

PROPOSED MULTI-SPORT FACILITY

SHANNONSIDE RECREATION CAMPUS
CASTLECARRA ROAD,
CARRICK-ON-SHANNON,
Co. LEITRIM

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Report Commissioned by
COLLINS BOYD
Engineers & Architects
Galway Road,
Roscommon
For
LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Archaeological Impact Assessment Report has been prepared with respect to a proposed Multi-Sport Facility at the Shannonside Recreation Campus, Castlecarrara Road, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim.

The report was commissioned by Collins Boyd, Engineers & Architects, Galway Road, Roscommon on behalf of Leitrim County Council.

The study comprises the results of a survey and evaluation of selected sites of archaeological interest/potential within, and in the immediate environs of, the proposed development area. The work consists of the results of the paper survey and the field inspection.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Definition of Study Area

The overall proposed development lands and an area of approx. 500m surrounding such lands were determined to be the Study Area for Archaeological Heritage. The extent of the Study Area was chosen to reflect an appropriate Archaeological Heritage context for the development, beyond which it was considered that a development of this nature would have no direct/indirect (visual) impacts.

2.2. Paper Survey

This is a documentary source study. The following sources were examined from which a list of sites and areas of archaeological and architectural interest/potential was compiled:

- Record of Monuments and Places – Co. Leitrim (RMP)
- Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) / Archive files of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland – www.archaeology.ie
- Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland (NMI)
- *Excavations – Summary Accounts of Archaeological Excavations in Ireland* – www.excavations.ie
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage – www.buildingsofireland.ie
- Historic O.S. cartographic and aerial photographic sources – www.osi.ie
- Documentary Sources (Appendix 1)
- Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 (LCDP)

2.3. Field Inspection

Following completion of the Paper Survey, the proposed development lands and immediate environs were subjected to a site inspection/surface reconnaissance survey in early September 2020.

3. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The proposed development lands are located on the western side of Castlecarra Road, which runs in a general north-easterly direction from the N4 Road to the east/southeast of the centre of Carrick-on-Shannon – Figure 1.



Figure 1 General Site Location

The lands, which are currently under pasture, are bounded to the east by the Castlecarra Road, to the north and west by existing agricultural lands, and to the south by St. Marys GAA Grounds; there are commercial/industrial facilities located along the eastern side of Castlecarra Road and to the south of the GAA Grounds – Figure 2; Plate 1.

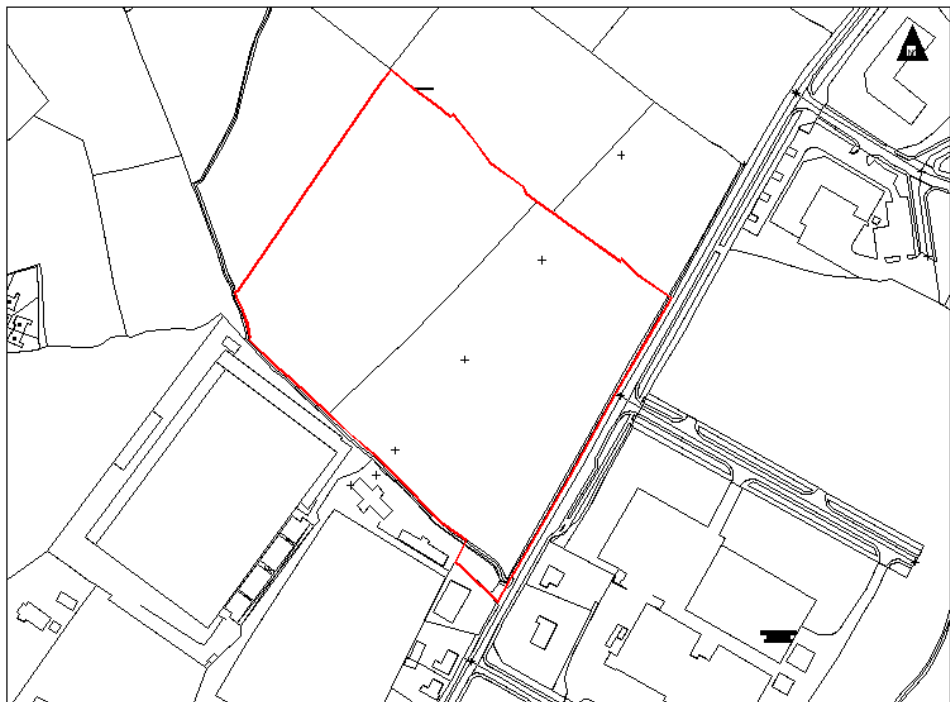


Figure 2 Extent of Site

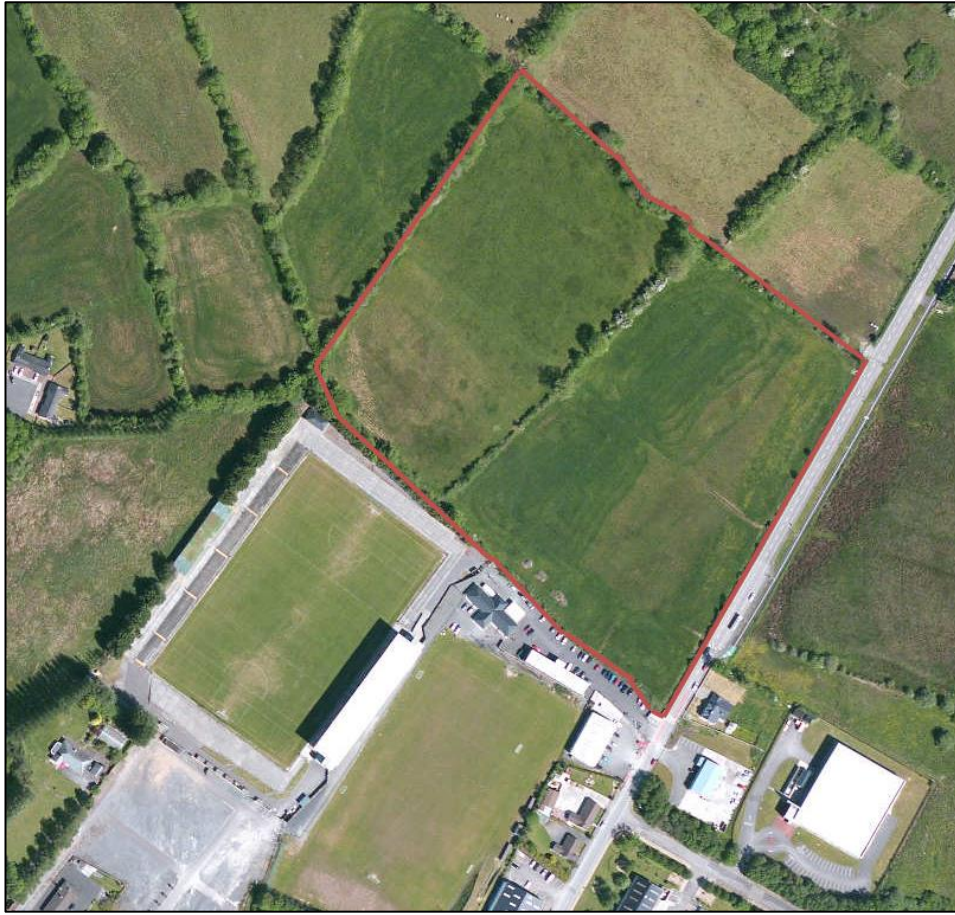


Plate 1 Aerial View of Site and immediate environs

The site two agricultural fields, both under rough pasture, with the long-axes aligned northeast-southwest. It is positioned on the southern slopes of a short ridge or drumlin, with the surface of the fields sloping down from north to a relatively level area adjacent Castlecarra Road – Figure 3.

The southern boundary to St. Marys GAA Ground is largely formed by a stream, with fencing and planting (trees and hedging) on the southern side. The northern and western boundaries are formed by low, densely planted, field banks incorporating shallow drainage ditches; similarly the dividing boundary between the two fields incorporates a shallow ditch and dense planting. The eastern road boundary is largely formed by a low bank with some dispersed planting; this generally slopes down from the road, the surface of which is higher than that of the adjoining site area. The easternmost area of the site, adjacent the road, is relatively level and partially low-lying and a little soft/march underfoot.

A low-voltage electrical overhead line is routed along the length of the easternmost field; also there are modern spoil heaps positioned close to the southern boundary of this field.

General views of the site are illustrated below in Plates 2 – 10, the viewpoints for which are indicated in Figure 3.



Figure 3 Contour Survey of Site

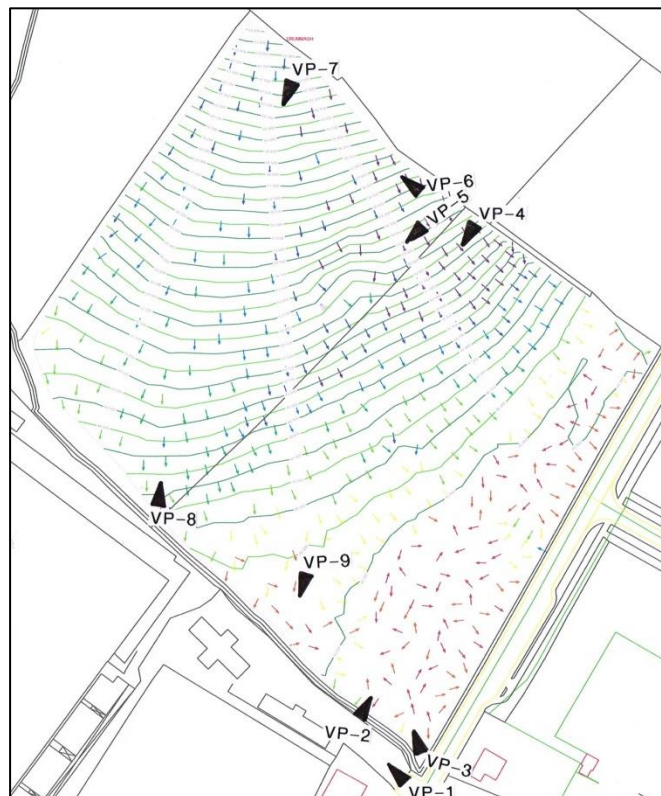


Figure 4 Viewpoints (VP) for Plates 2 - 10



Plate 2 Section of Boundary to St. Marys GAA Grounds (VP-1)



Plate 3 General View of Eastern Field – from south (VP-2)



Plate 4 General View of Site from southern corner (VP-3)



Plate 5 General View of Eastern Field from northern corner (VP-4)



Plate 6 General View of Western Field from eastern corner (VP-5)



Plate 7 Typical Boundary - eastern division of western field (VP-6)



Plate 8 General View of Western Field from north (VP-7)



Plate 9 General View of Western Field from south-western corner (VP-8)



Plate 10 Modern Spoil Heaps close to southern boundary of eastern field (VP-9)

4. GENERAL HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The proposed development lands form part of the townland of Drummagh, in the civil parish of Kiltoghert and barony of Leitrim. The Irish form of the Drummagh is *Dromach*, which the Placenames Commission (www.logainm.ie) notes may mean 'ridged land', heavy ridges of backs' or 'long field'.

In the early Historic Period, Leitrim formed the western half of the Kingdom of Breifne. This region was long influenced by the O'Rourke family of Dromahair, whose heraldic lion occupies the official county shield to this day. The immediate region was occupied by the *Conmaícne Maigh Nissi* (MoyNishy), under the chieftom of the *MacRannall* (Reynolds) and known as *Muintir Eolais*.

Close ties initially existed between the O'Rourkes with the O'Reilly clan in the eastern half of the kingdom; however a split occurred in the 13th century and the kingdom was divided into East Breifne (County Cavan) and West Breifne (County Leitrim). The Normans invaded south Leitrim in the 13th century but were defeated at the *Battle of Áth an Chip* in 1270

The earliest reference to the general area is with respect to a crossing point. According to the Annals of the Four Masters, O'Donnell crossed the Shannon at *Carradh Droma Ruisc* – the 'weir of the marshy ground' – in 1530, on a predatory raid into *Muintir Eoluis*. This feature is considered to be located at the present bridge crossing the River Shannon at Carrick-on-Shannon.

In 1565 the then Lord Deputy of Ireland, Sir John Perrot, ordered the legal establishment of 'Leitrim County' and subsequently demarcated the existing county boundaries in 1583.

In 1611 *Carra Fruinniske Carrick-on-Shannon*) is listed as a borough to be erected and the following year the Fiant of Incorporation was made. The charter was granted in 1613 and the town acquired a reputation for strong Protestantism. The town originally extended over the Shannon but the borough limits were all on the Leitrim side. The town's strategic importance was recognised and in 1614 it was described as the most respected ford on the Shannon between Roscommon and Portumna, already secured by His Majesties fort. This fort was located on the verge of the river, on the eastern side, immediately adjoining the bridge. However, following the construction of nearby Jamestown, the importance of the town was somewhat diminished

Much of the county was confiscated from its owners in 1620 and given to Villiers and Hamilton. Their initial objective was to plant the county with English settlers. However, this proved unsuccessful. The period between 1641 and 1653 saw widespread civil, political and economic unrest throughout Ireland, culminating in famine and extensive depopulation. The revolt was initially led by a mainly northern alliance with the aim of reclaiming lands confiscated in the Ulster Plantation after the Nine Year's War. With the outbreak of Civil war in England between royalists and parliamentarians the rebellion in Ireland spread and the rebels took up the royalist cause. The rising began in October 1641 and was followed by a proclamation by the government against ill-affected Irish papists. Having emerged victorious in Ireland, the English Commonwealth, immediately undertook an ambitious project of social engineering, underpinned by a massive transfer in landownership from Irish Catholics to English Protestants. For this to happen, the land had to be accurately surveyed and mapped, a task overseen by the surgeon-general of the English army, William Petty. The Civil Survey was undertaken from 1654-58 and is popularly known as the 'Down Survey'. An extract from the Down/Civil Survey map for the general area is illustrated in Figure 5, which shows the bridge crossing over the Shannon and associated settlement at 'Carickdrumruss' (Carrick-on-Shannon).

The townlands in the area are not named or marked as they formed a large combination of similar landholdings, described in a census of 1641 as ‘unfortified Protestant lands’ and similarly described in a census of 1670; the lands in the regions are described in 1657 as arable and pasture, and containing ‘red bogs’ and loughs (www.downsurvey.tcd.ie). .



Figure 5 Extract from Down Survey Map (1654-8)

Very little is known the area in the eighteenth century. Taylor and Skinner’s map of 1777 (Figure 6) gives a general impression of the area at this time, with the town of ‘Carrick’ indicated as well as the larger houses of the gentry; some of the roads in the area are also shown.

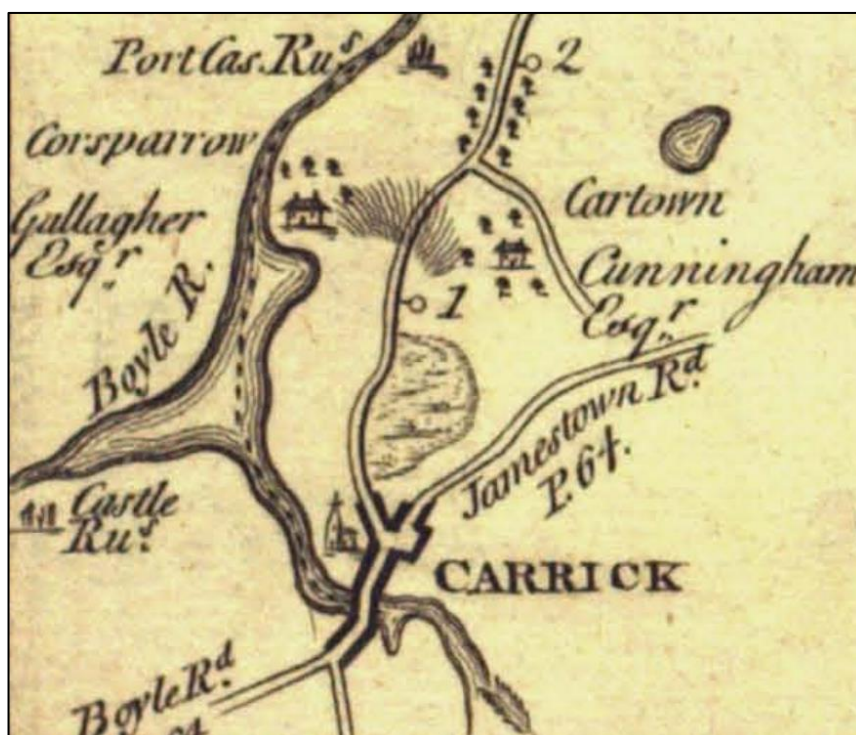


Figure 6 Extract Taylor and Skinner 1777 (Sheet 64)

A general indication of the area is illustrated in Larkin’s map of 1819 (Figure 7) in which Drummagh is named; some areas of higher ground (ridges and drumlins) are indicated light ‘clouds’, including that to the north of the subject site, and the Castlecarra Road is not shown.



Figure 7 Extract from Larkin's map of 1819

The Ordnance Survey (O.S.) 6-inch map of 1836 (Figure 8) illustrates that the Castlecarra Road had been constructed by this time and that the southern/south-eastern and eastern boundaries form sections of townland boundaries. The stream along the southern/south-eastern boundary is illustrated, with a small 'quarry' also indicated along this boundary. The easternmost field is shown as being formed by two separate fields with a central east-west division with the shared boundary between the eastern and western fields also indicated. However, the existing northern boundary to the western field is not shown and field extended further north-eastwards. Some trees are indicated outside the western corner of the site. No structures are indicated within the site.



Figure 8 Extract from O.S. Map of 1836 (Leitrim Sheet 31)

Lewis (1837, 214-5) describes the parish of Kiltoghert “as containing, with part of the post-town of Carrick-on-Shannon, and the villages of Drumshanbo, Leitrim, and Jamestown, 16,434 inhabitants. It comprises 20,669 statute acres, as apportioned under the tithe act, and valued at £11,942 per annum: the land is chiefly under tillage, and there is much bog and mountain, also quarries of freestone and limestone”.

Griffith’s Valuation of 1857 records that the subject site formed part of a much larger landholding owned by the Rev. William S. Guinness and leased to the representative of William Peyton.

The O.S. 25-inch map of 1907 (Figure 9) indicates that the central division in the eastern field had been removed by this time (although the ‘scar’ is still visible on aerial photographs, e.g. Plate 1) and that the roadside boundary incorporated a drain/stream which flowed to towards the southwest. The existing north-eastern boundary to the upper, western field had been established by this time and the field had been subdivided into two. The former ‘quarry’ feature is not indicated.

No additional topographical changes to the site are indicated in the 1945 O.S. map (Figure 10) except for a 10Kv electrical line routed across the eastern field.

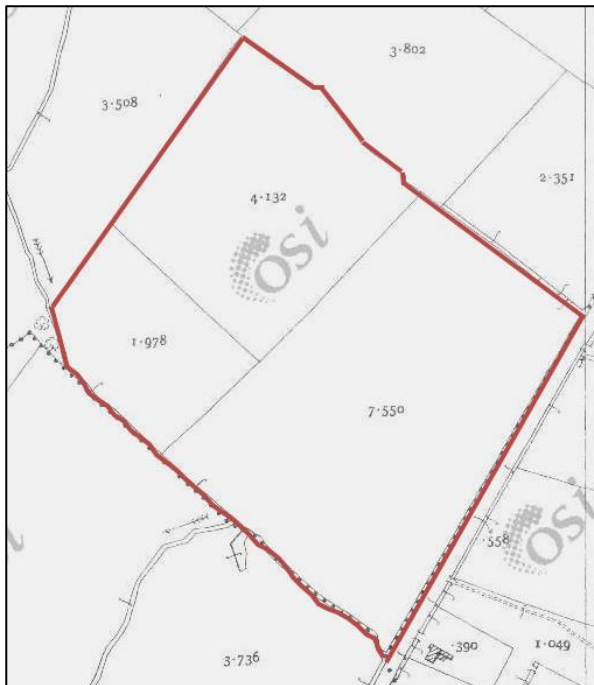


Figure 9 Extract from O.S. map of 1907

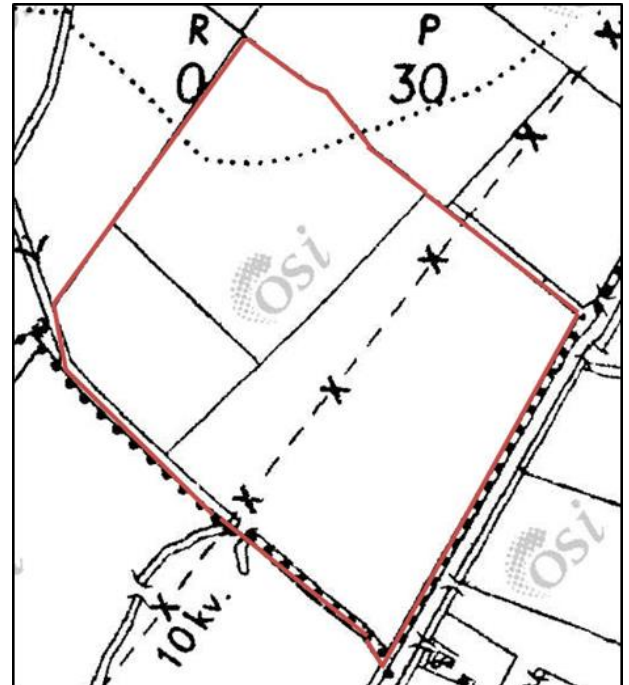


Figure 10 Extract from O.S. Map of 1945

In more recent times, the subdivision within the western field has been removed to form a single field; the lands along the Castlecarra Road have been developed for commercial purposes, together with the establishment of St. Mary’s GAA Grounds in the late 1990s.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

Archaeology is the study of past societies through their material remains and the landscapes they lived in. “The archaeological heritage consists of such material remains (whether in the form of sites and monuments or artefacts in the sense of moveable objects) and environmental evidence” (DoAHG 1999, p9).

5.1 Statutory Protections

The statutory and administrative framework of development control in zone of archaeological potential or in proximity to recorded monuments has two main elements:

- (a) Archaeological preservation and licensing under the National Monuments Acts and
- (b) Development plans and planning applications under the Planning Acts.

5.1.1 National Monuments Acts 1930 - 2004

❖ Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)

Section 12 (1) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 provides that the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government shall establish and maintain a record of monuments and places where the Minister believes there are monuments, such record to be comprised of a list of monuments and relevant places and a map or maps showing each monument and relevant place in respect to each county of the State. This is referred to as the 'Record of Monuments and Places' (RMP), and monuments entered into it are referred to as 'Recorded Monuments'.

Section 12(3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 provides for the protection of monuments and places in the record, stating that

"When the owner or occupier (not being the Minister) of a monument or place which has been recorded under subsection (1) of this section or any person proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such monument or place, he shall give notice in writing of his proposal to carry out the work to the Minister and shall not, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the Minister, commence work for a period of two months after having given the notice".

5.1.2 Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021

The following relevant Archaeological Heritage Policies and Objectives are set out in Section 4.9.8 of the Plan:

Policy 106	It is the policy of the Council to secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in-situ or in particular circumstances where the Council is satisfied that this is not possible, preservation by record as a minimum) of all archaeological remains and sites of importance such as National Monuments, Recorded Monuments, their setting and context.
Objective 93	It is an objective of the Council to ensure that any development (above or below ground), within the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest shall not be detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or its setting.
Objective 94	It is an objective of the Council to require, where appropriate, that an archaeological assessment be carried out by a suitably qualified person prior to the commencement of any activity that may impact upon the archaeological heritage.
Objective 95	It is an objective of the Council to protect the zones of archaeological potential, as identified in the Record of Monuments and Places.
Objective 96	It is an objective of the Council to protect archaeological sites discovered since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.

NOTE: The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for County Leitrim was originally published in 1995 and has not, as yet, been updated. However, any monuments discovered since the publication of the RMP are protected under Objective 96 of the Leitrim County Development Plan.

5.2 Relevant Archaeological Inventory

There are no previously identified monuments or features of archaeological interest or potential located within, or in the immediate environs of, the subject development lands. Likewise, no surface traces of archaeological potential were noted by cartographic or aerial photographic research undertaken with respect to the preparation of this report or by the subsequent surface reconnaissance survey.

There are two monuments located within the defined Archaeological Study Area, as defined above in Section 2.1. Both of these are included in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and their locations and associated Zones of Archaeological Notifications, with respect to the site, are illustrated in Figure 11.



Figure 11 Site Location with respect to previously identified Monuments within Study Area

LE031-010 is located approximately 485m to the northeast of the closest extent of the proposed development lands and in the townland of Keenaghan. It is classified as a Ringfort (Rath) and situated on top of a drumlin. It comprises an overgrown circular area (diameter: c. 30m) defined by an earthen bank (at southeast; width of base: 3m; internal height: 0.2m; external height: 1.2m), which is incorporated into a field bank (southeast-west-north), and a fosse (at southeast; width of base: 1.5m; depth: 0.8m) that is visible from north to southeast; the original entrance is not identified.

LE031-013 is located approximately 335m to the east of the closest extent of the proposed development lands and in the townland of Coreen. It is classified as a Ringfort (Rath) and situated in a low-lying position in an undulating landscape with a small meandering northeast-southwest stream curving around it from north to west c. 30-40m distant. This is a grass and scrub-covered circular earthen platform (diameter: 32m north-south) that slopes down slightly to the northwest. It is defined by a low scarp (height: 0.35m) with evidence of a fosse defined by a band of dense scrub (width: 2-3m): the original entrance is not identified.

NOTE: A Ringfort (Rath) is defined by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland as a roughly circular or oval area surrounded by an earthen bank with an external fosse. Some examples have two (bivallate) or three (trivallate) banks and fosses, but these are less common and have been equated with higher status sites belonging to upper grades of society. They functioned as residences and/or farmsteads and broadly date from 500 to 1000 AD.

5.3 Archaeological Artefacts

There are no artefacts listed in the Topographical Registers of the National Museum of Ireland, as having been discovered in the townland of Drummagh or bordering townlands.

5.4 Results from previous documented relevant archaeological investigations

A search undertaken of the annual Archaeological Excavations Bulletin (www.excavations.ie) indicates that a number of licensed archaeological investigations have been undertaken within, and in the immediate environs of, Carrick-on-Shannon.

The only recorded archaeological investigation/intervention from the general area of the proposed development site is as follows:

❖ Carrick-on-Shannon Sewerage Scheme

A programme of Archaeological Monitoring associated with the Scheme was undertaken by Martin Timoney (Licence No: 07E0947) in 2007-08. The Scheme incorporated area of the townlands of Cloonsheebane, Drummagh, Keenaghan, Kilboderr, Lisnabrack and Townparks (Co. Leitrim) and Cloonskeeven, Cortober and Drishoge (Co. Roscommon). No subsurface features of archaeological interest were uncovered (Excavations.ie Ref: 2007:1078).

5.5. Archaeological Potential of Proposed Development Lands

The siting preferences of particular archaeological monument types and features are well documented. Broadly speaking, the general topographical nature of the site offers a potential setting for subsurface archaeological features as follows:

- The subject lands offer opportunities for the location of Fulachta Fiadh (prehistoric cooking sites). These sites are location specific, generally located close to streams and rivers or in wet marshy, low-lying areas, and sometimes occur in groups.
- The general south-facing and sloping nature of the site is a favoured position for the location of prehistoric burial sites, ringforts and enclosure sites in the general region.
- Watercourses have always attracted human activity for a variety of reasons, as a source of water and food, as transport routes as a source of energy and for their spiritual, religious or ritual associations. They also act as depositories for archaeological artefacts.
- The area under assessment is part of a landscape which is rich in historical and archaeological material. The general region has attracted settlement from early times as evidenced by the presence of monuments dating back to the prehistoric period. Continuity of settlement is illustrated by artefacts dating to the Bronze Age and by identified monuments ranging from Neolithic to Medieval and Post-Medieval remains.

6. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The development proposes a mixed-use sporting facility as follows:

- Double height playing halls, dressing rooms, meeting rooms, gym, physio rooms, reception, canteen & activities room all located in a two-storey structure
- Grass and Astro-turf Playing Fields for mixed-use track and field activities; an athletic track will surround the grass pitch and the astro-turf pitch will be for mixed use (GAA, Rugby and Soccer).
- Spectator stand, storage areas for equipment, playground, hurling walls & car parking.

Plans of the development, as proposed, are illustrated below in Figures 12 and 13, with a 3-D representation illustrated in Figure 14.

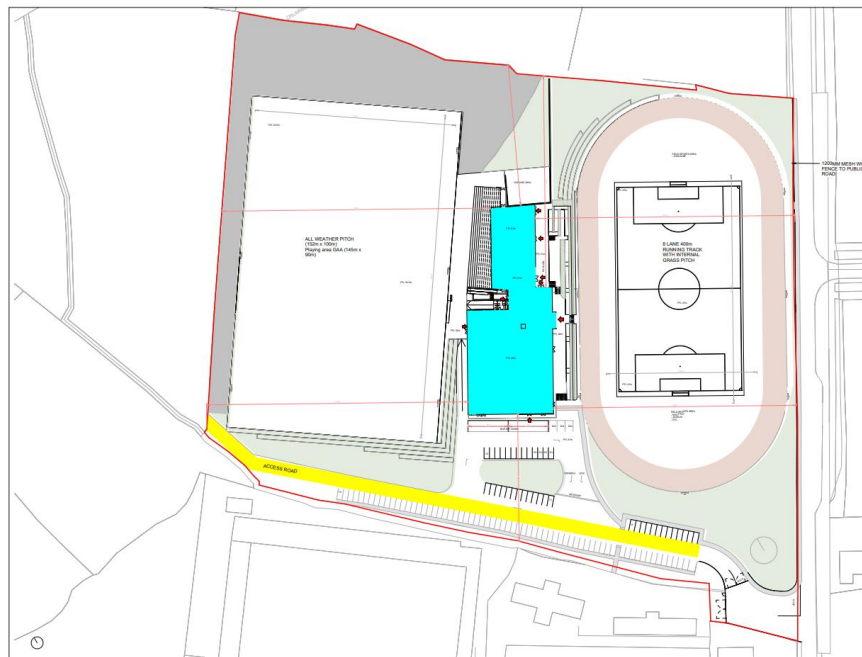


Figure 12 Proposed Layout

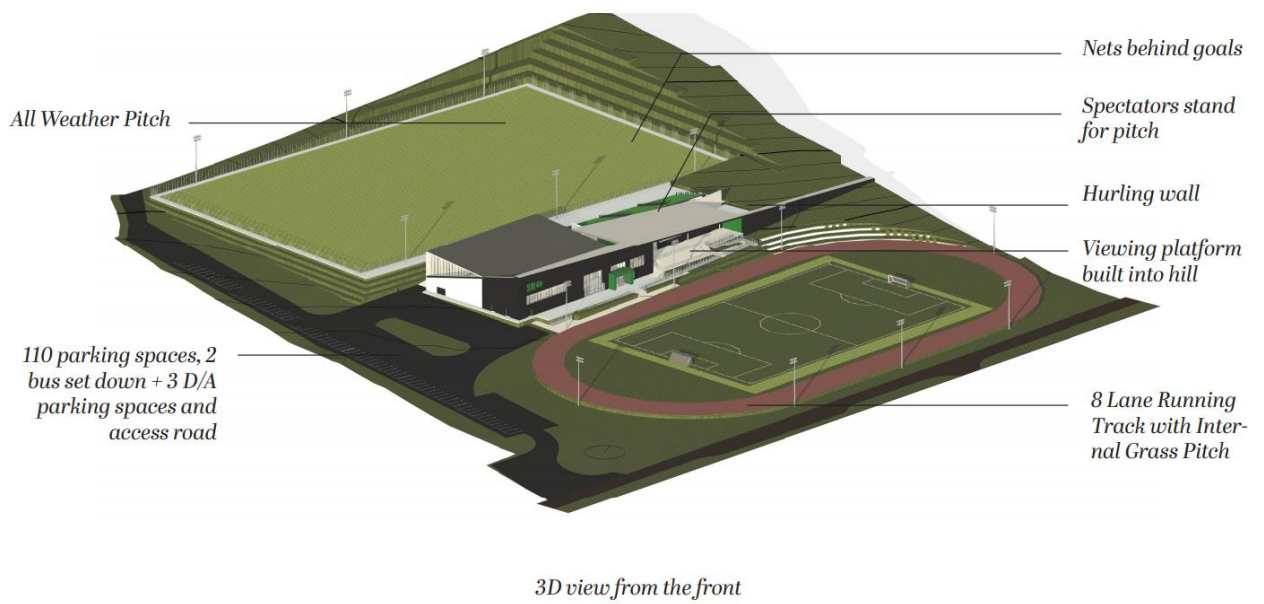


Figure 13 3-D Visualisation of Proposals

7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Assessment of Impacts

The following table (based on NRA, 2003, 21) provides the baseline criteria used to describe the impacts that the proposed development will have on Archaeological Heritage Sites.

	Direct	Indirect
Severe	Archaeological Heritage site is within a proposed development area. Construction work will entail the removal of part or the entire archaeological heritage site.	Archaeological Heritage site is within a proposed development area. Construction works will entail the destruction of the visual context of the site or isolate it from associated groups or features.
Potentially Severe	Archaeological Heritage site is adjacent to a proposed development area. There is potential for related remains being affected by development works.	Archaeological Heritage site is adjacent to a proposed development area. Construction works will greatly injure the visual context of the site or isolate it from associated groups or features.
Moderate	Existing access to an archaeological heritage site will be severed. Development works will affect the context of an archaeological heritage site.	N/A
No Predicted	The proposed development will have no predicted impact.	N/A

Table 1 Criteria for Impact Assessment

7.1 Physical Impacts

The general archaeological background to the subject development area was introduced above in Section 5. In summary, there are no previously identified archaeological monuments and features located within the proposed development site; no features of archaeological potential were noted by cartographic and

aerial photographic research and no surface features/traces of archaeological potential were noted by the subsequent surface reconnaissance survey.

The nearest previously identified monuments to the site are Ringforts (Raths) located at distances of approximately 335m to the east (SMR: LE031-013; Coreen Td.) and approximately 485m to the northeast (SMR: LE031-010; Keenaghan Td.) – Figure 11

As noted above in Section 5.5, the general topographical nature of the proposed development lands offers some potential for the discovery of subsurface archaeological features. Furthermore, in general, ground reductions associated with a development of this kind, in areas of previous generally undisturbed ground, have the ability to uncover and disturb hitherto unrecorded subsurface features, deposits, structures and finds of archaeological interest and potential. Without the adoption and implementation of a suitable mitigation strategy, any subsurface archaeological features or artefacts that might be located within the site during the construction phase of the development might not be identified and recorded.

7.2 Indirect (Visual) Impacts

There are no archaeological monuments located within, or in the immediate environs of, the subject development site. The nearest monuments are Ringforts (Raths) located at distances of approximately 335m to the east (SMR: LE031-013; Coreen Td.) and approximately 485m to the northeast (SMR: LE031-010; Keenaghan Td.) – Figure 11.

Given the nature of these sites, as described above in Section 5.2, and the respective distances of the monuments from the proposed development site, it is not predicted that the visual setting of these or any other archaeological monuments will be impacted upon by the proposed subject development.

8. DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTED MITIGATION

As noted above in Section 7.2 it is not considered likely that the development, as proposed, will cause any direct impacts to any identified archaeological monuments. Furthermore, as noted above in Section 7.3, there are no extant remains for any of the archaeological monuments and features located within, or in the immediate environs of, the subject development area; consequently, it is considered that no impacts will occur to the visual settings of such monuments.

As further noted above in Section 5.5, the general topographical nature of the proposed development lands offers some potential for the discovery of subsurface archaeological features; in addition, as noted in Section 7.2 general ground reductions associated with a development of this kind, in areas of previous generally undisturbed ground, have the ability to uncover and disturb hitherto unrecorded subsurface features, deposits, structures and finds of archaeological interest and potential. Without the adoption and implementation of a suitable mitigation strategy, any subsurface archaeological features or artefacts that might be located within the site during the construction phase of the development might not be identified and recorded.

Consequently, given the above, the following mitigation measures are suggested:

1. Prior to the commencement of site preparation works, a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist should be appointed to undertake the mitigation measures listed below.
2. All topsoil stripping/general ground reduction works onto the underlying archaeologically sterile geological subsoils associated with the development shall be monitored by an archaeologist.
3. In the event of archaeological material being uncovered during the course of such monitoring, the archaeologist shall be empowered to have works stopped in the vicinity of such material pending receipt of advice from the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Likewise should archaeological/historical artifactual material be recovered during such works, then the requirements of the National Museum of Ireland with regard to such items should be implemented.

4. Following completion of the monitoring and any other possible archaeological investigations, the archaeologist shall prepare a full and final report for submission to the Planning Authority, to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and to the National Museum of Ireland.

APPENDIX 1

List of Consulted Documentary Sources

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