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Archaeological Monitoring at
Aderrig Phase 2, Adamstown, Co. Dublin

Ref SDZ21A/0014

October 2022

Client: Quintain Developments Ireland Ltd.

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1 Introduction

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring for phase 2 of a housing development at Aderrig, Adamstown, Co. Dublin. Conditions for the development required archaeological monitoring. An archaeological assessment inspected the site, a walk over survey was undertaken all visible excavated areas and spoil. This report details this inspection.

Research included an examination of the Record of Monuments and Places; buildings of Ireland, Excavations Bulletin; historic maps; aerial photographs; place names and historic books and journals. A field inspection of the proposed site was also carried out as part of the assessment.

John Purcell BA undertook this report on behalf of Quintain Ireland Development Ltd.

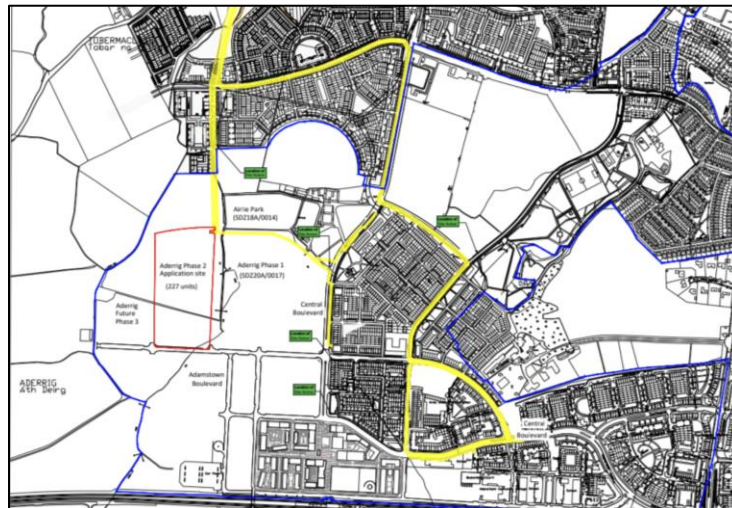


Figure 1: Location of the development

2 **Assessment Methodology**

2.1 **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 methodology has been conducted based on the guidelines from the Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht (D.C.H.G.).

2.2 **Desktop Survey**

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
- **County Development Plans;** The Development plan was consulted in order to ascertain if any structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and/or any Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). The Record of Protected Structures lists all protected structures and buildings in Dublin. This includes structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, social, scientific or technical importance.
- **Cartographic Sources;** The following maps were examined: 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map of the County Dublin (1836-1846) and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Map of the County Dublin (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:

The Excavations Bulletin; Local Journals; Published archaeological and architectural inventories; Peter Harbison, (1975). *Guide to the National Monuments of Ireland*; and O'Donovan's *Ordnance Survey Letters*.

A comprehensive list of all literary sources consulted is given in the bibliography.

2.3 Site Inspection

An archaeological field inspection survey seeks to verify the location and extent of known archaeological features and to record the location and extent of any newly identified features. A field inspection should also identify any areas of archaeological potential with no above ground visibility.

3 The Receiving Environment and Proposed Development

The proposed development is located on a green field site that was previously in use as pasture. The site is in an area that is being rapidly developed as part of the greater Adamstown Area. Phase 1 of Aderrig is located to the east of the study area. The Adamstown Way road forms the southern boundary of the site.

4 General Archaeological and Historical Summary

4.1 Archaeological Background

Prehistory

The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) lists a number of prehistoric sites in this part of Co. Dublin. The earliest recorded archaeology in the area dates from the Neolithic (4,200-2,500BC). At this stage communities became more stable with the introduction of agricultural practices. The more permanent settlement allowed communities to construct large ceremonial sites. These megalithic sites

are visible in the Dublin Mountains to the south and extensively recorded across Co. Meath to the North.

The bronze age marks the introduction of metal working to Ireland. This allowed for more efficient farming and hunting techniques. It also allowed for small industry and trade to take place between communities. Barrows are a common form of monument across in this area from this period. These are associated with the Bronze/Iron Age burial tradition (c. 2400 BC - AD 400) and are defined by an artificial mound of earth or earth and stone, normally constructed to contain or conceal burials. These sites vary in shape and scale and can be variously described as bowl-barrow, ditch barrow, embanked barrow, mound barrow, pond barrow, ring-barrow and stepped barrow. The incidence and frequency of these sites in the area attests to the extent of prehistoric settlement in this area from earliest times. Prehistoric settlements sites are generally not visible at ground level and can only be uncovered as a result of ground works.

Iron Age to Early Medieval Period

In late Bronze Age Ireland the use of the metal reached a high point with the production of high quality decorated weapons, ornament and instruments, often discovered from hoards or ritual deposits. The Iron Age however is known as a 'dark age' in Irish prehistory. Iron objects are found rarely, but there is no evidence for the warrior culture of the rest of Europe, although the distinctive La Tené style of art with animal motifs and spirals was adopted. Political life in the Iron Age seems to have been defined by continually warring petty kingdoms vying for power. These kingdoms, run on an extended clan system, had their economy based on mixed farming and, in particular cattle. Settlement was typically centred on a focal hillfort.

Another more domestic site common to the Bronze Age is the *fulachta fiadh*. These are located along the edges of streams or in damp areas. They consist of a mound of charcoal enriched soil with fragmented burnt rocks. They usually are accompanied by a wooden or stone lined trough. These were used seasonally possibly for cooking or may have been used for recreational purposes.

Settlement in the Early Medieval Period is defined by the ringfort. The country was a patchwork of competing Kingdoms during this period numbering up to 150. Ringforts were a farmstead surrounded by one or more earthen banks. These are the commonest monument across the country and have frequently been recorded in West Dublin. They are generally located in areas with commanding views over the countryside.

Ecclesiastical Settlement

The introduction of Christianity to Ireland in the fifth century had a profound impact on Gaelic society, not in the least in terms of land ownership and the development of churches and the development of a large number of religious houses. The earliest churches were constructed of wood and mortar and wattle walls. By the ninth and tenth centuries these were being replaced by stone structures including the construction of Round Towers. These settlements became very important around the country and became small towns. Many of these sites were surrounded large earthen enclosures.

Historic Period

Following the Norman Conquest of the country a series of tower houses and boroughs were built across Counties Dublin, Meath and Kildare. A series of medieval parish churches were also constructed to service the growing populations. A large number of tower houses and fortified houses were constructed to protect and consolidate settlement in the area.

Post Medieval Ireland

Seventeenth century Ireland saw massive upheaval as a result of the Confederate wars, the Cromwellian response and the Wars of the two kings. The impact on the country was profound. Long established settlements in the area were affected by the Cromwellian Restoration and land settlements. All Catholic property owners were affected, and large land and property confiscations took place. It has been estimated that up to a third of the population was wiped out

because of famine, disease and war. Soldiers were given land as payment resulting in further upheaval of the local population and the establishment of large estates. These came to dominate the landscape from this period onwards. Religious intolerance in other parts of Europe resulted in the expulsion of the Huguenot from France which were welcomed by the English Crown into Ireland.

Industrial Period

The eighteenth century saw considerable industrial growth across the country. In West Dublin a series of Mills were constructed along the Liffey and its tributaries. This allowed the industrialisation of the region and allowed trade with Dublin and the rest of the British Empire.

4.2 Recorded Archaeological Monuments

The site does not include any registered archaeological monuments the closest monuments to the study area located over 500m to the northwest. These are listed below:

DU017-028002- Class: Church Townland: ADERRIG Situated on an artificial rise within an enclosure (DU017-028001-). This medieval parish church is one of those confirmed to the Archbishop of Dublin after the AngloNorman Conquest and in the first half of the 13th century was granted to St. Patrick's Cathedral. The earliest documentary reference to the church occurs in 1235 (Mc Neill 1950, 78). The church was still in use at the beginning of the 17th century (Ball 1906, 61-12). It consists of a plain rectangular building with an undivided nave and chancel which is overgrown (ext. dims. L 12.12, Wth.6.23m). It is built of roughly coursed masonry with packing stones in the interstices and dressed sandstone quoins. There are two putlog holes in the N wall c. 1m from ground level. There are diametrically opposed doorways at the W end of the nave. The S doorway (Wth 1m) has a pointed segmental arch with a rebate and draw bar

hole present, N doorway is damaged. Interior is lit by a slit ope in W gable, the N portion of the E window splay survives (Ní Mharcaigh 1997, 263- 264).

DU017-028004- Class: Field system

Townland: ADERRIG A series of enclosures are visible as crop marks along the west and southern boundaries of the ecclesiastical enclosure (DU017-028001-). These may represent the remains of a field system associated with the ecclesiastical site (SMR file; pers. comm. Tom Condit, 11 March 2015).

DU017-028001- Class: Ecclesiastical enclosure

Townland: ADERRIG An aerial photograph (CUCAP, BDI 46) shows a bank with external fosse enclosing an oval area (dims. L 70m, Wth 50m) around the perimeter of the church (DU017- 028002-). A possible inner bank with opening in the S is also visible on the photograph. These features can be identified on the ground as an artificially raised area

DU017-092---- Class: Enclosure

Townland: ADERRIG A sub-circular enclosure visible as a crop mark on an aerial photograph (SMR file; pers. comm. Tom Condit, 11 March 2015). The north-eastern perimeter was reflected in a field boundary shown on the OS maps, now removed.

DU017-027---- Class: Ritual site - holy well

Townland: TOBERMACLUGG This is a natural spring situated in a hollow by a tree. Accessible from steps (Ó Danachair 1958, 83). It is dedicated to St. John (Daly 1957, 18). No longer venerated. Although these monuments are at a remove from the proposed development it shows an active population in the area during the medieval period. Often archaeological remains may exist beneath the existing ground level and can only be exposed as a result of excavation work.

DU017-093----

Class: Enclosure

Townland: GOLLIERSTOWN

A rectilinear enclosure visible as crop marks on an aerial photograph (SMR file; pers. comm. Tom Condit, 11 March 2015).

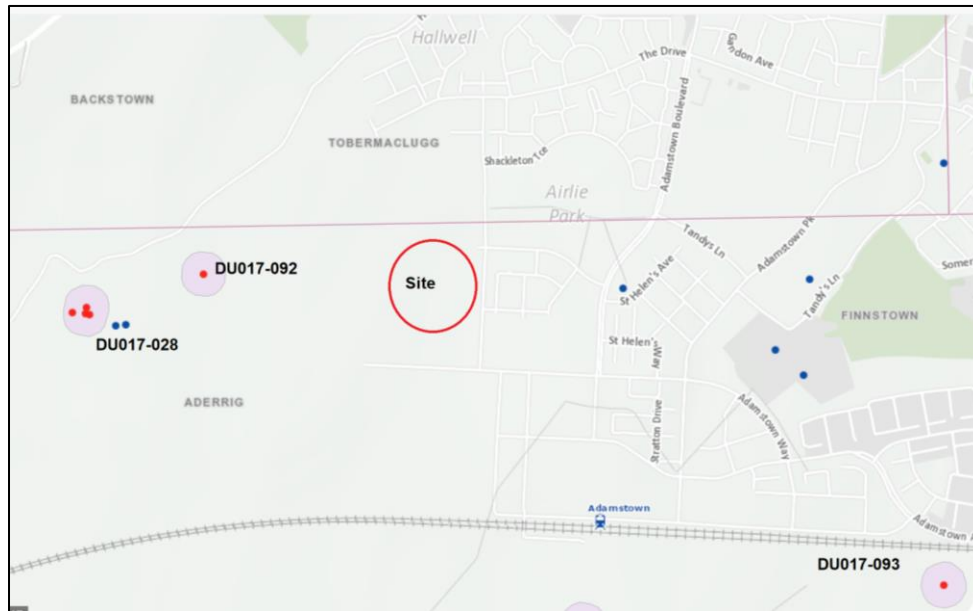


Figure 2: RMP extract for the proposed development

4.3 Previous Archaeological Works

Phase 1 of Aderrig was archaeologically tested in 2021 by Dave Bailey (Excavations.ie, licence 21E0249). This site was largely disturbed and no archaeological features were identified.



Figure 3: Proposed site layout

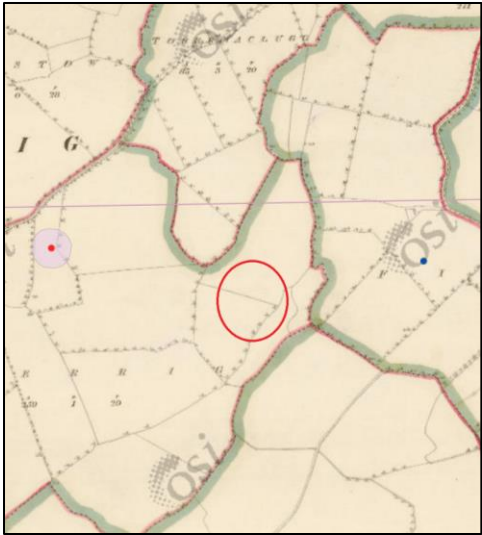


Figure 4: First edition OS map with the development marked

5 Archaeological Planning Conditions

18. Archaeological Monitoring.

(a) The applicant/developer shall employ a qualified Archaeologist, licensed to carry out Archaeological Monitoring of all sub-surface works carried out within the proposed development site. This will include the archaeological monitoring of the removal of topsoil, the excavation of trenches for foundations, services, access roadway, etc. associated with the proposed development.

(i) Any Test trenches will be excavated at locations chosen by the archaeologist (licensed under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004), having consulted the site drawings.

(ii) Having completed the work, the archaeologist shall submit a written report to the Planning Authority and to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Where archaeological material/features are shown to be present, preservation in situ, preservation by record (excavation) or

monitoring may be required and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht will advise the Applicant/Developer with regard to these matters.

(iii) No site preparation or construction work shall be carried out until after the archaeologist's report has been submitted and permission to proceed has been received in writing from the Planning Authority in consultation with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

REASON: To facilitate the recording and protection of any items of archaeological significance that the site may possess.

Figure 5: Archaeological Planning Conditions

6 Archaeological Monitoring

Archaeological monitoring was required as part of the planning schedule for the site. This report details a post development archaeological assessment. A site visit was undertaken in October 2022. Most excavation works had occurred by this stage. Even though the site has been excavated many areas of open excavated soil were still available. Across the southern half of the site the subsoil was still visible. These along with exposed baulks and foundation trenches were examined for archaeological remains (Plates 1-4). None of which were in evidence. Mounds of spoil were also examined for artefacts or architectural fragments none of which were identified.

All excavation works have now taken place. No archaeological finds, features or architectural fragments were identified.

7 Impact on the Cultural Heritage Landscape

7.1 Recorded Monuments

The site is located in the townland of Aderrig. No archaeological monuments are located in the environs of the proposed development. The closest recorded monument is located over 500m to the northwest. An examination of the digital and cartographic records for the site shows that it does not include any anomalies indicative of archaeological remains.

7.2 Archaeological Survey

Archaeological monitoring was required for a development at Phase 2, Aderrig, Adamstown, Lucan, Co. Dublin. A site visit was undertaken in October 2022 to assess the excavated areas for archaeological remains. All open areas and visible excavated areas were field walked. This inspection did not uncover any finds, features or architectural fragments.

7.3 Archaeological Potential

All site excavation works have now been completed at the site. An inspection of the site to assess the area for remains was undertaken. No archaeological features were identified. This assessment has shown that there is a very low chance for archaeological remains to exist at the site. No further archaeological input is required.

8 Conclusion

The proposed development consists of the construction of phase two of a housing development at Aderrig, Adamstown, Lucan, Co. Dublin. The site does not include any recorded archaeological remains and no archaeological deposits were uncovered during archaeological surveys at the site. The development is over 500m from the closest recorded archaeological monuments in the area. The development will have no impact on the archaeological landscape. No further archaeological input is required.

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



Plate 1: Looking south over excavated areas at the south of the site



Plate 2: Excavated areas at the east of the site



Plate 3: Looking east at excavated areas at the south of the site



Plate 4: Exposed baulks at the north of the site, looking southeast