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*Engineering Archaeological Services Ltd.*

**Swn Y Don  
Archaeological Investigation**

**I.P. Brooks**

***EAS Client report 2021/02***

**Swn Y Don**  
**Archaeological Investigation**

**Survey Commissioned**  
**by**  
**P. Davidson**

**Fieldwork**  
**by**  
**I.P. Brooks**  
**Engineering Archaeological Services Ltd.**

**Swn Y Don**  
**Archaeological Investigation**

**I.P. Brooks**  
***EAS Client report 2021/02***

**registered in England**

**No 2869678**

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## ***Introduction***

**NGR:** Centred on SH 75782 83083

### **Location and Topography:** (Figure 1)

Swn Y Don is located on the southern side of the Great Orme, approximately 280 m WNW from the Bishops Palace of Gogarth (Scheduled Ancient Monument CN093). The property lies south of Llys Helyg Drive with a moderately sloping front garden and a gently sloping back garden which has a cliff, down to the sea, at its southern end. The northern end of the back garden has a steeper slope which is the result of the dumping of spoil from the construction of the swimming pool. The house, itself, sits on a terrace between the two gardens, presumably man made. The back garden was under lawn at the time of the Investigation, although it was clear there had been beds along the sides of the garden which had been cleared. The back garden also contained the concrete top of a septic tank.

### **Archaeological Background**

It is intended to demolish the existing house at Swn y Don, Llys Helyg Drive, Llandudno and erect a replacement. It is also proposed to carry out associated developments within the garden (Conwy Planning Application 0/47543).

Swn y Don lies between two Scheduled Monuments, Gogarth Grange (CN093) and the former Royal Artillery Coast Artillery school (CN409) within the Creuddyn and Conwy Historic Landscape Area and the Great Orme and Creuddyn Peninsular Special Landscape Area. Whilst there are no formal records of archaeological features or finds associated with the plot, a previous owner of the house has reported finding a flint artefact within the garden and a possible stone wall (T. Fildes *pers. comm.*). Also, an aerial photograph, probably taken in the late 20th century, appears to show a series of linear cropmarks in the rear garden both running across the garden and along its length. The Gwynedd Historic Environment Record (HER Enquiry No. GATHER1478) shows only two records within the immediate area of the investigation (PRN 15193 and 15514), both of these are recorded as “medieval banks”, however no further information is given and no evidence is given as to the dating of these features. The nearest known archaeological intervention (PRN 45122) was by CR Archaeology (Rees and Jones 2016) in advance of the construction of a new dwelling off Llys Helyg Drive, however, no archaeological features or deposits were recorded.

As part of the planning process the Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service recommended that a programme of archaeological investigation, in line with Planning Policy Wales (2018) and TAN 24, was commissioned. As a result, conditions were imposed by Conwy County Borough Council.

The 1840 Tithe Map for Llandudno (Figure 2) shows the area to be fields at this date with three fields crossing the plot which was to become Swn Y Don (<https://places.library.wales/>). They were all owned by John Lloyd Jones and tenanted by Mary Owen. The up-hill plot (Plot 448) was under pasture at that time, whilst the lower plots were arable fields. The area was still open by the 1888 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 3), although there appears to have been a track along the southern side of Plot 447 on the Tithe map (Figure 2). Surprisingly the boundary between Plots 448 and 447 does not appear to have been mapped on the 1888 map, however, it re-appears on the later Ordnance Survey maps published in 1948 and 1953



(Figures 4 and 5). These maps do show, however, that the plot was still undeveloped until the second half of the twentieth century.

### **Aims of the Investigation**

To evaluate the archaeological record within the proposed development area.

### **SUMMARY**

*Only two archaeological features were recorded during the course of the archaeological investigation at Swn Y Don, Llys Helyg Drive, Llandudno, LL30 2XB. One appears to correlate with a field boundary shown on the 1840 Tithe Map of Llandudno, whilst the interpretation of the other is uncertain, but it may be a relatively modern planting hole. A small group of flint artefacts were recovered, both from the trench and from the garden in general.*

*Dim ond dwy nodwedd archeolegol a gofnodwyd yn ystod y gwerthusiad archeolegol yn Swn y Don, Llys Helyg Drive, Llandudno, LL30 2XB. Mae'n ymddangos bod un yn cydberthyn â ffin cae a ddangosir ar Fap Degwm 1840 Llandudno, tra bod dehongliad y llall yn ansicr, ond gall fod yn dwll plannu cymharol fodern. Cafwyd hyd i grŵp bach o arteffactau fflint, o'r ffos ac o'r ardd yn gyffredinol*

### **Methodology**

A cross shaped trench (Figure 6) was excavated in the back garden of Swn Y Don. This was 20 x 15 m in size with each leg of the cross being 2 m wide (Figure 7, Plate 1). The topsoil was removed using a micro-excavator with a smooth faced ditching bucket and all other work carried out by hand.

The photographs were taken with a Nikon D5300 Digital SLR Camera at a resolution of 24.2 MP with the photographs being taken in RAW (NEF) format. These photographs were converted into JPEG format for use as illustration in this report and TIFF for archiving. A series of photographs were also taken with a Panasonic Lumix DC-FT7, at a resolution of 20.4 MP which were further processed with Agisoft Metashape Standard v. 1.6.2 to produce 3D models from which orthographic plans and sections could be extracted. The trench and outline of the rear garden, swimming pool and rear of the house was surveyed using a Leica TS06 Power 5S total station with the resultant survey being processed with NRG surveying system for Windows v. 2016.00 Build O

### **Investigation**

Very little archaeology was recorded within the trench; however, five flint artefacts were recovered from around a rabbit burrow on the western side of the back garden, suggesting a level of prehistoric activity.

Within the trench (Figure 7), the most northerly 1.2 m of the trench consisted of the tip of materials (Context 2) which are related to the construction of the swimming pool. This layer contained modern, machine-made brick fragments demonstrating the recent nature of this deposit.

Only two archaeological features were located. One (Context 3) was a shallow (120 mm), roughly circular (840 mm diameter) feature with a dark greyish brown silty clay fill that had a degree of root disturbance (Context 4) (Figure 8, Plate 4). The function of this feature is not clear, however, its form and position, centrally placed across the width of the garden may suggest it was a relatively modern planting hole. If so, it predates an aerial photograph taken between 1972 and 2000 (T. Fildes *pers. comm*) for a previous owner. Given the clarity of the cropmarks it is possible that this photograph was taken in the hot summer of 1976, although this remains speculative.

The second feature (Context 5, Figure 8, Plate 5) was a linear feature crossing the north-south leg of the trench. This had an unusual form with a steep cut to the north and a gentle slope to the south, forming a near horizontal surface. The feature was filled with a sticky orange/brown clay with the occasional sample rounded pebble up to 50 mm in size and rare fleck of charcoal (Context 6). This feature can be seen on the aerial photograph taken between 1972 and 2000 and probably relates to the southern boundary of Plot 447 on the Tithe Map (Figure 2). The feature is approximately 1.0 m wide and its form suggest it was a terrace for the base of a boundary, possibly either a clay bank or a wall. It would also possibly suggest that the area may have been terraced, possibly as a result of the arable agriculture that was taking place in the early twentieth century.

## ***Finds***

Only a limited number of artefacts were recovered during the Investigation, none of which were from a secure context. The topsoil contained two sherds of Buckley Ware, a fragment of green bottle glass and an iron handle, probably from a kettle.

Of more significance is the small group of flint artefacts recovered (Plate 6). Five of these were associated with the spoil from a rabbit burrow, outside the area of the trench, whilst the remaining four artefacts were recovered during the cleaning of the trench. All of the flint artefacts appear to have been made on poor quality, small beach pebbles, probably having been collected relatively locally to the site.

From the rabbit burrow there is a single end scraper made of a fragment of beach flint (Plate 6.1) This has a series of long, abrupt, subparallel removals along the distal end (Inizan *et al* 1992). It is only 24.7 x 22.2 x 14.8 mm with its size and shape being largely defined by the raw material being used. Two other artefacts (Plate 6.2 and 6.3) have small areas of deliberate retouch on their sides, although this does not appear to be sufficient to define these artefacts as scrapers. The other two artefacts from this group consist of two small worked lumps that may be fragments from a more formal core (Plate 6.4 and 6.5). One of these (Plate 6.4) has two removals from its dorsal surface from small bladelets, whilst the other (Plate 6.5) is noticeable by its dense, cream coloured patination. The small size of these artefacts can be demonstrated by their weights with the fragment with the blade removals weighing only 3.9 g whilst the other weighs 4.1 g.

Only three lithic artefacts were recovered from Context 1 (topsoil) within the trench (Plate 6.6 – 6.8) None of these were retouched consisting of roughly worked fragments won no clear form. One of these (Plate 6.6) has been heated, in the past, sufficiently to change the appearance of the flint.

## ***Conclusions***

Only limited archaeology was located by the Investigation at Swn Y Don, Llys Helyg Drive, Llandudno, LL30 2XB with only two archaeological features being located within the trench. One of these is probably a twentieth century planting hole, whilst the other appears to be one of the boundaries seen on the 1840 Tithe Map of Llandudno.

Probably of greater interest are the lithic artefacts recovered during the project suggesting a level of prehistoric activity within the general area. None of the artefacts are diagnostic as to a possible date of this activity, however, the general style of knapping and the small size of the artefacts may suggest a Late Mesolithic date. Unfortunately, the use of probably local, beach resources to make these artefacts means that their form is more a product of the raw materials used rather than a temporally defined knapping strategy.

## ***Acknowledgements***

The project was commissioned by P. Davidson and the support of both him and his wife for arranging access to the site are gratefully acknowledge. The micro excavator was driven by M. Black of XTPlant Specialist Landscaping with his usual skill. The project was monitored by T. Fildes for the Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service.

## ***References***

- Inizan, M. -L., Roche, H. and Tixier, J. 1992. *Technology of Knapped Stone*. CREP. Meudon
- Rees, C., and Jones, M. 2016 *Results of Archaeological Works at Plot off Llys Helig Drive, Great Orme, Llandudno*. CR Archaeology Client Report CR94-2016





250 0 250 500 750 1,000 m

Swn y Don

Reproduced from the Outdoor LeisureTM OL17, 1:25,000 scale  
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The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office  
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Figure 1: Location  
Scale 1:20,000

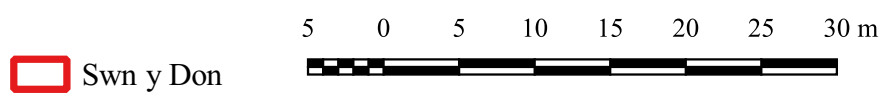
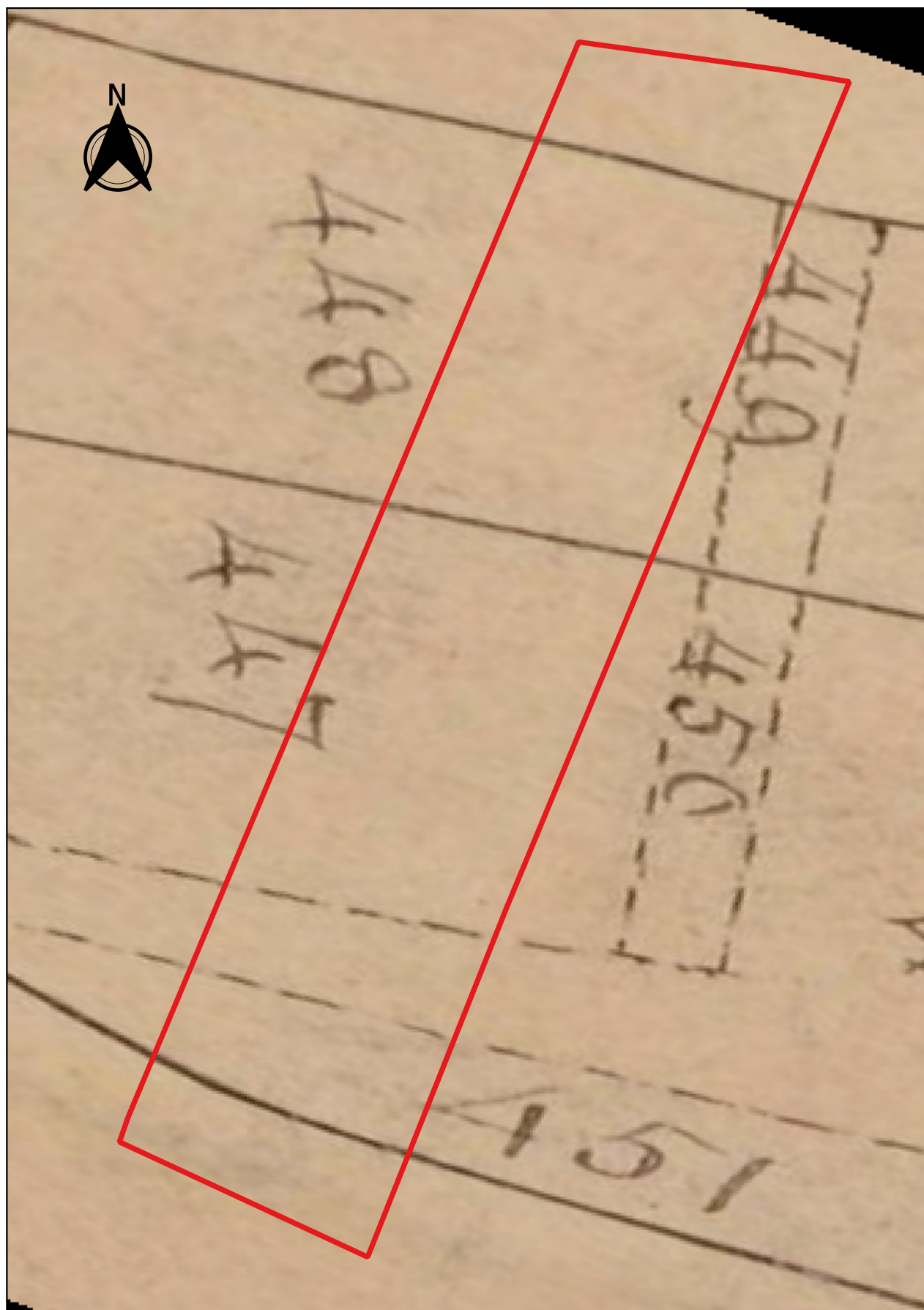


Figure 2: Extract from the 1840 Tithe Map of Llandudno  
Scale 1:500

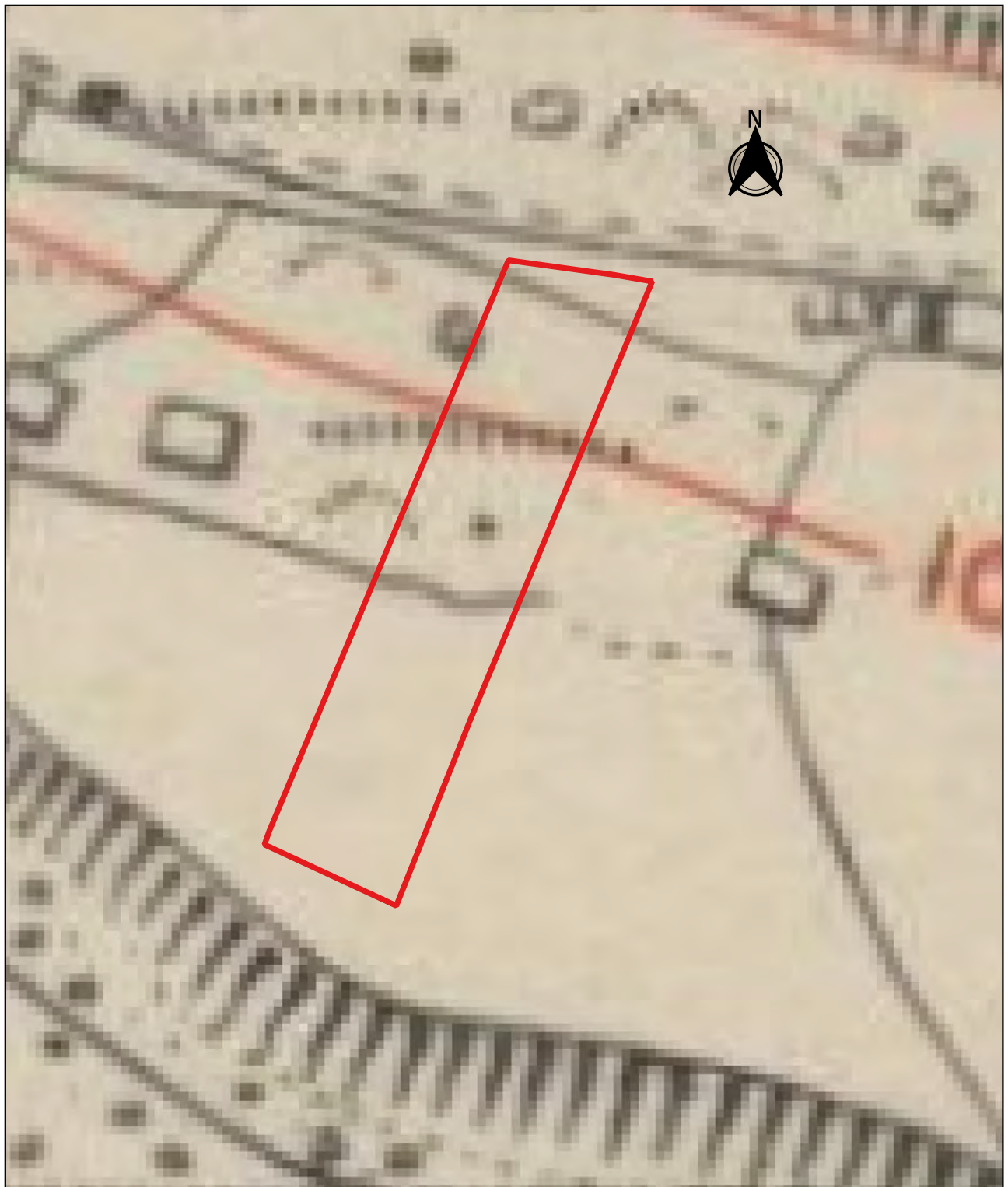




10 0 10 20 30 40 50 m

 Swn y Don

Figure 3: Extract from the  
1888 Ordnance Survey Map, Caernarvonshire I.SE  
Re-scaled to 1:1,000



10 0 10 20 30 40 50 m


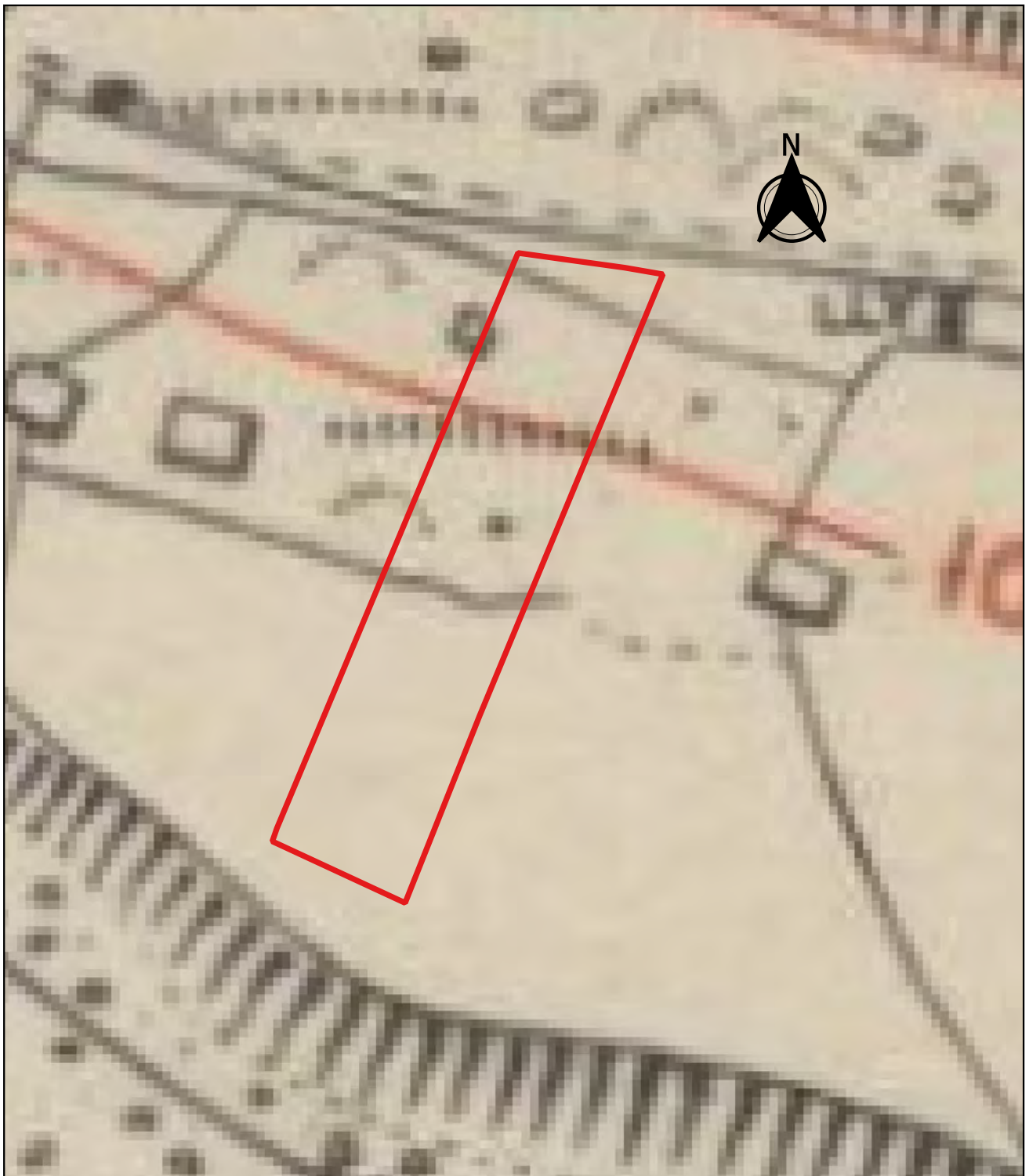

 Swn y Don

Figure 4: Extract from the 1948  
Ordnance Survey Map Caernarvonshire I.SE  
Rescaled to 1:1,000

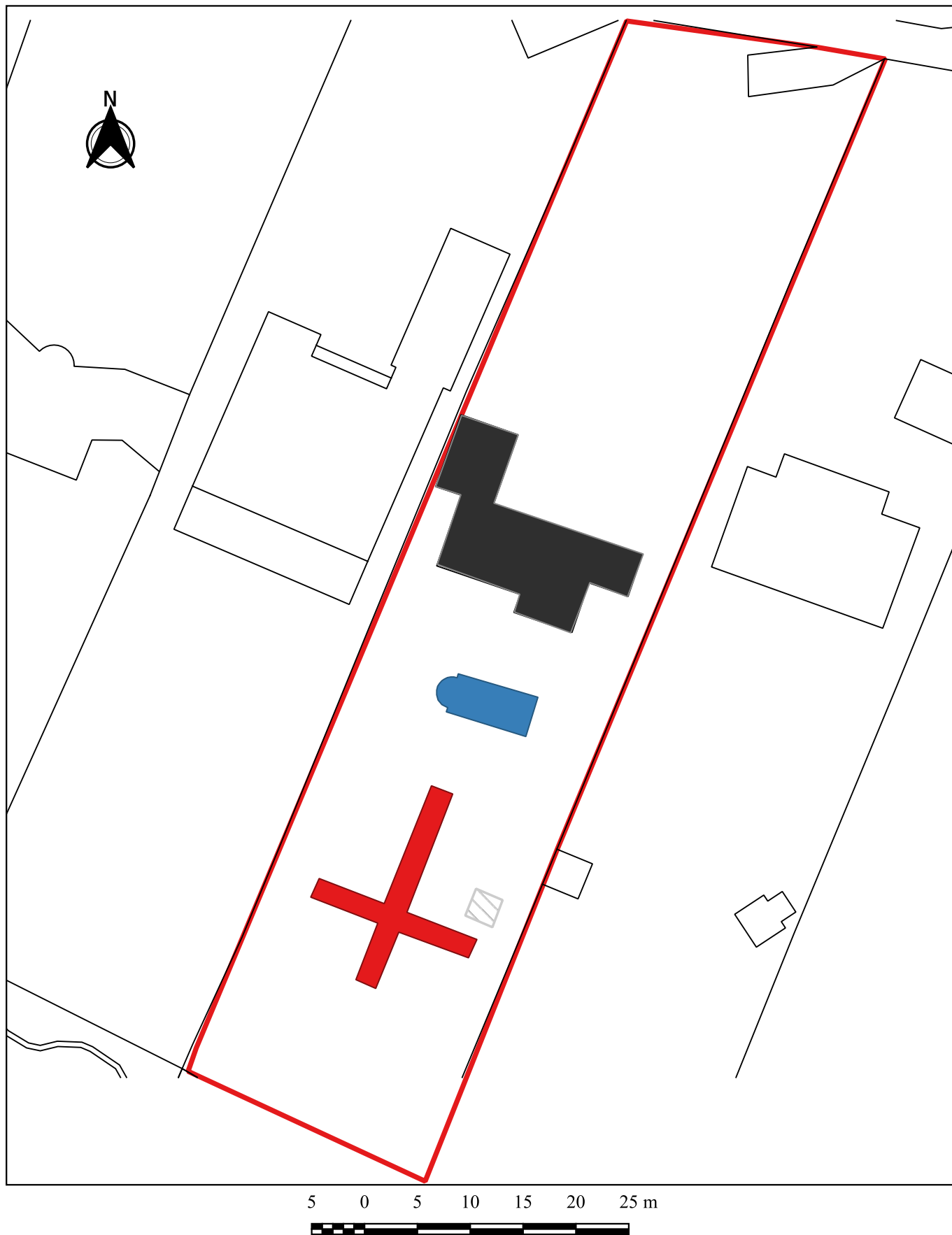


10 0 10 20 30 40 50 m

A scale bar with alternating black and white segments, used to indicate distance in meters.

 Swn y Don

Figure 5: Extract from the 1953  
Ordnance Survey Map Caernarvonshire I.SE  
Re-scaled to 1:1,000



House
  Septic Tank
  Trench
  Pool
  OS MasterMap
  Swn y Don

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Figure 6: Location of the trench  
Scale 1:500

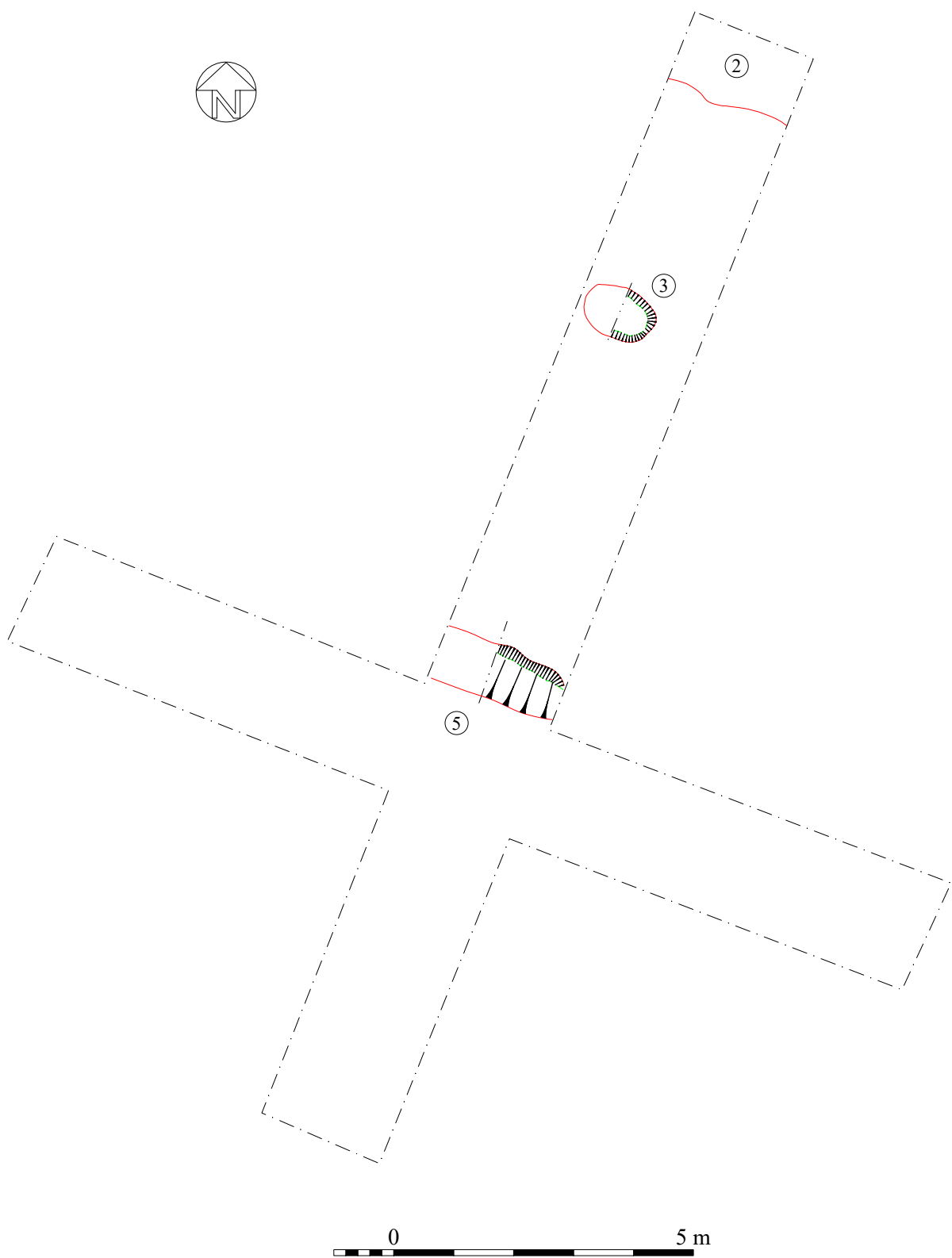


Figure 7: Plan of the Trench  
Scale 1:100



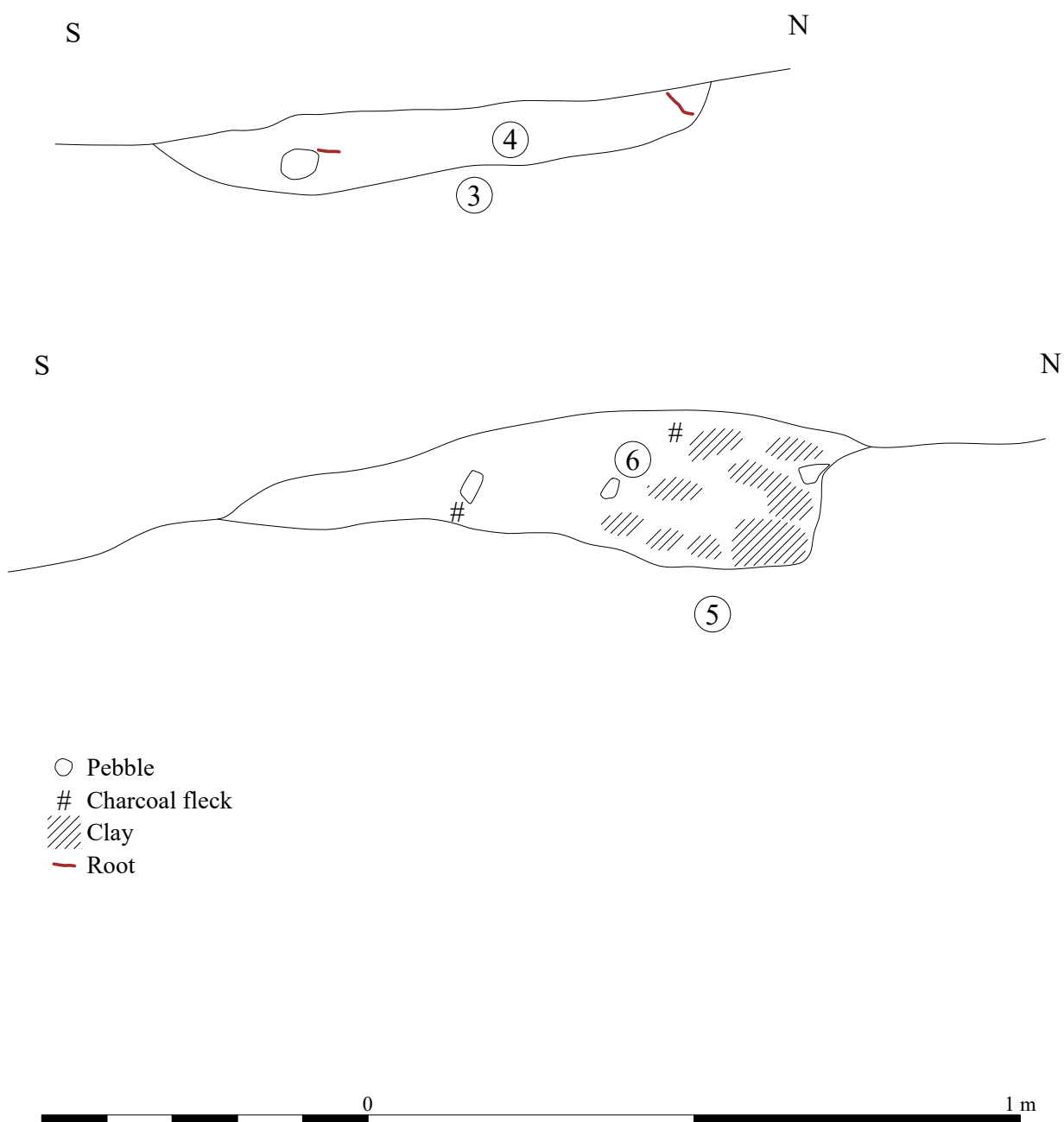


Figure 8: Sections  
Scale 1:10



Plate 1: The trench looking south



Plate 2: The trench looking north

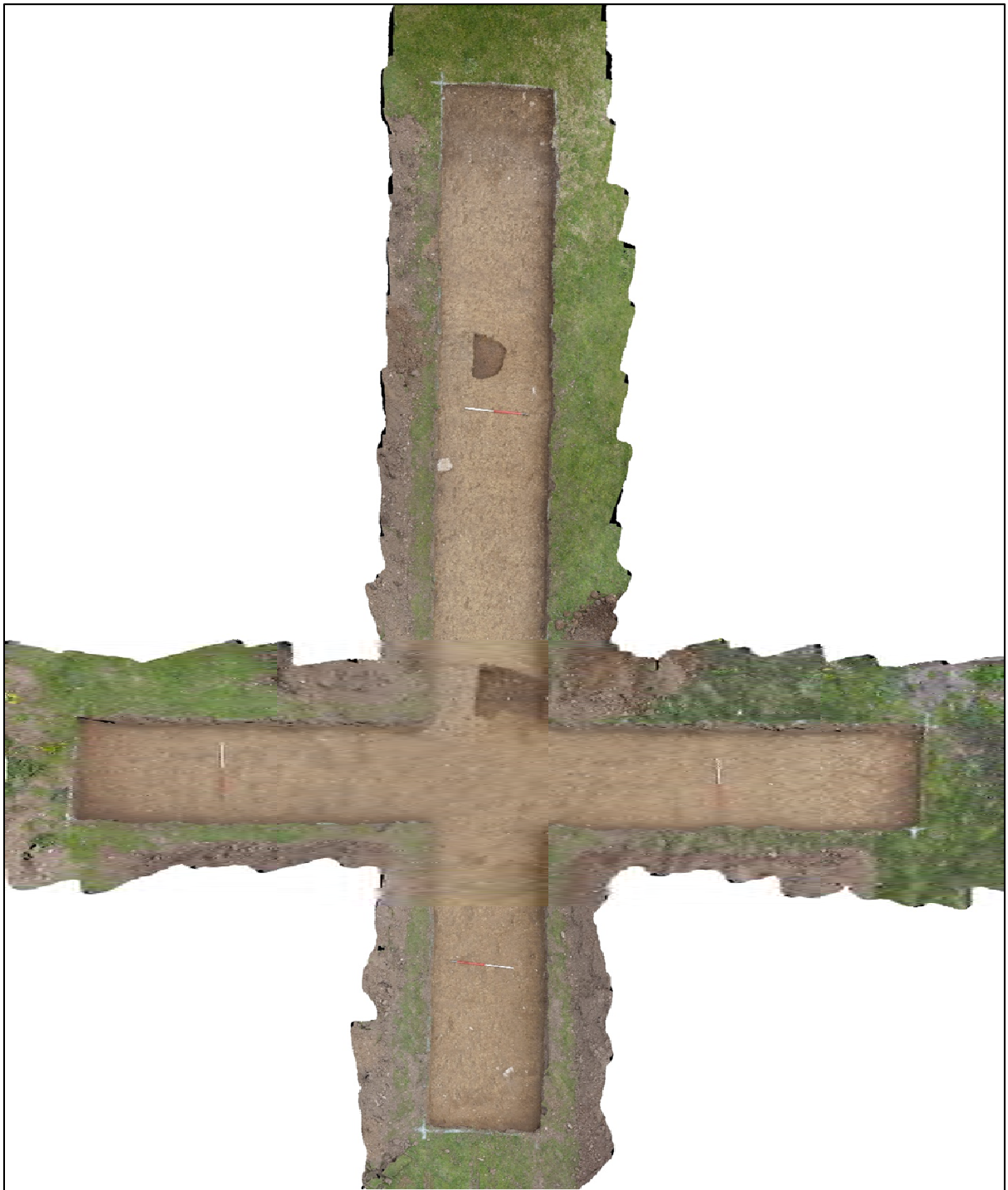


Plate 3: Composite vertical photograph of the trench





Plate 4: Possible planting hole (Context 3)



Plate 5: Probable boundary feature (Context 5)



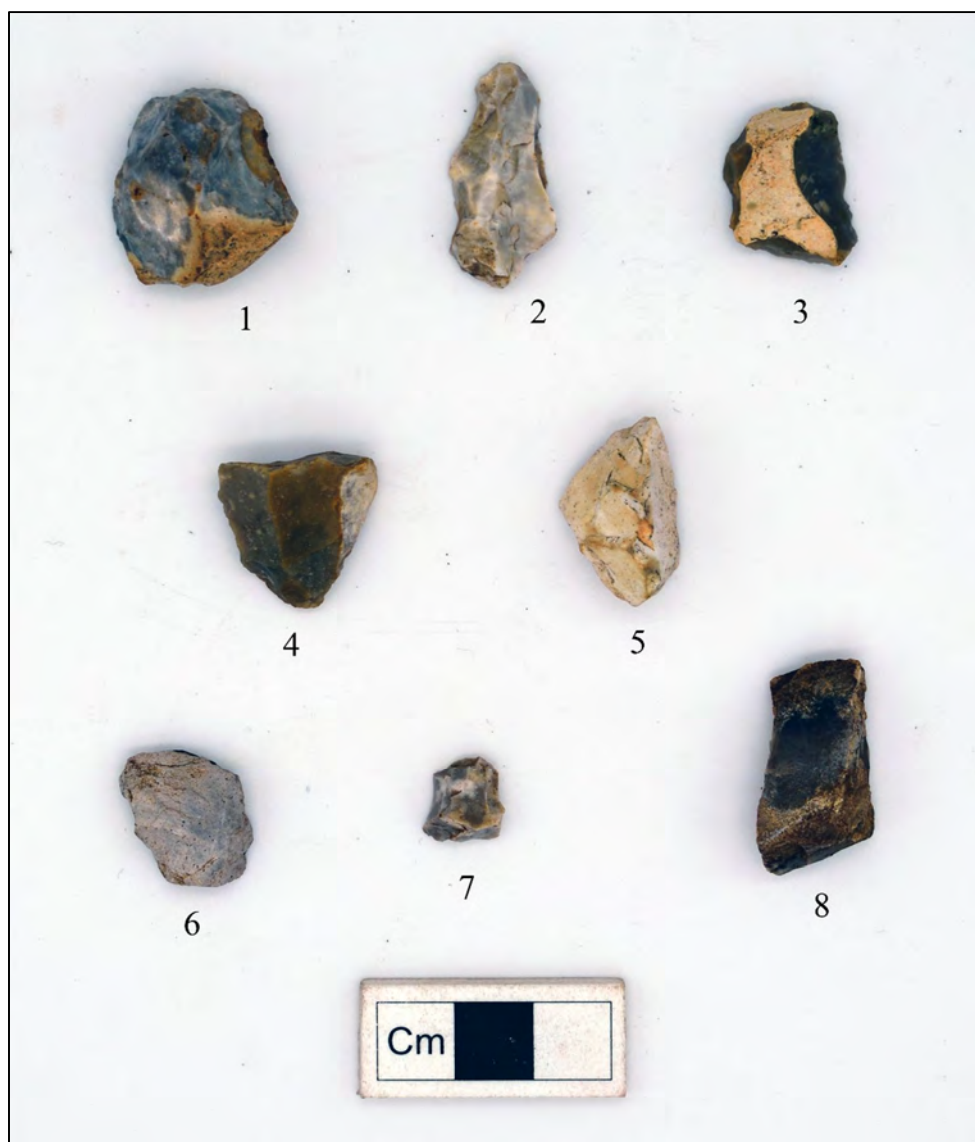


Plate 6: Flint assemblage

# **Appendix 1: Specification for the Archaeological Evaluation at Swn Y Don, Llys Helyg Drive, Llandudno, LL30 2XB**

**Specification compiled by I.P. Brooks.**

10 March 2021

## **1. Non-Technical Summary**

- 1.1. It is intended to demolish the existing house at Swn y Don, Llys Helyg Drive, Llandudno and erect a replacement. It is also proposed to carry out associated developments within the garden (Conwy Planning Application 0/47543).
- 1.2. Swn y Don lies between two Scheduled Monuments, Gogarth Grange (CN093) and the former Royal Artillery Coast Artillery school (CN409) within the Creuddyn and Conwy Historic Landscape Area and the Great Orme and Creuddyn Peninsular Special Landscape Area.
- 1.3. As part of the planning process the Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service recommended that a programme of archaeological investigation, in line with Planning Policy Wales (2018) and TAN 24, was commissioned. As a result, conditions were imposed by Conwy County Borough Council.
- 1.4. It is intended to dig a cross shaped trench within the rear garden of Swn y Don to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site and to sample the possible cropmarks seen on an aerial photograph of the site.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. Swn y Don is located on the southern flanks of the Great Orme at SH 75791 83110 (Figure 1).
- 2.2. Although there are no known archaeological records within the Historic Environment Record for Swn y Don itself, it lies between two Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Gogarth Grange (CN093) and the former Royal Artillery Coast Artillery School (CN409), and is within the Creuddyn and Conwy Historic Landscape Area.
- 2.3. A previous owner of the site has reported finding a flint artefact within the garden and a possible stone wall (T. Fildes *pers. comm.*).
- 2.4. An aerial photograph, probably taken in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, appears to show a series of linear cropmarks in the rear garden both running across the garden and along its length.
- 2.5. The local solid geology should be the Carboniferous Llanarmon Limestone Formation with Devensian, sand and gravel over.
- 2.6. This specification has been prepared considering:
  - 2.6.1. An email from Lowri Williams, Planning Consultant with Owen Devenport Ltd.
  - 2.6.2. Telephone and email correspondence with T. Fildes, Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service.

## **3. Aims**

- 3.1. To evaluate the archaeological record within the proposed development area.

#### **4. Field work program**

4.1. The fieldwork program will include:

4.1.1. The excavation of an evaluation trench

4.1.2. Report and archive preparation

#### **5. Methodology**

5.1. Evaluation Trenches

5.1.1. A single cross shaped trench will be dug in the rear garden of Swn y Don. (Figure 2)

5.1.1.1. The trench will be approximately 20 m x 15 m in size with each leg of the trench being 2 m wide.

5.1.2. All topsoil and superficial deposits will be removed using a smooth faced bucket under constant archaeological supervision and monitoring.

5.1.3. The trench will be cleaned by hand and any subsequent excavation will also be carried out by hand.

5.1.4. All features or archaeologically significant deposits revealed will be fully recorded including:

5.1.4.1. A written description of deposit: type, components etc.

5.1.4.2. Hand drawn plans and sections at suitable scales. Typically plans will be drawn at a scale of 1:20 or greater and sections at a scale of 1:10.

5.1.4.3. Photographs will be taken with Nikon D5300 Digital SLR Camera at a resolution of 24.2 MP

5.1.4.3.1. If appropriate photographs will be taken with a Panasonic Lumix DC-FT7 camera on an extendable pole. These photographs will be processed with Agisoft Metashape v. 1.6.3 to produce photogrammetric images of the trenches.

5.1.4.4. Plan drawings showing the extent and nature of any archaeological deposits or features encountered.

5.1.4.5. Section drawings of any features recorded to record vertical stratigraphy.

5.1.5. The Gwynedd Archaeological Planning service will be notified immediately if significant archaeological deposits, features or artefacts are located.

5.1.6. The photographs will include metric scales

5.1.7. All artefacts and ecofacts will be recorded by context.

5.1.8. Each deposit, feature or layer will be identified by a unique context number to which all other records will be related

5.1.9. Where possible, features will be sampled to obtain dating and functional evidence.

5.1.10. All discrete features will be excavated by hand, whilst a minimum of 10 % of the length of linear features will be sampled. The approach to spreads will be assessed on site with the intention of excavating approximately 50% of spreads



being sampled.

5.1.11. Where possible, elevation drawings of feature half sections to record vertical stratigraphy.

5.1.12. Where appropriate, deposits will be sampled for environmental, dating or technological evidence. Samples will be fully recorded and packed appropriately for future analysis.

5.1.13. Sampling will be carried out in accordance with the procedures outlined in English Heritage. 2011. Environmental Archaeology. A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation.

5.1.13.1. Bulk samples are likely to be in the range of 10 – 40l depending on the reason for the sample and the availability of suitable material.

5.1.14. If human remains are encountered all works will stop until the appropriate permissions have been obtained. A further specification will be submitted to detail the excavation of any human remains and the subsequent specialist reports.

## 5.2. Post Excavation Analysis

5.2.1. If there is little, or no, archaeological deposits/features or remains recorded during the evaluation will progress immediately on to the archive report.

5.2.2. If significant archaeological remains/features/deposits are encountered. On completion of the fieldwork an assessment of the archaeological record from the site, will be made and the project design updated. Including an estimate on the cost of the post-excavation process.

5.2.3. On approval of the updated project design the full archaeological report will be undertaken to including the commissioning of all specialist reports recommended by the revised project design.

## 5.3. Finds

5.3.1. The intention is to archive any suitable finds with STORIEL in Bangor.

5.3.2. Any flint artefacts will be studied by I.P. Brooks for Engineering Archaeological Services Ltd.

5.3.3. Any pottery will be studied by an appropriate specialist to be agreed in consultation with the Curatorial Archaeologist

5.3.4. Any metal or other special finds will be studied by an appropriate specialist to be agreed in consultation with the Curatorial Archaeologist

5.3.5. All ceramic, bone and stone artefacts will be cleaned and processed immediately following the watching brief.

5.3.6. Metal artefacts will be stored and managed on site according to the UK Institute of Conservation Guidelines.

5.3.7. Any samples taken for environmental analysis will be assessed and studied by an appropriate specialist to be agreed in consultation with the Curatorial Archaeologist

5.3.8. All finds will be bagged by context with the exception of closely datable or “special” finds which will be recorded with a 3 D position and will be bagged

separately

5.3.9. The requirement for specialist archaeological reports will be discussed with the Curatorial Archaeologist. The extent and cost of any such report will be discussed with the client and a suitable level of response formulated in discussion between the Archaeologist and the Curatorial Archaeologist.

5.3.10. The initial report will include an assessment of the finds from the work and a recommendation for further study if require.

#### 5.4. Archive Preparation and Report Preparation

5.4.1. On completion of fieldwork an archive of the results will be prepared.

5.4.2. The digital records will be archived with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales

5.4.3. The digital archive will be prepared in line with Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales. 2015. Guidelines for digital archives

5.4.4. The deposition of any find with a local museum will be discussed with the owner and the development control archaeologist with a strong recommendation that any finds are deposited in a suitable local museum. This is likely to be STORIEL in Bangor.

5.5. A summary report on the findings of the investigations will be prepared and completed within four weeks from completion of the project. This will summarise the results of the project including;

5.5.1. A site location plan

5.5.2. A plan of the site locating any features or archaeological deposits located.

5.5.3. An outline methodology

5.5.4. The results of the Evaluation.

5.5.5. A full bibliography

5.5.6. A copy the agreed specification

5.5.7. An assessment of the potential for further archaeological investigation

5.5.8. Up to five copies of the report will be provided.

5.5.9. A digital copy of the report will also be provided.

5.5.10. A digital copy of the report will be supplied to the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record

5.5.11. A digital copy of the report will be supplied to Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service

5.6. The preparation of the report will conform to the Welsh Archaeological Trusts 2018 "Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records (HERs)"

## 6. Timetable

6.1. It is intended to carry out the fieldwork in Late March 2021.

6.2. It is anticipated that the timetable will include:

6.2.1.Excavation of the evaluation trench: 2 man days

6.2.2.Report preparation: 1 man days

6.2.3.Archive preparation: 1 man day.

## **7. General**

7.1. CIfA Code of Conduct

7.1.1.All staff will abide by, and all procedures be carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct

7.2. Health and Safety

7.2.1.EAS Ltd adopt and adhere to safe working practices at all times. A copy of the company's general statement of policy is available on request.

7.3. Staff

7.3.1.The project will be directed by Dr I.P. Brooks MCIfA FSA

7.3.2.Project Staff will include Dr I.P. Brooks MCIfA FSA.

7.4. Curatorial Monitoring

7.4.1.The Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service will be informed as to the start date and progress of the fieldwork.

7.5. Insurance

7.5.1.EAS Ltd carries all necessary Public and Employee Liability Insurances.

7.5.2.EAS Ltd carries Professional Indemnity Insurance

## **8. Copyright**

8.1. EAS Ltd shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documentation, under the Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved: excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.

8.2. EAS Ltd is prepared to assign a licence to the client for the use of the report and any associated data.

## *Appendix 2: Context Summary*

<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Relationships</b>
1	Topsoil, typically 300 mm thick, mid brown clayey silty loam with the occasional tree/shrub root, particularly towards the sides of the garden.	Above 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
2	Tip from the construction of the pool consisting of a mixed layer, largely of mid brown clayey silt. The layer also contains fragments of modern, machine made bricks and limestone blocks up to 150 mm in size. Extend for 1.2 m from the north end of the trench	Below 1
3	Roughly circular feature 840 mm in diameter and 120 mm deep with sloping sides and a flat base. Function uncertain, but may be planting hole.	Below 1 Filled with 4
4	Dark greyish brown silty clay with very few other inclusions except the rare, rounded pebble up to 60 mm in size. Some root disturbance.	Below 1 Within 3
5	Linear feature running approximately east -west with a sharp cut to the north 200 mm deep and a flat base that has effectively no southern side as it merges with the natural slope. The feature is 1.0 m wide. Possible foundation trench for a boundary seen on the 1840 Tithe Map of Llandudno. Feature approximately 1.0 m wide. The fill (Context 6) for sale slight mound approximately 80 mm higher than the surrounding levels.	Below 1 Filled with 6
6	Sticky orange/brown clay with the occasional sample rounded pebble up to 50 mm in size and rare fleck of charcoal. The layer forms a slight linear mound approximately 1.0 m wide and up to 180 mm high	Below 1 Within 5

### *Appendix 3: List of photographs in the archive*

<b>File</b>	<b>Scale Bar</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Swyn_Y_Don_01		Back garden of Swyn Y Don before the evaluation with the trench marked, looking south
Swyn_Y_Don_02		Back garden of Swyn Y Don before the evaluation with the trench marked, looking north
Swyn_Y_Don_03		Machine removing topsoil
Swyn_Y_Don_04	1 m	Trench after the removal of the topsoil, looking south
Swyn_Y_Don_05	1 m	Possible planting hole (Context 3) before excavation
Swyn_Y_Don_06	1 m	Trench after the removal of the topsoil, looking west
Swyn_Y_Don_07	1 m	Trench after the removal of the topsoil, looking north
Swyn_Y_Don_08	1 m	Trench after the removal of the topsoil, looking east
Swyn_Y_Don_09	1 m	Probable boundary feature (Context 5) before excavation, looking south
Swyn_Y_Don_10	1 m and 150 mm	Section of Context 3, looking NW
Swyn_Y_Don_11	1 m and 150 mm	Section of Context 3, looking SW
Swyn_Y_Don_12	1 m and 150 mm	Section of linear feature, Context 5, looking west
Swyn_Y_Don_13	1 m and 150 mm	Section of linear feature, Context 5, looking west
Swyn_Y_Don_14	1 m	Excavated area of Context 5, looking north
Swyn_Y_Don_15		General view of the excavation looking south
Swyn_Y_Don_16		Disturbance around the rabbit burrow where the flint artefacts were found
Swyn_Y_Don_17	30 mm	Flint artefacts
Swyn_Y_Don_18	1 m	Orthographic, composite photograph of the trench after the removal of the topsoil
Swyn_Y_Don_19	1 m	Orthographic, composite photograph of the trench after the excavation of the features