Evaluation/Monitoring Report No. 124

SITE 140M SOUTH OF BALLYDONETY ROAD
BALLYDONETY
DOWNPATRICK
COUNTY DOWN

LICENCE NO.: AE/07/80

Brian Sloan

Site Specific Information

Site Name: 140m south of Ballydonety Road, Downpatrick, Co. Down

Townland: Ballydonety

SMR No. : DOW 037:081

State Care Scheduled Other √ [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: J 4509 4264

County: Down

Excavation Licence No. : AE/07/80

Planning Ref / No. : R/2005/1407/F

Dates of Monitoring: 16th April 2007

Archaeologist(s) Present: Brian Sloan

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site 140m south of Ballydonety Road, Ballydonety, Downpatrick, Co. Down as part of the planning application for a new dwelling. The application site is situated close to an aerial photograph site (cropmark – St. Josephs BDQ 42). The evaluation consisted of four mechanically-excavated test trenches to assess the presence of previously unrecorded archaeological remains. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered in any of the trenches. 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:

Three trenches each measuring approximately 15m in length (north/south) by 2m (east/west) in the footprint of the dwelling, and one trench measuring 5m in length (east/west) by 2m (north/south) in the proposed area of the septic tank.

Current Land Use: Agricultural pasture.

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site is located 140m south of Ballydonety Road, Ballydonety, Downpatrick, Co. Down The site is just outside the town of Downpatrick, lying approximately 4.5km south-west of its centre and at a height of approximately 30m above sea level (Fig. 1). The application site is bounded on all sides by a modern post and wire fence, interspersed with mature trees. The land in the vicinity of the application site is mainly used for pastoral agriculture interspersed with residential and farm buildings. The application site is in an area rich in archaeological sites and monuments (Fig. 2). It is situated within the same field as an aerial photograph site (DOW 037:020) and numerous raths and unclassified enclosures are in the immediate vicinity.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a new dwelling and garage, and was requested by Gina Baban: Caseworker with Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage. The access route for the application site was constructed prior to the archaeological investigation, and so the evaluation trenches were positioned across the footprint of the dwelling and the proposed location of the septic tank. It was requested due to the proximity of the application site to the aerial photograph site (DOW 037:020) (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 four mechanically-excavated test trenches. Three of the trenches measured 15m in length by 2m in width, and the fourth measured 5m in length by 2m in width. All four test trenches were excavated to the subsoil which consisted of a glacially derived orangey sand clay.

Trench One

Trench One was located roughly parallel to the western most boundary of the application site (Fig. 3). Trench One was approximately 2m wide and 15m long and was aligned approximately north/south. 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 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 relatively 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).

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 orange/red sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones, and was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m. There were no finds or features encountered in this trench.

Trench Two

Trench Two was positioned approximately 2m to the east of, and parallel to, Trench One and was aligned roughly north/south (Fig. 3). The trench was 2m wide and 15m long, and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Plate 3).

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). This layer was approximately 0.1m 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 0.15m thick. The cultivation soil in Trench Two (Context No. 202) directly overlay the subsoil (Plate 4).

The subsoil in Trench Two (Context No. 203) was an orange/red sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones, and was encountered at an average depth of 0.25m. There were no finds or features observed in this trench.

Trench Three

Trench Three was positioned approximately 2m to the east of, and parallel to Trench Two and was aligned roughly north/south (Fig. 3). The trench measured 15m in length by 2m in width and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Plate 5).

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), and 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).

The cultivation soil in Trench Three (Context No. 302) directly overlay the subsoil (Context No. 303) (Plate 6). This comprised an orange/red sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones, and was encountered at an average depth of 0.25m. There were no finds or features encountered in this trench.

Trench Four

Trench Four was positioned approximately 15m to the east of Trench Three and was situated in the proposed location of the septic tank. The trench measured 5m in length by 2m in width (Fig. 3). The trench was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil (Plate 7).

The sod and topsoil layer in Trench Four (Context No. 401) consisted of loose, light to mid brown, sandy loam containing infrequent, sub-angular, stone inclusions (average size: 30 x 20 x 10mm), and was 0.15m thick. Below the sod and topsoil layer (Context No. 401) was a cultivation soil (Context No. 402) 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).

The cultivation soil in Trench Four (Context No. 402) directly overlay the subsoil (Context No. 403) (Plate 8). This comprised of an orange/red sandy clay with occasional inclusions of small rounded and sub-angular stones, and was encountered at an average depth of 0.3m. There were no finds or features encountered in this trench.

The four 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: N/A

Photographs:

The digital images (21 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:_____

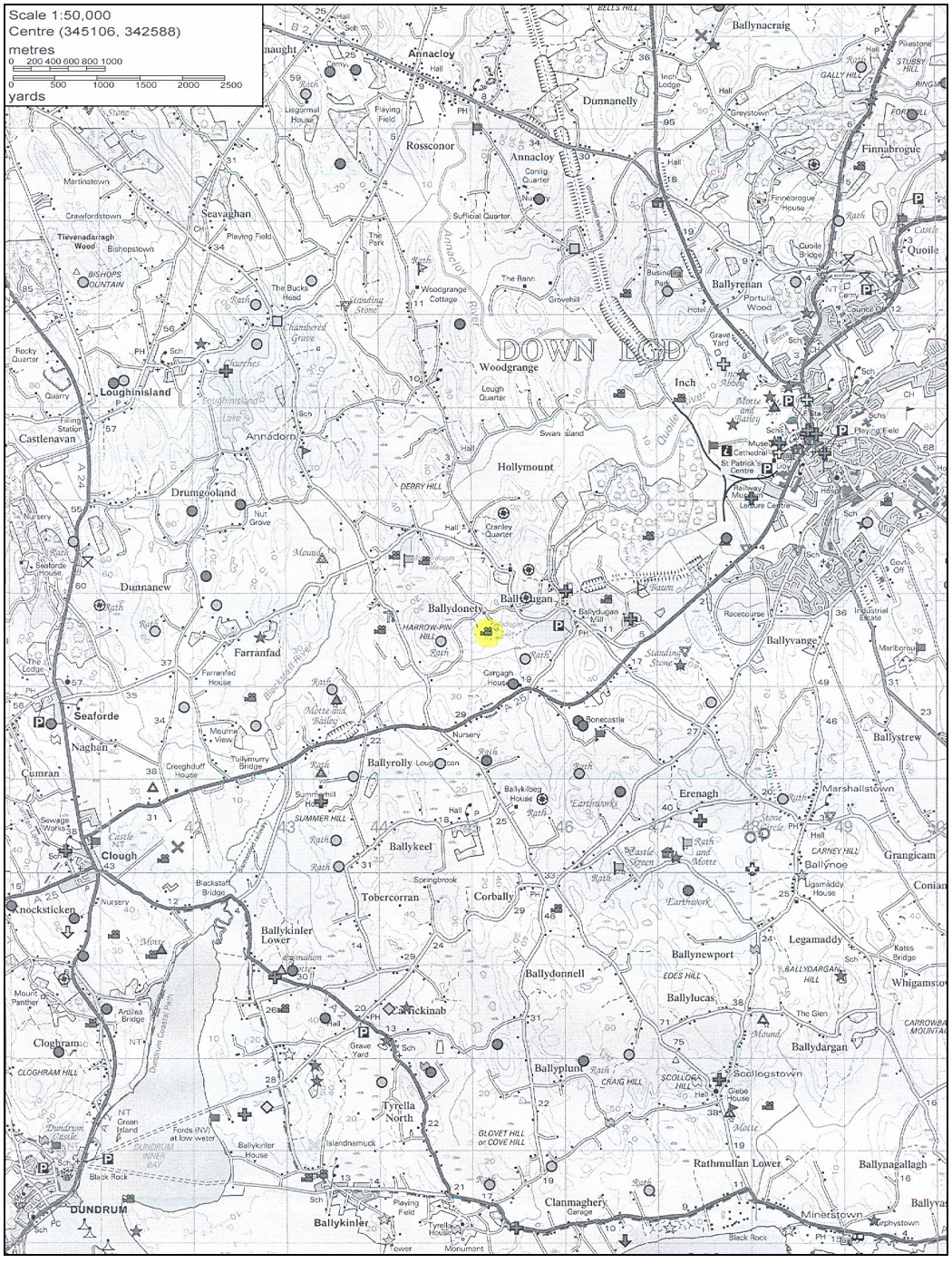

Fig. 1: General location map showing location of aerial photograph site (highlighted in yellow).

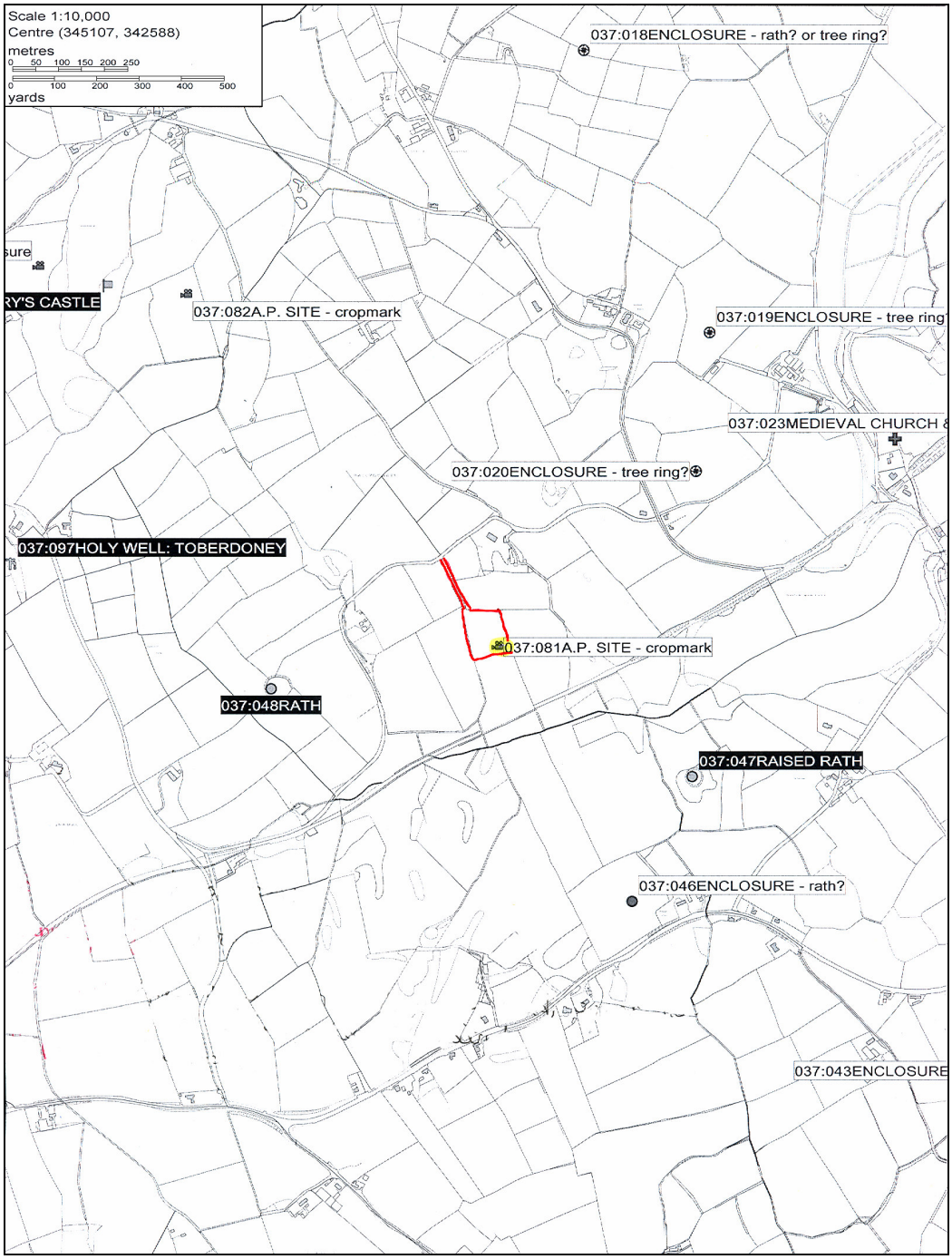

Fig. 2: Detailed location map, showing application site (outlined in red) and archaeological monuments in the vicinity.

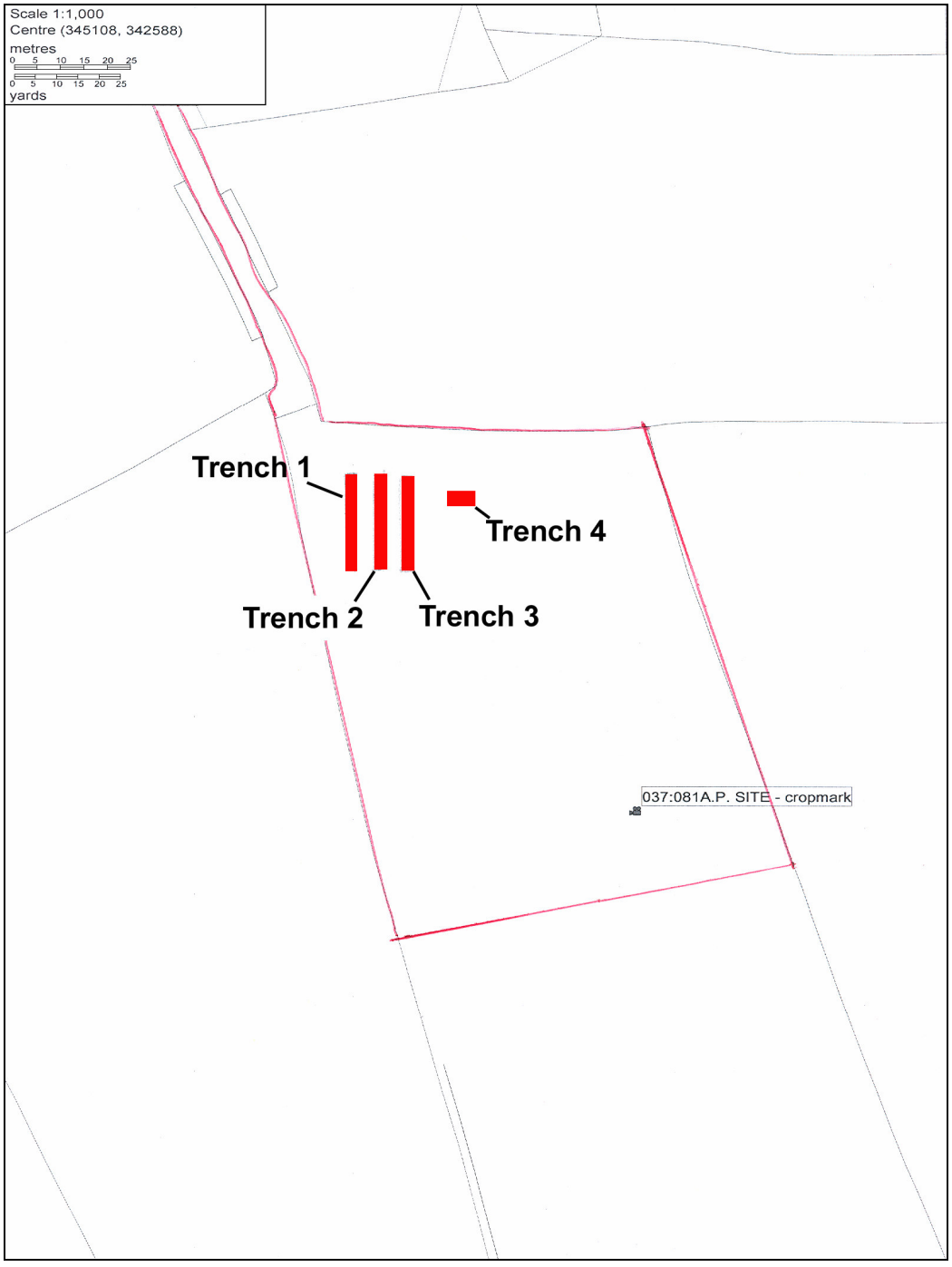

Fig. 3: Map detailing the location of the trenches within the application area (outlined in red).

Plate 1: Trench One following excavation to the surface of the subsoil (Context No. 103), looking north.

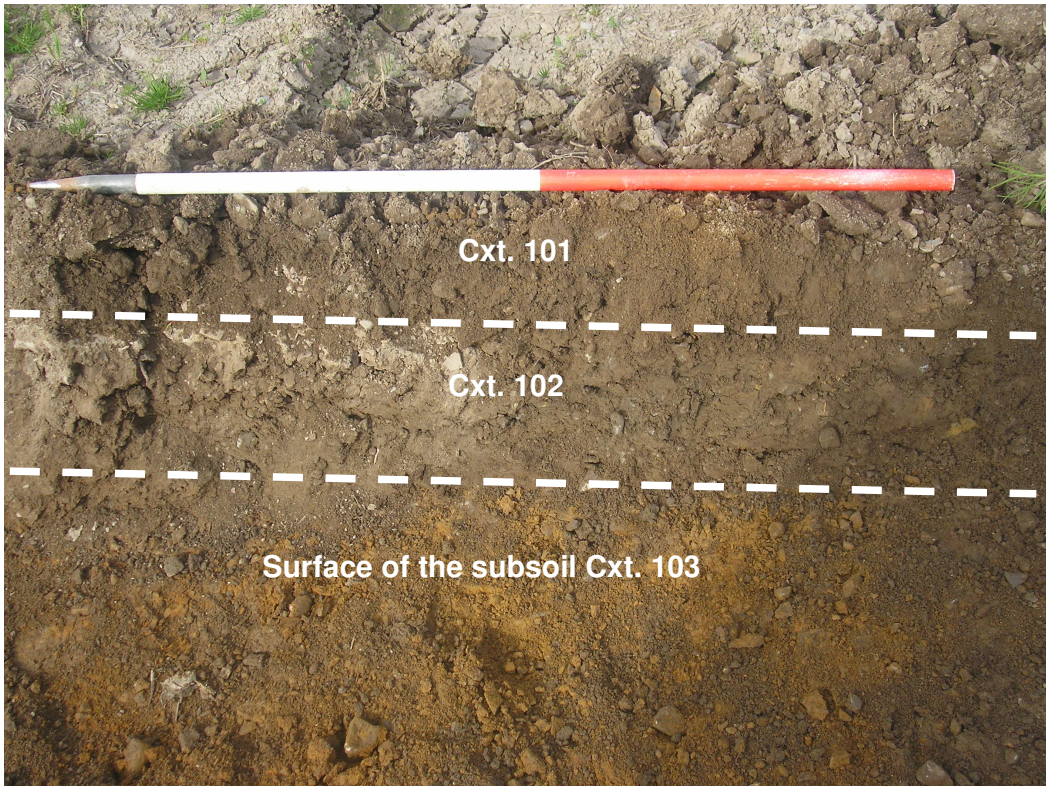

Plate 2: East facing section of Trench One.

Plate 3: Trench Two following excavation to the surface of the subsoil (Context No. 203), looking south.

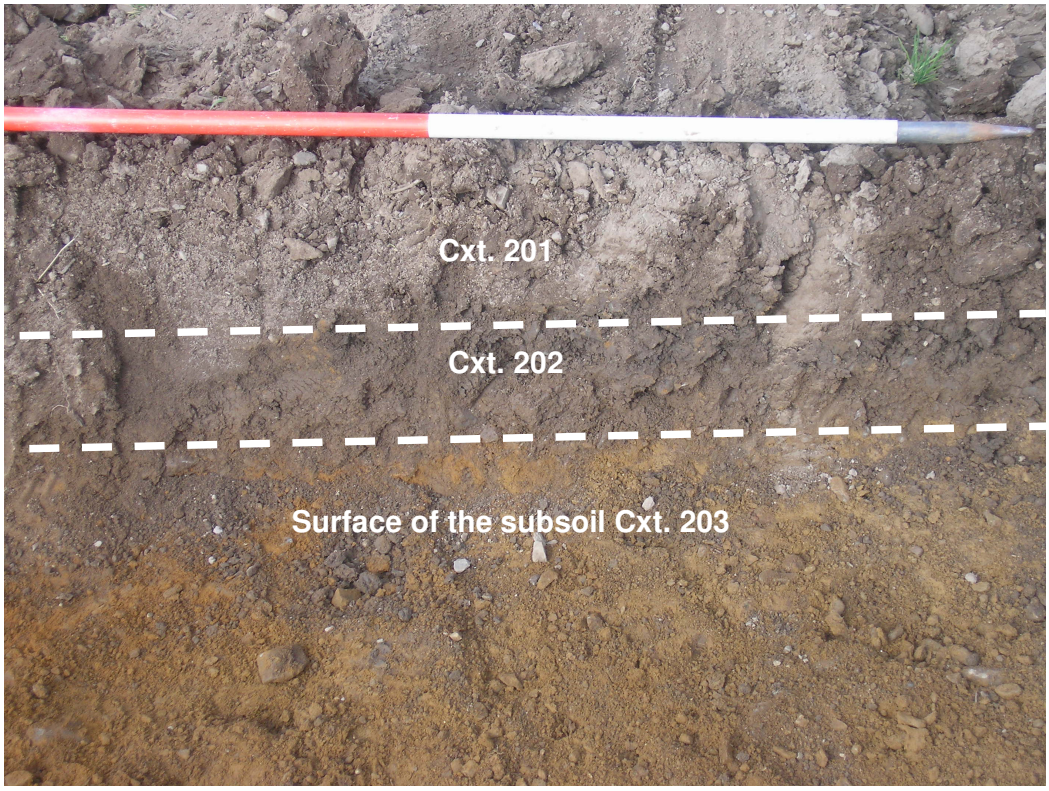

Plate 4: East facing section of Trench Two.

Plate 5: Trench Three following excavation to the surface of the subsoil (Context No. 303), looking south.

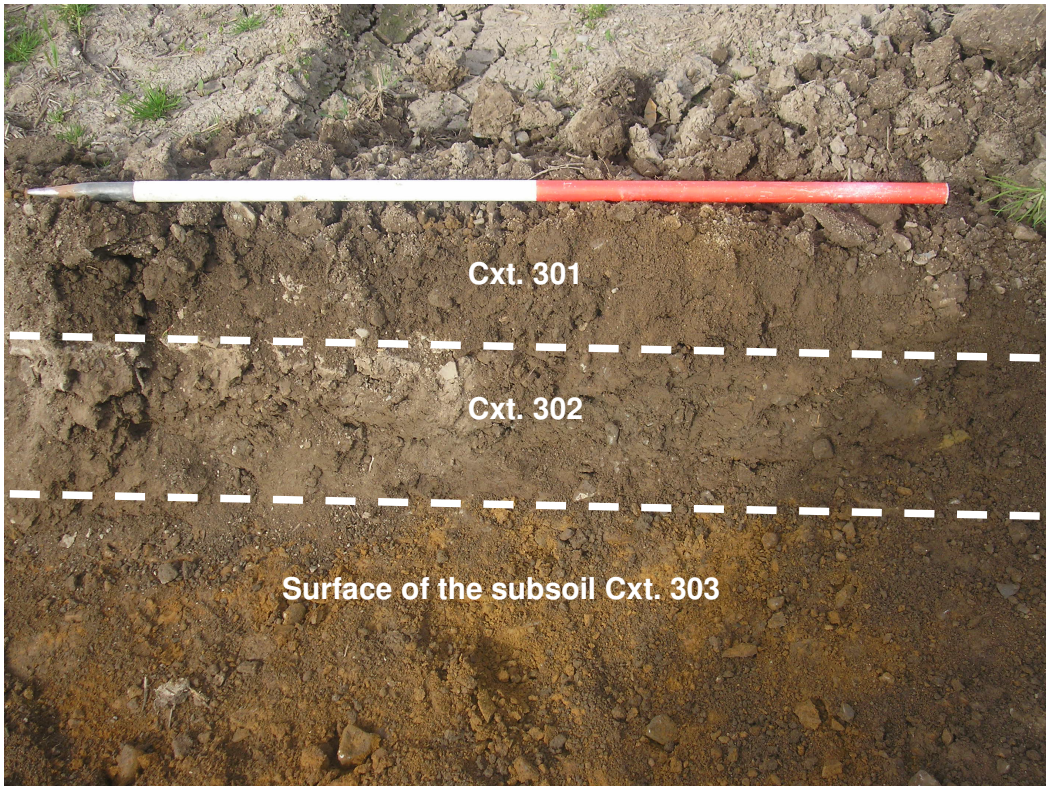

Plate 6: East facing section of Trench Three.

Plate 7: Trench Four following excavation to the surface of the subsoil (Context No. 403), looking east.

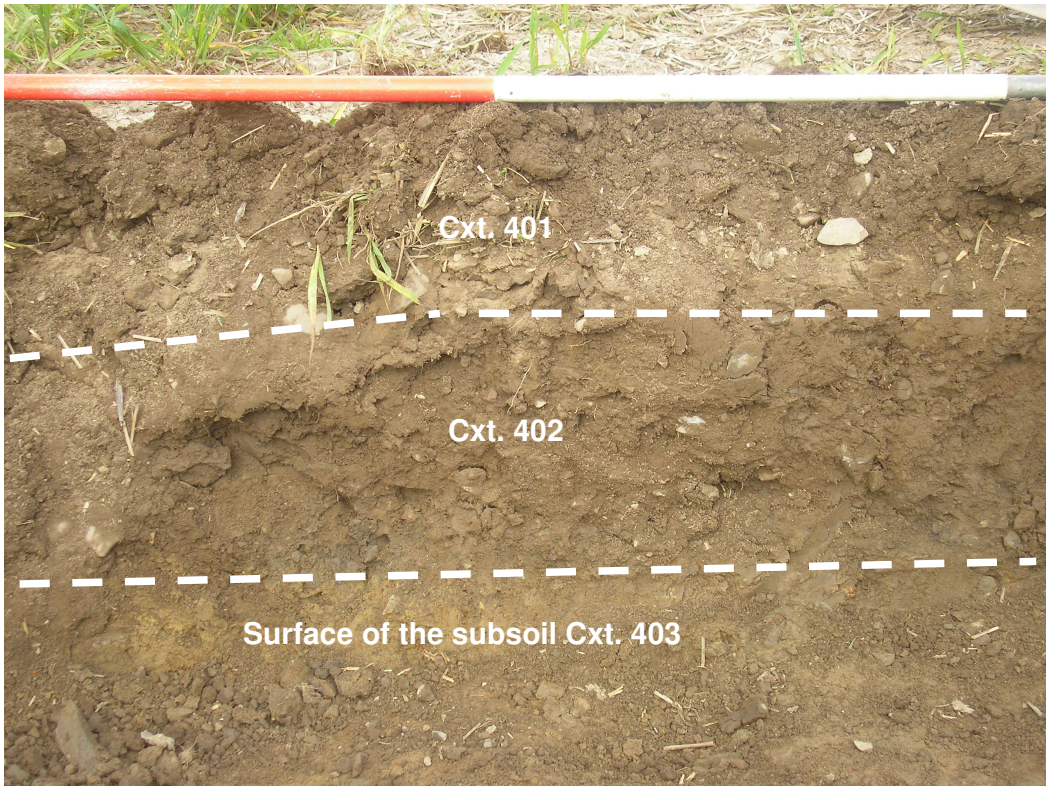

Plate 8: South facing section of Trench Four.

Plate 9: Application site following excavation of the evaluation trenches, looking south-east.