



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 256

**SITE 70M NORTH-WEST OF 51 LISBOY ROAD
BALLYLOUGH
DUNLOY
COUNTY ANTRIM**

LICENCE NO.: AE/13/19E

NAOMI CARVER

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 70m north-west of 51 Lisboy Road, Dunloy, Co. Antrim

Townland: Ballylough

SMR No. : ANT 018:028

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: D 0261 2404

County: Antrim

Excavation Licence No. : AE/13/19E

Planning Ref / No. : D/2010/0150/O

Dates of Monitoring: 19th February 2013

Archaeologist(s) Present: Naomi Carver

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site 70m north-west of 51 Lisboy Road, Dunloy, Co. Antrim in response to a planning application for a new farm dwelling. The development site is in the same field as a rath and souterrain (NISMR ANT 018:028). Four trenches were excavated over the footprint of the proposed new dwelling. The trenches were 1.5-1.8m wide and 30.0-31.0m long. No finds or features of archaeological interest were uncovered during the evaluation. It is therefore recommended that there is no need for any further archaeological mitigation at the site.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Four trenches ranging 1.5-1.8m wide and 30.0-31.0m long.

Current Land Use: Agricultural

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site for a new farm dwelling is located 70m north-west of 51 Lisboy Road, Ballylough, Co. Antrim (Figure 1). The site is around 5km north of Dunloy and 7.5km to the east of Ballymoney. It lies at a height of around 100m above sea level (Figure 2). The site is located in a hollow at the south-eastern corner of a large field approximately 0.35 hectares in size. It is bounded to the south by a low dry-stone wall and hawthorn hedge and to the east by a wooden fence and paddock. The northern and western sides are unenclosed. The land rises relatively steeply to the north, screening the site from the Lisboy Road (Plate 1). To the west are several dwelling houses beyond which the land rises up to the top of a small hill (Plate 2). There are good views to the south. Prior to the evaluation the field in which the site is located was used for the grazing of horses.

The rath and souterrain (NISMR ANT 018:028) are located on the crest of the hill to the north of the site, known locally as fort hill. The Ordnance Survey memoirs for the parish describe the rath as a 'fort of earth and stone'. The souterrain was rediscovered in 1937 in the north-eastern side of the hill. There are no visible remains of either feature (Plates 3 and 4). The rath has been leveled and the entrance to the souterrain was blocked by a fall of earth.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a new farm dwelling and was requested by Adrian McAleenan of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Historic Monuments Unit.

Excavation

Four test trenches, each measuring 1.5-1.8m wide and 30.0-31.0m long, were excavated at the site in the approximate positions shown on Figure 3. The trenches were excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at depths of between 0.3-2.0m.

Trench 1

Trench 1 ran parallel to the southernmost field boundary of the site, being 3.0m out from it and 2.0m from the fence/paddock on the site's eastern side. The trench was 1.5m wide and 30.0m long (Plates 5 and 6). The uppermost layer in Trench 1 was the sod and topsoil layer (C101) which consisted of mid brown loamy clay with few inclusions. The layer was 0.1m thick. Below it was a cultivation layer (C102) of mid brown sandy clay loam containing sub-rounded pebbles up to 50mm long. The cultivation layer was 0.2m thick. It directly overlay the subsoil (C103) which in Trench 1 consisted of orange gravelly sand the surface of which was encountered at a depth of 0.3m. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance in Trench 1.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was located to 2.0m to the north of Trench 1 and ran parallel to it. The trench was 1.8m wide and 30.0m long (Plates 7 and 8). The uppermost layer in Trench 2 was the sod and topsoil layer (C201) which consisted of mid brown loamy clay with few inclusions. The layer was 0.1m thick. Below it was a cultivation layer (C202) consisting of mid brown sandy loamy clay containing sub-rounded pebbles 50mm long. It was 0.25m thick. Below the cultivation layer, and cut into the subsoil, was an irregularly-shaped feature (C203) filled with a loose, unstable silty fill (C204) consisting of decomposed manure, plastic bags, barbed wire and wooden posts (Plate 9). The feature was the at least 1.8m wide (the width of the trench), 3.0m wide east/west and 2.0m deep. It was highly unstable and the sides of the trench began to collapse during the excavation. The sides of the cut feature were vertical, indicating that it had been machine-cut, while the contents of the fill indicate it was relatively recent in origin. The subsoil in Trench 2 (C205) consisted of orange sandy clay containing numerous stones. It was encountered at a depth of 2.0m at the eastern end of the trench and 0.3m at the western end. There were no finds or features of archaeological interest in Trench 2.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was located 3.0m to the north of Trench 2 and ran parallel to it. The trench was 3.0m from the easternmost field boundary. It was 1.6m wide and 31.0m long (Plates 10 and 11). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench 3 (C301) consisted of mid brown loamy clay with few inclusions. The layer was 0.15m thick. Below it was a cultivation layer (C302) consisting of mid brown sandy loamy clay which contained some sub-rounded stones around 60mm long. The layer was 0.2-0.3m thick. Below the cultivation layer was the continuation of the cut feature recorded in Trench 2 (C203/204). In Trench 3 the feature (C303: Plate 12) was 3.0m wide (east/west) and filled with a sandy/silty/ashy fill (C304) with partially decomposed manure and some rubbish. The edges of the feature were defined but it was not excavated due to the depth and instability of the feature uncovered in Trench 2. It was cut into the subsoil (C305) which in Trench 3 consisted of orange sandy clay with stones, the surface of which was encountered at a maximum depth of 0.45m. There were no finds or features of archaeological interest in Trench 3.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was located 3.0m to the north of Trench 3 and was aligned parallel to it. The trench was 1.7m wide and 30.0m long (Plates 13 and 14). The uppermost layer in Trench 4 was the sod and topsoil layer (C401) consisting of mid orange brown loamy clay with few inclusions. The layer was 0.10-0.15m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer was a mid brown to orange brown silty loam clay (C402). This cultivation layer contained sub-rounded to rounded stones which were around 50mm long. The layer was 0.2m thick. Below the cultivation layer was the subsoil (C403) which consisted of orange boulder clay which was quite sandy in parts and contained numerous sub-angular to sub-rounded stones. The surface of the subsoil was

encountered at a maximum depth of 0.35m. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance in Trench 4.

The evaluation uncovered a cut feature of modern origin which was visible in Trenches 2 and 3 but did not extend into Trenches 1 or 4. This feature was most likely to have been intended for dumping material. No remains of archaeological significance were uncovered within the four trenches excavated at the proposed development site. It is not thought that the proposed development will impinge on any unknown archaeological deposits and therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out. A short summary will be prepared for inclusion in the annual *'Excavations'* bulletin.

Archive:

Finds: N/A

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: _____

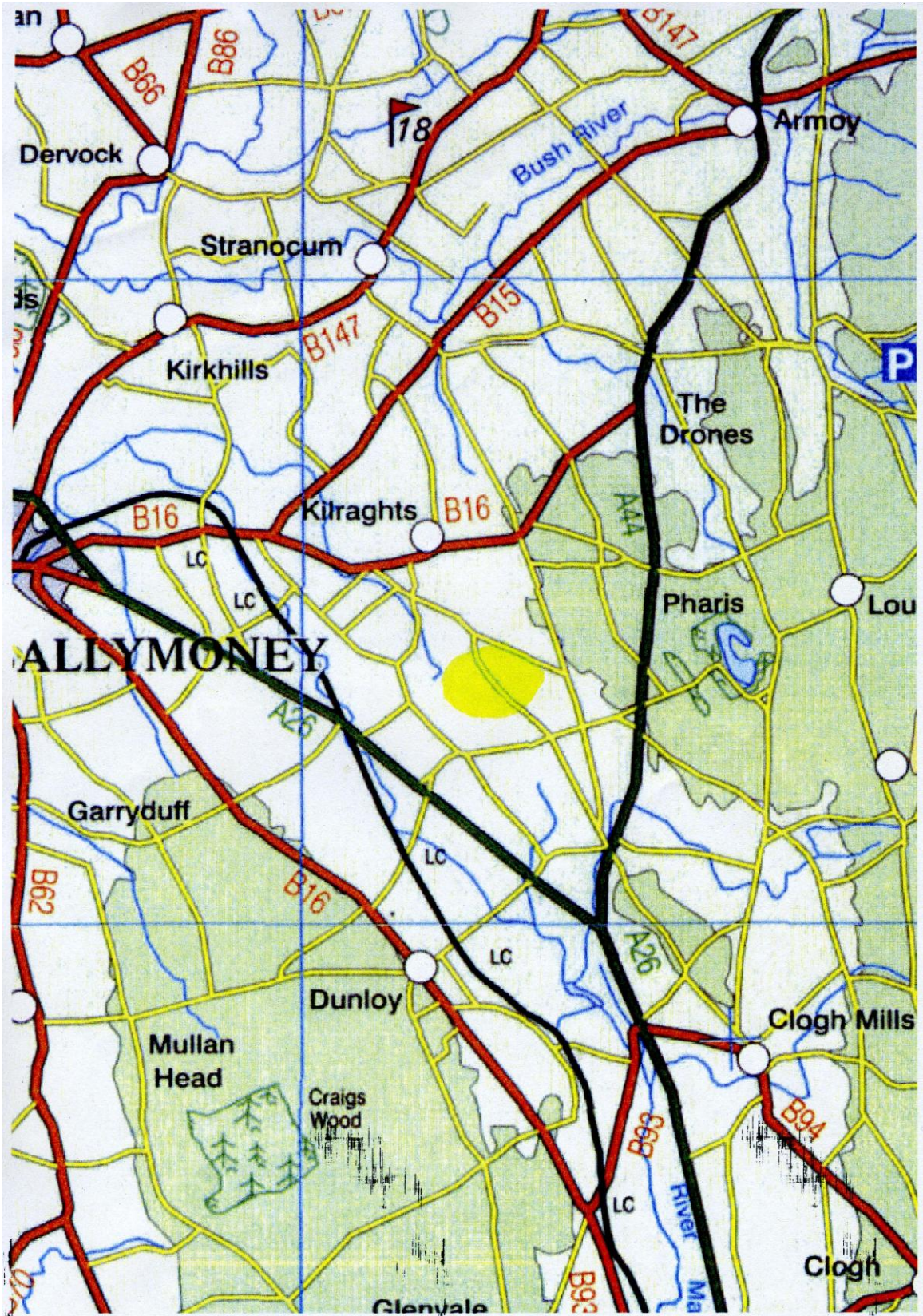


Figure 1: Map showing the location of the site (highlighted in yellow)

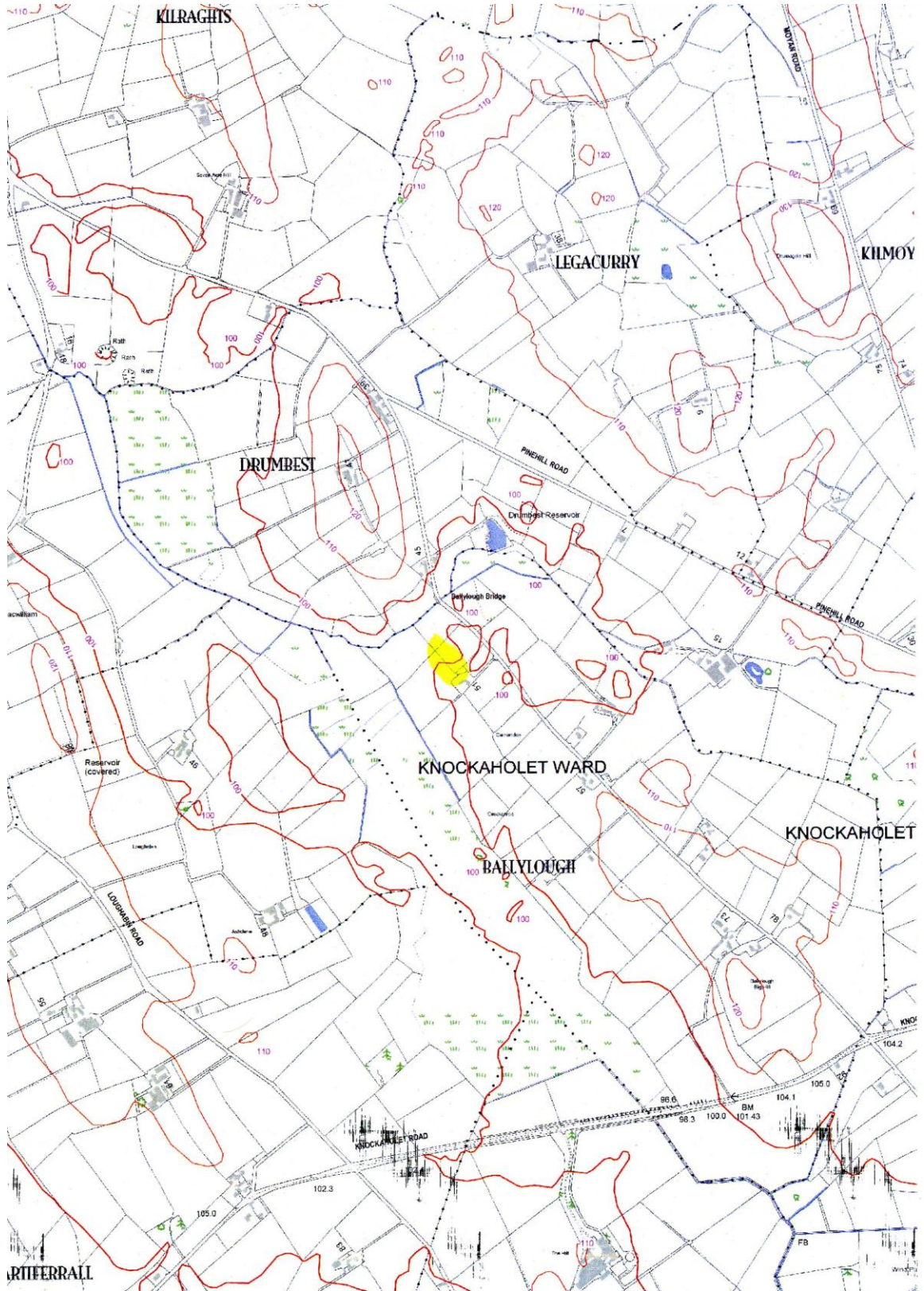


Figure 2: Detailed map showing the location of the site (highlighted in yellow)

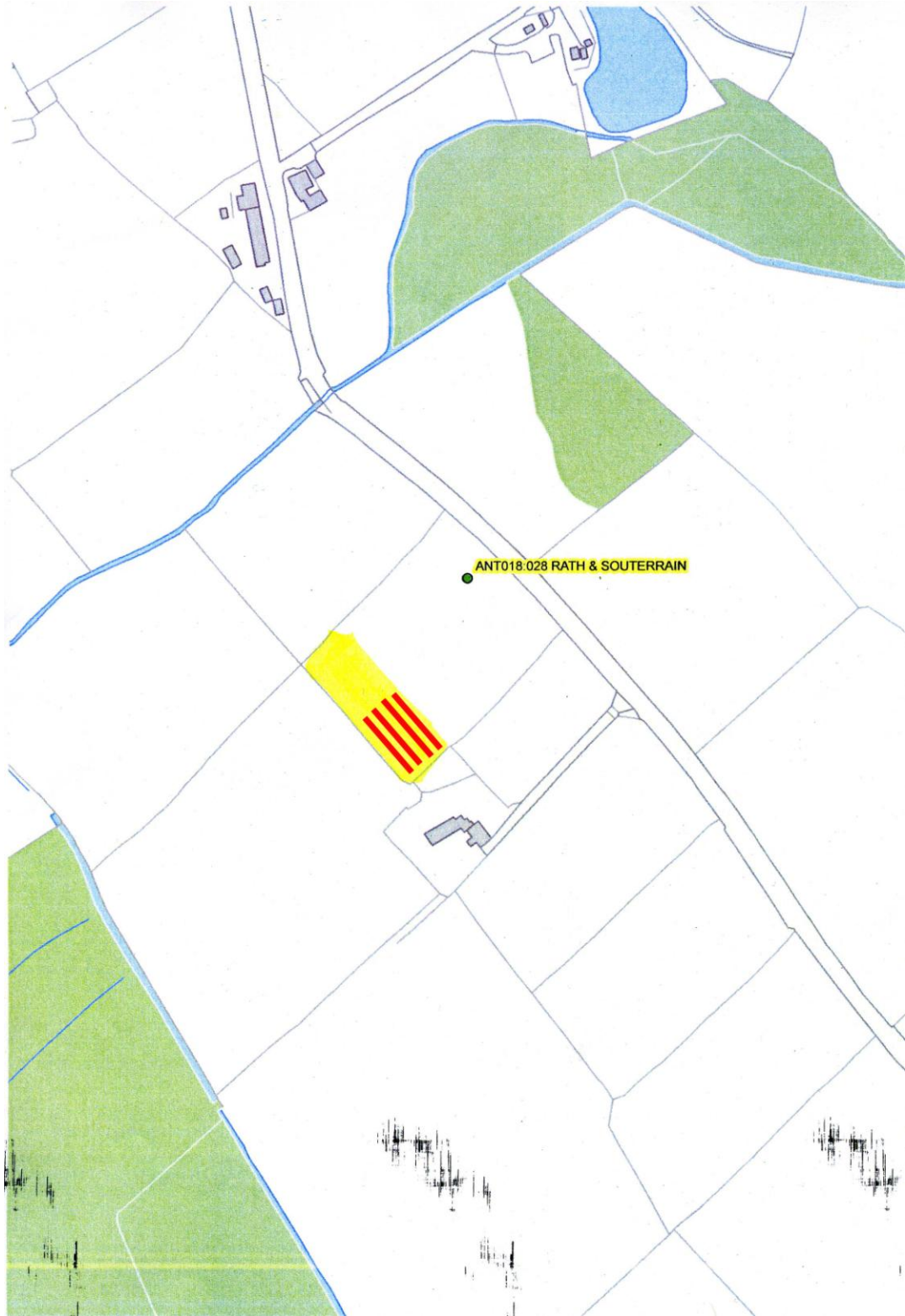


Figure 3: Site plan showing location of test trenches (1-4 from left to right) and the fort to the north-west



Plate 1: General view of the site prior to the evaluation, looking north-west



Plate 2: General view of the site prior to the evaluation, looking north towards the hill where the rath was



Plate 3: View of the area the rath occupied, looking north-west



Plate 4: View from the area the rath occupied, looking north



Plate 5: Trench 1, following excavation to subsoil level, looking north-west



Plate 6: South-west facing section of Trench 1, looking north-east



Plate 7: Trench 2, following excavation to subsoil level, looking south-east



Plate 8: South-west facing section of Trench 2, looking north-east



Plate 9: Cut feature in Trench 2 (C203/204) and partially collapsed trench edges, looking south-east



Plate 10: Trench 3 following excavation to subsoil level, looking south-east



Plate 11: South-west facing section of Trench 3, looking north-east



Plate 12: Cut feature in Trench 3 (C303/304), looking north-west



Plate 13: Trench 4 following excavation to subsoil, looking north-west



Plate 14: south-west facing section of Trench 4, looking north-east