

## 10. Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

### 10.1 Introduction

This section of the Constraints Study summarises the stand-alone archaeological desk study of the southern section. The archaeological report provides information on the known archaeological data and sites of architectural significance over the study area.

The report discusses the receiving environment from an archaeological perspective in general terms, describes the known baseline data in some detail, and recommends that the proposed works avoid, where practical, direct impacts on archaeological sites. A full glossary of site types is included in Appendix D.

### 10.2 Study Methodology

The archaeological assessment consisted of a paper survey identifying all recorded sites within the study area. The search utilised a number of sources, including the Sites and Monuments Record, National Museum of Ireland Topographical Files, County Development Plans, Primary sources and Literary sources.

The Sites and Monuments Record (Record of Monuments and Places), held in the Duchas archives, is an inventory of archaeological sites known to the National Monuments Service with accompanying RMP Constraint Maps, based on Ordnance Survey (OS) 6" Sheets, which indicate the location of each recorded site. The inventory is backed up with files housed in the National Monuments Services offices. The record is updated on a constant basis. Buildings belonging to the seventeenth century and later are not well represented in the Duchas archive.

The National Museum of Ireland's Topographical Files are the national archive of all antiquities known to the National Museum. Artefacts identified in the Constraints study area are listed in Table 1 of Appendix D.

The Museum's files present an accurate catalogue of artefact find-spots reported to that institution between 1928 and c. 1995.

The County Development Plans for Carlow and Kilkenny were also consulted. These plans include each Council's policy for the conservation and enhancement of their county's natural and built environment and lists items of special environmental or archaeological/artistic interest. They contain lists of historic buildings and other items for preservation as compiled for the County Council by expert bodies. The Kilkenny County Development Plan also includes a completed list of industrial archaeological items.

Catalogues of sites of Architectural Importance and Industrial Archaeological Sites identified in the Constraints study area are listed in Tables 2 and 3 of Appendix D.

Also consulted was the published archaeological inventory of sites and monuments in County Carlow; Anna Brindley & Annaba Kilfeather, *Archaeological Inventory of County Carlow* (Dublin 1993). As yet there is no published inventory for County Kilkenny.

The principal literary sources consulted are listed in the bibliography of Appendix D.

## 10.3 Assessment Criteria

### 10.3.1 The Archaeological Receiving Environment

The southern section study area is a rich archaeological landscape with approximately 1045 sites identified. Many sites were identified by Dúchas using aerial photography, where above ground indications identify a monument which may have been destroyed. These have been interpreted as cropmarks, enclosures, field systems and deserted medieval settlements or complexes. It is likely that topsoil stripping at a later stage will uncover new sites with no visible surface remains.

A number of megalithic structures are recorded in the area, some of which have been destroyed over time. This type of site consists of stone built monuments often containing collective burials. Four definitely classified portal tombs are located within the Constraints study area (CW019-041, CW019-090, KK021-029, KK032-00901) (see Figures 7A and 7B). The presence of this type of site in the area is an indication of well-established activity and settlement during either the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age.

The vast majority of the sites identified in the desktop study consist of earthworks and enclosures – circular, oval and rectilinear. Most of the earthwork sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places were identified through early maps and aerial photography, as the majority of these sites have been levelled through time. Consequently it is often difficult to determine their exact nature.

A large amount of *fualachta fiadh* sites, or cooking sites, were identified in the assessment. Most were noted during a National Museum of Ireland *Fulacht Fiadh* survey and presumably remain extant. They have become the most frequent monument found in the Irish countryside in recent times.

A number of cists, or graves, were found in the Constraints study area. The majority of these graves date to the Bronze Age period (c. 2000 – 700 BC).

A large number of ringforts were identified which are the most widely distributed and commonplace monuments on the Irish landscape. Research and excavation have dated the majority of ringforts to between c. 500 – c. 1200AD (Mitchell & Ryan 1997, 254-261; Edwards 1990, 6-33; Ó'Riordáin 1979, 29-59).

A number of souterrains were identified. These sites are frequently associated with ringforts and early ecclesiastical settlements. As souterrains were used for defense the plans for many of them are completely unpredictable and most are found accidentally during ploughing or foundation digging. Excavation results indicate a date range from c. 800 – 1200 AD.

A number of moated sites were identified and are usually associated with the Anglo-Norman settlement of Ireland during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Also located within the area of interest were several motte and baileys. These consist of earthen mounds, which were usually erected as initial forts by the invading Anglo-Normans in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

A number of castles and tower houses were identified which can date from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some 17<sup>th</sup> century and possible earlier dwellings are associated with the castles and tower houses. Associated landscape features might include formal gardens, vistas, ponds, follies, mazes and tree rings.

Quite a number of ecclesiastical remains were also found within the Constraints study area. These consisted primarily of churches and graveyards, with features such as bullaun stones, fonts and altar tombs. Nave and chancel churches date primarily to the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries while more simple rectangular buildings are of 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century date. A number of post-medieval (1540AD onwards) churches are also included.

Many of the holy wells identified are associated with ecclesiastical remains, although a number of isolated sites do occur. The date and origin of the dedication of some wells is known from documentary evidence and many are still used for pilgrimage. Local interest in and awareness of such sites can often be very high.

### 10.3.2 Historic Towns and Areas of Settlement

#### Historic Towns

The following historic towns and areas of settlement (see Figures 7A and 7B and Table 6 of Appendix D) are located within the Constraints study area: -

- Kilkenny;
- Dungarvan;
- Gowran;
- Kells;
- Knocktopher;
- Thomastown; and
- Danesfort.

The towns are listed in the Kilkenny County Archaeological Urban Survey and are considered to be zones of archaeological potential.

#### Areas of Settlement

Seven deserted medieval settlements were identified within the study area (also refer to Figures 7A and 7B and Table 6 of Appendix D).

- Kilree (KK023-04703);
- Newtown Baker (KK023-067);
- Kilbline (KK024-083);
- Stonecarthy West (KK027-047);
- Sheepstown (KK031-01505);
- Newtown Jerpoint (KK028-062); and
- Jerpoint Church (KK028-056).

These sites have mainly been identified through literary sources and aerial photography, although on some sites evidence for settlement is still visible in the form of churches or tower houses.

These areas should be avoided, where practical, as they are extensive areas of high archaeological potential.

### 10.3.3 National Monuments

Eleven of the sites identified in the archaeological report (see Table 1 of Appendix D) are classed as National Monuments currently under state ownership or guardianship.

The majority of the sites are listed in the Record of Historic Monuments and Places (RMP), established under Section 12 of the 1994 National Monuments (Amendment) Act.

The inclusion of archaeological objectives by planning authorities in their statutory development provides the basis for such authorities to provide for the protection of the archaeological heritage.

### 10.3.4 Preservation Orders, Registered Sites and Sites listed in County Development Plans

Four of the sites within the Constraints study area are protected by Preservation Orders (see Figures 7A and 7B and Table 2 of Appendix D). These Orders make it unlawful to interfere with the monument in any way without the written consent of Duchas.

Nine sites are listed as Registered Sites (see Figures 7A and 7B and Table 2 of Appendix D). Under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987 it is unlawful to carry out work to a Registered Monument, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of Duchas. The majority of Registered Sites are also listed in the county development plans as being protected.

### 10.3.5 Record of Historic Monuments and Places

The vast majority of the archaeological sites identified (see Table 3 of Appendix D) are listed in the Record of Historic Monuments and Places (RMP), which was established under Section 12 of the 1994 National Monuments (Amendment) Act.

### 10.3.6 Architectural Heritage

Eighty three Architectural Heritage sites were identified (see Table 4 of the Archaeological Report) through consultation with the Kilkenny and Carlow County Development Plans.

The buildings and structures listed in the Catalogue of Sites of Architectural Importance were identified in expert surveys carried out for the County Councils.

The 1999 Planning and Development Act introduced the provision for a Record of Protected Structures. It is the policy of the County Councils to seek the preservation of items listed in the Record. No listed building or structure may be demolished or materially altered without the permission under the Local Government Acts. Listed sites include country houses vernacular houses, churches, mills, bridges and other buildings of note.

### 10.3.7 Industrial Archaeology

Sixty two Industrial Archaeological sites were identified in the Kilkenny County Council portion of the study area (see Table 5 of Appendix D). These sites consist primarily of bridges, mills, railway bridges and structures associated with coal mining.

There were no Industrial Archaeological sites included in the County Carlow Development Plan. It is likely that sites will be identified during the field walking to be carried out during the route selection phase.

Under the new provisions of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987 the owners of industrial archaeological sites, which are deemed to be important, require planning permission in order to demolish or alter these sites.

A further amendment to the Act enabled industrial archaeological sites to be added to the national record of monuments, affording them a measure of statutory protection.

#### **10.3.8 Rivers**

Duchas The Heritage Service requires archaeological assessments to take water bodies and associated features into account.

#### **10.3.9 Bogland**

Bogs or water-logged areas are frequently rich sources of archaeology and their exceptional capability in the preservation of remains makes them a unique archaeological resource.

Although there are no very large areas of bogland within the Constraints study area, the location of smaller areas of bog or waterlogged, highly organic soils should be noted in the route selection phase.

#### **10.3.10 Gravel Ridges**

Gravel Ridges/Gravel deposits by their nature provide raised areas, generally with commanding views and with well-drained soils, which were very popular in particular for Bronze Age Settlement.

### **10.4 Recommendations**

It is recommended that, if possible, all impact on archaeological sites be avoided in the selection of the Preferred Route option.

If this is not possible, ameliorative measures, including archaeological investigation and excavation for sites in proximity to or directly impacted by the proposed scheme, would be recommended. This should be undertaken well in advance of the construction phase to allow for comprehensive recording of archaeological and architectural remains and to avoid causing delay to route construction.

The archaeological merit of waterways in the Constraints study area needs to be taken into account in the selection of the Preferred Route option. It is likely that levels of pre-disturbance archaeological assessment of relevant sections will be required ahead of the construction phase.

It is recommended that areas of bogland be avoided if possible. Should this not be possible a full programme of assessment of the potential of the bogland affected would be recommended.

It should be noted that the above recommendations are subject to approval by Duchas The Heritage Service at the Department of Arts, Heritage, the Gaeltacht, and the Islands.

## 10.5 Conclusion

Research through the desktop study indicated that the study area for the southern section of the N9 / N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Scheme comprises landscape rich in archaeology. There are 1045 known archaeological sites and areas of archaeological potential within the constraint area. Eighty three sites of architectural significance and sixty two sites of industrial archaeological significance were also noted. The study area also contains many rivers and small waterways.

It is recommended that the proposed scheme avoids direct impacts, where practical, with the elements of the known archaeological landscape. Should this not be possible, a full program of archaeological mitigation including aerial survey, topographical survey, geophysical survey and investigative excavation would be recommended. This would be followed by full-scale excavation, should this be required. Underwater assessment would also be recommended for all the waterway crossings.