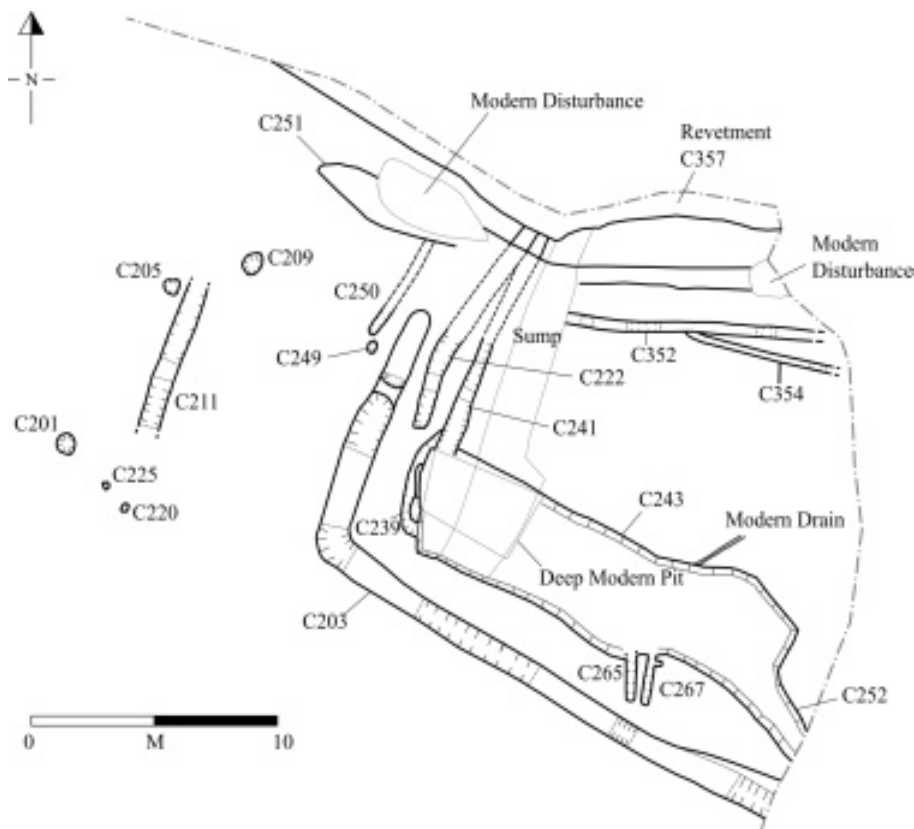


Fig. 6.37 Post-excavation plan of the northern portion of Area 3

Fig. 6.38 Mid-excavation shot of the pond C243 and ditch C203, looking west



The main water management ditch (C203) associated with the pond bounded the southern and western sides of the pond, taking a sharp corner to the southwest that mirrored the southwest corner of the pond. The levels along the base of the ditch showed only slight variations, suggesting the intention was to manage the water rather than control its flow. While it is difficult to say for certain due to the variance of the levels along the base of the ditch, it would appear that the ditch ran from east to west, before turning to run to the north. The ditch was lost to the north, as this area had been reduced

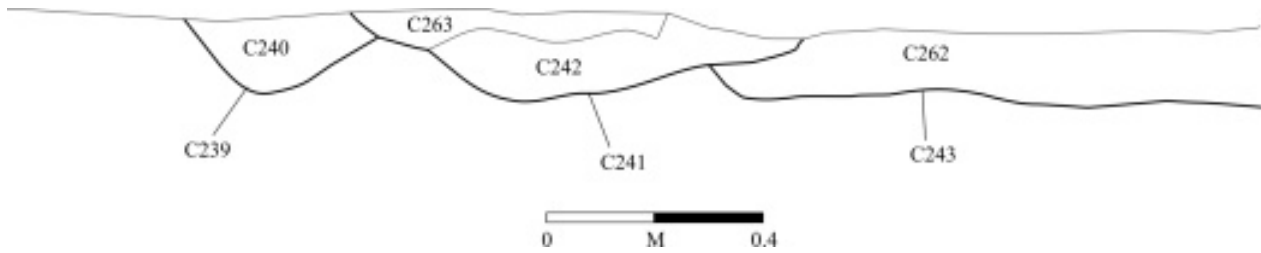


Fig. 6.39 South-facing section of gully C239, post-medieval ditch C241 and pond C243

Fig. 6.40 Post-excavation shot of gully C239 with pond C243 to the east, looking north

Fig. 6.41 (below) Mid-excavation shot of ditch C203, looking southwest



more than the others during the monitoring programme. After the removal of the field boundary this area was investigated and any evidence for the ditch continuing was found to have been lost due to later truncation by a modern ditch and sump (C251). A number of fills were identified within the ditch (C204, C217, C245, C246, & C247) and some degraded bone was retrieved. The remains of a bank (C244) was identified to the north of the east-west orientated section of the ditch at the eastern end. This had partially slumped into the ditch and survived to a height of 0.35m in section, with evidence of truncation during the levelling of the area for the playing fields in the 1970s suggesting that originally it would have stood to a

greater height. It was unclear whether this bank would have continued around the internal side of the ditch for its entire length. Two sherds of medieval pottery were retrieved from the bank material. One of the other fills (C245) suggested some slumping from the southern side also, possibly suggesting a second bank on that side, however this was not apparent elsewhere and no upstanding bank remains were noted in section.

All of the other fills of the ditch overlay the slumping of the bank at this point. Two main fills were identified within the ditch in most sections (C204 & C217). The primary fill of the ditch (C204), besides from the two possible slumping events (C244 & C245), was evident throughout the ditch and probably represents the initial silting up of the ditch. The secondary fill of the ditch (C217), which marked the back-filling of the ditch, was found in all sections bar the final section to the east, where the bank (C244) and additional slump to the south (C245) were also identified. Here two new fills were identified (C246 & C247), with the lower of these (C246) appearing to be associated with a build-up against the surviving bank. The final fill (C247) overlay this and continued beyond the edge of the ditch, possibly suggesting that it in fact represents a separate event after the ditch had been backfilled.

At the northern end of the north-south running section a distinct rise in the base caused by an intentionally deposited bank of material (C361) was evident, measuring 0.5m in width and standing 0.32m in height above the base of the ditch. The purpose of this rise was unclear, but it may have served as a causeway for crossing the ditch, or as an additional water management feature. The corner to the southwest is also a high point of the ditch, however the ditch is also at its widest at this point too, which may explain the lesser depth. It is possibly that these higher sections in the base were merely acci-

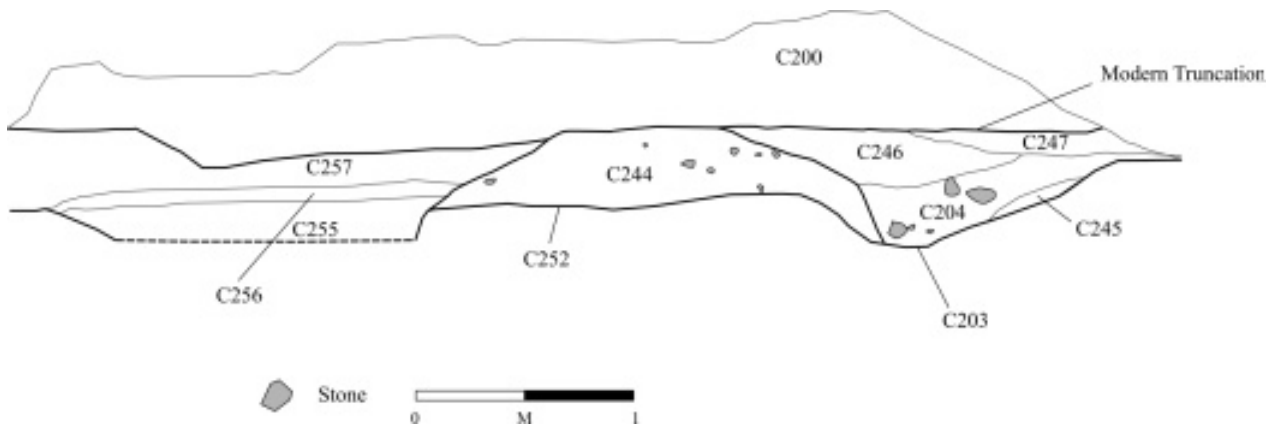


Fig. 6.42 Northwest-facing section of ditch C203, bank C244 and pond inlet C252

Fig. 6.43 Post-excavation shot of the northwest-facing bank of the site showing the northwest-facing section of ditch C203, bank C244 and pond inlet C252, looking southeast

Fig. 6.44 (below) Post-excavation shot of the rise in the base (C361) of ditch C203 at the northern end, looking north



dental.

There are three possible channels connecting the ditch to the pond, however in all cases the connection was not fully established. Two small channels (C265 & C267) were identified to the north of the main ditch (C203) running north-south. Both were relatively shallow and would have been cut through the bank to the north of the ditch (C244). Both of these appear to have sloped from south to north, possibly originally supplying water from the ditch to the pond, however their connection to the ditch has been lost, having been truncated away. The eastern channel (C267) clearly fed into the pond, the fills being indistinguishable. The western channel (C265) truncated the surviving fill of the pond (C262) and was evidently later, however it may still have supplied the pond with water at a higher and no longer surviving level. Both of these channels would have provided water from the ditch when the ditch was quite full and the water level was high. In this way they may have acted as overflows for the ditch rather than being specifically designed to feed the pond. A third channel to the east (C252) was identified, which ap-

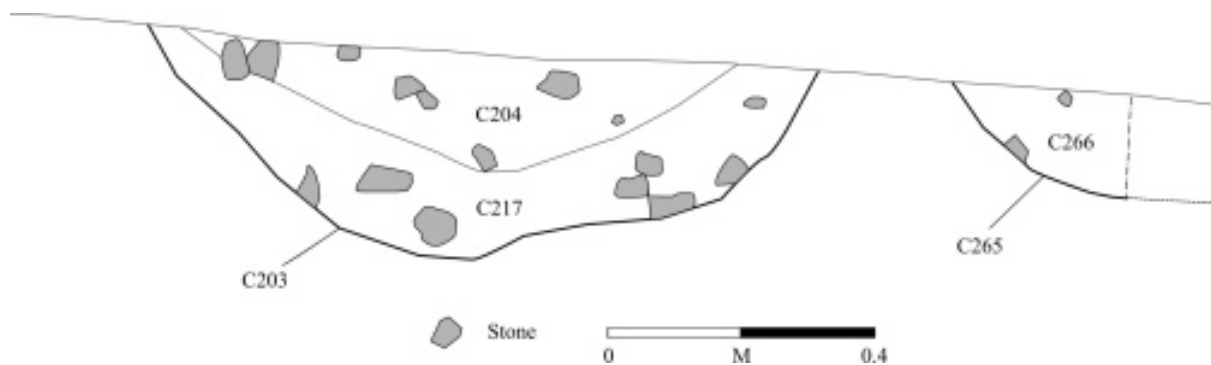
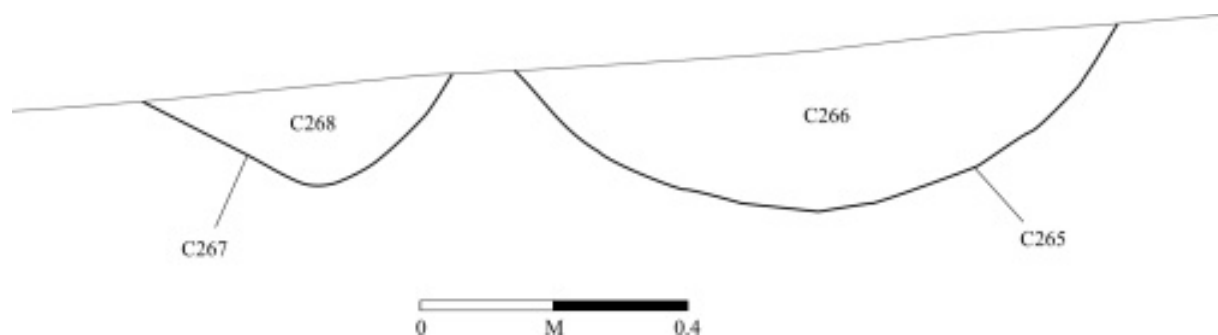


Fig. 6.45 Southeast-facing section of ditch C203 and overflow channel C265 showing the distance between the two features

Fig. 6.46 North-facing section of overflow channels C156 and C167



peared to have directly fed the pond. It was cut into (or possibly shared) the bank of the main ditch (C244) and ran southeast-northwest to the southeastern corner of the pond. Two fills were identified within this channel (C255 & C256), one of which (C255) contained a sherd of medieval pottery, however this was accidentally lost due to heavy downpour of rain during excava-

tion. The third channel is likely to have been the main water supply for the pond, feeding from a water supply to the east. Overlying this was a build-up of material (C257), which also overlay the bank of the main ditch (C244) to the south and is likely to represent the period after the pond and its feeding channels had gone out of use.

Context	Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C203	Cut	31.9	1 – 1.35	0.2-0.4
C204	Fill	31.9	1 – 1.35	0.2-0.4
C217	Fill	20	0.4-1.25	0.1-0.4
C239	Cut	6.55	0.35-0.4	0.15-0.17
C240	Fill	6.55	0.35-0.4	0.15-0.17
C243	Cut	17	3.8-5.7	0.14-0.24
C244	Deposit	4.3	0.5	0.25-0.35
C245	Fill	0.45	0.1	0.06
C246	Fill	N/A	1.4	0.26
C247	Fill	N/A	1.16	0.11
C252	Cut	N/A	2.28	0.45
C255	Fill	N/A	1.77	0.2
C256	Fill	N/A	1.89	0.05-0.15
C257	Deposit	N/A	2.5	0.09-0.37
C262	Fill	17	3.8-5.7	0.13-0.24
C263	Fill	0.58	0.35-0.4	0.03-0.07
C265	Cut	2.13	0.89	0.22
C266	Fill	2.13	0.89	0.22
C267	Cut	2.34	0.4	0.1
C268	Fill	2.34	0.4	0.1
C361	Fill	0.5	1.23	0.32

Medieval gully

To the north of the pond an east-west orientated gully (C352) was identified, partially below the former field boundary, the fill (C353) of which contained one sherd of medieval pottery and an animal tooth. The gully was clearly defined at its western end but became less distinct to the east and was lost in the disturbed ground underlying the field boundary. A separate west-northwest to east-southeast gully (C354) partially truncated it to the east running to the south of the gully and may represent a realignment of the original gully. The later gully did not produce any finds and had been lost to the east due to the greater ground reduction in this area. These gullies were somewhat isolated and relationship with the linear features to the west was obscured due to the placement of the

sump, however the size and shape of the gully is reminiscent of the gully truncated by the pond to the southwest (C239).

Context Type		L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C352	Cut	11.15	0.3-0.5	0.05-0.15
C353	Fill	11.15	0.3-0.5	0.05-0.15
C354	Cut	6.2	0.24-0.31	0.07-0.12
C355	Fill	6.2	0.24-0.31	0.07-0.12

Other features in the vicinity

The shallow north-south running ditch (C241) that truncated the northern end of the gully (C239) ran towards the field boundary also truncated the fill of the pond indicating that the pond had filled and gone out of use prior to the digging of this ditch. It is likely to be a post-medieval field drainage ditch, however no finds or datable material was retrieved from its fills (C242 & C263). Another small linear feature (C222) was excavated running parallel to this to the west, sloping from south to north towards the field boundary. After the removal of the field boundary it was found that this ditch partially truncated the ditch to the east (C241). This may be a later agricultural feature, however the fact that both this and the ditch cutting the pond to the east (C241) run roughly parallel to the main water management ditch (C203) associated with the pond may suggest that the main ditch was still of significance even after the pond itself had gone out of use.

Another small ditch or gully (C250) ran parallel to these to the west of the main ditch. Again, this may well have been agricultural. It was truncated to the north by a modern east-west running drain identified after the field boundary was removed (C251), which also cut the ditches to the east (C222 & C251). The modern drain was associated with a large stone and rubble-filled sump previously located within the field boundary and contained 19th and 20th century pottery. A posthole (C249) was located to the northern end of the small ditch to the west of the main ditch (C250) and to the north of the causeway in the main ditch. This contained two fills (C260 & C261), one of which (C261) was associated with support stones for the post. While it is unclear whether the posthole was related to the small ditch to the north, or the main ditch to the east. Its proximity to the causeway in the main ditch is interesting and it may have

been related to some aspect in the water management of these features.

A small pit with possible burning was also excavated to the northeast of the corner in the main ditch (C258). The function of this feature was unclear.

Context Type		L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C222	Cut	9.8	0.6-1	0.2
C223	Fill	9.8	0.6-1	0.2
C241	Cut	5.25	0.5-0.75	0.10-0.11
C242	Fill	5.25	0.5-0.75	0.1-0.11
C249	Cut	0.45	0.43	0.14-0.26
C250	Cut	4.8	0.35	0.07
C251	Cut	21.8	0.7-2.35	0.33
C258	Cut	0.3	0.1-0.18	0.1
C259	Fill	0.3	0.1-0.18	0.02-0.1
C260	Fill	0.14	0.14	0.26
C261	Fill	0.4	0.4	0.13
C263	Fill	0.58	0.35-0.4	0.03-0.07
C264	Fill	21.8	0.7-2.35	0.32
C269	Fill	4.8	0.35-0.4	0.07-0.10

Features to the northwest

A very shallow linear ditch (C211) running north-northeast to south-southwest through the northwest of Area 3 is likely to represent later agricultural activity. A number of anomalous features were also investigated in this area and were found to be non-archaeological geological and natural variations.

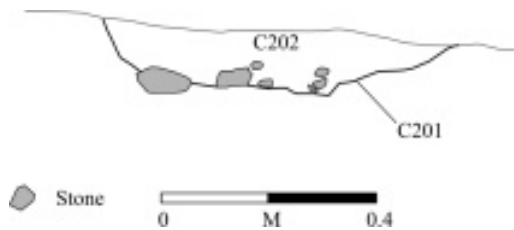
Several pits were identified nearby. One of the pits (C201) had been previously identified in the test-trenching programme, where it was suggested it was a metalworking pit. The surviving portion of the pit was relatively shallow, however a substantial quantity of slag was retrieved from the fill (C202) along with lumps of structured burnt clay possibly related to the superstructure associated with the pit. More or this structured burnt clay was retrieved from a spread of related material beyond the edge of the pit to the southwest (C207). There was nothing diagnostic about the pit to allow for a narrowing of the date range so until a radiocarbon date is obtained all that can be said is that this feature dated to the Iron Age at the earliest.

A second pit was a relatively large and shallow shallow sub-circular pit (C209) and contained three fills (C215, C210 & C213). A third sub-circular pit (C205) of similar proportions but much shallower was also identified. These latter



Fig. 6.47 Mid-excitation shot of metalworking pit C201, looking south

Fig. 6.48 North-facing section of metalworking pit C201



two pits were difficult to interpret as so little survives and are likely to have been more substantial originally.

To the southeast of the smelting pit two small postholes were identified. The southeastern posthole (C220) was located at the base of a shallow pit or natural depression (C216) and was sealed by the fill of that feature (C224). The northwestern posthole (C225) caused some doubts during excavation and may be a natural feature. While both of these features were in close proximity to each other, there were no other similar features in the surrounding vicinity to suggest they may have formed part of a structure. No dating evidence was retrieved from either feature.

Context	Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C201	Cut	0.67	0.65	0.05-0.1
C202	Fill	0.67	0.65	0.05-0.1
C205	Cut	0.85	0.85	0.07-0.10
C206	Fill	0.85	0.85	0.07-0.10
C207	Deposit	0.3	0.2	15mm
C209	Cut	1.03	0.35-0.8	0.05-0.22
C210	Fill	0.83	0.8	0.11
C211	Cut	7	0.9	0.13
C213	Fill	0.3	0.3	0.04
C214	Fill	7	0.9	0.11
C215	Fill	1.03	0.35-0.8	0.04-0.12
C216	Cut	0.7	0.65	0.06
C220	Cut	0.35	0.28	0.17
C221	Fill	0.35	0.28	0.17
C224	Fill	0.7	0.5	0.06
C225	Cut	0.35	0.3	0.11
C229	Fill	0.35	0.35-0.8	0.11

Central portion of Area 3

The central portion of Area 3 was somewhat unusual in that relatively few archaeological features were identified. It also provides a buffer between the predominantly medieval northern portion and the predominantly prehistoric southern portion of the area. The features in this portion are as yet undated and could relate to either phase of use.

Western kiln

To the west of the central portion of Area 3 a

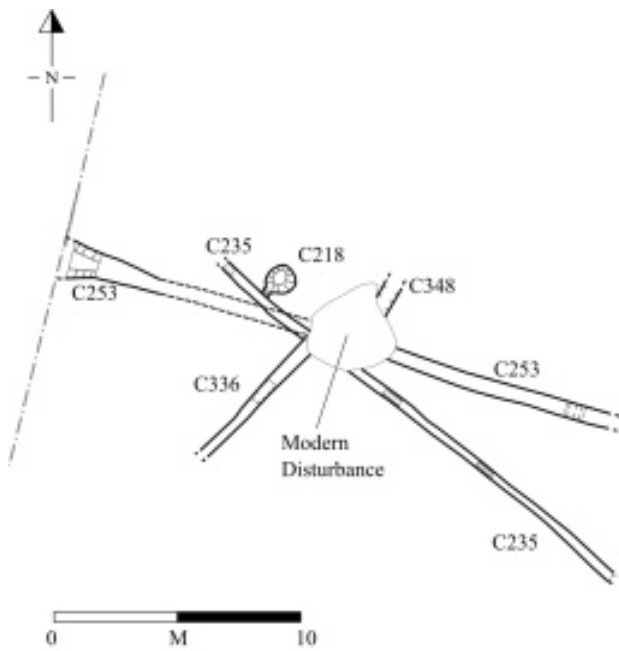


Fig. 6.49 Post-excitation plan of the central portion of Area 3

key-hole shaped kiln was identified (C218). It was steep-sided with the bowl to the north and the flue to the south. There was no surviving evidence for a second chamber, however the kiln was truncated to the south by a small northwest-southeast running drainage ditch (C235). The kiln had been well cleaned with only a small amount of scorching evident along the side of the flue to the south and no visible seeds identified during excavation. The primary fill of the kiln (C231) was located within the bowl to the north and survived better to the west of the kiln. This is likely to relate to the original use of the kiln. Overlying this was a secondary fill (C230), also located in the bowl, which exhibited heavy *in situ* burning. This fill may be the same as the fill below, differing only due to the effects of the burning. This is likely

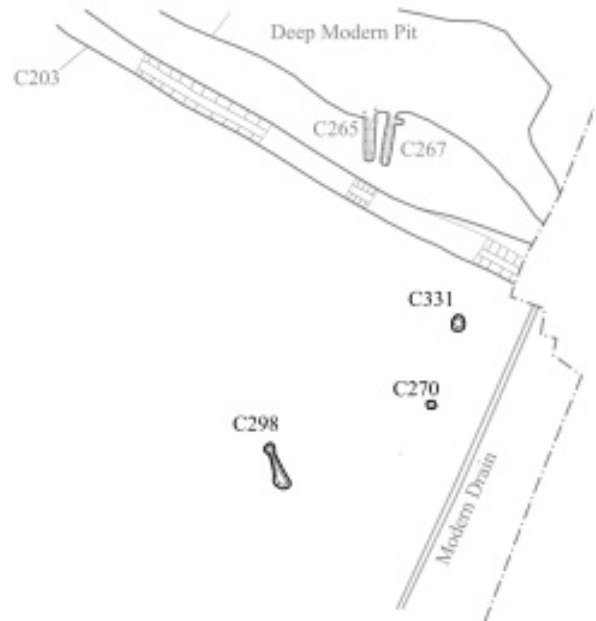
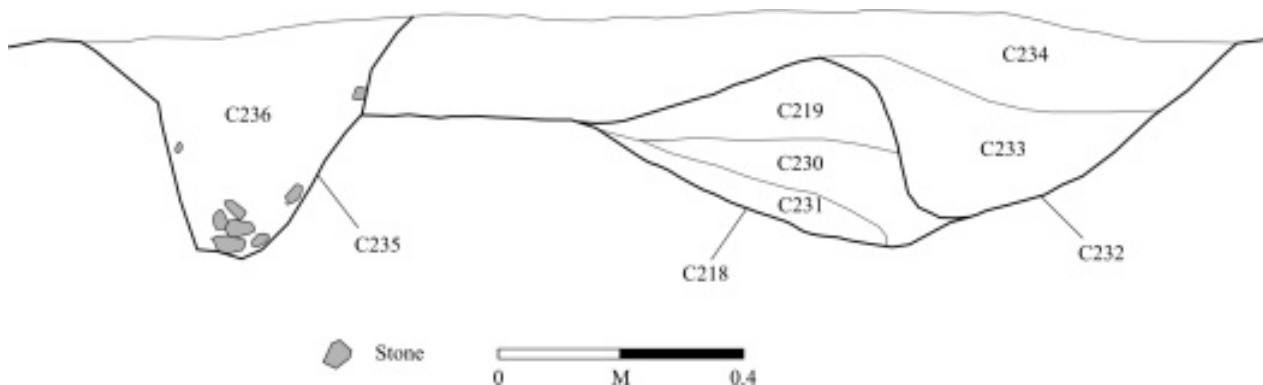


Fig. 6.50 East-facing section of kiln C218 and re-cut C232

to have occurred during a phase of re-use of the kiln after it had been partially backfilled. A third fill (C219) overlay this and was likely to relate to the backfilling of the original kiln.

Following this stage the kiln was re-cut (C232) in a comma shape, or possibly a small figure-of-eight, with a smaller bowl located in the northern portion of the original bowl and its flue running along the western edge of the original kiln. There was a rise in the base of the kiln re-cut between the new bowl and the new flue that may have acted as an informal baffle. The new flue narrowed slightly after leaving the bowl before widening to the original flue width of the original kiln, possibly suggesting that this widened section to the south was a second chamber. The re-cut was cut into the upper two fills of the original kiln. Two fills were identified within the re-cut kiln, a primary fill (C233) related to the use of the kiln itself and the upper



fill (C234) that backfilled the remainder of the kiln cut and marked the conclusion of the use of the kiln.

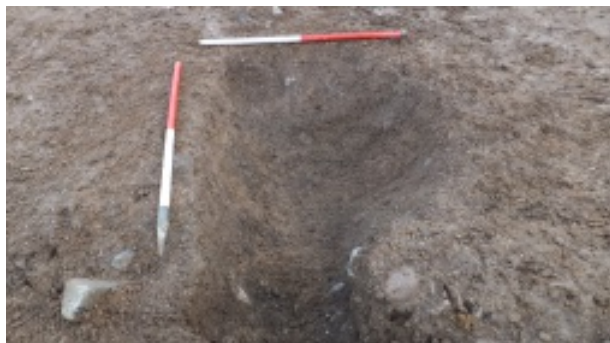
The southern end of the kiln was truncated by a small northwest-southeast running drainage ditch (C235), which continued across the whole area, meandering rather than straight. While it may be an agricultural feature it was orientated notably differently to the other linear agricultural features in the area and it may relate to an earlier phase of activity. No finds or dateable material was retrieved from the ditch.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C218 Cut	1.45	0.4-0.93	0.29-0.43
C219 Fill	0.53	0.4	0.13
C230 Fill	0.5	0.4	0.17
C231 Fill	0.45	0.36	0.14
C232 Cut	1.4	0.5	0.2
C233 Fill	0.55	0.5	0.2
C234 Fill	1.4	0.2-0.55	0.1-0.17
C235 Cut	35.5	0.35-0.4	0.35
C236 Fill	35.5	0.35-0.4	0.35



Fig. 6.51 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C218 and re-cut C232, looking west

Fig. 6.52 Post-excavation shot of kiln C218, looking north



Eastern kiln

To the east of the central area a second possible kiln was identified (C298). The kiln had been heavily truncated, possibly during the laying out of the rugby pitches in the 1970s. The kiln was

orientated northwest-southeast and the base of the southeast terminus had been scorched suggesting the firing pit was at this end. A single fill was identified within the kiln (C299) but no finds were retrieved. This appears to represent the truncated basal remains of a kiln of indeterminate shape and date. It suggests that prior to the levelling in the 1970s there was a slight rise in ground level in this part of the site.



Fig. 6.53 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C298, looking southwest

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C298 Cut	1.9	0.28-0.33	0.08-0.16
C299 Fill	1.9	0.28-0.33	0.08-0.16

Other features

A number of shallow linear features were identified in this central portion of the site. They may represent various phases of agricultural activity. To the north east of the western kiln (C218) an area of stony disturbance was noted, which marked the intersection of four of the shallow ditches. It was not possible to distinguish between the various cuts in this area due to the shallow nature of the ditches and the disturbance caused by the stones.

A north-northeast to south-southwest orientated shallow linear ditch (C336) was located to the southeast of the western kiln (C218). It appeared to respect the line of the small northwest-southeast running drainage ditch (C235) as the northern terminus of the ditch appeared to end before the edge of the second ditch. It also lies perpendicular to this ditch.

On the northern side of the stony disturbance another northeast-southwest orientated ditch was identified (C348), which may be a continuation of the ditch noted to the south (C336) at a slightly different angle. These two ditches are

likely to relate to agricultural activity and seem to correlate with the alignment of ditch C235.

A second shallow ditch running east-southeast to west-northwest (C253) crosses this area in this location. It was evident intermittently across the site, with only the base of the ditch surviving in places. The alignment of this ditch appears to be perpendicular to the ditches to the north and is likely to relate to field drainage. It would also have run to the south of the kiln, though traces of it in that location did not survive, having been removed during the topsoil stripping.

Two postholes were also identified to the northeast of the eastern kiln, the first (C270) had some stone within the fill (C271) possibly representing packing stones. A second posthole (C331) was located to the northeast of this and south of the main ditch in the northern area (C203) near the eastern end. The fill of the posthole (C332) had a dense lens of charcoal within it. These postholes were somewhat isolated though may be related to each other in some way.

Context Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C253 Cut	13.3	1	0.2
C254 Fill	13.3	1	0.2
C270 Cut	0.3	0.23	0.17
C271 Fill	0.3	0.23	0.17
C331 Cut	0.57	0.57	0.19
C332 Fill	0.57	0.57	0.19
C336 Cut	6.4	0.6-0.65	0.12
C337 Fill	6.4	0.6-0.65	0.12
C348 Cut	1.4	0.5	0.17
C349 Fill	1.4	0.5	0.17

Southern portion of Area 3

In the southern portion of the site a number of features were identified dating to the prehistoric period. To the east a circular barrow and a number of associated features were identified (C311) while to the south a C-shaped slot trench (C279) with an additional slot trench extending from the eastern end (C305) was uncovered along with a number of other features. There was little topsoil cover over this part of the site due to the tiered pitch layout. There was also a suggestion that originally a slight rise was located to the east in the vicinity of the barrow (C311) and the eastern kiln to the north of the barrow (C299) as both these features appear to be more truncated than others in the area. This is also suggested by the loss of

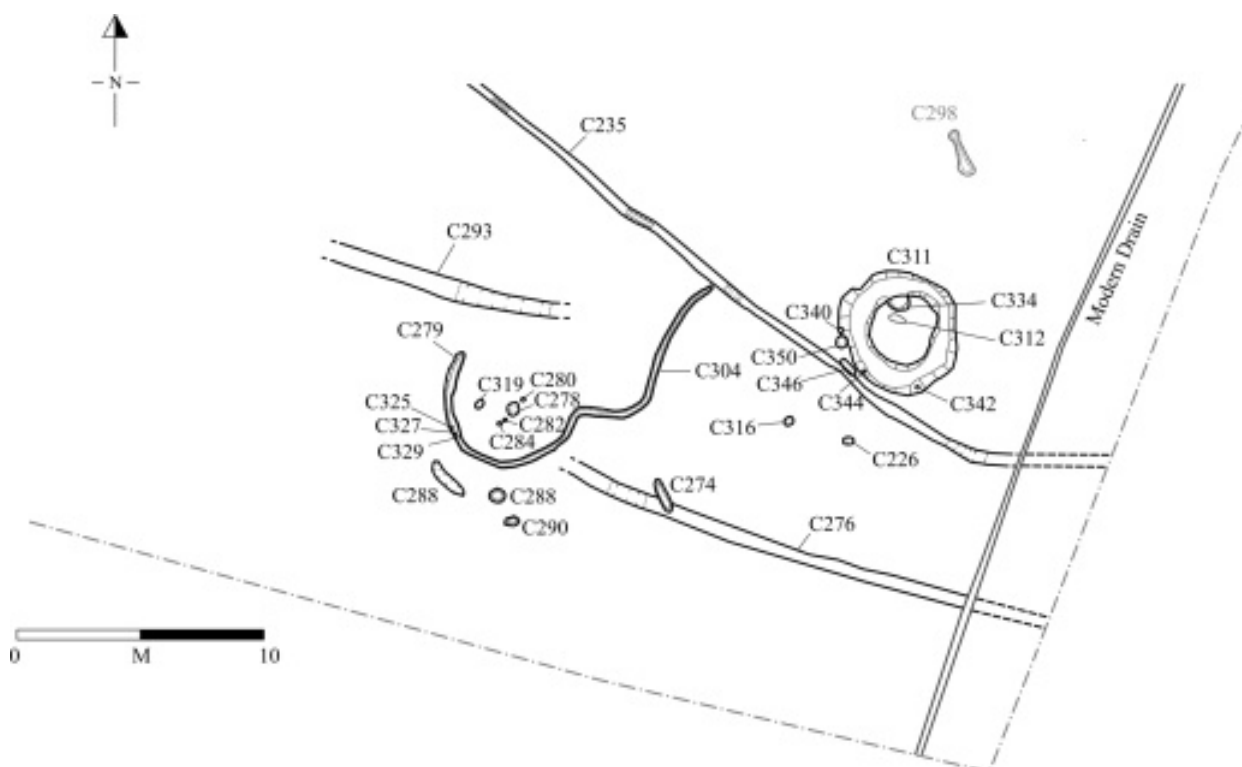


Fig. 6.54 Post-excavation plan of the southern portion of Area 3

the northern end of the additional slot trench (C305) relating to the structure which was found to peter out to the north. This rise would have been located at the base of the main hillside and the levelling out of this feature, either in the 18th century through agricultural use or more recently during the levelling works for the pitches, may explain why so few features survive in the central portion of the site. The relatively good survival of the structure (C279) suggests that this may have mainly been located in a slight hollow between the rise to the northeast and the hillside to the south.

The barrow

The circular ring-ditch of a small barrow (C311) was excavated to the east of the southern portion of Area 3, on what would originally have been a very slight rise in the landscape at the base of the hillside. The digging conditions for this feature were particularly wet due to flooding from the land drain to the east, which made excavation of the feature difficult and a small sump eventually had to be dug in the base to assist with draining the feature. A drainage ditch (C235), previously recorded in the central area of the site truncating the western kiln (C218), ran directly to the south of the barrow. Originally it was believed that the area enclosed by the ring ditch contained a number of possible pits, however upon investigation the majority of these turned out to be natural variations. One pit (C334) was located to the north of the internal area, located just inside but not truncating or truncated by the ring ditch. Immediately to the south of this a patch of scorched natural overlaid by charcoal-rich material (C312) was evident. This feature did not survive to any great depth and its form could not be ascertained during the excavation, though it may relate to a central pyre or pit with *in situ* burning.

The barrow measured 2.7-2.9m in width internally, 4.6-4.8m externally and survived better to the south, with truncation evident on the northern side. The ditch was excavated in six sections

radiating out from the centre of the barrow and was generally wide with shallow sloping sides and did not survive to any great depth. The primary fill of the barrow (C315) contained two sherds of prehistoric pottery (one very de-



Fig. 6.55 (top) Mid-excitation shot of barrow C311, looking southwest

Fig. 6.56 (middle) Southwest-facing section of barrow C311

Fig. 6.57 (bottom) Northeast-facing section of barrow C311

Fig. 6.58 Mid-excavation plan of barrow C311

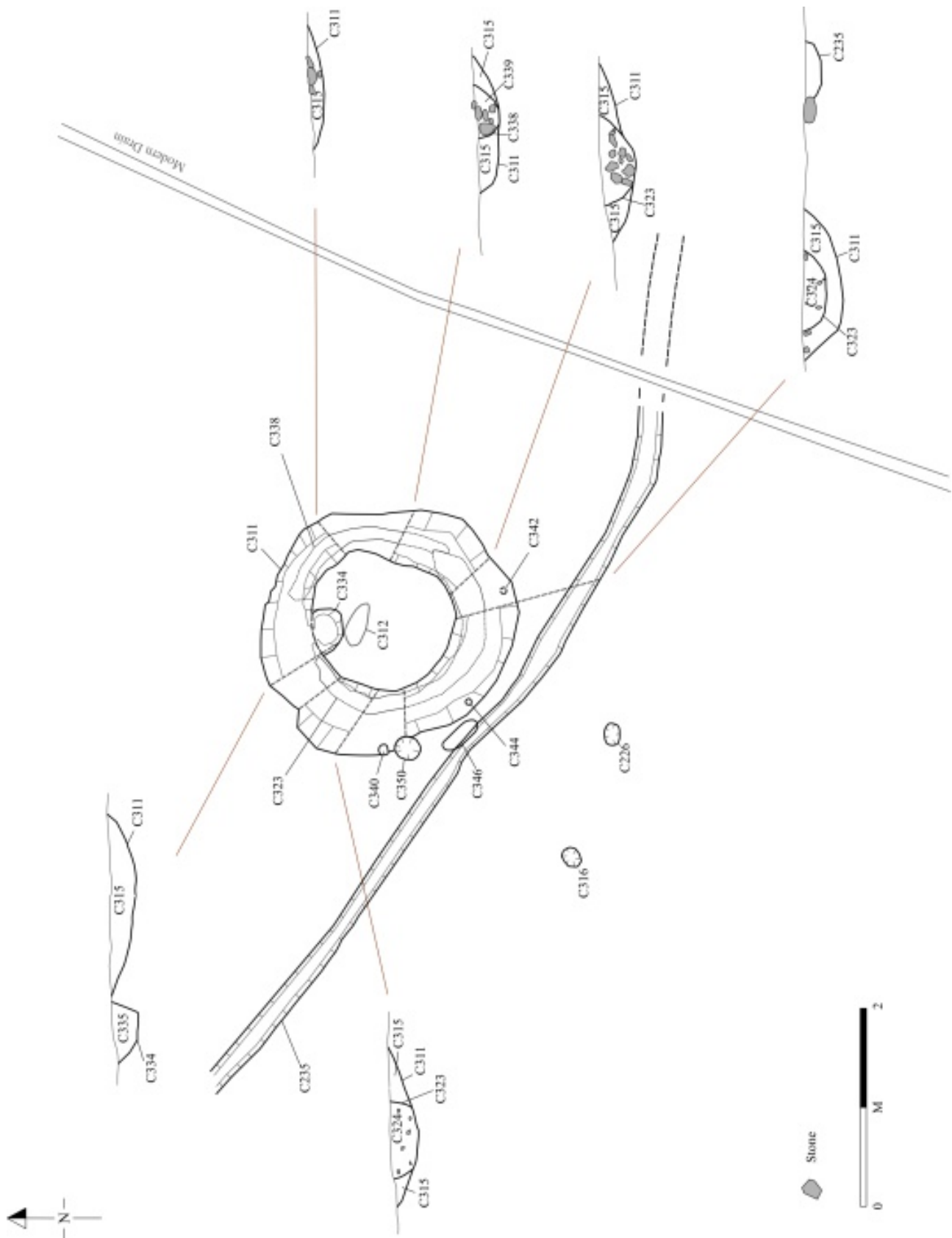




Fig. 6.59 Post-excavation shot of barrow C311, looking southwest

graded), some struck flint and some pieces of angular quartz. Originally this fill was given a further two context numbers (C321 & C322), however upon investigation no real variation was found and the contexts were amalgamated. Finds and samples from these contexts were kept separate, though should be seen as the same event.

The next phase of activity saw the re-cutting of the barrow (C323) to the south and west. A second re-cutting (C338) was noted to the east, which was given a separate context as significantly more charcoal was found in the fill of the southern and western re-cutting (C324) and the fill of the western re-cutting (C339) was predominantly stone. The two re-cuttings came together to the east, though it was not possible to identify whether one cut the other and they may have dated to the same event, with different stages of backfilling. The re-cutting was not recorded to the north, possibly suggesting a break in its circuit to that side, though this may also be due to the low level of survival of the barrow to this side. The re-cuts were narrow and generally U-shaped in section with more pronounced edges than the original cut. There was a distinct widening of western and southern re-cut (C323) to the southeast between

Context	Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C311	Cut	4.9	4.8	0.1-0.28
C312	Deposit	0.94	0.4	N/A
C315	Fill	4.9	0.7-1.31	0.1-0.3
C323	Cut	3.75	0.24-0.66	0.19-0.25
C324	Fill	3.75	0.24-0.66	0.19-0.25
C338	Cut	3.84	0.24-0.4	0.15-0.2
C339	Fill	3.84	0.24-0.4	0.15-0.2

sections 2 and 3, towards the end of the re-cut. This coincided with a small concentration of burnt bone, possibly representing a cremation, as well as a concentration of angular quartz stones, which were retrieved from the fill in this section of the re-cut. Five sherds of prehistoric pottery were also retrieved from this fill, though they were centred to the southeast in section 1.

Other features near the barrow

Three small stake-holes were identified cutting the fill of the barrow; one to the west (C340) between section 1 and 6; one to the southeast (C342) between sections 2 and 3; and one to the southwest (C244) between sections 1 and 2). All the stake-holes were located near the outer edge of the barrow. No further stake-holes were identified during the works, though the truncation of the upper levels of the northern side and the very wet digging conditions may have hampered their identification. It was unclear whether these related to the re-cutting phase of use of the barrow or a later, possibly unrelated period of use.

To the west of the barrow a shallow circular pit (C350) was uncovered. No relationship between this pit and the barrow survived, the edge of the pit stopping just prior to the edge of the ditch.

To the southwest of the barrow and partially truncating the northwest-southeast running drainage ditch (C235) along that side a small linear pit (C346) was excavated between the linear pit and the edge of the barrow. This may be a modern furrow of some sort and did not appear to relate to the earlier activity in this part of the site.

Two additional pits were identified in the vicinity of the barrow that appeared to be related to the activity centred in this part of the site. To the south of the barrow at a distance of c. 2.3m a circular cremation pit was excavated (C226). This contained a comparatively large deposit of burnt bone (C228; when compared with other burnt bone deposits from the site) along with



Fig. 6.60 Mid-excavation shot of cremation pit C226 showing location of Beaker pottery, looking south

an apparently intentional insertion of one sherd of possible Beaker pottery (E. Grogan pers. comm. 2014). A second pit (C316) was uncovered 3.2m to the southwest of the barrow at a distance of 2m from the first, which did not appear to contain any funerary remains but did contain a long flint flake, possibly an informal blade.

Context Type		L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C226	Cut	0.4	0.4	0.14
C228	Fill	0.4	0.4	0.14
C316	Cut	0.42	0.32	0.16
C317	Fill	0.42	0.32	0.16
C340	Cut	0.2	0.2	0.1
C341	Fill	0.2	0.2	0.1
C342	Cut	0.2	0.15	0.1
C343	Fill	0.2	0.15	0.1
C344	Cut	0.1	0.1	0.06
C345	Fill	0.1	0.1	0.06
C346	Cut	0.75	0.16	0.1
C347	Fill	0.75	0.16	0.1
C350	Cut	0.5	0.5	0.1
C351	Fill	0.5	0.5	0.1

The structure

To the south of the southern portion of Area 3 an undated prehistoric structure was identified. The remains of the structure consisted of a substantial C-shaped slot trench (C279) open to the north and enclosing an area measuring c. 4.5m east-west and 3.5m north-south to the edge of the open end. Located centrally within the enclosed space was a hearth (C278) with two stake-holes identified to the south (C282 & C284) and a third to the north (C280). Very little of the hearth survived: a thin upper charcoal-rich fill (C286) overlying a lower scorched fill (C287) to the south of the pit. The stake-holes were all found to have a single fill, with the southern and northern stake-holes being a similar depth, the inner stake-hole to the south being slightly shallower. They may relate to a



Fig. 6.61 Mid-excavation shot of central hearth C278 and stake-holes C280, C282 and C284 within structure C279, looking west

cooking or drying structure over the hearth, such as a spit. One posthole was also identified within the central area of the structure (C319), located midway between the hearth and the slot trench in the southwest side of the structure.

The slot trench was steep-sided was relatively uniformly U-shaped in profile, with a rounded terminus at the northwest end and continuing off to the northeast beyond the C-shaped structure. The form of the slot trench changed to the northeast and was recorded under a different context number (C304, see below). It appears that up to six wooden base planks were located at the base of the slot trench (C307, C306, C310, C303, C300 & C302 from west to east), which are likely to have held uprights to form an enclosing fence or wall. These planks appear to have been burnt *in situ*, surviving as dense linear layers of charcoal and partially charred wood. The sides of the slot trench and some of the packing material over the planks was scorched further giving weight to this suggestion. Three postholes were also identified within the slot trench, which possibly supported the walls of the structure. The postholes were suggested by concentrations of charcoal running from the base of the slot trench to the top of the cut and surrounded to some extent by possible packing stones. The three postholes also coincided with the end of planks (C358 between planks C306 and C307 to the west; C359 between planks C306 and C310 to the southwest; and C333 between planks 300 and C303 to the south) suggesting that they originally stood between and supported the upright panels suggested by the planks. A possible additional posthole was suggested on the eastern side of the structure where a dense concentration of charcoal (C295) overlay one of the base



Fig. 6.63 Mid-excavation shot of structure C279, looking north

planks (C300). This may represent the remains of an upright post located along the plank, part of the structural panel, rather than the post the panel would have been attached to as the end of the plank, as the other postholes appear to be.

Below the base plank to the southwest of the structure (C306) three small post- or stake-holes were identified (C325, C327 & C329). The third of these may represent the base of the southwest posthole (C359), however the other two may relate to uprights previously inserted into the base plank. Underlying one of the planks (C303) a small deposit of burnt bone was recovered. While there was no apparent associated context with this bone, and it appeared to overlie the natural immediately below the plank it was given a separate context number (C360). Although it may relate to a foundation deposit for the structure it is a tiny deposit and may also be accidental. A small sherd of prehistoric pottery was also retrieved during the processing of the sample associated with this base plank and may be associated with this event.

Overlying the burnt planks a secondary fill (C309) was evident along the edge of either side of the cut, probably the remains of packing material over the base planks intended to give the upright panels support. This fill exhibited in-situ

burning, presumably from when the structure burnt down. A second context number (C314) was given to an unburnt section of this recorded in section to the southwest, however is



Fig. 6.64 Mid-excavation shot of section of slot trench C279 of structure, looking southwest

Fig. 6.65 Mid-excavation of posthole C358 within slot trench C279 of structure, looking west





Fig. 6.66 Mid-excavation shot of southwest-facing section through plank C302 within slot trench C279 of structure, looking northeast

Fig. 6.67 Beaker pottery retrieved from structure C279 (Find No. 14E339:309:1)



likely to relate to the same process. The upper fill of the slot trench (C301) sealed this phase of activity and is likely to have been created after the structure had burnt down. One rim sherd of Beaker pottery (Eoin Grogan pers. comm. 2014) of a similar type to that found in the cremation pit (C226) to the south of the barrow was retrieved from the base of this fill against the side.

To the northeast of the main C-shaped slot trench a connected slot trench (C304) ran to the east before turning to run to the northeast. This slot trench was less defined, shallow U-shape in profile, and petered out to the north, probably due to ground reduction through agricultural activity. This slot trench had two fills. The first (C318) was a shallow deposit only identified in the short east-west running section extending up to the main slot trench (C279) where it was partially overlaid by the northern end of one of the planks (C302), indicating that this section is

contemporary with the excavation of the main slot trench and predates the burning of the structure. The remainder of the slot trench was filled with a consistent backfill (C305), which contained five sherds of prehistoric pottery, one of which was Beaker and of similar type to that found in the main structure to the southwest and in the cremation pit to the northeast (C226), as well as one possible quartz artefact. The purpose of this extension to the northeast was unclear and it may have served as an additional slot trench for a less substantial fence along this side, or as a drainage gully running water away from the construction slot trench to the southwest.



Fig. 6.68 Mid-excavation shot of gully C304, looking northeast



Fig. 6.69 Post-excitation shot of structure C279 and gully C304, looking north



Fig. 6.70 Post-excitation shot of structure C279 and gully C304, looking south

Context	Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C278	Cut	0.47	0.45	0.12
C279	Cut	5.4	0.21-0.5	0.2-0.21
C280	Cut	0.1	0.09	0.16
C281	Fill	0.1	0.09	0.16
C282	Cut	0.08	0.08	0.11
C283	Fill	0.08	0.08	0.11
C284	Cut	0.1	0.09	0.17
C285	Fill	0.1	0.09	0.17
C286	Fill	0.32	0.3	0.12
C287	Fill	0.2	0.17	0.08
C295	Fill	0.2	0.23	0.15
C300	Fill	2	0.2-0.35	0.08
C301	Fill	9.5	0.23-0.4	0.07-0.13
C302	Fill	1.15	0.18	0.06
C303	Fill	1.3	0.15-0.17	0.07
C304	Cut	7.8	0.25-0.36	0.06-0.16
C305	Fill	7.8	0.25-0.36	0.06-0.16
C306	Fill	1.25	0.21	0.04
C307	Fill	1.2	0.2	0.03
C309	Fill		0.03-0.15	0.11-0.17
C310	Fill	0.41	0.16	0.05

C314	Fill	0.1	0.05-0.1	0.15
C318	Fill	1.75	0.25	0.007
C319	Cut	0.36	0.28	0.29
C320	Fill	0.36	0.28	0.29
C325	Cut	0.11	0.09	0.06
C326	Fill	0.11	0.09	0.06
C327	Cut	0.1	0.09	0.05
C328	Fill	0.1	0.09	0.05
C329	Cut	0.11	0.09	0.11
C330	Fill	0.11	0.09	0.11
C333	Fill	0.23	0.23	
C358	Deposit	0.2	0.16	0.13
C359	Cut	0.25	0.25	0.3
C360	Fill	0.05	0.05	0.05

Other features near the structure

To the north of the structure a shallow east-southeast to west-northwest running linear ditch was identified (C293). This was post-me-

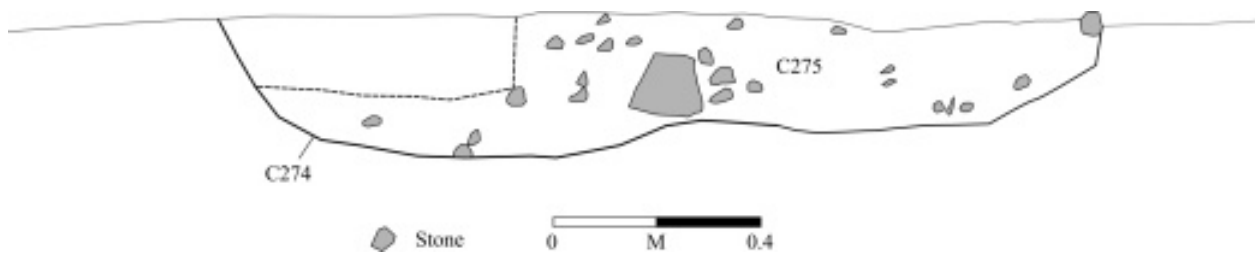


Fig. 6.71 Southwest-facing section of pit C274

Fig. 6.72 Mid-excavation shot of pit C274, looking north-east



dieval in date and only the base of the feature survived. It partially truncated the top of north-eastern extension of the slot trench (C304).

To the southeast of the structure a linear pit orientated northwest-southeast was identified (C274). This may represent a small kiln-like feature, though this interpretation is tentative. In plan the pit was rounded to the north, tapering slightly at its southern end. Some small patches of burning were noted on the edges of the pit, though nothing continuous, and two large stones were found placed on the base of the pit dividing one end from the other and may have acted as baffle stones. The fill of the pit was uniform throughout, with no variation at either end (C275). A number of pieces of struck flint were found within the fill along with a collection of fractured angular quartz, some burnt bone and some burnt clay. The pit was truncated by a later linear ditch (C276), which ran parallel to the ditch to the north of the structure and is likely to be part of the post-medieval field drainage system. This ditch runs towards the structure but did not survive over it, presumably having been truncated away during the levelling associated with the laying of the rugby pitches in the 1970s.

To the south of the structure was a circular pos-

thole (C288) with possible packing stone (C297) at the base from which an animal tooth was retrieved. This was sealed by a loose upper fill (C296).

To the south of the posthole and southwest of the structure an oval pit orientated east-west was identified (C290). Two sherds of prehistoric pottery were retrieved from the fill of this pit (C291).

To the west of the posthole, southwest of the structure a shallow northwest-southeast orientated linear feature was identified (C289). This was a similar size and shape to the linear pit to the east (C274), however this pit did not have real definition and the fill (C308) was relatively stony and indistinct. Pockets of natural stone were noted in the base suggesting this feature may not be archaeological.

Context	Type	L. (m)	W.(m)	D. (m)
C274	Cut	1.8	0.75	0.28
C275	Fill	1.8	0.75	0.28
C276	Cut	18	0.8	0.03-0.1
C277	Fill	18	0.8	0.03-0.1
C288	Cut	0.5-0.55	0.4-0.55	0.34
C289	Cut	2.6	0.4-0.6	0.08-0.12
C290	Cut	0.5	0.2-0.35	0.08-0.11
C291	Fill	0.5	0.2-0.35	0.08-0.11
C293	Cut	9.6	0.65-0.9	0.1-0.23
C294	Fill	9.6	0.65-0.9	0.1-0.23
C296	Fill	0.55	0.4-0.55	0.1
C297	Fill	0.55	0.4	0.4
C308	Fill	2.6	0.4-0.6	0.08-0.12

Section 7 Discussion

Introduction

The excavation at Kilgobbin has produced a number of interesting findings. The site is located on the northeastern slopes of Three Rock Mountain and slopes gently from south to north. Prior to excavation it was believed that features relating to medieval activity associated with Kilgobbin Church to the south and to Kilgobbin Castle and village to the northeast may encroach onto the site, given that the constraint zones relating to these monuments extended into the excavated area. Indeed, the earlier archaeological test-trenching programme identified two pits to the northeast indicating that archaeological activity was present in that area. These suggestions were borne out, with Area 1 to the south producing a small complex of industrial features of medieval date, and the northern portion of Area 3 to the northeast producing a complex of water management features of medieval and possibly later date. These parts of the site appear to mark the edge of activity relating to the two monuments, with Area 1 representing a zone of industrial activity to the northwest of the church and associated settlement and the northern portion of Area 3 relating to water management at the edge of the medieval village. While a number of additional features in Area 3 may eventually be dated to the medieval phase of activity, such as the metal-working pit (C201) and the two kilns in the central portion (C218 & C298), it would appear that the village itself must lie further to the north and east of the present site.

What was not foreseen from the testing or geophysics programmes was the wealth of prehistoric activity in the northern part of the site, with a concentration to the northwest in Area 2 and a separate concentration to the south of Area 3. While this was not identified in the previous archaeological investigations on the site, the presence of prehistoric activity is not at

all surprising given the wealth of material uncovered during archaeological investigations in the surrounding area. During the archaeological investigations relating to the development at Belarmine, immediately to the west of the current site, significant settlement and burial activity dating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age was identified and further activity has been identified at sites from Newtown Little to the west to Jamestown to the east. The prehistoric activity uncovered in the current site can be seen as part of a wider cultural landscape along the foothills of the Dublin Mountains relating to settlement, exploitation of natural resources, and death and burial. Indeed the presence of this activity in the surrounding area led one visitor to the site to ask: where is the rest! It is possible that more prehistoric activity may have been located within the bounds of the current site, however the significant ground level alterations required to lay out the three tiered pitches has obliterated any archaeological remains in the central section of the site. Additionally post-medieval agricultural practices are likely to have removed many more ephemeral and less intrusive archaeological features meaning that the features that have survived on the site may represent only a portion of what was once present within the bounds of the site.

The dense cluster of features in Area 2 appear to be located in and around a natural hollow in the landscape and relate to a number of different activities. The features also appear to span a wide time period from the Early Neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age. The archaeology revealed here suggested that burial took place in this location, as well as water access and other less distinctive activities. There was no evidence for house structures in the immediate vicinity, however, the possible pathway (C404) leading to one of the wells (C163) runs away from the site to the northwest and may indicate a connection with the prehistoric settlement identified in the excavations at Belarmine.

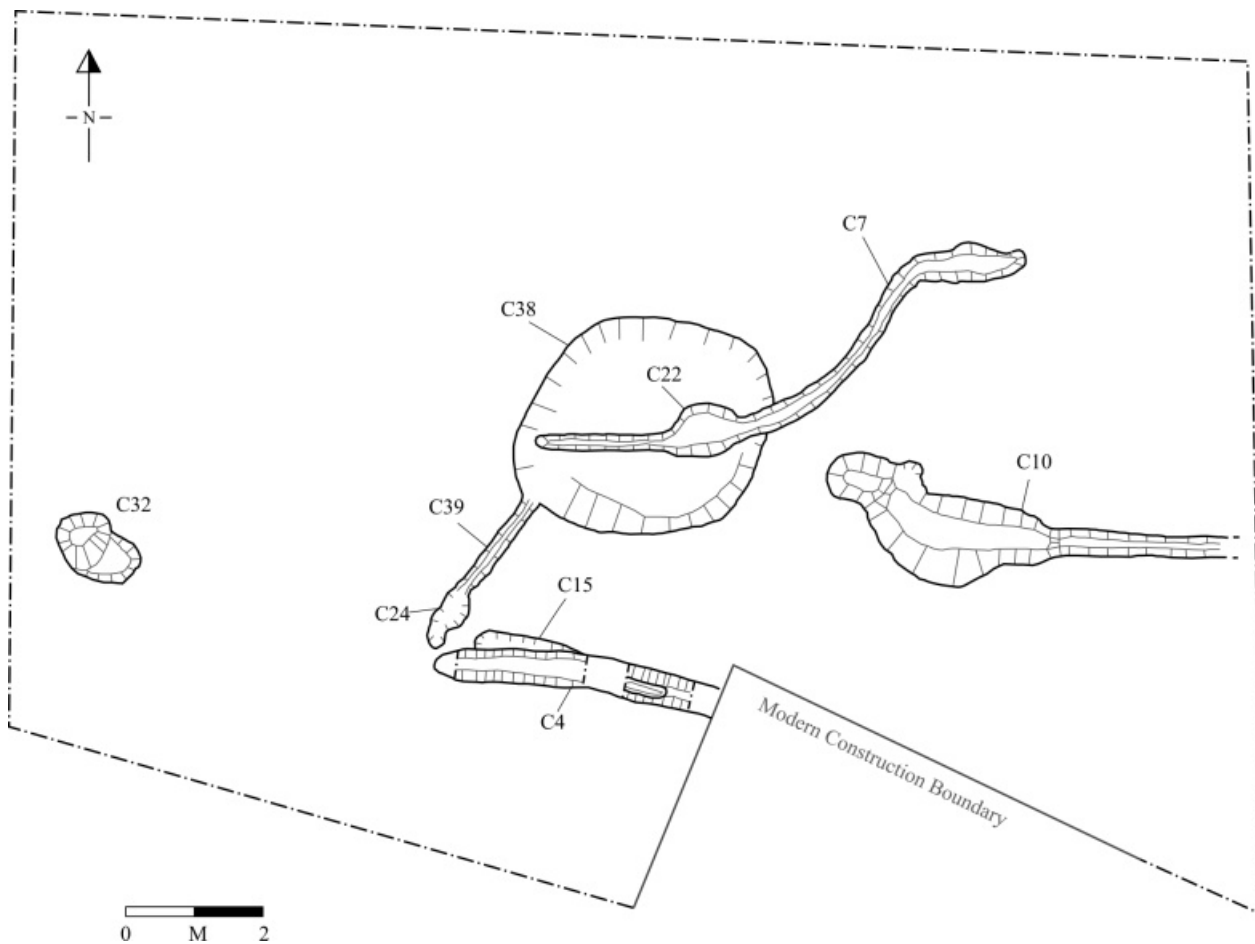


Fig. 7.1 Post-excavation plan of Area 1

Area 1

The kilns

The prehistoric activity in Area 3 was also intriguing. Burial activity was represented by the barrow (C311) and cremation pit (C226), and tentative domestic or ritual (or both) activity was suggested by the structure (C279). A much later medieval phase of activity was evident to the north of the area in the form of a managed pond, with a number of additional gullies and channels. This is likely to relate to the medieval settlement associated with Kilgobbin Castle to the northwest and lies within the constraint zone of that monument. Two possible kilns and a metal-working pit of uncertain date indicate that at some point the use of this area had been given over to small-scale industrial activity. These forms of activity are frequently located at the margins of settlements, as seen with the settlement around Kilgobbin Church to the south. Whether these features relate to the medieval phase of activity or are related to an earlier period is as yet unknown.

Area 1 appears to represent a medieval work area, possibly associated with the settlement in the vicinity of the church to the north. Two kilns were present (C10 & C32), one of which appears to have been modified for use in two directions (C10). This kiln had a masonry component (C11) running along the south side of the chamber, possibly to provide support along that side, although it is strange that this was the only masonry associated with the kiln. A long flue ran from the kiln to the east, however it was not possible to identify a fire pit at the end of the flue as the eastern end had been truncated by modern activity. A second phase of the kiln was much more compact, with a small firing pit located directly to the west of the chamber. A number of stones set onto the base between the firing pit and the main chamber are likely to have acted as baffle stones and the connection between the two chambers was somewhat waisted. This set up seems to have been intentional, possibly allowing the kiln to be

used from two different directions, probably dependant on wind direction. It appeared that the eastern flue was the last to be used, however both may have been used interchangeably during the period of use of the kiln. This may explain why so few seeds were retrieved from the kiln, as the need to alter the kiln allowed for better cleaning during these works. Both phases of the kiln were roughly key-hole shaped, though the shape in plan was not overly distinctive.



Fig. 7.2 Mid-excavation shot of kiln C10, looking east

The second kiln found to the west of the area (C32). It was also orientated east-west, but was much smaller than the first and figure-of-eight in shape. The firing pit appeared to be to the west with the bowl to the east. This was the only feature in Area 1 not to have any medieval pottery and it is only loosely suggested as relating to this medieval activity due to its close proximity. Figure-of-eight kilns are sometimes suggested as the predecessor to key-hole kilns and are tentatively ascribed to the early medieval period, with caveats relating to dating any kiln based on morphology alone (Monk & Kellagher 2005, 106). A key-hole shaped kiln of early medieval date was identified at 'Area 0' of the

Belarmine development, and was described as being c. 100m northwest of Kilgobbin Church, which would put it in relatively close proximity to the western side of Area 1. This has since been dated to the mid-4th to mid-6th century AD, earlier than the settlement around Kilgobbin Church and significantly earlier than the activity in Area 1 of the current site (Bolger 2010, 105). A second medieval kiln was excavated in the same development further to the north. It is possible that Area 1 represents the surviving elements of a larger complex of industrial features at the edges of the settlement associated with Kilgobbin Church. Further evidence for this was seen during the excavations to the south and west of Kilgobbin Church, with two kilns identified to the southwest and another to the southeast of the ecclesiastic enclosure (ibid.). In addition to this two areas of metal-working were identified associated with the ecclesiastic enclosure, one to the interior of the enclosure and relating to the 7th-10th century occupation of the site, and a second to the southeast. This suggests that the majority of the industrial activity being carried out at the settlement associated with Kilgobbin Church was taking place near the edges of the settlement. The features within Area 1 are likely to represent a section of probably intermittent small-scale industrial activity taking place around the ecclesiastic settlement.

The structure

The function of the structure in the centre of the area (C2) is somewhat unclear, and indeed it may have served more than one function. There are a number of unknowns relating to the structure, such as what form, if any, a superstructure would have taken; whether it was fully enclosed to the east; enclosed at all to the west, or whether it was roofed. The structure appears as stone foundations to the north and south, with a suggestion of a return to the east and a centrally placed drain dividing the interior. It is possible that the foundations were for clay walls, or for stone walls which have since been robbed out. They may have formed protective windbreaks or been more structural and represent the outer walls of a small building. This latter suggestion seems most appropriate.

The basic form of the structure is of a hut,



Fig. 7.3 Mid-excavation shot of structure C2, looking north

likely to have been enclosed on three sides, with a central drain running through the building and off to the northeast. At a later point it appears to have been altered with the drain now widened in the centre of the structure and exhibiting *in situ* burning, suggesting a change of use of the structure. The western section of the drain appears to be defunct at this point, although it was carefully capped with flat granite slabs, which also forms a stone setting around the widened central pit. There is also a possibility that the function of the structure required the use of the drain intermittently as well as the use of a fire-pit. If so, their presence together need not necessitate a change in function.

It is also unclear what form the superstructure would have taken, or whether it was roofed. It is possible that the structure was not roofed, merely providing protection to the north and south. The secondary phase of use of the central linear feature is somewhat suggestive of a keyhole-shaped kiln, however this is problematic as there is no evidence of a firing chamber and the central pit is rather small. The final phase of use does suggest that there was a central hearth before the end of the use of the structure. The sub-rounded granite slab overlying the pit is also interesting, given that it is incorporated well into the stone setting located around the pit and capping the western end of the drain. It may be suggested that this may have marked the end of the use of the channel and a levelling of the interior of the structure to serve a different purpose. However, this is unlikely as the eastern end of the drain remained uncapped, which would be unusual if the pur-

pose was to change function of the structure. The central stone may also originally have been placed outside the central pit, possibly offering a work surface within the structure before being placed within the central pit to mark the end of the use or termination of the structure.

Various functions for this unusual structure have been considered. At 2.7 by 2.4-2.6m internally, the structure does not seem large enough to have served as a byre-house or to have served as a primary residential space. It would appear to have an industrial function, perhaps serving as a work-hut for various craft industries. The large central stone, if originally sitting outside the central pit, could have been used as a work surface for a number of craft industries, although a general lack of by-products, such as slag, would suggest that metal-working is not a possibility. The components of the structure would suggest that heating and water or air formed part of the process being carried out in the structure. Water was not supplied into the structure, however there was a method of draining water from the structure. It should be noted that the constriction at the eastern end of the drain may suggest that there was a need to keep water out of the structure at certain times (such as when the burning-related activities were being carried out), though the fact that this only constricted rather than blocking it entirely may suggest that it was left open for a reason, perhaps to allow a controlled amount of water (or air) into the structure while the fire was lit.

One suggestion (Alan Hayden pers. comm. 2014) was that it may have functioned as a smoke-house. As such the structure would have been roofed in some way. A number of the findings of the excavation fit well with this suggestion. The presence of the fire-pit in the centre of the structure also fits with this theory, with the drain possibly serving two functions. Firstly, to aid the cleaning of the structure after use, and secondly, to allow for the diffusing of the smoke from the fire to both ends of the structure. In this regard, the large central stone

could be seen as a diffuser, keeping the flames of the fire down and allowing smoke to disperse around the structure. The capping of the western end of the channel and the placement of the large stone over the fire- (or smoke-) pit would also have improved movement around the structure from the probable entrance to the west. The controlled exit of the drain to the east may have acted as a vent in this hypothesis allowing some fresh air into the structure, or could have been used to fan the flames by way of a bellows to keep the fire smouldering. The negative aspect of this suggestion is the lack of a wall to the west, though a temporary or sod wall that left no archaeological trace may have been present. Another possibility is that the western side was enclosed with a wooden door, possibly forming the full side of the structure. While no smokehouses have been identified from archaeological excavations in Ireland, they are known from medieval contexts in Britain and Europe and an earlier Roman example was uncovered at Pineham, Northamptonshire with trenches believed to have been for smoke dispersal (Score 2013).

Smokehouses would have been necessary as a method of preserving meat, fish and cheese during the medieval period. While smoking could be carried out by hanging the meat and fish in the chimney of a kitchen, a separate structure may have been necessary for larger communities and may also have given some level of control and income from the activity to the ecclesiastic community.

Another possible function is a bake-house, functioning similarly to smoke-house suggestion. In this suggestion the drain feature again may have served both for cleaning the area and providing air channels to the central pit. In this suggestion the central stone may have acted as a surface upon which the bread was set for baking. Again there are issues with this interpretation, the structure appearing too big to allow for the control in heat required for baking and the absent western wall again appearing problematic.

Another suggestion is that the structure may represent a sweathouse. In Ireland, sweathouses are largely a northern phenomenon, however outliers are known from Wicklow and as far

south as Cork and Kerry. While some are suggested to be medieval in date, such as the example near Parke's Castle in Co. Leitrim, the majority are believed to have been used in the post-medieval period, though this could suggest the tradition continued into that time. The origins of sweathouses is somewhat obscure, with some suggestion that they are an Irish take of Scandinavian saunas (Bolton 2014). This is possibly of interest given the association of the lands around Kilgobbin with various Hiberno-Norse families during the medieval period. Sweathouses were known in the 18th and 19th centuries for the treatment of rheumatism, but a number of additional ailments were believed to be alleviated by the sweating process, which was also believed to aid complexion. The form of sweathouses in Ireland is usually a small structure with corbelled roof and a low creepway door providing access to the interior. Before use, a fire would have been lit within the hut until the structure was sufficiently heated, before being removed prior to the person or persons accessing the sweathouse (Moriarty 2012). While the size of the structure at Kilgobbin would be comparable to known examples of Irish sweathouses, there are a number of issues with this interpretation. Firstly, the lack of evidence for a wall to the west is problematic. While it must be considered that a wall may well have been present, possibly sitting at a slightly higher level and removed prior to the excavation, or possibly a sod wall leaving no archaeological trace, this would not allow for an evenly built structure with a corbelled roof. The presence of a fire-pit within the structure rather than the fire having been lit on a flat surface to allow ease of removal prior to use of the structure also suggests that the structure at Kilgobbin does not represent a sweathouse.

In conclusion, of all the aforementioned possibilities, the suggestion of a smoke-house is the best fit. A structure such as this would likely have been necessary for the ecclesiastic community based around Kilgobbin Church allowing them to preserve their meat and cheese and provide for the needs of the monks through the winter, but also possibly allowing them to control and have economic gain from the provision of the cured meat and cheese to the secular sections of their community. This

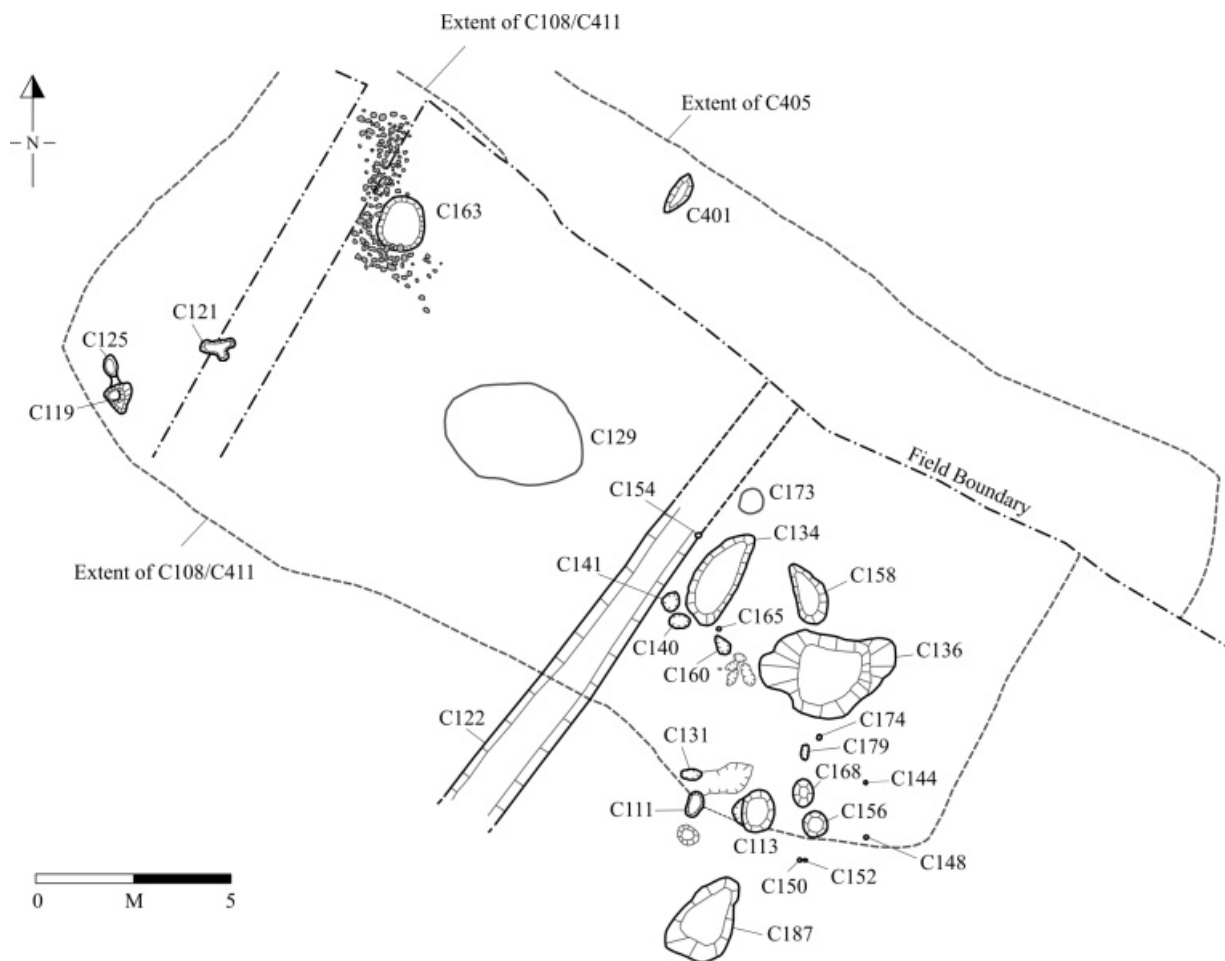


Fig. 7.4 Plan of Area 2 focussing on the features in the vicinity of spread C108

Area 2

The spread

The main feature of Area 2 was the spread of charcoal-rich material located within the hollow at the base of the hillside in the northwest corner of the site (C108). Initially it was thought that this material may be related to Bronze Age activity, possibly in proximity to a fulacht fiadh. This was not found to be the case. Instead, it appears that this spread of material formed in a natural hollow that was a regularly used point in the landscape. The remains of two small underlying deposits (C129 & C173), both of which contained probable Early Neolithic pottery, suggests that human occupation and use of the area began in this early prehistoric period. It would appear that the overall spread represents a mixed occupational layer formed by the continual use and re-use of this low-lying hollow. The spread was not a solid sealing event, and instead represents an extended period of activity, a mixed deposit churned up through human and animal action

interpretation also gives a function to most of the components of the structure. It is hoped that an analysis of the charcoal found within the structure may aid the interpretation, with oak, and to a lesser degree ash, being the preferred fuels for smoking (Davidson 2014, 747).

The other features to the south of the structure and kilns in Area 1 are generally more ephemeral and specific functions were unclear, asides from the successive shallow ditches to the south. The foreman of the development site informed the archaeologists that a natural spring was identified in the southwest corner of the site prior to the archaeological works taking place. It is possible that the ditches were intended to channel the waters of this spring near to the industrial area both to avoid flooding and to provide a controlled water source for use in the area. Unfortunately little more can be said about these features as so little of them survived.

in the wet ground of the hollow. It is possible that separate distinct layers built up within the hollow over time, however the continual use saw the churning up of the deposited layers to form one homogenous spread of material (C108) overlying two surviving patches of earlier occupational layers, the remainder of which has been churned into the overlying material. This is also suggested by the wide date range of the pottery contained within the overlying spread, indicating that it had built up over a long period of time. The hollow appears to have been a wet and muddy place, as indeed it was during the excavation.

The nature of the deposit meant that a number of the pits below it were filled with material that was somewhat similar to the spread, which may well have infiltrated the upper levels of the fills of these features. It would seem that at various times a more formalised use of the hollow such as the construction of the wells may have seen access to the area restricted to animals to avoid contamination of the water, however, this restriction clearly did not last forever and it can be suggested that the pock-marked surface exhibited at some points along the base of the hollow are indicative of animal activity. This is also why this spread of material should not be seen as a sealing deposit, more as a mobile and active layer, a combination of hundreds or more years of animal and human activity.

The hollow may originally have been a natural watering hole frequented by both the local Neolithic people and possibly animals. At various times, perhaps in an effort to preserve the cleanliness of the water source, or to chase the water table at a time of drought or climatic variation, wells were constructed. The larger well-pit (C136) would appear to be Late Bronze Age in date, based on pottery retrieved from its basal fills, as well as similarities with other well pits of similar date. The second well is more formal and regular and may be of a later date, though this will be assessed further when radiocarbon dates are returned. The interesting thing regarding the second well is that it appears the surrounding area of the hollow was still quite wet and marshy, suggested by the need for a pathway (C404) to access the well.

The general spread was found to overlie both

well features, suggesting that the area of the hollow was given over to animal use after the wells were no longer required by the human population. It was suggested (Neil Carlin pers. comm. 2014) that the spread present in Area 2 bore similarities with occupational spreads uncovered during the archaeological investigations prior to the Belarmine development in 2003. There, three spreads of charcoal-rich material were identified in 'Area 6' of the works. Two charcoal-rich spreads were recorded extending over an area of approximately 4.2m by 1.1-2.2m near two Bronze Age structures and were found to cover an irregular pit. 1,400 artefacts were recovered from the spreads and pit, representing over half of the entire find assemblage recovered from the site and yielded material consistent with later Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Beaker contexts. A number of stake-holes which were found in the vicinity of the spreads were interpreted as the possible remains of a further associated timber superstructure. An additional spread of material containing Beaker pottery was noted extending over the area for 27m and was interpreted as an old ground surface. It was found to partially lie within the interior of the larger house. While there are probably some similarities in the nature of the spread from this site and those uncovered during the Belarmine works, there was no evidence for domestic structures in the current site. It would seem that the spread here relates to continuous activity and use rather than domestic occupation. This is further suggested by the lower volume of finds from the spread, which could be explained by occasional accidental breakages as people went to collect water, as well as damage and disturbance to some of the other (earlier?) features in the immediate vicinity, such as the cremation pits.

The wells

The largest feature below the spread was a slightly irregular-shaped well-pit (C136), with relatively straight and steep sides to the north and south and a more gently sloping side to the west. The term well-pit is used here to differentiate between the apparently more formalised well to the west (C163), however the term watering hole could equally be applied to the feature as it appears its primary function was to provide access to the water table. The well-pit



Fig. 7.5 Post-excavation shot of well-pit C136, looking north



Fig. 7.6 Post-excavation shot of well C163 and pathway to the south, west and north, looking south

measured 3.1 x 1.9m in size and 0.8m in depth, while the well measured 1.25 by 1.15m and 0.47m in depth. Both extended below the current water table.

A sherd of probable Late Bronze Age pottery, as well as a second unidentified prehistoric pottery sherd, were retrieved from the lower fill of the well-pit, suggesting a Late Bronze Age date for this feature. The well-pit appeared to have filled in gradually over time. This was in contrast to the more formal well, which contained no finds and which appeared to have been filled in by a single event when a deposit of angular granite stones were deposited into the well

marking the end of its use. A similar deposit of stones was also identified at the bottom of the well-pit. It is possible that the more regular well, with its associated pathway, replaced the earlier informal well-pit. It is also a possibility that they served different functions, one for human and one for animal use. They may also date to completely different periods of prehistory and be completely unrelated and given the lack of finds from the more formal well further surmising on their possible relationship should wait until after dating evidence for the feature has been obtained.

A number of sites with very large prehistoric

wells or ponds have been uncovered in recent years in Ireland such as Ballynakelly, Co. Dublin, Drumgoold, Co. Wexford, Danesfort 5, Co. Kilkenny, Boyerstown 2, Clonee, Clowanstown 3, Kennastown, Muckerstown, Williamstown or Bawn 2, all in Co. Meath, and Camlin, Co. Tipperary. All of these are much larger than the well-pit in Kilgobbin but share a similar morphology in that there is an approach or access to one side.

A Bronze Age well of similar proportions to that at Kilgobbin was excavated at Coolfin 3, Co. Laois, where a wooden walkway providing access from one side was also noted (2006:1146, A015/121, E2230). Another well at Knockharley, Co. Meath, while similar in plan to the Kilgobbin well was shallower, however the Knockharley well was later adapted making it deeper and more funnel-shaped, to access the (maybe decreasing?) water table. At Laughanstown, Co. Dublin Matt Seaver excavated a site (Site 78) prior to the construction of the South-eastern Motorway (M50). Three waterholes measuring 5 x 3 x 1.5m, 2.6 x 1.3 x 0.68m and 3.5 x 3.25 x 0.8m of possible Middle Bronze Age date were identified (Excavation Licence No. 02E1133, 2002:0619), which is closely comparable to the well-pit (C136), 3.1 x 1.9 x 0.8m. Further afield, wells or watering holes of a scale similar to Kilgobbin have also been noted, such as at Kingsmead Quarry, Horton, Berkshire, England.

The majority of these features have been found to be Bronze Age in date. For example, pottery of Middle-Late Bronze Age type was found associated with the first two waterholes in Laughanstown, Co. Dublin. The large well at Ballynakelly, Co. Dublin was found to date to the Middle Bronze Age (McCarthy 2010, 101). Of the two large watering holes identified during the works at Clonee, Co. Meath one was found to contain an Iron Age wooden bucket (Excavation Licence No. 08E0840, 2008:944) indicating that these large watering holes continued in use into the Iron Age also. While it should be noted that the use of wells obviously continues into the modern period, this form of unlined watering hole would appear to be prehistoric in date.

The more formalised well to the west (C163)

clearly functioned as a well and was more recognisable as what we would expect a well to look like today. This may suggest that it has a more focused function and was not intended to serve a number of functions. It is also possible that the difference in form may suggest a difference in date for the two wells. There was no evidence for a lining to the well, however an associated somewhat ad-hoc surface surrounded the well to the south and west before running to the northwest. This was seen again further to the northwest near the limit of excavation but was less consistent at that point. The surface consisted of densely packed rounded and sub-angular stones forming a pathway presumably marking the access for the well, possibly used to provide a better surface to access the well in this obviously wet and muddy area of the field. In the northern area the pathway became less distinct, though a linear concentration of stones running northwest-southeast (C404) is likely to be a continuation of the pathway leading to the northwest. It is interesting that it is in this direction that the Bronze Age settlement uncovered during the Belarmine excavations is located. A more sporadic deposit of stone was identified within the general overlying fill in this area (C403) to the north of the well, similar to that seen to the southeast of the well, though this does not seem to be intentionally laid.

The most obvious purpose of the wells at Kilgobbin is for water access as wells or watering holes, either for human or animal access. It is interesting that with the larger watering holes, as well as the well-pit at Kilgobbin, one of the sides is sloped suggesting it was intended as an access point to the water within the watering hole. With the larger ponds this has been used to suggest a bathing interpretation, for example at Camlin, Co. Tipperary and Ballynakelly, Co. Dublin (McCarthy 2010, 102). They may have functioned as either cold water plunge pools or, with the addition of heated stones, as heated baths. This may have been purely for hygienic purposes or for more ritual reasons. A number of the larger watering holes appear to be associated with fulacht fiadh type activity, as in heated stone technology, which lends itself to the bathing suggestion. The wells at Laughanstown, Co. Dublin also had a fulacht fiadh consisting of a bound of burnt stone and a rectangular trough was also identified at the Laughanstown

site furthering the Bronze Age dating of the site.

The nearby funerary activity found at Kilgobbin represented by the cremation pits may suggest that the well-pit may also have played a sacred role. It has been suggested that water played a significant role in the burial rite, with the possibility that corpses were purified in water prior to cremation, a ritual still practiced in Eastern countries today (Grogan et al 2007, 105). It has also been suggested that this ritual washing may have taken place after cremation with the cremated bone being cleansed (and cooled) prior to its deposition (McCarthy 2010, 103). This is an interesting suggestion given that some burnt bone was found within the well-pit, possibly accidentally being lost while this process was being carried out.

The well-pit at Kilgobbin would have been large enough for such a function and a stony deposit was noted as the primary fill of the feature (C178), although there was no clear evidence that these stones had been heated. An alternative, and it must be said, more banal interpretation must also be postulated; that the well-pit with its sloping side was actually intended to allow for animal access down to the water table. It would not be surprising for pre-historic societies to go to great lengths to provide for their livestock given the importance placed upon them, indicated by the later Irish sagas such as the *Táin bó Cúailnge*.

Cremation pits and associated markers

Three of the pits in Area 2 have been tentatively interpreted as cremation pits (C111, C131 & C125). They were all small oval-shaped pits and they produced small quantities of burnt bone. There was evidence for in-situ burning within one of the pits, suggesting that some burning event took place within the pit itself rather than only on a separate pyre, though this could also have been accidental, for example if some fuel continued to burn when the cremated deposit was moved into the pit. Interestingly, the cremation pits appear to have been related to nearby postholes (C119 & C113), possibly suggesting that originally the cremation pits were marked with a wooden post acting as a grave marker. They were all located above the main body of

the spread representing the hollow, on the final slope down to what may originally have been a small natural pool. One of the posts (C119) had clearly been burnt *in situ*, though it is unknown whether this took place as part of the burial rite or whether this happened at a later date. It will be interesting to identify whether these features relate to a period before the well-pit and well were constructed or are contemporary, or later, as it will give us a better understanding of whether these features functioned as a single site or represents layers of subsequent use over a wide time period. An additional possible cremation pit (C141) was located within the hollow, also with a nearby posthole (C140). The presence of this cremation pit at the bottom of the hollow may bring into question the presence of a pool at the time of the cremation burials, or suggest that the pool may have receded or have been replaced by one of the wells by the time this cremation pit was excavated. The location of this cremation pit and posthole beside the linear pit may suggest that this feature was present at that time.

Another related feature is the pit containing a possible stone upright marker (C160), also located beside the linear pit. This was located at the base of the hollow and did not appear to have an associated cremation deposit, however, the presence of the upright stone, as well as the sherd of prehistoric pottery found within the pit, suggest it may be related to the other

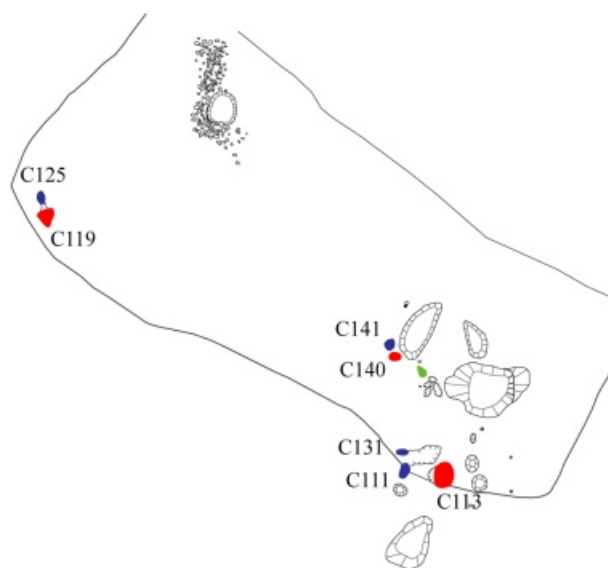


Fig. 7.7 Location of the possible cremation pits (in blue) and the associated marker posts (in red). The pit with the upright stone marker is highlighted in green

cremation pits and post-markers.

Groups of three or more cremation pits related to one another by rite, grave goods, or simply by their proximity to one another and not covered by a mound are classed as flat cemeteries and are likely to date to the Bronze Age (National Monument Service – www.archaeology.ie). A small Bronze Age flat cemetery was found at Carmenhall to the north of Kilgobbin during the construction of the southern section of the M50 (Reilly 2005, 35).

Token cremation pits are known from many archaeological sites, frequently dating to the Bronze Age, such as at Moneyatta Commons, Saggart (Excavation Licence No. 01E0329, 2001:463) and Ward Upper, Finglas (Excavation Licence No. 03E1358, 2004:658.). Iron Age examples are also known, such as at Ballynakelly, Newcastle (Excavation Licence No. 07E245, 2007:431), where token cremation pits were found dating from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age.

Cremation pits with possible grave-marker posts are known from sites dating as far back as the Mesolithic period, such as those excavated at Hermitage, Castleconnell (Area A; Excavation Licence No. 01E0319 ext., 2001:763). Undated cremation pits with possible grave-marker posts were excavated at Tinnacross 2, Wexford (Excavation Licence No. E004229, 2010:825). More cremation pits with stake-holes suggesting possible markers were identified at Manor East, Co. Kerry and dated to the Middle Bronze Age (Excavation Licence No. E004323, 2011:331). There was also a strong suggestion that the flat cemetery burials at Ballynakelly, Co. Dublin also had associated posts or markers (McCarthy 2010, 106).

At Donacarney Great a well-defined isolated pit lined along the base and sides by large water-rolled stones was uncovered, which contained small amounts of cremated bone as well as sherds of pottery including a sherd of Neolithic Carrowkeel ware (Giacometti 2010, 29). The stone lining and overall form and size of the feature resembled a posthole, however this feature was isolated, and the fragment of Carrowkeel pottery (usually found in ritual contexts) suggests a special function (*ibid.*). It is

possible that this feature represents a combination of what we are seeing at Kilgobbin, with the cremation pit itself doubling as a posthole for the grave-marker.

Pit cluster and stake-holes

The cluster of small pits and postholes identified beneath the southern edge of the spread did not appear to form any structural coherence. They appeared to be grouped or clustered at the southern end of the hollow, without any clearly identifiable function. It has been suggested that they are comparable to the Early Neolithic pit clusters encountered during the excavations at Belarmine in 2003 to the west of the development (N. Carlin pers. comm. 2014), however as yet these pits remain undated. The pit cluster may represent small offering pits or have held small markers at the edge of the hollow. The lack of conformity in size or arrangement does not allow for any suggestion other than their placement being ad-hoc and random, with the important factor being the location at one end of the hollow, possibly beside the natural pool, or the later wells; and their proximity to one another. The lack of functionality may suggest some form of ritualistic aspect to this, however as yet a clear idea of what this may have been remains unknown.

The presence of a number of small pits cut into the fills of the well-pit may suggest that at least some of these pits are later prehistoric in date. Another possibility is that some (such as those within the fills of the well-pit may not have been intentionally created at all, possibly formed accidentally by animals walking over and getting stuck in the still soft silting up well-pit.

The stake-holes (C144, C148, C150, C152 & C174) were located to the east of the pits and formed a semi-circular arc c. 3m in diameter north-south. There was no evidence for this continuing to the west to form a complete circle. This may represent the remains of a semi-circular barrier, windbreak or screen at the eastern end of the area of activity. The northern side of the arc lay only 80mm from the edge of the upper fill of the well-pit suggesting this may have marked the northern limit of the feature. Two of the pits of the pit cluster were enclosed by the arc of the stake-holes (C156 &

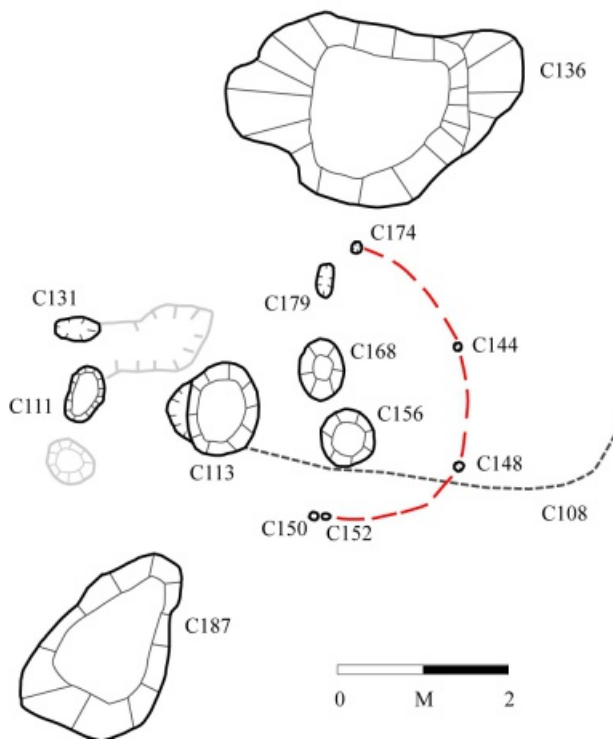


Fig. 7.8 Plan of possible structure represented by stake-holes

C168). It is unclear what purpose this structure may have served, but perhaps suggests that some level of wind protection or privacy was required for the activity taking place to the west of this, perhaps associated with the pit cluster, or the cremation pits further to the west.

Linear pit and associated posthole

The final feature of interest in Area 2 was the linear pit (C134) to the west of the well-pit. This feature also accessed the water table and

had a large clearly associated posthole near its southwestern end (C140). The purpose of this feature is again unclear, although the association of the posthole with beside a shallower pit (C141) containing cremated bone is reminiscent of the possible cremation pits to the south and it is possible that the posthole may be unrelated to the linear pit, instead marking another possible cremation pit. The location of the linear pit at the base of the hollow in the same general area as the well to the west and the well-pit to the east may suggest that this feature was also intended as a method of accessing the water table and indeed during the excavation it was found to lie mostly below the water table. However, in this case other elements are related to the pit, with the post at one end, two stake-holes, one to the north and one to the south, and the possible cremation pit to the southwest suggesting an alternative function for this pit. The linear nature of the pit also suggests that it may have served a different function. It is possible that a different activity was carried out at this pit, though what activity that may be remains unclear. The sides were steep-sided suggesting that accessing the pit was not the main goal, although its relatively shallow nature would not hamper people from stepping into and out of the pit. Given the shape, trough- or bath-shaped, suggestions as seen above for the pit being used for bathing or for providing animals with water access are again possibilities here. The additional features around the pit suggest that at least one post was present and associated with the pit.

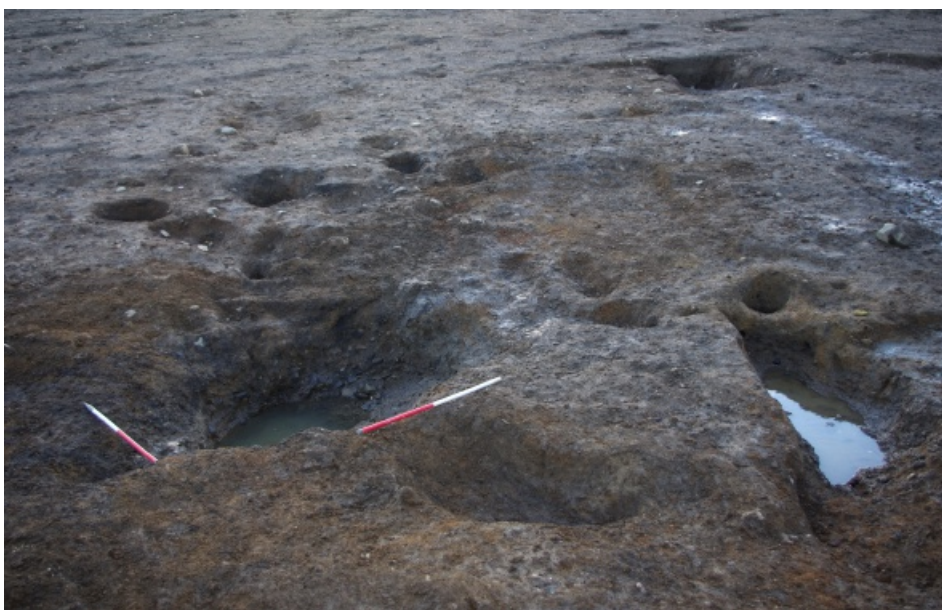


Fig. 7.9 Post-excavation shot of linear pit C134 (to right), well-pit C136 (to left) and smaller linear pit C158 in foreground. The small pits and postholes to the south of the well-pit are also visible. Looking southwest

The presence of a second smaller linear pit (C158) to the east, north of the well-pit or similar form would suggest that the function of the two pits may be related. Both were dug to similar depths and reached below the water table.

Area 3

Medieval water management features

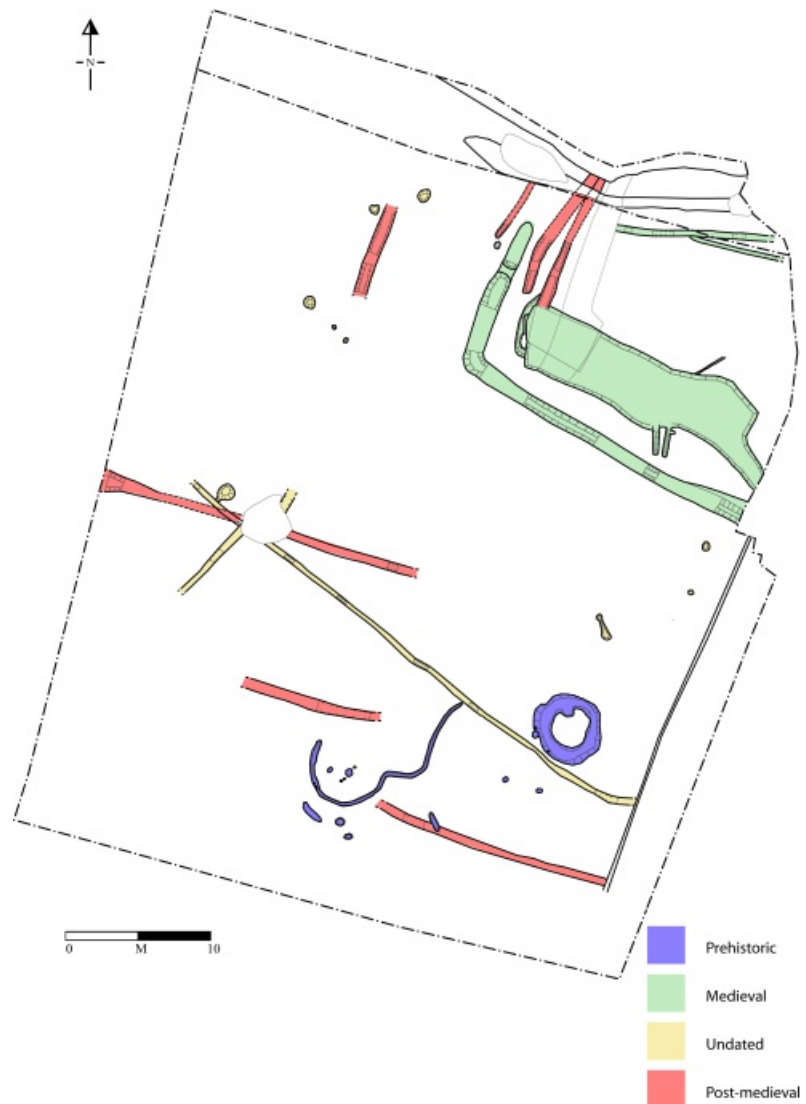
The medieval water management features to the north of Area 3 are likely to be outlying features relating to the fifteenth century village and castle of Kilgobbin. What is unusual about this is that the pottery retrieved (dated to the twelfth to fourteenth centuries) would seem to pre-date the castle itself, which was constructed at some point in the later fifteenth century by the Walsh family. This may suggest that a small settlement or possibly an earlier defensive structure was present at Kilgobbin Castle prior to the building of the current structure. It is also possible that, as not much pottery was in fact retrieved from Area 3, a small farmstead may have been located nearby during the medieval period rather than the village settlement that grew up around the castle in the later medieval period. Further evidence of small-scale medieval presence has been noted in excavations to the north of the castle and to the west of the current development.

The pond is fed via the channel to the east, with two additional channels leading from the ditch that runs around the pond to the south and west also possibly feeding into the pond. It would appear that these served a primarily as overflows for the ditch rather than feeding water into the pond. There was slight rise in the base of the ditch along the southern side as it flowed from east to west, possibly intended to raise the level of the water in the ditch to the point that water fed into the two channels running into the pond.

No outlet for the pond was identified.

The pond was 17 x c. 4.75 and c. 0.55m in depth. This depth may have been increased to a minimum of 0.75m if the bank (C244) was present the whole way around the pond. This would have given the pond a volume of c. 44.4m³, or c. 60.6 m³ including the bank. The purpose of the pond is somewhat unclear. It does not appear to have had an industrial function being too small to have functioned as a millpond, and with no associated outlet or millrace, this is not a possibility. Another suggestion is for it being a fishpond, with a number of these known from Ireland dating to the medieval period. The small size of the pond makes this suggestion somewhat suspect as most medieval fish ponds would tend to be larger than

Fig. 7.10 Post-excavation plan of Area 3 with highlighted phasing



this. It is also not particularly well-formed, suggesting it was a purely functional feature. It may have served as an animal trough at the south-western corner of the village of Kilgobbin, with the ditch (C203) enclosing the southern and western sides of the pond possibly also marking the edges of the settlement. At present no other features on the site have been dated to the medieval period, although the kilns and metal-working pit may yet be found to date to that time, and this may be because the pond and its associated ditch formed a limit to the settlement.

The industrial features

Two possible kilns were identified within the central portion of Area 3, one to the east and one to the west. It was unclear to which phase of activity these kilns belonged to as no datable finds were retrieved from either feature during excavation. The eastern kiln (C298), lying to the north of the barrow, was heavily truncated by 18th and 19th century agricultural activity and the 1970s levelling of the field to create the playing pitches. Only the base and a small amount of the fill survived in this feature and it was not possible to identify the form of the kiln, though it appeared that the firing pit lay to the southeast. This may indicate that this kiln was originally located on a local high point, since lost and ploughed out by the later agricultural activity.

The western kiln (C218) was originally key-hole shaped with a large drying chamber to the north. No firing pit was identified with this phase of the kiln, however the southern end of the flue had been truncated by a later drain (C235). A much smaller re-cutting of the kiln (C232) was evident running along the western side of the backfilled earlier kiln and somewhat comma-shaped in plan. This phase saw the firing pit and drying chamber of the new kiln almost completely located within the drying chamber of the earlier kiln, with intense burning of the fill of the earlier kiln evident in to the south where the new firing chamber had been created.

No seeds were noted within the fills of either kilns during excavation, however this may change following environmental analysis. The

form of the original kiln, being key-hole shaped, may suggest that it dates to the medieval period based on previous archaeological findings, however this is by no means conclusive (Monk & Kelleher 2005, 105). Dating of the feature will be carried out during the post-excavation phase of the project.

The isolated metal-working pit (C201) relating to the smelting of iron in the northern portion of the site is as yet undated but must date to the Iron Age or later. Given its proximity to the medieval activity to the northeast of the area there is a strong possibility that this metalworking pit represents small-scale industrial activity at the edge of the medieval settlement associated with Kilgobbin Castle. Within the pit a number of lumps of structured burnt clay were retrieved, possibly relating to the superstructure associated with the pit. More of this structured burnt clay was retrieved from a small spread of related material beyond the edge of the pit to the southwest (C207).

The location of the pit and kilns in isolated locations at the edge of the medieval settlement itself can also be seen at the settlement associated with Kilgobbin Church to the south where this industrial activity is somewhat removed from the main focus of the settlement. This is not surprising given the nature of the work, which would have been dirty, noisy as well as potentially dangerous given the fire and heat involved so it would have been ideally located away from potentially flammable thatch and other such combustibles.

The barrow

Based on the survival of the various archaeological features encountered to the south of Area 3 it appears that originally a slight rise was located to the east in the vicinity of the barrow (C311) and the eastern kiln to the north of the barrow (C298) as both these features appear to be more truncated than others in the area. The better survival of the structure (C279) to the southwest suggests that the main body of this may have been located within a slight hollow between the rise to the northeast and the hillside to the south, with the linear to the northeast (C304) running up-slope and therefore also being truncated at its northern end.

This natural rise is likely to have been relatively gentle and the levelling out of this feature, either in the 18th century through agricultural use or more recently during the levelling works for the pitches, may explain why so few features survive in the central portion of the site.

There is an argument against using the term 'barrow' for this feature (C311), perhaps using the more generic term 'ring ditch' would be more appropriate, however the cremated deposit in the southwest of the monument at least gives some credence to it being a barrow. Indeed there is some interchangeability in the use of the term ring-ditch and ring barrow, for example Clarke and Carlin (2006, 23) give a very similar description to ring-ditches as Waddell (1998, 367) and Corlett (2005, 69) give to ring barrows. Generally, a barrow is a form of burial monument used throughout the late prehistoric period, with a date range from the Bronze Age right through to the late Iron Age, with some suggestion of their continued use after the arrival of Christianity (ibid.). Ring barrows are described as circular mounds of earth surrounded by a ditch with a bank to the exterior and in many cases the mound and bank can be very low, almost imperceptible (Waddell 1998, 364). They can take a number of forms, however attempts to classify and thereby date barrows typologically have largely failed. They can be associated with both inhumation burials and cremations, either within the central area of the monument or within the ditch. However, it has also been noted that in some cases no burial is apparent at all (Corlett 2005, 64). This has led to

Fig. 7.11 Post-excavation shot of barrow C311, looking southwest



the suggestion that it is the enclosing element of the ditch that is the key feature of these monuments as it is present whether a burial is present or not (ibid.). It has also been suggested that the enclosing element may have marked a location already charged with meaning, possibly an earlier monument or focal point in the landscape (Giacometti 2010, 62).

The term barrow is used somewhat tentatively here, given that a burial was not identified in the centre of the feature, however there was a suggestion of a now lost central pit in the patch of scorched material to the north of the interior (C312). This may represent the base of an internal pit, possibly with *in situ* burning, however it could also be the base of a hearth or scorching relating to a central pyre. The size of the barrow at Kilgobbin (c. 4.8m external and c. 2.5m internal diameter) is at the lower end of the scale in terms of barrow size (Waddell 1998, 367; Clarke and Carlin 2006, 23). A small barrow of 3.5m diameter was excavated at Mullahead, Co. Antrim (Excavation Licence No. AE/10/99, 2010:069), while one of 4m diameter was excavated at Donacarneay Great (Excavation Licence No. 08E0912, 2008:951).

There are two phases of use of the barrow at Kilgobbin: an initial construction (C311) with no surviving associated burial material; and a subsequent re-digging of the monument (C323) with a small amount of surviving cremated material located in the southeast of the ditch. There are a number of interesting aspects to the barrow. Firstly is the presence of a concentration of fractured pieces of quartz in the vicinity of the cremation. While some quartz was apparent elsewhere on site and occasional pieces were to be found within the natural subsoil, the collection and deposition of the quartz in and around the cremated deposit appeared intentional due to the density of quartz here. Secondly, the presence of prehistoric pottery associated with both phases of the monuments use. While this has yet to be analysed, given that Iron Age pottery is infrequent in Ireland, this

is likely to indicate a Bronze Age date. It is possible however that the pottery from the re-cutting of the barrow was associated with the original fill and is not related to this phase of reuse and so does not exclude the possibility that the second phase of activity at the monument occurred during the Iron Age.

At Ballynakelly a ring-ditch was also uncovered, which McCarthy (2010, 106) suggested represented a permanent and visible monument on the landscape, as opposed to the earlier flat cemetery. At Kilgobbin the ring barrow in Area 3 may represent a similar change in ideological thinking from the less monumental flat cemetery seen in Area 2 to the west to the circular ring barrow. It is also a possibility that the shift from burial in the flat cemetery to the barrow may represent a variation of social status of the people buried within them rather than an ideological or religious change.

A note on quartz deposits

Quartz is a problematic material in the archaeological record. For many archaeologists it is difficult to understand its fracturing and therefore its utilitarian nature as a raw material for tool manufacture. In Killian O'Driscoll's recent PhD work on quartz (2010), he discusses the place of quartz in considerations of British and Irish prehistory, noting that a non-utilitarian use of quartz have played a strong role in interpretations of the archaeological record (O'Driscoll 2010, chapter 4). For instance, the presence of quartz has been given a ritual significance at the passage tombs of Newgrange, Co. Meath and Knockroe, Co. Kilkenny (Waddell 1998, 61) and it has also been suggested that the presence of quartz pebbles in early medieval burials of a Christian type may be a continuation of an earlier pagan tradition into this period (O'Donchada 2007, 10). O'Driscoll notes the connections with megalithic structures and medieval burials, and the suggestion from Thompson (2004) for an unbroken tradition from the Neolithic to the recent past for the use of quartz as a material reserved for the dead (O'Driscoll 2010, chapter 4). While he notes a more nuanced account suggesting that objects and monuments could mean different things to different social groups (O'Brien 1999), he also notes that ethnographic studies into the use of

quartz do suggest that the aesthetic and symbolic characteristics of stone influenced their use (O'Driscoll 2010, chapter 4).

In an Irish context, given the underrepresentation of quartz in the archaeological record and the difficulty in identifying worked quartz it must be recognised that the collection of quartz can be influenced by a judgement call on the part of the excavator. An excavator may collect the quartz from a feature where he or she deems it to be of significance, while ignoring quartz from others where it appears to have less importance. This would skew the significance of the presence or absence of quartz within the archaeological record. In the case of the quartz from this site, the majority of the quartz collected appears to be unworked and therefore would usually be considered archaeologically uninteresting. However the density of quartz within the barrow was significantly greater than elsewhere on the site, comprising a distinct concentration that appeared intentionally deposited within the southeast section of the ditch in the vicinity of the cremated deposit. It should also be noted that a significant concentration of quartz was noted from a pit to the south of the barrow (C274) that does not appear to be related to a burial context, though its proximity to the barrow (C311) and the structure (C279) may suggest this pit too is of some significance.

Quartz has been found (or noted) in a range of sites in Ireland, particularly megalithic tombs, but also barrows, cists and pits (O'Driscoll 2010, chapter 3). A ring barrow of Iron Age date (175 – 45 BC) excavated at Donacorney Great, Co. Meath was found to contain two deposits of cremated bone, both of which had a large unworked quartz pebble associated with them (Giacometti 2010, 28). A pit containing a substantial number of rose quartz pebbles was found in close proximity to the small Bronze Age flat cemetery found at Carmenhall (Reilly 2005, 35). There is a possibility that the unworked quartz within the barrow at Kilgobbin was intentionally gathered and placed along with the cremation as some part of the burial rite. Whether this burial was originally within the ditch itself is unknown, however both the fragments of burnt bone and the fractured quartz end up in the ditch as it filled up, either as a primary or secondary deposition and ap-

pear to be part of the same burial event.

Pits associated with the barrow

Two pits were identified in the vicinity of the barrow that appeared to be related to the activity centred in this part of the site. To the south of the barrow at a distance of c. 2.3m a circular cremation pit was excavated (C226). This contained a deposit of burnt bone along with an apparently intentional deposition of a single sherd of possible Beaker pottery (E. Grogan pers. comm. 2014). A second pit (C316) was uncovered 3.2m to the southwest of the barrow at a distance of 2m from the first, which did not appear to contain any funerary remains but did contain a long flint flake, possibly an informal blade.

While the cremation pit and the barrow may be unrelated, their close proximity and similar function would suggest some relationship between the two. Charles Mount has noted that pit burials form one of the burial traditions of the Beaker period, with a number now known from the south and east of the country at sites such as Lismullin, Co. Meath, Corbally, Co. Kildare and Brownstown, Co. Kildare (Mount 2011). These are characterised as having small token quantities of cremated bone associated with sherds from one or more beakers, sometimes associated with large stone artefacts like axes and mace heads, as well as flint and cereal grains, (ibid.). Mount states that in contrast to the second tradition apparent at the time that sees a continuation of the use of megalithic monuments and a collective burial culture, pit burials were single graves with only small amounts of cremated bone accompanied by broken artefacts, which he suggests as an emergence of two different views of burial, one looking to past traditions, the other making a new statement, but both using the international style of Beaker pottery (ibid.). This is interesting when viewed alongside the ring barrow to the north, which must mark another change in outlook and burial tradition.

The single burial tradition became popular among Beaker populations in Britain where a single crouched inhumation accompanied by a pot became the standard burial tradition. However, in Ireland more variation in burial tra-

dition has been noted, with Waddell noting in 1998 that 78% of burials known then occurred in cists and 22% in simple pits (Waddell 1998, 143). There was also variation in the burial rites with approximately 43% of bowls inserted into the burials being accompanied by unburnt burials and 57% with cremations (ibid.). It has further been noted that 43% of Early Bronze Age burials excavated so far did not have grave goods (Cahill & Sikora 2012, 54). Waddell suggests that this variation indicates the influences from Beaker practices stimulated a change in burial rites, whilst a strong non-Beaker element was maintained (1998, 144). That is, that the Beaker phenomenon, believed to be associated with societal change and an incursion of people, as seen in Britain and across the continent did not impact Ireland in the same way as in Britain. Rather, certain aspects of Beaker traditions seeped into the Irish population's thinking through contact, possibly through small Beaker excursions, but the Irish also maintained their own traditions.

A number of cist burials have been noted in the wider area and around Kilgobbin, uncovered by antiquarians in the 19th and early 20th century, such as that identified in 1926 in Jamestown (RMP No. DU026-015) and another probable cist found in the immediate vicinity of Kilgobbin Castle (DU025-01703). An urn burial is also recorded from Kilgobbin Cottage to the southeast of the site, probably dating to the same period (DU026-123). Excavations at Carmenhall in 2002 revealed three Bronze Age pits, the first with a cremation contained in a vase urn, the second with a cremation divided between two vessels and the third in a stone-lined pit (Reilly 2005, 32). Two cremation pits were also identified at Newtown Little (Excavation Licence No. 05E0333, 2005:513), with a further two from Kilgobbin near the townland boundary with Newtown Little (Excavation Licence No. 02E1196, 2002:606) and another in 'Area 1' of the Belarmine excavations (Excavation Licence No. 03E0306, 2003:616). These added to the small possible flat cemetery identified in Area 2 show that a range of generally low-key burial monuments are located in this general strip of land near the base of the slopes of the Dublin Mountains. In general these monuments do not have upstanding components, such as mounds or cairns. This not only makes identify-

ing them prior to excavation vastly more challenging, it also suggests that the monumental marking of burials was no longer a key factor as society evolved, or else that the marking of these graves was done through different means, perhaps timber posts, which have subsequently degraded. It will be interesting to analyse the dating evidence from the various burial monuments uncovered at Kilgobbin to see whether a progression of burial practice can be identified, or whether a number of practices were carried out at the same time. This may suggest different levels within society or variations within the belief structure of various groups, even those living in close proximity to each other.

Structure

The structure in Area 3 (C279) was defined by a C-shaped enclosed area with a central hearth, which had stake-holes either side, suggestive of a spit for cooking. The C-shaped slot trench contained six base planks, which appeared to have been burnt *in situ*, and appeared to have originally run between upright posts. Suggestion that further uprights rose up from the base planks was noted to the east, possibly signifying these base planks were part of upright screens or wattle walls tied into the posts. A number of stake-holes evident along the base of the slot trench to the southwest may relate to the base of upright stakes set into the timber base plank on that side. There was no evidence for the structure having been roofed, no drip gully was apparent and only one posthole was evident within the interior but not in a useful location for a supportive structural post. To the northeast of the structure the snaking gully (C304) that may be an additional slot trench, however it was not of the same form as the slot trench for the C-shaped structure and had no evidence for base planks within it. It is possible that this represents a drainage gully running away from the main structure, possibly intended to drain water from around the wooden foundation base planks and stop them from rotting to prolong the life of the structure. The contemporaneity of the gully and the structure is suggested by the presence of similar Beaker pottery in

both of these features.

The lack of a northern wall and the small size of the structure does not suggest a residence, more a protected cooking place. The lack of evidence for houses in this area combined with the presence of this structure in close proximity to the burial monument of the barrow and the quality of the construction may suggest that this was not a regular cooking spot. It is possible that this represents a feasting site, possibly associated with burial rites, or with later commemorations of the dead.

Some comparison can be made with a structure revealed in excavations at Newtown Little to the west (Excavation Licence No. 05E0333), where a semi-circular slot-trench with a stone hearth was identified, with a second small rectangular post-built structure of similar date identified nearby. The semi-circular structure was believed to be rather flimsy and possibly short-lived, though the layout is reminiscent of the structure in Area 3 with a hearth protected by an arcing fence. Interestingly here also Beaker pottery was found associated with both structures, however later radiocarbon dating found both to be Early Bronze Age in date. Two Bronze Age structures were also identified in 'Area 6' of the works associated with the Belarmine development to the northwest of the current site (03E0306). While the form of these structures was not similar to the form of the structure in Area 3, it is interesting that again Beaker pottery was found to be present associated with these presumed later buildings. A Neolithic house with post and plank walls was also identified at

Fig. 7.12 Post-excavation shot of structure C279, looking northeast



this site. The construction of this house indicates that post and plank construction is present in the area, albeit from a presumably earlier period.

It should be noted that the prehistoric activity in Area 3 is as yet undated. While the presence of the Beaker pottery does hint at a Beaker, or possibly Bronze Age date, further suggested by the Beaker pottery found associated with the Bronze Age structures to the north and west in the Belarmine development, it should not be discounted that the feature may turn out to be later. C-shaped structures of a similar scale have turned up on archaeological excavations of sites of a later date, such as the cluster of Iron Age structures uncovered at Cloongownagh, Co. Roscommon where at least three such structures were identified (Excavation Licence No. 99E0193 ext., 2000:0849). Another C-shaped structure of similar size was identified within a large Iron Age barrow or ring ditch at Morett 4, Co. Laois (Excavation Licence No. 03E1368, 2003:1085). Perhaps more pertinent is the C-shaped structure uncovered at Newtown Little to the west of the site, where a semi-circular slot trench was identified enclosing an area of 3m and contained a central hearth (Excavation Licence No. 05E0333, 2005:513).

Clarke and Carlin note that ring-ditches or barrows have been found in close proximity to Bronze Age houses at a number of sites in Ireland such as Charlesland, Co. Wicklow, Castlepton, Co. Antrim, Inch, Co. Down,

Ballyveelish 3, Co. Cork, Chancellersland, Co. Tipperary and Ardsallagh, Co. Meath and that many British settlement sites also have an associated small cemetery site nearby (2006, 25). Whether the structure present in Kilgobbin is representative of a domestic structure is not clear, however there were a number of Bronze Age houses identified to the west of the site in the Belarmine development.

Additional features

The linear pit orientated northwest-southeast to the east of the structure (C274) may represent a small kiln-like feature, though this interpretation is tentative. Some small patches of burning were noted on the edges of the pit, though this was not continuous, and two large stones were found placed on the base of the pit dividing one end from the other and may have acted as baffle stones. A number of pieces of struck flint were found within the fill along with a collection of fractured angular quartz, some burnt bone and some burnt clay. The collection of angular quartz within the feature was conspicuous and when considered alongside the collection of quartz found within the barrow to the north may suggest that these features are somehow related. There was no suggestion that this pit was a burial pit, although a small amount of burnt bone was retrieved from the pit, however the intentional collection and deposition of angular quartz within the pit is curious. A second much shallower pit (C289) was identified to the southwest of the structure and west



Fig. 7.13 Post-excavation shot with barrow C311 in foreground and structure C279 in background, looking southwest

of the linear pit. The orientation, shape and dimension in plan were reminiscent of the linear pit, however beyond that little can be said as this feature was too shallow.

A large posthole (C288) and a separate pit (C290) were excavated immediately to the south of the structure. Two sherds of prehistoric pottery were retrieved from the fill of the pit, however these are as yet unidentified. It is unclear whether these features relate to the activities being carried out at the structure, however their close proximity would suggest this. The posthole seems to have held an isolated upright post of a non-structural nature and may represent some sort of marker to the south of the structure.

Beaker pottery

The presence of Beaker pottery in three of the features in Area 3 (Structure C279, the gully associated with the structure C304 and Cremation pit C226) is somewhat unusual, particularly in the case of the structure and gully as Beaker structures are unknown in Ireland. The dating of this feature will be of great interest given the presence of the Beaker pottery and the possibilities it may lead to. It should be noted that Beaker pottery was retrieved during the excavations to the west as part of the Belarmine development associated with structures, which were later radiocarbon dated to the Early Bronze Age (Excavation Licence No. 03E306, 2003:616) and also turned up in two other areas of that development. Beaker pottery was also retrieved associated with Early Bronze Age structures in Newtown Little (Excavation Licence No. 05E333, 2005:513) to the west and in an area of 'archaeological deposits, pits, posts and stake-holes' in Jamestown townland (Excavation Licence No. 11E085, 2011:216) to the southeast, with Late Bronze Age dates returned from two of the features.

Mallory notes that Neil Carlin has recently identified 213 sites with Beaker pottery, also noting a significant growth in numbers in recent years attributable to the large development and road schemes carried out in the 2000s (Mallory 2013, 114). The majority of Beaker finds in Ireland have been in pits with apparent token deposition of single or multiple sherds suggestive of

some form of offering rather than accidental breakage (*ibid.*). The next most common context was in spreads of Beaker material not associated with any features, which is somewhat reminiscent of the spread in Area 2 (C108), although in that case the spread was associated with other features and appears to have been in use (or 'occupied') from the Neolithic period until the Late Bronze Age.

Mallory also suggests that the Beaker settlements may be temporary camps of a mobile population while noting that they also tend to turn up at earlier ritual sites, and he repeats the warning given by Carlin that it is extremely difficult to determine whether a site is a long-term settlement or a seasonally occupied ritual site where people have come together for feasting and celebrations (Mallory 2013, 115). Taking this into consideration, the Beaker pottery found at Kilgobbin may represent a short-term occupation. Only a small amount of pottery was retrieved, however it does appear to have been intentionally placed, particularly in the structure and the cremation pit. The presence of a probable Beaker horizon within the churned up layers of the spread in Area 2 also fits with this. It will be interesting to get the radiocarbon dates from the cremation pits sitting above the hollow to see if these also date to the Beaker period, in which case it would represent the continued ritual use of a sacred Early Neolithic watery place. It is evident from the previous excavations that a Beaker population was active in the area and it would seem that they were present at two of the areas excavated here, though to what degree that presence was felt, or whether they were responsible for the construction of the structure in Area 3 or other features on the site is as yet unknown.

Post-medieval activity

Later post-medieval agricultural features were evident in Areas 2 and 3 with a number of drainage ditches likely to date to this period. General trends of west-northwest to east-southeast running ditches were evident, mirroring the current field orientation and are likely to relate to the 18th and 19th century laying out of the fields. These tended to be wider ditches with flat bases cut from a higher level with little impact on the subsoil across the site in Area 3

(C211, C241, C253 & C276), with the post-medieval drain in Area 2 being slightly deeper (C122). One of the ditches associated with this phase (C241) truncated the fill of the medieval pond suggesting that this feature had been backfilled by the time this phase of agricultural activity had been established.

A slightly different orientation was suggested by some of the ditches in Area 3, possibly suggesting a different phase of agricultural activity (C235 & C336), however the relationship between these two phases was not established due to the shallow nature of the surviving features. This phase saw narrower ditches running northwest-southeast. The alignment of this activity is not perfectly aligned with the medieval ditch and pond to the northeast and also truncates the kiln (C218) to the west indicating it is later than this phase of activity at least. However, it does appear to respect the location of the barrow (C311) to the southeast, possibly suggesting this was still an extant monument when this phase of agricultural activity was being laid out.

Conclusions

The results of the excavation at Kilgobbin have revealed a number of interesting features. A range of prehistoric burial activity has been identified at the base of the slopes down from the Dublin Mountains, with cremation pits possibly forming a flat cemetery recorded to the west and a barrow and cremation pit recorded to the east. The barrow appears to have been located on a small rise in the landscape, which has now been ploughed out, while the flat cemetery to the west was located at the edge of what appears to have been a small natural pond.

Additional activity suggestive of interaction of the living with these burial areas was also recorded. A C-shaped structure possibly representing a well-built protective fence or wall surrounding a cooking place was located in close proximity to the barrow to the east. The form and location of this structure, together with the absence of evidence for domestic settlement, leads to the suggestion that this feature may relate more to activity associated with the burial rites rather than everyday cooking, possibly ritual feasting

associated with the burial itself or intermittent commemorative feasting to celebrate the dead.

The location of two water-accessing pits or wells to the northwest of the site within the natural hollow above which the small flat cemetery was located may also indicate interaction between the living and the dead, although it should be noted that at present these links are tentative and until dating evidence is returned the relationship between these features cannot be further emphasised. The wells do suggest that a settlement is likely to have been located nearby during the Bronze Age, but there was no suggestion that this settlement was located within the bounds of the current development. It is possible that the features identified here are features relating to the settlement identified during the excavations of the Belarmine development to the west and northwest of the site.

Medieval activity was also identified in the southwest of the site and in the northeast. Both of these areas appear to represent activity along the fringes of medieval settlements located beyond the limits of excavation of the current site and associated with Kilgobbin castle to the northeast and Kilgobbin church to the south. The activity in both areas appears to be more industrial and possibly agricultural in nature, with no suggestion that homesteads were located within the current site itself.

Later post-medieval activity in the form of agricultural drainage features were also identified indicating an intensifying of agricultural activity here in the foothills of the Dublin Mountains, possibly from the late 18th century onwards. Much of this activity was later affected by the laying out of the three tiered playing pitches in the 1970s, which were dug into the slope of the hillside thus obliterating much of the archaeological potential in the central section of the site. The survival of archaeological material in the areas not affected by this would suggest that a much richer archaeological landscape may have survived on the site prior to that time.

Section 8 Specialist reports

Specialist analysis and reporting on the archaeological material retrieved from the excavation is to be carried out and will be compiled as part of the final report when they are returned.

The specialists selected for the project are as follows:

Prehistoric pottery: Eoin Grogan

Medieval pottery: Siobhan Scully

Post-medieval pottery: Antoine Giacometti

Lithic analysis: Sean Sharpe

Metalurgical waste: Siobhan Scully

Animal bone: Jonny Geber

Cremated bone: Jonny Geber

Environmental analysis: Ellen O'Carroll & Nikolah Gilligan

Based on the results of the environmental analysis it is hoped to identify datable material from a number of key features across the site. Radiocarbon dates will be obtained for the two wells in Area 2, as well as two of the cremation pits and from the posthole to the south of the area. Radiocarbon dates will also be obtained for the two phases of the barrow in Area 3, as well as the cremation pit, one of the kilns, the metalworking pit and the structure. This is dependent on the quality and suitability of the datable material returned from the environmental analysis.

It is hoped that these additional analyses will be able to further the understanding of the site and add the overall picture of the excavation. The dating evidence will help greatly to give context to some of the features, particularly considering the horizontal nature of the archaeology on the site with little stratigraphy aiding the phasing of

the various features encountered. This will help create a better overall image of the relationships between the various features encountered during the excavation and help in setting the site within its overall landscape in the prehistoric and medieval periods.

Section 9 Recommendations

This report presents the results of the excavation, carried out under Excavation Licence Number 14E339, of three areas of archaeological activity identified during monitoring carried out on the site as part of the recommendations informed by the previous test-trenching programme in response to Condition 25 of the Grant of Planning Permission (D12/0206). All archaeological features within the three areas of archaeological activity identified in the main field of the proposed development have been excavated and recorded. No further excavation is required for the areas resolved under Excavation Licence 14E339.

At present it is proposed that the northern field of the proposed development is to be built up and as such it has not been archaeologically monitored. If this situation should change in the future it is recommended that the removal of topsoil in this area be archaeologically monitored given the potential for archaeological features relating to Areas 2 and 3 extending into the northern field.

Further archaeological monitoring is to be carried out for a service trench along the northern boundary of the site, during the removal of the farmyard in the northeast corner of the site and during the excavation of a number of storm water drains running towards the eastern boundary of the site. The results of this will be produced in the final report.

In the event that further future development is planned for the undeveloped area to the west of Area 2 or east of Area 3, further archaeological assessment should be undertaken as archaeological activity relating to the features identified on this site may extend these areas.

Funding has been agreed with the developer (Castlethorn Construction) for the post-excavation programme, which will permit analysis and reporting on the findings of the excavation and the full preservation by record of the site's archaeological remains.

All recommendations are subject to approval from the National Monuments Section of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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