



Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 85

**210m north-west of 15 Bonds Road
Dorsey
Silverbridge
County Armagh**

LICENCE NO.: AE/07/30

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 210m north-west of 15 Bonds Road, Dorsey, Silverbridge, Co. Armagh

Townland: Doresy

SMR No. : ARM 028:008

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: H 9518 1899

County: Armagh

Excavation Licence No. : AE/07/30

Planning Ref / No. : L/2006/1076

Dates of Monitoring: 26th February 2007

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site in the townland of Dorsey, Silverbridge, Co. Armagh as part of the planning application for a new dwelling. The application site lies to the south of the Dorsey Entrenchment, which is a scheduled Iron Age earthwork. A total of six trenches were mechanically excavated to assess the presence of archaeological remains. The trenches contained some evidence of agricultural activity (such as modern plough furrows and field drains), but nothing of archaeological significance. It is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out.

Type of monitoring:

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

Size of area opened:

Three trenches across application site all measuring approximately 20m in length and three trenches along the access route, each measuring approximately 18m in length.

Current Land Use: Agricultural

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is located in the townland of Dorsey, Silverbridge, Co. Armagh. The site is just outside the village of Silverbridge, lying approximately 1.5 km north-west of its centre and at a height of approximately 150m above sea level (Fig. 1). The application site is located approximately half way between the Dorsey and the Ummeracam rivers (Fig. 3). 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 slopes gently upwards towards the north-east.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for the construction of a new dwelling, and was requested by Neil Yeamen: Caseworker with Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. It was requested due to the proximity of the application site to the Dorsey Entrenchment (ARM 028:008) (Fig. 2) and the possibility that there may be previously unrecorded remains associated with this site.

Excavation

The evaluation consisted of the archaeological supervision of six mechanically-excavated test trenches. The trenches varied between 18-20m in length by 2m in width and their positions are illustrated in Figure Three. All six test trenches were excavated to the subsoil which consisted of an orangey yellow gravelly boulder clay.

Trench One

Trench One was located parallel to the south-eastern boundary of the application site (Fig. 3). Trench One measured 19m by 2m and was aligned approximately south-west/north-east. Trench One was excavated to the surface of the subsoil (Plate 1).

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) (Plate 2). 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 north-west of Trench One and was aligned south-west/north-east (Fig. 3). The trench was 18m long and 2m wide, and was excavated to the surface of the subsoil (Plate 3).

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) (Plate 4). The subsoil in Trench Two (Context No. 203) was an orangey yellow gravely 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 10m to the north-west of, and parallel to, Trench Two and measured 20m in length by 2m in width (Fig. 3). The trench was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Plate 5).

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).

The cultivation soil in Trench Three (Context No. 302) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 303) (Plate 6). The subsoil in Trench Three (Context No. 303) was an orangey yellow gravely 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 10m to the north-east of Trench One along the proposed access route for the new dwelling. It measured 12m in length by 2m in width (Fig. 3), and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Plate 7).

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) a linear feature (Context No. 403) was noticed roughly aligned east-west at the south-western most end of the trench. A small cutting was excavated across this feature to ascertain its archaeological potential. The feature was found to be shallow (0.05m deep) with a flattish base and gently sloping sides. The fill of this feature (Context No. 404) consisted of a light to mid brown sandy loam which contained occasional occurrences of small rounded stones (average size: 30mm x 20mm x 20mm). This feature is interpreted as being the result of an agricultural process, possibly ploughing or spade cultivation (Plate 8).

The cultivation soil in Trench Four (Context No. 402) overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 405) (Plate 9). The subsoil in Trench Four (Context No. 403) was an orangey yellow gravely 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 north-east of Trench Four along the proposed access route for the new dwelling (Fig. 3). Trench Five measured 17m by 2m and was aligned approximately south-west/north-east. Trench Five was excavated to the surface of the subsoil (Plate 10).

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) (Plate 11). The subsoil in Trench Five (Context No. 503) was an orangey yellow gravely 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 Six

Trench Six was positioned approximately 5m to the north-east of Trench Six and was aligned south-west/north-east (Fig. 3). The trench was 18m long and 2m wide, and was excavated to the surface of the subsoil (Plate 12).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Six (Context No. 601) 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 0.15m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 601) was a compact, mid to dark brown, sandy loam cultivation soil (Context No. 602) 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 Six (Context No. 602) directly overlay the natural subsoil (Context No. 603) (Plate 13). The subsoil in Trench Six (Context No. 603) was an orangey yellow gravely 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 0.25m.

The six 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: _____

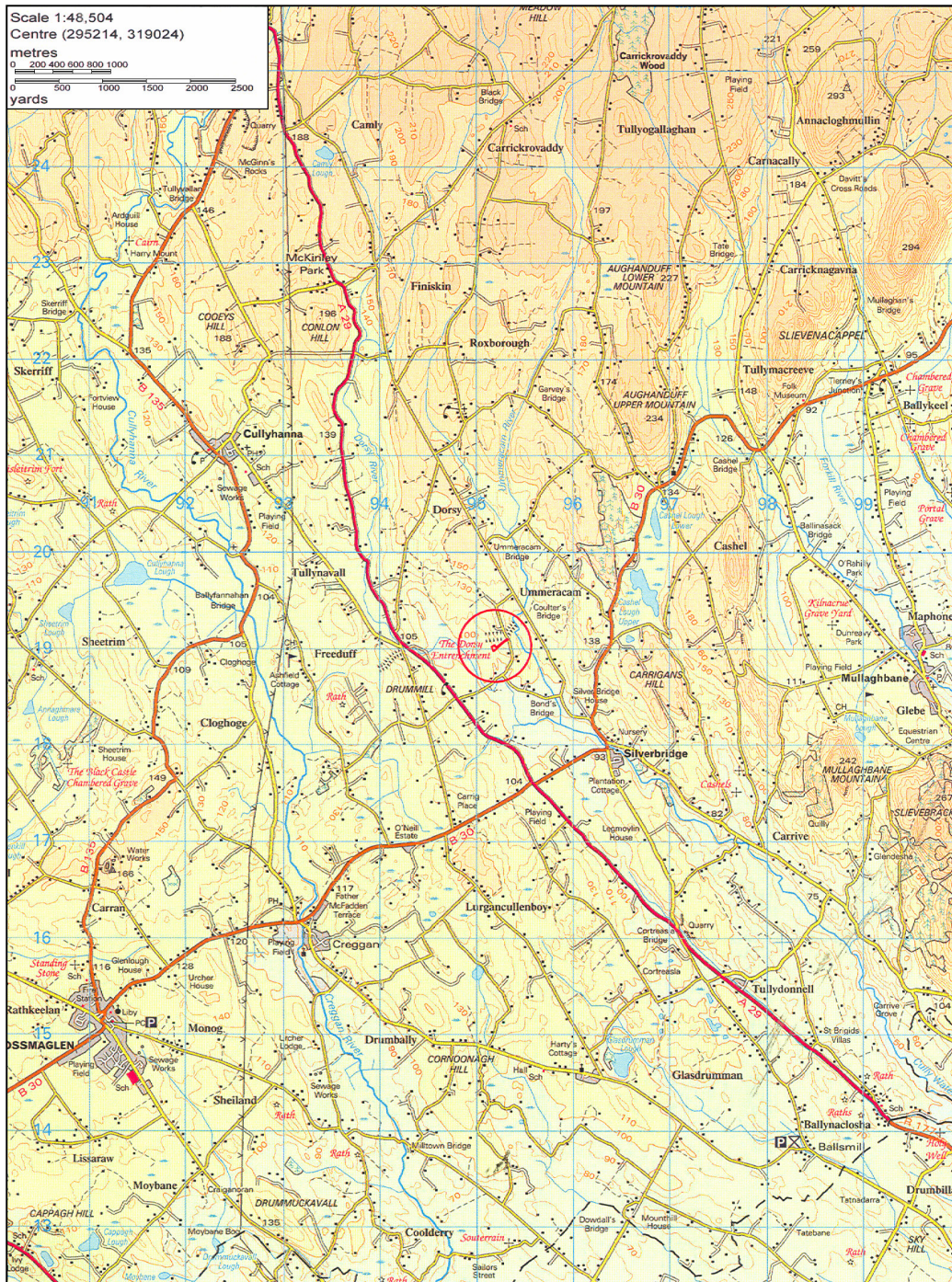


Figure One: 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Map showing location of site (within red circle)

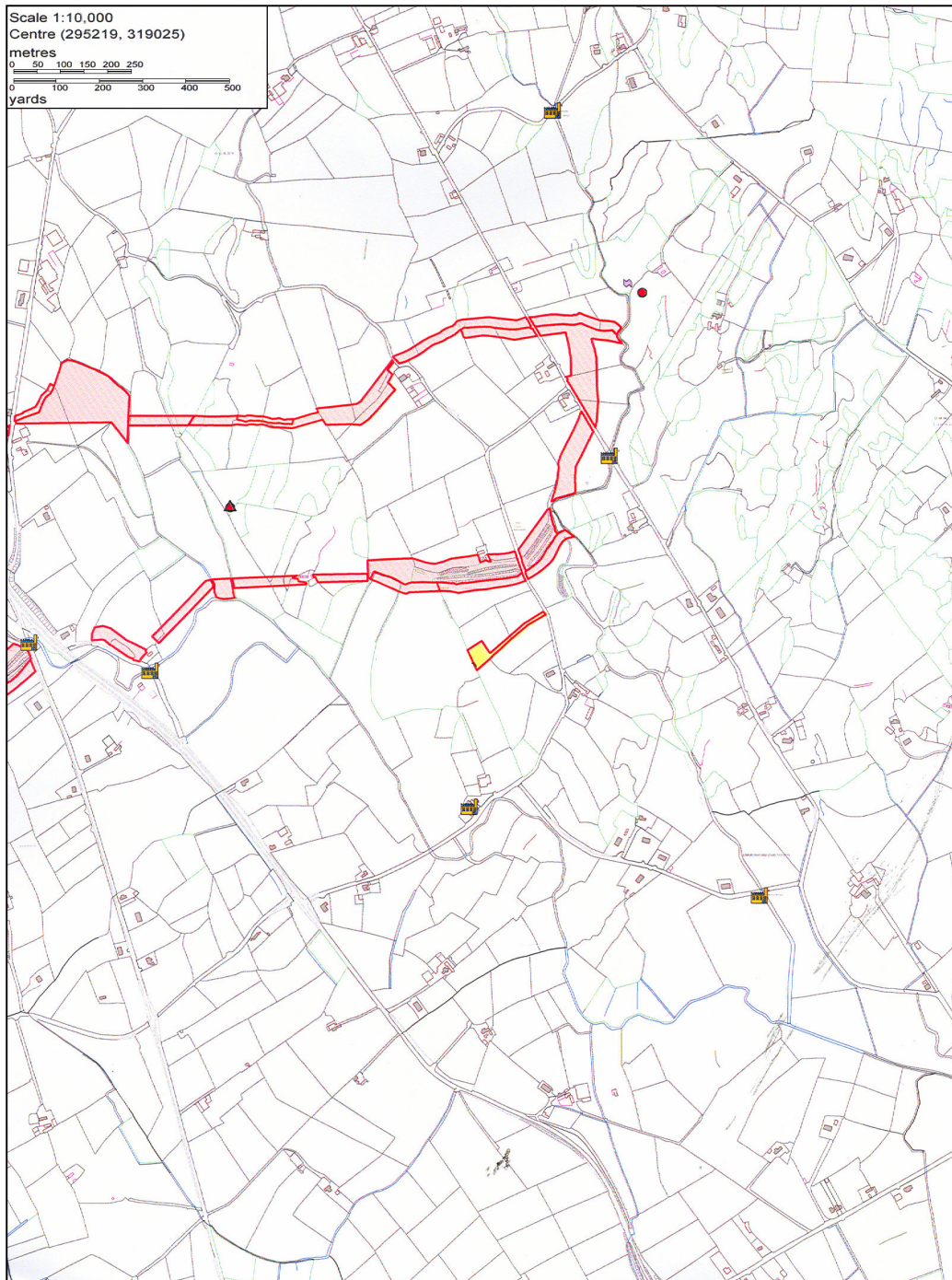


Figure Two: Detailed map of application site (in yellow).

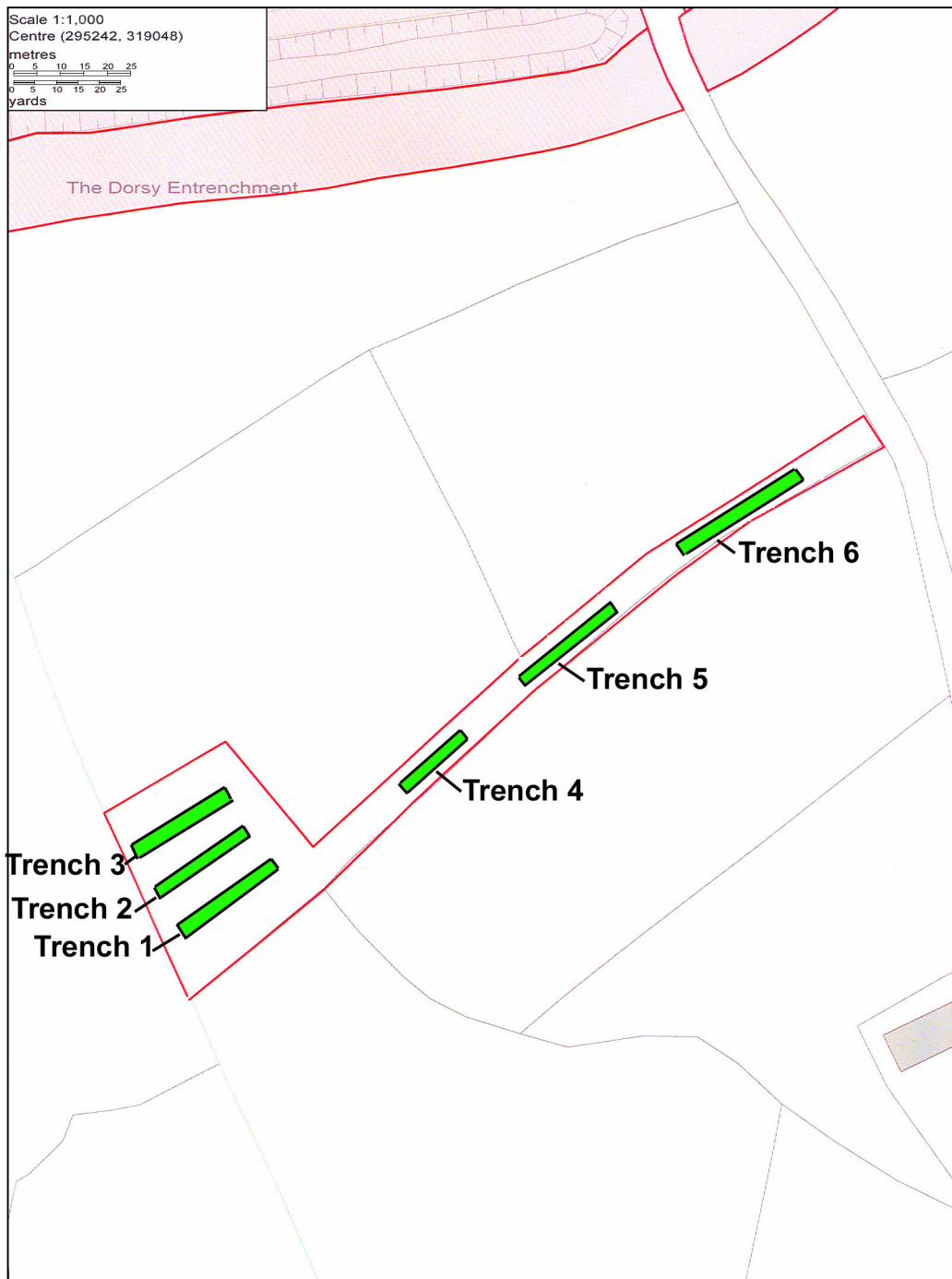


Figure Three: Plan showing location of Trenches.



Plate 1: Trench One following excavation to subsoil, looking north-east.

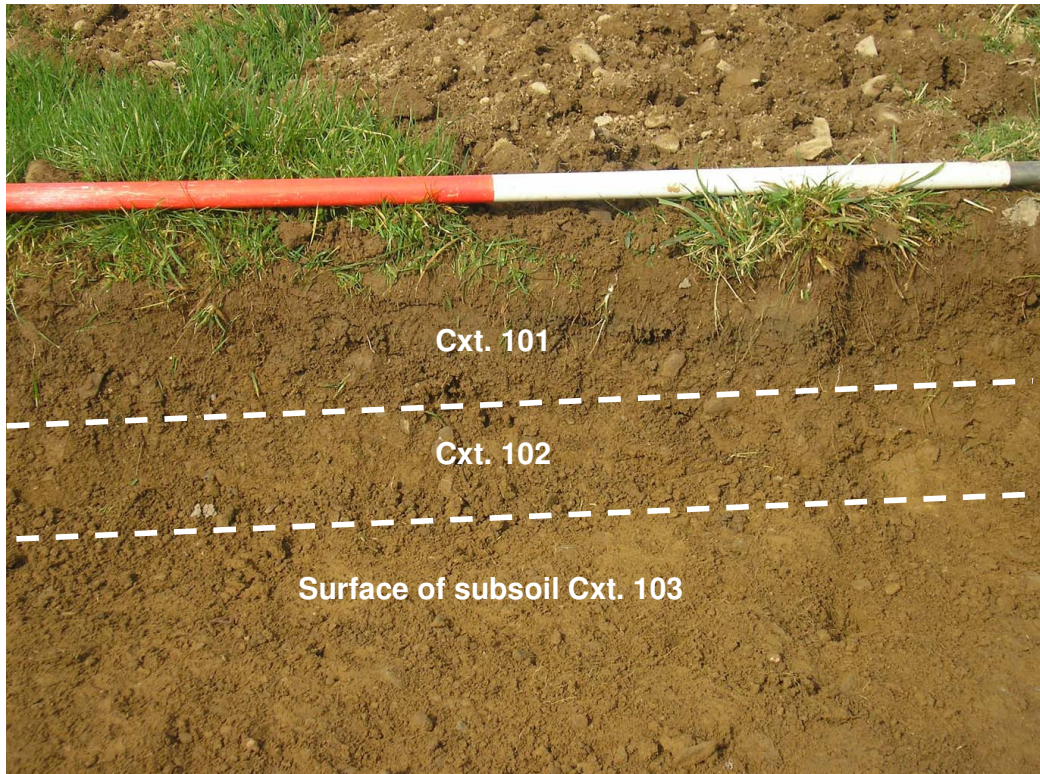


Plate 2: South-east facing section Trench One



Plate 3: Trench Two following excavation to subsoil, looking north-east.

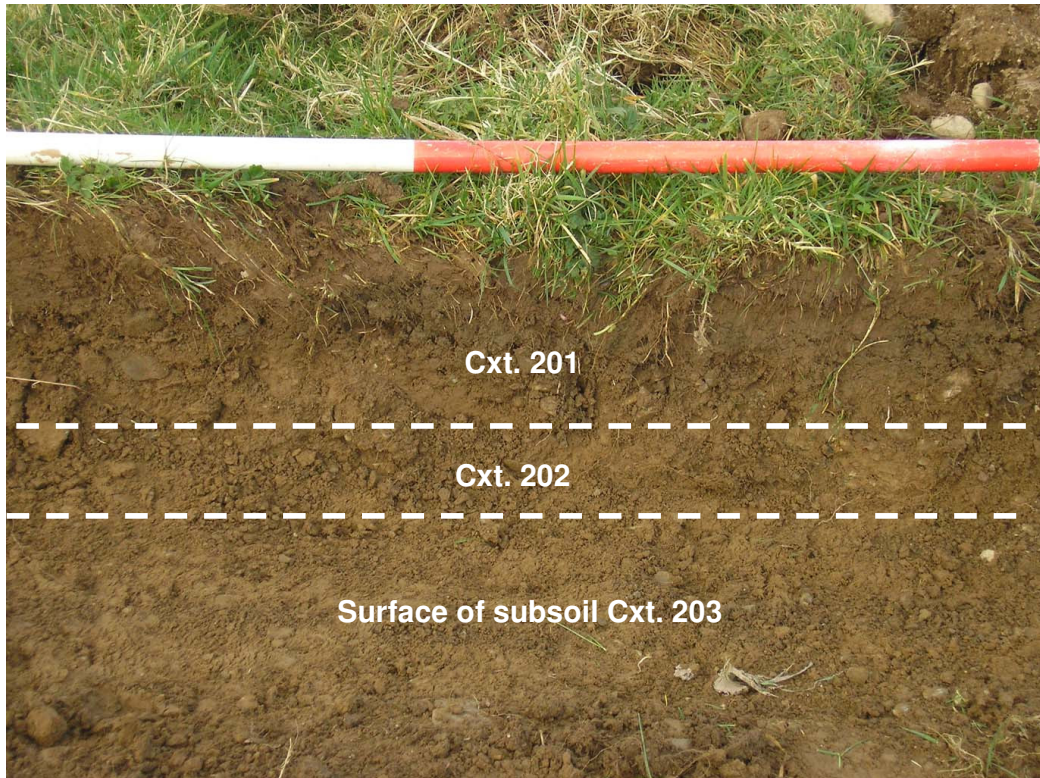


Plate 4: South-east facing section Trench Two.



Plate 5: Trench Three following excavation to subsoil, looking north-east.

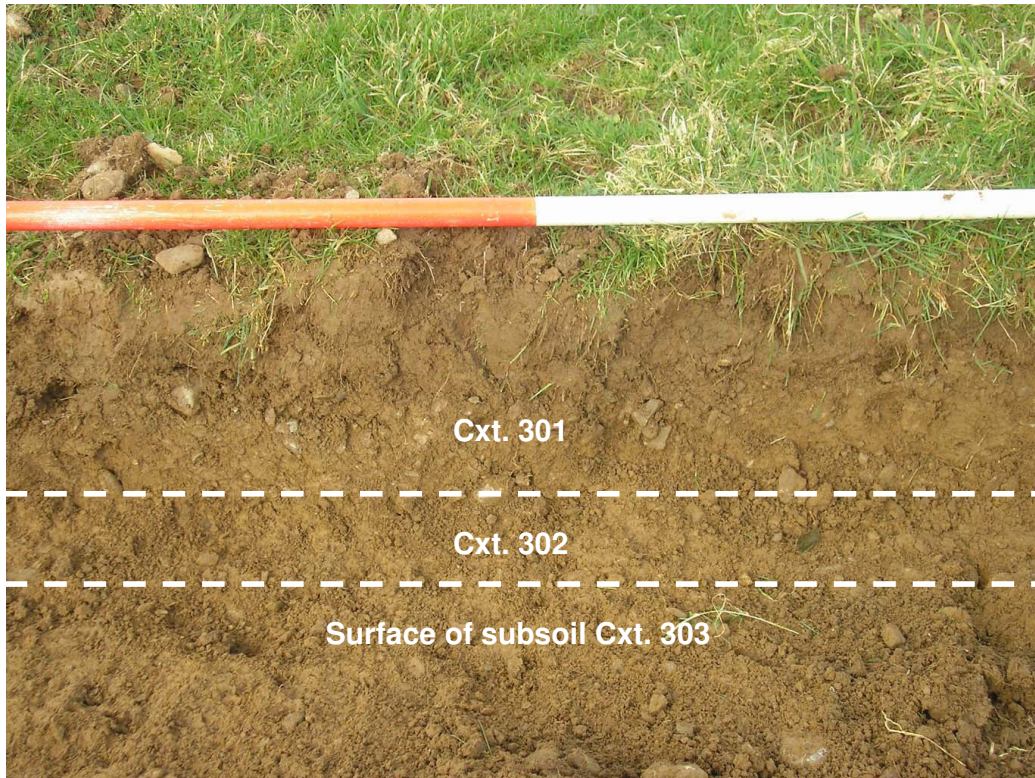


Plate 6: South-east facing section Trench Three.



Plate 7: Trench Four following excavation to subsoil, looking north-east.

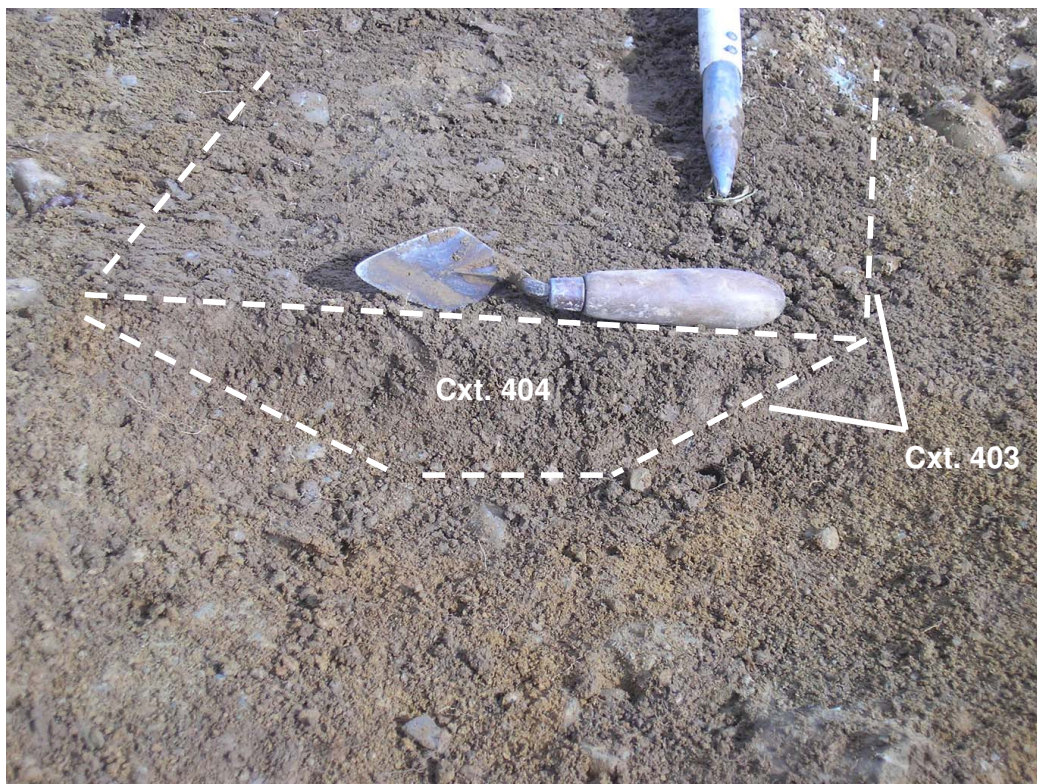


Plate 8: Cutting across agricultural feature Cxt. 403.

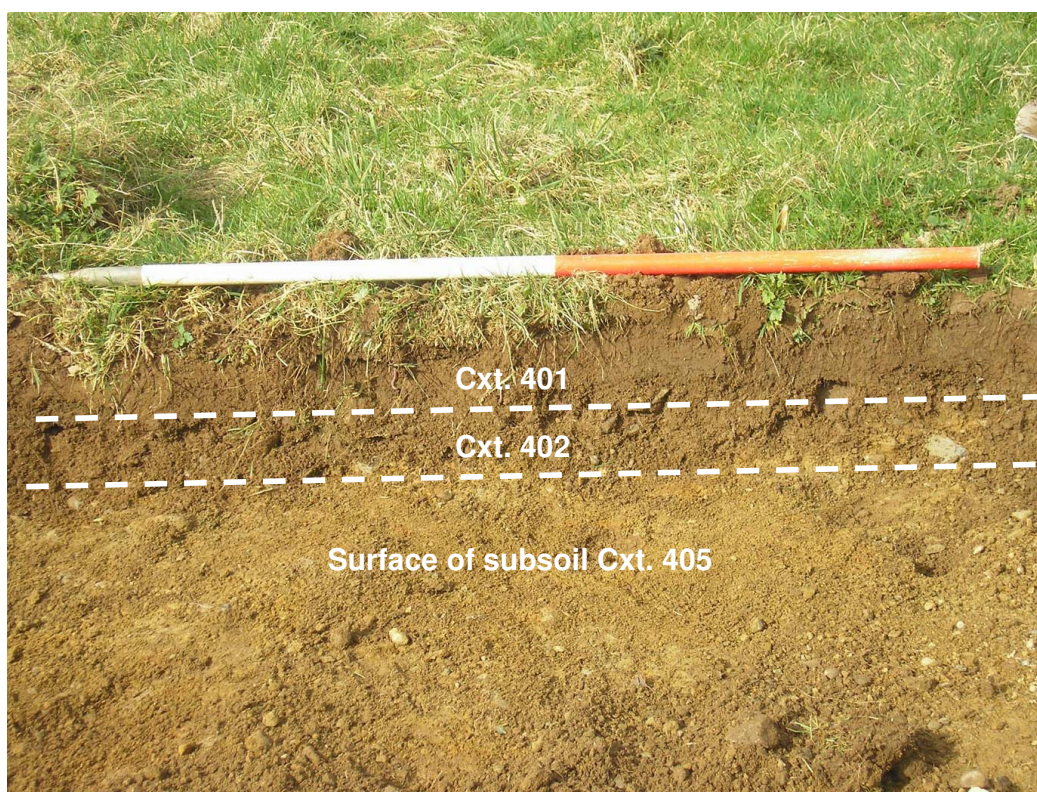


Plate 9: South-east facing section Trench Four.



Plate 10: Trench Five following excavation to subsoil, looking north-east

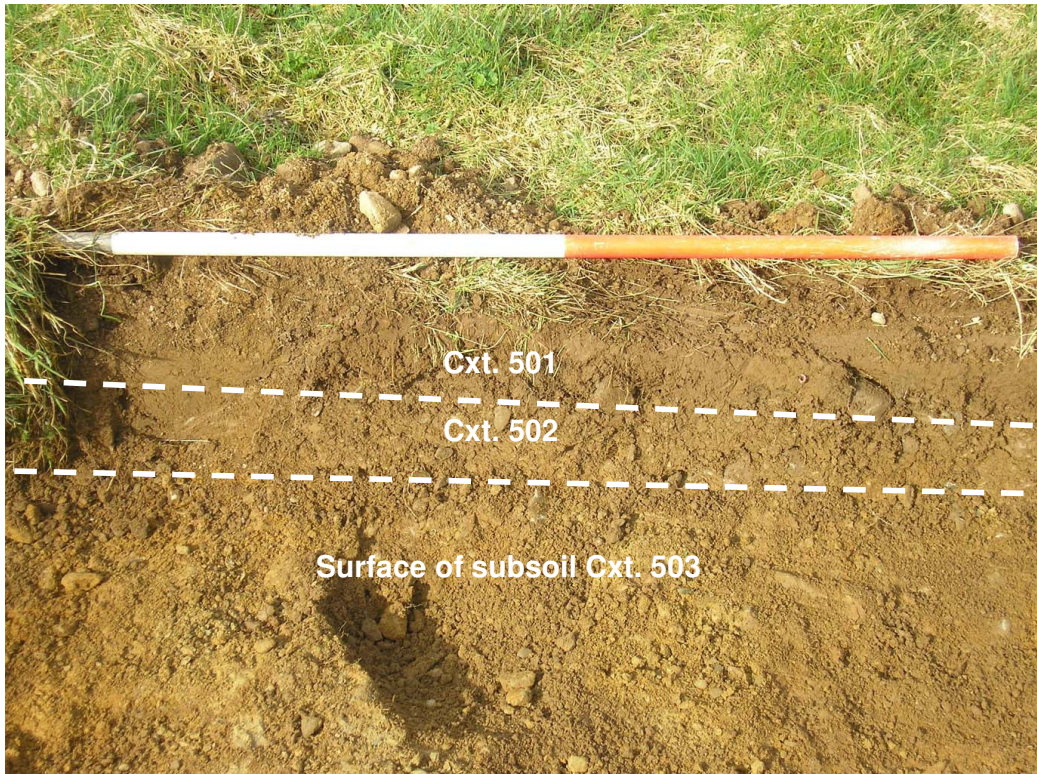


Plate 11: South-east facing section Trench Five. NB depression at base of picture occurred when a stone was removed by the mechanical digger.



Plate 12: Trench Six following excavation to subsoil, looking north-east

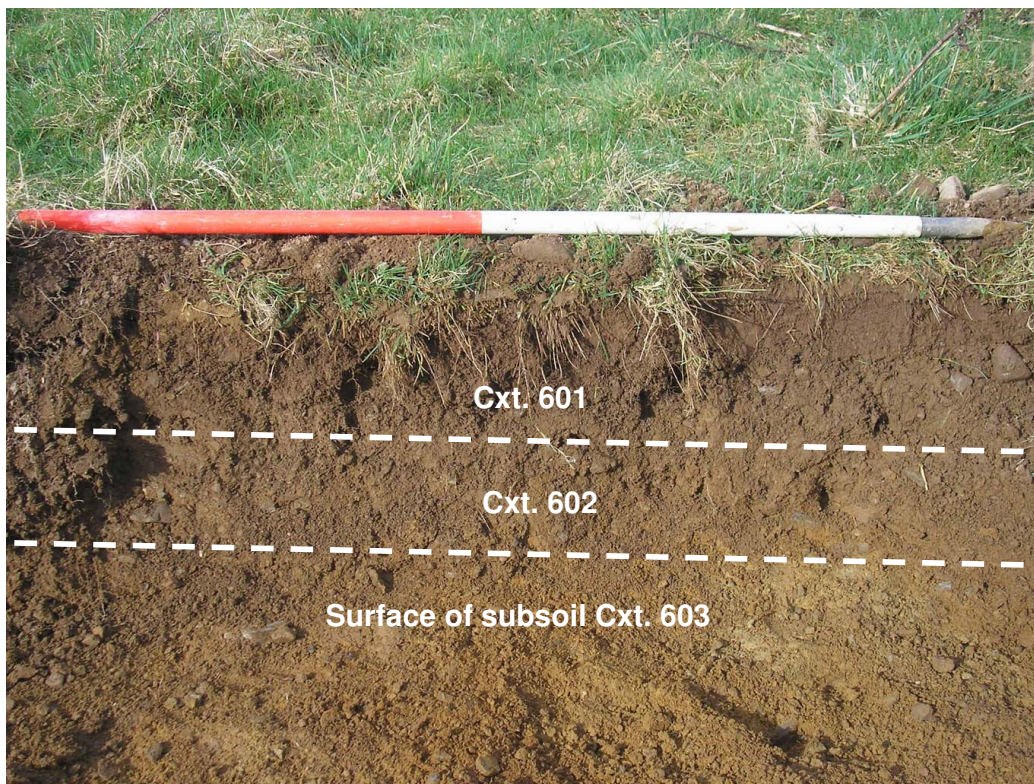


Plate 13: South-east facing section Trench Six.