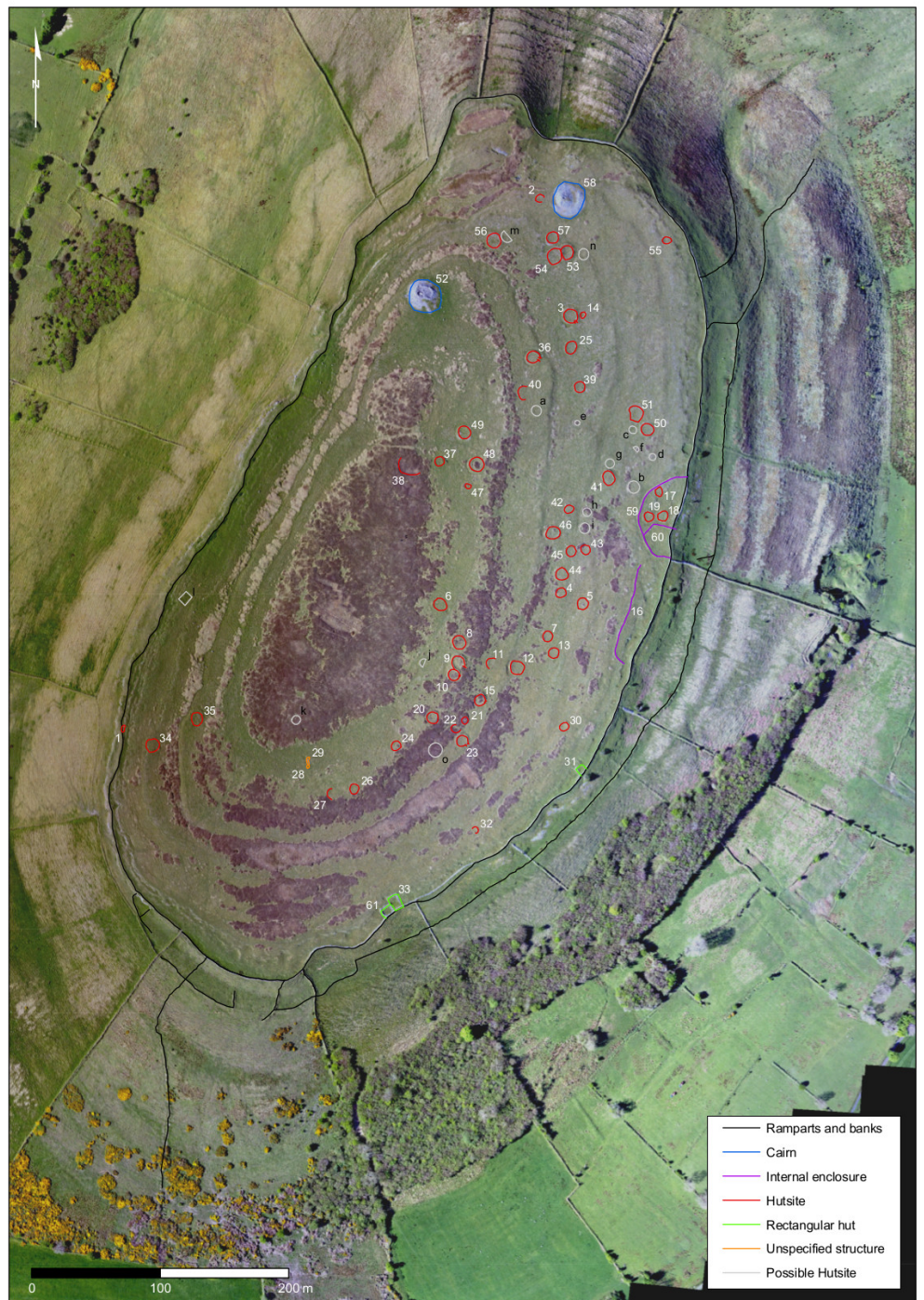




1. Title:	Dr
First name:	Cormac
Surname:	McSparron
Amount awarded:	€5000
3. Grant programme	Archaeology Research Excavation Grant
4. Year awarded	2019
5. Title of project	Post-excavation work on Knocknashee Hilltop Enclosure, Co. Sligo
6. Summary of report (Min. allowed 100 words)	<p>Fieldwork in this project was conducted over two campaigns in the summer months of 2016 and 2017, with post-excavation work carried out over 2018 and 2019. Between May and August of 2016 a series of initial surveys were carried out of the summit of Knocknashee Hill, Co. Sligo. A topographical survey of the entire summit of the hill was conducted, as was a magnetic susceptibility survey. A magnetic gradiometry survey was carried out over a much smaller area (Test Area 1) focused on a particularly well preserved group of roundhouse sites. An earth-resistance survey was carried out on the same group of houses. The topographical survey revealed additional houses not previously recorded on the summit before. It also allowed previously unnoticed settlement patterning to be observed. The magnetic susceptibility survey has produced a map of probable areas of intense activity on the summit of the hill. The magnetic gradiometry and earth-resistance surveys conducted in Test Area 1 revealed the presence of more structures, not previously identified, including a possible additional house, a wall enclosing several houses and a curving wall running through, or perhaps overlying, two houses. In July and August of 2017 a partial excavation of three prehistoric roundhouses identified in the 2016 surveys in Test Area 1 and a large-scale magnetometry survey of the entire southern half of the summit plateau were carried out. The excavation revealed details of the roundhouse occupation, producing information on details of their construction and on their use. One of the partially excavated roundhouses produced evidence of possibly more than one flooring event. Other than this, we seem to be dealing with single-phase occupation. However, abandonment of the houses left them in different states of repair/disrepair, with stone robbing from one of the houses apparently occurring already in prehistory. The magnetometry survey produced additional information on previously unknown subsurface features, but unlike the 2016 magnetometry survey conducted in Test Area 1 was not able to identify any of the roundhouse perimeters visible at surface level. Some of these features clearly appear to be related to the prehistoric roundhouse occupation, but evidence of intensive, industrial-scale burning in an enclosure on the eastern periphery of the site might be of much later (post-medieval?) date. The Late Bronze Age date of the structures on the summit has now been confirmed by a comprehensive programme of radiocarbon dating, and comprehensive palaeoenvironmental analysis of two monolith cores taken during the 2017 campaign is providing new insights into the post-abandonment vegetational history of the site.</p>
7. Date the report was submitted	13-11-2019

8. Please provide two appropriate images which can include photographs of team on site, aerial view, objects found during excavation etc and which can be used by the RIA in grant publications, website etc. The following file types are accepted: gif, jpeg, jpg, pdf, png and the image must be high quality (at least 1200x1800 pixels).



[Fig 7 Knocknashee Hill sites.jpg](#)



9. Please outline the objectives of the project

The project set out to complete the post-excavation of the fieldwork at Knocknashee in 2017, allowing the full publication of the results.

10. Please describe the methodology used in conducting the research

In addition to completing the write up of the excavation radiocarbon dates were obtained, paleoenvironmental, soil and artefact analysis was commissioned.

11. Please outline the findings of your research and/or milestones achieved

The most significant finding of the project is that we have established that the houses we excavated at Knocknashee were occupied in the Late Bronze Age, a period when archaeologists think that there was an increase in population density in Ireland coupled with an increasingly hierarchical society.

12. a) Please provide details of the dissemination of the outcomes from this project

The project has already been reported on in Archaeology Ireland and Emania. In addition a second Emania article and a paper which will be submitted to PRIA are in prep. The excavation has features in the Archaeology at Queens facebook page several times and in other QUB promotional material.

We anticipate a further interim publication in Emania with submission of a paper to PRIA in 2020.