

3a Westpoint Trade Centre  
Link Road  
Ballincollig  
Cork

Planning Department  
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council  
2 Marine Road  
Dún Laoghaire  
Dublin  
A96 K6C9

(t) 021 – 481 0311  
(e) info@johncronin.ie  
(w) www.johncronin.ie

VAT No.: IE 6394240B

09/06/2025

## Re. Archaeological commentary on revised proposals for Block A of Phase 1 Sea Gardens, Bray

To Whom It May Concern,

The current development site under consideration, Sea Gardens Phase 1 Block A, constitutes a discrete portion of the Sea Gardens Phase 1 lands for which planning was previously granted (Ref. **ABP-311181-21**). The revised project description for the Phase 1 Block A site is as follows:

*The proposed development will consist of the provision of 159 no. residential units over/around a shared 2-level podium comprising of: 9 no. 4-bedroom, 3 and 4-storey terraced townhouses with associated private terraces; and 150 no. apartments in 2 no. blocks ranging in height from 6 to 10-storeys (Block A1) and 7 to 11-storeys (Block A2) and consisting of a total of 48 no. 1-bedroom units, 58 no. 2-bedroom units, 44 no. 3-bedroom units, all with private balconies or terraces. The blocks will also include communal lounge areas; a communal gym in Block A1; refuse storage areas; and associated plant.*

*The shared 2-level podium will include car, motorcycle and bicycle parking, with additional car parking provided within the curtilage of 5 no. of the proposed townhouses.*

*The proposed development will also include: public open space including play areas; communal open space within the central podium courtyard; pedestrian / cycle linkages with adjoining existing and permitted developments; associated connections to the surrounding road network; all associated landscaping and public lighting; an ESB substation; drainage arrangements; utility connections; and all site development works.*

The Sea Gardens Phase 1 lands, including the subject site, have previously been subject to several archaeological investigations undertaken by our firm (John Cronin & Associates) as part of the planning process. These investigations include a geophysical survey (Detection Licence No. **20R02014**) followed by a programme of targeted archaeological test trenching and metal detection (Excavation Licence No. **20E0482**, Detection Licence No. **20R0179**). A programme of archaeological monitoring of topsoil stripping within greenfield areas of the Sea Gardens Phase 1 lands was carried out under Excavation Licence No. **22E0552** in response to **Condition no. 28** attached to grant of planning permission (**ABP-311181-21**). **An area of approximately 3.4 hectares was archaeologically monitored and nothing of an archaeological nature was found. The monitored area included the western portion of the proposed Block A site.**

The current line of the county boundary which forms the southern boundary of the subject site is defined by a linear earthwork which has been designated as a recorded archaeological monument and is included in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for County Dublin and Wicklow (DU026-124---, WI004-005---). The original designation of this feature as a recorded archaeological monument was based on a theory that the earthwork represented the remains of the 'Pale' ditch which surrounded the Dublin region in later medieval times.

According to local information the linear earthwork is known as the 'Nuns Walk', recalling the use of the earthwork as a delineated pathway through the golf club to the sea shore from the adjoining Ravenswell Convent to the south. Recent archaeological investigations undertaken for the Sea Gardens Phase 1 development suggests that the feature was formed as a result of the landscaping associated with the northern expansion of the Bray Golf Club into the former grounds of Ravenswell House in the early 20th century. This expansion included the proposed Block A site which was developed as part of the golf course at this time.

Hand excavated trenches across the recorded linear earthwork (DU026-124 / WI004-005) were excavated under licence from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Excavation Licence 20E0482). These trenches confirmed the earthwork to be a late 19<sup>th</sup>- or early 20<sup>th</sup>-century landscape feature.

The archaeological monitoring of the removal of topsoil from a segment of the earthwork identified a *circa* 1m wide linear ditch with red brick fragments and mortar on its surface which also contained a quantity of 18<sup>th</sup> /19<sup>th</sup> century ceramics. The excavators concluded that the linear earthwork is **not archaeological in nature**.

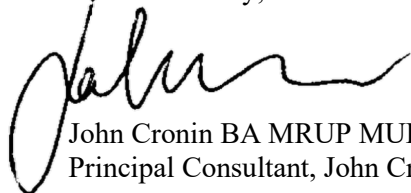
Condition No. 29 of planning permission (**ABP-311181-21**) required the linear earthwork to be incorporated in some regard into the design of the proposed development from the western to the eastern boundary. However following the submission of archaeological reporting to the National Monuments Service (NMS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ms Maeve O'Callaghan, Archaeologist with NMS stated the following (in an email) in relation to **Condition No. 29**:

*...the National Monuments Service concurs with the findings of the archaeological work completed on site to date which suggest that the recorded linear earthwork (WI005-005--- DU026-124) is unlikely to be archaeological in nature. The archaeological report states that "the linear earthwork within the development site boundary was formerly thought to represent a section of the Pale ditch, however recent archaeological investigations has shown that it is, in fact, a 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape feature." The National Monuments Service concurs with this conclusion and does not consider it necessary to erect interpretative signage relating to the Pale Ditch.*

The archaeological monitoring report for Excavation Licence No. 22E0552 concluded that the residual greenfield land within the Sea Gardens Phase 1 development site retain an archaeological potential and recommended that future topsoil stripping in such areas would be subject to a programme of licenced archaeological monitoring. This recommendation still applies to greenfield areas within the proposed Phase 1 Block A development site.

In summary, I can confirm that the revised development proposal currently under consideration does not affect or alter the findings and mitigation recommendations presented in previous archaeological assessments and reports issued in relation to the Sea Garden Phase 1 lands.

Yours faithfully,



John Cronin BA MRUP MUBC MIAI  
Principal Consultant, John Cronin & Associates