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The excavation bulletin website<sup>5</sup> was consulted to identify previous excavations that have been carried out within the study area. This database contains summary accounts of excavations carried out in Ireland from 1970 to 2024. The study area has been subject to twelve development led licenced excavations, or which seven uncovered archaeological remains. Summaries of excavations within the study area are detailed below.

**License No.:** 02E0114  
**Excavation No.:** 2002:1412  
**County:** Meath  
**Site name:** ARDNAMULLAN (1)  
**SMR No.:** N/A  
**Author:** Stephen J. Linnane, ACS Ltd.  
**Site type:** Charcoal-making site  
**Period/Dating:** Late Medieval (AD 1100-AD 1599)  
**ITM:** E 662054m, N 744566m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.447517, -7.065839  
**Description:** During test-trenching before the construction of the M4 Kinnegad–Enfield–Kilcock motorway, features of archaeological potential were observed, and subsequently full resolution of them was undertaken by stripping turf and topsoil from the immediate area within the road-take. In this excavation four features proved to be of interest; two were rectangular pits with shallowly sloping sides and oxidised bases and sides caused by high heat. The fills contained significant quantities of charcoal, and, by analogy with other features excavated on this project, it has been suggested that these may be charcoal-producing kilns. Two subcircular bowl-shaped pits were not kilns but may have been associated with some part of the industrial process. Among the uses for charcoal is in the smelting of iron ore, and bowl kilns and iron slag were present on similar sites in the vicinity.

**License No.:** 02E0018  
**Excavation No.:** 2002:1428  
**County:** Meath  
**Site name:** BALLYNAKILL  
**SMR No.:** N/A  
**Author:** Christine Baker, Arch-Tech Ltd.  
**Site type:** No archaeology found  
**Period/Dating:** N/A  
**ITM:** E 662279m, N 739690m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.416050, -6.834380  
**Description:** A site (Area A) of possible archaeological significance was identified during pre-development testing at Ballynakill, Enfield, Co. Meath. A test-excavation strategy was formulated on the basis of the geophysics results (licence 01R033), which showed weak linear responses and pit-type anomalies. Four trenches were opened by machine. Two features were identified, both small pits with heat-affected fills, which were very similar. Their position immediately below the topsoil suggested a late date. No artefacts, features, structures or deposits of archaeological significance were uncovered.

**License No.:** 02E0868  
**Excavation No.:** 2002:1482  
**County:** Meath  
**Site name:** KILWARDEN (BGE 1a/47/1)  
**SMR No.:** N/A  
**Author:** Redmond Tobin, Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd.  
**Site type:** Metalworking site

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<sup>5</sup> <https://excavations.ie>

<b>Period/Dating:</b>	Undetermined
<b>ITM:</b>	E 662640m, N 746744m
<b>Lat, Long.:</b>	53.467023, -7.056587
<b>Description:</b>	<p>Topsoil-stripping at Kilwarden, Clonard, revealed an isolated feature of exceptionally dense, charcoal-rich soil, with large quantities of iron slag and a bloom of smelted iron. The feature lay on flat, level ground adjacent to a west-facing slope leading onto boggy land to the north-west. During stripping, several areas of potential were identified and marked off for further examination.</p> <p>Subsequent testing revised the initial interpretation, as many of the areas of potential were resolved into pockets of residual topsoil. The only definite feature was that associated with iron smelting, a shallow depression measuring 2.2m north–south by 0.85m. The plan was quite irregular, suggesting that this feature had no definite structure. The depression was quite shallow, never exceeding 0.14m deep. The fill was a homogeneous, loose, friable, black soil with dense charcoal and a great frequency of iron slag inclusions.</p> <p>The depression was a natural feature that was used for industrial activity being carried out adjacent to this location. The identity of this site was defined by the charcoal and slag fill and not by the structure of the depression. The absence of heavy oxidation in the depression or in its immediate vicinity emphasised that this feature was not associated with any form of direct heat. This evidence suggests that this feature represents a secondary process associated with iron smelting.</p> <p>In the direct process of iron smelting, after a successful smelt, the bloom is removed from the remains of the furnace and taken to a forge. The forge may relate to an area adjacent to the furnace site and not necessarily to a structure. The bloom is taken from the bloomery furnace, encased in a hard crust of iron slag. At the forge site the bloom is beaten with a hammer to remove the slag while also consolidating and refining the spongy iron into wrought iron. The by-products of this process are slag and charcoal-rich material from the furnace.</p> <p>The evidence from this site supports the interpretation of the feature as a forge associated with a smelting furnace, which must be situated nearby but lies beyond the boundaries of the pipeline corridor.</p>
<b>License No.:</b>	<b>02E1147</b>
<b>Excavation No.:</b>	n/a
<b>County:</b>	Meath
<b>Site name:</b>	Ardnamullan 1
<b>SMR No.:</b>	N/A
<b>Author:</b>	Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd.
<b>Site type:</b>	Metalworking site
<b>Period/Dating:</b>	Medieval
<b>NGR:</b>	26208, 24431
<b>Description:</b>	<p>The principal feature on the site was detected during test trenching. The resolution of the site involved the stripping of topsoil from a considerable area and a number of features were identified. Two rectangular pits have tentatively been identified as charcoal burning pits. By analogy with other sites in the vicinity, these pits would have been used for preparing charcoal for iron smelting. Other pits and spreads may have been connected to this activity but none could be described as bowl hearths and no iron slag came from this site. Two radiocarbon dates were obtained and these provided dates within the medieval period, AD1020-AD1250.</p>

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**License number:** 03E0983  
**Excavation No.:** 2003:1512  
**County:** Offaly  
**Site name:** BALLYKILLEEN  
**SMR No.:** N/A  
**Author:** Eoin Corcoran, for ADS Ltd., Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Dublin 3  
**Site type:** Road - class 2 togher  
**Period/Dating:** Undetermined  
**ITM:** E 660429m, N 727884m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.297811, -7.093483  
**Description:** Following a survey by the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit (IAWU) in 2002 of Cloncreen Bog, a Bord na Móna production bog, a number of sites were selected for excavation in the summer of 2003. This site was identified during the 2002 survey as a secondary togher. Two 4m by 5m cuttings were excavated.  
The first cutting above a sighting in the drain face contained no archaeological material, probably due to the proximity of the main north-south drainage channel. The second cutting contained part of a split timber trackway orientated north-north-west/south-south-east. The timbers were laid longitudinally, with transverse roundwood elements and brushwood beneath them. This site was traced north for a further field. A c. 75m length of this trackway survives.

**License number:** 03E0984  
**Excavation No.:** 2003:1513  
**County:** Offaly  
**Site name:** BALLYKILLEEN  
**SRM No.:** N/A  
**Author:** Eoin Corcoran, for ADS Ltd., Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Dublin 3  
**Site type:** Road - class 1 togher, Road - class 3 togher and Structure - peatland  
**Period/Dating:** Prehistoric (12700 BC-AD 400)  
**ITM:** E 660396m, N 727967m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.298560, -7.093962  
**Description:** Following a survey by the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit (IAWU) in 2002 of Cloncreen Bog, a Bord na Móna production bog, a number sites were selected for excavation in the summer of 2003. These sites were identified as a primary togher, dated to 3630–3143 cal. BC, a possible tertiary togher orientated north-east/south-west incorporating a notched timber artefact, a tertiary togher orientated north-east/south-west, unworked wood in situ, a tertiary togher orientated north-south and another tertiary togher orientated north-south. Seven cuttings were excavated in this group of sites.  
The primary togher was of brushwood, of hurdle-type construction, extending for a distance of c. 150m in a north-north-west/south-south-east direction across the bog.  
The tertiary togher was found to be an arrangement of brushwood (possibly a platform) representing several phases of activity surrounding a notched timber artefact lying north-south. This artefact measured 1.28m in length and was c. 0.18m wide.  
The second tertiary togher was found to be a brushwood platform overlying another notched timber artefact. This artefact measured 2.4m long and was c. 0.16m wide.

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The unworked wood in situ was found to be a single roundwood underlying another notched timber artefact, which measured approximately 2m long and 0.3m wide.

The proximity of these three artefacts and their associations requires further analysis.

The third tertiary small toger was found to be of longitudinally laid brushwood running in a north-north-east/south-south-west direction; this site could not be traced further in either direction.

The fourth tertiary toger was found to be a substantial structure of longitudinally laid split timbers, transverse roundwoods, brushwood and twigs running in a north-south direction. This site appeared not to continue to the north but may be related to No. 1512, Excavations 2003 (03E0983) to the south.

**License No.:** 05E0173  
**Excavation No.:** 2005:1304  
**County:** Offaly  
**Site name:** ROGERSTOWN  
**SMR No.:** N/A  
**Author:** Alan Hayden, Archaeological Projects Ltd.  
**Site type:** No archaeology found  
**Period/Dating:** N/A  
**ITM:** E 659638m, N 733426m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.347698, -7.104317  
**Description:** Four trenches were mechanically excavated on the site on 5 March 2005; nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered.

**License No.:** 07E0383  
**Excavation No.:** 2008:1011  
**County:** Offaly  
**Site name:** MONASTERORIS, Edenderry  
**SMR No.:** N/A  
**Author:** Eoin Sullivan, Gort Archaeology  
**Site type:** No archaeology found  
**Period/Dating:** N/A  
**ITM:** E 660859m, N 732891m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.342753, -7.086073  
**Description:** The development site is located on the north-west side of Edenderry town in Monasteroris townland. The proposed development (Edenderry Business Park) was for 21 single-storey light industrial/warehouse units with two-storey office areas in three blocks on a greenfield site. A badly denuded ringfort (OF012-002) is located on the high ground in the southern field along the road frontage. Due to the close proximity of the ringfort, the local authority requested further information based upon excavated test-trenches.

A test excavation was undertaken between 2 and 9 May 2007. The site was assessed on the basis of 27 mechanically excavated trenches systematically located throughout the site of the proposed development. Two of the test-trenches revealed features, one of which was a modern land drain while the other was a small pit contained within the confines of the trench. Due to the presence of the ringfort and the pit it was recommended that all groundworks associated with the development be monitored.

The proposed development received full planning permission and the first phase of construction works commenced in November 2007. Between November and December groundworks associated with the site access road,

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roundabouts, site compound and associated drainage works and attenuation tank were monitored. No features or soils of archaeological significance were encountered on the site. Further groundworks are planned to commence in 2008 (see No. 1012, *Excavations 2008*).

*Editor's note: This summary arrived too late for inclusion in the 2007 bulletin.*

**License No.:** 07E0383 ext.  
**Excavation No.:** 2008:1012  
**County:** Offaly  
**Site name:** MONASTERORIS, Edenderry  
**SMR No.:** N/A  
**Author:** Eoin Sullivan, Gort Archaeology  
**Site type:** Pit  
**Period/Dating:** Undetermined  
**ITM:** E 660859m, N 732891m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.342753, -7.086073  
**Description:** The development site is located on the north-west side of Edenderry town in Monasteroris townland. The site was subject to pre-development test excavation (see No. 1011, *Excavations 2008*) and subsequent monitoring of groundworks associated with the construction of the site access road, associated drainage works and attenuation tank. It is near a ringfort, OF012-002. The groundworks associated with the first phase of construction of the industrial units took place between 21 and 30 May 2008. Monitoring was carried out as an extension to the excavation licence. The monitoring of Blocks 6 and 7 resulted in the identification of three small isolated features within both the footprint and the vicinity of the perimeter of Block 7. Two of the features appeared to be modern and related to modern/natural burning in the field. The third feature was an irregularly shaped pit and represented in situ burning in the field and was of archaeological significance. The pit was sectioned and measured 0.69m (north-south) by 0.6m. The single fill of the pit consisted of blackened clay containing occasional pieces of charcoal overlying fire-reddened subsoil. No artefacts were identified in the fill or were encountered in the removal of topsoil and there was a general lack of the typical modern wares associated with agricultural fields.

**License number:** 10E0168  
**Excavation No.:** 2010:554  
**County:** Offaly  
**Site name:** MONASTERORIS  
**SMR No.:** OF011-009006  
**Author:** Michael Tierney, The Archaeology Company, 9 Riveroaks, Riverstown, Birr, Co. Offaly  
**Site type:** Settlement deserted - medieval  
**Period/Dating:** Medieval (AD 400-AD 1600)  
**ITM:** E 660737m, N 733226m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.345777, -7.087840  
**Description:** The site of a proposed new house at Monasteroris, Edenderry, was tested as part of a request for further information. The site was adjacent to a deserted medieval village. Seven trenches were excavated. Two large ditches measuring 2.5m wide by 1.5m deep on average, and three oval/circular pits with an average diameter of 1m were found. A sherd of medieval pottery was found in one of the pits. The ditches may be associated with the adjacent medieval site.

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**License No.:** 14E0255  
**Excavation No.:** 2014:266  
**County:** Offaly  
**Site name:** Ballykilleen, Cloncreen Bog  
**SMR No.:** n/a  
**Author:** Jane Whitaker  
**Site type:** Structure – Peatland  
**Period/Dating:** —  
**ITM:** E 660398m, N 728009m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.298937, -7.093929  
**Description:** Cloncreen Bog was surveyed by the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit (IAWU) during the 2001 Archaeological Survey of Ireland Peatland Survey. Thirty-eight sites dating from the Neolithic to the Iron Age were excavated in 2003 by Eoin Corcoran and Jane Whitaker as part of the Bord na Móna mitigation programme. A Re-Assessment survey was carried out on behalf of Bord na Móna in 2013 by the author under License No. 13E0228 which identified two peatland structures, one of which, OF-CCN-002, was recommended for excavation as part of the 2014-2017 BnM Mitigation Project. The site was recorded in 2013 as being composed of a possibly displaced east–west oriented timber, roundwood and brushwood with a single north–south oriented brushwood. The timber measured 0.1m in width, 0.04m in depth and 0.68m in length, the roundwood measured 0.09m in diameter and 0.36m in length while the brushwood were both 0.03m in diameter and 0.36m and 0.68m in length. The peat was moderately humified, dark brown sphagnum peat. The original find spot was re-located by GPS, however no in situ remains were visible in September 2014. An area measuring 3 x 3m was cleaned back by hand which confirmed that nothing remained of this fragmentary site. A sample taken during the survey was subsequently dated to 1929–1750 BC.

**License number:** 17E0031  
**Excavation No.:** 2017:402  
**County:** Offaly  
**Site name:** MONASTERORIS  
**SMR No.:** OF011-009006  
**Author:** Icon Archaeology, [www.iconarchaeology.ie](http://www.iconarchaeology.ie)  
**Site type:** Earthwork  
**Period/Dating:** Medieval (AD 400-AD 1600)  
**ITM:** E 660826m, N 733200m  
**Lat, Long.:** 53.345526, -7.086521  
**Description:** An archaeological test excavation was carried out to assess the archaeological potential of a development site at Monasteroris, County Offaly. The proposed development will consist of a single dwelling and ancillary works located close to the zone of archaeological potential of a deserted medieval settlement defined by extensive earthworks close to the site of a friary, holy well and graveyard. The RMP files suggest that the remains are associated with the settlement of Tethmoy recorded in the survey of 1550.  
Four test trenches were excavated across the site. Trench 1 located along the northern boundary of the development site contained the remains of a 4m wide linear ditch aligned north south. Trenches 2 and 3 contained the remains of additional linear features 1.2m wide and also aligned north south. No associated banks survived and no finds were recovered during the excavation. The uncovered remains are likely an extension of the medieval earthworks visible in the adjacent field to the north.