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what we found in brief:

Some of the findings in and between Kinnegad, Enfield and Kilcock.

1. Small find: Selection of small finds uncovered at Killickaweeney (Photo A.C.S Ltd.).
2. Ring pivot: Copper-alloy pseudo penannular ring pin from Johnstown (Photo A.C.S Ltd.).
3. Burnt mound: Oval trough from a burnt mound uncovered at Killickaweeney (Photo A.C.S Ltd.).
4. Fulacht fiadh: Trough of a fulacht fiadh (Photo A.C.S Ltd.).
5. Trench: Trench removed from excavations at Killickaweeney (Photo A.C.S Ltd.).
6. Burial site: Inter-cutting burials uncovered on the early medieval site of Johnstown (Photo A.C.S Ltd.).

background:

This scheme consists of approximately 35km of motorway commencing to the south-west of Kinnegad in County Westmeath and continuing in an easterly direction through Counties Meath and Kildare and terminating at the western end of the existing motorway at Kilcock, County Kildare. Archaeological investigations and excavations commenced in 2002 and were undertaken by Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd. (A.C.S Ltd.) and Irish Archaeological Services Ltd. (I.A.S. Ltd.).

A total of 31 archaeological sites were identified during the investigation phase, which were subsequently excavated between summer and winter 2002. The majority of sites produced evidence of small-scale archaeological activity, the most prevalent being the occurrence of isolated areas of burning which in the main were related to industrial processes dating to the prehistoric and medieval periods.

Other sites uncovered included burnt mounds, kilns, a ring-ditch, two post-medieval buildings and a post-medieval enclosure surrounding a pond.

The largest sites excavated were at Killickaweeney, County Kildare, where a major settlement site was found dating to the early medieval period and Johnstown, County Meath, with activity from the late Iron Age right through to early modern period.

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Multi-period enclosure and burials - the Iron Age/early modern period

At a multi-period enclosure site excavated at Johnstown in the county of Meath, Ireland, several Iron Age/early modern burial mounds were identified. Three burials were located within the enclosure, with the remains of three individuals who died during the mid-17th century. The burials suggest that the site was used as a burial ground during this period.

The remains of a watermill were found within a ditch, and industrial activity was identified from 12 smelting pits, four tin smelting hearths, and two furnaces of medieval date. The industrial activity has been linked to the production of iron, and the site was likely to have been associated with the production of iron and metalworking.

Archaeologists excavating the early medieval site uncovered evidence of settlement and industrial activity at Killickaweeney. It appears that the site was associated with the production of iron and metalworking, and the site was likely to have been a trading post.

The principal structure on the site was a large house that had been used as a series of small enclosures, with different activities taking place within each. The site was likely to have been associated with the production of iron and metalworking, and the site was likely to have been a trading post.