De Faoite Archaeology

Unit 10
Riverside Business Centre
Tinahely
Co. Wicklow

Testing Report

Sewage Scheme

Site Investigation Works

Whitegate/Aghada

Co. Cork

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May 2019

19E0316

Client Irish Water

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1 Introduction

Irish Water is progressing sewerage schemes at untreated towns/villages in Cork as part of its UTAS programme and to upgrade wastewater treatment facilities at Whitegate and Aghada in Co. Cork. The works are broken into two routes one at Whitegate which runs northeast and southwest of the village and one route which runs between Aghada and Rostellan.

An archaeological impact assessment report was completed by ACSU Ltd in March 2018. Archaeological monitoring of the SI works was recommended along with archaeological testing of green-field areas where the scheme is located. Archaeological monitoring of the SI works was completed under a separate licence and report duly submitted to the department.

This report details the results of test trenching only of the green field areas on the Whitegate scheme and recommends an appropriate archaeological mitigation for any further SI works the main contract.

2 Location description:

The proposed works are located within the district of Cork County Council. This testing report only concerns the scheme at Whitegate which is located at the eastern shoreline of the entrance to Cork. As one of the finest natural Harbours in the world, Cork Harbour has shaped the history and lives of the people of Cork City and surrounding towns and villages such as Blackrock, Cobh, Monkstown, Passage West, Whitegate and Aghada, amongst others. The topography of the landscape is gently undulating, with a mixed coastline consisting of built infrastructure, shallow cliffs, intertidal mudflats, reed beds, shingle and rocky foreshores, which are exposed by the tide.

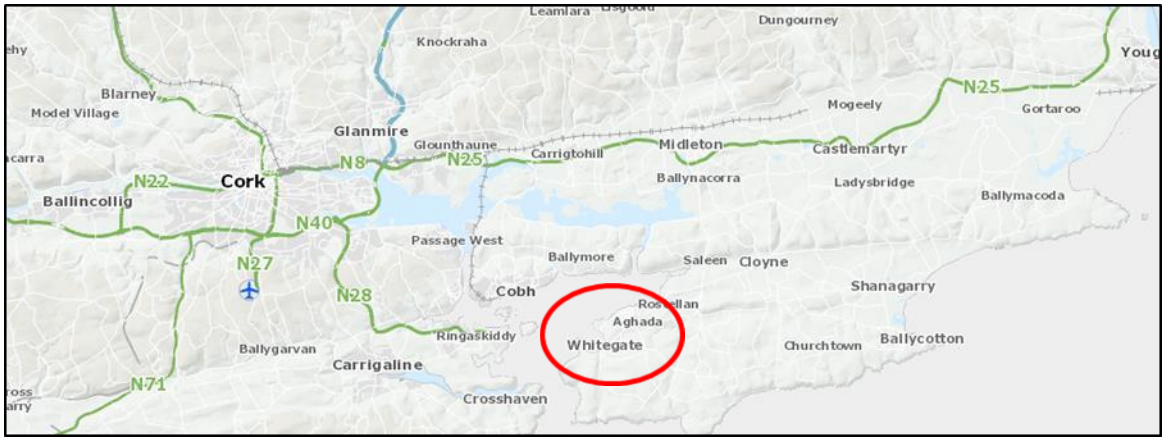


Figure 1: Location Map Whitegate.

The aim of testing the green-field site was to identify previously unrecorded archaeological features in advance of construction for the main contract. This strategy will enable an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy to be applied in advance of the main sewage contract if finds or features of archaeological significance are exposed. It also enables an assessment to be made of the degree of disturbance along the pipeline route and the likelihood of archaeological material surviving and the requirement for further archaeological mitigation for the main contract of works.

Whitegate is located along the east coast of Cork harbour and is accessed by the R630. Whitegate (Irish: an Geata Bán) is a small fishing village in East Cork on the eastern shore of Cork Harbour. This test trenching application is for works in the townland of Glanagow southwest of Whitegate where the scheme will run through greenfield sites. Glanagow is in the Electoral Division of Corkbeg and in the Civil Parish of the same name.

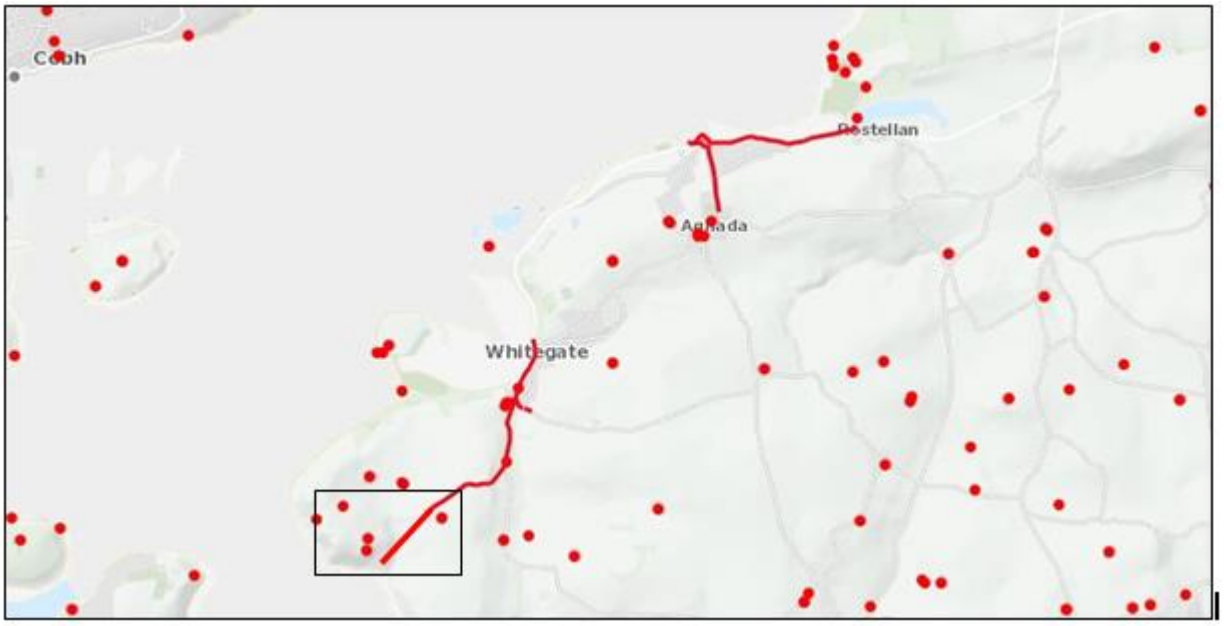


Figure 2: Black box marks Test trench location at Whitegate.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

Whitegate

Whitegate (Irish: an Geata Bán) is a small village in East Cork on the eastern shore of Cork Harbour. The village was originally a fishing village that appears to have developed in association with Whitegate House, which was built 1770-1790. The majority of the period buildings located within the village date 1820-1880.

The townland where the test trenches will be excavated is in Glanagow which adjoins the townland of Whitegate. In Irish Glanagow translates as 'Ghleann an Ghabha' - Glen of the Smith. The earliest reference to the townland is in 1833.

The surrounding landscape contains a relatively high distribution of Recorded Monuments that indicate that the study area has been subjected to human settlement from the prehistoric period through to the Late Medieval period. The results of this are contained within the archaeological assessment report. For the purposes of this application the focus is on the immediate Recorded Monument Sites and the green-field sites where the test trenches will be located.

The monuments in the immediate vicinity of the works are three ringforts which broadly date from 500 to 1000 AD. There are two basic forms the rath and cashel. The one at Glanagow is a rath and is purported to have had two ditches. They functioned as residences and/or farmsteads and excavated examples have produced metalworking evidence. Some examples have two (bivallate) or three (trivallate) banks and fosses and have been equated with higher status sites belonging to upper grades of society.

The scheme will also run in fields adjacent the townland boundaries between Glanagow and Trabolgan, which is also the parish boundary between Corkbeg and Trabolgan (Figure 3). In Ireland townland boundaries and in particular parish boundaries are likely to represent much earlier land divisions. Gaelic land ownership required a clear definition of territories for each sept and a need for strong permanent fences around their territories.

Three Recorded Monument Sites are discussed below in relation to proximity to proposed works.

3.1.1 Ringfort

RMP Number	Townland	Distance	Description
CO088-031	Glanagow	70m	Ringfort-rath: In pasture, on N-facing slope. Shown 1842 OS 6-inch map as circular enclosure (diam. c. 28m). Levelled; no visible surface trace. According to Power (1940, 98) 'There were formerly two lioses, but these were levelled.
CO100-032	Carlislefort	234m	In pasture, on SE-facing slope, overlooking White Bay. Depicted as circular enclosure (diam. c. 30m) on 1842 OS 6-inch map. According to Power (1940, 98) 'there was formerly a small circular lios close to the S.E. angle of the townland but it was levelled by the military authorities'.
CO100-033	Carlislefort	248m	In pasture, on SE-facing slope, overlooking White Bay. Depicted as circular enclosure (diam. c. 30m) on 1842 OS 6-inch map. Levelled; according to Power (1940, 99) both 'lioses' in this townland 'have been destroyed'.

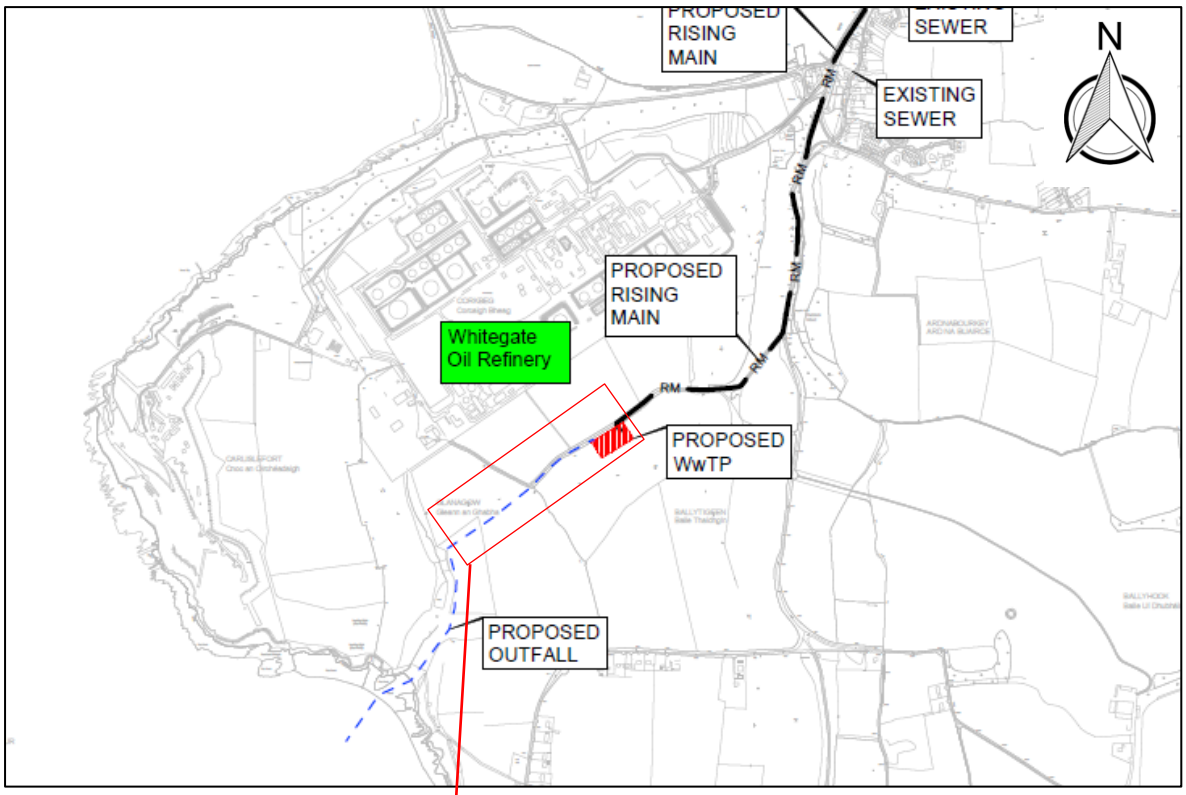
The proposed works are 70m to the northeast of a ringfort in the townland of Glanagow. Two other ringforts which are now destroyed are in Carlislefort to the northwest of the works. The closest ringfort at Glanagow may be bivallate its overall diameter would have been larger in antiquity. Furthermore the number of banks and ditches were equated with higher status sites belonging to upper grades of society.

Figure 3: Test trench location at Ringfort, Google Earth.

4 Test Trenching Results

A total of two trenches were excavated under licence 19E0316. The topsoil was reduced by a 6t machine with a flat grading bucket and under archaeological supervision. The topsoil was reduced to natural ground or the top of archaeological horizons, whichever was encountered first. This strategy was to ensure that if archaeological features were encountered their nature and extent would be known at an early stage so that an appropriate archaeological mitigation could be applied in consultation with the relevant bodies.

All features identified were tested by hand to confirm their archaeological potential or if they were agricultural in nature. The aim of this programme of test trenching was to identify finds or features of archaeological significance which may be impacted upon by the proposed works so that an appropriate archaeological mitigation for preservation in situ or by record i.e. full excavation could be applied in advance of the main sewage contract.



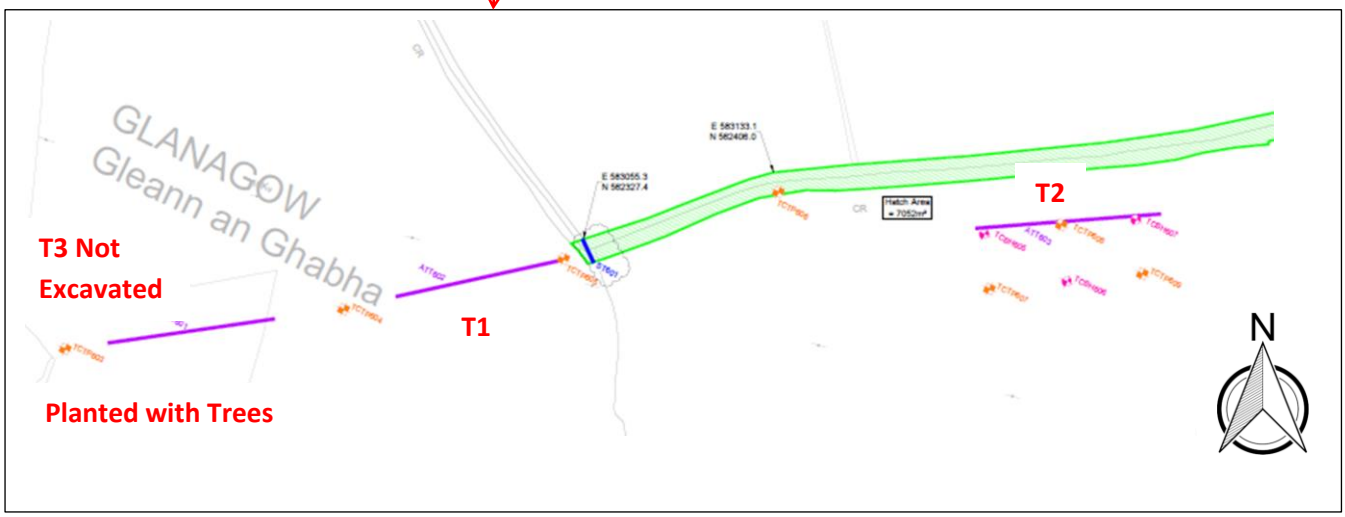


Table 1: Summary of Test Trenches

Trench	Length	Depth	Description
T1	193m	0.45m-0.65m	Topsoil was a dark-brown silty clay with moderate small stone inclusions. The natural ground varied and in the northeast was mid-orange brown silty clay. At the northwest end of the trench where the ground sloped to the southwest the natural ground comprised fragmented shale bedrock. No finds or features of archaeological significance were exposed in this trench.
T2	92m	0.58m	Topsoil was a mid-brown silty clay with moderate small stone inclusions. The natural ground was a mid-orange brown silty clay. No finds or features of archaeological significance were exposed in this trench.

A total of two test trenches were excavated by machine. Trench 1 was located at the location of the Waste Water Treatment Plant in tilled ground which had extensive views over White Bay. A Ringfort-Rath which is no longer visible was located 70m southwest of the development: At the time of the first edition map in 1842 it was 28m in diameter and was bi-vallate. A field boundary which was visible on the first edition map was located at the centre of Trench 1 however this was not visible in the test trench. The topsoil was 0.58 in depth and the natural ground was a mid-orange brown silty clay. No finds or features were exposed in this trench.

Plate 1: Test Trench 1 facing southwest.

Test trench 2 was along the location of the proposed outfall and this field was also under tillage. The ground sloped gently to the west towards the bay. The natural ground also varied and was boulder clay to the east and at the western edge it was bedrock.

Plate 3: Trench 2 north-eastern end of trench.

Plate 2: Trench 2 at south-western end of trench.

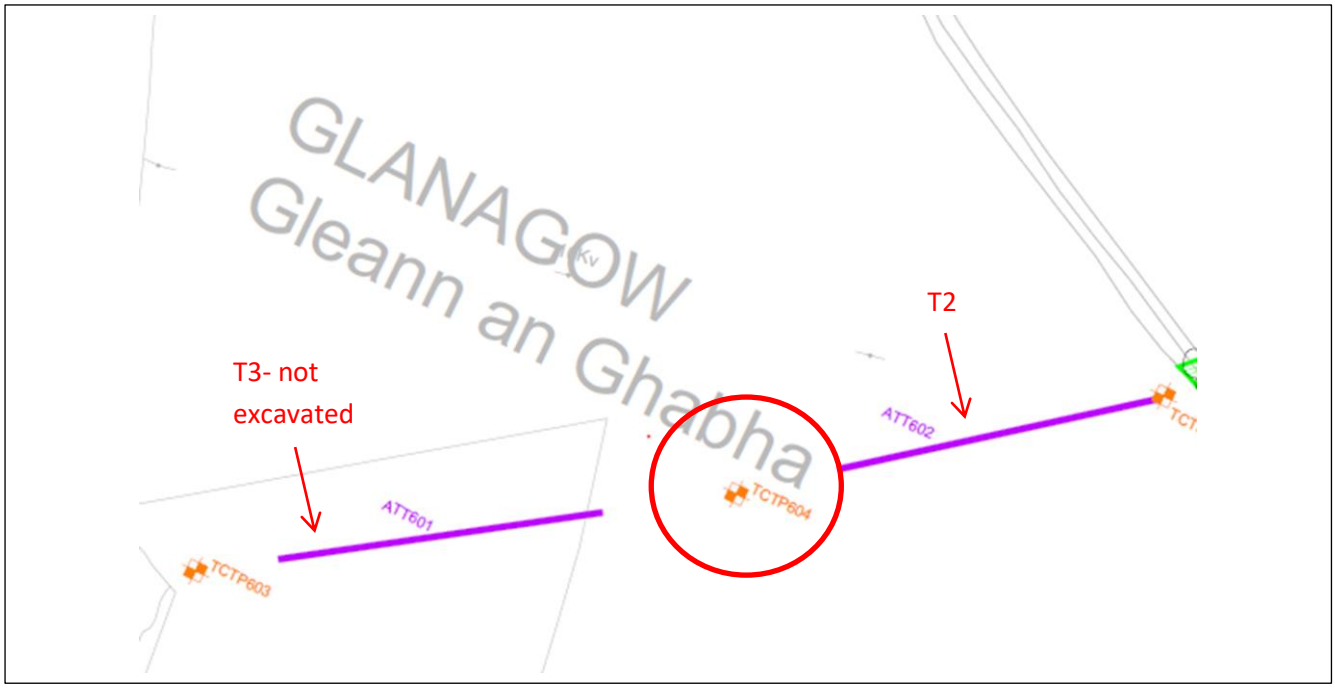


Figure 4: Location of TCTP604.

The route of the proposed outfall past Trench 2 continues through a field planted with dense trees (Figure 5). It was not possible to excavate Trench 3 at this location (Plate 4). A stream runs northwest to southeast towards the sea which feeds into a large man made pond. Extensive

excavation has taken place as is evidenced by the scarped landscape and piles of earth and topsoil. A small building on cleared ground is located west of the pond (Plates 5 and 6). The proposed outfall skirts along the edge of an overgrown extensively disturbed landscape which drops sharply to the west as a result of modern excavations (Plate 5).

Plate 4: View of trees facing north-west.

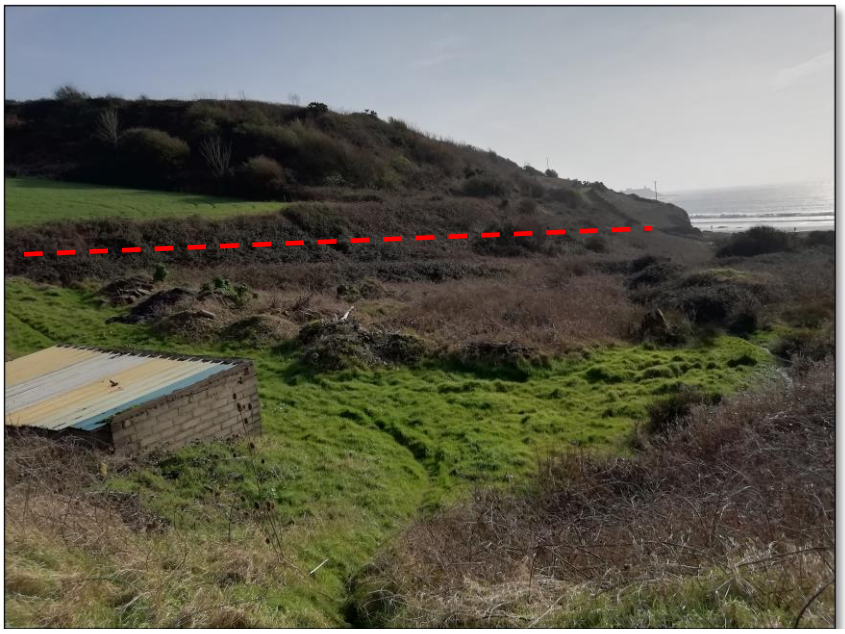


Plate 5: View of bay facing south-east.

Plate 6: View of pond facing north-west.
Red line is approximate location of pipe.

5 Impact Assessment

The purpose of this archaeological assessment with test trenching in advance of the Aghada Waste Water Treatment Plant and Outfall pipe in advance of the construction phase was to enable an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy to be adopted at an early stage in order to protect the archaeological heritage if finds or features of archaeological significance were exposed.

The desk based assessment indicates that the surrounding landscape contains a relatively high distribution of Recorded Monuments that indicate that the study area has been subjected to human settlement from the prehistoric period through to the Late Medieval period.

The monuments in the immediate vicinity of the works are three ringforts which broadly date from 500 to 1000 AD. The closest one 70m southwest of the proposed Waste Water Treatment Plant one Glanagow is a rath and is purported to have had two ditches. They functioned as residences and/or farmsteads and excavated examples have produced metalworking evidence. In Irish Glanagow translates as 'Ghleann an Ghabha' - Glen of the Smith. Test trenching at the location of the proposed Waste Water Treatment Plant indicates that no finds or features of archaeological significance will be impacted upon by the works.

It was not possible to test the entire route of the Outfall Pipe given the route is proposed through a densely planted area and along the edge of ground which is for the most part completely disturbed from recent construction activities. The location of Test Trench 2 and Trial Pit TCTP604 along the only area of undisturbed ground did not reveal any finds or features of archaeological significance. Furthermore as the field sloped to the west towards White Bay the topsoil lay directly on top of bedrock. The field where the recently planted trees are densely planted also exhibits evidence of significant machine clearance. Given the paucity of known archaeological monuments in the immediate vicinity and recent ground disturbance and root damage from the trees it is the authors opinion that the chance of archaeological remains surviving is unlikely and no further test trenching is required in this area.

The scheme will also run adjacent the townland boundaries between Glanagow and Trabolgan, which is also the parish boundary between Corkbeg and Trabolgan. In Ireland townland boundaries and in particular parish boundaries are likely to represent much earlier land divisions. Gaelic land ownership required a clear definition of territories for each sept and a need for strong permanent fences around their territories. The scheme will run in close proximity to these boundaries however will not directly impact on them. The proposed outfall route will run through an area which has been extensively disturbed associated with the excavation of a large pond. It was not possible to excavate test trenches along the route of the outfall at this location given the degree of overgrowth and for health and safety reasons.

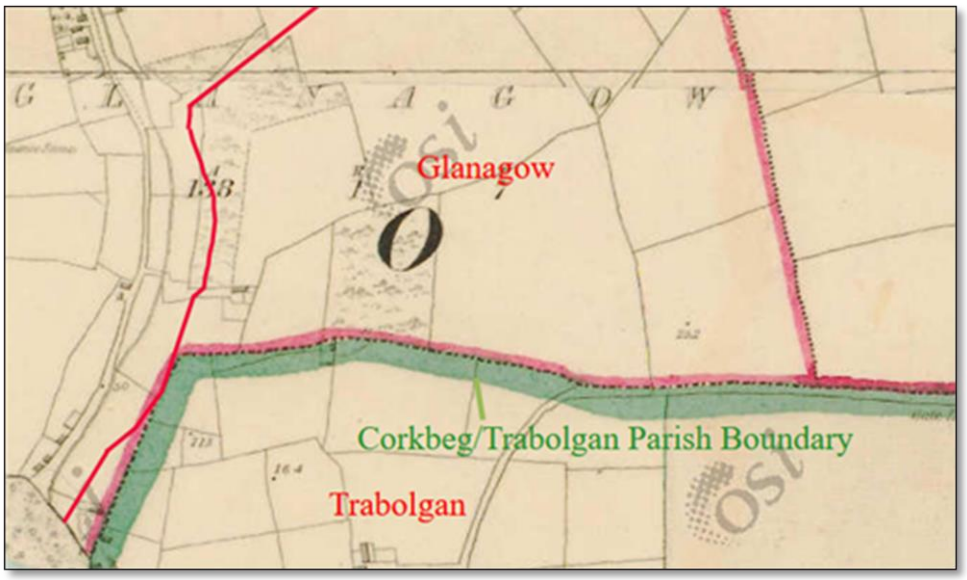


Figure 5: Townland and parish boundaries along scheme.

6 Archaeological Mitigation

Should the route of the outfall or location of Waste Water Treatment Plant be altered then further consultation with the archaeologist and further archaeological test trenching may be recommended prior to its final design.

Main Contract Waste Water Treatment Plant: No further archaeological works required.

Outfall Pipe: Any further SI works outlined below should be archaeologically monitored in order to obtain a clearer view of the degree of ground disturbance so that an appropriate archaeological mitigation can be applied for the main contract.

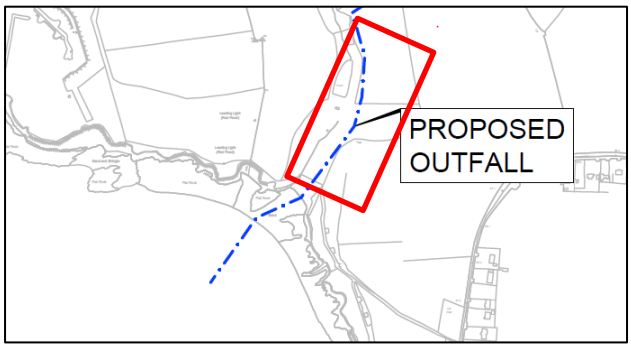


Plate 7: Area to be monitored should further SI works be necessary.

These recommendations are the professional opinion of the author and based upon the findings of the desk based assessments and test trenching results. The following guides and legislation were considered when compiling this report;

- Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Properties (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1999
- Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and National Heritage, 1972
- Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe, (the 'Granada Convention') ratified by Ireland in 1997
- European Convention Concerning the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (the 'Valetta

Convention') ratified by the Republic of Ireland in 1997

- Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, 1999, Department of the Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands
- Heritage Act, 1995
- National Monuments Act, 1930, as amended 1954, 1987 and 2004

Please note that all recommendations are subject to approval by the National Monument Section of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the National Museum of Ireland.

7 References

A.C.S.U (2018). *Archaeological Impact Assessment Whitegate/Aghada Sewage Scheme.* Unpublished.

Online Sources

www.excavations.ie

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www.webgis.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment