

Archaeological Excavation of two long cists
Proposed new house plot,
Adjacent to Marketknowe, Huntly Wood, Longforgan



Long Cist 1 cleaned up prior to excavation looking North, Marketknowe in background



31st August 2012

Introduction (Illus 1)

This programme of archaeological excavation was carried out for Mr Andrew Leonard to satisfy the outstanding archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development, as noted by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust in the Terms of Reference to Planning Application 10/01550/FLL dated 18th November 2010. It was undertaken by the author on Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th July 2011 (site code ROM03); weather conditions were warm with bright sunshine.

Archaeological Background (Illus 2 to 5)

The development area is immediately adjacent to the Market Knowe (Scheduled Monument 2879), a possible large prehistoric burial cairn, locally known as the Roman Knowe. Recent research has identified the Market Knowe as being the 'Hundhil of Longforgan' the site of the Barony Court of Longforgan from at least the 14th century (O'Grady 2008). It is also claimed that the market of Longforgan took place at the Market Knowe until 1633 (Philip 1895). The Ordnance Survey Name Book of 1861 records the discovery of stone coffins in the vicinity of the Knowe however the exact location of these burials is unknown (OS Name Book 1861).

The first phase of archaeological evaluation on this site in December 2010 located a single stone built long cist (Cist 1) to the rear of the standing workshop building in the footprint of the proposed new house and associated drainage (Hall 2010). Following this discovery it was recommended that a further phase of evaluation should be undertaken with the aim of stripping as much of the proposed new development plot as was feasible. This second phase of evaluation located another possible stone long cist 8.40m to the East of Cist 1. Full excavation of both of the cists was recommended prior to redevelopment of the site.

Excavation

The soil and plastic backfill over the top of Cist 1 was carefully removed and an including a buffer zone of 0.30m was cleaned up around it. Excavation then continued by hand with each stage being carefully recorded by photography, planning and field notes. Weather conditions were bright and sunny.

Cist 1 (Illus 6 to 12)

The fully exposed stone long cist was planned and photographed; it was noticeable that the slabs at West end had sunk 0.07m below the level of the large capstone. The two slabs at the west end had probably originally been a single stone that had become split in two longitudinally. When the top large capstone was removed another slab was revealed lying directly below it. When all of the capstones (2) had been removed the a deposit of loose and voided dark grey brown silty clay with occasional stones (4) was exposed filling the entire cist which measured 1.6m in length and was 1m wide. Fill 4 was removed to expose the base of the cist (6) which was constructed of flat stones; there was no trace of any surviving skeletal material at all. Following the recording of the stone base all of the stone lining (3) was removed, a deposit of grey black silty clay and charcoal (5) was revealed behind the western end stone and was sampled for Carbon 14 dating. On final removal of

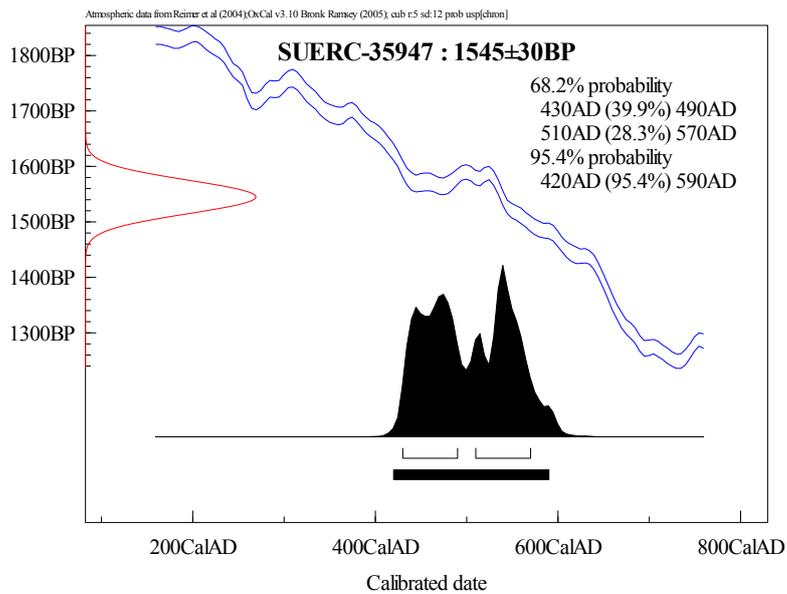
all of the stone lining and fill a cut (7) in the natural clay (8) was revealed. This cut contained deeper narrower slots for both the end stones and two of the diagonally opposing side stones. On final excavation the bottom of the grave cut lay at 0.39m below the level of natural.

Cist 2 (Illus 13 to 15)

The fully exposed long cist was planned and photographed. There was only a single flat stone (9) surviving at its western end which lay on an orange brown silty clay and stones (10). This deposit was removed to reveal a shallow cut (11) in the natural clay (7) which survived to a depth of 0.12m. As in Cist 1 there was no trace of any skeletal material.

Discussion and Conclusions

Both of the long cists can be regarded as satellite burials to the Marketknowe. The C14 date from behind the Western end slab of Cist 1 yielded a calibrated date of 420-590 AD which places that burial firmly into the 'Pictish' period adding yet another dating strand to this complicated monument which may still originate as a Prehistoric burial mound. It is not clear whether the 'stone coffins' recorded in the Ordnance Survey Name Book of 1861 could be associated with these excavated two long cists although the description of them does match. It is of interest that an entry in the Ordnance Survey Name Book of 1854 refers to a similar discovery at the Gallows Knowe, Longforgan which lies some 4km to the North West (NO 2517 3373), suggesting that such burial monuments may be quite common in the Carse of Gowrie. It is a great pity that there was no surviving skeletal material in either cist to enable an assessment of the sex and status of the burials, this must be due to the very acidic soil conditions present in material which ended up filling Cist 1 and the fact that Cist 2 appeared to have been badly damaged at some stage in the past. No other cist burials were located on any other part of the proposed housing site.



C14 date for sample from behind end stone of Cist 1

References

O’Grady, O 2008 **The Setting and Practice of Open Air assemblies in Medieval Scotland: A multi-disciplinary study** (submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Department of Archaeology, University of Glasgow)

Philip, A 1895 **The Parish of Longforan A sketch of its church and people**

Winlow, S 2010 ‘Two new dates from two old investigations: a reconsideration of The Women’s Knowe, Inchtuthil and Kingoodie Long Cist Cemetery, Invergowrie’ *Tayside Fife Archaeol J* Vol 16, 48-56

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Andrew Leonard for his interest in this project and Mr and Mrs Todd for keeping him company during the excavation of Cist 1.

Context List

1. Dark brown black topsoil
2. Flat stone capping stones to Cist 1
3. Flat stone side stones to Cist 1
4. Loose and voided dark grey brown silty clay with occasional stones (fill of interior of Cist 1)
5. Grey black silty clay and charcoal from behind western end slab of Cist 1 (sampled for C14 dating)
6. Flat stones forming base of Cist 1
7. Grave cut for Cist 1
8. Red brown natural clay
9. Flat stone in Cist 2
10. Orange brown silty clay and stones (fill of Cist 2)
11. Grave cut for Cist 2

Sample List

Context 4 sample of soil fill in Cist 1

Context 5 C14 sample of deposits behind Western end slab of Cist 1

Illustration List

Illus 1 Site Location (red dot) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2010. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)

Illus 2 Market Knowe as shown on 25" Ordnance Survey map (1855-1882) (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)

Illus 3 Location of Cists 1 and 2 in relation to proposed footprint of new house Scale 1:300

Illus 4 General view of trench A looking East (Cist 1 in foreground, Cist 2 beside ranging rod below spoil heap)

Illus 5 General view of Trench A looking West, Cist 2 visible to right of scale in trench, Cist 1 to right of mechanical excavator

Illus 6 Cist 1 cleaned up before excavation looking North

Illus 7 Cist 1 after removal of large capstone showing lower flat slab below it

Illus 8 Cist 1 after removal of all cap stones looking North showing soil fill (4)

Illus 9 Cist 1 after removal of soil fill 4 looking South showing stone base (6)

Illus 10 Cist 1 after removal of stone lining showing grave cut (7)

Illus 11 Long Cist 1 showing phases of excavation from cap stones (2) to grave cut (7) in natural subsoil (8)

Illus 12 Cross sections of excavated Cist 1

Illus 13 Detail view of Cist 2 looking North showing single stone slab (9)

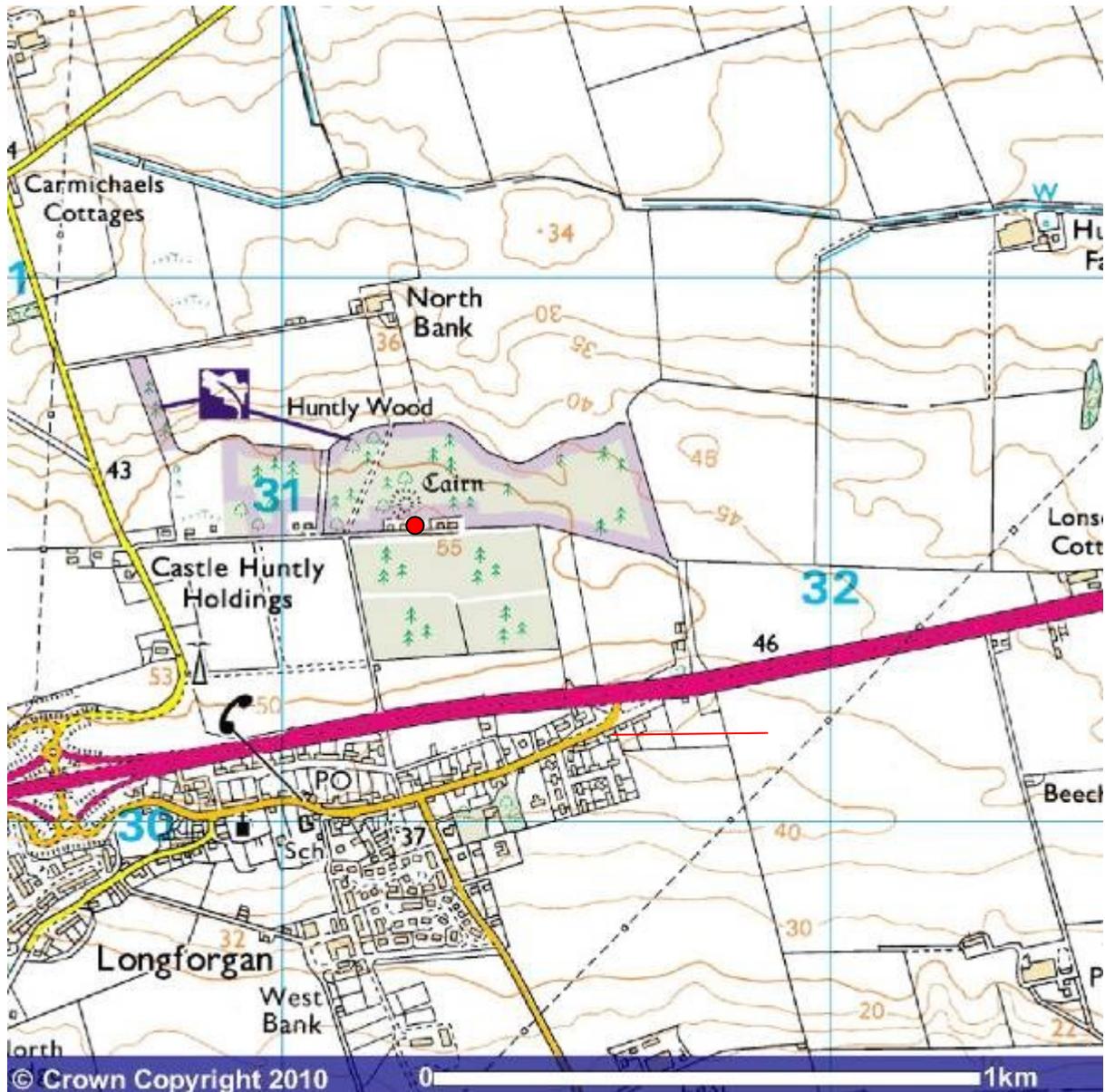
Illus 14 Cist 2 after removal of single surviving fragment of stone lining showing grave cut (11) in natural

Illus 15 Cist 2 showing single surviving stone slab, grave cut in the natural and cross sections across excavated cut

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth and Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Proposed house site adjacent to Marketknowe. Longforgan
PROJECT CODE:	ROM03
PARISH:	Longforgan
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Derek Hall
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Derek Hall, archaeologist and ceramic specialist
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Excavation
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	In vicinity of putative burial cairn/assembly mound
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Long Cists
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NO 312 305
START DATE	4th July 2011
END DATE	5th July 2011
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	First phase of evaluation December 2010, Second Phase of evaluation March 2011
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	The two long cists located in the earlier phases of site evaluation were excavated by hand. Cist 1 was still in good condition with its cap stones still in place, however on excavation of the soil fill there were no surviving remains of an inhumation. A charcoal sample from behind the western end slab of the cist produced a C14 date of 1545 +/- 30 BP (calibrated date of 420-590 AD at 95.4% probability). Cist 2 was very badly damaged and only a single base stone survived, again there were no surviving traces of an inhumation. No other cists were located within the proposed development area.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr and Mrs Todd
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	N/A

ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	34 Glenfarg Terrace, Perth, PH2 0AP
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Derek.hall1@blueyonder.co.uk

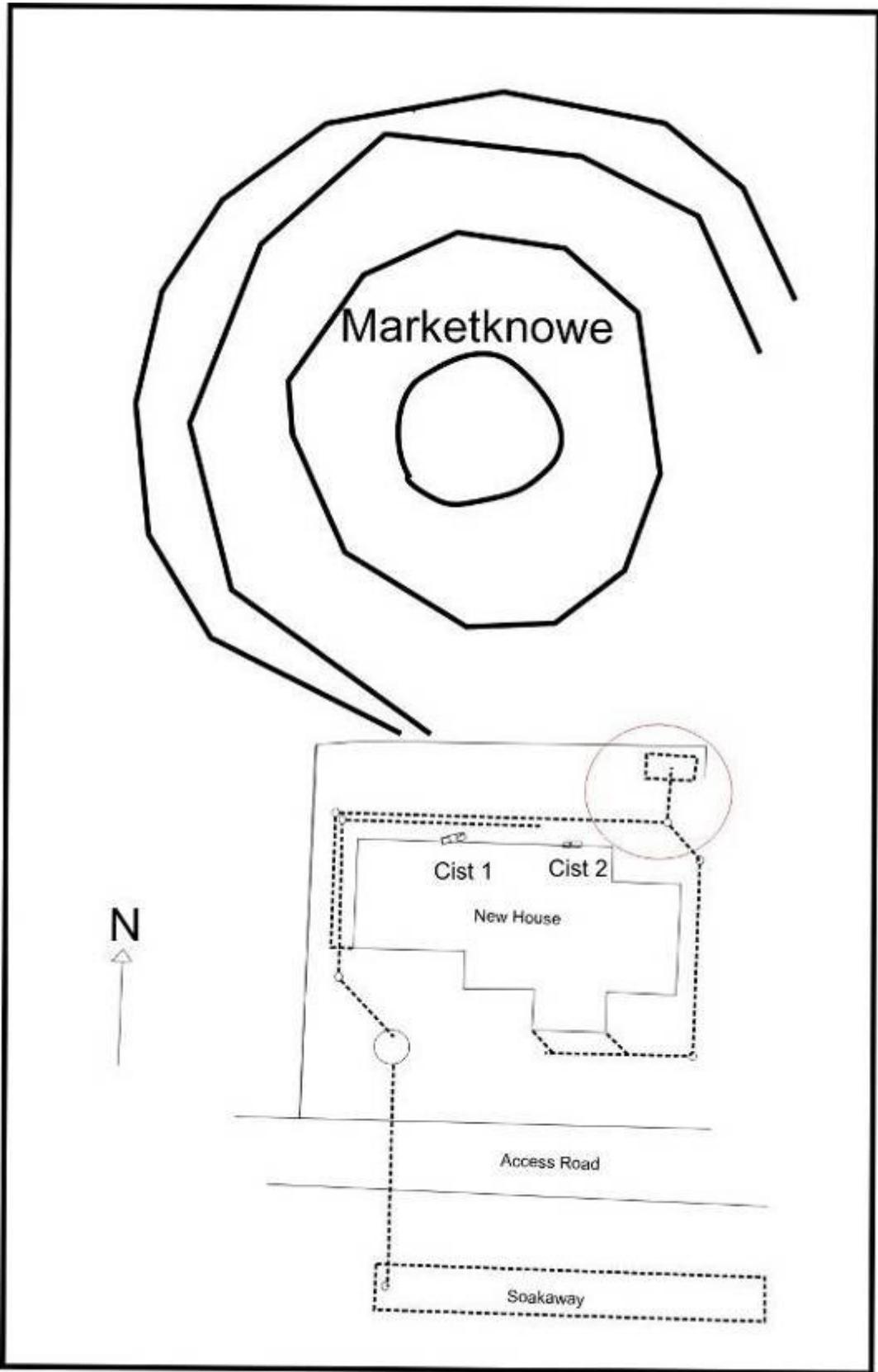


Illus 1 Site Location (red dot) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2010. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)

Six-inch 1840s-1880s maps - zoom out to display small-scale 1920s maps



Illus 2 Market Knowe as shown on 25" Ordnance Survey map (1855-1882) (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)



Illus 3 Location of Cists 1 and 2 in relation to proposed footprint of new house Scale 1:300



Illus 4 General view of trench A looking East (Cist 1 in foreground, Cist 2 beside ranging rod below spoil heap)



Illus 5 General view of Trench A looking West, Cist 2 visible to right of scale in trench, Cist 1 to right of mechanical excavator



Illus 6 Cist 1 cleaned up before excavation looking North



Illus 7 Cist 1 after removal of large capstone showing lower flat slab below it



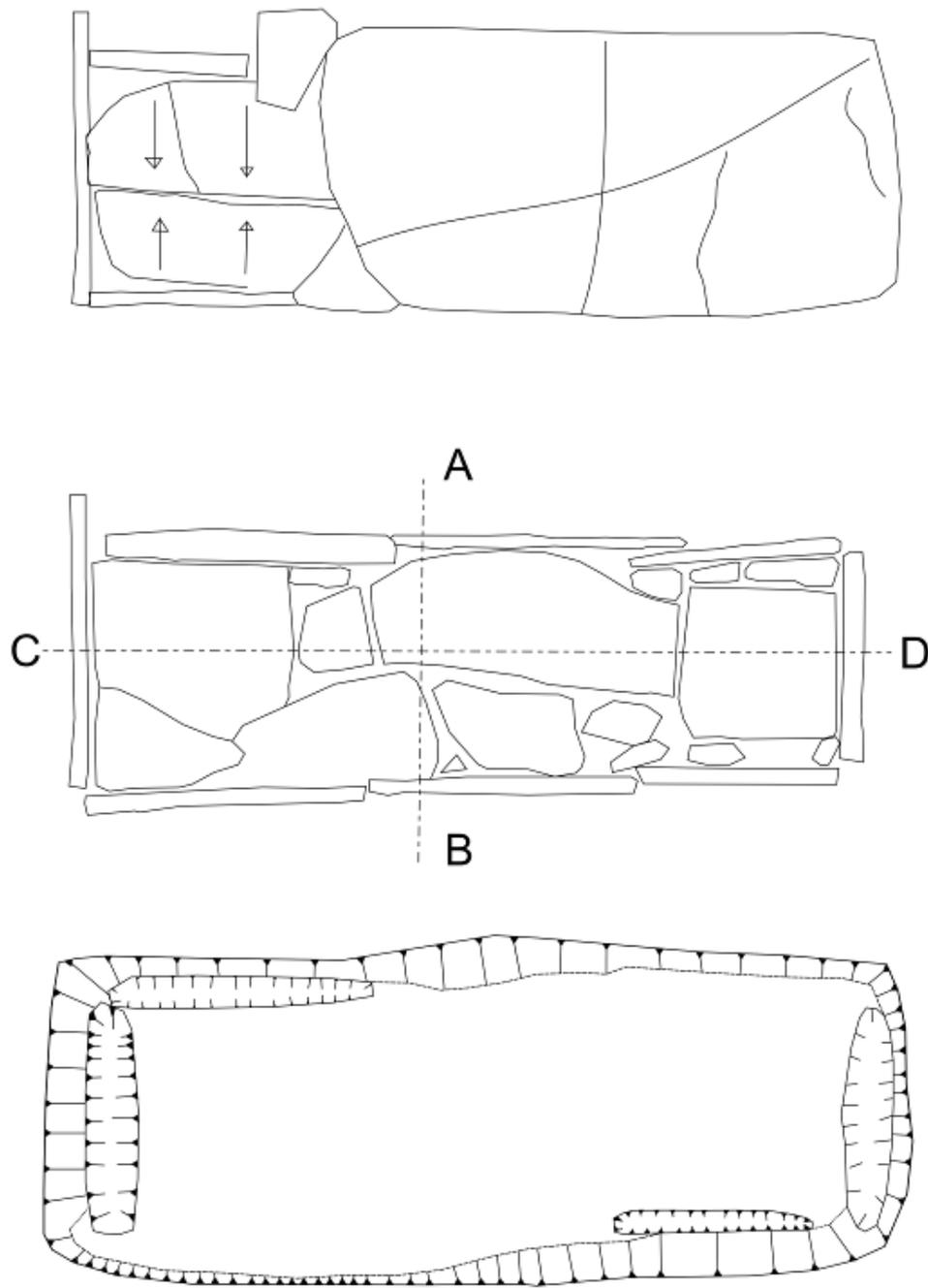
Illus 8 Cist 1 after removal of all cap stones looking North showing soil fill (4)



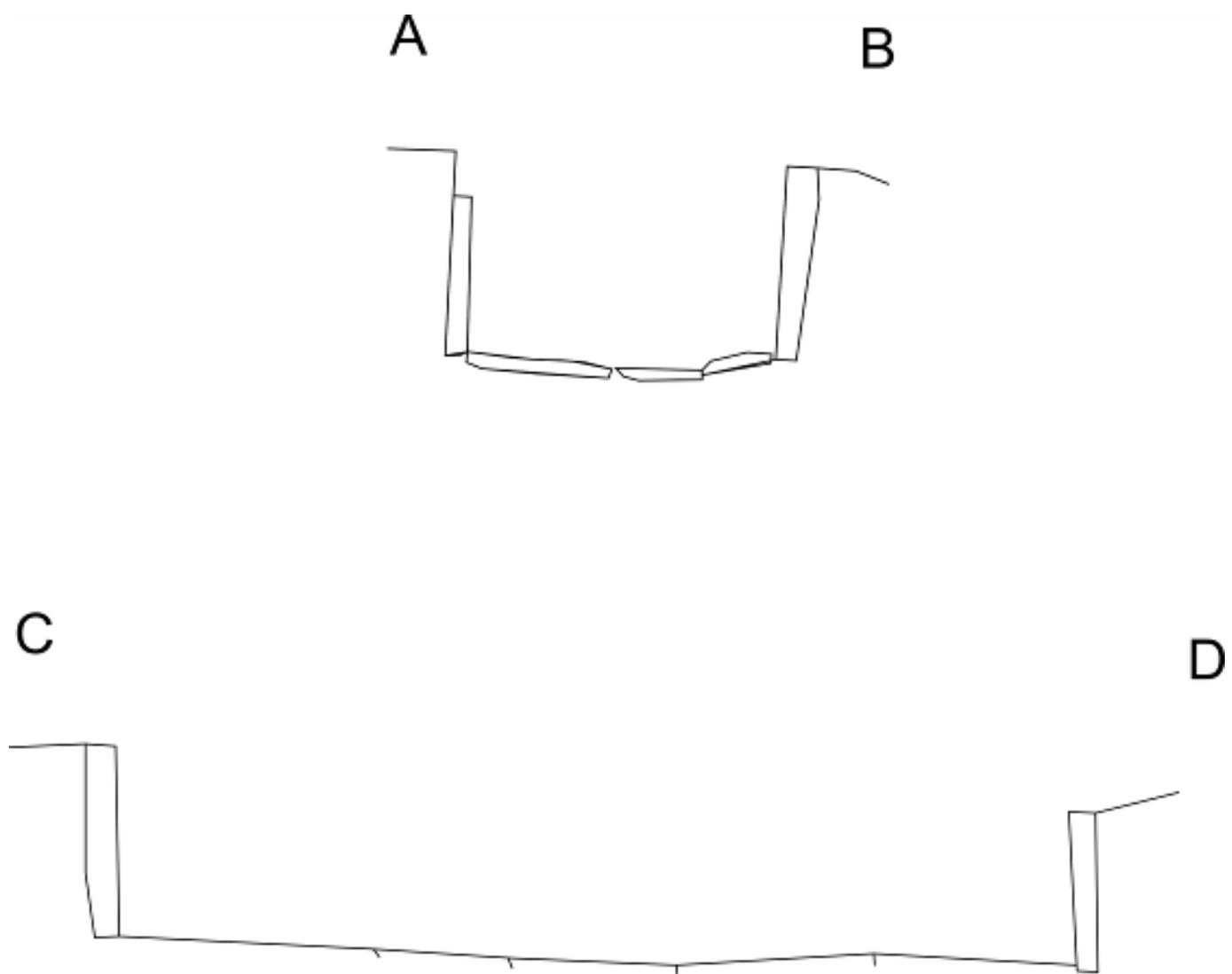
Illus 9 Cist 1 after removal of soil fill 4 looking South showing stone base (6)



Illus 10 Cist 1 after removal of stone lining showing grave cut (7)



Illus 11 Long Cist 1 showing phases of excavation from cap stones (2) to grave cut (7) in natural subsoil (8) Scale 1:13



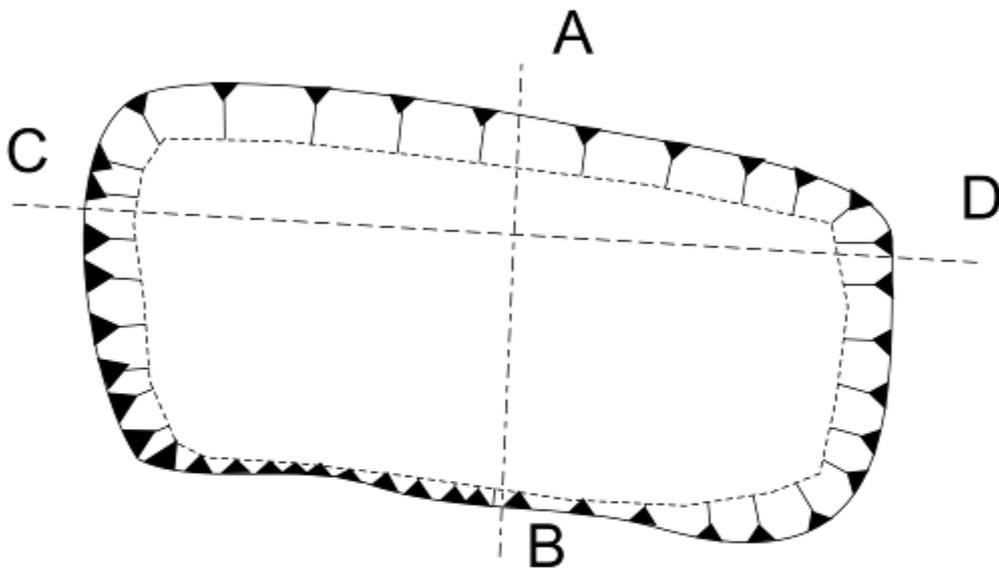
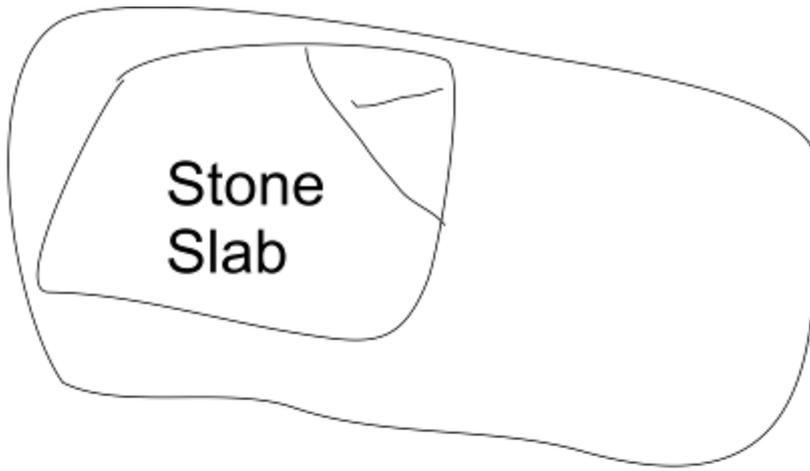
Illus 12 Cross sections of excavated Cist 1 Scale 1:10



Illus 13 Detail view of Cist 2 looking North showing single stone slab (9)



Illus 14 Cist 2 after removal of single surviving fragment of stone lining showing grave cut (11) in natural



Illus 15 Cist 2 showing single surviving stone slab, grave cut in the natural and cross sections across excavated cut Scale 1:10