



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 157

**REPLACEMENT DWELLING AT 74 DUNOVER ROAD
TULLYKEVIN
BALLYWALTER
CO. DOWN**

LICENCE NO.: AE/08/128

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 74 Dunover Road, Ballywalter, Co. Down

Townland: Tullykevin

SMR No. : DOW 012:005

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: J 5992 6977

County: Down

Excavation Licence No. : AE/08/128

Planning Ref / No. : X/2007/1297/F

Dates of Monitoring: 31st July 2008

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at 74 Dunover Road, Tullykevin, Ballywalter, Co. Down as part of the planning application for a replacement dwelling. A upstanding raised rath (DOW 012:005) is located within the confines of the application site, with the rath lying approximately 40m north of the proposed location of the replacement dwelling. It is the proximity of this site to the application site that prompted the evaluation. The evaluation consisted of the mechanical excavation of three trenches which ranged in size from 15m to 18m in length. The evaluation proved the existence of the ditch around the rath, although this feature was not investigated as it lay outside the parameters of the proposed dwelling. Another curvilinear ditch feature was encountered in Trenches One and Three. A small cutting was excavated into this feature in Trench One. Forty sherds of souterrain-ware pottery were recovered from this feature, and excavation of the cutting ceased following the identification of the feature as being of archaeological potential. A number of recommendations are made at the end of this report on the proceeding archaeological mitigation at the site.

Type of monitoring:

Excavation of three test trenches by mechanical excavator equipped with a 'sheugh' bucket under archaeological supervision.

Size of area opened:

Three trenches each approximately 2m wide and ranging in length from 15m to 18m.

Current Land Use: Ruined building at 74 Dunover Road

Intended Land Use: Replacement dwelling

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is located at 74 Dunover Road, Tullykevin, Ballywalter, Co. Down. The site is just outside the town of Ballywalter, lying approximately 3km north-west of its centre (Figure One). The general area of the application site is on relatively high ground overlooking other drumlins in the area. The application site is bounded on the north by a raised rath (DOW 012:005) and by ruined buildings on the south and west. An access lane is in the east running towards Dunover Road. The application site is in the yard of a previous dwelling, with a lot of masonry and debris lying about.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a replacement dwelling and was requested by Gina Baban: Caseworker with Northern Ireland Environment Agency. It was requested due to the proximity of the application site to the raised rath (DOW 012:005) and the potential that the development may impinge on previously unknown archaeological remains.

Excavation

Three trenches were mechanically opened across the proposed location for the replacement dwelling. The trenches were approximately 2m wide and ranged in length from 15m to 18m. All three test trenches were excavated to the subsoil which consisted of an orange glacially derived boulder clay. The stratigraphy encountered in Trenches One and Two was very shallow (0.05m). Information provided by the landowner indicates that this truncation was carried out relatively recently to remove rubble that had collapsed from the dilapidated outbuildings. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of around 0.3m in Trench Three.

Trench One

Trench One was located parallel to the northern wall of the previous dwelling. Trench One was approximately 2m wide and 15m long and was aligned approximately south-west/north-east. The trench was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at an average depth of 0.05m.

The topsoil (Context No. 101) in this trench was very thin (0.05m). This area had been severely truncated in the recent past, as rubble from the extant outbuilding had been cleared away by the landowner. Upon removal of the topsoil (Context No. 101) a negative feature was observed cutting the natural subsoil (Context No. 102). This feature was aligned roughly north/south and was approximately 1.6m in width. The fill of the feature (Context No. 103) consisted of a compact silty clay that had frequent inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones (average size: 40mm x 50mm x 30mm) and larger angular rocks (60mm x 90mm x 110mm). A small cutting was excavated into the fill (Context No. 103) of the feature to assess its archaeological potential. Forty sherds of souterrain ware pottery (provisionally identified by Cormac McSparron) were recovered from the fill (Context No. 103), along with charcoal and burnt bone. Excavation ceased following the identification of the feature as being of archaeological significance.

The cut of the feature (Context No. 104) consisted of steep sloping sides. However the feature was not excavated to the base of the cut (Context No. 104) at this stage.

The subsoil in Trench One (Context No. 103) was an orange compact boulder clay with occasional inclusions of medium to large angular stone, and was encountered at a depth of around 0.05m.

Trench Two

Trench Two was positioned parallel to and approximately 3m to the north of Trench One. The trench was 2m wide and 18m long and was excavated to the surface of the subsoil which was encountered at a depth of around 0.08m.

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Two (Context No. 201) consisted of a loose to slightly compact, light to mid brown, sandy loam. The layer contained infrequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm). This layer was on average 0.08m thick.

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Two (Context No. 201) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 202). It is assumed that the shallow nature of this deposit (Context No. 201) represents the same truncation encountered in Trench One. A continuation of the ditch encountered in Trench One (Context No. 104) was observed in Trench Two. However, in Trench Two the main fill of the feature (Context No. 204) was overlain by a thin spread of redeposited natural subsoil (Context No. 203). As the feature was investigated in Trench One and found to be of archaeological potential, it was not investigated in Trench Two at this stage.

The subsoil in Trench Two (Context No. 203) was an orange compact boulder clay with occasional inclusions of medium to large angular stone, and was encountered at a depth of around 0.08m.

Trench Three

Trench Three was positioned approximately 15m north of Trench Two and was aligned roughly north-south. The trench measured roughly 18m in length by 2m in width and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 303) which was encountered at a depth of around 0.3m.

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Three (Context No. 301) consisted of a loose to slightly compact, light to mid brown, sandy loam. The layer contained infrequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm). This layer was on average 0.25m thick.

Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 301) was a thin cultivation soil of compact, mid brown, sandy loam (Context No. 302) that contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm) and which was 0.05m thick. The cultivation soil (Context No. 302) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 303).

Following the removal of the thin cultivation soil (Context No. 302) some features of archaeological potential were observed. An isolated patch of charcoal (Context No. 304) was observed approximately 4m from the southern edge of the trench. The northern edge of the trench was positioned approximately 1.5m from the base of the bank of the rath (DOW 012:005). A curvilinear ditch (Context No. 305) was observed in this area that appeared to be respecting the arc of the bank of the rath. Although the feature (Context No. 305) was not archaeologically

investigated, it is assumed that it represents the silted up/filled in ditch of the rath itself.

The subsoil in Trench Three (Context No. 303) was an orange compact boulder clay with occasional inclusions of medium to large angular stone, and was encountered at a depth of around 0.3m.

The three test trenches excavated proved the existence of archaeological features within the confines of the development site. The area investigated was too small to make any generalisations about the type of archaeology present on site, but taking the pottery into account, it would appear that the truncated remains of an Early Christian feature, possibly a ditch, is present. This feature would need to be excavated prior to the development of the site as the proposed location of the replacement dwelling (as it now stands) would potentially destroy the archaeology.

It is recommended that the proposed area of the replacement dwelling should be mechanically stripped to the surface of the natural subsoil, and any archaeologically significant features or deposits excavated and recorded prior to the development proceeding. It would also be beneficial to excavate a section of the rath ditch (Context No. 305) to provide a comparison of stratigraphy and chronology.

Following the excavation, it is recommended that the results should be published in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* and a short note to be included in the annual *Excavations Bulletin*.

Archive:

Finds:

The find gathered during the evaluation are archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

Photographs:

The digital images taken during the evaluation (20 in total) are archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings: N/A

Signed: _____

Date: _____

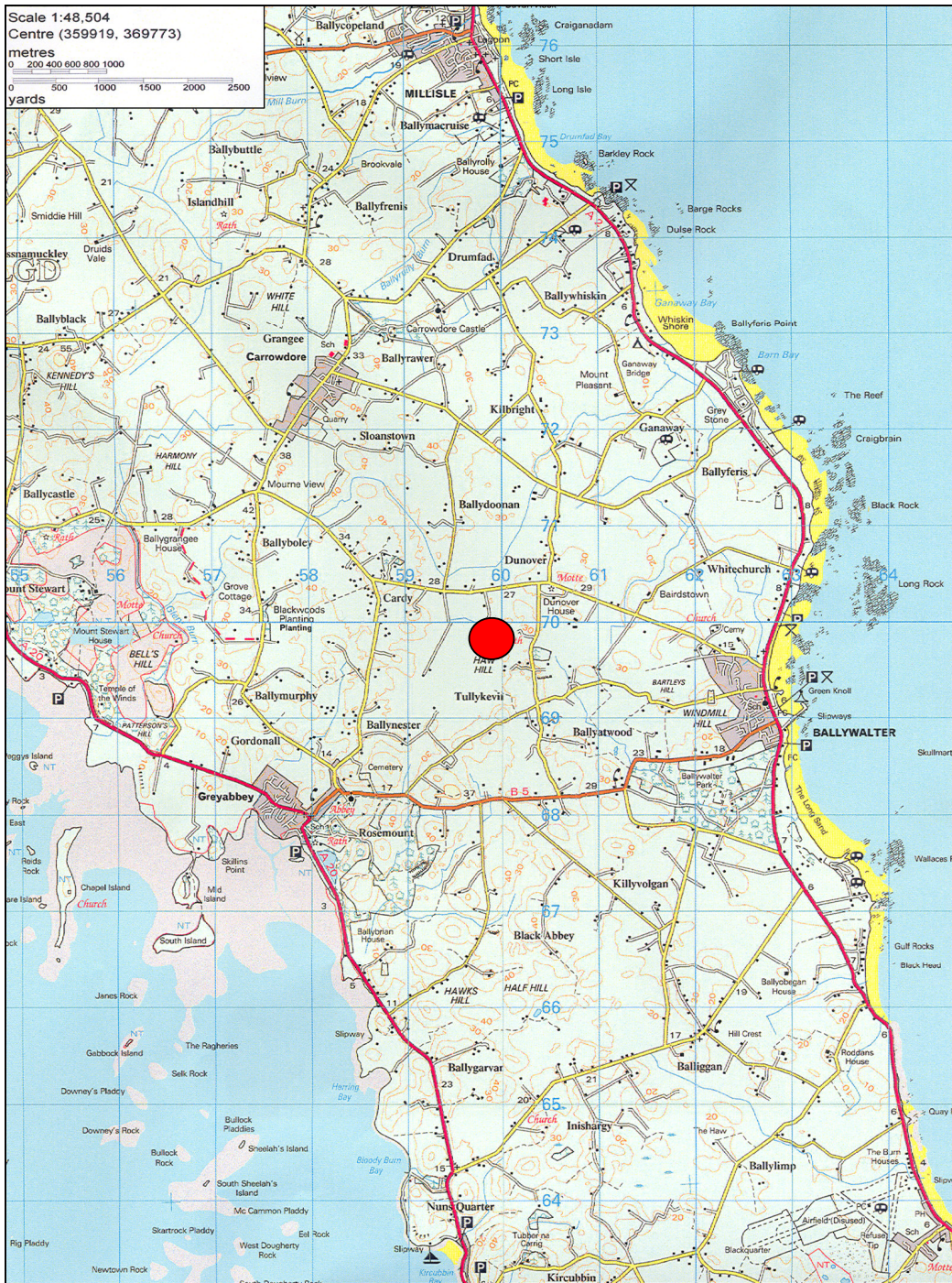


Figure One: 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Map showing location of site (red dot)

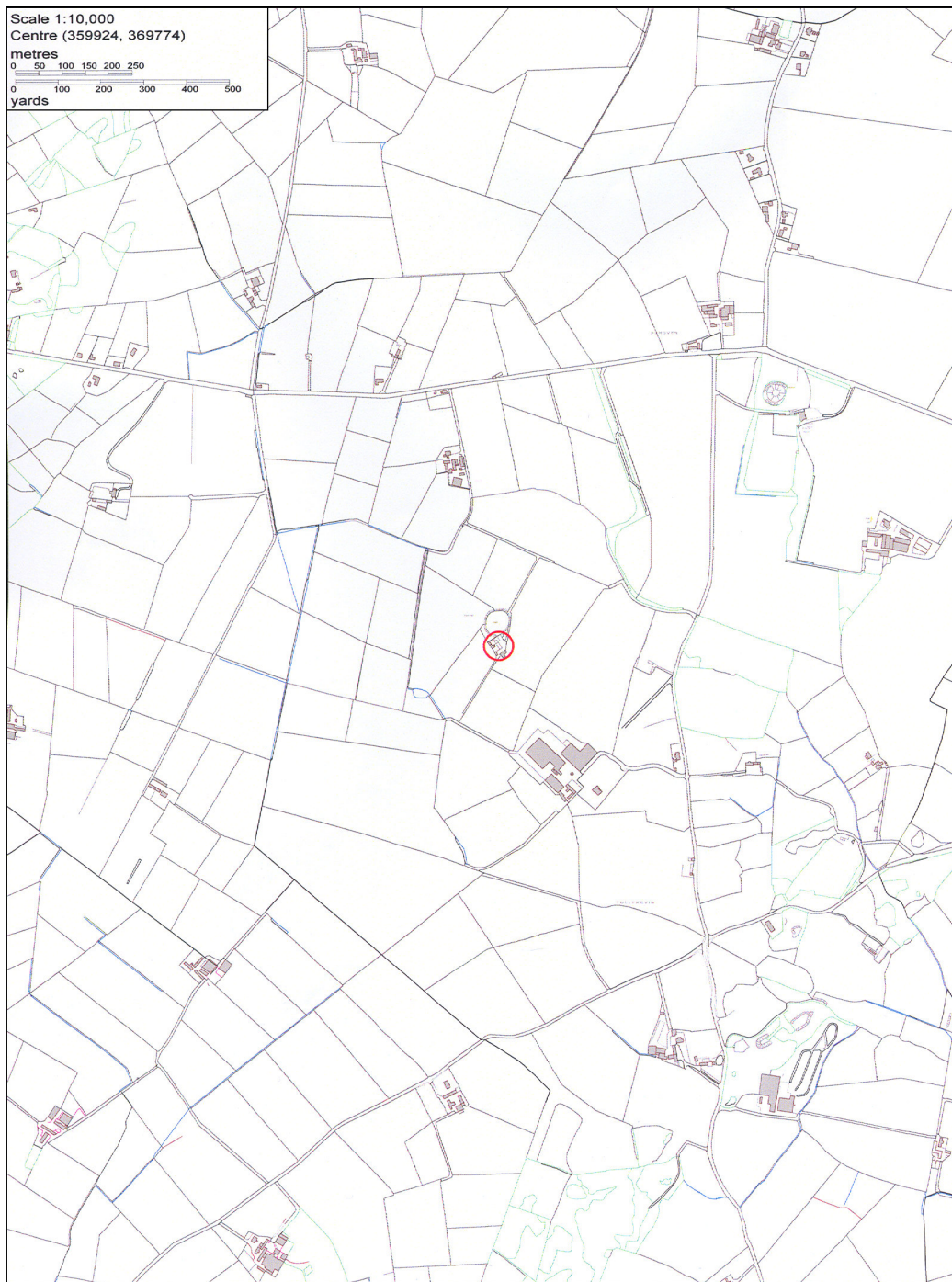


Figure Two: Detailed map of application site (circled in red)

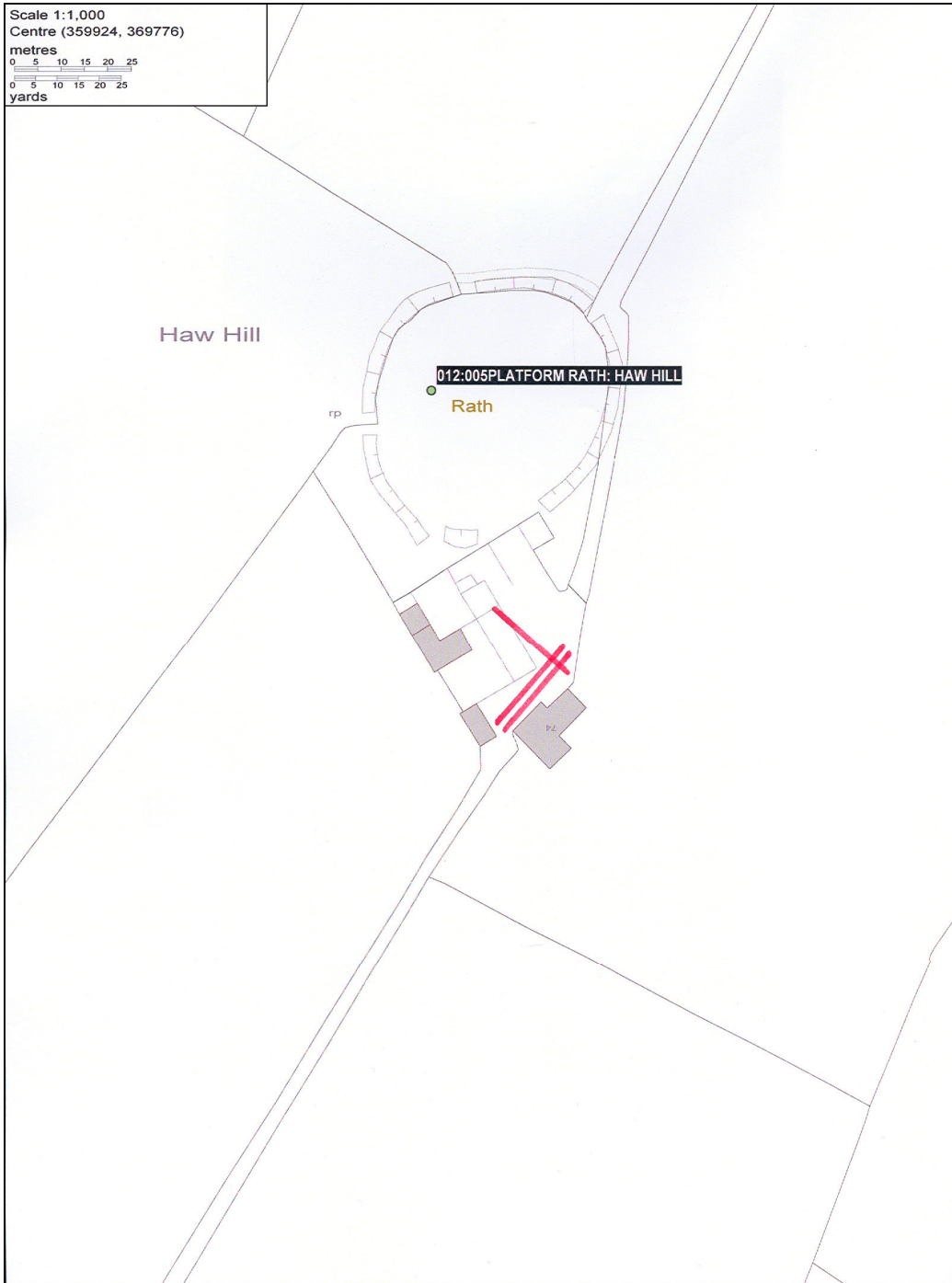


Figure Three: Proposed location of test trenches.



Plate One: Proposed location of replacement dwelling with rath (DOW 012:005) in the background, looking north-east.



Plate Two: Trench One following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 102) looking south-east. Ditch feature (Context No. 103) can be seen about the middle of the trench.



Plate Three: Trench One showing ditch feature (Context No. 103), looking north-east towards the rath (DOW 012:005).



Plate Four: Trench Two following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 202) showing the continuation of the ditch feature encountered in Trench One, looking east.



Plate Five: Trench Three following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 303), looking north with the rath in the background.



Plate Six: Charcoal spread (Context No. 304) in Trench Three, looking north.



Plate Seven: Rath ditch (Context No.305) looking north-east, taken from the bank of the rath.