



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 110

**SITE 180M NORTH-EAST OF 78 COAGH ROAD
BALLYWHOLAN
STEWARTSTOWN
COUNTY TYRONE**

LICENCE NO.: AE/06/296

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 180m north-east of 78 Coagh Road

Townland: Ballywholan

SMR No. : TYR 039:007

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: H 8605 7249

County: Tyrone

Excavation Licence No. :

Planning Ref / No. : I/2001/0531/F

Dates of Monitoring: 13th December 2006

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site 180m north-east of 78 Coagh Road, Ballywholan, Stewartstown, County Tyrone as part of the planning application for a new dwelling. An ecclesiastical site (TYR 039:007) is located approximately 200m to the north-east of the application site. An examination of the present day field boundaries suggested that the application site may be situated within a large oval-shaped enclosure associated with the ecclesiastical site. This information prompted the archaeological mitigation. The evaluation consisted of three mechanically-excavated test trenches measuring 20m by 2m. The trenches contained some evidence of agricultural activity (such as modern field drains), but nothing of great archaeological significance. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Three trenches each approximately 2m wide and 20m in length.

Current Land Use: Agricultural

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is located 180m north-east of 78 Coagh Road, Ballywholan, Stewartstown, County Tyrone. The site is just outside the village of Stewartstown, lying approximately 2km north-north east of its centre (Figure One). The general area of the application site is on relatively high ground overlooking other drumlins in the area. The application site is located in a 'wedge'-shaped field with straight linear hedges defining the northern and eastern parameters and a curvilinear hedge defining the southern and western limits of the field (Figures Two and Three). The field boundaries are defined by hedgerows interspersed with mature trees. As part of the form of the drumlin the site is located upon, the field slopes towards the north-west. The presence of drumlins in this area may explain the curvilinear field boundaries shown on the maps, rather than these being of archaeological interest.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a new dwelling and was requested by Andrew Gault: Caseworker with Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. It was requested due to the proximity of the application site to the ecclesiastical site and the possibility that there may be previously unrecorded remains associated with the monastery.

Excavation

The evaluation consisted of the supervision of three mechanically-excavated test trenches (Plate One). The trenches measured 20m by 2m and their positions are illustrated in Figure Three. All three test trenches were excavated to the subsoil which consisted of boulder clay. The surface of the subsoil was encountered at a depth of around 0.3m.

Trench One

Trench One was located parallel to the southern boundary of the application site. Trench One was approximately 2m wide and 20m long and was aligned approximately north-west/south-east (Plate Two).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench One (Context No. 101) consisted of loose, light to mid brown, sandy loam. The layer contained occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was around 0.1m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 101) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 102) which was 0.2m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm). There were no finds recovered from this trench.

Following the removal of the cultivation soil (Context No. 102), two features running roughly east/west were visible in the subsoil (Context No. 105) of Trench One. These features (Context Nos. 103 and 104) were both field drains whose fills (Context Nos. 106 and 107 respectively) comprised of loose angular and sub angular stones and gravel (average size: 20 x 30 x 10mm).

The subsoil in Trench One (Context No. 105) was an orange compact boulder clay with occasional inclusions of thermally-shattered flint, and was encountered at a depth of around 0.3m.

Trench Two

Trench Two was positioned perpendicular to Trench One on its northern side. The trench was 2m wide and 20m long (Plate Six).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Two (Context No. 201) consisted of a loose to slightly compact, light to mid brown, sandy loam. The layer contained infrequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm). A single struck flint flake was recovered from the topsoil (Context No. 201) although this is not diagnostic. This layer was on average 0.13m thick.

Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 201) was a cultivation soil of compact, mid brown, sandy loam (Context No. 202) that contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm) and which was 0.2m thick. No finds or features were observed in this layer.

Upon removal of the cultivation soil (Context No.202), two field drains (Context Nos. 203 and 204) were observed cutting the subsoil (Context No. 205). Again these ran roughly east/west and had similar fills (Context Nos. 206 and 207 respectively) to those of the field drains in Trench One. The alignment of field drain Context No. 203 (Trench Two) and field drain Context No. 104 (Trench One) suggests that these are the same feature. The location of the field drains in both Trenches One and Two is illustrated in Figure Four. A single sherd of Blackware pottery was recovered from the stoney fill (Context No. 207) of one of the field drains (Context No. 204).

The subsoil in Trench Two (Context No. 205) was an orange compact boulder clay with occasional inclusions of thermally-shattered flint, and was encountered at a depth of around 0.33m.

Trench Three

Trench Three was situated 5m to the north-east of Trench Two. It was located over the location of the proposed dwelling's septic tank and was aligned roughly east/west. It measured 20m by 2m (Plate Ten).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Three (Context No. 301) consisted of loose, light to mid brown, sandy loam containing infrequent, sub-angular, stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm). There were no finds within the sod and topsoil layer, which was 0.1m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 301) was a cultivation soil (Context No. 302) of moderately compact, mid brown, sandy loam. The cultivation soil was 0.15m thick and contained relatively frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm). A single sherd of white glazed ceramic was recovered from the cultivation soil (Context No. 302)

The cultivation soil in Trench Three (Context No. 302) directly overlay the subsoil (Context No. 303). This comprised an orange compact boulder clay with occasional inclusions of thermally shattered flint. The subsoil was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.25m.

The three test trenches excavated at the application site contained nothing of archaeological significance. It is not thought that the development will impact upon previously unrecorded archaeological remains. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out. No publication is required save for a short summary in the annual *'Excavations'* bulletin.

Archive:

Finds:

The artefacts found during the evaluation are temporarily housed 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 One: 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Map showing location of site (circled in red)

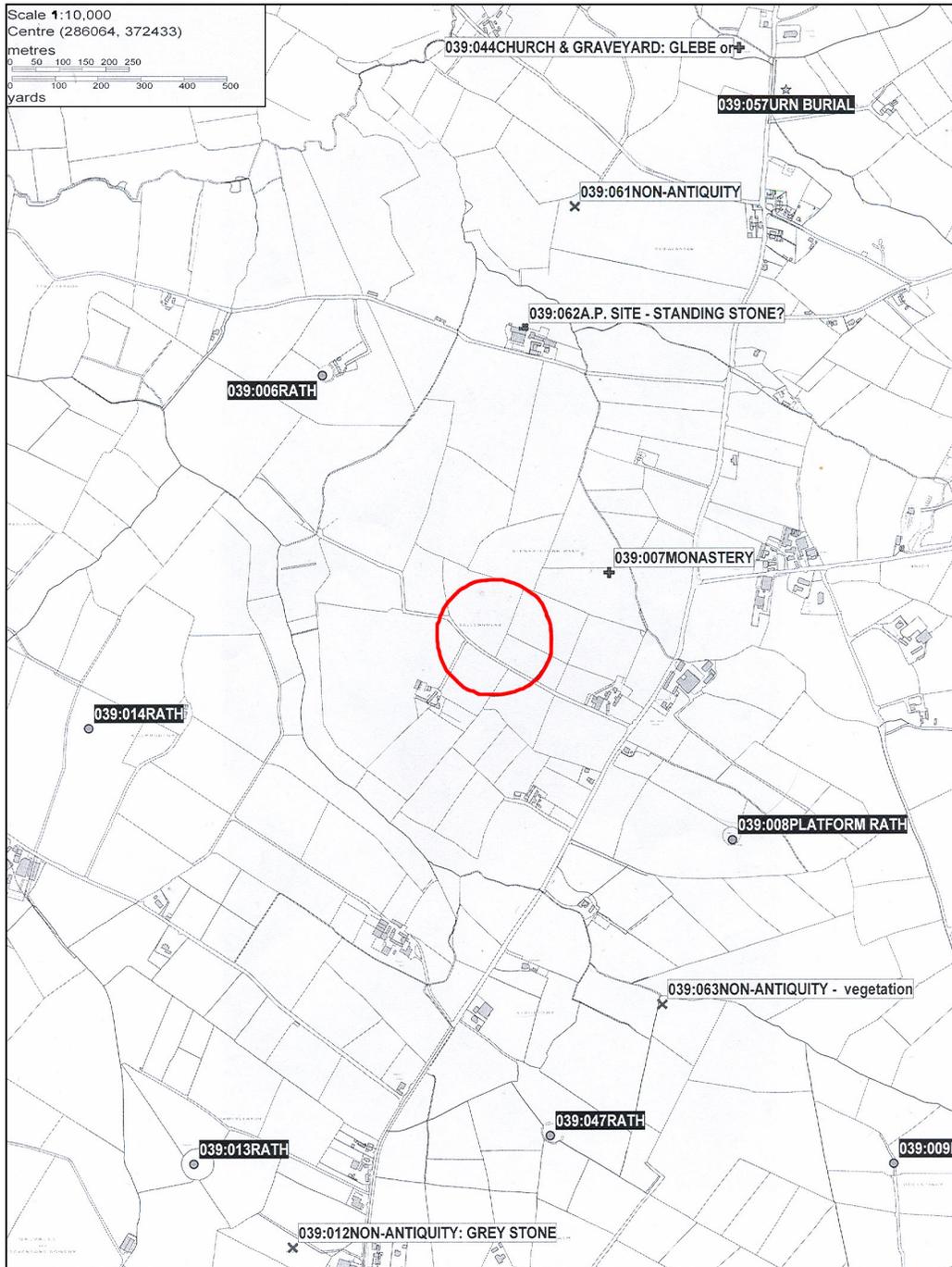


Figure Two: Detailed map of application site showing surrounding archaeological sites.

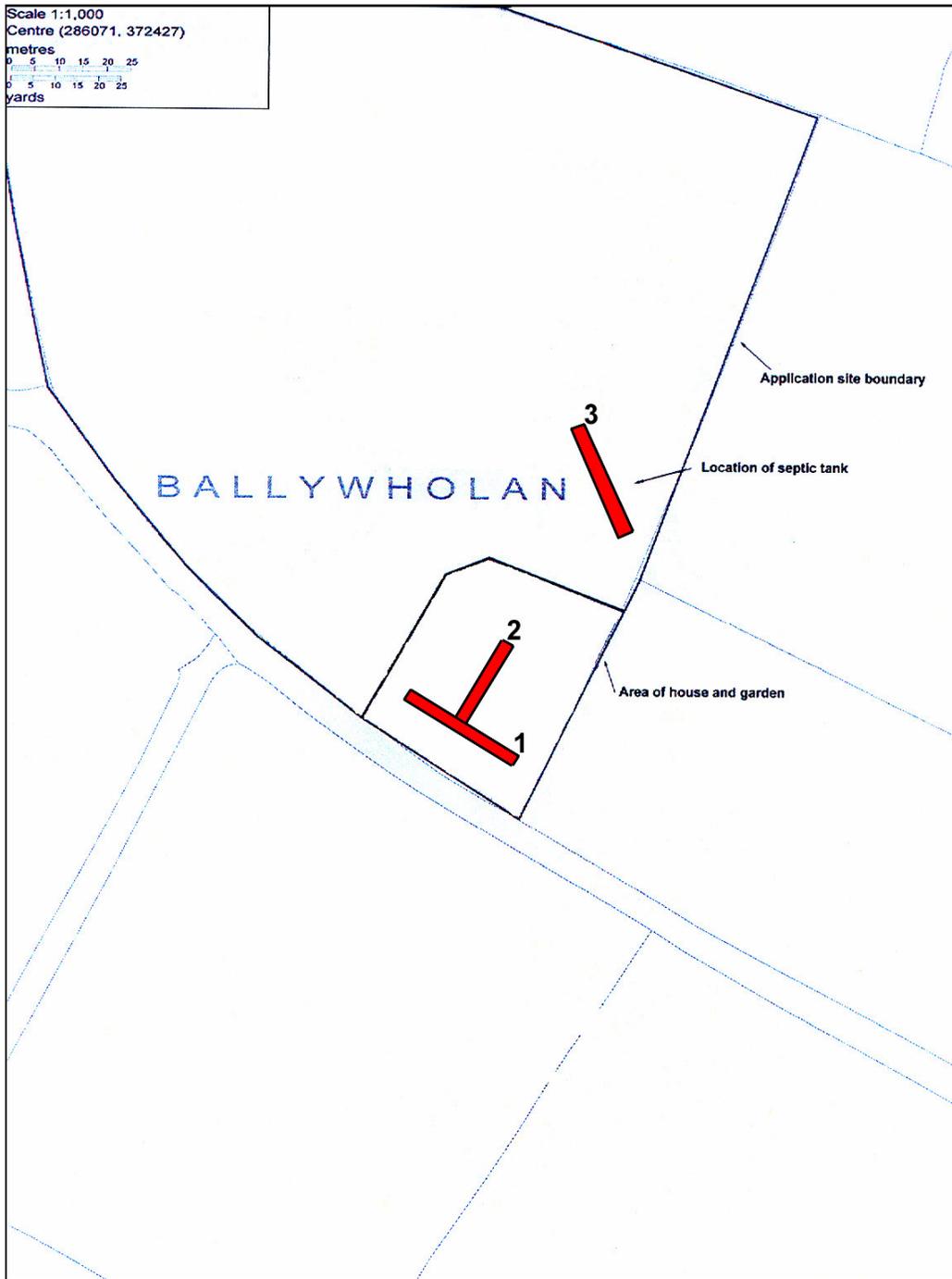


Figure Three: Plan showing location of Trenches One, Two and Three.

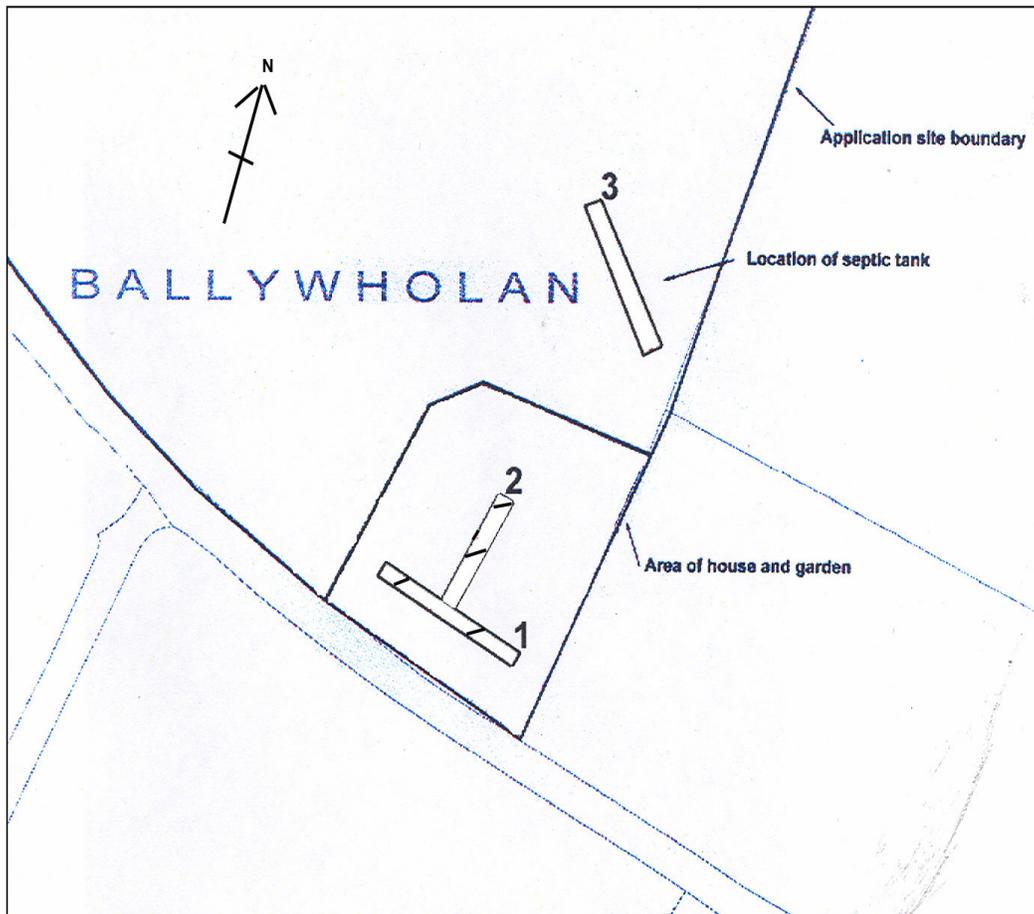


Figure Four: Map showing location of field drains in Trenches One and Two.



Plate One: General overview of the application site, looking north-west.



Plate Two: Trench One following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 105), looking west.

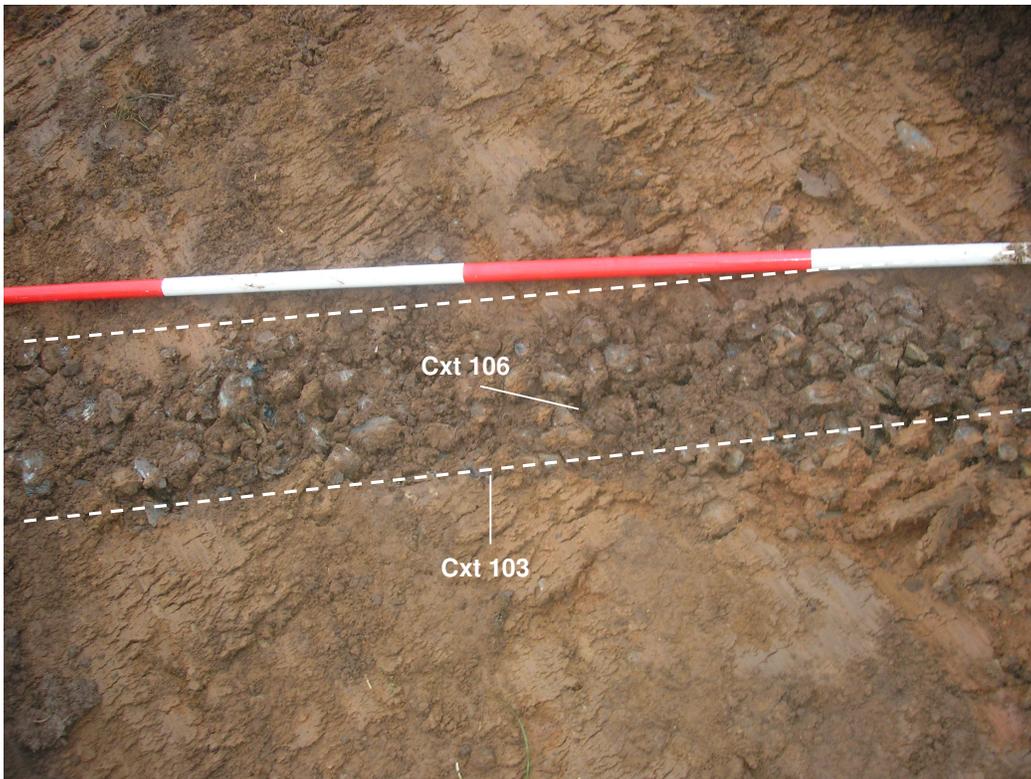


Plate Three: Field drain (Context No. 103) in Trench One, looking west.



Plate Four: Field drain (Context No. 104) in Trench One, looking east.

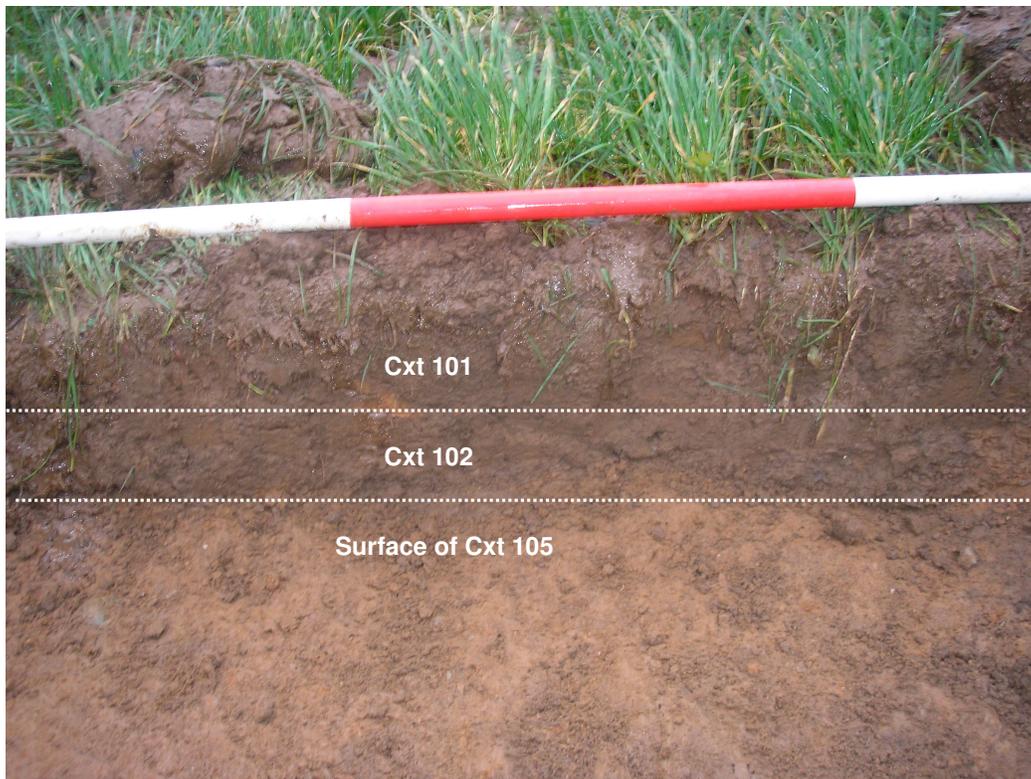


Plate Five: South-facing section in Trench One.



*Plate Six: Trench Two following excavation to subsoil (Context No. 205),
looking north.*



Plate Seven: Field drain (Context No. 203) in Trench Two, looking north.



Plate Eight: Field drain (Context No. 204) in Trench Two, looking south. Note the puddle towards the southern end of the trench.

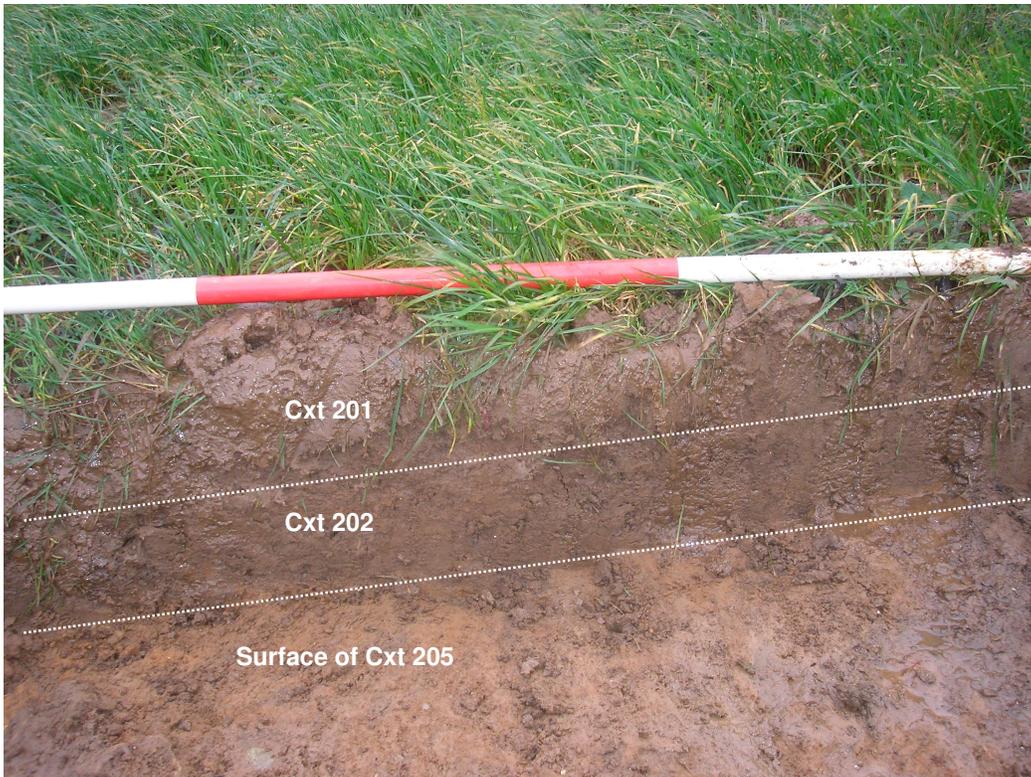


Plate Nine: West-facing section in Trench Two.



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



Plate Eleven: South-facing section in Trench Three.