

Submission Details

Submitter

Name	Alan Johnston
Address	Whitethorn Kilmurry Clane, Co. Kildare W91E1C2
Note	A chara, I wish to submit an observation and objection in relation to the above planning application. My concerns relate primarily to the impact of the proposed development upon the cultural landscape associated with Dún Dealgan (Castletown Motte) and Killin Hill. As outlined in the accompanying report, Killin Hill was formerly the site of a significant prehistoric ceremonial complex. Although these monuments were destroyed during the nineteenth century, important elements of the associated cultural landscape survive. I respectfully request that Louth County Council consider the potential impact of the proposed development upon this surviving cultural landscape relationship before determining the application. Is mise le meas, Alan Johnston

In relation to application

File Number	2560768
Name	Grandspect Limited
Address	Castletown Road Dundalk Co. Louth

Dún Dealgan, Killin Hill and the Summer Solstice Alignment

Heritage and Cultural Landscape Considerations in Relation to Planning Application Ref. 2560768. Submitted by Alan Johnston.

Executive Summary

The proposed development has the potential to adversely affect a surviving cultural landscape relationship between Dún Dealgan (Castletown Motte) and Killin Hill. This submission considers archaeological, literary, mythological, placename and visual heritage factors, together with evidence of a summer solstice sunset alignment observed from Dún Dealgan towards the summit of Killin Hill.

Dún Dealgan and the Identity of Dundalk

Dún Dealgan is traditionally identified as the fort from which Dundalk derives its name and is closely associated with Cú Chulainn. The continuing importance of this tradition is reflected in Dundalk's civic motto, '*Mé do rug Cú Chulainn cróga*'. The significance of Dún Dealgan derives not only from the earthwork itself but also from its commanding position overlooking the Plain of Muirthemne.

Killin Hill: A Forgotten Ceremonial Landscape

Killin Hill is far less widely recognised today than nearby heritage sites such as Proleek Dolmen or Dún Dealgan, despite evidence that it once contained a substantial ceremonial complex. Antiquarian sources and the Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society record that Killin Hill formerly contained a cromlech, stone circles and associated monuments occupying both summits of the hill.

Killin Hill and Céin in the Tradition of Oriel

The association of Killin Hill with Céin, son of the physician of the Tuatha Dé Danann, Dian Cécht, and father of Lugh, survives through the celebrated song *Úrchnoc Chéin Mhic Cáinte* by Peadar Ó Doirnín. According to the tale *Oidheadh Chloinne Tuireann*, Céin was pursued, slain and buried on the hill. Local tradition associates Killin Hill with the place of his death and burial. The association between Killin Hill and Céin therefore forms part of a wider mythological and genealogical framework linking the hill with Lugh and, ultimately, with Cú Chulainn and Dún Dealgan.

Loss and Survival

Much of the physical heritage of Killin Hill has already been lost. The prehistoric monuments recorded by Wright and later antiquarians no longer survive. What remains are the hill itself, the literary and mythological traditions associated with it, and its visual relationship with

Dún Dealgan. These surviving elements constitute a fragile cultural landscape whose significance has increased because so much of the original monument complex has disappeared.

Figures

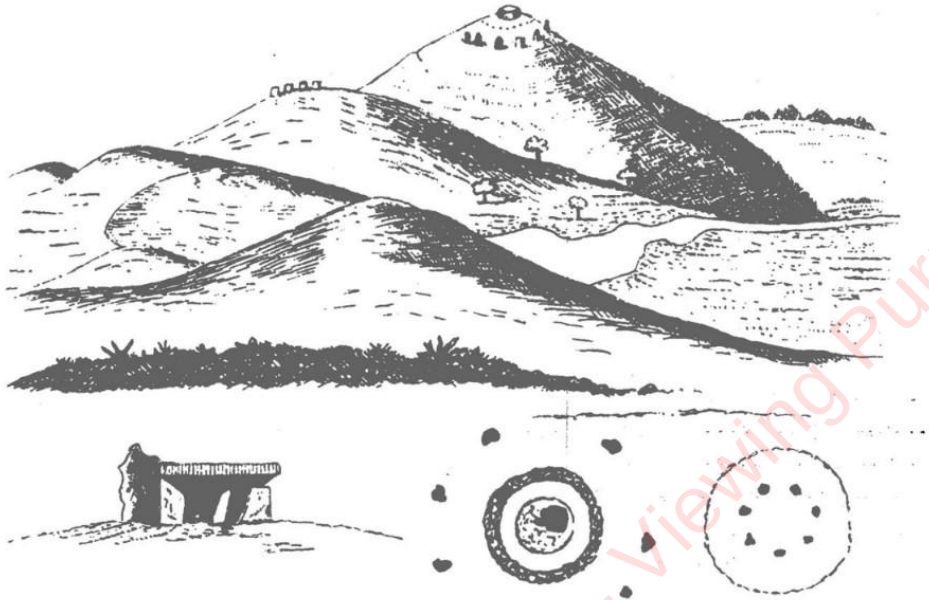


Figure 1. Thomas Wright's illustration of the monuments formerly present on Killin Hill, including the cromlech and stone circles.



Figure 2. Summer solstice sunset alignment between Dún Dealgan and Killin Hill derived from solar-path analysis.



Figure 3. Sunset observation from the embankment of Dún Dealgan on 13 June 2026, one week before the summer solstice. Cloud obscured the solar disc but the illuminated horizon marks the sunset position above the Killin Hill ridgeline.

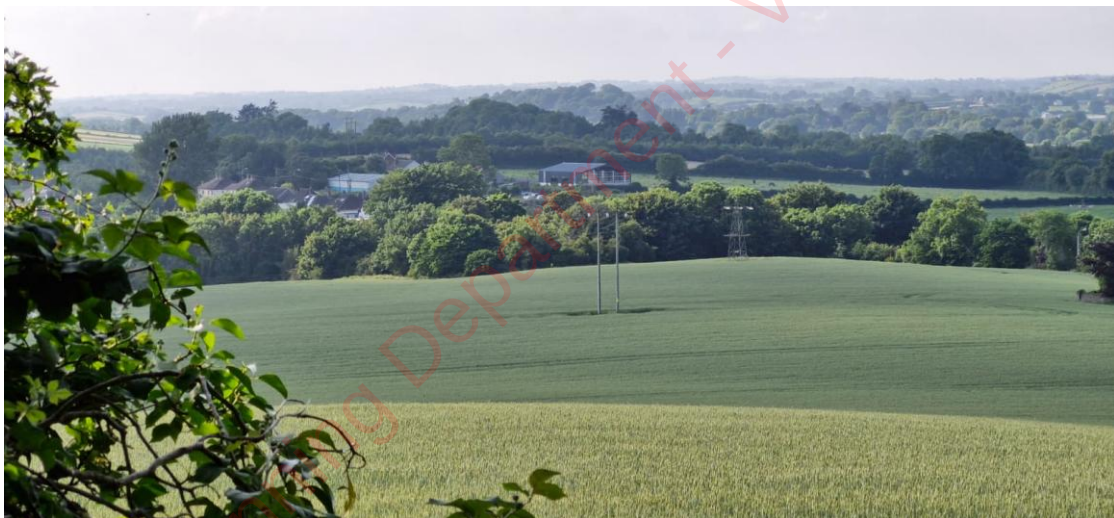


Figure 4. View from Dún Dealgan towards Killin Hill, illustrating the surviving landscape relationship between the sites.



Figure 5. The line of sight between Dún Dealgan and Killin Hill across the proposed development layout (Planning Ref. 2560768)

The Summer Solstice Alignment

Observed from the embankment of Dún Dealgan, the setting sun at the summer solstice disappears behind the summit of Killin Hill with remarkable precision. Observations made on 13 June 2026 at approximately 10:00 pm were consistent with the predicted alignment. Although cloud cover obscured the solar disc, an illuminated band on the horizon marked the position of sunset above the Killin Hill ridgeline. The significance of the alignment lies not simply in the position of the sun, but in its ability to connect archaeology, mythology, literature, placename tradition and landscape into a coherent expression of local heritage.

Intervisibility and Landscape Legibility

Dún Dealgan and Killin Hill occupy elevations of approximately 50m and 56m above sea level respectively. The proposed development occupies the foreground through which the relationship between Dún Dealgan and Killin Hill is perceived. Its impact therefore extends beyond visibility alone and affects the setting in which that relationship is experienced and understood.

Why This Matters

The issue is not the preservation of a view in the ordinary sense. Rather, it concerns the survival of a cultural relationship between Dún Dealgan and Killin Hill. Following the destruction of the monuments on Killin Hill, the surviving visual relationship between them

has become one of the few remaining means by which that connection can still be appreciated. Once interrupted, it cannot readily be recovered.

Local Connection and Experience

I grew up on Mount Avenue and spent much of my childhood exploring Dún Dealgan. One of my strongest memories is the uninterrupted view across the Plain of Muirthemne from the monument. Generations of local children have experienced the site in this way. The openness of that landscape forms part of the living heritage of Dundalk.

My familiarity with the monument and its surroundings over many years led me to become aware of the historical and cultural associations between Dún Dealgan and Killin Hill, including the summer solstice alignment discussed in this report.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is respectfully requested that the planning authority consider the impact of the development upon this heritage relationship and require appropriate assessment before determination.

Bibliography

Primary and Historical Sources

- Wright, Thomas. *Louthiana: An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland*. London, 1748 (and subsequent editions).
- Ó Doirnín, Peadar. *Úrchnoc Chéin Mhic Cáinte*.
- Tempest, W. H. "Killin Hill." *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1908), pp. 347–352.

Folklore and Literary Sources

- Ní Uallacháin, Pádraigín. Commentary on *Úrchnoc Chéin Mhic Cáinte* and the identification of Killin Hill with Céin.
- *Oidheadh Chloinne Tuireann (The Tragic Death of the Children of Tuireann)*, medieval Irish narrative.

Mapping and Landscape Sources

- Sonnverlauf.de solar-path calculator, summer solstice alignment analysis undertaken from Dún Dealgan towards Killin Hill, accessed June 2026.
- Planning Application Ref. 2560768, site layout and development drawings.

Photographic Sources

- Author's photographs from Dún Dealgan, June 2026.