



Archaeological Impact Assessment Report

Test Excavation

Bishopscourt, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford

Part 1 – Archaeological Information

Licence Number: 24E1158

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January 2025
Report Status: Final

ACSU Ref.: 24161



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PROJECT DETAILS

Project Bishopscourt, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford

Report Type Archaeological Test Excavation

Licence No. 24E1158

Townland(s) Bishopscourt

RMP/SMR No. WA018-088

RPS Id./NIAH Reg. No. N/A

ITM Ref. 663933, 608500

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VERSION CONTROL

Revision	Date	Description	Status	Author	Reviewed	Approved
1.0	07.01.2025	Archaeological test excavation report	Final	D.G & L.C	L.C	D.M

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report details the results of test excavations at a site located at Bishopscourt, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford (ITM 663933, 608500). The site lies southeast of Waterford, in the southeast portion of Ballygunner. The southern portion of the site is developed, and the northern portion is grassed but overgrown and uneven.

The proposed testing was carried out at the pre-planning stage. An archaeological Impact Assessment was recommended for the site. The site inspection deemed it unsuitable for a geophysical survey because it is overgrown and uneven.

The site contains one monument, fulacht fia WA018-088----. This was identified during archaeological monitoring carried out under licence 11E0252. The monument is located within the southern portion of the current site. It was partially excavated, with a portion preserved in situ under the existing carpark. Monitoring was also carried out under licence 12E0301 to the north of the monument WA018-088----. This was related to a temporary Crèche facility. Features of archaeological significance, including a small feature filled with burnt mound material and an area of burnt mound, were identified due to this monitoring phase. A pair of parallel ditches corresponding to a field boundary shown on the 1840 map were also identified. There are no protected structures listed in the Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022-2028 or sites listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) located within the site.

The northern portion of the site was archaeologically assessed (test trenching) by Derek Gallagher of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd. in December 2024 under licence no. 24E1158. Eleven test trenches, totalling 539m, were excavated within the site. The remnants of three burnt stone spreads (C3, C4/C6, C5) were identified.

C3 was identified in Trench 2 and Trench 2a. It was a deposit of burnt stone and charcoal. It measured 7m in maximum diameter, appeared very thin (<0.1m), and rested on the natural boulder clay. It was very much ploughed out and was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the eastern base.

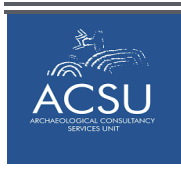
C4 was identified in Trench 2, Trench 2b and Trench 4. It was the largest of the burnt stone spreads and measured 17m in width (N-S) by 29m in length. The burnt stone was mixed with charcoal, and the mound was visible in the grass, although barely visible. It was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. The spread appeared substantial and not ploughed out, so it was approximately 0.30m thick and rested on the natural boulder clay. C4 extended eastwards into Trench 4 and was evident as C6 (C4 and C6 were the same feature).

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C5 was identified in Trench 4 and Trench 4a. It was a deposit of burnt stone and charcoal measuring 5m in maximum diameter and was very much ploughed out. It was located mid-way down the east slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. The spread appeared thin (<0.1m) and rested on the natural boulder clay.

The proposed development will directly impact the identified archaeological features. Preservation in situ is not an option; therefore, preservation by record (full excavation) is recommended. Topsoil should be removed from an area measuring 30m by 50m surrounding the identified features (C3, C4/C6, C5). The identified features and any additional features exposed within this area should be preserved by record (full excavation) before construction commences. The remainder of WA018-088 (fulacht fia) will also be impacted by the current phase of works, and preservation by record (full excavation) is also recommended.

All excavation and monitoring works should be carried out by a licence-eligible archaeologist licensed by the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report details the results of test excavations at a site located at Bishopscourt, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford (ITM 663933, 608500; Figures 1-2). The site lies southeast of Waterford, in the southeast portion of Ballygunner. The southern portion of the site is developed, and the northern portion is grassed but overgrown and uneven.

The proposed testing was carried out at the pre-planning stage. An archaeological Impact Assessment was recommended for the site. The site inspection deemed the site unsuitable for a geophysical survey because it is overgrown and uneven.

The site contains a monument, fulacht fia WA018-088----, identified during monitoring under licence 11E0252 (Pollock 2011). The monument is located within the southern portion of the site. It was partially excavated, with a portion preserved in situ under the existing carpark. Monitoring was also carried out under licence 12E0301 (Pollock 2012) north of the monument. This was related to a temporary crèche facility. Features of archaeological significance, including a small feature filled with burnt mound material and an area of burnt mound, were identified due to this monitoring phase. A pair of parallel ditches corresponding with a field boundary shown on the 1840 map were also identified.

There are no protected structures listed in the Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022-2028 or sites listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) located within the site.

This site was archaeologically assessed (test trenches) in December 2024 by Derek Gallagher of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd. under licence no. 24E1158.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

2.1 Archaeological & Historical Background

The site is located in the townland of Bishopscourt in the Barony of Gaultire and the Civil Parish of Kilcaragh. Bishopscourt from Irish Cúirt an Easpaig was recorded as Busschoppiscourte in 1567 (<https://www.logainm.ie/50305.aspx>). The site is located within the eastern portion of the townland, and the only monument within the townland itself is also located within the current site and consists of Fulacht Fia WA018-088, which was identified during archaeological investigations 11E0252 (Pollock 2011).

Fulachta fiadh, also known as burnt mounds/spreads, are among the most common field monuments in the Irish landscape. The last published survey (Power et al. 1997), carried out over 20 years ago, recorded over

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7,000 burnt mound sites. Over 1,000 sites have been excavated in recent years through development-led archaeological investigations. Despite this, the precise function of these sites is still not clear.

These sites are usually located where there is a readily available water source, often in proximity to a river, stream or wetland fringes. They are usually identified as charcoal-rich mounds or spreads of heat-shattered stones; however, in many cases, the sites have been disturbed by later agricultural activity and are no longer visible on the field surface. Disturbed spreads will nonetheless often preserve the underlying associated features, such as troughs, pits and gullies.

Whatever the ultimate purpose, these sites involved heating or boiling water by placing fire-heated stones into troughs. Small, shallow, round-bottomed pits are often associated with burnt mound sites and are generally called potboiler or roasting pits. The purpose of these pits remains unclear, however. Larger pits may have acted as wells or cisterns.

Burnt mound sites are most commonly dated to the Bronze Age and are most commonly dated to the middle/late Bronze Age (Brindley et al. 1989–90; Corlett 1997). Bishopstown monument was described as a penannular spread measuring c. 15m in diameter and c. 0.2m high with pits and through surviving (Pollock 2011). The monument was radiocarbon dated, and one charcoal (hazel) from one of the troughs was radiocarbon dated to 2370-2197 BC (3820 BP +/-35 UBA 22725; 2 sigma), placing it Chalcolithic (2450-2200 BC).

The most accepted theory traditionally is that burnt mound sites were used as cooking places. O’Kelly (1954) and Lawless (1990) demonstrated how meat could be cooked in troughs of boiling water, using hot stones to heat the water. A bathing or sauna function has been suggested as an alternative (Lucas 1965; Barfield and Hodder 1987). A recent demonstration by Quinn and Moore (2007) showed that troughs could also have been used for brewing. This theory has been criticised due to the absence of cereal remains from most burnt mound sites (McClatchie et al. 2007), though it is also rare to find animal bone remains to support the idea of cooking meat. Given their plentiful nature, it is perhaps best to see them simply as water heating sites, with as many possible uses for hot water as we have today. Thus, a specific function for a given site may have to be established based on the samples taken and retrieved finds. Aside from the function of the specific sites, fulachta fia/burnt mounds are also a reflection of Bronze Age activity in general and suggest the presence of settlements in the nearby vicinity (perhaps in a drier location).

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2.2 Previous Archaeological Investigations

Two archaeological investigations were carried out on the southern portion of the site. A Fulacht fia (WA018-088) was identified during monitoring under licence 11E0252 (Pollock 2011). The monument is located within the southern portion of the site, and it was partially excavated, with a portion preserved in situ under the existing carpark (Plates 17-18).

Subsequently, the site was monitored under licence 12E0301 (Pollock 2012) north of monument WA018-088. This was related to the temporary Creche facility. Features of archaeological significance, including a small feature filled with burnt mound material and an area of burnt mound, were identified (Plates 15-16). A pair of parallel ditches corresponding with a field boundary shown on the 1840 map were identified.

Listed below are the nearest previous archaeological investigations undertaken in the environs of the site (see Figure 2), which further demonstrate the overall archaeological potential of the site and its surrounding townlands (Table 1). The following information was taken from the *Summary Accounts of Archaeological Excavations in Ireland* (www.excavations.ie).

Table 1: Previous archaeological investigations within the environs of the site

Excavations.ie reference	Licence No.	Site-Type	Investigation Type
2012:593 - Bishopstown, Waterford	11E0252	Fulacht fiadh	Monitoring
2012:592 - Ballygunner, Bishopscourt, Waterford	12E0301	Fulacht fiadh	Monitoring

2.3 Recorded Monuments

The site contains one monument, a fulacht fia (WA018-088----), identified during monitoring under licence 11E0252 (Plates 17-18; Pollock 2011). The monument is located within the southern portion of the site. It was partially excavated, with a portion preserved in situ under the existing carpark.

Below (Table 2) is a list of the recorded monuments located in the environs of the site (Figure 2). These descriptions are derived from the National Monuments Service Archaeological Survey Database (<https://heritagedata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/>).

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Table 2: Recorded Monuments in the environs of the site

WA018-088----	Fulacht fia	BISHOPSCOURT
Situated on a hillside sloping to the east, the remains of this fulacht fia were discovered in 2011 during topsoil stripping at the site of a new school. The monument was partially excavated (license number 11E0252; Pollock 2011) and consisted of a penannular spread of burnt stone (diam. c. 15m and generally less than 0.2m high) around an oval hollow or trough on the downhill side. Two further pits or troughs survived but were not excavated. The remains of the monument were preserved beneath the school car park. One charcoal sample (hazel) was submitted for analysis from fire-shattered stone and black silt, the fill of the shallow oval trough. This returned a C14 determination of 3820 BP +/- 35 (UBA 22725) or 2370-2197 (95.4% - 2 sigma) cal BC, which would provide an indicative Early Bronze Age date for this monument (O'Carroll 2013, 11). Compiled by: Paul Walsh Date of upload: 23 April 2014 Six-Inch First Edition: Not indicated Six-Inch Latest Edition: Not indicated ITM Coordinates: 663900, 608418 Latitude and Longitude: 52.223804, -7.064722		

2.4 Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

There are no Protected Structures as listed in the *Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022-2028* or sites listed in the *National Inventory of Architectural Heritage* (NIAH) located within the site. The nearest such structure is located c. 0.56km northeast of the site and consists of Ballygunner House (RPS Ref. No. WA750313; NIAH Reg. No. 22901816).

2.5 Finds listed within the Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland

The Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland were requested to assess the area's archaeological potential. These files list all archaeological artefacts in the care of or known to the museum. Such a record can provide evidence for human settlement or activity in the absence of physical remains or documentary references. The topographical files were consulted for the townland of Bishopstown, but none were recorded.

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2.6 Cartographic Evidence

A review of available historical mapping for the area was carried out, including the 6-inch 1840 and the 25-inch 1905 editions of the Ordnance Survey maps. Potential archaeological or cultural heritage features are marked on such maps, which provide a helpful resource in identifying sites, particularly if they no longer have any above-ground remains.

The 1840 map (Figure 3) illustrates the site as consisting of two fields and a minor portion of a field. It is depicted adjacent to and east of a road with the easter boundary and a townland boundary, with a rougher area to the east. By the 1905 map (Figure 4), the internal field boundaries were removed, and the site consisted of a roughly rectangular field.

No archaeological or cultural heritage features are shown within the proposed development site on the examined mapping.

2.7 Aerial Photography

Aerial photographs from the Ordnance Survey of Ireland dating between 1995 and 2013 were reviewed, and Google Earth imagery dating between 2005 and 2023 was also examined. Unrecorded archaeological sites can often be identified in aerial photographs as cropmarks or differential growth in a field.

The site consisted of a grassed field and was undeveloped until the 2001-2005 aerial. By the 2006-2012 imagery, the southern portion of the site was developed, with some groundworks within the northern portion of the site apparent, and the plot adjacent and to the north developed. By the 2013-2018 aerial, a minor structure, creche facility, and play pitch were constructed north of the carpark. The site has remained unchanged since.

Nothing of cultural heritage significance was identified within the site on the examined aerial imagery.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Test Excavation

Test excavation was carried out in accordance with the *IAI Code of Conduct for Archaeological Assessment Excavation* (Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland 2006a). All trenches were excavated to the natural subsoil by a mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket under the direct supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist (Derek Gallagher).

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3.2 Conditions

Weather throughout the test excavations was dry.

3.3 Constraints on Methods

Trench 7 had to be moved slightly to the west due to the presence of an all-weather pitch/concrete.

4. TEST EXCAVATION RESULTS

Eleven test trenches, totalling 539m, were excavated within the site. Seven test trenches (Trenches 1-7) were initially proposed (Figures 5-6). However, Trench 7 was split into two (Trench 7a and Trench 7b), and additional trenches (Trench 2a, Trench 2b, and Trench 4a) were excavated to define the extent of archaeological features identified in Trench 2 and Trench 4. The remnants of three burnt stone spreads (C3, C4, C5) were identified. C3 was identified in Trench 2 and Trench 2a. C4 (also C6) was identified in Trench 2, Trench 2b and Trench 4, and C5 was identified in Trench 4 and Trench 4a.

Table 3: Trench descriptions

Trench Number	Length (m)	Trench depth (m)	Description
1	83	0.40	Trench 1 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.40m and came down onto an orange, brown, grey, stony boulder clay. No archaeological features were identified (Plate 1).
2	70	0.40	Trench 2 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.40m and came down onto a creamy orange-brown boulder clay with small stones (Plate 2). Two burnt stone spreads (C3 & C4) were identified. C3 was located at the north end of the trench (Figures 5-6; Plate 12). It was a deposit of burnt stone and charcoal measuring 7m in maximum diameter. It was very much ploughed out. It was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the eastern base. The burnt stone included sandstone and possibly limestone mixed with charcoal. The spread appears thin, <0.1m, and rested on the natural boulder clay. The shattered burnt stone ranges from less than 7cm to greater than 15cm in diameter. C4 was located towards the middle of the trench (Figures 5-6; Plate 13). C4 was the largest of the two burnt stone spreads. It was a deposit of

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Trench Number	Length (m)	Trench depth (m)	Description
			burnt stone and charcoal and measured 17m in width (N-S) by 29m in length. The burnt stone was mixed with charcoal, and the mound was visible in the grass, although barely visible. It was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. Burnt stone includes sandstone and possibly limestone mixed with charcoal. The spread appeared substantial and not ploughed out, so it was approximately 0.30m thick and rested on boulder clay. Shattered burnt stones ranged from less than 7cm to greater than 15cm in diameter. C4 extended eastwards into Trench 4 and was evident as C6 (C4 and C6 were the same feature).
2a	15	0.40	Dug to clarify the extent of C3 in Trench 2 (Plate 3).
2b	25	0.40	Dug to clarify the extent of C4 in Trench 2 – C4 is the same as C6 in Trench 4 (Plate 4).
3	72	0.40	Trench 3 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.40m and came down onto a grey, gritty boulder clay (Plate 5). Three cultivation furrows were exposed, running east-west on the lower-east slope of the ridge. They measured 0.40m in width and were 0.40m apart. No archaeological features were identified in this trench.
4	69	0.50	Trench 4 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.50 meters at the south end but was much shallower from the centre to the north end, where it measured only 0.30 meters in depth (Plate 6). The topsoil came down onto a creamy grey boulder clay with some small stones present. Two archaeological features were identified (C5, C6). C5 – Located at the north end of the trench (Figures 5-6; Plate 14). Deposit of burnt stone and charcoal measuring 5m in maximum diameter. Burnt stone mixed with charcoal and very much ploughed out. It was located mid-way down the east slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. Burnt stone included sandstone and possibly limestone mixed with charcoal. Spread appears very thin <0.1m and rests on boulder clay. Shattered burnt stone ranges from less than 7cm to greater than 15cm in diameter. C6 - same as C4 in Trench 2 (see Trench 2).
4a	10	0.40	Dug to clarify the extent of C5 in Trench 4 (Plate 7).
5	65	0.30	Trench 5 measured 0.30m in maximum depth and came down onto a creamy grey marly boulder clay with some small stones (Plate 8). It was in a low-lying wet area at the east bottom of a sloping ridge that ran north-south and parallel with the road. The burnt stone spreads were all on the east-facing slope.

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Trench Number	Length (m)	Trench depth (m)	Description
6	37	0.40	Trench 6 measured 0.40m in maximum depth and came onto a grey-creamy marl (Plate 9). No archaeological features were identified.
7a	60	0.40	Trench 7a measured 0.40m in maximum depth and came onto a creamy grey, gritty boulder clay (Plate 10). It was excavated in a low-lying wet area and immediately filled with water. No archaeological features were identified.
7b	33	0.30	Trench 7b measured 0.30 m in maximum depth and came down onto a creamy grey marl (Plate 11). No archaeological features were identified.

Table 4: Context descriptions

Context	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	Basic Description
C1	-	-	-	Topsoil
C2	-	-	-	Natural
C3	7m	-	<0.1m	Located in Trench 2. Deposit of burnt stone and charcoal measuring 7m in maximum diameter. The burnt stone was mixed with charcoal and was very much ploughed out. It was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. Burnt stone includes sandstone and possibly limestone mixed with charcoal. The spread appeared thin, <0.1m, and rested on the natural boulder clay. The shattered burnt stone ranged from less than 7cm to greater than 15cm in diameter (Plate 12).
C4	29m	17m	0.30	Located in Trench 2. Deposit of burnt stone and charcoal measuring 17m in width (N-S) by 29m in length. Burnt stone mixed with charcoal, with the mound still visible in the grass, though barely. It was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. Burnt stone includes sandstone and possibly limestone mixed with charcoal. The spread appears substantial and not ploughed out, so it was approximately 0.30m thick and rested on the natural boulder clay. Shattered burnt stones

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Context	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	Basic Description
				ranged from less than 7cm to greater than 15cm in diameter. Extended into Trench 4, where it was evident as C6 (Plate 13).
C5	5m	-	<0.1m	Located in Trench 4. Deposit of burnt stone and charcoal measuring 5m in max diameter. Burnt stone mixed with charcoal and very much ploughed out. It was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. Burnt stone included sandstone and possibly limestone mixed with charcoal. The spread appeared thin, <0.1m and rested on the natural boulder clay. Shattered burnt stones ranged from less than 7cm to greater than 15cm in diameter (Plate 14).
C6	-	-	-	Located in Trench 4. It is the same as C4.

5. MATERIAL CULTURE

No archaeological objects or finds were recovered, and no palaeo-environmental samples were taken.

6. CHRONOLOGY/DATING

Archaeological testing identified the remnants of three burnt stone spreads. Burnt mound sites are most commonly dated to the middle/late Bronze Age (Brindley et al. 1989–90; Corlett 1997). Burnt stone spreads indicate the presence of a fulacht fia.

The site also contains a previously identified monument - a fulacht fia (WA018-088----). This was situated on a hillside sloping to the east and was discovered in 2011 during topsoil stripping at the site of a new school. The monument was partially excavated (license number 11E0252; Pollock 2011) and consisted of a penannular spread of burnt stone (diam. c. 15m and generally less than 0.2m high) around an oval hollow or trough on the downhill side. Two further pits or troughs survived but were not excavated. The remains of the monument were preserved beneath the school car park. One charcoal sample (hazel) was submitted for analysis from fire-shattered stone and black silt, the fill of the shallow oval trough. This returned a C14 determination of 3820 BP +/- 35 (UBA 22725) or 2370-2197 (95.4% - 2 sigma) cal BC, which would provide an indicative Early Bronze Age date for this monument (O'Carroll 2013, 11).

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It is likely that the burnt stone spreads identified during the current testing phase will be similar in date to WA018-088.

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There will be a direct impact on all archaeological features identified.

8. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Eleven test trenches, totalling 539m, were excavated within the site. The remnants of three burnt stone spreads (C3, C4, C5) were identified. C3 was identified in Trench 2 and Trench 2a. C4 (same as C6) was identified in Trench 2, Trench 2b and Trench 4, and C5 was identified in Trench 4 and Trench 4a.

The proposed development will directly impact the identified archaeological features. Preservation in situ is not an option; therefore, preservation by record (full excavation) is recommended. Topsoil should be removed from an area measuring 30m by 50m surrounding the identified features (C3, C4/C6, C5). The identified features and any additional features exposed within this area should be preserved by record (full excavation) before construction commences. The remainder of WA018-088 (fulacht fia) will also be impacted by the current phase of works, and preservation by record (full excavation) is also recommended.

All excavation and monitoring works should be carried out by a licence-eligible archaeologist licensed by the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage.

9. POST-EXCAVATION PROGRAMME

No post-excavation work is necessary.

10. EXCAVATION BULLETIN

County: Waterford

Site name: Ballygunner, Co. Waterford

Sites and Monuments Record No.: WA018-088

Licence number: 24E1158

	No:	PM-SF-117	Version:	01	Effective Date:	01.01.24
	Title:	Archaeological Impact Assessment (Test Excavation): Bishops court, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford				Page 19 of 22

Author: Derek Gallagher

Site type: Fulacht Fia

Period/Dating: Bronze Age

ITM: 663933, 608500

Date of completion: December 2024

Summary:

Test excavations were carried out at a site located at Bishops court, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford (ITM 663933, 608500). The site lies southeast of Waterford, in the southeast portion of Ballygunner. The southern portion of the site is developed, and the northern portion is grassed but overgrown and uneven.

The proposed testing was carried out at the pre-planning stage. An archaeological Impact Assessment was recommended for the site. The site inspection deemed it unsuitable for a geophysical survey because it is overgrown and uneven.

The site contains one monument, fulacht fia WA018-088----. This was identified during archaeological monitoring carried out under licence 11E0252. The monument is located within the southern portion of the current site. It was partially excavated, with a portion preserved in situ under the existing carpark. Monitoring was also carried out under licence 12E0301 to the north of the monument WA018-088----. This was related to a temporary Crèche facility. Features of archaeological significance, including a small feature filled with burnt mound material and an area of burnt mound, were identified due to this monitoring phase. A pair of parallel ditches corresponding to a field boundary shown on the 1840 map were also identified. There are no protected structures listed in the Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022-2028 or sites listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) located within the site.

The northern portion of the site was archaeologically assessed (test trenching) by Derek Gallagher of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd. in December 2024. Eleven test trenches, totalling 539m, were excavated within the site. The remnants of three burnt stone spreads (C3, C4/C6, C5) were identified.

C3 was identified in Trench 2 and Trench 2a. It was a deposit of burnt stone and charcoal. It measured 7m in maximum diameter, appeared very thin (<0.1m), and rested on the natural boulder clay. It was very much ploughed out and was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the eastern base.

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	Title:	Archaeological Impact Assessment (Test Excavation): Bishopscourt, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford				Page 20 of 22

C4 was identified in Trench 2, Trench 2b and Trench 4. It was the largest of the burnt stone spreads and measured 17m in width (N-S) by 29m in length. The burnt stone was mixed with charcoal, and the mound was visible in the grass, although barely visible. It was located mid-way down the eastern slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. The spread appeared substantial and not ploughed out, so it was approximately 0.30m thick and rested on the natural boulder clay. C4 extended eastwards into Trench 4 and was evident as C6 (C4 and C6 were the same feature).

C5 was identified in Trench 4 and Trench 4a. It was a deposit of burnt stone and charcoal measuring 5m in maximum diameter and was very much ploughed out. It was located mid-way down the east slope of a north-south ridge with low-lying wet marshy ground at the east base. The spread appeared thin (<0.1m) and rested on the natural boulder clay.

Derek Gallagher, Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd, Unit 21 Boyne Business Park, Greenhills, Drogheda, Co Louth

11. PUBLICATION PLAN

An account of this archaeological assessment and its results will be published online as an excavation bulletin for the *Summary Accounts of Archaeological Excavations in Ireland* (see Section 10).

	No:	PM-SF-117	Version:	01	Effective Date:	01.01.24
	Title:	Archaeological Impact Assessment (Test Excavation): Bishopscourt, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford				Page 21 of 22

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Other Sources

Waterford County Development Plan 2022–2028.

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Extract from the Third edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 25-inch map, 1905.

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National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (<http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/>).

National Library of Ireland, 7–8 Wexford Street, Dublin 2.

Placenames Database of Ireland, developed by Fiontar & Scoil na Gaeilge (DCU) and The Placenames Branch, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (www.logainm.ie).

Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and Sites and Monuments (SMR), the Heritage Service, 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2 (<https://heritagedata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/>).

Summary Accounts of Archaeological Excavations in Ireland (www.excavations.ie).

Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland.



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Site Owner	Department of Education
Address	Department of Education, Portlaoise Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Planning Authority	Waterford County Council
Planning Reg. No.	Pre planning (G Pre00270/2024)
Excavation Type	Testing
Site	Ballygunner, Bishops court, Co. Waterford
Contractor/Developer	Department of Education

Description of Proposed Development

The proposed development will consist ofto consists of: *a 2 storey split level building and new carpark to the south of the site. , 5,735 sqm, on a greenfield site, circa 2.2ha. at Gaelcholáiste Phort Láirge, Bishops court, Ballygunner, Co. Waterford.*

Archaeological Condition

The test trenching is to be carried out at the pre-planning phase, following recommendations expressed during pre-planning consultation (G Pre00270/2024) dated 15 August 2024:

Archaeology

The proposed development is located within the confines of an archaeological site identified in the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) records as WA018-088 fulacht fia and described as follows:

“WA018-088 fulacht fia: Situated on a hillside sloping to the east, the remains of this fulacht fia were discovered in 2011 in the course of topsoil stripping at the site of a new school. The monument was partially excavated (license number 11E0252; Pollock 2011) and consisted of a pennanular spread of burnt stone (diam. c. 15m and generally less than 0.2m high) around an oval hollow or trough on the downhill side. Two further pits or troughs survived but were not excavated. The remains of the monument were preserved beneath the school car park. One charcoal sample (hazel) was submitted for analysis from fire-shattered stone and black silt, the fill of the shallow oval trough. This returned a C14 determination of 3820 BP +/- 35 (UBA 22725) or 2370-2197 (95.4% - 2 sigma) cal BC which would provide an indicative Early Bronze Age date for this monument (O'Carroll 2013, 11).”

As noted above, the fulacht fia (Bronze Age cooking place) was partially excavated during 2011 in advance of the construction of the existing school and associated carpark. The surviving buried remains of the fulacht fia are located within the footprint of the proposed development. Full archaeological excavation of the surviving remains of the previously identified fulacht fia will be required in advance of any site preparation and/or construction works should the development be permitted as proposed.

There is also potential for similar and possibly associated archaeological features/remains to survive within the footprint of the overall development. A detailed and field-based archaeological impact assessment will be required to determine the nature and extent of any surviving archaeological remains, to develop an informed archaeological mitigation strategy and to prepare an Archaeological Impact Assessment Report (AIAR) for submission with any future planning application

It is recommended that an archaeologist be engaged by the developer to complete this required Archaeological Impact Assessment and to prepare a report for submission with any future planning application.

The archaeological assessment shall involve documentary and cartographic research, a review of all previous archaeological assessments/excavation reports relating to the development area (including excavation report 11E0252 D. Pollock), fieldwork, an examination of all plans and section drawings for the proposed development, geophysical survey (if suitable site conditions) and archaeological testing within the footprint of the proposed development including associated ancillary works and access roadways (licensed under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2014).

The archaeologist shall prepare a report for submission with the planning application, including a full description of any archaeological findings, an archaeological impact statement and suggested mitigation strategy. Where archaeological material/features are shown to be present, preservation in situ, revision of site layout and design plans, preservation by record (excavation) or monitoring may be required. Mitigatory measures to ensure the preservation and/or recording of archaeological

material/features shall be suggested in the archaeological assessment report and the planning authority, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, will advise with regard to any further archaeological requirements following review of the assessment. Archaeological conditions informed by the AIAR may be attached to any planning approval.

The developer should be aware that any resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer. This may include archaeological excavation within the footprint of any proposed development, post excavation specialist reports and the preparation of a final archaeological report following the completion of all archaeological excavation works.

The above observations and recommendations are based on the documentation submitted to this Department on a pre-planning basis and are made without prejudice to any observations the Minister may make in the context of any consultation arising on foot of any development application referred to the Minister, by the planning authority, in his role as statutory consultee under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

You are requested to send further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) at manager.dau@npws.gov.ie where used, or to the following address:

The Manager

Development Applications Unit (DAU) Government Offices

Newtown Road

Wexford

Y35 AP90

Impact Statement and recommendations

There will be a direct impact on all archaeological features identified.

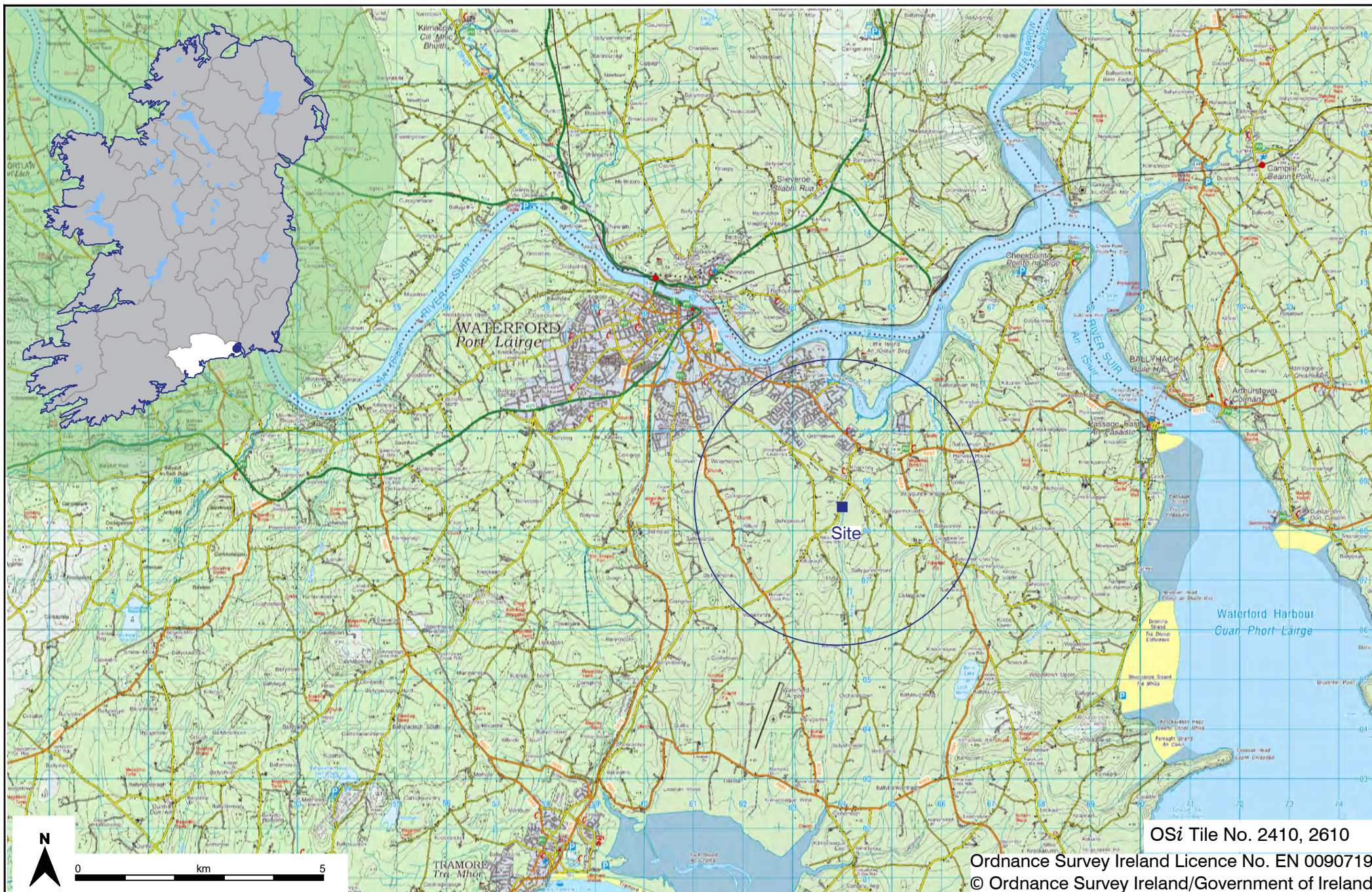
Eleven test trenches, totalling 539m, were excavated within the site. The remnants of three burnt stone spreads (C3, C4, C5) were identified. C3 was identified in Trench 2 and Trench 2a. C4 (same as C6) was identified in Trench 2, Trench 2b and Trench 4, and C5 was identified in Trench 4 and Trench 4a.

The proposed development will directly impact the identified archaeological features. Preservation in situ is not an option; therefore, preservation by record (full excavation) is recommended. Topsoil should be removed from an area measuring 30m by 50m surrounding the identified features (C3,

C4/C6, C5). The identified features and any additional features exposed within this area should be preserved by record (full excavation) before construction commences. The remainder of WA018-088 (fulacht fia) will also be impacted by the current phase of works, and preservation by record (full excavation) is also recommended.

All excavation and monitoring works should be carried out by a licence-eligible archaeologist licensed by the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage.

Signed:		Date:	7/01/25
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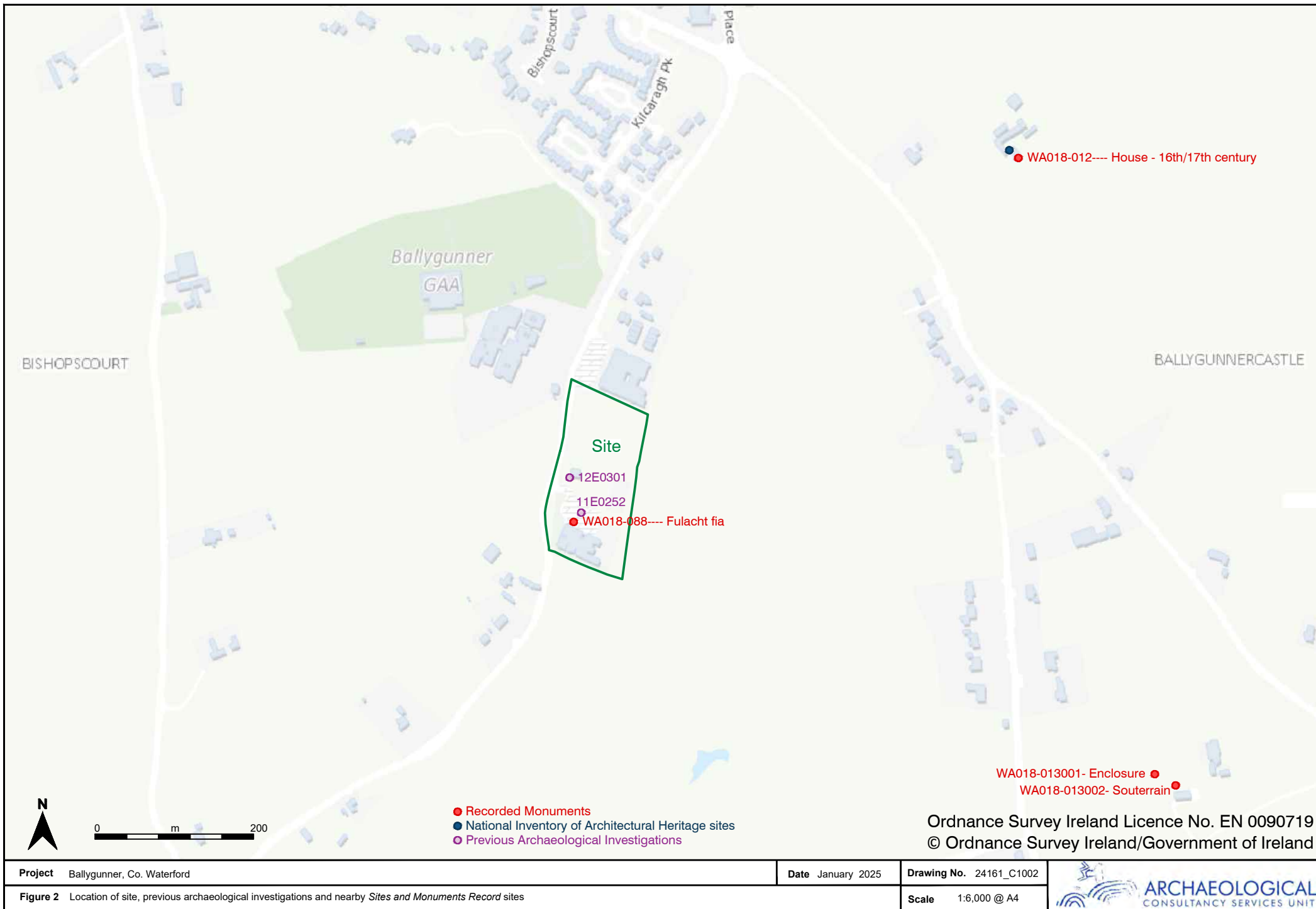
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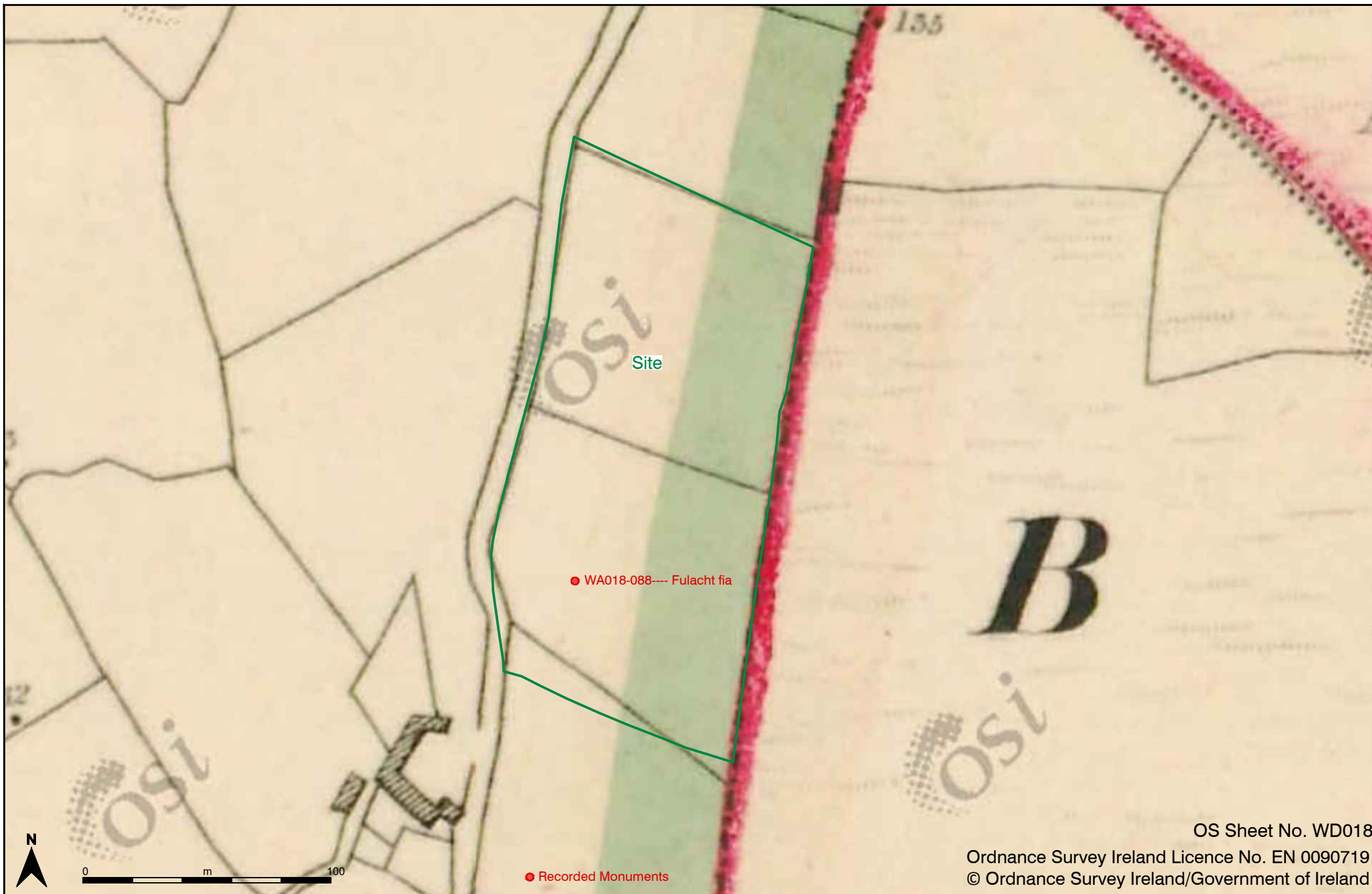
Date January 2025

Drawing No. 24161_C1001

Figure 1 Location of site

Scale 1:100,000 @ A4





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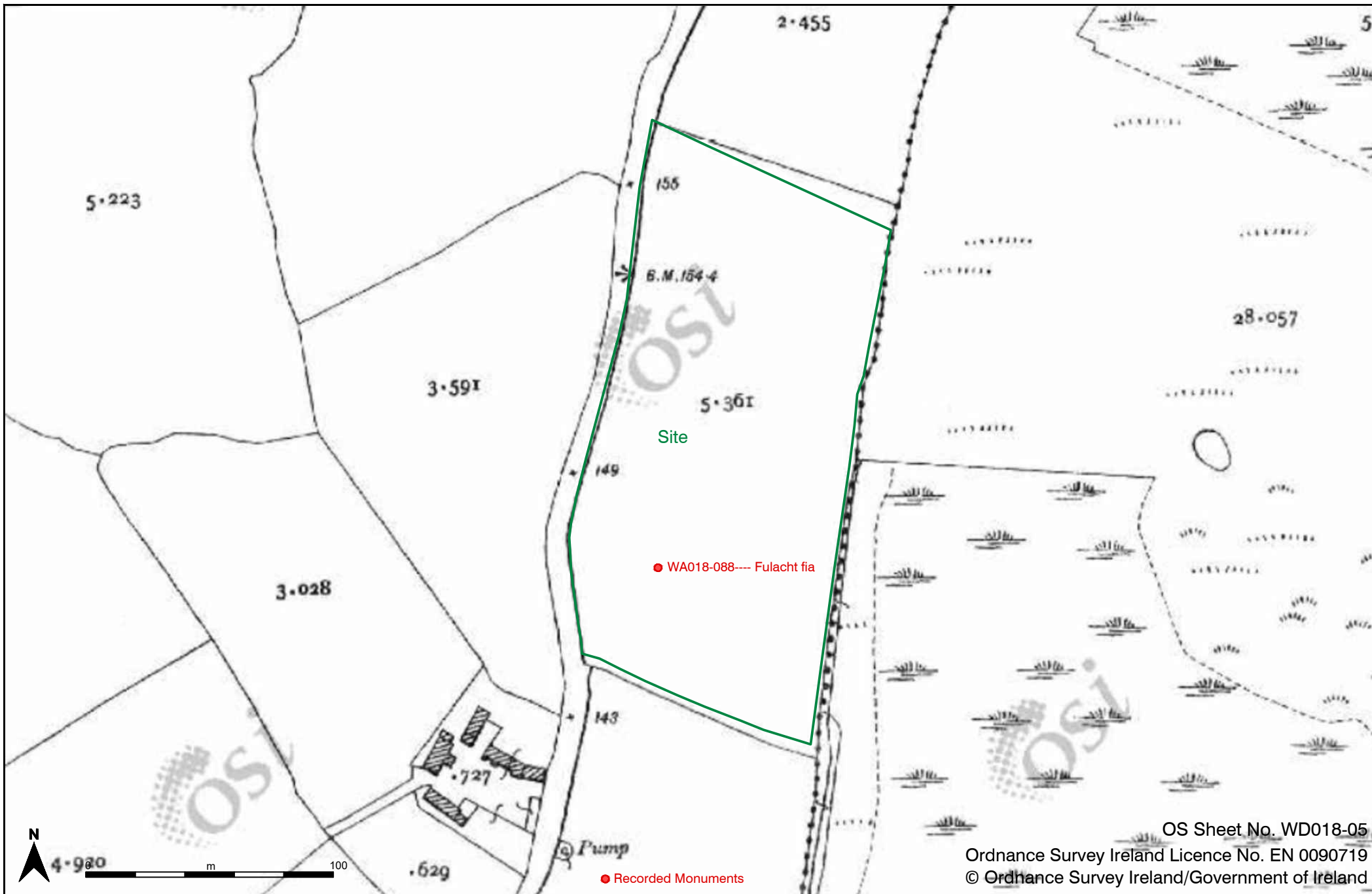
Date January 2025

Drawing No. 24161_C1003

Figure 3 Extract from 1st edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 6-inch map (surveyed 1840 - published 1842), showing location of site

Scale 1:2,000 @ A4





OS Sheet No. WD018-05

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Date January 2025

Drawing No. 24161_C1004

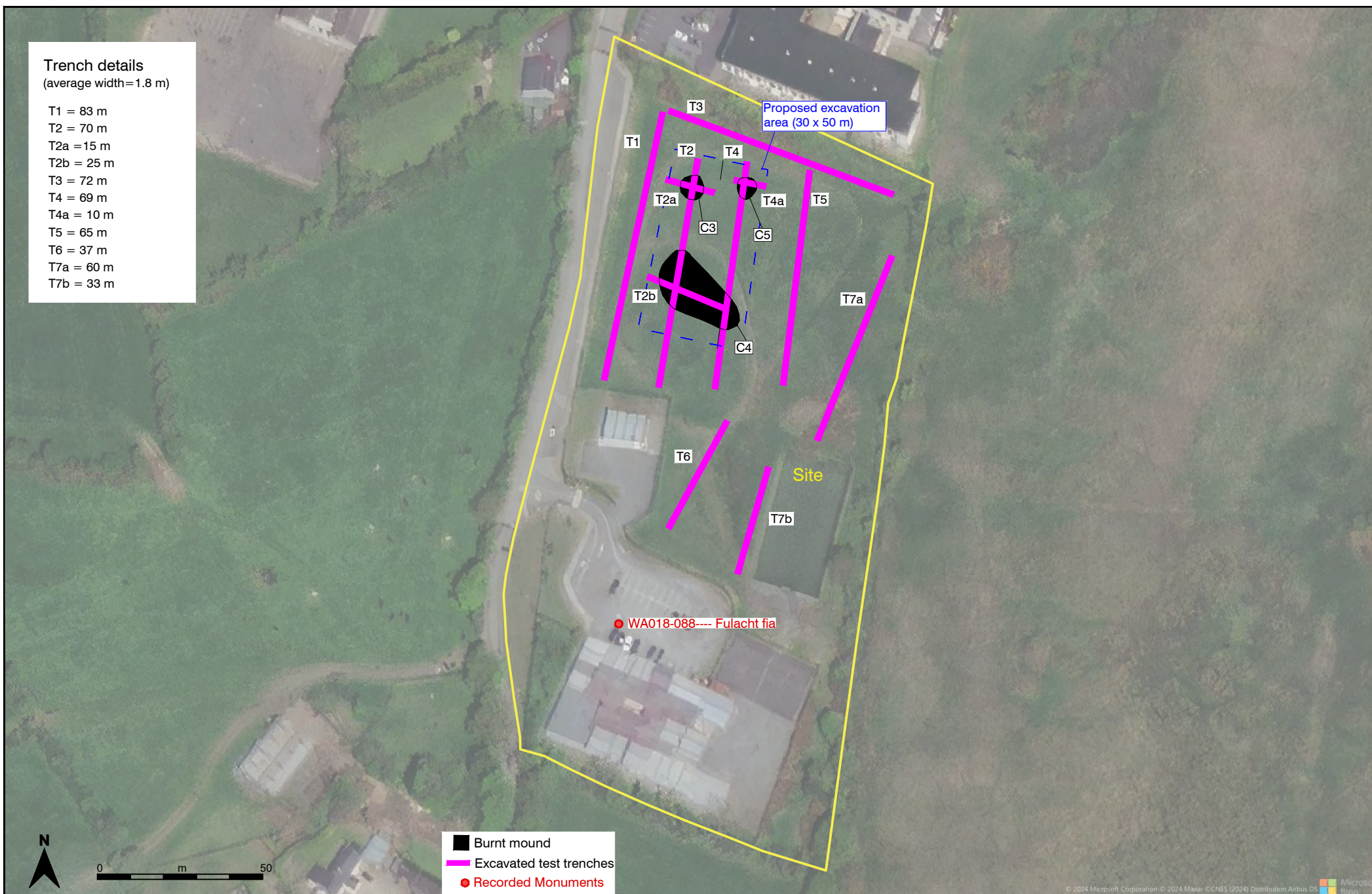
Figure 4 Extract from 3rd edition Ordnance Survey (OS) 25-inch map (surveyed 1905 - published 1907), showing location of site

Scale 1:2,000 @ A4



Trench details
(average width=1.8 m)

T1 = 83 m
T2 = 70 m
T2a = 15 m
T2b = 25 m
T3 = 72 m
T4 = 69 m
T4a = 10 m
T5 = 65 m
T6 = 37 m
T7a = 60 m
T7b = 33 m



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Date January 2025

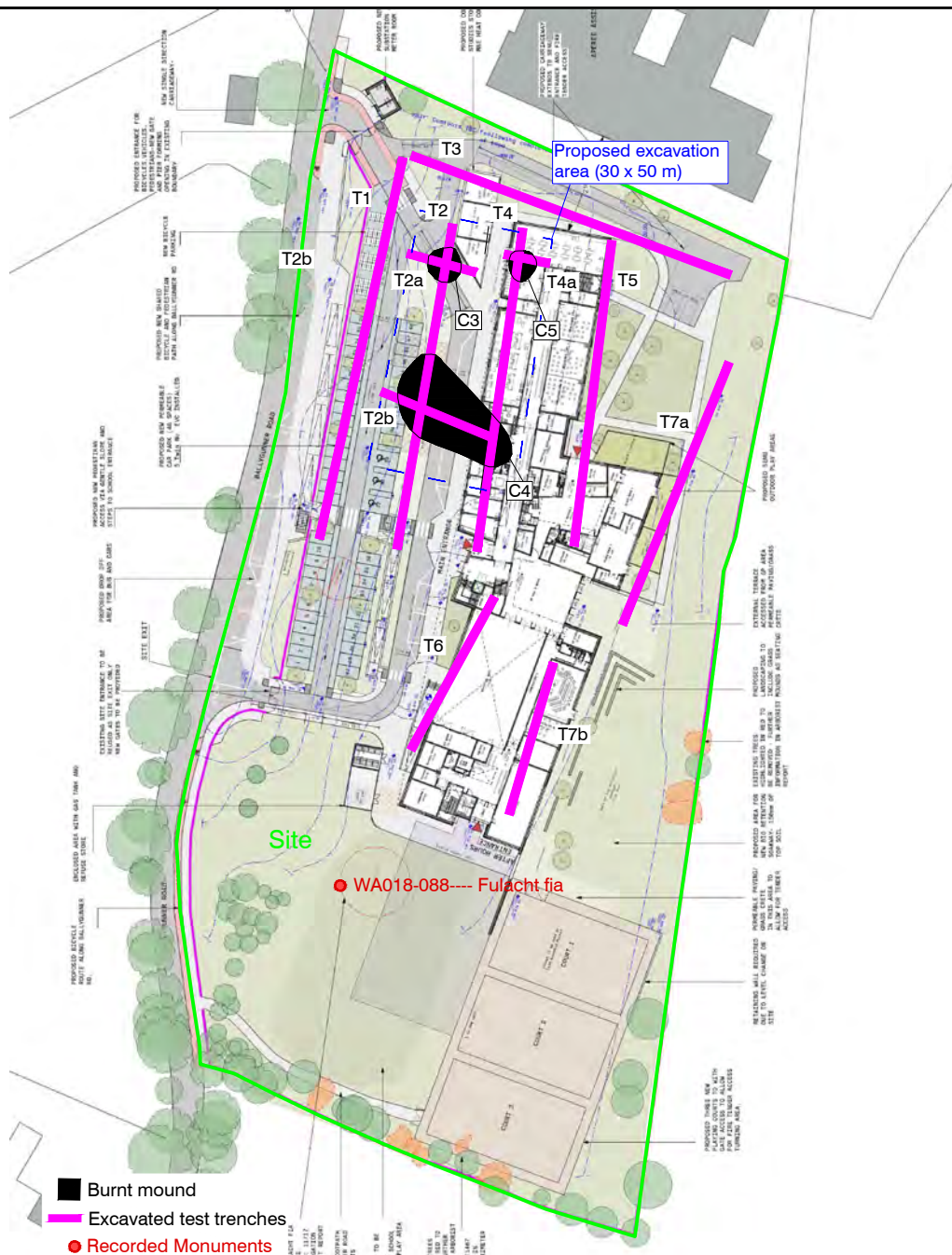
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Figure 5 Aerial view of site, showing location of excavated test trenches, uncovered burnt mounds and proposed excavation area

Scale 1:1,500 @ A4

Trench details
(average width=1.8 m)

- T1 = 83 m
- T2 = 70 m
- T2a = 15 m
- T2b = 25 m
- T3 = 72 m
- T4 = 69 m
- T4a = 10 m
- T5 = 65 m
- T6 = 37 m
- T7a = 60 m
- T7b = 33 m



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Date January 2025

Drawing No. 24161_C1006

Figure 6 Detail of site development, showing location of excavated test trenches, uncovered burnt mounds and proposed excavation area

Scale 1:1,500 @ A4





Plate 1: Trench 1 facing South



Plate 2: Trench 2 facing South



Plate 3: Trench 2a facing East



Plate 4: Trench 2b facing Southeast



Plate 5: Trench 3 facing West



Plate 6: Trench 4 facing North



Plate 7: Trench 4a facing west



Plate 8: Trench 5 facing South



Plate 9: Trench 6 facing Southwest



Plate 10: Trench 7a facing South



Plate 11: Trench 7b facing North



Plate 12: Trench 2 C3 facing north



Plate 13: Trench 2 C4 facing North



Plate 14: Trench 4 C5 facing North



Plate 15: Fulacht fia facing east (12E0301; Pollock 2012)



Plate 16: Fulacht fia facing east (12E0301; Pollock 2012)

