Data Structure Report No. 122

Excavations at Cloghancor, Cushendall, Co. Antrim

On behalf of

Queen's University Belfast

EXCAVATIONS AT CLOGHANCOR
CUSHENDALL
CO. ANTRIM

D 20920 27990

AE/17/153E

Brian Sloan

On behalf of the Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership

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1 Summary

1.1 *Introduction*

The Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork (CAF) at Queen's University Belfast were commissioned by the Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership (HoTGLPS) to undertake a community-based archaeological investigation into a small megalithic tomb ('Cloghancor'; D 20920 27990; Figure 1). The site is located in the uplands close to Cushendall, County Antrim, on the lower slopes of Tievebulliagh. The fieldwork took place during the three-week period from Monday 10th September to Friday 29th September 2017, directed by Brian Sloan (CAF).

1.2 *Aims of the investigation*

The excavation was primarily designed to investigate the small megalithic tomb known as 'Cloghancor', located in Cloghs Townland, Cushendall Co. Antrim. The cartographic evidence suggests that this tomb was discovered during the nineteenth century (more preciously between the publication of the 1st edition OS map and the revised 2nd edition), with a primary aim of the excavation being to assess the extent that this 'discovery' might have affected the monument. The excavation of the trench in the tomb interior was designed to assess the presence or survival of any Neolithic deposits. Also pertinent to this investigation was the trench located over the cairn material. It was hoped that the excavation of this trench would reveal aspects of the monument's construction, as well as expose *in situ* features and deposits that may have escaped attention during the nineteenth century. The current programme of work was therefore designed to improve our knowledge of the site, its origins, and the subsequent disruption of the tomb during the modern era. The work was community-based and involved the direct participation of local primary school children and adult volunteers in the fieldwork.

1.3 Excavation

Four trenches were manually investigated during the course of fieldwork. Trench One was located in the chamber of the tomb with Trenches Two and Four investigating the remains of the cairn. A further trench, Trench Three, was excavated approximately 10m south-west of the tomb and this provided the focus for the school participation component of the project.

Trench One was excavated in the chamber of the tomb. The trench was aligned roughly north/south and measured 1.52m in length by 0.84m in width. This trench effectively investigated 50% of the chamber interior. Finds from this trench included a small corpus of prehistorical lithics, along with early modern ceramics and bottle glass fragments. A sherd of

white glazed ceramic was recovered from the base of this trench indicating that the tomb has been effectively robbed out during the nineteenth century.

Trench Two was located to the immediate north-east of Trench One. The trench was aligned roughly north/south and measured 5m in length by 5m in width. The trench investigated the *in situ* cairn material, with the western portion of the trench being excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil. The excavation of this trench revealed the extent of the robbed-out cairn as well as the *in situ* kerbstones of the monument. A discreet patch of burning was encountered stratigraphically beneath the cairn material, providing the only secure deposit suitable for being forwarded for radiocarbon dating. A sample of this deposit was forwarded for radiocarbon dating but failed to produce a calibrated date range.

Trench Three was located approximately 10m south of both Trenches One and Two and provided the focus for the school participation in this project. The trench measured 5m x 5m and was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at an average depth of 0.4m. A simple stratigraphic sequence was uncovered in this trench with sod and topsoil directly overlying the natural subsoil. An array of artefacts was recovered from this trench, almost exclusively consisting of quartz and flint. A single flake of possible porcellanite was also recovered. The excavation of this trench did not reveal any features cutting the subsoil, and it is possible that the prehistoric artefacts recovered in this area originated in the monument itself and had been deposited here during the disruption of the tomb during the nineteenth century.

Trench Four was located approximately 7m north-west of Trench Three and measured 3m by 1m. The trench was aligned east/west and was positioned in front of what is perceived to be the entrance to the tomb. The excavation of this trench revealed more *in situ* cairn material, as well as a discreet area of compacted rounded stones which could tentatively be interpreted as a passage.

Following their excavation and recording all the trenches were manually backfilled and the site reinstated.

1.4 Discussion

The excavation was successful in that the tomb was archaeologically investigated with the involvement of local primary schools and adult volunteers. It is unfortunate that no *in situ* archaeological deposits were encountered within the chamber of the tomb, with the artefact assemblage from this area indicating that it has been substantially disturbed, likely in the nineteenth century. A discreet patch of burning encountered in Trench Two (Context No. 205)

was stratigraphically beneath the *in situ* cairn material (Context No. 203) and provided the only potential of a secure deposit for a radiocarbon date. However, the sample did not . pre-treatment in the radiocarbon facility and a date was unascertainable.

Both Trenches Two and Four revealed aspects of the tomb's construction. The rounded pebble deposit encountered in Trench Four (Context No. 403) is located directly outside of the probable entrance to the tomb and can be tentatively interpreted as a passage leading from the entrance of the monument into the burial chamber (with the side orthostats of the passage having been removed and subsequently reused). Trench Two revealed a possible construction sequence of the cairn which appears to be made up of layers of rounded and sub-angular stones and soil.

A reasonably sized artefact assemblage was recovered during the excavation. The prehistoric artefacts are dominated by quartz, with flint and a small assemblage of porcellanite also being represented. A small corpus of modern glass and ceramics was also recovered. Due to the disturbance of the monument, the majority of the artefacts were unfortunately unstratified and thus lend little to the archaeological interpretation of the site. However, a cursory examination of the lithic artefacts carried out by the author indicates that the production of flakes possessing a double dorsal ridge was the dominant reduction strategy at Cloghancor. This suggests the production of hollow scrapers and broadly dates the activity to the Middle Neolithic, consistent with the identification of the monument as being a (albeit disturbed) Passage Tomb.

1.5 Recommendations

Little further work is required to bring this project to a conclusion. The excavation demonstrated that the tomb was substantially disturbed during the nineteenth century. A single stratified deposit was encountered, although this unfortunately did not survive pre-treatment and a radiocarbon date was unattainable.

The material culture assemblage might prove suitable for further study, although given the unstratified nature of the majority of the assemblage the amount of further information the assemblage can give might be limited. It is possible that the assemblage can be passed to an undergraduate student for further study prior to their return to the landowner.

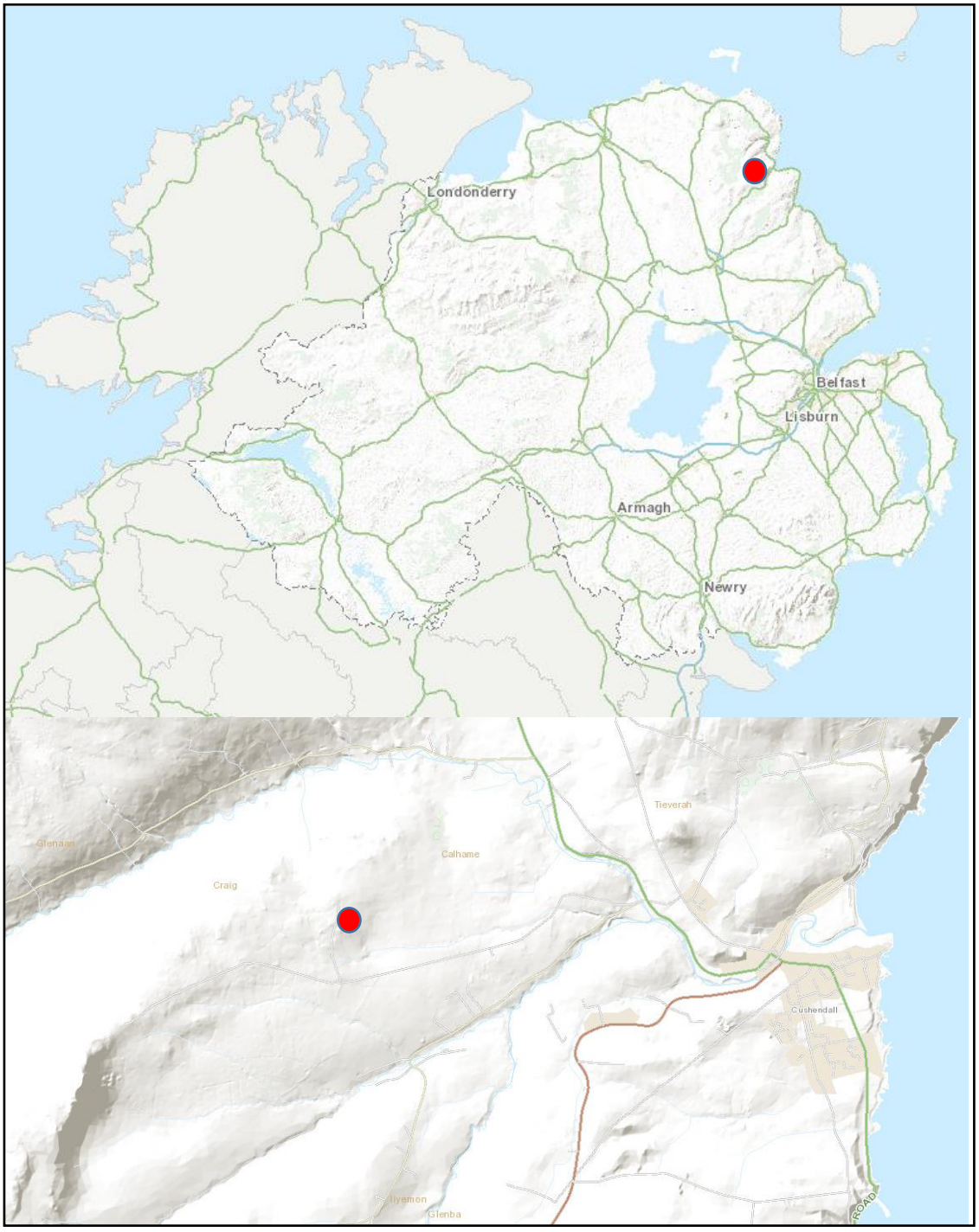

Figure 1: Approximate location of the Megalith (ANT 019:007) at Cloghs Td, Co. Antrim (red dot).

2 Introduction

2.1 *General*

The Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork at Queen's University Belfast were commissioned by the Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme (HoTGLPS) to undertake an archaeological investigation at Cloghancor, near Cushendall, County Antrim (IGR D20920 27990: NISMR ANT 019:007) in the townland of Cloghs (Figure 1). The excavation took place between Monday 10th September and Friday 29th September 2017 and was a community-based investigation which involved the participation of 13 local Primary Schools, 352 schoolchildren (P5-P7) and 63 adult volunteers over the three-week period. The excavation was directed by Brian Sloan (CAF) under Licence AE/17/153E.

2.2 *Location and description*

The monument consists of 5 upright orthostats set in a concentric pattern. A sixth stone, considerably larger than the others, lies to the immediate south of the orthostats, and this is tentatively identified as being the displaced capstone of the tomb. A discernible cairn is present circumventing the orthostats, although this appears better preserved in the north and north-east of the monument. It is estimated that the cairn measures approximately 9m in diameter, with the orthostats located at the centre.

The monument is located on a flat-topped hillock on the lower slopes of Tievebulliagh. The field in which the tomb is located comprises part of a large farm under the ownership of Mr. James Stephens. The field is bounded on all sides by a low stone wall with mature hedgerows. The location of the tomb affords panoramic views on all sides, particularly to the north and east where Scotland is easily visible.

2.2 *Cartographic evidence*

The monument does not appear on the 1st edition OS 6-inch map (1834) (Figure 2). The area in which the site is located is shown as being rough scrub. This map also shows a dwelling to be present to the immediate south-east of the location of the monument as well as the relatively un-enclosed nature of the surrounding landscape. It is uncertain why the monument was not included in this version of the OS maps, perhaps indicating that the area was under heavy scrub and the monument was not visible to the surveyors. To the immediate south, a further tomb is shown. This is denoted 'Cromleach' and shows the location of ANT 019:008.

By the revision of the OS maps by the 2nd edition (1860) the tomb at Cloghancor (ANT 019:007) is shown to the north-west of the structure depicted in the 1st edition (Figure 3). The

monument is depicted as a series of stones set in a circular pattern suggesting that by this date the capstone had already been removed or had fallen. This version of the maps shows the first instance that the monument is referred to as 'Cloghancor', and it is interesting that it is in gothic script suggesting a *known* or *perceived* degree of antiquity regarding the site. The 'Cromleach' located to the south-east (ANT 019:008) has been incorporated into a field boundary by this date with the further sub-division of the landscape evident. A new building has also been constructed to the immediate south-east of the tomb.

Little changes to this picture by the publication of the 3rd edition map in 1900 (Figure 4). Further sub-division of the landscape is evident with new field boundaries, particularly to the east of the monument. The 'Cromleach' (ANT 019:008) has by this point been completely incorporated into the field boundary and is now marked as 'Site of'. An access lane that ran roughly south-west/north-east and which was present on both the first and second editions has become relatively denuded and by this point exists as a path along the boundary of the field in which ANT 019:007 is located, and those to the south.

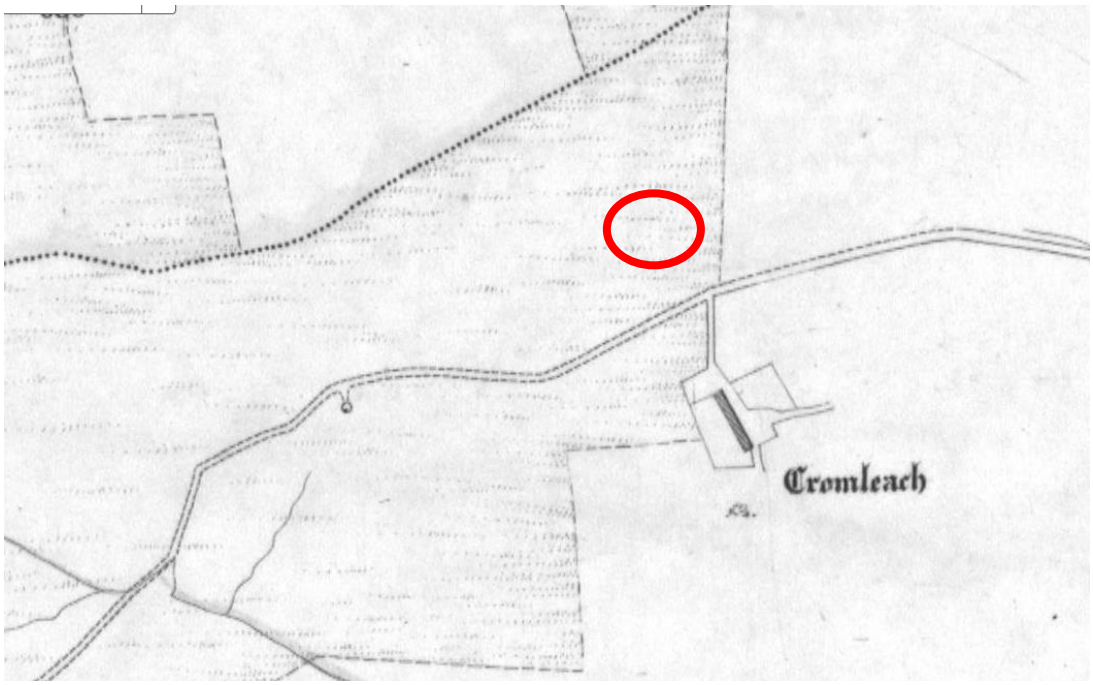

Figure 2: Excerpt of the 1st edition OS 6-inch map (1834) showing the approximate location of ANT 019:007 (circled red). This monument was not included in this edition of the OS map, with 'Cromleach' denoting the location of ANT 019:008.

Figure 3: Excerpt of the 2nd edition revised OS map (1860) showing the location of ANT 019:007 (circled in red).

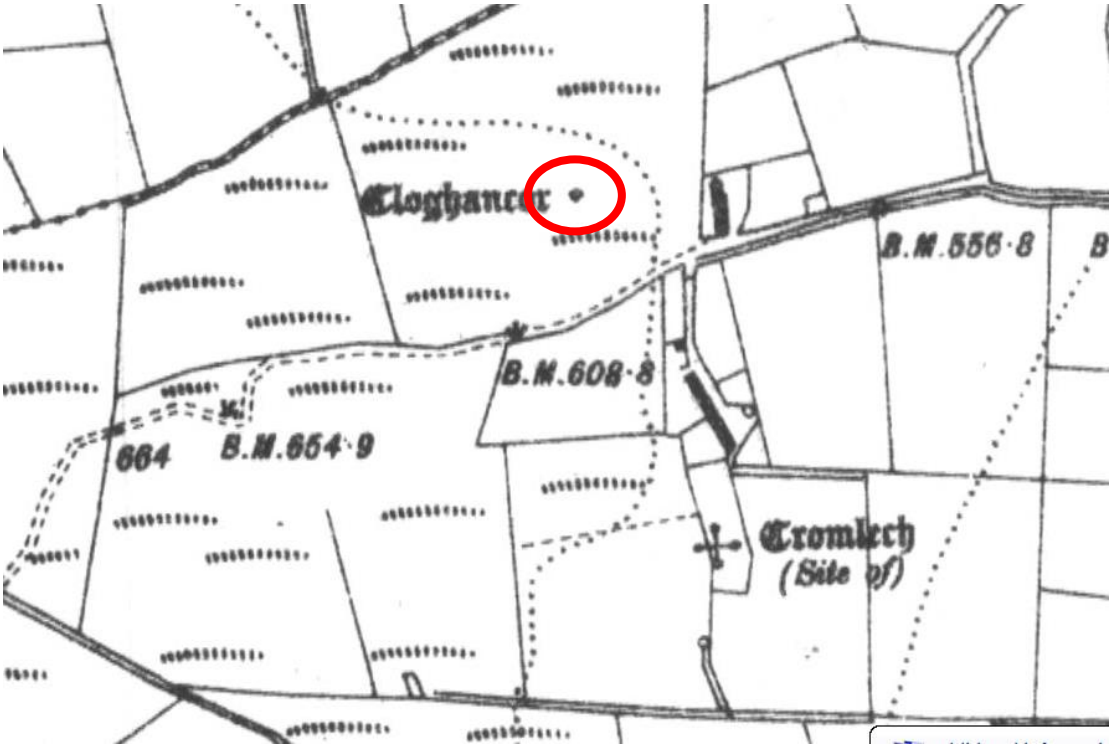

Figure 4: Excerpt of the 3rd edition OS map (1900) showing the location of ANT 019:007 (circled red).

2.3 *Surrounding archaeological landscape*

Cloghancor is located within a landscape of known archaeological significance and potential. The site sits on a lower north-east facing slope of Tievebulliagh, approximately 1.9km from its summit. The surrounding area is characterised by prehistoric burial monuments (ANT 019:005 – 008), as well as unclassified circular enclosures (ANT 019:014; 023). Given the prehistoric ritual nature of the area, it is possible that these represent ploughed out barrows or ring ditches.

As can be seen in Table 1, the immediate area surrounding Cloghancor is dominated by prehistoric burial monuments. Despite the absolute classification of Cloghancor being problematic, due to its size and form it is likely to represent a further albeit disturbed burial monument.

Figure 5: Sites and monuments in the immediate vicinity of Cloghancor (ANT 019:007) (for details see Table 1), overlaid on the 2nd edition OS map (1860).

Number	SMR #	Site type	Period
1	ANT 019:007	Megalithic tomb	Prehistoric
2	ANT 019:008	Megalithic tomb	Prehistoric
3	ANT 019:015	Standing stone	Prehistoric
4	ANT 019:023	Circular enclosure – aerial photograph	Uncertain
5	ANT 019:014	Circular enclosure – aerial photograph	Uncertain
6	ANT 019:006	Megalithic tomb – Scheduled area	Prehistoric
7	ANT 019:005	Megalithic tomb	Prehistoric

Table 1: Sites and monuments in the immediate vicinity of Cloghancor (ANT 019:007)

2.? *Credits and Acknowledgements*

The excavation was directed by Brian Sloan, supported by an excavation crew consisting of CAF members and students from QUB. Particular thanks are due to: Ruairi O'Baoill, Ruth Logue (both of the CAF), Dr. Heather Montgomery and Dr. Melie Le Roy (both of QUB), as well as Liam Magill, Lauren McCann, Catherine Edwards, Brendan Molloy, James Perkins (QUB students).

Appreciation is also due to Laura McCauley and Reamai Matthers of the Heat of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme, as well as the landowners for their help and support throughout the investigation.

Particular thanks are extended to the school groups and volunteers who took part in the project, as always with great enthusiasm often in inclement weather conditions. In particular the author wishes to express appreciation to: Seaview PS Glenarm, Carnlough Integrated PS, Carnalbanagh PS, St. Johns PS Carnlough, St.Patricks PS, St. Marysa PS Cushendall, Glenaan PS, St. Cairans PS Cushendun, Glenravel PS, Ballycastle Integrated PS, St. Patricks & St. Brigids PS Ballycastle, Gaelscoil an Chaistil Ballycastle and Barnish PS Ballyvoy.

3. Account of the excavation

3.1 Introduction

A total of four trenches were manually excavated during the three-week programme of excavation. These trenches investigated both the tomb itself (Trenches One, Two and Four) as well as the area in front of the perceived entrance to the tomb (Trench Three). The excavation revealed the tomb and cairn to have been significantly disturbed and robbed out, likely to have occurred following the tomb's discovery in the mid-nineteenth century. The trenches (excluding Trench Four) were manually excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which consisted of a gravelly orange brown clay. Trench Four was excavated to the surface of what was perceived to be an archaeologically significant horizon, with this being recorded prior to backfilling.

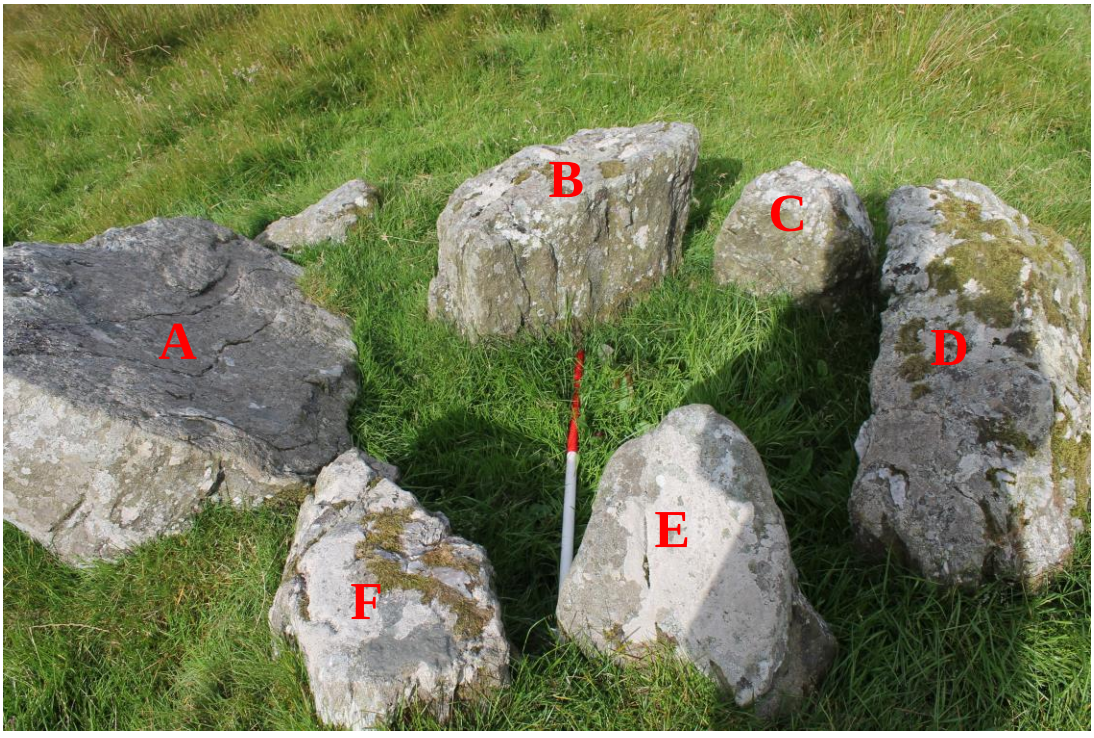

Plate 1: Annotated photograph showing the chamber of the tomb prior to excavation, looking west. The capstone (Stone A) is positioned to the extreme left of the photograph.

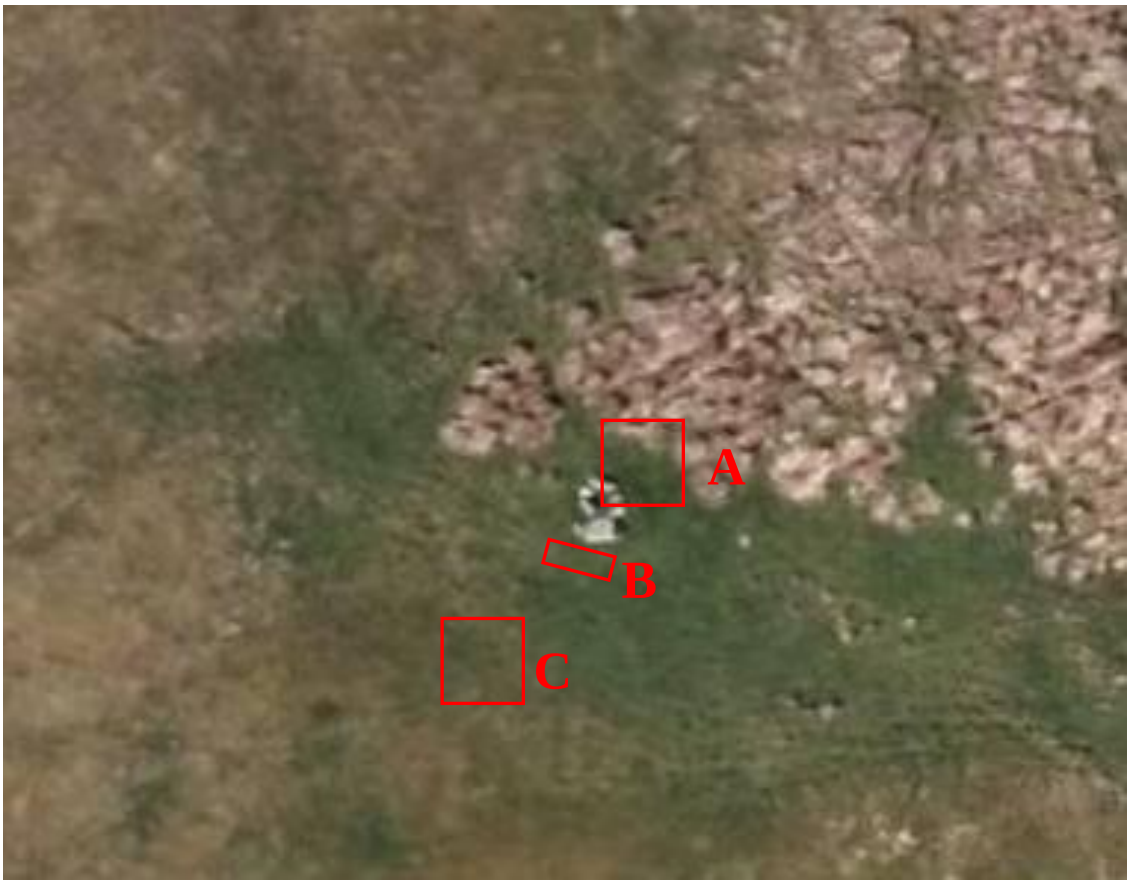

Figure 6: Location of the trenches excavated during the investigation; A = Trenches One and Two; B = Trench Four; C = Trench Three. NB: North is to the top of the image.

3.2 Methodology

The archaeological features were recorded using the standard recording system. The list of contexts is reproduced as Appendix One, and the field drawing register that was generated during the excavation is reproduced as Appendix Three. The remainder of the site records are reproduced as the Soil Sample Register (Appendix Four) and the Finds Register (Appendix Five).

It is intended that the Harris matrices for each trench (Appendix Two) are referred to when reading the stratigraphic sequences encountered.

3.3 The tomb and cairn – Trenches One, Two and Four

Trench One

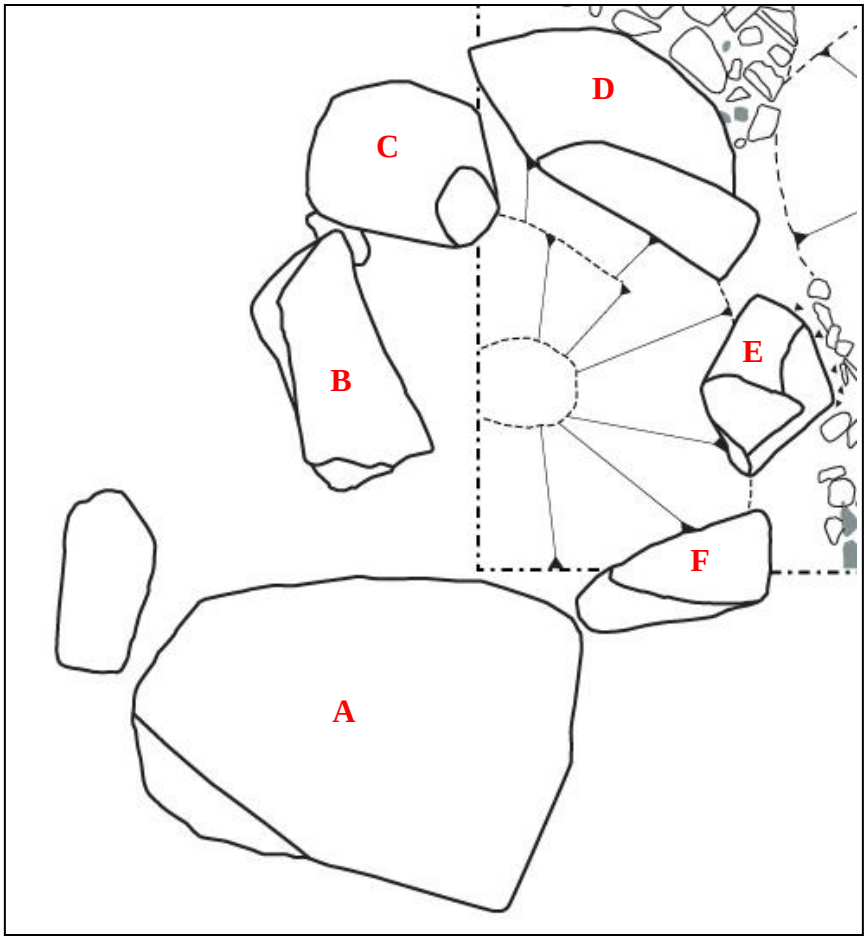

Figure 7: Post-excavation plan of Trench One (extracted from post-excavation plan of Trench Two [Figure 9]). NB: north is to the top of the image.

Trench One investigated the interior of the chamber and measured 1.8m north/south by 0.78m east west. This effectively investigated 50% of the chamber interior which was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered primarily consisting of sod and topsoil directly over lying discreet lenses of clay and subsoil. The artefact assemblage recovered from these deposits are a mix of prehistoric flint and quartz flakes as well as sherds of bottle glass and white glazed ceramics. The presence of these later finds indicates that the tomb has been disturbed and the prehistoric deposits associated with the Neolithic period of activity have been effectively removed. It is likely that this took place in the mid nineteenth century, when cartographic sources suggest that the tomb was discovered.

Plate 2: post-excavation shot of Trench One, looking west.

The sod layer in the chamber (Context No. 101) consisted of active grass roots within a dark brownish black peaty matrix. It was on average 0.15m thick and directly overlay a relatively thick deposit of dark brown peaty loam (Context No. 102). The peaty loam (Context No. 102) varied in thickness from a minimum of 0.1m to a maximum of 0.39m and constituted the main fill of the chamber interior. The excavation of this deposit produced the occasional flint and quartz flake, along with modern bottle glass and white glazed ceramics. A sherd of white glazed ceramic was recovered at the very base of the chamber indicating that the peaty loam (Context No. 102) is not of antiquity. The peaty loam (Context No. 102) overlay two discreet lenses of grey sticky clay (Context Nos. 103 and 104). Both these lenses averaged 0.05m thick and were located at the north and southern edges of the cut (Context No. 105) that accommodated the peaty loam (Context No. 102). Both lenses were sterile and postulated to be of little archaeological significance.

The interior of the chamber was dominated by an irregular cut (Context No. 105) excavated into the natural subsoil (Context No. 106). This cut (Context No. 105) had gently sloping sides on the north and south which became steep around the mid-point of the chamber. Due to the recovery of a sherd of white glazed ceramics from the very base of Context No. 102, on the base of the cut, it is likely that this cut (Context No. 106) relates to the nineteenth century disturbance of the tomb rather than representing a Neolithic feature. Following the recording of the trench, it was manually backfilled and area re-instated.

3.4 Trench Two

Trench Two was located to the immediate east of Trench One and was positioned to investigate the cairn. The trench investigated the north-eastern portion of the cairn which appeared, prior to the excavation, to be best preserved in this area. The trench measured 5m x 5m, although a 3m x 3m portion of the cairn material was preserved *in situ* with the remainder being excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil. This was encountered at an average depth of 0.2m below the modern ground surface. The excavation of this trench produced a substantive artefact assemblage (see Appendix Five), dominated by quartz and flint pieces.

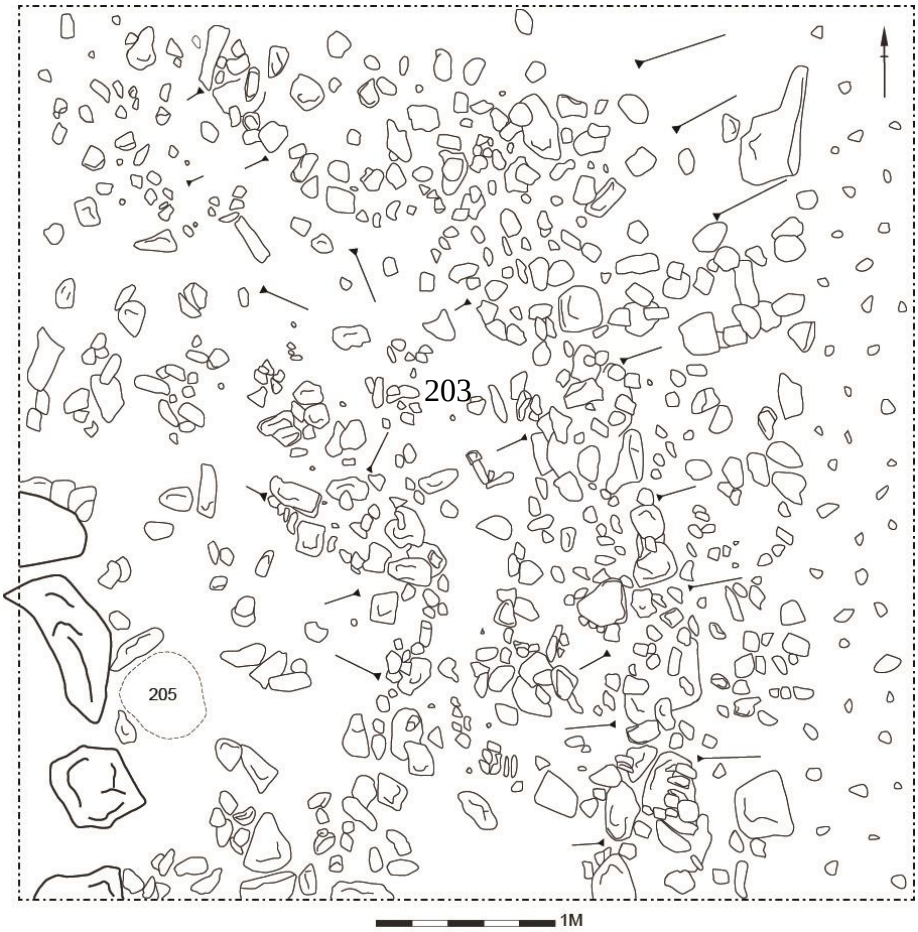

Figure 8: Mid-excavation plan of Trench 2 showing the extent of the upper cairn material Context No. 203.

The sod and topsoil (Context Nos. 201 and 202) was manually removed across the whole of the trench. This layer, on average 0.15m thick, consisted of active grass and reeds within a dark brown peaty loam matrix. Numerous small to medium sized angular stones were observed through this layer, likely originating from the underlying cairn material (Context No. 203).

Plate 3: The cairn material (Context No. 203) looking north-west.

Directly beneath the sod and topsoil (Context Nos. 201 and 202) the disturbed upper level of cairn material (Context No. 203) was encountered. This deposit (Context No. 203) appeared patchy across the trench and was better preserved in some areas than others. The cairn material (Context No. 203) consisted of loose, rounded rocks and stones (ranging in length between 0.2m – 0.4m) and was a maximum thickness of 0.15m. Frequent inclusions of quartz nodules were observed through out this deposit. Larger stones (some in excess of 0.5m in length) were observed running in an arc from the southern end of the trench running towards the north-western corner. Further excavation revealed this feature to be the denuded remains of a kerb that circumvents the tomb roughly 4.5m from the upright orthostats. Due to time constraints, the decision was made to preserve a 3m x 3m section (located at the north-eastern corner of the trench) *in situ*, effectively turning the active area of the trench to a 2m sondage along both the east-facing and north-facing sections. Removal of the cairn material (Context No. 203) in these areas revealed a thin spread of peaty loam (Context No. 206).

The thin deposit of peaty loam (Context No. 206) varied in thickness from 0.05 -0.02m and was confined to the southern region of the trench. It is not clear whether this represents soil washing down through higher levels of the cairn or if the deposit (Context No. 206) was introduced as a

bedding for the overlying cairn material (Context No. 203). The peaty loam (Context No. 206) stratigraphically overlay a number of features; the cuts for Stone D (Context No. 209), Stone E (Context No. 208) and a lower layer of cairn material (Context No. 207).

Immediately adjacent to Stone D, a discreet spread of burnt material (Context No. 205) was encountered. The southernmost end of this deposit (Context No. 205) was located stratigraphically below what was perceived as *in situ* cairn material and thus implied that the spread pre-dates the construction of the cairn. A sample of short lived wood charcoal was retrieved from the spread and submitted for radiocarbon analysis (UBA-36430). However, the sample did not survive the pre-treatment process (Jim McDonald *pers comm*) and no date from the sample was ascertainable. The burnt spread sat in a shallow depression (Context No. 211) in the subsoil (Context No. 204), which measured 0.82m (north/south) by 0.76m (east/west). It is not clear whether this is a purposeful cut or rather a natural depression in the subsoil.

Plate 4: Burnt deposit (Context No. 205) that was stratigraphically sealed by the cairn material (Context No. 203), looking west. The cuts for the upright orthostats (Stone D and E) are illustrated by the white dashed line.

Removal of the cairn material also revealed the cuts for two of the orthostats that comprised the chamber of the tomb; Stones D and E. These cuts (Context Nos. 209 and 208 respectively) were sub-circular in plan and appeared to be filled with small angular stones. These features were not archaeologically investigated so that the upright stones would not be undermined.

Figure 9: Post-excavation plan of Trench Two (incorporating a post-excavation plan of Trench One – [Figure 7]).

Removal of the thin spread of peaty soil (Context No. 206) also revealed the stratigraphically lowest level of *in situ* cairn material. This deposit (Context No. 207) consisted of relatively tightly packed angular stones which averaged 0.07m in length. Numerous chunks and nodules of quartz were observed throughout this deposit which averaged 0.1m thick. Removal of this layer revealed the natural subsoil (Context No. 204). Following the recording of the trench it was manually backfilled and the area reinstated.

3.6 Trench Four

Trench Four was located to the immediate south of Trenches One and Two, to investigate the area in front of the perceived entrance to the chamber. The rationale behind this trench was to investigate whether the cairn survived in this area of the monument and whether there was evidence of a passage leading into the chamber. The trench measured 3m in length by 1m in width and was aligned east/west. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered during the excavation of this trench with sod and topsoil directly overlying the *in situ* cairn material. Excavation ceased following the exposure of the cairn material and following recording the trench was manually backfilled.

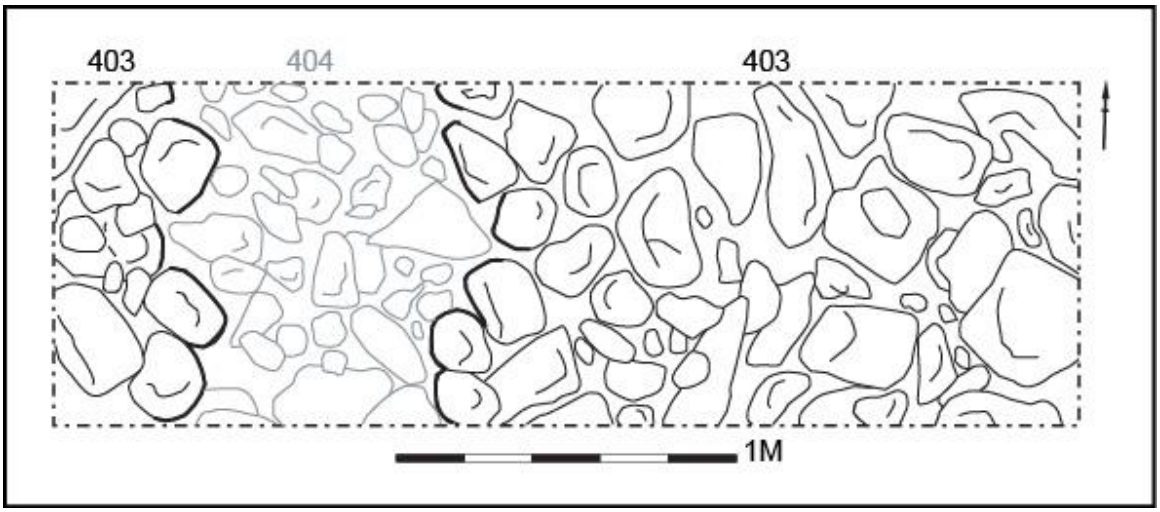

Figure 10: Post-excavation plan of Trench Four.

The sod layer in Trench Four consisted of active grass roots within a dark brown black peaty matrix (Context No. 401). It was an average of 0.1m thick and directly overlay a friable dark brown peaty loam topsoil (Context No. 402). This deposit (Context No. 402) varied in thickness from 0.05m to a maximum of 0.1m. Frequent inclusions of small to medium angular stones were noted throughout this deposit (Context No. 402) including the occasional protrusion of larger stones that are likely to have derived from the cairn deposit directly beneath (Context No. 403). Removal of the topsoil deposit (Context No. 402) revealed two deposits; a collection of large rounded stones (interpreted as the remnants of the cairn – Context No. 403) as well as a compact area of smaller rounded pebbles (Context No. 404).

The cairn material (Context No. 403) consisted of relatively sorted rounded stones and small boulders (ranging in length from 0.2 – 0.4m). Due to this deposit not being excavated, no thickness for the cairn at this point was established. The cairn deposit (Context No. 403) was

located both to the east and west of the compact area of pebbles (Context No. 404). The compact deposit of pebbles (Context No. 404) consisted of well sorted rounded and sub-rounded pebbles (averaging 0.07m in length). The area occupied by this deposit (Context No. 404) measured roughly 0.8m (east/west) and was directly in line with the perceived line of the entrance to the tomb (see Plate 5).

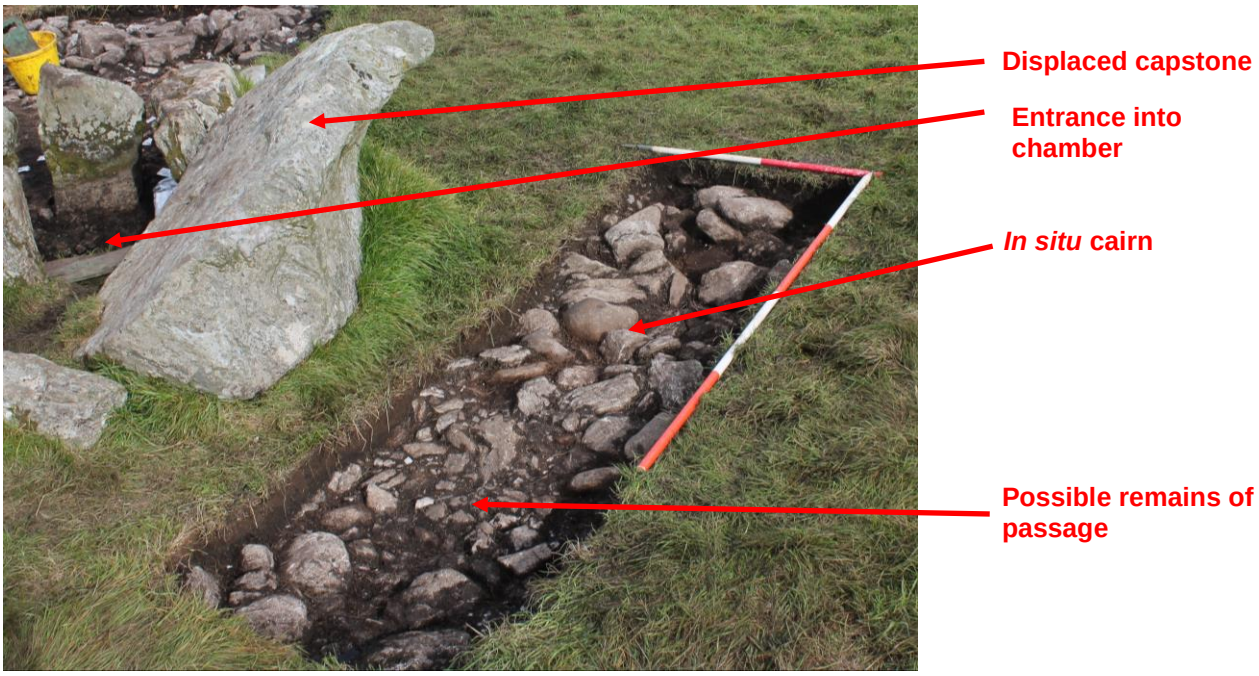

Plate 5: Annotated view of Trench Four showing the displaced capstone, the in situ cairn material and the possible remains of the passage into the monument, looking north-east.

Although the trench was small, the results of the excavation of it are quite interesting. The location of the pebble deposit (Context No. 404) being directly in line with the entrance to the chamber may identify this deposit as being the floor of a passage into the tomb (with the larger stones of the cairn either side). Following the recording of this trench, it was manually backfilled, and the area reinstated.

3.5 The area outside the monument - Trench Three

Trench Three was located approximately 10m to the immediate south of Trench Four and measured 5m in length by 5m by 5m in width. The trench, exclusively excavated by the visiting school groups and volunteers, was excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at an average depth of 0.4m from the modern ground surface. A simple stratigraphic sequence was encountered during the excavation of this trench with sod and topsoil being the

only strata encountered. No features were observed cutting the natural subsoil which consisted of a light to mid brown stony clay.

Plate 6: Pupils from St. Ciaran's Primary excavating in Trench Tree.

The sod layer in Trench Three (Cxt. 301) consisted of the roots of active grass and reeds within a matrix of dark brown peaty loam. On average the sod layer (Cxt. 301) was 0.15m thick and frequent inclusions of small rounded stones (average length 20mm) were observed during the deposits excavation. Removal of the sod layer (Cxt. 301) revealed a homogenous deposit of peaty loam topsoil (Cxt. 302).

The topsoil layer (Cxt. 302) consisted of a fairly friable, dark brown to black spongey peaty loam and had a maximum thickness of 0.3m although was on average 0.2-0.25m in thickness. Active roots were observed throughout well as frequent inclusions of small angular and sub-rounded stones (average length 20-30mm). a concentration of charcoal was encountered in the south-eastern corner of this deposit, although further investigation failed to encounter any *in situ* burning or structure to it. Given this it is likely that the presence of this charcoal represents an episode of burning (possible of the scrub) and is of no archaeological significance.

A large assemblage of finds was recovered during the excavation of the topsoil layer (Cxt. 302). This includes numerous flakes and chunks of quartz (probably originating from the cairn investigated in Trench Three) as well as flint fragments and a single flake of possible porcellanite.

A single sherd of nineteenth-century glazed ceramic was also recovered from the topsoil deposit (Cxt. 302).

Excavation of the topsoil layer (Cxt. 302) revealed the surface of the natural subsoil (Cxt. 303) which consisted of a light brown creamish stony clay. No features or deposits of an archaeological nature were encountered during the excavation of this trench and following recording it was manually backfilled.

Plate 7: Trench Three following excavation to the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 303) looking south-west.

4. Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The investigation was a success, primarily as the aims and objectives set out in Section 2 of this report were achieved. The interior of the tomb was investigated (Trench One) and found to be substantially disturbed and robbed out during the nineteenth century. Trenches Two and Four demonstrated that although substantially robbed out, that the lower levels of cairn material are still present. The excavation of Trench Three allowed the school group and public participation into the project and was successful in that the trench was excavated to the subsoil level, as well as enabling archaeological practices and techniques to be demonstrated to the site visitors.

4.2 The artefact assemblage

A varied and reasonably extensive artefact assemblage was recovered during the excavation. The majority of this assemblage constitutes prehistoric material with flint and quartz dominating, as well as a small assemblage of porcellanite being represented. The excavation of Trench One (chamber interior) produced a small corpus of post-medieval finds with both glass sherds and white glazed ceramics being represented. The recovery of a sherd of white glazed ceramic from the base of the chamber indicates that the tomb has been substantively disturbed, likely during the mid-nineteenth century when the tomb was likely discovered and mapped (Figures 2 and 3).

A small blue glass bead was recovered during the removal of Context No. 202 in Trench 2. The presence of such artefacts in Prehistoric tombs has been commented on before (cf. McSparron 2011; Evans 1935) and may relate to later ritual activity at the site. However, the later re-use and meaning of prehistoric monuments to later populations is an area that need further exploration to be understood fully.

A cursory inspection of the lithic artefacts has been carried out by the author. The dominant reduction strategy evident of the flakes and cores display double dorsal ridges and *chateau de gendarme* striking platforms, suggesting the production of hollow scrapers/blanks. The lack of perceivable formalised tools amongst the assemblage implies that the initial reduction of cores and the production of debitage was the dominant strategy in the immediate vicinity of the excavation.

The dominant lithic material recovered during the excavation consisted of quartz artefacts. A number of these are medium to large quartz nodules that likely originated from the cairn, although

it is clear from the amount of struck quartz flakes that the raw material was also worked here. The finding of quartz at prehistoric burial monuments is by no means uncommon and it has been observed also, in considerable quantities, at the entrances to Passage Tombs (Eogan 1974, 15 and 41). The significance of quartz to both prehistoric and later burial activity has been widely commented upon (Cooney 2000, 176-8, Bergh 1995, 156).

4.3 Classification of the tomb

One of the primary aims of the excavation was to put Cloghancor into a distinct tomb classification, with the excavation of Trench Four being located to help clarify this position. The trench was excavated directly beside the perceived entrance into the chamber (a gap in the orthostats as well as he interpretation of the large southern stone representing the fallen capstone). The trench exhibited large angular stones (Context No. 403 – likely *in situ* remnants of the cairn) located either side of smaller rounded stones pressed into the surface of the natural subsoil (Context No. 404). This suggests that Cloghancor is a denuded passage tomb, commonly dated to the Middle Neolithic period.

4.4 Conclusions

Cloghancor is located in an area that is rich in prehistoric remains, particularly funerary monuments. It is clear that this area of North Antrim was attractive for both settlement and burial. The activities of antiquarians in the nineteenth century has meant a special focus was afforded to this area and many of the tombs have been subsequently disturbed, with Cloghancor being but one example.

5. Recommendations for further work

5.1 Introduction

Little is required to bring this project to a conclusion. The excavation showed the tomb has been substantially disturbed during the nineteenth century. The only potential datable deposit (Context No. 205) did not survive the pre-treatment process and so a radiocarbon date was unobtainable. The artefact assemblage is largely from topsoil deposits, although it is likely to be contemporary and associated with the monument and could merit further study.

5.2 Artefact assemblage

The artefact assemblage recovered during the excavation is dominated by lithic artefacts with Quartz, flint and porcellanite all represented. A cursory examination of the lithics carried out by the author suggests that the dominant reduction strategy displayed dates to the Middle Neolithic. The lack of formalised finished tools amongst this assemblage means that this dating must be regarded as tentative at best. It might prove useful for further study of the artefact assemblage to take place and it is proposed that this work might be suitable for undergraduate study.

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6. Bibliography

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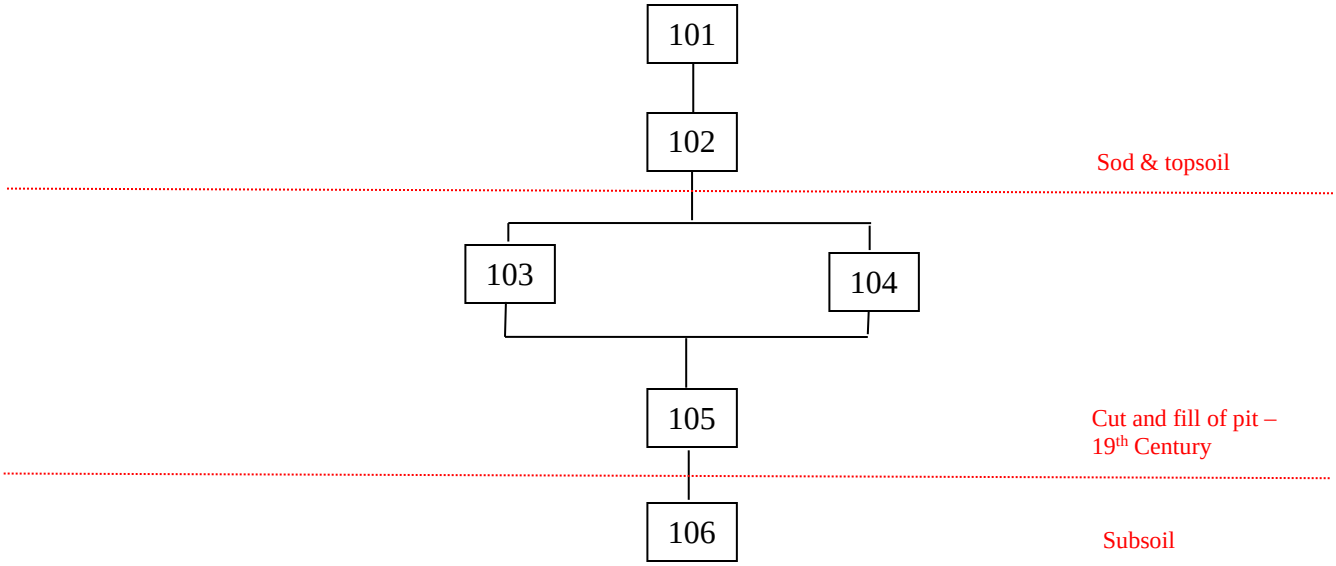
Appendix One: Context Register

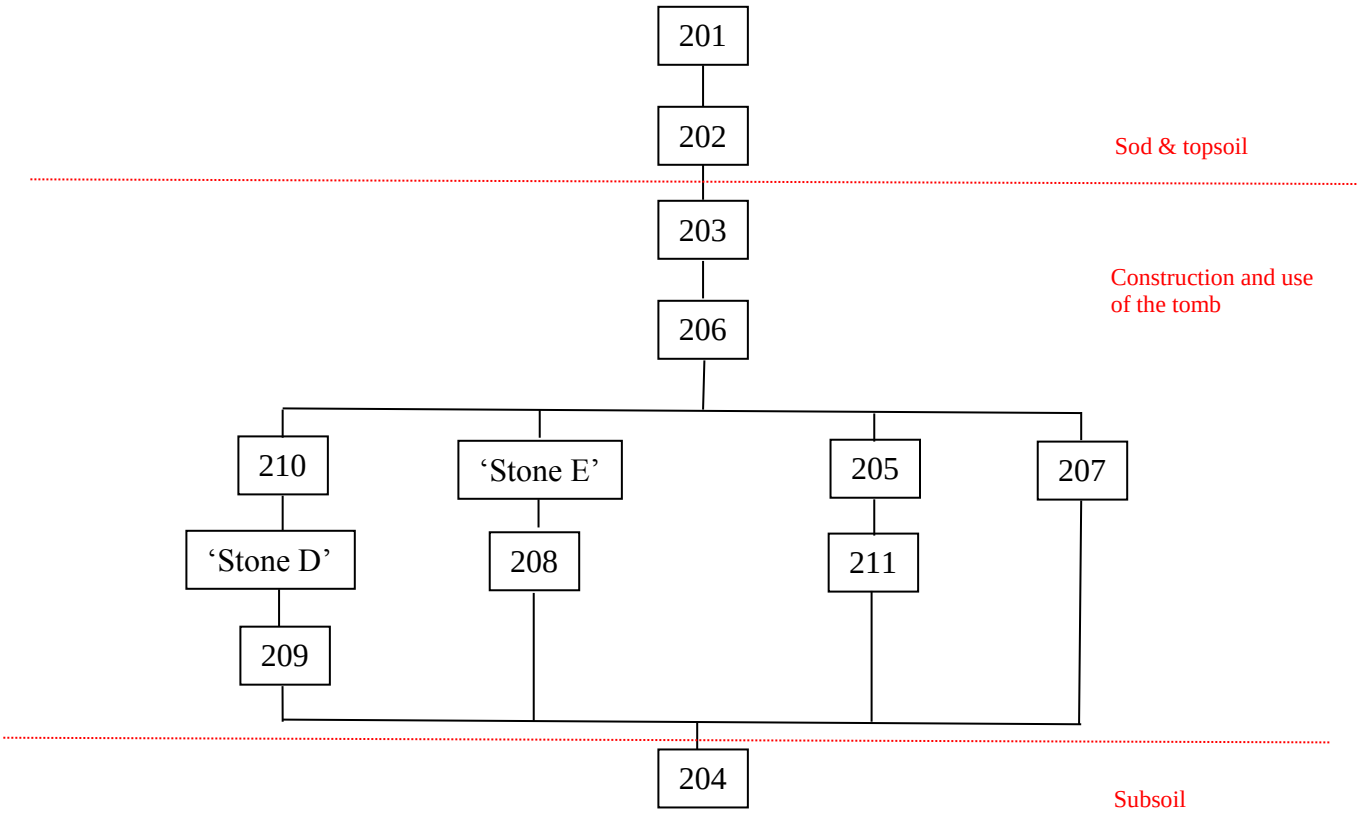
Trench	Context	Description
1	101	Sod
1	102	Topsoil
1	103	Discreet lens of greyish brown clay
1	104	Isolated medium sized angular stones
1	105	Cut of 19th century pit
1	106	Subsoil
2	201	Sod
2	202	Topsoil
2	203	Upper cairn material
2	204	Subsoil
2	205	Discreet patch of burning
2	206	Thin lens of peaty loam beneath 203
2	207	Lower cairn material
2	208	Cut for 'Stone E'
2	209	Cut for 'Stone D'
2	210	Stone packing along north-eastern side of 210
2	211	Cut for burning 205
2	Stone D	Northernmost orthostats of tomb
2	Stone E	Easternmost orthostats of tomb
3	301	Sod
3	302	Topsoil
3	303	Subsoil
4	401	Sod
4	402	Topsoil
4	403	Cairn material
4	404	Possible passage – small rounded compacted stones

Appendix Two: Harris Matrices

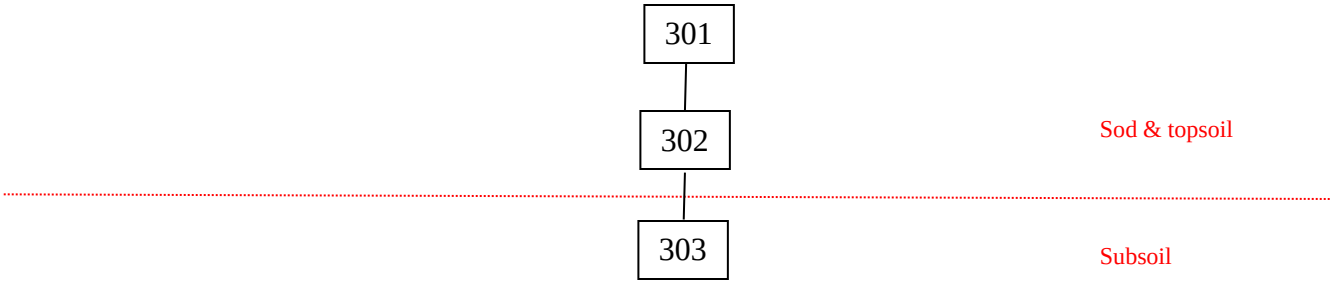
Trench 1



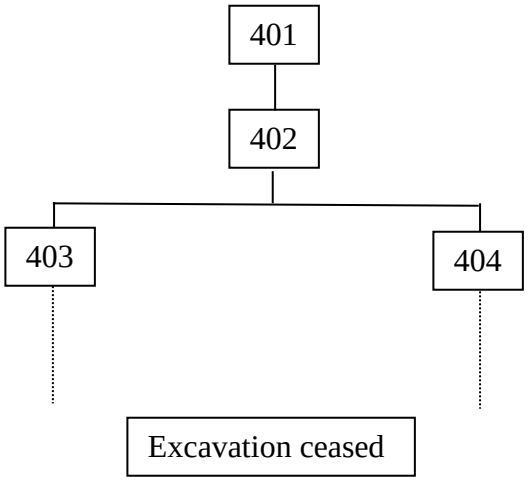
Trench 2



Trench 3



Trench 4



Appendix Three: Field drawing Register

Drawing #	Sheet #	Trench	Type	Scale	Detail
1	1	2	Plan	1:20	Plan of Tr 2 following removal of Context No. 202
2	1	4	Plan	1:20	Post-excavation plan of Tr 4
3	1	2	Plan	1:20	Post-excavation plan of burning Context No. 205
4	2	1 & 2	Plan	1:20	Post-excavation plan of Trs 1 & 2
5	2	1 & 2	Section	1:10	East-facing section of Trs 1 & 2

Appendix Four: Sample Register

Trench	Context	No. of Bags	Purpose
1	103	2	C^{14} / artefact recovery
2	205	1	C^{14}

Appendix Five: Finds Register

**All finds were surveyed using a GNSS to survey grade accuracy +/- 1.5cm*

Small Find No.	Trench	Context	Description
1	2	202	Glass Bead
2	2	202	Flint
3	2	202	Quartz
4	2	202	Quartz
5	2	202	Flint
6	2	202	Flint
7	2	202	Flint
8	2	202	Flint
9	2	202	Flint
10	2	202	Flint
11	2	202	Quartz
12	2	202	Flint
13	2	202	Flint
14	2	202	Flint
15	2	202	Flint
16	2	202	Quartz
17	2	202	Quartz
18	2	202	Quartz
19	2	202	Quartz
20	2	202	Flint
21	2	202	Flint
22	2	202	Quartz
23	2	202	Flint
24	2	202	Quartz
25	2	202	Quartz
26	2	202	Quartz
27	2	202	Quartz
28	2	202	Quartz
29	2	202	Quartz
30	2	202	Quartz
31	2	202	Hammer stone?
32	2	202	Quartz
33	2	202	Quartz
34	2	202	Flint
35	2	202	Flint
36	2	202	Flint
37	2	202	Quartz
38	2	202	Flint
39	2	202	Quartz
40	2	202	Flint
41	2	202	Flint

42	2	202	Quartz
43	2	202	Quartz
44	2	202	Flint
45	2	202	Quartz
46	2	202	Quartz
47	2	202	Quartz
48	2	202	Quartz
49	2	202	Quartz
50	2	202	Quartz
51	2	202	Quartz
52	2	202	Quartz
53	2	202	Quartz
54	2	202	Flint
55	2	202	Quartz
56	2	202	Quartz
57	2	202	Quartz
58	2	202	Quartz
59	2	202	Flint
60	2	202	Quartz
61	2	202	Quartz
62	2	202	Quartz
63	2	202	Quartz
64	2	202	Flint
65	2	202	Quartz
66	2	202	Quartz
67	2	202	Quartz
68	2	202	Quartz
69	2	202	Quartz
70	2	202	Quartz
71	2	202	Hammer stone
72	2	202	Quartz
73	2	202	Quartz
74	2	202	Quartz
75	2	202	Flint
76	2	202	Quartz
77	2	202	Quartz
78	2	202	Quartz
79	2	202	Quartz
80	2	202	Quartz
81	2	202	Quartz
82	2	202	Quartz
83	2	202	Quartz
84	2	202	Quartz
85	2	202	Possible pottery
86	2	202	Flint
87	2	202	Quartz
88	2	202	Quartz
89	2	202	Quartz
90	2	202	Quartz

91	2	202	Quartz
92	2	202	Quartz
93	2	202	Quartz
94	2	202	Quartz
95	2	202	Flint
96	2	202	Quartz
97	2	202	Quartz
98	2	202	Quartz
99	2	202	Quartz
100	2	202	Flint
101	2	202	Quartz
102	2	202	Quartz
103	2	202	Quartz
104	2	202	Quartz
105	2	202	Quartz
106	2	202	Quartz
107	2	202	Quartz
108	2	202	Quartz
109	2	202	Quartz
110	2	202	Flint
111	2	202	Quartz
112	2	202	Quartz
113	2	202	Flint
114	2	202	Quartz
115	2	202	Quartz
116	2	202	Flint
117	2	202	Quartz
118	2	202	Quartz
119	2	202	Flint
120	2	202	Flint
121	2	202	Quartz
122	2	202	Flint
123	2	202	Quartz
124	2	202	Flint
125	2	202	Flint
126	2	202	Flint
127	2	202	Flint
128	2	202	Flint
129	2	202	Flint
130	2	202	Flint
131	2	202	Flint
132	2	202	Hammer stone
133	2	202	Quartz
134	2	202	Flint
135	2	202	Flint
136	2	202	Flint
137	2	202	Flint
138	2	202	Flint
139	2	202	Flint

140	2	202	Flint
141	2	202	Flint
142	2	202	Flint
143	2	202	Flint
144	2	202	Flint
145	2	202	Flint
146	2	202	Flint
147	2	202	Flint
148	2	202	Flint
149	2	202	Flint
150	2	202	Quartz
151	2	202	Quartz
152	2	202	Flint
153	2	202	Quartz
154	2	202	Quartz
155	2	202	Quartz
156	2	202	Quartz
157	2	202	Quartz
158	2	202	Quartz
159	2	202	Flint
160	2	202	Quartz
161	2	202	Quartz
162	2	202	Quartz
163	2	202	Quartz
164	2	202	Quartz
165	2	202	Quartz
166	2	202	Quartz
167	2	202	Quartz
168	2	202	Quartz
169	2	202	Quartz
170	2	202	Quartz
171	2	202	Quartz
172	2	202	Quartz
173	2	202	Quartz
174	2	202	Quartz
175	2	202	Quartz
176	2	202	Quartz
177	2	202	Quartz
178	2	206	Stone
179	2	206	Quartz
180	2	206	Quartz
181	2	206	Quartz
182	2	206	Quartz
183	2	206	Quartz
184	2	206	Flint
185	2	206	Quartz
186	2	206	Quartz
187	2	206	Quartz
188	2	206	Quartz

189	2	206	Quartz
190	2	206	Quartz
191	2	206	Quartz
192	2	206	Quartz
193	2	206	Quartz
194	2	206	Quartz
195	2	206	Flint
196	2	206	Flint
197	2	206	Flint
198	2	206	Quartz
199	2	206	Flint
200	2	206	Flint
201	2	206	Flint
202	2	206	Quartz
203	2	206	Flint
204	2	206	Flint
205	2	206	Flint
206	2	206	Flint
207	2	206	Quartz
208	2	206	Quartz
209	2	206	Flint
210	2	206	Quartz
211	2	206	Quartz
212	2	206	Quartz
213	1	102	Glass
214	1	102	Quartz
215	1	102	Glass
216	1	102	Quartz
217	1	102	Flint
218	1	102	Quartz
219	1	102	Flint
220	1	102	Quartz
221	1	102	Flint
222	1	102	Flint
223	1	102	Stone
224	1	102	Quartz
225	1	102	Quartz
226	1	102	Quartz
227	1	102	Quartz
228	1	102	Flint
229	1	102	Flint
230	1	102	Quartz
231	1	102	Quartz
232	1	102	Quartz
233	1	102	Quartz
234	1	102	Quartz
235	1	102	Quartz
236	1	102	Quartz
237	1	102	Flint

238	1	102	Quartz
239	1	102	Flint
240	1	102	Quartz
241	1	102	Quartz
242	1	102	Quartz
243	1	102	Quartz
244	1	102	Flint
245	1	102	Quartz
246	1	102	Quartz
247	1	102	Flint
248	1	102	Quartz
249	1	102	Flint
250	4	403	Quartz
251	4	403	Quartz
252	4	403	Quartz
253	4	403	Quartz
254	4	403	Quartz
255	4	403	Quartz
256	4	403	Quartz
257	4	403	Quartz
258	4	403	Quartz
259	4	403	Quartz
260	4	403	Quartz
261	4	403	Quartz
262	4	403	Quartz
263	4	403	Glass
264	4	403	Quartz
265	4	403	Quartz
266	4	403	Quartz
267	4	403	Quartz
268	4	403	Flint
269	4	403	Flint
270	4	403	Quartz
271	4	403	Quartz
272	4	403	Quartz
273	2	206	Quartz
274	2	206	Flint
275	2	206	Flint
276	2	206	Flint
277	2	206	Quartz
278	2	206	Quartz
279	2	206	Quartz
280	2	206	Quartz
281	2	206	Quartz
282	2	206	Quartz
283	2	206	Quartz
284	2	206	Quartz
285	2	206	Quartz
286	2	206	Quartz

287	2	206	Flint
288	2	206	Flint
289	2	206	Quartz
290	2	206	Quartz
291	2	206	Flint
292	2	206	Flint
293	2	206	Flint
294	2	206	Quartz
295	2	206	Quartz
296	2	206	Quartz
297	2	206	Quartz
298	2	206	Quartz
299	2	206	Flint
300	2	206	Quartz
301	2	206	Quartz
302	2	206	Flint
303	2	206	Flint
304	2	206	?
305	2	206	Quartz
306	2	206	Quartz
307	2	206	Quartz
308	2	206	Flint
309	2	206	Flint
310	2	206	Quartz
311	2	206	Flint
312	2	206	Quartz
313	2	206	Quartz
314	2	206	Quartz
315	2	206	Quartz
316	2	206	Quartz
317	1	102	Ceramic
318	2	206	Quartz
319	2	206	Quartz
320	2	206	Quartz
321	2	206	Quartz
322	2	206	Quartz
323	2	206	Quartz
324	2	206	Quartz
325	2	206	Quartz
326	2	206	Quartz
327	2	206	Flint
328	2	206	Quartz
329	2	206	Flint
330	2	206	Quartz
331	2	206	Quartz
332	2	206	Quartz
333	2	206	Quartz
334	2	206	Quartz
335	2	206	Quartz

336	2	206	Quartz
337	2	206	Quartz
338	2	206	Quartz
339	2	206	Quartz
340	2	206	Quartz
341	2	206	Quartz
342	2	206	Quartz
343	2	206	Quartz
344	2	206	Quartz
345	2	206	Quartz
346	2	206	Quartz
347	2	206	Quartz
348	2	205	Quartz
349	2	205	Quartz
350	2	205	Quartz
351	2	205	Quartz
352	2	205	Quartz
353	2	205	Flint
354	1	102	Flint
355	1	102	Quartz
356	1	102	Quartz
357	1	102	Quartz
358	1	102	Flint
359	1	103	Flint
360	1	103	Quartz

Appendix Six – Surveying points

**All points were surveyed using a GNSS to survey grade accuracy +/- 1.5cm*

GPS Point	Description
361	Trench Three corner
362	Trench Three corner
363	Trench Three corner
364	Trench Three corner
365	Trench Four corner
366	Trench Four corner
367	Trench Four corner
368	Trench Four corner
369	Trenches One and Two corner
370	Trenches One and Two corner
371	Trenches One and Two corner
372	Trenches One and Two corner
373	Field boundary
374	Field boundary
375	Field boundary
376	Field boundary
377	Field boundary
378	Unexcavated portion of kerb
379	Unexcavated portion of kerb
380	Unexcavated portion of kerb
381	Unexcavated portion of kerb
382	Unexcavated portion of kerb
383	Large stone erratic to south-west of tomb
384	Large stone erratic to south-west of tomb
385	Large stone erratic to south-west of tomb
386	Large stone erratic to south-west of tomb
387	Large stone erratic to south-west of tomb
388	Large stone erratic to south-west of tomb