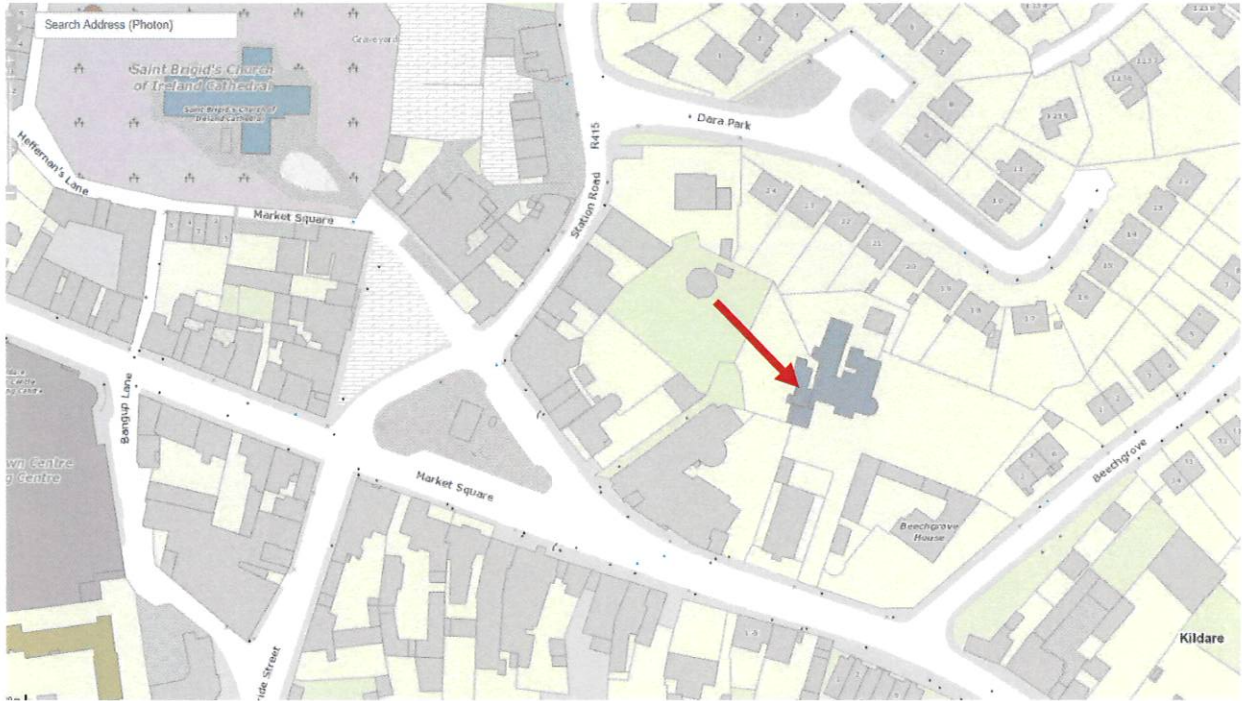


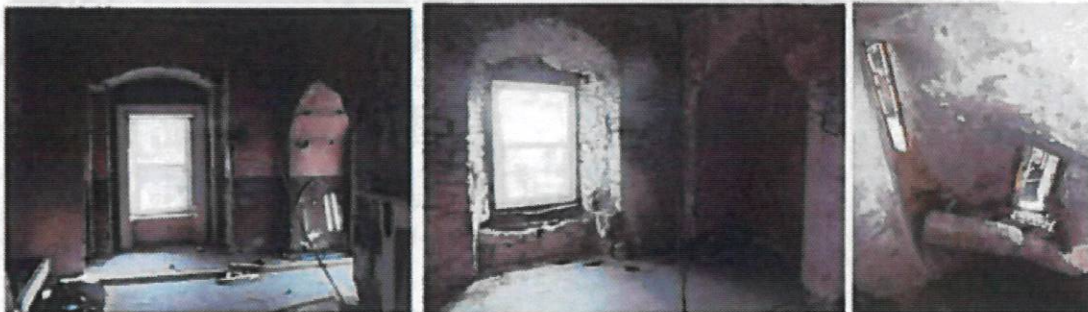
# Kildare Castle Gatehouse, Kildare Town



Location of Gatehouse indicated with red arrow



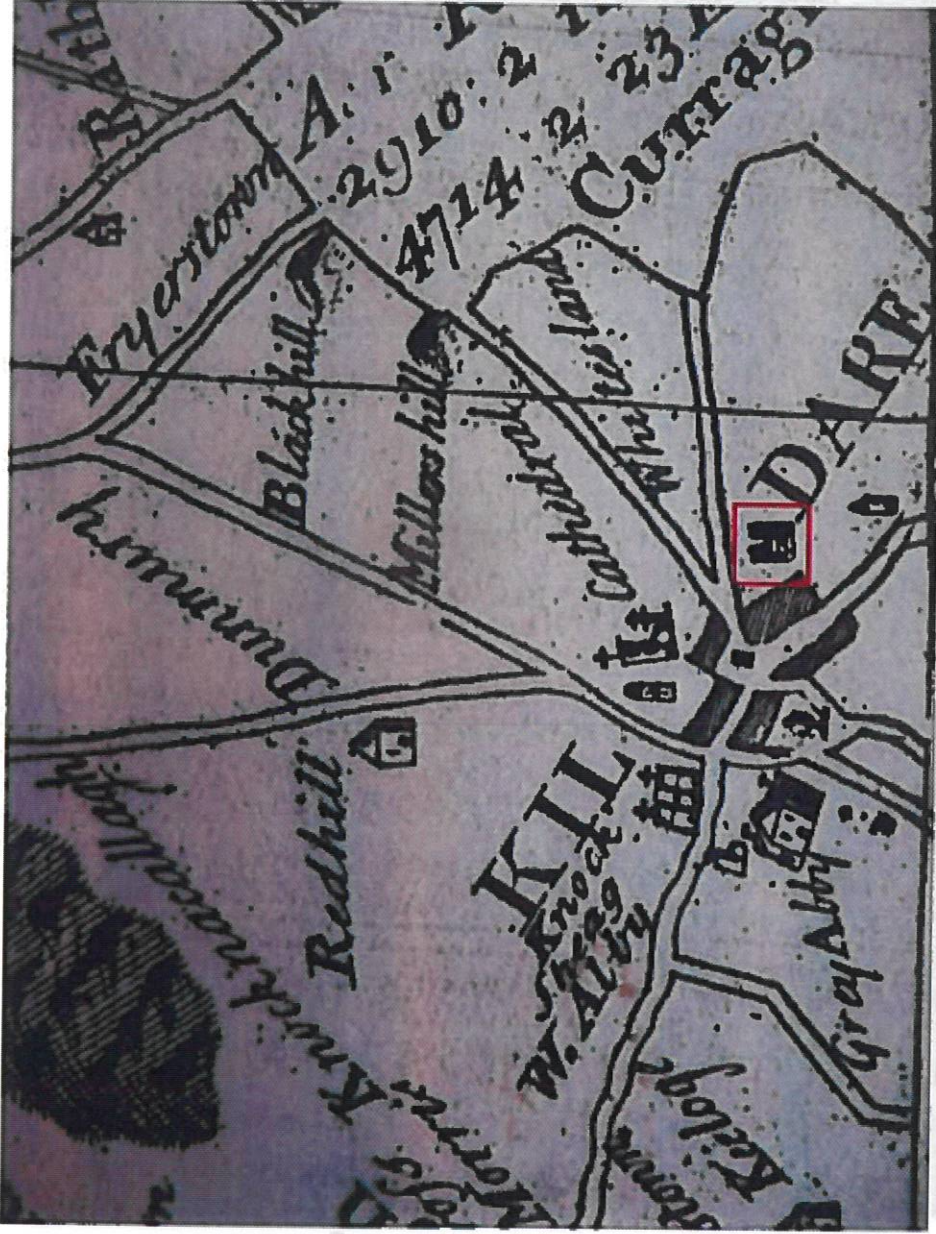
Harled rendered kildareGate house with base wall batter and Leinster Lodge



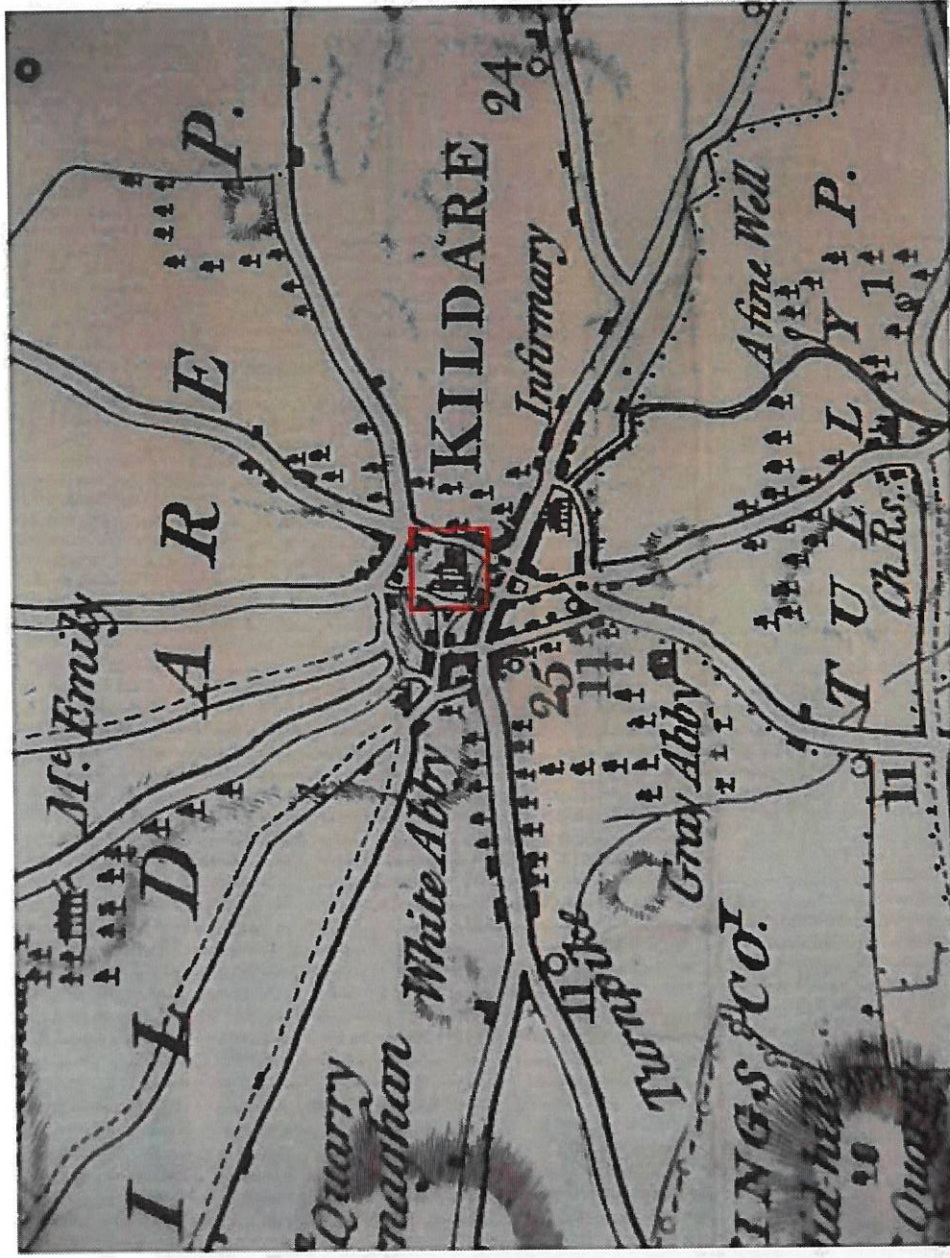
Gate house interiors with intra mural relieving masonry arches instead of floor vaults

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Maps



Nobel & Keenan 1752 with Kildare castle indicated



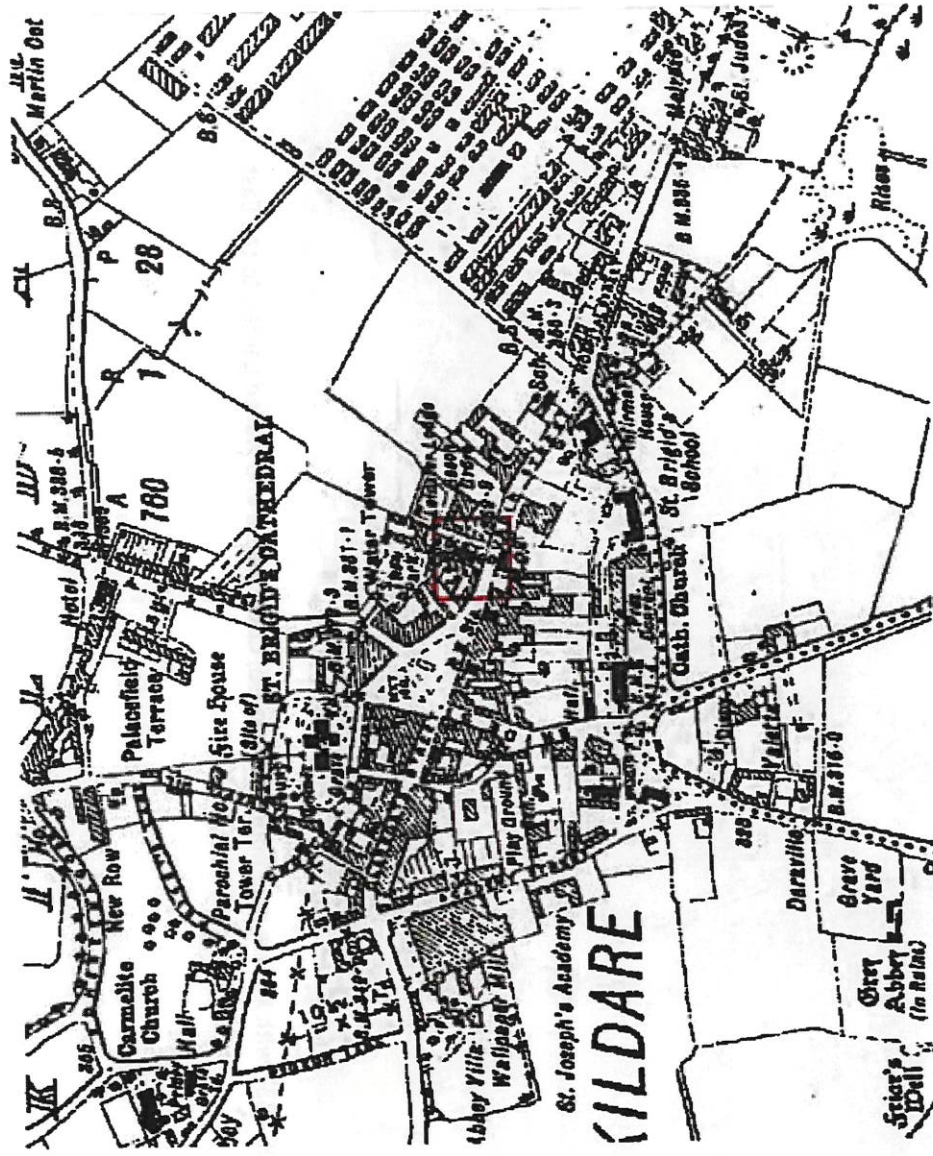
Taylor 1783 with Kildare castle indicated

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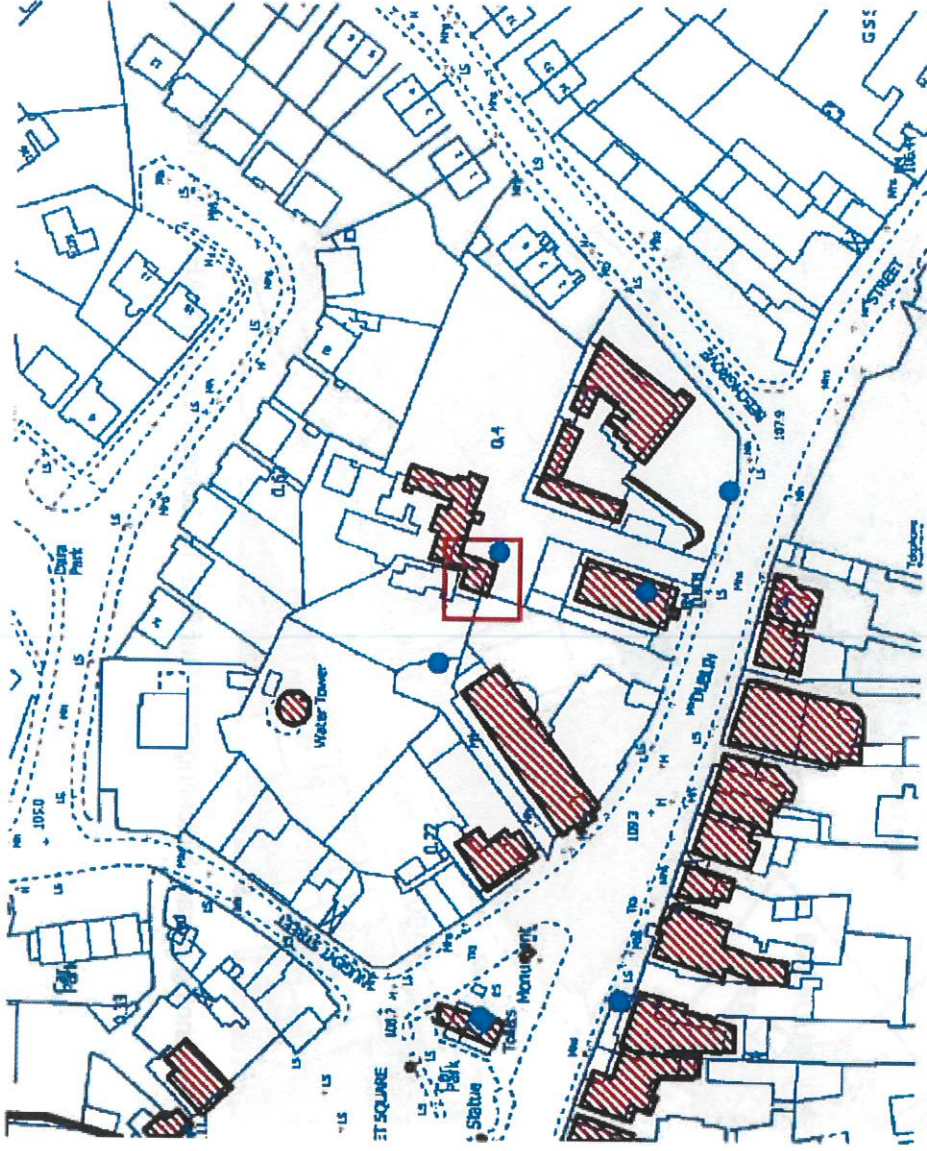
OS 1837 with Kildare gate house delineated, Court House and walled garden to the East

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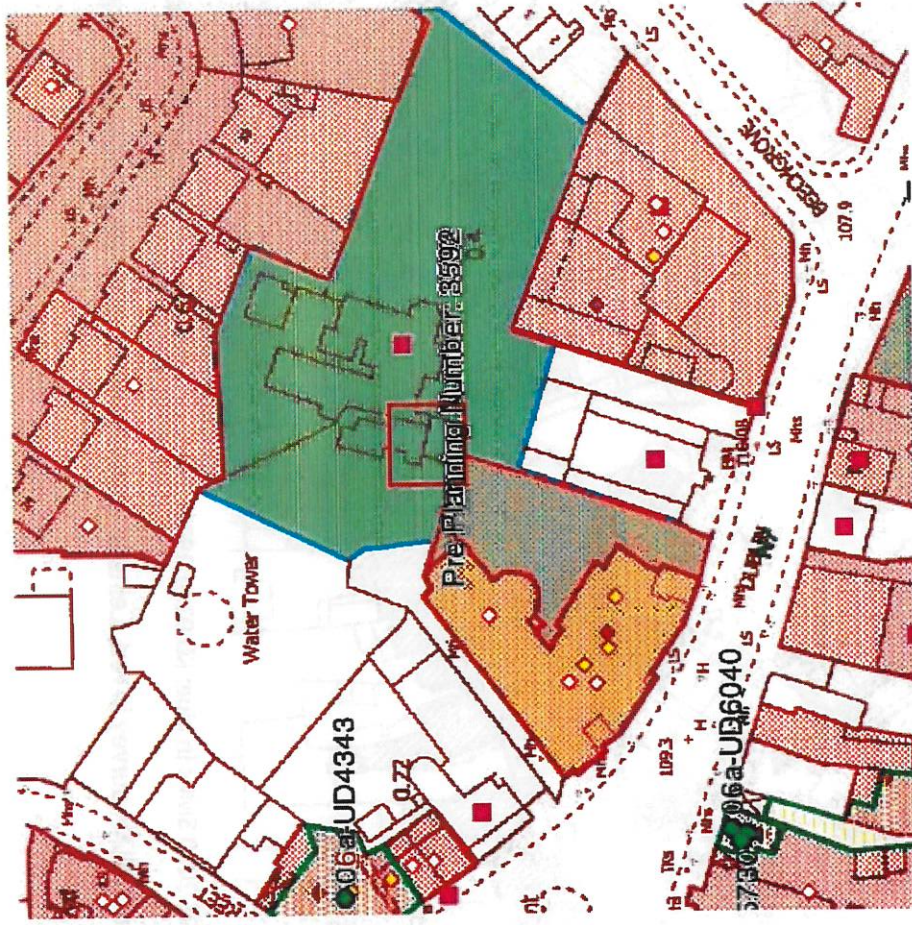
OS 6" c1900 with Kildare gate house delineated, Court House and walled garden to the East

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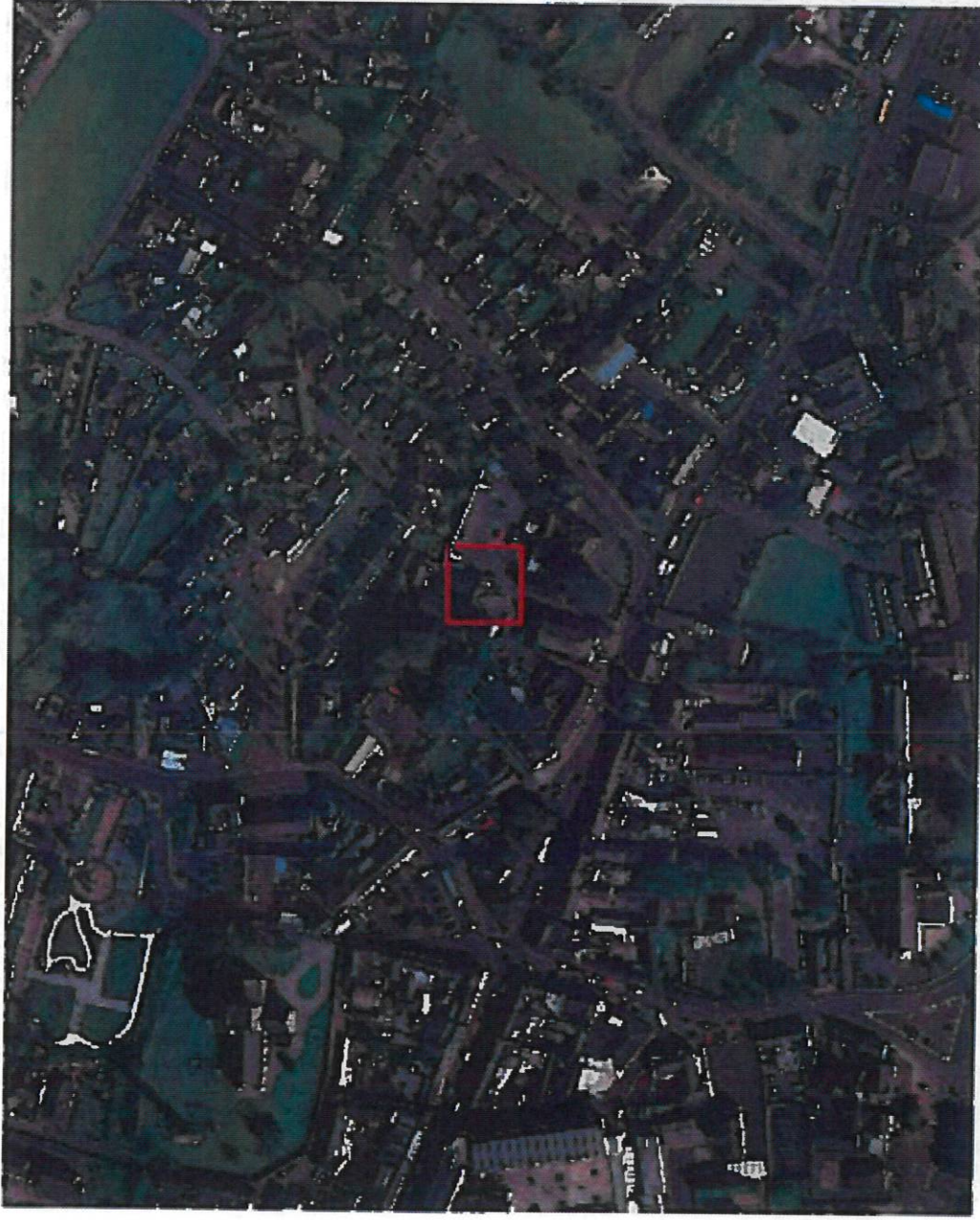
OS 2000 SMRs in blue: KD 022-029024 Kildare Gate House, KD 022-029004 Kildare Castle and NIAH survey in red, Leinster Lodge(NIAH: 1 1817102 incorporating ,in it's curtilage

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OS Planning extract indicating RPS Ref B22-18, Leinster Lodge(NIAH: 11817102

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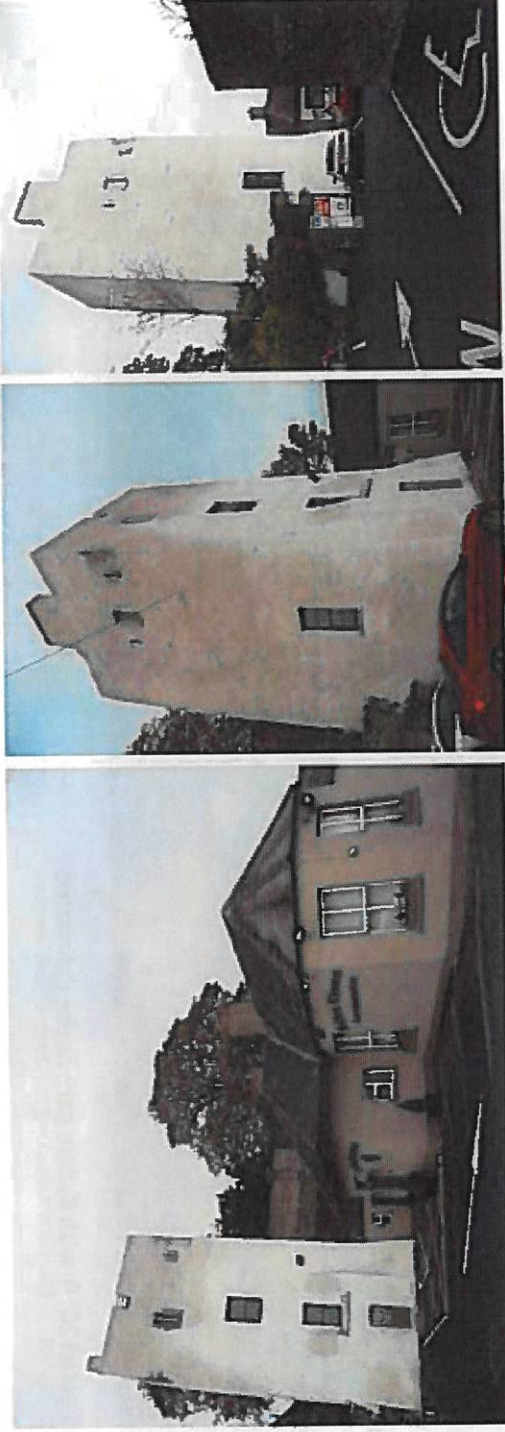


OS aerial 2010 with Kildare gate house delineated



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Existing 25/10/17



Harled rendered kildareGate house with base wall batter and Leinster Lodge



Gate house interiors with intra mural relieving masonry arches instead of floor vaults

## ACO Protected Structure Evaluation - PPS B22-62 Kildare Castle Gate House

### Architectural Inventory

**Reg . No.**

**Date :** 13c -16c-19c-20c

**Previous name:** N/A

**Townland:** Kildare

**County:** County Kildare

**Coordinates:**

**Categories of Special Interest:** Architectural, Archaeological, Historic, Social

**Rating:** National

**Original Use:** Gate house

**In Use As:** House

### Introduction

The following is an extract from the 'Conservation, interpretation and management plan' for Kildare Castle, Gate House, prepared by Fergal McNamara of Howley Hayes Conservation Architect, which was part funded by the Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) through the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS 2016) and coordinated by Kildare County Council. The Gate House also got a grant from the DCHG's Structures at Risk Fund (SRF) to weather protect the stone walls with lime render harling in 2016 and to consolidate and glaze the interior in 2017.

## ACO Protected Structure Evaluation - PPS B22-62 Kildare Castle Gate House

### **Statutory Protection**

Statutory protection for Kildare Castle and its gatehouse is scant, in place under the following legislation which is supplemented by policy documents and guidance:

- National Monuments Acts, 1930 – 2004
- Planning and Development Acts 2000-2002
- Record of Monuments and Places, established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994
- Local Plans & Policy

Kildare County Council is the relevant planning control authority. Kildare Castle (KD022-029004) and the gate house (KD022-029024) are recorded monuments, but do not benefit from the additional statutory protections afforded to National Monuments and protected structures. The town has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) with an extensive Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP) that encompasses the castle bawn. It is a policy of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 to protect the archaeological heritage of the county. Proposals to extend or change the use of the gate house or alter its appearance would require planning permission. Works proposed within the ZAP require a licence from the National Monuments Service.

### **Statutory Protection**

Seek to obtain protected structure status for the gate house. This will ensure that proper assessment of the impact of proposals is undertaken. It also ensures that in complying with the building regulations, pragmatic alternative approaches can be considered, where historic evidence would be at risk.

### **General**

Historically, access to the castle ward was through the gatehouse on the south-east side of the curtain wall. This has survived as a rectangular, three-storey over basement structure, built of uncoursed rubble limestone with a base batter on the north, east and west walls. It measures approximately 7.4m in length and 6.8m in width externally, over fifteen metres in height, with a thickness of 1.5m at basement level. The west and north walls of the tower line the former *Park*, the south and east line the carpark over three metres below the roof,

## Composition

### Chimney & Parapet

None of the original roof structure remains, it is now decked out with simple roof joists. However from drawings, it consisted of a pitched and hipped structure of common truss construction dating from the eighteenth or nineteenth century, the ridge of which ran along the north south axis of the building. The top of present flat roof covering was not parapet on the eastern side that is guarded with a metal bar, before the roof was replaced, a narrow wall walk was provided along the base of the roof slopes. The chimney and parapets are built of limestone rubble; these are pointed up crudely with cement in places, in others the joints are badly eroded due to ivy infestation. The main flue system runs along the south-facing wall to serve two nineteenth-century fireplaces. On the second floor, a small brick fireplace has been placed into the north eastern corner, with a brick flue inserted into the external wall, visible to the exterior, and no pot or outlet evident. This fireplace is in a precarious condition, having lost its hearth when the timber floor was removed.

### Walls

The external walls and their openings provide the clearest evidence of the several phases of development of the gate house; its gradual loss of its harling coating and the recent clearing of the ivy covering has exposed features that were covered up in recent decades. Built of random rubble limestone, loose render has revealed red brick window surrounds and chimney flues on the south and west walls. The quoins consist of small dressed stones, with carved ashlar used for the arrow loops on the corners. Rough, small stones are found on the south side, and these might relate to exposed wall core following the lowering of the curtain wall. A large granite lintel has been crudely installed into the arched opening over the western door. An annex to Leinster Lodge is attached at the north west corner, the town wall. The walls appear to be generally at rest, with the exception of cracks along the chimney flues and to a number of the window openings. Unusually for a building in a prominent town centre location, and one that was inhabited up to recent decades, there is scant evidence of hard cement re-pointing so that much of the walls have retained their lime mortar. The joints to the base of the walls have been eroded quite badly, as well as to the exposed corners and behind the badly leaking downpipe. As noted above, the parapets are in the poorest condition. This stonework should be made weatherproof by pinning and pointing using lime mortar as a matter of urgency. Consideration should also be given to the renewal of the harling; first by the removal of loose material, retention of sound render and dubbing out with lime render to a matching mix so that the shelter coat, used traditionally on rubble walls, is renewed. The most distinctive feature of the gate house is the

thickening of the wall around the first floor opening on the south side. This would have provided support for the gangway over the ditch at the entrance to the castle. Interestingly, this opening appears hardly large enough for a horse and cart to pass through, being less than two metres in width.

#### **Door & Windows**

Anglo-Norman castles generally had small, narrow and arch-headed openings, permitting little light or air. By the fifteenth century, windows had increased in size using finely dressed stone window surrounds with carved heads and mullions. The fifteenth-century twin-light windows also have finely dressed stone surrounds; these are simply detailed and missing their mullions. Medieval windows on the north and west sides have been in filled with stone, an early window over the gate was hidden by the ivy covering. The mural stairs are well lit, although these windows appear to be later additions. One has retained its timber casement. Otherwise, the early nineteenth century timber sliding sash windows have in the main been replaced with uPVC casements fitted flush to the front face of the wall; these are poorly fitted and allow water ingress and draughts. These have retained their shutters and sash boxes. The smaller openings have crude timber frames inserted, the arrow loops remain open. At basement level, the main entrance is through a plywood sheeted door which was formerly a timber sliding sash window that was the only source of light. On the floor above, the two openings that related to the gate at first floor level have been infilled with brick to the east side and masonry to the west side. This room is the former entrance passage into the castle, a narrow wall gives access into a lobby to the external door to the Park. A narrow vaulted corridor gives access to the mural stairs in the north wall and the door opening into the link to the bungalow. The timber door opening out onto the yard dates from the nineteenth century, now sheeted but formerly glazed, is badly rotted. An opening in the north wall has been introduced to link the gatehouse with a modern bungalow extension on the north. Some of the internal joinery has survived, the timber panel internal doors on the ground and first floors have bolection mouldings and brass doorknobs that may date from the eighteenth century and are salvageable. A door frame has also survived to the mural staircase leading to the second floor, but is badly rotted.

#### **Floors**

Unlike many tower houses, there are no masonry vaulted rooms, all of the floors being constructed of timber. The loss of part of the second floor has exposed a timber baulk, perhaps dating from the eighteenth century. There is a mixture of wide and narrow boards surviving on sawn timber floor joists. The mural staircases to the north and south walls to lead to the roof are no longer safely accessible. Until the interior can be refurbished, temporary access should be provided to these areas to allow inspection and access to the roof.

### **Interior Finishes**

In the interior, it is possible to appreciate that the walls are constructed around a series of arched openings and alcoves and passages for mural staircases. There are pointed arches to the alcoves and rounded vaulting to the staircases. The placement of openings suggest that there are hidden voids within the walls, other than those uncovered by the removal of the drylining. The staircases are built of solid stone steps, now painted, that appear to be later additions. On the uppermost level the steps were lined with timber, now badly rotted and its bedding eroded into rubble. The timber stairs that links the basement to the ground floor, dating from the nineteenth century, enclosed with a wainscot and has several rotted steps. It is narrow with tight winders leading to the landing that need to be carefully negotiated. The interior to the basement has modern dry lining in front of plastered walls, possibly dating from the nineteenth century. Some plaster and lath linings have survived to the alcoves and door surrounds. Much of the dry lining has been removed, exposing an arched alcove in the west retaining wall. The ground floor walls remain lined with timber boarding up to the ceiling, most likely twentieth century, with the walls behind also plastered. On the floor above, much of the drylining has been removed to expose plaster in poor condition, the second floor being half missing, it is clear that the entire interior was plastered, and that this has badly deteriorated on the upper most levels. Plaster has sheared off the walls, and much that remains in very damp and has lost its bonding and is covered by algae and trailing fronds of ivy. The ground and first floors remain covered in carpet, the basement having a modern concrete floor. Ceilings are flat plaster and lath fixed directly to the floor joists with no mouldings. The deep timber beam at second floor level is sheathed in laths to form a key and plastered. Timber tongue and grooved boards line the basement ceiling and appear to be in good condition. A number of Bakelite electrical switches have survived on the walls, with trailing wiring, along with more modern wiring. The fireplace on the first floor has been formed from brick with a thick timber lintel, with the remnants of an early moulded cement surround visible. On the ground floor, the moulded

### **Cultural Significance**

The Guidelines to the Burra Charter state that:

*Cultural Significance is a concept which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past or enrich the present, and which will be of value to future generations*

There are a variety of categories used to evaluate the level of a place's cultural significance: *Archaeological, Historic, Architectural, Artistic, Cultural, Scientific, Technical and Social* interest categories will be used to assess the significance of the gate house to Kildare Castle.

### **Archaeological Interest**

Kildare is arguably the longest continuously occupied urban centre in the country. There were at least four main phases in its development, from the pre-Christian to the modern era. As the only standing portion of the former castle to have survived, along with the removal of much of the medieval town from the early modern period, the significance of the gate house is enhanced. The survival of its gate house is of interest, allowing comparisons with far larger and intact structures such as at Roscrea and Carlingford. As a site that has remained relatively undeveloped up to the present, there is significant archaeological potential to learn more about the phases of its history.

### **Historical Interest**

The castle played an important part in the history of Kildare, in its development from an early Christian monastery into an Anglo-Norman town. Along with nearby historic castles of the county at Athy, Maynooth, Naas and Castledermot- they make a valuable cluster with similarities and differences that provide rich evidence of the medieval period. The associations with historical figures such as William Marshall, the Fitzgerald and Conolly families and most particularly Lord Edward Fitzgerald contribute to our understanding of Irish political and social history over six centuries.

### **Architectural Interest**

The gate house and castle bawn are records of the development of an architecture of war and colonisation from the late-medieval period. The decline of the castle and removal of its towers is of interest, attesting to both developments in martial technologies as well as political and social change. The castle bawn became the setting for an early modern house known as Leinster Lodge. The gate house appears to have been used as an annex to another residence, known as Kildare Lodge. Kildare Castle is featured in recent studies on architectural and landscape design; the gate house is offered as an exemplar of the creative re-use of medieval domestic architecture. The several phases of adaptation is a very useful record of Irish domestic architecture, as applied to a modestly-sized structure over an extended period. Its current function as an ornamental garden building adorning the setting of Kildare Lodge as well as its annexation by Leinster Lodge is further evidence of its adaptability, aspects that merit further research.

### **Social Interest**

The gate house makes a contribution to our understanding of the development of Irish society during the medieval period and up to the present. The removal of the castle walls and survival of the gate house is also of social interest, as the threat of invasion subsided due to technological advances and a period of relative peace during the eighteenth century prior to the rebellion of 1798. Its associations with the Fitzgerald and Conolly families, among the most prominent in eighteenth century society, adds to the significance of the place.

### **Statement of Significance**

While the gate house resembles and retains features of a fifteenth-century tower house, of which there are at least one thousand examples still standing; it is a far older structure, dating from the early decades of Anglo-Norman colonisation. The gate house has achieved a remarkable longevity, having served as a dwelling throughout a period of some five hundred years despite the gradual ruination and loss of the rest of the castle buildings. Contained within the various layers of its surviving fabric is an example of an adaptation of a largely functional defensive structure into a fortified dwelling, and later as a garden building and annex to the lodge which in time became a town park. Alterations to the window openings and lining of the interior have each obscure evidence of past phases. The process of uncovering of these layers through its refurbishment provides an opportunity to better understand this fascinating building. As only the bawn walls and its gate house have survived of Kildare Castle, their preservation is all the more important. The gate house itself contains evidence of over eight centuries of continuous use, an exemplar of the creative re-use of medieval architecture that has ensured its preservation, making it a place of regional cultural significance.





ACO Protected Structure Evaluation - PPS B22-62 Kildare Castle Gate House

1. I recommend that this structure is added to Kildare County Councils Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in accordance with section 54 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and as amended to protect its special interest heritage categories as described in the above particulars and architectural inventory

54.—(1) A planning authority may add to or delete from its record of protected structures a structure, a specified part of a structure or a specified feature of the attendant grounds of a structure, where—(a) the authority considers that—(i) in the case of an addition, the addition is necessary or desirable in order to protect a structure, or part of a structure, of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, whether or not a recommendation has been made under section 53,

2. I recommend that a letter of notification is served in accordance with section 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and as amended to the owner/occupier and interested parties.

Signed  

Peter Black Architect RIBA MUBC

Architectural Conservation Officer

Kildare County Council