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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

OF LAND AT

FAIRYLAND CARAVAN PARK, RIVERWAY, LALEHAM, SURREY



**SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

**An Archaeological Evaluation of land at Fairyland Caravan Park, Riverway, Laleham,
Surrey**

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 0454 6948

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological field evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology at Fairyland Caravan Park, Riverway, Laleham, Surrey (Figure 1). The site central National Grid Reference is TQ 0454 6948. The field evaluation was undertaken between the 16th and the 20th December 1996. The commissioning client was Crest Homes (Southern) Limited.
- 1.2 Four trenches were investigated which revealed evidence dating between the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age (although there may have been limited Late Bronze Age activity) and the Post-Medieval era.
- 1.3 Trench 1 did not contain any significant archaeological remains (Figures 3 and 4).
- 1.4 Trench 2 contained a curvilinear enclosure ditch, of Late Pre-Roman Iron Age date, and two other land boundary ditches, probably of Roman date (Figures 5 and 6).
- 1.5 Trench 3 contained a substantial land boundary ditch, possibly originally cut during the Late Bronze Age and, following a period of flooding, apparently re-cut during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age. Other alluvial deposits, pre-dating and post-dating the land boundary, were also investigated (Figures 7 and 8).
- 1.6 Trench 4 contained what was probably a substantial land boundary ditch and several smaller features, one possibly a 'beam slot', of Late Pre-Roman Iron Age date. Evidence of Roman activity was also present in the form of a large pit. Several other features, including a shallow boundary ditch and some postholes and stakeholes, representing post-built structures, were also probably of Roman date (Figures 9 and 10).

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological field evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology between December 16th and December 20th 1996, in advance of a proposed residential development at Fairyland Caravan Park, Riverway, Laleham, Surrey (Figures 1, 2 and 11). The site's central National Grid Reference is TQ 0454 6948.
- 2.2 The site is located between the River Thames to the S and the junction of two residential streets, The Ryde and Riverway, to the NE. The W boundary of the site is formed by a small tributary of the Thames, known as Sweep's Ditch. Skirting the E edge of the site is a footpath which, at its S end, connects with a riverside public right of way.
- 2.3 The site is not located within an area of High Archaeological Potential as defined in Spelthorne Borough's Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map. However, in accordance with the Borough's policies, Ms Dinah Saich, the Surrey Assistant County Archaeologist, recommended that proper provision be made for the archaeological implications of any development proposal as the site exceeded 0.4 hectares.
- 2.4 The commissioning client was Crest Homes (Southern) Limited. Pre-Construct Archaeology was commissioned to establish the archaeological potential of the site and to provide guidance on ways to accommodate any archaeological constraints identified. Prior to the archaeological field evaluation described in this report, Crest Homes (Southern) Limited had commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology to compile an archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of the site (Kain, 1996).
- 2.5 The recommendation of the Desk-Based Assessment was that the site required an archaeological field evaluation prior to the discharge of any planning conditions relating to archaeology attached to planning permission for the proposed development. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology under the supervision of Robin Taylor-Wilson. The Project Manager for Pre-Construct Archaeology was Gary Brown.
- 2.6 During the field evaluation a temporary bench mark was transferred to the site from the Ordnance Survey Bench Mark located upon the letterbox at the junction of Staines Road and The Avenue which had a value of 15.18 m OD.
- 2.7 The completed archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited at the Spelthorne Museum.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 The archaeological field evaluation described in this report was a planning requirement in order to gain planning permission for a residential development at Fairyland Caravan Park, Riverway, Laleham, Surrey.
- 3.1.2 The proposed development is not located within an area of High Archaeological Potential, as defined in the Spelthorne Borough's Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map. However, in accordance with the Borough's policies, the size of the site, larger than 0.4 hectares, determined that archaeology would be a material consideration in determining any planning application for development of the site.
- 3.1.3 The archaeological field evaluation was preceded by a Desk-Based Assessment which provided a baseline consideration of the archaeological potential of the site. The Desk-Based assessment was researched and compiled by Alison Kain for Pre-Construct Archaeology.
- 3.1.4 In considering any planning application for development the local planning authority will have regard to the strategic development plan policy framework, in this instance provided by the Surrey County Structure Plan and the Spelthorne Borough Local Plan. The former contains the following policies relating to archaeology:

Surrey County Structure Plan

"POLICY PE12

CONSERVING THE HERITAGE

Surrey's valuable inheritance of buildings, sites and historic landscape will be conserved and enhanced. Local plans will identify landscaped parks and gardens, other areas of archaeological or historical value, ancient monuments and County Sites of archaeological importance. Development will not normally be permitted which would have a materially adverse effect on such buildings or sites.

Positive schemes for the conservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas will be developed and promoted. The planning authorities will designate further conservation areas, or extend existing ones, where the overall character or architectural or historic interest is of sufficiently high quality.

Local plans will identify Areas of Historic Landscape value within which development proposals will be expected to conserve historic and archaeological features of value, and the management of such features will be promoted.

The planning authorities will maintain lists of buildings of architectural or historic value and will consider, in exceptional cases, the relaxation of planning standards or other planning policies and seek the sympathetic application of

building regulations, where this is essential for the conservation of such buildings, or for making them accessible to people with disabilities.”

“POLICY PE13

HERITAGE RECORDS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

An adequate record will be required to be made where development affecting buildings, parks and gardens, sites or areas referred to in Policy PE12 is permitted.

Local Plans will identify Sites and Areas of High Archaeological Potential within which prior archaeological evaluation will be required to provide information on the effects of development proposals on any archaeological or historic features of the site, enabling their preservation to be secured if justified.

Archaeological assessment or evaluation will also be required prior to development on sites of 0.4 hectares or more. Where archaeological remains are identified which cannot be preserved, proper archaeological investigation will be required prior to development.”

- 3.1.5 The emerging Local Plan framework is provided by the Spelthorne Borough Local Plan - Replacement Plan 1995. The Local Plan contains the following policies which provide a framework for the consideration of development proposals affecting archaeological and heritage features:

Spelthorne Borough Local Plan

“POLICY BE27

There will be a presumption against any development which would adversely affect a scheduled ancient monument or its setting. Development adversely affecting a site or monument of County archaeological importance will not normally be permitted.

In addition to the above sites and monuments, other areas exist where there is good evidence for the existence of archaeological remains based upon previous finds, maps or aerial photographs. These individual sites and areas of high potential are shown on the Proposals Map and are listed in Appendix 7. Any development proposal affecting such an area should include an initial assessment by a qualified archaeologist of its archaeological potential and what, if any, further field evaluation is required. An evaluation should assess the impact of the development upon the preservation of any archaeological remains. Where possible, remains should be left in situ. Proposals for development should wherever possible avoid damage to or disturbance of the archaeological remains. The Council will encourage the local display of archaeological finds, where appropriate, at the Spelthorne Museum or other suitable location.”

“POLICY BE28

In considering proposals for development within areas of high archaeological potential, the Borough Council will:-

(a) require an initial assessment of the archaeological value of the site to be submitted as part of any planning application.

(b) expect the applicant to arrange an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out prior to the determination of the planning application, where, as a result of the initial assessment, important archaeological remains are considered to exist.

(c) where remains are to be left in situ, impose conditions or seek a legal agreement, where appropriate, to ensure that damage to the remains is minimal or will be avoided.

(d) require by planning condition if necessary, a full archaeological investigation and recording of the site in accordance with a scheme of work to be agreed in writing with the Council prior to the commencement of the proposed development, where important archaeological remains are known or considered likely to exist but their preservation in situ is not justified.

Work in recent years has resulted in sites of major archaeological importance being discovered in the course of gravel extraction, where no previous specific evidence existed for them. In view of Spelthorne's river gravel base, it is reasonable to assume that any large scale development is likely to affect features of archaeological interest and that discoveries could be made in any size of new development site. Any new development proposal for site larger than 0.4 hectares and smaller sites where requested should include agreed arrangements for archaeological investigation and allow for future preservation of remains as deemed appropriate."

3.1.6 Both the Surrey County Structure Plan (Policies PE12 and PE13) and the Spelthorne Borough Local Plan (Policies BE27 and BE28) mirror advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16) "Archaeology and Planning", issued by the Department of the Environment in November 1990. This document identifies the need for early consultation in the planning process to determine the impact of development proposals upon buried archaeological deposits. Once the results of a Desk-Based Assessment and, where required, a follow-up field evaluation are known an informed decision on the necessity, or otherwise, for further mitigation may be taken.

3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.2.1 Although the relevant Spelthorne Borough UDP Proposals Map does not identify the site as lying within an area of High Archaeological Potential, the size of the site, larger than 0.4 hectares, determines that, in accordance with the Borough's policies, archaeology will be a material consideration in determining any planning application for proposed development.

3.2.2 The proposed development would entail the construction of nine housing units, some with detached garages, access roads and areas of hardstanding. It is anticipated that severe but localised truncation of surviving archaeological deposits will result during the excavation of service trenches and 'trench fill' foundations (with a minimum depth of 0.60m below present ground level) in the eastern part of the site where natural sand and gravels occur at depths of between 0.35m and 0.65m. Further west, towards Sweep's Ditch, the presence of alluvial clays will probably necessitate the use of piled foundations. Any de-watering area of the area caused by the insertion

of deep piles would undoubtedly have a widespread impact on any organic archaeological and paleoenvironmental deposits which may survive within the alluvial deposits in the western part of the site.

3.2.3 The aforementioned Desk-Based Assessment of the site's archaeological potential, compiled prior to the archaeological field evaluation described in this report, broadly concluded that the area proposed for development had a moderate to high potential for archaeological remains from the Mesolithic period to the Medieval period.

3.2.4 The strategic location of the site, at the confluence of the River Thames and its tributary, known as Sweep's Ditch, could well have been a focus of human activity during any archaeological era prior to the Medieval period. Since that time it is likely that human exploitation of the site has been of a relatively limited nature.

3.2.5 The main research aims of the field evaluation were:

*to establish the presence, nature and date of human activity on the site and attempt to establish how any such activity relates to the known archaeology of the area.

*to identify any exploitation of the River Thames or its tributary, known as Sweep's Ditch, during any period of human occupation of the site.

*to investigate any alluvial sediments encountered, including the identification of paleochannels, in order to establish the depositional sequence and environmental potential of such deposits.

3.3 CONTAMINATION

3.3.1 A geotechnical site investigation was undertaken at Fairyland Caravan Park in October 1995 by LBH Wembley (Geotechnical and Environmental) on behalf of Crest Homes (Southern) Limited (LBH Wembley, 1995 - this report appears as Appendix 2 in Kain, 1996).

3.3.2 In summary, the geotechnical investigation did not reveal the presence of any fill materials beneath the site, and no visual or olfactory evidence of any ground contamination was observed. LBH Wembley were of the opinion that, in view of the rural and residential history of the site, any ground contamination was considered to be extremely unlikely.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The aforementioned Desk-Based Assessment of the site's archaeological potential describes all reported finds entered into the Surrey County Sites and Monuments Record within the vicinity of the Fairyland Caravan Park. The Assessment also included the results of a map regression exercise. A summary of these findings is included here.

4.2 Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic

4.2.1 The foreshore of the River Thames is known to have been a focus for human activity throughout all Prehistoric periods. In addition, the land around the confluence of Sweep's Ditch with the River Thames would undoubtedly have been an attractive location for early settlement. However, the relatively recent date of the sand and gravels underlying the site indicates that *in situ* artefacts of the Palaeolithic period are unlikely.

4.2.2 While no evidence exists of Mesolithic activity in the vicinity of the site, evidence of Neolithic occupation has been located c. 800m to the SW of the site (SMR 585, TQ 04000 69000).

4.3 Bronze Age and Iron Age

4.3.1 An early Bronze Age settlement is known to have existed 1.5km S of the site at Abbey Lake (SMR 2843, TQ 04000 68200). Slightly closer, a late Bronze Age sword was found c. 400m to the SE of the site (SMR 798 TQ 04750 69110) and Bronze Age spears were recovered from Penton Hook Island, c. 500m to the SW of the site (SMR 3165, TQ 04300 69300).

4.3.2 Abbey Lake was also a focus of settlement during the Iron Age (SMR 597, TQ 04000 68200) and further evidence of settlement from this period was located at Penton Hook Yacht Basin, c. 700m to the SW of the site (SMR 597, TQ 03940 68350).

4.3.3 Cropmarks of ring ditch enclosures, possibly of Bronze Age or Iron Age date, were recorded c. 500m N of the site (SMR 811, TQ 0479 069900) and c. 450m NE of the site (SMR 826, TQ 05050 69350).

4.4 Roman

4.4.1 No settlement or finds of this period have been recorded closer to the site than Penton Hook Yacht Basin c. 700m to the SW (SMR 2396, TQ 04000 69000), Abbey Lake c. 1.5km to the S (SMR 2397, TQ 03940 68350) and at Staines, c. 2.5km to the N (*e.g.* Crouch and Shanks, 1984).

4.5 Saxon

4.5.1 A late Saxon/Viking sword was found c. 400m to the SE of the site at Penton Hook (SMR 2403, TQ 04690 69010).

4.6 Medieval

4.6.1 By the Medieval period settlement appears to have focused around the present day village of Laleham, which lies c. 1km to the SE of the site.

4.7 **Post-Medieval**

- 4.7.1 John Norden's map of Laleham Manor dated 1623 shows the study site located in the W corner of '*North Feilde of Laleham beinge Arrable Lande*'. The road from Staines to Laleham lies some distance S and E of the site and no settlement is shown nearby (Greater London Records Office (GLRO) Acc. No. F41).
- 4.7.2 John Rocque's map of Middlesex dated 1754 also shows the site situated in open arable fields (Reproduced as Figure 4 in Kain, 1996).
- 4.7.3 The 1844 Parish map of Laleham shows the site divided into two properties (Nos. 69 and 70) (Reproduced as Figure 5 in Kain, 1996). The plot to the east (No. 69 - which forms the majority of the site investigated during the evaluation described in this report) is recorded as arable land, known as Long Panlys, owned and occupied by Mr Harden Honnor. The plot to the west (No. 70 - part of which forms the SE corner of the site investigated during the evaluation described in this report) is also recorded as arable land, known as Lenham, owned by Lord Lucan and occupied by Charles and Robert Dearle.
- 4.7.4 A Plan of Laleham Manor 'Chandlers copyhold' of 1880 shows that the site was still owned by 'Mr Honnor'. (GLRO Acc. No. 493/ED 30). At this date Sweep's Ditch is referred to as 'Penty Brook'.
- 4.7.5 An indenture dated 1886 forms an agreement in which land, including the site described in this report, owned by the Earl of Lucus, is leased to William Burchell the Younger of Laleham for 93 pounds and 15 shillings (GLRO Acc. No. 493/ED 41/1).
- 4.7.6 The 1896, 1914 and 1959 Ordnance Survey maps (reproduced as Figures 6, 7 and 8 respectively in Kain, 1996) show that the site remained as arable or open land until becoming the Fairyland Caravan Park prior to 1974. The property boundary shown on the aforementioned 1844 tithe map remained in use probably until the caravan park was created. By this time the footpath, which skirts the eastern edge of the site described in this report, had become established. The land to the east of the footpath (which formed the remainder of Plot No. 70 on the 1844 tithe map) became the Arcadia Caravan park, presumably at the same time.

5 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1. The 'solid' geology of the Staines area is London Clay. Upon this base are a succession of gravel and alluvial layers. The earliest of these are glacial in origin (*e.g.* outwash gravels) while the later levels resulted from the activities of the River Thames, such as changes of course and depositional effects ('drift' geology) (Crouch and Shanks, 1984). The site described in this report lies on the River Thames Terrace Gravels, below 15m OD. In places these floodplain gravels are known to be capped with brickearth.
- 5.2. The Fairyland Caravan Park is bounded to the S by a public right of way along the N bank of the River Thames and to the W by a small tributary of the Thames, known now as Sweep's Ditch. The land slopes down gently towards the SW. It is probable that the route of Sweep's Ditch will have varied over time and many former channels could be buried upon the site. Although at present Sweep's Ditch is a narrow slow flowing brook, in the past it would have been a more powerful watercourse, at times gouging out new routes to the Thames. In the process silts and gravels would have been deposited over the W part of the site upon the older floodplain gravels.
- 5.3. The results of trial pits excavated as part of the aforementioned geotechnical site investigation demonstrated that alluvial clays, associated with Sweep's Ditch, overlay the floodplain sand and gravels in the W part of the site only. The alluvial deposits were found to thicken towards the W, attaining a maximum thickness of c. 1.60m near the SW corner of the site, close to the confluence of Sweep's Ditch and the River Thames.
- 5.4. In the E part of the site topsoil was found to be underlain directly by granular soils, often initially comprising a clayey or silty sand which graded into floodplain sand and gravels. The latter were located at a depth of c. 0.35m - c. 0.50m below ground level towards the E of the site but sloped down to the SW towards Sweep's Ditch and were located, beneath the aforementioned alluvial deposits, at a depth of c. 1.90m close to the site's SW corner.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The archaeological field evaluation at Fairyland Caravan Park was undertaken following the recommendations of a Desk-Based Assessment which sought to provide an initial consideration of the site's archaeological potential (Kain, 1996). The broad conclusion of the Desk-Based Assessment was that the area proposed for development has a moderate to high archaeological potential from the Mesolithic to the Medieval period. The Desk-Based Assessment was commissioned by Crest Homes (Southern) Limited in advance of an application for planning permission to develop the site.
- 6.2 The site does not lie within an area of High Archaeological Priority, as defined in Spelthorne Borough's Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map. However, in accordance with the Borough's policies, the Surrey Assistant County Archaeologist, Ms Dinah Saich, required that one of the conditions for planning permission should be a full consideration of the site's archaeological potential as the area involved in the development proposals exceeded 0.4 hectares.
- 6.3 Archaeological investigations were conducted in four trenches (Trenches 1-4) during the field evaluation described in this report (Figure 2). The agreed programme of works, detailed in Pre-Construct Archaeology's specification document (Divers, 1995), was altered slightly so that the S end of Trench 2 was moved further W than originally intended. This was agreed with the Client at the onset of field evaluation as it was evident that Trench 2, in its original location, would have made access to the site problematic. In particular, vehicles from the emergency services would have been prevented from gaining access to the site in the event of an accident occurring during the field evaluation.
- 6.4 Trench 1, located parallel to the site's S perimeter fence, was 15.90m long and 1.60m wide. Trench 2, located towards the site's N perimeter fence, was 16.80m long and 1.60m wide. Trench 3, located to the SW of Trench 2, was 16.50m long and 1.60m wide - with a step, 0.80m wide and up to 0.70m deep, along the upper part of each side in the W 9.50m of the trench. Trench 4, located parallel to the site's W perimeter fence, was 16.90m long and 1.60m wide.
- 6.5 During the field evaluation ground reduction was undertaken using a JCB back-acting mechanical excavator. A 1.60m wide, non-toothed, bucket was utilised and the work took place under the direct guidance of the supervising archaeologist. All undifferentiated topsoil or modern overburden was stripped down, in spits of approximately 100mm thickness, to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon. All spoil was mounded neatly at least 1.20m from the edges of the trenches by the machine.
- 6.6 In Trench 2 a live sewer, oriented E-W, was left intact at the behest of the Client.
- 6.7 Subsequent excavation and recording was undertaken in accordance with guidelines laid down by English Heritage (English Heritage, 1992). Following machine clearance, the long sections and the base of each trench were carefully cleaned using appropriate hand tools. One long section in each trench was drawn at a scale of 1:20. The base of each trench was planned at a scale of 1:20 relative to a baseline established along the trench. The position of each trench baseline was determined relative to a site baseline which, in turn, was precisely located using appropriate surveying equipment.
- 6.8 Archaeological deposits were recorded using the 'single context recording' system as employed by Museum of London Archaeological Services (MoLAS, 1994). All features and deposits observed were recorded on *pro forma* context record sheets.

- 6.9 Within significant archaeological levels, partial excavation, half-sectioning, the recovery of dating evidence, or the cleaning and recording of deposits was preferred to full excavation. Occasionally intrusive modern features were excavated completely by hand, using mattocks and shovels, prior to the investigation of earlier strata in order to remove the risk of contamination.
- 6.10 Photographic coverage employed colour transparency and black and white print formats.
- 6.11 A Temporary Bench Mark was established on the site from a Bench Mark (+ 15.18m OD) located upon the letterbox at the junction of Staines Road and The Avenue.

7 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

Note: Discrete stratigraphic entities (e.g. a cut, a fill, a layer) were assigned individual 'context' numbers and these are indicated in the following text as []. The archaeological sequence has been described by broad stratigraphic phases. These are indicated by Roman numerals and their sub-division into sub-groups by Arabic numbers (e.g. IV.3).*

7.1 Natural Geology - Phase I

7.1.1 Phase I.1

7.1.1.1 Natural sand and gravels were recorded, at some point, in the base of all four trenches. These deposits generally consisted of loose, mid yellowish brown, slightly clayey, silty, coarse sand with fine and medium sub-angular, sub-rounded and rounded pebbles. These deposits are part of the River Thames Terrace Gravels.

7.1.1.2 In Trench 1 sand and gravels were exposed along the base of the entire trench, with the upper interface undulating between 13.10m OD and 12.87m OD (Figure 4). In Trench 2 sand and gravels were recorded at 12.96m OD at the N end of the trench and at 12.75m OD towards the S end (Figure 6). In Trench 3 sand and gravels, again exposed along the base of the entire trench, were recorded at 12.98m OD at the NE end of the trench and then sloped down to 11.89m OD at the SW end (Figure 8). This dropping away of the sand and gravels reflected the accumulation of alluvial clays associated with Sweep's Ditch, the tributary of the Thames, immediately to the SW of the site. In Trench 4 sand and gravels were recorded at a height of 12.90m OD at the S end of the trench (Figure 10).

7.1.2 Phase I.2

7.1.2.1 In Trench 4 natural sand and gravels were overlain by a natural marl [77] which consisted of a firm, light yellowish brown, silty chalky clay. This deposit, which extended along the entire length of the trench, appeared to have been the result of a localised depositional event. It had a maximum thickness of 0.44m and was recorded at 13.50m OD at the N end of the trench, dropping away to 13.36m OD at the S end (Figure 10).

7.1.2.2 At the N end of Trench 4 the natural marl [77] was overlain by a thin layer of natural brickearth [75]. The deposit consisted of soft, mid orange brown, sandy clay. It had a maximum thickness of 80mm and was recorded at 13.58m OD (Figure 10).

7.1.3 Phase I.3

7.1.3.1 In the S part of Trench 3 natural sand and gravels were overlain by an alluvial deposit [45] which consisted of a light grey, generally sterile, clay. Amorphous sandy lenses were observed towards the base of the deposit. The upper c. 100mm of the deposit was hard-stiff but it became firm then soft with depth. It was recorded at a maximum height of 12.61m OD. The deposit had a maximum depth of 0.60m, recorded at the W end of the trench, and from that point the deposit extended c. 8.0m to the E whereupon it petered out as it overlay a distinct slope in the natural sand and gravels (Figure 8). The deposit represents the earliest accumulation of alluvial material associated with Sweep's Ditch, an ancient natural tributary of the River Thames lying to the SW of the site.

7.1.4 Phase I.4

7.1.4.1 In the N part of Trench 2 two shallow depressions were recorded, in section, within the upper interface of natural sand and gravels (Figure 6). Whether the features were archaeologically or naturally formed was not certain although the latter was probably the case. The first feature [17], appeared as a rounded scoop, 0.50m wide and 80mm deep. It was filled with firm, dark grey, clayey silt [18]. Approximately 1.20m to the S was one edge of a similar feature [20]. It was at least 0.38m wide, having been truncated to the S by a modern intrusion, and was 0.12m deep. It was filled with firm, mid grey, clayey silt [21].

7.2 Phase II - The Earliest Soil Horizon

7.2.1 Phase II.1

7.2.1.1 Overlying natural sand and gravels in Trench 2 was a deposit [19] which consisted of soft, mid brown, silty clay (Figure 6). It was recorded at a maximum height of 13.07m OD and was observed for a length of c. 5.50m in the N part of the trench, having been truncated by later intrusions in the remainder. The deposit, which had a maximum thickness of 0.18m, represents the earliest formation of a soil horizon upon the exposed surface of natural sand and gravels.

7.2.1.2 The deposit described above can be reasonably equated with a similar deposit [27] which overlay natural sand and gravels at the E end of Trench 3 (Figure 8). This consisted of firm, mid grey, sandy silty clay. To the E the deposit met the limit of excavation and from there it extended c. 1.0m to the W whereupon it had been truncated by a later ditch [11]. The deposit was recorded at a maximum height of 13.06m OD and had a maximum thickness of 0.14m. Again the deposit represents the earliest formation of a soil horizon upon the exposed surface of natural sand and gravels.

7.2.2 Phase II.2

7.2.2.1 Overlying natural marl in the S half of Trench 4 was a deposit [76] which consisted of soft, light to mid greyish brown, chalky sandy clay. To the south the deposit met the limit of excavation and from there it extended c. 7.80m to the N, whereupon it had been truncated by a later ditch [54]. The deposit was recorded at a maximum height of 13.47m OD, although the interface with the overlying soil horizon [57] was generally diffuse (Figure 10). This deposit represents the earliest development of a soil horizon upon the exposed natural marl which had been deposited in the E corner of the site.

7.3 Phase III - Possible Prehistoric Activity

7.3.1 Phase III.1

7.3.1.1 A NW-SE aligned ditch [11] was recorded at the E end of Trench 3 (Figures 7 and 8). The feature was 2.40m wide and 0.70m deep. To the E it cut into the early soil horizon [27], at a height of 13.06m OD, while to the W it cut into natural sand and gravels at a height of 12.56m OD. The ditch had gently sloping, slightly concave, sides which broke imperceptibly into a wide rounded base, at 12.26m OD. The feature's primary fill [10] consisted of compact, light greyish white, chalky clay from which two struck flints, possibly of Late Bronze Age date, were recovered. Overlying the primary fill along the feature's W edge was a fill [35] which consisted of firm, mid grey, sterile clay. Overlying the primary fill along the feature's E edge was a fill [30] which consisted of firm, light grey, sandy silt. Overlying the latter deposit was the feature's upper fill [29] which consisted of firm, mid greyish brown, sandy silty clay.

7.3.2.2 It is clear that the feature described above defined a land boundary of some considerable importance. As it was located immediately to the E of the earliest alluvial deposits associated with Sweep's Ditch, it is likely that the ditch was intended to demarcate 'dry' land to the E from marginal land on the fringe of the paleochannel to the W. Given its overall dimensions it is clear that the feature would have prevented the movement of livestock into the paleochannel, where they would presumably have perished. The presence of two struck flints, possibly of Late Bronze Age origin, within the fill of the ditch indicates that the feature represents the earliest human activity on the site.

7.4 Phase IV - A Flood Horizon

7.4.1 Phase IV.1

7.4.1.1 Overlying the W edge of ditch [11] in Trench 3 was an alluvial layer [34] which consisted of soft, mid grey, silty clay (Figure 8). To the E the deposit had been truncated by a re-cut [32] of ditch [11] and from there it extended 5.30m to the W, punctuated briefly by an intrusive feature [41], whereupon it petered out beneath a later alluvial deposit [38]. The deposit, which had a maximum depth of 0.30m, was recorded at a maximum height of 1.86m OD. Layer [34] had clearly been deposited following the abandonment of ditch [11], as indicated by the infilling of that feature, as described above. The deposit appeared to represent the accumulation of alluvium probably resulting from a period of severe flooding of the marginal land to the E of Sweep's Ditch.

7.5 Phase V - Late Pre-Roman Iron Age Activity

7.5.1 Phase V.1

7.5.1.1 A curvilinear ditch [6], oriented N-S, was recorded in the N half of Trench 2 at a maximum height of 12.90m OD (Figures 5 and 6). To the N the feature met the limit of excavation and from there extended 8.70m to the S (although punctuated by a later E-W oriented ditch [4]), whereupon it met an unexcavated baulk, c. 2.70m wide, through which a live sewer ran. The ditch was 0.85m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.30m. It had steep, generally straight, sides which broke gradually into a flat base which sloped down slightly towards the S. The ditch was filled with firm, light brownish grey, silty clay [7].

7.5.1.2 Two portions of ditch [6] were excavated, a total of c. 2.40m (Figure 5). A few fragmented animal bones, several chunks of burnt flint and one or two struck flints were recovered from the deposit, in addition to several sherds of pottery which have been dated to the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age.

7.5.1.3 To the S of the unexcavated baulk in Trench 2, as described above, ditch [6] probably continued as a similar ditch [14] (Figures 5 and 6). A length of 1.20m was revealed as the feature curved to meet the E edge of Trench 2. At that point the feature appeared to have been partially truncated by a similar ditch [12] situated immediately to the W (see Phase VII.1). Ditch [14] was at least 0.30m wide, at least 0.26m deep and was recorded at a maximum height of 12.73m OD. It had straight gently sloping sides which broke gradually into a flat base.

7.5.1.4 The primary fill [15] of ditch [14] consisted of firm, mid grey, silty clay, c. 0.19m thick. Overlying the latter deposit was what, in section, appeared to be an upper fill [16] of the ditch. This deposit, which had a maximum depth of 0.17m, consisted of firm, mid brownish yellow, sandy silt. A 0.60m portion of the feature was excavated but no cultural material was recovered.

7.5.1.5 Assuming that ditches [6] and [14] were one and the same then this extensive curvilinear feature probably delineated the W edge of a large sub-circular enclosure set out on the land immediately to

the E of Sweep's Ditch. Such features, which may have been used to pen livestock, are typically encountered in association with Iron Age settlement.

7.5.1.6 The base of a sub-rectangular feature [25], possibly a posthole, was recorded c. 0.50m to the E of ditch [6], as described above (Figure 5). It measured 0.37m by 0.18m and was 40mm deep. It had steep sides which broke sharply into a flat base at 12.79m OD. The feature was filled with firm, mid grey, clayey silt [24], from which a struck flint was recovered. The feature could represent the remains of one element of a post-built structure, which may have been associated with ditch [6] to the W, although this is by no means certain given its stratigraphic position. Conceivably the feature could also relate to the later ditch [4] to the N, or other similar features further to the E beyond the limit of excavation.

7.5.2 Phase V.2

7.5.2.1 Immediately to the W of ditch [11] alluvial deposit [34], as described above, had been cut through by a feature [41] (Figure 8). This feature, which may have been a palisade trench, was recorded at a maximum height of 12.86m OD. Recorded only in section it had steep, straight or slightly convex, sides which broke sharply into a flat base. The feature's maximum width was 0.75m and it was 0.32m deep. It was filled with firm, dark grey, clayey sand [33] which appeared to overlie the E edge of the feature and was then truncated further to the E by the re-cut [32] of ditch [11]. If it were a palisade trench the feature could represent an attempt to re-establish the land boundary initially delineated by ditch [11].

7.5.3 Phase V.3

7.5.3.1 Following the deposition of the alluvial clay [34] (see Phase IV.1) infilled ditch [11] was re-cut as ditch [32], along a similar NW-SE alignment (Figure 8). The re-cut had steep sides which were initially convex then became concave towards the narrow rounded base where there was a gradual break of slope. The ditch, which was recorded at a maximum height of 12.96m OD, had a maximum width of 1.50m and was 0.67m deep. Its primary fill [9], which was 0.23m thick, consisted of firm, dark grey, sandy clay. Several chunks of burnt flint and a few fragmented animal bones were recovered from the deposit. In addition, 3 sherds of pottery were recovered, all of which were from the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age. The ditch's upper fill [31], which was 0.43m thick, consisted of firm, mid grey, clayey sand.

7.5.3.2 Cut into the base of ditch [32], was a sub-oval posthole [39] (Figure 7). This feature, which was recorded at a height of 12.24m OD, measured 0.20m by 0.20m and was 80mm deep. It had steep straight sides which broke sharply into a concave base. The posthole was filled with firm, dark grey, sandy clay [40]. The presence of this feature indicates that when functioning as an open feature, ditch [32] may well have had upright posts, possibly part of a palisade, inserted along its length. Such a structure would have formed an additional barrier to livestock which may have been herded on the land to the E.

7.5.3.3 The re-cutting of this ditch, possibly originally delineated in the Late Bronze Age, during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age, indicates the importance of this land boundary. As suggested above, a ditch at this location would have demarcated dry land to the E from marginal land, prone to flooding, to the W.

7.5.4 Phase V.4

7.5.4.1 What may have been the S edge of an extensive, SE-NW oriented, boundary ditch [54] was recorded in the centre of Trench 4 (Figures 9 and 10). A 0.50m wide slot was excavated across the

feature, adjacent to the E-facing section of Trench 3. The feature was at least 1.35m wide and at least 0.20m deep, although it was not bottomed. To the S the feature cut into the early soil horizon [76] at 13.40m OD. To the N the edge of the feature was not revealed due to the presence of a possible live electricity cable. However, it could well have continued beyond that as a feature [49], which is described below. The primary fill [62] of feature [54] consisted of friable, mid orange brown, sandy silty clay. The feature's upper fill [55] consisted of hard, mid grey, sandy silt. Several chunks of burnt flint were recovered from the deposit, along with 6 sherds of pottery which have been dated to the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age.

7.5.4.2 To the N of the possible live electricity cable, as described above, was what may have been the N edge of feature [54], here assigned the number [49] (Figures 9 and 10). If the two features were one and the same then the resulting feature would have been c. 2.80m wide and could have been an extensive land boundary ditch. A 0.50m wide slot was excavated across feature [49], adjacent to the E-facing section of Trench 3. The feature was at least 0.95m wide and at least 0.20m deep, although it was not bottomed. To the N the feature cut into natural brickearth [75] at 13.52m OD. To the S the edge of the feature was not revealed due to the presence of the aforementioned possible live electricity cable. The fill of the feature consisted of hard, mid grey, sandy silt [48]. Several chunks of burnt flint were recovered from the deposit, along with several small fragments of what may have been burnt daub and 2 sherds of pottery, which have been dated to the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age.

7.5.5 Phase V.5

7.5.5.1 A linear, N-S oriented, feature [51] was recorded towards the N end of Trench 4 (Figure 9). To the S the feature was not revealed below unexcavated 'plough soil' [57] and from there it extended ^{to the} 1.20m to the N, whereupon it had been truncated by a later pit [53]. Feature [51] was 0.23m wide and 60mm deep and it was recorded, cutting into natural brickearth [75] at a maximum height of 13.49m OD. It had vertical sides and a flat base. A length of 0.60m of the feature was excavated, to the S of the point of truncation. The fill consisted of hard, mid grey, sandy silt [50]. It contained a sherd of pottery which has been dated to the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age. This feature could have been a 'beam slot', dug in order to house an horizontal timber element which may have formed part of a simple timber-framed building.

7.6 Phase VI - Late Pre-Roman Iron Age/Roman Alluvial Deposits

7.6.1 Phase V1.1

7.6.1.1 Following the abandonment of boundary ditch [32], as described above, the SW part of the site was clearly subject to further seasonal flooding. Sealing ditch [32] was a layer [28] of soft, mid greyish brown, silty clay (Figure 8). To the N this deposit met the limit of excavation and from there it extended c. 6.50m to the S, whereupon it appeared to have been overlain by a further alluvial deposit [38]. Deposit [28], recorded at a maximum height of 13.00m OD, had a maximum thickness of 0.20m. The deposit probably represents the effects of a short-lived episode of flooding of the SW part of the site, close to the confluence of Sweep's Ditch and the River Thames.

7.6.1.2 Overlying alluvial clay [45], in the S part of Trench 3, was a lens [44] of soft, mid greyish brown, silty clay (Figure 8). The deposit, which was recorded at a maximum height of 12.58m OD, had a maximum thickness of 0.15m. This deposit also probably represents the effects of short-lived seasonal flooding and can reasonably be equated with deposit [28], as described above.

7.6.1.3 The two deposits described above were sealed beneath an extensive alluvial horizon [38] (Figure 8). This consisted of soft, mid greyish brown, silty clay, from which a sherd of pottery was recovered which has been dated to the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age. To the S this deposit met the limit of excavation and from there it extended c. 9.0m to the N, whereupon it overlay deposit [28]. Deposit [38], recorded at a height of 12.99m OD, had a maximum thickness of 0.40m. This deposit probably represents the effects of a series of winter floods in the SW part of the site.

7.7 Phase VII - Probable Roman Activity

7.7.1 Phase VII.1

7.7.1.1 Part of a N-S oriented ditch [12] was recorded at the S end of Trench 2 (Figures 5 and 6). To the S the feature met the limit of excavation and from there extended 2.20m to the N, whereupon it had been truncated by modern intrusive activity. The ditch, which was 0.65m wide and at least 0.18m deep, was recorded at a maximum height of 12.95m OD. It had straight gently sloping sides which broke gradually into a flat base. The primary fill [23], which was observed only along its E edge, consisted of compact, mid brown, sandy silt and gravels. The upper fill [13] of the ditch consisted of firm, mid grey, silty clay. A length of 0.60m of the feature was excavated but no cultural material was recovered.

7.7.1.2 Although no dating evidence was recovered from ditch [12], it clearly truncated ditch [14] which, by association, was probably of Late Pre-Roman Iron Age date (see Phase V.1). Ditch [12], which was probably dug to delineate a land boundary, was, therefore, possibly associated with a field system laid out on the site during the Roman period.

7.7.2 Phase VII.2

7.7.2.1 An E-W oriented ditch [4] was recorded towards the N end of Trench 2 (Figures 5 and 6). The feature, which was recorded at a maximum height of 13.03m OD, was 1.10m wide and 0.30m deep. It had steep straight sides which broke generally sharply into a flat base. The ditch had one homogeneous fill [5] which consisted of firm, dark grey, sandy silty clay. Several chunks of burnt flint and fragments of animal bone were recovered from the deposit along with several sherds of pottery. Eight of these sherds have been dated to the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age, one was Roman and another, a rim sherd from an everted-rim cooking pot, was probably Roman, although it may have been Late Medieval. The purpose of Ditch [4] was almost certainly to delineate a land boundary, although it may have had a secondary drainage function, and it was probably associated with what may have been an extensive field system which existed on the site during the Roman period.

7.7.2.2 A sub-circular postpit [1] (fill [2]) was recorded cutting into the infill of ditch [4], as described above. The feature measured 0.35m by 0.29m and was 0.11m deep. It had steep, slightly concave, sides which broke gradually into a flat base at 12.71m OD. Cutting into the fill [2] of the postpit was a circular postpipe [78] (fill [3]) of diameter 0.14m and depth 80mm. This postpipe represents the position of an upright timber which had been inserted into postpit [1]. The timber itself had either rotted during the course of time or it had been removed, probably contemporaneously with the abandonment of the post-built structure with which the feature was associated. It is possible that this structure may have been a palisade erected along the line of the infilled ditch in order to provide continuation of this land boundary, albeit in a different form.

7.7.3 Phase VII.3

7.7.3.1 What was probably a linear, SE-NW oriented, ditch [59] was recorded in the S part of Trench 4 (Figures 9 and 10). To the N and S it cut into the early soil horizon [76], at a maximum height of 13.34m OD. The ditch was 1.66m wide and c. 0.20m deep and had straight, gently sloping, sides which broke imperceptibly into a broad concave base. It was filled with soft, dark greyish brown, clayey sand [58]. A 0.50m wide portion of the ditch was excavated adjacent to the E-facing section of Trench 4 and although no dating evidence was recovered occasional small highly abraded fragments of ceramic building material were observed within the deposit.

7.7.3.2 Although the feature described above was not particularly deep, its width suggests that it may have formed a land boundary of some significance. It could also have served to drain what would have been particularly heavy soils over the natural marl in this part of the site. It is possible that the feature delineated part of an enclosure or field within what may have been a substantial network of such features laid out at this riverside location during the Roman period.

7.7.4 Phase VII.4

7.7.4.1 A linear feature [61], which may have been a palisade trench, was recorded less than 1.0m to the N of ditch [59], as described above, and running roughly parallel with that feature (Figures 9 and 10). Feature [61], which was 0.43m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.22m, cut into the early soil horizon [76] at a maximum height of 13.40m OD. It had steep concave sides which broke imperceptibly into a narrow concave base. The feature was filled with firm, mid grey, silty clayey chalk [60]. A 0.50m wide portion of the ditch was excavated adjacent to the E-facing section of Trench 4 but no dating evidence was recovered. The feature may have been associated with the postulated Roman field system which appears to have existed upon the site.

7.7.5 Phase VII.5

7.7.5.1 What may have been part of a sub-circular pit [53] was recorded in the N end of Trench 4 (Figures 9 and 10). It measured at least 1.35m E-W by at least 0.80m N-S and was 0.25m deep. It was recorded, cutting into natural brickearth [75], at 13.55m OD. The pit generally had steep sides which broke sharply into a flat base. The fill of the feature consisted of hard, mid grey, sandy silt [52]. Several chunks of burnt flint were recovered from the deposit, along with several sherds of pottery, one or two of which were of late Roman date while the remainder were Late Pre-Roman Iron Age, and, therefore, probably deposited residually. The feature was probably dug in order to dispose of domestic refuse and, therefore, is indicative of the proximity of settlement.

7.7.6 Phase VII.6

7.7.6.1 A series of circular and sub-circular features, probably postholes, were recorded in Trench 4 (Figure 9). These features (fills/cuts: [65]/[66], [67]/[68], [69]/[70], [71]/[72] and [73]/[74]) were between 0.32m and 0.44m wide. None were excavated. Three of the features ([66], [68], and [70]) cut into the infilled ditch [59] in the S half of Trench 4 and could represent part of a circular post-built structure. One ([74]) cut into the infilled ditch [49] and the other ([72]) cut into natural marl [77].

7.7.6.2 A scatter of possible stakeholes (all cuts [64]) was recorded towards the S end of Trench 4 (Figure 9). The features were circular in shape, 70-80mm in diameter, and were filled with firm, mid greyish brown, clayey silty chalk [63]. All the features cut into natural marl [77] at 13.30m OD. They could represent the positions of upright timber stakes which may have formed part of a variety of simple structures.

7.7.6.3 Although no dating evidence was recovered from any of the structural features described above, it is likely that they represent the remains of post and stake-built structures established on the site. Given their stratigraphic position, it is likely that they date from the Roman period.

7.8 Phase VIII - A Developed Soil Horizon

7.8.1 Phase VIII.1

7.8.1.1 In all four trenches a developed soil horizon ([47] in Trench 1, [8] in Trench 2, [26] in Trench 3 and [57] in Trench 4) was recorded beneath topsoil (Figures 4, 6, 8 and 10). These deposits generally consisted of soft-firm, mid brown, sandy silt and were between 0.31m and 0.42m thick. This horizon, which can be conveniently termed 'plough soil', represents material which accumulated upon the site between the Roman and Post-Medieval periods. Since the site was probably under pasture or crop for prolonged episodes during this time, this horizon would have formed by a combination of factors including ploughing, manuring, general bioturbation and the accumulation of wind blown detritus. Although none of this horizon was excavated by hand, sherds of Post-Medieval pottery and ceramic building material were observed within it, along with Roman and Iron Age material, which had been deposited residually. Horizontal truncation, such as that caused by ploughing, of Roman and Late Pre-Roman Iron Age features was probably not extensive in Trenches 2 and 4 and probably had not occurred at all in Trench 3.

7.8.1.2 Observed only in section in the southern part of Trench 2, at the lower interface of soil horizon [8], was a thin, compact, horizon [22] which consisted of dark brown sandy silty gravels with moderate small fragments of ceramic building material (Figure 6). The horizon, which was 50mm thick, may have accumulated due to the effects of bioturbation within layer [8].

7.9 Phase IX - Modern Activity

7.9.1 Phase IX.1

7.9.1.1 Two features [36] and [42], probably pits, were recorded in section in Trench 3 (Figure 8). Both of these features, which were sealed below topsoil [80] and cut into 'plough soil' [26], were of modern origin.

7.9.1.2 In all four trenches topsoil was recorded ([46] in Trench 1, [79] in Trench 2, [80] in Trench 3, [56] in Trench 4). This horizon, generally overlain by turf, which was between 0.16m and 0.28m thick (Figures 4, 6, 8 and 10).

8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Conclusions

- 8.1.1 It is clear from the findings of the archaeological field evaluation described in this report that the site, to the E of the confluence of the River Thames and its tributary, Sweep's Ditch, proved an attractive location for human occupation during several archaeological eras. Possibly the earliest of these was the Late Bronze Age. In particular, the site appears to have been extensively utilised during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age and also, to a lesser extent, during the Roman period. Since then the land has apparently remained under pasture, although there may have been limited cultivation.
- 8.1.2 The earliest alluvial deposits associated with Sweep's Ditch were investigated in Trench 3, towards the SW of the site (Phase I). The earliest human activity was represented by a substantial land boundary ditch located immediately to the E of the aforementioned alluvial deposits. This feature, which cut through the earliest soil horizon (Phase II), was probably dug in order to demarcate the marginal land in the W part of the site from higher ground to the E. The initial phase of this ditch may date from the Late Bronze Age (Phase III), although the dating evidence for this was very limited. Further work would probably clarify the date of this feature. Following a period of flooding of the SW part of the site (Phase IV), the aforementioned land boundary was re-established by the re-cutting of the ditch along the same alignment. This appears to have occurred during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age, that is the period immediately before the Roman invasion of Britain in AD 43.
- 8.1.3 In addition to the land boundary ditch in Trench 3, evidence of human activity during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age was also located in Trenches 2 and 4 (Phase V). In Trench 2, the W part of a curvilinear enclosure ditch of this period was investigated. In Trench 4, another substantial ditch, which again presumably delineated a land boundary, was also of this period. It would appear that during the century prior to the Claudian invasion of Britain the site was being utilised, relatively intensively, by the rural farming community. A network of fields, paddocks and enclosures was apparently set out at this riverside location. The limited extent of the evaluation trenches precluded an attempt to determine whether or not timber-framed structures or other evidence of settlement was present at the site.
- 8.1.4 The concentration of features from the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age upon the site is unquestionably of great archaeological significance at a local and a regional level. Whether or not the land boundaries may have been associated with an *oppidum* is open to speculation. *Oppida* were proto-urban settlements which appeared across SE Britain with the demise of the hillforts, the characteristic form of settlement throughout the majority of the Iron Age, of which there are several examples in Surrey. In contrast, no previous oppida have been located in Surrey, although small-scale occupation of the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age has been investigated at several locations in the County (Hanworth, 1987).
- 8.1.5 Further alluvial strata representing flooding of the SW part of the site, probably during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age, were investigated in Trench 3 (Phase VI). It seems that the Romano-British population continued to practice farming activities at the site, as several features dating to the Roman period were encountered in Trenches 2 and 4 (Phase VII). Two ditches, probably relating to a field system of the Roman period, were investigated in Trench 2. In Trench 4 a large pit, apparently of late Roman date, was investigated. This feature, which contained general domestic refuse, suggests that the site is located close to Roman settlement. Another ditch and a handful of other features in Trench 4, including groups of stakeholes and postholes representing evidence of post-built structures, may also have been Roman in origin.

- 8.1.6 A series of excavations in Staines, 2.5km to the N of the site described in this report, has established that a small town, which may have originated as a posting station at the important river crossing, existed there during the Roman period (Bird, 1987). The Roman name of Staines was *Pontibus*, which demonstrates that there was certainly a bridge over the Thames there for the London-Silchester road. The area around the town, which occupied a natural gravel island, would undoubtedly have been under cultivation or used for rearing stock to supply the population of the town. The riverside location of the site described in this report would have been attractive to farmers. It is also possible that a small hamlet was established on, or close to, the site. With this in mind it is clear that the findings of the evaluation, which have demonstrated a Roman presence upon the site, have great archaeological significance, particularly at a local and regional level. Further work could clarify the nature and extent of the features and deposits which date from the Roman period.
- 8.1.7 Between the Roman and the Post-Medieval periods the site apparently lay under pasture allowing the development of a distinct soil horizon which sealed the evidence of previous phases of occupation (Phase VIII). Some modern activity was recorded below topsoil (Phase IX).

8.2 Recommendations

- 8.2.1 The findings of Trench 1, where no significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered, demonstrate that there is little likelihood of archaeological remains existing in the SE part of the site. Therefore, the impact of proposed house plots 1, 2 and 3 (Figure 11) upon the archaeological resource is considered to be minimal or non-existent. Similarly, in the SW part of the site (house plot 9 and to the S of that), where alluvial clays associated with Sweep's Ditch are known to be thickest, there also seems to be little or no chance of significant archaeological deposits existing.
- 8.2.2 In contrast to the S part of the site, the N area has clearly fulfilled the high archaeological potential predicted in the Desk-Based Assessment. The ditches encountered in Trenches 2 and 3 clearly continue to the S and E and further investigation of these is recommended as the construction of houses in plots 6, 7 and 8 will inevitably cause the destruction of important archaeological features and deposits from the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age (and possibly earlier) and the Roman period. The high concentration of archaeological features from the same periods which were encountered in Trench 4, where the localised deposition of natural marl seems to have acted as a focus for activity, is of particular concern considering the proposed location of house plots 4 and 5. Again, further investigation of the area threatened by the construction of houses in those plots is recommended.
- 8.2.3 The 'central' part of the site, where it is intended to establish an access road and areas of hardstanding, may also be threatened depending on the depth of truncation anticipated during the construction of those features. If truncation down to natural sand and gravels does occur then again it is likely that important archaeological deposits will be destroyed.

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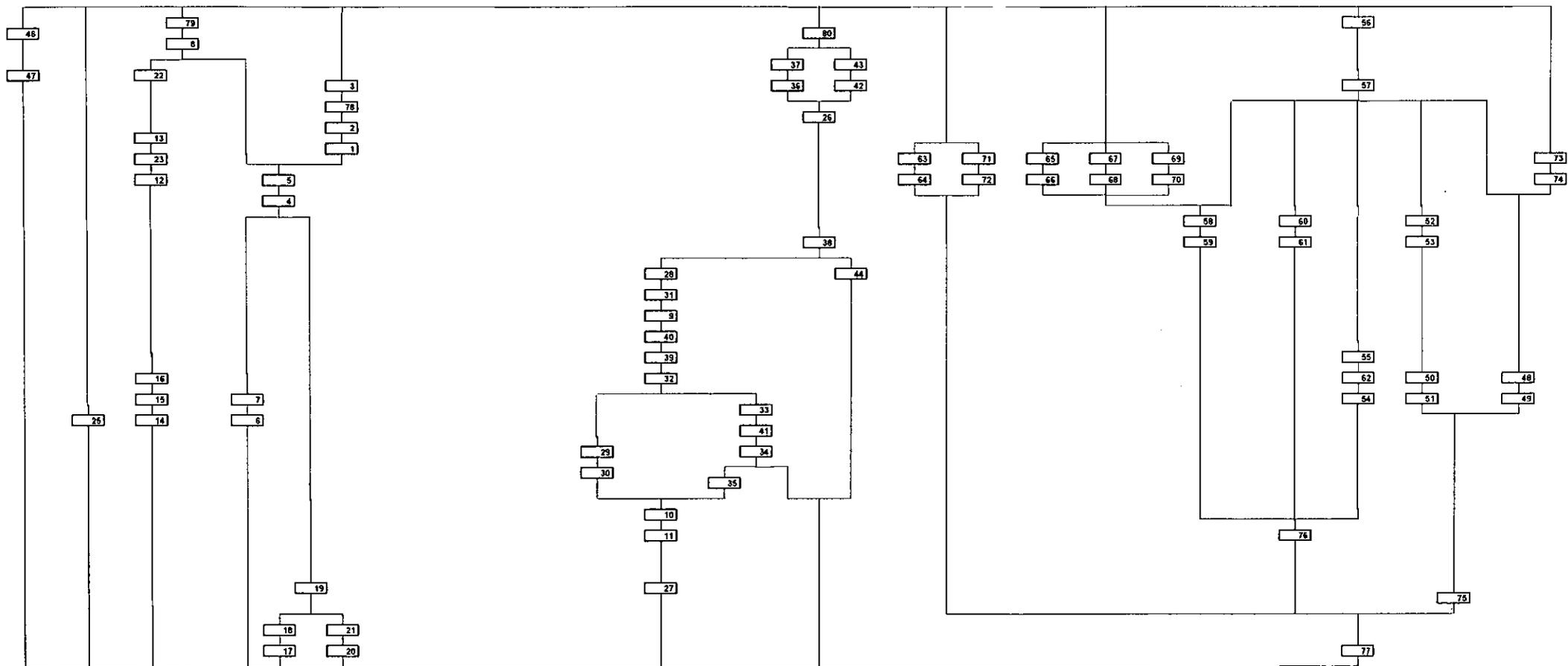
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APPENDIX 1

SITE MATRIX



NATURAL

APPENDIX 2

FINDS REPORT

by Malcolm Lyne Arch. Dip. (Lon.), PhD.

1. The fabrics.

The pottery from the site is mainly Late Iron Age in date and belongs to the period immediately before the Roman invasion. The sherds of this period can be subdivided into the following fabrics:

- A. Handmade black fabric with profuse up to 0.10 mm. subangular quartz filler
- B. Handmade brown-black fabric with poorly sorted 0.10 to 0.50 mm. quartz sand filler.
- C. Handmade black fabric with profuse up-to 2.00 mm. crushed fossil shell.
- D. Handmade black fabric with sparse up-to 0.50 mm. calcined flint inclusions.
- E. Handmade soapy black fabric with clay grog filler.
- F. Handmade soapy black fabric with minute flecks of lime or calcite.
- G. Tourmented black fabric with profuse up-to 5.00 mm. crushed flint.

2. The assemblages

LAL 96 [+]. 1 sherd Fabric A. 4 gm.

LAL 96 [5]. 4 sherds of Fabric A including fragment from base of cordoned and necked jar. 18 gm.

1 pellet of Fabric C. 2 gm.

2 chips of Fabric D. 8 gm.

1 sherd of Fabric E. 4 gm.

1 chip of Roman grey ware. 1 gm.

Rim sherd from everted-rim cooking-pot in very-fine-sanded grey ware fired orange-brown with rim edge blackening. Late Medieval.

LAL 96 [7] C. 1 sherd of Fabric F. 10 gm.

2 joining sherds from base of cooking-pot in Fabric G. 158 gm.

LAL 96 [7] N 6 lumps of fired daub.

6 sherds of Fabric A. 28 gm.

1 sherd of Fabric C. 12 gm.

LAL 96 [7] S 1 sherd of Fabric D. 2 gm.

LAL 96 [9] 2 sherds of Fabric A, including bead-rim from jar of period c.50 BC.- AD.43. 28 gm.

1 sherd of Fabric C. 4 gm.

LAL 96 [38] 1 sherd of Fabric A. 8 gm.

LAL 96 [48] 2 chips of Fabric B. 6 gm.

LAL 96 [50] 1 sherd of Fabric B. 8 gm.

LAL 96 [52] 8 sherds of Fabric B from small thick-walled cooking-pots. 122 gm

2 sherds in coarse cream-buff fabric with up-to 0.20 mm. iron stained quartz filler. These sherds are very abraded but one appears to have traces of horizontal rilling and could be from an Overwey/Portchester D cooking-pot of the period c.AD.330-420. 10 gm.

LAL 96 [55] 6 thick-walled sherds in Fabric A. 60 gm.

3. Observations.

A shortage of diagnostic rim fragments severely limits any detailed discussion of the material but the presence of what appear to be abraded Overwey/Portchester D sherds in Context 52 alongside sherds in Fabric B is intriguing. The dating of body sherds in fabrics similar to A and B (particularly B) has always been a problem in that a very similar group of fabrics is also characteristic of the pagan Saxon period (c.AD.450-650). It is possible therefore that some of the Fabrics A and B sherds from this site (and particularly the thick-walled ones from Contexts 52 and 55) are Pagan Saxon in date. Pagan Saxon sites in the Middle Thames valley are particularly interesting in that they include some of the earliest known in Britain. Bray produced a deep stratified sequence spanning the Late Roman/Early Saxon transition and the Eden Street site at Kingston has produced similarly dated material. Laleham thus has the potential for supplying new information on both the Iron Age/Roman ceramic transition and possibly the Early Saxon occupation in the Thames valley.

APPENDIX 3

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

CONTEXT [1]	cut, sub-circular, steep sides breaking gradually into flat base, 0.35m x 0.29m x 0.11m deep
INTERPRETATION	postpit
CONTEXT [2]	firm, mid brown, sandy silt, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material, occasional flecks of charcoal
INTERPRETATION	infill of posthole [1] following insertion of upright
CONTEXT [3]	firm, dark brown, sandy silt, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal
INTERPRETATION	infill of postpipe [78] following removal/disintegration of upright
CONTEXT [4]	cut, linear?, E-W, steep straight sides breaking gradually or sharply into flat base, 1.10m wide x 0.30m deep
INTERPRETATION	ditch
CONTEXT [5]	firm, dark grey with dark brownish red mottling, sandy silty clay, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional fragments of animal bone, occasional chunks of burnt flint
INTERPRETATION	fill of ditch [4]
CONTEXT [6]	cut, curvilinear, N-S, steep sides breaking gradually into flat base, 8.70m long x 0.85m x 0.30m deep
INTERPRETATION	ditch
CONTEXT [7]	firm, light brownish grey with mid greenish orange mottling, silty clay, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional fragments of animal bone, occasional chunks of burnt flint, occasional struck flints
INTERPRETATION	fill of ditch [6]
CONTEXT [8]	firm, mid brown, sandy silt, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material, occasional flecks of charcoal, 0.31m thick
INTERPRETATION	developed soil horizon in Trench 2
CONTEXT [9]	firm, dark grey with dark reddish brown mottling, sandy clay, moderate fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional chunks of burnt flint, occasional fragments of animal bone, 0.23m thick
INTERPRETATION	primary fill of ditch [32]
CONTEXT [10]	compact, light greyish white, chalky clay, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional struck flints, 0.20m thick
INTERPRETATION	primary fill of ditch [11]
CONTEXT [11]	cut, linear, NW-SE, gently sloping slightly concave sides breaking imperceptibly into rounded base, 1.70m long x 2.40m x 0.70m deep
INTERPRETATION	ditch

CONTEXT [12] cut, curvilinear?, N-S, gently sloping sides breaking gradually into flat base, 2.20m long x 0.65m x 0.18m deep

INTERPRETATION ditch

CONTEXT [13] firm, mid grey with dark reddish brown mottling, silty clay, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles

INTERPRETATION upper fill of ditch [12]

CONTEXT [14] cut, linear?, N-S, gently sloping sides breaking gradually into flat base, 1.20m long x at least 0.30m wide x at least 0.26m deep

INTERPRETATION ditch

CONTEXT [15] firm, mid grey with dark reddish brown mottling, silty clay, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, 0.19m thick

INTERPRETATION primary fill of ditch [14]

CONTEXT [16] firm, mid brownish yellow, sandy silt, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material, 0.17m thick

INTERPRETATION upper fill of ditch [14]?

CONTEXT [17] cut?, linear?, E-W?, gently sloping sides breaking gradually into concave base, 0.50m wide x 80mm deep

INTERPRETATION uncertain feature, possibly naturally formed

CONTEXT [18] firm, dark grey, clayey silt, occasional fine sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles

INTERPRETATION fill of feature [17]

CONTEXT [19] soft, mid brown, silty clay, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, 0.18m thick

INTERPRETATION 'early' soil horizon

CONTEXT [20] cut?, linear?, E-W?, steep side to N breaking sharply into flat base, at least 0.38m wide x 0.12m deep

INTERPRETATION uncertain feature, , possibly naturally formed

CONTEXT [21] firm, mid grey, clayey silt occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles

INTERPRETATION fill of feature [20]

CONTEXT [22] compact, dark brown, sandy silty gravels (fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles), moderate small fragments of ceramic building material, 50mm thick

INTERPRETATION gravel horizon

CONTEXT [23] compact, mid brown, sandy silty gravels (fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles), 0.12m thick

INTERPRETATION primary fill of ditch [12]

CONTEXT [24] firm mid grey with dark reddish brown mottling, clayey silt, occasional flecks of charcoal, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles, occasional struck flint

INTERPRETATION fill of posthole [25]

CONTEXT [25] cut, sub-rectangular, steep sides breaking sharply into flat base, 0.37m N-S x 0.18m E-W x 40mm deep

INTERPRETATION posthole

CONTEXT [26] firm, mid brown, sandy silt, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material, occasional flecks of charcoal, 0.35m thick

INTERPRETATION developed soil horizon in Trench 3

CONTEXT [27] firm, mid grey, sandy silty clay, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, 0.14m thick

INTERPRETATION 'early' soil horizon

CONTEXT [28] soft-firm, mid greyish brown, silty clay, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional small fragments of chalk, 0.20m thick

INTERPRETATION alluvial deposit

CONTEXT [29] firm, mid grey to mid greyish brown sandy silty clay, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, 0.12m thick

INTERPRETATION upper fill of ditch [11]

CONTEXT [30] firm, light grey with mid reddish brown mottling, sandy silt, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, 0.12m thick

INTERPRETATION a fill of ditch [11]

CONTEXT [31] firm, mid grey with mid reddish brown mottling, clayey sand, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material, 0.43m thick

INTERPRETATION upper fill of ditch [32]

CONTEXT [32] cut, linear, NW-SE, steep convex ,then concave towards base, sides breaking gradually into narrow concave base, 1.60m long x 1.50m x 0.67m deep

INTERPRETATION ditch (re-cut of ditch [11])

CONTEXT [33] firm, dark grey with mid reddish brown mottling, clayey sand, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material, 0.40m thick

INTERPRETATION fill of pit? [41]

CONTEXT [34] soft, mid grey, silty clay, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, 0.30m thick

INTERPRETATION alluvial deposit

CONTEXT [35] firm, mid grey, sterile clay, 0.16m thick

INTERPRETATION a fill of ditch [11]

CONTEXT [36] cut, linear?, E-W?, vertical side(s?) breaking sharply into flat base, 1.30m wide x 0.40m deep

INTERPRETATION pit?

CONTEXT [37] soft, dark brown, silty clay, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material

INTERPRETATION fill of pit? [36]

CONTEXT [38] soft, mid greyish brown silty clay, occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional sherds of pottery, 0.40m thick

INTERPRETATION alluvial deposit

CONTEXT [39] cut, sub-oval, steep sides breaking sharply into concave base, 0.20m x 0.20m x 80mm deep

INTERPRETATION posthole

CONTEXT [40] firm, dark grey with dark reddish brown mottling, sandy clay, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles

INTERPRETATION fill of posthole [39]

CONTEXT [41] cut, linear?, NW-SE, steep straight (N) or convex (S) sides breaking sharply into flat base, 0.75m wide x 0.32m deep

INTERPRETATION pit?

CONTEXT [42] cut, linear?, E-W?, steep concave sides breaking imperceptibly into concave base, 0.45m wide x 0.20m deep

INTERPRETATION pit?

CONTEXT [43] soft, dark brown, silty clay

INTERPRETATION fill of pit? [42]

CONTEXT [44] soft, mid greyish brown, silty clay, occasional fine rounded and sub-rounded flint pebbles, 0.15m thick

INTERPRETATION alluvial deposit

CONTEXT [45] stiff becoming firm then soft with depth, light grey clay, occasional amorphous sandy lenses in lower half, 0.60m thick

INTERPRETATION alluvial deposit

CONTEXT [46] soft, dark brownish grey sandy silt, frequent fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, frequent roots, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, 0.16m thick

INTERPRETATION topsoil in Trench 1

CONTEXT [47] firm, mid brown, sandy clayey silt, frequent pea grit, moderate fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional small and medium fragments of ceramic building material, 0.36m thick

INTERPRETATION developed soil horizon in Trench 1

CONTEXT [48] hard, mid grey sandy silt, moderate small fragments of chalk, occasional flecks of charcoal, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional chunks of burnt flint

INTERPRETATION fill of ditch? [49]

CONTEXT [49] cut, linear?, SE-NW?, steep straight side to N breaking sharply into flat base, 1.60m long x at least 0.95m wide x 0.32m deep

INTERPRETATION ditch?

CONTEXT [50] hard, mid grey with light brownish green speckling, sandy silt, frequent small fragments of chalk, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional chunks of burnt flint, occasional flecks of charcoal

INTERPRETATION fill of linear feature [51]

CONTEXT [51] cut, linear, N-S, vertical straight sides breaking sharply into flat base, 1.20m long x 0.23m x 60mm deep

INTERPRETATION beam slot?

CONTEXT [39] cut, sub-oval, steep sides breaking sharply into concave base, 0.20m x 0.20m x 80mm deep
INTERPRETATION posthole

CONTEXT [40] firm, dark grey with dark reddish brown mottling, sandy clay, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flint pebbles
INTERPRETATION fill of posthole [39]

CONTEXT [41] cut, linear?, NW-SE, steep straight (N) or convex (S) sides breaking sharply into flat base, 0.75m wide x 0.32m deep
INTERPRETATION pit?

CONTEXT [42] cut, linear?, E-W?, steep concave sides breaking imperceptibly into concave base, 0.45m wide x 0.20m deep
INTERPRETATION pit?

CONTEXT [43] soft, dark brown, silty clay
INTERPRETATION fill of pit? [42]

CONTEXT [44] soft, mid greyish brown, silty clay, occasional fine rounded and sub-rounded flint pebbles, 0.15m thick
INTERPRETATION alluvial deposit

CONTEXT [45] stiff becoming firm then soft with depth, light grey clay, occasional amorphous sandy lenses in lower half, 0.60m thick
INTERPRETATION alluvial deposit

CONTEXT [46] soft, dark brownish grey sandy silt, frequent fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, frequent roots, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, 0.16m thick
INTERPRETATION topsoil in Trench 1

CONTEXT [47] firm, mid brown, sandy clayey silt, frequent pea grit, moderate fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional small and medium fragments of ceramic building material, 0.36m thick
INTERPRETATION developed soil horizon in Trench 1

CONTEXT [48] hard, mid grey sandy silt, moderate small fragments of chalk, occasional flecks of charcoal, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional chunks of burnt flint
INTERPRETATION fill of ditch? [49]

CONTEXT [49] cut, linear?, SE-NW?, steep straight side to N breaking sharply into flat base, 1.60m long x at least 0.95m wide x 0.32m deep
INTERPRETATION ditch?

CONTEXT [50] hard, mid grey with light brownish green speckling, sandy silt, frequent small fragments of chalk, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional chunks of burnt flint, occasional flecks of charcoal
INTERPRETATION fill of linear feature [51]

CONTEXT [51] cut, linear, N-S, vertical straight sides breaking sharply into flat base, 1.20m long x 0.23m x 60mm deep
INTERPRETATION beam slot?

CONTEXT [52] hard, mid grey with light brownish green speckling, sandy silt, frequent small fragments of chalk, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional chunks of burnt flint, occasional flecks of charcoal

INTERPRETATION fill of pit [53]

CONTEXT [53] cut, sub-circular?, steep to S - more gentle to W - straight sides breaking sharply into flat base, at least 1.35m E-W x at least 0.80m N-S x 0.25m deep

INTERPRETATION pit

CONTEXT [54] cut, linear?, SE-NW?, steep straight side to S, 1.60m long x at least 1.35m wide x at least 0.20m deep but not bottomed

INTERPRETATION ditch?

CONTEXT [55] hard, mid grey sandy silt, moderate small fragments of chalk, occasional flecks of charcoal, occasional sherds of pottery, occasional chunks of burnt flint

INTERPRETATION fill of ditch? [54]

CONTEXT [56] soft, dark brownish grey sandy silt, frequent fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, frequent roots, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, 0.28m thick

INTERPRETATION topsoil in Trench 4

CONTEXT [57] firm, mid brown, sandy clayey silt, frequent pea grit, moderate fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional small and medium fragments of ceramic building material, 0.42m thick

INTERPRETATION developed soil horizon

CONTEXT [58] soft, dark greyish brown with mid greenish brown mottling, clayey sand with moderate fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles, occasional small fragments of ceramic building material

INTERPRETATION fill of ditch [59]

CONTEXT [59] cut, linear, SE-NW, gently sloping sides breaking imperceptibly into concave base, 1.60m long x 1.66m x 0.20m deep

INTERPRETATION ditch

CONTEXT [60] firm, mid grey with mid brownish green mottling, silty clayey chalk

INTERPRETATION fill of linear slot [61]

CONTEXT [61] cut, linear, SE-NW, steep concave sides breaking imperceptibly into narrow concave base, 1.60m long x 0.43m x 0.22m deep

INTERPRETATION linear slot

CONTEXT [62] friable, mid orange brown sandy silty clay, occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular flint pebbles

INTERPRETATION primary fill of ditch [54]?

CONTEXT [63] firm, mid greyish brown, clayey silty chalk

INTERPRETATION fill(s) of stakehole(s) [64]

CONTEXT [64] cut(s), circular, 70-80mm diameter, not excavated

INTERPRETATION group of stakeholes

CONTEXT [65] firm, mid reddish brown, chalky clayey silt

INTERPRETATION fill of posthole? [66]



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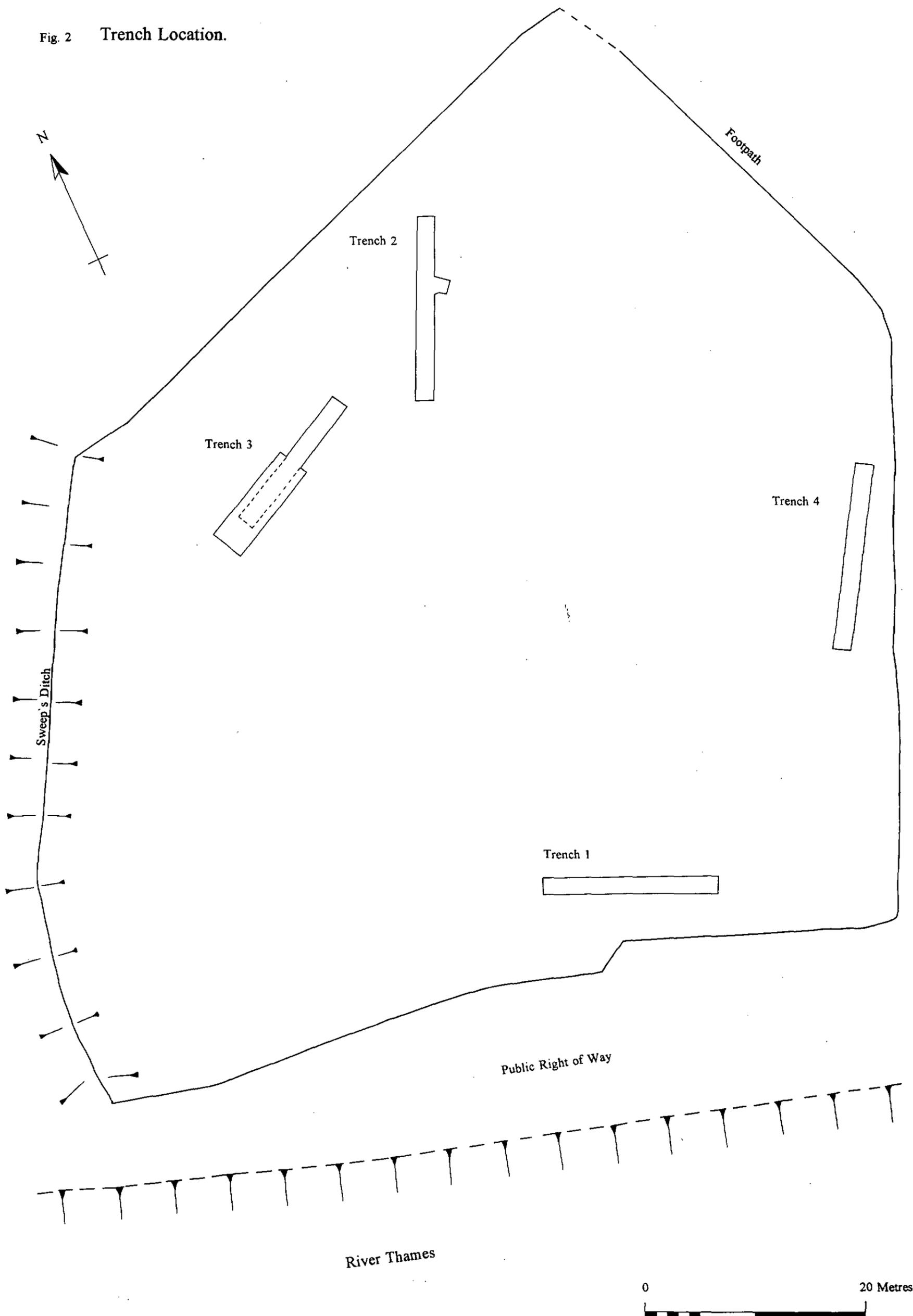


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Fig. 1 Site Location

LAL 96

Fig. 2 Trench Location.



LAL 96

Fig. 3 Trench 1, Plan.

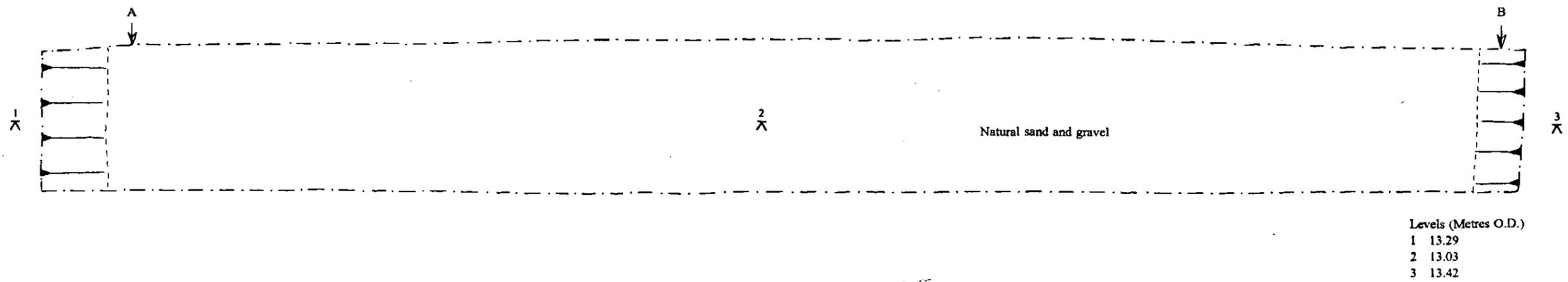


Fig. 4 Section 1, South Facing, Trench 1.

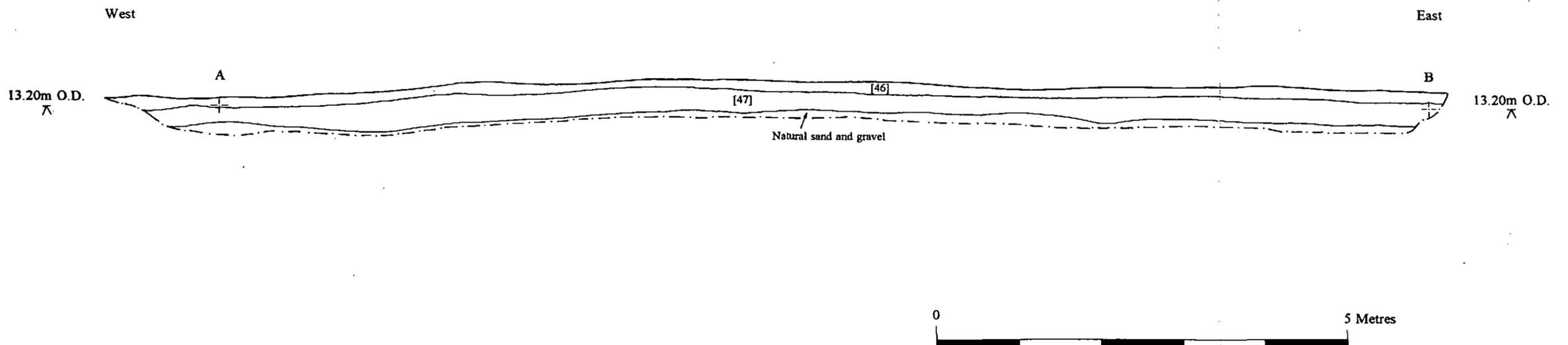


Fig. 5 Trench 2, Plan.

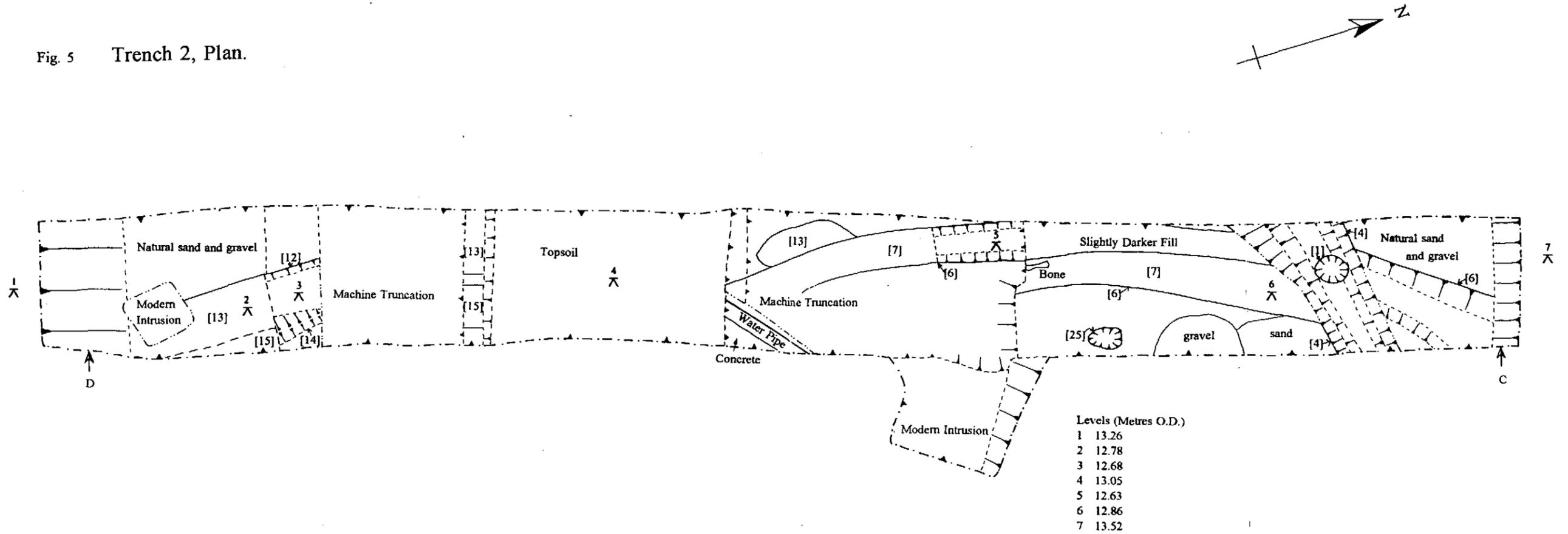


Fig. 6 Section 2, North-West Facing, Trench 2.

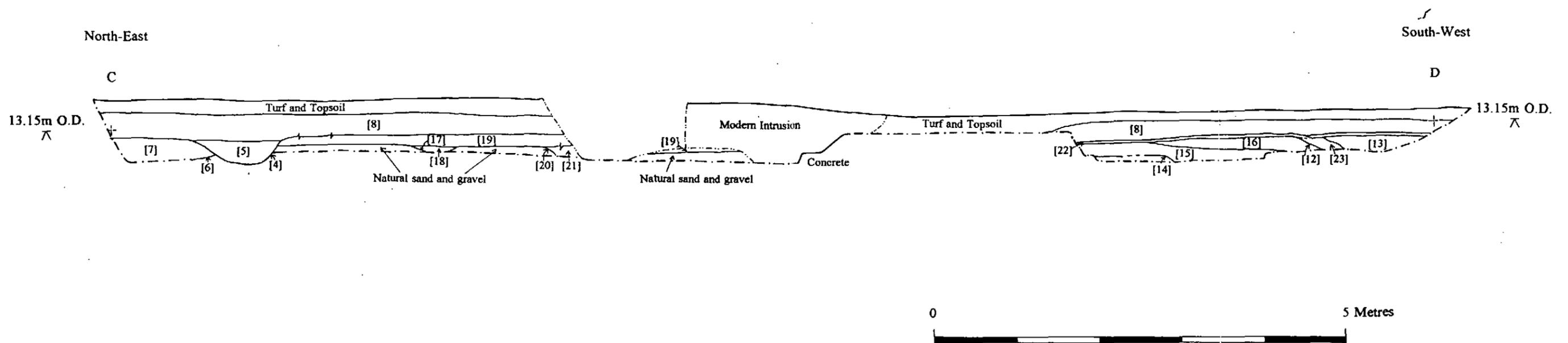
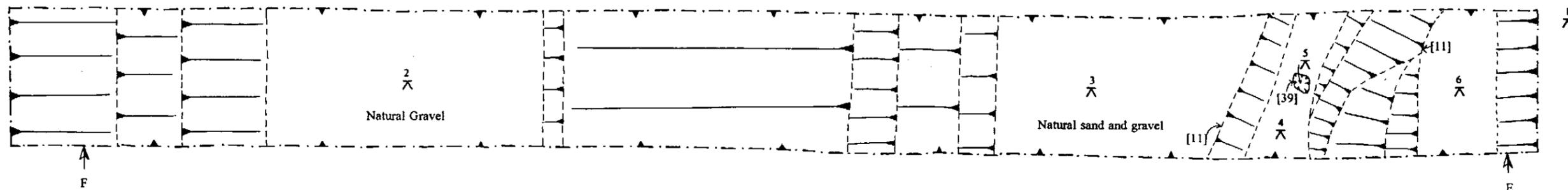


Fig. 7 Trench 3, Plan.



Levels (Metres O.D.)

1	13.27
2	11.79
3	12.50
4	12.24
5	12.16
6	12.79

Fig. 8 Section 3, North Facing, Trench 3.

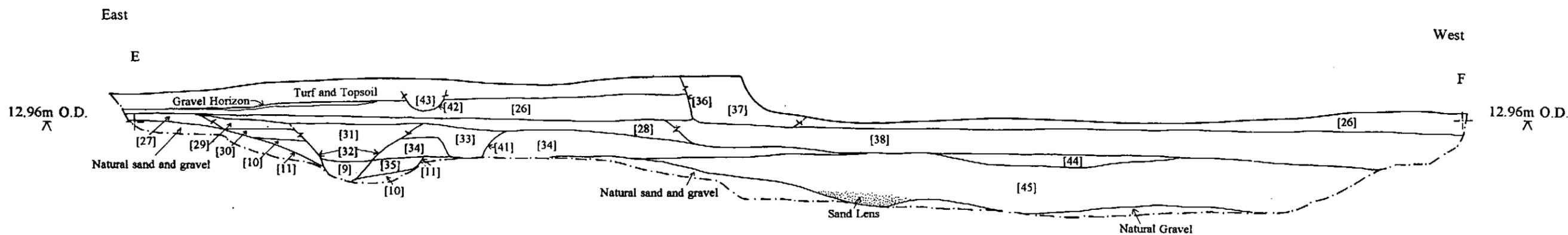
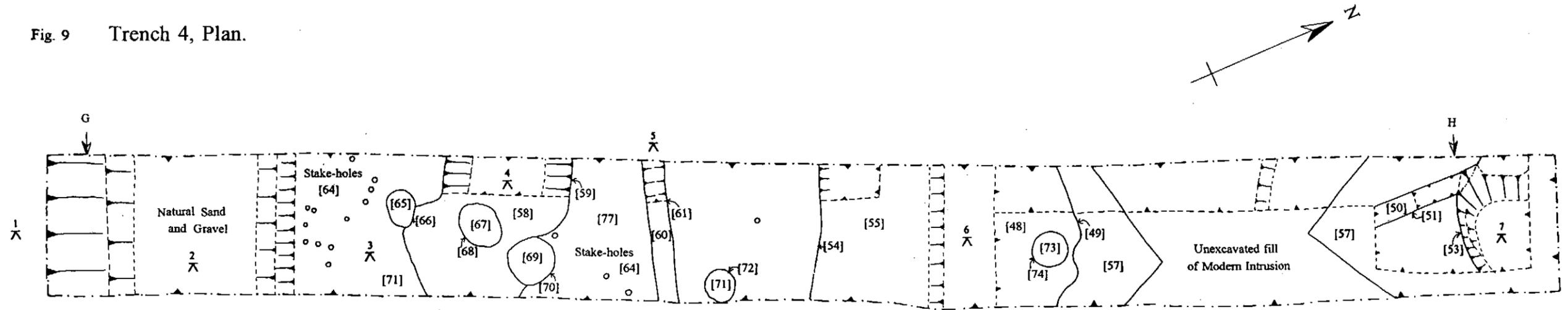


Fig. 9 Trench 4, Plan.



Levels (Metres O.D.)

1	13.74
2	12.97
3	13.30
4	13.10
5	13.17
6	13.61
7	13.30

Fig. 10 Section 4, South-East Facing, Trench 4.

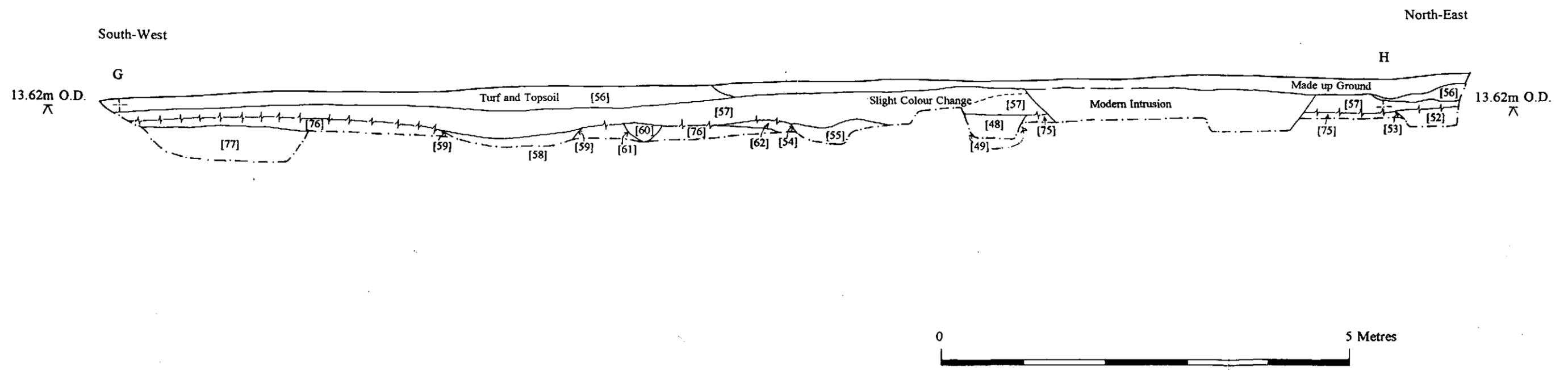


Fig 2 Trench Location.

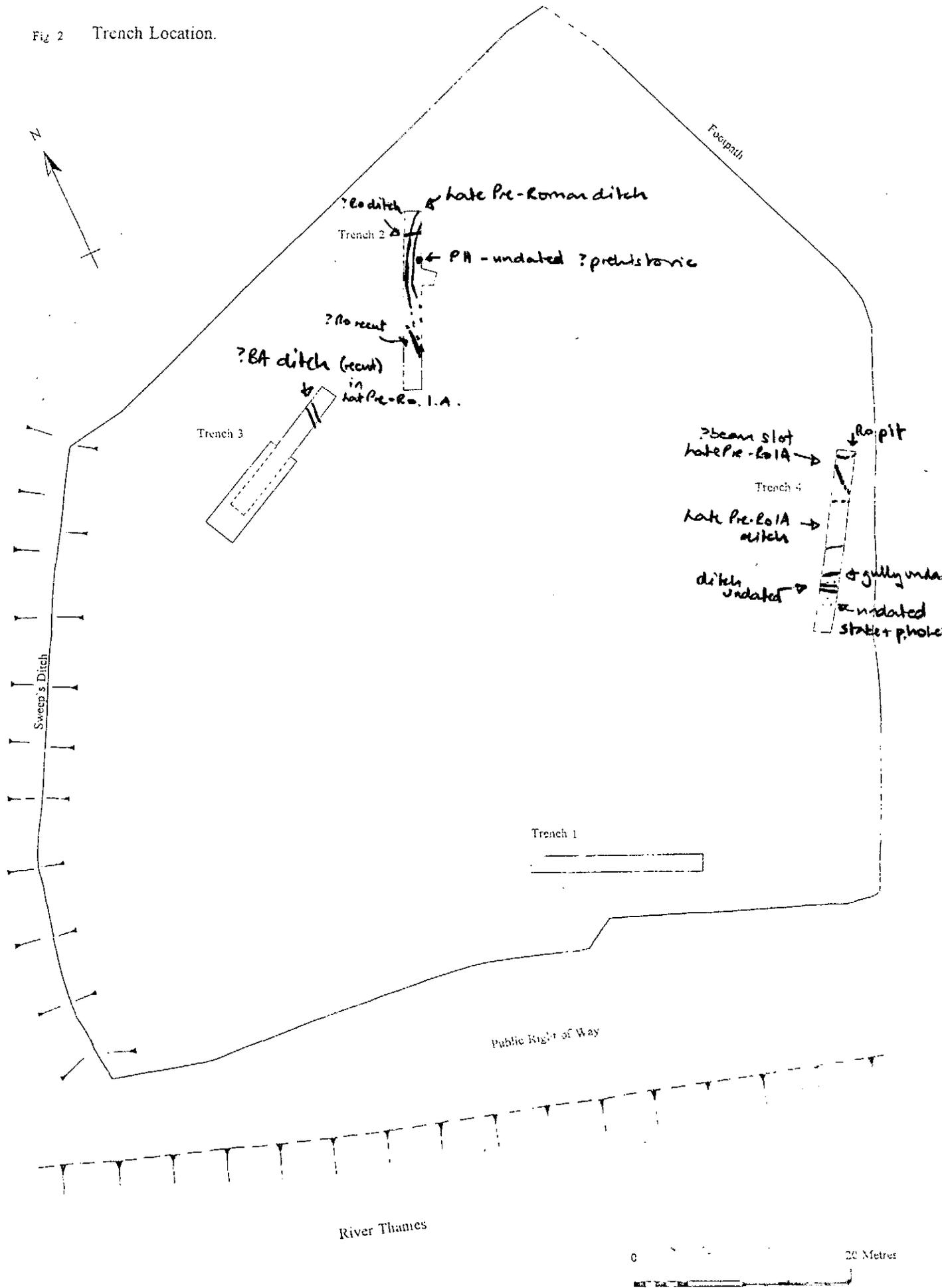


Fig 7 Trench 3, Plan.

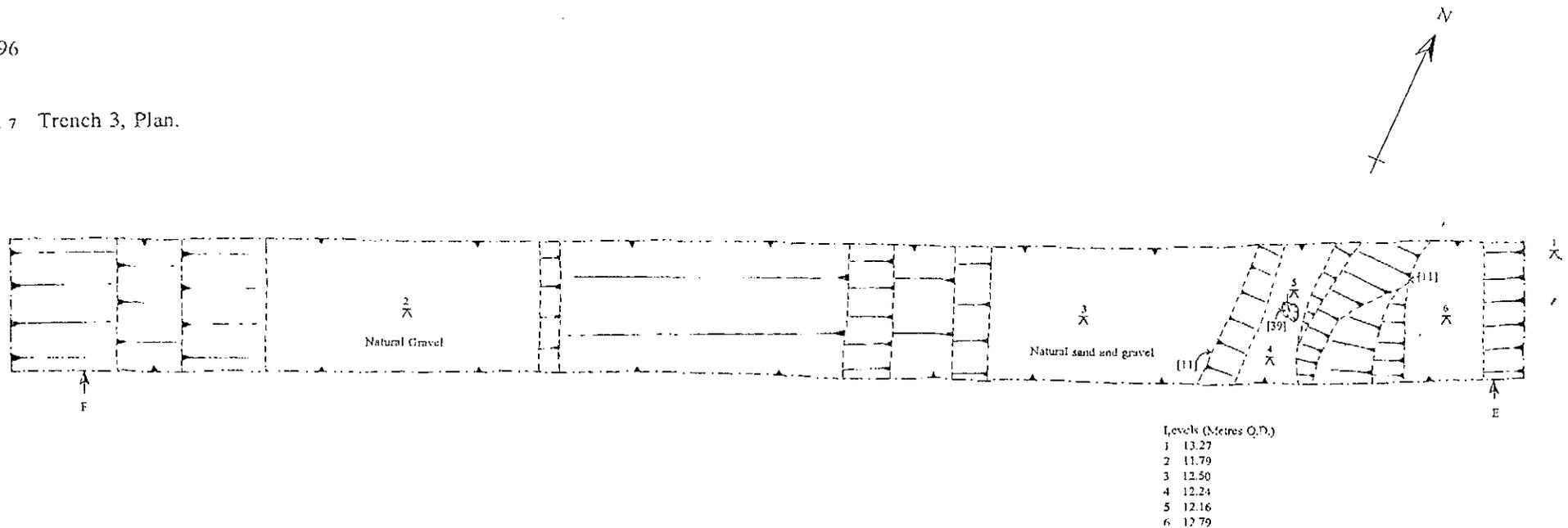


Fig 8 Section 3, North Facing, Trench 3.

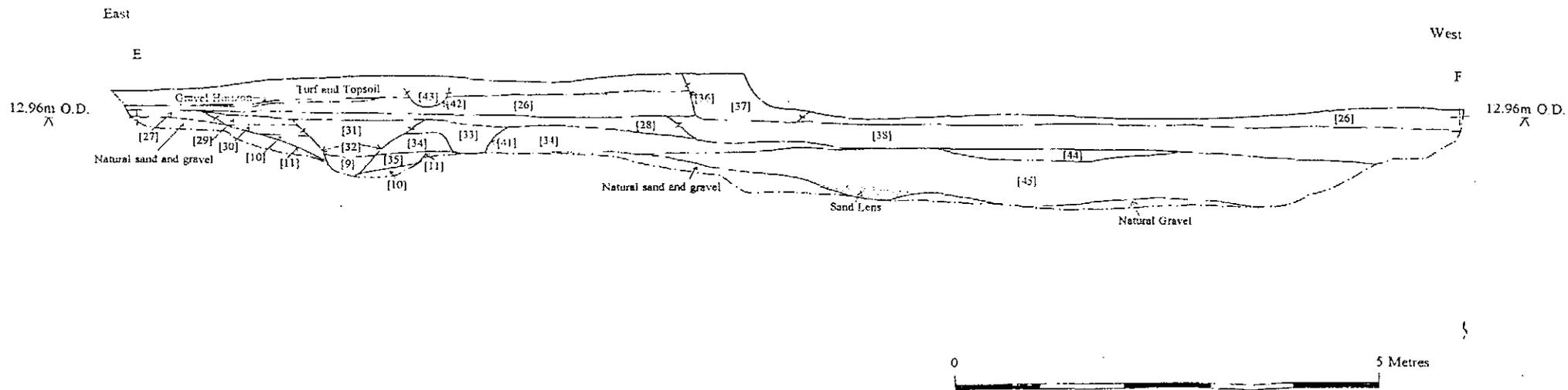


Fig 3 Trench 1, Plan.

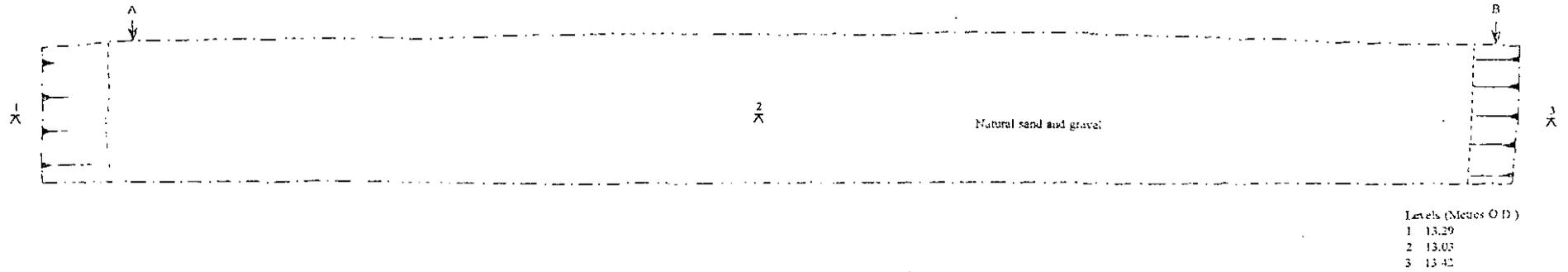


Fig. 4 Section I, South Facing, Trench 1.

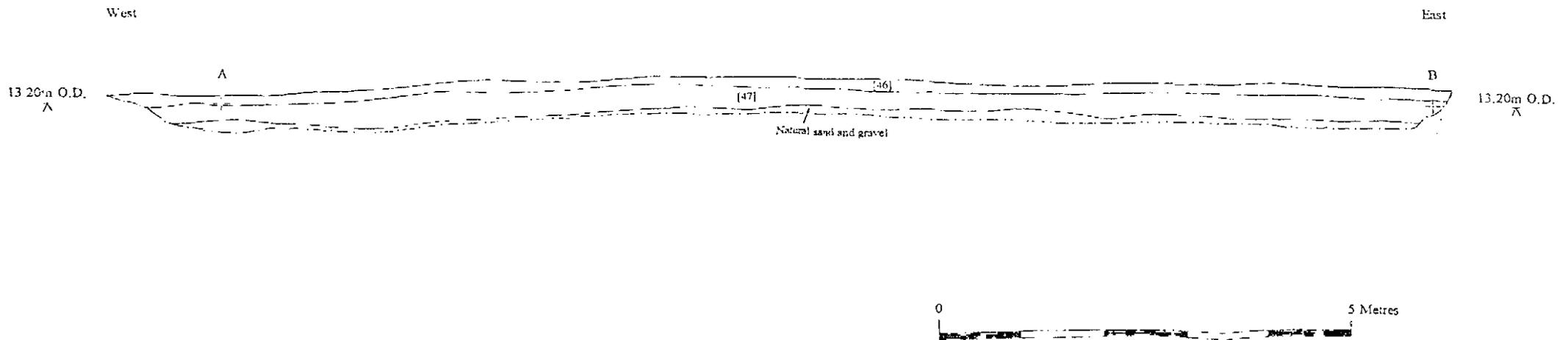


Fig. 5 Trench 2, Plan.

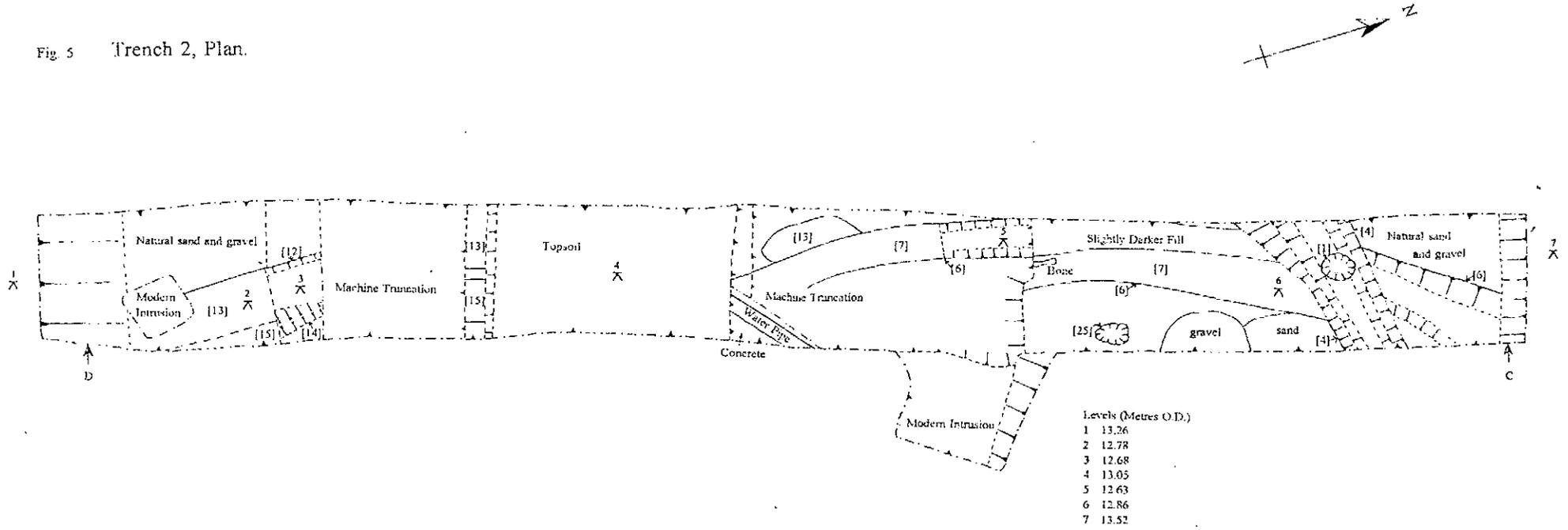


Fig. 6 Section 2, North-West Facing, Trench 2.

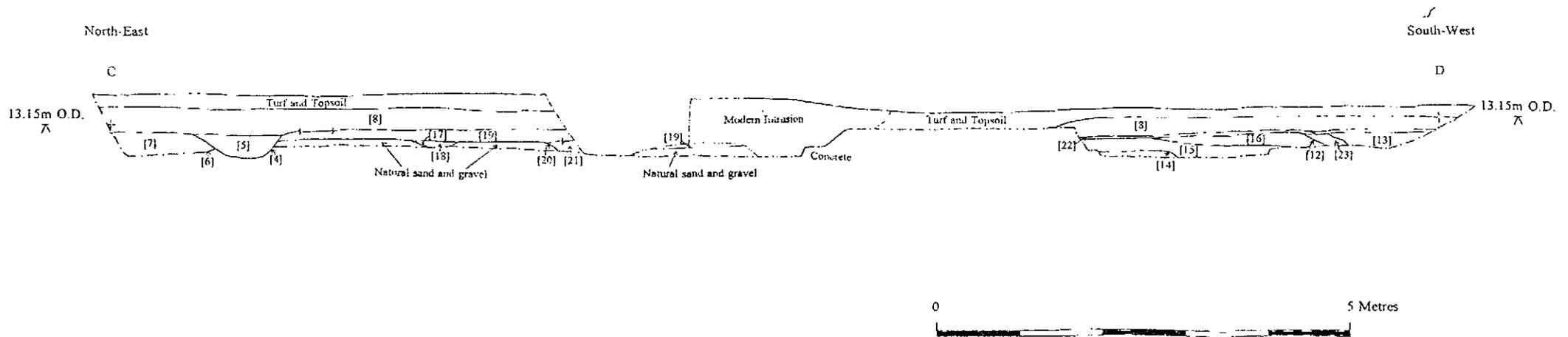




Fig. 11 Plan of Proposed Development