

99/23

A REPORT ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EXCAVATIONS AT CLUTTON CLOSE (REAR OF 65 NORTH
STREET) CROWLAND PETERBOROUGH

Planning Application No. H02/1036/98

By David Britchfield BA (Hons)
and
Martin Redding BA (Hons)

For:
South Holland District Council
Housing & Planning Services Department
Council Offices
Priory Road
Spalding
Lincolnshire, PE1 2XE

Soke Archaeological Services Ltd.
Inley Drove Farm,
New Fen Dyke,
Sutton St. James,
Spalding PE12 OLX

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Ipswich County Council
Archaeology Section

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Site Details Concerning Location, Planning Application and Archaeological Requirements.

Location: Cluttons Close, Crowland, Peterborough.

Parish: Crowland

OS Grid Ref.: TF 239 104 2396 1046

Planning Authority: South Holland District Council
Priory Road
Spalding
Lincolnshire, PE1 2XE

Application Number: H02/1036/98

Nature of development: Development of a private residential building

Client: Mr J N Drake
Croyland House.
Crowland
Peterborough.

Groundworks: Kevin Covell Ltd
Kings Lynn

Monitoring Level: Intermittant (Intensive)

1. Introduction

1.1 A planning application was made by Mr J N Drake (application number H02/0060/97) for the construction of a house, garage and swimming pool at Cluttons Close (rear of 65 North Street), Crowland, Peterborough (Figs.1 & 2). Outline planning permission was granted by South Holland District Council, subject to a condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during all stages of development involving ground disturbance (SHDC 1998).

1.2 The following report details the results of archaeological monitoring of the watching brief.

2. The site in its setting

2.1 Crowland is located approximately 12km South of Spalding in the administrative district of South Holland, Lincolnshire. The site is situated on the north side of the medieval centre of the village, northwest of the abbey, at NGR TF 239 104.

2.2 The parish is situated on a gravel island in the fens of South Lincolnshire at an elevation of approximately 5m OD. Soils at the site are of the Ireton Association, with alluvium over glacio-fluvial deposits of marine/estuarine sand and gravel, or *Abbey gravel* (BGS, Sheet 158: 1984; & Hodge *et al* 1984, 229).

2.3 Crowland is an area of considerable archaeological interest, although little modern systematic archaeological work has been carried out in the area. Several prehistoric burial mounds have been identified in the vicinity of the village, as well as Roman pottery, although there is no clear evidence for Roman settlement.

2.4 Crowland came to prominence during the early medieval period. Crowland Abbey was founded in 716AD, by King Ethelbald, in honour of St. Guthlac. The medieval Benedictine Abbey, dedicated to St. Bertholomew, St. Guthlac and St. Mary was founded during the thirteenth century. The abbey was dissolved in 1539, although part of the building remains in use as the parish church. Medieval settlement is confined to the area immediately surrounding the abbey.

2.5 Three trial pits (1, 1A and 2), dug by structural engineers Andrew Firebrace Partnership in October 1998, identified four primary types of fill to a depth of approximately 2.5m. The pits revealed similar stratigraphic relationships throughout the site, although it was noticeable at this point that the eastern end had lower levels of silt, as well as a greater concentration of made-up ground (AFP 1998). These results were confirmed during archaeological monitoring of the site.

3. Staff

3.1 The excavations described below took place in August 1999. The Project Manager was Francis Pryor MBE MIFA FSA MA Phd; the Site Supervisor was Martin Redding BA; assisted by David Britchfield BA.

4. The Excavations

4.1 Methods

4.1.1 The area directly impacted was cleared of existing scrub and intrusive trees by machine prior to starting the groundworks.

4.1.2 A 0.65m wide toothed bucket was used to excavate the exterior footings, which started in the northwestern corner of the development. Internal footings were subsequently excavated using a 0.5m toothed bucket. All stages of excavation were archaeologically monitored.

4.1.3 Spoil was screened for any archaeological material, both within the dumper and on the spoil heap, and subsequently metal detected.

4.1.4 Several pig burial pits were encountered during groundworks. These pits often penetrated deep into the natural geology and as a consequence the softer backfill was removed in order to avoid subsidence of the concrete footings.

4.1.5 Where appropriate, sections were trowelled clean to establish the stratigraphic relationship between preserved buried soil to the west, and truncated buried soil to the east.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 All levels of stratigraphy noted by the previous test pit survey (AFP 1998) were readily identifiable i.e. more gravely at the west end of the site, fading to a more clayey gravel/sand of a blue/grey colour towards the east. Overlying this was a dark grey buried soil, the lower limits of which contained frost shattered flint. The natural deposits tended to be more sandier towards the the east end, while buried soil in the west end was mid brown/ light grey with mottled orange oxidized staining, possibly due to localised fluctuating water tables.

4.2.2 The redeposited topsoil (002) was dark and humic, and littered with brick rubble, post medieval pottery and refuse. It was apparant that this layer truncated the the lower, eastern part of the plot, probably in the first half of this century. The uneven nature of this truncation/interference could be due to heavy trample by the pigs and cattle that formerly occupied the site, in addition to the pig burials mentioned in 4.1.4.

4.2.3 Alluvium/peaty layers (005) and (007) were evident above the buried soil horizon across the eastern area of the plot. In contrast to this, however, a more clayey alluvium (003) was apparent at the western end of the site (Fig. 3), where it is slightly higher and therefore drier.

4.2.4 The natural hollows encountered at the eastern end of the site (Fig. 4), could not be firmly attributed to archaeological activity, and are more representative of tree bowls or large animal wallows. The sterile nature of the deposits in these hollows would support this.

4.2.5 Several pits for the disposal of pig carcasses had been dug through all levels of stratigraphy into the natural (up to 1.70m deep). This was evident from a nasty stench and oily residues of fats and fluids forming a scum over the groundwater.

4.2.6 The natural groundwater was encountered at 0.80m below the surface of the existing ground level.

5. Finds

5.1 A flint blade was recovered in section from the buried soil/natural interface along the extreme western footing of the building. This blade could be attributed to the Late Neolithic or Bronze Age.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The contradicting evidence of the buried soil in the western and eastern ends of the plot (see section 4.2.3) seem to indicate that the site is on the limits of a gradually sloping fen edge, with the wetter deposits towards the eastern end.

6.2 It should also be noted, however, that the darker nature of the buried soil to the east may be as a result of leaching activity concerned with the darker overlying redeposited topsoil and animal waste. This leaching process may have been accentuated by the gentle sloping of the site towards the east, and local fluctuating water levels.

7. Archive

7.1 The documentation, finds, photographs and other records and materials generated during this watching brief will be sorted and distributed to the City and County Museum, Lincoln, for long term storage and curation.

Appendix 1: context list

<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Description</i>
001	1/2/3	Made up ground/hardcore.
002	1/2	Redeposited/heavily distributed topsoil including rubble, clinker, a scatter of Post-Medieval brick, tile, porcelain and other 20th century rubbish. Very dark grey (10YR 3/1)
003	1	Buried soil. Western end comprised of a fine silty clay/fine sand (10 YR 4/3), while the eastern end (2.5Y 3/1-4/1) contained mottled iron stone.
004	2	Marine clay. Very dark grey/bluish (2.5Y 3/1) with charcoal flecks.
005	2	Dark brown (7.5YR 2.5/1) peat horizon.
006	3	Alluvium. Grey/brown (10YR 4/2) mottled fine silty clay.
007	3	Wetter horizon of very dark grey (2.5Y 3/1) alluvium.

References

Andrew Firebrace Partnership. *Structural Engineering Report on Proposed Dwelling at Cluttons Close, Crowland.* (27/10/1998)

British Geological Survey. England and Wales, 1:50,000. Sheet 158. Solid and Drift Edition (1984)

Hodge, C.A.H., *et al* (1984) *Soils and their use in the Eastern England.* Soil Survey of England and Wales **13**

South Holland District Council (1998). *Archaeologists Watching Brief at Cluttons Close, Crowland, Peterborough.* (Condition 4 of H02/0060/97)

List of Figures:

Fig 1. Location plan

Fig 2. Plan of site

Fig 3. Section 1

Fig 4. Sections 2 & 3

Fig 1. Location plan

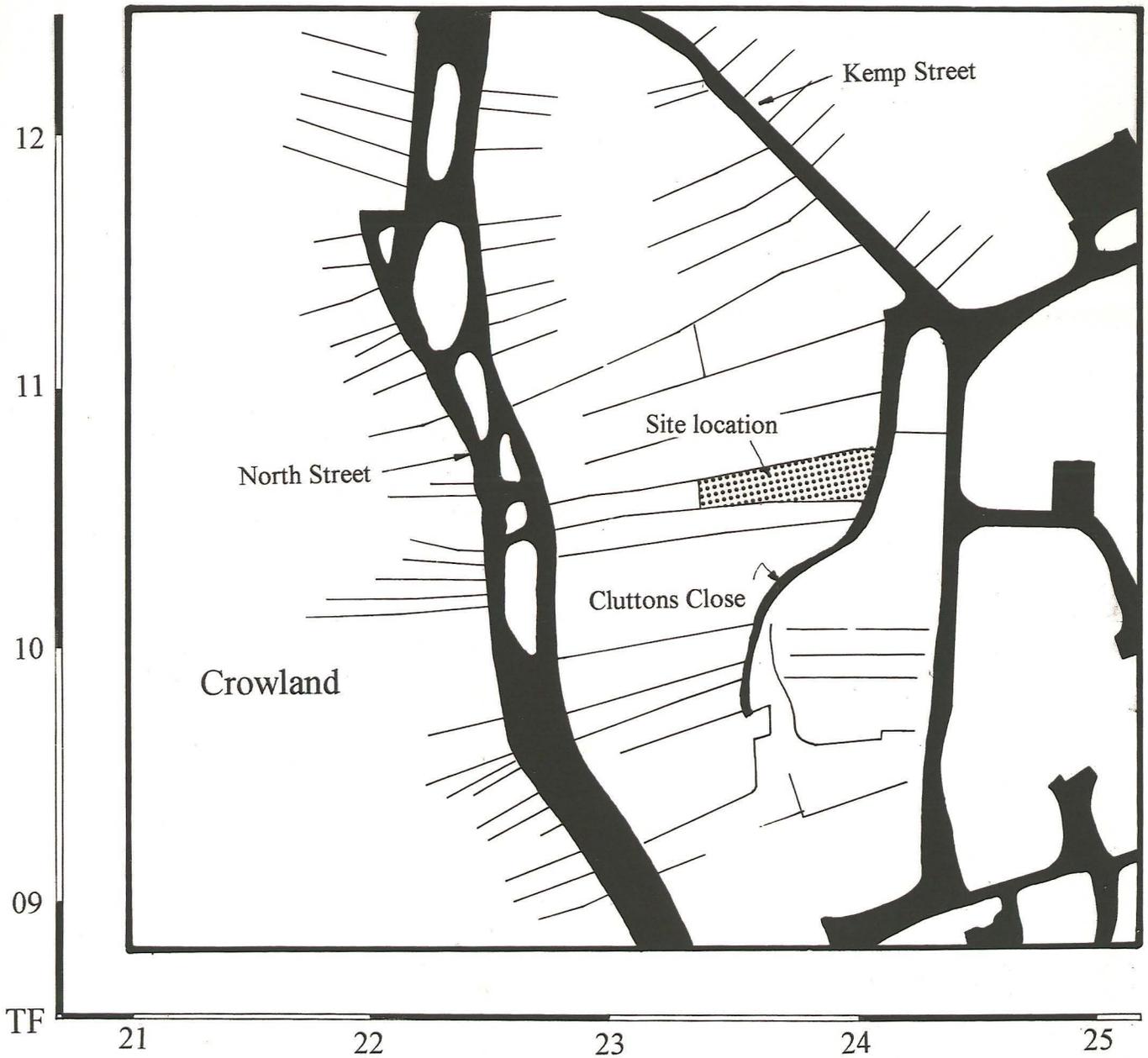
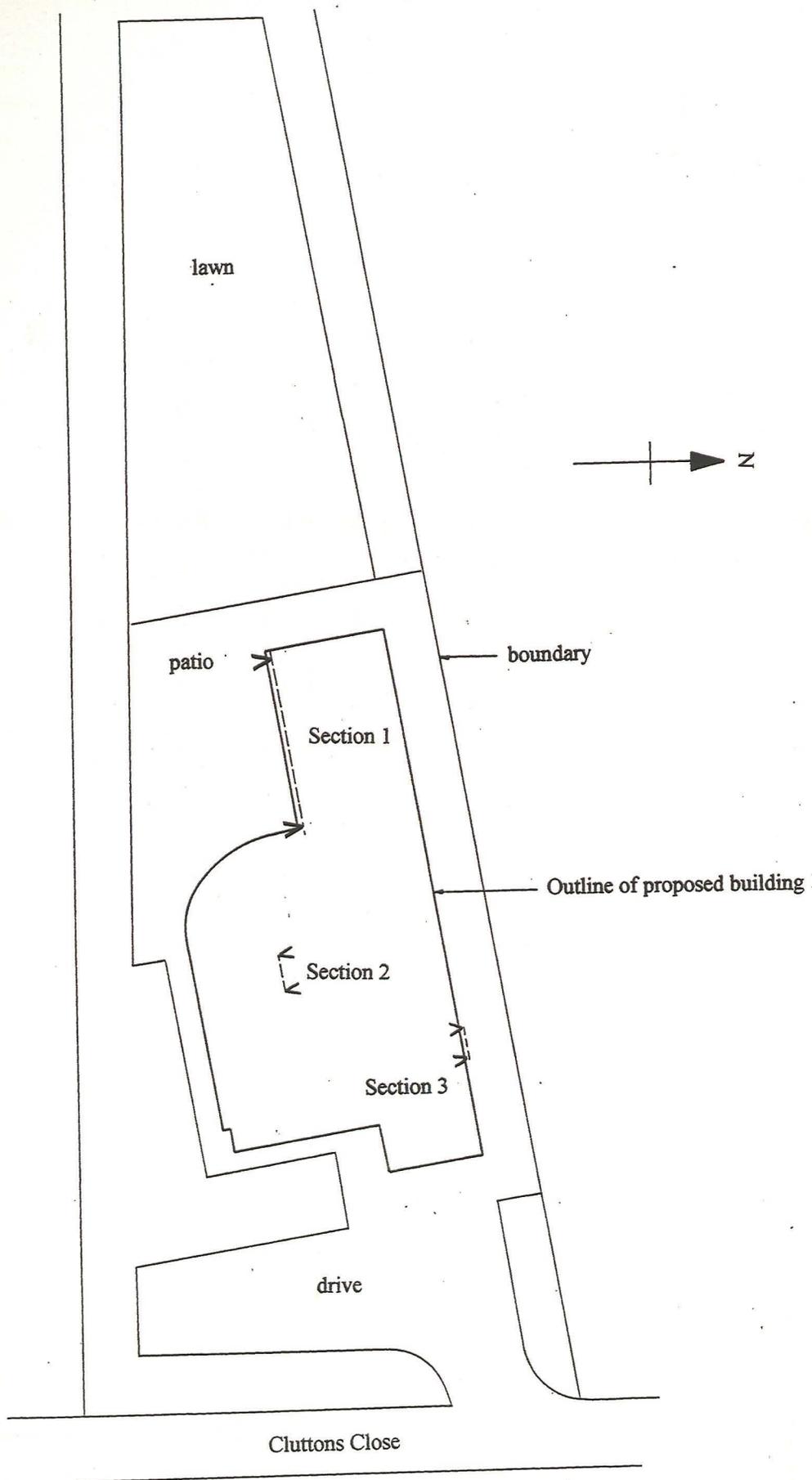


Fig 1. Location plan

Fig 2. Plan of Site



0m 20m

Fig 2. Plan of Site

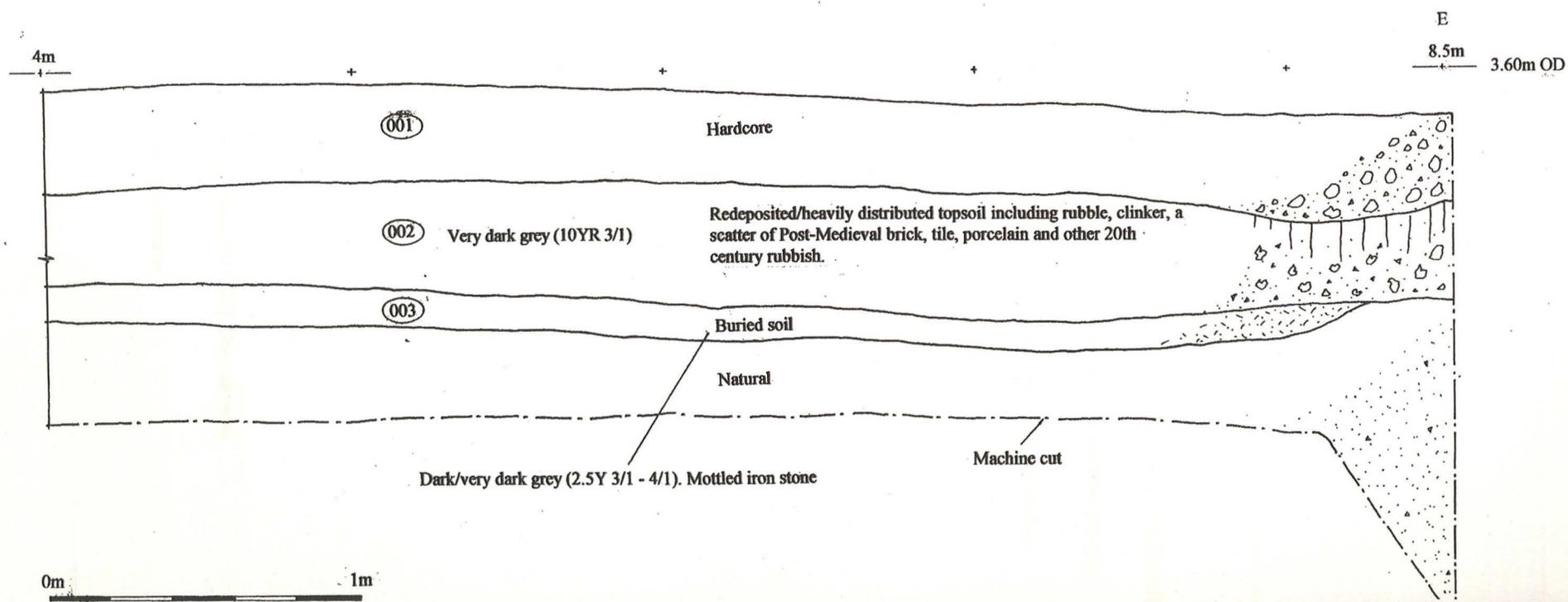
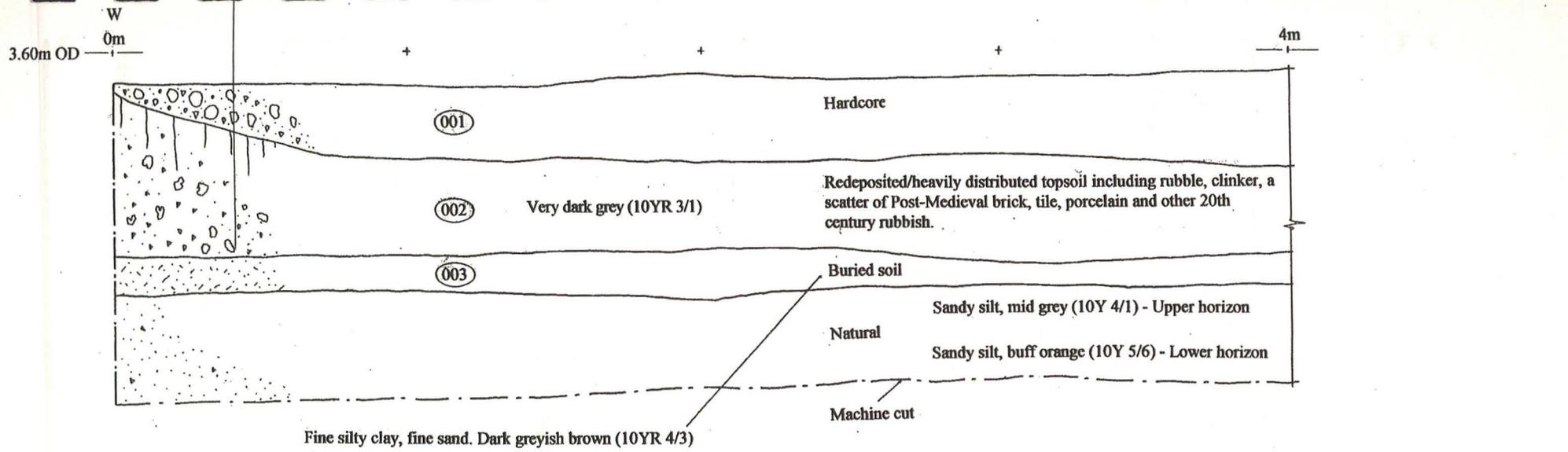
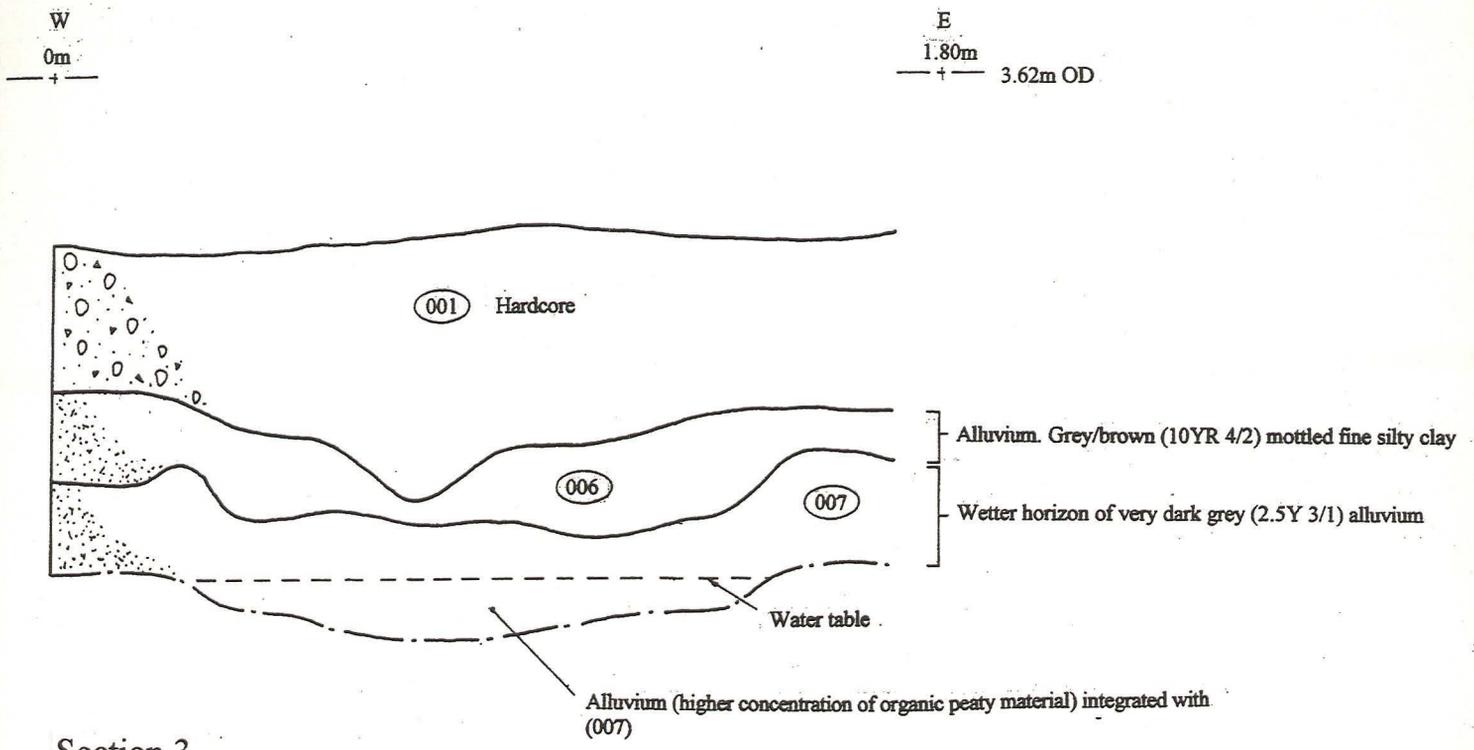
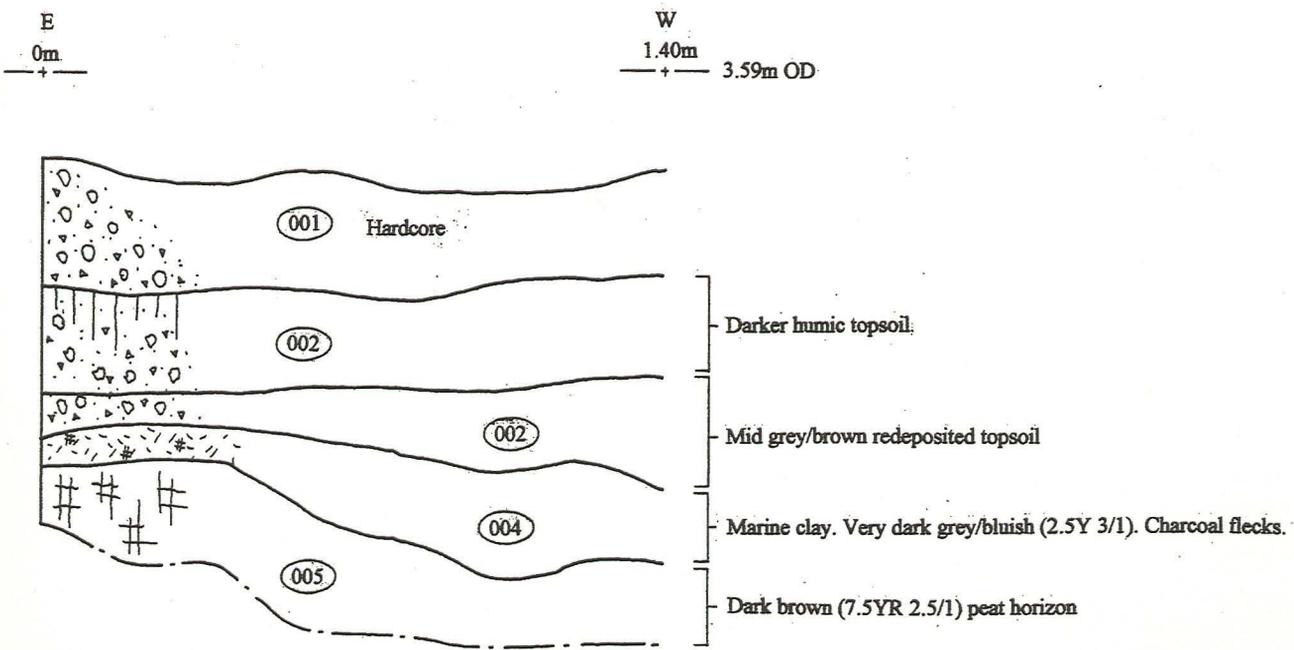


Fig 3. Section 1



Section 3



Section 2



Fig 4.

Appendix A. - Photographs

Plate 1 General view of locality

Plate 2 Work in progress

Plate 3 Section 2

Plate 4 Section 3

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21st December 1999

Dear Mr Bonner

Re: Cluttons Close, Crowland - Watching Brief Photographs

Following your receipt of the final report for the above mentioned project, please find enclosed copies of the relevant photographs.

My apologies for the omission of these in the original report, as well as the delay in forwarding them to you. Unfortunately, due to problems with the films, it is also not possible to include a photograph of section 1.

If I can be of any further assistance then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



David Britchfield
(Archaeological Supervisor)

ALLOC.	CIRC.	INITIALS	DATE
DIRECTOR			
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Plate 1 - General view of locality

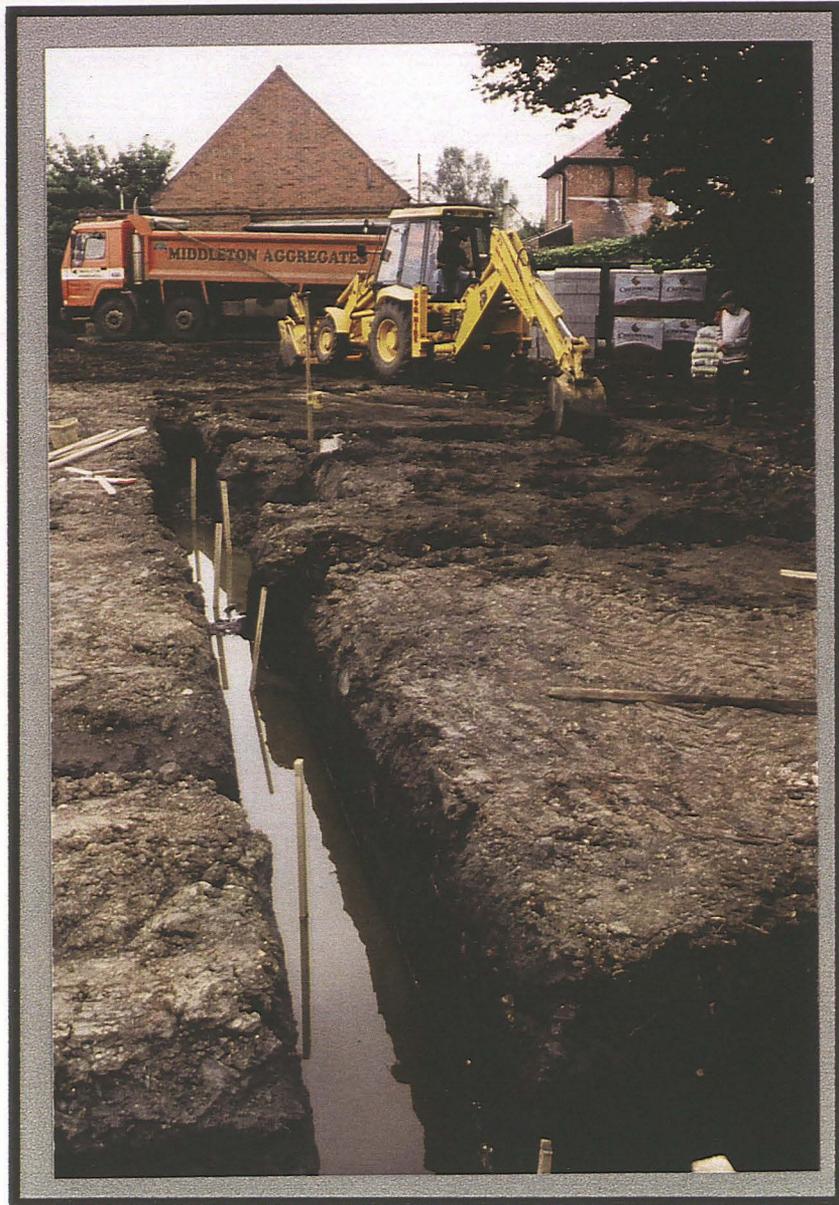


Plate 2 - Work in progress



Plate 3 - Section 2



Plate 4 - Section 3