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Graveyard Survey at Kilgarvan Graveyard, Co. Kerry



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Acknowledgements

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I. Abstract

This report details a graveyard survey, which was undertaken by ÆGIS ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED on behalf of the client. The report contains an accurate ground plan of all upstanding remains in the graveyard, including boundaries, paths/desire lines, grave-markers, tombs, architectural fragments, churches, areas of collapse and other miscellaneous features as discovered at the time of survey. A photographic record of the features at the site is included.

The ground plan was produced using a Trimble GeoXH 2005 Series GPS handheld receiver and datalogger survey instrument. Each position surveyed with the instrument is linked to GPS and has an Irish National Grid reference. The survey was downloaded from the instrument and corrected with Trimble GPS Pathfinder Office software. All ground plans were enhanced in AutoCAD 2010 and reproduced with added symbols and colours in Adobe Illustrator CS3.

This report contains a brief written description and statement of the general condition of the site and the condition of the features surveyed. Damaged and unstable features are noted and remedial actions to address potential issues of public safety are suggested.

A photographic record of all headstones, linked to the survey drawing is included in the report. The names on some headstones have become worn or are covered with vegetation and cannot be read. These headstones are included in the photographic survey and have been listed as 'Unknown'. Photographic surveys of named tombs and other memorials in the graveyard have been included in this report.

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III. Abbreviations and Terms Used

Architectural Fragment	A piece of worked wood or carved stone that has been removed from a building. These may be of any date from the early medieval period (5th-12th centuries AD) onwards
Barony, Parish, Townland	These terms refer to land divisions in Ireland. The barony is the largest land division in a county, which is formed from a number of parishes. These parishes are in turn made up of several townlands, which are the smallest land division in the country. The origins of these divisions are believed to be in the Early Medieval/Christian period (AD500-AD1000), or may date earlier in the Iron Age (500BC-AD500)
Bullaun Stone	The term 'bullaun' (from the Irish word 'bullan', which means a round hollow in a stone, or a bowl) is applied to boulders of stone with artificially carved, hemispherical hollows or basin-like depressions. They are frequently associated with ecclesiastical sites and holy wells. They date to the early medieval period (5th-12th centuries AD)
Burial Ground	An area of ground, set apart for the burial of the dead, not associated with a church and sometimes defined by a low earthen or stone bank. These date from the medieval period (5th - 16th centuries AD) up to the 20th century
Chapel	A free-standing building which is used for private worship. These date from the late medieval period (c. 1400 to the 16th century AD) up to the 20th century
Children's Burial Ground	An area of unconsecrated ground for the interment of unbaptised or stillborn children, often known under various Irish names: Cillin, Caldragh, Ceallunach or Calluragh. The graves were generally marked by simple, low, upright stones or slabs almost invariably without any inscription or other carving. This burial practice may be medieval in origin and continued in Ireland until the 1960s
Church	A building used for public Christian worship. These can be of any date from c. 500 AD onwards
Cross-slab	A slab of stone, either standing or recumbent, inscribed with a cross and generally used as a grave-marker or memorial. This term is applied only to slabs dating to pre-1200 AD
Ecclesiastical Enclosure	A large oval or roughly circular area, usually over 50m in diameter, defined by a bank/banks and external fosse/fosses or drystone wall/walls, enclosing an early medieval church or monastery and its associated areas of domestic and industrial activity. These date to the early medieval period (5th-12th centuries AD)
Grave Marker	A simple low un-inscribed stone marking the location of a burial. These may be situated at the head or foot of the burial or both
Graveslab	A stone designed to be recumbent and marking a grave, AD 1200-1700 in date
Graveyard	The burial area around a church or the site of church. These date from the medieval period (5th-16th centuries) onwards
Headstone	An upright stone placed over the head of a grave. These date from 17th century AD onwards
Holy Well	A well or spring, which usually bears a saint's name and is often reputed to possess miraculous healing properties. These may have their origins in prehistory but are associated with devotions from the medieval period (5th-16th centuries AD) onwards
Plot	A kerbed area enclosing a burial or burials
KE	This number is the number of the site on the RMP map (see below). It begins with the county code, here KE for Kerry, the 6-inch sheet number, followed by the number of the archaeological site
Mass Grave	A grave containing multiple, usually unidentified burials
Memorial Plaque	A plaque serving as a focus for memory of the named deceased placed in a graveyard but not necessarily indicating the location of a burial

Memorial Monument	A monument erected to commemorate a person or group of persons associated with an important historical event
OS	Ordnance Survey
RMP	Record of Monuments and Places. An update of the older SMR, (sites and monuments record), on which all known archaeological sites are marked and listed in an accompanying inventory. The record is based on the 6-inch map series for the country and is recorded on a county basis. Each archaeological monument on the RMP has a unique code known as the RMP number
Tomb	A monumental grave or sepulchre. These date from the medieval period (5th-16th centuries AD) onwards
Un-named Headstone	A headstone that has been cut and shaped as a headstone but has not been inscribed

1. Description of Site

1.1 Site Location and Cartographic Background (figs 1-5)

Kilgarvan graveyard is located to the north side of the main road through the town of Kilgarvan in the townland of Churchground, parish of Kilgarvan, barony of Glanarought, in south Co. Kerry, (NGR 101110/73273). The graveyard is within a sub-rectangular enclosed area immediately adjacent to north side of the main road through the town and is bounded on the east and west sides by domestic buildings. The site is recorded on the OS Discovery map 79 as 'Ch'. It is also listed by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland in the Record of Monuments and Places as KE094-004001- 'Church', KE094-004002- 'Bullaun Stone' and KE094-004003- 'Graveyard'.

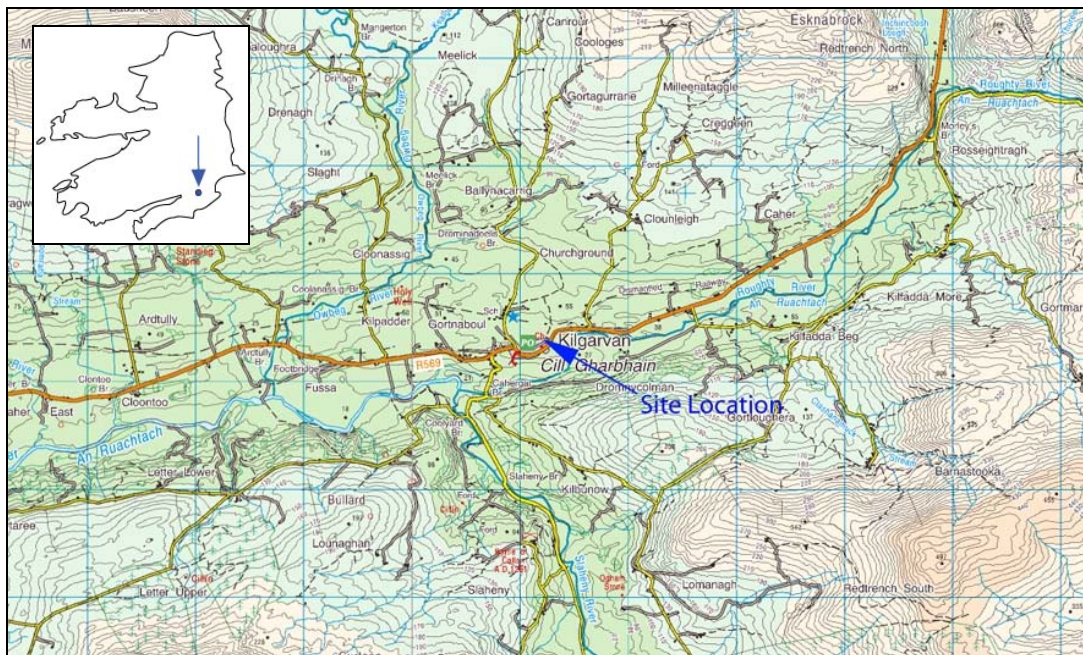


Figure 1. Site Location, OS Discovery Map 79, north to top (Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence No AR0095409 ©Ordnance Survey Ireland Government of Ireland)



Figure 2. Location of site indicated on aerial image (north to top)

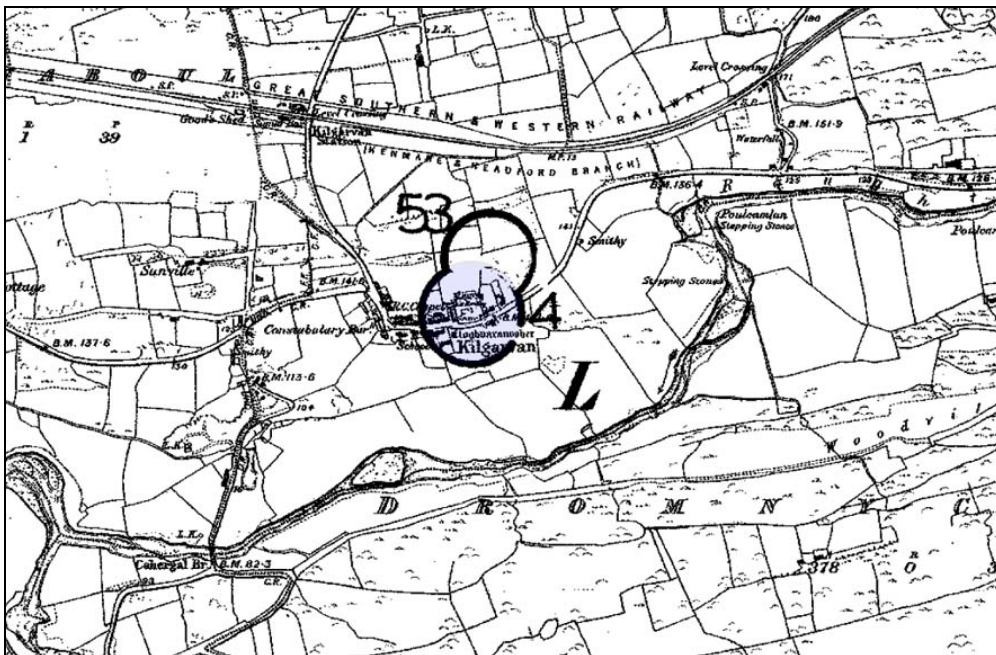


Figure 3. RMP constraints map Sheet 94 showing RMP KE094-004----

The site was originally indicated on the 1841 1st edition 6" Ordnance Survey map as a rectangular graveyard with a 'Church (*in ruins*)' and 'Grave Yd' and was bounded on the west side by a Roman Catholic chapel. The site was shown on the 1895 25" Ordnance Survey map as 'Church (*in ruins*)' and 'Grave Yard' with the chapel still bounding the west side. The

extents of the graveyard had expanded to the north by the time of the 1895 map, extending it to beyond the north side of the chapel.

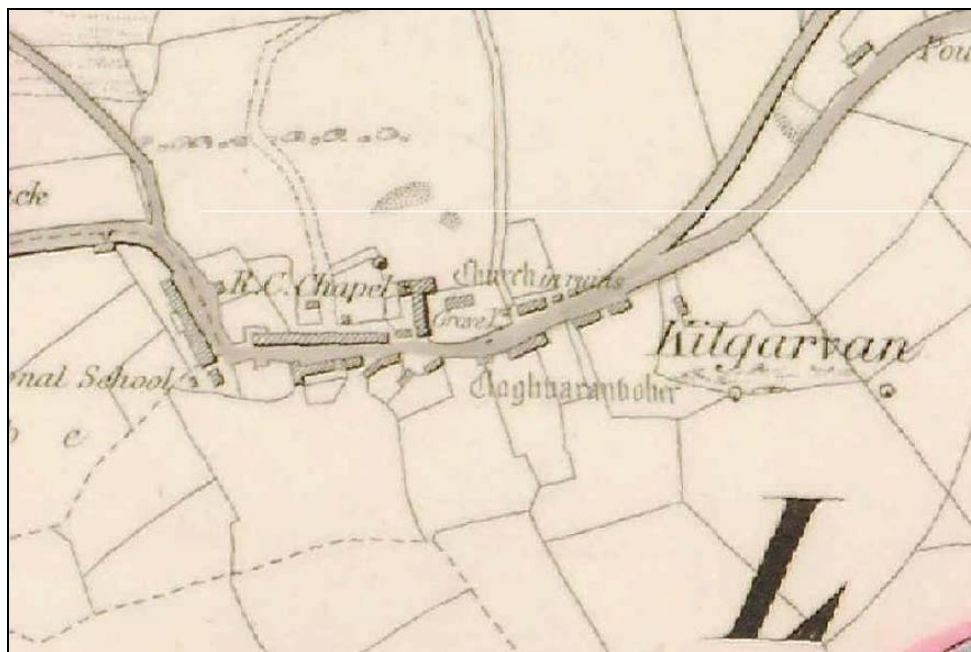


Figure 4. 1841 1st edition 6" OS map 94

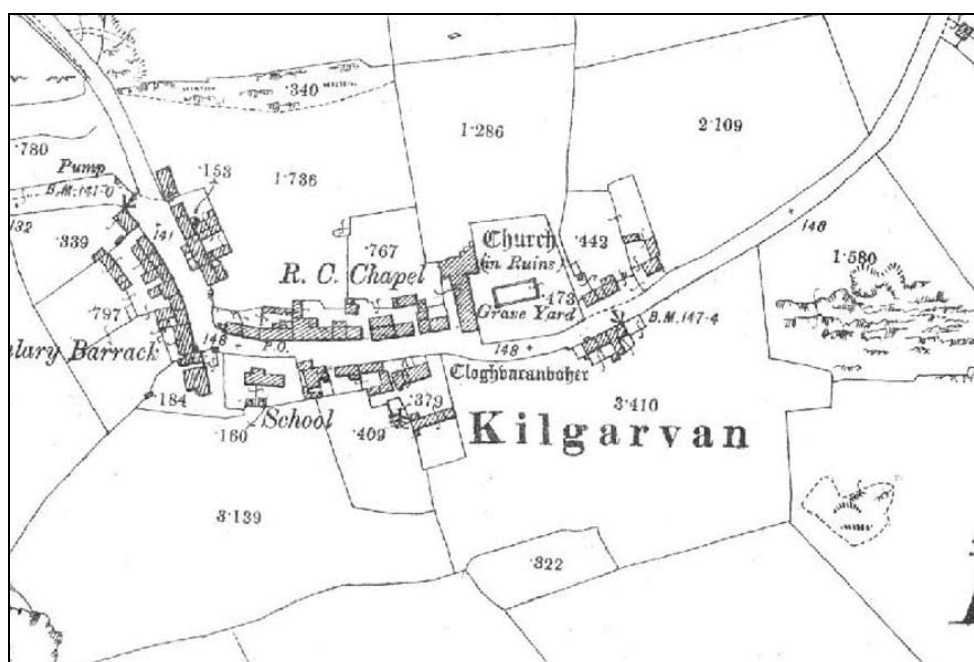


Figure 5. 1895 25" OS map 94

1.2 Site Description

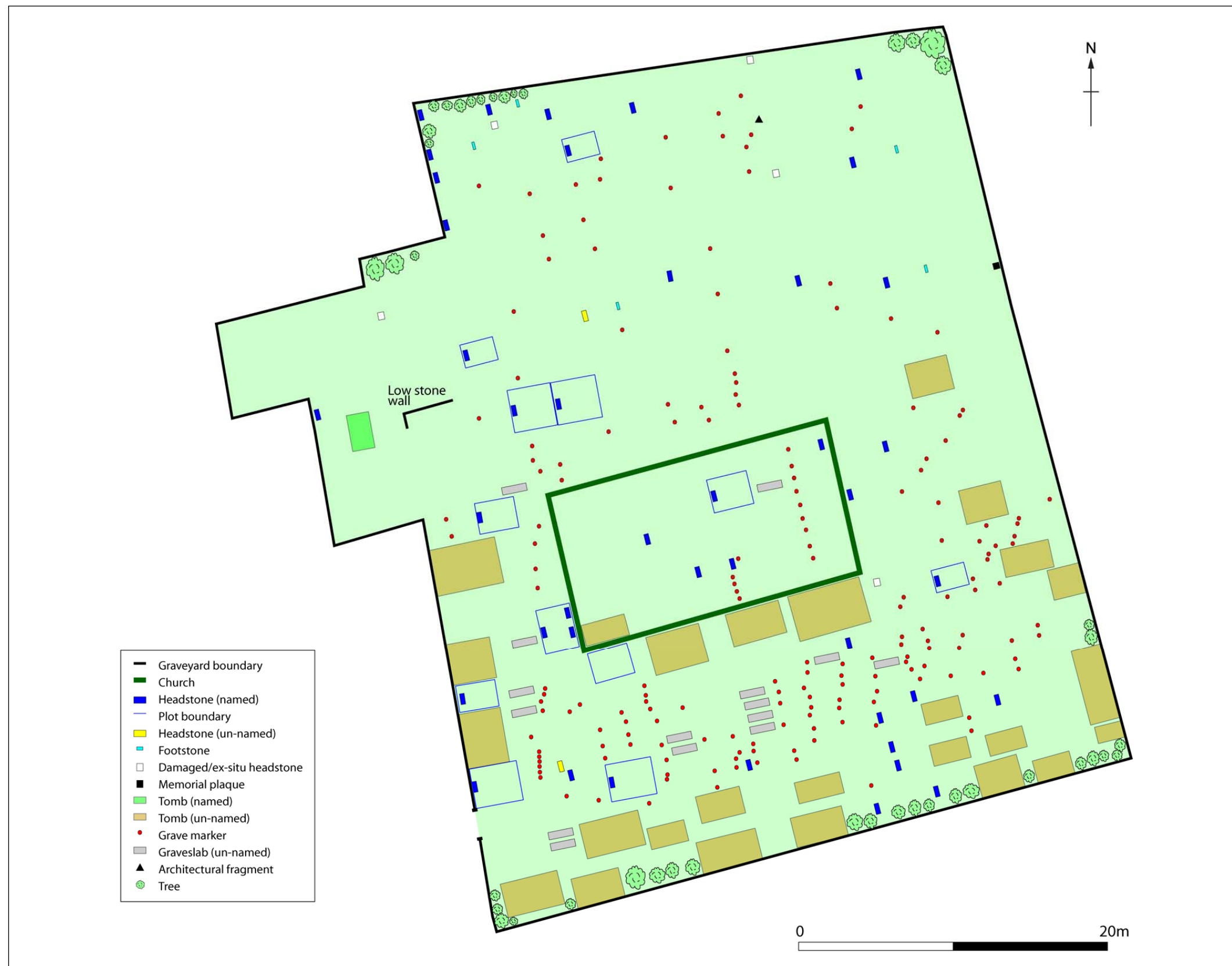


Figure 6. Plan of Kilgarvan graveyard

Kilgarvan graveyard is rectangular in plan, measuring 51m north-south by 40m east-west, and is enclosed by a random rubble stone wall. The wall on the south side of the graveyard overlooks the main road through the town of Kilgarvan. Residential and farm buildings stand immediately outside the east wall. There is a field of pasture outside the north wall and the west boundary wall is higher than the others, being the east wall of the now disused Catholic chapel. The roofless remains of a medieval church are located just south of centre of the graveyard. Most of the graves are concentrated in the southern half of the graveyard, on the south, east and west sides of the church. There are no pathways in the graveyard.

The graveyard contains 45 headstones, of which 3 have been damaged but have remained in-situ. Two other fallen/ex-situ headstones are located on the north side and close to the north boundary wall of the graveyard. There are two un-named headstones and 5 footstones in the graveyard and a memorial plaque has been erected on the west boundary wall. There is one named tomb on the east side of the graveyard, close to the wall of the former chapel and 26 other tombs where the identity of the interred cannot be identified. These un-named tombs are located on the south, east and west sides of the graveyard.

One hundred and seventy nine grave markers are randomly scattered throughout the graveyard though their distribution seems to be concentrated on the south side of the graveyard. It is difficult to differentiate between grave markers at the head or foot of graves. There are 15 un-inscribed graveslabs, again located mainly on the south side of the graveyard. One architectural fragment, possibly re-used as a grave marker, has been identified near the northeast corner of the graveyard.

The boundary walls on the north, east and south sides have become overgrown with vegetation, heavily in places. Ivy has extended from the boundary wall over some headstones against the wall at the northeast corner of the graveyard (App. I, nos. 11-16). The majority of the un-named tombs in the graveyard are situated close to these walls and the vegetation growth has extended from the walls and has enveloped these tombs. The north, east and west walls of the remains of the church in the centre of the graveyard are in good order though the south wall of this church and adjacent tombs are ivy-covered. A side panel has been removed from a tomb, which is now open on one side, on the east side of the graveyard. The iron railed plot boundaries at 3 of the grave plots are damaged and have become unstable. These plots are located at the outside west end of the south wall of the

church (Pl. 9), to the north of the east end of the church (Pl. 10) and inside the church (App. I, no. 44).

Some of the older headstones in the graveyard are leaning and in danger of collapse (App. I, nos. 15, 23, 25, 26, 32, 34, 35 & 41). Other headstones have been damaged, whereby crosses have become detached from their bases. The bases of these headstones appear to have stayed in-situ (Pl. 11 & App. I, no. 9; Pl. 12 & App. I, no. 15; App. I, no. 30). One headstone, towards the north side of the graveyard has been damaged and cannot be identified (Pl. 13) and another timber cross has been removed from its original location and placed against the north boundary wall (Pl. 14). The section of a low stone wall on the east side of the graveyard may be the remains of a wall of the now disused Catholic Chapel that at one time made up the eastern boundary of the graveyard. The ground throughout the graveyard is uneven and this may be an indication of further unmarked burials, particularly on the north side.



Pl. 1. Boundary on N side of graveyard



Pl. 2. Boundary on E side of graveyard



**Pl. 3. Boundary and ivy-covered tombs on
S side of graveyard**



Pl. 4. Remains of chapel on W side of graveyard



Pl. 5. Ivy-covered tombs and S wall of church



Pl. 6. Ivy-covered tombs on E side of graveyard



Pl. 7. Ivy-covered tombs in SE corner of graveyard



Pl. 8. Opened tomb on E side of graveyard



Pl. 9. Damaged railings on grave near SW
corner of church



Pl. 10. Damaged railings on grave near NW
corner of church



Pl. 11. Damaged headstone at NW corner of graveyard



Pl. 12. Damaged headstone on N side of graveyard



Pl. 13. Fallen headstone to N of the church



Pl. 14. Ex-situ headstone against N boundary of graveyard



Pl. 15. Remains of wall of chapel at NW side of graveyard



Pl. 16. Architectural fragment at N side of graveyard

1.3 Suggested Mitigation

The growth of vegetation on the boundary walls, headstones, the south wall of the church and the tombs should be contained and the effect of this growth on structures in the graveyard should be assessed. The stability of leaning headstones should be assessed. The repair of the in-situ damaged headstones might be considered as the broken fragments might be moved and become detached from their original graves in the future. The broken and unstable railed plot boundaries should be addressed. They are unsafe and the problem will be compounded by rusting in the long term. The repair of the opened tomb on the east side of the graveyard should be considered.

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3. Signing-Off Statement

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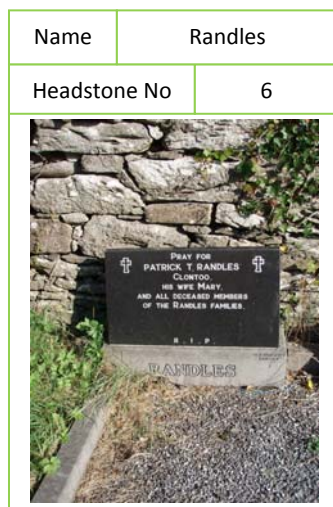
Signed: _____
For ÆGIS ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED


Dated: October 2009

4. Appendix I – Photographic Survey of Headstones







Name	Teahan
Headstone No	2
	


Name	Unknown
Headstone No	12
	

Name	Unknown
Headstone No	13
	

Name	Unknown
Headstone No	17
	

Name	Unknown
Headstone No	20
	

Name	Unknown
Headstone No	22
	

Name	Unknown
Headstone No	23
	

Name	Unknown
Headstone No	27
	

Name	Unknown
Headstone No	28
	



5. Appendix II – Photographic Survey of Named Memorial Plaque

Name	Lyne
Plaque No	46
	

6. Appendix III – Photographic Survey of Named Tomb

Name	O'Sullivan
Tomb No	47
	

7. Appendix IV – Plan of Numbered Graves

