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An tÚdarás um Bóithre Náisiúnta
National Roads Authority
Archaeology



Date: December 2009

Client: Kildare County Council

Project code: KCK06

**N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Scheme: Phase 3, Kilcullen to Carlow.
Archaeological Services Contract No. 5 – Resolution, Kilcullen to
Moone and Athy Link Road.**

**Final Report on archaeological investigations at Site E2877, in the
townland of Ballymount, Co. Kildare.**

By: John Twomey

National Monuments Section Registration Number: E2877

Director: Gillian Mc Carthy

NGR: 283390/203280

Report Status: Final



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ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd



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Executive Summary

This final report presents the results of the archaeological resolution works carried out on behalf of Kildare County Council and the National Roads Authority as part of the Archaeological Services Contract No. 5 - Resolution, Kilcullen to Moone and Athy Link Road. The works were undertaken prior to the commencement of construction of the N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Scheme: Phase 3, Kilcullen to Carlow. The Minister of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, following consultation with the National Museum of Ireland, issued Directions to Kildare County Council on 8 March 2007 for archaeological resolution works relating to the road development. The registration number, E2877, was allocated by the Department for the excavation of the present site in Ballymount townland under the directorship of Gillian Mc Carthy of Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd.

An Environmental Impact Assessment was published in 2003 for the Kilcullen to Powerstown Scheme, with Valerie J Keeley Ltd preparing the Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage Assessment. This formed Chapter 10 of the EIS produced by the Roughan and O'Donovan - Faber Maunsell Alliance. Geophysical prospection was carried out on certain areas of high archaeological potential by Bartlett-Clark Consultancy as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, on behalf of Valerie J. Keeley Ltd/Kildare County Council.

Aerial photography was undertaken along the entire route selection as part of the non-invasive assessment after the EIA stage. This work was carried out in April 2004 by Markus Casey.

Archaeological testing carried out by IAC Ltd under N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Scheme: Kilcullen to Powerstown. Archaeological Services Contract No. 1 – Test Excavations, Kilcullen to Mullamast under Ministerial Direction Number A021/090 on this site between 8 May and 28 August 2006 identified a linear feature which was aligned northwest/southeast and was cut by a furrow. It was 7.5 m in length was 2.1 m in width and had a depth of 0.7 m. The primary fill was mid-brown loose silty clay which had a depth of 0.6 m. The lower fill was yellowish brown compact silty clay which had frequent inclusions of small sub angular stones and was 0.1 m in depth.

Full archaeological resolution was conducted on this site between 1 October 2007 and 16 October 2007. This revealed a post-medieval double linear field boundary cut by a furrow with parallel furrows to the north. A Preliminary Report of works on the site was completed by Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd in February 2009.

1 Introduction

The N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Road Scheme, of which the Kilcullen to Powerstown Scheme forms part, was proposed as a High Quality Dual Carriageway/Motorway, forming the Major Inter Urban route between Dublin and Waterford. The Kilcullen to Powerstown Scheme was advanced as a single entity up to the Compulsory Purchase Order/Environmental Impact Statement and was subsequently divided into two separate construction contracts: the Carlow By-pass (Phase 1) and the Kilcullen to Carlow Scheme (Phase 3). Kildare County Council, National Roads Design Office, has responsibility for overseeing the project management of these two schemes. The entire road scheme from Kilcullen to Waterford has now been designated as Motorway.

An Environmental Impact Assessment was published in 2003 for the Kilcullen to Powerstown Scheme, with Valerie J Keeley Ltd preparing the Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage Assessment. This formed Chapter 10 of the EIS produced by the Roughan and O'Donovan - Faber Maunsell Alliance. Geophysical prospection was carried out on certain areas of high archaeological potential by Bartlett-Clark Consultancy as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, on behalf of Valerie J. Keeley Ltd/Kildare County Council.

Aerial photography was undertaken along the entire route selection as part of the non-invasive assessment after the EIA stage. This work was carried out in April 2004 by Markus Casey.

Construction commenced on Phase 1, the Carlow By-pass, in January 2006 and the road was completed and opened in May 2008. Construction of Phase 3, the Kilcullen to Carlow Scheme, which also includes a new single carriage link road to Athy town, commenced in January 2008.

Archaeological test-trenching was undertaken in advance of Phase 1, the Carlow By-pass, by Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd between June and August 2005 (Archaeological Services Contract No. 3). This work identified 64 archaeological sites, which required archaeological excavation in advance of road construction. The resolution works for these sites were undertaken by Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd between January and August 2006 (Archaeological Services Contract No. 4).

Archaeological test-trenching was undertaken in advance of the construction of Phase 3, the Kilcullen to Carlow Scheme, by IAC Ltd and CRDS Ltd, between October to November 2005 and May to August 2006 (Archaeological Services Contracts No. 1 and No. 2, respectively). This work resulted in the identification of 102 archaeological sites, which required resolution in advance of construction. The resolution works for these sites were undertaken by Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd between March and December 2007 (Archaeological Services Contracts No. 5 and No. 6). This report details the results of one of those excavations, undertaken under NMSR Number E2877.

The project was funded by the Irish Government and the European Union through Kildare County Council/National Roads Authority, under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 and 2007-2013.

Construction Phases 2 and 4 relate to the section of road between Powerstown, Co. Carlow and the Waterford city By-pass and are project managed by Waterford County Council, National Roads Design Office.

2 Site description and location

Site E2877 was situated in the townland of Ballymount, parish of Usk, barony of Narragh and Reban East, and was located 8.1 km south of Kilcullen, Co. Kildare at National Grid Reference: 282180/201780 (Figure 1). The site was located on a gravel ridge at the southeastern edge of Narraghmore bog, west of the current N9.

One RMP is recorded within the townland of Ballymount. An enclosure (RMP KD032-052) is located 350 m southeast of the site. Other known archaeological sites in the vicinity of E2877 include a ringfort (RMP KD032-032) 1.2 km to the south, and an enclosure (RMP KD032-026001) and stone circle (RMP KD032-026002) 1.3 km to the east. The stone circle is referred to as 'The Piper's Stones' on the 1st edition OS 25" map.

Archaeological investigations undertaken as part of Archaeological Services Contract No. 5 on the road scheme identified a number of nearby Bronze Age burnt mounds and associated features at; Ballymount, E2874, 800 m to the south (Hanbidge 2010); Ballymount, E2873, 900 m south (Hanbidge 2009b); Ballymount, E2872, 1 km south (Twomey 2009); and Blackrath, E2871, 1.1 km north, (Hanbidge 2009a). An early Bronze Age settlement was excavated at Baronsland E2878, 1.9 km to the north (O'Malley *et al* 2009), and an early medieval cereal-drying kiln, and a series of pot-medieval agricultural features were uncovered at two further sites in Baronsland, E2880 (O'Malley *et al* 2009b) and E2881 (O'Malley 2009). Also in Ballymount at E2875 was a cluster of pits postholes and stakeholes (Frykler 2009), while two Late Bronze Age cremations and three adjacent pits were excavated 1.75 km south at Blackrath, E2870 (Twomey 2009)

3 Aims and methodology

The objective of the work was the preservation by record of any archaeological features that would be impacted by the proposed development, in advance of the road construction programme.

Topsoil stripping of the site was conducted using a 360° tracked machine fitted with a 1.9 m wide ditching (toothless) bucket under constant archaeological supervision. A total area of 900 m² was exposed. The resulting surface was cleaned and all potential features investigated by hand. Archaeological contexts were recorded by photograph and on *pro forma* record sheets. Plans and sections were drawn at scales of 1:20 and 1:10 respectively. Registers are provided in the appendices (Appendices 1-5). Ordnance Datum levels and feature locations were recorded using Penmap and a total station theodolite.

Environmental samples, including animal bone samples, were taken of any deposits suitable for analysis or dating as per Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd environmental guidelines and following consultation with environmental archaeologist and archaeobotanist Karen Stewart and zooarchaeologist Dr. Auli Tourunen. Artefacts recovered during the excavation were assigned unique numbers and treated in accordance with National Museum of Ireland guidelines.

Full archaeological resolution was conducted on this site between 1 October and 16 October 2007. The crew on site E2877 consisted of 1 director, 1 supervisor and 3 site assistants.

Given the absence of archaeological artefacts and worked/charred wood no specialist reports were produced in relation to this site.

4 Excavation results

Following topsoil removal, two parallel linear ditches (003) and (010) were uncovered running in a west-northwest/east-southeast direction across the site with a distance of 3.5 m between them (Figure 3). A number of furrows were also discovered running over these linear ditches.

Ditches

Linear ditch (003) (Plate 1, Figure 3) measured 1.4 m in width, 0.7 m in depth and extended beyond the CPO at its east-southeastern end and had a west-northwest/east-southeast orientation. It had sharp breaks of slope on top, gradually sloping sides, and a concave base with gradual breaks of slope. It contained a basal fill (020) which consisted of mid-brownish grey loose silty sand with charcoal inclusions and small animal bone fragments (E2877:001), and had a depth of 0.35 m. Overlying context (020) was deposit (019) which filled the majority of the ditch. It measured 1.4 m in width and 0.3 m in depth and was dark greyish brown loose silty sand with a horizontal lens of charcoal which ran through the fill. The upper fill of the ditch (004) consisted of silty sand with only occasional charcoal inclusions and had a depth of 0.20 m. Two pieces of post-medieval, probably 20th century pottery were found in this fill (E2877:004:001) and (E2877:004:002). To the southern side of this ditch was a later recut (021). It ran directly along the southern side of the ditch (003), measuring 0.75 m in width, 0.3 m in depth and also extended beyond the CPO at its east-southeastern end. This contained a single fill (022), mid-brownish grey hard clayey sand. This was probably a drainage ditch or an attempt to re-establish linear ditch (003).

Situated 5 m to the north of linear ditch (003), and running roughly parallel to it, was a linear ditch (010) (Plate 2, Figure 3). This extended beyond the CPO at its east-southeastern end and had a west-northwestern/east-southeastern orientation and measured 1.6 m in width and 0.63 m in depth. It had gradual breaks of slope, gradually sloping sides and a rounded base. The basal fill (018) was mid-greyish brown hard sandy clay with occasional small stone inclusions. It measured 1.3 m in width and 0.4 m in depth and ran the entire length of the ditch (010). Overlying fill (018) was fill (011) which measured 1.55 m in width and 0.2 m in depth. It was mid-brownish grey hard clayey sand with occasional small stone inclusions. It also contained a post-medieval iron hook (E2877:011:001) and animal bone (E2877:002). This ditch was cut into the natural but at the east-southeastern end it was cut into a subsoil layer (009), which was a loosely compacted mid brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of small stones, measuring 1.45 m in width and 0.13 m in depth.

Furrows

Five west-northwest to southeast orientated furrows were also identified running parallel to each other at a distance of 1.3 m apart (Figure 3). All had concave sides and flat bases. Furrow (005) cut across the ditch (003) and also the ditch (010). It measured 0.66 m in width and 0.12 m in depth and contained the fill (006) which was light greyish brown soft clayey sand.

Furrow (007)/(025) ran parallel to (005) (Plate 4) at a distance of 2.5 m. It measured 0.65 m in width and 0.25 m in depth. It contained the fill (008)/(026) which was mid-greyish brown soft clayey sand which contained some small stone inclusions. Furrow (007)/(025) cut a possible earlier drain/furrow (016); it measured 0.17 m in depth, 0.3 m in width and contained the fill (017) which consisted of mid-brownish grey compact silty sand. It was only visible for 1 m and may only have been a drainage feature. Furrow (012) ran parallel to furrow (007)/(025) at a distance of 2.5 m to the northeast. Furrow (012) (Plate 3) measured 0.85 m in width, 0.16 m in depth and contained the fill (013) which consisted of light orangey brown hard clayey sand. Furrow (014) ran parallel to the furrow (012) at a distance of 2.5 m to the northeast. Furrow (012) cut linear ditch (010). Furrow (014) measured 0.83 m in width and 0.13 m in depth and contained the fill (015) which consisted of light orangey brown hard clayey sand. Furrow (023) ran parallel to the furrow (014) at a distance of 2.5 m to the northeast. The furrow (023)

measured 0.6 m in width and 0.1 m in depth and contained the fill (024) which consisted of mid-greyish brown loose clayey sand.

5 Discussion

The results of the excavation at Ballymount are discussed here following stratigraphic, environmental, dating and artefactual analysis. The site is then discussed on a local level and related to other sites known in the vicinity (including those discovered on the current scheme). The site will also be discussed on a national level in an attempt to place it in context and assess how it contributes to the archaeological record in general.

Artefacts uncovered from the upper fills of ditches (003) and (010) suggest both were open in the post-medieval period (Appendix 2). Ditch (003) is represented as an upstanding field boundary on the 1st Edition 6" OS map of 1839. It is no longer extant however, in the third edition OS map of 1907/09, it reflects field consolidation in this area in the late 19th/early 20th centuries. Linear ditch (010) could have been a bank with a ditch to either side, hence both ditches could represent the same boundary

The features recorded on site E2877 reflect the history of agricultural land use in the area from post-medieval times through to the modern day. The site provided evidence for landscape change and maintenance through the construction and subsequent removal of field boundaries, and ploughing. Adjacent sites have revealed evidence for intense prehistoric occupation across this area. However they also have also provided us with the remains of its post-medieval archaeology with features of a similar nature to those excavated on site E2877. A removed field boundary was excavated on sites E2874 (Hanbidge 2010), E2873 (Hanbidge 2009b) and E2872 (Twomey 2009a) approximately 0.80 km, 0.90 km and 1.10 km respectively southwest of E2877, while a similar arrangement of two parallel ditches, one of which was represented on the First Edition Map, was uncovered on site E2876 (Twomey 2009b) 0.25 km to the southwest and site E2881 (O'Malley 2009) 2.30 km to the northeast.

The five furrows uncovered all post-date these ditches. The shallow nature of the features and the uniformity of their shape and orientation reinforces the validity of their interpretation as furrows.

The evidence from the other sites in its vicinity support the notion that site E2877 should not be viewed in isolation but rather as part of a greater post-medieval agricultural landscape.

All the archaeology related to this site within the CPO has been resolved.

6 Archive quantities

The site archive is comprised of the following materials:

Item	Quantity
Context Sheets	26
Plans	0
Sections	3
Photographs	22
Registers	6
Notebooks	-

The archive material is contained within 1 box.

Storage of the archive in a suitable format and location is required in order to provide for any future archaeological research. It is proposed that in addition to the paper archive a digital copy is prepared. The archive is currently stored in the offices of Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd., Unit 1, Wallingstown Business Park, Little Island, Co. Cork. It is proposed that following completion of post-excavation analysis, the archive is appropriately deposited in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland.

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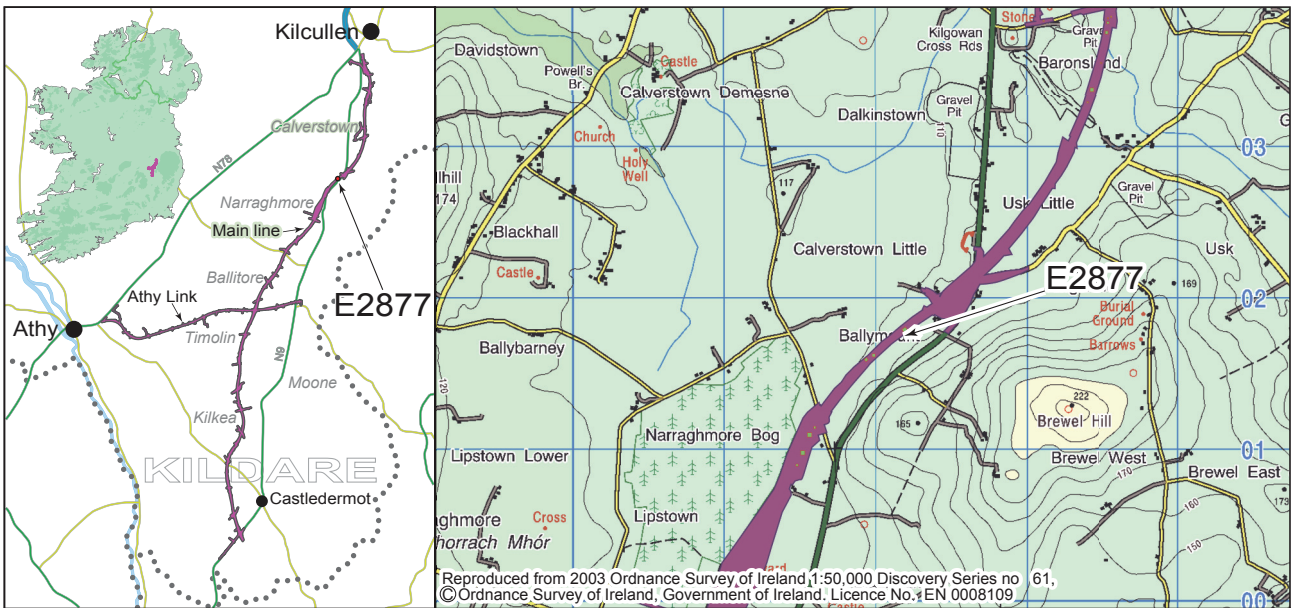
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- Graphics department, Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd.
- Jessica Djohari, Site Supervisor, Headland Archaeology (Ireland) Ltd.
- The excavation team.



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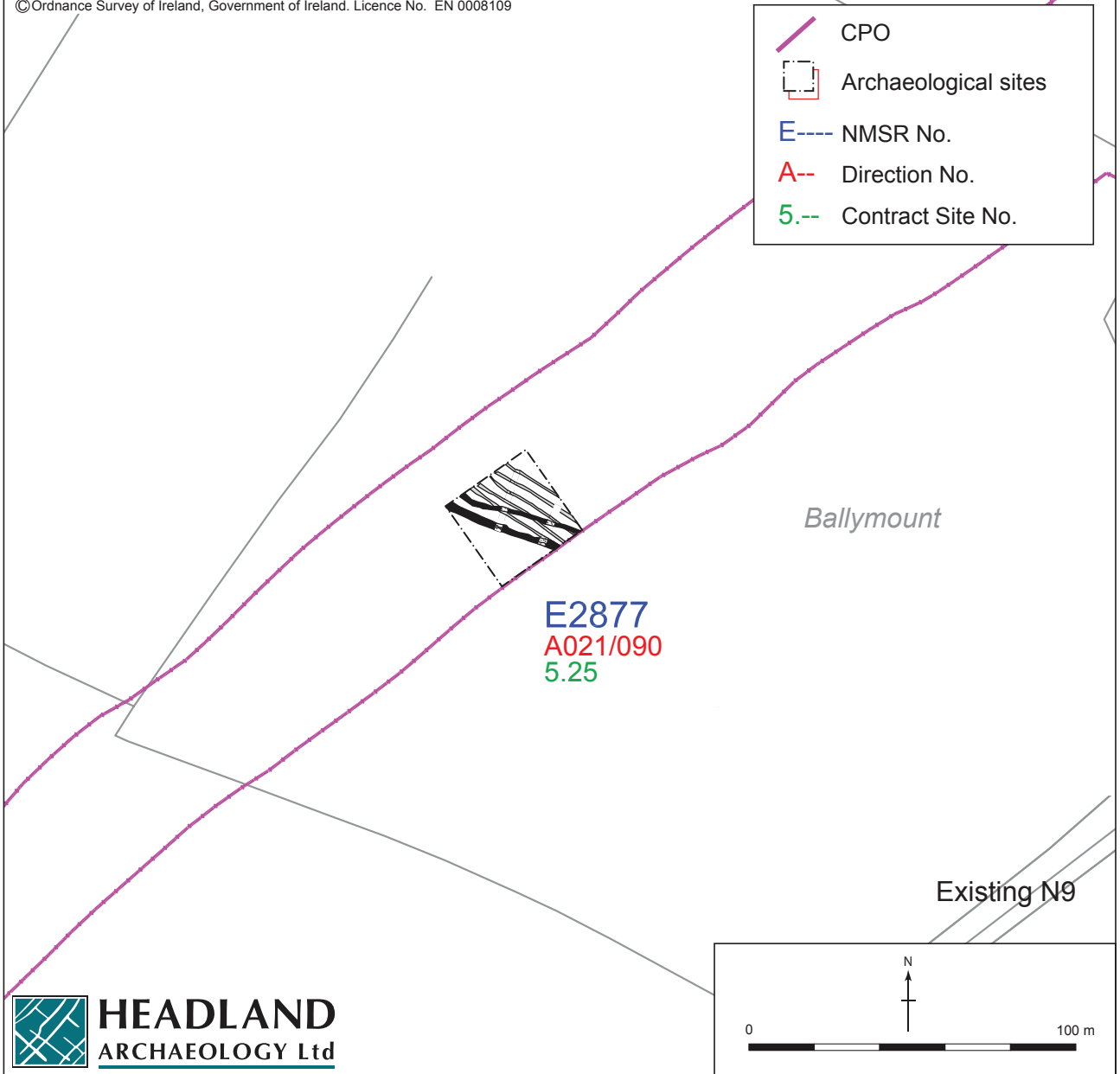


Figure 1 - N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Scheme: Phase 3, Kilcullen to Carlow. Archaeological Services Contract No. 5 – Resolution, Kilcullen to Moone and Athy Link Road: E2877 site location.

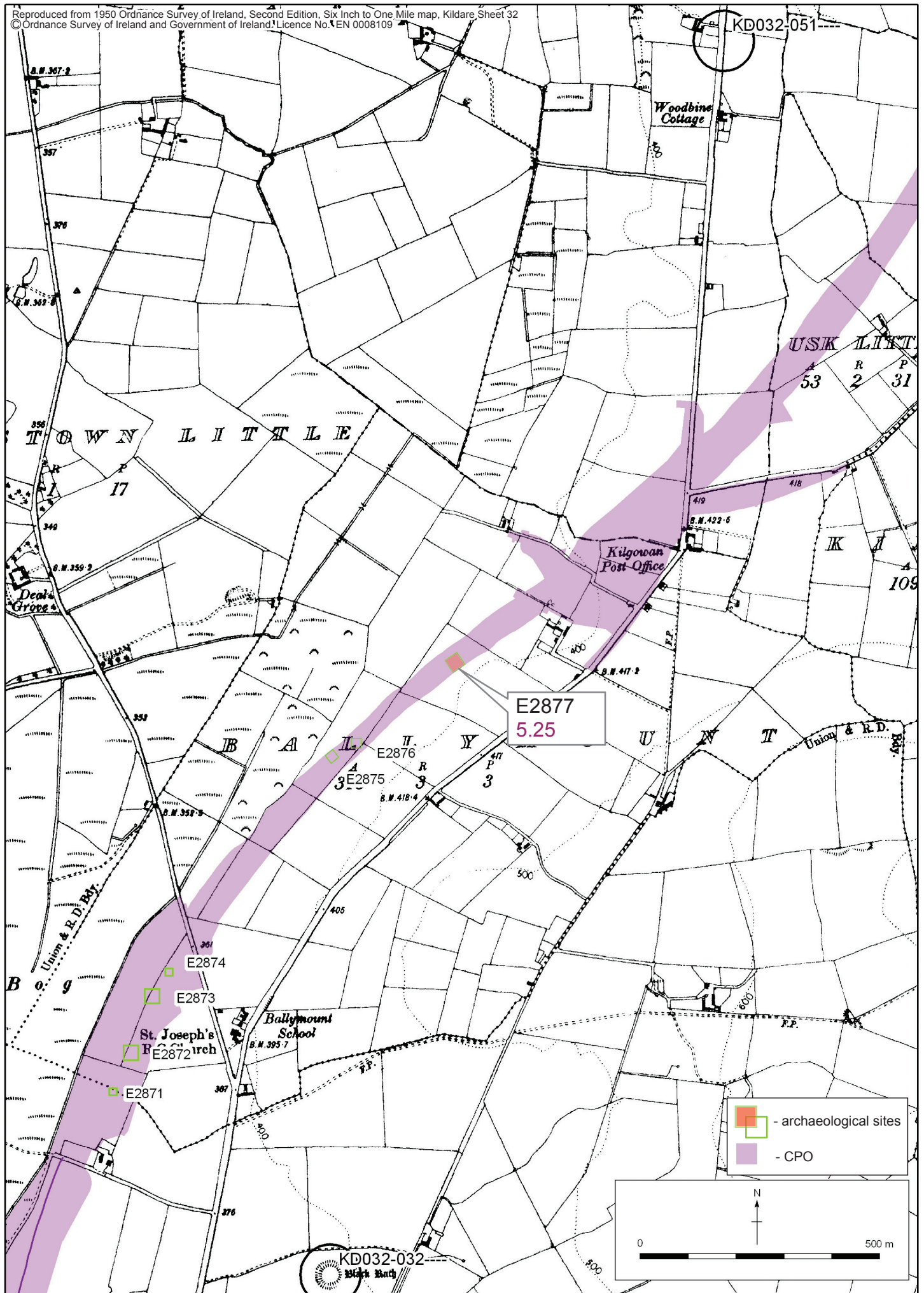
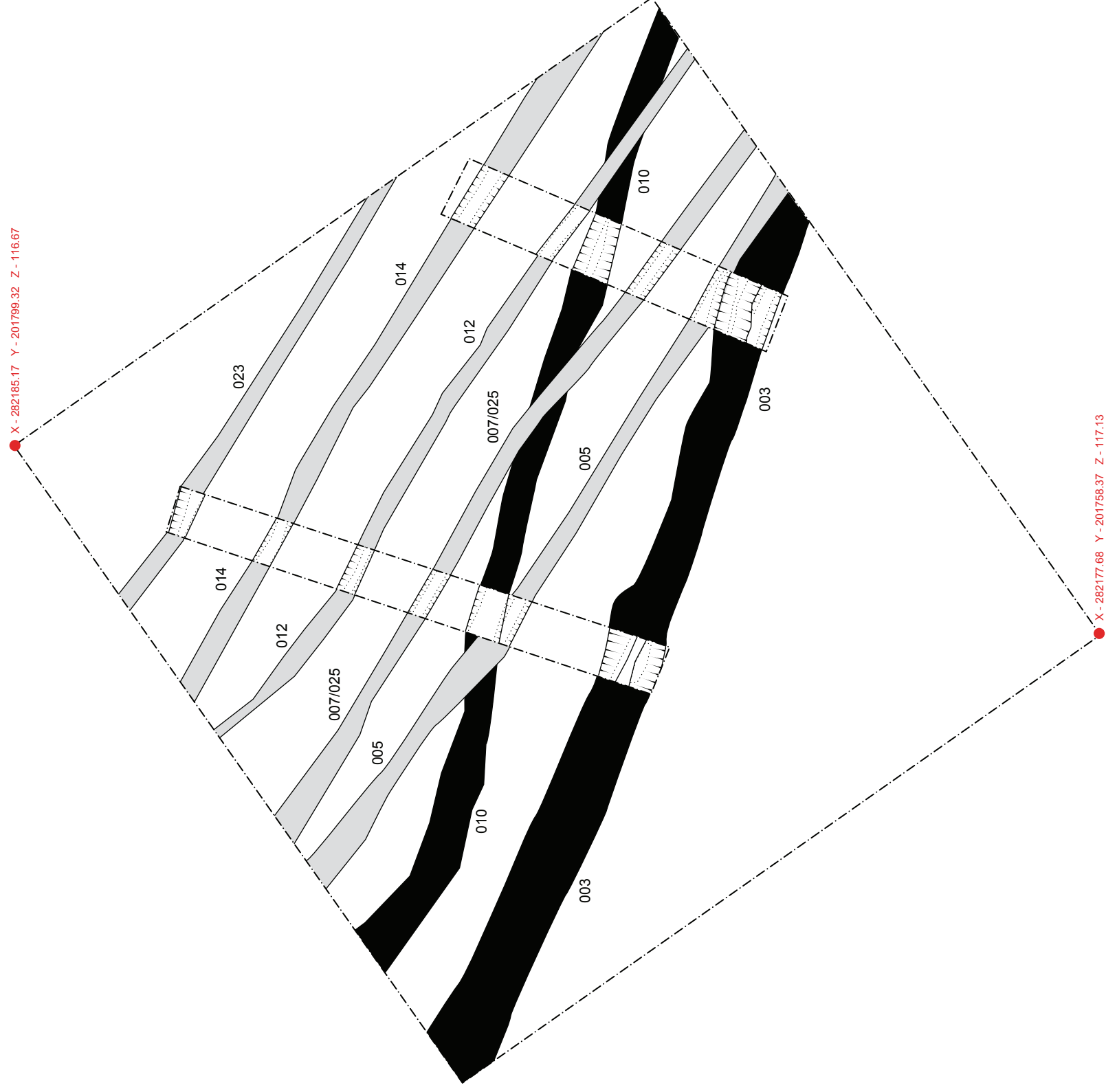


Figure 2 - N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Scheme: Phase 3, Kilcullen to Carlow. Archaeological Services Contract No. 5 – Resolution, Kilcullen to Moone and Athy Link Road: E2877 extract from RMP.



X - 282185.17 Y - 201799.32 Z - 116.67

X - 282177.68 Y - 201758.37 Z - 117.13

Figure 3 - N9/N10 Kilcullen to Waterford Scheme: Phase 3, Kilcullen to Carlow.
 Archaeological Services Contract No. 5 – Resolution, Kilcullen to Moone and Athy Link Road:
 E2877 site layout.



Plate 1 - Section through ditch (003) and furrow (021), facing east.



Plate 2 - Section through ditch (010), facing east



Plate 3 - Section through furrow (012), facing east.



Plate 4 - Section through furrows (005) and (007), facing east.



Plate 5 - Section through ditches (003) and (010), and furrows (005), (007)(025), (008)(026), (012), (014) and (023) facing east.

Appendix 1 – Context Register for Site E2877

Context no.	Type	Fill of:	Filled by:	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation
001	Deposit	-	-	-	-	0.35	Mid-brown silty clay	Topsoil
002	Deposit	-	-	-	-	-	-	Natural
003	Cut	-	(004) (019) (020)	Extends beyond CPO	1.40	0.70	WNW/ESE orientated linear with sharp breaks of slope on top, concave sides, and a concave base with gradual breaks of slope	Cut of ditch
004	Deposit	(003)	-	Extend beyond CPO	0.50	0.20	Firmly compacted light brownish grey silty sand with occasional charcoal inclusions	Upper fill of ditch (003)
005	Cut	-	(006)	Extends beyond CPO	0.66	0.12	East /west orientated linear with sharp breaks of slope on top, concave sides, and a flat base with gradual breaks of slope	Cut of furrow
006	Deposit	(005)	-	Extends beyond CPO	0.66	0.12	Loosely compacted light greyish brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of small stones	Single fill of furrow (005)
007	Cut	-	(008)	Extends beyond CPO	1.35	0.25	East /west orientated linear with gradual breaks of slope, concave sides, and a flat base	Cut of furrow
008	Deposit	(007)	-	Extends beyond CPO	1.35	0.26	Loosely compacted mid greyish brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of small stones	Single fill of furrow (007)
009	Deposit	-	-	Extends beyond CPO	1.45	0.13	Loosely compacted mid brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of small stones	Subsoil
010	Cut	-	(011) (018)	Extends beyond CPO	1.60	0.63	East /west orientated linear with gradual breaks of slope, concave sides, and a concave base	Cut of ditch
011	Deposit	(010)	-	Extends	1.55	0.20	Firmly compacted mid brownish grey clayey	Upper fill of ditch (010)

Context no.	Type	Fill of:	Filled by:	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation
012	Cut	-	(013)	Extends beyond CPO	1.15	0.85	sand with occasional inclusions of small stones East/ west orientated linear with gradual breaks of slope, concave sides, and a flat base	Cut of furrow
013	Deposit	(012)	-	Extends beyond CPO	1.15	0.16	Firmly compacted light brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of small stones	Single fill of furrow (012)
014	Cut	-	(015)	Extends beyond CPO	0.83	0.13	East /west orientated linear with gradual breaks of slope, concave sides, and a flat base	Cut of furrow
015	Fill	(014)	-	Extends beyond CPO	0.83	0.13	Firmly compacted light brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of small stones	Single fill of furrow (014)
016	Cut	-	(017)	1.00	0.30	0.17	East /west orientated linear with gradual breaks of slope, concave sides, and a flat base	Cut of furrow
017	Deposit	(016)	-	1.00	0.30	0.17	Firmly compacted mid grey silty sand	Single fill of furrow (016)
018	Deposit	(010)	-	Extends beyond CPO	1.30	0.40	Firmly compacted mid greyish brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of small stones	Basal fill of ditch (010)
019	Deposit	(003)	-	Extends beyond CPO	1.40	0.30	Loosely compacted dark greyish brown silty sand with occasional inclusions of pebbles and charcoal	Secondary fill of ditch (003)
020	Deposit	(003)	-	Extends beyond CPO	0.90	0.35	Loosely compacted mid greyish brown silty sand with moderate inclusions of charcoal	Basal fill of ditch (003)
021	Cut	-	(022)	Extends beyond CPO	0.95	0.30	East /west orientated linear with sharp breaks of slope on top, concave sides, and a concave base with gradual breaks of slope	Cut of furrow
022	Deposit	(021)	-	Extends beyond CPO	0.95	0.30	Firmly compacted mid greyish brown clayey	Single fill of furrow (021)

Context no.	Type	Fill of:	Filled by:	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation
023	Cut	-	(024)	beyond CPO Extends beyond CPO	0.60	0.10	sand with occasional inclusions of small stones East /west orientated linear with gradual breaks of slope, concave sides, and a flat base	Cut of furrow
024	Deposit	(023)	-	Extends beyond CPO	0.60	0.10	Loosely compacted mid greyish brown silty sand with inclusions of pebbles	Single fill of furrow (023)
025	Cut	-	(026)	Extends beyond CPO	0.65	0.30	East /west orientated linear with gradual breaks of slope, concave sides, and a flat base	Cut of furrow
026	Deposit	(025)	-	Extends beyond CPO	0.65	0.30	Loosely compacted mid greyish brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of small stones	Single fill of furrow (025)

Appendix 2 – Finds Register for Site E2877

Find no.	Material	Type	Identification	Description
E2877:004:001	Ceramic	Pottery sherd	Post-medieval	Small fragment of pottery
E2877:004:002	Ceramic	Pottery sherd	Post-medieval	Small fragment of pottery
E2877:011:001	Metal	Hook	Post-medieval	Metal hook

Appendix 3 – Sample Register for Site E2877

Sample no.	Context no.	Description
E2877:001	(020)	Mid brownish grey fill with charcoal and small animal bone fragments
E2877:002	(011)	Animal bone

Appendix 4 – Photo Register for Site E2877

Photo Number	Direction facing	Description
E2877:001	East	Mid-excavation view of (003) and (021)
E2877:002	East	Mid-excavation view of (005) and (007)
E2877:003	East	Mid-excavation view of (009)
E2877:004	East	Mid-excavation view of (010)
E2877:005	East	Mid-excavation view of (012)
E2877:006	East	Mid-excavation view of (014)
E2877:007	East	Mid-excavation view of (021),(003),(005),(007),(010),(012) and (014)
E2877:008	East	Mid-excavation view of (021),(003),(005),(007),(010),(012) and (014)
E2877:009	West	Mid-excavation view of (003), (005), and (021)
E2877:010	West	Mid –excavation view of (007) and (016)
E2877:011	West	Mid-excavation view of (009), (010) and (012)
E2877:012	West	Mid-excavation view of (014)
E2877:013	West	Mid-excavation view of (021),(003),(005),(007),(010),(012) and (014)
E2877:014	West	Mid-excavation view of (021),(003),(005),(007),(010),(012) and (014)
E2877:015	West	Mid-excavation view of (021),(003),(005),(007),(010),(012) and (014)
E2877:016	West	Mid-excavation view of (003)
E2877:017	West	Mid-excavation view of (010)
E2877:018	West	Mid-excavation view of (025)
E2877:019	West	Mid-excavation view of (012)
E2877:020	West	Mid-excavation view of (014)
E2877:021	West	Mid-excavation view of (023)
E2877:022	West	Mid-excavation view of (003)

Appendix 5 – Drawing Register for Site E2877

Drawing No.	Sheet no.	Type	Scale	Description
E2877:001	1	Section	1:10	East facing section of slot 1
E2877:002	2	Section	1:10	West facing section of slot 1
E2877:003	3	Section	1:10	East facing section of slot 1

Appendix 6 – Matrix for Site E2877

