

**SITE AT
BROWNSBARN
CITYWEST CAMPUS
DUBLIN 24**

**ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE
IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

21st June 2021

**Historic Building Consultants
Old Bawn
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1167/02

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Background

This report has been prepared for Exeter Ireland Property IV B Limited as part of the documentation to be submitted with a planning application.

The site was inspected for the purposes of preparing this report in February 2021 on which occasion the photographs incorporated in the report were taken and the site examined to prepare the descriptions contained therein.

Historical research was carried out on the background history of the property and the results are set down below.

While this report contains comment on aspects of the condition of the buildings it is not a condition report or a structural report and must not be read as such.

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Historical background

The Naas road has been the main route from Dublin to Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Kilkenny and elsewhere from time immemorial. The modern road system in Ireland began to emerge in the early 18th century and for many of the trunk roads this was done through the agency of turnpike commissioners. These bodies were established by law to upgrade roads to a good standard and to maintain them for the common good, with the finance for construction and maintenance coming from the tolls that were collected from those using the road at toll gates, or turnpikes.

One of the early turnpike trusts was established in 1729 to take charge of the road from Dublin to Kilcullen Bridge, and this included the road to Naas. While other turnpike trusts were set up to build new roads, the road to Kilcullen Bridge was largely based on the pre-existing route. The stretch that passes Brown's Barn was one of the realigned sections, cutting off a slightly longer route and providing a good quality road with an adequate width.

A substantial inn was built on the Naas Road at Brown's Barn and as this was on the realigned section of road it is evident that it dated from sometime after 1729, though probably not much later. This inn was named The Royal Garter, and it lay approximately 450 metres away from the stables, towards Naas, in the front left-hand corner of the site now occupied by the National Vehicle Delivery site. Directly opposite this site is the road leading to Saggart, which is still known as Garter Lane.

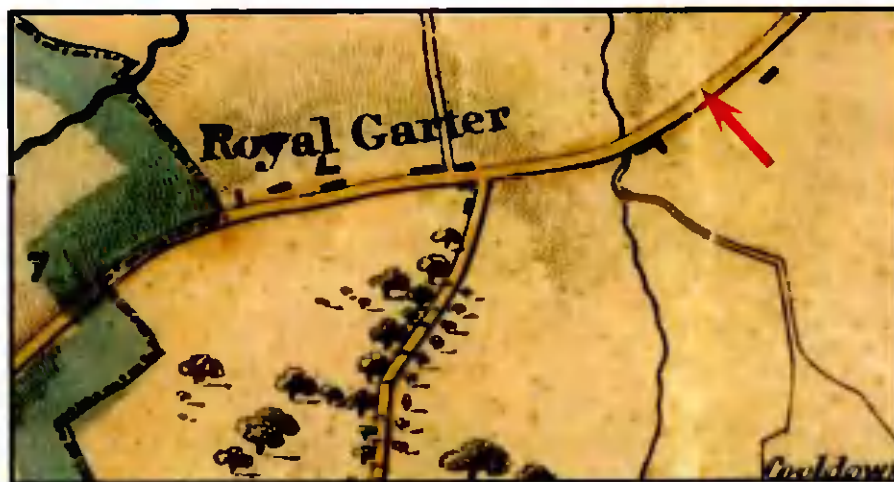


Figure 1: Detail of Duncan's map of 1821

When the Royal Garter Stables were built is unclear. The fabric of the building does not appear to be of early 18th century date – such as the low-pitched roof, and it seems more likely that it is of late 18th or early 19th century date. The stables are known to have been associated with Bianconi, who used them as a depot for his Bian cars, but there is little or no trace of them in the record prior to this. John Rocque's map of County Dublin of 1760 shows the Royal Garter inn, and it is labelled as such, but no building is shown on the northern side of the road to the

east of the inn, while it would be expected that a building of this size, and which would be important to travellers, would be shown on Rocque's map. It is also absent from John Taylor's map of 1816, which also depicts and labels the Royal Garter while depicting no building on the site of the stables. The name "Brown's Barn" is shown somewhat further to the north-east on this map. This is the townland name and while it was not an ancient townland name it appears to predate Bianconi's involvement with the stables. William Duncan's map of County Dublin, published in 1821, also shows no trace of the stables. As with Taylor's map, the Royal Garter inn is labelled, somewhat to the west, while there is no building on the future site of the Royal Garter Stables, which is indicated by the arrow on the map extract above.

By the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1843 the Royal Garter had disappeared, and the Royal Garter Stables was depicted clearly, and labelled "Royal Garter Stables". There were buildings on the site of the former inn, and while these may have been remnants of the building, it was not as big as the inn, and the valuation records of the period only show the buildings as houses.

It seems to be a distinct possibility that the present stable building was built in the early 19th century as a replacement for the stabling facility that had existed at the Royal Garter Inn, and which continued to be an important facility on this busy trunk road.

Note: *There is a plaque on site at the Brown's Barn restaurant that gives a history of the building and it is noted that this history is not accurate.*

Conservation context

Record of Protected Structures

There are no protected structures on the application site. On the adjacent site to the east the Royal Garter Stables stand at the edge of the N7 Naas Road and are included in the record of protected structures under reference 261. The address is "Royal Garter Stables, Naas Road" and the description is "Stone stables".

Conservation areas

The application site is not within an architectural conservation area and is not adjacent to an architectural conservation area.

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage has included the Royal Garter Stables in its survey of the South Dublin area, under reference 11214001. The survey assigns a Regional significance to the stables building for its architectural, artistic and historical interest. The appraisal states that:

This imposing coaching inn with a rich history is a prominent landmark along this busy national route and, though refurbished, retains much original fabric.

It is noted that the building was not a coaching inn, but stables connected with a coaching inn that formerly stood on a separate site at a distance to the west.

Survey

The site is located on the northern side of the N7 Naas Road at Citywest. From an architectural heritage perspective, the only significant factor is the presence of the Royal Garter Stables on an adjacent site. There are no other protected structures or structures that are included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage in the vicinity of the application site.

Royal Garter Stables



Plate 1: Royal Garter Stables, seen from the application site

The Royal Garter Stables is a two-storey, stone-built structure that is orientated east-west on the northern side of the Naas Road. On its southern side the building is fourteen-bay, with a row of small windows on the upper floor, while a large arched doorway in the centre of the ground floor is flanked by two blocked-up windows on either side. The roof is gabled and is slated.



Plate 2: Royal Garter Stables, seen from the south, across the Naas Road



Plate 3: Northern side of Royal Garter Stables

On the northern side, facing the application site, the stables building is asymmetrical, with an off-centre breakfront in which there is a large arched doorway. On either side of the breakfront the façade is punctuated by three rows of narrow ventilation slots, while at the western end is another door with a window above. This northern section is shorter than that on the south, which has a walled yard to the rear to the east of centre.



Plate 4: Western end of Royal Garter Stables

The western end of the building presents gables at the ends of the northern and southern sections, while between them the area has a hipped roof and is parapetted.

Setting as seen from Naas Road



Plate 5: View from 150 metres to the west of stables

From the Naas Road itself the site is seen by those travelling at significant speeds, from about 80 kph upwards. To those travelling to Dublin Brown's Barn emerges into view on the left-hand side of the road from a relatively close viewpoint, as the building is concealed from further back by a dense belt of trees and hedgerows. The photograph above shows the view from 150 metres to the west of the stables building, with the eastern end of the hedgerow at left.



Plate 6: View from 100 metres to the west of stables

The view of the stables building that first appears from this angle is the western end, while the southern side of the building then comes into view, though close to the road, so is seen more as an impression than in detail. The photograph below shows the view from a distance of about eighty metres from the stables.



Plate 7: View of stables from approximately 80 metres to the west

On the southern side of the N7 there is no public place from which the stables building may be seen. Those travelling along the road face away from the building and there is no footway on this side. The building may be seen from business premises set back from the road on the southern side.



Plate 8: View of stables from south-west. on southern side of Naas Road

Proposed development

It is proposed to develop the application site to provide two warehouse buildings, with ancillary works such as the provision of circulation, loading bays and parking. One warehouse is to be sited at the northern end of the site while the other is to be nearer to the southern end, towards the Naas Road. This southern warehouse would be set back from the road by approximately 26 metres at its eastern end and a little over 40 metres at the western end and would be approximately 15 metres high on this elevation.

Warehouse unit 1, to the north, will be at such a distance that there is little chance of significant impact on the setting of the protected structure. Unit 2, being closer to the protected structure, has a greater potential for impact.

In assessing the potential impact on the setting of the protected structure the analysis examines the viewpoint of those using the Naas Road, being the most prominent and most viewed aspect of the building. The potential impact from other directions is then examined.



Plate 9: Montage view from approach on northbound side of Naas Road

View from the northbound side of the Naas Road

The view seen by those travelling towards Dublin along the Naas Road is probably the view seen by most people and large numbers of vehicles pass this way each day. The proposed warehouse unit 2 has been set back from the road so as to leave the view of the end of the stables building unobstructed. As noted above, there are trees and hedgerows along the road frontage to the west of the application site such that the stables building only comes into view once the application site is reached. The proposed unit 2 would be located outside a line drawn from the south-western corner of the application site, 150 metres to the west of the stable structure, the north-western corner of the Royal Garter Stables, thereby ensuring that the view of the end of the stables is unobstructed when seen by the small number of pedestrians that use the footway along this side of the

road. The occupiers of vehicles using the road would be located further to the south, on one or other of the road lanes, from where the separation between the proposed warehouse and the stables would be greater. As the pedestrian or vehicle occupier proceeds the separation becomes larger again. It is proposed to provide landscaping along the road frontage, as seen in the photomontage in plate 9 above, which is from a similar viewpoint to plate 6.

View from the southbound side of the Naas Road

To travellers moving towards Naas the protected structure comes into view when passing under the Citywest bridge, from where the building is prominently seen on the right-hand side of the road. From here the application site is concealed from view behind the protected structure itself and could only be seen very briefly when looking sharply to the right for a fleeting moment. The proposed warehouse unit 2 would be sufficiently to the rear that it would not have any perceptible impact on the protected structure when seen from this angle. The warehouse may be slightly visible to the rear of the stables building but the prominence of the stables is such that any structure to the rear would not detract from the view.



Plate 10: Montage view of development from southern side of Naas Road

View from opposite side of Naas Road

When seen from a high point on the southern side of Naas Road the proposed building would be more visible than from either of the views seen by traffic along the road. The view seen in plate 2 above, is taken from a landscaped area and not one which is normally frequented by the public. From viewpoints such as this the protected structure can only be seen from a limited area on a height above the Naas Road. The application site is set back at the rear of the protected structure and the prominence of the stables building dominates the scene. Buildings to the rear would be visible, but not to the extent of detracting significantly from the character of the protected structure. From the Naas Road the setback of the proposed building and its height would be such that it would not intrude into the view of the protected structure, as seen in the photomontage shown above. Here the proposed building is just visible above the left-hand end of the former stables.



Plate 11: Photomontage showing proposed building, with stables at left

Setting of the site at the rear

As noted above, there is an extensive car park across the entire rear of the protected structure and the large scale of this car park is broken up by significant numbers of trees. The trees are still immature, but nonetheless give an element of screening, as is seen in plate 1 above. The separation in distance between the protected structure and the proposed unit 2 would be about 30 metres at the closest point, though the layout of the two buildings, set at an angle to each other, means that the distance is generally greater than this. The presence of the trees and the effect of the car park both combine to increase the separation. To the north of the protected structure the view of the Royal Garter Stables from the approach road would be unobstructed and there would be a significant distance between the stables and warehouse unit 1. The photomontage reproduced above shows the proposed building at centre right, while the stables is behind the trees to the left. None of the protected structure is obscured by the proposed building and the scale of the proposal together with the existing and proposed landscaping will ensure that the setting of the protected structure will not be adversely affected.

Conclusion

The application site is zoned for industrial purposes and hence it is to be expected that it would be developed for such a use. The proposed buildings have been sited so as to minimise any potential impact on the character and setting of the Royal Garter Stables, which form a prominent landmark on the Naas Road.

