



# Farrimond MacManus Ltd

ARCHAEOLOGY • SURVEY • GIS

Archaeological Impact Assessment  
for proposed new Kinnegad  
Community Economic Enterprise Hub

Main Street, Kinnegad  
Co Westmeath

commissioned by

**Cooney Architects**

on behalf of

**Westmeath County Council**

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*Archaeological Impact Assessment  
for proposed new Kinnegad Community  
Economic Enterprise Hub  
Main Street, Kinnegad, Co Westmeath<sup>1</sup>*

*Summary*

*The following cultural heritage impact assessment was carried out by FarrimondMacManus Ltd having been commissioned by Cooney Architects on behalf of Westmeath County Council in relation to a Part 8 Planning Application for a Community Economic Enterprise Hub at Main Street, Kinnegad, Co Westmeath. A desk-based study has confirmed that the proposed development site is located within a wider archaeological landscape, with several known archaeological sites, recorded structures and Industrial Heritage sites recorded within a 2km radius of the development. The majority of archaeological sites noted within the study area have been located as a result of construction of the nearby M4 Motorway Scheme, while there are few references to archaeological activity being uncovered within Kinnegad. Inspection of historic maps indicates that the proposed development lies beyond the 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> century historic core of Kinnegad Village. The proposed development site itself is being considered as being of low archaeological potential and it is therefore recommended that no further archaeological works are required.*

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Every effort is made to provide detailed and accurate information in compiling this report, however FarrimondMacManus Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions as a result of inaccuracies within third party data.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This Archaeological Impact Assessment was prepared during February 2024 by FarrimondMacManus Ltd, having been commissioned by Cooney Architects on behalf of Westmeath County Council in support of a Part 8 Planning Application in relation to a proposed Economic Enterprise Hub at Main Street, Kinnegad, Co Westmeath

## 2. Legal and Statutory Policies Relating to the Protection of Cultural Heritage

2.1 The legal framework which provides for the protection of the archaeological and cultural heritage resource in Ireland consists of various national and international laws and policies. The National Monuments Acts 1930 – 2004 is central to this framework and provides for the protection of a number of categories of monuments;

- National monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister or a local authority or national monuments which are subject to a preservation order.
- Historic monuments or archaeological areas recorded in the Register of Historic Monuments.
- Monuments or places recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places

2.2 The provisions of the National Monuments Acts were supplemented by the 1992 “European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage” (commonly known as the ‘Valletta Convention’) which was ratified by Ireland in 1997. The aim of the Convention is to ‘protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study’ (Article 1). The Convention provides the basic framework for policy on the protection of the archaeological heritage. The obligations on the State under the Convention include, but are not limited to:

- Providing for statutory protection measures, including the maintenance of an inventory of the archaeological heritage and the designation of protected monuments and areas.
- the authorisation and supervision of excavations and other archaeological activities;
- providing measures for the physical protection of the archaeological heritage, including (as necessary) acquisition or protection by other means by public authorities of areas intended to constitute archaeological reserves, conservation and maintenance of the archaeological heritage (preferably in-situ), and the provision of appropriate storage places for archaeological remains removed from their original locations.
- providing for consultation between archaeologists and planners in relation to the drawing up of development plans and development schemes so as to ensure that full consideration is given to archaeological requirements;

2.3 The National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht keeps a record of all known monuments and sites (the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)). The term ‘monument’ was redefined by the National Monuments (Amendment) Act of 1987 as:

*“any artificial or partly artificial building, structure or erection or group of such buildings, structures or erections, any cave, stone or other natural product... that has been artificially carved, sculptured or worked upon... any, or any part of any, prehistoric or ancient tomb, grave or burial deposit, or ritual, industrial or habitation site, any place comprising the remains or traces of any such building, structure or erection...”*

but excluding

*“any building or part of any building, that is habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes.”*

2.4 Section 1 of the 1987 Act provides that the term “historic monument” “includes a prehistoric monument and any monument associated with the commercial, cultural, economic, industrial, military, religious or

social history of the place where it is situated or of the country and also includes all monuments in existence before 1700 A.D. or such later date as the Minister may appoint by regulations”.

- 2.5 Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and associated Regulations, a planning authority must refer all planning applications, which might affect or be unduly close to any archaeological site, monument, or feature, to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- 2.6 When the owner or occupier of a property, or any other person proposes to carry out, or to cause, or to permit the carrying out of any work at or in relation to a Recorded Monument, they are required under Section 12 (3) of the 1994 Act to give notice in writing to the Minister 2 months before commencing that work. This time will allow the National Monuments Service to advise on how the work may proceed in tandem with the protection of the monuments in question.
- 2.7 While the owner or occupier or any persons proposing to carry out work at or in relation to a recorded monument is required under the National Monuments Act to give notice in writing to the Minister, it is the practice of DOEHLG to accept referrals from planning authorities as fulfilling the notification requirements.
- 2.8 The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) recognises that proper planning and sustainable development includes objectives for the protection of the archaeological heritage. Development plans may include such objectives and conditions relating to archaeology may be attached to individual planning permissions.

### 2.9 *Architectural and Built Heritage*

- 2.9.1 The protection of the architectural and built heritage resource in Ireland is provided for in the Heritage Act 1995, the National Monuments (Misc. Provisions) Act 1999 and the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 2000. Under the terms of the various elements of legislation a "Record of Protected Structures" (RPS) was compiled and produced within the Westmeath County Development Plan 2014 - 2020.

## 3. **Methodology**

- 3.1 The following archaeological impact assessment is based upon an extensive desk-based assessment carried out on information held by the National Monuments Service as the Archaeological Survey Database along with relevant historical documentary research. Available historical mapping was consulted and all sites and monuments, and listed buildings within the vicinity of the proposed development area (PDA) were noted.

## 4. **Aims and Objectives**

- 4.1 The aims of the Archaeological Impact Assessment can be viewed in the context of reference to the relevant National Monuments legislation in conjunction with County Westmeath Heritage Plan 2018 – 2023 and Westmeath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 with specific reference to the following Planning Policies and Objectives;
- Archaeological Heritage Policy Objectives CPO 14.5 – 14.15
  - Industrial Heritage Policy Objectives CPO 14.54 – 14.57
  - Architectural Heritage Policies CPO 14.26 and Objectives CPO 14.27 – 14.38
  - Vernacular Buildings and Structures Policy Objectives CPO 14.44 – 14.49
  - Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes Objectives CPO 14.50 - 14.53
- 4.2 In the first instance the desk-based study and field visit aims to identify any recorded archaeological remains which may exist within the boundaries of the proposed scheme, while the desk-based assessment is also aimed at analysing the wider archaeological landscape in order to assess the likely

potential for any previously unrecorded archaeological remains existing within the boundaries of the proposed development area (PDA). The second aim of the archaeological desk-based assessment is to develop a series of proposed mitigation measures in order to allow for the preservation (either *in situ* or by record) of any potential archaeological remains which may survive in line with relevant heritage planning guidelines.

## 5. Site Location

5.1 The proposed development scheme of Kinnegad Economic Enterprise Hub will occupy a site to the rear of the Old Kinnegad School House on Main Street, Kinnegad, Co Westmeath, which is currently being developed as a new community library, education and training centre (figs. 1 & 2).

## 6. Proposed Development

6.1 The proposed developed is part of the Kinnegad Regeneration Programme which aims to address the deficient social infrastructure and encourage economic growth in the town. The Kinnegad Economic Enterprise Hub will occupy the site of the former master's House adjacent to the new Kinnegad Library at the Old School House, Main St Kinnegad (fig. 3). The proposed works include the following:

- Refurbishment of the Existing Master's House building
- Refurbishment of associated outhouses
- Removal of an oil tank from existing outhouses
- Construction of a new single storey extension to the rear of the Masters House (c. 260m<sup>2</sup>) – to be used as reception, office space and meeting rooms.
- Associated external works and landscaping.
- Alterations to existing entrance ramp.

## 7. Geological and Topographic Setting

7.1 The proposed development is situated within an urban landscape on relatively low-lying land situated on the border with County Meath. The oldest rocks in Westmeath are marine sandstones of Ordovician age, about 485 million years ago, found around the summit of Sion Hill with younger rocks of Devonian age, around 400 million years ago, found under the lower slopes of Sion Hill and further west in low hills between Ballinahown and just north of Moate. These sandstones and conglomerates, with some volcanic ash layers, were deposited on a low flood plain<sup>2</sup>.

### 7.2 Solid & Drift Geology

7.2.1 Geological mapping and soil mapping for Co Westmeath show that the area is composed almost entirely of carboniferous limestone. The lower limestone series is generally pure but the middle and upper series contain a proportion of shale. The county is covered by deep deposits of glacial drift and rock exposures are rare. The bedrock is overlain by a drift mantle laid down by the most recent of several ice sheets which covered the county.

## 8. Archaeological Background

8.1 The following background is a brief summary of the archaeology and history of the general area of the development, which is designed to put the results of the investigations into their archaeological and historical context.

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<sup>2</sup> Mehan et al, (2019) The Geological Heritage of County Westmeath: An audit of County Geological Sites in County Westmeath

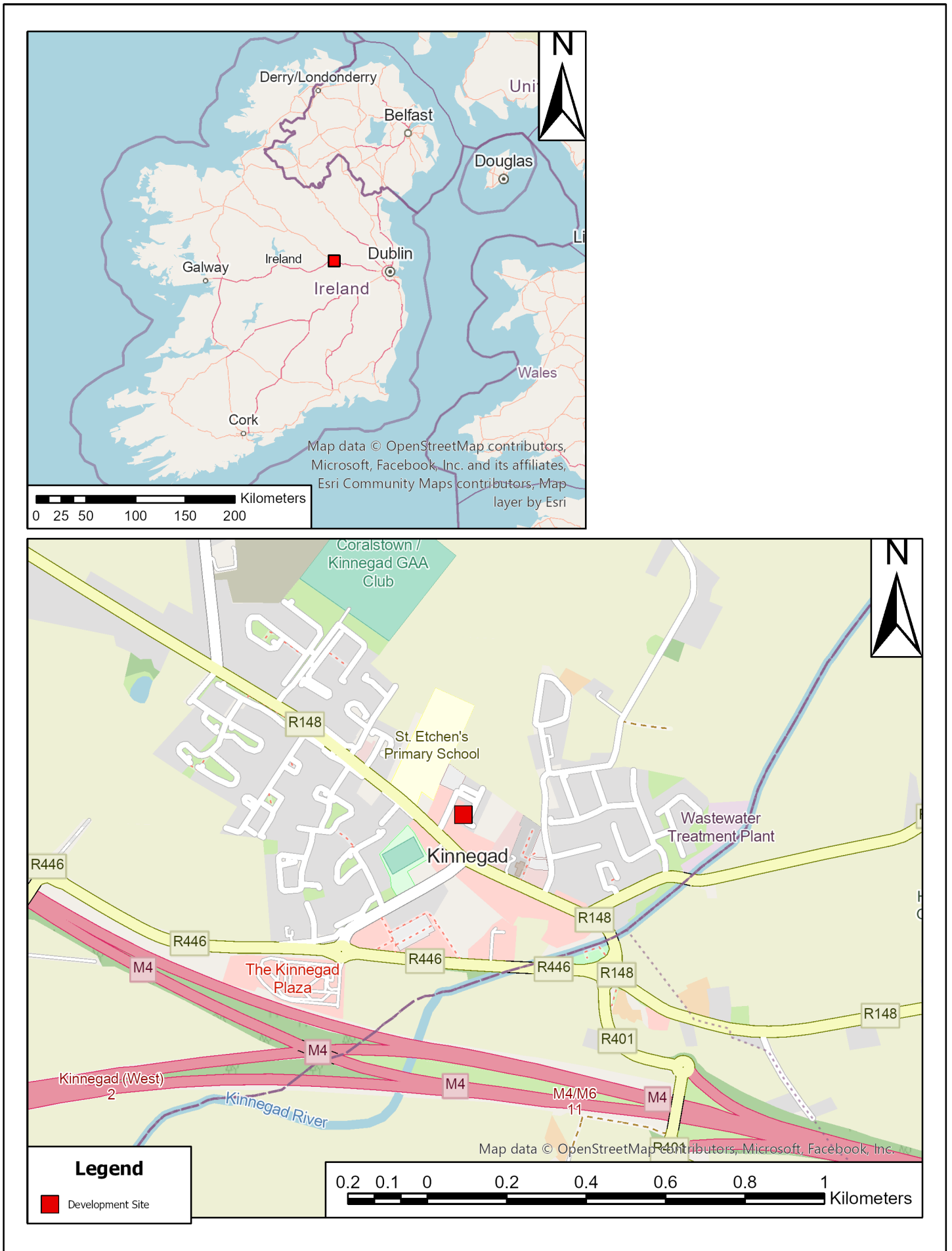
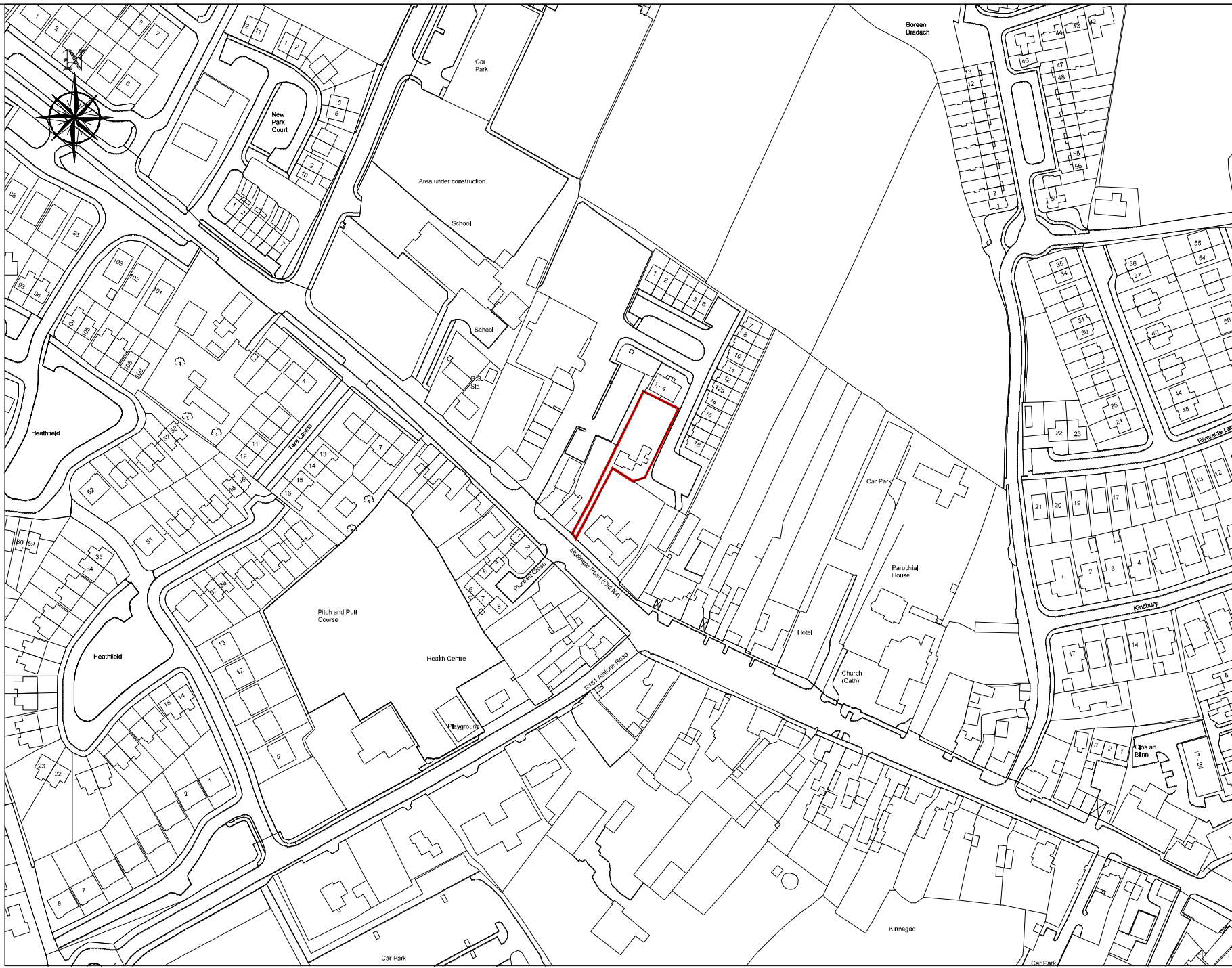


Figure 1: Proposed Economic and Enterprise Hub, Kinnegad, Co Westmeath: General site location



**Key**  
 Site Boundary —

Rev.	Description	Date	Chk'd	App'd



**PROJECT:**  
 Former School Master's House  
 Kinnegad, Co. Westmeath

**TITLE:**  
 Location Map

Stage	Drawing No.	Revision
	MRTT-073-2023-001	

Scale:	Date:	Surveyed:
1:1000 @ A1	20-01-2023	
Designed	Drawn	Checked
D. M'LEEN	D. M'LEEN	B. COX

Regeneration Project  
 Team:  
 Aras an Chontae  
 An Múinteoir gCearr  
 www.westmeath.ie

MRTT-073-2023-001/ubj  
 Director  
 H. BERRY\_2030\_Kinnegad\_Project/Documents/07  
 Preliminary Design/05 Master's House Information  
 Rev: 01/20/2023/05/02/DC/Drawings

Figure 2: Proposed Economic Enterprise Hub at Main Street, Kinnegad: Detailed site location

© Ordnance Survey Ireland/Government of Ireland 2021/OSI\_NMA\_287  
 Westmeath C.S. Map No: 2980-A, 2979-B, 2980-C, 2979-D



**Schedule of Accommodation:**

1. Cellular Offices
  2. Cellular Offices
  3. Entrance Lobby
  4. Breakout space
  5. Breakout space
  6. Kitchenette
  7. Cellular Offices
  8. Cellular Offices
  9. Cellular Offices
  10. Cellular Offices
  11. Cellular Offices
  12. WC
  13. Stair Lobby
  14. Cellular Offices
  15. WC
  16. WC
  17. Universal WC
  18. Incubation Unit
  19. Incubation Unit
  20. Incubation Unit
  21. Hot Desks
  22. Hot Desks
  23. Meeting Room
  24. Manager Office
  25. Reception
  26. Entrance Lobby
  27. Store
  28. Mechanical Plant
  29. Circulation
  30. Comms
  31. Cleaners Store
  32. Printing Room
  33. Bike Store
  34. Bin Store
- Total gross area: 416m<sup>2</sup>
- New Building: 287m<sup>2</sup>
- Existing Building: 129m<sup>2</sup>
- Total Desks: 31  
(Excluding 2 reception desks)

Ground Floor Plan  
1:100 @ A1

REVISION	NOTES

**NOTES**

All levels and dimensions to be checked onsite. Any discrepancies to be reported to Cooney Architects. Do not scale off this drawing. Use figured dimensions only.

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other relevant Engineering and Architectural drawings and specifications. General structure only. To be cross referenced with all associated Engineers drawings.

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**DESIGN TEAM**

Figure 3: Proposed site layout

**PLANNING**

**CooneyArchitects**

project title	Kinmagal Economic Enterprise Hub Kinmagal Former Masters House	drawing no.	23014	rev	101
client	WMCC	drawing title	Ground Floor Plan	The Old Brewery Club 28 The Cornice, Dublin 8 T 01 4532 444	
drawn by	NB	scale	1:100 @ ISO A1		
checked by	FC	date	12/02/2024		



8.2 *Mesolithic (7,500 – 4,500 BC)*

8.2.1 The earliest evidence of human activity in Ireland comes from the Mesolithic Period, for which evidence begins around 7,500 BC. The people were hunters and gatherers, living by catching wild animals, birds and fish and collecting wild fruit, nuts, and shellfish. They exploited local outcrops of flint and chert to manufacture characteristic microliths (to form composite implements), Larnian blades and butt-trimmed (Bann flake) tools. Mesolithic encampment sites are known around the lake shores of Co Cavan.

8.3 *Neolithic (4,500 – 2,500 BC)*

8.3.1 The Neolithic Period began around 4,500 BC with the arrival of farming. The introduction of a settled agricultural regime allowed some industrial specialisation (flint mining, polished stone axe production), the establishment of long-lasting settlements and the erection of megalithic tombs. Pottery was produced for the first time and exploitation of the flint resource continued for the manufacture of tools. Substantial houses and settlements were constructed and, with many such sites have been discovered in the last 10 years. Megalithic tombs, built of large stones are some of the most prominent funerary sites in the landscape, many of which were used as burial monuments to inter the remains of the dead.

8.4 *Bronze Age (2,500 – 500BC)*

8.4.1 The beginning of the Bronze Age, around 2,500 BC, was marked by the appearance of new types of pottery (Beakers, Food Vessels and Urns) and by the introduction of metallurgy (working with gold and bronze). Although wedge tombs date from this period, new burial practices in the form of single inhumations and cremations (often in cists and pits) and earthen barrows largely replaced the megalithic tomb tradition. Stone circles are probably the best-known monuments of the Bronze Age. Standing stones are sometimes assigned a Bronze Age date and may mark burials of the period. Settlement sites of the Bronze Age are being revealed at a dramatic rate in recent years; the houses are generally circular and leave no visible traces on the surface. Many artificial islands, or crannogs, also date to this period; composed of brushwood, timbers, and stone, they are found in small lakes and areas of drained and reclaimed land. The most numerous monuments of the period, however, are fulachta fiadh, or burnt mounds, composed of charcoal, ash, and fire-cracked stones; thought to be cooking places, they often have hearths, troughs and wood-lined pits associated with them. The majority of these sites have no upstanding remains and are usually revealed at the topsoil-stripping stage of archaeological investigations.

8.5 *Iron Age (500BC – AD500)*

8.5.1 Evidence of human activity and settlement in the Iron Age is surprisingly sparse, though more sites are gradually being discovered as part of development led archaeological works. Important Iron Age sites include the Black Pigs Dyke a considerable earthwork which stretches through Counties Leitrim, Longford, Monaghan, Cavan, Fermanagh and Down. As the name indicates, it was during this period that the manufacture and use of iron and steel tools, weapons and other artefacts first took place, though the tradition of pottery production apparently disappeared.

8.6 *Early Christian / Early Medieval (550AD – 1177AD)*

8.6.1 The term 'Early Christian' is used to refer to the period from about 500 to the Anglo- Norman invasion of east Ireland in 1169, though it is being increasingly referred to as the Early Medieval period. Monuments from this period are the most numerous in the landscape, with tens of thousands in the

whole of Ireland. These include defended settlements including raths, cashels, crannogs, unenclosed settlements, ecclesiastical sites and souterrains. The most plentiful of these are raths, which were farmsteads enclosed by banks and ditches. Many of the destroyed sites listed as enclosures in the SMR are probably the remains of raths disturbed by agricultural improvement schemes. Raths are generally circular or oval but vary in size and in the number of enclosing banks and ditches. Cashels are enclosures in rocky upland areas, of similar date and function as raths but with stone-built walls instead of banks and ditches.

- 8.6.2 Associated with such sites are souterrains, underground structures most commonly made by digging open trenches, lining them with boulders to form dry-stone walls, and then roofing them with large stone lintels before covering with soil. Due to the removal of associated upstanding remains, many souterrains are found with no obvious accompanying settlement; these are difficult to anticipate prior to their exposure.
- 8.6.3 As is clear from the name, this period saw the introduction of Christianity, and subsequently literacy into Ireland and, therefore, the start of the historic period. There are several hundred ecclesiastical sites of the period within Ireland, varying greatly in size and state of preservation. Some are occupied by modern churches, some are still used for burial, some have been completely destroyed.

#### 8.7 *Medieval* (1177AD – 1603AD)

- 8.7.1 The Medieval period in Ireland began with the Anglo-Norman invasion in 1169-70, and while the main focus of Anglo-Norman incursions were in east Ulster where Antrim and Down were quickly subdued and settled, the south Ulster borderlands were very much an “in between” place. In the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, there was an attempt to colonise parts of Cavan and Leitrim although the sporadic campaigns petered. Although. Where settlement did occur, the Anglo-Normans introduced new types of structures, prominent among which were mottes (flat-topped earthen mounds), stone castles and further monastic foundations.

#### 8.8 *Post Medieval* (1603AD – 1750AD)

- 8.8.1 The Post-Medieval period was dominated by the Plantation of Ulster. After the Flight of the Earls in 1607, large tracts of Counties Antrim, Down, Londonderry and Cavan were granted by the Crown to English and Scottish settlers in ‘Proportions’ of land of 1,000, 1,500 or 2,000 acres, on condition that the holders were able to build strong houses and enclosures. These in turn acted as the nucleus for the growth of towns.

### 9. **Historical Background**

- 9.1 The Irish place name for Kinnegad is Cionn Átha Gad, which has been translated as “the head of the Ford of withes.” The Ford referred to is the present River Kinnegad, which since 1543 has marked the boundary between Westmeath and Meath. This suggests that the settlement began life as a crossing point over the river. During the early medieval period, the area surrounding Kinnegad was under the control of the ruling Southern Ui Neill family. In 1559 Queen Elizabeth gifted the village to Luke Fitzgerald. The Civil Survey of 1655–59 recorded that in 1640, Sir Luke Fitzgerald held 8,560 acres in Farbill including Ticroghan and Kinnegad but most of his land passed to his son George after the war as George had fought for Cromwell. The Down Survey of Ireland (1656 – 1658) records the land around Kinnegad as comprising mainly of bog, with reference to a castle at “Kinigad” which is described as being in “good repaire” and which is quartered by a calvalry<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://downsurvey.tcd.ie/down-survey-maps.php#bm=Farbill&c=Westmeath>  
*Archaeological Impact Assessment for proposed new Kinnegad Community Economic Enterprise Hub  
Main Street, Kinnegad, Co Westmeath*

- 9.2 By 1837, According to Samuel Lewis' "A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland"<sup>4</sup>, Kinnegad was a post town and district parish containing 2,812 inhabitants with 670 living in the town which comprised of 115 houses with a market house in the centre. A patent exists that this time for 3 fairs and a market and there is a police station, dispensary and a church with associated glebe house and a glebe of 30 acres.
- 9.3 The settlement form of Kinnegad is largely dictated by the road network within the town in particular the former N4 Primary Road, now the R148 Regional route. This network comprises of six different routes converging on the town centre. In general, the road network acts as the boundaries for development in the town, particularly the present inner relief road, the R446 route, which was the former N6 Primary route to Rochfortbridge.

## 10. Desk Based Study

### 10.1 Sites and Monuments Record

- 10.1.1 The desktop study also shows that the proposed development is situated within an established archaeological landscape, with 13 archaeological sites and monuments (SMR) recorded within a 2km study area (fig. 4; Table 1) surrounding the proposed development area (PDA). There are a number of archaeological sites in the surrounding area, predominately to the south of the town. The motorway works to the south of Kinnegad have undoubtedly intensified archaeological surveys in this vicinity.

SMR No.	Site Type	General Period	Townland
WM028-003----	Bridge	Modern	Kinnegad
WM027-069----	Ringfort - rath	Early Medieval	Kinnegad
WM027-070----	Ringfort - rath	Early Medieval	Kinnegad
ME046-004----	Ringfort - rath	Early Medieval	Rossan
ME046-019----	Bridge	Modern	Rossan
ME046-021----	Prehistoric Occupation	Prehistoric	Rossan
ME046-022----	Prehistoric Occupation	Prehistoric	Rossan
ME046-023----	Metalworking site	Medieval	Rossan
ME046-024----	Metalworking site	Prehistoric	Rossan
ME046-025----	Charcoal-making site	Medieval	Hardwood
ME046-026----	Metalworking site	Early Medieval	Hardwood
ME046-082----	Structure - peatland	Prehistoric	Rossan
ME046-085----	Burial	Prehistoric	Moydrum, Bogstown

Table 1: List of recorded SMR sites within a 2km radius of the proposed development

- 10.1.2 Past occupation within the study area is known from the prehistoric times through to the medieval and modern periods. Prehistoric occupation is represented by the site of a Prehistoric Burial (ME046-085) was uncovered in Rossan Bog approximately 2km from the PDA during 2014 with an arm bone discovered in a pile of milled peat in March (NMI Reg. No. 2014:74) and the lower leg and foot bones of an adult were found at the same location in September (NMI Reg. No. 2014:262).
- 10.1.3 A Prehistoric structure (ME046-082) was uncovered in peatland located 1.75km southeast of the PDA. It consisted of a cluster of archaeological deposits of worked timbers and brushwood exposed on the field surface and in the drain face for over 14m from north to south and up to 0.5m below the field

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.libraryireland.com/topog/K/Kinnegad-Farbill-Westmeath.php>

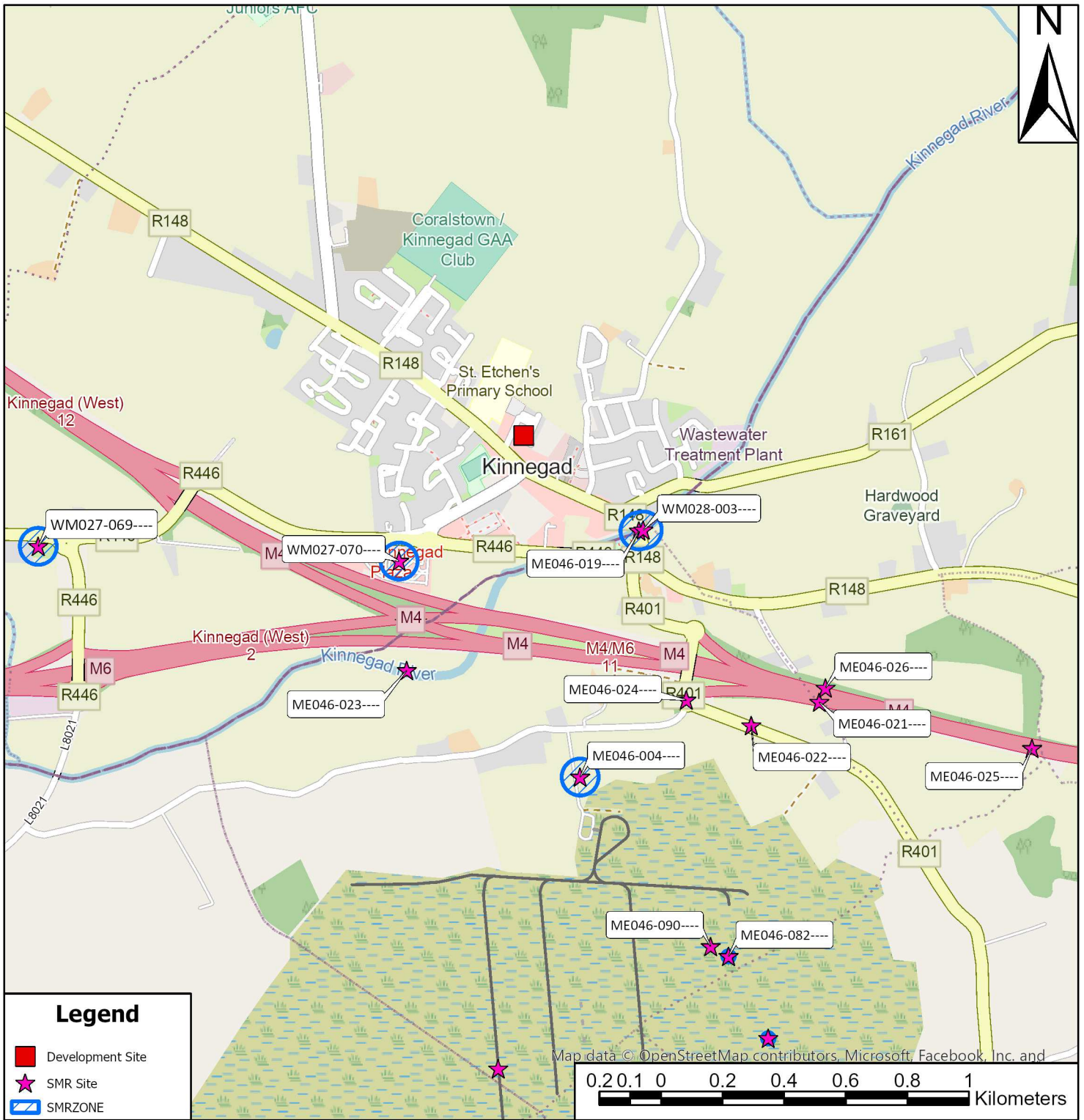


Figure 4: Located of recorded archaeological Sites and Monuments (SMR) sites within 2km of proposed development

surface. Toolmarks were present on several worked ends throughout the cluster with stone tool marks identified on wood from at least one location<sup>5</sup>. A sample was used for dating and the site was dated cal. 2618-2570 BC<sup>6</sup>.

- 10.1.4 Two prehistoric occupation sites were also uncovered within the study area. The first (ME046-021) is situated 1.25km south east of the PDA with two rectangular troughs placed c. 5m apart. In the same area there were 8 pits, some with a charcoal content, two pieces of worked flint and a worked piece of chert were recovered from them. These features were covered by charcoal-rich deposits. Charcoal samples from the troughs produced C14 dates of Cal BC 1290-1283 and Cal BC 1100-790<sup>7</sup>. The second prehistoric occupations site (ME046-022) is situated 1.14km south east of the PDA. Three pits were recorded with charcoal producing a radiocarbon date of Cal AD 1030-1280, while a circular pit had sherds of prehistoric pottery decorated with incised lines and finger-nail impressions. A charcoal sample from the pit with the pottery produced a radiocarbon date of Cal BC 1760-1440.
- 10.1.5 Three metal working sites have been uncovered within the study area ranging in date from the prehistoric period to the medieval period. The earliest metalworking site (ME046-024) is located approximately 1km from the PDA situated on an N-facing slope. The site consists of 17 pits containing charcoal and large slag inclusions. They are believed to be a bowl furnace with a radiocarbon date of Cal. BC 370-350 and two bloom-smithing hearths, the larger of which may have originated as a charcoal production pit and has a C14 date of Cal BC 820-780<sup>8</sup>. A second metal working site (ME046-026) appears to have been in use from the prehistoric through to the medieval period and is located 1.25km south east of the PDA. The site comprises of four bowl hearths and three other related pits, although all of the features were truncated by ploughing<sup>9</sup>. The third metal working site (ME046-023) is situated on an N-facing slope 0.75km southwest of the PDA and includes two hearths, a posthole and a charcoal filled pit<sup>10</sup>.
- 10.1.6 A charcoal-making site (ME046-025) dating to the medieval period was uncovered 1.9km south east of the PDA and consists of five pits containing large proportions of charcoal and the surrounding clay was oxidized leading to their interpretation as charcoal-making pits and hearths<sup>11</sup>.
- 10.1.7 There are three raths located within the study area dating to the medieval period. The first rath (WM027-069) is located on a slight S facing slope 1.6km south west of the PDA. The rath is poorly preserved measuring 40m N-S x 33.2m E-W and is defined by low scarp which is preserved as a curving field boundary along the southern edge and the only remains of an external fosse only visible at this point. The second oval shaped rath (WM027-070) located on a low natural rise of ground 500m south west of the PDA is defined by a poorly preserved low earth and stone bank only visible from W-N and elsewhere reduced to a scarp with faint traces of a shallow external fosse only visible at S and NW. The third rath (ME046-004) is a D-shaped embanked enclosure located on a S-facing slope overlooking Rossan Bog approximately 1km south of the PDA. The rath is depicted on the 1836 edition of the OS 6-inch map where it is described as a 'Fort'.

<sup>5</sup> Bermingham, N. (2014) Archaeological Survey of Ireland. Peatland Survey 2013: Kinnegad (Rossan), Co. Meath. Unpublished report commissioned by the National Monuments Service.

<sup>6</sup> Whitaker, J. (2017) Final Excavation Report, Kinnegad Bog, Co. Meath. Unpublished report prepared by IAC Ltd submitted to the National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin.

<sup>7</sup> Corcoran, E. 2004 Rossan 1 in Carlin, N., Clarke, L., and Fintan Walsh (eds) 2008 The Archaeology of Life and Death in the Boyne Floodplain: the linear landscape of the M4, Kinnegad – Enfield - Kilcock motorway. NRA Scheme Monographs 2, vol. 2

<sup>8</sup> Murphy, D. 2004 Rossan 6 in Carlin, N., Clarke, L., and Fintan Walsh (eds) 2008 The Archaeology of Life and Death in the Boyne Floodplain: the linear landscape of the M4, Kinnegad – Enfield - Kilcock motorway. NRA Scheme Monographs 2, vol. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Murphy, D. 2004 Hardwood 3. in Carlin, N., Clarke, L., and Fintan Walsh (eds) 2008 The Archaeology of Life and Death in the Boyne Floodplain: the linear landscape of the M4, Kinnegad – Enfield - Kilcock motorway. NRA Scheme Monographs 2, vol. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Murphy, D. 2003 Rossan 4 in Carlin, N., Clarke, L., and Fintan Walsh (eds) 2008 The Archaeology of Life and Death in the Boyne Floodplain: the linear landscape of the M4, Kinnegad – Enfield - Kilcock motorway. NRA Scheme Monographs 2, vol. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Murphy, D. 2004 Hardwood 2. in Carlin, N., Clarke, L., and Fintan Walsh (eds) 2008 The Archaeology of Life and Death in the Boyne Floodplain: the linear landscape of the M4, Kinnegad – Enfield - Kilcock motorway. NRA Scheme Monographs 2, vol. 2.

10.1.8 The bridge crossing the Kinnegad River, located 450m south east of the PDA, is recorded under WM028-003 and ME046-019. Three arches survive of a seven or nine arch 17th century road bridge which was replaced by the present concrete bridge in 1936. A bridge over the Kinnegad River at this location is depicted on the 1654 Down Survey map of Farbill barony where it is annotated as 'The Bridge of Kenegad'. In 1661 this medieval bridge was replaced by a new bridge and was mentioned in the House of Commons Journal under the entry for the 22nd of March where it states that 'the bridge of Kinnegad is much out of repair and that great damage and loss hath happened to travellers and cattle in their passing over same and have ordered that two letters be written from the Speaker of the House, one to the Judges of Assize for the Co. of Meath and another to the Justices of Peace for the Co. of Westmeath to take care that according to Law a substantial bridge can be made over the said river Kinnegad'<sup>12</sup>.

10.1.9 None of the aforementioned sites are located within the boundaries of the proposed development.

## 10.2 Recorded Structures

10.2.1 There are 12 recorded structures within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage within the 2km study area (Figure 5; Table 2). The majority of the buildings listed within the study area were originally used as houses and some are still in use as residential dwellings. All but two of the historic buildings are included within the Westmeath Record of Protected Structures.

Reg No.	Protected Structure	Date	Address	Townland	Original Use	Current Use
15316001	n/a	1820 - 1860	Kinnegad	Kinnegad	House	House
15316002	027-007	1750 - 1770	Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	Graveyard	Open Green Space
15316003	027-008	1890 - 1900	Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	School Master's House	House
15316004	027-013	1890 - 1900	Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	School	Miscellaneous Building
15316005	027-009	1900 - 1910	Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	Church/Chapel	Church/Chapel
15316006	027-010	1900 - 1910	Kinnegad Parochial House, Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	Presbytery / Parochial / Curate's House	Presbytery / Parochial / Curate's House
15316007	027-011	1800 - 1820	Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	House	House
15316008	027-012	1780 - 1820	Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	House	House
15316009	027-014	1820 - 1840	Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	House	Unknown
15316011	028-001	1850 - 1880	J.C. Donnelly, Main Street, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	House	Public House
15316012	n/a	1840 - 1860	Bun Daire, Kinnegad	Kinnegad	House	Unknown
15316013	028-002	1660 - 1840	Kinnegad Bridge	Kinnegad	Bridge	Unknown

Table 2: List of buildings on NIAH register located within 2km of the proposed development

<sup>12</sup> O'Keefe, P. & Simington, T. (1991) Irish stone bridges: History and heritage  
*Archaeological Impact Assessment for proposed new Kinnegad Community Economic Enterprise Hub  
 Main Street, Kinnegad, Co Westmeath*

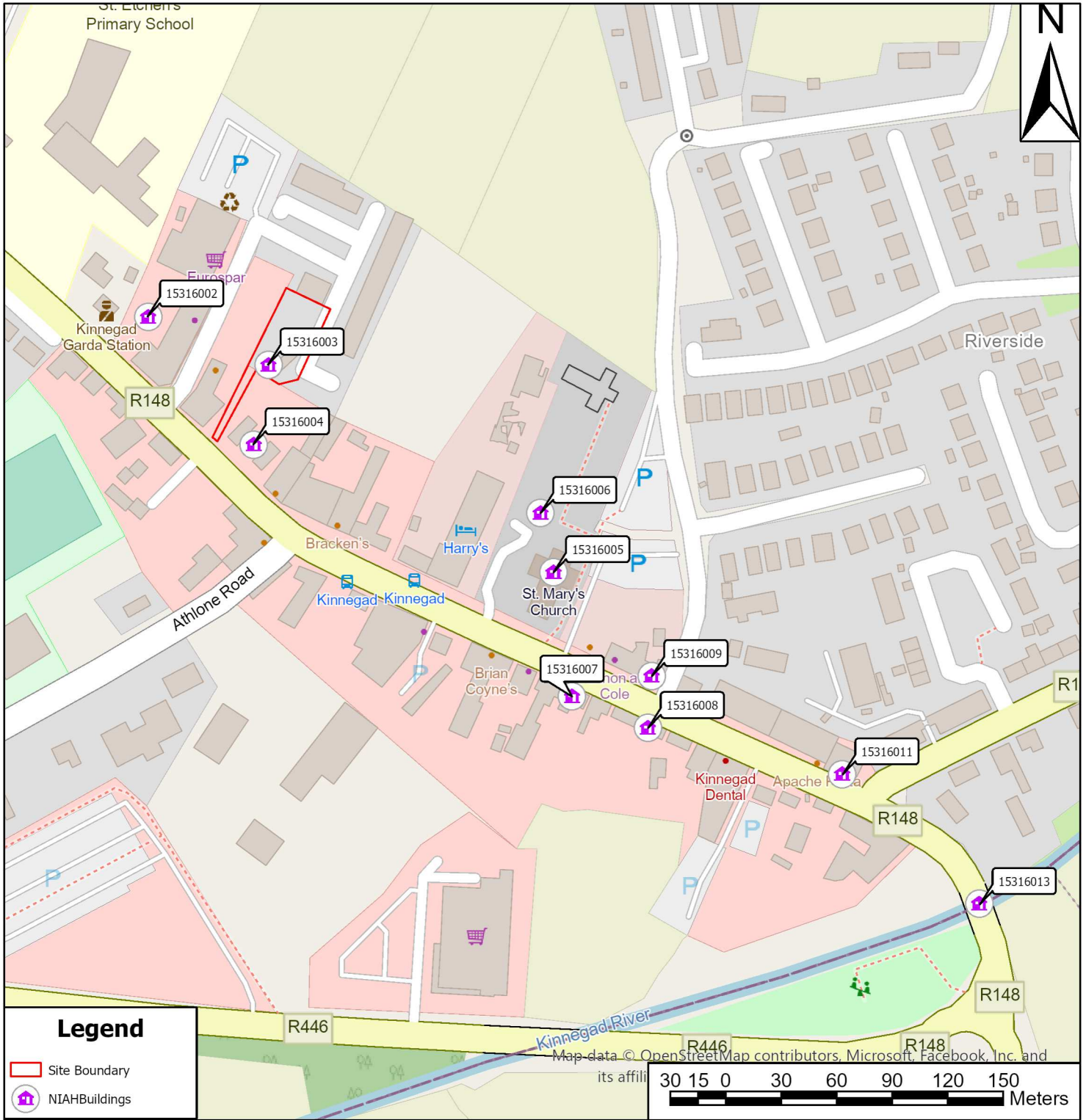


Figure 5: Located of NIAH Historic Buildings sites within 2km of proposed development

- 10.2.2 The School Master's House (NIAH 15316003) was built c.1893 and is described as a charming and well-detailed former schoolmaster's house which retains its early form and character. It consists of a detached three-bay two-storey former schoolmaster's house, having an advanced gable-fronted bay to the east end of the main elevation (south). The roof is constructed of pitched natural slate with overhanging eaves and two red brick chimneystacks, one original the other rebuilt. Externally there are roughcast rendered walls with extensive red brick trim, including dressings to the openings, a projecting sill course at first floor level and flush quoins to the corners. Window reveals consist of shallow segmental-headed window openings with one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows. The entrance to the building is defined by a central shallow segmental-headed doorway having brick dressings and a timber panelled door with plain overlight. A rubble limestone boundary wall defines southern boundary of the site. The building retains many original features and is similarly detailed to the adjacent school (NIAH 15316004) and was probably built to designs by the same builder/architect, an A. Scott.
- 10.2.3 The former national school (NIAH 15316004) constructed c.1893 which retains its original form and character. This building is described as probably the most attractive example of its type and date in Westmeath. This school was built to designs by A. Scott, architect, and the contractor was T. Reilly.
- 10.2.4 The former Church of Ireland graveyard (NIAH 15316002) located along Main Street which has been in use since c.1750. The graveyard contains a collection of cut stone grave markers, some with iron railings and some of artistic merit and important to the social history of the local community.
- 10.2.5
- 10.2.6 The Roman Catholic Church and its parochial house are listed on the NIAH. Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception (NIAH 15316005) was built c. 1900 – 1910. The church retains its early form, character and fabric and was built to designs by T. F. McNamara (1867-1947), a noteworthy architect of his day. The church is built in a subdued Gothic Revival-style and impresses principally with its scale and dominates the centre of Kinnegad. The substantial and well-detailed Roman Catholic parochial house (NIAH 15316006) was built c1900 - 1910 which retains its early form and character. This parochial house is of a more elaborate form than is more commonly encountered in rural Ireland and may have been built to designs by T. F. McNamara (1867-1947).
- 10.2.7 There are several houses listed on the NIAH which are located along Main Street, Kinnegad. The houses range in size and construction date. A semi-detached two storey house (NIAH 15316007) was built c.1810 and was possibly used as a Royal Irish Constabulary barracks c.1830 to c.1922.
- 10.2.8 An unusually long vernacular house (NIAH 15316008) was built c.1780 - 1820 which retains some of its early character despite extensive alterations in recent years. The steeply pitched roof hints that this building was formerly thatched. The position of the window openings and the chimneystacks suggests that this building was extended along its length to either gable end (east and west), a common feature of Irish vernacular architecture.
- 10.2.9 An end of terrace two storey house (NIAH 15316009) was built c.1820 – 1840 which retains much of its early character and importance to the streetscape. The irregular spacing of the openings to the front façade is an unusual feature that lends this building a vernacular character.
- 10.2.10 A detached two storey house (NIAH 15316011) built c.1850 – 1880 is now used as a public house called J.C. Donnelly. This robust and well-detailed building retains its early character and form including timber sash windows and a heavy eaves cornice.
- 10.2.11 A semi-detached single storey house (NIAH 15316010) built c.1880 – 1900 is characteristic of the great many labourers' cottages that were built throughout Ireland following the passing of various Labourers'



Acts and Land Acts (c.1880-1921) by the British Parliament during the late 19th - early 20th centuries. Very few of these structures now survive intact today, making this an important survival of an early example of social housing.

- 10.2.12 A detached single storey vernacular house (NIAH 15316012) was built c.1850 at Bun Daire, Kinnegad and is a significant example of a lobby entry vernacular house, which retains its early form, character, and fabric despite being out of use. This house type was once very common in the rural Irish countryside but is now becoming increasingly rare.
- 10.2.13 A detached two-storey extended vernacular house (NIAH 15316001) built c.1840 has retained its early character despite alterations over the years. The well-detailed and rather oversized porch to the south end of the front side is an interesting feature, which gives this building an unusual and somewhat unbalanced appearance. The position of the chimneystacks and the proportions of the window openings suggest that this building was extended on at least two occasions. The good quality traditional outbuildings to the rear add substantially to this composition and complete the setting.
- 10.2.14 The multi-arch road bridge over Kinnegad River (NIAH 15316013) is also recorded by the National Monuments Service as WM028-003 and ME046-019 is also recorded on the NIAH. Three arches survive of a seven or nine arch 17th century road bridge which was replaced by the present concrete bridge in 1936. A bridge over the Kinnegad River at this location is depicted on the 1654 Down Survey map of Farbill barony where it is annotated as 'The Bridge of Kenegad'. In 1661 this post-medieval bridge was replaced by a new bridge. The span of the surviving arches is 2.7m with a rise of 1.04m and a 105° degree arc segment. The piers are 3m thick with the wedge-shaped ring stone well bonded into the barrel. The joints are not truly radial, especially in the haunches, and the masonry in the cutwaters is coursed random rubble.
- 10.2.15 One of the structures, the School Master's House (NIAH 15316003) is located within the proposed development area and is included as part of the current development plans.

### 10.3 Industrial Heritage Sites

- 10.3.1 The Industrial Heritage sites are listed in the Westmeath Industrial Heritage Survey<sup>13</sup> which was carried out during 2019 under Action 2.1 of The Westmeath Heritage Plan to address gaps in existing datasets. The recording of Industrial Heritage sites was also an objective of the County Development Plan 2014-2020.

RefNo.	Name of site	Townland	Category
3123	Water Pump	Kinnegad	Utilities
3124	Water Pump	Kinnegad	Utilities
3125	Water Pump	Kinnegad	Utilities
3126	Water Pump	Kinnegad	Utilities
3127	Lime kiln	Kinnegad	Extractive
3128	Kinnegad Bridge	Kinnegad	Transport
3129	Bridge	Kinnegad	Transport
3130	Quarry (disused)	Kinnegad	Extractive
3131	Quarry	Kinnegad	Extractive

Table 3: List of Industrial Heritage Sites within 2km of the PDA

- 10.3.2 There are nine Industrial Heritage sites listed within the study area (fig.6; Table 3) and the site types range from water pumps, a lime kiln, two quarries and two bridges. One of the bridges is Kinnegad Bridge which is also listed on the National Monuments Record and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.westmeathcoco.ie/en/ourservices/planning/conservationheritage/heritageresources/>  
 Archaeological Impact Assessment for proposed new Kinnegad Community Economic Enterprise Hub  
 Main Street, Kinnegad, Co Westmeath

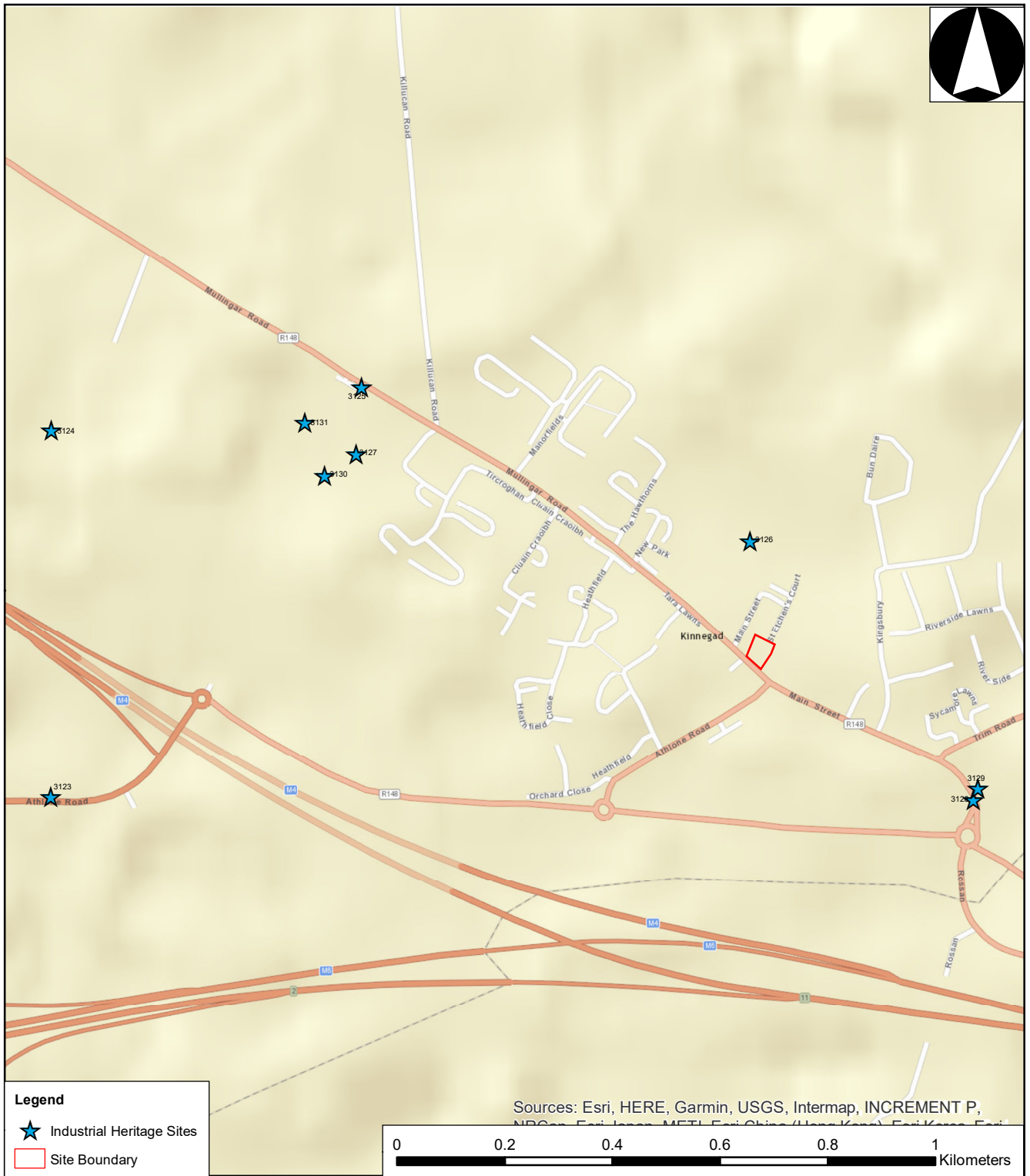


Figure 6: Location of Industrial Heritage sites within 2km of the proposed development area

#### 10.4 National Museum of Ireland Finds Database

- 10.4.1 The finds database from the National Museum of Ireland was consulted to establish whether any archaeological artefacts have been discovered within the PDA, giving further indication of the archaeological potential of the area.
- 10.4.2 Human remains were uncovered in Rossan Bog during 2014 with an arm bone discovered in a pile of milled peat in March (NMI reg. no. 2014:74) and the lower leg and foot bones of an adult were found at the same location in September (NMI reg. no. 2014:262). The remains of another body were discovered at Rossan Bog in 2012 (ME046-084----) that was radiocarbon dated to between 700 and 400 BC.

#### 10.5 Historic Maps

- 10.5.1 Both the 17<sup>th</sup> century Down Survey map (1656 – 58) and Taylor and Skinner's 18<sup>th</sup> century Road Map of Ireland (1777) were consulted. The Down Survey map shows the location of the town it is of insufficient detail and scale to depict the layout of the town during the mid - 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. The Taylor and Skinner road map does provide a little more clarity and suggests that the proposed development area is outside the historic core of the village at this time (fig. 7a)
- 10.5.2 The next available maps date to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards with the development of Ordnance Survey mapping. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition 6-inch OS map (1837), the 25-inch OS map (1910) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 6-inch OS map (1914)<sup>14</sup> were consulted to examine the development of the area within the PDA and its immediate surroundings (Figures 7a - c).
- 10.5.3 Consultation of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map (c.1835) shows an established town with residential houses and business lining the main street which runs NW-SE with a second road (Athlone Road) joining from the south west (fig. 7a). The entrance to the proposed development is part of a row of houses with long narrow gardens stretching northeast. The proposed development area appears to extend across two of these narrow garden plots.
- 10.5.4 The 25-inch OS map (1910) shows changes along the main street of Kinnegad with portions of the streetscape having been rebuilt or re-developed. The row of terraced buildings at the entrance to the proposed development have been demolished and replaced with a national school and a school master's house built within a separate plot to the rear. The proposed development area includes the school masters house and the two garden plots to the rear have been consolidated and divided up into larger square plots.
- 10.5.5 Due to the brief time lapse between the 25-inch map from 1910 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 6-inch OS map from 1914 there has been no change in the layout and size of the town.
- 10.5.6 No previously unknown or new potential archaeological sites or features were identified during inspection of the historic maps.

#### 10.6 Aerial Photography

- 10.6.1 The aerial photograph of the site (fig. 8) shows the PDA to occupy a roughly rectangular block of land in the centre of Kinnegad. There has been further development and expansion of the town with modern housing estates constructed to the west and east of the PDA. The land surrounding the PDA on its northern extent has also been developed with the construction of modern houses. The site of St John the Baptist Church is now green space and many of the buildings along the main street have been redeveloped or replaced with modern buildings or car parking.
- 10.6.2 Inspection of the aerial photograph did not reveal any obvious potential archaeological features within the boundaries of the proposed development.

<sup>14</sup> <https://heritagemaps.ie/>

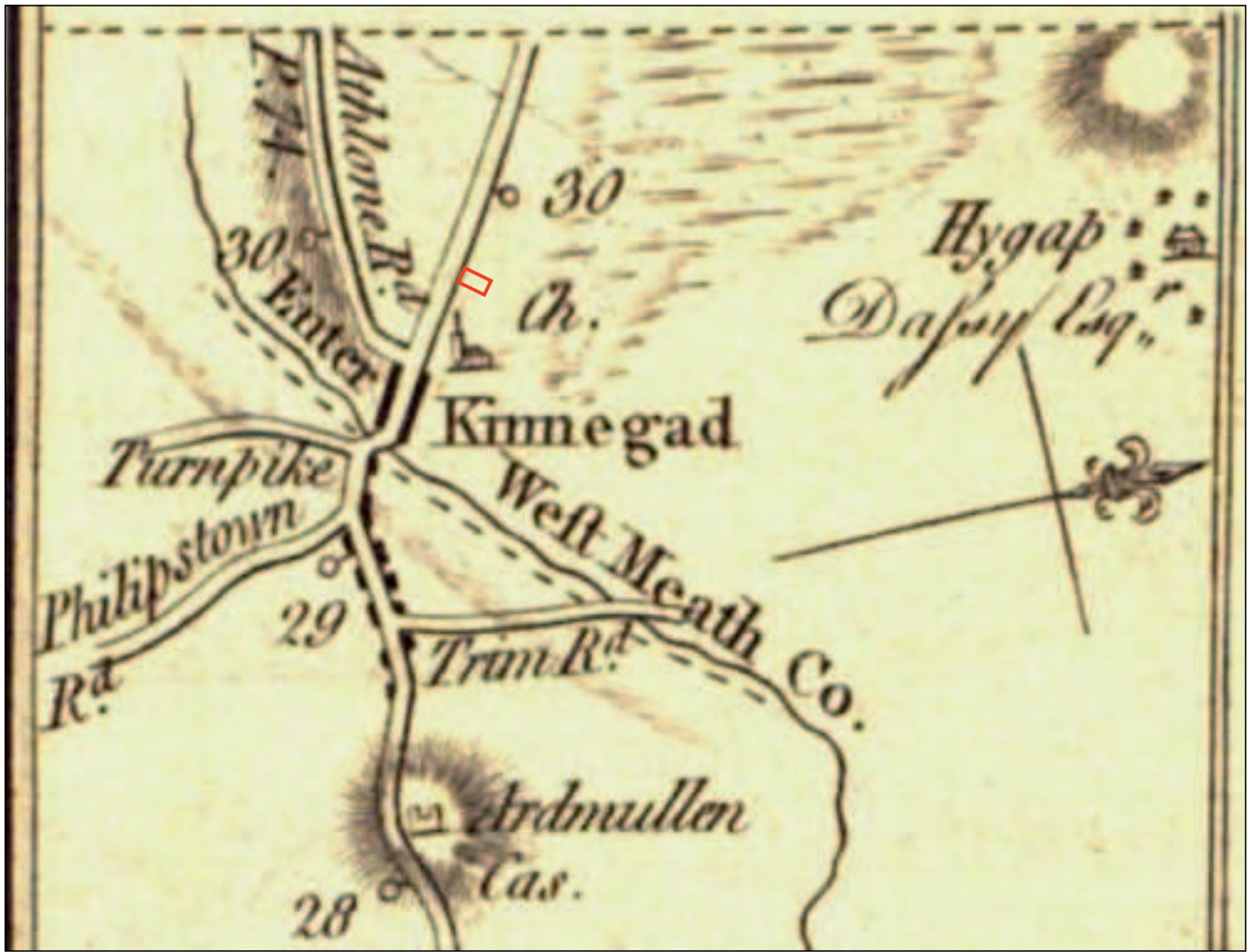


Figure 7a: 1777 Map of Kinnegad (from Taylor and Skinner)



Figure 7b: First Edition historic OS map (c.1835) showing land use of proposed development

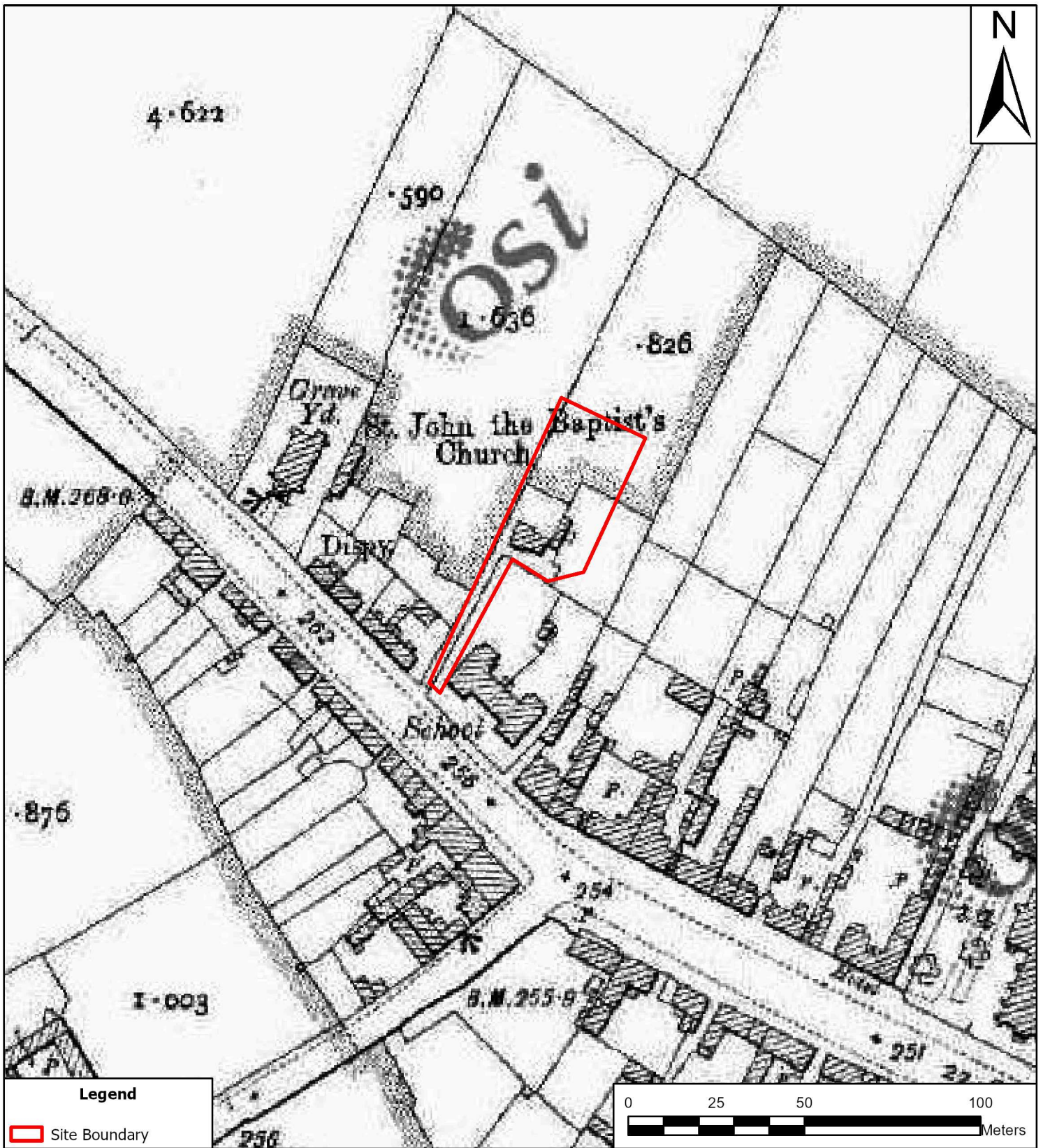


Figure 7c: Historic 25" OS map (c.1910) showing land use of proposed development

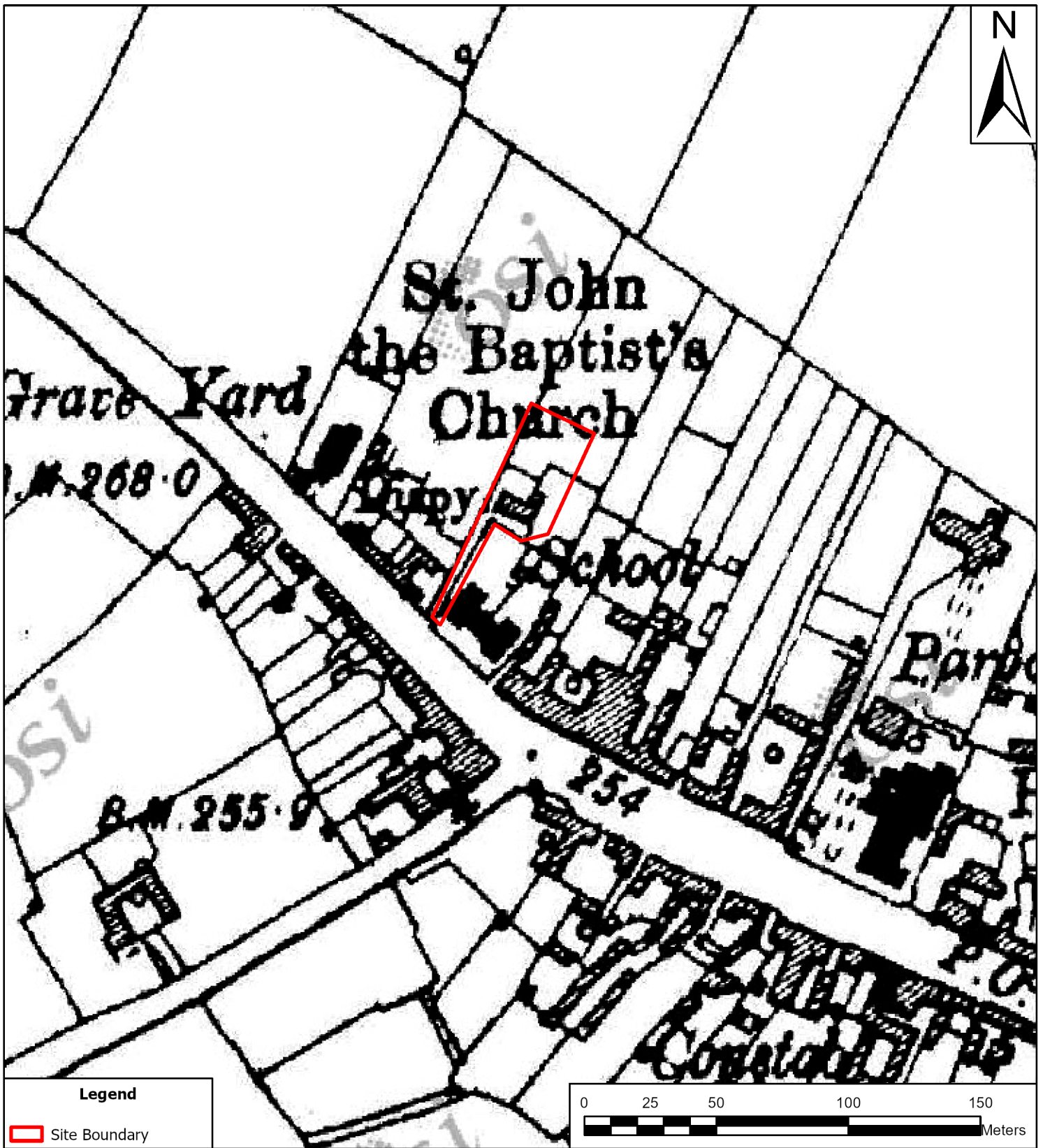


Figure 7d: Historic 6" OS map (c.1914) showing land use of proposed development

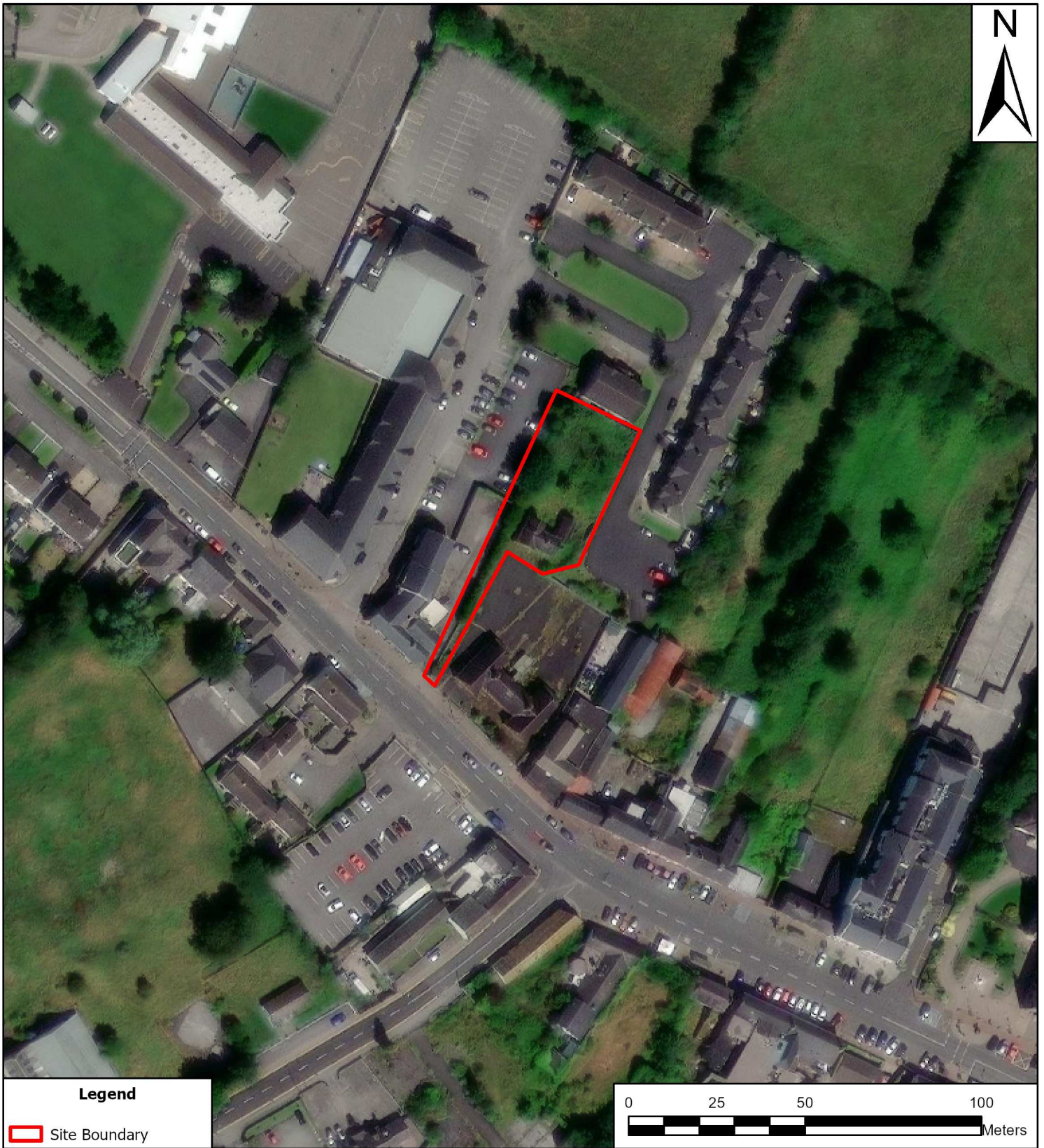


Figure 8: Aerial photograph showing modern land use of proposed development



## 10.7 Griffiths Valuation Records

10.7.1 Valuation records<sup>15</sup> were consulted as a means of confirming the historic development of the PDA. The town of Kinnegad is within plot number 63 which lists the occupiers of the 108 properties within the town. The valuation map of the town itself is slightly later than the larger scale 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map noted above and depicts a slightly different town layout (fig. 9). Many of the long-terraced buildings marked on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition map have been replaced with semi-detached dwellings as is the case of those which occupied the proposed development site. At this time the only buildings depicted within the proposed development boundaries is one of a semi-detached building on the site with an L-shaped rear garden plot and longer narrow field plots behind. The building is numbered as no. 41 with the associated records indicating no 41 was owned by David Wheatley and consisted of an officer and garden to the value of £1 and 5 shillings. Interestingly this map also shows the footprint of the later school building on top of the building and plot layout suggesting that the school development was in planning stage at this time.

## 10.8 Place name evidence

10.8.1 Often the origin of town or townland names will indicate the historic topography of an area or its use in past times. As such a search of the meanings of place names can assist in the assessment of archaeological potential of an area. The following sources were consulted for place name evidence; <http://www.logainm.ie/>.

10.8.2 The Irish place name for Kinnegad is Cionn Átha Gad, which has been translated as “the head of the Ford of withes.” The Ford referred to is the present River Kinnegad, which since 1543 has marked the boundary between Westmeath and Meath. This suggests that the settlement began life as a crossing point over the river.

## 10.9 Previous Archaeological Excavations

10.9.1 The Database of Irish Archaeological Excavation Reports ([www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)) was consulted to identify previous archaeological investigations within the 2km study area surrounding the PDA (Table 4).

Licence No.	Site Name/Location	Reason for Archaeological Excavation	Results of Archaeological Excavation
94E0169	Kinnegad, Westmeath	Street improvements & re-surfacing work	Underbridge discovered during street improvement works
98E0481	Rossan, Meath	Kinnegad Link Road development	No archaeological remains
02E0107	Rossan 11, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	No archaeological remains
02E0114	Ardnamullan 1, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	Charcoal burning kilns dating to the Iron Age/Early Medieval
02E0866	Rossan 1, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	Prehistoric activity and 19 <sup>th</sup> century industrial site
02E0869	Aghamore	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	Iron working site
02E0933	Kinnegad 5, Westmeath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	No archaeological remains
02E1064	Rossan 2, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	No archaeological significance
02E0165	Rossan 3, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	Metalworking site, pit
02E1066	Rossan 4, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	Prehistoric Hearths and Pits
02E1067	Rossan 5, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	No archaeological significance
02E1068	Rossan 6, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	Metalworking site
02E1139	Hardwood 1	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	No archaeological remains

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation>

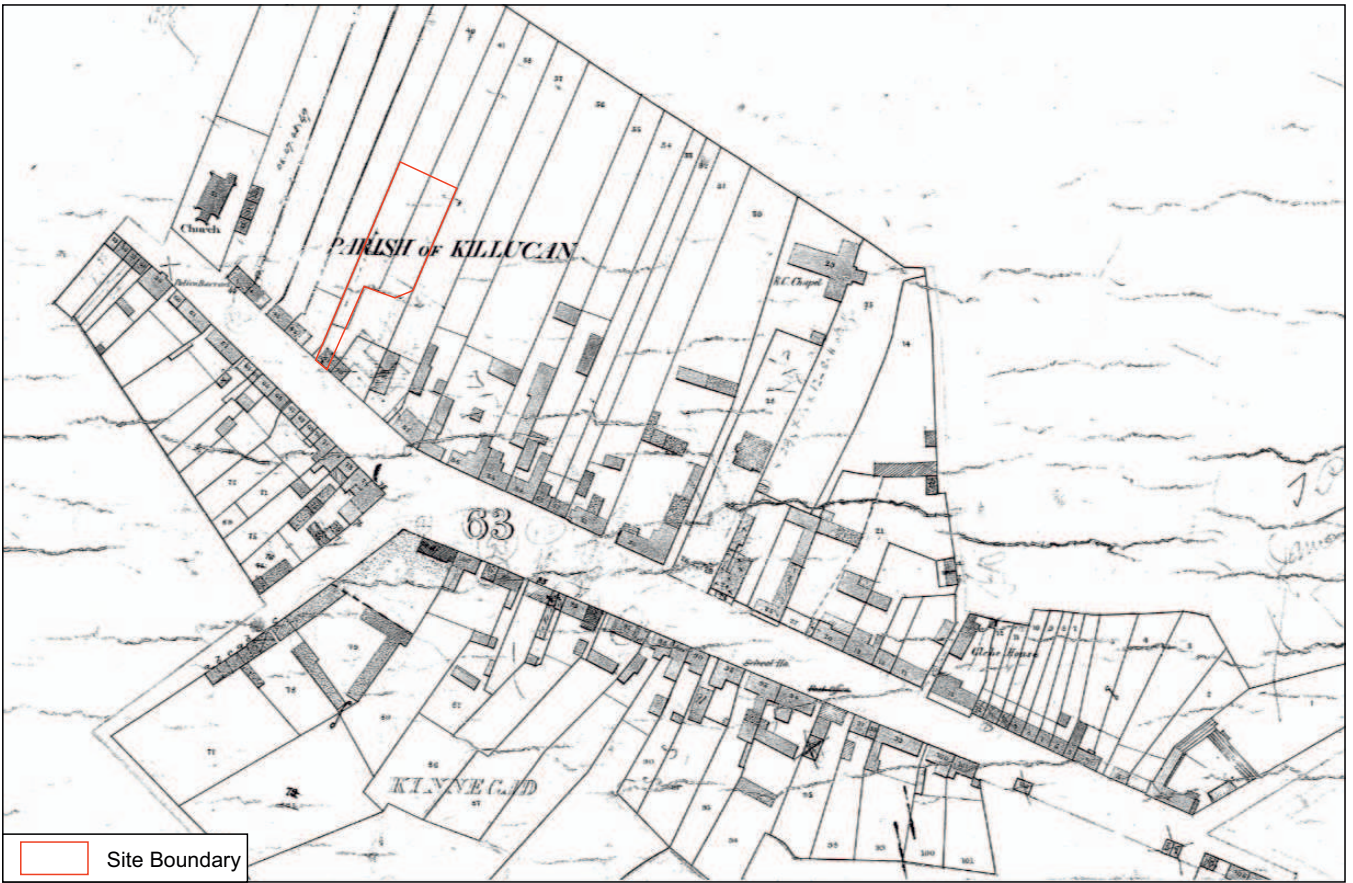


Figure 9: Kinnegad town plan c.1847 (Griffiths Valuation)

Licence No.	Site Name/Location	Reason for Archaeological Excavation	Results of Archaeological Excavation
02E1141	Hardwood 3, Meath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	Charcoal burning kilns and hearths dating to the Iron Age/Early Medieval
02E1144	Griffinstown 3	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	Early medieval industrial site
03E1122	Kinnegad 6, Westmeath	M4 Kinnegad Motorway Scheme	A small charcoal-filled feature
A001/001	Monganstown, Westmeath	Realignment of the N6 between Kinnegad & Kilbeggan, Westmeath	Metalworking site
06E0448	Boreen Bradach, Kinnegad, Westmeath	Excavation prior to and during development	A possible kiln, medieval burial ground, industrial pits
07E0665	Kinnegad, Westmeath	Excavation prior to development	A Ringfort
12E241	Kinnegad, Westmeath	Testing in advance of NRA Depot construction	No archaeological remains
18E0406	Kinnegad	Testing in advance of supermarket development	No archaeological remains
19E0425	Kinnegad (Bun Daire)	Testing in advance of residential development	Medieval enclosure ditch
22E0970	Mullingar Road, Kinnegad	Testing in advance of residential development	No archaeological remains

Table 4: Details of previous archaeological investigations within the study area

10.9.2 Records indicate that 22 licence archaeological investigations have taken place within the area with the majority as a result of the M4 Kinnegad–Enfield–Kilcock Motorway Scheme and resulting in a variety of sites which can be dated to the prehistoric and Early Medieval periods. Three sites archaeological excavations recorded from within the environs of Kinnegad town; Excavations were carried out in advance of a residential development at Boreen Bradach, 400m north of the proposed development. During pre-development test trenching and subsequent monitoring of topsoil stripping a medieval burial ground was uncovered along with a possible kiln and industrial pits. The remains of a buried underbridge structure were uncovered in 1994 during archaeological supervision of street improvement works and road resurfacing. The structure consisted of two vertical piers 0.7m high supporting a segmental arch 0.53m high. The pier walls were 0.25 – 0.3m thick and 2.24m apart. The total remaining length of the underbridge was 14m and the stream or drain for which it had originally been constructed was silted up to within 0.2m of the keystones. The structure was interpreted as being related to the early construction of Kinnegad town in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was archaeologically recorded prior to removal. It is not clear from the archaeological report where exactly in the town this structure was located.

10.10 Site Conditions

10.10.1 A preliminary site visit carried out in 2020 confirmed that the former School Masters House was located to the rear of the former National School Building just beyond the existing tarmac car park (Plate 1) and remains as described in the NIAH records. The rear of the property was heavily overgrown garden space (Plate 2).

10.10.2 A secondary site visit was carried out between September 2023 and January 2024. By this stage renovation of the old school building associated with the new Library and Training and Education Centre has begun., The site is accessed along a narrow access path with a gravel surface (Plate 3). The space in front of the former School Masters House is used for storage of construction materials and the house has been fenced off (Plate 4). The building appears to remain in relatively fair condition with the first floor windows boarded up. The rear of the building is also fenced off for protection while building materials are stored between the rear of the building and the northern boundary wall of the site (Plate



Plate 1: View of Old School Masters House facing the front building elevation in 2020



Plate 2: View of rear garden area of Old School Masters House in 2020



Plate 3: Existing site access to Old School Masters House



Plate 4: View of area in front of the fenced off Old School Masters House



Plate 5: View of gravel surface and storage area to rear of Old School Masters House



Plate 6: View of compound area to rear boundary wall of Old School Masters House



Plate 7: View of spoil and storage area at northwest corner of boundary with Old School Masters House

5). The rear of the property has been covered with a gravel surface and is used for a contractor's compound and storage (Plates 6 & 7).

10.10.3 While the site visit confirmed that the historic building associated with the former School Masters House still remains on the site, no previously un-identified archaeological features were noted during the site visit.

## **11. Assessment of Archaeological Potential**

11.1 The assessment of the topographic potential and the examination of the type, density, and distribution of archaeological sites within that landscape give rise to the identification of the archaeological potential of any given landscape. These areas of archaeological potential may be indicated given their:

- a. close proximity to recorded archaeological monuments (as depicted on the SMR and IHR maps)
- b. close proximity to newly identified potential archaeological sites.

### *11.2 Summary of Findings- Desk Based Assessment*

11.2.1 Consultation of the records maintained by Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht revealed that the wider study area has a proven archaeological heritage, with 13 recorded SMR sites and several historic buildings/protected structures and industrial heritage sites within 2km of the proposed development. Historic Building / Protected Structure a former School Master's House (NIAH 15316003 / PS 027-008) The archaeological record highlights that there has been activity in the area dating to the prehistoric period onwards with evidence of prehistoric occupation, metalworking, and a prehistoric burial in Rossan Bog. Occupation of the area has continued through the early medieval period with the construction of raths and a medieval bridge constructed across the Kinnegad River.

11.2.2 Consultation of early historical records and maps indicate that dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards indicate that the proposed development area is located outside of the historic core of Kinnegad village which was centered further southeast towards the Kinnegad River.

11.2.3 Many of the previous archaeological investigations within the area have identified sub-surface archaeological remains associated with the prehistoric and early medieval occupation and industry of the area surrounding the town itself. Evidence for past occupation within the town has been limited to the siting of a previously unknown medieval burial site within the northeast suburbs of the town and a post medieval underbridge within the environs of the town itself.

11.2.4 Based solely on the desk top study, the area of the PDA can be assessed to be of moderate archaeological potential based solely upon its location within the archaeological landscape, with a lower potential for archaeological remains associated with the historic town as it lies beyond its 17<sup>th</sup> / 18<sup>th</sup> century core.

### *11.3 Summary of findings – Topographic Assessment: interpretation of the archaeological landscape*

11.3.1 Consideration of the topographic setting of any proposed development is fundamental in the interpretation of the archaeological landscape of a given area. Three topographical characteristics may be considered as of archaeological importance within the landscape setting:

- High ground/elevated areas: These may be deemed as being of archaeological potential given their prominence in the local landscape. Numerous examples of the importance of areas of high/elevated land are recorded within the archaeological record, with specific emphasis upon early Christian defensive sites (i.e. raths/forts), prehistoric funerary (i.e. Barrows/Megalithic tombs) and ritual (i.e. prehistoric enclosures) sites.

- Areas in proximity to river courses: These areas may be deemed as being of archaeological potential given their ease of access to both natural resources such as water, food, and water energy (i.e. mills).
- Areas in proximity to lakes/coastal areas: As with those areas in proximity to river courses, these may also be deemed as being of archaeological potential due to their ease of access to water and food sources.

11.3.2 The proposed development is in an urban environment along Main Street, Kinnegad which until the construction of the M4 and M6, was an important transportation route between Galway and Dublin and a focal point for occupation since the prehistoric period. Based upon its topographic setting the PDA may be considered as being located within an area of moderate archaeological potential.

11.3.3 While the proposed development is located within an area of moderate archaeological potential, particularly to the rear of the former School Masters House which remained green field in nature until recently, the site has undergone some degree of modern ground disturbance associated with the installation of the gravel surface associated with the adjacent development of the former National School building. The degree to which recent ground works may have already impacted upon potential sub-surface archaeological features or deposits remains uncertain.

#### 11.4 *Summary of findings – Site Visit*

11.4.1 The site visit confirmed the urban environment of the proposed development. No previously unidentified archaeological features were identified during the site visit and no areas of specific archaeological potential were noted.

11.4.2 Based upon the results of the desktop study and site visit the proposed development may be considered as being of low to moderate archaeological potential.

## 12. **Assessment of Archaeological Impact of the Development**

### 12.1 *Criteria for assessing the Archaeological Impact*

12.1.1 The development will consist of the development of an existing site in order to provide a Community Economic Enterprise Hub.

12.1.2 No nationally accepted standard method of evaluation and assessment is available for the assessment of impact significance upon archaeological / historic remains (cultural heritage). Archaeological Impact of the proposed development is assessed from a baseline which is based upon the situation that would exist if the proposed development scheme were not pursued. Previous Sections 8 through to 11 therefore form the baseline survey for this assessment.

4.3 The framework for identifying the archaeological impact of any development upon cultural heritage and archaeological remains uncovered during the development are governed by National legislation and County Westmeath Heritage Plan 2018 – 2023 and Westmeath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 with specific reference to planning policies and objectives CPO 14.5 – 14.15, CPO 14.54 – 14.57, CPO 14.26 – 38, CPO 14.44 – 14.49 and CPO 14.50 - 14.53. The criteria for assessing the impact include period, rarity, documentation, group value, survival / condition, fragility / vulnerability, diversity, and potential.

12.1.3 This information, in conjunction with various other legal and statutory policies (as outlined above in Section 2) and with professional judgement, is used to assess the value of archaeological sites and monuments within a development. The approach to assessing the Cultural Heritage Value is presented in Table 5 below.

Value	Examples
Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World Heritage Sites;</li> <li>Assets of acknowledged international importance;</li> <li>Other buildings of recognized international importance;</li> <li>Historic landscapes of international sensitivity, whether designated or not.</li> </ul>
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheduled Monuments;</li> <li>Undesignated sites/features of schedulable quality and importance;</li> <li>Listed Buildings;</li> <li>Undesignated structures of clear national importance;</li> <li>Designated &amp; undesignated historic landscapes of outstanding interest.</li> </ul>
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives; Unlisted buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical association;</li> <li>Historic townscape or built-up areas with historic integrity in their buildings, or built settings;</li> <li>Designated special historic landscapes and undesignated historic landscapes of regional sensitivity.</li> </ul>
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undesignated sites/features of local importance;</li> <li>'Locally Listed' buildings and unlisted buildings of modest quality in their fabric or historical association;</li> <li>Historic landscapes whose sensitivity is limited by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations or with specific and substantial importance to local interest groups.</li> </ul>
Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assets with very little or no surviving archaeological interest;</li> <li>Buildings of no architectural or historical note; buildings of an intrusive character;</li> <li>Landscapes with little or no significant historical interest</li> </ul>
Unknown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Archaeological sites/features where the importance of the resource cannot be ascertained;</li> <li>Buildings with some hidden (i.e. inaccessible) potential for historic significance.</li> </ul>

Table 5: Determining cultural heritage value

- 12.1.4 The magnitude of the potential impact is assessed independently for each individual site as well as its cultural heritage value. The impact categories are outlined in Table 6 below.
- 12.1.5 The two sets of criteria, for both the cultural heritage value and the magnitude of the impact, are therefore combined to determine the significance of the impact, as laid out Table 7.
- 12.1.6 The significance of the impact can be either beneficial or adverse (Table 8). In general, a beneficial impact would involve the preservation of archaeological or historical remains *in situ* and through record. An adverse impact would be the destruction of archaeological or historical remains.

Magnitude	Criteria
Major	Change to most or all key archaeological/historic building/historic landscape elements, such that the resource is totally altered. Comprehensive or total changes to setting.
Intermediate	Changes to many key archaeological/historic building/historic landscape elements, such that the resource is clearly modified. Considerable changes to setting.
Minor	Changes to key archaeological/historic building/historic landscape elements, such that the asset is slightly altered. Slight changes to setting.
Negligible	Very minor changes to elements or setting.
No Change	No change

Table 6: Determining Magnitude of Impact



Significance of Impact	Magnitude of Potential Impact				
	Major	Intermediate	Minor	Negligible	No change
<b>Cultural Heritage Value</b>					
<b>Very high</b>	Very Large	Large/Very Large	Moderate/ Large	Slight	Neutral
<b>High</b>	Large/Very Large	Moderate/ Large	Slight/ Moderate	Slight	Neutral
<b>Medium</b>	Moderate/ Large	Moderate	Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral
<b>Low</b>	Slight/ Moderate	Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral
<b>Negligible</b>	Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral	Neutral

Table 7: Magnitude of impact

Impact Significance	Criteria
Very Large	Cultural heritage features assigned this level of impact significance will represent key factors in the decision-making process. <i>Adverse</i> – Features of high/very high value which are partially damaged; sites of high/medium value which are almost wholly damaged or destroyed. Mitigation measures will have had minimal effect in reducing the significance of impact. <i>Beneficial</i> – These effects will virtually restore a site or its setting and re-establish its significance.
Large	These effects are considered to be very important in the decision-making process. These effects are important at a national level and to statutory bodies. <i>Adverse</i> – These effects will damage assets or their setting, so that their integrity or understanding is destroyed or severely compromised. This will result in a resource that can no longer be appreciated or understood. Mitigation measures may not deal appropriately with all aspects of the impact. <i>Beneficial</i> – These effects will halt rapid degradation or erosion of cultural heritage features or result in significant restoration of setting.
Moderate	These effects are likely to be important considerations, but not key factors, in the decision-making process. However, cumulative effects may raise the overall significance of impact. These impacts are likely to be important at a regional level. <i>Adverse</i> – These effects will damage cultural heritage assets, or their setting, so that their integrity or understanding is compromised but not destroyed. Adequate mitigation measures can be specified. <i>Beneficial</i> – These effects are likely to result in the halting of degradation or erosion of heritage assets or result in the restoration of characteristics features or setting so that understanding, and appreciation is improved.
Slight	These effects are unlikely to be critical factors in the decision-making process but are likely to be important factors in the design of a project. These effects are important at a local level. <i>Adverse</i> – the proposals will damage cultural heritage assets, or their setting, so that their integrity or understanding is diminished but not compromised. <i>Beneficial</i> – the proposals will stabilise cultural heritage assets or enhance their setting, so that their integrity is maintained, or understanding is improved.
Neutral	No effects upon cultural heritage or the effects are negligible. There is no conflict with or contribution to policies for protection of heritage resources.

Table 8: Significance of Level of Impact

## 12.2 Assessment of Archaeological Impact: Previously Identified Cultural Heritage Features.

- 12.2.1 The proposed development site lies within an area of moderate archaeological, with several archaeological sites and monuments and industrial heritage sites being recorded within a 2km radius of its boundaries.
- 12.2.2 An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment has been carried out in tandem with this Archaeological Impact Assessment (Cooney Architects 2024). Therefore, this report will not deal further with the implications of the impact of the development upon the above Protected Structure and the following Impact Assessment will refer solely to archaeological sites and monuments and industrial heritage sites.
- 12.2.3 Based upon the above criteria the following designations may be proposed for the existing recorded cultural heritage sites set within 2km of the site (Table 9 below).

Cultural Heritage Receptor	Assessment of significance	Value	Magnitude	Significance of Impact
WM028-003----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	High	No Change	Neutral
WM027-069----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	High	No Change	Neutral
WM027-070----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	High	No Change	Neutral
ME046-019----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	High	No Change	Neutral
ME046-004----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	High	No Change	Neutral
ME046-022----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	Medium	No Change	Neutral
ME046-023----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	Medium	No Change	Neutral
ME046-021----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	Medium	No Change	Neutral
ME046-024----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	Medium	No Change	Neutral
ME046-025----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	Medium	No Change	Neutral
ME046-026----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	Medium	No Change	Neutral
ME046-082----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	Medium	No Change	Neutral
ME046-085----	Sites/features that contribute to regional research objectives	Medium	No Change	Neutral
3123	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	Low	No Change	Neutral
3124	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	Low	No Change	Neutral
3125	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	Low	No Change	Neutral
3126	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	Low	No Change	Neutral
3127	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	Low	No Change	Neutral
3128	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	High	No Change	Neutral
3129	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	Low	No Change	Neutral
3130	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	Low	No Change	Neutral
3131	Undesignated sites/features of local importance	Low	No Change	Neutral

Table 9: Assessment of Impact of proposed development upon existing known archaeological sites and monuments.

12.2.4 As there are no recorded monuments or industrial heritage sites located within the boundaries of the proposed development or its vicinity, the significance of the level of impact of the proposed development in relation to recorded monuments in the surrounding area can therefore be considered neutral for those existing archaeological monuments and industrial heritage sites within the wider landscape around the proposed development area.

### 12.3 Assessment of Archaeological Impact: Previously Unidentified/Potential Archaeological Remains

12.3.1 Previous archaeological investigations associated with development works within Ireland have highlighted the potential for subsurface archaeological remains associated with both prehistoric and historic activity to be adversely impacted upon during development works such as those carried out during development for housing, infrastructure, and commercial development.

12.3.2 The desk-based assessment suggests that the PDA is located within an area of moderate archaeological potential considering its location within a wider archaeological landscape with several known sites within the wider study area. Historic maps indicate that the proposed development is situated beyond the historic 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century town core and therefore the archaeological potential of the site may be considered as lowered.

12.3.3 The proposed development will consist of the renovation of the existing former School Masters House and associated rear outhouse and the construction of a new single storey extension to the rear of the building along with associated landscape and services.

12.3.4 While there will be invasive ground works to the rear of the existing school building, the archaeological potential in this area remains low, therefore the impact of development in this area may be also be considered low.

### **13. Conclusions and Recommendations<sup>16</sup>**

13.1 The desktop study has confirmed that the site is located within an area of moderate archaeological potential given the location of the proposed development area within a wider archaeological landscape, however the archaeological potential of the proposed development itself is considered lowered given the site is located beyond the historic core of Kinnegad town.

13.2 As there are no upstanding archaeological remains within the site boundaries and there is a relatively low potential for survival of sub-surface archaeological remains which may be impacted upon by development, it is recommended that no further archaeological works are required.

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<sup>16</sup> All recommendations are subject to discussions with and the approval of the relevant heritage authorities