



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 178

**LAND TO THE EAST OF 17 MOSSVALE TERRACE
MOSSVALE ROAD
DROMORE
COUNTY DOWN**

LICENCE NO.: AE/09/115

NAOMI CARVER

Site Specific Information

Site Location: Land to the east of 17 Mossvale Terrace, Mossvale Road, Dromore, Co. Down

Townland: Dromore

SMR No. : Various, see Table One

State Care Scheduled Other ✓ [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: J 2085 5340

County: Down

Excavation Licence No. : AE/09/115

Planning Ref / No. : Q/2007/0896/F

Dates of Monitoring: 7th July 2009

Archaeologist(s) Present: Naomi Carver

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at land adjacent to and to the east of No. 17 Mossvale Terrace, Dromore, Co. Down, as part of the planning application for the erection of six new town-houses. There are a range of sites of archaeological and historical interest in the vicinity of the development site. Two trenches were excavated on the site in which no remains of archaeological significance were recovered. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Two trenches each approximately 2m wide and 30m long

Current Land Use: Wasteland

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is located on the eastern outskirts of Dromore, Co. Down (Figure One). The site occupies a rectangular plot of land approximately 0.21 hectares in size, located to the east of No. 17 Mossvale Terrace, Mossvale Road (Figure Two). The plot is set perpendicular to Mossvale Road which forms the site's southernmost boundary. To the west are the houses and gardens of Mossvale Terrace while to the north and east is wasteland. Planning permission has been granted for the development of six townhouses, a new entranceway and car-parking spaces (Figure Three). There were three houses on the site which were knocked down in the 1970s (M. Haughian, *pers. comm.*) and the area is currently overgrown with grass and other vegetation (Plate One). The site has been built up considerably higher than the surrounding land (Plate Two), probably by infill of topsoil during the building of nearby houses (M. Haughian, *pers. comm.*). There is also rubble on the site from small test-pits dug by the developer to test the ground. The land at the rear (north) of the site drops steeply to a tree-filled, marshy area with standing water (Plate Three). Three of the proposed houses are to be built in this area, which will require the land to be built up artificially (M. Haughian, *pers. comm.*). The developer plans to sink piles to obtain a solid footing for building the houses.

Archaeological Background (based on NISMR)

The town of Dromore is rich in sites of archaeological and historical importance. The town itself is said to have its roots in the sixth century when St Colman founded an abbey in the area. Little remains from the medieval period as the town was heavily damaged during the 1641 rebellion. The only remains from this earlier period are a motte and bailey (DOW 021:048). Small scale excavations within the town have recovered limited evidence of Post-Medieval occupation, including a building on the site of the present Market House. Sites within the vicinity of the development date from the Early Christian to the Post-Medieval periods (Table One, below). These include raths, enclosures, a high cross, and a motte and bailey.

<i>Description</i>	<i>SMR No.</i>	<i>Townland</i>	<i>Grid Ref.</i>
Rath	DOW 021:040	Drumbroneth	J 2103 5230
Rath	DOW 021:041	Drumbroneth	J 2121 5235
Enclosure	DOW 021:045	Ballyvicknacally	J 2144 5322
Platform rath	DOW 021:046	Ballymacormick	J 2177 5387
Platform rath	DOW 021:047	Ballyvicknacally	J 2102 5323
Dromore Mound	DOW 021:048	Ballyvicknacally	J 2060 5318

<i>Description</i>	<i>SMR No.</i>	<i>Townland</i>	<i>Grid Ref.</i>
Counterscarp rath	DOW 021:049	Ballymaganlis	J 2007 5360
Rath	DOW 021:053	Drumbroneth	J 1993 5255
Rath (Cannon Hill)	DOW 021:054	Ballyvicknacally	J 2167 5346
Dromore Cross	DOW 021:058	Ballymaganlis	J 2004 5336
Bishop's Well	DOW 021:059	Ballynaris	J 2014 5425
Battle Site (1649)	DOW 021:080	Balleny	J 199 531

Table One: Sites of archaeological interest in the surrounding area

Cartographic Evidence

The 1859 6" edition of the Ordnance Survey map shows a single building in the area of the present Mossvale Terrace. There is also a marshy or boggy area shown to the north-west (Figure Four). The houses of Mossvale Terrace are first depicted on the 1903 6" Ordnance Survey map (Figure Five). They are surrounded by fields and the area to the north is marked as 'liable to floods'. A platform rath (DOW 021:047) and Dromore mound (DOW 021:048) are marked on both maps to the south-east and south-west respectively. The 1946 revision also shows the terrace, including the three houses which are no longer extant (Figure Six).

The evaluation was undertaken on behalf of the client, Mr M. Haughian, in response to Conditions 9 and 10 of the Full Planning Permission (Q/2007/0896/F) application for a proposed new dwelling.

Excavation

The original remit proposed the mechanical excavation of three test trenches on the site. However, following the excavation of two trenches it was decided not to excavate a third as the stratigraphy in each of the two trenches showed that the site was heavily disturbed. Prior to the excavation the site was extremely overgrown with waist high vegetation and a boggy area in the centre. The trenches were located in the positions shown in Figure Seven. Each was approximately 2m wide and 30m long. Both trenches were excavated as deep as was considered safe or to the surface of the natural subsoil.

Trench One

Trench One ran parallel to the eastern boundary of the site and had its long axis aligned north-south. The trench was 2m (east-west) by 30m (north-south) in size (Plate Four). At the northern end of the trench it was excavated to a depth of 0.7m at which the surface of the natural subsoil was not encountered. The trench contained a loose, rubbly deposit at this end which was unstable and therefore the decision was taken not to excavate any deeper.

The vegetation and topsoil layer in Trench One (Context No. 101) consisted of loose, mid brown clay loam containing angular stone inclusions with a range of sizes. The layer was typically 0.1-0.2m thick and was not present in parts of the southern end of the trench. Below the vegetation and topsoil layer was a loose, rubbly layer (Context No. 102) which consisted of large fragments of brick, stone and mortar, as well as plastic sacks and cloth, in a matrix of clay. The layer was present in the northern half of the trench only (it petered out around 15m from the southern limit of excavation). The layer was up to 0.7m deep in parts.

Below the loose, rubbly layer was a more compact rubbly clay (Context No. 103) consisting of boulder clay mixed with rubble. It was compact and the surface of the deposit was around 0.7m deep. The layer was not fully excavated due to issues with depth and safety in the trench. Overlying the compact rubbly clay in the southern part of the trench was a gravel spread (Context No. 104) which was present approximately 5m from the northern limit of excavation (Plate Five). The spread was at least 2m wide (east-west) and 4.7m long (north-south). It may represent the remains of a hard core road intended for use when the site was in-filled with rubble (M. Haughian, *pers. comm.*). Below the gravel spread was boulder clay which may have been the subsoil. This was present at the southern end of the trench only. The surface of this deposit was encountered at a depth of around 0.5m.

Trench Two

Trench Two was parallel to Trench One and approximately 5m to the west. It was 2m (east-west) by 30m (north-south) in size (Plate Six). The trench exhibited a similar stratigraphy to that observed in Trench One. The vegetation and topsoil layer (Context No. 201) consisted of mid-brown loamy clay which contained angular inclusions of various sizes and which was around 0.1-0.2m thick. Below the vegetation and topsoil layer was a loose rubbly layer (Context No. 202) which was similar to that excavated in Trench One (Context No. 102). The deposit was present at the northern end of Trench Two. It extended the width of the trench (2m) and 7m towards the south. The rubbly layer was 0.6-0.7m thick. Below the rubbly clay was a layer of compact rubbly clay (Context No. 203) which was similar to the layer excavated in Trench One (Context No. 103). It consisted of compact clay with large stone and brick fragments as well as smaller pieces of brick and slate. Overlying the compact rubbly clay was a gravel spread (Context No. 204) similar to that excavated in Trench One (Context No. 104). The gravel spread was 15m from the southern end of the trench and mostly covered the full width of the

trench (2m) although it was more consistently present beside the western limit of excavation. The spread overlay a sandy layer (Context No. 205) which was light orange in colour, loose, and contained angular inclusions around 100x100x50mm in size. The sandy layer was 0.05m thick and overlay a fine gravel layer (Context No. 206) which was light grey in colour, coarse and gritty (Plate Seven). This layer was not fully excavated and therefore it is not known what lay beneath it. The surface of the layer was around 0.5m deep. The layer extended the width of the trench (2m) and for around 15m (north-south).

The results of the evaluation show that there appear not to be archaeological remains present in the evaluated area. The stratigraphy on the site shows that it has been disturbed by previous building activity. It is unlikely that there are any surviving archaeological deposits on the site and it is not considered that the proposed development will have a detrimental impact. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out in this area. The results of the evaluation will be published as a brief summary in the annual *'Excavations'* bulletin.

Archive:

Finds:

The artefacts recovered from 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 currently archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings: *N/A*

Signed: _____ Date: _____

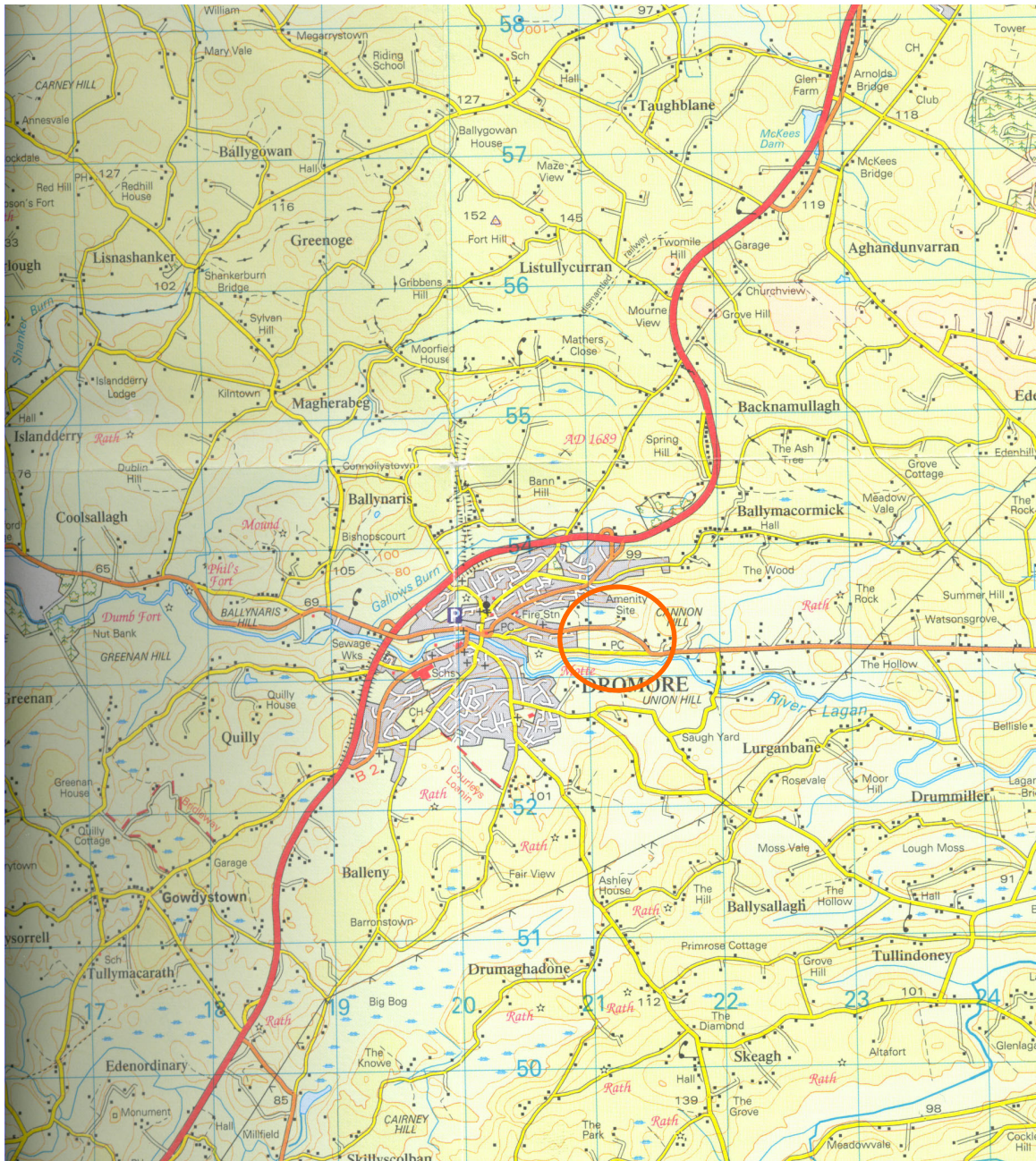


Figure One: General location map showing the location of the site (circled in red)



Project: Proposed Housing Development
Adjacent to east of Mossvale Terrace,
Mossvale Road, Dromore,
Co. Down
Client: **A. & M. HAUGHIAN Ltd.**
Scale: 1: 1250 Date: 13/12/07



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Figure Two: Detailed location map showing site outline (in red)

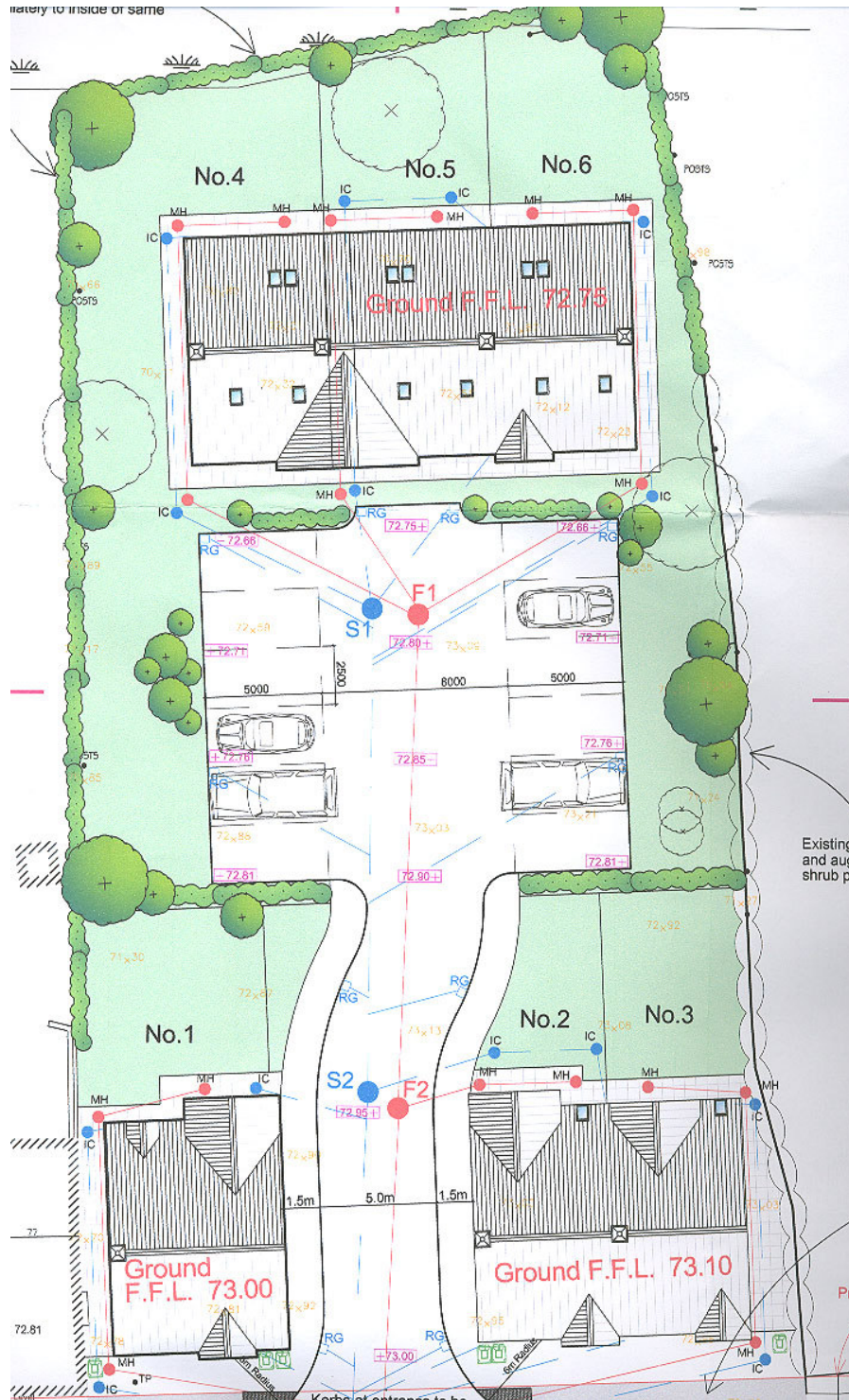


Figure Three: Architect's plan showing the location of the proposed new dwellings (provided by Liam Milling Architectural Design)



Figure Four: 1859 6" OS map showing area of the proposed development site prior to the construction of Mossvale Terrace (circled in red)

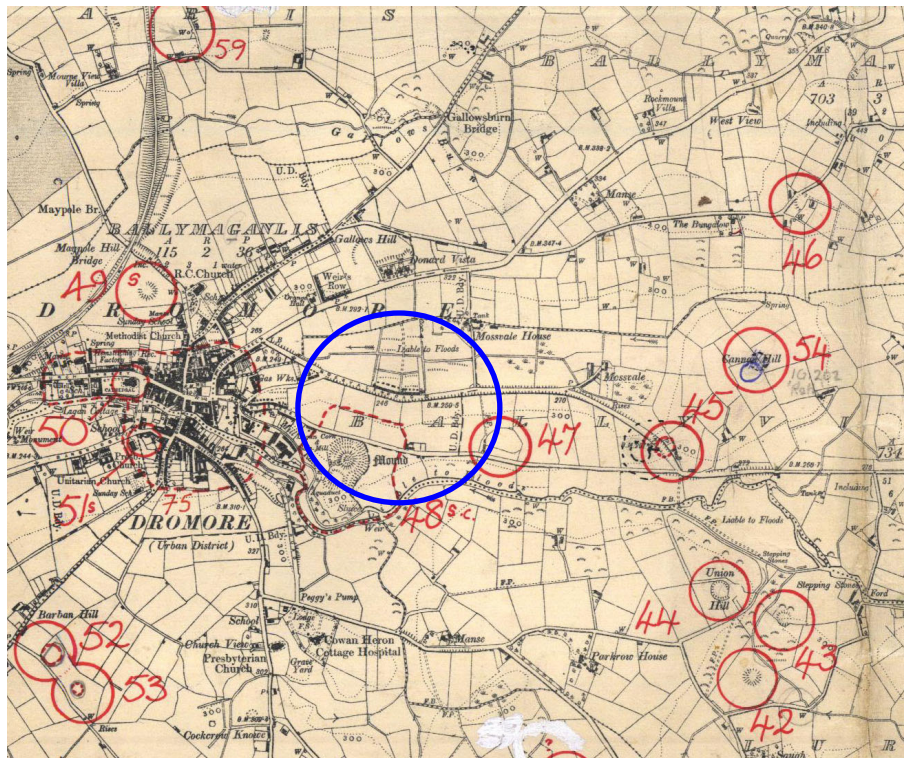


Figure Five: 1903 6" OS map showing Mossvale Terrace (circled in blue)

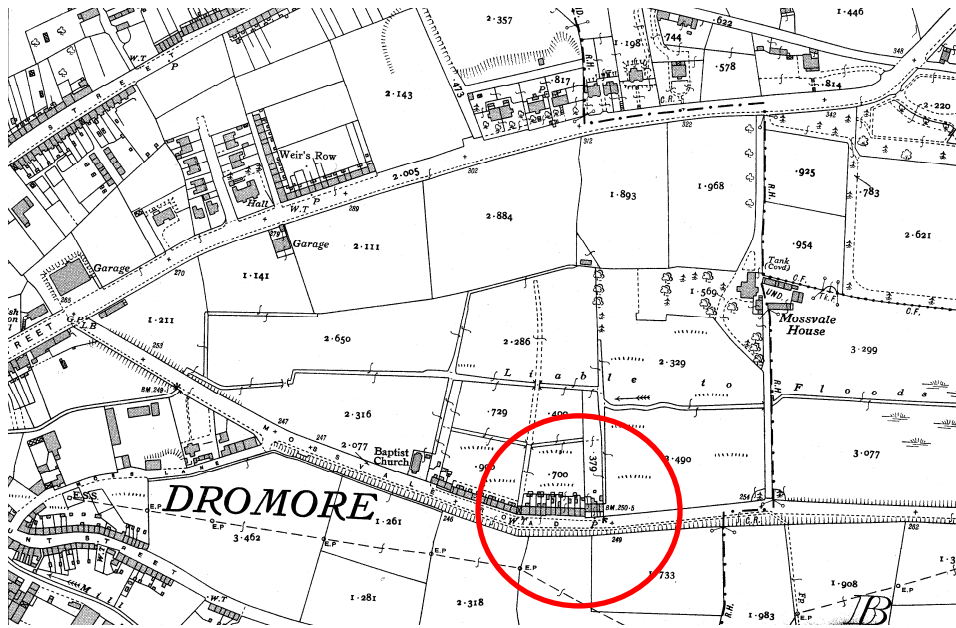


Figure Six: 1946 OS map showing Mossvale Terrace including the three houses formerly on the proposed development site (circled in red)

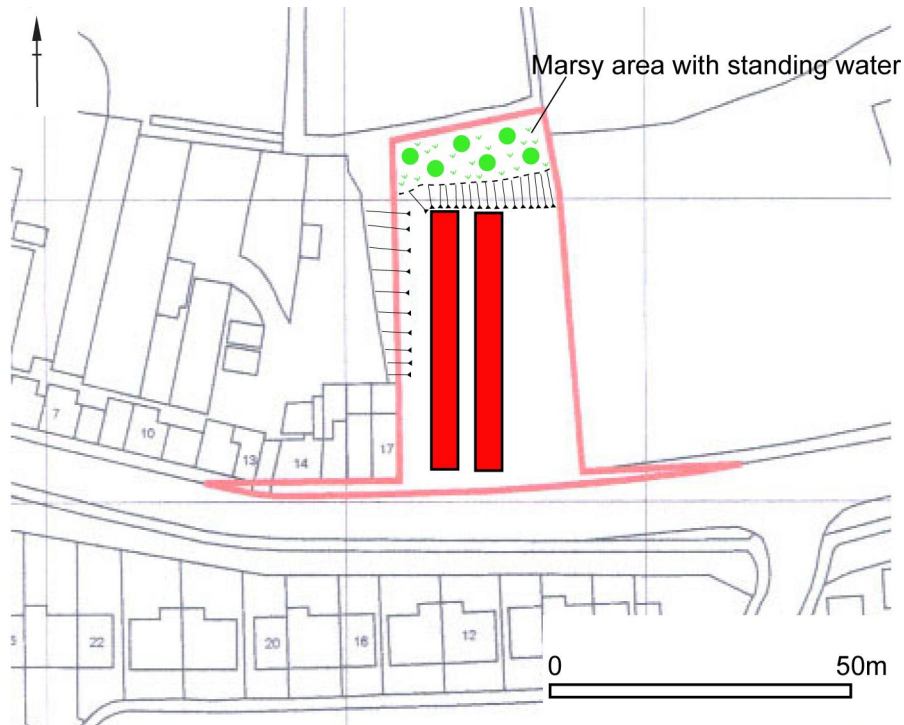


Figure Seven: Plan of development site showing approximate location of test trenches



Plate One: General view of the proposed development site, looking north



Plate Two: Showing the difference in height between the proposed development site and the surrounding area, looking west



Plate Three: Marshy area to the rear of the site, looking north



Plate Four: Trench One following removal of upper deposits, looking north



Plate Five: Close-up of gravel layer (Context No. 104)



Plate Six: Trench Two following removal of upper deposits, looking north



Plate Seven: West-facing section of Trench Two, showing fine-grained gravel layer (Context No.206)