



Monitoring Report No. 68

**Dunluce Parish Church Hall
Glebe
Bushmills
Co. Antrim**

AE/06/111

Kara Ward

Site Specific Information

Site Address: Dunluce Parish Church Hall, Priestland Road, Bushmills

Townland: Glebe

SMR No.: Just outside boundary of historic settlement of Bushmills (ANT:007:087) and near ANT:007:001 (site of medieval parish church).

State Care *Scheduled* *Other* ✓

Grid Ref: C 9386 4058

County: Antrim

Excavation Licence No: AE/06/111

Planning Ref / No.: E/2006/0054/F

Date of Monitoring: 9th June 2006

Archaeologist Present: Kara Ward

Brief Summary:

Two test trenches were excavated to evaluate the potential impact of a proposed development on any hidden archaeological remains. The proposed development site is located just outside the limit of the historic settlement of Bushmills as indicated on the Sites and Monuments Record maps (ANT:007:087). It is also located approximately 50m north-west of the site of a medieval parish church (ANT:007:001). Nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered in either of the trenches.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Two trenches each measuring approximately 15m by 1.25m

Current Land Use: Lawn

Intended Land Use: Church hall

Account of the evaluation

A planning application was made for the extension and renovation of the existing Dunluce Parish Church Hall in Bushmills, Co. Antrim (Fig. 1). The proposed development site (Plate 1) is located just outside the boundary of the historic settlement of Bushmills (ANT:007:087), as indicated on the Sites and Monuments Record map, and approximately 50m north-west of the site of Portcaman medieval parish church (ANT:007:001) (Fig. 2).

The modern St. John the Baptist Church and graveyard overlies the medieval parish church of Portcaman (ANT:007:001), which is described in the Ordnance Survey memoirs as “longer than the present church and the walls thick and bound together by grouted mortar. The ruins, which stood with out a roof for many years, have been razed to the ground about 1821.” The modern graveyard contains mainly 19th and 20th century graves and no evidence of any early material survives above ground (Sites and Monuments Record, ANT:007:001). Portcaman (Portcommon/Portcamon) is the earlier term referring to the Norman/medieval settlement on the banks of the Bush river.

An archaeological evaluation was requested by the Environment and Heritage Service: Protecting Historic Monuments Casework Officer, Andrew Gault, to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on any hidden archaeological remains. Monitoring of test trench excavation took place on 9th June 2006. Two conjoining test trenches, arranged in a t-shaped pattern, were excavated (Fig. 3) within the proposed development site boundary. Both trenches measured approximately 15m by 1.25m and a similar stratigraphic sequence was represented in each. The stratigraphy of the test trenches is described below:

Trench A was shallower at its northern end (Plates 2 and 3). In the northernmost 5m of the trench, the sod (C101) measured up to 0.10m deep. Directly underlying this was the topsoil (C102), a mottled orange brown silty clay with occasional stone inclusions. The underlying subsoil (C103) was a mottled grey brown boulder clay with infrequent stone inclusions. A manhole and associated drain were located approximately 1.5m from the northern end of Trench A (Plate 4). Between 5.0m and 15.0m from the northern end of the trench the sod layer had a depth of 0.15m. The topsoil along this part of the trench was present between 0.15m and 0.47m below ground level and directly overlay the subsoil (C103) (Plate 5). A lead pipe ran east-west across the trench at approximately 6.5m from the northern end of the trench (Plate 6) and a modern drain, containing a plastic pipe, ran diagonally across the trench from north-west to south-east between 11.0m and 12.7m from the northern end of the trench (Plate 7).

Trench B had a fairly even depth of sod and topsoil along its length (Plates 8 and 9). The sod (C101) had a depth of approximately 0.10m. The topsoil (C102) was present between 0.10m and 0.34m below ground level. The subsoil (C103) lay directly underneath the topsoil. A modern drain containing a plastic pipe was found to run diagonally across the trench from north-west to south-east between 5.0m and 6.0m from the western end of the trench (Plate 10). Another modern drain containing a plastic pipe ran from south-west to north-east across the trench between 11.0m and 12.5m from the western end of the trench (Plate 11).

The excavation of evaluation trenches has shown that the site has been quite heavily disturbed by drains but it was also evident that in the undisturbed areas of the trenches there were no finds, features or deposits of archaeological significance.

Archive:

Finds: n/a

Photographs: 14 digital images, held by the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings: n/a

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Fig. 1: 1:50,000 Map showing location of site (red circle).

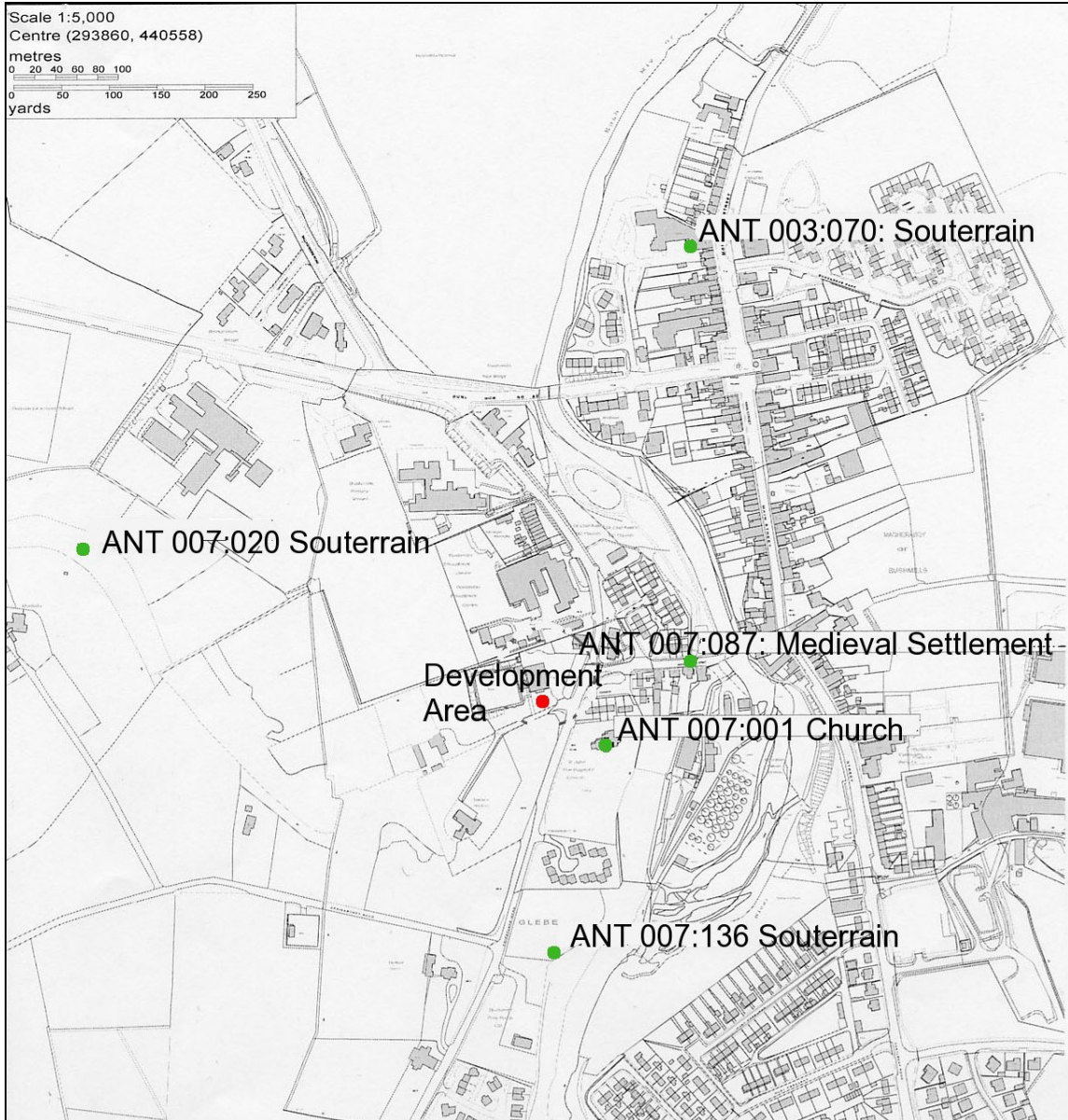


Fig. 2: Location of site (red dot) and archaeological monuments in the immediate vicinity (green dots).

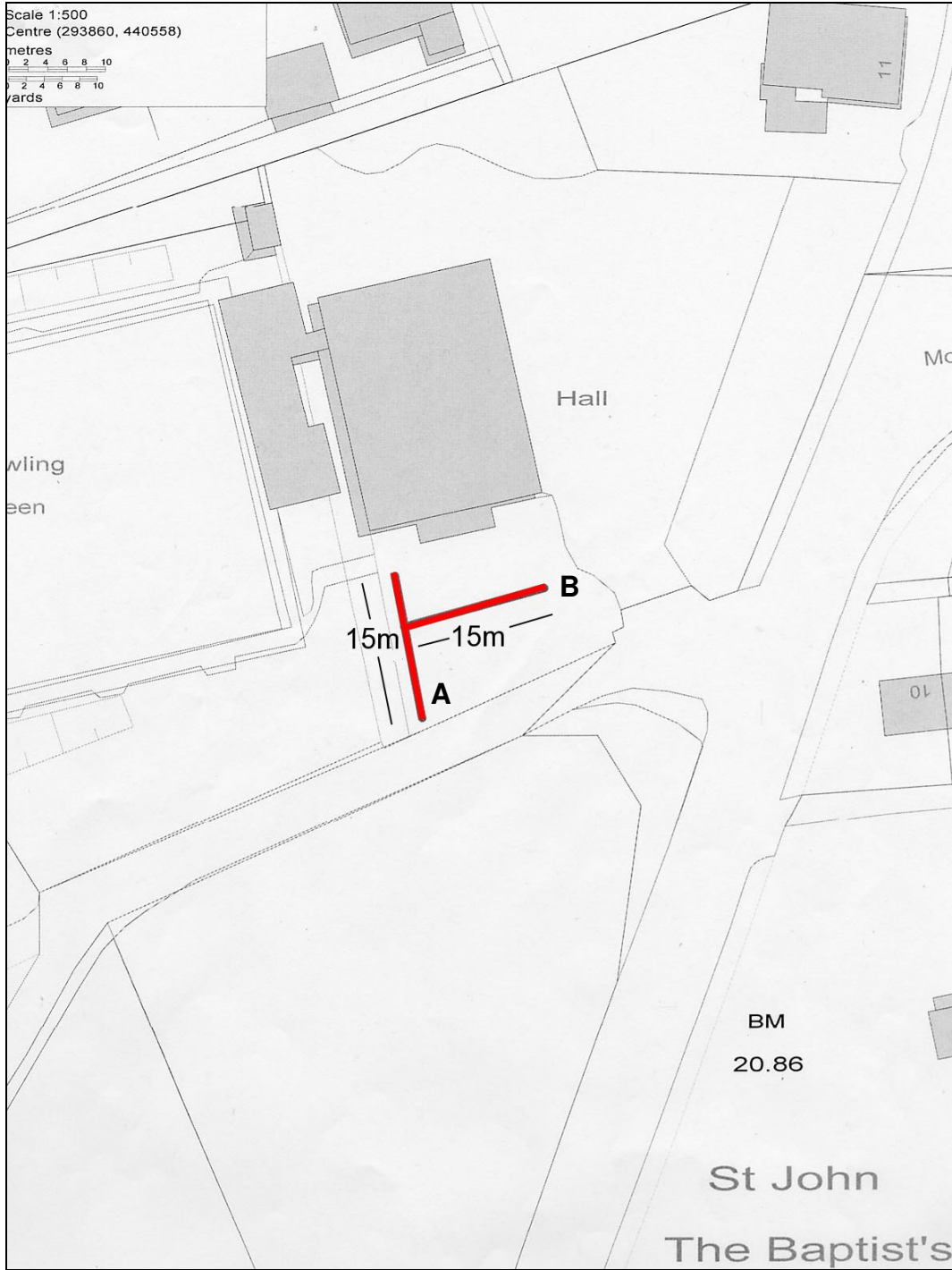


Fig. 3: Location of test trenches (marked in red).



Plate 1: Overall view of site from north-east prior to excavation of evaluation trenches.



Plate 2: View of Trench A from north, after excavation to surface of subsoil (C103).



Plate 3: View of east-facing section in northern part of Trench A, after excavation to surface of subsoil (C103).



Plate 4: View of manhole uncovered along western edge of Trench A.



Plate 5: View of west-facing section in southern part of Trench A, after excavation to surface of subsoil (C103).



Plate 6: View of leadpipe running east-west across Trench A.



Plate 7: View of drain pipe at southern end of Trench A.



Plate 8: View of Trench B from west, after excavation to surface of subsoil (C103).



Plate 9: View of north-facing section in Trench B, after excavation to surface of subsoil (C103).



Plate 10: View of north-west to south-east aligned drain in Trench B.



Plate 11: View of north-east to south-west aligned drain in Trench B.