

Dive & Metal detection survey at Hillcrest Road Improvement Scheme, Balally and Woodside, Co. Dublin.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
CONSULTANCY
SERVICES UNIT

Client:

Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

ITM: 718230, 725405

Licence Numbers: 23D0072 & 23R0245.

RMP No.: N/A

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11th July 2023.

ACSU Ref.: 22118

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PROJECT DETAILS

Project Hillcrest Road Improvement Scheme, Balally and Woodside, Co. Dublin

Report Type Archaeological Dive and Metal Detection Survey

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Client Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

Site Townland Stream – Balally and Woodside, Co. Dublin

Townland Balally and Woodside

ITM Ref. 718230, 725405

Planning Ref. No. N/A

Dive Licence No. 23D0072

Detection Licence No. 23R0245

RMP No. N/A

Report Date 11th July 2023.

ACSU Ref. 22118



Revision	Date	Description	Status	Author	Reviewed	Approved
0	11/07/2023	Dive & detection Survey	Final	D.M.	B.S.	L.M.



NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report details the results of an archaeological dive and metal detection survey of the townland stream adjacent to Hillcrest Road and between Balally and Woodside townlands, Co. Dublin (ITM 718230, 725405, Figures 1-2). The assessment was carried out at the request of the client in relation to the Hillcrest Road Improvement Scheme and in line with recommendations expressed in the Archaeological Impact Assessment (Murphy & Lyne 2022) which was recommended due to the location of the site within the medieval pale, and the results of archaeological investigations carried out in the area.

The survey was conducted along a section of the townland stream which runs NNW to SSE and passes below Hillcrest Road (R113) and included 34.55m of stream and was confined to the section south of Hillcrest Road. The stream measured a maximum of 1.40m in width and ranged in depth between 0.34m to the south and 0.09m to the north. The banks of the stream were steeply inclined and covered in vegetation, more so on the west bank, which included common nettles and trees. The west bank flattens out to the north adjacent to the bridge and contained cut logs from tree cutting and litter. Evidence for stone block lining of the stream was observed as well as large stones on the east bank. The bridge under Hillcrest Road consisted of a low culvert which the stream passes under. The stone lining of the stream extends southwards from this bridge and was visible in six courses for 3m. This mostly survives on the eastern bank, with the lining on the western bank extending for 1.90m with only three disturbed courses visible. The stream was relatively clear, with the bottom visible from the surface which consisted of loose alluvial deposits of silt and gravel. Modern waste was noted, including plastics and aluminum. The stream north of Hilcrest road had been culverted and partially disturbed by modern construction. Modern rubbish and deposition were once again visible.

No structures, artefacts or features of archaeological or architectural significance were discovered as a result of this wade and detection survey. A large amount of modern rubbish consisting of both plastic and decayed metal (ie. decayed tins, drinks cans etc) was noted within the stream and steam banks. No finds of an archaeological nature were detected or identified.

The proposed development in this location will therefore have no impact on archaeological features.



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1. INTRODUCTION

This report details the results of an archaeological dive and metal detection survey of the townland stream adjacent to Hillcrest Road and between Balally and Woodside townlands, Co. Dublin (ITM 718230, 725405, Figures 1-2).

The assessment was carried out at the request of the client in relation to the Hillcrest Road Improvement Scheme and in line with recommendations expressed in the Archaeological Impact Assessment (Murphy & Lyne 2022) which was recommended due to the location of the site within the medieval pale, and the results of archaeological investigations carried out in the area.

The townland stream is the boundary between Balally and Woodside townlands. It is within the western section of the proposed works associated with the Hillcrest Road Improvement Scheme. A bridge carries Hillcrest Road over the stream. Hillcrest Road was not depicted on the 1760 map but was shown by the time of the 1836 OS map. The townland boundary is depicted clearly as a wet ditch/stream by the 1907 OS map. During the site visit, a north–south aligned stream with a bridge was recorded. The bridge is built of stone and covered in ivy, particularly on its southern side. On the north side of the road, on the west shore of the stream, drainage works took place. The stream itself is very shallow, but this appears to fluctuate depending on weather conditions.

The survey was carried out by Donald Murphy of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit (ACSU) under dive licence number 23D0072 and Detection Device licence number 23R0245 in July 2023.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Proposal

The survey is to be carried out in relation to the scheme to widen the footprint of the existing roadway to provide upgraded facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

2.2 Archaeological Requirements

This assessment is being carried out at the request of the client and in line with recommendations expressed in the Archaeological Impact Assessment:

Due to the nature of the site and the development, test trenching is not feasible, and monitoring is therefore recommended. Furthermore, the presence of a stream, representing a townland boundary was identified. Consequently, in addition to monitoring during groundworks, a wade assessment with the use of metal detector is recommended prior to works commencing. The fieldwork should be carried out by an experienced, licence-eligible archaeologist in line with method statements submitted to and approved by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Murphy & Lyne 2022).

2.3 Aims of Dive and Metal Detector Survey

The aim of the survey is to ascertain the character, condition and extent of any archaeological areas, features or objects likely to be affected by the proposed works, including any associated temporary works, and the likely impact of the proposed works on these remains. The survey results will inform the further necessary mitigation strategy required. The proposed strategy will ensure that:



- a visual inspection and survey is undertaken of the stream and attendant grounds to be impacted in order to ensure that
 any upstanding and slightly submerged archaeological and architectural material is identified and recorded
- appropriate measures for the avoidance of any identified remains are set out or, where this cannot be achieved, measures
 to mitigate the impact of the works are set out
- all items of metalwork that may be of historical or archaeological significance are recovered by systematic detection and recording of the stream.

3. WADE & METAL DETECTOR SURVEY

3.1 Archaeological & Historical Background

The site is situated in Sandyford, in the townlands of Ballaly and Woodside in the Barony of Rathdown. Balally is in the Civil Parish of Taney, Woodside in the Civil Parish of Kilgobbin.

The majority of the scheme that this assessment is a part of is along Hillcrest Road in the townland of Woodside (Taobh na Coille). The area was recorded as Tynekilly in 1654, but by the early 19th century the name Woodside was in use and remains to the present day. It is unclear whether the townland name derives from Woodside House (DU022-068----) or the other way around, as perhaps the name was used due to the areas proximity to substantial parklands associated with Fern Hill parklands to the south, which date to the early 18th century. The westernmost portion of the scheme is in the townland of Balally (Baile Amhlaoibh). It was recorded as Ballawly in 1547 and variations of the name were used thereafter; it was depicted by Rocque (1760) as 'Ballally' and in 1821 by Duncan as 'Ballalley' and 'Ballalley Lands'. The area was translated as Baile Amhlaoibh 'Awley's town, Olave's town' by John O'Donovan in 1838 (Ordnance Survey Parish Namebooks). The townland boundary between Balally and Woodside is formed by a stream. This boundary is shown on the 1836 OS map and by the 1907 OS map it is clearly depicted as a stream.

Prehistoric activity in the area is represented by burnt mounds, known also as fulacht fia. Three such monuments were recorded in the environs of the site. One in the townland of Kilgobbin (DU026-161----), with an associated hearth and post- and stake-holes representing a structure, and two others to the north of the site, which were identified during topsoil stripping of the South-Eastern motorway. These were located in Murphystown (DU022-109----) and Ballally (DU022-110----). Fulachtaí fia comprise the most commonly discovered evidence for prehistoric settlement across Ireland and represent the use of pyrolithic technology to boil water, with those noted in close proximity to a trough generally interpreted as cooking/industrial sites (Hawkes 2018). These sites generally consist of a low mound of charcoal-enriched soil mixed with an abundance of heat-shattered stones, commonly forming a horseshoe shape in proximity to a trough, and are found in low-lying marshy areas or close to streams. Often these sites have been ploughed out and survive as a spread of heat-shattered stones in charcoal-rich soil with no surface expression. Furthermore, a pit burial (DU025-081----) in Kilgobbin was identified under licence 02E1220, with associated Middle-Late Bronze Age date pottery also recovered, while to the north-east in the townland of Carmanhall, a flat cemetery (DU023-063----) consisting of a group of pit burials with two vase urns, dated between 2000 BC and 1850 BC (Early Bronze Age), was excavated under licence 01E1129.

A stone-covered well (DU025-013----) is located to the southeast of the site and is known as O'Grady's Well. It is thought to be of medieval date but is not marked on any of the OS mapping. The worship of holy wells is hard to date, but the tradition likely originates around the seventh century AD. Some wells, however, retain their pre-Christian character, like the ones near Tara in County Meath. Many water springs that were a focus of activity in prehistory were likely transformed to Holy Wells with the introduction of Christianity. The wells often took their name from a saint, with St Patrick or St Brigid being the most common. Holy wells are found in isolation but



often in proximity to early church sites (O'Sullivan & Downey 2006). To the north of the well, an enclosure (DU025-014----) is registered. This monument is located on the northeast slope of Three Rock Mountain and was identified on aerial photograph taken in 1978; it is not visible at ground level. Less well-defined 'enclosures' such as this are also generally accepted as being from the early medieval period as the remnants of destroyed ringforts or similar associated sites, although the possibly of prehistoric origins cannot be ruled out. The majority of early medieval ditched enclosures date to the sixth to ninth centuries AD, and we see a significant decline in their use in the tenth century (O'Sullivan & Nicholls 2010). Ditched enclosures are generally regarded as enclosed farmsteads, and the defences are thought to have been built in order to protect against cattle raids (Stout 1997). Some have provided little evidence for structures, suggesting the enclosure was used for storing cattle, known as a 'bodun', though the majority provide evidence to suggest they were inhabited settlements, with houses, farmyards, outbuildings and animals (O'Sullivan & Nicholls 2010).

In the late medieval period, the area controlled by the English was known as the Pale. The Pale extended to Louth, Meath, Dublin and Kildare and consisted of a fortified ditch and rampart. The southerly extent of the Pale is marked by Carrickmines Castle. The line of the Pale through south-east county Dublin is likely to have varied. The route of the Pale ditch was recorded to the southeast, south and northwest of the site. Portions of the ditch are recorded as linear earthworks in the area, such as a section to the northwest of the site in the townland of Balally (DU022-064----) and to the southeast in the townland of Kilgobbin (DU026-087---- and DU026-121002-), while to the south of the site, a possible route of the Pale ditch was hinted at by McCabe (2004b). This was marked to the south, curving northwards on the west side of designated landscape – tree ring DU022-069----. The route described by Ball and Hamilton as The Pale began at Dalkey and followed a south-westerly direction towards Kilternan; then turning northwards passed Kilgobbin... and crosses the Parish of Taney to the south of that part of the lands of Balally now called Moreen and thence in a westerly direction towards Tallaght. It is unclear what evidence this was based on, however, examination in 1978 at Balally found a 220m-long ditch. In the townland of Jamestown, parallel to Ballyogan Road and a small river, an earthwork measuring 500m was also uncovered; the ditch varied from two to three meters wide (see Goodbody 1993).

To the south of the site stands a monument classed as House - 16th/17th century DU022-068----. The original house is likely to date from the 1690s (SMR file). On the 1836 OS map it appears to represent no more than a farmyard, however, by the 1907 map, more detail is given and the large house is labelled as 'Woodside House', with a well, what appears to be stables to the south and ancillary structures. The remains of the late 17th-century building are recorded as surviving to the rear of a late 19th-century building. The Griffith's Valuation carried out in 1848 and 1864 lists John Hastings as the owner of Woodside. The house change hands thereafter; it was sold to John Charlton Spinks in the early 20th century, with Robert Edward Lazenby, John Montgomery Esq., Daniel Joseph Delaney and the Lenehans occupying the house. The house still stands.

3.2 Previous Archaeological Investigations

There were no records of any previous archaeological investigations at the proposed site. However, a large area to the southeast was previously archaeologically assessed. This was in relation to a residential development of an area measuring c. 11.8 hectares. Investigations, including testing (02E1285; McCabe 2004a) and monitoring (13E0189) in an area to the southeast identified no features. However, during monitoring (02E1584; McCabe 2004b; 08E0427) further south, features of archaeological significance were identified and excavated. These included an isolated pit, a Bronze Age hut structure, a domestic settlement of post-medieval date and miscellaneous features (02E1584), while during groundworks associated with two reservoirs and a temporary compound, two small burnt pits or hearths were recorded (08E0427).



Listed below (Table 1) are the excavations and assessments located in the wider environs (Figure 2). The details are derived from the Summary Accounts of Archaeological Excavations in Ireland (www.excavations.ie).

Table 1: Previous archaeological investigations in the environs of the site

Site	Licence No.	Site Type	Investigation
			Туре
2002:0697 - Woodside, Dublin	02E1285	Prehistoric activity	Monitoring
2002:0698 - Woodside, Dublin	02E1584	Metal waste pit, Bronze Age hut and 18th-century stone structure	Monitoring
2008:499 - Sandyford High-Level Water Scheme, Woodside/ Kilgobbin/ Ballyedmonduff, Dublin	08E0427	Hearths	Monitoring
2013:530 - Woodside, Aikens Village, Stepaside, Co. Dublin, Dublin	13E0189	Modern made ground - no archaeology found	Monitoring

3.3 Recorded Monuments

The site does not contain any Recorded Monuments listed within the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) or Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). The nearest such monument is a House - 16th/17th century DU022-068---- located c. 363m to the south. The original house is likely to date from the 1690s, its remains survive to the rear of a late 19th-century building, labelled as Woodside House on the 1907 OS map.

The following is a list of the monuments located within the site (Figure 2, Table 2) and in the immediate environs listed in the National Monuments Service Archaeological Survey Database (http://maps.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/).

Table 2: Recorded Monuments in the environs of the site

DU022-068	House - 16th/17th century	
The original house at Woodside is likely to date from the 1690's (Rob Goodbody Pers coms). It had the front façade replaced in the		
1890's but the original house survives to the rear.		
DU022-069	Designed landscape - tree-ring	
Described by Paddy Healy in a report by An Foras Forbartha for Dublin County Council in 1983 as a possible ringfort. This was		
since assessed and considered to be a tree ring.		
·		



DU025-014---- Enclosure

Located in upland pasture on the lower NE slopes of Three Rock Mountain. An aerial photograph taken in 1978 (BKS 2776139/40) shows a semicircular platform defined to the E by a field boundary running NE-SW (dims. N-S 28m; E-W 18m). Not visible at ground level.

DU025-013---- Well

A lintelled passage in the middle of a field forms the approach to a stone covered well known as O'Grady's Well (NMI:1962). Thought to be medieval in date.

DU022-110---- Fulacht fia

During monitoring of topsoil on the South-Eastern Motorway a fulacht fiadh was identified. Located on a gentle slope at the foot of the Dublin Mountains near a stream. Comprised aspread of dark soil which covered a hearth and a large circular pit. Beside the hearth was a large circular pit surrounded by a ring of stake holes and a rectlinear pit which was lines with wooden planks. Finds from the site include a small quantity of lithic debitage (O' Drisceoil, 2004, 121).

DU022-064---- Linear earthwork

Now incorporated into a green area within Moreen Housing Estate. This feature extends roughly N-S direction and survives in two sections. It comprises a flat-topped bank with a fosse on either side (L 220m). The bank is better preserved in the S (Wth Top 3-4m, Wth Base 6m, H 1.2m). The fosses are mostly silted up (Wth 2m, D 0.3m). There are old whitethorn bushes along both faces of the bank and along the top a number of mature trees. This earthwork compares in appearance and size with sections of Pale Ditch in Dublin and Kildare. It is on a route of the Pale Ditch confirmed by Ball & Hamilton (1895) in their history of the Parish of Taney (Healy 1978). Investigative excavations in 1996 indicated the Pale Ditch continued northwards (L 63m) from the Kilcross estate through part of the Central Bank's grounds.

3.4 Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022–2028 lists no Protected Structures nor sites in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) within the site. The nearest Protected Structure is located c. 140m to the southwest of the site and is represented by a former Carnegie Library, now a Community Centre (RPS ID 1660), which is also listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH Reg. No. 60220039), with Saint Mary's National School (NIAH Reg. No. 60220038) just to the south of it. A Letter Box (Industrial Heritage Site No. 948) is located at Lamb's Cross, c. 152m to the west and is listed in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022–2028.

3.5 Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland

The Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland were consulted and list no finds for Balally nor Woodside.



3.6 Cartographic Review

A review of available historic mapping for the area was carried out to include the Down Survey map of County Dublin (1656), Barony of Rathdown, John Rocque's map of 1760, and various editions compiled by the Ordnance Survey (OS) of Ireland, including the 1st edition 6-inch map that was surveyed in 1836 (Figure 3) and the 25-inch map that was surveyed in 1907 (Figure 4). Potential archaeological or cultural heritage features are marked on such maps, and they provide a useful resource in identifying sites, particularly if they no longer have any above-ground remains.

The Down Survey map of County Dublin, dated 1656, depicts the site as largely within the northern portion of the Whitechurch Parish with annotation The Grange Protestant Land, with the western and eastern extent of the scheme within the Parish of Tanee. On the 1760 map, the site is shown within agricultural fields. The former footprint of Kilgobbin Road is apparent. A junction with Kilgobbin Road is shown and a road meandering to the west of it, but not within the footprint of the current Hillcrest Road. The road appears to continue further west, roughly within the current Blackglen Road.

The 1836 OS map shows the footprint of the current Hillcrest Road. A junction to the east with former Kilgobbin Road is also shown as the townland boundary between Woodside and Murphystown. By the time of the 1907 OS map, the townland boundary depicted on the 1836 map between Woodside and Balally is shown as a wet ditch/stream.

The examined maps do not depict any archaeological monuments within the site.

3.7 Aerial Photography

A review of the available aerial photography for the area was also undertaken as part of this assessment. Aerial imagery dating between 1995 and 2013 from the Ordnance Survey of Ireland and dating between 2005 and 2022 from Google Earth were examined and in addition google street view imagery (2009-2022).

By the time of the 1995 aerial photograph, significant expansion of residential development in South Dublin is apparent. Residential dwellings on long rectangular plots line Hillcrest Road, while the area to the south of the road consists of agricultural fields. By the 2008 aerial photograph, Kilgobbin Rd and Hillcrest Road junction was constructed and operational. The previously green area at the junction of Sandyford and Enniskery and Hillcrest Roads is in use as a yard since early 2022.

No cropmarks suggestive of archaeological monuments were identified.

3.8 Survey Methodology

The survey comprises of a visual inspection, topographic riverbed mapping and a waded metal detector survey which was carried out in water is less than 0.75m in depth. Breathing apparatus was not required.

The visual survey element investigated the riverbed, banks and attendant grounds for any upstanding and slightly submerged archaeological and architectural material. The visual survey recorded the condition and state of submerged features and a number of aspects relating to the general setting, including river width, depth, flow direction and current flow rate, visibility, bottom type and height



of banks. The waded metal detector survey was based on a numbered grid system with a baseline established for survey control, from which perpendicular offset lines were marked to form stints, and these were subdivided along the offset line to form parallel transects.

Each transect was subjected to a metal detection survey, thereby ensuring 100% coverage. Each potential object detected was carefully investigated and individually bagged and labelled with the licence number, unique identifier number, transect and stint numbers, depth at which the artefact was found and any other relevant information. The locations of finds were recorded using land-based EDM and diver-held prism or DGPS as appropriate, capable of sub-metre accuracy.

The survey was supervised at all times by a Licence Eligible archaeologist whose professional judgement was relied upon to distinguish between modern debris and archaeological objects. Objects deemed to be non-archaeological were not retained.

3.9 Survey Results

The survey was conducted along a section of the townland stream which runs NNW to SSE and passes below Hillcrest Road (R113) and included 34.55m of stream, confined to the section south of Hillcrest Road.

The stream measured a maximum of 1.40m in width and ranged in depth between 0.34m to the south and 0.09m to the north. The banks of the stream were steeply inclined and covered in vegetation, more so on the western bank, which included common nettles and trees. The west bank flattens out to the north adjacent to the bridge and contained cut logs from tree cutting and litter. Evidence for stone block lining of the stream was observed as well as large stones on the east bank.

The bridge under Hillcrest Road consisted of a low culvert which the stream passes under. The stone lining of the stream extends south from this bridge and was visible in six courses for 3m. This mostly survives on the east bank, with the lining on the west bank extending 1.90m with only three disturbed courses visible.

The stream was relatively clear, with the bottom visible from the surface which consisted of loose alluvial deposits of silt and gravel. Modern waste was noted, including plastics and aluminum. The stream north of Hilcrest road had been culverted and partially disturbed by modern construction. Modern rubbish and deposition were once again visible.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

No structures, artefacts or features of archaeological or architectural significance were discovered as a result of this wade and detection survey. A large amount of modern rubbish consisting of both plastic and decayed metal (ie. decayed tins, drinks cans etc) was noted within the stream and steam banks. No finds of an archaeological nature were detected or identified.

The proposed development in this location will therefore have no impact on archaeological features.



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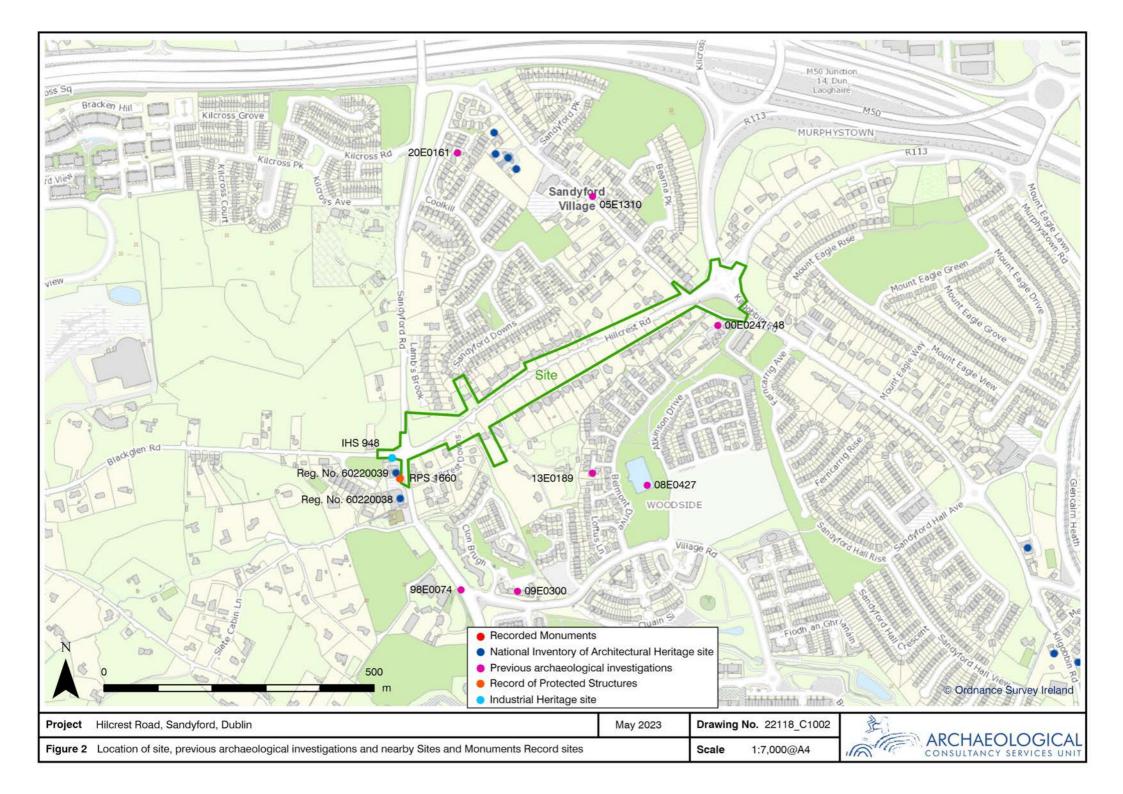
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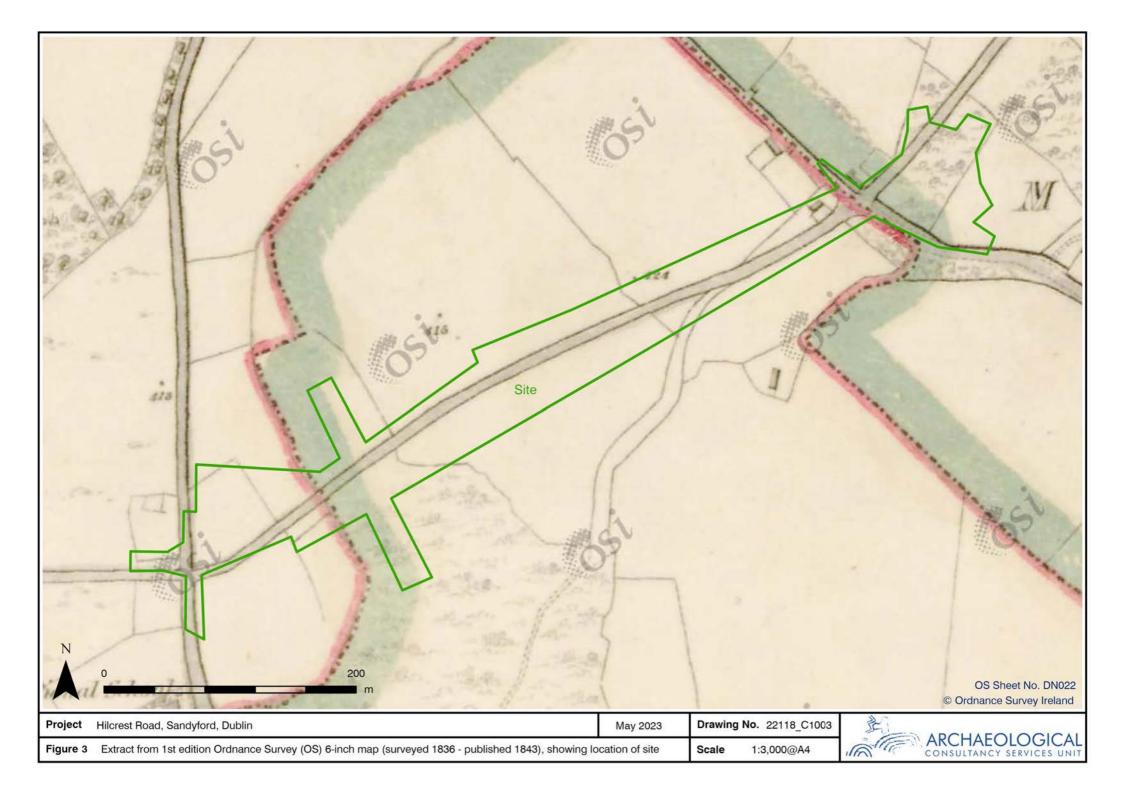


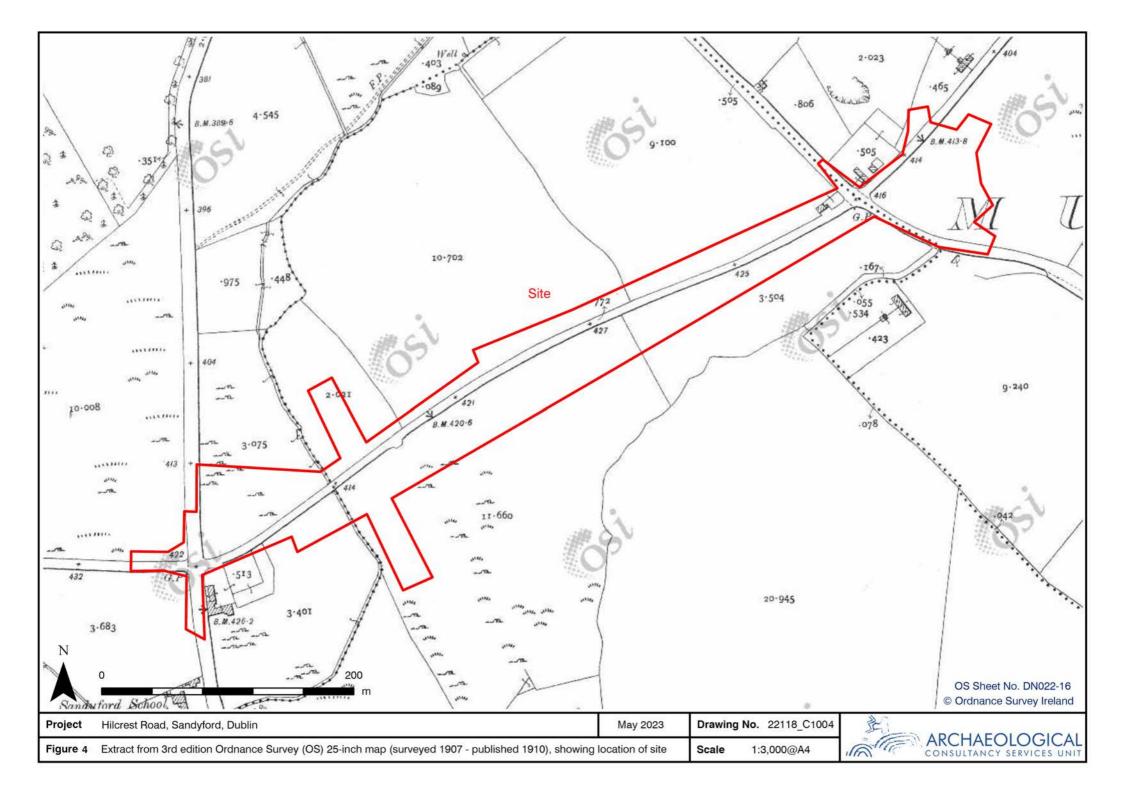
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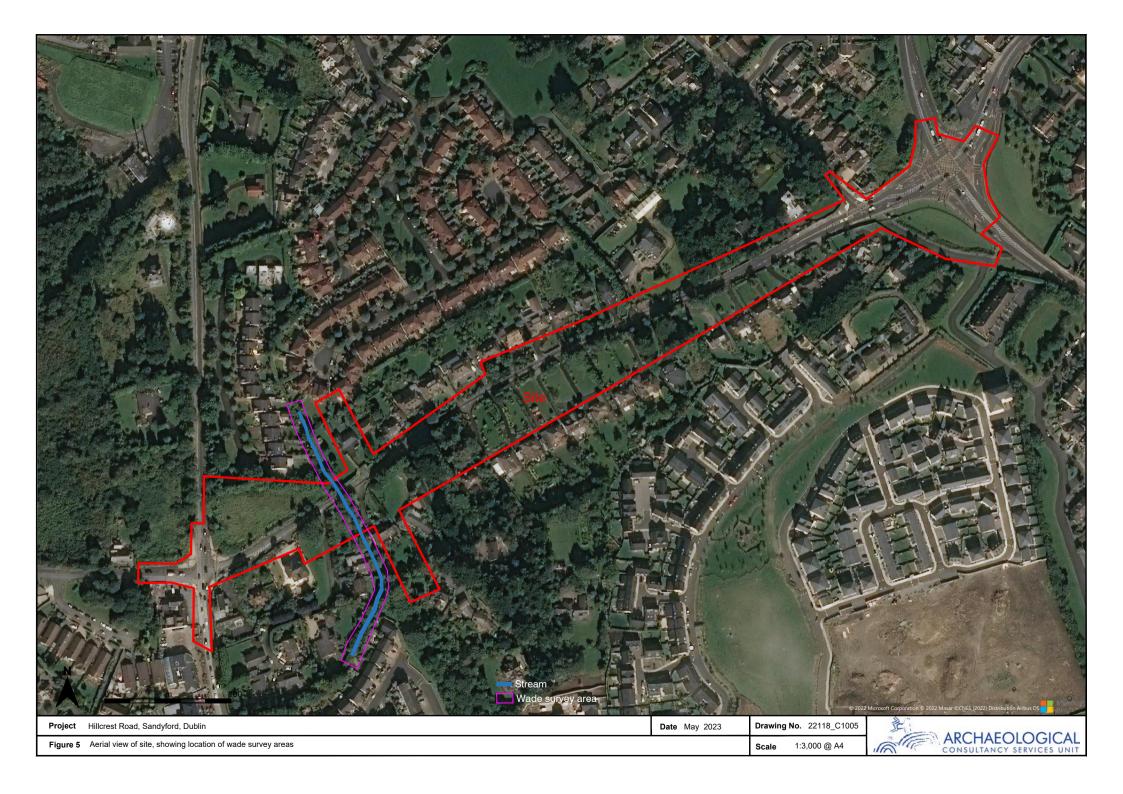






Plate 1: Culvert and stream under Hillcrest Road looking north.



Plate 3: Metal detection in progress looking north.



Plate 2: Stream looking north.



Plate 4: Metal detection in progress looking northeast.





Plate 5: Detail of culvert underneath Hillcrest Road looking northeast.



Plate 7: Detail of stream bed and banks looking east.



Plate 6: Metal Detection in progress looking southeast.



Plate 8: Stream and modern construction on north side of Hillcrest Road.