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Maria Kelleher,
Executive Architect,
Architects Department,
Sligo County Council,
Riverside,
Sligo

12th February 2021.

RE: Phase 2 of housing development at Connolly Park, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo.

Maria,

The Archaeological Desktop Study on the proposed housing development at Connolly Park, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo, which was compiled by Martin Timoney in 2018, covers Phase 2 of the proposed development; as on Page 2 of the report it states 'All four areas proposed for development were considered; Areas A (0.397Ha) and B (0.12Ha) will be developed with first, Areas C (0.261Ha) and D (0.096Ha) will be in years to come'. (appendix A)

Correspondence, dated 27.5.20, from Celine Walsh, Archaeologist, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (as the Department was then known – now Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage), recommended monitoring of all ground disturbance associated with the proposed development (Phase 1). (appendix B)

Monitoring of groundworks would appear to be the most appropriate recommendation for Phase 2 of the development, for the same reasons outlined in the Department's recommendations of 27.5.20, i.e. given the disturbance caused by the construction and demolition of the Union Workhouse which once stood on the site.

The recent monitoring of the groundworks involved in Phase 1 of the development (under Excavation Licence No. 20E0474) has proven that the entire site has been extensively disturbed by the construction of the workhouse in the 19th century and by its demolition and the subsequent construction of the local authority housing here in the 20th century. (appendix C)

While no evidence of the souterrain (RMP No. SL038-032) was uncovered during Phase 1 of the development, as its exact location is unknown within the general area, monitoring of groundworks in the vicinity of a recorded monument is still necessary.

Please contact me if you have any queries.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Crumlish". To the right of the signature is a short horizontal line.

Richard Crumlish

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

For provision of ten units including demolition of two
semi-detached blocks of houses and public open space

‘Part 8’

at

Connolly Park

CARROWTOBBER

Tubbercurry

Co. Sligo

For Sligo County Council

County Buildings, Riverside, Sligo

ITM: 552270, 812217

Martin A. Timoney, BA, FRSAI, MIAI
Research Archaeologist

Bóthar an Chorainn
Keash
Co. Sligo
071-9183293 & 087-2863301
martintimoney06@eircom.net
29th July, 2018

Introduction

I have been asked by the Architectural Section of Sligo County Council to investigate to 'site visit and desktop study level only' the archaeological potential of an area for proposed provision of ten units including demolition of two semi-detached blocks of houses and construction of public open space in a partly demolished County Council housing estate.

The site in question is in Carrowntobber, immediately northwest of the town of Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo. The development project is specifically Connolly Park and goes by that name for Sligo County Council. Prior to the County Council housing estate from the 1930s this was the Tubbercurry Union Workhouse from 1853.

The bulk of the report concentrates on the one particular suspected feature. All four areas proposed for development were considered; Areas A (0.397Ha) and B (0.12Ha) will be developed with first, Areas C (0.261Ha) and D (0.096Ha) will be in years to come.

This report can form part of the required notification to NMS.

Maps provided by Sligo County Council and some of my photos of the site are included at the end.

Evidence for potential archaeology

The only evidence for potential archaeology is one specific mapping.

On the 1838 OS Sligo 6" sheet 38 the word 'Cave' is marked within a small field with five straight sides. I have not found any other mapping showing the Cave.

The Tubbercurry Union Workhouse was built on this land in 1853, and so after the Great Famine of 1845-1848. The layout was that of George Wilkinson. It cost £5,150 to build and accommodated 500 people at the outset. In the Griffith Valuation of 1857 its exempted value was £100 for buildings and £9 for its 12 acres. Its layout is clearly depicted on the 1:2,500 OS mapping of c. 1910. The Cave is not marked on that map. The precise location of the Cave would have been within the Tubbercurry Union Workhouse complex, possibly under one of the buildings.

When the Sites and Monuments Record for Co. Sligo was being done by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland in 1988-1989 the Cave was given an SMR number, SL038-032----, and the location was visited by one of the ASI team.

When the *Archaeological Inventory for South Co. Sligo*, which includes this area, was compiled from the ASI file in 2003-2005 the location was included as entry #2022.

It reads (Egan *et al.*, 2005, 319)

"2022 Carrowntober; OS 38:1:4 (76, 464); Not indicated; OD 200-300; 15231, 31219 *Souterrain (possible)* On a SW facing slope, c. 150 m NW of Tubbercurry. There are no visible remains of the feature named 'Cave' on the 1838 OS 6-inch map. A housing estate was built on, or near the site of the possible souterrain c. 1940. SL038-032---- 1-9-1993."

This entry contains the only interpretation of the site. The interpretation is that the Cave was a souterrain, a manmade structure of the Early Medieval period. The most recent article on a Co. Sligo souterrain is my 2017 one on that at Culleenamore (Timoney 2017) wherein Warner dates them to the 6th to 12th and Clinton gives them a c.750 to 1250 *floruit*.

The souterrain interpretation may be correct as quite often souterrains are marked on OS maps as 'Cave', even within ringforts as at the ringfort just two fields to the NW. Irrespective of interpretation, natural cave or manmade souterrain, it is listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, SL038-032---- and as such there is a requirement under Section 12 of the Act that any (development) works be notified to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The logical step forward is to try to firmly establish the nature of this feature, if it still exists, considering two major phases of building on the location.

Considerations

If it is a natural cave then there may be engineering requirements, *i.e.*, ground conditions for building on. The area is one of limestone and natural caves are known.

If it is a man-made souterrain it could be in isolation, or it could be associated with an open settlement such as Twomile Stone, Co. Donegal, or it could be from an Early Medieval ringfort which had been levelled before 1838 – the OS of that time shows a small field with five straight sides and that could be an indication of a partly destroyed ringfort though it could be a fencing off of a hole in the ground of danger to farm animals.

Research

Following brief research in my own library I asked the Architectural Section of Sligo County Council to provide as many maps and aerial photos as it had to hand and to position the Cave from the 1838 OS map onto them.

Armed with these I visited the proposed development site on an overcast dry morning, 26/7/2018. Area A to be developed has been progressively cleared of the 1930s houses in recent times. It is now a fenced off flat area with minimal grass and weeds – we have had two months without rain, so the grass has not been growing and the horse on the site has eaten down what there has been of grass.

Soon after my arrival one of the residents on the north side came into this open area. He told me he knew the area very well for all of his seventy years. He had no knowledge of a hole in the ground, be it a cave or a souterrain, and as one caring for a horse, he would notice one if there was one visible – he was commenting from an animal safety point of view. He was aware of the souterrain, S1038-031002, in a ringfort, S1038-031001, two fields to the north (Egan *et al.*, 2005, 319, #2021). He also pointed out that besides demolition materials from houses a developer brought what I take to be builders’ rubble onto the site.

Next I went to a property dealer in Tubbercurry who has an active interest in local history and heritage. Likewise he had no knowledge of any feature in that area.

I emailed the archaeologist who examined the location for ASI in about 1994. He had no knowledge to help other than commenting that there are quite a lot of souterrains in that part of Co. Sligo and this cave could be a souterrain. There are about 130 souterrains in this part of Co. Sligo, of which 20 are in or close to Carrowntobber.

I consulted the Area Engineer for Sligo County Council whose yard is close by. He added some small but significant pieces of information. Bedrock was exposed at 800 mm depth on a pipeline cut nearby; boulder clay is common. There was a water tower in or close to this area and inward and outward piping may be crossing this area. Finally, he mention the well which served this water tower – it was only at this point that the origins of the townland name, Carrowntobber, The Quarter of the Well, struck me; the well must have been of some importance to deserve being incorporated in the name of the townland. The 1:2,500 OS from 1910 shows covered wells SW of the Union Workhouse.

Next

In summary then, all that we know comes from the one 1838 OS map. Interpretation is another matter. This will require use of some of the archaeological techniques that are in general use in such matters.

There are a number of ways to proceed: archaeologically monitor the development works, but then the construction works might have to be suspended if archaeology is revealed; open test trenches but the location of the supposed Cave is not precise; have a geophysics survey done, but the two phases of former building, and demolition and imported material, could render interpretation difficult.

Geophysics

I verbally consulted four experienced archaeologists, giving them the essentials, our one 1838 map record, site descriptions and site building history, but not the location.

Each considered that geophysics, particularly ground penetrating radar, would be the best to isolate the feature, be it a cave or a souterrain. For this to be successful the many pieces of scrap metal on the ground should be collected and removed. The low grass at the moment would make this a relatively easy process and should be done immediately. This has been a Sligo County Council housing estate since the 1930s. I have already mentioned this to two staff members at Sligo County Council.

There are a number of geophysics operators working in the northwest – these can be consulted at the next stage of this process. Besides this report I can be available for (on site) discussions.

Testing

Guided by the results of the geophysics the National Monuments Service would probably require test trenches. When a planning application for more than five houses is made the National Monuments Service generally asks for site testing. In this case site testing would best be guided by prior geophysics. Testing, if required by NMS, of the remaining areas can be undertaken in the same phase.

If the geophysics suggests that the feature turns out to be a souterrain then the question of its context arises. Was there a ringfort here that is was within or adjacent to? Was there an associated open settlement, similar to that at Twomile Stone, N of Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal? Was it in isolation? – such are not unknown.

What Might We Expect?

Souterrains are often regarded as being a feature of ringforts or cashels or early ecclesiastical sites.

The statistics tell otherwise. Clinton (2001, 46) quoting Buckley 1988-1989 gives a figure of 60% for souterrains in open spaces. This could have been so here – low field boundaries were not always marked on the First OS maps. Considering the developments in this area low field banks would not have survived. Egan *et al.*, (2005, 313) indicate that 16% of our souterrains are isolated.

Animal Bones

Local information is that there was an abattoir in the Tubbercurry Union Workhouse after it ceased that function – cattle, sheep and pigs; animal bone may well be frequent in the ground. The occupants of the County Council estate kept pets of all sizes, from cats to horses. Resulting from these two activities the ground is believed to be littered with the buried carcasses of many animals. Add to this the foundations of the buildings of the Tubbercurry Union Workhouse and of the County Council house. It could be a very complicated test excavation. One should not expect human bones – the Tubbercurry Union Workhouse graveyard is outside the NW of the development area.

This report has concentrated on locating and interpreting the Cave. The remainder of the proposed development area can be tested in one operation; geophysics is not required other than for the resolution of the Cave feature in Area A. The site difficulties outlined above applies to all of these areas.

On Souterrains: Warner and Clinton

Clinton (2001, 35, Fig. 10) provides an all-Ireland distribution map of souterrains, though his estimate of 3,000 to 3,500 may be well below the true figure. Walsh (2013, 13) gives totals of 441 souterrains for Sligo and 4,669 for the Republic. The count in Northern Ireland is 886. This would bring the count for the whole island of Ireland total of 5,555. As souterrains are a below-ground feature these numbers increase annually with accidental discoveries. Clinton (2001, 64) concludes his chapter on *Function* with the comment "It is the opinion of the present writer [Clinton] ... that the majority of souterrains in Ireland were built with refuge in mind but on a day-to-day basis functioned as convenient cold storage places."; see also Clinton (2001, 16-17) on the refuge v. storage debate under *Perceived Function*. Warner (1979; 1980) argues for the dismissal of the 'storage' explanation and comes down very firmly in favour of the 'refuge' explanation. I (Timoney) would add my thought that once a souterrain was constructed for refuge it could also be used for storage at a later date. The above is a slightly edited extract from my 2017 article (Timoney 2017, 4-5).

Clinton (pers. comm., June 2017, on reading this article and based on research for his PhD) suggests that these figures are too high and should be in the region of 3,500 to 4,000 for the whole country (Timoney 2017, 8, fn. 10).

There are many souterrains in Coolera, the Knocknarea-Carrowmore peninsula, some showing as meandering trenches within ringforts. These meandering trenches, which frequently begin at the edge of the ringfort, may be due to the wooden roof and wooden supports having rotted over the centuries with the covering soil collapsing into the trench. However, Clinton (pers. comm., June 2017) says that we should allow for the lintels having been robbed out for uses such as door thresholds, window and door lintels, gate posts, *etc.* The distribution of earth-cut souterrains, however, is almost exclusively Cork and Kerry (Clinton 2001, 37, fig. 12) (Timoney 2017, 8, fn. 11).

Summary

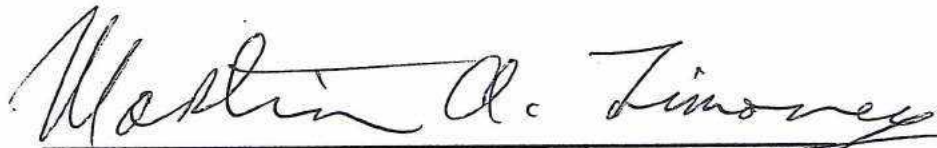
As Egan *et al.* (2005) correctly say that we have no evidence for the feature except for the 1838 mapping and this is the only archaeological comment we have on it. The feature could be a natural cave or a manmade souterrain. Fine-tuning its location has not helped, the area hereabouts has been Tubbercurry Union Workhouse, demolished between 1912 and the 1930s, and a County Council housing estate, now in the process of demolition. Site inspection did not locate the feature and contact with Tubbercurry locals has not added to our knowledge of either its location or its nature.

The Carrowntobber souterrain, SI038-031002, that we know of that is in a ringfort, SI038-031001, is extensive. The four parts of the passage there total at least 33 metres. Some souterrains can be in the region of 100 metres in length, caves can be 'endless'.

The position of the Cave is at the edge of the first proposed phase of development with the adjacent ground being planned to be back gardens. For the site we are dealing with, SI.038-032----, the First OS shows just one Cave, *i.e.*, one entrance. All this tells us is that there was one opening in the ground. It tells us nothing of the extent of the feature; be it a natural cave or a manmade souterrain. For either engineering or archaeological reasons this needs to be established.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that a geophysics survey of an area of no less than 50 m by 50 m centred on the calculated location of the Cave be undertaken; the calculation was based on overlaying the 1838 OS map on later maps. This should try to establish the nature of the feature and, based on the results of that, examine the surrounding space for indications of a possible ringfort or settlement that might have been associated with the feature. The overall results of each stage should inform the next and those in turn decide if further testing of the overall site, former Tubbercurry Union Workhouse and a former County Council estate, is warranted.



Martin A. Timoney, BA, FRSAI, MIAI

29th July, 2018

CAVEAT: Please note that recommendations are subject to approval by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. If archaeological material is revealed at any stage during the development then work in that area must stop and the National Monuments Service and the National Museum of Ireland must be informed. Whatever further recommendations they make must be adhered to. The developers should inform the contractors and all their other agents of these conditions and their implications.

Credits: My thanks go to Marian O'Callaghan, Maria Kelleher, Declan Clarke, Malachy Gillen, Marie Brennan, David Golden, Patricia Devins, Dr. Kieran D. O'Connor, Ted Skeffington, Roger McCarrick, Dr. Niall Brady, Andrew Beir, Mary B. Timoney and Richard Crumlsh for information and, most important, discussion on this proposal.

Published Sources

- Clinton, Mark, 2001: *The Souterrains of Ireland*, Bray, Wordwell.
- Crawford, Harriet, ed., 1979: *Subterranean Britain, Aspects of Underground Archaeology*, London, Baker.
- Egan, Ursula, Byrne, Elizabeth, and Sleeman, Mary, with Ronan, Sheila, and Murphy, Connie, 2005: *Archaeological Inventory of County Sligo, Volume I: South Sligo, Comprising the Baronies of Corran, Coolavin, Lemy and Tirerrill*, Dublin, Stationery Office.
- Griffith, Richard, 1857: *County of Sligo. Valuation of Several Tenements in the Union of Tubbercurry Union, (for the Primary Valuation, Valuation of Several Tenements)*, Dublin, HMSO.
- O'Brien, Gerard, 1986: "Workhouse Management in Pre-Famine Ireland", *Proceeding Royal Irish Academy*, 86C3, 113-134.
- Timoney Martin A., 2017: "A Souterrain in a Midden at Culleenamore, Co. Sligo", *Sligo Field Club Journal*, 3, 1-8.
- Timoney, Martin A., ed., 2002: *A Celebration of Sligo, First Essays for Sligo Field Club*, Sligo, Sligo Field Club.
- Timoney, Martin A., 2013: *Dedicated to Sligo, Thirty-four Essays on Sligo's Past*, Keash, Publishing Sligo's Past.
- Walsh, Paul, 2013: "The Archaeological Survey of Ireland: County Sligo", in Timoney, ed., 2013, 9-13.
- Warner, Richard, 1979: "The Irish Souterrains and their Background", in Crawford, ed., 1979, 100-144.
- Warner, Richard, 1980: "Irish Souterrains: Later Iron Age Refuges", *Archaeologia Atlantica*, 3, 81-99.

Contents

Maps and Photos to Illustrate the Site Location, Location of the ‘Cave’ and the Condition of the Land as it is now.

The position of the ‘Cave’ as on the 1838 OS 6” has been transferred to some of the maps and some of the photos.

The only indication of the ‘Cave’ is on the 1838 OS 6”. Its location on the ground has not been established.

In as far as possible its position has been drifted onto the other maps by Declan Clarke of Sligo County Council at my request. The maps do not comfortably overlay on the website, but the overlaying is quite good.

Pages

[1] – [6] Text of report

[7] Contents with some notes

Maps

[8] General layout of area at NW side of Tubbercurry

[9] 1838 6” OS map, showing the ‘Cave’

[10] 1910 1:2,500 (25”) plan showing the layout of the Tubbercurry Union Workhouse

[11] is [9] and [10] combined

[12] is [10] with layout of Council Housing Estate

[13] Aerial view of area, before demolition of some houses

[14] Modern layout and [9] combined

[15] Site location map

[16] Proposed layout for areas A and B with site survey

[17] Proposed layout for areas A and B

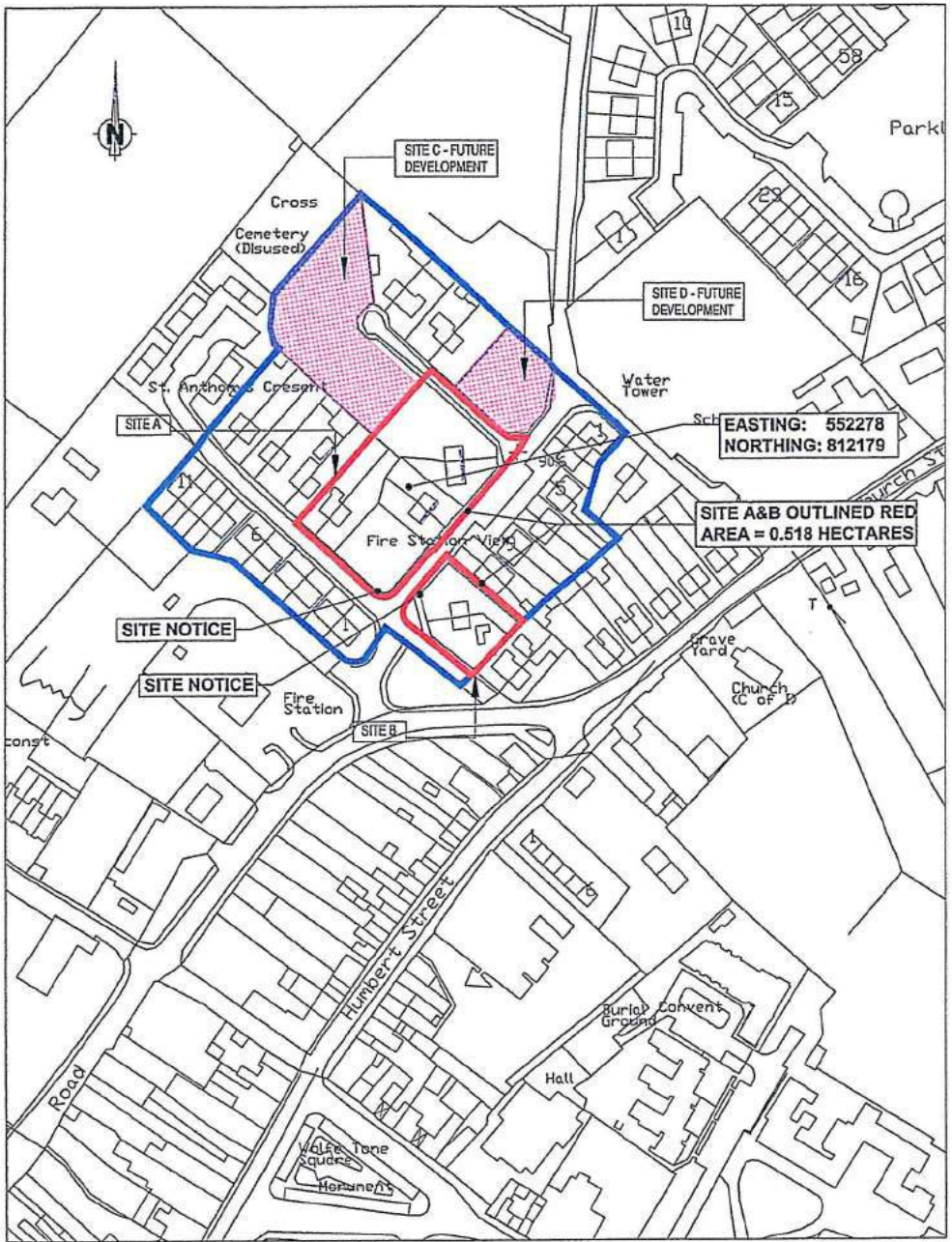
[18] – [21] Site photographs (Figs. 1 - 8), Martin A. Timoney, July 2018

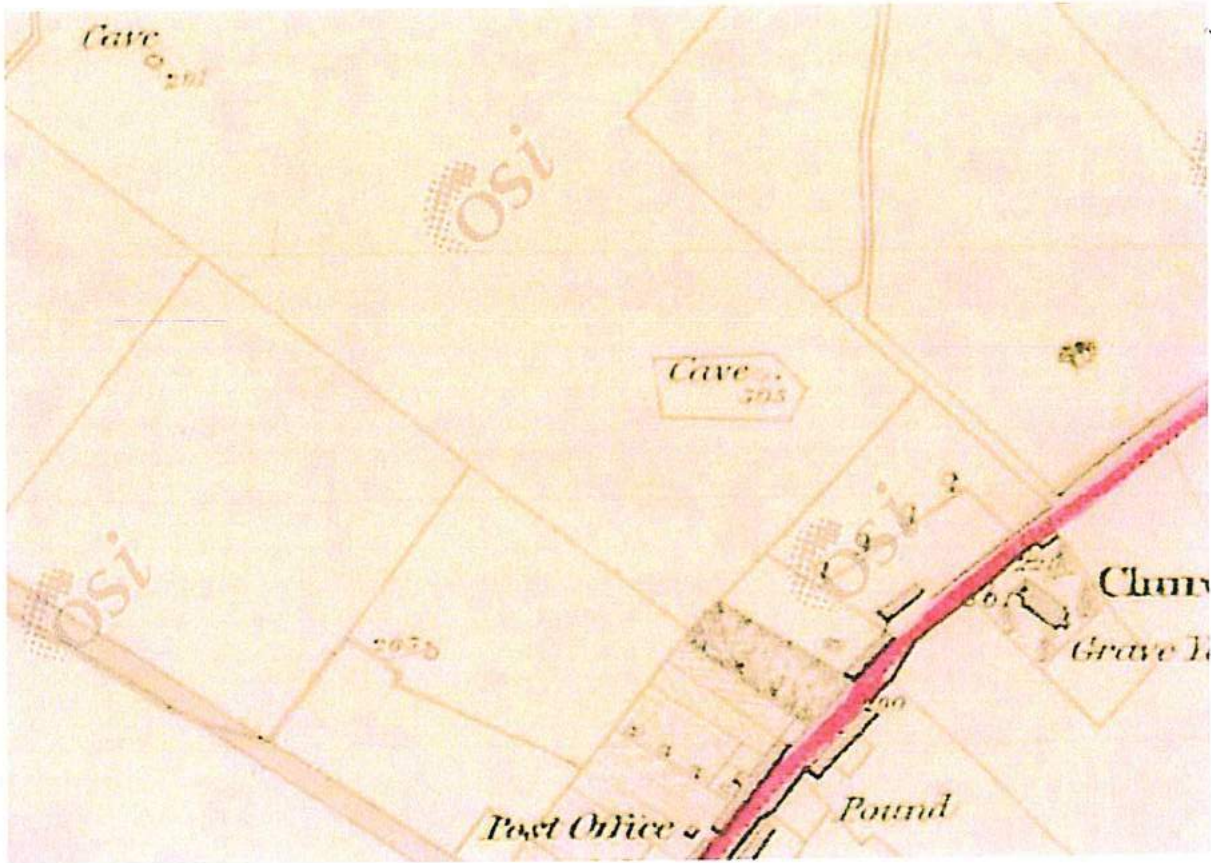
Photos

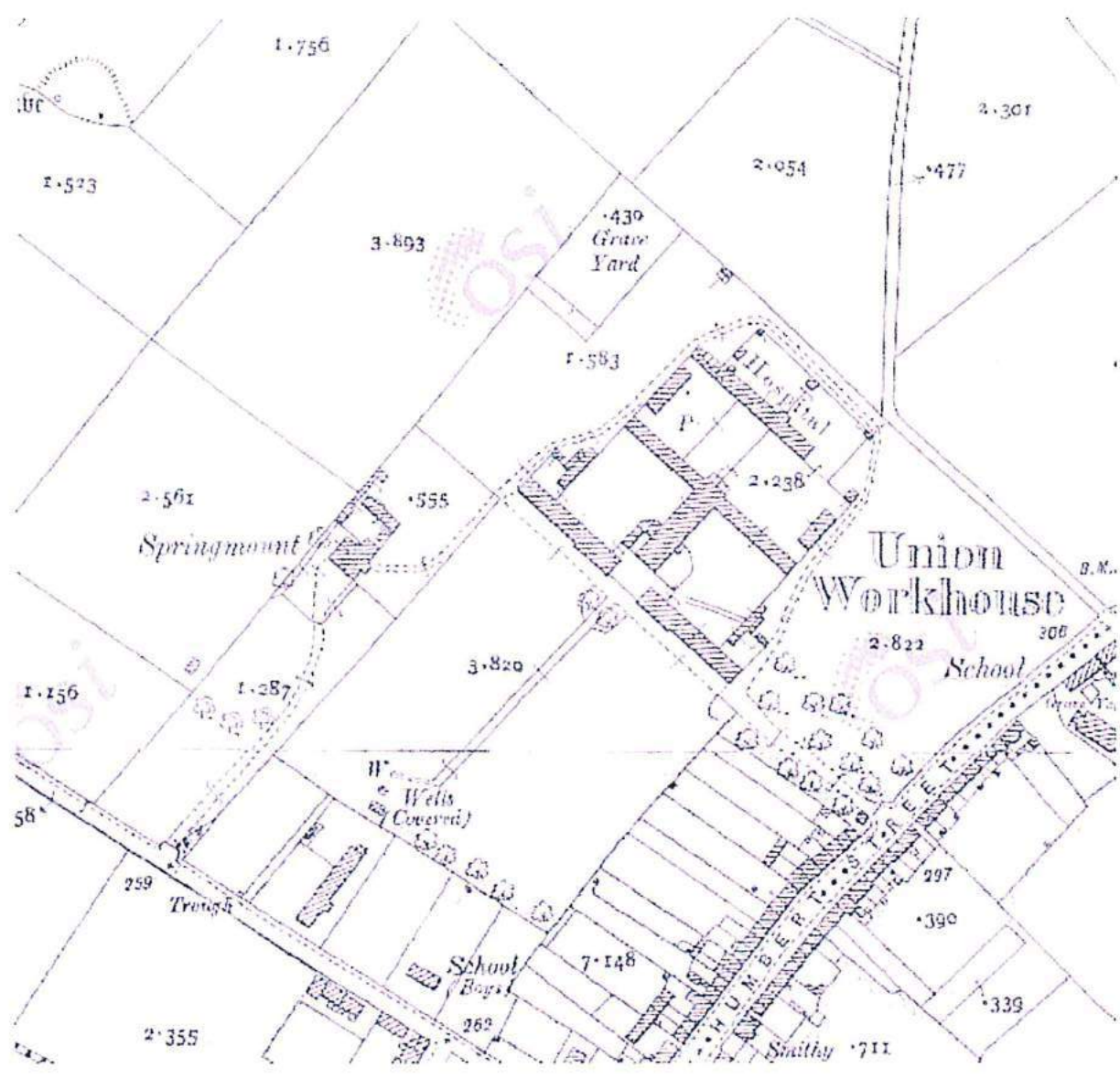
Figs. 1 to 8 show the estate as it is now, cleared of houses and under very rough grazing. Some of the remaining houses are to be seen in the background.

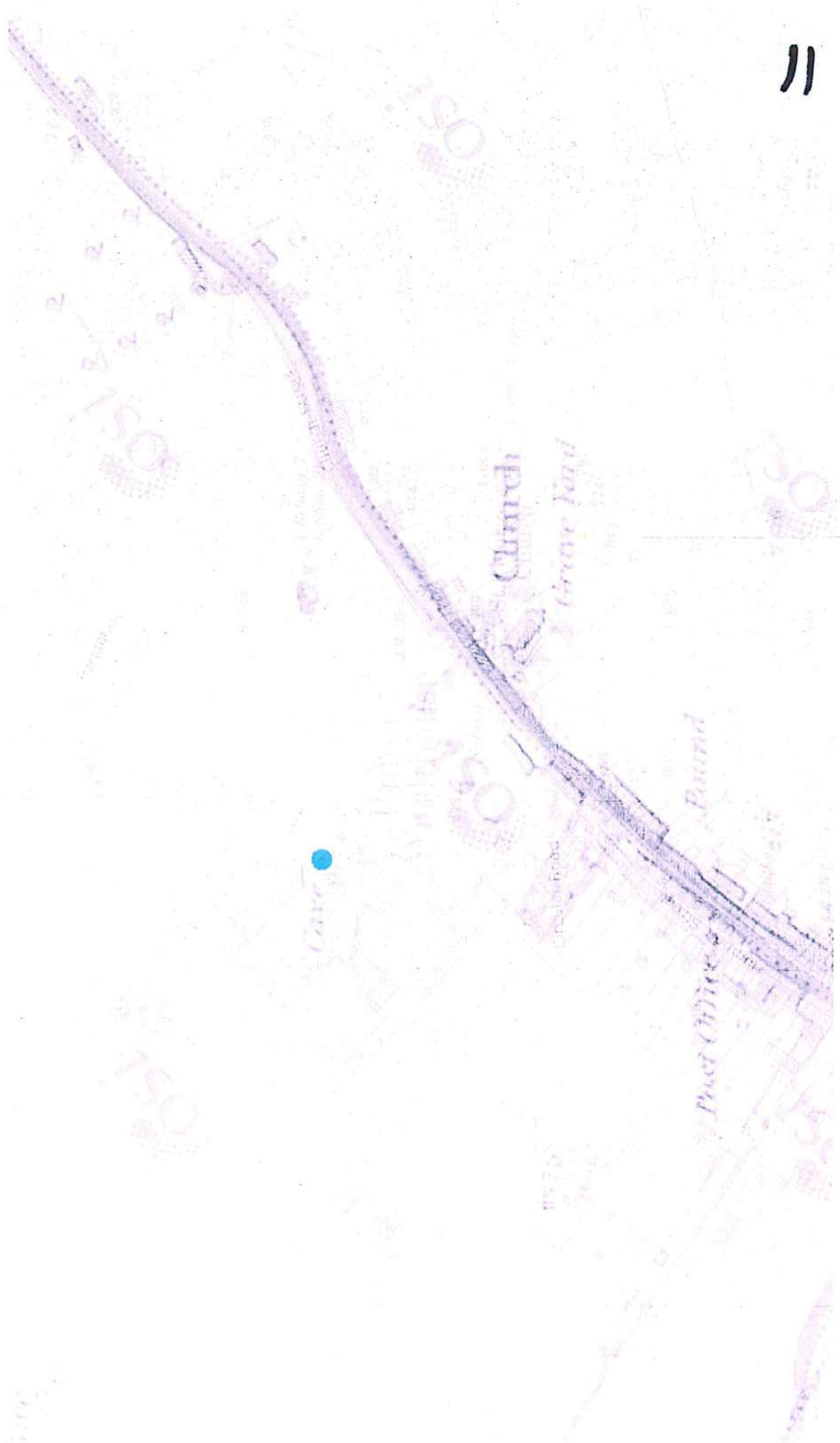
The *most likely* position of the ‘Cave’ is in the centre of Figs. 1 and 5 and left of centre of Fig. 4.

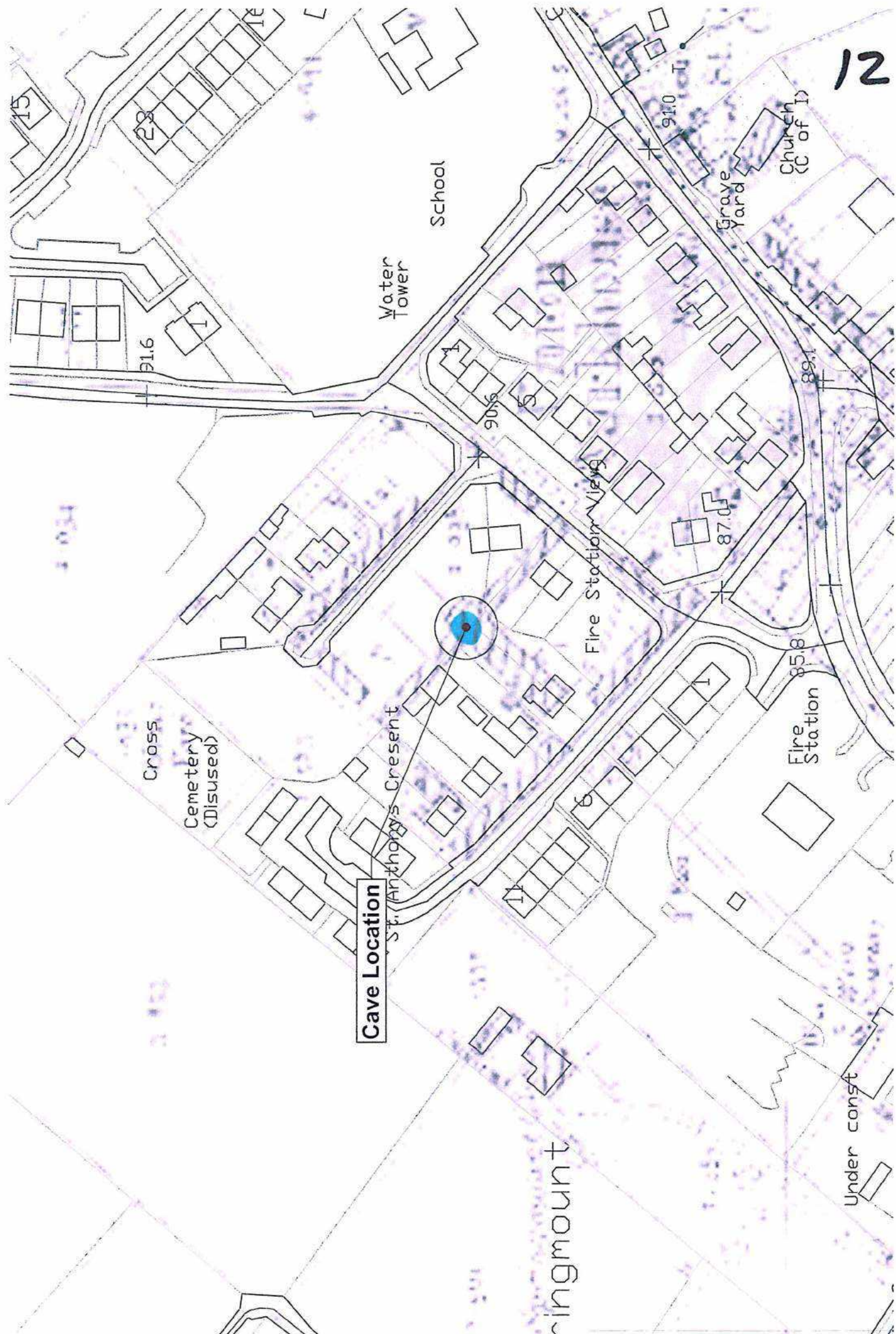
Figs. 7 and 8 show a road in Connolly Park and a play area there.











Cave Location

School

Water Tower

Grave Yard

Church (C of I)

Fire Station Views

Fire Station

Cross Cemetery (Disused)

St. Anthony's Crescent

Ringmount

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910

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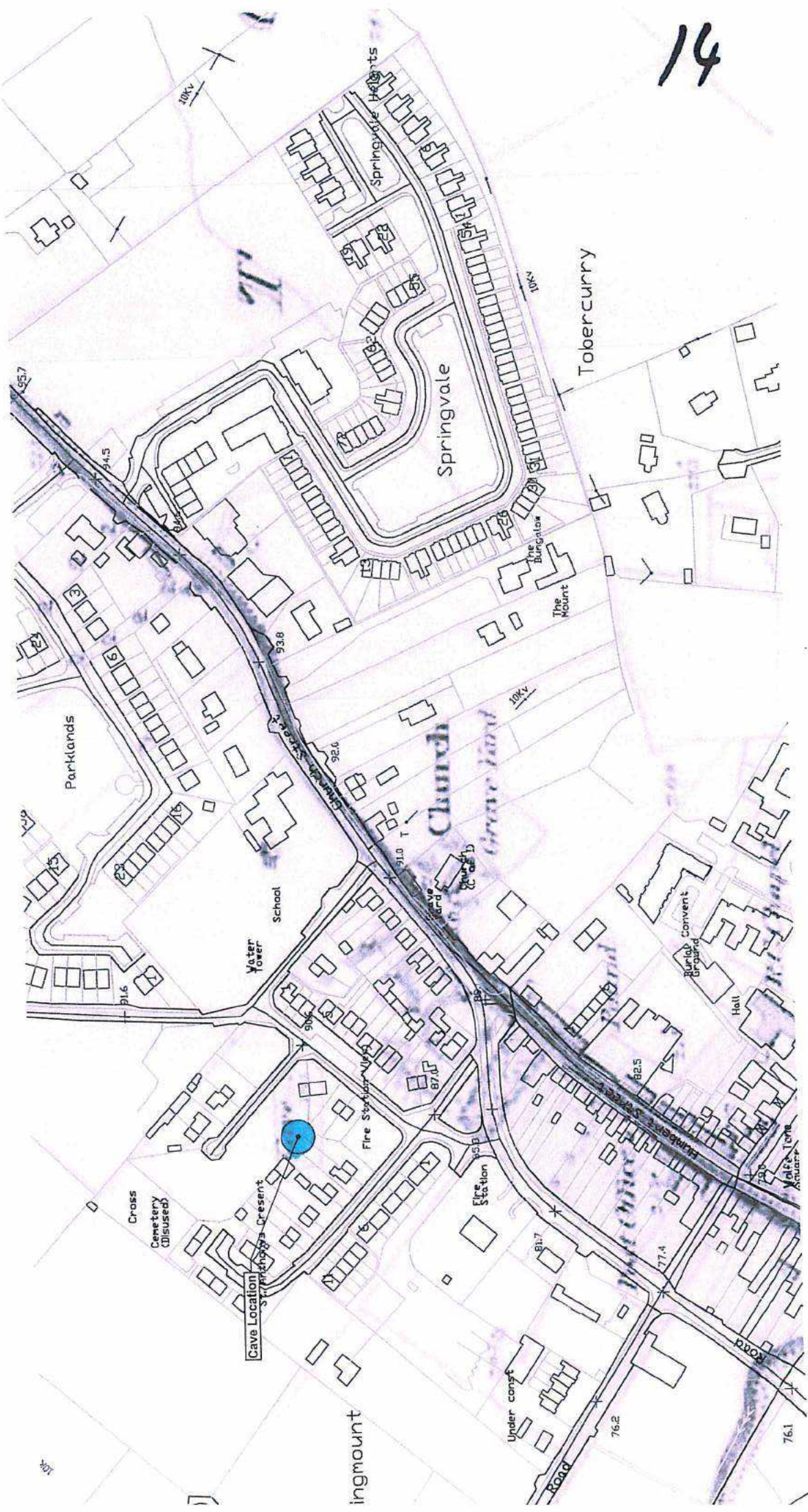
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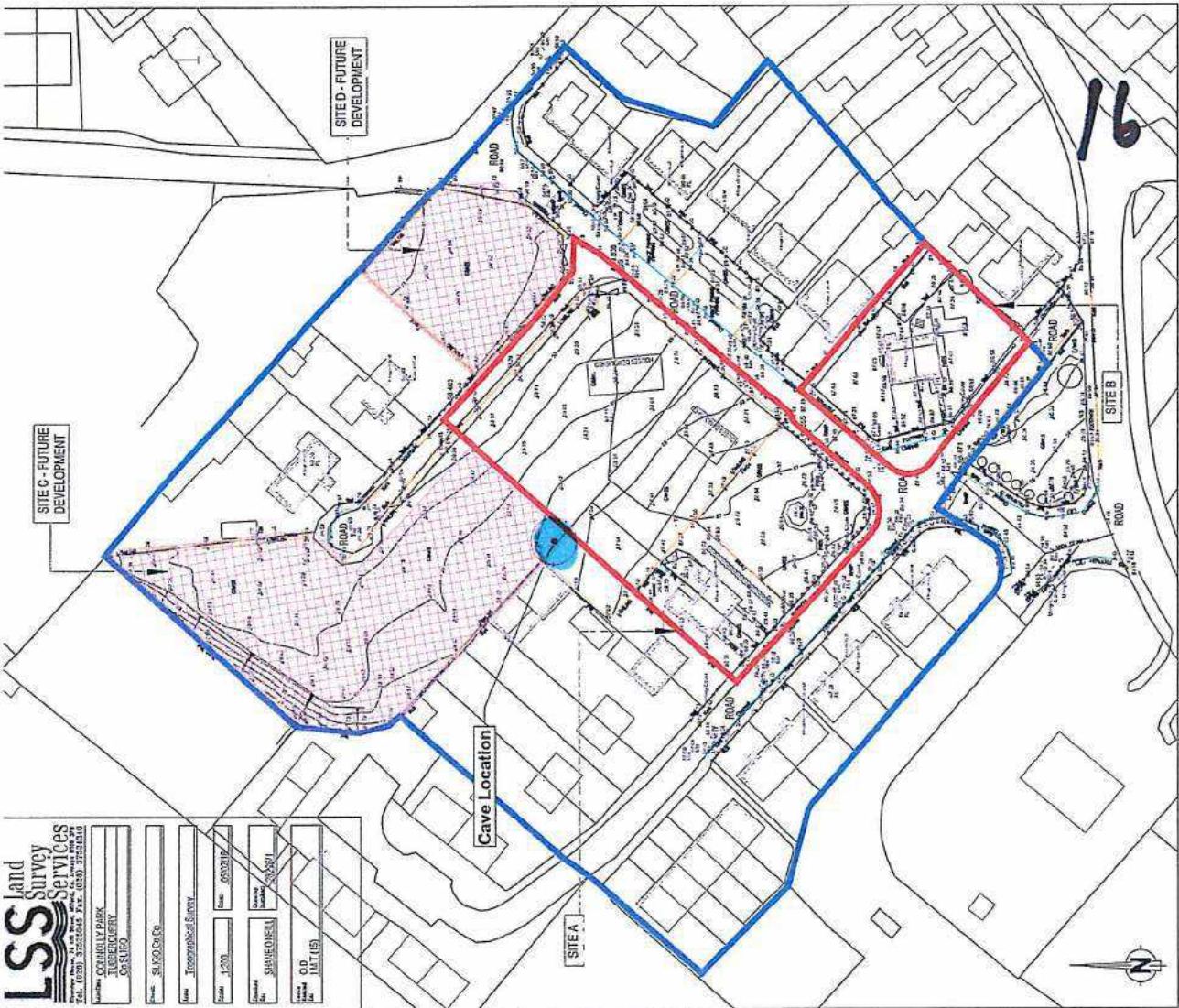
28





LSS Land Survey Services

Company: CONNOLLY PARK, SLIGO
 Project: CONNOLLY PARK
 Date: 12/20
 Scale: 1:500
 Author: SHANE O'NEILL
 Check: SHANE O'NEILL
 Date: 03/09/16
 Issue: 01
 Title: Topographical Survey
 Date: 03/09/16



TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY
 Scale: 1:500 NAL

Site within ownership Outlined in Blue
 Site Outlined in Red

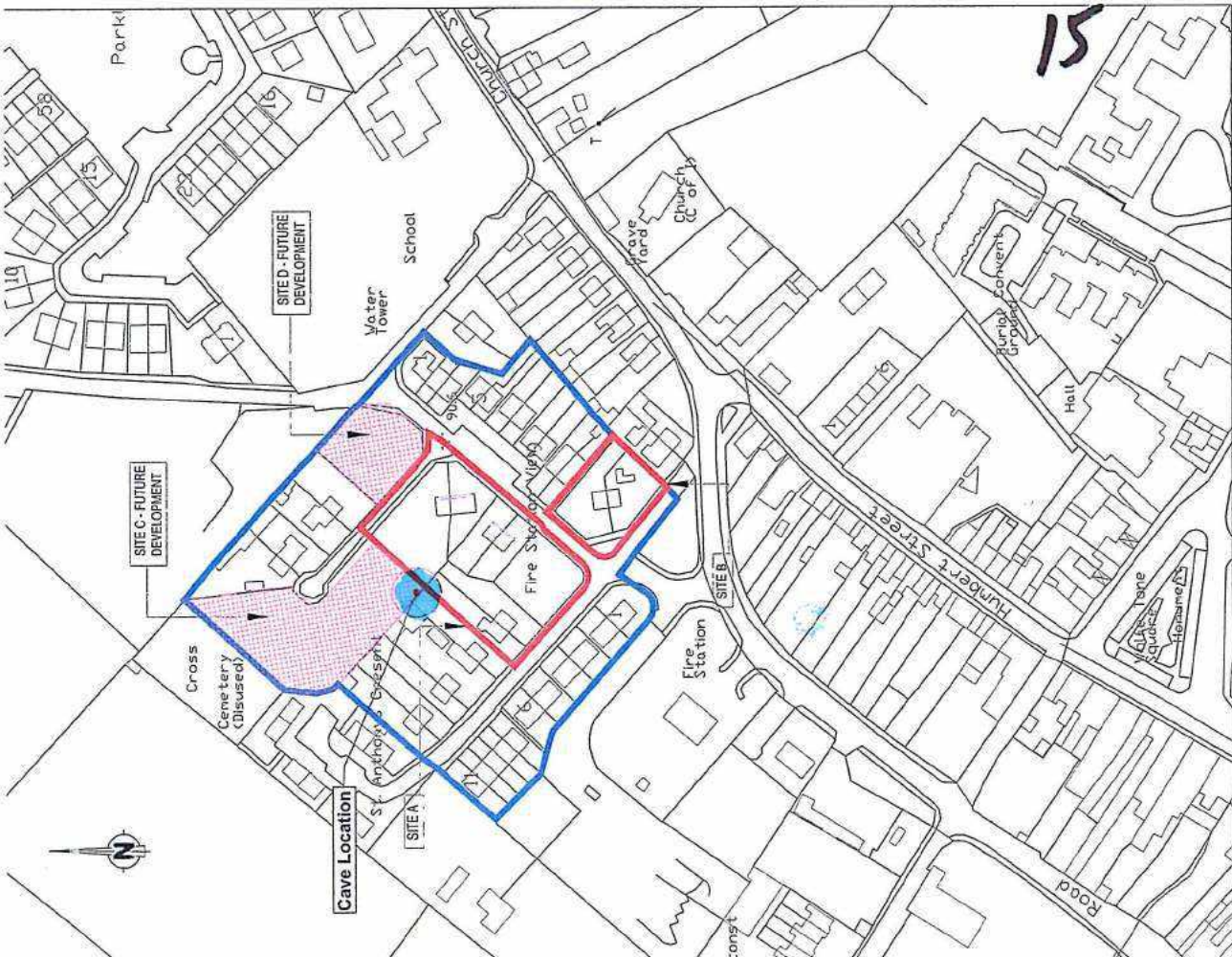
Site for Future Development

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
 Architects Department
 CONNOLLY PARK, TUBBERCURRY, CO. SLIGO

Site Location Map
 TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

REV. DATE: BY: CHK

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SITE LOCATION MAP
 Scale: 1:1000 NAL

Extract from Sligo OS 1525-A
 Ordnance Survey Ireland. All rights reserved.
 Licence number: 2015201000M Sligo County Council

Site within ownership Outlined in Blue
 Site Outlined in Red

Site for Future Development

DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING.
 THIS DRAWING IS THE PROPERTY OF LSS SURVEYS AND SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY REPORTED TO THE SLIGO BOROUGH EDUCATION ARCHITECT OR REPRESENTATIVE.
 ALL CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES ARE TO CONFORM WITH CURRENT BUILDING REGULATIONS.

REV. DATE: BY: CHK

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17

Draft
Work in progress

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| Architects Department | | Project Ref | PR003 | Sheet No | 1/50 |
| CONNOLLY PARK, TUBBERCOURRY, CO. SLIGO | | Project Name | SITE LAYOUT PLAN | | |
| Client | SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL | Project No | 150 | Sheet No | 1/50 |
| Design | 11/03/25 | Scale | AS/1:1 | Project No | PR003 |
| Drawn | | Checked | | Project Name | CONNOLLY PARK, TUBBERCOURRY, CO. SLIGO |
| Rev | | Author | | Sheet No | 1/50 |
| | | Client | | Project No | PR003 |



Site within ownership
Outlined in Blue

Site for Future
Development

Extract from Sligo OS 1526-A
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Licence number 2015/200/CMM/Sligo County Council

1 SITE LAYOUT PLAN
Scale: 1:2500/1

REVISED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE SUBMISSION. ANY ERRORS OR OMISSIONS ARE TO BE IMMEDIATELY REPORTED TO THE SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL ARCHITECT OR REPRESENTATIVE. ALL CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES ARE TO CONFORM WITH CURRENT BUILDING REGULATIONS.

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Fig. 1:



Fig. 2:



Fig. 3:



Fig. 4:



Fig. 5:



Fig. 6:

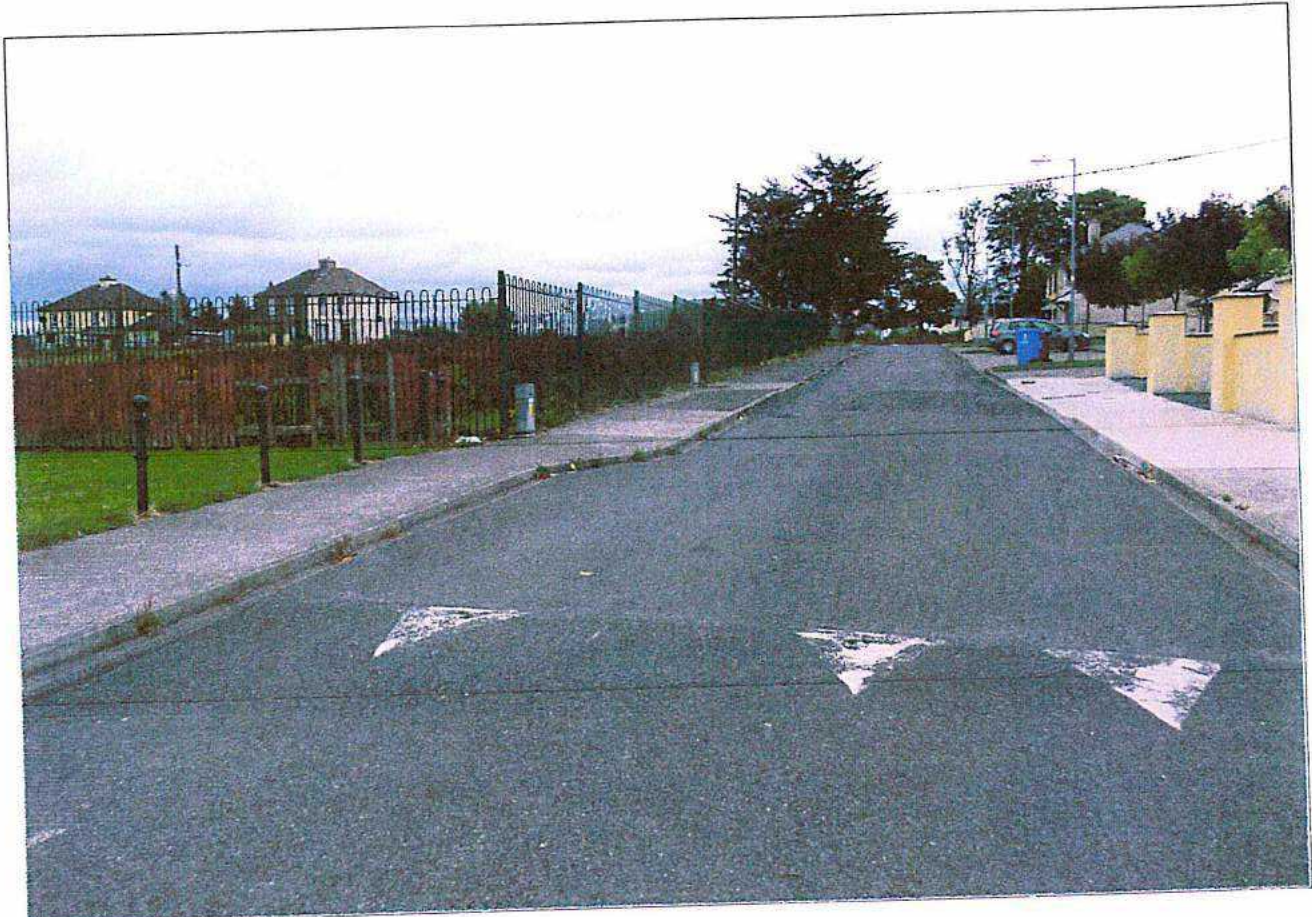


Fig. 7:



Fig. 8:

Appendix B

DATE: 27/05/20

Your Ref: Part VIII

Our Ref:

The County Secretary
Sligo County Council

Re: Part 8 application - Construction of 4 vacant units and 10 dwelling units & all associated site works at Connolly Park, Tobercurry, Co Sligo

A Chara,

We refer to the Council's notification in relation to the above-proposed development. Outlined below are the archaeological recommendations of the Department of Culture, Heritage, and Gaeltacht.

This Department notes that an archaeological assessment report by Mr Martin Timoney, Archaeologist had been submitted. The assessment report recommends that a geophysical survey should be carried out to establish the location of Souterrain. However additional new information from Dr James Bonsall advises against geophysical survey as the survey will be severely impacted by the previous construction and demolition of the Workhouse.

Therefore, it is our recommendation that archaeological monitoring by a suitably qualified archaeologist be carried out on all ground disturbance associated with the proposed development, this should be included in any grant of planning permission that may issue.

“Archaeological Monitoring shall consist of the following;

1. The applicant is required to engage the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist to monitor all topsoil stripping associated with the development.
2. Should archaeological material be found during the course of monitoring, the archaeologist may have work on the site stopped pending a decision as to how best to deal with the archaeology. The developer shall be prepared to be advised by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht with regard to any necessary mitigating action (e.g. preservation in situ, and/or excavation). The applicant shall facilitate the archaeologist in recording any material found.
3. The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht shall be furnished with a report describing the results of the monitoring.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.”

Kindly forward a copy of your decision to the following address as soon as it issues:

The Manager,
Development Application Section,
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht,
Wexford.

In addition, please acknowledge receipt of this letter (as required the Planning & Development Regulations 2001) and forward this relevant receipt to the address above.

Mise le meas,

Celine Walsh
Archaeologist

**RICHARD CRUMLISH, B.A., M.I.A.I.
CONSULTANT ARCHAEOLOGIST**

**REPORT ON
MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS
AT
CONNOLLY PARK,
TUBBERCURRY,
CO. SLIGO.**

Excavation Licence No. 20E0474

Part VIII Planning, Sligo County Council

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Av. Th. | Average Thickness | C | Context |
| E | East | Illus. | Illustration |
| ITM | Irish Transverse Mercator | m | metre |
| max. | maximum | mm | millimetre |
| N | North | NGC | National Grid Co-ordinates |
| NMI | National Museum of Ireland | NMS | National Monuments Service |
| OD | Ordnance Datum | OS | Ordnance Survey |
| RMP | Record of Monuments and Places | | |
| S | South | SMR | Sites and Monuments Record |
| Th. | Thickness | TH | Trial Hole |
| W | West | | |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

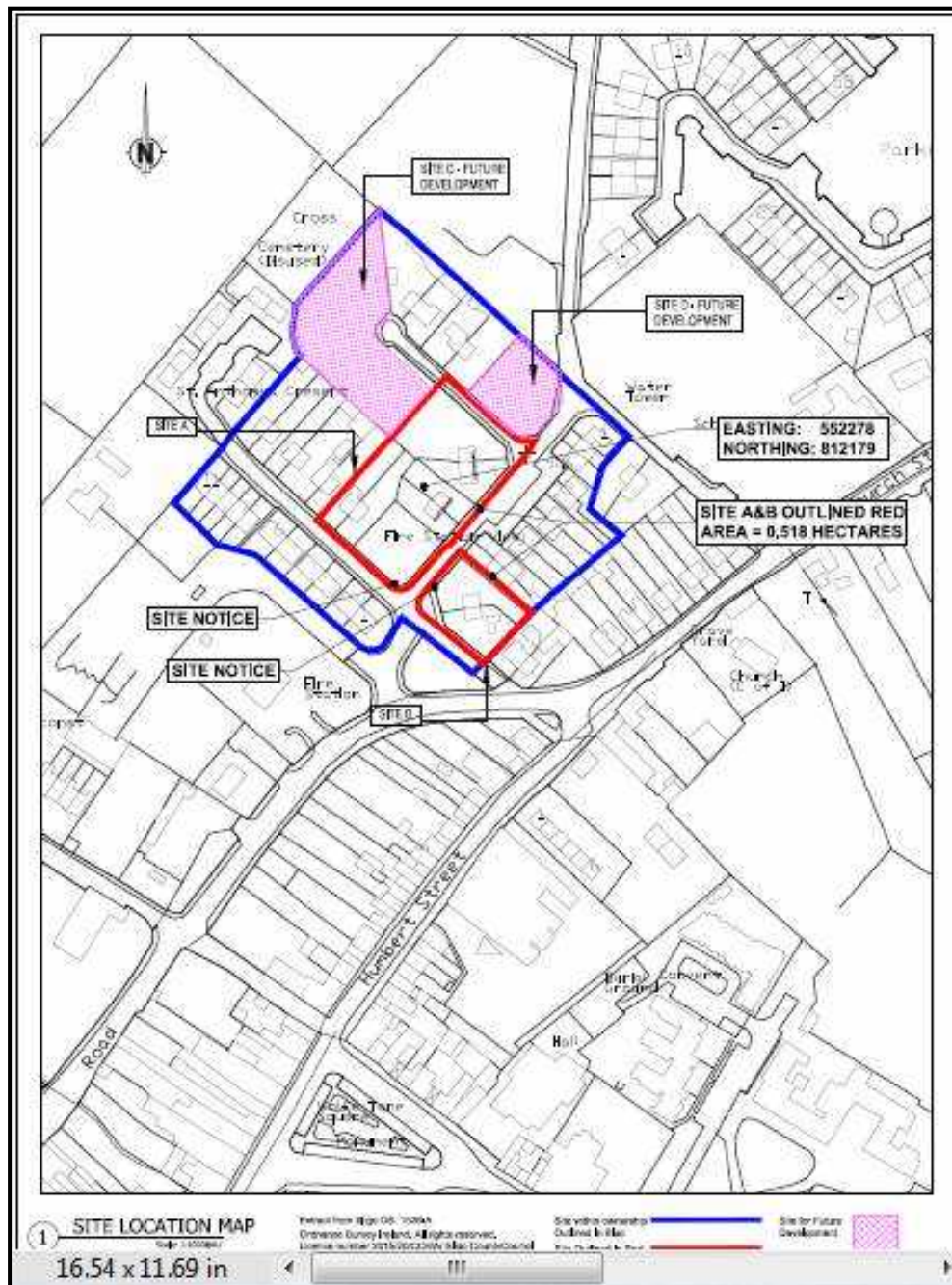
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This work was carried out by the writer between 21 September and 16 November 2020. It involved monitoring of groundworks at a development at Connolly Park in Tubbercurry, County Sligo (Illus. 1). The monitoring was a recommendation of the Development Applications Unit, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (as the Department was then known).



Illus. 1 Site Location Map (courtesy of Sligo County Council).

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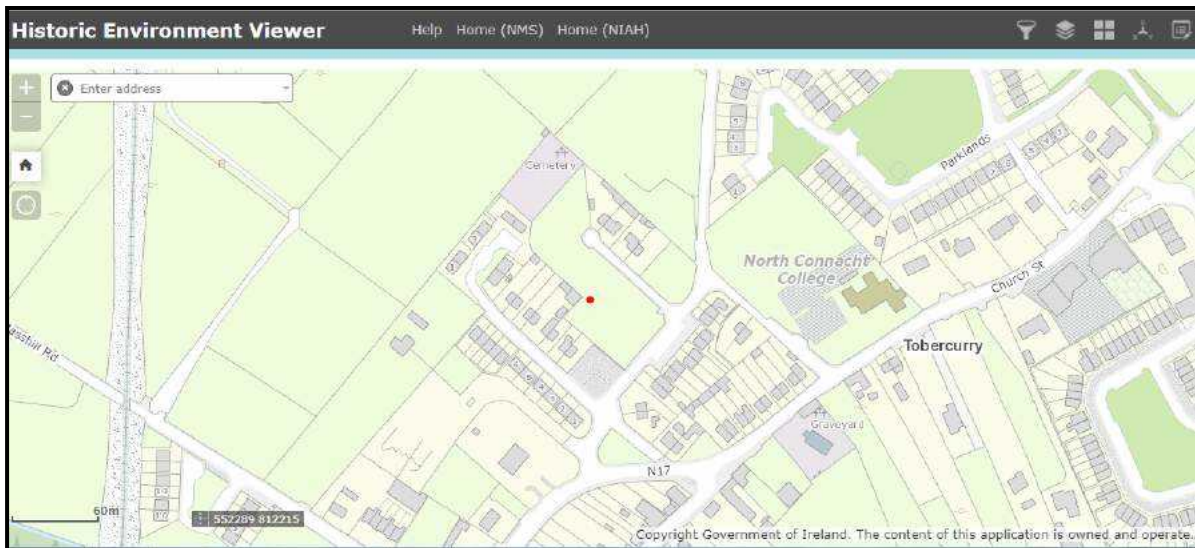
The project consisted of the demolition of 4 no. vacant units and construction of 10 dwelling units and all associated site works (Illus. 2).



Illus. 2 Site Layout (courtesy of Sligo County Council).

The monitoring was necessary as a possible souterrain (RMP No. SL038-032) is located just outside the proposed development site (Illus. 3). It is described on the National Monuments Service web-site (www.archaeology.ie) as follows: ‘There are no visible remains of the feature named “Cave” on the 1838 OS 6-inch map. A housing estate was built on or near the site of this possible souterrain c. 1940.’

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Illus. 3 Site Location Map showing development site with red dot showing recorded monument (courtesy of www.archaeology.ie).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BRIEF

The development was subject to a Part VIII application. The recommendations of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, dated 27.5.20, were as follows:

1. The applicant is required to engage the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist to monitor all topsoil stripping associated with the development.
2. Should archaeological material be found during the course of monitoring, the archaeologist may have work on the site stopped pending a decision as to how best to deal with the archaeology. The developer shall be prepared to be advised by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht with regard to any necessary mitigating action (e.g. preservation in-situ, and/or excavation). The applicant shall facilitate the archaeologist in recording any material found.
3. The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht shall be furnished with a report describing the results of the monitoring.

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LOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Locational Details

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Townland: | Carrowntober | Parish: | Achonry |
| Barony: | Leyny | OS 6-inch sheet: | Sligo No. 38 |
| OD: | 80-90m | ITM: | 552277, 812192 |
| RMP No. | SL038-032 | Classification: | Possible souterrain |

Access

The development site is located along the NW side of the N17 in Tubbercurry in County Sligo (Illus. 1).

Siting

The proposed development is located within Connolly Park in Tobercurry and consists of two areas (Sites A and B) adjacent to each other and separated by a public road (Illus. 1 and 2).



Site A is the larger area, 0.397 hectare and is located on the NW side of the road. Most of Site A consists of an overgrown green area which slopes down from NE to SW (Plate No. 1). This area contained four, semi-detached, two-storey dwellings which were demolished in the last 20 years.

Plate No. 1 Looking SW across Site A.

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At the NW side of the SW end of Area A are two derelict, two-storey, semi-detached dwellings (Plate No. 2).

Plate No. 2 Two derelict dwellings at SW end of Site A. Taken from SW.



To the SE of the two derelict dwellings is a public amenity area which consists of a landscaped lawn with seating area (Plate No. 3).

Plate No. 3 Amenity area from SSE with derelict dwellings in the background.



Area B is located on the SE of the public road and consists of two derelict, two-storey, semi-detached dwellings (Plate No. 4).

Plate No. 4 Site B from W showing derelict dwellings.

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Connolly Park was developed as council housing in the 1930/40s, on the site of a Union Workhouse. The workhouse was opened in 1852, one of three in County Sligo and was built to house up to 500 inmates, although there was rarely more than 100. It was offered for sale to Sligo County Council in 1924 and subsequently demolished. The workhouse graveyard is located a short distance to the NW of the proposed development site (Illus. 4).



Illus. 4 Site Location Map showing Union Workhouse, graveyard and red dot showing location of possible souterrain (Extract from OS 25-inch map, late 19th/early 20th century, courtesy of www.archaeology.ie).

SUMMARY

Monitoring of the groundworks uncovered nothing of archaeological significance.

MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS

The groundworks comprised topsoil stripping and the reduction of levels to formation level, foundations for the new dwellings and the boundary walls, the diversion of services and the excavation of the Attenuation Tank.

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Demolition

The demolition of the two derelict housing units at the NW end of the SW side of Site A revealed re-used cut and dressed blocks in the wall fabric. The dressing indicated a 19th date for the blocks with the Union Workhouse the likeliest source.



The dressed blocks were retrieved from the rubble and stored on site for use in landscaping features as part of the new development (Plate No. 5). The demolition of the two vacant housing units on Site B revealed a building constructed of concrete.

Plate No. 5 Cut and dressed stone stored on site.

Topsoil Stripping

The topsoil stripping of Sites A and B, to a depth of 0.1-0.2m, did not exceed the entire depth of the topsoil (C1), but did reveal concrete paths, red brick, plastics, metal, timber, concrete blocks, modern glass fragments, concrete foundations and various items of modern rubbish/rubble. Two man-hole covers were visible suggesting services which crossed Site A.

Formation Level

The reduction across the two sites to formation level saw excavation of three separate levels in Site A. The majority of the lowest level, at the SW end of Site A, was already at the required depth following the demolition of the two vacant housing units. Only a 3m wide area along the NE side required excavation to a maximum depth of 1m. The lower level measured 28m NW/SE and 29m NE/SW. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of topsoil (C1) above modern rubble fill (C2) which contained 20th century artefacts associated with the two vacant housing units recently demolished.

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The central level measured 28m NW/SE, 18m NE/SW and was reduced by 0.4m (SW end) - 1.5m (NE end). Below the remains of the topsoil (C1) was rubble fill (C2), which measured 0.3-0.6m thick and was made up of loose soil and rocks with yellow and red brick, concrete, corrugated metal, wire, timber, plastic and tree branches.

Plate No. 6 Central level reduced to formation level, from E.

Below the rubble fill (C2) was grey boulder clay (C3) and loose grey sand and gravel (C4), found as high as 0.3m below the surface (Plate No. 6). The depth of rubble fill (C2) was not exceeded in places (Plate No. 6). A loose rubble wall foundation (C24), orientated NE/SW, bisected the central area and measured 1.0-1.1m wide.



The area excavated for the upper level measured 18m NE/SW, 22m NW/SE and was reduced by 0.4m (SW side) - 1.3m (NE side). The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil (C1) above rubble fill (C2), above boulder clay (C3) and sand and gravel (C4) (Plate No. 7). The remains of the topsoil (C1) measured 0.1-0.2m thick.

Plate No. 7 Upper level reduced to formation level, from S.

The rubble fill (C2) contained red and yellow bricks, mortar, modern pottery sherds (whiteware) and 20th century artefacts of metal, timber, plastic and concrete. The fill (C2) measured up to 0.5m thick. The depth of fill (C2) was not exceeded along the SW side of the upper level. The boulder clay (C3) was found as high as 0.2m below the surface along the NE

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side of the area. A rubble wall foundation (C25) crossed the area in a NE/SW direction, at 11m from the NW side of the area excavated. The wall (C25) measured 0.5-0.7m wide and 0.5-0.6m deep and was found above the boulder clay (C3).



A clay pipe bowl with a stamp, '43' (Find No. 20E0474:1), was found in the rubble fill (C2) (Plate No. 8).

Plate No. 8 Find No. 20E0474:1.

The area excavated for the reduction to formation level on Site B measured 27m NW/SE, 8m NE/SW and 0.3-1.9m deep. It revealed topsoil (C5) and rubble fill (C6) on the surface. Below the topsoil (C5) was orange/grey/brown friable silt loam (C7). The topsoil (C5), which measured up to 0.5m thick, contained modern pottery sherds (whiteware sherds), modern glass fragments, plastic, concrete and timber. The rubble fill (C6) contained modern 20th century artefacts. Below the silt loam (C7), which measured 0.2m thick, was grey boulder clay (C8). The boulder clay measured up to 0.5m thick.



Bedrock (C9) was visible in the NE half of the site below the boulder clay (C8), as high as 0.9m below the surface (Plate No. 9). The concrete floor (C10) of the recently demolished vacant housing units in Site B were visible on the surface in places and measured up to 0.45m thick.

Plate No. 9 Looking SE across Site B reduced to formation level, showing bedrock (C9).

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A disarticulated dog burial was found in the rubble fill (C5) to the rear of one of the recently demolished housing units (Plate No. 10).

Plate No. 10 Disarticulated dog burial in Site B.

Two 100mm diameter cast-iron water services were found crossing the site from NE to SW, at 0.9m below the surface. A 150mm concrete pipe bisected the site from NW to SE, at 0.5-0.9m below the surface. A 20mm diameter water service crossed the area at 0.3m below the surface.

Boundary Walls

Trenches were then excavated for the boundary walls of the new housing units in Site A. The trenches measured 1.1-1.4m wide and 0.2-0.4m deep.



The first trench excavated along the NW site boundary in the lower level uncovered a culvert (C28) constructed of mortared rubble, which measured 0.4m wide and 0.4m high internally. The culvert (C28) was located 2.5m from the NW site boundary, orientated NE/SW and was constructed on the boulder clay (C3) (Plate No. 11).

Plate No. 11 Culvert from NW.

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The stratigraphy encountered in the lower level was rubble fill (C2) above boulder clay (C3). The depth of the fill (C2) was not exceeded in places. A loose rubble wall foundation (C26) crossed the NW/SE foundation trench at 1m from the NE side of the lower level. The foundation (C26) was orientated NNW/SSE, measured 0.9m wide and was found along an 8m long section at 6.5m from the NW end of the trench.

The trenches excavated within the central area, which was 0.8m higher than the lower level, measured 1.1-1.4m wide and 0.35-0.5m deep. Fill (C2) and boulder clay (C3) were found on the surface. Below the fill (C2) was boulder clay (C3).

The upper level was 1m higher than the central level. The foundation trenches for the boundary walls measured 1.3-1.6m wide and 0.4-0.5m deep. Fill (C2) and boulder clay (C3) were found on the surface. Below the fill (C2) was boulder clay (C3) and loose grey sand and gravel (C4). A second culvert (C29) was found running NW/SE midway along the upper level with same construction and dimensions as the first culvert (C28). A 100mm cast-iron pipe crossed the area in a NW/SE direction, just NE of the culvert (C29).



A mortared rubble wall (C27) was visible at 5.8m from the NW side of the area excavated, just below the formation level. It crossed the area in a NE/SW direction and measured 0.6m wide and 0.9m deep (Plate No. 12). The wall (C27) appeared to be rendered on its SE face.

Plate No. 12 Mortared rubble wall from SW.

Service Diversions

The diversion of a sewer at the NW end of the SW side of the site entailed its connection to a man-hole in the public road just outside the SW site boundary. The existing sewer measured 150mm in diameter and was located 0.4-0.5m below formation level. The trench excavated

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measured 23.5m long (NE/SW). The trench outside the SW site boundary measured 0.9m wide and 0.8m deep. On the surface was the tarred road (C11) which measured 0.15m thick. Below the tarred road (C11) was fill (C12), which measured 0.5m thick. Below the fill (C12) was topsoil (C13), which measured 0.3-0.4m thick. Below the topsoil (C13) was grey sand and gravel (C14). Inside the site boundary the trench measured 0.7-1.1m wide and 1.0-1.5m deep (Plate No. 13).



On the surface was fill (C2), which measured up to 0.9m thick. Below the fill (C2) was original topsoil (C30), which measured up to 0.5m thick. Below the topsoil (C30) was boulder clay (C3), which measured 0.3-0.5m thick. Below the boulder clay (C3) was orange/grey/brown loose sand and gravel (C4), visible as high as 1m below the surface.

Plate No. 13 SE section face of trench for sewer diversion showing C2, C1, C, C4, from NW.

The diversion of a sewer to the NE of the site entailed the excavation of a trench in the public road outside the NE boundary of Site A. The trench measured 76m NW/SE, 2.0-2.4m wide and 2.6-3.0m deep.



The existing sewer measured 300mm in diameter and was found at 2.6m below the road surface at the junction of the roads which run along the NE and SE sides of Site A. Above the existing sewer was a 600mm diameter concrete storm water pipe and a 150mm diameter water-main at 0.8m below the surface (Plate No. 14).

Plate No. 14 SE end of trench for sewer diversion showing services, Taken from NE.

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Further services uncovered during the excavation of the trench were: a 175mm diameter concrete pipe which crossed the SE end of the trench (NE/SW) at 1.0m below the surface; a 300mm diameter pipe which crossed (NE/SW) the trench at 1m from its SE end, at 1.1m below the surface; a 450mm diameter pipe crossed (NE/SW) the trench at 1.5m from the SE end of the trench, at 1.0m below the surface and an ESB service which crossed the trench (NE/SW) at 5.2m from its SE end.

The stratigraphy consisted of tarmac (C17) on the surface, which measured 0.07-0.15m thick. Below the tarmac (C17) was fill (C18), which measured 0.2-2.8m thick. Below the fill (C18) was topsoil (C20) and grey loose sand and gravel (C19). Below the sand and gravel (C19) was bedrock (C21), at 2.1-2.6m below the surface. The topsoil (C20) measured 0.2m thick and contained modern pottery (whiteware) sherds. The sand and gravel (C19), which was also found below the topsoil (C20), was visible as high as 1.6m below the surface and measured up to 2.25m thick.

A trench was excavated outside the SW site boundary at the SE end of the site for the diversion of a sewer for Site B. The trench measured 15m long (NW/SE), 1.1-1.6m wide and 2.3m deep.



On the surface was tarmac (C11), above fill (C12), above topsoil (C13), above bedrock (C21) (Plate No. 15). The tarmac (C11) measured 80mm thick. The fill (C12) measured 0.3-0.4m thick. The topsoil (C13) measured 0.3m thick. The bedrock (C21) was visible as high as 0.8m below the surface. A 150mm diameter water-main crossed the trench at 10m from its NW end, at 1.0m below the surface (Plate No. 15).

Plate No. 15 SW section face of trench showing C11, C12, C13, C21 and water-main.

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Trial Pits

Two trial pits were excavated in the upper and lower levels of Site A. Trial Pit 1 was excavated in the upper level and measured 5m NW/SE, 3.3m NE/SW and 0.75m deep (below formation level). The stratigraphy consisted of fill (C2) above grey boulder clay (C3). Trial Pit 2 was excavated in the lower level and measured 5m NW/SE, 3.8m NE/SW and 0.65m deep (below formation level). The stratigraphy consisted of fill (C2) above grey boulder clay (C3). Two mortared rubble walls (C15 and C16) crossed the trial pit in a NE/SW direction. The walls (C15 and C16) measured 0.6m wide with 0.9m wide foundations.

House foundations

The trenches excavated for the new house foundations in the upper level of Site A measured 1.2-1.7m wide and 0.9-1.2m deep (below formation level) and covered an area measuring 14m NE/SW and 12m NW/SE. The stratigraphy consisted of fill (C2), above grey boulder clay (C3). The NE half of the upper level was already reduced to the boulder clay (C3).



A section of stone flag floor (C22) was uncovered at 0.6m below the formation level. The flags (C22) measured 50-70mm thick and were found within the fill (C2) in a 1.2-1.4m long area (Plate No. 16). The fill (C22) measured up to 0.8m thick and contained red and yellow bricks, slates, rubble and mortar.

Plate No. 16 Section of stone flags (C22) within the fill (C2) from SE.

The trenches excavated for the house foundations in the central level measured 0.9-1.1m wide and 0.7-1.2m deep (below the formation level) and covered an area measuring 11m NW/SE and 14m NE/SW. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil (C1) and fill (C2) on the surface, above grey boulder clay (C3) and orange/brown friable silt loam (C23), above loose sand and gravel (C4). The fill (C2) measured 0.2m thick. The silt loam (C23) measured 0.25-0.4m thick.

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The trenches excavated for the house foundations in the lower level measured 1.2-1.6m wide and 0.7-1.4m deep (below the formation level) and covered an area measuring 8m NW/SE and 15m NE/SW. The stratigraphy consisted of fill (C2) and topsoil (C1), above grey boulder clay (C3) and orange/brown friable silt loam (C23), above loose sand and gravel (C3). The fill (C2) measured 0.7m thick and contained plastic and concrete blocks. The topsoil (C1) measured 0.1-0.2m thick. The silt loam (C23) measured 0.2m thick. The boulder clay (C3) and sand and gravel (C4) were visible as high as 0.2m below the formation level. A 100mm water-main crossed NW/SE near the NE side of the lower level. A ceramic sewer pipe crossed the site NW/SE, at 0.5m below formation level.

There was no need to monitor the excavation of the foundations for the building on Site B as it was already reduced to boulder clay (C8) and bedrock (C9).

Attenuation Tank



The excavation tank was located along the SW site boundary of Site A, at 9.5m from the NW site boundary. The area excavated measured 15-18m NW/SE, 8.5m NE/SW and 1.6-1.7m deep. On the surface was a concrete footpath (C31) and rubble fill (C2), above topsoil (C30), above boulder clay (C3) and grey sand and gravel (C4).

Plate No. 17 Attenuation Tank excavated, from SE.

The footpath (C31) measured 0.1m thick. The fill (C2) measured up to 0.6m thick. The original topsoil (C30) measured 0.2-0.4m thick. A rubble wall foundation (C32), was found at 1.5m from the SW side of the area excavated, at 0.1m below the surface. The foundation (C32) contained red brick, was orientated NW/SE and measured 0.8m wide and 0.6m deep. A 250mm diameter ceramic pipe crossed the area (NE/SW) at 5.5m from the NW side, at 0.55m below the surface. A 100mm diameter plastic duct was located along the SW side of the area

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excavated and crossed the area (NE/SW) at 2m SE of the ceramic pipe, at 0.25m below the surface.

CONCLUSIONS

The stratigraphy encountered during the monitoring of groundworks consisted of tarred road (C11 and C17), concrete (C10 and C31) and topsoil (C1 and C5) on the surface, above modern rubble fills (C2, C6, C12 and C18), above original topsoil (C13, C20 and C30), natural subsoils (C3, C4, C7, C8, C14, C19 and C23) and bedrock (C9 and C21).

A number of mortared rubble walls and wall foundations (C15, C16, C24, C25, C26, C27 and C32) and a small area of stone flags (C22) in Site A appear to be the remains of the Union Workhouse, which was demolished to make way for the Connolly Park housing estate in the 1930/40s. The construction of Connolly Park and its associated sub-surface services has removed most of the evidence of the Union Workhouse.

These sub-surface services include the two culverts uncovered in Site A. The first culvert (C28) uncovered near the NW side of the SW end of the site measured 9m long (NE/SW). Its NE end terminated directly in line with the adjacent two-storey semi-detached dwellings to the NW, appearing to date the feature to the construction of Connolly Park in the 1940s. The second culvert (C29) had the same dimensions and construction as the first (C28) and therefore appeared to date to the same period of construction.

There was no evidence of the souterrain (RMP No. MA038-032).

Apart from the clay pipe bowl (Find No. 20E0474:1), none of the modern artefacts recovered were retained. Nothing of archaeological significance was in evidence.



Richard Crumlish

27.11.20