

Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork
School of Archaeology and Palaeoecology
Queen's University Belfast

Monitoring Report No. 05
Quoile Castle
July 2004

On behalf of:



Monitoring Report: Quoile Castle, County Down

SMR: DOW 031:009

July 2004

Ruth Logue

CAF MR 05

1 Background

- 1.1 Archaeological monitoring of the excavation of the footprint for an information board at Quoile Castle, County Down, took place on the 15th July 2004. The monitoring was undertaken by Ruth Logue of the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queen's University Belfast. The monitoring was conducted on behalf of the Protecting Historic Monuments branch of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage, who funded the work.
- 1.2 Quoile Castle (SMR: DOW 031:009) is situated within Quoile Countryside Centre, 5 Quay Road, Downpatrick, County Down. It lies on the south bank of the River Quoile, approximately 800 m downstream from Quoile Quay.

The castle is a State Care site, but Scheduled Monument Consent was not required for the work to erect the information board as the location chosen was just without the scheduled area.

Quoile Castle was probably built in the late 16th century, of split-stone rubble with sandstone dressing. It is rectangular in plan, around 8 m x 10 m, with three floors and a possible attic. (Jope 1966, 247-248)

2 Archiving

- 2.1 A copy of this report has been deposited with the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. The records generated during the monitoring are temporarily archived within the School of Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

3 Monitoring

- 3.1 Staff of the Environment and Heritage Service: Regional Operations requested that monitoring by an archaeologist took place during the excavation of a footprint for a new information board at Quoile Castle. The information board was located just outside and to the right of the door of the castle. The principal objective of the monitoring was to ascertain the character and date of any deposits disturbed during the installation of the information board.
- 3.2 The footprint of the information board was excavated by hand by staff from the Countryside Centre. A flag-stone (measuring 0.74 x 0.37 x 0.75 x 0.40 m) first had to be removed. The final dimensions of the footprint were approximately 0.40 x 0.40 m, with a depth of 0.36 m. The stratigraphic sequence consisted of flag-stones (Context Number 101) which overlay hard-fill (Context Number 102). Upon installation the shaft of the information board was 0.33 m from the castle wall.

4 Discussion

- 4.1 The deposits excavated to facilitate the installation of the information board at Quoile Castle were modern, relating to the recent construction of a path. The hard-fill was laid to form a slope rising from the path leading from the car park up to an area at the front of the castle. The flag-stones were laid on top of the hard-fill and cemented together, the paving continued around the back of the Countryside Centre reception building.

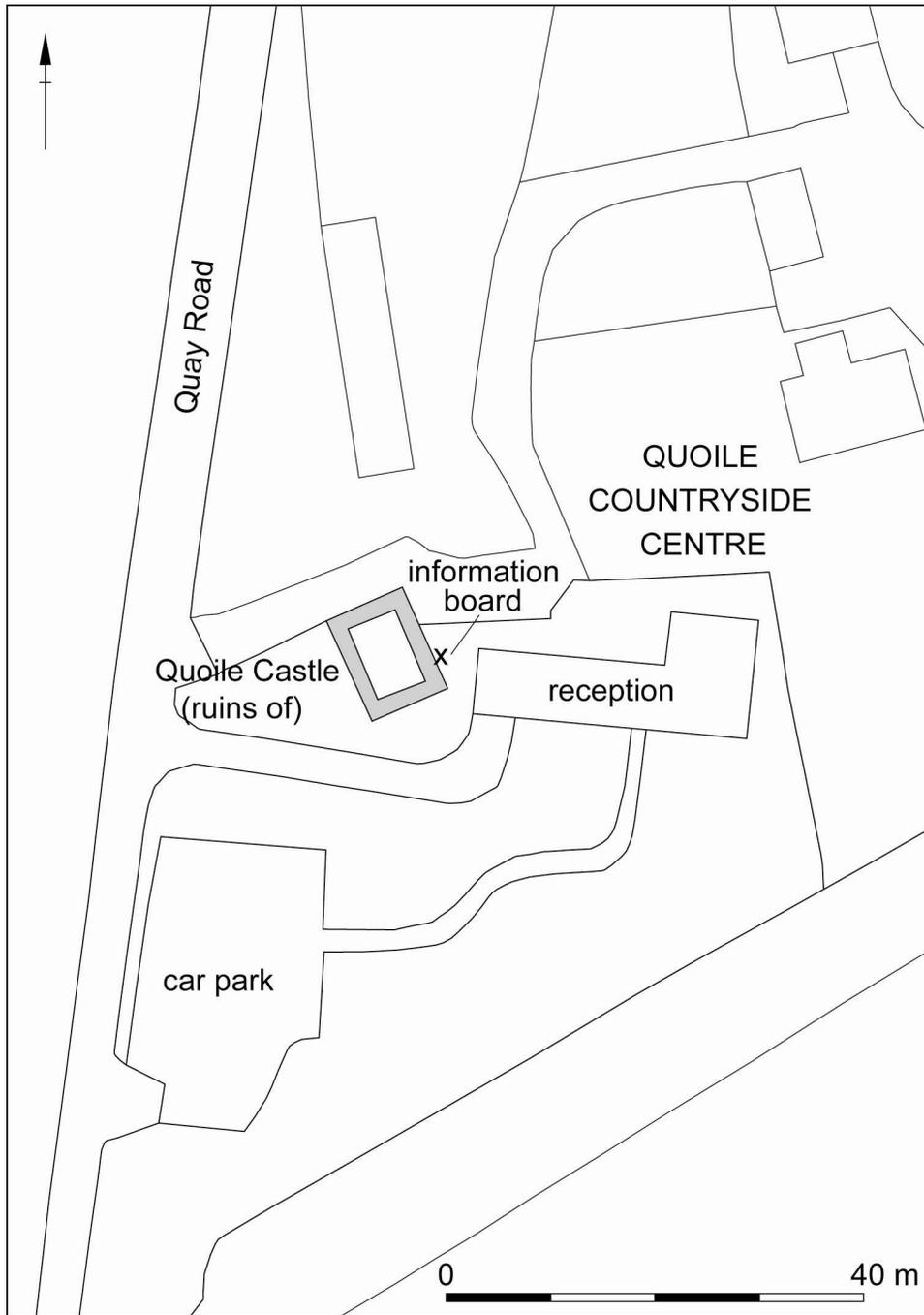


Figure 1: Location of Information Board at Quoile Castle.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 As the deposits disturbed during the installation of the information board were modern, no further publication of the results of the monitoring exercise is necessary, beyond what is contained in this report.

6 Acknowledgements

- 6.1 Thanks go to the staff of Quoile Countryside Centre.

7 Bibliography

Jope, E.M. (editor), 1966. An Archaeological Survey of County Down, H.M.S.O. Belfast



Plate 1: Newly installed information board beside castle door.



Plate 2: Flag-stone path leading to front of castle.

Appendix One: Context Register

Context 101 Flag-stones
Context 102 Hard-fill

Appendix Two: Photographic Register

Digital Images and Colour Film

- 1 Excavated footprint, looking south-west
- 2 Excavated footprint, looking south-west
- 3 Information board, looking south-west
- 4 Information board, looking south-west
- 5 Path, looking north-west
- 6 Path, looking north-west
- 7 Quoile Castle, from the road, looking north-east