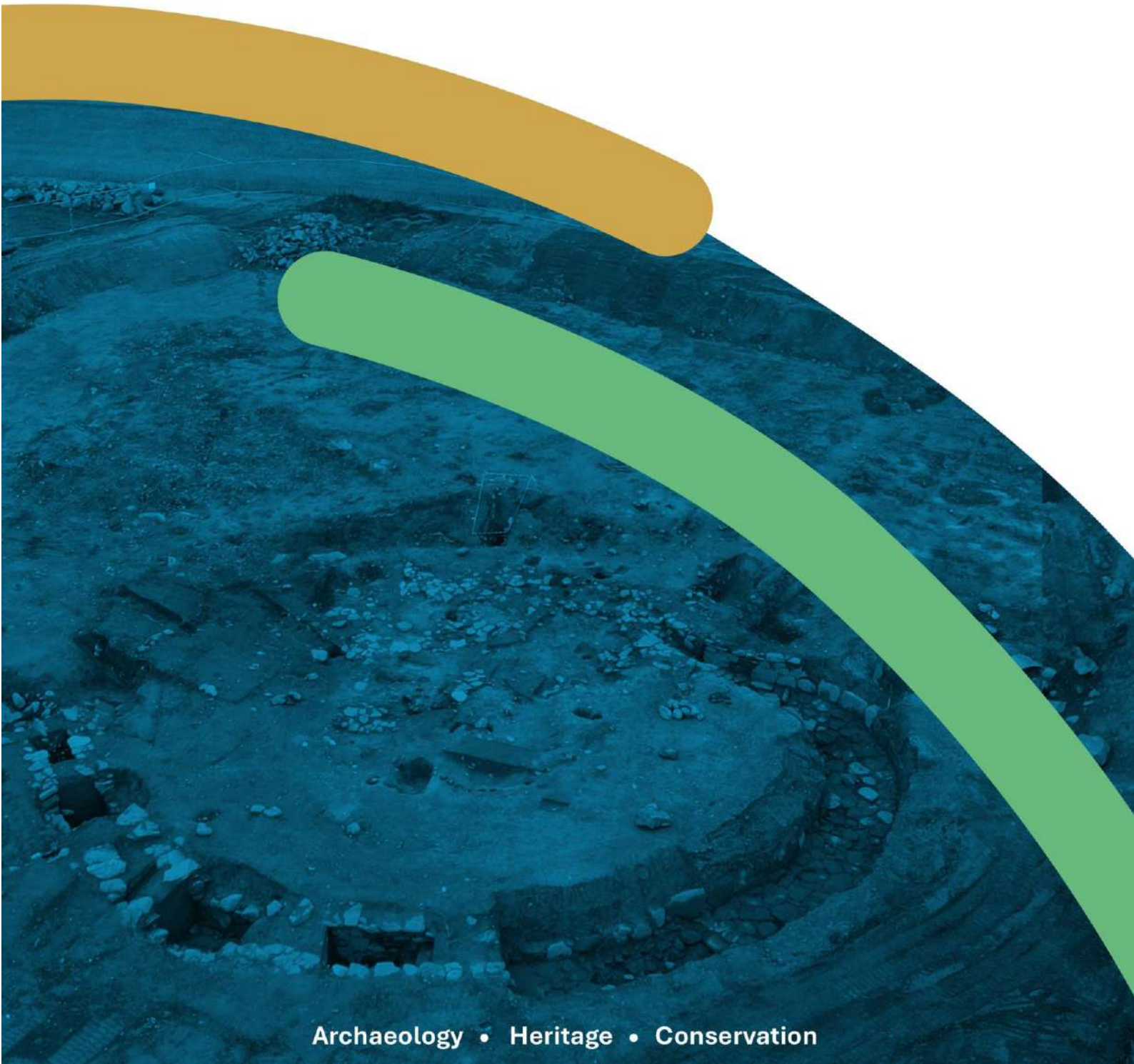
STROANFREGGAN FORT AND SMITTONS BRIDGE CAIRN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

FINAL REPORT

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Archaeology • Heritage • Conservation

On Behalf of: *Carsphairn Heritage Initiative*

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Author: *Cathy MacIver & Cullen Cockburn*

Illustration by: *Mark Hoyle*

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Non-Technical Summary

As part of the Stroanfreggan Project, a programme of survey and targeted archaeological excavation was carried out at Stroanfreggan Craig hillfort and Smitton's Bridge cairn near Carsphairn, Dumfries and Galloway (NGR NX 63702, 92066 and NGR NX 63402, 91892). Four trenches were excavated at the fort site, which revealed a large summit enclosure rampart, an annexe enclosure rampart and remains of shallow occupation deposits within both enclosures. The summit enclosure rampart was confirmed to be vitrified in at least two locations, indicating a likely timber laced component and destruction in a conflagration. Excavations confirmed all structures on the hill had undergone significant robbing in more recent centuries which had reduced the height of the wall collapse significantly in some parts of the site. Dating material derived from the old ground surface and the base of the wall core material indicates that the rampart was constructed in the Early Iron Age. Charred animal bone, cereal grains and wood charcoal from the occupation deposits inside the fort indicate occupation in the Early Iron Age which had likely ceased by the last century BC. A later annexe enclosure contained occupation deposits indicating it was used in the medieval period, likely relating to livestock management on a hill farm. Several lithics reincorporated into occupation material could indicate the hilltop was also used in earlier prehistory, pre-dating the fort construction. One trench was excavated at the cairn which confirmed the cairn was defined by a substantial kerb, had an internal ring and a central space. Although truncated by a more recent road several phases of cairn activity were identified surviving, dating of material in the basal deposits indicate construction in the Early Bronze Age.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Carsphairn Heritage Initiative for facilitating access and logistics on site and their ongoing partnership on the project. Richard Barbour the landowner and George Barbour the farmer for being so accommodating about the works undertaken. We would also like to thank staff at Dalry Secondary and Wallace High as well as the Bairn Banter group for facilitating visits and work placements on the excavations for local school pupils and young people. AOC would also like to thank all the volunteers for their effort and commitment during the evaluation, it was a real pleasure to work alongside them for four weeks. Thanks to colleagues at Historic Environment Scotland in particular Rob MacLean in the Grants team, Lisa Brown and Craig Stanford in the Archaeology team and Tom Gardner in the Designations team for their ongoing support of the project and visits to site. Thanks to Jo Jackson and Peter Renwick at the Catstrand for their support with volunteer bookings and facilitating access to the local venue for the talks. David Bartholomew and John Wykes undertook metal detecting of the spoil on behalf of the project team. The Stroanfreggan project was funded by Historic Environment Scotland and the Carsphairn Renewable Energy Fund Ltd and received in-kind donations from Carsphairn Heritage Initiative and AOC Archaeology.



Plate 1: Smitton's Bridge cairn with Stroanfreggan Craig behind

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 As part of the Stroanfreggan Project, a programme of survey and targeted excavation was undertaken at Stroanfreggan Craig fort (SM 1095; MDG3966) and Smitton's Bridge cairn (MDG3937) near Carsphairn, Dumfries and Galloway (Figure 1). The site is located within an upland area of rough pasture (Plate 1).

1.1.2 In September to October 2025 AOC Archaeology carried out an evaluation of five trenches working alongside a group of volunteers over four weeks to characterise and record the two sites.

1.1.3 After excavation was complete a programme of post-excavation work was undertaken which is summarised at the end of this report.

1.2 Location

1.2.1 The sites are located at the base of the Lorg Glen, the base of the glen is located at a height of approximately 193 m above sea level, with the uppermost point of the craig sitting at a height of 218 m in elevation (Fort NGR NX 63702 92066; Cairn NX 63402, 91892).

1.2.2 The ridge of Stroanfreggan Craig is formed of Portpatrick Formation Wacke sedimentary bedrock and is part of a narrow ridge of south-west to north-east outcropping bedrock (BGS Geology Viewer, 2025) which measures approximately 1.37 km in length. It is surrounded by superficial deposits of glacial till and silts, sand and gravels. The undulating topography is covered by long grassy tussocks which is presently used for rough grazing. The Water of Ken lies to the immediate west of the Craig and flows in a south-westerly direction until it reaches Loch Ken where it widens. Both sides of the Glen are covered in forestry plantation and rise to an approximate height of 350 m on the west side and 270 m on the eastern side. Cairnsmore of Carsphairn and Beninner Hills are located to the north-west of the site and sit at 710 m and 797 m respectively.

1.2.3 Stroanfreggan Fort occupies the most prominent point of Stroanfreggan Craig towards the lower southwest summit at the end of the ridge, with the main enclosure occupying the actual summit (NGR: NX 63700 92064; Figure 1) which sits at a height of 218 m. The ridge drops precipitously away on the south-east side. The site is a scheduled monument (SM 1095).

1.2.4 Smitton's Bridge cairn sits at the foot of the hill on a low rise set in relatively flat ground within a meander of the Water of Ken. Although a bank has been constructed to minimise flooding in this stretch of the river it is likely that this area once formed part of the floodplain for the Water of Ken prior to more recent improvements.

Archaeological and Historical Background

1.2.5 The area surrounding the site is rich in multi-period sites, no doubt influenced by the Water of Ken which formed a natural route through the landscape and relatively fertile soils and quality upland grazing in some parts of the surrounding glen.

1.2.6 Numerous prehistoric sites are within close proximity to Stroanfreggan Craig and include lithic scatters, burial monuments and a burnt mound structure. The lithic scatter find spots have mostly been found adjacent to the River Ken at Craig Pool (MDG3932) where Mesolithic and later prehistoric lithic flint and chert material was recovered, Long Knowe (MDG3957) and Water of Ken (MDG3956; MDG3934). Most of these have been accidental finds eroding from the banks of the river or the action of soil erosion/burrowing animals such as moles bringing artefacts to the surface, an example being those lithics found at Smitton's Bridge and at Black Burn located 1 km to the north of the site (MDG3958; MDG3959).

1.2.7 Several prehistoric burials are also known suggesting that the area was not only attractive for its resources to early groups living within the area but also became a focus for burial during the Neolithic/Bronze Age periods. These monuments include Stroanfreggan Cairn Scheduled Monument (MDG3960/SM1043) located approximately 650 m to the south-east, where in 1910 a cist containing lithics and a thin bronze fragment was found and Round Craigs Cairn (MDG3944) located approximately 1.5 km to the north-east which is thought to be a kerbed cairn structure. A possible ring cairn is located at Marscalloch Hill (MDG3936) c.1.5km to the north-west. The closest funerary monument to Stroanfreggan Craig Fort is Smitton's Bridge Kerb Cairn which lies approximately 250 m to the south-west amidst the numerous flint scatters. Bones and a sword are recorded to have been removed from the structure in the nineteenth century although their present location is unknown. Typically, these types of cairns date to the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods, but only excavation can establish whether it is indeed a kerb cairn and refine the chronology of the site. Other remnants of stone cairns lie to the north-east of Stroanfreggan Craig but it is unclear if these are burial cairns or clearance cairns (e.g. MDG3938).

1.2.8 Further afield prehistoric activity within the area includes Round Craigs Burnt Mound(s) (MDG9616; MDG3945) located adjacent to Little Auchrae Burn 1.5 km to the north-east of the Fort. These structures are typically dated to the mid to late Bronze Age periods and their function has been fervently debated over the years and includes being used for cooking, industrial processing or as a sauna. Recent research in Ireland has suggested that they might have also been used for textile processing (Brown et al 2016). However, within Galloway there have been several burnt mounds dated to the twelfth/thirteenth centuries AD.

1.2.9 Later prehistoric settlement activity in the region includes the prehistoric forts of Carminnows (MDG3969) and Tynron Doon (MDG5759; SM663) and traces of a possible scooped settlement lie to the east of Stroanfreggan Craig (MDG3942). The possible settlement noted on the north-facing slopes of the Craig are more recently recorded as a

number of amorphous enclosures with linear and circular clearance cairns set between granite outcrops, however the scooped features appear to be natural depressions utilised as small fields or quarries (RCAHMS 1978).

1.2.10 Carminnows Fort (MDG3969) is located just 3.5 km to the south-west of Stroanfreggan Craig on the western banks of the Kendoon Reservoir. This promontory fort was first recorded by Coles in 1892 as having triple ramparts with outer ditches at its northern side, with vertical cliffs at its south-west and south-eastern sides, enclosing 0.24 ha. The creation of this reservoir in the 1930s resulted in significant damage to this fort with little now surviving. Excavations in 1935 through the ramparts revealed that the innermost rampart measured at most 2.4 m thick and 0.9 m high (Childe 1936). Childe dug at least five trenches, mainly concentrating on the defenses, but also attempting to identify structures in the interior. Unfortunately, the excavation recovered only animal bone and flint but no dateable evidence and his report does not provide an overall plan. Given the concentric curvilinear layout of the multivallate defenses that once defined Carminnows Fort, it was likely occupied during the Iron Age but nothing more precise can be determined.

1.2.11 A further fort with likely later prehistoric origins and later potential early medieval and medieval phases is located c. 20km to the east of Stroanfreggan at Tynron Doon (Williams 1971). The prehistoric fort is multivallate with two main ramparts and three substantial ditches enclosing the summit of the southern end of a spur of Auchengibbert Hill. Occupation waste on the south-western slope included elements of vitrification and iron working as well as three fragments of a portion of a gold filigree panel of a bracteate-pendant likely dating to between the 6th-8th centuries AD indicating another phase of use in the early medieval period. Later phases include a 16th century tower house.

1.2.12 Early medieval activity in the region of Stroanfreggan Craig may be present in the form of two large stones purported to be decorated with religious iconography recovered from a rivulet at the Image Pool located 0.7 km to the south-east of Stroanfreggan Craig Fort (MDG3967). These were then used as lintel stones at Stroanfreggan Farm prior to being subsequently removed to Hastings Hall in Moniaive, and Manquhil. The Hastings Hall stone was identified in the early nineteenth century as part of a shaft of an early Christian Cross (Corrie 1912); the stone at Manquhil has not been found.

1.2.13 Early medieval crosses with figurative/animal panels are known from mid-Nithsdale and the Cairn Valley, and could represent a cluster of Anglian minster churches from the 8th and 9th centuries, these include those from Closeburn, Kirkland of Glencairn and Thornhill. To the west of the Ken Valley is a potential pilgrim route which was documented in the Medieval period and where earlier crosses are also known, for example those at Daltallochan and Braidenoch Hill and the Auchenshinnoch cross slab (MDG3922) which bears a later inscription from the 18th century.

1.2.14 A mid-8th-9th century fragment of a silver Arabic dirham was identified by detectorist David Bartholomew at Chapelyard near Mackilston in 2021 (pers comm). The Blaeu map from 1654 marks a place just north of Chapelyard called Pilgrymleyis, now Leys which further

indicates that this area was used as a pilgrim route in the later part of the early medieval period if not before. Likely reusing a natural route through the area from earlier periods.

1.2.15 Also recorded within the surrounding land are numerous structures associated with past agricultural activity. These include relic field boundaries, livestock enclosures, and traces of rig cultivation. Scattered throughout the Lorg Glen are numerous field systems at Image Pool (MDG15837) and at Stroanpatrick (MDG15860) located approximately 880 m to the east, sheepfolds at Low Door of the Craig (MDG25736) at the southern side base of Stroanfreggan Craig and numerous field clearance cairns at Blackmark Plantation (MDG4816) approximately 1 km to the south-east. Just 1.8 km to the north of Stroanfreggan Craig Fort is the deserted settlement of Scalloch/Little Auchrae (MDG11404). This ferm-toun comprises the remains of two unroofed buildings and four enclosures with a large field system around its periphery.

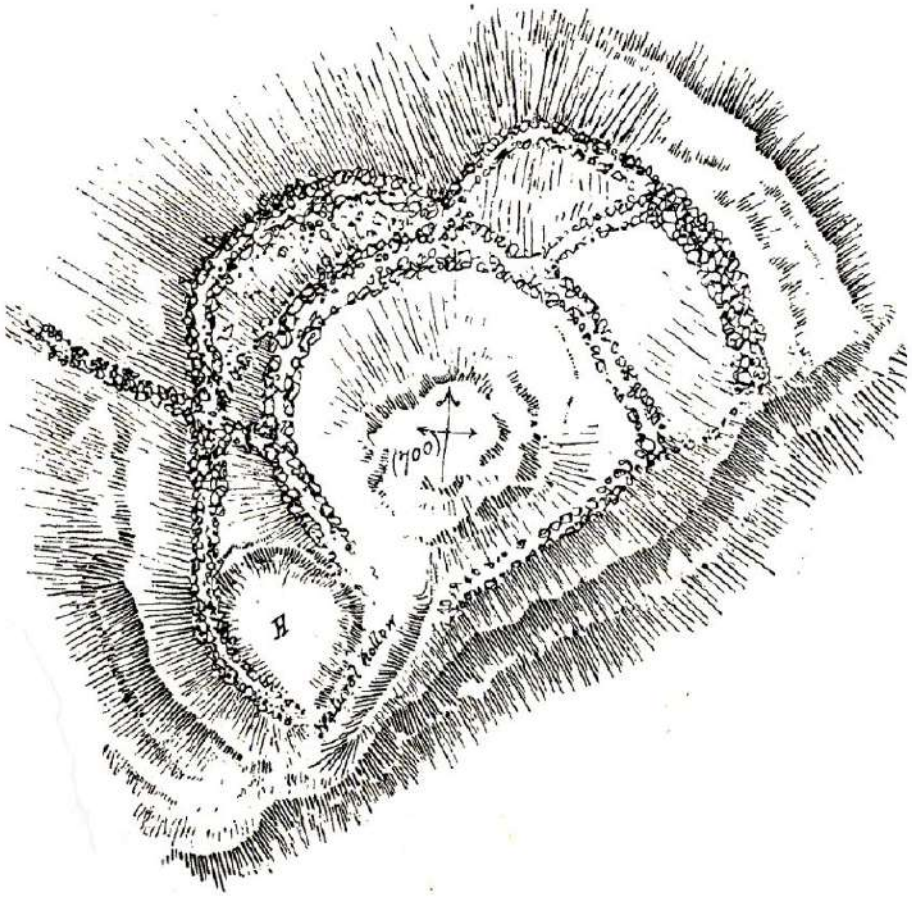
The fort

1.2.16 The only previous survey plan of Stroanfreggan Craig Fort was a measured sketch prepared in the late nineteenth century (Coles 1892; Extract 1). The hillfort was depicted as defined by a faced stone rampart enclosing the natural summit of the craig, supplemented by the remains of four non-concentric outer enclosures, on the north-east, north, north-west, west and south-west flanks of the summit. All of the ramparts had apparently been robbed or collapsed and spread across the slopes, leaving only the base or foundations.

1.2.17 Despite the fort being interpreted as prehistoric, namely Iron Age (for example on the signpost up to the footpath up the craig), there has been some more recent debate as to the chronological origins of the site. Some have noted it could be closely comparable with emerging results from early medieval forts in Galloway (Truckell 1963, 95; Feachem 1977, 129-131). The layout of the fort – a fortified summit with a series of lesser enclosures looping out along lower-lying terraces and crags - is at least superficially similar to that of a 'nucleated fort'. This is a type of hillfort largely unique to Scotland between circa AD 600 to AD 900 (Toolis & Bowles 2017, 111; Toolis 2021, 261-262), which is where the theory that it could have an early medieval phase has originated. Additionally, Stroanfreggan Fort lies on the northern margins of a cluster of twelve early medieval forts in the Stewartry district of Galloway, which have been identified as potentially forming the core of the early medieval kingdom of Rheged (Toolis & Bowles 2017, 142). This cluster includes the early medieval royal stronghold of Trusty's Hill and a fortified high-status workshop at the Mote of Mark (Toolis & Bowles 2017; Laing & Longley 2006). While most of these forts are unexcavated, excavations of nucleated forts in other parts of Scotland have revealed many of these including Dundurn, Dunadd, Kings Seat, Clatchard Craig and Mither Tap (among others) to be high status settlements of the early medieval period (Alcock et al 1989; Lane & Campbell 2000; Strachan et al 2025; Close-Brooks 1986; Noble et al 2022). Other recent work has indicated some forts previously thought to be prehistoric in nature have originated in the Iron Age but also have

phases that date from the early centuries AD right through to the early medieval period c. 7th century AD e.g. Tap O' Noth and East Lomond (Noble and Evans 2022; Noble et al forthcoming).

1.2.18 Therefore, because Stroanfreggan Craig Fort aligns superficially with the appearance of some other nearby nucleated hillfort its appearance has drawn explicit comparisons to those other hillforts in the 'Trusty's Hill group' (Feachem 1977, 131; Coles 1892, 166), potentially indicating an early medieval date for the construction of the fort. However, despite assertations that the fort is entirely from the early medieval period (Truckell 1963, 95), many of those aforementioned 'Trusty's Hill group' forts have origins reaching back into the Iron Age, rather than being from the early medieval period in their entirety. This includes Trusty's Hill itself and Tynron Doon (Toolis & Bowles 2017; William 1971). It is instructive to consider Moredun Top on Moncreiffe Hill in Perthshire which gave rise to similar debates around the date of its construction, with some theories that it was an Iron Age hillfort while others believed it to be of early medieval origin owing to its nucleated layout. Upon excavation, however, the date of construction and use was confirmed as unequivocally Iron Age, between the mid-4th and mid-1st centuries BC (Strachan 2024, 21-42) with no evidence for later reuse. Additionally, Stroanfreggan Craig Fort has not been the subject of any modern survey investigations, and Cole's sketch plan (Extract 1), while a useful starting point, cannot be taken to be entirely accurate. It is possible that some of the external subdivisions between ramparts forming the lower terraces are nothing but tumbled stones and relict edges of substantially robbed areas creating a misleading pattern on the slopes of the crag.



Extract 1: Coles sketch plan of Stroanfreggan Craig fort (1892)

2 Objectives

2.1.1 A programme of excavation to characterise archaeological activity at the fort and the cairn was designed to enhance the understanding of the sites. Five trenches were proposed to investigate different elements of the sites, to characterise, record and date any buried remains as well as assessing survival of the archaeological features on both the cairn and the fort. A team of five professional archaeologists led a group of volunteers to undertake the work.

2.1.2 Trench 1 was excavated to investigate the summit enclosure rampart on the north-east side of the hill with a small part of the trench extending into the interior up the steep slope towards the summit terrace.

2.1.3 Trench 2 was excavated to investigate the summit enclosure rampart on the south-west side of the hill with a small part of the trench extending into the interior over a possible platform cut into the hillside.

2.1.4 Trench 3 was excavated to investigate the annexe enclosure rampart on the north-east of the hill. Half the trench covered the interior of the annexe enclosure with the aim of characterising any activity taking place within this smaller subsidiary enclosure.

2.1.5 Trench 4 was excavated to investigate an area of potentially waterlogged ground at the top of a natural gully which bisects the interior of the summit enclosure. The gully is on the flatter ground below the summit of the hill, and it is evident from rush and reed vegetation that the ground here remains waterlogged at least part of the year. The focus of the investigation was to identify any evidence for augmentation or construction of a rock cut cistern to retain water, assess survival of organic material in the base of the feature and understand any factors such as climate change which could negatively impact these deposits in the future.

2.1.6 Trench 5 was excavated to investigate the cairn at the base of the hill, particularly focusing on characterising the feature, assessing survival of internal deposits and recording the structure.

2.1.7 There are four main objectives for this project:

1. To enhance our knowledge and understanding of Stroanfreggan Craig Fort and its surrounding sites, with particular reference to:

* the chronology of the sites

* the material culture of the sites

* their relationship to nearby sites

* their relationship to other sites in Scotland and beyond

* the significance of the sites within a local, regional, national and supranational context

2. Engage the local community, volunteers and Young Archaeologists Clubs in helping to investigate the site, providing the opportunity to develop new skills and experience in archaeological fieldwork;

3. Apply high quality techniques to the recovery of archaeological evidence (excavation) and the analyses of that evidence (post-excavation) to maximise the information we retrieve, collaborating with an array of specialists from different sectors;

4. Produce and disseminate accurate and detailed records to enable the wider public to learn about the site and its context in the history of Dumfries and Galloway, enhancing the relevant historic environment records, an interim data structure report and publications.

2.1.8 These objectives accord with all five aims of Scotland's Archaeology Strategy (HES 2016, 15-23) and accord with Scheduled Monument Policies SMP1: when undertaking works to scheduled monuments, their significance should be maintained and SMP2: conservation and research works should always be aimed at the lowest level of intervention that is consistent with achieving a monument's preservation.

2.1.9 Further information on the design of the project is available in the revised Project Design (AOC 2025).

3 Methodology

3.1 Archaeological Evaluation\Excavation

3.1.1 Trench positions were outlined in a project design agreed with Historic Environment Scotland to target different components of the fort, with one trench on the cairn. Trenches were set out using Trimble GPS according to the project design.

3.1.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in the project design which was initially produced for the client by GUARD and then updated and agreed with HES (AOC, 2024) and the CIfA Standard for archaeological excavation (CIfA, 2023).

3.1.3 Trenches were excavated by hand with each trench deturfed using hand tools. Topsoil and overburden deposits were then removed by hand to reveal relatively shallow archaeological deposits. All archaeological deposits were excavated by hand. Structural features such as the summit enclosure rampart and annexe rampart were investigated with a 0.5m wide slot through them. Bedrock was encountered relatively close to the surface in most trenches. The cairn material was removed in a narrow 0.75m slot to reveal and understand the underlying deposits relating to the construction of the cairn and potentially any earlier activity.

3.1.4 A series of 13 hand auger positions were attempted prior to the excavation of Trench 4 as per the revised project design (AOC 2025), however very stony soil and shallow bedrock meant that no significant deposits were identified in these.

3.1.5 Trenches and any related archaeological features were recorded by digital photograph, DGPS, drone photography as well as written descriptions of any contexts. Measured

section drawings were undertaken of any significant archaeological deposits, and hand plans where deemed necessary to complement the GPS recording.

3.1.6 The position of small finds and artefacts were recorded using DGPS.

3.1.7 Bulk soil samples were retrieved where significant archaeological features or deposits were identified, with a minimum of 20L being retained from each significant deposit.

3.1.8 Reinstatement followed the reinstatement plan outlined in the revised project design (AOC 2025) to ensure the monument was left in a stable condition.

3.1.9 A programme of post-excavation work was then undertaken to fulfil the Post-Exavation Research Design (PERD) which was agreed with HES. The results of this post-excavation work are summarised in section 5.



Plate 2: Overview of fort trenches

4 Results

4.1 Archaeological Excavation

4.1.1 The archaeological excavation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group and a group of local volunteers on behalf of Carsphairn Heritage Initiative. The excavation was undertaken between Tuesday 23rd September and Friday 17th October 2025 with weather conditions being generally dry for the first week until a very sustained period of heavy rain and high winds in the second week impacting excavation and resulting in trench flooding. The remaining two weeks the weather was more settled with occasional rain. There was no substantive rain in the 2-3 months preceding the excavation, leading to the potentially waterlogged trench being unusually dry in its upper layers, making it all the more significant that the lowest deposits likely remained wet even through this drier weather

indicating potential for year-round waterlogged deposits at the base. Archaeological visibility was generally good, except for the wet period in the middle of the dig and the lowest deposits of Trench 4 and 5 which were below the water table and repeatedly flooded, at times compromising archaeological visibility and progress.

4.1.2 One of the key social value aims of the project was to engage the local community and people from further afield by providing skills-training opportunities for volunteers to participate in the excavation, and to deliver workshops to the local schools and youth groups. The project ran for twenty days from Tuesday to Saturday for a period of 4 weeks. A total of 43 individual volunteers participated on the excavation, contributing over 150 person days to the project. The entire secondary school roll of 11 learners from Dalry Secondary visited the site and undertook archaeology and finds workshops on site. A group of 18 participants from Carsphairn Bairn Banter youth group visited the site and participated in archaeology, excavation and a finds session. Therefore, the project involved a total of 72 participants of all ages. Five of these participants were young people aged 16-17 looking for work experience or experience on an excavation prior to applying to university or seeking further work. One of these placements attended site 3 days each week throughout the project as part of a formal WorkSite Placement.

4.1.3 The site advertised three open days, one of which was cancelled in light of severe weather, and informal tours were undertaken throughout the project. A conservative total of c. 49 individual visitors to the site was recorded who engaged with site staff with additional visitors indicated out of site hours and not including casual passersby or repeat visitors.

4.1.4 In total five individual trenches were opened with archaeological features identified and investigated (Figure 2).

4.1.5 Four trenches were located up on the hill of Stroanfreggan Craig (Figure 3; Plate 2), placed to investigate the hillfort. A fifth trench was located at the base of the hill in a meander of the Water of Ken, placed to investigate Smitton's Bridge cairn (Figure 4).



Plate 3: Trench 1 general overview



Plate 4: Plan view of Trench 1

4.2 Trench 1

4.2.1 Trench 1 was positioned over the summit enclosure rampart on the eastern edge of the hill (Figure 5; Plates 3-4). It was aligned north-east to south-west and measured c.3m by 7m. Prior to excavation bedrock was visible outcropping at the top of slope at the south-west end of the trench. The upper stony deposits of the collapsed summit rampart were visible in a band of extant moss and lichen covered rubble stones aligned north-west to south-east across the trench. The remainder of the trench was characterised by sloping undulating ground covered in close cropped grass.

4.2.2 Bedrock (100) was identified directly below the turf and thin 0.07m thick topsoil (101) at the southern corner of Trench 1. The topsoil comprised a firm dark greyish brown sandy silt with frequent roots and was thicker up to 0.15m across other parts of the trench it contained several small fragments of vitrified stone (SF 101) and large fragments were noted lying directly on the surface above the rampart footprint. Overlying the undulating bedrock in some places was a loose reddish brown fine silty sand which could represent patches of natural subsoil (100) formation occurring prior to the use of the hilltop for a fort. At the north-east end of the trench a 0.27m thick deposit of reddish brown silty sand (107) containing flecks of burnt bone (SF 104) and a fragment of vitrified material (SF107) was present extending 1.4m across the bedrock (Plate 8). Birch and hazel charcoal from this deposit represented reworked fuel debris. This could represent traces of occupation material reworked into a deposit overlying bedrock and natural subsoil along the edge of the outer face during or after construction of the rampart. Birch charcoal from this deposit was dated to *cal BC 761-480* placing it in the Early Iron Age.

4.2.3 The summit enclosure rampart was evident aligned north-west to south-east across the middle of the trench (Plate 5) and was situated either directly on bedrock or a thin deposit of brown silty sand (112) with frequent small angular stones, occasional burnt bone

fragments and flecks of alder and birch charcoal fuel debris as well as a charred barley caryopsis. This was interpreted as remains of an old ground surface disturbed by human activity, possibly related to early use of the hilltop or occupation related to construction of the rampart itself (112). In the middle of the footprint of the rampart this deposit was sealed under a patchy layer of small flat stones (113) which covered an area of 0.5m by 1.15m within the excavated slot (Plate 9). They likely represented the base of the rampart. The stones were small and measured c. 0.3m by 0.13m by 0.04m. Their scale made it apparent that they would not have been required from an engineering perspective to stabilise or form base for the rampart but their inclusion appears deliberate as these shapes of stones are not found naturally on the hill. They potentially could have been related to marking out the footprint of the structure or perhaps used as the base pads of a now degraded timber component of the structure.

4.2.4 A deposit of loose brownish black silty sand (111) with frequent birch, hazel and hazel roundwood charcoal fuel debris, occasional small angular stones and rare burnt bone fragments extended across the base of the interior rampart footprint. It was contained by a substantial stone boulder face on both the exterior [106] (Plate 7) and interior [105] (Plate 6) and lay directly under a loose stony core (104). Hazel charcoal from this layer was dated to *cal BC 749-407*. Combined with the date for the ground surface (107) which is adjacent to the wall this indicates an Early Iron Age TPQ for the construction of the rampart. The outer face [106] comprised a ragged line of large angular boulders which measured between 0.6m by 0.3m by 0.3m up to 0.7m by 0.7m by 0.4m. Together they formed the remains of a collapsed kerb of boulders surviving to one course high. Four meters to the south-west a parallel line of medium to larger boulders formed an inner face [105]. The stones in this face measured between 0.2m by 0.3m by 0.2m up to 0.8m by 0.23m by 0.4m and were slightly more coherently arranged than the outer face which had buckled slightly and twisted out of position down the slope. The stone faces of the rampart contained a 0.8m thick core of loose voided rubble (104). This ranged from infrequent small angular stones to frequent medium and large angular stones. The core contained many voids indicating it had been deposited relatively rapidly without a turf or earth core at this level. The core included both fragments of vitrified and heat shattered material (SF 108), some of the vitrified stone from the core in this location was exceptionally deformed. In the west part of the excavated rampart there was a notable concentration of smaller porous/lightweight heat cracked and fissured stones which could indicate proximity to a timber setting which has burnt completely whereas elsewhere in the core there were larger boulders or more mixed material (Figure 6; Plate 10). The width of the rampart was 4m from face to face, indicating it could once have been at least 2-3m high. It survives to a maximum height of 0.9m where the top of the core extended in height slightly above the top of the surviving faces, indicating it was once much higher.

4.2.5 Based on the vitrification evident in both the core and the collapsed material this could indicate that the rampart had some form of timber component. If this was burnt down it would have caused significant collapse as the core and facing stones melted and

shattered. It is likely that the features of the fort have also been very substantially robbed, with the stone reused in the various enclosures, boundary banks and sheep fanks evident across the surrounding hillsides.

4.2.6 On the interior of the summit enclosure rampart a 0.1m thick deposit of dark blackish brown silty sand (110) and (108) with very occasional hazel, alder and oak charcoal fuel debris and burnt bone inclusions was present directly overlying the bedrock indicating early occupation activity in this part of the site. The lower horizon of this deposit (110) contained small pockets of slightly better preserved alder, birch and apple-type charcoal fuel debris where as the upper deposit (108) contained fire-cracked sandstone (SF 102) and a worked fragment of flint (SF 106). Burnt animal bone from the occupation layer (110) was dated to *cal BC 719-401* indicating Early Iron Age occupation within the fort after the rampart was constructed. Overlying this was a small cluster of collapsed angular stone (109) from the rampart and a larger spread of collapsed material (103) extending about 1.5m out from the face. The collapsed stone was a mix of larger angular fragments which measured 0.4m by 0.3m and some smaller angular stone which represented spilled out core material. It included fragments of severely heat affected rock and vitrified material (SF 103) with bubbled, melted and blackened faces. The voided nature of this material indicated an abrupt deposition. A similar deposit of stone (102) was present extending out from the outer face c. 1m and also contained large fragments of vitrified material (SF 105) with melted, bubbly and glassified faces and smaller fragments with surface level distortion and fissures.

4.2.7 During excavation at the outer face it was noted that at the edge of the rampart collapse material some larger stones had been placed or moved to be set relatively upright along the edge of a natural cut in the bedrock, aligned east-west and abutting the outer face [106]. This confirmed that the sub-rectangular spread of stone visible to the north-east in the annexe enclosure was a later feature than the summit enclosure. Only a small section of this structure was within Trench 1 but ground observations of the structure indicate it is defined by larger angular stones placed in a line or kerb. The interior is covered or filled with a deposit of large to medium stones arranged in no particular order. It is possible this relates to a later sub-rectangular enclosure defined by a low wall of large stones, potentially related to stock control or lambing. It reuses the collapsed summit rampart indicating it likely post-dates the use of the summit enclosure by some margin and could be tentatively linked to post-medieval sheep farming on the hill.



Plate 5: General view of surviving level of summit rampart in Trench 1



Plate 6: Inner face of rampart [105] and deposit (108), facing NE



Plate 7: Outer face of rampart [106], facing SW



Plate 8: Kerb of outer face of rampart on subsoil (107), facing SE



Plate 9: Plan view of flat stones [113] at base of rampart



Plate 10: NE facing section of slot through summit enclosure rampart, with vitrified heat shattered core (104)

4.3 Trench 2

4.3.1 Trench 2 was positioned over the summit enclosure rampart on the south-western edge of the hill (Figure 7; Plates 11-12). It was aligned north-east to south-west and measured c. 3.5m by 3m with a 1m wide slot extending c.4m to the south-west across the rampart. The remainder of the trench was not opened. Prior to excavation bedrock was visible outcropping at the top of slope just to the north-east of the trench. The upper stony

deposits of the collapsed summit rampart were visible in a band of extant moss and lichen covered rubble stones aligned north-west to south-east across the trench. A more coherent narrower straight line of larger upright stones was visible overlying this forming a later field boundary. The north-east end of the trench was extended across a relatively flat terrace cut into the bedrock slope forming a possible platform covered in close cropped grass.

4.3.2 Bedrock (200) was identified across the base of the slot excavated along the north-west edge of the trench. It formed a gently sloping terrace at the top northern-most end of the trench and started to slope steeply downhill at the south-west. Overlying this at the top of slope in the northern corner of the trench was a sterile deposit of reddish brown sandy silty with very frequent angular stones (204) likely subsoil weathered off parent bedrock material.

4.3.3 Directly overlying the bedrock across the footprint of the summit rampart was a 0.15m thick layer of loose dark blackish brown clayey silt (209) with charcoal flecks and frequent small fragments of burnt bone. This could represent a deposit at base of the structure, the presence of the burnt bone fragments could indicate it is redeposited occupation material from elsewhere on the fort. This deposit was bounded by a collapsed outer kerb [206] of large boulders which measured 0.4m by 0.3m by 0.2m up to 0.7m by 0.6m by 0.3m (Plate 13). And bounded on the north-east by an almost completely removed or collapsed inner kerb [207] of angular stones which measured up to 0.26m by 0.16m by 0.29m. Within these overlying (209) was a 0.3m thick stony deposit (208) of remnant core comprising a mix of small to medium angular stones with a concentration of voided smaller angular core (Plate 14) surviving directly behind the outer face [206]. The stones varied in size between 0.2m by 0.15m up to 0.3m by 0.24m. The summit enclosure rampart measured 4.1m from face to face in this part of the site and survived to one course high at most with several parts of the face totally collapsed (Figure 8). Although this was broadly similar to the construction observed on the north-east side of the hill in Trench 1 the rampart was much more substantially robbed in Trench 2 on the south-west side of the hill and there was a much smaller volume of collapsed material within the interior.

4.3.4 A linear band of rubble [210] comprising large angular boulders was aligned south-east to north-west on top of what survived of the earlier rampart (Plate 17). It measured c. 1.13m wide and survived to c. 0.3m high with no significant soil matrix surviving and likely forms part of a post-medieval field boundary bank. This feature visibly extends across the site to the natural gully to the south-east and downslope and off the hill to the north-west. It post-dates substantial robbing of the earlier fort features in this part of the site.

4.3.5 A 0.2m thick deposit of charcoal and burnt animal bone flecked sandy silt (202) extended from the collapsed inner face [207] across the flat terrace in the interior of the summit rampart and formed the matrix of flat angular stones (203) (Plate 15). The stones generally measured between c. 0.3m by 0.22m and were laid flat face up to create a rough fragmentary surface. This occupation deposit extended across an area c. 2.1m by 2.8m within the trench and extended out the trench on both sides. A single fragment of

unclassified iron slag (RT202a) was recovered from sample retent, representing hearth rake-out material, indicative of iron-working of some form taking place nearby. Charcoal from this deposit included birch, hazel, alder and ash and represented reworked fuel debris. Hazel charcoal from this occupation deposit was dated to *cal BC 361-174* indicating an Early Iron Age date ranging slightly later than the other dating from the interior of the fort. This could indicate ongoing occupation into the latter centuries BC, perhaps implying several hundred years of occupation at the fort before it went out of use. A similar deposit of charcoal flecked sandy silt (211) was present at the top of the terrace but contained no flat stones. A small cluster of flat stones (205) (Plate 16) was laid in a small sub-square setting which measured 0.8m by 0.45m by 0.2m thick within occupation deposit/surface (202/203). This was surrounded by a more concentrated charcoal flecked deposit including birch and hazel charcoal and five charred cereal caryopsis, indicating it was used as a hearth setting for a putative structure set on the terrace here. Due to the scope of the trench no structural elements at the edges of the terrace were observed so the nature of a structure here remains speculative and based on the deposits and convenient flat terrace visible in the topography. The occupation deposit was investigated in a slot along the edge of the trench but not removed to the south-east. Setting (205) was sampled under but left *in situ* to help contextualise any future excavations here.

4.3.6 The (201) topsoil in this part of the site was 0.1m thick and covered the deposits on the terrace it contained a water smoothed rounded quartz pebble (SF 201) which was likely natural in origin but not native to the hilltop.



Plate 11: General view of Trench 2



Plate 12: Plan view of Trench 2



Plate 13: Outer face of summit rampart [206] in Trench 2



Plate 14: NE facing section of slot through summit enclosure rampart in Trench 2



Plate 15: Occupation deposit (202) and possible surface (203) in Trench 2



Plate 16: Small stone setting [205] in Trench 2



Plate 17: Post-medieval boundary bank [210] overlying earlier rampart in Trench 2

4.4 Trench 3

4.4.1 Trench 3 was positioned over the annexe enclosure rampart or bank, extending out from the summit enclosure rampart on the north-east side of the hill (Figure 9; Plates 18-19). It was aligned north-east to south-west and measured c. 4m by 6m. Prior to excavation bedrock was visible outcropping in some parts of the flatter terrace within this enclosure. The upper stony deposits of the collapsed annexe rampart were visible in a band of extant moss and lichen covered rubble stones aligned north-west to south-east across the

trench. A line of large boulders along the outer edge were visible representing collapse facing material. The south-west end of the trench extended across the relatively flat interior of the enclosure covered in close cropped grass. The rampart was investigated in a single c. 0.5m wide slot along the southern edge of the trench.

4.4.2 The bedrock (300) was present on the interior of the annexe enclosure very close to the surface forming a relatively flat surface. It sloped at a moderate gradient to the north-east under where the annexe rampart was built.

4.4.3 A deposit of 0.15m thick deposit (309) of dark brownish black silty sand with frequent small and medium stones, frequent burnt animal bone and charcoal inclusions was built up on the bedrock forming the basal deposit of the annexe material. Burnt animal bone from this layer was dated to *cal BC 718-399*, indicating Early Iron Age cooking refuse and fuel debris was incorporated during the formation of the bank. The charcoal was particularly frequent under a large stone which had preserved large fragments of a splintered burnt oak log. The mix of charcoal around this included birch, hazel, hazel roundwood, alder and oak, indicating the charcoal represents mixed fuel debris incorporated in the rampart during construction. The outer face of the rampart [305] or bank was formed of very large stones which would once have been set upright but had tipped over downslope to lie flat. The larger stones measured c. 0.82m by 0.67 by 0.35m and further along the outer face outside the trench the outer kerb was still in position with upright stones measuring around 0.45m by 0.32m by 0.25m. The inner face [303] survived well in one section as three courses of rough angular blocks measuring 0.4m by 0.3m and the three courses surviving to a height of c. 0.57m (Plate 21). The rampart measured c.1.92m wide from face to face where it survived well and the crest of the bank was c. 0.75m at its highest point. The inner and outer face retained a core (304) of brownish grey very loose sandy silt matrix with frequent small stones measuring between 0.13m by 0.14m to 0.92m by 0.46m and occasional large stones and flecks of charcoal. Taken together the inner and outer faces and core are all that survives of a substantial bank or rampart comprised of a stone face and turf, earth and stone dumped core (Plate 23). The bank of material was noticeably slighter at the southern end, indicating that it might terminate, leaving a gap for an entrance on the north-east edge of the site where the gradient is more amenable to access.

4.4.4 In the interior of the annexe enclosure a 0.05m thick deposit of dark brownish black silty sand (308) flecked with burnt animal bone and charcoal lay directly above bedrock (Plate 22). Hazel and birch charcoal from fuel debris in this deposit were dated to *1038-1175 cal AD* and *1157-1260 cal AD* respectively, indicating a medieval phase of occupation in this enclosure. A similar 0.12m thick deposit of compact dark greyish brown silty sand (306) with frequent small angular stones contained reworked food and fuel debris including flecks of burnt bone, birch, alder and oak charcoal and four charred hazelnut shell fragments. This formed an upper horizon to this occupation deposit (Plate 20). This occupation deposit contained 2 small fragments of possible lithic debitage (SF 302). A small cluster of larger angular stones (307) was located in the south-west of Trench 3. It measured 0.57m by 0.4m by 0.3m and formed a small possible setting on (308) and within

(306). The charcoal patches within the occupation deposits (306) and (308) were best preserved immediately around setting (307) and under rampart collapse (302). This comprised a mix of angular stones which measured 0.2m by 0.05m within a matrix of moderately compact brown silty sand. This material survived to a height of 0.2m and extended c1.8m out from the internal face [303] of the rampart. Overlying all these layers was a 0.1m thick topsoil and turf (301) which contained a worked flint lithic fragment (SF 301).



Plate 18: General view over Trench 1 and 3 and annexe interior



Plate 19: Plan view of Trench 3



Plate 20: Pre-excavation view of stone tumble (302) and occupation deposit (306), facing SE



Plate 21: Inner face of annexe enclosure rampart [303] after tumble removal, facing SE



Plate 22: Post-excavation view of Trench 3 showing bedrock under occupation (308)



Plate 23: NE facing section of slot through annexe rampart

4.5 Trench 4

4.5.1 Trench 4 was positioned over the northern end of a natural gully which bisected the interior of the summit enclosure in the center of the hill (Figure 10; Plates 24-25). It was aligned north-west to south-east and measured c. 4m by 7m. Prior to excavation bedrock was visible outcropping around the edges of the gully which sat below the highest summit

terrace in a lower part of the hilltop. A lower distinct hollow filled with reedy vegetation was present in the northernmost section of the gully which is where Trench 4 was positioned. To the south of the reeded area outwith the trench the ground sloped away to the south-west, steepening to form a natural run off from the center of the hill. A change in vegetation here to close-cropped grass indicated a drier underlying deposit than in the lowest point of the gully where the reeds indicated that some deposits remained more waterlogged. Upon starting excavation in September 2025 after a sustained period of dry weather (unusual for the region) it was noted that the ground still retained water in the reedy area, squelching under foot and damp to touch during deturfing. This indicated, even prior to further excavation, that currently any basal deposits would remain waterlogged throughout the year, even during relatively dry periods.

4.5.2 After topsoil removal revealed a flat terrace of bedrock on the west and the edge of the gully two slots were excavated across the length of the deposits in Trench 4. The natural gully comprised a c. 3m wide hollow with ragged stepped bedrock edges and a concave uneven base (Plate 26). The stepped edges were where bedrock had weathered along natural planes of weakness and there was no evidence of quarrying. At the very base of the gully a thin deposit of reddish yellow brown subsoil formation had occurred (Plate 28), indicating the base of the gully has likely not previously been excavated out or quarried.

4.5.3 Overlying the natural subsoil and bedrock along the base of the gully was a 0.18m thick deposit of charcoal and burnt bone flecked sandy silt (404) which contained small angular stones (Plate 27). A large fragment of burnt bone was retained as a sample from this deposit in addition to the bulk samples to better understand the material which has washed into this hollow. The deposits are likely derived from nearby occupation material.

4.5.4 A natural shelf on the west side of the gully had formed a natural silt trap with the formation of a 0.05m thick lens of charcoal flecked clayey silt with occasional angular stones at the base derived from weathered bedrock beneath. The lens of material contained very small possible flecks of burnt bone. A bulk sample was taken from this localised area to compare and contrast with the sample from (404).

4.5.5 A very compact 0.23m thick deposit of very frequent small angular stone (402) was present overlying these silted up layers and likely represented collapse of material from upslope. Over this was a 0.12m thick deposit of very rooted clayey silt (401) which formed a topsoil. In most places above the bedrock shelf on the west end of the trench only a thin layer of turf had formed with minimal topsoil formation.



Plate 24: General view of Trench 4 and natural gully sloping off the hilltop



Plate 25: Plan view of Trench 4



Plate 26: SW facing section of slot through Trench 4



Plate 27: Detail of deposits (404) and (403) and (400) in SW facing slot in Trench 4



Plate 28: Plan view of natural deposit (400) at base of second slot in Trench 4

4.6 Trench 5 – Smitton's Bridge Cairn

4.6.1 Trench 5 was positioned at the base of the hill, targeting Smitton's Bridge Cairn which was a c. 16m diameter sub-circular bank of stones located on the relatively flat floodplain in a meander of the Water of Ken. It was aligned roughly east to west and measured c. 2m by 7m (Plates 29-30). To the east of the trench reedy tussocky grass vegetation indicated the presence of poorly drained unmanaged ground with peaty deposits and long thick rooted rushes. A surfaced farm track was located to the immediate west of the trench which crossed the cairn in a curve approximately north to south aligned. The cairn was visibly higher in position than the surrounding ground, indicating the cairn had likely taken advantage of a low natural rise in the otherwise gently sloping riverside terrace. The trench was positioned from the approximate centre of the cairn across a low bank and surviving kerb still visible at the east edge of the cairn.

4.6.2 The underlying natural in this part of the site was a mid-greyish brown, sandy silt (500) comprised of 80-90% gravel, loosely compacted with inclusions of small stones. It was found throughout the footprint of Trench 5 and interpreted as an alluvial deposit related to the nearby Water of Ken. At the west end of the trench a probable pit was cut into the natural (500). It was excavated within the trench but not fully excavated due to extending beyond the limits of the trench edge to the north and becoming rapidly waterlogged. The pit [514] was sub-circular in plan with a shallow profile with a sharp top of slope and concave base (Plate 31). It measured 0.65m by 0.3m and survived to a depth of 0.15m. It was filled by dark-brownish black sand (513) with very frequent small loose gravel

inclusions and tightly packed rounded stones which measured c. 0.2m by 0.05m. Several heat affected stones could indicate this has been used as a fire pit or that hearth waste has been deposited in this feature but processing of the samples identified only 0.2g birch charcoal in very small fragments which it was not feasible to date. However, the presence of charcoal indicates reworked fuel debris hinting at prehistoric activity on this terrace prior to the cairn construction.

4.6.3 A 0.3m thick deposit of mid yellow grey sandy silt (511) with frequent small gravel inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks sealed this pit and extended c. 2.3m from the west end of the trench (Plate 36). It was similar to other alluvial deposits identified in the trench and is most likely representative of a flood event which has redeposited a layer of material across this part of the landscape. It contained a lithic flake (SF 511) which could indicate redeposition/incorporation of earlier prehistoric material into this deposit.

4.6.4 Overlying the natural (500) in the middle of the trench was a 0.25m thick mid grey yellow sandy silt (509) with very infrequent oak and hazel charcoal flecks and rare rounded stone inclusions. The deposit sloped slightly upwards towards the west where it abutted (511). It likely forms another alluvial deposit (Figure 13-14) incorporating small remnants of fuel debris. Hazel charcoal from this layer was dated to *cal BC 2136-1955* indicating the cairn was likely constructed sometime after this date in the Early Bronze Age. A 0.12m thick deposit of mid-greyish sand (512) with rare charcoal fragments and small stones directly overlay alluvial deposit (509). The charcoal was a mix including hazel, oak, hazel roundwood and birch representing fuel debris. It extended across the width of the trench and was 4.23m in length. It likely forms a levelling layer of material deliberately redeposited to form the base of the cairn. It sat directly below the laid deposits of cairn stone [502], [506] and [507]. Hazel charcoal from (512) was dated to *cal BC 2575-2470*, indicating activity in the area at the Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age transition. The presence of this older material overlying the EBA material in (509) indicates the levelling deposit (512) includes residual or redeposited material from elsewhere, incorporated in the cairn construction.

4.6.5 The exterior edge of the cairn was defined by a series of large sub-angular boulders which measured between 1m by 0.4m to 0.6m by 0.5m. The boulders were arranged in a sub-circular ring around the whole cairn and several were visible extruding from the turf, particularly on the north-west side of the cairn. Two were visible fully within the trench and another continued out the trench to the north, they were spaced regularly c. 0.57m apart and taken together formed the outer kerb of the cairn. They sat on a thin layer of (512) and were likely placed with (512) being deposited up against the back of them as one episode of construction, indicating they are one of the earliest structural components of the cairn build. Overlying these up against the interior edge of the outer kerb was a bank of smaller rounded stone [506] which survived to 0.42m high and had a line of slightly larger stones set with flat faces to the interior which defined the inner edge of this feature (Plate 35). From inner edge to outer kerb this bank was just under 2m wide and defined a ring around the entire cairn.

4.6.6 Set to the interior of this ring of material was another band of lower stony material [507] sitting on (512) and related to the early construction of the cairn. It was formed of two concentric lines of larger stones (c. 0.5m by 0.3m) placed parallel with each other 0.75m apart so that their flatter faces were set facing out (Figure 12). The inner edge [507-1] was 0.32m high (Plate 33) and the outer edge [507-2] was 0.14m high with stones packed roughly between them, generally one course high. The position of this feature and the fact it respects the line of the outer kerb indicates they are likely similar phases of construction forming two concentric rings around a central area defining an enclosed space where funerary activities could have taken place.

4.6.7 A 0.08m thick deposit of yellow brown sandy silt (508) with occasional gravel and frequent small fragments of oak and birch charcoal fuel debris and patches of greyish sandy silt was located in the central area of the cairn (Plate 34). It measured c. 2.9m long and was formed up against the inner edge of [507] indicating it formed after the initial construction of the cairn. Its mottled appearance indicates that it has been slightly reworked and this could be related to repeated activity within the cairn during its use. A single possible lithic was identified (SF 510) from this layer.

4.6.8 After the initial use of the cairn another deposit of loose stone was formed of rounded stones (503) measuring c. 0.35m by 0.25m on average and covering the whole of the central area and overlying in places [507] and lapping up over [506] (Figure 11). This deposit generally survived to two courses high, except in the west where only one layer survived and was more irregularly placed than the early rings of stone defined by carefully arranged kerbs. One flatter angular slab was tipped over within this and is notable due to its angular nature. Tentatively it could be suggested this was selected for its shape to line a setting, such as a cist but the stone is now *ex situ*. A single quartz pebble (SF 509) was also recovered from this layer, while likely natural and unworked it may have been placed within the cairn material deliberately. The layer of [503] would have created a low mound of stone over the initial cairn deposits, potentially once extending much higher than it currently survives after modern truncation.

4.6.9 A mid brown grey sandy silt (510) matrix was in place in some parts of the cairn stone material while in other places the stones were voided indicating rapid deposition with no soil incorporated in some parts of the cairn.

4.6.10 The cairn material must have been somewhat reduced by robbing taking place in the post-medieval period if not before and also potentially curious antiquarian investigation. There is a reference to the cairn material being reduced and human bones and a sword being removed to a local house (now lost). The cairn was then further truncated by the construction of an access road into a quarry.

4.6.11 At the easternmost end of Trench 5, a deposit of dark brown sandy silt with frequent tightly packed rounded white stones (518) was present up against the outer kerb [502]. This could represent a deposit outside the cairn forming a level surface or platform, although this is hard to ascertain in the limited space revealed in the trench. A deposit of further mixed stone material (515) may be a similar deposit or may represent slumping of

cairn material after it was no longer maintained and began to collapse or was destabilised by later activity (Plate 32).

4.6.12 A 0.11m thick deposit of very frequent small angular stones (504) lay directly beneath topsoil at the east end of the trench c. 5m in length and abutted (505). It was likely related to the activity associated with the quarry and finds of plastic, bullet casings (SF 501 & SF 507), 19th – early 20th century pottery (SF 502), a pin badge (SF 508) and glass (SF 503) confirm this deposit was formed in recent centuries. A deposit of loose type-1 angular dark grey gravel (505) was present in the western end of the trench adjacent to the road. In the western end of the trench the road deposits extended 0.2m deep from the turf, truncating upper deposits of the already reduced cairn material (Plate 37). The combination of reduction of the cairn and the position of the road it is likely that any evidence for a potential central burial no longer survives.

4.6.13 The overlying topsoil was a 0.1m thick deposit of mid to dark brown sandy silt (501) with frequent small angular stones.



Plate 29: General view of Trench 5



Plate 30: Plan view of Trench 5



Plate 31: South facing section of pit [514] in Trench 5



Plate 32: Outer kerb [502] and (515) stony deposit



Plate 33: Inner ring of stones with very rough possible face [507]



Plate 34: Internal deposit (508) in central part of cairn



Plate 35: South facing section of Trench 5 at east end



Plate 36: South facing section of Trench 5 detailing deposits at west end



Plate 37: Modern disturbance (503)/ (504) at west end of Trench 5



Plate 38: Example of vitrified material from rampart collapse including heavily melted pieces

5 Post-Excavation Results

5.1

Animal Bone Analysis- Amy Halliday

5.1.1 Animal bone was poorly preserved, 465 fragments (302g) were recovered from nine deposits relating to the fort construction and occupation including contexts (107), (110), (111), (112), (202), (209), (308), (309) and (404). All of the bone was poorly preserved, with all but four of the recovered fragments being extensively burnt, none could be identified to species. The assemblage represented discarded cooking waste related to the fort's occupation. No bone was recovered from the cairn.

Ecofact Analysis – Alice Wolff & Jackaline Robertson

5.1.2 The ecofact assemblage was small, comprising very limited macroplant and limited wood charcoal. The macroplant included one barley caryopsis, five cereal caryopses, four hazelnut shell fragments, and one rhizome fragment. These likely represent material reworked into the occupation deposits of the fort rather than material that was deliberately discarded. The only identifiable cereal was the barley caryopsis from occupation deposit (112). Barley has been cultivated in Scotland since the Neolithic (Bishop et al. 2010). The hazelnut shells were retrieved from occupation deposit (306) and could represent food and fuel waste. They have been exploited in Britain since prehistory with the nuts usually roasted and the shells were often recycled as kindling, which means they are commonly found in charred ecofact assemblages. Additionally, due to their robustness, they survive the charring process more often than other types of

plant material, which means they tend to be overrepresented in the archaeological record (Bishop 2019).

5.1.3 The wood charcoal included alder (Alnus glutinosa L.), birch (Betula sp.), hazel (Corylus avellana L.), ash (Fraxinus sp.), apple-type (Maloideae) and oak (Quercus sp.) which are all native and most would have grown locally. Species such as alder and birch favour damper habitats. Hazel, ash, and apple-type grow in a range of environments including open woods, hedgerows and scrub. Oak is adaptable to a variety of growing conditions (Stace 2010, Linford 2009). This species composition is very typical for late prehistoric settlements in southern Scotland. The majority of the material represented re-worked fuel debris in the fort occupation and construction deposits and in the redeposited material forming the cairn.

5.1.4 The small size of the ecofact assemblage means it has little to contribute to research questions related to defining activities/processes taking place in the fort and cairn. The presence of wood species found in the local area suggests exploitation of local fuel resources from open woodland and scrub vegetation.

Lithics

5.1.5 Four pieces of struck lithics were recovered from occupation deposits within the fort (Plate 39) and three fragments of struck lithic were recovered from redeposited layers in the cairn (Plate 40). The assemblage is composed of a variety of lithic material including Flint (n. 3), Quartz (n. 2) and Chert (n. 2). The three flint artefacts all appear to be made on east coast 'Buchan' material of local derivation. The quartz and chert also appear to have been locally derived from waterworn nodules.

5.1.6 No cores are present within the fort assemblage. Debitage included a chip of chert (SF 302), two small irregular flakes (SF 106 & SF 300), a natural quartz nodule (SF 200).

5.1.7 No cores are present within the cairn assemblage. Primary technology is represented by a side struck platform rejuvenation flake made on flint (SF 511) and debitage, a primary flake of quartz (SF 509).

5.1.8 The assemblage included a single secondary worked piece in the form of a concave scraper measuring 28.5mm x 14.6mm x 10.5mm (SF 510), fashioned on a tertiary rejuvenation flake of Southern Uplands blue grey chert. The scraper had a number of rough, abrupt flake removals along the right lateral edge forming a concave hollow.

5.1.9 The assemblage is most probably Late Mesolithic in date and represents background occupation within the immediate locale. Though almost certainly residual in nature, the small lithic assemblage recovered indicates early prehistoric activity on the river side and on the nearby hilltop, prior to both cairn and late prehistoric fort construction. It is likely that the prominent location on the ridge of Stroanfreggan Craig, on high, well drained ground overlooking the Water of Ken was a particular draw for prehistoric populations.



Plate 39: Flint debitage SF 106 from deposit (108) in fort



Plate 40: Flint debitage rejuvenation flake SF 511 from deposit (511) in cairn



Plate 41: Southern upland chert scraper SF 510 from deposit (508) in cairn

Vitrified Stone – Dawn McLaren

5.1.10 Nineteen fragments of vitrified stone were retained from contexts topsoil (101), wall collapse (102) and (103), wall core (104) and external deposit (107). These stones have all been altered as the result of exposure to the intense heat of a fire which has resulted in stones of different lithologies melting or becoming partially viscous, becoming bubbly or 'vesicular' as the result of liquids boiling off during heating and gasses being released, or simply cracking or discolouring. The temperature required to melt rock will differ depending on the constituents of its lithology and this means that different types of stone will melt at different temperatures. Scientific analysis of the vitrified stones of the vitrified fort at Dun Deardail, Glen Nevis, Highland, determined that the temperatures needed to melt the rocks must have been greater than 800°c, but the condition of stones within the core of the rampart displayed vitrification suggesting that the temperature in places was likely to have reached between 850°c and 1100°c (Dolan 2018), far greater than would be achieved in a domestic hearth.

5.1.11 This includes fragments which are clearly heat-affected (such as SF 108.3; Plate 1) but where vitrification is limited, as well as those which are extensively vitrified and display smooth, glassy, molten-looking surfaces (such as SF 105.7; Plate 2). The extent of vitrification is the result of several factors including the lithology, the proximity to the source of heat, as well as exposure/air flow. Although often vitrified, vesicular and, in some cases, molten-looking in appearance, none of the fragments have any voids or imprints from any timber elements of the rampart.

5.1.12 Most of the fragments appear to consist of locally sourced greywacke reflecting the geology of the bedrock on which the fort is constructed.). Also present are small quantities of coarse sandstone and perhaps some other lithologies which are so heat distorted that their parent material is unidentified in the absence of scientific analysis. These various lithologies behave in different ways under exposure to intense heat: sandstone discolours and fractures but seems quite resilient to vitrification (Plate 4); greywacke is more vulnerable to vitrification, and in some cases, discrete areas of the stone fragments become vesicular (see Plate 3, top left corner of fragment) and partially or fully molten (see Plate 2), often fusing with other stones; quartz veins and seams retain off-white colouration, tend to fire-crack and can take on a granular texture but do not appear to have been exposed to temperatures high enough to vitrify. Other lithologies are not identified due to the extent of melting but may be siltstone/mudstones, as seen in SF 101.1 (Plate 4) where there is a short stack of fused stones consisting of sandstone fragments alternating with fully melted stones of unknown lithology.

5.1.13 The majority of the vitrified stone fragments came from the collapsed rampart of the summit enclosure, from both the exterior (102) and inner face (103), but were also recovered from the wall core (104). The small quantity of fragments and the small size of many of the stones make it difficult to draw conclusions about their condition in relation to the vitrification event, however, many of those which had collapsed from the exterior face of the rampart (SF 105) were more heavily vitrified than those from other contexts.



Plate 42: Example of vitrified stone (SF105)



Plate 43: Short stack of heat affected sandstone between which are sandwiched partially melted greywacke or siltstone fragments (SF101.1)

Industrial Material – Andrew Morrison

5.1.14 A single fragment of unclassified iron slag (UIS) (RT 202a) was recovered from the occupation layer (202) within the interior of the fort's summit enclosure rampart. This small, amorphous fragment likely represents the residual remains of hearth rake-out material from either a smithing hearth or smelting furnace, and is indicative of ironworking.

Ceramic - Orlene McIlfatrick

5.1.15 A small assemblage of more recent material was recovered during the excavation of the cairn and a selection of material was retained for assessment to provide an indication of the chronology of the disturbance at the cairn. The retained material included three sherds of ceramic and three copper alloy objects.

The three sherds (SF 502) are from a single clear glazed ceramic jam jar, made from a high-vitrification cream coloured stoneware clay, likely representing a 1lb jam jar commonly used in the 19th to early 20th century.

Copper Alloy – Andrew Morrison

5.1.16 Two spent cartridges (SF 501; SF 507) manufactured by the Federal Cartridge Corporation for a .243 Winchester rifle. This type of ammunition post-dates 1955 when the rifle was introduced and is commonly used for hunting deer.

5.1.17 The third object was a gilt badge (SF 508) is shield-shaped and divided into two panels with an 'EC' monogram over a blue enamel field below, and 'JUNIOR' over a red enamel field above. The revere contains a broken sprung pin with catch-plate and lists the manufacturer as 'H.W. Miller Ltd./ Branston St/ B'Ham 18'. This pin was given to junior members of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, a Christian youth organization founded in 1881, with the badge most likely dating between the 2nd and 3rd quarters of the 20th century.



Plate 44: Gilt pin badge (SF 508)

5.2

Radiocarbon Dates

5.2.1 Seven radiocarbon determinations were obtained from samples selected from the old ground surface, the rampart wall core, the annexe enclosure and the occupation surface within the fort enclosure. Two radiocarbon determinations were obtained from basal deposits associated with the levelling layers at the base of the cairn. The results are presented in Table 1.

Cairn

5.2.2 One of the resulting dates for the cairn, for sample 1 was slightly older than anticipated, calibrating in the mid 3rd millennia. This is probably due to the incorporation of older Late

Neolithic material in the cairn. It is likely that turf or earth was being cut from nearby for use as both levelling/make up of the cairn. The second date from the cairn material calibrates in the Early Bronze Age and is more likely to represent a TPQ for when the cairn was constructed and first in use.

Fort

5.2.3 The majority of the dates from the fort span the 8th to 4/5th centuries BC with the construction of the fort probably occurring within this period followed by occupation. It is likely that the fort was constructed and occupied in the Early Iron Age for a number of years but was likely out of use by the last century BC.

5.2.4 Two dates indicate that occupation of the annexe enclosure dates to between the 11th-13th centuries AD in the medieval period.

Table 1: Radiocarbon Dates

Context	Sample	Sample type	Lab Code	Age	Error	δ13 ‰	From (95%)	To (95%)
512 Redeposited material in base of cairn	1	Charcoal, *Corylus avellana* (hazel)	SUERC-139647	4011	23	-26.8	2575 BC	2470 BC
509 Base of cairn	2	Charcoal, *Corylus avellana* (hazel)	SUERC-139646	3664	23	-27.7	2136 BC	1955 BC
107 Old ground surface on exterior fort rampart	3	Charcoal, *Betula sp.* (birch)	SUERC-139638	2471	20	-25.8	761 BC	480 BC
111 Basal deposit fort rampart core	4	Charcoal, *Corylus avellana* (hazel)	SUERC-139648	2434	24	-26.1	749 BC	407 BC
110 Occupation deposit in fort	5	Cremated animal bone	SUERC-139642	2402	24	-26.4	719 BC	401 BC
309 Basal redeposit in outer kerb annexe	6	Cremated animal bone	SUERC-139645	2398	25	-19.5	718 BC	399 BC
202 Occupation deposit fort interior	7	Charcoal, *Corylus avellana* (hazel)	SUERC-139652	2196	20	-26.0	361 BBC	174 BC
308 Occupation deposit annexe enclosure	8	Charcoal, *Corylus avellana* (hazel)	SUERC-139644	922	21	-29.4	AD 1038	AD 1175
308 Occupation deposit annexe enclosure	9	Charcoal, *Betula sp.* (birch)	SUERC-139643	858	24	-26.3	AD 1157	AD 1260

6 Discussion

6.1

Fort

6.1.1 The archaeological evaluation at Stroanfreggan Craig was an excellent opportunity to investigate the archaeological potential of the hillfort, while simultaneously engaging the public in the many aspects of archaeological excavation and recording. The archaeological evaluation has successfully identified and characterised the summit enclosure rampart, the annexe enclosure rampart and several areas of surviving occupation deposits.

6.1.2 A small assemblage of struck lithics identified in the topsoil and occupation deposits are most likely residual and indicate activity on the hilltop pre-dating the fort. This could indicate Late Mesolithic hunter-gatherer groups are using the hilltop as a look-out or temporary camp over the Water of Ken and its wide reaching views would make it a good location to monitor herds of animals moving through the area. There is known hunter gatherer activity along the Water of Ken, illustrated by several lithic scatters eroding out the banks of the river close to the site. It is likely that the prominent location on the ridge of Stroanfreggan Craig, on high, well drained ground overlooking the Water of Ken was a particular draw for prehistoric populations. Indeed, residual Late Mesolithic material has been recovered from other hillfort sites such as at Moredun and Moncrieffe (Strachan, Cook and McLaren 2024) and King's Seat (Strachan, MacIver and Heald 2025). Earlier prehistoric material has also been identified at other hillfort sites such as The Mote of Mark, Dumfries and Galloway (Smith 2006, 99) where it was identified amongst later Neolithic and Early Bronze Age material. The dating from the cairn implies there was activity along the Water of Ken in the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, these communities may well have made use of the hilltop long before a fort was constructed there in later prehistory.

6.1.3 At some point, most likely in later prehistory, the summit of the hill was enclosed by a very substantial 4m wide stone rampart. Vitrification and intense heat affected stone (Plate 38) was evident in one section of the core, implying the structure was potentially once timber laced (albeit vitrification is only indirect evidence for the presence of timber) and had been set on fire. The scale of the rampart at 4m wide is comparable with other sites of later prehistoric origin. Other examples that are comparable in scale include sites like Craig Phadrig where the Iron Age phase had a 4m wide rampart with evidence for a vitrification event. The rampart is much larger in scale than the enclosing elements identified at early medieval sites like Trusty's Hill and Mote of Mark in the local region as well as sites like Kings Seat and Clatchard Craig further afield in Perthshire where the walls or ramparts rarely extended much beyond 2m in width. Excavations at sites such as Kings Seat, Mote of Mark, Trusty's Hill and Clatchard Craig produced substantial artefact assemblages of early medieval date including extensive evidence for craft and metalworking such as clay moulds, crucibles, spindlewhorls, stone moulds and metal objects such as knives and wood working tools. The scale of the enclosing elements and

lack of artefacts directly related to the fort's occupation at Stroanfreggan was an early indication that the fort activity likely dated to later prehistory. Radiocarbon dating from external surviving ground surface deposits, wall core and occupation material abutting the inner face of the summit enclosure rampart confirmed a date for construction and occupation of the fort in the Early Iron Age. Burnt animal bone and wood charcoal fuel debris as well as a very limited number of charred cereals indicate occupation took place in the Early Iron Age and could have lasted several hundred years with no evidence for the occupation continuing into the last century BC.

6.1.4 The presence of large fragments of slaggy vitrification within localised areas of core indicates that the rampart or elements of it were likely destroyed by fire at the end of the forts use. This is interesting as this is a common feature on some Early Iron Age forts in Scotland such as Finavon, Dun Deardail, Castle Law Forgandenny and Tap O'Noth. This process of vitrification is also evident at sites in the Solway region with early medieval phases such as Trusty's Hill and Mote of Mark where it is speculated to link to destruction related to shifts in power and incoming groups in the 7th century AD. In the case of Stroanfreggan the lack of evidence for occupation beyond the late centuries BC indicates that the vitrification event likely took place at a broadly similar time period to several other recently excavated Early Iron Age forts confirmed to have extensive vitrification events. For example Dun Deardail, Highland was constructed, occupied and out of use sometime between c. 5th to 2nd century cal BC (Cook et al forthcoming). The vitrified fort at Tap O'Noth, Aberdeenshire began in the 5th century cal BC and came to an end in the later 3rd or early 2nd century BC (Noble et al 2026, 258). Excavations at Castle Law Forgandenny, Perthshire confirmed that both the vitrified forts on this hill were in use in the second half of the first millennium BC (Poller pers comm) and vitrification was identified occurring within the wall core of the outer fort (Poller and MacIver 2014).

6.1.5 Although these forts all date to the Early Iron Age and have some features in common it is impossible to confirm if they all went out of use for similar reasons. However, the fact many of these vitrified forts appear to be destroyed in the latter centuries BC and this event is happening on forts from different regions across Scotland feeds into wider evidence towards a larger societal shift in North Britain around the end of the first millennia BC/early AD with a move away from inhabiting enclosed spaces. The mechanisms and factors involved in this shift remain unclear although some factors that have been proposed (SCARF 2012) include; the adoption of new forms of displaying status, e.g. a shift to personal adornment or monumental houses not larger forts, changes to societal structure and hierarchy or a rejection of belief systems which led to enclosure.

6.1.6 The wet hollow on site within the summit enclosure was confirmed to be the top end of a natural gully which collected surface water runoff. Further along the gully the water would then have drained rapidly off the hill but where Trench 4 targeted a reedy rushy area the water here drained more slowly, enabling deposits to retain more moisture hence the distinctive vegetation growth in this part of the site. The gully had not been visibly augmented in any way to create a rock cut cistern, and no structures were built around

the edge to manage access to the water. It is likely that during the occupation of the fort this gully was more extant than it is today, with deposits of occupation material in the upper fills indicating it has silted up somewhat either during the use of the fort or after the fort went out of use. No organic material was preserved in the basal fills.

6.1.7 One concern with climate change is that waterlogged deposits in this part of the site would potentially start to dry out. After an unusually dry and hot summer with long periods of no rainfall the upper deposits were still slightly waterlogged when the excavation team came on site. The ground was slightly spongy underfoot which would indicate this is not presently a risk. A period of heavy rain demonstrated how quickly the hollow filled with water in the excavated slots but interestingly after a few weeks of the trench remaining open with only short periods of light rain the hollow did more or less drain of standing water naturally. The basal 0.2m was still filled with standing water but the upper sections of the gully had dried naturally, indicating that it was probably at best used as a convenient source of water during the use of the fort during periods of wet weather but the community would not have been able to rely on it in the summer months or during dry spells would have had to source water from the nearby Water of Ken.

6.1.8 Shallow deposits on interior of summit enclosure across all the trenches even in some areas identified as potential silt traps could indicate either that the fort was not occupied intensively for thousands of years or that the occupation areas have been regularly cleared out, ensuring there was no significant build-up of material on the summit of the hill.

6.1.9 The annexe enclosure was confirmed to be a slighter and later feature, measuring closer to 2m wide and comprising large boulder kerbs with a turf and stone core forming a bank of material. This formed a sub-rectangular enclosure built up against the earlier fort rampart on the north-east. The arrangement of the material could indicate an entrance gap is likely at its southern end. The deposits within the annexe were very shallow, indicating that even this flat terrace is unlikely to have been used for occupation or activities that would create a buildup of material for very long. The annexe is clearly built after the main summit enclosure, tagged onto the edge of the outer face of the summit rampart. The arrangement of this later enclosure on a terrace at more or less the same height as the undulating summit enclosure is not entirely in keeping with proposals that this site would have formed a nuclear fort (Hinckley, Toolis). Although the setting on a craggy outcrop with multiple enclosures looping out from a summit enclosure is reminiscent of some of the nuclear forts such as Dunadd, Dundurn, Clatchard Craig and King's Seat the elevation of the north-east enclosure does not differ more than 0.5m from the shoulder of the hill that the summit enclosure is built on. The north-western end is set downhill in a hollow of the undulating hillside which affords it a marginally more sheltered position than the summit but it is not a substantially different terrace from the main enclosure.

6.1.10 The dating of charcoal material relating to use of the enclosure dates activity here to between the 11th-13th centuries AD, representing a significantly later addition to the site in the medieval period. Although no building were identified within the trench it is feasible

that people were cooking or living in some form nearby during this period as indicated by the substantial quantity of small fragments of burnt animal bone in the same deposits as the fuel debris. Whether this related to a settlement or activity from shephards/farmers using the space periodically remained unclear. Activity at another fort site in the region parallels this reuse of the hill. At Tynron Doon the hill is clearly reused in both the Early Medieval and Medieval period well after the Iron Age fortifications go out of use. The later enclosure and a smaller rectilinear pen within the annexe at Stroanfreggan are likely used for livestock management as part of a wider network of boundaries and enclosures sprawling across the hillside forming elements of a medieval hill farm. Enclosures and boundaries from this period are often built in turf and stone and survive best in upland areas. The farming regime of this upland part of south-west Scotland would have been primarily based on cattle and sheep pastoral farming with some agriculture. The position of the site on routeways north-south and east-west would have ensured connection to markets and trade routes to larger population centers. The medieval enclosure and pen at Stroanfreggan are rare dated examples of activity relating to this period in the region.

Cairn

6.1.11 The archaeological evaluation at Smitton's Bridge Cairn was an excellent opportunity to investigate the archaeological potential of the cairn, successfully characterising the cairn, retrieving dating evidence and recording the level of archaeological survival.

6.1.12 Early activity under the cairn in the form of a small pit as well as a few fragments of fuel debris and redeposited lithic material was identified in the basal alluvial deposits. These hint at activity in early prehistory in the region with some of the material reworked into alluvial deposits during flood events forming the river terrace upon which the cairn was later constructed. Unlike some other excavated cairns no evidence for ploughing was preserved beneath the cairn, however the position in an active floodplain indicate that the ground was unlikely to be suitable for intense cultivation.

6.1.13 The cairn sits on a slightly raised area of ground within the Water of Ken floodplain. It is feasible that the earliest activity related to the pit pre-dates the cairn by some margin and represents early prehistoric activity. Subsequent to this deposits of alluvial material are redeposited by river action and seal the early pit. Later the low rise is again exploited for the building of the cairn with further deposits of material to level the site. Material dating to the Early Bronze Age between the last century of the third millenium BCE and the first century of the second millennium BCE in this apparently natural formed flood deposit sealed beneath the base of the built cairn indicates a TPQ for the cairns construction in the Early Bronze Age.

6.1.14 The cairns construction therefore appears to have begun with a deposit of material (512) to level an already fortuitous natural low rise in the surrounding flood plain. This material has incorporated a mix of material imported from elsewhere. Charcoal within this indicates a background phase of activity during the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age transition in the wider region but not explicitly related to the date of construction or use

of the cairn as it is residual/reworked material. The importation of the material to build the cairn means there is a high potential for redeposited material to create an inverted sequence. The levelling deposit (512) is the first clearly redeposited layer relating to construction and sits directly below both the outer kerb [502], [506] and the inner ring of stone [507]. Although the outer kerb most likely came first it is likely that the inner ring followed soon after as part of the same phase of construction, enclosing a space on the interior and forming a prominent stone feature.

6.1.15 While undoubtedly a burial cairn relating to funerary traditions, likely constructed and in use at some point in the Early Bronze Age the lack of evidence of surviving burials made it challenging to classify the cairn further.

6.1.16 Historic England defines a kerb cairn as:

"...prehistoric funerary monuments dating to the Bronze Age. They were constructed as stone mounds defined by an outer kerb of upright stones or walling covering single or multiple burials. These burials may be placed within the mound in stone-lined compartments called cists. In some cases the cairn was surrounded by a ditch. Often occupying prominent locations, kerbed cairns are a major visual element in the modern landscape. They are a relatively common feature of the uplands and are the stone equivalent of the earthen round barrows of the lowlands. Their considerable variation in form and longevity as a monument type provide important information on the diversity of beliefs and social organisation amongst early prehistoric communities..."

6.1.17 In a Scottish context the term 'kerb cairn' was coined in the early 1970s (Ritchie & MacLaren 1971) for a particular type of Bronze Age burial monument where very large boulders surround a small area within which a burial is placed. They highlight that Scottish ring cairns are not a homogenous group of sites but should be considered the remains of a burial tradition involving the construction of a circular ring or bank, within which funerary activities took place. They suggest that the term ring cairn should be used where monuments have a genuine bank of cairn material surrounding an open area in which burials are deposited whereas cairns with massive kerbs are kerbed cairns. Both of these types are presumed to date from the earlier half of the second millennium BC.

6.1.18 Enclosed cremation cemeteries are widespread across Scotland and the north of England and there are many examples known in Dumfriesshire. Enclosed cremation cemeteries often comprise a circular bank, flat interior and low internal mound of stones. Some examples have cremations in pits within the central area and cremations incorporated into the enclosing bank. Excavated examples such as Weird Law are thought to date to the later part of the Bronze Age period with some examples such as Brown Edge, Totley, Weird Law, Tweedsmuir and Whitestanes Moor dated to the second half of the second millennium BC (Ritchie and McLaren, 1971, 15). Superficially the cairn at Smitton's Bridge bears some similarities with this, with a ring of material surviving, however this current form is the result of how the cairn has been robbed and reduced over time rather than its original complete form. The radiocarbon dating from Smitton's Bridge would place the site much earlier than most enclosed cremation cemetery sites.

6.1.19 The site at Smitton's Bridge has a relatively substantial outer kerb and excavation indicates it conforms to many of the criteria of a kerbed cairn. The central area investigated within the trench certainly appears to have been originally open, enclosed by a double ring of stones. Presumably the mound from the cairn material would once have been higher than the apparently much reduced surviving deposits. The dating from the basal layer of the cairn indicates construction sometime from the Early Bronze Age onwards, also in keeping with the chronologies put forward by Ritchie and McLaren.

6.1.20 Several examples of cairns with multiple roughly concentric kerbed features are known from the Hebrides, including excavations undertaken at Olcote (Neighbour 2005) (roughly dated to between *1900-1500 BC*) and Cnoc an Tursa (Campbell and Coles 1999) at Callanais, Isle of Lewis. These double kerbed features likely represent one phase of construction comprising an inner and outer kerb. However, they are generally understood to be a specific style confined to the Hebrides. Other examples are known from Vatersay (Branigan and Foster 2000) and Cnip (Close Brooks 1995) on Lewis.

6.1.21 It is feasible that the stone structure identified at Smitton's Bridge cairn relate to evolving use of the cairn and/or potential later phases of reuse. This could be compared with the site at Levens Park, Westmoreland where multiple kerbed structures formed a series of concentric rings, amongst other elements of the site. A recent re-evaluation of the excavation archive of the Levens Park ring cairn (Clare et al 2021, 320) presents an example of a cairn monument with many phases and alterations and additions over its lifespan. The authors argue that cairns, rather than being considered static entities, should instead be considered as monuments that have undergone progressive change over time, potentially a period of centuries. The monuments could have been "the focus of attention over centuries during which time they were altered/elaborated by a regional repertoire of structural forms and practices" (Clare et al 2021, 323). It is common for cairns to be reused and also remain significant landmarks in later periods even after their primary use is complete. A similar evolution of a monument's use is seen at Parks of Tongland, Kirkcudbrightshire. Excavations undertaken the site identified a complex funerary site described as multi-sequence. The preface to the paper in 1992 observed that *"field survey and excavation in Scotland over the last two decades has amply demonstrated that there is a far wider range of cairn and barrow forms from a variety of periods than was previously thought, and it has become clear that the late 3rd and early 2nd millennium BC saw a particularly rapid diversification in the development of types of funerary monument (Russell-White et al 1992, 287)."* The first phase of the monument comprised pits filled with cremation material in collared urns, some marked by larger upright orthostats. These burials were dated to a range of *cal BC 1480-1530* and later covered by a second phase of the monument comprising a stone built kerb and cairn containing material dating to a range of cal BC 1530 to 1870 (Russell-White 1992, 320) indicating construction and use around the mid second millenium BCE.

6.1.22 No evidence for central burials or later cremation pits were identified in the cairn at Smittons Bridge. It is most likely that any central features have been impacted by later disturbance and satellite burials or later cremation insertions would have been at a

higher level and could have been removed or heavily disturbed during cairn reduction. A relatively small sample of the cairn was excavated so it also remains feasible burials were present in other parts of the cairn. The lack of direct funerary or burial evidence limits what else can be said about the community or individuals using this cairn.

7 Conclusion

7.1.1 In summary the excavation has helped characterise the cairn at Smitton's Bridge as an Early Bronze Age funerary monument, conforming to the broad kerbed cairn group. The results confirm at least some limited evidence for pre cairn activity, at least one phase of cairn construction and associated use as well as potential for subsequent alterations or additions before the monument was sealed. Later disturbance has potentially impacted the survival of any human remains or burial evidence in the central area and in the area of the excavation.

7.1.2 The excavation on the fort has identified some limited evidence for use of the hilltop that predates the fort as well as substantial structural remains related to the forts enclosing works. Dating from key deposits such as the deposits at the base of the enclosing works, occupation deposits abutting the ramparts sealed under tumble and the occupation deposit around a possible stone setting as well as deposits that have silted into the hollow in the middle of the site have indicated an Early Iron Age fort construction and occupation, with no evidence for occupation past the final few centuries BC. Wood charcoal fuel debris and a limited assemblage of food and cooking waste including burnt animal bone, charred hazelnut shells and cereal grains indicate occupation. A single fragment of slag hints that other activities such as iron-working are likely to have occurred on the site.

7.1.3 The identification of vitrified material in the rampart core and the collapse confirms the feature potentially had a timber laced structure and was burnt down, at least on the north-east side. Perhaps indicating a rather abrupt end to the use of this site around the same time some other prominent Early Iron Age sites were going out of use across Scotland. This pattern hints at significant social shifts around the end of the first millennium BC.

8 Bibliography

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Appendix 1. Context Register

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
1	100	Deposit	Bedrock grey wacke, very jagged and undulating in some locations where it has not been exposed to weathering. At the top of slope much more smoothed indicating exposed to elements prior to more recent turf growth in recent centuries.	Natural bedrock	-
1	101	Deposit	Firm dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent roots and turf, measured 0.15m deep.	Topsoil	SF 101 Vitrified stone
1	102	Deposit	Loose reddish brown fine silty sand matrix with very frequent angular large poorly sorted stones, overall measurements >2.8 length width >1.2 depth max 0.4m thick. Stones vary in in size up to 0.35m by 0.25m.	Wall collapse, exterior face	SF 105 Vitrified stone
1	103	Deposit	Moderately compacted mid greyish brown very frequent medium sub angular stones. Several visible tipping away from wall face, overall deposit measured > 2.8m by 2.1m by 0.3m. Stones vary in size up to c. 0.4m by 0.3m.	Wall collapse, interior face	SF 103 Vitrified stone
1	104	Structure	Infrequent small angular stones, frequent medium and large angular stones. Stones are voided including vitrified and heat shattered material. In the SW area of wall there are smaller heat cracked stones which could indicate proximity to a timber setting and in the middle of the core the stones are larger boulders. Measured >2.8m long by 2.2m wide by 0.8m deep.	Wall core	SF 108 Vitrified stone
1	105	Structure	Angular frequent very large and medium stones measuring between 0.80m by 0.23m by 0.4m to 0.2m by 0.3m by 0.2m. NE side of kerb/face forming face of drystone wall. Measured over all >2.8m long by 1.08m to 1.2m wide by 0.4m deep. Only one course high. Overall width of wall 4m from inner to outer kerb.	Inner collapsed face of wall	-
1	106	Structure	Very frequent angular stones measuring between 0.6m by 0.3m by 0.3m to 0.7m by 0.7m by 0.4m forming the SW kerb of wall dry stones construction, one course high. Overall measured >2.8m by 0.5m to 0.6m and 0.7m deep. Overall	Outer collapsed face of wall	-

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
			width of wall is 4m with core and inner kerb.		
1	107	Deposit	Loose reddish brown silty sand with occasional large angular stones and frequent angular medium stones poorly sorted. Measured >2.8m long by >1.4m wide by 0.27m deep.	Possible old ground surface or natural deposit under 102 with a thin skim of occupation material reworked into it.	SF 104 burnt bone, SF 107 possible metal
1	108	Deposit	Dark brownish black silty sand with frequent sub angular small stones and occasional rare burnt bone and charcoal flecks. Measured >2.8m by 3.16m by 0.05 to 0.15m deep.	Occupation deposit under wall collapse on inside above bedrock.	SF 102 fire cracked stones, SF 106 flint
1	109	Deposit	Small cluster of poorly arranged sub-angular stones measuring circa 1.25m by 0.8m by 0.10m to 0.20m deep.	Localised area of stone collapse/possible setting within (108)	-
1	110	Deposit	Loose dark brownish black silty sand, frequent charcoal flecks and rare burnt bone fragments, occasional sub-angular stones. Measured 1.25m long by 0.8m by 0.1m deep.	Lower horizon of occupation under (108), directly over bedrock. Charcoal slightly better preserved here in pockets.	-
1	111	Deposit	Loose brownish black silty sand with frequent small angular stones and occasional charcoal flecks and rare burnt bone fragments. Measured >2.8m long by 2.3m wide by 0.23m deep.	Deposit under base of core material within wall, overlying flat stones [113]. Could relate to early construction phase.	
1	112	Deposit	Loose brown silty sand with small frequent angular stones, occasional charcoal and rare burnt bone.	Thin occupation or old ground surface deposit under flat stones (113) relating to earliest surviving activity from this part of the site.	
1	113	Deposit	Flat stones measuring 0.3m by 0.13m by 0.04m covering area under deposit (111) in the middle of wall care towards base. Overall measured 0.5m by 1.15m.	Several flat stones at base of wall that have been purposefully laid. Not clear if they	

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
				relate to an earlier feature that the substantial wall overlies or if they are part of the foundation laid for the wall itself.	
2	200	Deposit	Grey wacke bedrock stone and light greyish yellow clay.	Bedrock with pockets of natural subsoil overlying.	
2	201	Deposit	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt with frequent sub-angular and medium small stone inclusions. The inclusions are moderately sorted and rare charcoal flecks are present.	Topsoil	SF 200, water worn small quartz pebble, likely natural but imported to site
2	202	Deposit	Firm dark brownish black sandy silt with frequent inclusions of large angular grey wacke stones [203], measured 2.1m by 2.8m by 0.2m deep.	Occupation layer within fort forming matrix around laid flat stones [203]. Could tentatively suggest it is formed within a structure up against inner face of summit rampart but position of the trench made this hard to determine.	-
2	203	Structure	Sub-angular grey wacke flat stones the likely form part of a flat surface within a possible building. Stones measure between 0.3m by 0.22m to 0.62m by 0.28m. Covering an area of 2.1m by 2.8m.	Possible rough surface of flat stones.	-
2	204	Deposit	Mid greyish brown silt with very frequent sub-angular stones that have weathered off the bedrock which is directly below 204.	Stony deposit which could represent weathered material derived from bedrock.	-
2	205	Deposit	An area of five flat angular stones covering an area of 0.8m by 0.45m by 0.08m deep. Dark brownish black clayey silt including frequent charcoal and occasional burnt bone. Set within 202/203 occupation deposit.	Small stone setting possibly for a post or setting related to a structure located on the flat terrace in this location.	-

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
2	206	Structure	Large stone boulders part of the outer wall face. Only one course surviving, dry stone construction. Stone measure between 0.4m by 0.3m by 0.2m to 0.7m by 0.6m by 0.3m. Overall measured >1m by 0.8m by 0.3m deep. With core and inner face wall likely measured about 4.1m in width.	Outer face of wall forming summit rampart.	-
2	207	Structure	Frequent angular stones with some sub-rounded, measuring between 0.26m by 0.16m by 0.29m to 0.19m by 0.09m by 0.01m. Overall measured 2.8m by 4m.	Collapsed stone representing what remains of inner face of wall forming summit rampart.	-
2	208	Deposit	Mid greyish brown clayey silt with a matrix of sub-angular stones that are grey wacke stones that measure 0.2m by 0.25m. And cover an area c. >1m long by 3.15m wide by 0.3m deep.	Very robbed wall core of summit rampart.	-
2	209	Deposit	Loose dark brownish black clayey silty with very frequent charcoal and rare burnt bone measured >1m long by 3.15m wide by 0.1-0.15m deep.	Deposit under wall core (208). Charcoal and burnt bone rich which could indicate redeposited hearth material within base of wall core or an earlier horizon of occupation.	-
2	210	Structure	Two to three sub-angular grey wacke stones measured >1m long by 1.1m wide by 0.3m deep.	Post medieval wall which has truncated and overlies position of earlier summit enclosure rampart	-
2	211	Deposit	Mid greyish brown sandy silt with frequent inclusions of medium sub-angular moderately sorted stones including rare charcoal and rare burnt bone flecks.	Same as (202) located along top of terrace where there were less laid flat stones.	-
3	300	Deposit	Grey wacke bedrock very angular.	Bedrock	-
3	301	Deposit	Hard greyish brown silty sand with frequent sub angular stones and root disturbance. Measured >7m by 4m by 0.1m to 0.15m deep.	Topsoil	SF 301 flint debitage

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
3	302	Deposit	Frequent angular stones tumbled at different angles off of wall face. Stones measured 0.05m to 0.2m with a matrix of moderately compact brown silty sand. Overall area measured >4m by 1.8m by 0.2m deep.	Angular stones and soil core material collapsed from annexe wall into interior.	-
3	303	Structure	Angular round stones measured 0.6m by 0.38m by 0.22m to 0.13m by 0.06m by 0.05m. Overall measured 3.8m by 0.5m by 0.58m.	Inner collapsed face of annexe wall.	-
3	304	Deposit	Mid brownish grey very loose sandy silt matrix with frequent small stones measuring between 0.13m by 0.14m to 0.92m by 0.46m and occasional large stones, some charcoal. Overall size measured >4m by 2.3m by 0.4m to 0.5m.	Core of annexe wall	-
3	305	Structure	Very tumbled and disturbed angular and rounded stones. Measured 3.8m by 0.5m by 0.58m deep. With core and inner kerb measured 2m wide.	Outer face of annexe enclosure wall	-
3	306	Deposit	Compact dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent sub-angular small stones and occasional charcoal and rare burnt bone. Measured >4m by 4m by 0.05-0.1m deep.	Occupation deposit	SF 302, 2 x small fragments possible lithic debitage
3	307	Deposit	Possible stone setting at SW end of trench made up of large stones made up of 5 stones. Measured 0.57m by 0.4m by 0.3m.	Possible stone setting in/on occupation deposit (306)	-
3	308	Deposit	Firm dark brownish black silty sand with frequent sub-angular stones small fragments of burnt bone. Measured >1.1m by 1.3m by 0.05m.	Lower horizon occupation deposit on bedrock around (307)	-
3	309	Deposit	Dark brownish black silty sand with frequent small and medium stones, frequent charcoal including a cluster under a large stone that could have been part of a larger fragment of wood/timber burnt in the core of the wall as well as burnt bone. It measured >4m by 2.3m by 0.1 to 0.15m.	Lower horizon of wall core or initial deposit at base of wall.	-
4	400	Deposit	Bedrock hollow. Not visibly quarried or augmented. At very base a thin deposit of yellow brown silty sand indicated base of hollow unaltered by human activity and natural sediment formation processes have occurred forming a subsoil over bedrock.	Natural bedrock	-

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
4	401	Deposit	A rooted clayey silt, with occasional angular stones circa 0.1m deep, directly over bedrock at E and W of trench.	Topsoil and turf	-
4	402	Deposit	A deposit of frequent small to medium angular stones, likely an eroded deposit from up slope to the east. Measured 0.23m thick.	Eroded material from weathered bedrock upslope washing into eastern edge of hollow.	-
4	403	Deposit	A thin 0.05m lens of charcoal flecked clayey silt with occasional angular stones derived from weathered bedrock. Small possible flecks of burnt bone. Lies directly on bedrock shelf on west edge of hollow.	Silted up deposit contained residual occupation material indicates hollow was open to elements at some point and occupation material has silted into crevices of bedrock and weathered material.	-
4	404	Deposit	A thin deposit of silty waterlogged deposit on bedrock or natural subsoil at base of hollow. Contains charcoal and burnt bone flecks. Formation of this deposit in the upper part of hollow indicates that upper portion of gully was open to elements during/after a period of occupation and silted up with some of this material.	Silted up redeposited occupation material indicating gully was once probably more pronounced hollow than seen today. Although no evidence for a rock cut cistern or structure around this it may still have functioned as a useful water catchment area on the hill in times of heavy rainfall.	-
5	500	Deposit	Mid-greyish brown, sandy silt gravel (gravel stones comprising 80-90%), loosely compacted. Very frequent inclusions of small stones. Found throughout trench 5 (7m by 2m) at base of trench. Depth unknown, at water table at time of excavation.	An alluvial deposit of sand and gravel, likely formed in relation to river floodplain events from nearby Water of Ken.	-

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
5	501	Deposit	Mid-dark brownish, sandy silty, loam, friable. Inclusions of small angular stones frequently spaced throughout (050 x 020 mm). Directly above (504) which is a stonier topsoil with diffuse interface. 0.1m thick.	Topsoil, same as (504) including several post-medieval and modern objects (ceramic, bullet casings, 19th C glass, Fe nails, hooks, tarp ringlets, plastic wheel and copper alloy badge pin labelled JCE 'Junior Christian Endeavour'. These finds indicating a relatively recent formation/disturbance, particularly evident at the west end of the trench.	SF 501-SF 508
5	502	Structure	A sub-circular ring of large semi-rounded boulders set upright and regularly spaced (approximately 0.57m between boulders). Boulders measure c. 1m by 0.4m to 0.6m by 0.5m and represent local water rounded stones. The stones form a kerb which encloses an area c.14m diameter. The kerb is set on a band of white sand (512) and retains an bank of stony material (506).	Outer kerb of cairn.	-
5	503	Deposit	Formed of loosely compacted rounded stones (approximately 0.35x0.25m). Stones are generally deposited in a layer up to c. 2 stone deep surviving to a depth of 0.30m. The deposition of these stones is irregular and placed directly atop (508)/ (512). More often only a single layer of stone was present over (508) at the centre of the cairn potentially indicating more stone had been removed here.	Stone deposit forming cairn structure. Its loose nature could imply it is stone rapidly deposited filling a gap between [507] and [506] leaving voids between the stones which have not filled with soil. This deposit of cairn stone has likely been reduced (attested to in documentary sources) as a result of stone robbing.	SF 509; quartz

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
5	504	Deposit	Angular stones (0.1x0.2m in scale) below and mixed with (501) topsoil. Inclusions of 10% gravel, and occasional charcoals. Abuts (505) to the west covering an area in the trench of 5m by 2m, and a depth of 0.11m.	Represents a 19th-20th century levelling deposit of redeposited material related to the route into the quarry.	-
5	505	Deposit	Type-1 angular gravel (0.01x0.05m), dark greyish and loose gravel. Deposit has a north to south orientation through the cairn forming part of a road surface which overlays deposits (504) and (503). It covers an area across the cairn 17m in length and 5m in width, with a depth of 0.20m where visible in the trench.	20th century modern deposit related to resurfacing of road into quarry.	-
5	506	Structure	A low bank of stony material around the edge of the cairn comprised of rounded localised river stones (0.2x0.2m) and retained or delineated by 'kerb' of small boulders set into (512) to the west and larger kerb [502] to the east. The bank is 2m wide and 1.95m in length in the trench but appears to form a continuous feature around the whole cairn. The bank survives to a height of 0.42m.	These stones form the outer bank of material constructed with large kerb [502] to delineate the outer edge of the cairn. The bank material comprises notably smaller rounded stones than other parts of the cairn construction which could indicate either careful selection of material or perhaps a distinct phase of construction from other parts of the cairn.	-

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
5	507	Structure	Formed of two parallel concentric lines of medium to large (0.5x0.3m) stones set into (512). Taken together these form a band of stone which is concentric to the outer kerb enclosing the central deposits of the cairn. These large stones are comprised of one course and are characterised by angular/ irregular stones chosen for a flat face which is set up forming a rough face or kerb on both edges of the bank. Overall the internal ring/ embankment is 2.30m in width, 1.97m in length (in trench), and survives to a height of 0.50m.	This stone deposit within the cairn is of a slightly more structural nature than the other deposits of stone, similar in nature to the outer kerb. It forms an inner kerb or ring within the cairn containing the central space which has a distinct burnt deposit (508) different from the other deposits underlying the stones to the east. This inner structure could either relate to an early phase of the cairn - defining an inner space while the cairn was in use and is later covered by the other cairn material as part of a capping deposit. OR it could merely be an artefact of the way the cairn was constructed - with larger stones laid to set out the outline the structure of the cairn initially forming two rings of stone with the gaps in between then filled with more stone to complete the low cairn. The inclusion of these informal interstitial lines of larger stones could have aided in not only	-

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
				defining the initial proposed footprint but also stabilising the cairn material, enabling it to be built higher without collapse and undue slumping of material.	
5	508	Deposit	Mid-yellowish, brown, sandy silt (gravel 20%), firmly compacted. Frequent inclusions of small flecks of charcoal (often smeared throughout the deposit), small rounded stones, and gravel. Length 2.90m, width 1.97m, depth 0.08m. Within this deposit small patches of mid-greyish sand silt, with a similar firm compaction were noticed, these didn't have distinguishable shapes, but SF 510 was recovered from within one of these features indicating they likely represent a mixed deposit.	A layer of disturbed ground localised within the interior of the cairn and bounded by the ring of stones forming the cairn. This deposit is clearly disturbed and small patches of grey charcoal flecked material could indicate this is due to activity (e.g. burning/burial/use of cairn) on this surface occurring within the cairn prior to later deposition of stones capping this deposit.	SF 510; possible lithic

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
5	509	Deposit	Mid-greyish yellow sandy silt (gravel 20%), firmly compacted. Inclusions of infrequent charcoal, and rare rounded stones (0.2x0.2m). Length 4.10m, width 2m, depth 0.25m. Abuts (511).	Sandy deposit of natural alluvial material. Most likely a low naturally formed mound or redeposited natural material laid to prepare ground at base of cairn. The deposit appears naturally formed but if a date from the early pit is derived similar to the date of the cairn material this would need to be reconsidered.	-
5	510	Deposit	Mid-brownish grey, sandy silt clay (peaty), plastic and malleable compaction. Inclusions of frequent rooting/ occasional charcoal. Length 7m, Width 2.20m, depth 0.30m.	Matrix of cairn material. Present around stones (503), (506) and (507) and likely deposited at the same time as the stones forming a relatively coherent deposit across cairn which indicates most likely scenario is a single phase of construction for most components of the cairn.	-
5	511	Deposit	Mid-yellowish grey, sandy silt (30% gravel), loosely compacted, reddish hues throughout relating to mineralisation. Inclusions of occasional charcoal flecks and infrequent small stones (0.2x0.2m). Length 2.30m, width 2,20m, depth 0.30m.	An alluvial deposit, similar to (509). Most likely formed naturally during alluvial events (flooding) however could also represent redeposited natural material laid to prepare ground at base of cairn. Overlies earlier pit [514]. The deposit appears naturally formed but if a	SF 511; flint lithic

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
				date from the pit is derived similar to the date of the cairn material this would need to be reconsidered.	
5	512	Deposit	Mid-grey to white, sandy deposit (gravel 10%), loosely compacted. Inclusions of small stones (0.1x 0.1m), infrequent to sparse charcoal inclusions. Length 4.32m, width 2.20m, depth 0.12m. Over (509). Under (507), (503), (506) stony cairn material. Not present in cairn interior.	Basal deposit of cairn material laid down to level/prepare the ground prior to stony material being deposited. It is not present in interior of cairn which could indicate different formation processes occurring here (see (508)).	-
5	513	Fill	Dark-brownish-black, sandy (50% gravel), loose compaction. Inclusions of very frequent charcoal and very tightly packed stones c. 0.2m by 0.05m. Length 0.65m, Width 0.30m, and Depth 0.15m. Feature extended beyond edge of trench and was on water table so was only partially excavated to characterise.	Fill of pit [514]. Nature of fill and cut could indicate small pit with fire refuse. Some stones appeared heat affected.	Some small fragments of stone included in sample
5	514	Cut	Sub-circular pit, partially within trench and obscured by rapid ingress of ground water. U-shaped profile with sharp break at top of slope, gentle break at base of slope and concave base. Length 0.65m, Width 0.30m, and Depth 0.15m.	Cut of a sub-circular pit filled by (513), cut into natural (500). Relates to earlier phase of activity on low rise near river either entirely pre-dating cairn or related to early phase of ground preparation in relation to cairn.	-
5	515	Deposit	Dark-brown, sandy silty peat, plastic compaction localised at the east end of trench outside of cairn kerb [502]. Inclusion of some densely compacted rounded white stones 0.3m by 0.3m . Deposit extended 2m in width, 1.14m in length, 0.20m in	Deposit could be representing tumble from collapsing stones of cairn however it may also represent denuded remains	-

Trench	Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation	Finds
			depth. Deposit continued to east out of trench.	of a platform or rough surface of stone laid outside the cairn, particularly relevant if the ground here was waterlogged at times.	

Appendix 2. Photographic Register

Photo No.	Trench	Description	Facing
465	1	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 1	SW
466	1	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 1	SW
467	1	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 1	NE
468	1	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 1	NE
469	5	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 5	E
470	5	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 5	E
471	5	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 5	W
472	5	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 5	W
473	3	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 3	NE
474	3	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 3	NE
475	3	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 3	SW
476	3	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 3	SW
477	3	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 3	S
478	3	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 3	S
479	3	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 3	S
480	3	General pre-excavation shot of Trench 3	S
481	3	General pre-excavation shot of kerb [305]	SE
482	3	General pre-excavation shot of kerb [305]	SE
483	3	General pre-excavation shot of kerb [305]	SE
484	3	General pre-excavation shot of kerb [305]	SE
485	1	Record shot of NE extent of Trench 1 showing [106]	SW
486	1	NE face of wall [106]	SW
487	1	Record shot of wall [106]	S
488	1	NE facing face of wall [106]	SW
489	1	Record shot of wall [106]	W
490	1	NE facing face of wall [106] and deposit (107)	SW
491	1	Close up shot of vitrified stone within [106]	-
492	1	Close up shot of vitrified stone within [106]	-
493	1	SE facing section of post-medieval wall in trench 1	NW
494	1	SE facing section of post-medieval wall in trench 1	NW
495	5	General shot of kerbed cairn of trench 5	W
496	5	General shot of kerbed cairn of trench 5	W

Photo No.	Trench	Description	Facing
497	5	General shot of kerbed cairn of trench 5	W
498	5	General shot of kerbed cairn of trench 5	W
499	5	E facing pre-excavation of photo [502] kerb cairn	SW
500	5	E facing pre-excavation of photo [502] kerb cairn	SW
501	5	E facing pre-excavation of photo [502] kerb cairn	SW
502	5	E facing pre-excavation of photo [502] kerb cairn	S
503	5	E facing pre-excavation of photo [502] kerb cairn	S
504	5	E facing pre-excavation of photo [502] kerb cairn	S
505	5	Pre-excavation shot of kerb cairn [502]	W
506	5	Pre-excavation shot of kerb cairn [502]	W
507	5	Pre-excavation shot of kerb cairn [502]	S
508	5	Pre-excavation shot of kerb cairn [502]	S
509	5	Pre-excavation shot of kerb cairn [502]	S
510	5	Pre-excavation shot of kerb cairn [502]	S
511	5	Pre-excavation shot of kerb cairn [502], from rear	E
512	5	Pre-excavation shot of kerb cairn [502], from rear	E
513	5	Modern deposit (505) and modern surface (504)	E
514	5	Modern deposit (505) and modern surface (504)	E
515	5	Modern deposit (505) and modern surface (504)	E
516	5	Hollow (504)	S
517	5	Hollow (504)	S
518	3	Mid-excavation shot of Trench 3, post removal of (301)	NE
519	3	Mid-excavation shot of Trench 3, post removal of (301)	NE
520	3	Mid-excavation shot of Trench 3, post removal of (301)	NE
521	3	Mid-excavation shot of Trench 3, post removal of (301)	NW
522	3	Mid-excavation shot of Trench 3, post removal of (301)	NW
523	3	Post topsoil overbank in trench 3	NW
524	3	Close up of possible quern stone/stone setting [307]	SE
525	3	Close up of possible quern stone/stone setting [307]	SE
526	3	Close up of possible quern stone/stone setting [307]	NE
527	3	Close up of possible quern stone/stone setting [307]	NE
528-592	5	Pre-excavation of modern disturbance on cairn	
593	1	Mid-excavation of Trench 1 deposit (108) interior of wall and inner face	SE
594	1	Mid-excavation of Trench 1 deposit (108) interior of wall and inner face	SE
595	1	Mid-excavation of Trench 1 deposit (108) interior of wall and inner face	NE
596	1	Mid-excavation of Trench 1 deposit (108) interior of wall and inner face	NE
597	1	Mid-excavation of Trench 1 deposit (108) interior of wall and inner face	N

Photo No.	Trench	Description	Facing
598	1	Mid-excavation of Trench 1 deposit (108) interior of wall and inner face	N
599	1	Post-excavation of Trench 1 onto bedrock at outer kerb/face	SW
600	1	Post-excavation of Trench 1 onto bedrock at outer kerb/face	SW
601	1	Post-excavation of Trench 1 onto bedrock at outer kerb/face	SW
602	1	Post-excavation of Trench 1 onto bedrock at outer kerb/face	W
603	1	Post-excavation of Trench 1 onto bedrock at outer kerb/face	NW
604	1	Post-excavation of Trench 1 onto bedrock at outer kerb/face	NW
605	3	Pre-excavation of occupation deposit (306) in Trench 3	NE
606	3	Pre-excavation of occupation deposit (306) in Trench 3	NE
607	3	Pre-excavation of occupation deposit (306) in Trench 3	NE
608	1	Outer face of wall on bedrock	SW
609	1	Outer face of wall on bedrock	SW
610	1	Outer face of wall on bedrock	SW
611	1	Pre-excavation of voided rubble deposit in NE corner in Trench 1	NW
612	1	Pre-excavation of voided rubble deposit in NE corner in Trench 1	NW
613	1	Pre-excavation of voided rubble deposit in NE corner in Trench 1	NW
614	1	NE facing section of deposits under wall	SW
615	1	NE facing section of deposits under wall	SW
616	1	NE facing section of deposits under wall	SW
617	1	NW facing section of subsoil on bedrock	SE
618	1	NW facing section of subsoil on bedrock	SE
619	1	NW facing section of subsoil on bedrock	SE
620	1	Post excavation of sondage to outside of wall with later Structure	SE
621	1	Post excavation of sondage to outside of wall with later Structure	SE
622	1	Post excavation of sondage to outside of wall with later Structure	SE
623	1	Post excavation of sondage to outside of wall with later Structure	SW
624	1	Post excavation of sondage to outside of wall with later Structure	SW
625	1	Post excavation of sondage to outside of wall with later Structure	SW

Photo No.	Trench	Description	Facing
626	1	Post excavation of sondage to outside of wall with later Structure	SW
627	1	NE facing section of deposit by outer face of wall	SW
628	1	NE facing section of deposit by outer face of wall	SW
629	1	NE facing section of deposit by outer face of wall	SW
630	1	NE facing section of deposit by outer face of wall	SW
631	3	Working shot of trench 3	NE
632	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
633	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
634	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
635	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
636	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
637	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
638	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
639	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
640	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
641	3	Inner face of kerb [303] in trench 3	NE
642	3	Kerb [303]	NW
643	3	Stone with wedge cut out in [304]	NW
644	3	Kerb [303]	N
645	3	Kerb [303]	N
646	3	Kerb [303]	N
647-648	3	Mid-excavation (503)/(510) Cairn Deposit	E
649	5	Mid-excavation oblique	NE
650-651	5	Mid-excavation (507-2) plan	W
652	5	Mid-excavation (507-2)/(503) oblique	W
653-654	5	Mid-excavation (507-1)/(503) plan	E
655	5	Mid-excavation (507-2)/(503) oblique	E
656-658	5	Mid-excavation (506) embankment blank	E
659-661	5	Mid-excavation (502) cairn curb	W
662-665	5	Mid-excavation (502) cairn curb	W
666-668	5	Mid-excavation (502) cairn slope of kerb, S facing section	N
669-671	5	Mid-excavation south facing section (507)	W
672-676	5	Mid-excavation south facing section (503)	N
677	5	Oblique south facing section	N
678-840		Cairn Trench 5 Photogram	VAR
841-851		Trench 1 Post-excavation of slot through wall 110-112	
852-855	5	Post-excavation overview of cairn (508)	E
856-857	5	Post-excavation (507) Plan	N
858	5	Post-excavation (507) oblique	N
859-860	5	Post-excavation (506) plan	N
861-862	5	Post-excavation (506) oblique	N
863-864	5	Post-excavation (506) + (516) oblique	W
865	5	Post-excavation (506) + (516) oblique	SW
866-867	5	Post-excavation (506) Plan	S

Photo No.	Trench	Description	Facing
868-873	5	Post-excavation (502)/(506) Plan	W
874-878	5	Post-excavation (502)/(506) Plan	E
879-880	5	Post-excavation (507-1) plan	W
881-882	5	Post-excavation (507-1) east facing section	W
883-884	5	Post-excavation(507-2) west facing section	E
885-888	5	Deposit (508) plan	E
889-890	5	Unique stone (507-2) Plan	S
891-1043	5	Post-excavation photogrammetry of cairn	VAR
1044	3	(303) Inner wall face and sondage through wall	NE
1045-1047	3	Wall core (304)	SE
1048	3	Wall core (304)	NW
1049	3	SE facing section of wall core (304)	NW
1050 - 1051	3	SE facing section of wall core (304)	NW
1052 - 1053	3	SE facing section of wall core (304)	N
1054 - 1056	3	Slot through wall core (304)	SW
1057 - 1058	3	Slot through wall core (304)	S
1059	3	Slot through wall core (304) showing detail of bedrock	S
1060 - 1061	3	Post excavation of trench 3	NE
1062 - 1064	3	Post excavation of trench 3	NE
1065 - 1067	3	Post excavation of trench 3	NE
1068	2	Pre excavation of wall core (208) and wall [210]	NE
1069	2	Pre excavation of wall core (208) and wall [210]	NE
1070	2	Pre excavation of wall core (208) and wall [210]	NE
1071	2	Pre excavation of wall core (208) and wall [210]	SW
1072	2	Pre excavation of wall core (208) and wall [210]	SW
1073 - 1076	4	North facing section of excavation of south slot in trench 4	S
1077-1078	4	Plan shot of south slot in trench 4	E
1079 - 1085	2	Mid excavation of trench 2	SW
1086 - 1087	4	South facing section of trench 4	N
1088 - 1090	4	South facing section of trench 4	N
1091	4	Plan shot of south slot in trench 4	E
1092 - 1095	5	South facing section of cairn (508)/(511)	N
1096 - 1099	5	South facing section of cairn (509)/(508)/(511)/(512)	N
1100 - 1103	5	South facing section of cairn (509)/(512)/507	N

Photo No.	Trench	Description	Facing
1104 - 1107	5	South facing section of cairn (509)/(512)/503	N
1108 - 1111	5	South facing section of cairn (510)/502/506/(512)	N
1112 - 1117	5	South facing section of cairn (506)/(502)	N
1118 - 1121	5	South facing section of cairn (515)	N
1122 - 1125	5	Plan photo of cairn 502/506	W
1126 - 1129	5	Plan photo of cairn 507/508	E
1130 - 1131	5	Plan photo of cairn 507/508 oblique	NE
1132 - 1133	5	Plan photo of pit [514]	E
1134 - 1135	5	Plan photo of pit [514]	S
1136 - 1137	5	Plan photo of cairn 502/506	W
1138 - 1141	5	South facing section of 502/506 vertical scale	N
1142 - 1147	5	South facing section of 509/512 vertical scale	N
1148 - 1153	5	South facing section of 508/511 vertical scale	N
1154 - 1157	5	South facing section of 508/511 vertical scale oblique	NE
1158 - 1159	5	Working shot of cairn	
1160 - 1161	5	South facing section of cairn 511/508 elevated	N
1162 - 1163	5	South facing section of cairn 512/509 elevated	N
1164 - 1165	2	Post-excavation of trench 2	SE
1166 - 1168	2	Post-excavation of trench 2	NW
1169 - 1171	2	SE facing section of trench 2	NW
1172 - 1173	2	SE facing section of trench 2	NW
1174 - 1175	2	SE facing section of trench 2	NW
1176	2	SE facing section of trench 2	NW
1177 - 1178	2	SE facing section of trench 2	NW
1179	2	SE facing section of trench 2	NW
1180	2	Post excavation of trench 2	NE
1181 - 1183	2	Post excavation of trench 2	NE
1184	2	NE facing section of trench 2	SE
1185	2	NE facing section of trench 2	SE

Photo No.	Trench	Description	Facing
1186	2	NE facing section of trench 2	SE
1187	2	NE facing section of trench 2	SE
1188 - 1189	2	NE facing section of trench 2	SE
1190 - 1191	2	Stone setting (205)	SE
1192 - 1193		Cu 501 bullet case	
1194 - 1195		Cu 504 ringlets	
1196 - 1198		Cu 507 bullet case	
1199 - 1200		Cr 502 white ceramic	
1201 - 1205		Gl 503 clean glass/ one fragment stamped 1806	
1206 - 1207		Fe 504 iron object misc.	
1208 - 1210		Pl 506 plastic wheel orange	
1211 - 1212		Gl glass slag droplets	
1213 - 1215		St 102 fire cracked stone	
1216 - 1217		St 103 vitrified stone	
1218 - 1219		St 101 vitrified stone	
1220 - 1221		St 108 vitrified stone	
1222 - 1224		St 105 vitrified stone	
1225 - 1226		St 107 vitrified stone	
1227 - 1228		St 200 quartz	
1229 - 1232		Cu 508 metal badge	
1233 - 1234		St 108 lithium	
1235 - 1236		St 302 lithium	
1237 - 1238		St 300 lithium	
1239 - 1240		St 509 quartz	
1241 - 1243		St 511 lithium	
1244 - 1247		St 510 lithium	

Appendix 3. Finds Register

Find number	Context	Description	Notes
101	101	Vitrified stone in topsoil over wall collapse	Sample taken in case different types of vitrification can be identified in different parts of wall and any further detail on type of vitrification event confirmed. Also need nice photo of the best bits of vit for publication.
102	108	Fire cracked stone	confirm ID
103	103	Vitrified stone	see above
104	107	Burnt bone	
105	102	Vitrified stone	see above
106	108	Flint ?debitage	
107	107	Possible metal working waste or vit stone	confirm if vit stone or slag
108	104	3xsmall fragments of vitrified stone	see above - this is from wall core - is it demonstrating anything different from larger slaggier lumps in wall collapse?
200	201	Medium sized rounded quartz pebble	is this natural? Not native stone on hilltop, confirm if worked.
301	301	Flint ?debitage	
302	306	2 x small fragments of ?debitage	
501	501	Bullet casing	ID useful if can firm up date of disturbance
502	501	5 fragment modern ceramic	
503	501	7 Glass modern fragments	
504	501	Iron Objects	discarded as clearly relate to modern waste
505	501	Cu rings	discarded as clearly relate to modern waste
506	501	Modern plastic	discarded as clearly relate to modern waste
507	501	Bullet casing	ID useful if can firm up date of disturbance
508	501	Badge	Junior Christian Endeavour pin badge, enamel? Often relates to c. 1st quarter 20th century
509	503	Quartz	natural? Retained because in cairn context could be significant natural but deliberate inclusion. Confirm if worked.
510	508	Possible lithic	
511	511	Flint lithic	

Appendix 4. Sample Register

Trench	Context	Quantity	Volume (L)	Notes
1	107	2	20	date occupation and understand inclusions
1	108	2	20	date occupation and understand inclusions
1	104	1	10	Wall core deposit for understanding inclusions and nature of material better
1	111	1	10	Deposit above flat stone - TPQ wall
1	112	2	20	Under flat stones - TPQ earlier activity
1	110	3	30	Deposit on interface of wall directly on bedrock
2	202	3	30	
2	205	1	10	
2	209	2	20	
3	306	1	10	occupation material around stone setting
3	308	1	5	occupation material up abutting rampart interior
3	309	2	20	Burnt bone in small bag in tub so it doesn't dissolve
3	309	1	2	Larger fragments of burnt wood within wall core in tub with sample
4	404	1	1	Burnt bone bag - taken as larger frag
4	403	1	10	Charcoal, burnt bone looking for any organics grain/pollen etc to indicate what has been washed into hollow
4	404	1	10	Charcoal, burnt bone looking for any organics grain/pollen etc to indicate what has been washed into hollow
5	508	2	20	Rich charcoal deposit
5	509 - under 507 - 1	1	10	Occasional charcoal
5	509 - under 507 - 2	1	10	Probably more (509) occasional charcoal
5	509 - under 506	2	20	Possible (512) contamination occasional charcoal

Trench	Context	Quantity	Volume (L)	Notes
5	509 - between 506/507	1	10	Occasional charcoal sandy deposit
5	510 - between 507 - 1	2	20	Frequent charcoal construction/bonding soil
5	510 - between 506	1	10	Occasional charcoal bonding material
5	511	1	10	Lower sand deposit in cairn occasional charcoal
5	512 - under 506	1	5	Occasional charcoal
5	512 - under 507	1	5	Occasional charcoal
5	513	1	2	Rich charcoal deposit base of cairn

Appendix 5. Drawing Register

Drawing No.	Description	Scale
1.1	North facing section of trench 1 showing wall face [105] and [106]	1.20
2.1	North west facing section of trench 2	1.20
2.2	South west facing of trench 2	1.20
3.1	North west facing section of trench 3 showing [303] and [305]	1.20
4.1	South facing section of trench 4	1.20
4.2	North facing section for trench 4 slot	1.20
4.3	Auger depth notations next to trench 4	Not to scale
5.1	Plan of trench 5 post-excavation	1:20
5.2	South facing section of trench 5 post excavation	1:20
PG-1	Pre-ex plan of wall in trench 1	1:20
PG-2	Post-ex plan of wall and bedrock in trench 1	1:20

Drawing No.	Description	Scale
PG-3	Pre-ex plan of trench 2	1:20
PG-4	Post-ex overlay of slot in trench 2	1:20
PG-5	Pre-ex plan of annexe wall in trench 3 after tumble removal	1:20
PG-6	Post-ex overlay of slot in trench 3	1:20
PG-7	Plan of trench 4 showing slots	1:20
PG-8	Pre-ex plan of trench 5 showing cairn material at reduced level	1:20
PG-9	Mid-ex plan of trench 5 showing cairn rings and kerb features	1:20
PG-10	Post-ex overlay of trench 5 showing slot and basal deposit	1:20

Figures

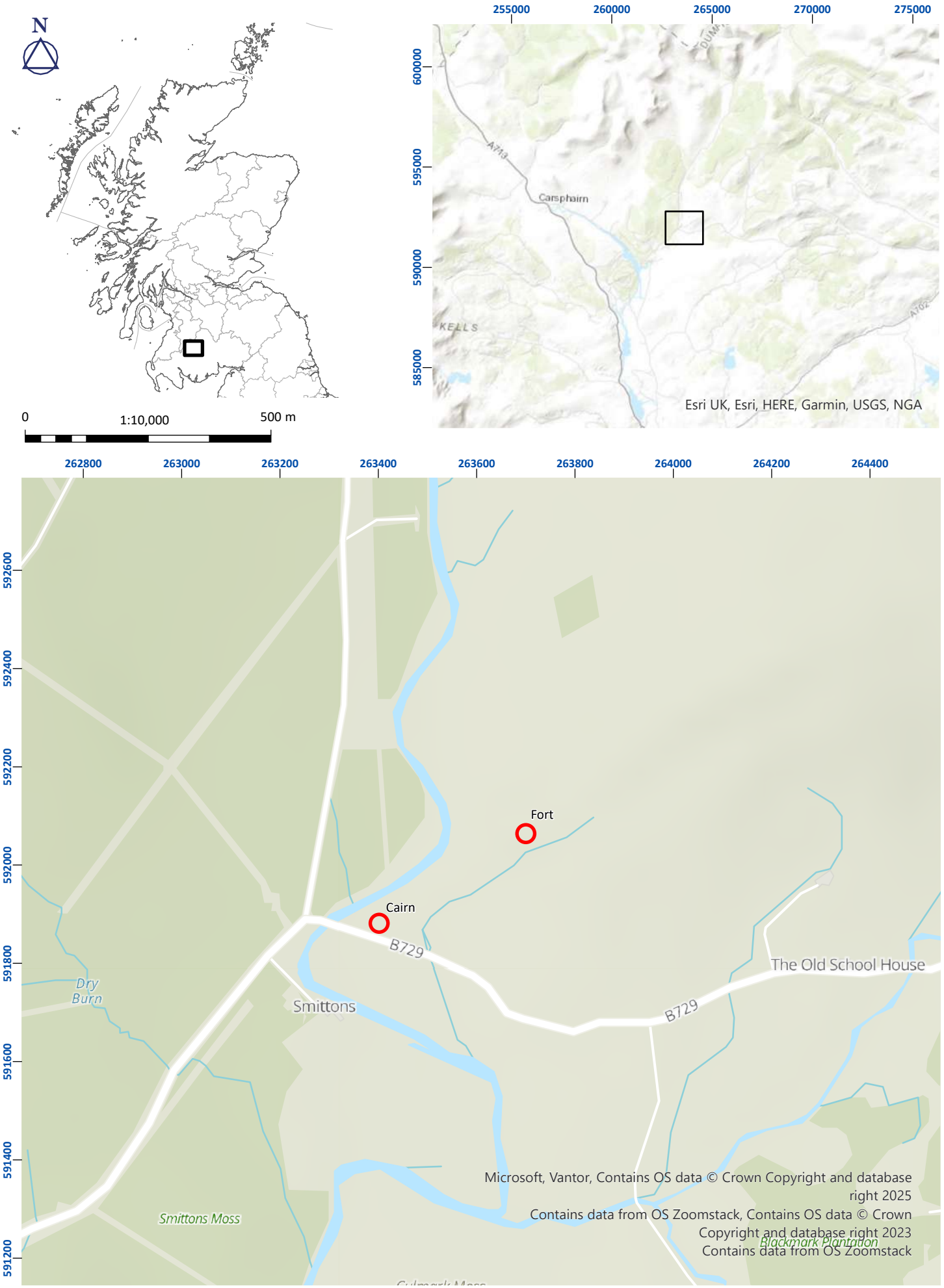


Figure 1: Site location plan

01/27658/DSR/01/01

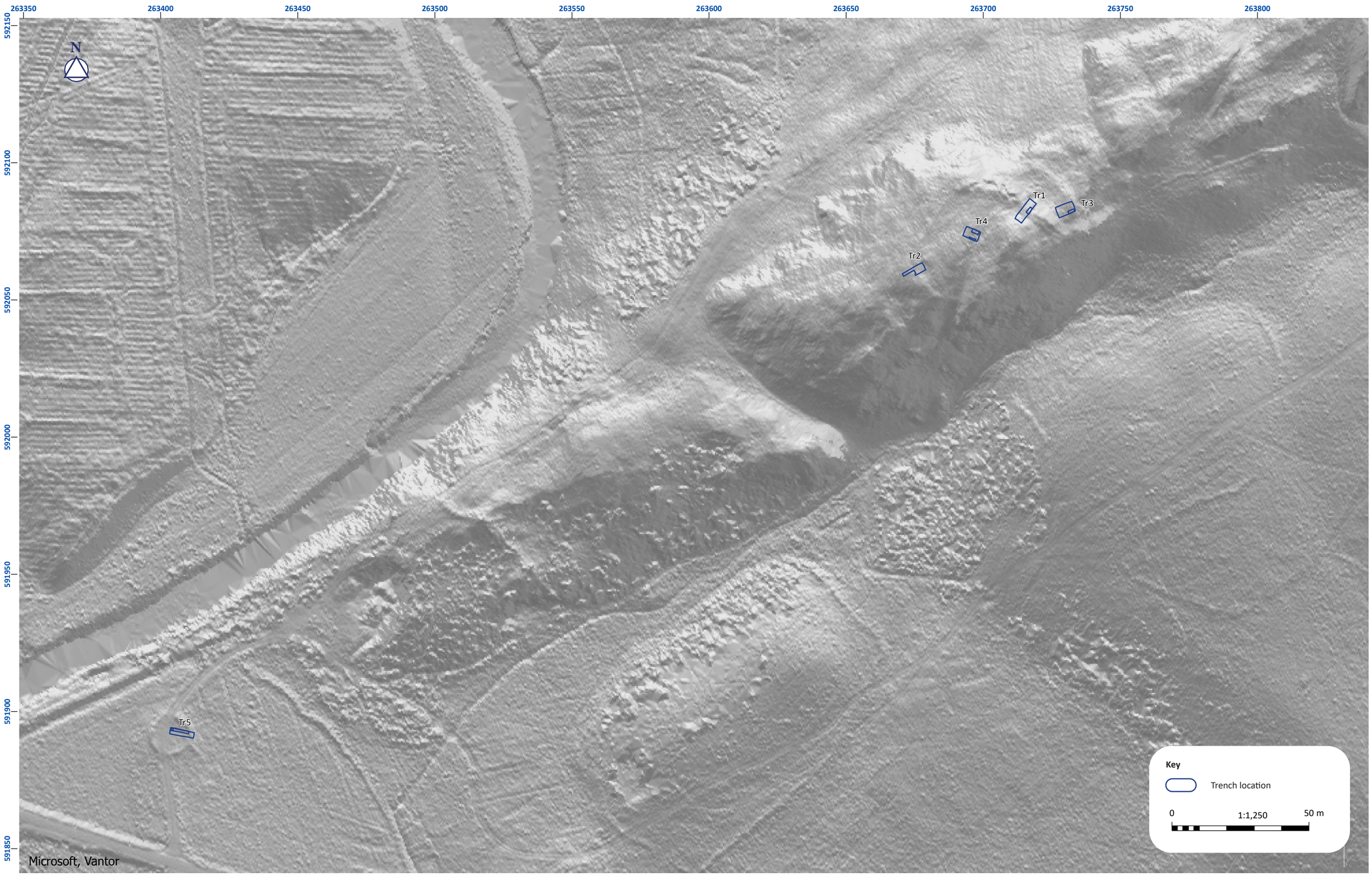


Figure 2: Overview of Trenches

01/27658/DSR/02/01



Figure 3: Fort Trench Plan

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Figure 4: Cairn Trench Plan

01/27658/DSR/04/01



Figure 5: Trench 1 plan

01/27658/DSR/05/01

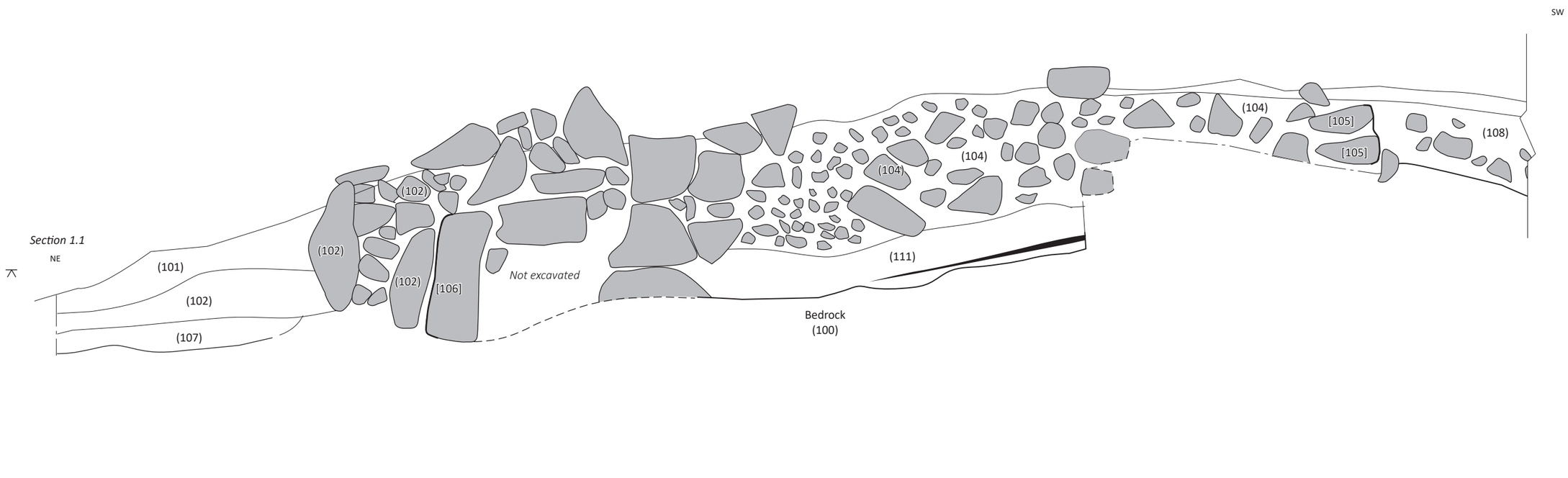


Figure 6: Trench 1 NW facing section

01/27658/DSR/06/01

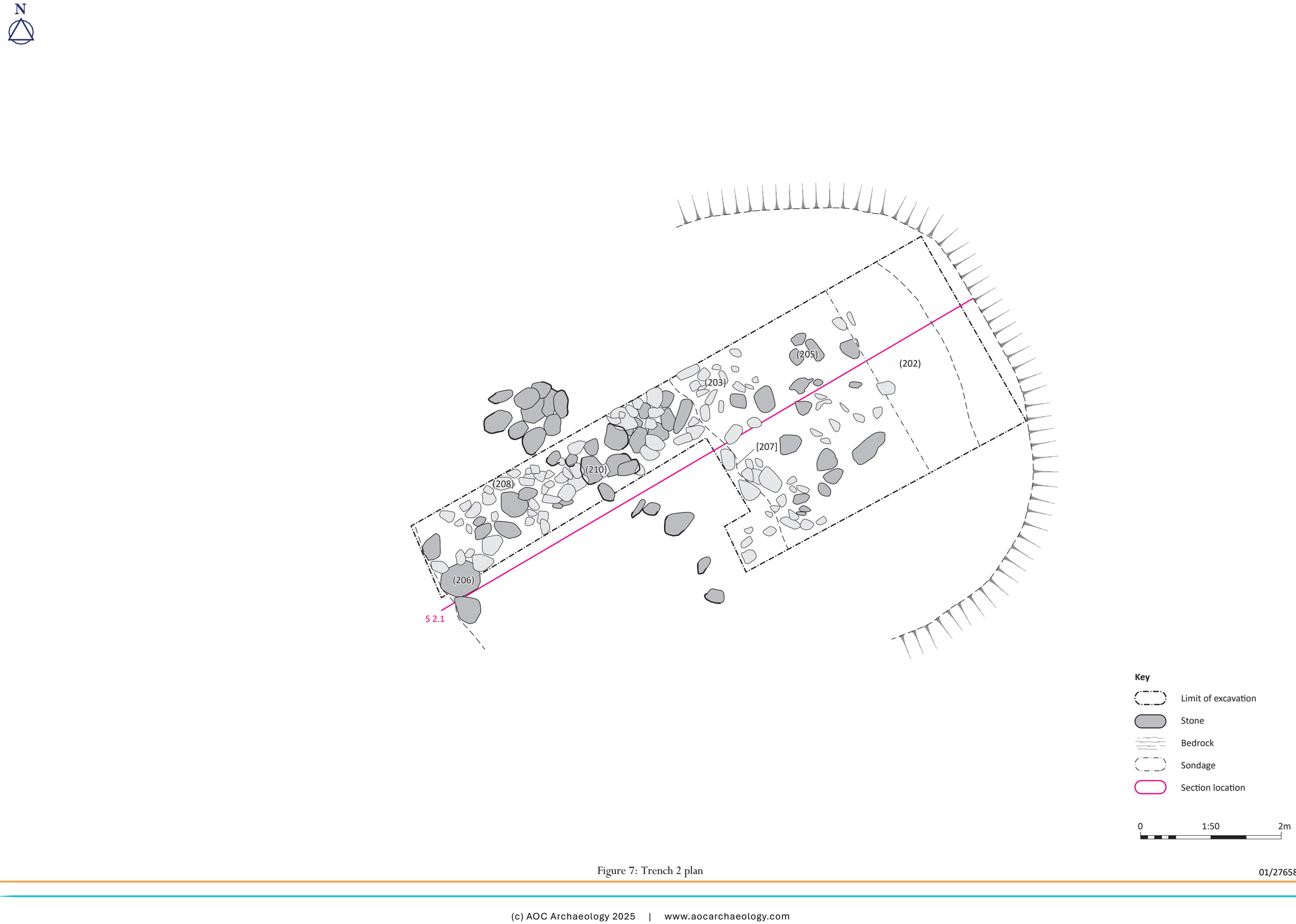


Figure 7: Trench 2 plan

01/27658/DSR/07/01

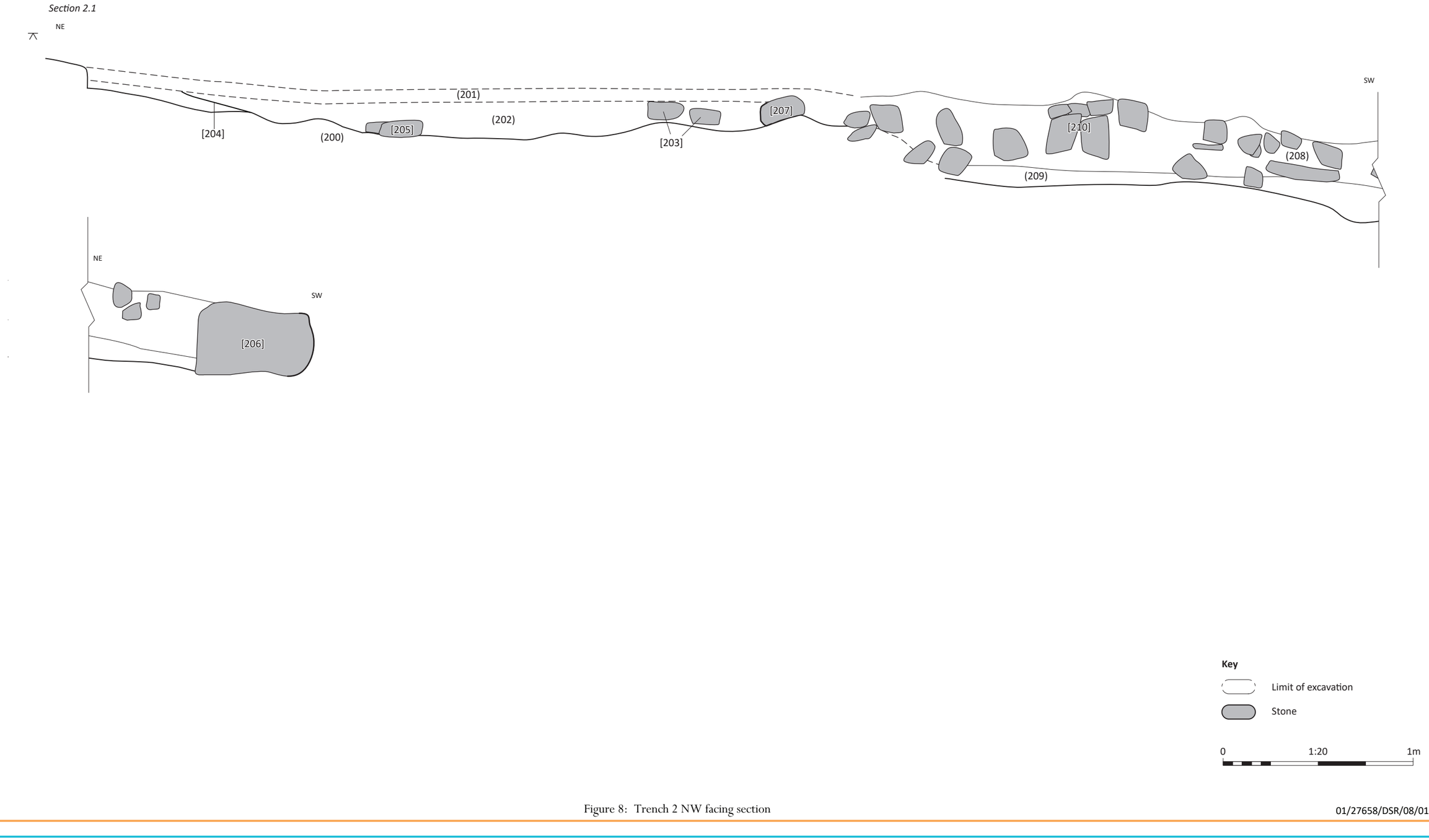


Figure 8: Trench 2 NW facing section

01/27658/DSR/08/01

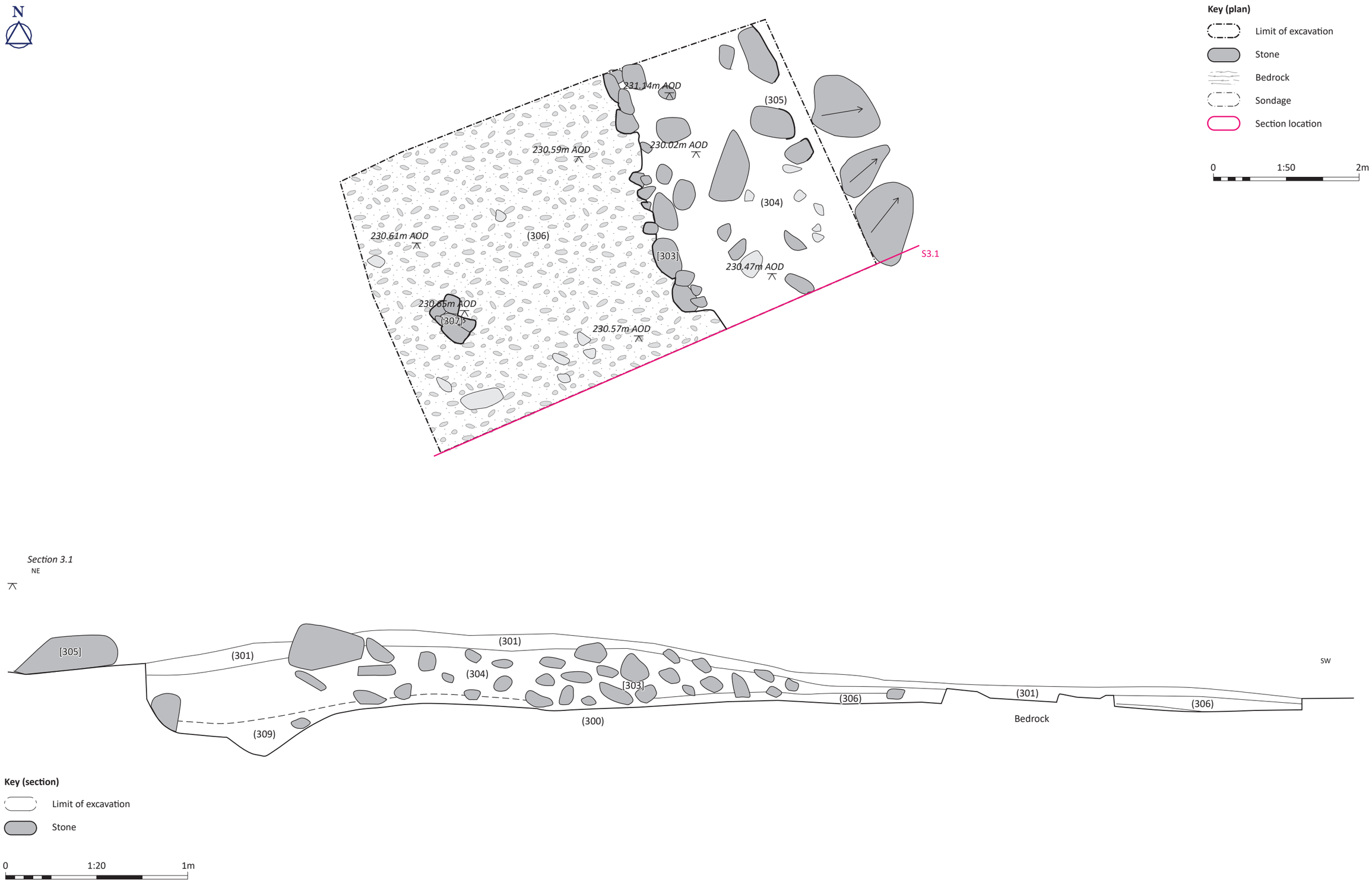


Figure 9: Trench 3 Plan and NW facing section

01/27658/DSR/09/01



Figure 10: Trench 4 Plan and NW facing section

01/27658/DSR/10/01



Figure 11: Mid-excavation Plan of Cairn

01/27658/DSR/11/01

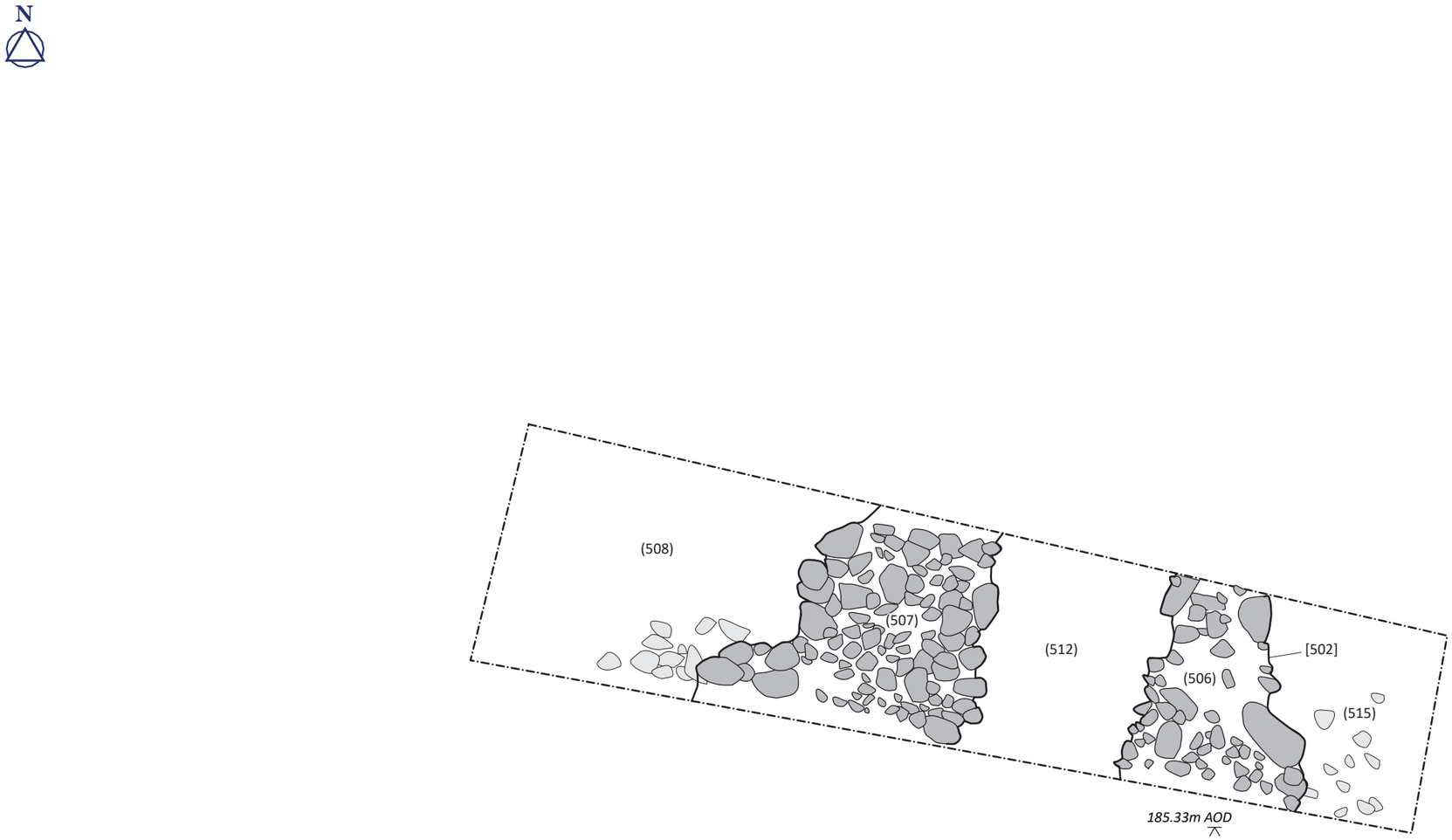


Figure 12: Post-excavation Plan of Cairn

01/27658/DSR/12/01

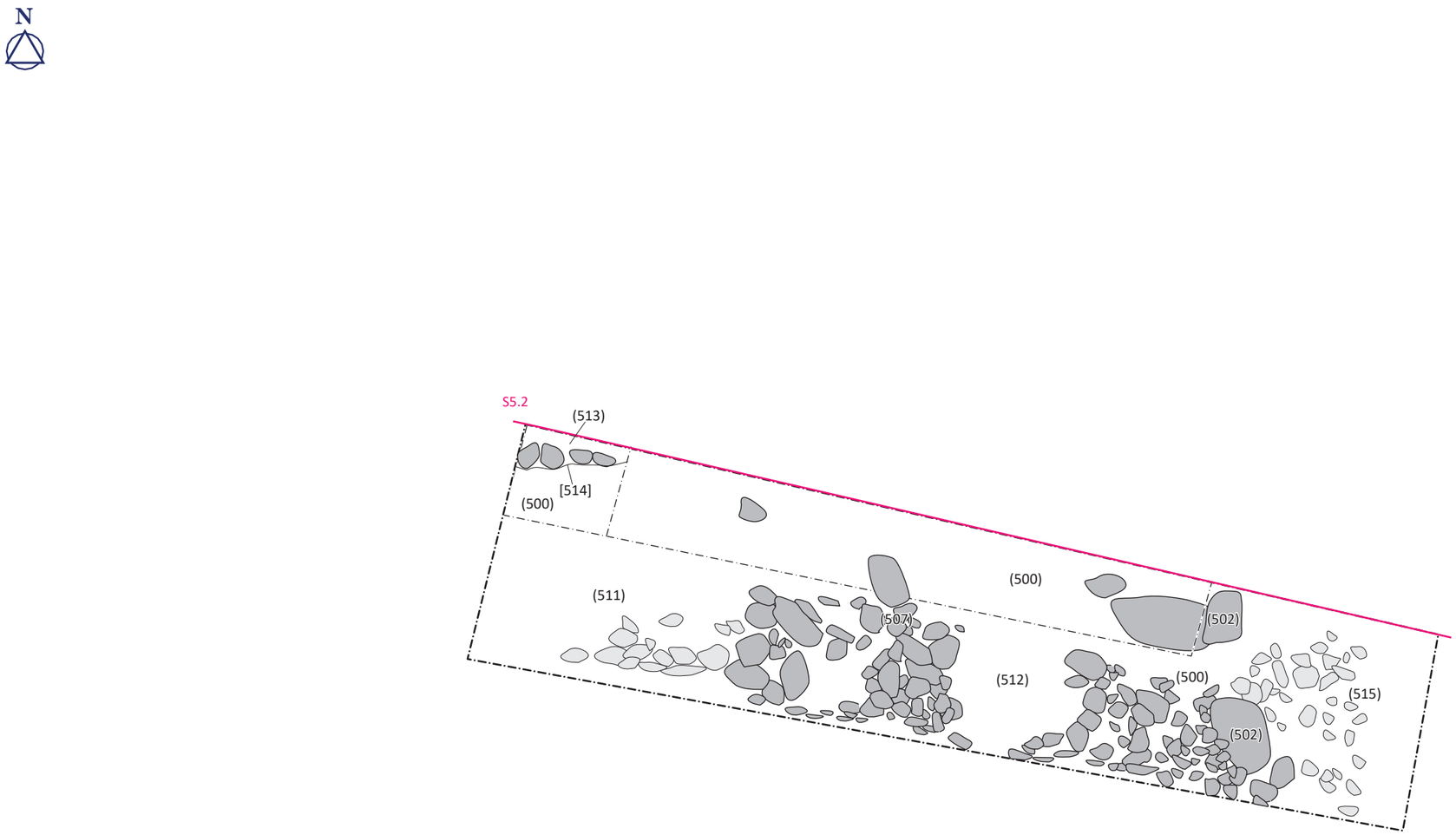


Figure 13: Post-excavation plan of Trench 5

01/27658/DSR/13/01

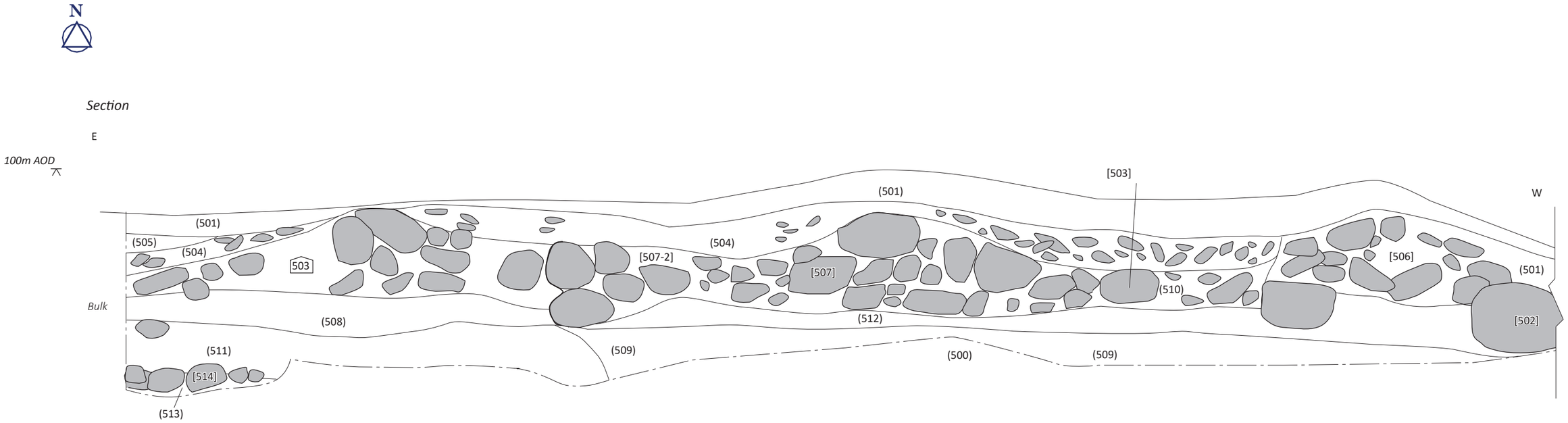


Figure 12: Trench 5 south facing section

01/27658/DSR/12/01

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