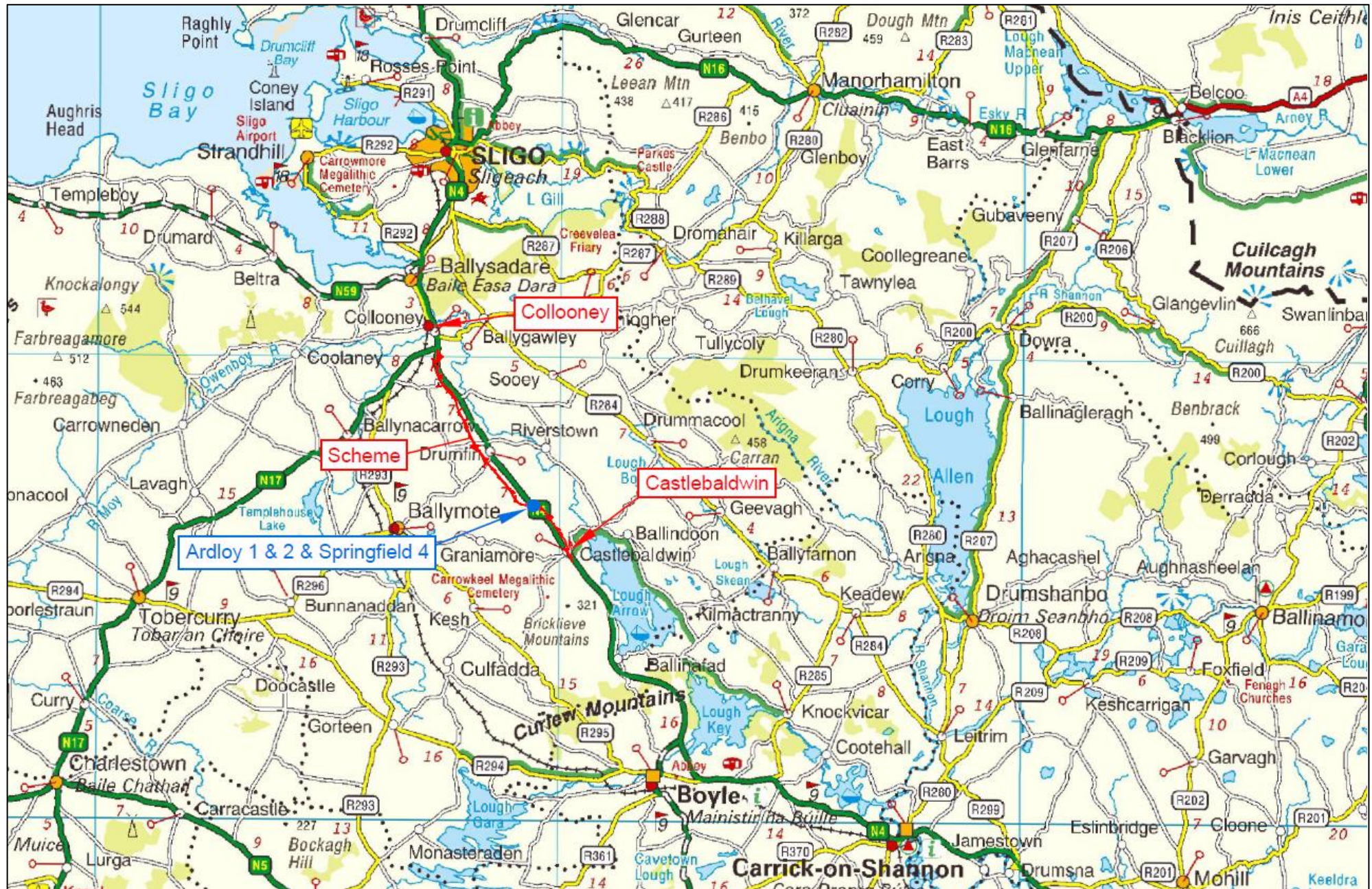


Waking from the Dreamtime: the Iron Age in the light of excavations along the N4

John Ó Néill







Queen Meave
J. C. Leyendecker

Fr.

Symbolist imagery from
T.W. Rolleston's *Myths
and Legends of the
Celtic Race* (1911).

(artists J.C. Leyendecker
and Stephen Reid)



The Two Ambassadors

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Ardloy/Springfield

Bronze Age occupation

700-400 BC – mainly visible through radiocarbon dating

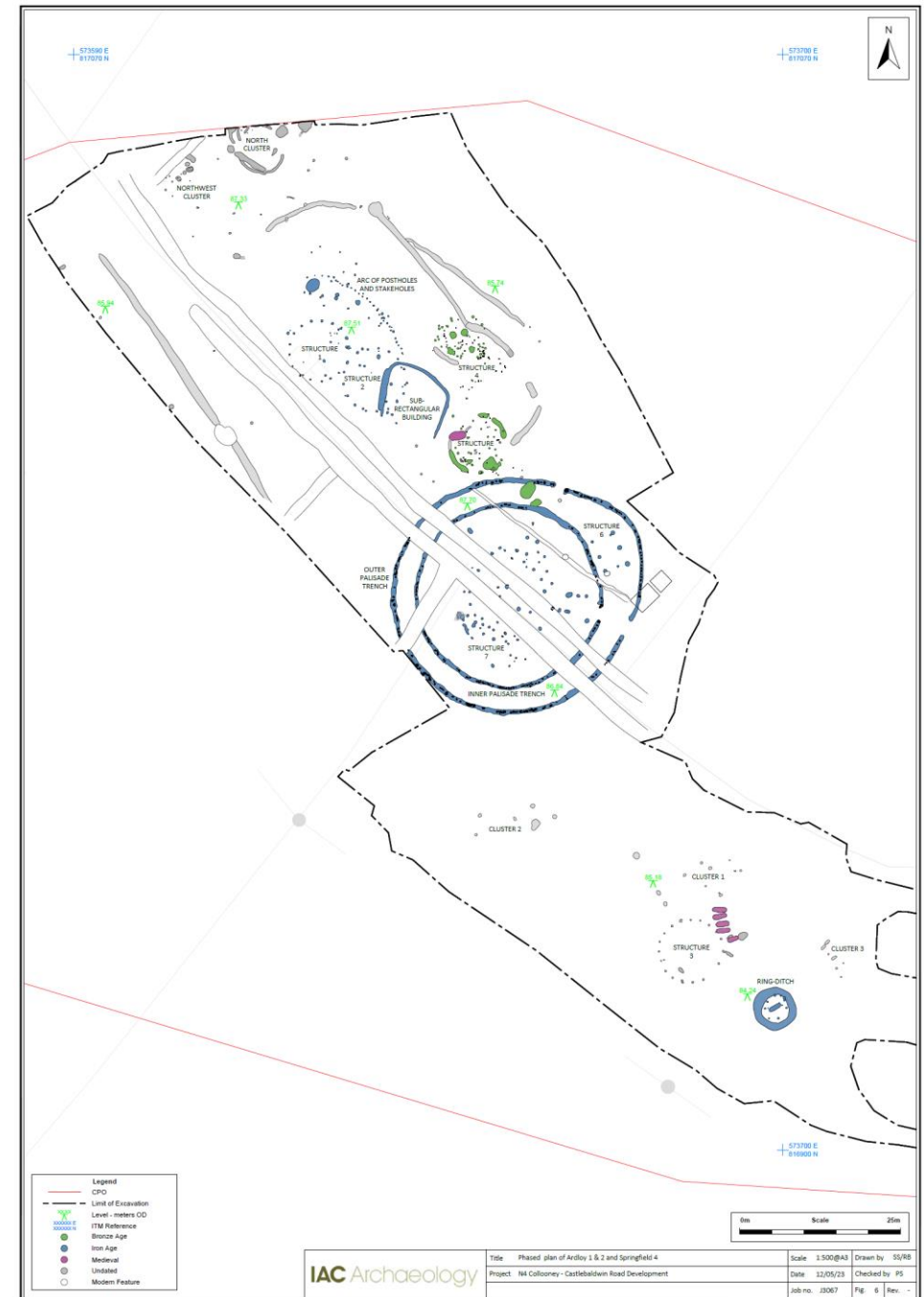
400 BC – 150 BC occupation
(structures), palisaded enclosure,
buildings granary.

100 BC – AD 100 ring ditch/uprights

50 BC – inhumation burial (48 BC – AD 110)

AD 238-387 – Shrine

AD 420-523 – Cemetery

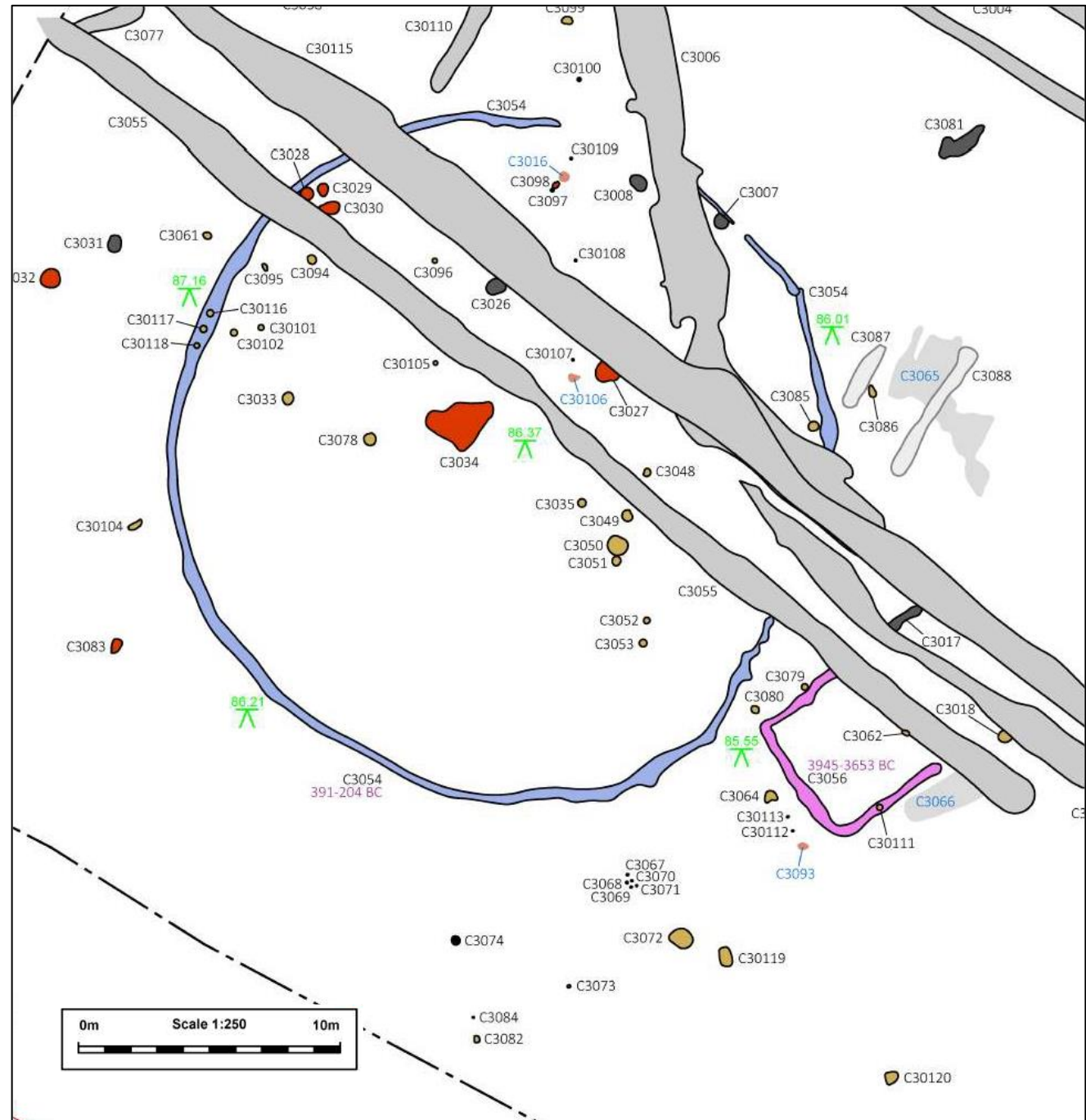


Cloonmeenaghan

Site identified during works on the N4 scheme but preserved *in situ* and not fully excavated.

Based on the investigations carried out the site is clearly comparable to Ardloy 1 & 2/Springfield 4 and Carrownagark 3-6. Also dated to 391-204 BC.

Neolithic house and nearby ringfort present.

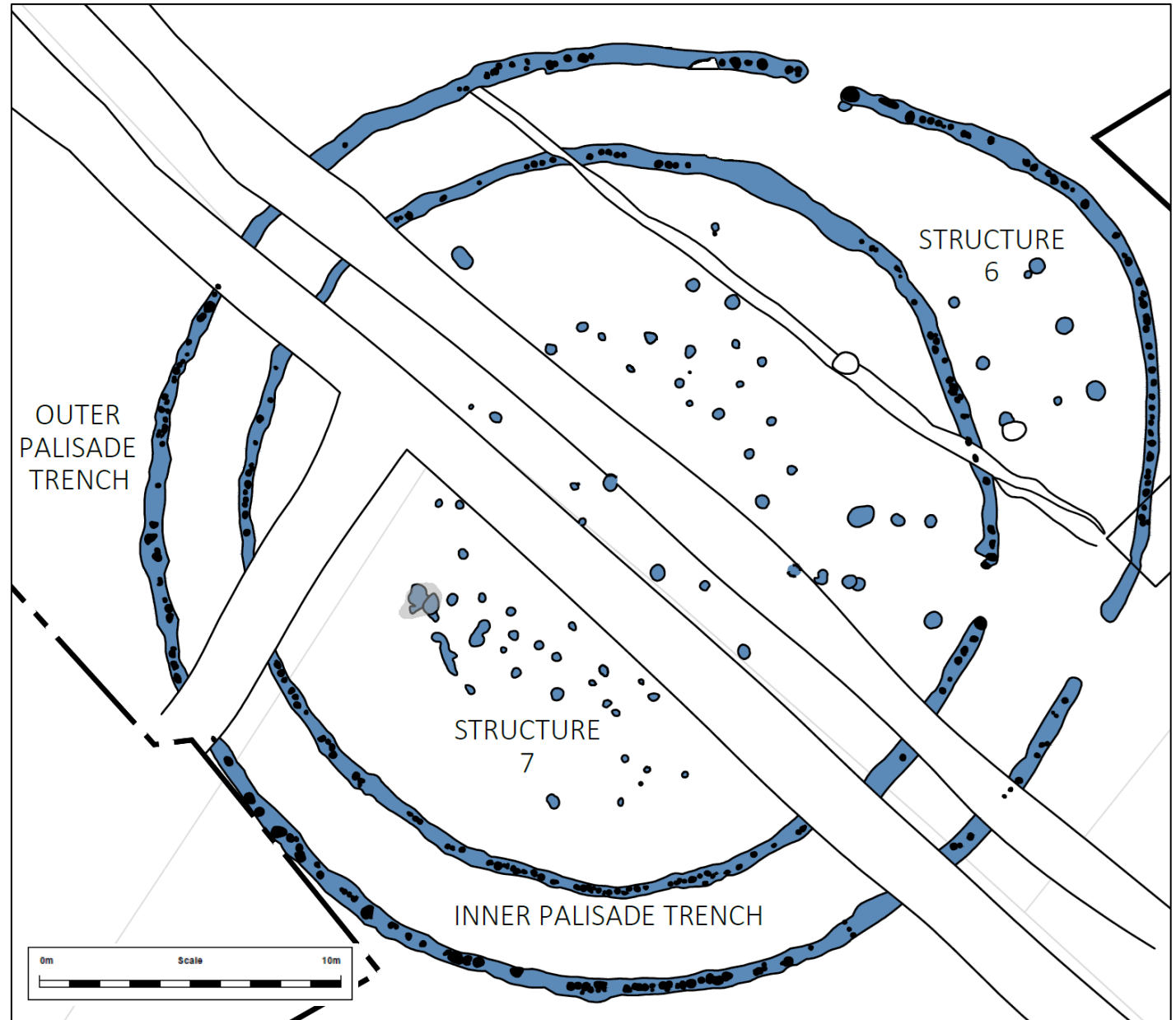


Ardloy/Springfield

Palisaded enclosure includes inner and outer palisade – on average larger diameter timbers in outer palisade ring.

One entrance to inner ring and two in outer palisade ring.

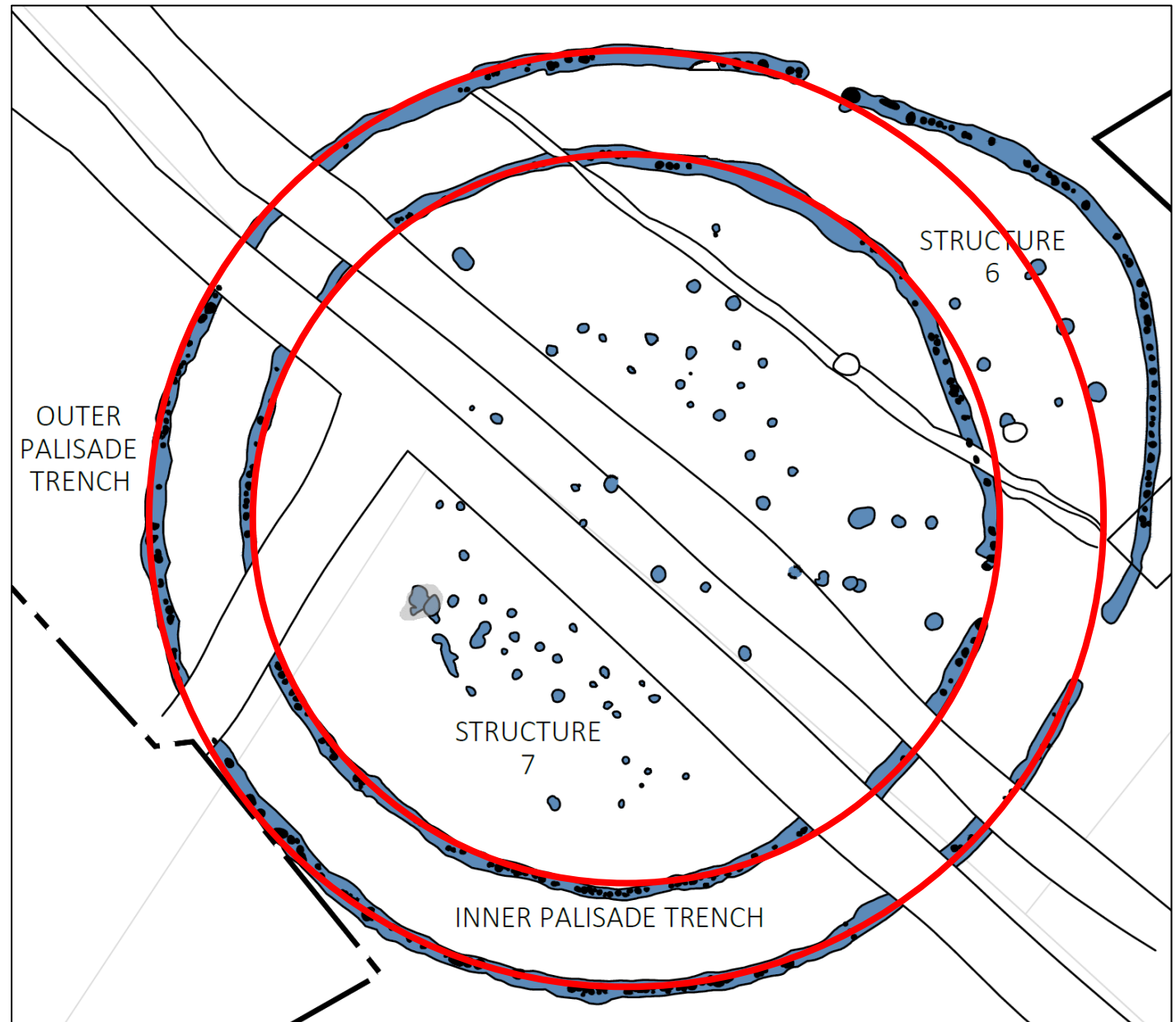
One large centrally placed structure with linking corridor to the entrance of the inner palisade ring.

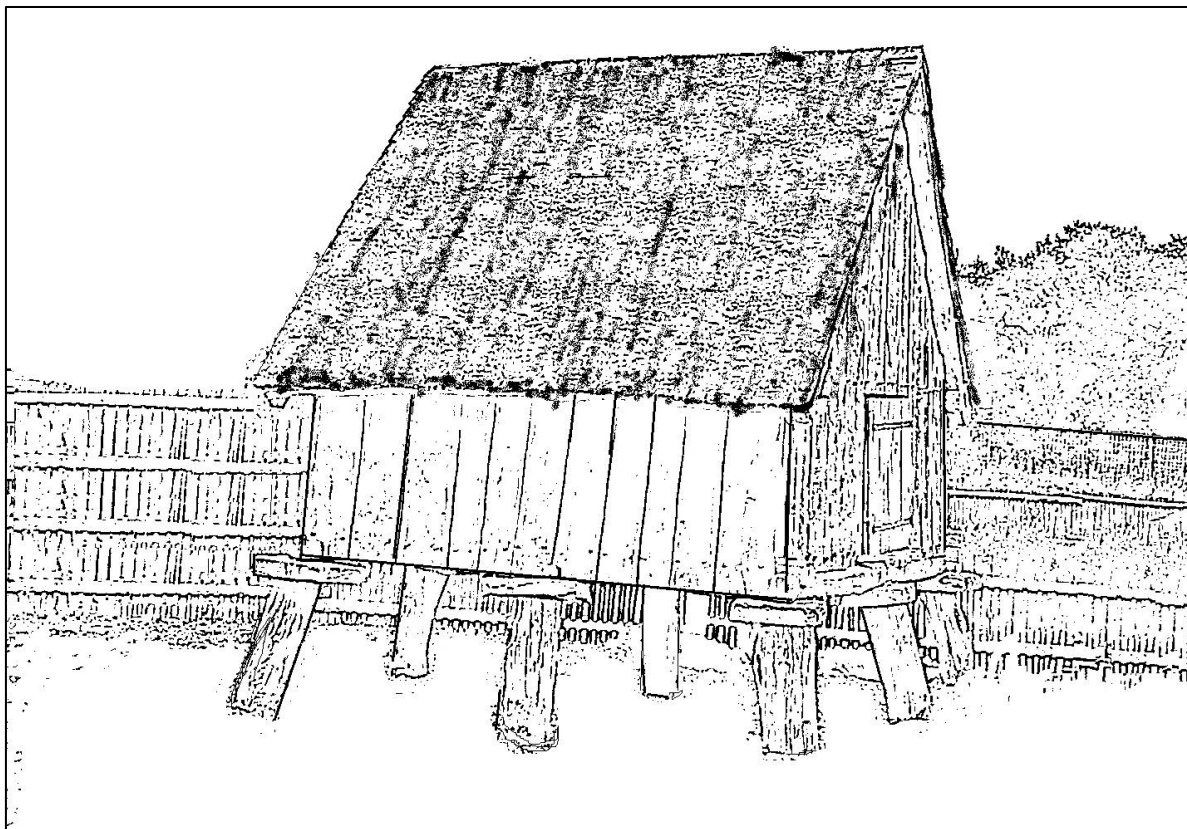


Ardloy/Springfield

Palisades laid around two concentric circles (shown in red).

Note the top right where the inner palisade flattens to incorporate Structure 6 while the outer palisade widens at both entrances to accommodate the outer side of Structure 6.

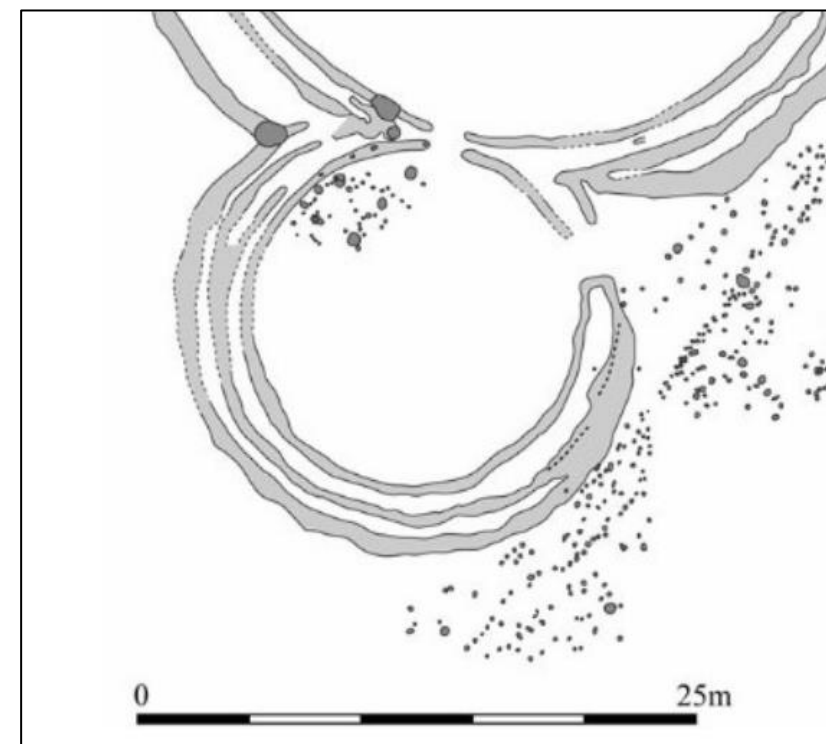
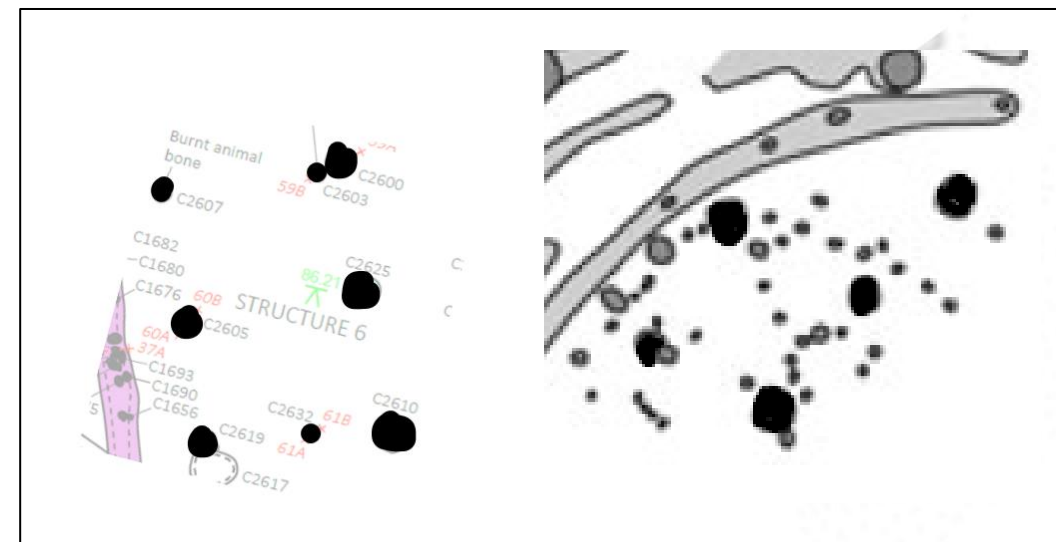




Above: Typical granary reconstruction.

Bottom right: Southern palisaded enclosure, Rose phase Dún Ailíne (after Johnston and Wailes 2007, Figure 2.10).

Above right: comparison of Structure 6 (left) and the Dún Ailíne Rose phase structure (right).



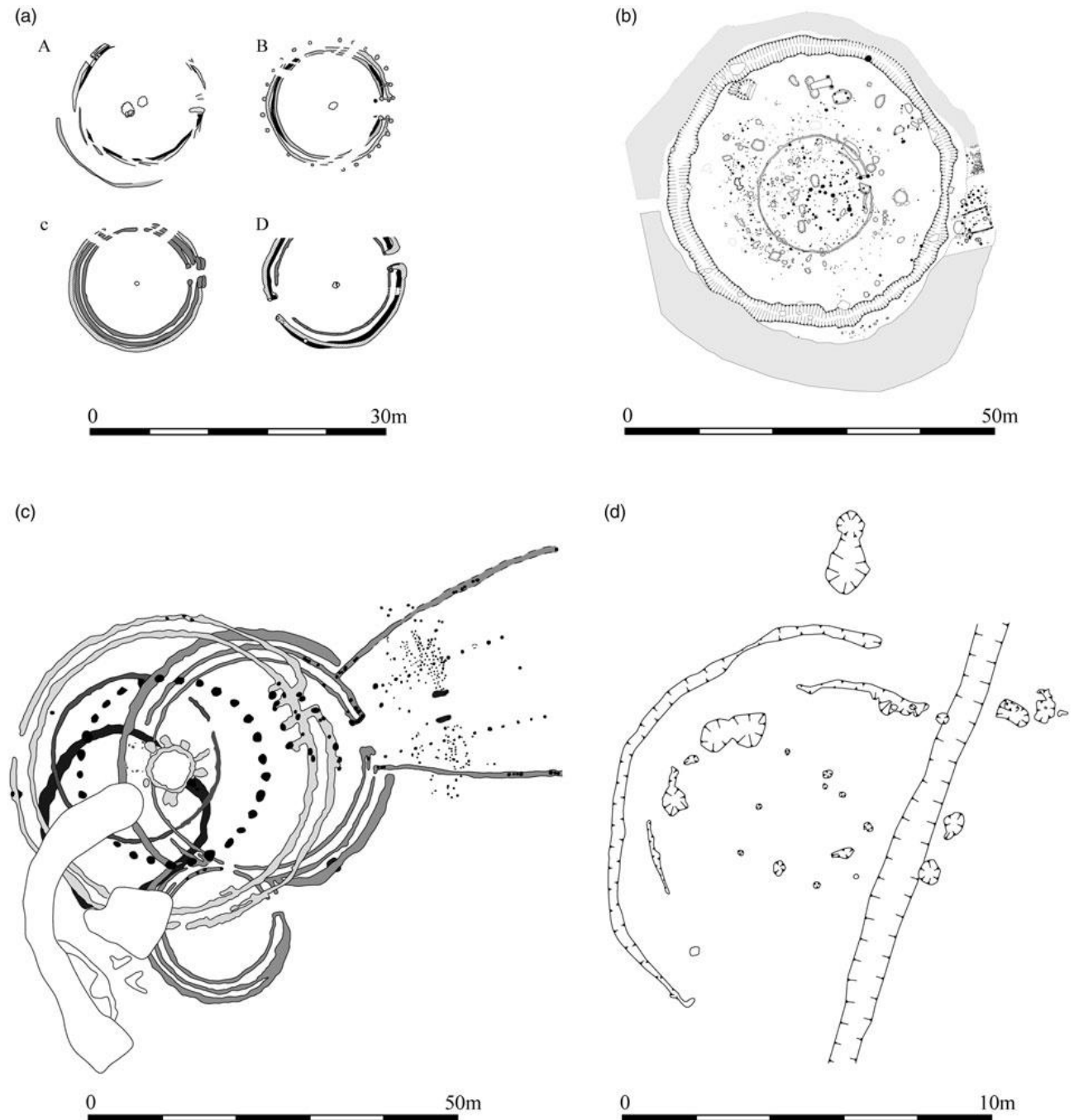
Iron Age, 400 BC-

Palisaded enclosures on the N4 scheme provide clear parallels with other known Iron Age sites.

Largely dates to after 400 BC.

This coincides with the appearance of earliest La Tène objects in Ireland.

[Figure after Becker 2019, *PPS*, fig. 6.]

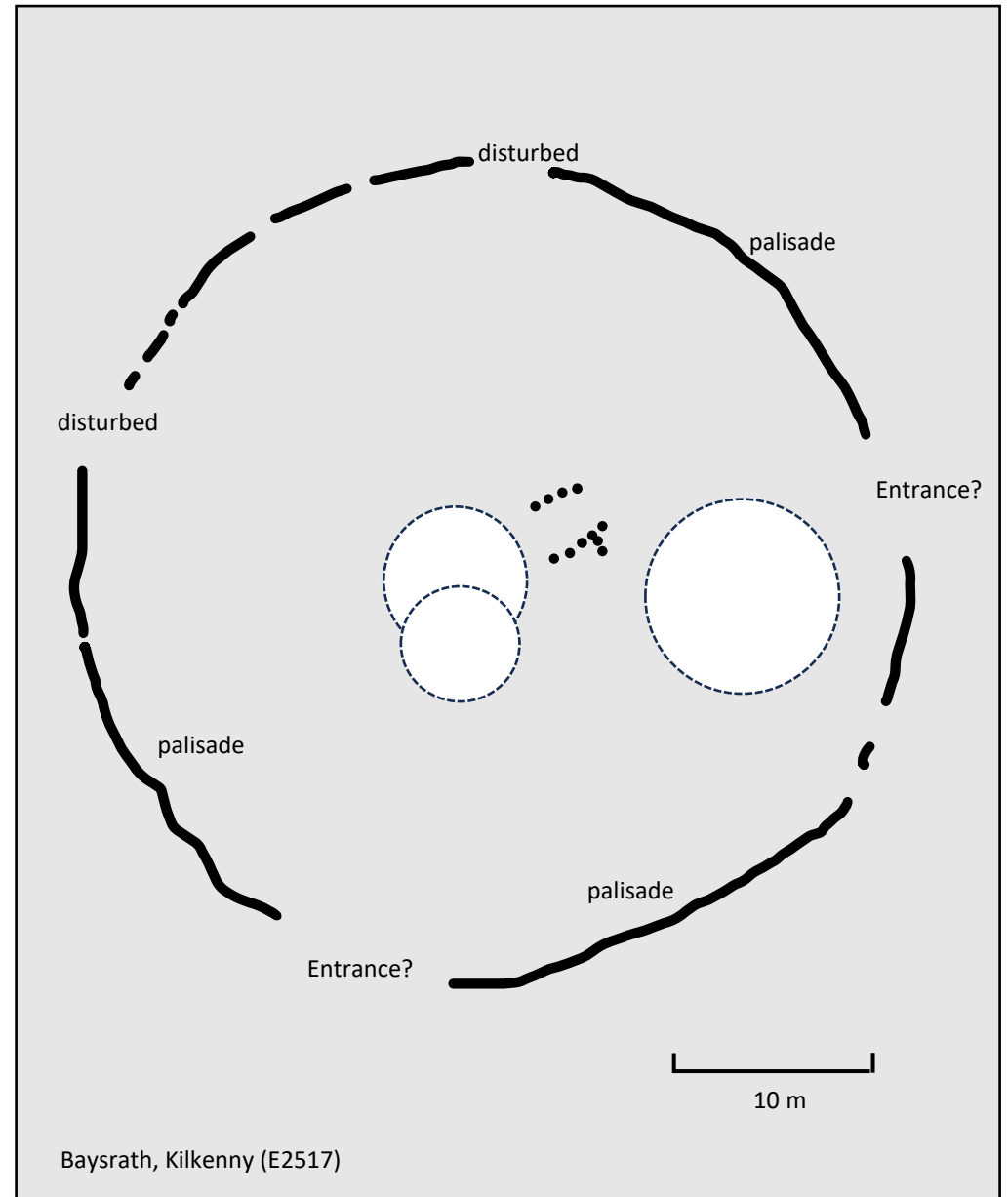


Baysrath, Co. Kilkenny

Form known from 'Royal Sites' but found elsewhere in the Iron Age.

Baysrath, Co. Kilkenny (right) dates late 1st century to early 3rd century AD. Suggests that this type of enclosure was being constructed over a large part of the Iron Age from 400 BC onwards.

What happens before 400 BC?



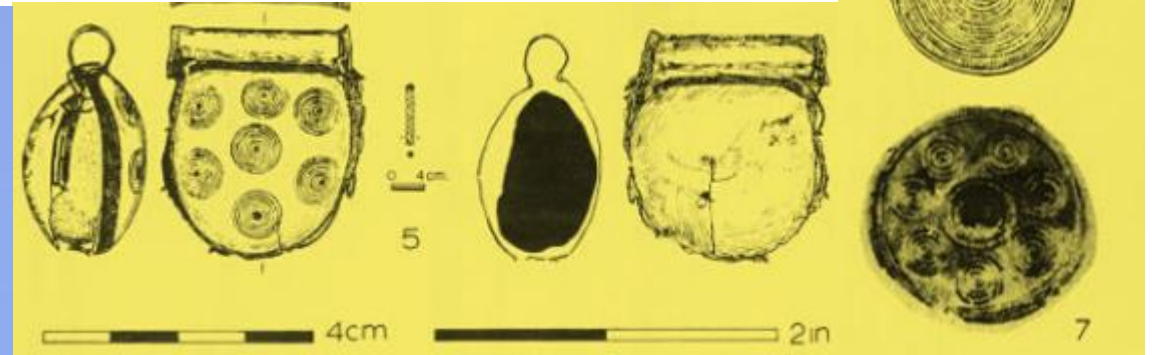
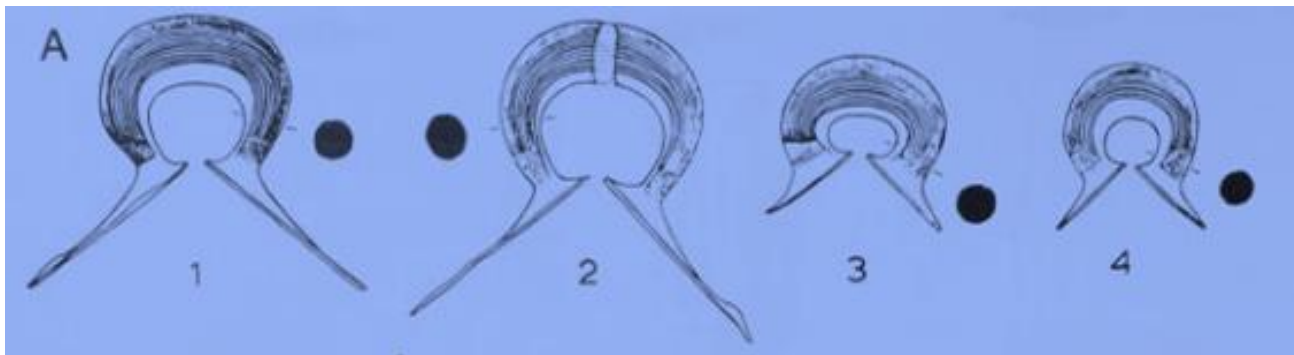
Early Iron Age?



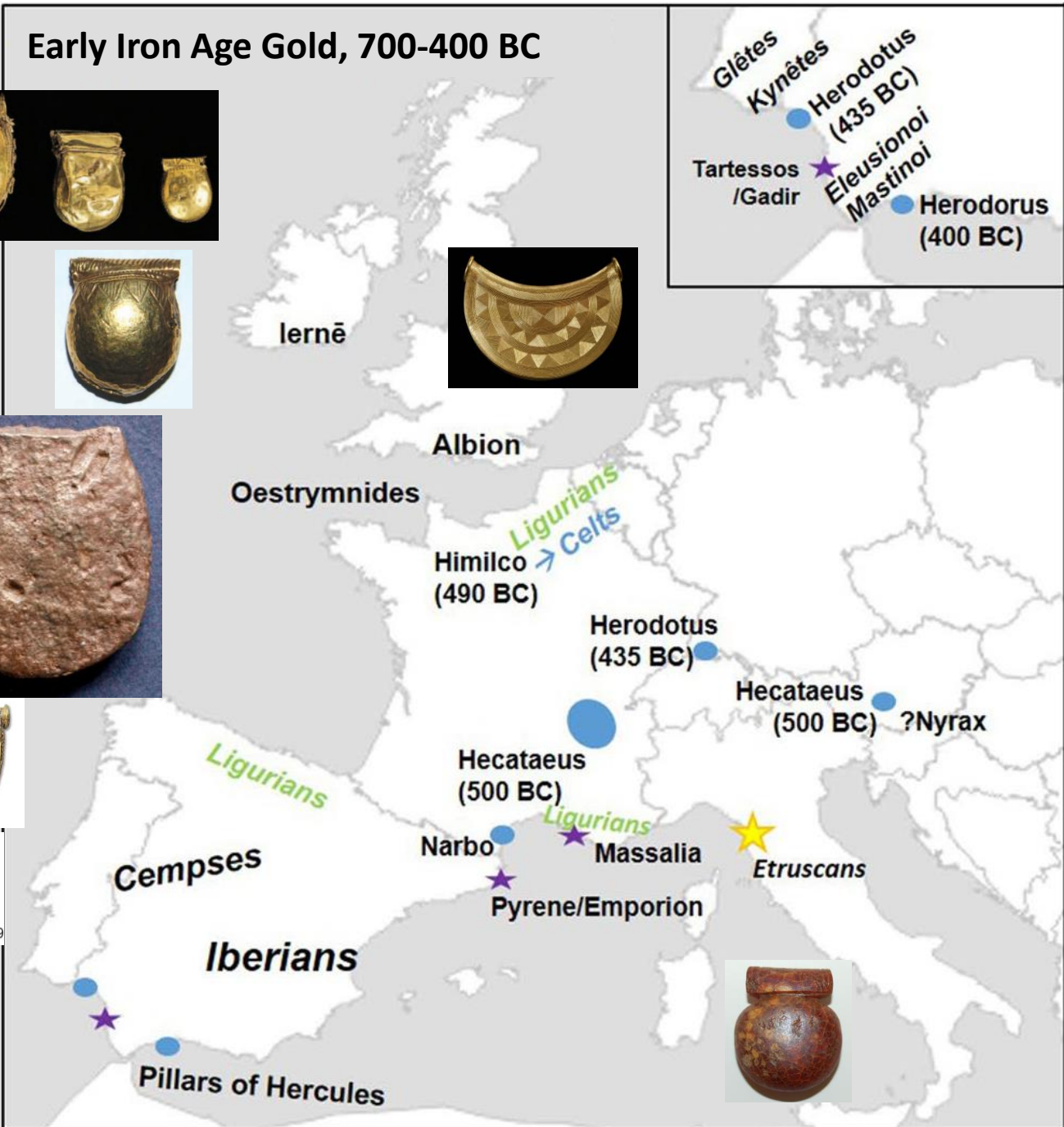
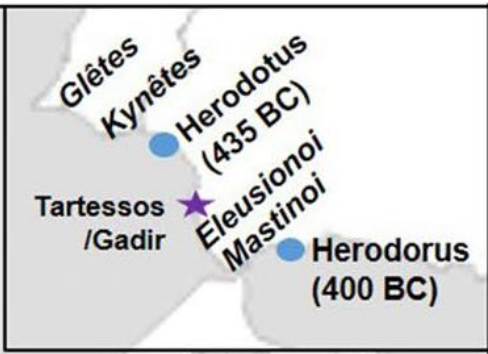
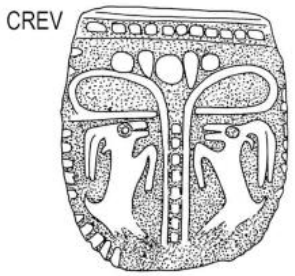
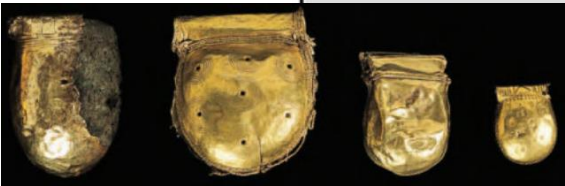
Above: Kinneigo, Co. Armagh

Left: Kilmurry, Co. Kerry

Below: Ardboe, Co. Tyrone



Early Iron Age Gold, 700-400 BC



Dama de Elche
5-4th Cent BC



Dama de Baza
4th Cent BC



Early Iron Age 700-400 BC



CREV

3801-21



Tree of Life symbols?

Left to right: Bog of Allen, Jaen, Quinta do Castelo 5, Crevelente.

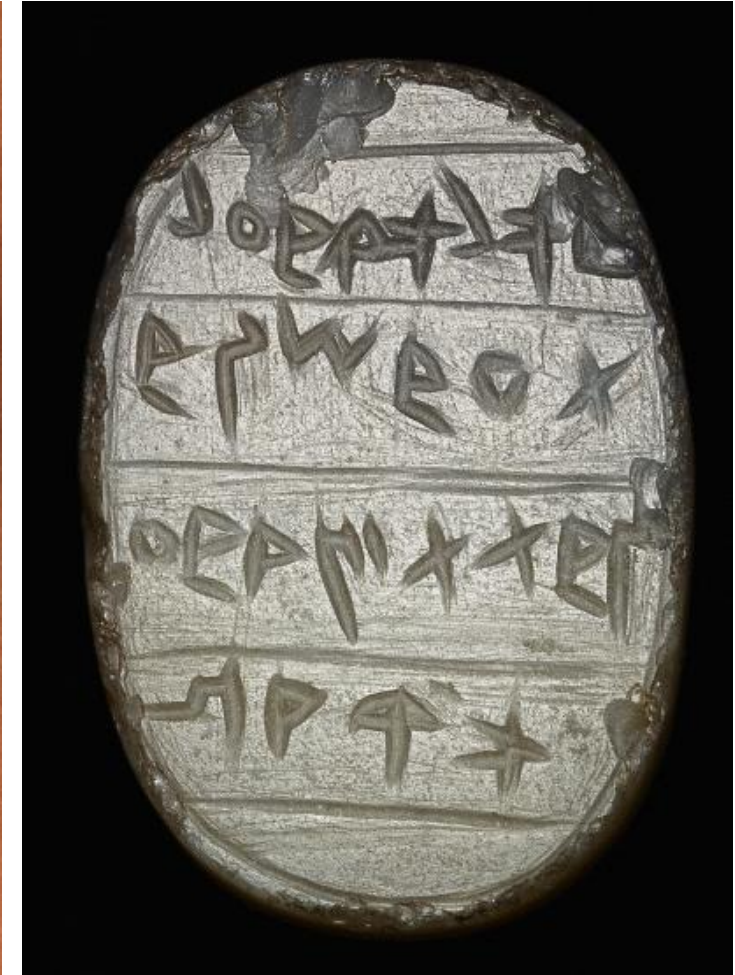
Scaraboid seal, Dundrum, Dublin (BM)

Early nineteenth century find.

Text reads:

“Abdi Eliab
Son of Shebat,
Servant of (King) Mittitti,
Son of Sidqa.”

Mittitti II ruled Ashkelon
early-mid 7th century BC.

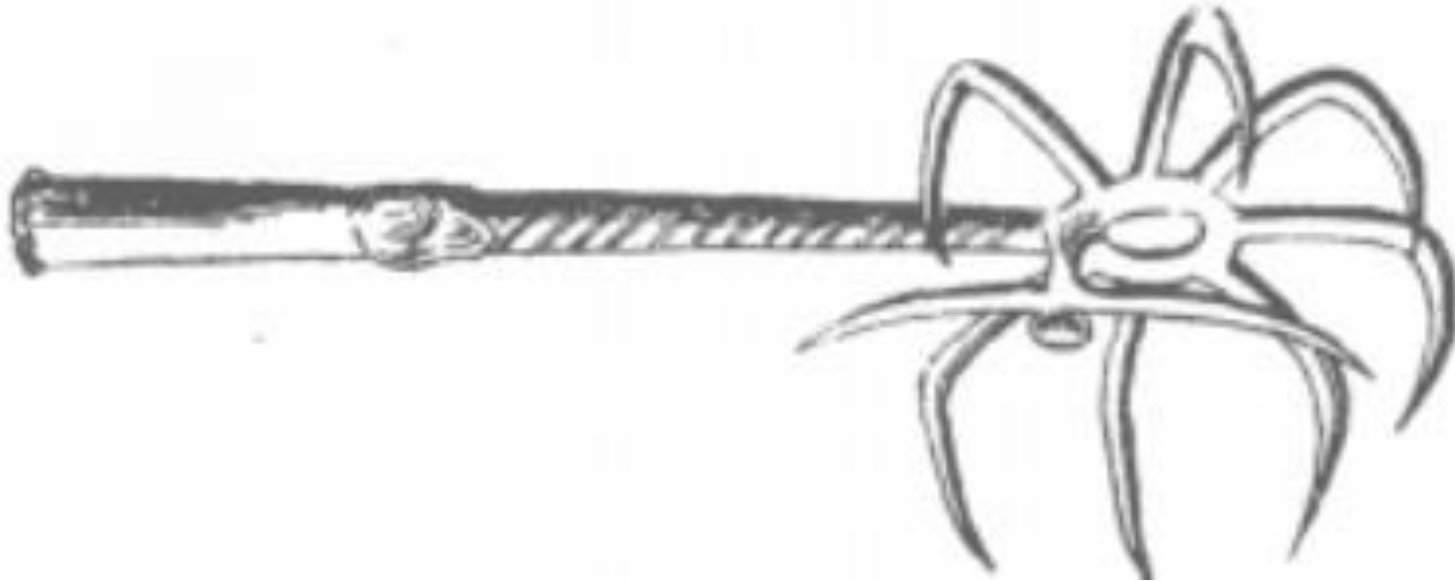


Exvotos figures?



Left to right: County Sligo; County Roscommon; Ballintoy Cave (Co. Antrim); Antiquity sketched by William Betham (provenance and date unknown – possibly Ireland)

Exotica

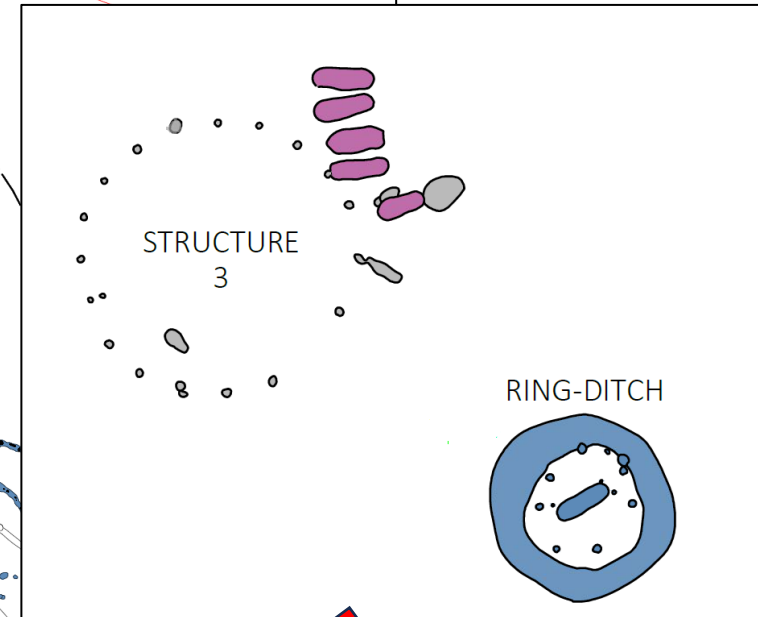
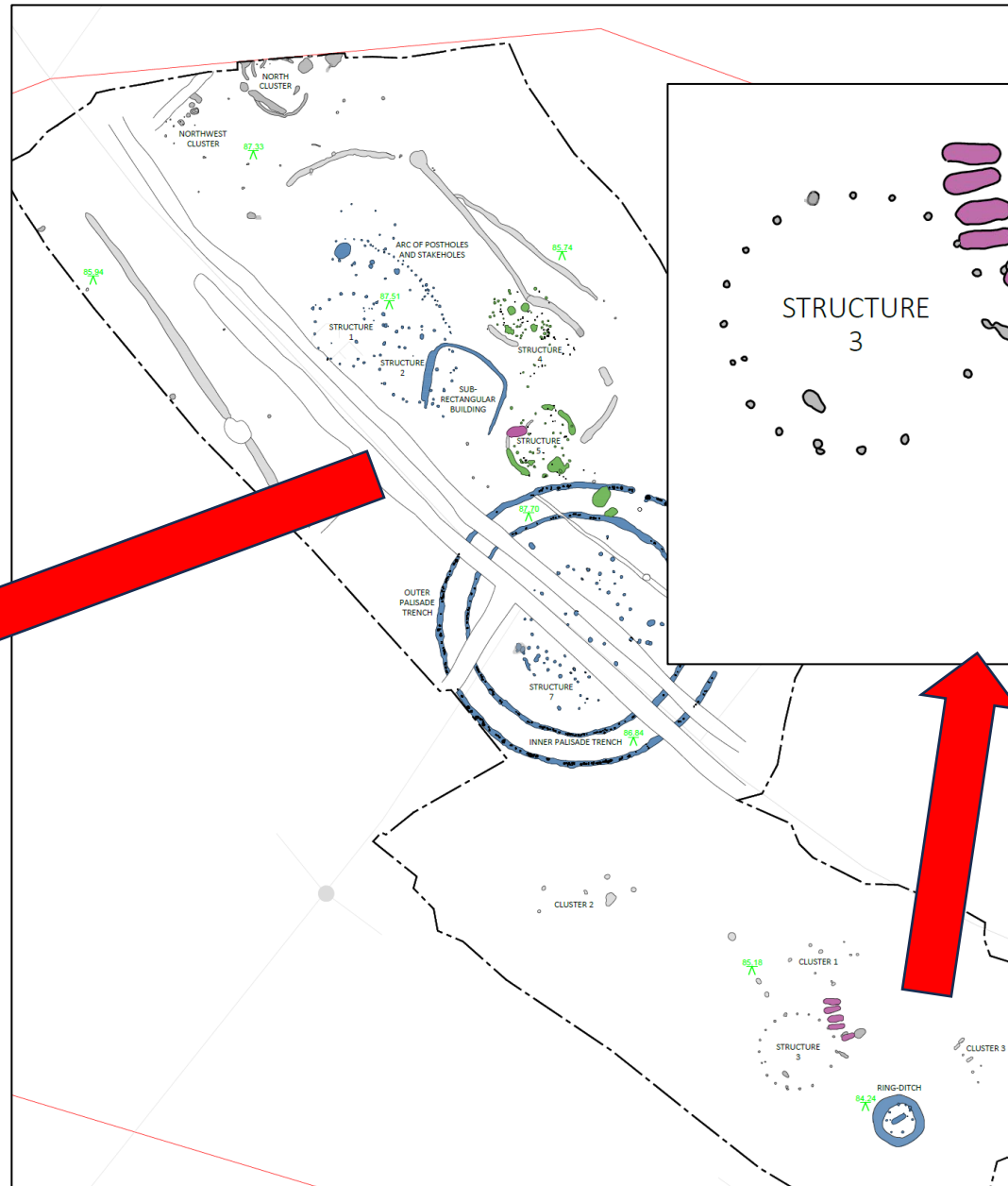
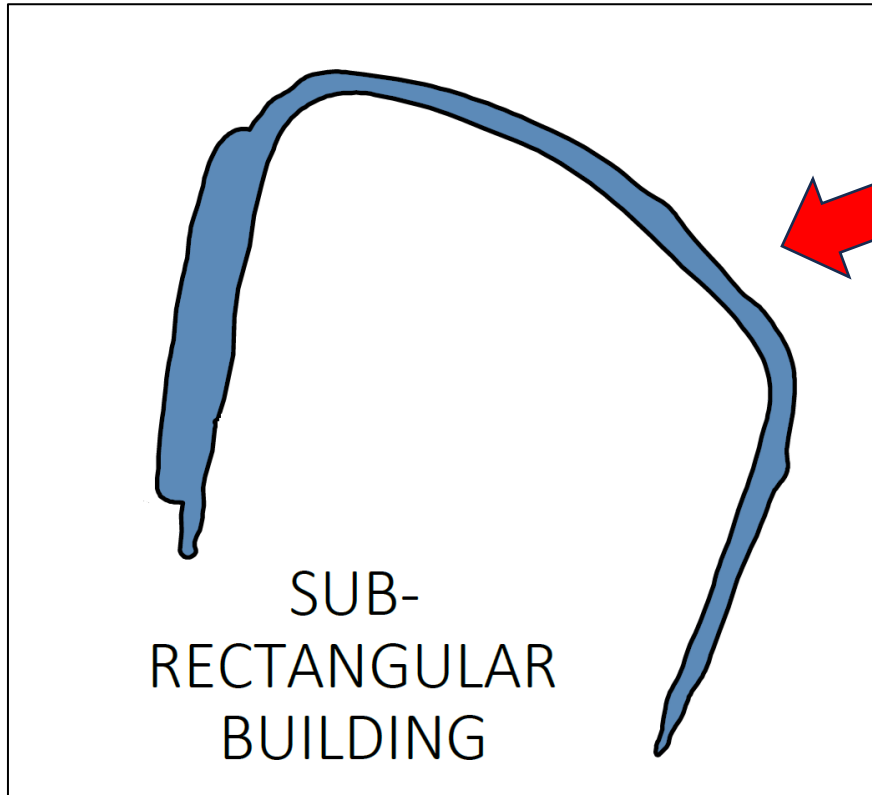


Length, 12 inches ; Breadth, 5 inches.

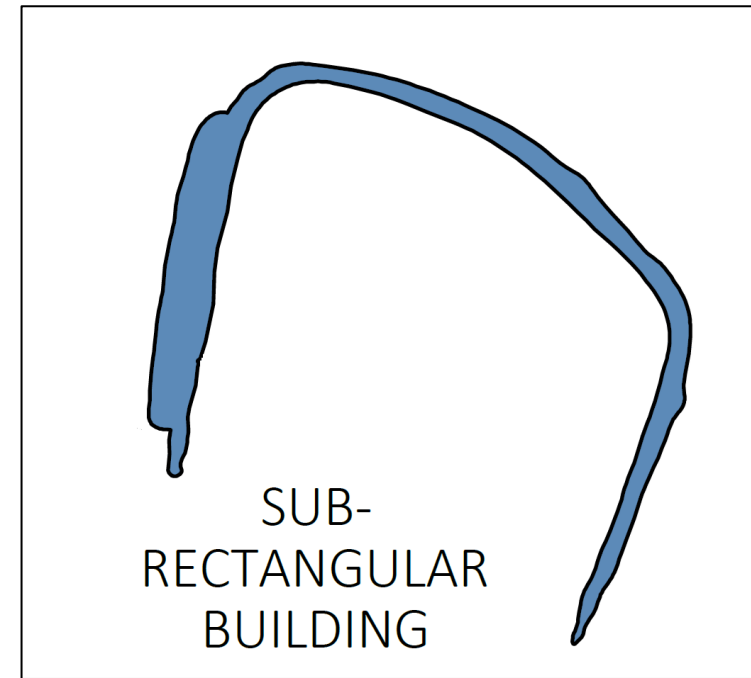
Harpago, Saintfield, County Down (below), Dunaverney, Co. Antrim (above)



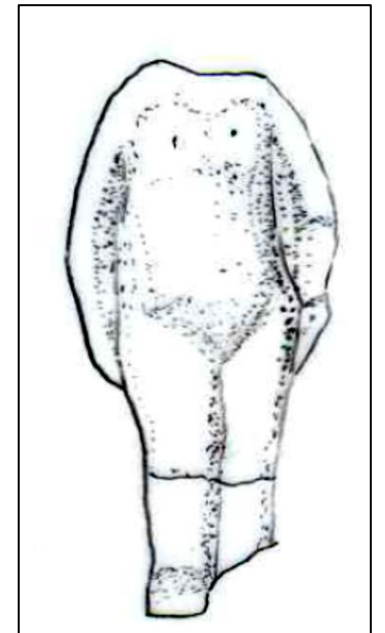
Ardloy/Springfield



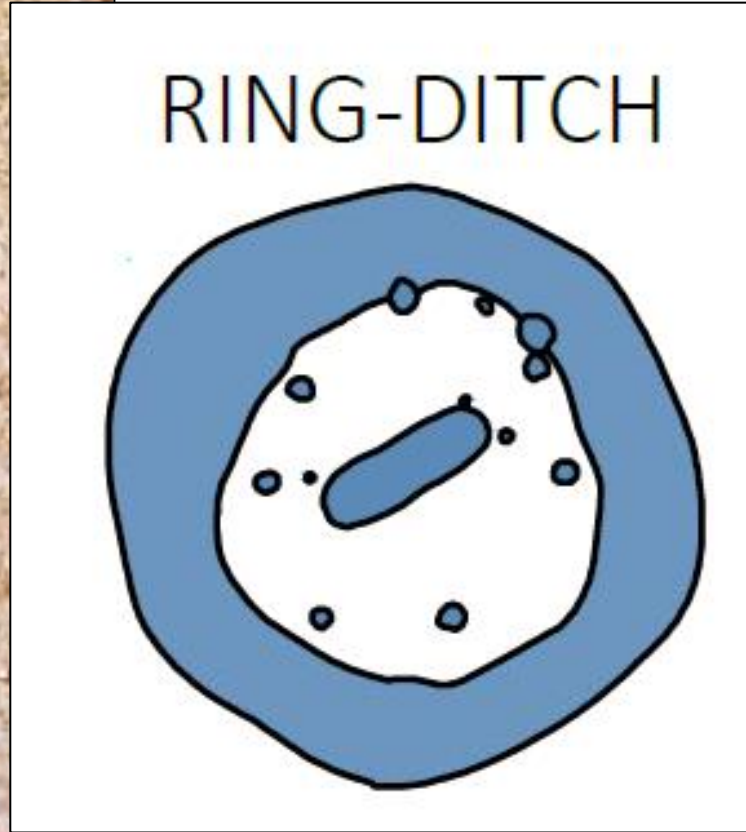
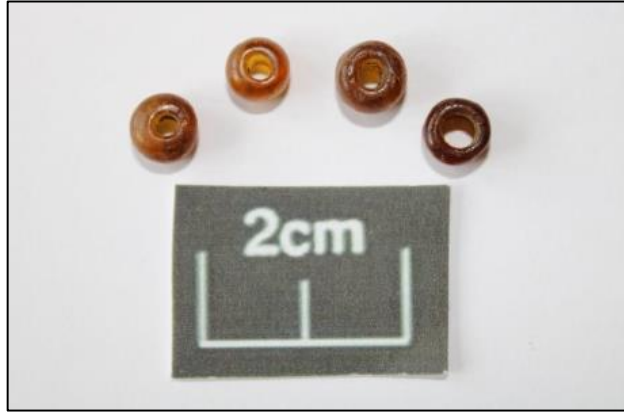
Ardloy/Springfield



Above: Rectangular enclosure ('Structure 8') at Kilmainham, near Kells, Co. Meath. Excavated in advance of the M3. Top right: Ardloy/Springfield. Far right: Venus figurine Carrowmore, Site 7 (after S. Daffy 2013, PhD NUIG). Centre right: 'Tandragee' Idol.



Ardloy/Springfield



Ballybritain, Co. Derry (left),
Gortcrannagh, Co. Roscommon
(right), experimental copy.

Acknowledgements

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Ardloy 1 & 2, Springfield 4 excavated by **Brian O'Hara** (E4842)

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Cloonymeenaghan 1 & 2 excavated by **Brian O'Hara** (E4627)

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IAC Irish Archaeological
Consultancy

