

CPAT Report No. 1553

# Dudmaston Hall, Shropshire

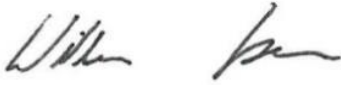


ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH ARCHAEOLEGOL CLWYD-POWYS

CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Client name: National Trust  
 CPAT Project No: 2238  
 Project Name: Dudmaston Hall, Shropshire  
 Grid Reference: SO 74692 88821  
 County/LPA: Shropshire  
 CPAT Report No: 1553  
 Report status: Final  
 Confidential: No

Prepared by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
		
William Logan Project Archaeologist	Paul Belford Director	Paul Belford Director
22 January 2018	24 January 2018	24 January 2018

Bibliographic reference:

Logan, W., 2018. *Dudmaston Hall, Shropshire: Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpublished report. CPAT Report No 1553



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH ARCHAEOLEGOL CLWYD-POWYS  
 CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR, United Kingdom

+44 (0) 1938 553 670

[trust@cpat.org.uk](mailto:trust@cpat.org.uk)

[www.cpat.org.uk](http://www.cpat.org.uk)

©CPAT 2018



The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust is a Registered Organisation  
 with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

## CONTENTS

<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4 CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5 REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>6 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1: CPAT WSI 1846 .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: SITE DRAWINGS.....</b>	<b>1</b>

## Summary

In November 2017 an intermittent watching brief was carried out during the groundworks for a fibre optic cable running across parkland between the A442 road and Dudmaston Hall.

At the western extent of the groundworks, the trenching ran across a surfaced trackway running north-east south-west between the main road and an entrance located close to the walled gardens, to the south of the Hall. The trackway is of an unspecified post medieval date.

The track was constructed from a single undifferentiated deposit formed from gravel. Dumps of repair material containing late post medieval pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) indicated that the trackway was still in use until the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ditches ran parallel with either side of the track and appeared to have been back filled during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The cable trenching was excavated to the north of the trackway on a broadly parallel route towards the Hall. A junction box was excavated immediately to the south of the driveway.

As no further communications with the groundworks contractor was received regarding the trenching between this box and the main building, this section of the trenching was not carried out under archaeological watching brief conditions.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was invited by the National Trust to undertake a watching brief during the installation of new ducting and cabling for a fibre optic service at Dudmaston Hall in Shropshire. The groundworks were deemed to affect two areas of archaeological potential, a post-medieval trackway (SMR No 50646\*0 - MNA142121) (Fig. 1, 1) and the courtyard to the south-east of the property (Fig. 1, 6).



Fig. 1 The route of the cable trench at Dudmaston Hall, showing locations mentioned in the text

## 2 Historical Background

- 2.1. Dudmaston lies 5km south-east of Bridgnorth, close to Shropshire's south-east boundary. The long, north-eastern park boundary largely follows the main A442 Bridgnorth to Kidderminster road, although the boundary extends east of this to

encompass the eastern end of the chain of pools which are one of the main features of the Dudmaston landscape. These lie along a shallow valley which runs through the centre of the park and drains into the River Severn c. 1km to the south. The Hall lies on the east lip of the valley, overlooking the largest of the pools, Big Pool, and the countryside beyond to the Clee Hills. A subsidiary, but visually more dramatic valley, The Dingle, forms the southern boundary of the park. The registered park is c. 185ha in extent.

- 2.2. In 1403 Margaret be Butailles, the heiress of the family which had held the manor of Dudmaston since at least the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, married William Wolryche of Much Wenlock. The estate descended in that family, and in 1695 Sir Thomas Wolryche commissioned Francis Smith of Warwick to begin the present house. His son, Sir John, drowned in the River Severn in 1723, and Dudmaston passed in due course to his sister Mary. From her it passed to her uncle Col Thomas Weld, and from him to a distant cousin George Whitmore. He died, childless, in 1775, leaving as heir his nephew William Whitmore.
- 2.3. By 1775 the estate was apparently much in need of the improvement and investment. After this initial expenditure Whitmore turned to the Hall's surrounds, and in 1777 commissioned William Emes to produce a design for the park. Under his son William Wolryche Whitmore, the Hall was altered in the 1820s and later large sums were spent on many of the farm buildings on the estate. On his death in 1858 there were outstanding mortgages on the estate of £60,000, not paid off until c 1900. His heir was his nephew Francis Henry Laing, who took the name Wolryche-Whitmore. From 1921 the estate was owned by his great-nephew Geoffrey Wolryche-Whitmore, under whom Dudmaston gained an international reputation for enlightened forestry. In 1952 he passed the estate over to his niece Lady Rachel Labouchere with the intention that it should eventually pass to the National Trust. That gift was completed in 1978.
- 2.4. Dudmaston Hall is a Grade II\* listed building consisting of a nine-bay house of red brick with stone quoins and stone-framed windows with a recessed five-bay centre. Called 'lately rebuilt' in 1730 the Hall probably dates from c. 1695 and is usually attributed to Francis Smith of Warwick. It was altered and received a new roof in 1817-26 by the Bridgnorth builder John Smalman.
- 2.5. A farm and stables court dating from 1789 with early 19<sup>th</sup> century additions stands to the south-east, against the south-west side of the walled garden. Rising above its entrance is a crenellated brick tower of early to mid C19 date. The walled kitchen garden is believed to be contemporary with the Hall.
- 2.6. The establishment of parkland to the east of Dudmaston Hall appears to have formed part of William Whitmore's scheme of improvements in the later 1770s. East of the Hall, extending to the A442, the parkland is level. Here there are many parkland and specimen trees of different ages. North, south and west of the Hall the parkland slopes down towards Big Pool, and is again well planted with parkland and specimen trees. East of the A422 the registered area extends to include Brim, Seggy and Wall Pools, and Comer (in 1840 'Commer or Cwm Mawr') Wood which surrounds them.

- 2.7. In 1817 there was a different drive arrangement, and no lodges. One drive looped south to the Hall from a gate opposite Brim Pool. A second, straight, drive approached from the east. A bank marks its line.

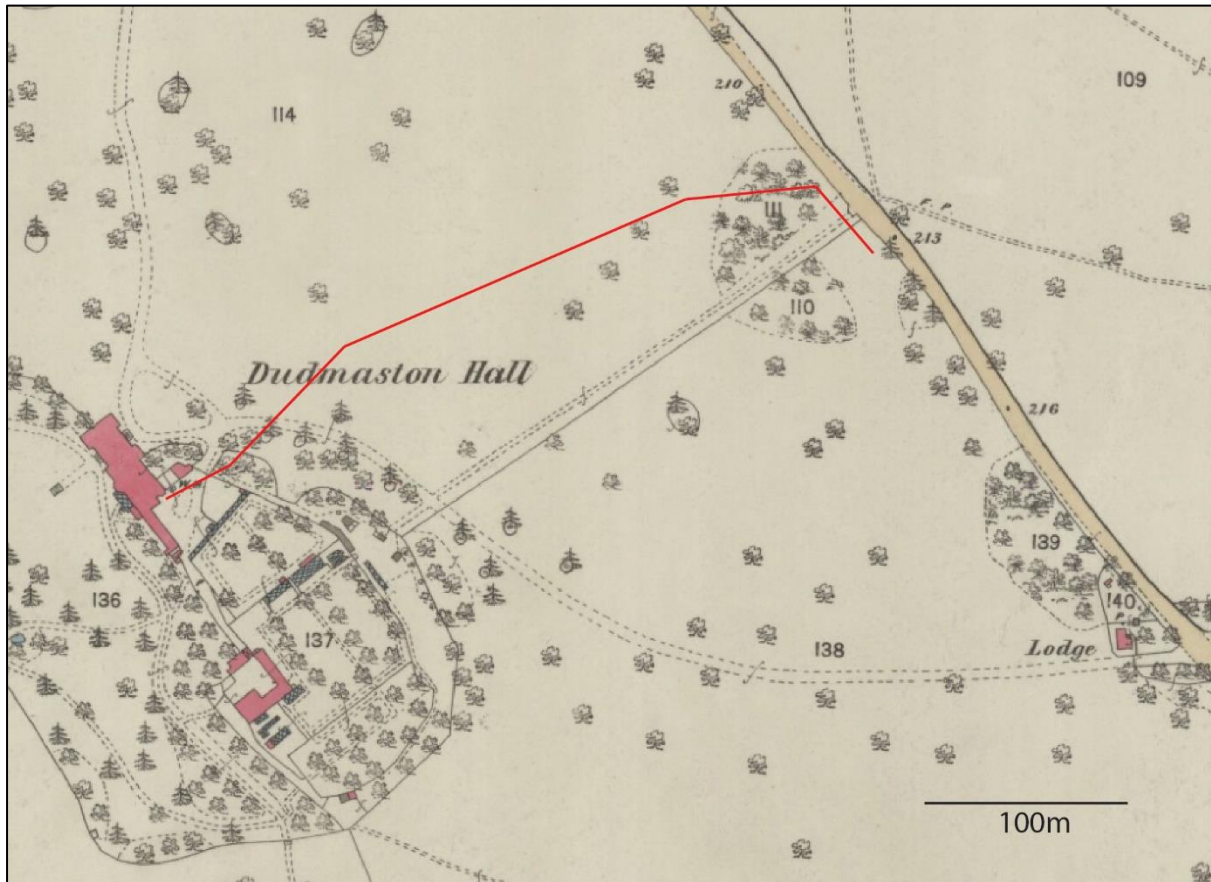


Fig. 2 Detail from the 25" 1883 Ordnance Survey map (cable trench marked in red)

### 3 Archaeological Watching Brief

- 3.1. The cable trench ran approximately 400m, between an access point on the west side of the A442, to an access point into the Hall, located in the courtyard. Trenching was carried out with a 0.3m-wide toothless bucket to a depth of 0.45m. Similar topsoil deposits consisting of a soft sandy silt (001) up to 0.3m in thickness extended across the entire parkland section of the trenching, overlying orange slightly clayey sand (004) >0.4m thick. Isolated finds of 19<sup>th</sup>-century pottery were recovered from trenching in the parkland (Fig. 1, 3 and 4).



Fig. 3 South-facing section of the trench in parkland. Photo CPAT 4448-0003

- 3.2. Close to the eastern end point of the cable trench, the route passed across a trackway (Fig. 1, 1). A section of the trackway measuring 0.9m in width was exposed, and cleaned and excavated by hand (Fig. 1, 2; Fig. 7). Underlying the topsoil (001) a road formed from packed river gravel (003) was revealed. This measured approximately 4m in width and 0.38m thick. Either side of the road were two ditches [007] and [008], both approximately 1.4m in width and >0.2m deep. The ditch fills (005) and (006) comprised similar greyish sandy silts containing late post medieval or modern pottery and ceramic building material. The natural subsoil (004) had evidently been cut [009] to form a level surface for the trackway. The upper track surface had been repaired on the south-east extent (002), there was evidence of minor repairs across the entire surface. There was no evidence of cart tracks or ruts in the exposed section of trackway.





Fig. 4 View of the trackway (003) from the south-east. Photo CPAT 4448-0015

- 3.3. Towards the south-west end of the cable route, the trenching crossed the main driveway to the Hall (Fig. 1, 5). Underlying the modern tarmac road surface (010) a hard compacted gravel sub-base (011) 0.2m thick was revealed. No trace of the earlier driveway depicted on early Ordnance Survey mapping was visible.



Fig. 5 Section view of the driveway to the Hall. Photo CPAT 4448-0009

- 3.4. Immediately to the south-west of the driveway, a pit was excavated to accommodate a junction box. Pottery, brick and bottle glass was recovered, which was 18<sup>th</sup>- or 19<sup>th</sup>-century in date.



Fig. 6 North-west-facing section of the excavation for the junction box. Photo CPAT 4448-0005

- 3.5. As no further communications with the groundworks contractor was received regarding the trenching between the junction box and the main building (Fig. 1, 6), this section of the trenching was not carried out under archaeological watching brief conditions. Subsequent discussion with the contractor suggested that soil deposits in this section were heavily disturbed by the laying of the modern courtyard surface, but this was obviously unverifiable.

## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1. The excavation across the parkland revealed no evidence for previous occupation of the area. Stray finds in this area were sparse and not indicative of local habitation.
- 4.2. The trackway (003) running north-east from the Hall gardens to the main road (now the A442) may have been a formal landscaping feature, although it is unclear when it was constructed. The Rocque Map of 1752 does not depict the layout of the park very clearly so was unhelpful in establishing a date for this feature. The trackway presumably predates the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> rearrangement of the access to the Hall which resulted in the construction of two lodges and a new driveway from the main road to the north of the hall.
- 4.3. The trackway was constructed from river gravel type material with two parallel ditches (Fig. 7). The trackway surface shows signs of having been repaired up until the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century and was probably still in use until quite recently. The ditches were also backfilled during this period.

## 5 References

### *Published Sources*

*Dudmaston Hall* (listing entry) Historic England

### *Cartographic Sources*

Roque, J., 1752. Actual Survey of the County of Salop

1883 Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition 25" map, Shropshire LXVII.I

## 6 Archive deposition Statement

- 6.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CIfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2014). The archive will be deposited with the National Trust. A summary of the archive is provided in Appendix 1.

### **Archive Summary**

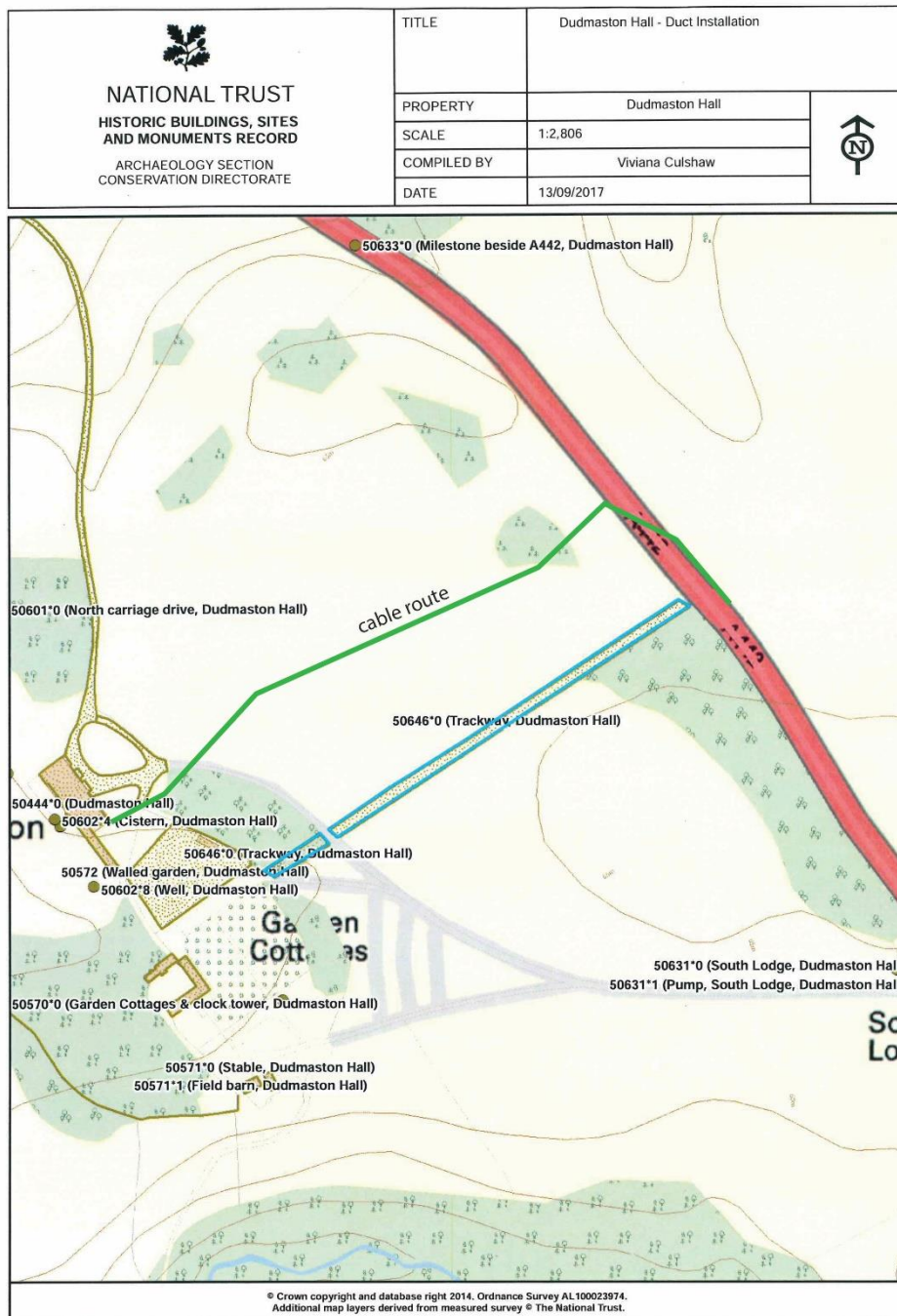
6 Watching brief recording forms

43 digital photographs CPAT Film No. 4448

## Appendix 1: CPAT WSI 1846

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) have been invited by the National Trust to undertake a watching brief during the installation of new ducting and cabling for a fibre optic service at Dudmaston Hall in Shropshire. The groundworks are likely to affect two areas of archaeological potential, a post-medieval trackway and the courtyard of the property.



- 1.2. Dudmaston Hall is a 17th-century country house located in the Severn Valley, near the village of Quatt, a few miles south of the market town of Bridgnorth.

## 2 Methodology

- 2.1. The watching brief will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CifA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014). The watching brief will be undertaken to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of the new detached recreational building. The excavation of any archaeological features or deposits will be undertaken by hand using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation:

- The presence or absence of archaeological features encountered during the ground works will be noted.
- Where features of archaeological interest are identified during the ground works they will be systematically investigated by hand with sufficient work being undertaken to determine their date, character and function, using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation and in accordance with CifA Standard and Guidance.
- All features will be located as accurately as possible on an overall plan of the development at an appropriate scale, showing boundaries depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping.
- Contexts will be recorded on individual record forms, using a continuous numbering system, and be drawn and photographed as appropriate.
- Plans will be drawn on permatrace to a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50, as appropriate.
- All photography will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a minimum resolution of 8 mega pixels, including a metric scale in each view, with views logged in a photographic register.
- In the event of human burials being discovered the Ministry of Justice will be informed. The remains will initially be left *in situ*, and if removal is required, a MoJ licences will be applied for under the Burial Act 1857.
- In the event of finding any artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasures Act 1996, the appropriate procedures under this legislation will be followed.

- 2.2. All artefacts and environmental samples will be treated in a manner appropriate to their composition and a sampling strategy will be developed as appropriate:

- All stratified finds will be collected by context, or where appropriate, individually recorded in three dimensions. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest.
- All finds and samples will be collected, processed, sorted, quantified, recorded, labelled, packed, stored, marked, assessed, analysed and conserved in a manner appropriate to their composition and in line with appropriate guidance.
- arrangements to assess and study any artefacts, assemblages and environment samples.
- Any artefacts recovered during the evaluation will be deposited with an appropriate museum, subject to the permission of the owner.

- 
- 2.3. Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared containing conventional sections to include:
- Non-technical summary
  - Introduction
  - Site location
  - Topography and Geology
  - Archaeological Background
  - Watching brief
  - Conclusions
  - References
  - Appropriate appendices on archives and finds
- 2.4. In addition to copies submitted to the client, a copy of the report will be provided to the Historic Environment Team, Shropshire Council, and one further copy to the Shropshire Historic Environment Record.
- 2.5. The site archive will be ordered, catalogued, labelled and conserved and stored according to the UKIC Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage and the Cifa *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2014). The project archive will be presented to an appropriate Museum or recipient body within 12 months.
- 2.6. The Shropshire HER participates in the OASIS scheme, a form for which will be completed at each reporting stage.

### **3 Resources and programming**

- 3.1. The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled archaeologist under the overall supervision of Nigel Jones, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Cifa). CPAT is also a Cifa Registered Organisation (RAO No 6) and as such agrees to abide by their *Code of Conduct* (2014) and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (2014).
- 3.2. All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the site work. Copies of the report will be deposited with the client and the regional Historic Environment Record within one month of the completion of on-site works. If appropriate, a short report will be published in *Archaeology in Wales*.
- 3.3. The client should be aware that in the event that significant archaeological remains are revealed there may be a requirement for more detailed excavation and specialist services. Any further work over and above the original watching brief and report would be the subject of a separate WSI and costing.
- 3.4. Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 3.5. CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance, as well as Professional Indemnity insurance.

## Appendix 2: Site drawings

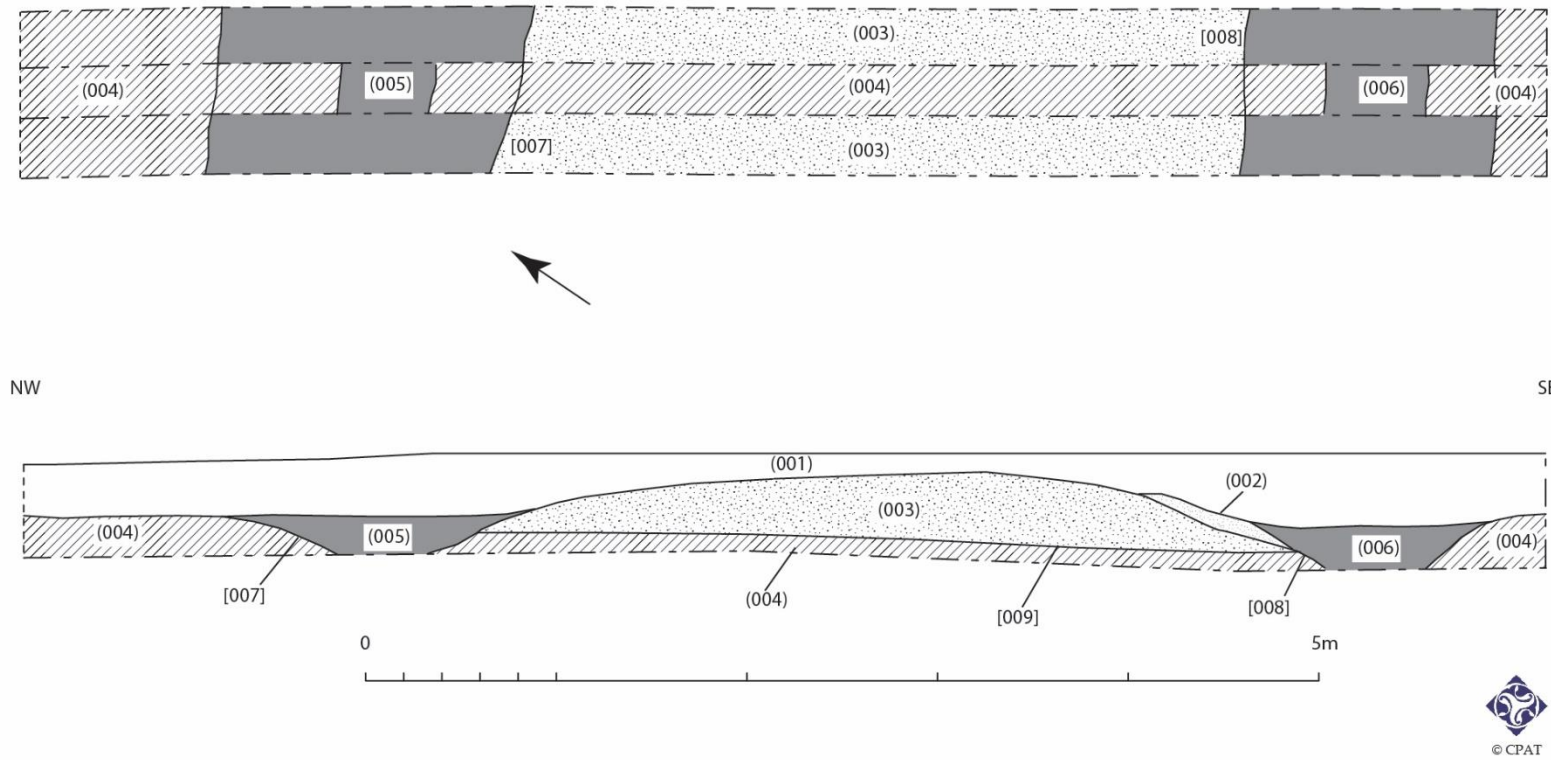


Fig. 7 Plan and south-west facing section of trackway (003)