



**Monitoring Report No. 204**

**Dunmull Hillfort  
South of 18 Ballyhome Road  
Coleraine  
Co. Antrim**

Brian Sloan

C/2007/0728/RM

## Site Specific Information

*Site Address:* South of 18 Ballyhome Road, Coleraine, Co. Antrim

*Townland:* Toberdornan

*SMR No.:* ANT 006:004

*State Care*      *Scheduled*       *Other*

*Scheduled Monument Consent:* ANT 006:004 B217/88

*County:* Antrim

*Excavation Licence No:* AE/10/126E

*Planning Ref / No.:* C/2007/0728/RM

*Date of Monitoring:* 16<sup>th</sup> August 2010

*Archaeologist Present:* Brian Sloan

### *Brief Summary:*

Monitoring of the mechanical excavation of a trench to house a retaining wall was undertaken at the scheduled 'Dunmull Hillfort' (ANT 006:004) to service a replacement dwelling. The monitoring exercise took place as the trench would encroach upon the scheduled area and Scheduled Monument Consent was issued to carry out the monitoring. The trench was aligned roughly north-east/south-west and measured roughly 32m in length by 1.5m in width (0.5m of the width encroached upon the scheduled area). Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the monitoring exercise and it is recommended that no further archaeological work is necessary in relation to this replacement dwelling.

### *Type of monitoring:*

Monitoring of the mechanical excavation of a single service trench.

### *Size of area opened:*

Approximately 32m in length by 1.5m in width

*Current Land Use:* Rough ground

*Intended Land Use:* Replacement dwelling

## Brief account of the monitoring

### Introduction

A request was made by NIEA for CAF to monitor the mechanical excavation of a service trench following an initial archaeological evaluation carried out at Dunmull Hillfort, Toberdorran, Co. Antrim in advance of the construction of a replacement dwelling. Previous archaeological investigation at the site involved the monitored removal of an upstanding building and the reduction of the development site to subsoil level. This work was carried out by Adrian McAleenan (Casework Officer for NIEA) and nothing of archaeological significance was encountered (Adrian McAleenan *pers comm.*). A further monitoring exercise (the focus of this report) was necessitated due to the proposed excavation of a service trench to house a revetment wall. As this trench would encroach the scheduled area by approximately 0.5m, Scheduled Monument Consent was sought by the landowner (Thomas McClure) prior to the work being carried out.

The monitoring exercise was requested by Adrian McAleenan and Lorraine Bourke (both of NIEA) due to the proximity of the ongoing site work to the scheduled area.

### Site description

The Sites and Monuments Register details the following information regarding the site of Dunmull Hillfort;

*'On a flat-topped outcrop with extensive views. A naturally defensive site, further fortified by a perimeter bank around summit, forming an enclosure 163m N-S x c.60m E-W. Traces of a circular enclosure seen on APs at the W side of the NW end of the hillfort are visible. The well is in the centre of the site & is still visible within a circular enclosure 7.8m across. The outlines of several structures were also picked up on APs. The site is traditionally a pre- C12th stronghold of O'Flynn's. References to a chair and footprint stone suggest inaugural site. It was used as a mass site during penal times.'*

The proposed development site lies at the southern base of the slope of the hillfort and has commanding views, particularly of the south and east. The development site is bounded by an access lane on the south, and the area is generally agricultural land interspersed with residential dwellings.

### Excavation

A mechanical excavator was utilised to remove the spoil from a service trench at the rear of the proposed replacement dwelling. This trench measured roughly 32m in length, 1.5m in width, and was excavated into the natural bedrock. Approximately 0.5m of the width of this trench encroached upon the scheduled area. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered during the monitoring exercise, with sod and topsoil directly overlying natural subsoil/bedrock. Several large angular boulders were encountered, and it is postulated that these originated at the rocky outcrop situated above the proposed

development site. The average depth of the topsoil and upper strata was 0.4m. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during this monitoring exercise and no further investigation is deemed necessary.

Nothing of archaeological significance was noted during the monitoring exercise. 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: \_\_\_\_\_

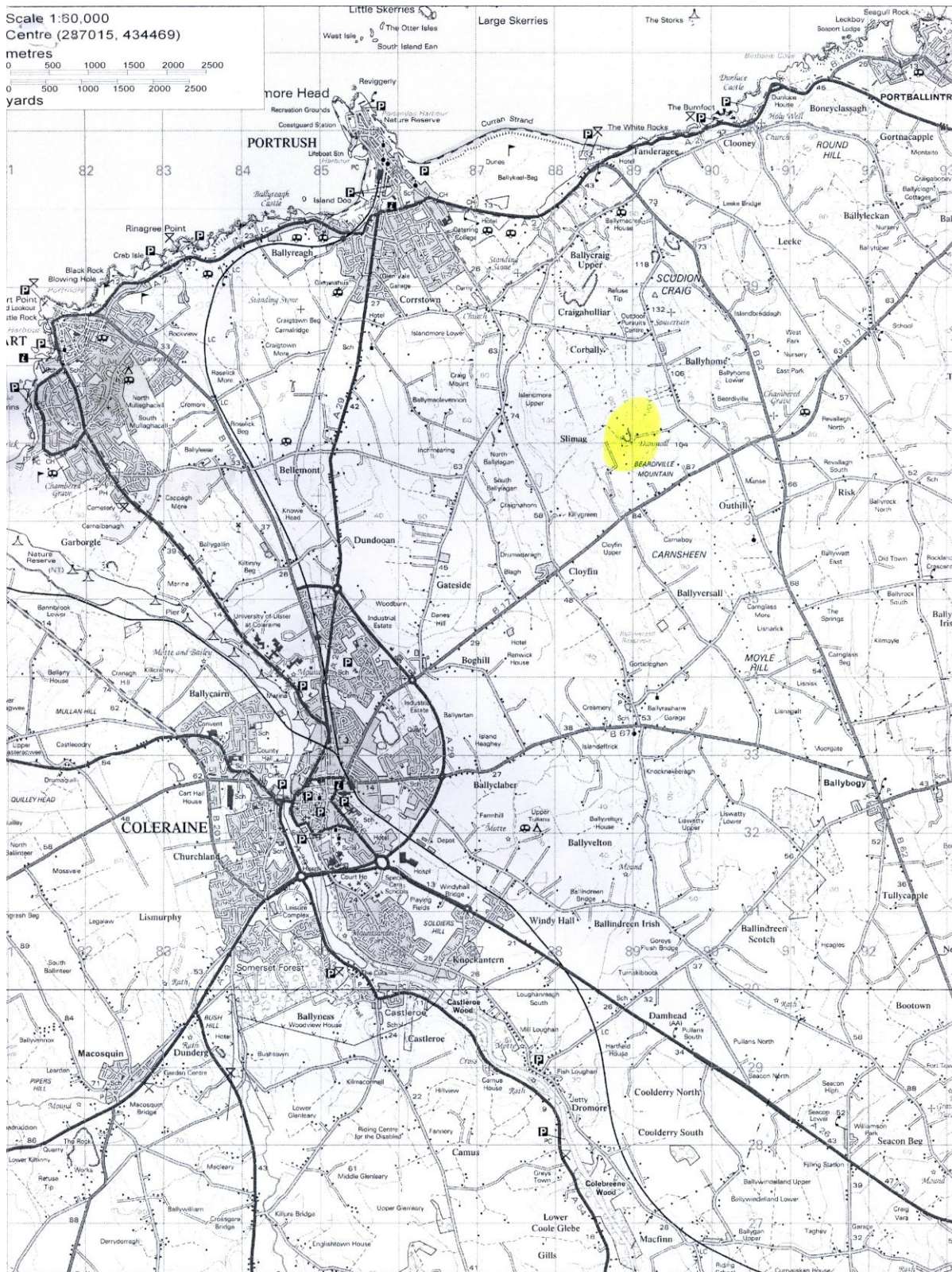


Figure 1: general map showing location of development site (in yellow).

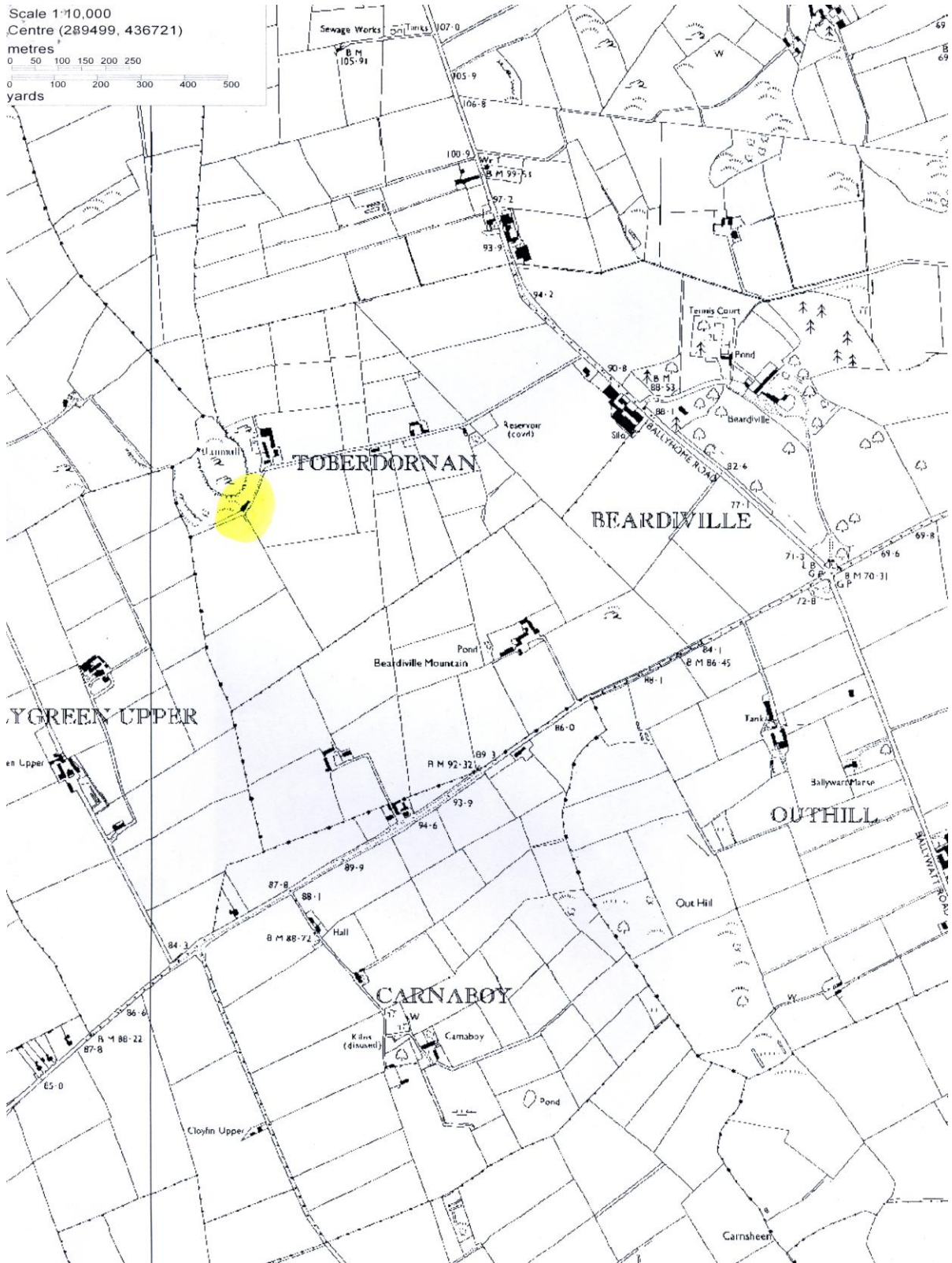


Figure 2: Detailed location map showing proposed development site (in yellow).



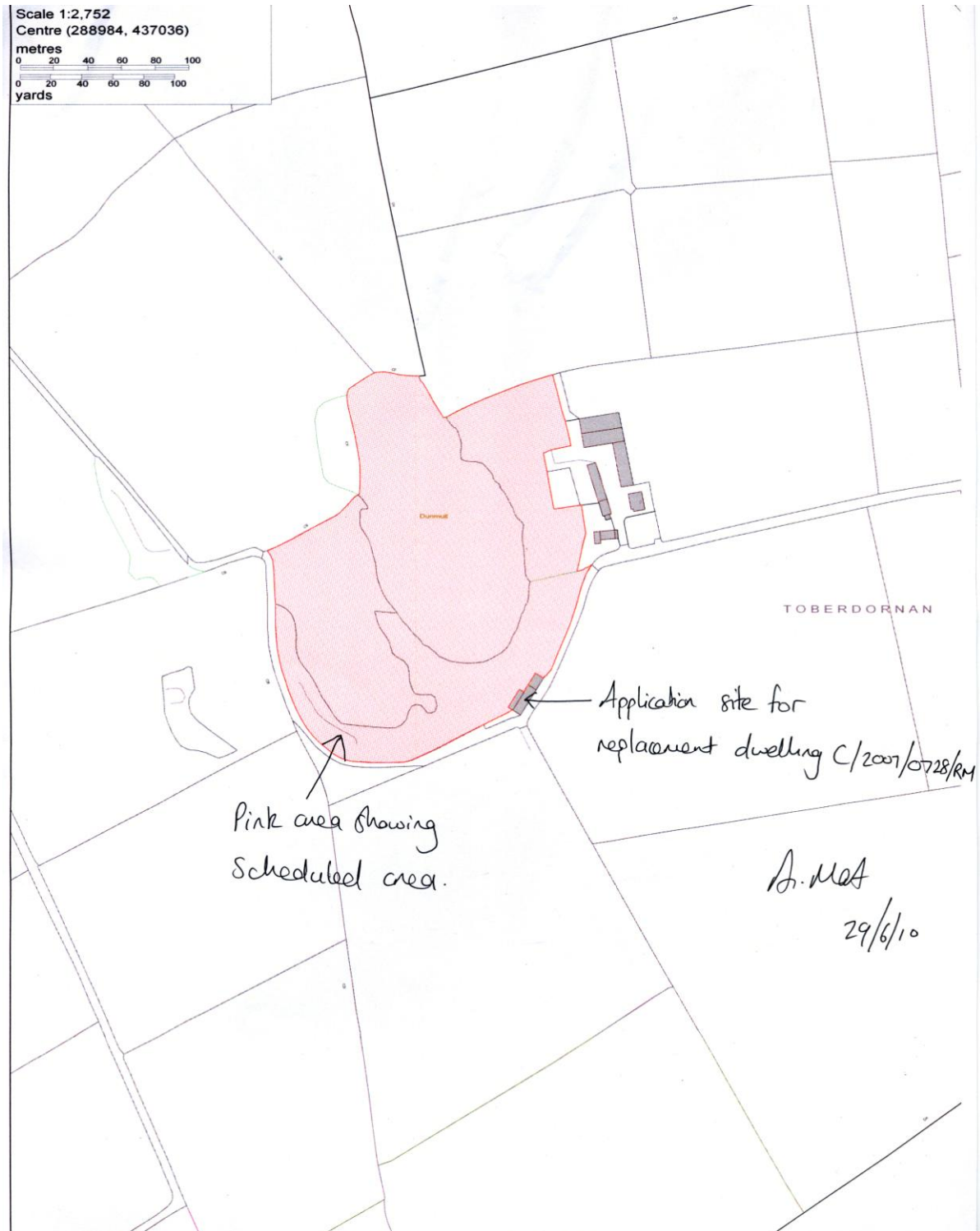


Figure 3: Map showing scheduled area (in pink/purple) and proposed replacement dwelling.

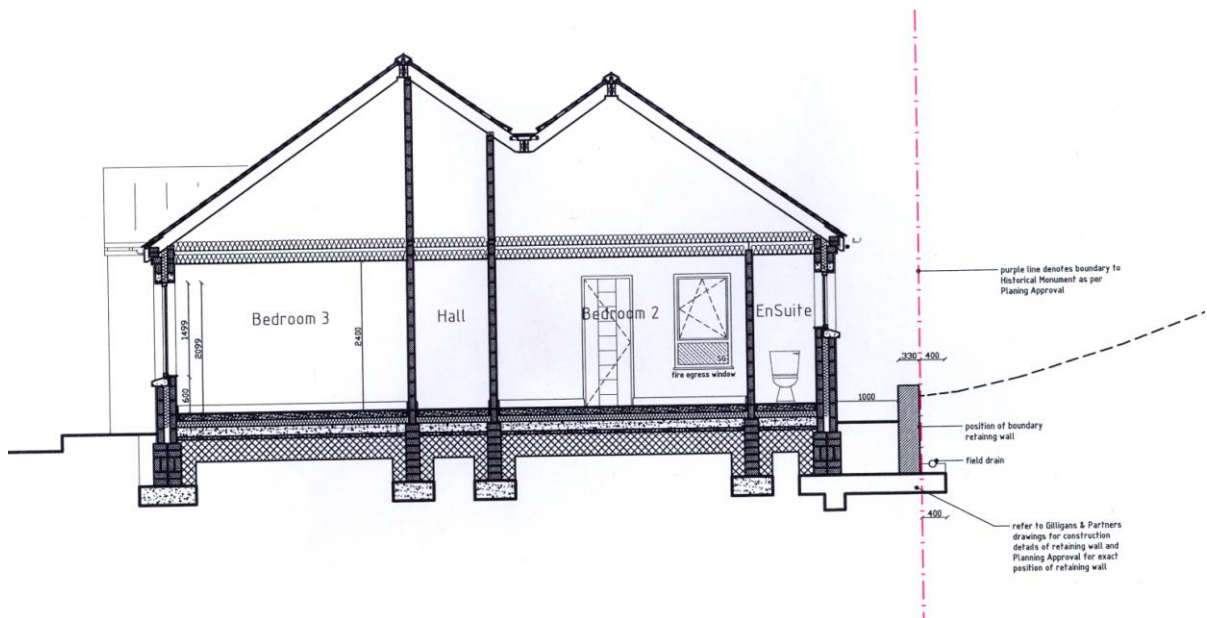


Figure 4: Architects map showing location of service trench at the rear of the proposed replacement dwelling.



Plate 1: Proposed development site following McAleenan's evaluation and prior to the the monitoring exercise taking place, looking north-east.



Plate 2: Approximate edge of the scheduled area (red dashed line). This was located due to the remains of the back wall of the now demolished building, looking east.



Plate 3: Mechanical excavation 0.5m into scheduled area, looking north.



Plate 4: Excavation of the service trench, looking north.