



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 122

**SITE ADJACENT TO 82 SEAVERS ROAD
BALLINLISS
NEWRY
COUNTY ARMAGH**

LICENCE NO.: AE/07/85

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: Site adjacent to 82 Seavers Road, Ballinliss, Newry, Co. Armagh

Townland: Ballinliss

SMR No. : ARM 029:001

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: J 0483 2264

County: Armagh

Excavation Licence No.: AE/07/85

Planning Ref / No. : P/2005/0493/O

Dates of Monitoring: 25th June 2007

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site adjacent to No. 82 Seavers Road, Ballinliss, Newry Co. Armagh as part of the planning application for a new dwelling. The application site contains a portion of the Scheduled Danes Cast (ARM 029:001), although the Environment and Heritage Service: Protecting Historic Monuments highlighted an area of the application site approximately 75m north-east of this monument. It is thought acceptable that development could proceed in this area following archaeological mitigation. The evaluation consisted of four mechanically-excavated test trenches measuring approximately 25m by 2m. The trenches contained some evidence of agricultural activity (such as modern spade cultivation furrows), but nothing of great archaeological significance. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Four trenches each approximately 2m wide and 25m in length.

Current Land Use: Pastoral Agricultural

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is adjacent to No. 82 Seavers Road, Ballinliss, Newry, Co. Armagh. The site is just outside the village of Meigh, lying approximately 2km north-west of its centre (Fig. One). The general area of the application site is on relatively high ground, approximately 100m above sea level, and approximately 1.5km south-east of the village of Camlough. The application site is within a large irregular shaped field (Fig. Two), the boundaries of which are delineated by field boundaries consisting of large boulders and mature trees and hedgerows. A post and wire fence demarks the northernmost boundary of the application site. A portion of the Scheduled monument, The Danes Cast (ARM 029:001), is present in approximately 75m south-west of the application site. The Environment and Heritage Service: Protecting Historic Monuments highlighted an area acceptable for development following archaeological mitigation.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a new dwelling and was requested by Neil Yeaman: Caseworker with Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. It was requested due to the proximity of the application site to the Danes Cast and the possibility that there may be previously unrecorded remains associated with this monument.

Excavation

The evaluation consisted of the supervision of four mechanically-excavated test trenches. The trenches measured 25m by 2m and their positions are illustrated in Fig. Two. All three test trenches were excavated to the subsoil which consisted of orange yellow, glacially derived, boulder clay. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at an average depth of around 0.3m.

Trench One

Trench One was located parallel to the northern boundary of the application site. Trench One was approximately 2m wide and 25m long and was aligned approximately west/east. The trench was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (context No. 103) which was encountered at a depth of 0.3m (Plate One).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench One (Context No. 101) consisted of loose, light to mid brown, sandy loam. The layer contained occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was around 0.1m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 101) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 102) which was 0.2m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm). The cultivation soil (Context No. 102) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 103) (Plate Two).

The subsoil in Trench One (Context No. 103) consisted of orange yellow, glacially derived, boulder clay, with occasional inclusions of large rounded boulders. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of around 0.3m. No finds or features of an archaeological nature were observed in this trench.

Trench Two

Trench Two was located approximately 5m south of, and parallel to, Trench One. Trench Two measured approximately 25m long by 2m wide and was aligned west/east. It was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil, which was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.35m (Plate Five).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Two (Context No. 201) consisted of a loose to slightly compact, light to mid brown, sandy loam. The layer contained infrequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm). This layer was on average 0.13m thick.

Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 201) was a cultivation soil of compact, mid brown, sandy loam (Context No. 202) that contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm) and which was 0.22m thick.

Upon removal of the cultivation soil (Context No.202), a linear feature (Context No. 203) running roughly south-west/north-east was observed (Plate Three). The cut of this feature (Context No. 204) was shallow, a maximum of 0.07m deep with a concave base (Plate Four). A single sherd of black glazed earthenware was recovered from the fill of this feature (Context No. 203) and this tentatively dates the feature to the nineteenth or twentieth century (R. O’Baill *pers comm.*). Consultation with the landowner suggested that the field was cultivated with potatoes in the past, and it is probable that this feature represents the remains of a spade cultivation furrow. The cultivation soil (Context No. 202) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 205) (Plate Six).

The subsoil in Trench Two (Context No. 205) consisted of orange yellow, glacially derived, boulder clay, with occasional inclusions of large rounded boulders. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of around 0.35m. No finds or features of an archaeological nature were observed in this trench.

Trench Three

Trench Three was located approximately 5m south of, and parallel to, Trench Two. Trench Three measured approximately 25m long by 2m wide and was aligned west/east. It was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil, which was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.3m (Plate Seven).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Three (Context No. 301) consisted of loose, light to mid brown, sandy loam. The layer contained occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was around 0.1m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 301) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 302) which was 0.2m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm). The proximal fragment of a burnt flint flake was recovered from the cultivation soil, although no other finds or features of a prehistoric date were observed in the evaluation. The cultivation soil (Context No. 302) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 303) (Plate Eight).

The subsoil in Trench Three (Context No. 303) consisted of orange yellow, glacially derived, boulder clay, with occasional inclusions of large rounded boulders. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of around 0.3m. Apart from the isolated proximal fragment of a burnt flint flake, there were no finds or features of archaeological significance recovered from this trench.

Trench Four

Trench Four was located approximately 4m south of, and parallel to, Trench Three. Trench Four measured approximately 28m long by 2m wide and was aligned west/east. It was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil, which was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.3m (Plate Nine).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Four (Context No. 401) consisted of loose, light to mid brown, sandy loam. The layer contained occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was around 0.1m thick. A single sherd of black glazed earthenware was recovered from this deposit. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 401) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 402) which was 0.2m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm). A sherd of brown glazed earthenware, tentatively dating to the eighteenth or nineteenth century (R O'Baoill *pers comm.*) was recovered from this deposit. The cultivation soil (Context No. 402) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 403) (Plate Ten).

The subsoil in Trench Four (Context No. 403) consisted of orange yellow, glacially derived, boulder clay, with occasional inclusions of large rounded boulders. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of around 0.3m. No finds or features of an archaeological nature were observed in this trench.

The four test trenches excavated at the application site contained nothing of archaeological significance. 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:

The artefacts found during the evaluation are temporarily housed within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

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: _____

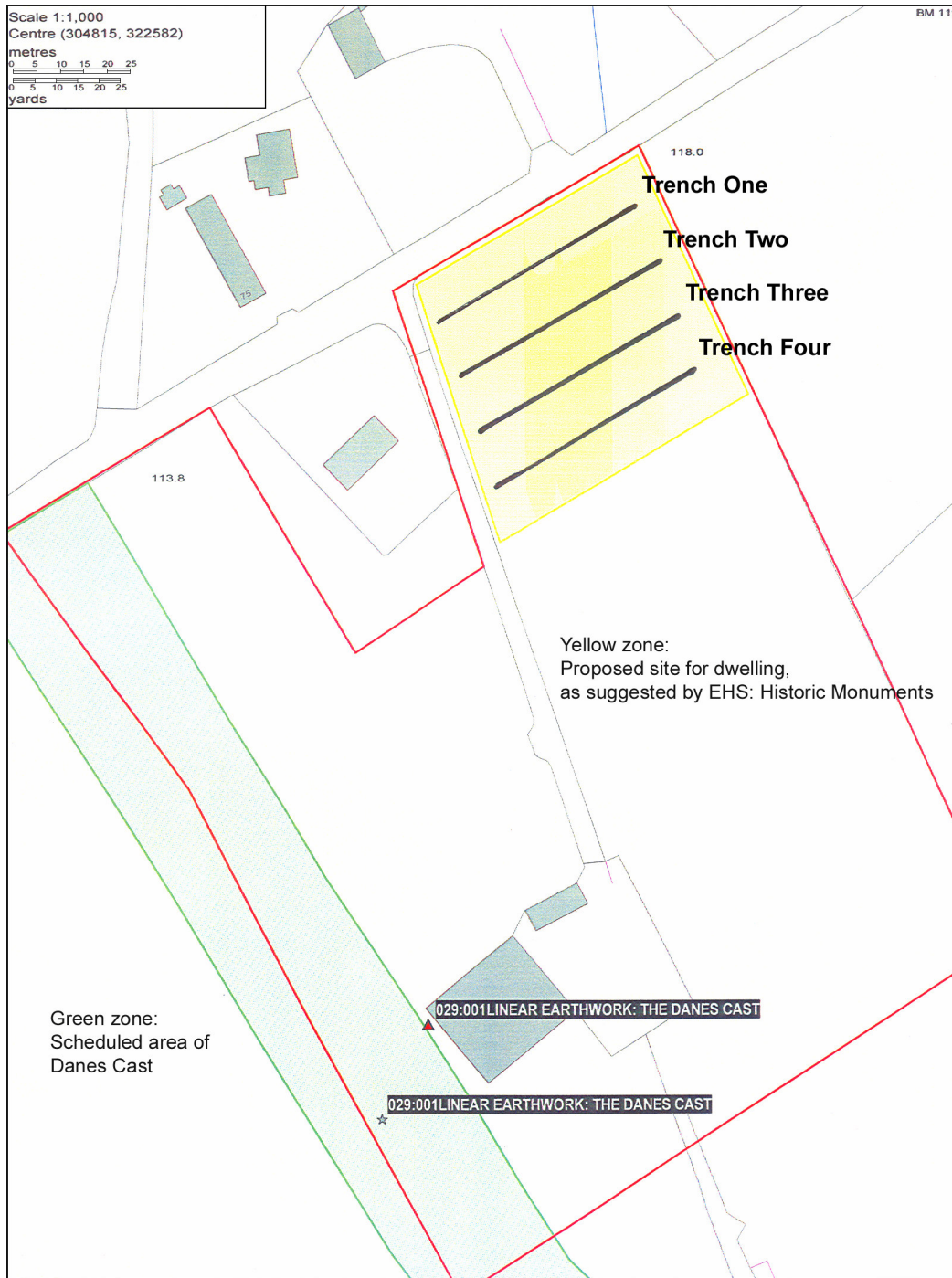


Figure Two: Detailed map of application site showing proximity to The Danes Cast (ARM 029:001).



*Plate One: Trench One following excavation to the surface of the subsoil
(Context No. 103), looking west.*

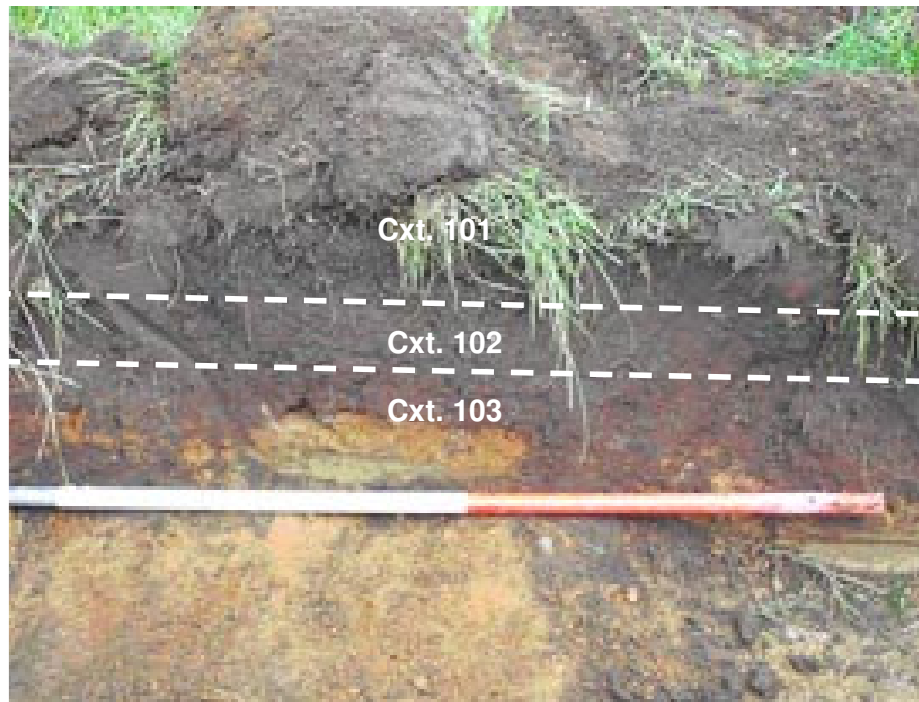


Plate Two: North facing section of Trench One.



Plate Three: Linear feature (Context No. 203) in Trench Two, looking east.

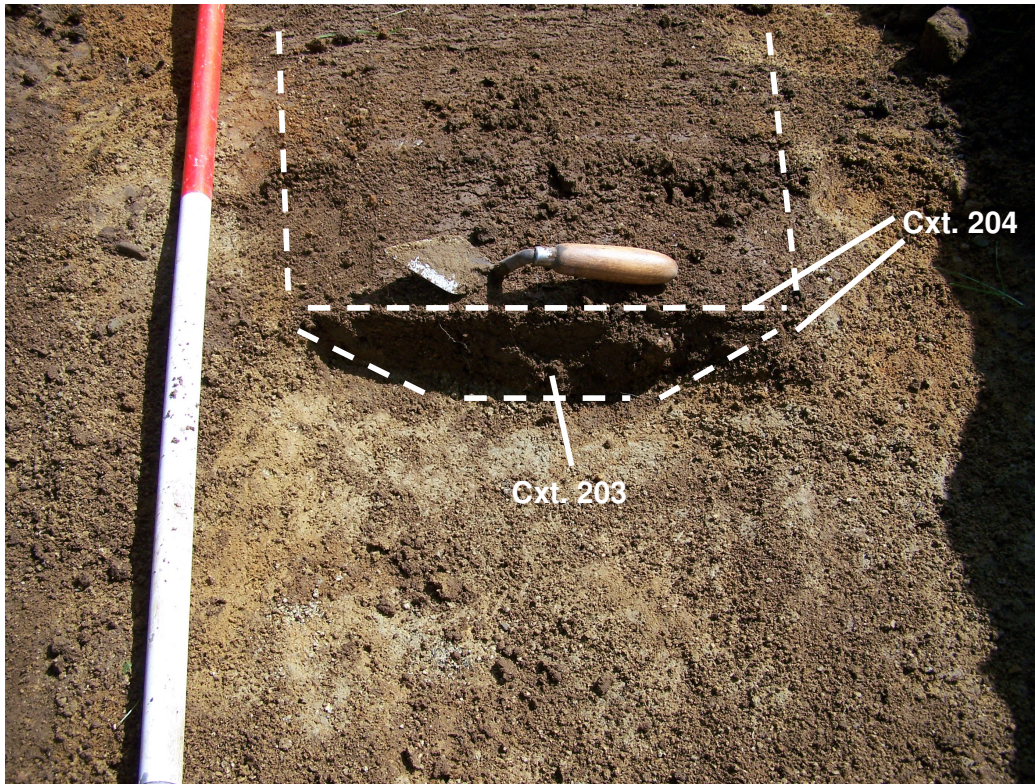


Plate Four: Linear feature following excavation of a section of the fill (Context No. 203), looking east.



Plate Five: Trench Two following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 205), looking west.

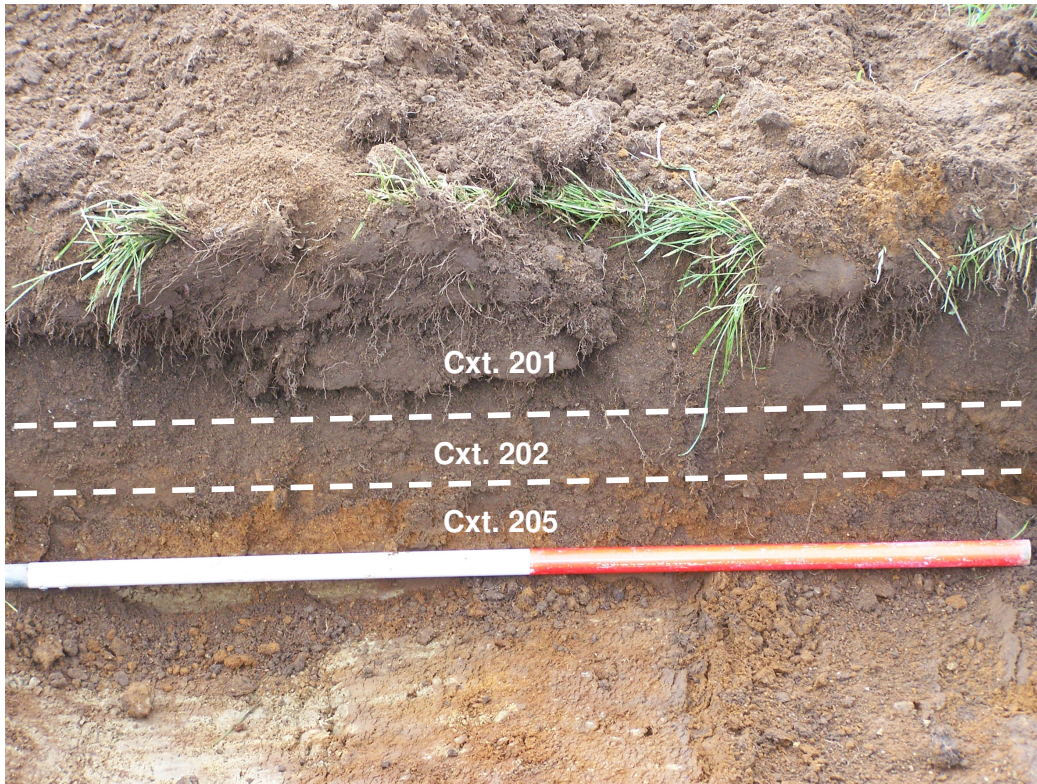


Plate Six: North facing section of Trench Two.



Plate Seven: Trench Three following excavation to the surface of the subsoil (Context No. 303), looking west.

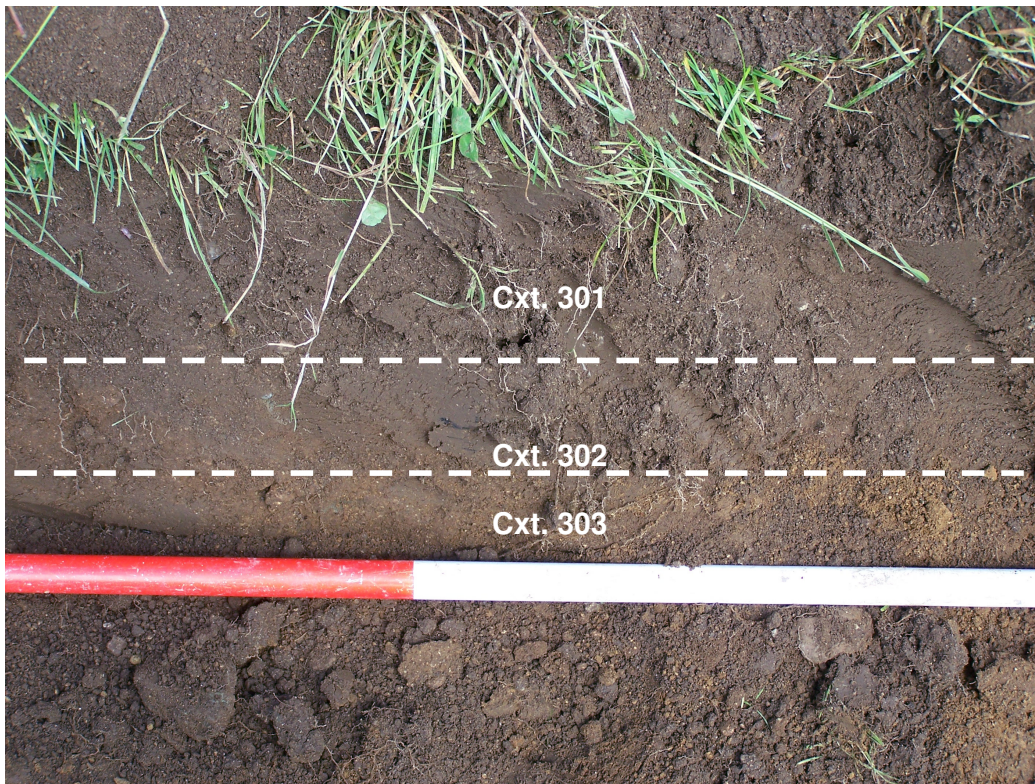


Plate Eight: North facing section of Trench Three.



*Plate Nine: Trench Four following excavation to the surface of the subsoil
(Context No. 403), looking east.*



Plate Ten: North facing section of Trench Four.



Plate Eleven: Overview of application site following the excavation of the four test trenches, looking north.



Plate Twelve: Artefacts recovered during the evaluation