



Monitoring Report No. 224

**Monitoring of the consolidation of Harryville Motte (ANT 037:022)
Ballymena
County Antrim**

LICENCE NO.: AE/11/48E

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: Harryville Motte and Bailey, Ballymena, Co. Antrim

Townland: Ballykeel

SMR No. : ANT 037:022

State Care X Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: D 1123 0259

County: Antrim

Excavation Licence No. : AE/11/48E

Planning Ref / No. : N/A

Dates of exercise: 7th April 2011

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan, Stewart Alexander and Dermot Redmond

Brief Summary:

Following the unauthorized excavation of a pit in the bailey of the monument, the NIEA requested the CAF to record its sections prior to the pit being backfilled. The pit was cleaned up and photographed and the sections recorded. No further invasive work was carried out during this exercise. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the monitoring exercise.

Size of area opened: original pit measured approximately 2,3m in length by 0.78m in width. Upon straightening of the sides, the pit measured 2.5m in length by 0.9m in width.

Current Land Use: Upstanding monument

Intended Land Use: Upstanding monument

Summary

Introduction

Harryville motte and bailey is located on a ridge overlooking the River Braid in Ballymena, Co. Antrim. The monument consists of a steep sided conical motte and a rectilinear raised platform. A ditch surrounds both the motte and bailey and is itself enclosed by a large well preserved bank. The monument has suffered substantial erosion in the past as it has been used as a recreation area for a local housing development. The monument was identified as necessitating consolidation, which was carried out and reported on previously (Sloan 2008). The current investigation centers on a linear pit that had been excavated into the bailey of the monument. This unauthorized pit was manually cleaned and recorded prior to its backfilling by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). The exercise was requested by Andrew Gault and Paul Logue, both of the NIEA.

Brief Account

The sections of the pit were manually cleaned prior to their recording. The stratigraphy encountered was simple, and consisted of sod and topsoil (Context No. 101) overlying topsoil (Context No. 102). The topsoil (Context No. 102) consisted of a orangey brown gritty loam. This deposit was quite compact and had frequent inclusions of angular stones throughout. Recording of the northern section of the pit (fig. 4) revealed a cut (Context No. 104) that had been made into the topsoil (Context No. 102). The fill of this cut (Context No. 105) was a loose charcoal rich loam, with lenses of ash throughout. Sherds of bottle glass recovered from cleaning up this feature in section would indicate that this feature is not of antiquity and probably the result of a bonfire constructed on the bank of the bailey. The topsoil (Context No. 102) averaged 0.4m in thickness and overlay an undulating deposit of brown gritty loam (Context No. 103). The pit was not investigated further than this level. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the investigation.

Conclusions

Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the recording exercise at Harryville motte, Ballymena, 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*.

References

Sloan, B. 2008. *Consolidation works carried out at Harryville Motte, Ballykeel, Ballymena, Co. Antrim*. CAF Monitoring Report No. 162. Unpublished report submitted to NIEA.

Archive:

Finds:

N/A

Photographs:

The digital images (8 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: The section drawings collated onsite are archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast

Signed: _____ Date: _____

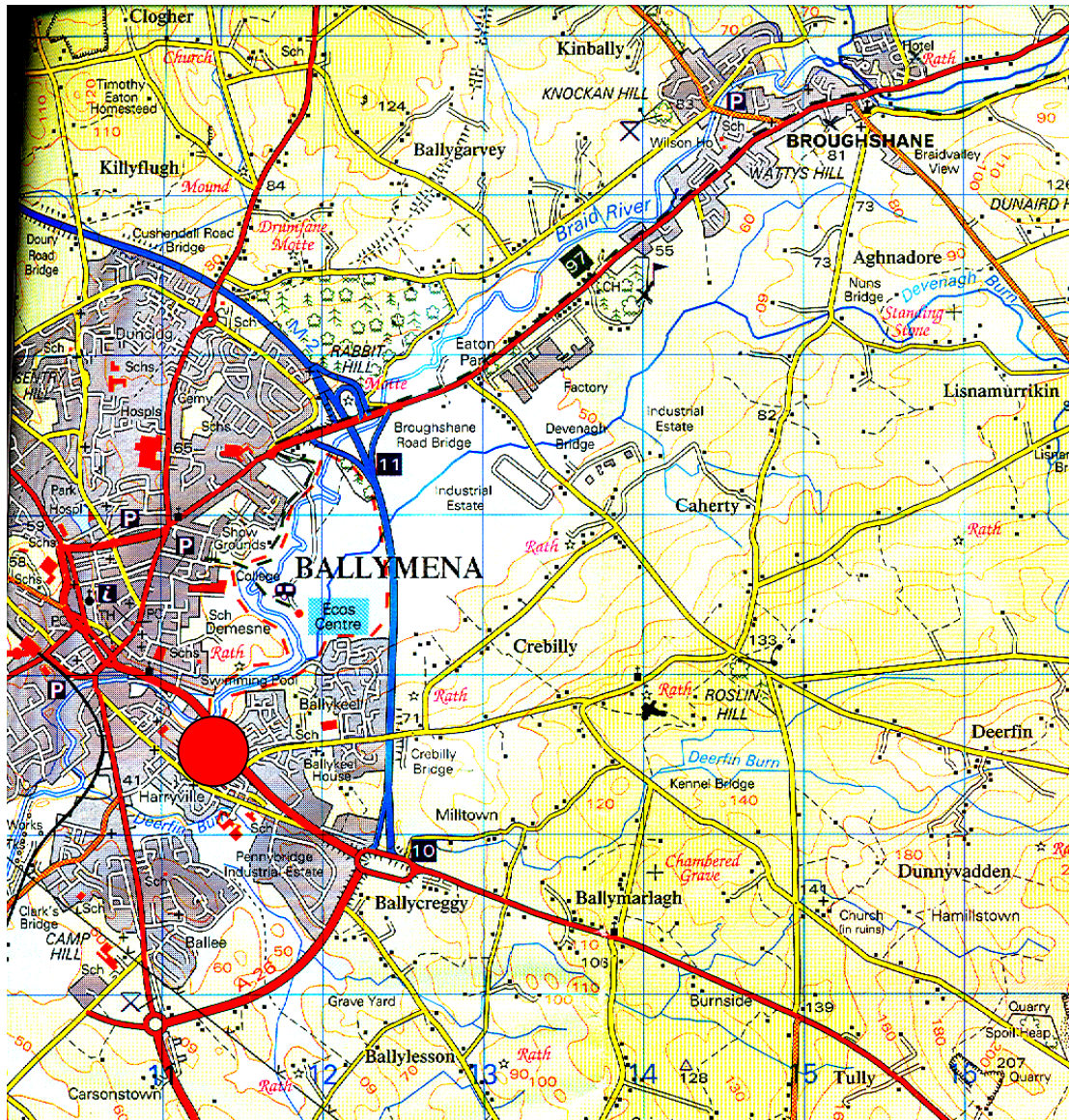


Figure 1: Map showing location of Harryville motte and bailey (Red Dot)

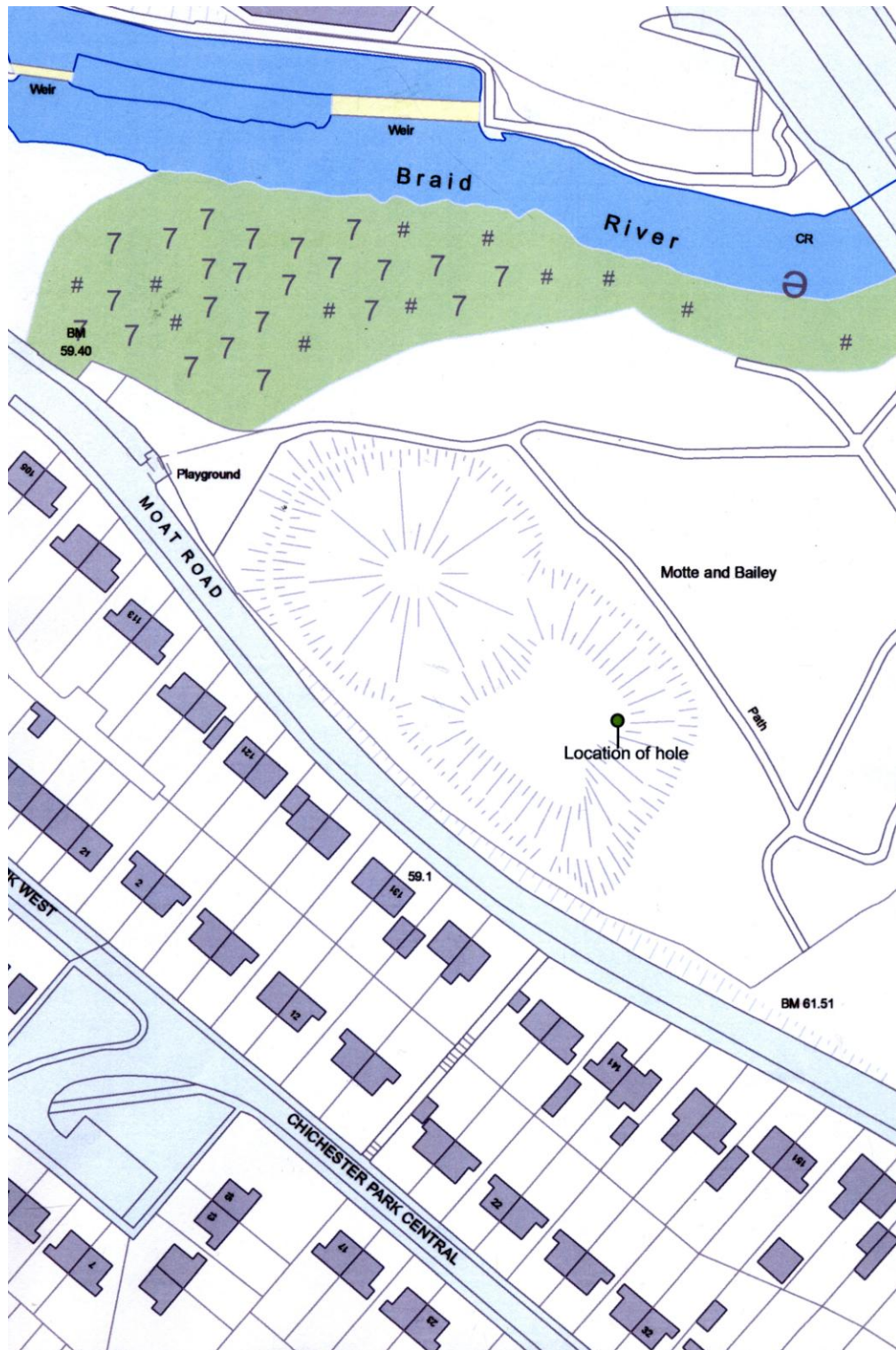


Figure 2: location of the unauthorized pit that was excavated into the Bailey of the monument

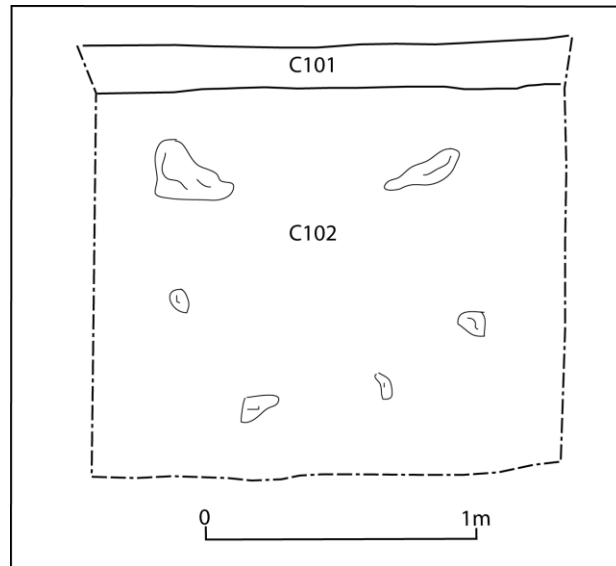


Figure 3: East facing section of the excavated pit

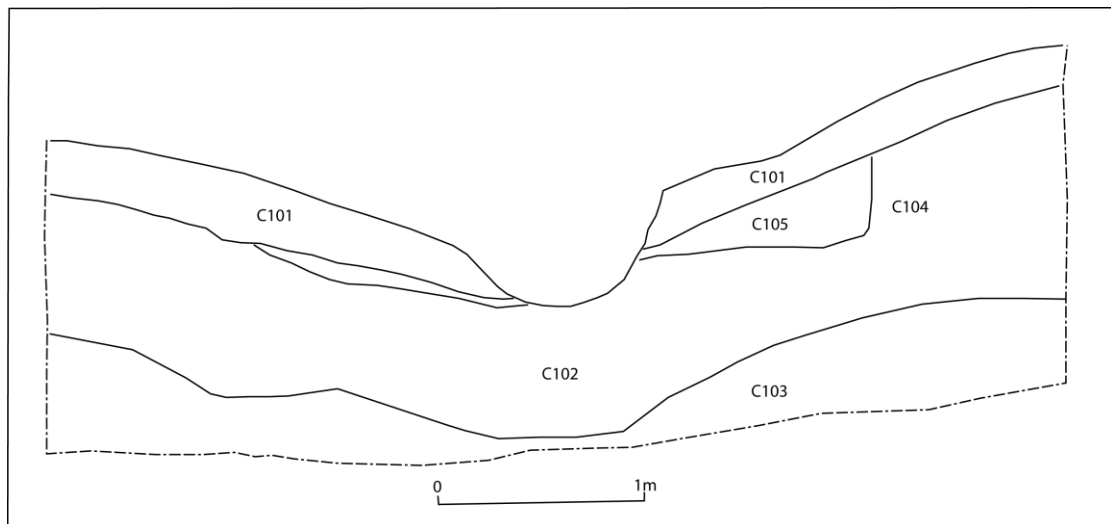


Figure 4: South-facing section of the excavated pit

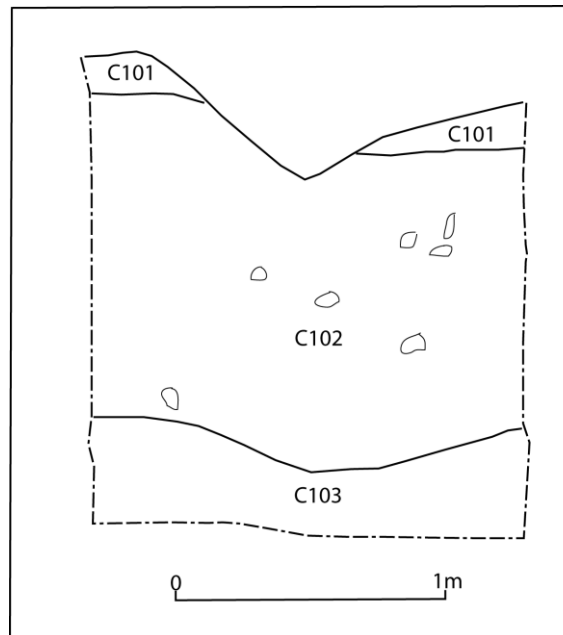


Figure 5: West facing section of the excavated pit

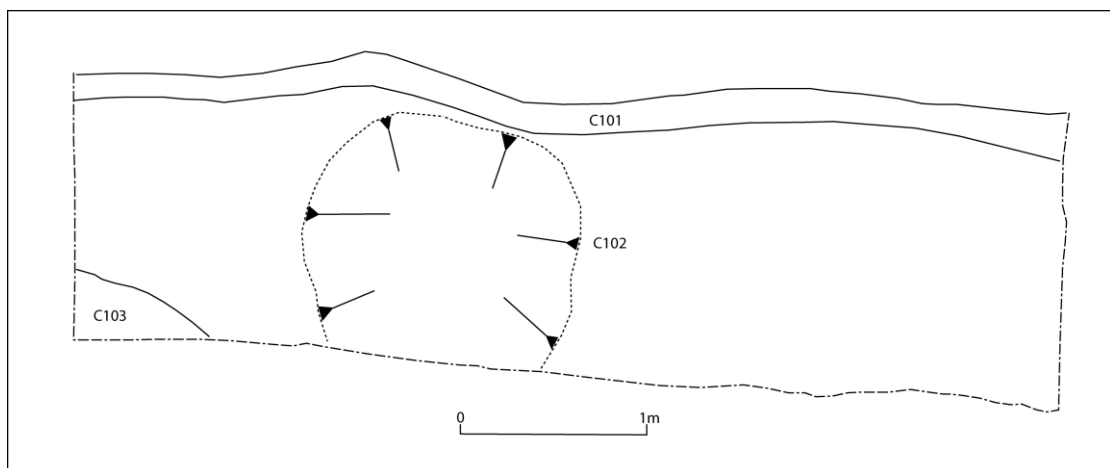


Figure 6: North-facing section of the excavated pit. Note the depression within C102. At the time of cleaning, a pile of loose spoil was located directly beneath this depression suggesting it is the result of either further digging in the pit or perhaps animal activity.



Plate 1: View of the pit prior to cleaning, looking east.



Plate 2: view of the pit following straightening of the sides and cleaning, looking east.



Plate 3: View of the pit following recording and the erection of security fencing, looking south-east.