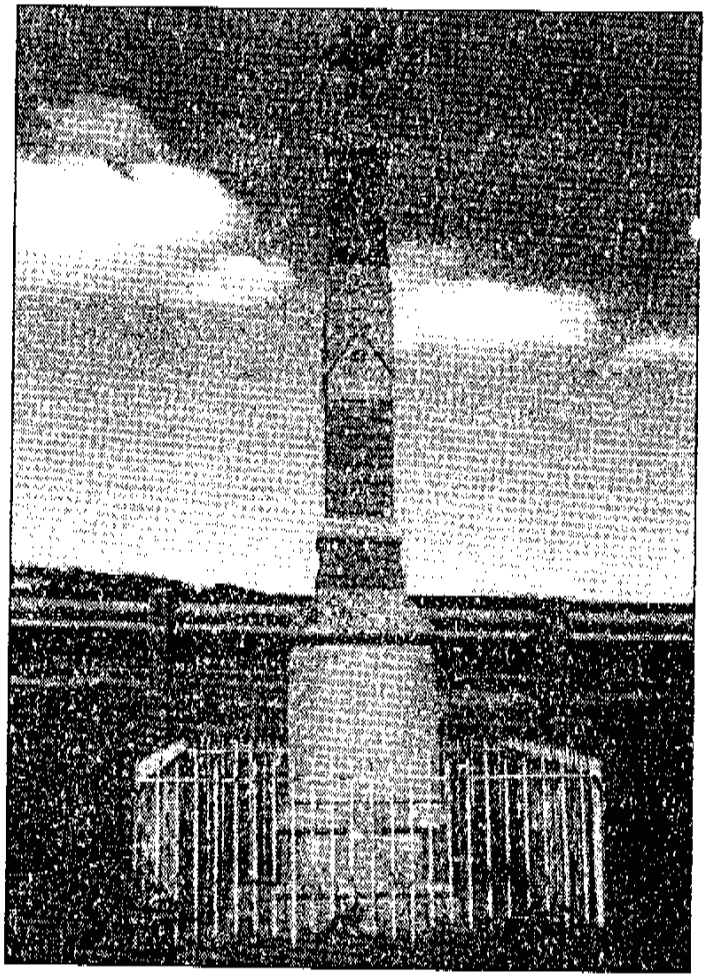
# A30 HONITON TO EXETER IMPROVEMENT
# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION EXCAVATIONS 1994



Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit

Highways Agency

Acer Consultants Ltd

# A30 TRUNK ROAD
# HONITON TO EXETER IMPROVEMENT
# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
# PART 1: BLACKHORSE, SOWTON

by

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**Preface**

This report is one of a series of six describing the results of archaeological investigations along the proposed route of the A30 Trunk Road Honiton to Exeter Improvement Scheme in east Devon. The fieldwork was undertaken by Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit (EMAFU) between June and December 1994. The project was funded by the Highways Agency.

A preliminary archaeological assessment of the published route had been prepared in 1991 (EMAFU Report No. 91.22). At a meeting on 31 March 1994 representatives of interested parties (the Highways Agency, Acer Consultants, EMAFU, Devon County Archaeological Service and English Heritage) discussed the archaeological implications of the scheme. It was agreed to bring the level of archaeological assessment in line with recent guidelines laid out in the Department of Transport's document: *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Vol. II* (1993).

A Scoping Statement was subsequently produced by EMAFU identifying the archaeological requirements as follows: an update/review of the 1991 assessment; an assessment of existing borehole/trial-pit data; the implementation of a geophysical survey; evaluation excavations; field survey and fabric recording; fieldwalking; palaeoenvironmental sampling and dating.

The geophysical survey was carried out by Oxford Archaeotechnics and will be produced as a separate report.

**Contents**



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation excavation undertaken in November 1994 at the site of a prehistoric enclosure at Blackhorse, Sowton.

## 1.1. **Location** (Figs 1-2)

The site (SX97769331) lies wholly within the proposed construction corridor in a field immediately to the south of the existing A30, opposite the Blackhorse Garage and between the A30/M5 interchange and Clyst Honiton. It is located on the south-east slopes of the Clyst Valley, at a height of approximately 30m OD. The sandy soils (Bridgnorth Series) overlie Permian and Triassic Dawlish Sandstone.

## 1.2 **Background**

This site was identified from aerial photographs taken in 1984 by F.M. Griffith as a rectangular enclosure. The enclosed area measured approximately 42 x 37m. Three north-south linear features were also recorded as cropmarks in the same area, running through the enclosure on a different alignment.

# 2. THE EXCAVATION

## 2.1 **Method** (Figs 3-4)

Seven trenches were excavated on the site. Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 were situated to determine the level of survival of the enclosure ditch and any features within the enclosure itself. Trenches 5 and 7 were excavated across the linear features which were seen from the aerial photographs to cut across the enclosure. All the trenches were mechanically excavated to a depth of *c.* 0.5m as far as the level of the weathering sandstone bedrock. Above this level, no archaeological stratification survived due to ploughing.

## 2.2 **Results**

### 2.2.1 ***The enclosure ditch***

The enclosure ditch (706) was exposed in Trenches 1, 2, 4 and 6 (Fig. 4). It was fully excavated in Trenches 1 and 6 (Fig. 10), and plotted in Trenches 2 and 4 (Fig. 6).

*Trench 1* (Fig. 5)

This trench was positioned at the north side of the enclosure. The ditch was found to have an open V-shaped profile with a flattened base, 0.2m wide. The width of the ditch at its widest point was 2.7m, and the base of the ditch was 1.85m below the existing ground level (cut 1.1m into the sandstone bedrock). The ditch fills were sealed by *c.* 0.75m of topsoil and the underlying soil horizon (700, 745). No remnants of bank survived above the level of the bedrock.

*Trench 6* (Figs 9-10)

Trench 6 was excavated across the eastern entrance to the enclosure. The ditch terminus to the north was exposed for a distance of 5.5m. Only *c.* 0.5m of the tip of the ditch terminus to the south (780) was exposed at the southern edge of the trench.

The northern ditch terminus was 3.4m wide and had a depth of *c.* 1.8m below the surface of topsoil (cut *c.* 1.1m into the sandstone bedrock). Its flattened base was between 0.2-0.3m wide. The lowest 0.5m of fills (738-41, 705) were derived from weathering of the ditch sides and the bank. Above this was a soil development (736) representing a period of stabilization after the initial weathering had taken place. There was also evidence of occupation debris having being thrown into the ditch (e.g. burnt stones and abundant charcoal within context 737), which has been sampled for future radiocarbon dating and charred macrofossil analysis. The upper fills consisted of slighted bank material and soil (735 and 704) deposited during the final phases of the earthwork (Fig. 10, section 9). No bank survived above the level of the bedrock.

The retrieval of 30 prehistoric sherds from the ditch (23 from upper fill 704, and 7 from the primary fill 705) suggest that the enclosure dates to the middle Iron Age (see Appendix 1). The pottery has been sent to P. Bidwell (Tyne and Wear Museums) for analysis. The pottery from the upper fill is thought to be Glastonbury Ware.

No evidence was found to indicate the existence or position of a gate at the entrance, except for the remnants of a possible post-hole (781) 0.5m from the northern ditch terminus. No corresponding feature was exposed on the southern side of the entrance. A disturbed surface (799), leading through the entrance and into the enclosure, consisted of scattered slabs of sandstone (up to 0.25 x 0.15 x 0.03m in size) and grit, which were not encountered anywhere else on the site.

*Trenches 2 and 4* (Fig. 6)
In Trench 2 the eastern edge of the enclosure ditch was defined and plotted. In Trench 4 the upper 0.2m of fill was removed to determine the width of the ditch at its highest level, which was 4.1m.

### 2.2.2 ***Possible structures within the enclosure***

*Trench 1* (Fig. 5)
To the south of the enclosure ditch in Trench 1, a linear feature (769) orientated north-south, was recorded for a distance of 6.5m. At its northern end (5m from the ditch) the feature bifurcated at right angles to the main alignment of the trench, and another westward extension was recorded 1.5m south of this.

Although not fully excavated, the varying profiles (V-shaped and U-shaped) of the feature suggest that it was not of natural origin, and it may have been a post-trench. It was between 0.3 and 0.5m deep. It was filled with concreted red sand (768). No finds or charcoal were recovered. At its southern end this feature was cut by a ditch (770).

*Trenches 2 and 3* (Figs 6-7)
The western edge of a north-south linear feature (774) was exposed 1.3m from the eastern side of Trench 3. It contained the same red concreted material mentioned above (775). Eight stakeholes (785), all *c.* 0.2m deep and orientated north-south, were cut into this feature over a distance of 1m. There were also three larger stakeholes (786-8), *c.* 0.15m in diameter, orientated east-west over a distance of 0.75m. A fragment of charcoal was recovered from one stakehole (787). No other finds were recovered from the area and the fill (775) into

which the stakeholes were cut was not excavated. At the eastern end of Trench 2 there was a possible continuation of this feature (791), although it was only seen crossing the south-eastern corner of the trench.

*Trench 6* (Fig. 9)
The southern end of an apparent structure (800) was represented by two slots (717, 725) and one post-trench (716) located 4m inside the enclosure. These features were between 0.4 and 0.6m wide, and *c.* 0.4m deep, with steep V-shaped profiles. Post-trench (716) contained three post-holes (801-3). The fills consisted of red concreted sand, with no finds or charcoal.

At its southern corner, the structure cut into an earlier linear feature (742) which was also filled with red concreted sand (743). This feature extended southward beyond the edge of the excavation area. The edges of two pits (752, 750) were also exposed at the western end of the trench. They contained stony fills (753, 751), which may have been packing material for posts, but no other finds. The diameter of the pits could not be determined within the very limited area exposed. Their position, and possibly that of the linear feature (742), suggest that either they pre-date the main ditch and form part of an earlier enclosure, or that the pits represent part of a contemporary inner entrance/gate.

2.2.3 ***Ditch in Trenches 1, 3 and 4*** (Figs 5-7)

*Trench 1* (Fig. 5)
A ditch (770) was found to cut the linear feature (769) in Trench 1 (described above in 3.2). The ditch had been disturbed by animal burrowing. Although it appears in plan (Fig. 4) that this feature may have some connection with ditch (772) (see below) it differs significantly in profile, being a shallow U shape. It measured approximately 0.5m wide and 0.13m deep.

*Trenches 3 and 4* (Figs 6-7)
An asymmetrical ditch (772) was located in Trench 4, 8m east of the enclosure ditch. This feature continued northward and was seen to turn in a north-easterly direction in Trench 3, where it cut two earlier features, a pit (776) and the linear feature (774; see 3.2). The ditch was between 1.1m and 1.4m wide. Its western side was 0.1m deeper than the eastern side. It may represent a post-trench or palisade slot for an earlier enclosure, or a sub-division of the main enclosed area. No finds were recovered from this feature, but charcoal was extracted for future radiocarbon dating if required.

2.2.4 ***Curvilinear ditch in Trench 6*** (Fig. 9)

Cutting across the north-east corner of Trench 6 was a curvilinear ditch (747), 1m wide and 0.35m deep. No finds or charcoal were recovered from this ditch, and no stratigraphic relationship with any other feature could be demonstrated.

2.2.5 ***Possible field boundaries*** (Figs 4, 8-9)

Two ditches (793, 795) in Trench 5, and another ditch (796) in Trench 7 were plotted (Fig. 4). These features probably represent field boundaries which post-date the enclosure. The widest ditch in Trench 5 (795) was parallel (and similar) to the post-medieval ditch in Trench 6 (701).

## 3. GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

A magnetometer survey was undertaken by Oxford Archaeotechnics after the excavation was completed. The main ditch was plotted to the south, east and north (partially) of the enclosure, but was obscured in the northern and western part of the enclosure by increased archaeological activity, particularly in the region of features 769, 770, 772 and 774. There was the suggestion of another possible entrance on the southern side of the enclosure. The presence of the curved ditch (747) was confirmed. Additionally a linear feature was recorded, parallel to the main ditch and crossing the line of the entrance, in the vicinity of the structure (800).

## 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation at Blackhorse has demonstrated the survival of significant archaeological deposits within a relatively complex site. The main enclosure appears to date to the Iron Age, but it is possible that an earlier enclosure ditch encompassed a smaller area. The site lies entirely within the road corridor land intake boundary and will be destroyed by the new trunk road. A full area (rescue) excavation is required in advance of construction in order to record the complete sequence of the site, and to determine he interrelationships of the features.

The following specific points should be addressed:

(i) Determination and recording of the overall plan, date, function and character of the main enclosure ditch(es) and of the other linear features and possible structures within them.

(ii) Determination of any separate sequences of re-cutting within the main enclosure ditch; these have not been defined as yet, although indirect evidence exists in the form of variations of ditch fills between trenches. This will require controlled stratigraphic excavation over pre-determined lengths of the ditch, such as the southern terminal.

(iii) Location and recording of any other internal and external features not already identified by the evaluation excavation.

(iv) Establishment of stratigraphic relationships between the different elements within the site. Consideration should be given to the use of palaeoenvironmental or artefactual dating evidence where appropriate. Particular reference is drawn to the following:

(i) the internal curvilinear ditch and the larger main enclosure ditch;
(ii) the putative post-trench structures and the ditch sequences;
(iii) the post-holes and pits inside the entrance and the ditch terminals.

(v) Determination and recording of the plan, function and nature of the curvilinear feature outside the northern ditch terminal in Trench 6.

(vi) Sample excavation and recording of sufficient length of the linear feature in Trench 7, and the eastern linear feature in Trench 5, to determine their date, function and character.

(vii) Determination of a strategy for palaeoenvironmental sampling to achieve these research aims.

### 4.1 **Palaeoenvironmental deposits**

At Blackhorse the sandstone bedrock is slightly acidic, aerobic and well-drained. This reduces the potential survival of waterlogged remains and pollen. The palaeoenvironmental scope at the site is probably limited to the recovery of charred organic matter. The environmental sampling strategy should therefore aim for the bulk sampling of features within the enclosure, and the ditch fills, for the purposes of charred macrofossil analysis and radiocarbon dating.

APPENDIX 1: FINDS CATALOGUE *by* G. Langman

*Context Comments*

700 10 pot sherds: 1 sherd Iron Age, 7 sherds South Somerset coarsewares (17C/18C), 1 sherd Frechen stoneware (17C/18C), 1 sherd 19C English stoneware.
1 clay pipe stem
1 lithic: flint flake
Slag: 40gms

701 Small Find No. 400: 4 fragments of Fe from two objects

704 23 pot sherds: 23 sherds prehistoric - Middle Iron Age (Glastonbury Ware)
2 lithics: 1 flint flake, 1 flint awl
5 charcoal flecks
1 geological find

705 7 pot sherds: 7 sherds prehistoric - Iron Age (all one vessel)

Unstrat. 5 pot sherds: 3 sherds South Somerset coarsewares (L17C/18C), 1 sherd Bristol/Staffs slipware (18C), 1 sherd Transfer Print (after 1780)
1 lithic: flint flake
Small Find No. 401: 1 Fe horseshoe fragment - post-medieval?
Small Find No. 402: 1 copper alloy button - post-medieval?

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

700 Topsoil in Trenches 1-7. Reddish-brown 5YR 4/3 clayey sand loam, friable, occ small sandstone frags.

701 Fill of 702, a post-medieval ditch in Trench 6. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 silty sand, friable, stoneless (<1%), occ charcoal frags.

702 Post-medieval ditch cut in Trench 6. Probably associated with a bank on the west which has now been ploughed out. Contains 701. W: 2.5m, D: 0.25m.

703 Weathering sandstone bedrock present in every trench. Red to yellowish-red 10YR 4/8 - 5YR 5/8 sand, friable, rare sandstone frags.

704 Upper fill of enclosing ditch 706 in Trench 6; contained Glastonbury ware. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 silty sand, friable, occ moderate sub-angular sandstone frags, occ charcoal frags.

705 Primary ditch fill of 706 in Trench 6, representing the initial weathering of the ditch sides and bank. Reddish-yellow silty sand, friable, occ sub-rounded stones, occ charcoal frags.

706 Enclosing ditch cut exposed in Trenches 1, 2, 4 and 6; encloses an area *c.* 42 x 37m. The ditch is smooth, V-shaped with a width of between 2.7m and 3.4m (but *c.* 4.1m in Trench 4) and is cut into the natural some 1.1m (the base is *c.* 1.8-1.9m below present turf level). The ditch had a flattened base

between 0.2-0.3m wide. Contains contexts 704, 705, 735-741, 756-762.

710 Pit cut in Trench 6 cut into weathering bedrock 703; roughly rectangular. The cut for this pit cuts the edge of 742/3, a similar but unexcavated feature to 800 within the enclosure. Contains contexts 711-713. Le: 1.8m, W: 1m, D: 0.3m.

711 Tertiary fill of 710. Yellowish-red 5YR 5/6 sand, some silt present, friable, occ charcoal frags, occ large flat angular stones <0.5m.

712 Primary fill of 710. Yellowish-brown 10YR 5/4 silty sand, friable, occ charcoal flecks, stoneless.

713 Secondary fill of 710. Brownish-yellow 10YR 6/8 silty sand, friable, occ large flat angular sandstones, occ charcoal flecks.

714 Flat-bottomed, shallow pit cut into natural in Trench 6. Diam: 0.68m, D: *c.* 0.2m. No post-pipe or post-packing present. Contained context 715.

715 Pit fill. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 slightly silty sand, friable, clean, occ small ww stones.

716 Post-trench cut into natural 703; continuous with 717, 725. Contained three post-impressions 801-3. Probably formed a rectangular building of which the southern end was exposed in Trench 6. The western face of this ditch is steeper than the eastern, suggesting posts had been put into this trench and packed tight up to the western or inside edge. Contains 744. This context forms, with 725 and 717, generic context 800. W: 0.3-0.5m, D: 0.4m.

717 Post-trench cut into natural 703 in Trench 6; continuous with 716 and 725. Only exposed for a short distance, *c.* 0.2m, it forms the opposite parallel to post-trench 716. Like 716, the eastern face of the trench was steeper than the western external face. Contained context 746. With 725, 716 forms generic context 800. W: 0.5m, D: 0.5m.

718 Secondary fill of 719. Orange-brown sand, friable, occ medium-sized sub-angular stones, occ charcoal flecks.

719 Primary fill of 720. Reddish-brown sand, friable, occ medium sub-angular stones, occ charcoal flecks.

720 Flat-bottomed pit cut. Diam: 0.35m, D: 0.17m. Contains 718 and 719. It has been cut partially into the natural, 703, and into the fill of 725.

721 Fill of 722. Orange-brown sand, friable, occ sub-rounded stones.

722 Flat-bottomed pit, circular. Diam: 0.3m, D: 0.08m. Cut into the fill of post-trench 725; later cut by 720. Contains 721.

723 Fill of post-trench 725 possibly infilling the position left by rotted timbers/posts. orange-brown silty sand, friable, occ medium sub-angular stones.

724 Fill of post-trench 725; probably packing material for posts. Red 2.5YR 4/6 sand, very compact, harder than the natural 703; stoneless; occ worm-casts.

725 Post-trench cut; contains 723, 724; cut into natural 703. The northern face is steeper than the southern face. Continuous with 716 and 717. Forms with 717 and 716 the southern part of a rectangular structure, generic number 800. W: 0.4m, D: 0.46.

726 Lens of soil overlying junction of 725 and 716. Red 2.5YR 4/6 silty sand, friable, occ small charcoal flecks.

729 Pit cut, small, U-shaped in profile, D: 0.05m. Partially removed by JCB during topsoil stripping and exposed against the edge of trench so diameter could not be determined. Contained context 730.

730 Fill of 729. Yellowish-red, clayey sand, friable, occ small sandstone frags.

735 Slumped bank material within 706 in Trench 6. Yellowish-red 5YR 5/8 sand, friable, occ small charcoal frags, occ small ww pebbles.

736 Soil development within enclosure ditch 706 in Trench 6, representing a stabilisation horizon over the initial weathering fills derived from the ditch sides and bank represented by fills 705, 738-741. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 sand, friable, occ rare angular stones, occ small charcoal frags.

737 Dumped ditch fill within 736 in the enclosure ditch 706 in Trench 6. This context contained freq burnt stone. This context has been dumped after the weathering of the sides and bank had to a large degree stopped. The matrix was identical to that of the overlying context 736 so this context may be regarded as part of 736. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 silty sand, friable, abundant small to large frags of charcoal.

738 Fill of 706, representing weathering/slumping of rampart material. Yellowish-red 5YR 5/8 clay sand, friable, stoneless.

739 Fill of 706 in Trench 6 derived from weathering of ditch sides and bank. Yellowish-red 5YR 5/6 clayey sand, friable, occ small ww stones, heavily manganese stained.

740 Ditch fill of 706 in Trench 6, derived from weathering of the outer edge of the ditch. Red 2.5YR 5/8 clay sand, friable, stoneless <1%, occ charcoal frags.

741 Ditch fill of 706 in Trench 6, derived from weathering of inside edge of ditch 706. Yellowish-red 5YR 5/8 clay sand, friable, stoneless, occ charcoal frags.

742 Linear cut containing 743, probably continuous with 717, 716, 725 as part of the post-trenches inside the enclosure's entrance. Unexcavated.

743 Fill of 742. Red 2.5YR 4/6 sand, very compact (?concreted) with occ worm-casts.

744 Fill of post-trench 716. Red 2.5YR 4/6 sand, concreted, occ soft pockets of grey sand.

745 Lower soil horizon, B horizon of the field; underlies the topsoil 500 and overlies all archaeological features. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 clayey sand, friable, freq charcoal frags, common small-medium sandstone frags.

746 Fill of post-trench 717. Red 2.5YR 4/6 concreted sand, occ small angular sandstone frags.

747 Curvilinear ditch in the north-east corner of Trench 6. Contains fill 748. W: *c.* 1m, D: 0.35m.

748 Fill of 747. Brown/dark-brown 7.5YR 4/4 silty sand, friable, rare charcoal frags, occ small ww stones.

750 Pit/post-pit cut in Trench 6, only the eastern edge of which was exposed against the western edge of excavation. This pit lies across the line of the entrance into the enclosure, so may represent an entrance structure associated with the enclosure. Possibly associated with 752. Dimensions of this pit were not ascertainable. Contained context 751.

751 Fill of pit 750; probably represents post-packing. Yellowish-red matrix, 5YR 4/8, silty sand, very abundant compacted angular stones.

752 Pit/post-pit cut in Trench 6 *c.* 1m north of 750, partially exposed in western edge of excavation. May be associated with an entrance structure with 750 since it lies across the entrance line into the enclosure. Contains 753. Dimensions not ascertainable.

753 Fill of 752; the stony character of the fill suggests it is packing for a post. Yellowish-red matrix 5YR 4/8, silty sand, very abundant 5YR 4/8, silty sand, friable, loose, very abundant angular small to medium stones.

754 Unexcavated feature, the fill of which, 755, was identical to 716, 717 and 725 which continue west and southward from the junction of 717 and 725. Represents another post-trench similar to 716, 717, 725.

755 Fill of 754. Red 2.5YR 4/8 clayey compacted sand, friable, occ small sandstone frags.

756 Upper fill of enclosing ditch 706 in Trench 1. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 clayey sand, friable, occ angular sandstone frags.

757 Soil development over the weathering-derived fills 758-762 within 706 in Trench 1. Yellowish-red 5YR 5/8 slightly clayey sand, friable, occ small stones, burnt clay and rare charcoal.

758 Fill of 706 in Trench 6 derived from weathering of ditch and bank. Red 2.5YR 4/8 sand, friable, stoneless, occ worm-casts.

759 Fill of 706 in Trench 6 derived from weathering of ditch sides and bank. Red

2.5YR 5/8.

760 Ditch fill of 706 in Trench 1 derived from weathering of ditch sides and bank. Red 2.5YR 4/8 clayey sand, friable, stoneless <1% occ small sandstone frags.

761 Ditch fill of 706 in Trench 1 derived from weathering of ditch sides and bank Red 2.5YR 4/6 sand, friable, stoneless <1%.

762 Primary fill of 706 in Trench 1 derived from weathering of bank and ditch sides. Red 2.5YR 4/8 sand, friable, stoneless <1%.

763 Ditch fill of 706 in Trench 1. Probable infilling when ditch less stabilised. Shape of fill suggests it had been dumped.

764 Ditch fill of 706 in Trench 1 derived from weathering of ditch sides. Red 2.5YR 4/8 silty clayey sand, friable, occ rare sandstone frags.

765 Ditch fill of 706 in Trench 1 derived from weathering of bank and ditch sides. Red 2.5YR 4/8 clayey sand, friable, very slightly plastic.

766 Ditch fill of 706 in Trench 1 derived from weathering of bank and ditch sides. Red 2.5YR 4/8 silty sand, friable, stoneless.

767 Laminated lower ditch fill of 706 in Trench 1 derived from weathering of ditch sides. Red 2.5 YR 4/6 silty sand, friable, stoneless.

768 Fill of post-trench 769 in Trench 1, compacted, concreted fill similar to fills of 717, 716 and 725 in Trench 6. Probable packing material concreted *in situ*. Red 2.5Y 4/6, compacted, occ small sandstone frags.

769 Linear cut in Trench 1. Similar in profile to post-trenches 800 in Trench 6 and may represent structure. Contains 768.

770 Disturbed linear ditch cut in Trench 1. Disturbed by animal burrowing; shallow U-shaped profile. Not comparable to any other feature on site. W: 0.55m, D: 0.15m.

771 Ditch fill of 770 in Trench 1. Ditch cuts across linear feature 768/9. No finds.

772 Ditch cut in Trenches 3 and 4. Stepped in profile with western side 0.26m deeper. Cut 0.2m into natural on east and 0.4m on west. Possibly functioned as earlier palisade ditch pre-dating rectangular enclosure (706), but no packing or post impressions in base. Contained fill 773.

773 Ditch fill of 772 in Trenches 3 and 4. Yellow-red 5YR 5/8 silty sand, friable, occ small angular sandstone frags, occ charcoal frags.

774 Linear cut in Trench 3. Only the western edge was exposed. Contains 775, a concreted red sand, similar to fills in 800 (Trench 6) and in 769 (Trench 1). Cut by series of stakeholes 785-7. Also contains 784 (packing for stakes).

775 Fill of 774 in Trench 3. Red 2.5YR 4/6 concreted sand cut by stakeholes 785-7.

776 Pit cut in Trench 3. Partially exposed flat-bottomed, cut 0.8m into subsoil. Cuts earlier feature 774/5. Cut by curvilinear feature 772/3.

777 Pit fill in 776 in Trench 3. Yellow-red 5YR 5/8 silty sand, friable, common small angular sandstone frags.

778 Ditch fill of 780 in Trench 6. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 silty sand, friable, occ moderate sub-angular stones, occ charcoal frags.

779 Stakehole cut into base of 772 in Trench 3.

780 Ditch terminus, Trench 6. Probable southern ditch terminus. Contains 778.

781 Post-hole (unexcavated) in Trench 6. May be associated with entrance to enclosure.

782 Fill of stakehole 779 in Trench 3. Pale brown, silty sand, friable, very soft, stoneless.

783 Layer in trench 3, infilling depression over 784. Overlies the southern part of fill 777.

784 Fill within 774 in Trench 3. Packing material around stakeholes 785-88. Yellowish-red 5YR 4/8 silty sand, friable matrix; abundant small to medium angular and sub-angular stones (sandstone).

785 Group of eight stakeholes in Trench 3 cut into 775.

786 Stakehole cut in Trench 3 cut into 775.

787 Stakehole cut in Trench 3 cut into 775.

788 Stakehole cut in Trench 3 cut into 703.

789 Stakehole fill in Trench 3 cut into base of 772.

790 Generic for fills of 785 in Trench 3. Pale brown, silty sand, friable, very soft, stoneless.

791 Linear ditch cut in Trench 2.

792 Ditch fill/linear fill in Trench 2. Identical to fills of 800 (Trench 6) and 769 (Trench 1).

793 Ditch cut in Trench 5. Plotted but not excavated.

794 Ditch fill of 793 in Trench 5.

795 Ditch cut in Trench 5. Part of linear feature shown on aerial photograph. Runs parallel to 701/2; if related, post-medieval in date. Plotted but not excavated.

796 Ditch cut in Trench 7 for linear feature, probably field division. Plotted but unexcavated; shown on aerial photograph.

797 Ditch fill of 795 in Trench 5.

798 Ditch fill of 796. Plotted but not excavated.

799 Surface debris in Trench 6, consisting of scattered/disturbed sandstone and grit laid down as a surface for the entrance.

800 Generic for square post-trenches (717, 716, 725).

801 Post-hole impression in base of 716 in Trench 6, associated with 802, 803.

802 Post impression in base of 716 in Trench 6.

803 Post impression in base of 716 in Trench 6.

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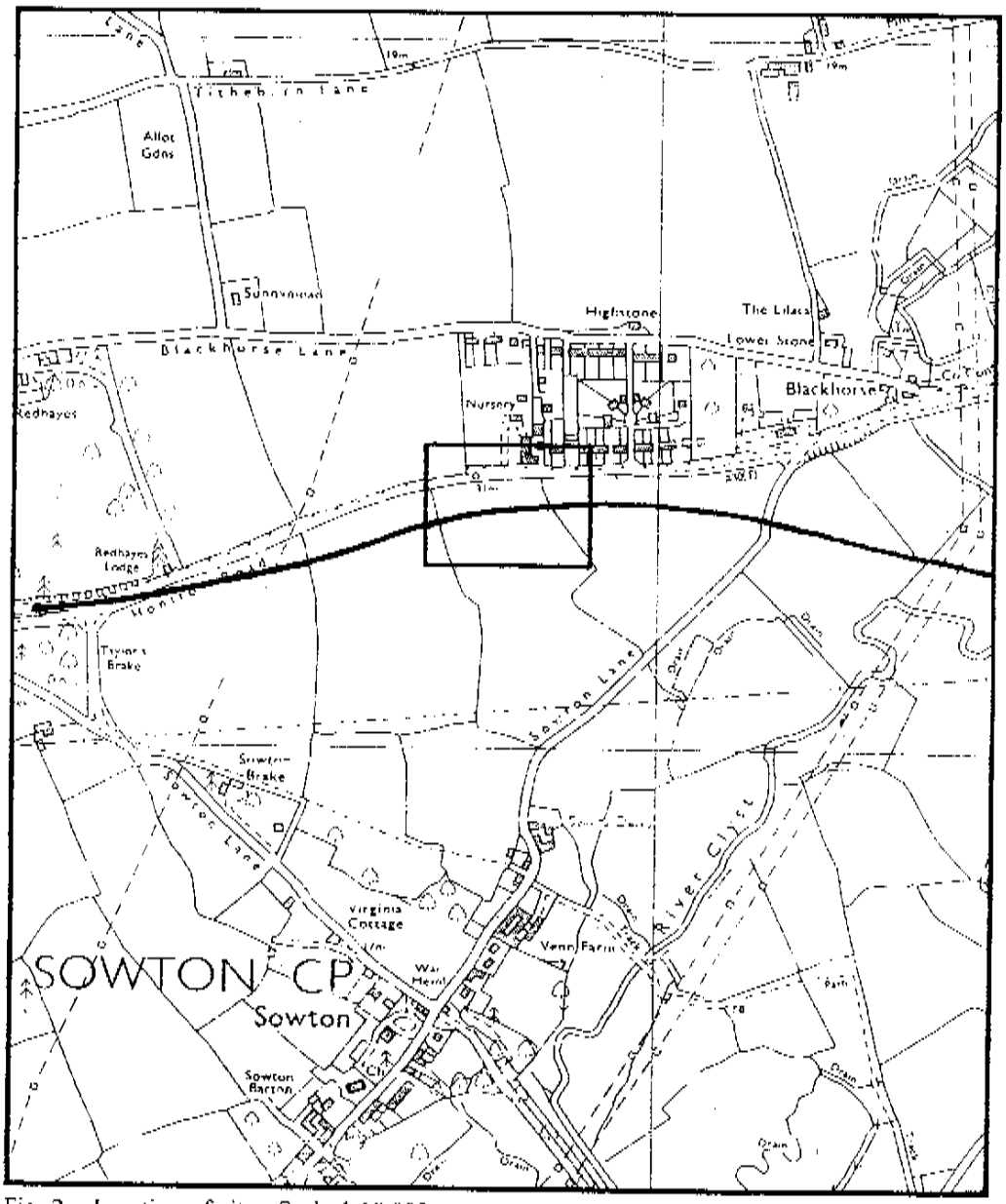


Fig. 2 Location of site. Scale 1:10,000.

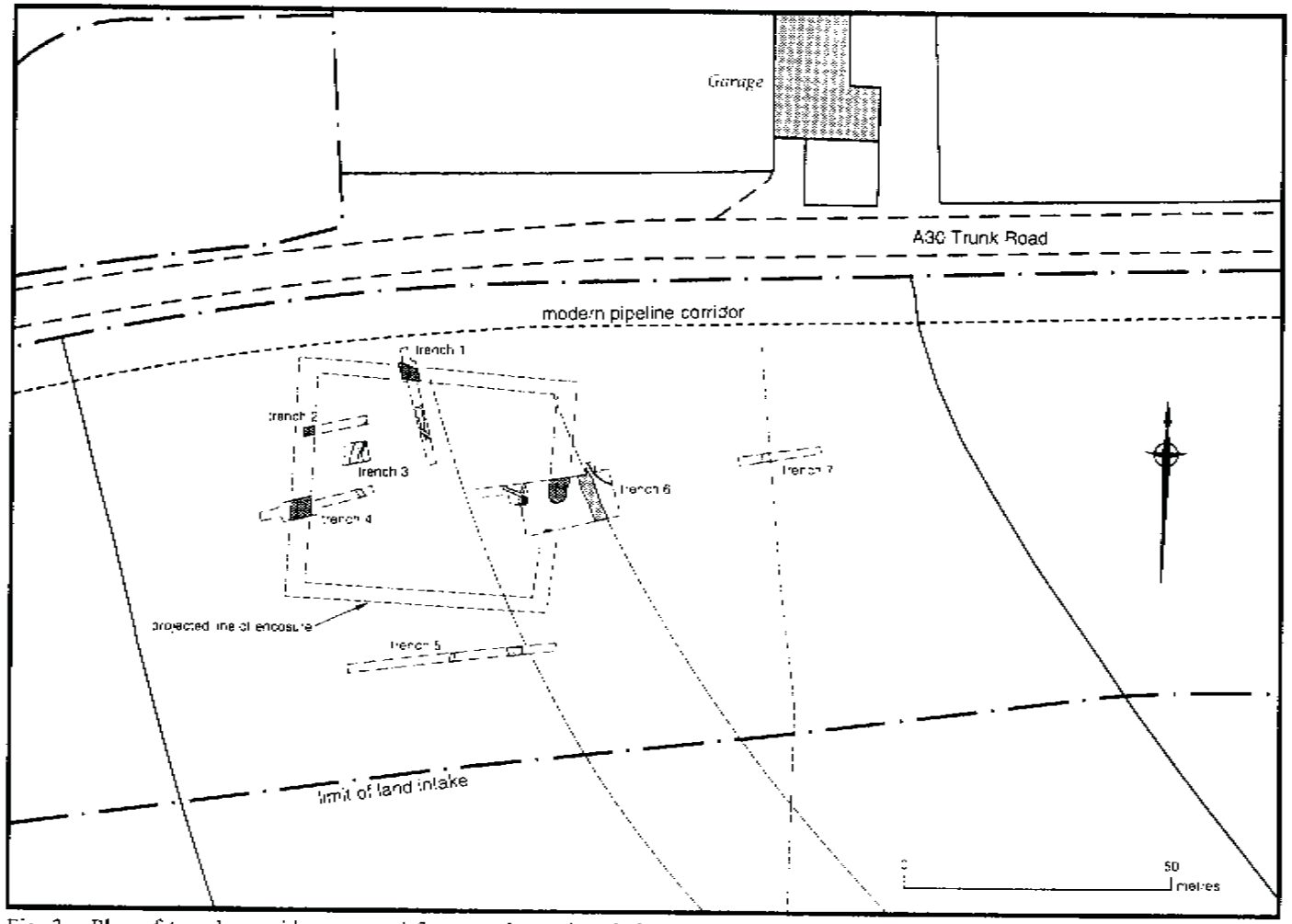


Fig. 3 Plan of trenches, with excavated features shown in relation to cropmarks (dashed lines).

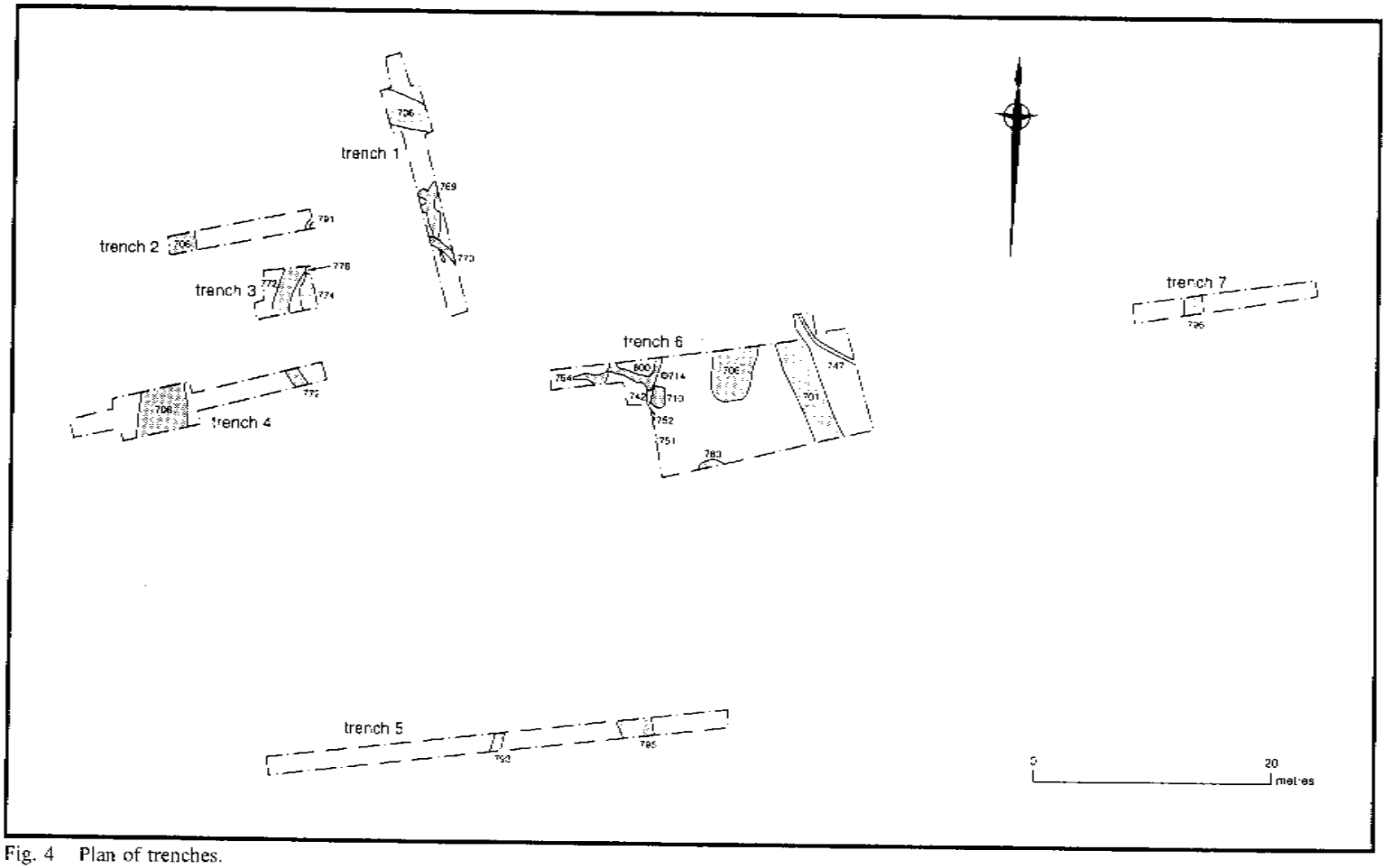


Fig. 4 Plan of trenches.

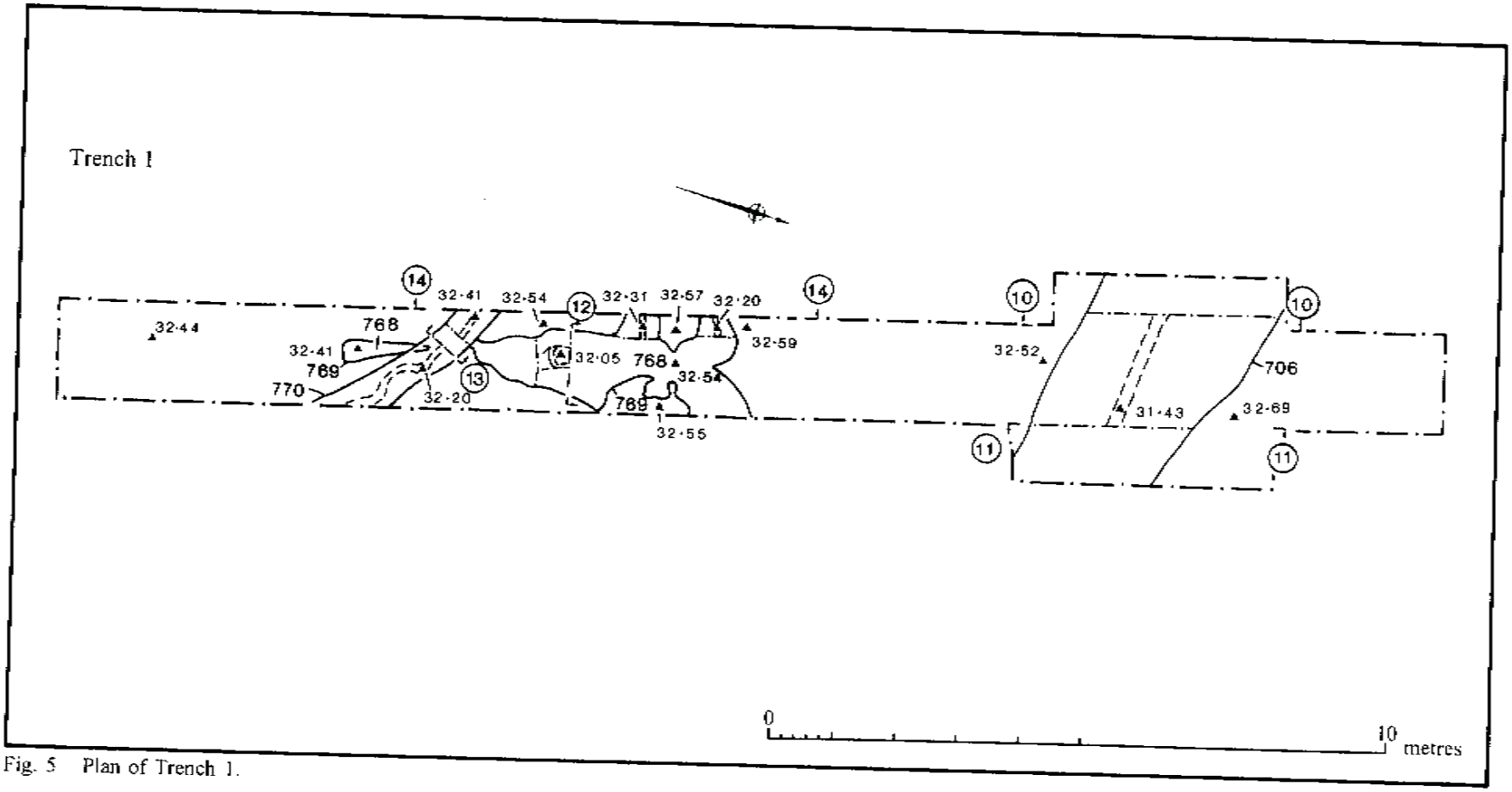


Fig. 5 Plan of Trench 1.

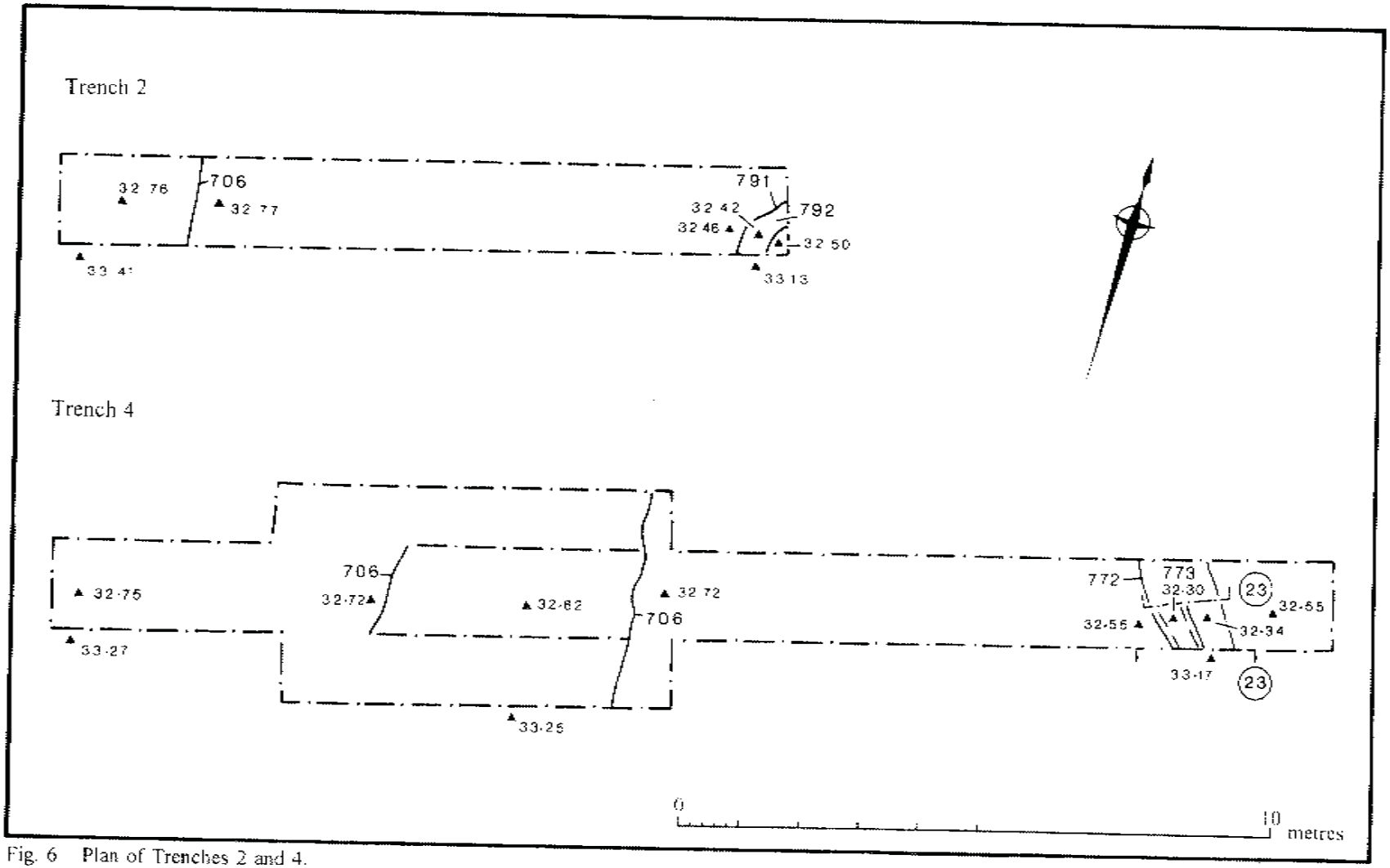


Fig. 6 Plan of Trenches 2 and 4.

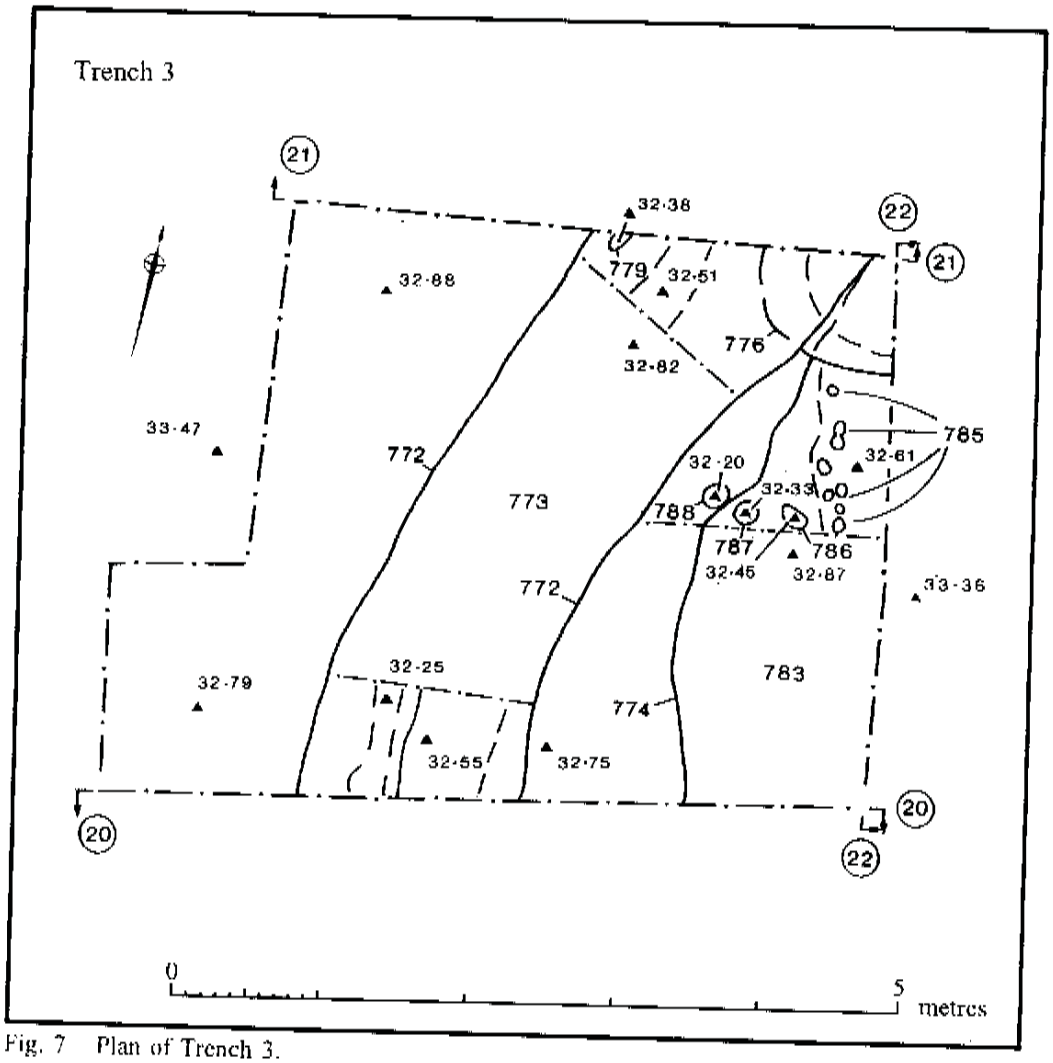


Fig. 7 Plan of Trench 3.

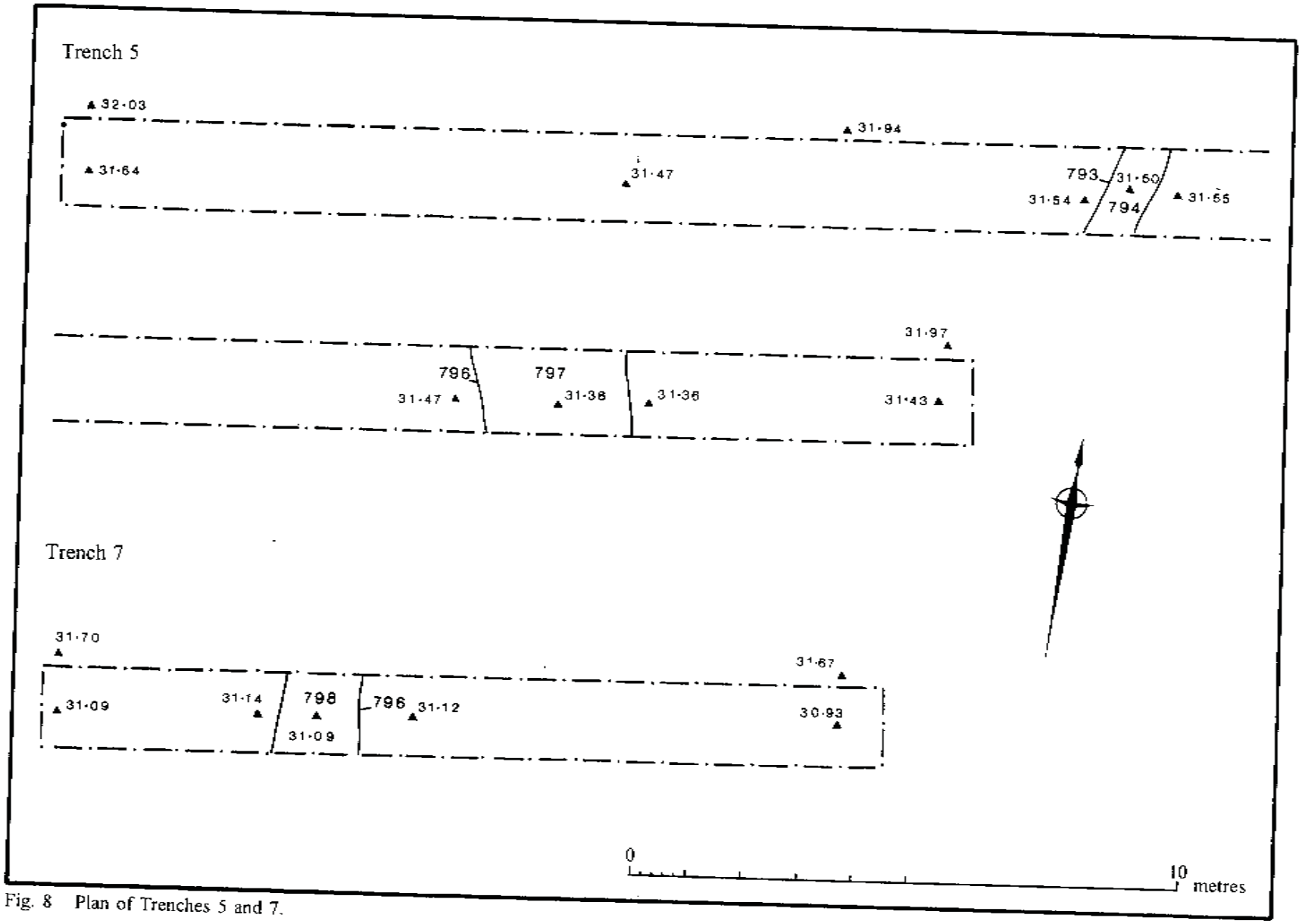


Fig. 8 Plan of Trenches 5 and 7.

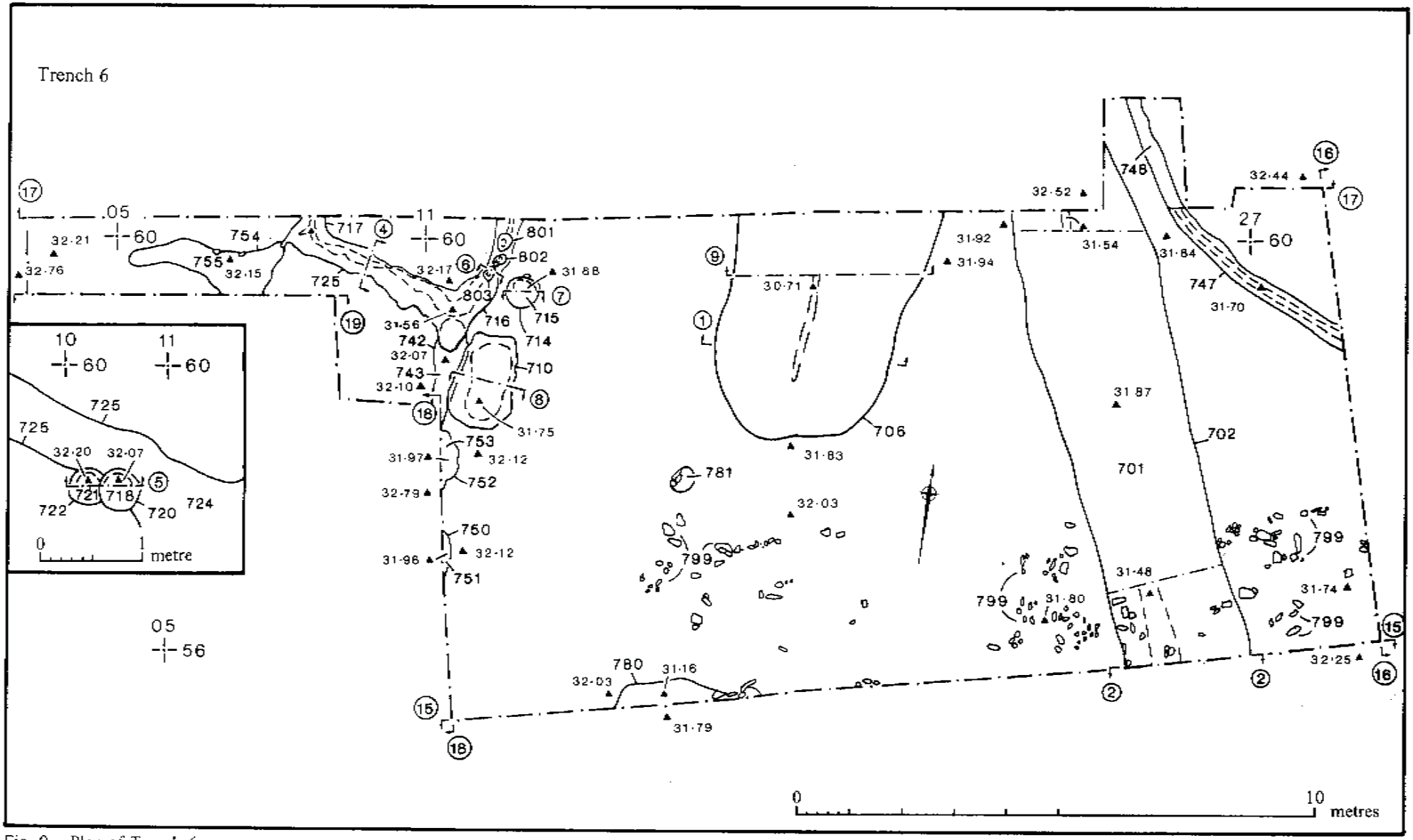


Fig. 9 Plan of Trench 6.

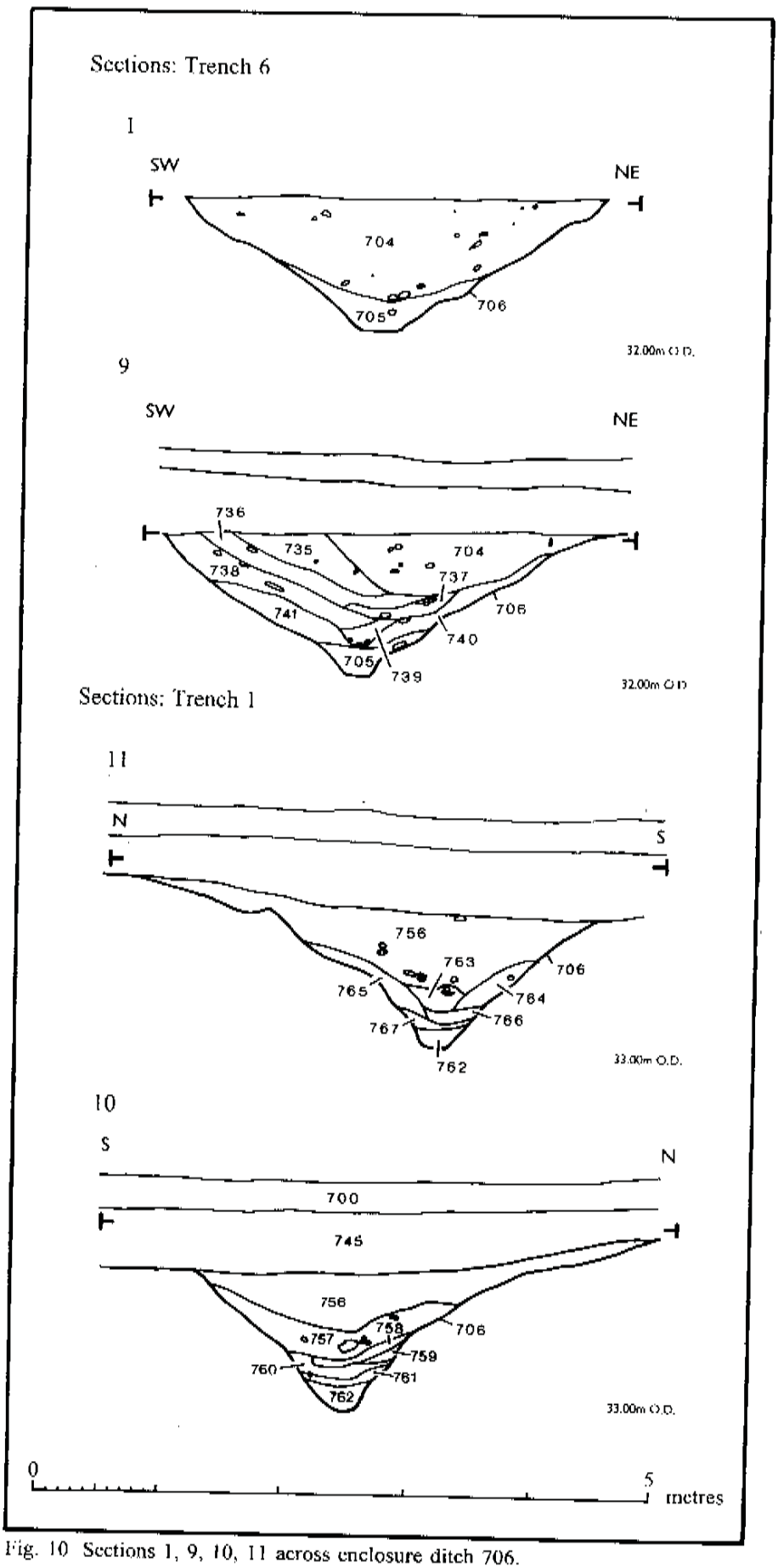


Fig. 10 Sections 1, 9, 10, 11 across enclosure ditch 706.

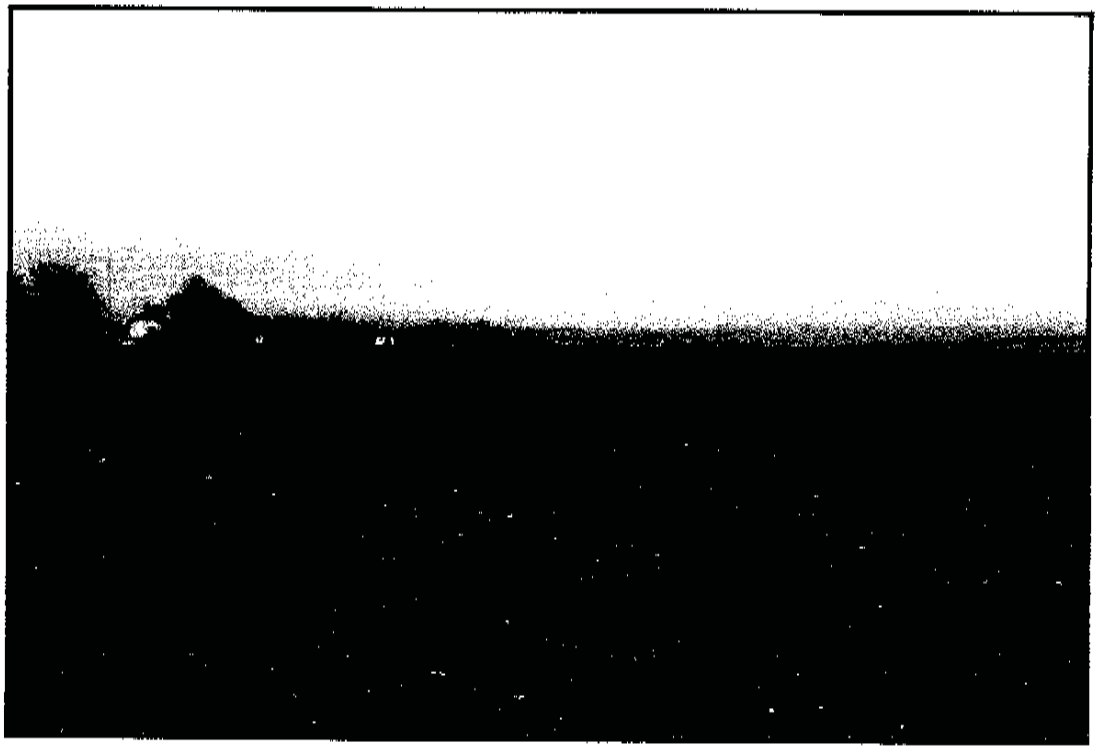

Plate 1 View of site prior to excavation. Looking east.

Plate 2 Enclosure ditch 706 in Trench 1, fully excavated. Looking west. (Scale: 1m).

Plate 3 Linear feature 769 exposed in plan in Trench 1. Looking south. (Scale: 1m).

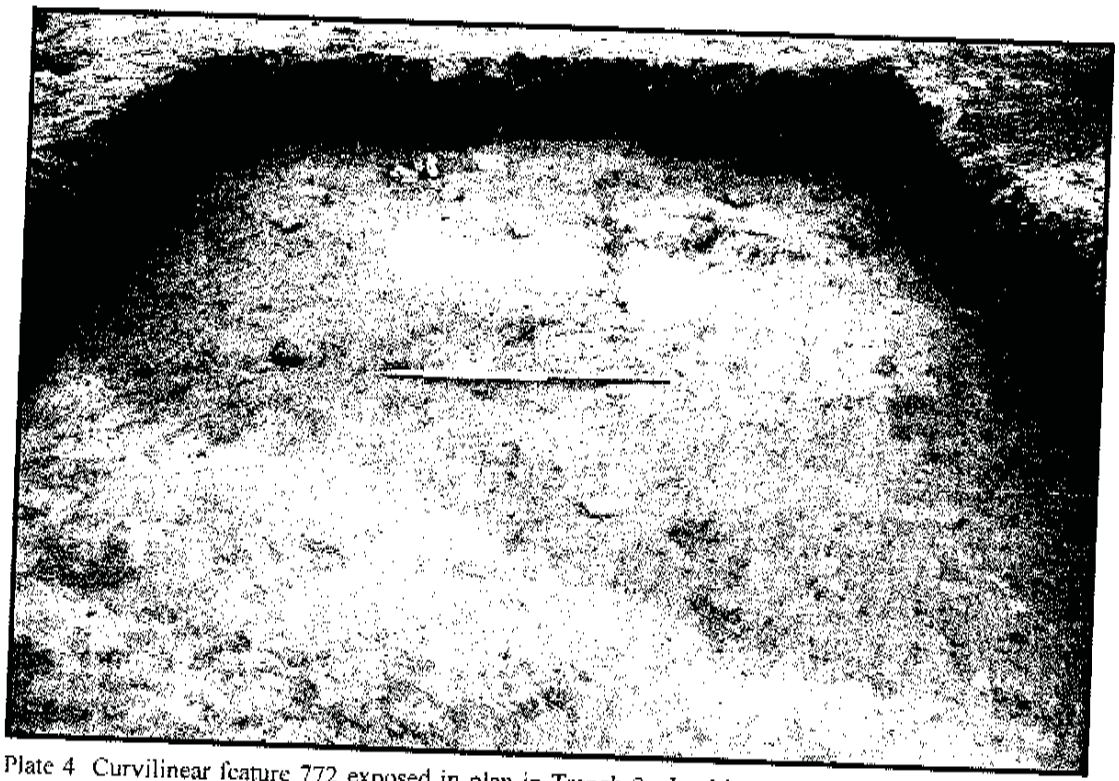

Plate 4 Curvilinear feature 772 exposed in plan in Trench 3. Looking east. (Scale: 1m).

Plate 5 View of eastern half of Trench 6, showing ditch terminus and post-medieval ditch 702 on the right. Looking north.

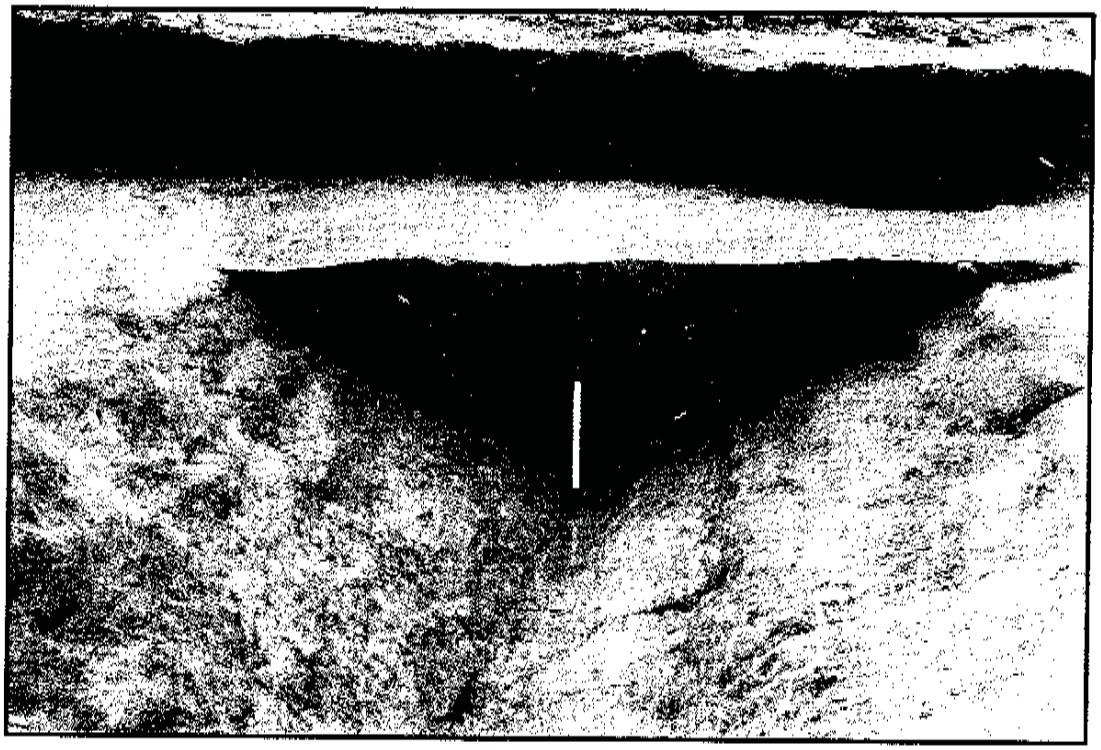

Plate 6 Detail of section across ditch terminus 706. Looking north. (Scale: 1m).

Plate 7 Curving ditch 747 in north-east corner of Trench 6, fully excavated. Looking east.

Plate 8 Post trench and slots of structure 800 in Trench 6, fully excavated. Looking north. (Scale: 2m).

# A30 TRUNK ROAD
# HONITON TO EXETER IMPROVEMENT
# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
# PART 2: FAIR OAK, CLYST HONITON

by

S.J. Reed and P.T. Manning

Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit

Report No. 94.102

December 1994

## Preface

This report is one of a series of six describing the results of archaeological investigations along the proposed route of the A30 Trunk Road Honiton to Exeter Improvement Scheme in east Devon. The fieldwork was undertaken by Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit (EMAFU) between June and December 1994. The project was funded by the Highways Agency.

A preliminary archaeological assessment of the published route had been prepared in 1991 (EMAFU Report No. 91.22). At a meeting on 31 March 1994 representatives of interested parties (the Highways Agency, Acer Consultants, EMAFU, Devon County Archaeological Service and English Heritage) discussed the archaeological implications of the scheme. It was agreed to bring the level of archaeological assessment in line with recent guidelines laid out in the Department of Transport's document: *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Vol. II* (1993).

A Scoping Statement was subsequently produced by EMAFU identifying the archaeological requirements as follows: an update/review of the 1991 assessment; an assessment of existing borehole/trial-pit data; the implementation of a geophysical survey; evaluation excavations; field survey and fabric recording; fieldwalking; palaeoenvironmental sampling and dating.

The geophysical survey was carried out by Oxford Archaeotechnics and will be produced as a separate report.

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**List of illustrations**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 **Location**

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation excavation undertaken from 7-18 July 1994 at Fair Oak, Clyst Honiton (SY00129308).

## 1.2 **The site**

The site lies to the south of Exeter Airport, just south of the B3184, on the northern side of a small valley and the stream which marks the parish boundary between Clyst Honiton and Farringdon. In the 18th century, there were at least two farmsteads in this area: Smeaths, lying within the proposed route corridor, and Wilsons or Fair Oak, lying to the south of the corridor. These now survive only as earthworks. The present farm called Fair Oak is located just to the north of the proposed route corridor, where unnamed buildings are shown in 1839 (see below). There is further evidence of an 18th-century brickworking site in two fields to the north-east of the former site of Smeaths. The underlying geology of the site consists of Permian Marls, overlain by the loamy soils of the Whimple Series.

# 2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND PRELIMINARY FIELDWORK

The following is a summary of the documentary history of the sites (discussed in detail in Weddell 1991, 8-9) together with the results of preliminary fieldwork. Only the site of Smeaths was subsequently excavated, since it lay within the proposed working corridor.

## 2.1 **Fair Oak: Smeaths and Wilsons**

*Historical background*

The deserted settlement at Fair Oak formerly comprised two separate farmsteads known as Smeaths and Wilsons (later Fair Oak) which were shown on a map of 1798 (DRO D&C). Wilsons occupied the southern part of the site, close to the stream, and Smeaths the northern part. At this date there was no indication of buildings on the site of the present Fair Oak Farm.

By 1839 (Clyst Honiton Tithe Map) the buildings associated with Smeaths had been abandoned and the combined holdings were being farmed from Wilsons, the main farm site situated alongside the lane leading south into Farringdon and by then known as Fair Oak. The present site of Fair Oak Farm appears to have been established by 1851 (although buildings were present here in 1839), and by 1861 the original Wilsons site was known as Fair Oak Cottage (WCSL Census).

In 1702 Smeaths tenement was divided into three parts, held by Richard Smeath and two named others (D&C 4552 Survey), but it is not known whether each part had a separate dwelling house. In 1798 the tenement consisted of 39 acres and included a dwelling house, curtilage, gardens and outhouses (D&C 25/75115).

Wilsons tenement may be linked to the family of Anthony Wilson mentioned in 1581, and later with John Wilson named in 1675. The premises contained about 40 acres by the later 18th century (D&C 6020/4), which increased to about 80 acres when it was amalgamated with Smeaths.

A lease of 1661 (D&C 4552/4/2) refers to yet another property at Fair Oak, but its site has not yet been identified. Two fields to the east of the farm sites called 'Croft' in the mid 19th-century Tithe Apportionment also suggest that there may have once been other settlements in the vicinity. The place-name 'Fair Oak' itself dates to at least the 13th century (Gover *et al* 1932, 584). Although no other medieval documentation has been located, it is possible that Wilsons and Smeaths represented the remnants of a more substantial medieval settlement.

*Fieldwork*
The upper part of the field has been enclosed as an overflow car park for Exeter Airport, but the remaining area is under permanent pasture. There appears to have been little disturbance of the land since the settlements were abandoned and extensive earthworks survive, including terracing for buildings and evidence of a trackway leading from Clyst Honiton. To the west of the settlement an area of parallel ridges probably indicate the site of an orchard, but may originally have been caused by the medieval method of cultivation known as 'ridge and furrow' (Weddell 1991, 9).

## 2.2 **Brickfields**

*Historical background*
In the records of a survey by the Dean and Chapter in 1778 (DRO D&C) the inventory for Smeaths included '2 Brickfields' of six acres in extent. By the time of the Dean and Chapter survey for the 1798 map (Fig. ) the fields were known as 'Higher and Lower Brick Close' and were already described as arable or pasture. The Tithe Apportionment also lists a 'Brickfield' as being under pasture. It therefore seems likely that any activity connected with brickmaking took place around 1778 and had ceased before the end of the century, the production probably being for a specific project, which has not yet been identified (Weddell 1991, 10).

*Fieldwork*
The field boundary between the two brickfields has now gone and the area is partially within the overflow car park for the airport. There is no clear visible evidence in the area of pits or quarries, although the ground does seem to be more irregular than that in the surrounding fields.

# 3. THE EXCAVATION

Two trenches were excavated mechanically across the proposed route in the vicinity of the deserted settlement of Smeaths.

## 3.1 **Results**

*Trench 1*
Trench 1 measured *c.* 1.7m x 38m. At the north end of the trench, a cobbled track (508) was exposed, which was also seen in the northern end of Trench 2. A residual sherd of possible Roman pottery was recovered from the make-up of the cobbles. Approximately 7m south of the trackway was an infilled 0.9m-deep terrace cut (528), which created a building platform. The lee of the terrace contained a ditch (517), which ran eastward. On the southern side of this ditch a mud-bonded wall made of re-used building material (513) survived for two

courses. South of this wall a metalled surface (507) extended southward for *c.* 8.5m before petering out. This surface probably represents an outside yard associated with Smeaths.

*Trench 2*
Trench 2 measured *c.* 1.7m x 36m. At the northern end of the trench were the disturbed remains of the cobbled trackway (508) continuing from Trench 1. A terrace cut (536) was encountered 4.8m to the south, a continuation of the cut (528) in Trench 1. At the base of the terrace cut was the cobbled lining of a drain (519), which ran up to a wall (512). This wall was a continuation of the wall (513) in Trench 1. It survived for two courses and was built of re-used building debris. It contained lime-ash flooring fragments and ashlar blocks with mortar still adhering. To the south of the wall the compacted surface of a soil layer (504) continued as far as the remains of another wall (510) represented by one course of lime-mortared pebbles running east-west across the trench. An apparent rough wall base (511), consisting of pebbles and occasional bricks, ran north-south along the trench and into the southern edge of excavation (see Plan, Fig. 4). Sherds of pottery recovered from these contexts suggest an 18th-/19th-century date.

To the south there was a compacted surface over 504. This surface continued southward until it reached the remains of a building represented by one course of lime-mortared pebbles running east-west across the trench and what appeared to be a rough wall base consisting of pebbles and occasional bricks running north-south along the trench and into the southern edge of excavation. Sherds of pottery recovered from these contexts again suggest an 18th-/19th-century date.

Both trenches were further excavated to ascertain the survival of any archaeological deposits earlier than the 18th century, but none were encountered.

*Brickfields*
At the north of the field (the former 'Brickfields'), in the car parking area, was a modern V-shaped drainage gulley, spanning the width of the field (180m east-west). This feature was *c.* 0.50cm deep x *c.* 0.50cm wide. This ditch was re-excavated to a depth below natural subsoil and investigated for evidence of brickworking, but none was found. The presence of hand-made bricks in the wall (511) mentioned above should be noted: it is possible that they were made near the site. These bricks were re-used in a late 18th-/early 19th-century context.

### 3.2 **Dating evidence**
During the course of excavation 427 sherds of pottery were recovered which indicated a late 18th-century date for the structures. There were two exceptions: one sherd of possible Roman pottery from the make-up of the cobbled trackway (508) and one sherd of medieval gritty coarseware cooking-pot rim dated to 1000-1400 AD from the demolition layer (505) in Trench 1 (see Appendix 1).

## 4. CONCLUSION

The evaluation excavation demonstrated that there had been extensive terracing for building on the site of Smeaths tenement in the late 18th/early 19th-century. This would have effectively removed evidence of any earlier occupation. However, earlier archaeological deposits may survive in the immediate vicinity, outside the excavation area. The presence of

possible Roman pottery and medieval coarseware is, as yet, unaccounted for. Consequently, it is recommended that a watching brief be maintained during construction in order to ensure that no evidence for pre-18th-century occupation or settlement is destroyed without record.

APPENDIX 1: FINDS CATALOGUE *by* G. Langman

*Context Comments*

500 98 sherds in total.
1 sherd Transfer Print (after 1780), 1 sherd English porcelain (late 18C+), 1 sherd creamware (after 1750), 1 sherd Staffs white salt-glazed stoneware (after 1740), 1 sherd Westerwald stoneware (18C type), 1 sherd Chinese porcelain (?18C), 1 sherd South Somerset coarseware (17C/18C), 3 sherds South Somerset 18C slipwares (trailed and slip bands), 1 sherd unidentified yellow-glazed white ware (?18C).
1 fragment mid 18C bottle glass neck.
5 flint pieces: 1 burnt, 4 small ?crushed fragments.
Discarded: 9 sherds Transfer Print/china, 64 sherds creamware, 32 sherds S. Somerset 18C coarsewares, 2 sherds Bristol/Staffs slipwares, 22 fragments L18C/19C bottle glass. 6 Fe nails, 1 Fe 2oz weight, 1 20C bullet casing (dated 1942), 3 brick fragments.

502 9 sherds in total.
2 sherds Transfer print/china, 1 sherd English stoneware (late 18C/19C), 1 fragment bottle glass (19C), 1 fragment of burnt material.
Discarded: 4 sherds Transfer Print/china, 2 sherds creamware, 2 fragments 18C/19C bottle glass, 1 fragment pantile.

504 51 sherds in total
1 sherd willow pattern (after 1780), 1 sherd creamware (after 1750), 1 sherd Jackfield (mid 18C), 1 sherd English stoneware (18C/19C), 1 sherd Bristol/Staffs slipware (18C), 1 sherd Westerwald stoneware, 5 sherds South Somerset 18C coarsewares, 1 sherd flowerpot, 1 piece of coke.
Discarded: 11 sherds Transfer Print/china, 8 sherds creamware, 20 sherds S. Somerset 18C coarsewares, 10 fragments 18C/19C window/bottle glass, 2 Fe nails.

505 70 sherds in total
1 sherd china (after 1780), 2 sherds English porcelain (late 18C/19C), 2 sherds creamware (after 1750), 1 sherd Chinese porcelain (?18C), 1 sherd Westerwald stoneware (18C type), 1 sherd Bristol/Staffs press-moulded slipware dish (18C), 1 sherd late 18C micaceous whiteware, 1 sherd South Somerset coarseware (17C/18C), 5 sherds S. Somerset 18C coarsewares (mottled copper green-glaze plus slip bands), 1 sherd medieval gritty coarseware cooking-pot rim (1000-early 15C), 1 mid 18C+ bottle glass neck.
Discarded: 5 sherds willow pattern/china, 10 sherds creamware, 3 sherds Bristol/Staffs slipware, 1 sherd late 18C micaceous whiteware, 35 sherds South Somerset 18C coarsewares, 12 fragments 18C/19C bottle glass; 4 fragments of faunal bone; 1 Fe nail; 1 20C bullet casing.

506 12 sherds in total.
1 sherd Transfer Print (after 1780), 2 sherds creamware (after 1760), 1 sherd Bristol/Staffs press-moulded slipware dish (18C), 2 sherds South Somerset 18C coarsewares, 1 fragment bottle glass (18C/19C), 1 piece of unused flint.
Discarded: 3 sherds creamware, 3 sherds S. Somerset 18C coarsewares, 1 Fe nail, 1 brick fragment.

508 4 sherds in total.
4 sherds South Somerset 18C coarsewares (2 chamber-pot rims with trailed slip).

509 2 sherds in total.
1 sherd willow pattern (after 1780), 1 sherd creamware (after 1760).

*Context Comments*

510 4 sherds in total.
2 sherds china (late 18C/19C), 2 sherds Chinese porcelain (?18C).

511 1 sherd in total.
1 sherd creamware (after 1760), 1 base fragment of clear bottle glass (?18C/?19C).
3 brick samples: 1 hand-made brick orange sandy fabric with frequent small crushed grit filler, size 115mm wide x 230mm long x 57mm depth, weight 2.825kg; 1 hand-made brick fabric as before, size 107mm wide x 240mm long x 70mm depth, weight: 3.245kg; 1 hand-made brick, brick red sandy fabric with previously stated inclusions, size 110mm wide x 235mm long x 67mm depth, weight: 3.500kg.
Discarded: 2 hand-made bricks, 1 orange fabric, 1 brick red fabric, sizes 110mm wide x 230mm long x 67mm depth, weight: 3.170kg. 110mm wide x 235mm long x 65mm depth, weight 3.855kg.

514 156 sherds in total.
1 sherd willow pattern (after 1780), 1 sherd black Basaltes (after 1770), 2 sherds creamware (after 1760), 1 sherd English industrial earthenware (mid 18C+), 1 sherd Staffs white salt-glazed stoneware (after 1740), 1 sherd Bristol/Staffs press-moulded slipware dish (18C), 1 sherd ?English stoneware (?18C), 8 sherds Chinese porcelain (18C), 7 sherds South Somerset coarsewares (including plain yellow glaze, trailed/scrolled slip and slip bands) all 18C, 1 sherd late 18C micaceous whiteware, 1 sherd earthenware flowerpot.
2 fragments bottle glass (mid 18C+), 2 fragments clear wine glass (18C), 7 fragments lead window cames.
Discarded: 8 sherds Transfer Print/china, 70 sherds creamware, 1 sherd English porcelain, 1 sherd English industrial earthenware, 1 sherd English stoneware, 1 sherd late 18C micaceous whiteware, 3 sherds Bristol/Staffs slipware, 46 sherds South Somerset 18C coarsewares, 10 fragments mid 18C+ bottle glass, 1 brick fragment.

518 3 sherds in total.
1 sherd willow pattern (after 1780), 1 sherd china, 1 sherd earthenware flowerpot, 1 fragment bottle glass (18C/19C).

519 4 sherds in total.
1 sherd willow pattern (after 1780), 1 sherd creamware (after 1760), 1 sherd Chinese porcelain (18C), 1 sherd South Somerset coarseware (17C/18C), 1 fragment wineglass stem (?18C).

520 6 sherds in total.
2 sherds South Somerset 18C coarsewares, 4 sherds same vessel, overfired/burnt, ?South Somerset, 1 fragment clear bottle glass ?18C/?19C.

521 2 sherds in total
1 sherd South Somerset mottled copper green-glazed coarseware (18C), 1 sherd pre-medieval (most likely Roman rather than Iron Age).
Discarded: 1 brick fragment

525 No sherds
1 fragment post-medieval roof tile.
Discarded: 1 brick fragment, 1 Fe nail.

531 2 sherds in total.
1 sherd creamware (after 1760), 1 sherd South Somerset coarseware (late 18C in character).

unstrat 3 sherds in total
3 sherds (all one vessel) 18C decorated Delft.

## APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

500 Topsoil/turf. Reddish-brown, friable, fine sandy loam. Inclusions - none.

502 Demolition/soil mix. Reddish-brown, friable, fine sandy loam. Includes abundant frags of charcoal, lime, mortar, sandstone and pottery sherds.

503 Demolition layer. Reddish-brown, friable, very sandy clay. Includes fibrous roots and freq charcoal frags.

504 Soil layer. Reddish-brown, friable, fine sandy loam. Includes abundant charcoal flecks and lime mortar frags.

505 Demolition layer. Yellowish-reddish-brown, friable, sandy clay. Includes moderate small-medium cobbles.

506 Soil. Reddish-brown, friable, plastic when moist, fine sandy loam. Includes freq small frags of mortar and charcoal.

507 Cobbled area south of wall 513 in Trench 1. Uneven but well-compacted, becoming more like metalling to the south.

508 Uneven rough cobbled trackway exposed in the northern ends of Trenches 1 and 2. Made up of ww cobbles, between 0.07-0.2m in diameter.

509 Mixed subsoil. Reddish-brown, friable, clay fine silt.

510 Wall base, running E/W across Trench 2; mortar-bonded, large ww cobbles, one course high, abutted by 511.

511 Cobbles and brick wall base in Trench 2; large ww cobbles, and brick in a linear fashion, orientated N-S; mud-bonded, one course high.

512 Wall build in lee of terrace in Trench 2, made up of ashlar blocks and large and medium ww stones; also contains re-used lime ash floor frags and re-used bricks with mortar still on. probably continuous with 513 in Trench 1. Built within cut 529.

513 Wall build in lee of terrace cut 528 in Trench 1. Survives up to two courses and built of re-used building material. Probably continuous with 512.

514 Fill of ditch cut 517. Reddish-brown clay, friable when dry. Inclusions - stoneless, occ pot frags, occ charcoal frags.

515 Surface of 508.

516 Surface of 507.

517 Cut of ditch. Flat-bottomed, running E-W. Dug in the lee of the terrace cut 530. Contains 514. W: 0.7m, D: 0.18m.

518 Infill of terrace cut 536, over cobbled drain 519.

519 Cobbled lining of drain in base of terrace cut 536.

521 Make-up for 508 in Trench 1. Reddish-brown, friable, clay silt; occ small sub-angular and sub-rounded stones.

522 Fill of wheel-rut cut into 508 in Trench 1. Medium sub-rounded ww cobbles.

524 Surface of 525; fairly even and smooth.

525 Build for metalled surface 524: ww stone 0.05-0.10m in size, sub-rounded and sub-angular.

527 Demolition layer. Reddish-brown, sandy silty clay, friable. Includes freq-abundant mortar frags, brick frags and charcoal.

528 Construction cut for 513.

529 Construction cut for 512.

530 Terrace cut in Trench 1; D: *c* 1m. Continuous with 536 in Trench 2.

531 Soil layer in Trench 1. Dark reddish-brown, silty sandy clay, friable. Includes moderate amounts of lime aggregate, charcoal, brick, manganese, occ pottery and nails.

532 Post-demolition fill of terrace cut in Trench 1.

533 Post-demolition soil development in Trench 1.

534 Post-demolition soil development in Trench 2.

535 Post-demolition soil development in Trench 2.

536 Terrace cut, flat-bottomed and containing cobbled drain 519. D: 1.2m. Running E-W and probably continuous with 530.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation excavations were commissioned and funded by the Highways Agency (HA). The project was administered by R. Park and B. Lewis (HA), R.H. Veevers and C.R. Wilson (Acer Consultants Ltd, consulting engineers) and P.J. Weddell (EMAFU). Advice on archaeological matters was provided throughout by F.M. Griffith (Devon County Archaeological Service). R. Iles (English Heritage) advised on the Scoping Statement. T. Johnson (Oxford Archaeotechnics, geophysical survey consultants) provided invaluable assistance and information. Thanks are due to the landowner Mr Brown for his co-operation. The site supervisor was S.J. Reed, assisted by E. Jones, S. Ottery, A. Sage and S. Sage. The site was surveyed by K. Westcott. Documentary research was undertaken by R. Goodyer, and the illustrations were prepared by S. Sage and S. Blackmore. The report was edited by S.D. Turton.

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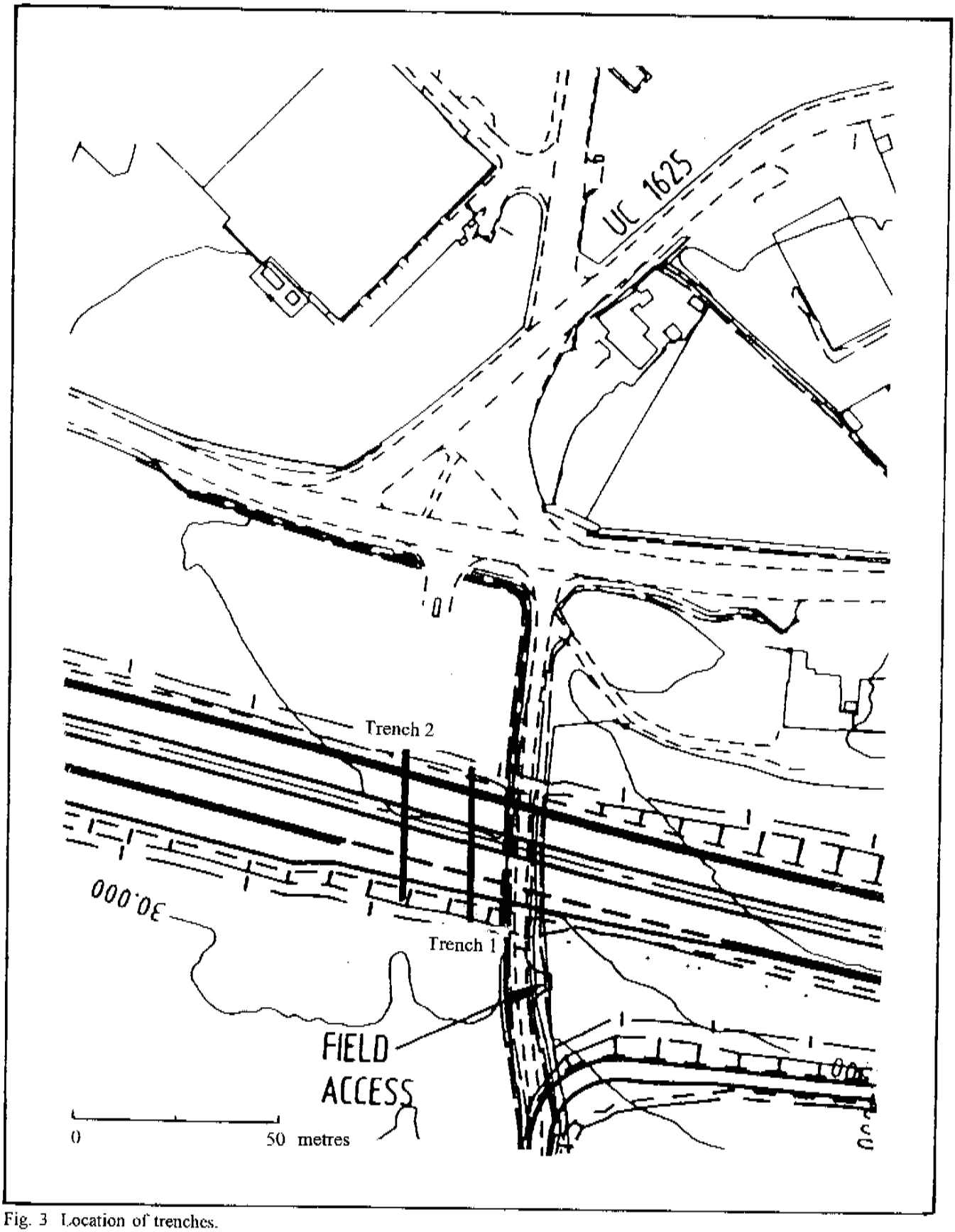


Fig. 3 Location of trenches.

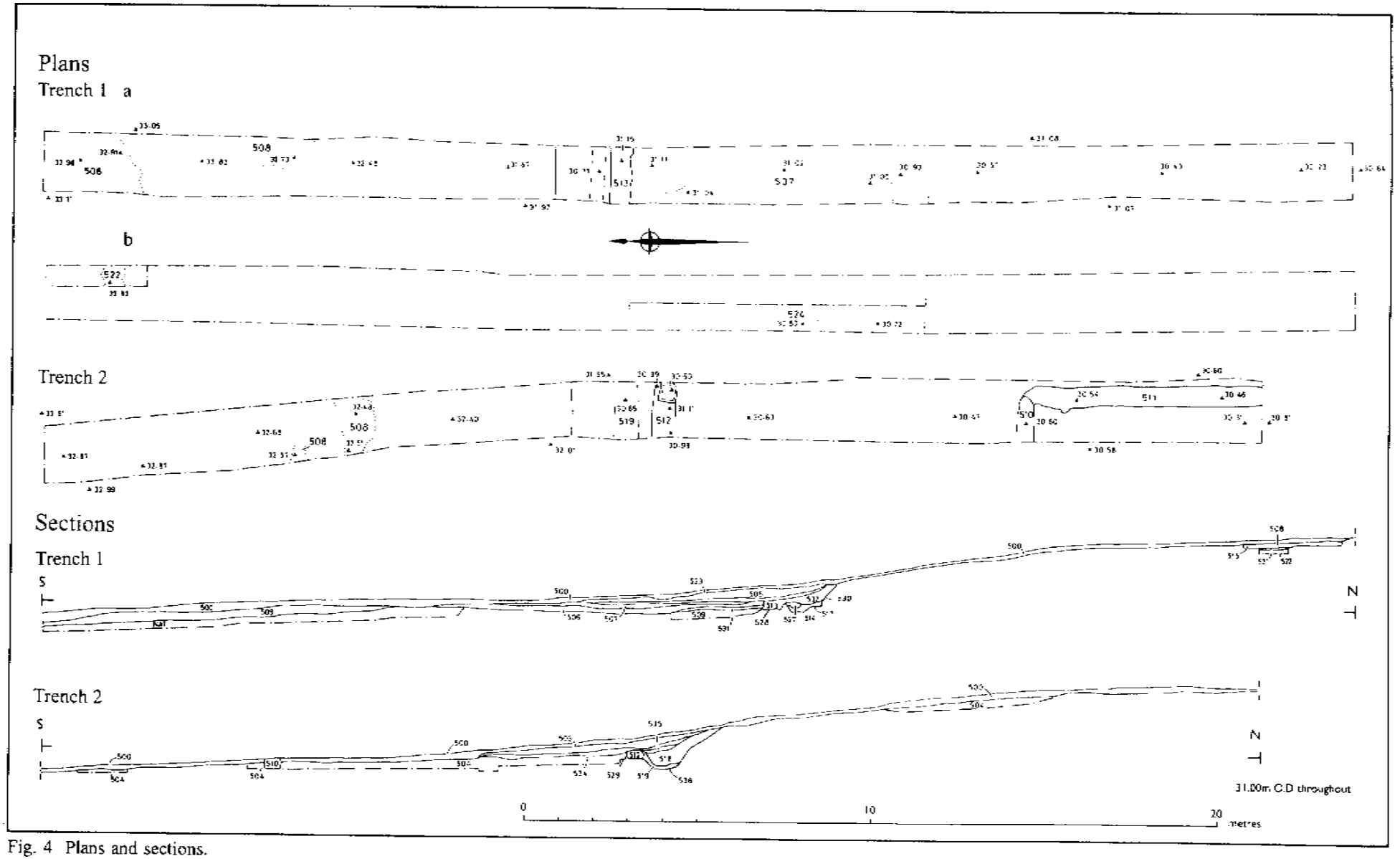


Fig. 4 Plans and sections.

Plate 1 View of Trench 1 with cobbled trackway 508 in foreground. Looking south. (Scale: 1m).

Plate 2 View of the southern half of Trench 1, showing wall 513 and cobbled surface 507. Looking south.

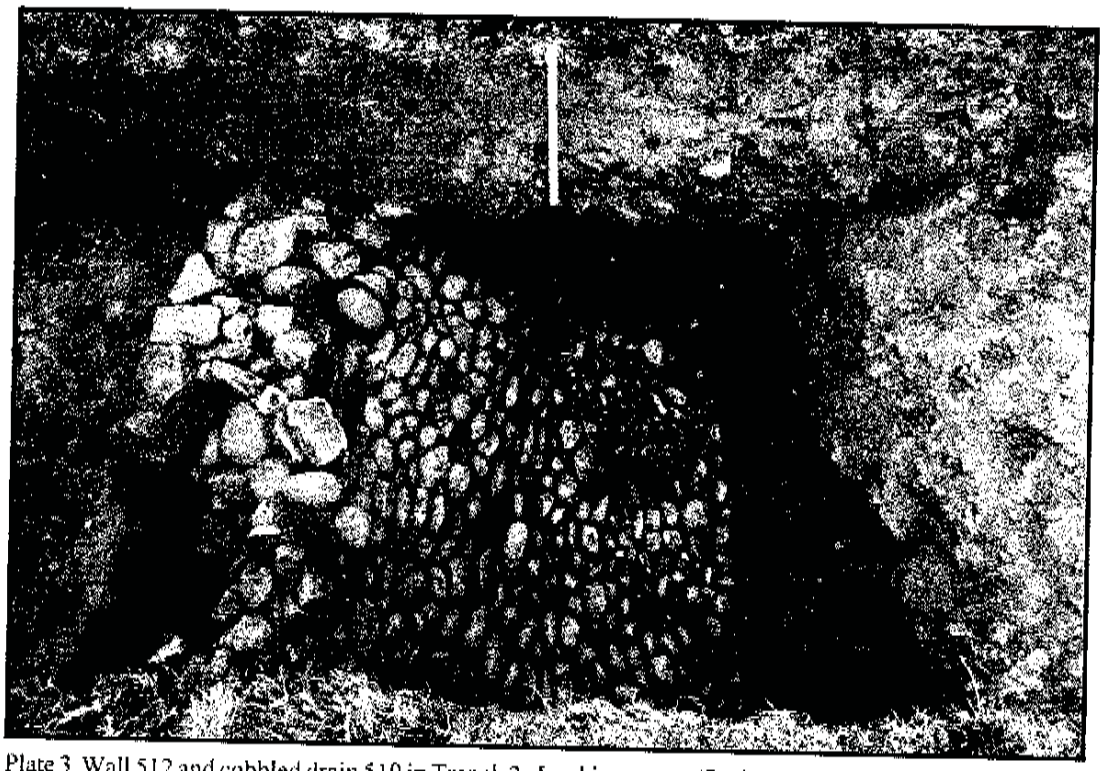

Plate 3 Wall 512 and cobbled drain 519 in Trench 2. Looking west. (Scale: 1m).

Plate 4 Remains of wall bases in southern end of Trench 2. Looking south-west.

# A30 TRUNK ROAD
# HONITON TO EXETER IMPROVEMENT
# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
# PART 3: CASTLE HILL, NEAR FENITON

by

S.J. Reed and P.T. Manning

Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit

Report No. 94.103

December 1994

## Preface

This report is one of a series of six describing the results of archaeological investigations along the proposed route of the A30 Trunk Road Honiton to Exeter Improvement Scheme in east Devon. The fieldwork was undertaken by Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit (EMAFU) between June and December 1994. The project was funded by the Highways Agency.

A preliminary archaeological assessment of the published route had been prepared in 1991 (EMAFU Report No. 91.22). At a meeting on 31 March 1994 representatives of interested parties (the Highways Agency, Acer Consultants, EMAFU, Devon County Archaeological Service and English Heritage) discussed the archaeological implications of the scheme. It was agreed to bring the level of archaeological assessment in line with recent guidelines laid out in the Department of Transport's document: *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Vol. II* (1993).

A Scoping Statement was subsequently produced by EMAFU identifying the archaeological requirements as follows: an update/review of the 1991 assessment; an assessment of existing borehole/trial-pit data; the implementation of a geophysical survey; evaluation excavations; field survey and fabric recording; fieldwalking; palaeoenvironmental sampling and dating.

The geophysical survey was carried out by Oxford Archaeotechnics and will be produced as a separate report.

**Contents**



**List of illustrations**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation excavation undertaken between 24 October and 8 November 1994 on the lower slopes of Castle Hill, near Fenny Bridges.

## 1.1 **Location** (Fig. 1)

Castle Hill is situated on the north side of the existing A30 (which at this point follows the line of the Roman road) at SY108986, between Ash Farm and Fenny Bridges. Although in Ottery St Mary Parish, the site lies adjacent to the parish boundary near Feniton. The site is located on gently sloping ground which rises to about 90m above the River Otter. The underlying geology is Permian and Triassic Upper Sandstone.

# 2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND PRELIMINARY FIELDWORK

Castle Hill is an area of land north-west of Skinners Ash, now cut by the Exeter to Waterloo railway line. It was considered to be of potential archaeological importance because the place-name suggests the former existence of earthworks or other archaeological features. There is no prominent hill or natural feature from which the name could have derived.

## 2.1 **Documentary research**

The antiquity of the name Castle Hill is uncertain, but it appears on the 1st edition OS 6" map (1891). On Donn's Map of Devon (1765) the area was called Tower Hill. The name Castle Hill is used on the OS Surveyors Draft of 1806-7, and found in documents of the Kennaway family from 1823 (DRO B961M/T8; E2), which record properties called Castle Hill Cottages. There are no other records which allude to the 'Tower' of Donn's map. It is possible that the 'Tower' or 'Castle' element refers to a former landmark, perhaps a folly of some kind. Alternatively, it may indicate archaeological feature in the form of an earthwork which has not survived. The land in this area has been intensively farmed (Weddell 1991, 23).

## 2.2 **Fieldwork**

Fieldwalking has produced finds which indicate prehistoric and Roman activity in the area. Work to the north and north-east of Skinner's Ash in the early part of 1992 produced finds which included a number of pieces of worked flint and chert, and some tile fragments of possible Roman date (SMR: SY19NW/100, 101). A sherd of Roman pottery found in the field immediately west of the railway line suggests a possible Roman settlement in the vicinity. Roman pottery of the 2nd and 4th century AD has also been found to the south of the A30 (SMR: SY19NW/99).

## 2.3 **Other archaeological features in the area**

There are two prehistoric ring-ditches, visible as cropmarks, to the north of Castle Hill (SMR: SY19NW/86) which may represent the sites of round barrows (i.e. burial mounds) of the second millennium BC. The ring ditches appear to be associated with linear marks which may extend south into the road scheme corridor, and may be part of an earlier field system (see below). There are instances where the 'Castle' element of a place-name has derived from a mound feature such as a barrow, and some connection may be possible here, although the features lie over 100m to the north of the area now known as Castle Hill (Weddell 1991, 23).

There is also evidence of a prehistoric field system in the area. It has been noted that some hedgebanks on land between Higher Gosford Farm and Little Ash appear to continue their alignment south beyond the A30, implying that the Roman road (A30) has cut through an existing field system (SMR: SY09NE/22; SY19NW/88-91). One particular field boundary east of Little Ash Farm may be an example of this (Fig. 6). There is other evidence for pre-Roman field systems further east on the A30 between Hamlet and Honiton where field boundaries follow a completely different alignment to that of the Roman road (Weddell 1991, 31).

## 3. THE EXCAVATION (Figs 2-6, Pls 1-6)

The proposed route at Fenny Bridges skirts the lower slopes of Castle Hill, passing between Castle Hill and Skinners Ash Farm. Three trenches, aligned along the route corridor, were excavated mechanically and subsequently cleaned by hand to locate any features. Trench 1 was located two fields south of the railway cutting running along the southern edge of corridor, Trench 2 was located in the field to the south of the cutting, and Trench 3 north of the cutting (Fig. 2).

### 3.1 **Results**

*Trench 1* (Figs 3-5, Pls 1-6)
Trench 1 measured 1.7 x 106m. It contained a series of linear features, all crossing the trench approximately from north to south. They were all cut into undisturbed subsoil and no stratigraphic relationships could be established. Seven features were located within this trench:

(i) About 0.5m from the western end of the trench was a U-shaped ditch (853), running north-west/south-east (Fig. 4). It had a varying width of between 1.12-1.9m and was cut 0.4-0.5m into the gravelly subsoil. No datable material was recovered from the fill of this ditch. There was no clear evidence to indicate the position of an associated bank, and no bank material survived above the level of the subsoil.

(ii) Another ditch (856) lay 19m to the east (Fig. 4) and followed a broadly similar alignment to the ditch (853) mentioned above. This feature was V-shaped, 1.5-1.9m wide and cut 0.5m into the subsoil. Twelve sherds of Bronze Age pottery were found within the fill (854) of this ditch, of which 5 were from a collared urn (see 3.3 below and Appendix 1). There was no evidence to indicate the position of any associated bank.

(iii) Some 24m further east was a shallow gully (674), 0.8m wide and 0.15m deep, again on a north-west/south-east alignment (Fig. 5). The base of the feature was cut by five stakeholes (676-680). From the upper part of the fill (673) two sherds of abraded prehistoric pottery of indeterminate date were recovered.

(iv) Another ditch (686) was located 15m further east (Fig. 3). This was 1.9-2-2m wide and *c.* 0.75-1.0m deep and orientated north-west/south-east. The ditch was variable in profile, its north-eastern face being generally steeper, with a rough undulating base, giving the impression that it had been dug as a source of bank material rather than as a defensive feature. Evidence

for a bank on this side is represented by slumped bank material (687; Fig. 3, section 1), although no bank material survived above the level of the subsoil.

Fills 689, 685 and 684 represented the initial weathering of the ditch sides and bank. Fill 672 (Fig. 3, section 2) represented the gradual infilling of the ditch and contained three flint waste flakes. Radiocarbon analysis of charcoal recovered from the lower level of this fill gave a Neolithic date of 2915-2605BC, calibrated to 2σ (95% probability) (see Appendix 3).

(v) To the west of the ditch (686) were three stakeholes (690-692; Fig. 3, plan), which lay in a line approximately parallel to the ditch.

(vi) Approximately 1.5m east of the ditch (686) was a pit (683; Fig. 3, plan). The true shape and nature of this feature could not be determined due to extensive badger disturbance. No stratigraphic relationship was demonstrated between the pit and ditch.

(vii) At *c.* 13m from the eastern end of Trench 1 were two linear features cutting across the trench. The westernmost feature, a U-shaped ditch (670) was 0.8-1m wide and 0.25-0.34m deep. No finds or charcoal were recovered from the fill (669). The easternmost feature (668) ran parallel, although it was more open in profile and varied in width between 1.2m and 1.9m with a depth of 0.2m. Again no finds or charcoal were recovered from the fill (667). No direct stratigraphic relationship could be demonstrated between the dated ditch (686), the pit (683) and these linear features.

*Trench 2* (Fig. 5)
Trench 2 measured 1.7 x 216m. At its western end was a shallow ditch (656), 0.4m wide and 0.12m deep (Fig. 5, section 4). A flint end scraper was recovered from the fill (657). No other features were observed in Trench 2 except the truncated ditches of a former hedgebank. However, three sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the ploughsoil (654) and one abraded Roman pottery sherd was found during fieldwalking within the area to the south-east of the trench. From the topsoil and lower soil horizon (652, 653) in Trench 2, a further 48 flint and chert artefacts were recovered (see Appendix 1).

*Trench 3* (Fig. 5)
Trench 3 measured 1.7 x 64m, and was orientated north-east/south-west along the centre of the route corridor. Five metres from its western end was a shallow ditch (663), 1.8m wide and 0.2m deep, cutting across the trench. No finds or charcoal were recovered from the fill (665). Fifteen metres further east was a shallow depression (660), 0.4m wide and 0.06m deep, which ran into the floor of the trench from the north and petered out within 1.2m. The other feature within Trench 3 was of indeterminate function. It measured *c.* 0.15m deep, 2.5m long and 0.75m wide in total, but consisted of two shallow depressions (658 and 675) which contained one fill (659). A stakehole (681) was cut into the south-western corner of the feature (675). No finds were recovered from the fills.

### 3.2 **The prehistoric pottery**

The presence of the remains of a probable collared urn in Trench 1, ditch (856) is of considerable significance. This pottery type is usually associated with cremation burials of the early Bronze Age, but is occasionally found in domestic contexts. Collared urns are rare in Devon. Furthermore, this particular piece has very unusual decoration. The decoration

comprises close-spaced, short whipped-cord and fingernail impressions, with a decorative row right under the collar pushing the edge to an outer lip. Most collared urns from the West have a looser, more widely-spread decoration. It is possible that this particular piece dates either from very early in the Bronze Age, or it may represent the remains of a ?transitional late Neolithic vessel in the 'Peterborough' tradition (which used similar impressed decorative techniques), although there are no easy parallels (H. Quinnell pers. comm.).

### 3.3 **Geophysical survey**

A geophysical (magnetometer) survey was undertaken by Oxford Archaeotechnics which covered two parallel strips of land either side of Trench 1. The results of this and other surveys will be published in a separate forthcoming report.

## 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation excavation demonstrated the presence of a very important prehistoric site at Castle Hill containing a number of possible boundary and other features. These may relate to a pre-Roman co-axial field system. On current evidence at least two of the features in Trench 1 appear to date to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age period. The recovery of fragments of a probable collared urn may be indicative of nearby cremation pits or domestic occupation. The discovery of Roman pottery on site is also significant but has yet to be explained.

In view of the importance of the surviving archaeological deposits, it is recommended that an area (rescue) excavation be undertaken prior to construction work in order to record the features already identified, and to investigate other likely surviving features within the route corridor. The area excavation will need to concentrate on the field containing Trench 1, extending into the field to the west (the exact distance depending on the final results of the geophysical survey).

APPENDIX 1: FINDS CATALOGUE *by* G. Langman

| *Context* | *Comments* |
|---|---|
| 650 | 10 flint lithics: 6 flakes, 4 scrapers (1 burnt)<br>Brick: 1 fragment - post-medieval<br>Tile: 2 fragments - post-medieval?<br>Slag: 1 fragment tap slag, weight: 10gms |
| 652 | Pot: 1 small abraded sherd ?prehistoric,<br>2 sherds post-medieval South Somerset wares (17C/18C)<br>Glass: 1 fragment bottle glass (1650-1800), 1 fragment window glass 18C/19C<br>43 lithics: 8 chert: flakes<br>35 flint: 4 scrapers, 1 notched flake, 2 blade cores (1 burnt), 1 broken blade, 27 flakes<br>Slag: 3 fragments tap slag, weight: 90gms |
| 653 | Pot: 1 sherd South Somerset coarseware (17C/18C)<br>5 lithics: 2 flint flakes<br>2 chert: 1 flake core, 1 flake<br>1 flint nodule |

| | |
|---|---|
| 654 | Pot: 3 sherds from one vessel - Roman |
| 655 | Pot: 1 small abraded sherd ?prehistoric, 1 sherd post-medieval South Somerset black-glazed (after 1660)<br>Glass: 1 small fragment blue glass - post-medieval 18C/19C<br>43 lithics: 9 chert: 9 flakes, 1 chip<br>34 flint: 3 chips, 1 scraper, 1 blade, 1 awl, 26 flakes, 2?unused |
| 657 | Lithics: 1 flint end scraper |
| 672 | 3 flint lithics: flakes |
| 673 | Pot: 2 sherds from same vessel - ?prehistoric |
| 694 | Claypipe - 1 stem (after 1600 AD) |
| 665 | Pot: 1 sherd S. Somerset 18C coarseware |
| 854 | Pot: 12 sherds Bronze Age - 5 sherds probable collared urn with corded decoration (?late Neolithic/early Bronze Age) (H. Quinnell identification) |
| Unstrat | Pot: 3 small abraded sherds; 1 large sherd - probably prehistoric. |

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

650 Topsoil in Trench 1. Dark yellowish-brown, 10YR 4/4 fine sandy clay; friable; common small to medium ww stones.

651 Natural subsoil in Trench 1, a variable sandy clay subsoil locally very gravelly. Strong brown 7.5YR 4/6, fine sandy clay; friable, slightly plastic; freq to abundant small to large ww stones.

652 Topsoil in Trench 2. Dark brown 7.5YR 3/4 fine sandy clay loam; friable; common small to medium ww stones.

653 Interface between topsoil 652 and subsoil 654 in Trench 2.

654 Lower soil horizon in Trench 2 (B horizon). Strong brown 7.5YR 4/6 clayey fine sand; friable, slightly plastic; occ small to medium rounded stones.

655 Fieldwalking in vicinity of Trench 2.

656 Shallow ditch cut in Trench 2; V-shaped cut into natural 666 running across the trench orientated NW-SE. Contains fill 657. Cut W: 0.4m; D: 0.12m.

657 Fill of 656. One flint end scraper was recovered from this context. reddish-brown 5YR 4/4 fine sandy clay; friable; stoneless <1%.

658 Pit cut into natural 662 of Trench 3. This pit is cut by 675 which may be contemporary as an extension to 658. No function could be attributed to this feature. Le: 1.1m; W: 0.6m; D: 0.15m.

659 Fill of 658 and 675. Brown/dark-brown 7.5YR 4/4 fine sandy clay loam; friable; contains freq lumps of redeposited natural and freq charcoal frags.

660 Shallow scoop/ditch. Extending into the trench 1.2m from the northern edge of excavation before petering out. This feature had no distinct fill. W: 0.4m, D: 0.06m.

662 Natural in Trench 3 into which all features are cut. Strong brown 7.5YR 5/6 fine sandy clay, friable; freq small to medium ww stones, locally more gravelly in bands.

663 Shallow ditch cut in Trench 3. Probably a hedge ditch; the natural is higher on the eastern side of the ditch suggesting the position of a bank associated with the ditch. W: 1.8m, D: 0.2m.

664 Topsoil in Trench 3. Dark yellowish-brown

10YR 4/4 fine sandy loam, friable, relatively stoneless, occ small to medium ww stones.

665 Fill of 663. Strong brown 7.5YR 5/8 silty clay loam, friable, slightly plastic.

666 Natural subsoil in Trench 2. Strong brown 7.5YR 5/8 fine sandy clay, plastic when wet; abundant small to medium ww stones, locally very gravelly.

667 Fill of 668. Brown/dark-brown 7.5YR 4/4 fine sandy clay, friable, occ small ww stones, rare medium-sized ww stones.

668 Ditch cut in Trench 1 containing 667; probably associated with ditch 670 to the east as possibly a grubbed-out hedgebank. W: 1.2-1.9m (N-S), D: *c.* 0.3m.

669 Fill of 670. Strong brown 7.5YR 5/6 fine sandy clay, friable, occ to rare small ww stones and occ charcoal frags.

670 Ditch cut in Trench 1. Irregular base, deeper in the middle. Probably associated with 668 as a grubbed-out hedgebank (see 668). Contains 669. W: 0.7-0.9m, D: 0.25-0.49m.

672 Fill of 686. Reddish-brown 5YR 4/4 fine sandy clay, friable, occ small to medium ww stones and freq small to large (up to 4cm) pieces of charcoal. This fill contained three lithic finds and charcoal, radiocarbon dated to 2915-2605BC 2σ (95% probability).

673 Fill of 674; contained abraded sherds of ?Roman/prehistoric pottery. Brown/dark-brown 10YR 4/3 fine sandy clay, friable, occ small ww stones.

674 Ditch cut in Trench 1. Contains 673. The base is cut by five stakeholes 676-680. W: 0.8m, D: 0.2m.

675 Pit cut in Trench 3. Natural 662 and pit cut 658 contained fill 659. No function could be attributed to this feature.

676 Stakehole cut into base of ditch 674 in Trench 1.

677 Ditto

678 Ditto

679 Ditto

680 Ditto

681 Stakehole cut into pit cut 675 in Trench 3.

682 Fill of 683. Yellowish-brown silty clay, friable, occ charcoal flecks.

683 Pit cut in Trench 1 just NE of ditch 686. Approx dimensions: 1.6 x 1.4m where it runs into the southern edge of excavation. Its depth (and true size) could not be accurately ascertained, due to later disturbance by badger burrowing.

684 Fill of 686 representing weathering of the bank and ditch sides. Reddish-brown 5YR 5/3 fine sandy clay, friable, occ small to medium ww stones and freq small to medium charcoal frags.

685 Fill of 686. Yellowish-brown 10YR 5/4 fine sandy clay, friable, stoneless, rare charcoal frags.

686 Ditch cut into natural subsoil (651). Contains fills 684, 685, 688, 689, 687, 672. Rough undulating base; the northern face was steeper than the southern. The ditch had a U-shaped profile suggesting that it had been dug as a quarry ditch for a bank rather than as a defensive feature. One of the fills 687 appeared to represent slumping of the bank, which would indicate that the bank lay on the north of the ditch. No bank survived above the natural 651. W: 1.9-2.2m, D: 0.79-0.97m.

687 Fill of 686. Possible bank material slumped into the infilled ditch. Reddish-brown 5YR 5/4 sandy clay, friable, plastic when moist; stoneless.

688 Fill of 686, possibly dumping material. Yellowish-brown 10YR 5/6 clay, some sand content, friable, stoneless.

689 Primary ditch fill of 686. Reddish-brown 2.5YR 5/4 sandy clay, common small sub-angular and ww stones (chert).

690 Stakehole cut in Trench 1. Diam: 0.14m. Cut into natural to the south of 686 and probably associated with 691 and 692 as a parallel row of stakes parallel to ditch 686,

and as such may be of similar date.

691 Stakehole cut in Trench 1. Diam: 0.14m. Associated with 690 (see above).

692 Stakehole cut in Trench 1. Diam: 0.12m. See 690 above.

693 Hedgebank ditch cut in Trench 2 associated with 695. Hedgebank is now grubbed-out; contains context 694.

694 Fill of 693. Brown 7.5YR 5/2 clay loam, friable, slightly plastic.

695 Hedgebank ditch cut in Trench 2 associated with 693. Hedgebank is now grubbed-out. Contains 696.

696 Fill of 695. Brown 7.5YR 5/2 clay loam, friable, slightly plastic.

850 Strong, compacted lower horizon beneath topsoil 650 in Trench 1. Not present in the eastern part of the trench. In the western half of the trench it seals all the archaeological deposits. Dark yellowish-brown 10YR 4/4 fine sandy clay, friable, more compact than 650. Freq small to medium rounded stones/chert.

851 Fill of 853. Reddish-brown 5YR 5/4 fine sandy loam, friable, slightly plastic when moist. Common small to medium ww and angular stones. Rare charcoal flecks.

852 Fill of 853 derived from weathering of ditch sides. Yellowish-red 5YR 5/8 silty clay, plastic. Common small to medium rounded and angular chert.

853 Open U-shaped ditch cut containing 851, 852. Cut 0.4-0.5m into subsoil 651. The eastern edge is steeper, suggesting bank on this side. W: 1.12-1.9m.

854 Fill of ditch cut 856. Contained Bronze Age pottery sherds. Yellowish-brown 10YR 5/6 silty sandy loam, friable, slightly plastic. Freq small to medium rounded stones, occ fine intrusive roots.

855 Ditch fill of 856 derived from weathering of ditch sides. Reddish-brown 5YR 5/3 sandy clay, plastic, stoneless.

856 Open V-shaped ditch cut. Cut *c.* 0.05m into subsoil. Contains fills 854, 855. W: 1.5-1.9m (S-N).

APPENDIX 3: RESULTS OF RADIOCARBON DATING UNDERTAKEN BY BETA ANALYTIC, MIAMI, FLORIDA, USA

| *EMAFU Sample No.* | *Laboratory No.* | *Radiocarbon Age* | *1 σ calibrated result (68% probability)* | *2 σ calibrated result (95% probability)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 639300 | Beta 78183 | 4220±60BP | cal BC 2895-2865 and BC 2810-2695 | cal BC 2915-2605 |

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation excavations were commissioned and funded by the Highways Agency (HA). The project was administered by R. Park and B. Lewis (HA), R.H. Veevers and C.R. Wilson (Acer Consultants Ltd, consulting engineers) and P.J. Weddell (EMAFU). Advice on archaeological matters was provided throughout by F.M. Griffith (Devon County Archaeological Service). R. Iles (English Heritage) advised on the Scoping Statement. T. Johnson (Oxford Archaeotechnics, geophysical survey consultants) provided invaluable assistance and information. Thanks are due to the landowner Mr B.J. Godfrey of Skinners Ash Farm for his co-operation. The site supervisor was S.J. Reed, assisted by T. Dixon, A. Ellis, P. Manning, S. Ottery, S. Tobiasson and G. Tyler. Documentary research was undertaken by A.G. Collings, R. Goodyer and J.Z. Juddery. The drawings were prepared by

T. Ives and S. Blackmore. The report was edited by S.D. Turton.

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Devon Record Office (DRO)
B961M/E2 Kennaway estate papers

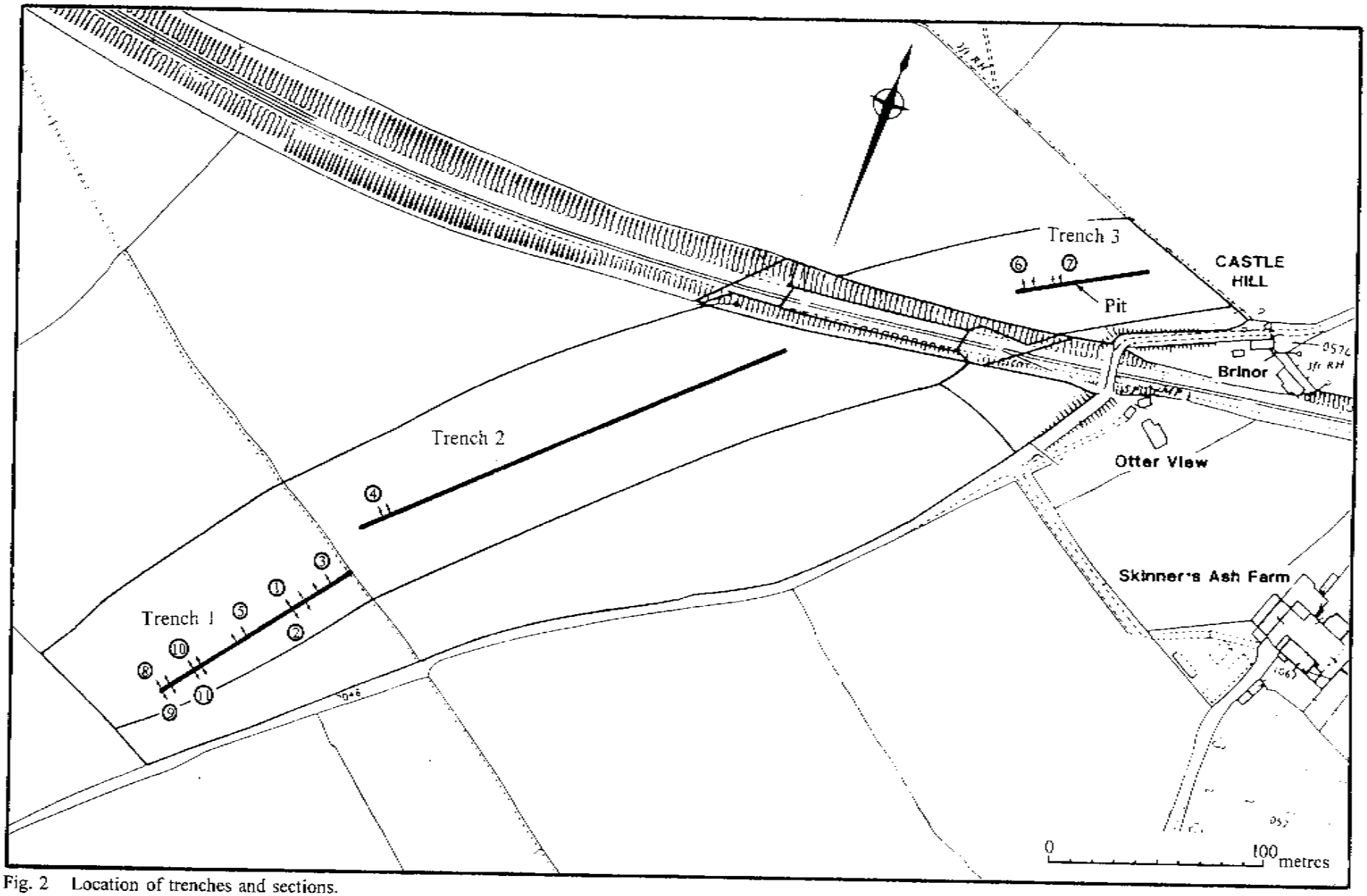


Fig. 2 Location of trenches and sections.

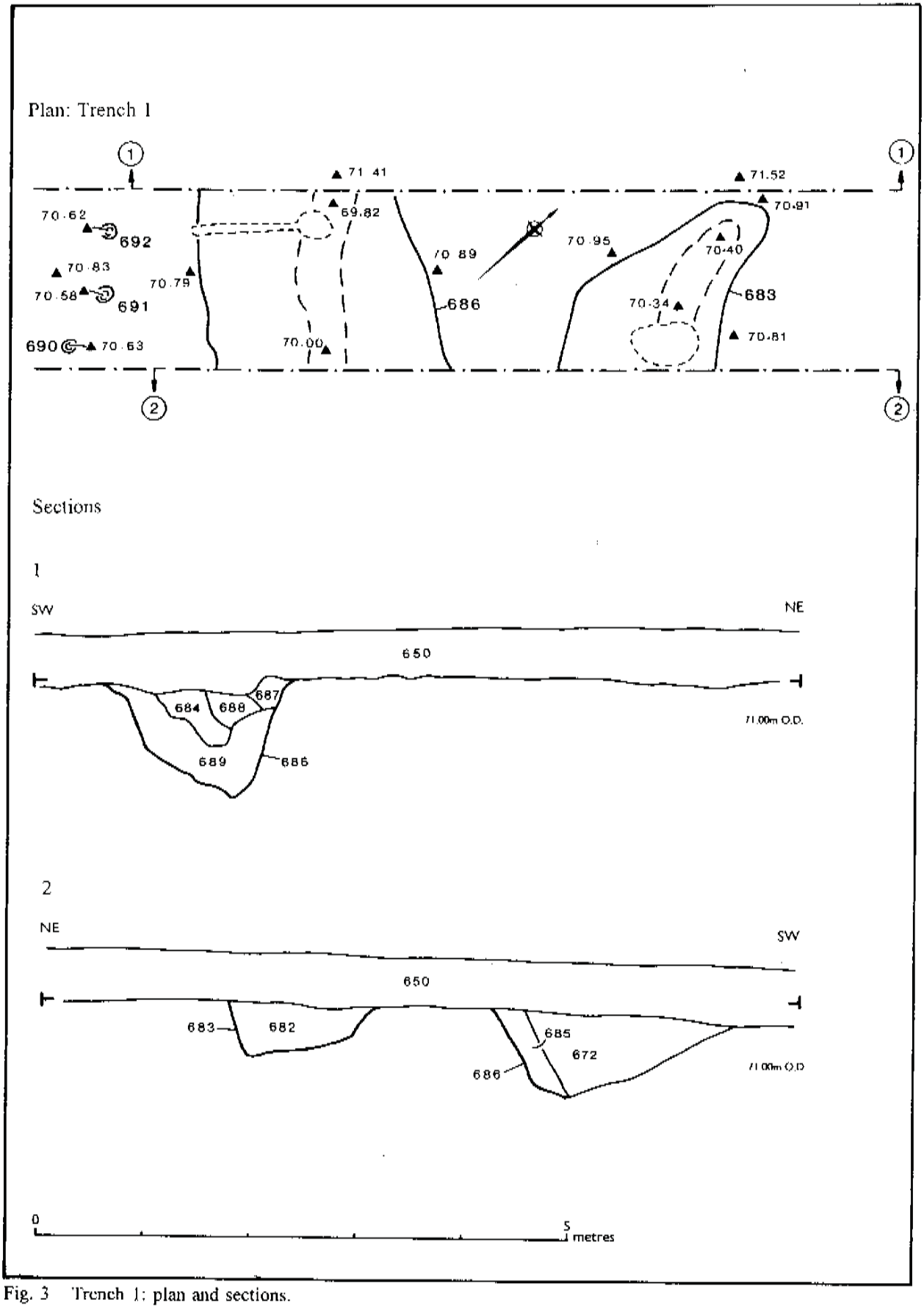


Fig. 3 Trench 1: plan and sections.

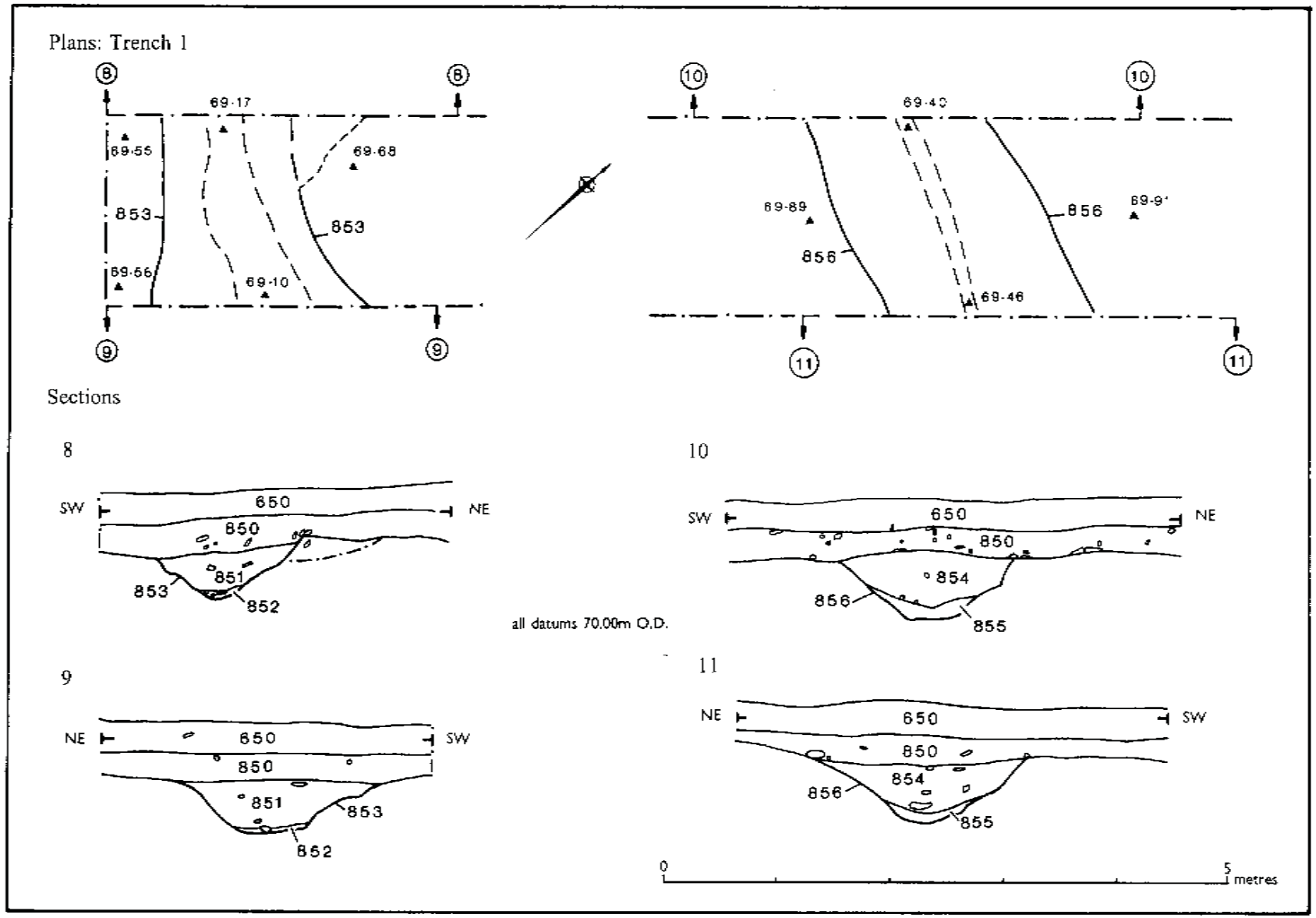


Fig. 4 Trench 1: plans and sections.

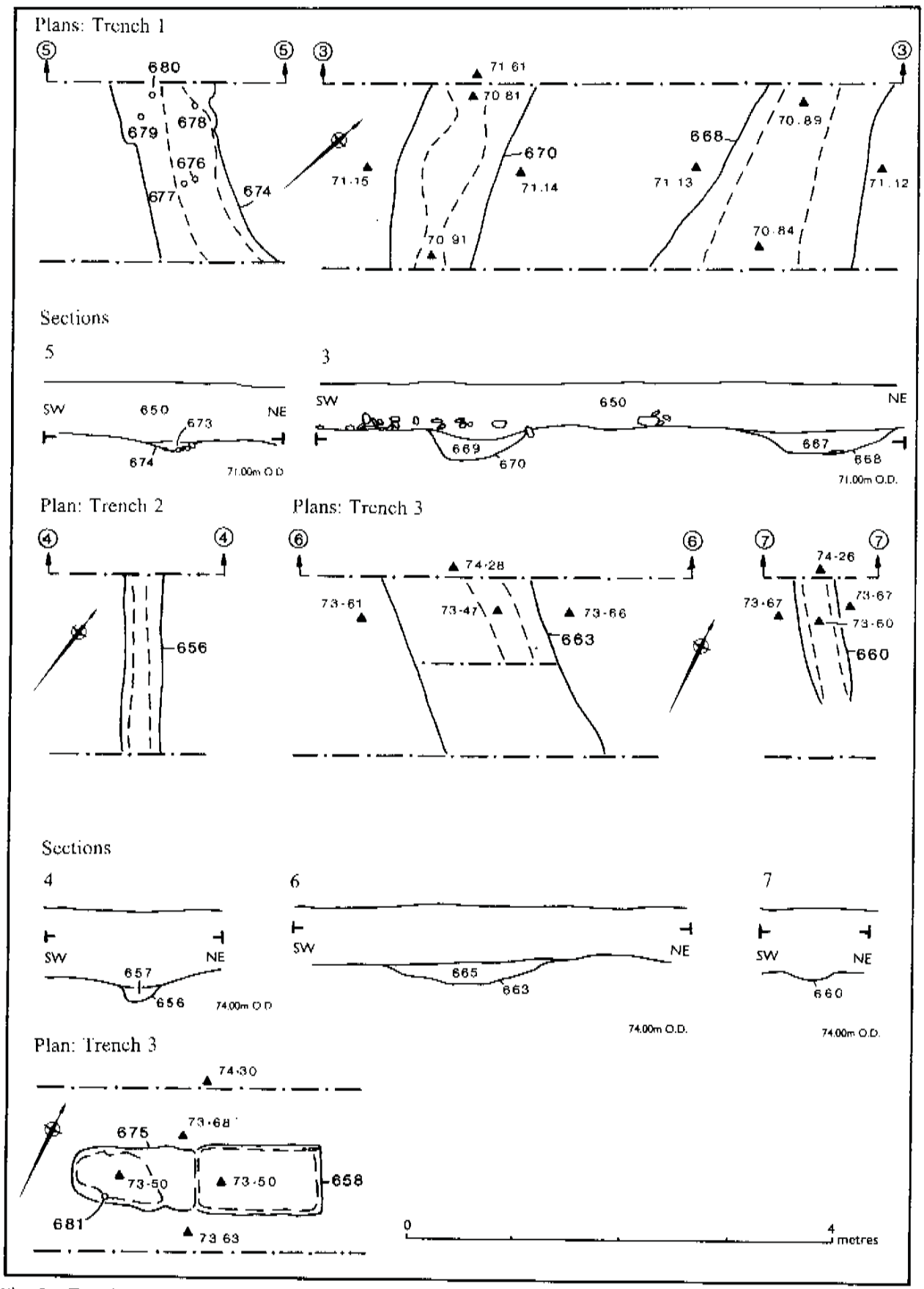


Fig. 5 Trenches 1-3: plans and sections.

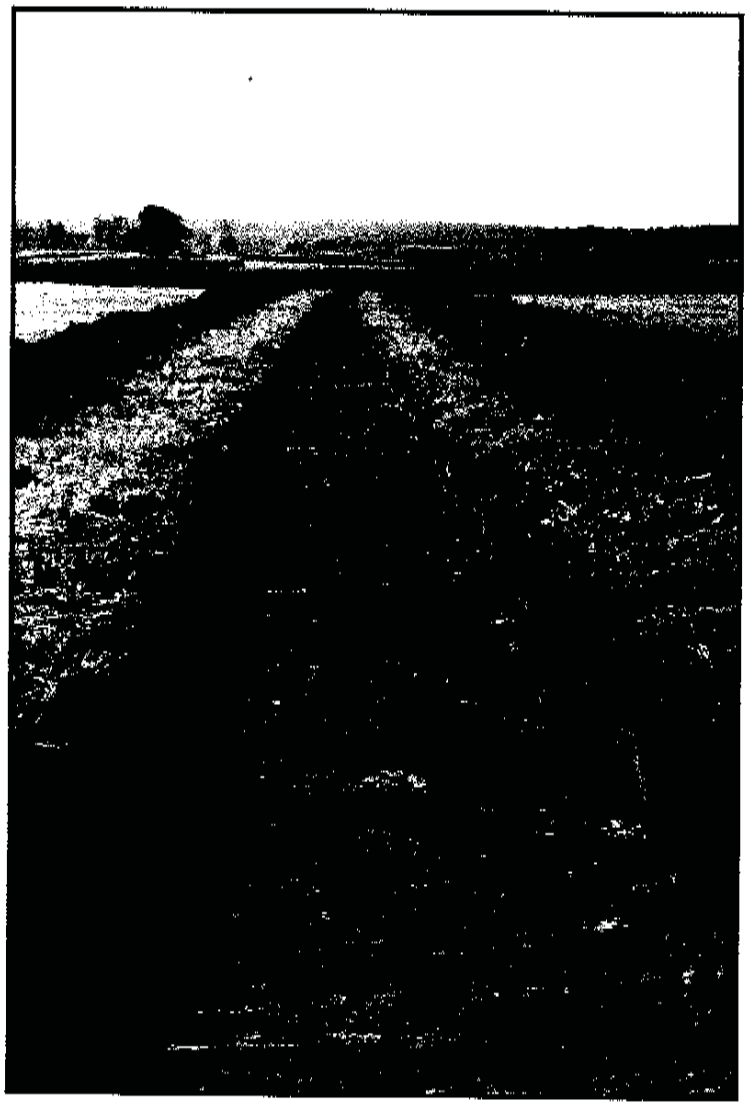

Plate 1 Trench 1. Looking west.

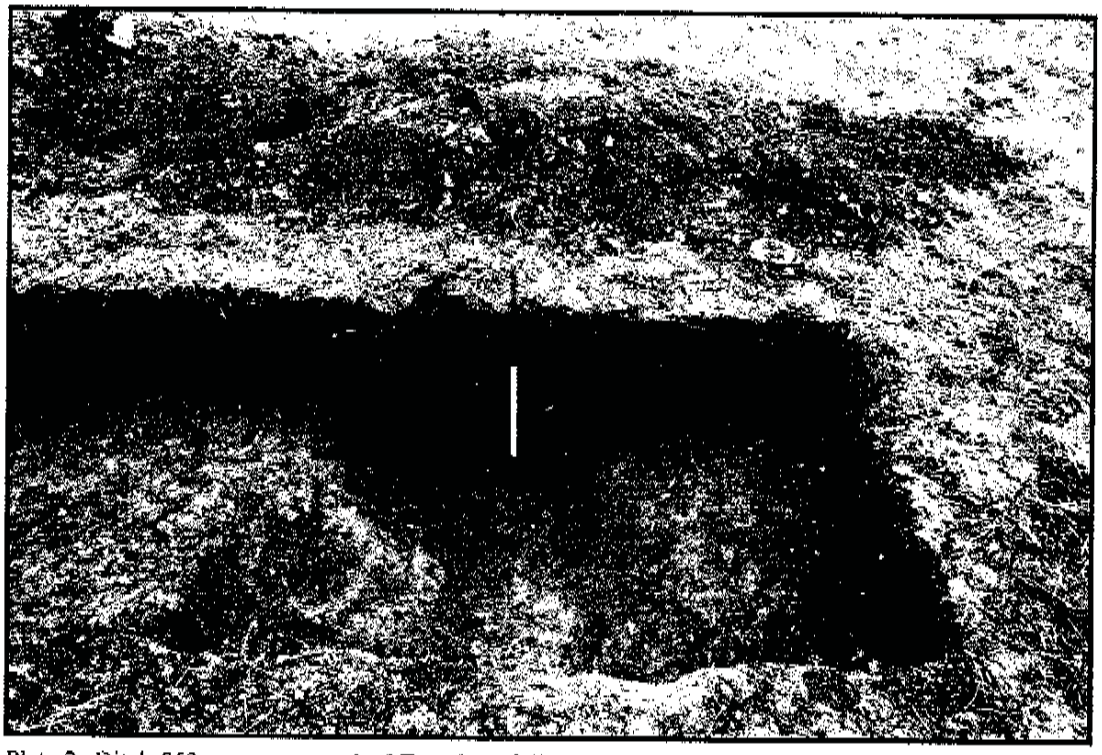

Plate 2 Ditch 853 at western end of Trench 1, fully excavated. Looking south. (Scale: 1m).

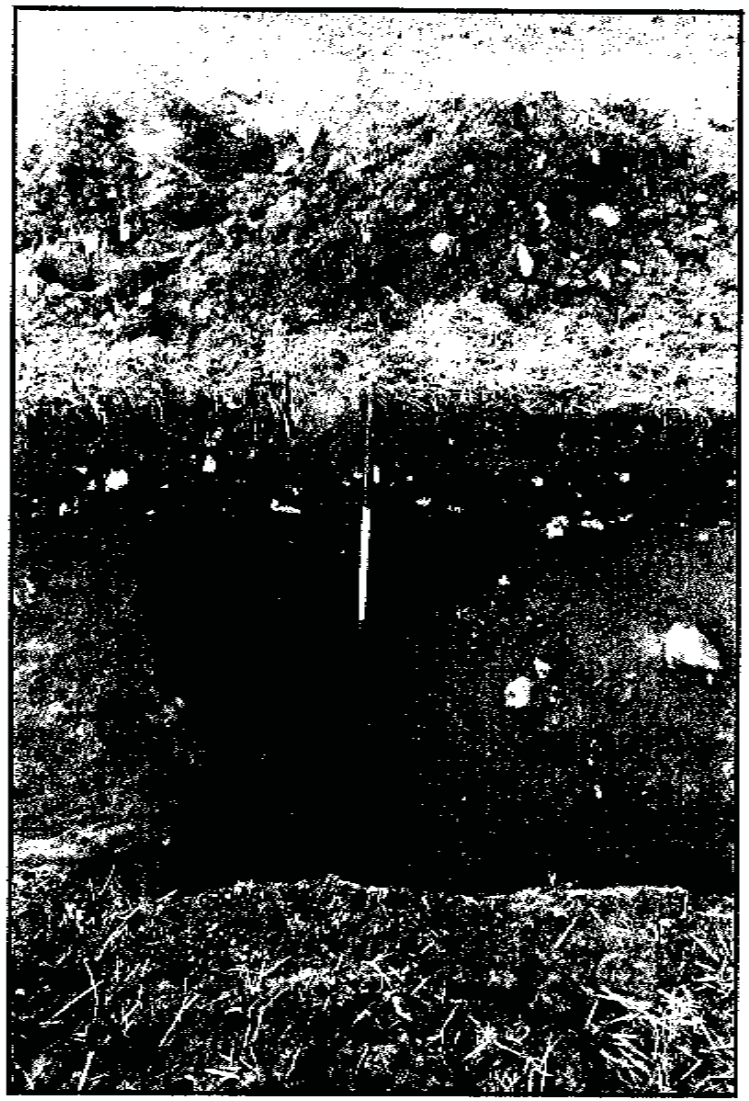

Plate 3 Ditch 856 in Trench 1 from which Bronze Age pottery was recovered. Looking north. (Scale: 1m).

Plate 4 Ditch 674 in Trench 1, showing stakeholes 677-680. Looking north-west.

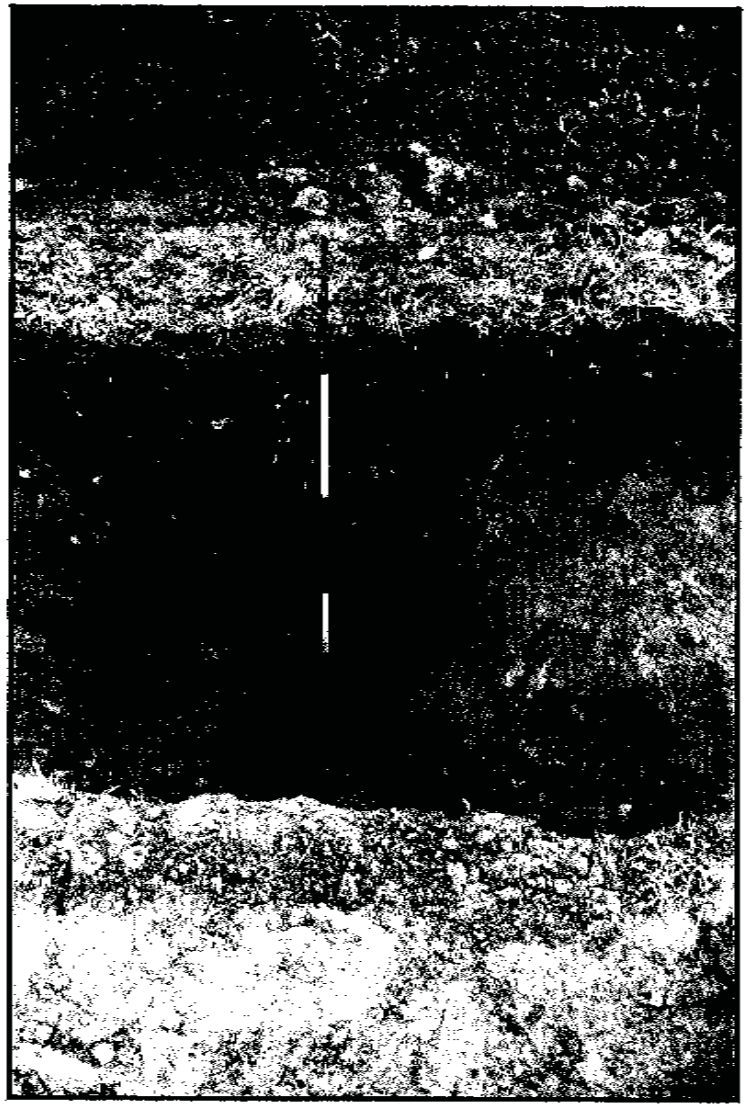

Plate 5 Ditch 686, fully excavated. Looking north. (Scale: 2m).

Plate 6 Ditches 668 and 670 at eastern end of Trench 1. Looking east. (Scale: 1m).

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The geophysical survey was carried out by Oxford Archaeotechnics and will be produced as a separate report.

**Contents**



**List of illustrations**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation excavation undertaken in August 1994 at the site of a prehistoric enclosure at Hayne Lane, Gittisham. At the time of the excavation the field containing the site was under stubble.

## 1.1 **Location** (Figs 1-2, Pl. 1)

The site is located at SY140996 in an arable field on the south side of the present A30, to the west of Hayne Lane and Hamlet. It lies on the lower slopes of the Otter Valley, just below the 80m contour. The underlying geology is river terrace drift, defined on the Institute of Geological Sciences Geological Survey Map (Sidmouth, sheet 326/340) as valley gravels over Upper (Keuper) Marls.

## 1.2 **Background**

The site was identified from aerial photographs taken in 1984 by F.M. Griffith as a single-ditched enclosure of oval shape. It was approximately 80m long (east-west) and at least 40m wide. The northern edge of the enclosure had already been destroyed by road widening and pipeline construction.

There was no evidence of earthworks associated with the enclosure above ground. A geophysical (magnetometer) survey was undertaken by Oxford Archaeotechnics in 1994 as part of the evaluation. This survey indicated that the enclosure was perhaps more sub-rectangular than oval in shape. The enclosure ditch produced sharp magnetic anomalies, and a possible entrance was located at the south-eastern side of the enclosure. No clear pattern of internal features emerged.

# 2. THE EXCAVATION (Figs 3-5, Pls 2-4)

## 2.1 **Method**

A trench, *c.* 128m long by 1.6m wide, was dug across the enclosure site. This was located 25m south of, and parallel to, the northern edge of the field and within the area of the proposed improvement scheme (Figs 3-4). Between 0.2-0.25m of topsoil was removed mechanically and dumped to the south of the trench, at which time it was examined for artefacts. The topsoil (ploughsoil) directly overlay the subsoil (chert and flints in a silty clay matrix). The trench was cleaned by hand to locate features cut into the subsoil.

## 2.2 **Results**

*Ditch terminus (possible entrance at west end)* (Fig. 5, section 1; Pl. 3)

The terminus (545) of a ditch was located 27m from the west end of the trench. This feature only extended 1m into the northern side of the trench, and its true base probably lay outside the excavated area. However, it is likely to have been of a similar V-shaped profile to the ditch encountered to the east (see below). The ditch terminus contained a single fill (546) comprising a strong silty clay matrix with frequent sub-angular fragments of chert. The upper part of the fill had been disturbed by the construction of a hedgebank (542/1, 544/3; subsequently removed some time after 1963) which formerly divided the field. The ditch fill contained one sherd of possible Neolithic pottery, five lithic finds and two fragments of slag. This feature probably represented an entrance into the enclosure, additional to the south-east

entrance indicated by the geophysical survey.

*Pit* (Fig. 5)
A shallow, flat-bottomed pit (554) was excavated within the enclosure. Seven sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the brown silty clay fill (555): three from a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age carinated bowl, and four sherds of probable Neolithic date. There were three lithic finds. The pit also contained part of a clay loom-weight (Iron Age), the outer face of which bore impressions of vegetation, presumably from having been rolled on the ground prior to firing. The impressions were too eroded to enable botanical identification (V. Straker pers. comm.).

Magnetic susceptibility readings around the western side of the pit (including the western part of fill 555) were considerably higher than those of the surrounding area. This suggested that an activity such as burning had been carried out in the immediate vicinity. Three fragments of iron tap slag were recovered from the surface of the subsoil to the west of the pit.

*Enclosure ditch at east end* (Fig. 5, section 2; Pl. 4)
The enclosure ditch (553) was located 28m from the east end of the trench. This was 4m wide and 2.3m deep, with a steep V-shaped profile. There was no evidence of silting at its base. The primary fill (552) comprised 1m of variously-sized angular and sub-angular fragments of chert in a clay matrix, representing the weathering of the ditch sides and its associated bank. From this layer three sherds of (undatable) prehistoric pottery, 4 lithic artefacts and 1 fragment of slag were recovered.

Above this was a soil layer (551) which had developed once the bank and ditch had stabilised. This layer was more loamy in character than fill (552) and contained occasional charcoal fragments. It was overlain by slighted bank material (550), which may have been levelled during ploughing. The subsequent soil development (548), which yielded one sherd of medieval pottery (not closely dated), possibly represented the medieval topsoil washed into the partially-filled ditch. The upper ditch fill (547) consisted of material from the original bank levelled over the ditch, either through ploughing or by the deliberate razing of the earthwork. No bank material was found to survive *in situ*, and modern ploughing appears to have truncated all features to the top of the subsoil.

*Other finds*
Finds from the topsoil dump (540) included 35 flint and chert artefacts and fragments of slag, in addition to medieval and post-medieval pottery and glass. Unstratified finds comprised two sherds of medieval pottery, one sherd of prehistoric pottery (undated), three fragments of slag (see above) and 7 lithic finds.

The lithics from the site as a whole are considered most likely to be of Neolithic date (T.H. Gent pers. comm.). None of the artefacts were of remarkable quality. They were made from both pebble and Beer flint (from the east Devon coast), and local chert.

## 3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation confirmed that the enclosure is an important prehistoric site with significant surviving archaeological deposits. The main occupation is likely to date from the later

prehistoric period, however the presence of Neolithic material on site has yet to be satisfactorily explained. Enclosures of this type are relatively unusual in Devon.

The extent of the proposed A30 improvement in this vicinity extends 35-40m south of the field's northern boundary. The site should therefore be subject to rescue excavations prior to its destruction. The following areas of detail require particular attention:

(i) the overall form of the enclosure including possible entrance causeways;
(ii) establishment of any phasing within the ditch outlines;
(iii) location and identification of interior features;
(iv) identification of other features possibly associated with ironworking (tap slag), or lithic finds (providing a possible context for the Neolithic material).

The scheme should leave an approximate 10m-wide strip of the enclosure unaffected (see Fig. 3) including the possible entrance at the south identified by the geophysical survey.

### 3.1 **Palaeoenvironmental sampling**

Because the site is relatively well-drained, waterlogged remains are considered unlikely, but if encountered should be sampled for floral and faunal identification. The most likely palaeoenvironmental evidence is anticipated in the form of charred organic material, and the sampling strategy should therefore be directed towards the recovery of such from the both the internal features (100% sampling) and the enclosing ditch (selected sampling). These samples can be used for macrofossil analysis and possible radiocarbon dating. Separate samples should be taken from the ditch fills for the purpose of pollen analysis, which may provide information on past land-use and agricultural activity.

APPENDIX 1: FINDS CATALOGUE *by* G. Langman

| *Context* | *Comments* |
|---|---|
| 540 | 27 sherds in total: 1 sherd English china (after 1780AD), 9 sherds S. Somerset coarsewares (17C/18C), 5 sherds S. Somerset jug (15C/16C), 12 sherds ?medieval (13C/14C/15C)<br>4 fragments post-med glass (18C+)<br>35 lithics (+ 37 discarded): including 1 end scraper, 1 side scraper<br>1 bag slag, weight 110gms<br>4 fragments coal<br>1 slate fragment<br>1 Fe nail |
| 546 | 1 prehistoric pot sherd: ?Neolithic<br>5 lithics (+ 17 discarded)<br>2 slag fragments, weight 15 gms |
| 548 | 1 pot sherd - ?medieval<br>2 lithics (+ 2 discarded): including 1 end scraper |
| 550 | 1 pot sherd - prehistoric<br>1 fragment ?geological material |
| 552 | 3 pot sherds - prehistoric<br>4 lithics (+ 3 discarded): including 2 side scrapers<br>1 slag fragment |

555 7 sherds in total: 3 sherds late Bronze Age/early Iron Age from a ?carinated bowl, 4 sherds ?Neolithic
3 lithics (+ 1 discarded)
1 Iron Age loom weight (245gms in weight) [sent to V. Straker, Bristol University 7.9.94; returned Dec. 1994 - insufficient remains for analysis]

Unstrat. 2 sherds ?medieval, 1 sherd prehistoric
7 lithics (+ 9 discarded)
3 fragments slag, weight 120gms

## APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

540 Topsoil. Dark yellowish-brown 10YR 4/4 silty loam, friable, freq to abundant small to medium ww stones, freq to abundant fine intrusive roots.

541 Fill of grubbed-out hedge ditch (cut 542). Brown/dark-brown silty loam, friable, freq small to medium angular chert frags.

542 Ditch cut for now grubbed-out hedgebank. Contains 541. W: 0.8m, D: *c.* 0.2m.

543 Fill of grubbed-out hedge ditch (cut 544). Brown/dark-brown 10YR 4/3 silty clay loam; friable, freq small to medium angular and sub-angular chert frags.

544 Ditch cut for grubbed-out hedgebank. Contains 543. W: *c.* 1m, D: 0.13m.

545 Ditch cut, cut into natural; contains 546. This represents the terminus of the enclosing ditch extending *c.* 1m southward into the trial trench, exposed for a width of 3.4m and a depth of 1m below turf.

546 Fill of ditch cut 545. Strong brown 7.5YR 4/6 silty clay, friable when dry. Heavily stained by manganese precipitation. Contains freq small to medium rounded and sub-angular chert frags. Common charcoal frags up to 5mm. Contained one sherd of ?Neolithic pottery.

547 Ditch fill. Stony last fill of the enclosing ditch 553. Probably represents the latest slighting of the earthwork into the ditch, either pushed or dragged in by successive ploughing. Brown/dark-brown 10YR 4/3 fine sandy silty loam, friable when dry; freq to abundant small to medium angular to sub-angular chert frags, rare charcoal frags.

548 Ditch fill. Soil stabilization layer within ditch 553. Contained medieval pottery. Its relative stonelessness suggests it has washed in during agricultural activity and as such may, because of the medieval find, represent the medieval land surface prior to the final slighting of the earthwork. Brown/dark-brown, 10YR 4/3, fine sandy silty loam, friable when dry, relatively stonelessness (< 1%), occ charcoal frags.

549 Cut and fill of modern land drain west of ditch terminus 545.

550 Ditch fill. Similar in character to 547, this context represents an infilling of the ditch 553 by slighting of the existing earthwork. Overlies a stable soil development 551. Brown/dark-brown 7.5YR 4/2 fine sandy silty loam, friable when dry. Abundant small to medium angular and sub-angular chert frags. One sherd of indeterminate prehistoric pot was recovered from this context.

551 Ditch fill. A soil stabilization horizon similar to 548 directly overlying the primary fill 552. Strong brown 7.5YR 4/6 silty clay loam, friable when dry. Common small angular and sub-angular chert, occ charcoal frags.

552 Primary fill of ditch 553, representing the initial weathering of the ditch sides and the earthwork itself. This context infills the ditch to half its original depth and yielded three sherds of indeterminate prehistoric pot. Brown/dark-brown 7.5YR 4/4 clayey silt matrix, becoming more clayey with depth; plastic when moist, slightly sticky, friable when dry. Abundant small to large angular and sub-angular chert.

553 Ditch cut. May be continuous with 545 as an enclosure ditch; V-shaped; cut into valley gravels 554. No evidence of any bank surviving above natural. W: 4.5m, D: 2.3.

554 Flat-bottomed pit cut into natural 556. Contains 555. Partially truncated by JCB during trench excavation. W: 1.3m, D: 0.3m.

555 Fill of 554. Dark yellowish-brown 10YR 4/4 silty loam, friable with abundant small fragments of charcoal. Contained one Iron Age loom weight, and seven sherds of prehistoric pot (three late Bronze/early Iron Age and four (residual) Neolithic).

556 River terrace drift subsoil (natural); abundant small to medium-sized stones in a yellowish-brown silty clay matrix.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation excavations were commissioned and funded by the Highways Agency (HA). The project was administered by R. Park and B. Lewis (HA), R.H. Veevers and C.R. Wilson (Acer Consultants Ltd, consulting engineers) and P.J. Weddell (EMAFU). Advice on archaeological matters was provided throughout by F.M. Griffith (Devon County Archaeological Service). R. Iles (English Heritage) advised on the Scoping Statement. T. Johnson (Oxford Archaeotechnics, geophysical survey consultants) provided invaluable assistance and information. The fieldwork was carried out with the kind permission of Mr Hayman, the landowner. The excavation was supervised by S.J. Reed, assisted by A. Ellis, E. Jones, M. Knight, B. Middleton, A. Sage and S. Sage. The site was surveyed by J. Bedford. V. Straker (Bristol University) examined the impressions on the loom weight. T.H. Gent examined the lithics. The illustrations were prepared by S. Blackmore. The report was edited by S.D. Turton.

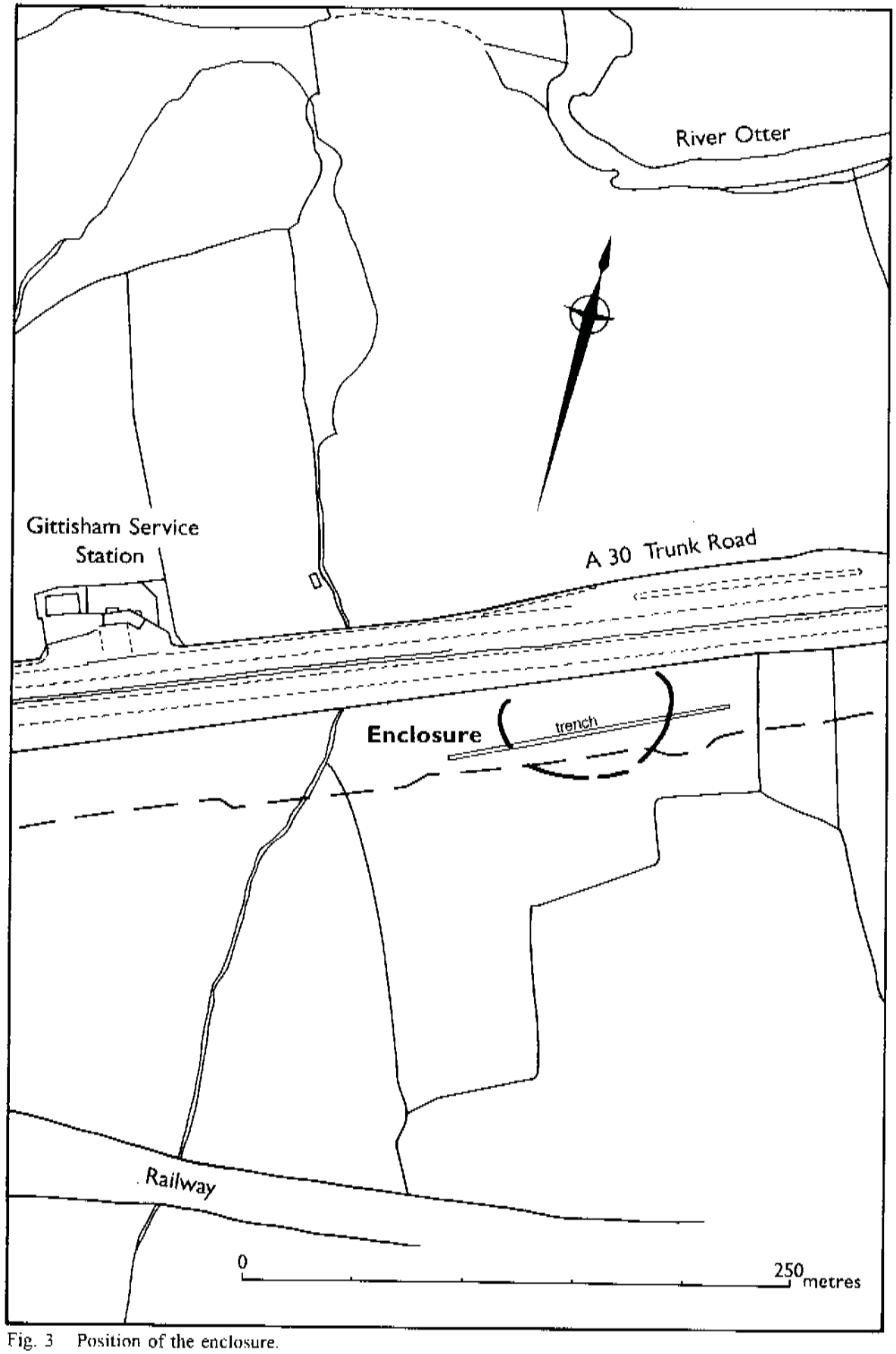


Fig. 3 Position of the enclosure.

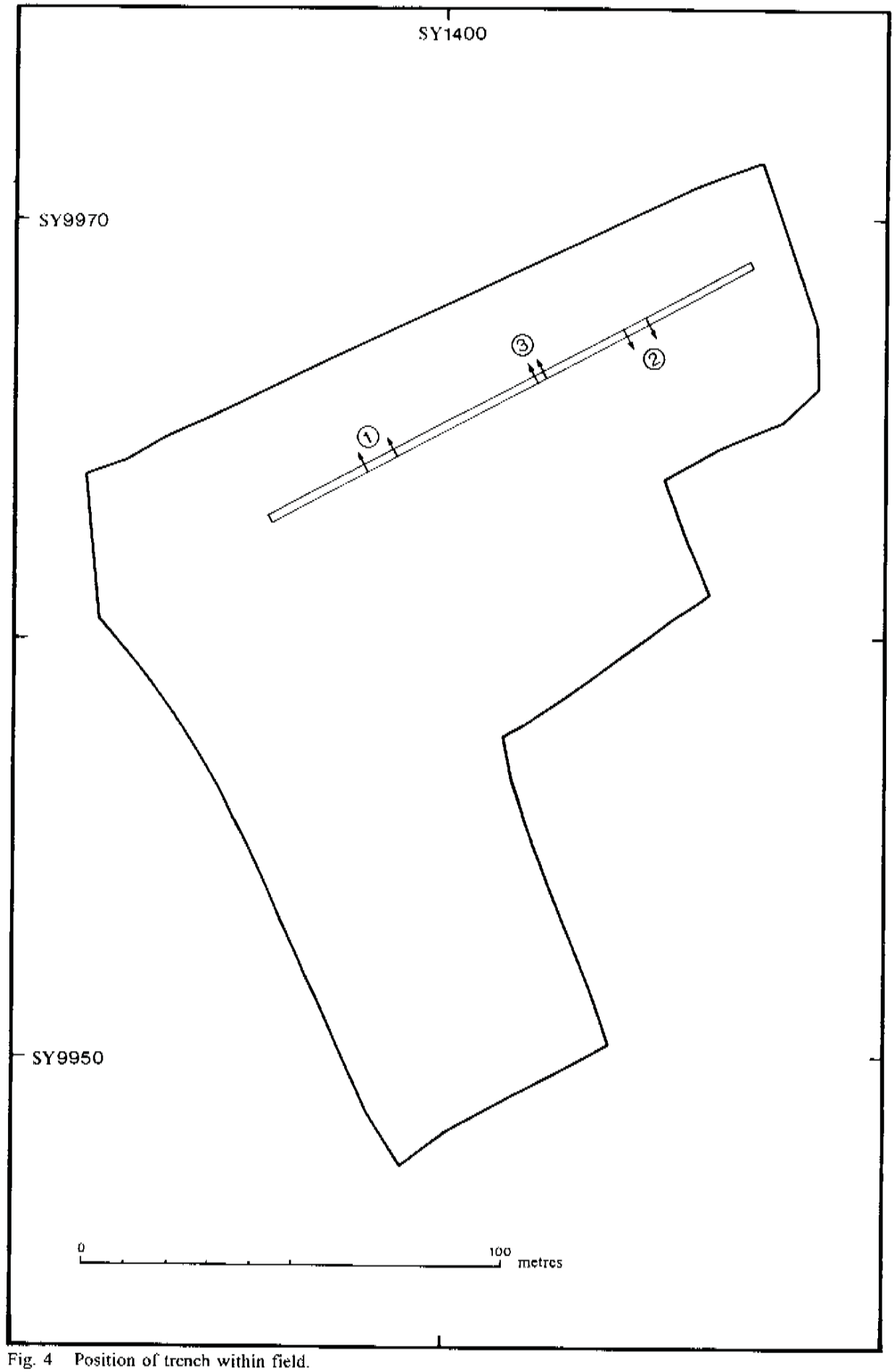


Fig. 4 Position of trench within field.

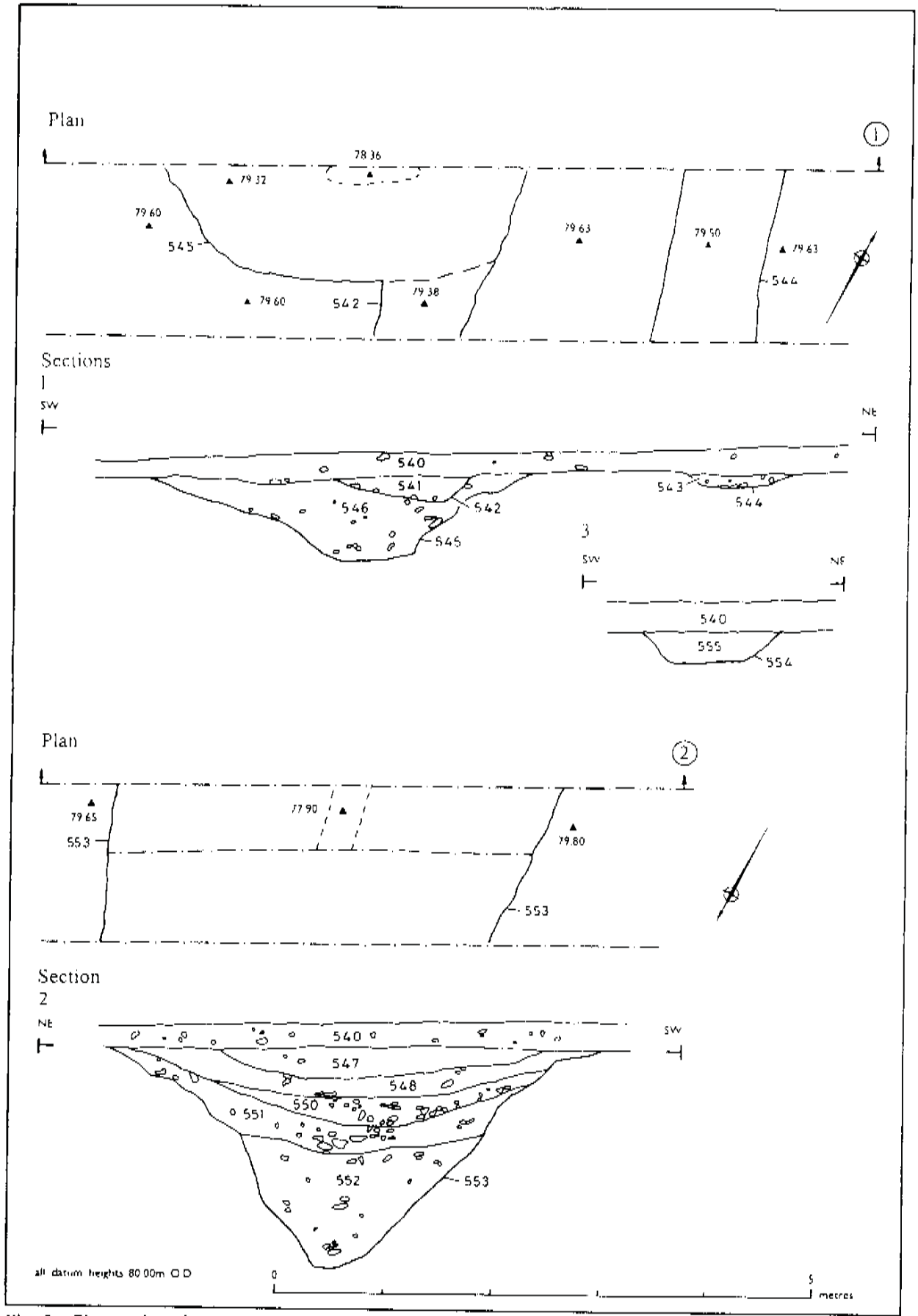


Fig. 5 Plans and sections.

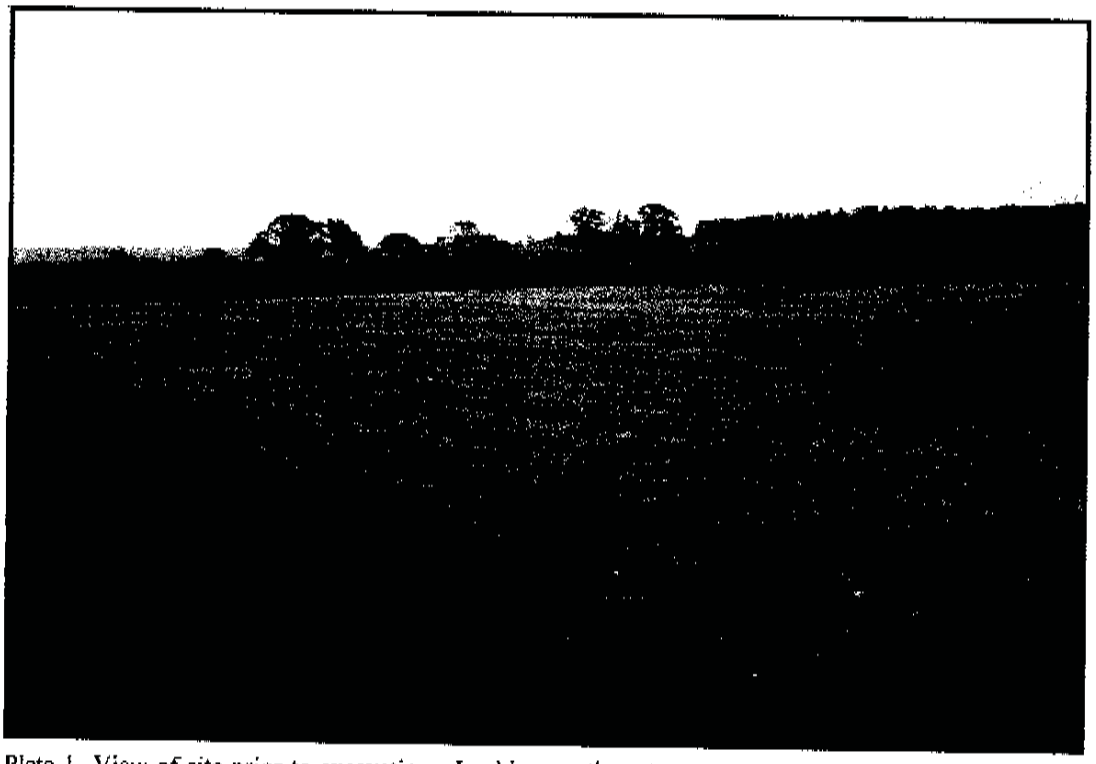

Plate 1 View of site prior to excavation. Looking south-east.

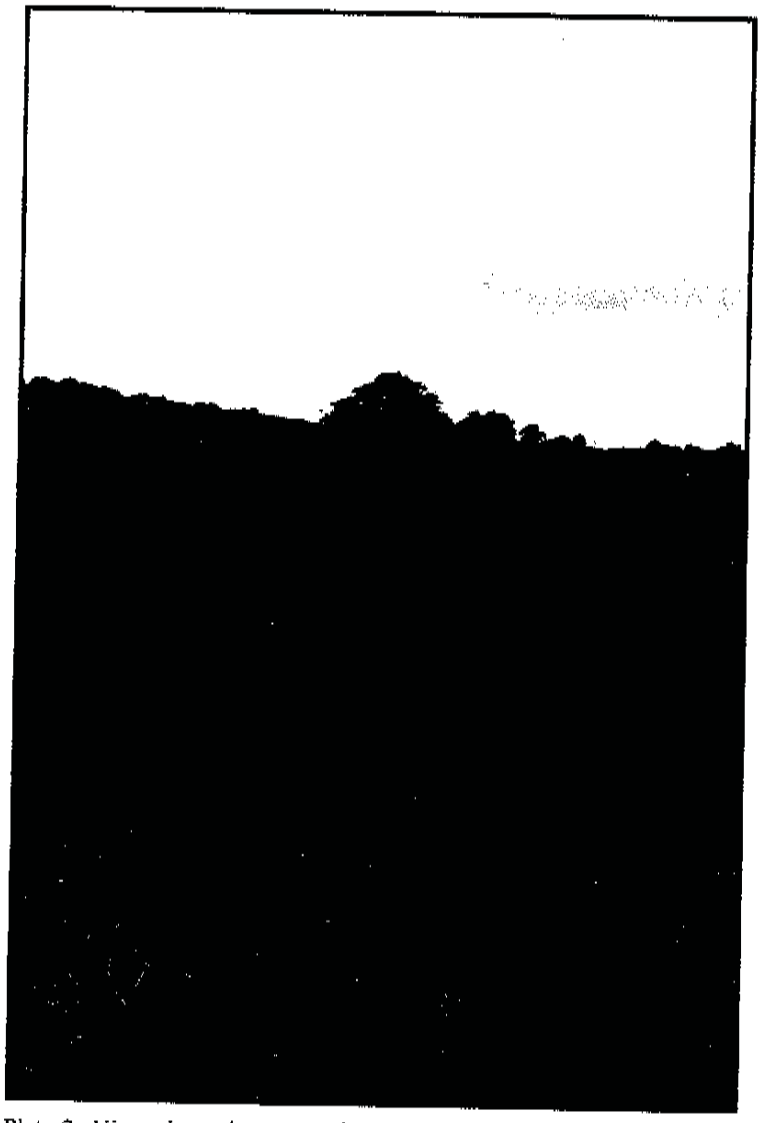

Plate 2 View along the excavation trench. Looking west.

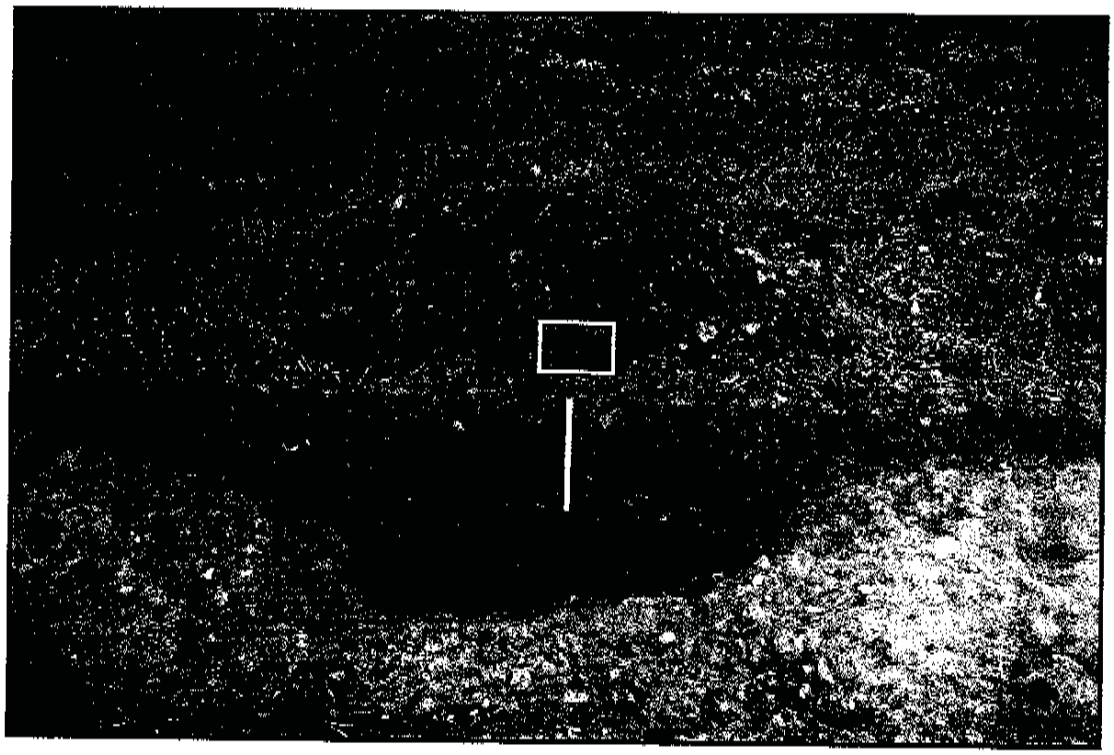

Plate 3 Ditch terminus 545. Looking north. (Scale: 1m).

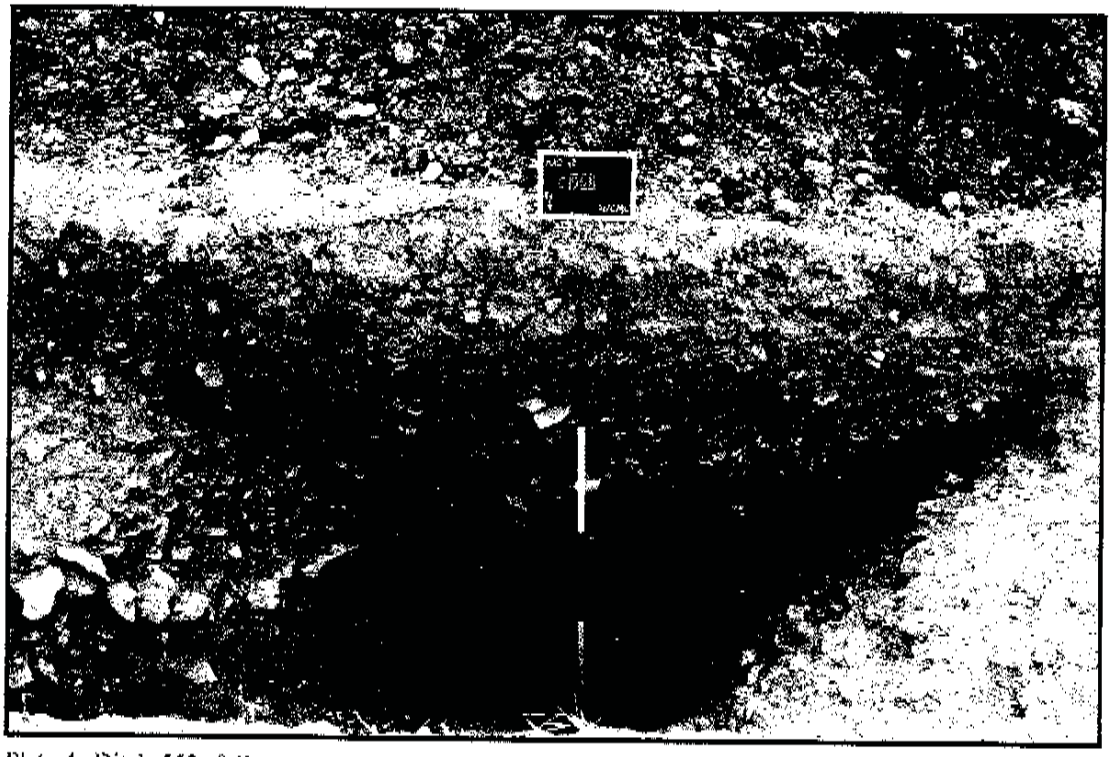

Plate 4 Ditch 553, fully excavated. Looking south. (Scale: 2m).

# A30 TRUNK ROAD
# HONITON TO EXETER IMPROVEMENT
# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
# PART 5: MISCELLANEOUS SITES

by

S.J. Reed and P.T. Manning

Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit

Report No. 95.04

January 1995

## Preface

This report is one of a series of six describing the results of archaeological investigations along the proposed route of the A30 Trunk Road Honiton to Exeter Improvement Scheme in east Devon. The fieldwork was undertaken by Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit (EMAFU) between June and December 1994. The project was funded by the Highways Agency.

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The geophysical survey was carried out by Oxford Archaeotechnics and will be produced as a separate report.

**Contents**



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of archaeological investigations at five sites along the route of the proposed A30 Honiton to Exeter Improvement. These took the form of evaluation excavations undertaken in September 1994, except at Fenny Meadow (see 2.4) where augering only took place.

## 1.1 **Geophysical survey**

All five sites described below had been subjected to a geophysical survey, carried out by Oxford Archaeotechnics, prior to the archaeological excavations/investigations. In all cases, magnetometer readings revealed anomalies which suggested the possibility of archaeological features surviving below ground.

# 2. THE EXCAVATIONS

## 2.1 **Sowton Lane** (Fig. 2, site 2; Fig. 5)

An evaluation excavation was undertaken at Sowton Lane in the Blackhorse area, which is between the A30/M5 interchange and Clyst Honiton. The site is on farm land immediately to the south of the A30, opposite the block of houses to the east of the Blackhorse Garage. The natural subsoil in this area is sand over Permian and Triassic Sandstone, overlain by 0.25m of clayey sandy loam.

### 2.1.1 *Background*

Two areas of potential archaeological interest were identified as a result of geophysical surveys (magnetic susceptibility and magnetometer) conducted in the area. These indicated the possible presence of buried linear archaeological features.

### 2.1.2 *Fieldwork*

Two trial trenches were excavated in the areas where the geophysical anomalies had been recorded (Fig. 5). The trenches were excavated by machine and cleaned by hand. Trench 1 at SX97979336) was located using the geophysical survey grid. It measured 38 x 1.5m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.25m. Trench 2 at SX97869335 was located in the north-west corner of the field. It measured 28 x 1.5m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.25m. No archaeological features were observed in either trench. Two sherds of medieval pottery, three sherds of 18th-century South Somerset coarseware, and one fragment of possible smithing debris were recovered from the topsoil.

*Conclusion and recommendations*

No archaeological features were found within the excavated area, and it is possible that the anomalies indicated by the geophysical surveys were of geological origin or left no trace in the subsoil. However, it is strongly recommended that a watching brief be undertaken during construction in this area due to the proximity of the complex prehistoric site at Blackhorse (Fig. 1, site 1).

## 2.2 **Laurel Copse** (Fig. 2, site 5; Figs 6-7, Pls 1-2)

An evaluation excavation was undertaken in a field to the east of Laurel Copse (SY05989538), south-east of Straightway Head Big Wood and the B3174. The natural subsoil is gravel with bands of clay overlying Permian and Triassic Lower Marls with occasional

Sandstone.

2.2.1 *Background*
An area of potential archaeological interest was identified as a result of geophysical surveys (magnetic susceptibility and magnetometer) conducted in the area. This took the form of buried linear features.

2.2.2 *Fieldwork* (Figs 6-7, Pls 1-2)
A 5 x 25m trench was excavated in the area of geophysical anomalies. The topsoil was removed by machine, and the trench was then cleaned by hand. Two ditches (594 and 595), were found to cut into the natural subsoil on a south-west/north-east alignment. These represented the line of a former hedgebank. The ditches had been recut for the insertion of modern land drains. Two other land drains were located to the east of the ditches.

No finds were recovered from the excavated features, but the hedgebank was probably of 19th-century or later date. Four worked flints were found on the ground surface in the general area of the excavation. One of these was possibly a partially-made arrowhead of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date, which had apparently been discarded after breaking during manufacture (T.H. Gent pers. comm.).

*Conclusion and recommendations*
The presence of worked flints at Laurel Copse does suggest prehistoric occupation, if not settlement, in the immediate area. It is therefore recommended that a watching brief be maintained during construction work.

2.3 **Long Range Swimming School and Straitgate Farm** (Fig. 3, sites 6-7; Figs 8-9, Pls 1-2)

Evaluation excavations were undertaken at the Long Range Swimming School and Straitgate Farm, which lie just within Ottery St Mary Parish, to the east of the B3180 and Straightway Head Big Wood. The areas of archaeological interest which lie within the proposed road route are on high ground. The Swimming School site (SY06369592) is at the top of the hill above 160m OD, with commanding views to the north, west and east. The site at Straitgate Farm (SY06459609) lies in the next field to the south, above 150m OD. The River Otter flows along the valley to the east, and the underlying geology is Bunter Pebble Beds, which vary in texture between clay and gravel in a clay matrix.

2.3.1 *Background and documentary history*
At Straightway Head, the proposed route cuts across the north-west corner of Ottery St Mary parish boundary with Whimple. The parish of Ottery St Mary, as it existed until *c.* 1840, was of some importance and antiquity: the boundaries being roughly equivalent to those recorded in a charter for the manor and hundred of Ottery, when given by Edward the Confessor to the canons of St Mary at Rouen in 1061 (Rose-Troup 1939). The parish itself also formed a hundred at the time of Domesday and in later medieval times.

The sites at Long Range and Straitgate Farm lie close to two possible prehistoric boundaries. The B3180, which forms the western parish boundary of Ottery, is described in the charter of 1061 as a *Herepath* or 'army path'. It forms part of a long ridgeway from the coast, near

Exmouth, to the Blackdown Hills in the north. There is also a clear boundary feature which can be traced for at least 6km in a north-south direction, between the Roman roads on the line of the A30 and the A3052 (Exeter-Dorchester). The course of this feature lies approximately 300m east of the B3180 within Ottery St Mary, although its course is not certain immediately to the south of the A30. Both these boundaries appear to be cut by the Roman road (A30) and are therefore likely to be of prehistoric origin (Weddell 1991, 28-9, Fig. 31).

2.3.2 *Fieldwork*

*Long Range Swimming School* (Figs 8-9; Pl. 1)
An open area 10 x 10m was excavated in the area of an anomaly recorded by the geophysical survey *c.* 300m south of the school buildings (Fig. 8). The topsoil was removed by machine and from this two small fragments of indeterminate pottery were retrieved. During subsequent hand cleaning down to the level of the natural subsoil, six sherds of indeterminate prehistoric pottery also were recovered. Two small oval shaped pits (585 and 587) were exposed cutting into the natural subsoil. Pit 585 measured 0.55m from north to south, 0.35m east to west and deepest on its south-east side at 0.22m. Pit 587 had a flat bottom and steep sides: it measured 0.7m from north to south, 0.5m from east to west and was cut into the subsoil to a depth of some 0.15m.

Both pits contained abundant charcoal fragments, and samples were taken from the fills for potential macrofossil analysis and radiocarbon dating. Although no finds were recovered from the pit fills, the existence of the pottery from the surface of the subsoil might suggest a prehistoric context for both features, which could be verified by radiocarbon dating.

Four pieces of worked flint were also found in unstratified contexts during topsoil stripping. One of these was a core of Neolithic date.

*Straitgate Farm* (Figs 10-11; Pl. 2)
The geophysical survey showed a linear feature running approximately north-west/south-east *c.* 160m south-east of the Long Range Swimming School building. Due to the close proximity of possible prehistoric boundaries in the area (see above), it was decided to excavate a trial trench to determine whether the feature was associated with any such boundary (Fig. 10).

The trench (3.3 x 0.5m) revealed a former hedgebank, represented by two parallel ditches (564 and 563/565) cut into the subsoil (Fig. 11). No finds were recovered to enable the hedgebank to be dated. Two small fragments of slag/vitrified material were found within the topsoil (560), one sherd of possible medieval pottery and one fragment of coke/smithing debris were found in the layer below the topsoil (561).

*Conclusion and recommendations*
The pottery recovered from the Long Range site does suggest some prehistoric activity, possibly associated with the two pits, and the commanding aspect of the site would have been attractive for settlement. The nearby presence of prehistoric boundary features is yet to be archaeologically demonstrated, but remains a firm possibility. It is recommended that this area of construction be subjected to a watching brief, in order to identify any further surviving features prior to their destruction. Provision should accordingly be made for area (rescue)

excavation, should any archaeological deposits be encountered.

## 2.4 **Fenny Meadow** (Fig. 3, site 9; Figs 12-13)

Archaeological investigations at Fenny Meadow, near Feniton, were undertaken immediately north of the A30 just east of Fenny Bridges at SY114988 (Fig. 3, site 9). The site lies in the floodplain of the River Otter. The proposed route cuts across part of the southern end of the field.

### 2.4.1 *Background and documentary history*

Fenny Meadow is the supposed site of the battle which took place as a result of the Prayer Book Rebellion in 1549, when rebels from Cornwall and west Devon unsuccessfully laid siege to Exeter (Hoskins 1952, 233-4). While attempting to block the main road into Exeter, the rebels were defeated at this site in July 1549 by Lord Russell's mercenary troops.

The field in which the battle is said to have taken place is called 'Bloody Meadow'. The level ground has been used as water meadow for the last 60 years, and subjected to very little ploughing. The present farmer recalled that two 'cannon balls' were found over 50 years ago during trenching for a water supply. As the battle site was probably chosen at short notice it is unlikely that there were ever any substantial fortifications, although the site may contain burials of those who fell in battle, as well as miscellaneous finds of weapons (Weddell 1991, 24-25).

### 2.4.2 *Fieldwork*

A geophysical magnetometer survey revealed a slight anomaly in the south-west of the field, suggesting the possibility of archaeological features existing below the ground surface. As a result, augering was carried out along a 24m traverse of the area (Fig. 13). Auger cores of a maximum depth of 0.75m were taken at 2m intervals with a helical auger (0.04m diam). The cores revealed topsoil overlaying a light greyish-brown, silty-clay, stone-free subsoil and no archaeological deposits were identified.

### *Conclusion and recommendations*

It seems unlikely that any archaeological features directly relating to the battle would be revealed during construction work in this area, although there is still a strong possibility of chance finds (e.g. weapons). The anomaly revealed by the geophysical survey, and confirmed by augering, appears to be a slight natural hollow as shown by the dip in the subsoil in Fig. 13.

APPENDIX: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

**Sowton Lane**

| | |
|---|---|
| 537 | Topsoil. Brown fine sandy loam. |
| 538 | B horizon of soil profile; pale brown silty sand. |
| 539 | Completely weathered sandstone natural (C horizon); red/reddish-brown sand. |

**Straitgate Farm**

| | |
|---|---|
| 560 | Topsoil, mid reddish-brown, friable, silty loam with abundant small round and sub-rounded stones. |
| 561 | Lower horizon of 560, 'B' horizon. Mid yellowish-brown, friable clay silt loam with abundant small round and sub- |

rounded stones.

563 Cut for eastern ditch of hedgebank.

564 Cut for western ditch of hedgebank.

565 Re-cut for eastern ditch of hedgebank.

**Long Range Swimming School**

580 Topsoil; mid brown, friable, silty loam with occ small sub-rounded stones.

581 Lower soil horizon (B horizon) of 580. Mid brown, friable, clay silt with freq rounded and sub-angular small stones.

583 Interface between 581 and natural subsoil (588-92) from which prehistoric pottery was recovered.

584 Pit fill within 585. Sampled for radiocarbon dating. Yellowish-brown, friable, clay silt, occ small ww stones and occ charcoal.

585 Pit cut. Contains 584; sub-rounded in shape with steep sides and uneven bottom. W: 0.4-0.5m, D: 0.22m.

586 Pit fill within 587. Sampled for radiocarbon dating. Mid brown, friable, clayey silt, abundant medium ww stones and occ charcoal.

587 Pit cut containing 586. Sub-rounded in plan with steep sides and a flat bottom. W:0.6-0.7m, D: 0.14m.

588 Natural clay subsoil. Grey silty clay with abundant gravel.

589 Natural clay subsoil. Grey silty clay with occ ww pebbles.

590 Natural clay subsoil. Yellowish-brown silty clay, stoneless.

591 Natural clay subsoil. Yellowish-brown silty clay, common small ww pebbles.

592 Natural gravel bed (Bunter gravel beds) which underlies and mixed to a degree with 588-591.

**Laurel Copse**

593 Primary fill of grubbed-out hedgebank. Reddish-brown, friable when dry, sandy clay, freq manganese nodules and small ww stones and fine intrusive roots.

594 Ditch cut for grubbed-out hedgebank; cuts natural 599; contains 593.

595 Ditch cut for grubbed-out hedgebank; cuts natural 599; contains 596.

596 Primary ditch fill of grubbed-out hedgebank. Brown clay silt, friable, slightly plastic, common small ww pebbles.

597 Recut through ditch fill 596 for insertion of land drain. Contains earthenware pipe at base and context 598.

598 Fill of land drain cut 597. Brown clay silt, friable when dry, with black oxidising inclusions.

599 Natural gravel subsoil. Very friable gravel with lenses and bands of fine sandy silty clays.

600 Recut of ditch fill 593 for insertion of land drain. Contains 601.

601 Land drain fill within cut 600. Greyish-brown friable clay silt, occ small angular and ww stones, common fine intrusive roots, pockets of organic silts.

602 Topsoil. Mid brown, friable, clay silt; occ medium sub-rounded stones.

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DRO 69/9/2 Box 9/21 Collection of 19th century and later sales catalogues


Fig. 1 Location of sites along proposed route: sites 1-3.


Fig. 2 Location of sites along proposed route: sites 4-7.

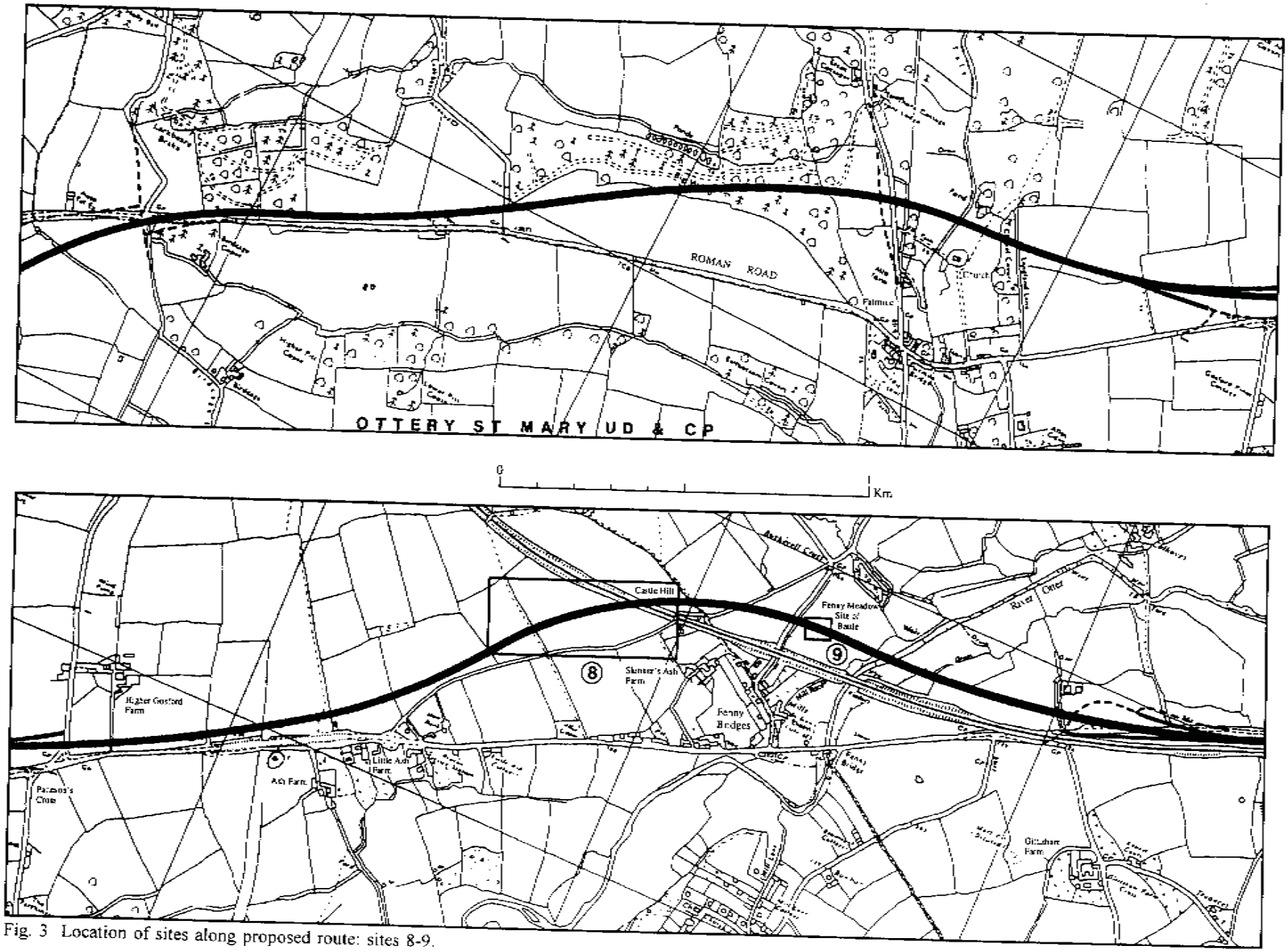


Fig. 3 Location of sites along proposed route: sites 8-9.

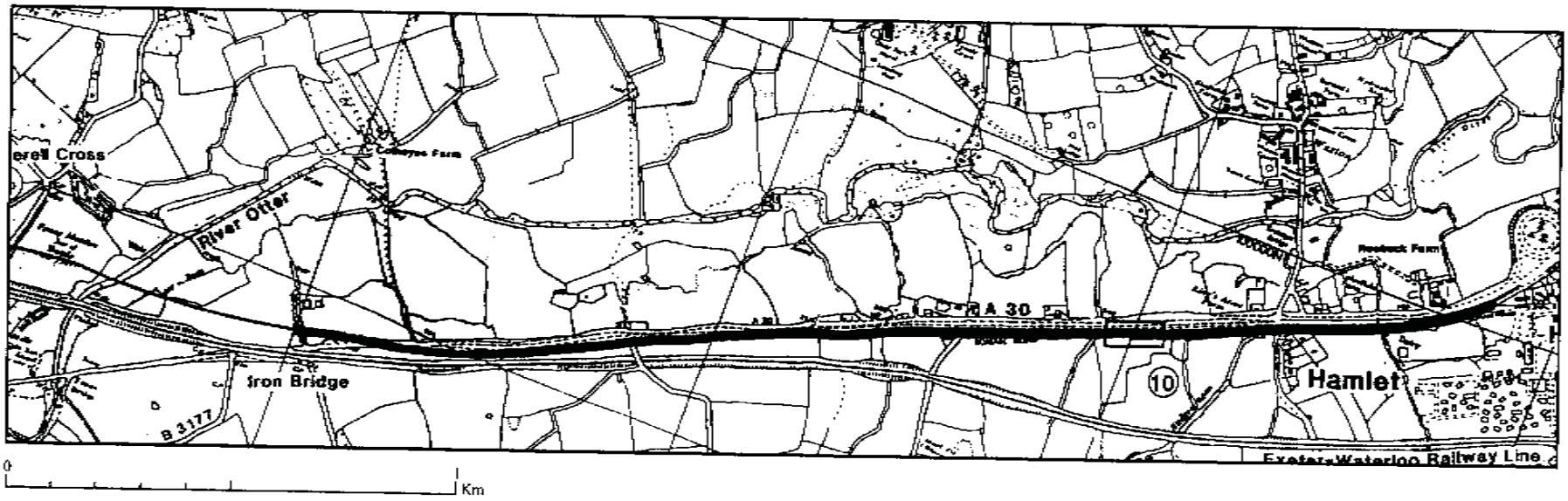


Fig. 4 Location of sites along proposed route: site 10.

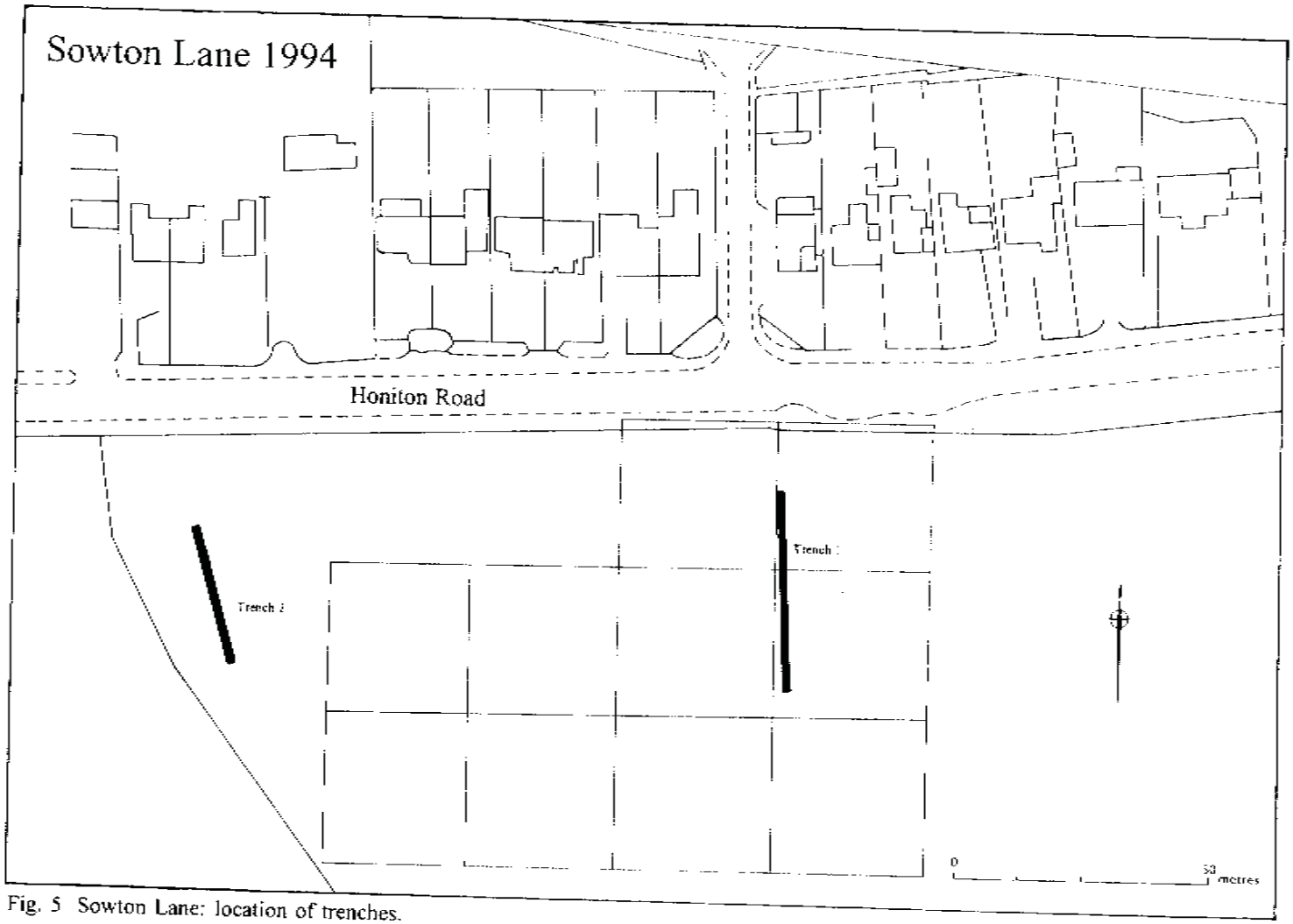

Fig. 5 Sowton Lane: location of trenches.

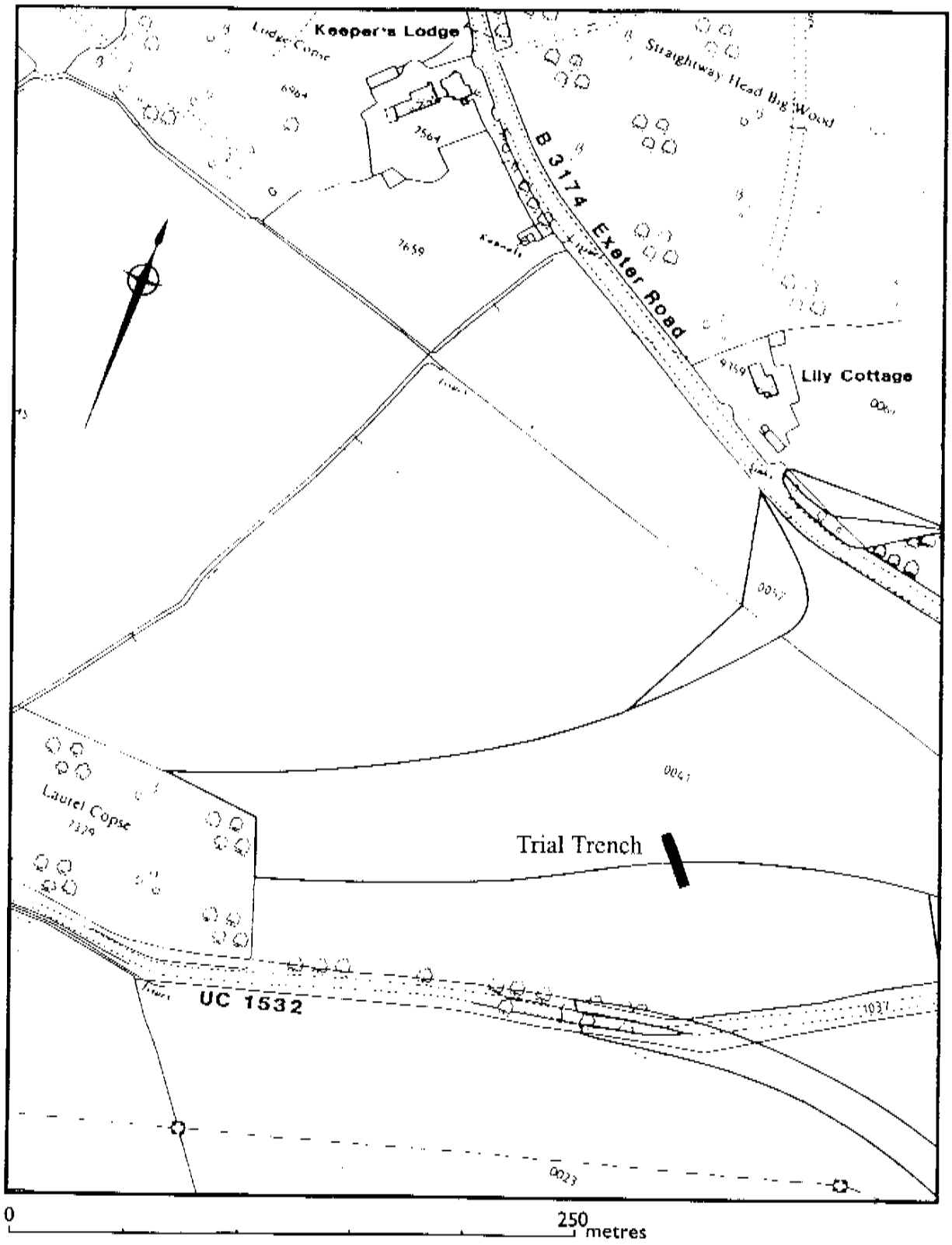


Fig. 6 Laurel Copse: location of trench.

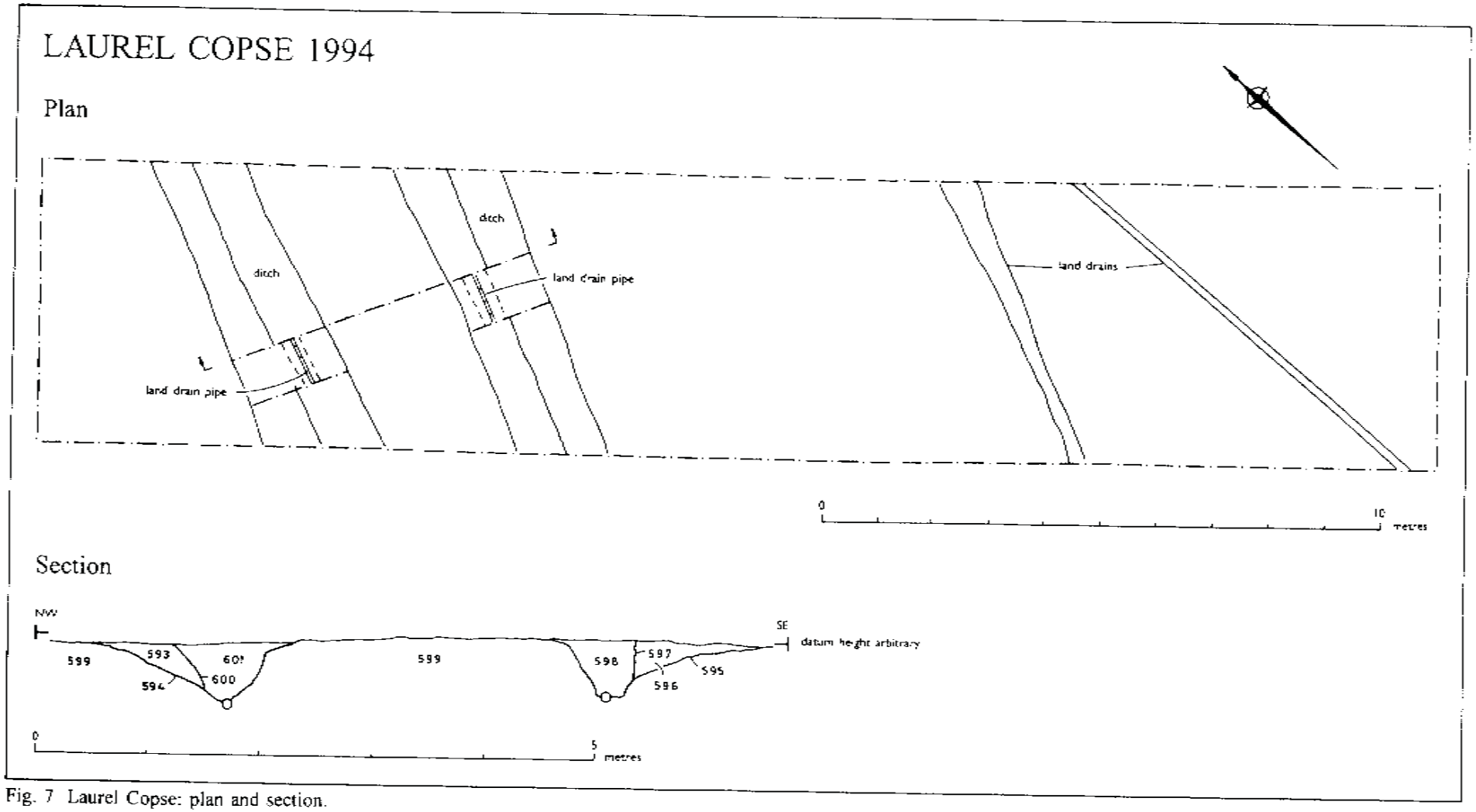


Fig. 7 Laurel Copse: plan and section.

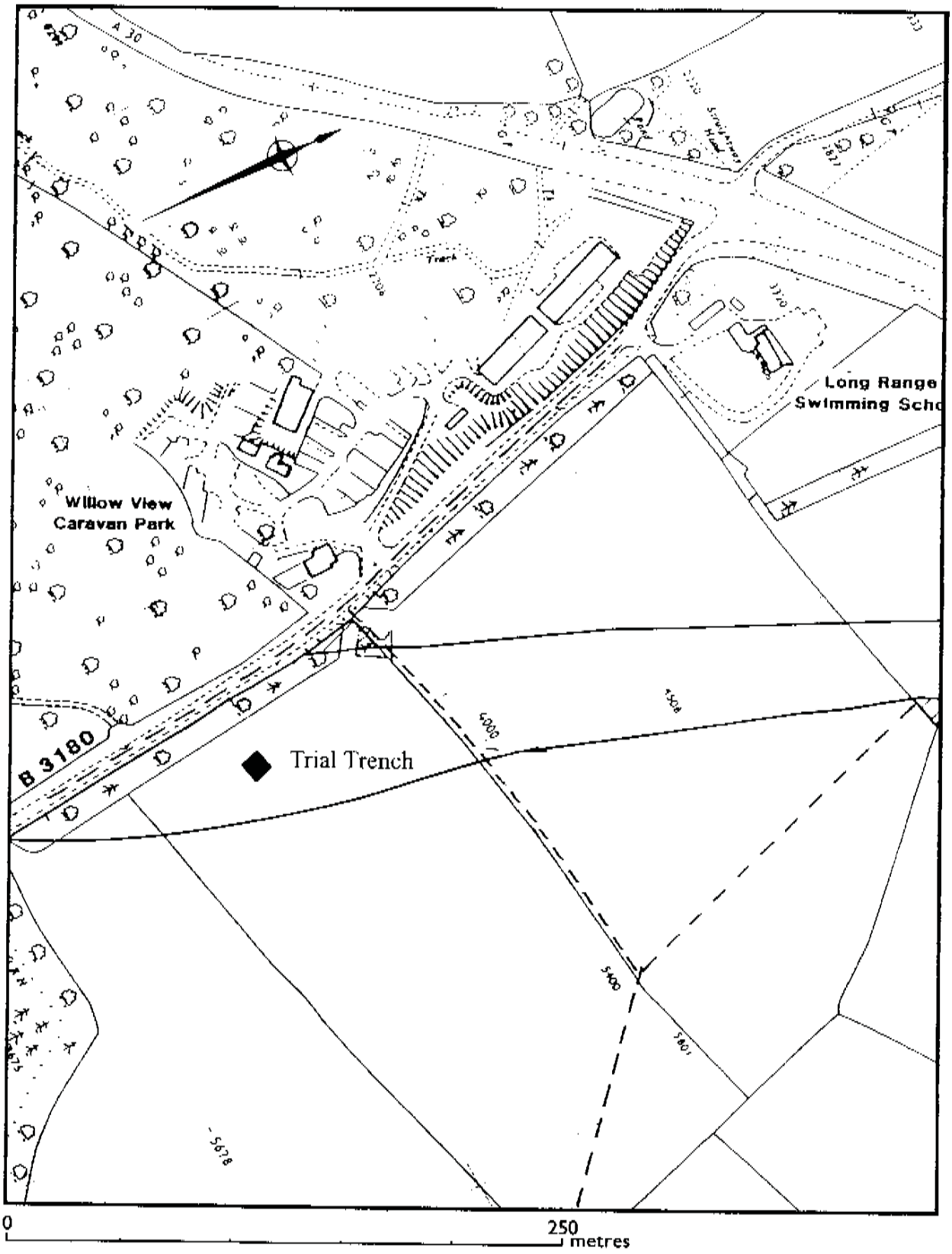


Fig. 8 Long Range: location of trench.

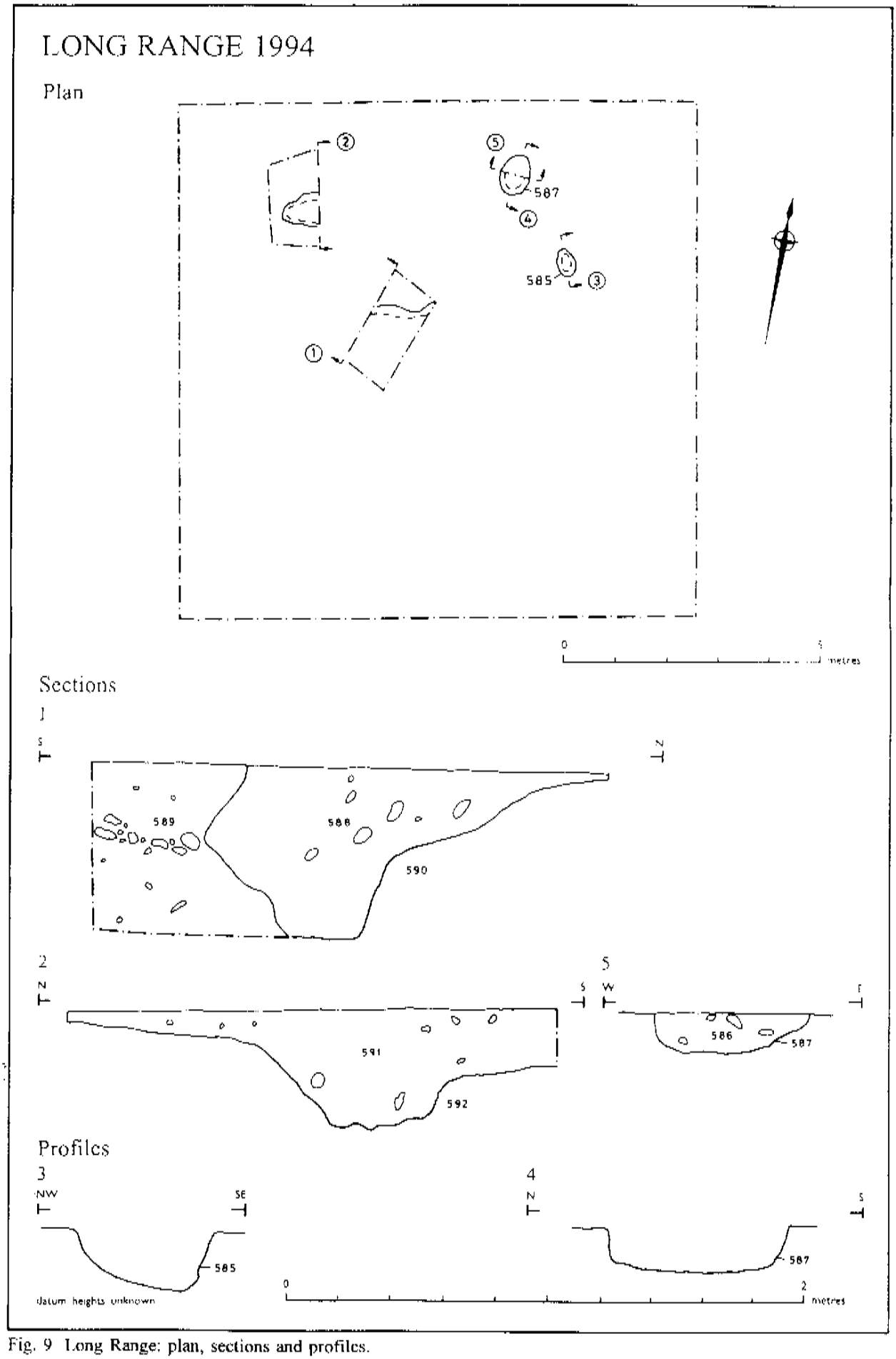


Fig. 9 Long Range: plan, sections and profiles.

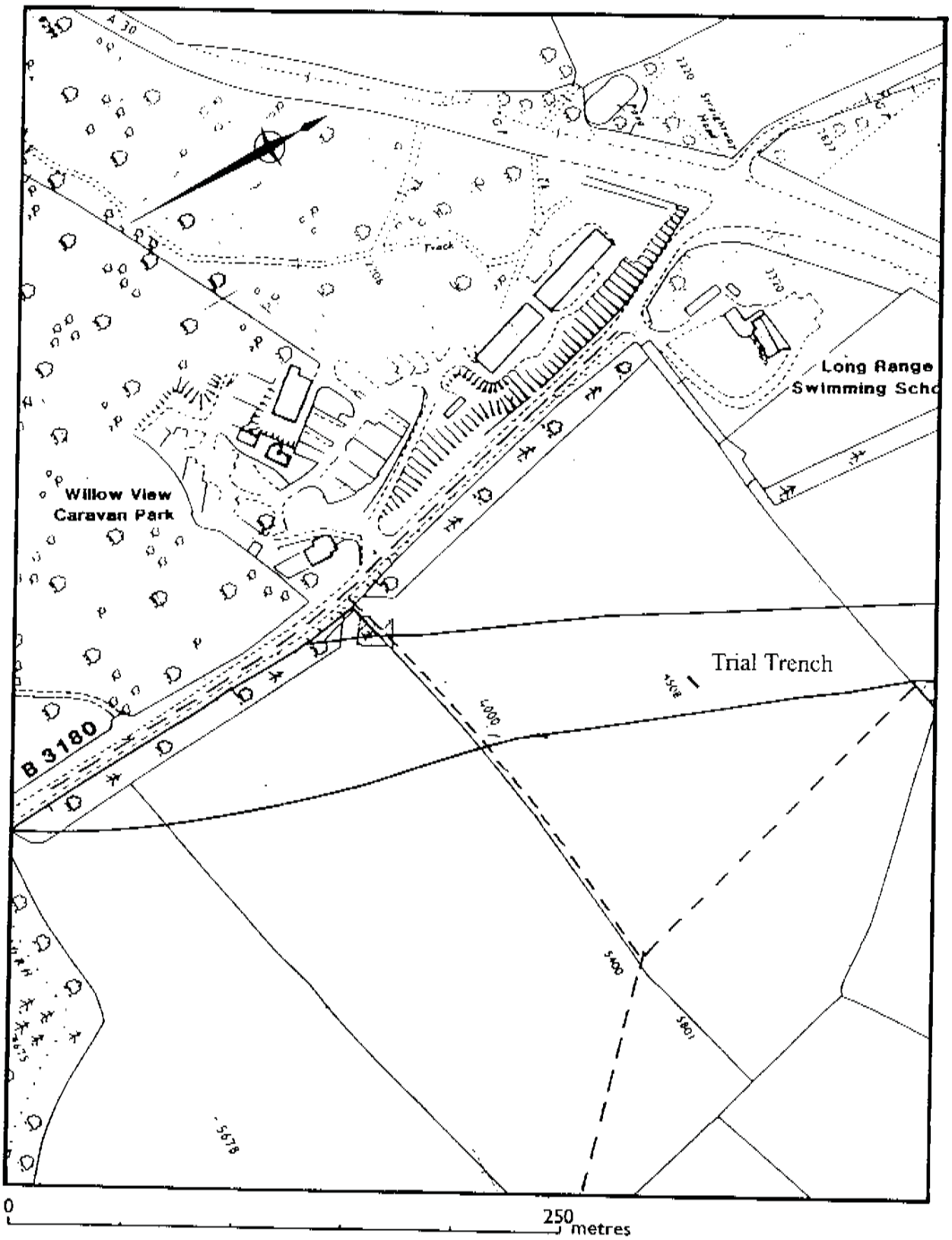


Fig. 10 Straitgate Farm: location of trench.

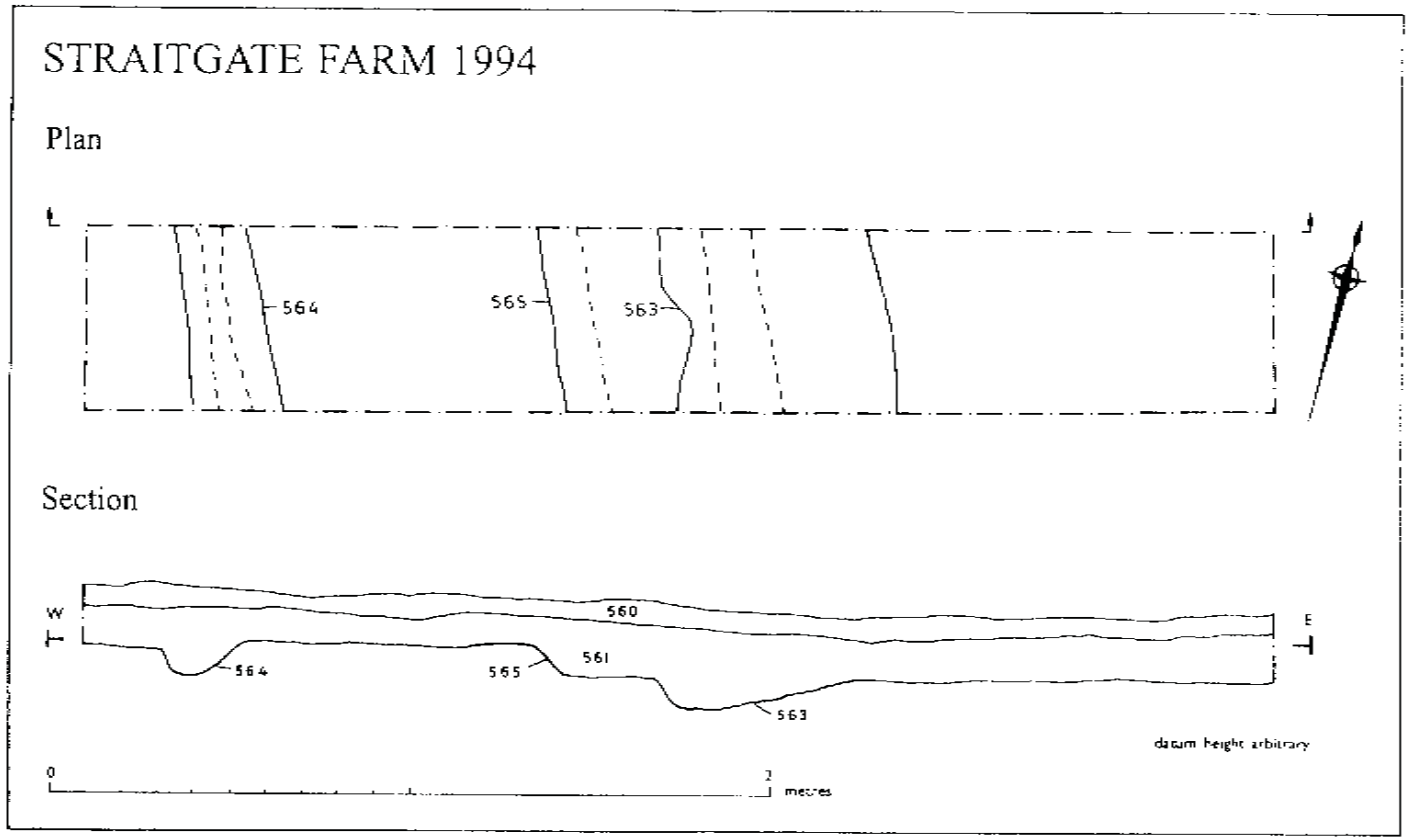


Fig. 11 Straitgate Farm: plan and section.

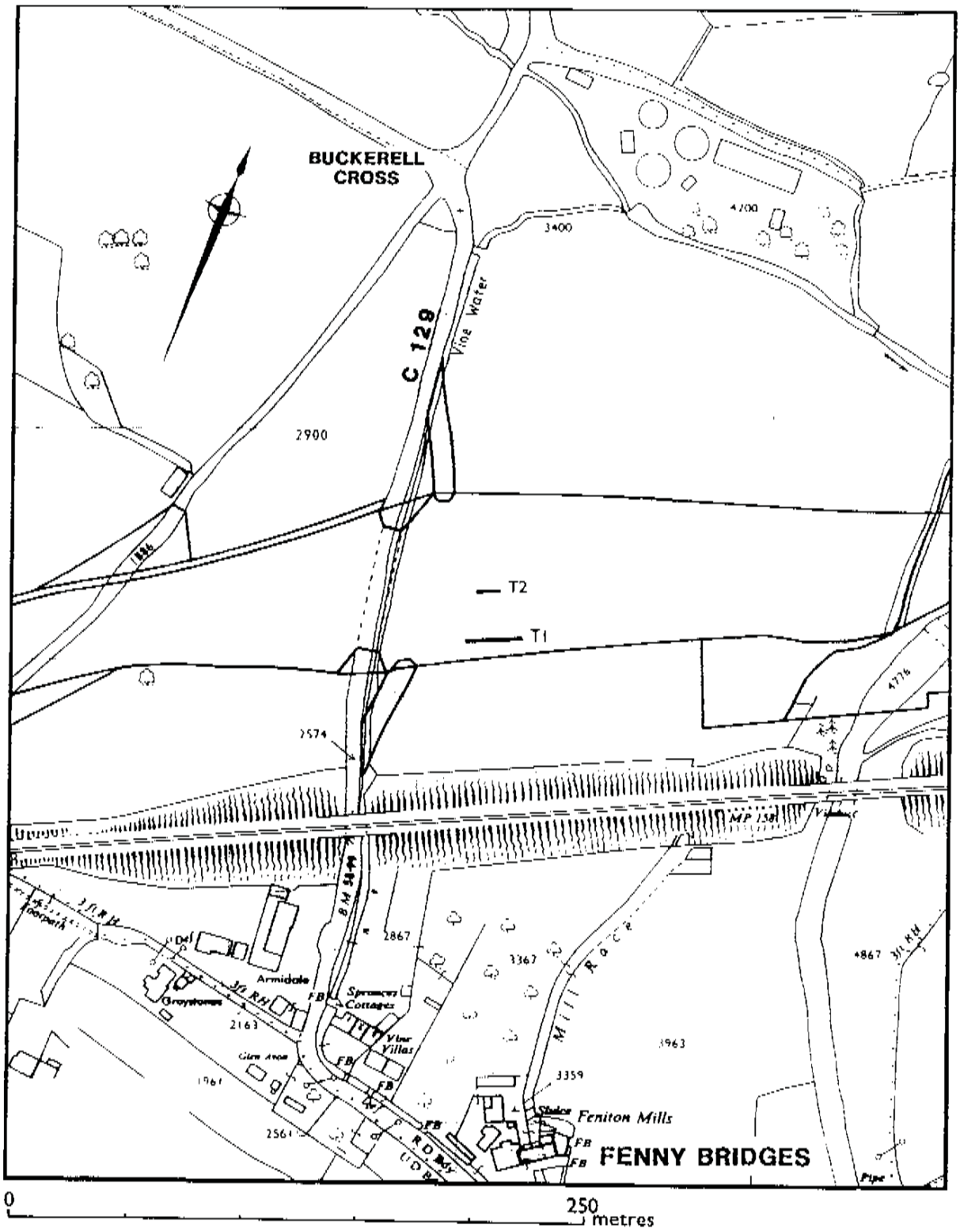


Fig. 12 Fenny Meadow: location of auger traverses.

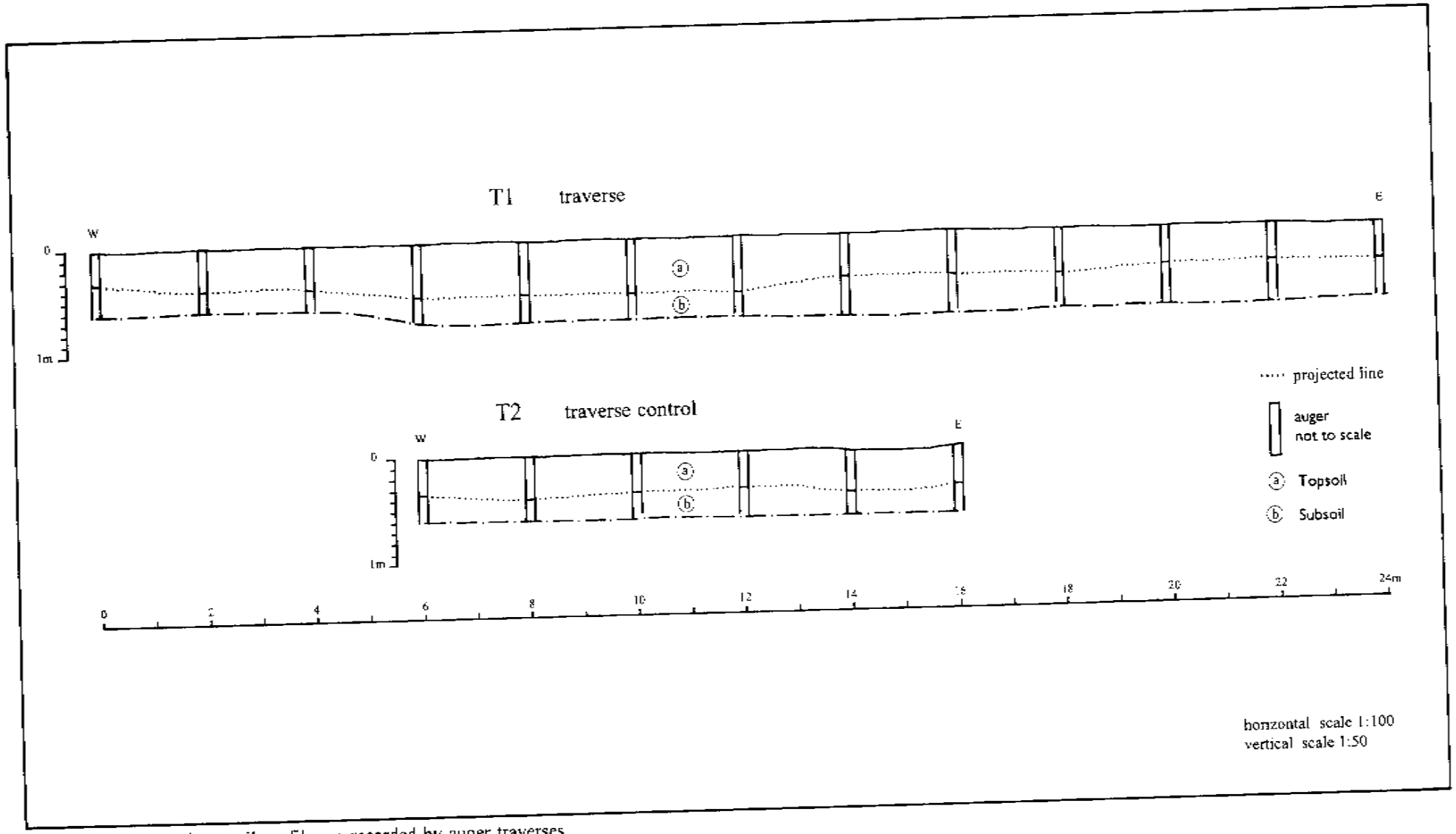


Fig. 13 Fenny Meadow: soil profiles as recorded by auger traverses.

# SOWTON LANE

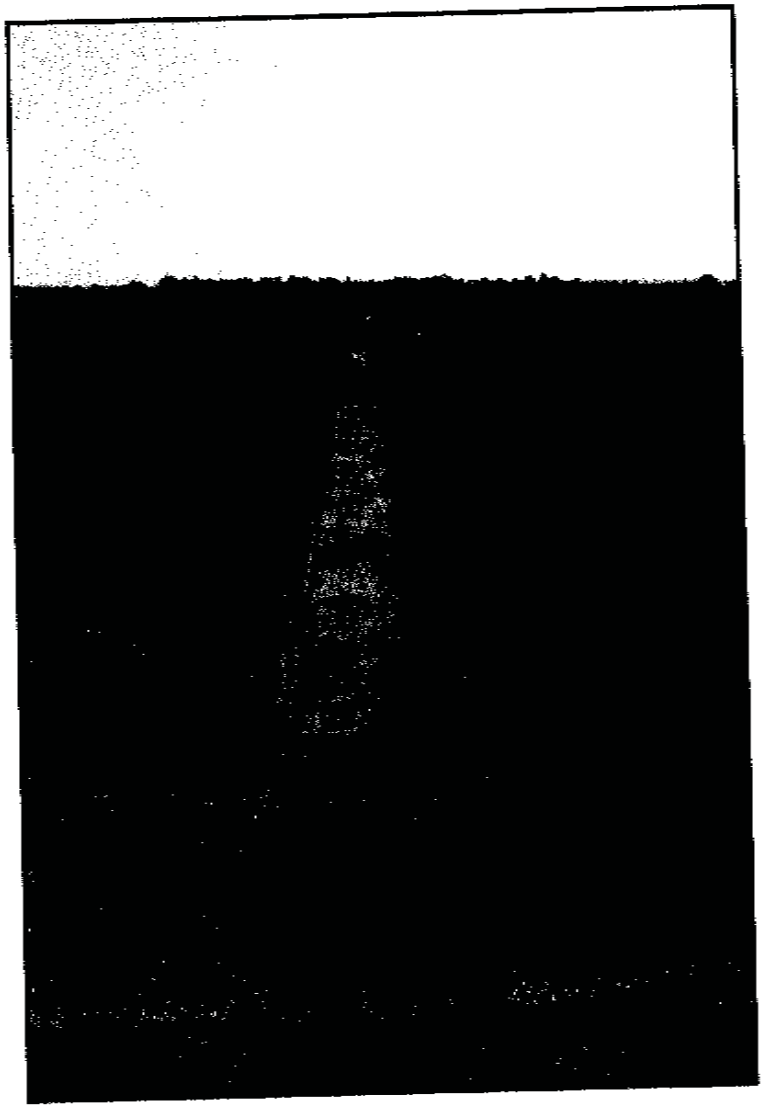

Plate 1 Trench 1. Looking south.

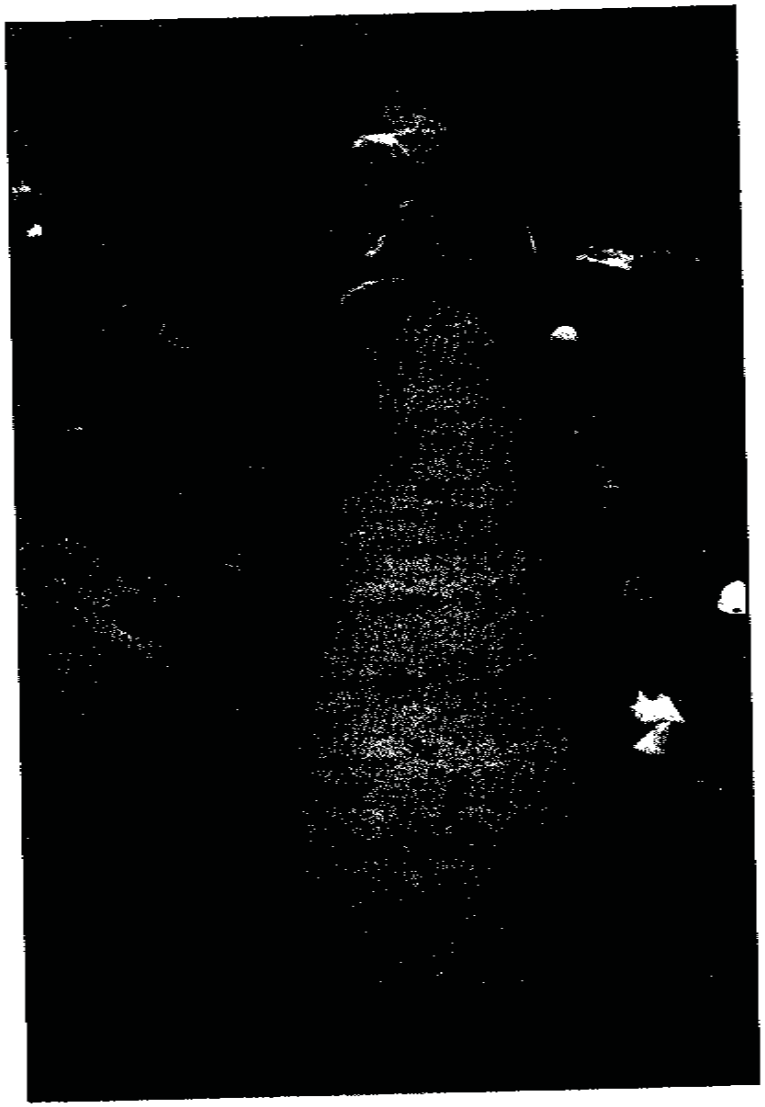

Plate 2 Trench 2 under excavation. Looking south.

Plate 1 View of site prior to excavation. Looking north.

Plate 2 View of site with topsoil stripped. Hedgebank ditches run from left to right. Looking south-east. (Scale: 1m).

# LONG RANGE & STRAITGATE FARM

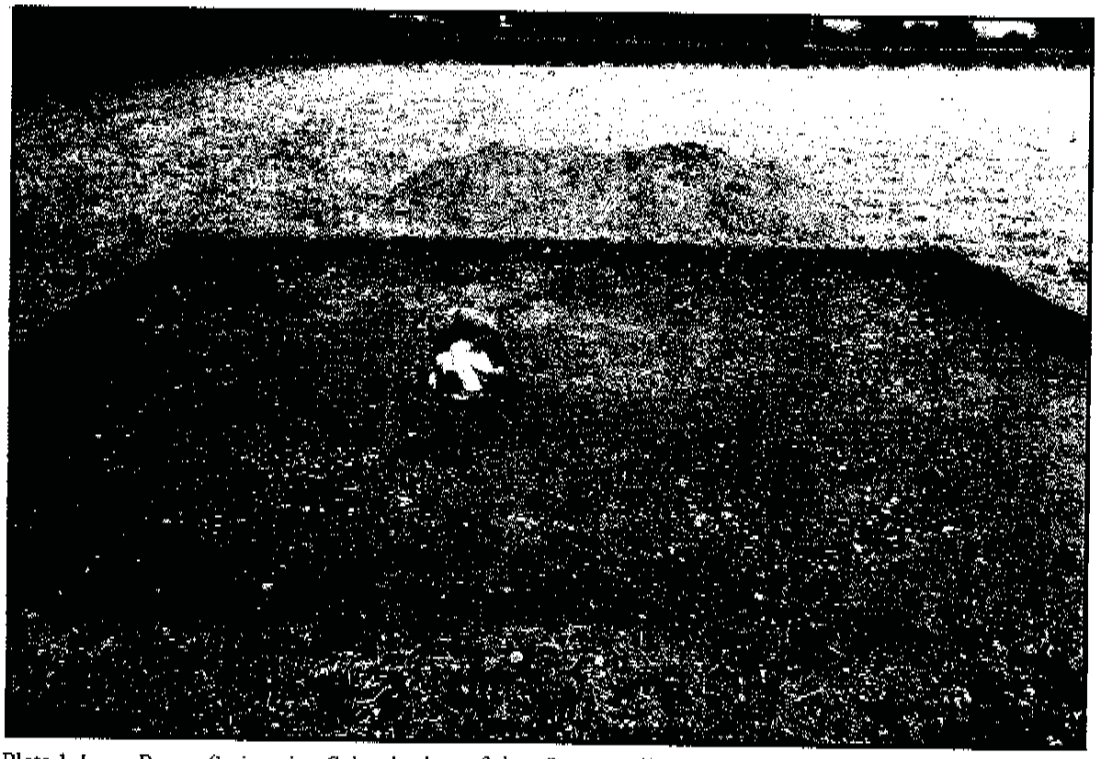

Plate 1 Long Range Swimming School: view of site after topsoil had been removed. Looking north.

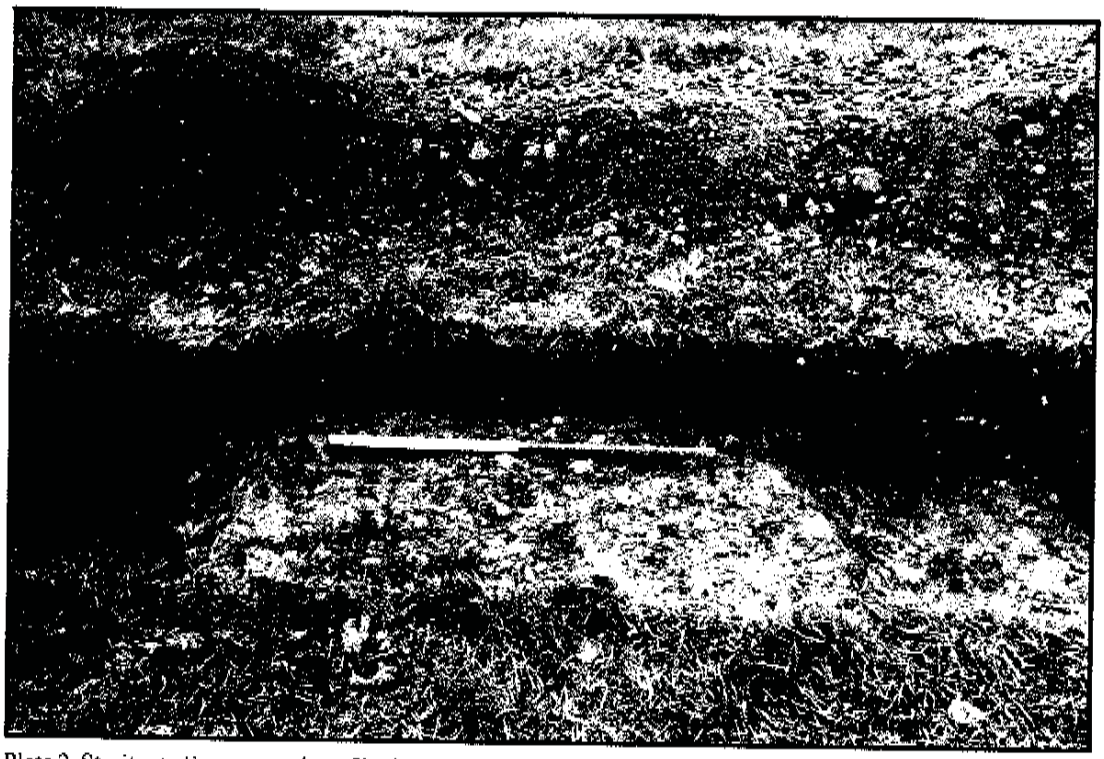

Plate 2 Straitgate Farm: remains of hedgebank exposed during excavation.

# A30 HONITON TO EXETER IMPROVEMENT – ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION EXCAVATIONS 1994 12/94