



Dr. Charles Mount  
Project Archaeologist

---

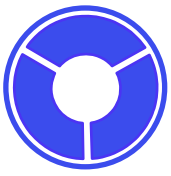
**Archaeological Impact Assessment of a Land Parcel in Bishopsland  
and Ballymore Eustace East townlands, Ballymore Eustace, Co.  
Kildare**

**Report For**

**Joe and Ann Headon**

**Author**

**Dr. Charles Mount**



## Introduction

This archaeological impact assessment report was prepared by Dr. Charles Mount. It represents the results of a desk-based assessment of a land parcel of c.7.4 hectares in the townlands of Bishopsland and Ballymore Eustace East townlands, Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare on the known archaeological heritage of the land parcel and vicinity. The land parcel is located in east Co. Kildare, south-east of the town of Ballymore Eustace, and directly south of the L2025 road. The land parcel consists of agricultural greenfield and woodland.

## Methodology

This is a desk-based archaeological assessment that includes a collation of existing written and graphic information to identify the likely archaeological potential of the land parcel and vicinity. The overall study area is presented in Fig. 1. This area was examined using information from the:

- Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for County Kildare
- The Sites and Monuments Record that is maintained by the Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- The Co. Kildare Development Plan 2017-23
- Aerial photography
- Excavation and assessment reports; and
- Cartography

An impact assessment has been prepared and recommendations have been made.

## Desktop assessment

### Recorded Monuments

The Record of Monuments and Places for Co. Kildare which was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 was examined as part of the assessment (DAHGI 1995). This review established that there are no known Recorded Monuments located in the land parcel. The northern part of the land parcel extends into the area of notification of the historic town of Ballymore Eustace RMP KD029-01101- at north (see Fig. 1). The description of RMP KD029-01101- from the Sites and Monuments Record is provided below.

#### *KD029-01101-, Town, Ballymore Eustace*

*On a S-facing slope on the E bank of the River Liffey, near the border with County Wicklow. A significant pre-Norman ecclesiastical presence is indicated by the two high crosses (KD029-011006- and KD029-011007-) and a cross slab (KD029-011009-) in the graveyard (KD029-011004-) containing the ruins of St. John's Church (KD029-011002-) at the E end of the town. According to Bradley et al. (1986, vol. 1, 71-74), the name 'Ballymore' [i.e. Baile mór/town] is found in late 12th-century documents, while the epithet Eustace first occurs in Irish in 1548 and in English sources from 1666, because the Eustace family held the office of constable of the castle (KD029-011005-) for most of the Middle Ages. A Norman motte (KD029-011003-) was erected, probably to the N of the present town. Ballymore was a manor belonging to the archbishops of Dublin: references occur to the archbishop's castle of Ballymore in a grant of 1181-90 and to his manor of Ballymore in a grant of 1191. The grant of a weekly market is referred to between 1189 and 1199, and in 1234, Henry III granted the archbishop the right to*



hold a yearly fair. A document of c. 1256-66 indicates Ballymore had become a borough with burgesses paying 12d yearly and holding 12 acres in burgage. A 1326 extent of the manor of Ballymore states that there were 160 burgesses in the borough, as well as two water mills and a common kiln together with 16 cottages that paid no rent, four cottages lying in waste and a plot of land called 'Tailourbourgage'. In 1540, the grant of a weekly market and annual fair was confirmed by the king to the archbishop. Ballymore was plundered during the Geraldine revolt of 1546, while in 1572, it was reported that all Ballymore, except for one le Strange's house and castle, had been burned by the Irish. In 1608, James I revived the rights of fairs and markets in the town and in 1659, the population was given as 132. The precise location and extent of the medieval borough is uncertain. It may have stood near St. John's Church (KD029-011002-) at the E end of the present town or may have been focused on Church Road, to the SW, which runs roughly N-S in a bend in the River Liffey, and off which, especially to the E, long narrow, burgage-like plots run. The layout of the 'main' part of the town, including Main Street and the Market Square to the NE of Church Road, probably dates from the 17th-century.

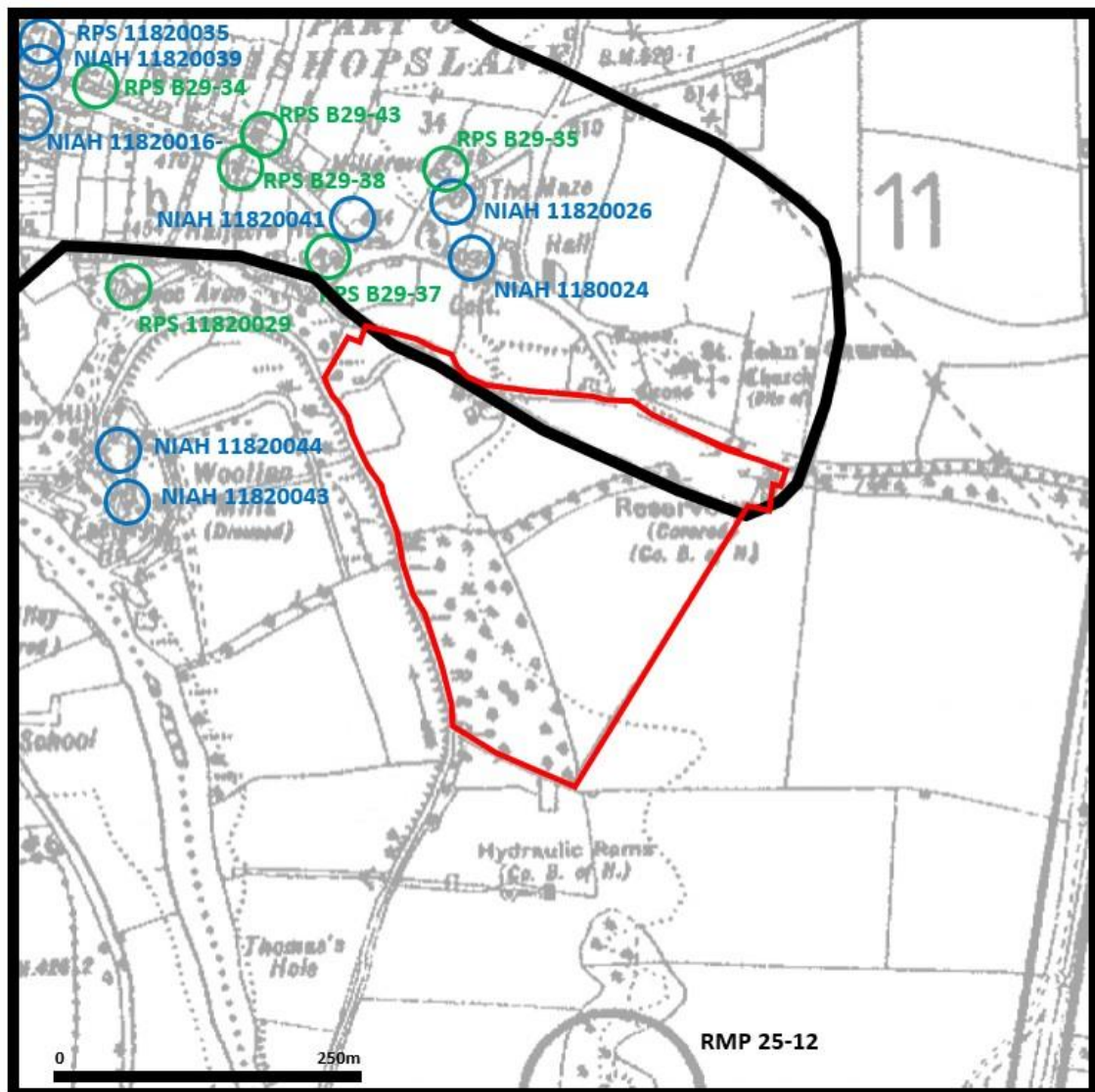
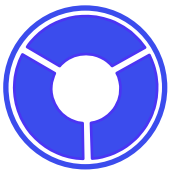


Fig. 1. Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare, detail of the Record of Monuments and Places map sheet No. 25. The land parcel is outlined with the red line. The area of notification of the historic town of



*Ballymore Eustace is indicated by the thick black line. Structures in the RPS are indicated with green circles and the NIAH with blue circles*

*In 1997 archaeological testing was carried out under licence no. 97E0370 on a proposed house site (693075/709960) listed as Site 2 at Bishops lane in 1997 uncovered medieval features, deposits and finds relating to the medieval settlement (KD029-011001-) of Ballymore Eustace (Hayden 1998, 90). The site was located on the S side of Bishops lane Road 155m W of the medieval church (KD029-011002-) and graveyard (KD029-011004-) and 265m SE of the Anglo-Norman motte castle (KD029-011003-). The archaeological deposits were concentrated at the N end of the development site in a 20m zone running N-S and facing onto the present road.*

*Archaeological testing under licence No. 97E0425 was carried out on the adjoining development sites; Site 1 located immediately W of Site 2 and Sites 3-6 located immediately to the E. Medieval settlement features, deposits and finds were found in all 19 test trenches with possible medieval structure at the N and S ends of the trenches with cultivation furrows located in between the possible structures (Hayden 1998, 90, No. 262). The archaeological testing in these fields shows that the settlement associated with the medieval town or manor of Ballymore Eustace located between the medieval church and castle. In 1999 a Preservation Order (PO 1 of 1999) was placed on the proposed development site No. 1 (693046/709953), Site No. 3 (693099/709936), Site No 5 (693146/709912) and Site No. 6 (693180/709896). In the same year archaeological monitoring was carried out on Site 4 prior to the construction of a single storey dwelling and no archaeological features or deposits were uncovered (Lynch 2000, 121, No. 360). The following year archaeological monitoring of ground-works on Site 3 under licence No. 97E0425etx. was carried out and medieval pottery dating from the 12th-15th century was recovered from the site. A bungalow was subsequently constructed on this site. Sites 1, 5, and 6 are currently undeveloped green-field sites as visible on Digital Globe aerial photographs.*

#### Proximity to individual Recorded Monuments

Within the historic town of Ballymore Eustace the closest monument to the land parcel is the St. John's ecclesiastical site that is located c.10m from the north edge of the land parcel directly across the L2025 road. This ecclesiastical site has 17 individually listed monuments including a Church, Graveyard, High Crosses, etc. that are detailed below.

#### *KD029-011002-, Church, Ballymore Eustace East*

*In a graveyard (KD029-011004-) at the E edge of Ballymore Eustace, a historic town (KD029-011001-). According to Bradley et al. (1986, vol. 1, 77-8), the first reference to a church occurs in 1192, although the presence two high crosses (KD029-011006- and KD029-011007-) and a cross slab (KD029-011009-) in the graveyard indicates the existence of a significant pre-Norman church site. The church was a prebend of St. Patrick's cathedral in Dublin from before 1227 when it was valued at 20 marks. It is referred to as the 'church of Blessed Mary of Ballymore' in a document of 1529-34. The church was described as in good repair in the Royal Visitation of 1615, but had deteriorated by the time of Archbishops Bulkley's Visitation in 1630. Few physical remains survive: fragments of two walls are visible to the E (L 1.8m; H 3m; T 1.05m) containing a splayed ope, and S (L 2m; H c. 1m; T 1.05m) of the present, 19th-century church. A font (KD029-011010-) in the porch of the 19th-century church presumably came from the medieval church, while a second font (KD029-011013-) in the graveyard is said to have come from Coghlanstown church (KD029-005001-).*





*KD029-011004-, Graveyard, Ballymore Eustace East*

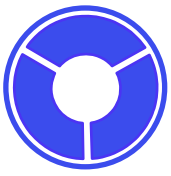
*On a S-facing slope on the E edge of Ballymore Eustace, a historic town (KD029-011001-). A roughly square area (max. c. 82m E-W; c. 80m N-S) is enclosed by a well-built stone wall with a gate and stile in the NW corner and a gate in the SE corner. Mature beech and yew trees grow throughout. It's likely to have been a significant pre-Norman ecclesiastical site because the graveyard also contains two high crosses (KD029-011006- and KD029-011007-), two cross-inscribed slabs (KD029-011008-, KD029-011009-) and seven grave slabs (KD029-011014- to KD029-011020-). There is also a medieval font (KD029-011013-), a holed stone (KD029-011012-) and the fragmentary remains of a medieval church (KD029-011002-) to the rear of an upstanding 19th-century church, which itself contains a second medieval font (KD029-011013-) and a 16th-century knightly effigy (KD029-011011-). Burials from the 18th-century to recent times are marked by chest tombs, table tombs and headstones, many of which are leaning and some of which are broken.*

*KD029-011006-, Cross - High Cross, Ballymore Eustace East*

*The cross stands in a graveyard (KD029-011004-) to the N of a 19th-century church. Of granite, this tall, slightly tapering, ringed cross (H 3.4m; Wth across arms 1.4m; shaft H 2.15; Wth 0.42-0.49m; T 0.33-0.35m) stands on deeply buried rectangular base. The upper shaft and the E side of the S arm are damaged. The W face has a large central boss surrounded by a low rounded moulding and the ring on both faces is banded by a double half-roll moulding. It is probably pre-1200 in date. A secondary inscription in Roman capitals on the W face reads (anticlockwise); AMEN/ NO(r) THE 9 ERECTED IN 16/89/BY/ AM WALL/ IHS (King, H. 1999 Excavations at the North Cross, Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare. Unpublished report, National Monuments Service, Dublin), and commemorates its re-erection in 1689. The cross was leaning badly, and in 1999 it was taken down and re-erected securely, the work being informed and facilitated by a small scale archaeological excavation around the base (Licence No. 99E0143; King, op. cit.). The deeply buried base consists of a large granite boulder, worked to create a stepped pyramidal shape on its upper surface. It is crudely cut, and the steps are of uneven height. The lower part of the stone is unworked, and the eastern side is steeply concave. The base was sitting on the undisturbed natural and was propped on the east by a number of stones overlain in places by mortar. The cross shaft was found to have no tenon and sat loosely in the base's mortice to a depth of c. 0.3m. The mortice was, however, over double that depth but bellied inwards at c. 0.3-0.35m below the upper surface, resulting in a narrowing which did not permit the shaft to be seated securely in position. The gap between the shaft and the mortice had allowed an old iron key, probably for the church door, to slip down into the bottom of the mortice, which was filled up with soil, dead leaves and water. Excavation was confined to the area immediately around the base so that no stratified burials would be disturbed, although a number of cuts for burials were recorded. The lack of significant stratigraphy or any great depth of burial suggested that this area of the graveyard had not been extensively used. The finding of two sherds of medieval pottery, slag, a bronze binding strip and a small quantity of animal bone suggested some medieval occupation activity in the area before its use as a burial-ground. (Manning 1998, 112; King 2004).*

*KD029-011007-, Cross - High Cross, Ballymore Eustace East*

*Bradley (et. al. 1986, vol. 1, 79) described the South Cross standing in Ballymore Eustace graveyard (KD029-011004-), to the SE of St. John's C. of I. church as consisting of an unpierced ringed cross carved from a single block of granite (total H 1.97m; base: H 0.82m; L 0.46-0.56m; Wth 0.38-0.4m; shaft; H 1.15m; Wth 0.35m T 0.24-0.27m). The base is a tall rectangular piece of stone, not much wider than the shaft, with low moulding around its edges. The gently tapering shaft has rounded edges and is undecorated except for half-diamond shapes on the lower end of each face. Only the lower sections of recessed spandrels forming*



*the ring survive. It is probably pre-1200 in date. Recent photogrammetric survey of this cross carried out by Seán Sourke clearly shows the V shaped terminal at the base on all four faces of the cross. The survey also revealed faint traces of a possible ringed cross visible on the W face of the base and fainter traces of possible decoration on the other three faces of the cross-base.*

*KD029-011008-, Cross, Ballymore Eustace East*

*According to Bradley et al. (1986, vol. 1, 79) it stands in a graveyard (KD029-011004-), to N of a 19th-century church. A roughly shaped granite Latin cross (dims. H 1.67m; Wth across arms 0.4m; T 0.15m) of uncertain date.*

*KD029-011009-, Cross-Slab, Ballymore Eustace East*

*According to Bradley et al. (1986, vol. 1, 79) it stands in a graveyard (KD029-011004-), to W of a 19th-century church. A tapering granite slab (H 1.03m; Wth 0.47-0.67m; T 0.19m) bears an incised cross with expanded arms, and is probably pre-1200 in date. (Corlett 2003, 87, 88, 106, Slab 1)*

*KD029-011010-, Font, Ballymore Eustace East*

*According to Bradley et al. (1986, vol. 1, 79-80), the font stands in the porch of a 19th-century church, in a graveyard (KD029-011004-). A cylindrical granite stone (diam. 0.77m; H 0.47m) contains a bowl (diam 0.54m; D 0.25-0.26m) which is almost straight-sided and has a flat base with a central circular drain-hole (diam. 0.09m). The rim of the bowl is flat but has broken away at one point and was subsequently replaced with concrete. It is possibly 12th-century in date.*

*KD029-011011-, Tomb - Effigial (Present Location), Ballymore Eustace*

*According to Bradley et al. (1986, vol. 1, 80), a 16th-century limestone knightly effigy was moved from Old Kilcullen (KD028-049012-) to a 19th-century church in a graveyard (KD029-011004-) in Ballymore Eustace. The slab, carved in high relief with the figure of a knight, is believed to represent Sir Oliver FitzEustace. The head is on a cushion and the feet rest on an animal. The right arm lies on his breast and the left is extended, lying across a sword. The knight is represented as armed, in a long hauberk (coat) of mail with short sleeves and with a mail collar attached. The bascinet (helmet) has a visor and there is a crest, possibly a stag couchant, on the forehead (Hunt 1974, 77, 153, Fig. 142). Hunt (op. cit. 153) considers that the effigy, 'represents indifferent journeyman's work, but is said to have been "restored" in the nineteenth century.'*

*KD029-011012-, Holed Stone, Ballymore Eustace East*

*According to Bradley et al. (1986, vol. 1, 80), it lies at the E end of a graveyard (KD029-011004-). A rectangular granite block (L 0.68m; Wth 0.44m; H 0.22m) contains a circular hole (diam. 0.14m).*

*KD029-011013-, Font, Ballymore Eustace East*

*According to Bradley et al. (1986, vol. 1, 80), it lies in a graveyard (KD029-011004-) at the NW corner of a 19th-century church. A circular granite font (ext. diam. 0.75m; H 0.50m; int. diam. 0.55m; D of basin 0.27m). The font is said to have been moved here from Coghlanstown church (KD029-005001-).*

*KD029-011014-, Graveslab, Ballymore Eustace East*

*In a graveyard (KD029-011004-) immediately S of the W gable of a medieval church ruins (KD029-011002-). An erect, earthfast, tapering granite slab (dims. H 1.03m; Wth 0.5-0.65m; T 0.25m) carries an incised Latin cross on its E face. (Corlett 2003, 87, 88 Slab 2).*



*KD029-011015-, Graveslab, Ballymore Eustace East*

*In a graveyard (KD029-011004-) beside a high cross (KD029-011006-). An erect, earthfast, tapering granite slab (dims. H 1.2m; Wth 0.45-0.61m; T 0.13m) carries a broadly incised Latin cross on its W face. (Corlett 2003, 87, 88 Slab 3).*

*KD029-011016-, Graveslab, Ballymore Eustace East*

*In a graveyard (KD029-011004-), N of a medieval church ruins (KD029-011002-). A low, erect, earthfast, gently tapering granite slab (dims. H 0.3m; Wth 0.50-0.52m; T 0.14m) carries a deeply incised Latin cross on its E face. (Corlett 2003, 87, 88 Slab 4).*

*KD029-011017-, Graveslab, Ballymore Eustace East*

*In a graveyard (KD029-011004-), N of a medieval church ruins (KD029-011002-). A low, erect, earthfast granite slab (dims. H 0.44m; Wth 0.46m; T 0.16m) carries an incised Latin cross on its E face, below the arms of which are two, small, incised circles. (Corlett 2003, 87, 88-9, 106 Slab 5).*

*KD029-011018-, Graveslab, Ballymore Eustace East*

*In the SE corner of a graveyard (KD029-011004-), beside a high cross (KD029-011007-). A low, erect, earthfast, tapering granite slab (dims. H 0.85m; Wth 0.40-0.50m; T 0.14m) carries an incised Latin cross on its E face. (Corlett 2003, 89, 107 Slab 6).*

*KD029-011019-, Graveslab, Ballymore Eustace East*

*In the SE corner of a graveyard (KD029-011004-). An erect, earthfast, gently tapering, granite slab (dims. H 1.1m; Wth 0.46-0.52m; T 0.20m) carries an incised, but very weathered Latin cross on its E face. (Corlett 2003, 89, 90 Slab 7).*

*KD029-011020-, Graveslab, Ballymore Eustace East*

*In the SE corner of a graveyard (KD029-011004-). A low, erect, earthfast, granite slab (dims. H 0.25m; Wth 0.38m; T 0.20m) carries an incised Latin cross with expanded terminals on its E face. (Corlett 2003, 89, 90 Slab 8).*

#### Sites and Monuments Record

The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which is maintained by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage was examined as part of the assessment on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2022. This review established that there are no SMRs located in the land parcel (see Fig. 2).

#### National Monuments

Examination of the lists of National Monuments included in the Co. Kildare Development Plan 2017-23 (Tables 12.2, 12.3, 12.4 and 12.5) indicated that there are no National Monuments located in the land parcel. There is a monument: Medieval Settlement Ballymore Eustace KD029-01101- listed in table 12-5 as subject to a preservation order No. 1/1999.

#### Architectural Structures

A review of the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in the Co. Kildare Development Plan 2017-23 indicated that there are no Protected Structures in the land parcel (see Fig. 1). Externally the closest protected structure to the land parcel is a house in Ballymore Eustace East Townland No. B29-37. This structure is located c.50m north-west of the land parcel.

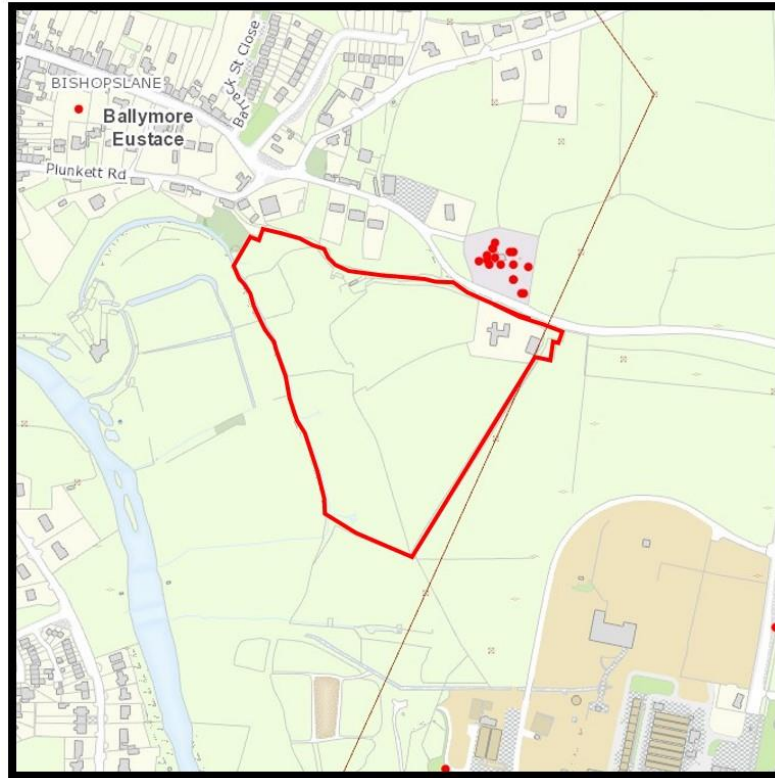
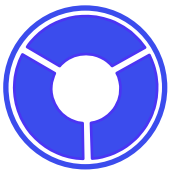


Fig. 2. Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare detail of the online Sites and Monuments Record map at <https://maps.archaeology.ie/>. The proposed application site is outlined with the red line. There are no SMRs in the land parcel.

A review of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) which is maintained by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage indicated that there are no structures listed in the NIAH in the land parcel (see Fig. 1). Externally the closest NIAH structure to the land parcel is a house in Ballymore Eustace East Townland No. 11820024. This structure is located c.75m north of the land parcel.

#### Archaeological investigations

Reports of archaeological excavations and licensed monitoring in the vicinity of the land parcel listed in the excavations database at [excavations.ie](http://excavations.ie) were examined as part of the assessment. There have been a large number of archaeological investigations carried out in the vicinity of the land parcel that have uncovered evidence for prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval activity (see below).

#### Church Road, Ballymore Eustace 98E0413 Urban medieval

Monitoring of groundworks associated with the reconstruction of a house and extension was undertaken at a site at Church Road, Ballymore Eustace, from 14 to 16 September 1998. Archaeological involvement with the development was carried out in compliance with the grant of planning.

The site lies at the base of Garrison Hill, and a reduction of existing ground levels by up to 3m in the area of the rear extension was required. It was also necessary to strip the topsoil in a section of the garden area in order to reduce the severity of the existing slope. Removal of the topsoil





revealed a layer of mid-brown, clayey sand, which appeared to be relatively undisturbed, and a number of sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from this layer. No features or structures of archaeological interest were uncovered during the course of the work.

Plunkett Road, Ballymore Eustace 99E0533 No archaeological significance

Test excavation of the site of a new dwelling was undertaken on 2 October 1999. Three trenches were opened by mechanical excavator, using a toothless bucket. No traces of medieval cultivation furrows survived here; however, the profile of potato ridges was apparent. Straight-sided ridges, which were up to c. 0.45m wide and varied from 0.3m to 0.6m deep, extended into the subsoil. In confirmation of their late date, glazed pottery dating from the 18th century onwards was recovered from the lowest levels of the cultivation soil in the trenches. Several small, abraded sherds of glazed medieval pottery were also recovered from the topsoil. No features of archaeological interest were present.

North Cross, St. John's,, Ballymore Eustace 99E0143 High Cross

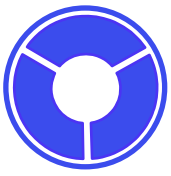
Peter Harbison noted in his study of The high crosses of Ireland, published in 1992, that the north cross in St John's Church of Ireland churchyard at Ballymore Eustace was leaning at a 'perilous angle'. In 1998 a site inspection gave rise to fears that the situation was deteriorating, and a decision was made to take down the cross and rectify the problem.

The large granite cross, 3.5m high, was set in a granite base that was almost completely buried in the ground. The cross was removed from the base by the National Monuments staff of Dúchas The Heritage Service, and the main reasons for the 'perilous' angle of the cross shaft were immediately evident. An examination of the mortice showed that the shaft was sitting in the base without any mortar, and there was a gap of c. 20mm on three sides between shaft and mortice. The cross shaft had no tenon and sat loosely in the mortice to a depth of c. 0.3m. The mortice was over double that depth but bellied inwards at c. 0.3-0.35m below the upper surface, resulting in a narrowing of the mortice, which did not permit the shaft to be seated securely in position. The gap between the shaft and the mortice had allowed an old iron key, probably for the church door, to slip down into the bottom of the mortice, which was filled up with soil, dead leaves and water. A small excavation took place around the base to facilitate its removal and to prepare the area for the re-erection of the cross. The base consists of a large granite boulder that had been worked to create a stepped pyramidal shape on its upper surface. It is crudely cut, and the steps are of uneven height. The lower part of the stone is unworked, and the eastern side is steeply concave. The base was sitting on the undisturbed natural esker and was propped on the east by a number of stones overlain in places by mortar.

Excavation was confined to the area immediately around the base so that no stratified burials would be disturbed, although a number of cuts for burials were recorded. The lack of significant stratigraphy or any great depth of burial would suggest that this area of the graveyard has not been extensively used. The finding of two sherds of medieval pottery, slag, a bronze binding strip and a small quantity of animal bone would seem to indicate some medieval occupation activity in the area before its use as a burial-ground.

Plunkett Road, Ballymore Eustace 99E0586 Medieval borough

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at a proposed development site at Plunkett Road, Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare, on 20 October 1999. The work was carried out in compliance with a condition included in the grant of planning in relation to the construction of a bungalow on the site.



Four trenches were excavated by machine. The site is to the east-south-east of the medieval borough of Ballymore and within the designated zone of archaeological potential. However, no features, deposits, structures or finds of archaeological interest were uncovered.

It is presumed, based on the results of the testing, that levels within the area of the site were reduced in the 19th century before the site was levelled with a shale gravel. This process resulted in topsoil being removed and may have also led to some disturbance to the natural, sandy subsoil. Given the location of the site, it was expected that, at a minimum, sherds of medieval pottery would have been uncovered. However, it is probable that any such material was removed from the site during groundworks associated with the construction of a previous dwelling

Site 3 Bishops lane, Ballymore Eustace 00E0425 Medieval borough

Monitoring of topsoil clearance for the construction of a dwelling was undertaken on 21 August 2000. The site had been tested in 1997 by Alan Hayden (Excavations 1997, 90), but since then considerable ground disturbance without archaeological supervision had occurred. Infilled foundations from 1998 were evident in the subsoil. Several shallow features, identified as cultivation furrows and tree-root disturbance, were excavated; none produced finds. Sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from the remaining topsoil, but the later strata of cultivation had been removed prior to this construction phase.

1 Chapel Lane, Ballymore Eustace 00E0426 No archaeological significance

Unlicensed monitoring of the construction of a small extension was undertaken in January 2000. Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered.

Barrack Street, Ballymore Eustace 00E0846 Environs of medieval borough

Testing was undertaken, as part of an archaeological assessment of a proposed development, on 16 November 2000. The site is located within the designated area of archaeological potential of Ballymore Eustace. Located c. 70m to the west/north-west of the site is Close Hill, the speculated location of a castle. No features, deposits or structures of archaeological potential were uncovered during the course of this work. However, twenty sherds of pottery, all of which appear to be of medieval date, were recovered. Given the likelihood that further pottery sherds exist buried within the confines of the development site, it was suggested that a monitoring clause be included in the grant of planning, if the development is allowed to proceed.

Naas–Ballymore Eustace–Athy, Kildare 02E0957 No archaeological significance

Monitoring of preliminary ground-investigation work preceding the County Kildare Water Strategy Phases 1A and 1B was carried out over eleven days from 18 June 2002. A total of 52 test-pits along the line of the proposed routes between Naas, Ballymore Eustace, Old Kilcullen and Athy were excavated to locate existing water mains. Two of the pits were within the zone of archaeological potential of Ardscull, and one pit was in the vicinity of an enclosure and field system at Russellstown (SMR 35:20). Nothing of archaeological interest was recorded.

Bishopsland Garage, Bishopsland, Ballymore Eustace, Kildare 03E1685 Medieval borough

Four trenches were mechanically excavated on the site. This revealed the presence of medieval gullies/ditches similar to those found on adjacent sites in previous years.

Anna Livia, Plunkett Road, Ballymore Eustace 05E1245 No archaeological significance

No material of archaeological significance was uncovered at this site.



#### Cnoc Avon, Bishopsland, Ballymore Eustace, Kildare 03E1337 Post-medieval

Testing was required in advance of a private development because of the proximity of the site to the zone of archaeological potential around the urban area of Ballymore Eustace. Testing was carried out in September 2003, during which three trenches were opened. The evidence from all trenches and from the local landscape indicates that this field has been subject to serious disturbance and subsequent reinstatement. The trenches revealed evidence for a sand quarry, which had been backfilled with domestic and construction refuse. Some of the infill material appears post-medieval in date but is mixed with 19th-century material. This may suggest that the quarry was excavated to facilitate the construction of Cnoc Avon House in the 19th century. The infill material may have been imported to the site to enable full reinstatement of the site prior to occupation.

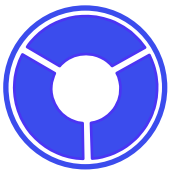
The Park, Ballymore Eustace 06E1131 Medieval rubbish pits, pond and post-medieval booley hut  
An impact assessment of a proposed housing development was undertaken at the site of The Park, Ballymore Eustace, Kildare. The site, which is bounded by the River Liffey in the south, is situated adjacent to the zone of archaeological potential for the medieval town of Ballymore Eustace, KD029–011. The assessment involved the excavation of ten test-trenches totalling 1016 linear metres. Three areas of archaeological potential were identified comprising medieval rubbish pits, a possible medieval ditch, a pond containing medieval stratigraphy and a post-medieval booley hut. The latter was 7m in diameter and was abutted by two charcoal spreads containing animal bone and post-medieval ceramics.

#### Ballymore Eustace 10E0102 Multi-period settlement

A series of test-trenches were excavated to the north-east of the barrow KE029–051 on foot of a geophysical survey (08R0031) which identified a large area of archaeological potential. The test excavations confirmed that the potential features identified by the geophysical survey were archaeological in nature and several additional features (a post-hole, pits and ditches) that had not been identified by the survey were also uncovered in the test-trenches. The combined results of the geophysical survey and test excavations have identified a previously unrecorded area of archaeological significance that is likely to be part of a large multi-period site with ditches, pits and a post-hole indicating an area of settlement activity extending over an area measuring 26m by 15m.

Seven trenches were excavated on-site, revealing that topsoil varied from 0.2m to 0.4m deep. All of the archaeological features were cut into subsoil. The post-hole uncovered on the western end of the site measured 0.12m in diameter and was probably part of a larger structure that extends outside the test-trench. A struck flint recovered from this post-hole suggests that it dates to the prehistoric period. Two pits in proximity to the post-hole probably indicate contemporary settlement activity. These pits measured 0.7m by 0.5m and 0.35m by 0.23m and were 0.08–0.12m deep.

Three linear ditches, F17, F19 and F21/F23, identified to the east and south-east of the pits and post-hole may be part of a contemporary settlement site, although no finds were recovered to indicate their date. These ditches measured 0.8m wide by 0.2m deep, 0.66m by 0.4m and 1.3m by 0.4m respectively. They all had similar fills of mid-brown silty clay with charcoal flecks, and fragments of bone (burnt and unburnt) were present within the fill of F21/23. A curvilinear ditch F25, located to the west of the ditch F21/F23 and c. 20m north-east of the recorded barrow (029–051) may date to the Bronze Age, since it contained a fragment of a copper-alloy ring. This ditch was 0.5m wide and 0.4m deep and was filled with dark-brown silty clay which contained poorly preserved fragments of animal bone.



A larger (3.5m by 1.2m) ditch, F3, uncovered in Trench 6 on the eastern end of the site, c. 43m from the barrow, may be part of a ditched enclosure. However, this east–west-orientated ditch was not uncovered within the Trench 5, which was located some 23m to the west, suggesting that it terminated somewhere between the two parallel trenches. A smaller (1.6m by 0.5m) north-east/south-west-orientated linear ditch, F27, in Trench 5, may also be part of an enclosure or a linear field boundary. Another ditch, F5, measuring just 0.65m by 0.23m, was located to the south of the large ditch F3. These three ditches (F3, F27 and F15) were located within an area depicted on the historic maps as open fields and they almost certainly pre-date these maps, while their relative proximity to the barrow (029–081) could suggest a prehistoric date.

The spoil from the hand-dug sections together with that from the mechanically excavated trenches was scanned by a metal detector. No 'hits' were recorded during this metal-detection exercise. The absence of topsoil finds from any of the test-trenches suggests that the land may not have been tilled or otherwise disturbed during the medieval or post-medieval periods. The features identified as a result of geophysical survey and test excavations suggest an area of settlement, where at least some of the activity dates from the prehistoric period. Occasional fragments of burnt bone were identified during testing, but these were not found in the type of concentrated deposits that typically indicate cremation burials. Several poorly preserved fragments of unburnt bone were also uncovered. These were all disarticulated and those that allowed for identification in the field were from domestic animals. Thus the evidence suggests that the bones uncovered here were domestic waste rather than the remains of human burials and further indicates that the area of test excavation was one of domestic settlement activity.

Ballymore Eustace Sewerage Scheme 13E0009 No archaeology found

Monitoring was undertaken during ground works associated with the construction of the Ballymore Eustace Sewerage Scheme, Co. Kildare (OS Sheet 29). Monitoring was undertaken by Faith Bailey, Mark Moraghan and David McIlreavy of IAC Ltd. It follows a desktop report carried out by The Archaeology Company in 2008 which recommended monitoring within greenfield areas. All topsoil stripping within the greenfield areas of the scheme was monitored in January 2013. Nothing of archaeological significance was identified during the programme of works.

Bishopsland, Ballymore Eustace 13E0155 Prehistoric activity

Excavation was carried out at a site in Bishopsland in advance of the construction of a sludge treatment facility at the Ballymore Eustace Water Treatment Plant. Prior to excavation, and as part of the planning process, Dublin City Council had previously engaged Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd. to carry out an Archaeological Appraisal (2007) followed by Geophysical Survey (08R0031) and test excavation (2010:395, 10E0102) of the area to be impacted on by the new development. The test excavation report concluded that excavations required for the proposed new sludge treatment plant development would result in the removal of all archaeological features within the footprint and recommended full excavation across the development. The excavation was undertaken on behalf of Dublin City Council between 24 June and 2 August 2013. Excavation revealed a concentration of activity within the western portion of the site, north-east of bowl barrow KD029-051. Archaeological features included pits and posts centred on hearths and a number of curvilinear gullies one of which appears to have been a small ring-ditch. Kilns and a metalworking furnace were also excavated across the site. Post-excavation analysis is on-going, however, based on the sample and artefact assemblage for the site, it appears primarily to represent domestic or settlement activity, which would mainly date to the Bronze Age. Some possible Neolithic activity was also identified based on pottery sherds recovered from some of the pits. A possible Iron Age or early medieval metalworking furnace was identified that was cut by a later





linear ditch, which had been recut twice. A curvilinear feature to the east of the site may be contemporary with the Neolithic or Bronze Age activity. It was cut by a later linear ditch. The entire site was truncated by agricultural furrows.

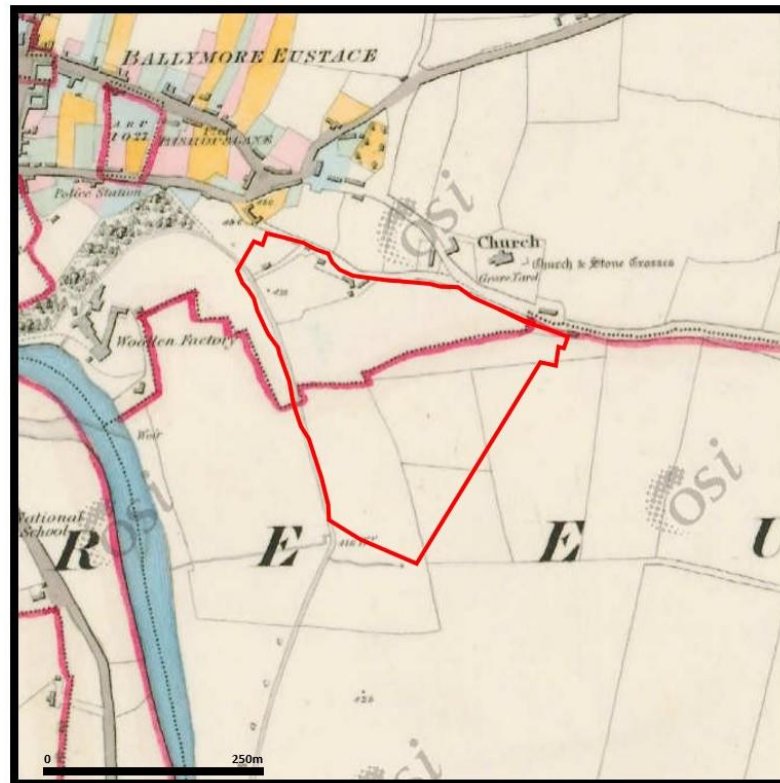


Fig. 4. Ballymore Eustace, Kildare, detail of the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition six-inch map sheet No. 19. The proposed land parcel is outlined with the red line. The land parcel was undeveloped agricultural land in the early nineteenth century.

### Previous Assessments

A review of previous planning applications concerning the land parcel available on the Kildare County Council planning search web facility indicated that the land parcel has not previously been subject to archaeological assessment.

### Cartographic Sources

The Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> edition six-inch and 1<sup>st</sup> edition twenty-five-inch maps of the application site were examined as part of the assessment. This analysis did not indicate any additional unrecorded archaeological sites or monuments in the land parcel or vicinity (see Figs. 3 and 4).

### Aerial Photography

Examination of the Ordnance Survey 1995, 2000 and 2005 aerial imagery as well as Google Earth imagery from 2009, 2010, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019 and 2020, Bing imagery (see Figs. 6 and 7). This analysis did not indicate any additional unrecorded archaeological sites or monuments in the land parcel or vicinity.

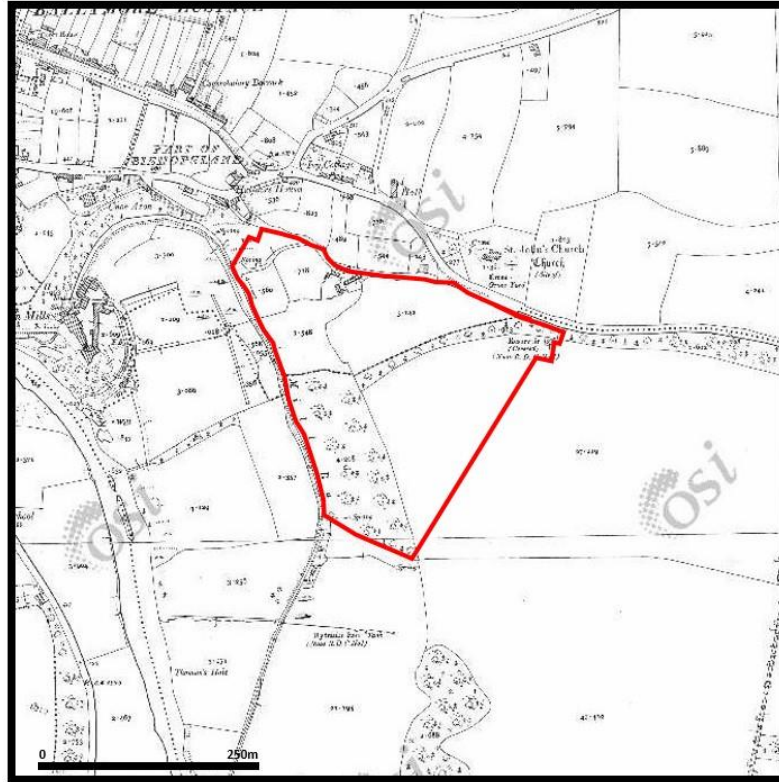
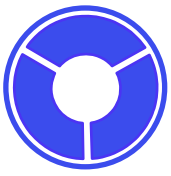


Fig. 5. Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare, detail of the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition twenty-five-inch map sheet. The proposed land parcel is outlined with the red line.

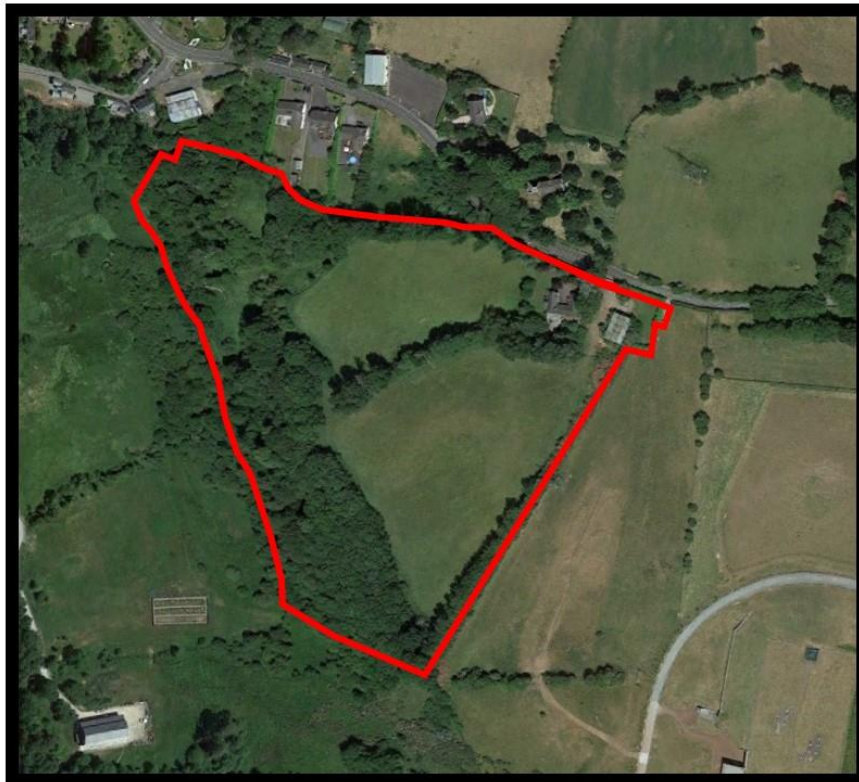


Fig. 6. Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare, Google Earth aerial image of the application site captured in 2018. The proposed land parcel is outlined with the red line.



## Impact Assessment

The land parcel is agricultural land and woodland located beside the historic town of Ballymore Eustace. There are no known items of archaeological heritage in the land parcel. There is a potential for any future development in the land parcel to disturb previously unknown subsurface deposits or artefacts without preservation by record taking place. Externally the proposed development has the potential to impact the setting of St. John's ecclesiastical site (RMP KD029-011002- KD029-011020-).

## Conclusion

This is a desk-based archaeological assessment that includes a collation of existing written and graphic information intended to identify the likely archaeological potential of the land parcel. No known archaeological material has been identified in the land parcel. There is a potential for any future development to disturb previously unknown subsurface deposits or artefacts without preservation by record taking place. Externally any future proposed development has the potential to impact the setting of St. John's ecclesiastical site (RMP KD029-011002- KD029-011020-).

## References

- Bradley, J. *et al* 1986. Urban Archaeology Survey of Ireland vol. 4, 343-383.
- Corlett, C. 2003, The Hollywood Slabs – some late medieval grave slabs from west Wicklow and neighbouring Counties, Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 133, 86-110.
- DAHGI 1995. Recorded Monuments Protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994. County Kildare.
- Harbison, P. 1992 The high crosses of Ireland: an iconographical and photographic survey, 3 vols. Dublin. Royal Irish Academy. Bonn. Dr. Rudolf Habelt GMBH.
- Hunt, J. 1974 Irish medieval figure sculpture 1200-1600, 2 vols. Dublin. Irish University Press.
- King, H. 2004 Excavation at the north cross, Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare. In C. Hourihane (ed.) Irish art historical studies in honour of Peter Harbison. Dublin. Four Courts Press, 165-74.
- Manning, C. 1998a Miscellanea: The inscription on the North Cross at Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare, Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries 128, 112.

Dr. Charles Mount  
10 May 2022