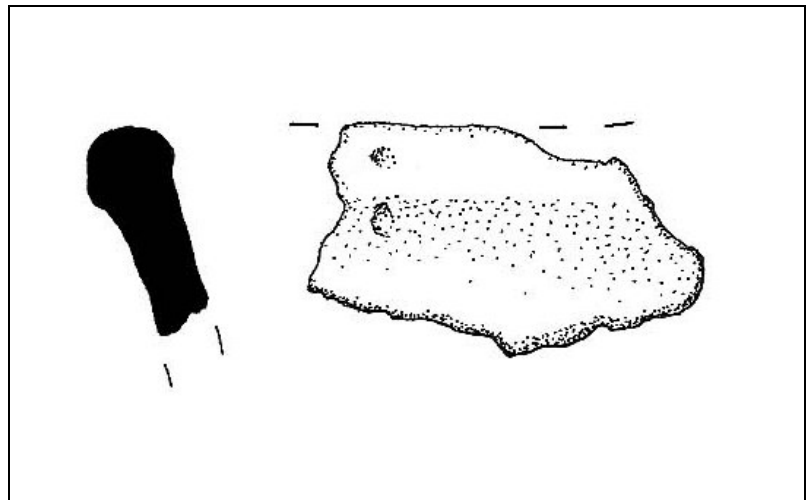


transport21
progress in motion



M1 DUNDALK WESTERN BYPASS

SITE 132, FAUGHART LOWER 5
CHAINAGE 25.960
NGR 305805/310996

FINAL REPORT

ON BEHALF OF
LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL and the
NATIONAL ROADS AUTHORITY

LICENSEE: SHANE DELANEY
LICENCE NUMBER: 03E1574

JULY 2009

IAC Irish Archaeological
Consultancy

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. (IAC Ltd.), funded by Louth County Council and the National Roads Authority, undertook an excavation in the townland of Faughart Lower, c.2.5km north of Dundalk, in advance of the construction of the Dundalk Western Bypass (DWB). The excavation was undertaken to ensure all subsoil archaeological remains were preserved by record in advance of groundwork.

The excavation was carried out following the identification of two charcoal rich pits with prehistoric pottery during linear testing (02E0658). The excavation began on the 18th of September 2003 with a crew of one Supervisor and five Assistant Archaeologists. Fieldwork was completed on the 24th of September 2003. An area measuring 20m x 40m was stripped over the site.

Archaeological features were initially identified during a programme of linear testing along the proposed route of the Dundalk western bypass (Licence no: 02E0658). Subsequent excavation (Licence no: 03E1574; Delaney 2006) of an area 40m x 40m revealed a group of five pits or possible postholes, four of which formed a shallow arc extending northeast-southwest, with a fifth pit internal to this arc. Four of the features were between 5 and 15cm in depth and suggest that the archaeology had been truncated. All the pits or postholes contained sherds of Early Neolithic Carinated pottery (Appendix 2.1).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The archaeological excavation at Site 132, Faughart Lower 5, Co. Louth was carried out on behalf of Louth County Council and the National Roads Authority in advance of the construction of the M1 Dundalk Western Bypass.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report provides comment and analysis on the excavation carried out in the townland of Faughart Lower at Faughart Lower 5 (Site 132), c.2.5km to the north of Dundalk, Co. Louth as part of an archaeological mitigation programme associated with the Dundalk Western Bypass (DWB). Archaeological fieldwork was directed by Shane Delaney of Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. (IAC Ltd.) and was funded by Louth County Council and the National Roads Authority.

1.1 Site location

Faughart Lower 5 was located in Faughart Lower townland, to the east of the Faughart Road (R97), c.2.5km north of Dundalk (Louth OS sheet 004) (Plate 1). The site is located on generally flat ground with a low rise to the northeast. The site is:

- Site 132, Faughart Lower 5 Excavation Licence 03E01574, Ch 25.960, NGR 305805/310996

The site was identified as a result of the archaeological test trenching undertaken by IAC Ltd. in September 2003 under licence to Shane Delaney (Licence Ref.:02E0658).

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 terminated 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)) runs 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 was not 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

Faughart Lower 5 (Site 132) site lies at approximate chainage 25,960.

An area approximately 20m x 40m was opened over Faughart Lower 5.

1.3 Circumstances and dates of fieldwork

The excavations were 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 the 18th of September 2003 and the fieldwork was completed on the 24th of September 2003. The order and date of the excavation is as follows:

The site was identified during a programme of linear testing along the proposed route of the Dundalk western bypass. An area of approximately 20 metres long and 20 metres wide was proposed initially (this was later extended by another 20m x 20m extension to the north) as the limits of the site and topsoil removal was undertaken using a flat-bucketed machine. The area stripped was centred on the known archaeology.

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 or 1:20 (sections were recorded generally at 1:10) and photographs where necessary. All works were carried out in agreement with the Project Archaeologist, the National Monuments Section of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (formerly *Dúchas*-The Heritage Service).

It was agreed in advance that adequate funds to cover excavation, post-excavation, conservation and dating analysis would be made available by Louth County Council. Dating involved pottery analysis through typological study and radiocarbon analysis. The site archive, and any finds, samples *et cetera* were kept in safe storage by IAC Ltd. during the post-excavation stage.

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, the northwest of the province of Leinster. The area spans two geographical areas. To the west, the rural landscape surrounding the urban district is one of undulating topography, with low drumlins rising to 30-40m from the coastal plain. As with much of Louth, this covers thick strata of Ordovician and Silurian slates, with some outcrops (Gosling 1993, 237). To the east of the urban district, the flat, low lying coastal plain is comprised of recent estuarine and alluvial clays and silts, shaped by the sea level changes after the last glaciation.

At the time of the earliest habitation in Ireland (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 2400BC, replacing the submerged area with salt marshes and tidal flats. At various stages from the 17th century onward, 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 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 Co 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-AD500)

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

Above the ground, a large, granite standing stone known locally as *Dealg Fhinn* (LH 007-118-06) is the only remaining visible reminder of the prehistoric occupation of the area. Another standing stone, on the Bellew's Bridge Road, was removed at the beginning of the twentieth century. The pollen record for this area during the prehistoric period indicates that the indigenous forestry was not cleared and replaced by cereals until farming in Ireland was well into its second millennium (3000 - 2500BC).

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

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 Faughart Lower 5 (with the nearest example located at Faughart Lower (LH004-062), c.1km to the northwest) and scattered throughout the Cooley peninsula. The tomb at Faughart Lower appears to be a small passage tomb with a wedge-shaped chamber and is incorporated into a field boundary. The north, south and east sides each consist of a split boulder. Two imbricated stones represent an entrance opening to the southwest and the chamber is covered by a single roof stone. Archaeological discoveries elsewhere on the DWB scheme revealed Late Neolithic /Early Bronze Age habitation activity at Site 115, Newtownbalregan 5 (Bayley, D. forthcoming (c)), located c.4.3km south-west of Site 132 and the truncated remains of a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age House identified at Site 101, Littlemill 1 (O Donnachadha, B. forthcoming (d)), located c.6.4km to the southwest of the site. A collection of pits dating to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age were identified at Site 103, Littlemill 4 & 5 (O Donnachadha, B. forthcoming (c)), c.6.2km southwest of Site 132 (Faughart Lower 5) and a number of Neolithic huts with associated pits were excavated at Site 124, Carn More 1 (Delaney, S. forthcoming (b)), located c.1.5km west of the site. A middle Neolithic to Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Beaker settlement was also identified at Site 108, Donaghmore 1 (O Donnachadha, B. forthcoming (e)) which is located c.5.4km to the southwest of Site 132.

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

From the relatively scant prehistoric archaeological evidence, there are indications that the area was not densely settled until the beginning of the Bronze Age (2500 BC). 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). Bronze Age activity is distributed fairly evenly across the study area. These are indicated in the antiquarian drawings of Wright at the Castletown/Kilcurry confluence.

Bronze Age discoveries along the DWB consist of an Early Bronze Age Beaker (2400-2200BC) habitation at Site 112, Newtownbalregan 2 (Bayley, D. forthcoming (e)), located c.4.7km south west of the site. 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.1km west of Site 132. A total of 3 Bronze Age burnt mounds/fulachta fiadh were excavated along the route of the DWB at Site 111, Newtownbalregan 1.1, Site 113, Newtownbalregan 5 and at Site 128, Faughart 1, 2 & 3. The burnt mound excavated at Site 102, Littlemill 2 dated to the medieval period (890-1250AD). 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 (c.500BC – c.500AD)

There is a marked lack of known Iron Age (700BC-AD500) activity. The ring barrow identified at Site 131, Donaghmore 7 (Ó Donnachadha, B. forthcoming (g)) is the sole example of a definitive Iron Age site identified through the DWB archaeological investigations. The site 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. 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 (AD500-1169)

The study area lies within a rich early medieval landscape. By far the most numerous type of monument to be recorded within the study area is the 'enclosure' site. This tends to be equated with the dispersed farmstead of the pre-twelfth-century era, known as the ringfort or *rath*. Such sites are classically identified as circular enclosures of c.30m internal diameter with a series of earthen banks and fosses outside to define the boundary and protect the complex. Site 13 on the DWB for example was identified as a possible ringfort in the EIS (March 2000). These were the homes of farmers who practiced a mixed-farming economy. Ringforts are one of the most common site types in north Co Louth. Many have had their surface remains destroyed, with the banks ploughed back into the soil. To the north of the northern end of Section 1 there is a concentration of ringforts or earthworks.

Site 114 at Newtownbalregan 6 (Bayley, D. forthcoming (d)) consists of a ringfort and souterrain. The ringfort or rath is considered to be the most common indicator of settlement during the early medieval Period (c.500AD – 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. At Site 124, Carn More 1 (Delaney, S. forthcoming (b)), (Area 1) a ringfort identified in the RMP as LH004-067 was excavated in advance of the motorway's construction, with the RMP originally listing the monument as a circular enclosure.

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 east of the CPO line at Ch17.640 (LH007-071).

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 south 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, Co. Armagh, the *Conaille Muirtheimne* appear to have been subject to the kingdom of *Brega* 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 688AD 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* in the early 12th century.

The *fulacht fiadh* identified at Site 102, Littlemill 2 was Radiocarbon 14 dated to Cal. 890AD -1250AD (968 \pm 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 dating, tend to be circular to oval in shape with no evidence for pit lining (O'Neill, pers.comm, 2007). The example at Littlemill 2, however was lined with wooden planks.

2.3 Medieval Period (AD1169-1700)

The motte and bailey at Castletown (LH 007-118-07) located c.5km southwest of Faughart Lower 5 represents the initial phase of Anglo-Norman activity in the area. The decision to create a motte and bailey as an initial Anglo-Norman base was the easiest way to construct a headquarters, in contrast to the construction of stone castle structures which required substantial time, materials and organisation. It is not the case however that these constructions were always replaced by a stone structure. 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 and around 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 Bellews. It was at this time that many of the tower houses were constructed at this time. The Bellews 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 trace of the tower house survive above ground. In 1429, Henry IV introduced a £10 subsidy which was given to encourage the King's 'liege men' to build tower houses in Louth, as well as the rest of the Pale, which was so successful that twenty years later a limit was imposed on their construction. In County Louth, as well as 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 information is recorded in the 'Dowdall deeds'. The lack of documentary sources and archaeological excavations in the area has led to large 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. The Anglo-Normans were responsible for the network of towns throughout the country, with Louth being the most heavily urbanised county (Barry 1987, 118).

At this time however 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 sitting along with the fact that it was 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, which was to grow into the modern town of Dundalk, 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 pulse of the Lordship. The precise date for the foundation of the *newtown* was established is unclear. Certainly 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 land and the shape of the gravel ridge on which the Newtown (Dundalk) was located, the town developed a markedly linear aspect which can still be seen to this day.

2.4 Post-Medieval Period (1700-1900)

Post-medieval archaeological remains identified in the study area relate to industrial structures particularly mills and kilns surrounding the Castletown and Kilcurry River waters, with these structures usually being served by a mill race. A mill and associated race occur near to the Castletown-Kilcurry confluence. A quarry for limestone is also situated to the north of the road-take. Small scale extraction cuts are also known sunk into natural rock outcrops such as the one at Ch19.200.

Site 102 at Littlemill 2 (O Donnachadha, B. forthcoming (f)) contained the remains of a post-medieval structure, which cartographic evidence demonstrates supports its existence at this location since the first edition OS map dating to 1836. It is probable that this structure was a small vernacular style residence accompanied by a small farmyard as was typical of the area and indeed most of Ireland during the 19th century.

At Site 119, Balregan 3 & 4 (Delaney, S. forthcoming (d)), the subsurface remains of a north-south oriented masonry structure was recorded. The foundations measured 21m in length and 6.5m in width and consisted of two rooms. The building appears to have been of 19th century construction based on the artefactual evidence and identifiable construction methods, however, the structure is not depicted on the 1835 or the 1908-9 1:10, 560 scale Ordnance Survey editions. Anecdotal evidence from a local landowner notes that a structure formerly located at this site was demolished around the mid 20th century; it is likely the building dates from the later 19th century and fell out of use at the same time as the Scotch Green Mill.

Site 118, Balregan 5 & 6 (Delaney, S. forthcoming (e)), contained the remains of a post-medieval water mill, which even in its ruinous condition showed a complete example of this form. Millrace, millpond, main sluices, internal wheel race and a number of main rooms along with the access road and access road and yard for the mill buildings were present.

3 THE EXCAVATION

3.1 Introduction

The excavation at Site 132, Faughart Lower 5 was undertaken as part of the archaeological mitigation for the DWB in the townland of Faughart Lower.

3.2 Methodology

Topsoil stripping of the area commenced on the 18th of September 2003 and the fieldwork was completed on the 24th of September 2003, 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] (formerly *Dúchas*-the Heritage Service). All contexts are described in Appendix 1.

3.2 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

STRATIGRAPHY

4.1 Group 1: Natural Drift Geology

4.1.1 Subgroup {1001} Natural subsoil

Contexts:

C	Area	Fill of	Filled with	Interpretation	Description
2	Site	n/a	n/a	Natural subsoil	Compact yellow-grey sandy clay frq mixed stones.

Geology and topography

The DWB in this area crosses a zone of prime agricultural land, with soils in the category of 'Wide Use Range' being very suitable for grassland and tillage enterprises. In general terms the ground conditions comprise typically 3m to 5m of glacial till over Bedrock. The glacial nature of the sand and stone-strewn natural subsoil ensures the area is well drained. Bedrock consists of Silurian siltstones, mudstones and sandstones, and locally Dinavian limestone.

Landscape

The site was located in a field immediately to east of the Faughart Road (R97). This field was generally flat grazed pasture with a slight central raised area and a slightly raised area to the south. It was surrounded on all sides with mature hedge lines. The topsoil over the area stripped was between 0.30-0.40m deep.

4.2 Group 2: Prehistoric Activity

4.2.1 Subgroup {1001}: Postholes/Pits

Contexts:

C.	Area	Fill of	Filled with	Interpretation	Description
3		C4	n/a	Deliberate fill	Mid-dk grey brown, compact sandy clay, mod ch fl freq s ang, several large packing stones.
4		n/a	C3	Possible posthole	Subcircular in plan, straight steep sides, flat base, 0.30d x 0.70 diameter.
5		C6	N/a	Deliberate backfill	Dk-mid brown, peaty clay, freq ch fl, occ s ang.
6		n/a	C5	Truncated posthole	Circular in plan, uneven sides, blunt tapered base heavily t'd, 0.15d x 0.55dia.
7		C8	n/a	Deliberate backfill	Dk brown/black, charcoal-rich sandy silt.
8		n/a	&	Truncated posthole	slightly oval in plan, very shallow, concave base, 0.05d x 0.22l x 0.19w, NE-SW.
9		C10	n/a	Deliberate fill	Dk Brown, charcoal-rich silt.
10		n/a	C9	Truncated posthole	Oval in plan, very shallow prof, concave base, 0.13d x 0.60l x 0.50w, NW-SE.
11				Non-Archaeological	
12				Non-Archaeological	
13		C14	n/a	Deliberate backfill	Mid-dk brown peaty clay, freq ch fl, occ s+m ang, occ hazelnut shells.
14		n/a	C13	Truncated posthole	Circular in plan, even sides, blunt tapered base, heavily t'd 0.90d x 0.48dia.

Finds:

C	Find	Material	Period	Pottery form	Artefact type	Comment
3	03E1574:3:1	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:2	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:3	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:4	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:5	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:6	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:7	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:8	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:9	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:10	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:11	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:12	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:13	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:14	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:15	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:16	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:17	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:18	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:1	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:2	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:3	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:4	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:5	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:6	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:7	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:8	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:9	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:10	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:11	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:12	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:13	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:14	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:15	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bod sherd

5	03E1574:5:16	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Shouldersherd
5	03E1574:5:17	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:18	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:19	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:1	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:2	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:3	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:4	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Body sherd
7	03E1574:7:5	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Body sherd
7	03E1574:7:6				stone
7	03E1574:7:7	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:8	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:9	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:10	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:11	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:12	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:13	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:14	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:15	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:16	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:17	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:18	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:19	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:20	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:21	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:22	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:23	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:24	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:25	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:26	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:27	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:28	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:29	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:30	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:31	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:32	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:33	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:34	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:35	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:36	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:37	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
7	03E1574:7:38	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:1	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Shouldersherd
9	03E1574:9:2	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:3	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:4	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:5	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:6	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:7	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:8	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:9	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:10	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:11	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:12	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:13				stone
9	03E1574:9:14	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:15	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Shouldersherd
9	03E1574:9:16	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:17	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:18	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:19	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Shouldersherd
9	03E1574:9:20	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:21	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:22	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:23	Pottery	Early Neolithic		Bodysherd

9	03E1574:9:24	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:25	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:26	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:27	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:28	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:29	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:30	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:31	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:32	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:33	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:34	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:35	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:36	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:37	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:38	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:39	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:40	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:41	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:42	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:43	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:44	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:45	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:46	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:47	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:48	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:49	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:50	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:51	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:52	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:53	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:54	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:55	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:56	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:57	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:58	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:59	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:60	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:61	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:62	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:63	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:64	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:65	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Body sherd
9	03E1574:9:66	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
9	03E1574:9:67	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:1	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:2	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:3	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:4	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:5	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:6	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:7	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:8	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:9	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:10	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:11	Pottery	Early Neolithic			Bodysherd

Interpretation:

Five archaeological features are represented in subgroup {1001}. These comprised of four shallow, truncated pits forming a curvilinear arc running north-east to south-west with one possible pit internal to the arc, situated to the immediate west. The pits arced from north-east to south-west in the following order [C14], [C6], [C8], [C10] with [C4]

located centrally this arc was spaced over an area approximately 5m in length. A description of the contexts follows:

[C4] was a sub-circular pit in plan, 0.70m x 0.70m and 0.30m in depth. It had a sharp break of slope from the surface to steep but straight sides, which broke gradually to a flat base (Plate 3). This was filled by (C3), a compact mid to dark brown sandy clay, with moderate charcoal inclusions, plentiful small angular stones and several cobble size possible packing stones. Eighteen sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the fill. The sherds recovered from (C3) were included in the pottery assemblage sent for specialist analysis by E. Grogan & H. Roche. The sherds returned a date of Early Neolithic (Appendix 2.1)

[C6] was a possible posthole, circular in plan, 0.55m in diameter and 0.15m in depth. It had a sharp break of slope from the surface to uneven sides that tapered to a blunt base (Plate 4). This was filled by (C5), a dark to mid brown peaty clay with frequent charcoal and moderate small angular stones included. Nineteen sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the fill. The sherds recovered from (C5) were included in the pottery assemblage sent for specialist analysis and returned a date of Early Neolithic (Appendix 2.1)

[C8] was an oval shaped, north-east to south-west oriented possible posthole 0.22m x 0.19m and 0.05m deep. It formed a very shallow scoop with a concave base and was filled by (C7), a dark brown charcoal rich sandy silt and contained thirty-eight sherds of prehistoric pottery. The sherds recovered from (C7) were included in the pottery assemblage sent for specialist analysis and returned a date of Early Neolithic (Appendix 2.1)

[C10] was an oval shaped north-south oriented possible posthole 0.6m x 0.5m and 0.13m deep. It was a shallow cut with a concave base. This was filled by (C9), a dark brown charcoal-rich silty clay and contained sixty-seven sherds of prehistoric pottery. The sherds recovered from (C9) were included in the pottery assemblage sent for specialist analysis and returned a date of Early Neolithic (Appendix 2.1)

[C14] was a possible posthole, circular in plan, 0.48m x 0.45m and 0.09m deep. The cut had a sharp break of slope at its surface to even sides that tapered to its base. This cut was filled by (C13), which was a dark to mid brown charcoal rich peaty clay, with moderate small angular stones and eleven sherds of prehistoric pottery. The sherds recovered from (C13) were included in the pottery assemblage sent for specialist analysis and returned a date of Early Neolithic (Appendix 2.1)

Due to the curving nature of the arc of postholes/pits it is suggested that they may be the very truncated remains of a structure of unknown function. All other potential contexts on site were thoroughly investigated by the team, but these were deemed to be not of an archaeological nature.

GROUP 2 DISCUSSION: Prehistoric Activity

Group	Subgroup	Subgroup type	Period by finds/ stratigraphy	Period by interpretation	Group Interpretation
2	1001	Postholes	Early Neolithic	Early Neolithic	Neolithic

Archaeological features were initially identified in an area measuring 40m x 40m. The excavation revealed a group of five pits or possible postholes, four of which formed a shallow arc extending northeast-southwest, with a fifth pit internal to this arc. Four of the features were between 5 and 15cm in depth and suggest that the archaeology had been truncated. All the pits or postholes contained sherds of Early Neolithic Carinated pottery (Appendix 2.1).

The curve formed by the regularly-spaced pits [C4], [C6], [C8], [C10] and [C14] was tentatively interpreted as the possible partial remains of a circular structure (Delaney 2006). While this is not inconceivable, it should be noted that these pits contained only single fills – no postpipes were recorded – and the only evidence for possible stone packing came from pit 4, a feature internal to the arc. An alternative explanation is that the line formed by these pits is accidental or is at least non-structural, and that the features at Faughart Lower 5 are the remains of a small group of pits dug separately or at the same time and then filled.

4.3 Group 3: Topsoil

4.3.1 Subgroup {1002}: Topsoil

Contexts:

C.	Area	Fill of	Filled with	Interpretation	Description
1	Site	n/a	n/a	Topsoil	Compact dark grey brown sandy clay frq mix stones.

Finds:

None.

Topsoil was generally of uniform colour and compaction across the site.

4.4 SYNTHESIS

Open Area 1: Geology and topography

The DWB in this area crosses a zone of prime agricultural land, with soils in the category of 'Wide Use Range' being very suitable for grassland and tillage enterprises. In general terms the ground conditions comprise typically 3m to 5m of glacial till over Bedrock. The glacial nature of the sand and stone-strewn natural subsoil ensures the area is well drained. Bedrock consists of Silurian siltstones, mudstones and sandstones, and locally Dinatian limestone.

Site 132, Faughart Lower 5 was located in a field immediately to east of the Faughart Road (R97). This field was generally flat grazed pasture with a slight central raised area and a slightly raised area to the south. It was surrounded on all sides with mature hedge lines. The topsoil over the area stripped was between 0.30-0.40m deep.

Open Area 2: Prehistoric Activity

Archaeological features were initially identified in an area measuring 40m x 40m. The excavation revealed a group of five pits or possible postholes, four of which formed a shallow arc extending northeast-southwest, with a fifth pit internal to this arc. Four of the features were between 5 and 15cm in depth and suggest that the archaeology had been truncated. All the pits or postholes contained sherds of Early Neolithic Carinated pottery (Appendix 2.1).

The curve formed by the regularly-spaced pits [C4], [C6], [C8], [C10] and [C14] was tentatively interpreted as the possible partial remains of a circular structure (Delaney 2006). While this is not inconceivable, it should be noted that these pits contained only single fills – no postpipes were recorded – and the only evidence for possible stone packing came from pit 4, a feature internal to the arc. An alternative explanation is that the line formed by these pits is accidental or is at least non-structural, and that the features at Faughart Lower 5 are the remains of a small group of pits dug separately or at the same time and then filled.

Open Area 3: Post-medieval and modern activity

The land was enclosed during the post-medieval period and field boundaries were dug. Modern topsoil was particularly thin over the site and ploughing had considerably truncated the underlying archaeological remains.

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 excavations began. The following are the Original Research Questions relating to the excavation at Site 132, Faughart Lower 5 and Responses (**R**) based on preliminary assessment of the site data.

ORQ 1: *How many buildings are present, what were the functions and construction methods? Are there different phases of construction and use?*

R: The curve formed by the regularly-spaced pits [C6], [C8], [C10] and [C14] was tentatively interpreted as the possible partial remains of a circular structure. While this is not inconceivable, it should be noted that these pits contained only single fills – no postpipes were recorded – and the only evidence for possible stone packing came from pit 4, a feature internal to the arc.

ORQ 2: *What are the dates of occupation and how does the site change through time?*

R: The site would appear to date to the Early Neolithic based on the pottery assemblage although the broad date range of Early Neolithic carinated pottery, a couple of centuries at least and the lack of any other datable material recovered makes it difficult to address questions of sequence and chronology in the early 4th millennium BC. No evidence for occupation from any other period was discovered during the excavation.

ORQ 3: *Are there areas where different activities were undertaken?*

R: No.

ORQ 4: *What is the nature of the finds and the environmental evidence? What type of evidence is present here and do they give indications for specific activities?*

R: With the exception of post-medieval finds retrieved from the topsoil, the only finds recovered were Early and Middle Neolithic pottery sherds from two pits. No other evidence for activity was recovered.

ORQ 5: *Is there any evidence for burial or ritual activity?*

R: No.

5.2 Conclusions

Discussion of Neolithic activity at Site 132, Faughart Lower 5 (By Dr. Jessica Smyth).

The archaeological features were initially identified during a programme of linear testing along the proposed route of the Dundalk western bypass (Licence no: 02E0658). Subsequent excavation (Licence no: 03E01574; Delaney 2006) of an area 40m x 40m revealed a group of five pits or possible postholes, four of which formed a shallow arc extending northeast-southwest, with a fifth pit internal to this arc. Four of the features were between 5 and 15cm in depth and suggest that the archaeology had

been truncated. All the pits or postholes contained sherds of Early Neolithic Carinated pottery (Appendix 2.1).

The curve formed by the regularly-spaced pits [C6], [C8], [C10] and [C14] was tentatively interpreted as the possible partial remains of a circular structure. While this is not inconceivable, it should be noted that these pits contained only single fills – no postpipes were recorded – and the only evidence for possible stone packing came from pit 4, a feature internal to the arc. An alternative explanation is that the line formed by these pits is accidental or is at least non-structural, and that the features at Faughart Lower are the remains of a small group of pits dug separately or at the same time and then filled. The Faughart Lower pits contained dark, charcoal-rich or peaty fills. This, together with the worn and fragmented pottery inclusions (Appendix 2.1) and the hazelnut shells from Pit 14, suggest that the pits were filled with deposits of domestic or midden material. It would appear that the source of this midden material was located some distance away: all other potential contexts on the site were thoroughly investigated and found to be non-archaeological. Moreover, the pits at Faughart Lower 5 lay within a topsoil-stripped and archaeologically monitored corridor on average 100m wide (*ibid.*).

Seemingly isolated Early Neolithic pits have been recorded further south, along the route of the M1 Drogheda Bypass. At Balgatheran 2, Co. Louth, a scatter of small pits, hollows and shallow deposits produced varying amounts of early Neolithic pottery, flint, burnt bone, burnt stone, charcoal and charred hazelnut shell. One feature also yielded some charred cereal grain (Campbell 2002a). At Mell 6, Co. Louth, on the north-facing slope of a limestone ridge, a shallow, oval pit was found to contain a fill of dark grey-brown soil, as well as charcoal, a large fragment of a possible granite maul, several heat-cracked stones and several sherds of Early Neolithic Carinated pottery (Campbell 2002b; Kieran Campbell, pers. comm.). None of these sites yielded other discernible features in the vicinity. Of course, given that most of the above sites have been uncovered along relatively narrow road takes or pipeline corridors, we may never know how separate or isolated this activity really is.

Pit digging and deposition was a common practice in the Irish early Neolithic. A recent review of Neolithic material listed in the *Excavations Bulletin* from 1970 to 2002 shows that sites producing pits were at least as common as sites with evidence for houses (Smyth 2007; in prep). Pits have been uncovered in river valleys and in coastal sandhills, and across limestone ridges and hilltops. They may occur singly or in clusters, with or without associated structural features or occupation evidence. Generally speaking, many of the pits found in clusters or singly across other parts of the landscape are located in the very same low-lying, gently undulating terrain as that chosen for the early Neolithic timber houses. Both isolated pits and those associated with houses also commonly contain 'simple' fills of silty sand/clay flecked with charcoal, burnt/unburnt stone and hazelnut shell fragments, with occasional pieces of pottery and lithics. However, there are slight indications that pits located away from the Early Neolithic houses yield more artefacts, e.g., more sherds of pottery and worked flint. Forty-seven sherds of Early Neolithic Carinated pottery came from a pit at Kerlogue, Co. Wexford, 26 sherds from the pit at Oldbridge 1, Co. Meath, while approximately 50 sherds of pottery were recovered from the cluster of pits at Balgatheran 2 (McLoughlin 2004; Campbell 2002c, 2002a). The pits from Faughart Lower 5 certainly fit in with this emerging trend. Such amounts of material may not be very substantial, but they still contrast with the fills of pits associated with most early

Neolithic houses. This may be due to the fact that the foundation trenches, internal walls and postholes of the houses themselves are often the focus of deposition, resulting in fewer objects or less cultural material being deposited in surrounding pits.

Since Case's explorations at Goodland, Co. Antrim (1973), several authors have acknowledged that the digging and filling of pits in Ireland in the Neolithic involved something more than the routine disposal of unwanted refuse (e.g. Cooney 2000; Gibson 2003; Woodman & Bamforth 2004). Despite this, many of the generally artefact-poor Early Neolithic pits – especially those associated with houses – have been interpreted as mere 'rubbish pits'. It has been supposed that these features were dug to dispose of quantities of occupation material or else represent clay borrow pits, infilled for safety. Such interpretations, based on the quantity and quality of diagnostic 'artefacts' in pits, are founded on modern notions of rubbish, consumption and disposal and undermine the importance that may have been attached in the past to materials like clay and stone and to the acts or events that produced the fills (Chapman 2000a, 2000b). In the British literature, pits feature prominently in Neolithic settlement narratives (e.g. Garrow 2006). In southern Britain in particular, a region that is largely devoid of visible architectural statements of everyday place relations, pits have come to represent the presence and pauses of people in the landscape at the scale of small groups. Like the Irish examples, many of these pits have been shown to contain accumulated and abraded secondary debris, or midden material, a potentially powerful symbol of life and living, consumption and the home place.

Pollard argues that the pit deposition common in the earlier British Neolithic would have been engaged in to situate or 'presence' meanings and references in particular locations and contexts (2002: 23). In a lifestyle of high mobility, deposition perhaps served to 'fix' domesticity at particular locales (*ibid.*: 25). Mark Edmonds interprets pit deposition in a similar way, suggesting that pits were dug and filled as people left a place for a season, like the planting of crops, offering "the hope of renewal and return" (1997: 106). Pollard also suggests that abandoning a settlement and moving on was an act of social transition, and a potential threat to social order. The digging and filling of pits may have been a way to counter this threat (1999: 89). In whatever way these pits were tied into local practices of renewal and renegotiation of tenure in the Neolithic, such was the attitude to settlement that even shortlived occupations "could not easily be walked away from" (Pollard 2001: 323). The abandonment of a settlement seems to have required respectful treatment (*ibid.*), and the fact that most pits were filled in a single operation suggests that connections to a place may have been severed or transformed at a specific point in time (*ibid.*).

Certainly, not every Neolithic pit can be viewed as a structured or ritualized expression of a place relationship. As Reynolds (1979) has remarked, pits can have lengthy biographies and unless it can be shown that a pit was backfilled a short time after it was excavated, we should be careful in arguing for deposition for deposition's sake. Nevertheless, it is tempting to view the form of deposition seen at Faughart Lower 5 – essentially deposits of occupation material – as intimately connected with settlement, part of a wider practice carried out across settlements of varying size and permanence.

The identification of Early Neolithic Carinated pottery at Faughart Lower 5 (Grogan and Roche 2006a) is useful in looking in broad terms at early prehistoric activity in north Louth and across eastern Leinster. Comparative, albeit smaller, assemblages

have been found on several sites in the vicinity such as Littlemill 1, Donaghmore 1a and Newtownbalregan 6, Co. Louth (Ó Donnchadha 2003; Ó Donnchadha 2002; Bayley 2004; Grogan and Roche 2006b, 2006c, 2005). However, the relatively broad date range of early Neolithic carinated pottery – a couple of centuries at least – means that a date based solely on pottery identification is of little use in addressing questions of sequence and chronology in the early 4th millennium BC. Currently, emerging short-life dates for early Neolithic timber houses are suggesting that this activity may have taken place over two centuries or less, from approximately 3800BC to 3650/3600BC (McSparron 2003; Smyth forthcoming; Alex Bayliss, pers comm.). Such evidence poses new questions about the nature of settlement at the very beginning of the Irish Neolithic, at c.4000BC onwards, and in this respect hazelnut shell from the fill of pit 14 might be used to give a tighter indication of the date of activity at Faughart Lower 5, information potentially not of only regional but national importance.

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Irish
Archaeological
Consultancy Ltd.

Title: Site 132, Faughart Lower 5
Project: M1 Dundalk Western Bypass
Client: Louth County Council

Scale: N.T.S.
Date: 19/11/07
Produced by: P Higgins
Job No: J2041
Figure No: 1

NORTH



LH007:001 - Archaeological Complex

LH007:094 - Bellew's Bridge

egan Lough on 1835 survey - subsequently drained

LH007:024 - souterrain

LH007:025 - souterrain

LH007:025 - souterrain

LH007:029 - souterrain

LH007:102 - rock art

LH007:100 - cist

LH007:030-31 - Ringfort + stone

Grey Acre Road

LH007:032 - stone

LH007:033 - souterrain

LH006:060 - 2 x souterrains

LH007:106 - souterrain

LH007:058 - crannóg

LH007:059 - souterrain

LH007:060 - cemetery

LH007:063 - souterrain

LH007:064 - fulacht fiadh

LH007:062 - dugdúch

Mill on 1835 OS

LH007:071 - Souterrains

LH007:072 - enclosure, souterrains, art, ogham, church, metalworking

LH007:074 - Ringfort

LH007:077 - cemetery

LH007:075 - souterrain

LH007:111 - souterrain

LH007:108 - souterrain

LH004:059 - Ringfort

LH004:060 - Church

Flour Mill

Tower House

LH007:099 - Cist

Mill Race Scotch Green Lane

St John's Well

LH007:011 - St John's Well

LH007:010 - standing stone

Corn Mill

Malt Kiln

LH007:012 - Henge enclosure

LH004:066 - Enclosure

LH004:067 - Ringfort

Stone

LH007:014 - Enclosure

LH007:013 - Ringfort/Cashel

LH004:118 - Enclosure

LH007:015 - Fulacht

LH004:072 - Souterrain

Tree Ring

Folly

Mill House

Field E

Stream

Site 132
Faughart Lower 5

Legend

- Dundalk Western Bypass Route
- IAC excavated sites
- RMP sites



Irish
Archaeological
Consultancy Ltd.

Title: Site location with RMP sites shown

Project: Dundalk Western Bypass

Client: Louth County Council

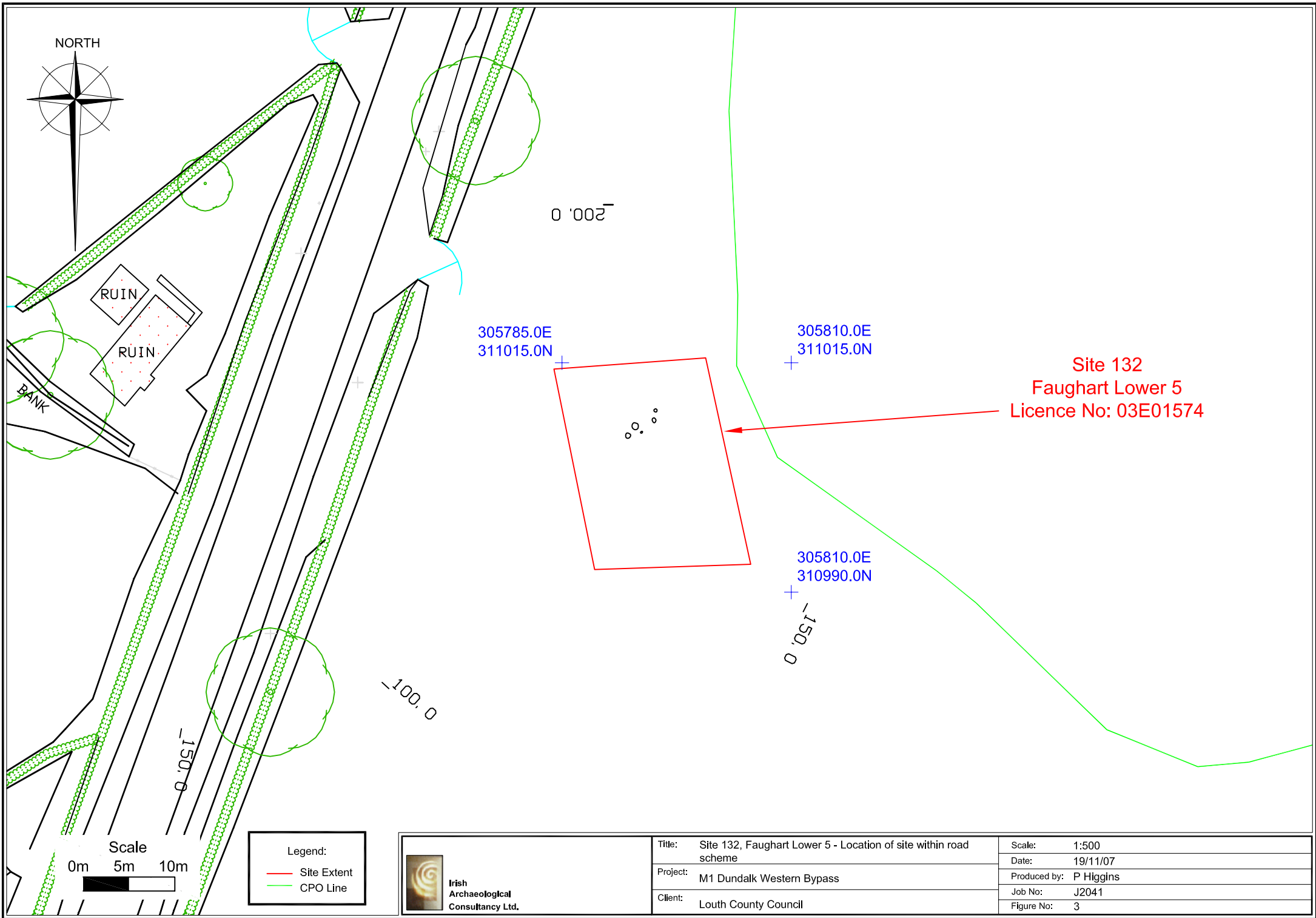
Scale: 1:30000

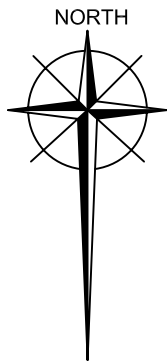
Date: 19/11/07

Produced by: P Higgins

Job No: J2041

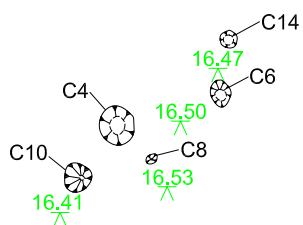
Figure No: 2





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311015.0N

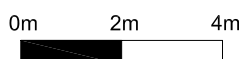


305810.0E
310990.0N

Legend

C## Cut number
— Limit of excavation
0.00 OD Levels

Scale



Irish
Archaeological
Consultancy Ltd.

Title: Post Excavation Plan of Site 132 Faughart 5
Project: M1 Dundalk Western Bypass
Client: Louth County Council

Scale: 1:150
Date: 27/11/07
Produced by: P Higgins
Job No: J2041
Figure No: 4



Plate 1: Overview of Site 132, looking south (Studiolab)



Plate 2: Pre-excitation view of site



Plate 3. Post-ex of posthole [C4], looking north

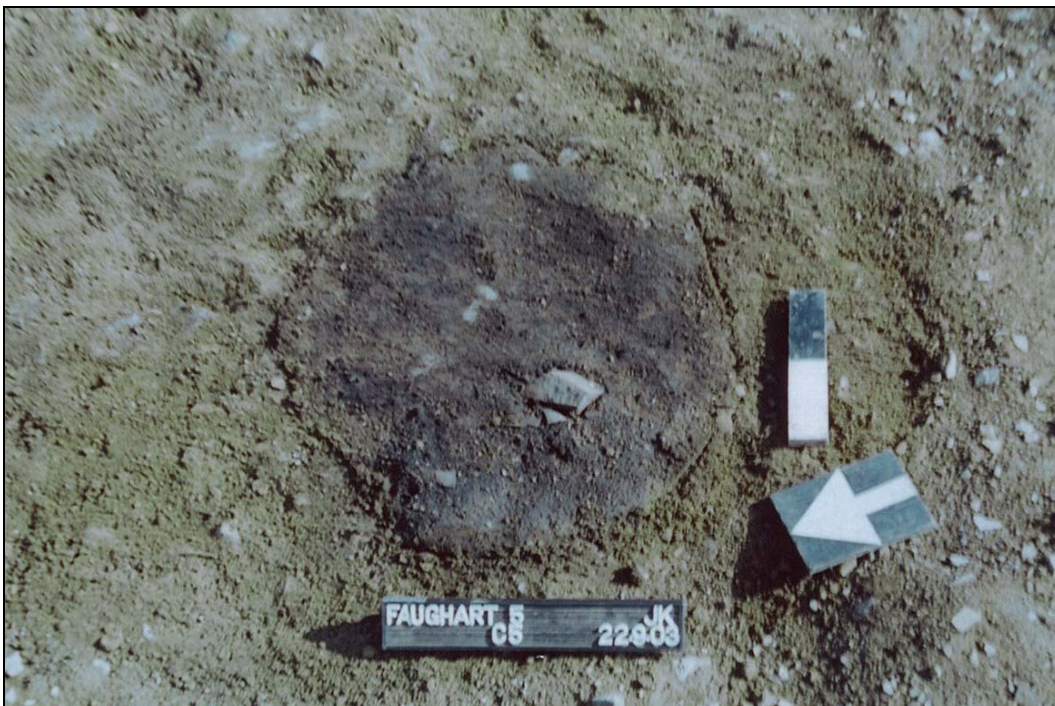


Plate 4: Pre-excitation view of posthole C6

APPENDIX 1: CATALOGUE OF PRIMARY DATA

Context Index:

C.	Area	Fill of	Filled with	Interpretation	Description
1	Site	n/a	n/a	Topsoil	Compact dark grey brown sandy clay frq mix stones.
2	Site	n/a	n/a	Natural subsoil	Compact yellow-grey sandy clay frq mixed stones.
3		C4	n/a	Deliberate fill	Mid-dk grey brown, compact sandy clay, mod ch fl freq s ang, several large packing stones.
4		n/a	C3	Possible posthole	Subcircular in plan, straight steep sides, flat base, 0.30d x 0.70 diameter.
5		C6	N/a	Deliberate backfill	Dk-mid brown, peaty clay, freq ch fl, occ s ang.
6		n/a	C5	Truncated posthole	Circular in plan, uneven sides, blunt tapered base heavily t'd, 0.15d x 0.55dia.
7		C8	n/a	Deliberate backfill	Dk brown/black, charcoal-rich sandy silt.
8		n/a	&	Truncated posthole	slightly oval in plan, very shallow, concave base, 0.05d x 0.22l x 0.19w, NE-SW.
9		C10	n/a	Deliberate fill	Dk Brown, charcoal-rich silt.
10		n/a	C9	Truncated posthole	Oval in plan, very shallow prof, concave base, 0.13d x 0.60l x 0.50w, NW-SE.
11				Non-Archaeological	
12				Non-Archaeological	
13		C14	n/a	Deliberate backfill	Mid-dk brown peaty clay, freq ch fl, occ s+m ang, occ hazelnut shells.
14		n/a	C13	Truncated posthole	Circular in plan, even sides, blunt tapered base, heavily t'd 0.90d x 0.48dia.

Finds Register:

Context	Find	Description
3	03E1574:3:1	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:2	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:3	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:4	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:5	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:6	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:7	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:8	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:9	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:10	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:11	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:12	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:13	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
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3	03E1574:3:15	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
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3	03E1574:3:17	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
3	03E1574:3:18	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:1	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
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5	03E1574:5:14	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:15	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:16	Early Neolithic Shouldersherd
5	03E1574:5:17	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:18	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
5	03E1574:5:19	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
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13	03E1574:13:9	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:10	Early Neolithic Bodysherd
13	03E1574:13:11	Early Neolithic Bodysherd

APPENDIX 2: SPECIALIST REPORTS

APPENDIX 2.1: PREHISTORIC POTTERY REPORT

THE PREHISTORIC POTTERY
FROM
FAUGHART LOWER 5, CO. LOUTH
(03E1574)

EOIN GROGAN AND HELEN ROCHE

Summary

The site produced a small assemblage of sixty nine sherds of early Neolithic Carinated bowls representing at least nine vessels. The pottery came from a small group of pits or postholes and appears to represent domestic activity.

Early Neolithic Carinated bowls

The site produced sixty nine sherds (5 rim-, 11 shoulder-, 29 neck-, and 24 bodysherds as well as 76 fragments and 80 crumbs; total weight: 520g) representing at least nine separate vessels. These came from a pit [C4] and four small pits or postholes [C6], [C8], [C10], [C14] (Delaney 2004). In general the pottery consisted of very friable, crumbly, fabric and the inner surfaces have sheared off many sherds. The level of wear and the fragmented nature of the material, as well as the small number of sherds representing all but one of the vessels (No. 7), suggest that the assemblage is derived from a domestic context. A few vessels, such as Nos 7 and 8, are of more compact ware and No. 7, at least, was finished by burnishing. It is probable that other pots, such as Nos 5, 6 and 8, were also treated in this fashion. The inclusions throughout the assemblage are of both crushed and uncrushed quartzite.

Although no specific measurements were possible it appears that the vessels were generally of medium size (i.e. less than 25cm in maximum diameter at the rim) but a few, such as Nos 1, 4, 5 and 7 may have been larger. Only a few rimsherds were present but these are rounded and slightly everted. The shoulders are mainly of the medium stepped type although that on Vessel 4 is slightly more prominent. These vessels generally have neutral profiles and deep rounded bodies. These forms represent the earliest type of Neolithic pottery in Ireland (Case 1961: 'Dunmurry-Ballymarlagh styles'; Sheridan 1995: 'classic' carinated bowls). In a regional context this pottery occurs at Monanny, Co. Monaghan (Walsh 2004; Grogan and Roche 2006a), Knowth northeast, Co. Meath (Eogan and Roche 1997), and Feltrim Hill, Co. Dublin (Hartnett and Eogan 1964). Smaller assemblages also came from several sites in the vicinity such as Littlemill 1, the Hill of Rath, Donaghmore 1a and Newtownbalregan 6, Co. Louth (Ó Donnchadha 2003; Duffy 2002; Ó Donnchadha 2002; Bayley 2004; Grogan and Roche 2006b; 2006c; 2005). Dated sites indicate that this pottery style was current during the period c. 4000-3600 BC.

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CATALOGUE

The excavation number 05E1574 is omitted throughout; only the context number followed by the find number is included. Where the pottery is listed in the catalogue the context numbers are in bold: e.g. bodysherds: **92.5-6**.

Numbers in square brackets (e.g. **92.**[16-7]) indicate that the sherds are conjoined.

R = Rimsherd N = Necksherd B = Bodysherd S = shouldersherd f = fragment

The thickness refers to an average dimension; where relevant a thickness range is indicated. Vessel numbers have been allocated to pottery where some estimation of the form of the pot is possible, or where the detailed evidence of featured sherds (e.g. rims, shoulders) or the fabric indicates separate vessels.

Vessel/ 1. There are 3 sherds (2 necksherds: **3.1**, **3**; 1 bodysherd: **3.2**) from a large vessel of friable brown-buff fabric with a dark grey core. There is a medium content of crushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 2\text{mm}$, up to $4 \times 3\text{mm}$). Neck thickness: $10.5\text{mm}+$; body: 7.6mm .

Vessel/ 2. There are 7 sherds (1 rimsherd: **3.5**; 2 shouldersherds: **3.4**, **11**; 4 necksherds: **3.6-9**) from a medium sized vessel with a rounded and slightly everted rim, a sharply curved neck and a medium step shoulder. The friable grey-buff fabric has smooth, inclusion-free, surfaces. There is a medium content of crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 1.5\text{mm}$, up to 2.5mm). Body thickness: 4.8mm .

Vessel/ 3. There are 2 sherds (1 shouldersherd: **3.10**; 1 necksherd: **3.12**; 7 fragments: **3.13-7**; 20 crumbs: **3.18**) from a vessel with a curved neck and a sharply angled medium step shoulder. The friable buff fabric has smooth, grey-brown surfaces. There is a medium content of crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 1.5\text{mm}$, up to 2.5mm).

Vessel/ 4. There are 13 sherds (1 rimsherd: **5.5**; 3 shouldersherds and 9 necksherds: **5.**[S 16-8, N 1-4], **5.N6-9**, **11**; 4 fragments: **5.12-5**) from a large vessel with a rounded and slightly everted rim, a high ($6\text{cm}+$) curved neck, a medium step shoulder and a deep rounded body. The friable buff fabric has smooth surfaces. There is a low to medium content of crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 1.5\text{mm}$, up to 2.5mm). Neck thickness: 7.5mm .

Vessel/ 5. There are 8 sherds (2 rimsherds: **7.2-3**; 1 shouldersherd: **7.9**; 3 necksherds: **7.1**, **5**, **8**; 2 bodysherds: **7.4**, **7**) from a large vessel with a rounded everted rim, sharply curved neck and a stepped shoulder. The smooth grey-brown fabric has a low content of crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 1\text{mm}$, up to $2 \times 2\text{mm}$). Neck thickness: 6.2mm .

Vessel/ 6. There are 6 sherds (1 rimsherd: **7.10**; 5 necksherds: **7.11-2**, **13-5**) from a vessel with a angular everted rim and a sharply curved neck. The smooth grey-brown fabric has a low content of crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 2\text{mm}$). Neck thickness: 6mm .

Vessel/ 7. There are 24 sherds (2 shouldersherds: **9.1**, **19**; 4 necksherds: **9.8**, **10**, **17-8**; 18 bodysherds: **9.2-4**, **5-7**, **11-2**, **20**, **22-4**, **25-30**; 7 fragments: **9.31-7**) from a large vessel with a curved neck, a broad angular shoulder and a medium rounded body.

The smooth brown-buff fabric has a grey-brown inner surface: the external surface has clear smoothing striations and has been burnished. There is a medium content of crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 1\text{mm}$, up to $3 \times 2\text{mm}$). Neck thickness: 6mm; body: 6mm but increasing to 9mm towards the base of the bowl. Total weight of sherds: 210g.

Vessel 8. There are 2 shouldersherds (9.14-5) from a vessel with a curved neck, medium step shoulder and a deep rounded body. The brown-buff fabric has a smooth external surface. There is a low content of finely crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 1\text{mm}$).

Vessel 9. There are 3 sherds (1 necksherd: 13.1; 2 bodysherds: 13.2-3; 7 crumbs: 13.4-10) from a vessel of smooth friable brown-buff fabric has a low content of crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions (up to $3 \times 2\text{mm}$).

Other sherds

5.10 is a bodysherd of hard gritty grey-brown fabric with crushed and uncrushed quartzite inclusions ($\leq 2\text{mm}$)

There are a further 58 fragments: 5.19 (1B, 2f), R 7.16-7, N 7.18-20, 7.26-37, B 9.41-9, 51-9, 61-80, and 70 crumbs: 7.21-5, 38 (55), 9.81 (15).