

4. EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

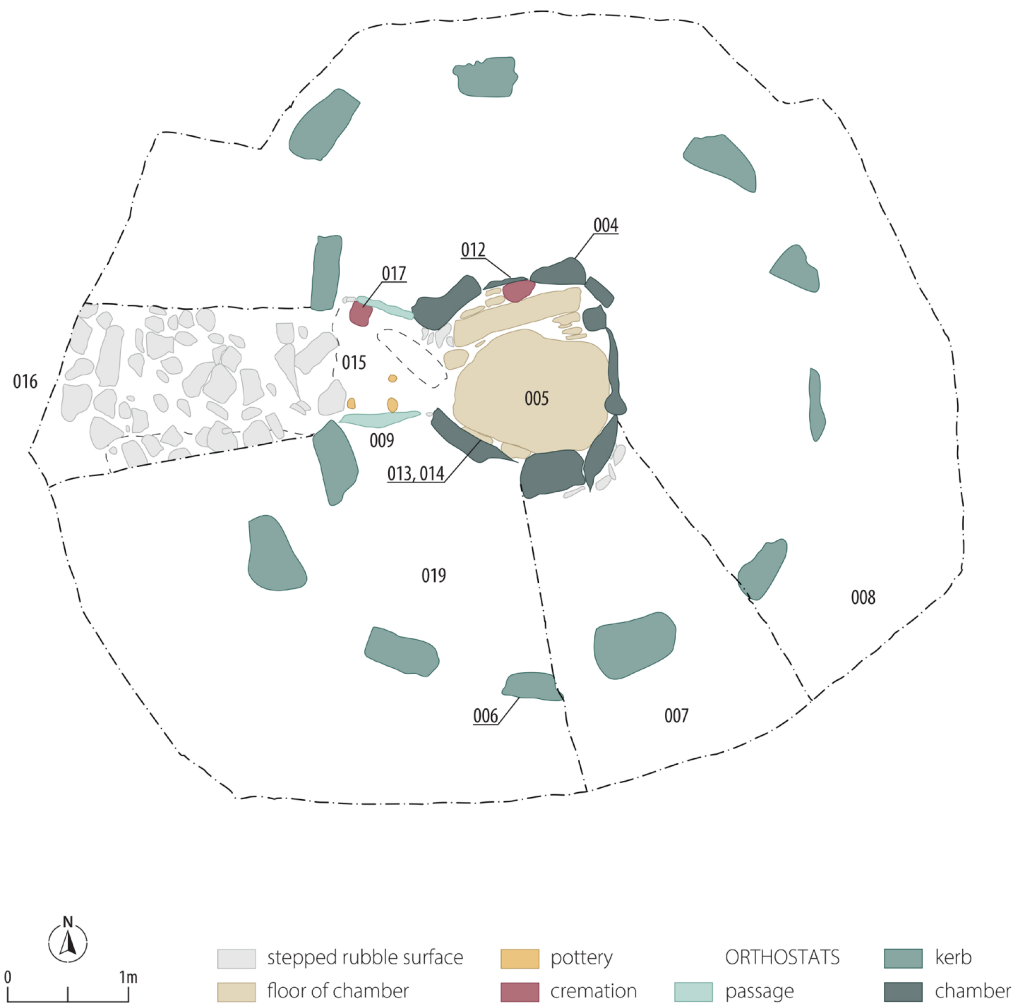
The re-examination of Carmahome was carried out according to a Method Statement that was prepared in March 2022 by Argyll Archaeology. The first stage of excavation in October 2022 cleared the moss and explored the chamber (Illus 4). The passage and the central chamber (down to the surface of the flagstones) were investigated and a slot was cut through the southern side of the cairn (Illus 5 and 6). A proposed trench through the northern portion of the cairn was not excavated due to the conditions. The weather was appalling for the duration of the first stage of excavation, making conditions very

difficult for recording. When it was suspected that neither of the two large chamber floor flagstones (the largest estimated to weigh around 2 tons) had been lifted, and given the realisation that potentially Early Neolithic material may have survived undisturbed below, it was decided to delay lifting the flagstone floor and cutting a section through the cairn until both could be achieved in a safe and careful manner and under more favourable weather conditions.

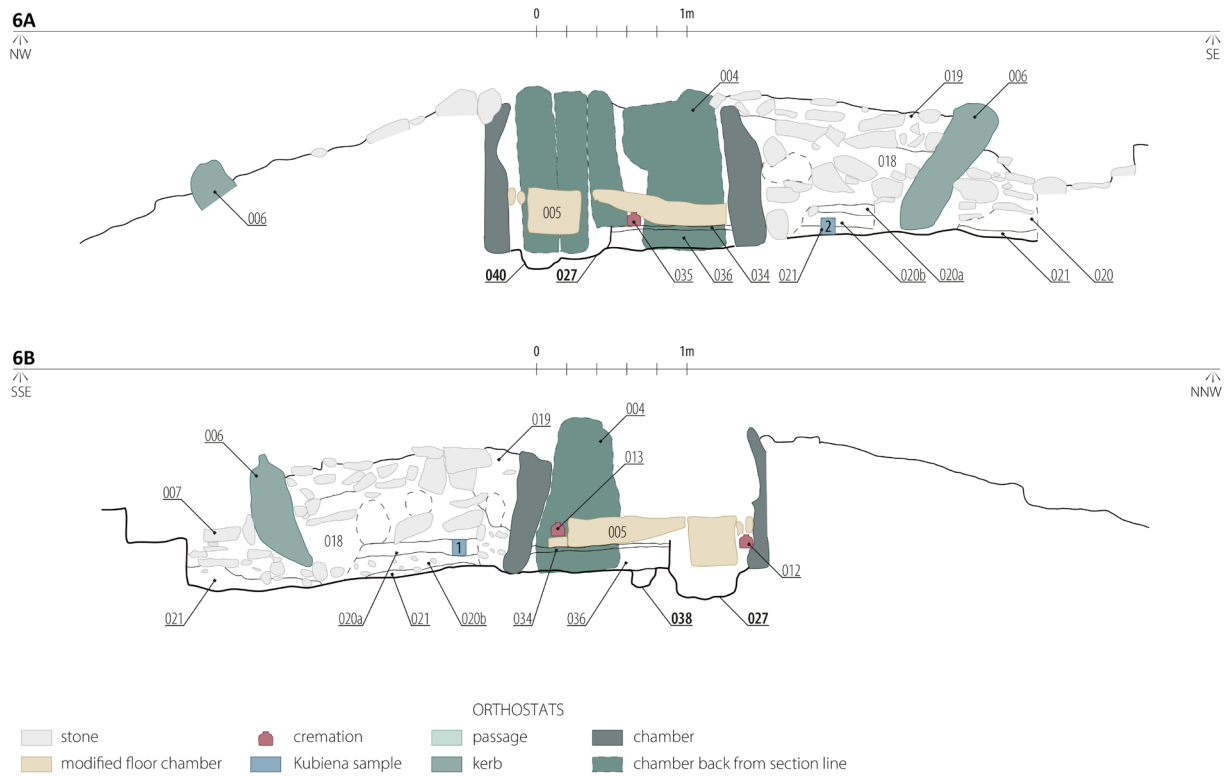
The second stage of excavation was undertaken in much better but bitterly cold conditions in January 2023. This stage of excavation focused on the deposits underneath the flagstone floor (Illus 7).



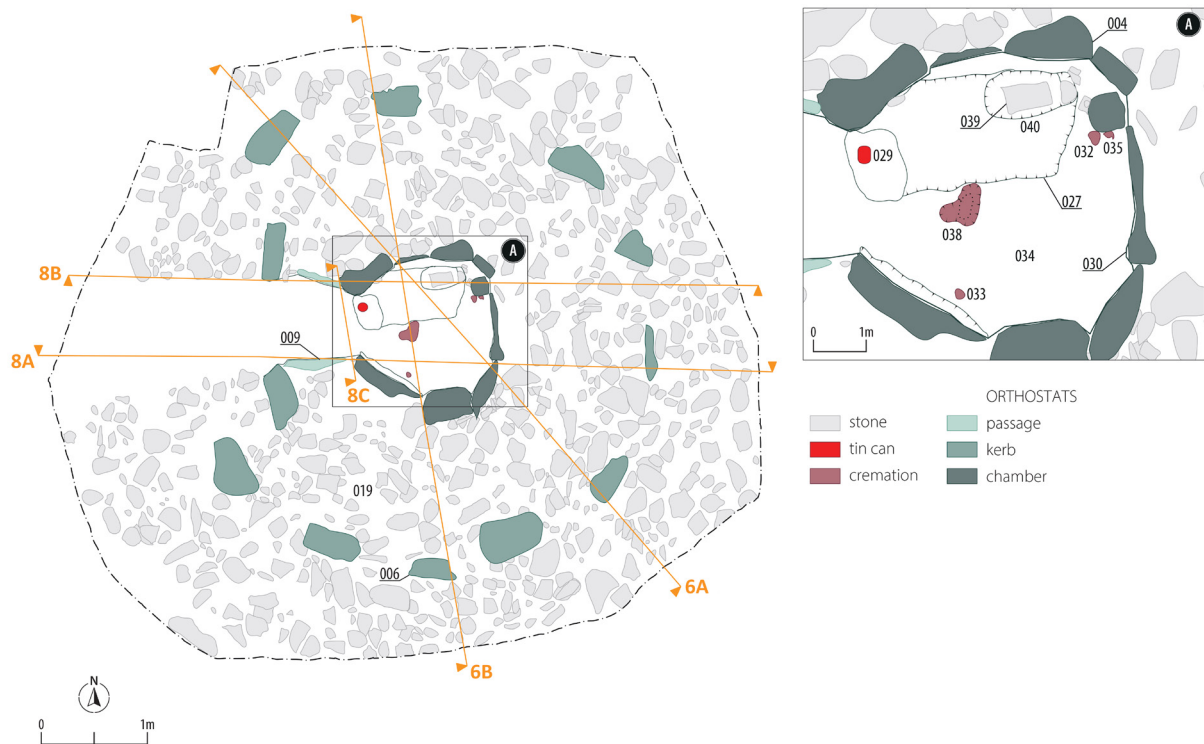
Illus 4 Plan of the passage tomb after the removal of the surface vegetation and topsoil (image: Forestry and Land Scotland)



Illus 5 Plan of the passage tomb after stage one of the excavation, showing the location of the Beaker pottery and cremation deposits (image: Forestry and Land Scotland)



Illus 6 Section drawings of (A) the east side of the slot trench through the cairn material and (B) the west side of the slot trench. (image: Forestry and Land Scotland)



Illus 7 Plan of the passage tomb after stage two of the excavation, following the removal of the chamber floor and showing location of the sections. (image: Forestry and Land Scotland)