

**Desktop Archaeological and Cultural Heritage
Assessment**

**Battery Energy Storage System,
Rasharkin, County Antrim**

Prepared by
John Cronin & Associates
Burnside
Saint Oran's Road
Buncrana
County Donegal

For
RPS
Elmwood House
74 Boucher Road
Belfast
BT12 6RZ

October 2024

Document Control Sheet

<i>Client</i>	RPS				
<i>Project Title</i>	Proposed Battery Energy Storage System, Rasharkin, County Antrim				
<i>Document Title</i>	Archaeological & Cultural Heritage Assessment				
<i>Document No.</i>	01				
<i>Document Comprises</i>	DCS	NTS	TOC	Pages	23
	Y	N	Y	Appendices	0

<i>Rev</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Reviewed By</i>	<i>Approved By</i>	<i>Office of Origin</i>	<i>Issue Date</i>
01	Draft	Camilla Brännström & Joseph Miller	Martin McGonigle	Martin McGonigle	Buncrana	10/10/2024

© 2024 Cultural Resource Management and Planning Ltd. 'John Cronin & Associates; is a trading name of Cultural Resource Management and Planning Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Cultural Resource Management & Planning Ltd has used reasonable skill, care and diligence in compiling this report and no warranty is provided as to the report's accuracy. Cultural Resource Management & Planning Ltd is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from the use of information outlined in this report. No part of this report may be copied or reproduced, by any means, without the written permission of Cultural Resource Management & Planning Ltd.

Contents

1. Introduction 1

2. Methodology..... 3

3. Context 5

4. Description of subject site..... 17

5. Assessment of impacts 18

6. Conclusions & recommendations 19

7. References 20

1. Introduction

John Cronin & Associates have been commissioned by **RPS** on behalf of **RES Ltd** to undertake a desktop archaeological and cultural heritage assessment of a proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) c.400m east of an existing solar farm and substation within the townland of Magheraboy, approximately 1km north of the town of Rasharkin, County Antrim (**Figure 1**). The subject lands consist of two agricultural fields accessed from Magheraboy Road to the north.

This report presents summary details on the locations of recorded elements of the archaeological and cultural heritage resource within the environs of the subject site and aims to identify any previously unknown archaeological constraints. The study area for this assessment comprised the lands of the proposed development as well as the lands extending for approximately 500m. This provides a sufficient geographical scope of the surrounding landscape from which to research and assess the cultural heritage constraints and their contribution to the archaeological/built heritage potential or otherwise of the proposed development lands. The assessment has been compiled by desktop research of this study area.

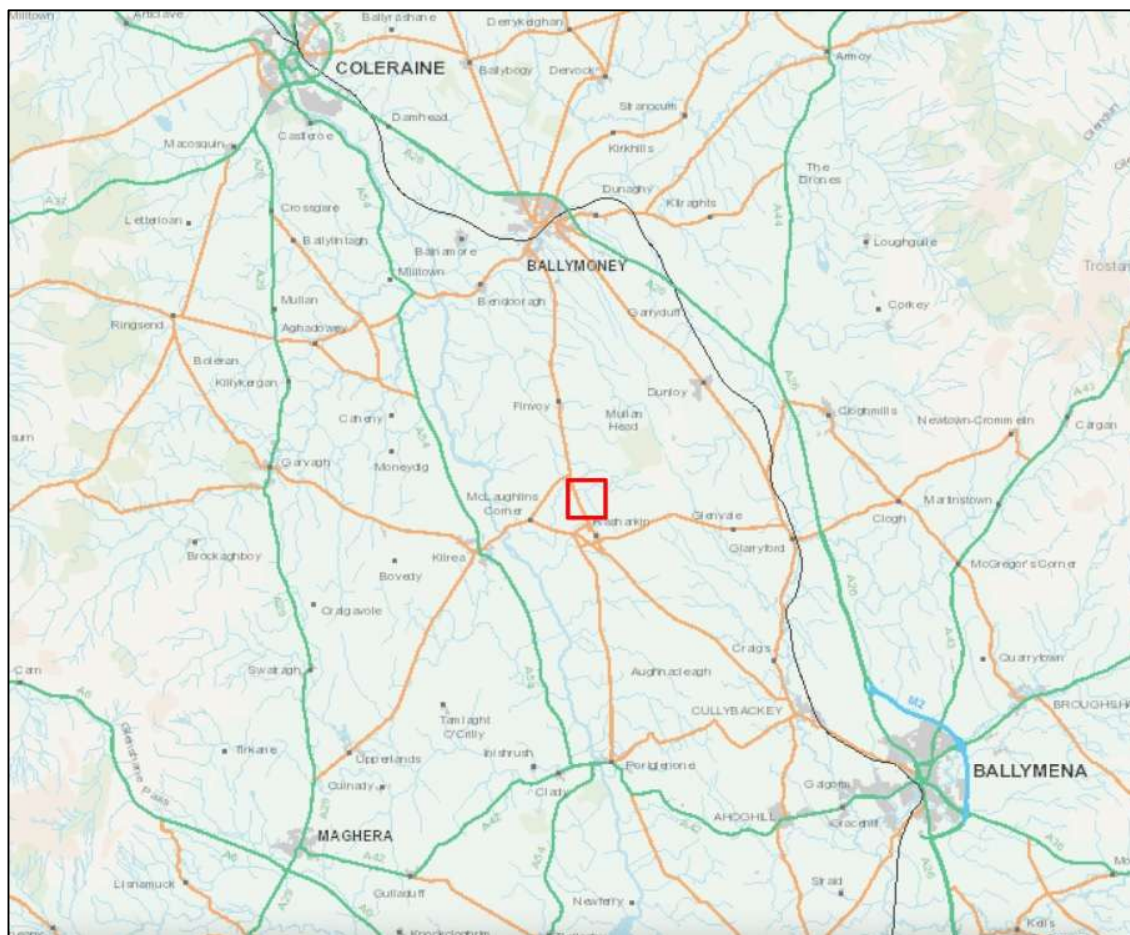


Figure 1: General location of subject site (red box) (Source: DfC: Historic Environment Map Viewer)

Statement of authority

This report was compiled by Camilla Brännström MA and Joseph Miller BA.

Ms Brännström graduated with a Master of Arts with a major in Archaeology from the University of Umeå, Sweden in 2004. With over 19 years' experience from commercial archaeology in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland Ms Brännström attained her archaeological licence from the Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division in 2015 and the Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht: National Monuments Service in 2019. Since joining John Cronin & Associates in 2018 Ms Brännström has worked as a Project Archaeologist on numerous archaeological schemes and heritage projects, including, but not limited to, archaeological impact assessments, cultural heritage assessments for EIARs and archaeological works on large infrastructure projects.

Mr Miller graduated with a B.A. in Archaeology at the University of Wales, Lampeter in 2014 and subsequently attained a Postgraduate Certificate in Landscape Management and Environmental Archaeology at the same institution. Mr Miller has been a Licensed Archaeologist in NI since 2021, a full-time professional archaeologist since 2017, and has been working as a Project Archaeologist with John Cronin & Associates (JC&A) since August 2022. Mr Miller has worked on a wide variety of archaeological and cultural heritage projects in both supervisory and managerial capacities, including large scale infrastructure projects and has extensive experience in archaeological excavation and post-excavation analysis.

2. Methodology

Desktop study

A desktop study assessment was carried out in order to identify all known archaeological sites, designated architectural heritage structures and other undesignated cultural heritage assets within the study area. The principal sources reviewed for this assessment of the known archaeological resource are the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (NISMR) and the Historic Environment Map Viewer. The Historic Environment Map Viewer provides a map-based record with data on approximately 17,000 archaeological sites recorded on the NISMR (including Scheduled Sites and those in State Care), as well as GIS layers containing the Industrial Heritage Record, Historic Buildings Register (listed buildings), Register of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes, Battlesites Register, Defence Heritage Register, Heritage at risk NI Register, Areas of Archaeological Potential, Area of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI), Archaeological Investigations and Historic Wrecks.

In addition, the following sources were consulted as part of the desktop study:

- UNESCO recorded World Heritage Sites and Tentative List: UNESCO seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. There are no Cultural World Heritage Sites in Northern Ireland, and no NI sites are included on the Tentative List of World Heritage Sites for the United Kingdom. Current data was accessed via <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/gb>. *Emain Mhacha* (Navan Fort), County Armagh, is part of the *Royal Sites of Ireland* grouping on Ireland's 2022 Tentative list (<https://www.worldheritageireland.ie/tentative-property/the-royal-sites-of-ireland/>). *Emain Mhacha* is located approximately 68km south of the proposed BESS site.
- Database of Irish Excavation Reports: This database contains summary accounts of all licensed archaeological excavations carried out in Ireland (North and South) from 1970 to 2024. The database entries for investigations carried out within townlands in the study area are provided below. Current data was accessed via www.excavations.ie.
- Historical publications and cartographic sources: various published and unpublished sources and historical maps were consulted. The historical maps and other figures are presented in this report.
- Aerial Imagery: available current local and regional online aerial mapping of the proposed development area were consulted to determine if any traces of unrecorded, sub-surface archaeological sites were evident.
- Placenames Database: this current online database (www.placenamesni.org) provides a comprehensive management system for data, archival records, and placename research, for townland names (and Irish translations) for Northern Ireland.

Types of impact

Impacts are categorised as either being *direct*, *indirect* or of *no predicted impact*. The criteria for determining the nature of impacts are based on the following:

- **Direct Impact** – where a cultural heritage site is physically located within the footprint of the scheme, which will result in its complete or partial removal.
- **Indirect Impact** – where a cultural heritage site or its setting is located in close proximity to the footprint of the scheme.
- **No predicted impact** – where the potential scheme will not adversely or positively affect a cultural heritage site.

A significance rating for these impacts is then applied; whether *profound, significant, moderate, slight, or imperceptible*

- A **profound** impact applies where mitigation would be unlikely to remove adverse effects that arise where a cultural heritage site is completely and irreversibly destroyed by a proposed development.
- A **significant** impact applies when an impact, by its magnitude, duration or intensity, alters an important aspect of the environment. It applies where part of a cultural heritage site would be permanently impacted upon, leading to a loss of character, integrity and data about the feature/site.
- A **moderate** impact applies when a change to a cultural heritage site is proposed that, though noticeable, does not compromise the integrity of the site and which is reversible. This arises where a cultural heritage site can be incorporated into a modern-day development without damage and where all procedures used to facilitate this are reversible.
- A **slight** impact causes changes in the character of the environment which are not significant or profound and do not directly impact or affect a cultural heritage site.
- An **imperceptible** impact applied where an impact is capable of measurement but does not carry noticeable consequences.

3. Context

Location

The subject lands are situated approximately 1km south of the town of Rasharkin, within the townland of Magheraboy. The site consists of two agricultural land parcels directly south of Magheraboy Road (**Figure 2**).

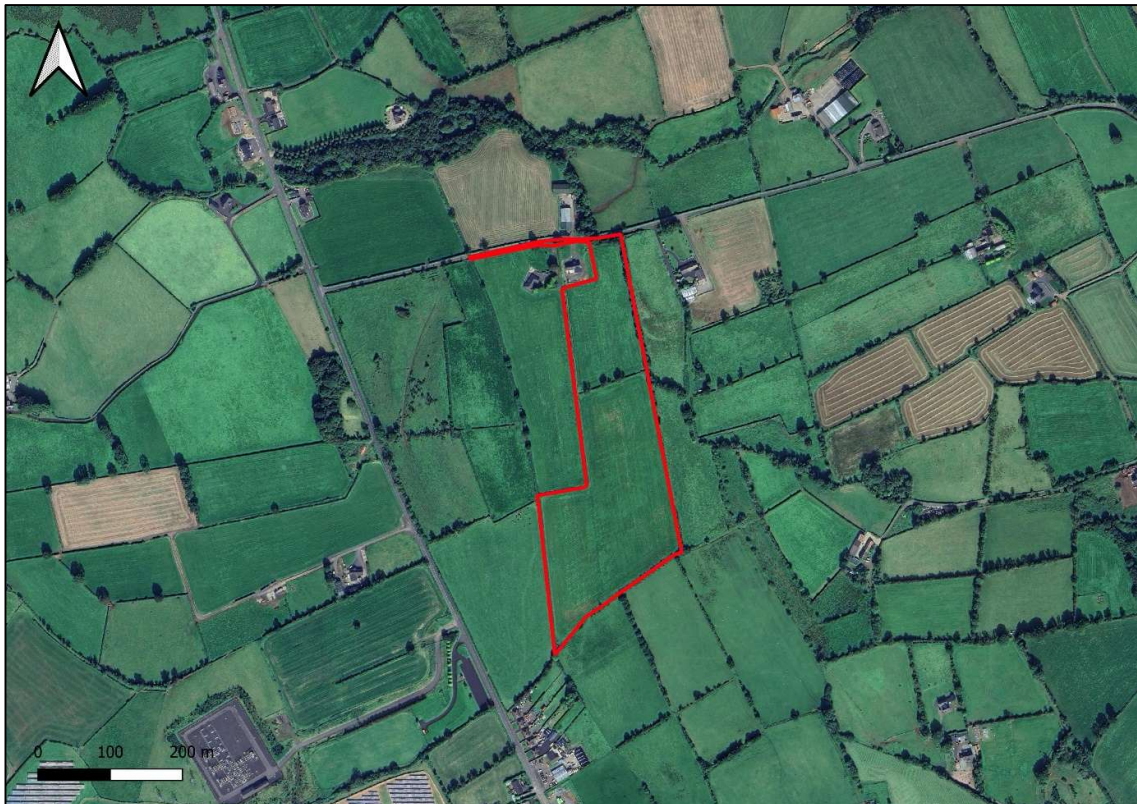


Figure 2: Location of subject site (red outline)

Legal & Policy Framework

Archaeological Heritage

The principal basis for the protection of archaeological sites in Northern Ireland is the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order (1995). The Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (NISMR) identifies all known historic monuments by location and type. To date there are over 16,500 sites identified throughout Northern Ireland. The Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division (DfC:HED) have responsibility, under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995, to compile and maintain a list of scheduled sites. The NISMR information is used to identify sites and monuments for statutory protection in the form of Scheduling. To date DfC:HED have listed over 2000 scheduled historic monuments (April 2022) which represents approximately 12% of the NISMR dataset¹.

¹ <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/scheduled-historic-monuments>

A recorded historic monument can be classified as an SMR site and/or a Scheduled Site. A scheduled monument designation is applied often in cases where the monument(s) are of enhanced significance in terms of rarity, condition, vulnerability, and grouping value etc. (see Annex B of Planning Policy Statement 6, 1999).

Scheduled monuments are protected under Article 3 of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995. It is an offence to damage or alter a scheduled site in any way. No works should be planned or undertaken at the sites listed here without first consulting with DfC:HED and obtaining any necessary Scheduled Monument Consent. When sites and monuments are scheduled, they remain in private ownership but are protected from damage and unauthorised development. Most scheduled monuments are privately owned and are not normally accessible to the public.

Notwithstanding the legal designation and scheduling protocol per the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995, and the requirements for on-going revisions and additions to the scheduled list by DfC:HED; those SMR sites, on the NISMR (over 17,000 sites²) and currently without scheduled monument designation, still retain unique archaeological importance and should not be interfered with in any way. The Planning Policy framework ensures that such sites still require statutory consultation with DfC:HED.

Protection of the archaeological and built heritage resource are also provided for in the Planning context through defined policies and objectives set out in Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6) (1999), (including PPS6 Addendum: Areas of Townscape Character (2005), and PPS6 Amendment to Annex C (2011)) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) (2015). Due cognisance of all relevant policies and objectives therein pertaining to the Cultural Heritage resource has been applied in the preparation of this report.

It should be noted that, a licence is required to search for archaeological objects, or to carry out an excavation, and any archaeological object found must be reported. All archaeological excavations must be carried out under the direction of a qualified archaeologist, licensed by the DfC:HED. A licence application must be submitted for every excavation by the archaeologist who will direct the work, at least three weeks before the date on which work is due to begin.

The DfC:HED are also concerned with the survival of other sites not protected under the 1995 Order and it is automatically consulted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) about every new development likely to affect a site or its setting.

There is also a separate Industrial Heritage Record of over 16,500 entries³ (April 2022), a Maritime Record, Defence Heritage Record and a Historic Parks and Gardens Register, all of which detail sites, structures, and areas of heritage significance.

Architectural Heritage

In addition to archaeological sites, the planning system has a duty towards listed buildings under Part 4 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. Furthermore, under Section 80 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division (DfC:HED) is required to compile and maintain a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. There are more than 9,000 historic buildings in Northern Ireland (as of March

² <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/scheduled-historic-monuments-of-ni.pdf>

³ <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/scheduled-historic-monuments>

2023)⁴; varying from fine churches and country houses to thatched cottages and post boxes. To be selected for listing, a building must be assessed and evaluated against established criteria. Key elements include the age of a building, its condition, style, aesthetic quality, structure, and any innovatory qualities (Source: DfC:HED).

Under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, consent, known as Listed Building Consent (LBC), is required from the local council of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) for the demolition or any works, alteration and extension that may in any way affect the character of a listed building. Any unauthorised works to a listed building may lead to a fine(s) and /or imprisonment.

The DfI and Local Planning Authorities also have a programme of area plans for Northern Ireland. Area plans provide the primary means of reconciling conflicts between the need for development and the need to protect the natural and man-made heritage within a defined (local) geographical planning area.

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) (2015) recognises the importance of preserving the natural and built heritage features, and in doing so states the need to assess development proposals impacting listed buildings and their settings. Any proposed works to a listed building must respect the character, setting and fabric of the building. SPPS has been informed by PPS6 Planning, Archaeology, and the Built Heritage (1999) which in turn [will/is] reflected in the local council's new Local Development Plans. (Note until the relevant LDP for the study area is adopted, PPS6 still applies).

Archaeological & historical background

There are two archaeological sites recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), within the 500m study area, as depicted in **Figure 3** and detailed in **Table 1**. The first of these is an enclosure (ANT026:005) which is described in the NISMR database as follows:

On top of a hill, commanding a very extensive view to the W over the Bann valley and overlooking streams forming the townland boundary to the E and the parish boundary to the S. Shown only on the 2nd ed of OS map. There are now no visible remains of this enclosure. The site is traversed from E-SW by a modern field boundary.

The second recorded site is also identified as an enclosure (ANT026:030) which has not been located. It is described in the NISMR database as follows:

Mentioned briefly in OS Mem as a "fort of earth on the farm of Hugh McTaggart....but part is dug away". Attempts to locate this enclosure failed despite extensive enquiries in the townland. The townland is almost entirely improved grassland, and rises in altitude from W to E, with a narrow hill in the NE corner, a very suitable location for a rath. The enclosure remains unlocated and has probably been removed.

⁴ <https://apps.communities-ni.gov.uk/Buildings/buildMain.aspx?Accept>

Table 1: Recorded archaeological sites within 500m study area

SMR No.	Class	Townland	IG Co-ordinates	Distance from proposed works
ANT026:005	Enclosure	Ballytunn	296529, 415191	430m
ANT026:030	Enclosure	Gortahar	297000, 414000	300m

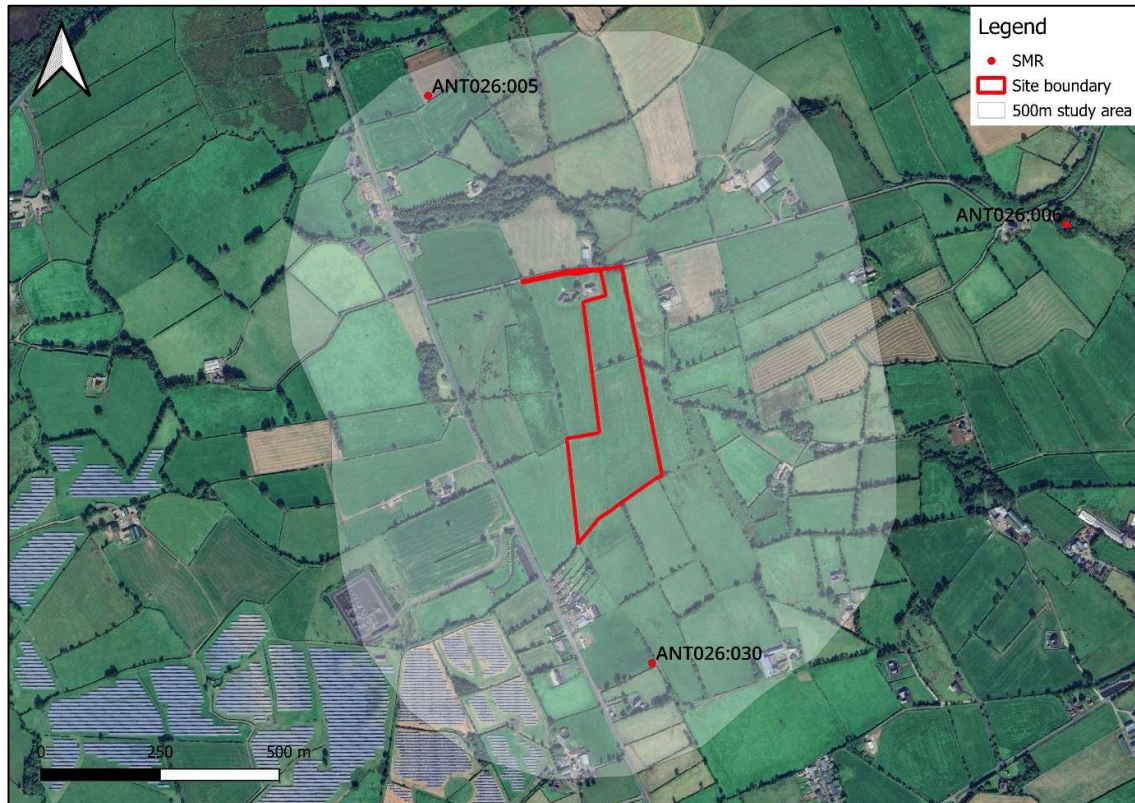


Figure 3: Archaeological sites (SMR's) within 500m study area

Prehistoric period

Traditionally, the earliest recorded evidence for human settlement in Ireland dates to the Mesolithic period (7000–4000 BC) when groups of hunter-gatherers arrived on the island. However recent evidence in the form of a butchered bear patella found in Alice and Gwendoline Cave near Ennis in County Clare now suggests that humans were present in Ireland during the Palaeolithic period between 12,800 to 12,600 cal BC (Dowd and Carden 2016, 161). These nomadic groups appear to have favoured coastal, lake and river shores which provided a valuable transport and food resource. There are no extant above-ground monuments dating to this period, however the presence of these early groups can often be identified by scatters of worked lithics in ploughed fields, shoreline shell middens and traces of temporary occupation sites occasionally uncovered during modern ground works.

The Neolithic period (4000-2400 BC) began with the arrival and establishment of agriculture as the principal form of economic subsistence, which resulted in more permanent settlement patterns and associated societal changes. As a consequence of the more settled nature of agrarian life, new site and artefact types, such as megalithic tombs and pottery vessels, begin to appear in the archaeological record during this period. This period saw the clearance of large swathes of

the thick forest cover in order to create grasslands for their domesticated animals, such as cattle, sheep and pigs, and to create cultivation plots in which crops such as wheat and barley were grown. The sub-surface remains of houses built by these early farmers have been uncovered while traces of enclosed field systems of the period have also been recorded. **There are no sites which date to this period within the study area.**

Late prehistoric periods

The Bronze Age period (2400 BC – 500 BC) commenced with the introduction of mining and metal-working technology to Ireland, initially using gold and copper, and then more durable bronze objects created with an alloy of tin and copper. This period also saw the construction of new monument types, often with a ritual function, within the landscape such as wedge tombs, standing stones, stone rows, stone circles, *fulachta fiadh* and new burial practices including inhumation and cremation burials within barrows, boulder burials and stone-lined cists.

The arrival of iron-working technology in Ireland saw the advent of the Iron Age (600 BC – 400 AD). This period has traditionally been associated with a Celtic ‘invasion’ but recent archaeological evidence is suggestive of a gradual acculturation of the Irish Bronze Age communities following centuries of contacts with Celtic-type cultures in Europe. Relatively little was known about Iron Age settlement and ritual practices in Ireland until recent decades when the corpus of evidence has been greatly increased by the discovery of sub-surface sites dating to this period. **There are no sites which date to this period within the study area.**

Early medieval period

This period began with the introduction of Christianity in Ireland and continued up to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans during the twelfth century (c. 400 BC – 1169 AD). While this period saw the emergence of the first phases of urbanisation around the large monasteries and the Viking ports, the dominant settlement pattern of the period continued to be rural-based and centred on enclosed farmsteads, known as ringforts (or *rath/lios/dun*), with livestock farming as the dominant practice. Ringforts form the visible element of much wider external agricultural landscapes that may contain unrecorded, sub-surface archaeological features such as associated field systems, stockades, barns, mills and drying kilns. The early medieval church sites were morphologically similar to ringforts but are often differentiated by the presence of features such as church buildings, graves, stone crosses and shrines. Following the first recorded Viking raid in AD 795, the Vikings eventually began to develop substantial port (and settlement) centres particularly at Dublin, Cork, Waterford and Limerick. **It is possible that the two enclosures, (AT026:005, ANT026:030) date to this period.**

High and late medieval periods

The arrival and conquest of large parts of Ireland by the Anglo-Normans in the twelfth century marked the advent of the late medieval period. The following centuries saw a rapid expansion of urbanisation, with many of the major Hiberno-Norse settlements expanded into walled cities while numerous regional towns and villages were established as settlement and market centres often adjacent to newly constructed Anglo-Norman castles. Areas of the country continued to remain outside of the Anglo-Norman colony and the native Irish lords also began to construct their own castles, or tower-houses, and to develop their own settlement centres. This period also saw the development of large ecclesiastical foundations both within the environs of the towns and across the countryside. The layout of agricultural lands during this period often comprised open fields with arable farming as the dominant practice in suitable lands which also saw the

development of ancillary milling centres. **There are no sites which date to this period within the study area.**

Post-medieval and early modern periods

The centuries following 1550 are referred to as the post-medieval period, which is generally considered to continue into the mid-nineteenth century and the period thereafter is described as early modern. The early part of the post-medieval period was a turbulent time in Irish history and in the later decades of the sixteenth century the Tudors, particularly Elizabeth I, sought to re-assert English control. The resultant wars between the 1560s and 1603 brought this unsettled period to an end and the following century was a time of prosperity for the newly established Protestant gentry and landowners. This period saw the widespread enclosure of fields with a shift back to livestock farming in some areas and the development of distinctive *rundale* farms in the north and west of the country. This also period saw the development of high and low status stone houses throughout the Irish countryside and rural settlement clusters at this time typically consisted of single-storey thatched cottages with associated farm buildings while two-storey farmhouses had become more common by the nineteenth century. An agricultural boom in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw a rise in prices for both tillage and dairy produce and this resulted in landlords investing in extensive land improvement and drainage works within their holdings. **There are no sites recorded in the SMR which date to this period within the study area.**

Historical context

Samuel Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, published in 1837 provides historical and statistical descriptions of several of the counties, cities, boroughs, parishes, villages and post towns throughout Ireland. Lewis (1837) states the following in relation to the parish of Rasharkin:

RASHARKIN, a parish, in the barony of KILCONWAY, county of ANTRIM, and province of ULSTER, 2- miles (E.) from Kilrea, on the road to Ballymena; containing 7481 inhabitants. This parish, called also Rath-Arkin and Magherasharkin, lies on the border of the county of Londonderry, from which it is separated by the river Bann : it is 6 miles long and 5 broad, and comprises, according to the Ordnance survey, 19,337- statute acres, of which a very large quantity is mountain wasteland, or bog ; the remainder is of a light soil, but of excellent quality for flax, potatoes, oats and clover ; the system of agriculture in some parts is very good, in others the reverse. The linen manufacture is carried on to a considerable extent, the cloth being sold at Ballymena; and there are two bleach-greens, one at Dunroin, belonging to John Cunningham, Esq., in which about 34,000 webs are annually bleached; the other at Dunminning, belonging to Tho. Birnie, Esq., which bleaches about 20,000 webs, principally for the English market. These gentlemen have elegant residence attached to their respective establishments. At Killymurris is a very extensive vein of coal, chiefly of the kind called cannel, which is very productive, though by no means skilfully wrought: there are some quarries of basalt, from which the stone is raised for building and road-making. The Bann is navigable from Lough Neagh to Portna, where there is a convenient wharf, at which considerable business is done at times. A fair for cattle and pedlery is held annually in the village of Rasharkin, which is also a chief constabulary police station. (...) The parishes of Rasharkin and Finvoy are held with cure of souls, those of Kilraghts and Kildallock without cure. The glebe-

house, having been found by the present incumbent in a dilapidated and uninhabitable state on his admission to the benefice, has been put into complete repair by him, at an expense of £3692, without having any demand on his successor for the repayment of any portion thereof: the glebe consists of 50a. 0r. 34-p. statute measure, valued at 18s. 6d. per acre, The church is a small but very beautiful edifice on a commanding situation. In the R. C. divisions the parish is united with that of Finvoy; both have chapels: that of Rasharkin is in the village, in which there are also two places of worship for Presbyterians. A parochial school is chiefly supported by the rector: at Dromore are two schools under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Wilson ; a male and female school at Dunminny were built and are supported, the former by Mr. Birnie and the latter by Miss Birnie; a school at Glenback is in connection with the Board of National Education, another is in connection with the London Hibernian Society, and there are two others, aided by grants from individuals. In these schools about 130 boys and 120 girls are instructed: besides whom, 418 boys and 160 girls are educated in 13 private schools: there are also 8 Sunday schools. There are several raths in the parish: one of these, at Lisnacannon, is of very large dimensions; it has two fosses and three ramparts, and covers nearly an acre and a half of ground. Several silver coins, of the reigns of Stephen, John and Rich. III., and of Robert and David Bruce, were found here; and an artificial cavern was discovered near the church. The body of a man who had committed suicide in 1776, and had been buried in a bog in the mountain, was found in 1827, without the smallest signs of decomposition.

Recorded Architectural/Cultural Heritage Features

There are seven Industrial Heritage sites within the 500m study area, including two Flax Mill sites and a Bridge. A description and location of these sites can be viewed in **Table 2** and **Figure 4**.

There are no Historic Buildings, Defence Heritage sites, Historic Parks/Gardens, Battlesites, sites on the Register of Heritage at risk NI, Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI) or Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP) within the study area.

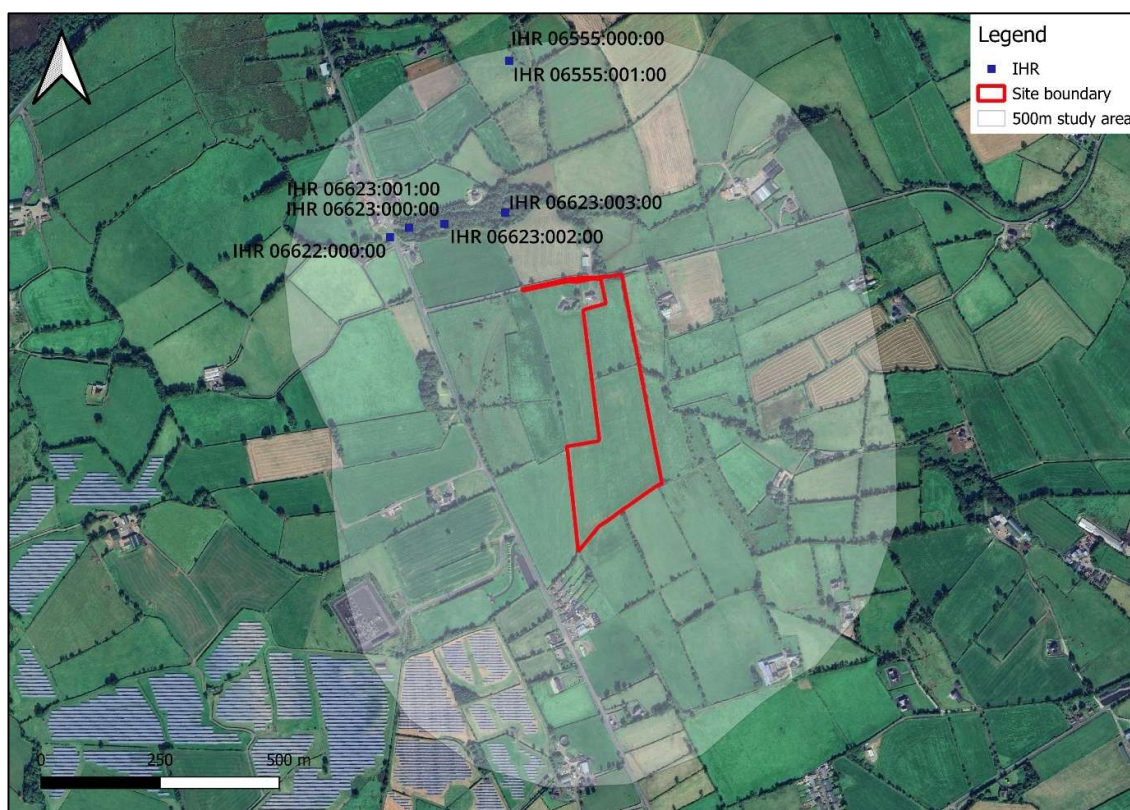


Figure 4: Industrial Heritage sites within 500m study area

Table 2: Recorded Industrial Heritage Record sites within 500m study area

IHR No.	Type	Townland	IG Co-ordinates	Distance from proposed works
6555:000:00	Flax Mill site	Slievenaghy	296706, 415277	470m
6555:001:00	Flax Mill	Slievenaghy	296706, 415277	470m
6622:000:00	Bridge	Magheraboy	296452, 414908	300m
6623:000:00	Flax Mill site	Magheraboy	296495, 414927	268m
6623:001:00	Flax Mill	Magheraboy	296495, 414927	268m
6623:002:00	Mill Race	Magheraboy	296569, 414934	212m
6623:003:00	Dam	Magheraboy	296693, 414961	160m

The Excavations Database

The *Database of Irish Excavation Reports* (www.excavations.ie) contains summary accounts of archaeological excavations undertaken in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland from 1970 to present. There are no archaeological excavations recorded within the 500m study area. It is known however that archaeological excavations for the solar farm and its associated cable routes to the southwest of the subject site have occurred, however there is no record of these excavations in the *Database of Irish Excavation Reports* or the *Historic Environment Map Viewer*.

Cartographic review and aerial imagery

The detail on historic cartographic sources demonstrates the nature of past settlements and land use patterns in recent centuries. It also highlights the impacts of modern developments and agricultural practices. This information can aid in the identification of the location and extent of unrecorded or partially levelled features of archaeological or architectural heritage interest. The cartographic sources examined for the study areas include the first edition of the 6-inch OS map (surveyed and published in the 1830s-40s) (**Figure 5**), the second edition OS maps (surveyed and published 1846-1862) (**Figure 6**), and the fourth edition OS maps (surveyed and published 1916-1957) (**Figure 7**). Extracts from orthophotography from 2017 and 2023 have also been included (**Figures 8-9**).

Inspection of the historic OS maps indicate that the subject lands have remained largely unchanged except for the continued improvement of fields for agricultural use. The first edition map records bog within the northern portion of the subject lands which has been improved by the time of the second edition map. The external field boundaries remain as recorded on the second edition map. The maps do not reveal any previously unknown or undocumented archaeological sites or structures.

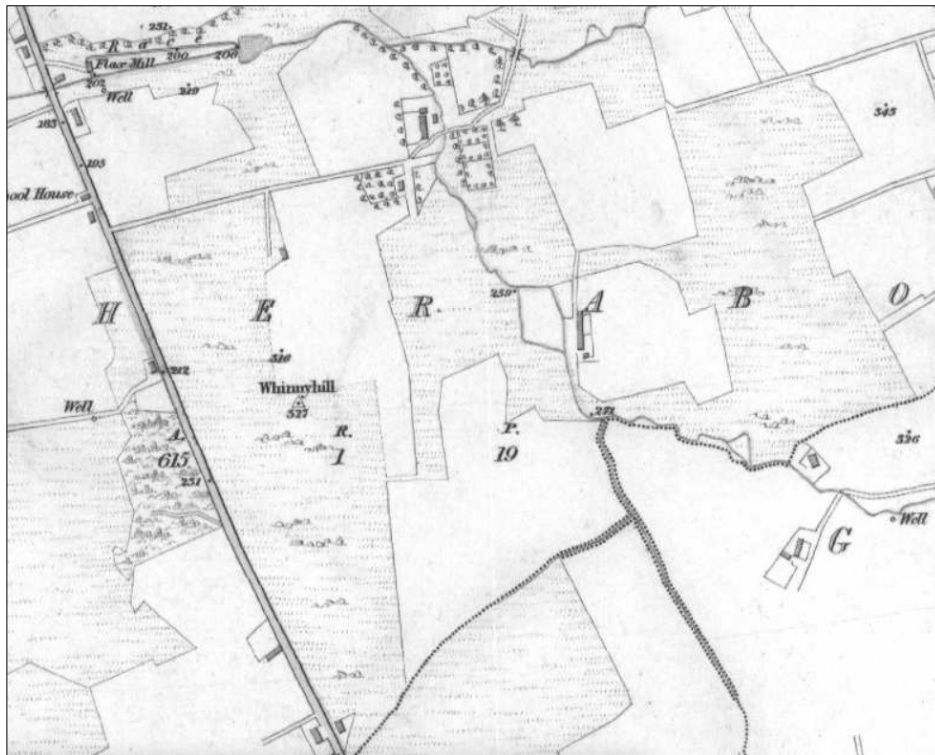


Figure 5: Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey map showing subject lands
(Source: DfC: Historic Environment Map Viewer)



Figure 6: Extract from the second edition Ordnance Survey map showing subject lands
(Source: DfC: Historic Environment Map Viewer)

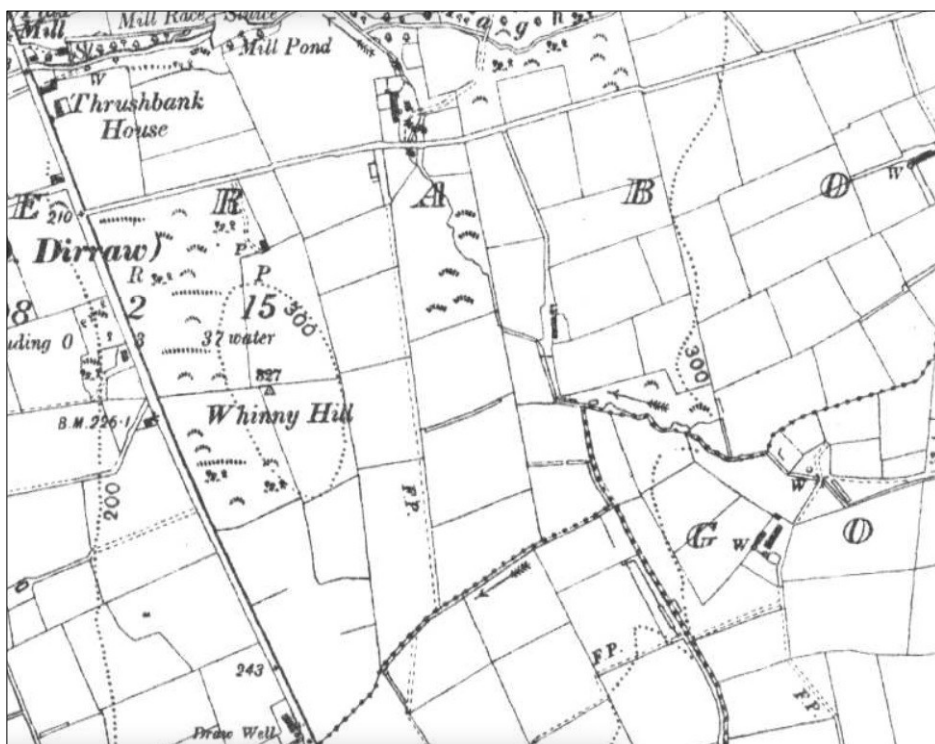


Figure 7: Extract from the fourth edition Ordnance Survey map showing subject lands
(Source: DfC: Historic Environment Map Viewer)

Orthophotography from 2017 shows faint traces a possible circular anomaly at the centre of the site which may represent a previously unrecorded large enclosure with a diameter of c.75m (**Figure 8**). This possible feature is not visible on any of the other available orthorectified photographic sources.



Figure 8: Extract from orthography from 2017 showing possible circular anomaly (yellow) within the subject lands (Source: Google Maps)

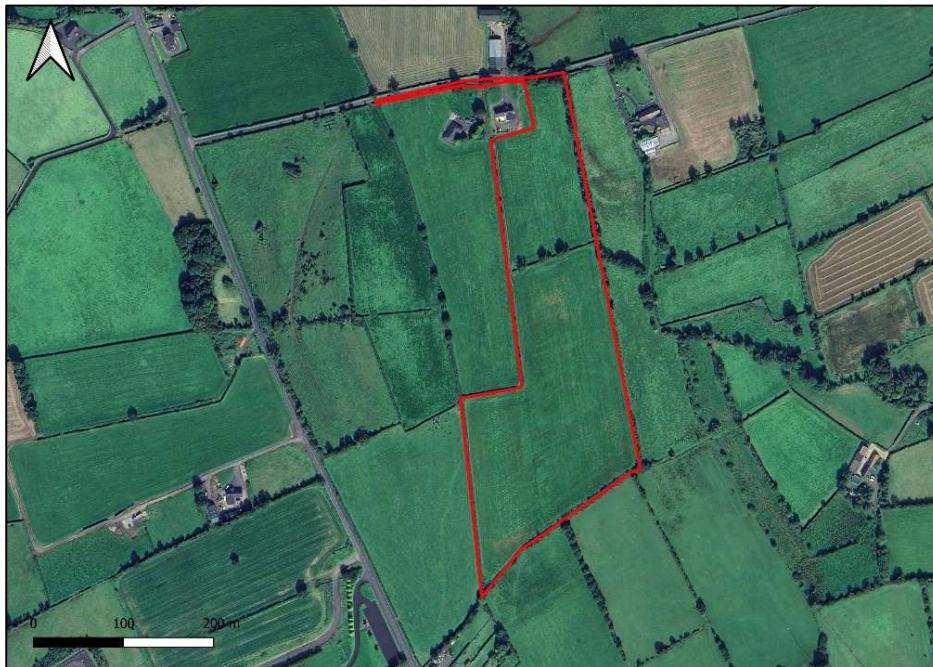


Figure 9: Extract from current orthography (2023) showing subject lands (Source: Google Maps)

Placenames

Townlands are the smallest unit of land division in the Irish landscape and many preserve early Gaelic territorial boundaries that pre-date the Anglo-Norman conquest. The layout and nomenclature of Irish townlands was recorded and standardised by the work of the Ordnance Survey in the nineteenth century. The Irish translations of the townlands names often refer to natural topographical features, but name elements may also give an indication of the presence of past human activity within the townland, e.g. *dun*, *lios* or *ráth* indicate the presence of a ringfort while *temple*, *saggart*, *termon* or *kill* record an association with a church site.

The study area for the proposed works includes the townlands of Magheraboy, Slievenaghy, Gortahar, Ballytunn, Moneyleck and Lisnagaver. The Irish translation of 'Magheraboy' is *An Machaire Buí* which means 'the yellow plain', 'Slievenaghy' is *Sliabhánach* which translates as 'place of heathy upland', 'Gortahar' is *Gort an Chara* which means 'field of the stepping stones', 'Ballytunn' is *Baile Tonnaigh* meaning 'townland of the rampart or fortress', 'Moneyleck' is *Muine Leice* which translates as 'thicket of the flagstone' and finally, 'Lisnagaver' *Lios na nGabhar* meaning 'fort of the goats' Most of these translations are indicative of landscape characteristics and topographical features, however Ballytunn and Lisnagaver indicate the potential presence of archaeological sites in the form of enclosures or ringforts (Source: placenamesNI.org).

4. Description of subject site

The following description of the subject lands has been compiled from a review of desktop sources and is therefore limited in the detail it can provide. The subject site consists of two relatively flat pasture fields immediately south of Magheraboy Road and east of Whinny hill, set within the townland of Magheraboy. The fields are bounded by hedges and the site is set within an slightly elevated position at approximately 70m OD.

5. Assessment of impacts

Within the 500m study area, only two archaeological sites are documented in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR): an enclosure (**ANT026:005**) located approximately 430m from the proposed development. There is **no predicted impact** on this archaeological site. A second enclosure (**ANT026:030**) recorded from the eighteenth century O.S. memoirs remain unlocated, however, there is **no predicted impact** on this archaeological site.

Also located within the 500m study area are seven Industrial Heritage sites which includes a historic bridge across Magheraboy Burn (**IHR 6622:000:00**) and two Flax Mill sites (**IHR 6555:000:00** and **6623:000:00**). The proposed project foresees **no predicted impact** on these sites.

In addition, the subject site is bounded to the south by the historic townland boundary of Magheraboy and Moneyleck. The boundary has been in existence since at least 1840 and are therefore noteworthy due to its antiquity. It is expected that this boundary will be retained during the proposed development.

A review of recent aerial photography has identified a possible circular cropmark within the central portion of the subject lands. The cropmark has a diameter of c.75m which would be unusually large for an enclosure. Should this possible feature be confirmed as archaeological, the **potential direct impact** would be considered **significant**. However, the potential direct impact could be reduced through a programme of archaeological works to preserve it by record, resulting in a **moderate impact**.

6. Conclusions & recommendations

Conclusions

The study area which encompasses both the lands of the proposed development and the surrounding 500m radius contains nine recorded cultural heritage sites, two enclosures (**ANT026:005** and **ANT026:030**) one of which is unlocated, a bridge (IHR 6622:000:00) and two Flax Mill sites (IHR6555:000:00, 6555:001:00, 6623:000:00, 6623:001:00, 6623:002:00 and 6623:003:00) located to the north of the subject site. There is **no predicted impact** on these recorded cultural heritage sites.

A review of aerial imagery identified faint traces of a **possible circular cropmark** within the central portion of the subject site which may represent an enclosure. The desktop study identified no other additional sites or structures of archaeological or cultural significance within the subject lands. The subject site has remained as undeveloped agricultural greenfield land since at least the first half of the eighteenth century when portions of it are recorded as unimproved bog.

Recommendations

Given the apparent undisturbed nature of the subject site as a whole, and the possible circular cropmark noted on aerial imagery there is a possibility of subsurface archaeological remains within this area. It is therefore recommended that a programme of geophysical survey followed by targeted test trenching is carried out within areas subject to ground reduction prior to any development at this site.

All recommendations are subject to approval by the DfC:HED and the planning authority.

7. References

- Database of Irish Excavation Reports. Available at: <https://excavations.ie/>. [Accessed: 08/10/2024].
- Department for Communities. 2023. *Historic Environment Map Viewer*. Available at: <https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6887ca0873b446e39d2f82c80c8a9337>. [Accessed: 08/10/2024].
- Dowd, M. and Carden, R. 2016. First evidence of a Late Upper Palaeolithic human presence in Ireland. *Quaternary Science Reviews* 139, 158–63.
- Google Earth Pro. Available at: <https://www.google.com/earth/versions>. [Accessed: 08/10/2024].
- Lewis, S. 1837. *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 2 vols, London: Samuel Lewis & Son.
- Placenames NI. Available at: https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/9b31e0501b744154b4584b1dce1f859b/page/Place-Name-Info/?data_id=dataSource_1-PlaceNames_Gazeteer_No_Global_IDs_3734%3A16407. [Accessed: 08/10/2024].
- UNESCO. 2022. *Tentative List of World Heritage Sites for the United Kingdom*. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/gb>. [Accessed: 08/10/2024].
- World Heritage Ireland. *2022 Tentative List of World Heritage Sites for Ireland*. Available at: <https://www.worldheritageireland.ie/tentative-property/the-royal-sites-of-ireland/>. [Accessed: 08/10/2024].