



Fairnilee, Yair



Moated settlement | NGR: NT 4565 3270 | Archaeological survey | June 2025

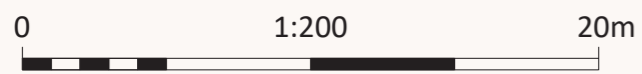
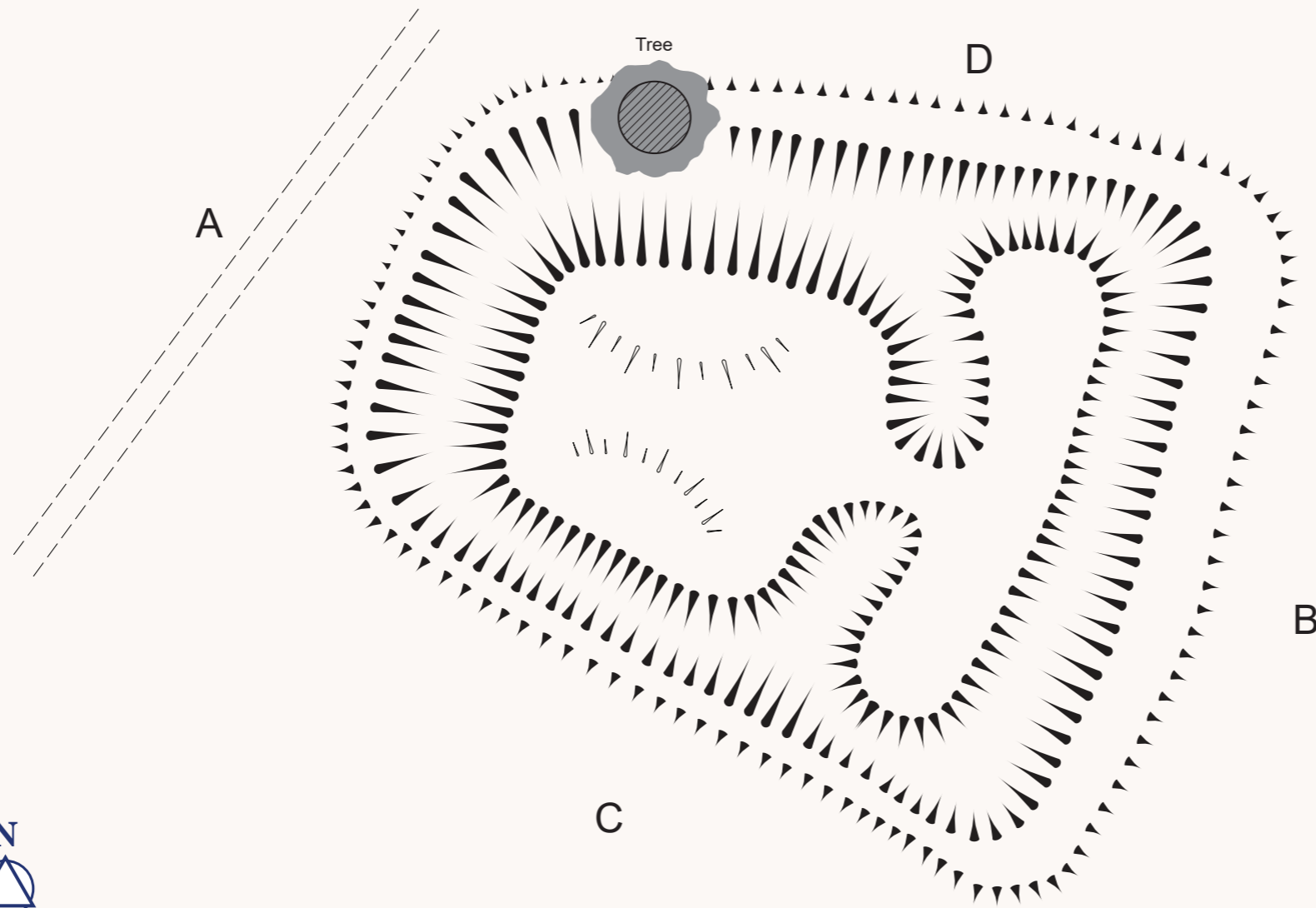
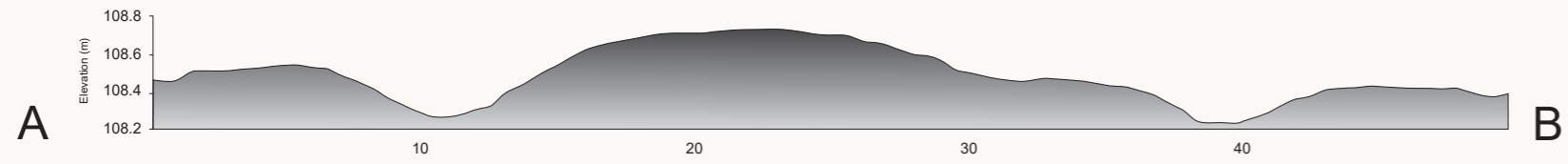
Situated on the raised northern bank of the Tweed at Fairniee, Yair are the remains of a probable moated settlement, first detected in the assessment of LiDAR visualisations and indicated by sub-rectangular ditch surrounding a pronounced square mound c.16m square. The surrounding moat is indicated by a shallow ditch around 5m wide, describing a near trapezoidal shape in plan; the shorter, western end is c.15m long while the wider, eastern end measures c.25m. The enclosed area measures around 32m from W to E. A narrow causeway runs between the main mound and a separate bank to the west which forms an unusual outer work, presumably at the entrance to the settlement, itself in turn surrounded by the perimeter ditch. A faint outer bank surrounds the enclosure, presumably representing upcast from the ditch. A substantial oak tree is growing on the NW corner of the earthwork, overlying the outer bank.

The site was surveyed using plane table and dGPS, with volunteers from the Uncovering the Tweed project on 29th May 2025. A magnetometry survey was also conducted using a Sensys MXPDA cart system. The results were inconclusive; the field containing the earthwork evidently contains a substantial quantity of ferrous or heat-affected material, likely debris related to the nearby farm and former mill, which has masked any evidence of archaeological features. The lack of differentiation in magnetic signal between the makeup of the mound, the ditch fill and surrounding soils might suggest that the earthwork is primarily soil and turf, with little stone component.

The settlement most likely represents a moated settlement of the medieval period, although the format is relatively unusual in the regional context. The enclosed mound may have supported a tower, the remains of which have now been completely removed or, perhaps more likely, a timber fortification.



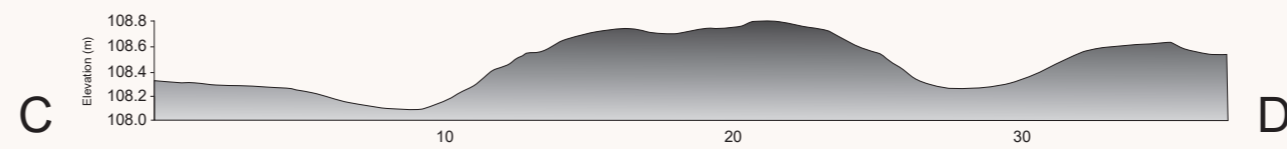
Drone photograph of the site, facing west with the River Tweed in the background



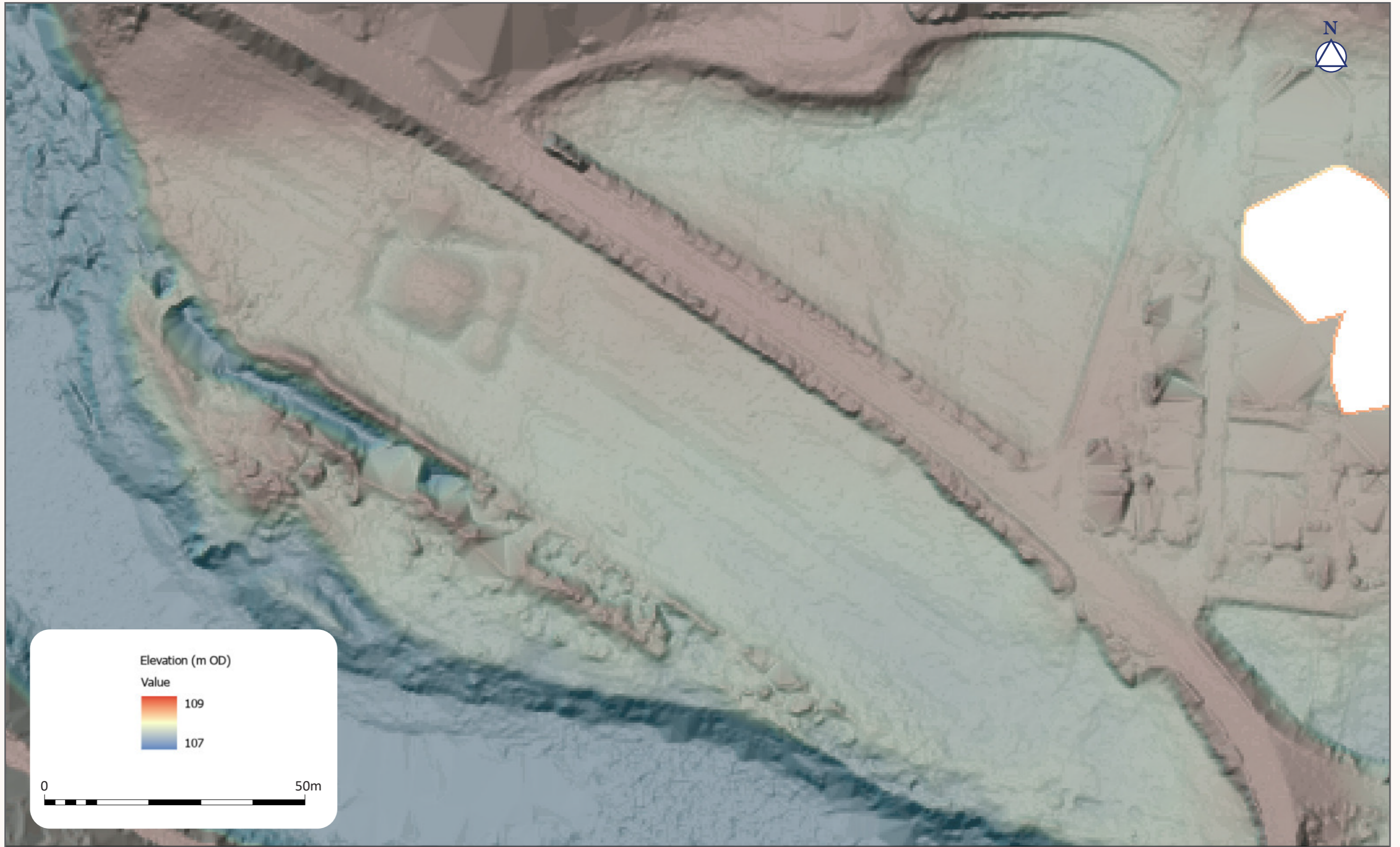
Fairnilee

AOC 60131-16

Profile vertical scale exaggerated

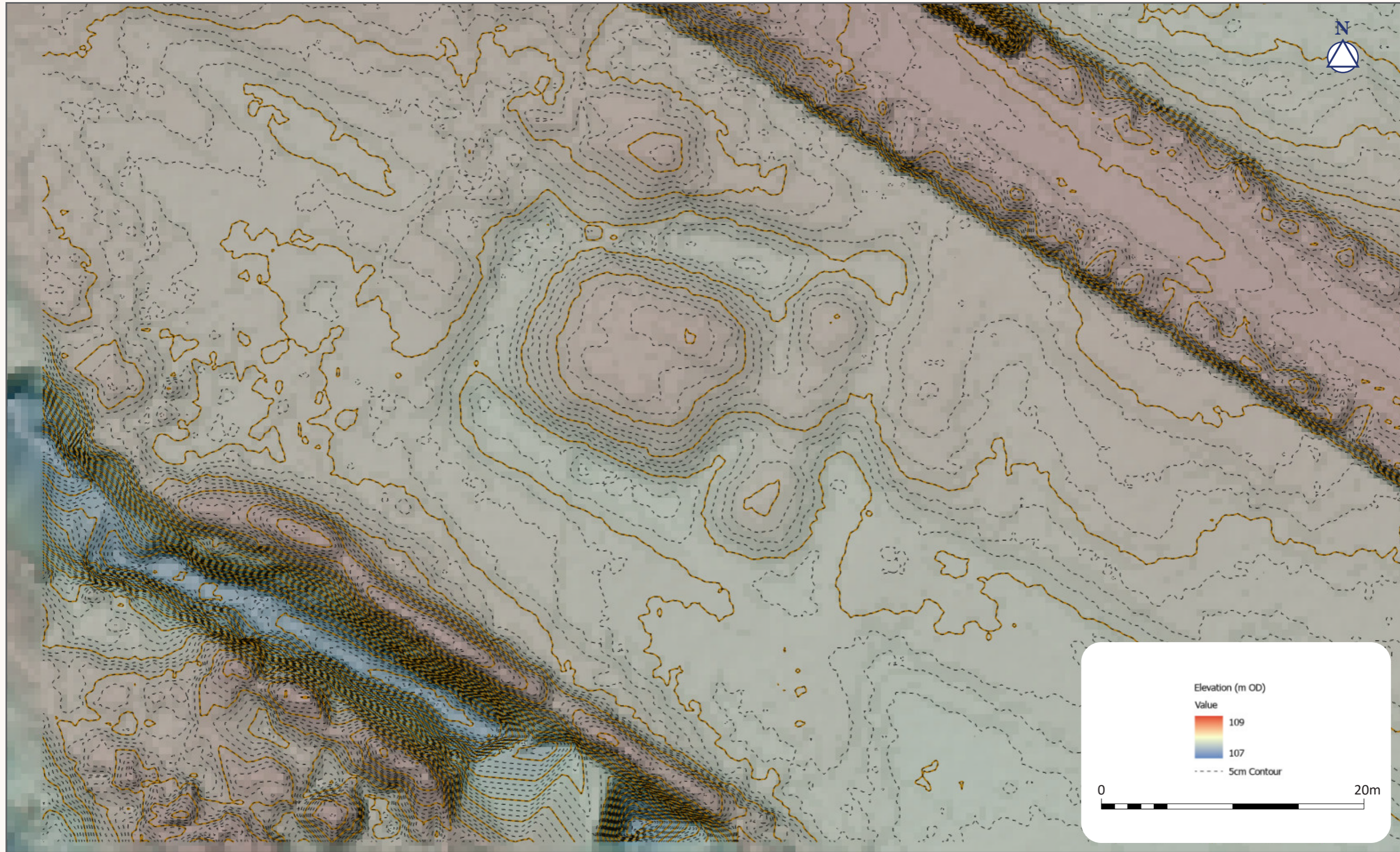


The Survey



LiDAR-derived terrain model of the site at Fairnielee (resolution 0.25m; source dataset: Scottish Government Phase 3 DTM, CC-BY-SA 4)





Contour plan derived from LiDAR terrain model (source dataset: Scottish Government Phase 3 DTM, CC-BY-SA 4)





Greyscale plot of magnetometry data





Project participants undertaking plane table and GPS



Project participants undertaking magnetometry survey



View of the site facing NW



View of the site facing NE



