



Evaluation Report No.236

Crumlin road,
Upper Ballinderry,
Lurgill, Co. Antrim

Licence No. AE/12/11E

Sapphire Mussen

Report Date: 14th March 2012

Site Specific Information:

Site Location: Between Nos. 30 and 32, Crumlin road, Upper Ballinderry, Lisburn

Townland: Lurgill

County: Antrim

SMR No.: ANT 062:053

Grid Reference: J 1321 6984

Current land use: Grassy field

Intended land use: Residential development

Excavation Licence No.: AE/12/11E

Planning Reference: S/2011/0491/O

Date of Evaluation: 13th February 2012

Archaeologists present: Sapphire Mussen and Naomi Carver

Size of area opened: Three trenches measuring approximately 20m in length by 1.6m in width, (approx 94m²).

Type of monitoring: Mechanical excavation of three evaluative trenches across the footprint of the development with a 1.6m wide straight edged sheugh bucket under archaeological supervision.

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in an effort to inform the Planning Service of the presence and survival of archaeological remains that would be adversely affected by the proposed development. The application site is located adjacent to a possible rath site which is described in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record as a non antiquity (NISMR: ANT 062:053). Three test trenches were opened across the footprint of the proposed development and all were excavated to subsoil level (encountered at a depth of approx 0.3m across the site), to evaluate the potential impact of the proposed development on any previously unrecorded subsurface remains. Aside from a modern layer of burnt material and a number of items of modern domestic and architectural debris (glass, brick, nails, clay pipe stems and 19th century glazed pottery), no finds or features of archaeological significance were observed during the evaluation.

Introduction:

An archaeological evaluation of a proposed new dwelling and garage between Nos. 30 and 32 Crumlin road, Upper Ballinderry, Co. Antrim (S/2011/0491/O) (Figure 1), was undertaken on the 13th February 2012. The evaluation was carried out to assess the presence and survival of any archaeological remains that would be adversely affected by the development and to assist NIEA in making an informed response to the Planning Service. The application site (0.2 hectares) occupies an area which was previously used as gardens for the two adjoining houses (Plate 1). Given that the only archaeological records pertaining to the site was a brief mention in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record of a possible rath in the area listed as a non-antiquity (NISMR: ANT 062:053) (Figure 2), it was not deemed necessary to excavate by hand. Three test trenches were opened in the area next to the Crumlin road which covered the footprint of the proposed dwelling and garage (Figure 3). No deposits of archaeological significance were discovered in any of the three trenches which were excavated to subsoil.

Account of the evaluation:

Three trenches measuring approximately 20m in length by 1.6m in width were opened using a 1.6m sheugh bucket and mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision on 13th February 2012. All were aligned roughly east-west, parallel with the southern edge of the site and no discoveries of archaeological significance were uncovered while excavating to the level of natural subsoil (See Figure 3 & Plates 1-9).

Trench 1

Trench 1 ran west northwest-east southeast roughly parallel to the southern boundary of the site. The sod context (C101, consisted of a dark grey brown loamy grass rich sod layer with root intrusions to a depth of approximately 0.1m throughout the site. The sod layer was fairly homogenous and free of stones and void of any artifact material. Below the sod a thick topsoil layer (C102) was present which was formed of mid grey brown fine grained sticky silty clay, loamy garden soil with large flecks of charcoal and root intrusions throughout (Plate 3). The depth of this layer was fairly uniform throughout the site reaching a maximum thickness of 0.25m. Finds from this layer included glass, 19th century glazed ceramics, a fragment of clay pipe stem, corroded

iron and plastics. This context contained domestic building and midden material throughout including sherds of pottery (slipwares, blackware and blue and white china) and bottle glass. The topsoil layer was removed mechanically to reveal reddish orange stony clay subsoil (C103) at a maximum depth of approximately 0.35m (Plate 2). No features were observed in the subsoil. The excavated dimensions of the trench were 19.2m by 1.6m.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was positioned roughly 4m north of and parallel to Trench 1. The trench was mechanically excavated to the natural subsoil which was uncovered at an average depth of 0.35m (Plate 4). The character of the sod layer and the topsoil in this trench was the same as in Trench 1. In the western end of the trench a simple stratigraphic sequence of sod layer (C201) and topsoil (C202) overlying the natural subsoil was encountered. In the Eastern end of the trench an area of bright red orange redeposited burnt clay (C203) and dark black charcoal rich layer (C204) were encountered (Plates 5-7). These layers were within 202 and interpreted as an episode of burning associated with a modern bonfire pit occurring on the top of a gentle rise in the topography of the site. The charcoal-rich layer contained modern bottle glass, plastics and rusted ironwork. The maximum trench dimensions were 20.7m by 1.6m.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was positioned roughly 4m to the north of and parallel to Trench 2 with maximum dimensions of 19m by 1.6m. The trench was excavated to natural subsoil at an average depth of 0.35m (Plate 8). The character of the subsoil and topsoil remained the same as in the other trenches. As with Trench 2, in the western end of the trench a simple stratigraphic sequence of sod layer (C301) and topsoil (C302) overlying the natural subsoil was encountered and in the eastern end of the trench an area of bright red orange redeposited burnt clay (C303) and dark black charcoal rich layer (C304), (Plate 9), were encountered. These layers formed the same stratigraphic sequence as found in Trench 2. The charcoal-rich layer contained the same finds as C204 with the addition of a factory made brick with attached mortar.

Conclusion

The three evaluative trenches excavated at the application site contained nothing of archaeological significance and all three trenches were back-filled on completion of the evaluation. It is not thought that the development of the dwelling and garage will impact upon previously unrecognized and unrecorded archaeological remains. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out at the development site. With the exception of a short summary in the annual *Excavations Bulletin*, no publication of this work is merited.

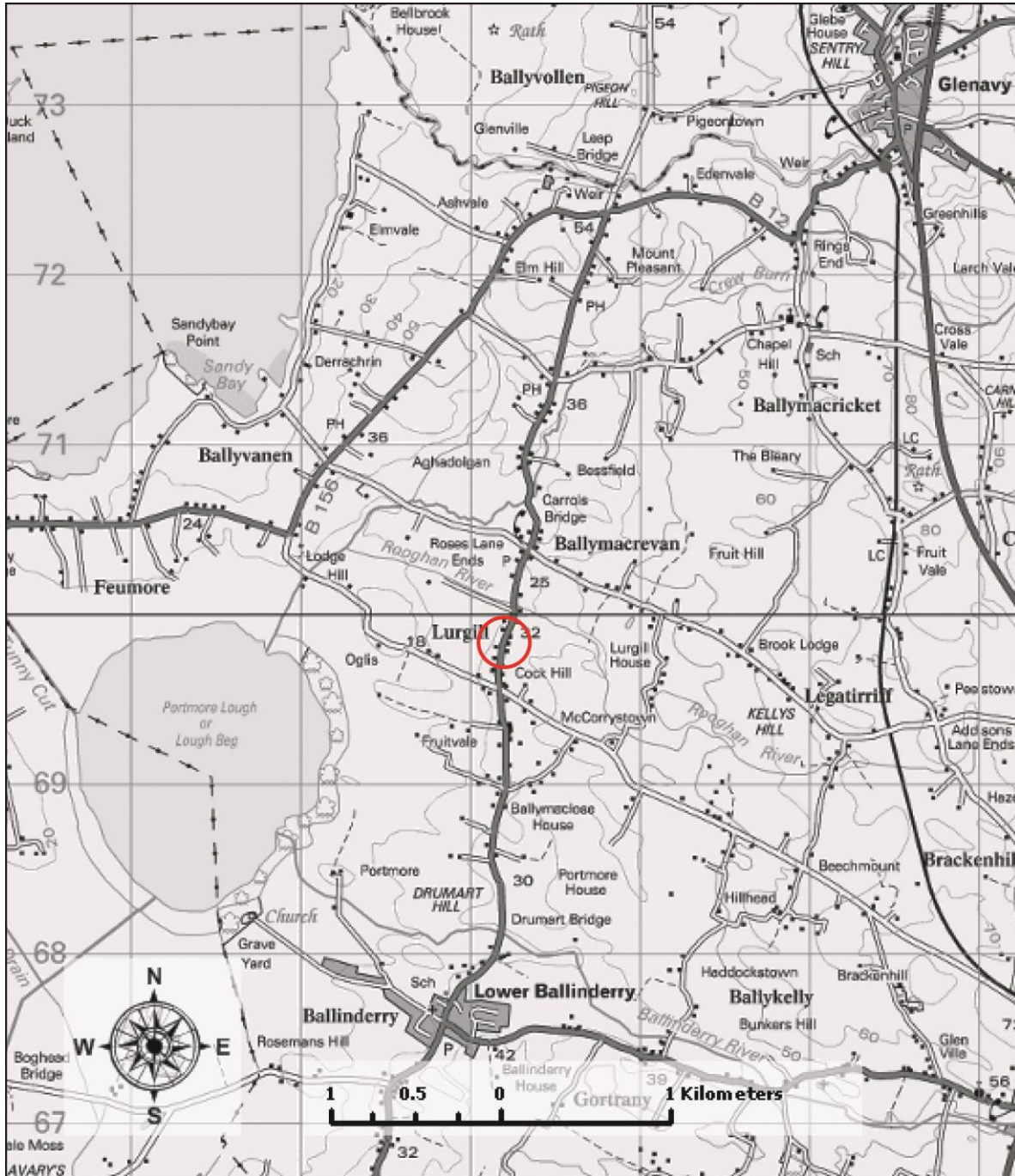


Figure 1: Location of application site, Crumlin road, Lurgill, Co. Antrim (circled in red).

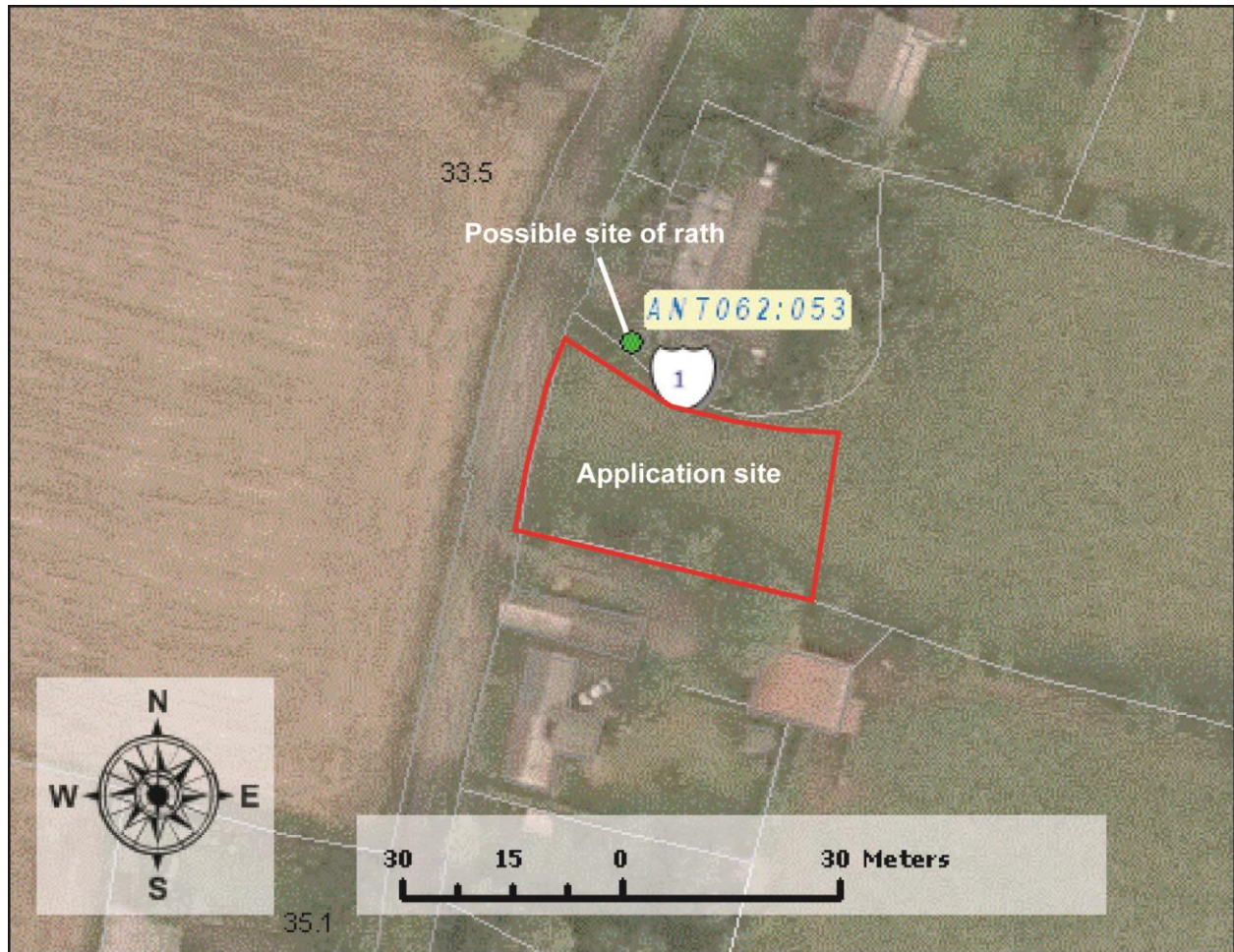


Figure 2: Google Earth image of the application site and proposed location for the possible rath at Lurgill, Co. Antrim; the approximate boundaries of the application site are outlined in red.

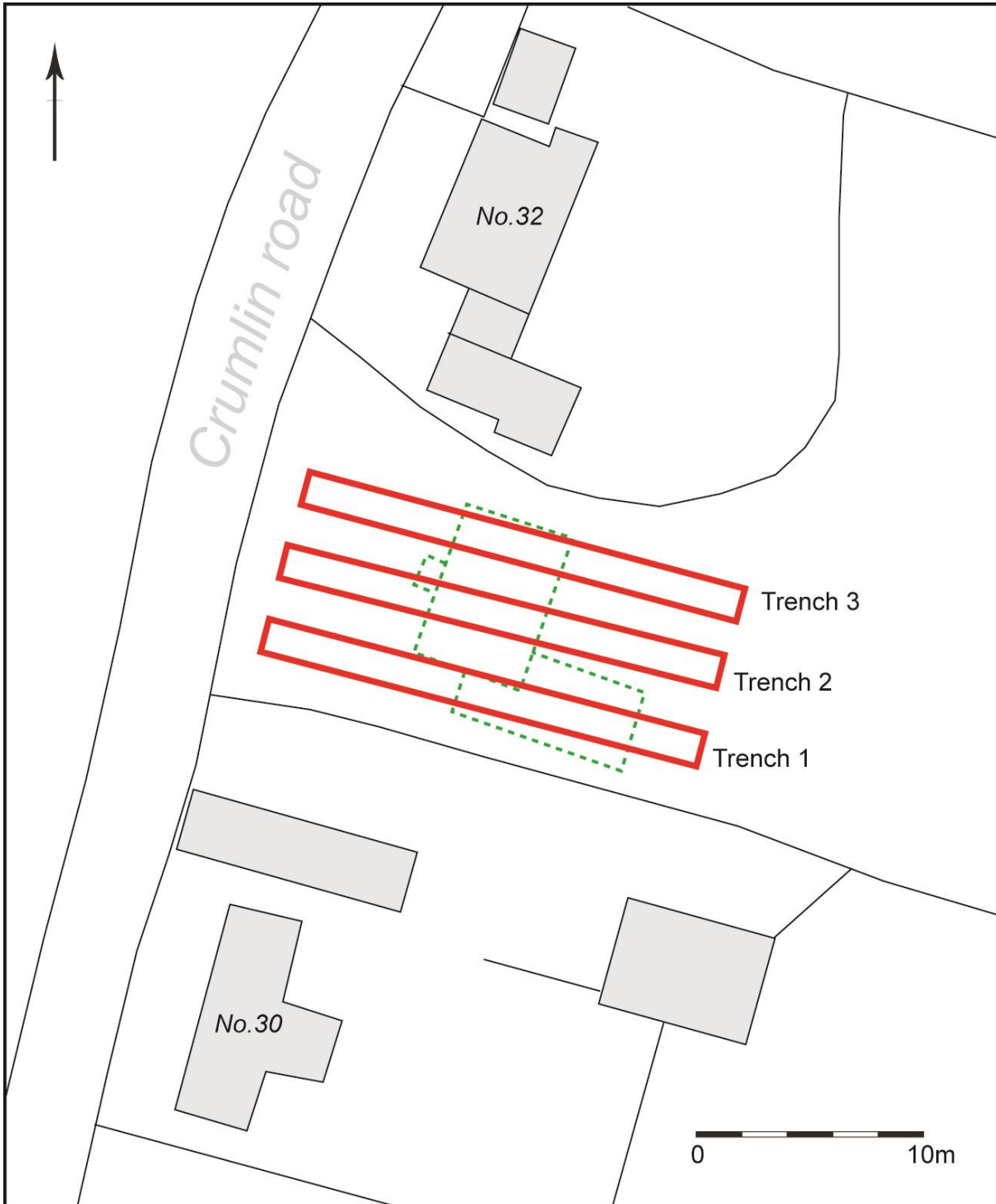


Figure 3: Map of the application site showing approximate location of evaluation trenches (solid red line), overlying the footprint of the proposed residential dwelling (green dashed line).



Plate 1: General view of site looking east southeast prior to excavation commencing.



Plate 2: General view of Trench 1 looking east southeast.



Plate 3: Trench 1; northeast facing section showing flecks of charcoal throughout (C102).



Plate 4: General view of Trench 2 looking east southeast.



Plate 5: Trench 2; Surface of redeposited burnt clay (C203) and charcoal rich burnt layer (C204) at easternmost end of trench prior to removal by digger.



Plate 6: Trench 2; easternmost end of southwest facing section showing layer of burning (C204) with occurrences of redeposited burnt clay throughout (C203).



Plate 7: Trench 2: southwest facing section showing western end of the area of burning (C204) within the topsoil layer (C202) a section of the redeposited burnt clay (C203) can be seen on the right.



Plate 8: General view of Trench 3 looking west northwest after excavation to subsoil.



Plate 9: Trench 3; easternmost end of northeast facing section showing part of burnt layer (C304), with a fragment of glazed blackware within C202.