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**EVALUATION EXCAVATIONS ON THE LINE OF THE FOSSE WAY BYPASS, AT
GLEBE FARM, BROUGH, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

May 2001

Prepared on behalf of URS and Highways Agency

By Howard Jones and David Knight



TRENT & **PEAK**
ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

**EVALUATION EXCAVATIONS ON THE LINE OF THE FOSSE WAY BYPASS, AT GLEBE FARM, BROUGH,
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

A preliminary report on Evaluation Trenches 1 – 17 and recommendations for further fieldwork

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SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Evaluation excavation on the line of the A46 Bypass around the Roman town of Brough has revealed pre-Roman occupation, and for almost the first time in the region, has also uncovered evidence for continuing settlement in the area after the decline of Roman control.
- 2 A series of field boundaries, pits, postholes, and curvilinear gullies of the kind which encircled round houses is associated with pottery of pre-Roman Iron Age style. This appears to be the location of one of a number of small settlements of the later Iron Age, which may eventually have become consolidated alongside the Roman Fosse Way at Brough.
- 3 The evaluation excavations also uncovered pits and postholes associated with early Saxon pottery of the sixth or seventh century AD. This is an important discovery within the region, where settlements of this period are rare.
- 4 The project has also concluded that Romano-British settlement activity appears to have been concentrated in the area of the defended town, so that sections of the Brough Bypass traverse traditional agricultural areas which have more limited archaeological potential.
- 5 This report sets out a summary of the results of the evaluation project, together with a strategy for the appropriate examination of the areas of principal archaeological interest along the brough Bypass.

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Executive Summary

- Seventeen trenches, the majority measuring 30 x 3m, were stripped of topsoil using a JCB down to the underlying subsoil, predominantly mixed glacial sand and gravels. These were positioned along the projected road corridor to target both cropmark sites and geophysical anomalies, and to test apparent blank areas.
- With the exception of three trenches (Trenches 03, 15, 16, 17), Features of archaeological significance were identified in 14 trenches. Small-scale excavation of features was undertaken, sufficient to establish character, extract samples for preliminary palaeoenvironmental analysis, and provide an opportunity to recover dating evidence.
- The results of the evaluation trenches have successfully highlighted the distribution of key elements of the archaeological landscape. The features divide into two broad groups, linear ditches - the remains of ancient field/enclosure boundaries, and settlement-related features including pits, postholes, and short lengths of gully.
- The linear ditches produced only sparse dating evidence, although this is typical of the feature type, and together with the finds is consistent with a potential late prehistoric – Romano-British date. With the exception of the area of the southern end of the road corridor these features were widely distributed.
- Features consistent with late prehistoric - Iron Age - settlement were identified in trenches to the north (Trench 02, 04, 12, 13) and south (Trench 06, 07) of Glebe Farm, while evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement was recorded in trenches to the north of Glebe Farm (Trench 04, 12).
- The identification of prehistoric – Romano-British settlement and boundaries will permit the main phase of fieldwork to address key research questions. In particular it is hoped that the character of pre-Roman occupation and landscape division can be elucidated, along with the possibility of a nucleated roadside settlement forming a precursor to the Roman town.
- The evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation forms a valuable addition to the archaeological record for Brough and the county as a whole. If confirmed by larger scale excavation, this important discovery gives the potential for the extension of the sequence of settlement and landscape development to be traced into the post-Roman period. The discovery represents only the second example of the potential identification of rural Anglo-Saxon settlement by archaeological excavation in Nottinghamshire.

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1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

Aerial photographs provide strong evidence for possible pre-town occupation, in the form of a cropmark complex, elements of which clearly pre-date the ditches of the Roman town. The complex comprises a trackway, flanked by rectilinear enclosures, and includes traces of a possible pit alignment and hut circles. Limited excavation within the site of the Roman town and fieldwalking within 100m of the new road (expanded to 500m in the vicinity of Brough), failed to add significantly to this pattern. In 1991 fieldwalking revealed only a thin scatter of flintwork, and a small number of Iron Age potsherds on the east and south-east edge of the site of the later Roman town (Knight 1991, 63, fig. 31). The apparent dearth of material was tested by additional fieldwalking in 2001. This confirmed the extremely low density of prehistoric material extant within ploughsoils in the vicinity of Brough (K. Challis pers.comm.).

The aerial photographic evidence appears to provide a reliable indication of the earlier date of the cropmark complex relative to the ditched defences of the Roman town. However, the dating of these ditches has yet to be demonstrated by excavation and could conceivably be late in the life of *Crococalana*. Aspects of the pre-town complex arguably favour a late prehistoric dating, in particular the possible hut circles and pit alignment (Whimster 1989; Waddington 1997). As a whole, the pattern of enclosures and trackways at Brough has numerous parallels on the gravels of the Trent Valley, where excavation has consistently demonstrated a late Iron Age - early Romano-British dating (Wheeler 1979; Knight 1992)

Further isolated fragments of cropmarks, including possible linear boundary features and enclosures, extend to the north and north-west of the Roman town, three directly impinging on the line of the proposed road corridor (Fig.1). Whilst lacking the broad *terminus ante quem* provided by the town ditches of Brough, the same comparative dating is applicable on the basis of excavated sites elsewhere in the region.

The overall pattern of evidence for prehistoric activity at Brough and its immediate environs lacks precision, but has important implications. It is consistent with a well-ordered landscape, with extensive boundaries and trackways, enclosing fields and settlement areas. Comparative evidence within the Trent Valley suggests a probable origin in the mid - later Iron Age for such enclosures (Wheeler 1979; Knight 1992). The cropmark complex directly underlying the later Roman town ditches raises the possibility of a quite sharply focused area of settlement alongside an existing trackway. A number of examples of late Iron Age roadside settlement have been recorded elsewhere in Britain (Smith 1987, 3-5). The previous assessment of the evidence from Brough (Knight 1991), noted a close parallel with the excavated late Iron Age and Roman site at Baldock, Herts. (Stead and Rigby 1986). Within the east midlands a potential trend towards larger nucleated settlement during the late Iron Age has also been noted (e.g. May 1984). This broader archaeological research background reveals the importance of the evidence for a sequence of dense pre-Roman roadside occupation and enclosure at Brough and its environs.

Romano-British

Evidence for the Roman landscape of Brough and its environs suggests at least four major elements. These comprise the Fosse Way, the site of the Roman town, peripheral activity/extra mural settlement, and associated land parcels and boundaries.

The Roman road, constructed in the latter half of the 1st century AD, links the legionary fortresses at Lincoln and Exeter and has been identified as a major linear archaeological resource (Knight 1991, 6). At Brough the road was examined within the town in 1979, as part of an archaeological watching brief by M. Bishop (1980). This established a good layer of preservation, with at least two phases of surfacing. Whilst the A46 can be demonstrated to follow broadly the line of the Roman road, four significant points of deviation have been identified between Newark and Lincoln (Knight 1991, 6). At Brough aerial photographs show a distinct linear cropmark running through the fields to the west of the modern road, possibly consistent with the Roman road. The alignment of the Fosse Way also appears to be at a variance with the orientation of some boundaries and land parcels. The chronological relationship between these elements is a key research issue to be taken into account in subsequent fieldwork.

The importance of Brough as a significant archaeological resource has been established beyond any reasonable doubt (Knight 1991; Challis 2000). It represents one of only five small Roman towns with demonstrable defensive features (Burnham and Wachter 1990, 4, 12, 25), associated with the Fosse Way and has a broadly accepted correlation with the Roman site of *Crococalana* with two entries in the Antonine Itinerary (*Iter VI, VIII*; Rivet and Smith 1979, 327). The level of archaeological preservation remains high. Substantial stone foundations of the Roman buildings continued to form a convenient source of stone as late as the early 18th century (Stukeley 1724, 98). Despite such documented plundering, evaluation trenches in 1979 demonstrated the survival of stratified archaeological deposits to a depth of over 1m. For these reasons the site is Scheduled as an Ancient Monument, and the route of the upgraded A46 takes the currently proposed bypass line.

Aerial photographs continue to provide the main source of evidence. These suggest a minimum of two phases of town defences (Fig. 1), still traceable in a detailed contour survey of the west side of the town (Knight 1991, 17, fig.14, 15). The

detailed character of the site remains uncertain. The only substantial excavation, conducted by T. C. S. Woolley in the north-east sector of the town in 1906, has no surviving documentation of note. The available details clearly suggest substantial buildings and finds entirely consistent with a site of considerable status (Woolley 1910). Stray finds include a broad assemblage of pottery and over 137 coins, the latter providing a date range of late 1st to late 4th century AD. Three lead coffins are also recorded from Brough, indicating the presence of an associated cemetery with individuals of some status and wealth.

Fieldwalking adjacent to the A46 as part of the 1991 archaeological assessment indicated that activity was quite tightly focused and that the main extramural settlement lay on the south/south-west side of the town, with little real indication of significant occupation extending to the north.

Anglo-Saxon - Medieval

Evidence for post-Roman activity at Brough and its vicinity has remained sparse. Until the current episode of evaluation there has been a reliance on poorly recorded stray finds. These are exclusively metalwork, and almost all are brooches, arguably consistent with a probable cemetery of this date. The most recent finds include a gold and garnet pyramidal stud, suggestive of high status burials (Smith 1906, 203; Alvey 1980, 34-36; Knight 1991, 10; Challis 2000, 13). Information on precise findspots is lacking and it is unclear whether the probable cemetery is within the town defences or has an extramural position. The broad regional pattern (Ancaster; Leicester; Derby) would, however, favour a location outside the town, but its possible location remains unclear.

The change in name from Crococalana to Brough has been viewed as a possible indicator of the abandonment of the Roman site in the Anglo-Saxon period. The town's ultimate decline in the post-Roman period cannot be disputed, but the spatial, economic, and chronological aspects of any shift in the focus of settlement at Brough remain to be elucidated.

Similarly evidence is lacking for the development of the later medieval landscape at Brough and its environs. A 16th century signet ring and low-density scatter of pottery attributed to manuring (Knight 1991, 10) were recovered from the locality. A contour survey to the west and north-west of the Roman town defences recorded faint traces of ridge and furrow (*ibid.*, 17) and the current evaluations have provided additional evidence, now much eroded, of this system of medieval cultivation in the vicinity of Brough.

2 METHODOLOGY FOR TRENCHES 01 - 17

A JCB backactor with a toothless ditching bucket was used to remove topsoil and any intervening sub-soil down to the level at which archaeological features first became clearly visible. In all but three cases (Trenches 14, 15, 17) this comprised an easily distinguished horizon of mixed glacial sands and gravels. In Trench 14 the natural comprised a heavy deposit of boulder clay, whilst in Trenches 15 and 17 a substantial layer of dull brown silty clay overlay glacial mixed sands and gravel. In Trench 17 the clay formed two distinct deposits, an orange-brown silty clay overlying a grey (gleyed) silty clay with a combined depth of 0.65m.

The base and sides of the trenches were then cleaned by hand and photographed. In a number of instances cleaning and excavation were restricted by the high level of ground water (Trenches 01, 03, 14, 15, 16, 17). The severity of the problem within trenches 15 - 17 forced the adoption of a 'scrape and see' methodology to permit assessment of the presence or absence of archaeology to be made within the limits of the agreed project timetable.

Before and during excavation the base of the trench was checked by metal detector.

Archaeological features were identified in all but one of the 17 trenches, Trench 03 being the sole exception. These were recorded by a combination of survey by EDM and hand-planning. Small-scale excavation by hand of a representative sample of features was undertaken, to establish the character of the features and to recover dating evidence. Features were also selected for environmental sampling on the basis of the presence of charred remains, or as representative examples of a group of features with priority accorded to those producing dateable finds (Appendix).

3 STRATIGRAPHIC SUMMARY FOR TRENCHES 01 - 17

The majority of trenches demonstrated a simple stratigraphic sequence with topsoil (c.0.35 - 0.38m) overlying natural glacial sands and gravels (Trenches 01, 02, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 13). Amongst these a zone of disturbance was frequently encountered at the base of the topsoil, c.0.1-0.15m thick. This represented the mixing of topsoil and gravel during recent deep cultivation. This layer was removed by machine along with topsoil to allow identification of features.

True subsoil was recorded in two neighbouring trenches, Trench 04 and 12 (Fig. 1), and reached a maximum thickness in the latter of c.0.2m. A sherd of medieval pottery recovered from this subsoil layer in Trench 04 allows for the possibility that this is a remnant of medieval cultivation surviving in the lee of a quite pronounced ridge crossing the field from west-east.

Within the north-eastern half of Trench 11 a layer of grey silty clay, tentatively identified as colluvium, lay between the topsoil and natural glacial sands and gravels. With a maximum thickness of 0.25m this formed a key stratigraphic layer infilling and sealing some features, cut by others.

Trench 14, located at the north-east end of the road corridor at its tie-in with the existing A46, was unique in its sequence of topsoil overlying natural boulder clay. A deep machine-cut box adjacent to the trench established that this was a thick deposit of natural origin, and not a build up of colluvium linked to cultivation.

Trench 15 and 17, positioned at the south extreme of the corridor near the tie-in with the A46, were similarly exceptional in their stratigraphic sequences. Removal of the topsoil from Trench 15 revealed a layer of silty clay some 0.25m thick, which in turn overlay the familiar horizon of glacial sands and gravel. Trench 17 provided the more complex stratigraphic sequence. Below topsoil was a layer of orangey brown silty clay some 0.35m deep. Removal of this layer revealed natural sands and gravels in the south-western third of the trench. In the remainder an additional layer of distinctive grey silty clay (gleyed) was identified and shown to be 0.3m thick, below which were the natural glacial sands and gravels.

4 TRENCH INFORMATION SUMMARIES

Trench 1 (Fig.2)

Trench 1 comprised a 30 x 3m trench positioned on an approximate west-east alignment, within the middle third of the proposed road corridor, just to the north of Glebe Farm (Fig.1). The field has been subjected to continued recent arable cultivation for potato cropping. Prior to excavation no features were indicated in this area, either by aerial photographs or geophysical survey. However, the location of the trench was partly conditioned by the speculative continuation of the line of a probable pit alignment plotted from aerial photographic evidence immediately to the south of Glebe Farm (Fig.1).

Topsoil, 0.35m deep, was removed by machine to expose a surface of mixed yellowy-orange to pale brown glacial sand and gravel. This surface proved unsuitable for the rapid identification of archaeological features as it represented a zone of disturbance at the interface of the cultivated ploughsoil and the underlying natural. An additional machine spit of *c.* 0.2m was therefore removed to expose undisturbed natural. No archaeological features were apparent in the western half of the trench after initial cleaning. This part of the trench rapidly flooded due to the high level of ground water.

Due to the high level of ground water, this resulted in the flooding of the western half of the trench, although not before the machined surface had been observed, no archaeological features being apparent in this portion of the trench.

Within the base and sections of the drier eastern half of the trench, hand cleaning revealed two intersecting linear features, 0006 and 0034 (Fig.2). Feature 0006 was traced on a *c.* west-east alignment for a distance of some 11 metres, and clearly post-dated feature 0034. A box section at the eastern end of 0006 revealed two potential phases, although no chronological sequence could be established on the basis of the section. These comprised a broad flat-bottomed ditch and, on its northern edge, a smaller shallower gully. The latter had a probable projected original width of 0.8m, and a maximum surviving depth of 0.14m.

The second of the two main features, 0034, followed a south-south-east/north-north-west course, but was recorded for only a short length of *c.* 3m. It was interrupted at its southeast end by 0006 and could not be traced beyond this intersection. A box section at the north-west end of 0034 indicated a broad ditch, with quite steeply sloping sides, but failed to clarify the base of the feature due to the high level of the ground water. Projection of the recorded edges appears to suggest a surviving depth of *c.* 0.9m.

No finds were recovered during the excavation of Trench 01.

Trench 02 (Fig.3)

Originally measuring 30 x 3m, Trench 2 was subsequently extended by an additional 20m at its south-east end. Aligned north-west – south-east, the trench was positioned to partially evaluate a cropmark complex previously identified from aerial photographic evidence (Knight 1991, 48 Site 6; Challis 2000, 15). In recent years the field containing this complex has been cultivated for potato cropping.

Following machine removal of the topsoil a further spit c. 0.1–0.15m deep was removed to reach undisturbed natural. This surface, comprising mixed yellowy-orange to pale brown glacial sands and gravels was hand cleaned, revealing five potential linear features (0003 – 0005, 0007, 0009) and a semicircular patch of distinctive darker material (0008) projecting from the south-west edge of the trench (Fig.3).

The linear features followed various alignments, c. north–south (0004, 0005, 0009), west-east (0003) and north-north-west/south-south-east (0007). No intersections between features occurred within the limits of the trench.

Four out of the five linear features were excavated, all by box section, although the high level of the ground water prevented the bottoming of the deeper features 0003 and 0004. A good correlation is apparent between these two ditches and the west and south sides, respectively, of a small sub-rectangular enclosure forming part of the Site 6 cropmark complex (*ibid.*). Ditch 0004 was the broadest of the recorded ditches with a maximum surviving width of nearly 2.7m. Only partial excavation was possible, although a speculative projected depth of c. 0.75m or more can be suggested on the basis of the recorded section. Feature 0005 runs parallel with 0004 on its west side. Whilst its extant form is far narrower (1.04m) and shallower (0.24m) than 0004, it may be viewed as a possible additional phase of the same boundary. However, no relationship could be observed either in plan or section to indicate the chronological sequence of the two features.

Excavation of 0007, the easternmost of the five linear features, revealed three distinct phases with a clear migration from east to west. Little of the earliest phase feature survived the phase 2 recut, but it is enough to indicate a surviving depth of 0.22m, with a gently sloping east edge and rounded – flat base. The phase 2 feature comprised a ditch/gully with a narrow bottom, and moderately sloping sides. The final phase of this feature is the most distinctive consisting of a quite angular cutting with steeply sloping sides and a surviving depth of only 0.26m. The fills of the three phases are very similar in appearance, and could be distinguished only in section.

The linear feature 0009 was left unexcavated, it has a recorded width of c.1.5m and an extant surface fill of brown sandy silt loam.

Excavation of the southeast quadrant of 0008, the only non-linear feature within trench 02, demonstrated that it comprised a steep sided pit containing a large number of heat-affected stones. The feature could not be bottomed due to the high level of ground water.

No dateable finds were recovered from any of the features within trench 02.

Trench 03

Trench 03 was positioned on an approximate west-east alignment so as to intercept elements of the cropmark complex Site 8, previously identified on the basis of aerial photographic evidence (Fig.1; Knight 1991, 50, Fig.24). The field containing Trench 03 has been regularly ploughed in recent years and currently supports a wheat crop. Removal of the topsoil exposed a distinctive natural horizon of yellow-orange and pale brown mixed sands and gravels. This provided good conditions for the identification of archaeological features. Despite close scrutiny no features could be observed. Extension of the trench an additional 5m to the west, giving a total length of 35m x 5m, and the removal of an additional spit of 0.2m from the natural sand and gravel failed to reveal any archaeology and the trench rapidly filled with water, preventing any further investigation.

Trench 04 (Fig.4)

Trench 04 (30 x 3m) was oriented on a north-north-east/south-south-west alignment and was positioned so as to allow for a potential interception of the projected line of elements of a cropmark complex, recorded to the east of the road corridor (Fig.1), and at the same time to evaluate a quite marked east-west ridge of higher ground.

Machine removal of the topsoil revealed a distinctive brown subsoil (0091), c.0.1 – 0.15m thick which sealed all recorded archaeological features and yielded a single sherd of medieval pottery. Removal of 0091 revealed a dense arrangement of archaeological features (Fig.4), clustering on and around a pronounced ridge of natural gravel. These resolved themselves into a pattern of boundary ditches and possible occupation related pits and postholes, some of the latter producing pottery of probable Iron Age (or perhaps Anglo-Saxon) date.

A small group of three potential postholes (0039, 0040, 0068) was located at the south-west end of the trench. Excavation of 0039 suggested a possible two phase posthole with possible replacement of the timber, whilst the surface of the fill produced a single potsherd of possible Iron Age (or Anglo-Saxon) date. The identical character of the distinctive dark fill of this, and the adjacent 0040, suggests that these may have formed part of a contemporary structural arrangement.

A shallow flat-bottomed pit (0041) lay close to the two postholes 0039 and 0040, but produced only mineralised wood fragments. Towards the north-east end of the trench cleaning clarified a distinctive patch of charcoal rich material as a probable pit group 0046, whose full extent lay to the east, beyond the limits of the trench. A decision not to excavate within the current episode of rapid evaluation, was based on the potential complexity of relationships, and the recovery of sufficient dating evidence through surface cleaning.

Four potential linear features were identified in plan (Fig.4). Two probable ditches at the north-east end of the trench (0139,0140), could not be excavated due to flooding. Excavation of the southernmost of the linear features, which followed an approximate west-north-west/east-south-east ditch, revealed at least two phases of ditch-cutting (0043 replacing 0047). Evidence was also recovered suggestive of a line of postholes (0048,0049) cut into the south edge of the infilled ditch 0047.

The remaining linear feature ran parallel with the north side of ditch 0043/0047. Excavation established two distinct phases of ditch, the earlier narrower ditch 0045 being cut away on its north side by a broader ditch 0044. The only dateable material was recovered from 0044 and consists of a badly abraded fragment of pot, of either medieval or Romano-British date.

Two additional linear features (0037, 0038) were identified in initial cleaning at the south-west end of the trench. A box section through the latter demonstrated a natural glacial origin, 0037 and 0038 being attributable to 'ice wedges' (Howard 1995).

Trench 05 (Fig.5)

Trench 05 (30m x 3m) was positioned so as to intersect the cropmark complex Site 09, previously identified on the basis of aerial photographic evidence (Fig.1). The trench, aligned on an approximate west-east axis, and located within a field that has been the subject of modern arable cultivation and is currently supporting a wheat crop.

Removal of topsoil revealed four distinct linear features cut into the natural glacial sands and gravel. Three (0072, 0073, 0076) were quickly established as relating to field drains of the modern era. The remaining linear feature (0074) followed a north-north-west/south-south-east alignment and appears to correlate with an element of the Site 09, cropmark complex. An irregularity in its outline (0075) close to the south edge of the trench may suggest an additional phase of the same boundary. The high level of ground water hampered excavation of 0074, although it was demonstrated to form a broad flat-bottomed ditch. A number of finds were recovered from the upper fills of the ditch, including a single Romano-British potsherd and two sherds of possible Iron Age (or perhaps Anglo-Saxon) pottery.

A single isolated small sub-circular feature at the eastern end of the trench (0077) was half-sectioned. This indicated a very shallow ill-defined depression consistent with probable animal disturbance.

Trench 06 (Fig.6)

Trench 06 formed one of two double length trenches (60m x 3m) positioned within the road corridor where it passes immediately to the west and north-west of the site of the Roman town. The trench was aligned approximately north-east/south-west and was positioned so as to intercept any elements of the main cropmark complex at Brough that might extend beyond the current western limits of the plot (Fig.1). The trench was located within a field immediately south of Glebe Farm which has formed set-aside during recent years.

Removal of the topsoil and an additional mixed horizon at the base of the topsoil 0.1m thick revealed a variety of features, predominantly pits (0050, 0053, 0013/0080, 0014), lengths of potential gully (0012, 0016, 0018, 0021/23) and possible postholes (0011, 0051, 0052, 0054, 0055) together with evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation (0015, 0019, 0022, 0025, 0026). These were all cut into natural glacial sands and gravel. Finds were sparse and with the exception of possible late Iron Age pottery from posthole 0011, features produced no datable material.

Pits and postholes focus in the north-eastern third of the trench. A group of at least four pits were identified (0050, 0053, 0014, 0013/0080) closely accompanied by four postholes, although a direct association between the two feature types cannot be assumed. The pits ranged from sub-circular (0053), to sub-oval (0050) and highly elongated forms (0014). Partial excavation of 0014 and 0050 established their form as shallow flat-bottomed features. During machine removal of topsoil late Iron Age pottery was recovered from 0011, it was therefore selected for excavation. This indicated a truncated, steep sided flat-bottomed posthole but produced no additional finds. A single additional posthole was located at the south-west end of Trench 06 (Fig.6). The limited scale of the current excavations prohibits credible structural interpretation, although the apparent clustering of features in the northeastern third of the trench gives grounds for speculation.

A series of five broad parallel linear features (0015, 0019, 0022, 0025, 0026) crossed the trench on an approximate west-east alignment (Fig.6). In plan these appeared strongly suggestive of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation, and this was supported by the evidence of a box section through 0015 that indicated a broad, shallow feature with an irregular base.

A more sinuous linear feature 0023/0021, cut by furrow 0022, indicates an earlier, pre-medieval phase of activity. Excavation of 0023 established its character as a shallow, flat-bottomed gully, but produced no datable finds. 0016 represents a similarly sinuous linear feature, adjacent to the furrow 0015. The box section through the latter was extended to include 0016, this indicated a narrow, shallow gully/slot with a rounded base.

Two additional narrow linear features (0012, 0017) similar in appearance and sharing a west-east alignment were recorded. A box section through 0017 indicated a probable glacial origin (ice wedges) and the similarity with the surface fill of 0012 favours a similar interpretation for the latter.

Two features of uncertain character and date were recorded at opposing ends of Trench 06 (0027, 0090) (Fig. 6). The first of these, 0090, comprised a sub-rectangular patch of yellowish sand extending from the northwest edge of the trench. This had been slightly truncated by machining and examination of the section suggested that the sand formed a fill within a probable feature. Comparison with evidence in Trench 07 (in particular 0078 in that trench, a large V-shaped cutting up to 2m deep), suggests that 0090 could represent the continuation of a series of parallel deep ditches, probably of modern origin. At the north-east end of Trench 06 machining revealed an ill-defined possible sub-rectangular feature (0027) projecting from the north-west section. A machine-cut box revealed a shallow flat-bottomed feature badly disturbed by animal burrowing.

Trench 07 (Fig.7)

Trench 07 formed the southernmost of two 60m x 3m trenches positioned within the road corridor where it passes to the west and north-west of the site of the Roman town. As with Trench 06, the trench was aligned north-east/south-west, within a set-aside field, to the south of Glebe Farm. It was positioned to intercept any extension of elements of the main cropmark complex at Brough (Fig.1).

After topsoil removal the machine removed an additional spit of c. 0.1-0.1m from the underlying glacial sands and gravel to clear the disturbed zone at the interface of the two layers and permit rapid identification of archaeological features. These were relatively few in number and were dominated by postholes and probable medieval furrows. There are also indications of possible major activity in the more modern period although this in itself may have some historical value, being speculatively linked to the proximity of World War II airfields.

As many as six postholes were identified within the north-east half of the trench. The limited scale of the excavations militates against the identification of coherent structures. Despite this a number of the postholes are quite closely spaced in particular a cluster of three, including two adjoining examples, possibly indicating post replacement (0066/0069, 0070).

A number of distinctive small sub-circular – sub-oval patches were targeted as possible pits (0060, 0061, 0062, 0063, 0065). Excavation revealed that with one exception (0067) these formed extremely shallow depressions. Animal disturbance cannot be ruled out as a potential origin for these features, although 0060 contained the base of a Romano-British colour coated vessel. In contrast 0067 was found to be deep and clearly the product of animal burrowing.

The south-western end of Trench 07 was dominated by irregular patches of homogenous pale brown sand that only became clear after considerable weathering. Excavation of one element of this complex, 0079, indicated a probable animal origin, although other aspects of this group may well be attributable to modern disturbance. A patch of identical sand on the north-east edge of the complex (0078) was also targeted for excavation. After further cleaning this was resolved as a sub-rectangular area projecting from the north-west edge of the trench. An attempt at conventional excavation quickly established that the feature was far bigger than the surface indications. A machine excavated box section across the feature established that the original patch of sand formed only the upper and inner fill within a V-shaped ditch terminal up to 3.5m wide and 2m deep. Recording was limited by groundwater and dangers of collapse. The size and form seem strongly consistent with machine-cut features of relatively recent date. A reconsideration of the remainder of the trench led to the identification of two widely spaced sub-rectangular patches of identical pale brown sand (0092, 0093). This suggests that 0078 may have been one of a series of parallel features terminating within Trench 07 but extending to the west. Evidence from the south-west end of Trench 06 may indicate that this band of possible ditches continued to the north.

Trench 08 (Fig.8)

Trench 08 (30m x 3m) was located on a west-north-west/east-south-east alignment to the west of the site of the Roman town. No pre-existing indicators of archaeological features were available to guide the trench location other than the relative proximity to the site of the Roman town. The field has been under arable cultivation in recent years and currently supports a wheat crop.

Removal of the topsoil and cleaning of the natural glacial sands and gravel revealed two parallel linear features at the eastern end of the trench, both following an approximate north-south alignment and spaced c.1.3m apart. Excavation of 0032, the easternmost of the two, showed it to comprise a ditched boundary of two distinct phases. The box section suggests ditches of similar form the later phase representing a slight eastward shift in the boundary line. Excavation also indicated that ditch 0033 was of two clear phases. The later phase of 0033 also represented an eastward shift in alignment, cutting away the east side of the infilled earlier ditch. The two phases were of strongly differing in form, the later being broad and flat-bottomed, in contrast to the earlier narrower round-bottomed ditch (Fig.15)

No finds were recovered during the excavation of these features.

Trench 09 (Fig.9)

Trench 09 (30 x 3m) was positioned on a north-north-east/south-south-west alignment. Its location allowed for a possible intersection with the projected line of potential archaeological linear features forming part of the crop mark complex on the west side of the site of the Roman town (Fig.1). Removal of the topsoil down to the natural glacial mixed sands and gravel revealed four distinct linear features (Fig.9). However, with the possible exception of 0030, these cannot be correlated with any projections from existing aerial photographic evidence (Fig.1).

Features 0028, 0029 and 0031 follow a roughly parallel north-south alignment and may be suspected to delineate the same boundary as the ditches recorded within Trench 08 to the north. In plan, 0029 runs immediately parallel to the east side of 0028. Limited excavation established 0028 as the earliest and narrowest of the two ditches, with a distinctive flat base. The west edge of 0028 is cut by 0029, the latter is by far the broader of the two ditches and has gently sloping sides and a slightly undulating base.

In plan no relationship could be discerned between features 0030 and 0031. The former was not excavated and was traced only for a short length, it follows an approximate west-east course before its right-angled junction with the north-south aligned ditch 0031. Small-scale excavation of 0031 indicated a shallow round-bottomed ditch, with no indication of a recut.

No finds were recovered.

Trench 10 (Fig.10)

Trench 10 (30m x 3m) was positioned c.180m to the north-east of cropmark complex Site 9 (Knight 1991, 50) and followed a north-east/south-west alignment.

Removal of the topsoil revealed a natural surface of mixed glacial sands and gravel. Four linear features of variable widths were clearly visible crossing the base of the trench on a variety of alignments (Fig.10). Two can be attributed solely to the insertion of field drains (0081, 0084).

Excavation of the broad band crossing the middle portion of the trench on an east-north-east/west-south-west axis revealed three distinct phases of shallow linear features. The earliest demonstrable phase, 0099, comprised a U-shaped ditch base or gully. This was cut on its north-east edge by a broad shallow ditch base 0082. A more irregular round-bottomed ditch base, 0083, was recorded on the north-east side of 0082. Evidence of the chronological relationship between the two had been removed by animal burrowing. No finds were recovered from any of the three features.

Excavation of the linear band (0085) at the north-east end of the trench revealed three intercutting phases of shallow round-bottomed ditches (0112, 0087, 0088), each phase shifting north-eastwards. The sequence ended with a final phase of activity involving the insertion of a ceramic field drain (0089). A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from 0088, and the whole sequence seems likely to represent a relatively recent episode of activity.

Trench 11 (Fig.11)

Trench 11 (34 x 3m) was positioned on an east-north-east/west-south-west axis close to a proposed intersection between the A46/Fosse Way and the road corridor.

Removal of the topsoil revealed a layer of grey silty clay overlying the glacial sands and gravels in the north-east half of the trench. This was identified as a layer of probable colluvium (0138) with a maximum thickness of *c.* 0.25m at the north-east end of the trench (Fig.17). This was removed in spits by machine until features were clearly visible at the interface with the natural glacial sands and gravels.

A range of features including linear ditches (0101, 0104, 0105/0124, 0108), a curvilinear gully (0106) and a possible shallow pit (0102) was recorded. Some of these features can be allocated to one of two broad phases on the basis of their relationship with the layer of colluvium. Dateable finds were sparse comprising three Romano-British potsherds from ditch 0104 and a single possible late Iron Age sherd from ditch 0105/0124.

Phase 1

Of the three features attributable to the earliest phase of activity predating the deposition of the colluvial layer 0138, only 0108 was excavated. In plan it formed a band with a highly irregular outline (possibly indicative of additional multiple phases) following a roughly north-south alignment. Excavation indicated a broad shallow ditch with a slightly undulating base sealed by colluvium. No finds were recovered.

Phase 2

The phase 2 ditch 0105 had a strongly distinctive appearance with sharply defined edges and followed a highly regular north-north-east/south-south-west alignment. A limited hand dug extension to the machined trench was positioned so as to intercept the line of the ditch to the north-east. This provided an additional opportunity to assess the relationship of ditch 0105/0124 with the layer of probable colluvium 0138. The ditch was located and was demonstrated to have been cut through the colluvium. Excavated cuttings at either end of the ditch also established its character as a relatively narrow ditch with a rounded base.

Irregular patches of colluvium marked two additional possible features 0107 and 0111. Probing of their edges indicated that the colluvium formed an upper fill within genuine potential features.

Unphased

The two unphased ditches at the south-west end of the trench 0101 and 0104 were beyond the spread of colluvium and were cut directly into the natural glacial sand and gravels. In plan the two ditches follow distinct, but converging, alignments. Ditch 0101 follows an approximate north-south axis and ditch 0104 a north-north-west/south-south-east course. Their intersection appears to lie just beyond the trench limits. Feature 0103 comprises an irregularity in the outline of 0104 and is strongly suggestive of distinct phase on a slightly differing alignment. Excavation of both 0101 and 0104 established their character as broad flat-bottomed ditches. The fill of the latter yielded three Romano-British potsherds.

Excavation of feature 0102 indicated a very shallow sub-oval depression consistent with a truncated pit base. 0109 lay only partly within Trench 11 and was shown by excavation to form a shallow oval ended feature with a stepped profile and flat base, although it is uncertain whether this represents an isolated pit or the butt-end of a more extensive ditch or gully extending to the east. Feature 0106 was partially excavated and shown to be a shallow curvilinear gully with a rounded base and ill defined squared butt-end. Examination of the adjacent long north facing trench section (Fig.17) established that the gully lay just beyond the edge of the layer of colluvium 0138 and hence no reliable relationship between the two could be established. No dateable finds were recovered from any of these features.

Trench 12 (Fig.12)

Trench 12 was positioned on an approximate north-east/south-west alignment within the road corridor. The trench was positioned to clarify the character of the archaeology between Trench 02 to the north-east and Trench 04 to the south-west (Fig.1), both trenches having proved archaeologically productive.

Removal of the topsoil revealed a discontinuous layer of brown subsoil (0113) *c.* 0.2m thick. This was seated above a mixed natural horizon of glacial sands gravel and sandy silt. The south-western end of the trench rapidly flooded and excavation of the deeper features was hampered by the high level of the groundwater.

Features identified within the trench included three potential postholes (0096, 0098, 0110). Two were proven by excavation, while the remainder, 0098, did not withstand repeated hand-cleaning. These should still perhaps be regarded as a possible feature albeit badly truncated.

Feature 0097 comprised an irregular patch of dark sandy silt loam projecting from the west edge of the trench and appearing to cut through the remnant of the subsoil 0113. Excavation indicated that it formed a small pit, with an irregular base. Possible stakeholes were identified inside the southern lip of the pit. Excavation recovered numerous finds despite the difficulties presented by groundwater. These comprised a shale spindle whorl (Fig.18) fragments of burnt animal bone, worked stone, abraded Romano-British pottery, and more importantly, numerous potsherds of Anglo-Saxon date including a decorated body sherd (Fig.19).

Feature 0095 formed the only other feature recorded in plan. Excavation demonstrated that this comprised a broad flat-bottomed ditch extending across the trench on a *c.* west-east axis, cutting the layer of subsoil 0113. No finds were recovered from ditch 095.

Trench 13 (Fig.13)

Trench 13 (30m x 3m) was positioned c.32m to the east of Trench 02, and followed the same approximate west-north-west/east-south-east alignment. The trench location was intended to evaluate the extent of archaeological features already identified in Trench 02 to the west.

Machine removal of the topsoil revealed a natural horizon of mixed glacial sands and gravels. Cut into this natural layer were three (0114, 0116, 0122) parallel, roughly equally spaced linear bands of differing widths, crossing the trench on a north-north-east/south-south-west alignment (Fig.13). Excavation of all three revealed a similar pattern of broad shallow features with either flat or irregular bases. These have been interpreted as possible medieval furrows, furrow 0114 having produced a single sherd of medieval pottery during excavation. However, it also yielded a fragment of Romano-British box tile, and cleaning of the surface of 0116 yielded a single abraded Romano-British potsherd. A degree of uncertainty as to the dating of these features must therefore remain.

The remaining features included a scatter of small shallow pits and postholes, the absence of post-pipes and packing details blurring the distinction between the two (0115, 0117, 0118, 0119). No finds were recovered from any of these features, although 0115 appears to postdate the suggested medieval furrow 0116.

A box section through the suggested westernmost furrow base, 0122, also revealed a narrow gully or slot with a U-shaped cross-section, running parallel to the west side of the furrow. No finds were recovered and it is uncertain as to whether the short recorded length of the feature and the shared alignment with 0122 can be regarded as any indicator of contemporaneity.

Trench 14 (Fig.14)

Trench 14 (35m x 3m) was positioned within a cultivated field supporting a crop of rape at the north-east end of the projected road corridor, close to the current route of the A46 (Fig.1). The trench was located in a low lying area (14.7m OD) ground falling away quite steeply to the north-east.

The local topography combined with the untypical silty clay natural and wet weather, greatly compromised work within the trench. Despite these problems close monitoring of the topsoil stripping by machine established that potential archaeological features were limited to a small area in the south-west third of the trench (Fig.14). They appeared as irregular patches of dark grey-brown silty clay. Three were tested by excavation (0125,0132,0135) and this appeared to confirm their identification as archaeological features. Although the conditions and the limited extent of the work prevented conclusive characterisation, a probable shallow pit (0135), and gully (0132) were identified. Much of feature 0125 lies beyond the south edge of the trench, hence its precise form remains uncertain, although a large pit or possible linear feature may be suspected. A single abraded potsherd of possible Romano-British date was found on the surface of feature 0132 during cleaning. No other dating evidence was recovered.

Trench 15

Trench 15 (30 x 3m) was positioned within the south-western quarter of the road corridor on a north-north-east/west-south-west alignment. The trench straddled the boundary between a recently sown arable crop and pasture land.

Machine removal of the topsoil revealed a surface of yellowish brown silty clay. No features were observed cutting through this horizon during close monitoring of machining. A machine cut box was cut to a depth of c. 1.0m adjacent to the trench. This indicated that the ubiquitous natural layer of glacial mixed sands and gravel lay beneath the clay horizon. Overnight rain resulted in the near total flooding of the trench and forced an alternative methodology, of 'scrape and see' to permit any assessment of the archaeological potential of this lower layer of sands and gravel. The layer of silty clay, some 0.25m deep, was removed in a series of 2m wide bays divided by narrow baulks, to prevent flooding from adjacent areas. Within each bay the natural surface of mixed glacial sands and gravels was exposed and examined, no archaeological features were observed.

Trench 16

Trench 16 (30 x 3m) lay c. 185m to the south-west of Trench 15 and shared the same north-north-east/west-south-west alignment. It was positioned within a field currently under rough pasture.

In contrast to the nearby Trenches 15 and 17, machine removal of the topsoil exposed natural mixed glacial sands and gravels. The southern third of the trench remained dry and permitted hand-cleaning of the surface. This revealed a narrow linear feature crossing the trench on a c. west-east alignment. Test excavation quickly established its origin in a 19th century field drain. The remaining 20m length of the trench was rapidly flooded. The same basic 'scrape and see' methodology described for Trench 15 was applied. In this instance the natural surface was cleaned of the overlying water and sludge in two or three shallow spits of 0.1m or less to permit identification of potential archaeological features. With the exception of an additional field drain, no features were observed.

Trench 17

Trench 17 was positioned on a north-north-east/west-south-west alignment at the south-west end of the road corridor, within the same field of rough pasture as Trench 16.

As with the previous two trenches in this portion of the road corridor flooding posed a particular problem. Removal of the topsoil by machine exposed a distinctive layer of orange-brown silty clay. This was completely uncovered by machine and despite close monitoring no archaeological features were revealed. Flooding soon obscured the surface, and a testhole doubling as a sump was machine dug adjacent to the south end of the trench. This indicated that the orange-brown clay had a depth of 0.35m and overlay a further layer of grey (gleyed) silty clay. The latter extended to a further depth of 0.3m and overlay the more familiar horizon of mixed glacial sands and gravels.

Beginning at the north-east end of the trench the clay was removed by machine in controlled spits down to the level of the sands and gravels. Each spit was carefully scrutinized for archaeological features. This indicated that in the north-eastern two thirds of the trench the upper layer of orange brown clay directly overlay glacial sands and gravel, in contrast to the remainder of the trench where the additional layer of grey (gleyed) clay was encountered.

Although no archaeological features were observed, the stratigraphy recorded in the southeastern end of Trench 17 raises the possibility of good preservation of palaeoenvironmental material, although the current conditions prevented safe sampling for assessment.

5 OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

The key aspects of the results of the evaluation trenches excavated in early 2001 are summarised in the table below. This is followed by a more expansive discussion of the evidence and conclusions, the latter paying particular attention to the significance of the findings in the light of the research issues identified by previous archaeological assessments.

Summary of the archaeological results from evaluation trenches 1 -17

<i>Archaeological Feature Group</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Dating</i>	<i>Distribution</i>	<i>Comments/Significance</i>
Linear boundary and/or enclosure ditches.	Tr.01: 0006, 0034 Tr.02: 0003, 0004, 0005, 0007, 0009 Tr.04: 0042, 0043, 0044, 0045, 0139, 0140 Tr.05: 0074? Tr.07: 20058, 20071 Tr.08: 0032, 0033. Tr.11: 0101, 0103, 0104, 0105/0124, 0108 Tr.13: 20114, 20116, 20122	Iron Age - Romano-British.	Widely dispersed across the evaluated corridor.	A key element of the developing archaeological landscape, but typically poor in finds. A small amount of possible Iron Age and Romano-British pottery was recovered.
Possible settlement features (pits, postholes etc.)	Tr.02: 0008, Tr.04: 20039, 0040, 0041, 20046, 0068 Tr.06: 0011, 0013/80, 0014, 0050, 0052, 0053, 0054, 0055 Tr.07: 0057, 0059, 0064, 0066, 0069, 0070 Tr.12: 0096, 0110	Iron Age (?)	Focused in the fields immediately to the south and north of Glebe Farm.	Important indicator of the location of pre-Roman settlement within the road corridor. Provides a potential opportunity to elucidate the character of pre-Roman settlement at Brough.
Possible settlement features (pit/sunken featured building, postholes etc.)	Tr.04: 20039, 20046 Tr.12: 0097	Anglo-Saxon	Identified in the field immediately to the north of Glebe Farm.	An important discovery with the potential to clarify the character of post-Roman occupation in the vicinity of Brough. This is only the second occurrence of rural Anglo-Saxon settlement identified by excavation in Nottinghamshire.
Ridge and furrow strip cultivation	Tr.06: 0015, 0019, 0022, 0026 Tr.07: 0058, 0071 Tr.13: 0114, 0116, 0122	Medieval	Fragmented survival within the portion of the corridor west and northwest of the Roman town.	The Medieval period is poorly represented and has attracted little attention. This evidence is a small contribution to the overall sequence of landscape development in the locality.

5.1 EARLIER PREHISTORIC (Palaeolithic – Bronze Age)

The dearth of earlier prehistoric material from Brough and its locality was noted as a distinctive characteristic of the original programme of fieldwalking (Knight 1991, 65). A second season of fieldwalking in 2001 failed to add to this extremely limited assemblage, and evidence of Neolithic – Bronze Age activity in the locality remained limited to three flint flakes (Keith Challis, pers. comm.).

The results of the evaluation trenches do little to change the pattern suggested by fieldwalking. No features or finds dating to the broad earlier prehistoric period (Palaeolithic – Bronze Age) were recorded.

The fieldwalking data was noted to contrast strongly with the pattern of evidence established by similar surveys in the

wider locality, as for example north Nottinghamshire (Garton 1987) and the Vale of Belvoir (Hills and Liddon 1981). The subsequent repetition of the original results, both by the additional fieldwalking and the current evaluation, adds support to the acceptance of the apparent sparse character of early prehistoric activity at Brough. A large number of the features recorded during the current episode of fieldwork remain undated. Hence there is a possibility that features pertaining to this earlier prehistoric period have yet to be identified. However, the general pattern of evidence from Brough and its locality, together with comparative evidence from elsewhere in the region strongly support a likely Iron Age date for much of this activity (see Section 5.2).

5.2 IRON AGE

Linear boundary and enclosure ditches

Prior to the current evaluation a number of cropmarks, comprising linear boundaries and a possible enclosure, had been identified within the projected road corridor (Knight 1991, 48, 50, Sites 6, 8, 9).

The appearance of such cropmarks is known to be highly susceptible to subtle variations in the underlying geology (Riley 1980; Whimster 1989). At Brough, the evaluation trenches conclusively establish that these features survive far more extensively than the aerial photographic record suggests. Definite and possible examples of linear boundary and/or enclosure ditches were recorded in all the main areas of the proposed road corridor, with the exception of the two extreme ends of the proposed road line.

The small size of the trenches places limits on interpretation. There are also problems in distinguishing in plan between archaeological and geological features, such as ice wedges (Howard 1995), as encountered in Trench 06 and Trench 04. More importantly, the functional distinction between general boundary and enclosure ditches can only be made with confidence where a direct correlation can be established between recorded features and aerial photographic (or geophysical) evidence. This occurs in two instances, firstly between Trench 02 and the enclosure known as crop mark Site 6 (Knight 1991, 48), and between a long linear boundary forming part of Site 9 (Knight 1991, 50).

The distinction is an important one, enclosures are a common component of the late prehistoric (and Romano-British) landscape of the Trent Valley, and frequently demarcate either stock compounds or occupation areas (Whimster 1989, 84-86; Knight 1992). The longer linear boundaries appear as quite distinct elements within the major cropmark complex predating the Roman town to the south-east of the road corridor (Fig.1). They appear to form the key boundaries of a broader framework containing smaller sub-rectangular enclosures and land parcels. The linear boundary defining the west side of this complex includes an apparent length of pit alignment, perhaps also suggestive of a distinct origin or role for these more major elements of the complex. Elsewhere in the Trent Valley such boundaries have been demonstrated to date typically to the later Iron Age (Elliott and Knight 1999). However, there are tentative indications of even greater chronological depth, recent excavations at Hoveringham in Nottinghamshire have raised the possibility of an early Iron Age date for some linear boundary ditches (David Knight pers. comm).

The pattern of finds within such linear features is notoriously sparse. Hence the dearth of finds from the current excavations is neither surprising, nor indicative of their importance, but relates directly to function. Finds were recovered from at least four of the probable examples and comprise predominantly Romano-British pottery. One ditch (Trench 05: 0074) also produced pottery of probable Iron Age date. As noted previously, such finds cannot date the origin of such features, for the evidence of recuts (eg. Trench 02, 08) is consistent with the prolonged life and maintenance of these ditches. The current finds can therefore do no more than provide a *terminus post quem* for abandonment and final infilling. The evaluation has however highlighted specific areas with good potential for the resolution of such issues, in particular Trench 11, where results suggest that, in larger scale excavation, important stratigraphic relationships may be found in this locality.

Settlement

Features consistent with probable settlement activity of Iron Age date were recorded within trenches both to the north and south of Glebe Farm. These consist predominantly of pits and postholes, although the limited scale of the excavations precludes any identification of coherent structures. Iron Age occupation activity may extend as far north as Trench 02, where in addition to probable enclosure ditches, a large pit was partially excavated, producing substantial numbers of heat affected stones. The latter are a common find on later prehistoric sites in the Trent Valley and are thought to relate to the heating of water and cooking activities (Knight 1992). Trench 04, positioned in an area of noticeably higher ground, produced pits and postholes, some containing probable Iron Age pottery. However, there are problems in the region in distinguishing between later prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon undecorated body sherds, and in the absence of supporting diagnostic material, it is not completely certain to which period these finds and features should be attributed. To the south of Glebe Farm, Trench 06 and to a lesser extent Trench 07, contain a scatter of pits and postholes, with some lengths of sinuous gully. The features are most dense towards the northwest end of Trench 06. They produced very few finds, although these included part of a large Iron Age pot from a probable posthole, 0011.

Potential pits and a short length of gully were also recorded in the west end of Trench 14, located at the northern extreme of

the projected road corridor. Excavation was restricted due to extremely adverse weather conditions and only one datable find was recovered, a single sherd of abraded Romano-British pottery.

The general lack of finds from these features is significant and given the proximity to a Roman town strongly suggestive of a later prehistoric dating. Features within Trenches 06 and 07 are consistent with a westerly extension of the pre-Roman phase of settlement activity evident within the main cropmark complex at Brough. Discoveries within Trenches 02, 04, and 12 also indicate this phase of activity extended into the zone immediately north of the Glebe Farm (Fig.1).

The evaluation trenches have therefore highlighted probable focuses for late Iron Age settlement within those portions of the corridor to the immediate north and south of Glebe Farm.

5.3 ROMANO-BRITISH

Despite the proximity to a small Roman town, the number of features dated with confidence to this period remain few in number. However this is likely to reflect the probable character of Romano-British activity and function of the features. With the exception of a small shallow pit (0060) from Trench 07 to the south of Glebe Farm, which produced the base of a small colour coated beaker of 2nd-4th century date, the great majority of possible features of Romano-British date fall within the category of linear boundaries and enclosures.

Romano-British pottery was recovered from the upper fills of at least three ditches (Trench 05: 0074; Trench 11: 0104, 0105/0124). As has been noted above, the dating of such features remains problematic. The complex of boundary ditches and enclosures at Brough and its environs are likely to originate in the pre-Roman period. Aerial photographic evidence has highlighted a core area of possible roadside settlement which appears to clearly pre-date the ditches of the Roman town (Fig.1). It seems likely that at least key elements of this landscape were maintained into the Roman period. Enclosures of probable Late Iron Age origin of the type sampled in Trench 02 (Knight 1991 48, Site 6) may be reasonably expected to continue into the early Roman period. Indeed, the clarification of the precise extent of such continuity of boundaries and land parcels, and assessment of the impact of the Roman infrastructure on the preceding landscape represents one of the key research issues to be addressed by the main phase of fieldwork (Section 6).

The Fosse Way itself represents a major structural imposition of Roman date and shows a noticeable disregard for the potential detail of the preceding landscape as indicated by cropmark evidence (Fig.1). Evidence from Trench 11 positioned close to the presumed west side of the Roman road suggests a complex of multi-phase boundary ditches whose alignments show no apparent reference to the axis of the road and a layer of colluvium sealing an early phase of features (Fig.11). The possibility of the intersection of road and boundary features in the vicinity of Trench 11 is the principal point of archaeological interest in this area.

5.4 ANGLO-SAXON

Features indicative of Anglo-Saxon settlement were identified to the north of Glebe Farm, within Trench 12 and less certainly, Trench 04. A sub-rectangular pit, 0097, projected from the west edge of Trench 12. Excavation recovered some 14 sherds of Anglo-Saxon pottery (including a sherd with incised decoration, Fig.19), a fragment of worked stone (a possible whetstone) and a shale spindle whorl (Fig.18), in addition to four small scraps of very abraded Romano-British pottery. The assemblage is typical of the Anglo-Saxon (and in particular middle Saxon) period, and is particularly indicative of the range of finds normally recovered from sunken featured buildings, or *Grubenhäuser*, which are well-known from other excavated Anglo-Saxon settlements (e.g. Jones and Kinsley 1999). Whilst the identification of pit 0097 as a *Grubenhause* remains uncertain given the partial excavation, there is no doubt that it is a strong indication of Anglo-Saxon settlement in the immediate vicinity.

The difficulties in achieving reliable distinctions between Anglo-Saxon and Iron Age pottery have been noted above. These problems therefore preclude certainty in assessing the extent of Anglo-Saxon occupation within the road corridor, although comparative evidence would be consistent with scattered buildings extending at least as far south as the potential features identified within Trench 04.

Such evidence has a high rarity value within the region, and in Nottinghamshire rural settlement of this date has only been identified in controlled excavation in one other instance (*ibid.*)

5.5 MEDIEVAL

The evaluation identified only a limited number of Medieval features. With the possible exception of ditch 0044 within Trench 04, these were limited to evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation from areas to the north and south of Glebe Farm.

5.6 POST -MEDIEVAL

Earlier assessments of the archaeology of Brough and its locality revealed few post-medieval features of significance (Knight 1991, 24). The current programme of evaluation work has revealed nothing to alter this basic pattern. Evidence remains limited and includes the scatter of post-medieval pottery and other material indicative of probable manuring of the fields around Brough (*ibid.*), and a number of water pumps recorded in the vicinity of Glebe Farm (Knight 1991, Fig.35).

The structure of Glebe Farm itself, however, has been overlooked in earlier assessments and this standing building may merit assessment and recording prior to demolition.

5.7 PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

A high level of modern contamination was revealed with nearly all of the samples containing modern rootlets and weed seeds. Three of the samples (Trench 04: posthole 0039; Trench 07: posthole; Trench 12: pit/*grubenhause?* 0097) contained charred seeds, although the level of modern contamination dictates caution in interpretation.

The preliminary assessment indicates limited preservation of charred plant remains surviving in the soils at Brough, and even this was poorly represented. However, the wide distribution of the trenches and the limited extent of sampling mean that the results cannot be relied upon as an indication of the character of the archaeology. It is recommended that any additional phase of fieldwork should include provision for a programme of environmental sampling.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation project has highlighted three key areas with the potential to address significant elements of the later Iron Age, Romano-British and early medieval landscape.

Area 01 focuses on the area around Trench 11. The latter indicated the potential of this area for investigation of the relationship between ditches of the pre-Roman field system and the Roman Fosse Way.

Area 02 comprises the section of the corridor to the north of Glebe Farm containing evaluation Trenches 02, 04 and 12. These trenches produced evidence consistent with possible Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon occupation.

Area 03 targets Trench 06 and 07. This forms the point closest in the road corridor to the Roman town and evaluation recovered evidence of possible Iron Age occupation. This is likely to correlate with a westerly extension to the occupation zone indicated by those elements of the cropmark complex to the east, which clearly pre-date the ditches of the later Roman town.

Those sectors of the road corridor not covered by the three areas described above, namely the more northerly and southerly thirds were shown by the evaluation to be of lesser archaeological significance.

The significance and implications of these results for additional fieldwork are considered below in relation to the main archaeological phases.

Prehistoric - Neolithic & Bronze Age

No indication of activity attributable to this period was recovered during the programme of evaluation.

Prehistoric - Iron Age

Potential foci of settlement were identified to the immediate north (Trenches 02, 04, 12) and south of Glebe Farm (Trenches 06, 07). These require more detailed and extensive excavation, to ascertain extent and to recover coherent structural remains and phasings.

Roman

Evidence is currently limited to ditches of field systems and/or enclosures that are likely to have originated in the Iron Age. These can be mapped and sampled where necessary in the course of the continuation of the project. Comparative evidence within the region suggests the strong likelihood that in larger scale excavation the settlements of Iron Age date may be found to continue into the early Roman period. Such a sequence would permit assessment of the impact of the imposition of the Roman infrastructure on the existing landscape and economy.

Post-Roman

The recovery of both finds and structural remains of Anglo-Saxon date is of considerable regional significance. This rare discovery provides an invaluable opportunity for larger scale excavation to trace the sequence of settlement and landscape development into the early medieval period in the vicinity of Brough.

Medieval

The programme of evaluation produced only limited evidence for this period, namely ridge and furrow. It therefore merits little additional investigation other than to be plotted and characterised as part of the broader landscape sequence within the three targeted areas.

Post-medieval

No significant evidence of post-medieval activity was recovered during evaluation. The building comprising the Glebe Farm farmhouse is an obvious exception and it should form the subject of a separately costed assessment followed by survey if necessary.

Environmental

Preliminary assessment of the evaluation samples suggests relatively poor potential for palaeoenvironmental data at Brough (Appendix). On this basis a detailed design for extensive sampling is viewed as inappropriate. Sampling during the main phase of fieldwork will therefore continue on a 'judgement' basis. This will provide representative sampling of a range of dated features, and those producing good evidence of charred material or other visible indications of enhanced preservation of plant and faunal material.

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APPENDIX : Preliminary Environmental Archaeology assessment
by A. Snelling and D.J.Rackham

Excavations carried out by Trent & Peak Archaeological Unit at Glebe Farm Brough in advance of the A46 Road Improvement Scheme, revealed a series of ditches, pits and post holes of probable Late Iron Age / Romano British date. Twelve samples were taken and submitted to the Environmental Archaeology Consultancy for assessment, nine of which are considered here as an interim to the final assessment report.

Only the first flot of these nine samples has so far been processed, a summary of which is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Environmental samples taken and preliminarily assessed

sample no.	context no.	trench	feature	comments	date
1	0031/b	9	ditch	abundant modern seeds, straw frags and worm egg cases	ud
2	0008	2	pit?	abundant modern weeds	LIA/RB?
3	0039	4	posthole?	indet. cereal, mod weeds, cinder frag	ud
4	0006	1	ditch	modern weeds, coal?	ud
5	0032	8	ditch	occ. charcoal, modern weeds, worm egg cases	ud
6	0014	6	sub-rectangular pit	modern weeds, worm egg cases	ud
7	0066	7	posthole	abun. charcoal, barley, modern weeds, worm egg cases	ud
8a	0074	5	ditch, upper	abun. modern weeds, occ. charcoal	RB?
8b	0074	5	ditch, middle	modern weeds	RB?
8c	0074	5	ditch, basal	roots and weeds	RB?
9a	0097	12	grubenhause?	straw frags, rootlets, occ. charcoal	AS?
9b	0097	12	grubenhause?	barley, mod weeds, rootlets	AS?
9c	0097	12	grubenhause?	occ. charcoal frags, modern weeds	AS?

ud – undated; LIA – late Iron Age; RB – Romano-British; AS – Anglo-Saxon

Practically all of the samples contained modern rootlets and modern weed seeds including *Chenopodium* spp, *Fumaria officinalis*, *Galium* spp, and *Urtica* spp. with some containing worm egg cases and occasional insect fragments. Given the nature of these deposits, these are not considered to be contemporary with the archaeology and probably represent modern contaminants. Individual charred seeds within these contexts therefore need to be treated with caution as they cannot be assumed to be contemporary with the deposit. Three of the above thirteen samples contained cereal remains: sample 3, a probable posthole; sample 7, part of a double posthole and sample 9b, a pit which may be a grubenhause, represented by only one or two grains in each case and in the latter two contexts, identified as barley. The antiquity of these grains is questionable given the highly contaminated nature of the samples.

Surprisingly, for an Iron Age/Romano British site very little in the way of domestic activity was identified from the first flot of the above nine samples. Initial indications are that the residues are equally barren and it is likely that these samples represent features that were not actively receiving debris of a domestic or crop processing nature, which was probably occurring in another area of the site. Once all the samples have been fully processed then it may be possible to assess whether the samples can give some indication of feature function or local activities, but this is not evident from the palaeobotanical material studied so far, and so, in terms of this line of evidence, little more can be said.

This preliminary work suggests that only charred plant remains have survived in the soils on the site. Animal bone, shell and probably pollen and waterlogged remains are likely to be absent, unless different soils or sediment fills are uncovered. The density of charred material, including charcoal, is low in all the samples except posthole fill 66, and even in this feature its archaeobotanical potential is low.

On the preliminary evidence of these samples the environmental data is largely negative and would not justify on its own any further excavation. However if further excavation is required on the basis of other archaeological criteria, then sampling should be a component of the fieldwork. The negative nature of the samples from the evaluation is itself instructive in that it appears to indicate little input of archaeological material, a fact reinforced by the absence of dateable artefacts. However since the evaluation samples derive from a series of trenches across a large area and only a single feature was sampled in any trench these need not reflect the true character of the archaeology at any specific location along the projected road route. Often dumps in ditches can be fairly area specific, relating to proximity and convenience for the settlement, and are not spread evenly along their course and the negative results obtained during the evaluation need not be representative.

The low density of finds in these evaluation samples indicates that any future sampling should ensure that samples of 30 litres continue to be taken. Sampling should normally be restricted to dated contexts, although deposits rich in charred material should be sampled and may be subsequently dated by radiocarbon if warranted. It may be appropriate where

dating evidence is rare to sample specifically to recover charred material for radiocarbon dating.

Although the assessment has not been completed it is not envisaged that further work (post-excavation) will be required on any of the nine samples so far studied.

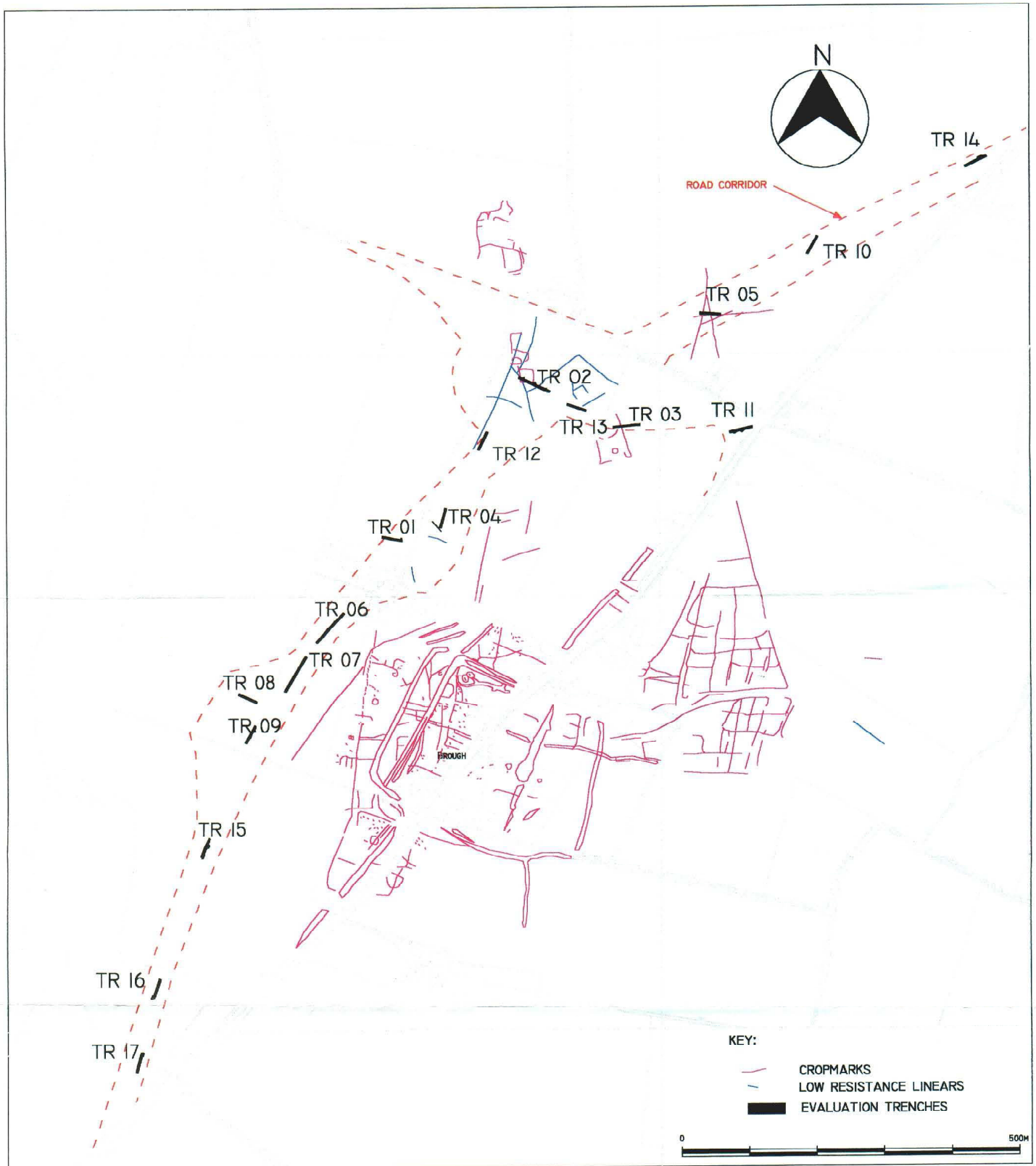


Fig.1 Plan showing the location of evaluation trenches (1-17) within the road corridor at Brough.

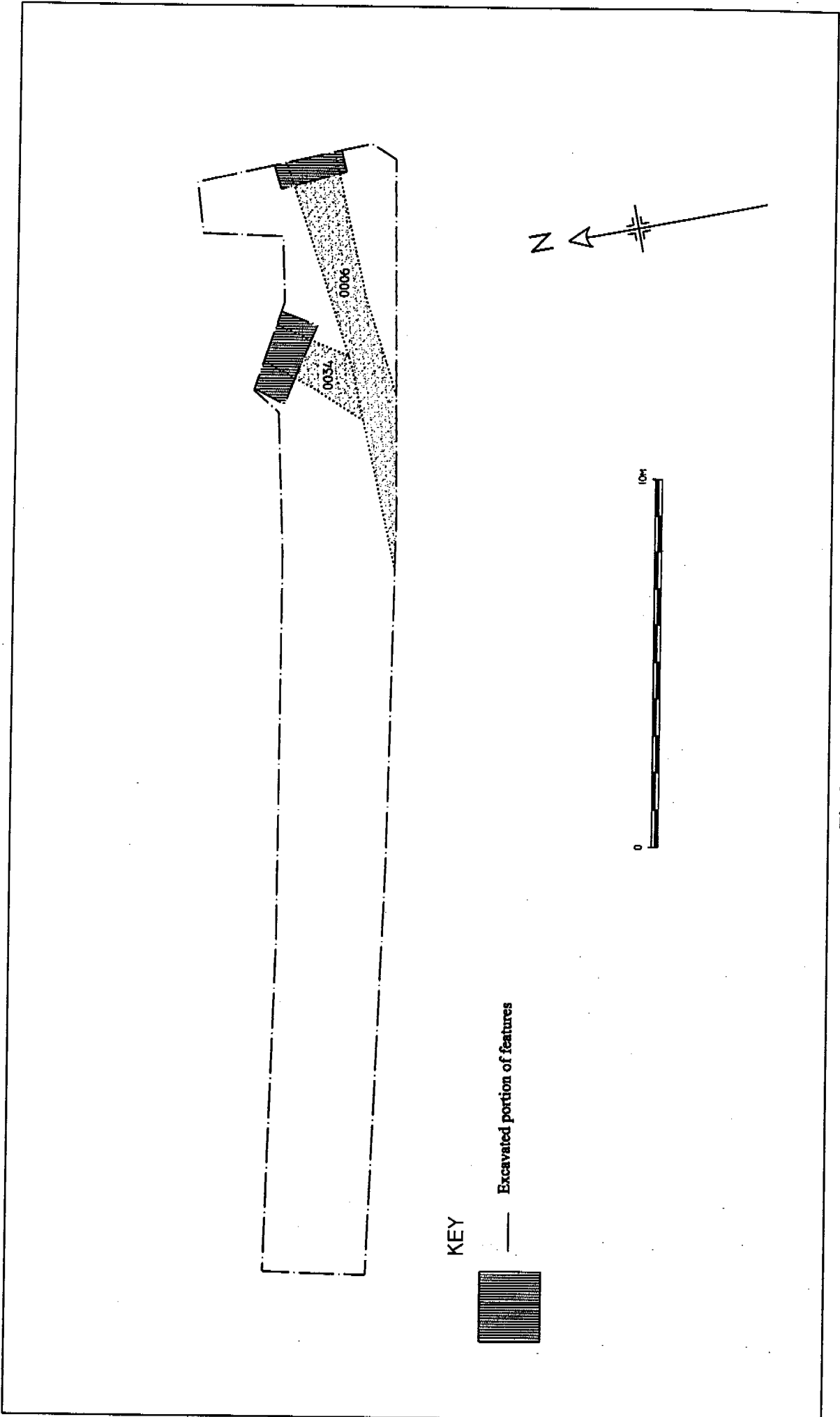


Fig.2 Trench 01 plan of features.

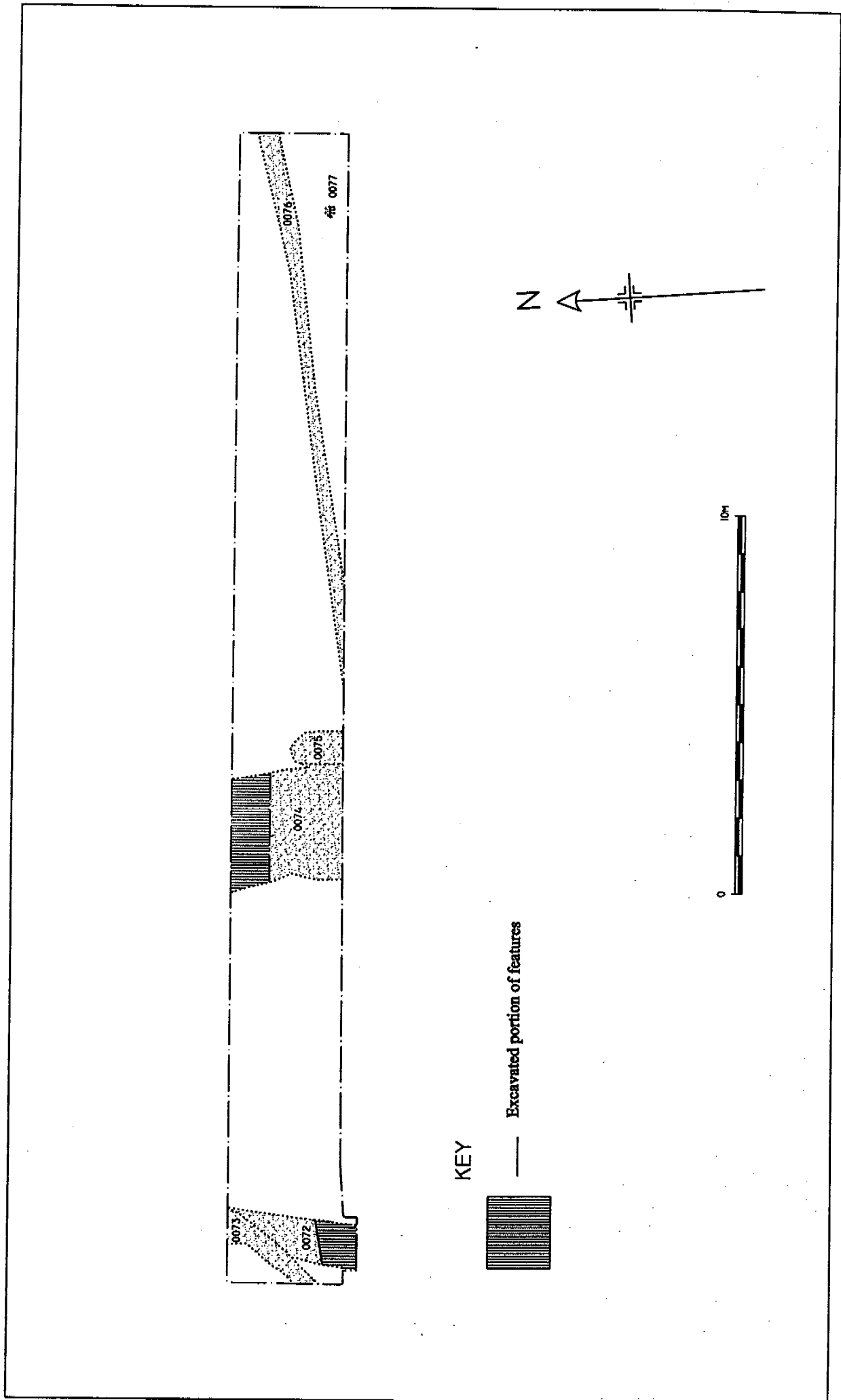


Fig.5 Trench 05 plan of features.

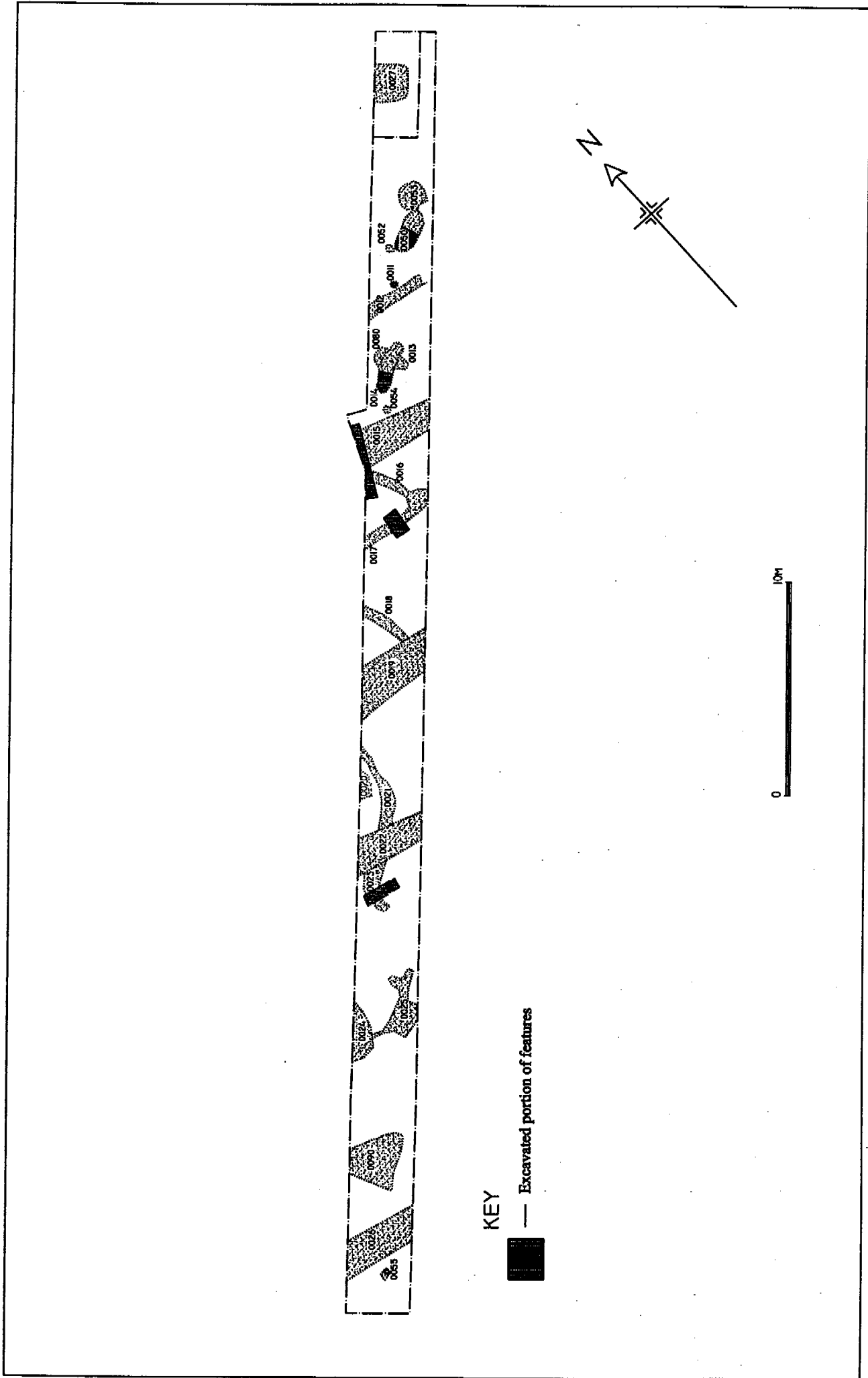


Fig.6 Trench 06 plan of features.

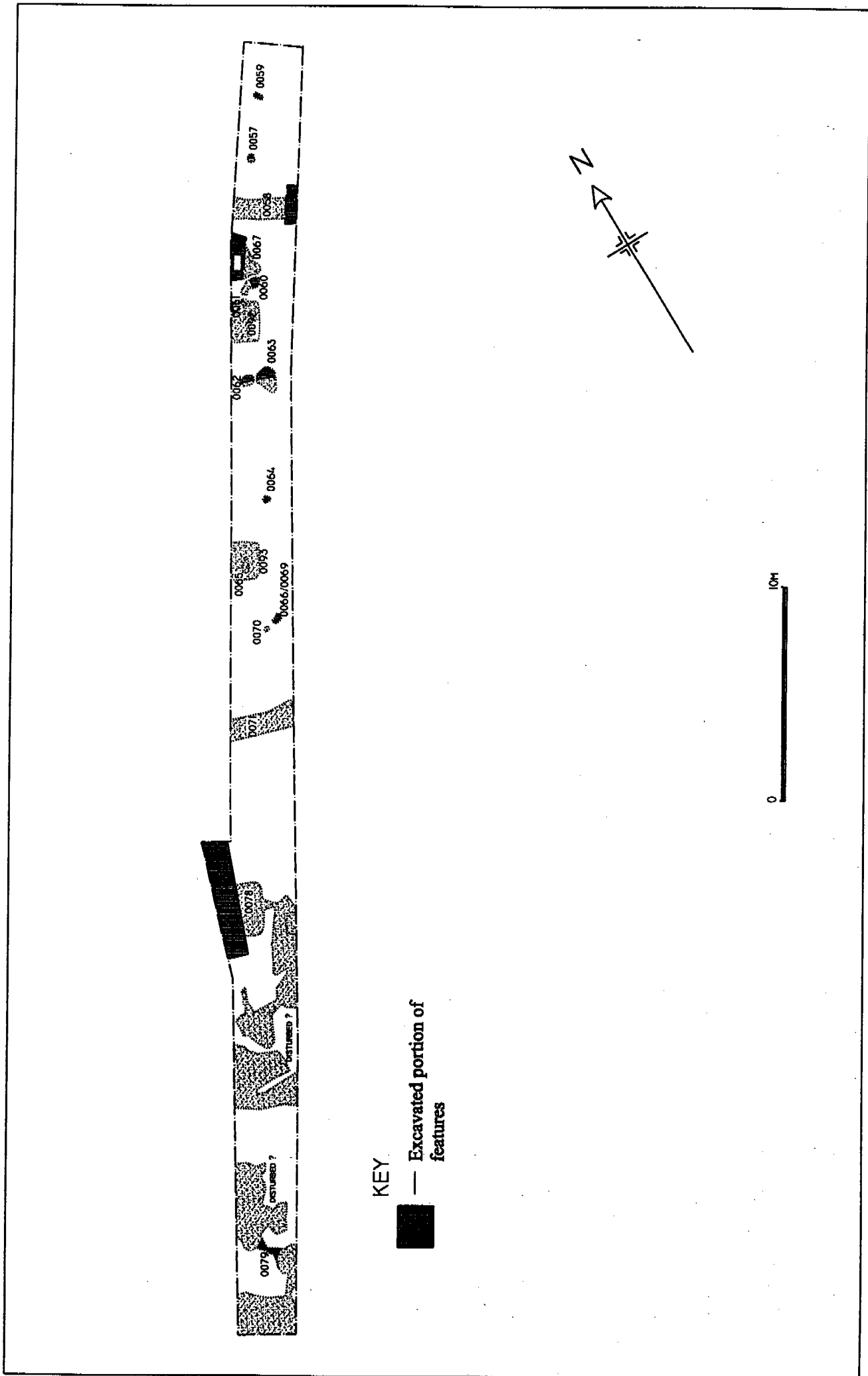
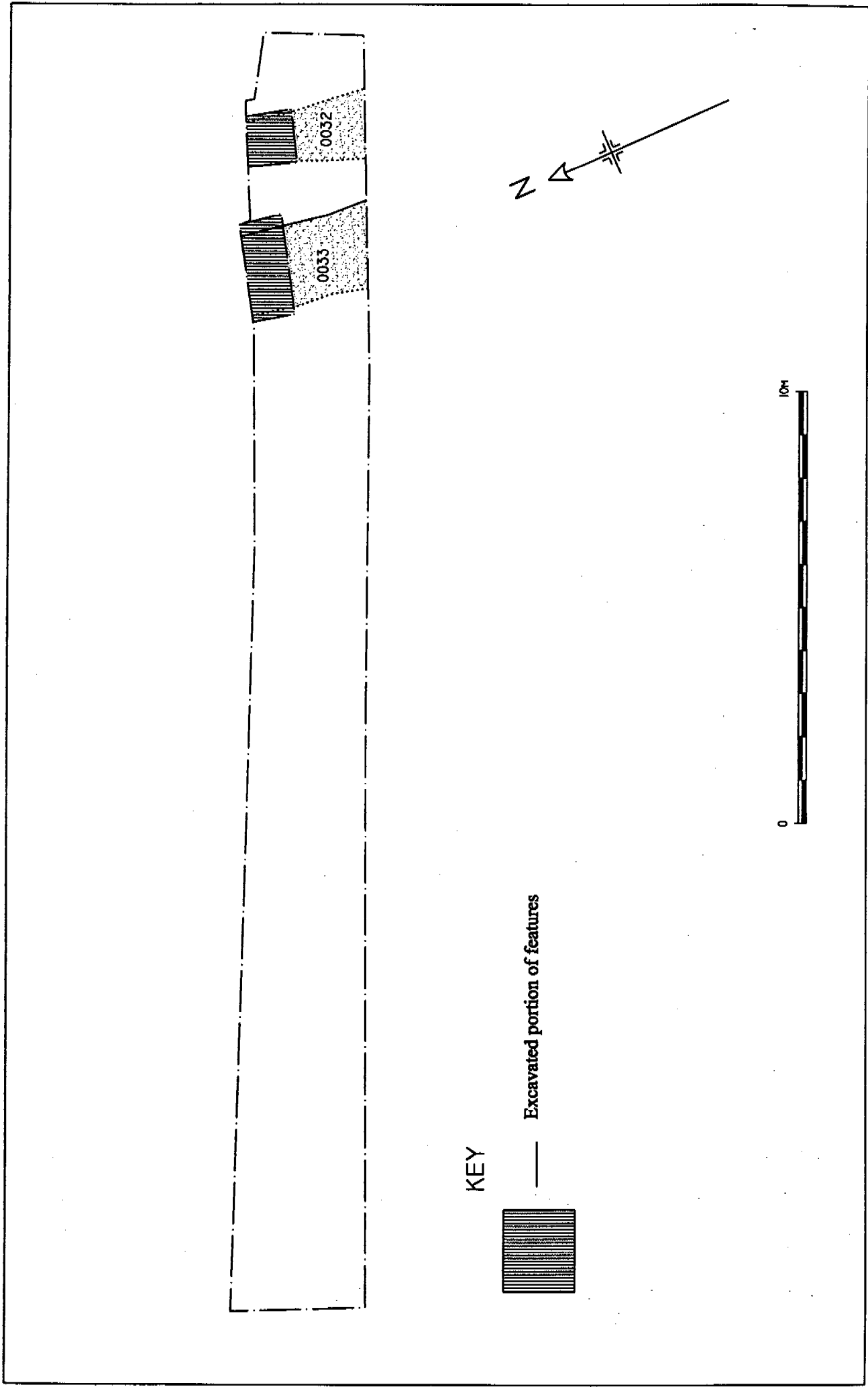


Fig.7 Trench 07 plan of features.



KEY



— Excavated portion of features

Fig.8 Trench 08 plan of features.

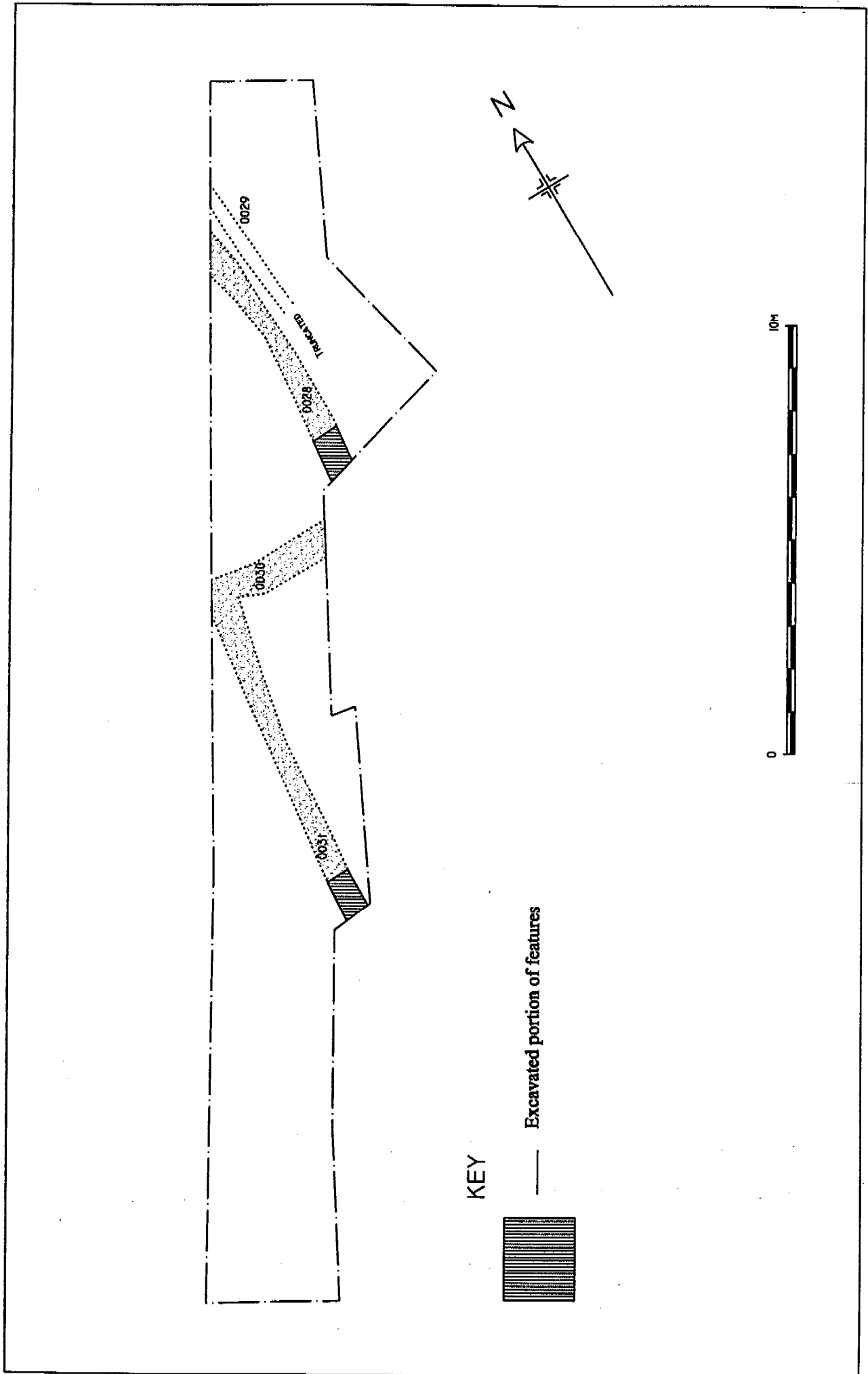


Fig.9 Trench 09 plan of features.

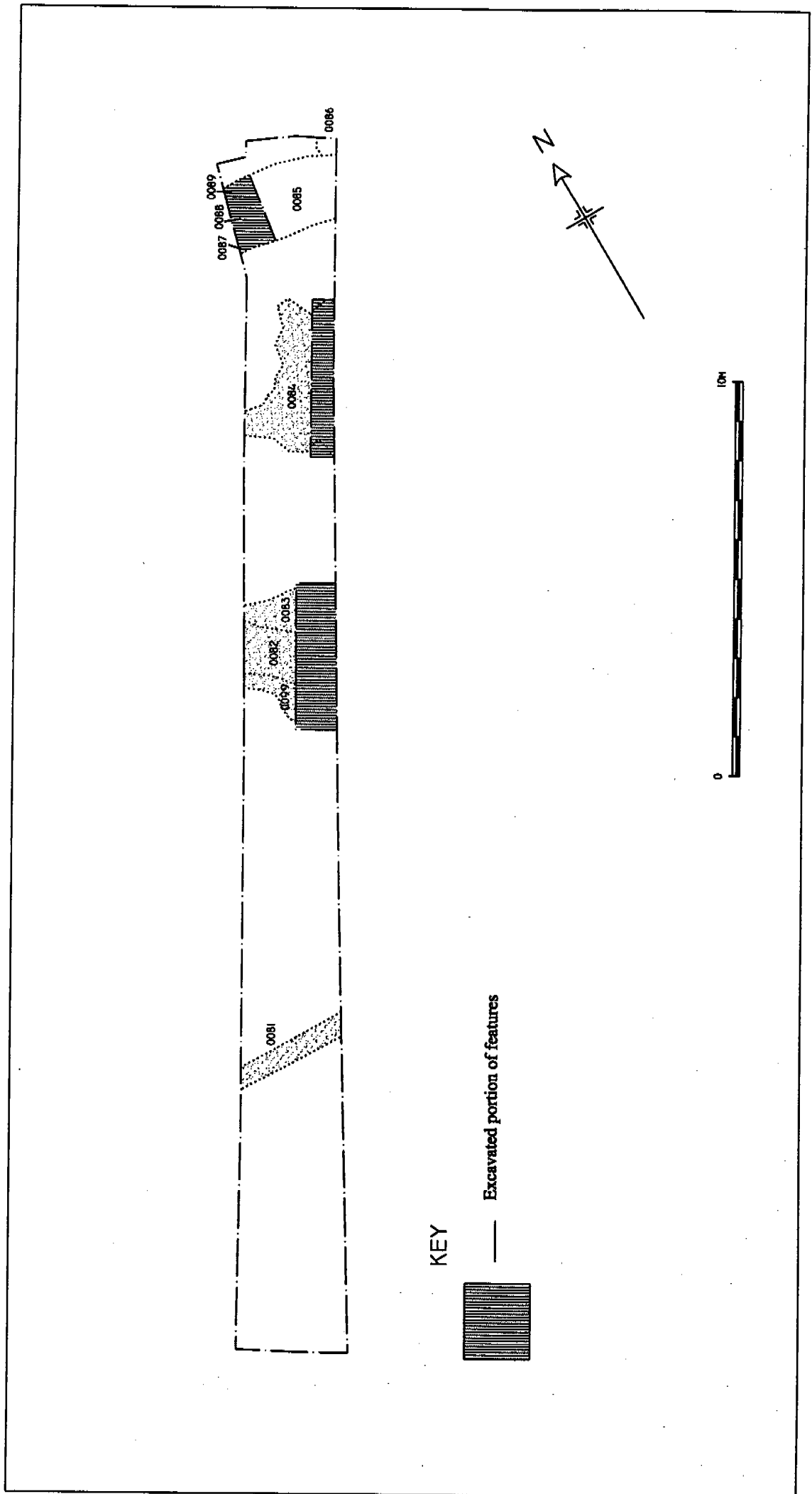


Fig.10 Trench 10 plan of features.

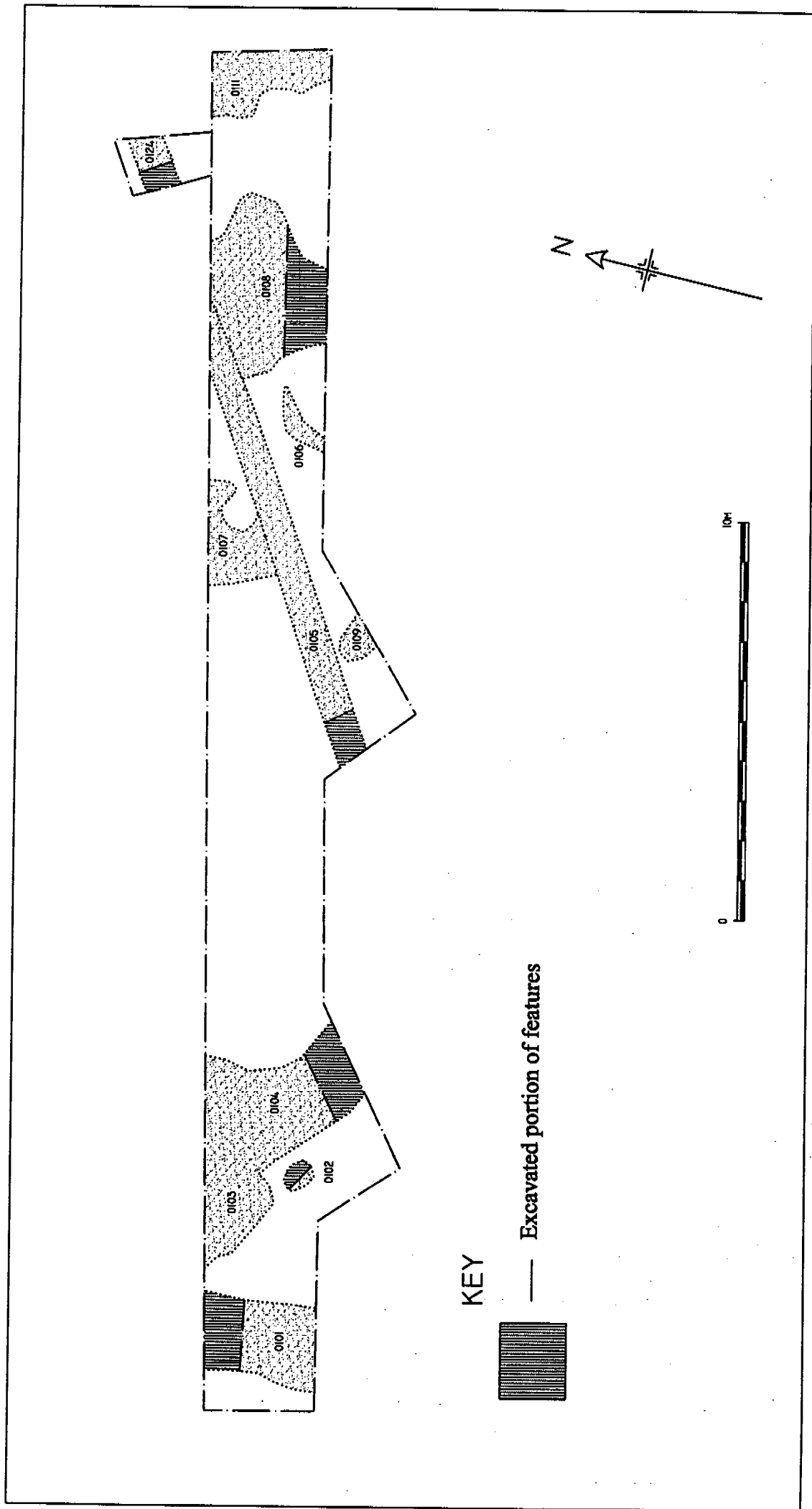


Fig.11 Trench 11 plan of features.

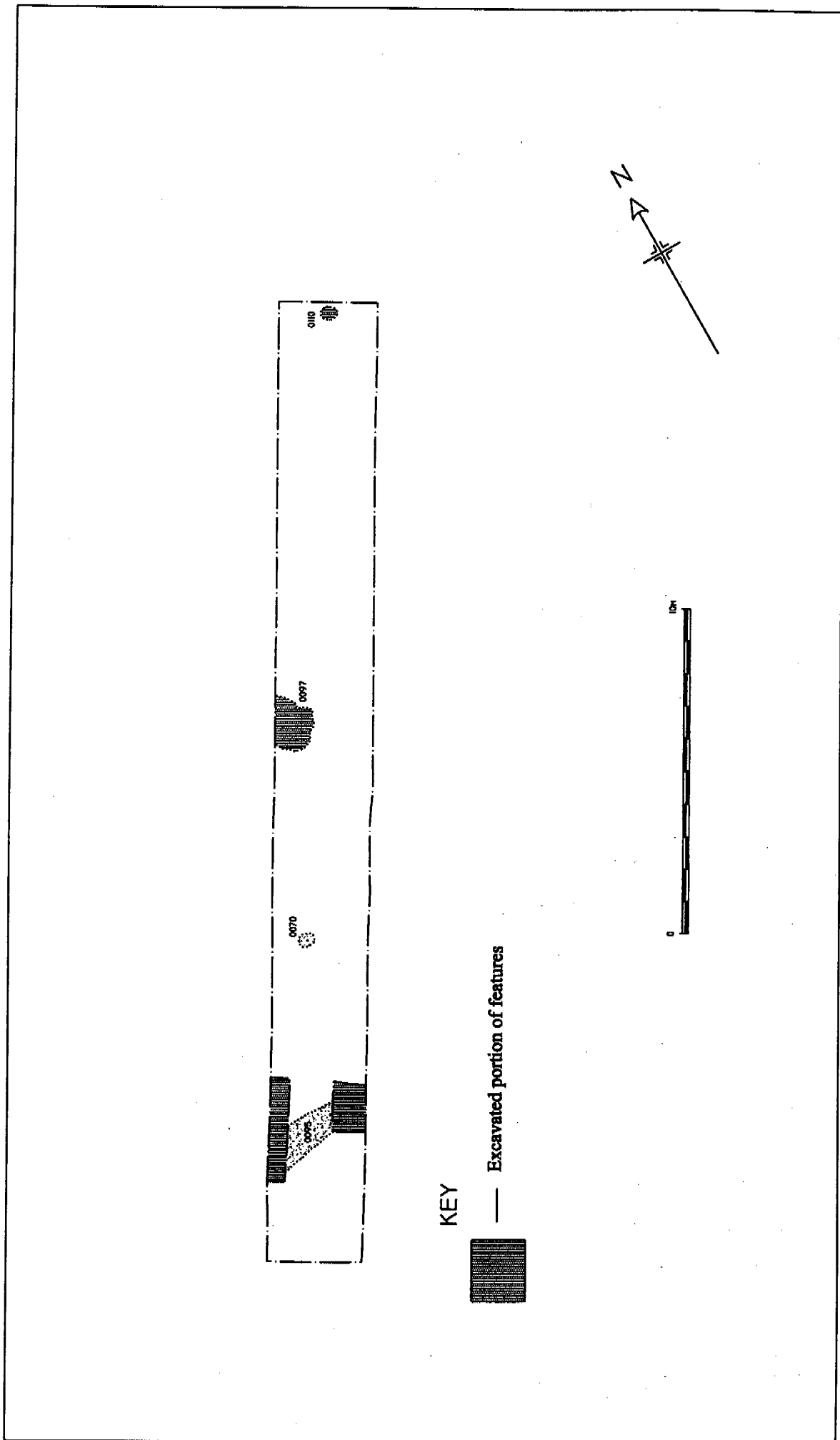


Fig.12 Trench 12 plan of features.

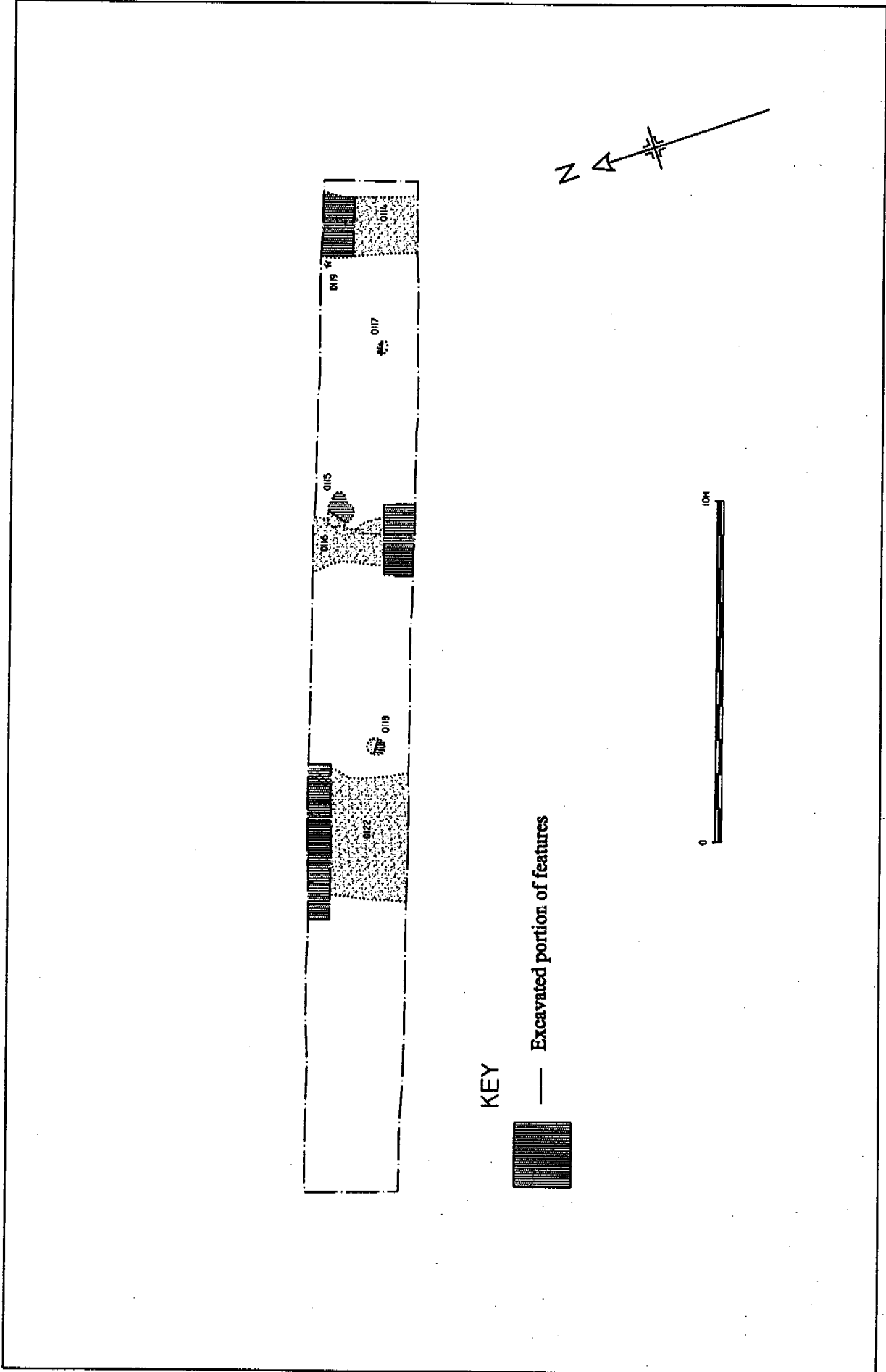


Fig.13 Trench 13 plan of features.

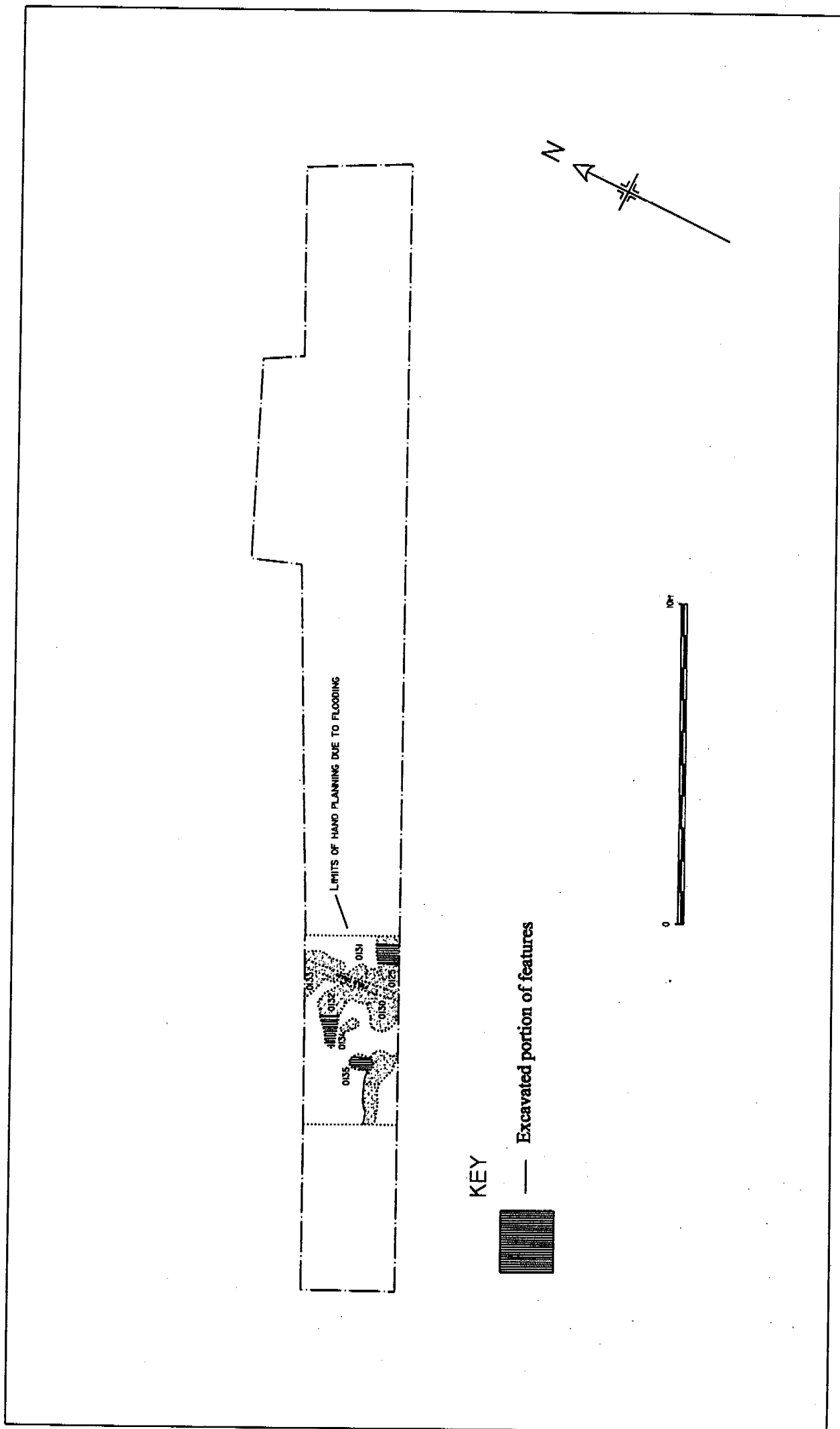
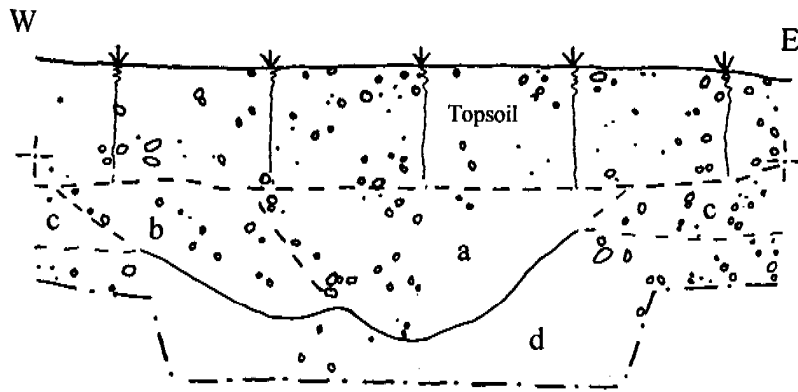
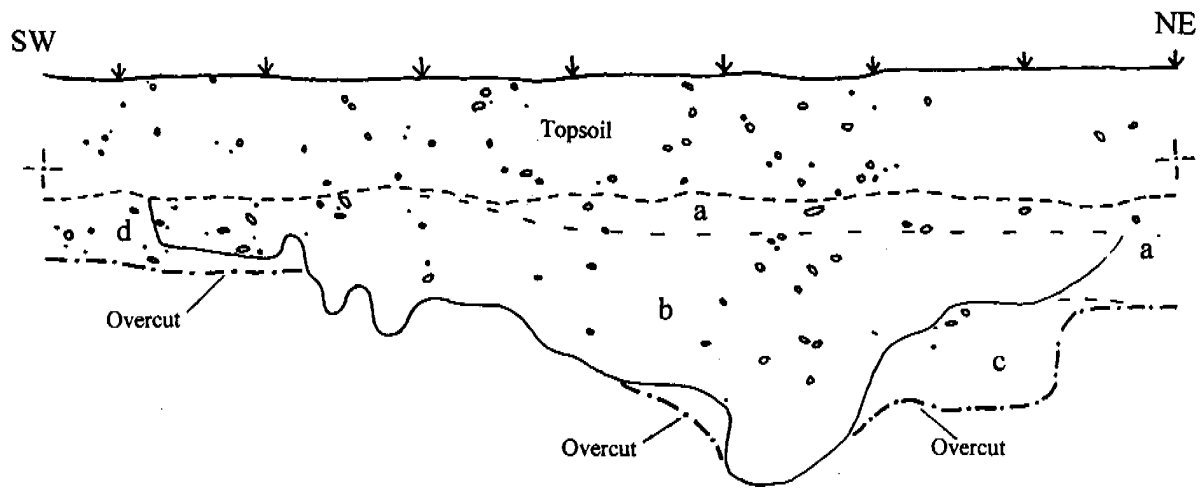


Fig.14 Trench 14 plan of features.



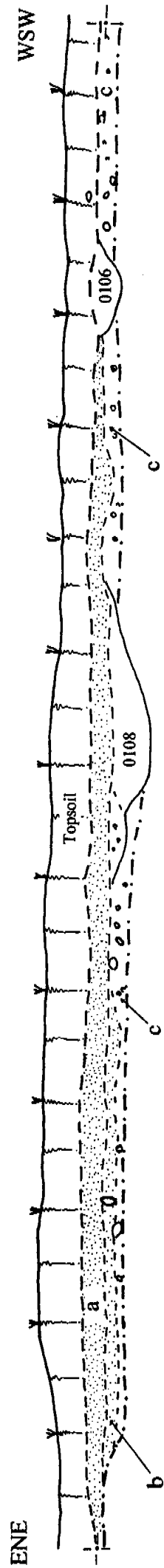
- a Brown sandy silt.
- b Brown sandy silt.
- c Pale brown sandy loam and gravel.
- d Yellowish brown glacial sands and gravel.

Fig.15 Ditch 0033 south facing section. Scale 1:20.



- a Dark brown sandy loam.
- b Dark greyish brown to black sandy silt loam.
- c Brown sandy silt loam.
- d Yellowish brown glacial sands and gravel.

Fig.16 Pit 0097 south-east facing section. Scale 1:20.



- a Layer 0138 (colluvium?), dark greyish brown silty clay loam.
- b Greyish brown silty clay loam (colluvium?)
- c Yellowish brown glacial sands and gravel.

Fig.17 Trench 11 north-north-west facing section through layer 0138 (possible colluvium). Scale 1:50.

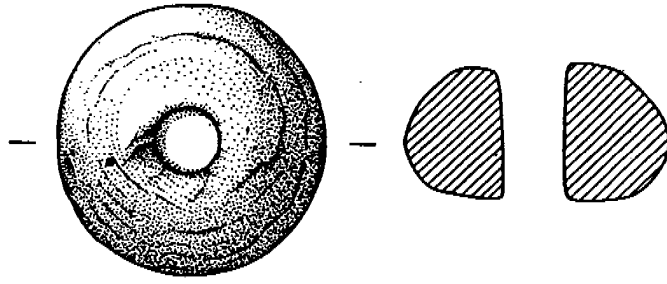


Fig.18 Stone spindle whorl (ABV) from pit 0097. Scale 1:1.



Fig.19 Decorated Anglo-Saxon potsherd (AAY) from pit 0097.