



Monitoring Report No. 31

**17 Lisnamurrigan Road
Caherty
Co. Antrim**

AE/05/144

Cormac McSparron

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 17 Lisnamurrigan Rd, Ballymena

Townland: Caherty

SMR No: on site of ANT 33:039

Grid Ref: 9545 8410

County: Antrim

Excavation License No: AE / 05 / 144

Planning Ref / No.: G/2004/1004/F

Dates of Monitoring: 11 November 2005

Archaeologist Present: Cormac McSparron, Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, QUB.

Brief Summary: Evaluation of building site carried out by the re-stripping of the already excavated house footprint.

Type of monitoring: Excavation by mechanical digger under supervision of archaeologists.

Size of area opened: House platform 14m by 10m.

Current Land Use: The land has in recent years been used as a parking area for 17 Lisnamurrigan Road

Intended Land Use: Single residence



Figure 1: General location of site

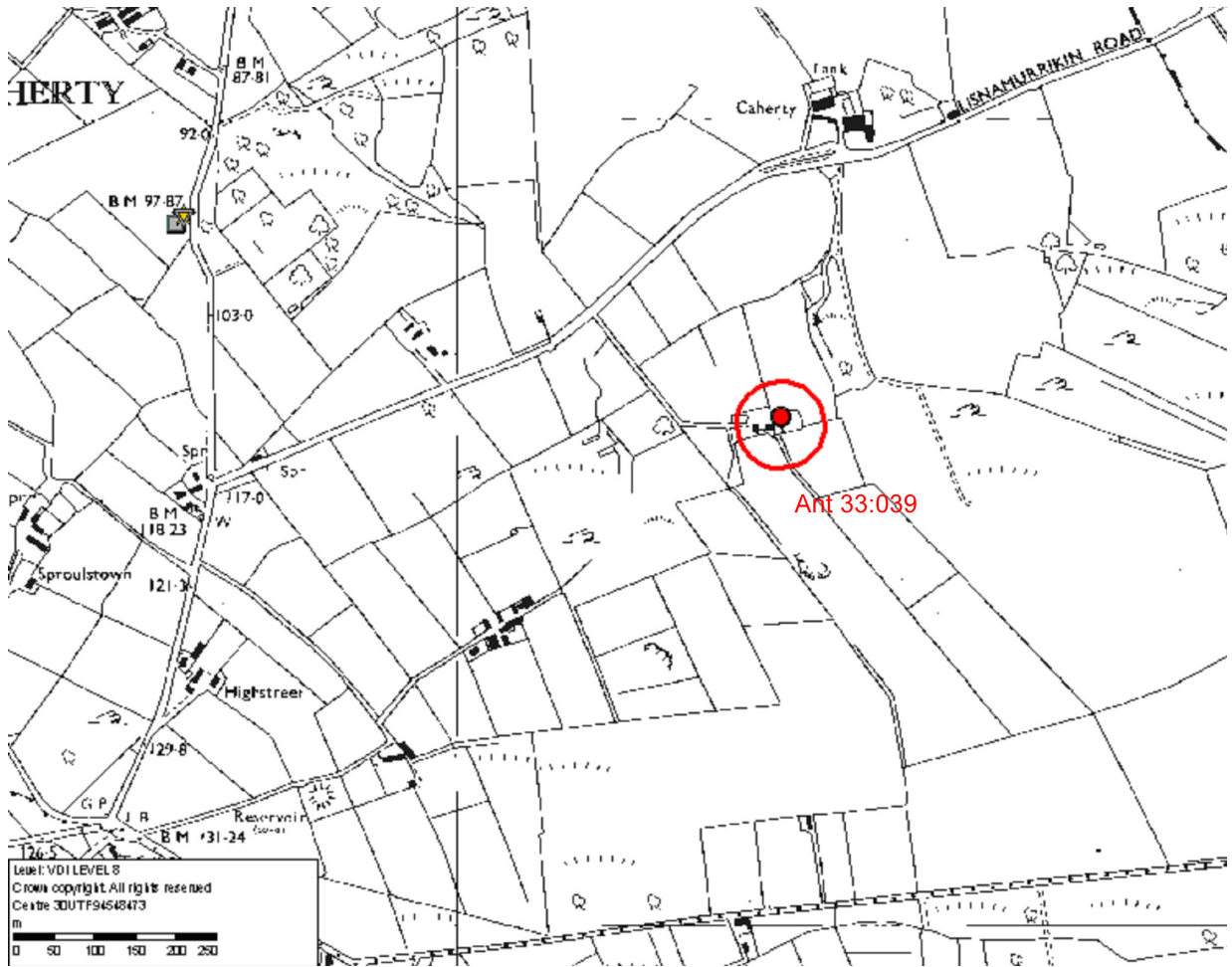


Figure 2: Map showing development site and location of enclosure Ant 33:039

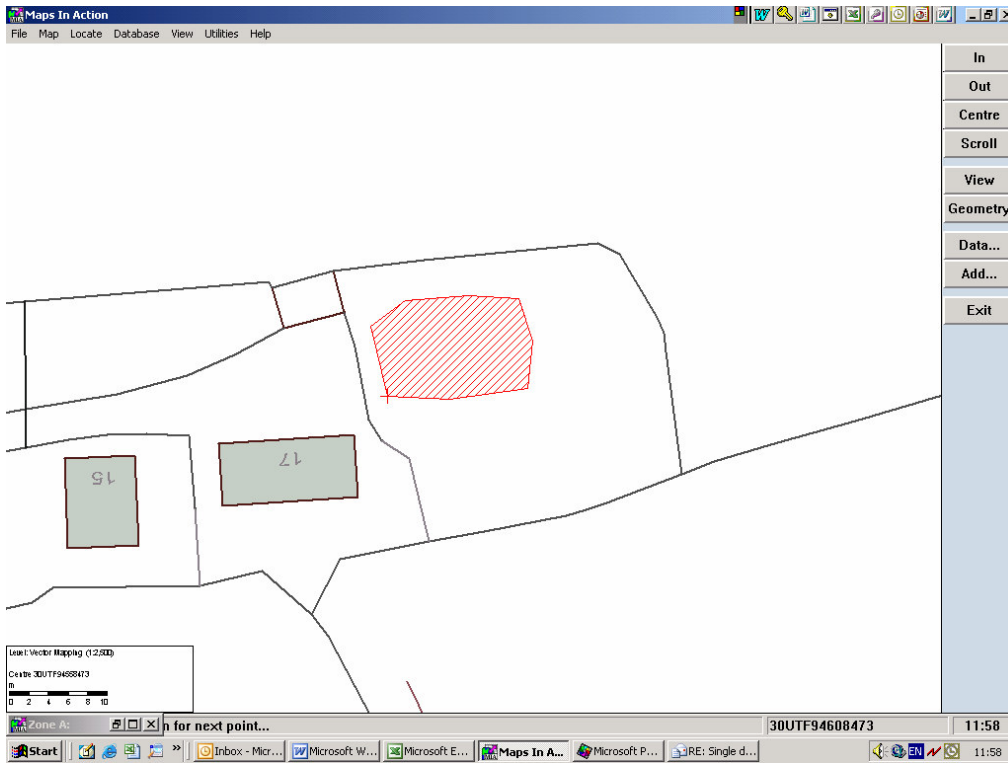


Figure 3 (a): Plan of development site, supplied by Andrew Gault, showing proposed location of development site (hatched in red)

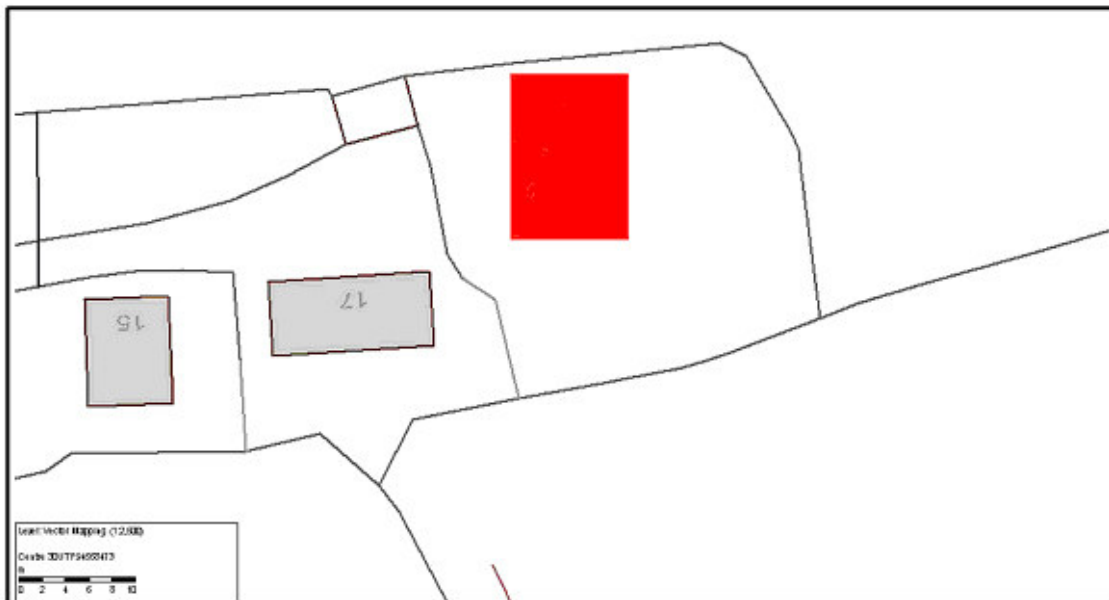


Figure 3: Plan of development site showing development area, pegged out by developer, that was re-stripped under archaeological supervision (coloured red).

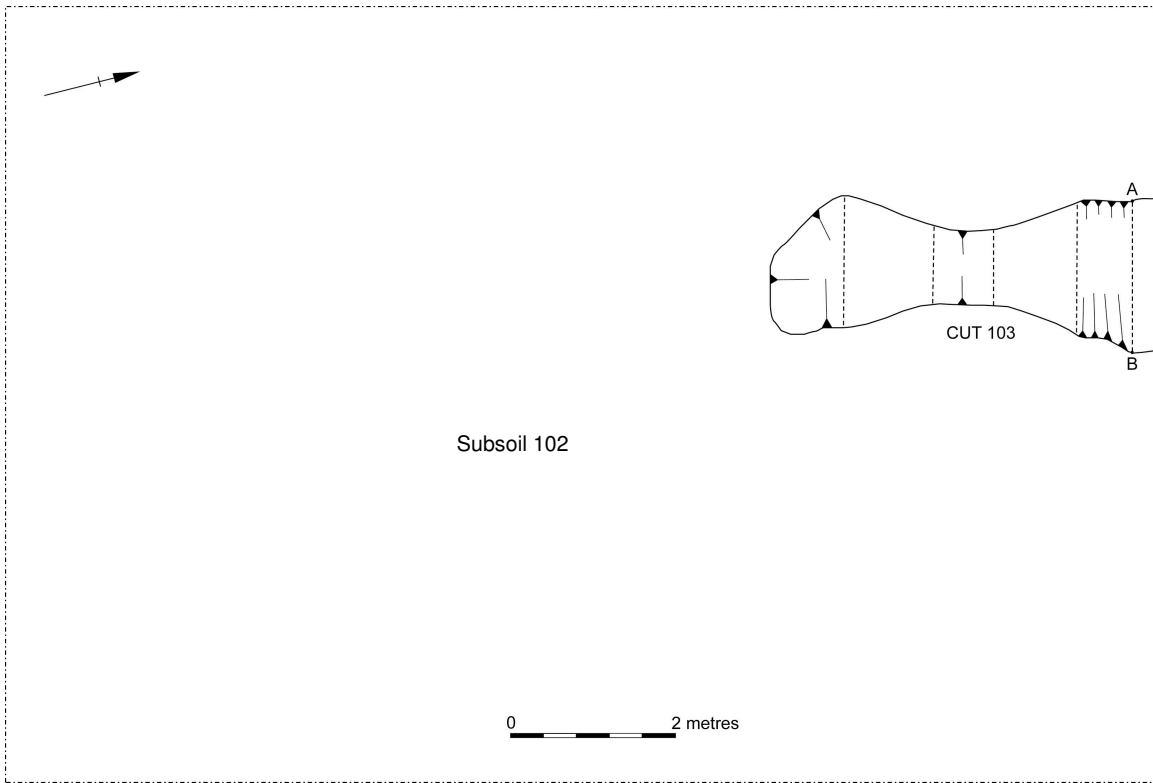


Figure 4: Plan of area re-stripped showing location of cut (Context 103)

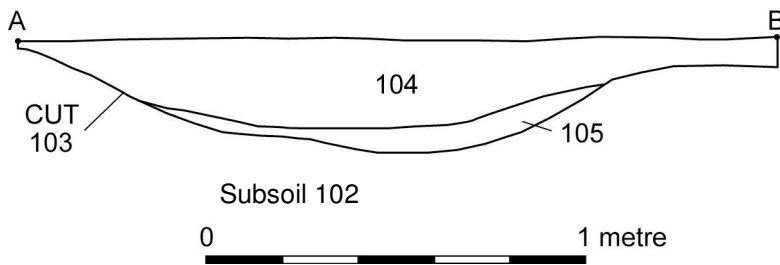


Figure 5: Section of cut (Context 103)

Brief account of the monitoring.

This site was located at 17 Lisnamurrigan Road, Caherty, Ballymena, within a possible enclosure (ANT 33:039) recorded on the 1st edition OS map. The topsoil had already been stripped to subsoil, without archaeological supervision, prior to this evaluation. There had also been considerable leveling carried out with, according to the developer, "40 loads of earth" having been removed from the site. In addition the leveled ground surface had building waste and some demolition rubble pressed into it before being covered with garden soil and a deliberate asphalt type surface.

The development site, which measured 14m by 10m, was re-stripped by the developer, under archaeological supervision, using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless "sheugh" bucket. The intention was to leave a clean subsoil surface in which archaeological remains might be visible (Figures 1 – 5).

Because of the amount of material that had been pressed into the top of the subsoil it was difficult to achieve a uniformly clean subsoil surface over the whole site without reducing the level of the subsoil so far that it would have destroyed the possibility of finding any surviving archaeology. Nevertheless it was possible to leave the surface sufficiently clean to identify if there were any archaeological features present.

Over most of the development site the yellow-orange sandy clay subsoil (Context 102) was found immediately beneath the mixed loam and rubble topsoil (Context 101). In the north-west corner of the development area there was a, subsoil cutting, linear depression (Context 103) which measured approximately 5m long (north-south) by 1.5m (east-west) at its widest. It varied from about 5cm to 35 cm in depth. It had two fills, a mid brown soft loam upper fill (Context 104), which was up to about 25cm thick, and a dark grey brown basal fill (Context 105), which was up to about 10cm thick, and which contained within it many medium sized stones up to about 10cm in diameter. It seems likely that it was a drain. The upper fill (Context 104) contained two fragments of struck flint and some relatively modern porcelain pottery with Chinese style decoration. The basal fill (Context 105) also contained fragments of the same modern Chinese style porcelain, suggesting that the drain dated to the late 19th or 20th centuries.

Conclusions

No archaeological features were found after this development site was re-stripped. It is possible that there were archaeological features on the site before the development but that the topsoil stripping had destroyed them. However it is likely that prior development at the site in the 19th and 20th centuries had already destroyed any archaeological remains. Two struck flint flakes were discovered in the modern drain uncovered during the evaluation, however stray finds of struck flints are common in County Antrim and they, of themselves, are of little archaeological significance.



Photo 1: Re-stripped development site from north-east



Photo 2: Photo of 19th / 20th century possible drain under excavation

Archive:

(List any records from the monitoring e.g. finds, photos and plans and state where they are currently available for inspection.)

Finds: N/A

Photographs: Digital Photographs currently at CAF

Plans / Drawings: One digitized plan currently at CAF

Signed: _____

Date: _____