



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 141

**SITE 373M EAST OF 40 COOLKERRAN ROAD
MAGHERAHONEY
ARMOY
CO. ANTRIM**

LICENCE NO.: AE/07/178

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 373m east of 40 Coolkerran Road, Armoy, Co. Antrim

Townland: Magherahoney

SMR No. : ANT 013:022

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: D0811629619

County: Antrim

Excavation Licence No. : AE/07/178

Planning Ref / No. : D/2006/0102/O

Dates of Monitoring: 3rd October 2007

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site in the townland of Magherahoney, Armoy, Co. Antrim as part of the planning application for a new dwelling and garage. The application site lies approximately 180m north-east of a Bivallate Rath (ANT 013:022). A total of five trenches were mechanically excavated to assess the presence of archaeological remains. The trenches contained some evidence of agricultural activity (field drains), but nothing of archaeological significance. It is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Five trenches across application site all measuring approximately 30m in length and 2m in width

Current Land Use: Agricultural

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is located in the townland of Magherahoney, Armooy, Co. Antrim. The site is just outside the village of Armooy, lying approximately 1.5 km south-east of its centre and at a height of approximately 160m above sea level (Fig. 1). The application site is situated in a roughly square field, the boundaries of which are delineated by a wire and post fence interspersed with mature trees and gorse bushes on the south-eastern and western edges. The field undulates towards its centre. The application site lies approximately 180m to the north-east of a Bivallate Rath (ANT 013:022). An access route to the application site is to be constructed lying hardcore directly on the grass (Maurice Connelly pers comm.). Due to the ground in this area not being disturbed, it was not archaeologically investigated.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for the construction of a new dwelling and garage, and was requested by Paul Logue: Caseworker with Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. It was requested due to the proximity of the application site to a Bivallate Rath (ANT 013:022) and the possibility that there may be previously unrecorded remains associated with this site.

Excavation

The evaluation consisted of the archaeological supervision of five mechanically-excavated test trenches. The trenches measured approximately 30m in length by 2m in width and their positions are illustrated in Figure Three. All five test trenches were excavated to the subsoil which consisted of a glacially derived orangey yellow stony clay.

Trench One

Trench One was located parallel to the northern boundary of the application site (Fig. 3). Trench One measured 30m by 2m and was aligned approximately east/west. Trench One was excavated to the surface of the subsoil.

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench One (Context No. 101) consisted of mid to dark brown, silty clay loam. The layer contained occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was around 0.2m 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 0.1m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm).

The cultivation soil in Trench One (Context No. 102) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 103). Two features were observed cutting the subsoil (Context Nos. 104 and 105). The first of these (Context No. 104) was interpreted as a field drain as its fill (Context No. 106) was a matrix of angular gravel (average size: 30mm x 20mm). The second feature (Context No. 105) was also interpreted as a filed drain, although its fill (Context No. 107) contained larger stones than that of the previous drain. The subsoil in Trench One (Context No. 103) was an orangey yellow gravelly clay with frequent inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular

stones (average size 50mm x 30mm x 10mm) as well as larger angular stones (average size 100mm x 80mm x 50mm), and was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m.

Trench Two

Trench Two was positioned approximately 5m to the south of Trench One and was aligned roughly east/west (Fig. 3). The trench was 30m long and 2m wide, and was excavated to the surface of the subsoil.

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Two (Context No. 201) consisted of mid to dark brown, silty clay loam. The layer contained occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was around 0.2m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 201) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 202) which was 0.15m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm).

The cultivation soil in Trench Two (Context No. 202) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 203). Continuations of the two field drains encountered in Trench One were observed in Trench Two. The subsoil in Trench Two (Context No. 203) was an orangey yellow gravelly clay with frequent inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones (average size 50mm x 30mm x 10mm) as well as larger angular stones (average size 100mm x 80mm x 50mm), and was encountered at an average depth of 0.35m.

Trench Three

Trench Three was positioned approximately 7m to the south of, and parallel to, Trench Two and measured 30m in length by 2m in width (Fig. 3). The trench was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil and was aligned east/west.

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Three (Context No. 301) consisted of mid brown, silty clay loam. The layer contained occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was approximately 0.1m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 301) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 302) which was 0.2m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm). A single undiagnostic flint flake was recovered from the cultivation soil (Context No. 302).

The cultivation soil in Trench Three (Context No. 302) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 303). A single field drain (Context No. 304) was encountered cut into the subsoil (Context No. 303). The fill of this drain (Context No. 305) consisted of largish angular stones, and is likely to be a continuation of the field drain encountered in Trenches One and Two (Context Nos. 105 and 205). The subsoil in Trench Three (Context No. 303) was an orangey yellow gravelly clay with occasional inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones (average size 50mm x 30mm x 10mm) as well as larger angular stones (average size 100mm x 80mm x 50mm), and was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m.

Trench Four

Trench Four was positioned approximately 5m to the south of Trench Three. It measured 30m in length by 2m in width (Fig. 3), and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil. The trench was roughly aligned east/west.

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Four (Context No. 401) consisted of light to mid brown, silty loam. The layer contained occasional inclusions of sub-rounded stones (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was approximately 0.1m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 401) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 402) which was 0.08m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm).

Upon removal of the cultivation soil (Context No. 402) another field drain (Context No. 403) was encountered. The fill of this drain (Context No. 404) consisted of small loose angular stones (similar in appearance to Context No. 106) and was running approximately north-west/south-east through the western end of Trench Four. Due to its alignment, it is not thought that this drain is a continuation of any encountered in the other test trenches.

The cultivation soil in Trench Four (Context No. 402) overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 405). The subsoil in Trench Four (Context No. 403) was an orangey yellow gravelly clay with occasional inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones (average size 50mm x 30mm x 10mm) as well as larger angular stones (average size 100mm x 80mm x 50mm), and was encountered at an average depth of 0.2m.

Trench Five

Trench Five was located approximately 5m to the south of Trench Four. Trench Five measured 30m by 2m and was aligned approximately east/west. Trench Five was excavated to the surface of the subsoil.

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Five (Context No. 501) consisted of mid to dark brown, silty clay loam. The layer contained occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 20 x 20 x 10mm). The layer was around 0.2m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 501) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 502) which was 0.1m thick. The cultivation soil contained frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions (average size: 40 x 30 x 20mm).

The cultivation soil in Trench Five (Context No. 502) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 503). The subsoil in Trench Five (Context No. 503) was an orangey yellow gravelly clay with frequent inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones (average size 50mm x 30mm x 10mm) as well as larger angular stones (average size 100mm x 80mm x 50mm), and was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m.

The five test trenches excavated at the application site contained no features or artefacts 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: N/A.

Photographs:

The digital images (39 in total) 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: _____

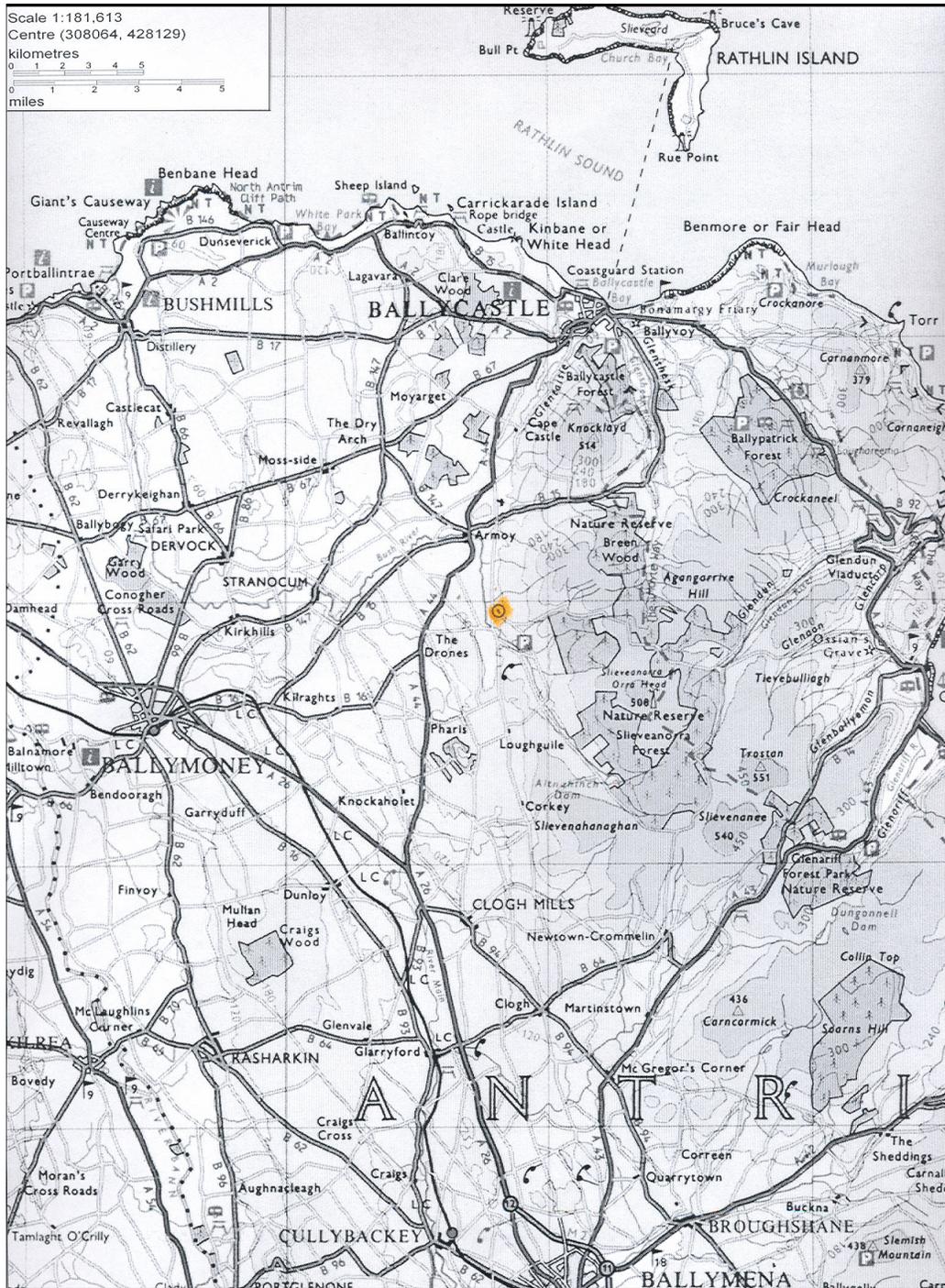


Figure 1: General location map showing location of application site (highlighted orange).

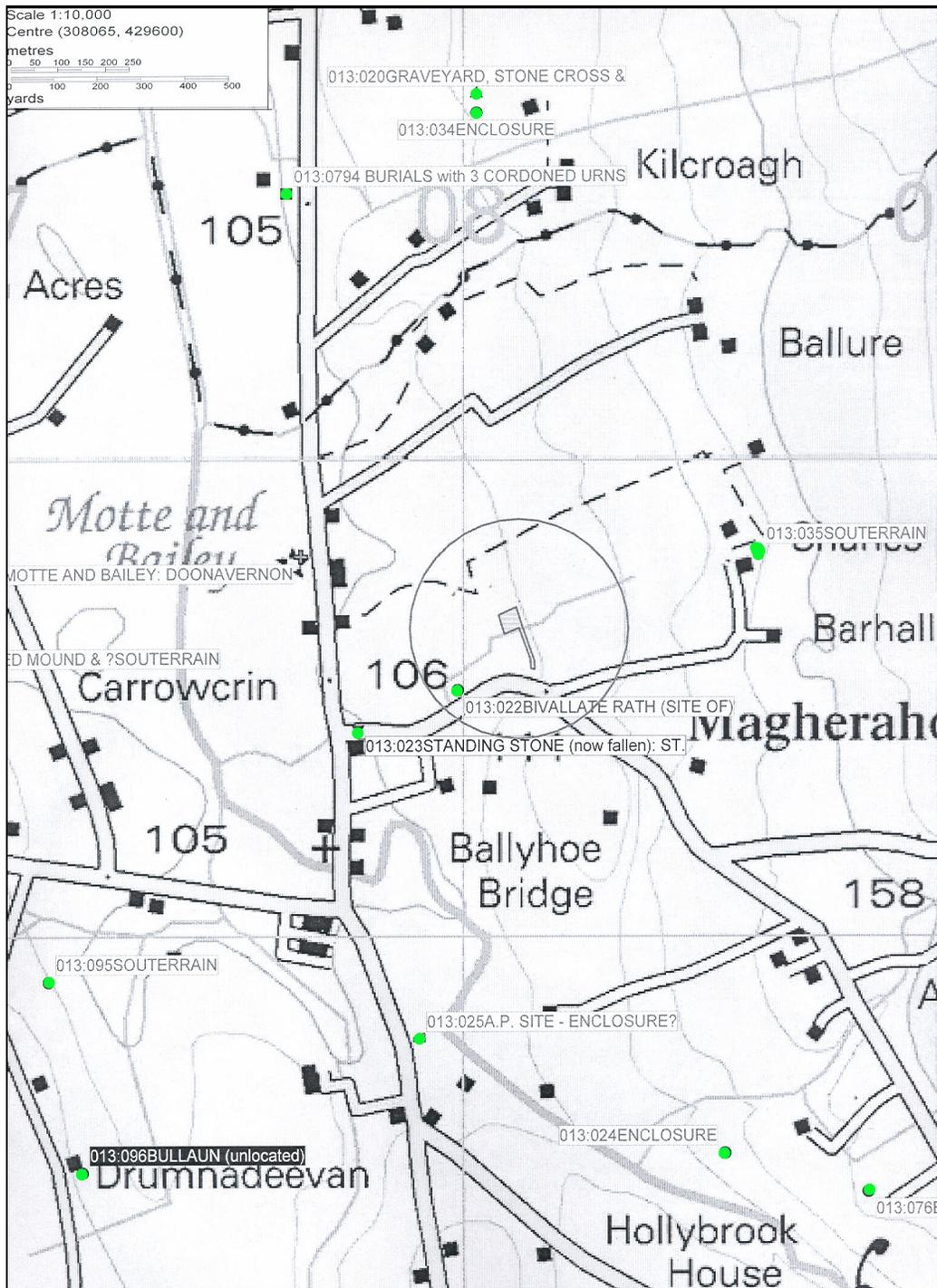


Figure 2: Detailed location map showing application site (circled) in relation to surrounding archaeological sites and monuments (green dots).

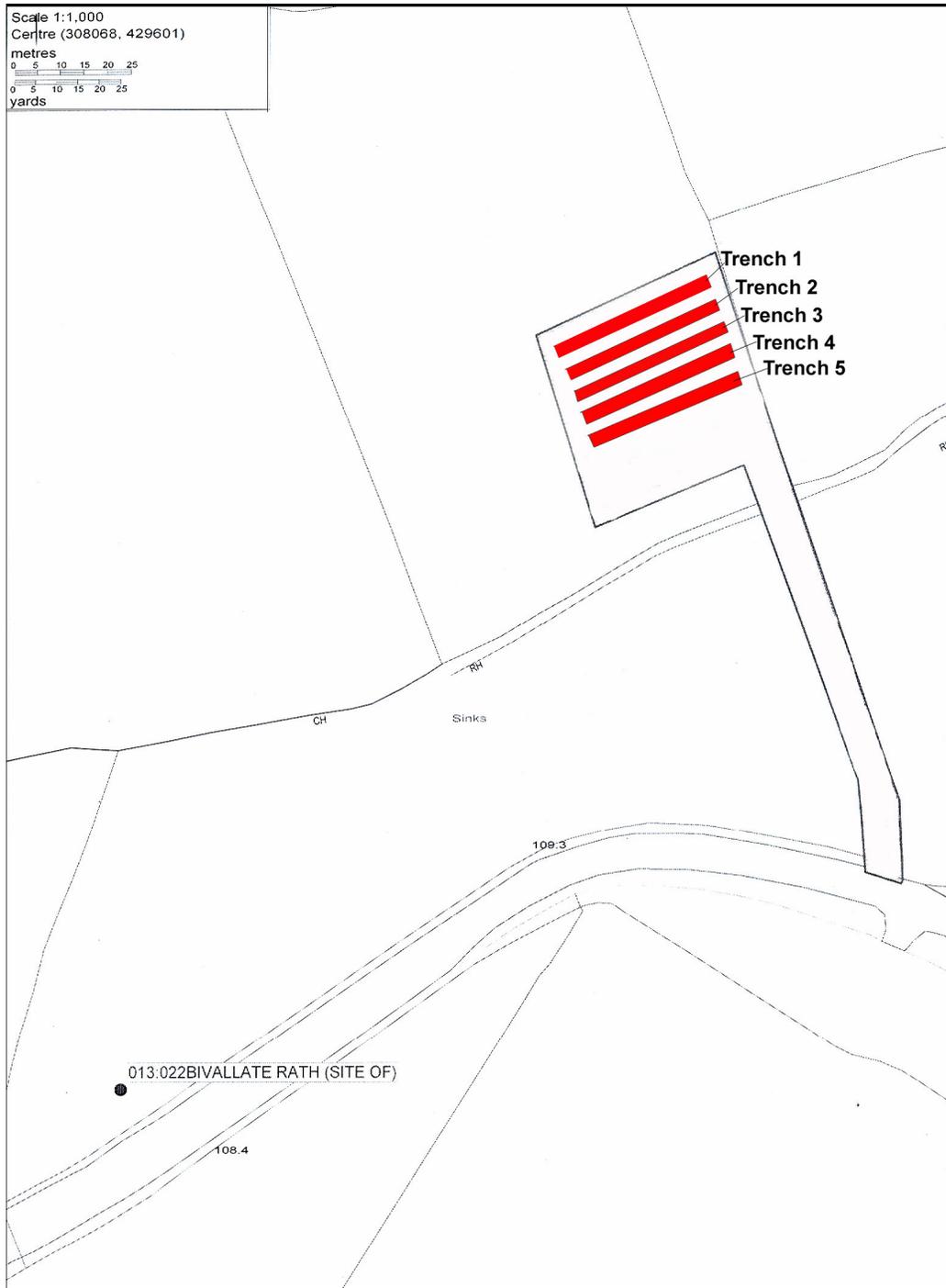


Figure 3: Location of the test trenches excavated at Magherahoney



Plate 1: Trench 1 following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No.???), looking north-east.

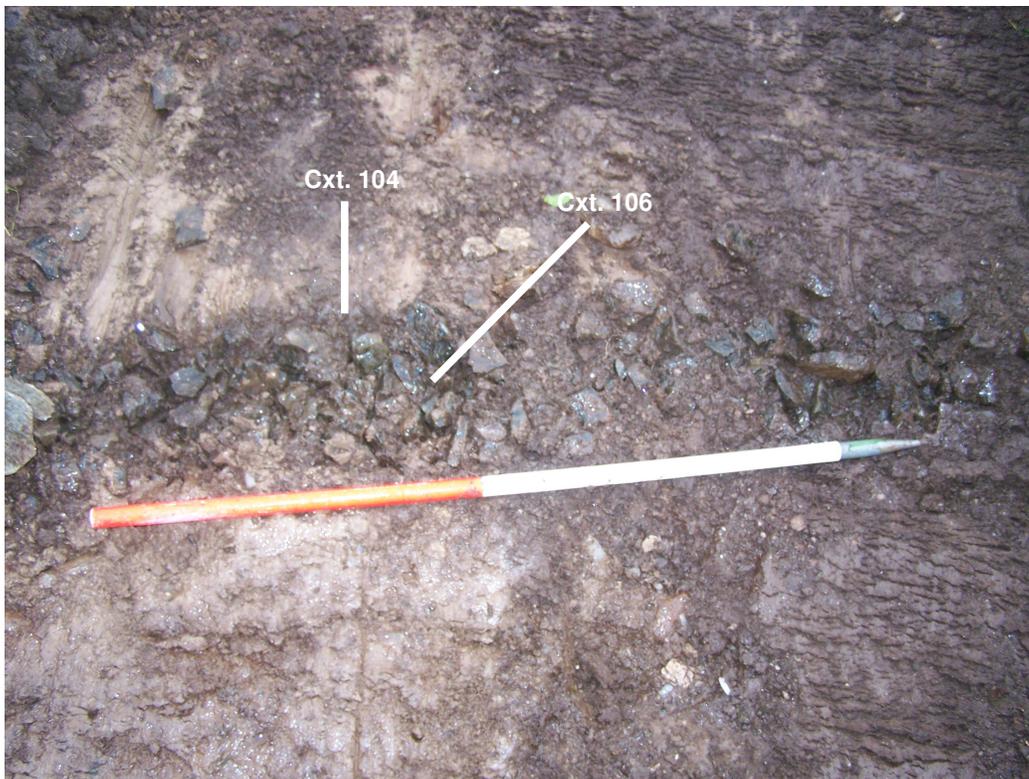


Plate 2: Field drain in Trench 1, looking north-east.



Plate 3: Field drain in Trench 1, looking north-east.



Plate 4: North-west facing section of Trench 1.



Plate 5: Trench 2 following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 203), looking north-east.



Plate 6: continuation of one of the field drains into Trench 2, looking north-east.



Plate 7: North-west facing section of Trench 2.



Plate 8: Trench 3 following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 303), looking north-east. Discoloration of subsoil is due to spoil slippage.



Plate 9: north-west facing section of Trench 3.



Plate 10: Trench 4 following excavation to the surface of the subsoil (Context No. 405).

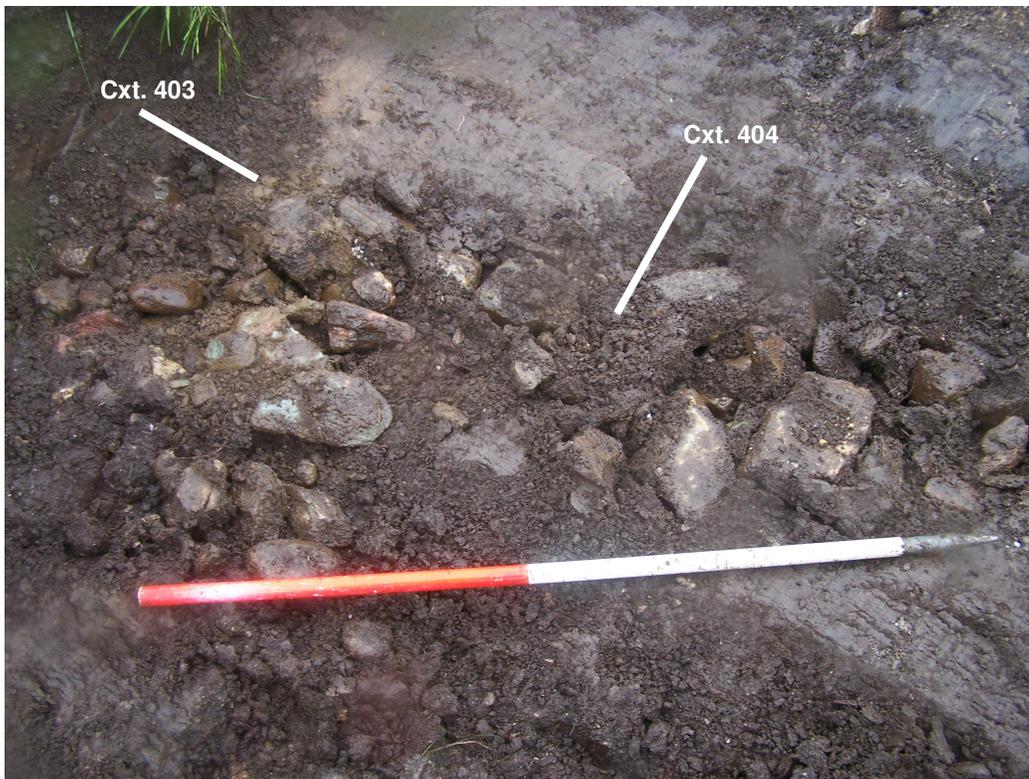


Plate 11: Field drain in Trench 4, looking north-east.



Plate 12: North-west facing section of Trench 4.



Plate 13: Trench 5 following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 503). Discoloration in the subsoil is due to spoil slippage.



Plate 14: North-west facing section of Trench 5.