



Monitoring Report No. 190

**150m north-west of Ballymacilurr Road
Culnady
Maghera
Co. Derry**

AE/10/10

H/2009/0422/O

BRIAN SLOAN

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 150m north-west of Ballymacilurr Road, Maghera, Co. Derry

Townland: Culnady

SMR No. : LDY 032:001

State Care Scheduled Other ✓ [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: C 87610293

County: Derry

Excavation Licence No. : AE/10/10

Planning Ref / No. : H/2009/0422/O

Dates of Monitoring: Thursday 17th December 2009

Archaeologist Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

Three trenches were mechanically excavated to assess the presence and survival of archaeological strata at the proposed development site. The site has been subject to substantial truncation due to an upstanding farm dwelling and associated farmyard. As such, little topsoil was present across the development area and the subsoil had been greatly disturbed. Excavation of the test trenches revealed nothing of archaeological significance, with no further archaeological work recommended at this development site.

Type of monitoring:

Mechanical excavation of three evaluative trenches

Size of area opened:

Three trenches measuring roughly 20m in length and 2m in width

Current Land Use:

Abandoned farm building and yard.

Intended Land Use:

Residential dwelling

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is located approximately 150m north-west of Ballymacilurr Road, Culnady, Co. Derry (Fig.1). The site lies just outside the village of Culnady, lying approximately 2km west of its centre and at a height of approximately 50m above sea level. The proposed development is located in a roughly rectangular field adjacent to the remains of a possible Bivallate Rath (LDY 032:001), although little remains of this monument are visible today. The application site is currently occupied by a derelict farm building, as well as associated outbuildings. It is bounded on all sides by dry-stone walls that have become covered in trees and vegetation.

The monitoring took place as part of the planning application for the construction of two new dwellings and was requested by Neil Yeaman: Caseworker with Northern Ireland Environment Agency. It was requested due to the proximity of the application sites to the rath (LDY 032:001) and the possibility that there may be previously unrecorded remains associated with this monument.

Account of the excavation

Due to the buildings presently occupying the application site, only three trenches could be excavated. These were excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which consisted of an orange boulder clay. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the investigation. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered during the evaluation, which is described in further detail below.

Trench One

Trench One was positioned parallel to a series of north-west/south-east aligned outhouses. The trench measured roughly 19m in length by 2m in width and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at an average depth of 0.1m. A simple stratigraphic sequence of topsoil (Context No. 101) directly overlying the natural subsoil (Context No. 102) was encountered with nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the excavation of this trench.

Trench Two

Trench Two was positioned perpendicular to Trench One, orientated north-east/south-west parallel to a short stretch of dry-stone walling. The trench measured roughly 16m in length by 2m in width and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil, which was encountered at an average depth of 0.12m. Again a simple stratigraphic sequence of topsoil (Context No. 201) directly overlying natural subsoil (Context No. 202) was encountered. A shallow depression in the natural subsoil (Context No. 202) was observed, although this is considered to be a natural undulation in the subsoil that has become filled with topsoil. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered in this trench.

Trench Three

Trench Three was positioned parallel to the dilapidated farmhouse. The trench measured roughly 12m in length by 2m in width and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at an average depth of 0.1m. A simple stratigraphic sequence of topsoil (Context No. 301) directly overlying the natural subsoil (Context No. 302) was encountered. A modern drain (Context No. 303) was observed cutting the natural subsoil (Context No. 302). This feature was characterised as a linear cut filled with loose angular stones, aligned north/south and running towards the farmhouse. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the excavation of this trench.

Conclusions

The three evaluative test trenches excavated in the application area contained nothing of archaeological significance. It is not thought that the development of the dwelling will impact upon previously unrecognized and unrecorded archaeological remains. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out at either of the development sites. No publication of this work is merited save a short summary in the annual *Excavations Bulletin*.

Archive:

Finds: No finds were recovered during the evaluation.

Photographs: Due to technical problems with the camera, no photographs of this evaluation are available.

Plans / Drawings: No plans or drawings were generated during the evaluation.

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Fig. 1: General location map showing location map showing proposed development site (red dot).

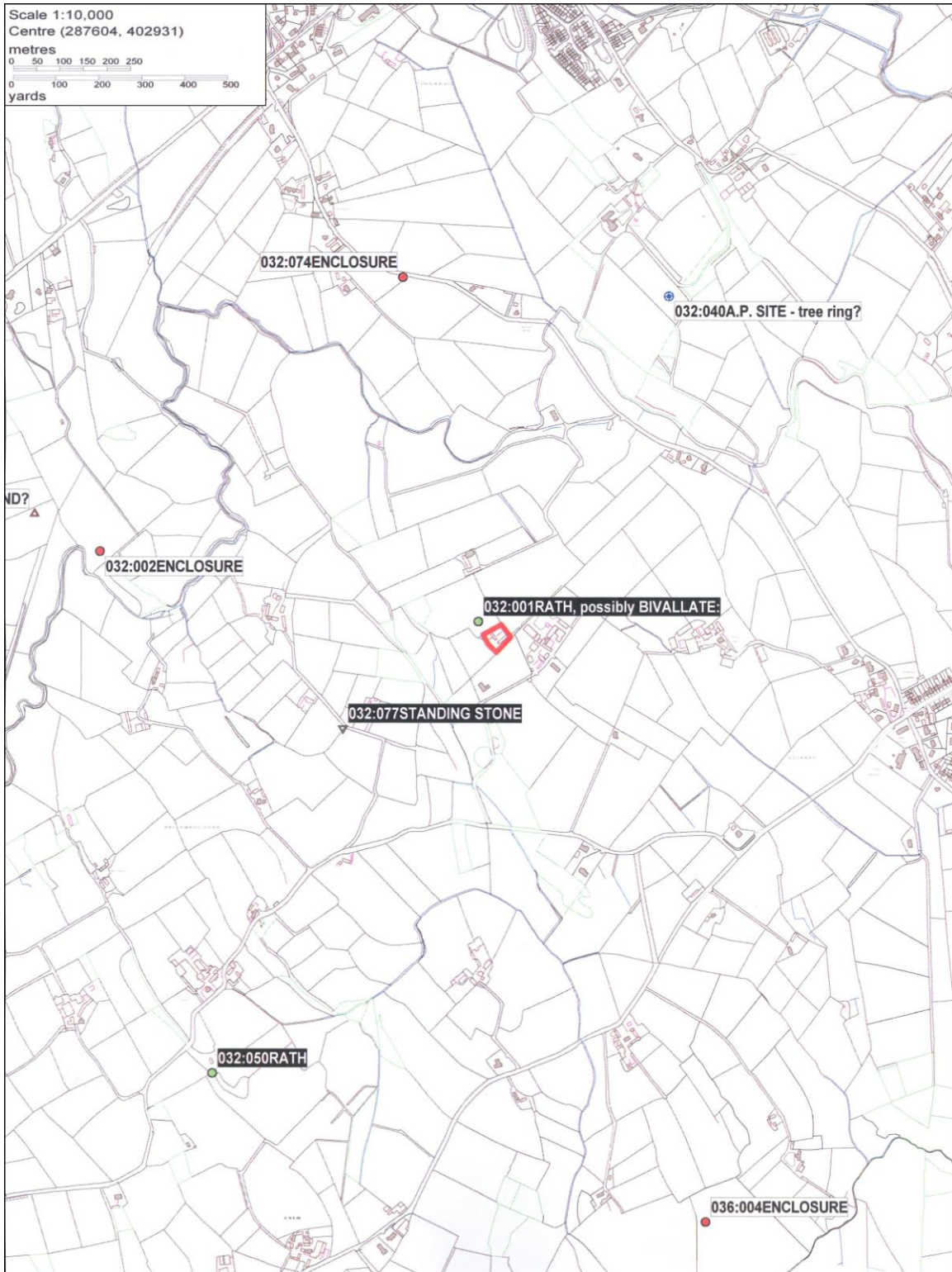


Fig. 2: Map showing proposed application site (outlined in red) and surrounding archaeological monuments.

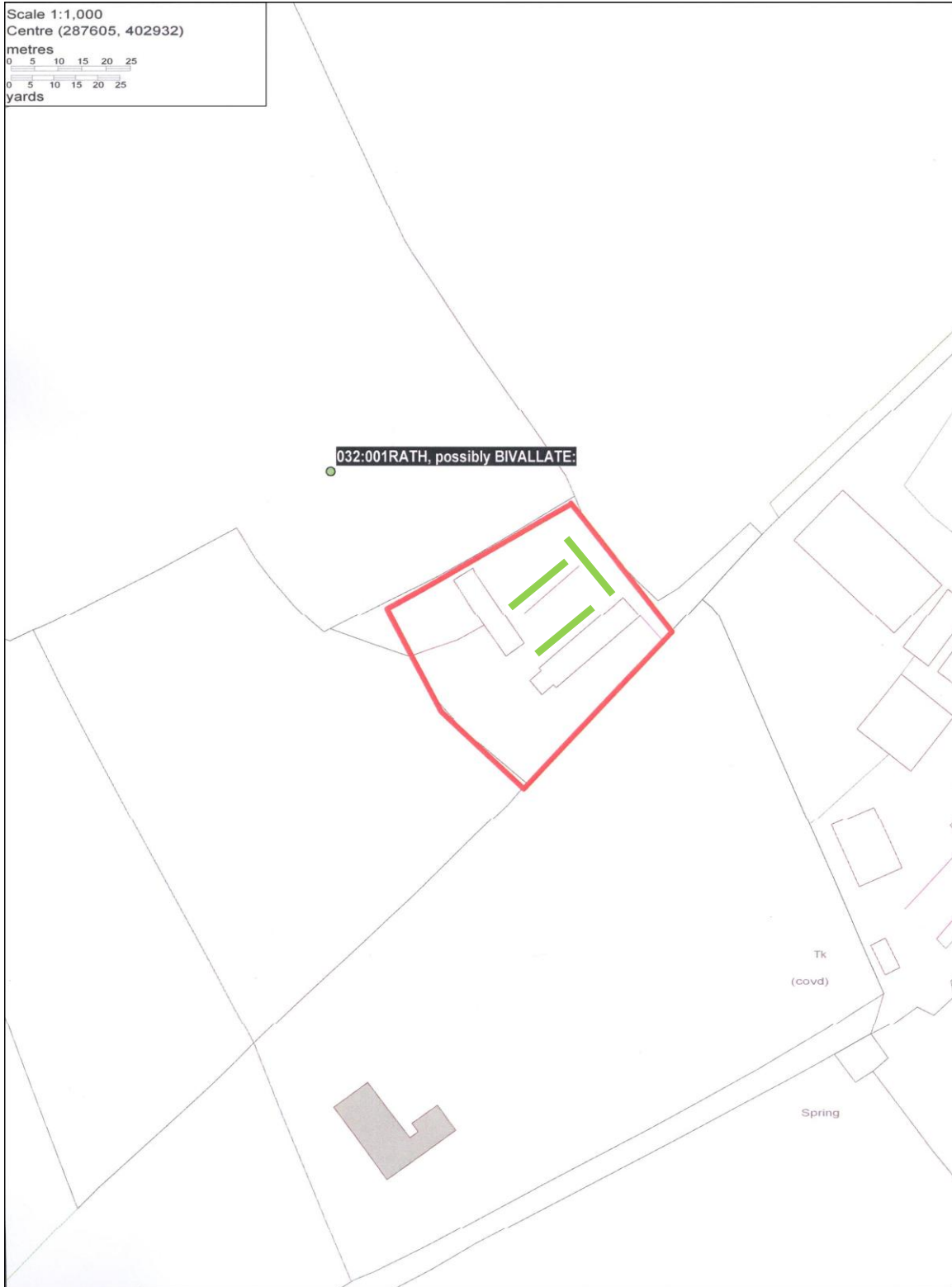


Fig. 3: Map showing proposed application site (red outline) and evaluation trenches (in green).