



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 259

**SITE 100M EAST OF 16 LEARMORE ROAD
CASTLEGORE
CASTLEDERG
COUNTY TYRONE**

LICENCE NO.: AE/13/36E

NAOMI CARVER

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 100m east of 16 Learmore Road, Castlederg, Co. Tyrone

Townland: Castlegore

SMR No. : TYR 016:005

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: H 2548 8299

County: Tyrone

Excavation Licence No. : AE/13/36E

Planning Ref / No. : J/2012/0393/O

Dates of Monitoring: 13th March 2013

Archaeologist(s) Present: Naomi Carver

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site 100m to the east of 16 Learmore Road in Castlegore townland on the outskirts of Castlederg, Co. Tyrone. The work was requested in response to a planning application for a new dwelling and garage on a farm. The proposed development site is approximately 50m to the north of the site of a standing stone recorded in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (TYR 016:005). Five trenches were excavated at the site, ranging in size from 2.0m x 12.0m to 2.0m x 34.0m. No finds or features of archaeological interest were uncovered during the evaluation. It is therefore recommended that there is no need for any further archaeological mitigation at the site.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Five trenches each 2.0m wide and ranging 12.0-34.0m long.

Current Land Use: Agricultural

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site for a proposed new dwelling is located within a farm to the east of 16 Learmore Road, Castlegore, Co. Tyrone (Figure 1). It is around 2km to the south of Castlederg and lies at a height of approximately 120m above sea level. The site is located in the eastern corner of a large, open field which slopes gently to the west, beyond the limits of the development site. The field is bounded by post-and-wire fencing interspersed with hawthorn bushes and mature trees. There is a concrete yard and outbuildings to the south and south-east while the Learmore Road bounds the field to the west. There are good views all around, particularly from the south-west to north (Plates 1, 2 and 3).

The evaluation was requested due to the presence of a standing stone (NISMR TYR 016:005) in the adjacent field, around 50m to the south. The standing stone is no longer extant but was described in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (NISMR) as being located on a terrace of grassland on the west-facing slope of Silver Hill. It was marked on the 1905 Ordnance Survey map but there is no local knowledge of the site. There is another standing stone around 200m to the north-east (NISMR TYR 016:004). Around 0.5km to the north of the proposed development site was the find-spot of a Late Bronze Age gold dress fastener. A geophysical survey and excavation were carried out at the find-spot in 2008 by the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork (CAFDSR93) but no finds or features of archaeological interest were recorded.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a new farm dwelling and garage. It was requested by Kevin Maguire of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Historic Monuments Unit.

Excavation

Five test trenches, each measuring 2.0m wide and 12.0-34.0m long were excavated at the site in the approximate positions shown on Figure 3. The trenches were excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at depths of between 0.40-0.75m.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located in the area of the footprint of the house and garage. It ran parallel to the southernmost field boundary, 11.0m to the north-east of it. It was some 20m from the field's easternmost boundary. The trench was 2.0m wide and 34.0m long and aligned with its long axis roughly north-west/south-east (Plates 4 and 5). The uppermost layer in Trench 1 was the sod and topsoil layer (C101) which consisted of dark greyish brown clay loam with few inclusions. It was 0.1m thick. Below this was a cultivation layer (C102) comprising greyish brown silty clay loam with few small inclusions 2mm long. It was 0.15-0.20m thick.

Below the cultivation layer, at the south-eastern end of the trench, was a layer of brown sandy clay (C103) which appeared to fill a hollow in this part of the site. It was 0.35m thick. There was a small drain (C104) cut into the sandy clay. The drain

was disturbed during the evaluation and found to contain a plastic pipe in a matrix of sub to well-rounded stones 100mm in diameter (C105). Stratigraphically below the sandy clay was the boulder clay subsoil (C106) which ranged from orange clay to sandy clay to crushed bedrock. The surface was encountered at depths ranging from 0.30-0.65m. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance uncovered during the excavation of Trench 1.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was located 3.0m to the south of Trench 1, 5.0m from the southernmost field boundary and 20.0m from the easternmost field boundary. The trench was aligned roughly north-east/south-west. It was 2.0m wide and 33.5m long (Plates 6 and 8). The uppermost layer in Trench 2 was the sod and topsoil layer (C201) which consisted of dark grayish brown loamy clay with some small inclusions 2mm long. It was 0.1m thick. Below the topsoil was a cultivation layer (C202) consisting of grayish brown loamy clay silt with some small inclusions 2mm long. The layer was 0.2-0.25m thick. Below it was a brown sandy clay deposit (C203) which was present at the south-eastern end of the trench and also visible in Trench 1. The clay appeared to fill a natural hollow at this end of the site as it was not the fill of a cut feature. It was up to 0.35m thick. Cut into the sandy clay was a small field drain (C204: Plate 7). The cut of the drain was 0.4m wide. It was filled with sub- to well-rounded stones (C205) with an average diameter of 100mm. Below the stones a plastic pipe was visible. Stratigraphically below the sandy clay was the subsoil (C206) which consisted of orange sandy clay containing crushed bedrock. It was whiteish yellow in colour in parts, particularly at the south-eastern end of the trench. The surface of the subsoil was present at depths of up to 0.75m at the south-eastern end of the trench. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance in Trench 2.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was located approximately 5.0m to the north of Trench 1 and ran parallel to it. The trench was 2.0m wide and 31.0m long (Plates 9 and 10). The uppermost layer in Trench 3 was the sod and topsoil layer (C301) which consisted of dark greyish brown loamy clay which was approximately 0.1m thick. Below this was a cultivation layer (C302) comprising mid brown silty clay approximately 0.2m thick. The deposit of brown clay (C303) was present below the cultivation layer at the south-eastern end of the trench and was up to 0.4m thick. There was no sign of the field drain or plastic pipe which was present in Trenches 1 and 2. Below the brown clay was the boulder clay subsoil (C304) which was stony in parts and varied in colour from orange to yellowish grey. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of 0.7m. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance in Trench 3.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was located 2.0m from the western end of Trench 3 and ran diagonally towards the end of the proposed new laneway (Figure 3). It was aligned west south-west/east north-east. The trench was 2.0m wide and 18.0m long (Plates 11 and 12). The stratigraphically latest layer in Trench 4 was the sod and topsoil layer

(C401) which was made up of dark brown loamy clay silt containing some angular inclusions 20mm long. The layer was 0.24m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer was a cultivation layer (C402) consisting of mid greyish brown silty loamy clay with angular inclusions 20mm long. The layer was 0.20m thick and contained a sherd of 19th century white-glazed ceramic. Below the cultivation layer was the boulder clay subsoil (C403) which varied in colour from orange to greyish orange. There were no finds or features observed in Trench 4. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of 0.44m.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was 6.0m to the south-west of Trench 4 and continued on the same alignment as it and the proposed new laneway. A gap was left between the two trenches to avoid a drain running across the site. Trench 5 was 2.0m wide and 12.0m long (Plates 13 and 14). The uppermost layer in the trench was the sod and topsoil layer (C501) which comprised dark brown silty clay up to 0.2m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer was a cultivation layer (C502) consisting of greyish brown silty clay with angular inclusions which was also 0.2m thick. The cultivation layer overlay the boulder clay subsoil (C503) which was brownish orange in colour and stony in parts. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a maximum depth of 0.4m.

No finds or features of archaeological interest were found during the evaluation. The sandy clay and drains at the south-eastern end of Trenches 1-3 probably represent either natural infill of a hollow at this end of the site and its subsequent drainage or deliberate infill or leveling up of a hollow. The presence of the drains suggest that this area was waterlogged at some point. It is not thought that the proposed development will impinge on any unknown archaeological deposits and therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out. A short summary will be prepared for inclusion in the annual '*Excavations*' bulletin.

Archive:

Finds: N/A

Photographs:

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

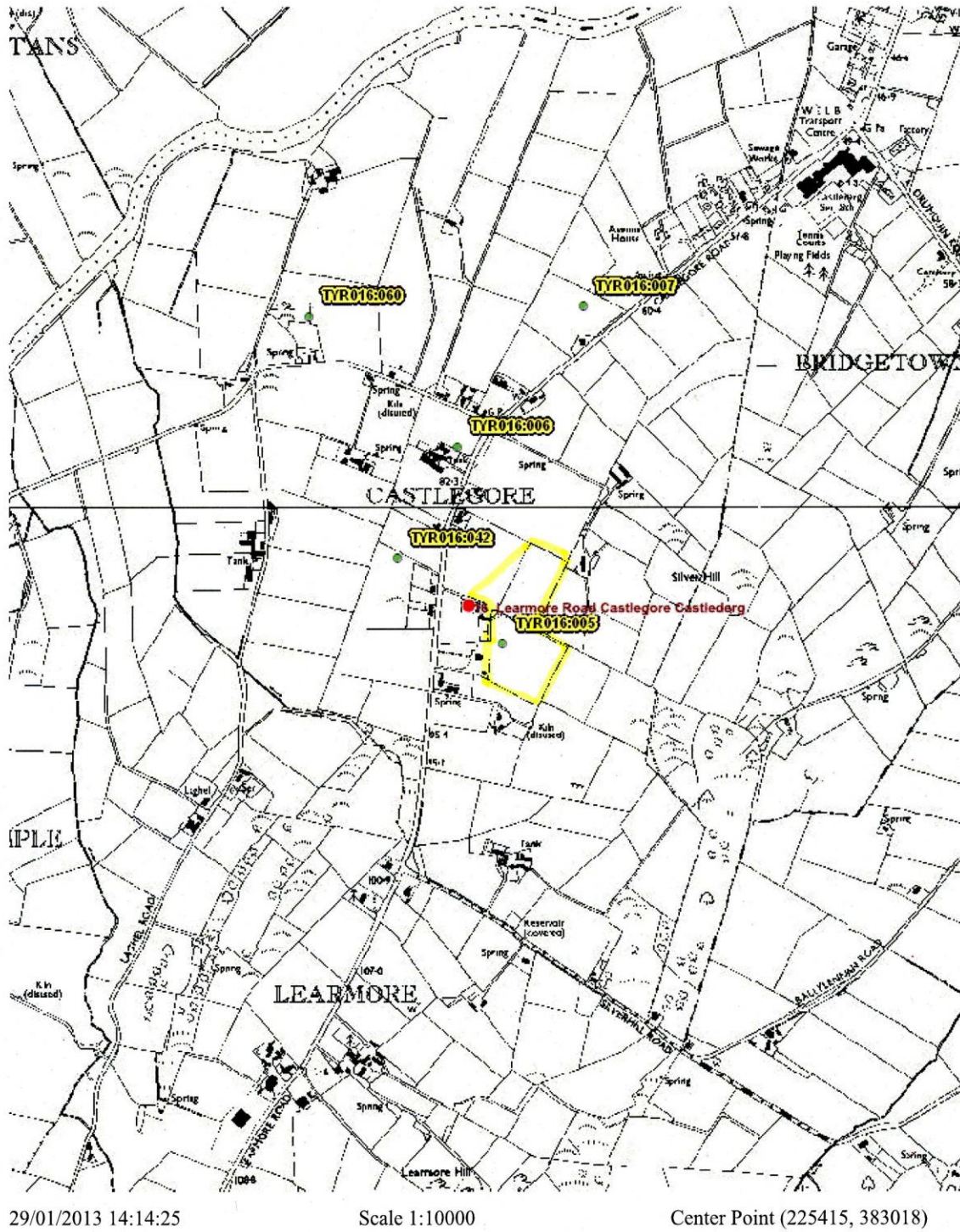
Plans / Drawings: N/A

Signed: _____

Date: _____



Figure 1: Map showing the location of the site (circled in red)



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Figure 2: Detailed map showing the location of the site (highlighted in yellow)

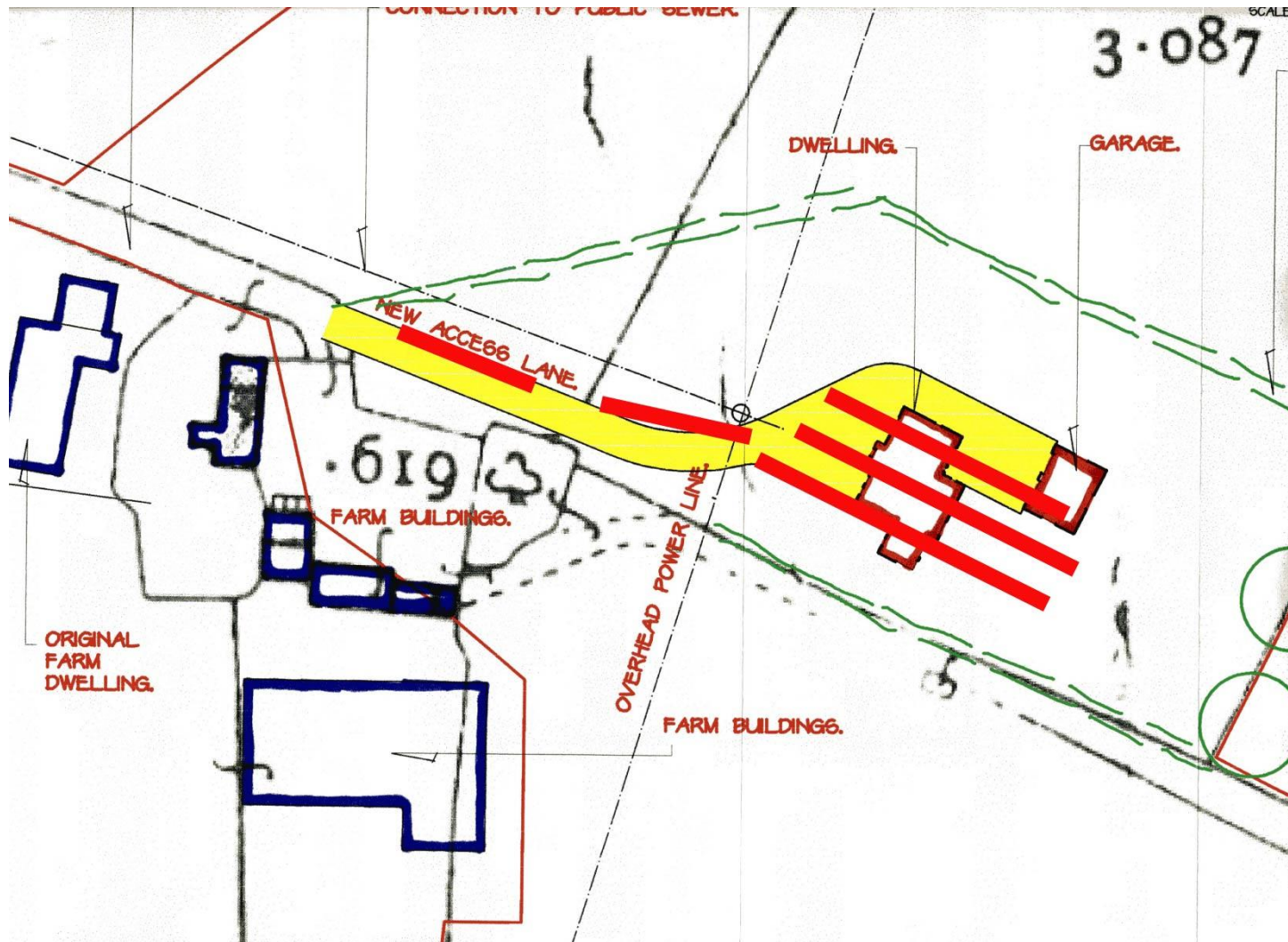


Figure 3: Site plan showing location of test trenches (1-5)



Plate 1: General view of the site during evaluation, looking north-west



Plate 2: General view of the site during evaluation, looking north-east



Plate 3: View of the eastern corner of the site, looking east



Plate 4: South-facing section of Trench 1, looking north



Plate 5: Trench 1 during evaluation showing brown sandy clay at south-eastern end, looking north-west



Plate 6: Trench 2 following excavation to subsoil level, looking east



Plate 7: South-eastern end of Trench 2 showing drain C204/205, looking north-west



Plate 8: South-facing section of Trench 2, looking north



Plate 9: Trench 3 following excavation to subsoil level, looking north-west



Plate 10: South-facing section of Trench 3, looking north



Plate 11: Trench 4 following excavation to subsoil level, looking east



Plate 12: North-facing section of Trench 4, looking south



Plate 13: Trench 5 following excavation to subsoil level, looking east



Plate 14: South-facing section of Trench 5, looking north