



20 Ladyhill Lane

Ladyhill

Co Antrim

Monitoring report No: 294

License No. AE/15/13E

Stuart Alexander

## Site Specific Information

*Site Name:* 20 Ladyhill Lane

*Townland:* Ladyhill

*SMR No:* ANT 044:056

*State Care*                      ~~*Scheduled*~~                      *Other*                      (*delete as applicable*)

*Grid Reference :* 317009, 39116

*County:* Antrim

*Excavation License No:* AE/15/13E

*Planning Ref No:* T/2013/0380/O

*Date of Monitoring:* 17<sup>th</sup> February 2015

*Archaeologist Present:* Stuart Alexander

### *Brief Summary:*

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on a site approximately 45 metres south west of 20 Ladyhill Lane; in response to a planning application for a proposed dwelling on a farm. The development area is approximately 20 metres west of a Rath (ANT: 044:056) that is shown on the first and second edition ordnance survey maps. No surface trace of the Rath can be seen today. Three 2 metre wide trenches were opened across the site, ranging in length from 12 metres to 30 metres. No finds or features of archaeological significance were uncovered. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is undertaken.

### *Type of Monitoring:*

Excavation of three test trenches by a mechanical excavator, equipped with a 'sheugh' (smooth edged) bucket under archaeological supervision.

### *Size of Area Opened:*

Three test trenches all 2 metres wide ranging between 12 metres and 30 metres long. A total of 108 square metres.

*Current Land Use:* Greenfield/ Small Copse

*Intended Land Use:* Residential

## **Brief Account of the Monitoring**

### *Introduction*

An archaeological evaluation was carried out a site approximately 45 metres south west of 20 Ladyhill Lane, Ladyhill, Co Antrim (Figures 1 -4). The application site, is located half way up Ladyhill Lane and is adjacent to the road. The site is approximately 600 feet above sea level with good views to the south and west across Lough Neagh towards the Sperrin Mountains. The proposed development area is situated in a large field that contains semi-mature woodland between 10 and 15 years old (Plate 1).

The archaeological monitoring was requested as the development area lies close the remains of a Rath (ANT 044:056) that was recorded on the first edition 1831-1833 and second edition 1853-1858 ordnance survey maps. The site is shown on the first edition map (Figure 5) as a single banked enclosure and is marked as a '*fort*'. It is then depicted on the second (Figure 6) as a single dashed ring, labelled as '*site of fort*'. By the time of the third edition ordnance survey 1900-1906 the monument is no longer illustrated suggesting that it may have been landscaped during the intervening period. Even though no traces of the fort can be seen today it was necessary to carry out an archaeological evaluation; to provide a formal response to the planning service. Sub surface traces of the Rath may have survived or there may have been extramural features associated with it.

The evaluation was requested by Gina Baban of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Historic Monuments Unit, as part of a planning application for a new dwelling (Planning Ref: T/2013/0380/0).

### *Excavation*

Three 2 metre wide trenches were opened across the development area. Due to the woodland on site these ranged in length from 12 metres to 30 metres (Figure 4). All trenches were aligned east west and were excavated to the natural glacial subsoil. This was encountered at depths between 0.17 metres and 0.36 metres from the modern ground surface.

### *Trench One*

Trench one (Plate 2) measured 2 metres by 12 metres and was positioned just in front of the small copse. This trench contained three contexts sod (c.101), topsoil (c.102) and subsoil (c.103). The sod

came off on to the topsoil which was a grey light brown sticky clay loam, with some charcoal flecking and sub rounded stones between 0.05m – 0.16m in size. This deposit varied in depth between 0.18m and 0.36m. Once this was removed it revealed the natural glacial subsoil which was a bright orange clay with some sub rounded stones up to 0.13m in size. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the excavation of this trench.

### *Trench Two*

Trench two (Plate 3) was the longest of the three trenches, measuring 2 metres by 30 metres in length, running up through a small break in the woodland. This trench contained five deposits sod (c.201), topsoil (c.202), subsoil cut feature (c.203), fill of this feature (c.204) and subsoil (c.205). The topsoil in this trench varied in depth between 0.17m -0.29m and was a light brown sticky clay loam with some charcoal flecking and sub rounded stones between 0.05m – 0.13m in size. Once this was removed it exposed the natural glacial subsoil which was an orange clay similar to c.103 in trench one.

At the very eastern end of this trench among the woodland was an oval subsoil cut feature measuring 0.95m east west by 0.45m north south and 0.28m deep (Plates 4, 5, 6). The north and south sides of this feature had sharp breaks of slope that steeply tapered to a 'U' shaped base, whilst the east and west edges had more gradual slopes tapering to the base. The cut was filled by a deposit very similar to the topsoil. It was a grey brown clay loam that contained a number of small stones and some slight pieces of charcoal. This feature does not appear to be anything of archaeological significance. It is either a stone socket or a cut associated with the recent tree planting in the area.

### *Trench Three*

Trench three (Plate 7) was the same size as trench one measuring 2 metres by 12 metres. It like the other trenches contained similar strata: sod (c.301), topsoil (c.302) and subsoil (c.301). The topsoil was again a grey brown clay loam with occasional charcoal flecking and some sub rounded stones between 0.07m – 0.19m in size. This deposit ranged in depth between 0.18m -0.26m. The subsoil in this trench was an orange clay the same as the previous trenches. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the excavation of this trench.

### *Conclusion*

No features or finds of archaeological significance were recorded during the excavation at 20 Ladyhill Lane. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological work is carried out at the site. A short summary of the excavation will be prepared for inclusion in the annual '*Excavations*' bulletin.

**Archive:**

*Finds:* N/A

*Photographs:*

Fifty eight digital images were taken during the evaluation. These are archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

*Plans and Drawings:* N/A

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Figure 1 – General Location Map

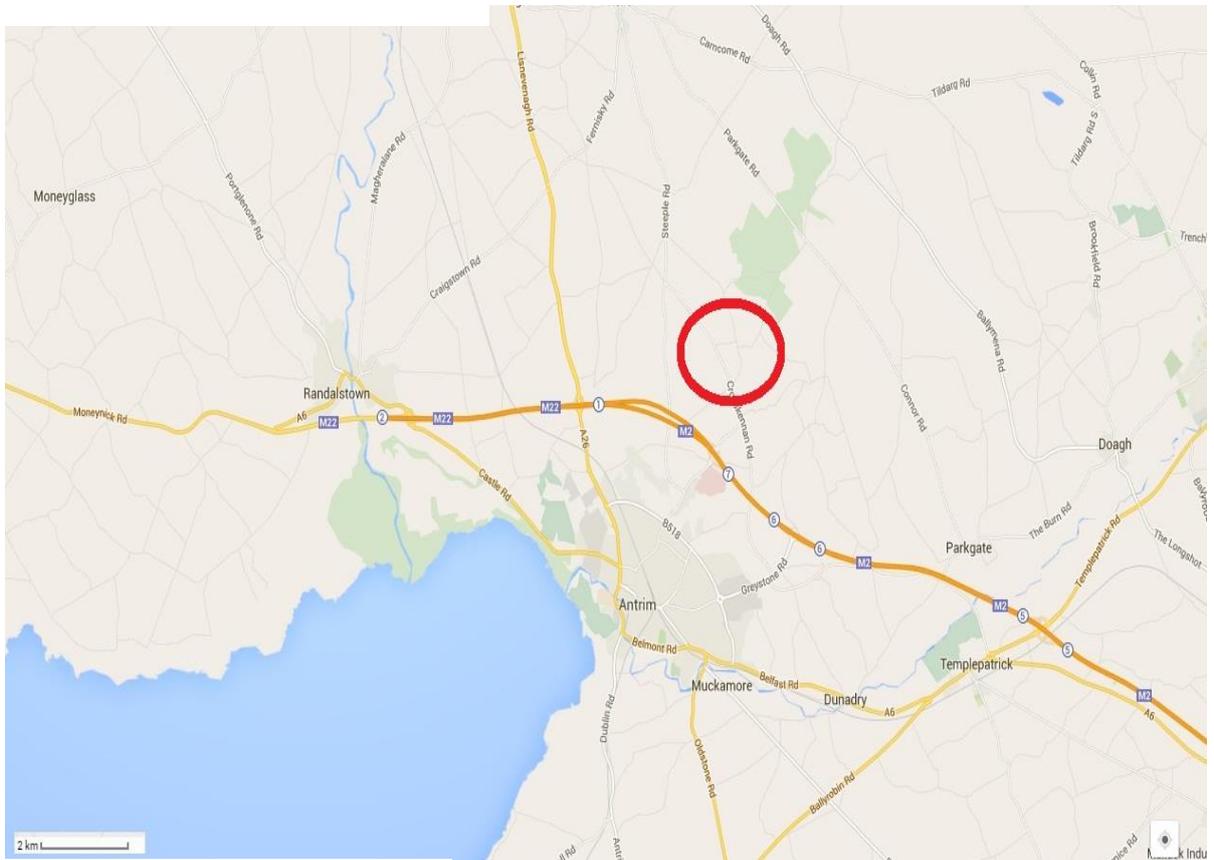


Figure 2 – General Location Map

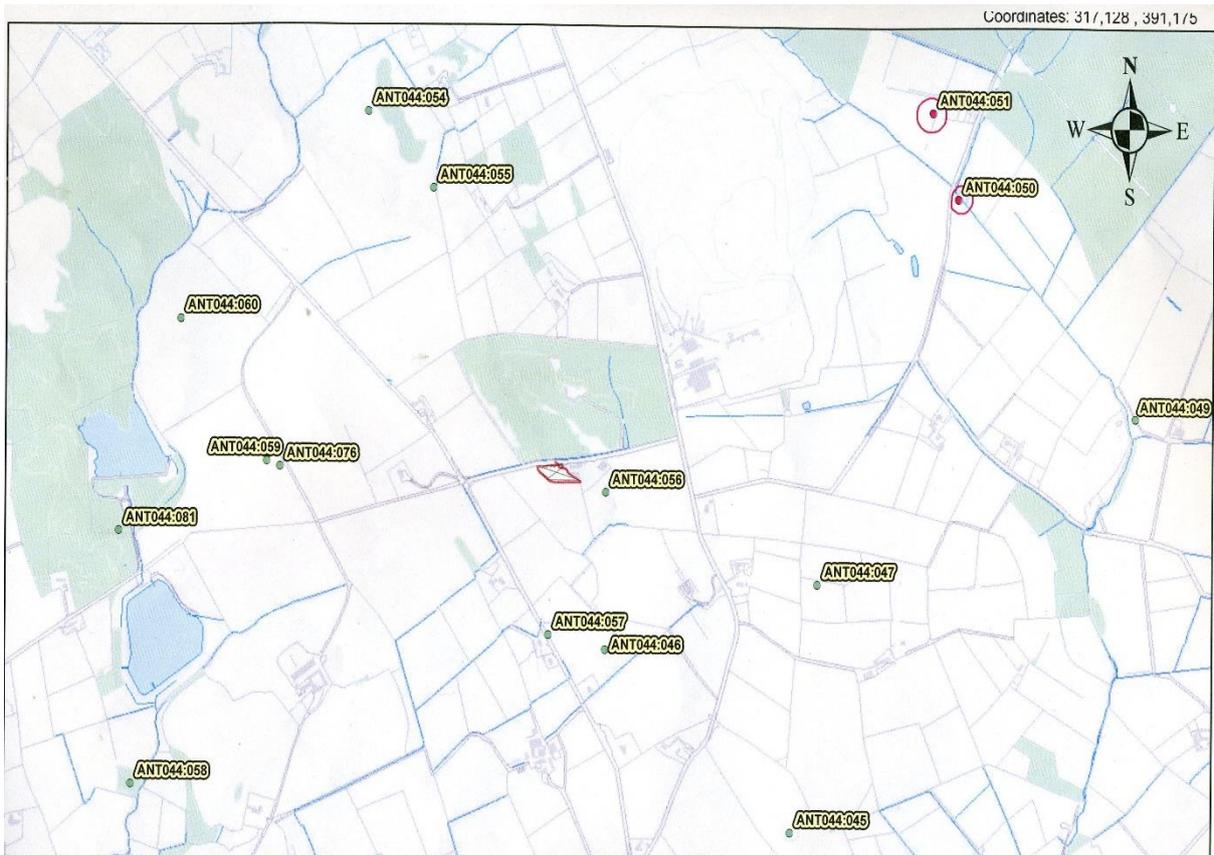


Figure 3 – Detailed Location Map, site is outlined in red

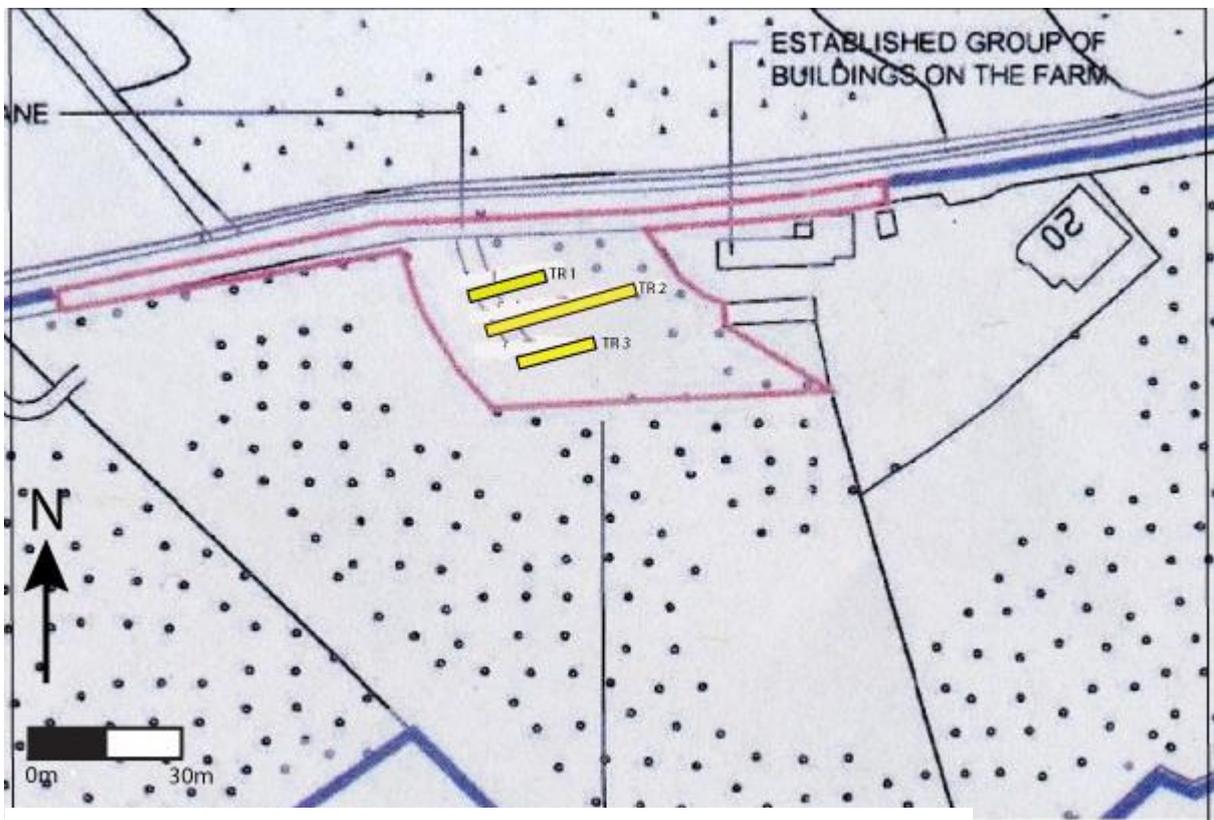


Figure 4 – Development area outlined in red, trenches highlighted in yellow

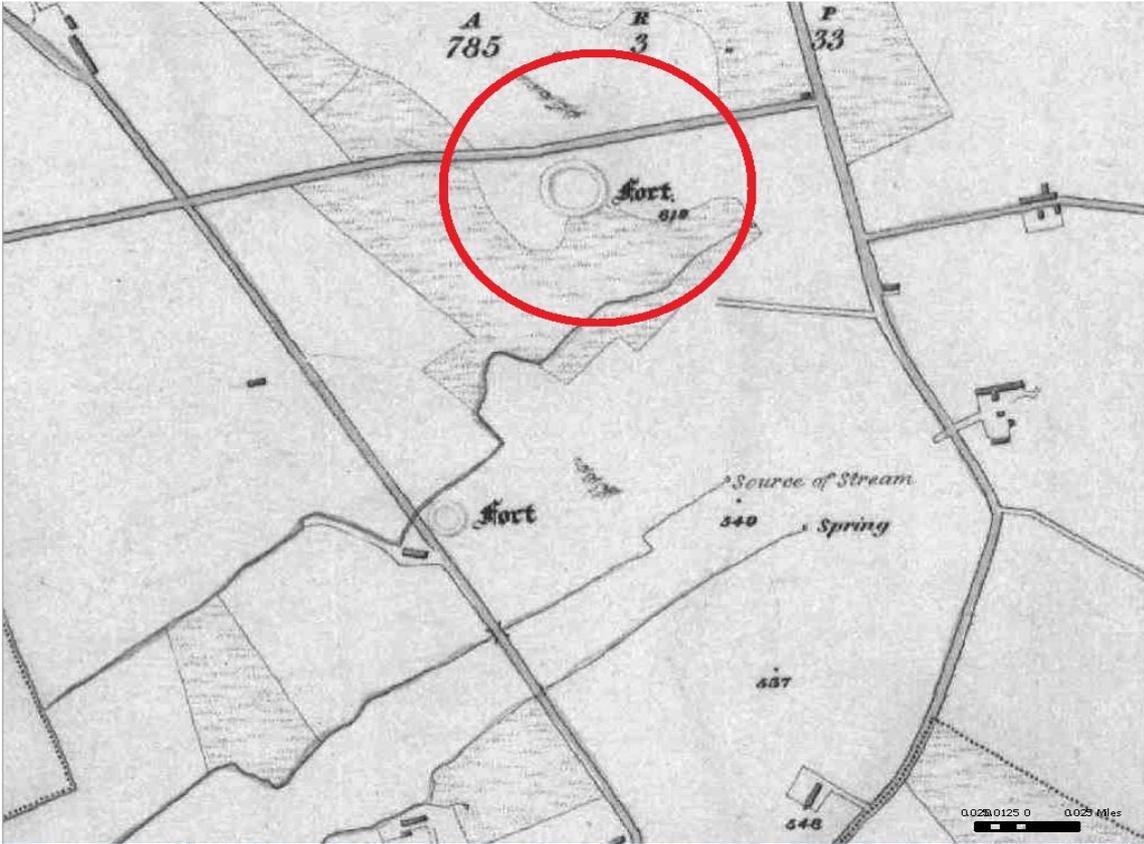


Figure 5 – First Edition Ordnance survey map

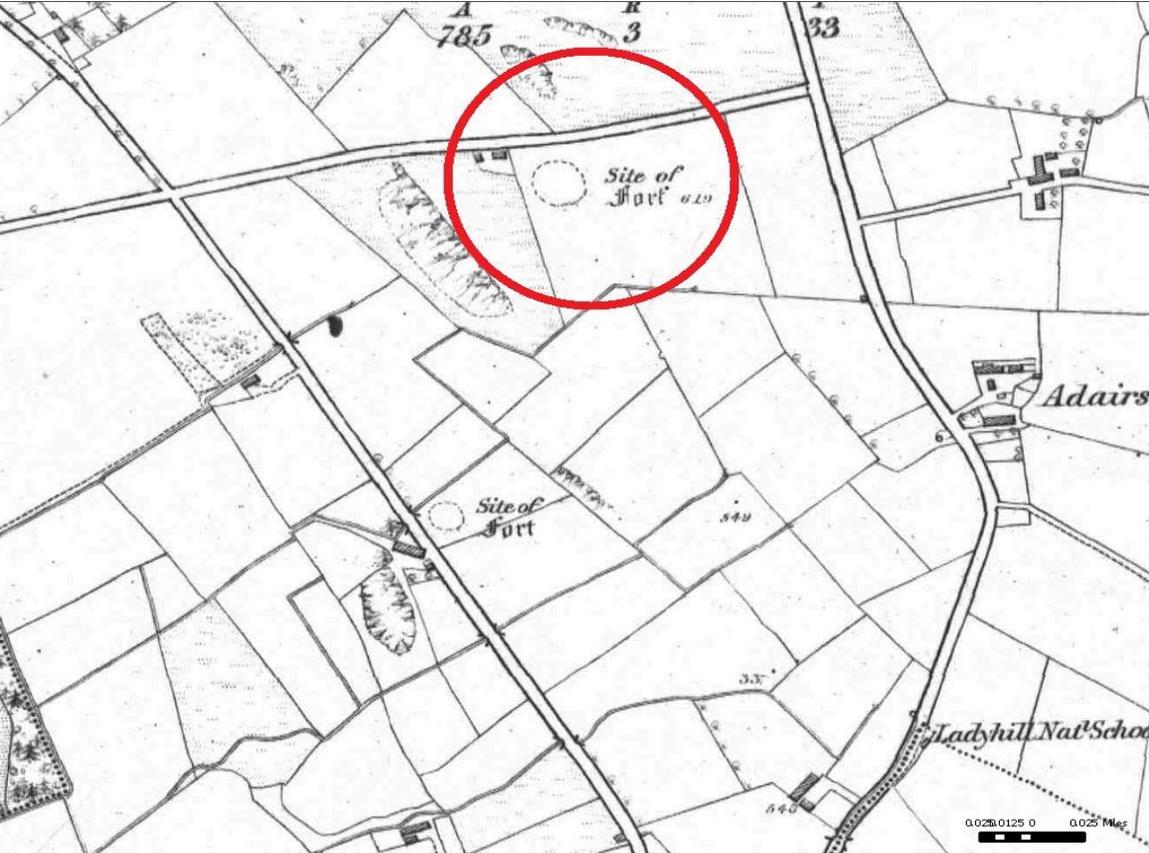


Figure 6 – Second Edition Ordnance survey map



*Plate 1 – Development site prior to archaeological evaluation*



*Plate 2 – Post ex shot of Trench One, looking east*



*Plate 3 – Post ex shot of Trench Two, looking east*



*Plate 4 – Pre ex shot of subsoil cut feature c.203, looking north*



*Plate 5 – Mid ex shot of subsoil cut feature c.203, looking east*



*Plate 6 – Post ex shot of subsoil cut feature c.203, looking west*



*Plate 7 – Post ex shot of Trench Three,  
looking east*