Investigations into Land to the Southwest of Derrynoose Old Church & Graveyard, Listarkelt, Derrynoose, Co. Armagh

Archaeological Geophysical Survey

Survey undertaken on behalf of

Derrynoose Heritage Group,

Derrynoose Community Development Association

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EARTHSOUND geophysics

EAG 534

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Summary of Results

On the 5th June 2026, a geophysical survey was executed over an area of land to the southwest of Derrynoose Old Church and Graveyard, within the townland of Listarkelt, Derrynoose, County Armagh. An electromagnetic survey was undertaken at a sample resolution of 0.5m x 0.25m.

The data collected for this report has revealed a large amount of previously unknown potential archaeological remains. Evidence for two relict agricultural boundaries were detected within the northern field as well as a curvilinear enclosure ditch. This enclosure ditch appears to interconnect with the extant arcing field boundary in the southern field indicating the likely presence of a large arcing enclosure which surrounds the high ground to the south of Derrynoose old graveyard. The exact orientation of this enclosure could not be fully established as the enclosure ditch either runs under ground which could not be surveyed or possibly interconnects with one of two ditches detected in the survey data.

External to this large arcing enclosure a large amount of possible pits and small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches were detected. These suggest extensive habitation remains and archaeological boundary features were once present on the land between the Derrynoose old graveyard and the enclosure ditch. It would appear that this archaeological activity ran right up to the enclosure ditch.

On the internal edge of the large arcing enclosure further extensive evidence of possible pits and small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches have been identified which indicate the presence of habitation remains and archaeological boundary features. In addition areas of disturbed soils have also been detected which are likely associated with closely spaced archaeological remains and a linear trend of stone rich ground which could be could archaeological, agricultural or geological in origin.

Close to the southern edge of the survey area the remains of an sub-circular enclosure was also detected which has been cut by the more modern trackway which runs along the edge of the survey area. This sub-circular enclosure appears to be located within the large arcing enclosure and possibly contains a break or entranceway to the east. Contained within this sub-circular enclosure further habitation remains have been identified (possible pits and small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches) as well as a curvilinear stone feature which would once have possibly divided the sub-circular enclosure. Further potential archaeological evidence was revealed with the detection of an area of stone or clay rich ground.

Statement of Indemnity

A geophysical survey is a scientific procedure that produces observations of results which are influenced by specific variables. The results and subsequent interpretation of the geophysical survey presented here should not be treated as an absolute representation of the underlying archaeological features, but as a hypothesis that must be proved or disproved. **Direct investigations are recommended to confirm the findings of this report.** Verification can only be provided via intrusive means, such as Test Trench excavations.

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1 Introduction

Earthsound Geophysics Ltd. execute a geophysical survey over an area of land to the southwest of Derrynoose Old Church and Graveyard, within the townland of Listarkelt, Derrynoose, County Armagh.

The geophysical survey was requested to determine the presence/absence of unknown archaeological features with the old church and graveyard or the ecclesiastical site ARM019:010 which is thought to exist somewhere within the vicinity of the survey area.

The survey area was assessed using an electromagnetic instrument to collect apparent electrical resistivity and apparent magnetic susceptibility data.

1.1 Geography, Geology, Topography & Climate

Townland	Listarkelt
County	Armagh
Central OSGB36 Co-ordinates	88310 / 492328
No. of Fields Surveyed	2
Ground Cover	Newly harvested grass in the southern field which slopes to the east. The northern field also slopes to the north and east and consisted of pasture with areas of rushes and rough ground which could not be surveyed. The western portion of the northern field is located next to extant farm sheds and a portion of the pasture land that previously contained sheds which have been removed.
Geology	Sandstone
Drift / Quaternary Geology	Till
Topography	The survey area is located on a raised topographical point. The landscape slopes down in all directions.
Climate	The weather encountered during the survey was dry and sunny. These conditions are unlikely to have affected the survey.

1.2 Archaeological Background

The survey area is located in a landscape which is thought to have contained an Ecclesiastical site (ARM019:010). The exact location of this site is unknown at present.

Ecclesiastical site ARM019:010 is listed in the SMR record as:

‘Multiperiod church, graveyard & enclosure: Derrynoose old church, Lisrocatty, Lysreakeilte, Listrakelt, St. Mochua's’.

‘The ground remains of the site suggest a rectangular plan, with areas of tumble to NE. Above ground remains consist of a pillar of masonry at N end of the NW wall, a substantial portion of the lower sections of the SE wall and numerous headstones etc. in the graveyard to S & E. The 'pillar' is a portion of stone 18ft high x 6ft wide x 3ft thick. The E wall is some 40ft long, from 5-8ft high & 3ft thick. Both it & the pillar are well built of assorted rubble stone and a gritty lime of mortar’.

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There is also mention within the records ‘of ‘seven crosses on the hill (Mullach gCross) beyond the old church’, where stations were formerly held. No crosses survive, and St Mochua’s cursing stone is also lost, buried in the 1920’s to discourage ‘superstitious practices’.

The SMR record also further mentions that ‘The hilltop of Listarkelt is the site of a church of the earthly Chirstian periods, associated with St. Mochua, who is better known for his link with Timahoe in Co. Leix. The medieval parish church, taxed in 1306 as Dirmleece, was also here. The 1622 Church must have had a short life, because in 1782 the parish of Derrynoose was united with Tynan, and in 1709 it was report that ‘the ancient parish church of Derrynoose is very inconveniently situation and in a ruinous condition’’

A further recorded monument ARM019:009 Holy Well is located 140m northeast of the survey area.

The following image was produced by Alastair Ruffell from drone data collected by himself. It shows the topography of the survey area (in purple) and the surrounding fields, dark red being the highest topography and blue the lowest. It can be seen in the image that the southwestern portion of the site is located on the higher ground with the break in slope continuing into the northwest field. The majority of this field is however located off the highest point in the landscape comprising of sloping ground with the lowest land outside the survey area.

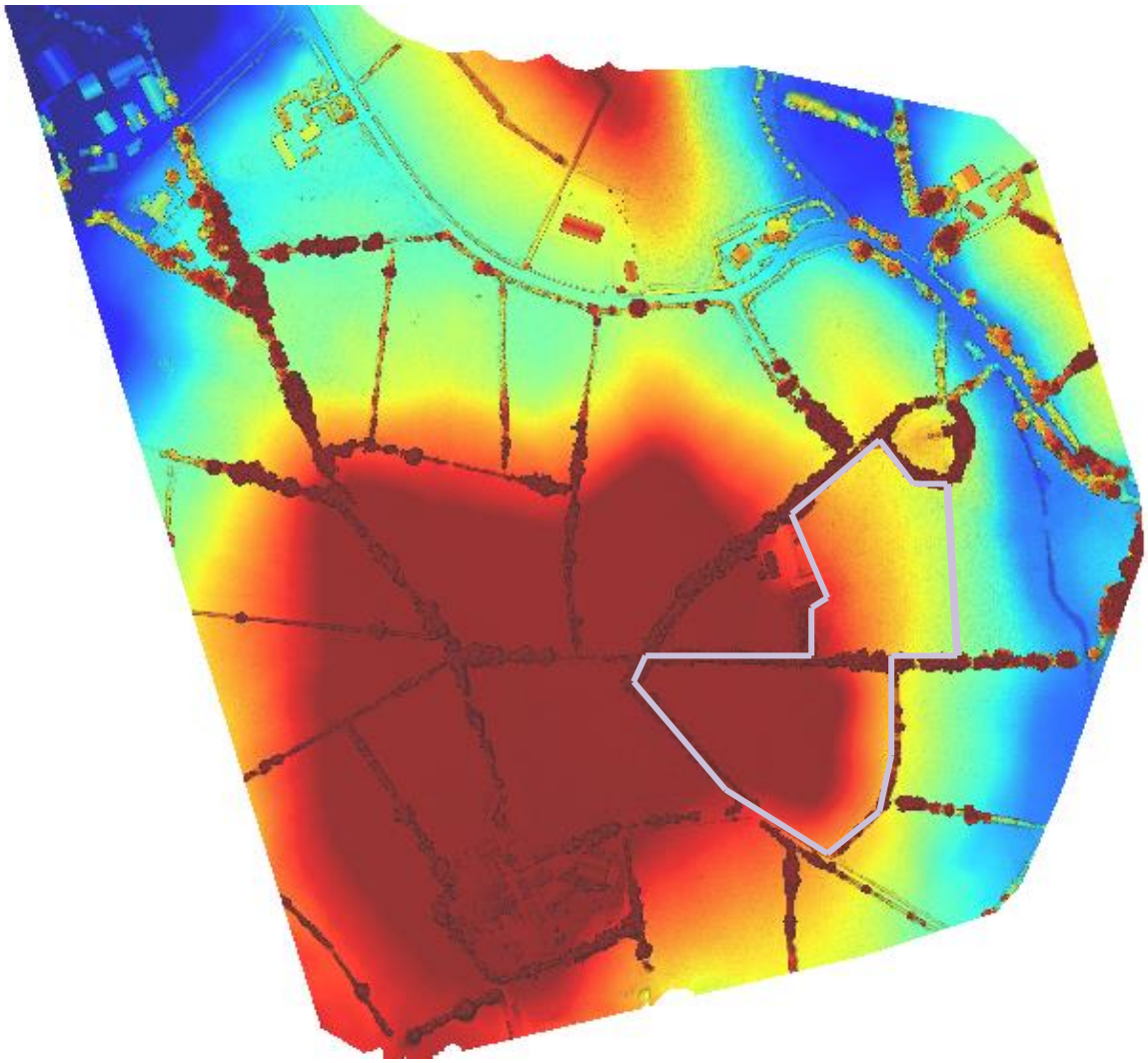


Image 1: Digital Elevation Model (Red = Higher ground, Blue = Lower ground)

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1.3 Aims & Objectives

The aim of the geophysical survey was to determine the nature of the archaeological resource and assess the spatial extent of the archaeological features within the survey area.

A detailed electromagnetic apparent magnetic susceptibility and apparent electrical resistivity survey was carried out. This technique has been used in commercial and research archaeological projects for many years and are considered the most appropriate techniques for a detailed investigation of the underlying archaeology (Clark 1996, Scollar *et al*. 1990, Gaffney & Gater 2003).

2 Methodology

Fieldwork Dates	05/06/2026
Survey Area	3 Ha
Method / Area	Electromagnetic Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility (MS_a): 3 Ha Electromagnetic Apparent Electrical Resistivity (ER_a): 3Ha
Surveyors	E. Murray, A. Whyte

2.1 Electromagnetic Induction Survey

EMI Measurement	Apparent Electrical Resistivity (ER_a)	Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility (MS_a)
Instrument	GF Instruments CMD-MiniExplorer	
Data Acquisition Resolution	0.5m x 0.2s	0.5m x 0.2s
Coil Configuration / Effective depth range	Vertical Coplanar Coil configuration (VPC) or 'half-depth', effective depth range: 0.25m, 0.5m, 0.9m All three depth levels were examined during the data interpretation, the image displayed in this report represents the depth which contains the most potential archaeological signatures.	
Platform	SparrowHawk-1000 cart system propelled via quad-bike	
Data Acquisition Method	Continuous mode, Gridless, using a Trimble RTK GPS VRS Now system to an accuracy of 5cm	
Measuring Range	ER_a: 1000mS/m, resolution 0.1mS/m m	MS_a: ±80ppt, resolution 10pp
Data Logger	CMD Control Unit	CMD Control Unit
Calibration	According to manufacturers guidelines (GF Instruments 2010)	
Data Processing	CMD Data Transfer: conversion to Apparent Electrical Resistivity (ER_a) from Apparent Electrical Conductivity (Quadrature) Drift correction using a moving filter, Despike, Low Pass Gaussian Filter, Interpolation	CMD Data Transfer Downloaded as Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility (MS_a) (In-phase) Drift correction using a moving filter, Despike, Low Pass Gaussian Filter, Interpolation
Graphical Display / Dynamic Range	Greyscale 60 Ohm.m (black) to 100 Ohm.m (white)	Greyscale 4ppm (white) to 8ppm (black)

The apparent electrical resistivity data records how resistive the soil is. Changes in resistivity can be associated with agricultural or geological soil movement / stone or potentially archaeological features such as ditches, dug features, pits, habitation remains etc.

The apparent magnetic susceptibility data records the magnetic content of the soil and therefore is able to detect features which contain enhancement, either through the addition of agricultural / geological material or through the addition of archaeological material such as fired or burnt remains, disturbed soil or habitation remains etc.

2.2 Reporting, Mapping & Archiving

The geophysical survey and report follow the recommendations outlined by relevant best practice guidance documents as a minimum standard (David *et al*. 2008; Gaffney *et al*. 2002, Schmidt *et al*. 2015). Geophysical data, the figures presented here and the text have been archived following the recommendations of the Archaeology Data Service (Schmidt & Ernenwein 2011). Basemapping mapping was supplied by Alistair Ruffle / Earthsound.

3 Results & Discussion

The interpretation figures should not be looked at in isolation but in conjunction with the information below and classification terms contained in the Appendices. Significant Anomalies are highlighted in Figures 4, 6 & 7 and are discussed within the text.

The electromagnetic apparent magnetic susceptibility and apparent electrical resistivity data collect revealed a number of anomalies that were detected in both datasets as well as anomalies which were very similar in shape, form and size. The results of both datasets need to be looked at as a whole to understand the complexities of the archaeological remains detected. For this reason the results of both datasets have been combined into Figure 7 and it is this combined interpretation which is discussed below.

Anomaly **1** was detected in the apparent electrical resistivity data and represents a linear relict field boundary which is shown on the Six Inch County Series Ordnance Survey Maps, Edition 2 - 4 (1900 - 1957). Highlighted by the red arrow in the image below.

Anomaly **2** was detected in the apparent electrical resistivity data and corresponds to another relict field boundary which is shown on the Six Inch County Series Ordnance Survey Maps, Edition 2 - 4 (1900 - 1957). Highlighted by the blue arrow in the image below.

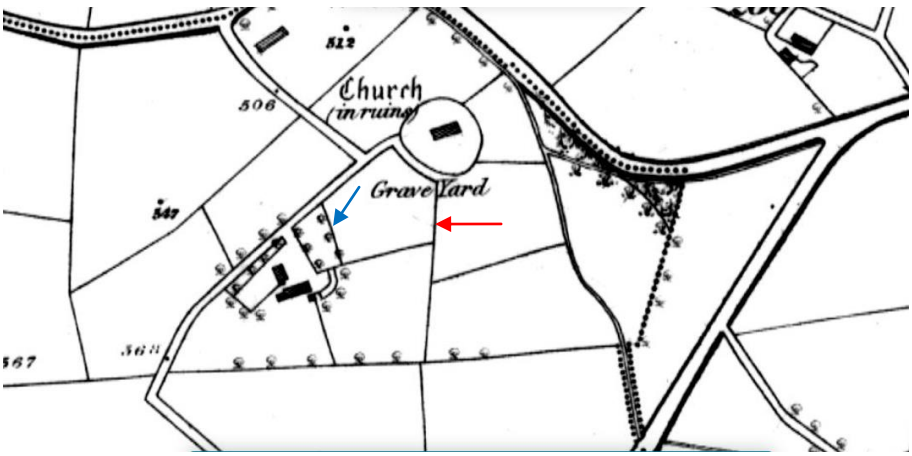


Image 2: Six Inch County Series Ordnance Survey Map - Edition 2 (1838-1862)

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Anomaly **3** consists of a curvilinear ditch, 51m in length which was detected in both the apparent electrical resistivity and apparent magnetic susceptibility data. This anomaly appears to interconnect with the arcing eastern boundary within the southern field and likely once represented a continuation of this feature. Anomaly 3 appears to enclose the higher ground to the southwest (see Image 1) and is likely to represent an archaeological enclosure ditch.

The orientation of anomaly 3 indicates that it likely extends either under the land which was unsurveyable adjacent to the farm buildings or possibly into either anomaly 2 or anomaly **4**, a 35m long curvilinear ditch.

Throughout the survey area a large amount of small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches (examples highlighted as **5**) were detected within either/or and sometimes both the apparent electrical resistivity and apparent magnetic susceptibility data. These ditches range in size from 8m to c. 25m in length and they could relate to archaeological, agricultural or geological activity. However the density of these types of anomalies detected within both datasets suggests that the majority of them are likely associated with archaeological remains.

The smaller arcing possible ditches could be associated with habitation, boundaries or small enclosure elements, indeed some possible enclosure elements have been identified (Anomalies **6**, **7** and **8** detected in the apparent electrical resistivity data). It is noticeable that although these small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches were detected throughout the survey area they appear to respect the enclosure ditch (anomaly 3). The presence of so many small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches suggests that extensive habitation and associated land boundaries were present inside and outside the ecclesiastical settlement of Derrynoose.

Across the majority of the survey area a large amount of possible pits were detected (examples highlighted as **9**). These features were detected in either/or and sometimes both the apparent electrical resistivity and apparent magnetic susceptibility data and could be archaeological, agricultural or geological in origin. The density of possible pits detected suggests that the majority of them are likely associated with archaeological remains.

A series of nine closely spaced possible pits (Anomaly **10**) have been identified close to the southern edge of the old church and graveyard. Covering an area of 12m N-S and 23m E-W these possible pits could relate to archaeological, agricultural or geological in nature.

Anomaly **11** represents an arcing ditch which was detected in both the apparent electrical resistivity and apparent magnetic susceptibility data. This anomaly appears to represent a sub-circular enclosure ditch, measuring 74m NW-SE and at least 50m SW-NE which has likely been cut by the modern trackway. The enclosure ditch (anomaly 11) appears to comprise a single ditch and contains a possible break or entranceway on its eastern edge. This enclosure likely represents a large sub-enclosure contained within enclosure ditch (anomaly 3) and located near the highest point in the landscape. Contained within anomaly 11 a series of possible pits and small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches were detected which is indicative of habitation and boundary ditches.

Anomaly **12** is a curvilinear trend of stone rich ground which was detected in the apparent electrical resistivity data. Measuring 49m in length this anomaly appears to terminate close to enclosure ditch anomaly 11. The stone rich ground could be associated with to archaeological, agricultural or geological in processes.

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Anomaly **13** is an area of low susceptibility readings which was detected which measures 24m N-S and 14m E-W. Comprising of stone or clay rich ground, it is likely this anomaly is associated with archaeological activity, although a geological explanation cannot totally be ruled out. The location of the anomaly suggests that it likely sits on the internal edge of anomaly 11, the stony ground having been spread slightly by later agricultural processes.

A number of areas of disturbed soil were detected in the southern field (examples highlighted as **14**). These features were detected in the apparent electrical resistivity data and measure between 12m and 30m in length. They could be associated with archaeological, agricultural or geological activity, however the presence of a number of pits and small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches within a number of these disturbed soil areas indicates that the disturbed soil is most likely caused by closely spaced archaeological remains.

Anomaly **15** is a linear trend of stone rich ground which was detected in both the apparent electrical resistivity and apparent magnetic susceptibility data. Measuring 24m in length this anomaly could archaeological, agricultural or geological in origin.

4 Conclusion

4.1 Summary of Results

The data collected for this report has revealed a large amount of previously unknown potential archaeological remains. Evidence for two relict agricultural boundaries were detected within the northern field as well as a curvilinear enclosure ditch. This enclosure ditch appears to interconnect with the extant arcing field boundary in the southern field indicating the likely presence of a large arcing enclosure which surrounds the high ground to the south of Derrynoose old graveyard. The exact orientation of this enclosure could not be fully established as the enclosure ditch either runs under ground which could not be surveyed or possibly interconnects with one of two ditches detected in the survey data.

External to this large arcing enclosure a large amount of possible pits and small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches were detected. These suggest extensive habitation remains and archaeological boundary features were once present on the land between the Derrynoose old graveyard and the enclosure ditch. It would appear that this archaeological activity ran right up to the enclosure ditch.

On the internal edge of the large arcing enclosure further extensive evidence of possible pits and small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches have been identified which indicate the presence of habitation remains and archaeological boundary features. In addition areas of disturbed soils have also been detected which are likely associated with closely spaced archaeological remains and a linear trend of stone rich ground which could be could archaeological, agricultural or geological in origin.

Close to the southern edge of the survey area the remains of an sub-circular enclosure was also detected which has been cut by the more modern trackway which runs along the edge of the survey area. This sub-circular enclosure appears to be located within the large arcing enclosure and possibly contains a break or entranceway to the east. Contained within this sub-circular enclosure further habitation remains have been identified (possible pits and small arcing and curvilinear possible ditches) as well as a curvilinear stone feature which would once have possibly divided the sub-circular enclosure. Further potential archaeological evidence was revealed with the detection of an area of stone or clay rich ground.

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4.2 Dissemination

The results of this survey were submitted to Derrynoose Heritage Group. Additional copies will be distributed to the Historic Environment Division.

5 Bibliography

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Historic Environment Division
https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6887ca0873b446e39d2f82c80c8a9337

6 Figures

Figure 1: Location map
Figure 2: Detailed location map
Figure 3: Electromagnetic Apparent Electrical Resistivity data
Figure 4: Electromagnetic Apparent Electrical Resistivity interpretation
Figure 5: Electromagnetic Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility data
Figure 6: Electromagnetic Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility interpretation
Figure 7: Combined and simplified interpretation

Technical Appendix: Anomaly Classifications

Electromagnetic Apparent Electrical Resistivity

Electromagnetic instruments transmit an alternating current which induces a primary and subsequently a secondary electromagnetic field which interacts with the underlying soils. One of the subsequent responses is the Apparent Electrical Conductivity of the soil, which are subsequently calculated via automated software to Apparent Electrical Resistivity.

Anomaly classification used to interpret data

After Gaffney & Gater (2003) and Gaffney *et al*. (2000).

A known archaeological feature type e.g. Ditch / Wall / Structure etc: An anomaly with strongly contrasting Resistivity, where the presence of a type of archaeological feature is known from supporting evidence.

Archaeology: A linear, curvilinear or isolated anomaly with an Resistivity that contrasts strongly with the surrounding sub-soil, without any supporting evidence from another source.

- **Ditch / Wall:** A discrete linear, curvilinear, annular or penannular anomaly with an Resistivity that contrasts strongly with the surrounding sub-soil. A low Resistivity suggests a ditch; a high Resistivity suggests a stone-filled ditch or wall.
- **Mound of Stones:** A higher Resistivity than the surrounding sub-oil.
- **Pit:** A small isolated area (>1-2m diameter) of Resistivity that contrasts with the surrounding sub-soil, judged to be caused by a pit-type feature.
- **Cultivation:** Parallel linear responses of high or low Resistivity.
- **Disturbed Soil:** A broad area of moderate Resistivity change that contrasts with the surrounding sub-soil. May represent cultural noise associated with soil disturbance, judged to be of archaeological origin.

High Resistivity Anomalies: Soils comprised of materials of a higher Resistivity than the surrounding soil will exhibit anomalies of 'higher resistivity'. These are likely to include stone walls, masonry, rubble, cobbled or gravel surfaces, as well as near surface geology.

Low Resistivity Anomalies: Soils that are comprised of materials of a lower ER_a than the surrounding soil will exhibit anomalies of 'lower resistivity'. These are likely to include ditches, drainage ditches and pits, as well as palaeochannels, drained soils, a high water table, deep topsoil, springs, boggy areas, areas adjacent to rivers and clay soils.

Electromagnetic Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility

The electromagnetic instrument transmits an alternating current which induces a primary and subsequently a secondary electromagnetic field which interacts with the underlying soils. Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility is a response derived from the ratio of the magnetic susceptibility of the soil.

Anomaly classification used to interpret data

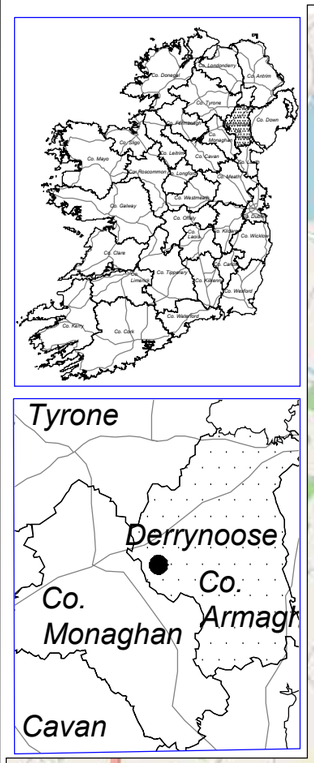
After Gaffney & Gater (2003) and Gaffney *et al*. (2000).

A known archaeological feature type e.g. Ditch / Wall / Structure etc: An anomaly with a susceptibility gradient that contrasts strongly with the surrounding sub-soil, where the presence of a type of archaeological feature is known from supporting evidence.

Archaeology: A linear, curvilinear or isolated anomaly with a susceptibility that contrasts strongly with the surrounding sub-soil, without any supporting evidence from another source.

- **Ditch:** A linear, curvilinear, annular or penannular anomaly with a susceptibility gradient that contrasts strongly with the surrounding sub-soil, judged to be caused by a pit-type feature with a fill more magnetic than the surrounding soil.
- **Burnt Mound / Spread:** A susceptibility that contrasts strongly with the surrounding sub-soil.
- **Hearth:** A small isolated area (<2m diameter) of higher susceptibility than the surrounding sub-soil.
- **Pit:** A small isolated area (>1-2m diameter) of moderate to high susceptibility, judged to be caused by a pit-type feature with a fill more magnetic than the surrounding soil.
- **Industrial:** An isolated anomaly with a strong susceptibility, judged not to be surface iron. This type of anomaly is typically caused by the remains of kilns or furnaces.
- **Cultivation:** Parallel linear responses of contrasting susceptibility.
- **Magnetic Enhancement:** A broad area of moderate MS_a that contrasts with the surrounding sub-soil. May represent cultural noise associated with occupation or soil disturbance, judged to be of archaeological origin.
- **Metal:** Isolated anomalies indicating metallic responses, judged to be in the near-surface.

Possible Archaeology: A linear, curvilinear or isolated anomaly with a susceptibility that contrasts weakly with the surrounding sub-soil, without any supporting evidence from another source. Such categories may represent possible archaeological or geological sources.



Caledon
A28
Killylea
Armagh
Milford
Tynan
Glaslough
A3
B210
B31
Middletown
B132
Killyfaddy
Madden
A29
Ulster
A3
B3
R185
N12
Monaghan
R213
Keady
R214
B3
N2
B32
Derrynoose

Legend

Approximate location of Geophysical Survey Area

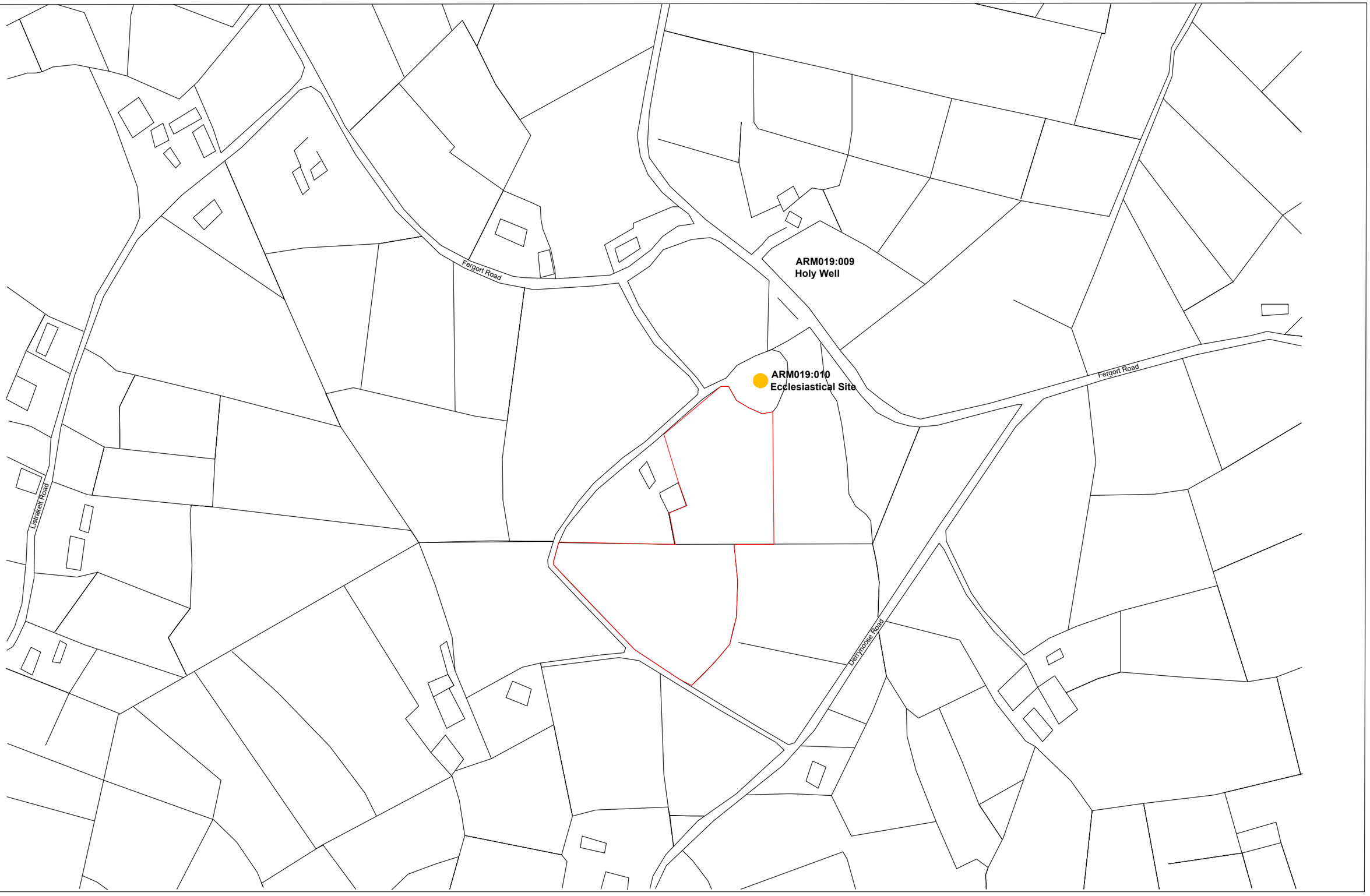
Project: Investigations into land to the southwest of Derrynoose Old Church and Graveyard, Listarkelt, Derrynoose, County Armagh

Client: Derrynoose Heritage Group

Mapping Supplied by: Openmaps

Figure No. 1: Location Map

EARTHSOUND geophysics



Legend

- Basemap
- National Monument
- Geophysical Survey Area

N

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Client: Derrynoose Heritage Group

Mapping Supplied by: Earthsound

0m 150m 300m

Figure No. 2: Detailed Location Map

EARTHSOUND geophysics



Legend

Basemap

Unsurveyable Area

Ohm.m

60 — 100

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Client: Derrynoose Heritage Group

Mapping Supplied by: Earthsound

0m — 150m — 300m

Figure No. 3: Electromagnetic Resistivity Apparent Data

EARTHSOUND geophysics



Legend

- Basemap
- Unsurveyable Area
- Possible Ditch
- Possible Pit
- Area of Disturbed Soil
- Possible Stone Feature

Ohm.m

60 — 100

N

Project: Investigations into land to the southwest of Derrynoose Old Church and Graveyard, Listarkelt, Derrynoose, County Armagh

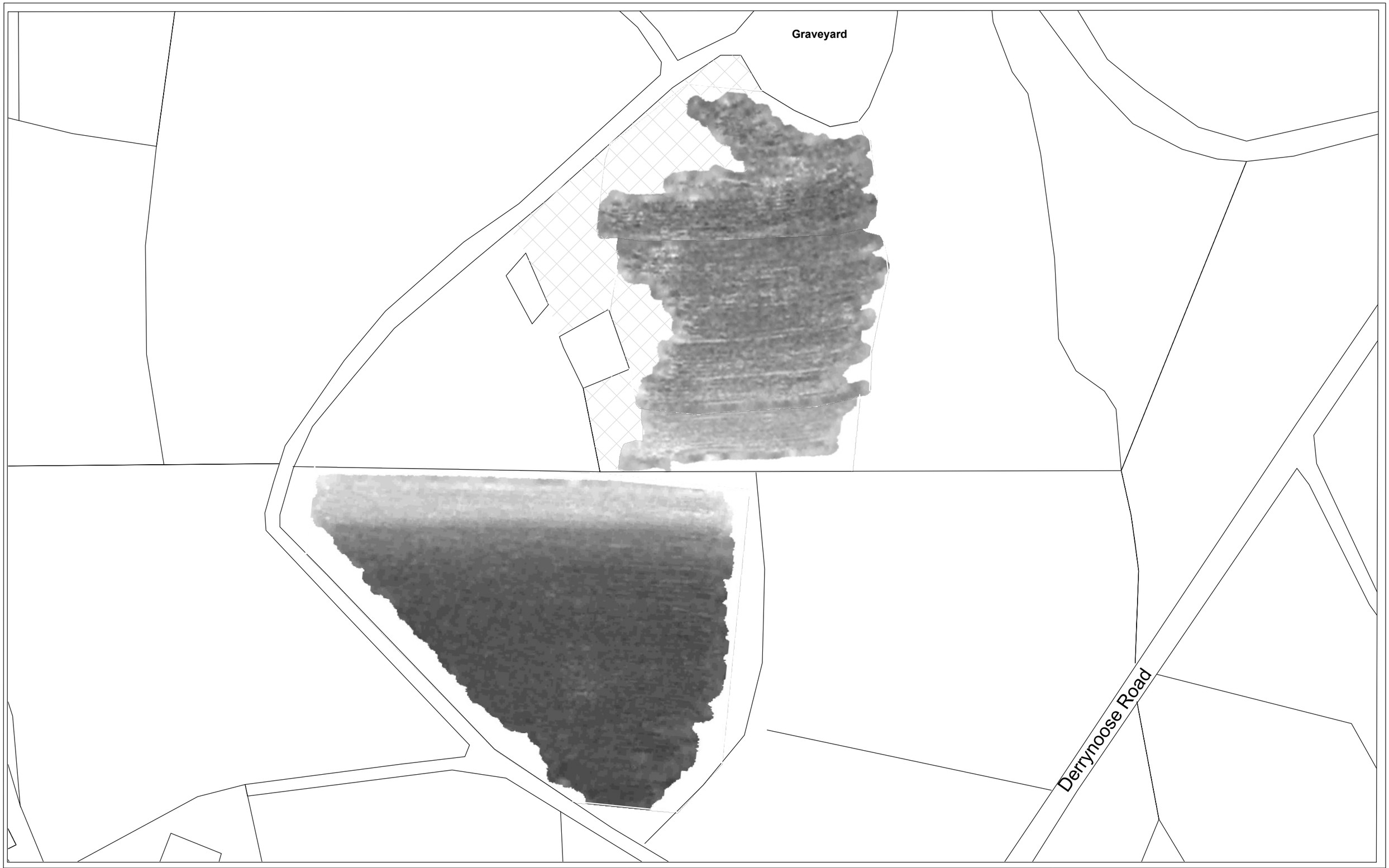
Client: Derrynoose Heritage Group

Mapping Supplied by: Earthsound

0m — 150m — 300m

Figure No. 4: Electromagnetic Apparent Resistivity Interpretation

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Legend

Basemap

Unsurveyable Area

ppm

4 8

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Mapping Supplied by: Earthsound

0m 150m 300m

Figure No. 5: Electromagnetic Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility Data

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Legend

- Basemap
- Unsurveyable Area
- Possible Ditch
- Possible Pit
- Area of Stone or Clay Rich Ground

ppm

4 — 8

N

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Client: Derrynoose Heritage Group

Mapping Supplied by: Earthsound

0m — 150m — 300m

Figure No. 6: Electromagnetic Apparent Magnetic Susceptibility Interpretation

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Graveyard

Derrynoose Road

Legend

- Basemap
- Geophysical Survey Area
- Unsurveyable Area
- Possible Ditch - Possibly Archeological Habitation
- Possible Enclosure Ditch
- Possible Pit
- Area of Disturbed Soil - Possibly Archaeological
- Area of Stone or Clay Rich Ground - Possibly Archaeological
- Relict Field Boundary

N

Project: Investigations into land to the southwest of Derrynoose Old Church and Graveyard, Listarkelt, Derrynoose, County Armagh

Client: Derrynoose Heritage Group

Mapping Supplied by: Earthsound

0m 150m 300m

Figure No. 7: Combined and Simplified Interpretation

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