



MONITORING REPORT: No. 276

Between 51 and 53 Castor Bay Road

Lurgan

Co. Armagh

AE/13/214

Dermot Redmond

Site Specific Information

Site Name: Between 51 and 53 Castor Bay Road, Lurgan, Co. Armagh

Townland: Liscorran

SMR No. : ARM 006:002

State Care Scheduled Other [delete as applicable]

Grid Ref.: J 07886094

County: Armagh

Excavation Licence No. : AE/13/214

Planning Ref / No. : Q/2013/0054/F

Dates of Monitoring: 19th December 2013

Archaeologist(s) Present: Dermot Redmond

Brief Summary:

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at a site between 51 and 53 Castor Bay Road in Liscorran townland in Lurgan, Co. Armagh. The work was requested in response to a planning application for a new dwelling and garage. The proposed development site is adjacent to the site of a "fort" or rath (NISM No. ARM 006:002). Three trenches were excavated during the course of the evaluation, ranging in size from 2m x 11m to 2m x 30m. No finds or features of archeological interest were found in any of the trenches and it is recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is undertaken.

Type of monitoring:

Excavation of three test trenches by mechanical excavator equipped with a 'sheugh' bucket under archaeological supervision.

Size of area opened:

Three trenches each 2m wide and ranging 11-30m long.

Current Land Use: Greenfield

Intended Land Use: Residential

Brief account of the monitoring

Introduction

The application site for the proposed new dwelling is located on the outskirts of Lurgan, Co. Armagh (Figures 1 and 2). The site, between 51 and 53 Castor bay Road, consists of a small plot, 40m long and ranging in width from 25m-35m. It is overgrown with vegetation and the ground level is uneven, as seen in the general record shots of the site (Plates 1-3).

The "fort" or rath (NISMR ARM 006:002) lies to east of the site. Very little remains of the site. It is described in the NISMR as being scarcely visible on its northern side, and that the arc of the perimeter is discernible as a slight scarp. In the Ordnance Survey maps, the description for the site changed from "fort" in 1835, to "site of fort" by 1862, which would suggest that some levelling had occurred during that period.

The evaluation took place as part of the planning application for a new dwelling and garage. It was requested by Gina Baban of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Historic Monuments Unit.

Excavation

Three test trenches, each measuring 2m wide and 11-30m long were excavated at the site in the approximate positions shown on Figure 3. The trenches were excavated to the surface of the natural subsoil which was encountered at depths of between 0.40-0.60m.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located 25m from the western field boundary and 9m from the northern boundary. It was oriented North-South, and was 2m wide and 26m long (Plate 4). The uppermost layer in Trench 1 consisted of the sod and topsoil layer (c101) which was a mid to dark brown silty loam of loose consistence. The layer was 0.10m thick.

Below the topsoil was a thick layer of grey-brown clay (c102), which contained some large rounded to sub-rounded stone inclusions, ranging in size from 0.10-0.20m long. The layer was 0.40-0.50m thick. A terracotta water pipe was present within this layer (Plate 5), 13m from the northern edge of the trench. The pipe was approximately 0.10m in diameter.

This clay overlay the subsoil (c103), which was orange-grey boulder clay. The surface of the subsoil was slightly shallower at the northern edge of the trench, but was up to 0.60m deep at the southern end. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance in Trench 1.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was located 6m to the west of Trench 1 and was aligned parallel to it. It was 9.0m from the northern field boundary. The trench was 2m wide and 30m long (Plate 6). The uppermost layer of Trench 2 was the sod and topsoil layer (c201) which was a mid to dark brown silty loam of loose consistence. The layer was 0.10m thick.

Below the topsoil was a thick layer of grey-brown clay (c202), which contained some large rounded to sub-rounded stone inclusions, ranging in size from 0.10-0.20m

long. The layer was 0.30-0.50m thick. The terracotta water pipe from Trench 1 was also present within this layer (Plate 7), 15.80m from the northern edge of the trench.

This clay overlay the natural subsoil (c203), an orange-grey boulder clay, which was encountered at a depth of 0.40m to 0.60m. There were no finds or features of archaeological interest in Trench 2.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was located 11.0m to the west of Trench 2 and aligned parallel to it. It was 9m from the northern field boundary. The trench was 2m wide and 11m long (Plate 8). The uppermost layer of Trench 3 was the sod and topsoil layer (c301) which was a mid to dark brown silty loam of loose consistence. The layer was 0.10m thick.

Below the topsoil was a layer of light brown silty loam (c302), of loose consistence. It contained some small sub-rounded to rounded stone inclusions, ranging in size from 0.05-0.10m. The layer was between 0.45-0.50m.

This silty loam overlay the natural subsoil (c303), which again was orange-grey boulder clay. There were no finds or features of archaeological interest in Trench 3.

Conclusions

No finds or features of archaeological interest were found during the evaluation. It is not thought that the proposed development will impinge on any unknown archaeological deposits and therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is carried out. A short summary will be prepared for inclusion in the annual '*Excavations*' bulletin.

Archive:

Finds: N/A

Photographs:

The digital images taken during the evaluation are archived within the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast.

Plans / Drawings: N/A

Signed: _____

Date: _____

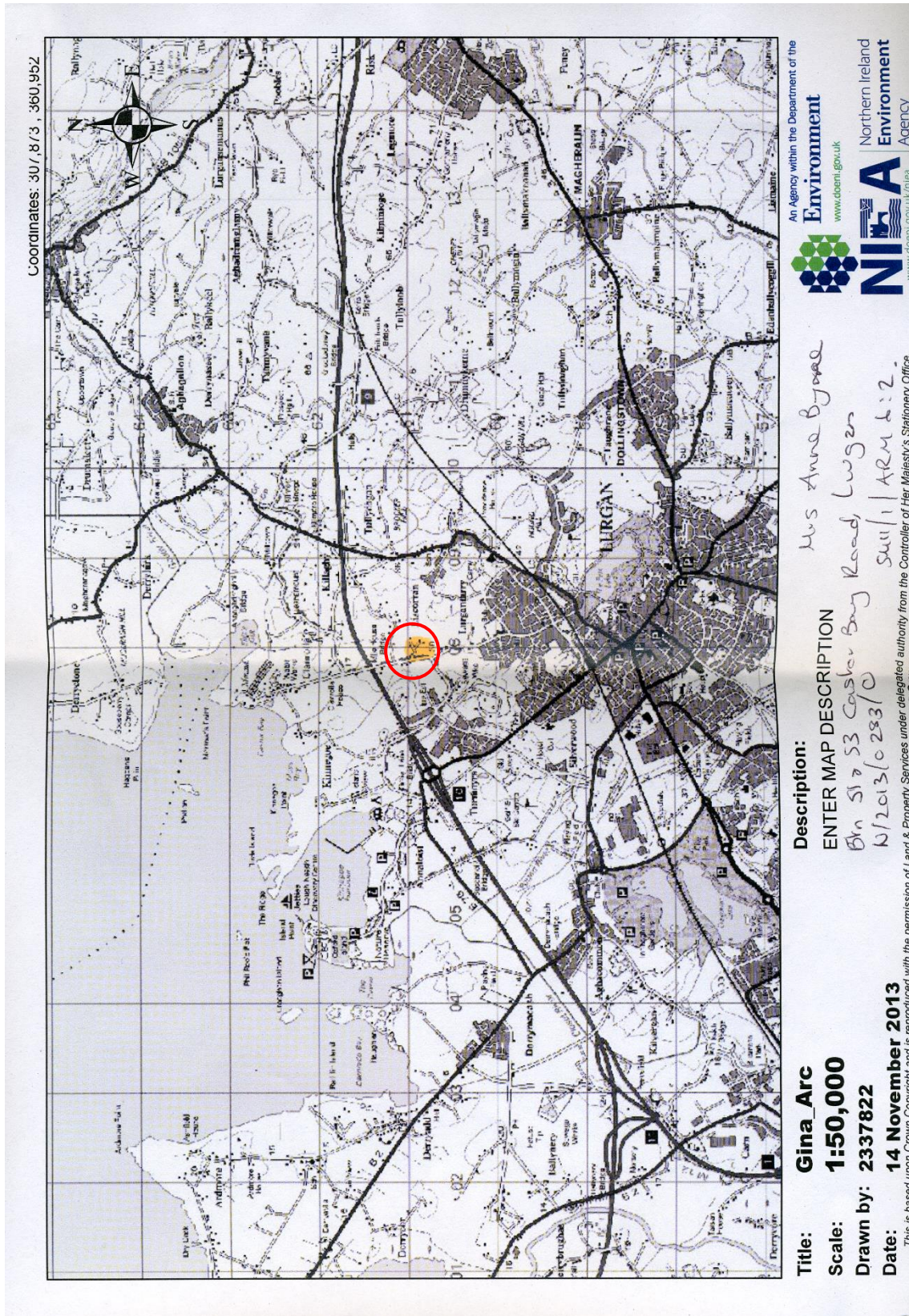


Figure 1: General location map with location of the site marked by the red circle

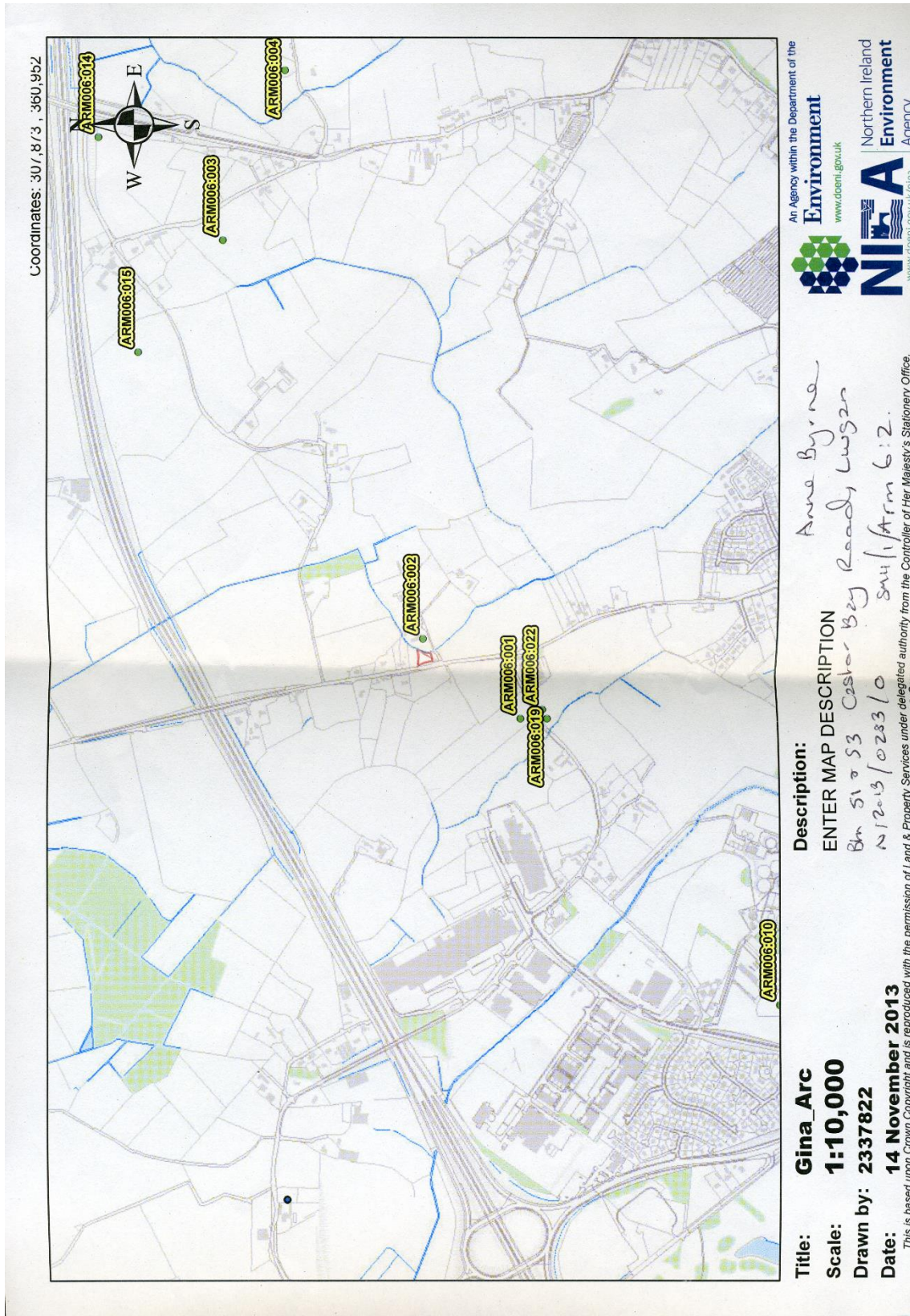


Figure 2 – Detailed location map showing location of site (outlined in red)

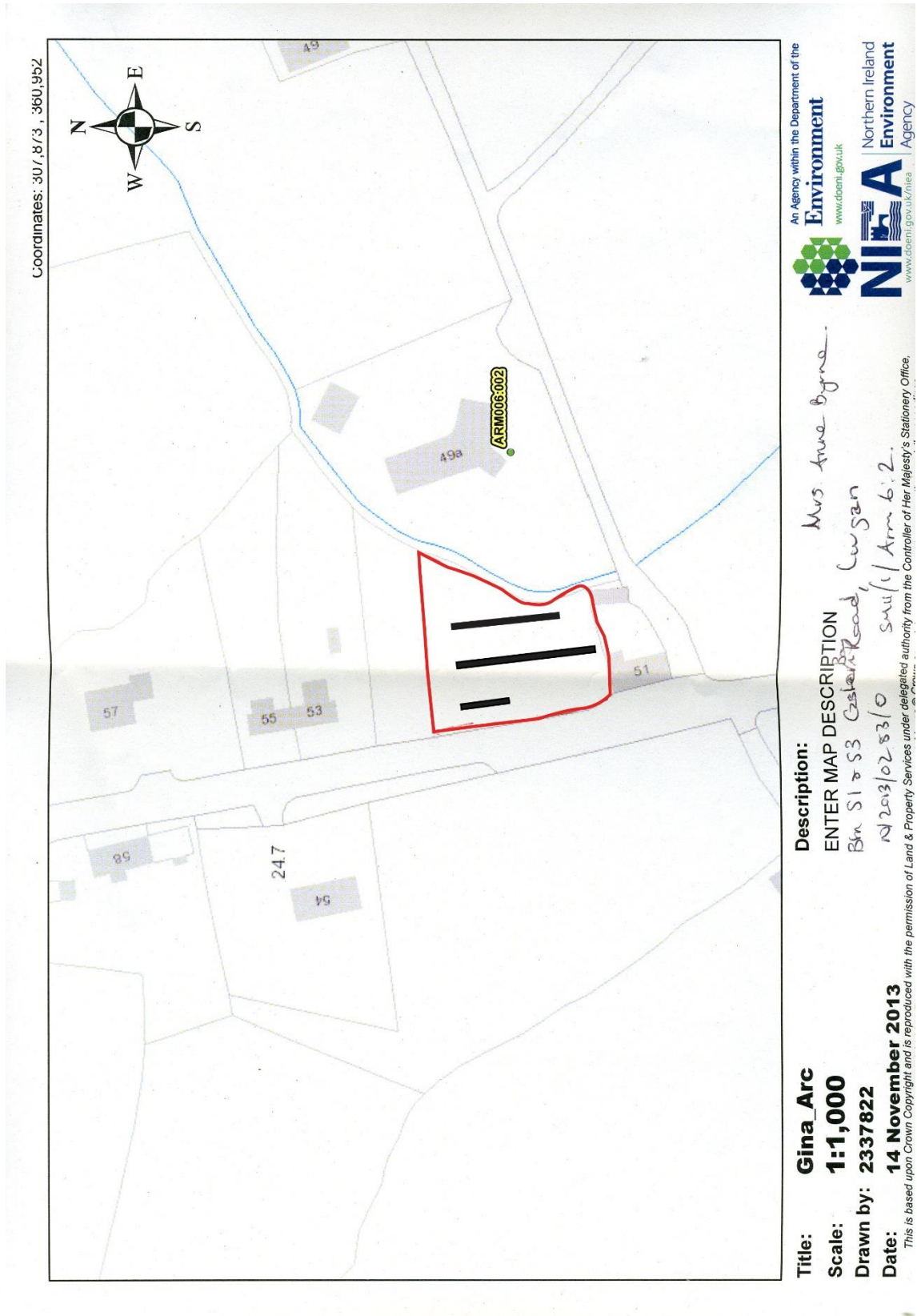


Figure 3 – Site plan showing locations of test trenches



Plate 1 – General view of application site, looking east



Plate 2 – General view of application site, looking southeast



Plate 3 – General view of application site, looking south



Plate 4 – Surface of the subsoil in Trench 1, looking south



Plate 5 – The terracotta water pipe in Trench 1

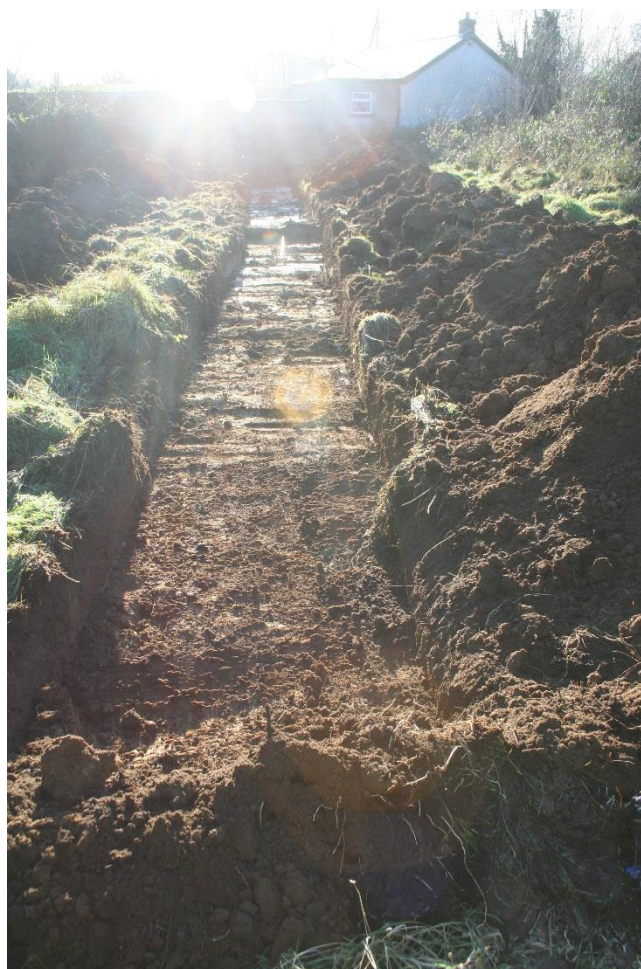


Plate 6 – Surface of the subsoil in Trench 2, looking south



Plate 7 – The terracotta water pipe in Trench 2



Plate 8 – Surface of the subsoil in Trench 3, looking south