

# BUCHAN KANE & FOLEY

## GRADE 1 CONSERVATION ARCHITECTS

Conservation Assessment  
for  
Palmyra Housing Development  
Whitchurch Road, Dublin 16



August 2021





**Development Site at  
Palmyra  
Whitechurch Road  
Dublin 16**

**Conservation Assessment  
Application for Planning Permission**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

The owner of this site, Beckett Development Ltd., which lies to the rear of Palmyra (*Not a Protected Structure*), is applying to South Dublin Co. Council for Planning Permission to build:-

*Eight Houses on a site, part of the grounds of Palmyra, that will be accessed from Grangebrook Avenue, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.*

The purpose of this Conservation Assessment is:

To assess the impact of the proposed new dwellings on the heritage significance of:  
(a), Palmyra, and (b), of the adjoining Whitechurch church and graveyard.

**2.0 Architects.**

The lead consultant is Terry & O'Flanagan Architects, who have instructed Timothy Foley, B. Arch. MUBC., FRIAI, of Buchan Kane and Foley Architects, which is a RIAI Accredited Grade 1 Conservation Practice, to prepare this assessment.

**3.0 Conservation Principles**

Where relevant throughout the project the Conservation Principles of 'repair rather than replace', 'minimum intervention', 'honesty of repairs and alterations', 'use of appropriate materials' and 'reversibility of alterations' shall be employed. Wherever possible elements will be repaired rather than replaced. Works and repairs to various elements will be undertaken only when necessary to protect and conserve the original structure and/or when required as an essential element in the protection of the original structure.

**4.0 Recording of Interventions**

Any interventions or alterations made to historic fabric will be recorded by drawings, photographs and/or words as appropriate.

All repairs to historic elements will be recorded by drawings, photographs and/or words as appropriate. Interventions will kept to the minimum necessary, in order to preserve original fabric and character. Where works are required specifications and schedules will be agreed with the conservation architect prior to implementation.

**5.0 Core Data**

**5.1 Address**

Site at Palmyra, Whitechurch Road & Grangebrook Avenue, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.

**5.2 Planning Authority**

The relevant Planning Authority for the area is South Dublin Co. Council.

**5.3 Protected Structure Status**

These lands are part of the Attendant Grounds of Palmyra which is NOT a Protected Structure, but is close to Whitechurch Church & Graveyard, which is a Protected Structure, (Ref. 334) and is also a Recorded Monument. (DU022-030)

**5.4 Applicant**

Beckett Development Ltd.



## 5.5 Description

The lands, which are the subject of this application, adjoin the western side of Palmyra and are part of its curtilage. The house and the site are situated on, and accessed from, the western side of Whitechurch Road. Vehicular access to the development site during construction, and on completion, will be from Grangebrook Avenue, which forms the western boundary of Palmyra and its grounds.

Palmyra lies on the western side of the Glin river and is well set back from the main roadway, Whitechurch Road, which runs along the eastern side of the Glin river. The house and lands are currently accessed via a lane running westwards from Whitechurch Road. Palmyra is a two-storey gabled fronted house, with an off-set entrance door, set back from the plane of the front wall. The house is rendered with a slated main roof and a flat roofed extension containing the main entrance door. There is a mono-pitched slated extension to the rear. There are number of detached outhouses to the northern side of the house.

## 6.0 Use of Report:

- 6.1 This report is for the sole use of the applicants for the purposes of making a Planning Application to South Dublin County Council. No responsibility to any third party is implied or accepted, nor shall any responsibility be implied or accepted, should this report be used for any purpose other than this planning application.

## 7.0 Proposal Outline

- 7.1 This Assessment is prepared in support of a Planning Application for the construction of Eight New Houses on land lying immediately to the west of Palmyra. The building site will be accessed from Grangebrook Avenue on the western side of Palmyra, as shall the New Houses when the building works have been completed.
- 7.2 The following works are planned:- remove the modern block and brick wall onto Grangebrook Avenue: - Construct new pavement along the eastern side of Grangebrook Avenue and install eight vehicular/pedestrian entrances in new boundary treatment; Construct 2 No. two-storey detached houses and three pairs of semi-detached houses (Total 8 No. houses), together with new boundary walls, pathways, hardstanding and gardens, all to rear/west of Palmyra.
- 7.3 The owner of Palmyra has submitted a planning application for permission to conserve , refurbish and extend Palmyra ( Planning Reg Ref : SD21B/0372 ).



8.

Drawings

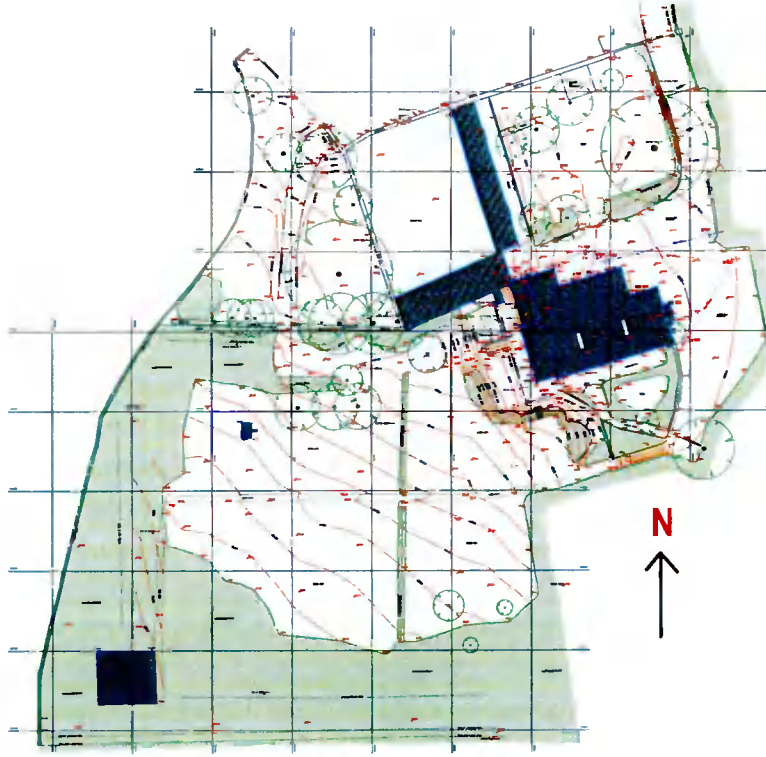


Fig. 1 Palmyra and Proposed Housing Site

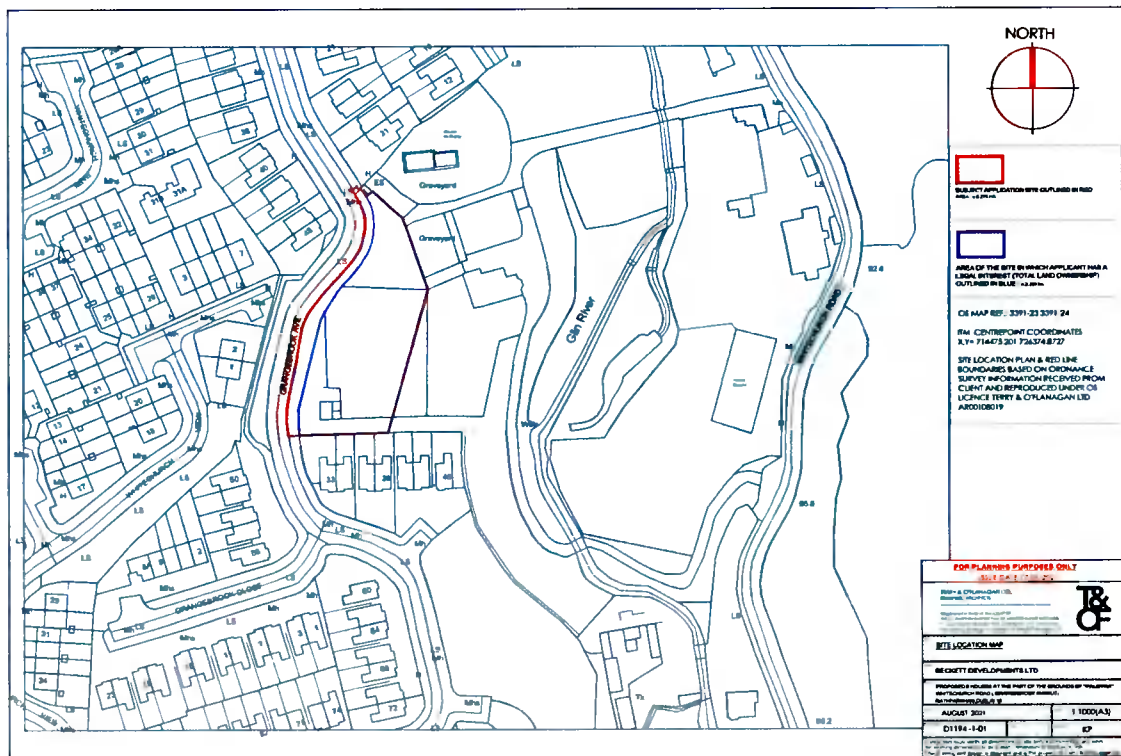


Fig. 2 Palmyra and grounds, with Whitechurch Graveyard immediately to the north





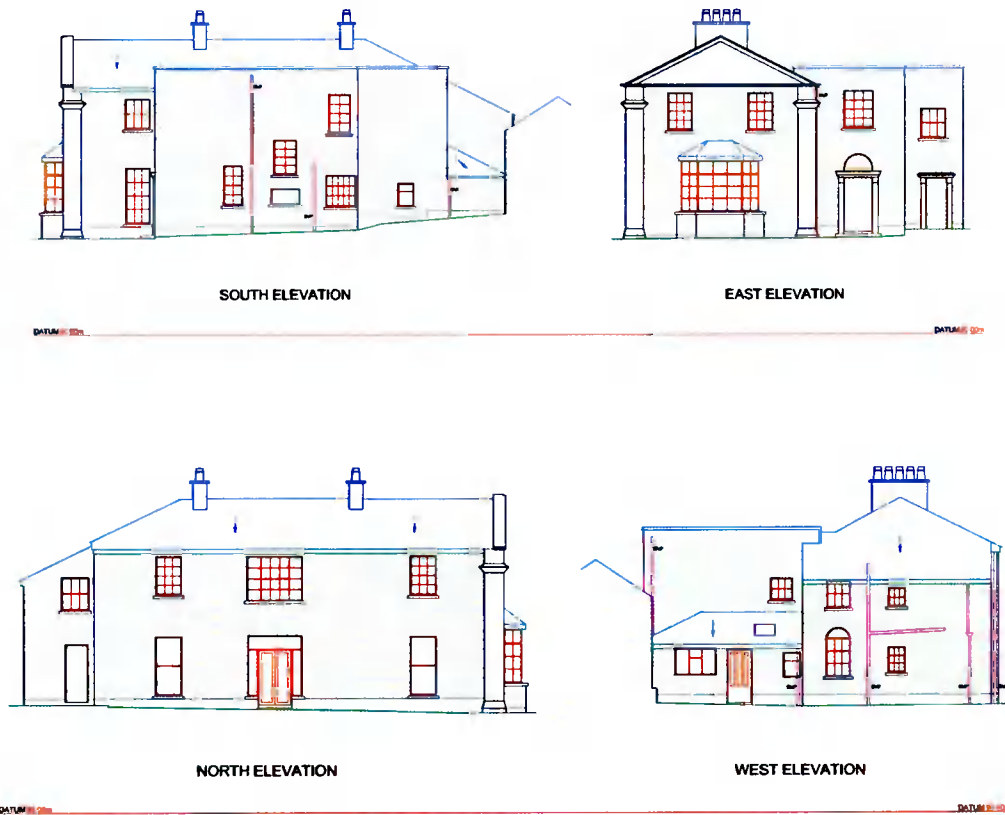


Fig. 3 Palmyra House Elevations

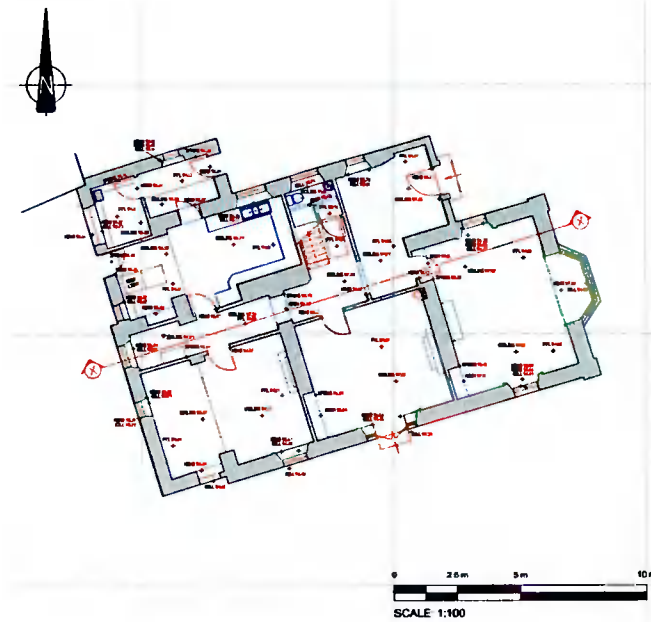


Fig. 4 Palmyra Ground Floor Plan



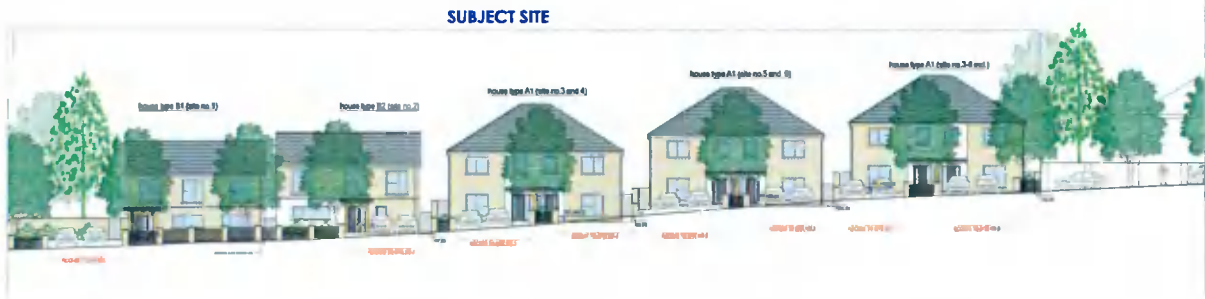


Fig. 5 Elevations of the proposed new houses, seen from the west



Fig. 6 Semi-detached houses and gable of Whitechurch church, looking SW from Grangebrook Ave



Fig. 7 Semi-detached houses immediately south of site, looking NE from Grangebrook Ave



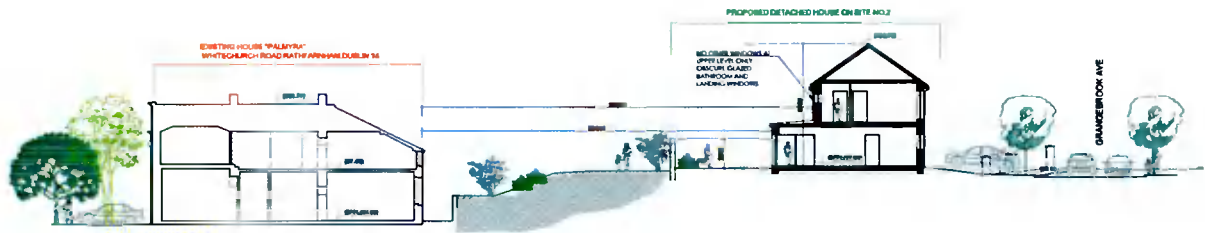


Fig. 8 Site section through House No 2 and Palmyra, looking southwards.

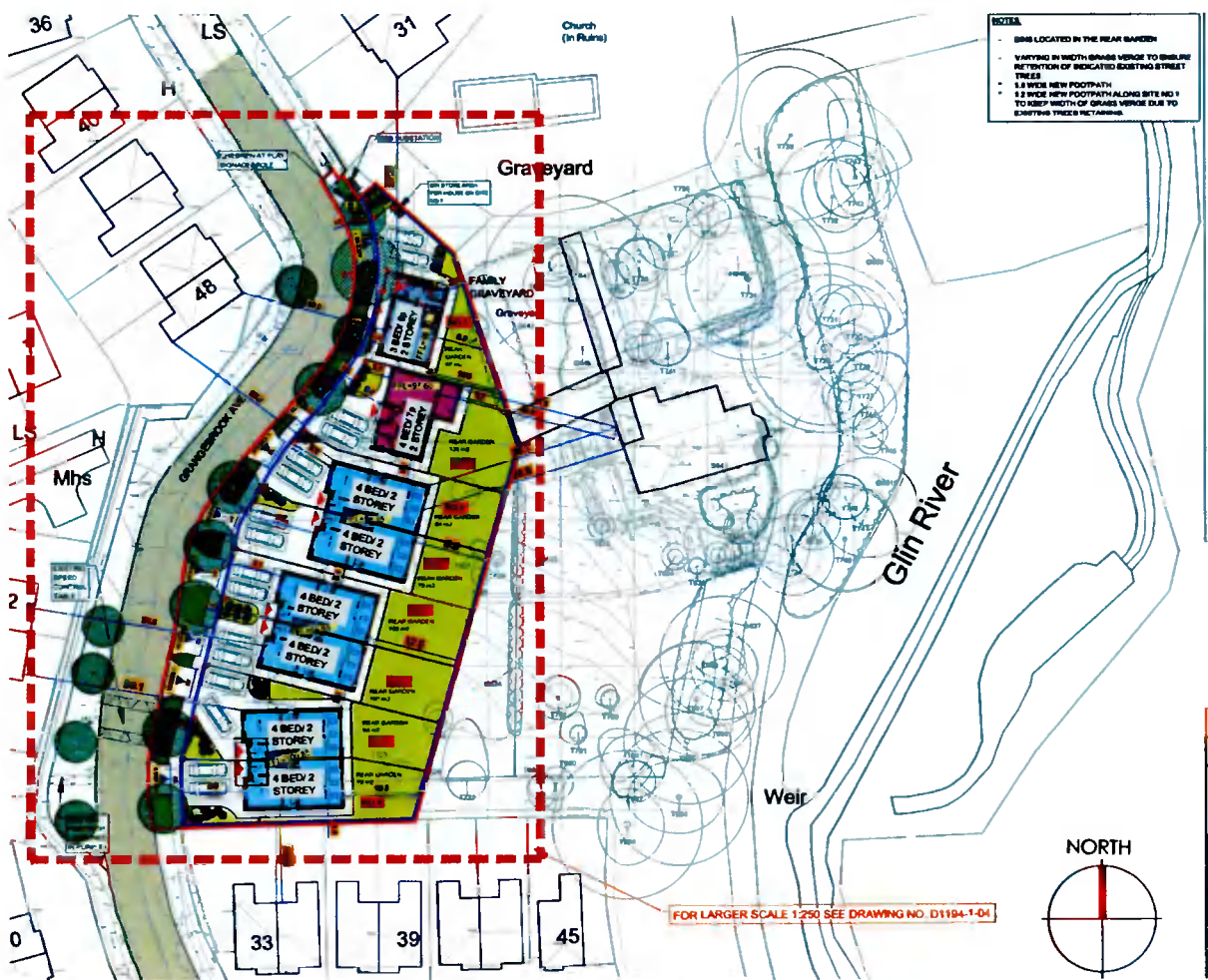


Fig. 9 Layout of 8 No. New Houses, showing their relationship to Whitechurch Church and Palmyra



## 9.0 OUTLINE HISTORY

The house does not appear on the Duncan Map of 1821, but is shown on the First edition of the Ordnance Map (1830's) so we can surmise that Palmyra probably dates from c. 1825 to 1835.

According to (Shepard 1983, 65) Palmyra was constructed by Thomas Bewley in the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> C. However Griffith's Valuation maps show the Study Area as parcel 4A, which corresponds to a house, offices and land being owned by John Davis, Esq., and occupied by Thomas Bewley Esq in 1848. So it seems more likely that Davis actually built the house.

Thomas Bewley also occupies parcel 4B, which is the wash mill directly south of Palmyra and is also leased from Davis. Bewley is listed as owning two further parcels in the vicinity (4C and 4D) which do not appear to be labelled on the map, and which are occupied by Robert Keen and John Fox, respectively, and he owns lot 3 – Whitechurch Lodge – which he leases to William Swifts, Esq. An obituary in the Freeman's Journal notes that Thomas Bewley died in 1844, aged 64, at Whitechurch (Freeman's Journal 1844, May 10<sup>th</sup> Notice of Death). (*Archaeology Plan Archaeological Assessment*).

### 20<sup>th</sup> century Palmyra

The 1915 Post Office Dublin Directory and calendar lists the Baily family, including John F., Francis, and Miss N. as residents at Palmyra. The entry for Francis reads: Baily, Fras. Probate court, Palmyra'. In Porter's Guide for the same year a Miss Whelan is listed as an occupant of Palmyra. J.F. Bailey is listed as the occupant in the Dublin Directory in 1934 and in Thom's Directory for 1928, 1932 and 1935.

Thom's Directory lists P.T. Cremer as an occupant of Palmyra in 1939, with the Dublin Directory of 1940 listing the same occupant. The Dublin Directory also lists Henry Maguire as an occupant at Palmyra in 1940.

In the 1970s and 1980s Thom's directory lists the Perry family residing at Palmyra.

(See - History, in the *Archaeological Assessment* prepared by *Archaeology Plan*, which accompanies this application.)

## 10.1.0 MAPS



Fig. 10 Griffith Valuation Map







Fig. 11 The Down Survey 1650s

10.1.1 The circle indicates approx. location of the site, with no features recorded in this location.



Fig. 12 Rocque's Map of Dublin (1756)

10.1.2 This map shows Whitechurch church and graveyard (unnamed) to the west of the river Glin. The site of Palmyra is circled, indicating that there was not a house standing there in 1756.





Fig 13 Taylor 1816

10.1.3 This map shows Whitechurch (Old Church in Ruins and Latouche's Burying Ground), which is within our added circle which marks the location of Palmyra - where no buildings are identified.



Fig 14 Duncan 1821

10.1.4 The ruined church is shown, and there was still no building recorded on the site of Palmyra.



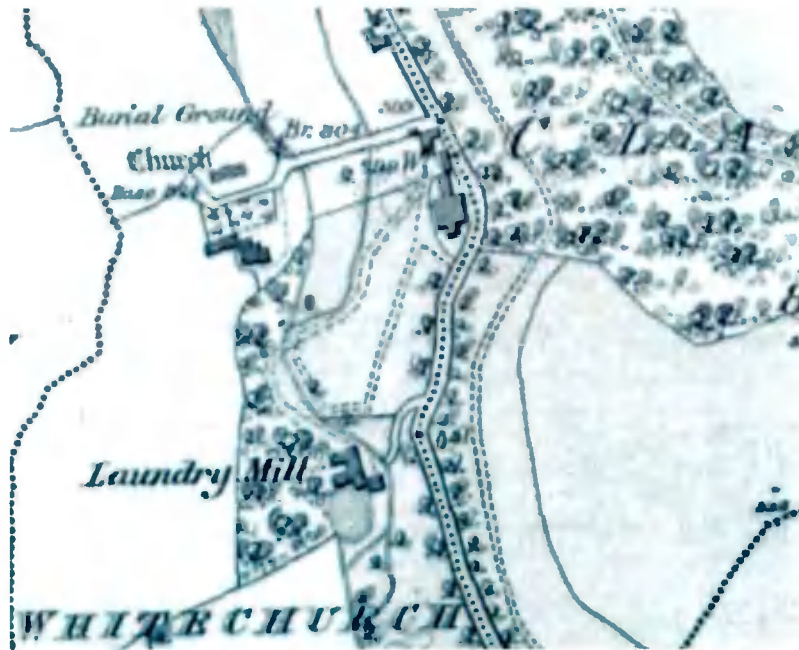


Fig. 15 First Edition OS Map (1837)

10.1.5 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1830s)

Whitechurch Church and burial ground are shown, with Palmyra immediately to the south. the house is shown in much the same ground plan as it stands today, except for variations in the attendant outhouses.

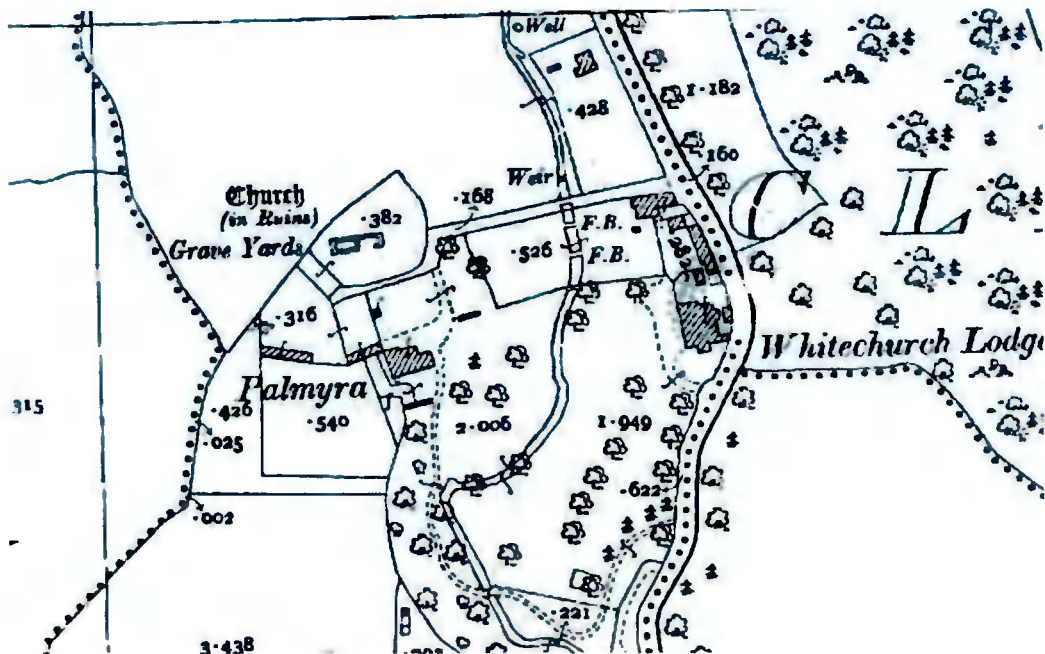


Fig. 16 OS Map (1890)

10.1.6 Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1890).

The church, graveyard and house are shown much as they stand to this day.



**11.0.0 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

11.0.1 8 No. Houses in the grounds of Palmyra.

11.0.2 This application is for permission to build Eight two-storey dwellings on land lying to the rear, western, side of Palmyra. The site, and the new houses when completed, will be accessed from Grangebrook Avenue which runs along the western boundary of the lands.

11.0.3 This site plan (Fig 17 below) shows the proposed layout - with Two detached and Three pairs of semi-detached houses, being eight units in total, and indicates their relationship to:

(a) Palmyra: and, (b) Whitechurch Church and Graveyard.

The site layout and individual houses have been designed to respect both Palmyra and Whitechurch Church and Graveyard which is both a recorded National Monument, and a Protected Structure.

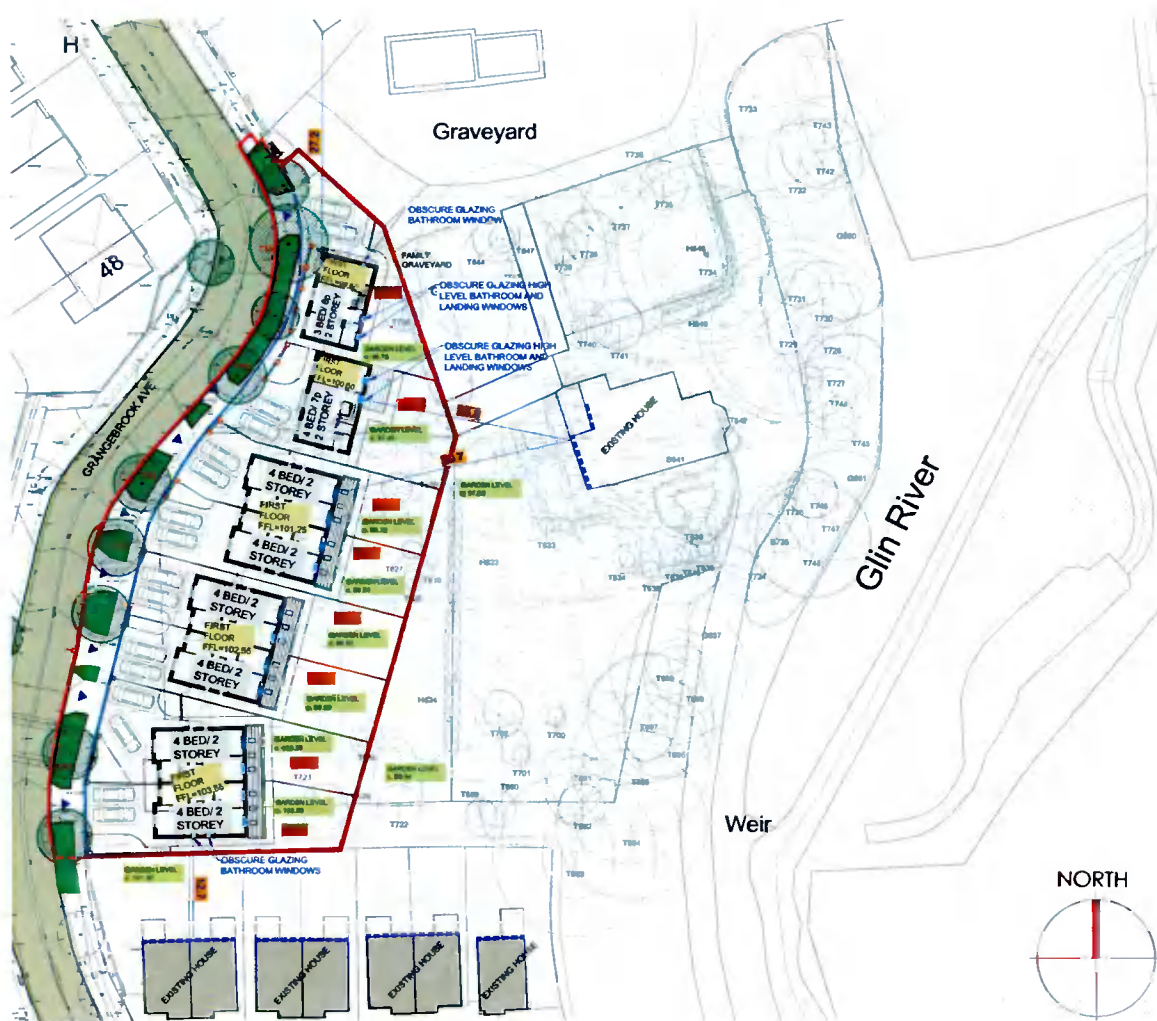


Fig 17 Site Plan showing rear facing windows at first floor of proposed new houses, in relation to Whitechurch Graveyard and Palmyra

11.0.4 The location of house No 1 will be at about 20 metres from the SW corner of the Whitechurch ruins. The Site Plan (above) shows that the existing house at No. 31 Grangebrook Ave. lies about 5 meters from the NW corner of the ruin, meaning the proposed house will be c. four times as far from the Church as is No. 31.





## 11.1.0 House Types

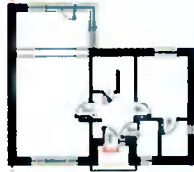
## 11.1.0 House No 1.

**SITE NO.1****B1 (3 bed) - 3 BED / 5 p / 2 STOREYS/ DETACHED**

**HOUSES B1(3b) - REAR ELEVATION -**  
only obscure glazing high level bathroom  
and landing windows on the First Floor to  
avoid overlooking of the proposed  
extended house.

11.1.1 This house has been designed to suit its particular location at the northernmost corner of the development site, where it adjoins Whitechurch and the Graveyard. To mitigate any impact on the National Monument and Protected Structure there will be no rear-facing windows in habitable at first floor level, thus ensuring that over-looking will be avoided. This design feature has the further effect of also eliminating over-looking of Palmyra. House No. 1 will be c. 20 meters distance from the south-west corner of the Church and c. 29 meters from the western-most corner of Palmyra.

## 11.2.0 House No 2.

**SITE NO.2****B2 (4 bed) - 4 BED / 7 p / 2 STOREYS/ DETACHED**

**HOUSES B2(4b) - REAR ELEVATION-**  
only obscure glazing high level bathroom  
and landing windows on the First Floor to  
avoid overlooking of the proposed  
extended house.

11.2.1 This house has also been designed to suit its location immediately to the south of House No 1. There will be no windows in habitable rooms to the rear at 1st floor, which will be c. 26.3 metro from Palmyra ensuring that over-looking will be avoided. Furthermore it will have no impact on Whitechurch as it is well shielded from the church by house No 1.

## 11.3.0 Houses 3 to 8

**SITES NO.3-8 incl.****A1 (4 bed) - 4 BED / 7 p / 2 STOREYS/ SEMI-DETACHED**

11.3.1 These six semi-detached houses will have windows at first floor level, however there will not be any marked over-looking of Palmyra as even the closest will be more than 26 meters from Palmyra and there will not be any directly opposed windows at first floor level.



### 12.0.0 Site & Adjacent Property

12.0.1 The proposed building site is part of the grounds of Palmyra House.

12.0.2 Palmyra and the adjacent Whitechurch site are not visible from the public roadway to the east at Whitechurch Road, or from the section of Grangebrook Avenue which borders the development site. Therefore construction of these houses will not make a material impact upon the public setting or amenity value of either property.

12.0.2 House No. 1 at the northern end of the site, which will be the unit closest to the historic building and graveyard at Whitechurch Church, will be located at a sufficient distance therefrom to ensure that any impact thereon will be minimal.

12.0.3 South Dublin County Council seeks to encourage a sustainable density of housing development in locations such as this site in an existing housing location. The contemporary design, scale and density of the new houses will provide an appropriate balance between community requirements and protection of the heritage significance of Palmyra House and the adjoining National Monument at Whitechurch Church.

### 13.0 Palmyra House Conservation

Palmyra House is a building some heritage interest which the owner plans to conserve and refurbish for their own use. Research indicates that it dates from about 1840. A full planning application for conservation and extension works to Palmyra will be lodged presently.

### 14.0 Justification for Development

14.1 Construction of these dwellings does not require any direct intervention or impact upon the existing structures at Palmyra or Whitechurch Church and Graveyard.

14.2 Any indirect impact occasioned by the development will be much mitigated as House No. 1 will be built over 20 meters from the ruins of Whitechurch Church. In comparison the existing modern house at 31 Grangebrook Avenue was built about 5 meters from the church.

14.3 The proposed housing development will not have a material impact the setting and amenity of the adjoining properties at Palmyra or Whitechurch Church.

### 13.0 Opinion

13.1 Palmyra House is not a protected structure, but is of some local importance and the owner plans to make a planning application for permission to extend and a conserve the house in compliance with the principals of conservation.

13.2 Palmyra House and Whitechurch will not be directly impacted by the proposed development.

13.3 I am of the opinion that the proposed housing development will not have a negative impact on the cultural significance of Palmyra or Whitechurch Church & Graveyard.

13.4 I am therefore of the opinion that Planning Permission should be granted for this proposal.

Timothy Foley  
B. Arch, MUBC, FRIAI

Buchan Kane and Foley  
Grade 1 Conservation Architects



## Photographic Record

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1 Front entrance, Palmyra



2 Rear, western, facade



3 Southern facade and rear seen from upper garden



4 Driveway leading to southern entrance. Steps to upper garden on right





5 Steps to upper garden, looking westwards from driveway to southern entrance



6 Upper garden and rear of house looking northwards



7 Upper garden to west of House, looking north-north-west



8 Upper garden to west of house, looking west



9 Upper garden to west of house, looking south-west



10 Upper garden to west of house, looking south-south-west



11 Upper garden to west of House, looking eastwards



12 Modern shed in south-west corner of site



13 Boundary with house to south of Palmyra site



14 Looking west along boundary wall



15 Junction of south boundary with west boundary wall along Grangebrook Avenue



16 Gate in stone wall running east -west across site, seen from south



17 Gate in stone wall running east -west across site, seen from north



18 Western end of on-site stone wall from north joins boundary wall at Grangebrook Avenue



19 Block boundary at Grangebrook Ave. running north from junction with on-site stone wall



20 Eastern face of boundary to Grangebrook Avenue





21 North corner of site. Wall to Grangebrook Ave on left, fence & wall to Whitechurch on right



22 Fence between Palmyra and Whitechurch, gate to Laneway, looking north-east



23 Looking east, gate to lane and boundary with Private Graveyard



24 Gate in site boundary, looking eastwards to lane which has Whitechurch wall on left



25 Laneway. looking eastwards. Whitechurch on left, private graveyard on right



26 Lane to principal entrance gateway, looking eastwards from close to Palmyra's gate



27 Lane at curve to Palmyra entrance gate, wall of Whitechurch on right, looking SW



28 Main gateway and gate on right to lane between house grounds and Whitechurch



29 Palmyra grounds on left, Laneway and Whitechurch on right



30 End of Laneway with gate to Palmyra grounds. Gate to private graveyard on left



31 Entrance to private graveyard, looking south



32 Private graveyard, looking south



33 Bridge over Glin river on driveway to southern entrance gate, looking southwards



34 Southern driveway near entrance gate



35 Southern gate looking out towards main roadway



36 Grangebrook Avenue. Palmyra's modern boundary wall on left, seen from north end of site





37 Looking south along western boundary wall of site at Grangebrook Avenue



38 Modern wall towards the southern end of the western boundary



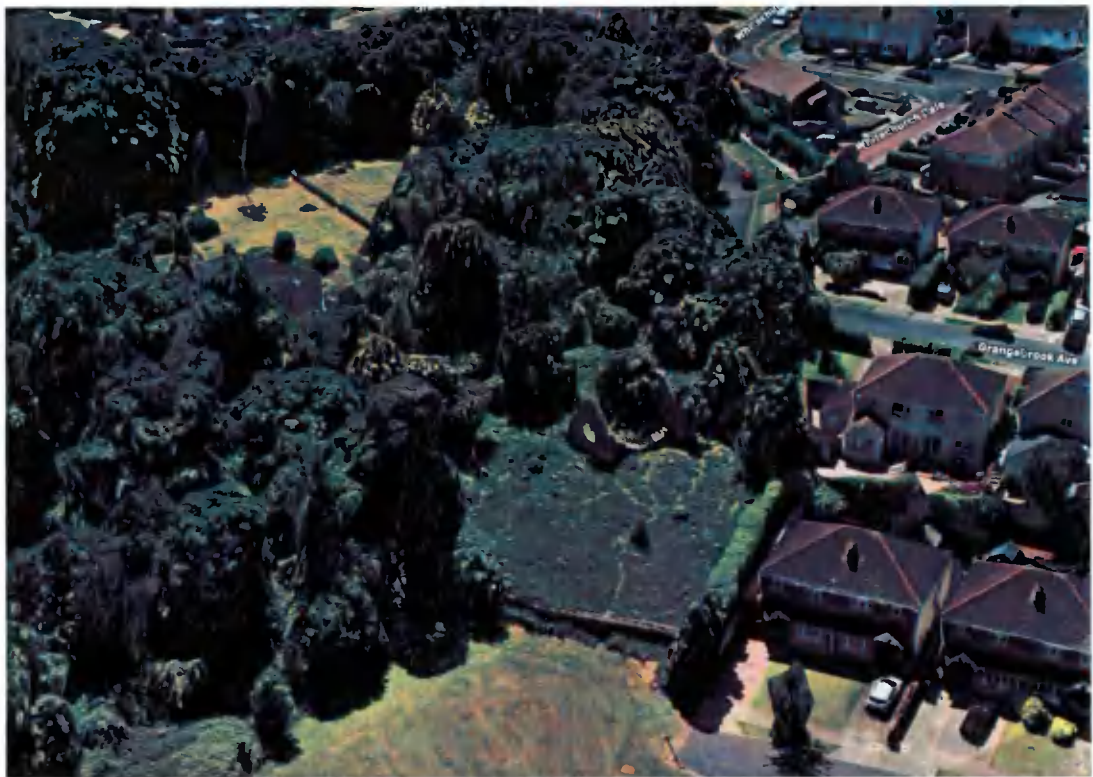
39 Main access lane to Palmyra and Whitechurch where it joins Whitechurch Road



40 Whitechurch Church



41 Palmyra from the north with Whitechurch and Graveyard in the foreground



42 Whitechurch seen from the north-east with Palmyra on the left

