



Monitoring Report No. 180

**Monitoring of engineering pits
Market Yard
Coleraine
Co. Derry**

LICENCE NO.: N/A

BRIAN SLOAN

Site Specific Information

Site Name: Market Yard, Coleraine, Coleraine, Co. Derry

Townland: Coleraine

SMR No. : LDY 007:091

State Care Scheduled Other ✓ [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: C84933214

County: Derry

Excavation Licence No. : N/A

Planning Ref / Nos. : N/A

Dates of Monitoring: 3rd September 2009

Archaeologist Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

Archaeological monitoring of four engineering pits was carried out within the confines of the nineteenth-century Market Yard, Coleraine, Co. Derry. The purpose of this work was to ascertain the depth of the foundations of the walls to advise on the future development of a library on the site. The excavation of the test pits found that the foundations of the wall varied from 0.3m to 1.45m below the present ground surface. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered in any of the test pits.

Type of monitoring:

Monitoring of the manual excavation of four test pits to wall foundation level.

Size of area opened:

Four test pits measuring roughly 2m by 1m

Current Land Use:

Waste ground

Intended Land Use:

Library building.

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring of test pits was carried out within the confines of the Market Yard, Coleraine, Co. Derry. This work was carried out in an effort to inform the engineers on the depth of the listed walls prior to the development of the site for a new library. It is proposed that a basement level is included in the structure, and the monitoring was requested to see how close the new structure could go to the walls without undermining their stability. This work was carried out with the authorization of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) but was unlicensed (Paul Logue *pers comm.*).

This area of Coleraine is known for its archaeological and historical potential. Previous archaeological investigations in the Market Yard revealed the upper fill of a feature interpreted as a possible defensive ditch running outside the circuit of the Town Wall. The fill contained a sherd of 16th- or 17th-century pottery [information obtained from the NISMR under SMR # LDY 007:091].

Account of the excavations

A total of four test pits were excavated around the walls of the Market Yard, in an effort to ascertain the depth of the foundations of the (listed) nineteenth-century walls. Each trench measured approximately 2m by 1m and was positioned tight against the walls of the yard. The stratigraphy encountered in each trench was identical with the concrete surface of the market yard overlying a thin layer of hardcore. Following the removal of this matrix, a sticky mid brown clay was encountered. This deposit was only excavated close to the wall to ascertain the depth of the foundations. The foundations were found to vary between 0.3m and 1.45m from the present ground surface. The difference of the depth of the foundations might be explained by the presence of standing water in the test pits closest to the frontage with New Market Street, where the wet ground would have stipulated the need for deeper foundations. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered in any of the test pits. A summary of the results of the test pits is tabulated below:

Test Pit	Position in Market Yard	Depth of Foundations
1	South-western	0.3m
2	Southern	0.7m
3	South-eastern	1.4m
4	North-eastern	1.45m

Conclusions

Due to the depth of the walls of the market yard not being substantial, no deposits of archaeological significance were disturbed during the monitoring exercise. The excavation of the test pits revealed a substantial amount of nineteenth and twentieth century make-up in the area of the

Market Yard, probably as a result of sustained livestock markets held here since the mid nineteenth century. It is not recommended that further archaeological work is needed in relation to the foundations of the walls, although if the development of the basement of the new library should go ahead, then the area of disturbance will need to be monitored due to the increased potential of the presence of archaeological deposits as the foundations will exceed the depth of the investigation dealt with in this report. As the work was unlicensed, no publication is necessary or merited.

Archive:

Finds:

Photographs: The photographs taken during the monitoring exercise are currently housed at the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

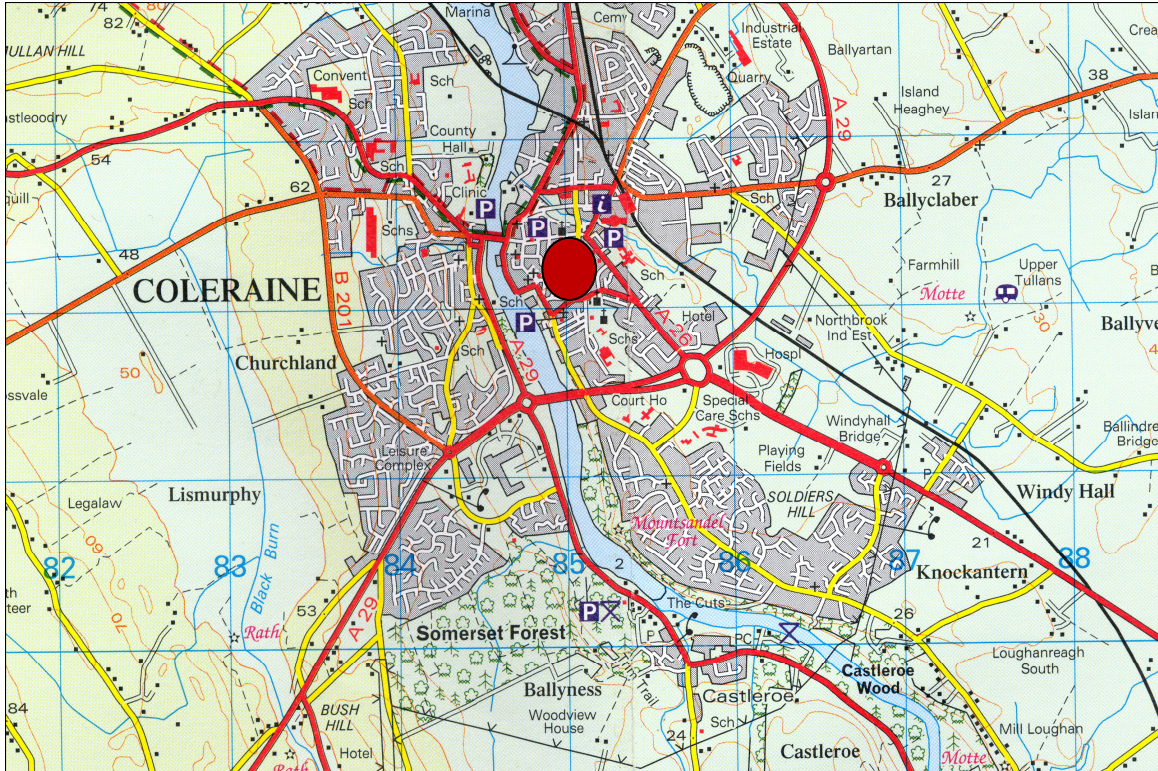


Figure 1: General map showing Coleraine and location of Market Yard (red dot).



Plate One: Excavation of Test pit 1 in the southwestern corner of Market Yard. Base of the foundations are visible, looking south.



Plate Two: Excavation of Test Pit 2 along the southern wall of the Market Yard. The base of the foundations are visible, looking south.



Plate Three: Excavation of Test Pit 3 in the south-eastern area of the Market Yard. The base of the foundations are visible, looking east.



Plate Four: Excavation of Test Pit 4 in the north-eastern corner of the Market Yard. The base of the foundations of the wall can be seen.