



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 071

**OPPOSITE 56 GORTAGAMMON ROAD
TULLYHOGUE
GORTAGAMMON
COOKSTOWN
COUNTY TYRONE**

LICENCE NO.: AE/06/138

NAOMI CARVER

Site Specific Information

Site Name: Opposite 56 Gortagammon Road

Townland: Gortagammon

SMR No. : TYR 038:011

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: H 8285 7242

County: Tyrone

Excavation Licence No. : AE/06/138

Planning Ref / No. : I/2003/0265/O

Dates of Monitoring: 26th July 2006

Archaeologist(s) Present: Naomi Carver

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site opposite 56 Gortagammon Road, Tullyhogue, County Tyrone in response to a planning application for a new dwelling. The application site was approximately 250m to the south of the remains of a megalithic tomb (TYR 038:011). The evaluation consisted of six mechanically excavated test trenches which ranged in length from 20m to 42.5m. Two of the test trenches contained ephemeral features associated with late nineteenth century ceramics. The remaining four test trenches were archaeologically sterile. It is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out, as the development site does not pose a threat to significant archaeological remains.

Type of monitoring:

Excavation of six test trenches by mechanical excavator equipped with a 'sheugh' bucket under archaeological supervision.

Size of area opened:

Six trenches each approximately 1.5m wide and ranging in length from 20m to 42.5m.

Current Land Use: Agricultural

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site for a proposed new dwelling is located in County Tyrone, approximately 1 km to the south of the village of Tullyhogue. The site lies to the south of the Killymoon River, at a height of approximately 70m above sea level (Figure One). An archaeological evaluation was requested due to the presence of a megalithic tomb (TYR 038:011). The application site is approximately 250m to the south of the megalithic tomb which is thought to be the remains of a portal tomb (Figure Two). It survives in poor condition. There are many archaeological sites in the surrounding area including standing stones, holy wells and raths. The inauguration site of Tullaghoge Fort lies approximately 2km to the north.

The application site consists of a sub-rectangular area approximately 18.9 hectares in size (Figure Three). The site is located on the brow of a hill which slopes gently to the north and also to the south-western corner of the field (Plate One). At the western side is a derelict dwelling house which is overgrown with vegetation (Plate Two). The field boundaries are lined with trees and there is a rough lane running immediately beside the east-west field boundary. From the site there are good views in all directions. Landuse in the immediate area is primarily agricultural although across the road from the site (to the north) is a sand or gravel quarry.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a new dwelling and was requested by Paul Logue: Protecting Historic Monuments Caseworker with Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage.

Excavation

The original research design accompanying the licence application proposed the excavation of four test trenches (Trenches A, B, C and D: Figure Three) in the northern part of the field. However, the proposed location of the new dwelling is in the south-western part of the field, and therefore (with the permission of the caseworker) the archaeological investigation was focused on this area. The northern part of the site was part of another field and the landowner claimed that this area had already been tested but this information is unconfirmed. It is intended that an existing laneway will be used for access and services for the proposed new dwelling. The sewage soakage is to be downslope in the south-western part of the field.

The evaluation, therefore, consisted of six test trenches positioned in the south-western corner of the field (Figure Four). The test trenches were around 1.5m wide and ranged in length from 20m to 42.5m. The trenches were all excavated to the orange boulder clay subsoil, an average depth of 0.24m.

Trench One

Trench One ran parallel to the south-west/north-east field boundary and was situated 3m out from the latter. The trench was also 4m from the north-west/south-east field boundary. The trench terminated 13m from the south-eastern corner of the derelict house. Trench One was approximately 1.3m wide and 42.5m long. The sod and topsoil layer in Trench One (Context No. 101) consisted of a friable, medium

brown, sandy loam which was 0.16m thick. The sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 101) contained no artefactual remains. Within the layer were infrequent small stone inclusions (average size 5x5x5mm) and more frequent larger angular stone inclusions (average size 20x10x5mm). Below the sod and topsoil layer was a thin cultivation soil (Context No. 102). The cultivation soil was orangeish brown in colour and consisted of compact sandy clay loam. It contained infrequent small stone inclusions (average size 0.5x0.5x0.5mm) and more frequent larger sub-angular stone inclusions (average size 30x20x10mm). The cultivation soil (Context No. 102) was 0.14m thick and contained no artefactual material.

Following the removal of the cultivation soil (Context No. 102) in Trench One, two possible features were visible in the subsoil (Context Nos. 103 and 104: Plate Three). Approximately 5m from the north-eastern end of the trench was a patch of compact, dark brown, charcoal-flecked clay loam (Context No. 103: Plate Four). The charcoal-flecked clay loam was around 0.5m wide and spanned the width of the trench. Upon investigation it appeared to be around 0.1m deep and was probably caused by tree root disturbance- indeed it contained old tree roots. Also at the north-eastern end of the trench, approximately 1.5m from the end was a spread of stones (Context No. 104: Plate Five), approximately 2m long and 1.3m wide. The spread consisted of sub-rounded and sub-angular stones (average size 150x10x8mm) which had a few sherds of late nineteenth century ceramics mixed in with them. There was no cut associated with the stones. It is possible that the spread of stones was related in some way to the derelict house to the north-east. Both the area of charcoal flecked clay loam (Context No. 103) and the spread of stones (Context No. 104) overlay the subsoil (Context No. 105) which in Trench One was present at a depth of 0.3m (Plate Six). There were no other features cut into the subsoil.

Trench Two

Trench Two was positioned perpendicular to Trench One. It was located approximately 2.0m along and 1.2m out from the north-eastern end of Trench One. Trench Two was approximately 1.6m wide and 21.5m long. The sod and topsoil in Trench Two (Context No. 201) consisted of a dark brown, friable, sandy loam. The layer contained some small stones (average size 5x5x2mm) along with larger sub-rounded stones (80x60x20mm). The sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 201) contained no finds and was 0.13m thick. The subsoil (Context No. 205) in Trench Two was shallow, particularly at the south-eastern edge of the trench. Although stratigraphically above the cultivation soil (Context No. 202), in parts the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 201) was physically above the subsoil (Context No. 205).

The cultivation soil in Trench Two (Context No. 202) consisted of a compact, medium brown, sandy clay loam which contained frequent small stone inclusions (average size 5x5x2mm). The cultivation soil (Context No. 202) did not extend throughout the trench and where it was present it was a shallow deposit approximately 0.1m thick. The cultivation soil contained no finds. Below the cultivation soil (Context No. 202) were two ephemeral features (Context Nos. 203 and 204: Plate Seven). In the middle of the trench, beside the north-eastern limit of excavation was a spread of stony material (Context No. 203: Plate Eight) which was approximately 3.0m long, at least 0.5m wide and 0.05m deep. The spread consisted of loose, mid to dark brown

sandy loam and contained numerous stones (average size 30x20x10mm) and also active tree roots. There was no evidence of a cut associated with the spread (Context No. 203) which contained a few sherds of late nineteenth century ceramics. The original function or purpose of the feature was uncertain but it was probably relatively modern. The other spread (Context No. 204: Plates Nine and Ten) was present at the north-western end of the trench and was approximately 3.0m long, 1.2m wide and 0.1m deep. The spread consisted of stones (average size 100x80x20mm) within a matrix of light greyish brown gritty sandy loam. There was no evidence of a cut associated with the spread (Context No. 204) which contained similar finds to that of the spread in the middle of the trench (Context No. 203) including a few sherds of glass, nineteenth and twentieth century ceramics and metal. It was of uncertain function but may have been related to the derelict house. Both spreads overlay the subsoil (Context No. 205) whose surface varied in depth from 0.1m at the south-eastern end of the trench to 0.5m at the north-western end (Plate Eleven). There were no subsoil cut features in Trench Two.

Trench Three

Trench Three ran parallel to Trench Two and was situated 6.4m to the south-west. The trench was 1.5m wide and 20.5m long (Plate Twelve). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Three (Context No. 301) consisted of loose, mid to dark brown, sandy loam which contained some small inclusions including quartz (average size 15x10x5mm). The sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 301) was 0.12m deep and contained no finds. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 301) was a thin cultivation soil (Context No. 302) which consisted of compact, orangeish brown, sandy clay loam. The cultivation soil (Context No. 302) contained small sub-rounded inclusions (average size 10x10x5mm). The layer was 0.12m thick and contained a few sherds of nineteenth and twentieth century ceramics. Below the cultivation soil (Context No. 302) was the subsoil (Context No. 303) which in Trench Three occurred at a depth of 0.24m (Plate Thirteen). There were no features cut into the subsoil (Context No. 303) in Trench Three.

Trench Four

Trench Four was situated 12.0m to the south-west of Trench Three and ran parallel to it. Trench Four was 1.4m wide and 21.0m long (Plate Fourteen). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Four (Context No. 401) consisted of loose, mid greyish brown, sandy loam. The layer contained some sub-angular stones (average size 8x5x3mm) and was 0.12m deep. There were no finds within the sod and topsoil layer in Trench Four (Context No. 401). Below the sod and topsoil layer was a thin cultivation soil (Context No. 402) which consisted of a compact, orangeish brown sandy clay loam. The cultivation soil (Context No. 402) contained small stone inclusions (average size 8x5x3mm) and some larger stones (average size 20x30x50mm). It was 0.12m deep and contained a few sherds of modern (nineteenth and twentieth century) ceramics. Below the cultivation soil (Context No. 402) was the subsoil (Context No. 403) which in Trench Four occurred at a depth of 0.24m (Plate Fifteen). There were no features visible in the subsoil (Context No. 403).

Trench Five

Trench Five was located 4.0m to the south-west of Trench Four and ran parallel to the latter. The trench was 1.3m wide and 20.0m long (Plate Sixteen). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Five (Context No. 501) consisted of loose, mid brown, sandy loam containing numerous small sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size 2x5x10mm). There were no finds from the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 501) which was 0.13m deep. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 501) was a thin cultivation soil (Context No. 502) which consisted of a compact, orangeish brown, sandy clay loam. The layer contained numerous stone inclusions ranging in size from small (average size 10x5x2mm) to large (average size 50x30x20mm). Finds from the layer included several sherds of nineteenth and twentieth century ceramics. The cultivation soil (Context No. 502) was 0.14m deep. Below the cultivation soil was the subsoil (Context No. 503) which in Trench Five occurred at a depth of 0.27m (Plate Seventeen) and contained no archaeological features.

Trench Six

Trench Six ran parallel to Trench Five and was situated 6.0m to the south-east of the latter. Trench Six was 20m wide and 1.3m long (Plate Eighteen). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Six consisted of a loose, mid greyish brown, sandy loam which contained frequent small stone inclusions (average size 10x5x5mm). The layer was 0.13m thick and contained no finds. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 601) was a thin cultivation soil (Context No. 602) which consisted of a compact, orangeish brown, sandy clay loam. The cultivation soil (Context No. 602) contained both small (average size 10x5x5mm) and larger (average size 50x40x20mm) stone inclusions. The layer was 0.14m thick and contained no finds. Below the cultivation soil (Context No. 602) was the subsoil (Context No. 603) which was present at a depth of 0.27m (Plate Nineteen). There were no features in the subsoil in Trench Six (Context No. 603).

The spreads of stone (Context Nos. 104, 203 and 204) uncovered in Trenches One and Two were ephemeral features which may have been associated with the nearby derelict house. There were no cuts associated with the three spreads which were shallow and of uncertain function. It is likely, based on associated ceramic finds, that the features were relatively modern and probably date to the early twentieth century. The other four test trenches were archaeologically sterile and the few sherds of pottery recovered from these trenches were consistent with the spread of midden contents for manuring. It is not thought that the proposed development would impinge on unknown archaeological deposits and therefore it is recommended that no further work is required save for a short summary in the annual '*Excavations*' bulletin.

Archive:

Finds:

The artefacts found during the evaluation are temporarily archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

Photographs:

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

Plans / Drawings: N/A

Signed: _____

Date: _____

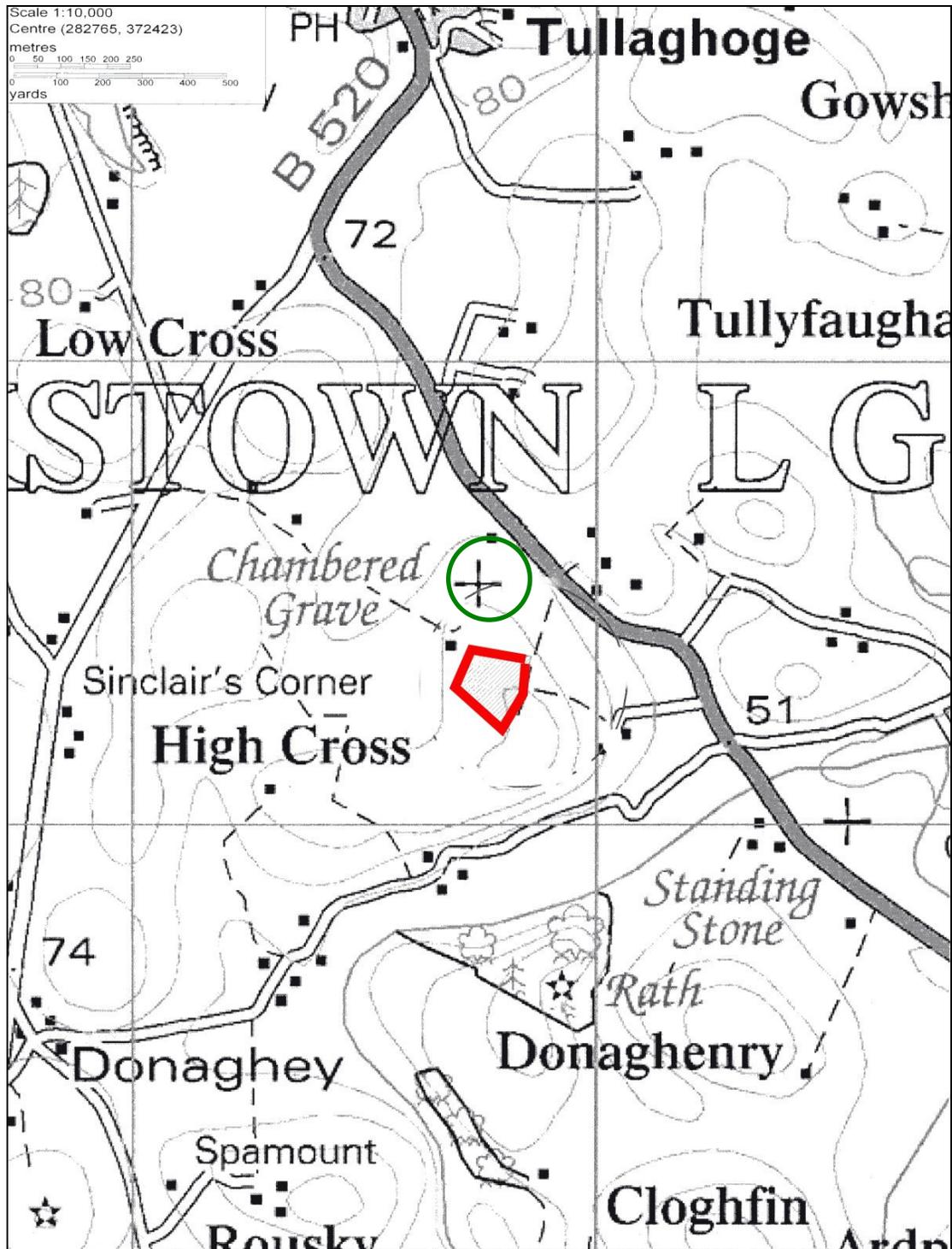


Figure Two: Location of site (outlined in red) and nearby megalithic tomb (circled in green)

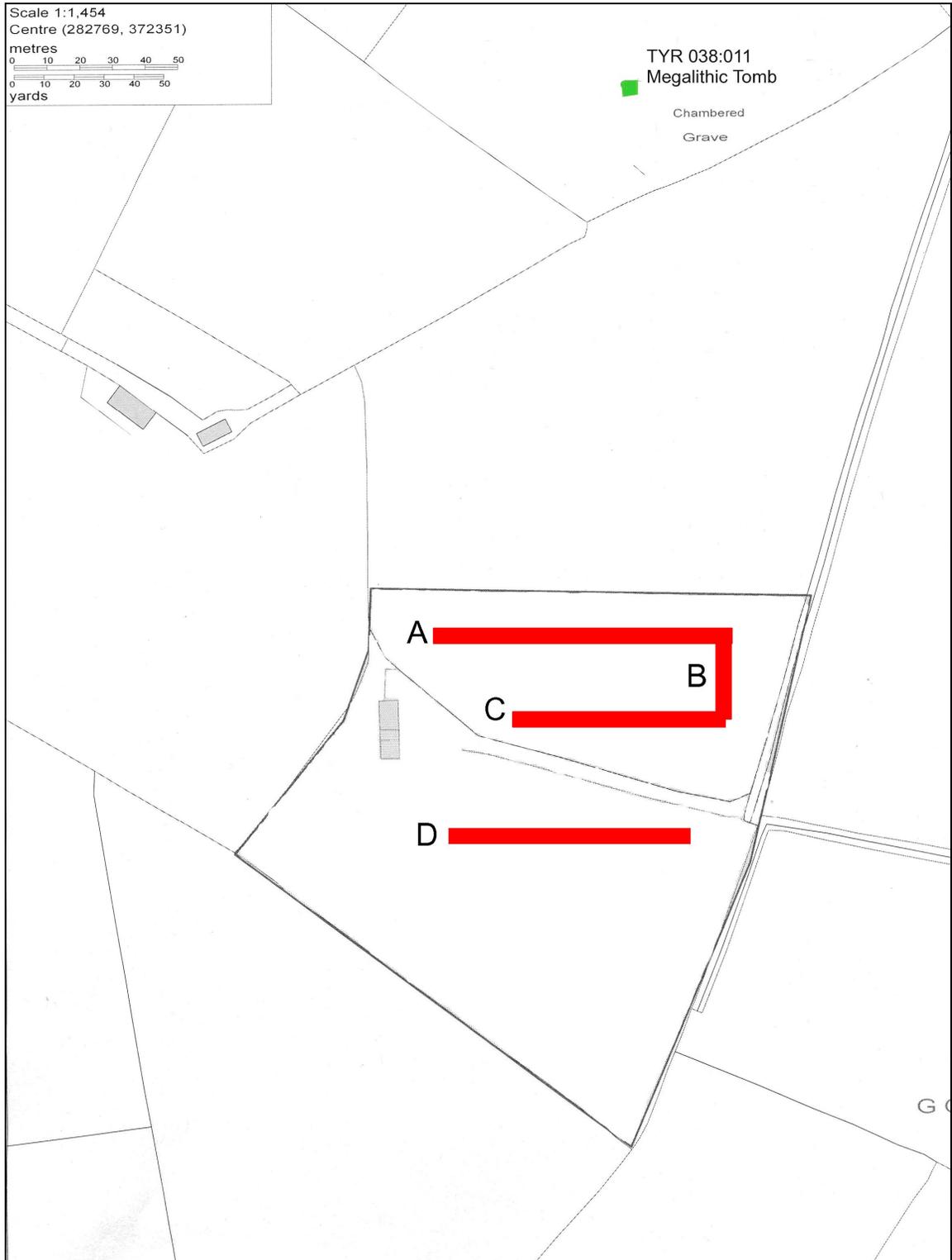


Figure Three: Site plan from original research design showing proposed location of test trenches (in red)

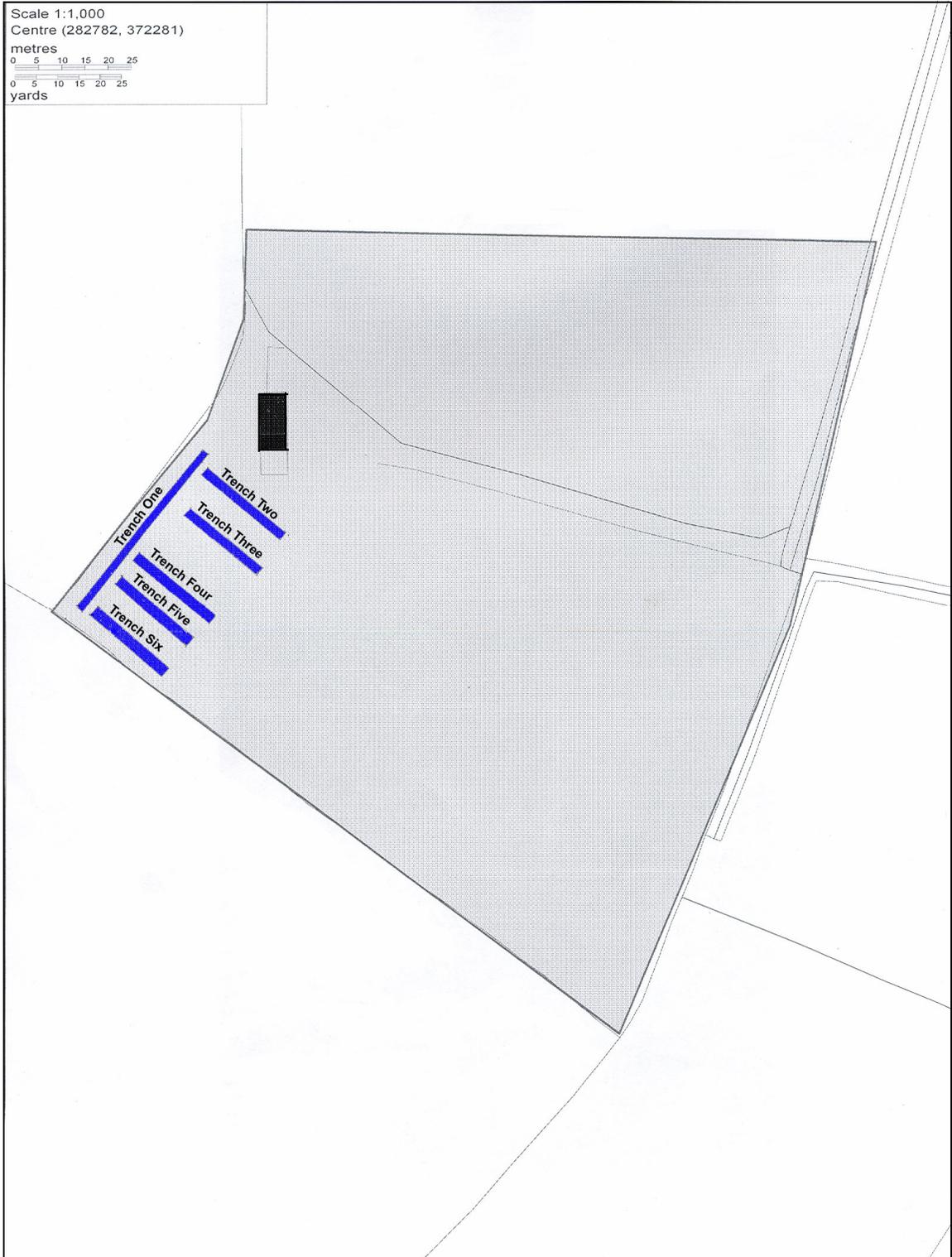


Figure Four: Site plan showing actual location of test trenches (in blue)



Plate One: General view of site from south-western corner of field (looking east)



Plate Two: Derelict house (looking north-west)

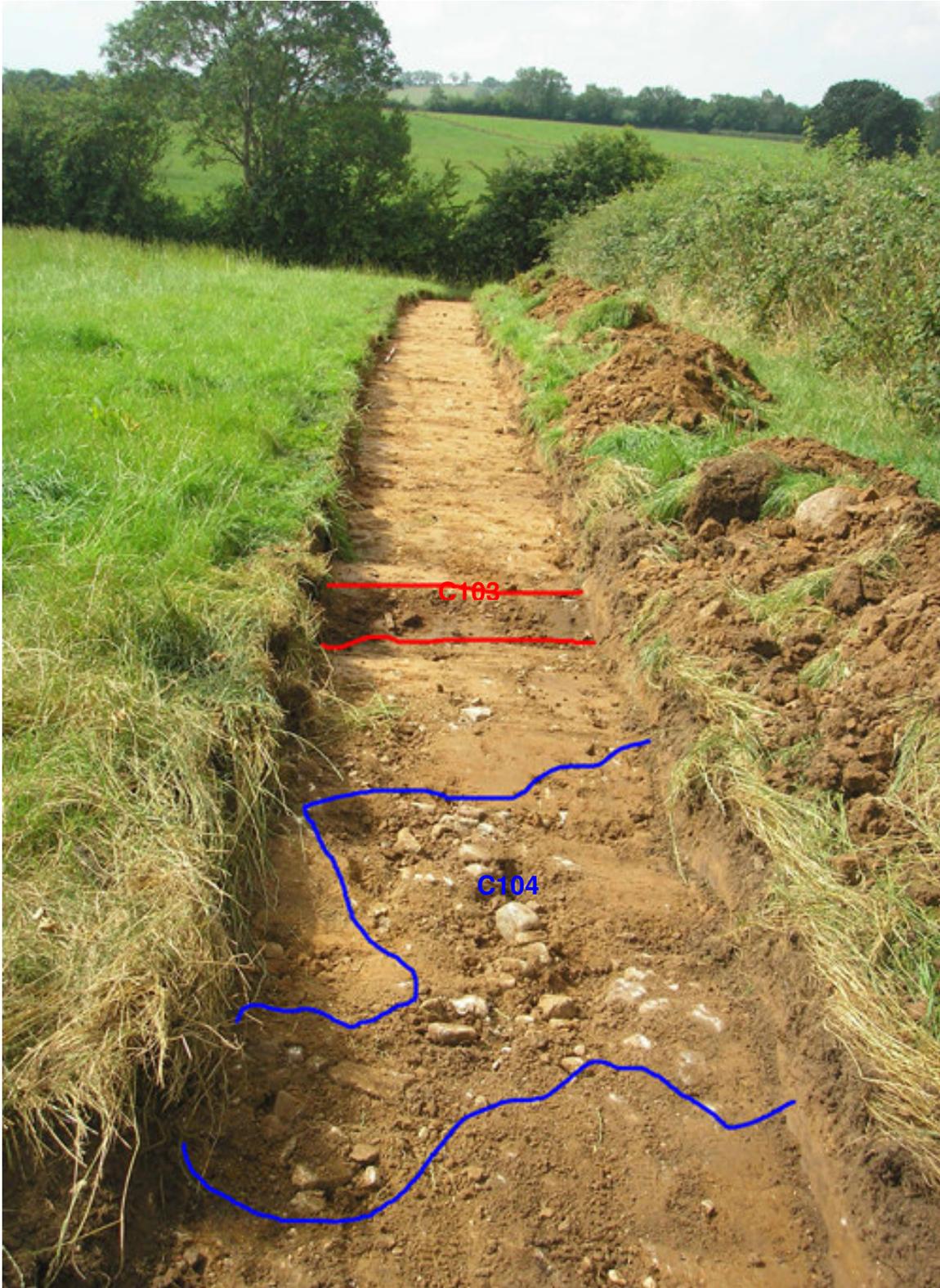


Plate Three: Trench One following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 105), also showing tree root disturbance (Context No. 103) and stone spread (Context No. 104), looking south-west

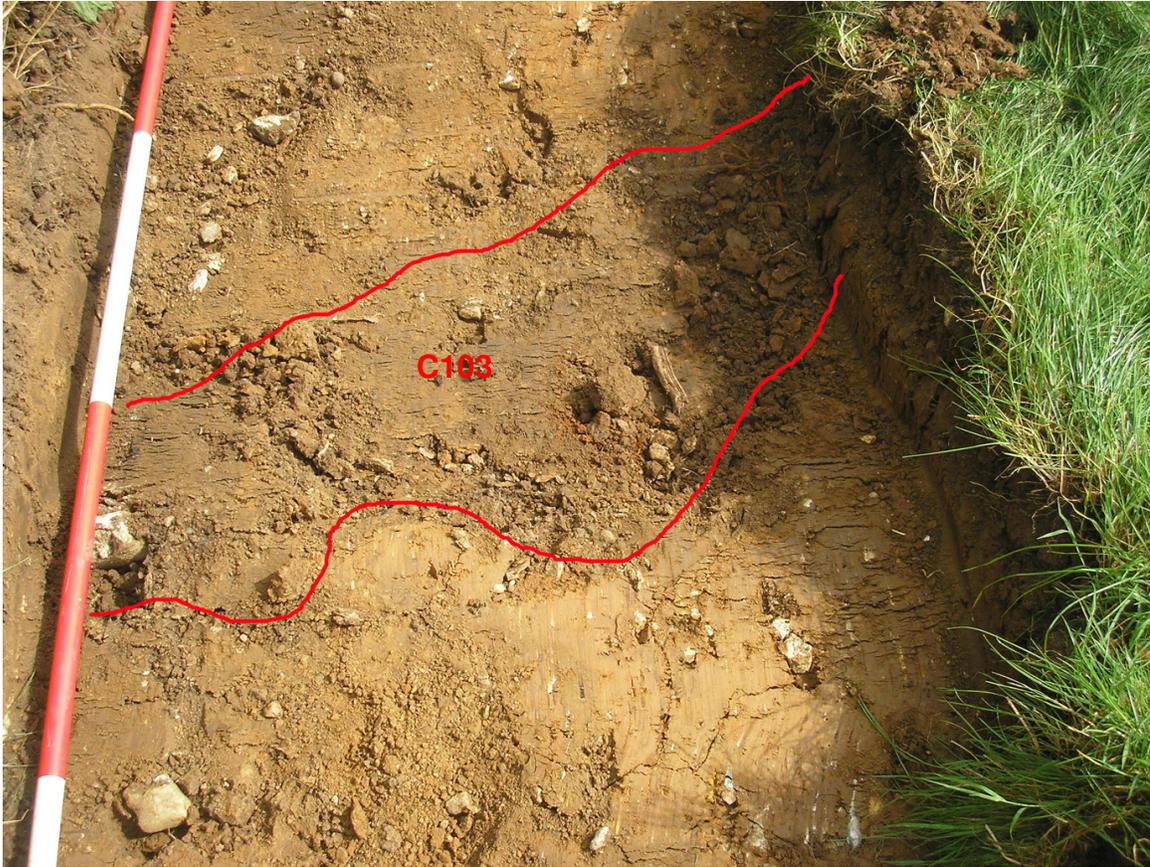


Plate Four: Trench One, close-up of tree root disturbance (Context No. 103), looking north-east

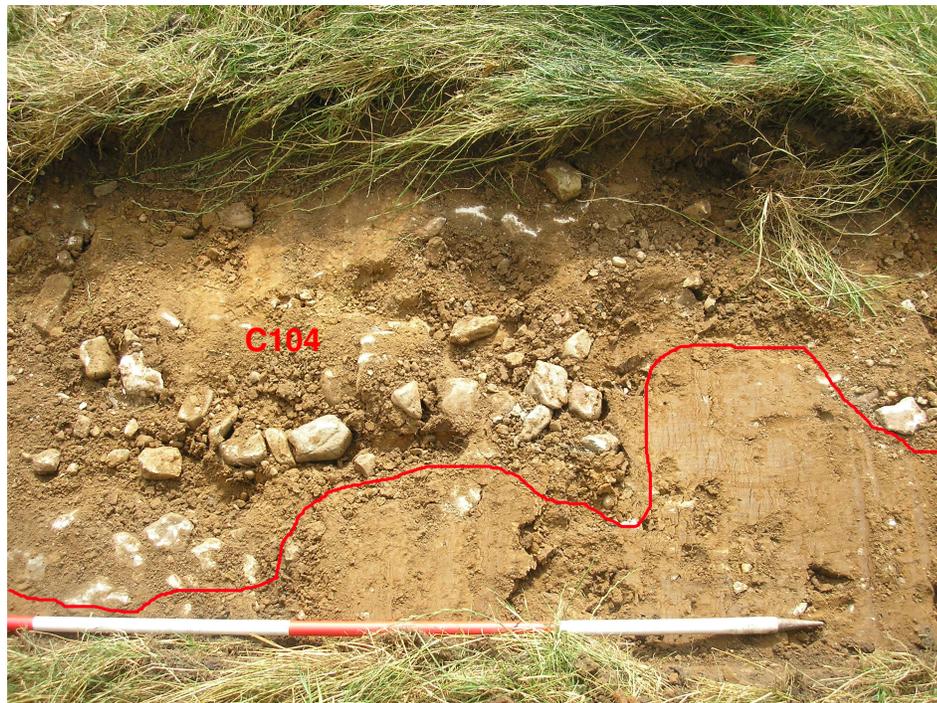


Plate Five: Trench One, close-up of stone spread (Context No. 104), looking south-east



Plate Six: North-west facing section of Trench One, looking south-east

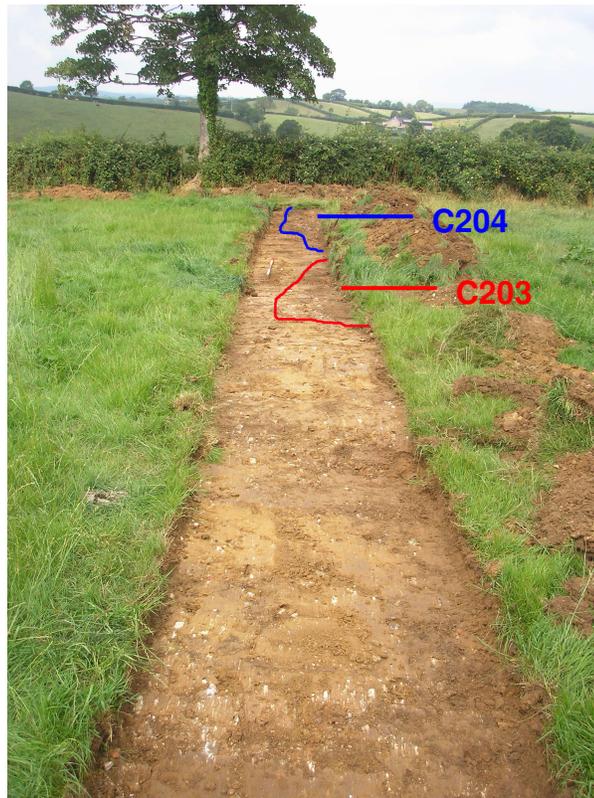


Plate Seven: Trench Two following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 205), looking north-west



Plate Eight: Trench Two showing spread of midden material (Context No. 203), looking north-west



Plate Nine (left): Trench Two showing spread of stones (Context No. 204), looking north-west

*Plate Ten: Trench Two following removal of spread of stones (Context No. 204),
looking north-west*



Plate Eleven: North-east facing section of Trench Two, looking south-west



*Plate Twelve: Trench Three following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 303), looking
south-east*



Plate Thirteen: North-east facing section of Trench Three, looking south-west



Plate Fourteen: Trench Four following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 403), looking south-east



Plate Fifteen: North-east facing section of Trench Four, looking south-west



Plate Sixteen: Trench Five following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 503), looking north-west



Plate Seventeen: North-east facing section of Trench Five, looking south-west



Plate Eighteen: Trench Six following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 603), looking north-west



Plate Nineteen: North-east facing section of Trench Six, looking south-west