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Archaeological Impact Assessment
At Cardiffsbridge Road, Finglas, Co. Dublin
June 2023

Client: DCC

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

A review of the archaeological evidence for the area has shown that the proposed development does not include any recorded archaeological monuments or historic structures. An examination of the cartographic and aerial photographic evidence did not reveal any potential remains. The site is in use as a green space, a visual inspection would indicate that the site been landscaped in the past, truncation of the natural slope is visible at the south. The potential for sub surface remains are low. However as per DCC guidelines archaeological testing of the proposed site is recommended.

All recommendations are subject to agreement with the Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government.

1 Introduction

A pre planning archaeological impact assessment was undertaken by John Purcell Archaeological Consultancy to assess the cultural heritage impact of a development at Cardiffsbridge Road, Finglas, Co. Dublin. This report is being undertaken on behalf of the National Development Finance Agency. The report has been compiled to assess the impact of the site on the archaeological and historical landscape.

The report is based on documentary and cartographic research from all available sources including but not limited to the Record of Monuments and Places, the Sites and Monument Records, the topographical files of the National Museum, the Development Plan, local sources, and other literary and documentary references. Previous excavation in the immediate vicinity was also be reviewed.



Figure 1: Location of development

2 Receiving Environment

The study area is located in the townland of Springmount in South Finglas. The site is currently in use as a green space. The site is located 750m to the southwest of Finglas Village and 4km north of Dublin City. The site is located in an area that was

developed for housing in the last 20th century. The greenspace is surrounded by a modern road network on all sides (Figure 1).

3 Methodology

This report has been prepared having regard to the following guidelines;

- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government, 2018)
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (European Commission, 2017)
- Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports – Draft (EPA, 2017)
- The Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Bill, 2006
- Heritage Act 1995
- Frameworks and Principles for the protection of Archaeological Heritage 1999
- Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments and the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 2000.
- Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023.

3.1 Study Methodology

This assessment consists of a paper survey identifying all recorded sites within the vicinity of the proposed development and a site inspection.

The desktop survey undertaken consisted of a document and cartographic search utilising a number of sources including the following:

- Record of Monuments and Places (RMP); The RMP records known upstanding archaeological monuments, the original location of destroyed monuments and the location of possible sites identified through, documentary, cartographic, photographic research and field inspections.
- The RMP consists of a list, organised by county and subdivided by 6" map sheets showing the location of each site. The RMP data is compiled from the files of the Archaeological Survey.

- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage; The inventory of architectural heritage lists all post 1700 structures and buildings in the country. This includes structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, social, scientific or technical importance.
- County Development Plans; The county development plans were consulted to ascertain if any structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and/or any Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) were to be impacted by the proposed development.
- Cartographic Sources; the following maps were examined: Down Survey (1656-1658), 1st edition Ordnance Survey Maps (1836-1846) and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Maps (1908).
- Literary Sources; various published sources, including local and national journals, were consulted to establish a historical background for the proposed development site. Literary sources are a valuable means of completing the written record of an area and gaining insight into the history of the environs of the proposed development. Principal archaeological sources include: Local Journals; Published archaeological and architectural inventories; Peter Harbison's Guide to the National Monuments of Ireland; and O'Donovan's Ordnance Survey Letters.
- Previous archaeological assessments and excavations for the area were also reviewed.
- Topographical files are located at the National Museum of Ireland and detail stray finds across the country.

Figure 2: Site boundary with archaeological monuments marked



4 General Archaeological and Historical Summary

4.1 Brief Archaeological Background Dublin

Finglas village is located to the northwest of Dublin City. Dublin city's origins trace back to the 9th century when it was founded by Viking settlers on the banks of the River Liffey. The name "Dublin" is derived from the Irish "Dubh Linn," meaning "black pool," which referred to a dark tidal pool where the River Poddle met the River Liffey. Archaeological excavations have revealed Viking longhouses, burial sites, and artifacts, underscoring Dublin's significance as a Viking trading and military hub. By the late 11th century, there was a suburb of Dublin north of the Liffey centred around Smithfield and Stonybattery.

Following the Norman invasion of Ireland in the late 12th century, Dublin underwent significant transformation. The Normans established Dublin Castle as a seat of power. In 1152, the Bishop of Dublin was made an Archbishop. Between 1172 and 1191, the Cathedral of Christchurch was rebuilt. In 1213, the parish Church of St. Patrick was also made a cathedral. In the early 13th century, a stone wall was constructed to protect the settlement. In 1229, Dublin gained its first mayor. Dublin grew rapidly and may have had a population of 8,000 by the 13th century. The street pattern from this period survives in parts of the city's current layout.

During the late medieval period, Dublin continued to grow as a commercial center. The city saw the establishment of numerous religious institutions, such as monasteries and abbeys, which played vital roles in education and healthcare, extending the city's wealth and influence. The dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII led to the transfer of this wealth to a new ruling elite.

In the 16th century, Dublin expanded outside the walled town. In 1591, Queen Elizabeth granted a charter for a new university, Trinity College. The first students were admitted in 1594. In 1621, a Custom House was built. In 1662, Phoenix Park was laid out as a deer park. The 17th and 18th centuries marked continued expansion of Dublin. The city saw the construction of Georgian buildings, wide streets, and public squares. Developments include the construction of St. Stephen's Green, the Four Courts, and several hospitals. The 17th century also saw an influx of Huguenot settlers expelled from Catholic France. Many of these settled in the Newmarket area of the city.

The 19th century brought industrialization, further urban expansion, and social changes. Dublin's port facilities were modernized, facilitating increased trade. The development of the canal, railway networks, and improved road networks connected Dublin more efficiently with the rest of Ireland.

4.2 Brief Archaeological Background Finglas

Finglas Village, situated northwest of Dublin city, boasts a rich history and significant archaeological heritage dating back to early medieval times. The name Finglas is derived from the Irish "Fionnghlas," meaning "clear stream" or "white stream," a nod to its ancient origins and natural features.

Early Medieval Period

Finglas emerged as an important ecclesiastical site from the 6th century, marked by the establishment of a monastic settlement by St. Canice. This era is well-documented in historical records, and archaeological investigations have revealed numerous remnants of its monastic past. These include early Christian burial sites, cross slabs, and the foundations of ecclesiastical buildings. Pre-Christian burials, dated from the 2nd to 7th century, were discovered during archaeological monitoring in 2003 in Pelletstown, just south of the village.

Norman Period

The Norman period brought substantial development to Finglas, with the construction of defensive structures such as motte-and-bailey castles, indicating its strategic importance. Evidence of a wall surrounding the medieval settlement, dating from the 13th to 15th century and reinforced in the mid-17th century, underscores the village's significance. Cardiffstown Bridge, with possible medieval fabric in its lower levels, further highlights the area's importance during this period.

17th Century

In the 17th century, Cardiffstown Castle was constructed, adding to the area's historical architecture. Numerous other structures from this period are recorded, reflecting the continuing importance of Finglas during this time.

19th Century

The industrialization of Dublin in the early 19th century saw the development of mills along the Dodder River, south of the study area. 19th-century maps indicate that the surrounding areas were primarily agricultural land, with notable residences like Rosemount House located to the south.

20th Century to Present

By the 20th century, Finglas had transformed into a significant suburb of Dublin, illustrating its long-term growth and development from a historical and archaeological perspective.

4.3 Archaeological Monuments

Only one recorded archaeological monument is located within 750m of the study area. The details of these sites have been taken from archaeology.ie and are outlined below.

DU014-066005-

Class: House - 16th/17th century

Townland: FINGLAS WEST

A manor established by Archbishop Comyn in 1181 appears to have been on the present site of the convent which on the 1st edition OS 6-inch map (1843) is called Springmount, later known as Fortwilliam. In 1228 Archbishop Luke established an episcopal residence on the site. During the period that Alexander de Bicknor held the See of Dublin 1317-1319, this residence became known as the Court. It was a substantial mansion. There are references to stone walls, leaden gutters, iron bars, kitchen, brewhouse and furnaces (Ball 1920, 85). The Civil survey (1654-6) mentions a 'stone house' at Oldcourt on the church farm at Finglas (Simington 1945, 140). Excavations in 1992 failed to reveal any traces of the site (O'Flanagan 1993, 27). Further excavations in 1995 revealed the walls of a rectangular, two-roomed structure (L 20m, Wth 4.5m) associated with 16th-17th century material. This has been interpreted as an out-building associated with Fortwilliam (Halpin 1996, 24-25).

DU014-075---- : Bridge : CARDIFFSBRIDGE

This bridge spans the River Tolka S of Finglas town. It is a four-arched example with three round arches close together and one on the S bank. The parapet walls are of coursed limestone masonry with granite coping. The stonework changes in character in the lower portion of the walls indicating an earlier building phase which maybe of medieval date (Simington & O'Keefe 1991, 17, 290).

DU014-095---- : Burial ground : PELLETSTOWN

During topsoil monitoring in 2003 three unenclosed inhumation burials were discovered including a south-north stone-lined, probably supine burial. Two additional graves, a juvenile at the foot of the main adult burial and a stone-lined west-east juvenile grave were revealed during the subsequent excavation. A provisional date of the 2nd to the 7th century has been proposed for the burials. At least two may be pre-Christian (Frazer, W.2006, 111-112).

4.4 Previous Archaeological Works

The archaeological excavation database (excavations.ie) was searched for archaeological excavations and reports in the environs of the proposed development. No entries were recorded for the study area.

4.5 Cartographic Evidence

An examination of the cartographic evidence for the site was undertaken. This included the Taylor map and the OS maps. The Taylor Map shows the area in use for agricultural purposes. Finclas Village and Cardiffstown Bridge are visible. The road linking the two that forms the eastern boundary of the site is marked. The first edition OS map and the 25" map shows the site as a number of fields with a structure visible at the southeast. A well is marked on the road at the southeast of the study area on the 25" map. No features indicative of archaeological remains were identified. The aerial photographs did not reveal any potential features.

Figure 3: Extract from the Taylor Map of Dublin with the site

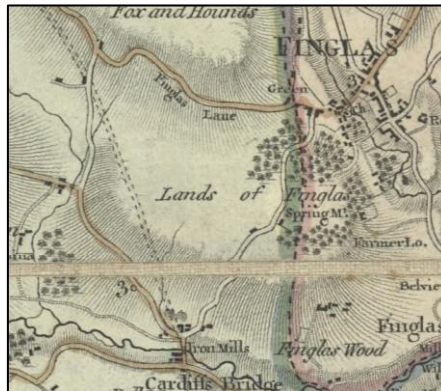


Figure 4: First edition OS map for the site with the study area marked



Figure 5: 25" map for the site with the study area marked

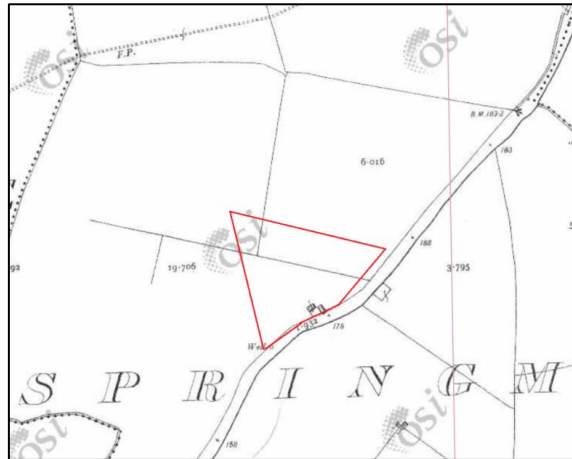


Figure 6: Aerial Photograph for the site (taken from geohive.ie)



4.6 Protected Structures

The study area does not include any structures listed in the RPS or the NIAH. The closest protected structures are located approximately 1km from the study area.

4.7 Topographical Files

The topographical files are a record of stray finds and artefacts reported to the National Museum of Ireland. A database is available for research and the artefacts are listed by townland. An examination of the topographical files did not reveal any stray finds for the townland of Springmount.

5 Cultural Heritage Assessment

The proposed development does not include any recorded archaeological monuments. No sites are located within the immediate environs of the site. The early Christian and medieval settlement of Finglas is located over 400m to the north. The site or its immediate environs do not include any protected structures. The site has been in use as a green space since the wider area was developed in the 20th century.

A visual assessment of the site would indicate that landscaping works have taken place. The site slopes gently to the south towards the Tolka River Valley. Truncation of the site is visible along the road at the south. The potential for unrecorded sub surface remains at the site is low. However, in accordance with the Dublin City Development Plan (Policy BHA26.4 2022-28), sites over 0.5 hectares are subject to archaeological assessment and testing. This should be undertaken prior to the commencement of development at the site.

6 Mitigation And Conclusion

A recent review of the archaeological evidence for a site at Cardiffsbridge Road, indicates that no historic structures or archaeological remains have been identified within the immediate environs, suggesting a low potential for discovering historic remains. However, due to the scale of the proposed development and in compliance with Dublin City Council (DCC) requirements, archaeological testing is recommended. This testing will be conducted under a license issued by the National Monuments Service (NMS) and should adhere to the framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage. The testing process must be thorough,

utilizing appropriate methods to ensure comprehensive examination of potential subsurface remains. If any archaeological remains are identified, further mitigation measures will be required, which could include either avoidance or preservation by record, depending on the significance of the finds and the development's impact. A detailed method statement must be prepared, outlining the impact of the development on any potential remains and including a strategy for resolving any identified remains. This statement and strategy will be formulated in consultation with the NMS to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and best practices. While the current review suggests a low potential for historic remains, the recommended archaeological testing is crucial to safeguarding any potential archaeological heritage, ensuring any discovered remains are appropriately managed and preserved in accordance with established archaeological principles and regulations.

All recommendations are subject to agreement with the Office of the Dublin City Archaeologist and the NMS.