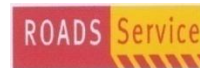


**Interim Report of
Phase 2 Excavations
A1/N1 Newry-Dundalk Link Road
Area 7, Site 101**



Ministerial Direction no:	E3786
Chainage:	7220
NGR:	307463E, 316782N
Townland:	Drumad
Parish:	Killanny
County:	Louth
Country:	Republic of Ireland
Director:	S.J. Turrell
Submitted:	September 2005

**Interim Report of Phase 2 Excavations,
A1/N1 Newry-Dundalk Link Road,
Area 7 Site 101**

Location: Chainage 7220
Townland: Drumad
Parish: Ballymascanlan
County: Louth
Country: Republic of Ireland
NGR: 307463E, 316782N
Author: Sinclair Turrell
Submitted: September 2005

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Abstract

Archaeological Development Services Ltd, having been commissioned by DRD Roads Service, undertook archaeological assessment along the proposed A1/N1 Newry-Dundalk Link Road. Archaeological evaluation was carried out along a number of locations highlighted in the Environmental Impact Assessment as areas of high archaeological potential. This report discusses the archaeological findings in Area 7, which is located in Drumad Townland and was tested under DoEHLG Record Number A002/000; sub number A002/001 by Damien Finn. A total of 2738sqm were tested in Area 7 (chainage 7200 – 7600).

At this site a 20 by 20m cutting revealed a large spread of topsoil containing 19th century finds and covering a stone-filled linear feature that ran east to west. This feature became shallower to the east, where it faded out. It probably represents a natural gully filled with stones before 19th century cultivation. A second feature, a small oval pit with a charcoal-rich fill is most likely the result of tree clearance.

1 Description of the Site and Location

1.1 Introduction

The National Roads Authority (NRA) for the Republic of Ireland and Department for Regional Development (DRD) for Northern Ireland are the authorities in charge of the proposal to construct a new road between Newry and Dundalk. The proposed scheme involves a 14 km route with 5.7 km of associated link roads (Fig. 1). Upgrading the key transport corridors and associated trunk road links will provide a strategic framework for infrastructure investment, improvement of public transport, future urban and economic development especially for large-scale sites to accommodate industry and commerce and assisting tourist travel around the region.

As part of the road works, Archaeological Development Services Ltd (ADS) was commissioned to perform an archaeological assessment along the proposed Link Road and to mitigate the impacts of any construction on archaeological resources. The following report details the results of the excavation at Site 101 that followed the discovery of two stone filled linear features **(031)** and **(032)** that were uncovered during Phase 1 test trenching (McConway and O'Rourke 2005).

This report describes the results of excavations carried out from May 10 through May 12, 2005. The staff of ADS carried out archaeological work on behalf of the developers under the direction of Sinclair Turrell. This section of the project occurs in Drumad Townland, Ballymascanlan Parish, Co. Louth, Republic of Ireland at National Grid Reference 307463E, 316782N (centre point), Ordnance Datum (OD) of approximately 90.9m and at road scheme Chainage 7220.

1.2 Site description

1.2.1 Topography

The existing landscape character of the study area is a result of previous glacial, geological and human impacts (Figs 1, 2 and 3)¹. The study area is contained within a mountainous backdrop known as the Ring of Gullion. Slieve Gullion defines the western extent of the study area and lies at the centre of the Ring of Gullion. To the north lies Camlough Mountain and Fathom Mountain. The eastern boundary is defined by the western edge of the Carlingford Mountains and specifically Black Mountain. The southern edge of the Ring of Gullion is contained within the study area and includes Feede Mountain and

¹ This information has been taken directly from the A1/N1 Newry-Dundalk Link Road Environmental Statement/Environmental Impact Statement Non-Technical Summary prepared by RPS Ireland Environmental Sciences

Slievenabolea. Between the mountains of the Ring lies a broad gently undulating agricultural landscape. South of Feede Mountain the study area levels off gently undulating to Dundalk Bay.

1.2.2 Geology

Buckley and Sweetman (1991, 10) identify the dominant bedrock in the site area as granophyre, which is part of the Carlingford Igneous Complex. Granophyre refers to fine-grained granitic material, commonly though not always with graphic intergrowths. Granophyre contains quartz and feldspar crystals, in a fine-grained microgranite. Granophyre is a characteristic result of metamorphic recrystallization in the presence of active fluids, completely changing the texture of a rock while the basic chemical composition changes very little. In composition, granophyre is typical granite, but the texture has been metamorphosed. At Slieve Gullion in Northern Ireland, there was a transformation of very old granodiorite (granite with roughly equal amounts of potassium and soda feldspar) into newer granophyre while in the Northwest Scottish Highlands old Torridonian sandstone has also been found transformed into granophyre.

1.2.3 Archaeological and historical background

The road follows a natural route way through mountainous terrain that may have been in use from the prehistoric period. The previously known monuments recorded near the route date from the Neolithic period to the 11th Century AD (Buckley and Sweetman 1991).

Previously known sites within 1km of the current site. A search of the “Archaeological Survey of County Louth” (Buckley and Sweetman 1991) and of the SMR shows that there are no sites within 1km of this location (Fig. 3).

Sites within 1km, known from the current project. Current work has identified one archaeological site within 1km of this location.

Site 102 Testing revealed a linear feature (045) located along the east of Trench 11. This measured 2.5m wide and lay close to the present N1. It consisted of grey sand and redeposited subsoil mix. A second linear spread of grey sand (043), 10m wide was uncovered to the immediate south of (045). These deposits may be part of a larger feature but their relationship was unclear having been cut through by a stone filled drain (044). In the testing nothing dateable was recovered from the upper surface of either (043) or (045) and it is uncertain whether or not they are associated with the present N1 (an infilled sheugh?) or are of antiquity.

2 A Description of the Works Carried Out

2.1 Reason for the excavation

The principal objectives of the Roads Service in implementing the scheme are to improve the conditions for road users by reducing journey times between the major commercial centres, together with an improvement in road safety. The specific objectives are:

- To contribute to the improvement of the Regional Strategic Transport Network and major transport links with Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland;
- To reduce vehicle operating times and costs;
- To facilitate freight transport;
- To improve road safety and improve pedestrian and cycle access and safety.

2.2 Excavation methods

2.2.1 Phasing

The road works have been divided into 2 phases: Phase 1 included (a) the archaeological evaluation of known sites, possible sites and areas of archaeological potential and (b) the recording and evaluation of standing buildings/structures at identified locations. Phase 2, reported here, includes the resolution of any sites identified by the works.

2.2.2 Desk top study

A desktop study of archaeological and cultural heritage sites was reported in the Environmental Impact Statement for the project (RPS 2002a, 236; 2002b). A particular emphasis was paid to sites with 1km of what was then the proposed route alignment.

2.2.3 Phase 1 archaeological testing

Archaeological testing in Area 7 evaluated the potential for uncovering previously unrecorded subsurface archaeological deposits along the road take (McConway and O'Rourke 2005). Area 7 is a field of pasture located to the south of An Grianán (Figs 1-4). It is one of a few areas in the townland of Drumad that has not been intensively forested for at least the past 160 years. It is therefore considered an area of archaeological potential and was evaluated under Phase 1 of the Contract by means of test excavation. The Phase 1 report discusses the archaeological findings within Area 7, at Drumad Townland, between

chainages 10000-10925. Patricia Lynch carried out testing in this area under project sub number A002/002 from the 18th through 23rd of November 2004 (McConway and O'Rourke 2005).

Area 7 lies directly east of Drumad Wood. Testing consisted of a centre line trench 398m long north to south by 2m wide that ran to the west of and roughly parallel with the present N1. Set perpendicular to this base trench were 21 offset trenches, of varying lengths, each set 20m apart and 2m wide (McConway and O'Rourke 2005; Figs 4 and 5 in the current work). The test work uncovered field drains along the northern edge of the site and a number of small charcoal spreads scattered elsewhere in the fields.

Some of these features may have been related to an old farmhouse as marked on 1st Edition Ordnance Survey maps or they may have been from antiquity.

The purpose for and the methodology employed in the Phase I testing included:

- To fully expose, investigate, record and resolve archaeological deposits uncovered in and all deposits associated with these.
- Resolution of the archaeological features described above was carried out by a licenced director, a supervisor, two assistants and four general operatives.
- A 100 by 40m area was appropriately opened over the features under archaeological supervision to the latest archaeological horizon or to the upper surface of natural geology, whichever occurs first. The area will be manually cleaned and examined for further archaeological deposits.
- All archaeological deposits were surveyed in to a site grid and in relation to their position on the road.
- All deposits were recorded and investigated by methods appropriate to their nature and complexity using best archaeological practice.
- Methods used included sectioning, planning and photographing the deposits, investigating the stratigraphic relationship with other deposits if appropriate, compiling a written record of the deposits via a context sheets

Recommendations derived from the testing. Four specific recommendations, that would help determine the origins of these features, were made following the test work (McConway and O'Rourke 2005, 18):

- That an agreed area is topsoil stripped to expose the limits of the linear feature and all other subsurface archaeological deposits in the northern limit of the field;

- That an appropriate area be opened up around each feature to determine whether other deposits survive;
- That all deposits uncovered are fully investigated and recorded; and
- That the remaining charcoal spreads are investigated during the construction phase.

As it was determined likely that additional subsurface archaeological deposits would be associated with the known features it was also recommended that an appropriate area around each feature be topsoil stripped. All features exposed from the stripping were to be fully investigated. If it became apparent that these features form part of a more extensive archaeological landscape then it was recommended that an appropriate area be opened up on plan in order to fully investigate and record any discovered features.

2.2.4 Phase 2 archaeological excavations

Recording strategy. Recording was by means of ‘best archaeological practise’. The primary records of these excavations consist of written and drawn records, photographs, survey data, finds and samples. The stratigraphic record was primarily made on context record sheets, of the standard type used by ADS. These are supplemented by information from the site diary and notebooks. Field surveying equipment consisted of an Ashtech DGPS surveying suite, which allowed real-time data collection with horizontal accuracy of 0.005m +1ppm and vertical accuracy of 0.010m +2ppm.

All Phase 2 archaeological excavations were carried out in accordance with the Specification for Archaeological Rescue Excavation on Known Sites document (ADS 2005). Field methods included:

- An appropriately sized area around each of the deposits was fenced off and access to these areas by machinery and personnel denied until they have been resolved.
- The removal of topsoil was by judicious use of a machine fitted with a toothless bucket under the constant supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist.
- All trenches were excavated to the latest archaeological horizon or to the upper surface of natural geology, whichever occurred first. If archaeological features were revealed these deposits were in the first instant, cordoned off using high visibility tape and access to these areas by machinery denied.
- All deposits were hand investigated using methods appropriate to their composition, nature and date and time was allowed for the archaeologist to undertake the appropriate level of recording.
- The level of recording depended on the nature and extent of the archaeological remains encountered. All deposits were recorded on plan (in relation to the site grid), photographed and if appropriate, their location surveyed in advance of hand excavation.

- Excavation of deposits was carried out by sectioning using methods appropriate to their composition and nature.
- Contexts were sampled for palaeobotanical material, radiocarbon dating, soil micromorphology, petrology, wood identification, etc.
- All sections and cut features were photographed and drawn.
- The position of all finds and samples were recorded in three-dimensions (when practicable) in relation to the site grid.
- Sampling strategies depended upon the dimensions, make up and complexity of the archaeological remains encountered.
- A day book was maintained where all archaeological features were recorded in writing utilizing ADS context sheets, scaled field illustrations and by both slide and digital photography.
- All finds were logged according to context, bagged and catalogued.
- A contract conservator was on call if necessary.
- All finds are stored in our post excavation unit at Kells, Co. Meath and will ultimately be stored in whatever facility the State will provide.
- Excavation or preservation by record was carried out on archaeological deposits that will be impacted on by the construction of the road scheme.

2.2.5 Health and safety documents

It is the policy of ADS to comply with the Health & Safety at Work Acts and the Construction Safety, Health & Welfare Regulations and to ensure so far as reasonably practicable the safety, health and welfare of all employees whilst at work, and to provide such information, training and supervision needed for this purpose. To comply with these acts and regulations the works were conducted following the procedures and principles laid out in the company health and safety document (ADS 2003). Special attention to health and safety will be paid in areas close to rivers, streams, woodland, marshy ground and overhead power lines. ADS can confirm that the excavation crews all hold a valid safe pass certificate.

2.2.6 Staff involved

ADS staff involved in the excavation were the Director Sinclair Turrell; Supervisor Mary O'Brien; Site Assistants Feilim MacGabhann, Brendan Malone, Colm O'Brien and Emma Taylor and General Operative Oisín O'Brien.

3 The Excavation-Phase 2

3.1 Introduction

Area 7 is one of a few places in the townland of Drumad that has not been forested for at least the last 160 years (Figs 1, 2 and 3). It is therefore considered an area of archaeological potential and was evaluated under Phase 1 of the Contract by means of test excavation. Testing had indicated the site consisted of two stone-filled linear features, both aligned on a northwest to southeast axis and containing a mix of small stones and granite pieces within a grey-brown clay matrix and a small charcoal rich feature.

An area measuring 20 by 20m was cleared of topsoil by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket and then subsequently cleaned by hand, down to the level of the subsoil, a very stoney, compact, orange-brown silty clay (**002**). After cleaning, the site was seen to mostly consist of a large irregular spread of topsoil (**001**) in the centre of the area, which narrowed into a linear shape to the west. This spread was investigated by hand excavating three box sections across it (Figs 4, 5 and 6).

Section 1 was placed across the narrow, linear part of the spread. It revealed an irregular U-shaped feature (**003**), 0.7m deep and filled with a dense packing of large stones, up to 0.8m in diameter, in a crumbly, dark orange-brown silty clay matrix (**005**). Above this, on the northern side of the feature, was a deposit of dark grey silty clay, some 0.15m deep and 0.6m wide (**004**) (Figs 5, 6 and 7; Plate 1).

Section 2, across the widest part of the spread, was mostly excavated through a thin (0.03-0.08m) layer of topsoil (Fig. 5; Plate 3). There was a slight dip in the centre of the section, around 0.35m deep and 2.2m wide (**008**). There were two large stones in this dip, which was filled with loose, brown, stoney silt (**007**).

Section 3, across the eastern end of the spread, was also cut through a thin layer of topsoil (Fig. 5). No features were revealed here but a small patch of stones, on the same east-west alignment as the features in the other two sections, was noted.

There were no finds in any of the features revealed by these sections but a selection of 19th century finds, including sherds of red earthenware, blackware, a fragment of clay pipe stem and a piece of corroded iron, were obtained from the spread (**001**) of topsoil (Appendix II).

The only other feature here was a small sub-oval patch of dark soil, just to the south of the topsoil spread (Fig. 5). This was sectioned and proved a very shallow feature, 0.8 by 0.5m in plan and 0.25m deep (009). It was filled with friable, stoney, dark brown/black very silty clay, which contained a lot of charcoal, as well as some small fragments of charred twig (006) (Fig. 7; Plates 2 and 4).

3.2 Summary

A 20 by 20m cutting revealed a large spread of topsoil containing 19th century finds and covering a stone-filled linear feature running east to west (Plate 5). This feature became shallower to the east, where it faded out. It probably represents a natural gully filled with stones before 19th century cultivation. A small oval feature with a charcoal-rich fill is most likely the result of tree clearance.

4 Discussion and Conclusions

The three box sections showed that the spread of topsoil here was very thin and simply a pocket of soil caused by the irregular surface of the natural subsoil. This topsoil spread masked a stone-filled linear feature running east to west and becoming shallower to the east, where it eventually petered out, no traces of it occurring on the eastern baulk of the site. The base of this feature was very irregular and this, together with the fact that it petered out, suggests that it is probably better interpreted as a natural gully, running down the slope of the hill, than as a purpose-cut field drain. This gully was probably filled with stones to facilitate the 19th century cultivation which the topsoil finds suggest occurred here. The small oval feature cannot be dated but is probably also associated with these 19th Century activities, perhaps the result of tree clearance by burning.

None of the features here appear to be of any great antiquity and with the investigation of the site, all archaeological questions can be considered to have been resolved.

5 Recommendation

No further archaeological work is recommended for Site 101.

6 References

ADS

- 2003 Archaeological Development Services Ltd Health and Safety Manual. Compiled by Fergus Cooney.
- 2005 Archaeological Method Statements To facilitate Phase 2 works On the A1/N1 Newry – Dundalk Link Road Project Number A002/000, April 2005.

Buckley, V. and P. Sweetman

- 1991 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*. The Office of Public Works, Dublin.

Louth County Council

- 1997 Louth County Development Plan. Louth County Council, Dundalk.

McConway, L. and M. O'Rourke

- 2005 *A1/N1 Newry-Dundalk Link Road Volume 1 Archaeological Assessment Areas 7, 8 & 9*. Archaeological Development Services Ltd for Department for Regional Development, Roads Service. Belfast

RPS Ireland Environmental Services (RPS)

- 2002a *A1/N1 Newry-Dundalk Link Road Environmental Statement Environmental Impact Statement*, Volume 1 Main Text.
- 2002b *A1/N1 Newry-Dundalk Link Road Environmental Statement Environmental Impact Statement*, Volume 2 Appendices.

Appendices

Appendix I Context log

Context	Type	Description
(001)	Deposit	Top soil
(002)	Deposit	Sub soil
(003)	Cut	North to south drain cut.
(004)	Deposit	Top fill of (003).
(005)	Deposit	Lower fill of (003).
(006)	Deposit	Burnt surface spread, fill of (009).
(007)	Deposit	Deposit within (008)
(008)	Cut	Drain cut, possibly the same as (003)
(009)	Cut	Shallow pit, tree clearing?

Appendix II Finds

Context	Type	Description
(001)	Pottery	Three sherds of red earthenware, unglazed.
	Pottery	Two sherds of blackware.
	Pipe stem	Clay (small fragment)
	Metal	Probably a broken nail.

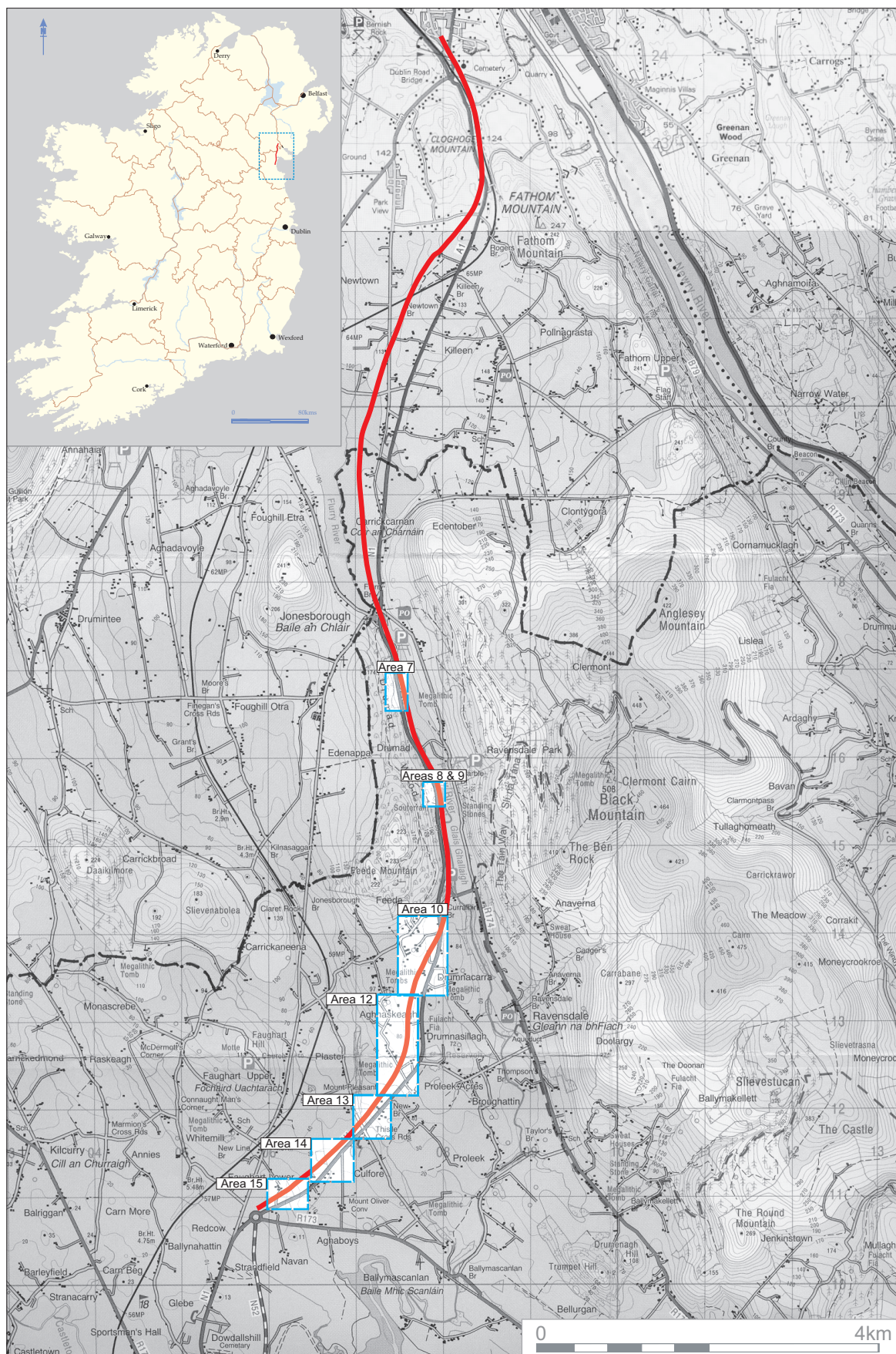


Fig. 1 Location plan for A1/N1.

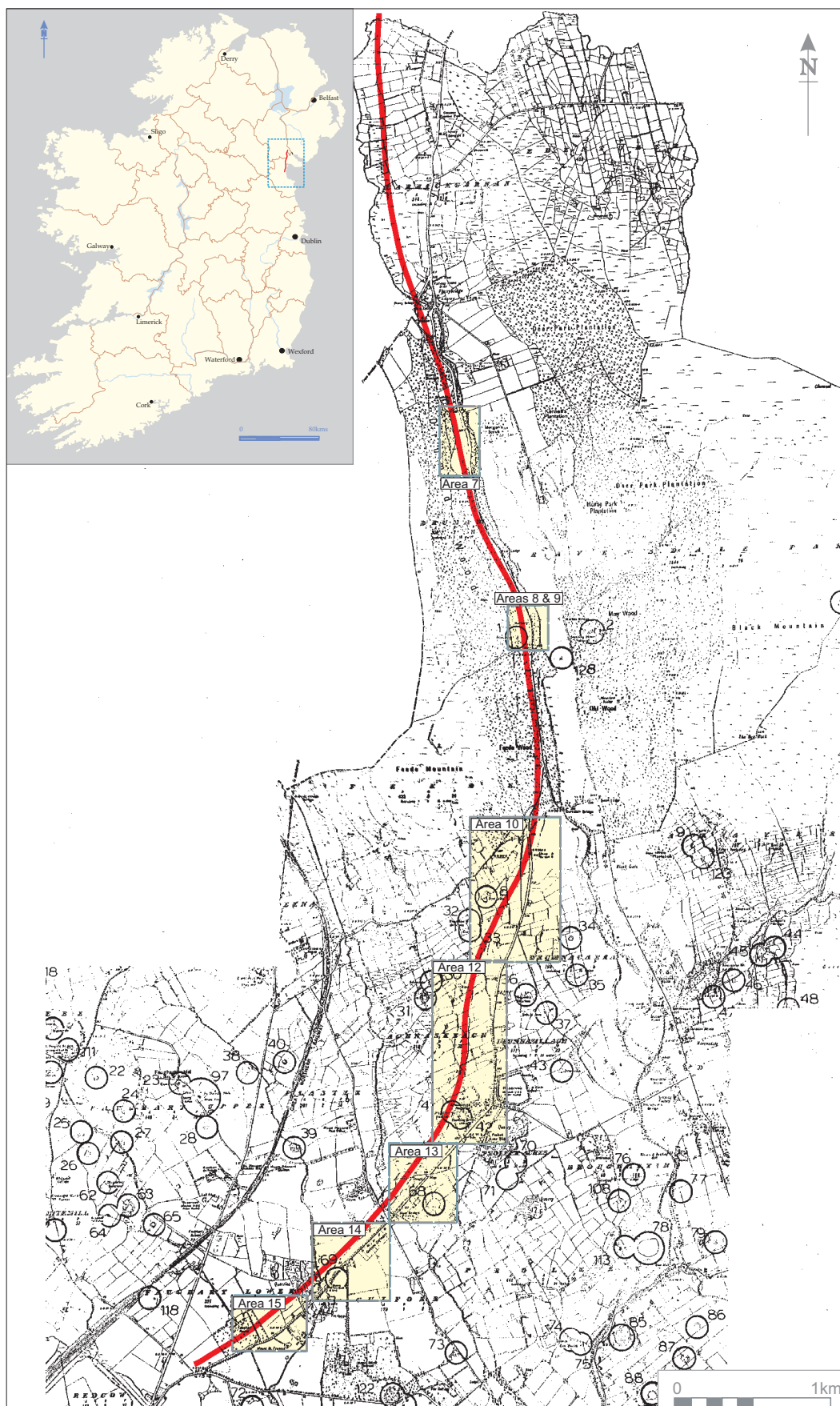


Fig. 2 Extract from RMP Maps of Louth, Sheets 1 & 4. A1/N1 in red. Scale as indicated.

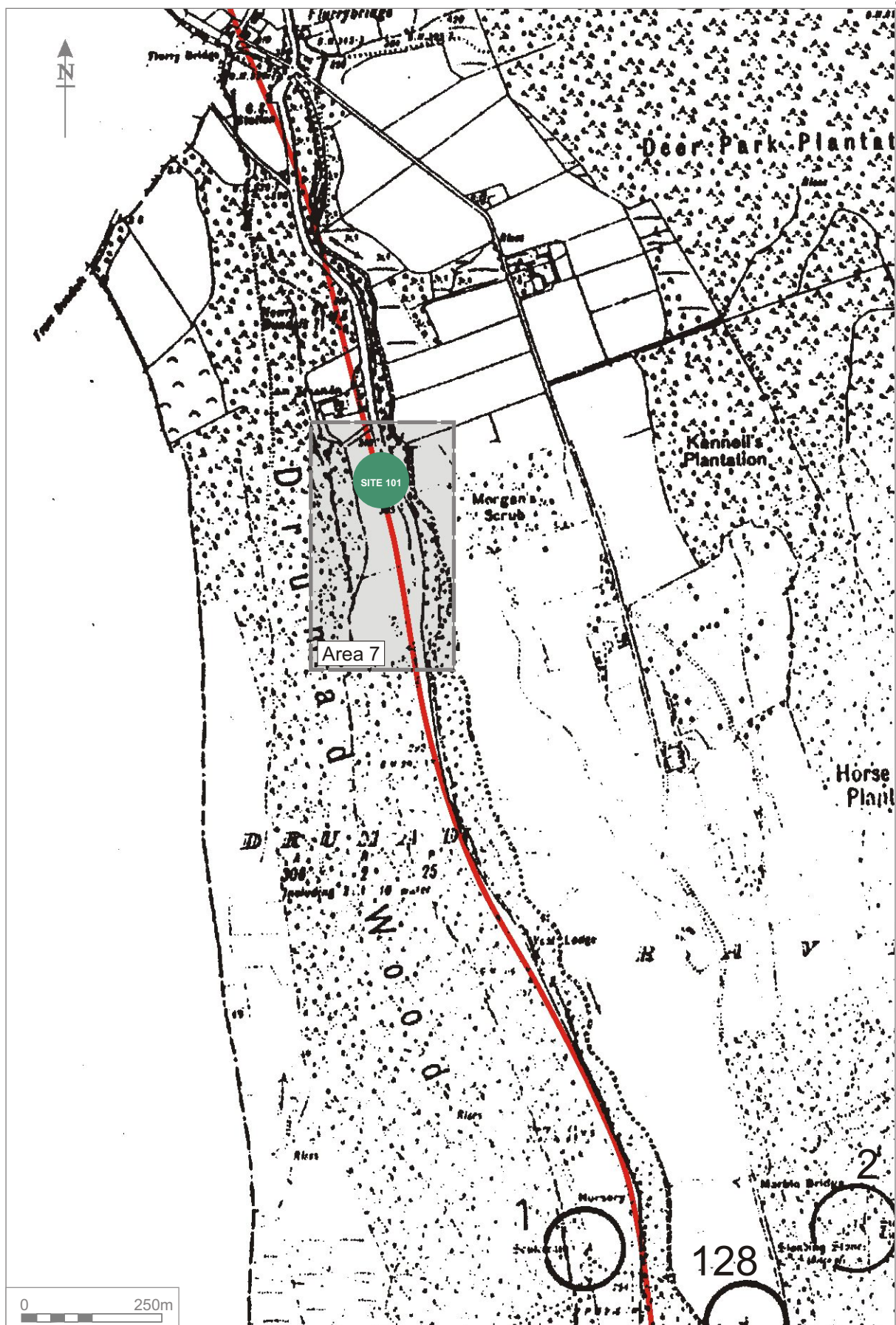


Fig. 3 Location of Area 7 on RMP Maps of Louth, Sheets 1 & 4.A1/N1 in red. Scale 1:10,000.

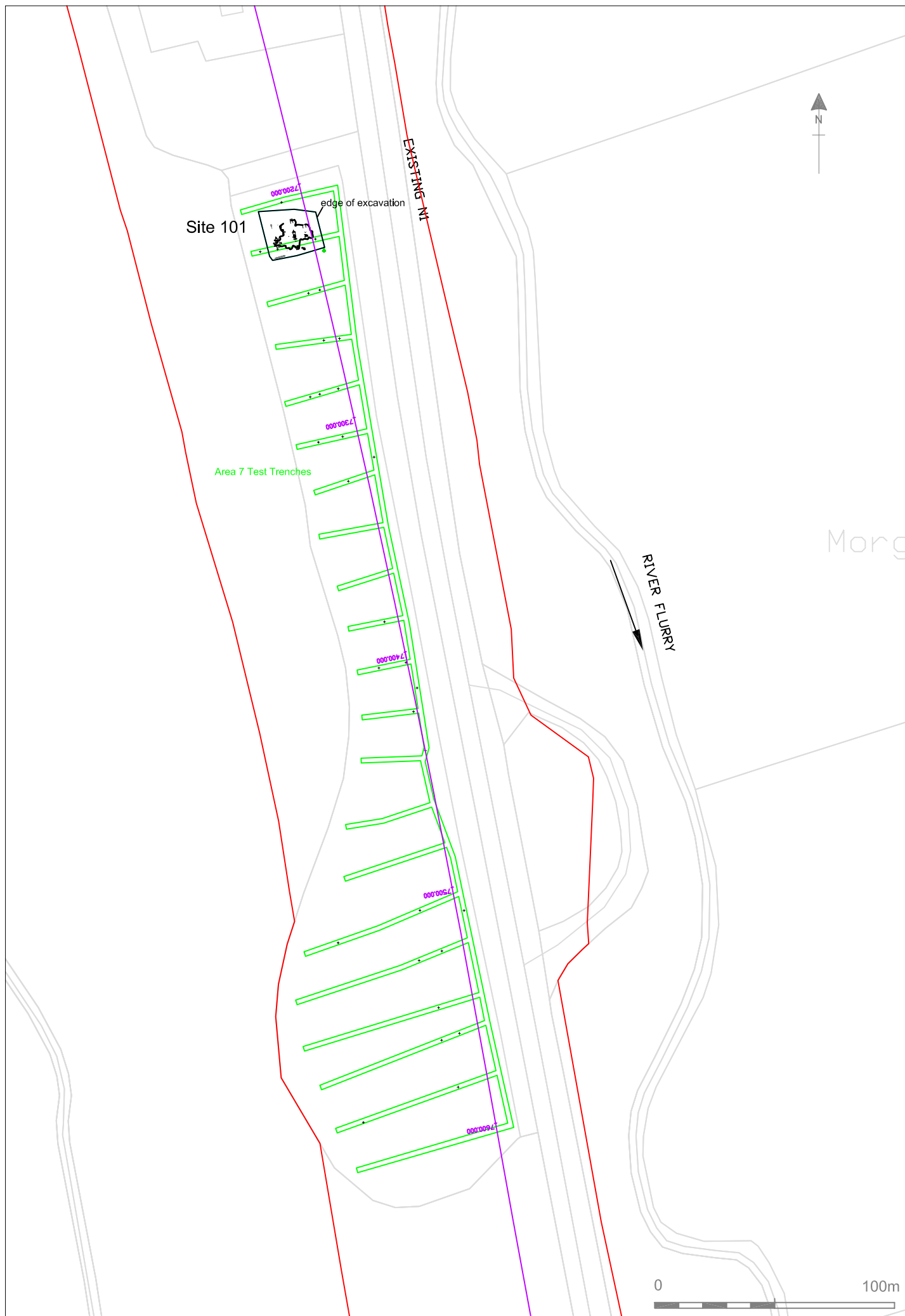


Fig. 4 Plan showing Area 7 and Site 101.

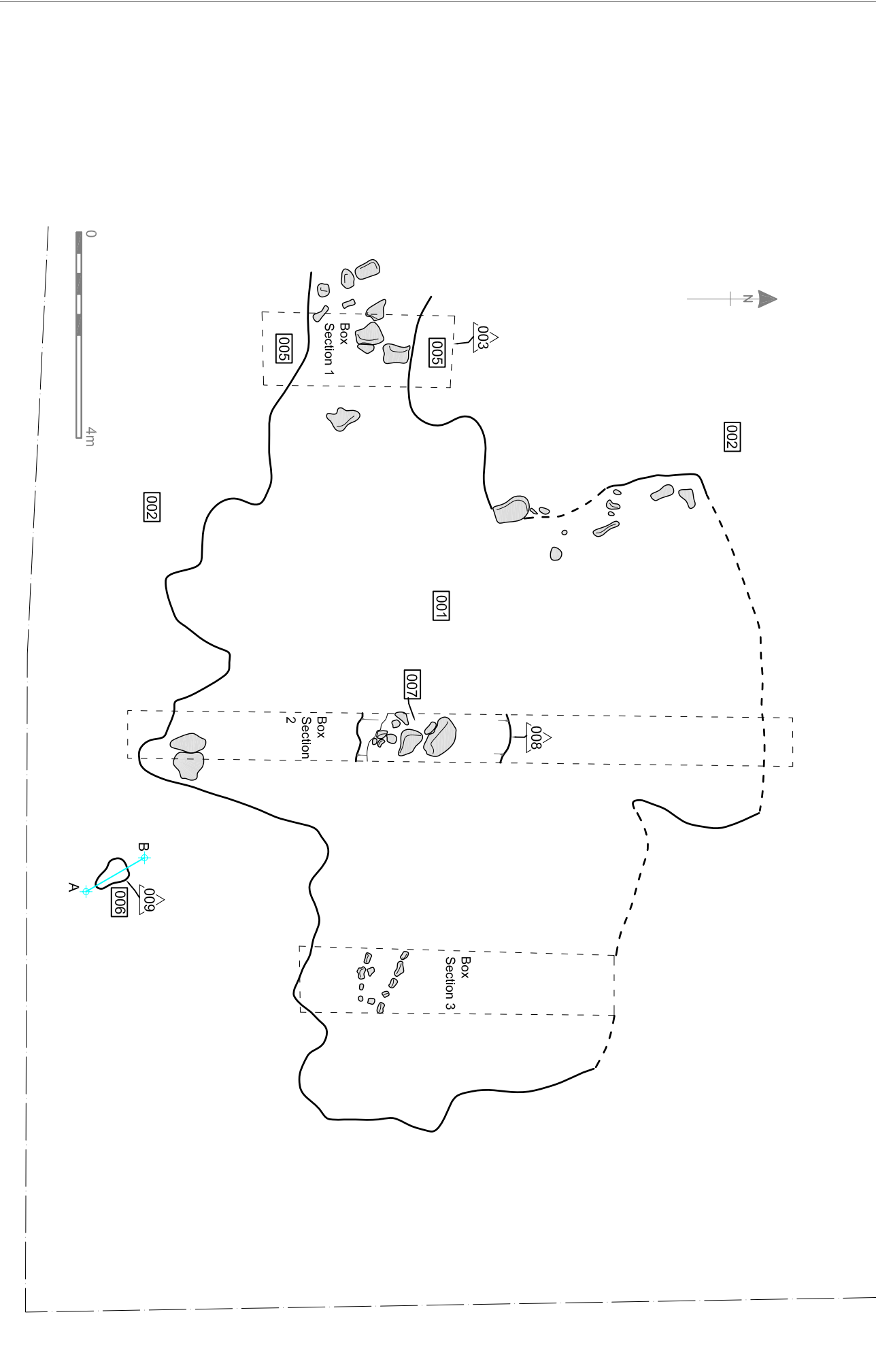
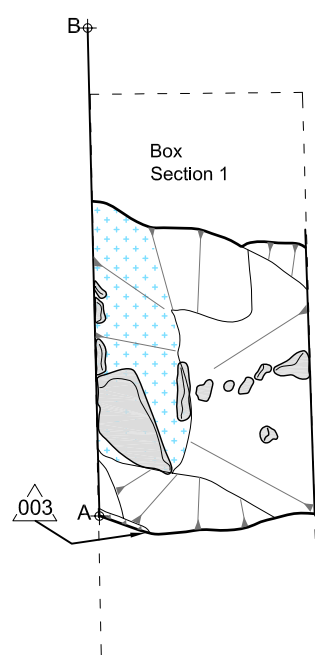



Fig. 5 Site 101, showing main features and location of Box Sections. Scale 1:100.



 medium and small sized stone & decaying granite tumble



0 2m



Fig. 6 Box Section 1. Scale 1:50.

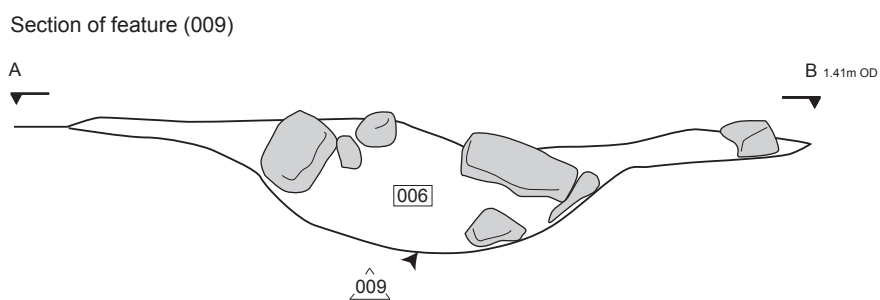
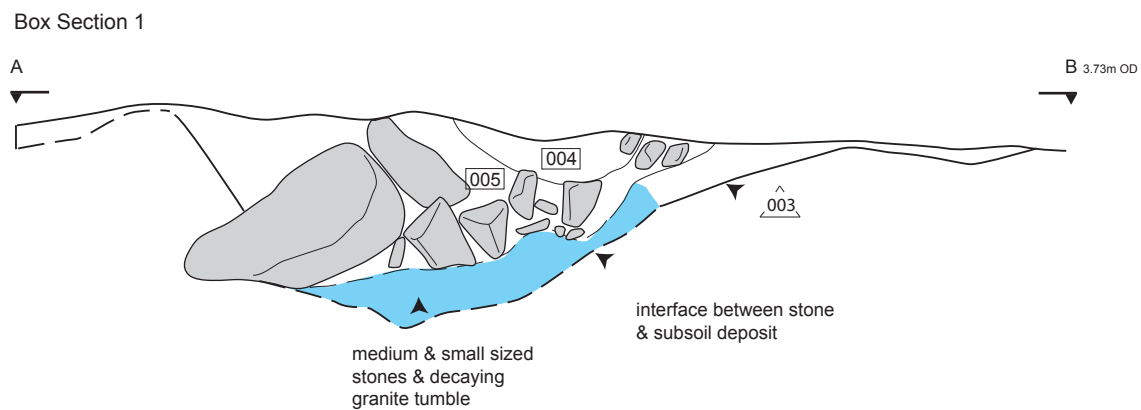


Fig. 7 Box section 1 and section through feature (009).



Plate 1 Section of drain (003) looking west.



Plate 2 Pre excavation of spread (006) looking west.



Plate 3 Box Section No. 2 showing drain (008) looking west.



Plate 4 Section of pit (009) looking west.



Plate 5 Post excavation photograph of Area 7.