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**LAND AT LONGLANDS FARM,
NORTON FITZWARREN, SOMERSET**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

January 2000

Report 0100



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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Foundations Archaeology on 8th - 9th December 1999 on land at Longland's Farm, Norton Fitzwarren (NGR: ST 18546 27692). The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of two trenches (one 15m x 1.8m and one 50m x 1.8m) in order to establish the presence or absence of archaeologically sensitive deposits.

Archaeological features were identified in both trenches, including ditches, pits and possible postholes. Pottery sherds, dating to the Iron Age and Roman period, were confined to the features in Trench 2.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology on 8th – 9th December 1999 on land at Longland's Farm, Norton Fitzwarren, Taunton (NGR: ST 18546 27692). The work was commissioned by R J Lampard & Co Ltd and was undertaken in accordance with the principals of Planning Policy Guidance note 16, Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16).
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in response to a proposal to create a waste recycling facility at Longland's Farm (Planning Application reference 4/06/99/24). The proposal involves the formation of a bund on the north and west sides of the site, three concrete storage and sorting areas on the western part of the field, a concrete crushing area and four soil screening areas on the remainder of the site.
- 1.3 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief supplied by Somerset County Council (Waste Recycling facility, land at Longland's Farm, Norton Fitzwarren: Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation). The field evaluation was undertaken in accordance with IFA Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation, 1994.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The study area consists of agricultural land that is located approximately 3 km west of Taunton. The site is bounded to the north by the A358 and to the west by Monty's Lane. To the south and east the site is bounded by open fields.
- 2.2 The fields to the north and west have produced very good aerial photographic evidence for rectangular enclosures, field systems and ring ditches of pre-Medieval date (PRN 44160; 44187). Some possible cropmarks suggesting field boundaries extend into the northern edge of the field in the area of Trench 2.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains. This would enable recommendations to be made regarding the preservation and management of archaeologically sensitive deposits, and the formulation of a mitigation strategy, including further archaeological works as necessary.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The project required the excavation of two trenches; the first 15m by 1.8m parallel to the west boundary of the field, the second 50m by 1.8m along the north boundary of the field (see figure 2).
- 4.2 Topsoil and non-significant overburden was removed to the top of archaeological deposits, or to the natural substrate where such deposits were absent. This was achieved through use of a mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket. Thereafter the trenches were cleaned and all additional excavation was conducted by hand.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 The trenches were excavated to an average depth of 0.35m. Natural deposits, comprising a mid orange-brown gravel were reached between 135.77m OD and 136.22m OD. The natural substrate was overlaid by a light orange-brown sandy-clay subsoil which varied in depth between 0.2 – 0.4m. The latest stratigraphic deposits consisted of a dark brown clay loam ploughsoil which varied from 0.2 – 0.3m in depth. Archaeologically significant features were identified within both trenches.
- 5.2 Two features [103] and [105] were identified in the northern end of Trench 1. Of these [103] appeared to be a possible linear feature, and [105] the terminal end of a linear or part of a pit. No archaeological deposits were present in the remainder of the trench.
- 5.3 Feature [103], a possible ditch was aligned east - west at the northernmost end of Trench 1. It measured 0.8m+ in width and 0.1m in depth and was filled with (104), a mid grey clay-loam which contained frequent pebbles. No finds were recovered from the feature.
- 5.4 Feature [105] to the south of [103], was interpreted as a shallow ditch terminus. It measured 0.47m wide and 0.2m deep and was aligned approximately north-west, south east. The sides sloped at around 45 degrees, creating a rounded end and a flat base. The fill (106) comprised a dark brown clay-loam containing charcoal. This feature also yielded no artefactual evidence.
- 5.5 The most significant features were located in Trench 2. These consisted of three ditches, a probable pit and four other pits/postholes.
- 5.6 A second ditch, [207], measuring 0.9m wide, 0.25m deep was revealed towards the eastern end of Trench 2. This feature ran on a north-east to south-west alignment and contained a mid brown loamy clay and pebble fill with a moderate amount of charcoal and charcoal flecking. Seven sherds of Iron Age pottery,

Somerset Glastonbury ware (c. 200-50 BC), were recovered from the fill of the feature.

- 5.7 A series of interconnected features [203], [205] and [218] were present approximately half-way along Trench 2. Feature [203] represented a substantial ditch aligned north-east to south-west. It measured 2.6m wide and 0.65m deep. Ditch [205] ran adjacent to [203] on the same alignment and was of similar dimensions (2.4m wide and 0.55m deep). Associated with [205] was a probable pit [218]. The relationship between these three features could not be established with any certainty since all three were filled (204, 206 and 219) with an identical mid brown loamy clay containing frequent pebbles, and in plan appeared to be a single feature prior to excavation. In section, the only difference observed between [203] and [205] was that the latter contained slightly more pebbles. Excavation demonstrated, however, that the base of pit [218] was contained within the fill of ditch [205], and that it was stratigraphically later. Ditch [205] did not appear to extend to the east beyond pit [218] and either terminated within the area of the evaluation trench, or curved northwards. The similarity of the fills suggested that the features were all roughly contemporary; [203] yielded 18 sherds of late Roman pottery, [205] yielded one small fragment and [218] provided none.
- 5.8 There were four small features to the west of ditch [207]. A small oval feature [211] measuring 0.53m by 0.8m and 0.16m deep has been interpreted as a small pit. It contained (213) a gray-brown clay-loam with a moderate amount of pebbles in. This feature yielded no finds.
- 5.9 Adjacent to [211] was another small oval feature [214], which was interpreted as a posthole or small pit. It measured 0.49m by 0.33m and was 0.25m deep. It contained a similar gray-brown clay-loam fill (215), again with a moderate amount of pebbles. This feature yielded one sherd of probable Roman pot.
- 5.10 Another feature [216] was identified adjacent to [214]. It comprised a small circular pit or posthole, with steep sides and a rounded, uneven base. It measured 0.48m in length, 0.41m in width and was 0.15m deep. The fill was again a grey-brown clay loam, had frequent pebbles and charcoal flecking.
- 5.11 The final feature identified was a shallow, oval depression measuring 0.58m long, 0.38m wide and 0.08m deep. It was filled with (210), a dark brown clay loam with a moderate amount of pebbles. It also contained charcoal pieces and flecking, as well as flecks of brick. This may be identified as a posthole or tree hole.
- 5.12 No ecofactual material was identified during the course of the evaluation.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The evaluation has identified archaeologically sensitive deposits within the study area. Two undated features probably forming small ditches or gullies were revealed in Trench 1 and a complex of well-defined and dated archaeological features in Trench 2. The fields to the north and west of the site have produced good aerial photographic evidence for a ring ditch, enclosures and field systems. This evidence includes cropmarks suggestive of field boundaries, which extend from the north into the study area, in the vicinity of Trench 2. It is probable that the ditches identified represent elements of these features. Ceramic evidence identified the ditches as being of Iron Age and Roman date. Of the smaller features, also revealed in Trench 2, only one yielded artefactual evidence, also of Roman date.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Bob Lampard, Eric Judd, and Steve Membrey for their assistance in the smooth running of the project.

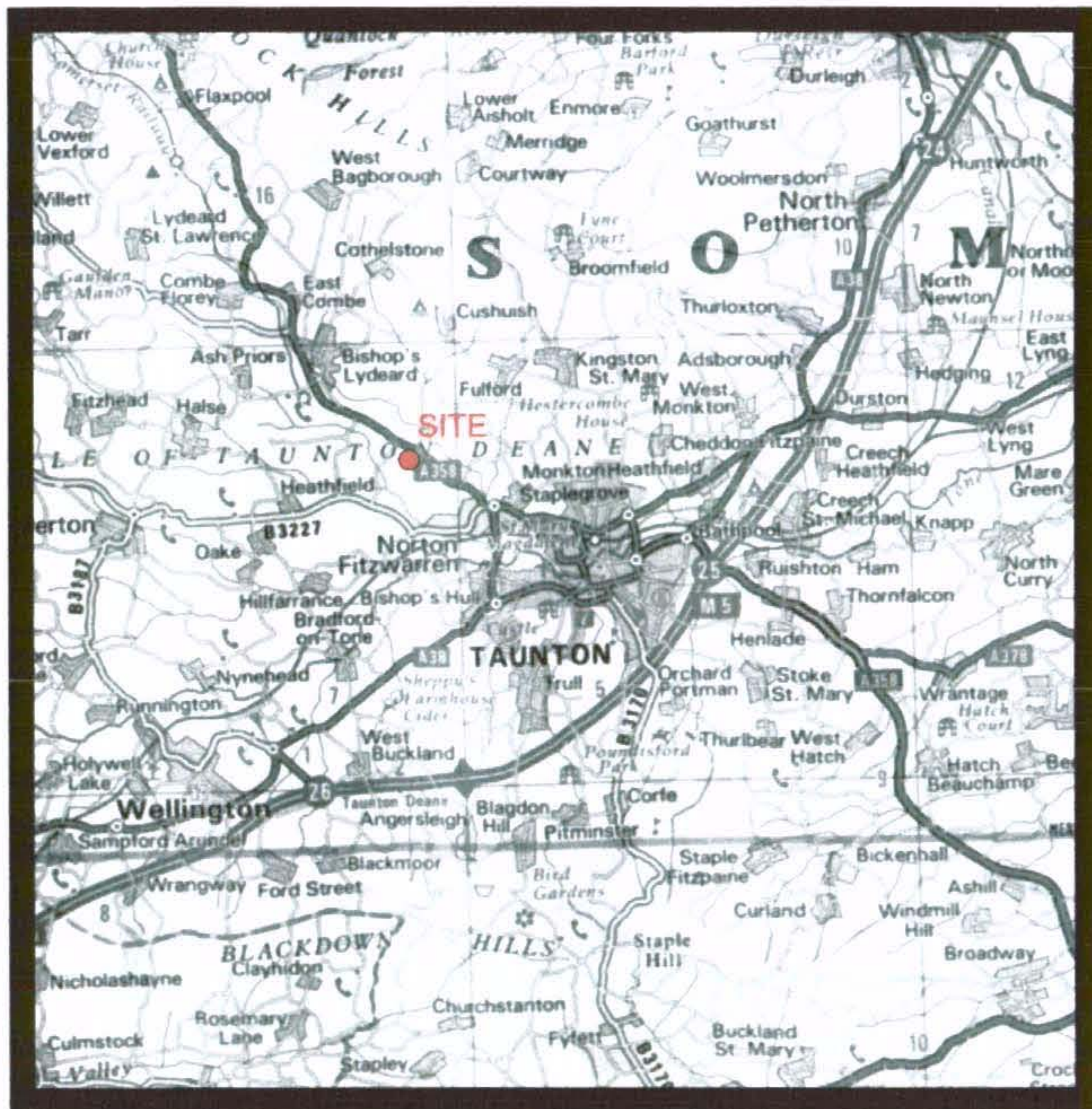


Figure 1 : Site :Location

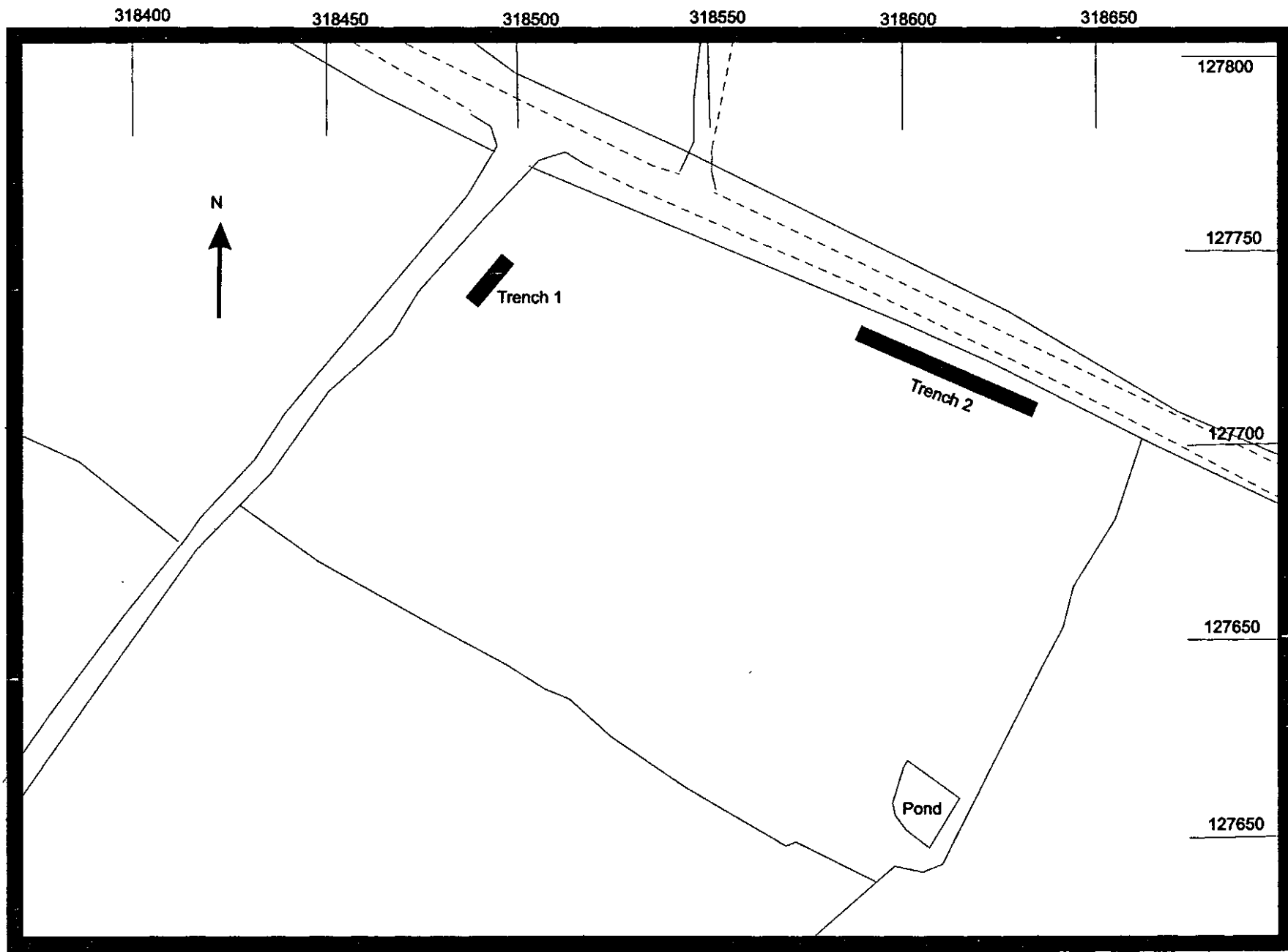


Figure 2 : Trench Positions

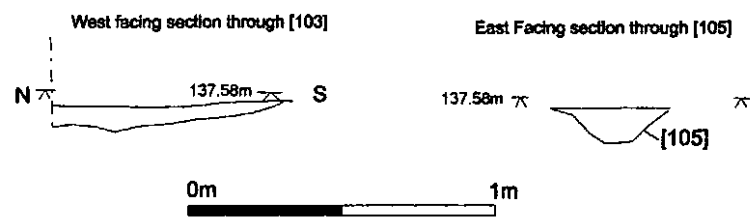
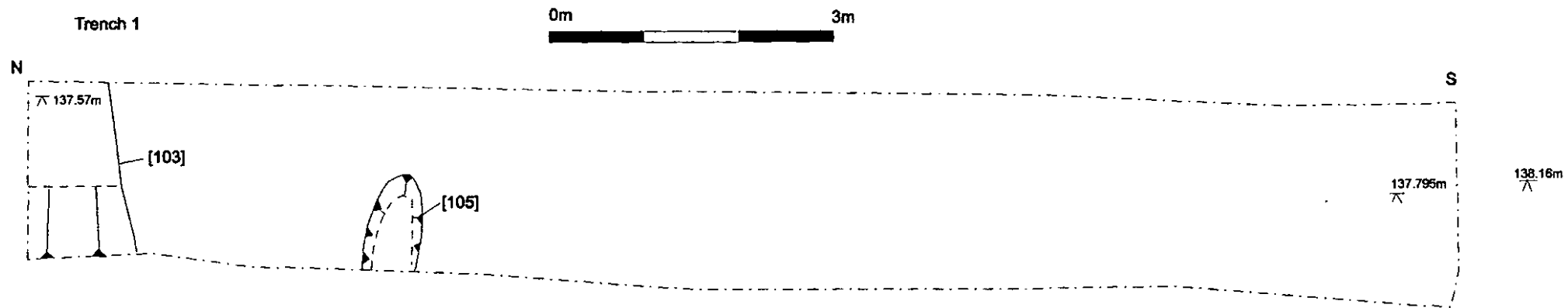


Figure 3 : Trench 1 Plan and Sections

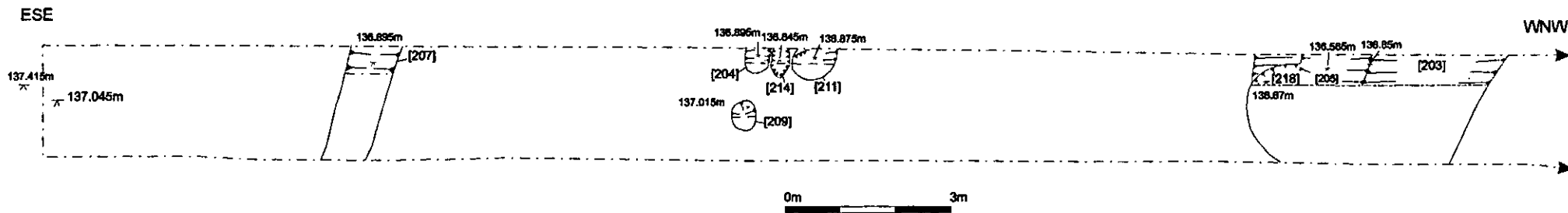


Figure 4 : Plan Trench 2

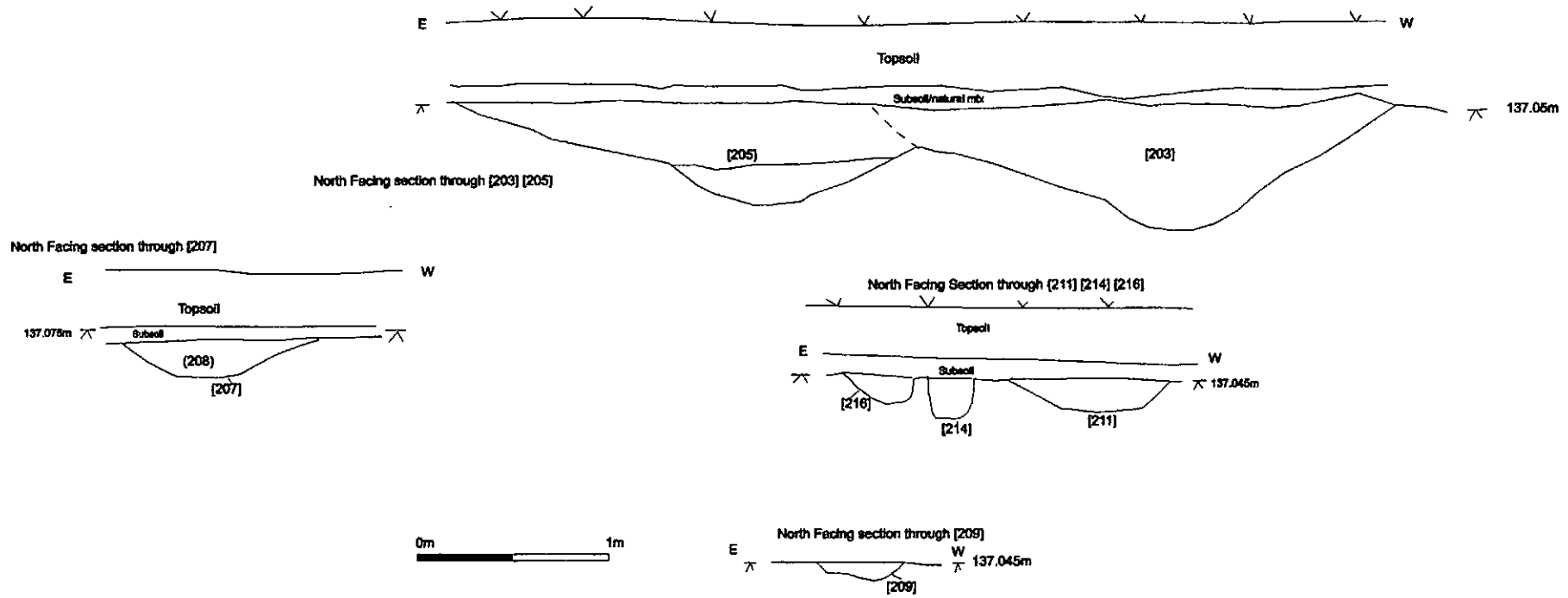


Figure 5 : Trench 2 Sections