



Monitoring Report No. 177

**Monitoring of invasive groundworks ahead of the installation of a septic tank at
16a, 16b and 16c Donegore Hill
Muckamore
County Antrim**

LICENCE NO.: AE/09/48

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 16a Donegore Hill, Muckamore, Co. Antrim

Townland: Ballysavage

SMR No. : ANT 050:045, 047 AND 132

State Care Scheduled Other X [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: J 2055 8769

County: Antrim

Excavation Licence No. : AE/09/48

Planning Ref / No. : T/2006/0269/F

Dates of Monitoring: 21st July 2009

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

Monitoring was carried out of the invasive ground works associated with the installation of a septic tank to service three restored cottages at 16a, 16b and 16c Donegore Hill, Co. Antrim. A 4m x 3m trench was mechanically excavated across the area to be disturbed by the installation of the septic tank and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the monitoring exercise.

Type of monitoring:

Supervision of the mechanical excavation of a 4m x 3m trench.

Size of area opened: Approximately 12m²

Current Land Use: Garden of 16a Donegore Hill

Intended Land Use: Area of septic tank to service 16a, 16b and 16c Donegore Hill

Summary

Introduction

The monitoring exercise carried out at the above site was undertaken by the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queen's University Belfast (CAF) following contact by the applicant, Dr. Ajang Agaghi. This was in response to a planning condition under planning reference T/2006/0269/F which stipulated the necessity for archaeological mitigation during the restoration of 16a, 16b and 16c Donegore Hill, Muckamore, Co. Antrim. A programme of works was drawn up and approved by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) Case Officer for the area, Neil Yeaman. The work was carried out under Licence Number AE/09/48 and was directed by Brian Sloan (CAF).

The proposed area of the septic tanks is located towards the north of the current garden of 16a Donegore Hill. This area has previously been used as a vegetable patch (Dr. Agaghi *pers comm.*). The site is bounded by mature trees to the north, the building that are subject to renovation (16a, 16b and 16c Donegore Hill) to the east and gardens to the west and south.

Archaeological Background

The development site is adjacent to Donegore Hill, Co. Antrim. The archaeological potential of this area has been previously demonstrated with excavations carried out at the Neolithic enclosure on the summit of Donegore. A number of sites of archaeological and historical interest are recorded in the general area of the application site (see Table One).

<u>SMR Number</u>	<u>Townland</u>	<u>Site Name & Edited Type</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Grid Ref</u>
<u>ANT 050:045</u>	DONEGORE	MOTTE: DONEGORE MOAT OR MOTTE	Medieval	J20528785
<u>ANT 050:047</u>	DONEGORE	MULTIPERIOD CHURCH & GRAVEYARD: DONEGORE CHURCH, DUNCURRI	Uncertain	J20598776
<u>ANT 050:132</u>	FREEMANSTOWN; TOBERGILL	NEOLITHIC HILLTOP CAUSEWAYED ENCLOSURE & OCCUPATION SITE: DONEGORE HILL	Prehistoric	J21358917

Table One: SMR sites in vicinity of application site.

The proximity of the application site to the above monuments prompted the archaeological mitigation. This was carried out in association with planning reference T/2006/0269/F.

Account of the excavation

A trench measuring roughly 4m (east/west) by 3m (north/south) was mechanically excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 102) which was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered during the excavation.

The sod and topsoil (Context No. 101) consisted of a mid to dark brown clay loam. Numerous inclusions of small angular and sub-angular stones (average size: 30mm x 30mm x 20mm) were observed throughout this layer (Context No. 101), along with infrequent inclusions of charcoal, cinder and active tree roots. Three fragments of white glazed ceramics dating to the nineteenth or twentieth-century were recovered from the topsoil deposit (Context No. 101), which was on average 0.3m in depth. The topsoil deposit (Context No. 101) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 102).

The natural subsoil (Context No. 102) consisted of a reddish orange sandy clay. No finds or features of an archaeological nature were recovered or observed during the monitoring exercise.

Conclusions

Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the monitoring exercise at Donegore Hill, Muckamore, Co. Antrim. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological work is necessary at the site. Publication of the work is not deemed necessary, save for a short account being submitted to the annual *Excavations Bulletin*.

Archive:

Finds:

N/A

Photographs:

The digital images (9 in total) taken during the evaluation are archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings: N/A

Signed: _____ Date: _____

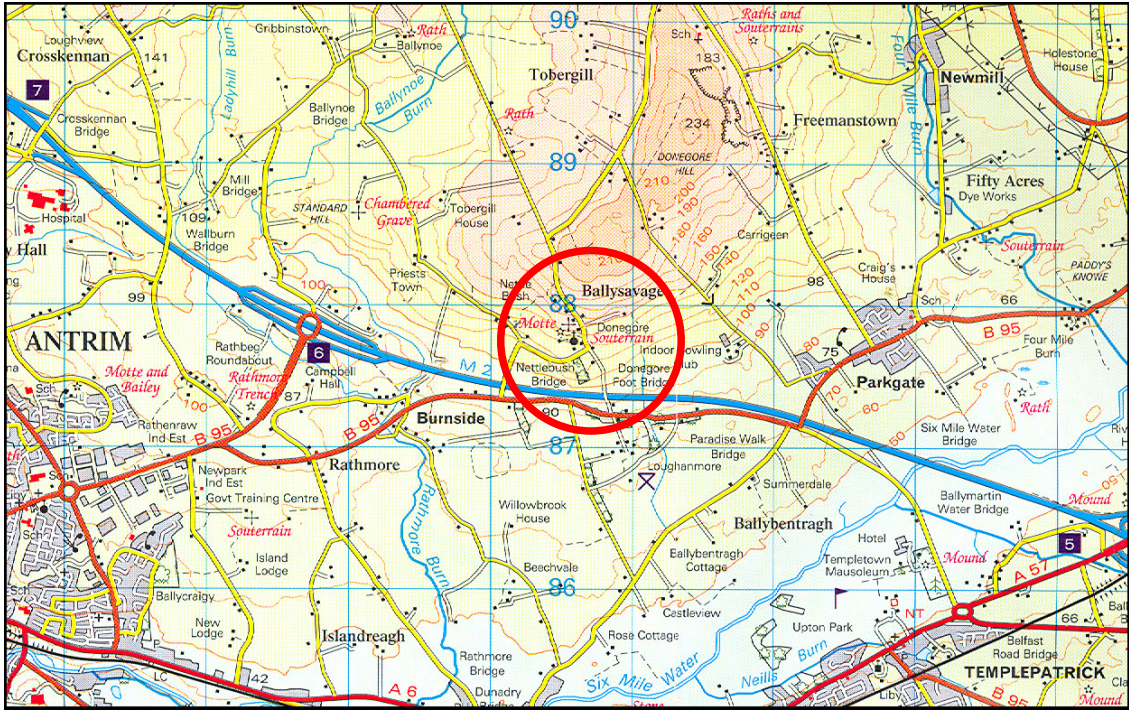


Figure One: General location map showing the application site (circled in red)

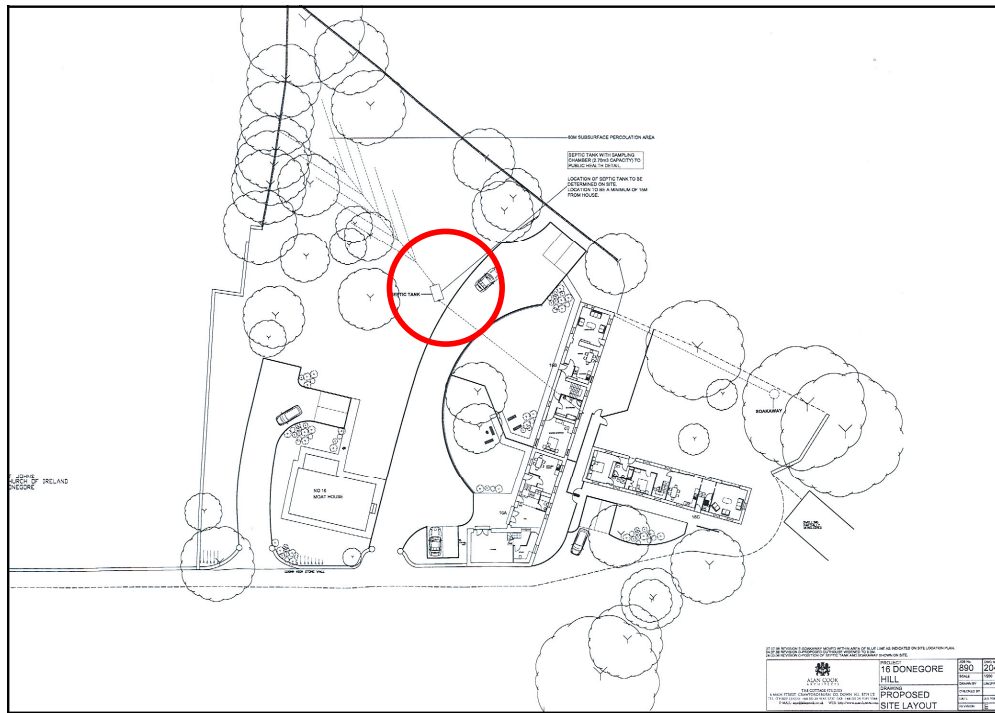


Figure Two: Detailed location map showing the approximate location of the septic tank (circled in red)



Plate One: Proposed area of the septic tank prior to the excavation, looking north.



Plate Two: The trench following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 102), looking north. (Scale is set at 1m).