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M1 DUNDALK WESTERN BYPASS

SITE 105: DONAGHMORE 2 & 3
CHAINAGE 18.080
NGR: 302477/305768

FINAL REPORT

ON BEHALF OF
LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL and the
NATIONAL ROADS AUTHORITY

LICENSEE: BRIAN Ó DONNCHADHA
LICENCE NUMBER: 03E062

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IAC Irish Archaeological
Consultancy

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. (IAC), funded by Louth County Council and the National Roads Authority, undertook an excavation in the townland of Donaghmore, c. 4km to the west of Dundalk in advance of the construction of the Dundalk Western Bypass (DWB). Excavations were undertaken to ensure all subsoil archaeological remains were preserved by record in advance of groundwork.

The archaeological excavations followed a detailed programme of archaeological test trenching carried out by IAC Ltd in order to define the location, nature and extent of previously unidentified archaeological remains along the route of the Dundalk Western Bypass. Site 105, at Donaghmore 2 & 3 was identified during archaeological test-trenching, revealing the remains of a farmyard

Resolution excavation of Site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3, was completed at Chainage 18.080 (NGR 30203/30722). The excavation commenced on 15th January 2003 and was completed on 31st January 2003 using a team of approximately five field archaeologists, directed by Brian Ó'Donnchadha under Licence Ref.:03E0062.

The site overlooks the low-lying valley that contains the Ramparts River and a small area of wetland at c. 14m OD. The surrounding landscape is well-drained and sheltered by the surrounding ridges and as such it would have served as an ideal settlement location.

The Ordnance Survey map editions illustrate that the buildings in question were present until at least 1939, albeit derelict/unroofed. Subsequent to this period, the structures were fully demolished and the site was robbed of stone. The partial remains of a wall are the only upstanding remains of the buildings which once stood on the site. No finds of archaeological significance were found and there was no suitable material for specialist analysis during the course of the excavation. Consequently, no evidence for any activities, other than domestic post-medieval occupation of the 19th century was discovered.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report refers to an excavation carried out at Site 105, Donaghmore 2/3 in the townland of Donaghmore located c. 2.5km to the west of Dundalk, Co. Louth. It was carried out as part of an archaeological mitigation programme designed to offset adverse impacts on the archaeological heritage of sites identified in advance of the construction of the Dundalk Western Bypass (DWB). All archaeological fieldwork was directed by Brian Ó Donnchadha of Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. (IAC) and was funded by Louth County Council and the National Roads Authority.

1.1 Site location

Site 105 Donaghmore 2 & 3 is located in Donaghmore townland, c. 4km west of Dundalk (OS sheet number 7, Figure 1). The site is:

- Site 105, Excavation Licence 03E0062, route Chainage (Ch) 18.080 and centred on NGR 30203/30722.

The site was identified as a result of archaeological test trenching undertaken by IAC in March 2002, in addition to intensive background research of early Ordnance Survey maps, which identified possible late 18th/early 19th dwellings on site. The area comprised of an undulating landscape with the sites primarily focused in a low-lying valley between two ridges running in an east-west direction through the landscape.

1.2 The scope of the project

General

Louth County Council proposed to construct a motorway called the 'Dundalk Western Bypass – Northern Link'. The scheme also included ancillary roads and other structures.

The Dundalk Western Bypass – Northern Link connects the existing Dunleer-Dundalk Motorway, which terminates in the area of the N52 Ardee Road, to the N1 Ballymascanlan Roundabout in an arc situated c. 2.5km - 3km to the west and north of Dundalk.

The scheme was divided into two sections. Section 1 (7.8km main centre line chainage (Ch) ran from Ch16.000 to Ch23.870 (the Armagh Road, R177). Work on the southern end of Section 1 was previously commenced so that the main cutting and rough surfacing for the road had been completed to chainage point Ch17.100. The chainage zone Ch16.000 – 17.100 had therefore not been investigated archaeologically under the present contract. Section 2 (2.08km main centre line chainage) ran from the Armagh Road Ch23.870 to the Ballymascanlan Roundabout, Ch25.950.

Therefore the archaeological potential of the route represented a distance of 8.49km (Ch17.100 – 25.950). The route corridor varied between 60m and 200m (not including side roads) and was on average 100m wide. The archaeological site area was thus approximately 85 hectares.

Specific

Three excavations were undertaken in the townland, spread out over a distance of 700m, with a distance of 300m between Donaghmore 8 and 9, while Donaghmore

2&3 were located 400m to the south of Donaghmore 8 (Figure 6). This report deals with Donaghmore 2 & 3.

Background historical research undertaken as part of the EIS (Valerie J. Keeley Ltd, 2002) and this identified a site listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP LH007-062) namely, a ring ditch c. 30m to the west of the fence line at Ch17.640 (Figure 2) within the townland of Donaghmore

An area of 60m x 50m investigated during the archaeological resolution. Site 105, at Donaghmore 2 & 3 was identified during archaeological test-trenching, revealing the remains of a farmyard. Subsequent to this period, the structures were fully demolished and the site was robbed of stone. The partial remains of a wall are the only upstanding remains of the buildings which once stood on the site. No finds of archaeological significance were discovered and no suitable material was identified for specialist analysis during the course of the excavation. Consequently, the excavation revealed domestic post-medieval occupation of the 19th century exclusively.

1.3 Circumstances and dates of fieldwork

The excavation was undertaken to offset the adverse impact of road construction on known and potential subsoil archaeological remains in order to preserve these sites by record.

Topsoil stripping of the area commenced on Wednesday the 15th of January and was completed by Friday the 31st of January. Work was carried out by a team of one Site Supervisor and four Archaeological Assistants.

All features were excavated using the single context system of recording with plans and sections being produced at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10 where necessary. All features were fully excavated by hand with topsoil stripping being carried out by a machine fitted with a toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Following excavation, the area was cleaned down, photographed and planned at a scale of 1:20. All works were carried out in agreement with the Project Archaeologist and the National Monuments Section of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Samples of wood were taken for specialist charcoal analysis.

It was agreed in advance that adequate funds to cover excavation, post-excavation and any conservation and dating analysis would be made available by the developer. Typically dating would involve pottery dating through typological analysis and radiocarbon analysis.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following archaeological and historical background refers to the wider archaeological landscape through which the DWB passes.

The town of Dundalk lies at the northern end of Dundalk Bay and is the administrative centre of County Louth, located in north east Leinster. The area spans two geographical areas. To the west the rural landscape surrounding the urban district consists of undulating topography, with low drumlins rising to 30-40m from the coastal plain. As is the case with much of Louth, this covers thick strata of Ordovician and Silurian slates, with some rock outcrops notable (Gosling 1993, 237). To the east of the urban district, the flat, low lying coastal plain comprises of recent estuarine and alluvial clays and silts, shaped by the sea level changes following the end of the last Ice Age period in Ireland c. 10000 years ago.

At the time of the earliest habitation in Ireland, the Early Mesolithic period: (c. 7000BC), the sea submerged the area of the town to a depth of 4-5m, although it continued to retreat to its present level until the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Period (c. 2500BC), replacing the submerged area with salt marshes and tidal flats. At various stages from the 17th century onwards, these areas were improved by reclamation projects.

The proposed route for the Dundalk Western Bypass–Northern Link is located within an area that avoids the major recorded archaeological monuments in the vicinity. This is a particularly rich archaeological landscape but the great majority of known sites lie beyond the perimeter of the original study area. It is important to note, however, that a significant number of sites in this part of County Louth survive as crop marks, where the above ground indication of the monument has been destroyed. The recognition of such monuments has often been the result of chance discovery from ploughing and construction work, or by observation from the air where the distinctive traces of the buried features can sometimes be observed. The strong tradition of arable agriculture in the locality has been largely responsible for this occurrence.

2.1 Prehistoric Period (7000BC-AD400)

The archaeological record provides evidence that the locality was occupied from the Late Mesolithic period (c. 4200BC) onwards, with the excavation of Mesolithic shell midden sites with flint material at Rockmarshall, (O Sullivan 2002, 10-11) c. 5km northeast of the town of Dundalk.

Although we can say with confidence that substantial Neolithic activity is evidenced by the archaeological record from c. 4000BC onwards, which had many similar features with contemporary sites in Britain and near Europe, uncertainty still remains concerning the circumstances of the arrival of Neolithic customs and traditions within Ireland and how the new economy altered the environment.

2.1.1 Neolithic Period (c. 4000BC – c. 2500BC)

The origins of Neolithic activity in Ireland are disputed. Pollen records reveal forest clearances occurring before our earliest dated Neolithic sites or monuments; however this may be a reflection of some modern dating methods being too crude to discriminate between early and late Neolithic settlement rather than an indication of the true chronology (Mitchell & Ryan 1997). A debate ensues over whether the culture evident in Ireland during the Neolithic was a product of a migrating people into Ireland or an indigenous development from Mesolithic populations. The introduction

of certain flora and fauna species, landscape management techniques, traits in architectural construction and domestic crafts, bearing with a striking resemblance to contemporary evidence in Britain has led some authors to suggest colonisation from outside of Ireland Mitchell & Ryan (1997). Recent studies (Cooney 2000, 13) have suggested that a combination of small-scale movement across the Irish Sea by migrating communities and developments within the existing Mesolithic populations within Ireland resulted in the innovative beginnings of this era.

The vast majority of the archaeological evidence for this period is to be found at the 4-5m (25ft) contour, which reflects the coastline during the maximum post-glacial marine transgression, and it has been suggested that this settlement location would have facilitated the exploitation of the higher ground for farming and the lower ground for summer grazing (Gosling 1993, 242). There is a concentration of megalithic tombs in the Flurry valley to the northeast of the site at Donaghmore 2/3 (with the nearest example located at Faughart lower (LH004-062), c. 2 km to the N) and the remainder scattered throughout the Cooley peninsula. Archaeological discoveries elsewhere on the DWB scheme revealed settlement evidence from the Neolithic period, with a the truncated remains of a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age house identified at Site 101, Littlemill 1 (O'Donnchadha forthcoming (d)), located c. 0.5km to the south of Site 105 (Donaghmore 2 & 3.)

Other Neolithic activity identified as part of the Dundalk Western Bypass consisted of Neolithic occupation at Site 120, Fort Hill (Bayley, 2002 Licence Ref., 02E1326), Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age hearths and pits at Site 113, Newtownbalregan 5 (Bayley forthcoming (c)), a possible structure at Site 108 Donaghmore 1 (Ó Donnchadha forthcoming (e)) and a collection of pits possibly Neolithic/Early Bronze Age in dating at Site 103, Littlemill 4/5. (Ó Donnchadha (c)).

2.1.2 The Bronze Age Period (c. 2500BC – c. 500BC)

Bronze Age discoveries along the DWB consist of an Early Bronze Age Beaker (c. 2500BC - c. 2200BC) habitation site at Site 112, Newtownbalregan 2 (Bayley forthcoming (e)), located c. 2km north of site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3. A number of Bronze Age ring-barrows, a cist and a cairn were excavated at Site 127, Carn More 5 (Bayley, D. forthcoming (g)), located c. 5.5km northeast of Site 105.

Burnt mounds or *fulachta fiadh* are the most prevalent prehistoric monument in Ireland (Waddell, 1998, 174), with over 4500 burnt mounds recorded to date. The quantity of this site type is ever increasing as a result in most instances of development led archaeological investigations. In some cases burnt mounds or *fulachta fiadh* can occur in clusters, with a complex of 18 previously unrecorded sites excavated in 2001 on the N11 Newtownmountkennedy to Ballynabarney road scheme by Archaeological Development Services Ltd (ADS Ltd 2001) in Co. Wicklow. In County Louth, there are 18 recorded burnt mounds/*fulacht fiadh* noted in the Records of Monuments and Places, a figure which must be regarded as a minimum representative of the original number (Buckley & Sweetman, 1991).

This is further supported by the discovery of 4 burnt mounds/*fulachta fiadh* as part of the DWB scheme at Site 111, Newtownbalregan 1.1, located 2.3km to the south, Site 113, Newtownbalregan 5 located 3km to the south and at Site 128, Faughart 1, 2 and 3 located 6.5km northeast of Site 118, Donaghmore 2 & 3 and at Site 102 at Littlemill 2, however the example at Site 102, Littlemill 2, located 0.5km south of Site 105 proved to be Early Medieval in dating (Cal 890-1250AD; Donnachada, forthcoming (f)). A further 6 burnt mounds/*fulachta fiadh* were excavated by Archaeological Development Services Ltd (ADS Ltd.) as part of the archaeological resolution of the Dunleer/Dundalk Motorway.

2.1.3 The Iron Age Period (c. 500BC –c. 500AD)

There is a marked lack of known Iron Age (c. 500BC -c. 500AD) activity within the surrounding area. The ring barrow identified at Site 131, Donaghmore 7 (Ó Donnachada 2002, forthcoming (g)) is the sole example of a definitive Iron Age site identified through the DWB archaeological investigations. The site is located 1.4km to the north and consists of a small ring barrow and a single piece of unworked flint was found in the barrow with remains of three charred wooden planks found within the barrow ditch. These were taken for specialist analysis and were submitted for Carbon 14 dating (WK 18564). The dates returned confirmed that the ring barrow belongs to the Iron Age period, specifically the mid-Iron Age based on Cal 120BC-60AD.

2.2 Early Medieval Period (AD400-1169)

The Early Medieval period is depicted in the surviving sources as entirely rural characterised by the basic territorial unit known as *túath*. Byrne (1973) estimates that there were probably at least one hundred and fifty kings in Ireland at any given time during this period, each ruling over his own *túath*. During this sometimes violent period, roughly circular defensive enclosures known as ringforts were constructed to protect farmsteads. Although most of the ringforts that have been excavated are shown to date to this period, some have earlier origins and may have been originally constructed during the Iron Age, or even earlier.

The ringfort or rath is considered to be the most common indicator of settlement during the early medieval period (c. 400AD – c. 1100 AD). The most recent study of the ringfort (Stout 2000) has suggested that there are a total of 45,119 potential ringforts or enclosure sites throughout Ireland. They are typically enclosed by an earthen bank and exterior ditch, and range from 25m to 50m in diameter. The smaller sized and single banked type (univallate) were more likely to be home to the lower ranks of society while larger examples with more than one bank (bivallate/trivallate) housed the more powerful kings and lords. A previously unrecorded souterrain was identified at Site 114, Newtownbalregan 6 (Bayley 2003, forthcoming (d)) located c. 5km to the N of site 105, Donaghmore 2/3. Located in the interior of the extensive souterrain, a capstone decorated with Megalithic and possible Iron Age carvings was identified demonstrating the reuse of materials within the area. At Site 124, Carn More 1 (Delaney forthcoming (b)), a ringfort was identified in Area 1 and is listed in the Records of Monuments and Places as LH004-067 was excavated in advance of the motorway's construction. The site was originally listed as a circular enclosure.

Early Medieval activity was also identified at Site 109, Donaghmore 6 located 1.6km to the north, where two pits were identified (O'Donnchadha forthcoming (a)) and at Site 110, Donaghmore 5 (O'Donnchadha forthcoming (b)), located 1.7km to the north where two pits were identified in addition to the discovery of copper alloy fragment and a blue glass bead, which supports Early Medieval dating.

Souterrains are artificial underground structures, usually built of dry stone walling and comprising of passages and chambers with creeps connecting them. Souterrains are generally regarded as having had a defensive or protective function, as evidenced by the complex construction of many of the sites, with narrow winding passages, deliberate obstructions and small chambers. Raiding was endemic to Early Medieval society, and souterrains are thought to have served to house portable valuables and non-combatants during a raid. There is a previously recorded souterrain located 30m to the E of the CPO line at Ch17.640 (LH007-071), in Littlemill townland. A further two enclosures with associated souterrains were also excavated by Archaeological Development Services Ltd (ADS Ltd) in advance of the construction of the Dunleer/Dundalk Motorway.

The *fulacht fiadh* identified at Site 102, Littlemill 2 (Ó Donnachada, forthcoming (f)), located 0.5km to the north of Site 105 and was Carbon 14 dated to Cal 890AD - 1250AD (968 +/- 85BP). Site 102, Littlemill 2 is roughly circular in shape and it is suggested that these sites which are identified as early medieval and medieval in date, tend to be circular to oval in shape with no evidence for pit lining (O'Neill, pers.comm, 2007).

The historical sources for the early medieval period indicate that the main population group in north Louth was the *Conaille Muirtheimne*. They controlled the areas of *Cuailgne* (Cooley) and *Mag Muirtheimne* (Plain of Muirtheimne) –corresponding to the area S of Dundalk, roughly equating with the modern baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk. It has been suggested (Gosling 1993, 46) that the ancient boundaries of this kingdom may coincide with the dense concentration of souterrains in north Louth. Though nominally a branch of the *Ulaid*, who had their capital at *Eamain Mhaca* or Navan Fort, Armagh; the *Conaille Muirtheimne* appear to have been subject to the kingdom of *Brega*, which had its capital at *Cnógbha* or Knowth in Co. Meath at the time of its greatest political cohesion, during the first half of the 7th century AD. Their earliest appearance in the annals is in 688 AD, as allies of the Knowth branch of the *Síl nÁeda Sláine* at the battle of *Imblech Pich* (Emlagh, Co. Meath), which was a key event in the political fragmentation of the *Síl nÁeda Sláine* dynasty. They were subsumed by the *Airgialla* or Oriel in the early 12th century.

2.3 Medieval Period (AD1169-1600)

The motte and bailey at Castletown (LH007-11807) located c. 3km east of Donaghmore 2/3, represents the initial phase of Anglo-Norman activity in the area. Although there are some suggestions that John de Courcy was responsible for this development, it is generally accepted that it represents the initial headquarters of the de Verdon family in their new territory. The Anglo-Normans were responsible for the construction of a network of towns throughout Ireland, with Louth being the most urbanised county.

The land in Castletown and Dundalk environs was granted to the Anglo-Norman Bertram de Verdon following his arrival in 1185 and corresponds to the modern barony of Upper Dundalk (Gosling, 1993, 252). The de Verdon estate passed onto the Bellew's with many of tower houses constructed at this time. The Bellew's contributed two large examples in 1472 and 1479, of which only the later survives in the grounds of St. Louis convent (LH007-11801). The earlier tower house is known to have stood at Castletown cross (LH007-11803), but no traces of the tower house survive above ground. In 1429, Henry IV introduced a £10 subsidy to encourage the King's 'liege men' to build tower houses in the Pale, under the condition that they were built within ten years. This venture was so successful that twenty years later a limit was imposed on their construction. In Counties Louth, Kildare and Meath, the towers were mostly concentrated along the borders of the Pale (Davin 1982). The surviving tower house at Castletown (LH007-11801), most likely functioned as the centre of the Bellew manor of Dundalk during the 15th century. Garstin's map of 1655 shows it protected by a bawn wall, which also enclosed outhouses.

For information of the Anglo-Norman land ownership we are reliant on documentary sources, and in Louth this is recorded in the 'Dowdall deeds'. The lack of documentary sources and archaeological excavation in the area has led to gaps in the record regarding the size of the Anglo-Norman settlement and how it was laid out. By the 13th century it seems that Castletown had its own church and burgesses. Garstin's map does point out the existence of burgage plots and streets in the vicinity of Mill road and Castletown cross. A watermill, most likely attached to the manor, is known from documentary sources although its precise location is not known.

At this time the new town of Dundalk, which lies c. 2km to the east of Castletown, developed as the major urban centre. This was due to its market centre and port in addition to its more strategic siting on the major routeway linking Dublin with Ulster. It is probable that another factor influencing the move of the de Verdons was the nature of the topography of the general area. The unsatisfactory nature of the river at the Castletown location must have made it inaccessible to shipping even in the late 12th century. The new town also had the advantage of considerable natural defences. The site of the new town was thus better situated than Castletown from a commercial and defensive perspective. As Dundalk developed and became the focus for Anglo-Norman settlement in the area, Castletown fell into decline and Dundalk became the economic heart of the Lordship. The precise date for the foundation of the "Newtown" of Dundalk is unclear. However, by the late 13th century surviving property deeds make the distinction between the late 12th century settlement at Castletown and the Newtown or '*nove ville de Dundalc*'.

As a result of the low-lying nature of the surrounding landscape and the form of the gravel ridge on which the Newtown (Dundalk) was located, the town developed a markedly linear aspect, which is still apparent today.

2.4 Post-Medieval Period (1600-1900)

Post-medieval remains identified in the study area relate to industrial structures particularly mills and kilns using the Castletown and Kilcurry River waters, with these structures usually being fed by a mill race. Two mills and associated races occur near to the Castletown-Kilcurry river confluence. There was also a mill race and mill located c. 75m to the south southwest of Donaghmore 2 & 3. This complex went out of use during the early 20th century, but it is possible that the post medieval structure found at Donaghmore 2 & 3 was part of a complex that may have been related to milling activity in the area. The following cartographic analysis helps to illustrate the development of this site.

Taylor and Skinner's Map of County Louth, 1783 (not illustrated)

This is the earliest map of any detail that shows the area containing Donaghmore 2 & 3. The Ramparts River is clearly marked, however there are no buildings marked in the location of Donaghmore 2 & 3. To the northwest of the approximate location of Site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3 a structure, possibly a mill is indicated suggesting that the river was suitable to support the milling industry. A circular enclosure is depicted to the east of this rectangular shaped structure and this may possibly correlate to LH006-037 the cist in Tankardsrock or LH007-030 the ringfort also in Tankardsrock.

First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1835, scale 1:10,560 (Figure 3)

This map dating to 1835 contains the first detailed portrayal of the townland of Donaghmore and the building complex in which the structure has been identified at Donaghmore 2 & 3. The complex of buildings resembles a small farmstead, and there are four buildings three of which are smaller rectangular shaped buildings and the fourth is a larger "L" shaped structure. Three of the structures appear to be aligned on a north west – south east axis and the fourth aligned south west south west south –east north east. Comparative analysis between the remains identified on the ground at Site 105 Donaghmore 2/3 and the structures identified through cartographic analysis suggest that the remains are not part of any building but more likely to be part of the yard wall that encloses the site. A laneway extends roughly south from the Carrickmacross Road (the present day R178) and turns east into the southwest extent of the mill complex. The Ramparts River is marked to the south of the site, and a Corn Mill and kiln are marked on the southern bank of this river, c. 75m to the south of the site. This mill has an associated mill race and is located

within the townland of Littlemill and the townland name is possibly derived from this mill site.

Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1863, scale 1:10560 (Figure 4)

On the Second edition mapping dating to 1863, the footprint of the building complex is unchanged; however, the surrounding landscape has now been divided into smaller fields. The laneway depicted on the first edition mapping is still present; however it is truncated by the insertion of the Dundalk and Enniskillen Railway to the north, with the lane running parallel to the southern side of the railway track. The lane is also extended south providing access to the complex in the townland of Littlemill on the southern bank of the Ramparts River. The buildings within the mill complex are depicted as being more substantial on this edition in comparison with the first edition. A new laneway is depicted on this map edition which provides access to the southeast extent of the complex from the east side of the Carrickmacross Road, where it extends in a general southeast direction from the road passing under the Dundalk and Enniskillen Railway, which extends west from Dundalk town.

Ordnance Survey Map, 1908, scale 1:2500 (not illustrated)

This map, due to the scale, gives a detailed view of the complex of buildings containing Donaghmore 2 & 3. There are four buildings marked, two of which are small square buildings, which may be sheds. The two main rectangular buildings that have been present since the first edition map are still marked as present, as is the enclosing wall of the yard. The mill complex is still located to the south as on previous editions.

Ordnance Survey Map, 1939, scale 1:2500 (Figure 5)

By the time of this edition the complex of buildings are marked as derelict and unused as they are not shaded in. Figure 5 highlights the area within the complex that was identified during excavation of Site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3. The footprint of the structures has not changed and there is no marked access to the site now. The laneways have fallen into disuse and have been incorporated into the existing field boundaries.

3 THE EXCAVATION

3.1 Introduction

The excavation of site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3 was undertaken as part of the archaeological mitigation for the DWB in the townland of Donaghmore. Hand excavations began on the 15th January and were completed on Friday the 31st of January 2003. The following consists of a summary of the archaeological material and sequence as identified through the excavations.

3.2 Methodology

Topsoil stripping of the area commenced on 15th January 2003 and the fieldwork in the areas below was completed on 31st of January, using a team of one Supervisor and four Assistant Archaeologists.

The topsoil was removed by a machine equipped with a flat toothless bucket under strict archaeological supervision. After initial bulk stripping the area of excavation was hand cleaned in order to identify potential archaeological remains. All features were subsequently fully excavated and recorded by hand, using the single context recording system with plans and sections being produced at a scale of 1:50 and 1:20 (sections were recorded generally at 1:10) and photographs where necessary. All works were carried out in agreement with the Project Archaeologist and the National Monuments Section of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG). All contexts are described in Appendix 1.

3.3 Legends and Brackets

In the following text, the authors have used three types of brackets:

- { } = These enclose Subgroup numbers.
- () = These enclose Deposit numbers.
- [] = These enclose both Cut and Masonry Structure numbers.

CONTEXT KEY;

- prof = profile
- NSEW = Compass points, Eg: 'N-S' = North-South oriented feature
- All dimensions are given in metres
- d/l/w = depth/width/length
- s/m/lg = small/medium/large
- ang/sub-ang/rou/sub-rou = refer to stones, Eg: 's sub-ang' = small sub-angular stone
- mixed = ang + sub-ang + rou + sub-rou
- Dk/Lt = dark/light
- mod = moderate/moderately
- freq/occ = frequent/occasional
- ch = charcoal
- Hb/Ht = Human bone/teeth
- Ab/At = Animal bone/teeth
- frags/fls = fragments/flecks
- vert = vertical
- constr = construction
- sk = skeleton
- t'd/unx/s'd = truncated/unexcavated/segmented
- w/- = with
- pres = preservation

PERIOD KEY:

- PH: Prehistoric
- EM: Early Medieval
- MD: Medieval
- PM: Post-medieval
- MOD: Modern

4 EXCAVATION RESULTS

4.1 GROUP 1: The Natural Drift Geology

4.1.1 SUBGROUP {1000}: Natural drift geology

C	Area	Fill of	Filled by	Interpretation	Description
2	Site	N/A	N/A	Natural	Compact yellow-grey sandy clay with frequent decayed stone inclusions

INTERPRETATION:

Natural drift geology into which was cut the features on site at c. 14m OD.

DISCUSSION: Natural Drift Geology

The site of Donaghmore 2 & 3 overlooks the low-lying valley that contains the Ramparts River and a small wetland area. The Ramparts River valley extends east from the direction of Carrickmacross towards the town of Dundalk. The landscape is well drained and sheltered by the surrounding ridges and is therefore an ideal settlement location, suited to agricultural practice as is evidenced by the numerous farm cottages indicated on the Ordnance Survey editions for the area.

4.2 GROUP 2: The wall foundation, Farmyard

4.2.1 SUBGROUP {1002}: Foundation of wall

CONTEXTS:

C	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Interpretation	Description	Area (E/N)
3	Fill	4	N/A	Spread	Dark brown clayey silt with building rubble and post medieval/modern pottery 8.84L x 7.10W	D.2+3
4	Cut	N/A	3	Cut filled by 5	Linear foundation cut 3.20L x 0.45W	D.2+3
5	wall	4	N/A	Fill of foundation [4]	Remnants of stone wall/foundation wall at east end of site, 3L x 0.4W	D.2+3

FINDS:

None

INTERPRETATION:

The wall foundation [4] is the only feature on the site. It was filled by building rubble (3) and the remnants of a stone wall (5) (Plate 2). (3) consisted of a thin spread of building rubble and modern pottery, which may be the remains of dumping material into the farmyard. The pottery dated the remains to the post-medieval period, which is confirmed through cartographic analysis. The “pit” that was discovered during testing was shown to be an outlying layer of building rubble that comprised mostly of slate roofing material. Local tradition states a priest lived within one of the houses in the complex, which dates from at least 1835. The complex of buildings may have been associated with the mill to the south within Littlemill townland, and is marked as derelict by the time of the 1939 Ordnance Survey map (1:2, 500 scale). It is probable that the remaining buildings were demolished and all the stone, including foundation stone was removed, or scattered with only a small portion of yard wall remaining.

GROUP 2 DISCUSSION: Wall Foundation, Farmyard

Group	Subgroup	Subgroup type	Period by finds/stratigraphy	Period by interpretation	Group Interpretation
2	1002	Wall foundation	PM	PM	Post Medieval Activity

Group 2 consists only of {1002}, which is formed by the remains of a wall and associated spread. Cartographic analysis has shown that this wall is likely to be the remains of an enclosing farmyard wall, which surrounded a complex of four buildings. No other remains were present on site of the associated structures. It is likely that when the buildings were demolished the stone was removed or scattered down slope (to the south), to the northern bank of the Rampart River. The wall and buildings are present on the first edition OS map of 1835 and are marked as derelict by the time of the 1:2, 500 scale map edition of 1939.

4.3 GROUP 3: Topsoil

4.3.1 SUBGROUP {1003}: Topsoil

C	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Interpretation	Description	Area (E/N)
1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Topsoil	Dark brown clayey silt with building rubble and post medieval/modern pottery 8.84L x 7.10W	D.2+3

INTERPRETATION:

Subgroup {1003} is the topsoil that covered the site. Found throughout the topsoil as surface finds was an assortment of pottery, China delft, glass bottles, and clay pipes, all of which belong to the post-medieval period. The above was suggestive of widespread agricultural use during the post medieval period, and this can be said to be the case with the present day land usage.

GROUP 3 DISCUSSION: Topsoil

Group	Subgroup	Subgroup type	Period by finds/stratigraphy	Period by interpretation	Group Interpretation
3	1003	Topsoil	PM	PM	Post-Medieval

The wall foundation was covered by topsoil. Within the topsoil some fragments of post medieval pottery and various fragments of building rubble were found. Modern agricultural activity had resulted in the removal of some of the rubble material from the site.

4.4 Synthesis

Open Area 1: Geology and topography

The site of Donaghmore 2 & 3 overlooks the low-lying valley that contains the Ramparts river and a small area of wetland. The Rampart River valley extends east from Carrickmacross to the town of Dundalk. The land is well drained and sheltered by the surrounding ridges and as such it would have served as an ideal location for the establishment of habitational sites, as is indicated by the numerous farm cottages recorded on all the Ordnance Survey maps of the area.

Open Area 2: No discernible activity

There is no evidence for archaeological activity until the post-medieval period.

Open Area 3: Yard Wall

The complex of buildings was constructed some time prior to 1835. The remains of the wall that was discovered is likely to have formed part of the wall that enclosed the farmyard, which is marked on all the Ordnance Survey map editions. By the time of the 1939 OS map, the buildings are marked as being derelict.

The RMP shows records a ring ditch LH007:062 to the immediate west of the CPO line here. However, this is based on an aerial photograph and itself may relate to the access track that is marked on the first edition OS map, which curved from the north, around to the east towards the complex of buildings.

The complex, which may have been a farmstead, may have also been associated with the southern bank of the Rampart River, which forms the townland boundary between Donaghmore and Littlemill townlands. The mill grew in size during the 19th century, fell into decline in the early 20th century and is depicted as defunct on the 1939 OS map, with the mill race is only partially marked.

Area around house

No evidence was found for archaeology around the house, except for the demolition rubble from the complex of buildings. No other foundations were identified.

Open Area 4: Topsoil

Modern agricultural topsoil. The present farmer had thoroughly de-stoned the field, which has also resulted in the removal of some of the demolition rubble

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Realisation of the original research aims

This section examines the extent to which preliminary assessment of the results of the excavation reveal how the original research aims have been or can be answered.

Original Research Questions (ORQ) were prepared after the results of the test-trenching exercise were known and before the rescue excavation began. The following are the Original Research Questions relating to the excavation in the Donaghmore complex and Responses (R) based on preliminary analysis of the site data.

ORQ: *How many buildings are present, what were the construction methods and are there different phases of construction and use?*

R: The upstanding remains consisted of portions of one wall, which according to cartographic evidence consists of the remains of the enclosing farmyard wall. The wall was composed of tightly packed dry stone walling, c. 0.40m thick. There was no clear indication of more than one phase of use. No other building remains were identified through archaeological excavation on the site although at least four buildings are marked on the various Ordnance Survey Editions within this area.

ORQ: *What are the dates for construction and occupation?*

R: The wall was indicated on the First edition Ordnance Survey (Sheet 7) dating to 1835. The buildings located within the enclosing wall are indicated as being derelict/unroofed by the time of the 1939 Ordnance Survey edition (1:2, 500 scale).

ORQ: *Are there areas where different activities were undertaken?*

R: There was no evidence for this during the course of the excavation.

ORQ: *What is the nature of the finds and environmental evidence? What type of evidence is present here and do they give evidence of specific activities?*

R: No finds of archaeological significance were discovered and there was no suitable material present to be submitted for specialist analysis during the course of these investigations. Consequently; no evidence for any activities, other than domestic post medieval (19th century) occupation was discovered.

5.2 Conclusions

The excavation at this site addresses all the original research questions without posing further questions. The excavation was carried out to validate the existence of early 19th century buildings as marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of this area. These buildings, derelict since the 1903's and subsequently destroyed resulted in no upstanding remains surviving to the present day. The location of the enclosing wall surrounding the structures corresponds precisely with its position on the Ordnance Survey mapping, highlighting the accuracy achieved by the Ordnance Surveyors during the 19th century. In terms of archaeological significance these sites have very little bearing the archaeological record at a national scale. As no diagnostic material was recovered from this site, no interpretation can be offered as to the context of the structures other than they most likely formed a farmstead.

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**Site 105
Donaghmore 2 & 3**

**DUNDALK
WESTERN BYPASS**

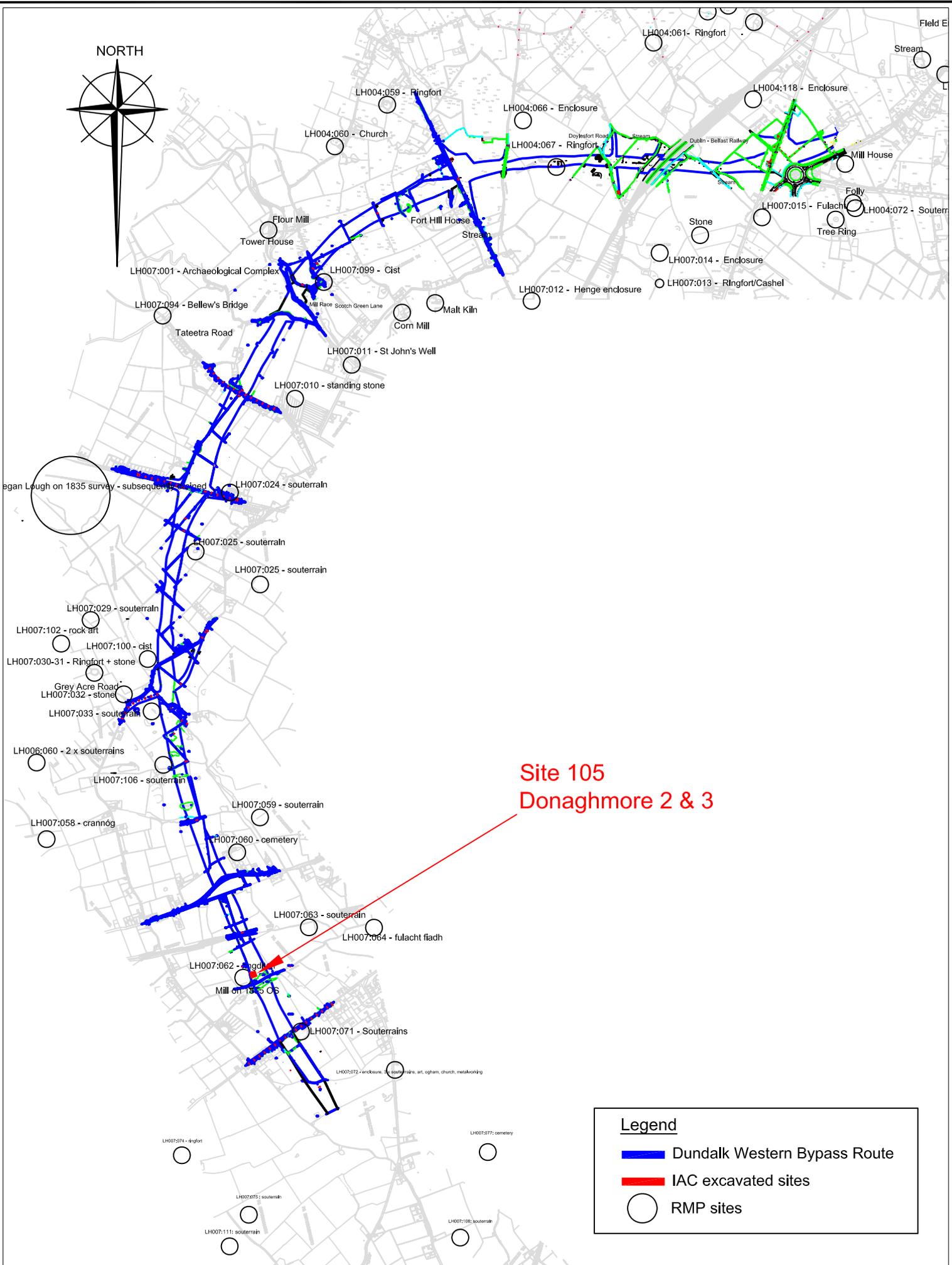
**DUNLEER DUNDALK
MOTORWAY**



Irish
Archaeological
Consultancy Ltd.

Title:	Site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3 Site location
Project:	M1 Dundalk Western Bypass
Client:	Louth County Council

Scale:	N.T.S.
Date:	14/11/07
Produced by:	P Higgins
Job No:	J2041
Figure No:	1



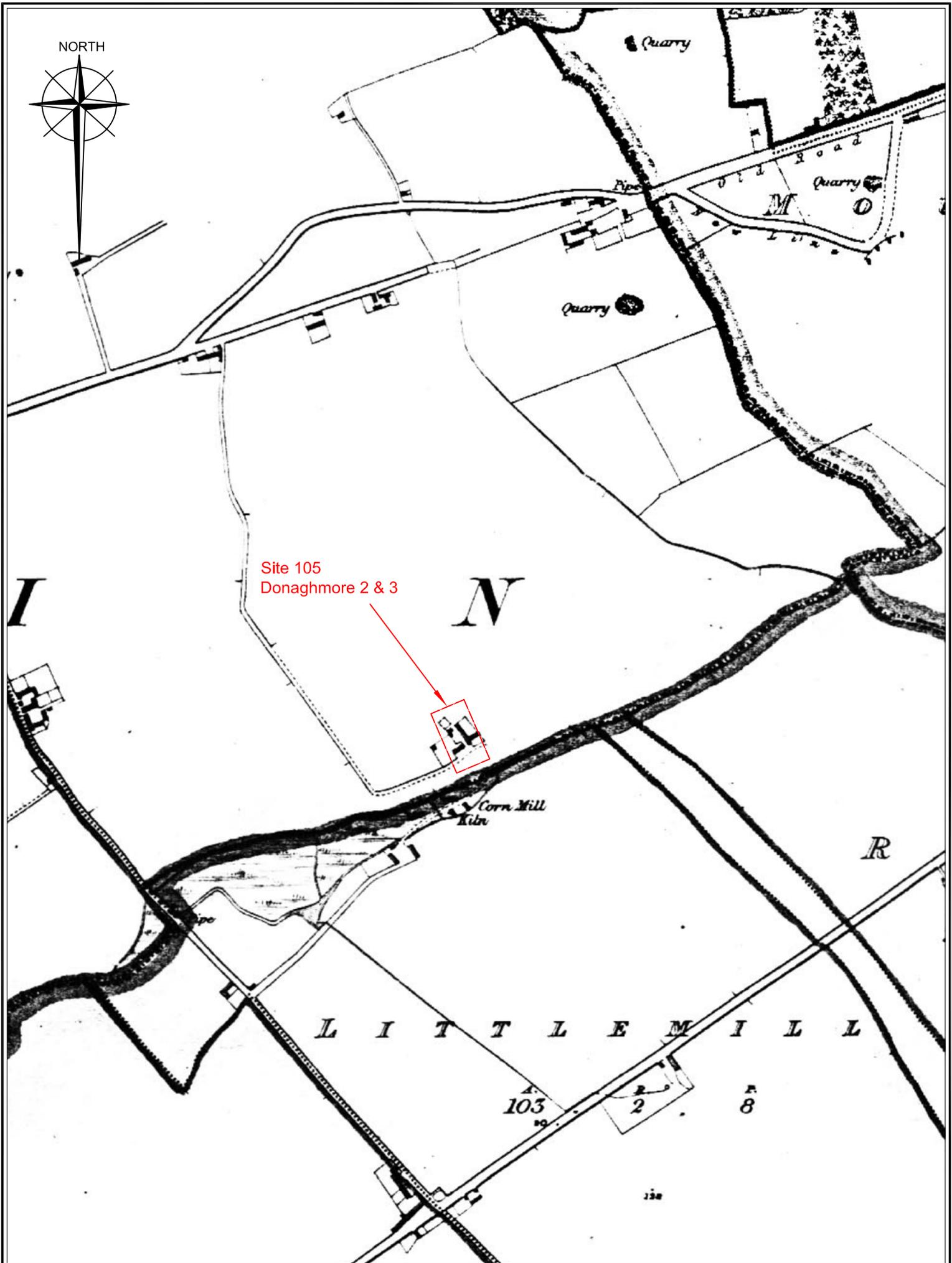
Site 105
Donaghmore 2 & 3

Legend	
	Dundalk Western Bypass Route
	IAC excavated sites
	RMP sites



Title: Extract from RMP map showing location of Site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3
 Project: M1 Dundalk Western Bypass
 Client: Louth County Council

Scale: 1:30000
 Date: 14/11/07
 Produced by: P Higgins
 Job No: J2041
 Figure No: 2



Title: Extract from first edition OS map (1835) showing location of site

Project: M1 Dundalk Western Bypass

Client: Louth County Council

Scale: N.T.S.

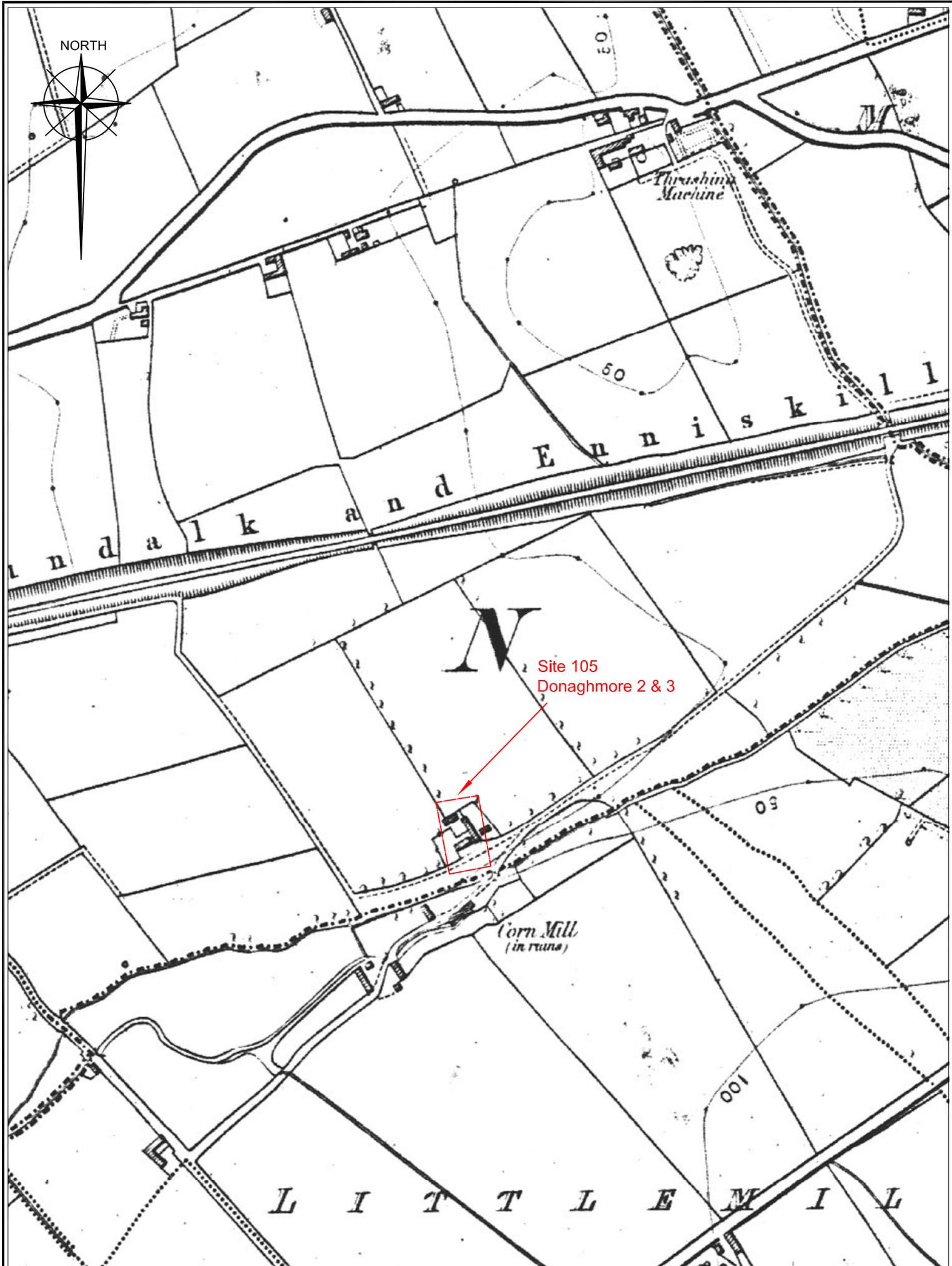
Date: 14/11/07

Produced by: P Higgins

Job No: J2041

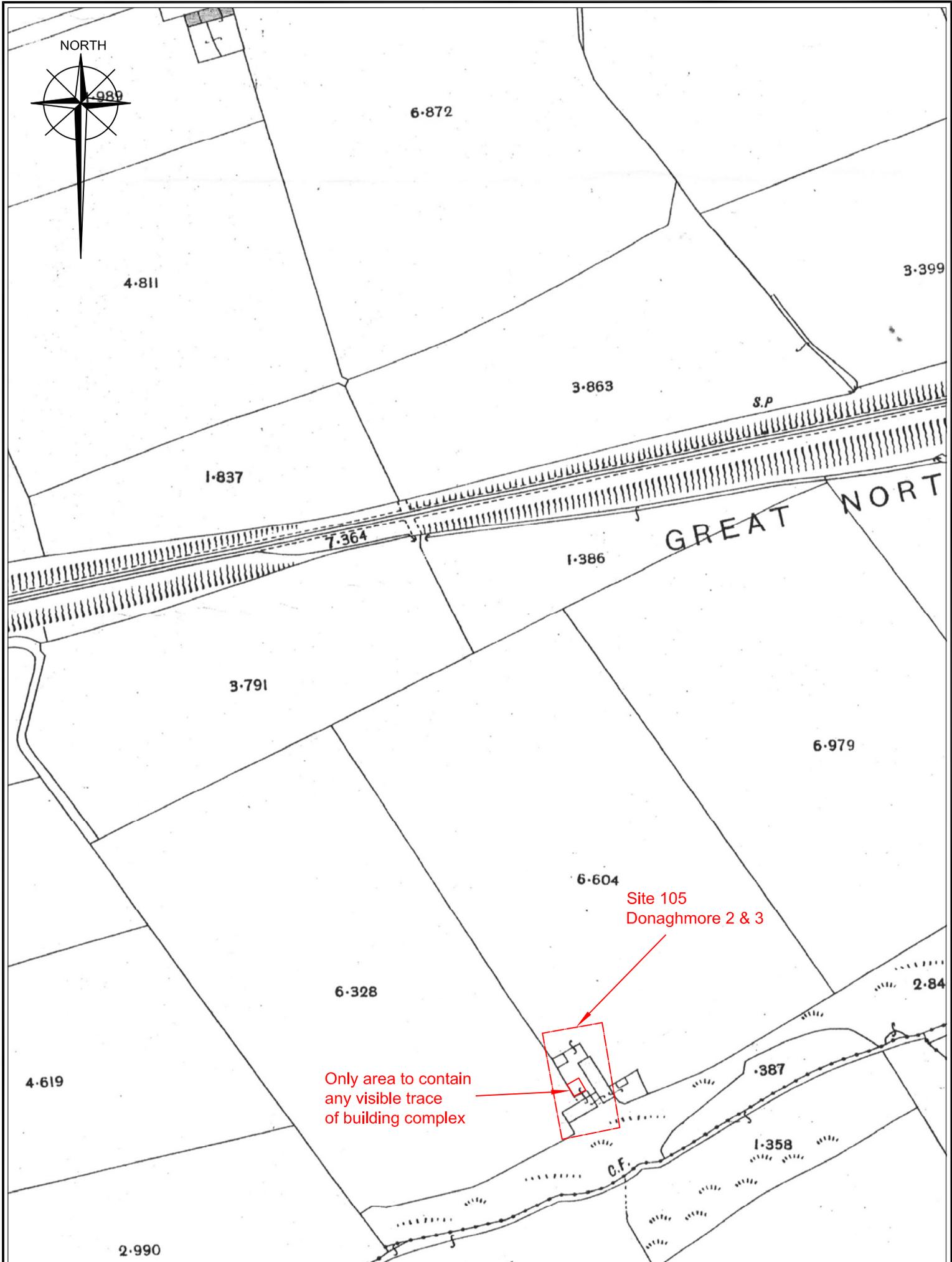
Figure No: 3





Site 105
Donaghmore 2 & 3

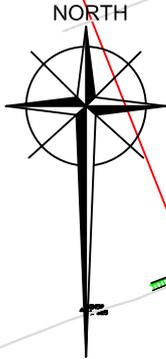
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	Project:	M1 Dundalk Western Bypass	Date:	14/11/07
	Client:	Louth County Council	Produced by:	P Higgins
			Job No:	J2041
			Figure No:	4



Irish
Archaeological
Consultancy Ltd.

Title: Extract OS map (1939) showing location of site
 Project: M1 Dundalk Western Bypass
 Client: Louth County Council

Scale: N.T.S.
 Date: 14/11/07
 Produced by: P Higgins
 Job No: J2041
 Figure No: 5



18+480

18+440

Site 106
Donaghmore 8

18+400

SINGLE FIELD GATE

SINGLE FIELD GATE

TREES & BUSHES

18+320

SINGLE FIELD GATE

SINGLE FIELD GATE

18+280

18+240

18+200

18+180

Site 105
Donaghmore 2 & 3

18+120

18+080

TREES & BUSHES

TREES & BUSHES

TREES & BUSHES

18+000

TREES & BUSHES

0m

RAMPART RIVER

Legend:

-  CPO Line
-  Limit of Excavation
-  RMP sites



Irish
Archaeological
Consultancy Ltd.

Title: Location of site within the Dundalk Western Bypass
Road Scheme

Project: M1 Dundalk Western Bypass

Client: Louth County Council

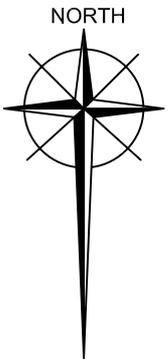
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Date: 14/11/07

Produced by: P Higgins

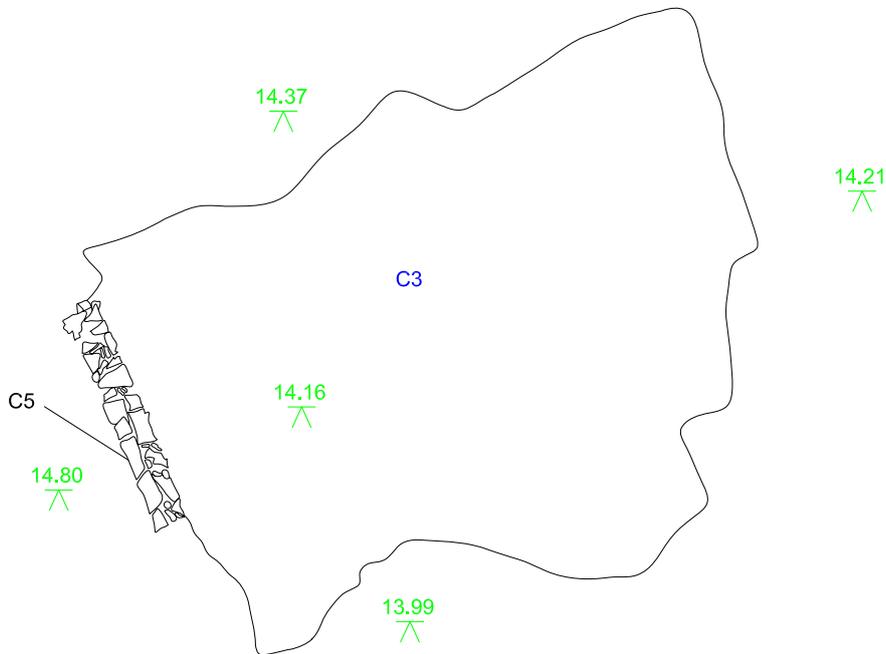
Job No: J2041

Figure No: 6



302470E
305770N
+

302480E
305770N
+



302470E
305750N
+

Legend	
C##	Cut number
- - - -	Section line
— — — —	Limit of excavation
^	OD Levels



Irish
Archaeological
Consultancy Ltd.

Title: Post Excavation Plan of Site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3
Project: M1 Dundalk Western Bypass
Client: Louth County Council

Scale: 1:100
Date: 14/11/07
Produced by: P Higgins
Job No: J2041
Figure No: 7



Plate 1 – Overhead view of Site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3, looking NW (Studiolab)



Plate 2 – Site 105, Donaghmore 2 & 3, mixed rubble wall foundations

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

C	Area	Fill of	Filled by	Interpretation	Description
1	D.2+3	N/A	N/A	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy clay
2	Site	N/A	N/A	Natural	
3	D.2+3	4	N/A	Spread of post med material	Dark brown clayey silt with building rubble and post medieval/modern pottery
4	D.2+3	N/A	3	Cut of wall foundation filled by 5	Linear foundation cut 3.20L x 0.45W
5	D.2+3	4	N/A	Fill of foundation [4]	Remnants of stone wall at east end of site, 3L x 0.4W