

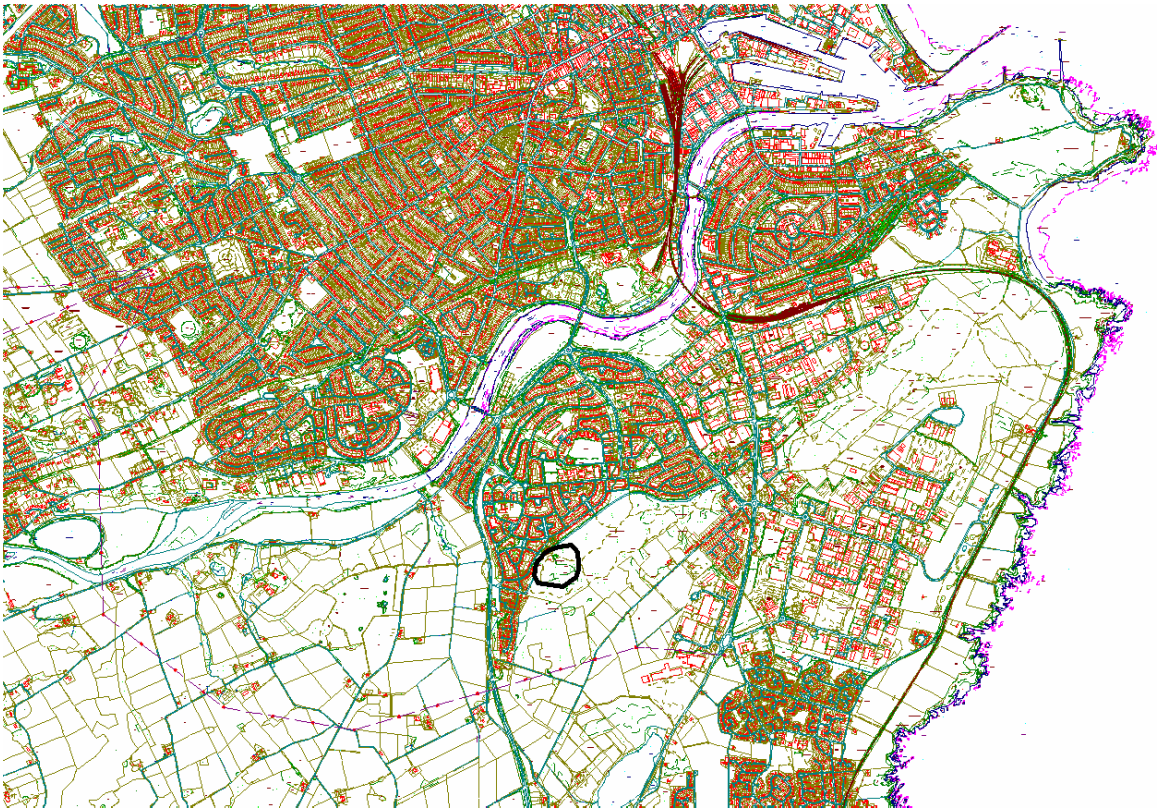
**KINCORTH/STONEYHILL QUARRIES  
KINCORTH HILL  
ABERDEEN**



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# KINCORTH/STONEYHILL QUARRIES KINCORTH HILL ABERDEEN

Aberdeen City Council Archaeological Unit were employed by Neil Stirling, Scientific Officer, Shelter and Environment, Neighbourhood Services Central, Aberdeen City Council, to observe trial pits at Kincorth/Stoneyhill Quarries. The trial pits were dug by Raeburn Drilling and Geotechnical (Northern) Ltd on 18<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2009.



Location plan

## Introduction

Quarrying on Kincorth Hill began in 1766. In March 1766 John Adam, an architect from Edinburgh presented a petition to Aberdeen City Council asking for permission to begin extracting rocks from quarries in the Bay of Nigg (CR, 63, f.49r). Adams proposed an initial lease of 21 years with a one year trial period built in and reviewed every 3 years. The council quickly agreed and Adams accepted (T/D/155, Adams to the Council, 2 August 1766). Later on 22 August 1766 the agreement was extended to include all of the land from the Bay of Nigg down to Cove (T/D/47, Adams to the Council, 22 August 1767). The exact position of Adams quarries is shown on the Brown's survey map of the area dated 1777 (below).





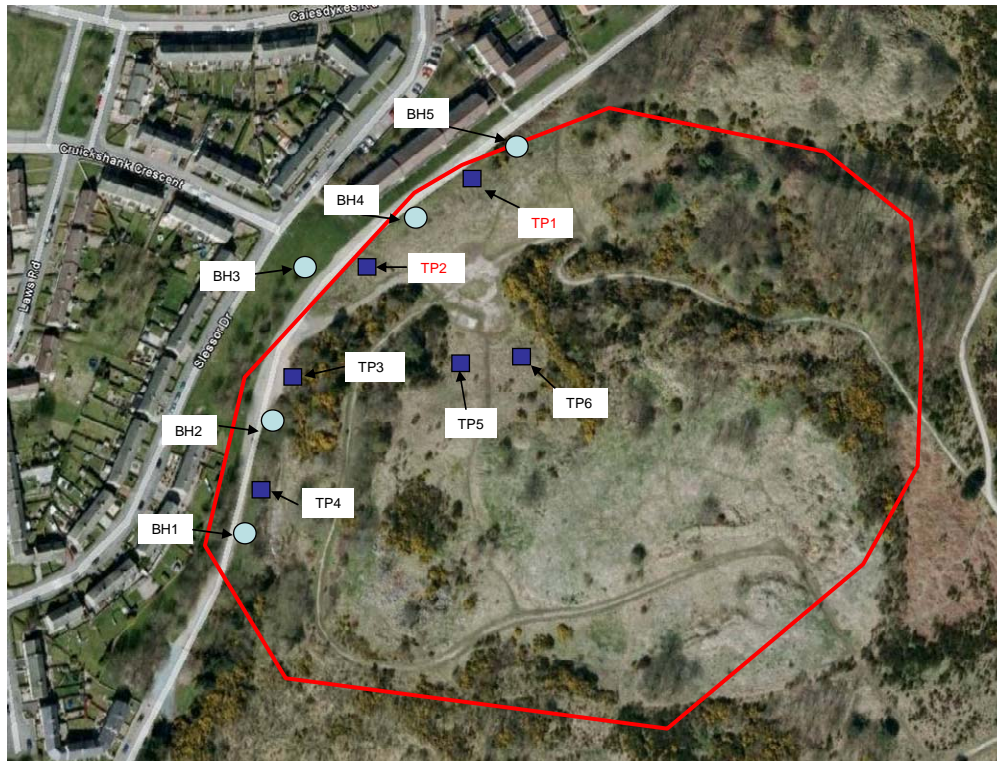
Despite Kincorth becoming a residential area in the 20th century quarrying continued very close to the new homes. Kincorth Quarry itself was not closed until as late as 1967. This was despite many calls from residents for it to be closed. For example Mr Charles Campbell of 2 Slessor Drive was quoted (in P and J, 2 December 1967) as saying 'Its like living next to a volcano.'

Eventually the City Council's Streets and Works Committee decided to close the quarry. Depute City Engineer William Turner said: 'with the best will in the world it is impossible to use explosives so near to houses without risk. We are lucky a stone has never struck anyone.' (P and J, 2 December 1967)

Machine dug trial pits were observed on 18<sup>th</sup> February and hand dug pits on 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

#### Trial pits

TP2 and TP4 were observed during excavation. TP2 contained 0.7m depth of modern fill including fragments of Belfast sink and plastic. Between 0.7 and 0.9m below the modern surface, a black loam was the remains of buried topsoil above natural stony sand subsoil. The buried soil indicates that this area has not been previously quarried; the upper layers consisted of dumped material, probably during the construction of the houses in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.



**LOT 4**  
**Kincorth Quarries**  
**(phase 1)**

- = rotary drillhole
- = JCB-dug trial pit

Note: hand pits not marked – to be agreed, but will be spread across site

### Location of trial pits

Although TP3 was not observed by an archaeologist, it contained similar deposits to TP2, including the layer of buried topsoil (Raeburn Drilling and Geotechnical, pers comm).

TP4 consisted of 0.8m topsoil on top of quarry waste (dug to 2m below current surface) consisting of granite rubble and schist, the waste from the quarrying industry. The location of TP4 is therefore within the quarried area. This trial pit was excavated through a 2m broad soil bank, up to 0.5m high. The bank may have been created using soil cleared during the construction of Nigg Way. Around the area of TP4, large quantities of worked granite had been piled over many years.

### Hand pits

Three hand dug pits were watched on 23<sup>rd</sup> February in locations HP1, HP2 and HP3 (see plan below). HP1 and HP2 were positioned on the NW facing slope above nos 1-25 Slessor Drive. A depth of 0.5m of topsoil was observed in both trenches. At 0.5m depth in HP2, sand and stones may have represented a fill or the natural subsoil. No buried soil levels were recorded. HP3 was excavated within the quarry. The fill included concrete, stone and soil, presumably capping material







**LOT 4**  
Kincorth Quarries

- Hand pit to 0.50mbgl
- Hand pit to 1.00mbgl

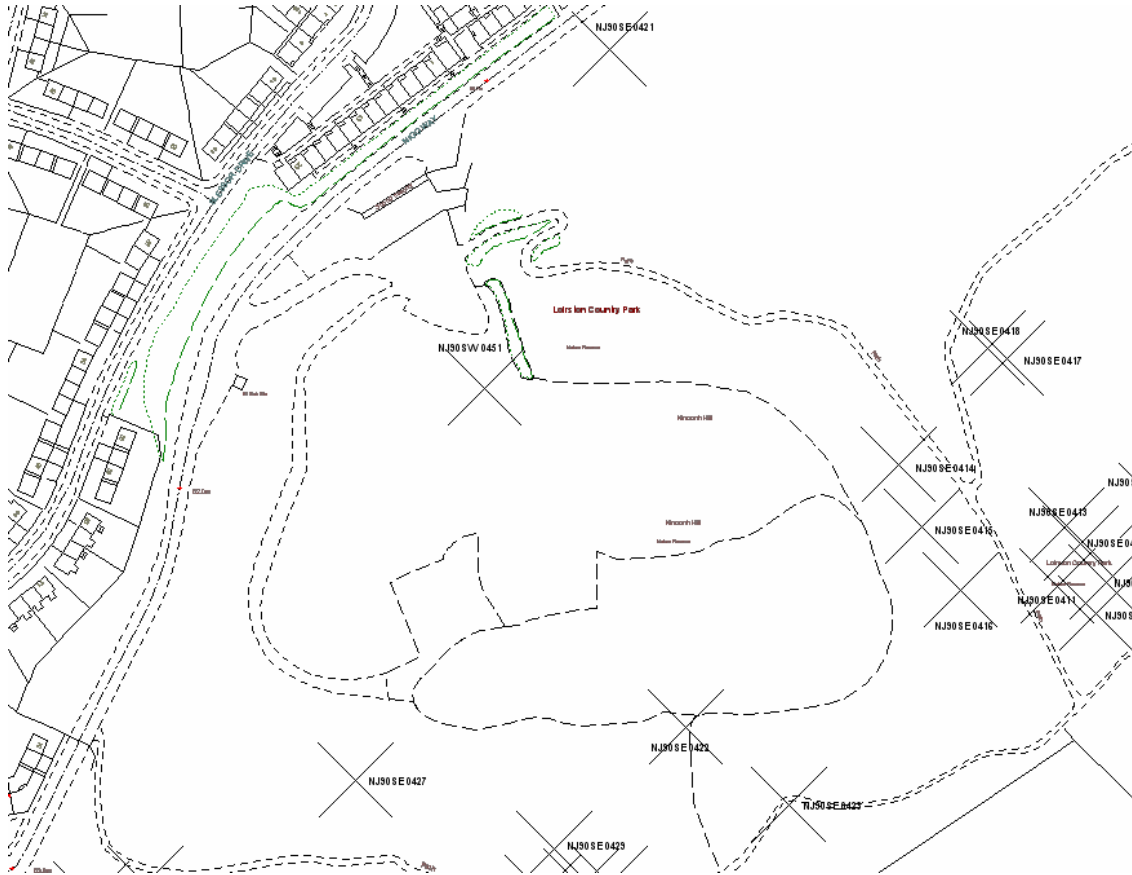
**Conclusions**

TP4 was excavated within the area previously quarried whilst TP2 and 3 were outwith the quarried area. A buried soil in trial pits 2 and 3 suggests that archaeological deposits and features may survive, although no evidence of finds or features were seen in these small trenches. HP1 and HP2 also appear to be outwith the quarried area.

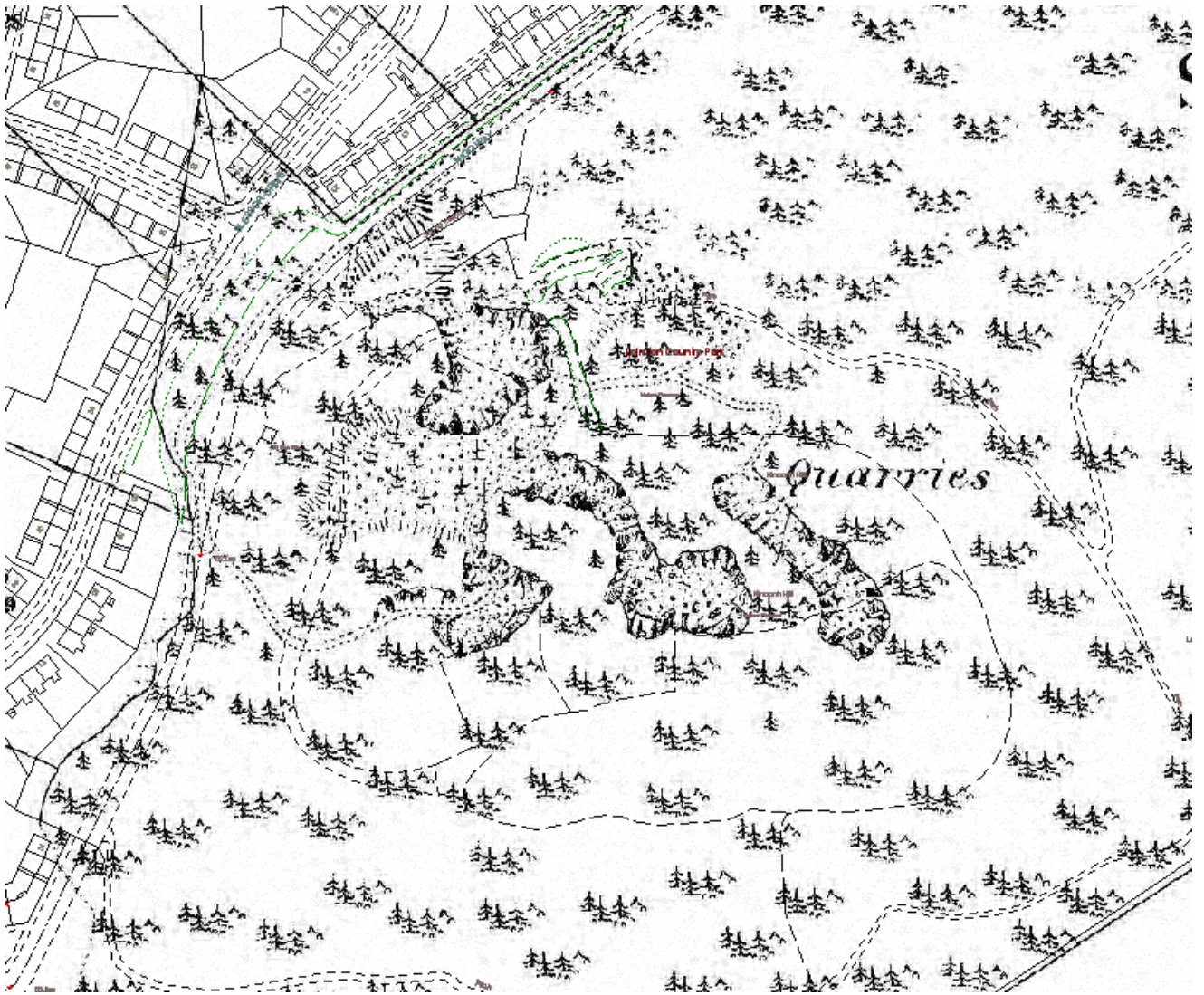
**Recommendations**

No further archaeological work is required at this site during this phase of trial pits. If further pits are to be excavated outwith the quarry area, they should be watched by an archaeologist.

# APPENDIX 1 MAPS

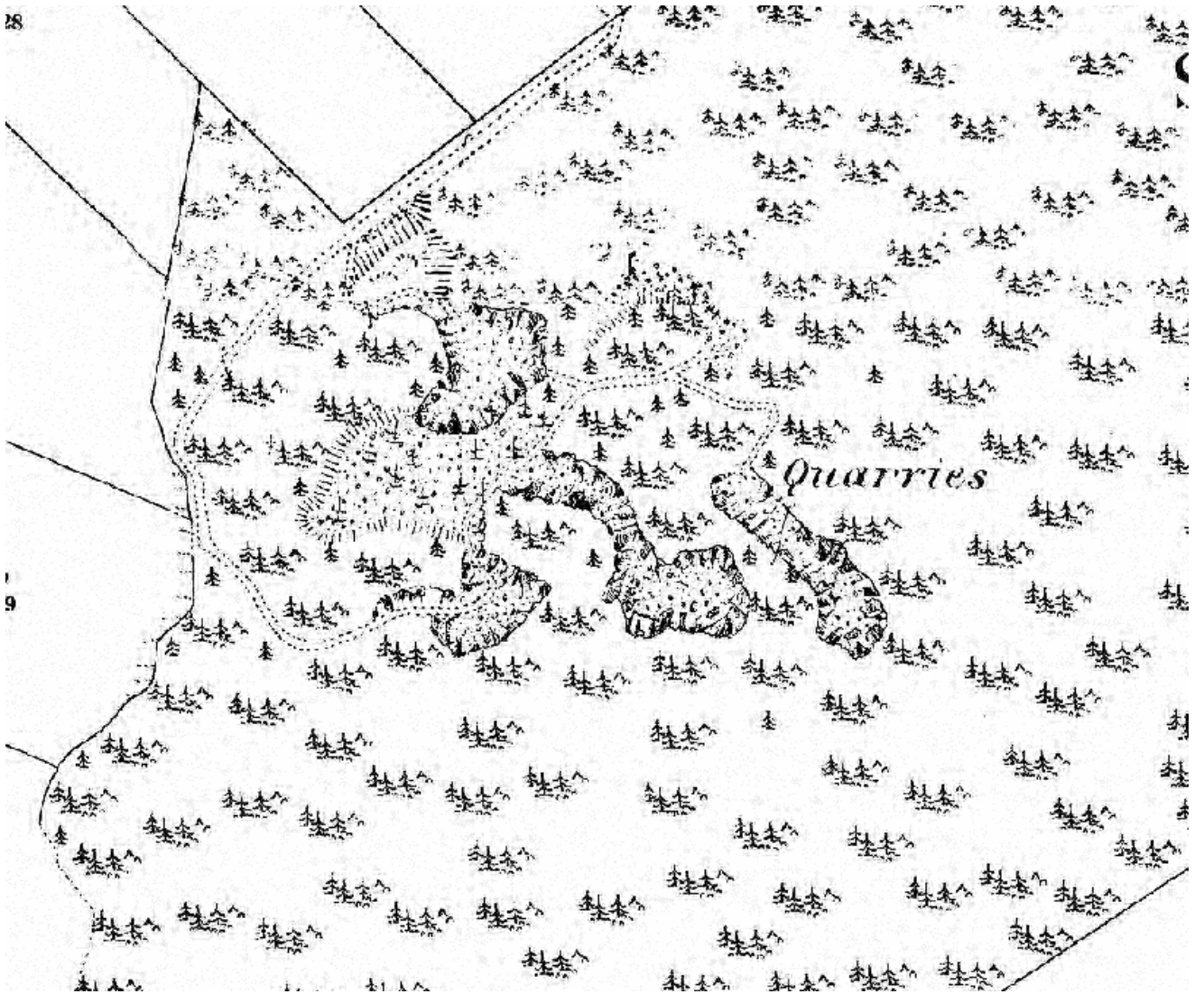


2009 Ordnance Survey map showing sites on Aberdeen City Council Sites and Monuments Record (for details contact Judith Stones, 01224 523658 or [judiths@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:judiths@aberdeencity.gov.uk)).

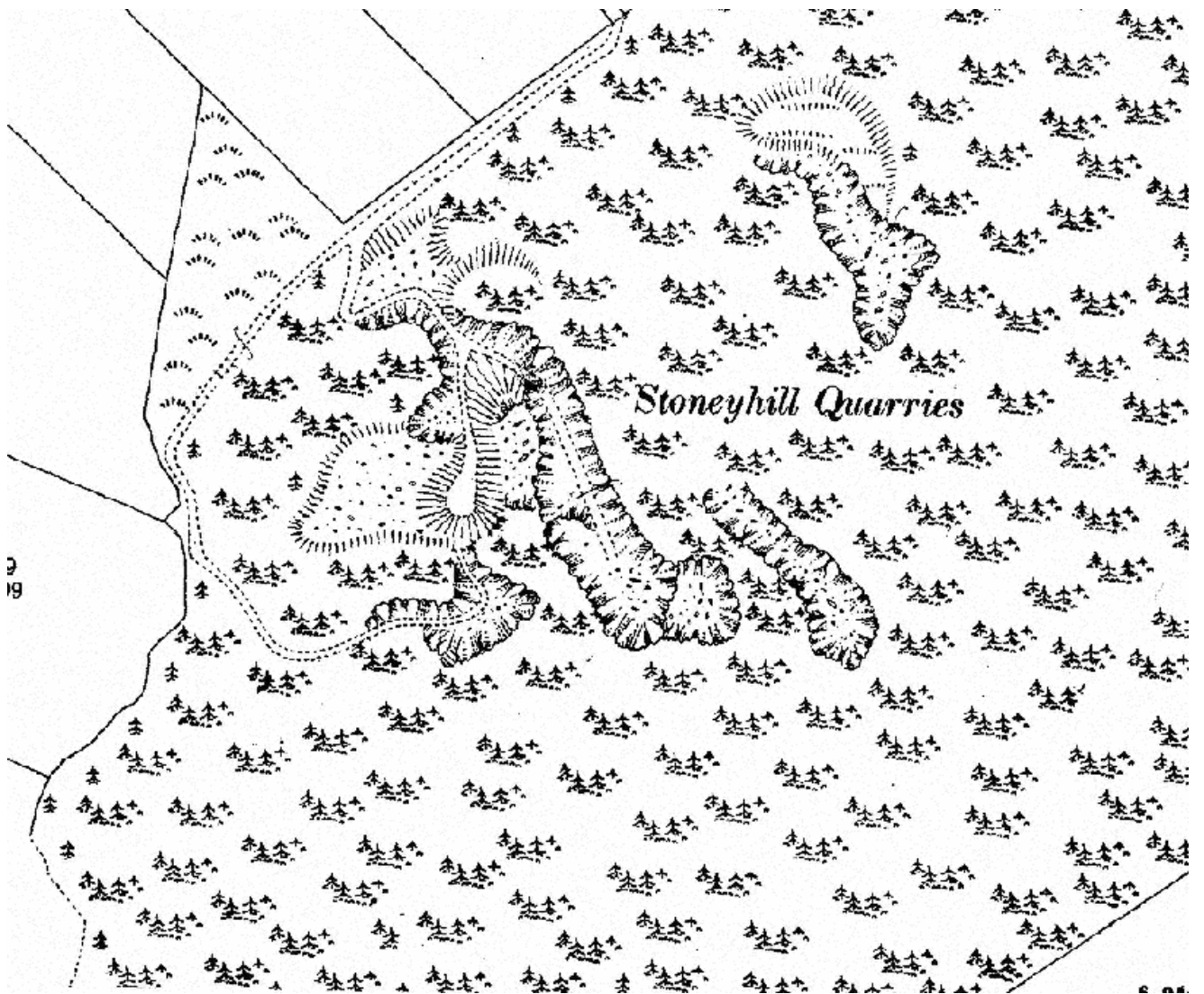


1867 superimposed on 2009 Ordnance Survey map

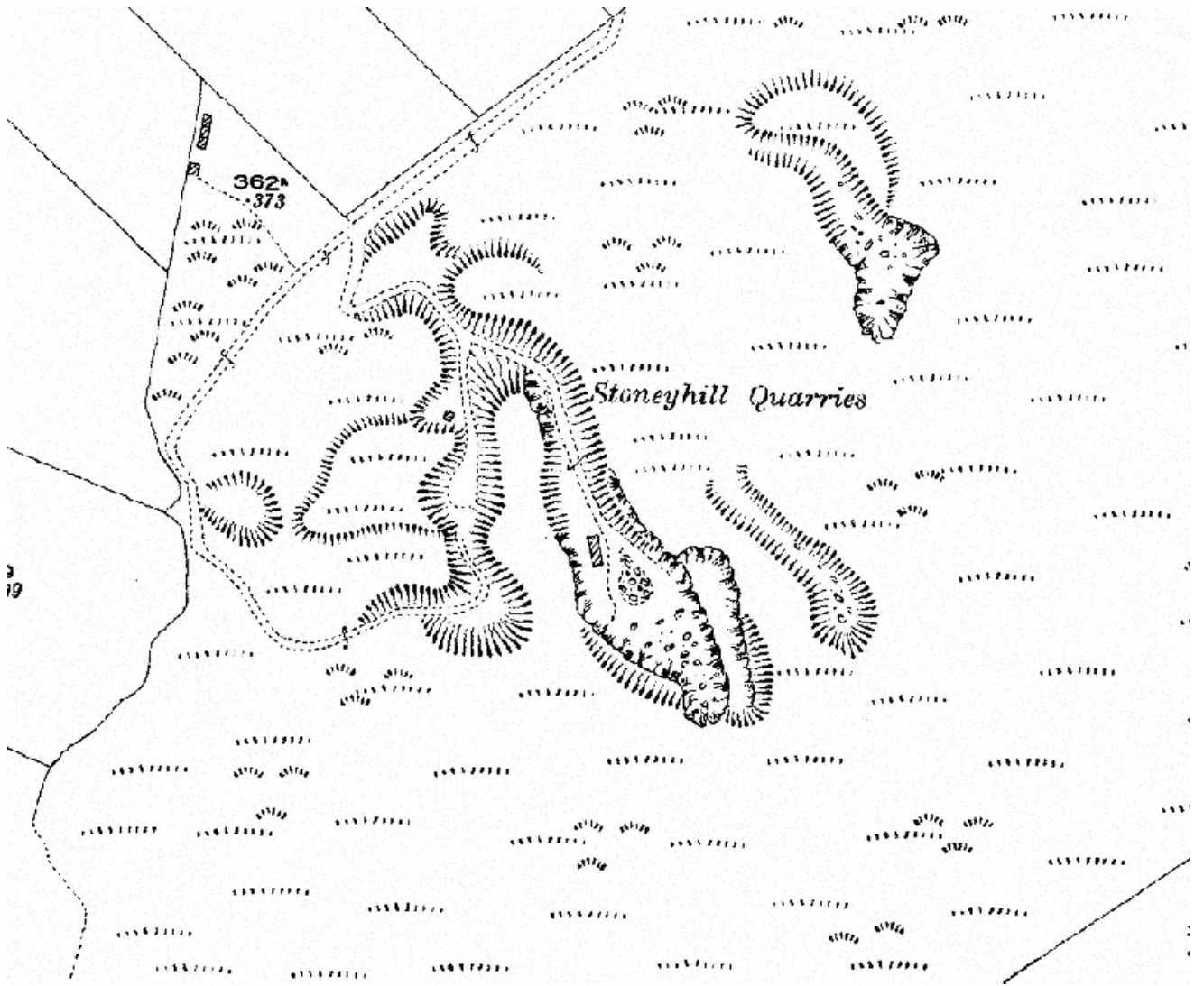




1867 Ordnance Survey map

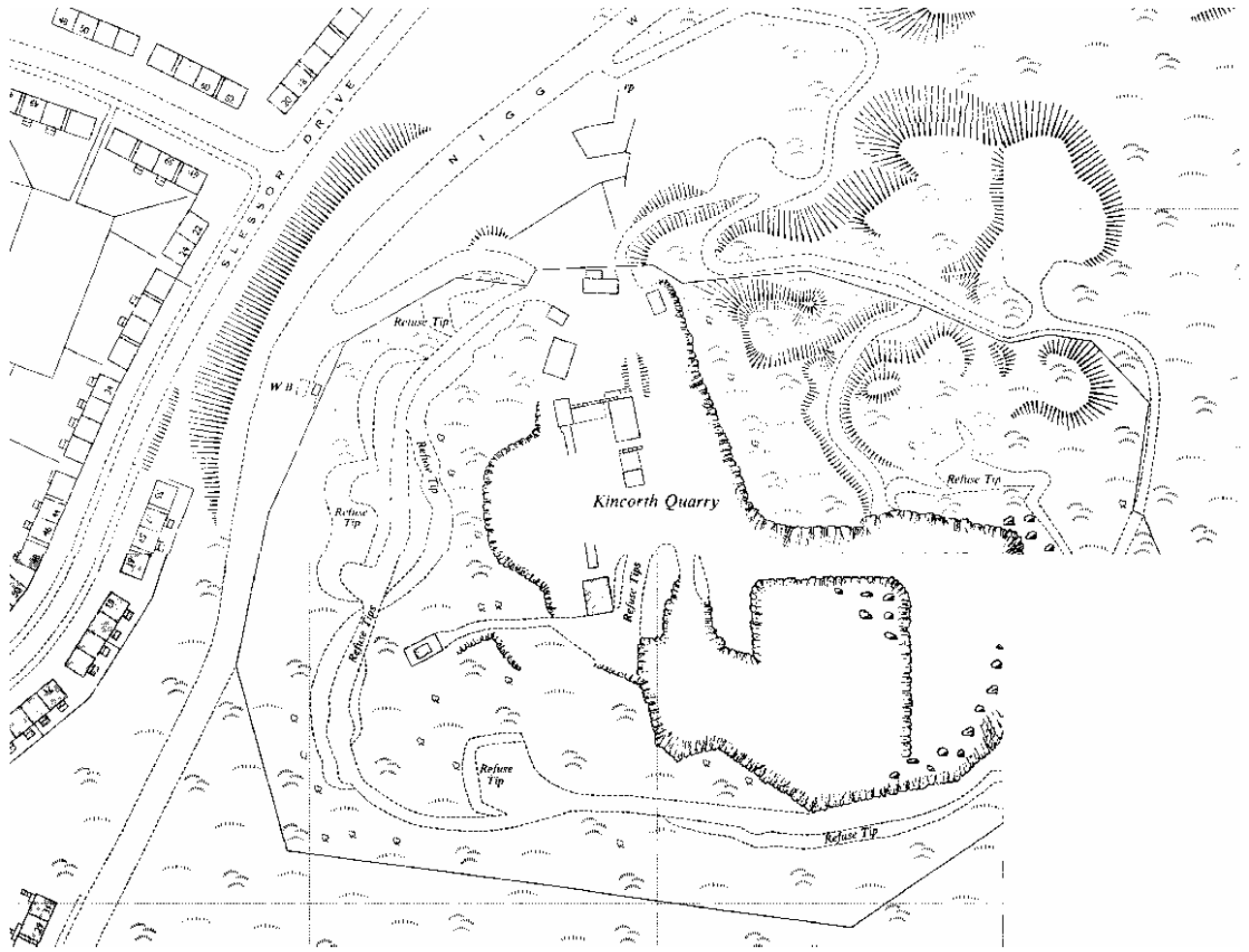


1901 Ordnance Survey map



1926 Ordnance Survey map





1950s-1960s Ordnance Survey map

## APPENDIX 2 CONTACT SHEET OF PHOTOGRAPHS



Area of TP4 stone dump (1)



Area of TP4 stone dump (2)



Area of TP4 stone dump



TP4 location (1)



TP4 location



TP4 topsoil over quarry waste (1)



TP4 topsoil over quarry waste



TP4 quarried stone dump from fill of trial pit (1)



TP4 quarried stone dump from fill of trial pit (2)



TP4 quarried stone dump from fill of trial pit



TP4 (7)



TP4 (8)



TP4 (10)



TP4 (11)



TP4 spoil showing schist and granite waste



TP4 location (1)



TP4 location



TP2 location



TP2 upper layers showing plastic etc (1)



TP2 upper layers showing plastic etc (2)



TP2 upper layers showing plastic etc (3)



TP2 upper layers showing plastic etc (4)



TP2 upper layers showing plastic etc



TP2 spoil heap



TP2 facing W showing buried topsoil (1)



TP2 facing W showing buried topsoil (2)



TP2 facing W showing buried topsoil



TP2 facing S (1)



TP2 facing S



HP3



views from top of hill (1)



views from top of hill (2)



views from top of hill (3)



views from top of hill



HP1 (1)



HP1 (2)



HP1 (3)



HP1 (4)



HP1



HP2 (1)



HP2 (2)



HP2 (3)



HP2 (4)



HP2



HP3 (1)



HP3 (2)



HP3 (3)