

# ULSTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



**Survey Report: No. 52**

**Survey and surface artefact collection at Ballytaylor, County  
Antrim  
UAS/14/01**

**In association with**



Northern Ireland  
**Environment**  
Agency



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## CONTENTS

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	page
List of figures	4
1. Summary	5
2. Introduction	6
3. 2014 UAS survey	10
4. Discussion	16
5. Recommendations for further work	17
6. Bibliography	19
Appendix: Photograph record form	20

## LIST OF FIGURES

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Figures	page
01. Location map for Ballytaylor, County Antrim	5
02. Location of Ballytaylor site	5
03. Table of recorded archaeological sites adjacent to Ballytaylor townland	7
04. Second Edition, Antrim County Sheet 3 (part of) 1859	8
05: Third Edition Antrim County Sheet 3 (part of) 1906	8
06: UAS Survey Group and Downpatrick YAC at work at Ballytaylor	9
07: Plan of Grids A and B	10
08: Grid A - Inventory of items recovered	11
09: Surface chart of flints recovered from Grid A	12
10: Surface chart of prehistoric pottery recovered – Grid A	12
11: Grid B – Inventory of items recovered	12
12: Example of artefacts recovered - flint flakes	13
13: Example of artefacts recovered – prehistoric pottery	13
14: Example of artefacts recovered – modern (Victorian) pottery	14
15: Example of artefacts recovered – clay pipe fragments	15
16: Example of artefacts recovered – part of porcellanite axe-head	15
17: Example of artefacts recovered – sandstone object (possible whetstone)	16
18: Chalk scatter possibly indicating the presence of a prehistoric burial cairn	17

## 1. Summary

### 1.1 Location

A site survey and surface artefact collection were carried out at Ballytaylor Townland, County Antrim, in the Parish of Billy and Barony of Cary, Irish Grid reference C 9400 4200 at an altitude of 25m + OD on 8 March 2014.

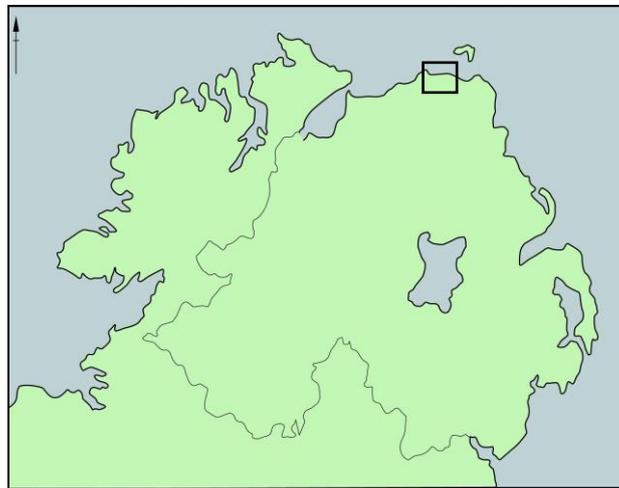


Figure 01: Location map for Ballytaylor, County Antrim



Figure 02: Location of Ballytaylor site *Google Earth*

The survey site is situated within private farmland, currently owned by MacNaghten Farms Limited. It is known locally as Field 22, which is immediately to the east of the Bush River. The adjacent field, known as Field 23, was traversed in order to reach the survey site. At the time of the 2014 survey, this had also been heavily ploughed and many flint items were observed by the survey group while travelling to the survey site. The survey was the first in a series of planned surveys undertaken by members of the Ulster Archaeological Society (UAS) during 2014.

## 1.2 Aims

In order to enhance the archaeological record of this site, the aims of this survey were to produce a plan of the site and carry out a photographic survey and surface artefact collection. This information was compiled into a report and copies submitted to the landowners, MacNaghten Farms Limited, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Built Heritage (NIEA), Downpatrick YAC and to the archives of the UAS. A copy of the report was also placed on the website of the UAS.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Background

This site was initially identified by Kara Ward, an Archaeological Inspector with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Built Heritage. Following a ploughing competition in October 2013, Kara observed that a large number of worked flints and sherds of prehistoric pottery were present on the ground surface. In order to recover as much as possible of this surface material and to identify possible archaeological features, a surface artefact collection was suggested. Following contact with the Ulster Archaeological Society, this was undertaken on Saturday 8 March 2014. The surface artefact collection and associated survey were carried out by members of the UAS in response to a decision taken by the committee of the society to extend an opportunity to members to participate in practical surveys of archaeological monuments that had not previously been recorded. This followed a bequest to the society from the late Dr Ann Hamlin, from which the items of survey equipment were purchased. It was therefore agreed that members of the society would commence a programme to survey these monuments and the site at Ballytaylor was subsequently chosen to be the fourth-fifth of these. An invitation was also extended to the Downpatrick branch of the Young Archaeologists Club and a group of 20 members participated in the surface artefact collection.

### 2.2 Previous archaeological surveys

#### 2.2.1 Ballytaylor Townland

No archaeological monuments are currently recorded in Ballytaylor townland on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) maintained by the NIEA.

### 2.2.2 Adjacent Townlands

Several archaeological monuments are recorded in adjacent townlands on the Sites and Monuments Record:

<b>TOWNLAND</b>	<b>SMR NUMBER</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	<b>IG REFERENCE</b>
Dooley	ANT 003:029	Sandhills Site, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Medieval Settlements	C 93762 42517
Dooley	ANT 003:113	Burial in sand dunes	C 93460 42630
Bushfoot or Lisanduff	ANT 003:001	Two Earthworks	C 92980 42200
Bushfoot or Lisanduff	ANT 003:002	Two Earthworks	C 93014 42282
Bushfoot or Lisanduff	MRA 006:030	Harbour	C 92660 42190
Bushfoot or Lisanduff	MRA 006:044	Ice House	C 92766 42353
Bushmills or Ballaghmore	ANT 007:020	Souterrain	C 93420 40710
Clogher North	ANT 003:070	Souterrain	C 94000 41000
Clogher North	ANT 007:059	Standing Stone	C 94700 40720
Bushmills	ANT 003:070	Souterrain	C 94000 41000
Bushmills	ANT 007:020	Souterrain	C 93420 40710

Figure 03: Table of recorded archaeological sites adjacent to Ballytaylor townland

### 2.3 Cartographic evidence

By 1859, the field system at Ballytaylor had been established and has little changed until the present day (Figures 4 and 5).

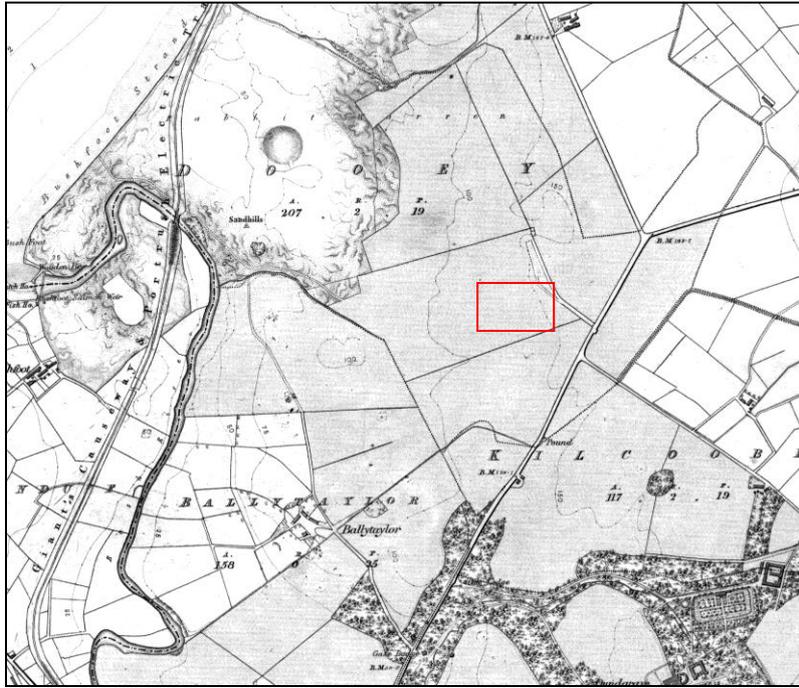


Figure 04: Second Edition, Antrim County Sheet 3 (part of) 1859 *Ordnance Survey*.

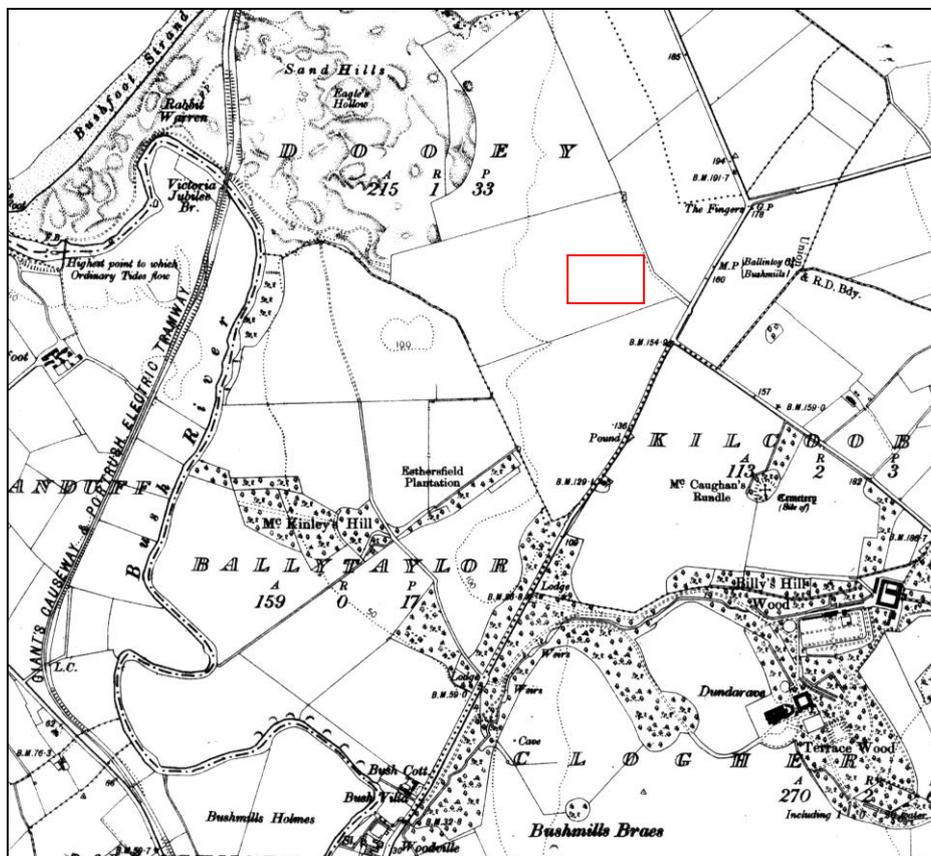


Figure 05: Third Edition, Antrim County Sheet 3 (part of) 1906 *Ordnance Survey*.

## 2.4 Archiving

Copies of this report have been deposited with the landowners, MacNaghten Farms Limited the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Built Heritage, Downpatrick YAC and the Ulster Archaeological Society. All site records have been archived by the Ulster Archaeological Society and artefacts are temporarily stored at the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queen's University, Belfast.

## 2.5 Credits and Acknowledgements

The survey was led by Harry Welsh and other members of the survey team were Chris Ayers, Philip Baxter, Chris Brayson, Olive Campbell, Michael Catney, Robin Collins, Ian Gillespie, Lee Gordon, Jo Magill, Anne MacDermott, Janna McDonald, Pat O'Neill, Ken Pullin, Alan Hope, George Rutherford, Randal Scott, Janey Sproule, Chris Stevenson and Karine Wright. Also present were 20 members of Downpatrick Young Archaeologists Club (YAC), led by Moira O'Rourke. The Ulster Archaeological Society is particularly grateful to the landowners, MacNaghten Farms Limited, for allowing access to the site and accommodating the survey group. Also, Kara Ward of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Built Heritage, for identifying the site and making initial contact with MacNaghten Farms Limited.



Figure 06: UAS survey group and Downpatrick YAC at work at Ballytaylor

### 3. 2014 UAS Survey

#### 3.1 Methodology

It was decided that the survey would take the form of a surface artefact collection, the production of an associated plan drawing and a photographic survey. The surface artefact collection was designed in accordance with guidance issued by the Cambridge Archaeology Field Group (2011). This report was compiled using the information obtained from these sources, in addition to background documentary material.

#### 3.2 Production of the plan drawing

A plan drawing was completed, based on the Grid A search area of 50m north-west/south-east by 50m north-east/south-west and Grid B search area of 50m north-west/south-east by 20m north-east/south-west. The total search area of 3,500 square metres divided into 10m by 10m grids to identify any clustering of artefacts. The search area and grids were plotted with the society's *Leica Sprinter* electronic measuring device.

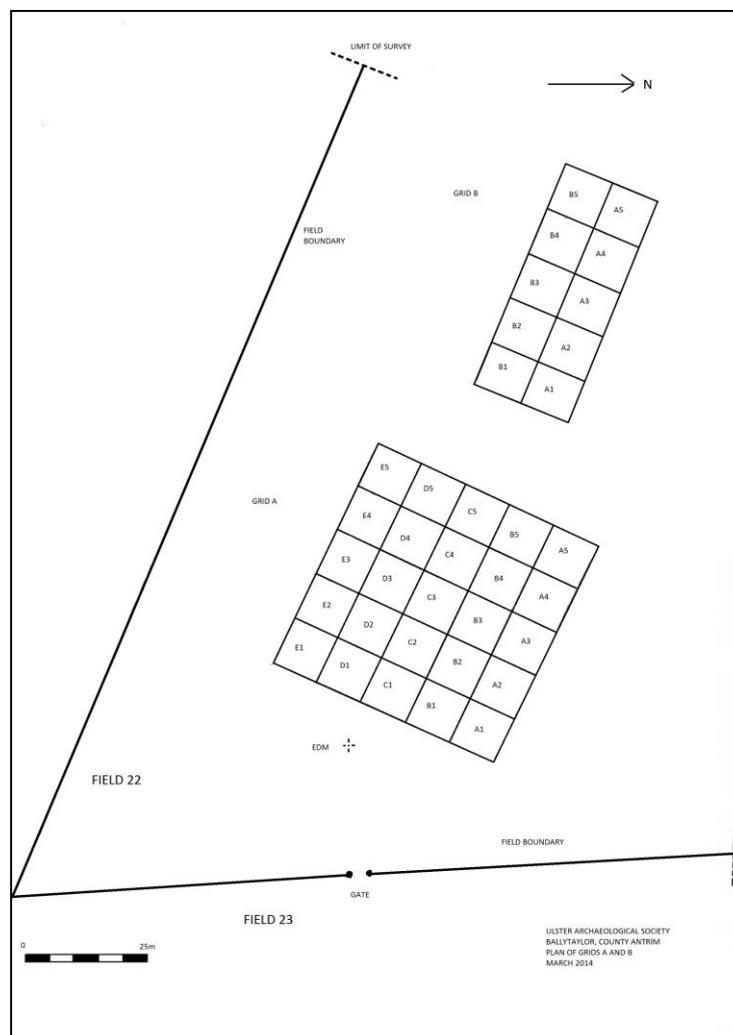


Figure 07: Plan of Grids A and

Grid No	Ceramics	All Flint**	Metal	Glass	Quartz	Stone	Bone	Shell
A1	6	175	0	0	2	0	0	0
A2	2+1	146	0	0	1	2	0	0
A3	0	97	0	0	0	0	0	0
A4	0	84	0	0	0	0	0	0
A5	0	27	0	0	0	1	0	0
B1	8	234	0	1	1	3	0	0
B2	9+10	272	0	1	0	0	0	0
B3	2	266	0	1	1	1	0	0
B4	1	109	0	0	0	0	0	0
B5	2+c/pipe	60	0	1	0	0	0	0
C1	2	153	0	0	1	4	0	0
C2	3+2	143	0	0	1	1	0	0
C3	0	133	0	0	0	0	0	0
C4	3+c/pipe	63	0	0	0	0	0	0
C5	3	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
D1	9	51	0	0	0	0	0	0
D2	9+1brick	67	0	0	2	1	0	0
D3	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
D4	8	86	0	1	0	0	0	0
D5	Unable to search this grid square for safety reasons							
E1	1	52	0	2	2	0	0	0
E2	5	90	0	0	11	9	0	0
E3	10+1	126	0	1	1	0	0	0
E4	12	45	0	0	9	2	0	0
E5	Unable to search this grid square for safety reasons							
Stray	11+1+2c/pipe	33	0	0	0	3***	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>2530</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Figure 08: Grid A - Inventory of items recovered\*

\*All finds awaiting specialist analysis

\*\*Unsorted total and includes natural flint

\*\*\*Including part of porcellanite axe-head and possible whetstone

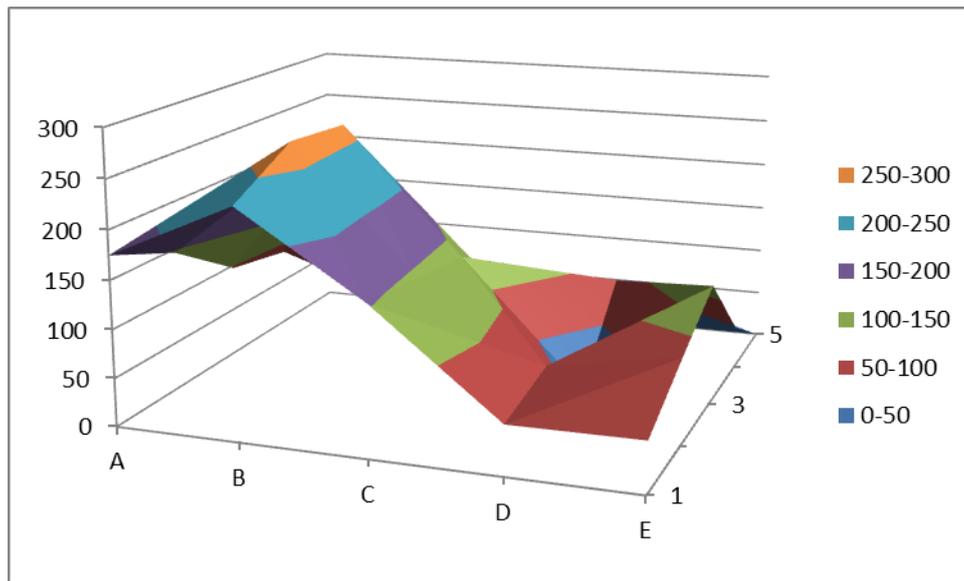


Figure 09: Surface chart of flints recovered

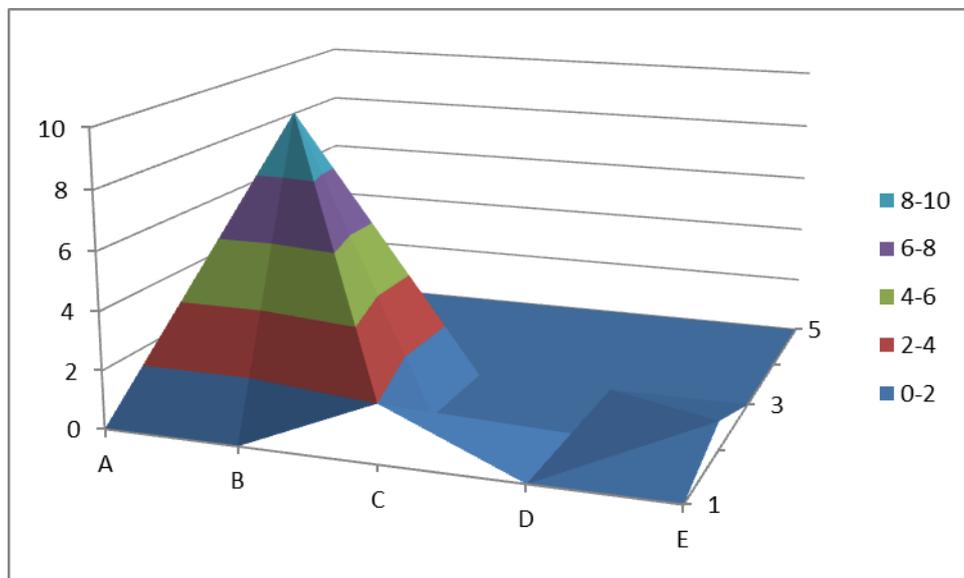


Figure 10: Surface chart of prehistoric pottery recovered

Grid No	Ceramics	All Flint**	Metal	Glass	Quartz	Stone	Bone	Shell
A1	13+brick	94	1	4	0	2	0	0
A2	5	85	0	4	6	24	1bird	0
A3	10+brick	173	0	1	1	6	0	0
A4	0	199	0	1	0	10	0	0
A5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A6	2+brick	27	1	0	0	0	0	0
B1	2	53	0	0	0	0	0	0
B2	0	34	0	1	0	1	0	0
B3	2	44	0	1	0	1	0	0
B4	1	39	0	0	0	0	1	0

B5	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
B6	2	39	0	0	0	0	0	0
Field 22	1	27	0	0	0	0	0	0
Field 23	2+c/pipe	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outcrop	30+1+c/pipe	152	3	0	0	1	0	0
Stray	10	87	0	0	2	2	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>1084</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

Figure 11: Grid B - Inventory of items recovered\*

\*All finds awaiting specialist analysis

\*\*Unsorted total and includes natural flint



Figure 12: Example of artefacts recovered - flint flakes



Figure 13: Example of artefacts recovered – prehistoric pottery



Figure 14: Example of artefacts recovered – modern (Victorian) pottery



Figure 15: Example of artefacts recovered – clay pipe fragments



Figure 16: Example of artefacts recovered – part of porcellanite axe-head



Figure 17: Example of artefacts recovered – sandstone object (possible whetstone)

### 3.3 Photographic archive

A photographic record of the site was taken by using a *Ricoh Caplio 600G Wide 8* megapixel digital camera and a photograph record sheet was employed, corresponding to photographs taken during the site survey of 8 March 2014. The archive has been compiled in jpeg format and saved to compact disc.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Introduction

The north coast of County Antrim is an area rich in archaeological monuments from every period of human occupation since the Mesolithic. Sand dune sites have long been recognised as areas where human artefacts are plentiful and antiquarians such as William Knowles and William Grey have recorded many of these. Strangely, little attention seems to have been paid to the dune system in the Bushfoot area and as a result, this is an area that is ripe for archaeological investigation.

4.2. A small hill was observed in the same field and approximately 170m to the north-west of the survey site. When this was investigated, a circular scatter of chalk fragments, approximately 10m in diameter, was observed at the summit (Figure 18). Numerous flint fragments were also present and it was considered that this may represent the ploughed-out remains of a burial cairn. Further investigation here, perhaps an earth resistivity geophysical survey, may identify any sub-surface structural remains, such as a burial pit or cist.



Figure 18: Chalk scatter possibly indicating the presence of a prehistoric burial cairn

#### 4.6. Summary

The policy of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Built Heritage to investigate the results of ploughing competitions has in this case been totally justified. The presence of a significant amount of artefactual material, mostly prehistoric in origin, has confirmed that Ballytaylor townland should be considered in the wider context of prehistoric activity along the north Antrim coastline and associated sand dune systems. Further archaeological investigation in this area may identify previously unrecorded monuments and add to our understanding of this complex and poorly-understood period of Irish prehistory.

#### **5. Recommendations for further work**

The north Antrim coast is an area rich in archaeological monuments and this surface artefact collection has confirmed significant prehistoric activity in the Ballytaylor townland. The NIEA policy of having an archaeologist inspect the ground surface in the aftermath of the ploughing competition in the area has proved invaluable and should be considered if any future ploughing competitions are to be held in such archaeologically sensitive areas.

The investigation of 2014 has confirmed the commitment of the Ulster Archaeological Society to be at the forefront of efforts to extend opportunities for members of the public to engage in archaeological fieldwork and research. The Ballytaylor site should provide further such opportunities in the future as the search area is extended and more information obtained.

The NIEA may wish to consider a small-scale geophysical survey of the Ballytaylor site, particularly where concentrations of flints and pottery have been identified, in order to locate any sub-surface prehistoric occupation sites. The NIEA may also wish to consider a small-scale geophysical investigation in the area of the circular scatter of chalk fragments referred to in Section 4.2 above, in order to locate any possible sub-surface evidence of prehistoric burials.

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## APPENDIX

## PHOTOGRAPH RECORD FORM

**Site:** Ballytaylor, County Antrim

**Date:** 8 March 2014

**Make and model of camera...***Ricoh Caplio 500G wide*

Film no.	B/W Print	Colour print	Colour slide	Digital image (m.pixels)
				8

Frame no	Direction viewed from	Details
RIMG0001	West	Field boundary between Fields 22 and 23
RIMG0002	South	UAS Survey Group setting out Grid A
RIMG0003	South-east	Surface artefact collection in progress
RIMG0004	South	UAS and YAC teams at work
RIMG0005	South	UAS and YAC teams at work
RIMG0006	East	View from top of field 23
RIMG0007	South-east	View from top of field 23
RIMG0008	South	View from top of field 23
DSC0303	South-east	UAS Survey Group in action
DSC0304	South-east	UAS Survey Group in action
DSC0305	South-east	UAS Survey Group in action
DSC0306		Flint arrowhead recovered from Grid A
DSC0306		Flint arrowhead recovered from Grid A
DSC0310	South-east	Chalk scatter adjacent to survey site