

Landscape  
Design  
**Built  
Environment**

**BSM**

Est.  
1968

**Brady Shipman  
Martin**

**Built.  
Environment.**

**Grange Castle**

Landscape Design Rationale

**Client:** South Dublin County Council  
**Date:** June 2017







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# Grange Castle

## Landscape Design Rationale

### 1.0 Introduction

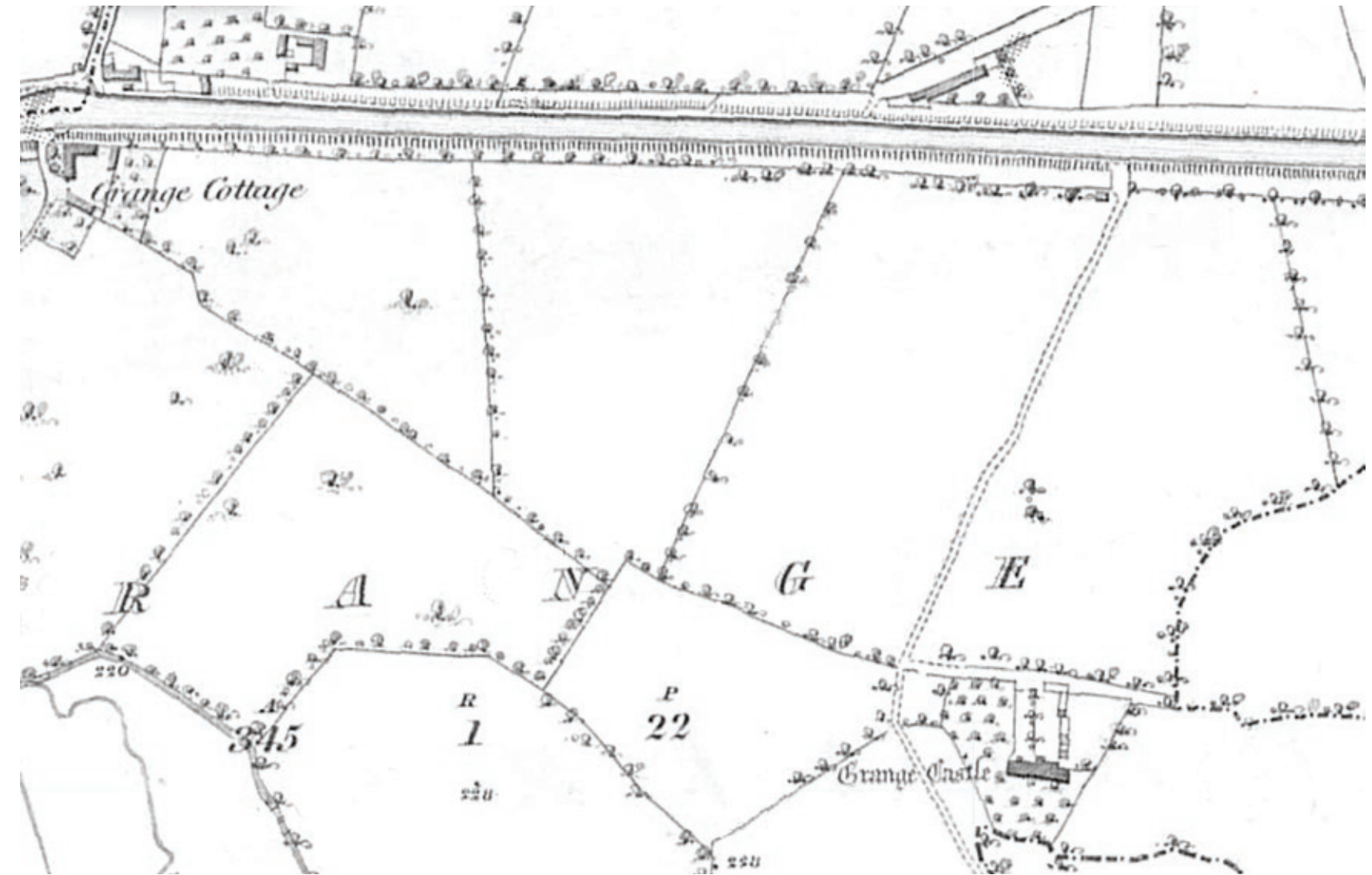
Grange Castle is a Protected Structure and Recorded Monument located at the centre of Grange Castle Business Park dating from circa 1580. It is located within the centre of Grange Castle Business Park. Conservation and repair works are proposed to Grange Castle which should commence this autumn. South Dublin County Council have commissioned the design of a pocket park to create a meaningful setting for the castle within a developing high-tech industry park.

### 2.0 Design Approach

Brady Shipman Martin carried out a preliminary site survey and analysis of Grange Castle with a view to understanding the castle within its current setting and context and to develop an initial design strategy for the pocket park.

The elements considered were:

- The visual aspect of the site within its landscape
- The strengths and weaknesses of the site within its environs
- Visual quality
- Visual aspect and interpretation of individual elements on the site



First Edition Map (OSi)



Approach to Castle from North



**3.0 Site Context**

- The physical setting and landscape is important to visitors in how they perceive the Castle .
- The context of the castle has changed significantly with the development of Grange Castle Business Park. The principal views of the Castle are now from the entry roundabout on the main spine road to the north. These are changing as development takes place on lands west of the site.
- The boundary hedgerow to the west of the site is weak and tree line intermittent. This allows views of the development associated with the business park to conflict with the setting of the Castle.
- Views of the Castle are significant from the south and east opposite Pfizer Pharmaceuticals.
- Retaining the lands north, east and south of the castle undeveloped will be important to providing a setting for the Castle and ideally should become part of the pocket park.
- These lands will also be integral to the experience of the visitor on the approach to the future park.
- Access from the canal towpath to the amenity lake and future Castle park could be improved with a new pedestrian link from the towpath. The current route is circuitous.
- Casual visitors currently walk the grounds of the Castle entering from the lake area to the north and crossing the western boundary of the site exiting along the lane to the south. The potential for a loop walk incorporated into the future pocket park could be considered.



**Site Context**

**Legend**

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Principal views                                 | Grand Canal                         |
| Glimpsed views                                  | Existing pedestrian route to Castle |
| Pedestrian entry to Grange Castle Business Park | Townland/ Barony boundary           |
| Pedestrian amenity path                         | Area Integral to setting            |
| Pedestrian bridge on the Grand Canal            | Primary visual envelope             |
| Site-Grange Castle                              | Currently Undeveloped Land          |
| Amenity Lake                                    | Developed sites                     |



**4.0 Site Analysis**



1. View South-Pedestrian Approach from Lake



2. View Southwest- Principal View from Roundabout



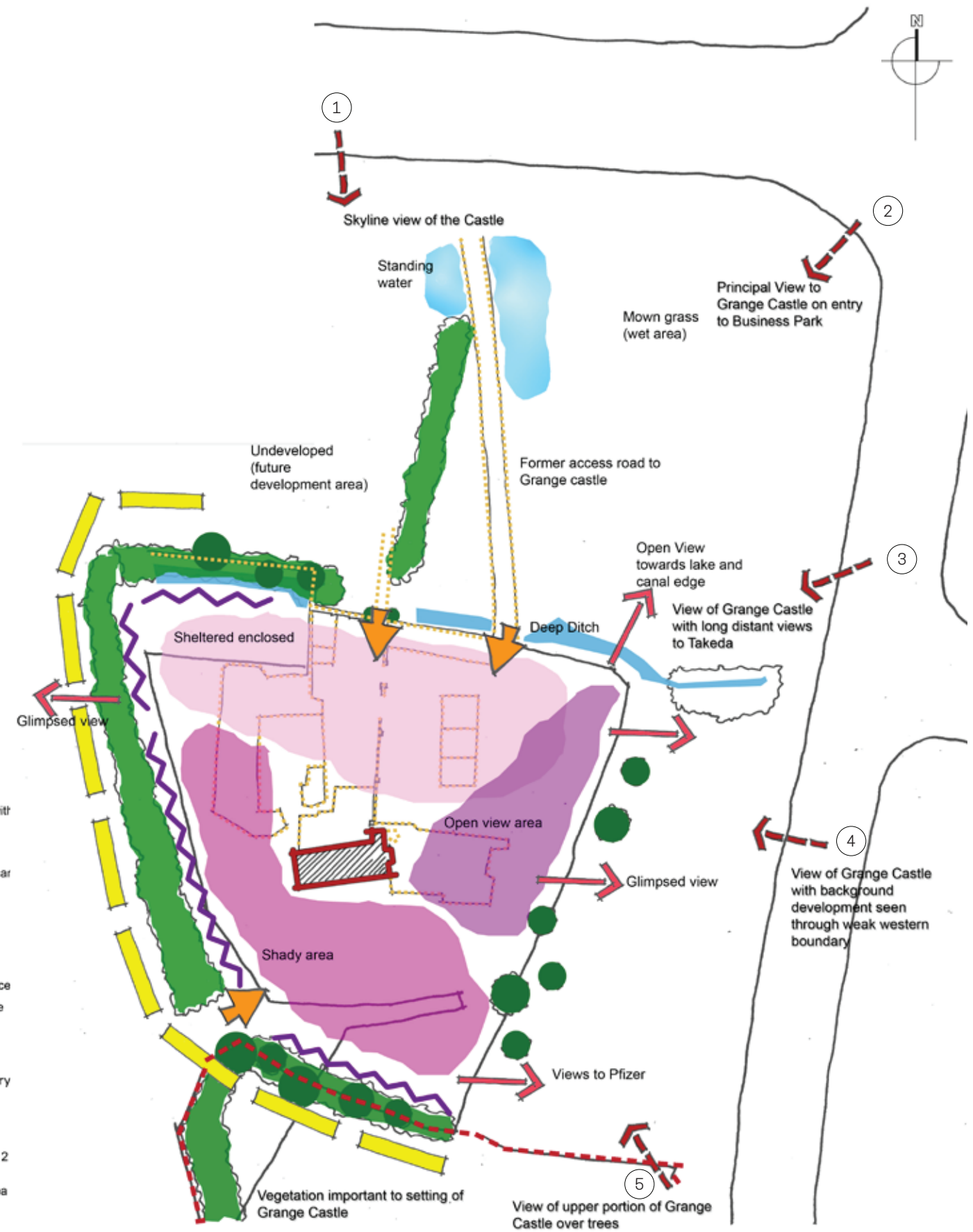
3. View West



4. View Northwest



5. View North

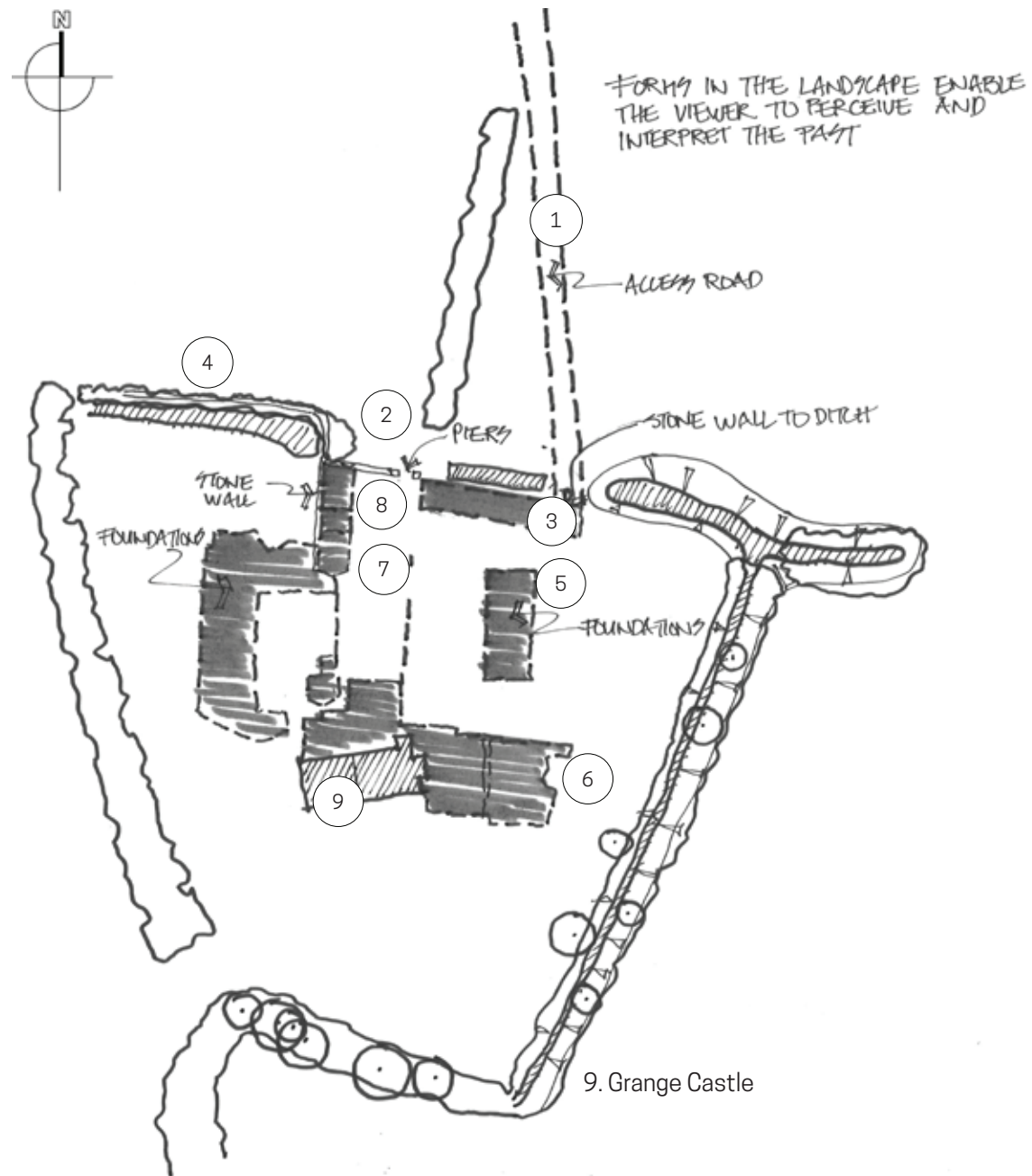


- Legend**
- Open views from site
  - Significant views to Castle (maintain visual relationship with castle)
  - Entry points to Castle Grange
  - Boundary important to setting ar views to Castle
  - Semi-permeable edge-allows glimpsed views beyond site
  - Area periodic standing water/wet area
  - Deep ditch (restricts/ limits acce
  - Archaeological features visible over ground
  - Grange Castle (tower house and bawn)
  - Townland/ Barony boundary
  - Sheltered microclimate-character area 1
  - Shady/slightly exposed microclimate - character area 2
  - Open to visual influence of Business Park - character area
  - Tree with low understorey hedgerow
  - Hedgerow trees



**5.0 Heritage Features**

Building forms in the landscape provide a sense of place. Contact with the Protected Structure is important. The design strategy will interpret the physical and spatial setting of the heritage elements within the park and incorporate these into the redesign.



**Heritage Features (above ground)**



1. Former Access Road to Grange Castle



2. Entrance Piers



3. Foundations of former Cottage Fronting Green Road (1910)



4. Stone Wall Boundary to North of Site



5. Foundations of former Building (1800-1910)



6. Foundations of former Building (1800)



7. Foundations of former Buildings (1900-1910)



8. Stone Trough



## 6.0 Design Objectives

As the Castle is a Protected Structure the design of the pocket park requires sensitive design intervention that recognises the historic significance and setting of the Castle while also addressing its changing context within the high-tech business park.

The design objectives are:

- a) Enhance the historic setting of the 16th Century tower;
- b) Provide a space that reflects the contemporary character of the Business Park;
- c) Integration of biodiversity into the design proposals;
- d) Enhance/ review potential to highlight historic features such as the barony boundary
- e) Consideration of views into the site from surrounding roads and the presentation of the Castle from public vantage points;
- f) Provide a quality space with a strong sense of place;
- g) Include opportunities for recreational use and establish pedestrian links to the park.

### Key

- 1 Gateway and recontoured walkway
- 2 Ornamental bands of grasses
- 3 Meadow to create appropriate setting and approach to castle
- 4 New wetland
- 5 Entry threshold defined by new stone walls
- 6 Seating area with new wall set on former cottage foundation
- 7 Planting on former building footprint
- 8 Information area/ interpretation panels with view to castle
- 9 Retain stone trough
- 10 Informal seating area
- 11 Stone Plaza
- 12 Orchard
- 13 Vista to Castle
- 14 Seating
- 15 Elevated viewing platform
- 16 Link from Business Park
- 17 Thicken hedgerow and interplant with new trees

## Landscape Masterplan





### 7.0 Design Concept

The overall landscape vision for the park is to create a contemporary layout layered over the historic fabric that interprets the past within a new spatial form. The pocket park will provide an attractive place to relax for visitors and employees, provide an appropriate setting and re-establish the Castle presence within the Business Park.

### 8.0 Landscape Design Proposal (Refer to Landscape Masterplan)

The proposal incorporates the following elements;

#### Setting

The landscape design extends beyond the immediate vicinity of the Castle to include the immediate areas to the east, which are integral to the setting of the Castle and part of the visitor experience on the approach to the park. It is proposed to provide a meadow landscape which will enhance biodiversity and improve views to the Castle. A new wetland is also proposed in a low lying area immediately north of the park entrance.

#### Access

The Castle is currently surrounded by deep ditches to the north and east and an existing hedgerow to the west and south (historic townland barony boundary) which limit access but also serve to give the impression that the Castle is an island. The design seeks to reinforce this character by providing pedestrian approaches that span the ditches and create strong thresholds that clearly differentiate the park entrances. Two pedestrian routes are provided. The north eastern path connects pedestrians from the amenity lake area and forms the most direct route (No 1). Access is also provided via a new pedestrian bridge (No 16) from the east which terminates in an elevated viewing platform with views over the Castle and park before ramping down into the park.

#### Arrangement of the Park

The main focus of the park is the Castle which dominates views. The park is laid out in a simple arrangement which take visitors around the vicinity of the Castle and creates a series of views and vistas, including areas for seating and information. The pathways intersect each of the heritage features visible above ground level and described in Section 4.0. The heritage features are highlighted by outlining in stone, while the pathways give new spatial and contemporary form to the park.

The park slopes in a southeasterly direction from a level of 65.5m to 63.5m. The intention is that the pathways will be designed to work with the existing topography and that existing levels will be retained around the Castle in order to retain the site integrity.

#### Features

The park includes a number of features. The primary seating area occurs beside the park entrance to the north (No 6) over what was the footprint of the former cottage. Two informal seating areas (No 10 and No 14) are also included within the meadows. The seating area to the rear of the Castle is set on a vista across a mown grass path and framed by an orchard either side.

An area providing information on the history of the site is designed on slightly elevated ground adjoining the remnants of the former walls of an outbuilding. These will be rebuilt to incorporate a seat and used to define the information area. It serves as a good viewing point to the Castle.

To the east of the Castle an elevated viewing platform will provide connectivity to users of the business park in addition to providing a different vantage point to the Castle.

#### Materials

A limited palette of materials is proposed. The principal pathways will be bonded gravel. It is proposed to use limestone where the pathways intersect with the footprint of former buildings thereby highlighting the heritage features. Limestone will also be used to form a plinth to the Castle. The main pedestrian route will be formed in linear plank paving.

#### Planting

- Thicken the western boundary with native tree planting to enhance the screening value and infill weak sections where new development is encroaching on the setting of the castle.
- Provide a native meadow around the park perimeter where it adjoins the existing hedgerows and on the park approaches.
- Provide ornamental shrubs and groundcover within the footprint of former buildings to highlight the historic arrangement of the bawn and farm buildings.
- Include bands of ornamental grasses to the south east of the park orientated along the main viewpoint to the Castle.
- Provide an orchard to the rear. There was evidence that an orchard previously existed although not in this location. It is designed on a deconstructed grid that opens to reveal a vista to the Castle.
- Wetland grasses will be planted within the low lying area where it is proposed to partially excavate and create a new wetland.



Grange Castle



**9.0 Reference Images**



Mown grass path through meadow



Large meadow area appropriate to setting of castle



Orchard



Trees in Ornamental grasses



Seat/Wall



9.0 Reference Images



Paving bands through Grass



Corten Steel Bridge



Contemporary Bench



Timber Boardwalk over archaeology (Mellifont Abbey)



Resin bonded path (Mellifont Abbey)



Timber walkway over archaeology and resin path (Mellifont Abbey)



Timber Bench



Low level Bollard Lighting to Paths