

**Archaeological Assessment**

St. Catherine's Cemetery, Kilcully, Co. Cork

Licence Holder: Ciara Brett MA MIAI

August 2005

**Excavation Licence No.: 05E0639**

**Planning Reg. No.: 05/419**

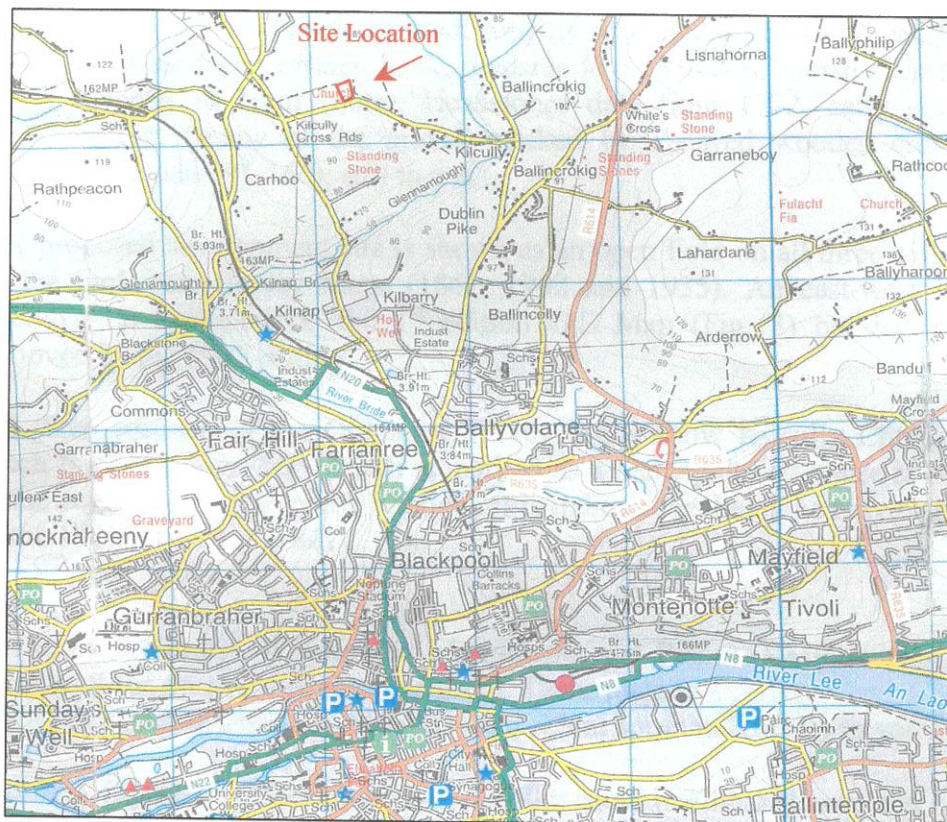
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*On behalf of  
Recreation, Amenity and Cultural Dept., Cork City Council*

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed development site is located at Kilcully, Co. Cork.
- 1.2 A planning application has been submitted to Cork County Council by the Recreation, Amenity and Cultural Department, Cork City Council to extend the existing graveyard at St. Catherine's Cemetery, Kilcully, Co. Cork. Cork County Council has issued a request (Reg. No. 05/419) for further information, which requires the developer to have carried out *an archaeological assessment of the proposed development site...This may include licensed archaeological testing of the site.*
- 1.3 This report contains an archaeological assessment of the proposed development site and the results of the excavation of two archaeological test trenches (under Licence No. 05E0639) on the site.
- 1.4 This archaeological assessment was carried out by Ciara Brett of Sheila Lane & Associates, Consultant Archaeologists, AE House, Monahan Road, Cork, at the request of Recreation, Amenity and Cultural Dept., Cork City Council, Abbeycourt House, Georges Quay, Cork.



**Figure 1: Location Map** (extract from O.S. Discovery Series Map, Sheet 80)

## 2 Archaeological, Historical & Cartographic Evidence

- 2.1 The south-western corner of the proposed development site falls within the Zone of Archaeological Potential surrounding a church and graveyard as listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for County Cork (RMP No. CO063-06501-/02-) (Fig. 2). The church is described in the Archaeological Inventory of County Cork (Power et al 1994, 250) as follows

*Church* Just N of centre in graveyard, ruins of rectangular church (18.9m E-W; 7.5m N-S). S wall almost entirely fallen; W and N walls stand to max. H 1.5m, ivy-clad; E gable stands to near full height, also ivy-clad. E window has double ogee-headed light, mullion missing. E gable shows signs of recent repair and repointing. Recent grave on line of S wall, probably in doorway position. Grave markers dating back to 1780s in interior, tree growing near W end. Remains of late medieval parish church of Kilcully, in repair 1615 but ruinous by 1639 (Brady 1863, vol. 1,146).

The graveyard is described in the Archaeological Inventory of County Cork (Power et al 1994, 250) as follows

*Graveyard* On N side of road; roughly rectangular graveyard enclosed by stone-faced earthen bank, roadside to S. Ruins of parish church of Kilcully to N of centre. Headstones date from 1772, early in this century 'many of the graves marked by decayed wooden crosses' (Coleman 191-16d); still in use.

- 2.2 The proposed development site is shown as an open field on all three editions of the Ordnance Survey Maps (1841, 1902 and 1935). An east-west field boundary is indicated on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition O.S Map (Fig. 3) but has been removed by the 1902 edition.
- 2.3 All three editions of the Ordnance Survey Maps show Kilcully Church in much the same way. The church is marked as a rectangular structure roughly in the centre of the graveyard, although it is indicated as being heavily planted in the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Map (1841).
- 2.4 There are a number of Recorded Monuments and Places (RMP) within the vicinity of the proposed development site. These include
- A standing stone (CO063-066---) c. 450m south in Kilcully townland
  - A Corn Mill (CO0063-067---) c. 850m south in Kilbarry townland

Three Mills (CO068/01/02/03) c. 800m south-east in Kilcully townland



Figure 2: Location Map (extract from RMP Map, sheet 63)



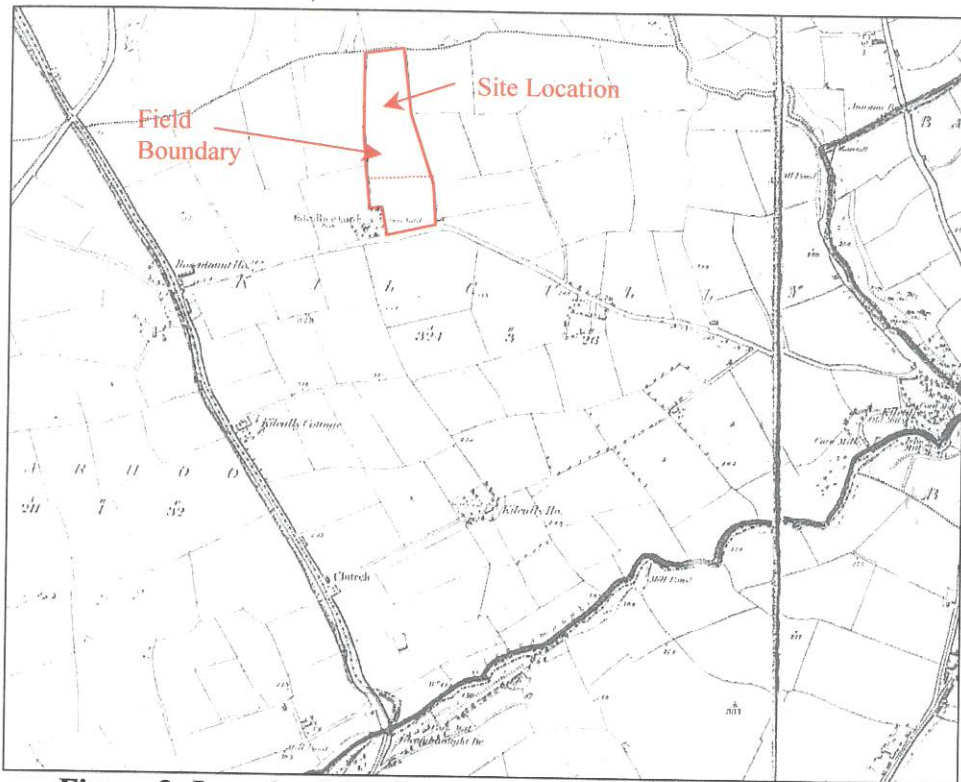


Figure 3: Location Map (extract from O.S.1<sup>st</sup> Edition 1841 Map)

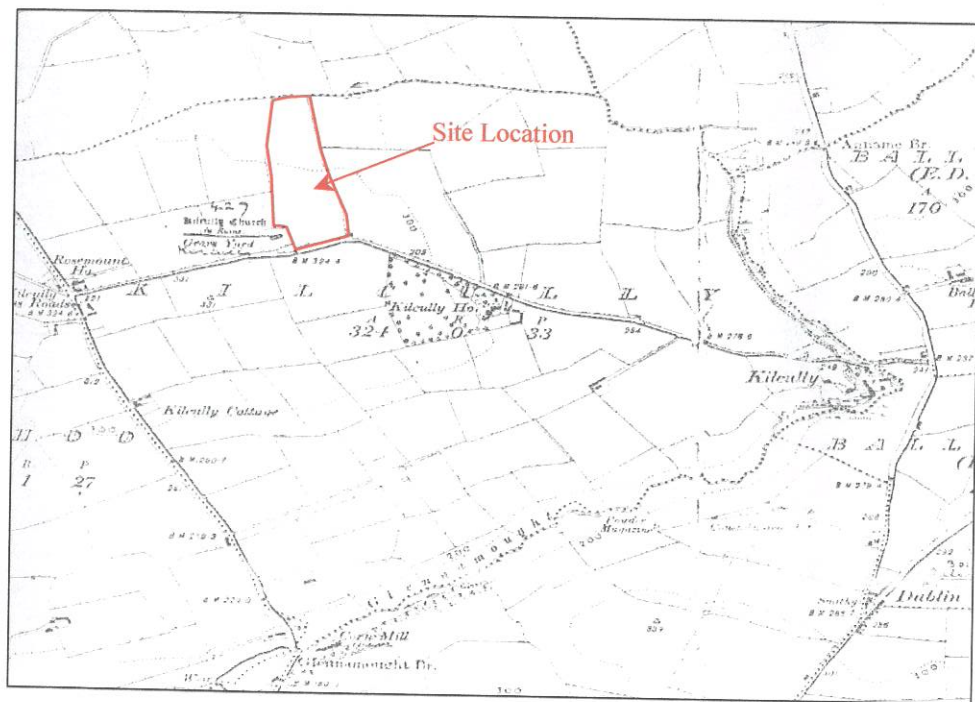
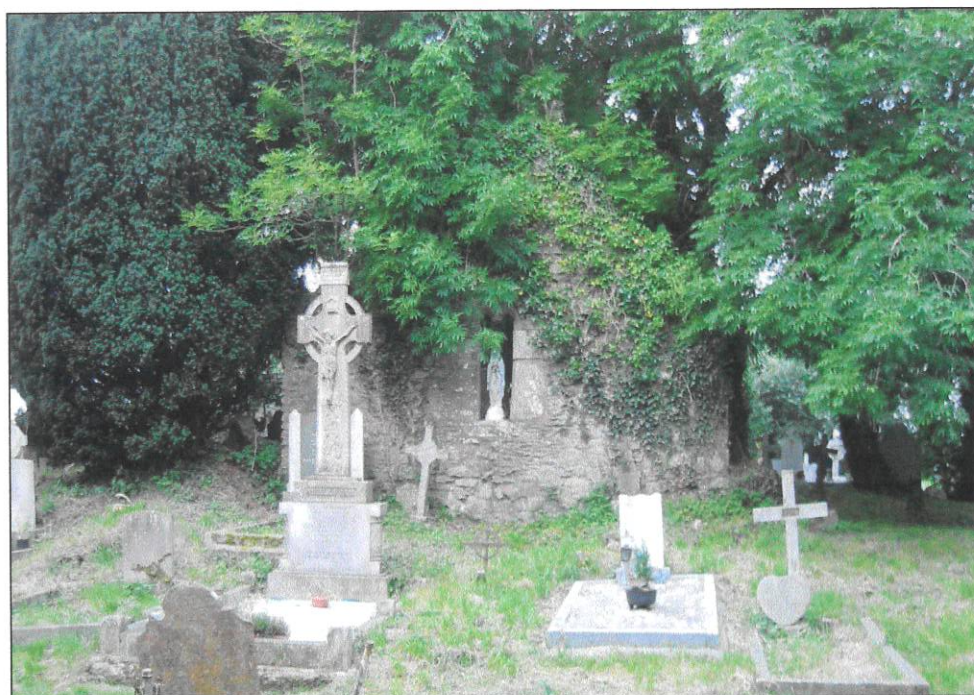


Figure 4: Location Map (extract from O.S.2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1902 Map)

### 3 The Development Site

- 3.1 The proposed development site in Kilcully townland lies 800m west of the village of Kilcully. It is located on the northern side of the road heading west to Kilcully Cross Roads. The southern portion of the development is sandwiched to the east by St. Catherine's Cemetery and to the west by Kilcully Church and graveyard.
- 3.2 The proposed development site is situated in a large rectangular field in pasture. The field is generally flat but falls away gently at the northern end where it then levels off again to form quite an uneven boggy area. It is defined to the south-west by the graveyard wall of Kilcully Church to the south-east by St. Catherine's Cemetery, to the south by a roadway, and to north, east and west by field boundaries.
- 3.3 The ruins of Kilcully Church lie roughly in the centre of the graveyard c. 20m outside and to the south-west of the proposed development site. The church is in a ruinous condition and is very overgrown. The eastern gable end, however, does survive to nearly full height and the double ogee-headed window is still present. A Marian shrine has been placed in the window ope (Plate 1). The church and graveyard are enclosed by a stone-faced earthen bank.



**Plate 1:** Kilcully Church and Graveyard (CO063-06501-/02-), from east



#### 4 Archaeological Testing

4.1 Five archaeological test trenches were opened at the proposed development site (under Licence No. 05E0639) using a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2005. These test trenches were excavated in order to establish the nature and extent of any archaeological features that may be present within the site. Four trenches were excavated at the southern and central portion of the site and a fifth trench was excavated at the northern end.

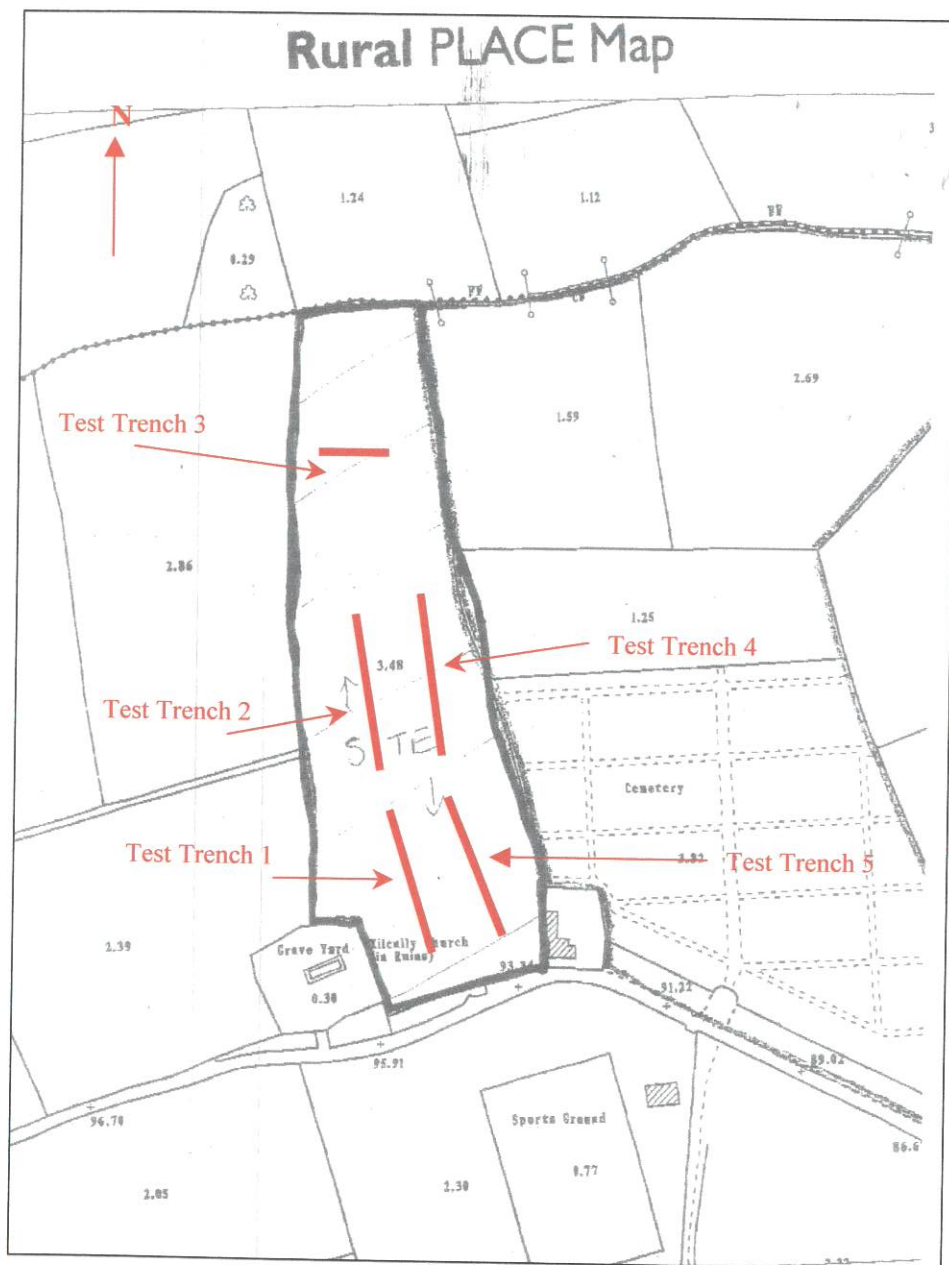


Figure 5: Test Trench Locations (extract from Rural Place Map)

- 4.2 Test Trench 1 measured 50m long by 2m wide and was orientated north-south. It was partially located within the Zone of Archaeological Potential surrounding Kilcully Church and Graveyard (CO063-06501-/02-).

*Typical Section:*

- 0-0.25m Mid-Dark Brown Topsoil  
0.25m Orange/brown sandy subsoil with frequent inclusions of red sandstone.

There were no features or finds of archaeological significance revealed in the test trench.



**Plate 2:** Test Trench 1, looking north

- 4.3 Test Trench 2 measured 50m long by 2m wide and was orientated north-south. It was located 26m north of Test Trench 1

*Typical Section:*

- 0-0.25m Mid-Dark Brown Topsoil  
0.25m Orange/brown sandy subsoil with frequent inclusions of red sandstone.



There were no features or finds of archaeological significance revealed in the test trench.



**Plate 3:** Test Trench 2, looking north

- 4.4 Test Trench 3 measured 20m long by 2m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located at the northern end of the field in quite boggy ground.

*Typical Section:*

0-0.25m	Dark Silty Topsoil
0.25m	Grey sticky clay subsoil with occasional small stones.

There was a drainage feature running southwest-northeast across the trench c. 10m from the eastern end of the trench. It was 0.8m wide and comprised a dark grey stoney fill.

There were no features or finds of archaeological significance revealed in the test trench.



**Plate 4:** Test Trench 3, looking west

- 4.5 Test Trench 4 measured 50m long by 2m wide and was orientated north-south. It was located 30m east of Test Trench 2.

*Typical Section:*

0-0.25m	Mid-Dark Brown Topsoil
0.25m	Orange/brown sandy subsoil with frequent inclusions of red sandstone.

There were no features or finds of archaeological significance revealed in the test trench.





**Plate 5:** Test Trench 4, looking south

- 4.6 Test Trench 5 measured 50m long by 2m wide and was orientated north-south. It was located 26m south of Test Trench 4.

*Typical Section:*

0-0.25m	Mid-Dark Brown Topsoil
0.25m	Orange/brown sandy subsoil with frequent inclusions of red sandstone.

There were no features or finds of archaeological significance revealed in the test trench.





**Plate 6:** Test Trench 5, looking south

**5 Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 5.1 Five archaeological test trenches were excavated at the proposed development site under excavation Licence No. 05E0639 on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2005.
- 5.2 There were no sub-surface archaeological features recorded during test trenching at this site.
- 5.3 There are no archaeological reasons why the development at this site at Kilcully, Co. Cork should not be allowed to proceed.
- 5.4 This recommendation is subject to the approval of The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Planning Authority.

## **Bibliography**

Cadogan, T. 1998 *Lewis' Cork: A topographical dictionary of the Parishes, towns and villages of Cork City and County.* (First published in 1837.) The Collins Press, Cork.

Power, Denis, Byrne, E., Egan, U., Lane, S., Sleeman, M., 1994 *Archaeological Inventory of County Cork Volume 2: East and South Cork* The Stationery Office: Dublin.