



Monitoring Report No. 137

**Bigwood
Kesh
Co. Fermanagh**

AE/07/161

Ruth Logue

Site Specific Information

Site Name: Bigwood, Kesh, BT93 8DP

Townland: Bigwood

SMR No (if applicable): rath – FER 153:001

State Care Scheduled Other

Grid Ref: IG H1251 6687

County: Fermanagh

Excavation Licence Number: AE/07/161

Planning Reference Number: N/A
HMU-S Management Agreement

Date of Monitoring: 16th August 2007

Archaeologist Present: Ruth Logue

Brief Summary:

Monitoring of a field drain trench excavated to below subsoil to evaluate the potential impact of the digging of the drain on any previously unrecorded below-ground remains.

Nothing of archaeological significance found.

Type of monitoring: Field drain excavation by mechanical back-acting digger (bobcat-sized) under archaeological supervision

Size of area opened: One trench: approximately 103m long, 0.3m wide and averaging between 0.6 and 0.7m deep.

Current Land Use: Rough grazing

Intended Land Use: New field drain

Account of the monitoring

An archaeological evaluation was requested to assess the potential impact of the proposed work on any hidden archaeological remains. Monitoring of the excavation of a new field drain pipe trench took place on 16th August 2007. The work was requested by Maybelline Gormley of the Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage.

The evaluation site is located in a field in the townland of Bigwood, near Kesh in County Fermanagh. The monument at the site is a scheduled bivallate rath, FER 153:001. The north to west portion of the outer bank has been levelled, according to the farmer this was due to ploughing and cattle trampling.

A Management Agreement Proposal was drawn up as the landowner wanted to unblock an existing drain which runs through the monument along its western side. The Management Agreement Proposal made a number of requirements/conditions with regard to the work. These included that a new drain be dug south-west of the existing drain, and that the new drain should be at least 3m from the farthest visible bank of the rath. It was also specified that no work should be carried out on the existing (blocked) drain.

The line of the pipe trench was marked out with wooden stakes prior to excavation commencing; the line of the trench on the ground differs slightly from that which was proposed by the EHS but is 3.5m away from the outer bank of the rath (Figure 2). A small (bobcat-sized) back-acting digger, with a toothless bucket, was used to excavate the pipe trench. The width of the digger bucket was 0.28m. The trench was approximately 103m long and between 0.6 and 0.7m deep.

The topsoil was between 0.10m and 0.13m deep along the trench and lay on top of subsoil throughout. A number of previous drains were uncovered during the digging of the new drain. From the bottom (south) end of the field the drain trench headed in a north-north-west direction, then followed the curve of the rath bank and took a more northerly direction to the top of the field where it met another drainage ditch running north-east to south-west along the top edge of the field. The landowner laid plastic piping into the trench as the excavation proceeded.

No features or finds of archaeological significance were found in the trench.

Archive:

Finds: N/A

Photographs: 4 digital photos, held in Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork offices

Plans / Drawings: N/A



Figure 1: 1:50,000 map showing location of site (153:001).

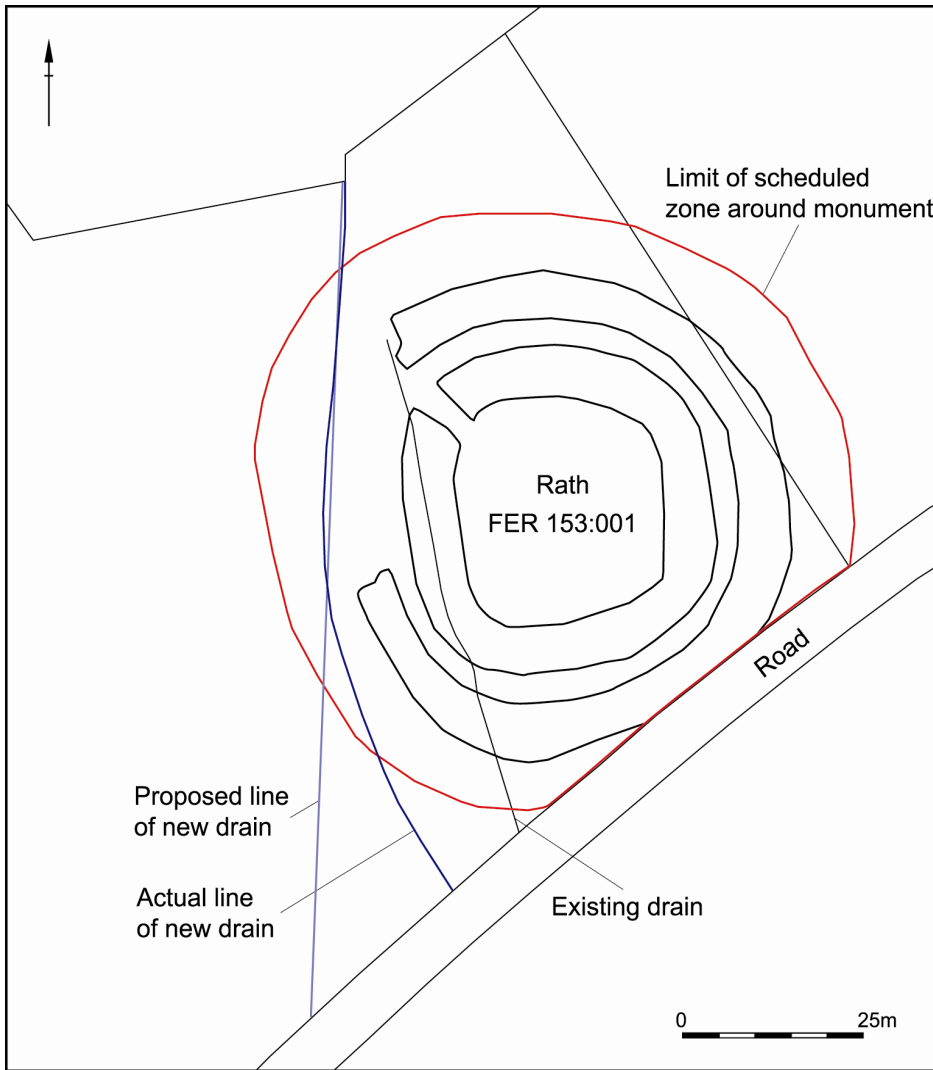


Figure 2: Plan of application site showing location of new drain trench.



Plate 1: Rath, looking south-east.



Plate 2: Trench with plastic pipe in situ and rath outer bank, looking north.



Plate 3: Trench and rath outer bank, looking south.