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Data Structure Report: No. 11.

Excavations at Mahee Castle, Co. Down
AE/02/79

On behalf of



Data Structure Report: Mahee Castle, Mahee Island, County Down

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(CAF DSR 011)

(Licence No. AE/02/79)

(SMR No. Down 017:004)

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1 Summary

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Archaeological excavation was undertaken at Mahee Castle (SMR No. Down 017 : 004) on Mahee Island in Strangford Lough, Co. Down in advance of a programme of restoration work undertaken by the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. Mahee Castle is a ruined tower house located on the northern shore of Mahee Island, close to the causeway to Reagh Island (Grid Reference J52396394). The site is conventionally dated on historical evidence to c.1570. The tower house is built upon an artificial terrace cut into the northeastern end of a drumlin. The back of the terrace is retained by a revetment wall located c.4.0 metres to the southwest of the tower house.

1.1.2 A series of early photographic images of the Mahee Castle form an important source for the architectural study of the tower house. Their study also illustrates how the construction of the nineteenth century causeway to Reagh Island precipitated the undermining of the castle's northern corner through tidal erosion. In addition, the early photographic studies of the castle record two earlier episodes of restoration work at the site: one apparently coinciding with the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's 1887 excursion to Mahee Island and the other undertaken by H.C.Lawlor in 1923. The photographs show that the buttress under the northern corner of the castle and its extension as a base batter across part of the northeastern side of the castle were both built by H.C.Lawlor in 1923. Previously these features have been considered original architectural details.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 To facilitate the current programme of restoration work, excavations had previously been carried out at the site during 2001 by Ruairí Ó Baoill on behalf of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. Ó Baoill excavated approximately two-thirds of the area between the revetment wall and the tower house, as well as part of the building's interior and recovered artefacts ranging in date from the Late Medieval period to the twentieth century. The 2001 excavations established the character of the deposits between the tower house and the revetment wall; the earliest horizon uncovered was a roughly cobbled surface which was apparently contemporary with the construction of the tower house. The primary aim of the 2002 excavation was to dig the remaining unexcavated area between the revetment wall and the tower house so that the restoration work being undertaken at the site could be completed. Other objectives included resolving the stratigraphic relationships between the revetment wall, roughly cobbled surface and the earliest phase of the tower house, as well as recovering artefactual evidence to assist in the closer dating of the site's various features and phases.

1.3 Excavation

- 1.3.1 Excavation of the site duly took place between the 6th August and the 12th of September 2002 under the direction of Philip Macdonald for the Excavation Unit of the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork in the School of Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast on behalf of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. An area of upstanding deposits c.4 x 4 metres in size and situated across the revetment wall and part of the northwestern end of the small yard formed between the wall and the back of the tower house were excavated. This block of deposits did not extend as far as the tower house as a small trench, c.1.25 metres wide, had been excavated immediately adjacent to the southwestern wall of the tower house during the 2001 excavations. The block of upstanding deposits was excavated in plan as a single area and the context record for the site was created using the standard context recording method. As it was anticipated that artefactual material recovered from relevant contexts would provide the best dating evidence for the site, a strategy of sieving the spoil from significant deposits was adopted in order to maximize finds recovery. It was not practical to conduct a detailed topographic survey of the site and its immediate environs because the dense vegetation cover on the site's southern and western sides restricted the working range of the total station; however, a limited survey was undertaken in order to tie in the location of the excavations with the Ordnance Survey.
- 1.3.2 Initially, the backfill (Context 1001) from the 2001 excavation trenches (Context Nos.1002 and 1003) was partially removed to enable the full sections of the upstanding block of deposits to be recorded. Then the topsoil (Context No.1004) and an underlying deposit of twentieth century hillwash (Context No.1005) were excavated to reveal a dump of uniform small angular stones (Context No.1006) that was interpreted as the remains of an early to mid twentieth century levelling or metalling deposit. Underlying this deposit was a complex of dumped and tumbled stone layers (Context No.1007) which included a spread of gravel and shell immediately adjacent to the revetment wall (Context No.1015) that appeared to be the same used in the cement/mortar employed to repair the wall during Lawlor's 1920's restoration work at the site. Underlying this complex of dumped and tumbled stones was a localized spread of sandy clay loam (Context No.1016) which overlay a small, square area of cobbling of uncertain purpose (Context No.1019) that was set into a clay loam bedding (Context No.1021) immediately adjacent to the revetment wall (Context Nos.1009). Other deposits underlying the deposit of sandy clay loam (Context No.1016) included a spread of apparently redeposited boulder clay (Context No.1020) and a localized deposit of hillwash (Context No.1017). The precise date of these features and deposits underlying the sandy clay loam (Context No.1016) is, at present, uncertain. Potentially, they range in date from the late seventeenth to the nineteenth century; however, they all post-date the ruination of the tower house as they overlay the sequence of deposits (Context Nos. 1008, 1018, 1023

and 1011) which are interpreted as representing the principal tumble or collapse of stones derived from the tower house and possibly the revetment wall.

- 1.3.3 The sequence of deposits representing the main tumble of stones from the tower house are provisionally interpreted as representing several discrete episodes of collapse rather than a single catastrophic or demolition event. They consist of a heterogeneous complex of frequently concreted deposits of angular stones of various sizes, lime mortar and charcoal which include several lenses of hillwash (Context Nos.1008 and 1018) that overlaid an unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar and mixed stones (Context No.1023) which in turn overlay a layer of large sub-angular stones (Context No.1011) that increased in thickness towards the tower house. It is possible that the unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar (Context No.1023) formed *in situ* as rainwater percolated through the sequence of deposits and dissolved and then transported downwards lime mortar from the overlying collapse and tumble deposits (Context Nos.1008 and 1018) which then precipitated out immediately above the relatively impervious layer of large stones (Context No.1011). An almost complete sandstone window jamb (Small Find No.286) was recovered from the deposit of lime mortar and mixed stones (Context No.1023). The relatively unweathered condition of the jamb, coupled with the softness of the sandstone, suggests that it had not been exposed to the elements for a long period prior to its deposition. This observation suggests that the period between the tower house's construction and it falling into a ruin was not great.
- 1.3.4 Underlying the deposit of large sub-angular stones (Context No.1011) was a thin dump of redeposited boulder clay (Context No.1012) and a localized spread of hillwash which contained no finds and only a few flecks of charcoal (Context No.1024). These two deposits are provisionally equated with the period of abandonment of the tower house prior to its falling into a ruin. These 'abandonment' phase deposits overlay a thin but extensive charcoal-rich loamy deposit (Context No.1028) which probably represents an occupation deposit. This occupation layer was the last deposit to butt up against the revetment wall (Context 1009) and its excavation revealed two small pits (Context Nos.1029 and 1037) one of which (Context No.1029) cut through the fill (Context Nos.1030 and 1034) of a large pit (Context No.1035) that had been deliberately backfilled with large boulders so that the revetment wall (Context No.1009) could be built across it. The large boulders making up the pit's fill (Context Nos.1030 and 1034) had settled following the construction of the revetment wall causing the wall (Context No.1009) to partly slump and subside. Both the large pit (Context No.1035) and one of the smaller pits (Context No.1037) cut the fill (Context No.1032) of a linear drain with steep sides which ran approximately south-east to north-west across the entire excavation area getting closer to the back wall of the tower house towards the north-west. The fill of this drain (Context No.1032) appeared to have accumulated relatively slowly suggesting that the revetment wall (Context 1009) is a secondary feature which post-dates the initial construction of the tower house, possibly by

a significant period. The revetment wall itself (Context 1009) is infilled with a rubble core and redeposited boulder clay and loamy hillwash deposits. It is faced only on its northeastern side (which faces the back wall of the tower house) and its lowest course is slightly stepped out and laid directly on to the truncated surface (Context No.1038) of the boulder clay (Context Nos.1010, 1014 and 1025). The linear drain (Context No.1033) apparently cuts through a now incomplete, roughly metalled surface (Context No.1031) impressed directly into the truncated surface (Context No.1038) of the boulder clay (Context Nos.1010, 1014 and 1025). The roughly metalled surface (Context No.1031) is presumably contemporary with the initial construction of the tower house.

1.3.5 In line with conditions of Scheduled Monument Consent the roughly metalled surface (Context No.1031) and the revetment wall (Context No.1009) were not excavated but preserved *in situ*. In addition, only part of the fill (Context No.1034) of the large pit (Context No.1035) underlying the revetment wall (Context No.1009) was excavated to prevent the wall from being further undermined.

1.3.6 A wide range of artefactual material was recovered during the 2002 excavations including: pottery, metal artefacts, worked slate and animal bone. Provisional analysis of the ceramic assemblage recovered during the excavations suggests that occupation of the site dates from some point during the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries, that the site was abandoned by the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and had become a ruin in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

1.4 *Discussion*

1.4.1 Prior to the 2001 and 2002 excavations, the dating of Mahee Castle was based on three separate strands of evidence: architectural, cartographic and historical. These three strands of evidence are critically reviewed and it is suggested that the accepted date for the construction of Mahee Castle to c.1570 on historical evidence is more problematic than has previously been appreciated. Evaluation of the architectural, cartographic and historical evidence suggests that it is consistent with any point within the fifteenth to sixteenth century date range, suggested by the archaeological evidence from the 2002 excavations, for the construction and occupation of Mahee Castle.

1.4.2 The results of the 2001 and 2002 excavations are broadly consistent with each other. Evidence for the secondary date for the revetment wall was recovered during both excavations and the recovery of Late Medieval artefacts prompted Ó Baoill to suggest that activity at the site might pre-date the conventional date of c.1570 for the tower house's construction. However, Ó Baoill suggested that the revetment wall and the drainage system, cut into the roughly cobbled surface between the revetment wall and the tower house, were of seventeenth century date; whilst the artefactual material recovered during

the 2002 excavations suggested that these features were probably fifteenth or sixteenth century and that the site was abandoned by the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. It may be that Ó Baoill's analysis is unduly influenced by the conventional historical date for the construction of Mahee Castle, or that the limited scale of the 2002 excavations resulted in the recovery of a small and potentially unrepresentative artefactual assemblage.

- 1.4.3 During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Mahee Island was located close to the unstable boundary between lordships of Clandeboye to the north and Dufferin to the south. During this period the border area would have been the subject of raiding and power disputes and possession of Mahee Castle may have changed hands several times. Being located on the border between these two lordships, Mahee Castle would have been of great strategic importance and it is within this historical context that the site must be considered.

1.5 *Recommendations*

- 1.5.1 Both the 2001 and 2002 excavations at Mahee Castle produced detailed stratigraphic sequences with associated artefactual and faunal assemblages. Given the relative lack of excavations previously undertaken at Irish tower houses, the archaeological importance of the two seasons of work at Mahee Castle should not be underestimated. Specific deposits that will provide insights into the economic role of coastal tower house in County Down during the Late Medieval period were identified during the 2002 excavation. The prompt and full publication of these excavations is identified as a priority. It is recommended that a single report of both excavations should be published in an academic journal such as the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*.
- 1.5.2 In order to facilitate the preparation of a joint report on both excavations it is necessary to assess how easily the two excavation archives can be integrated and evaluate the costs of completing both the necessary specialist reports and reproducing copyrighted archival material in the report. It is recommended that a second Costed Assessment is prepared during the summer of 2003 outlining the costs of preparing an integrated report on the Mahee Castle excavations. It is estimated that the preparation of the second Costed Assessment will take an experienced archaeologist two weeks.

2 Introduction

2.1 General

2.1.1 The following report details the preliminary results of the archaeological excavation at Mahee Castle, undertaken by the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Archaeology and Palaeoecology at Queen's University of Belfast from the 6th August 2002 to the 12th September 2002 (Licence No. AE/02/79). The excavation was undertaken on behalf of the Environment and Heritage Services: Built Heritage who funded the project. The excavation was carried out in advance of an ongoing programme of restoration and consolidation work, intended to improve public access to the monument, which is being undertaken by the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 Mahee Castle (SMR No. Down 017:004) is a ruined tower house located on the northern shore of Mahee Island, close to the causeway to Reagh Island, in Strangford Lough, County Down (Grid Reference J52396394) (Figure One). Mahee Island is the largest island in Strangford Lough. It is situated within the parish of Tullynakill, close to the western shore of the lough and is located about five kilometres to the southeast of Comber. The island consists of two ridges joined by an isthmus; the castle is located at the northern end of the western ridge which is formed by a drumlin with a boulder clay core. The name 'Mahee' is derived from Mochaoi who was the saint traditionally considered to have founded the monastery at Nendrum (Knox 1875, 540; McErlean and Crothers 2002, 200).

2.2.2 Mahee Castle, also known as Nendrum Castle, is conventionally dated on historical grounds to c.1570. It is built upon an artificial terrace cut into the northern end of a drumlin. The castle is built of split-stone rubble and boulders and measures c.12.75 metres (northwest – southeast) by c.6.75 metres (northeast – southwest). The castle is ruined but survives in places to a height of three floors. The ground floor is divided into two chambers separated by a cross wall. The larger, northwestern chamber is covered by a semicircular barrel vault, while the smaller, southeastern has a barrel vault of triangular section. The entrance to the tower house is through the northwestern wall of the building. As well as the entrance, the northwestern chamber also contains the stairs to the first floor. The southwestern end of the southeastern chamber contains a wide arched opening, while the northeastern end of the same chamber is now ruined but may have also contained a wide opening through the external wall of the castle. For a detailed description of the tower house's architecture see Archaeological Survey of County Down 1966, 244-245. The back of the terrace that the castle is constructed on is retained by a revetment wall (previously described as a probable bawn wall cf. Archaeological Survey of Northern Ireland 1966, 245) located c.4.0 metres to the southwest of the tower house. Mahee Castle's siting

meant that it could be provisioned by sea and its location also commanded the ford with Reagh Island which, presumably, predated the construction of the causeway in the nineteenth century.

2.3 Archaeological survey of the site's environs

2.3.1 Mahee Island contains several archaeological sites ranging in date from the Mesolithic to the Post-Medieval period. Appreciation of the archaeology of Mahee Island has been greatly advanced by the 1995 to 2000 survey of the coastal archaeology of Strangford Lough commissioned by the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage (McErlean, McConkey and Forsythe 2002). Details of sites and monuments either on the island or associated with its shoreline have been tabulated (Table One). In addition to Mahee Castle, the most significant sites are the early monastic site of Nendrum (Lawlor 1925; McErlean 2002a, 75) and its associated Early Medieval tidal mills (McErlean and Crothers 2002). The only known site which may be directly associated with the tower house is the possible quay structure c.100 metres to the southeast of Mahee Castle (McConkey 2002, 310-311, fig.10.2).

Description	SMR No. or MR No.	Grid Reference	References
Mesolithic flint blade find spot	DOW 017:032	J52386352	
Mesolithic flint scatters	DOW 017:036	J52446363	McErlean, McConkey and Forsythe 2002, 435
Late Mesolithic flint scatter	-	J537624	McErlean 2002c, fig.7.8
Oyster midden	-	J538624	McErlean 2002c, fig.7.8
Oyster midden	MRD 168:96	J35393645	McErlean 2002c, fig.7.8; McErlean, McConkey and Forsythe 2002, 486-487
Neolithic polished stone axes	DOW 017:039	J524636	McErlean, McConkey and Forsythe 2002, 446
Monastic site: Nendrum	DOW 017:005	J524636	Lawlor 1925; McErlean 2002a, 75
Tower House: Mahee Castle	DOW 017:004	J52396394	Archaeological Survey of County Down 1966, 244-245; Ó Baoill and McQuaid 2002
Early Medieval tidal mills	-	J525637	McErlean and Crothers 2002
Possible quay	MRD 168:180	J524639	McConkey 2002, 310-311, fig.10.2; McErlean, McConkey and Forsythe 2002, 529
Late nineteenth century causeway to Reagh Island	-		McErlean 2002c, 196
Quay and slipway	MRD 168:21	J522638	McErlean, McConkey and Forsythe 2002, 527
Slipway	MRD 168:29	J523636	McConkey 2002, 311; McErlean, McConkey and Forsythe 2002, 528
Quay and slipways	MRD168:149	J528634	McErlean, McConkey and Forsythe 2002, 528

Table One: Recorded archaeological sites either on, or associated with the shoreline of, Mahee Island

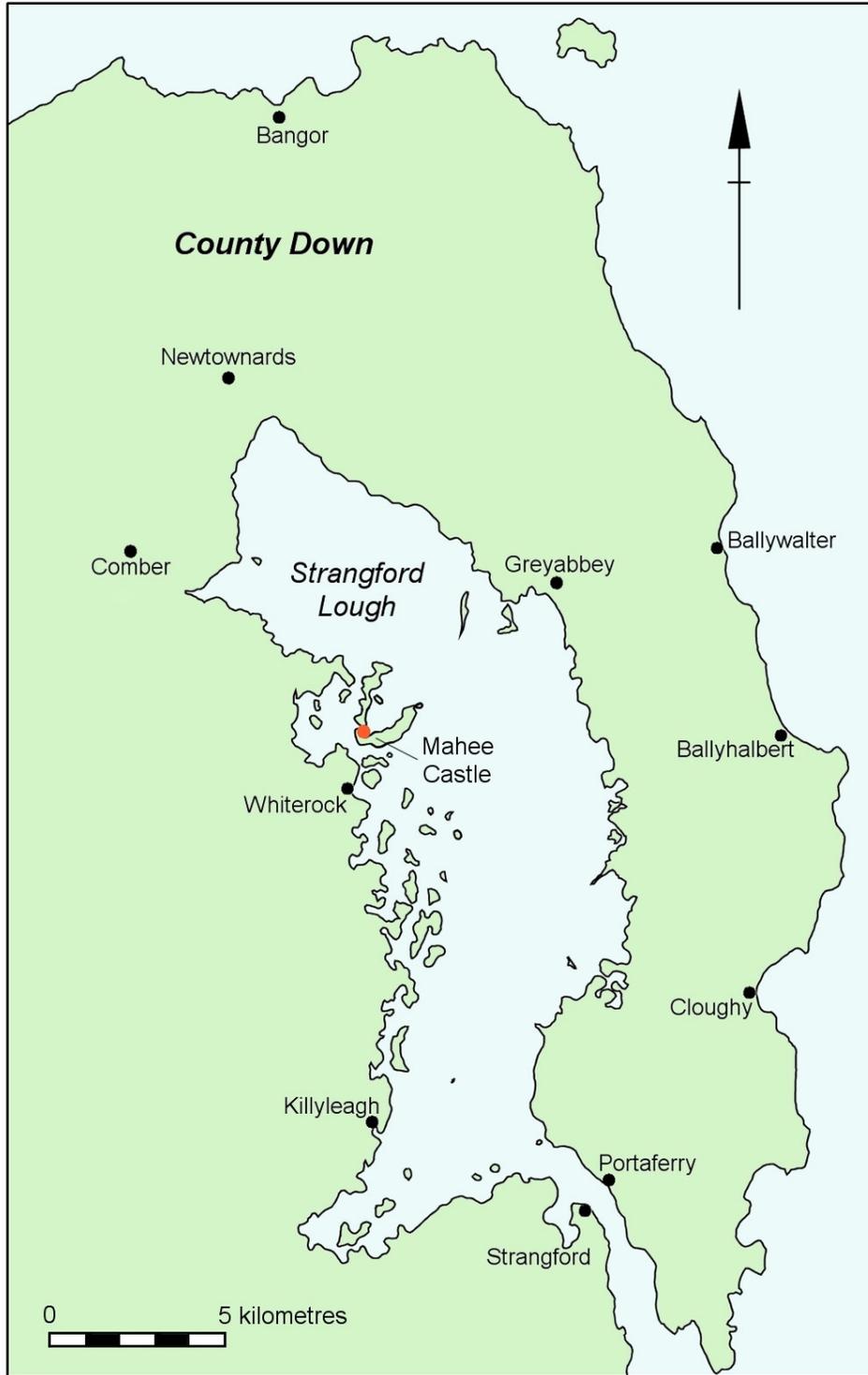


Figure One: Mahee Castle Location Map

2.4 *Previous archaeological investigations, photographic studies and restoration work undertaken at Mahee Castle*

2.4.1 Prior to the 2002 excavation, Mahee Castle has been the subject of at least two phases of archaeological intervention: H.C.Lawlor's restoration of the tower house in 1923 and Ruairí Ó Baoill's 2001 excavations undertaken on behalf of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. It is probable that early photographs of the castle record an episode of restoration work dating to 1887.

2.5 *Early photographic studies*

2.5.1 Early photographic images of Mahee Castle are included in a late nineteenth century Belfast Naturalist Field Club Photographic Album as well as the Welch, Hogg and Green Collections of photographic prints (see Appendix Eight). Probably as a result of the close proximity of Mahee Castle to the frequently visited monastic site of Nendrum, a relatively large number of early photographic images exist of Mahee Castle. The extant images apparently record the tower house during the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's 1887 excursion to Mahee Island, as well as the site in 1900 and during H.C. Lawlor's 1923 restoration work. Collectively, they form an important source for the architectural study of the tower house. Details of the content of each photographic image are tabulated in Appendix Eight and three representative images from the Green Collection are also reproduced (see Plates One, Two and Three).

2.5.2 Study of the early photographic images raises several interesting points. The images which apparently date to the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's 1887 excursion to Mahee Island depict a water cart and a number of partially buried half barrels located immediately around the castle (see Appendix Eight refs: Belfast Naturalist Field Club Photographic Album (Y39050, pls.76-77) and Welch Collection (W05/06/3)). Several of the half barrels contain white contents suggesting that they represent containers for preparing either limewash or lime mortar which may have been used in a hitherto unrecorded episode of repair work at the site. Comparison of the photographs taken in 1887 (see Appendix Eight ref: Welch Collection (W05/06/3)) and c.1900 (see Appendix Eight ref: Green Collection (WAG 879)) suggests that reconstruction work around the door in the northwest wall of the tower house was undertaken between these dates.

2.5.3 The early photographs all show preferential robbing of stone from both the corners and the northeastern side of the castle. Presumably the squared stones from the corners of the tower house were taken for use in local buildings, whilst the stone from the northeastern side of the castle was used for the construction of the adjacent nineteenth century causeway to Reagh Island. Several of the photographs also show that the area between the southwestern wall which forms the back of the tower house and the revetment wall was

relatively uneven (see Appendix Eight refs: Belfast Naturalist Field Club Photographic Album (Y39050, pl.77) and Hogg Collection (H05/06/2)). The ground surface, and by extension the depth of the underlying stratigraphy, rises significantly towards the northwestern end of this area where the 2002 area of excavation was sited. Several of the photographs also show how Mahee Castle was incorporated into a late nineteenth century field system. Lengths of dry stone walling, which run on an approximately southeast to northwest alignment that follows the line of the coast, butt up against both the northwestern and southeastern sides of the tower house (see Appendix Eight refs: Belfast Naturalist Field Club Photographic Album (Y39050, pls.76-77, 82), Welch Collection (W05/06/1 and W05/06/3) and Hogg Collection (H05/06/1 and H05/06/2). One of the photographs shows that a small wooden gate was originally inserted immediately between the northwestern wall of the tower house and the adjoining length of dry stone wall although this was removed by c.1900 and the wall extended so that it butted directly against the tower house (see Appendix Eight refs: Belfast Naturalist Field Club Photographic Album (Y39050, pl.76) and Green Collection (WAG 879)).

2.6 *Lawlor's 1923 restoration*

- 2.6.1 In 1923 the site was partially consolidated by the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society under the direction of H.C. Lawlor. Lawlor describes how 'in 1922 the ruin was in great danger of further destruction from ivy growing through the walls; many cracks were showing, and any storm might have almost completed its destruction' (1925, 125). He also described his restoration work, noting that 'all the ivy has now been cut out, the cracks and loose stones grouted in with cement, and a strong buttress built under the N.E. corner, which had been deeply undermined; the tops of all the walls have been made water-tight by cement, so that the ruin may now stand safe for centuries' (Lawlor 1925, 125).
- 2.6.2 Comparing and contrasting photographs of Mahee Castle taken both prior to and during the 1923 restoration work verifies the accuracy of Lawlor's account of his works. Earlier images of the castle confirms that its northern corner had been undermined, presumably as a result of tidal erosion exacerbated by the construction of the causeway during the nineteenth century (for example see Plate One). Images taken during Lawlor's restoration work (Plates Two and Three) show that a buttress was inserted under the northern corner. More recent photographs of Mahee Castle, taken prior to the current phase of restoration work, indicate that the line of the buttress was extended as a base batter across the northernmost part of the northeastern side of the tower house (Plate Four). The photographs taken during Lawlor's restoration work (Plates Two and Three) show that the fresh mortar used on the buttress was distinctly lighter in colour than that on the surviving parts of the tower house's original masonry. However, the new mortar subsequently weathered and the buttress and base batter were mistakenly identified as original features by the Archaeological Survey of County Down (1966, 244). This misidentification is

regrettable as the extension of Lawlor's base batter forms a major element of the current restoration work at Mahee Castle.

2.6.3 Study of the early photographs also indicates that the worked stone defining the doorways and windows of the tower house were robbed out by the 1880s (see Appendix Eight for details). Lawlor reconstructed these architectural features using crudely worked stones which were identified by the Archaeological Survey of County Down as being recent (1966, 244). The photographs also show that the ruined, northeastern entrance of the southeastern chamber was blocked by a ruined stone wall (for example see Plates One and Two) which, presumably, was subsequently removed by Lawlor during the later stages of his restoration works. It is uncertain whether this length of ruined wall is part of the original northeastern external wall of the tower house or a secondary addition designed to block off the entrance. If the wall is an original feature this would suggest that the northeastern entrance of the southeastern chamber may have been inadvertently created by Lawlor and that the apparent arched opening is a result of a construction technique which involved first building the vaulted roof of the southeast chamber and then butting the tower house's northeast external wall against it. The presence of an entrance on this side of the southeast chamber was only suggested as a possibility by the Archaeological Survey of County Down (1966, 244) and should not be considered a certainty. A second possibility is that this wall represents a blocking of an original northeast entrance of the southeast chamber. Ó Baoill's excavations uncovered a foundation trench dated to the seventeenth century in this area which may relate to the length of walling that Lawlor demolished.

2.7 *The 2001 excavations*

2.7.1 To facilitate the current programme of restoration work, excavations were carried out at the site during 2001 by Ruaíri Ó Baoill on behalf of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. Approximately two-thirds of the area between the revetment wall and the tower house, as well as part of the building's interior and trenches against its external walls, were excavated. The following account of the results of the 2001 excavations is derived from an unpublished summary report (Ó Baoill and McQuaid 2002).

2.7.2 The stratigraphic sequence between the revetment wall and the back of the tower house had a maximum depth of 1.5 metres. The earliest horizon uncovered was a roughly cobbled surface which appeared to be contemporary with the foundation of the castle and was therefore dated by Ó Baoill to the late sixteenth century. The main feature uncovered in this area was the first course of a horseshoe-shaped dry stone wall that butted against the back wall of the tower house either side of the arched entrance into the southeast chamber. The wall enclosed an area c.3.4 metres by c.3.4 metres and may have formed the footing of a wooden superstructure. In an account of Mahee Castle, Lawlor apparently

described this feature as a 'kitchen which was at one time attached to the main building by a lean-to roof, and communicated therewith by an arched doorway' (1925, 124). The horseshoe-shaped feature is visible in one of the photographs dating to 1923 confirming Lawlor's observation that it remained exposed until the early twentieth century (see Appendix Eight: Green Collection WAG2092). In addition to the horseshoe-shaped feature, Ó Baoill's excavations also uncovered a system of drains between the revetment wall and the tower house. The main drain which was uncovered was earth cut and covered with stone lintels. It ran approximately east-west and was connected to three other perpendicularly aligned drains which ran under the revetment wall. On artefactual evidence, Ó Baoill dated the revetment wall, horseshoe-shaped structure and drains to the seventeenth century.

- 2.7.3 The earliest horizon uncovered inside the southeast chamber of the tower house was a cobbled surface thought to be contemporary with that found between the revetment wall and the back of the tower house. Overlying this was an organic soil through which was cut by a drain fed by a well or sump that was associated with a disturbed cobbled surface. The arched entrance into the chamber through the back wall of the tower house was partially blocked by a stone wall overlying the earliest cobbled surface. The latest activity represented in the stratigraphic sequence of the southeastern chamber was a cobbled surface which incorporated a covered drain that led out to the shore. Ó Baoill associated this horizon with the use of the building to house animals in the nineteenth century. Excavation revealed a doorway between the southeastern and northwestern chambers. Only part of the northwestern chamber was excavated. The earliest recorded deposits in the northwestern chamber were a series of infills which underlay a metalled floor. A series of stake holes, which might be associated with the construction of the chamber's vaulted roof, were cut into the metalled floor.
- 2.7.4 Study of the masonry around the northeastern entrance to the southeastern chamber suggested that there had been at least two phases of construction work. Excavation uncovered a foundation trench, presumably associated with the latest phase of building, which contained seventeenth century artefactual material. A small trench against the outer face of the tower house's southeastern wall revealed evidence of a cobbled surface and two walls butted against the southeastern wall. These walls may have formed part of an additional structure attached to the tower house, although early photographs of the site show that a dry stone field wall butted against the southeastern wall of the tower house (for example see Appendix Eight: Welch Collection W05/06/1).
- 2.7.5 Artefacts ranging in date from the Late Medieval period to the twentieth century were recovered during the 2001 excavations. Combined with the stratigraphic evidence outlined above, these prompted the excavator to conclude that activity may have taken place at the

site prior to the construction of the tower house and that the site was subject to at least one phase of rebuilding during the seventeenth century.

2.8 Reason for excavation and research objectives

2.8.1 The aim of the 2002 excavation was to dig the remaining block of unexcavated deposits in the area between the revetment wall and the tower house so that the restoration work being undertaken at the site could be completed. The principal research objective that was identified prior to the excavation was to resolve the stratigraphic relationships between the revetment wall, roughly cobbled surface and the earliest phase of the tower house. Additional objectives included recovering artefactual evidence to assist in the closer dating of the site's various features and phases.

2.9 Archiving

2.9.1 A copy of this report has been deposited with the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. All site records and finds are temporarily archived with the School of Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

2.10 Credits and Acknowledgements

2.10.1 The excavation was directed by Philip Macdonald and supervised by Bronagh Murray. The core excavation team consisted of Nicholas Beer, Graeme Heyburn, Sonja Laus, Daniel Reilly and Brian Sloan. Temporary members of the excavation team included Keith Adams, Catherine Boner, Lucy Chapman, Tom Kerr, Ruth Logue, James McKee and Peter Moore.

2.10.2 For their assistance in preparing this report the author is particularly grateful to: Graeme Heyburn for his comments on the early photographs of Mahee Castle in the Green Collection, Thomas McErlean (Centre for Maritime Archaeology, University of Ulster) for his comments on the historical evidence relating to the site, and Cormac McSparron (Queen's University Belfast) for his provisional analysis of the ceramic assemblage recovered during the excavation. Additional assistance during the course of the excavation and the preparation of this report was kindly provided by: Max Browne, John Davison (Queen's University Belfast), Colm Donnelly (Queen's University Belfast), Robert Heslip (Museums & Galleries of Northern Ireland), Declan Hurl (Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage), Finbar McCormick (Queen's University Belfast), Tom McNeill (Queen's University Belfast), Marion Meek (Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage) and Mary O'Dowd (Queen's University Belfast). The illustrations were prepared by Keith Adams and Ruth Logue of the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queen's University Belfast.

3 Excavation

3.1 Methodology

- 3.1.1 The excavation extended across a single rectangular-shaped block of upstanding deposits situated across the revetment wall and part of the northwestern end of the small yard formed between the revetment wall and the back of the tower house (Figure Two; Plate Five). The block of upstanding deposits extended northeast – southwest for c.4.4 metres and southeast – northwest for c.3.9 metres. The area of excavation did not extend as far as the tower house because a small trench, c.1.25 metres wide, had been dug immediately adjacent to the southwestern wall of the tower house during the 2001 excavations. For the purposes of creating a convenient site grid, a site north (equivalent to true northeast) was established. To avoid confusion all references to cardinal directions within this report have been corrected; however, references in the primary site records have not been altered.
- 3.1.2 Excavating the upstanding block of deposits meant that the northeast and southeast facing sections of the excavation, which were defined by the edges of the 2001 excavation trenches, would be destroyed, rather than exposed, as the excavation progressed. Consequently, prior to excavating the upstanding block of deposits, the partially backfilled 2001 excavation trenches immediately adjacent to the block's northeastern and southeastern edges were re-excavated. Clearing back an area c.0.7 metres wide around the block of deposits facilitated access to the site and enabled both the northeast and southeast facing sections to be drawn prior to excavation. As the excavation progressed corrections to these section drawings were made on sheets of drawing film that were laid over the original drawings.
- 3.1.3 The block of upstanding deposits was excavated, in plan, as a single area. Excavation was undertaken by hand and the context record for the site was created using the standard context recording method. Large scale plans of the site (scale 1:50) were prepared prior to excavation showing the position of the 2002 excavations in relation to the tower house, revetment wall and surrounding features. Site plans (scale 1:10) were completed of all the significant stratigraphic levels uncovered during the course of the excavations. Section drawings (scale 1:10) of the fills of all negative features as well as the northwestern edge of the excavation were undertaken. An elevation (scale 1:20) was also completed of the northeast facing side of the revetment wall (for details of the field illustrations see Appendix Four). In addition to the field drawings, the principal site records consisted of photography (see Appendix Three), context sheets augmented by a supervisor's notebook, as well as separate registers of small finds (Appendix Five) and samples (Appendix Seven). The unique site code used to identify the records generated during the excavation was MAI 02.

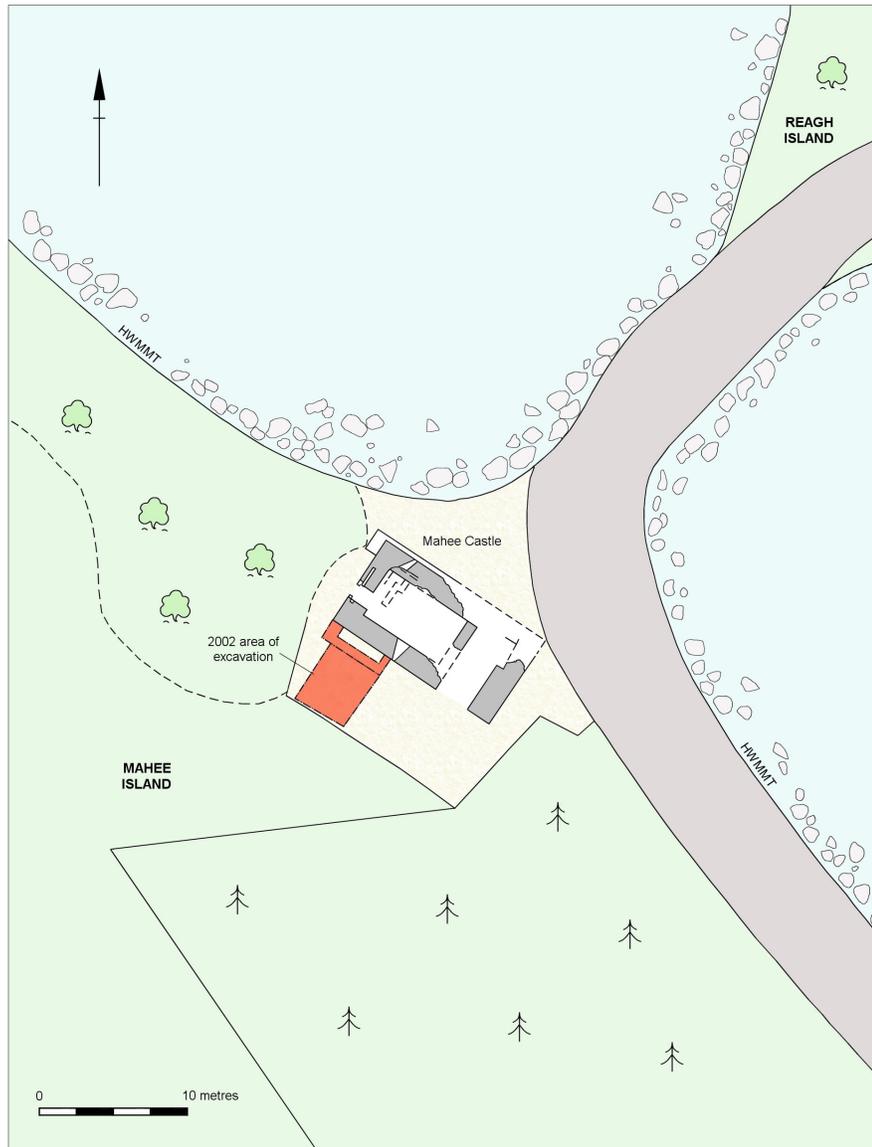


Figure Two: Mahee Castle showing location of 2002 area of excavation
(plan of tower house after *Archaeological Survey of County Down, 1966, p244*) (Scale 1:250)

3.1.4 As it was anticipated that artefactual material recovered from relevant contexts would provide the best dating evidence for the site, a strategy of sieving the spoil from significant deposits was adopted in order to maximize finds recovery. It was not practical to conduct a detailed topographic survey of the site and its immediate environs because the dense vegetation cover on the site's southern and western sides restricted the working range of the total station (EDM); however, a limited survey was undertaken in order to tie in the location of the excavation with the Ordnance Survey.

3.2 *Account of the excavations*

3.2.1 It is intended that the Harris Matrix for the site (see Appendix Two) is referred to whilst reading the following account of the stratigraphic sequence of the excavation.

3.2.2 Initially, the friable, dark brown, silty clay loam backfill (Context No.1001) of the 2001 excavation trenches (Context No.1002), which defined both the northeastern and southeastern edges of the 2002 area of excavation, was partially removed to enable the full sections of the upstanding block of deposits to be recorded. Only a thin strip of the backfill (Context No.1001), c.0.7 metres wide, immediately adjacent to the area was re-excavated. In addition, the dimensions of a small rectangular trench (Context No.1003) cut into the top of the upstanding block of deposits during the 2001 excavations was recorded. This small trench (dimensions 2.90 metres by 1.95 metres, depth 0.20 - 0.60 metres) had been excavated in order to confirm the line of the revetment wall (Context No.1009) and only disturbed superficial and modern deposits.

3.2.3 The first deposit to be excavated from the upstanding block of deposits was a dark brown, friable, loamy topsoil (Context No.1004) which extended across the whole of the area of excavation. The topsoil varied in depth from 0.04 to 0.06 metres. Its surface was relatively free of vegetation and had been heavily trampled suggesting that the upstanding block of deposits was deturfed during the 2001 excavations. Several discrete areas of burning within the topsoil were observed and combined with the large amount of modern bottle glass recovered from the deposit suggest that Mahee Castle is a popular location for illicit partying.

3.2.4 Underlying the topsoil (Context No.1004) was a deposit of loose, charcoal flecked, brown loamy hillwash (Context No.1005) which extended from the southwestern edge of excavation in a northeasterly direction for a maximum distance of c.2.30 metres. This hillwash deposit (Context No.1005) physically overlay the top of the revetment wall (Context No.1009) but also included localized spreads of tumbled stone from the revetment wall suggesting that some damage had occurred to the wall as the deposit accumulated. Underlying the hillwash (Context No.1005) was a dump of uniform small angular stones in a loose, dark brown, loam matrix (Context No.1006) (Plate Six). This deposit extended

from the northeastern edge of the revetment wall to the northeastern edge of the excavation. Although the upper surface of the deposit was relatively flat, it varied in thickness considerably (depth 0.05 – 0.20 metres) tending to get deeper towards the eastern corner of the area of excavation suggesting that it represented a deliberate attempt to level the area between the tower house and revetment wall (Context No.1009). Finds recovered from the deposit include modern china pottery suggesting that, at the earliest, it is of mid twentieth century date.

- 3.2.5 Following the removal of the levelling deposit of small angular stones (Context No.1006), a complex of dumped and tumbled stoney deposits in a loose, mid brown, loam (Context No.1007) were exposed. This complex of deposits was excavated as a single stratigraphic unit because of the difficulties encountered in recognizing separate layers. It is interpreted as representing several separate deposits of dumped and tumbled stone derived from both the tower house and the revetment wall. The complex of deposits (Context No.1007) contained a spread of gravel and shell (Context No.1015), c.0.05 metres deep and located immediately adjacent to the revetment wall (Context No.1009), which extended northeastwards for a distance of c.0.45 metres. The gravel and shell which formed this deposit was the same as that identified by the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage masons as being used in the cement employed by H.C. Lawlor to restore the top of the revetment wall in 1923.
- 3.2.6 Underlying the complex of dumped and tumbled stones (Context No.1007) was a localized deposit of charcoal flecked, mid brown, sandy clay loam (Context No.1016). This deposit extended along part of the revetment wall exposed during the 2002 excavations for a distance of c.2.60 metres and continued beyond the northwestern edge of excavation. It extended out northeastwards from the revetment wall for c.1.00 metres and varied in thickness from c.0.05 – 0.10 metres. It is not certain how this deposit formed; however, it probably represents a layer of hillwash.
- 3.2.7 The probable deposit of hillwash (Context No.1007) overlay two features located immediately adjacent to the revetment wall (Context Nos.1009). These were a rectangular-shaped stone setting (Context No.1019) partly laid over a clay loam bedding (Context No.1021) and an adjacent spread of apparently deliberately redeposited boulder clay (Context No.1020) (Plate Seven). The stone setting (Context No.1019) measured 0.95 metres (northeast – southwest) by 0.84 metres (northwest-southeast) and physically butted up against the revetment wall (Context No.1009). It was made up of a variety of sizes of angular stones which had been laid in a relatively regular manner to form a flat upper surface with well defined curb-like edges. Underlying the southwestern half of the stone setting (Context No.1019) was a sticky, reddish brown, clay loam deposit (Context No.1021) which formed a deliberate bedding for the stone setting. This deposit extended 0.50 metres (northeast – southwest) by 0.85 metres (northwest-southeast) and was 0.05 to

0.10 metres deep. It is not obvious why the clay loam bedding (Context No.1021) did not extend across the northeastern half of the stone setting. There was no evidence to suggest that the stone setting (Context No.1019) had been extended or was a two-part construction. It is more likely that either the northeastern half of the clay loam bedding (Context No.1021) was lost through erosion, or that it had never extended across the whole area of the stone setting.

- 3.2.8 Located c.0.30 metres to the northwest of the stone setting (Context No.1019) was a sub-triangular shaped spread of burnt or oxidised, compact, stoney orange clay (Context 1020). This layer, of apparently redeposited boulder clay, physically butted against the revetment wall (Context No.1009), was 0.07 - 0.09 metres deep, had a maximum width of 0.36 metres and extended 0.87 metres in a northeasterly direction.
- 3.2.9 The function of both the rectangular-shaped stone setting (Context No.1019) and the adjacent deposit of burnt or oxidised boulder clay (Context No.1020) was not obvious; however, it is not unreasonable to assume that they were related features. They overlie the sequence of deposits associated with the primary tumble and ruin of the tower house, demonstrating that they post-date the site's occupation, abandonment and ruination. It is possible that the small rectangular-shaped stone setting formed the base of a hearth; however, no evidence of burning directly associated with the stone setting was observed. Another possibility is that the stone setting formed either a pad for an upright structural timber or the base of a wooden partition used for stalling animals. That no comparable features were uncovered during the 2002 excavations suggests that the stone setting is unlikely to have been part of a large building or structure. The features may also be associated with the preparation of either limewash or lime mortar which appears to have been used during an episode of repair work dating to the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's excursion to Mahee Island in 1887.
- 3.2.10 Underlying the spread of stoney orange clay (Context 1020) was a localized deposit of hillwash (Context No.1017) that incorporated a small number of tumbled stone inclusions derived from either the revetment wall (Context No.1009) or the tower house. This deposit extended across the northwestern half of the site from the revetment wall to the northeastern edge of excavation and varied in thickness up to a maximum depth of 0.10 metres. Following the excavation of both this localized deposit of hillwash (Context No.1017) and the clay loam bedding (Context No.1021) for the stone setting (Context No.1019), the sequence of deposits (Context Nos.1008, 1018, 1023 and 1011) which represented the primary tumble or ruination of the fabric of the tower house was exposed.
- 3.2.11 The sequence of deposits (Context Nos.1008, 1018, 1023 and 1011) representing the main tumble of stones from the tower house are interpreted as the product of several discrete episodes of collapse rather than a single catastrophic or demolition event.

Excavation demonstrated that they contained few finds in comparison to the overlying hillwash deposits suggesting that they were deposited relatively quickly rather than accumulated over a period of time. This sequence of deposits extended across the whole area of excavation to the northeast of the revetment wall. Stratigraphically, the latest of these deposits (Context Nos.1008 and 1018) consisted of a heterogeneous series of frequently concreted layers of angular stones of various sizes, lime mortar and charcoal interspersed with thin lenses of loamy hillwash. This series of concreted layers (Context Nos.1008 and 1018) varied in thickness from 0.05 to 0.20 metres and overlaid an unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar and mixed stones in a loose, mid brown, sandy clay loam soil matrix (Context No.1023) which varied in thickness from 0.05 to 0.20 metres. This unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar, in turn, overlay a layer of large sub-angular stones (Context No.1011) in a loose, mid brown, loam with gravel inclusions which varied in thickness from 0.05 to 0.20 metres. Both the unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar (Context No.1023) and the layer of large sub-angular stones (Context No.1011) increased in thickness towards the tower house. It is possible that the unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar (Context No.1023) formed *in situ* as rainwater percolated through the sequence of deposits and dissolved and then transported downwards lime mortar from the overlying collapse and tumble deposits (Context Nos.1008 and 1018) which then precipitated out immediately above the relatively impervious layer of large stones (Context No.1011). An almost complete sandstone window jamb (Small Find No.286) was recovered from the deposit of lime mortar and mixed stones (Context No.1023). The source of the sandstone has been provisionally identified as the Permo-Triassic sandstones exposed at Scarbo Hill (T.McErlean pers.comm.). The style of the jamb is suggestive of a fifteenth or sixteenth century date (C.Donnely pers.comm.). The relatively unweathered condition of the jamb, coupled with the softness of the sandstone, suggests that it had not been exposed to the elements for a long period prior to its deposition. This observation suggests that the period between the tower house's construction and it falling into a ruin was not great.

- 3.2.12 Underlying the deposit of large sub-angular stones (Context No.1011) was a dump of hard, reddish brown, redeposited boulder clay (Context No.1012) and a widespread layer of hillwash which contained relatively few finds and only a few flecks of charcoal (Context No.1024). These two deposits are equated with a period of abandonment of the tower house prior to it falling into a ruin. The irregular-shaped dump of redeposited boulder clay (Context No.1012) was restricted to the eastern corner of the area of excavation. It varied in depth from 0.02 to 0.05 metres, and extended c.1.4 metres in a northeast – southwest direction and c.1.0 metre in a southeast – northwest direction. The reason for its deposition is not obvious, it does not appear to have formed a levelling deposit. The spread of friable, greyish brown, sandy loam hillwash (Context No.1024) extended over much of the area of excavation between the revetment wall (Context No.1009) and the back of the tower house. It varied in depth from c.0.05 to c.0.10 metres and contained

relatively few finds suggesting that it accumulated during a period when the tower house was not occupied.

- 3.2.13 The 'abandonment' phase deposits (Context Nos.1012 and 1024) overlay a thin, dark brown, charcoal-rich, silty clay loam deposit (Context No.1028) which extended across most of the area of excavation to the northeast of the revetment wall (Context No.1009). This deposit was mostly only 0.02 metres deep but increased in depth up to c.0.10 metres in places. It probably represents an occupation deposit associated with the tower house and it was the earliest deposit to butt against the revetment wall (Context 1009).
- 3.2.14 The excavation of the silty clay loam (Context No.1028) exposed the revetment wall (Context No.1009) and four negative features (Context Nos. 1029, 1035, 1037 and 1033) which were cut through a roughly metalled surface (Context No.1031) impressed into the terrace (Context No.1038) upon which the tower house was constructed (Figure Four; Plate Eight). Stratigraphically, the latest features were the revetment wall (Context No.1009), and two small pits (Context Nos.1029 and 1037). The revetment wall (Context No.1009) was built over, and one of the small pits (Context No.1029) cut through, the fill (Context Nos.1030 and 1034) of a larger pit (Context No.1035). The large pit (Context No.1035) had been deliberately backfilled with boulders and large stones (Context No.1030 and 1034) so that the revetment wall (Context No.1009) could be constructed across it. The large boulders making up the pit's fill (Context Nos.1030 and 1034) had settled following the construction of the revetment wall. This settling had caused the wall (Context No.1009) to partly slump and subside. The larger pit (Context No.1035) and the remaining small pit (Context No.1037) both cut through the fill (Context No.1032) of a drain (Context No.1033) which was the earliest feature cut through the roughly metalled surface (Context No.1031).
- 3.2.15 The revetment wall (Context No.1009) extends across the area of excavation on a northwest – southeast alignment that is parallel to the back wall of the tower house. The revetment wall is faced on its northeastern side and retains the ridge of boulder clay (Context Nos.1010, 1014 and 1025) which forms the slope of the drumlin upon which the tower house is built. The lowest course of the wall, which is physically laid directly upon either the truncated terrace surface (Context No.1038) or the fill (Context Nos.1030 and 1034) of the large pit (Context No.1035), is stepped out c.0.10 metre to form a secure base for the overlying courses. The face of the wall is made up of large sub-rounded boulders with relatively flat faces that show no signs of having been worked or artificially shaped. The maximum recorded dimensions of these large facing stones was c.0.70 metres. Small, sub-rectangular stones (typical lengths c.0.15 metres, typical heights c.0.05 metres) have been used to fill the gaps between the large sub-rounded stones. No evidence of mortar was observed in the revetment wall; however, this may be as a result of post-constructional leaching rather than evidence that the wall was built without mortar. Prior to

any reconstruction work, the recorded thickness of the faced course varied from 0.25 metres to 0.60 metres and it survived to a maximum height of 0.76 metres. The infilled rubble 'core' of the wall is made up of redeposited boulder clay and loamy hillwash deposits. Traces of a gravel rich concrete survived on parts of the top of the wall; this has been identified by Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage masons as evidence of the restoration work undertaken in 1923 by H.C. Lawlor. That the large pit (Context No.1035) and the drain (Context No.1033), which cut through the terrace upon which the tower house is built (Context No.1038), stratigraphically pre-date the revetment wall indicates that the wall was built subsequent to the construction of the tower house. Where the revetment wall is built over the fill (Context No.1030 and 1034) of the large pit (Context No.1035) it is noticeable that the wall has subsided (Plate Nine). In line with the conditions of Scheduled Monument Consent the revetment wall was not excavated but preserved *in situ*.

- 3.2.16 As well as the revetment wall (Context No.1009), two small pits (Context Nos.1029 and 1037) were also uncovered by the excavation of the silty clay loam deposit (Context No.1028). One of these pits (Context No.1029) was located across the southeastern edge of the excavation and was largely excavated during Ó Baoill's 2001 excavations of the site. The character of the small part of the feature excavated in 2002 suggests that the pit was originally sub-circular in shape with relatively steep sides that were partially stepped on its southwestern side. The portion of the pit excavated in 2002 had a maximum depth of c.0.35 metres and a maximum width of c.0.65 metres. The pit was filled with a gritty, greyish brown sandy clay loam with a significant number of redeposited lime mortar inclusions and sub-angular stones (Context No.1013). These inclusions suggest that, whatever the original purpose of the pit was, it was filled with building debris. Considering the pit's position in the stratigraphic sequence in relation to the cut for the terrace upon which the tower house is built (Context No.1038), it is unlikely that this building debris relates to the original construction of the tower house.
- 3.2.17 The second small pit (Context No.1037) was an oval-shaped feature with shallow sides, situated across the northeastern edge of the excavation area. It was partly excavated during Ó Baoill's 2001 season at the site. The pit extended north-south c.1.10 metres, east-west c.0.90 metres and had a maximum depth of c.0.20 metres. It was filled a dark brown, sandy clay loam (Context No.1036) and its base was filled with several large sub-angular stones. The purpose or function of this pit is uncertain.
- 3.2.18 The large pit (Context No.1035), that was cut by one of the small pits (Context No.1029), was a deep, apparently sub-circular shaped feature located across the southeastern edge of excavation. It was partly excavated during Ó Baoill's 2001 excavations. The pit was filled with a deposit of large sub-rounded to sub-angular stones and boulders set in a loose, charcoal flecked, dark brown, sandy clay loam matrix (Context No.1034). The fill



Figure Three: Plan of 2002 area of excavation showing revetment wall (Context No. 1009), pits (Context Nos. 1029, 1035 and 1037), drain (Context No. 1033) and roughly cobbled surface (Context No. 1031)

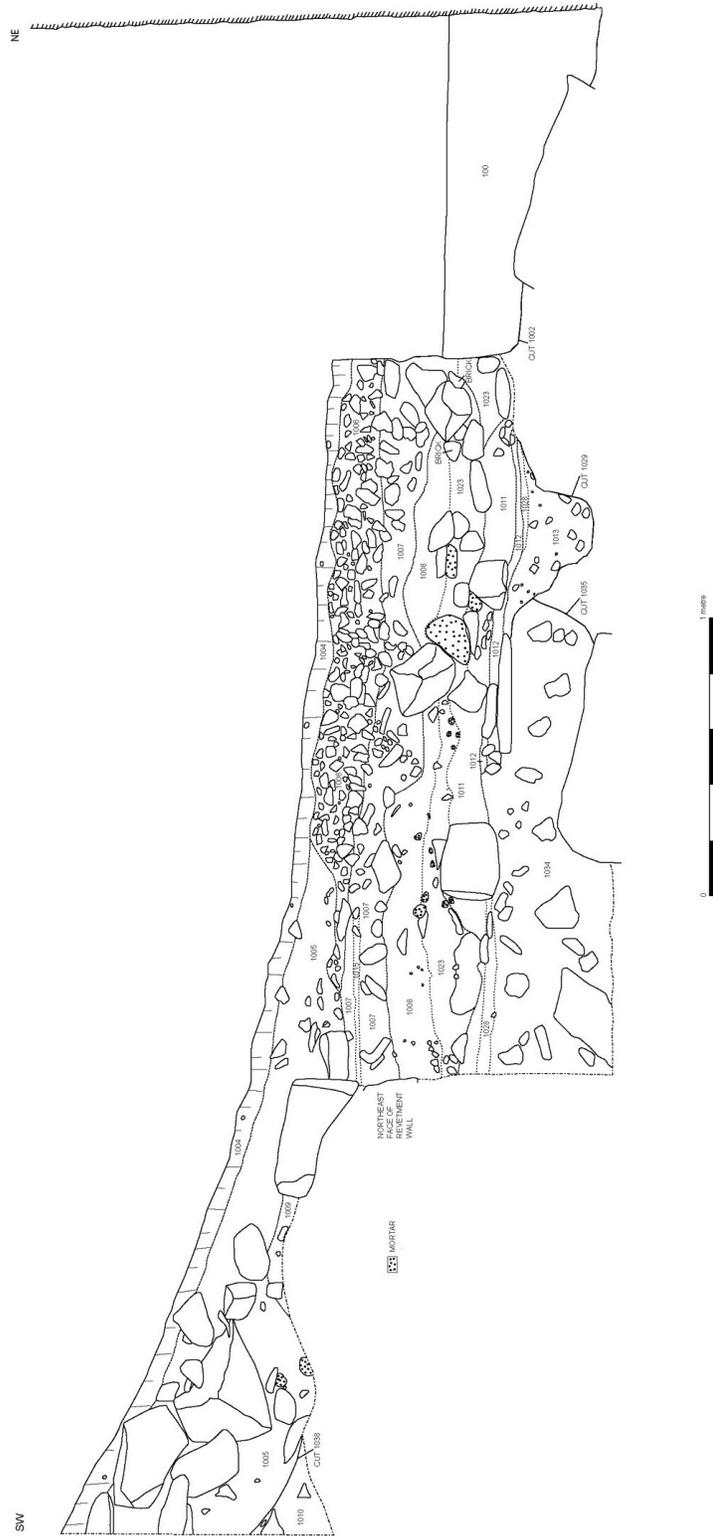


Figure Four: Southeast facing section of 2002 area of excavation

(Context No.1034) appears to have been rapidly deposited in order to fill the pit and enable the revetment wall (Context No.1009) to be built across it. The large stones and boulders which make up the bulk of the fill were presumably selected because they could have been used to fill the pit quickly. Despite being rapidly deposited, the fill (Context No.1034) contained a large number of finds (especially animal bones) suggesting that, in addition to the large stones, the pit may have been filled with debris from a midden. The fill (Context No.1034) was only partially excavated because it continued below the water table and extended under the revetment wall (Context No.1009) and further excavation would have risked undermining the wall. The part of the pit which was exposed during the 2002 excavations has a maximum diameter of c.1.80 metres. It was excavated to a depth of c.0.40 metres before digging was abandoned. The original purpose of the pit is uncertain.

3.2.19 As noted above, the large pit (Context No.1035) and one of the smaller pits (Context No.1037) cut the fill (Context No.1032) of a linear drain (Context No.1033) which ran approximately south-east to north-west across the entire excavation area getting closer to the back wall of the tower house towards the castle's western corner (Plates Ten and Eleven). The drain (Context No.1033) has steep sides, a U-shaped profile, is c.0.50 – 0.60 metres wide and c.0.45 metres deep. The drain appears to be lined with large stones at certain points along its length; however, these stones are naturally occurring inclusions within the underlying boulder clay (Context Nos.1010, 1014 and 1025) rather than a deliberately created slab lining to the drain. The drain is filled with a firm, dark brown, charcoal flecked, silty clay loam which was only excavated in two cuttings. Excavation suggested that the fill of this drain (Context No.1032) accumulated relatively slowly suggesting that the revetment wall (Context 1009) is a secondary feature which post-dates the initial construction of the tower house, possibly by a significant period. The drain (Context No.1033) cuts through a now incomplete, roughly metalled surface (Context No.1031) impressed directly into the truncated surface (Context No.1038) of the boulder clay (Context Nos.1010, 1014 and 1025). The roughly metalled surface (Context No.1031) is made up of a variety of sub-angular stones whose flat sides have been arranged uppermost. The maximum dimension of the stones range from 0.07 to 0.15 metres in length. The metalled surface is presumably contemporary with the initial construction of the tower house. In line with conditions of Scheduled Monument Consent the roughly metalled surface (Context No.1031) was not excavated but preserved *in situ*.

3.2.20 The terrace (Context No.1038) upon which the tower house was constructed and the metalled surface (Context No.1031) was impressed, was cut into the natural boulder clay (Context Nos.1010, 1014 and 1025). Excavation demonstrated that the terrace was not a horizontal or level surface but sloped gently downwards from the face of the revetment wall towards the back of the tower house. The vertical element of the back of the terrace (located behind the revetment wall) was awarded the same context number (i.e. Context No.1038) as the near horizontal element situated between the revetment wall and the

tower house. It is uncertain whether the vertical element of the terrace was recut at the point in time when the revetment wall (Context No.1009) was constructed. No evidence for a recut was observed but as the revetment wall was not removed during the course of the excavations no great interpretive weight can be placed on this absence of evidence.

3.3 *Artefactual Dating*

3.3.1 A wide range of artefactual material was recovered during the 2002 excavations including: pottery, metal artefacts, worked slate and animal bone (see Appendices Five and Six). Large quantities of animal bone and shell were also recovered (see Appendix Six). With the exception of fragments of worked stone, mortar, animal bone and shell, all recovered finds were awarded with small find numbers and their positions surveyed using a total station. In the course of the excavation a total number of 310 small finds were recovered (mostly modern bottle glass but also pottery sherds, worked stone, clay pipe stems, ironwork and copper alloy artefacts) including a number of pottery sherds associated with some of the early features and deposits. These sherds have been examined by Cormac McSparron whose provisional identifications provide an outline chronology for the stratigraphic sequence described above.

3.3.2 The earliest phase of the tower house's occupation is represented by the sherds recovered from both the fill (Context No.1032) of the drain (Context No.1033) and the fill (Context No.1030 and 1034) of the large pit (Context No.1035) which pre-date the construction of the revetment wall (Context No.1009). These sherds probably date from the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries (Small Find Nos.304-305 and 310-311). They include: a fragment of everted rim ware (Small Find No.304), a brown glazed earthenware sherd (Small Find No.310) and two earthenware sherds of uncertain date (Small Find Nos.305 and 311). The sherds which relate to the later phase of occupation that post-dates the construction of the revetment wall (Context No.1009) were recovered from the charcoal-rich, silty clay loam, occupation deposit (Context No.1028). They also have a probable fifteenth to sixteenth century date range. They include: three fragments of everted rim ware (Small Find Nos.294, 296-297), a small sherd with a glassy glaze (Small Find No.292), the handle of a coarse ware pitcher (Small Find No.293) and two sherds of green glazed pottery (Small Find Nos.291 and 300). The sherds of green glazed pottery might pre-date the fifteenth century and the abraded character of one of the sherds (i.e. Small Find No.291) indicates that it was possibly residually deposited. These sherds may represent a phase of activity at the site which pre-dates the construction of the tower house; although this activity may well be no more significant than the use of kitchen middens to manure adjacent fields during the Medieval period.

3.3.3 The abandonment phase of the stratigraphic sequence is represented by a single sherd of salt glazed earthenware pottery (Small Find No.290) which was recovered from a hillwash

deposit (Context No.1024). Salt glaze pottery rarely occurs in Irish contexts before the seventeenth century suggesting that the abandonment phase of the stratigraphic sequence dates to the late sixteenth century at the earliest.

- 3.3.4 The assemblage of sherds recovered from the sequence of deposits (Context Nos.1008, 1018, 1023 and 1011) representing the collapse and ruination of the tower house suggest a late seventeenth or early eighteenth century date for this event. They include: a fragment of Staffordshire trailed slip ware (Small Find No.278), a glazed earthen ware sherd of uncertain date (Small Find No.285), three sherds of Brown ware (Small Find Nos.316, 341-342) and a Delft-type earthenware handle with a tin glaze (Small Find No.343). A tiny sherd of dark brown glazed earthenware (Small Find No.355) recovered from the unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar (Context No.1024) has a probable eighteenth or nineteenth century date; however, considering its small size, it is possible that its presence in the unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar (Context No.1024) is intrusive.
- 3.3.5 Study of the pottery suggests that the main occupation phase of the site dates from some point in the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries, occupation was abandoned by the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and the site became a ruin in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. The fifteenth to sixteenth century date for the tower house's occupation is consistent with the date of the sandstone jamb (Small Find No.286) recovered during the excavations (C.Donnelly pers.comm.).

4 Discussion

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Prior to the 2001 and 2002 excavations, the dating of Mahee Castle was based on three separate strands of evidence: architectural, cartographic and historical. Before the archaeological evidence is considered, these three strands of evidence are critically reviewed.

4.2 Architectural assessment of the date of Mahee Castle

4.2.1 It is not possible to date tower houses precisely on architectural grounds, although the presence or absence of certain features can be suggestive of broad date ranges. For example, the presence of Irish Gothic architectural features is suggestive of a date within a broad band from 1400 to 1550 (C.Donnely pers.comm.). The use of guns in war only became common in Ireland after 1500, therefore loops which are specifically designed for use with hand guns are probably sixteenth century or later in date (McNeill 1997, 205). Furthermore, the absence of a vault may be indicative of a late date as the absence of this feature is often associated with tower houses with late features such as elaborate fireplaces and sets of chimneys (McNeill 1997, 205). Regrettably, as a result of extensive robbing of worked stone from Mahee Castle, no closely datable architectural features survive at the site. However, the sandstone window jamb (Small Find No.286) recovered from a deposit associated with the collapse and ruination of the tower house is consistent with a fifteenth or sixteenth century date (C.Donnely pers.comm.). This broad Late Medieval date range is not inconsistent with the overall architecture character of the tower house.

4.3 Cartographic Evidence

4.3.1 Mahee Castle is not featured on either the map of southeast Ulster dating to 1568 (McErlean 2002b, fig.3.36) or the *Ultoniae Orientalis Pars* published by Gerard Mercator in 1595 (McErlean 2002b, fig.3.37). That Mahee Castle is not featured on the southeast Ulster map of 1568 is not necessarily indicative that the tower house was built after this date. Significant nearby sites, such as Comber Abbey, which are known to have existed at this date, are not featured on the 1568 map (McErlean 2002b, 103). That the *Ultoniae Orientalis Pars* is largely based on information copied from the 1568 map suggests that no great significance should be attributed to the fact that Mahee Castle is not represented upon it.

4.4 *Historical References to Mahee Castle*

4.4.1 The accepted date for the construction of Mahee Castle to c.1570 on historical evidence is more problematic than has previously been appreciated. Three historical sources of note apparently refer to Mahee Castle. The earliest is a petition from a Captain Brown to Lord Burghley, dated to c.1571-74, which is preserved in the Public Record Office:

4.4.2 ***Petition of Captain Brown to Burghley SP 63/38, no.74***

He was the first of his nation who at the time of Turlough Luineach's invading that country set down in Clandeboye on the bishop of Down's lands called Island Magee for which he had a lease for life from the late bishop John. He also had a £200 bond of the bishop to make him an estate of the same in fee farm. He built a castle on the land that cost over 400 marks as the late lord deputy can report.

He has been a suitor for a long time at the court. The bishop died without making him an estate in fee farm and he would like the next appointed bishop to do it.

He understands that Sir Brian Mac Phelim keeps a ward in his house. Wants letters from lord deputy to regain possession.

There is not a dean and chapter attached to the see and without them no assurance of the bishop's waste land can be made to any man by the bishop.

Without assurance of a long lease no man will build upon these waste lands.

Be a mean to the queen to appoint a dean and for Brown to have the reversion of the constableness of Knockfergus Castle.

(after O'Dowd 2000, 246-247, no.47).

4.4.3 John Merriman was appointed Bishop of Down by the Crown in December 1568; he died in 1571 (Leslie and Swanzy 1936, 7). The reference to the former Lord Deputy being able to confirm Brown's construction costs presumably refers to Sir Henry Sidney who left Ireland in March 1571, having served as chief governor since October 1568. Merriman's appointment and Sidney's departure presumably delineate the fourteen month period in which Brown's building work was undertaken and completed. The historical context during which Brown's construction work is assumed to have been undertaken has been usefully summarised by McErlean (2002b, 106-107). During the early 1570s the Crown changed its policy to maintaining political control in Ulster and began encouraging, through generous land grants, colonisation by adventurers. This phase of largely unsuccessful colonisation has become known as the 'Enterprise of Ulster'; the best known examples being Thomas Smith and the Earl of Essex's respective failed colonial schemes (for more detailed accounts of these enterprises see: Robinson 1984, 48-52; Morgan 1985; O'Dowd 2000, xiv-xvi). Brown's petition suggests that under the encouragement of Sidney he had successfully obtained a lease of a large episcopal estate from John Merriman, the Bishop of Down during this period, but that with the death of Merriman the lease had not been renewed and that Sir Brian Mac Phelim O'Neill had taken possession of both the estate and the tower house (O'Laverty 1878, 367-368; McErlean 2002b, 107).

4.4.4 The identification of Mahee Castle as being the subject of Brown's petition was first made by Shirley (1853) although O'Lavery was the first to explicitly use the petition to date the construction of the tower house to c.1570 (O'Lavery 1878, 367-368). The castle had previously been recorded in the 1830s Ordnance Survey Memoirs where it was noted that 'it is not known for what use it was built nor time of erection or by whom erected' (Day and McWilliams 1991, 124). O'Lavery's use of the historical evidence to date the tower house's construction to c.1570 has been widely accepted ever since; however, O'Dowd has recently identified the subject of Brown's petition as possibly being Island Magee, County Antrim (O'Dowd 2000, 952). Although the identification is far from certain (O'Dowd pers.comm.), it is not implausible. The map of southeast Ulster dating to 1568 shows that the contemporary area of Clandeboyne extended into South Antrim at least as far as Island Magee (McErlean 2002b, fig.3.36). Following the canonical merging of the dioceses of Down and Connor in the mid fifteenth century, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the Bishop of Down could have possessed estates on Island Magee. Furthermore, Chichester Castle in Island Magee (SMR No. ANT 047:025) is a tower house whose construction is consistent with the c.1570 date implied in Brown's petition (T.McNeill pers.comm.). If it is only accepted as being plausible, then O'Dowd's identification undermines the confidence that can be placed in the previously accepted dating of Mahee Castle.

4.4.5 Even if the subject of Brown's petition is Mahee Castle it does not follow that the petition refers to the original construction of the tower house. Sir Arthur Chichester considered four years to be the minimum time necessary for building a castle, storehouse and bawn (Archaeological Survey County Down 1966, 126); consequently, it seems unlikely that Brown could have built Mahee Castle within the fourteen month period suggested by his petition to Burghley. In appealing for compensation for being dispossessed of the tower house, Brown may have exaggerated the scale of his works. Rather than having been responsible for building the tower house, he may have simply refurbished the site.

4.4.6 There is no ambiguity over whether the next historical reference relates to Mahee Castle or not. It is contained within correspondence between Chichester, then Lord Deputy of Ireland, and the Attorney and Solicitor-General:

4.4.7 ***Sir A. Chichester to the Attorney and Solicitor-General***

Warrant for fiant of pardon of alienation to Robert, Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, for having alienated certain waste lands in the county of Down called Island Maghie, 2 castles, 20 messuages, 500 acres of land arable, 400 acres of pasture, 100 acres of moor, and 100 acres of heath and furze in the said Island Maggee, Island Reagh, Island Rawley, Island Magneesee in Ballycaslaneaspicke, Balliliddell, Balledrine, Ballilishane, Ballynemartyn, Balligavagan, Ballyrennaile, and of the rectories, advowsons, and churches of the said towns and villages, with the fishings of Loughcon in the county of Down, in fee farm to Henry Persse and Francis Annsley of Dublin, gent., for consideration of 100l., and a yearly rent of 6l. 13s. 4d. sterl., to be paid to the Bishop's see for ever, being a greater rent than hath been

paid for the premises in certainty at any time within the memory of man – Dublin, 20 September 1606.

(after Russell and Prendergast 1872, 575 no.867).

4.4.8 This correspondence, which presumably relates to the supplementation of Montgomery's portion of the Upper Clondeboye estate with church land (see Robinson 1984, 53), refers to the leasing of a large area of land, which includes Mahee Island, by Robert Humpston who had been appointed Bishop of Down in c.1601. The correspondence refers to the lease including two castles, which are presumably Mahee Castle and Sketrick Castle, suggesting that both were in a relatively good state of repair, if not actually occupied, in the early seventeenth century.

4.4.9 The third reference is part of an inquisition taken at Tullynakill in 1617:

4.4.10 ***Tolomkill 13th Oct' 15th year***

The towneland of Ballymartin al' Ballymartynagh is, and anciently hath been, pcell of the manor of Ballydreene al' lland-maghie, and the said manor is the ancient inheritance of the Bishop of Downe. - [] MERRYMAN, late bishop of Downe, was seised of the said manor of Ballydreene, in right of his said bishoprick, and was also seised, as of fe, of the towneland of Ballymartyn, as part of the said manor. - The sept or family called slutt Mc. HENRY keyes did lately expulse and diseise the said bishop out of the whole manor aforesaid, in tyme of warre and rebellion. - One ROWLAND SAVAGE of Ballgalgett, some tyme, entered upon and possessed the said manor of Ballynebreene al' lland-maghie, as tenant or farmer to the then bishop of Downe, and did also hold the towneland of Ballymartin al' Ballymartynagh, and did pay for the said lands, yearly, the rent of 4l. for the space of 3 years together, to one ROB' HUMSTON late bishop of Downe, and did also give to the said bishop a horse valued at 20l. for and in the name of a fine or income for a lease of the said lands, for 3 yeares. -The tenants and farmers of the now or late bishop of Downe, were and did contynue in the quiet possession of the said towneland of Ballymartyn al' Ballymartynagh, as pcell of the said manor, until sir HUGH MONTGOMERY, knt. Did about 9 yeares now past, disseise them from and oute of the same. - There are no rents, duties, customes or services due to the King out of the said manor of Ballindreene, or out of any land thereunto belonging.

(after Hardiman 1829, no.6 – Jac.I).

4.4.11 The interpretation of the opening section of this inquisition is difficult. It is uncertain whether the references to the estate containing Mahee Island being seized from Merriman whilst he was the Bishop of Down and the seizure of the estate by the sept McHenry Keyes during a time of 'war and rebellion' refer to a single event or two separate episodes. The period of 'war and rebellion' may be Sir Brian Mac Phelim O'Neill's military response to Smith's Enterprise in 1572, but more probably it refers to an episode during the Nine Years War (1594-1603). The inquisition further goes on to record that the estate had been rented out by Humpston to, amongst others, Rowland Savage for a period of three years. This

suggests that possession of the estate had returned to the Bishop of Down prior to its incorporation into the Montgomery estate in 1606.

4.5 *Discussion*

- 4.5.1 Given the difficulties in recognising and closely dating fifteenth to sixteenth century architecture and material culture in Ireland, it is not surprising that a great deal of weight is placed upon historical evidence, where it is available, for dating Late Medieval sites. The fixed chronological point that Brown's petition apparently provides for Mahee Castle has long been considered important, not just for dating the tower house itself, but also, by analogy, for dating other sites within the region (for example Archaeological Survey of County Down 1966, 121; McErlean 2002c, 310). However, historical evidence, if not critically evaluated, can lead to erroneous interpretations which gain a stubborn inertia within the archaeological literature. This has arguably been the case with Mahee Castle.
- 4.5.2 Too much weight has been placed upon the historical evidence for dating Mahee Castle contained in Brown's petition. It is not even certain that the petition refers to Mahee Island. Provisional analysis of the dating evidence recovered during the 2002 excavations suggests a date range somewhere within the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries for the construction and occupation of the tower house. Although this evidence is consistent with the c.1570 date conventionally derived from Brown's petition, there is no reason that the construction of the tower house could not be significantly earlier within this period. The architectural, cartographic and historical evidence is all consistent with any point within the fifteenth to sixteenth century date range, suggested by the archaeological evidence from the 2002 excavations, for the construction and occupation of Mahee Castle.
- 4.5.3 Even if Brown's petition does refer to Mahee Castle, it does not follow that he actually built the tower house. Given the relatively short time for construction work allowed by the petition it is more probable that Brown's building works relate to the refurbishment of an existing tower house rather than the construction of a new castle. Both the pit (Context No.1029) whose fill (Context No.1013) contained building debris and the revetment wall (Context No.1009) stratigraphically post-date the construction of the tower house by a potentially significant period. Consequently, if it is accepted that Brown's petition refers to Mahee Castle, then it is tempting to assign the secondary phase of building work that these features represent to the conventional c.1570 date.
- 4.5.4 The results of the 2001 and 2002 excavations are broadly consistent with each other. Evidence for the secondary date for the revetment wall was recovered during both excavations and the recovery of Late Medieval artefacts prompted Ó Baoill to suggest that activity at the site might pre-date the conventional date of c.1570 for the tower house's construction. However, Ó Baoill suggested that the revetment wall and the drainage

system, cut into the roughly cobbled surface between the revetment wall and the tower house, were of seventeenth century date. The artefactual material recovered during the 2002 excavations suggested that these features were probably fifteenth or sixteenth century and that the site was abandoned by the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. It may be that Ó Baoill's analysis is unduly influenced by the conventional historical date for the construction of Mahee Castle, or that the limited scale of the 2002 excavations resulted in the recovery of a small and potentially unrepresentative artefactual assemblage. These interesting inconsistencies would be resolved through a comprehensive and consistent analysis of both excavations' archives.

- 4.5.5 If Mahee Castle is earlier than the conventional date of c.1570 then another historical context, other than the 'Enterprise of Ulster', must be sought for its construction. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Mahee Island was located close to the unstable boundary between lordships of Clandeboye to the north and Dufferin to the south, that is respectively the area held by the Gaelic Clandeboye O'Neills and the area under the control of various Anglo-Irish families (McErlean 2002b, 98). Being located on the border between these two lordships, Mahee Castle would have been of great strategic importance. During this period the border area would have been the subject of raiding and power disputes. Possession of Mahee Castle may have changed hands several times. Tower houses are the most archaeologically visible response to these unstable social conditions (McErlean 2002b, 100) and it is within this historical context that the construction and occupation of Mahee Castle must be considered.
- 4.5.6 One interpretive question which arises from placing Mahee Castle in this earlier historical context is the character of its relationship with Sketrick Castle. Sketrick Castle is located on the western shore of Sketrick Island only c.1.5 kilometres to the south of Mahee Castle (for a detailed description of Sketrick Castle see Archaeological Survey of County Down 1966, 250-252). Sketrick Castle was in existence in 1470 when it is recorded in the *Annals of the Four Masters* that it was captured by Henry O'Neill and handed over to MacQuillan of Dufferin (McErlean 2002b, 111). In 1536 the castle was captured and occupied by John Prowse, constable of Carlingford Castle (Archaeological Survey of County Down 1966, 250) and, although it is not mentioned in any further historical records, it is not unreasonable to suggest that it was occupied for some time after this last historical date. Like Mahee Castle, its location on the northern boundary of English influence with Clandeboye would have given it a great strategic importance. Were these two castles constructed or occupied simultaneously? Or was Mahee Castle built to replace Sketrick Castle? Given their strategic position it is possible that it was intended that both tower houses were occupied simultaneously. Such an arrangement would have enabled each castle to have reinforced and supported the other, thereby strengthening the position of the forces that possessed them.

- 4.5.7 In addition to the defensive function of tower houses is the question of their economic role. Although a wide diversity of finds were recovered during the 2002 excavations, the total amount of material datable to the castle's occupation is relatively slight. This lack of finds is presumably a reflection of Late Medieval attitudes to dirt within the domestic sphere and also may partially be the product of the efficient use of refuse deposits for manuring. However, the fill (Context Nos.1030 and 1034) of the large pit (Context No.1035) which was rapidly backfilled, so that the revetment wall could be built over it, partially contained the contents of a midden. This deposit is of particular significance because it demonstrably dates to the site's earliest phase of occupation. Midden deposits associated with the Mahee Castle have not otherwise been located and it is regrettable that circumstances prevented the full excavation of this deposit. Detailed analysis of the animal bone and artefacts recovered from the pit should, however, provide an insight into the role of the tower house in the Late Medieval economy.
- 4.5.8 A final historically derived question is why did Mahee Castle, unlike many other tower houses, fail to form a focus for a seventeenth century plantation? Although the coastal distribution of tower houses in County Down reflects the importance of maritime factors to their function in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by the early seventeenth century plantations, Mahee Island must have been perceived as an increasingly isolated being located far away from the major coastal road system around the lough. It may be partly for this reason that the site was abandoned and failed to form a focus for later settlement. In addition, as the inquisition taken at Tullynakill in 1617 records, Mahee Island formed part of the Montgomery Estate. The bulk of the Montgomery Estates were located around the northern and eastern shores of Strangford Lough and it may be that Mahee Island formed a relatively remote outlier of these lands and was therefore not a focus for plantation.

5 Recommendations for further work

- 5.1 Both the 2001 and 2002 excavations at Mahee Castle produced detailed stratigraphic sequences with associated artefactual and faunal assemblages. Given the relative lack of excavations previously undertaken at Irish tower houses, the archaeological importance of the two seasons of work at Mahee Castle should not be underestimated. Specific deposits that will provide insights into the economic role of coastal tower house in County Down during the Late Medieval period were identified during the 2002 excavation. The prompt and full publication of these excavations should be considered a priority.
- 5.2 It is recommended that a single report of both excavations should be published in an academic journal such as the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*. This report should be a joint publication, co-authored by both excavation directors. It is proposed that the report contain an integrated account of both seasons' excavations, integrated specialist reports on the artefactual and faunal material recovered during both excavations, a detailed analysis of the early photographic studies of the tower house which includes an account of past programmes of restoration work, and a discursive account of the chronology and economic role of the tower house which takes account of the site's historical context.
- 5.3 In order to facilitate the preparation of a joint report on both excavations it is necessary to assess how easily the two excavation archives can be integrated and evaluate the costs of completing both the necessary specialist reports and reproducing copyrighted archival material in the report. It is recommended that a document is prepared during the summer of 2003 outlining the costs of preparing the proposed integrated report on the Mahee Castle excavations. This document will form a second, more detailed Costed Assessment for the completion of the Mahee Castle excavations. This second Costed Assessment will form the basis for decision making concerning the preparation of a final report for publication during the winter of 2003/2004.
- 5.4 The cost of the tasks to be considered in the proposed document include:
- Preparation of both a phased Harris Matrix and written account of the integrated stratigraphic sequences uncovered in the 2001 and 2002 excavations. *[It is intended that these will form the background information on the excavations required by specialists to complete their own reports].*
 - Preparation of a concise integrated account of the excavations suitable for publication.
 - Preparation of introductory remarks and full discussion of excavation results suitable for publication.
 - Preparation of site and artefact illustrations for publication.
 - X-radiography of the metalwork assemblage and limited investigative conservation.

- Specialist reports on the pottery, metalwork, glass, clay pipes, worked bone, worked stone and animal bone recovered during the excavation.
- Reproduction of early photographic images of Mahee Castle in a published report.

5.5 To complete the second Costed Assessment it will be necessary to have full access to both the 2001 and 2002 excavation archives. This will enable an assessment of the difficulties inherent in amalgamating the two archives and enable a detailed quantification of the size and character of the artefactual and faunal assemblages. It is estimated that the preparation of the second Costed Assessment will take an experienced archaeologist two weeks.

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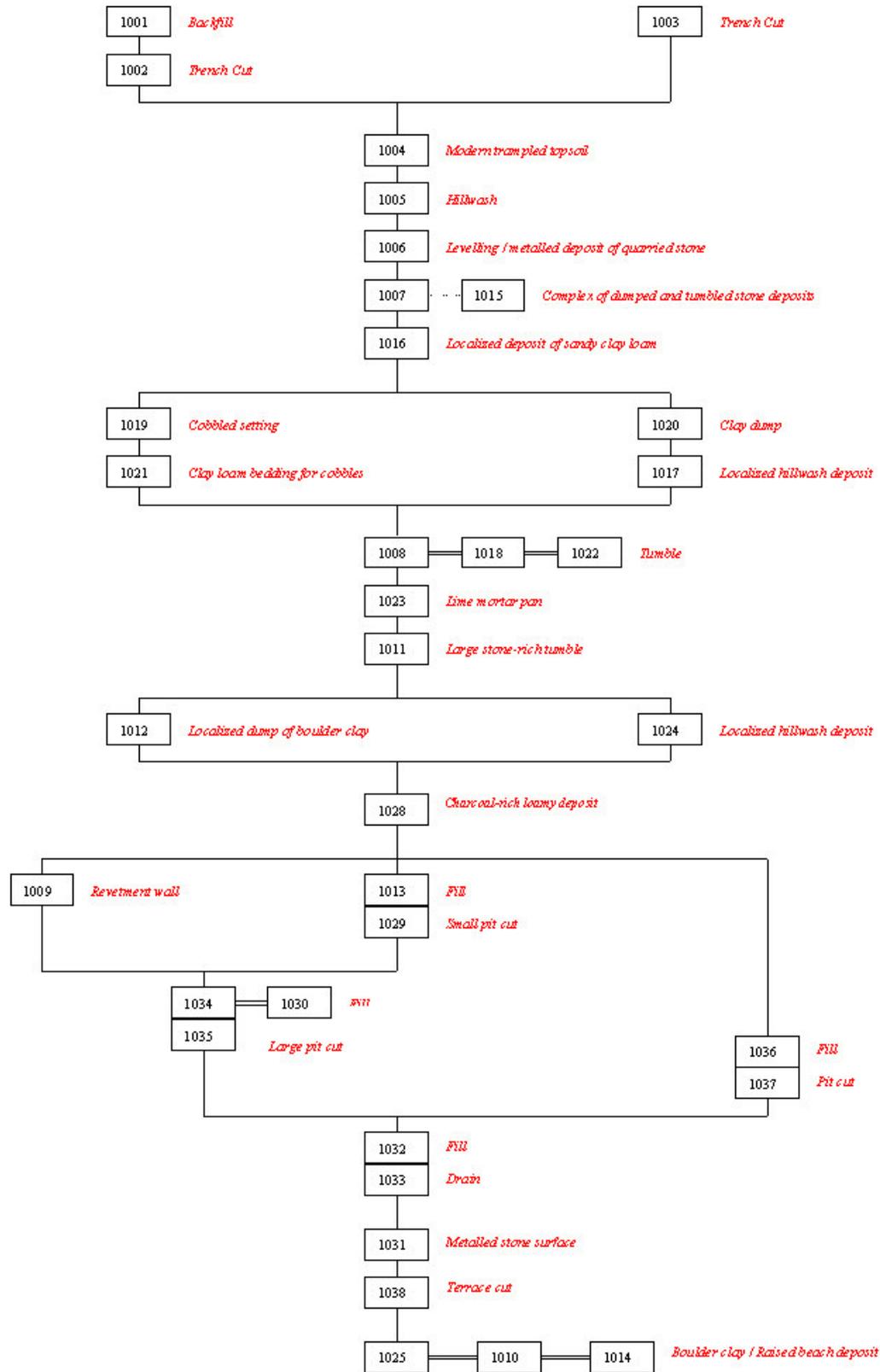
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Appendix One: Context List

Context No.	Description
1001	Fill of (1002) (Backfill of 2001 excavation trench)
1002	2002 excavation trench cut
1003	2002 excavation trench cut (not backfilled)
1004	Topsoil
1005	Hillwash
1006	Levelling or metalling deposit of quarried stone
1007	Complex of dumped and tumbled stone deposits
1008	Deposit of mortar and tumbled stone (same as 1018)
1009	Revetment wall
1010	Natural. Boulder clay (same as 1014 and 1025)
1011	Deposit of large sub-angular stones
1012	Localized spread of redeposited boulder clay
1013	Fill of small pit (1029)
1014	Natural. Boulder clay (same as 1010 and 1025)
1015	Deposit of gravel and shell
1016	Localized deposit of sandy clay loam
1017	Localized deposit of hillwash
1018	Deposit of mortar and tumbled stone (same as 1008))
1019	Cobbled setting
1020	Localized spread of redeposited boulder clay
1021	Clay loam bedding
1022	Possible feature – excavation demonstrated not real
1023	Unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar and stones
1024	Localized deposit of hillwash
1025	Natural. Boulder clay (same as 1010 and 1014)
1026	Possible fill of foundation 1027 – excavation demonstrated not real
1027	Possible foundation cut – excavation demonstrated not real
1028	Charcoal-rich loam
1029	Small pit cut (filled by 1013)
1030	Fill of large pit (1035) (same as 1034)
1031	Metalled surface
1032	Fill of drain (1033)
1033	Drain cut (filled by 1032)
1034	Fill of large pit (1035) (same as 1030)
1035	Large pit cut (filled by 1030 and 1034)
1036	Fill of shallow pit (1037)
1037	Shallow pit cut (filled by 1036)
1038	Terrace cut

Appendix Two: Harris Matrix



Appendix Three: Photographic Record

Film One: Kodak E100VS 5.135 – 36 Ektachrome colour reversal film.

6th August 2002

- 1 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking northwest).
- 2 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking northwest).
- 3 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking northwest).
- 4 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking northwest).
- 5 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking northwest).
- 6 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking northwest).
- 7 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking south).
- 8 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking south).
- 9 Pre-excavation shot of upstanding deposits (looking south).
- 10 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits (looking northwest)
- 11 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits (looking northwest)
- 12 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits (looking northwest)
- 13 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits looking northwest)
- 14 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits (looking west).
- 15 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits (looking west).
- 16 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits (looking northwest).
- 17 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits (looking northwest)
- 18 Pre-excavation, post-clearance shot of deposits (looking south).

8th August 2002

- 19 Possible base of curving buttress/battered support and butted wall join noted by workmen during reconstruction work on the northwest side of arched entrance on the southeast facing wall of the southeast chamber (looking west).
- 20 Possible base of curving buttress/battered support and butted wall join noted by workmen during reconstruction work on the northwest side of arched entrance on the southeast facing wall of the southeast chamber (looking west).
- 21 Possible base of curving buttress/battered support and butted wall join noted by workmen during reconstruction work on the northwest side of arched entrance on the southeast facing wall of the southeast chamber (looking west).
- 22 Possible base of curving buttress/battered support noted by workmen during reconstruction work on the southeast side of the arched entrance on northwest facing wall of the southeast chamber (looking south).

- 23 Possible base of curving buttress/battered support noted by workmen during reconstruction work on the southeast side of the arched entrance on northwest facing wall of the southeast chamber (looking south).

9th August 2002

- 24 Pre-excavation shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
25 Pre-excavation shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
26 Pre-excavation shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
27 Pre-excavation detailed shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
28 Pre-excavation detailed shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
29 Pre-excavation detailed shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
30 Pre-excavation detailed shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
31 Pre-excavation detailed shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
32 Pre-excavation detailed shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
33 Pre-excavation shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).
34 Pre-excavation shot of southeast facing section of excavation (looking northwest).

Film Two: Kodak E100VS 5.135 – 36 Ektachrome colour reversal film.

14th August 2002

- 1 Southeast facing section of the northwest end of the site prior to excavation (looking northwest).
2 Southeast facing section of the northwest end of the site prior to excavation (looking northwest).
3 Southeast facing section of the northwest end of the site prior to excavation (looking northwest).
4 Southeast facing section of the northwest end of the site prior to excavation (looking northwest).
5 Northeast facing section of the southwestern end of site, showing terrace cut 1038 (looking southwest).
6 Northeast facing section of the southwestern end of site, showing terrace cut 1038 (looking southwest).
7 Northeast facing section of the southwestern end of site, showing terrace cut 1038 (looking southwest).
8 Northeast facing section of the southwestern end of site, showing terrace cut 1038 (looking west).
9 Northeast facing section of the southwestern end of site, showing terrace cut 1038 (looking northwest).

- 10 Northeast facing section of the southwestern end of site, showing terrace cut 1038 (looking northwest).
- 11 Possible foundation cut of western corner of tower house wall (looking northeast).
- 12 Possible foundation cut of western corner of tower house wall (looking northeast).
- 13 Possible foundation cut of western corner of tower house wall (looking northeast).

19th August 2002

- 14 Record shot of possible unauthorised site inspection over weekend or disruption of waterproof covering by wind? (looking northwest).
- 15 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking northeast).
- 16 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking northeast).
- 17 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking northeast).
- 18 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking northeast).
- 19 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking southwest).
- 20 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking southwest).
- 21 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking southwest).
- 22 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking southwest).
- 23 Site prior to excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking southwest).
- 24 Deposit of gravel and shell 1015 prior to excavation (looking southeast).
- 25 Deposit of gravel and shell 1015 prior to excavation (looking southeast).
- 26 Deposit of gravel and shell 1015 prior to excavation (looking northeast).
- 27 Deposit of gravel and shell 1015 prior to excavation (looking northeast).
- 28 Levelling/metalling deposit 1006 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 29 Levelling/metalling deposit 1006 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 30 Levelling/metalling deposit 1006 prior to excavation (looking southeast).
- 31 Levelling/metalling deposit 1006 prior to excavation (looking southeast).

22nd August 2002

- 32 Record shot of site following excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking northwest).
- 33 Record shot of site following excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking northwest).
- 34 Record shot of site following excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking southeast).
- 35 Record shot of site following excavation of levelling/metalling deposit 1006 (looking southeast).
- 36 Natural stone with circular void within complex of dumped and tumbled stone deposits 1007 (southwest to top of frame).

- 37 Natural stone with circular void within complex of dumped and tumbled stone deposits 1007 (southwest to top of frame).

Film Three: Kodak E100VS 5.135 – 36 Ektachrome colour reversal film.

23rd August 2002

- 1 Record shot of site following excavation of complex of dumped and tumbled stone deposits 1007 (looking southeast).
2 Record shot of site following excavation of complex of dumped and tumbled stone deposits 1007 (looking southeast).
3 Record shot of site following excavation of complex of dumped and tumbled stone deposits 1007 (looking northwest).
4 Record shot of site following excavation of complex of dumped and tumbled stone deposits 1007 (looking northwest).

27th August 2002

- 5 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 prior to excavation (looking southwest).
6 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 prior to excavation (looking southwest).
7 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
8 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
9 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 prior to excavation (looking southeast).
10 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 prior to excavation (looking southeast).

28th August 2002

- 11 Record shot of possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking southeast).
12 Record shot of possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking southeast).
13 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 and possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking southeast).
14 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 and possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking southeast).

- 15 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 and possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking southwest).
- 16 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 and possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking southwest).
- 17 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 and possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking southwest).
- 18 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 and possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking southwest).
- 19 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 and possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking northwest).
- 20 Record shot of cobbled setting 1019 and possible stone feature 1022 following excavation of spread of redeposited boulder clay 1020 (looking northwest).
- 21 Record shot of unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar and stones 1023 prior to excavation (looking southeast).
- 22 Record shot of unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar and stones 1023 prior to excavation (looking southeast).
- 23 Record shot of unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar and stones 1023 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 24 Record shot of unconsolidated deposit of lime mortar and stones 1023 prior to excavation (looking northwest).

3rd September 2002

- 25 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking northwest).
- 26 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking northwest).
- 27 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking northwest).
- 28 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking southeast).
- 29 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking southeast).
- 30 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking southeast).
- 31 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking northeast).
- 32 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking northeast).
- 33 Record shot of site following excavation of deposit of large sub-angular stones 1011 (looking northeast).

- 34 Record shot of possible foundation cut 1027 of revetment wall 1009 prior to excavation (looking southeast).
- 35 Record shot of possible foundation cut 1027 of revetment wall 1009 prior to excavation (looking southeast).
- 36 Record shot of possible foundation cut 1027 of revetment wall 1009 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 37 Record shot of possible foundation cut 1027 of revetment wall 1009 prior to excavation (looking northwest).

Film Four: Kodak E100VS 5.135 – 36 Ektachrome colour reversal film.

3rd September 2002 (continued)

- 1 Record shot of possible foundation cut 1027 of revetment wall 1009 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 2 Record shot of possible foundation cut 1027 of revetment wall 1009 prior to excavation (looking northeast).
- 3 Record shot of possible foundation cut 1027 of revetment wall 1009 prior to excavation (looking northeast).

4th September 2002

- 4 Record shot of charcoal-rich loam 1028 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 5 Record shot of charcoal-rich loam 1028 prior to excavation (looking northwest).

6th September 2002

- 6 General shot of site following excavation of charcoal-rich loam 1028 (looking northwest).
- 7 General shot of site following excavation of charcoal-rich loam 1028 (looking northwest).
- 8 General shot of site following excavation of charcoal-rich loam 1028 (looking northwest).
- 9 General shot of site following excavation of charcoal-rich loam 1028 (looking southeast).
- 10 General shot of site following excavation of charcoal-rich loam 1028 (looking southeast).
- 11 General shot of site following excavation of charcoal-rich loam 1028 (looking southeast).
- 12 Plastic sheeting going on (looking northwest).
- 13 Plastic sheeting going on (looking northwest).
- 14 Small pit 1029 following excavation (looking northwest).
- 15 Small pit 1029 following excavation (looking northwest).
- 16 Small pit 1029 following excavation (looking northwest).
- 17 Large pit 1035 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 18 Large pit 1035 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 19 Drain 1033 prior to excavation (looking northwest).

- 20 Drain 1033 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 21 Drain 1033 prior to excavation (looking southwest).
- 22 Drain 1033 prior to excavation (looking southwest).
- 23 Personal.
- 24 Personal.
- 25 Shallow pit 1037 prior to excavation (looking northwest).
- 26 Shallow pit 1037 prior to excavation (looking northwest).

9th September 2002

- 27 Record shot of cutting across drain 1033 (looking southwest).
- 28 Record shot of cutting across drain 1033 (looking southwest).
- 29 Record shot of cutting across drain 1033 (looking southeast).
- 30 Record shot of cutting across drain 1033 (looking southeast).
- 31 Record shot of cutting across drain 1033 (looking northwest).
- 32 Record shot of cutting across drain 1033 (looking northwest).

10th September 2002

- 33 Record shot of shallow pit 1037 and drain 1033 following partial excavation of shallow pit 1037 (looking northwest).
- 34 Record shot of shallow pit 1037 and drain 1033 following partial excavation of shallow pit 1037 (looking northwest).
- 35 Shallow pit 1037 (northwest facing section looking southeast).
- 36 Shallow pit 1037 (northwest facing section looking southeast).

Film Five: Kodak E100VS 5.135 – 36 Ektachrome colour reversal film.

11th September 2002

- 1 Record shot of partially excavated large pit 1035 (looking northwest).
- 2 Record shot of partially excavated large pit 1035 (looking northwest).
- 3 Record shot of partially excavated large pit 1035 (looking southeast).
- 4 Record shot of partially excavated large pit 1035 (looking southeast).
- 5 Record shot of revetment wall 1009 subsiding into large pit 1035 (looking southwest).
- 6 Record shot of revetment wall 1009 subsiding into large pit 1035 (looking southwest).
- 7 Record shot of revetment wall 1009 subsiding into large pit 1035 (looking southwest).
- 8 Record shot of revetment wall 1009 subsiding into large pit 1035 (looking southwest).
- 9 Shallow pit 1037 following excavation (looking southwest).
- 10 Shallow pit 1037 following excavation (looking southwest).
- 11 Shallow pit 1037 following excavation (looking northwest).

- 12 Shallow pit 1037 following excavation (looking northwest).

12th September 2002

- 13 Final shot excavation site (looking northwest).
14 Final shot excavation site (looking northwest).
15 Final shot excavation site (looking northwest).
16 Final shot excavation site (looking northwest).
17 Final shot excavation site (looking southeast).
18 Final shot excavation site (looking southeast).
19 Final shot excavation site (looking southeast).
20 Final shot excavation site (looking southeast).
21 Final shot excavation site (looking northeast).
22 Final shot excavation site (looking northeast).
23 Final shot of northern end of excavation site (looking northwest).
24 Final shot of northern end of excavation site (looking northwest).
25 Metalled surface 1031 (looking southwest).
26 Metalled surface 1031 (looking southwest).
27 Metalled surface 1031 (looking northeast).
28 Metalled surface 1031 (looking northeast).
29 Revetment wall 1009 (looking southwest).
30 Revetment wall 1009 (looking southwest).
31 Collapsed part of revetment wall 1009 (looking southwest).
32 Collapsed part of revetment wall 1009 (looking southwest).
33 Collapsed part of revetment wall 1009 (looking southwest).
34 Collapsed part of revetment wall 1009 (looking southwest).
35 Drain 1033 following excavation (looking north).
36 Drain 1033 following excavation (looking north).

Film Six: Kodak E100VS 5.135 – 36 Ektachrome colour reversal film.

12th September 2002 (continued)

- 1 Southeast facing section of northwestern edge of excavation (looking northwest).
2 Southeast facing section of northwestern edge of excavation (looking northwest).
3 Southeast facing section of northwestern edge of excavation (looking northwest).
4 Southeast facing section of northwestern edge of excavation (looking northwest).

Film Seven: Kodak E100VS 5.135 – 36 Ektachrome colour reversal film.

12th August 2002

- 16 Mahee Castle: restoration in progress.
- 17 Mahee Castle: restoration in progress.
- 18 Mahee Castle: restoration in progress.
- 19 Mahee Castle: restoration in progress.
- 20 Mahee Castle: restoration in progress.
- 21 Mahee Castle: restoration in progress.
- 22 Mahee Castle: restoration in progress.
- 23 Mahee Castle: restoration in progress.
- 24 General shot of excavation in progress.
- 25 General shot of excavation in progress.
- 26 General shot of excavation in progress.
- 26 General shot of northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking south).
- 27 General shot of northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking south).
- 28 General shot of northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking south).
- 29 Northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking southwest).
- 30 Northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking southwest).
- 31 Northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking southwest).
- 32 Northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking southwest).
- 33 Northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking southwest).
- 34 Northeast facing section of site prior to excavation (looking southwest).

15th August 2002

- 35 General shot of excavation in progress.
- 36 General shot of excavation in progress.
- 37 General shot of excavation in progress.

Appendix Four: Field Drawing Register

Drawing No.	Scale	Type	Description
1	1:50	Plan	Overall plan of site prior to excavation
2	1:10	Section	Southeast facing section prior to excavation
3	1:10	Section	Northeast facing section prior to excavation
4	1:50	Plan	Overall plan of site with extent of new excavation cuts (overlay drawing 2)
5	1:10	Plan	Detailed plan of area of hillwash 1005 and levelling/metalling deposit 1006 prior to excavation
6	1:10	Plan	General excavation plan after removal of hillwash 1005
7	1:10	Plan	General excavation plan after removal of levelling/metalling deposit 1006
8	1:10	Plan	General excavation plan after removal of localized deposit of sandy clay loam 1016
9	1:10	Plan	Cobbled setting 1019 and possible feature 1022 (overlay to drawing 8)
10	1:10	Plan	Plan following excavation of 1008
11	1:10	Plan	Features 1029, 1033, 1035 and 1037 prior to excavation
12	1:20	Elevation	Revetment wall 1009
13	1:10	Section	Cut (1033) drain facing southeast
14	1:10	Section	Cut (1033) drain facing northwest
15	1:10	Section	Northwest facing section of shallow pit 1037
16	1:10	Plan	Features 1033, 1035 and 1037 (overlay to drawing 11)
17	1:10	Section	Main southeast facing section of site
18	1:10	Section	Southeast facing section of large pit 1035
19	1:10	Section	Northeast facing section of site following excavation
20	1:10	Section	Northwest facing section of drain 1033
21	1:10	Section	Southeast facing section of northwestern edge of excavation
22	1:10	Section	Southeast facing section 'corrected' during excavation (overlay to drawing 2)

Appendix Five: Small Finds List

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
101	Glass (Post-Medieval)	1001	-	-	-
102	Brown glass (modern) bottle	1004	1504.12	496.12	4.30
103	Green glass bottle	1004	1504.37	496.89	4.31
104	Brown glass (modern) bottle	1004	1504.17	496.82	4.33
105	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.98	496.99	4.32
106	Cream ware	1004	1503.97	497.19	4.27
107	Brown glass (modern) bottle	1004	1503.64	496.14	4.57
108	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.05	497.56	4.24
109	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.30	497.38	4.31
110	Brown glass (modern bottle)	1004	1503.68	496.42	4.45
111	Clear glass	1004	1502.94	497.83	4.25
112	Green glass (bottle)	1004	1501.09	498.13	4.16
113	Clear glass (bottle)	1004	1504.17	497.04	4.26
114	Iron artefact	1004	1503.51	497.81	4.23
115	Glass green bottle	1004	1502.31	498.01	4.24
116	Brown bottle glass	1004	1503.95	497.18	4.26
117	Brown bottle glass	1004	1504.25	498.00	4.15
118	Clear glass	1004	1503.99	497.94	4.19
119	Brown bottle glass	1004	1502.77	497.99	4.25
120	Flint	1004	1501.13	498.77	4.09
121	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.22	498.11	4.22
122	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.27	498.21	4.22
123	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.12	498.33	4.24
124	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1500.98	498.88	4.05
125	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.64	498.23	4.21
126	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.86	498.31	4.16
127	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.63	498.30	4.20
128	Pot sherd (glazed)	1004	1501.75	498.50	4.16
129	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.56	498.36	4.20
130	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1501.83	498.69	4.16
131	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.17	498.46	4.21
132	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1502.48	498.48	4.18
133	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.29	498.52	4.14
134	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.16	498.82	4.14
135	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.29	498.59	4.18
136	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	1502.01	499.08	4.13

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
137	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.17	498.71	4.13
138	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.50	498.63	4.17
139	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.23	498.90	4.09
140	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.33	498.76	4.09
141	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.02	498.86	4.12
142	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.70	498.71	4.16
143	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.39	498.82	4.09
144	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.52	498.91	4.07
145	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.61	499.01	4.04
146	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.29	498.14	4.10
147	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.63	499.27	4.01
148	Pot sherd	1004	1501.52	499.56	3.99
149	Glass (modern)	1004	1503.72	498.83	4.15
150	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.59	499.38	4.01
151	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.45	499.40	4.04
152	Flint core?	1004	1503.60	499.55	4.09
153	White metal washer	1004	1502.13	499.43	4.10
154	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.89	498.94	4.12
155	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.44	499.18	4.06
156	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1501.73	499.63	4.05
157	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.45	499.13	4.06
158	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.74	498.97	4.12
159	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.27	499.41	4.07
160	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.01	499.05	4.10
161	Clear glass (modern) fragmented	1004	1504.39	499.06	4.04
162	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1501.95	499.89	3.99
163	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1502.07	499.78	4.02
164	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.77	499.48	4.07
165	Bottle top (modern)	1004	1504.31	499.22	4.08
166	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.21	198.92	4.10
167	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.15	499.33	4.07
168	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.17	499.22	4.15
169	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.15	499.38	4.15
170	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.37	499.67	4.10
171	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.10	499.66	4.10
172	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.22	499.50	4.04
173	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.60	499.14	4.04
174	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.60	499.22	4.04

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
175	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.24	499.58	4.10
176	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.36	499.10	4.03
177	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.24	499.24	4.07
178	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1501.20	499.27	3.99
179	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.05	499.36	4.08
180	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.03	498.99	4.12
181	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.44	498.96	4.03
182	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.94	499.27	4.10
183	Modern pot sherd	1004	1500.88	499.16	3.96
184	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.59	499.02	4.03
185	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.77	498.99	4.13
186	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.32	499.34	4.10
187	Clear glass (modern)	1004	150.14	498.99	4.09
188	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.49	498.75	4.06
189	Pot sherd	1004	1503.35	499.15	4.10
190	Glass	1004	1501.92	499.21	4.10
191	Brown glass (modern)	1004	150.34	498.86	4.09
192	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.83	498.92	4.14
193	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.20	499.24	4.11
194	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.22	498.78	4.11
195	Clear/green glass (modern)	1004	1503.26	499.16	4.13
196	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.93	498.76	4.13
197	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1501.89	499.11	4.10
198	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.90	499.17	4.12
199	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.25	499.01	4.07
200	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.07	499.08	4.13
201	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.12	498.99	4.09
202	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.13	499.04	4.13
203	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.02	498.96	4.08
204	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.87	499.04	4.13
205	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1501.20	498.81	4.15
206	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.76	498.86	4.15
207	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1502.94	498.97	4.14
208	Green glass (modern)	1004	1502.98	498.87	4.13
209	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.13	498.74	4.13
210	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.84	498.66	4.14
211	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.79	498.78	4.16
212	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.02	498.80	4.15

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
213	Green glass (modern)	1004	1501.55	498.86	4.09
214	Green glass (modern)	1004	-	-	
215	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.18	498.81	4.13
216	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.47	499.38	4.09
217	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.38	499.09	4.03
218	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1502.04	499.25	4.11
219	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.50	498.92	4.04
220	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.43	499.02	4.03
221	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1502.21	499.08	4.11
222	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.70	499.32	4.12
223	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.76	499.17	4.10
224	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.65	499.38	4.06
225	Green glass (modern)	1004	1504.49	499.19	4.05
226	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.19	499.04	4.07
227	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1502.47	499.04	4.16
228	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.76	499.22	4.11
229	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.85	499.08	4.1
230	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.26	499.00	4.12
231	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.38	499.28	4.10
232	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.17	498.63	4.05
233	Green glass (fragmented)	1004	1503.77	498.85	4.11
234	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.67	498.95	4.13
235	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.54	499.12	4.10
236	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.15	498.52	4.13
237	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.55	498.99	4.11
238	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1501.97	498.75	4.12
239	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.39	498.49	4.09
240	Pot sherd	1004	1503.26	498.99	4.13
241	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.85	498.68	4.14
242	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.64	498.77	4.16
243	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.56	498.83	4.16
244	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1503.65	498.71	4.16
245	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.54	498.62	4.16
246	Pottery sherd	1004	1504.23	498.62	4.09
247	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1504.28	498.57	4.11
248	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1504.33	498.53	4.11
249	Clear glass (modern)	1004	1503.00	498.71	4.16
250	Brown glass (melted?)	1004	1503.36	498.65	4.18

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
251	Green glass (modern)	1004	1503.22	498.63	4.13
252	Brown glass (modern)	1004	1502.95	498.66	4.15
253	Flint	1004	1504.26	497.51	4.11
254	Pot sherd	1004	1501.42	498.51	4.10
255	Flint	1004	1503.85	495.40	4.68
256	Copper alloy button	1006	1502.77	497.70	4.08
257	Iron artefact	1006	1501.17	498.80	3.90
258	Iron nail	US	-	-	-
259	Copper alloy button/mount	US	-	-	-
260	Clay pipe fragment	1015	1504.43	497.51	3.79
261	Iron horse shoe fragment	1007	1502.04	498.55	3.95
262	Iron fragment/stone adhesion	1007	-	-	-
263	Iron nail?	1015/1007	-	-	-
264	Iron fragment	1015/1007	-	-	-
265	Iron ard	US	-	-	-
266	Iron nail	1008	1503.27	497.80	3.87
267	Iron nail	1017	1500.88	498.98	3.80
268	Iron strip	1016	1502.97	497.66	3.84
269	Iron nail	1016	-	-	-
270	Iron nail	1016	1501.69	497.25	3.87
271	Iron nail	1016	1503.15	497.04	3.84
272	Iron nail	1016	-	-	-
273	Iron holdfast/clench bolt	1020	1502.74	497.89	3.82
274	Iron nail ?	1008	1500.02	99.99	4.05
275	Clay pipe fragment	1008	1503.25	498.12	3.82
276	Copper alloy coin ?	1020	1501.33	497.75	3.90
277	Iron nail ?	1017	1500.72	497.66	3.90
278	Pot sherd	1008	1502.81	499.7	3.74
279	Iron nail	1008	1503.56	498.64	3.84
280	Iron nail	1008	-	-	-
281	Iron punch ?	1008	-	-	-
282	Clay pipe fragment	1008	1504.13	499.40	3.78
283	Iron nail	1008	1501.02	497.66	3.81
284	Iron artefact ?	1008	1501.55	497.54	3.78
285	Pot sherd	1008	1503.11	498.36	3.75
286	Dressed stone	1023	1502.81	498.13	3.55
287	Iron nail?	1008/1018	1500.73	497.54	3.84
288	Stone (2 bags)	1023/1011	-	-	-

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
289	Cut stone	US	-	-	-
290	Pot sherd	1024	1501.86	499.75	3.33
291	Pot sherd	1028	1501.24	499.22	3.41
292	Pot sherd	1028	1501.76	499.05	3.45
293	Ceramic handle	1028	-	-	-
294	Pot sherd	1028	1502.88	499.80	3.27
295	Metal artefact	1028	-	-	-
296	Pot sherd	1028	1504.05	497.75	3.38
297	Pot sherd	1028	1504.33	497.36	3.34
298	Iron artefact	1028	1501.43	499.09	3.42
299	Iron nail	1028	1501.74	499.37	3.31
300	Pot sherd	1028	1501.43	499.89	3.20
301	Pot sherd	US	-	-	-
302	Pot sherd	1036	1501.61	500.07	3.28
303	Perforated slate	US	-	-	-
304	Pot sherd	1034	1504.09	497.96	3.32
305	Pot sherd	1034	1504.26	496.91	3.27
306	Worked stone	1034	1504.19	497.09	3.12
307	Worked stone	1034	1504.11	497.11	3.06
308	Worked stone	1032	1500.91	500.30	3.09
309	Metal artefact	1032	1500.82	500.33	3.08
310	Pot sherd	1032	1500.77	500.35	3.04
311	Pot sherd	1032	1500.71	500.51	3.11
312	Slag	1007	-	-	-
313	Iron nail	1007	-	-	-
314	Clay pipe stem	US	-	-	-
315	Clay pipe stem	1015/1007	-	-	-
316	Pot sherd	1008	-	-	-
317	Pot sherd / stone ware ?	1005	-	-	-
318	Pot sherd / black ware ?	1005	-	-	-
319	Pot sherd	1005	-	-	-
320	Pot sherd	1005	-	-	-
321	Pot sherd	1005	-	-	-
322	Pot sherd	1005	-	-	-
323	Pot sherd	1005	-	-	-
324	Pot sherd	1005	-	-	-
325	Ceramic inkwell?	1006	-	-	-
326	Pot sherd (modern)	1007	-	-	-

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
327	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1007	-	-	-
328	Pot sherd (modern)	1007	-	-	-
329	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1007	-	-	-
330	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1015/1007	-	-	-
331	Pot sherd	1015/1007	-	-	-
332	Pot sherd / black ware ?	1006	-	-	-
333	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1006	-	-	-
334	Pot sherd	1006	-	-	-
335	Pot sherd (modern)	1006	-	-	-
336	Pot sherd (modern)	1006	-	-	-
337	Pot sherd (modern)	1006	-	-	-
338	Pot sherd (modern)	1006	-	-	-
339	Pot sherd (modern)	1006	-	-	-
340	Pot sherd (modern)	1006	-	-	-
341	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1008	-	-	-
342	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1008	-	-	-
343	Pot sherd / handle ?	1008	-	-	-
344	Pot / stone ware?	US	-	-	-
345	Pot sherd (modern)	US	-	-	-
346	Pot sherd (modern)	US	-	-	-
347	Pot sherd (modern)	1001/ sieve	-	-	-
348	Pot sherd (modern)	1005/ sieve	-	-	-
349	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
350	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
351	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
352	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
353	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
354	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
355	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1023	-	-	-
356	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
357	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
358	Pot sherd (modern)	1004	-	-	-
359	Pot sherd (modern)	1015	-	-	-
360	Pot sherd (modern)	1015	-	-	-
361	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1015	-	-	-
362	Pot sherd / brown ware ?	1015	-	-	-
363	Iron slag (two fragments)	1023	-	-	-
364	Slate (two fragments)	1036	-	-	-

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
365	Slate/ 5 fragments	1032	-	-	-
366	Flint	1008/ sieve	-	-	-
367	Flint	1008/ sieve	-	-	-
368	Flint	1015/ sieve	-	-	-
369	Flint	1011	-	-	-
370	Flint	1009	-	-	-
371	Flint	1008	-	-	-
372	Flint	1008	-	-	-
373	Flint	1008	-	-	-
374	Flint	1008	-	-	-
375	Flint	1008	-	-	-
376	Flint	1008	-	-	-
377	Flint	1008	-	-	-
378	Flint	1008	-	-	-
379	Flint	1007/ sieve	-	-	-
380	Flint	1007/ sieve	-	-	-
381	Flint	1007/ sieve	-	-	-
382	Flint	1007/ sieve	-	-	-
383	Flint	1015/ 1007	-	-	-
384	Flint	1005/ sieve	-	-	-
385	Flint burnt?	1005/ sieve	-	-	-
386	Flint	1005/ sieve	-	-	-
387	Flint	1005/ sieve	-	-	-
388	Flint	1007	-	-	-
389	Flint	1007	-	-	-
390	Flint	1007	-	-	-
391	Flint	1015	-	-	-
392	Flint	1006	-	-	-
393	Flint	1006	-	-	-
394	Flint	1006	-	-	-
395	Flint	1006	-	-	-
396	Flint	1006	-	-	-
397	Flint	1006	-	-	-
398	Flint	1001/ sieve	-	-	-
399	Flint	1001/ sieve	-	-	-
400	Flint	1001/ sieve	-	-	-
401	Flint	1001/ sieve	-	-	-
402	Flint	1001/ sieve	-	-	-

Small Find No.	Description	Context No.	Easting	Northing	Height
403	Flint	1001/ sieve	-	-	-
404	Flint	1001/ sieve	-	-	-
405	Cut sandstone	1013/ sieve	-	-	-
406	Perforated slate	1032	-	-	-
407	Slate fragments	1034	-	-	-
408	Flint	1008	-	-	-
409	Glass slag ?	1028	-	-	-
410	Square stone	1028	-	-	-

Appendix Six: Record of Bulk Finds

Context No.	Animal bone	Shell	Mortar	Slate	Brick / Tile
1001					
1002					
1003					
1004					
1005					
1006					
1007					
1008					
1009					
1010					
1011					
1012					
1013					
1014					
1015					
1016					
1017					
1018					
1019					
1020					
1021					
1022					
1023					
1024					
1025					
1026					
1027					
1028					
1029					
1030					
1031					
1032					
1033					
1034					
1035					
1036					
1037					
1038					

	Animal bone	Shell	Mortar	Slate	Brick / Tile
No. of boxes	2	1	4	1	1
Weight	8.4 kg	4.0 kg	26.8 kg	-	9.0 kg

Appendix Seven: Samples List

Sample No.	Context No.	Type	Volume (l.)	No. of bags	Purpose	Retained ?
1	1006	Stone inclusions from levelling/metalling deposit	1	1	Identify source of stone	Yes
2	1036	Soil	4	2	Recovery of small bones	Yes

Appendix Eight: Early Photographic Studies of Mahee Castle

Belfast Naturalist Field Club Photographic Album (held by The Ulster Museum, Museums & Galleries of Northern Ireland)

<i>Reference No.</i>	<i>Description</i>
Y39050, pl.76	Mahee Castle looking northeast. Probably taken during the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's 1887 excursion to Mahee Island. The photograph shows the northwestern and southwestern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. Features of note include the undermined northern corner of the tower house and the partially robbed western corner of the castle. A water cart and a number of partially buried half barrels with white contents which are located round the castle suggest the preparation of either limewash or lime mortar perhaps in an unrecorded episode of restoration work. The photograph shows that the dry stone field wall which extends as far as the northwestern side of the tower house ends in a small wooden gate which swings on a post butted against the castle wall. The photograph includes individuals dressed in late nineteenth century clothes.
Y39050, pl.77	Mahee Castle looking southeast. Probably taken during the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's 1887 excursion to Mahee Island. The photograph shows the northwestern and southwestern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. A water cart and a number of partially buried half barrels with white contents which are located round the castle suggest the preparation of limewash or lime mortar perhaps in an unrecorded episode of restoration work. The photograph shows that the area between the southwestern wall of the tower house and the revetment wall is uneven; it rises significantly towards the northwestern end where the 2002 area of excavation was sited. The revetment wall is ruined but survives to a maximum height equal to the top of the arched entrance through the southwestern wall of the tower house. The photograph includes an individual dressed in late nineteenth century clothes.
Y39050, pl.82	Mahee Castle looking north. Probably taken during the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's 1887 excursion to Mahee Island. The photograph shows the southwestern and southeastern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. Features of note include two dry stone field walls that butt against the southeastern and northwestern walls of the tower house and which apparently incorporate the tower house into a field system. The photograph also shows the arched entrance into the southwestern wall of the tower house. The

photograph includes individuals dressed in late nineteenth century clothes. [This image is also included in the Welch Collection held by The Ulster Museum, Museums & Galleries of Northern Ireland, ref: W05/06/1].

The Welch Collection (held by The Ulster Museum, Museums & Galleries of Northern Ireland)

<i>Reference No.</i>	<i>Description</i>
W05/06/1	Mahee Castle looking north. Probably taken during the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's 1887 excursion to Mahee Island. The photograph shows the southwestern and southeastern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. Features of note include two dry stone field walls that butt against the southeastern and northwestern walls of the tower house and which apparently incorporate the tower house into a field system. The photograph also shows the arched entrance into the southwestern wall of the tower house. The photograph includes individuals dressed in late nineteenth century clothes. [Also reproduced in one of the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's Nineteenth Century Photographic Albums held by The Ulster Museum, Museums & Galleries of Northern Ireland ref: Y39050, pl.82].
W05/06/2	Mahee Castle during 1923 restoration looking east. The photograph shows the northwestern and southwestern walls of the tower house which have been cleared of ivy. The buttress supporting the northern corner of the castle has been inserted, the western corner of the tower house has been rebuilt, the tops of the ruined walls have been capped with cement and the windows in the southwestern wall have been reconstructed, although the doorway through the northwestern wall has not yet been restored.
W05/06/3	Mahee Castle looking east. Probably taken during the Belfast Naturalist Field Club's 1887 excursion to Mahee Island. The photograph shows the northwestern and southwestern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. The photograph shows the dry stone field wall which butts up against the northwestern side of the tower house immediately to the northeast of the ruined doorway through the wall. A water cart and a number of partially buried half barrels with white contents which are located round the castle suggest the preparation of limewash or lime mortar perhaps in an unrecorded episode of restoration work. The top of the dry stone wall horseshoe-shaped feature immediately adjacent to the arched entrance in the southwestern wall of the

tower house is visible. The photograph shows that the revetment wall is covered with earth and closely cropped grass. The photograph includes individuals dressed in late nineteenth century clothes.

The Hogg Collection (held by The Ulster Museum, Museums & Galleries of Northern Ireland)

<i>Reference No.</i>	<i>Description</i>
H05/06/1	Mahee Castle in 1900 looking south. The photograph shows the northeastern and northwestern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. Features of note include the overgrown dry stone walls butting against the southeastern and northwestern sides of the tower house and a build up of deposits with an estimated depth of c.0.6 metres over the vaulted roof of the ground floor. The photograph also shows the ruined doorway in the northwestern wall of the tower house and undermining of the northern corner of the castle. No evidence of a base batter on the northeastern side of the castle is visible in the photograph.
H05/06/2	Mahee Castle in 1900 looking east. The photograph shows the southwestern and northwestern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. Features of note include the robbed out worked stone around the doorway in the northwestern wall, the western corner of the building and the windows in the southwestern wall. The photograph also shows the overgrown dry stone wall butting against the northwestern wall of the tower house and the undermined northern corner of the castle. The depth of deposits located in the area between the southwestern wall of the tower house and the overgrown revetment wall varies considerably; the deposits increase significantly in thickness towards the northwestern end of this area where the 2002 area of excavation was located.
H05/06/3	Mahee Castle in 1900 looking west. The photograph shows the northeastern and south eastern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. Other features of note include a build up of deposits with an estimated depth of c.0.6 metres over the vaulted roof of the ground floor as well as preferential robbing out of stone from both the corners and the northeastern side of the castle. The angle of the photograph demonstrates that there was no base batter on the northeastern side of the castle.

The Green Collection (held by The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Museums & Galleries of Northern Ireland)

<i>Reference No.</i>	<i>Description</i>
WAG 879	Mahee Castle c.1900 looking east. The photograph shows the northwestern and southwestern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. The photograph shows that the small wooden gate at the end of the dry stone wall which butts up against the northwestern side of the tower house has been removed and that the dry stone wall has been extended so that it butts directly on to the tower house. Features of note include the undermining of the north corner of the castle and the preferential robbing of squared stone from its western corner. The photograph shows that the area between the southwestern wall of the tower house and the revetment wall is uneven; it rises significantly towards the northwestern end where the 2002 area of excavation was sited. The faced stones around the windows not obscured by ivy have been robbed. The photograph depicts some reconstruction work around the door in the northwest wall of the tower house.
WAG 880	Mahee Castle c.1900 looking southwest. The photograph shows the northeastern and southeastern walls of the tower house which are partially covered in ivy. Features of note include the undermined northern corner of the castle, part of the ruined revetment wall behind the tower house which survives to a maximum height equal to the top of the arched entrance through the southwestern wall of the tower house, and a build up of deposits with an estimated depth of c.0.6 metres over the vaulted roof of the ground floor. The photograph also shows that the ruined, northeastern entrance of the southeastern chamber was blocked by a ruined stone wall. [Plate One].
WAG 2091	Mahee Castle during 1923 restoration looking southwest. The photograph shows the northeastern and southeastern walls of the tower house. Features of note include the bastion inserted by Lawlor underneath the undermined northern corner of the castle. The mortar used in the bastion is notably lighter than that present elsewhere in the castle. The photograph also shows that the ruined, northeastern entrance of the southeastern chamber was blocked by a ruined stone wall. [Plate Two].
WAG 2092	Mahee Castle during 1923 restoration looking east. The photograph shows the northwestern and southwestern walls of the castle. Features of note include the robbed out stone around the windows and doorways in the northwestern and

southwestern walls, the bastion inserted underneath the undermined northern corner of the tower house and the preferentially robbed western corner of the building. The horseshoe-shaped dry stone footing adjacent to the arched entrance in the southwestern wall is visible. The photograph shows that the area between the southwestern wall of the tower house and the revetment wall is uneven; it rises significantly towards the northwestern end where the 2002 area of excavation was sited. [Plate Three].

WAG 2101 Mahee Castle during 1923 restoration work looking northwest. The photograph is taken at some distance from the castle and consequently contains little detail of note.

WAG 2102 Mahee Castle during 1923 restoration work looking northwest. The photograph is taken at some distance from the castle and consequently contains little detail of note.



Plate One: Mahee Castle c.1900 (looking southwest) (from the Green Collection WAG 880).



Plate Two: Mahee Castle during 1923 restoration (looking southwest) (from the Green Collection WAG 2091).



Plate Three: Mahee Castle during 1923 restoration (looking east) (from the Green Collection WAG 2092).



Plate Four: Mahee Castle prior to the commencement of the current restoration (looking south).



Plate Five: 2002 area of excavation prior to initial site clearance (looking northwest).



Plate Six: Levelling deposit (Context No.1006) prior to excavation (looking northwest).



Plate Seven: rectangular-shaped stone setting (Context No.1019) and adjacent deposit of burnt or oxidised boulder clay (Context No.1020) prior to excavation (looking southwest).



Plate Eight: Area of excavation following removal of charcoal-rich loamy deposit (Context No.1028) (looking northwest). The photograph also shows the revetment wall (Context No.1009), three pits (Context Nos.1029, 1035 and 1037) and drain (Context No.1033) prior to their excavation.



Plate Nine: Section of revetment wall (Context No.1009) which has slumped into the settled fill of the partially excavated large pit (Context No.1035) (looking southwest).



Plate Ten: Final excavation shot (looking northwest).



Plate Eleven: Occupation features following excavation (looking northwest). Photograph shows part of the large pit (Context No.1035) (*foreground left*), part of the small pit (Context No.1029) (*foreground right*), the shallow pit (Context No.1037) (*middle ground centre*) and the linear drain (Context No.1033) (*excavated in two separate cuttings*).