



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 072

**7 MOYBEG ROAD
MOBUY
COOKSTOWN
COUNTY LONDONDERRY**

LICENCE NO.: AE/06/135

NAOMI CARVER

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 7 Moybeg Road

Townland: Mobuy

SMR No. : LDY 045:016

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref. : H 7755 8646

County: Londonderry

Excavation Licence No. : AE/06/135

Planning Ref / No. : I/2005/1448/O

Dates of Monitoring: 20th July 2006

Archaeologist(s) Present: Naomi Carver

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site 200m north of 7 Moybeg Road, Mobuy, Cookstown in response to a planning application for a new dwelling. The site was close to the remains of a megalithic tomb (LDY 045:016). The evaluation consisted of four mechanically excavated test trenches which ranged in length from 5m to 16.5m. The test trenches contained no archaeological remains and it is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Four trenches each approximately 2m wide and ranging in length between 5m and 16.5m.

Current Land Use: Wasteland

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site lies on the south-eastern part of the Sperrin Mountains (Figure One), equidistant from the towns of Draperstown and Cookstown (approximately 5km from each). The site occupies an elevated position of 230m OD on the lower slopes of Glenarudda Mountain approximately 2km east of Lough Fea. The application site is close to a megalithic tomb (LDY 045:016) which is situated approximately 10m to the east. There are no visible remains of the tomb. The site was recorded in the Ordnance Survey Memoirs of the nineteenth century which said that the capstone was in a reclined position with one end on the ground supported by smaller upright stones (Environment and Heritage Service: Sites and Monuments Record). The surrounding landscape is rich in archaeological remains of a similar Neolithic character (Figure Two). To the east and north are standing stones, stone circles and chambered graves, including the dual court tomb of Carnabane/Ballybriest.

The application site consists of a rectangular area approximately 0.13 hectares in size (Figure Three). It extends from the south-eastern corner of an unimproved, boggy field, towards an area of much-disturbed ground (Plate One). The disturbed area has been stripped down to the subsoil and therefore was not tested during the archaeological evaluation. No archaeological remains were visible in this area. Between the boggy area in the south-eastern corner and the disturbed area at the north-west are several spoil heaps, presumably the result of the stripping of the latter. The proposed location of the house is in the south-eastern corner of the site (Plate Two). Prior to the evaluation the site was overgrown with vegetation including brambles, gorse, bog cotton and rough grasses. The site is poorly drained, particularly to the north-east (Plate Three). The south-western and south-eastern sides of the site are bordered by field boundaries consisting of ditches, out of which are growing small trees and shrubs. To the north-east the site is unenclosed although the field continues for several hundred metres. There is an area of quarrying at the base of a hill to the north/north-east (Plate Four) and in the surrounding area there are several more sand quarries. The land on all other sides is utilised for rough grazing. The higher ground to the west has been exploited for peat.

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 requested the excavation of four test trenches, each approximately 2m by 15m in size. Due to health and safety reasons, the waterlogged nature of the site and the depth of natural stratigraphy, it was not possible to excavate Trenches One and Two to their proposed length. Consequently, Trench One was 2m wide by approximately 5m long and Trench Two was 2m wide by approximately 12m long. Trenches Three and Four were 16.5m and 16.0m long respectively. The trenches were excavated to the natural subsoil, or in some cases, bedrock, an average depth of 0.9m. The subsoil consisted of sandy clay which varied in colour from green to brown. The bedrock, where exposed, consisted of heavily

weathered grey shaly bedrock. The depth of the subsoil and the unstable nature of the trench sections meant that recording was undertaken from outside the trenches, therefore, some photographs do not include a ranging rod for scale.

Trench One

Trench One was located 4.6m from the north-west/south-east field boundary and 5.0m from the north-east/south-west field boundary. The trench was approximately 2m wide and 5m long (north-east/south-west). The area to the north-east was heavily waterlogged and upon excavation the trench filled rapidly with water (Plate Five). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench One consisted of fairly compact dark brown peaty loam which supported a mixture of vegetation including reeds and rough grasses. The sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 101) contained no stone inclusions, no finds and was approximately 0.2m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 101) was a deep layer of more compact, dark brown peaty loam. The peaty loam (Context No. 102) did not contain stone inclusions. The layer contained no finds. It was 0.78m thick. Below the peaty loam (Context No. 102) was the subsoil (Context No. 103) which was encountered at a depth of 0.98m in Trench One (Plate Six). There were no features cut into the subsoil.

Trench Two

Trench Two was located approximately 3m north-west of Trench One and ran parallel to it. The south-western end of the trench extended up to the north-west/south-east field boundary. The trench was approximately 2m by 12m in size (Plate Seven). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Two (Context No. 201) consisted of a relatively compact dark brown peaty loam which contained no stone inclusions. No finds were found in the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 201). The layer was approximately 0.2m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 201) was a deposit of compact peaty loam (Context No. 202). The peaty loam was dark brown in colour and contained no finds or stone inclusions. The deposit was, on average, 0.7m thick. Below the peaty loam (Context No. 202) was the subsoil (Context No. 203) which in Trench Two was 0.9m deep (Plate Eight). There were no visible features cut into the subsoil.

Trench Three

Trench Three was located approximately 2m to the north-west of Trench Two and ran parallel to it. The trench extended up to the north-west/south-east field boundary. Trench Three was approximately 2.0m wide and approximately 16.5m long (Plate Nine). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Three (Context No. 301) consisted of a rooty dark brown peaty loam which was quite compact and contained no stone inclusions. The sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 301) contained no finds. The layer was 0.19m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 301) was a deposit of compact dark brown peaty loam (Context No. 302). There were no finds within the peaty loam (Context No. 302). The peaty loam (Context No. 302) was 0.64m thick. Below the peaty loam (Context No. 302) was the subsoil (Context No. 303). The

subsoil in Trench Three was encountered at a depth of 0.83m (Plate Ten) and contained no archaeological features.

Trench Four

Trench Four was situated approximately 2.0m to the north-west of Trench Three and ran parallel to the latter. The trench extended up to the north-west/south-east field boundary and was approximately 2.0m wide and 16.0m long (Plate Eleven). The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Four (Context No. 401) consisted of a dark brown peaty loam which was quite compact and contained no stone inclusions. There were no finds within the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 401) which was approximately 0.2m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 401) was a layer of peaty loam (Context No. 402) which was dark brown in colour and compact. The peaty loam (Context No. 402) contained no stone inclusions. There were no finds within the peaty loam (Context No. 402), which was 0.72m thick. Below the peaty loam (Context No. 402) was the subsoil (Context No. 403) which in Trench Four was encountered at a depth of 0.92m (Plate Twelve). There were no features cut into the subsoil.

No deposits or features of archaeological significance were noted in the four test trenches, and it is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out at the development site. No publication is required apart from a short summary in the annual bulletin of excavations.

Archive:

Finds: N/A

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: _____

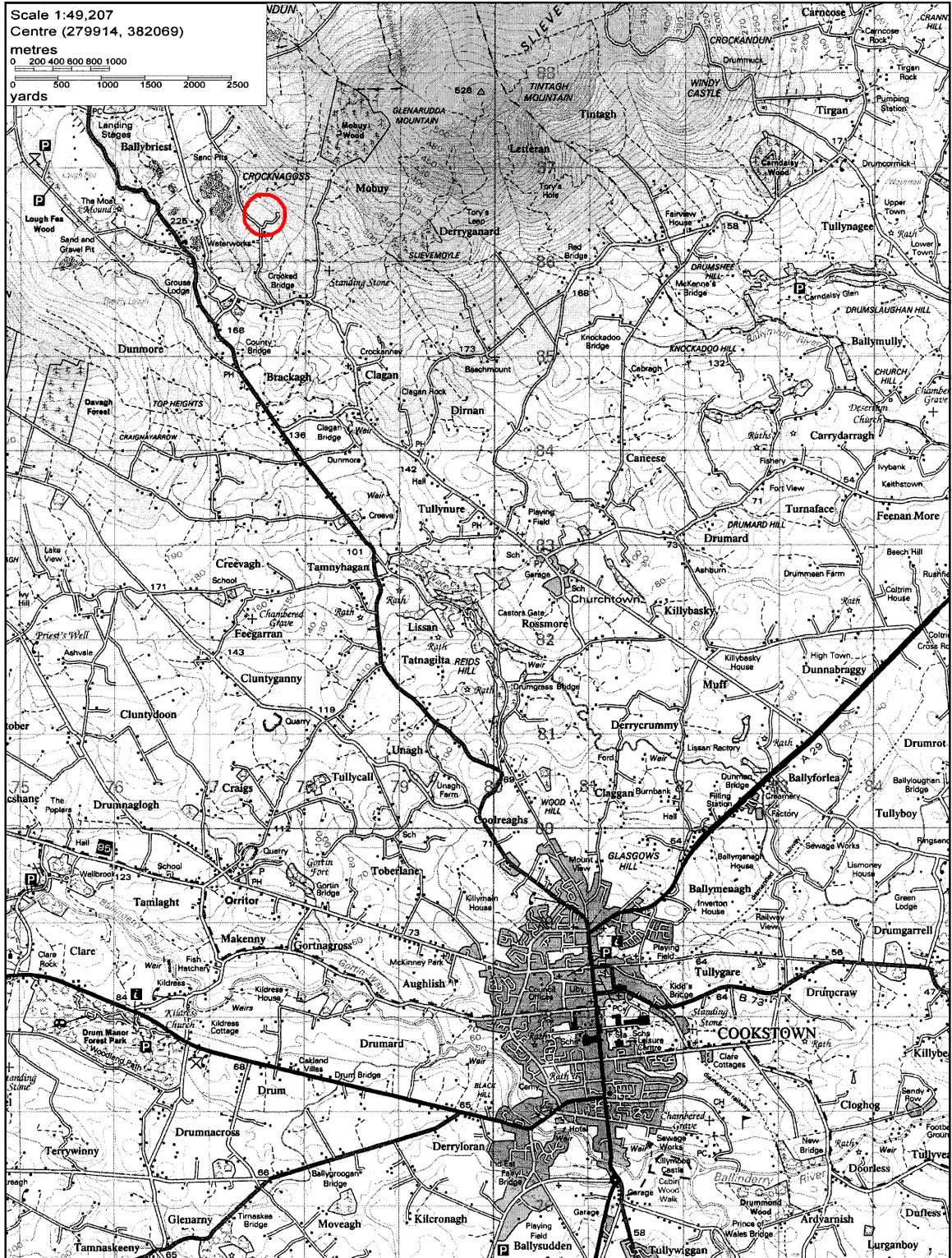


Figure One: General location map (site location circled in red)

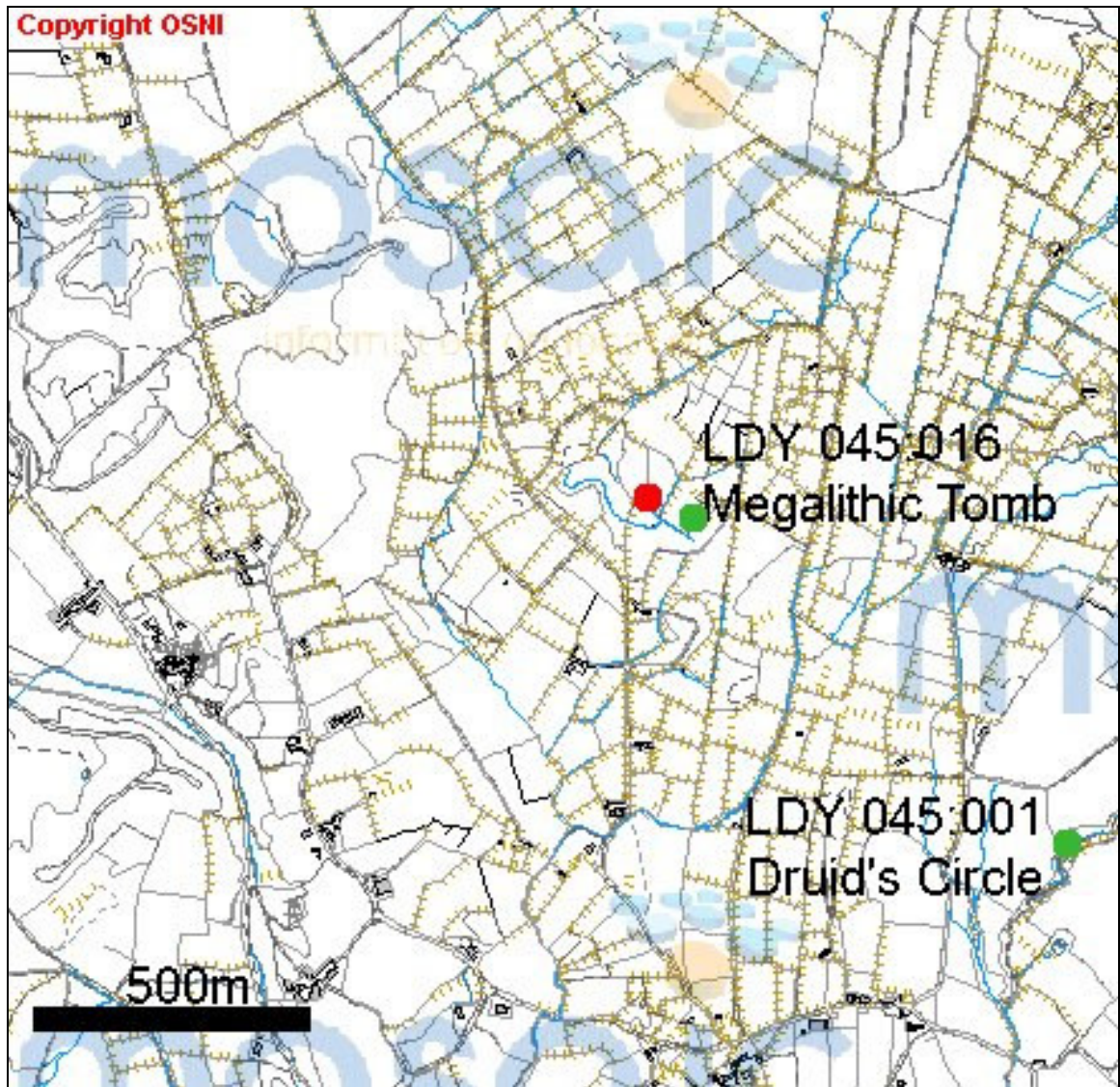


Figure Two: Location of site (red dot) and nearby sites of archaeological interest (green dots)

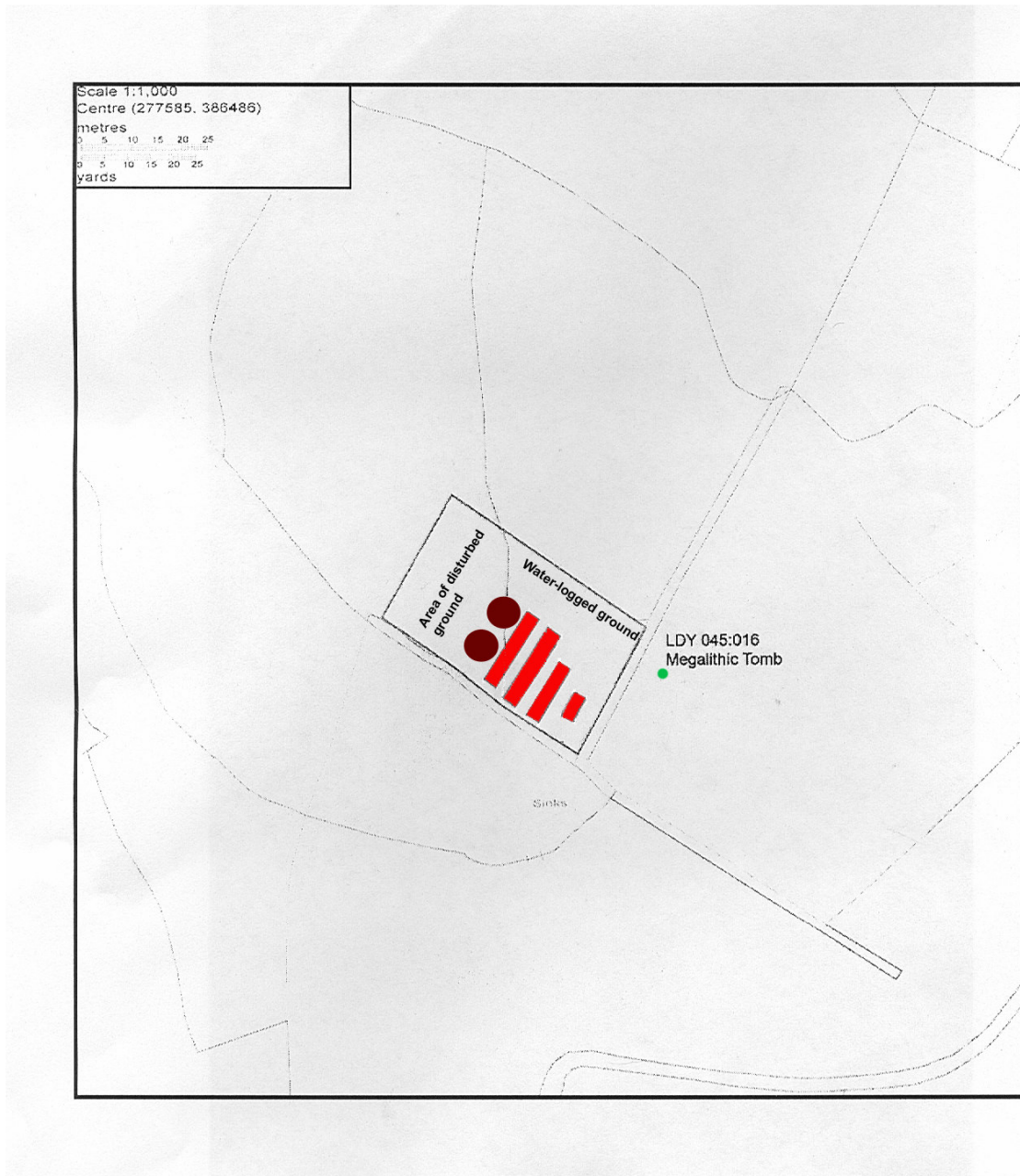


Figure Three: Site plan showing location of application site (outlined in black), test trenches (in red) and spoil heaps (brown dots)



Plate One: General view of site with disturbed area in the foreground and spoil heap to the left of the picture, looking south-east



Plate Two: General view of site, looking south-east



Plate Three: General view of site, looking north



Plate Four: General view of area to the north-west of site, looking north-east



Plate Five: Trench One following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 103), looking north-east



Sandy clay subsoil
(Context No. 103)

Quite compact, dark brown, peaty loam topsoil (Context No. 101)

Compact, dark brown, peaty loam (Context No. 102)

Weathered bedrock (greenshale)

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



Plate Seven: Trench Two following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 203), looking north-east



Quite compact,
dark brown, peaty
loam topsoil
(Context No. 201)

Compact, dark
brown, peaty loam
(Context No. 202)

Sandy clay subsoil
(Context No. 203)

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



Plate Nine: Trench Three following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 303), looking north-east



Quite compact,
dark brown, peaty
loam (Context No.
301)

Compact, dark
brown, peaty loam
(Context No. 302)

Weathered bedrock
(greenshale)

Plate Ten: South-west facing section of Trench Three, looking north-west



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

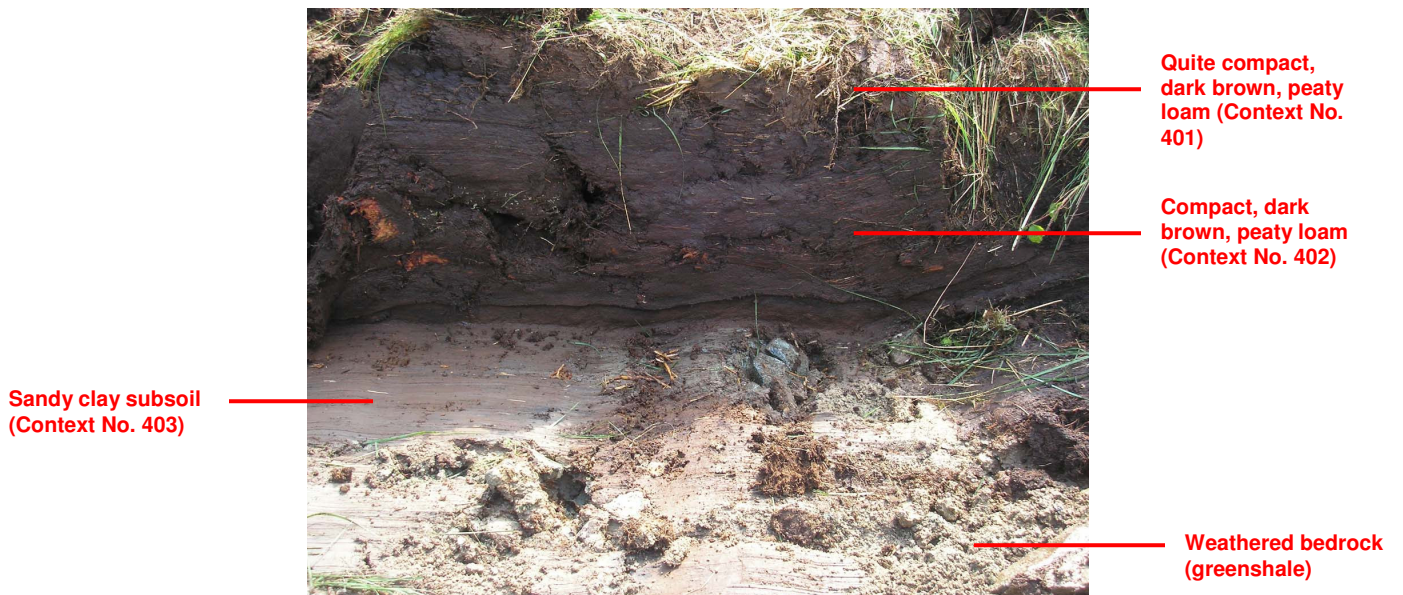


Plate Twelve: North-west facing section of Trench Four, looking south-east