

Archaeological Excavation Phase 1 St Joseph's, Clonsilla, Dublin 15



GIACOMETTI & GARAHY

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Section 1 Introduction

Report summary

Archaeological monitoring at Clonsilla in 2019 exposed the remains of a medieval field system and a very unusual feature: rows of pits in one of the medieval fields. Each pit was identical (1.60m by 0.50m and 0.35m deep), and arranged in rows 6m apart, with each pit 6m from each other pit. The pits rows extended over an area measuring at least 80m by 50m. The pits contained few artefacts other than small sherds of medieval pottery. This report defines the finding as a pitfield, and compares it to other pitfields in County Roscommon. Various possible functions, including military or agricultural, are put

forward.

The remains of the 19th century demesne landscape of Clonsilla Lodge were also recorded as part of the monitoring. Phase 1 of the scheme is now complete.

Site location

The site is situated in Clonsilla, Dublin 15. It is bounded by the Royal Canal to the south, the townland boundary with Barberstown to the west, St Joseph's Hospital to the northwest, and the Hansfield (former Clonsilla to Clonee) road



View of general monitoring programme, showing removal of topsoil down to natural subsoil

to the north and east. The site formerly formed part of St Joseph's Hospital Clonsilla, and before that comprised the grounds of 19th century Clonsilla Lodge and an adjacent field to the west. The site extends across c. 7.6 ha. It is also known as Zone 6 Hansfield SDZ Lands. The site was in short grass prior to the archaeological work starting.

Development and planning

Planning permission has been granted (FCC FW17A/0234) for a large residential development at St Joseph's, Clonsilla. The site has been the subject of an archaeological desktop study (by Antoine Giacometti dated 06/12/2017) and a Geophysical Survey (Joanna Leigh 19R0013), and archaeological monitoring was recommended.

Archaeological potential

Based on the results of the desktop assessment and geophysical survey, a number of areas of archaeological and heritage interest were identified.

Prehistoric and medieval

The development is situated 300m east of the site of a medieval church (St Mary's RMP DU013-017), which is possibly surrounded by an early medieval enclosure. This is a religious foundation associated with the medieval Priory of Little Malvern, but there are suggestions from placename analysis and site inspection of a pre-12th century foundation (Giacometti 2017). On this basis the presence of early medieval and medieval remains on the site was considered. However, the only large-scale features identified on the geophysical survey were dated to the 19th or 20th century by comparison with historic maps, which suggests no



Development plan and overall site layout

significant enclosures of pre-medieval date are present within the site.

Historic watercourse in southeast corner

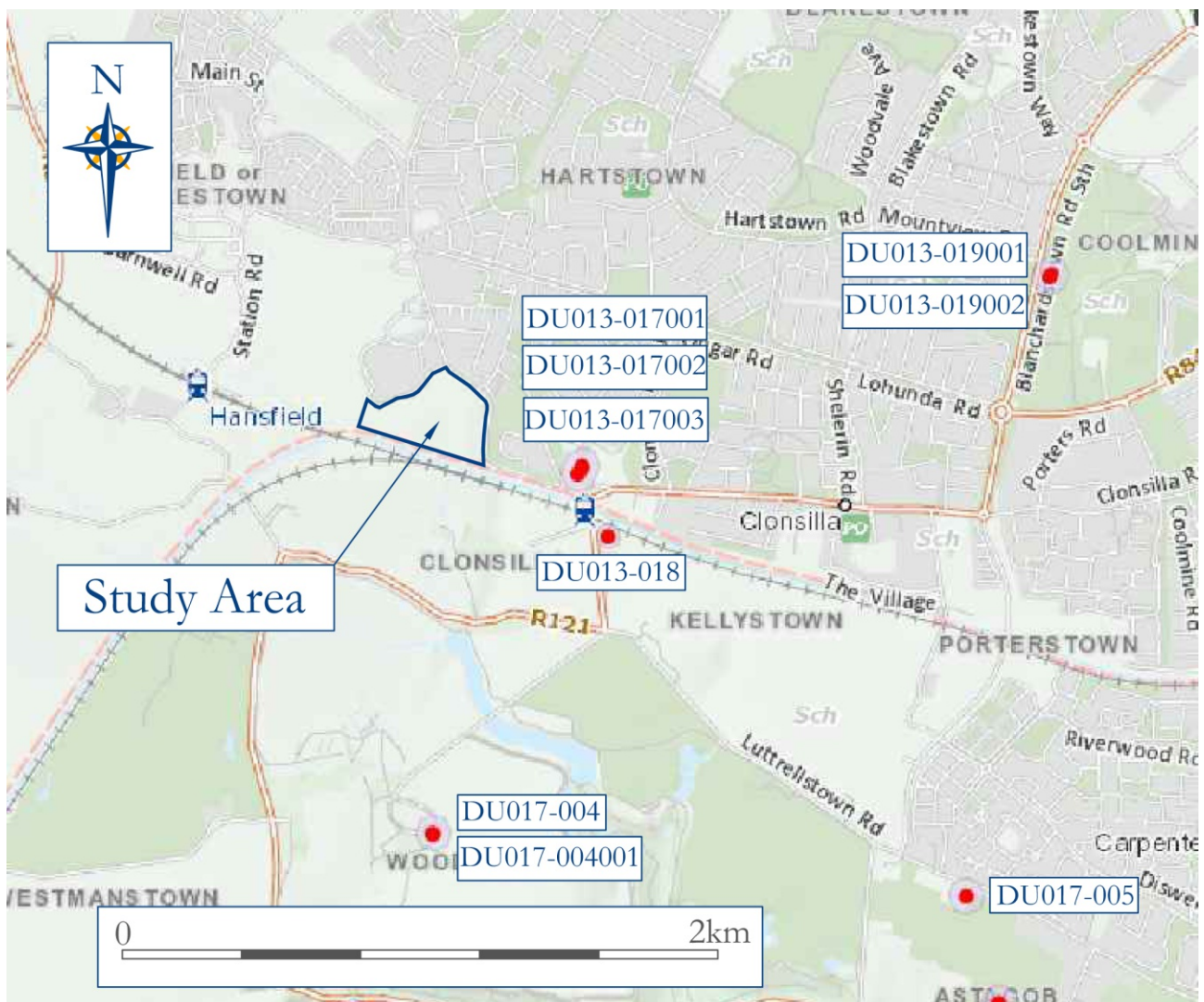
A watercourse is depicted on the 1st Edition 1837 OS map running from Hartstown southwards, under the Clonee-Clonsilla Road. It runs diagonally through the site and appears over-ground from the gate lodge to the southern boundary, crossing the Royal Canal, and connecting with the waterways of Luttrellstown Demense. A number of mills are recorded in the Civil Survey (mid-17th century) at Clonsilla, and this watercourse may represent the remains of a former mill-race. The former watercourse

has been recently disturbed and the overall archaeological potential of this feature within the site is very low.

18th century building

An 18th century building is depicted by Rocque in the northeast of the site. This lies within the impact zone of road improvement works associated with the development. Archaeological remains associated with 18th century or earlier non-estate residential activity in the site would be archaeologically significant, as this is historically under-represented at Clonsilla. For this reason, this feature was tested as part of the overall monitoring programme.

Recorded Monuments in vicinity of the site





Geophysical survey of the site by JM Leigh

19th century estate landscape

The 19th century estate landscape of Clonsilla Lodge is recorded in the NIAH historic gardens and designed landscape survey (ref DU-50-O-043385). This was the estate of Patrick Geale Esq. and family in the early-mid 19th century. The estate grounds are of heritage and archaeological interest, and the surviving woodlands at the site boundaries are being retained where possible as a historic estate feature. The historic driveway and gate lodge are no longer present, but the driveway was identified in the geophysical survey and both were fully documented during the archaeological monitoring programme.

Industrial Heritage & Royal Canal

Archaeological remains in the southern half of the site may represent features associated with the use of the canal and towpath, or with the construction of the canal in c. 1800 AD. Industrial features are often associated with the

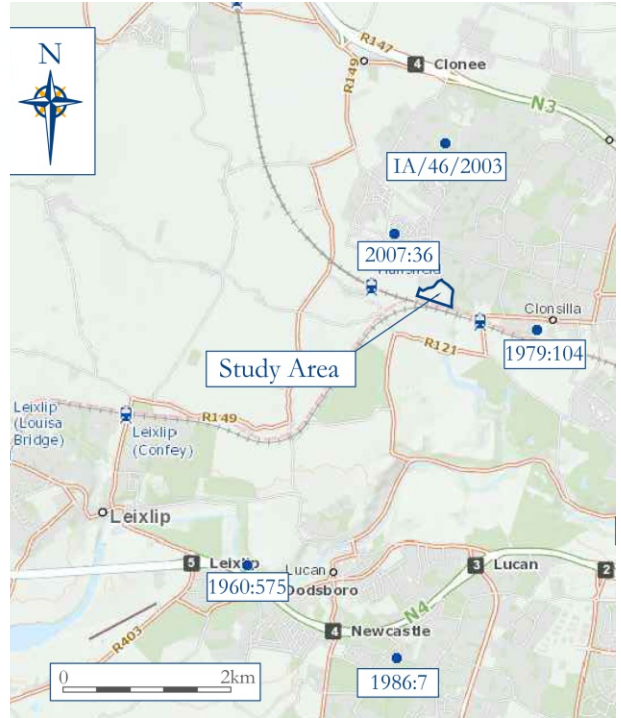
construction of canals. Brickfields, for example, grew out of the large excavations of clay, combined with new opportunities to cheaply transport bricks. The site is, however, separated from the canal by a deep ditch and high bank that blocks the view. No industrial sites, remains or material associated with the Royal Canal of with its construction were identified during the monitoring programme, with the possible exception of a thick wedge of redeposited clay laid down on the low-lying parts of the site, which may derive from the canal construction.

Townland boundary

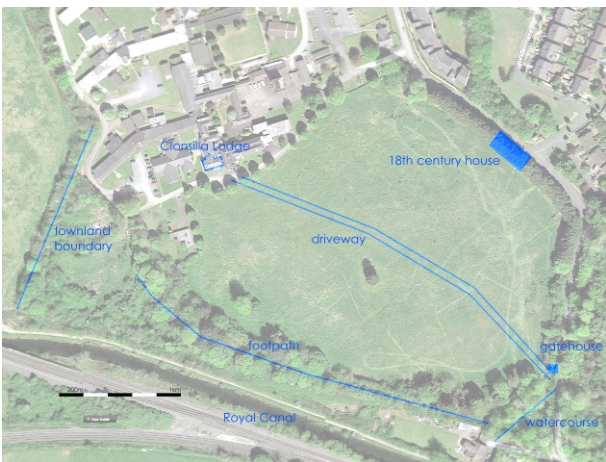
The townland boundary between Clonsilla and Barberstown may be physically impacted upon by this development. Townland boundaries frequently run along boundaries established in medieval or earlier periods, and can be archaeologically significant. The size of this boundary, however, suggests it has been extensively modified in the 19th century.



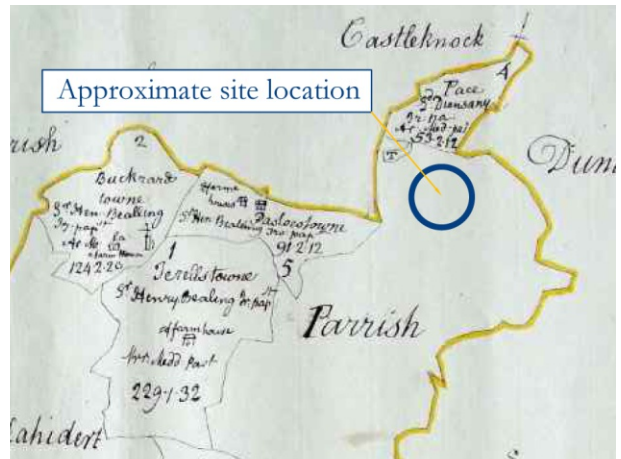
Duncan 1821 map



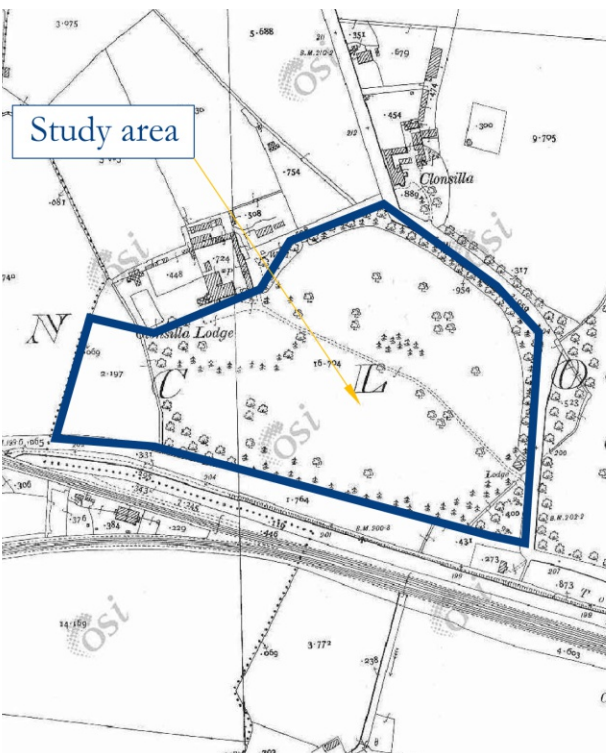
NMI topographic files in vicinity of site



Overview of archaeological potential



Down Survey



1910 Edition OS map 25-Inch



Rocque's map, 1760

Section 3 Archaeological Programme

Monitoring programme

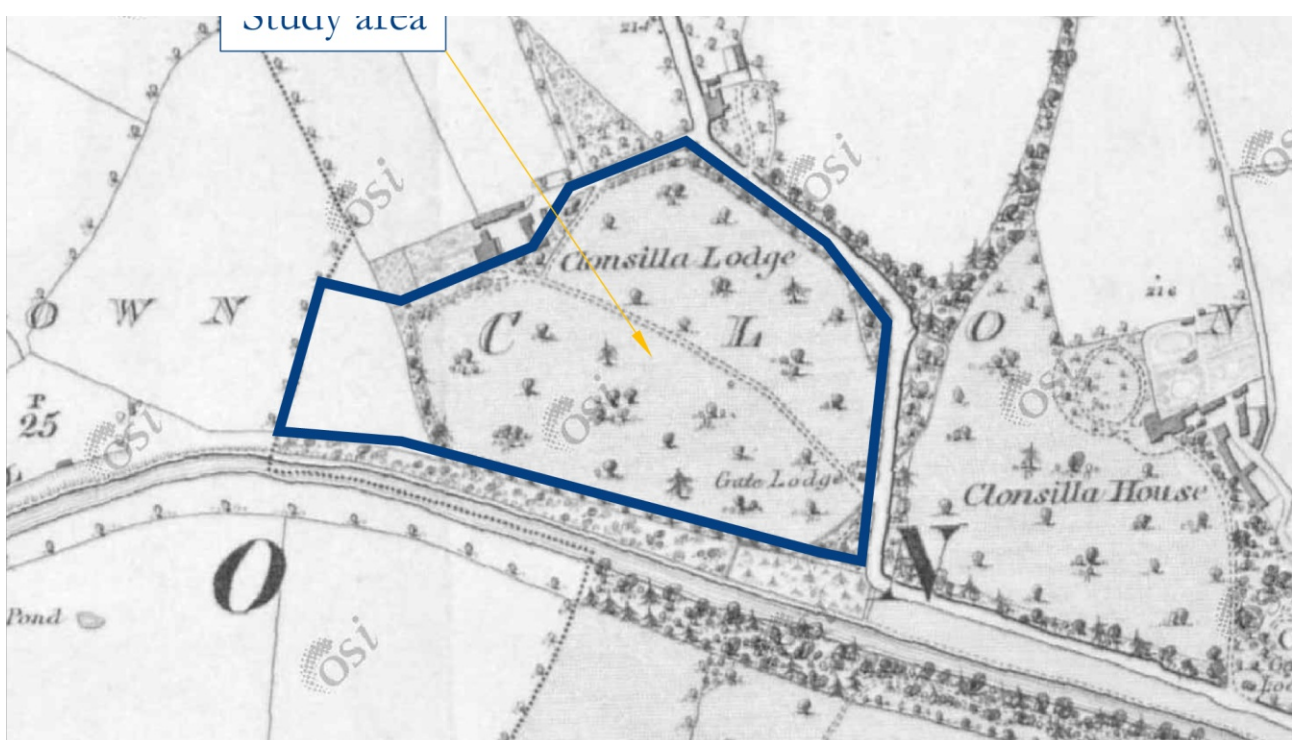
The area subject to archaeological monitoring comprised the former open ground of Clonsilla Lodge. This was a large open area of abandoned grassland enveloped by mature tree lines. No visible archaeological features were identified during the site inspection. There was no trace of the former 19th century driveway or gatehouse, or of the 18th century farmhouse.

A geophysical survey was carried out across the site in 2019 (Leigh 19R0013). This identified modern services and 19th century demesne features (drains and a driveway). No earlier archaeological features were visible.

The site is located on land that gently sloped from a high point at St Joseph's hospital (formally Clonsilla Lodge) in the north, down towards

the canal to the south. One of the key findings from the monitoring programme was the identification of redeposited subsoil across the entire site that was very thin in the higher ground in the north, but reached up to c. 1m in thickness to the south near the canal. This wedge of material sealed the medieval features below, and was cut through by 19th century features. It comprised a sterile yellow silty-clay. It likely formed from the redeposition of material that was excavated during the construction of the canal. This was done to raise the surface level above that of the canal.

Six areas of archaeology were identified during the monitoring (Areas 1-6). Another five possible archaeological features outside of these areas were investigated during the monitoring programme. None of these proved to be of archaeological significance. The ditches forming the medieval field system extending north and



1st Edition OS Map c. 1830s



Rocque's map, 1760, showing small structure inside northwest side of site

west (three ditches in total) of Area 2 were identified and also excavated during the general monitoring works, and the findings are incorporated into the Area 2 report below.

19th century estate landscape

As noted above, the 19th century estate landscape of Clonsilla Lodge (NIAH historic gardens and designed landscape survey DU-50-O- 043385) belonged to Patrick Geale Esq. and family.

The historic driveway, established in the 19th century, was identified on the site. It was represented by a high concentration of post-medieval and modern pottery within the topsoil along the band where the driveway was marked on 19th century maps. Below this was a layer of compacted small stones set into the top of the redeposited natural layer. The surface itself did not survive, and indeed it appeared to have been intentionally removed in the southern half of the site. The driveway survived well in the north, but only patchily to the south. The historic gatehouse was not identified.

A network of 19th century stone-lined and stone-filled drains was identified across the entire development site. These were hand excavated and contained 19th century pottery.

Drains containing ceramic pipes were also identified. Modern 20th century concrete drains were also identified. Both 19th and 20th century drains cut through the redeposited natural layer, supporting the idea that this layer was laid down in or around the 18th century during the construction of the canal.



19th century stone-lined drain



Location of archaeological Areas 1-6 within overall development scheme

18th century building

An 18th century building is depicted by Rocque in the northeast of the Study Area. No archaeological remains were identified in this area, however it was notably disturbed in contrast to the remainder of the site. The disturbance comprised a 10m wide strip along the Hansfield Road that contained a deep deposit of made-up fill 3m in depth containing 19th and 20th century material.

Watercourses

Three former watercourses were identified on the site. Watercourse 1 was identified to the west, and appeared to be sealed by the (18th century?) redeposited natural. Watercourses 2 and 3 in the east of the site were cut through the redeposited layer, and indeed Watercourse 3 was visible - as a dry watercourse - prior to the monitoring programme. All three watercourses

were on a similar northeast-southwest alignment, and all three took similar forms (a deep ditch filled with soggy wet silt with a high organic content).

Watercourse 3 is depicted on the 1st Edition 1837 OS map running southwards from Hartstown, under the Clonee-Clonsilla Road, and diagonally through the site where it appears overground from the gate lodge to the southern boundary, crossing the Royal Canal, and connecting with the waterways of Luttrellstown Demense. This suggests that Watercourse 3 predates the construction of the canal in the 18th century. It has clearly been redug in the 19th and 20th centuries.

A number of mills are recorded in the Civil Survey (mid-17th century) at Clonsilla, and one or more of these watercourses may represent the remains of a former mill-race. No remains of a mill were identified on the site.

Artefacts from monitoring

The majority of artefacts found during monitoring was 19th and 20th century ceramic sherds of refined whiteware (including porcelain, creamware and pearlware), and English stoneware marmalade jars and bottles. The black-glazed earthenware comprised late 18th century or later thick-walled ribbed storage jars with orange fabric. A single sherd of glazed red earthenware was also identified, glazed on both sides. A yellow slipware earthenware dish with bright orange fabric is likely to be 19th century or later.

The glass assemblage comprised modern utility bottles and a glass lid from a jar. Ceramic building materials comprised modern white tiles, unglazed earthenware tiles, modern cavity brick, hand-made brick, and modern ceramic pipes. Metal artefacts comprised mostly nails, bars and plates, but included a donkey-shoe, a door latch, and a door brace. All of these modern artefacts were recorded, photographed, and discarded on site.

Type	Number	MNV
Context 1 (topsoil)		
Glass	4	4
Metal	20	-
Clay pipe	3	1
Ceramic building material	21	8
Mortar samples	1	-
Shell samples	1	-
Refined whitewares	70	20
Stoneware (English)	8	8
Stoneware (German)	1	1
Tin-glazed earthenware	2	1
Black-glazed earthenware	9	2
Slipware	1	1
Bristol-Staffordshire slipware	3	1
Glazed red earthenware	1	1
Unglazed/eroded earthenware	12	0
<i>Pottery totals (C1)</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Find totals (C1)</i>	<i>155</i>	<i>-</i>
C139 (made-up ground near 18th century farmhouse)		
Glass	4	4
C163 (19th century drain)		
Black-glazed earthenware	12	1
Animal bone, oyster and shell	-	-



Lead musketball from C1



Tin-glazed earthenware from C1



Refined whiteware from C1



English and German stoneware from C1

17th and 18th century pottery was also identified. This comprised a tin-glazed earthenware vessel of unusual shape that was possibly a small salt bowl, a clay pipe bowl with a flat heel that may be early 18th century in date, a German salt-glazed stoneware Frechen jug handle, and fine black-on-yellow Bristol-Staffordshire slipware tableware. One lead ball of shot was identified, which may derive from 17th or 18th century hunting. These artefacts were retained.

Area 1

No archaeological features were excavated in Area 1.

Area 2

Area 2 was situated in the northwest of the overall development scheme, approximately 20m west of the Hansfield Road. It measured 80m north-south and 50m east-west. The topography sloped gently downhill towards the south. Area 2 was excavated by a team of six archaeologists over two weeks from 26/08/19 to 03/09/19.

Natural subsoil comprised a dark grey stony-clay. This was overlain by a thin layer of yellowish-brown mottled silty-clay, overlain in turn by topsoil.

Medieval field system

Four ditches running WNW-ESE and WSW-ESE were identified. The longest and earliest ditch (C32) ran WNW-ESE through the entire area. It measured 1.39m wide and 0.58m deep. It had a lower fill of yellowy-brown silty-clay (C46), overlain by a greyish-brown silty-clay (C33). In one part of the ditch, near the junction with ditch C52, a thin basal layer of greyish-brown silty-clay (C78) was identified.

The other three ditches intersected with this ditch, and formed a right-angle boundary comprising two ditches that were spaced 2.5m to 5.7m apart. Ditch C95 formed the second ditch with C32, and two new ditches at right angles (C52 & C70) formed the return. This probably represented a rectangular double-ditched en-



Black-glazed earthenware from drain C163

closure defining a property that fronted onto the main road. This property was in the same location as the 18th century building depicted on Rocque's map of 1756, and it may also have contained a building in the medieval period.

The other ditches (C70, C52 and C95) ran off the primary ditch (C32) for a short distance to the west, and to the edge of the site to the east. The shorter northern ditch (C70) measured 25m in length, 1m in width and only 0.36m in depth, and was filled by a sterile brown sandy-clay (C71). The southern ditch was identical. Both ditches terminated at a point 5.7m west of the ditch C32, probably at a former boundary line. A fourth ditch (C95) cut across these two where they terminated. This truncated whatever had originally caused these two ditches to end here., presumably an earlier version of the boundary defined by ditch C95. Ditch C95 varied widely in depth from 600mm to 200mm in depth (deeper in the north) and measured 1.4m in width. It terminated to the north at the right-angle junction with ditch C70 but continued south beyond the site limits.

These were agricultural ditches that formed part of a wider field system, pre-dating and at a different alignment to the 19th century demesne landscape. The ditches contained sherds of green-glazed medieval pottery, indicating they were in use during the 13th-15th centuries. Similar medieval ditches from the same field system were excavated in Areas 3, 5 and 6. It is very likely that the WNW end of ditch C52 formed a ring angle with the ditch excavated in Area 6,



Pre-excitation view of Area 2, showing medieval ditches in paler colour, facing northeast

and that the ESE end of ditch C52 formed a right angle with the ditch excavated in Areas 3 and 5. Most of the archaeological features in Area 3 were situated to the northeast of ditch C52.

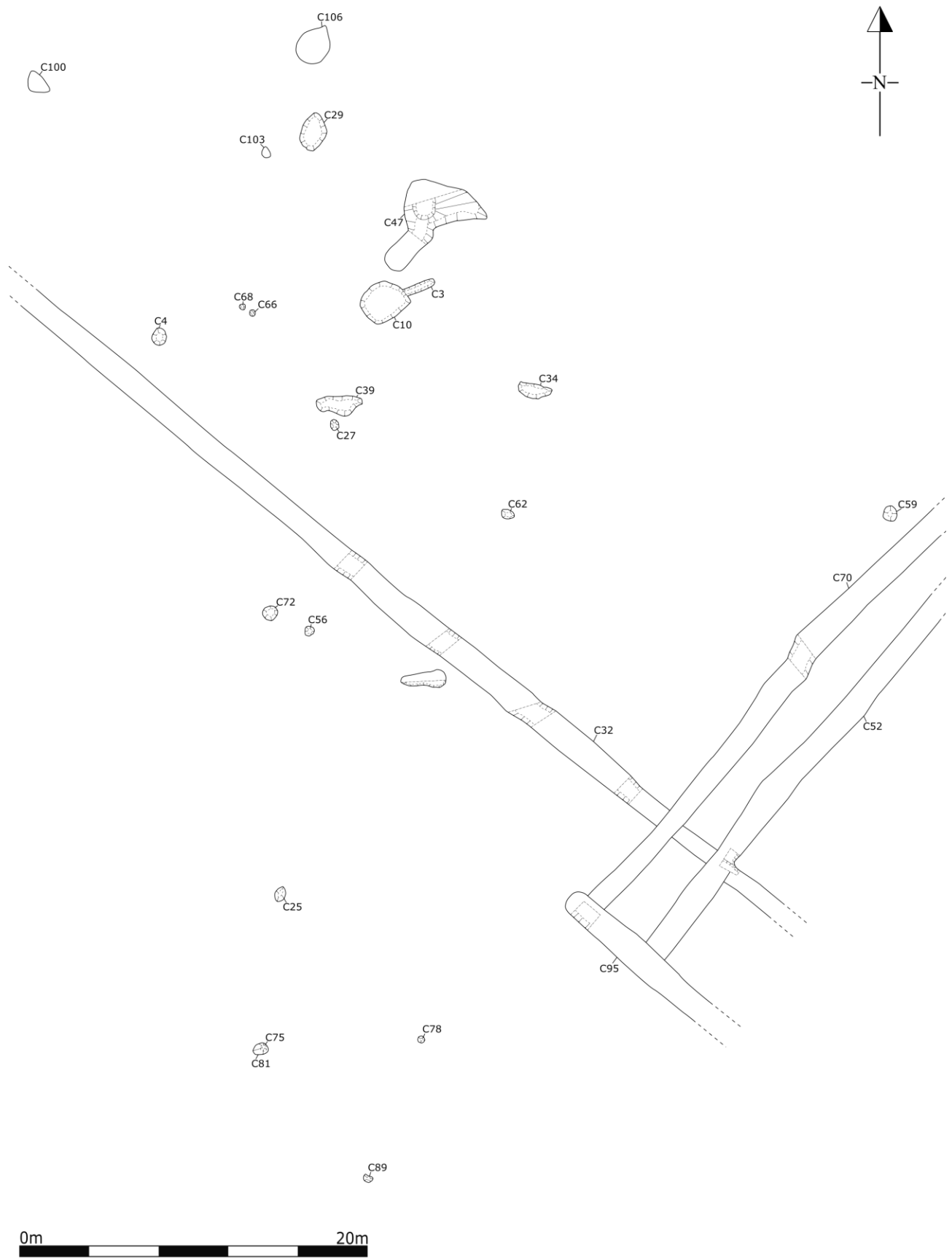
The well

The well (C47), situated in the northeast of Area 2, was sub-circular in shape and measured 3.38m (E-W) by 2.8m across. The upper part of the well had steep sides except for the eastern side, which had a very gentle incline. Small stones pressed into this gently-sloping side created a metal surface, suggesting this side was used to access water. The lower half of the well was perfectly circular (measuring 0.80m diameter) and had vertical sides down to a concave base that was 1.70m in depth below the surface. The northern half of the well was truncated by a 19th century stone-filled drain and a later pit (C50).

Once emptied, the well continuously filled up with water. The fills of the well indicated it had been cleaned out and reused at least once during its lifetime. This may have included an attempt to shape the pit, by redepositing clay subsoil to create very straight sides and an almost perfectly circular base. The fills of the well appeared to represent deliberate backfilling. They comprised (C48) an orangey mid-grey mottled silty clay with occasional snail shells and rare animal bone that filled most of the well, and (C49) a gritty orange sandy clay.

Pits clustered around the well

A cluster of small pits and postholes surrounded the well. The well appeared to be the longest-lived feature in this part of the site, and the focus of activity in the immediate area. All of these features were situated in the northeastern enclosure defined by the medieval ditches C32 and C70. Many of the smaller features (C27, C34, C39, C62, C59, C100, C103 & C106)



Plan of archaeological features in Area 2

were situated on the level ground to the south and northwest of the well. The majority of these features were shallow, circular and oval shaped features with steep sides and concave bases. They were almost identical in terms of shape, size and profile. All were filled with similar bluish-clay, which probably represented the gradual silting up of the pit. They were interpreted as possible water basins and the clay natural subsoil held water within them.

A larger pit (C10) was identified 3m southwest of the well. This was sub-circular in shape, c. 2.50m in diameter and 0.90m in depth, with concave sides and an uneven irregular base. It was filled by a pale grey brown silty clay with flecks of charcoal (C11). This pit was truncated by several shallow sub-circular pits. A gully (C3) connected to the northeast side of the pit, and measured 2m in length and 500mm wide. The pit and gully may represent an attempt to create a well, cistern or other water management feature, either prior to the creation of the well or as well as it. Given that the natural subsoil directly around pit C10 was stonier and more compact than elsewhere, and given pit C10's irregular base, it may be that this feature was abandoned prior to its completion.

Another pit (C4) 5m west of the well was sub-circular with a bowl-shaped profile vertical sides and concave base, and measured 800mm in diameter and 600mm in depth. The basal fill was redeposited sterile natural subsoil (C5) and this was overlain by a compact blue clay (C6) that contained occasional charcoal flecks and seeds. The uppermost fill was a pale yellow silty-clay (C5).

Two postholes (C66 and C68) also formed part of this cluster of features surrounding the well. C66 was 350mm in diameter and 370mm in depth and formed a 60-degree angle, and C68 was 340mm in diameter and 190mm in depth. Both were filled by a greyish-brown silty-clay.

A second smaller cluster of small pits or postholes (C25, C56, C72, C75, C78 & C81) lay on the western side of ditch C32. These were similar to the small pits surrounding the well: shallow, circular and oval shaped features with steep sides and concave bases filled with sterile

bluish-clay.

Area 3

Area 3 was situated in the centre-south of the site, downslope from Areas 1, 2 and 6. A thick (up to 700mm thick) layer of yellow silty clay, sitting below the topsoil, was evident across the entire area, thickening towards the south. This was cut by 19th century features and sealed medieval and earlier features. It may represent the raising and levelling of the ground in the 18th or 19th centuries using the excavated clay from the digging from the canal nearby to the south. Natural subsoil in this area had a distinct reddish hue, which may represent hillwash or silting predating the 18th century canal works.

This area comprised a large circular pit surrounded by a number of postholes, isolated pits and a ditch.

A linear boundary ditch (C137) ran east-west across the area. This ran parallel to the ditch identified upslope in Area 6 and perpendicular to the ditches in Area 1 to the northeast, and all of the ditches probably formed a single medieval field system. It measured 1.1m wide and was filled by a yellow silty-clay with frequent charcoal (C138).

To the north of the ditch, a large circular pit (C122) measured 1m in diameter and 0.18m deep, and was surrounded by a postholes and smaller pits. The basal fill of the large pit was a yellow clay (C124) overlain by a reddish ashy clay (C123). Four postholes surrounding the pit (C125, C158, C164 & C128) were all circular in shape 150mm in diameter and 300mm deep, with steep sides and flat bases. All were filled by a brown silty-clay with small stones near the base. A small pit further to the northwest (C130) was 0.55m in diameter and 60cm deep with bowl shaped profile, and was filled with the same brown silty-clay as the postholes.

Area 4

This area directly north of Area 2. The continuation of the medieval ditch (C32) was followed,



Area 5 large pit C140, mid-excavation

and three features (C100, C103 & C106) were excavated, as described in Area 2 above.

Area 5

Area 5 was situated immediately southwest of Area 3. The possible medieval ditch from Area 3 (C137) extended through this area. The thick wedge of redeposited subsoil sealed the archaeological features in this area, and was cut by 19th century features, as with Area 3.

A large circular pit (C140) 1.10m in diameter and 0.45m deep with a bowl-shaped profile had a basal fill of grey stony clay (C143), followed by a pale brown silty-clay (C142), and the uppermost fill comprised charcoal with burnt clay and burnt bone inclusions (C141). A posthole (C146) was located next to it, measuring 0.15m

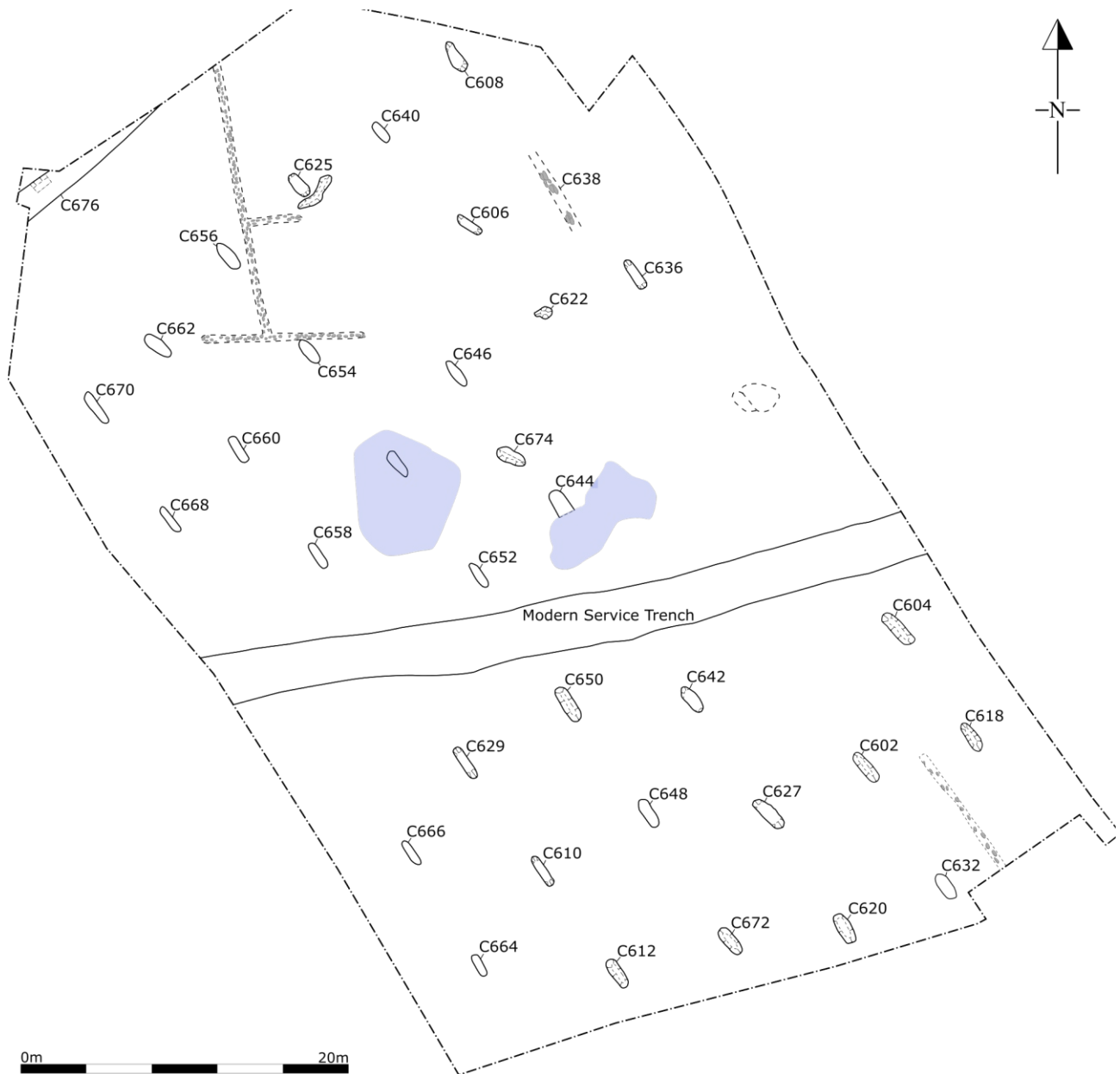
diameter and 0.25m deep and steep sides with flat base, and a pale brown clay fill, stonier and wetter near the base.

Two further oblong features (C120 and C144) were identified, 8.5m north of the ditch. These were a continuation of the regular pits identified in Area 6 and in line with the two most westerly rows of pits. Both were 1.80m long (NW–SE), 0.50m wide and 0.50m deep, with straight long sides and steeply sloping ends and flat bases. They were both filled with a sterile yellow clay.

Area 6

Introduction

Area 6 was situated in the northwest of the overall development scheme. It measured 22m



Plan of archaeological features in Area 6

northwest to southeast and 30m southwest to northeast. An area of disturbed ground directly to the west of this was initially included within Area 6, however the level of preservation there was very low, and this area was subsequently excluded from the defined zone of Area 6. Area 6 was excavated by a team of six archaeologists over two weeks from 4/11/19 to 15/11/19 in mixed weather conditions.

As with the remainder of the overall St Joseph's

Development Site, Area 6 was covered by a dark brown organic and humic layer of loam topsoil 0.30m thick, which overlay two further deposits (C601). Directly below topsoil was a yellowish brown sterile clay (C601a) 0.05m to 0.10m in thickness, which was thicker towards the lower-lying southern ends of the development and which may have been hill wash or a deliberate levelling deposit. The lowest layer was a yellow gravelly sticky clay with decayed stone (C601b), 0.13m in thickness. This lowest layer sealed the



Area 6 pit C620, post-excavation

Area 6 pit C606, mid-excavation



archaeological features, but both layers were cut by the 19th century features. Natural subsoil (C699) comprised a brownish-grey clay with frequent decayed stone. This subsoil was found to drain extremely poorly. This corresponds well with Association 40 of the Soil Map of Ireland 1980: 80 % gleys, 20% brown podzolics. Such soils are deemed to have a somewhat limited use range. They are suitable mainly for grassland but can be used for tillage if the ideal moisture balance can be found. (AFT, 116–117).

Rows of pits

Thirty-three almost identical pits were identified, laid out in six rows across Area 6. Based on their regularity, it was possible to establish that originally 42 pits would have extended across the 30m by 22m area, but nine of the pits had been truncated away by 19th and 20th century features. Each row of pits ran NW to SE, which was in alignment with the sloping topography of the site. Each pit was situated approximately 6m apart from each other pit on all sides. The rows of pits extended to the south (into Areas 3 and 5) and to the west (a disturbed part of Area 6) but did not extend to the east (Area 1). The pits thus extended across an area measuring at least 80m northwest to southeast and at least 50m southwest to northeast.

The northwest extent of the pit rows was defined by a ditch (C676) which ran northeast to southwest, perpendicular to the rows of pits. This ditch ran at the same alignment and was identical in shape, size and fills to the medieval ditches excavated further east in Area 2 and is likely to form part of a contemporary medieval field system. The northern end of each row of pits was located 8m away from the ditch, which broke the consistent 6m-apart pattern elsewhere. A second northeast-southwest ditch (C137), also probably medieval in date, defined the southern extent of the pits (this was excavated in Areas 3 and 5). The rows of pits did not continue south of the southern medieval ditch, so all the pits were contained between these two ditches 50m apart.

In the north, near the ditch, the pits in each row were perfectly aligned. As the rows extended away from the ditch downhill to the southeast, the pits in each row lost their regularity. This

might suggest a mechanism for the creation of the field of pits. A group of pit-diggers - each 6m apart - began at the northern boundary of a medieval field, and as they worked at different paces digging each pit and moving forward 6m to the next, they pits gradually lost regularity in relation to each other.

The pits were remarkably similar in size, shape and fill. They were 1.60m long (NW-SE), 0.50m wide and 0.35m deep. They all had vertical long sides and steeply sloping ends. They had flat bases that occasionally sloped to the southeast following the local topography.

The majority of the pits contained a single fill. This was a brownish yellow silty-clay with frequent fine sub-angular stones and decayed stone. This was identical to the layer of subsoil or hill-wash (C601) that sealed all of the archaeological features: a brownish yellow clay with occasional decayed stone and gravel which contrasts strongly with the surrounding grey



Area 6 pit C615, post-excitation

Area 6 overview facing northwest



natural. One of the pits was identified as having two fills. The lower fill (C630) was the standard pit fill, but in this case a distinct upper fill of identical but greyer material (C631) was also recorded.

Six of the pits produced artefacts. Fifteen sherds of medieval pottery were found in three pits (C608, C610 and C612). Three small iron artefacts including one iron nail, and a piece of slag, were found in three pits (C604, C612 and C614). Two of the pits (C614 and C606) contained very small amounts of animal bone, including burnt bone. These two pits were situated near a pit (C674 described below) that contained burnt bone, and it seems likely that all three features were open at the same time. None of the pits contained any charcoal, seeds, or post-medieval pottery. On the basis of the finds, the field of pits can be dated to the medieval period, c. 13th to 15th century AD.

Pre-19th century ditch

The northern extent of the pit rows was defined by a ditch (C676) that ran northeast to southwest, perpendicular to the rows of pits. An 8m section of the ditch was exposed in Area 6, but it extended to the east and west outside the area. It was similar in shape and orientation to medieval ditches found elsewhere on the site. It was 1.10 wide, 0.44m deep, flat-bottomed with steeply sloping sides and contained three fills: upper fill C677 a yellow clay, C678 a greyish yellow silty-clay, and lower fill C679 sterile, stony blue-grey clay.

Area 6 scorched pit C622, mid-excavation



Scorched pit

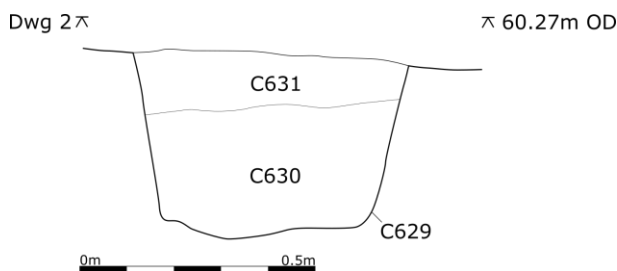
A large pit in the centre of the Area 6 (C674) measured 1.7m by 1.13m and was sub-oval in shape. The edges of the pit were heavily scorched an orange-red colour (C683), indicating that a hot fire had been lit inside the pit. The pit appeared to have been cleared out and reused. Over a basal fill of bright yellow silty clay (C682), there was a band of charcoal and burnt bone (C681). Above this was a dark brown clay with burnt bone (C680). The uppermost fill of the pit was a pale brown, crumbly clay (C675) that may represent an intentional backfill. The presence of burnt bone in two nearby features to the north, (C606 and C614), suggests that the scorched pit may also be medieval in date.

Small pit

A small pit (C622) of undetermined purpose which did not fit into the regular pit layout was identified. It was sub-oval in plan with a u-shaped profile. Its sides and base were irregular. It measured 1.05m long and 0.56m wide and 0.24m deep and was orientated west to east. There were two fills, the upper C623, a firm, yellowish grey brown silty clay and the basal fill C624, a light grey silty clay with infrequent fine pebbles.

Post medieval features

19th and 20th century stone-lined drains and modern drains traversed Area 6 and truncated the earlier features. The seven stone-lined drains were identified elsewhere on the site and are likely to be 19th century demesne features.



Area 6 section through pit C629 - a typical pitfield feature

Section 3 The Clonsilla Pitfield

The key finding from the archaeological work at Clonsilla was a medieval pitfield defined by a medieval field system.

Definitions

The Archaeological Survey of Ireland, National Monuments Service has established a set of monument categories to classify Irish archaeological sites (NMS 2019). The definition of the monument class ‘Pitfield’ is ‘Shallow oblong pits c.10m x c. 2-3m, with a depth of c. 0.5m, arranged in parallel rows placed c. 20-40m apart. These may be post-medieval in date, from the 17th century AD onwards.’

Similar monuments are also known from Great Britain. Waddington (1997, 22) defines ‘pit alignments’ as ‘pit features of consistent size and spacing arranged in lines, usually with a linear or slightly curved axis, and commonly occurring as part of a complex of such features in a given area’. He further notes (ibid) that such alignments have two important features. ‘Firstly, within each alignment the shape of the pit and distance between pits are for the most part constant..... Secondly, ... the pits are often sharply defined indicating that these features were dug as a single undertaking over a short period and they were quickly backfilled with material different from that extracted’. The latter point may be open to debate (Wigley 2004, 127). Waddington (ibid, 23) goes on to divide the British pit alignments into single- and double-pit alignments, and notes both circular and rectangular pits of diameters c. 1m to 3m and depths 0.7m to 1m. He points out that most of them have been dated to the prehistoric period (ibid, 29-30). Earlier pit alignments have been recorded in Britain and Germany and have varying forms. Similar features have also been recorded in Germany (O’Connell, 2016).

Irish comparisons

Over forty pitfields are known in central north

Roscommon, and more may extend into Longford (Meehan and Parkes 2014, 37; Timoney 2009, 139). Timoney (2009) estimates that there are perhaps 1,500 to 2,000 pits in Roscommon. The best known and most concentrated area of pitfields is at Rathcroghan, near Tulsk. They vary in length from 2m to 8m, in width from 1.5 to 2.5m and in depth they average 40cm to 70cm deep. The pits usually occur in at least two parallel lines. As yet, a date has not been established for the pit fields but they are thought to be post-medieval. Some of the Roscommon pitfields are being excavated archaeologically at the time of writing, during works for the N5 Ballaghadeeren to Scramoge Road Project (Fintan Walsh, pers. comm., 2019). Surveys in advance of the scheme identified a number of

One of the Clonsilla pits under excavation





Rathcroghan pitfield, Roscommon. From Dempsey, G. 2012. "The Pitfields of Rathcroghan, Co. Roscommon", in *Archaeology Ireland*. Vol. 26, 1, 26–30.

new pit fields. There will be an emphasis on establishing the purpose and date of the features using geophysical survey, test trenching of the pits and their surrounds, soil sampling and investigation by a consultant hydrogeologist (EIA, 14).

Timoney (2009, 142) identifies another enigmatic cluster of pits in County Sligo at the Carrowkeel passage tomb cemetery. This is represented by several hundred circular pits of 4m or 10m in diameter and approximately 1.5m in depth. These are generally interpreted as geological dolines, but Timoney (*ibid*) suggests that their consistency in shape and size may suggest a human origin.

The Roscommon pitfields are much larger than the Clonsilla features - they are visible from the air and have survived into modern times. The pits forming the pitfield at Clonsilla are smaller

and much closer together. Despite this, the Clonsilla features share many characteristics of the pitfield monument class and can be considered to form part of this monument category (Micheal Moore, pers. comm., 2019). This is the first time a pitfield has been identified in Dublin. In terms of comparison with British pit alignments, the Clonsilla pitfield does not compare well, as those alignments tend to be defined by single or double rows or pits over a long distance, rather than comprising an entire field filled with pits.

Dating

Based on the relationship of the Roscommon features and other manmade features, Moore (pers. comm.) has cautiously suggested a post-medieval date for the Roscommon pitfields, however as Dempsey (2012, 30) points out, this date is tentative. Timoney (2009, 141) has pointed out that some of the pitfields may underlie field systems that date from the medieval period. Three of the Clonsilla pits contained medieval pottery, and three pits contained rusted metal artefacts. Furthermore the ditches defining the Clonsilla pitfield are part of a winder system excavated in other parts of the site and found to contain medieval pottery. This strongly suggests that the Clonsilla pitfield is medieval in date.

Clonsilla pitfield

The Clonsilla pit alignments appears to be restricted to a single medieval field (or part of a field) measuring 100m by 70m and defined by ditches to the north and south. The field would have contained approximately 100 pits. Although no medieval pottery was found in these particular ditches, similar ditches that appear to be part of the overall field system to the east contained medieval pottery. The eastern extent of the pitfield was not defined by any visible boundary, so it either extended over only part of a medieval field, or else the eastern boundary of the field was defined by an archaeologically-invisible line such as a shallow drain, fence or hedge. The western edge of the pit field was not identified. The regularity of the pits within the pitfield certainly suggest that the full c. 7,000m² extent of the feature formed a single land parcel without internal subdivisions or obstructions. In Britain, the late prehistoric pit

alignments at Aldwinckle and Gretton appear to be related to ditches which run at right-angles to the alignment, leading Waddington to suggest (1997, 24-25) that ‘the pits formed only one component in a more varied and complex system of land division’.

Considering the consistency of pit alignment, form and backfill, the pits should be considered a single-period planned project rather than the result of a gradual construction over time (and see Waddington 1997, 22). Based on the breakdown of pit alignment from north to south, it has been suggested above that the pitfield was laid out from north (uphill) to south (downhill) by a team of pit-diggers spread out 6m apart and excavating pits roughly every 6m. The only other archaeological feature within the pitfield was a scorched pit, which was situated between a group of pitfield pits, and which contained bone. Bone found in two adjacent pitfield pits suggests the scorched feature was contemporary, and it may represent a location for the cooking of a working lunch.

It is unclear if the pits silted up naturally over time after they were dug, or if they were back-filled relatively rapidly. The latter seems more likely, since the regularity in pit profile and in pit rim form would have become distorted if they had been left open for a sustained period of time. The regularity of the pit fills, and the distinct difference between the pit fills and the underlying natural subsoil, may also point to deliberate backfilling rather than gradual accumulation of soil.

Natural origin?

Whilst some of the Roscommon pitfield pits are undoubtedly natural in origin (Fenwick & Parkes 1997), others show evidence of having been humanly formed (Dempsey 2007). The enigmatic pits at Carrowkeel passage tomb cemetery are generally interpreted as geological dolines, but Timoney (ibid) suggests that their consistency in shape and size may suggest a human origin. The Clonsilla pitfield is undoubtedly humanly created, based on their form and the presence of medieval pottery and metal artefacts inside them.

Medieval ditches and the extent of the Clonsilla pitfield in orange



Soil mending?

Michael Moore of the National Monuments Service has suggested that the Roscommon pitfields represent an attempt to gather subsoil for use as a manure to spread over topsoil, particularly in bog areas (Moore, pers. comm). This historic practise is described by Collins (2008) and is not limited to Roscommon, but scant evidence survives for the Dublin region and historical evidence suggests the practice was not used in Ireland until the 17th century. Collins (ibid) also details the harvesting of clay for subsoiling roasting. Collins (pers. comm., 2019) does not believe that the Clonsilla pit alignment has such a purpose.

Quarries?

One local suggestion for the function of the Roscommon pitfields is for use as quarry pits, although Timoney (2009, 141) discounts this as unlikely as they do not resemble quarries. In Britain some archaeologists have suggested pit alignments are the result of quarry scoops for an earthwork boundary, however based on their neat shape and regularity this is dismissed by Waddington (1997, 23). In the case of Clonsilla, it is inconceivable that the pits are the result of quarrying for the same reasons as provided above, and because they were dug through natural clay that was readily available from the upper surface and none of them reached any underlying pure clay or gravel sediments. Furthermore the rectangular shape of the pits is impractical for the harvesting of clay (Collins 2008).

Collecting water?

The pits at Clonsilla held water after rainfall, and the holding of water has been considered in relation to the function of pit alignments in Wales (Wigley 125-6). However none of the pits reached the water table, and they would be an impractical way to store or collect water. A well of possible medieval date was excavated in the northeast of the same site, and this was much larger and reached the water table.

Storing potatoes?

The Clonsilla pits would be a damp and impractical place for storing potatoes, which is one of the local suggestions recorded by Timoney (2009, 141) for the Roscommon pitfields.

Drainage?

The Clonsilla pitfield was situated in a field which was notably badly-drained. It was criss-crossed with post-medieval drains indicating that considerable effort had been expended to improve drainage in the 19th century. Although drainage is one of the possible local functions for the Roscommon pitfields Timoney (2009, 141), the Clonsilla pits are too small to have functioned as sumps, and if drains were required the existing medieval ditches could simply have been extended through the area.

Flax pits?

Kevin Barton has suggested that some of the Rathcroghan pits may have been utilised for retting flax (Meehan & Parkes 2014, 37). Retting is the process through which bundles of flax stalks are submerged in water for one to two weeks to separate the flax fibre from the stem. The site of Frydenland, near Odense in Denmark, had 52 circular pits, 1.5–3m wide and 1m deep. Sediment layers were found at the base of these retting pits which contained flax capsules and seeds. Another site at Seyden Syd, had 30 pits 0.5m deep as the groundwater level was very high. These also contained evidence of wood lining, sediment, capsules and seeds. (Andresen & Karg, 2011). The Clonsilla pits were sub-rectangular and had no evidence of sediment or seeds, and were not deep enough to consistently hold water in dry weather.

Damaging fields?

The careful regularity of the Clonsilla pits suggest that their interpretation as the intentional damage of a landlord's field by its tenants, as proposed locally for the Rathcgoragh pits (Timoney 2009, 141) is extremely unlikely.

Producing lime?

There is no evidence of lime production on the site, and none of the pits contained any lime.

Structural?

Some British pit alignments have provided excavated evidence that they once held posts, perhaps for fences forming field boundaries complementing a co-existing system of ditches and banks (Waddington 1997, 24; Wigley 2007, 119). There is no evidence the pits at Clonsilla held posts, nor is their form suggesting of a



Lilia at Rough Castle, by PaulT (Gunther Tschuch) - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=63109590>

structural support. If they did once hold posts or structural supports that were subsequently removed, they could conceivably have formed a dense grid of cages for penning animals, or uprights to hand a network of string to dry cloth. Although tenter fields - fields with posts for the drying of textiles - are known in Ireland and indeed have been excavated by the author in Dublin, none of the associated evidence for textile production or intensive animal processing was identified at Clonsilla.

Test pits?

One possible interpretation for the pits is as testing pits, excavated in order to identify a clay horizon for Fuller's earth or ceramic-suitable clay. This is a possibility, but it is doubtful that anyone searching for either of these specialised clays would dig so many small pits in such a close location. Another possibility, considering the proximity of the canal to the site, is the testing of the clays in advance of canal construction in order to inform the route of the

new canal in the 18th century. Various canal routes were probably tested, but these test-pits would probably have been deeper than the Clonsilla pits, and the medieval date of the pits preclude this interpretation.

Leisure?

Could the Clonsilla pits be part of an obscure medieval game or sport? The pitfield appears to have been created and backfilled in a short space of time, suggesting it was used just once, and it has no obvious practical function. It is difficult to envisage any game or sport utilising a field with a hundred pits. It is conceivable that the pitfield originally represented exactly a hundred pits arranged in ten rows of ten pits, in which case it might have been utilised in a once-off invented game.

Planting pits?

Perhaps the simplest explanation is that the pits were dug to accommodate planting of larger trees, shrubs or plants with a larger root system.

A similar interpretation has been provided for some British pit alignments (Pickering, cited in Waddington 1997, 25). The regular rectangular shape of the pits throws confusion on this interpretation but perhaps the sloping ends were to allow a tree to be tilted in at an end and levered to its standing position. Another possibility is that the intention was to plant a small number of plants or crops in rectangular clumps at regular intervals. If this was the intention, perhaps it was abandoned or the crop rapidly failed and left no visible trace in the fill. 19th century maps show trees planted on the site, but not in a layout that corresponds to the pit alignment.

Military?

In the absence of another logical explanation, the feature with the most similar shape to the Clonsilla pits is the lillia or trou de loup (wolf trap). The lillias at Rough Castle, a Roman fort on the Antonine wall are similar in appearance to the Clonsilla pits, and they are also sub-rectangular in plan. However, lillias are laid out in a quincunx pattern and are placed closely together, so that soldiers or cavalry approaching at speed might lose their footing. The Clonsilla pit alignment offers little in the way of defence. One could simply go around the pits, taking a straight line through 6m intervals. Additionally there is no evidence that the site was ever a battlefield, and the single bullet found (in topsoil) is a piece of lead musket shot most likely from a hunting rifle. It is conceivable that pits were created as military practice, though again the pits do not appear to offer any defensive advantage.

Conclusion

The Clonsilla pitfield is an enigmatic medieval landscape feature, and none of the suggested functions is fully plausible.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P11419.003

Photograph: 'An unidentified Australian soldier stands among a line of defensive pits, dug as cavalry traps. Part of a collection relating to the service of Ivan Sinclair Young of Nhill, Victoria, who served as a sergeant (serial number 4) with the Armoured Car Section and later as a lieutenant with 67 (Australian) Squadron, Royal Flying Corps.', 1916-1917. Australian War Memorial, Accession Number P11419.003.

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19E045 Finds Register

ExcavNo	SiteNo	ContextNo	ItemNo	SimpleName	FullName	Material	Description
19E0457:1:1	19E0457	0001	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	VOID
19E0457:1:2	19E0457	0001	02	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	VOID
19E0457:1:3	19E0457	0001	03	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:1:4	19E0457	0001	04	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:1:5	19E0457	0001	05	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:1:6	19E0457	0001	06	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:1:7	19E0457	0001	07	SHOT	Musket ball/ shot	METAL	
19E0457:1:8	19E0457	0001	08	STONE	Worked chert	CHERT	Blue/teal
19E0457:1:9	19E0457	0001	09	STONE	Worked flint	FLINT	
19E0457:1:10	19E0457	0001	10	POTTERY	Stoneware (German)	CERAMIC	German salt glazed stone ware handle from a jug. Frenchen origen. 17th to early 18th century.
19E0457:1:11	19E0457	0001	11	POTTERY	Tin glazed earthenware	CERAMIC	Rim sherd, buff fabric. Odd shaped vessel, may be a salt.
19E0457:1:12	19E0457	0001	12	POTTERY	Tin glazed earthenware	CERAMIC	Base sherd, buff fabric. Odd shaped vessel, may be a salt.
19E0457:1:13	19E0457	0001	13	POTTERY	Bristol-Staffordshire stonew	CERAMIC	Yellow small fragment
19E0457:1:14	19E0457	0001	14	POTTERY	Bristol-Staffordshire stonew	CERAMIC	Yellow small fragment
19E0457:1:15	19E0457	0001	15	POTTERY	Bristol-Staffordshire stonew	CERAMIC	Black BSS or tiny bit of mottled ware. Late 17th, early 18th century.
19E0457:23:1	19E0457	0023	01	STONE	Worked flint	FLINT	Possible core, white
19E0457:33:1	19E0457	0033	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:53:1	19E0457	0053	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:53:2	19E0457	0053	02	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:53:3	19E0457	0053	03	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:53:4	19E0457	0053	04	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:53:5	19E0457	0053	05	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:53:6	19E0457	0053	06	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:71:1	19E0457	0071	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:71:2	19E0457	0071	02	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:101:1	19E0457	0101	01	POTTERY	Prehistoric?	CERAMIC	
19E0457:101:2	19E0457	0101	02	POTTERY	Prehistoric?	CERAMIC	
19E0457:101:3	19E0457	0101	03	POTTERY	Prehistoric?	CERAMIC	
19E0457:101:4	19E0457	0101	04	POTTERY	Prehistoric?	CERAMIC	
19E0457:132:1	19E0457	0132	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:139:1	19E0457	0139	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:139:2	19E0457	0139	02	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:139:3	19E0457	0139	03	STONE	Worked flint	FLINT	Possible core, white
19E0457:139:4	19E0457	0139	04	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:139:5	19E0457	0139	05	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:162:1	19E0457	0162	01	STONE	Worked flint	FLINT	Grey flake
19E0457:605:1	19E0457	0605	01	METAL	Iron fragments	IRON	
19E0457:605:2	19E0457	0605	02	METAL	Iron fragments	IRON	
19E0457:609:1	19E0457	0609	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	Glazed, fine
19E0457:611:1	19E0457	0611	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:611:2	19E0457	0611	02	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:611:3	19E0457	0611	03	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:611:4	19E0457	0611	04	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:611:5	19E0457	0611	05	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:611:6	19E0457	0611	06	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:611:7	19E0457	0611	07	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:613:1	19E0457	0613	01	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:613:2	19E0457	0613	02	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:613:3	19E0457	0613	03	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:613:4	19E0457	0613	04	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:613:5	19E0457	0613	05	POTTERY	Medieval pottery	CERAMIC	
19E0457:613:6	19E0457	0613	06	METAL	Iron fragments	IRON	
19E0457:613:7	19E0457	0613	07	METAL	Iron fragments	IRON	

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0001	Topsoil				All
C0002	Subsoil				All
C0120	Cut of linear adjacent to Area 3		C0121	C0002	5
C0121	Light brown silty clay		C0001	C0120	5
C0122	Sub-circular pit			C0002	3
C0123	Fill of sub-circular pit with possible burning.				3
C0124	Second fill of C0122, yellow silty clay				3
C0125	SW of C0122		C0127	C0002	3
C0126	Upper fill of C0125, brown silty clay		C0001	C0127	3
C0127	Basal fill of C125, very wet, dark brown, silty clay		C0126	C0125	3
C0128	Posthole NE of C0122		C0129	C0002	3
C0129	Fill of C0128		C0001	C0128	3
C0130	NE of C0128		C0131	C0002	3
C0131	Fill of C0130		C0001	C0130	3
C0132	Adjacent to C0133				3
C0133	Adjacent to C0132		C0134	C0002	3
C0134			C0001	C0133	3
C0135			C0136	C0002	3
C0136			C0001	C0135	3
C0137	Linear ditch			C0002	3
C0138	Upper fill		C0001		3
C0139	Along NE end of site (drain system)				N/A
C0140			C0143	C0002	5
C0141	Charcoal deposit upper fill		C0001	C0142	5
C0142	Light brown silty clay, with charcoal		C0141	C0143	5

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0143	Basal fill of C0140		C0142	C0140	5
C0144	West of C0120			C0002	5
C0145	Light brown silty clay		C0001		5
C0146	NNE of C0140		C0148	C0002	5
C0147	Upper		C0001	C0148	5
C0148	Basal		C0147	C0146	5
C0149	Overcut		C0150	C0002	1
C0150			C0001	C0149	1
C0151					
C0152					
C0153					
C0154					
C0155					
C0156	Truncated by modern drain		C0157	C0002	1
C0157	Yellow silty clay with flecks of charcoal		C0001	C0156	1
C0158	W of C0122		C0159	C0002	3
C0159			C0001	C0158	3
C0160	Circular pit		C0161	C0002	2
C0161	Marked grey yellow clay		C0001	C0160	2
C0162	Next to C0072, C0056				2
C0163	Area 2 boarding Area 4				2
C0164	N of C0122		C0165	C0002	3
C0165			C0001	C0164	3
C0166					
C0167					
C0168					
C0169					

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Recut of/ related to	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)	Orientation	Interpretation
C0170									
C0171									
C0172									
C0173									
C0174									
C0175									
C0176									
C0177									
C0178									
C0179									
C0180									
C0601	Topsoil						0.3–0.6		Topsoil/Uncontexted
C0602	Pit cut		C0603	Group 1	1.78	0.45–0.48	0.36	NW–SE	Cut of pit
C0603	Pit fill	C0602		Group 1	1.78	0.45–0.48	0.36	NW–SE	Fill of pit
C0604	Pit cut		C0605	Group 1	1.66	0.53	0.39	NW–SE	Cut of pit
C0605	Pit fill	C0604		Group 1	1.66	0.53	0.39	NW–SE	Fill of pit

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0170					
C0171					
C0172					
C0173					
C0174					
C0175					
C0176					
C0177					
C0178					
C0179					
C0180					
C0601	The area is covered by 3 layers of topsoil. The first is a friable dark organic humic material which has an average depth of 0.30m. Beneath this was a soft yellow clay which was limited to this Area 6. It is 0.05m to 0.10m deep. Finally an orange gravelly sticky clay, 0.2m deep, with decayed stone which sealed the archaeological features.				6
C0602	Sub-rectangular pit, sharp break of slope at the north, gentler to the south; gentle break of slope at the base in the north and south ends but sharper at the west and east sides, which are straight. The northern and southern ends are steeply sloping. 1.28m length at the base,		C0603	C0699	6
C0603	Light brown yellow silty clay, frequent fine, angular pebbles and decayed stone. Occasional flecks of charcoal.		C0601	C0602	6
C0604	Sub-rectangular pit with straight sides and rounded, steeply sloping northern and southern ends. Initially undercut. 1.25m long at the flat base. North of GP 380E, 470N. Sharp break of slope at the top and moderately sharp at the base. 6.04m from CG's cut C0608.		C0605	C0699	6
C0605	Compact, yellow brown silty clay, occasional small stones.	2 pieces, 1 may be slag.	C0601	C0604	6

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Recut of/ related to	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)	Orientation	Interpretation
C0606	Pit cut		C0607	Group 1	1.61	0.48	0.35	NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0607	Pit fill	C0606		Group 1	1.61	0.48	0.35	NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0608	Pit cut		C0609	Group 1	1.6	0.48	0.36	NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0609	Pit fill	C0608		Group 1	1.6	0.48	0.36	NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0610	Pit cut		C0611	Group 1	1.6	0.49		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0611	Pit fill	C0610		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0612	Pit cut		C0613	Group 1	1.7	0.54		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0613	Pit fill	C0612		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0614	Pit cut		C0615	Group 1	1.72	0.5	0.35	NW-SE	Cut of pit

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0606	Sub-rectangular pit, adjacent to Grid peg 350E, 500N. 1.2m long at flat base. 6m east of C0614.		C0607	C0699	6
C0607	Light yellow brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks. Frequent fine pebbles and decayed stone.	1 piece, possible heat affected bone.	C0601	C0606	6
C0608	Sub-rectangular pit, possibly cut later by a drain. Straight sides, with rounded, steeply sloping sides.		C0609	C0699	6
C0609	Light yellow silty clay, this fill was very mottled at the top and was almost abandoned. It may have been recut later. The earlier cut which was in the correct alignment, contained 1 piece of poorly fired medieval pottery with traces of a light yellow lead glaze, similar to that found in C0612. Frequent decayed stone and small sub-angular pebbles.	19E0457:609:1, Medieval pottery.	C0601	C0608	6
C0610	Sub-rectangular pit - need CH notes, dug in testing.		C0611	C0699	6
C0611	need CH notes, dug in testing.	19E0457: 611: 1-7: medieval pottery	C0601	C0610	6
C0612	Sub-rectangular pit - need CH notes, dug in testing, but finished by ROM		C0613	C0699	6
C0613	need CH notes, dug in testing, but finished by ROM	19E0457: 613: 1-7, pottery and iron fragments	C0601	C0612	6
C0614	Sub-rectangular pit - largest thus far but maintains the same depth. 6m west of C0606 which contained heat affected bone and 5m south of C0625 and 340E, 500N. This pit is slightly larger and has a stronger profile, the sides are straight, with a very slight overhang and sharp breaks of slope at the top and base. The northern and southern ends slope more gently than the other pits which have almost uniformly steep gradients. The 1.47m long base slopes slightly from north to south.		C0615	C0699	6

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Recut of/ related to	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)	Orientation	Interpretation
C0615	Pit fill	C0614		Group 1	1.72	0.5	0.35	NW–SE	Fill of pit
C0616	Pit cut		C0617		1.5	0.69	0.3	NE–SW	Cut of sub-oval pit
C0617	Pit fill	C0616			1.5	0.69	0.3	NE–SW	Fill of pit
C0618	Pit cut		C0619	Group 1	1.6	0.5	0.3	NW–SE	Cut of pit
C0619	Pit fill	C0618		Group 1	1.6	0.5	0.3	NW–SE	Fill of pit
C0620	Pit cut		C0621	Group 1	1.6	0.5	0.3	NW–SE	Cut of pit
C0621	Pit fill			Group 1	1.6	0.5	0.3	NW–SE	Fill of pit
C0622	Pit cut		C0623, C0624		1.05	0.56	0.24	W–E	Cut of small pit
C0623	Pit fill	C0622			1.05	0.4	0.15	W–E	Uppermost fill of pit

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0615	Yellowish light brown silty clay, firm but spongy. Frequent small pebbles and infrequent medium pebbles. Very similar to fills of C0606 and C602.	Burnt bone; iron nail.	C0601	C0614	6
C0616	Sub-oval pit with a concave shape in plan. Gradual breaks of slope at top and base, gently sloping at the SW. The sides are a gradual 45 °. The base is concave. May be agricultural and due to the collapse or removal of a tree.		C0617	C0699	6
C0617	Sterile, mixed fill: a) 0.10m of Compact, mottled grey-white, clay with occasional decayed stone; b) 0.10m of Compact, mottled brown-yellow clay with occasional decayed stone and fine pebbles c) 0.20m of Compact white clay.		C0601	C0616	6
C0618	Sub-rectangular pit, 6m south of ROM C0604, and the northern end of this pit is 6m east of the southern end of pit C0601. It has straight sides with a steeply sloping northern end and a more gently sloping southern end - the natural is also sloping to the south. It is on average 0.1m shallower than the other pits.		C0619	C0699	6
C0619	Yellow brown silty clay, easy to trowel.		C0601	C0618	6
C0620	Sub-rectangular pit, 6m west of C602. 6.7m from MW pit to NW. 6m to pit C6XX, NW of this pit. Gentle slope to south, otherwise straight sides with rounded steeply sloping ends.		C0621	C0699	6
C0621	Yellow brown silty clay. Frequent medium pebbles. Easy to trowel - medium compaction.		C0601	C0620	6
C0622	Small pit adjacent to GP 340E, 500N and just over 0.10m south of pit C0625, sub-oval shop similar to a rugby ball with a bowl/ u-shape. Gradual breaks of slope at the top and base. The sides were sloping and irregular. The base was concave and irregular. It was initially thought to interact with C0625 but this was disproven.		C0624	C0699	6
C0623	Firm, yellowish grey brown silty clay; similar to the fill C0626. Occasional small pebbles and occasional medium stones.		C0601	C0624	6

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Recut of/ related to	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)	Orientation	Interpretation
C0624	Pit fill	C0622			1.05	0.56	0.15	W-E	Basal fill of pit
C0625	Pit cut		C0626	Group 1	1.58	0.5	0.38	NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0626	Pit fill	C0625		Group 1	1.58	0.5	0.38	NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0627	Pit cut		C0628	Group 1	1.8	0.5	0.4	NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0628	Pit fill	C0627		Group 1	1.8	0.5	0.4	NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0629	Pit cut		C6030, C6031	Group 1	1.94	0.57	0.4	NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0630	Pit fill	C0629		Group 1	1.94	0.57	0.27	NW-SE	Basal fill of pit
C0631	Pit fill	C0629		Group 1	1.94	0.57	0.13	NW-SE	Uppermost fill of pit
C0632	Pit cut		C0633	Group 1	1.6	0.5	-	NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0633	Pit fill	C0632		Group 1	1.6	0.5	-	NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0634	Pit cut		C0635	Group 1	1.6	0.35		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0635	Pit fill	C0634		Group 1	1.6	0.35		NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0636	Pit cut		C0637	Group 1	1.54	0.43		NW-SE	Cut of pit

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0624	Pure grey clay		C0623	C0622	6
C0625	Sub-rectangular pit, north of C0622. Not fully excavated.		C0626	C0699	6
C0626	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0625	6
C0627	Sub-rectangular pit, slopes gently to south. Straight sides with rounded, steeply sloping ends and a flat base. 6m west of C0601. 6-6.3m north of C0620.		C0628	C0699	6
C0628	Medium compact, yellow brown silty clay. Frequent small and medium stones.		C0601	C0627	6
C0629	Sub-rectangular pit in group 1 but with two fills. Steep, almost vertical sides. Flat base. Sharp break of slope at the top, moderate at the bottom. Rounded, steeply sloping ends. Between 350E, 460-470N.		C0630	C0699	6
C0630	Compact, mid- yellow brown silty clay with moderate occurrence of small stones and decayed stone. Occasional small charcol flecks.	Pottery, wood sample.	C0631	C0629	6
C0631	Smooth, mid grey-brown, silty clay. Compact with very occasional fine pebbles.	Soil sample.	C0601	C0630	6
C0632	Sub-rectangular pit in group 1 , not excavated.		C0633	C0699	6
C0633	Yellow brown silty clay with frequent pebbles.		C0601	C0632	6
C0634	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0635	C0699	6
C0635	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0634	6
C0636	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0637	C0699	6

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Recut of/ related to	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)	Orientation	Interpretation
C0637	Pit fill	C0636		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0638	Pit cut		C0639	Group 1	0.5	0.5		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0639	Pit fill	C0638		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0640	Pit cut		C0641	Group 1	0.3	0.48		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0641	Pit fill	C0640		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0642	Pit cut		C0643	Group 1	1.65	0.51		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0643	Pit fill	C0642		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0644	Pit cut		C0645	Group 1	0.3	0.4		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0645	Pit fill	C0644		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0646	Pit cut		C0647	Group 1	1.6	0.5		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0647	Pit fill	C0646		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0648	Pit cut		C0649	Group 1	1.8	0.47		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0649	Pit fill	C0648		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0650	Pit cut		C0651	Group 1	1.8	0.6	0.3	NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0651	Pit fill	C0650		Group 1	1.8	0.6	0.3	NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0652	Pit cut		C0653	Group 1	1.7	0.48		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0653	Pit fill	C0652		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0654	Pit cut		C0655	Group 1	1.4	0.45		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0655	Pit fill	C0654		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0656	Pit cut		C0657	Group 1	1.5	0.47		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0657	Pit fill	C0656		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0658	Pit cut		C0659	Group 1	1.7	0.47		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0659	Pit fill	C0658		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0660	Pit cut		C0661	Group 1	1.61	0.45		NW-SE	Cut of pit

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0637	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0636	6
C0638	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0639	C0699	6
C0639	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0638	6
C0640	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0641	C0699	6
C0641	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0640	6
C0642	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0643	C0699	6
C0643	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0642	6
C0644	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0645	C0699	6
C0645	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0644	6
C0646	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0647	C0699	6
C0647	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0646	6
C0648	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0649	C0699	6
C0649	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0648	6
C0650	Sub-rectangular pit, straight sides, rounded, steeply sloping ends.		C0651	C0699	6
C0651	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0650	6
C0652	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0653	C0699	6
C0653	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0652	6
C0654	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0655	C0699	6
C0655	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0654	6
C0656	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0657	C0699	6
C0657	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0656	6
C0658	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0659	C0699	6
C0659	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0658	6
C0660	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0661	C0699	6

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Recut of/ related to	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)	Orientation	Interpretation
C0661	Pit fill	C0660		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0662	Pit cut		C0663	Group 1	1.63	0.49		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0663	Pit fill	C0662		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0664	Pit cut		C0665	Group 1	1.6	0.47		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0665	Pit fill	C0664		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0666	Pit cut		C0667	Group 1	1.5	0.43		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0667	Pit fill	C0666		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0668	Pit cut		C0669	Group 1	1.5	0.4		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0669	Pit fill	C0668		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0670	Pit cut		C0671	Group 1	1.7	0.45		NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0671	Pit fill	C0670		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0672	Pit cut		C0672	Group 1	1.69	0.53	0.21	NW-SE	Cut of pit
C0673	Pit fill	C0671		Group 1				NW-SE	Fill of pit
C0674	Pit cut		C0675		1.7	1.13			Cut of pit with scorched clay
C0675	Pit fill	C0684							Fill of scorched pit
C0676	Ditch cut		C0677						Cut of medieval ditch
C0677	Ditch fill	C0676							Fill of medieval ditch
C0678	Ditch fill	C0677							Fill of medieval ditch
C0679	Ditch fill	C0678							Fill of medieval ditch
C0680	Pit fill	C0674							Fill of scorched pit
C0681	Pit fill	C0674							Fill of scorched pit
C0682	Pit fill	C0674							Fill of scorched pit
C0683	Pit fill	C0674							Fill of scorched pit

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0661	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0660	6
C0662	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0663	C0699	6
C0663	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0662	6
C0664	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0665	C0699	6
C0665	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0664	6
C0666	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0667	C0699	6
C0667	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0666	6
C0668	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0669	C0699	6
C0669	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0668	6
C0670	Sub-rectangular pit, not excavated.		C0671	C0699	6
C0671	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0670	6
C0672	Sub-rectangular pit, south of C0648		C0673	C0699	6
C0673	Yellow brown silty clay.		C0601	C0672	6
C0674	Sub-oval pit with scorched clay and burnt bone.			C0699	6
C0675	Upper fill, light brown crumbly clay.		C0601	C0680	6
C0676	Cut of medieval ditch at northern limit of area 6.				6
C0677	Fill of C676 u				6
C0678	Fill of C676 m				6
C0679	Fill of C676 l				6
C0680	Crumbly dark brown clay with burnt bone.		C0684	C0681	6
C0681	Band of charcoal and burnt bone.		C0680	C0682	6
C0682	Bright yellow silty clay.		C0681	C0683	6
C0683	Scorched/heat affected clay, possibly cleaned out on SW side		C0682	C0674	6

Context	Type	Fill of	Filled by	Recut of/ related to	L. (m)	W. (m)	D. (m)	Orientation	Interpretation
C0684	Pit cut		C0675						Recut of scorched pit
C0699	Subsoil			C0601					Subsoil

Context	Description	Finds/ Ecofacts	Context above current	Context below current	Area
C0684	Recut of scorched pit with light brown crumbly clay		C0675	C0680	6
C0699	The subsoil is a brown-grey clay with frequent decayed stone. It drains poorly and is cut repeatedly by a series of stone lined drains.		C0601	N/A	6