

# PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

**KESHCARRIGAN  
Co. LEITRIM**

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE SCREENING/APPRAISAL REPORT**

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BYRNE MULLINS & ASSOCIATES – ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared with respect to a proposed residential development on a site plot at Keshcarrigan, Co. Leitrim. It has been prepared on instruction from Wynne Gormley Gilsean, Architects & Surveyors, 21 Church View, Cavan on behalf of Leitrim County Council, who requested that the site be subject to Archaeological Screening/Appraisal with respect to a Part VIII Planning Process.

#### 2. METHODOLOGY

##### 2.1 Definition of Study Area

The subject development lands (red-line boundary) and an area of 300m 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 context for the development, beyond which it was considered that a development of this nature would have no direct/indirect impacts.

The Archaeological Heritage components of the study comprise the results of a survey and evaluation of selected sites of archaeological heritage interest/potential that might exist within, and in the immediate environs of, the proposed development area. The work consists of the results of the paper survey.

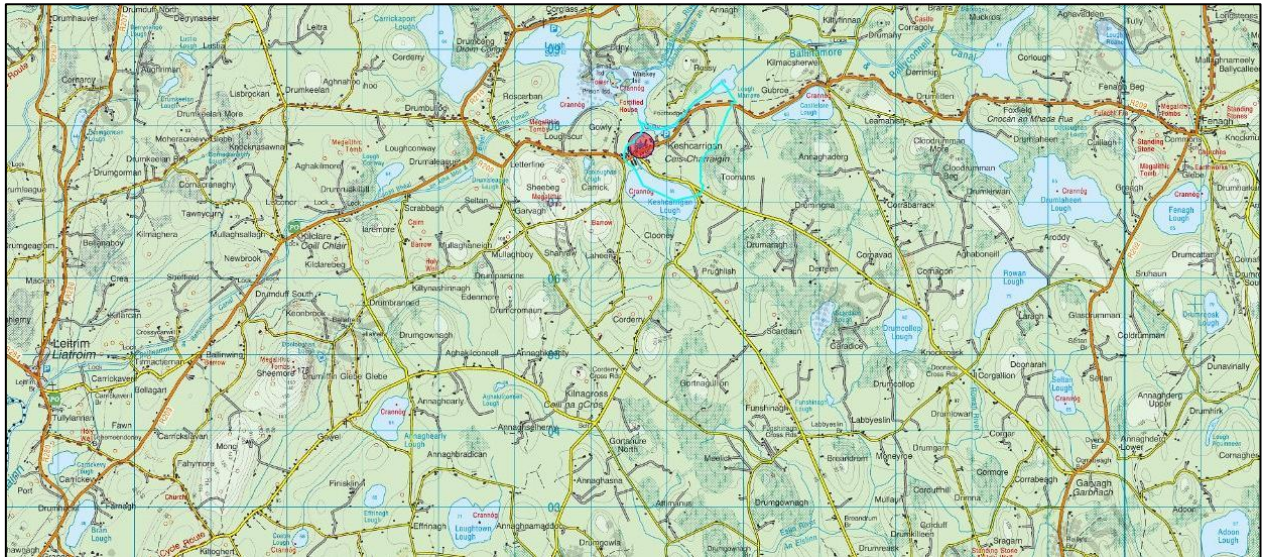
##### 2.2 Paper Survey

As part of a documentary/cartographic search, the following principal sources were examined from which a list of sites and areas of Cultural Heritage interest/potential was compiled:

- Record of Monuments and Places – Co. Leitrim (RMP)
- Sites and Monuments Record of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (SMR) – [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie)
- Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland
- Annual Archaeological Excavations Bulletin – [www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)
- Aerial Photographic & Cartographic Archive of the Ordnance Survey of Ireland – [www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie)
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) – [www.buildingsofireland.ie](http://www.buildingsofireland.ie)
- Placenames Commission – [www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie)
- Documentary and cartographic source material (see Appendix 1)
- Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 (LCDP)
- Heritage Council Data – [www.heritagemaps.ie](http://www.heritagemaps.ie)
- GSI Open Topographic Data Viewer (LiDAR information) – [www.dcent.maps.arcgis.com](http://www.dcent.maps.arcgis.com)

#### 3. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Keshcarrigan is a village in South Leitrim on the Shannon-erne Waterway, between Lough Scurl to the north and Keshcarrigan Lake to the south; it is linear in form and bisected by the R209 road which links Fenagh to the east with the R280, south of Leitrim Village, to the west – Figure 1.



**Figure 1 General Site Location (Regional Context)**

The subject is located in the central-eastern area of the village and on the northern side of the R209 road – Figure 2; Plate 1. It is bounded to the west by a residential access road with an associated footpath, to the immediate north by a developed residential plot and to the west by undeveloped lands; a carpark is located outside the southern boundary and a former Garda Station (Protected Structure; RPS No: 177) is located to the immediate southeast (Plate 2)

The site is undeveloped and comprises a mixture of trees and dense undergrowth (Plates 3 and 4) and the surface slopes very gently down from north to south.



**Figure 2 Site Location with respect to Keshcarrigan Village**



**Plate 1 Aerial View of Site**





**Plate 2** General View from southwest illustrating carpark to south of site, former Garda Station to southeast and residential access road along western boundary



**Plate 3** View of Site from west



**Plate 4** Dense Undergrowth within the interior of the site



#### 4. GENERAL HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The subject development land site form part of the townland of Keshcarrigan, in the civil parish of Kiltubrid and barony of Leitrim (O.S. 6-inch map: Roscommon Sheet 24).

Prehistoric activity in the area is attested to burial tomb-monuments in the wider area and by the discovery of lithic flakes, of probable Mesolithic date, a polished shale axe, a dolerite axe and a dugout canoe from the shores of Lough Scur, together with a stone mould for flat axes or spear-heads of Bronze Age date. A ceremonial drinking cup – The Keshcarrigan Bowl – of Iron Age origin was recovered in the nineteenth century in a waterway between Lough Scur and Lough Marrave. Settlement activity in the late Iron Age/Early Medieval/Historic Period is evidenced by Crannogs in Lough Scur and Keshcarrigan Lake (see Section 5.3 for the latter), as well as ringforts in the wider area.

In the first quarter of the sixth century, the *Conmaicne* tribe moved north from the present Dunmore in County Galway and settled in *Magh Réin and Maigh Nissi*; these areas generally encompassed the present baronies of Mohill and Leitrim, respectively.

From the eighth century, approximately, the region was ruled by *Muintir Eolais*, whose principal families included the *Mag Raghnaill* (Reynold), the O'Mulvey sept of *Maigh Nissi*, O'Moran of AttyRory, Mac Shanley's of Dromod, and the Mac Garry sept.

The Anglo- Normans invaded south Leitrim in the 13th century but were defeated at the Battle of Áth an Chip in 1270; thereafter, the Mag Raghnaill built castles at Lough Rynn, Lough Scur, and Leitrim Village.

The English Lord-Deputy Sir John Perrot ordered the legal establishment of "Leitrim County" in 1565 and demarcated the current county borders around 1583.

The Mag Raghnaill, O'Mulvey, and Mac Shanley rule became increasingly fragmented throughout the 16th century, and influence of the family tribes of the *Muintir Eolais* collapsed with Irish defeat in the Nine Years' War in 1603; thereafter, the lands formed part of the later Ulster Plantation, although the Reynolds family, in particular, appear to have maintained their grip on much of their landholdings in the region, although the lands at Keshcarrigan ('Kellsheasse') are recorded as being owned by Sir George Blundell in 1641 ([www.downsurvey.ie](http://www.downsurvey.ie)).

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. In September 1653, following the victory of the parliamentarians, the parliament passed the Act of Settlement, an ordinance that enabled the enforcement of a policy of mass confiscation of land from Irish Catholics in punishment for the rebellion and to pay for the war. The Civil Survey of 1656-8 records much of the land in the area were retained by various members of the Reynolds family, with George Blundell still recorded as the owner of Keshcarrigan in 1670.

Little is known of the area during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Taylor and Skinner's map of 1777 (Figure 3) indicates a village settlement Castle Cargan.

General Humbert marched through the town with his United Irish and French contingents towards Ballinamuck during the 1798 rebellion.

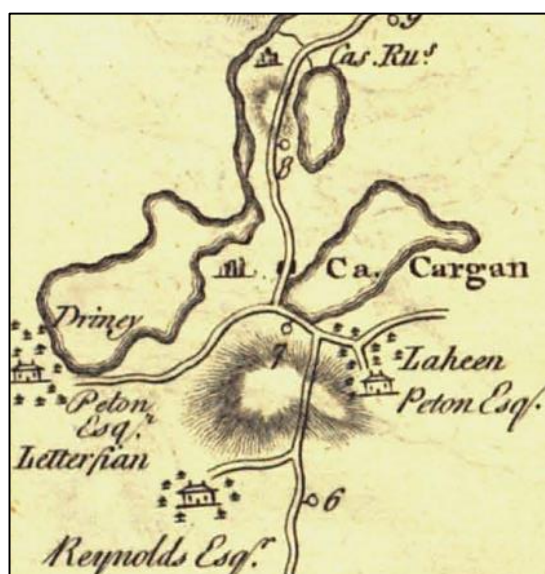


Figure 3 Extract from Taylor & Skinner – 1777  
(Sheet 232 – north to left)

The Ordnance Survey map of 1835 (Figure 4) indicates that the subject site formed parts of two fields, with a filed boundary running north-south through the centre of the site and part of a trackway routed through the north-western quadrant; some trees are indicated within the site along the edge of the trackway.

The area to the immediate south of the site includes a number of structures, probably residential.



Figure 4 Extract from O.S. Maps of 1835 (Leitrim Sheets 24 & 27)

Lewis (1837, Vol. II. 217), notes that that the civil parish of Kiltubrid contained 6508 inhabitants and comprised 12,088 statute acres, as apportioned under the tithe act, including 60 of woodland, besides 2429 acres of bog and mountain and that the land was chiefly under spade husbandry. He further notes that the Roman Catholic parish was coextensive with that of the Established Church of Ireland and was called Cashcarrigan, with a chapel in the townland of Rosgarbon.

Griffith's Valuation (*Primary Valuation of Ireland 1848-64*) for Leitrim (July 1857) notes that the site formed part of the property of the Representatives of Mary-Anne McNamara; such property had an overall area of approximately 17 acres and included a house and office (outbuilding) leased by Thomas Judge. The Valuation also records that the two structures positioned immediately to the south of the site were, likewise, owned by the Representatives of Mary-Anne McNamara; that to the east comprised a house, office (outbuilding), yard and small garden leased by James Reynolds, with that to the west comprised a house, office, yard and garden, leased by John Taylor. The structure to the southeast is described as a Police Barracks, with office, yards and garden.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1911 (Figure 5) indicates the present site extent had been established by this time; the former central boundary and trackway had been removed.

The houses and gardens to the south are indicated, as is a small shed to the rear of the eastern house with access directly from the street.

The property to the southeast is marked as a Constabulary Barracks, and a Court House is indicated a little further to the east.

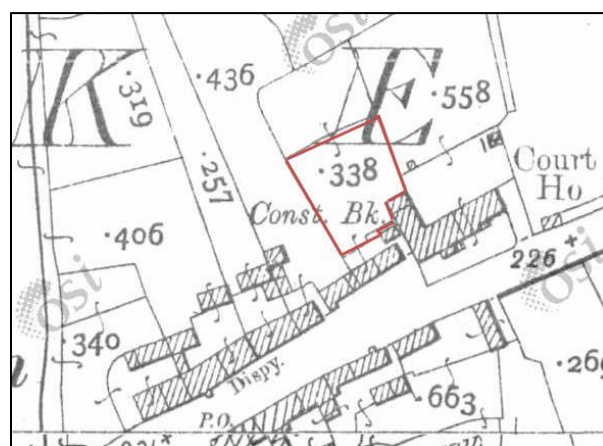


Figure 5 Extract from O.S. Map of 1911

The adjacent RIC Barracks was burned following an attack by the IRA in 1920, during the War of Independence; it was subsequently, converted to a residence and post office before being again repurposed as a Garda Station until 2013, when it was closed.

The houses to the south of the site were demolished in more recent years and the plots amalgamated to form a car park; in addition, a road was constructed outside the western site boundary, giving access to residential plots to the north.

## 5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

### 5.1 Introduction

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).

Archaeological heritage comprises all material remains of past societies, with the potential to enhance our understanding of such societies. It includes the remains of features such as settlements, burials, ships and boats and portable objects of all kinds, from the everyday to the very special. It also includes evidence of the environment in which those societies lived. The terms "site" or "monument" are used generally to refer to fixed structures or areas of activity, as opposed to particular moveable objects. Historic wrecks are also part of the archaeological heritage (DHLG&H, 2021, 3).

### 5.2 Statutory Protections

The statutory and administrative framework of development control in zones of archaeological potential/notification 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.

#### 5.2.1 National Monuments Acts 1930-2004

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."*

#### 5.2.2 Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029

The following relevant Archaeological Heritage Policies and Objectives are set out in Section 11.23 of the Plan:

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>ARCH<br/>POL 1</b> | 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, protected wrecks and underwater archaeological heritage, to include their setting and context. |
| <b>ARCH<br/>OBJ 2</b> | To ensure that any development (above or below ground or underwater), within the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest or protected wreck or area of underwater archaeological heritage shall not be detrimental to the archaeological remains, character of the site or its setting.  |
| <b>ARCH<br/>OBJ 3</b> | To require, where appropriate, that an archaeological assessment or underwater archaeological impact assessment be carried out by a suitably qualified person prior to the commencement of any activity that may impact upon archaeological heritage, including underwater archaeological heritage.  |
| <b>ARCH<br/>OBJ 4</b> | To protect the zones of archaeological potential, as identified in the Record of Monuments and Places, protected wrecks and underwater archaeological heritage   |
| <b>ARCH<br/>OBJ 5</b> | To protect archaeological sites, protected wrecks and underwater archaeological heritage discovered since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places, which are recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record.   |

### 5.3 Archaeological Inventory

The Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) inventory database is known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). The SMR contains details of all monuments and places (sites) where it is believed there is



a monument known to the ASI pre-dating AD 1700 and also includes a selection of monuments from the post-AD 1700 period. The RMP (Section 5.2.1 above) is a subset of the SMR; monuments included in the RMP are legally protected and are generally referred to as “Recorded Monuments”. The SMR also includes monuments subject to Preservation Orders, including National Monuments. The addition of a monument to the ASI SMR database does not, of itself, confer legal protection under the National Monuments Acts although such sites are protected by the Leitrim County Development Plan (Section 5.2.2 above; Arch OBJ 5). The reclassification of a monument does not affect its legal status in any way.

There are no previously identified archaeological monuments or features of archaeological potential located within, the subject site or immediate environs. Likewise, no features of archaeological potential were noted by cartographic, aerial photographic or satellite imagery research.

There is one previously recorded monument located within the wider study area. This is classified as a Crannóg by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (SMR Nos: LE028-27); the location of the monument and the associated Zone of Notification is illustrated in Figure 6 with respect to the subject site location and they are described as follows:

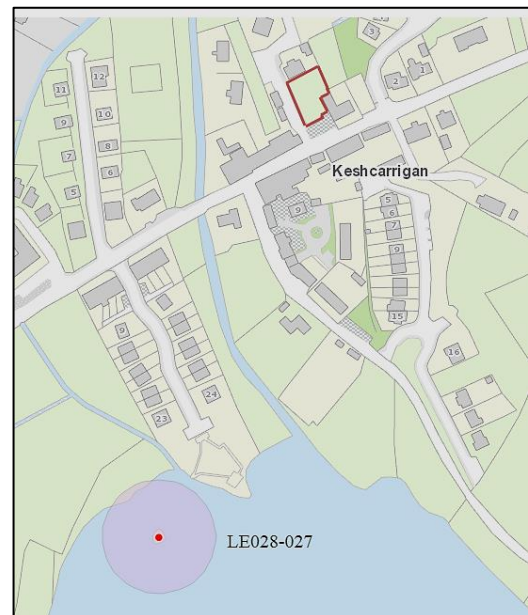
**SMR No:** LE028-027

**Classification:** Crannog

**Townland:** Carrick (Leitrim By: Gortnagullion ED)

**Description:** Located c. 30m from the north-western shore of the subrectangular Keshcarrigan Lough (dims c. 1km NW-SE; c. 400m NE-SW). It is depicted as a small island on the 1911 edition of the OS 6-inch map. This is a small stony island (diam. c. 3m), with reeds growing in the water to the south (total diam. c. 8m). It has no visible evidence of artificial construction.

The closest extent of the SMR Zone of Notification is approximately 270m from the subject site



**Figure 6 Site Location with respect to LE028-027 (Crannog)**

### 5.3 Archaeological Artefacts

No artefacts are listed in the Topographical Registers of the National Museum of Ireland as having been located from within the defined study area.

### 5.4 Results from previous documented relevant archaeological investigations

A search undertaken of the annual Archaeological Excavations Bulletin ([www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)) that no licensed archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the village.

## 6. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The development proposes the construction of a new two storey residential unit consisting of 4 no. 1 bed units, connection to existing public services and all ancillary and associated works.

A layout plan of the development, as proposed, is illustrated in Figure 7, with proposed images illustrated in Figure 8.



Figure 7 Proposed Layout Plan



Figure 8 Images of Proposed Development

## **7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCREENING/APPRaisal STATEMENT**

The general historical and archaeological background to the subject development area was introduced above in Sections 4 & 5. In summary, there are no historical events associated with the proposed development site and no previously identified monuments or features of archaeological interest located within the extent of the site

There are no previously recorded archaeological monuments or features of archaeological potential located within the subject development. Likewise, no features of archaeological potential were noted by cartographic, aerial photographic or satellite imagery research.

The site is located a minimum of 270m outside the closest Archaeological SMR Zone of Notification (SMR: LE028-027; Crannog)

It is noted that the subject site previously incorporated a central north-south field division boundary, with a section of trackway routed through the north-western quadrant, both dating to the early nineteenth century but subsequently removed; the current extent of the site dates to at least the early twentieth century.

There are no extant monuments located in close proximity to the subject site and its existing topographic situation, within an urban streetscape, is such that the settings of any archaeological monuments in the wider area will not be impacted by the development of the lands.

Consequent to the above, it is considered that the subject site of very low/negligible archaeological potential. It is further considered that any development of the subject plots will not have any impacts (direct or visual) on any previously Recorded Monuments.

Given the foregoing, it is recommended that no physical archaeological interventions (e.g. pre-development testing or monitoring of site preparation works) are required of any development proposals within the overall site.



## APPENDIX 1

### Consulted Documentary Sources

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