



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 130

**Crevinish Castle
Kesh
County Fermanagh**

LICENCE NO.: AE/07/151

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: Crevinish Castle, Crevinish Road, Kesh, Co. Fermanagh

Townland: Crevinish

SMR No. : FER 153:020

State Care Scheduled X Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: IGH 1301 6422

County: Fermanagh

Excavation Licence No. : AE/07/151

Planning Ref / No.: N/A

Dates of Monitoring: 3rd August 2007

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

Excavation of six small trenches was undertaken on the site of Crevinish Castle, Kesh, Co. Fermanagh, in order to accommodate two railings designed to facilitate Health and Safety requirements. The site is a scheduled monument. In trenches One, Two and Three a layer of compact mortar and stone was encountered directly below the sod and topsoil. This mortar layer was not encountered in trenches Four, Five or Six where a layer of loose rounded stones and gritty soil was observed directly below the topsoil. This is interpreted as representing the build up of the ground around the castle

by the previous owner of the dwelling to the south of the monument (Billy Silcock *pers comm.*). No material or features of archaeological significance were unearthed.

Type of monitoring:

Manual excavation of six trenches by workers of the Environment and Heritage Service.

Size of area opened:

Six trenches were opened each measuring approximately 0.3m x 0.3m x 0.4m deep.

Current Land Use: Scheduled archaeological site.

Intended Land Use: Scheduled archaeological site.

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

Crevinish Castle (FER 153:020) lies on the shoreline of Lough Erne and approximately 2km south-east of the village of Kesh, Co. Fermanagh (Figure One). The site is a ruined Plantation period castle built by Thomas Blennerhasset before 1618-19. The ruins exist today as a dwelling house and remnants of an enclosing Bawn (Plate Twelve). Along the east side of the castle is a walled enclosure which has been used as a burial ground.

Work is ongoing at the castle to consolidate the remains as, numerous window lintels and quoins have been removed from the castle over time. To facilitate Health and Safety requirements, two guard rails were to be installed in front of a break in the enclosing wall and large window on the castles southern side (Plate Ten). A total of six small trenches were manually excavated to facilitate the footings of these guard rails (Figure Four). As the castle is a Scheduled Monument, Scheduled Monument Consent was sought and granted prior to work commencing (B457/74).

The Excavation

The six trenches were excavated along the southern wall of the castle in an effort to hamper access to a collapsed portion of the wall and a large window (Figure Four). Each trench measured 0.3m x 0.3m and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m. Excavation ceased at this level and the trenches were lined with a semi-permeable membrane prior to concrete being poured in.

Trench One

Trench One was the easternmost trench excavated (Plate Five). The trench measured 0.3m x 0.3m and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m.

The sod and topsoil in this trench (Context No. 101) consisted of a light to mid brown gritty loam with frequent inclusions of small angular stones and pebbles (average size 20mm x 50mm x 60mm). This deposit was approximately 0.25m deep. Directly below the sod and topsoil (Context No. 101) compact mortared stone (Context No. 102) was encountered (Plate One). Due to the proximity of the excavation to the southern wall of the castle, the mortared stone (Context No. 102) may represent a plinth that the wall was built upon (Billy Silcock *pers comm.*). Excavation continued into this layer (Context No. 102) for a further 0.15m where excavation ceased at an overall depth of 0.4m.

Trench Two

Trench Two was positioned approximately 2m to the west of Trench One (Plate Five). The trench measured 0.3m x 0.3m and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m.

The sod and topsoil in this trench (Context No. 201) consisted of a light to mid brown gritty loam with frequent inclusions of small angular stones and pebbles (average size 20mm x 50mm x 60mm). This deposit was approximately 0.20m deep. Directly below the sod and topsoil (Context No. 201) compact mortared stone (Context No. 202) was encountered (Plate Two). Due to the proximity of the excavation to the southern wall of the castle, the mortared stone (Context No. 202) may represent a plinth that the wall was built upon (Billy Silcock *pers comm.*). Excavation continued into this layer (Context No. 202) for a further 0.20m where excavation ceased at an overall depth of 0.4m.

Trench Three

Trench Three was positioned approximately 2m to the west of Trench Two (Plate Five). The trench measured 0.3m x 0.3m and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m.

The sod and topsoil in this trench (Context No. 301) consisted of a light to mid brown gritty loam with frequent inclusions of small angular stones and pebbles (average size 20mm x 50mm x 60mm). This deposit was approximately 0.25m deep. Directly below the sod and topsoil (Context No. 301) compact mortared stone (Context No. 302) was encountered (Plate Three). Due to the proximity of the excavation to the southern wall of the castle, the mortared stone (Context No. 302) may represent a plinth that the wall was built upon (Billy Silcock *pers comm.*). Excavation continued into this layer (Context No. 302) for a further 0.15m where excavation ceased at an overall depth of 0.4m.

Trench Four

Trench Four was positioned approximately 3.5m to the west of Trench Three and provided the easternmost footing for the railing guarding the collapsed section of wall (Plate Nine). The trench measured 0.3m x 0.3m and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m (Plate Six).

The sod and topsoil in this trench (Context No. 401) consisted of a light to mid brown gritty loam with frequent inclusions of small angular stones and pebbles (average size 20mm x 50mm x 60mm). This deposit was approximately 0.25m deep. Directly below the sod and topsoil (Context No. 401) was a layer of loose gritty soil with frequent inclusions of medium to large rounded and sub-angular stones (average size: 50mm x 80mm x 120mm) (Context No. 402). Excavation continued into this layer (Context No. 402) for a further 0.15m where excavation ceased at an overall depth of 0.4m.

Trench Five

Trench Five was positioned approximately 2m to the west of Trench Four (Plate Nine). The trench measured 0.3m x 0.3m and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m (Plate Seven).

The sod and topsoil in this trench (Context No. 501) consisted of a light to mid brown gritty loam with frequent inclusions of small angular stones and pebbles (average size 20mm x 50mm x 60mm). This deposit was approximately 0.25m deep. Directly below the sod and topsoil (Context No. 501) was a layer of loose gritty soil with frequent inclusions of medium to large rounded and sub-angular stones (average size: 50mm x 80mm x 120mm) (Context No. 502). Excavation continued into this layer (Context No. 502) for a further 0.15m where excavation ceased at an overall depth of 0.4m.

Trench Six

Trench Six was positioned approximately 2m to the west of Trench Five (Plate Nine). The trench measured 0.3m x 0.3m and was excavated to a depth of 0.4m (Plate Eight).

The sod and topsoil in this trench (Context No. 601) consisted of a light to mid brown gritty loam with frequent inclusions of small angular stones and pebbles (average size 20mm x 50mm x 60mm). This deposit was approximately 0.25m deep. Directly below the sod and topsoil (Context No. 601) was a layer of loose gritty soil with frequent inclusions of medium to large rounded and sub-angular stones (average size: 50mm x 80mm x 120mm) (Context No. 602). Excavation continued into this layer (Context No. 602) for a further 0.15m where excavation ceased at an overall depth of 0.4m.

Conclusion

The excavation of the six trenches caused minimal disturbance to archaeologically significant deposits. The trenches (Trenches One, Two and Three) for the eastern guardrail exposed a compact layer of mortared stone (Context Nos. 102, 202 and 302). Due to the presence of a large window frame at this point in the southern wall of the castle, it is proposed that this deposit represents a plinth or some sort of strengthening of the wall for the inclusion of a larger window. This layer was noticeably absent in the westernmost trenches (Trenches Four, Five and Six) where a layer of loose gritty soil and stones was encountered (Context Nos. 402, 502 and 602). Due to the consistency of this deposit being quite loose, it is proposed that it represents an episode of filling in of the site, carried out by the previous owner of the land the site is situated on (Billy Silcock *pers comm.*). Although the size of the area was quite small, nothing of archaeological significance was disturbed during the exercise. No publication is required save for a short summary in the annual '*Excavations*' bulletin.

Archive:

Finds: N/a

Photographs: The digital images taken during the evaluation are currently archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings: N/a

Signed:.....

Date:.....



Figure One: General location map showing Crevinish Castle (red dot).



Figure Two: Detailed location map

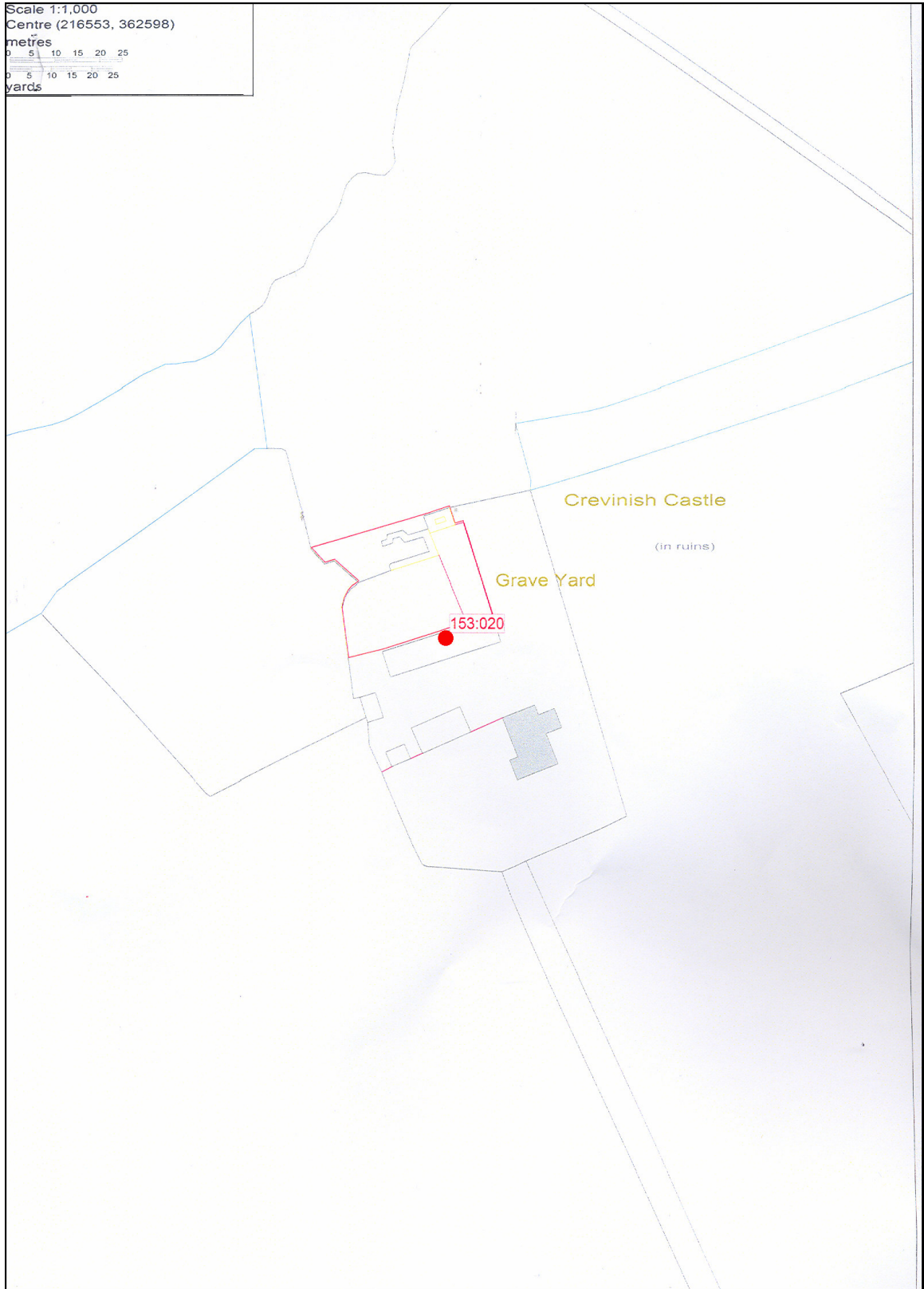


Figure Three: Detailed map showing castle, graveyard and position of modern residential dwelling

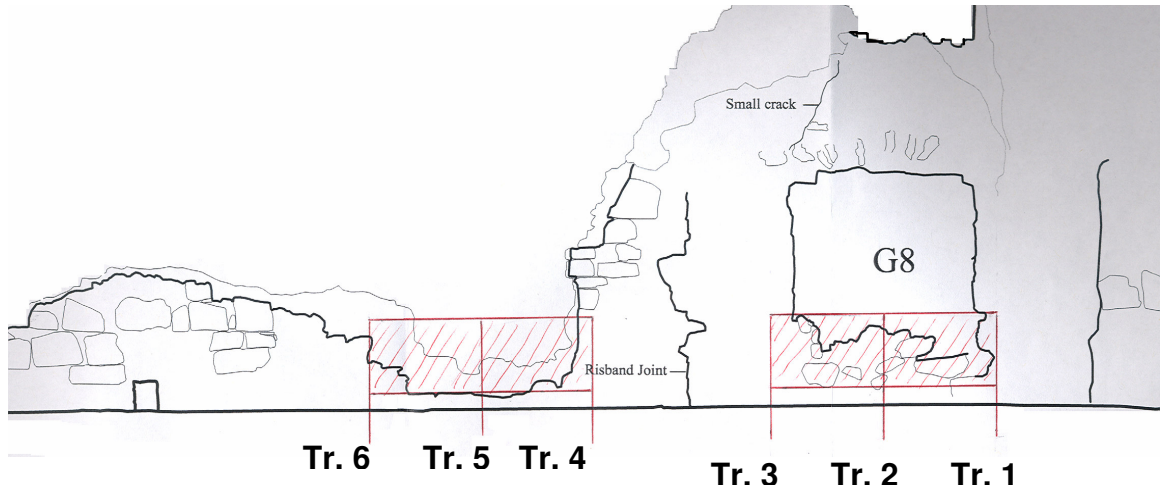


Figure Four: Location of the trenches (Provided by the EHS).



Plate One: Trench 1 showing surface of mortared stone (Context No. 102)



Plate Two: Trench Two Showing surface of mortared stone (Context No. 202).



Plate Three: Trench Three showing surface of mortared stone (Context No. 303).



Plate Four: Trench Three showing stratigraphic sequence encountered in the excavation.

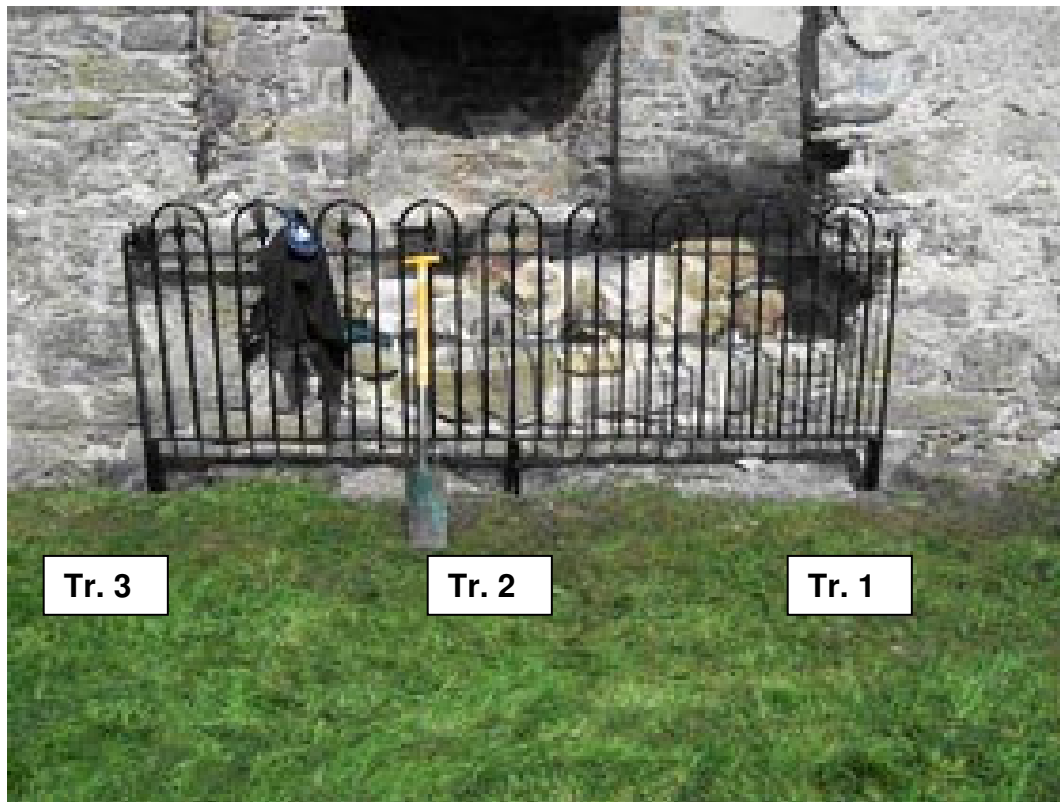


Plate Five: The easternmost guardrail, looking north.



Plate Six: Trench Four following excavation to a depth of 0.4m.



Plate Seven: Trench Five following excavation to depth of 0.4m.



Plate Eight: Trench Six following excavation to a depth of 0.4m.

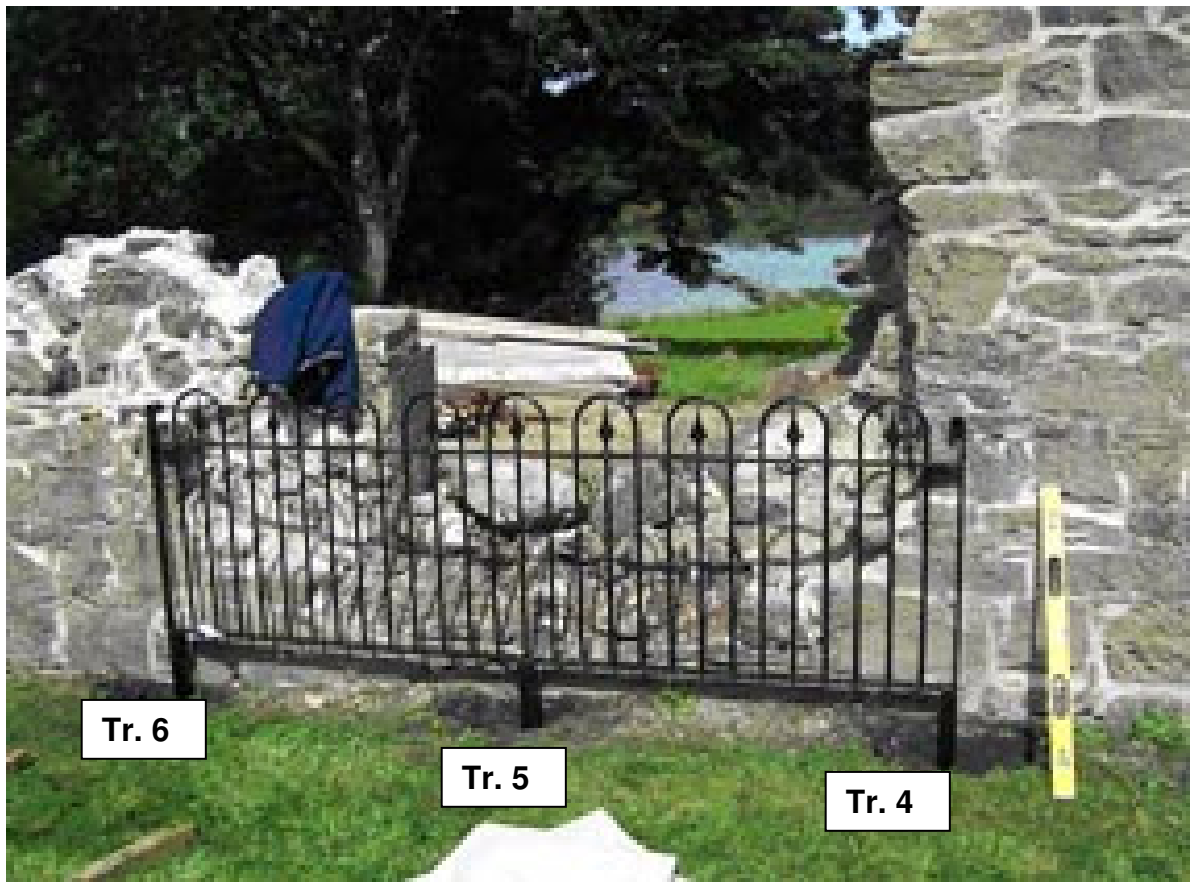


Plate Nine: The westernmost guardrail, looking north.



Plate Ten: Positions of the guardrails, looking north-west.



Plate Twelve: Crevinish Castle (FER 153:020), looking north-east.