



**Monitoring Report No. 182**

16 Knockballey Road,  
Magheraveely,  
Lislea,  
Co. Fermanagh

**AE/09/146**

Brian Sloan

### Site Specific Information

*Site Address:* 16 Knockballey Road, Magheraveely, Lislea, Co. Fermanagh

*Townland:* Magheraveely

*SMR No.:* FER 262:029

*State Care*      *Scheduled*      *Other* ✓

*Grid Ref:* H 4831 2706

*County:* Fermanagh

*Excavation Licence No:* AE/09/146

*Planning Ref / No.:* L/2008/1343/F

*Date of Monitoring:* 29<sup>th</sup> September 2009

*Archaeologist Present:* Brian Sloan

*Brief Summary:*

Three test trenches were excavated to evaluate the potential impact of the proposed development on any hidden archaeological remains. The proposed development site is located near the 'Black Pigs Dyke', a monument with substantial upstanding remains. A similar stratigraphic sequence was observed in each of the trenches. Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered in any of the trenches.

*Type of monitoring:*

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

*Size of area opened:*

Three trenches; each measuring approximately 18m in length by 2m in width.

*Current Land Use:* Pasture

*Intended Land Use:* Residential

## **Account of the monitoring**

### *Introduction*

A planning application for a private dwelling was made for a site (Fig. 1). The proposed development site is located adjacent to the Black Pig's Dyke (FER 262:029) (Fig. 2). The Sites and Monuments Record details the monument as having substantial upstanding remains.

The proposed development site is located within a roughly rectangular field, bounded on the east by a post and wire fence, as well as hedgerows interspersed with mature trees. The position of the proposed development is on a small patch of level ground approximately half way up the slope with panoramic views to the west, north and east. The ground slopes quite sharply to the north and west, where the field runs to Knockballymore Lough. The surrounding landscape consists primarily of agricultural land, interspersed with residential dwellings.

An archaeological evaluation was requested by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Historic Monuments Unit (NIEA:HMU) Casework Officer, Paul Devlin, to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on any hidden archaeological remains. Monitoring of test trench excavation took place on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Two test trenches were excavated within the proposed development site boundary, with a third excavated along the proposed access route to the development site (Fig. 3). A similar stratigraphic sequence was represented in each of the trenches, which is detailed below.

### *Trench One*

Trench One was aligned roughly west/east, measured approximately 18m by 2m, and was located towards the southern end of the proposed development site. The excavation ceased at the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 103) which was encountered at an average depth of 0.7m.

The topsoil (Context No. 101) in Trench One was a light brown sandy loam with frequent angular stone inclusions, some of them quite large boulders. It had an average depth of 0.3m and directly overlay a cultivation soil (Context No. 102). The cultivation soil (Context No. 102) was a mid to dark brown clay loam with frequent stone inclusions. This deposit (Context No.102) was on average 0.4m thick. The cultivation soil (Context No. 102) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 103) which consisted of a greyish orange clay, with frequent inclusions of rather large, semi-angular pieces of stone and rock. No finds or features of an archaeological nature were observed in this trench.

### *Trench Two*

Trench Two was aligned roughly west/east, measured approximately 16m by 2m and was located approximately 1.5m to the north of Trench One. The excavation ceased at the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 203) which was encountered at an average depth of 0.5m.

The topsoil (Context No. 201) in Trench Two was a light brown sandy loam with frequent angular stone inclusions. It had an average depth of 0.3m and directly overlay a cultivation soil (Context No. 202). The cultivation soil (Context No. 202) was a mid to dark brown clay loam with frequent stone inclusions. This deposit (Context No.202) was on average 0.4m thick. The cultivation soil (Context No. 102) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 103) which consisted of a greyish orange sandy clay, which the natural bedrock protruded through at places. Upon removal of the cultivation soil (Context No. 202) a large boulder was observed protruding from the natural subsoil (Context No. 203). This was too large for the digger to move and so was left *in situ*. No finds or features of an archaeological nature were observed in this trench.

### *Trench Three*

Trench Three was located approximately 10m to the north-east of Trench Two, in the area of the access lane to the development. It was aligned roughly north/south and measured 18.5m in length by 2m in width. The trench was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 302) which was encountered at an average depth of 0.45m.

The topsoil in Trench Three (Context No. 301) consisted of light brown sandy loam with frequent angular stone inclusions. It had an average depth of 0.45m and directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 302) which consisted of a greyish orange sandy clay. The cultivation soil present in the other two trenches (Context Nos. 102 and 202) was not observed in this trench, perhaps due to the location of Trench Three on the relatively steep slope of the hill. Nothing of archaeological significance was noted in this trench.

### *Conclusions*

A relatively simple stratigraphic sequence was observed in all three of the excavated trenches at Magheraveely. The depth of the topsoil deposits was surprising, given the location of the development site on the slope of a hill. It is assumed that the depth of the stratigraphy represents various episodes of hill wash, although no difference of the build up of the topsoil deposit was noted at the time of excavation.

Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the investigation. As such, it is not recommended that any further archaeological work is necessary in connection with this

development. Publication of the results of this evaluation is not merited save a short summary to be submitted in the annual *Excavations Bulletin*.

**Archive:**

*Finds:* n/a

*Photographs:* 15 digital images, held by the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queen's University Belfast.

*Plans / Drawings:* n/a

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

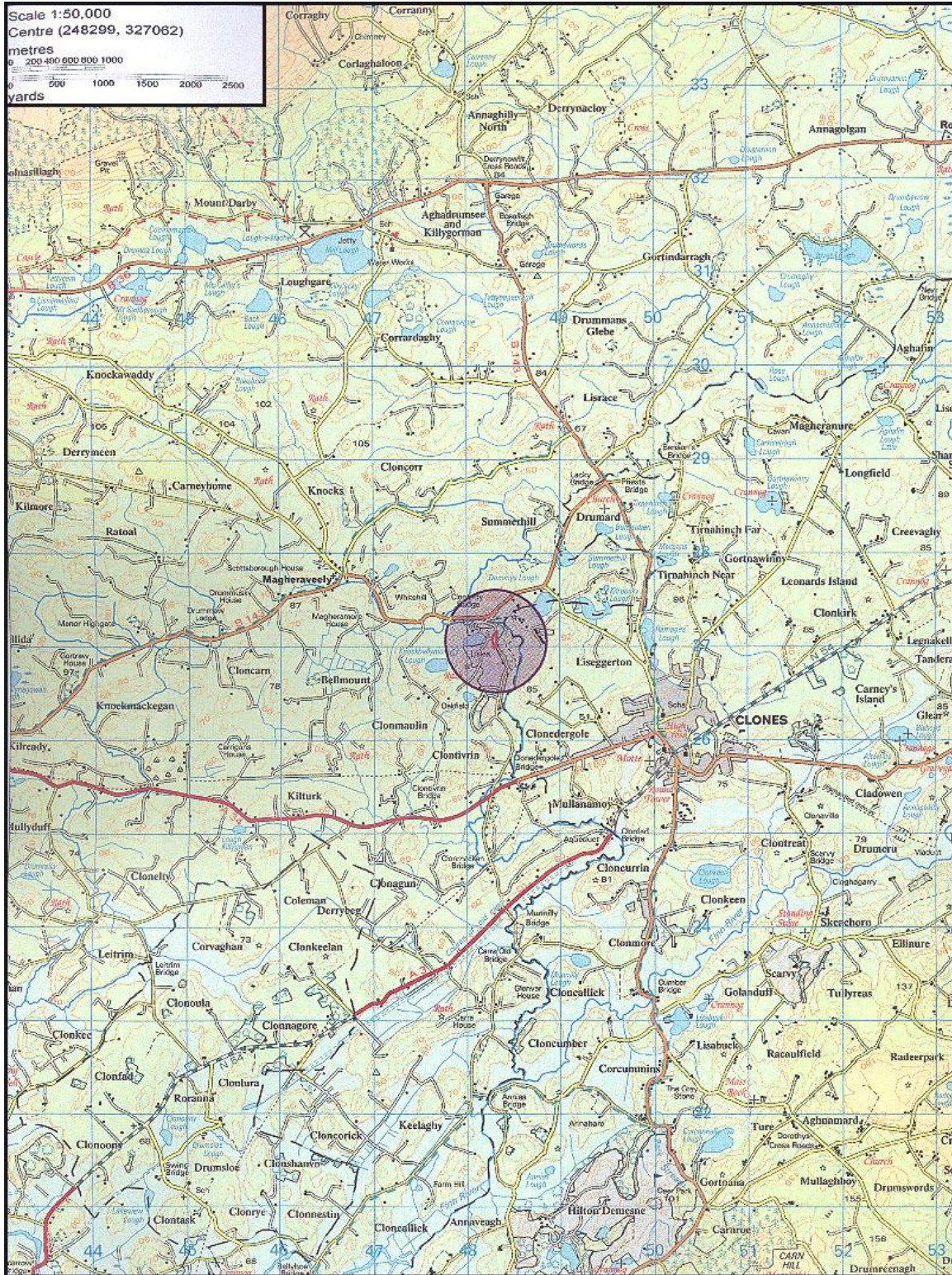


Figure One: Map showing location of development site (circled).



Figure Two: Map showing the development site (in red) in relation to the Black Pig's Dyke and a rath (both shown in yellow).



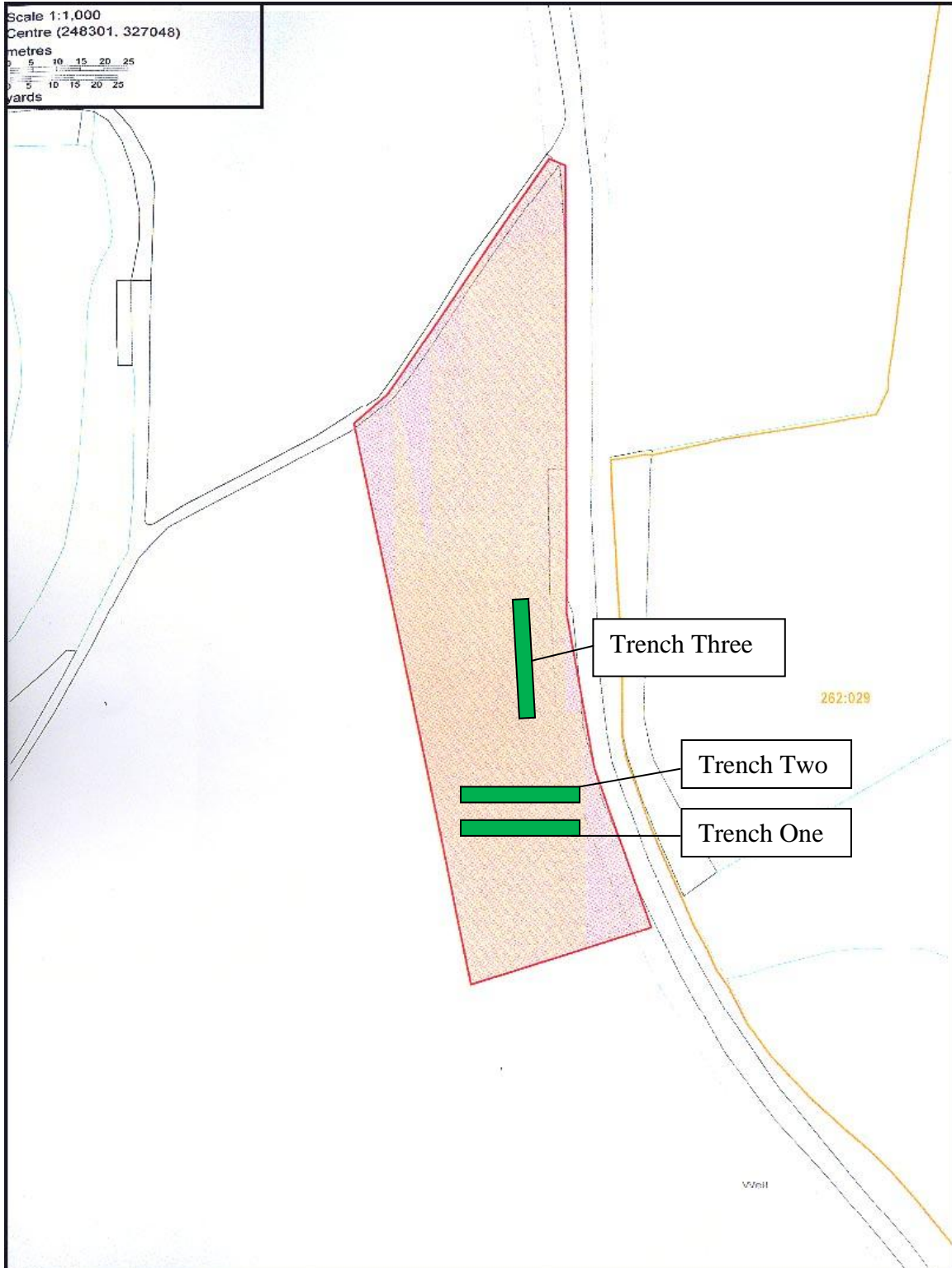


Figure Three: Development area (in red) showing the locations of Trenches One, Two and Three (in green).



Plate One: View of the development site prior to the evaluation, looking north-west.



Plate Two: Trench One following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 103), looking east.



Plate Three: Trench Two following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 203), looking west. The large boulder that protruded the subsoil can be seen about the centre of the trench.



Plate Four: Trench Three following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 302), looking north.



Plate Four: View of the development site showing Trenches One and Two following the evaluation, looking south-west.