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**An Archaeological Field  
Evaluation at Gimbro Farm,  
Castle Donington, Leicestershire  
(SK440 256)**

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For

Planning Application No. 970814 &15/PT

**University of Leicester  
Archaeological Services**

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching of land at Gimbro Farm, Castle Donington, was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services in advance of proposed development of land in order to extend airport services within the area. A number of struck flints and sherds of Late Neolithic-Bronze Age pottery were recovered from features in trench 56, field 6. A square pit-like feature in trench 37 field 2, also contained struck flint. A small number of retouched pieces and an end scraper were also recovered from the topsoil in fields 5 and 6. The remains of medieval ridge and furrow field systems were revealed within most of the trenches across the development area.*

## **1. Introduction**

**1.1** Permission has been granted by North West Leics. District Council to construct airport facilities on land known as Gimbro Farm, located to the west of East Midlands Airport, Castle Donington, Leicestershire (Planning Application No. 970814 & 15/ PT) ; centred on National Grid Reference SK 440 256 (figs. 1 and 2).

**1.2** An archaeological evaluation of the development area, by trial trenching, was requested by the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council.

**1.3** This stage of evaluation was commissioned from the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) and was undertaken between the 1/6/98 and 3/9/98. The site was directed by Sophie Clarke.

## **2. Geology**

**2.1** The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 141 indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of Boulder Clay, with underlying sand and gravel. The site lies at a height of c.80-90m O.D, on land mainly sloping down to the west.

## **3. Archaeological and Historical Background**

**3.1** The Leicestershire Museums Sites and Monuments Record suggests two sites of potential archaeological significance, which lie within the development area. An archaeological cropmark, believed to represent an occupation enclosure and trackway of Iron Age or Roman date, has been identified to the south east of the development area (SMR Ref: 42 NW AG).

Documentary evidence exists to suggest the existence of a Neolithic-Bronze Age barrow within the development area of Gimbro Farm (SMR Ref: **42 NW AB**). Sources dated to the 13th century refer to the site as Gyldenbarrow, later known as Gildenborow before it becomes known as Gimbro Farm.

An Archaeological Impact Assessment of the development proposals was completed on behalf of E.M.I.A. (Stanger Science and Environment, 1998) which determined the necessity for an archaeological field evaluation across the development area, in accordance with PPG16, in order to establish the potential for surviving archaeological deposits.

**3.2** Evaluation by geophysical survey of the proposed development area was undertaken in May/June 1998 by ULAS using a Geoscan Research FM18 fluxgate gradiometer and ST1 sample trigger. The survey produced negative results, with no anomalies of potentially archaeological significance being located (Butler, 1998).

#### **4. Aims**

The aims of the trial trenching programme were:

**4.1** To establish the nature, character and extent of any archaeological deposits within the area to be affected by the proposed development.

**4.2** To establish a date range for any archaeological deposits located.

**4.3** To define the state of preservation of these deposits, including the potential for the survival of environmental data.

**4.4** To assess the local, regional and national importance of any deposits.

#### **5. Methods**

**5.1** Within each field system, the trenches were located to compliment the results of the geophysical survey. Where geophysical survey provided negative results, the trenches were located evenly to provide a good sample of the area.

**5.2** The total surface area of the development site measures 64.6 hectares. Originally it was recommended that a 2% sample of areas of archaeological interest as shown by geophysical survey be undertaken. The sample was reduced to 1% for fields 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9 where there were no geophysical anomalies. It was decided that the sample be dropped further to 0.5% for fields 1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11 and 12 due to lack of results from trial trenching and geophysics. The latter was by agreement with the planning archaeologist.

**5.3** The trenches were numbered 1-151, based on the initial ULAS plan (fig. 3). Due to a break in trenching between field 7 and field 1 trench number 139 was

repeated. This error was resolved by renumbering the trenches 139a and 139b respectively.

**5.4** A JCB 3CX fitted with a 1.5m wide ditching bucket was used to remove topsoil and subsoil, where present, in level spits until archaeological remains or the natural substratum was reached. Descriptions of all the machined layers of the trenches were recorded and the spoil was observed for archaeological finds.

**5.5** Trenches were examined by hand cleaning. The levels above ordnance datum of all machined layers were recorded along the lengths of the trenches. All potentially significant archaeological deposits were investigated and recorded.

**5.6** The locations of the machined trenches were recorded using a Topcon GTS-212 Electronic Distance Measurer linked to a Psion hand held data logger.

## 6. Results (figs. 4 - 13)

### 6.1 In total 152

trenches, with a combined area of 4379 square metres (0.44 hectares), were excavated. This was, approximately, an 0.7% sample of the total development area of 64.6 hectares.

### 6.2 Trenches 1-9: Farmyard Area

| Trench Number | Align-ment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of topsoil (mean m) | Depth of subsoil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology (yes/ no) |
|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1             | NE-SW      | 30.5       | 1.5       | 0.40                      | 0.38                      | 0.78                     | no                    |
| 2             | NE-SW      | 21         | 1.5       | -                         | -                         | 1.5                      | no                    |
| 3             | N-S        | 29.8       | 1.5       | 0.13                      | 0.23                      | 0.36                     | no                    |
| 4             | E-W        | 30.7       | 1.5       | 0.16                      | 0.71                      | 0.87                     | no                    |
| 5             | E-W        | 30.6       | 1.5       | 0.17                      | 0.20                      | 0.37                     | no                    |
| 6             | NE-SW      | 24         | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.22                      | 0.47                     | no                    |
| 7             | E-W        | 32.3       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.13                      | 0.38                     | no                    |
| 8             | E-W        | 28.1       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.23                      | 0.48                     | no                    |
| 9             | N-S        | 30.3       | 1.5       | 0.24                      | 0.14                      | 0.38                     | no                    |

**6.2.1** Nine trenches were excavated within the farm yard area.

**6.2.2** In each trench, the topsoil was recorded as a dark, greyish brown, friable, silty clay. Where subsoil was present, it was recorded as a mid yellowish brown, sandy, silty clay. Where reached, the natural geological substratum was recorded as a red boulder clay.

**6.2.3** Each trench showed a high level of modern disturbance and contamination consistent with the recent demolition of the farmyard buildings. Trench 2 revealed a 20th century bottle dump and although it was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.0m, the natural geological substratum was not reached.

**6.2.4** Trenches 3-9 revealed a series of dark yellowish brown silty clay bands, all on a roughly north- south alignment. These silty bands were thought likely to be plough furrows, representing the remainders of the medieval ridge and furrow ploughing system.

**6.2.5** None of the trenches revealed any evidence of archaeological deposits.

### 6.3 Trenches 10-16: Field 8

| Trench Number | Align-ment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of topsoil (mean m) | Depth of subsoil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology (yes/ no) |
|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 10            | N-S        | 3.9        | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 1.20                      | 1.50                     | no                    |
| 11            | N-S        | 2.2        | 1.5       | 0.10                      | 0.90                      | 1.0                      | no                    |
| 12            | N-S        | 3.0        | 1.5       | 0.20                      | 0.80                      | 1.0                      | no                    |
| 13            | E-W        | 2.5        | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 0.80                      | 1.10                     | no                    |
| 14            | E-W        | 6.0        | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 1.0                       | 1.30                     | no                    |
| 15            | N-S        | 3.4        | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 0.90                      | 1.20                     | no                    |
| 16            | E-W        | 3.0        | 1.5       | 0.20                      | 1.0                       | 1.20                     | no                    |

**6.3.1** Seven test slots were excavated within field 8, in order to establish the depth of the natural geological substratum. A 1% sample of the area was not attempted due to the substantial levels of build up that exist across the field.

**6.3.2** In each trench the topsoil was recorded as a dark greyish brown silty clay. Each section showed the topsoil to overlie a substantial layer of redeposited red clay, found to contain flecks of charcoal and occasional brick fragments. The natural geological substratum was reached at depths varying from 1.0- 1.5m and it was noted that, after excavation, each trench rapidly became waterlogged to within 0.30m of the topsoil.

**6.3.3** None of the trenches revealed any evidence of archaeological deposits.

### 6.4 Trenches 17-30: Field 9

| Trench Number | Align-ment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of topsoil (mean m) | Depth of subsoil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology (yes/ no) |
|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 17            | NW-SE      | 32         | 1.5       | 0.31                      | -                         | 0.31                     | no                    |
| 18            | N-S        | 29.3       | 1.5       | 0.30                      | -                         | 0.30                     | no                    |
| 19            | E-W        | 30.6       | 1.5       | 0.34                      | 0.36                      | 0.70                     | no                    |
| 20            | E-W        | 29.4       | 1.5       | 0.31                      | 0.16                      | 0.47                     | yes                   |
| 21            | E-W        | 28.5       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.27                      | 0.52                     | no                    |
| 22            | N-S        | 29         | 1.5       | 0.28                      | 0.26                      | 0.54                     | no                    |
| 23            | N-S        | 29.3       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.13                      | 0.38                     | no                    |
| 24            | NW-SE      | 26.7       | 1.5       | 0.31                      | 0.20                      | 0.51                     | no                    |
| 25            | NW-SE      | 29.0       | 1.5       | 0.28                      | 0.12                      | 0.40                     | no                    |
| 26            | E-W        | 32.0       | 1.5       | 0.29                      | -                         | 0.29                     | no                    |
| 27            | N-S        | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.26                      | 0.16                      | 0.42                     | no                    |
| 28            | N-S        | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.19                      | 0.44                     | no                    |
| 29            | E-W        | 29.0       | 1.5       | 0.26                      | 0.22                      | 0.48                     | no                    |
| 30            | NE-SW      | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.10                      | 0.35                     | no                    |

**6.4.1** In field 9, 14 trenches were excavated, representing a 1% sample of the area.

**6.4.2** In each trench, the topsoil was recorded as a dark, greyish brown, friable, silty clay. Where subsoil was present, it was recorded as a mid yellowish brown, sandy, silty clay. The natural geological substratum was recorded as a red boulder clay.

**6.4.3** Many of the trenches contained dark yellowish brown silty clay bands, all on a roughly north- south alignment. These silty bands were thought likely to be plough furrows, representing the remainders of the medieval ridge and furrow ploughing system.

**6.4.4** Of the 14 trenches excavated, only 20 indicated the presence of deposits of potentially archaeological significance within the area. This trench plan is recorded in archive only.

| Trench No. | Feature type | Alignment | Context Nos. | Find |
|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|------|
| 20         | Post hole    | -         | (2) [3]      | no   |

Examination of the base of the trench revealed a sub-circular, post-hole shaped feature [3], cut into the natural geological substratum (fig.13). The fill (2) consisted of a dark greyish brown silty clay, with reddish brown mottles, but no finds were recovered with which to date the feature.

## 6.5 Trenches 31-37: Field 2

| Trench Number | Align-ment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of topsoil (mean m) | Depth of subsoil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology (yes/ no) |
|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 31            | E-W        | 31.0       | 1.5       | 0.26                      | -                         | 0.26                     | no                    |
| 32            | E-W        | 29.8       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | -                         | 0.25                     | no                    |
| 33            | E-W        | 29.1       | 1.5       | 0.28                      | -                         | 0.28                     | no                    |
| 34            | E-W        | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.26                      | -                         | 0.26                     | no                    |
| 35            | E-W        | 29.0       | 1.5       | 0.22                      | -                         | 0.22                     | no                    |
| 36            | E-W        | 29.9       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | -                         | 0.25                     | no                    |
| 37            | E-W        | 28.7       | 1.5       | 0.27                      | -                         | 0.27                     | yes                   |

**6.5.1** Seven trenches were excavated within Field 2, representing a 1% sample of the area.

**6.5.2** In each trench the topsoil was recorded as a dark greyish brown silty clay and was found to directly overlie the natural geological substratum of red boulder clay, with no subsoil interface apparent in the sections.

**6.5.3** Many of the trenches contained dark yellowish brown silty clay bands, all on a roughly north- south alignment. These silty bands were thought likely to be

plough furrows, representing the remainders of the medieval ridge and furrow ploughing system.

**6.5.4** Of the seven trenches excavated in field 2, only trench 37 revealed evidence for the presence of archaeological deposits within the area. This trench plan is recorded in the archive only.

| Trench No. | Feature Type | Alignment | Context Nos. | Finds |
|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-------|
| 37         | Pit          | -         | (5) [6]      | flint |

Examination of the base of the trench revealed an area of pale yellowish brown, sandy silty clay (5), truncated to the north by the trench baulk (fig.13). The trench was further extended to the north, to reveal a square-shaped pit-like feature cut into the red clay natural. Excavation of the feature proved the pit to be square-shaped in plan, with 45 degree sloping sides and a rounded bottom [6]. The pit fill was found to contain frequent flecks of charcoal and produced two flint flakes.

## 6.6 Trenches 38- 56: Field 6

| Trench Number | Align-ment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of topsoil (mean m) | Depth of subsoil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology (yes/ no) |
|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 38            | N-S        | 29.9       | 1.5       | 0.24                      | -                         | 0.24                     | no                    |
| 39            | N-S        | 29.4       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | -                         | 0.25                     | no                    |
| 40            | N-S        | 29.9       | 1.5       | 0.21                      | -                         | 0.21                     | no                    |
| 41            | N-S        | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | -                         | 0.25                     | no                    |
| 42            | N-S        | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.22                      | -                         | 0.22                     | no                    |
| 43            | N-S        | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | -                         | 0.25                     | no                    |
| 44            | N-S        | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.23                      | -                         | 0.23                     | no                    |
| 45            | N-S        | 31.0       | 1.5       | 0.23                      | -                         | 0.23                     | no                    |
| 46            | N-S        | 29.7       | 1.5       | 0.22                      | -                         | 0.22                     | no                    |
| 47            | N-S        | 29.5       | 1.5       | 0.21                      | -                         | 0.21                     | no                    |
| 48            | N-S        | 29.8       | 1.5       | 0.23                      | -                         | 0.23                     | no                    |
| 49            | N-S        | 29.3       | 1.5       | 0.20                      | -                         | 0.20                     | no                    |
| 50            | N-S        | 30.6       | 1.5       | 0.22                      | -                         | 0.22                     | no                    |
| 51            | N-S        | 30.6       | 1.5       | 0.23                      | -                         | 0.23                     | no                    |
| 52            | N-S        | 29.9       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | -                         | 0.25                     | no                    |
| 53            | N-S        | 27.0       | 1.5       | 0.23                      | -                         | 0.23                     | no                    |
| 54            | N-S        | 28.3       | 1.5       | 0.21                      | 0.21                      | 0.42                     | no                    |
| 55            | N-S        | 31.0       | 1.5       | 0.22                      | -                         | 0.22                     | yes                   |
| 56            | N-S        | 29.9       | 1.5       | 0.21                      | -                         | 0.21                     | yes                   |

**6.6.1** A series of 10 meter wide transects were mown through the winter barley crop to facilitate geophysical and trial trenching, this represented 22% of the total field area.

**6.6.2** Nineteen trenches were excavated in field 6, representing a 1% sample of the area.

**6.6.3** In each trench the topsoil was recorded as a dark greyish brown silty clay and was found to directly overlie the natural geological substratum of red boulder clay, with no subsoil interface apparent in the sections.

**6.6.4** Many of the trenches contained dark yellowish brown silty clay bands, all on an approximate NE-SW alignment. These silty bands were thought likely to be plough furrows, representing the remainders of the medieval ridge and furrow ploughing system.

**6.6.5** Trial trenching in field 6 produced deposits of archaeological origin in trenches 55 and 56 (Figs. 4 and 5)

| Trench No. | Feature Type    | Alignment | Context Nos. | Finds |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|-------|
| 55         | Linear gully    | NW-SE     | (9) [10]     | no    |
|            | Curving gully   | E-W       | (11) [12]    | no    |
|            | Linear gully    | NW-SE     | (13) [14]    | no    |
|            | Curvilinear (?) | NW-SE     | (15) [16]    | no    |
|            | Ditch           |           |              |       |

Four linear features of possible archaeological origin were located within trench 55 (fig.6). All features were subject to partial excavation, displaying a certain similarity in the nature of their fills. All were described as a mid-reddish brown friable silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks.

Feature [10] was a convincing gully with steep edges and a rounded bottom. Gullies [12] and [14] were similar to [10] but were much shallower in depth. Ditch [16] was flat bottomed and had very steep almost straight sides. None of these features yielded finds of any sort.

| Trench No. | Feature Type | Alignment | Context Nos. | Finds          |
|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|
| 56         | Pit          | -         | (17) [18]    | flint          |
|            | Ditch        | E-W       | (20) [21]    | flint/ pottery |
|            | Ditch        | NW-SE     | (22) [23]    | no             |
|            | Post hole    | -         | (24) [25]    | no             |
|            | Post hole    | -         | (26) [27]    | no             |
|            | Gully        | NNW-SSE   | (28) [29]    | flint          |
|            | Gully        | E-W       | (30) [31]    | no             |

Trench 56 produced seven features of possible archaeological origin (fig.7). All features were subject to partial excavation and displayed similar characteristics in the leached and compact nature of their fills. The fills were generally a mid-reddish brown the exception being ditch (22) [23] which was recorded as a pale pinkish brown; all were described as friable sandy silty clays.

Pit [18] is a steep sided pit with a rounded base, it contained no pot however did produce two flint flakes. Gully [29] was shallow and had steep sides and an undulating base, it also contained a flint flake. Ditch [21] had one almost straight side and one edge which was at an approximate 45 degree angle; one piece of flint and one piece of Prehistoric pot was recovered from here.

## 6.7 Trenches 57-70: Field 5

| Trench Number | Alignment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of topsoil (mean m) | Depth of subsoil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology (yes/ no) |
|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 57            | E-W       | 29.4       | 1.5       | 0.20                      | 0.18                      | 0.38                     | no                    |
| 58            | E-W       | 29.2       | 1.5       | 0.24                      | 0.17                      | 0.41                     | no                    |
| 59            | E-W       | 30.6       | 1.5       | 0.18                      | 0.31                      | 0.49                     | no                    |
| 60            | E-W       | 28.8       | 1.5       | 0.18                      | 0.13                      | 0.31                     | no                    |
| 61            | E-W       | 29.7       | 1.5       | 0.18                      | 0.10                      | 0.28                     | no                    |
| 62            | E-W       | 29.8       | 1.5       | 0.21                      | -                         | 0.21                     | yes                   |
| 63            | E-W       | 29.1       | 1.5       | 0.19                      | 0.17                      | 0.36                     | no                    |
| 64            | E-W       | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.25                      | -                         | 0.25                     | yes                   |
| 65            | E-W       | 30.4       | 1.5       | 0.20                      | 0.15                      | 0.35                     | no                    |
| 66            | E-W       | 30.4       | 1.5       | 0.18                      | 0.14                      | 0.32                     | no                    |
| 67            | E-W       | 30.4       | 1.5       | 0.18                      | 0.17                      | 0.35                     | no                    |
| 68            | E-W       | 30.0       | 1.5       | 0.18                      | 0.17                      | 0.35                     | no                    |
| 69            | E-W       | 23.0       | 1.5       | 0.26                      | 0.62                      | 0.88                     | no                    |
| 70            | E-W       | 28.0       | 1.5       | 0.27                      | 0.61                      | 0.88                     | no                    |

**6.7.1** A series of 10 meter wide transects were mown in order to facilitate geophysical survey and trial trenching, this amounted to 23% of the total field area.

**6.7.2** Twenty one trenches were excavated within Field 5, representing a 1% sample of the area. Trench location was determined according to linear areas which had been stripped of the growing crop, in anticipation of the trenching groundworks.

**6.7.3** In each trench the topsoil was recorded as a dark greyish brown silty clay. Subsoil, where present was a mid brown silty clay.

**6.7.4** Many of the trenches revealed bands of dark yellowish brown silty clay, running on a roughly north-south alignment. These bands were the remainders of plough furrows, indicative of the ridge and furrow ploughing system that was evident elsewhere across the site.

**6.7.5** Trenches 62 and 64 contained deposits of possible archaeological origin. The plan of trench 62 is contained in the archive only.

| Trench No. | Feature Type | Alignment | Context Nos.   | Finds |
|------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|-------|
| 62         | Pit          | -         | (39) (40) [41] | no    |

One sub-circular feature [41] was located in trench 62 (fig.13). A half-section excavation of the feature revealed a well defined post pit, with evidence of a

post pipe (39), contained within a fill of orangey brown silty clay (40). No finds were recovered with which to date the feature.

| Trench No. | Feature Type | Alignment | Context Nos.   | Finds |
|------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|-------|
| 64         | Pit          | -         | (32) (33) [34] | no    |
|            | Gully        | N-S       | (35) [36]      | no    |
|            | Gully        | N-S       | (37) [38]      | no    |

Three features of possible archaeological origin were seen in trench 64 (figs. 8 and 9). All features were subject to partial excavation, although no finds were obtained with which they could be dated. Upon excavation pit [34] proved to be very amorphous, with a highly irregular interface between its fill and the natural substratum. It was thought possible that this feature may have been naturally formed, perhaps through the root action of a tree, rather than hand-dug.

#### 6.8. Trenches 71-90: Field 4

| Trench Number | Alignment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of top-soil (mean m) | Depth of sub-soil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology yes/no |
|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 71            | E-W       | 17         | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 72            | E-W       | 17         | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 73            | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 74            | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.20                     | no                 |
| 75            | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 76            | E-W       | 16         | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 77            | E-W       | 17         | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 78            | E-W       | 17.50      | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 79            | E-W       | 12.50      | 1.5       | 0.25                       | 0.05                       | 0.30                     | yes                |
| 80            | E-W       | 16.50      | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.05                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 81            | E-W       | 16.50      | 1.5       | 0.35                       | 0.20                       | 0.65                     | no                 |
| 82            | E-W       | 14         | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 83            | E-W       | 17.20      | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.10                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 84            | E-W       | 13.50      | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.27                       | 0.30                     | no                 |
| 85            | E-W       | 14.10      | 1.5       | 0.30                       | -----                      | 0.30                     | no                 |
| 86            | E-W       | 14.60      | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.07                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 87            | E-W       | 15.50      | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.07                       | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 88            | E-W       | 14.20      | 1.5       | 0.30                       | 0.15                       | 0.54                     | no                 |
| 89            | E-W       | 15.30      | 1.5       | 0.25                       | 0.10                       | 0.35                     | no                 |
| 90            | E-W       | 16         | 1.5       | 0.27                       | -----                      | 0.30                     | no                 |

**6.8.1** A series of 10 meter wide transects were mown through the rape crop to facilitate geophysical survey and trial trenching, this amounted to 21% of the whole field.

**6.8.2** Twenty trenches were excavated within Field 4, representing a 0.5% sample of the area. Trench location was determined according to linear areas that had been stripped of the growing crop, in anticipation of the trenching groundwork's.

**6.8.3** In each trench the topsoil was recorded as a mid greyish brown silty sandy clay. Subsoil, where present was a light yellowish brown sandy silty clay.

**6.8.4** Plough furrows aligned N-S were evident in many of the trenches as dark yellowish brown silty clay bands.

**6.8.5** Trench 79 contained deposits of possible archaeological origin (fig.10).

| Trench No. | Feature type | Alignment | Context No.'s | Findings |
|------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| 79         | post-hole    | -----     | (221)         | none     |
|            | gully        | NW-SE     | (222)         | none     |

Both the post-hole and gully were unexcavated, and failed to yield any finds. There is some doubt as to the archaeological nature of the gully, it may simply be a band of natural sand. (fig.12)

## 6.9 Trenches 91-106: Field 10

| Trench Number | Alignment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of topsoil (mean m) | Depth of subsoil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology yes/no |
|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 91            | E-W       | 15         | 1.70      | 0.30                      | 1.00                      | 1.00                     | no                 |
| 92            | E-W       | 15         | 1.70      | 0.30                      | 0.50                      | 0.70                     | no                 |
| 93            | E-W       | 15         | 1.70      | 0.27                      | -----                     | 0.50                     | no                 |
| 94            | E-W       | 15         | 1.70      | 0.37                      | -----                     | 0.50                     | no                 |
| 95            | E-W       | 30         | 1.70      | 0.25                      | 0.20                      | 0.45                     | yes                |
| 96            | E-W       | 30         | 1.70      | 0.28                      | -----                     | 0.37                     | yes                |
| 97            | E-W       | 15         | 1.70      | 0.36                      | 0.06                      | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 98            | E-W       | 17.50      | 1.70      | 0.25                      | 0.05                      | 0.37                     | no                 |
| 99            | E-W       | 15         | 1.70      | 0.28                      | 0.10                      | 0.33                     | no                 |
| 100           | E-W       | 14.5       | 1.70      | 0.37                      | 0.12                      | 0.50                     | no                 |
| 101           | E-W       | 16         | 1.70      | 0.33                      | 0.10                      | 0.50                     | no                 |
| 102           | E-W       | 14.5       | 1.70      | 0.29                      | 0.10                      | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 103           | E-W       | 14         | 1.70      | 0.28                      | 0.10                      | 0.40                     | no                 |
| 104           | E-W       | 14         | 1.70      | 0.35                      | 0.72                      | 1.05                     | no                 |
| 105           | E-W       | 16.5       | 1.70      | 0.34                      | -----                     | 0.37                     | no                 |
| 106           | E-W       | 15         | 1.70      | 0.30                      | 0.15                      | 0.65                     | no                 |

**6.9.1** Sixteen trenches were excavated representing a 0.5% sample of field 10.

**6.9.2** In each trench the topsoil was recorded as a mid-dark brown clayey silt and where present the subsoil tended to be a mid-dark orangey brown silty sandy clay. The natural geological stratum was red marl clay. Furrows were also present running in a N.-S. direction.

**6.9.3** Of the sixteen trenches excavated in field 10 only trenches 95 (fig.11) and 96 contained archaeological deposits. The plan of trench 96 is recorded only in the archive.

| Trench No. | Feature Type | Alignment | Context No.'s | Finds             |
|------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|-------------------|
| 95         | gully        | N-S       | (50) [51]     | Late Iron Age pot |
|            | gully        | N-S       | (52) [53]     | -----             |
|            | posthole     | --        | (54) [55]     | -----             |
|            | pit          | --        | (56) [57]     | -----             |

Upon excavation all the features with the exception of gully [53] had well defined edges and profiles (fig. 12). Gully [53] had irregular base and sides and had a clean silty sand fill, it is possible then that this is a naturally formed feature. The only piece of pot from this trench came from the terminal end of gully [51]. This has been dated to the Late Iron Age.

| Trench No. | Feature Type                  | Alignment | Context No.'s | Finds |
|------------|-------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-------|
| 96         | continuation of gully in T.95 | N-S       | (52) [53]     | ----- |

This feature is a continuation of the gully recorded in trench 95 (fig.11). When excavated it seemed likely that it was a natural sandy band.

### 6.10 Trenches 107-118: Field 3

| Trench No. | Alignment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of Topsoil (mean m) | Depth of Subsoil (mean m) | Depth of Trench (mean m) | Archaeology yes/no |
|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 107        | E-W       | 14         | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 0.44                      | 0.42                     | no                 |
| 108        | E-W       | 14         | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 0.48                      | 0.46                     | no                 |
| 109        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.28                      | 0.33                      | 0.34                     | no                 |
| 110        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.28                      | 0.34                      | 0.35                     | no                 |
| 111        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 0.34                      | 0.36                     | no                 |
| 112        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.29                      | 0.48                      | 0.60                     | no                 |
| 113        | E-W       | 13         | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.57                      | 0.61                     | no                 |
| 114        | E-W       | 13.5       | 1.5       | 0.27                      | 0.75                      | 0.76                     | no                 |
| 115        | E-W       | 7          | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 1.30                      | 1.30                     | no                 |
| 116        | E-W       | 3          | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 1.5                       | 1.50                     | no                 |
| 117        | E-W       | 9          | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 0.79                      | 1.32                     | no                 |
| 118        | E-W       | 4.5        | 1.5       | 0.26                      | 1.29                      | 1.29                     | no                 |

**6.10.1** Twelve trenches were excavated in field 3, this represented a 0.5% sample of the area.

**6.10.2** In each of the trenches the topsoil was recorded as a mid-greyish brown clayey silt. The subsoil was described as being a mid-orangey brown clayey silt. The

subsoil overlay the natural geological stratum of Mercia mudstone (formally Keuper marl).

**6.10.3** All the trenches contained evidence of medieval ridge and furrow which appeared as bands of dark yellowish brown silty clay; these were generally orientated in a NW-SE direction.

**6.10.3** None of the trenches excavated revealed any evidence of archaeological activity.

### 6.11 Trenches 119-126: Field 11

| Trench No. | Alignment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of Topsoil (mean m) | Depth of Subsoil (mean m) | Depth of Trench (mean m) | Archaeology yes/no |
|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 119        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.32                      | 0.75                      | 1.10                     | no                 |
| 120        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.37                      | 0.29                      | 0.65                     | no                 |
| 121        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.33                      | 0.55                      | 0.95                     | no                 |
| 122        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.32                      | 0.61                      | 0.97                     | no                 |
| 123        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.30                      | 0.49                      | 0.85                     | no                 |
| 124        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.33                      | 0.41                      | 0.77                     | no                 |
| 125        | N-S       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.33                      | 0.50                      | 0.84                     | no                 |
| 126        | N-S       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.34                      | 0.56                      | 0.88                     | no                 |

**6.11.1** Eight trenches in all were excavated in field 11, this represents a 0.5% sample of the whole field.

**6.11.2** The topsoil for all the trenches was recorded as a dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt. In trenches 119-124 the subsoil was a mid-reddish brown sandy clay whereas in trenches 125 and 126 the subsoil was recorded as a mid-yellowish brown sandy clay. In most trenches there was a thick covering of colluvium which made the red marl natural clay appear very mixed and dirty.

**6.11.3** None of the trenches revealed any evidence of archaeological deposits.

## 6.12 Trenches 127-140: Field 7

| Trench No. | Alignment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of Topsoil (mean m) | Depth of Subsoil (mean m) | Depth of Trench (mean m) | Archaeology yes/no |
|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 127        | N-S       | 13         | 1.5       | 0.21                      | 0.35                      | 0.58                     | no                 |
| 128        | N-S       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.23                      | --                        | 0.24                     | yes                |
| 129        | N-S       | 16         | 1.5       | 0.27                      | 0.38                      | 0.65                     | no                 |
| 130        | E-W       | 6          | 1.5       | 0.27                      | 0.47                      | 0.50                     | no                 |
| 131        | E-W       | 11         | 1.5       | 0.26                      | --                        | 0.24                     | no                 |
| 132        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.26                      | 0.39                      | 0.63                     | no                 |
| 133        | E-W       | 16         | 1.5       | 0.25                      | --                        | 0.25                     | no                 |
| 134        | NW-SE     | 15         | 1.5       | 0.29                      | --                        | 0.30                     | no                 |
| 135        | E-W       | 16         | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.36                      | 0.63                     | no                 |
| 136        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.25                      | 0.33                      | 0.44                     | no                 |
| 137        | E-W       | 18         | 1.5       | 0.31                      | 0.14                      | 0.42                     | no                 |
| 138        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.29                      | 0.47                      | 0.77                     | no                 |
| 139a       | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.27                      | 0.34                      | 0.65                     | no                 |

**6.12.1** thirteen trenches were excavated in field 7, this represents a 0.5% sample of this field.

**6.12.2** In each trench the topsoil was recorded as a mid-grey brown sandy silt. Subsoil was present in all but trench 128 and was described as a mid-orangey brown clayey silt throughout.

**6.12.3** In some of the trenches medieval furrows were present; the orientation of these furrows ranged from NE-SW to E-W and WNW-ESE suggesting the utilisation of different field systems.

**6.12.4** Of the thirteen trenches only trench 128 had evidence for any archaeological activity. The plan of this trench is recorded in the archive.

| Trench No. | Feature Type | Alignment | Context No.'s | Finds |
|------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|-------|
| 128        | Posthole     | --        | (58) [59]     | None  |
|            | Posthole     | --        | (60) [61]     | None  |

**6.12.5** Both these features were dug in extremely dry conditions with the result they do not have any great definition. There was a certain doubt as to their validity as postholes and may simply be undulations in the natural. Context [59] was 0.04m deep and [61] was 0.10m deep, no finds were recovered from both (fig.13).

### 6.13 Trenches 139-147: Field 1

| Trench No. | Alignment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of topsoil (mean m) | Depth of subsoil (mean m) | Depth of trench (mean m) | Archaeology yes/no |
|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 139b       | E-W       | 17         | 1.5       | 0.30                      | -----                     | 0.30                     | no                 |
| 140        | E-W       | 16.30      | 1.5       | 0.25                      | -----                     | 0.25                     | no                 |
| 141        | E-W       | 15         | 1.5       | 0.30                      | -----                     | 0.30                     | no                 |
| 142        | E-W       | 16.70      | 1.5       | 0.30                      | -----                     | 0.30                     | no                 |
| 143        | E-W       | 16.60      | 1.5       | 0.30                      | -----                     | 0.30                     | no                 |
| 144        | E-W       | 17.50      | 1.5       | 0.30                      | -----                     | 0.30                     | no                 |
| 145        | E-W       | 19         | 1.5       | 0.31                      | 0.19                      | 0.53                     | no                 |
| 146        | NW-SE     | 15         | 2         | 0.28                      | 0.61                      | 0.85                     | no                 |
| 147        | E-W       | 15         | 2         | 0.28                      | -----                     | 0.30                     | no                 |

6.13.1 In total nine trenches were excavated in field one, this represents a 0.5% sample of this area.

6.13.2 In trenches 139b-144 the topsoil was described as a dark greyish brown sandy clay with occasional pebbles whereas in 145 and 146 the topsoil was a dark brown clayey silt with frequent pebbles. Subsoil was also present in trenches 145 and 146 this was described as an orangey brown silty clay with frequent pebbles and charcoal flecks. The topsoil and subsoil overlay the geological strata of Mercia mudstone.

6.13.3 Furrows were present in all the trenches revealing themselves as dark yellowish brown silty clay bands. These were aligned in a N-S direction.

6.13.4 None of the trenches revealed any evidence of archaeological activity.

### 6.14 Trenches 148-151: Field 12

| Trench No. | Alignment | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth of Topsoil (mean m) | Depth of Subsoil (mean m) | Depth of Trench (mean m) | Archaeology yes/no? |
|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 148        | E-W       | 30         | 15        | 0.25                      | 0.32                      | 0.54                     | no                  |
| 149        | E-W       | 30         | 15        | 0.27                      | 0.41                      | 0.59                     | no                  |
| 150        | E-W       | 30         | 15        | 0.26                      | 0.48                      | 0.72                     | no                  |
| 151        | E-W       | 30         | 15        | 0.27                      | 0.46                      | 0.77                     | no                  |

6.14.1 Four trenches in total were excavated in field 12, this represents a 0.5% sample of the area.

**6.14.2** In all the trenches the topsoil was recorded as a mid-greyish brown sandy silt. The subsoil was described as light yellowish brown sandy silt except in trench 148 where it was described as light orangey brown grey clayey sand. The natural geology was described as coarse sand and gravels.

**6.14.3** In each trench furrows were present. These revealed themselves as dark yellowish brown silty clay bands and were oriented E.-W.

**6.14.4** None of the trenches revealed any evidence of archaeological deposits.

## 7 The Finds

### 7.1 Table of pottery finds.

| Field | Trench | Context              | Fabric      | Ware        | Sherd No. | Weight (g) | Comments/Date                    |
|-------|--------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|------------|----------------------------------|
| 6     | 56     | (20) [21]<br>(ditch) | Prehistoric | Prehistoric | 22        | 35         | Late Neolithic, Early Bronze Age |
| 6     | 56     | (19)<br>(Layer)      | Medieval    | Sandy       | 2         | 10         | 13th century                     |
| 10    | 95     | (50) [51]<br>(gully) | Prehistoric | Prehistoric | 1         | 2          | Late Iron Age                    |

**7.1.1** Context (20) in trench 56 contained 22 sherds of prehistoric pottery, dating to the Late Neolithic - Early Bronze Age. Each sherd displayed similar characteristics in terms of fabric type. There was one rim sherd which had indications of possible internally impressed, cord decoration. One small sherd of Iron Age pot was found in gully [51].

#### 7.1.2

Context (19) was a layer that appeared in Section 2.06 of trench 56. The layer seals ditch (20) [21], and is probably the remains of a medieval plough furrow.

### 7.2: Table of flint finds

| Field         | Trench/Area | Context     | Number of flints | Comments/Date   |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|---|
| Farmyard Area | 7           | subsoil u/s | 3                | Three broken flakes                                       |
| 2             | 37          | (5) [6]     | 2                | Two flint flakes recovered from fill of pit-like feature  |
| 6             | 56          | (17) [18]   | 2                | Two flint flakes recovered from fill of pit-like feature  |
| 6             | 56          | (20) [21]   | 2                | Two broken flakes   |
| 6             | 56          | (28) [29]   | 1                | Broken flake, corticated. From fill of feature.           |
| 6             | 56          | u/s         | 1                | Flint flake showing retouch                               |
| 5             | 62          | u/s         | 1                | Broken flake; natural piece with removals (plough damage) |



**8.6** It is therefore recommended that a second stage of archaeological fieldwork be undertaken, in order to establish the full extent and nature of the activity present in this south-east corner of field 6 and the eastern corner of field 10. This fieldwork should take the form of further trenching or, preferably, a total topsoil strip of an area to be designated.

## **9 The Site Archive**

The site archive will be stored with LMARS; Accession No. XA53. 1998

152 trench record sheets

57 context sheets

Site indices

Colour slide films and monochrome films

EDM survey files and plots

Finds: 2 sherds of medieval pottery

22 sherds of Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age pottery

1 sherd of Late Iron Age pottery

15 flints

## **10 Acknowledgements**

The archaeological evaluation was carried out by Martin Shore, Sophie Clarke and Michael Derrick with the assistance of Jon Coward, and Tony Gnanaratnam.

The medieval pottery was analysed by Debbie Sawday. The prehistoric pottery was analysed by Patrick Marsden. The flint was analysed by Lynden Cooper. The project manager was Richard Buckley.

Michael Derrick and Sophie Clarke  
University of Leicester Archaeological Services

## **11 References**

Butler A. 1998 A Geophysical Survey at Gimbro Farm Castle Donington, Leicestershire. (SK47 29 (area)) ULAS Report Number: 98/120

Stanger Science and Environment, 1998 Environmental Assessment

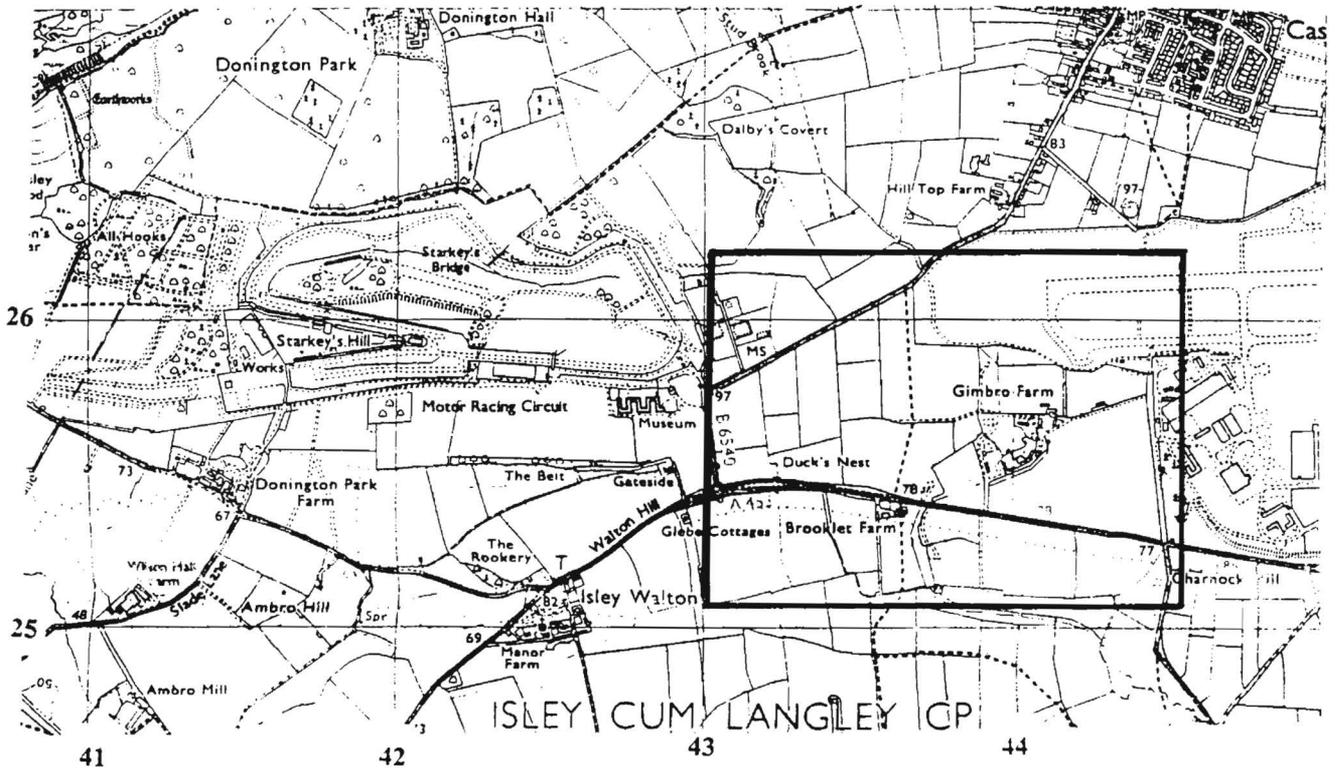


Figure 1 Location of Gimbro Farm (SK440256). Scale 1: 25000

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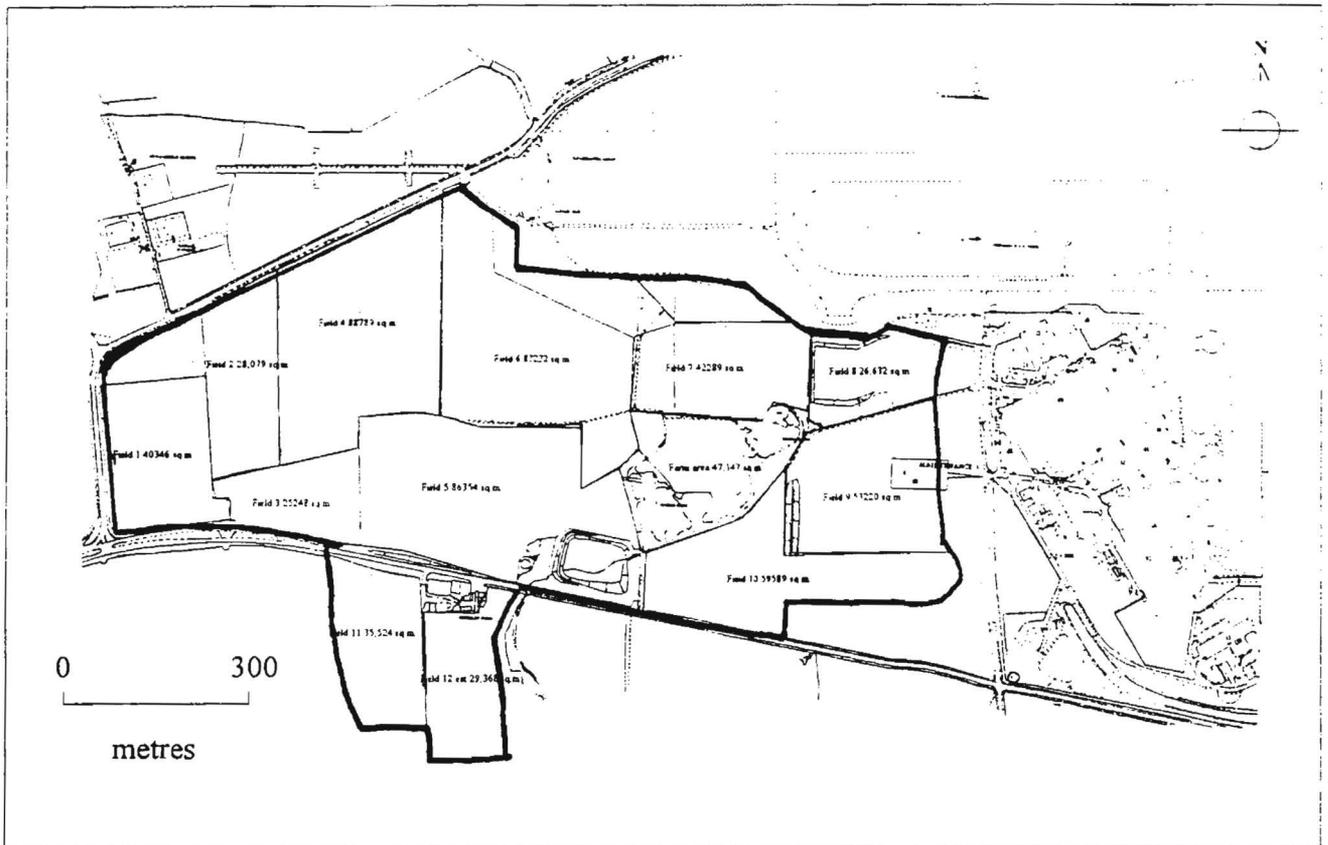


Figure 2 Location of the development site. From site survey.

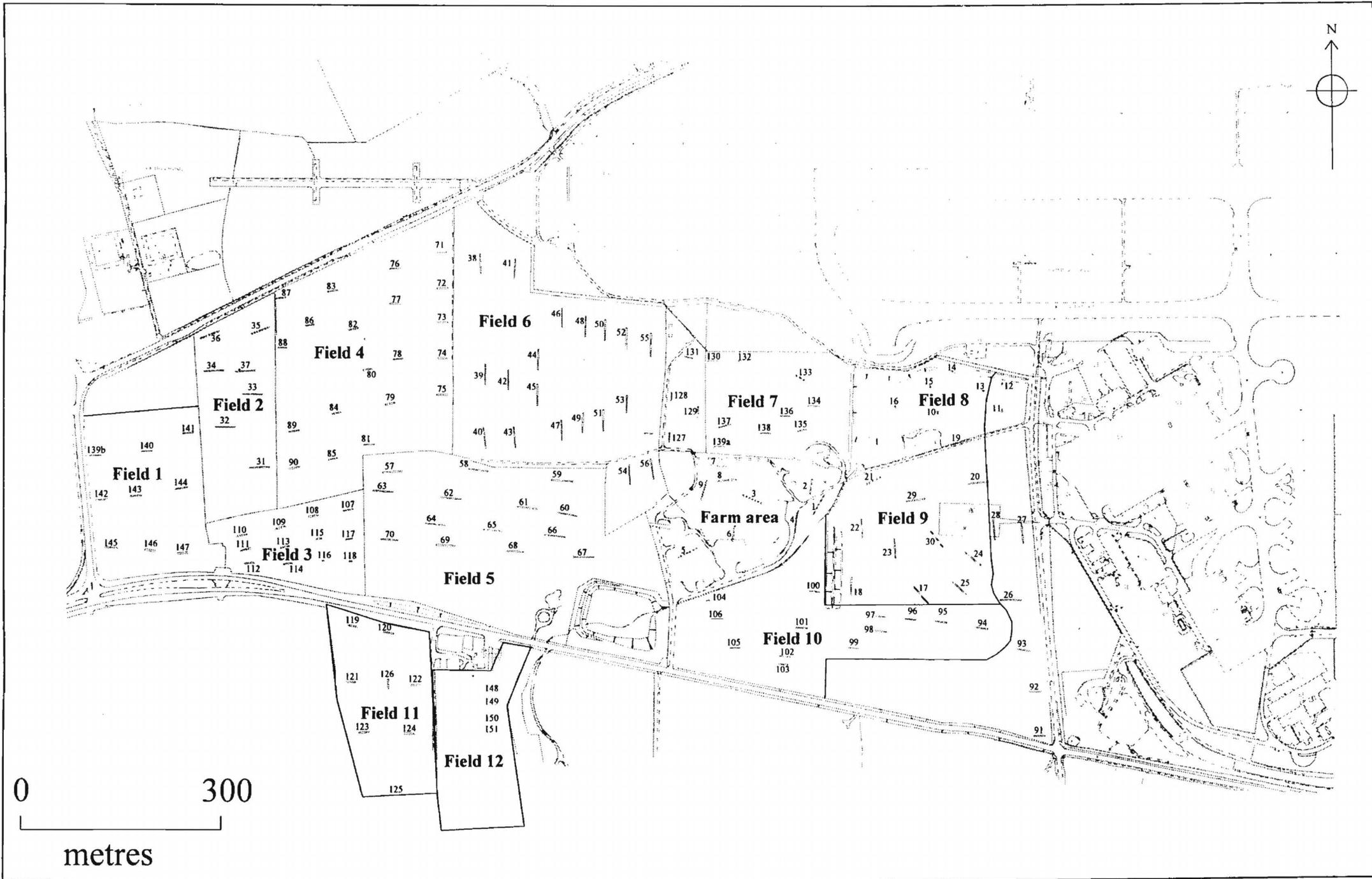


Figure 3: Location plan of trenches 1 - 151. (Baseplan supplied by East Midlands Airport)

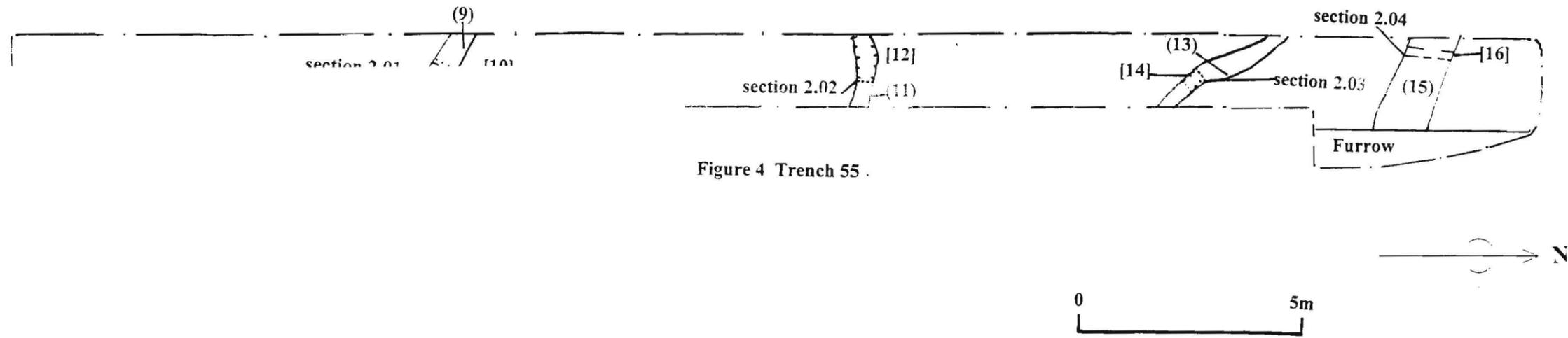


Figure 4 Trench 55 .

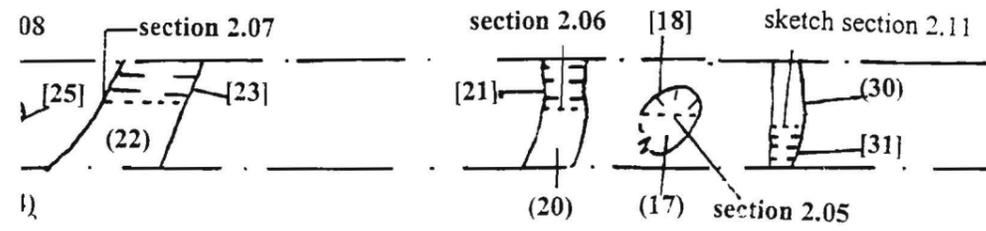


Figure 5 Trench 56

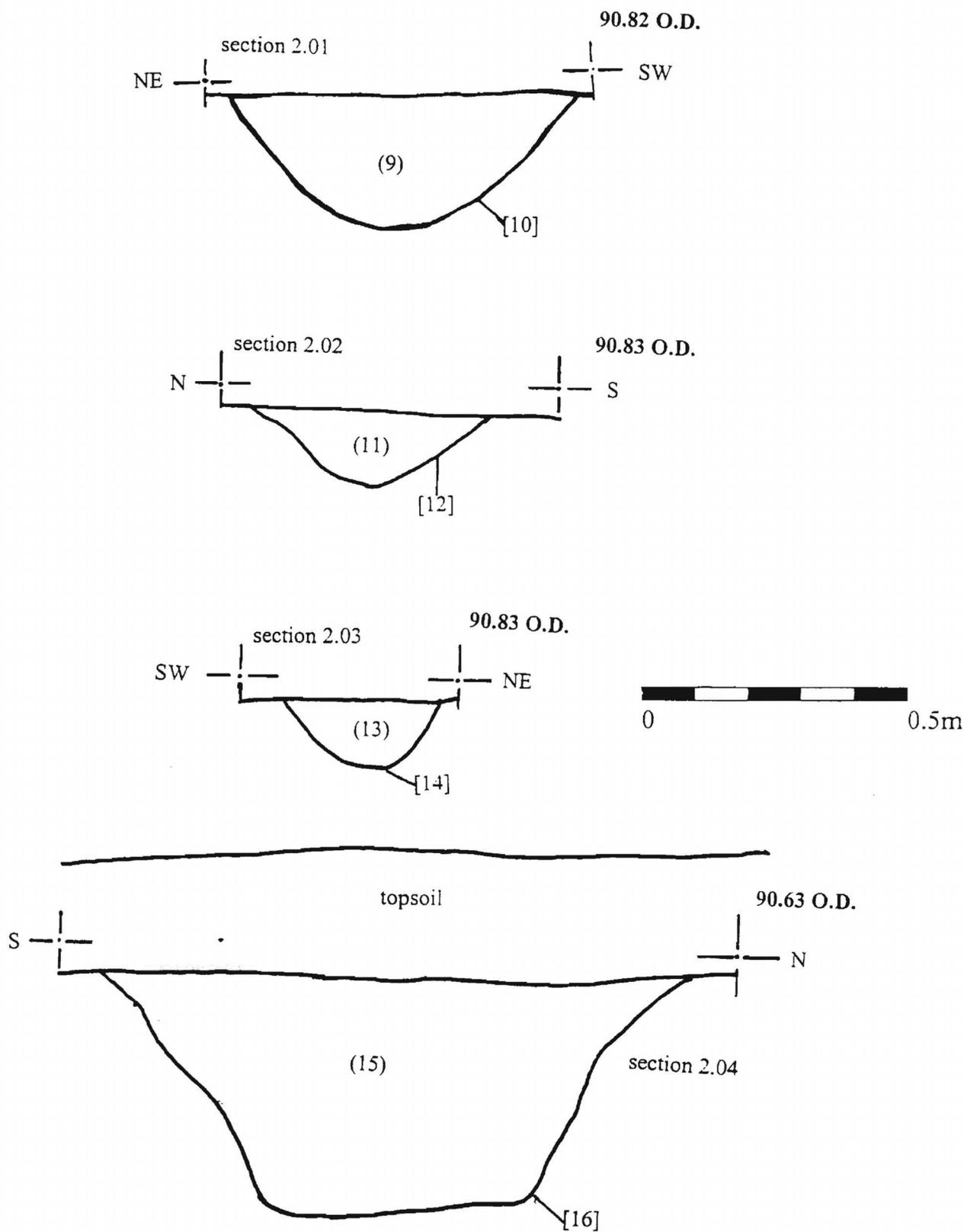


Figure 6 Sections from trench 55

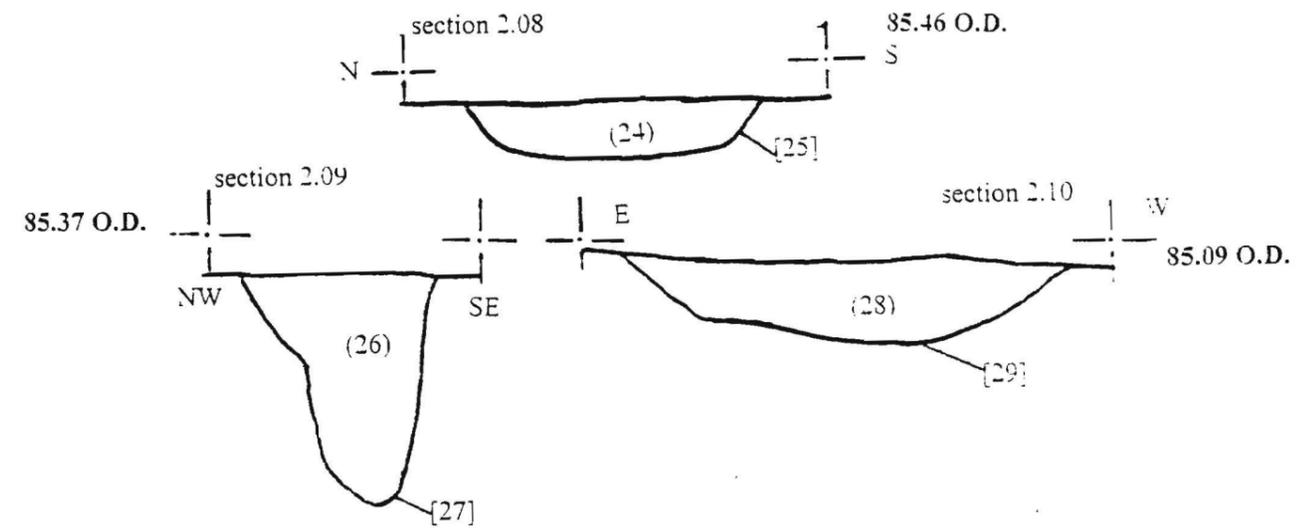
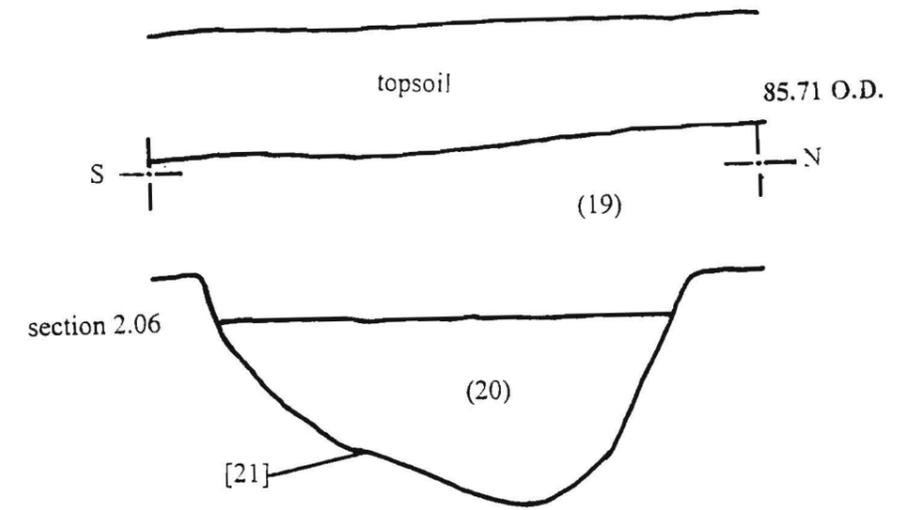
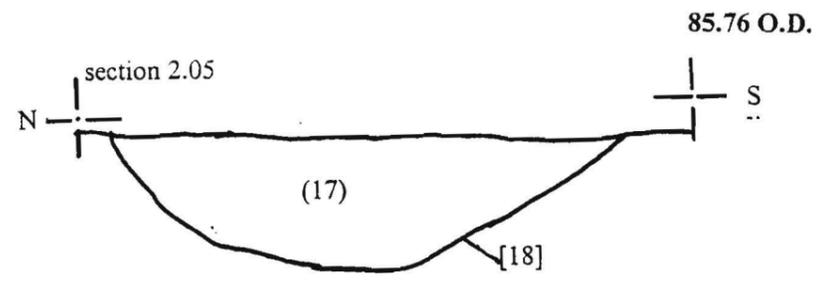


Figure 7 Sections from trench 56

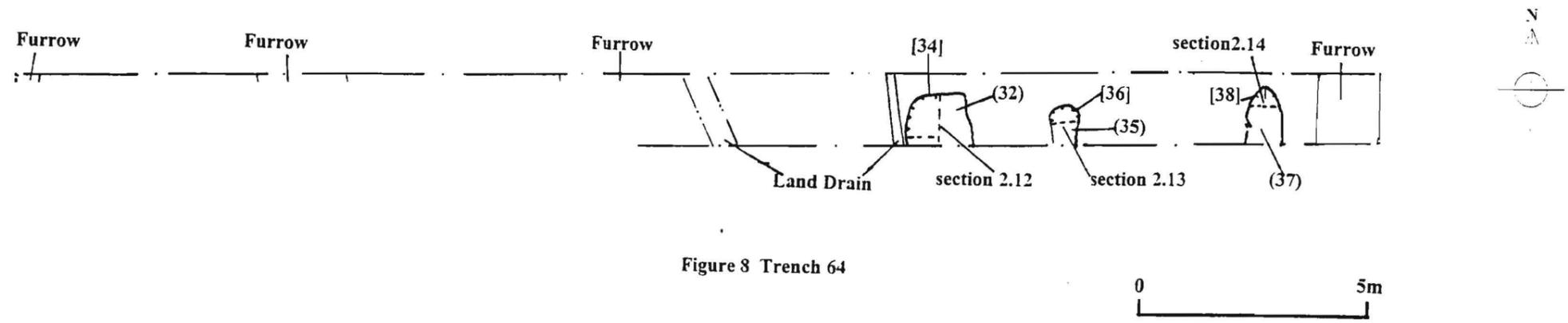


Figure 8 Trench 64

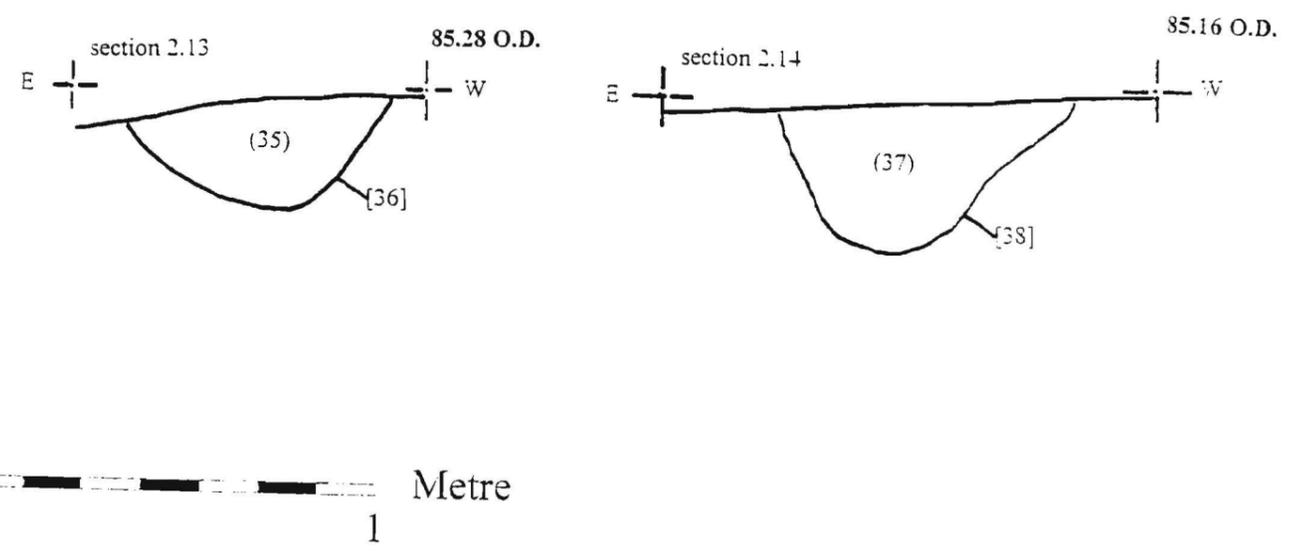
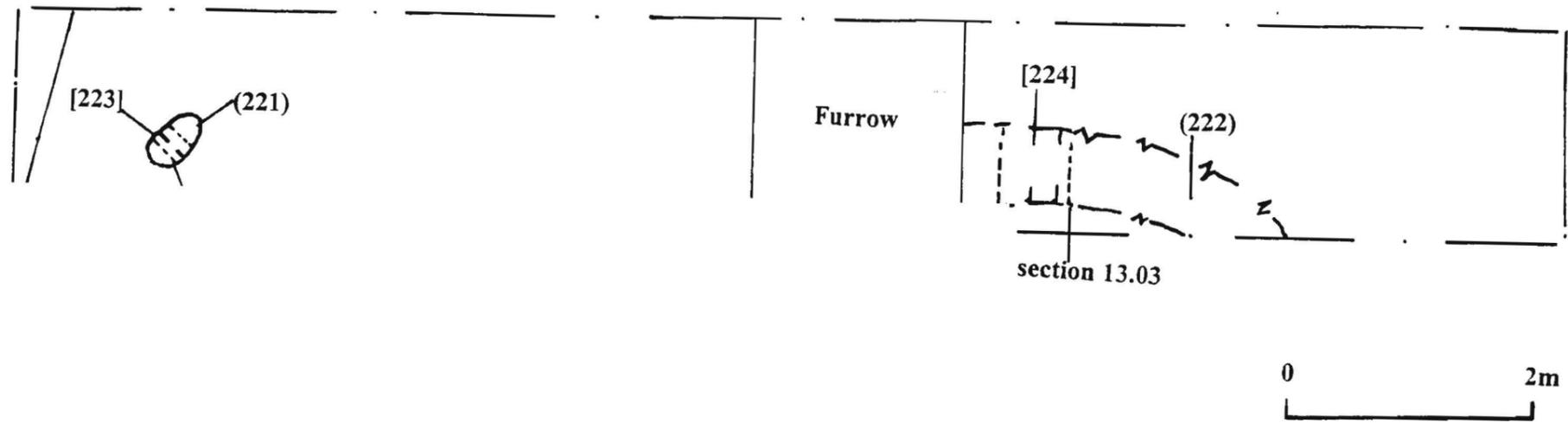
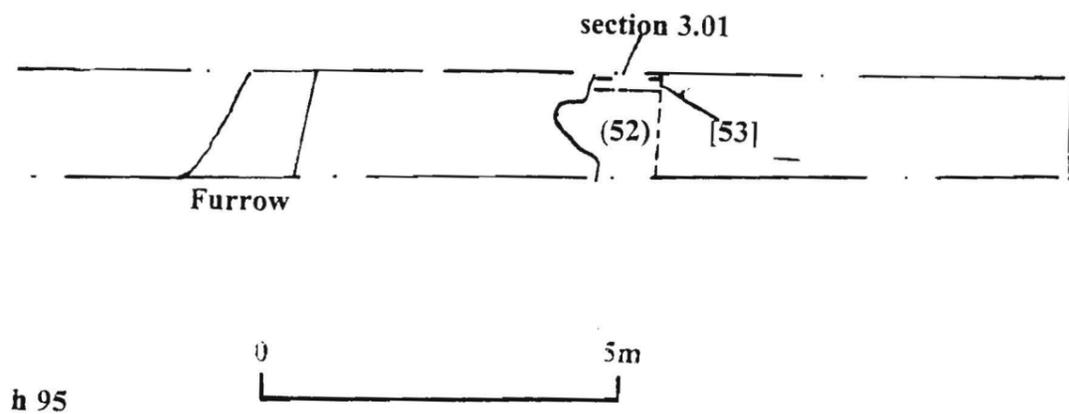


Figure 9 Sections from trench 64



h 79



h 95

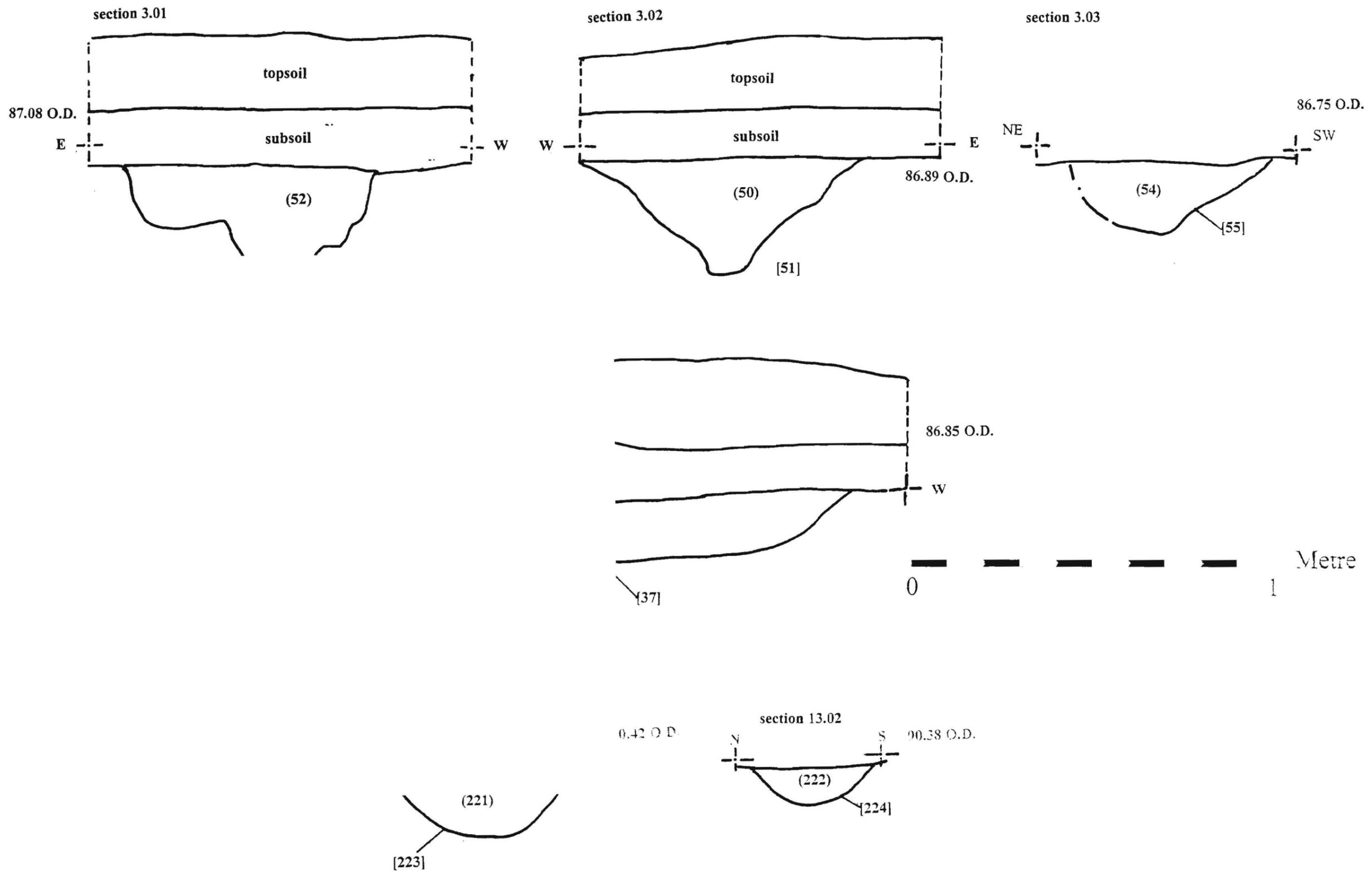


Figure 12 Sections from trenches 79 and 95

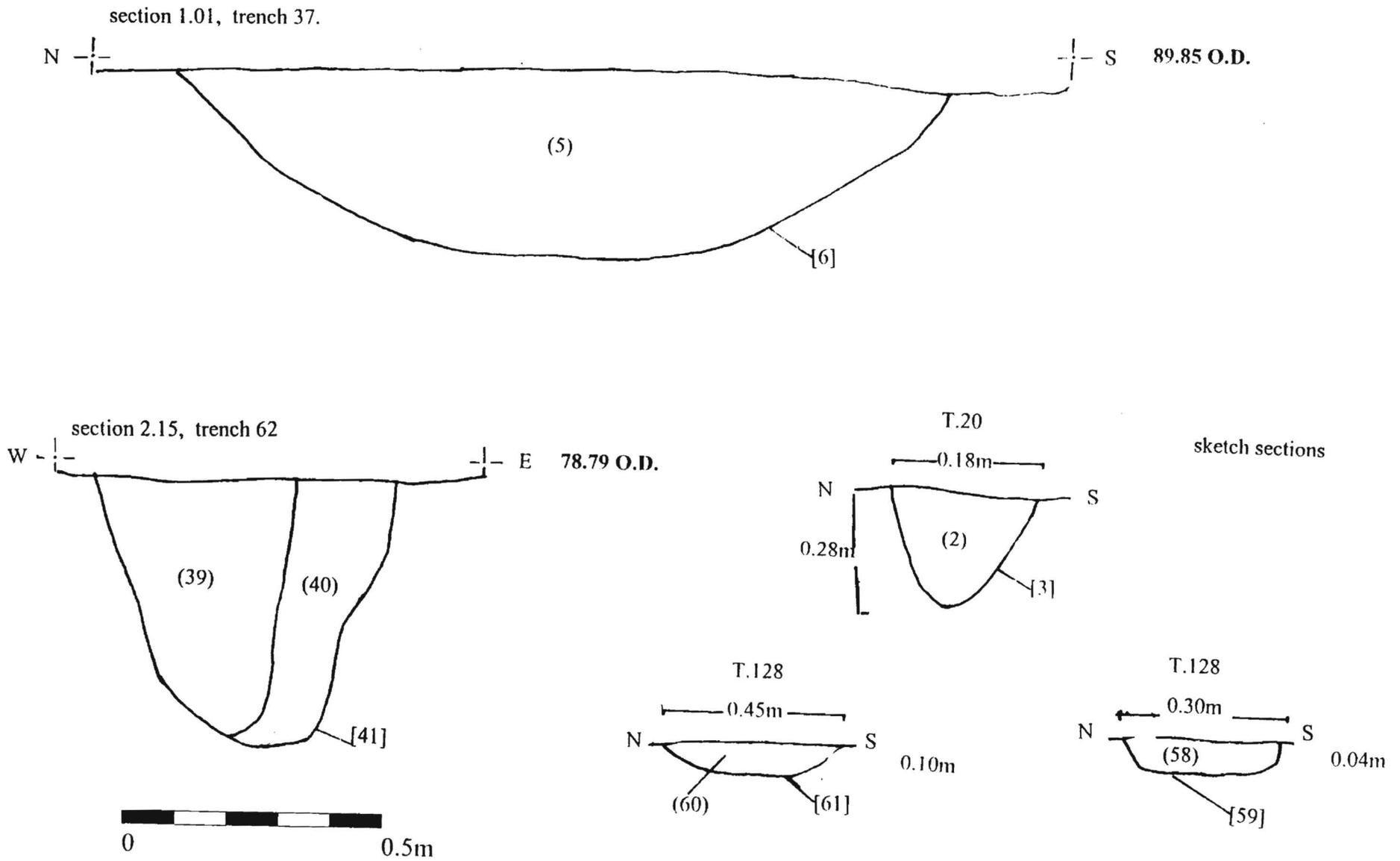


Figure 13 Remaining sections from trenches

