



**Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 258**

**SITE AT 24, 26 & 28 BALLYGARVEY ROAD  
DRUMFANE  
BALLYMENA  
COUNTY ANTRIM**

**LICENCE NO.: AE/13/34E**

**NAOMI CARVER**

## Site Specific Information

*Site Name:* 24, 26 & 28 Ballygarvey Road, Ballymena, Co. Antrim

*Townland:* Drumfane

*SMR No. :* ANT 032:022

State Care                      Scheduled                      Other                       [delete as applicable]

*Grid Ref.:* D 1176 0551

*County:* Antrim

*Excavation Licence No. :* AE/13/34E

*Planning Ref / No. :* G/2012/0153/F

*Dates of Monitoring:* 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013

*Archaeologist(s) Present:* Naomi Carver

### *Brief Summary:*

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site at 24, 26 & 28 Ballygarvey Road in Drumfane townland on the outskirts of Ballymena, Co. Antrim. The work was requested in response to a planning application for two detached dwellings with garages. The proposed development site is approximately 50m to the south-east of Drumfane motte and bailey (ANT 032:022). Seven trenches were excavated during the course of the evaluation, ranging in size from 1.6m x 8.0m to 1.6m x 30.0m. No finds or features of archaeological interest were found in any of the trenches and it is therefore recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is undertaken.

### *Type of monitoring:*

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

### *Size of area opened:*

Seven trenches each 1.6m wide and ranging 8.0-30.0m long.

*Current Land Use:* Wasteland

*Intended Land Use:* Residential

## **Brief account of the monitoring**

### *Introduction*

The application site for two proposed new dwellings is located on the outskirts of Ballymena, Co. Antrim (Figure 1). The site, at Nos. 24, 26 and 28 Ballygarvey Road, lies at a height of approximately 80m above sea level (Figure 2). It consists of a rectangular plot with a number of old stone cottages and outbuildings, fronting onto the Ballygarvey Road. The site is particularly overgrown with vegetation and the ground level is uneven, with a large hollow in the middle (Plates 1-5). There is also rubbish, hay bales and rusty farm machinery present in various parts. There are houses to the west of the proposed development site and fields to the north. Record photographs were taken of the old stone buildings which are to be demolished prior to the development (Figure 3; Plates 6-10).

To the east the application site is bounded by a hedge, beyond which is a dwelling house. Drumfane motte (NISMR ANT 032:022), of which there are substantial remains, lies to the north-east behind this house (Plate 11). The motte is described in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (NISMR) as being approximately 140m in diameter and 8.5m high with a flat top. The bailey was originally rectangular and a wide trench separates it from the motte. It is noted in the NISMR that the bailey has been almost destroyed by the removal of soil by a local farmer. In 2010 an archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northern Archaeological Consultancy in a field to the east of the motte. No finds or features of archaeological significance were found during this work.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for two detached dwellings and garages. It was requested by Kevin Maguire of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Historic Monuments Unit.

### *Excavation*

Seven test trenches, each measuring 1.6m wide and 8.0-30.0m long were excavated at the site in the approximate positions shown on Figure 4. The positioning of the trenches was dictated by the presence of stone buildings on the site as well as the hay bales, farm machinery etc. as shown in the general site photographs (Plates 1-5). The trenches were excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at depths of between 0.15-0.50m.

#### *Trench 1*

Trench 1 was located 2.7m from the easternmost field boundary and 2.8m from the northernmost boundary. The trench sloped towards the south-eastern corner of the site. It was 1.6m wide and 30.0m long (Plates 11 and 12). The uppermost layer in Trench 1 consisted of the sod and topsoil layer (C101) which was a dark brown loamy clay of loose consistence. It contained small sub-rounded inclusions around 2mm long. The layer was 0.1m thick and contained a sherd of black-glazed red earthenware.

Below the topsoil was a cultivation layer of mid brown silty clay (C102). It contained some large angular to sub-angular inclusions around 50mm long. The layer has a maximum thickness of 0.3m.

The cultivation layer overlay the subsoil (C103). The surface of the subsoil was shallower at the southern end of the trench but up to 0.43m deep at the northern end. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance in Trench 1.

### *Trench 2*

Trench 2 was located 3.0m to the west of Trench 1 and was aligned parallel to it. It was 2.5m from the northernmost field boundary. The trench was 1.6m wide and 30.0m long (Plates 13 and 14). The uppermost layer in Trench 2 was the sod and topsoil layer (C201) which consisted of dark brown loamy clay topsoil containing numerous sub-rounded to sub-angular stones up to 60mm long. The layer was quite thick- up to 0.4m- and contained numerous tree roots at the northern end. The topsoil directly overlay the subsoil (C202) which consisted of orangeish brown sandy clay. The surface was encountered at a depth of 0.1m-0.4m. There were no finds or features of archaeological interest in Trench 2.

### *Trench 3*

Trench 3 was located in the hollow approximately 5.0m to the west of Trench 2 and 12.0m from the northernmost field boundary. The hollow was roughly sub-rectangular in plan with a steep 1.5-2m-high edge at the northern side. It may possibly represent the remains of a building as there is stone in the vertical section of the northern side, although there are also trees and shrubs growing there. The trench was 1.6m wide and 12.0m long (Plates 15 and 16). It was apparent that this area had been highly disturbed. The uppermost layer in Trench 3 (C301) consisted of rubbish plus large sub-angular stones up to 0.5m long. Below this was a loose, loamy clay topsoil (C302), mostly dark brown in colour. It contained a sherd of glazed red earthenware as well as fragments of glass, plastic and ceramic pipes. Below this was a clay subsoil (C303) consisting of dark brown clay at a depth of up to 0.4m. This had evidence of localized burning. There was no evidence in the trench of *in situ* archaeological features or finds. Another trench was not excavated in this area due to the presence of farm machinery.

### *Trench 4*

Trench 4 opened off Trench 2 at a distance of 2.5m from the northern end of Trench 2 and ran parallel to the northernmost field boundary, approximately 5.0m out from it. The trench was 1.6m wide and 14.0m long (Plates 17 and 18). The uppermost layer in Trench 4 consisted of mid to dark brown loamy clay topsoil (C401) up to 0.4m thick. It contained sub-rounded stones up to 50mm long. Below this, at the western end of the trench, was a burnt/ashy layer. It contained charred wood and appeared to be the result of *in situ* burning e.g. a bonfire for rubbish clearance. The ashy layer overlay the boulder clay subsoil (C403) which was orange in colour and contained numerous stones. There were no features in the subsoil but there was evidence of root disturbance. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of 0.4m.

### *Trench 5*

Trench 5 was located 2.0m to the south of Trench 4 and ran parallel to it. It also opened off Trench 2 and was 1.6m wide and 14.0m long (Plates 19 and 20). The stratigraphically latest layer in Trench 5 was the sod and topsoil layer (C501). This was composed of dark brown loamy silty clay with sub-rounded stones up to 30mm long. The layer was quite thick- up to 0.5m in parts. It contained ceramic pipe. Below the topsoil was the boulder clay subsoil (C502), the surface of which was encountered at a depth of 0.5m. The subsoil contained some sizeable boulders but there were no finds or features of archaeological interest.

### *Trench 6*

Trench 6 was aligned north-west/south-east and to the south-west of Trenches 1-5. The trench was 1.6m wide and 12.5m long (Plate 21). The uppermost layer in Trench 6 was a metalled surface (C601) consisting of sub-angular and sub-rounded stones ranging in length 50-150mm. Below this was the boulder clay subsoil (C602). There were no finds or features of archaeological interest in Trench 6 and it is likely that the metalled surface was associated with the derelict stone buildings on the site.

### *Trench 7*

Trench 7 opened off Trench 6, 2.0m from the northern end and was aligned perpendicular (north-east/south-west). The trench was 1.6m wide and 8.0m long (Plate 22). The uppermost layer was a metalled surface (C701) but the stones were smaller than those of the similar layer in Trench 6 (C601). They consisted of pebble-sized gravel and larger sub-rounded stones 100mm long. Below the metalled surface was sandy orange boulder clay (C702) at a maximum depth of 0.15m. No finds or features were found in Trench 7 and again the metalled surface was most likely associated with the buildings on the site.

No finds or features of archaeological interest were found during the evaluation. 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

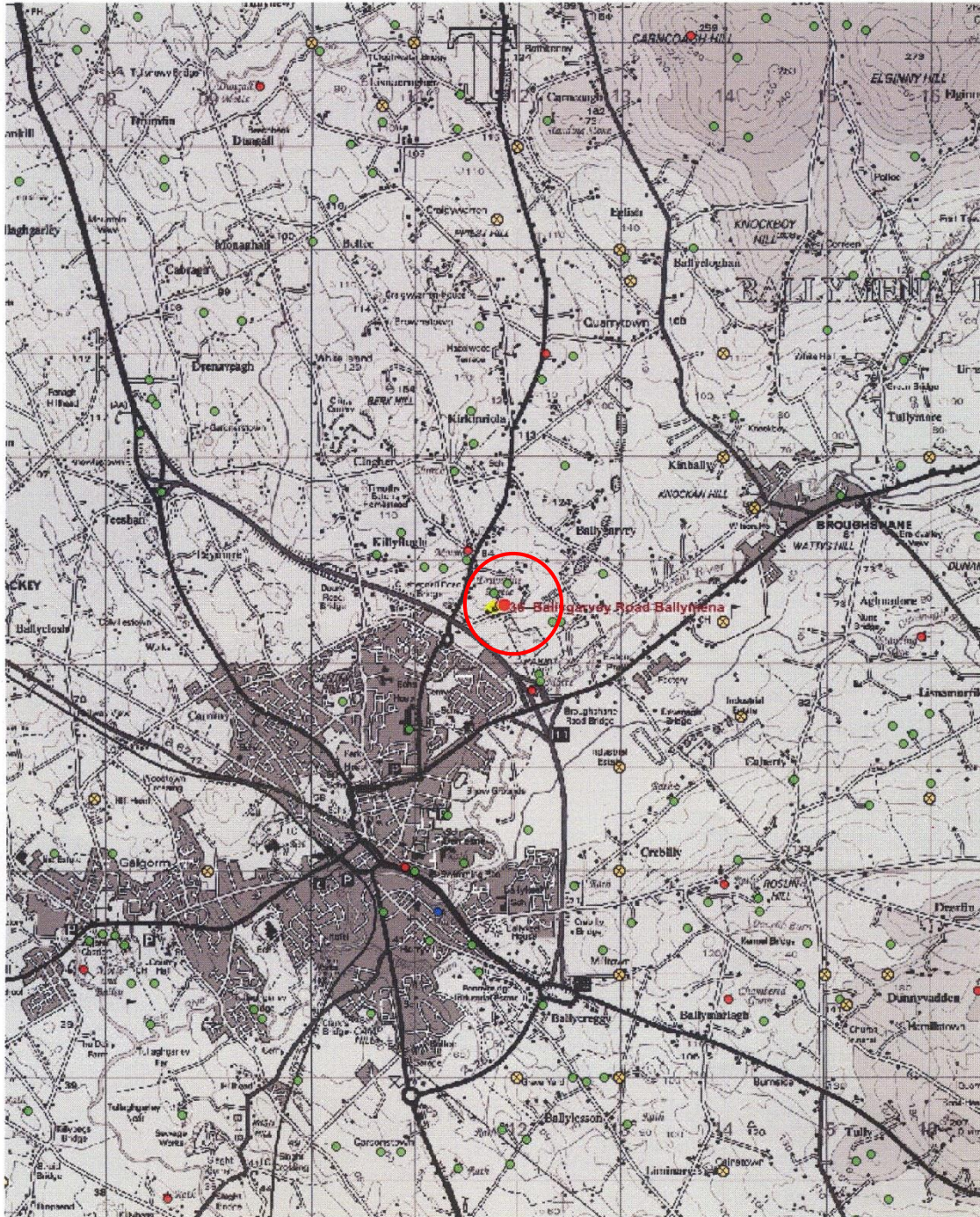
*Photographs:*

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: \_\_\_\_\_



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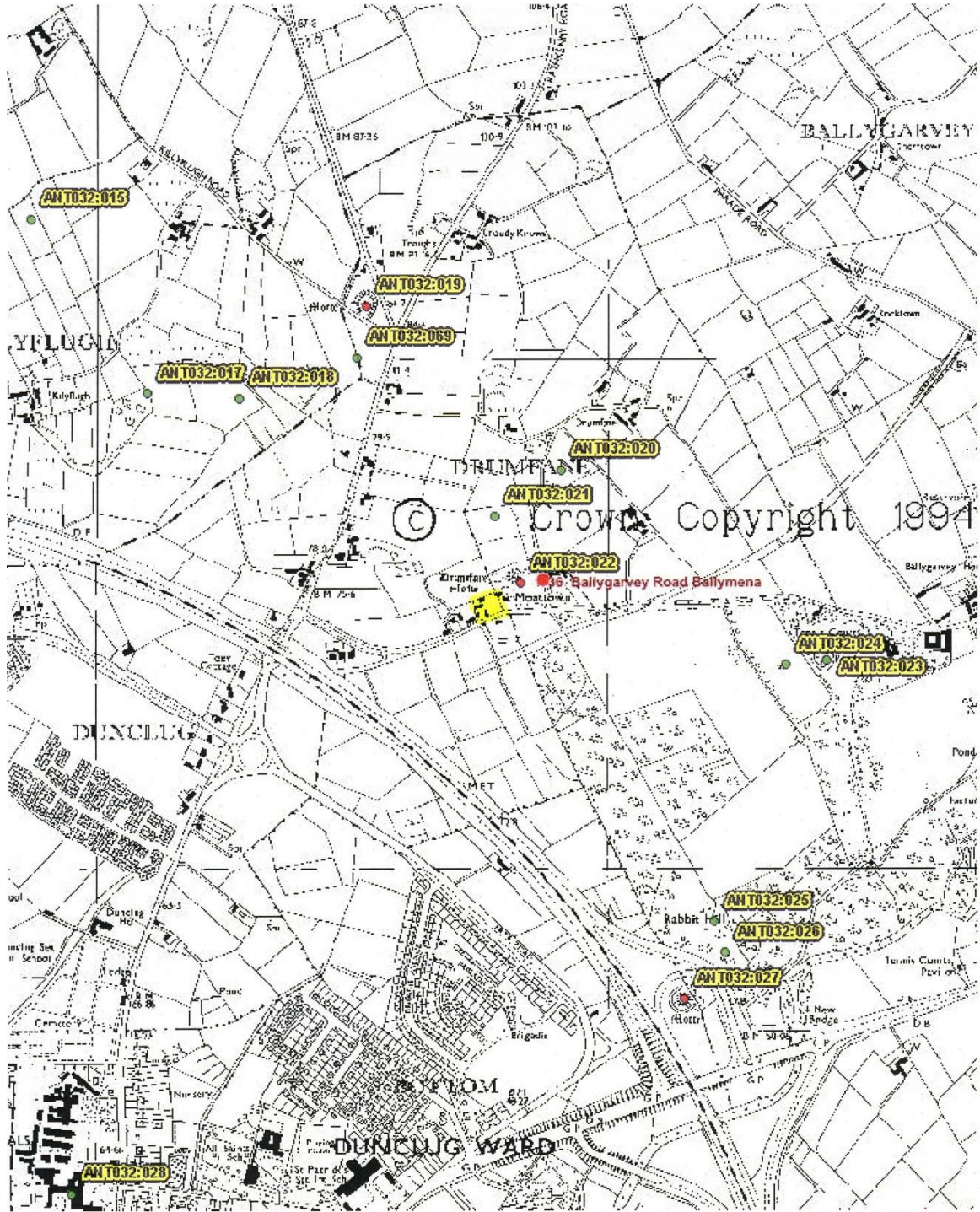
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Figure 1: Map showing the location of the site (circled in red)



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Center Point (311765, 405512)



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



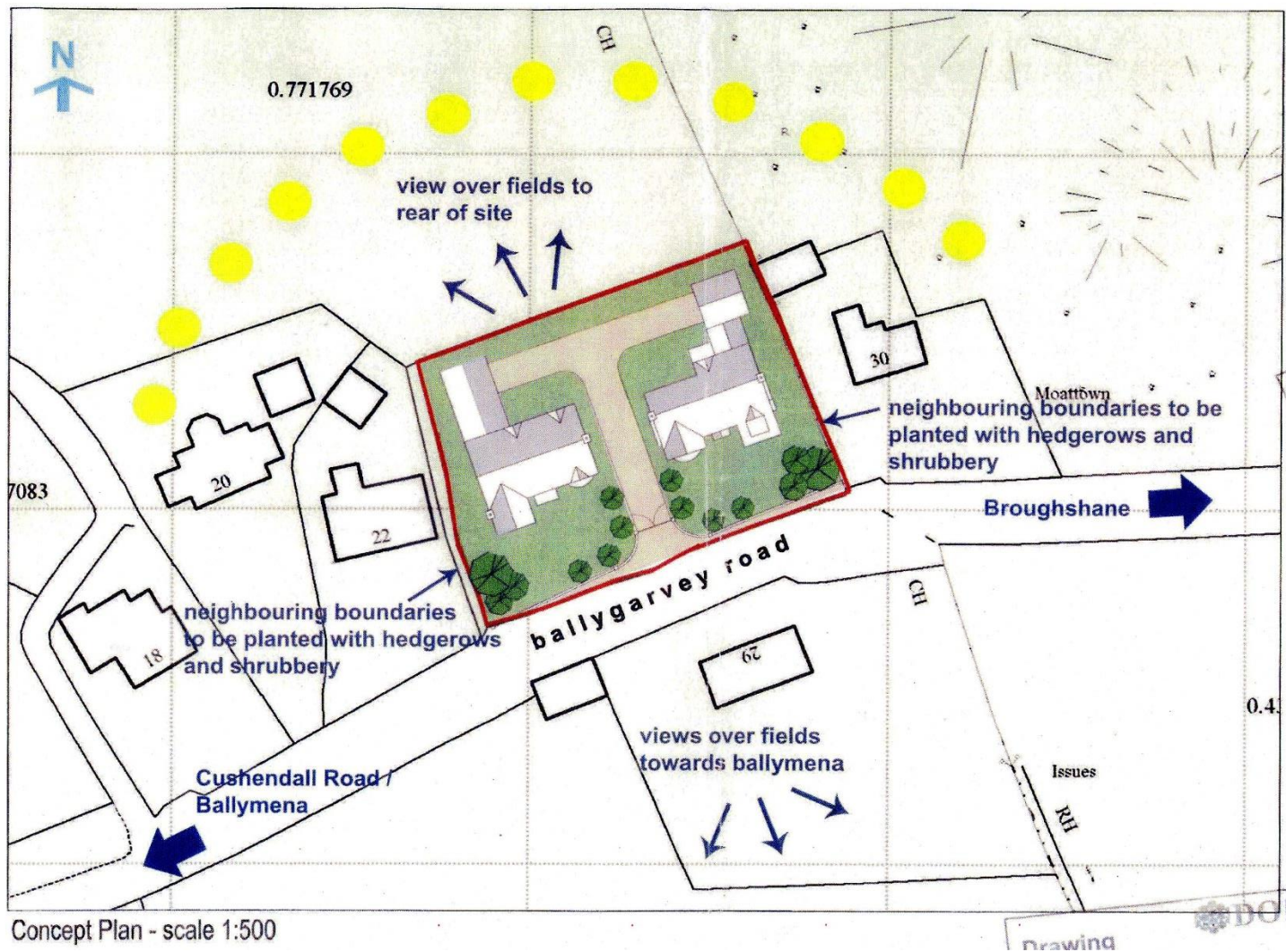


Figure 3: Architect's drawing of proposed development site

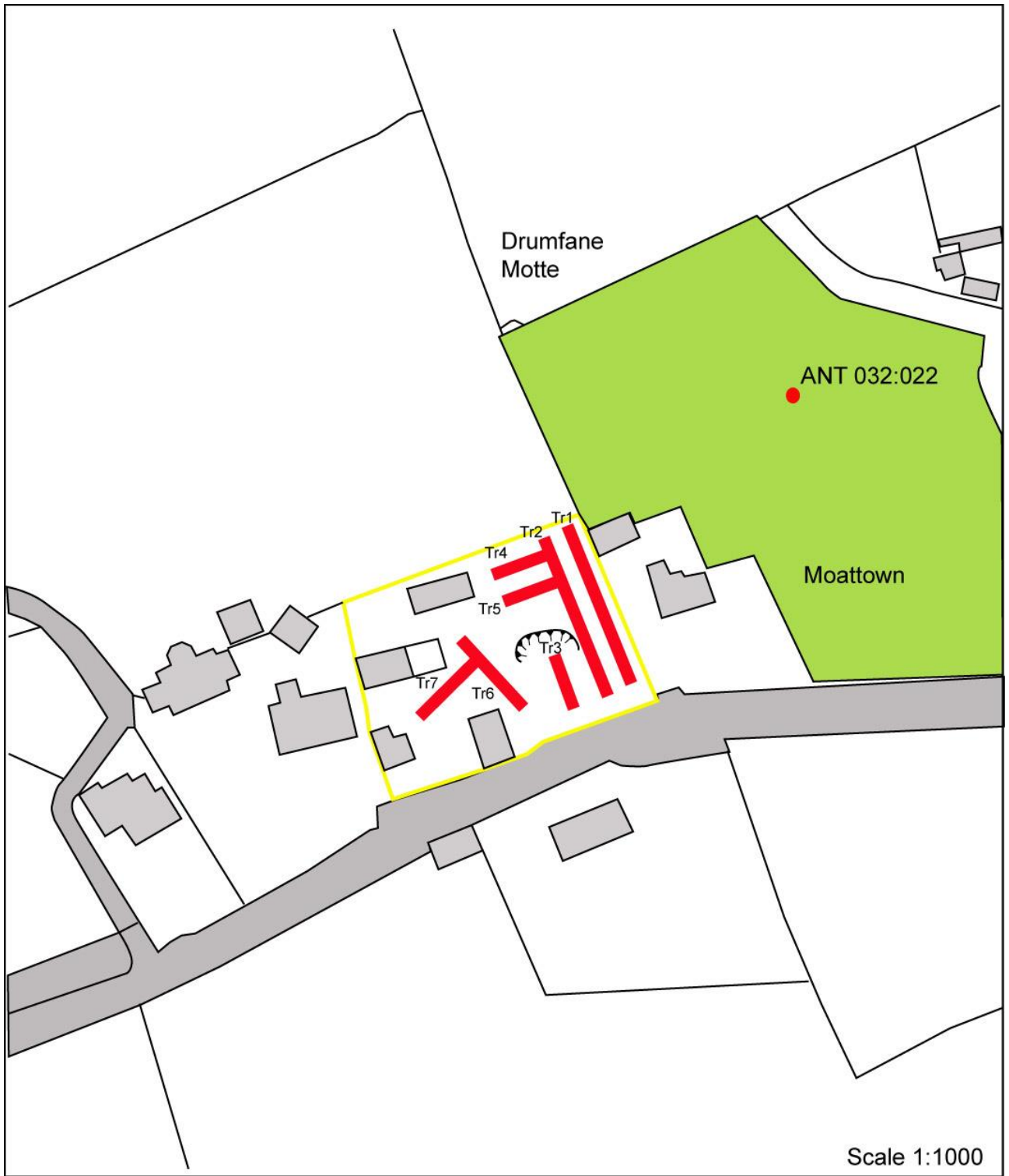


Figure 4: Approximate location of test trenches



Plate 1: General view of the application site, looking west



Plate 2: General view of the application site, looking south towards Ballygarvey Road



Plate 3: General view of the application site, looking north



Plate 4: General view of application site, looking north-east



Plate 5: General view of application site, looking south-west



Plate 6: View of building 1, looking north



Plate 7: View of building 2, looking west



Plate 8: Building 3, looking east



Plate 9: Building 3, looking west



Plate 10: View of the motte, looking north-east



Plate 11: Trench 1 following excavation to subsoil level, looking north





Plate 12: West-facing section of Trench 1 (part of), looking east



Plate 13: Trench 2 following excavation to subsoil level, looking north



Plate 14: East-facing section of Trench 2, looking west



Plate 15: Trench 3 following excavation to subsoil level, looking north



Plate 16: South-facing section of Trench 3, looking north



Plate 17: Trench 4 following excavation to subsoil level, looking west



Plate 18: North-facing section of Trench 4 (part of), looking south



Plate 19: Trench 5 following excavation to subsoil level, looking east





Plate 20: South-facing section of Trench 5 (part of), looking east



Plate 21: Trench 6 following excavation to subsoil level, looking north-west



Plate 22: Trench 7 following excavation to subsoil level, looking north-east