

JCA Architects



Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

Kildare Market Square, Co. Kildare

For Metropolitan Workshop

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1.0 Introduction

The following report has been prepared by Jack Coughlan Architects, RIAI Grade 1 Conservation Architects at the request of Metropolitan Workshop Architecture & Urbanism, to accompany a Part 8 planning application for the Kildare Market Square Regeneration project for Kildare County Council.

The following report includes a written and photographic record of Kildare Town's Market Square and former Market House, historical context, an assessment of its significance, followed by recommendations and mitigation measures to inform the proposed works.

This report has been carried out following site visit to Kildare Town in July 2023, and a desktop study utilising published sources including the Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2023-2029, the Archaeological Impact Assessment report accompanying this application, by Courtney Deery Heritage Consultancy Ltd, Kildare Town Walls Conservation, Interpretation & Management Plan by Howley Hayes Architects, and Kildare Town Architectural Conservation Area Statement of Character by Kildare County Council (with Sheridan Woods Architects). Primary sources utilised include historic maps, photographs in the collections of the National Photographic Archive at the National Library of Ireland and sources identified in the Dictionary of Irish Architects (Irish Architectural Archive).

1.1 Location & Heritage Protection Status

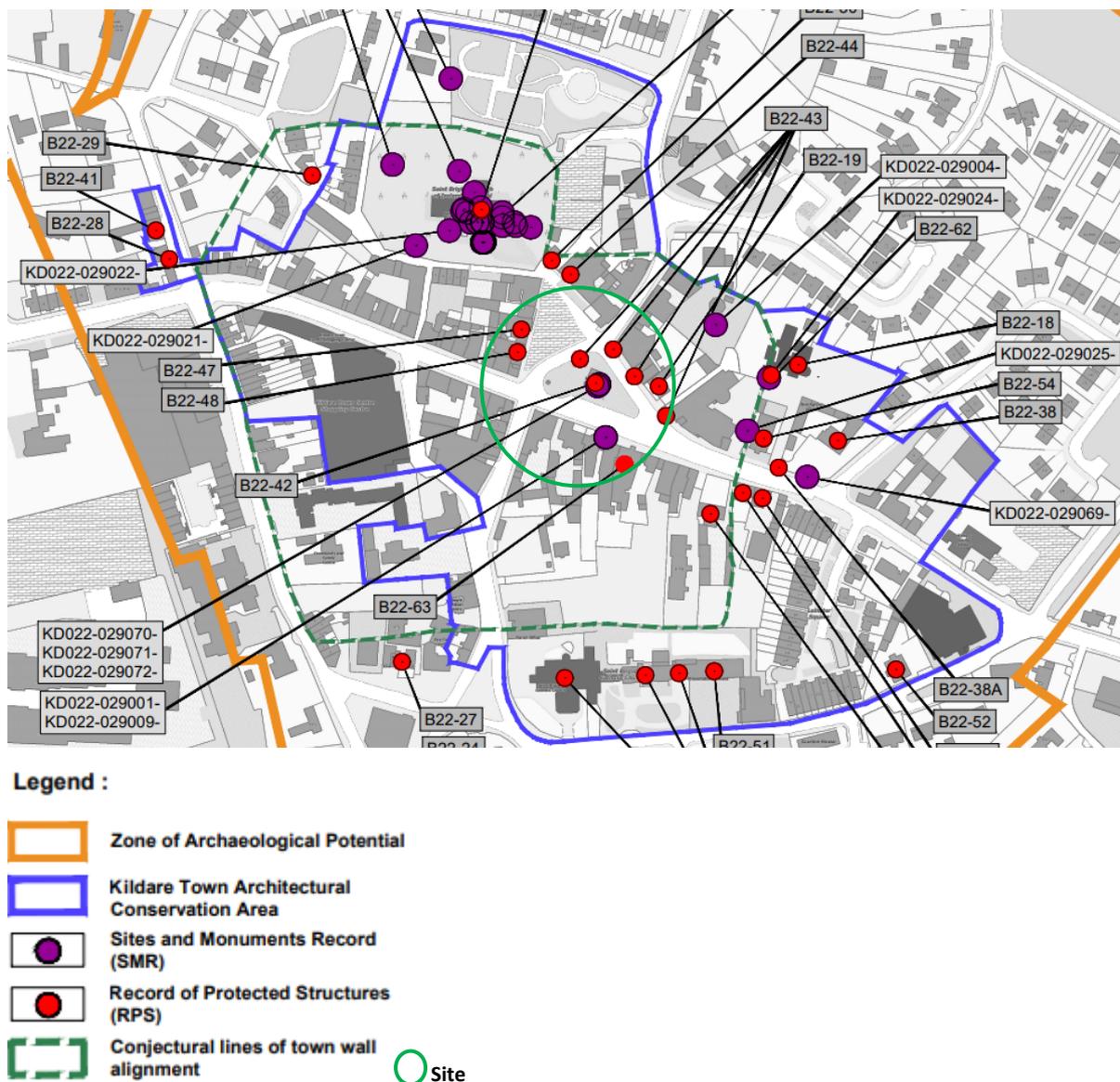


Figure 1: Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2023-2029: Built Heritage & Archaeology map

The application site is located within the Kildare Town Architectural Conservation Area, and the former Market House on the square included on Kildare County Council’s Record of Protected Structures (RPS. B22-42), as is a set of four cast-iron lamp standards on the square (B22-43).

The Market House is also included on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH Reg. 11817003), as is the set of lamp standards (NIAH Reg. No. 11817004). Also included on the NIAH is the 1798 Monument (NIAH Reg No. 11817002), and a High Cross Monument (NIAH Reg. 11817001).

A number of the structures surrounding the site are also included on the RPS, NIAH, and Record of Monuments and Places. Details of all of the relevant buildings on the RPS and NIAH are included in the inventory in the *Kildare Town Architectural Conservation Area Statement of Character*. Current photographs of buildings surrounding the square are included in the Photographic Record at the end of this report.

2.0 Historical Context

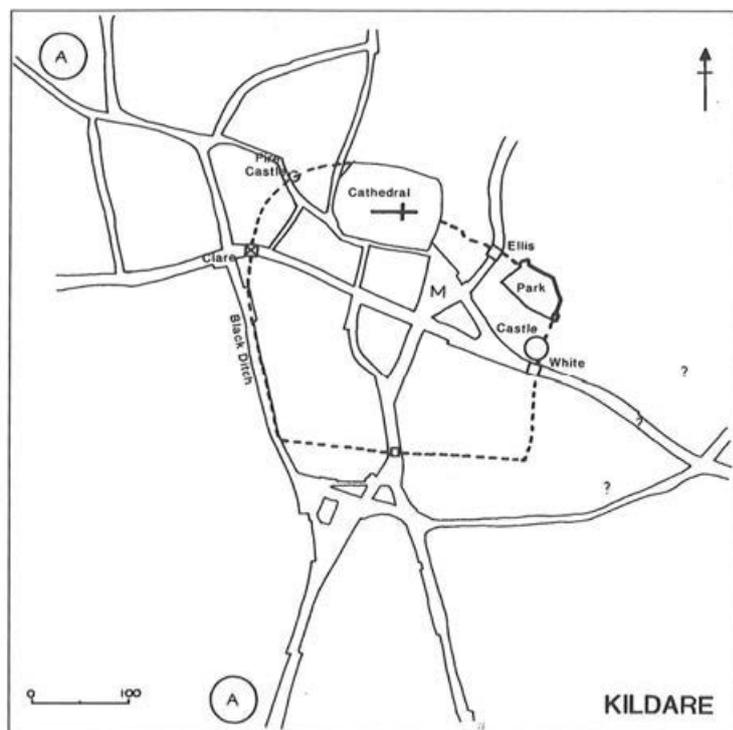


Figure 2 - Map highlighting outline of the town walls, Avril Thomas, 1992¹. M marks the location of the Market Square

The distinctive urban form of Kildare Market square was influenced by its location between Castle and Cathedral within the medieval walled town of Kildare. For detailed analysis of Kildare Town pre 16th century, refer to Town Walls² and Kildare Market Square AIA³ reports.

Kildare Town follows the pattern of early medieval settlements. The town is surrounded by two offset curvilinear enclosures, with the innermost containing sacred ecclesiastical structures: church, burial ground, and other ecclesiastical features including a round tower and high cross. The outermost enclosure serves secular functions (industry, commerce, and crafts) and contains features like a holy well, a triangular-shaped marketplace east of the monastery entrance and routeways that would radiate in. The enclosure lines etched themselves into the street plans, becoming routeways and edges. Figure 2 illustrates the town wall enclosures, including the triangular shape marked 'M', indicating the Market Square area.

References to Kildare Town as a market town date back to 1458 in the Statutes of Henry VI. Thomas FitzMaurice, Earl of Kildare, was given permission to adjust the day of the weekly market at Kildare Town to Thursday. This was to accommodate Naas' weekly market. Authorisation for this was made in the Charter of Kildare by Henry VIII in 1515. This grant also allowed for maintenance and improvement of roads and streets (pavage), repair and construction of the town walls (murage), and for a fair to take place in Kildare annually⁴. The Down Survey of Ireland (1656-8), Fig. 3, illustrates

¹ Thomas, A. 1992. The Walled Towns of Ireland. Volume 2. Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 49-51.

² Howley Hayes Architects (2014) Kildare Town Walls Conservation, Interpretation & Management Plan

³ Courtney Deery Heritage Consultancy Ltd (2023) Archaeological Impact Assessment Report, Kildare Market Square, Kildare Town, Co. Kildare.

⁴ Courtney Deery (9 - 10) Kildare Market Square AIA and Berry 1910, 507, in Bradley et al.,1986)

key buildings in Kildare Town including the Cathedral, Round Tower, Abbey, Castle, a house (possibly indicating settlement in the town), and a triangular shape (this could be a mound, motte and bailey, market square, or a blemish in the map). Street patterns, road, or any form of routeways are not included in this early rendition of Kildare Town.

Kildare's Market Square is triangular, a characteristic of 17th and 18th century town planning, but is believed to have developed within the early medieval settlement. Written evidence of a civic building on that site does not appear until the 17th century. An observation from Thomas Emerson's survey of the Earl of Kildare's estate in 1674⁵ includes details of a tholsel⁶, with its location presumably where the current Market House resides⁷. Although the location of this civic building is noted to be Chapel Street (now Bride Street) and a widening of the street, visible on Rocques' 1757 map, indicates that Emerson may not have been referring to the building where the Market House resides. References to Kildare Town's 'market place' are noted in the Registry of Deeds Office in 1726 and 1751.



Figure 3- Extract from Down Survey of Ireland 1656-8 - The Barony of Ophaly in the County of Kildare.

⁵ The maps which accompany the written records of Emerson's survey are lost from the written descriptions and therefore their location cannot be fully determined.

⁶ A tholsel was an important public building, generally combining the functions of civic hall, guildhall, gaol, and court - Courtney Deery (,10) Kildare Market Square AIA

⁷ Also see <https://www.kildare.ie/greyabbey/archives/2006/11/>



Figure 4- View of St. Brigid's Cathedral and Round Tower from Chapel Street, The Lawrence Collection (c. 19th century)

Rocques' (1757) Map of Kildare Town (Fig. 5) illustrates a more detailed layout of the Kildare Town. A distinctive streetscape is formed surrounding the Market Square, including a series of building fronting the square on three sides, with long narrow burgage plots. These are located south of Dublin Street. This layout closely resembles that which exists currently. The location of the house situated within the open triangular area adjacent to St Brigid's Cathedral is labelled as 'The Market House'. The design of this market house building differs from the present Market House, with Rocque's map showing it as a collection of three buildings joint together by a yard. Adjacent to the market house, Rocque marks the location of 'The Well', which was the main water source for the town⁸.



Figure 5: Rocques' (1757) Map of Kildare Town - detail

⁸ The well adjacent to the building is referred to as a pump providing the town with a water source and then labelling it as a fountain in the 1863 OS map. It was in use as a pump until the early 20th century but was eventually removed. In 1973 an ancient well was discovered on the Market Square but filled in for safety reasons. It was re-discovered in 2003 and, now restored, has become a permanent feature on the Market Square. <https://kildareheritage.com/history-market-house/>

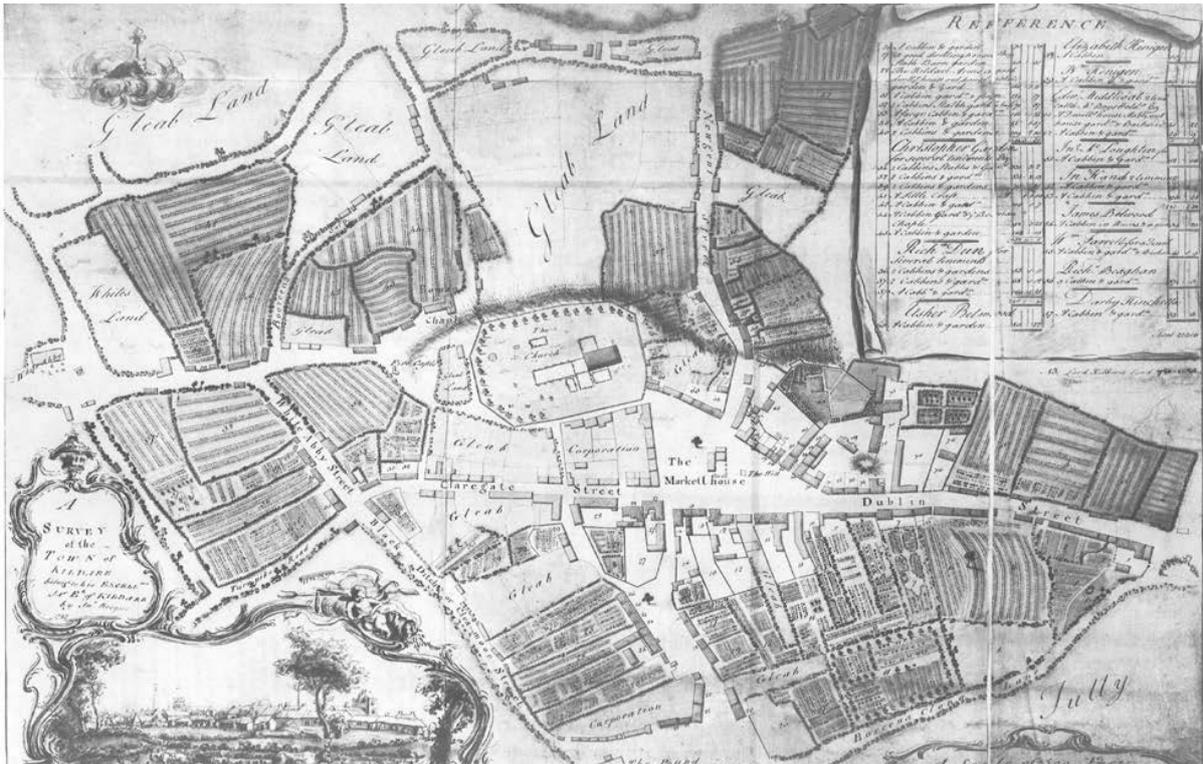


Figure 6 - Rocques' (1757) Map of Kildare Town

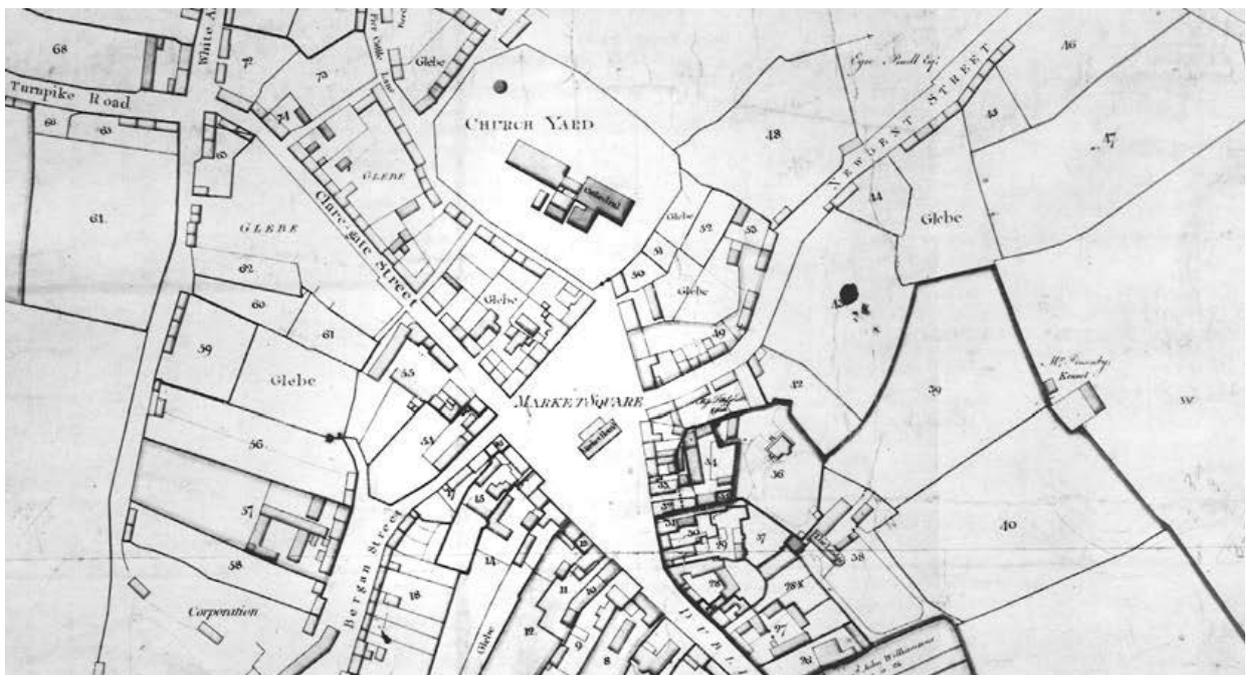


Figure 7 - Sherrard's (1798) Survey of Kildare Town

Thomas Sherrard's 1798 survey⁹ map is the first to show the Market House in a simple rectangular plan form, with the addition of a projection towards St Brigid's Cathedral (Figure 7).

⁹ A detailed reference table with information on land holdings, occupiers, structures accompany this map preceding the Griffith's Valuation Survey in 1851.

By 1817, this projection was not shown on the survey conducted by Sherrard, Brassington, and Greene (Figure 6).

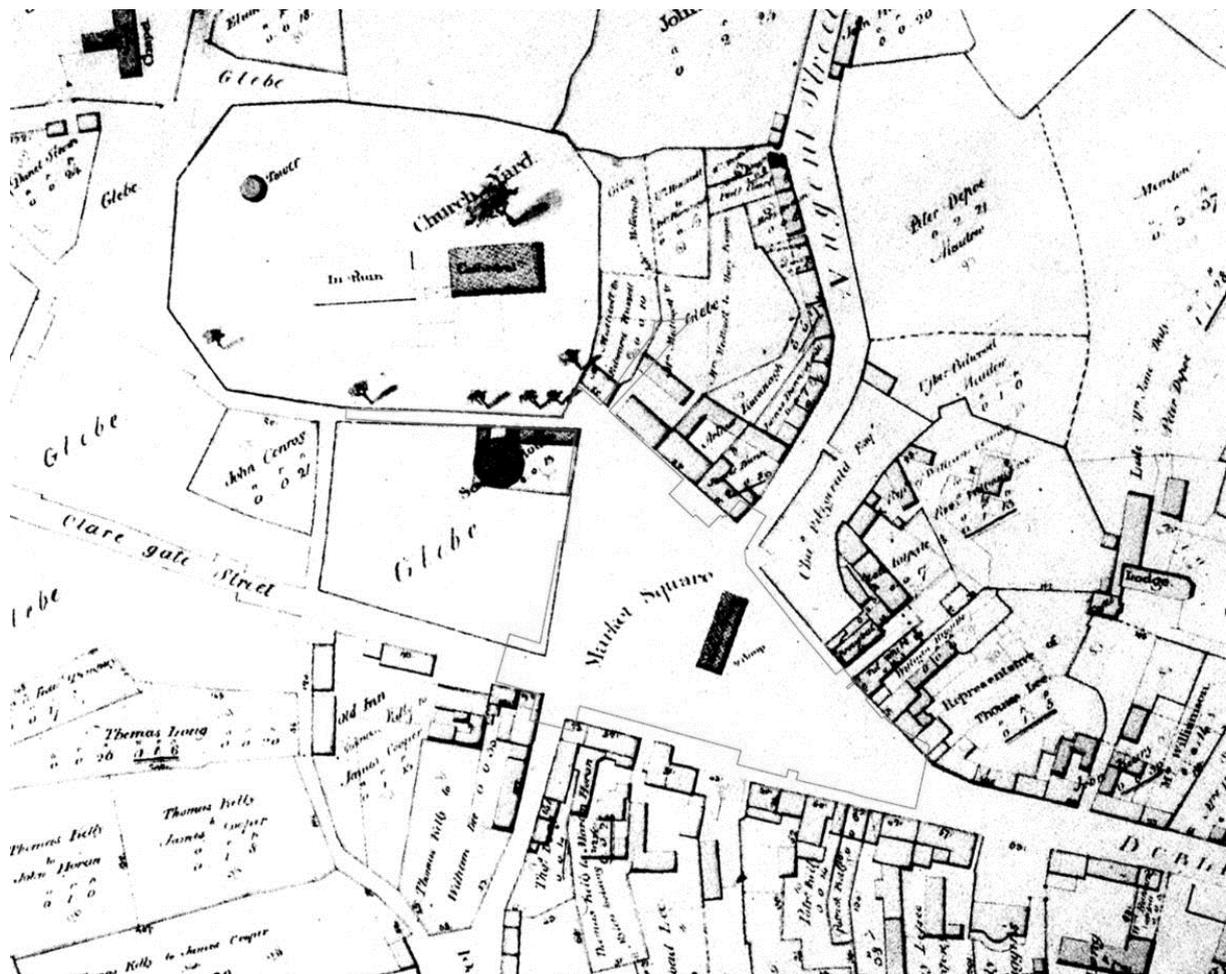


Figure 8 - Extract from Sherrard, Brassington, and Greene (1817) Survey of Kildare Town

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage dates the Market House to c. 1817, without a reference for this specific date, describing The Market House as a ‘detached three-bay single-storey’ building that form a ‘classically-composed symmetrical block of graceful proportions’.

The design of the Market House is certainly typical of early 19th-century Irish Market House typology. According to Livia Hurley, ‘Market houses were large, commercial buildings typically found at the centre of Irish towns and villages. Once the lifeblood of these communities, they formed part of the country’s economic warp, their position in the canon complemented by a rural structure of corn-exchanges, tholsels (where toll was paid on goods) and fair greens. Freestanding market houses were strategically placed on former medieval sites and in prominent positions on a central market space or a diamond (squares particular to northern counties). Often sited on axis with their civic and ecclesiastical counterparts, together they created a distinctive set-piece in the formally planned settlement. The Irish market house has its origins in the Renaissance tradition and was typically arranged in a classical motif, with an arcaded ground floor and a fully enclosed upper level; their forms sometimes defined by lantern clock towers, reflecting the civic awareness of eighteenth-century developers. The ground floor was for storing, weighing and selling goods, while upper floors often doubled as space for administration and for court sessions. This dual function was not uniquely Irish and had its predecessor in thirteenth-century Europe, where the hybrid of town hall and market house was widespread. The open arcades provided a semi-public, semi-private space that allowed

deals to be struck under arches and sales to spill out onto the streets. This arrangement was favoured by the Irish, who traditionally preferred to do business outdoors rather than within closed halls¹⁰.

A number of sources suggest that in the mid-nineteenth century an additional level was added to allow for meetings/governor's room above¹¹, although the present two-storey form is more typical of an Irish Market House of this date..

An extract from Samuel Lewis' *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* (1837) describes Kildare Town in the 1840s.

The town, though consisting only of 346 houses, and carrying on but little trade, has an appearance of importance, from its commanding situation on boldly rising ground, and from the numerous remains of its ancient religious edifices. It is badly supplied with water, raised from a very deep well near the market-house, by a forcing pump, into a public cistern. The principal streets are portions of the public roads, and are kept in repair by the county – No manufacturers are carried on here, nor any trade except what arises from its public situation and for the supply of the neighbourhood. The market is on Thursday, and fairs are held on Feb. 12th, April 5th and 26th, May 12th, June 29th, and Sept. 19th. The market-house is a neat building.

The 1st edition 1836 OS Map (Fig. 9) illustrates the 'neat building' with its simple rectangular form. The adjacent well structure is referred to as a fountain, but its use as the main water source for the town remained.



Figure 9 - Extract from Ordnance Survey first edition six-inch map (1836) of Kildare Town

¹⁰ Hurley, Livia, 'The Demise of the Irish Market House', *Free Market* (Venice Biennale)
http://www.freemarket.ie/01_news_3.php

¹¹ <https://www.kildare.ie/heritage/details.asp?GCID=143> and Courtney Deery (,11) Kildare Market Square AIA

In Griffith's Valuation Survey, Market House (listed as number 2 building on Main Street) is described as such, a market house with its immediate lessor being Duke of Leinster with an annual valuation of rateable property equating to £6. The Kildare survey was conducted in 1851¹².

TOWN OF KILDARE		MAIN-STREET.					
-	1	Pump-house, . . .	Duke of Leinster, .	Pump-house, . . .	—	—	1 10 0
-	2	Market-house, . .	Same, . . .	Market-house, . .	—	—	6 0 0
-	3 a	David Brereton, .	Same, . . .	Ho. (pt. of), off, & yd.	—	—	7 10 0
-	-b	David Brereton, .	Ecclesiastical Comrs.,	Ho. (pt. of), off, & yd.	—	—	4 10 0
-	-c	David Brereton, .	Richard & Wm. Woods,	Office and garden, .	0 0 10	0 10 0	1 5 0
-	4 a	Charles Bergin, .	Ecclesiastical Comrs.,	Ho. (pt. of), off, & yd.	—	—	6 0 0
-	-b	Charles Bergin, .	Richard & Wm. Woods,	House (part of) & yard,	—	—	6 10 0
-	5			Ruin	—	—	6 10 0

Figure 10 - Extract from Griffith's Valuation Survey (c.1851)

An analysis of the town provided in the 1872 OS five-foot: 1 mile scale Town Plan, details the floor plans of the significant buildings in Kildare Town, including the Market House.

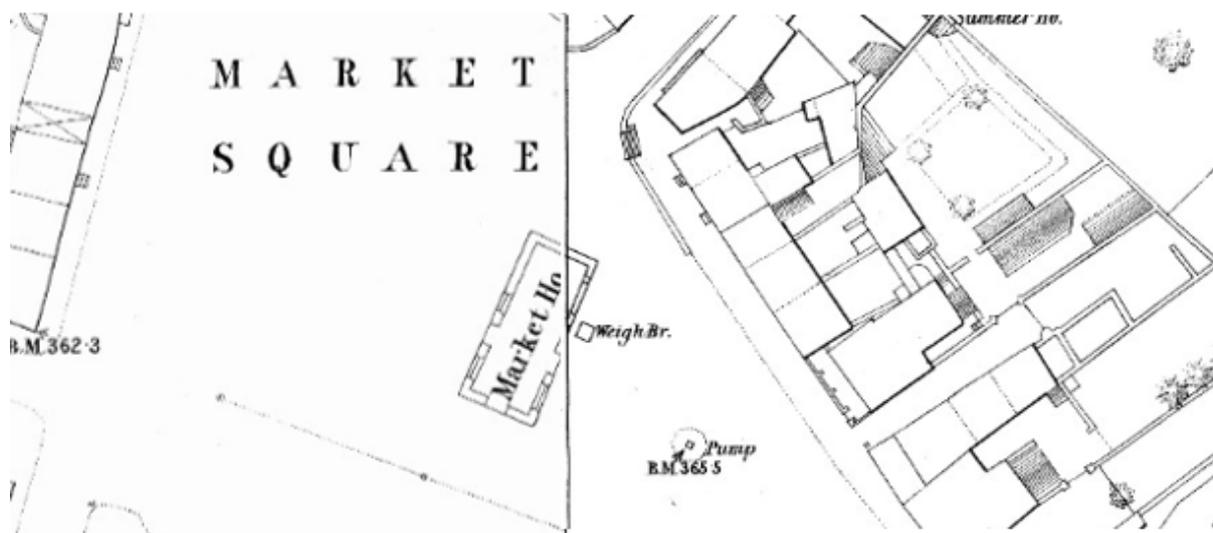


Figure 11: OS Town Plan map 1872 (sheets 5 & 6)

A weigh bridge is now located on the southeast of the Market House with the fountain replaced by a pump. Difficulties with Kildare Town's water supply called for the installation of a mechanical pump in the Square to provide water supply for rapidly growing population in Kildare Town in the nineteenth century. This solution was followed by installation of three more pumps in scattered around the town 'but the water supply remained dangerously insecure'¹³ and susceptible to cholera outbreaks. A new solution came in the form of hydraulic energy: damming the stream at Tully and pumping this water into a tank fitted in the roof of Market House. A cast-iron water gauge dated 1885 is displayed on the outside of the Market House building¹⁴ to mark this history.

The buildings surrounding the Market Place during the later 19th century are typical of many Irish

¹² Building 1, the pump-house, is likely to be adjacent to the Market House or part of it due to the well-turned-fountain's main function being a water supply to the town. However, with no accompanying map, we cannot verify this statement.

¹³ Andrews, J. H. (1986) Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA), no. 1, Kildare, also see [Irish Historic Towns Atlas Online: Kildare | Royal Irish Academy \(ria.ie\)](http://www.ria.ie)

¹⁴ <https://www.kildare.ie/heritage/details.asp?GCID=143>

town centres. An extract from Irish Historic Town Atlas no. 1 Kildare¹⁵ describes the streetscape

‘the two-storeyed house facades around the Market Square in c. 1900 were flat plaster-rendered rectangles with slate roofs ridged parallel to the street. Some houses had already been modified by purpose-built shop fronts. In others the main door was still surmounted by its traditional semi-circular fanlight and flanked by oblong sash windows. The most common decorative features were the simple but heavy-looking plaster cornices and upper-storey window cases of the more ambitious shops and licensed premises. Housefronts in this austere mode were still being built in the 1870s and many examples have survived, some showing little change, others wholly or partly refaced without disturbing their original proportions. Even at the end of the century Nolan’s shop, on the north side of the Market Square, remained to all appearances the only architect-designed commercial building in Kildare. (The ornate Hibernian Bank did not materialise until 1903). The contrast between urban core and integuments thus depended on the height and size of buildings, and the number of their out-offices, rather than on any basic difference of style. With its girdle of trees and its still-intact Georgian market house, the Square provided a revealing showcase for a fin-de-siècle townscape and an effective contrast with the nearby protestant churchyard, where after centuries of ruination cathedral and round tower stood ready to greet the tourist with all the tranquillising power of a well-kept museum. Other institutional buildings included two large catholic churches, an unofficial ‘town hall’, and the convent—but not the castle, which in its modern role of off-street private dwelling was generally ignored (or at any rate unphotographed) by visiting sightseers’.



Figure 12 - Extract from Sheets 5 & 6 of OS Town Plan (1872) of Kildare Town.

¹⁵ Andrews, J. H. (1986) Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA), no. 1, Kildare, also see [Irish Historic Towns Atlas Online: Kildare | Royal Irish Academy \(ria.ie\)](#)



Figure 13 - View of entrance to St. Brigid's Cathedral grounds, Eason Photographic Collection (1900-39) NLI



Figure 14 - View of Market Square, Eason Photographic Collection (1900-20) NLI

The beginnings of the marking out of the Market Square are indicated by what appear to be bollards on the Dublin Street side. In the 1908 OS Map, the Market Square is defined by a dotted line as a single public space. The division of the square into two parts is marked in the 1942 OS Map to facilitate a routeway from Bride Street to Nugent Street.



Figure 15 - Extract from Ordnance Survey 25-inch map (1908) of Kildare Town

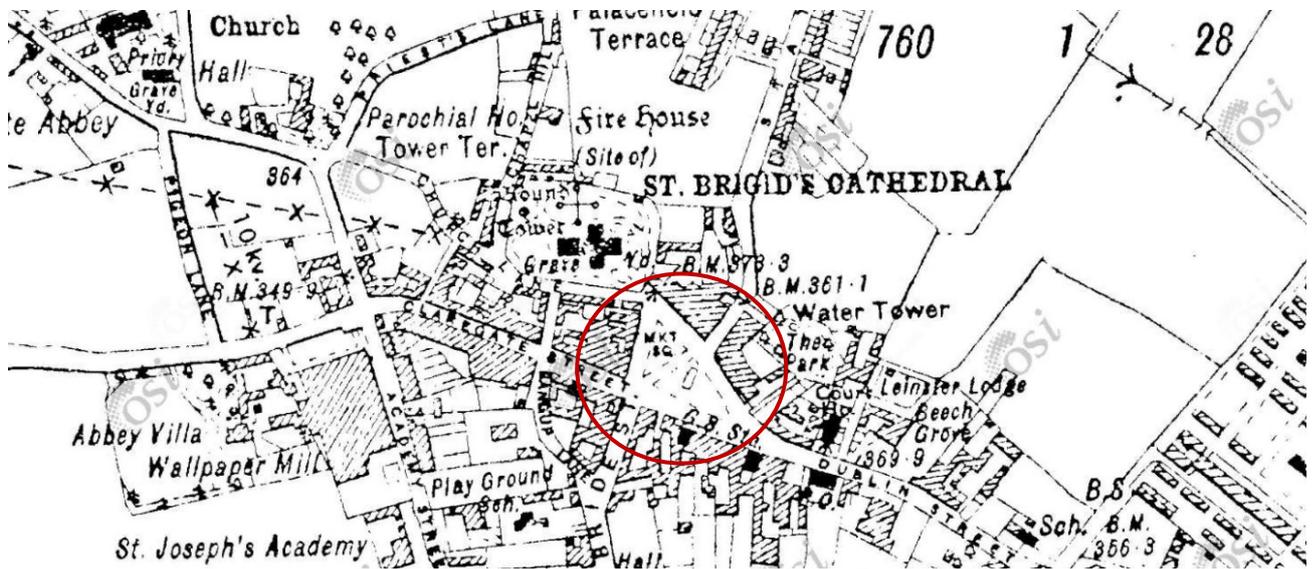


Figure 16 - Extract from OS revised edition six-inch map (1942) of Kildare Town with Market Square highlighted



Figure 17 – View of Market House, Valentine photographic collection (1900-1930) NLI

The square continued to be used for Market functions during the twentieth century. The cast-iron lamp standards on the square were added in the 1950's (NIAH). By the late twentieth century, the Market House appears not to have been in use and was in a poor state of repair. Kildare County Council bought the Market House in the 1970s for £300. It was redeveloped to include toilets, a bus shelter and small museum and in 1973 it won An Taisce Award. The cast-iron water gauge (dated 1885) was retained on the outside of the building, in addition to a plaque celebrating the completion of the Kildare Waterworks in 1886.

A campaign to provide Heritage Status for the Town of Kildare was established in 1992 and the designation of Heritage Town enabled European and Local Authority funding towards the redevelopment of the Market House. The project was begun in 1999 and took 2 years to complete, with the newly refurbished Market House reopening in 2001 as a Heritage Centre. Changes introduced to the Market House include the glazing of the open arcade at the ground floor and the introduction of a cementitious external render to the ground floor. The semi-circular openings at first floor level appear to have previously been filled in and the ground floor arcades partially filled in late 19th and early 20th century photographic views of the building. Also evident in earlier photographs is the early door opening to the west, now filled in and reduced in size.

These early photographs also illustrate the simple boundary treatment of the square, utilising what appears to be modest limestone kerb stones and trees with metal protective railings to their trunks to define the boundary between the square and the street surfaces surrounding it.



Figure 18 - View of St Brigid's Cathedral from Market Square, The Lawrence Photograph Collection (1865-1914) NLI



Figure 19 - View of Market Square and House, Eason Photographic Collection (1900-20) NLI



Figure 20 - View of Market Square and House, Eason Photographic Collection (1900-20) NLI



Figure 21 - Early 20th century postcard view of Market Square (kildarehistory.ie)



Figure 22 - View of Kildare Town from Round Tower, Valentine photographic collection (1900-1930) NLI

3.0 Current Description and Record of Existing Structures

This chapter draws on a number of published sources to provide a current description of Kildare Market Square. Building inventory descriptions for the buildings within the site are included below, but building descriptions for the buildings surrounding the site from the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage are included in full in Courtney Deery's *Archaeological Impact Assessment Report*, which accompanies this application, so are not repeated here.

Extracts from Kildare County Council's Kildare Town ACA Statement of Character are included, as they provide a clear description of the architectural character of the site and surrounding area.

A current (July 2023) photographic record by JCA Architects is included at the end of this report to provide an updated visual record of the site, including current views, existing Protected Structures and buildings included on the NIAH

3.1 Kildare Town ACA Statement of Character

An extract from the Kildare County Council's Kildare Town Architectural Conservation Area Statement of Character¹⁶ published in 2023 describes the architectural character of the Market Square and Market House.

Market Square

Extract from 6.1 Street Pattern

Central to the town is the Market Square and Cathedral enclosure. The Market Square is of an irregular triangular form. It is traversed along its southern edge by the principal east west route through the town. This road marks the Main Street of the town, and extends to the east as Dublin Street, and to the West as Claregate Street. The secondary roads entering the square are Nugent street to the north, which provides access from the Station Road and Kildare Railway Station, and Bride Street to the south. The Market Square is bisected to the east and west by a north south route that aligns with the entrances of Nugent Street and Bride Street to the Market Square. Bangup lane connects Bride Street to Claregate Street, and a series of laneways occur along the southern boundary of the Cathedral enclosure and north south lanes connecting the edges of the Cathedral enclosure to Claregate Street and to Chapel Hill. Cleamore Road and Convent Road form the western and southern boundaries of the ACA respectively.

The Market Square is a well-defined space to the Cathedral enclosure, the heart of early Christian Kildare. The Cathedral complex sits to the northwest of the Market Square, the entrance pinched to a narrow entrance point. This reflects the early relationship of commercial activity to the ecclesiastical centre. This is an important relationship and its existing form and arrangement distinctive. The Market Square is defined by terraces of two and three storey buildings with incidental standalone landmark buildings. It presents an understated backdrop to the dramatic Cathedral enclosure. The landmark buildings, such as

¹⁶ Kildare County Council (2023) Appendix C Kildare Town Architectural Conservation Area Statement Of Character p. 18

the Bank of Ireland and Nolan's are later additions to the fabric, and their brick finish and distinctive forms distinguish them in the context of adjoining simple render finishes.

Dublin Street is characterised by stand-alone 'Lodges' in large gardens, Leinster Lodge, Beechgrove and Lislee, and the presence of civic buildings, including the former Courthouse set back from the Street. This gives the street an open and formal character. The street opens gradually to the Market Square. This is in contrast to the well-defined entrance to Claregate Street from the Market Square. The character of Claregate Street is distinctive presenting a well-defined and strong building line with a compact and fine plot grain. There is a subtle change in the character of the terraces along the street, stepping down from three to two storey. The building height and detail and design of the buildings simplify from east to west. The topography of Claregate Street, sloping away from the Market Square goes hand in hand with the change in scale of buildings. The slope is demarcated in the building forms in the stepping of roofs and chimneys along the length of the street. The southwestern end of Claregate Street was redeveloped in recent years with modern apartments and a town centre development.

Nugent Street is narrow and curving which reflects the medieval influence in its evolution. The topography rises when approaching the Square, which creates a strong sense of anticipation. The buildings are two storeys in height, and terraced. These include a number of nineteenth century buildings, but a predominance of twentieth century buildings to the east at the entrance to the Square, along the street, and along the western side of the street. The views to the Square are punctuated by the gable of the Market building, and 'Boland's' public house in the distance.

The narrow lanes surrounding the Cathedral enclosure to the south and west and the interconnecting lanes to Claregate street to the south are of particular significance. The scale and building height along these lanes, the rubble boundary walls to the side gardens, and their close proximity to the Cathedral boundary wall, together with the narrowness of the entrances to the lanes creates a strong medieval character. The building heights are single and two storey. The closeness in the relationship of the entrance from the lane to Market Square is a key characteristic that retains the medieval character of this area in Kildare.

Extract from 6.2 Form and Arrangement of Urban Spaces

The Market Square was originally used as a public space and until recently this area was dominated by car parking. As part of Kildare County Council's Covid-19 response a hard surfaced open space was reinstated in this location and some planting and street furniture were added to encourage outdoor gathering and dining. This space surrounded by restaurants, cafes and public houses is widely frequented and used as a small market place on Fridays for a limited number of stalls. The Square is well defined and provides a strong sense of place.

Extract from 7.1 Market Square Architectural Character

The Market Square is located in a prominent position adjoining the Cathedral, it is triangular in form, and it is the traditional commercial centre of Kildare. The Market Square is defined to the west, north and south by continuous rows of buildings. The space is subdivided by the Market building, which defines two spaces within the Square. The buildings forming the edge of the Square are configured in narrow plot widths, creating a fine urban grain. Building heights comprise of two to three storeys. Higher buildings of three-storey are located to the

south of the space, and two storey buildings to the northwest and northeast of the space. The building typologies are in principle traditional retail and commercial buildings with over the shop accommodation, town houses, and the market building. Buildings generally date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and their overall design and arrangement around the space reflect a period when attempts were made to formalize the appearance of the space. The addition of prominent buildings, including the Hibernian Bank would have contributed to this attempt in the early twentieth century to enhance the overall aesthetic of the space. Although personalisation has occurred to most buildings there is in general formal and simple Georgian architectural character and proportions that still prevail. Traditional craftsmanship in the use of decorative plasterwork is displayed in a number of the buildings in the space, and the use of brick introduced in the early 20th century reflect the use of a new building materials.

Market House

Extract from 7.1 Market Square Architectural Character

The Market Building is a major landmark, with its central position in the Square. It is a single storey three bay former market house built in 1817 with a symmetrical plan originally with a round headed open arcade, with a gable ended roof with slate. A distinctive louvered cupola centrally positioned on the roof, square in plan with an elongated pyramidal roof and iron weathervane to the apex. The walls are finished with cut stone coping to the gables, and cut stone surrounds with block and start detailing to the ground floor arches, with a rendered string course, brick English Garden Wall bond to the walls to the first floor side elevations to the north and south, and lunette openings to the first floor, with cast iron rainwater goods. The building has undergone refurbishment and is now finished in a replacement cement render to the ground floor. Original windows have been replaced with fixed glazed timber windows and doors. The building was described by Lewis as a 'Neat Building'. It is now used as a tourist information point. The structure divides the Square and terminates the views into the square when approached from Nugent Street.

Street Surface Treatment / Street Furniture

Extract from 7.1 Market Square Street Surface Treatment / Street Furniture

As part of Kildare County Council's Covid-19 response a tarmac open space was implemented in the western section of the Square with planting and street furniture to encourage outdoor gathering and dining. There are steel bollards to the south of the Market House, and various memorials, plaques, statues and tourist information surrounding it including an ancient well, a memorial cross to local men killed during the War of Independence, a bronze bust of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, a stone statue of St. Brigid commemorating those having died at Gibbet Rath and a statue of Bill 'Squires' Gannon, captain of the 1928 Kildare football team and first to raise the Sam Maguire Cup. A bus shelter is located to the south of the Square, Toilet kiosk to the east of the market house and various litter bins throughout.

3.2 Kildare County Council's Record of Protected Structures

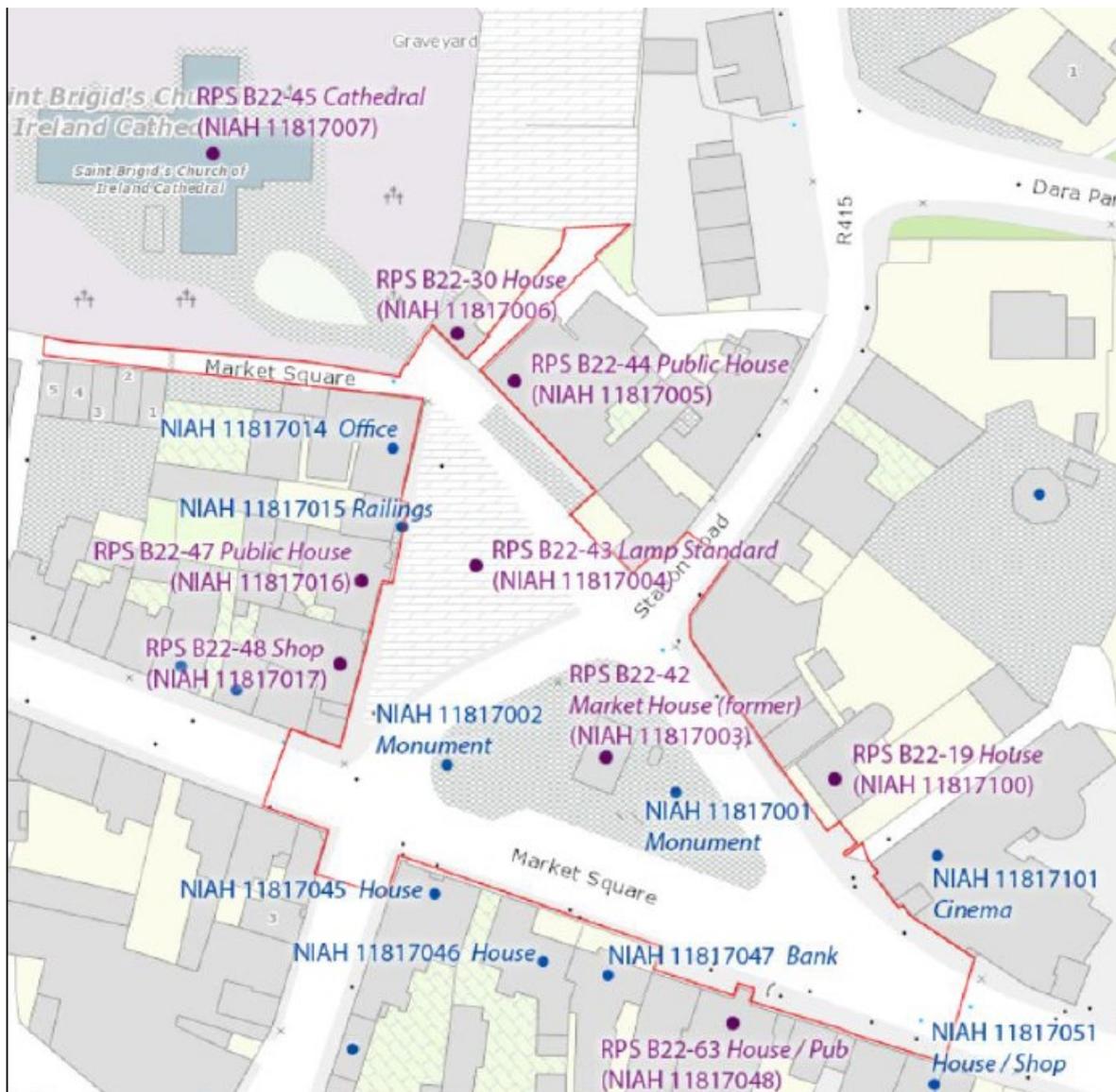


Figure 23: Map indicating locations of RPS and NIAH structures (Courtney Deery)

Kildare County Council has included 2 features within the site boundary on their Record of Protected Structures: the market house (**B22-42**) and lamp standard (**B22-43**).

They have also included a number of structures facing into the square including:

- B22-19 – Virginia Lodge** (NIAH Reg. No. 11817100)
- B22-30 - Verger's House** (NIAH Reg. No. 11817006)
- B22-44 - Nolan's/Seeta Public House** (NIAH Reg. No. 11817005)
- B22-45 - St. Brigid's Cathedral** (NIAH Reg. No. 11817007)
- B22-47 - The Vatican, Public House** (NIAH Reg. No. 11817016)
- B22-48 - Southwells [shop]** (NIAH Reg. No. 11817017)

3.3 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

On the Market Square, there are 4 significant features listed by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage including two monuments, lampstands, and the market house.

Market Square (NIAH Reg. No. 11817001)

Freestanding cut-limestone Celtic High Cross-style monument, erected 1935, on inscribed pedestal on inscribed stepped base. Set on wedge-shaped site with shamrock-detailed wrought iron railings to perimeter.

A monument 'erected by Local Committee' commemorating seven men executed (1922) at the Curragh Camp during the Civil War (1922-3): Patrick Bagnall of Fairgreen, Kildare; Stephen White of Abbey Street, Kildare; Jackie Johnston of Station Road, Kildare; Patrick Nolan of Rathbride; Patrick Mangan of Fairgreen, Kildare; Brian Moore of Rathbride; and James Connor of Bansha, County Tipperary.

1798 Monument (NIAH Reg No. 11817002)

Freestanding monument, unveiled 1973; installed 1976, on inscribed cut-limestone pedestal on stepped base. Street fronted on a corner site.

A monument erected 'in memory of over 350 men from Kildare and district who gave their lives at Gibbet Rath 28 May 1798' representing an integral component of the later twentieth-century built heritage of Kildare.

Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003)

Detached three-bay single-storey former market house with half-attic, built 1817, on a symmetrical plan originally with round-headed open arcade to ground floor. Extensively renovated, c.2000, to accommodate use as offices. Gable-ended roof with slate. Clay ridge tiles. Louvered timber cupola, c.2000, to ridge on a square plan with elongated pyramidal roof having iron weathervane to apex. Cut-stone coping to gables. Cast-iron rainwater goods. Replacement cement render, c.2000, to ground floor. Unpainted. Round-headed recessed panel to side elevation to south (possibly originally window opening). Rendered stringcourse to first floor. Squared rubble stone walls to first floor. Yellow brick English Garden Wall bond walls to first floor side elevations to north and to south. Cut-stone date stone/plaque to side elevation to south. Round-headed openings to ground floor originally open arcade. Cut-stone surrounds with block-and-start detailing to arches. Replacement fixed-pane timber windows, c.2000, with glazed timber double doors, c.2000, to opening to centre. Lunette openings to first floor. Yellow brick dressings. Blocked-up, c.2000, and rendered. Round-headed openings to gables to side elevations. Stone sills. Replacement louvered timber panelled fittings, c.2000. Sited on an island site. Concrete flagged and concrete brick cobbled square to site.

Kildare Market House (former) is a fine, substantial building that conforms to traditional market house planning, comprising a Classically-composed symmetrical block of graceful proportions and originally with an open arcade to ground floor having a meeting/governor's room over. The market house is of considerable social and historical interest, representing the early commercialisation of Kildare town, and would originally have played an important role in the economic survival of the rural outskirts – the market house historically acted as a

centre where rural produce would be sold. Unsympathetically renovated in the late twentieth century the building has lost most of its original fabric and some of its original form. Future renovation works might aim to restore traditional materials, thereby providing a more accurate representation of the original appearance of the building. The market house is an attractive feature in the historic core of Kildare town, forming the central focal point of the market square.

Market Square (NIAH Reg. No. 11817004)

Group of four freestanding cast-iron lamp standards, c.1950, comprising fluted shafts on pedestals having moulded necking surmounted by lamp having decorative iron capping.

This group of cast-iron lamp standards is an example of subtle items of street furniture that are often overlooked, but which are becoming increasingly rare on the streetscape of urban centres. The lamp standards are of some artistic interest, having been designed as aesthetic as well as functional pieces.

A number of key buildings fronting the square are listed by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage:

Nolan's/Seeta Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817005)

Verger's House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817006)

St. Brigid's Cathedral (NIAH Reg. No. 11817007)

Fitzpatrick (NIAH Reg. No. 11817014)

Gates/Railings/Walls (NIAH Reg. No. 11817015)

The Vatican, Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817016)

Southwells [shop] (NIAH Reg. No. 11817017)

House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817045)

House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817046)

Bank of Ireland (NIAH Reg. No. 11817047)

Barrett/Grace's Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817048)

Virgina Lodge (NIAH Reg. No. 11817100)

3.4 Appendix C (Building Inventory) of 2012 *Kildare Town ACA Statement of Character*

Appendix C (Building Inventory) of the 2012 *Kildare Town Architectural Conservation Area Statement of Character* is used in this document as this is presently the most up-to-date list. This report includes property descriptions, location, contribution to the character of the ACA and elements of the properties within the Kildare Town ACA.

Market Square

An analysis of individual buildings along the Market Square can be viewed in the Appendix C (Building Inventory) of 2012 *Kildare Town Architectural Conservation Area Statement of Character*. References below are to buildings included in Parcel 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

- Parcel 1:** P1_01, P1_02, P1_03, P1_04, P1_05, P1_06, P1_08, P1_09_10, P1_11, P1_12, P1_13_14
- Parcel 2:** P2_05, P2_06, P2_06A, P2_07
- Parcel 7:** P7_01, P7_02, P7_14, P7_15, P7_16, P7_17, P7_18
- Parcel 8:** P8_01, P8_02
- Parcel 9:** P9_01, P9_02, P9_03, P9_04
- Parcel 10:** P10_02, P10_03-05, P10_06, P10_07, P10_08, P10_09, P10_10, P10_11, P10_12

4.0 Assessment Methodology

The site was visited on 9 July 2023, and the existing structures on the site were examined.

Once information resulting from the historical analysis and physical inspection of the structures and site was compiled, the character of the historic structures and potential risks to their character were determined.

This impact assessment entails four stages:

1. A desk-top review of relevant documents relating to the site's history.
2. A field survey of the structures now surviving within the proposed development area.
3. An evaluation of the architectural heritage significance of these structures.
4. An assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the special heritage significance of the site.

Desktop Study

The historical aspects of the site's development were ascertained using historic Ordnance Survey maps, historic photographs and published sources on Kildare.

Field Survey

A full survey of the site was carried out by JCA in July 2023. This entailed the examination, description and photographing of all relevant structures within the development site for three reasons: (1) to verify what was already known about its built heritage, (2) to update this information to take account of any physical alterations to the site's structures, and (3) to fill in any gaps in our knowledge of the site, such as previously unrecorded features.

4.1 Assessment of Impact Methodology

An evaluation was made of the likely impacts of the proposed development upon the heritage characteristics of the historic structures within the site. Changes to the buildings' physical attributes could potentially arise from:

- Indirect disturbance to upstanding buildings, e.g. vibrations from construction traffic, stockpiling of earth, and overshadowing by new buildings.
- Direct physical interventions to upstanding buildings, e.g. piecemeal demolitions, new extensions, and the replacement of existing fabric, fixtures and fittings

The magnitude of these impacts can range from 'major' in the case of drastic alterations or demolitions, to 'negligible' or 'none' where little or no change will ensue as a result of the impact.

Such impacts can either be 'beneficial' or 'adverse' depending on whether the heritage character of the feature being impacted upon is enhanced or degraded as a result. A 'neutral' impact will be neither beneficial nor adverse.

- Major: *Beneficial* - Large scale or major improvement of resource quality; extensive restoration or enhancement; major improvement of attribute quality. *Adverse* - Loss of resource and/or quality and integrity of resource; severe damage to key attributes.
- Moderate: *Beneficial* - Benefit to, or addition of, key attributes; improvement of attribute quality. *Adverse* - Loss of resource, but not adversely affecting integrity; partial loss of/damage to key attributes.
- Minor: *Beneficial* - Minor benefit to, or addition of, one or several key attributes; some beneficial impact on attribute or a reduced risk of negative impact occurring. *Adverse* - Some measurable change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor loss of, or alteration to, one or several key attributes.
- Negligible: *Beneficial* - Very minor benefit to or positive addition of one or more attributes. *Adverse* - Very minor loss or detrimental alteration to one or more attributes.
- None: No loss or alteration of attributes; no observable impact, ie neither beneficial nor adverse.

The *significance* of an impact will depend on its magnitude and the heritage value of the feature being impacted upon. It can range from 'neutral', through 'moderate' to 'very large'. Thus, a major negative impact on a feature of very high heritage value will have a significantly large adverse effect, whereas the same impact on a feature of negligible value will be relatively insignificant. For the purposes of this analysis, the levels of impact significance are defined as follows:

- Very large: Only very adverse effects are normally assigned this level of significance. They are generally, but not exclusively, associated with sites of international, national or regional importance that are likely to suffer a most damaging impact and loss of integrity. However, a major change in a site or feature of local importance is not precluded from this category.
- Large: These beneficial or adverse effects are considered to be very important considerations and are likely to be material in the planning process.
- Moderate: These beneficial or adverse effects may be important, but are not likely to be key factors in the planning process. Their cumulative effects may, however, be relevant if they lead to an increase in the overall adverse effect on a particular feature.
- Slight: These beneficial or adverse effects may be raised as local factors but are unlikely to be a critical issue in the planning process.
- Neutral: No effects or those that are beneath levels of perception, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.

The various permutations of 'magnitude of impact' and 'heritage value' will result in the following impact significances:

Heritage Value	Magnitude of Impact				
	None	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major
Very High	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large	Very Large
High	Neutral	Slight	Slight/Moderate	Moderate/Large	Large/Very Large
Medium	Neutral	Neutral/ Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/Large
Low	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Slight	Slight/Moderate
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral/ Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Slight

The duration of the impact is also of relevance. Short-term impacts upon a site's built heritage may arise during the construction phase of a development. There is likely to be long-term residual impacts as well once the development is completed and the site operational.

5.0 Statement of Significance

Kildare Market Square is an important public space of Regional historical, social and architectural significance. It is especially notable that it has retained its original form, which appears to date to at least the early 18th century, as a public open space with a Market House as its focal point, without additional structures or features, other than a well.

A series of historic maps illustrate how the character of this public open space has remained consistent. The distinctive and unusual triangular form of the Market 'square', with the intact line of the inner monastic enclosure forming its north-east corner, is of great importance.

In addition to the Market House itself, a further 17 buildings lining Market Square, as well as lamp standards and monuments on the square, are included on either the RPS or NIAH, and the square is included in the Kildare ACA in the *Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023*.

Section 12.7.1 of the Kildare County Development Plan refers to the sensitivity required in the design of public space in Architectural Conservation Areas: *ACAs provide an opportunity to build upon an existing character by establishing a high standard of urban design. A distinctive sense of place can be created through street lighting, street furniture, paving, signage, and by encouraging best conservation practice in the repair and maintenance of historic buildings, and also by insisting on high design standards for new developments.*

It is very important that all proposed interventions into the existing public square are carefully considered as part of a fully co-ordinated approach to the design of the public realm. New paving and lighting have the potential to highlight the important existing historic buildings, and care must be taken to avoid introducing additional features, including signage, artworks or other features, whether permanent or temporary, that might detract from or impact the existing character of this historically intact public space. New elements should be of a high quality, recognisably contemporary design that is sensitive to the existing historic character of the place without introducing out of context historic or replica elements that have the potential to confuse the legibility of the existing site's historic evolution.



Figure 24: View from East across square towards Round Tower and Cathedral

6.0 Impact of the Proposed Works on Architectural Heritage

Proposed Works:

A provision of new small resting areas seeks to maintain outdoor activities established with the recent temporary interventions on the square. Successive terraced areas will encourage intimate gatherings whilst also allowing an open appropriation of the public space.

These terraces set within the larger square seek to preserve and emphasize the domestic character that is and has been an intrinsic part of the history of the place.



Figure 25: Proposals for Market Square (Metropolitan Workshop)

Proposed Works: Introduction of new paving to include larger strip pavers and smaller infill pavers

Physical Impacts: The existing paving is not of historic significance. Historic photographs and maps provide evidence of unpaved surfaces and simple kerbs forming an incomplete boundary. The existing paving is of late-twentieth century construction. The physical impact of new paving will therefore be neutral in nature. Where the new paving meets the existing structures on the square and around the square,

the impact will be neutral if care is taken during the removal of existing paving and setting of new paving.

Visual Impacts: The new pavers are to be set along lines running East to West, informed by sight lines towards the Round Tower and Cathedral. This will have the visual impact of drawing the two parts of the original Market Square together and connecting them visually with the Round Tower and Cathedral, which will have a positive visual impact on the architectural heritage of the site.

Proposed Works: Introduction of stepped and fixed precast concrete seating

Physical Impacts: The provision of stepped seating responds to the changes in level on the site. They have a neutral physical impact on the existing architectural heritage of the site as the existing paving in these areas is of modern construction, and the proposed seating does not have a physical impact on any historic features within the site.

Visual Impacts: The existing paving, seating and street furniture date from recent decades and are not uniform in style or construction. While map and photographic evidence of the Market Square in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries show a relatively informal open space which accommodated a variety of traders during market days, the square has evolved as a public meeting place, accommodating functions relating to public buildings and public transport, like many other such historic market places in Ireland and elsewhere. The proposed new seating is contemporary in design and materials and does not attempt to replicate details of its historic surroundings, in keeping with international best practice in the presentation of historic public spaces.

The impact of these proposed changes to the present Market Square may be regarded as neutral in nature, due to mitigating factors such as the recent nature of the existing paving and seating on the square, and the quality of design of the new elements, which will draw together the presently visually disparate east and west sides of the square.

Proposed Works: Site of Historic Well to be redeveloped as a pivotal feature

Physical Impacts: While this site has had a long historical association with public water supply as a well and the location of a water pump, there are presently no historic architectural features here, so there will be no physical architectural heritage impact.

Visual Impacts: The introduction of a designed feature around the well site will draw attention to the historic significance of this historic element in a contemporary way. This will have a positive impact on the historical continuity of use of the square as the location for a public water supply.

The existing pair of 1950's lamp standards located at the junction of Station Road and Market Square (RPS no. B22-43 and NIAH Reg. No. 11817004) are two of the four cast-iron lamp standards referred to in the NIAH. They appear to have already been moved to their present location. It is proposed to relocate these lamp standards as part of the proposed works, to locations to be determined at detail design stage. As these lamp standards are of relatively recent manufacture, and appear to have previously been relocated, the architectural heritage impact of their future relocation may be regarded as neutral.

Cumulative Impact of Proposed Works

- The cumulative architectural heritage impact of the proposed public realm changes to Market Square ranges from neutral to positive. The scheme retains and respects the Protected Structures on the Square and will result in a positive visual impact on their setting.
- The open large gathering space proposed to the western side of the square represents an improvement in quality on the existing cluttered environment and reinforces the prominence of the Market House as the principal architectural feature within the square.
- Existing trees, where found to be significant, are to be retained. Photographic evidence indicates a consistent presence of trees demarcating the boundaries of the square, and while the present trees are more substantial, they are important to the present character of the square.

Recommended Protective Actions for the Market House for the duration of the works before tender and commencement of works on site

- In order to protect the existing masonry, hoarding should be stood to the perimeter of the structure prior to the commencement of works. This should be further detailed by the contractor in their Construction Management Plan.
- In order to protect the windows, jambs and cills of openings, a lightweight mesh should be installed within the reveals. These protections should not be fixed to the stonework. This should be further detailed by the contractor in their Construction Management Plan.
- Instructions to workers by way of inductions and workshops should be undertaken with members of the design team present, in order to impress upon them the necessity of exercising care during the construction phase.

7.0 Photographic Record

Market Square



View of current bus stop outside of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) looking towards Dublin Street.



View of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Market Square/Nugent Street junction.



View of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Nugent Street.



View of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Market Square/Nugent Street junction.



View of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Market Square.



View of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Market Square.



View of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Bride Street/Claregate Street junction.



View of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Dublin Street.



View of Celtic High Cross Monument on eastern part of Square (NIAH Reg. No. 11817001)



View of Dublin Street streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Barrett/Grace's Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817048). View of Dublin Street streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Barrett/Grace's Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817048) and Bank of Ireland (NIAH Reg. No. 11817047). View of Dublin Street streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Barrett/Grace's Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817048) and Bank of Ireland (NIAH Reg. No. 11817047). View of Dublin Street streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Barrett/Grace's Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817048). View of Dublin Street streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Boyles building House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817046). View of Dublin Street streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Boyles building (NIAH Reg. No. 11817046) and Daniel Boland building (NIAH Reg. No. 11817045). View of Dublin Street streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Daniel Boland building (NIAH Reg. No. 11817045). View of Dublin Street/Bride Street junction streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Daniel Boland building (NIAH Reg. No. 11817045). View of Dublin Street/Bride Street junction streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Daniel Boland building (NIAH Reg. No. 11817045). View of Dublin Street/Bride Street junction streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Virginia Lodge (NIAH Reg. No. 11817100). View of Market Square streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Virginia Lodge (NIAH Reg. No. 11817100). View of Market Square streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Former Cinema (NIAH Reg. No. 1187051). View from Market Square towards Dublin Street



View of Claregate Street/Bride Street junction streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



View of Claregate Street/Bride Street junction streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



View of Claregate Street/Bride Street junction streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



Southwells [shop] (NIAH Reg. No. 11817017). View of square streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Bride Street.



Harte's Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817016) View of square streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Bride Street.



View of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) and Square from Market Square.



Verger's House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817006) and Nolan's/Seeta Public House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817005). View of Market Square streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



View of Market Square streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



View of Market Square streetscape opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



View of Market Square opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



View of Market Square opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



View of Nugent Street junction opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).



View of Nugent Street junction opposite Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003).

Market House



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Dublin Street side



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Dublin Street side looking towards square on Bride Street



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Bride Street side.



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Bride Street side.



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Bride Street side.



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Bride Street side.



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Dublin Street/Market Square junction.



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Nugent Street/Market Square junction



External view of Kildare Market House (NIAH Reg. No. 11817003) from Nugent Street/Market Square junction

St Brigid's Cathedral



View of St Brigid's Cathedral (NIAH Reg. No. 11817007) and Round Tower Entrance (outside grounds). Market Square continues to the left.



View of St Brigid's Cathedral (NIAH Reg. No. 11817007) and Round Tower Entrance (outside grounds)



View from within St Brigid's Cathedral gates (NIAH Reg. No. 11817007) and Round Tower Entrance (within grounds) towards Market Square



View from within St Brigid's Cathedral enclosure (NIAH Reg. No. 11817007) and Round Tower Entrance (within grounds) towards Market Square



View towards Market Square from St Brigid's Cathedral (NIAH Reg. No. 11817007) and Round Tower Entrance (within grounds)



Exterior view of St Brigid's Cathedral (NIAH Reg. No. 11817007) (within grounds)