



Monitoring Report No. 115

**Site to the rear of 79 Carricknakeilt Road
Knocknakeilt
Co. Derry**

AE/07/77

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Address: Site to the rear of 79 Carricknakeilt Road

Townland: Knocknakeilt

SMR No: LDY 036:002

State Care *Scheduled* *Other* ✓

Grid Ref: H 8752 9863

County: Derry

Excavation License No: AE/07/77

Planning Ref / No.: H/2006/0219/F

Date of Monitoring: 4th April 2007

Archaeologist Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

The excavation of foundation trenches for a replacement dwelling was carried out under archaeological supervision. Nothing of archaeological significance was noted during the monitoring.

Type of monitoring:

Excavation of foundation trenches by mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision.

Size of area opened: Foundation trenches within an area approximately 20m (north/south) by 10m (east/west).

Current Land Use: Dwelling

Intended Land Use: Replacement dwelling.

Account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is situated to the rear of 79 Carricknakeilt Road, Knocknakeilt, Co. Derry. The site lies approximately 3km from the centre of Maghera at a height of approximately 50m above sea level (Fig. 1). The Back Burn, a tributary of the Moyola River is approximately 500m to the south-west of the application site. A building (80 Carricknakeilt Road) stood on the application site and was demolished prior to the monitoring work being carried out (Plate 1). A number of archaeological monuments are listed on the Sites and Monuments Record as being in the general vicinity. These include a Bronze Age urn burial (LDY 036:042) and an enclosure (LDY 036:054). The application site itself is situated close to 'Fort Hill', a probable Early Christian rath (LDY 036:002) (Figs. 2 and 3) (Plate 7).

The monitoring took place as part of the planning application for a replacement dwelling, and was requested by Andrew Gault, Caseworker with Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. It was requested due to the proximity of the application site to 'Fort Hill' (LDY 036:002) (Fig 3).

Excavation

The programme of works consisted of the archaeological supervision of the mechanical excavation of the foundation trenches for a replacement dwelling. The excavation was carried out using a 0.2m wide toothed bucket on a back acting mechanical excavator. The trenches were excavated to a depth of approximately 0.6m below the surface of the subsoil (Plates 5 and 6), which consisted of red orange boulder clay. A simple stratigraphy was encountered in the monitoring exercise (Plate 4).

Due to the demolition of a disused building on the application site, the upper stratum in the foundation trenches consisted of a thick deposit (average thickness of 0.4m) of mixed rubble and roof slates (Context No. 101). Numerous fragments of bricks, glass, wood and sherds of nineteenth and twentieth-century white glazed ceramics were observed in this deposit, originating from the demolished building. This deposit was generally homogenous throughout the application site and directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 103). However, in the north-west of the application site, the rubble deposit (Context No. 101) stratigraphically overlay a garden soil (Context No. 102) which consisted of a mid to dark brown sandy loam. Numerous active plant roots were present in this deposit as well as infrequent sherds of bottle glass and plastic, and it had an average thickness of 0.2m.

Both these deposits (Context Nos. 101 and 102) overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 103). This deposit consisted of red orange boulder clay and was encountered at an average depth of 0.4m. The excavation continued to a depth of approximately 0.6m below the surface of the subsoil to facilitate the foundations for the replacement building.

The excavation of the foundation trenches at the application site demonstrated that nothing of archaeological significance was present within the tested area. It is not thought that the development will impact upon previously unrecorded archaeological remains. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out. No publication is required save for a short summary in the annual '*Excavations*' bulletin.

Archive:

Finds: N/A

Photographs: 21 digital images, held by the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings: N/A

Signed: _____

Date: _____

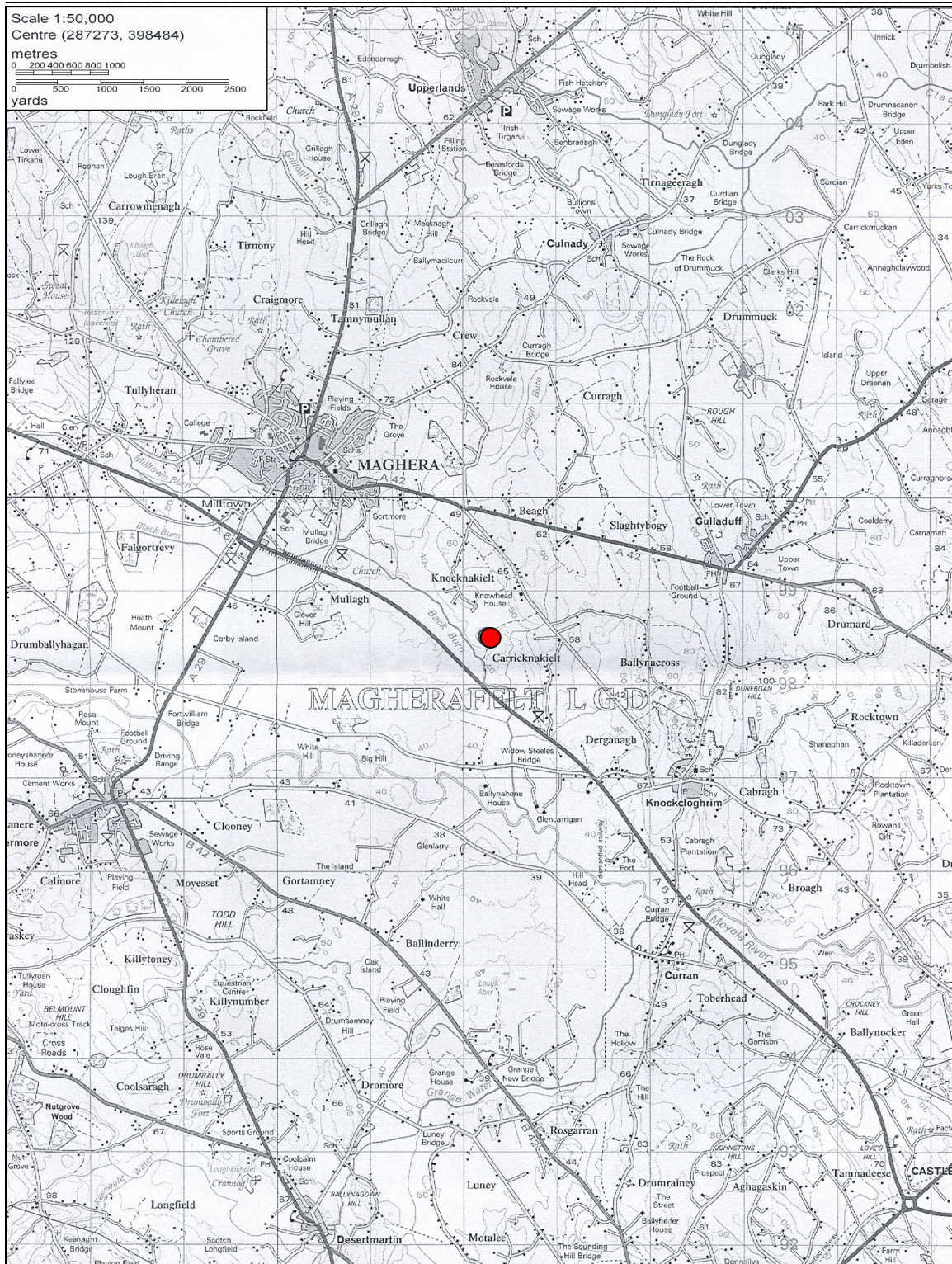


Fig 1: General location map showing application site (red dot).

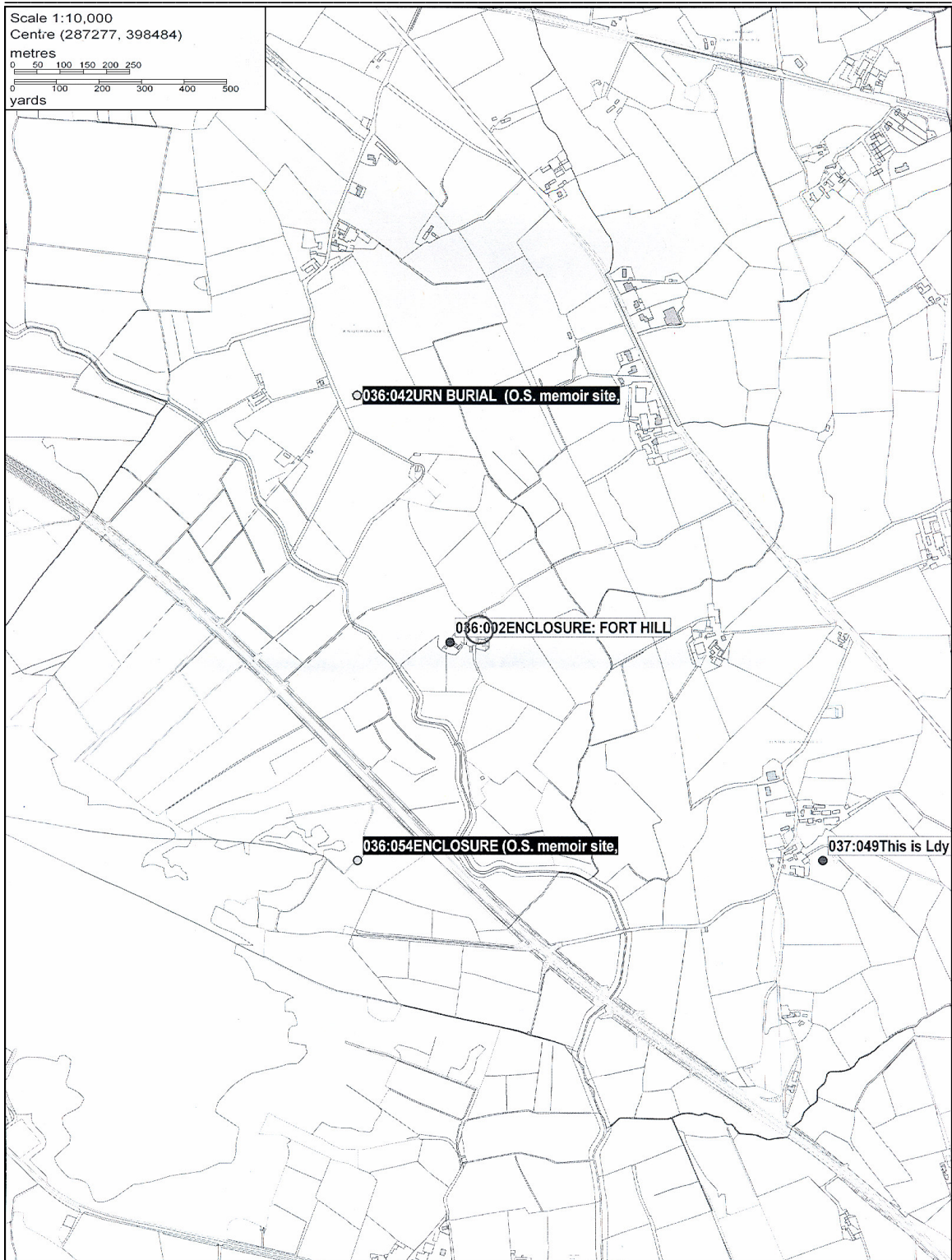


Fig 2: Detailed location map showing application site and archaeological monuments in the vicinity.

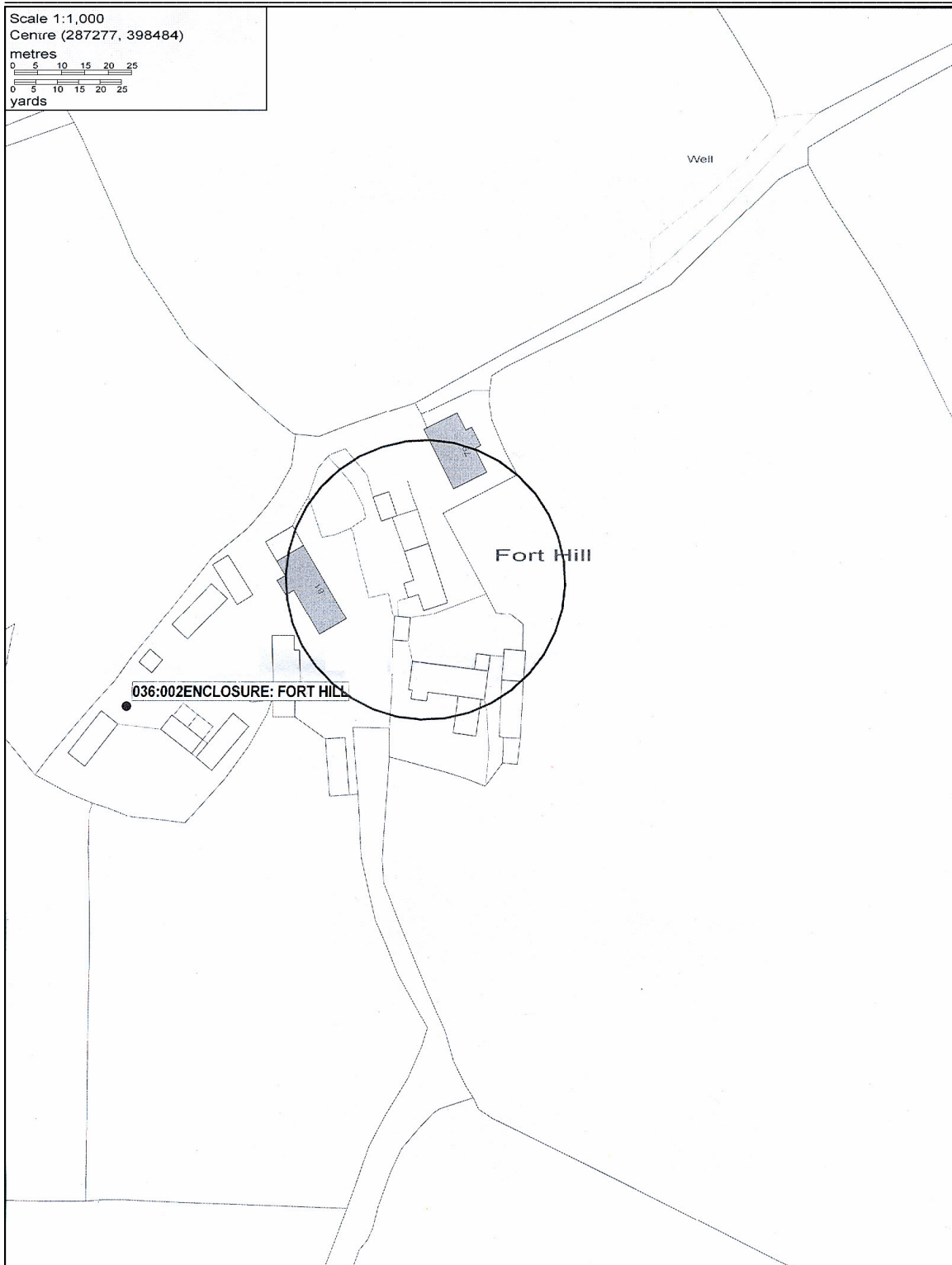


Fig 3: Map showing application site



Plate 1: Application site prior to the excavation, looking south.



Plate 2: Layout of the foundation trench prior to the excavation, looking south-west.



Plate 3: Excavation of the foundation trenches, showing mixed rubble deposit (Context No. 101) and the natural subsoil (Context No. 103), looking north.

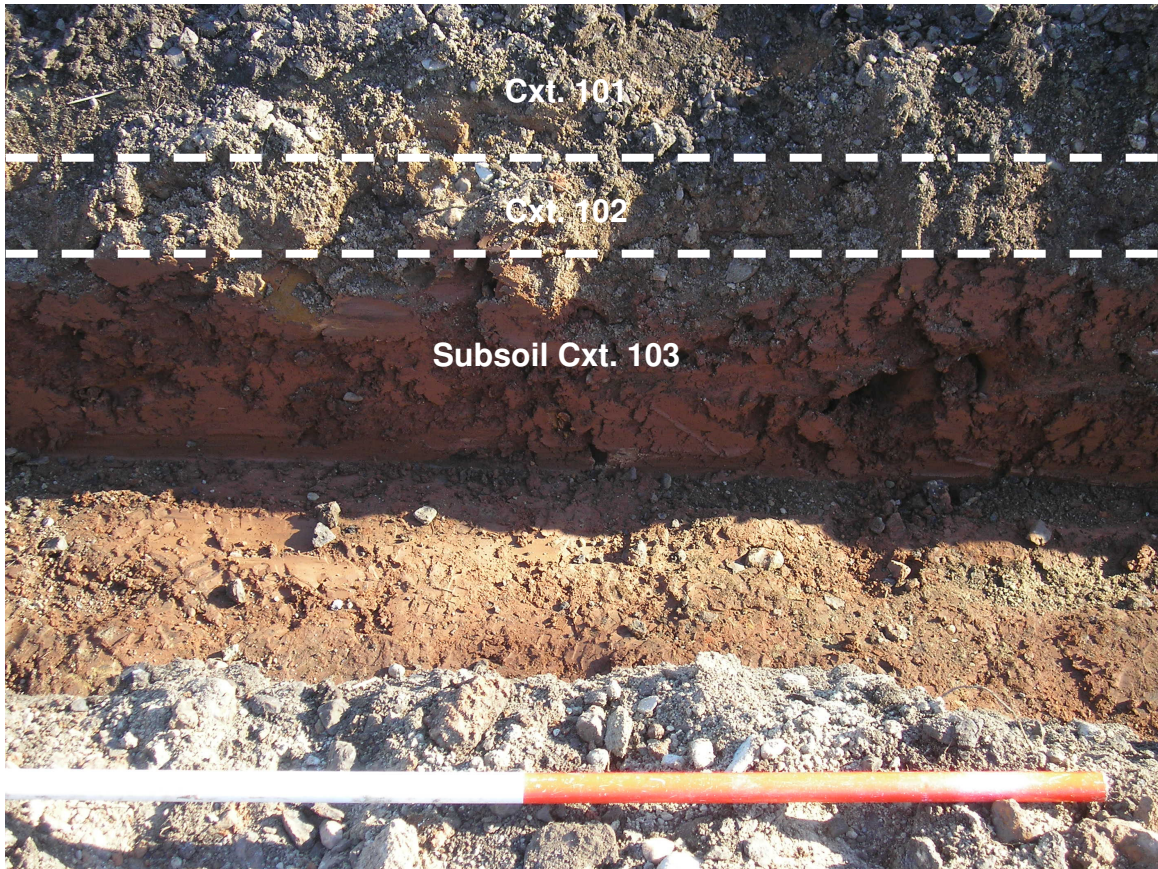


Plate 4: North-west facing section of the foundation trenches.



Plate 5: Northern most foundation trench following excavation, looking east. Note No. 79 Carricknakeilt Road in the background.



Plate 6: Application site following excavation of the foundation trenches, looking south-east.



Plate 7: 'Fort Hill' (LDY 036:002), looking south-east.