

A submission from Kildare Cultural Heritage Group

Kildare Cultural Heritage Group



Kildare County Development Plan
c/o Senior Executive Planner
Planning Department
Kildare Co Co
Aras Chill Dara
Devoy Park
Naas
County Kildare

27 October 2022

Re: Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

We are writing to make a submission with respect to the above and specifically relating to Proposed Material Alteration No. APS 2 as follows:

“Add Gowran Grange House, associated outbuildings and demesne to the list of Kildare County Council Proposed Protected Structures (PPS) – Additions.”

We welcome Kildare County Council’s acknowledgement of the importance of the Gowran Grange House and demesne and we support the material alteration as proposed.

We also refer to Page 1420 of Volume 2 of the Chief Executive Report as published in August 2022, stating as follows:

“Gowran Grange house and demesne is a significant mid-19th century Tudor-revival house built by noteworthy architects, Lanyon and Lynn with the assistance of architect John McCurdy. The estate remains in the ownership of the original family, de Robeck.

The house and demesne are an important heritage asset and greatly contribute to the history and development of the local area and grand country houses of County Kildare.

The NIAH Garden Survey record for Gowran Grange does not include a record of architectural features including a principal building, garden structures, gateways or gatehouses, or a building of indeterminate purpose. This does not determine that there are no architectural features of note, more so they have yet to be recorded.

It is also noted that the subject lands at Gowran Grange contain a Designed Landscape feature on the NIAH (ref KDO24 – 040).

Having regard to the above, Gowran Grange House, demesne and associated outbuildings are considered to be of regional significance and of special interest from an architectural, historical, cultural, social and technical point of view.”

We also note that there were a number of other submissions as part of the Development Plan consultation process. Many of these were also in support of the inclusion of Gowran Grange and its demesne onto the Record of Protected Structures and demonstrate the strong feeling within the local community that this important heritage asset should be immediately protected.

We also note the submission by Dr Andrew Tierney who is an architectural historian with a broad chronological interest in building and design history. Dr Tierney is a specialist in the Victorian period with a focus on Ireland and his area of expertise relates directly to properties of historic interest such as Gowran Grange House and demesne. Dr Tierney has taught history and architectural history in UCD, NUI Maynooth and the University of Liverpool and it currently an eminent Professor at the Department of History of Art and Architecture at Trinity College Dublin. He has produced many pieces of published work and is well regarded as an expert in his field. Dr Tierney’s submission on Gowran Grange outlines the significance of both the House, its outbuildings and entire demesne.

It is Dr Tierney’s view that the house was designed by the Belfast-based architectural firm Lanyon & Lynn, with possible input from John McCurdy. His expert opinion letter states as follows:

“In many ways Gowran Grange is typical of this oeuvre, with an irregular plan, a mix of Gothic and Tudor/Jacobean detailing, including canted bays, oriel windows, crenellations, buttresses and finally a lively roofline of gabled dormers and tall stacks.

Like many of the Tudor revival houses of the nineteenth century, Gowran Grange’s architectural profile was designed as a picturesque addition to the landscape...

Given its size, architectural quality, and regional significance, as well as its importance to the local history of Punchestown, in my opinion the house, its demesne, and any associated historic structures should undoubtedly be added to the country’s Record of Protected Structures.”

Our Heritage Group hereby submit to Kildare County Council a detailed report setting out further information on the importance of Gowran Grange House, historic structures and the entire demesne. The purpose of this report is to provide further information to Kildare County Council in order to aid their assessments.

The enclosed report provides background on the architectural significance of the house, based on detailed accounts available in the National Archives. It also sets out newspaper reports relating to the Gowran Grange demesne over the years, showing its long established hunting tradition and close ties with Punchestown. The entire demesne since its establishment in 1857 has been a central

feature of the area and has enormous cultural heritage and historical significance both locally and regionally, thus warranting robust heritage protection.

Below we deal with some other points raised by a submission to the Council which we believe require clarification.

Submission to Kildare County Council by Peter Thomson

We note that a submission has been made to the Council on behalf of the owner of Gowran Grange House and demesne by Peter Thomson Planning Solutions (dated 26 October 2022).

We welcome the statement contained therein that the owner of the property John de Robeck does not object to the proposed listing of Gowran Grange House, associated outbuildings and curtilage.

We are concerned however that the writer of the letter is now seeking to exclude the demesne of Gowran Grange from the Record of Protected Structures. This is of concern given that the Chief Executive's Report of August 2022 clearly explains the reasons for the proposed listing as follows: "*Gowran Grange House, **demesne** and associated outbuildings are considered to be of **regional significance** and of special interest from an architectural, historical, cultural, social and technical point of view .*"

Additionally, we would refer you to Section 12.5.1 of the County Development Plan 2017-2023 whereon it is the policy of Kildare County Council as follows:

"It is the policy of the Council to preserve and protect the historic gardens and designed landscapes identified in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage." (CH 2).

We would also refer you to policy CH1 which states as follows:

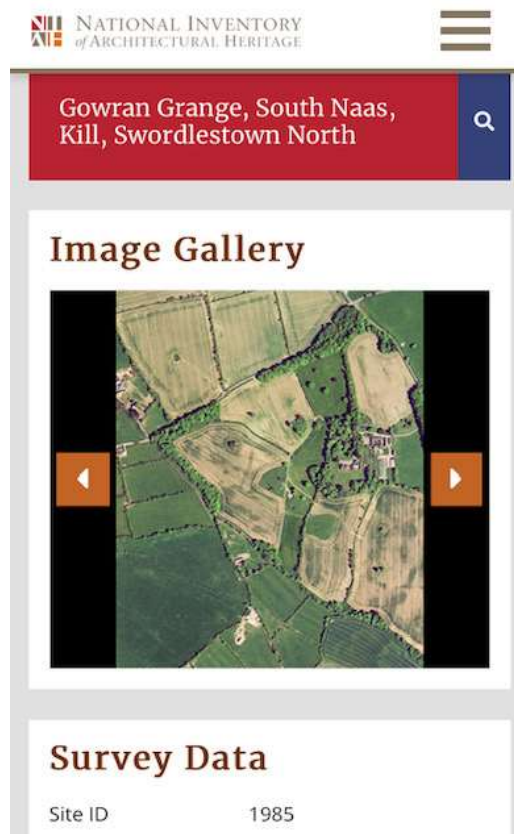
*"It is the policy of the Council to promote appreciation of the landscape and historical importance of traditional and **historic gardens, demesne** and parks within Kildare in general and particularly where they constitute an important setting to a protected structure." (CH 1)*

Gowran Grange demesne is a historic demesne which can be clearly traced back to 1856 when the fourth Baron de Robeck sought to establish his new home and parkland on the 400 acre landholding adjacent to Punchestown Racecourse.

The demesne includes a beautifully designed landscape which has already been surveyed and recorded by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and given the ID 1985 as shown in fig.

1.

Fig. 1 – Extract from NIAH records



The purpose of the Garden survey by NIAH was to record Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Ireland in order to protect and preserve them. Whilst not statutory in nature, Gowran Grange was clearly identified by the NIAH at this time as being a historic garden and designed landscape worthy of inclusion on the NIAH register. As such the County Development Plan seeks to protect and preserve these.

The record for the Gowran Grange demesne states that the site footprint is clearly visible and the boundary is defined. The record confirms that there has been no significant development. The record also specifically sets out the landscape features which are present as follows: parkland, woodlands and kitchen garden.

The County Development Plan at policies CH1 and CH pledge to preserve and protect the historic gardens and designed landscapes identified in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. Gowran Grange demesne has clearly been identified as a historic garden and designed landscape at ID 1985. It is therefore of concern that the submission to the Council by Peter Thomson seeks to disregard the importance attached to the designed landscape at Gowran Grange and seeks to ignore planning policy to protect important designed landscapes and historic gardens such as that existing at Gowran Grange.

The Florence Charter in 1982 clearly recognises the significance of Historic Gardens and as far back as 40 years ago it has been made clear that historic gardens should be preserved. Article 1 of the Florence Charter defines a historic garden as follows: *“A historic garden is an architectural and horticultural composition of interest to the public from the historical or artistic point of view.”* Article 3 of the Florence Charter goes on to state that *“the historic garden must be preserved in accordance*

with the spirit of the Venice Charter.” Article 3 clarifies that the architectural composition of the historic garden which includes the following 4 elements:

- *“Its plan and topography*
- *Its vegetation, including its species, proportions, colour schemes, spacing and respective heights*
- *Its structural and decorative features*
- *Its water, running or still, reflecting the sky”.*

All of these elements are clearly present and identifiable within Gowran Grange demesne.

There is no question that Gowran Grange is a designed landscape created intentionally for the Baron de Robeck as a demesne and home farm for the Baron and his family. The second edition Ordnance Survey map clearly shows the extent of the Gowran Grange demesne and faithfully details the key elements of the designed landscape including the primary entrance and driveway, the clumps of specimen trees, the mature perimeter woodland around the estate, the formal gardens around the House including their winding pathways, the historic outbuildings etc. More recently the NIAH has recorded the significance of the Historic Garden and designed landscape at Gowran Grange.

The Florence Charter confirms at Article 7 that the relationship between the historic garden and a building is important. It states as follows:

“Whether or not it is associated with a building in which case it is an inseparable complement, the historic garden cannot be isolated from its own particular environment, whether urban or rural, artificial or natural.”

In the case of Gowran Grange, the designed landscape and historic garden were established to complement the main House at the centre of the estate. The stone walls were built around many parts of the perimeter of the entire demesne to clearly identify the extent of the demesne. It is therefore clear that in the spirit of Article 7 that the historical garden is an inseparable complement to the house. The House and the garden therefore must be considered as one element and consequently it would be damaging to the integrity of the historic garden if it was to be truncated from the House and not afforded specific protection as envisaged by the Florence Charter. This is further clarified in Article 10 which states as follows:

“In any work of maintenance, conservation, restoration or reconstruction of a historic garden, or of any part of it, all its constituent features must be dealt with simultaneously. To isolate the various operations would damage the unity of the whole.”

In the case of Gowran Grange the House, its formal gardens, its sweeping primary driveway, its stone perimeter walling and its extensive perimeter woodland planting all form part of the historic garden. To separate the House and its historic garden would clearly damage the unity of the whole as envisaged by the Florence Charter.

Article 14 of the Florence Charter states clearly that *“The historic garden must be preserved in appropriate surroundings.”* It is clearly that the 400 acre Gowran Grange demesne comprise the *“appropriate surroundings”* for the historic garden which forms a key part of the demesne itself. The Florence Charter clearly states as follows:

“The historic garden must be preserved in appropriate surroundings. Any alteration to the physical environment which will endanger the ecological equilibrium must be prohibited. These applications are applicable to all aspects of the infrastructure, whether internal or

external (drainage works, irrigation systems, roads, car parks, fence, caretaking facilities, visitors amenities etc.” (Article 14)

The European Landscape Convention, also known as the Florence Convention, was adopted in 2000 and came into force on the 1 March 2004. The Convention was ratified by Ireland in 2002. The National Landscape Strategy seeks to set out Ireland’s way of meeting its obligations and objectives under the European Landscape Convention. Article 11 of the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 involved the completion of the Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes Survey by the NIAH. This was the survey which ultimately recorded Gowran Grange demesne as being of significance. This underpins its recognised significance.

The County Development Plan has very clear planning policy to preserve and protect the designed landscapes as identified by the NIAH as part of their Historic Garden Survey. It is therefore inappropriate to attempt to ignore the significance of the Historic garden which is clearly present and forms an important part of the Gowran Grange demesne. It is essential to extend protection to the designed landscape at Gowran Grange by its inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures and by seeking to protect the entire demesne and the many elements which form part of it.

The letter submitted by Peter Thompson states as follows: *“It is the fields and pasturage, which is an ever-changing landscape, which this submission seeks to have excluded from the protection....”* This is at the heart of this Heritage Group’s concern: the reality is that the fields and pasturage in fact form part of the historic garden and the demesne and they should be treated as a whole. Article 14 of the Florence Charter makes clear that the *“the historic garden must be preserved in appropriate surroundings.”* The appropriate surroundings for the historic gardens at Gowran Grange are in fact the entirety of the 400 acre demesne which both includes the designed landscape and surrounds the designed landscape. For example, the northern part of the demesne clearly includes 5 large fields which have been farmed for many years. There is no contention that these are farmed fields, and yet they are also an important part of the demesne itself as they were part of the home farm. The fact that they are an integral part of the demesne is evidenced by the fact that there are perimeter stone walls along a significant part of this northern section and also at the junction of the Woolpack Road at Watch House Cross. These fields are utilitarian in nature and would have been a part of the home farm of the demesne. As such they are integral to the demesne itself and have been for almost 170 years and should not be excluded from the proposed protection which seeks to protect both the House and its demesne.

It is worth also commenting on an additional point: the report produced by the applicant by Dr. Maurice Hurley seeks to exclude the primary driveway and entrance to the Gowran Grange estate from protected status. This is highly irregular as clearly the primary driveway and entrance with its stone walls and sweeping tree planting form an important part of the estate. It would be highly irregular to attempt to exclude these elements from protected status as they are clearly an integral part of the estate and its history and would have been a key design feature by the esteemed architects Lanyon and Lynn. These important historical and architectural feature should not be excluded from the proposed RPS listing as suggested by Mr Thomson.

We hereby enclose a detailed report which confirms that the Woolpack Road which bisects the Gowran Grange estate was in fact realigned in order to form the grand new entrance to the House and its demesne in 1856. This would have been an important design consideration at the time, and clearly an attempt now to exclude the primary entrance to the Gowran Grange demesne would be to entirely disregard its importance both historically and architecturally.

We are very concerned at the following statement by Peter Thomson as submitted to Kildare County Council as follows: *“This assessment ...confirms the absence of any historical or cultural significance of the land beyond the woodland enclosure”* of the house. This assessment is flawed in that it disregards the assessment by the NIAH that the landscape is in fact an important designed landscape. The NIAH record for Gowran Grange records the following landscape features present within the demesne: parkland, woodlands, walled garden. The NIAH have therefore clearly recorded that the parkland **is part** of the designed landscape. The assessment by Dr Maurice Hurley seeking to exclude the designed landscape including the parkland is therefore flawed.

Dr Hurley’s report has sought to redefine the parkland landscape as *“agricultural fields”* whereon he states as follows: *“The farmyard is undistinguished and utilitarian and the parkland landscape which be termed ‘demesne’ is agricultural fields.”*

This is simply incorrect. It is clear that legislation seeks to protect both the House and its curtilage however there is also significant importance attached to designed landscapes and their demesne, both of which are present at Gowran Grange. European legislation is clear in its intention to protect historic gardens and that these must be preserved in their appropriate surroundings. It is therefore not appropriate to seek to limit protected status at Gowran Grange only to the House and its curtilage and to ignore the presence and significance of the historic garden and entire demesne which are present at Gowran Grange.

We would also refer to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines as issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. At 13.3.1 it is made clear that *“features within the curtilage and attendant grounds of a protected structure can make a significant contribution to the character of that structure. The designed landscape associated with a protected structure was often an intrinsic part of the original design concept and, as such, inseparable from the building.”* This is certainly true of Gowran Grange and its entire demesne.

Dr Hurley’s report also makes a further statement which is simply incorrect. This statement is as follows: *“This parkland landscape has been cultivated for tillage crops for many years and therefore is utilitarian agricultural land and neither recreational nor for sport or leisure.”*

It is untrue to say that the parkland landscape has not been used for recreational nor for sport or leisure use. The attached report sets out in significant detail the history of the estate and how for many many years it has been the hunting ground for the Kildare Hunt. This legacy continues today. There are two hunts from Punchestown racecourse each year: the opening meet (on the October Bank Holiday Monday) and a second meet on New Year’s Day. For almost 170 years these hunts have taken place regularly through the Gowran Grange demesne and its parkland. Many of these hunts are recorded in the newspaper the Kildare Observer. A photograph is provided in fig. 2 below representing photographic evidence of a recent Hunt on New Years Day 2020 which passed through the Gowran Grange estate. The red arrow shows the land of Gowran Grange demesne through which the horses and their riders can be seen to be exiting. The second photo at fig. 3 clearly shows riders and their horses on the lands within Gowran Grange demesne at the most westerly parcel (also taken on New Years Day 2020).

Fig. 2 – Photograph of Hunt New Years Day 2020 on Gowran Grange demesne

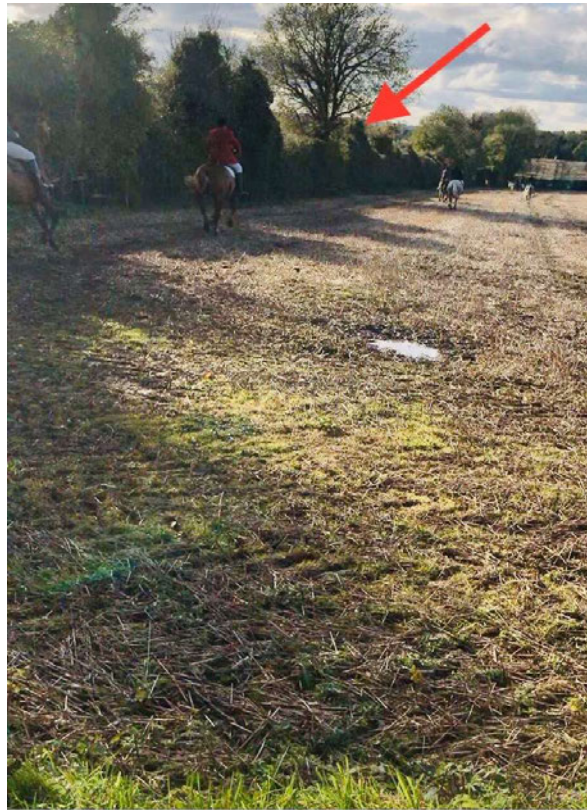


Fig. 3 – Photograph of Hunt New Years Day 2020 on Gowran Grange demesne, at the most westerly point of the demesne



More recently the Kildare Hunt have obtained permission from the landowner of Gowran Grange to hunt throughout the demesne next week on Monday 31 October 2022. It is therefore clear that the established legacy and pattern of hunting at Gowran Grange continues today. The statement by Dr Hurley is therefore misleading that the demesne lands are not used for recreation or sports use.

The land at Gowran Grange demesne is more accurately described as a demesne *including* agricultural lands (as in keeping with a home farm) and a demesne used for many years for equine use and as a hunting ground in conjunction with the adjacent Punchestown area. The enclosed report sets out in significantly more detail the long term connection between the Gowran Grange demesne and the hunting and equine connection it still enjoys today. This underpins the estate's ongoing significance both locally from a historical and a cultural perspective.

Dr Hurley's assessment is that the *"agricultural land surrounding the curtilage of the house and outbuildings is not integral to their setting."* This statement entirely ignores the demesne lands and historic garden that is present at Gowran Grange and seeks to significantly under represent its importance. The attached report illustrates in great detail why the entirety of the 400 acre demesne is of significance from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural and technical interest.

The members of our Heritage Group are aware that a planning application has been approved for a solar farm on the Gowran Grange demesne. The members are also aware that this decision has been appealed to An Bord Pleanála for their determination on the matter. This is a planning process which is ongoing. At the same time this Heritage Group wish to ensure that proper protection is afforded to the House, its historical outbuildings and the entire demesne at this time. Gowran Grange is an extremely special place and any large scale development within the demesne should be carefully considered to understand its impact on what is clearly a house and demesne of regional significance.

Our Heritage Group have reviewed the planning file for the proposed solar farm development and we cannot find any evidence that an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment has been carried out for the proposed development in order to assess the visual or physical impacts of the proposed development on the demesne and designed landscape. We are therefore concerned that this important assessment has not been carried out and that therefore there is not a full understanding of the impact that the proposed development may in fact have on a regionally important House and demesne.

Additionally, we understand that the Council's GIS system did not record the existence of the NIAH Designed Garden landscape record for Gowran Grange and so the significance of the designed historic garden and landscape may have been missed due to the computer system error. As such we wish to ensure that the Conservation Officer and the Heritage Officer for Kildare County Council are now afforded an opportunity to pause and fully consider the significance of the Gowran Grange demesne and what important heritage elements exist within the demesne and which should be specifically protected.

We note that the Draft Development Plan proposes at AH A15 that they will carry out a pilot study to protect and enhance the amenity value of significant demesnes in the county. We are therefore taking this opportunity as part of our submission to suggest that it would be appropriate to include the Gowran Grange demesne as part of this pilot study, reflecting its regional significance.

We note that the Draft Development Plan includes the following policy at AH O47: *"It is the objective of the Council to designate and protect historic landscape areas including demesnes and ensure that*

new development enhances the special character and visual setting of these historic landscapes and to prevent development that would have a negative impact on the character of the lands within these historic landscape areas.” We welcome this policy objective and in keeping with the spirit of the policy we hope to see that the demesne at Gowran Grange will be afforded robust protection to ensure that new development within it enhances the special character and visual setting of the historic landscape.

As a Heritage Group we do not wish to seek to stop any development within the Gowran Grange demesne. Naturally the owner should be afforded every opportunity to appropriately re-use the demesne lands. At the same time, it is necessary to protect and preserve Kildare’s important cultural heritage and Gowran Grange is clearly an important demesne that requires careful consideration at this important juncture.

Our Heritage Group have taken advice from Landscape and Conservation specialists in order to advise us on what we can do to protect this important House and demesne while at the same time ensuring a future for this precious and valued heritage demesne.

We fully support the material alteration which seeks to add Gowran Grange House, associated outbuildings and demesne to the list of Kildare County Council Proposed Protected Structures.

We respectfully suggest that in the interests of clarity, that the proposed RPS listing and the content of the notice to the owner should specifically include the following elements to ensure their full protection: Gowran Grange House, associated outbuildings, historic farm buildings and secondary dwellings, demesne lands, formal gardens, designed landscape and historic garden, perimeter woodland tree belts forming part of designed landscape, hydraulic ram, decorative bridge and pond, primary entrance and driveway, secondary entrance and driveway, all perimeter part stone walling throughout the demesne.

In respect of the extensive trees and mature woodland in the estate, we would request that the Council give consideration as part of this process to protecting these trees by means of a tree preservation order or by the designation of a landscape conservation area, in order to ensure that these majestic trees are protected and preserved. Our estimates are that the 400 acre estate includes approximately 60 acres of mature woodland and this is clearly worthy of protection and preservation.

We would like to conclude our submission by thanking Kildare County Council for their ongoing efforts to protect and preserve Kildare’s important heritage. We would welcome a meeting with you to discuss the Gowran Grange demesne and to meet with the Heritage Officer and Conservation Officer to discuss any of the matters we have raised in this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Kildare Cultural Heritage Group.

GOWRAN GRANGE HOUSE & DEMESNE



SWORDLESTOWN, COUNTY KILDARE

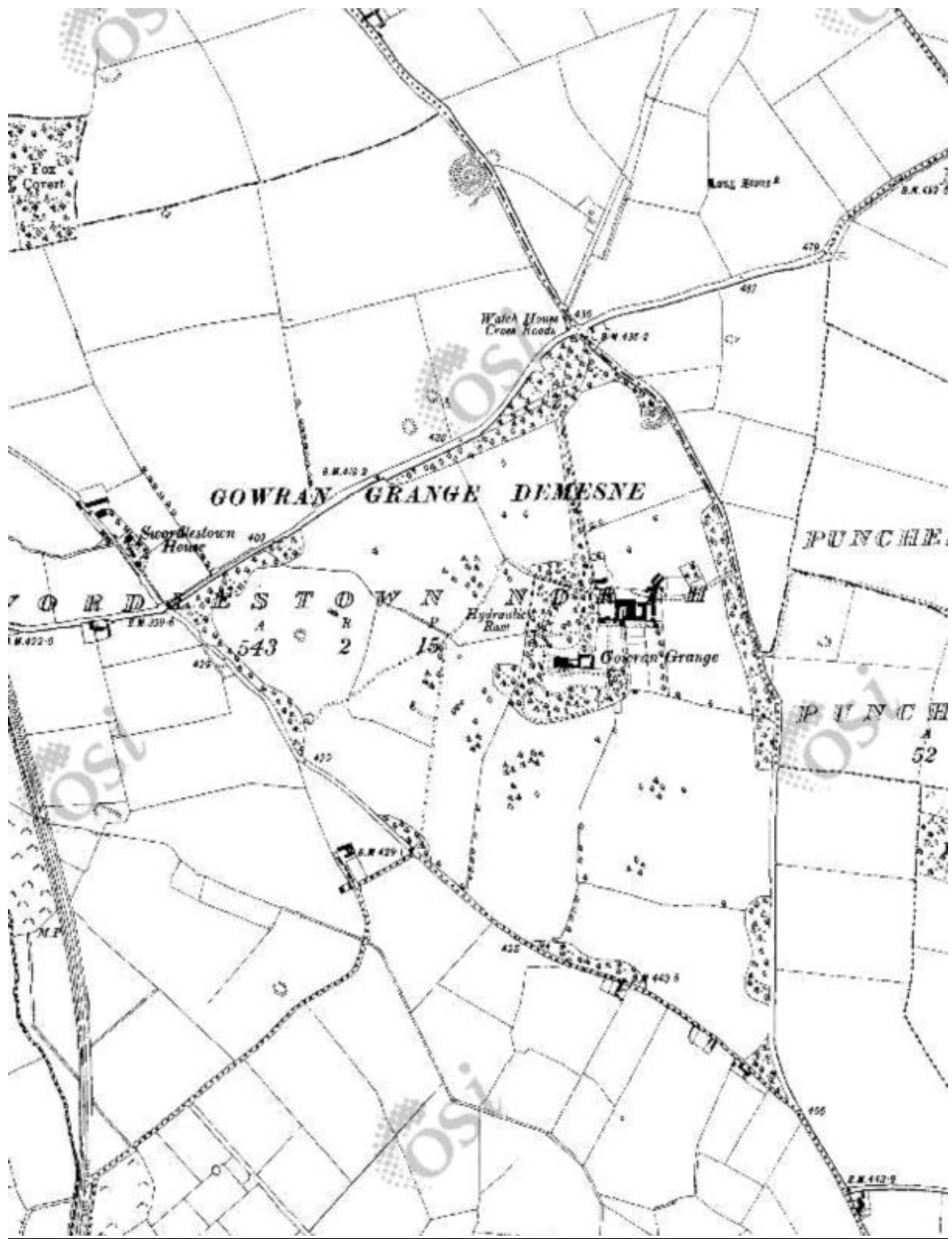
October 2022

Fig. 1 – Overview map of Gowran Grange and demesne



- A Gowran Grange Victorian Manor House
- B Original farm outbuildings
- C Main entrance to Gowran Grange demesne
- D Gliding Glub (the 'Big Field')
- E Woolpack Road (L2023) leading to Watch House Cross (crossroads at junction with R411)
- F Fox's covert (8 acre forest, shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map)
- G Former Tullow to Naas Great Southern Railway line
- H Secondary entrance to Gowran Grange demesne

Fig. 2 – Ordnance Survey map - OSI extract Black & White Last edition 6 inch



1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the reader with an overview of Gowran Grange demesne from its establishment in 1867 to the present day. The four storey heritage property at the centre of the demesne represents a heritage asset of significant value as does the entire demesne.
- 1.2 The 400-acre demesne remains almost entirely intact with its many heritage features retained. Unusually the demesne has remained in the ownership of the same family throughout the 166-year period, being passed down from the 4th Baron de Robeck who commenced construction of the elaborate estate to each generation since. The 8th Baron de Robeck and his family currently reside at Gowran Grange demesne.
- 1.3 At the date of writing this report, Kildare County Council are preparing a new County Development Plan for the 2023-2029 period. They are assessing which properties and demesnes should be included on the Record of Protected Structures. The demesne of Gowran Grange has now been identified by the Kildare County Council as being of *“regional importance”* and a material alteration to the Development Plan (No. APS 2) proposes the following: *“Add Gowran Grange House, associated outbuildings and demesne to the list of Kildare County Council Proposed Protected Structures (PPS) – Additions.”*

2.0 Overview of the Gowran Grange demesne

- 2.1 The part walled 400 acres of Gowran Grange demesne contain the Victorian manor house at the centre of the demesne, the home farm, parkland, extensive woods, gardens, fields and farmyards and stone perimeter walling. All these features would have been considered essential appurtenances of the big house when the demesne was designed and constructed.
- 2.2 The word demesne common in Irish place names is of Normal French origin and designates the ‘Home Farm’ or lands directly managed by a landlord.
- 2.3 In the case of Gowran Grange this includes approximately 400 acres, all of which have been considered the demesne lands of Gowran Grange since the estate was established in 1856. The 4th Baron de Robeck inherited the lands in 1856 when the 3rd Baron passed away and the new owner commenced the building out of the mansion house in 1857. At the same time the demesne lands were set out and established.
- 2.4 Defined historically as the lands held by a lord around his manor for his own use and occupation, the demesne formerly enveloped almost six per cent of the landmass of the island (Aalen et al. 1997: 197). Although dependent upon their surrounding tenant’s estates, demesnes evolved as separate social and economic areas, whose distinctive layouts usually incorporated a manor house, other built features, gardens, arable and pastoral farmlands and woodland. Demesnes continue to symbolise one of the most

dominant man-made component of the Irish landscape. In Kildare the most famous demesnes are Carton House and Castletown House. The Kildare Development Plan acknowledges that County Kildare has a large number of country houses and demesnes where the grounds and settings constitute an intrinsic element of their character. The same is true of Gowran Grange House and demesne.

- 2.5 In the 18th and 19th century the demesne form was raised to the level of art; demesnes became masterpieces of architecture and landscape design. It is within this context that the Gowran Grange demesne was designed and established. The demesne today comprises of unique areas of outstanding architectural, archaeological, botanical, ecological and landscape importance. The demesne is central to the entire area and significantly contributes to the value of the landscape. The design of the House and demesne also reflects the cultural interests of the De Robeck family and their passion for hunting and desire for prestige.
- 2.6 When it was first established in 1857 the demesne at Gowran Grange served the purpose of providing a home for the Baron, his family and a retinue of servants indoor and outdoor who ensured the smooth running of a considerable enterprise. It also served as a hunting ground for the Baron and for the Kildare Hunt. The home farm produced as wide a range of foodstuffs as possible.
- 2.7 The 1901 census form for Gowran Grange demesne reveals much about the demesne lands and its occupants. At the time of the census the Manor house was occupied by the Baron de Robeck, his wife and 2 children and a host of servants (13 in total). The census form also indicates that there were 27 rooms in the house occupied by the family and 37 out houses and farm buildings within the demesne. These outhouses and buildings included: 4 stables, 2 coach houses, 10 sheds, a horse's room, a cow house, a calf room, a dairy, 7 piggeries, 2 flows houses, a turf house, a potato house, a work shop, a store, a forge and a laundry house (see Appendix 1 for census extracts). There have been more modern farm buildings built to complement these in more recent times.
- 2.8 Some four years later, a detailed account is recorded in the Kildare Observer in 1905. It sets how the Home Farm at Gowran Grange demesne was managed at that time (see below for more detail).
- 2.9 The second edition OS Map Survey was undertaken around this time which included an appraisal of the lands at Gowran Grange; the finalised OS map clearly shows the words "*Gowran Grange demesne*" marked across the demesne lands (Fig. 2). It was not possible to have shown the demesne on the earlier First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1846 as the establishment of the demesne had not yet commenced until 8 years after this date.
- 2.10 Today in 2022 the demesne remains largely intact with no substantial alterations to the main house. The land continues to be farmed by Baron de Robeck albeit occasionally let out. Horses continue to be kept on the estate. Many of the original outbuildings remain intact including old stone buildings typical of their time. Despite

additions to the farm yard (via new sheds for animals and forage) the old stone buildings were retained amongst these.

2.11 There are also additional dwellings within the demesne lands although it is unclear if these were constructed at the same time as the original building work in 1857 or later in 1872 or at a more recent time.

2.12 It is understood that the original and beautiful walled garden remains largely intact with pathways connecting it to the main formal gardens. These are still in place and aerial photographs suggest these are still in use.

2.13 The stone walls surrounding the perimeter of the estate are largely intact although very obscured by overgrown planting. In many places it is almost impossible to see the stone walls which surround large parts of the estate although through closer inspection and some light clearing of vegetation it is easy to see the extent of the beautiful stone walling.

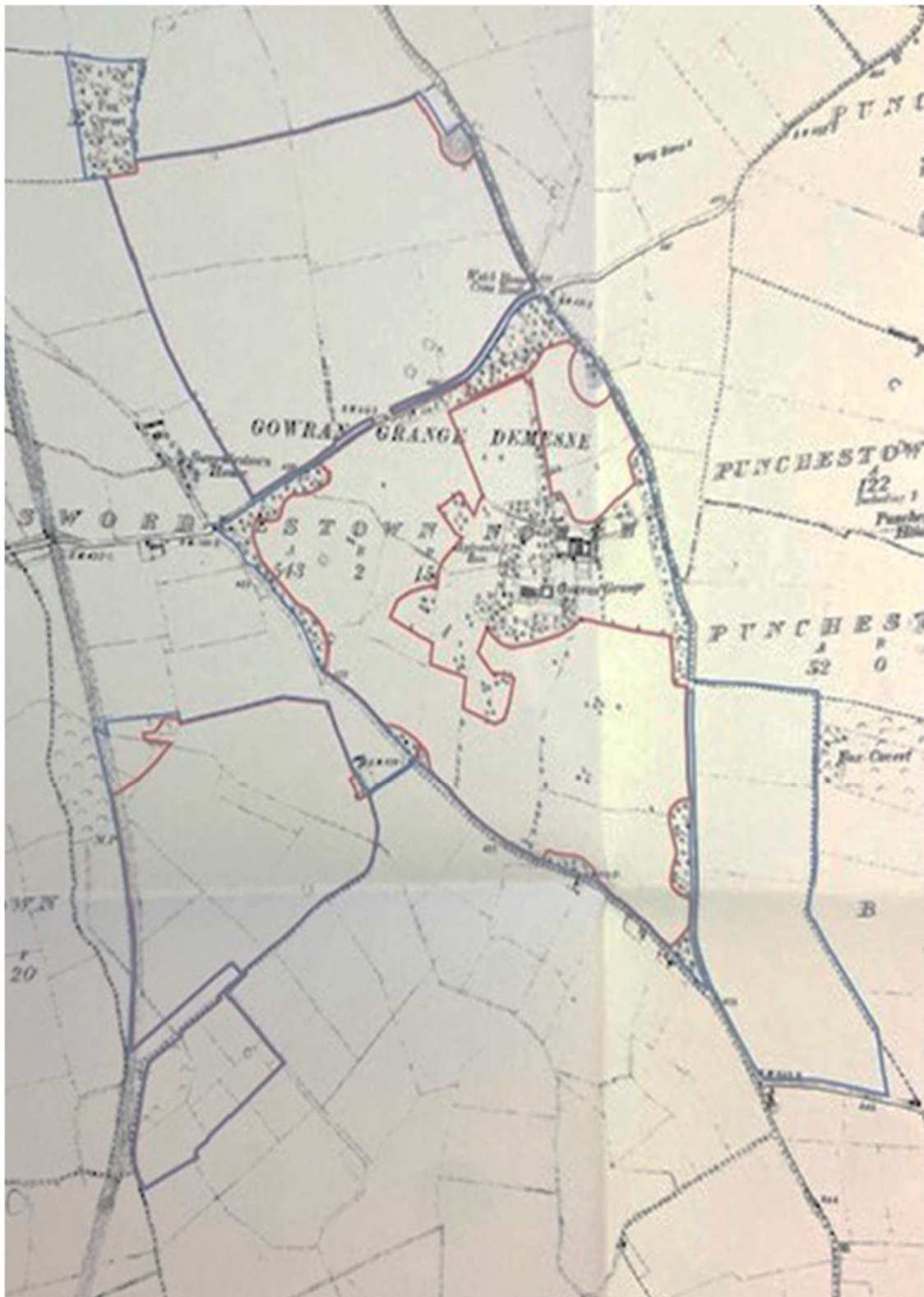
2.14 The sweeping main entrance avenue of half a kilometre long and secondary entrance avenue both remain operational although in recent years the secondary entrance has been primarily used by the de Robeck family. Both entrances feature distinctive round curved pillars and caps which feature throughout the entire demesne.

2.15 In section 3 of this report we set out some of the key elements of the demesne that are still in existence today, almost 170 years after they were first created. These include:

- Established boundary walls and a well-defined demesne
- Victorian house at the centre of the demesne
- Historic outbuildings
- Formal lawns and gardens
- Walled gardens
- Parkland setting with a designed landscape and established woodland
- Defined entrances and driveways
- Former railway line
- Fox's covert forested area.

2.16 Latter sections of the report set out the history of the estate in order that the reader can understand how the demesne has developed over the years and the forces that shaped its design.

Fig. 3 – Extract from Planning File KCC 22111. Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map showing the extent of the Gowran Grange demesne as edged in blue (approximately 400 acres). Dated March 2022



The area edged in blue shows the extent of the demesne as of March 2022. The area red lined is the approved application site for a large scale solar farm (totalling approximately 277 acres).

3.0 The extent and boundary of the demesne

- 3.1 Historical records reveal that the estate was approximately 400 acres in size at the beginning of the 20th century (newspaper report 1906). This is consistent with the second edition Ordnance Survey map which clearly marks the words '*Gowran Grange demesne*' across both the northern part and central part of the demesne. The 400-acre demesne would also have included the farmed lands at the east and west of the central triangular section.
- 3.2 Historical records available at the National Library provide written descriptions of the demesne in the late 1800s and describe how hunting took place extensively throughout the demesne. There are numerous accounts of hunting along the Baron's railway line (at the western part of the demesne) and at the demesne's Fox's covert (at the most northerly part of the demesne). These historical records confirm that the extent of the demesne in the late 1800s was approximately 400 acres.
- 3.3 A planning application was submitted on the de Robeck family landholding in March 2022 and within this a map was provided setting out the land ownership. This is provided in fig. 3 above. What can be easily seen is the full extent of the demesne edged in blue. An assessment has been done as to the acreage within the blue area and it is approximately 400 acres. This would indicate that the Gowran Grange demesne remains largely the same as it was in 1856 when the demesne was first designed and established for the De Robeck family.
- 3.4 The demesne also benefits from being part walled around its perimeter. The stone walls do not entirely enclose the estate but tend to be in prominent sections of it. For example, the demesne is traversed by the Woolpack Road which separates the most northerly part and central part of the demesne. The Woolpack Road is itself a historic road as it was the primary route for taking wool from the Curragh to Dublin since the 1300s. The main entrance to Gowran Grange is on the Woolpack Road so this approach road would have represented an important 'first impression' of the estate. The entrance to the estate is located on this road, very close to the Watch House Cross junction and close to Punchestown racecourse.
- 3.5 The length of the Woolpack Road that sits alongside the Gowran Grange demesne at this location is approximately 850m in length. The entire section is not stone walled, however on the right hand side of the road (with the central parcel on your right hand side) there are two large continuous sections of stone perimeter walling; (i) the first is from the junction at Watch House cross to the main entrance and beyond (approximately 230m) (ii) the second section of stone walling exists between the corner of the Swordlestown laneway and the Woolpack Road (approximately 230m). At this section the stone walling exists on both sides of the road making this very distinctive; the stone walling therefore exists on both the perimeter of the central parcel (on the right hand side) and the northern parcel (on the left hand side).
- 3.6 This stone walling on both sides of the road is very distinguishing and as an attractive heritage feature is adds hugely to the local landscape and sense of place. The stone walls which surround many parts of the perimeter of the estate form a key defining

feature of the demesne along the Woolpack Road and the stone perimeter walling should be specifically protected as part of the overall proposed protection for the demesne.

Fig. 4 – Image of the main entrance to the Gowran Grange demesne, flanked with stone walls and curved pillars (approx. 230m of stone perimeter walling still exists at this location)



Fig. 5 – The photograph below shows stone walls on either side of the Woolpack Road with both sides of the road representing fields within the demesne

Taken in winter 2022

Taken in summer 2022



Fig. 5 – Photograph taken on the Woolpack Road in Autumn 2022. This photograph shows the lands of the Gowran Grange on either side of this road.

Notes: The left hand side is the central triangular parcel of the demesne and the lands on the right hand side are the demesne lands on the most northern part of Gowran Grange. The majestic trees present on the left hand side particularly greatly add to the local character of the Woolpack Road, along with the stone walls present on sections on either side of the road as illustrated in the photo. The Woolpack Road is itself a historic road, being the main route to transport wool from the Curragh since the 1300s. The designed landscape design of Gowran Grange and its woodland planting has served to improve the landscape of this section of the Woolpack Road.



- 3.7 The stone walls along the Woolpack Road are present for approximately 460m, which is almost half of the length of this entire stretch of road which abounds the demesne. The stone walls are therefore a dominant and attractive feature on this road, especially with the majestic mature trees sitting immediately behind the stone walling.

4.0 The Victorian House

4.1 At the centre of the demesne sits the magnificent residence of the de Robeck family. The Victorian house is of significant heritage value and has been faithfully protected throughout the many years that the de Robeck family have lived at the demesne. Aerial images of the house as taken in summer 2022 are set out below.

Fig. 6 – Image of the south facing façade (taken 2022)

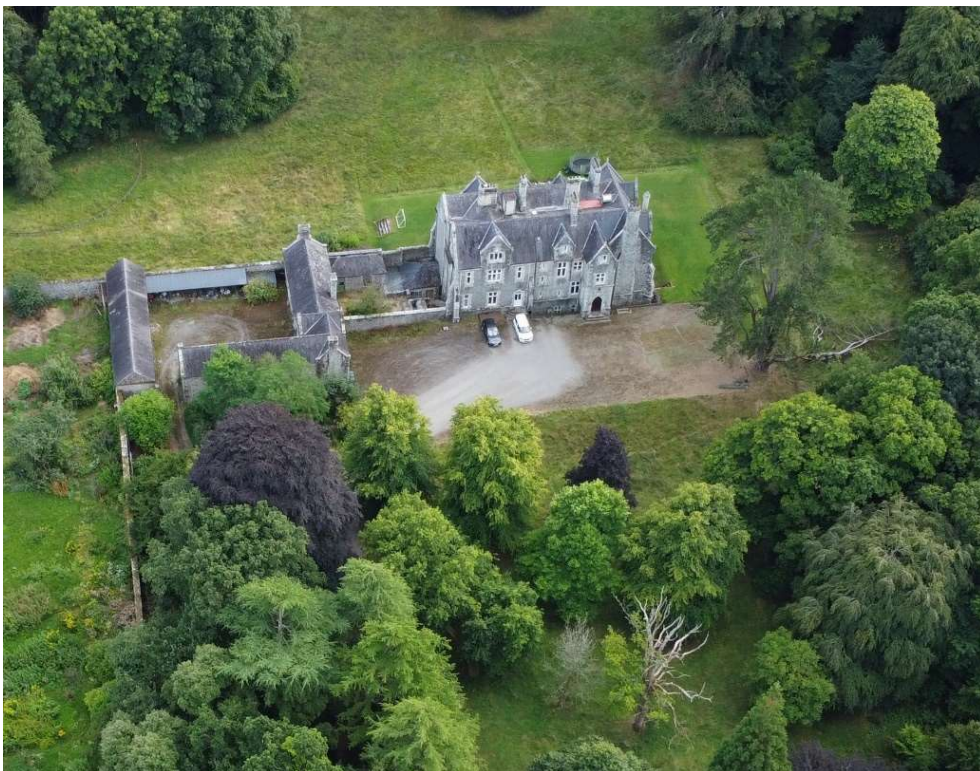


4.2 Dr Andrew Tierney is an eminent Professor at the Department of History of Art and Architecture at Trinity College Dublin. In May 2022 Dr Tierney provided an architectural assessment of Gowran Grange. It is his view that the house was designed by the Belfast-based architectural firm Lanyon & Lynn, with possible input from John McCurdy. Like many of the Tudor revival houses of the nineteenth century, Gowran Grange's architectural profile was designed as a picturesque addition to the landscape. It is typical of its oeuvre, with an irregular plan, a mix of Gothic and Tudor/Jacobean detailing, including canted bays, oriel windows, crenellations, buttresses and finally a lively roofline of gabled dormers and tall stacks (see Appendix 2 for Dr Tierney's full assessment).

Fig. 7 – Image of the north facing façade (taken 2022)



Fig. 8 - Image of the north facing façade (taken 2022)



4.3 The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map provides a detailed overview of the layout of the demesne and particularly the areas surrounding the house and outbuildings at this time (fig. 9).

4.4 A comparison of Second Edition Ordnance Survey map compared to the most recent OSI extract shows that the layout remains the same and does not appear to have been altered. The only addition is some new modern farm outbuildings to the south of the original farm complex. We assume these are of more recent construction due to their appearance. A physical inspection on-site would be necessary to understand and confirm what alterations or amendments may have taken place in more recent years.

Fig. 9 – OSI extract

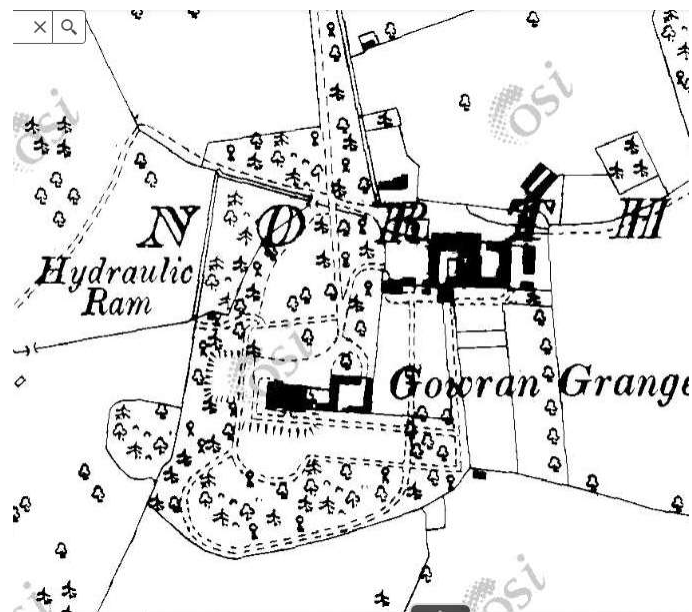
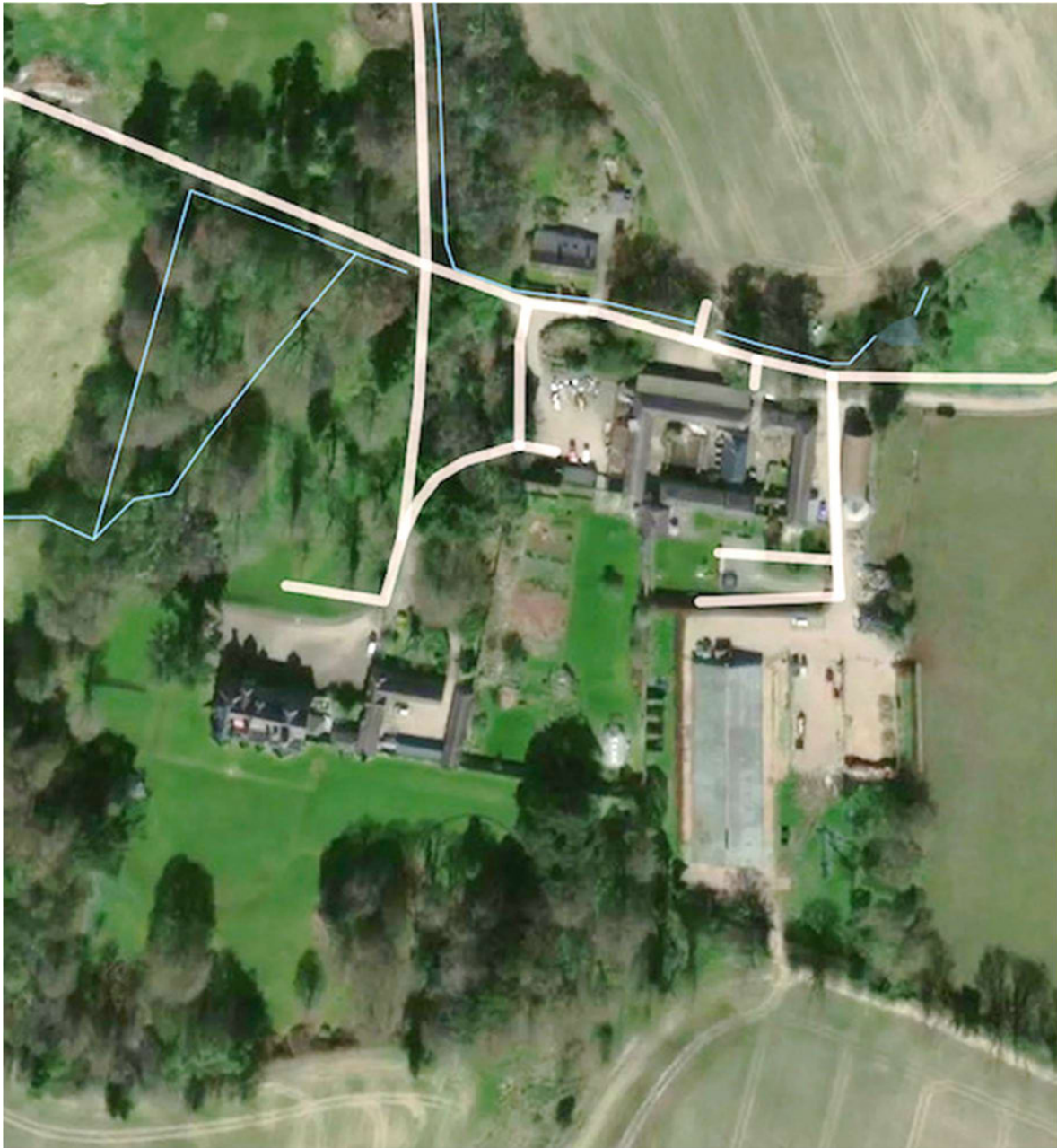


Fig. 10 – Latest OSI extract available at www.osi.ie



4.5 The most recent aerial photo available at mapbook.ie shows that the layout today is largely similar to the 1910 OSI extract. The original design of the house and the buildings immediately surrounding it appear to have been faithfully preserved.

Fig. 11 – Aerial photograph of House and outbuildings



5.0 Historic outbuildings

5.1 Many of the original outbuildings which were built between 1857-1859 and later in 1872 are still in existence today. Fig. 12 is an aerial photo showing outbuildings beside the main manor house. They are in the same style as the main house, having been designed and built out at the same time.

Fig. 12 – Aerial photo showing House and outbuildings



5.2 There are the derelict ruins of an outbuilding within the westerly part of the demesne at the sharp turn on the Swordlestown Laneway. It is not clear what the original use of this building was however the stone walls are still intact. It would be advisable to specifically include derelict outbuildings, such as this, in the proposed inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures.

5.3 It is understood that there is a second single storey cottage in use as a residence. This building is also worthy of specific RPS protection being typical of its time and worthy of preservation and protection.

6.0 Formal lawns and gardens

6.1 The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map provides incredible detail as to the extent of the formal lawns around the main house at the time. The main lawn is south facing and accessed from the south facing façade. Recent aerial photograph show that the lawn is still maintained today as a lawn and in use for playing sports as suggested by goals and a trampoline.

6.2 The formal south facing lawn is approximately 1 acre in size and is shown edged yellow in fig. 13, along with an image of the lawn.

6.3 The photograph shows a raised lawn area with sets of steps down to a lower lawn area.

6.4 On the map a series of elaborate paths can clearly be shown which connect the house and garden, both front and back. Recent aerial photographs show that these paths still exist.

Fig. 13 – Formal south facing lawn edged yellow



6.5 The second edition Ordnance Survey Map names a hydraulic pump. It is understood that this is now disused but it is still present as a 'romantic' feature in the garden. This is worthy of specific preservation on the basis of it being of technical interest and also an aesthetic feature. A hydraulic ram is a cyclic hydro powered water pump that works by building up pressure within a cylinder to force water out in smaller fast jets than it entered. This would have been a significant feature to have constructed at the time that the house and estate were build out between 1857 and 1872. Other Records of Protected Structures extend protection to hydraulic pumps such as this.

6.6 In addition to the formal designed lawn area, we also understand that there is a stream with bridges and a pond. This is an original feature associated with the design of the house and its landscape and these are worthy of specific RPS protection on account of their contribution to the designed landscape.

7.0 Walled garden

7.1 It is understood that a walled garden formed part of the original design of the house. It occupies 0.86 acres and sits in close proximity to the main dwelling house.

7.2 Aerial photographs show that the walled garden still exists. It appears that a greenhouse structure has been erected in this location in recent years, suggesting that the walled garden continues to be used for a similar purpose as it was first envisaged. The walled garden is fully south facing with no overhanging trees producing any shade.

Fig. 14 – Walled garden, sitting adjacent to main house, edged in yellow



8.0 Parkland setting & designed landscape

8.1 An impressive and well considered parkland setting would have been an important consideration in designing the overall demesne as it provided a setting for the principal building. Aerial images below show how the country house at Gowran Grange sits majestically within the carefully designed landscape.

8.2 The parkland at Gowran Grange demesne consists of large fields of grazed land with few internal boundaries dotted with individual trees, clumps of trees and avenues. Many of the specimen trees which were planting in the 1800s remain today and these are important for both biodiversity and scenic value. The NIAH added Gowran Grange demesne to its Garden Survey in 2002 (ID 1985) in recognition of the importance of the demesne. The House was not surveyed at this time.

8.3 The design of the parkland around the house would have been such that it considered the views to and from the house and its setting within the wider landscape. The original OS survey for 1910 shows that at that time the entire house was to be surrounded by trees, particularly on the southern side. However aerial photographs in recent years reveal that a portion of trees within this southern area have been removed. It is possible that this was done in order to improve the views from the four storey house. A visual inspection would confirm this. It would be important during an inspection to record the important views and vistas present within the demesne itself.

Fig. 15 – Aerial photo of Gowran Grange



Fig. 16 – Aerial photo of Gowran Grange



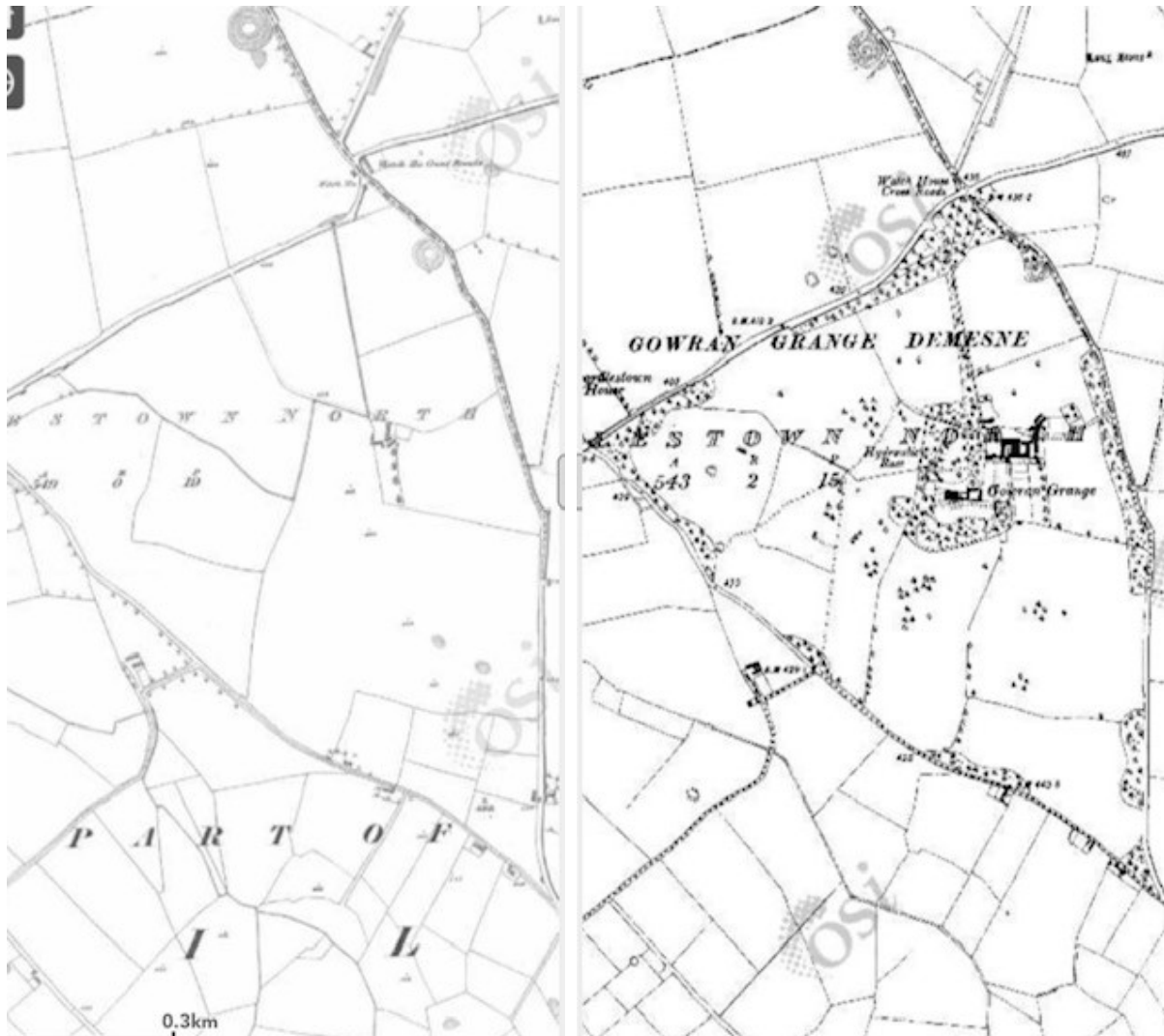
8.4 A comparison of Ordnance Survey maps reveals that significant tree planting was carried out as part of the overall designed landscape at Gowran Grange. An OS map from the first edition is shown at fig. 17A below. This shows the layout of the land in the 1800s before the demesne was inherited by the 4th Baron.

8.5 A comparison of fig. 17A and 17B shows that extensive tree planting was carried out both at the centre of the estate (surrounding the new house) and around the perimeter of the entire estate. It also appears that the Woolpack Road (which bisects the central and northern part of the demesne) was diverted as part of the design of the demesne. It is likely this was possible because the de Robeck family owned the land on either side of the road in order to enable the diverting of the road. Originally the junction at Watch House Cross Roads would have been a staggered junction as opposed to a traditional junction where 2 roads evenly meet. Fig. 17B shows that extensive tree planting was carried out throughout the estate but that field boundaries largely remained unchanged. A comparison of the two OS maps shows some fields either merged or subdivided between the time that the OS surveys were carried out.

Fig. 17 – OSI Extracts compared side by side

A – First OS extract

B – 6 inch extract last edition



8.6 The designed landscape at Gowran Grange contains many elements of horticultural interest. The demesne contains some particularly large and old specimens. The extensive woodland and mature trees present on site add greatly to the strength of the demesne in particular in the areas set out in fig. 18 below.

8.7 The continuous mature woodlands surrounding the perimeter of the triangular part of the demesne comprise approximately 33.6 acres of mature woodland, which contributes greatly to the high value of the landscape (edged yellow Fig. 18).

8.8 Around the Gowran Grange House there is an additional 19.4 acres of mature woodland which forms a vital and important part of the designed landscape. The mature woodland provides a habitat for birds, small mammals, butterflies and insects, and creates a wonderful combination of both wild and landscaped spaces to be explored and enjoyed. The woodland areas within the demesne are considered of high value as a component of the designed landscape and as of a high ecological value.

Fig. 18 – Extent of established mature woodland, forming part of the designed landscape



Perimeter ?
3.26 km ▾



Area
19.4 ac ▾



Perimeter ?
5.88 km ▾



Area
33.6 ac ▾



Fig. 19 - Images of the open parkland designed estate at Gowran Grange



Fig. 20 – Aerial photograph of Gowran Grange house with designed landscape feature circled in red



Fig. 21 – Photograph of lime tree, at the central part of the Demesne



8.9 The demesne at Gowran Grange could be considered as an importance cultural landscape due to its authenticity and integrity. Cultural heritage comprises more than simply built structures and focuses more so on a wide range of cultural property such as designed landscapes. Historic designed landscapes have now been termed “cultural landscapes”. In 1992 the International Convention for the Protection of the World’s Cultural and Natural Heritage became the first international legal instrument to protect cultural landscapes. Furthermore, the World Heritage Committee has identified three categories of cultural landscape, the first being “*a landscape designed and created intentionally by man*”. This is true of Gowran Grange based on an analysis of the evidence available.

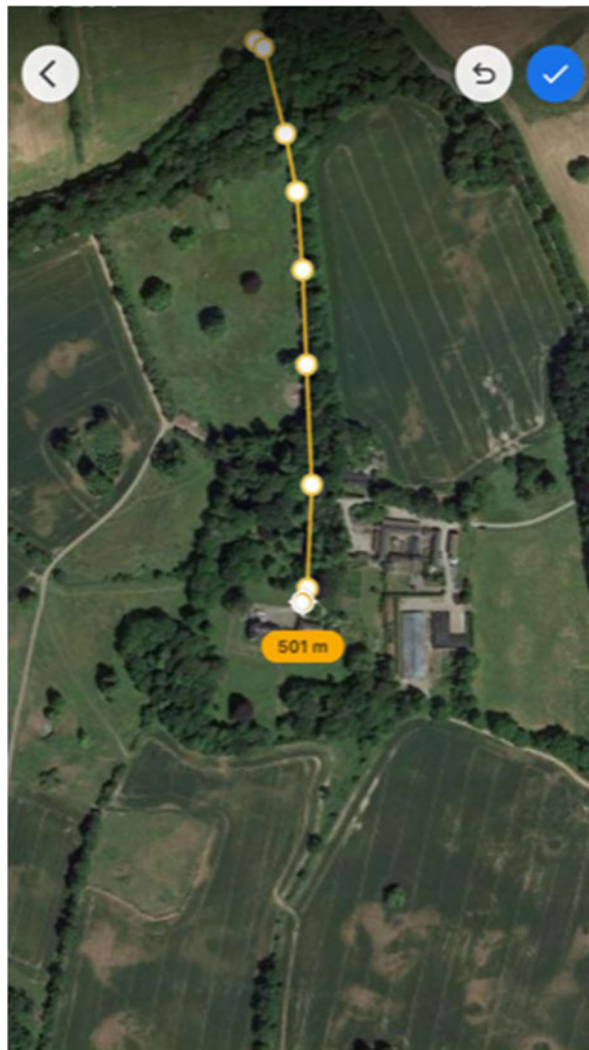
8.10 Aside from the extensive designed parkland, the Gowran Grange demesne also benefits from two watercourses running through it including a stream which comes from a north easterly direction and enters the demesne. It runs in a southern direction towards the House. The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map reveals the existence of a hydraulic ram at this location on this stream. It is unknown whether this still exists today. A second watercourse called the Broadfield River passes through the demesne at the western section of the demesne. Both these sources of water add an extra element of beauty into the naturalistic environment and these streams would have been carefully incorporated into the design of the landscape.

9.0 Entrance driveway

9.1 The primary entrance to the Gowran Grange demesne is via the Woolpack Road. The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map clearly shows this route. The same route exists today. It is a sweeping driveway almost 500m in length and with majestic trees along the route. These open up to reveal the full impact of the substantial 4 storey Victorian house. It is likely that this route was selected as it offered travellers a controlled and dramatic view that displayed the designed parkland, gardens and house in the most impressive manor.

9.2 A series of aerial photographs over the years suggests that the field immediately adjacent to the entrance road does not appear to be farmed. Alternatively, it has been set out as a designed field with a series of specimen trees that are set attractively within the landscape. This also accords with the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map which shows that the field by this time had been planted out with a series of trees in an irregular pattern.

Fig. 22 – Route of primary entrance to Gowran Grange House



10. Railway line

10.1 The Great Southern & Western Railway line passed through the Gowran Grange demesne from 1882 until the mid-1950s. It continued for a length of 820m through the southwest side of the estate. The railway line is no longer in existence and what now remains is an easily identifiable cleared stretch of ground where the railway infrastructure once sat.

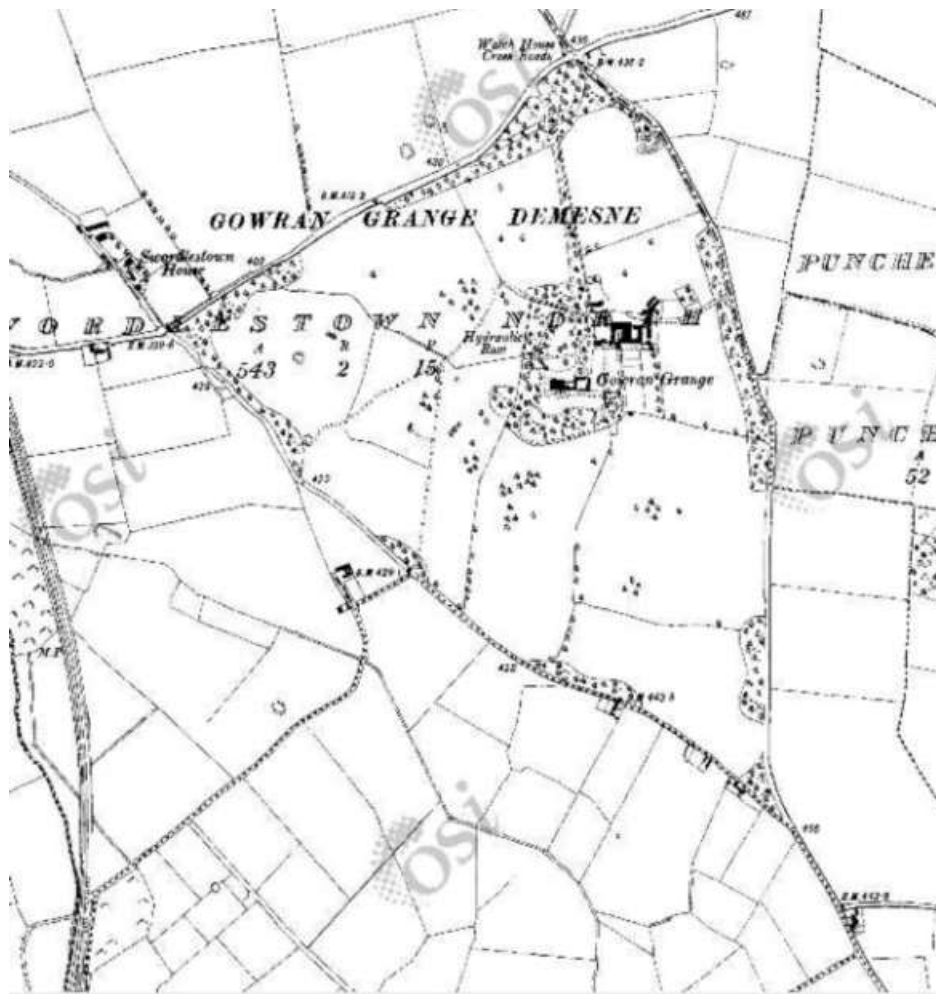
10.2 The original railway is thought to have been used by the 4th Baron de Robeck to get to the RDS where he was Vice President. It has also been noted that many visitors to Gowran Grange arrived by train. Racegoers from Tullow departed the train near Gowran Grange and using right of ways walked through the lands of Gowran Grange Demesne to get to Punchestown Racecourse. It is likely that the opening of the railway line in 1882 would have been seen as a positive addition to the demesne by the resident Baron at that time, who was able to easily access the town of Naas and onwards to Dublin by train following a

short stroll from his residence. The Baron would have been afforded views of his designed parkland estate and home farm as he would have walked through the demesne to its most westerly part to alight the train.

10.3 When the Prince of Wales visited Punchestown he travelled part of the way on this rail route. It is understood he then travelled on the Ballymore Eustace Road and stopped to turn left to access the racecourse at the Watch House Cross junction. Newspaper reports reveal that the Baron de Robeck erected a large welcome banner on his demesne lands at this junction with the message “Cead Mile Failte”. It is also reported in local newspapers that part of the Royal party visited the Gowran Grange House demesne at this time.

10.4 Today this former railway route has been designated as a future greenway along the entire length of the old railway line, linking the towns of Naas through to Tullow (approximately 32km in length). The Draft County Kildare Development Plan intends to deliver this project by 2029, subject to a feasibility study. Travellers along the greenway route will likely enjoy spectacular views across the demesne and designed parkland for a stretch of 820m.

Fig. 23 – The former railway line is easily identifiable within the western part of the demesne in the Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map



11.0 Fox's Covert

11.1 Historical records reveal that the Baron de Robeck was a keen horseman at the time his demesne and parkland were designed and established. It is likely then that the Fox's covert at the most northerly part of the demesne would have been an important element to incorporate into the design of the demesne as any hunting through the landholding would have centred around the coverts due to their popularity with foxes.

11.2 The first large scale survey of Ireland was carried out between 1829 and 1842. The Fox's covert is already visible in this first map as a clearly defined area of approximately 8 acres. The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map shows the Fox Covert in the same location but clearly labelled as such this time. The covert is still in use today and foxes are often seen darting in and out of the covert. The Kildare Hunt still hunt through the lands today and hunt along the former railway line, in much the same way as they did 166 years ago when the demesne was first set out. The Fox's Covert remains an important part of the demesne for historical reasons. The forested area is of enormous ecological value with pine martens regularly sighted within it.

12.0 Constructing the House and demesne (1856-1872)

12.1 Thus far this report has focussed on the main features of the demesne, however it is helpful to set out the history of the demesne in order to fully appreciate its significance. This part of the report will focus on this.

12.2 The 4th Baron de Robeck, John Henry Edward Fock, inherited the estate now known as Gowran Grange in 1856 at the age of 33. His grandfather was created a Baron by Frederick I of Sweden in 1750.

12.3 The lifestyle of the 4th Baron de Robeck was typical of landed gentry of the time. He had income from thousands of acres of land, hunting at home and abroad, and had many servants to cater for his every need. It is understood that a number of these also lived at the demesne. At the time of the 1901 census there were 9 servants living on the demesne, aging from 18 years old to 67 years old.

12.4 The 4th Baron kept extensive details of his life in written format, many of which were donated to the National Library of Ireland by the 7th Baron (Martin John Michael Fock). These extensive documents are contained within the archives and are available by appointment to view. They also contain considerable receipts for the building of the mansion at Gowran Grange and allow the reader great insight into the creation of the de Robeck country house and demesne.

12.5 The 4th Baron de Robeck was a third generation British subject, and by intermarriage his family were connected with some of the oldest families in Ireland.

12.6 The 4th Baron spent considerable time abroad on military service, but when at home in Kildare he was a ranger of the Curragh and justice of the peace and spent time at Gowran Grange managing its extensive staff and affairs.

12.7 When the 3rd Baron died, the estate passed to the 4th Baron who was 33 years old at the time. He had become wed earlier that year to Sophia Charlotte Burton (daughter of William Fitzwilliam Burton of Burton Hall in County Carlow). The Baron and Baroness were thus ready to establish their own residence with the creation of a new mansion befitting their standing. Consequently, the Baron commissioned the building of Gowran Grange at Swordlestown. Until that time, they had been living at 6 Merrion Square East or occasionally at Leixlip Castle.

12.8 The name of the house and demesne came from the fact that the 2nd Baron de Robeck married Anne Fitzpatrick, youngest daughter and eventually sole heiress of Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, 2nd son of Richard, 1st Lord Gowran (Kilkenny). As women did not inherit property at that time, the lands reverted to the 2nd Baron de Robeck. The property holding was very extensive and used to extend from Blanchardstown, County Dublin to Gowran County Kilkenny. Jon Bateman's "*The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*" records that at the time the 4th Baron was in possession of 5,536 acres, of which 1838 acres were in Kildare.

Fig. 24 – Extract from Jon Bateman's works

		acres.	g. an. val.
DE ROBECK, BARON, of Gowran Grange, Naas, Co. Kildare.			
Coll. Sandhurst.	Dublin . . .	1,660	2,098
Club. Army & Navy, Kild. St., Dublin.	Kildare . . .	1,838	1,358
	Wicklow . . .	2,038	1,654
b. 1823, s. 1858, m. 1856. Served in 8th Foot.		5,536	5,110

12.9 The receipts and accounts of the building and furnishing of Gowran Grange which are in the de Robeck family papers are also preserved on microfilm in the National library of Ireland. Gowran Grange was built during a time of prosperity between the years 1857-1859 and enormous expense went into the creation of both the house, the outbuildings and the perimeter part stone walls.

12.10 The design of the house was a Victorian country mansion as befits a country gentleman with a passion for hunting. Casey (2005) and Tierney (2019) believe the overall design of the house was created by the Belfast based architectural firm Lanyon & Lynn. It is understood that John McCurdy was a collaborator and executant.

12.11 The firm Lanyon & Lynn was founded by Sir Charles Lanyon and William Henry Lynn in 1854 and it was among the most successful country house practices working in Ireland in the mid-19th century. Lanyon and Lynn were also involved in the design of nearby Killashee House, Naas (which is also a Protected Structure Ref B24-16). Killashee House was designed and built out at a similar time to the country house at Gowran Grange (1859-1862).

12.12 Lanyon & Lynn also were involved in the design of Stradbally Hall, Laois (which is also a Protected Structure Ref 414 and considered to be of National importance). This involved the enlargement of a smaller house built in 1772. Sir Charles Lanyon enlarged the house between 1866-1869, to form the house which we see today. It is likely he

worked on the design of Stradbally Hall at the same time as Gowran Grange. There are similarities in the design.

12.13 Castle Leslie, Glaslough in County Monaghan was also designed by Lanyon & Lynn in 1870, shortly after the completion of building works at Gowran Grange.

12.14 Dr Andrew Tierney at the Department of History of Art and Architecture at Trinity College Dublin stated as follows:

“In many ways Gowran Grange is typical of this oeuvre, with an irregular plan, a mix of Gothic and Tudor/Jacobean detailing, including canted bays, oriel windows, crenellations, buttresses and finally a lively roofline of gabled dormers and tall stacks.

Like many of the Tudor revival houses of the nineteenth century, Gowran Grange’s architectural profile was designed as a picturesque addition to the landscape.”

12.15 Dr Tierney’s Architectural Assessment of Gowran Grange is as follows:

“In my opinion the house, its demesne, and any associated historic structures should undoubtedly be added to the country’s Record of Protected Structures.”

12.16 John McElwaine was commissioned by the Baron to undertake the construction work. His accounts are contained in the National Archives along with accounts of Dublin tradesmen for the supply of furnishings to the Baron in 1958. The 4 storey house was a substantial dwelling of its time albeit that further work was carried out in 1872. It is accepted that the Baron spared no expense in both the material used and in the design of the house and outbuildings.

12.17 Throughout the Baron’s private papers are the details of every building expense, accounts from the building contractor and accounts from suppliers of furnishings. There are more than twelve pages of accounts from the building contractor, John McElwaine, as well as receipts for payments made by the Baron de Robeck. The bills were paid by instalments between the years 1857-9 and approximately half of the money was paid in advance before the building work began.

12.18 As the work progressed the accounts were paid (beginning 22 September 1857), for example, £1,000 sterling for the building of the Baron’s dwelling house. In the fifth instalment another £2,000 was paid on account for building work at Swordlestown. A banker’s draft for the final instalment of £5,500 for works executed and materials supplied in building the house and thatch offices for the Baron de Robeck, were dated 18 October 1858.

12.19 The total cost of the Baron’s own house Gowran Grange alone, came to 6,332 pounds, 9 shillings and 5 pence, an enormous sum of money at the time.

12.20 Towards the end of the extremely long list of expenses, there is a list of ‘cash paid you’ which contains the various instalments paid and dates, and this is brought forward in a column beside the overall total. The amount paid by instalments was then taken from the overall total and a new balance of the amount due was created. Other costs

with regard to the building of Gowran Grange do not come under the overall total for the completion of the house. These include 339 cubic yards of rubble masonry over the foundations.

- 12.21 The accounts for these extra expenses are presented with headings, such as, kitchen, coal vaults, knife and boot house, yard halls, garden walls etc. These receipts illustrate the extent of the building works that took place at the Gowran Grange demesne during this period.
- 12.22 There was a receipt sent to the Baron in 1857 from Ballantine & Sons furnishings for the payment of a bill, and the suppliers of several chimney pieces seemed very pleased with their own work.
- 12.23 There was a letter attached (12 December 1857) in which Robert Ballantine, writing on behalf of the Dublin furnishings supplier, thanked the Baron for allowing them to complete the work at his mansion at Surrellstown (as it was then referred to). The writer goes on to state that the chimney-piece in the drawing room had *'delighted everyone who has seen it.'*
- 12.24 The builders installed a very ornate chimney-piece made of black marble and also two smaller decorative marble pieces for bedrooms and three plain black marble pieces for three other bedrooms. A portland stone Gothic piece was set in the hall and three small portland stone pieces for lower rooms. There were various other items listed in a very detailed account, including hearths for mantel pieces and doors, black marble facings for doors, and countless other decorative additions.
- 12.25 At the end of the account the marble mason's time and travelling expenses were included in the bill. It took seventeen and a half days to do the work and travelling to and from Swordlestown every day, except Sunday, which alone cost £8. This particular bill totalled 137 pounds, 4 shillings and 10 pence.
- 12.26 There are also numerous receipts for the furnishing expenses for such a large property and there are bills and receipts within the archive from a variety of establishments. One particular bill came from William Fry & Co., cabinet-makers, upholsterers, carpet warehousemen and general house furnishers. The list of purchases was four pages long and included the following: a crimson russet carpet for room eight and twelve, one four-foot oak wardrobe half-hanging, three oak patent portable water closets, four chon bedsteads (one with canopy) and two oak chairs and more.
- 12.27 There is another bill added to that, with one six foot oak wardrobe with glass stand and one two foot oak washstand. The total cost came to 1,269 pounds 8 shillings and 6 pence, however, there was another additional expense for 'extra furnishing charges.' There was no explanation as to what that charge was for, but it came to 731 pounds 16 shillings and 3 pence.
- 12.28 The Baroness de Robeck was still going to auctions well into the 1860s, seeking out ornaments and objets d'art to decorate Gowran Grange. The furnishings, carpets,

decorations and works of art were purchased at that time, to enrich and beautify the special house.

12.29 The papers from the De Robeck archive reveal that enormous expense and detail went into the creation of both the house and the design of the entire demesne. Identity and land ownership would seem to have been important to the de Robeck family, since there are several letters in the archive that refer to both. This would have influenced the design of the house.

12.30 When the 4th Baron de Robeck had put the finishing touches to his rural retreat, it was time to take a more keen interest in the sport of kings and hunting, which brought about a new stage in the history of the Gowran Grange demesne.

13.0 Life at Gowran Grange demesne (1859-1900)

13.1 Back in the nineteenth century it seemed automatic for each Baron de Robeck in turn, to become master of the Kildare hunt. Reading through A history of the Kildare hunt (1913) one gets a clear insight into the huge contribution the family made to the development and well-being of the hunt. The vacancy caused by the resignation of Lord Naas early in 1862, saw the Baron de Robeck unanimously elected by the members of the hunt.

13.2 There are quotes from his diary in the book, which show that he had regularly hunted with the 'Kildare's' since 1853. It was thought that there was no better sportsman to be found to succeed Lord Naas. The members believed that the good sport and prosperity of the late mastership would continue under the Baron's control.

13.3 Their confidence was proven to be right, as the hunt had six very successful seasons afterwards. Each week in the local newspaper the Kildare Observer there was a column written under the title the 'Kildare Hounds' during the hunting season.

13.4 For the latter half of the nineteenth century, it was a rare report on the Kildare hounds, in which he was not mentioned as one of the county worthies. In fact, the Baron was often the designer of great runs for the hunt, going through his own land, as well as that of his neighbours and friends. These included, the Marquis of Drogheda, the Earl of Mayo, Thomas de Burgh and Major Moore. All of these men owned thousands of acres of land each, in Kildare and surrounding counties.

13.5 The hunt might have for example, set out from Sillagh bog (now called the Baron's bog) which everyone had known, '*being on the estate of the Baron de Robeck.*' The reports in the newspaper were very descriptive, of hounds barking and someone shouting '*Raynard*' when a fox had been caught and of the scenery and weather conditions of the day.

13.6 Most often the hunt would convene at Punchestown (home of the historic racecourse) or nearby at Beggar's End and then onto Eadestown and across the fields to Killashee. The hunt would normally take 1-2 hours to complete the course, which had been '*dutifully set out by the Baron.*' Quite often the hunt was delayed by a snowstorm.

One particular run took 1 hour and 5 minutes, which was the best the 'Kildare's' had all season. The mastership on that day was entrusted to 'that galant sportsman, Baron de Robeck.'

- 13.7 An article in the Kildare Observer on 1 January 1881 shows how many meets were arranged and commenced at Gowran Grange demesne. The first paragraph of the newspaper report specifically mentions 'coverts' which were popular locations for foxes. There is a wooded area of approximately 8 acres at the most northerly part of Gowran Grange demesne referred to as 'Fox Covert' and shown as such on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map.

Fig. 25 – Newspaper article Kildare Observer 1 January 1881

MEET AT GOWRAN GRANGE.
The meet on Tuesday, at Gowran Grange, was anxiously looked forward to from its close proximity to coverts from which there is usually a good days' fox hunting. There were present—Earl of Mayo, Baron and Miss de Robeck, Major de Robeck, Mr. T. J. de Burgh and Mrs. de Burgh, Captain Burton, Mr. Percy La Touche, Mr. David Mahony, Captain F. J. Tynte, Hon. Colonel Orlinton, Captain Gresson, Mr. W. Blacker, Mr. E. Kennedy, Miss Kilbee, Mr. Arthur Owen, Mr. T. Cooke Trench, Mr. Ulick de Burgh, Mr. Hugo de Burgh, Mr. Richard Bushe, Mrs. Fynamore and the Misses Fynamore, Miss Bailey, Mr. Thomas Beasley, Mr. J. Beasley.
Found at the Sillagh Wood, known as the Baron's Bog, and when, after a long delay, a fox broke away and ran straight over the Ballymore road for Dowdenstown, where he was lost. Found in Stonebrook cover, and he went away at the far side, crossed the road, and ran through Mullaboden, and then as if for Dnnshane; crossed again, keeping to the right, and back to Sillagh, where, after some covert hunting, the fox went away over the same line to Stonebrook cover, through it, on to the banks of the River Liffey, turning to the left in a ring along the side of the Ballymore road, and was marked to ground in the plantation on the edge of the road. Found at Panchestown, and went away in the direction of Sillagh wood; wheeling to the left, he crossed the Ballymore road, leaving Dowdenstown to the right. There, darkness setting in, the hounds were stopped within a field of the cover.

- 13.8 The Baron continued to ride out with the hunt long after he resigned as master. In fact, he continued to design courses for the hunt and gave at least one hunt dance at his Gowran Grange residence during the season. Usually news of these dances were tucked away within the society column and were full of praise for the pretty dances at Gowran Grange. The Baron's house was described as one of the best in the kingdom, 'if only for its vicinity to Panchestown racecourse.' He remained a steward at the racecourse until he died in 1904.

Fig. 26 – Newspaper article Kildare Observer 17 January 1885

The Baron and Baroness de Robeck gave a very pretty dance at Gowran Grange on Monday week and the dancers were given the best of "pick-me-ups" in a meet of the Kildare Hounds at Johnstown Inn next morning. Gowran Grange is one of the best-known houses in the kingdom, if only from its vicinity to Panchestown racecourse.

- 13.9 An elaborate account is given of a hunt which took place in 1903 and was centred around Gowran Grange. Two mentions in the article specifically describe hunting at the “demesne” and how the hunting would have taken place within it, including explicit mention of hunting along the railway line which ran through Gowran Grange at the time. Today the railway line is no longer in operation but the former line itself remains within the lands of the demesne. The article in fig. 28 also precisely mentions passing “the Baron de Robeck’s residence on the left as we leave the demesne.” This confirms how extensive the hunting would have been throughout the entire demesne.

Fig. 28 – Newspaper article Kildare Observer 28 March 1903

A fine morning encouraged a big metropolitan contingent on Tuesday to 18-Milestone, always a popular fixture. The old covert at Killashee was blank, and orders were given for Punchestown gorse. We got away at once, and ran nicely over the racecourse, keeping the Blackhills on the right and the Herd’s Garden on the left, towards Beggar’s End. Wheeling to the right, we crossed the road to Newtown, and hounds “marked” their fox in the same earth as they have twice before this season, close to Mr Walsh’s house. The Baron’s Bog was blank. Mullaboden gorse held a brace, of which one was unfortunately chopped, and the other got away to only run through Stonebrook, and be killed close to the road. Hounds were quickly running in Harristown demesne, and soon drove their fox away over the road to Duns-town Wood. Reynard has gone right through and over the Commons by Mullacash Hill up to 18-Milestone. Keeping the chapel on the left we cross the road into Killashee, through the covert, and on over the road and the railway into Gowran Grange. The Baron de Robeck’s residence is on the left as we leave the demesne, and cross the road as if going to Punchestown, but hounds keep the gorse on the right, and are immediately at fault. Champion quickly sets them right, and we ran back over the road to Gowran Grange, through the demesne, and over the road, scent failing close to the new covert at Killashee owing to sheep having crossed the line. A capital 55 minutes. A real good day’s sport, although we never were further away from our fixture than about four miles.

- 13.10 When the Baron died on 23 August 1904, the Kildare Observer published a special supplement dedicated to him. There was a front-page cover picture of him, accompanied by several pages of text, as part of a eulogy.
- 13.11 The tributes were glowing, with descriptions such as “a good Christian, charitable, philanthropic and good-natured”. This was only natural, since the Baron had been before the public for a long time. He was a member of the R.D.S. and one of its vice-presidents. He had been a regular attender of their council meetings and shows. Ironically, his death in 1904, occurred on the opening day of that year’s show.

14.0 Life at the demesne (1900-2000)

14.1 Since the establishment of the demesne the estate has continued to fully function, with the de Robeck family in residence at the manor house and the entire demesne being both carefully managed and enjoyed. A detailed account of the farm was produced in *Irish Farming World* in 1906 and reproduced in the *Kildare Observer* on 17 November 1906. The author provides significant insight into the running of the Home Farm at the demesne and comments as follows: *“Our principal object, however, on the occasion of a recent visit, was to have a glance around the well managed property and home farm, extending to about 400 acres.”*

14.2 The account gives a good overview of the extent of the demesne and how it operated as an economic entity at that time. Some comments reveal how well looked after the estate was: *“The avenue is beautifully kept along its whole length of about a mile, and hollies, laurels, Austrian pines and oaks grow luxuriantly, yet there is no overcrowding or untidiness”.*

14.3 There is also commentary about how the estate was well looked after: *“All the wood and iron work is kept in a good state of preservation by the frequent use of the paint brush, and in every department there is ample evidence of economical and system management. No one department is developed at the expense of another, and the practical arrangement of every detail shows that a master mind is at the head of affairs. Nothing is allowed to go to waste and the home farm reflects the highest credit on the abilities of Mr Walter Watson, the Baron’s steward. The poultry and dairy departments are efficiently managed by Mrs Watson, who has more than once distinguished herself by winning prizes for butter in the strongest competition.”*

14.4 The article shows how the land at the home farm was productively used at that time as follows:

- For keeping horses; *“It is best known as the home of some useful hunters and steeplechasers....”*
- For tillage purposes: *“About forty acres of land are under tillage, mostly under a five course rotation.”*
- For growing roots: *“Of the eight acres under roots, two were devoted to red and yellow globe manges, while there were also two varieties of swede, green and purple top, and one acre of Dalle’s hybrid turnip.*
- For growing potatoes: *“The potato crop covered about an acre and was fairly good. It was sprayed once, and the tubers as a rule were very healthy, but the crop was hardly an average one. The varieties sown were Red Cups and Northern Stars. The Red Cups were remarkably good cookers, and have turned out so well that they will be a standard potato at Gowran Grange.”*
- For growing hay: *“There has been under hay about 6 ½ acres new meadow.”*
- For growing a forage crop: *“The Baron has been experimenting this year with Lucerne as a forage crop... about an acre of land is thus cultivated and as it was rather late in being got in this year it was converted into hay, but next year it is intended to utilise it as a soiling crop for the horses.”*

- For growing rape: *“There are four acres under rape, which grew to a height of three feet, and gave a bountiful crop, being cut and carted to cattle and milch cows in the field. A five acre field has been sown with rape, crimson, clover and rye grass to come in for feeding ewes and early lambs in April or May.”*
- For rearing livestock: *“Amongst live stock there are a dozen well selected cross-bred Shorthorn cows retained for the dairy. The calves are all hand reared, receiving whole milk until they are three months old... Besides these about hundred head of Kerry heifers are purchased within the year. They are wintered outside and fattened off the grass during the following summer.”*
- For sheep: *“Or sheep, a pure bred flock of Shrops is being established, ten ewes and ten hoggets being secured last year. The ram in use is a nice two shear bred by Colonel St Leger Moore, Killashee, Naas. Over sixty head of cross-bred Wicklow ewes are kept for breeding purposes, and mated with a Shrop ram, all the lambs being sold fat in the month of July. A few cross-bred wethers are kept for the purpose of supplying the mansion with mutton.”*

14.5 Aside from the day to day operation of running the home farm, there continued to be improvement works in the vicinity of it. The Swordlestown laneway runs alongside the Gowran Grange demesne and road works were carried out in 1916. A newspaper article appeared in the Kildare Observer in August 1916 referencing the “demesne” and proposing works to be carried out by the Council on the laneway adjoining Gowran Grange demesne.

Fig. 29 – Newspaper advertisement Kildare Observer August 1916

TO ROAD CONTRACTORS.

THE Council will on Wednesday, 6th September, 1916, consider tenders for repairing Swordlestown Laneway, about 168 perches, from the Lane which bounds Gowran Grange Demesne on the south-west to the Railway Bridge between the townlands of Flemington North and Swordlestown South, according to specification, at a cost not to exceed £20.

The work must be completed before the 1st December, 1916.

Tenders to be lodged by 11 o'clock, a.m., on the above date.

By Order,
D. J. PURCELL,
Clerk of Council.

Naas,
10th August, 1916. (b-19a)

14.6 The demesne has continued to evolve over the years. After the passing of the 4th Baron de Robeck the Gowran Grange demesne passed to the 5th Baron. The 5th Baron de Robeck saw part of the demesne become a licenced airfield. The ‘Big field’ at Gowran Grange has operated as an airfield since the 1930s.

14.7 In 1952 the Dublin Gliding Club established and initially operated at Baldonnel. As the Air Corps became more active it was necessary for the Gliding Club to seek a new base. Baron Martin De Robeck offered a 40 acre field (referred to as the ‘Big field’) at

the Gowran Grange demesne, which was highly suitable as it had been already licensed as an airfield for over 20 years.

14.8 Baron de Robeck's father had been an aviation enthusiast and he thus welcomed the gliding club as tenants to Gowran Grange.

14.9 The club experimented with flying from Gowran Grange while continuing to operate from Baldonnell between 1976-1979. The last flight from Baldonnell took place in November 1980 and Gowran Grange has been the club's base ever since. The Dublin Gliding Club is Ireland's only gliding club and has operated from Gowran Grange for over 40 years. Today it is a common sight to see gliders being towed from Gowran Grange and flying over both the demesne and the extended countryside.

15.0 Gowran Grange today in 2022

15.1 Whilst there have been many changes over the years at Gowran Grange, very little has changed within the demesne. The original 400-acre demesne remains largely intact with some minor amendments to historic hedgerows via their removal. The country house designed by Lanyon & Lynn has been faithfully protected and has not been extended or altered externally in any way which would detract from its original design. It is understood that the original outbuildings adjacent to the main house remain in existence. The farm building complex as shown on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map also appears largely the same. The demesne is still used in the same way as it was designed in 1856 with some fields designated as designed parkland and other fields used as productive agricultural fields and part of the home farm. As such the demesne continues to be authentic and full of integrity to its very core. Hunting continues to take place within the demesne at least annually on the October bank holiday of each year and on the New Year's hunt by the Kildare Hunt, which would typically be the two largest hunting events on the Hunt calendar. Gowran Grange still features prominently on these Hunt events. In fact, it is understood that a Hunt is scheduled to take place on Monday 31 October 2022 demonstrating the ongoing connection between hunting and the Gowran Grange estate that has been taking place over the last 166 years.

15.2 What marks the Gowran Grange demesne as very unique is the fact that it remains in the hands of the original family: the current resident at Gowran Grange House is the 8th Baron de Robeck. The impact of this continual unbroken ownership by the one family has allowed the demesne to be highly protected with little loss of its original character.

15.3 It is now time to recognise the significance of both Gowran Grange House and demesne by its inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures. This will ensure its protection into the future and will allow for the authenticity and integrity of the Gowran Grange demesne to be both retained and protected going forward.

15.4 We understand that it is the intention of Kildare County Council to add the Gowran Grange House, outbuildings and demesne to the Record of Protected Structures. We respectfully suggest that in the interests of clarity, that the proposed RPS listing and the

content of the notice to the owner should specifically include the following elements to ensure their full protection: Gowran Grange House, associated outbuildings, historic farm buildings and secondary dwellings, demesne lands, formal gardens, designed landscape and historic garden, perimeter woodland tree belts forming part of designed landscape, hydraulic ram, decorative bridge and pond, primary entrance and driveway, secondary entrance and driveway, all perimeter part stone walling throughout the demesne.

15.5 In respect of the extensive trees and mature woodland in the estate, we would request that the Council give consideration as part of this process to protecting these trees by means of a tree preservation order or by the designation of a landscape conservation area, in order to ensure that these majestic trees are protected and preserved. Our estimates are that the 400 acre estate includes approximately 60 acres of mature woodland and this is clearly worthy of protection and preservation.

15.6 The Gowran Grange House and demesne is of regional significance and is worthy of robust protection due to its important designed landscape and substantially intact demesne that greatly contributes to the architectural and landscape heritage of County Kildare.

Appendix 1 – Census extracts

CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1901.

(Two Examples of the mode of filling up this Table are given on the other side.)

FORM A.

No. on Form B. /

RETURN of the MEMBERS of this FAMILY and their VISITORS, BOARDERS, SERVANTS, &c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of SUNDAY, the 31st of MARCH 1901.

Number.	NAME AND SURNAME.	RELATION to Head of Family.	RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.	EDUCATION.	AGE.	SEX.	RANK, PROFESSION, OR OCCUPATION.	MARRIAGE.	WHERE BORN.	IRISH LANGUAGE.	If Deaf and Dumb; Blind; or Lame.
1	John Henry de Robeck	Head	Church of Ireland	Read & write	77	M	Baron & P.O.L.	Married	Dublin City		
2	Sophia C. de Robeck	Wife	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	62	F	Baroness	Married	Co. Carlow		
3	Henry Edward de Robeck	Son	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	42	M	Colonel & High School	Married	Dublin City		
4	Patrick de Robeck	Son	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	40	M	Nil	Married	Co. Wick		
5	Samuel Grace	Servant	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	47	M	Domestic Servant	Married	C. Kildare		
6	James Burnett	Servant	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	20	M	R.C.D.	Married	C. Wick		
7	Francis Spathan	Servant	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	19	M	R.C.D.	Married	Dublin City		
8	Elizabeth Oakley	Servant	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	67	F	R.C.D.	Married	London City		
9	William Walker	Servant	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	42	M	Domestic Servant	Married	C. Wick		
10	James Mitchell	Servant	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	28	M	Domestic Servant	Married	C. Wick		
11	Elizabeth Hamilton	Servant	Presbyterian	R.C.D.	21	F	Domestic Servant	Married	C. Wick		
12	John Grace	Servant	Church of Ireland	R.C.D.	18	M	R.C.D.	Married	C. Wick		
13	Elizabeth Hephurn	Servant	R.C.D.	R.C.D.	22	F	R.C.D.	Married	C. Carlow		
14											
15											

I hereby certify, as required by the Act 63 Vic., cap. 6, s. 6 (1), that the foregoing Return is correct, according to the best of my knowledge and belief.

I believe the foregoing to be a true Return.

John A. Graham Esq. (Signature of Enumerator.)

de Robeck (Signature of Head of Family.)

From <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/reels/nai000909348/>

CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1901.

FORM B. 1.—HOUSE AND BUILDING RETURN.

County, Kildare Parliamentary Division, North Kildare Poor Law Union, Nass District Electoral Division, Killeshoe Townland, Boylestown North

Parliamentary Borough, — City, — Urban District, — Town or Village, — Street, Barony, Nass South parish, Kill

NOTE A.—When a Townland or Street is situated in two Parliamentary Divisions, or in more than one District Electoral Division or Parish, or is partly within and partly without a Parliamentary Borough, City, Urban District, Town, or Village, a separate Return should be made for each portion.

No. of House.	Whether built or rebuilt.	Name of the House.	No. of Rooms.	Is it a Dwelling?	PARTICULARS OF INHABITED HOUSES.							No. of Families.	Name of the Head of each Family residing in the House.	No. of Families in the House.	No. of Families in the House.	No. of Families in the House.	No. of Families in the House.	No. of Families in the House.
					Walls.	Roof.	Floors.	Windows.	Doors.	Stairs.	Cellars.							
1	Build	Proctor's Milling	37	yes	1	1	6	12	20	1	1	1	John A. D. de Robeck	27	13	13	13	13
2	Do	Do	-	yes	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	William Leahy	1	1	1	1	1
3	Do	Do	-	yes	1	1	2	3	7	2	1	1	William Shore	4	3	4	4	4
4	Do	Do	-	yes	1	1	4	5	11	2	1	1	Robert Loggott	9	6	4	4	4
5	Do	Do	-	yes	1	1	2	1	5	3	1	1	Francis J. J. J.	3	4	4	4	4
6	Do	Do	-	yes	1	1	2	4	8	2	1	1	Patrick Hogan	3	5	4	4	4
7	Do	Do	11	yes	1	1	3	5	10	2	1	1	John Moore	5	5	4	4	4
8	Do	Do	10	yes	1	1	3	5	10	2	1	1	John Nolan	5	3	4	4	4
9	Do	Do	5	yes	1	1	2	3	7	2	1	1	John Matthews	3	6	4	4	4
10	Do	Do	1	yes	1	1	2	2	6	2	1	1	Jeremiah Sullivan	4	10	4	4	4
11	Do	Do	2	yes	1	1	2	2	6	2	1	1	Lawrence Wright	4	6	4	4	4
12	Do	Do	-	yes	1	1	2	2	6	2	1	1	Thomas Wright	4	3	4	4	4
13	Do	Do	2	yes	1	1	2	2	6	2	1	1	John Singleton	2	5	4	4	4
14	Do	Do	-	yes	1	1	2	2	6	2	1	1	Lawrence Butler	3	6	4	4	4
15	Do	Do	-	yes	1	1	2	2	6	2	1	1	John Breslin	4	5	4	4	4
16	Do	Do	2	yes	0	0	2	2	4	3	1	1	Michael Connor	3	11	4	4	4
17	Do	Do	8	yes	1	1	3	3	8	2	1	1	Thomas Byrne	6	8	4	4	4

NOTE B.—If one House is occupied by more than one Family, the Names of the Heads of Families so occupying it should be inserted together in Col. 11, thus:—
John Jones, Peter Henry, and the figures 1 entered in Col. 14, opposite the middle of the bracket. See pattern Table in Instructions, page 8.

Appendix 2 – Architectural Assessment by Dr Andrew Tierney

Dr Andrew Tierney
Irish Research Council Laureate Project Fellow
Irish Art Research Centre (TRIARC)
Department of the History of Art and Architecture
Trinity College Dublin
tiernea4@tcd.ie
05/05/2022

Re: Architectural assessment of Gowran Grange, Punchestown, Co. Kildare in support of its addition to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) for Co. Kildare. For Punchestown Community Group.

Gowran Grange is an important Victorian country house in County Kildare. The house has been attributed to the youthful John McCurdy by Bence-Jones (1978) but is more likely the work (in overall conceit at least) of Belfast-based architectural firm Lanyon & Lynn (later Lanyon, Lynn & Lanyon) (Casey 2005; Tierney 2019), possibly with McCurdy as collaborator and executant (in which capacity he also worked with Deane and Woodward at the Museum Building in Trinity College Dublin 1853-7). Additional work is recorded in 1872. The firm, founded by Sir Charles Lanyon and William Henry Lynn in 1854, was among the most successful country house practices working in Ireland in the mid-19th century. Major works of these architects, working alone or in collaboration, include Stranmillis, Co. Antrim (1857-8), Killashee, Co. Kildare (1859-62), Rossmore Park, Co. Monaghan (1858), Belfast Castle (1862), Ballymena Castle (begun 1865), Stradbally Hall, Co. Laois (1866-7), and Castle Leslie, Co. Monaghan. In many ways Gowran Grange is typical of this oeuvre, with an irregular plan, a mix of Gothic and Tudor/Jacobean detailing, including canted bays, oriel windows, crenellations, buttresses, and finally a lively roofline of gabled dormers and tall stacks.

Like many of the Tudor revival houses of the nineteenth century, Gowran Grange's architectural profile was designed as a picturesque addition to the landscape. It is resonant with nostalgia for the Elizabethan golden age, inspired by the work of lithographers such as Joseph Nash, author of the hugely popular four volume *The Mansions of England in the Olden Time* (1839-49), which did much to popularise the style. Given its size, architectural quality, and regional significance, as well as its importance to the local history of Punchestown, in my opinion the house, its demesne, and any associated historic structures should undoubtedly be added to the county's Record of Protected Structures.



Dr Andrew Tierney

Appendix 3 – Aerial images of Gowran Grange House & Demense

1999



2004



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Unpublished sources

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