



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 247

**176 CAUSEWAY ROAD
FEIGH ALIAS DUNSEVERICK
BUSHMILLS
COUNTY ANTRIM**

LICENCE NO.: AE/12/121E

NAOMI CARVER

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 176 Causeway Road, Feigh alias Dunseverick, Bushmills, Co. Antrim

Townland: Feigh alias Dunseverick

SMR No. : ANT 003:011 & 003:035

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: C9887 4447

County: Antrim

Excavation Licence No. : AE/12/121E

Planning Ref / No. : E/2012/0091/F

Dates of Monitoring: 25th September 2012

Archaeologist(s) Present: Naomi Carver

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at 76 Causeway Road, Bushmills, Co. Antrim in response to a planning application for a replacement dwelling and detached garage. Dunseverick castle (ANT 003:011) lies to the north-west of the site and a holy well is also recorded in the vicinity (ANT 003:035). The evaluation consisted of eight mechanically-excavated test trenches which ranged in width 1.3-1.5m and length 10.0-20.0m. No remains of archaeological significance were uncovered during the course of the evaluation and it is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out, as the development does not pose a threat to significant archaeological remains.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Eight trenches covering an area of approximately 180m².

Current Land Use: Residential

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site for a replacement dwelling and detached garage is located 5km north-east of Bushmills, along the Antrim coast road (Figure 1). The site is approximately 150m to the south-east of Dunseverick Castle (NISMR ANT 003:011) which occupies the top of a steep-sided rocky promontory (Figure 2 and Plate 1). A holy well (St Patrick's well: NISMR ANT 003:035) was also recorded close to the castle in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (NISMR). A roughly oval depression towards the north-western end of the promontory on which the castle was built may represent the remains of the well.

The application site consists of a triangular field approximately 0.21 hectares in size (Plate 2). It is bounded to the south by the Causeway Road and on the north-western and north-eastern sides by post-and-wire fences beyond which is heathland leading to the coast (Plates 3 and 4). A house and outbuildings occupy the centre of the site, close to the road. The remainder of the land surrounding the house is grass, occasionally used for grazing. There are good views in all directions, including to Rathlin Island to the north-east. The site is quite exposed and on the day of the evaluation there was a strong north-easterly wind.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a replacement dwelling and garage and was requested by Kevin Maguire of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Historic Monuments Unit.

Excavation

The evaluation request allowed for the excavation of trial trenches, the proposed location of which was indicated in the original research design. A total of eight test trenches were excavated in the application area (Figure 3). These differed from the original research design due to the presence of the house and outbuildings on the site.

The trenches were 1.3-1.5m wide and 10.0-20.0m long. Each was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was 1.5m wide and 20.0m long (Plates 5 and 6). It was located on the western side of the house and 2.0m to the north of the road/southernmost field boundary to which it ran parallel. The uppermost layer in Trench 1 was the sod and topsoil layer (C101) which consisted of dark brown humic loamy clay. The layer was 0.14m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer was a cultivation soil (C102) consisting of sandy clay which was brownish black in colour and 0.18m thick. It contained some small sub-rounded and sub-angular stones up to 10mm long. The cultivation layer also contained a few sherds of 19th century pottery and some naturally occurring flint. Below the cultivation layer was the subsoil (C103) which consisted of orange boulder clay, the surface of which was encountered at a depth of 0.30-0.32m. There were patches of burning and superficial traces of cultivation furrows in the subsoil but nothing of archaeological significance was noted.

Trench 2

Trench 2 ran parallel to Trench 1 and was located 5.0m to the north of it. The trench was 1.4m wide and 17.0m long (Plates 7 and 8). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench 2 (C201) consisted of humic, loamy clay with a spongy consistence and few inclusions. The layer was dark brown in colour and 0.13m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer was a cultivation soil of brownish black sandy clay (C202) which was up to 0.20m thick. The cultivation soil contained sub-rounded stones of up to 30mm in length as well as a few sherds of 19th and 20th century pottery. The cultivation layer directly overlay the orange boulder clay subsoil (C203), the surface of which was encountered at a depth of 0.33m. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance uncovered in Trench 2.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was located 5.0m to the north of Trench 2 and ran parallel to it. The trench was 1.5m wide and 11.0m long (Plates 9 and 10). The uppermost deposit in Trench 3 was the sod and topsoil layer (C301) which consisted of dark brownish black humic loamy clay which was 0.12m thick. It overlay a cultivation soil (C302) of dark brownish black sandy clay which contained sub-rounded stones up to 30mm long as well as some sherds of 19th and 20th century pottery. The layer was 0.20m thick. Below the cultivation layer, at the western end of the trench, was a gravelly layer (C303) which overlay the natural subsoil. The gravelly layer consisted of poorly sorted angular and sub-angular stones between 50mm and 200mm long. It appeared to be the remains of the gravel pathway. The subsoil in Trench 3 (C304) consisted of orange boulder clay which contained decaying stones. The surface was encountered at a depth of 0.32m. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance within the subsoil.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was located on the eastern side of the house, parallel to the southernmost field boundary and 3.0m to the north of it. The trench was 1.3m wide and 20.0m long (Plates 11 and 12). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench 4 (C401) consisted of dark greyish brown humic loamy clay which was up to 0.10m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer was a cultivation layer (C402) comprised of loamy clay which was dark brown in colour and compact. The layer was up to 0.24m thick and contained infrequent stone inclusions as well as several sherds of 19th century pottery. Below the cultivation layer was the subsoil (C403) which consisted of orange boulder clay which was sandier and less stony than the subsoil recorded in Trenches 1-3. There was struck flint pressed into the surface of the subsoil but no evidence of archaeological features. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of up to 0.34m.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was located 8.0m to the north of Trench 4 and ran parallel to it. The trench was 1.5m wide and 15.0m long (Plates 13 and 14). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench 5 (C501) consisted of greyish brown humic loamy clay which was up to 0.12m thick. It overlay a cultivation soil consisting of dark greyish brown loamy clay (C502).

The cultivation soil was compact and up to 0.20m thick. It contained sub-angular stone inclusions around 40mm long as well as 19th century pottery. Following the removal of the cultivation soil a linear feature was visible running north-west/south-east across the trench (Plate 15). The cut (C503) of the feature was up to 0.30m wide and the fill (C504) consisted of greyish brown silty clay loam. The feature ran towards a manhole cover beside the house and resembled a modern pipe trench. Stratigraphically below the linear feature was the natural subsoil (C505) which consisted of orange boulder clay. There were no features of archaeological significance but several pieces of struck flint were pressed into the surface of the subsoil. The subsoil was encountered at a depth of 0.32m.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was located 6.0m to the north of Trench 5 and ran parallel to it. The trench was 1.3m wide and 10.0m long (Plates 16 and 17). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench 6 (C601) consisted of dark brown humic loamy clay which was 0.13m thick. Below this was a cultivation soil (C602) of dark brown loamy clay up to 0.14m thick. This layer contained 19th and 20th century pottery as well as a few pieces of struck flint. Below the cultivation soil was the subsoil (C603) consisting of pale orange sandy boulder clay which was water-logged in places. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of 0.27m. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance in Trench 6.

Trench 7

Trench 7 was located 10.0m to the north of Trench 6 and ran parallel to it. The trench was 1.3m wide and 20.0m long (Plates 18 and 19). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench 7 (C701) consisted of dark brown humic loamy clay up to 0.15m thick. Below this was a cultivation soil (C702) consisting of dark greyish brown loamy clay which contained 19th century pottery and animal bone. The cultivation soil was 0.15m thick. The subsoil in Trench 7 (C703) consisted of orange boulder clay, the surface of which was encountered at a depth of 0.30m. There were no finds or features of archaeological interest in Trench 7.

Trench 8

Trench 8 was located 8.0m to the north of Trench 7 and ran parallel to it. The trench was 1.4m wide and 15.0m long (Plates 20 and 21). The uppermost layer in Trench 8 was the sod and topsoil layer (C801) which consisted of greyish brown humic loamy clay with a spongy consistence. The layer was 0.15m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer was a cultivation layer (C802) consisting of greyish brown loamy clay up to 0.20m thick. The cultivation layer contained sub-rounded and sub-angular stones around 40mm long. Below the cultivation layer was the subsoil (C803) which in Trench 8 consisted of orange boulder clay with decayed stones. Trench 8 contained no finds or features of archaeological significance.

No remains of archaeological significance were uncovered within the eight trenches excavated at the proposed development site. Artefacts including struck flint and 19th century pottery were found within most of the trenches. As no features were uncovered it is likely that the flint was residual. The 19th century pottery was probably the result of kitchen midden material being used to fertilize the field. 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: _____



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Figure 1: Map showing the location of the site (circled in red)

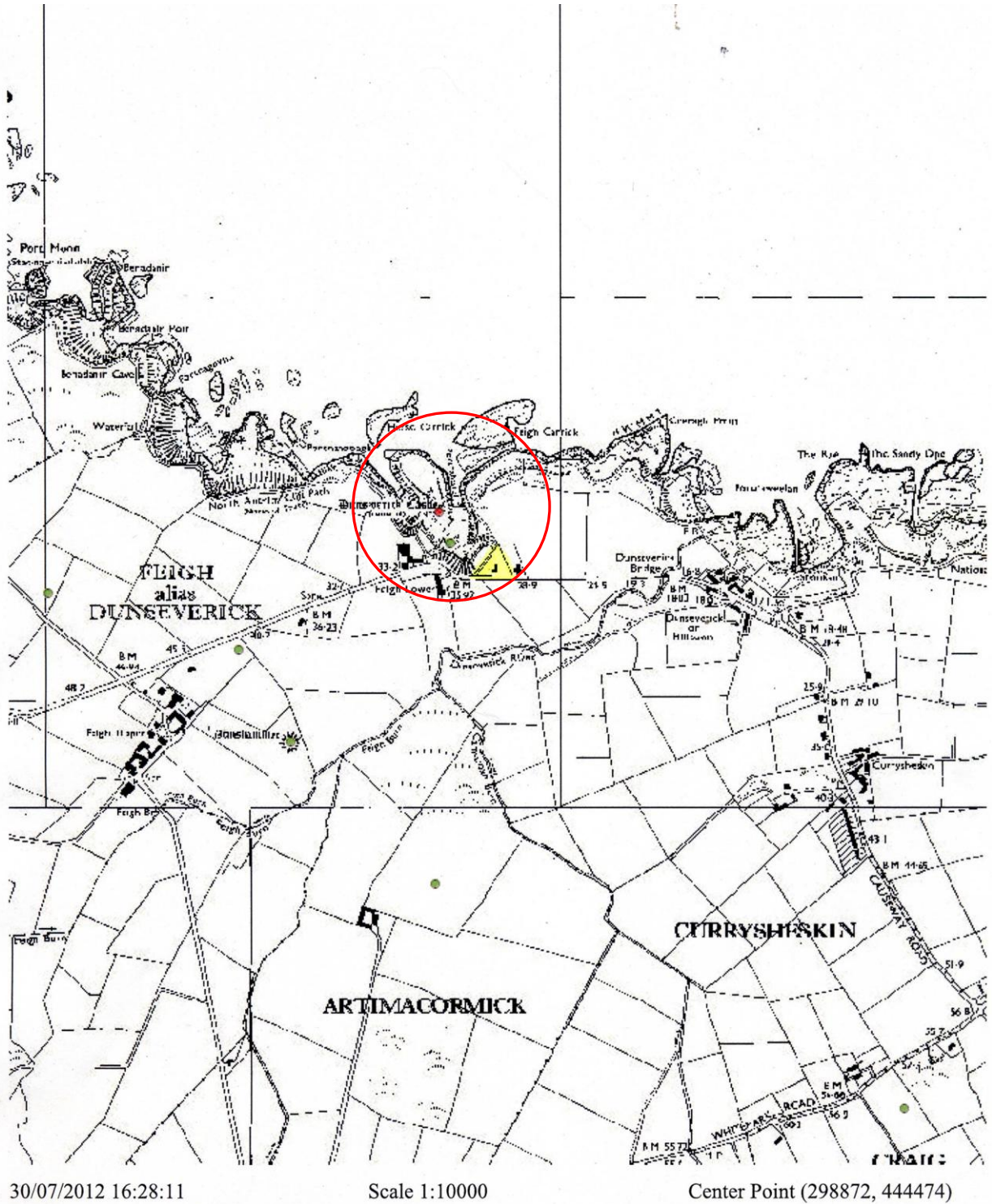


Figure 2: Detailed map showing the location of the site (circled in red) with Dunseverick castle to the north-west



Figure 3: Site plan showing location of test trenches



Plate 1: Dunseverick Castle (ANT 003:011), looking north-west



Plate 2: General view of site prior to evaluation, looking west



Plate 3: General view of site prior to evaluation, looking north north-east



Plate 4: General view of site prior to evaluation, looking north-west



Plate 5: Trench 1 following removal of upper deposits, looking west



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



Plate 7: Trench 2 following removal of upper deposits, looking west



Plate 8: North-facing section of Trench 2, looking south



Plate 9: Trench 3 following removal of upper deposits, looking west



Plate 10: North-facing section of Trench 3, looking south



Plate 11: Trench 4 following removal of upper deposits, looking west



Plate 12: North-facing section of Trench 4, looking south



Plate 13: Trench 5 following removal of upper deposits, looking west



Plate 14: North-facing section of Trench 5, looking south



Plate 15: Pipe trench in Trench 5 (C503/504), looking west



Plate 16: Trench 6 following removal of upper deposits, looking west



Plate 17: North-facing section of Trench 6, looking south



Plate 18: Trench 7 following removal of upper deposits, looking east



Plate 19: North-facing section of Trench 7, looking south



Plate 20: Trench 8 following removal of upper deposits, looking east



Plate 21: South-facing section of Trench 8, looking north