Monitoring Report No. 203

75m south-east of 35 Woburn Road
Ballyrolly
Millisle
Co. Down

AE/10/118E

Brian Sloan

X/2010/0156/O

Site Specific Information

Site Address: 75m south-east of 35 Woburn Road, Millisle, Co. Down

Townland: Ballyrolly

SMR No.: DOW 007:005

State Care *Scheduled* *Other* √

Grid Ref: IJ 5957274188

County: Down

Excavation Licence No: AE/10/118E

Planning Ref / No.: X/2010/0156/O

Date of Monitoring: 2nd July 2010

Archaeologist Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:
Three test trenches were excavated to evaluate the potential impact of a proposed development of a residential dwelling on any hidden archaeological remains. The proposed development site is located adjacent to a possible Early Christian Rath (DOW 007:005). The trenches were excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil with nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered in either of the trenches.

Type of monitoring:
Excavation of three test trenches by mechanical excavator equipped with a smooth-edged 'sheugh' bucket under archaeological supervision.
Size of area opened:
Two trenches each measuring approximately 20m in length by 2m in width.

Current Land Use: Pastoral agriculture

Intended Land Use: Residential dwelling

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The site of the proposed dwelling is located at Ballyrolly townland, Millisle, Co. Down (Fig 1). The application site lies to the south of the town of Millisle, and the surrounding landscape consists of both pastoral and arable land, interspersed with dwelling houses as well as the town itself. The application site is located within a large irregular field that is delineated by a post and wire fence, as well as a mature hedgerow on all sides. The trenches were positioned to incorporate the footprint of the proposed dwelling (Fig 3) and was requested by Gina Baban (Case Officer Northern Ireland Environment Agency).

The evaluation was requested due to the proximity of the development site to a possible rath (DOW 007:005) and a possible site identified by aerial photography. The landowner, David Magill, informed the author that there is a remarkable change in soil colour when a plough is dragged over the area of the reputed aerial photograph site. The evaluation was carried out to assess the presence and survival of any archaeological strata that would be adversely affected by the development.

Excavation

Trench 1 was positioned parallel to the western boundary of the application site and measured approximately 20m by 2m. The trench was aligned roughly north/south and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 102) which was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered in this trench consisting of topsoil (Context No. 101) directly overlying natural subsoil (Context No. 102).

The sod and topsoil in Trench 1 (Context No. 101) consisted of a mid to dark brown clay loam. This deposit had infrequent inclusions of rounded and angular stones (average size: 30 x 30 x 40mm) and active plant roots were observed within it. The sod and topsoil (Context No. 101) had an average depth of 0.3m and directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 102).

The natural subsoil in Trench 1 (Context No. 102) consisted of yellowish orange gravelly clay. There were no finds or features of an archaeological nature encountered in this trench.

Trench 2 was positioned approximately 4m to the east of Trench 1. The trench was aligned roughly north/south and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 202) which was encountered at an average depth of 0.2m. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered in this trench.

The sod and topsoil in Trench 2 (Context No. 201) consisted of a mid to dark brown clay loam. This deposit had infrequent inclusions of rounded and angular stones (average size: 30 x 30 x 40mm). The sod and topsoil (Context No. 201) had an average depth of 0.2m and directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 202).

The natural subsoil in Trench 2 (Context No. 202) consisted of yellowish orange gravely clay. There were no finds or features of an archaeological nature encountered in this trench.

Trench 3 was positioned approximately 2.5mm to the east of Trench 2. The trench was aligned roughly north/south and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 302) which was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered in this trench.

The sod and topsoil in Trench 3 (Context No. 301) consisted of a mid to dark brown clay loam. This deposit had infrequent inclusions of rounded and angular stones (average size: 30 x 30 x 40mm). The sod and topsoil (Context No. 301) had an average depth of 0.3m and directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 302).

The natural subsoil in Trench 3 (Context No. 302) consisted of yellowish orange gravely clay. There were no finds or features of an archaeological nature encountered in this trench.

Nothing of archaeological significance was noted during the evaluation. It is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out at the development site. No publication is required, apart from a short summary in the annual *Excavations Bulletin*.

Archive:

Finds: n/a

Photographs:. 9 digital images, held by the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings: n/a

Signed:_____ Date:_____

Figure 1: general map showing location of development site (in red).

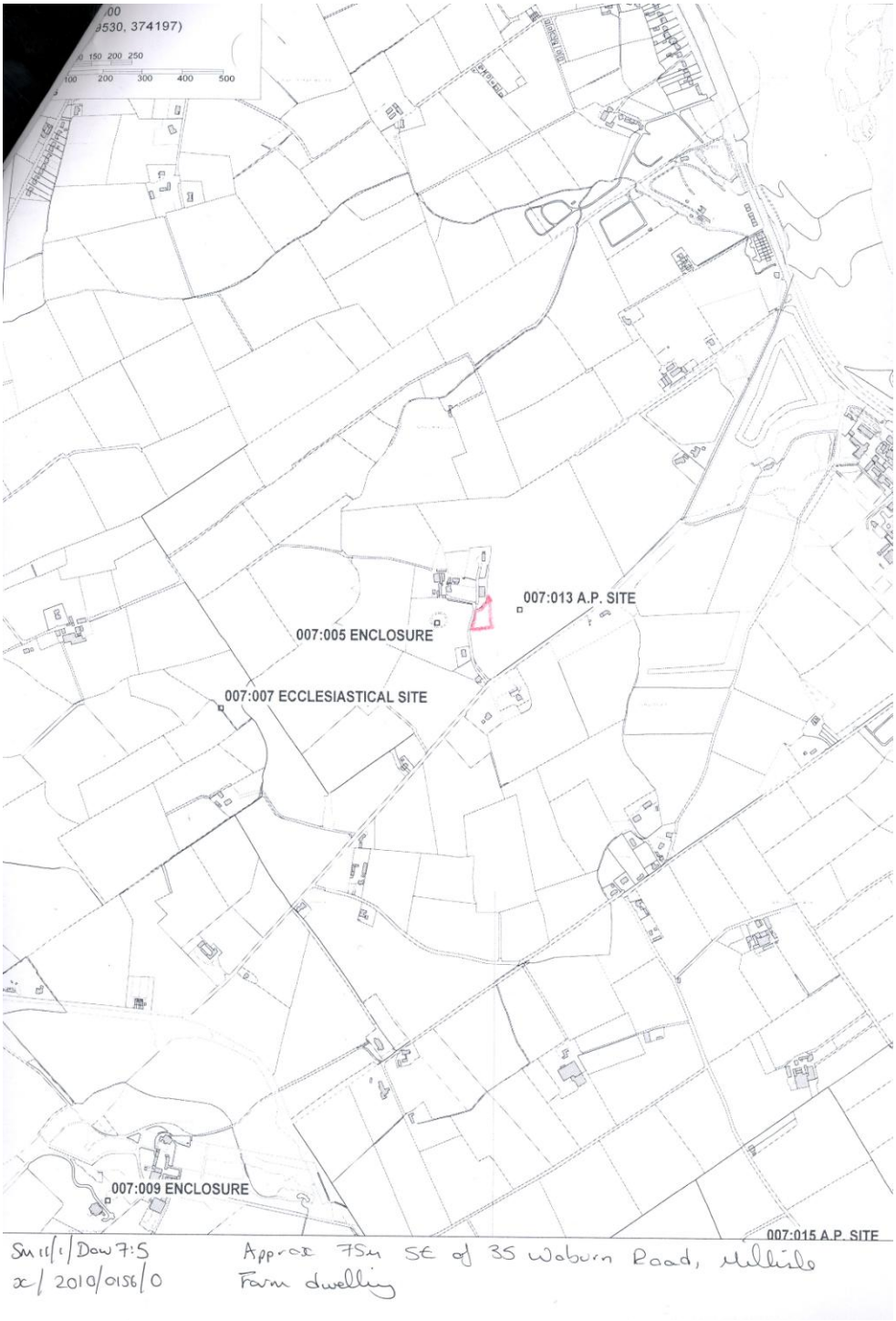

Figure 2: Map showing location of application site (outlined in red) and surrounding archaeological landscape.

Figure 3: Map showing proposed development site in realtion to possible rath (DOW 007:005).

Plate 1: Trench One following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 102), looking north.

Plate 2: Trench Two following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 202), looking north.

Plate 3: Trench Three following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 302), looking north.

Plate 4: Development site following the excavation of the three evaluative test trenches, looking north-west.