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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS UNDERTAKEN ALONG THE ROUTE OF THE MARKET DEEPING BYPASS

VOLUME 1
DESCRIPTIONS OF THE EXCAVATIONS

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PROJECT
SERVICES

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS UNDERTAKEN ALONG THE ROUTE OF THE MARKET DEEPING BYPASS

VOLUME 1
DESCRIPTIONS OF THE EXCAVATIONS

Work Undertaken For
Environmental Consultancy Services

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Report compiled by Dale Trimble

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Contents

Appendices

by James Rackham

Appendix 15 Report on the environmental archaeology on the Market Deeping bypass report by Val Fryer

Appendix 16 Assessment of the palynology on the Market Deeping bypass by Patricia Wiltshire

Appendix 17 Identification of charcoal from Site 4 on the Market Deeping bypass by Rowena Gale

+possibly Site 10

Appendix 18 Report on the geophysical survey undertaken on Site 8 by Engineering Archaeological Services

Appendix 19 Report on the radiocarbon dating of charcoal in hearth group 74 on Site 4 on the Market Deeping bypass by Beta Analytic

List of Figures

List of Plates

Plate 14	Site 4	DBF97 Early Iron Age Structure 1 from northeast after removal of floor layers and buried soil.
Plate 15	Site 4	DBF97 Shallow pit in Group 75 located on east side of Structure 1. From south.
Plate 16	Site 4	DBF97 Early Iron Age pit 1208 in Group 61 from east. Note inverted upper half of quern stone on north side of pit.
Plate 17	Site 4	DBF97 Fragmentary but *in-situ* scored ware vessel recorded in base of amorphous hollow in Group 33. From north.
Plate 18	Site 4	DBF97 The scored ware vessel in Group 33 after removal of collapsed top of pot. From north
Plate 19	Site 4	DBF97 The Early Iron Age pit in Group 89 containing layers of heat reddened silt and clay and deposits of ash and charcoal. From southwest.
Plate 20	Site 4	DBF97 Middle Iron Age ditch in Group 68. Note Group 103 pit in foreground. From south.
Plate 21	Site 4	DBF97 Group 83 crouched burial of probable Iron Age date from southwest. The burial lies parallel to ditch in Group 84.
Plate 22	Site 4	DBF97 Skeleton 027 from Roman Grave Group 44 from south. The cemetery was located within the corner of Enclosure 2.
Plate 23	Site 4	DBF97 Skeleton 016 from Roman Grave Group 44 from south.
Plate 24	Site 4	DBF97 Skeleton 006 from Roman Grave Group 44 from west. Note position of decapitated skull between thighs of skeleton.
Plate 25	Site 4	DBF97 Skeleton 020 from Roman Grave Group 44 from west. Medieval plough furrow in foreground has severely truncated the skeleton. Note position of skull between the feet of the skeleton.
Plate 26	Site 4	DBF97 Early Saxon Grave 1334 from Group 7 containing skeletons 1336 and 1337. From northwest.
Plate 27	Site 4	DBF97. Plough truncated Early Saxon skeleton 081 in Group 7 from southwest. Note spearhead under left arm.
Plate 28	Site 4	DBF97 Spearhead under left arm of skeleton 081 from southwest.
Plate 29	Site 4	DBF97 Skeleton 1511 in Group 7 from southwest
Plate 30	Site 4	DBF97 Double Early Saxon Grave in Group 42 cut into tertiary fill of Roman Enclosure 2 ditch. From east.

Plate 31	Site 4	DBF97 Excavating the triple Early Saxon grave in Group 42. From west .
Plate 32	Site 4	DBF97 Iron buckle and buckle plate (SF 10) on front of pelvis of male skeleton (023) in Early Saxon triple burial. An Iron knife or small Seax (SF9) can be seen behind the pelvis.
Plate 33	Site 4	DBF97 Early Saxon amorphous hollow in Group 25 from east
Plate 34	Site 5	DBM97 Section across ditch cut (003) in Trench 1 from northeast
Plate 35	Site 7	DBD97 Aerial shot of site during excavation from southwest
Plate 36	Site 7	DBD97 Section across the shallow recut curvilinear ditch of possible Late Bronze Age date. From northeast.
Plate 37	Site 7	DBD97 Iron Age pit in Group 10 from west.
Plate 38	Site 7	DBD97 Recut enclosure ditch from southeast.
Plate 39	Site 8	DBB97 Ring ditches east of AI5 in area of Site 8
Plate 40	Site 8	DBB97 Aerial shot of site under excavation from southwest.
Plate 41	Site 8	DBB97 West cross baulk across ring ditch showing north facing section
Plate 42	Site 8	DBB97 Ring ditch section from east.
Plate 43	Site 8	DBB97 Possible post trench (085) in southeast quadrant of excavation.
Plate 44	Site 8	DBB97 Linear ditch (071) which intersects east side of ring ditch From north.

1 SUMMARY

Desktop assessments of the archaeological impact of the proposed Market Deeping bypass were undertaken separately in 1991 and 1992 for the Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire sections of the route. Both studies concluded that construction of the road would have a serious impact on buried archaeological remains. These results prompted both the Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire County Councils to request more detailed evaluation to determine an appropriate mitigation strategy for the archaeological deposits in the path of the proposed bypass. In Lincolnshire the archaeological assessment was undertaken between January and March of 1996 and included geophysical survey, fieldwalking and trial trenching in areas of archaeological potential (Trimble 1999a). The evaluation of the Cambridgeshire section of the route was undertaken separately between February and March of 1997 and comprised the accurate plotting of aerial photographs followed by a phase of trial trenching (Trimble 1999b).

As a consequence of these evaluations, 10 sites along the route were targeted for further investigation in advance of the construction of the bypass. This work was undertaken between May and November of 1997.

Archaeological deposits of Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman and medieval date were recorded during the excavations. A possible cremation cemetery dating to the middle of the Neolithic period was recorded at a site close to the southern limit of the bypass. The most substantial excavations were undertaken on a settlement site adjacent to Fox Cover Farm in Maxey, Cambridgeshire, where a complex sequence of Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman and Saxon deposits was recorded. Excavation on this site was limited to the two roadside ditches where archaeological deposits would be unavoidably destroyed. The remainder of the site was preserved beneath the surface of the road, elevated to avoid disturbing archaeological remains. However, even within the limited area available for excavation, a rich sequence of archaeological deposits was identified. These included the remains of an Early Iron Age roundhouse located within a ditched enclosure, and a number of burials dating to the Iron Age, Roman and Saxon periods. A substantial quantity of Iron Age pottery was recovered, mainly dating to the early part of the period. Few sizeable Early Iron Age ceramic assemblages have been recovered in the area and the analyses of the material from the Fox Cover Farm site has made a significant contribution to characterising later prehistoric pottery in the region.

In Lincolnshire, the edge of a ditched enclosure dating to the Middle Iron Age and Roman period was excavated at a site 0.5km to the west of Market Deeping. Two parallel curvilinear ditches recorded at the site possibly date to the late Bronze Age. These may be associated with an extensive field system of the same date recorded 2km to the southwest at West Deeping during the excavations undertaken in 1994. To the north of Market Deeping the excavation of a ring ditch recovered no evidence for funerary activity and it seems likely that the site has been severely disturbed by medieval and post medieval ploughing.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of an Archaeological Excavation

An archaeological excavation is defined as '*a programme of controlled, intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives*

which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site....' (IFA 1997).

2.2 Planning Background

In 1991 the archaeological division of Heritage Lincolnshire (now Archaeological Project Services) and the Cambridge County Council Archaeological Field Unit were commissioned by Engineering Consultancy Services (ECS) on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council to undertake surveys of the archaeological implications of the construction of the Market Deeping bypass. As the route of the bypass extended through Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire, separate briefs outlining the requirements for archaeological evaluation were issued for both counties. In Cambridgeshire, the brief was issued by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Section and in Lincolnshire by the Archaeology Section of Lincolnshire County Council In both cases the work was funded by ECS.

The Lincolnshire survey comprised a desk top assessment drawing together archaeological records held at the County Council SMR, Heritage Lincolnshire and assorted published sources. Cropmarks identified on aerial photographs were sketch plotted and a limited programme of fieldwalking was undertaken (Challands 1992). In Cambridgeshire the County Council Sites and Monuments Record was consulted followed by a rapid fieldwalking survey (Reynolds 1992). Both projects identified areas of high archaeological potential, including several where archaeological deposits were thought to be sealed and protected by layers of clay alluvium. Several settlements sites believed to date to the Iron Age and Roman periods were identified in Cambridgeshire and in Lincolnshire a possible barrow cemetery and assorted cropmark features thought to be of archaeological origin were plotted from aerial photographs. The fieldwalking survey in Lincolnshire was largely negative.

The results of the desktop surveys prompted both County Archaeological Officers to request additional archaeological investigations. The brief for archaeological evaluation in Lincolnshire requested a programme of geophysical survey and fieldwalking followed by a scheme of trenching. A specification detailing the methodology and programme of works was written by Archaeological Project Services who were contracted by ECS to undertake the work between January and March of 1996.

Archaeological Project Services (APS) was contracted by ECS to write a specification for the Cambridgeshire evaluation, incorporating advice of the Cambridge County Council archaeological development control officer. This evaluation focussed on the accurate plotting of aerial photographs along a corridor centred on the route of the bypass, followed by a programme of trial trenching.

The results of both evaluations provided the necessary information for archaeological development control officers in both counties to implement a mitigation strategy for the archaeological deposits likely to be affected by construction of the bypass.

A total of 10 sites were earmarked for full or partial excavation in advance of the construction of the road (Fig. 3). Due to the need for a standard brief, and because the work covered two counties it was agreed that a single brief be written specifically for this route and covering both counties. The brief was prepared by Archaeological Project Services and approved by the development

control officers of both counties (Appendix 1). Individual specifications for each site were written by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with the appropriate brief (Appendix 2). All of the work was undertaken by Archaeological Project Services and funded by ECS.

2.3 Topography, Geology and Soils

The course of the bypass extends over a distance of approximately 8km, connecting the A15 and A16 which are the major traffic routes passing through Market Deeping from north to south and west to east respectively (Fig 2). To the south of Market Deeping the route extends northwest from the Northborough roundabout and joins the A16 just west of the town. The road then skirts the western fringes of the town and links with the A15 north of Market Deeping before heading eastwards for approximately 4km where it again meets the A16.

This route crosses the open and generally level landscape of the Lower Welland valley and fen edge, at the interface of these two landscape zones. Approximately 5km to the west is the Jurassic Limestone ridge which dips gently from west to east and runs north to south through much of Lincolnshire. The ridge fringes the low lying areas to the east where the principal geological deposits are Oxford Clays, Kellaways sands and clays or Cornbrash (Burton 1981). Within the low lying floodplain of the river Welland, gravel terrace deposits overly the clays and also extend onto the adjacent fen edge as a broad, fan shaped deposit. These gravels coalesce with the 'skirtlands', formerly peat covered gravels, which fringe the fen edge.

Within the floodplain of the river, freshwater alluvial clays overly the gravels in many areas. The river and fen edge gravels are typical of deposits formed in glacial outwash conditions. The alluvial clays relate to flood conditions prevailing during the late prehistoric and early Roman periods.

Current landuse is dedicated mainly to the production of arable crops although some small areas are under pasture and occasional patches of woodland survive. Evidence of extensive ridge and furrow in the form of cropmarks plotted from aerial photographs or as earthworks suggest that arable farming has a long history in the area.

East of Market Deeping the bypass route extends into the fens, crossing the wide gravel fan formed at the junction of the Welland valley and fen basin.

The soils along the route are described as belonging mainly to the Fladbury 1 Association, predominantly deep clayey alluvial soils comprising the Fladbury (pelo-calcareous alluvial gley soils) and Wyre (pelogleyic brown calcareous alluvial soils) series. Along the Welland soils of the Thames series are rare. Wyre soils occur on levees or on other slightly elevated flood plain sites (Hodge et al. 1984). The route of the road may also touch on an area of Badsey 2 Association, which is mainly composed of fine loamy soils over calcareous gravels.

2.4 Archaeological Setting

The Maxey and Market Deeping areas have a long and distinguished history of archaeological investigation. Some of the earliest was undertaken under the auspices of the Welland Valley Research Committee, formed in response to the findings of the Royal Commission for Historical Monuments. The seminal Royal Commission publication, *'A Matter of Time,'* detailed the results of a national survey of the archaeology of river valley gravels (RCHME 1960). A case study of the Welland gravels formed a major element of this survey, which

aimed to characterise and categorise the various types of cropmark identified on aerial photographs. This work also highlighted the emerging threat to the survival of archaeological deposits on these gravels due to an increase in gravel quarrying during the 1950s and 1960s.

The initial aims of the Welland Valley Research committee were to implement a programme of targeted excavation to investigate the various categories of cropmarks. Inevitably these aims were subsumed by the need to excavate sites threatened by mineral extraction. Large open area excavations in the area were largely undertaken as part of the Welland Valley Project in the 1970s and 1980s. These included the excavations undertaken immediately to the south of the modern village of Maxey where a remarkable prehistoric ceremonial monument complex including an earlier Neolithic Cursus and mortuary enclosure, a later Neolithic Henge monument and a number of possible Iron Age square barrows was recorded. These excavations also identified the remains of a Middle Iron Age and Romano British settlement (Pryor *et al* 1985)

An Early Iron Age and Romano British settlement site was also recorded during excavations at Plants Farm to the west of Maxey village (Gurney, *et al* 1993a). Excavations undertaken at Tallington in Lincolnshire recorded a poorly preserved Early Iron Age site (Gurney, *et al* 1993b). A Bronze Age round barrow cemetery in Tallington was investigated in 1964 (May 1976, 68-71).

More recently large scale excavations have been undertaken at West Deeping some 3km to the west where extensive 'co-axial' Late Bronze Age field systems were identified. At Welland Bank Quarry, some 4km southwest of Market Deeping, Archaeological Project Services has undertaken excavations on a 16ha site containing a Late Bronze Age settlement and associated field system. At least eight structures were recorded, mostly post built round houses although two examples of rectangular buildings were recorded (Dymond *et al* 2000).

Extensive fieldwalking surveys of the fens in Lincolnshire were undertaken during the Fenland Project (Hayes and Lane, 1992). The plotting of relict stream channels and surface soil types during the project enabled broad environmental changes to be related to changing settlement patterns The survey identified a number of prehistoric and Roman sites on the fen edge east of Market Deeping, including several which lie close to the bypass route.

Following the fieldwalking phase of the Fenland Project a number of sites were targeted for evaluation as part of the Fenland Management Project. In the Deepings area these included the excavation of a multi-phase Bronze Age burial mound in Deeping St. Nicholas (French 1994), a rich Iron Age and Roman site just 3km east of Market Deeping (Lane, 2000b) and an Early Bronze Age and Middle Iron Age settlement in Deeping St.James (Trimble 2000).

2.5 General Methodology

Initially it was intended to investigate 10 separate sites in advance of the construction of the Market Deeping bypass (Fig 3). Individual specifications were written for each site by APS and approved by the appropriate archaeological authority within the county councils of Cambridgeshire or Lincolnshire County Council. Apart from the Car Dyke watercourse watching brief (DCD97), site codes for each site were pre-fixed with 'DB', ('Deeping Bypass') followed by a third letter which was specific to a particular site. For example 'DBF97'

stands for Deeping Bypass, Fox Cover Farm.

All excavations were undertaken between the months of April and November 1997. In addition to the excavations, an archaeological watching brief was maintained throughout the stripping of all overburden within the road line and also during the excavation of the roadside ditches. Within this report each individual site will be described separately, followed by a generalised discussion.

Prior to any excavation all features were plotted using a Total Station EDM attached to a datalogger using NSS software. The raw data was downloaded to a PC and a digital plan compiled using NSS survpro software. All points were located onto the Ordnance Survey National grid to an accuracy of ± 50mm.

Recording followed standard Archaeological Project Services practise, using a system based on the Museum of London Archaeology Service Site Manual (MOLAS 1994). Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description (Appendix 3). Excavated features were hand planned at 1:20 scale and sections drawn at 1:10.

2.6 List of sites investigated during the Deeping Bypass project and nature of intervention

Site Number	Site Name and County	Site Code	Grid Ref	Nature of Intervention
1	Deeping Bypass Headland (Cambs)	DBH97	TF14210856	Single 50m x 2m trench to investigate deposits underneath medieval headland.
2	Deeping Bypass Enclosure A (Cambs)	DBEA97	TF14170863	Excavation of a 50m x 30m area to investigate a possible enclosure plotted from aerial photographs.
3	Deeping Bypass Enclosure B (Cambs)	DBEB97	TF14060870	Excavation of a 50m x 30m area to investigate a possible enclosure plotted from aerial photographs
4	Deeping Bypass Fox Cover Farm (Cambs)	DBF97	TF13800889	Surface planning and limited excavation of a 200m x 30m area over a multi-period Iron Age, Roman and Saxon site.
5	Deeping Bypass Maxey (Cambs)	DBM97	TF13700920	Excavation of three 5m x 5m trenches over selected cropmarks plotted from aerial photographs.
6	Deeping Bypass Welland South (Cambs)	DBS97	TF13450942	Excavation of 30m x 20m area to investigate gullies and post hole groups discovered during evaluation.
7	Deeping Bypass Deeping West (Lincs)	DBD97	TF12751037	Excavation of a corner of an Iron Age and Roman enclosure plotted from aerial photographs. Parallel linear ditches truncated by the enclosure may be of Late Bronze Age date.
8	Deeping Bypass Barrows (Lincs)	DBB97	TF13201124	Excavation of part of a Bronze Age ring ditch over an approximately 30m x 35m area. A second ring ditch identified during the evaluation and on aerial photographs was not found during the excavation phase.

9	Car Dyke Watercourse (Lincs)	DCD97	~~TF13561137~~ TF13591140	Watching brief undertaken on ancient watercourse known as the Car Dyke. No remains were visible during topsoil stripping or excavation of roadside ditches.
10	Deeping Common Industrial Site (Lincs)	DBI97	TF15811251	Proposed excavation of possible Late Neolithic Industrial Site discovered during evaluation. Only limited insubstantial remains were uncovered during the excavation phase and it is likely that original evaluation trench was incorrectly surveyed and site is located just to the north of bypass route.
No number	Deeping Bypass Compound (Lincs)	DBC97	TF13261120	Watching brief undertaken during topsoil stripping in advance of construction of contractors compound
No number	Deeping Bypass Watching Brief (Lincs)	DBW97	NA	Watching brief undertaken during the stripping of topsoil and the excavation of roadside ditches along the entire bypass route

2.7 Chronology of periods used throughout the text

Neolithic	Early	4500-3500 BC
	Late	3500-2300 BC
Bronze Age	Early	2300-1500 BC
	Middle	1500-1100 BC
	Late/Early Iron Age	1100-600BC
Iron Age	Early	600-400 BC
	Middle	400-50 BC
	Late	50BC-43AD
Roman		43AD-410AD
Saxon	Early	450-750 AD
	Middle	750-950 AD
	Late	950-1066 AD

3 THE EXCAVATIONS

3.1 Site 1 DBH97 Deeping Bypass Headland

3.1.1 Summary of Objectives

The specific aims of excavations undertaken at this site are set out in a specification which appears as Appendix 2. The site is located towards the south end of the bypass route, 350m northeast of the Northborough traffic roundabout.

Inspection of the route in advance of construction revealed several prominent headlands within ridge and furrow earthworks. As the areas beneath headlands are unlikely to have undergone truncation by medieval or recent agriculture, preservation of underlying deposits is often better than in adjacent areas. As a result a trench was cut through a prominent headland extending across the bypass route as this offered the best hope of retrieving a well preserved palaeosol soil profile to enable detailed study of soil formation in the area.

3.1.2 Specific Methodology

The trench located across the headland measured 50m x 2m and was excavated by mechanical excavator to the depth of the underlying gravel deposits at 6.86m OD.

3.1.3 Results

Phase 1 Natural Deposits

The earliest deposits recorded at site DBH were natural sands and gravels (013) recorded in the base of the trench. A 0.10m thick layer recorded above the gravel represents a palaeosol or buried soil (012) (Fig 7) (Plate 1). Dr Charly French, the project micromorphologist, concluded that the palaeosol had undergone considerable truncation and degradation, probably due to

the erosive action of the later floodwaters. (Appendix 12)

Phase 2 Middle Neolithic Deposits

At the north end of the trench a 0.9m diameter and 0.3m deep pit or post hole (001) was cut through the natural gravels, (Fig 8, Section 5) (Plate 2). The secondary fill of the pit contained several sherds of pottery from four separate vessels, all apparently of the Ebbsfleet sub-style of Peterborough ware, suggesting a date in the range 3400-2900 cal BC (Peterson, Appendix 5).

Phase 2 Undated

No dateable artefacts were recovered from two ditches recorded at the south end of the trench (Fig 7). The stratigraphic relationship between these features is uncertain although both features were sealed beneath alluvium, suggesting a pre-Roman date. Ditch (009) was 1.6m wide, 0.3m deep and aligned southwest to northeast (Fig 8, Section 2). In plan there was some suggestion that (009) was truncated by (005) an adjacent southeast to northwest aligned 0.7m wide and 0.3m deep ditch (Fig 8, Section 4). It is likely that ditch (005) produced the north-south aligned linear cropmark recorded in this area (Fig. 6).

Phase 3 Alluvial Deposits

All deposits in the trench were overlain by a layer of silty clay alluvium (011). Underneath the crest of the headland this deposit was 0.20m thick but was virtually absent at the ends of the trench (Fig 7).

3.1.4 Discussion

Little can be said in relation to the original aims and objectives of this excavations as in the opinion of the project micromorphologist, the buried soils underlying the headland had been truncated or transformed by later floodwaters and were not worth detailed study.

However, the unexpected discovery of a pit containing Peterborough ware pottery is of some significance, given the location of the site within a prehistoric landscape dominated by ceremonial and funerary monuments. The burial of pottery and other artefacts within small pits formed an important element of the ritualised activities within the nearby Etton causewayed enclosure (Pryor, 1998).

Unfortunately the small area investigated at Site 2 provides little information on setting, association and context for the Neolithic pit. Either of the undated ditches may have been contemporary and formed a surrounding enclosure. As topsoil stripping in this area did not penetrate deep enough to expose archaeological deposits this could not be determined during the watching brief.

At Site 3, some 150m to the northwest, cremated bone and charred hazelnut shells were recovered from similar pits containing earlier Neolithic Mildenhall type pottery.

It would seem that a connection with ritual activities cannot be ruled out for the deposits recorded at Site 3, given its location close to the Etton enclosure and other ceremonial monuments, and for the pit at Site 1.

3.2 Site 2 DBEA97 Deeping Bypass Enclosure A

3.2.1 Summary of objectives

The specific aims and objectives for this excavation can be found in the specification which appears in Appendix 2. The aerial

photographic survey undertaken as part of the evaluation of the route showed cropmarks in this area which possibly represent a ditched enclosure (Fig 5 and 6). The possible enclosure appears to have also been identified as lying adjacent to 'channel belt one' in an earlier study of palaeochannels in the Welland valley (French *et al* 1992).

Trenching undertaken during the evaluation recovered pottery of Late Bronze Age date from ditches thought to be part of this enclosure. Remains of this date are not well documented nationally but there is some local detail, particularly from the investigation of field systems at sites such as Fengate on the fen edge east of Peterborough (Pryor, 1980) and at West Deeping some 3km to the east. Field systems and substantial settlement remains of the period have been identified at Welland Quarry, also in the Welland valley, located 4km southeast of Site 3 (Dymond *et al* 2000).

The main aim of the excavation was to explore the ditches and interior of the possible enclosure to recover environmental indicators and evidence of settlement and other activities.

3.2.2 Specific Methodology

A 30m x 40m area was stripped of topsoil and alluvium to the level of the underlying natural geology. Also, a 60m long and 6.5m wide trench linking site DBEA with neighbouring site DBEB was cut along the central line of the bypass route.

3.2.3 Results

Phase 1 Natural Deposits.

The earliest deposits recorded at the site were layers of sandy gravel natural (070)

The west edge of a palaeochannel (020) exposed at the east limit of excavation is probably part of the system of watercourses identified on the aerial photographic assessment and previous surveys (Fig. 9) (Fig 10 Section 1) (Plate 6). In particular this palaeochannel appears to fall within alluvial belt number one of the four identified in the area during the Etton Landscape study (French *et al* 1992).

The primary fill (068) of the palaeochannel was a dark grey organic clay deposit recorded only in the section cut at the north end of the feature (Fig 10, Section 30). Assessment of the pollen from a monolith taken through the channel sediments suggests an environment supporting mixed woodland with ferns dominated by *Alder* (Wiltshire, Appendix 16). The presence of charcoal in the sediments suggests a human presence in the vicinity, although no artefacts were recovered from the deposit. The secondary fills of the channel comprised silty clay alluvial sediments. Buried soil at the site survived only in patches.

Phase 2 Late Bronze Age (1100-600 BC)

Although a number of pits and post holes were recorded within the cleared area, only one contained any dating evidence. However, it was established that these features probably did probably fall within a ditched enclosure (Fig 9).

The north ditch (038) of this possible enclosure was the most substantial. Several sherds of Late Bronze Age pottery were recovered during the excavation of a section across this southwest to northeast aligned ditch during the evaluation. The cut of the feature was 1.8m wide and 0.7m deep ditch (Fig 10, Section 65).
During the excavation a section was dug through the ditch to investigate its

relationship with a southeast-northwest aligned linear ditch (036) recorded adjacent to the west limit of excavation. No pottery or any form of dating evidence was recovered.

The line of this ditch falls 5m southwest of the cropmark thought to represent the north side of a ditched enclosure (Fig 6). However, its alignment matches that of the cropmark and it is reasonable to assume that the two represent the same feature. The cropmark turns to the southeast just beyond the west limit of the enclosure and extends on this alignment approximately 20m.

Linear cropmarks thought to form part of the ditched enclosure are possibly represented by ditches recorded adjacent to the southern limit of excavation. Possibly the earliest of these is (048), a southeast to northwest aligned gully recorded towards the southeast corner of the excavation, cut through the upper alluvial fills of palaeochannel (020) (Fig 12, Section 27). The fills of the gully were almost identical to the clays filling the channel and therefore defining the sides and edges of the feature was problematical. However, as the feature extended beyond the limits of the palaeochannel it was possible to trace its course against natural gravels. No artefacts were recovered from the fill of this ditch.

Ditch (048) was truncated by cut (040) (Fig 12, Section 25), the same feature as (017) recorded approximately 6m to the north (Plate 3). These may form the corner of the enclosure plotted on aerial photographs, with (048) possibly representing a previous phase. Twenty three sherds of pottery of late Bronze Age date were recovered from the fills of gully (017). It should be emphasised that tracing the line of these features against the clays filling the top of the palaeochannel was extremely difficult and linking features between sections is very tentative. However, ephemeral features were recorded in Sections 1 and 30 which could represent gully (017) (Fig 10). If so it is possible to extend the line of (017) close to the junction of (038) with the palaeochannel. A section excavated to explore the stratigraphic relationship between (038) and the palaeochannel, proved inconclusive. However, it seems likely that the linear features identified during the excavation do equate to those identified as cropmarks on aerial photographs. The date of the pottery from (017) certainly matches the material recovered from (038) during the evaluation.

Within the area defined by these ditches and gullies a number of pits (Plate 4) and post holes were recorded. Most of these were very shallow and none exceeded a depth of 0.20m (Fig 11, Sections 2-6, 9, 10, 12-14). No closely dateable artefacts were recovered from the fills of any of these features located within the area enclosed by the ditches. However, pit (077) cuts through ditch/gully (017) and contained sherds of Late Bronze Age pottery (Fig 12, Section 29). Although the pottery is possibly residual material derived from the ditch, this single stratigraphic relationship does suggest that some of the discrete features could post-date the enclosure ditches.

Phase 2 Alluvial Deposits

The entire area of investigation was covered by 0.20 - 0.30m of alluvium (002), probably deposited in the post-Roman period.

Phase 3 Medieval Deposits

Two parallel ditches (036) and (062) cut through the alluvium share the same alignment as ridge and furrow earthworks identified on aerial photographs. However, the sides of both ditches are too steep for the features to represent medieval plough furrows and it can only be assumed that they represent land division or drainage ditches.

Undated Deposits

Within the trench linking sites DBEA with DBEB two undated linear ditches were recorded.

The first (082) was aligned west to east and located 20m northwest of the north limit of the main DBEA excavation (Fig 12, Section 33). The tertiary fill of the feature was very similar to the overlying alluvium and it seems reasonable to assume that the ditch pre-dates the deposition of this layer. No finds were recovered from any of the fills of this ditch. The second ditch (033) (Plate 5) was recorded five metres to the north of (082) and followed a southwest-west to northeast-east alignment, very similar to that of (038) and indicating the possibility of a Bronze Age date (Fig 10, Section 16) (Plate 5).

Both ditches were very shallow and this may explain why neither were identified as crop marks on aerial photographs.

3.2.4 Discussion

Although the palaeochannel identified at the site is a natural feature, it does have some archaeological significance. Previous research in this area has begun to establish a chronology for the evolution of channel systems for this part of the Welland floodplain (French *et al.* 1992). The palaeochannel identified at DBEA would appear to fall within belt one of the channel belts discussed by French, who suggested that the channel might be contemporary with the enclosure identified then as a cropmark. However, the bypass investigations suggest that the channel predates the enclosure, although the site does seem strategically sited on a 'gravel island'.

Assessment of the pollen from the primary fills of the channel indicates mixed woodland with extensive clearings. The absence of *Tilia* pollen might suggest a date in the later part of the Bronze Age as this tree appears to have dominated much of south east England and the east Midlands during the earlier part of the period (Wiltshire, Appendix 16)

It is noticeable that within the DBEA enclosure the post holes are distributed at the north and centre and the pits to the south. This discrete distribution of different types of features could reflect zoning of activities within the enclosure. It is possible that five of the post holes near the centre of the site form the remains of the west side of a sub-circular structure, possibly a roundhouse. The pits may then relate to particular activities undertaken to the south of a building. Little evidence was recovered of how these pits were used. Only a single seed of indeterminate species was recovered from an environmental sample taken from pit (006) (Fryer, Appendix 15). However, small fragments of charcoal were moderately abundant within the sample and this indicates human activity in the vicinity.

Palmer (1996) suggests that the ditched enclosures identified as part of the aerial photographic assessment are located on gravel spurs or tongues of dryer land within the flood plain. This was supported by the results of the evaluation, which had shown these areas to be slightly elevated.

3.3 Site 3
DBEB97
Deeping Bypass Enclosure B

3.3.1 Summary of Objectives

The specific aims for this site appear in Appendix 2. Evaluation trenches dug in this area revealed ephemeral features of probable prehistoric date. A single sherd of pottery from an Early Bronze Age Collared Urn vessel was recovered from the buried soil in

this area.

Aerial photographs of this area of the route show a three sided 55m x 40m sub-rectangular cropmark which was thought to probably represent a ditched enclosure (Fig. 6). The south end of the enclosure was targeted with trenches during the evaluation but no ditches were recorded.

The main aim of the evaluation was to investigate the possible enclosure identified on aerial photographs and to recover samples from the buried soil/occupation layer for analysis

3.3.2 Specific Methodology

A 50m x 30m area of topsoil and alluvium was removed by machine to the surface of any surviving archaeological deposits. In the case of DBEB this included a charcoal enriched buried soil which had been identified during the evaluation.

As prehistoric pottery had been recovered from this buried soil during the evaluation, a programme of sampling was implemented for the excavation phase. This comprised excavation by hand of 1m squares at 1m intervals on a chequerboard grid.

3.3.3 Results

Phase 1 Natural Deposits

Coarse sands and gravels (022) form the underlying natural deposits in this area of the site. As anticipated a buried soil (023) (Fig 13) was recorded towards the south end of excavation. This charcoal rich palaeosol extended for some 30m to the southwest into the connecting trench with DBEA. Several sherds of pottery thought to date to the earlier part of the Neolithic period were recovered during the excavation of the 1m sample squares through the buried soil. The pottery probably dates to within the approximate date range of 3750 - 3100 cal BC (Peterson and Roberts, Appendix 5). Environmental samples were taken from each excavated square and as would be expected fragmented charcoal was recovered during processing. No remains of economic plants were recovered.

Phase 2 Earlier Neolithic

Mildenhall type pottery of earlier Neolithic date was also recovered from the fills of two pits (005) (Plate 7) and (011) located towards the southeast corner of the area of investigation (Fig 14, Sections 1 and 6). Both pits were well defined and sub-circular in shape. However, pit (005) was 0.8m long and 0.6m wide, much larger than (011) which measured only 0.50m x 0.4m. Also, pit (011) was only 0.10m deep, 0.20m less than (005). The deeper pit (005) had straight, near vertical sides suggesting rapid infilling. Pit (011) was too shallow to determine the shape of the sides.

Processing of environmental samples from the pits yielded charcoal, hazelnut shells and cremated bone. A 'black porous 'cokey' material and a single seed of possible *Malus/Pyrus* (apple/pear) were also recovered from a sample taken from the upper fill (004) of pit (005) (Fryer, Appendix 15).

Finds were absent from the fills of a group of four post holes (015), (017), (019) and (021) located 15m northwest of these two pits. (Fig 14, Sections 2, 3 and 4. The fill (029) of a 0.62m diameter and 0.2m deep pit (028) pit located towards the north end of the site contained charcoal flecks but no finds (Fig 14, Section 10).

Phase 3 Alluvium

As with DBH and DBEA97, the entire area of excavation was sealed by 0.20 - 0.3m of alluvium. No doubt the survival of some of the early prehistoric features on DBEB is due to the protection of this clay layer.

Phase 4 Medieval

A ditch recorded adjacent to the east limit of excavation aligns with (006) recorded in area DBEA and is likely to represent medieval/post medieval land division. A shallow 5m wide linear feature recorded at the west limit of excavation was recorded on the same alignment as the ditches described above and no doubt is a remnant of the ridge and furrow known to have once covered this area. A copper-alloy strap end of a type common in the 13th and 14th centuries (E. Crowfoot, Appendix 11) was recovered from the fill of the furrow. The alignment of the furrow matches that of the ridge and furrow plotted on aerial photographs.

3.3.4 Discussion

Ditches which might represent the enclosure shaped cropmark identified in this area on aerial photographs were not identified. Given that the site lies under a thin covering of alluvium it is difficult to account for the absence of features which might represent this cropmark. Their absence cannot simply be ascribed to the effects of medieval and modern ploughing.

Although too small for positive identification, it seems reasonable to suggest that the cremated bone from (005) and (011) might be human, given the association with Neolithic pottery, charcoal, the 'black cokey' material and the context of burial in the pits themselves. The charring of the hazelnuts suggests that these may have been placed on the pyre along with the body for cremation. The 'black cokey' material recovered from environmental samples presumably represents fire ash slag scraped up with the cremated bone from the base of the pyre.

The nearby charcoal rich buried soil was noticeably darker than the palaeosols recorded elsewhere along the bypass and it is possible that this area is associated with the cremation pits. However, the absence of any evidence for *in-site* burning suggests that the DBEB site was not located in the immediate vicinity of any pyre area. Processing of the samples taken from the buried soil recovered charcoal but no charred remains of economic plants. This suggests that although burning of some kind was happening at the site, there is no evidence for this occurring in a domestic context.

Although only offered as a tentative interpretation, it is possible that the group of four post holes located northwest of the pits once contained markers denoting the presence of cremation burials. Two very shallow sub-circular features (032) and (034) located 2.5m southwest of the cremation pits could also represent post holes which preformed a similar function. A shallow oval pit (008) possibly truncated by one of these post holes also contained no finds but may have been related to the funerary features in some way.

Although slightly unusual, the association of Mildenhall pottery with calcined bone is not unknown, particularly in East Anglia (Peterson and Roberts Appendix 5). The backfilling of small pits with pottery, bone and other finds is thought to have formed an important element of ritualised and funerary activities within the nearby Neolithic causewayed enclosure at Etton (Pryor 1998). The evidence from Site 2 suggests that the activities associated with these kinds

of features was not all focussed within the more easily identifiable ceremonial monuments.

3.4 Site 4 DBF97 Deeping Bypass Fox Cover Farm

As the excavations at Site 4 (DBF97) were by far the most substantial of those undertaken along the bypass route it was thought appropriate to include sections on archaeological background, local topography, methodology and post-excavation methodology specific to the site.

3.4.1 Specific Archaeological Background

The results of the desktop assessment suggested that the area around Fox Cover Farm was likely to be rich in archaeological remains (Reynolds 1992) and this was confirmed during the evaluation undertaken by Archaeological Project Services in 1997 (Trimble G, 1997 and Trimble D, 1999b).

The aerial photographic assessment of the bypass route in Cambridgeshire identified cropmarks thought to represent enclosures, pits and hut circles (Fig 15). During the evaluation some of these features were targeted with trenches and the interpretations of the aerial photographic assessment were largely confirmed. Animal bone, pottery and fired clay weights were recovered from a number of gullies, ditches, post holes and pits. Although most of the pottery recovered during the evaluation dated to the Middle to Late Iron Age, a number of sherds were from the Romano-British and Saxon periods. This suggested that the site was occupied over a considerable period of time, perhaps as much as a millennium. The discovery of a crouched adult inhumation within one of the trenches suggested, from the burial style, the possible presence of an Early Bronze Age cemetery at the site. This was supported by the identification of ring ditches during the aerial photographic survey. Deposits of gravel overlying buried soils at the site were thought to possibly represent ploughed down round barrows, a reasonable hypothesis in the light of the discovery of the crouched burial and the possible ring ditches visible on aerial photographs.

3.4.2 Specific Local Topography

The site lies on a low gravel ridge (Plate 8) located on the northeast edge of Maxey Island, an area rich in archaeological deposits from a wide range of archaeological periods (Fig 4). The location of the ridge, and Maxey island as a whole, within the low lying floodplain of the river Welland may have had a significant influence the selection of funerary, ceremonial and settlement sites. Neolithic Henge and Cursus monuments, Bronze Age barrow cemeteries and Middle Iron Age and Saxon settlements have been recorded approximately 1km to the east of Fox Cover Farm in the area of the present day village of Maxey (Pryor *et al* 1985). The ridge location of the site resulted in the archaeology being directly below the topsoil, rather than sealed by alluvium.

3.4.3 Planning Background and Mitigation

Since Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 was issued in 1990, many local authorities have sought to preserve important archaeological deposits *in-situ* where possible. Archaeological remains are seen as a fragile, non-renewable resource which should be preserved for research by future generations to the maximum extent possible. Preservation by record, i.e. by excavation, should be used as a last resort. At an early stage it was realised that the complex and rich deposits identified at the Fox Cover Farm may require a mitigation strategy

which would to the largest extent possible, preserve archaeological remains *in-situ*.

The mitigation options available entailed either the preservation of the site beneath an elevated made up road surface or full archaeological recording of the surviving deposits. It was decided to leave the final decision on mitigation until the site was stripped of topsoil immediately prior to construction of the bypass in order to more accurately assess the archaeological deposits. In the event the archaeological remains uncovered at the site were considered of sufficient density and quality to warrant preservation. However, the necessity for roadside drainage ditches meant the excavation of two approximately 5m wide strips located along the line of the proposed roadside ditches. The remaining archaeological deposits located on the main carriageway between these two areas was surface recorded then covered with a geotextile and 0.5m of road makeup

3.4.4 Summary of Objectives

Two separate specifications were issued for the archaeological work undertaken at Site 4(Appendix 2). The primary aim of the project as stated in the first specification was to undertake basic surface recording of archaeological deposits in advance of their preservation beneath an elevated road surface.

The second specification related to the excavations undertaken within the lines of the two roadside ditches where archaeological deposits were to be unavoidably destroyed. The overall aim was to excavate and fully record the archaeological remains within the line of the roadside ditches.

3.4.5 Specific Methodology

As on all of the bypass sites stripping of topsoil was undertaken by a 360 tracked machine using a toothless ditching bucket. Following removal of the topsoil all exposed surfaces were hoe cleaned. In conditions of extreme dryness it was possible to brush loose material from the surface of the site and adequately define archaeological features.

Following cleaning of the site all features were planned using a Total Station EDM (Fig 16). Also, all artefacts exposed at the level of the buried soil were three dimensionally recorded using the same technique.

For feature sampling purposes the site was considered to be the area occupied by the two strips and not that of the entire exposed area. Therefore, a single section cut across a ditch running across both strips would be considered representative of both areas. This strategy was flexible and could be altered should crucial stratigraphic relationships need investigation. The only archaeological deposits excavated within the line of the carriageway were a number of skeletons buried in shallow graves just beneath the topsoil. These were thought to be too fragile to survive the rigours of burial underneath the road.

To maintain a through route for bypass construction traffic an approximately 5m wide strip of topsoil was left intact, more or less along the line of one of the southern roadside ditch. This meant that excavation of the southern area was undertaken after the line of the main carriageway was buried and it was not possible to relate visibly the features within the excavated area to those within the area of the road.

Within the areas to be excavated, the majority of features recorded after the initial cleaning of the site were planned and

sectioned. Most features were cut into a thin buried soil layer which was removed in 5m x 2.5m blocks along both areas of excavation. After the removal of this buried soil the exposed surface was hand cleaned and all newly exposed features planned and sectioned.

3.4.6 Post Excavation Methodology

Due to the complexity of the stratigraphy of the Fox Covert site, contexts were arranged into sub-groups and groups. In particular, it was thought that this would speed up the analysis of the large pottery and animal bone collections retrieved from the site. The sub-groups relate to particular stratigraphic units such as a cut and its primary or secondary fills. A group can relate to a whole feature or layer, depending on how completely the stratigraphic sequence is understood. This system allows the rapid association of artefacts to particular layers or features. For example, some features were excavated in squares or spits. During post-excavation these individual contexts were grouped together into associated stratigraphic units allowing artefacts from these features to be studied in normal stratigraphic units. Within the report text the features will be referred to within their group numbers.

3.4.7 Phasing

Recognition of discrete stratigraphic phases over the entire site was not possible within such restricted areas of excavation. However, definition of stratigraphic phases which relate to re-organisation or re-settlement may not have been recognisable even with more extensive excavation. Many of the ditches excavated at the site appear to have existed as boundaries defining enclosures or larger parcels throughout the life of the settlement. Few significant changes in alignment of boundary features were apparent and many recuts of ditches and gullies were recorded. As displayed in the archaeological record, change at Fox Cover Farm was appears to have been more 'organic' and incremental than wholesale. In some cases the earliest cuts of a ditch were dateable to the Early Iron Age while the latest phases contained Roman pottery. It seems that if new or different areas of land were marked out, alignments tended to follow the pre-existing linear features.

However, although the general layout of the settlement remained consistent, this did not apply to internal arrangement of features within or outside of enclosures. It was possible to recover closely dated groups of pottery from pits and hollows undisturbed by later features. For the reasons outlined above the phases discussed in the report in the main relate to broad period divisions.

A related, stratigraphic difficulty, was posed by the covering of buried soil/occupation deposit recorded over much of the site. By definition a soil or occupation deposit must have existed at the site throughout the time it was occupied. As this layer would have always been exposed, artefacts from all periods would inevitably be incorporated into the soil. Therefore the artefacts collected from this layer have to be ascribed to all periods. This can lead to large quantities of material effectively being treated as unphased.

The buried soil also posed direct stratigraphic difficulties. Some features were visible at the surface of the buried soil while others only became visible after the deposit was removed. However, this does not necessarily relate to the stratigraphy sequence as the buried soil must have been present when all features at the site were excavated. It could be that visibility in the palaeosol is simply determined by the nature of feature fills.

3.4.8 Results

3.4.8.1 Neolithic

Evidence for Neolithic activity at the site is limited to a small collection of flints recovered from buried soils and from a number of much later feature fills (Pryor, Appendix 4).

A number of the flints were recovered from a buried soil sealed beneath an Early Iron Age gravel bank (Group 53) located alongside an enclosure ditch dating from the Iron Age and Roman periods (Fig 18) (Plate 9). The buried soil also contained a sherd of late Bronze Age pottery. This mixing of artefacts would not be unexpected within a buried soil.

The flints recovered in this buried soil could reflect activity on the site at any time before the Early Iron Age but as a whole the collection appears to date mainly to the Neolithic period rather than the Bronze Age. Pryor identified types resembling material recovered at the nearby earlier Causewayed Enclosure at Etton.

Among the lithics there are Bronze Age forms but there is a significant residue of material likely to be of Neolithic date. The assemblage would appear to be primarily derived from domestic contexts of various dates. However, there were no features identified as Neolithic in date.

A single sherd of Beaker type pottery was recovered from the surface of an unexcavated layer located towards the north end of the site immediately adjacent to the Middle Iron Age ditch described in Group 95.

3.4.8.2 Early Bronze Age

The evaluation identified an adult crouched inhumation burial of probable Early Bronze Age date. No closely dateable artefacts had been recovered in the grave but the style of burial suggested an Early Bronze Age date (Trimble 1999b). A date in the early part of the site's history was supported by the fill of the grave, which was light in colour and devoid of any later prehistoric artefacts. This is in stark contrast to the later deposits at the site which were rich in residual pottery, bone, charcoal and other domestic refuse.

The burial was located adjacent to a curved feature which was probably part of a small ring gully identified as a crop mark. An association between the grave and putative ring ditch cannot be ruled out even though the latter contained much later pottery dating to the Iron Age. This would not be surprising as the ring gully would have been left open to silt up rather than being backfilled. However, both features fell within the line of the main carriageway of the road and therefore were not recorded during the excavation.

There was some concern that identification of burials of this date would be difficult as the fills of the grave cuts might closely resemble the underlying natural deposits. This can be discounted for the areas within the lines of the roadside ditches where monitoring of these areas during ditch construction did not identify any additional burials.

There is further evidence of Early Bronze Age activity at the site in the form of pottery and flints, although most of these are residual within later features. Two sherds from a Collared Urn are dateable to the Early Bronze Age and it is possible that other early prehistoric pottery from the site is of similar date (Peterson and Roberts Appendix 5).

Although no features definitely dated to the

Bronze Age were recorded, this does not rule out their presence elsewhere on the site. Also, settlement deposits from the Early Bronze Age may have been be widely scattered and ephemeral in character. Later Iron Age, Roman and Saxon activity may also have severely truncated some earlier features.

3.4.8.3 Late Bronze Age

Evidence for Late Bronze Age activity is limited to a single sherd of pottery recovered from the buried soil beneath the Early Iron Age gravel bank described in Group 52 (Fig 18). The Late Bronze Age sherd indicates that this area of the site was exposed until the Early Iron Age when the first of a sequence of ditches defining the north ditch of an enclosure was excavated.

3.4.8.4 Early Iron Age

Intensive occupation of the site began in the Early Iron Age, and appears to have persisted until the close of the Roman period.

Features dated to the Iron Age period are listed below.

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Enclosure 1 (Figs 17 and 18)

Ditch Group 21 and Associated Pit Group 104, Ditch Group 62, Ditch Groups 59 and 49 and Gravel bank Group 53.

By combining the results of the initial surface plan of the entire site and the subsequent excavations within the line of the roadside ditches, a possible ditched enclosure was identified which appears to delimit the focus of the Early Iron Age settlement (Fig 18)

Groups 21 and 104 *Ditch and Associated Pit forming south side of Enclosure 1*

The south side of the enclosure is formed by a 6m length of a west east aligned ditch (Group 21) which extends beyond the west limit of excavation (Fig 19 Sections 50 and 61). A 0.7m deep pit (Group 104) was located adjacent to the terminal of this ditch (Fig 19 Section 51) (Plate 11).

A closely dated group of Early Iron Age pottery sherds was recovered from the fills of the pit. The pottery from the pit was unusual in that the pieces were large in comparison to those from the majority of Early Iron Age features. The pit contained large sherds from four vessels including the near total profile of a round shouldered jar. Pottery from the adjacent ditch terminal falls within a Middle to Late Iron Age date range. This chronological divergence of the pottery from apparently associated features can possibly be explained in terms of site formation processes. If both features were originally excavated more or less contemporaneously, it is likely that the ditch would have been maintained as a boundary long after the Group 21 pit was completely backfilled.

Group 62. *Ditch forming east side of Enclosure 1*

A 2m gap between the pit and a north-south aligned linear ditch (Group 62) may represent an entrance into the south-east corner of Enclosure 1. A section excavated across the north-south ditch 30m north of the putative entrance showed two recuts, both contained within the line of the 1.7m wide and 0.75m deep earliest cut (184) (Fig 19 Section 49). The two recuts (1670) and (171) were both shallower, at 0.55m and 0.3m respectively. Pottery recovered from the ditch and its recuts falls within an Early to Middle Iron Age date range.

The presence of later recuts of the ditch in this section supports an interpretation that Group 104, the southern ditch of the

enclosure, was first established in Early Iron Age and then maintained as a boundary into the middle part of the period. It could be that the single cut recorded in the section across Group 104 is one of the latest phases, the earliest being completely truncated. The difference in the depths between the south and east ditches might be explainable in terms of the local topography. The ditch section recorded in Group 62, defining the east side of the enclosure, is located very near to the crest of the gravel ridge, the highest part of the site. The bases of the ditches were dug to more or less the same level OD, but to different depths according to the local topography.

The position at which the southern terminal of the eastern ditch would have been located lies in the preserved section of the road outside the area of excavation, although the ditch did not extend into the line of the west roadside ditch.

Groups 49 and 59 Iron Age Phases. *Ditch defining north boundary of Enclosure 1.*

Some 35 metres north of the south side of the enclosure, a west east ditch recorded in separate sections as Groups 49 and 59 crossed the site (Plate 6). In terms of location this would appear to be a suitable candidate for defining the north limit of the Enclosure 1. However, the latest phases of this west east ditch were found to date to the Roman period. Nevertheless, there are stratigraphic as well as topographic grounds to suggest that the earliest phases of this ditch relate to Enclosure 1.

The low gravel bank (Group 53) (Plate 9) recorded immediately to the north of the ditch sealed a buried soil (Group 52) which contained only early prehistoric flints and a single sherd of Late Bronze Age pottery. The deposit overlying the gravel bank was rich in Iron Age material and in effect represents the contemporary buried soil. Therefore, the area to the north of the ditch was open until the Late Bronze Age but was sealed by the gravel bank before any Early Iron Age material was deposited. No pottery of any period was recovered from the bank itself, indicating that this was freshly deposited material not derived from earlier ditch fills. It seems likely that the bank, and therefore the earliest phases of the ditch, was formed at an early stage of the site's history.

There are other indications that the earliest of the cuts recorded in the section across the west-east ditch dates to the Early Iron Age (Fig 19, Section 12). The stratigraphically earliest ditch cut (759) is located at the north end of the section and directly adjacent to the gravel bank in Group 53. In Section 12 the buried soil is represented by (749) and the gravel upcast by (738). The deposit (704) overlying (738) is part of the 'occupation layer' distributed over much of the site and which contained abundant Early Iron Age and later material. The only pottery sherds recovered from the fills of ditch (759) date to the Early Iron Age, and although this amounts to only two sherds, the absence of Roman material is probably significant. This pattern is reflected, perhaps more clearly, in the section cut across this ditch on the west side of the site (Group 49) (Fig 19 Section 155) where a clear progression from Iron Age to Roman is apparent. The earliest two cuts, (1502) and (1503), contain fills from which only Early to Middle Iron Age material was recovered. Both of these ditches were approximately 1.0m deep.

If it is accepted that the line of the gravel bank and adjacent west east ditch mark the north side of the Iron Age enclosure, an area measuring 40m from north to south and at least 34m east to west would be defined.

Structure 1. Ring Gully 81, Hearth 74, Floor 76, Pit Group 75, Post Hole Groups 79 and 57. (Figs 18 and 20).

Structure 1 was located within Enclosure 1 at the west limit of excavation and within the line of the west roadside ditch (Plates 10, 13 and 14). Therefore, excavation of an area of this structure was possible. The structure was defined by a ring gully (Group 81), a central hearth (Group 74), a floor surface (Group 76) and possibly by a number of post holes.

Group 81 *The Ring Gully*

Just under 50% of the 11.3m diameter ring was located inside the line of the line of the roadside ditch and available for detailed investigation.

The west side of the ring gully defined against the buried soil/occupation layer and was difficult to distinguish in places. Much of the east side was recorded in plan only, but was clearly defined against the underlying natural gravels. This area lies close to the crest of the natural gravel ridge on which the site is located and it is possible that modern ploughing has truncated the buried soil on the east side of the ring gully. Alternatively the deposit may have been intentionally removed to level the floor of the building.

The pottery recovered during the excavation of sections across the ring gully could only be broadly characterised as Iron Age due to the lack of diagnostic pieces. The disintegrated remains of a fired clay object that may once have been bun shaped (Cowgill, Appendix 10) was recovered from a section dug through the northwest side of the ring gully. To the north the sides of the gully were generally regular and vertical or steeply sloping. Excavation at the west limit of excavation failed to define the full extent of the cut (1319) but to the northwest, the gully was 0.34m (1317) and 0.40m (1134) wide respectively (Fig 21, Sections 135, 134 and 101). The depth of the gully was fairly uniform and was recorded at 0.22m, 0.19m and 0.21m from west to east in the three excavated sections described above. Only single fills were recorded and these were predominantly fine grained silty clays or clayey silts with gravel inclusions. There is some evidence for root or animal disturbance in Section 101, which also contained the highest frequency of gravel.

To the south, sections dug across the gully revealed straight, steeply sloping and regular sides. In this area the width of the gully ranged between 0.30m and 0.36m, and from 0.2m to 0.33m deep, increasing from west to east (Fig 21, Sections 99, 123 and 133). The base of the gully here was generally flat or slightly rounded, although one section display a tapered, almost V-shaped profile (1129).

No causeways or entrances were recorded, but these are likely to be located outside of the excavated area. At the east side of the ring gully, an irregular depression recorded in plan only may represent an entrance.

Group 74. *The Hearth or Oven* (Fig 20), (Fig 22, Sections 109, 110, 111, 112, 113 and 115),

A pit located at the centre of the ring gully is thought to represent the remains of a hearth or oven. Some fills of the feature contained frequent charcoal and ash from which a radiocarbon age of 635 - 560 Cal BC At Sigma 1 was determined (Appendix 19).

The pit/hearth was dug in six segments along a north-south long axis. Deposits (1358), (1651) and (1643) located around the edges of the hearth showed signs of exposure to heat. Deposit (1358) was a

reddish brown silt containing fragments of burnt limestone, while (1651) and (1643) were noticeably yellower than the surrounding naturals which they otherwise resembled.

In the sequence, (1431) appears to be the remains of the west side of a shallow elongated pit truncated by (1409), an oval shaped cut which represents the earliest phase of the north south aligned hearth (Fig 22, Sections 110 and 115). It is not certain whether cut (1431) belongs to the hearth or is an entirely unrelated earlier feature. Although located at the centre of the ring gully, (1431) is cut on a west east alignment, contrasting with all the later hearth pit recuts which all favour a north south orientation. However, no ashy or charcoal rich deposits were recorded in (1431), although these may have been completely removed. It is possible that (1431) represents the earliest phase of the hearth cut on a different alignment to those it preceded. Early to Middle Iron Age pottery was recovered from (1176), a fill contained within this feature.

Of the north south hearth cuts, the earliest was (1409), a 0.34m deep, 1.00m long and 0.6m wide oval pit containing a gravelly dark grey silt with burnt clay and charcoal inclusions (1508). Pottery recovered from this fill dates from the Early to Middle Iron Age. A near complete fired clay sling shot found in a fill of the hearth had probably been placed in the embers of the fire for firing (Cowgill, Appendix 10)

The recut of the pit formed an irregular, 0.96m long crescent shape, 0.4m wide across the centre. It should be stressed that much of this cut was only recognised in section and the shape in plan is partly conjectural. The dark brownish-grey clay primary fill (1141) of the recut contained frequent charcoal and moderate quantities of burnt clay. This deposit formed a thin 'lining' around the cut and is probably the surface on which combustion took place. A 0.20m thick dumped gravel (1139) overlying this layer could represent an extinguishing event in the hearth. A charcoal rich deposit overlying the gravel may suggest that the hearth was re-used even after this backfilling.

Group 75. *Pit on west side of area enclosed by ring gully* (Fig. 20 and Fig. 24, Sections 185 and 186, Plate 15)

A two metre long and 1.7m wide oval pit recorded on the west side of the area enclosed by the ring gully in Group 81 may represent an internal feature within Structure 1. Initially the pit defined only as a darker stain within the ring gully. However, excavation of this area in quarter sections revealed a shallow, 0.12m deep, well defined flat bottomed pit. The straight sides and regular shape suggest the pit was deliberately dug rather than a hollow formed by repeated use of the area.

The pit (1522) contained a mid yellowish brown sandy clay primary fill (1565) and a light mid greenish brown sandy clay secondary fill (1564). Moderate quantities of small fragments of bone, pottery and fired clay inclusions were recorded within the dark brown silty clay tertiary fill (1523), which resembled floor layer (1263) described below. A small quantity of fire ash slag and a piece of Iron Age Grey slag were also found in the pit. The characteristically fragmented finds and the slag would chronologically link the floor, the hearth and the pit. Certainly the pit appears to have been deliberately sited at the west limit of the building opposite the entrance to the east. This indicates that the pit was at least partially open when the structure was in use.

Determining the function of the pit is more difficult. The pit was regular with a smooth and regular flat base. The shallowness of the

feature was intentional and the impression is that the pit was created with a specialised, particular function in mind. Environmental amples recovered from a fill of the pit failed to produce any material to suggest a function for the feature.

Group 76 *Floor of the Roundhouse* (Fig 20)

Unlike on many lowland archaeological sites the floor levels of this roundhouse do not appear to have been completely truncated.

The underlying natural gravels on the south and west side of the area enclosed by the ring gully (Group 81) were overlain by a thin layer of a dark greenish grey clay (1120) which probably represents the contemporary buried soil. Within the layer of buried soil and towards the southeast side of the ring gully was a thin layer of greenish grey silt (1263) containing highly fragmented burnt clay, fuel ash slag, pottery and charcoal. This extended from near to the south side of the hearth pit, northwest to the south edge of the shallow, flat based pit (Group 75) located to the northwest of the area enclosed by the ring gully. This layer probably represents a floor surface contemporary with occupation of the structure. Pieces of fuel ash slag were recovered from environmental samples taken from this deposit and probably derive from 'rake out' from the central hearth (Cowgill Appendix 10). A very small amount of hammerscale was also found in the samples from the floor. Some iron smithing may have have been undertaken in the hearth. Animal bone from the floor was more fragmented than elsewhere on the site, probably due to trampling (Rackham, Appendix 14).

The surrounding layer (1120) was noticeably different from this characteristically 'floor like' deposit and similar to the buried soil recorded elsewhere on the site. Nevertheless, as this layer must have been *in-situ* at the same time as the 'floor layer' (1263), the whole of the area within the ring gully was treated as containing potential floor layers.

As floor deposits are rare, especially within an Early Iron Age context, excavation strategy was designed to maximise retrieval of information. All artefacts recovered during the excavation of deposits within the ring gully were three dimensionally recorded and environmental samples recovered on a 0.5m chequerboard grid pattern.

It should be noted that several factors could distort the results of the plotting of artefacts within the floor layers. Inevitably, later and earlier material will have been incorporated into the buried soil/floor layers within the ring gully. Separating these out stratigraphically within the buried soil/occupation deposit was not possible as this layer represents a continuous process of working and reworking, with no defined horizons. Nevertheless it was hoped that it might be possible to define patterns within the plotted material. Differential survival of floor deposits may also affect the validity of results. Medieval furrows recorded at the site demonstrate that the area has been ploughed for a considerable time. This being the case, the survival of any floor deposits within a prehistoric structure is surprising, although the ridges between the furrows would have provided some protection. This may account for the survival of floor deposits on the west side of the structure.

The most striking feature of the plotted material is the increase in finds density near to the west limit of the enclosed area, opposite the supposed entrance into the structure and within the characteristically 'floor like' layer (1263) (Fig 23). The area of plotted artefacts is of course limited to the southwest part of the structure and obviously no conclusions can be drawn regarding the distributions of artefacts in the building as a whole.

Towards the south end of the area within the ring gully some of the plotted pottery appears to form a line extending southwest to northeast across the 5m width of the excavated area. It might be suggested that this line of artefacts reflect the position of an internal partition in the structure along which finds have collected. However, this would be a little odd given that partitions would be expected to be aligned at 90 degrees to the walls of the building rather cutting off an area at a tangent.

As a whole the plotted distribution might suggest an area on the west side of the building where activities were focused. The area to the south appears to be significantly cleaner and was also devoid of any signs of a charcoal rich layer such as (1263). If the doorway to the house was to the east it may be that the occupants spent more of their time facing the entrance across the fire which burnt at the centre of the structure.

No spindle whorls, loomweights, bone tools or other artefacts suggestive of craft activities were recovered from the floor. Perhaps these activities were undertaken in a separate area of the structure, or possibly in a separate building located outside of the line of the bypass or within the unexcavated area underneath the main carriageway. However, the fired clay object recovered from the ring gully (Fig 80, 4) may have had a use in some kind of craft activity. The remains of two possible fired clay loomweights or spindle whorls were found in the fills of the ditch in Group 62 and the pit in Group 21, both components of the boundaries of Enclosure 1, indicating that craft or industrial activities were undertaken in the area.

An important result of the analysis of the pottery assemblage from this site is the bias towards types associated with consumption. Bowls dominate the assemblage and although the evidence is somewhat limited, perhaps it is possible to view the excavated areas of the site, including Structure 1, as an area where consumption rather than preparation of foodstuffs was undertaken. Analysis of the animal bone collected from the floor of the roundhouse shows that the material is more fragmented than elsewhere on the site and has suffered more from gnawing by dogs. It seems that meals were at least consumed within the building.

Analysis of the pottery from the floor of the building suggests a date more towards the Middle of the Iron Age, conflicting with the early dates from the hearth and the ring gully (Morris, Appendix 6). However, the floor does contain all the types of vessel found in the pit in Group 75 and the hearth, which appears to link these features chronologically. This could mean the building continued to be used into the Middle Iron Age when later pottery was incorporated into the floor layer. Perhaps the earliest deposits were left undisturbed as later material was cleaned out of the heath and disposed of elsewhere. Also, Early Iron Age pottery on the floor surface would have had more time to degrade than that from later phases, possibly leading to a biases in the relative quantities of the pottery from different phases.

Post Hole Groups within Structure 1. (Figs 20 and Fig 24, Sections 107, 177, 178 and 179, and 183)

Two post hole groups were recorded within the ring gully of Structure 1. These have been divided into Groups 79 and 57, although in the case of the latter, the association is somewhat arbitrary as they have no particular connection with the structure other than that they were recorded within the area enclosed by ring gully 81. The floor layers and buried soils with this area created some stratigraphic problems. A number of the post holes were only

identified after the removal of the floor deposits and buried soils within the building. As noted previously this does not necessarily have any implications in terms of stratigraphic sequence. Some of the post holes were probably only visible at the surface of these layers due to a darker, more visible fill. In one instance a post hole was revealed in plan against underlying gravel natural layers, but once identified, was visible through the buried soil in the section at the edge of the area of excavation.

The post holes in Group 79 do have some coherence and appear to cluster around the hearth located at the centre of the ring gully. Of those in Group 57, however, it is unknown how many of these are actually associated with the building

Group 79 *Post holes clustering near hearth at the centre of Ring Gully 81*

Post Hole 1575 (Fig. 24 Section 183)
This circular 0.4m diameter and 0.2m deep post hole was located 1.4m northwest of the central hearth within ring gully 81. The sides of the cut were vertical and the base rounded.

Post holes 1568 and 1542 (Fig. 24 Section 179)
This post hole was located 2.1m northwest of the hearth and appeared in plan to be the largest of the group. Excavation, however, showed that it was probably formed by two separate small post holes. Both of these were around 0.10m deep and 0.15m in diameter.

Post Hole 1548 (Fig 24 Section 177)
A Circular 0.5m diameter and 0.11m deep post hole located 1.2m southwest of the central hearth within ring gully 81. Reddish colour of fill (1549) may represent burning of post *in-situ.* The base of the post was slightly rounded but irregular.

Post Hole 1566 (Fig 24 Section 178)
Located 1.2m west of the central hearth, this circular 0.43m and 0.27m deep post hole tapered down to a pointed base.

Post Hole 1143 (Fig 24 Section 107)
A sub-circular post hole located 1.35m to the southeast of the hearth within Structure 1. The 0.25 deep and 0.45m diameter cut had irregular sides tapering down to a rounded base.

Discussion of Group 79

It appears that two post holes are missing from the northeast corner of the group which would complete the circuit around the hearth. It may be, of course, that these were never present and this area formed an opening within the group. It should also be noted that this area actually falls outside of the permitted area of excavation and post holes may have been present without defining at the surface of the buried soil in this area.

Although this group of post holes does seem to form a coherent pattern within Structure 1 around the central hearth, their position set very close together near to the centre of the building indicates that they did not contain vertical roof supports.

Alternatively, these features may be small pits dug into the floor of the building around the central hearth. None of the features contained any finds which might indicate that these contained any votive/ritualised deposits.

Group 57 *Assorted post holes within Ring Gully 81.*(Fig20) (Fig 25 Sections 121, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 131)

Unlike Group 79 these post holes do not form a possible structure or pattern within the limits of the building. The group comprises all non Group 79 post holes recorded within the limits of the building, including those recorded before and after the removal of the buried soil/floor layers. All of the post holes in the group are smaller than those in Group 79 and resemble driven stakes rather than post holes.

As noted previously the post holes in this group do not appear to form structural elements within the ring gully. There is tentative evidence that they may relate to a later phase. One of the group, (1226) located on the south edge of the structure, cut through the fills of ring gully 81 and may be linked to unexcavated post holes (1569), and (1571) and (1659) to the northwest.

A cluster of post holes comprising (1284), (1292), (1286), (1310) (1288) and (1291) located towards the north side of area within ring gully 81, may represent the remains of some kind of internal structure within the building, although no obvious interpretation emerges from the pattern.

Unexcavated post holes within ring gully 81. (Fig 20)

Many possible post holes were unavailable for excavation as they lay outside of the line of the roadside ditch. There is a suggestion that three of these which form a short section of an arc just inside the line of ring gully 81 formed a structural element at the very north edge of the building.

Structure 1 Discussion.

Initial interpretations of Structure 1 viewed the ring gully in Group 81 as having functioned as a drain surrounding a roundhouse. These type of features are relatively common in the region and are known from excavations at Fengate (Pryor, 1984), Dowsby (Lane 2000a) and Deeping St. James (Trimble 2000).

However, closer scrutiny of Structure 1 suggests that the ring gully probably acted as a setting for the timbers which supported the walls of the building itself. The size, shape and form of the gully all suggest that the feature could not have acted as a drain. Most drainage gullies of this type are significantly wider, many up to 0.5m to 0.75m wide and 0.5m deep, even when recorded at the level of plough truncation. Significant truncation of the Structure 1 gully is precluded, as the survival of floor deposits within the ring gully demonstrates. The 0.3m wide and 0.3m deep gully of Structure 1 is unlikely to have acted as an effective drain. Also, ring gully 81 forms an almost perfect circle which seems unlikely had the feature been dug around an existing building. It seems more probable that the shape of ring gully 81 reflects the initial laying out of the structure when a string was used to mark out a circle very precisely.

The relationship of the gully with other elements of the structure also suggests that the ring gully marks the position of the walls of a building. The 'floor deposits' recorded in Group 76 extend from near the central hearth to within 0.5m of the ring gully. This leaves limited space for the line of a hut wall between the edge of the floor deposits and the ring gully. If the ring gully had acted as an 'eaves drip gully' there would be very little space for any kind of eave at all.

A similar point applies to the pit recorded in Group 75. The presence of 'floor' material in the tertiary fills of the pit suggests that it was located within the confines of the building. If the ring gully in Group 81 was a drain, there would have been very little space for an intervening wall.

If the gully did act as a drain the whereabouts of the structural supports for the building has to be determined. In many cases where ring gullies thought to act as drains have been identified, no internal post holes of wall settings have been recorded. This is commonly explained as resulting from plough truncation, with the much deeper drainage gullies surviving to mark out the position of the building. However, as the floor levels survive over the western half

of the roundhouse at Site 4 this can hardly be the case here. If structural supports for a wall or roof were once present within ring gully 81, these should have survived in the archaeological record.

The relative scarcity of finds from the fills of the ring gully may also be of some significance. Had the gully been open within the settlement it is likely many more artefacts would have collected within the feature.

The absence of evidence for timbers within the fills of the ring gully might be due to post-depositional processes or the invisibility of any 'post-pipes' within a very similar soil matrix.

External features possibly associated with Structure 1

Group 61. *(Pits 1208, 1175, 1138, 1131)* (Fig 20 and Fig 25, Sections 100, 106,108, 117)

Four shallow pits recorded to the north of Structure 1 contained a few artefacts which tentatively date these features to the Early Iron Age.

Pit 1208 (Fig 25 Section 17, Plate 10)

Like all of the pits recorded in this group (1208) was shallow, flat bottomed with steep sides. It was sub-circular in plan with a diameter of 0.66m and a depth of 0.14m and contained a dark blue grey silty clay fill (1209) with 40 to 50% sub angular pebble inclusions.

During excavation no dateable pottery was recovered. However, a single sherd of Anglo-Saxon and two pieces of Iron Age pottery were recovered from a sample taken from fill 1209. The complete upper part of a saddle quern was recovered from the pit as well as assorted pieces of stone which may be quern fragments. The quern is likely to be of Early or Middle Iron Age date, indicating that the Anglo Saxon pottery is residual. All of these pieces of stone were recorded on the southwest side of the pit with the complete stone bottom side up.

Pit (1175) (Fig 25 Section 108)

A number pieces of stone were also recovered from the fills of this pit, one of which is a fragment of a quern (Cowgill, Appendix 10). With a 0.72m diameter and 0.22m depth, this pit had similar dimensions to (1209). No dateable artefacts were recovered from fill (1173), a dark brownish olive silty clay.

Pit (1138) (Fig 25 Section 106)

This feature was located immediately north of the ring gully in Group 81 and lies to the east of the other pits in the group. The pit was 0.60m wide, 0.65 long but truncated to the north by the Early Saxon gully in Group 60 As with the fills of 1175, no artefacts were retrieved during the excavation of this pit. However, the pit contained a piece of 'Iron Age Grey slag' and a small quantity of fuel ash slag, adding weight to the proposition that these features are chronologically linked to Structure 1.

Pit (1131) (Fig 25 Section 100)

This 0.6m long and 0.58m wide pit shared similar dimensions to the other pits in the group. However, at 60mm deep, pit 1132 was the shallowest of the four. No artefacts were recovered from the single mid brown sandy clay fill of the feature.

It seems very likely that these four pits are linked functionally and chronologically with Early Iron Age Structure 1.

Early Iron Age features outside of the enclosure. (Fig 26)

Group 31. *Amorphous Hollow* (Fig 26), (Fig 27 Section 163)

This feature (1380) lay towards the north end of the site some 100m northwest of Enclosure 1. It was excavated in alternate 1m squares, as it was not possible to define a cross section on such an irregular shape.

The sides were moderately steep but variable and irregular. The base was generally flat but was also variable with rounded scoop-like depressions in places. Apart from the archaeologically rich fills the feature had the appearance of being created by natural or animal action. The Group 16 hollow was of similar character, and the fully defined example in Group 25 from which Early Saxon pottery was recovered, possibly shares the same origin.

A single sherd of Roman pottery from Group 31 is very likely to be intrusive as the other 113 pieces recovered are distinctly Iron Age. The feature was sealed by a thin dark layer (Groups 2 and 14) which contained Roman and Saxon pottery. As this layer closely resembled the tertiary fill of the hollow it possible that this is where the intrusive sherd derived.

Group 16 *Amorphous Hollow* (Fig 26, Fig 27 Section 93)

Similar problems to those in Group 31 were encountered in the excavation of this feature, located some 20m to the northwest. In plan the feature was irregular and extended beyond the permitted limits of excavation, limiting the options for targeted sections.

Nevertheless, in form and date the feature is closely comparable to the Group 31 hollow, sharing irregular sides and an uneven base. The feature extended west to east across the line of excavation and was a maximum 0.22m deep and 2.63m wide. Like the amorphous hollow in Group 31, the pottery recovered from Group 16 is of Early Iron Age type.

Group 33 *Amorphous Hollow* (Fig 27, Fig 26 Section 70)

Although smaller and shallower than the hollows described in Groups 31 and 16, this feature can be categorised as being of the same type. Located some 32m east of the hollow in Group 31 and 24m southeast of Group 16, Group 33 was 3m long, 1.5m wide and a maximum of 0.15m in depth.

The Group 33 hollow is set apart from others at the site by the presence of a collapsed scored ware pot which showed every sign of being *in-situ* and was probably a deliberately placed deposit (Plates 17 and 18, Fig 69, 23). A highly polished bone bodkin or awl was also found in the fills of the Group 33 hollow (SF 17 Fig 80, 5), adjacent to the 'placed pot'. The form the pot would suggest it dates to the Early Iron Age although the scoring suggests a date range possibly extending through to the Late Iron Age or early Roman period. Its presence within an amorphous hollow similar to two others on the site from which Early Iron Age material was recovered, suggests that the date indicated by the form is accurate. An intrusive Roman 2nd century sherd was recovered from underneath this pot.

Possible origins of the amorphous hollows.

The hollows are not cut features and explaining their origin and function is challenging. One suggestion (F. Pryor *pers comm*) is that the hollows were created by wallowing pigs. The author has seen substantial hollows created by pigs on

modern free range farms. A second interpretation is that the hollows are scoops created when the bases of middens were being scoured for the last vestiges of the heap (Rackham, *pers com*). A third possibility is that the hollows were created during the puddling of clay for building hut walls. The thick clay layer which caps the gravel in this area would have certainly been suitable as a daub. The hollows could not have been created any closer to the Iron Age structures, which were located on the crest of the gravel island.

Group 32 *Post Holes adjacent to or cut by amorphous hollow 33* (Fig 26), (Fig 28, Sections 68, 73, 85)

Two of the three post holes in this group were recorded in the base of the hollow recorded in Group 33. The third was located immediately adjacent to the southeast corner. One of the group (982) was recorded in the section excavated across the hollow and does appear to be stratigraphically earlier. Neither of the other two post holes were cut through the fills of the hollow and they are also thought to predate this feature.

Post Hole (1044) (Fig 28 Section 73)

This was truncated by the hollow in Group 33. In plan the feature had an irregular shape and was 0.48m long, 0.34m wide and at least 0.4m deep. The irregular shape of the post hole in plan might indicate that the post had been extracted from the pit.

Post Hole (1064)

This post hole was circular, 0.45m in diameter, 0.10m deep and located immediately adjacent to the southwest corner of the amorphous hollow described in Group 33. No pottery was recovered from the fill.

Post Hole (982) (Fig 28 Section 68)

Circular in shape with a diameter of 0.2m and a depth of 0.23m. The sides were steep and the base flat with axis angled slightly off vertical to the east.

Group 17 *Pit/Possible posthole truncated by Amorphous hollow in Group 16* (Fig. 28 Section 64)

Circular 0.52m diameter and 70mm deep feature (1089) recorded below amorphous pit in Group 16. Pottery recovered from the fill of the pit was of a broad Iron Age date but the overlying feature in Group 16 provided a firm *terminus ante quem*.

Group 89. *Pit containing reddened and charcoal rich fills* (Fig 29), (Fig 28 Section 59, Plate 19)

A pit (980) located some 45m north of Structure 1 contained firmly diagnostic Early Iron Age pottery. The presence of charcoal rich and heat reddened fills in the feature suggested a possible industrial function. With this possibility in mind, the feature was completely excavated in order to fully reveal the form of the feature and to recover any industrial residues which might help determine the function of the pit.

During the excavation of the second half of the pit a 100% sieving policy was implemented to maximise recovery of pottery, faunal remains and any possible industrial residues.

When fully excavated the pit was a sub-circular, slightly irregular shape with steep smooth, slightly concave sides. It had a diameter of 1.6 metres and was 0.71m deep. The sides of the pit showed no signs of exposure to direct heat and it seems that the feature was used for the disposal of debris associated with burning, rather than directly within an industrial process. No industrial residues were recovered from the pit either through excavation or the sieving of bulk samples.

The clayey silt primary fill of the pit indicates a phase of slow natural silting. The

sides of the pit are steep and appear not to have been eroded to any great extent. It is possible that a now disappeared basketwork liner was used to support the sides. This might indicate that initially the pit acted as a well or sump before being used for the disposal of waste material. If the feature was used as a well, it would suggest that the water table at the site was very near the ground surface during the Iron Age. This might easily have been the case in such a low lying area.

The deposit immediately overlying primary fill (1010) was of a very different character. This was a reddish brown sand and gravel which represents deliberate backfilling, as do all of the subsequent fills of the pit. The most substantial of these was (1008), a reddish yellow sand containing lumps of burnt clay. The underlying layer (950) was composed of fine charcoal and ash. It is possible that these layers represent the cleaning of a hearth or oven; with the burnt clay lumps representing the disposal of the broken superstructure

Unfortunately the limiting of the area available for excavation did not permit the exploration of the surrounding area for features which might indicate the location of the hearth or oven from which this debris originated.

Group 64 *Pit or possible ditch terminal containing charcoal rich fills* (Fig 29), (Fig 30 Section 82 and 83).

This group represents the cut and fills of a pit, or possibly the terminal of a ditch, recorded 7m beyond the north side of Enclosure 1. Unfortunately the feature extended into the area of the main carriageway with only the east side visible within the line of the eastern roadside ditch. There is no sign of the remaining part of the pit visible on the pre-excavation EDM survey of the area of the main carriageway. This is not surprising as the feature only defined clearly against the natural gravels once the overlying buried soils had been removed.

In plan, the feature formed an irregular 3.5m sub-rectangular shape, extending 1.5m from the limit of excavation as defined by the line of the main carriageway. In section the pit showed slightly irregular concave sides and was a maximum of 0.65m deep. The base of the feature was more irregular and undulated in places. Although a dip was recorded around the base at the edge of the pit, no recuts were apparent through any of the fills. The primary fill contained a high proportion of silt and clay with little archaeological material apparent. This suggests that initially the feature silted up naturally with little addition of domestic debris. However, some of the secondary fills were particularly rich in charcoal and also contained quantities of pottery and animal bone. Much of the pottery from the pit is diagnostically Early Iron Age, suggesting that the fills contain little residual material and that consequently, the feature has not been disturbed by later activity. No recuts were recorded, supporting the evidence that the material in the pit had not been disturbed by later activity. Although in low concentrations, the samples from this pit contained more cereal and barley grains than any other feature on the site (Fryer, Appendix 15).

Group 3 *Pit* (Fig 26 Plan, Fig 30 Section 140)

A 0.61m deep and 1.22m diameter pit (1367) located towards the north end of the site, some 14m northwest of the hollow in Group 31. Pottery recovered from the fill suggests an Early Iron Age date. The pit truncated a southwest to northeast aligned unexcavated gully.

Groups 96, 97 & 98 *Features recorded in section beneath Middle Iron Age linear in*

Group 95 (Fig 26), (Fig 31, Section 138)

These were recorded predominantly in the section excavated across the ditch in Group 95. None of the deposits and features recorded in these groups were viewed in plan, severely limiting meaningful interpretation. It is not known whether these are separate features or recuts of the same entity.

The earliest in the sequence, Group 98, was recorded in plan as a 1.4m deep and at least 2.6m wide cut (1167) located south of and truncated by the Middle Iron Age ditch(1125) recorded in Group 95.

Group 98 *Pit or Ditch terminal* (Fig 26). (Fig 31 Section 138)

This was the earliest of the three groups of possible Early Iron Age features identified in Section 138.The 1.4m deep cut (1167) of Group 98 has a rounded end to the southeast but was truncated to the northwest by the Group 95 ditch (1125).

Although not particularly diagnostic, a single sherd of pottery from a fill of the feature may be Early Iron Age in date, particularly as it was recovered with a piece of shell tempered briquetage likely to be from this period (Morris, Appendix 6).

Group 97. (Fig 31 Section 128)

Group 97 is represented by the remains of a cut (1614) and its fills recorded in Section 138. It lies at the junction of the south side of the Middle Iron Age ditch in Group 95 and the north side of the pit/ditch terminal in Group 98. The cut (1614) of the Group 97 feature truncated one of the lower fills (1254) of Group 98 (1167) but was in turn truncated by (1347).

Group 96 (Fig 31 Section 128)

This feature (cut 1347) was positively identified through its obvious truncation of (1252) the gravelly fill of cut (1614) in Group 97. In contrast to the pit/ditch terminal in Group 98, this cut was irregular in section, possibly through erosion of the sides and may be a shallower and narrower recut of the original pit/ditch terminal in Group 98. Cut (1348) which truncates the fills of (1347) probably represents a recut.

3.4.8.5 Middle Iron Age

Middle Iron Age features on the site comprise chiefly two linear ditches which may be associated.

Ditch Group 68 and Pit Ditch Terminal 103 and Shallow linear gully 69. (Fig 29) (Fig 32 Sections 15, 54, 55 and 56)

To the north of Early Iron Age Enclosure 1, a north south aligned ditch was recorded within the line of the east roadside ditch. The group also includes a possible pit located immediately south of the terminal of the ditch.

The ditch and pit were flanked to the east by a number of post holes described in Group 67, described in the section on features of indeterminate Iron Age date. The ditch and pit may form one side of an entrance in the same fashion as Groups 21 and 104 of Enclosure 1 further south. Although in plan it appeared as though pit 103 and ditch 68 were physically connected, it was not possible to prove a stratigraphic relationship through excavation.

Group 68 *Ditch associated with Pit in Group 103* (Fig 29), (Fig 32, Sections 54, 55 and 56, Plate 14)

In plan the ditch (915) appeared to have contained a number of post holes placed

close together in the manner of a palisade. Therefore it was excavated in alternate opposed 1m long segments to record complete sections along the width and length of the ditch. As excavation progressed it became apparent that the post hole like shapes in the fill of the ditch were more likely caused by erosion of the ditch sides during subsequent post-depositional processes.

On average the ditch was 0.45m deep, although this varied as the base of the ditch was irregular along its length. The maximum width of the ditch was around 1.8m, although this was also variable due to the irregular edges. The bottom edges of the ditch displayed severe undercutting, suggesting erosion of the sides by water action. In all likelihood the ditch was originally much narrower. None of the ditch fills appear to represent backfilling and it appears that the ditch slowly filled with fine grained sediments over a considerable period of time. If the feature did contain water as the irregular sides indicate, the water table at the site must have been quite close to the surface. The pottery from the ditch suggests a Middle to Late Iron Age date.

Group 103. *Pit located adjacent to ditch terminal in Group 68* (Fig 29), (Fig 32, Section 15 and 190)

This group represents a pit, or possibly the terminal of the ditch in Group 68. It was not possible to prove through excavation whether these two features were ever connected physically but it is certain that the two have very different forms. The pit was identified within the buried soil which covered much of the line of the east roadside ditch. At this stage the adjacent ditch was not visible and during the excavation of the pit, any possible stratigraphic relationship between the features was lost.

In plan the pit appears as a circular bulge located slightly southwest of terminal of the north south ditch described in Group 68. The pit was 2m in diameter and had a maximum depth of 0.45 metres. Although a stratigraphic relationship between the two was not determined, it was possible to establish that the two were almost certainly in contemporary use at some stage. The fills of the two features were similar and pottery was likewise of a very similar type.

The base of the pit showed the same severe undercutting as in the ditch, suggesting a similar taphonomic history. It is possible that like the adjacent ditch, this feature was originally smaller and therefore separate from the ditch. This would enhance the similarities between these and the pit and ditch in Groups 21 and 104 from the Early Iron Age phase.

Group 69 *Shallow linear gully parallel to ditch in Group 68* (Fig 29), (Fig 32, Sections 54, 55 and 56)

This group describes a very shallow linear gully (855) recorded on the west edge of the ditch in Group 68 and the pit in Group 103. The maximum depth of the feature was 0.11m but on average it was only around 20 - 40mm deep. The sides were absent but the base was rounded.

Although truncated by the pit in Group 103, the gully and the two adjacent features are obviously related in some way as the offset line of the pit and ditch is followed closely by the gully. The pottery recovered from the fills of the gully falls within a broadly Iron Age date range. However, a Middle Iron Age date seems more likely as the feature seems closely linked with the adjacent features in Groups 103 and 68.

Group 95. *North south ditch* (Fig. 26), (Fig 31 Section 138)

This north south aligned ditch located towards the north end of the site was identified on aerial photographs and located during the evaluation of the site. During the initial topsoil strip the feature did not show through the buried soil, which as already described, closely resembled the upper fill of this ditch. After hand cleaning of the easement, however, it was possible to identify the north south line of the ditch as a linear dark area within the buried soil. The line of the ditch crossing the easement, as plotted from aerial photographs, was not visible.

As most of the line of the ditch fell within the area of the main carriageway, the locations available for excavation of sections were extremely limited. The projected alignment of the feature crossed the line of the western roadside ditch in an area of dense archaeological features. An east west aligned ditch crossed the site at the same point and much of this area was covered in a dark deposit from a later period. A section was excavated across the two ditches to establish a stratigraphic relationship. This meant that the section across the ditch in Group 95 would not be transverse to the line of the feature as this would not be possible within the room available for excavation.

The section cut across the ditch revealed it to be 1.5m deep with a broad U-shaped profile. The ditch appeared to be around 5m wide but it must be stressed that the position of the section along the ditch would have the effect of broadening and reducing the angle of slope of the ditch. In plan where it crosses the main carriageway the ditch was 4 metres wide. A sample from a lower fill (1126) contained waterlogged macro-fossils which indicate locally open vegetation of poorly-drained grassland, with some standing water in deep features.

The aerial photographic plot (Fig. 15) shows the length of the ditch as it crosses the line of the bypass route up to the intersection with the west east ditch in Group 13. From this point the course is unclear. A slightly sinuous linear feature does extend northeast for some 45 metres to join a complex of rectilinear cropmarks which are on the same alignment as the Group 95 ditch.

These features could all be part of the same ditch system, perhaps part of a group of enclosures surrounding occupied areas in the same fashion as the ditches around Structure 1. The recovery of pottery and animal bone from the fills of the ditch certainly suggest that it was being utilised for the disposal of domestic waste. The ditch had been recut on several occasions, indicating regular maintenance and redefinition of the feature.

3.4.8.6 Late Iron Age

One of the most puzzling aspects of the archaeological record at the Fox Cover Farm site is the apparent hiatus of activity at the site in Late Iron and Early Roman periods. Classically Late Iron Age ceramics are virtually absent from the pottery assemblage. The only recognisably Late Iron Age sherd was derived from a the surface of the upper fill of the possible enclosure ditch in Group 95 (Morris Appendix 6). Some sherds which of probable Late Iron/Early Roman were recovered as residual sherds from later features (Darling, Appendix 7).

However, a Late Iron Age Corieltauvian minted silver coin (Taylor, Appendix 11), (Fig 83, 77) found in the area of the excavations prior to the excavations and a Late Iron Age/Early Roman Iron brooch (Cowgill, Appendix 10) (Fig 80, 2) recovered from the Saxon layer in Group 14, add to the evidence for a presence at the site during the period.

3.4.8.7 Indeterminate Iron Age

Several features on the site can only be dated broadly to the Iron Age due to either the undiagnostic nature of the pottery or the lack of stratigraphic relationships.

Enclosure 2. Groups 41 and 51.

Group 41 *Ditch forming part of Enclosure 2 Iron Age phase.* (Fig 17), (Fig 29), (Fig 33, Section 66)

As described above, the north ditch of Enclosure 1 was retained as a boundary into the Roman period when it linked with a north south linear to form the corner of Enclosure 2. However, it seems that this enclosure also had origins in the Iron Age.

The north south ditch of Enclosure 2 ditch appeared to divide into two separate features where it intersected with the line of the east roadside ditch. A section targeted across the northern split of the feature revealed repeated recutting. It was noticeable that these ditches were less substantial and shallower than those thought to represent the Iron Age phases of Enclosure 1, with none being much more than 0.4m deep. If elsewhere the later phases of the enclosure followed the earlier line more accurately, these ditches would have been completely truncated.

The earliest phases of the ditch in Group 41 contain only Iron Age material. In fact the sole Roman sherd from this feature was recovered from the upper fill of the latest recut. Although the presence of only Iron Age pottery cannot be taken as conclusive evidence for this date, it would seem reasonable to suggest this given the absence of Roman sherds in the earlier phases of the feature.

Group 51 *Ditch forming part of Enclosure 2. Iron Age phase* (Fig 33), (Section 157)

The cuts and deposits in Group 51 were revealed in a section dug within the line of the west roadside ditch, at the southwest corner of Enclosure 2. Although the latest cuts of the Enclosure 2 ditch in this section were dateable to the Roman period, the earliest phases contained exclusively Iron Age pottery.

The section revealed a succession of ditches, each one cut slightly to the south of its predecessor. This recutting of ditches apparently on the same line supports the impression that boundaries within the settlement were followed and maintained over a considerable time span. Notwithstanding the problems of dating ditch recuts, it seems likely that the Group 51 ditch was established in the Iron Age and continued to be used into the Roman period.

Group 84. *Linear Ditch (1077)* (Fig 34, Fig 30 Section 89)

This 3.5m wide and 1.5m deep V-shaped linear ditch recorded towards the south end of the site on a southwest to northeast alignment contained Iron Age sherds in a secondary fill (1080). However, phasing this ditch is problematical as its alignment does not match with that of the more closely dated Early to Middle Iron Age enclosure, indicating a significant chronological difference between the two. However, a *terminus post quem* for (1080) and later fills is provided by the Early Iron Age pottery.

The primary fill of the ditch contained no dateable pottery and in comparison to other ditches on the site the deposits in (1080) contained few artefacts.

Group 83. *Crouched inhumation located adjacent to and parallel with ditch in Group 84* (Fig 38, Plate 21).

A shallow oval pit (032)contained a flexed inhumation burial. The skeleton (034) was believed to be of an adult female, although there is some doubt over the sex determination. Apart from the grave discovered during the evaluation, this is the earliest burial recorded at the site. This probably accounts for the poor state of preservation of the bones in comparison to the others recovered during the excavations.

The grave appears to have been dug parallel and adjacent to the ditch in Group 84, suggesting an association between the two features.

Two Iron Age sherds recovered from the grave provide a *terminus post quem* for the burial.

Group 56 *Two post holes recorded adjacent to Group 95 ditch.*

Two post holes were recorded adjacent to the eastwards turn of the Middle Iron Age ditch recorded in Group 95. No dating evidence was recovered from either of the post holes but they are thought to be Iron Age, based on location and fill type.

Post Hole (1424)
Circular, 0.4m diameter and 0.16m deep post hole located 3.6m southwest of 1146, the other cut in this group.

Post Hole (1569)

This post hole was located 1m south of the edge of the Group 95 Middle Iron Age ditch. The cut was 0.24m in diameter and 80mm deep.

Group 67. *Post holes to the south of Middle Iron Age features in Groups 68 and 103* (Fig 29).

This group comprises a number of post holes recorded just to the south of the Middle Iron Age features in Groups 68 and 103. Four sherds of Iron Age pottery were recovered from the fills of the post holes although residuality cannot be ruled out given the abundance of material from this period on the site.

Post Hole (755)
Square post hole, 70mm deep and 0.42m across with flat base and straight sides.

Post (753)
Circular 0.36m diameter and 0.10m deep post hole with straight sides and a concave base. Located adjacent to sub-circular post hole (748).

Post Hole (748)
Sub-circular post hole of maximum 0.20m diameter with straight steep sides. At 0.16m this post hole is slightly deeper than adjacent cut (753).

Post Holes (773) and (775).
Flat based, sub-circular 0.36m deep and 0.36m wide post hole (773) appears to have been replaced by smaller 0.2m wide and 60mm deep sub circular cut (775).

Post Hole (936)
Initially recorded in plan as 'keyhole' shaped but on excavation was circular, 0.21m diameter and 0.11m deep straight sided, flat based post hole. Located adjacent to a unexcavated possible post hole.

Post Hole (779)
Partially visible post hole located outside of permitted area of excavation.

Discussion of Group 67

The limited area of excavation makes the interpretation of this group of post holes problematical. It may be that they relate to the adjacent pit and ditch immediately to the north, perhaps defining a fence or boundary. It cannot be ruled out however that the group represents the remains of structure, although similar post holes were not recorded to the north of the adjacent pit and ditch.

Group 65. *Group of Post Holes*

This is a somewhat arbitrarily defined group and they form no obvious pattern or structure. They are best described as forming a general background distribution of 'Iron Age' post holes at the site. A total of six sherds of Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fills of this group of post holes.

Post Hole (816)
Sub circular, 0.156m deep post of maximum 0.26m diameter located around two metres west of post holes of Group 67.

Post Hole (796)
Oval 0.26m deep and 0.4m wide post hole located at edge of excavation around 3.5metres east of post holes in Group 67.

Post Hole (792)
Isolated oval to sub-rectangular 0.15m deep and 0.5m wide post hole located around two metres south east of post holes in group 67.

Post Hole (733)
Sub-circular 0.28m deep post hole of 0.26m maximum diameter located just north of Enclosure 1. Probably the deepest of the post holes excavated along the line of the east roadside ditch.

Post Hole (852)
Circular, 70mm deep and 0.23m diameter post hole post hole with tapered base recorded on gravel bank on north side of north ditch for Enclosure 1.

3.4.8.8 Roman (Fig 35)

As a proportion of the pottery assemblage the Roman ceramics form a minor component. In total 392 sherds were identified as Roman (Darling Appendix 7), compared to several thousand which are thought to be of Iron Age date. The most notable feature of the Roman phase was parts of the south and east sides of a ditch, almost certainly part of a larger enclosure located to the east of the area of investigation. The enclosure almost certainly originated in the Early Iron Age, as demonstrated by the recovery of exclusively Iron Age pottery from the earliest cuts of the surrounding ditch. Also, the south ditch probably follows the exact line of the north side of Enclosure 1 from the Early Iron Age phase.

Enclosure 2 Roman Phase Groups 59, 49, 51 and 41 (Fig 17), (Fig 36).

Ditch of Enclosure 2 (Fig 19 Section 12, Plate 12)

As described in the Early Iron Age section, the line of this ditch appears to pre-date the Roman period by a considerable time span.

The maximum depth of the ditch during the Roman phase was 1.2m and although the combined width of all phases of the features was around 5m, no individual ditch cut was more than 1.2m wide. The final ditch in the sequence, located at the south end of the section, was only 1.2m wide and 0.3m deep, significantly less substantial than the other phases.

When the stratigraphic sequence of ditches in Group 59 is plotted alongside the dated pottery, a convincing trend from Early to Middle Iron Age through to Roman is shown. This trend is also apparent in the stratigraphic sequence of the ditches in Groups 49 and 51 where Iron Age finds occur in the fills of the earliest ditches followed by Roman pottery higher up in the sequence.

Group 49 *Ditch of Enclosure 2* (Fig 19 Section 155)

The final ditch in the sequence recorded in this section across the Enclosure 2 ditch measured 0.7m deep and was approximately 2.7m wide. Individual rebuts were much

more difficult to discern in this section.

It is in this section across the Enclosure 2 ditch where chronology is most clearly related to stratigraphy. Progressing up the stratigraphic sequence the ceramic dates change from Early Iron Age to 1st to 2nd century AD and then through mid 2nd century AD, mid 2nd century AD, Late 2nd century AD, mid 2nd century AD and finally Late 3rd to 4th century. The recutting and maintenance of the ditch boundary over time appears to be reflected in the gradual decreasing date of the pottery up the stratigraphic sequence.

This apparent clarity of pottery dates from a complex sequence of recut ditches has some implications for the assessment of how much residuality might be expected within the feature.

Removal of the Bank material (Fig 33 Section 157)

The Group 51 section excavated across the Enclosure 2 ditch revealed a horizontal layer of gravel extending across the top of the sequence of ditches (1218). This was stratigraphically later than all of ditches except (1248) which truncated the layer. The sharp break of slope and steep gradient of the ditch underlying this layer of gravel suggests a truncation event Also the sides of the ditches are steep and do not show the typical gently sloping weathered sides usually found near the upper edges of ditches. This indicates that the ground level has been artificially reduced in this area and a sizeable portion of the upper levels of these ditches removed.

As noted above, the general direction of movement of the ditches is away from the inside of the enclosure, probably forced by the slumping of upcast bank material into the adjacent ditch and the eventual silting of the ditch over the top of the bank material. This can clearly be seen in the section recorded in Group 59 where the tertiary fills of the earliest ditch extend over the top of the adjacent bank. The succeeding ditch was then dug slightly away from the advanced position of the bank.

Eventually the bank would probably widen and even extend over the tops of the earlier ditches. This appears to have happened at Fox Cover Farm until eventually the whole area was deliberately levelled, probably in the later part of the Roman period. The gravel layer recorded in section at the southwest corner of the enclosure in Group 51 represents the spread out bank material.

Group 44 The cemetery (Fig 36) (Fig 37)

A group of five burials, recorded within the angle of the southwest corner of Enclosure 2 is thought to be of Roman date, although this is based on burial style and location rather than direct dating evidence

None of the graves contained grave goods and, as would be expected on such an intensively occupied site, much of the pottery recovered from grave fills is likely to be residual. Also, these burial were extremely shallow, located at stripped ground level. As most of the graves were not dug deep enough to reach undisturbed natural deposits grave cuts were very difficult to distinguish. Some contamination from earlier phases would not be unexpected.

However, there are some indications of dates from the material recovered from the graves.

Grave (004). (Fig 38)

This grave contained the skeleton of a child aged around 7-9 years in an oblong 1.4m long, 0.54m

wide and 0.1m deep cut. It was not possible to determine the sex of this skeleton as the pelvis did not survive in a sufficient state of preservation. The skull had been removed and placed between the thighs of the prone body and facing towards the pelvis. No pottery was recovered from the fill of the grave and there are no stratigraphic relationships to determine a *terminus post quem* for the burial. The skeleton was west east aligned with the feet at the west end of the grave.

Grave 015 (Fig 39)

A rectangular 2m long, 0.7m wide and 0.10m deep grave containing a supine male skeleton (016) aged around 25-30 years. The burial was placed with the head at the north end of the of the north-south aligned grave. Five sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the grave fill and are thought to include pieces of 3rd century date. Much of this material may be residual, but it does provide a *terminus post quem* for digging of the grave.

Grave 013 (Fig 38)

A medieval plough furrow had severely truncated this west east aligned grave, apart from the final 0.6m at the eastern end of the cut. This contained the lower legs and feet of an adult, probably female, skeleton (020), aged about 20 - 30 years. The body had been decapitated and the head placed between the ankles. Unlike grave (004), which also contained a 'decapitation' burial, the body was placed in the grave with the feet to the east. Pottery of Iron Age date was recovered from the fill of the grave but is almost certainly residual.

Grave 017 (Fig 38)

An adult female skeleton was contained within this shallow 0.10m deep, 1.6m long and 0.78m wide west east aligned grave. Parts of the upper limbs and all of the lower legs and feet were missing, almost certainly due to medieval or recent ploughing. The burial was placed with the head at the west end of the grave. As well as a number of sherds of Iron Age pottery, a single sherd which may be late Iron Age or Early Roman date was recovered from the grave.

Grave 025 (Fig 39)

This shallow, 80mm deep, 1.98m long and 0.62m wide, oblong shaped grave contained the more or less complete skeleton (027) of a adult male aged about 50 years. As with grave (015), the body was placed with the head at the north end of the north south aligned grave. The front of the skull was truncated during machining and most of the foot bones of the skeleton were also absent. A number of sherds of Iron Age pottery were recovered during the excavation of this burial but are likely to be residual.

Animal (Sheep) Burial

A grave containing a probable sheep skeleton was recorded to the east of the human burials within the cemetery. As the brief allowed only for the removal of human burials during this phase of work the skeleton was not excavated.

Enclosure 2 sub-division

Group 37 Gully recorded within Enclosure 2 (Fig 36), (Fig 39 Sections 25 and 27)

It seems likely that the gully in this group acted as a sub-division within Enclosure 2 probably in the later part of the Roman period.

As much of the interior area of Enclosure 2 was in the line of the main carriageway there was little investigation of this area apart from the initial surface clean and plan. However, it was possible to investigate a west east aligned linear gully within the line of the west roadside ditch. Unfortunately the junction of the gully in Group 37 and the ditch of Enclosure 2 was located outside of the limit of excavation. Therefore no stratigraphic relationship between the two features was recorded. Although Roman pottery was only recovered from the tertiary fill of the gully it seems unlikely that such a small feature was originally dug in the Iron Age and survived long enough to incorporate pottery of this date in its fills. The residual Iron Age material could have easily been derived from surrounding earlier deposits, including the buried soil, which were rich in pottery of this date. Also, the gully directly truncated the pit in Group 89 which was particularly rich in Iron Age pottery.

Post Hole Groups

A number of post hole groups recorded at the site are thought to date to the Roman period. Dating of these groups of features has been problematical. Most of the post holes recorded in the permitted area of excavation do not form coherent patterns. Group 22, a line of post holes which cross the south side of the Iron Age ring gully in Group 81 in Enclosure 1 are an exception. These, however, contained no dateable material and are assumed to be Roman on stratigraphic grounds only. In some cases it has been possible to speculate on a date for a groups of post holes on purely stratigraphic grounds even though the features themselves do not contain pottery.

Group 47 *Group of post holes.* (Fig 36), (Fig 40)

Dating of this group of post holes to the Roman period is based on the most tenuous of evidence. The group is located north and south of Roman gully recorded in Group 37. Where the gully cuts through Iron Age pit (980) in Group 37, a reddish deposit was recorded overlying the buried soil. This was interpreted as material upcast from the pit when the gully was excavated. The recovery of a single sherd of Roman pottery from the layer indicated that this was probably accurate. One of the post holes (1071) in Group 47 truncated this layer, therefore providing a tentative *terminus post quem* for the group.

Post Hole (1071) (Fig 40 Section 88)
At 0.42m deep and with a 0.35m diameter, post hole (1071) was one of the more substantial of the group. It truncated a layer containing a single sherd of third century Roman pottery, suggesting that Iron Age pottery recovered from the fill of the post hole was residual. The post hole itself had very steep, near vertical sides and a slightly rounded base.

Post Holes (857) and (859) (Fig 40 Section 41)

These two post holes were located three metres to the south of (1071) on the opposite side of gully 37. Post hole (859) was the later of the two and it is possible that it replaced the original post represented by (857). Although Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fills of this post hole it is possibly be associated with post hole (1071) based on similarity of fills.

Post holes (766) and (764). (Fig 40, Section 24)

Although apparently intersecting, no stratigraphic relationship was recorded between these two post holes. Post hole (766) had an irregular sub-oval shape and a maximum length of 0.32m. When excavated the feature was 0.15m deep with steep slightly irregular sides. Intersecting post hole (764) was smaller with a diameter of 0.22m and a depth of 0.13m. The south side of (764) had steep, near vertical sides but to the north the sides were concave and sloped much more gradually.

Post holes (833), (829), (831) and (827). (Fig 40, Sections 39, 37, 38 and 36)

These four post holes were clustered together some three metres south of the gully in Group 47. All were circular or sub-circular and ranged between 0.25 and 0.3m in diameter. At 0.2m, (829) was the deepest of the four. Two of the group, (833) and (827) were only five centimetres deep.

Post Hole (861)
This small, circular 0.2m diameter post hole was located some three metres east of the four described above. The feature was 0.10m deep with an irregular rounded base.

Group 22 *Line of post holes post dating Early Iron Age Gully in Group 22* (Fig 41)

Uncommonly for the site this group of post holes forms a coherent pattern which appears to describe at least part of a structure or possibly a fence.

The only dating evidence recovered was a single sherd of Iron Age pottery. However, one of the post holes truncates the Iron Age ring gully in Group 81. Given the lack of firm dating evidence these post holes have

been dated tentatively to the Roman period. This is based only similarity of the alignment of group to the ditches of Enclosure 2 from the Roman phase. Although this alignment was also extant during the Iron Age the fills of the post holes were unlike any other Iron Age features from the site.

Post Hole (1092) (Fig 42 Section 92)

Located at the west end of the line of six west east aligned post holes, (1092) was sub-circular with a maximum length of 0.35m. It was 0.37m deep with a steep north side and an irregular more gradually sloping south side, tapering to a pointed base. The cut of the post hole truncated the fill of ring gully 81, providing the key stratigraphic relationship between Group 22 and Early Iron Age Structure 1.

The single sherd of Iron Age pottery recovered from the fills of this group came from the fill (1093) of this post hole. This is not surprising given the truncation of the Early Iron Age ring gully.

Post Holes (1579) and (1581) (Fig 42, Section 184)

These two intersecting post holes were located 0.75m west of (1091). Post hole (1579) cuts through (1581) suggesting that the post was replaced. The earlier post hole was larger with a diameter of 0.40m. However, at 0.12m, the later post hole (1581) was slightly deeper.

Post Hole (1091) (Fig 42, Section 91)

An oval, 0.2m deep, 0.6m long and 0.45m wide posthole. In section the feature had gently sloping irregular sides and a flat base, suggesting perhaps that the post had been removed.

Post Hole (1656)

This sub-rectangular, 0.38m long and 0.3m wide post hole was unexcavated but forms part of the alignment of Group 22.

Post Hole (1661)
This unexcavated 0.68m diameter sub-circular post hole is one of a linear arrangement formed by Group 22. The fill closely resembled that of the other post holes in the group.

Post Hole 1657

Unexcavated 0.44m diameter sub-circular post hole located at the east end of the line formed by Group 22. The dark grey silty clay fill closely resembles that of adjacent post hole (1661) and the others of Group 22 located to the east.

Group 63 (Post Holes (757), (156), (881), (771) (Fig 41)

A scatter of post holes recorded towards the south end of the site within the line of the east roadside ditch. No pattern which might form the ground plan of a structure was discernable. A single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the fill of (757), the remainder of the post holes are thought to be associated based on the similarity of their fills.

Post Hole (757) (Fig 42, Section 48)

A circular, 0.3m diameter and 0.23m deep post hole with straight sides and a concave base. A single sherd of mid second century or later Roman pottery was recovered from the surface of this post hole.

Post hole (156) (Fig 42, Section 19)

This post hole was located only 0.6m southwest of (757) and shared a similar dark greyish brown clay silt fill. With a maximum diameter of 0.4m and a depth of 0.19m, the dimensions of (156) also resemble those of (757).

Post hole (771) (Fig 42, Section 23)

Circular, steep sided post hole located to the north of (156) and (757) with very similar dark brownish grey silty clay fill. With a diameter of 0.2m and a depth of 0.12m, this was the smallest of the three.

Post Hole (881) (Fig 42, Section 48)

An oval 0.5m long and 0.4m wide post hole containing a dark greenish brown sandy silt fill. Although only 0.10m deep the cut has fairly steep sides.

Group 94. Recut Ditch (Fig 41, Fig 42 Section 170)

Within the narrow confines of the excavated

area this proved an extremely problematical feature to investigate and understand. Much of this area was covered with redeposited gravels which were very similar to the underlying natural deposits..

The sections excavated across Group 94 were re-aligned several times in an attempt to record the most informative section across the feature. During post-excavation it has become clear that the gravels which partially covered this feature are probably associated with the levelling of the bank of Enclosure 2 from the Roman phase.

Despite the difficulties of excavating the feature, it is reasonably certain that Group 94 represents a north-south linear ditch, recut at least four times, leaving a complex stratigraphic sequence.

In terms of the date of the feature, it is probably significant that unlike in the ditches of Enclosure 2, Iron Age pottery was always accompanied by Roman material in the earliest phases of Group 94. It seems possible that this ditch was first dug in the Roman period, although the complete truncation of the earliest phases cannot be ruled out.

The maximum depth of the ditch was 0.5m and what appears to be the latest recut (1544) was 1.00 metre wide. The sequence of recut ditches was sealed by two horizontally laid layers of gravel (1345) and (1553). These are likely to represent the levelling of the gravel banks of Enclosure 2, probably at some stage during the later Roman period. This is supported by the recovery of pottery dating to the early to mid third century from one of the earlier phases of the ditch. Unfortunately it was not possible to place a section in a position to investigate the stratigraphic relationship between the ditch of Enclosure and Group 47. Pottery of a broad date range was recovered from both ditches and it may be that they were both long lived features which were contemporary at least for some time during the Roman period. It does seem likely, however, that the ditches of Enclosure 2 has origins in the Early Iron Age, while those in Group 94 would seem to be a purely Roman period phenomenon.

A piece of quern stone recovered during the excavation of this ditch was from an 'unstratified' context, probably material collected during the cleaning of section or the surface of the ditch.

Group 66 *Infant burial*(Fig 39)

As this burial was located outside of Enclosure 2, some 30m southeast of the five graves in Group 44, it has been assigned a separate group number. Like the burials in group 44 the grave for this infant was extremely shallow, virtually at the interface between the topsoil and the buried soil. No dateable artefacts were recovered from the fill of the grave.

Group 13 *Ditch at North end of site*. (Fig 26, Fig 31 Section 138)

A southwest-northeast aligned 1.6m wide and 0.9m deep ditch (1148) which contained Roman pottery in its upper fills. It truncated the Group 95 Middle Iron Age ditch and probably produced the cropmark on the same alignment plotted in this area (Fig 15)

The cropmark would appear to represent a small enclosure but no matching ditches were recorded during the excavation.

3.4.8.9 Anglo-Saxon

It is clear that only during the Anglo-Saxon phase of occupation at the site is there any evidence for significant re-organisation or change in the layout of the site. There is no

evidence for the continued re-cutting of long established ditch boundaries and linear features of this period appear to be newly established and on a slightly different alignment.

The quantities of pottery and animal bone indicate domestic occupation during the Early Saxon period although around the seventh century the site was at least partially used as a cemetery. There are no archaeological grounds for believing that the settlement and burial activity form distinct chronological phases. There are uncertainties with the dating of both the metal work from the burials and the pottery. However, the most likely date is seventh century AD.

Group 42 (Isolated Multiple Burials) (Figs 43 and 44)

Two of the Anglo-Saxon graves at the site contained double or multiple burials. Within the limits of the excavated area these appear to be solitary, isolated graves so will be described under the same group heading.

Grave (021) (Fig 44)

This grave contained the skeletons of an adult male (023), a pregnant adult female (024) and a child (031) of around 3-4 years. The grave was shallow and the skulls of both the adult skeletons appear to have been lost to the plough.

The bodies were lain over the top of a partially silted 0.7m deep pit (021). It seems likely that the weathered pit was used as a convenient grave for these inhumations, perhaps after being slightly enlarged.

In contrast to the burials of Roman date in Group 44, little effort seems to have gone into the formal laying out of the bodies in this grave

Skeleton (023)

The male skeleton occupies the middle position of the three, suggesting perhaps that it was the first in the grave. The body was aligned more or less west to east in a supine position with the head at the east end of the grave. The pelvic area was positioned over the partially silted pit, resulting in the body assuming a bowed posture in the grave, with the head and feet considerably higher than the middle of the skeleton. The right arm was flexed and placed high on the chest. The left arm was extended and lies underneath the female skeleton (024). The legs appear to have been shifted to the west side of the grave, perhaps to make room for the placing of the child in the grave.

An iron knife (SF 9, Fig 82, 18) was found behind the left hand pelvis and probably represents a dress item rather than a grave goods placed in the grave (Cowgill, Appendix 10). The same is likely to apply to a buckle found on the front of the same pelvic bone (Fig 82, 19).

Skeleton (024)

The skeleton of this pregnant adult female was placed on the south side of the grave adjacent to and overlying the male burial. Like skeleton (023) the body was supine, west-east aligned, with the head at the east end of the grave.

The right arm of the body was slightly flexed but placed over the chest and pelvic area of the male. The left arm was also slightly flexed but extended down the side of the body. The legs were close together near the feet and both were lain across the left leg of the male skeleton. The skeleton of a foetus was discovered within the pelvis of the skeleton, confirming the sex of the burial and that she was pregnant at death.

Skeleton (031)

This skeleton represents the remains of child, probably of about three to four years, placed in the same grave as (023) and (031). The child was placed in the north side of the grave, on the right hand side of the two adults. However, although aligned west to east, the head of the child is towards the west end of the grave, opposite to the two adults. Also, unlike the two supine adults the child was placed face down in the grave.

Possible Grave Goods and Offerings

It is possible that the scapula of a cow found adjacent to the head of the child was placed in the grave as a food offering. A glass bead (SF 005, Fig 82, 17) recovered from the grave could represent an object placed in the grave but is more likely to be a jewellery item already on one of the bodies when placed in the grave.

Grave 007

This grave contained an adult female and adult male burial, both southwest to northeast aligned, with the skulls at the west end of the grave. Like grave (021) the cut was very shallow with the skeletons located just beneath the modern topsoil. The legs of both burials were severely disturbed by ploughing. The grave was cut into the tertiary fills of the ditch of Enclosure 2 from the Roman phase, supporting the interpretation of a Saxon date.

Skeleton (009)

A supine, extended adult male skeleton with both arms are extended at the sides with the right hand over the pelvic area. Lies next to female skeleton (010) in the same grave.

Skeleton (010)

Placed to the right of (009) this skeleton of an adult female is also supine, extended, west east aligned with the head at the west end of the grave.

Group 48. Disarticulated remains immediately east of Grave (007)

A group of disarticulated bones were recorded two metres east of Grave 7. The remains are likely to be those of an adult male and may represent a skeleton disturbed by a later burial, with the disordered remains placed into a separate grave.

Group 7 Cluster of Anglo-Saxon Burials (Fig 45)

This group of 4 burials was located northwest of the more isolated double and multiple burials and possibly represent part of a formal cemetery, which extends beyond the line of the bypass route. Also, the possibility of more burials within the line of the bypass but outside the area of the east roadside ditch cannot be ruled out. As stated earlier, only burials visible at clearance level were recorded.

Interestingly, where stratigraphic relationships between these graves and other features containing Anglo-Saxon pottery have been identified, the graves are always earliest. However, it was not thought appropriate to divide such low numbers of features into discrete stratigraphic phases.

Grave (105)

Skeleton (081)

A badly plough damaged southeast-northwest aligned burial. The body was placed with the head towards the south end of the grave, where unfortunately the skull had been completely destroyed by a later ditch.

The lower legs were completely destroyed by a medieval plough furrow. Fortunately the central part of the grave was slightly lower than the ends and the remainder of the skeleton, apart from the skull, had survived more or less intact.

The skeleton was supine, with the right arm extended to where the hand rested on a spearhead (SF 14, Fig 81, 14) placed adjacent to the pelvis. The left arm was flexed across the chest with the hand resting on the elbow of the right arm.

An iron knife (Fig 81, 15) was recovered from the fill of the grave but was not identified as such during excavation. Therefore the position of the object in relation to the skeleton is not known. It is likely, however, to have been around the pelvis area in a similar fashion to others recovered at the site.

Grave 1334
This grave shared a similar southeast - northwest alignment as adjacent grave (105). However, grave (1334) appears to have contained two skeletons (1336) and (1337), although it is possible that these formed two separate intercutting burials.

Skeleton (1336)
This is the earliest of the two skeletons and from its position, would seem to be definitely associated with the grave cut (1334). The body was placed supine and extended into the grave, with the head towards the south.

The skull was completely truncated and destroyed by ditch (203) to the south. The lower legs were truncated by ploughing, either modern or medieval.

The skeleton was male and a number of objects were buried with the body, probably as items of everyday dress than as grave goods. An iron knife (SF 55, Fig 81, 10) was found adjacent to the left femur and had probably hung from a waist belt. A copper alloy buckle (SF 52, Fig 81, 9) found on the left side of the pelvis was probably used to fasten the belt. A second buckle, this example made of iron, was found on the right side of the pelvis (SF 57, Fig 81, 11). An iron buckle in very poor condition was also recorded next to the left shoulder of the skeleton (SF 58, Fig 81, 12).

Skeleton (1337)
Although recorded as being contained in the same grave as (1336) there are grounds to believe that this may not be the case. The two skeletons are on very different alignments, with the later skeleton lying across the chest area of (1336). Although there appears to be little fill between the two skeletons, as might be expected if the two were buried together, the earliest skeleton appears to have been almost completely truncated above the pelvis, possible by the excavation of the grave for the second skeleton.

Skeleton (1337) is more or less west east aligned with the head to the east. Less than half of skeleton remained in the grave. The upper legs, pelvis and a right arm were identified but the remainder appears to have been truncated either by ploughing or by the ditch to the south.

However, it was possible to identify the skeleton as that of an adult female, based on the pelvic morphology. An iron latch lifter/key handle (SF 56) was found around the right side of the pelvis (Fig 81, 13).

Grave 1509 (Fig 45)
The 0.52m deep grave cut was the deepest identified at the site and consequently contained the best preserved skeleton (1511). This was of an adult male who was placed in the grave with flexed knees, giving the impression that the grave was too small

for him. The right arm was bent so that the hand was placed next to the skull, while the lower part of the left arm was lain across the lower chest. The grave was southwest-northeast aligned with the head of the body at the east end of the grave.

An iron knife (SF 65, Fig 81, 16) was found underneath the pelvis of the skeleton.

Anglo Saxon Non Burial Features

Group 8. Linear Gully (Fig 46), (Fig 47 Sections 152 and 174)

This is one of the few features at the site other than graves which is likely to be of Saxon date. The gully is south southeast to north northwest aligned and was recorded from close to the limit of excavation north of the Grave group 7 southwards for some 25m. Most of the length was recorded during the initial EDM survey of the cleaned easement, and it is uncertain whether the feature continued further south.

The gully truncated grave (1507) but, at 0.33m wide and only 90mm deep, was not deep enough to damage the skeleton. The gully appears to have been badly truncated with only the rounded base surviving. Only a single sherd of Saxon pottery was recovered from the gully (1537), although several more were collected from surface cleaning. A Saxon date seems likely given the recovery of exclusively Saxon pottery and the truncation of the feature by a medieval plough furrow. Also, the alignment of the feature is close to being at a right angle to that of the gully described below in Group 60.

Group 60. Linear Gully (Fig 48, Fig 47 Section 10)

This 0.75m wide, 0.18m deep gully with steep vertical sides and a irregular base, was located just north of the roundhouse complex from the Early Iron Age phase. The Saxon date is based solely on the recovery of a single Saxon sherd and the similarity of alignment with the gully in Group 8 to the north. Also, the alignment of this gully is markedly different to the enclosure ditches of the Iron Age and Roman period. Moreover, this gully appears to truncate the shallow pit described in Group 29 which contained a single sherd of Anglo Saxon pottery

Group 29 Shallow Irregular Pit (Fig 48)

This feature was located on the east side of the carriageway and was truncated by the linear gully described in Group 60. Much of the feature extended beneath the limit of excavation and its shape cannot be accurately described. It was 90mm deep with a slightly concave base. The single fill was of dark 'humic' appearance, similar to other features on the site of the same date.

Group 9. Shallow Linear Ditch (Fig 46, Fig 47, Section 147)

A 1.0m wide and 0.3m deep southwest to northeast aligned linear ditch with a rounded base was located near the north end of the site within the area of the Group 7 Anglo Saxon cemetery. A single sherd of possible Saxon pottery was recovered from the feature but the main evidence for the ditch being this date is stratigraphic. The ditch truncates two securely dated graves (105) and (1334) and is cut by the pit in Group 10 which is firmly dateable to the Saxon period.

Most of the sides appear to have been truncated by later ploughing, as suggested by the sharp break of slope at the top of the feature.

Group 6. Pit (Fig 46), Fig 47, Section 132)

This pit is located towards the north end of the excavation some 21 metres east of the graves in Group 7. It was 0.73m in diameter, 83m deep and contained four sherds of Anglo-Saxon pottery. The pit truncated an undated linear southwest to northeast aligned gully.

Group 10. Pit. (Fig 46), (Fig 47 Sections 98 and 86)

A 3.7m diameter and 1.3m deep pit (989) was located towards the north of the site just east of the three graves of Group 7. Three sherds of Saxon pottery from the fills and the position of the pit in the stratigraphic sequence strongly suggest an Anglo-Saxon date. The pit is later than the Group 9 ditch which truncates the Anglo Saxon burials, suggesting, perhaps, a post cemetery date.

The pit may have initially been used as a well but the presence of pottery and animal bones in the secondary fills suggests that it was eventually used for the disposal of domestic rubbish.

Tertiary fills of Enclosure Ditch 2

Four sherds of Charnwood Saxon pottery were recovered from the tertiary fills of Enclosure 2 in the Group 59 section. The tertiary fills were dark and closely resemble the spreads recorded in Groups 2 and 14 which had been preserved underneath a medieval headland.

The Amorphous Hollows

Group 25. Amorphous Hollow (Fig 46), (Fig 49 Sections 141, 142 and 143)

This feature was located approximately 25m southwest of the burials in Group 7. Before excavation the feature defined as an irregular area of dark soil. There was no obvious point where a section could be placed to record a profile so it was decided to excavate the feature in a series of squares leaving 0.10m baulks in between.

The hollow (1206) was amorphous in plan with an irregular, 'hummocky' base and sides, extending for a maximum of 6.6m north to south and 5.5m west to east.

The primary fill (1395) was a greenish brown sandy silt containing occasional gravel, bone and charcoal. Unfortunately no dating evidence was retrieved from this fill. The secondary fill (1207) contained Early Iron Age, Late Iron/Roman pottery and a number of sherds dating from the Early Saxon period.

This is one of several amorphous hollows found on this area of the site. Although only Iron Age pottery was recovered from the hollow in Groups 31 and 33, it would seem reasonable to assume that these hollows share the same origin, whether by natural or human action. It seems, however, that only the hollow in Group 25 was open in the Saxon period and was used for the disposal of rubbish, if this is the interpretation which can be accepted for the quantities of animal bone and pottery recovered from the feature. Other interpretations for these are 'pig wallows' or the bottoms of middens (Rackham, *pers comm).*

Of the 154 sherds of Saxon pottery recovered from the site, 49 were derived from the amorphous hollows. The material is fresh and several vessels are represented by more than one sherd It seems likely that the pottery was dumped directly into the hollows rather than incorporated as residual material, as the infrequency and small sherd size of the pottery from the other Saxon groups would suggest. In general the pottery from the amorphous hollows is also different in composition than that from the other Saxon features, although whether this is due

to a functional or date difference is uncertain (Young. Appendix 8)

Group 24 (Fig 46)

Group 24 includes two irregular cuts recorded immediately north of the hollow in Group 25. Cut (1006) was an irregular 1.2m long, 0.8m wide and 0.3m deep pit. It was originally recorded separately from what was believed to be an intersecting cut represented by (992), an oval pit of similar dimensions. However, in the light of further excavation of a number of these type of irregular hollows at the site, it seems likely that these two cuts are connected and part of the same feature. Two sherds of Anglo Saxon pottery and a number of residual Iron Age sherds were recovered from the fills of these cuts.

Groups 2 and 14 (Fig 46)

Towards the north end of the site, immediately south and west of the graves in Group 7, 'spreads' of dark greenish brown clayey silt sealed the tops of the ditches in Groups 95 (Fig 31 Section 138) and 15. In order to reveal the underlying features these deposits were removed to the level of the underlying natural or until the top fills of features were clearly revealed.

Pottery recovered from this deposit was mixed and included Iron Age, Roman and Saxon pieces. The overwhelming majority of the pieces were Iron Age and it is difficult to reconcile this with dating the deposit to the Saxon period.

However, the deposit lies at the top of the stratigraphic sequence, extending into and beyond the tops of the Iron Age and Roman ditches in Groups 95 and 15, supporting a Saxon date, at least on stratigraphic grounds. However, an explanation for the recovery of such large quantities of Iron Age pottery is still needed. Perhaps the deposit was excavated from Iron Age ditches and spread over the area as manuring. The close proximity of the Saxon burials would seem to argue against this and there is an absence of evidence for quarrying of this kind, admittedly from a very small sample of the site.

Inspection of the contour plan on Figure 50 provides a possible clue to the solution of the problem. The very close contours recorded on this area of the site show that the area covered by the deposits in Groups 2 and 14 is slightly elevated above the surrounding area The southwest to northeast aligned furrow in Group 4 terminates just before the Group 2 deposit on the east side of the site (Fig 51). Medieval furrows just to the north of the 'spread' are aligned transverse to those to the south. It seems clear that the area occupied by the Group 2 and 14 layers was once underneath a medieval headland and this accounts for the survival of this 'ridge' of archaeological deposits. The deposit itself is not part of the headland but is archaeological material protected underneath. The dark layers in Groups 2 and 14 might represent *in situ* soil development on the site during the post Roman period, almost in the manner of a 'dark earth'. A very similar deposit fills the top of the ditch of Roman Enclosure 2 and also the triple grave in Group 42. The development of this soil would have extended downwards through earlier archaeological deposits in the tops of ditches which were then recovered during the excavation of an apparently single horizon. Saxon and Roman material would have been incorporated into the layer, but not in the same quantities as contained in the tops of the Iron Age features. Also, the material recovered from the amorphous hollows in Groups 16, 31 and 33 suggests that this area of the site was used for dumping of refuse during the Early Iron Age, perhaps as a midden, and this may account for the

presence of such large quantities of material of this date.

Group 39

Pit or amorphous hollow located within line of west roadside ditch and 27m south of amorphous hollow described in Group 25. One of a number of amorphous features recorded in plan in this area, similar to those excavated to the north and west which contained Early Iron Age material.

This feature however contained far fewer artefacts and may not have been utilised for the disposal of domestic waste.

Two sherds of pottery recovered from the fill date to the Anglo Saxon period.

3.4.8.10 Medieval

Plough furrows Groups 4 and 11 (Fig 51)

Medieval deposits comprised entirely the remains of ridge and furrow agriculture. Characteristically these remains have led to both the destruction of some and preservation of other earlier deposits. Preservation of deposits located under a ridge would be enhanced and protected by the thickened soil profile while those in the line of adjacent furrows are liable to truncation.

The furrows recorded at DBF were mainly southeast to northwest aligned, more or less following the line of the bypass route. It is likely that furrows near the north end of the site on a transverse alignment were separated by a headland.

3.4.8.11 Undated

Group 82 *Cluster of post holes* (Fig 42)

This group of post holes was located towards the south end of the site, some 15m east of Enclosure 1 from the Early Iron Age phase. No dating evidence was retrieved from any of the post holes in the group.

Post hole (1031)
Sub-circular, 0.23m diameter and 0.14m deep post hole with steep, near vertical sides and a flat base.

Post Hole (1037)
Sub-circular, 0.34m diameter and 0.20m deep post hole with steep near vertical sides and a rounded base. Located 1.8m southwest of post hole (1031)

Post Hole (1033)
Sub-circular, 02m wide and 0.14m deep post hole with irregular sides and a tapered base. Located one metre southwest of post hole
(1037).

Post hole (1039)
Sub-circular 0.21m diameter and 0.11m deep post hole with steep sides and a concave base. Part of a line of post holes formed by 1041, 1035 and this post holes

Post Hole (1041)
Sub-circular 0.18m diameter and 0.10m deep post hole with steep sides and a concave base. Part of line formed by (1039), (1035) and this post holes.

Post Hole (1035)
Sub-circular 0.24m wide and 0.10m deep post hole with sides much more gradually sloping to north.

3.4.8.12 Distribution of Surface Finds

As described in the methodology section all finds disturbed during the cleaning of the site were three dimensionally plotted.

Pottery by period (Fig 52)

The density of the plotted surface pottery by period reflects the overall ratios of the excavated material. Material of Iron Age date is the most numerous followed by Roman and then Saxon.

In many respects the distribution of the

pottery is influenced by the physical survival of archaeological deposits at the site. Few pieces of pottery were plotted within the Early Iron Age Enclosure 1, the area of the site where the most features were visible. The visibility of features, and the lack of surface finds, is in large part due this being the highest part of the site where much of the buried soil/occupation which covers much of the rest of the site had probably been truncated by later ploughing.

However, within the overall distribution of pottery there may be information of some significance. A noticeably higher density of pottery of both Iron Age and Roman date was recorded within Enclosure 2. This supports the stratigraphic evidence that the enclosure first originated in the Iron Age and continued into the Roman period. Also, this suggests that the distribution of the plotted pottery can be related to the layout and chronology of the site.

The density of Iron Age pottery is far greater than that of Roman date and suggests that the either the intensity of occupation was significantly reduced, or had shifted outside the line of the area investigated during the latter period.

There is also a higher density of plotted pottery in the region of the amorphous hollow in Group 31 at the north end of the site. This is a reflection of the abundance of Iron Age material from the features themselves and is another indication that the artefacts recovered from the buried soil probably relate to the distribution of features at the site and have not been subject to excessive disturbance either from later phases of settlement or more recent agricultural processes.

Animal Bone (Fig 53)

In general the relative densities and distribution of animal bone plotted at Site 4 is similar to that of the pottery. The increased density of material within Enclosure 2 is repeated, as is that in the area of the amorphous hollow in Group 31.

This is significant in that it supports the interpretation that the artefacts within the buried soils are *in-situ* and have not been unduly disturbed.

Probably the most interesting aspect of the plotted bone is the increased density of animal bone visible within the tertiary fills of the Enclosure 2 ditch (Fig 53). These tertiary fills of Enclosure 2 were phased somewhat uncertainly to the Saxon period based on 4 sherds of Charnwood pottery. Scrutiny of the pottery plots (Fig 52) does show Saxon material in the tertiary fills but at a much lower density than the animal bone. The section excavated across the ditch on the west side of the site did not recover any Saxon pottery at all. This ratio of small quantities of pottery to larger amounts of animal bone in the 3d plotted material is reflected in the stratified faunal remains assemblage. Despite Saxon material forming a very small part of the pottery assemblage, faunal remains phased to this period form the biggest single group in the collection.

With such low quantities of pottery it would be possible to excavate a section across a ditch and retrieve no Saxon sherds, but recover a substantial amount of faunal remains associated with only residual Iron Age and Roman pottery. At Site 4, increased quantities of animal bone are associated with the Saxon phase and are probably much more representative of the intensity of settlement than the pottery which appears to have been relatively scarce.

3.4.9 DISCUSSION

Effectiveness of Techniques

The overall aim of the archaeological work at Fox Cover Farm was to preserve the site *in-situ*. This complies with national policy guidelines as described in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 issued by the government in 1990.

This aim was successfully achieved at Fox Cover Farm by undertaking an initial assessment of the archaeological deposits through a phase of surface recording, subsequent to the stripping of topsoil from over the site. The richness of the archaeological deposits was readily apparent through the density of artefacts and features plotted as part of this initial survey. The central area of the site was then preserved beneath a geotextile and up to 0.75m of overburden on which the road was built. The surface recording and excavation of shallow skeletons were undertaken against the backdrop of keeping construction of the road underway and this required a high level of co-operation between on site archaeologists, the various planning archaeologists involved, the contractors and the funders of the project.

In total it was possible to preserve around 65 % of the archaeological deposits identified at Fox Cover Farm. If preservation *in-situ* had not been feasible, it is likely that a full excavation would have been required, given the richness and quality of the remains on the site. Therefore the chosen mitigation not only preserved deposits which are of at least regional archaeological importance, but also represents a considerable saving of resources which may have been necessary for a more extensive excavation. Depending on the sampling strategy adopted for such an excavation, this would have required at least twice the manpower used to excavate those areas within the lines of the roadside ditches. The savings made through the avoidance of delays to the contractors caused by a lengthy excavation have been considerable.

It is worth stressing that it was only possible to meet these aims through co-operation between all those involved in the project and in particular the willingness of the developers to recognise the importance of the archaeology at an early stage and to alter established plans and designs.

The longer term success of preserving these important archaeological deposits underneath a busy road is more difficult to determine. The impact of vibration and compaction caused by heavy vehicles passing over the road may eventually have a detrimental effect on the underlying remains, but as far as is known by the author, little research has been undertaken to assess this with any accuracy.

More can be said regarding the effect of this preservation *in-situ* policy on the understanding of the archaeological remains themselves. Preservation of this kind was acceptable *because* of the complexity and density of the archaeological deposits at the site. However, the resultant restriction on the excavation of these remains to the two 5m strips within the line of the roadside ditches has greatly reduced the understanding of the site in terms of its stratigraphic record and the distribution of artefacts, features and deposits over the site. Attempting to disentangle the stratigraphic sequence of intercutting ditches within areas covered by buried soil and redeposited gravel was an arduous and sometimes impossible task on site and during the post-excavation process. Small clusters and lines of post holes made little sense within these narrow excavated areas. This was made no easier by the covering of buried soil which effectively masked many of the smaller

features outside the permitted area of excavation.

As the archaeological work was undertaken concurrently with construction of the road, it was crucial that all site operations were undertaken rapidly, efficiently and safely. This was perhaps most vital during the surface recording of the central carriageway which was to be preserved beneath the elevated road surface. As the contractors required access throughout the entire route of the bypass, it was not possible to set aside the site for archaeological recording. The continued movement of construction along the route was achieved by leaving the topsoil intact within five metre strip along the southern edge of the site. In the meantime the remainder of the site was stripped of topsoil and a programme of surface recording was undertaken. This was accomplished by using a Total Station EDM connected to a datalogger using NSS survey software. This method has the advantage of being quicker than conventional methods using planning frames, gridded permatrace and a site grid and enabled the rapid production of site plans at a variety of scales. These plans were then be used to reference and enhance the context recording of the deposits and cuts recorded by the edm survey. The most successful use of the total station was probably in the three dimensional recording of artefacts loosened by the surface cleaning of the site. Plotting these by hand using tapes and handwritten co-ordinates is a time consuming and possibly error prone process, to the extent of being prohibitive in terms of time and resources. Once digitally recorded it is also far easier to manipulate the data during the post excavation process without the need for time consuming data entry.

All of the survey data from the surface recording stage of the project was accurately logged on to Ordnance Survey grid using trigonometric stations supplied by the contractors. However, during the excavation phase of the project it became necessary to establish an internal grid aligned onto the long axis of the site. This led to a number of problems during the post-excavation process as in effect two separate grids were used during the project. With hindsight it would have been preferable to establish a grid on the axis of the site at an early stage and use this throughout the project.

The surface plan compiled from the Total Station EDM survey was crucial in that it enabled the results of the detailed excavations to be placed within some kind of context. In particular, the limits of the two enclosures recorded towards the south end of the site could not have been determined without the information provided by this plan.

If one aspect of the project as a whole could be singled out for criticism, it is that so much unstratified or undated material was recovered. All of the surface pottery and bone was unstratified and all artefacts recovered from the various palaeosols excavated at the site have to be considered unphased. In effect, large amounts of the pottery and animal bone collected at the site could not be assigned to a phase or date with any certainty. Although material can be excluded from analyses if necessary, the question has to be raised at to whether the collection of so much of this material was worthwhile given the limited potential it has within the post excavation process.

Chronology

An extended time span is represented by the archaeological remains discovered at Site 4. Occupation appears to have begun at least by the Neolithic period as indicated by the recovery of flints of this date from a number of contexts at the site. Although not a

primary component of the flint collection, Early Bronze Age types are represented. The crouched burial excavated during the evaluation of the site may also be of Bronze Age date. The gravel layers recorded during the evaluation which were initially thought to represent possible ploughed out round barrows were found to be low banks alongside Early Iron Age or Roman ditches.

An apparent hiatus in the use of the site occurs in the Middle to Late Bronze Age although a single sherd of Late Bronze Age pottery was recovered from the buried soil underneath the gravel bank alongside the north ditch of Enclosure 1.

Intensive settlement appears to have begun in the Early Iron Age. A radiocarbon determination of 635 - 560 BC at 68% probability, obtained from charcoal collected from the hearth at the centre of Structure 1, is associated with diagnostic pottery of Early Iron Age date. Of the Iron Age pottery, Middle Iron Age types form a small but significant percentage. The site stratigraphy does not suggest any particular hiatus of activity through the Iron Age, indeed boundaries of Early Iron Age date must have been maintained to be recut in the Roman period. It is possible that many of the prehistoric sherds identified as broadly Iron Age do in fact date to the middle phase of the period.

Very little of the pottery assemblage dates to the Late Iron Age/Early Roman period and the main evidence for Roman activity lies in the later Roman period, the 3rd and 4th centuries (Darling Appendix 7). It is of considerable interest whether this break in the pottery chronology between the Middle Iron Age and Late Roman periods is real or apparent, considering that there is little evidence for abandonment and re-occupation of the site. Excavations undertaken as part of the Fenland Management Project in 1991 at a site 2.5km to the east of Market Deeping, identified a similar absence of Late Iron Age /Early Roman ceramics although analysis of this well stratified collection may well challenge this position. Analysis of many of pottery collections retrieved during the fieldwalking phase of the Fenland Project showed a similar chronological pattern.

Some of the stratigraphic sequences defined during the excavations at Site 4 would suggest continuity between the Iron Age and Roman phases, conflicting with the evidence suggested by the pottery. The possibility has been raised that Middle Iron Age types of pottery continued in use throughout the later Iron Age (Elsdon, 1992)

Dating of the Saxon pottery and metalwork suggests that settlement during this period was probably concentrated in the 7th century. Saxon features are more numerous towards the north end of the site, away from the focus of the Iron Age and Roman deposits. There is little evidence for continuity between the Roman and Saxon periods in terms of settlement layout and focus. Existing ditches defining enclosures or other boundaries were not recut or maintained during the Saxon phase, suggesting dislocation in the nature of occupation at the site. The use of some areas of the site for the human burial suggests that the main focus of settlement had shifted slightly during the Saxon period. Even so the recovery of a substantial quantity of pottery and animal bone from features such as the amorphous hollow in Group 25 indicates that the Site 4 continued in use as a settlement well into the Saxon period.

The variation within fabric subgroups of Saxon pottery and the clear differences in the material from the amorphous hollows and that from the other groups at the site would suggest more than one short period of occupation. (Young Appendix 8). This

suggestion is also supported by the length of some of the stratigraphic sequences of Saxon features at the site. It is likely that the Saxon occupation at the site was much more substantial than implied by the low feature count and the small quantity of pottery collected. As discussed in the section describing the three dimensionally plotted animal bone, pottery appears to have been relatively scarce during the Saxon phase. However, Saxon material forms the largest single group among the faunal remains. Saxon deposits must have once extended across the site but were only recorded where preserved in the tops of earlier ditches or beneath the medieval headland.

Maxey-type pottery is absent from the site, suggesting that occupation had ceased by the Middle Saxon period. However, Young (Appendix 8) notes that shell gritted Middle Saxon pottery of Maxey type may have gone undetected among the Iron Age pottery found at the site.

During the medieval period the site was under arable agricultural management and several plough furrows of this date were recorded during the excavations.

Environment

Location of the site on a low gravel ridge within the Welland Valley flood plain suggests that the occupants of the site would probably have experienced some problems with flooding, during the winter months at least. Much of the alluvium which is distributed across the Welland valley floodplain is thought to have been deposited during the Iron Age and Roman periods (French 1990) Alluvial deposits were recorded feathering out onto the edge of the island, within 100m of the main focus of the settlement although these may have been lain down considerably earlier or later than the main phases of occupation.

The composition of the small vertebrate bone assemblage from sieved environmental samples suggests that the area surrounding the site throughout its history was probably open country, with pasture and arable land dissected by dykes and ditches but little woodland or scrub (Rackham, Appendix 14). Water vole, field vole, grass snakes and amphibians occur but species such as wood mouse or bank vole which prefer woodland, hedgerow or scrub environments were absent. Assessment of the charcoal from the hearth and other features suggests an open landscape but with more coverage of light woodland. However, it is more likely that fuel would be imported and these residues might not be a true reflection of the immediate environment at the site.

This impression of an open, relatively treeless environment is supported by the analyses of macro-fossils retrieved from the single waterlogged environmental sample from Site 4. The sample was of Middle Iron Age date and produced an assemblage composed primarily of weed, grassland wetland and aquatic species, with very few remains of trees and shrubs. Locally open vegetation of poorly-drained weedy grassland, with some standing water in deep features, appears to be represented (Fryer, Appendix 15). Pollen monoliths from the sediments of two of the Iron Age ditches contained very few palynomorphs but those present were predominantly of plant types found in open, weedy grassland.

Settlement

The flint assemblage suggests domestic occupation occurred at the site during the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. Within the excavated areas no features dateable to this period were recorded and it seems that any occupation of the site during this time left little physical impact. This is not surprising

and is consistent with the perceived character of domestic settlement for this period within British archaeology. The efforts of the local communities may have been concentrated on building the 'ritual landscape' of the area which has received so much archaeological attention.

Despite the constraints imposed by the restricted area of excavation it was possible to identify the basic elements of settlement layout for the Early Iron Age period, and to a lesser extent for the Middle Iron Age and Roman phases.

There is reasonably secure evidence to suggest that during the Iron Age the community at Fox Cover Farm inhabited circular timber built roundhouses located within small ditched enclosures, probably about 30m by 30m in extent. A similar settlement form was identified during excavations at the Early Iron Age sites at Tallington. West Deeping (Simpson 1993) and at Plants Farm, Maxey (Gurney *et al* 1993a). Circular structures located within rectilinear enclosure complexes were also recorded during the Bardyke West and East field excavations at Maxey, although the features at these site are probably of Middle Iron Age date (Simpson 1985).

The settlement during the Early Iron Age was within Enclosure 1, towards the south of the excavated area. Structure 1 was probably positioned near the centre of the enclosure although this is speculative given the limited area available for investigation. The entrance of the house was probably between east and southeast. the common orientation for roundhouses of this period. Parts of four other ring gullies were recorded by surface plan within the area of the road reserved for preservation. The positions of two of these suggest that they may well be contemporaries of Structure 1, perhaps acting as workshops or cookhouses. Certainly there is no sign of industrial or food processing activity within Structure 1.

Outside of Enclosure 1 Early Iron Age features include the enigmatic amorphous hollows in Groups 31, 16 and 33. Whatever the origins of these features they appear eventually to have eventually acted as receptacles for domestic refuse.

Diagnostically Middle Iron Age pottery was mainly recovered from features such as the large ditch in Group 95 and from the pit in Group 68 adjacent to ditch 103. These all lie to the north of Enclosure 1. However, to have survived into the Roman period, it seems likely that the north ditch of Enclosure 1 was maintained as a boundary throughout the Iron Age.

It has to be stressed that the recorded layout of the settlement is based on a surface plan and excavation within the two approximately 5m strips within the lines of the proposed roadside ditches. The palimpsest of features recorded in plan between these areas gives an indication of how complex the settlement layout is and how difficult it is to extrapolate evidence.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the settlement layout is its continuity. Sections excavated across enclosure ditches showed repeated recutting over particularly long time spans. It seems likely that the ditches of both Enclosures 1 and 2 were both first cut in the Early Iron Age and persisted as boundaries into the Roman period. Settlement mobility and layout seems to have been remarkably static throughout these periods.

No definite buildings of Roman date were recorded at the site although it is conceivable that some of the many post hole groups recorded at the site form parts of timber built structures. However, in

comparison to the abundance of Iron Age ceramics only small quantities of Roman pottery were recovered. This suggests that occupation within the excavated area in the Roman period was not as intensive as during the Iron Age. During the Roman period the corner of Enclosure 2 was used as a cemetery, suggesting that the settlement areas may have been further afield, possibly to the northwest but still within the enclosure. The levelling of this area of the site suggested by the truncated ditches and spread of gravel recorded in Group 51 could be associated with the laying out of the cemetery.

There is no evidence to suggest that the site would have looked much different in the Roman period than it did in the Iron Age. There is no evidence for example of the introduction of stone buildings, or of significant quantities of bricks and tile to suggest that these may have been located nearby. However, the identification of a possible tegula and a fragment of flue tile among the 10 pieces of Ceramic Building Material recovered during the excavations could suggest that a tiled building was located somewhere in the vicinity (Mills Appendix 9).

Within the excavated area there are few features of Saxon date to suggest what form the settlement may have taken. It is probably significant, however, that the linear features which were recorded take on different alignments than those of the Iron Age and Roman periods.

Economy and Trade

Despite the processing of over 200 environmental samples very few preserved or charred cereal remains were found and no evidence was found for the processing of grain. This might suggest that either grain arrived already cleaned or that this activity took place away from the excavated area (Fryer, Appendix 15). Whatever the case the quern fragments recovered from Early Iron Age Pit Group 61 and in the area of the Roman ditch in Group 94 demonstrate that the milling of grain was undertaken at the site. Moreover, it would appear that the complete upper part of a saddle quern and other fragments recovered from pit 1208 were deliberately placed and buried. It is not surprising that querns could become both valuable and symbolic artefacts given their role in the production of basic food items which themselves may have had to arrive at the site as traded items. The disposal of used and broken querns may have been linked with rituals to maintain and reinforce procurement and production of grain related food products. None of the Group 61 pits excavated would have acted as grain stores. It is of course possible that stores took the form of raised granaries of the 'four poster' type so often recorded on Iron Age sites. Presumably these would have been more suitable in an area like the Welland Valley with a high water table.

The lack of evidence for cereal crop processing might suggest that the agricultural economy was oriented more towards stock raising than grain production. The location of the site, on a low gravel ridge on the Welland flood plain, an area where flooding would have no doubt occurred regularly during wet winters, would certainly here favoured a pastoral rather than arable economy. However, cereal pollen was present in a monolith from an Iron Age ditch and might indicate small scale crop production or processing nearby. Moreover, there is some suggestion of ard ploughing in the micromorphology sample (French Appendix 12)

Analysis of the animal bone assemblage indicates a shift towards the keeping of cattle over sheep between the Iron Age and

the Roman and Saxon periods. (Rackham Appendix 14). However, sheep were more numerous in all periods, although cattle predominate in terms of their meat contribution and dietary importance, a dominance which increased in the Roman and Saxon periods. Pigs also seem to have formed a higher proportion of the animal stock in the Iron Age than in these later periods. This pattern was apparent in the faunal remains recovered at Rectory Farm, West Deeping (Rackham Appendix 14). This shift might indicate that during the later Roman period the community at Fox Cover Farm was able to look towards production of meat for a market rather than for purely domestic consumption (Rackham, *pers com*). This was not a pattern detected in the material collected during the excavations at the nearby Maxey site (Halstead 1985, 221)

No evidence for changes in the husbandry of sheep were detected between periods. Most periods indicate slaughter of immature, sub adult and adult sheep, although no elderly animals were recorded. The pattern may reflect seasonal or annual culling. It would appear that sheep husbandry at Site 4 was oriented towards mixed subsistence farming, with no sign of specialised wool or meat production.

Few bones of wild species were present within the animal bone assemblage. Despite the sieving of over 200 environmental samples through 5mm and 3mm mesh only ten fish bones were recovered. It seems that the inhabitants of the Site 4 were conservative farmers who found spent little time hunting or fishing to supplement their diet. There is also little evidence of diversification in the range of domestic species exploited. Chicken bones were retrieved from Roman contexts but their occurrence is rare. Geese also first appear in the Roman period but do not become important during the Saxon period. (Rackham, Appendix 14)

It is intriguing that a small amount of briquetage was recovered during the excavations. Among the briquetage were fragments of 'troughs' commonly thought to have been used as receptacles during the evaporation of brine to produce salt. Salt production is known to have been undertaken on the fen edge from as early as the Middle Bronze Age but was more commonly practiced during the Iron Age and Roman periods. No supports or clips which are commonly associated with the production of salt were found at Site 4 and it has been suggested that the briquetage recovered during the excavation may represent evidence for trade with communities along the fen edge (Morris, Appendix 7). The fabrics of the briquetage resembles that recovered during the Fenland Management Project excavations at a site some 4km to the east and it is possible that this site may have been the source for the Site 4 briquetage.

However, the making of salt at Site 4 cannot be ruled out as excavations on a Late Bronze Age site near Northborough just 1km to the south, recovered pieces of briquetage which are undoubtedly related to production.

Although recovered in very small quantities from environmental samples, the hammerscale demonstrates that iron smithing was undertaken at the site during the Iron Age. More uncertain is the origin of the two pieces of tap slag and two fragments of furnace slag. The dating of this material, derived from the dark spread of Saxon material preserved underneath the headland and the Early Iron Age pit in Group 3, is uncertain. The pieces from the dark spread are very likely to be residual, like much of the pottery from the deposit. Cowgill (Appendix 10) thinks iron production at the

site extremely unlikely given the perceived lack of trees as a fuel source in the area. However, perhaps substantial stands of trees were growing on Maxey island located immediately to the west. The three loomweights recovered from stratified Iron Age contexts show that at least some textile production was undertaken. Fragments of at least seven unstratified triangular loomweights were also found. These are of a type commonly found on Iron Age sites in the region.

Like that from many other sites in the region, the pottery from the Saxon features at Site 4 contained a high proportion of sherds of Charnwood type. It is thought that the source of the clay for this pottery lies to the south of Charnwood forest in Leicestershire (Young Appendix 8). It seems that the community at Site 4 was integrated into the trade network operating at the time which brought this hand made pottery over considerable distances.

Status and wealth

In terms of site status, there seems no reason to differentiate the Fox Cover site from others excavated in the region. Although only a small part of Site 4 was investigated, the recorded Iron Age and Roman remains seem to resemble those excavated at Maxey and Tallington in terms of the form of settlement within small ditched enclosures. However, Site 4 appears to have been more intensively occupied and perhaps over a longer period. In this sense the community was enduring, suggesting a sturdy and stable economic base.

Little metalwork was recovered during the excavations despite metal detection of all surfaces prior to excavation. The iron brooch recovered from the dark spread in Group 14 was the only piece of Late Iron Age/Early Roman metalwork recovered during the excavations. However, a Corieltauvian minted silver Late Iron Age coin found at the site prior to the excavations by a local metal detectorist demonstrates that the occupants of the site did have access to currency. Five brooches and part of a bracelet of Roman date. (Taylor, Appendix 11) were also recovered by the metal detectorist. The discovery of these pieces might suggest that metalwork was more common at the site during the Roman period than reflected in the sparsity found during the excavation.

Burial and Funerary practice

A long tradition of human burial is represented at Site 4. Although not supported by firm dating evidence, a crouched burial discovered during evaluation is thought to date to around the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age period. The lack of extensive excavation makes it difficult to place the burial in context, but it may have been associated with a small ring ditch. Both the burial and the ring ditch lay outside of the area investigated during the excavation. As suggested by the recovery of a number of worked flints of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date and a number of sherds of pottery of the period, it is likely that the Site 4 was also the location of a domestic settlement at the time of this burial. This burial at least was not excluded from the area of the living in a monumental barrow cemetery.

The burial tradition at the site during the Iron Age is represented by a crouched inhumation apparently sited adjacent to a linear ditch. The context of this burial, next to a boundary, may have had symbolic associations, placing the dead in an area which had meaning to the living, defining the limits space and place.

The Group 44 Roman cemetery was located

in the corner of Enclosure 2, also in an area where space and place are physically defined. Recent research (Pearce, *pers comm*) has shown that disposal of the dead alongside ditched boundaries was a common practice on rural Roman sites in central southern England and the west country. The close proximity of the sheep burials also has parallels elsewhere. Animal burials were also recovered in similar locations to adult burials from Maddington, Wiltshire (Mckinley and Heaton 1996) and within the settlement area at Foxton, Cambridgeshire (Price *et al.* 1997).

Human inhumation burials alongside ditches have were recorded during the excavations at Rectory Farm, West Deeping, approximately 4km northwest of Site 4 (Casa *pers comm*).

Precise dating of the Group 44 cemetery was problematical as no dateable grave goods accompanied the burials. The date of these burials is based on the location of the burials in the corner of Roman Enclosure 2, redeposited Roman pottery in one of the graves and the style of burial. Decapitation as displayed in graves 004 and 013 is predominantly a feature of burial rites in the Roman period (Gowland, Appendix 13). All of the graves in Group 44 are orientated east to west or north to south. This could be interpreted as reflecting changing religious belief, with the east -west burials belonging to a later Christian phase. However, two of the west to east graves contained decapitation burials with the head placed between the thighs or feet, thought to be a typically pagan practice. It seems most likely that the variation of alignment and burial rite in the Group 42 graves reflects a wide spectrum of belief, (Gowland Appendix 13) possibly extending across the pagan and christian phases of Roman period. The alignment of graves could of course be influenced by that of significant features already prevailing at the site, such as the ditches of Enclosure 2.

Human burial continued at the site during the Anglo-Saxon period, probably during the 7th century as indicated by the metalwork found within some of the graves. It may be possible to distinguish two distinct styles of burial within the Anglo-Saxon graves. The Group 7 burials located towards the north end of the site appear to be more formal and localised than the those in Group 42. Little care was taken in the disposal of the three bodies in grave 021 which appear to have been buried in a half filled pit. It seems likely that the burials in Group 7 may form part of a larger cemetery located outside the line of the bypass.

The deaths of the three individuals in grave 021 must have occurred almost contemporaneously and the possibility that the group represents a single family cannot be dismissed. The lack of care with which the group was buried suggests a hurried burial, perhaps disease having killed the group (Gowland, Appendix 13). However, it seems unlikely that even with an extremely virulent disease that three people from such a small community would die so close together. Perhaps the three suffered violent deaths which were not detectable in the skeletal remains. Similar circumstances could surround the burial of the two skeletons in grave (007). Perhaps these burials were excluded from the main cemetery due to the circumstances of their deaths rather than their status in life. The burials are apparently not located with reference to any contemporary linear features or other boundaries.

Apart from the spear found with skeleton 81, the metalwork and other artefacts recovered from the Saxon graves are probably items of everyday attire (Cowgill, Appendix 10).

Preservation

Probably the most striking aspect of the Fox Cover Farm site is its remarkable preservation. Buried soils containing abundant artefacts, upcast gravel banks adjacent to ditches and even floor deposits within building survived at the site. Undoubtedly the ridges between the medieval plough furrows have been largely responsible for this preservation. The plough furrows themselves have penetrated the buried soils and gravel banks and truncated other shallow deposits such as the burials. Between the furrows, however, archaeological deposits have been protected. More recent ploughing has in effect smoothed out the surface of the field and begun to destroy the uppermost deposits over the whole site. Many of the shallow burials, for example, were truncated by modern ploughing.

Thin alluvial cover was recorded above archaeological layers over much of the Cambridgeshire section of the bypass route. Although no clays were recorded over the gravel ridge on which the Fox Cover Farm site is situated, it is possible that these are now incorporated into the current topsoil. These could have assisted in the protection of underlying archaeological layers. Archaeological deposits would also have been preserved beneath the raised ridges of the medieval strip fields.

Whatever the reason, it is certain that the survival of the kind of deposits recorded at Fox Cover Farm is a rarity. It is unlikely that the shallow features which comprised Structure 1 will have survived on many ploughed sites.

3.5 Site 5 DBM97

Deeping Bypass Maxey

3.5.1 Aims and Objectives

Aerial photographs revealed a possible ditched enclosure some 350m northwest of the Fox Cover Farm site (Fig 54). A Trench placed in this area during the evaluation located ditches but no dating evidence was retrieved

The brief written for the excavation phase of the bypass project required that three 5m square trenches be targeted on the cropmarks with a specific aim of retrieving dating evidence.

3.5.2 Specific Methodology

The 5m squares to be excavated were surveyed onto co-ordinates taken from the 1:2500 scale aerial photographic plot using a Total Station EDM.

3.5.3 Results Trench 1

Topsoil stripping revealed a layer of gravel at the south corner of the trench. In the remainder of the trench, this gravel was sealed by a layer of clay. A 1m wide sondage was hand dug through the clay layer across the alignment of the linear cropmark.

Phase 1 Natural deposits

A 0.55m thick sequence of sandy gravels formed the earliest deposits in the trench and comprise contexts (005), (007) and (004) (Fig 55, Section 1) These appear to have either been truncated or undulate naturally, as deposit (004) was recorded at the south end of the trench protruding through a surrounding clay layer (Fig 56).

Phase 2 Undated Features

At the south end of the section, cut through

clay layer (001), a 0.5m deep and 1.8m wide irregular cut (003) was recorded. As the surface of the trench was machined to the top of the overlying clay judging the alignment of the ditch was difficult. However, from the section the alignment of the feature would seem to match that of the plotted enclosure shaped crop mark. No artefacts were recovered from the fills of the ditch. At the north end of the section a 0.35m deep and 1.7m wide ditch with a flat base was recorded. This was completely filled with (008) a deposit which closely resembled the surface clay (001). No finds were recovered from either ditch.

3.5.4 Results Trench 2

This trench was placed over a west east aligned crop mark identified just to the north of Mill Road and thought to represent a section of ditch forming part of a possible field system (Fig 54).

A south southwest to north northeast linear ditch (012) (Fig 57, Fig 55, Sections 2 and 3) identified in this trench is very likely to represent this cropmark. The ditch recorded in Trench 2 is on an almost identical alignment to the cropmark. However, as the plotted survey places this feature some five metres to the south of the cropmark, there is some doubt as to wether they are the same features. No artefacts were recovered from the fills of (012) but this 1.4m wide and 0.4m deep feature is probably a recut of an earlier ditch filled by (011) from which four sherds of pottery of unknown date were recovered.

The tertiary fill of cut (012) is probably a layer of alluvial clay. This layer represents the edge of an area of extensive alluvium covering the floodplain and surrounding the gravel island on which Maxey is located.

3.5.5 Results Trench 3

Trench 3 was positioned to investigate the north side of the possible ditched enclosure identified as a cropmark The trench was 3m wide and 7m long and appears to have accurately located a west east aligned ditch which is likely to form part of the targeted linear cropmark.

The ditch (028) was 0.5m deep and 1.5m wide and appears to have been recut on at least two occasions. Two of the upper fills (023) and (020) are probably alluvial sediments (Fig 55 Section 5). Some fragments of animal bone and four worked flints were recovered from the ditch. The flints can be broadly characterised as of earlier Neolithic to Bronze Age in date but could easily be residual within the fills of the ditch. The feature is likely to be a contemporary of ditch (012) in Trench 2, which could be an internal division of the same enclosure.

3.6 Site 6 DBS97 Deeping Bypass South Welland

A trench located in this area during the evaluation had recorded a number of possible post holes and gullies. However, no dateable material was present. Three fragments of fired clay were also retrieved from the fill of one of the post holes. During the main phase of excavation logistical problems were encountered. The tracked 360 degree mechanical excavator used to strip topsoil from over the archaeological sites were considerably larger than the machines used during the evaluation. Health and safety regulations did not permit the tracked vehicles to operate directly under power lines which crossed the bypass route in this area.

However it was possible to strip a 20m x 30m area of topsoil and alluvium immediately adjacent to the evaluation

trench. No further archaeological deposits were recorded and with the agreement of the Cambridge County Council Archaeological Development Control Officer, it was agreed that further work in this area would be unproductive.

3.7 Site 7 DBD97 Deeping Bypass West Deeping.

3.7.1 Summary of Objectives

This site was identified as a possible enclosure from the sketch plotting of aerial photographs undertaken as part of the desktop assessment of the archaeological impact of the proposed Market Deeping bypass in Lincolnshire.

The plotted cropmarks in this area appeared to represent a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure and a trackway approaching from the southwest. Subsequent geophysical survey and excavation undertaken during the evaluation of the Lincolnshire part of the route recorded a substantial ditch containing Roman pottery along with pits and other features of archaeological origin, within the interior of the enclosure.

3.7.2 Specific Methodology

As this area of the bypass was to be dual carriageway, a 40m x 40m area was stripped of topsoil, considerably wider than elsewhere along the route. This revealed ditches of the west side of the enclosure and a linear, southwest to northeast aligned ditch which was assumed to represent the 'trackway' identified on aerial photographs.

In line with the other sites excavated along the line of the bypass route, a pre-excavation plan of the site was compiled using a Total Station EDM and NSS datalogger to collect raw data to be processed and converted to a CAD drawing on a PC using Survpro software.

3.7.3 Results

As anticipated very little of the interior of the enclosure was revealed within the stripped area. However, a ditch extending from the southwest to northeast corner of the excavation is likely to represent what was thought to be a trackway identified on aerial photographs.

Excavation revealed evidence for activity during the Late Bronze Age, Middle Iron Age and Roman periods. The linear ditch which appeared to correspond with the 'trackway', identified on aerial photographs may relate to the field system of the same date identified at the extensive excavations undertaken at West Deeping some 3km to the west. A pit recorded within the enclosure contained scored ware pottery indicating occupation at the site during the Middle Iron Age. A series of recuts was identified within the ditch defining the enclosed area but all these were dateable to the Roman period. It is likely that if the Iron Age occupation had been surrounded by a ditch the latter may have been completely truncated by the Roman phases.

Group 9 Late Bronze Age Prehistoric Linears (Fig 58)

The earliest dated features on the site were two parallel, closely spaced slightly curving ditches running diagonally across the excavated area on southwest to northeast alignments.

Both were truncated by ditches associated with the Roman and possibly Iron Age enclosure located towards the east side of the area of investigation.

A section (Fig 59 Section 2) excavated across the southern ditch revealed at least four recuts. Although the earliest cut in the sequence (028) was central to the feature, the remaining phases progress from northwest to southeast. This might indicate that a bank had once existed on the north side of the ditch. At 0.60m deep and at least 1.46m wide, the first visible recut is the deepest and widest in the sequence; the remainder being no more than 0.45m deep. The latest recut (023) was 0.19m deep and 0.52m wide, the shallowest and narrowest recorded in the section.

This sequence of recuts is not repeated in the section excavated across the parallel ditch to the north. Here a single 2.5m wide and 0.30m deep ditch cut (031) was recorded. However, there is some evidence to suggest that a single phase is unlikely and a dip in the base of the feature at the northwest end of the section may represent a recut not visible within the overlying ditch fills. Nevertheless, in a second section dug across this ditch some 12m to the southwest, a single phase was also recorded. The ditch here was slightly wider, at 2.7m, but shared the same maximum depth of 0.31m. A primary fill (029) and a secondary fill (030) were also visible in this section.

Although pottery recovered from the fills of these features was mostly undiagnostic three sherds from fill (005) of the north ditch are likely to be of Late Bronze Age date.

Iron Age

Evaluation of the site had suggested that Saxon ceramics were present on the site. As excavation proceeded on the site it became clear that this pottery had probably been misidentified and that an Iron Age phase was present on the site.

Group 10 Iron Age Pit (Fig 59 Section 3)

A 0.7m diameter and 0.4m deep pit (011, Group 10) recorded adjacent to the east limit of excavation contained sherds of scored ware pottery thought to date from the Middle to Late Iron Age. It is possible that deposit (032) forming a layer around the sides of the pit represents a deliberate clay lining.

The fill overlying the lining contained charcoal, pottery and animal bone, suggesting that at some stage the pit was used for the disposal of domestic waste. The original function of the pit may have been as a store for grain or other food items.

More importantly the presence of the pit demonstrates that the enclosure was probably first used in the Iron Age.

First Phase of enclosure. Iron Age

Three separate ditches revealed after the stripping of the area appeared to relate to entities identified during the geophysical survey or aerial photographic plot. A curving ditch extending eastwards beneath the east limit of excavation represents the west corner of a round cornered, rhombus-shaped cropmark plotted adjacent to the bypass route. This feature appears to be related to a rectilinear cropmark which forms a right angle between the southwest and southeast corners of the rhombus-shaped feature. Within the stripped area two linear features extending across the width of the east side of the excavation are likely to represent these cropmark features.

The section excavated across the curving ditch revealed at least four recuts (Fig 59 Section 17). The ditch (125) recorded at the west limit of the section contained sherds of distinctly Middle Iron Age type. However, the stratigraphic relationship between (125)

and the adjacent ditch (126) was far from clear and the former was recorded as being the earliest. The recovery of Middle Iron Age sherds and no Roman pottery from the ditch would strongly suggest a date in the former period.

Possible Iron Age

Group 14 Possible Pit

This unexcavated possible pit recorded towards the north limit of excavation pre-dates the gully in Group 12. As the Group 12 gully pre-dates the earliest Roman enclosure ditch, the Group 14 feature is thought to be Iron Age in date.

Group 13 Post Hole

No dating evidence was recovered from this 0.35m diameter and 0.1m deep post hole. It is thought to be of Iron Age date only because it is located within an area of features of similar date.

Group 12 Gully

A north-northwest to south-southeast aligned linear gully (Group 12) extended some 3.7m from the north limit of excavation to where it was truncated by the ditch recorded in Group 8, the earliest phase of the Roman enclosure.

No artefacts were recovered from the gully but as it was truncated by the earliest Roman phase of the enclosure it is thought likely to probably date to the Iron Age.

First Roman phase of enclosure. Group 8 linear.

Roman pottery of middle to late second and second to third century was recovered from a linear feature (Group 8) extending from the south limit of excavation and turning eastwards more or less adjacent to the corner of the arc-shaped ditch. The sections excavated across the Group 8 linear ditch revealed that the feature had been recut at least twice, but to the same depth of around 0.5m. As Group 8 was truncated by the Roman phases of the arc-shaped ditch it has to be earlier in date. The problem with this is that the earliest phase of the arc-shaped ditch is apparently Iron Age, suggesting that the enclosure was originally cut on the line of the arc, then on the line of the Group 8 linear, and then back to the arc shape.

Second Roman phase of enclosure. Group 4 linear.

This linear extends from the south limit of excavation some 3.5m east of the Group 8 ditch but on the same alignment. The ditch had probably been recut on at least two occasions. The earliest phase was a maximum 1m deep and 1.4m wide, with a flat, slightly sloping, 0.5m wide base. The two recuts were shallower and narrower with rounded (154) and tapered (153) bases respectively. The location and depth of this ditch would suggest that it is likely to have caused the linear anomaly detected during the geophysical survey. Also the rectilinear 'corner' recorded as a cropmark is likely to be represented by this ditch within the excavated area. Pottery recovered from the primary fill (052) of the earliest phase of this ditch is thought to date to the second century or later.

A small sondage excavated at the junction of the Group 4 linear and the curved Group 3 phase of the enclosure ditch showed the latter to be stratigraphically later, although the curved line appears to have been followed during the Iron Age. Also the Group 4 ditch was not recorded in the section excavated across the curved ditch in

Group 3. At the north end of the excavation a relationship was recorded in plan showing that the group 4 linear cut through the first Roman phase of the enclosure defined in Group 8.

Third Roman phase of Enclosure Group 3

The section cut across the curved phase of the enclosure recorded several phases of the ditch, including one which contained only Iron Age pottery. This only became apparent during the post-excavation and poses some problems for the accepted on-site sequence.

Within the section dug across the Group 3 ditch three phases of ditch cutting belonging to the Roman period were identified. Two of the ditches (128) and (126) were stratigraphically separated but were both stratigraphically earlier than ditch (127). Determining the stratigraphic relationship with Iron Age ditch (125) was problematical. The pottery from these ditches did not show any significant chronological variations in date and was mostly of second to third century date.

Plant macrofossils within a waterlogged sample from context (105) in ditch (126) include seeds/fruits of wetland and aquatic plants and few taxa of trees and shrubs.

Undated Roman

Group 7 Linear Gully

A linear gully recorded on a west-northwest to south-southeast alignment truncated the ditch in Group 8 which is thought to be associated with the first phase of the Roman enclosure. No dateable artefacts were recovered from the 0.2m deep gully.

Group 6 Linear Gully

A shallow, linear, north/south aligned gully recorded adjacent to the north limit of excavation is thought to date to the Roman period on stratigraphic grounds.

This 0.15m deep round based gully truncated a second gully in Group 7 which is known to post-date the first ditch (Group 8) of the Roman enclosure.

Group 5 Cremation burial.

A Roman pottery vessel containing a cremation was recovered from a 0.40 m diameter and 0.10m deep pit located towards the north limit of the site, adjacent to the west edge of the curved ditch in Group 3. The pot was probably placed in the pit on its side.

MEDIEVAL

Group 2. Medieval Furrows

This group includes all of the medieval furrows recorded across the site. These were recorded on a north-northwest to south-southeast alignment across the site. The fills of the furrows masked extensive areas of archaeology on the site.

3.7.4 Discussion

The chronology of Site 7 broadly resembles that established at Site 4. Occupation appears to start in the Middle Iron Age although there is some evidence for earlier activity at the site, probably in the Late Bronze Age. The site continued to be used into the Roman period, although typically for the region, little evidence of a Late Iron Age /Early Roman phase of activity was recorded at the site (Precious, Appendix 7).

The shallow curvilinear ditches which cross the site are likely to be associated with the

similarly aligned Late Bronze Age system which has been recorded some 3km to the west at West Deeping. The ditches recorded at Site 7 were shallow and it may be that others in the area would not appear as cropmarks. Also, intervening areas of post-Bronze Age alluvium may be masking parts of the field system.

It seems that prehistoric communities in this area of the Welland valley found it necessary to demarcate the landscape by at least the Late Bronze Age. Frequent recutting of the ditches indicated that these boundaries were redefined periodically, possibly over several centuries.

Although a scatter of Roman pottery was found in the area of the enclosure during fieldwalking undertaken as part of the evaluation, ceramics of Iron Age date were absent from the collection. This repeats a pattern on fen-edge sites detected during the Fenland Survey and Management projects.

As the interior of the enclosure lay outside of the area of excavation it was not possible to establish any details regarding the character of the occupation at the site. Quantities of pottery, an Iron Age pit excavated just inside the enclosure ditch, and the gullies recorded near to the north limit of excavation suggest that the site functioned as a settlement for a time at least. Recutting and remodelling of the enclosure reflect the extended period over which it was used. The size of the enclosure would suggest a small-scale settlement, probably represented by a one or two houses. Few fine wares were present among the Roman pottery (Precious Appendix 7) to suggest that the community was particularly affluent or of high status.

Charred cereals were present in low concentrations in some of the environmental sample from the site, suggesting that arable production was not an important part of the local economy or that features sampled were peripheral to areas of cereal processing (Fryer, Appendix 15).

Macro-fossils recovered from the waterlogged sample in Roman ditch (126) indicate locally open vegetation of poorly-drained weedy grassland, with some standing water in deep features (Fryer, Appendix 15).

3.8 Site 8 DBB97 Deeping Bypass Barrows

3.8.1 Background

Sketch plotting of aerial photographs undertaken as part of the desk top assessment identified a number of cropmarks on the outskirts of the north side of Market Deeping (Fig 63, Plate 39). A number of these were thought to represent circular ring ditches which once surrounded now flattened Early Bronze Age round barrows.

The Market Deeping ring ditches can be considered as part of a larger group comprising at least 100 barrows situated on the lower Welland/fen-edge interface (French 1994). In 1991 a large, multi-phase barrow was excavated as part of the Fenland Management Project at Oat Sheaf House, Deeping St. Nicholas. Construction of the monument was pre-dated by Late Neolithic activity and the primary interment was radiocarbon dated to 3557 ± 38BP (2030 - 1775 cal BC at 95% probability. Analyses of the pollen and molluscs from the soils buried beneath the mound indicate a cleared, generally open landscape by the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age period. This monument is one of at least five located some 5km northeast of the group adjacent to the A15 in Market Deeping. A similarly large and complex multi-phase barrow was excavated in 1964 by W.G. Simpson (May,

1976). In this case the primary burial was accompanied by a complete food vessel urn.

A poorly preserved burial mound was excavated at Dowsby on the fen edge some 8km to the north as part of the Fenland Management Project (Lane 2000a). Here the primary interment was a collared urn containing a cremation placed on the pre-mound surface. No inhumations were recorded.

Two barrows were excavated during the excavations undertaken in advance of construction of the Glinton A15 bypass. Under one of the barrow mounds 16 grave pits each containing an inhumation were discovered. Grave goods included a long necked beaker vessel, flints knives and a small bronze dagger. No burials were found under the second mound (French, forthcoming).

Trenches cut across two of the Market Deeping ditches during the archaeological evaluation undertaken in 1996 recovered Early Bronze Age pottery from ditches, supporting the interpretation that these features once formed parts of barrow monuments.

The cropmark plot suggested that at least four ring ditches survived in the area, two of which lay in the line of the bypass route. A geophysical survey undertaken as part of the main phase of archaeological investigation identified one of the ring ditches recorded during the evaluation (Fig 60). No anomaly characteristic of a ring ditch was detected in the area where the second ring ditch was thought to be located.

3.8.2 Summary of Objectives

The specific aims of the excavations within the area of the barrow cemetery can be found in Appendix 2. However, the general aims of the excavations were to recover any details of the construction of the monuments, to locate and excavation any burials which might survive within the area of the ring ditches and to recover any evidence of structures on the sites which might represents mortuary structures or buildings associated with funerary practice. The excavations of these monuments would also provide valuable comparative data to contrast with that from excavations undertaken on the barrows at Deeping St. Nicholas, Tallington and Glinton.

3.8.3 Methodology

The evaluation trench placed over this ring ditch had yielded tentative evidence for the survival of a possible barrow mound. During the excavation phase one metre wide cross baulks were left *in situ* to allow for the recording of any evidence for the survival of buried soils or mound material in section.

Topsoil was removed from over the ring ditch until either archaeological or natural deposits were encountered. Subsequently, all archaeological deposits were excavated by hand.

When fully excavated the cross baulks were inspected by the project micromorphologist to identify any buried soils which might have survived underneath the barrow mound.

All features thought to be archaeological identified within the ring ditch were half or quarter sectioned and stratigraphic relationships investigated.

A 2m wide and 5m long sondage was hand excavated from the machined level adjacent to the east face of the north south cross baulk, at the centre of the ring ditch. This was undertaken to ensure that any burials which might have been sealed by a mound

would not be missed. It was felt that it might be difficult to detect any grave cut, as the grave would have been backfilled with the excavated material almost immediately after being dug.

After recording of the sections, the cross baulks at the centre of the mound were removed and all deposits over a 5m square area at the centre of the ring ditch were excavated to the level of the natural gravels.

3.8.4 Results

Natural Deposits.

Naturally formed deposits are represented by various gravely sands (009), (138), (139), (129), (128), (127), (060), (074) and (138) recorded across the site. These deposits which were recorded in separate quadrants or underneath various features all represent the natural underlying gravel.

Within the cross baulk sections various deposits were recorded overlying these natural gravels and initially it was thought that a 0.10m thick mid reddish brown clayey sand (010) recorded in Section 20 (Fig 62), along the north facing side of the west cross baulk might represent a remaining fragment of barrow mound material. Deposits (082) and (063) recorded in the east facing section (Section 17) of the north south cross baulk were also thought to be likely candidates for surviving barrow mound (Fig 62). However, after examination of the crossbaulks the project micromorphologist, Dr Charly French, concluded that this material represented only natural subsoils and that all mound deposits and buried soils had probably been truncated.

Nevertheless, at the centre of the mound, just to the east of the north south cross baulk, a 2m by 5m area of these deposits were removed to reveal the natural gravels as it was suspected that grave cuts may only defined at this level. After recording of the sections of the cross baulks an additional 5m area was hand excavated to the level at which the underlying natural gravels were exposed.

Early Bronze Age

Very little firm dating evidence was recovered during the excavation. No prehistoric pottery was recovered from any of the excavated features and only four worked flints were retrieved during the entire excavation

The ring ditch (002) (Fig 61)

Approximately 20% of the ring ditch lay beyond the north limit of the bypass easement and remains unexcavated. Within the three sections excavated across it, the ditch was found to be no more than 0.7m deep. The broad U-shaped ditch had a projected diameter of 22.5m. All of the fills of the ditch appeared to have formed during natural silting with no sign of deliberate backfilling. Context (079) from Section 10 contained a high percentage of gravel, suggesting that mound material may have collapsed into the ditch, probably after erosion of the sides of the cut.

Possible recutting of the ditch was suggested on site for all the sections excavated across the ditch, but, as these were all recorded within the fills of the cut rather than on a different line, these interpretations are tentative.

Near to the northeast limit of excavation, on the north side of medieval furrow (136), the inner edge of the ring ditch appears to be misaligned. The most likely explanation for this is that along this section of the ditch erosion of the sides was more extensive, resulting in the impression that the cut was

wider in this area.

Finds from the ditch were sparse, comprising a few fragments of animal bone and a single oval flint scraper from context (023), excavated in Section 9. Although, the finds evidence was limited, a date around the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age period is likely, based on the pottery from the evaluation and the form of the ring ditch itself.

Possible linear post trench (085)

Towards the south side of the area defined by ring ditch (002) an irregular linear feature may represent a post trench (085). The approximately 0.4m wide feature extended for some 6m on an uneven north northeast to south-southwest alignment between the two southern quadrants of the excavation. The feature was 0.3m deep on average and more or less square in section. Four possible post holes were recorded along its length, possibly representing upright timbers inserted into the post trench. From west to east these post holes were (058), (056), (088) and (067). Post holes (058) and (056) were both 0.25m deep, 0.4m in diameter and located fully within the trench. Post hole (088) however, was positioned to the north of the centre line of (085). Where the post intersected the fill of the trench it was not possible to distinguish the cuts of the two features. However, it was determined that the post hole was no more than 0.3m deep.

Other post holes.

Other features which might represent post holes were identified during the excavation. Cut (047) a 0.13m deep and 0.38m diameter possible post hole was located six metres southwest of the centre of the ring ditch as defined by the intersection of the cross baulks. As with most of the features recorded within the ring ditch interpretation of this feature is uncertain.

Post hole (095)

This 0.65m diameter and 0.38m deep feature was located adjacent to the inner edge of the ring ditch in the southwest quadrant of the excavation.

Oval pit (064)

This pit was recorded two metres east of the north-south cross-baulk and 4.5m north of the inner edge of the ring ditch. It was the most regular shaped feature recorded within the ring ditch. It contained no burial or other artefacts.

The pit was 1.7m long, 0.15m deep and 0.75m wide with a rounded base and slightly irregular concave sides.

Undated

A pit located outside and to the southeast of the ring ditch contained darker fills than many of the features recorded at the site and is a more certain candidate to be of archaeological origin. Also, charcoal was recovered from the samples taken from the fills of the feature.

The pit was 1.7m wide, 1m deep with a near vertical south side near to the base of the pit. The north slope was much more gradual except near to the base.

The erosion of the side of the pit suggests that it was left to silt up naturally, with no sign of backfilling apparent in the five fills. Unfortunately no finds were recovered. The clayey primary fill suggests that it once contained standing water, perhaps at a time when the sides were supported in some way. Secondary fill (135) contained a high frequency of gravel, probably representing a phase when the sides of the pit had become

unstable.

Linear (071)

A southwest-northeast aligned linear ditch recorded within the southeast area of excavation intersected the east side of the ring ditch. Establishing the stratigraphic sequence between these two features on site was problematical but the fills of both features were very similar, suggesting that they may well be of similar date, or even contemporary.

The ditch itself was 1.22m wide, 0.22m deep with concave sides and a rounded base. No finds were recovered.

Medieval

Furrow 136

A broad, 0.20m deep, round based linear feature crossing the site on a northeast to southwest alignment represents a medieval plough furrow. A second furrow of this period was recorded 20m to the north adjacent to the north limit of excavation.

3.8.5 Discussion

Little, if any, evidence of funerary practice was identified and no traces of a mound within the ring ditch was identified.

Despite careful investigation no pits containing burials or other items associated with funerary activities were recorded. Very little dating evidence was recovered from the exposed surfaces or any of the excavated features. However, there is very tentative evidence of a trench (085) towards the south side of the area defined by the ring ditch which might have contained a line of posts. If so, it is possible that these and the remaining post holes may represent some kind of mortuary structure.

Even allowing for a large degree of plough truncation, it would be anticipated that the lowest levels of primary burials in graves cut before the building of any mound would have been identifiable. During the excavation of a barrow monument at Deeping St. Nicholas some 4.5km northeast of the site a primary burial was recorded in a 0.7m deep pit at the centre of the first ring ditch (French 1994). However, it is by no means certain that burials within pits would have ever been present at the site. Excavations on a barrow at Dowsby some 8km to the north, (Lane 2000a) recorded an *in-situ* but plough damaged collared urn at the centre of the area defined by the ring ditch. The urn had simply been placed onto the existing ground surface. If this was the practice undertaken at the bypass site, no evidence would have survived, given the plough damaged nature of the site.

Dating evidence in the from of Early Bronze Age pottery was recovered from the ring ditch during the evaluation of the site. This date is supported by the scraper recovered from the ring ditch, although there is a good chance that this is residual.

3.9 Site 9 DCD97 Deeping Car Dyke Watercourse

The course of the Car Dyke follows the river Witham east of Lincoln and then heads south along the fen edge until at least the Peterborough area. Although construction of the canal is usually attributed to the Romans, no firm dating evidence has yet been recovered.

No archaeological deposits were recorded in the area where the course of the bypass crosses the line of the ancient watercourse known as the Car Dyke. It is possible that the roadside ditches only revealed gravels used to infil the dyke and which were

indistinguishable from the underlying natural deposits.

3.10 Site 10 DBI97 Deeping Common Industrial Site

During the evaluation of the bypass route a site containing evidence of an unidentified industrial activity was recorded some 3km northeast of Market Deeping.

Radiocarbon determination of a charcoal sample from a pit indicated that the activity at the site dated to around the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age period. However stripping of topsoil in the area where this site was thought to be located revealed no archaeological features. It seems most likely that the trench which contained these deposits was incorrectly located during the evaluation and that the features recorded lay just off the line of the carriageway.

3.11 DBC97 Deeping Bypass Compound

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during stripping of topsoil within the area of the contractors compound.

The compound occupied an approximately 120m by 50m rectangular area located only 25m southwest of the ring ditch.

3.11.1 Specific Methodology

A watching brief was undertaken during the stripping of topsoil from over the site. Features were plotted using a Total Station EDM and limited excavation was conducted.

3.11.2 Results

Natural Features

Although a number of discrete features were identified during the stripping of topsoil, the amorphous shape of most of these suggested that they were probably of natural origin and did not require excavation.

Medieval (Fig 63)

Four broad linear features (018), (017), (016) and (015) which crossed the site on west east alignments represent plough furrows associated with ridge and furrow agriculture.

Undated

A 40m length of a southeast to northeast aligned linear ditch (008) (Fig 63) was recorded towards the east side of the compound area. Although a section was excavated across the 0.7m deep and 1.7m wide ditch no finds were recovered. The position and alignment of the ditch corresponds with a linear cropmark plotted from aerial photographs.

3.11.3 Discussion

No definite features associated with the nearby barrow were identified during the watching brief.

It is probably significant that the southwest to northeast alignment of the undated linear ditch and associated field system is at variance with evidence which suggests that the organisation of the Roman landscape was closer to being on a west to east alignment in this area. Although the date of the construction of the nearby Car Dyke has not been conclusively established, a 4th century radiocarbon date from a peat fill shows it was certainly extant during the Roman period.

The alignment of the Car Dyke is markedly different to the undated ditches and cropmarks at the compound. Also, a

cropmark recorded approximately 0.5km northeast of the compound runs at right angles to the Car Dyke and probably represents a droveway. This, shows that the watercourse strongly influenced the organisation of the landscape. Ditches of a droveway recorded at Baston approximately 4.5km to the north run at right angles to the Car Dyke and contained Roman pottery

The alignment of the ditch and cropmarks recorded at the compound is much closer to that of the prehistoric ditches recorded at Site 7 and the Late Bronze Age field system recorded at West Deeping.

The recording of medieval plough furrows is evidence of the long history of arable agriculture in this area.

3.12 DBW97 Deeping Bypass Watching Brief

3.12.1 Background

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of the roadside ditches along the entire bypass route. Similar observations were also maintained during the removal of topsoil and other overburden from over the construction easement for the road.

The brief for this work did not permit any excavation of features and timescales usually allowed for rapid sketch plotting of exposed features only. Therefore dates for recorded features are not available and little is understood regarding the character of the deposits. Over most of the route the positions of features were plotted using the chainage points established by the contractors. However, south of Site 4 it was possible to record the position of features onto the Ordnance Survey grid using a Total Station EDM.

Stripping of overburden in advance of the laying of make-up material was not undertaken to archaeological requirements and over much of the route did not reach levels at which archaeological deposits were defined. Therefore, much of what was understood regarding archaeological deposits outside of the excavated sites along the bypass route is derived from observation of the roadside ditches.

3.12.2 Results and discussion

Due to the limited recording of features possible during the project, it is not thought appropriate or necessary to present detailed results of the watching brief.

However, some general observations made during the watching brief are of significance. In the area south of the Mill Road in the Cambridgeshire section of the route, many more features thought to be of pre-Medieval date were recognised. The positions of some of these matched aerial photographs and many were sealed beneath alluvium. It is of interest that deep palaeochannels containing organic sediments were not recorded in the area south of Mill Road apart from at Site 3 (DBEB97). In the ditch sections many of broad, clay filled hollows were recorded which might represent the alluviated areas plotted from aerial photographs.

North of Mill Road few archaeological features were recorded and east of Market Deeping most were ditches of medieval or post-medieval date. Towards the east end of the bypass a number of peat filled palaeochannels were recorded.

Near to Site 8 (DBI97), where the evaluation identified evidence of Late Bronze Age/Early Neolithic industrial activity, the remains of a fragmented vessel was recovered from the subsoil. The vessel appeared to be made of a fired clay similar

to that found in the charcoal rich pits excavated during the evaluation.

4 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Once exposed, it was clear that Site 4 constituted a substantial multi-period archaeological resource, the rarity and importance of which was immediately recognised and acknowledged by the developer, Lincolnshire County Council. The presumption in favour of preservation of archaeological remains *in-situ* is central to PPG 16 and fully acknowledged by the developer, with the approval of the consultant and curating archaeologist, to maximise preservation of the fragile archaeological remains situated beneath the carriageway.

Following the recording of surface features and artefacts, the planned vertical alignment of the road was raised to the point where the finished carriageway was to be one metre above the level of the archaeology. In order to achieve this firstly, where artefacts projected from the site, or particularly sensitive features were present, a sheet of Terram 100 was placed over the artefact or feature and covered with a layer of sand some 100mm in depth. Subsequently, a separation geotextile (Terram 1000) was placed directly over the cleaned archaeology over the whole area of the carriageway within Site 4. A capping layer, consisting of 'As raised' sands and gravels, was spread outwards over the geotextile to ensure that construction traffic did no run directly on the archaeology and to form a base for the elevated carriageway. The sands and gravels were fine in nature and devoid of large (>50mm) size particles to prevent puncture of the geotextile.

The innovative mitigation had the treble benefit of reducing construction time, making substantial financial savings and enabling *in situ* preservation of c.65% of the exposed archaeology.

As predicted by the initial desktop assessments and evaluations the route of the bypass proved to be rich in archaeological deposits, particularly in the section south of the Welland in Cambridgeshire. The dearth of sites east of Market Deeping in Lincolnshire is likely to be environmentally determined in this area of low lying former fen.

The earliest deposits recorded during the project were identified at Site 3 (DBEB97) south of Market Deeping, approximately 1km northwest of Northborough and possibly represent part of an earlier Neolithic cremation cemetery. The Etton causewayed enclosure lies approximately 2km southwest and the discoveries at Site 3 show that deposits of this date are likely to be extensive in this area. The Ebbsfleet Peterborough ware pottery retrieved from Site 1 just 200 southwest of (DBH97) indicates that occupation of the area continued into the later part of the Neolithic period. Typically settlement evidence for the Neolithic period was not recorded, although the pit at Site 1 may be related to domestic activity.

Site 1, 2 and 3 all appear to be site areas which are slightly elevated. This is consistent with micromorphological research in the lower Welland valley which shown that 'once clearance had begun in the earlier Neolithic period, relatively widespread colluviation and alluviation processes had begun to affect the floodplain/terrace' (French 1990). The cropmark plots (Figs 5 and 6) show the site surrounded by palaeochannels or 'alluvial belts'. It may be of some significance that no other occupation sites were identified along the route of the bypass in areas underneath alluvium, off these slightly elevated areas.

However, stripping of overburden did not always extend to beneath the alluvial cover and it is possible that some sites were not detected. Even so, the picture which emerges from the bypass project is that occupation sites tend to be located on slightly elevated areas, although surrounding field ditches may be more extensive.

The late Bronze Age deposits recorded at Site 3 were not substantial or dense and the impression is that this may have only been a short lived or temporary site. Excavations undertaken at Welland Bank Quarry some 4km to the east have recorded extensive fields systems and the remains of at least 8 structures which are thought to date to the late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age. The remains of more intensive settlement of the period may be located elsewhere, perhaps on higher ground.

The Iron Age, Roman and Saxon site at Fox Cover Farm (Site 4) occupies the highest elevation on the southwest to northeast aligned gravel ridge which is an extension of the deposits of Maxey 'Island' to the west. It seems that through time it became necessary to occupy areas of increased elevation. French (forthcoming) suggests that this accounts for the absence of Iron Age deposits from the excavations undertaken in advance of the construction of the Glinton bypass.

At Site 2 pits and post holes recorded within a possible enclosure were found to contain Late Bronze Age pottery. The occupation at this site was neither substantial nor long lived and may represent no more than temporary or seasonal use of the site. It is of course possible that Site 2 lies at the edge of an area containing richer archaeological remains, although these will lie undetected beneath alluvium. In contrast to the remains discovered at Site 3, those recorded at Welland Bank Quarry further to the east in the river valley represent substantial and permanent settlement probably associated with extensive field systems. It may be that a variety of sites were used in this part of landscape during the late Bronze Age, each dedicated to a particular function in an economic cycle, or reflecting a range of settlement sizes.

By far the most substantial archaeological deposits recorded on the bypass project were recorded at Site 4. Its location on a low but prominent gravel ridge within the Welland floodplain probably accounts for its status as a favoured location. This slight elevation appears to have became more crucial during the Iron Age when water levels appear to have been rising appreciably. However, there is evidence for activity at the site in the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age periods in the form of worked flints and some pottery. Typically, settlement remains for these periods were not identified although this may be due to the insubstantial nature of occupation during this time. The efforts of the community was probably directed towards the construction and maintenance of the public, ceremonial and funerary monuments so well known in this area.

From the Early Iron Age the site was occupied by a small community of farmers rearing cattle and sheep surrounded by a marshy and open grassy landscape. Arable farming probably played a smaller role in the economy, perhaps limited to higher and drier areas adjacent to the settlement. There appears to have been little change in the character of settlement between the Iron Age and Roman periods, although the intensity of settlement seems much reduced. However, the focus of might have shifted slightly when as the corner of Enclosure 2 recorded within the bypass easement was laid out as a cemetery during the Roman period.

There is some evidence that the rearing of cattle started to assume more significance in the by the Roman period, perhaps reflecting the emergence of towns and a growing consumer demand.

Occupation of Site 4 seem to have ended by the onset of the Middle Saxon period and no other deposits of this date were retrieved along the bypass routes. Perhaps nucleation of settlement in the area of the present day village of Maxey occurred during the Middle Saxon period, leading to the abandonment of Site 4. Indeed, excavations on the west side of Maxey village identified remains of Middle Saxon date associated with pottery now known as 'Maxey Ware'(Addyman, 1964).

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6 PERSONNEL

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Site Assistants: Dave Bower, Diccon Hart, Mike Olney, Andrew Hardwick, Jeremy Dubber, Phil Mills, Rebecka Gowland, Rosalind Aitken, Lee Hunwicks, Mike Garrett and Dan Swift.

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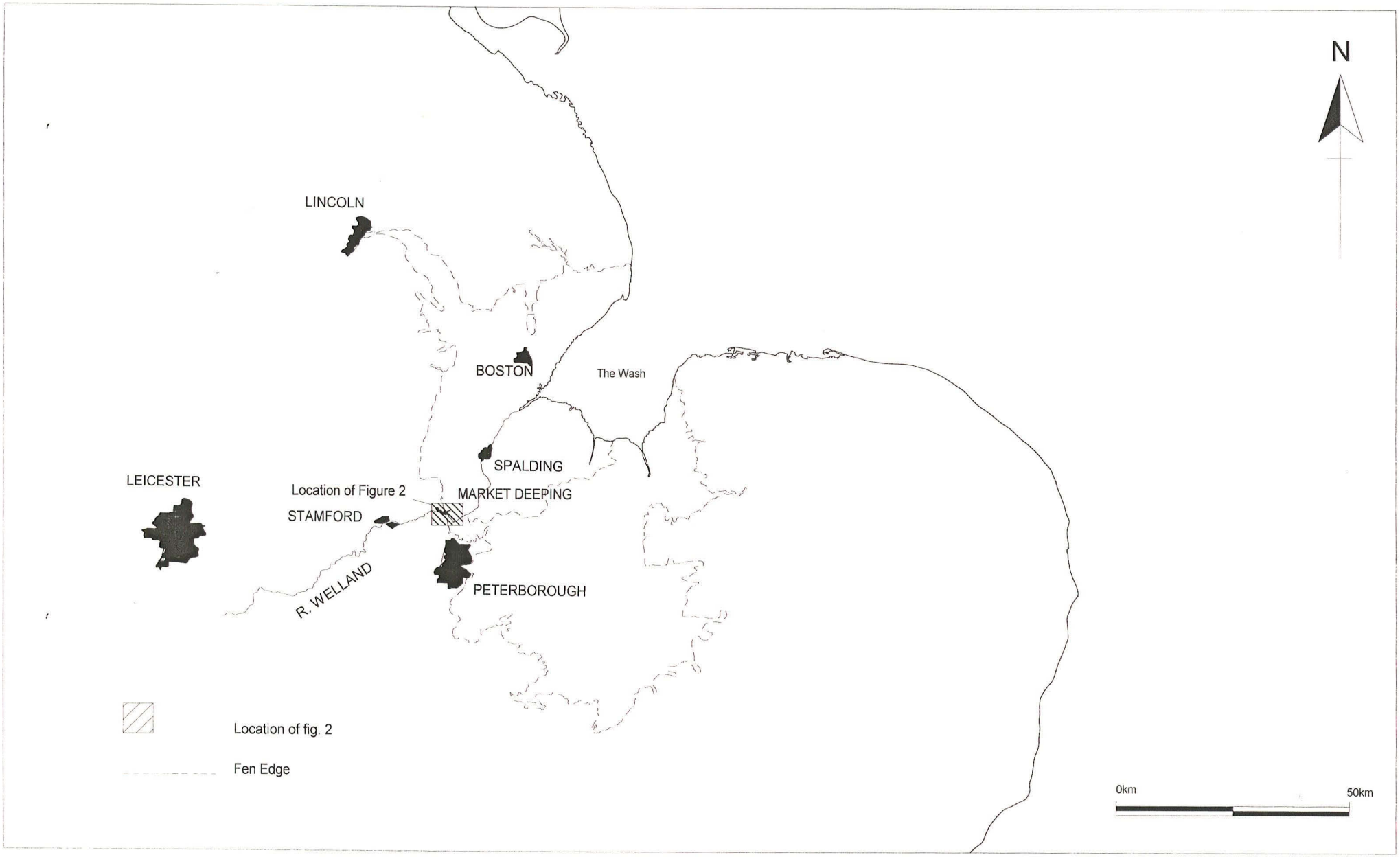


Figure 1. General location plan

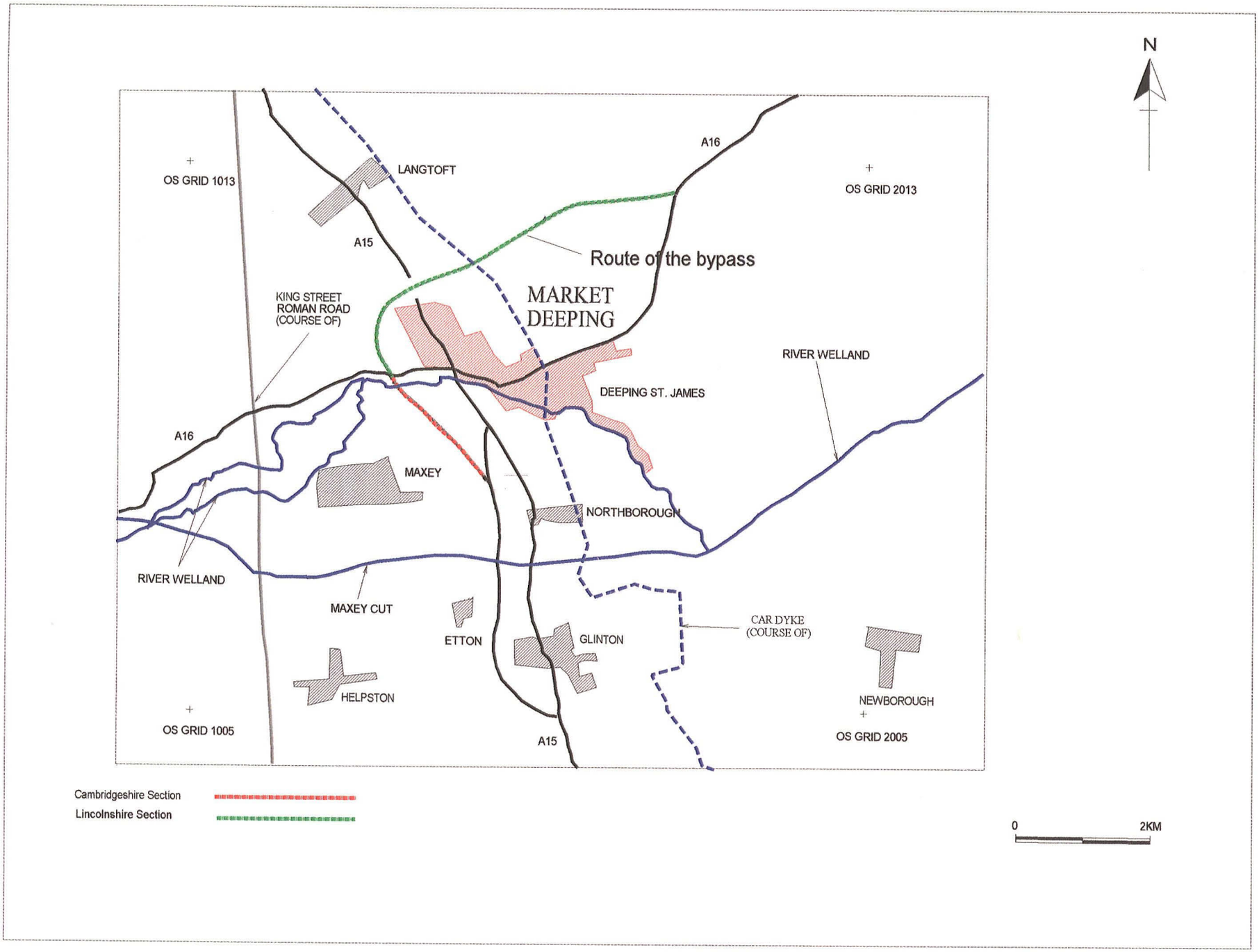


Figure 2. Route of the Market Deeping bypass.

Fig. 3. Location of excavated sites

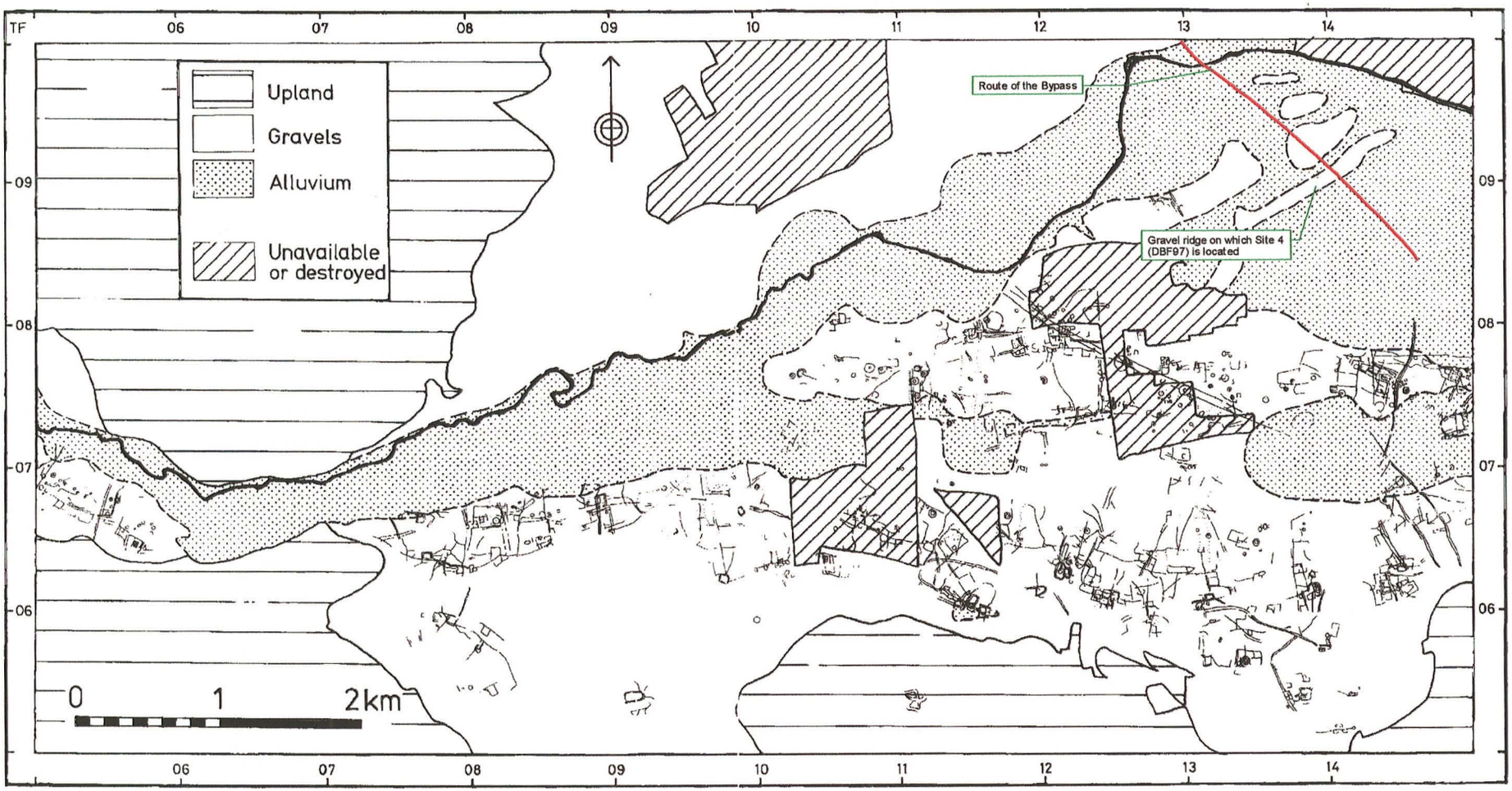


Figure 4 The Maxey area showing distribution of cropmarks south of the Welland (After Pryor, French, Crowther, Gurney, Simpson and Taylor 1985)

Figure 5 Cropmarks plotted along the Cambridgeshire section of the Market Deeping bypass

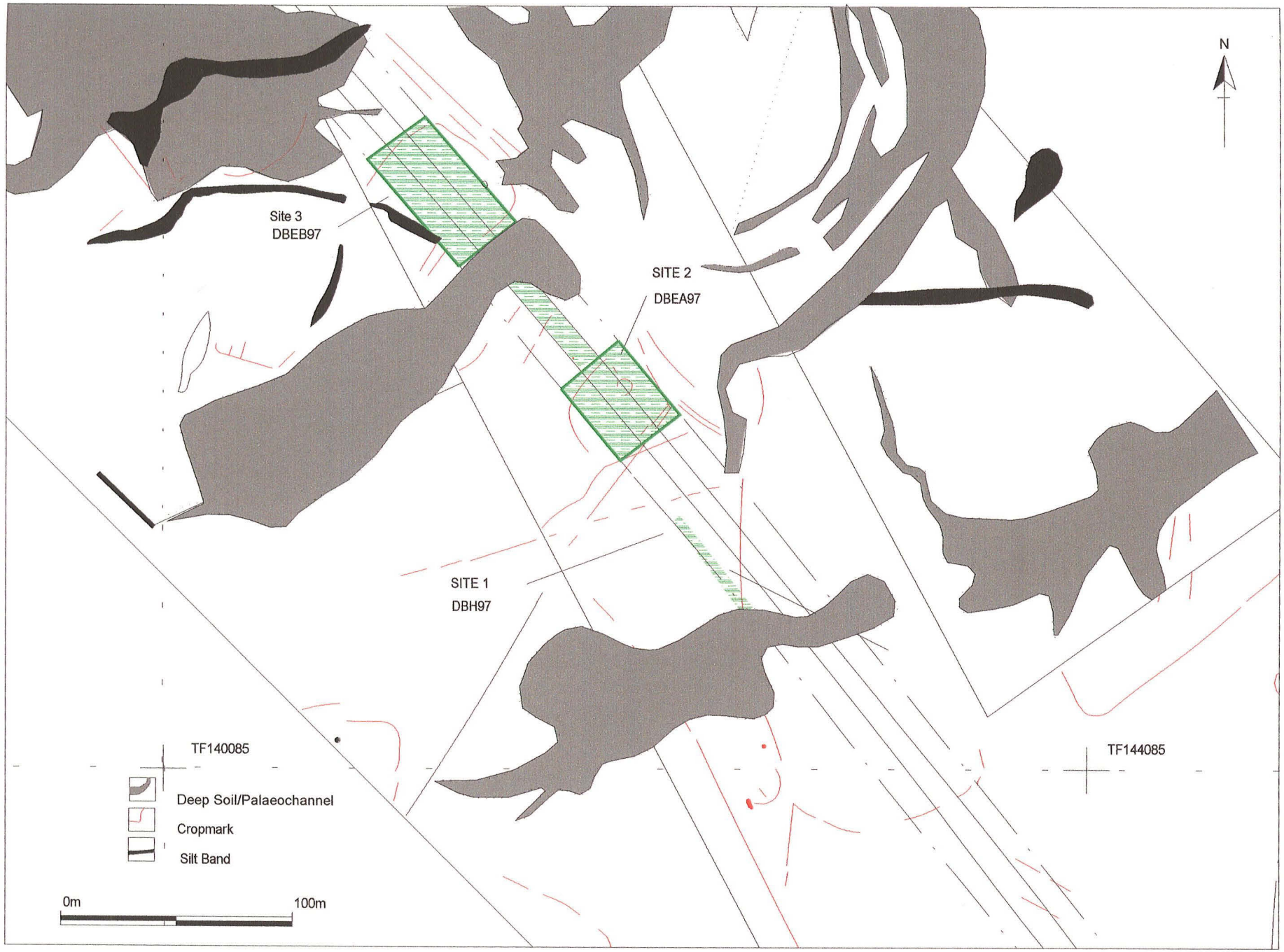


Figure 6. Sites 1 (DBH97), 2 (DBEA97) and 3 (DBEB97) showing plotted cropmarks

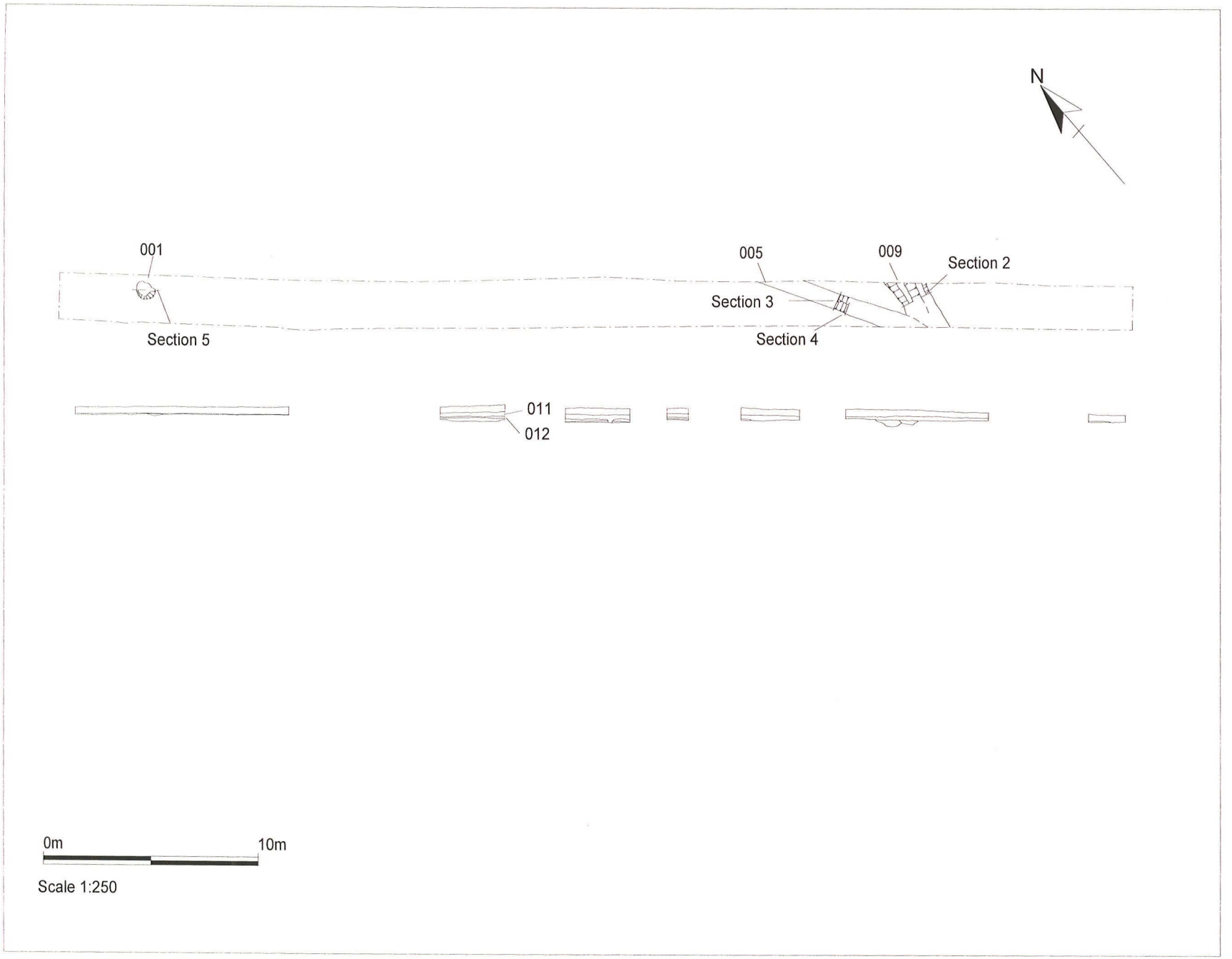


Figure 7. Site 1 (DBH97) General Plan and Trench Section

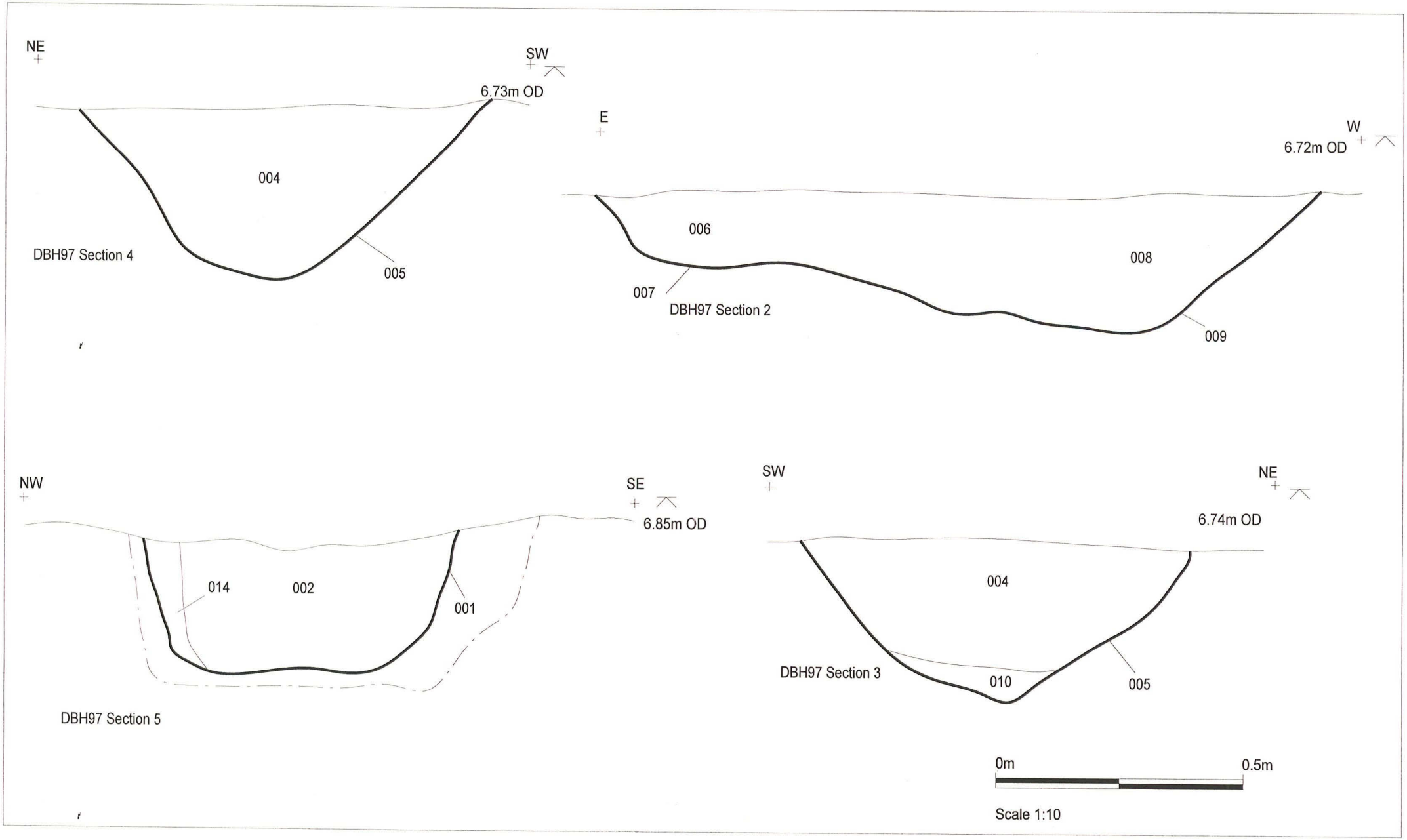


Figure 8. Site 1 (DBH97) Sections

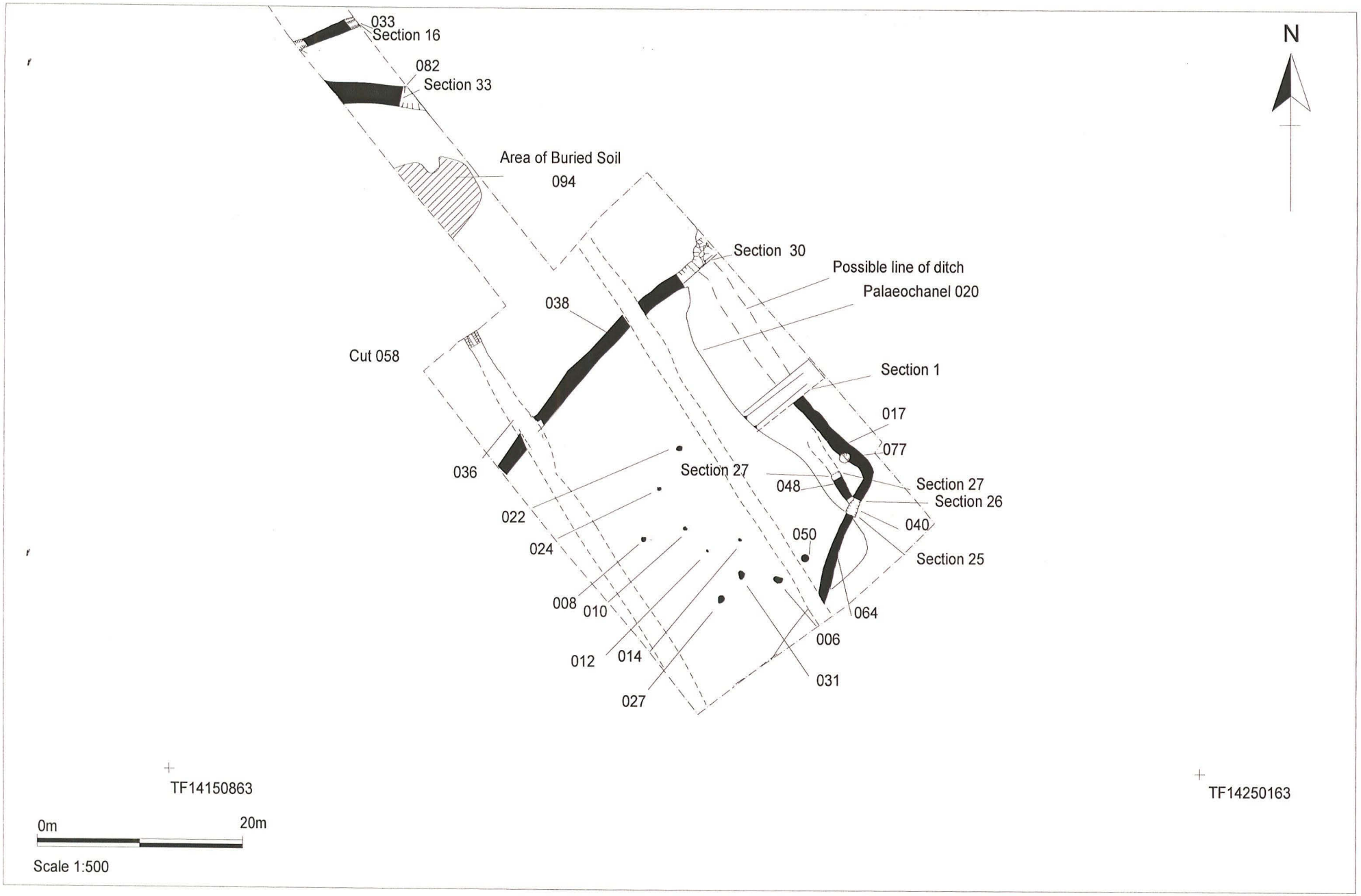


Figure 9 Site 2 (DBEA97) General plan

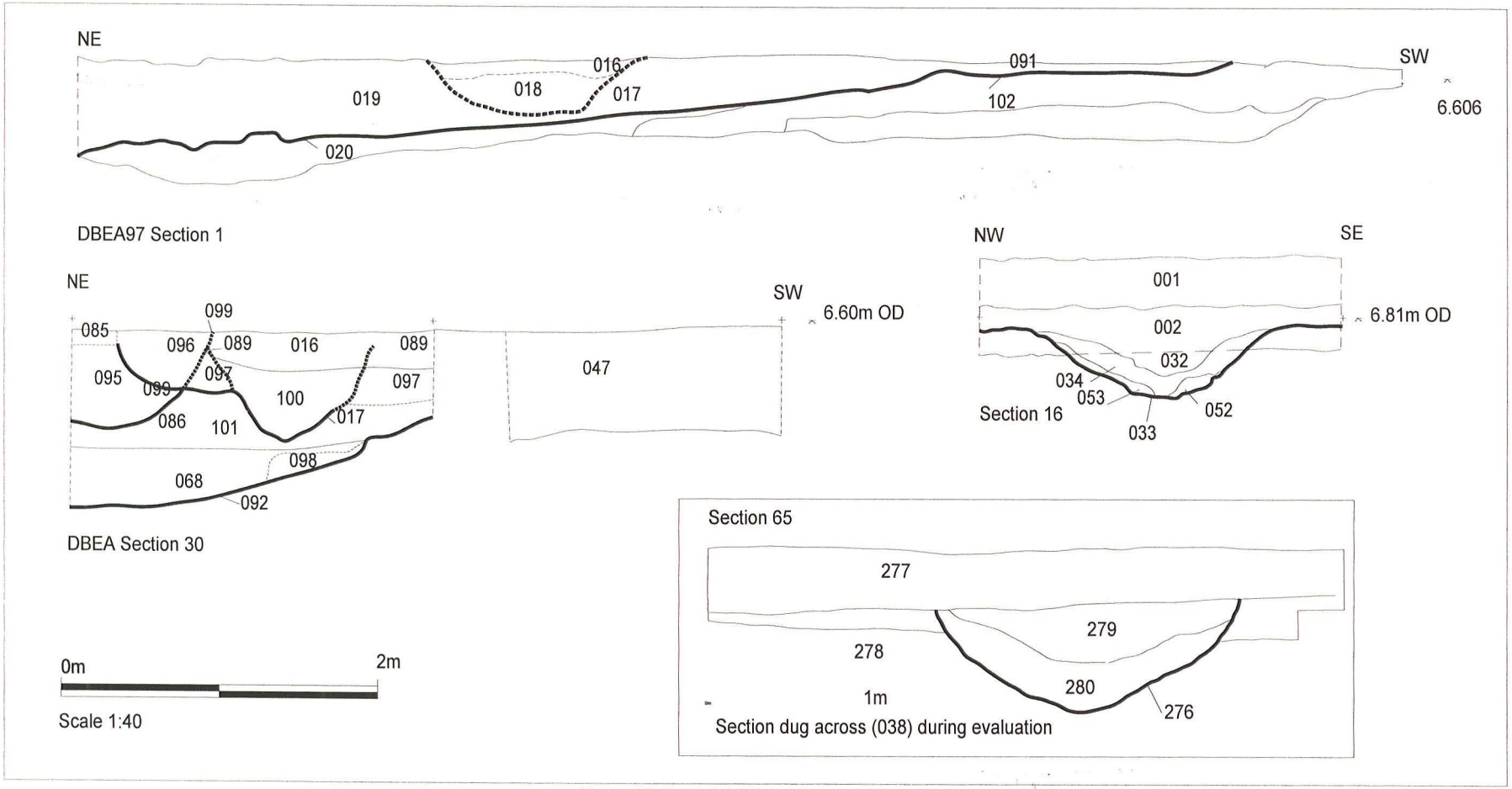


Figure 10 Site 2 (DBEA 97) Sections

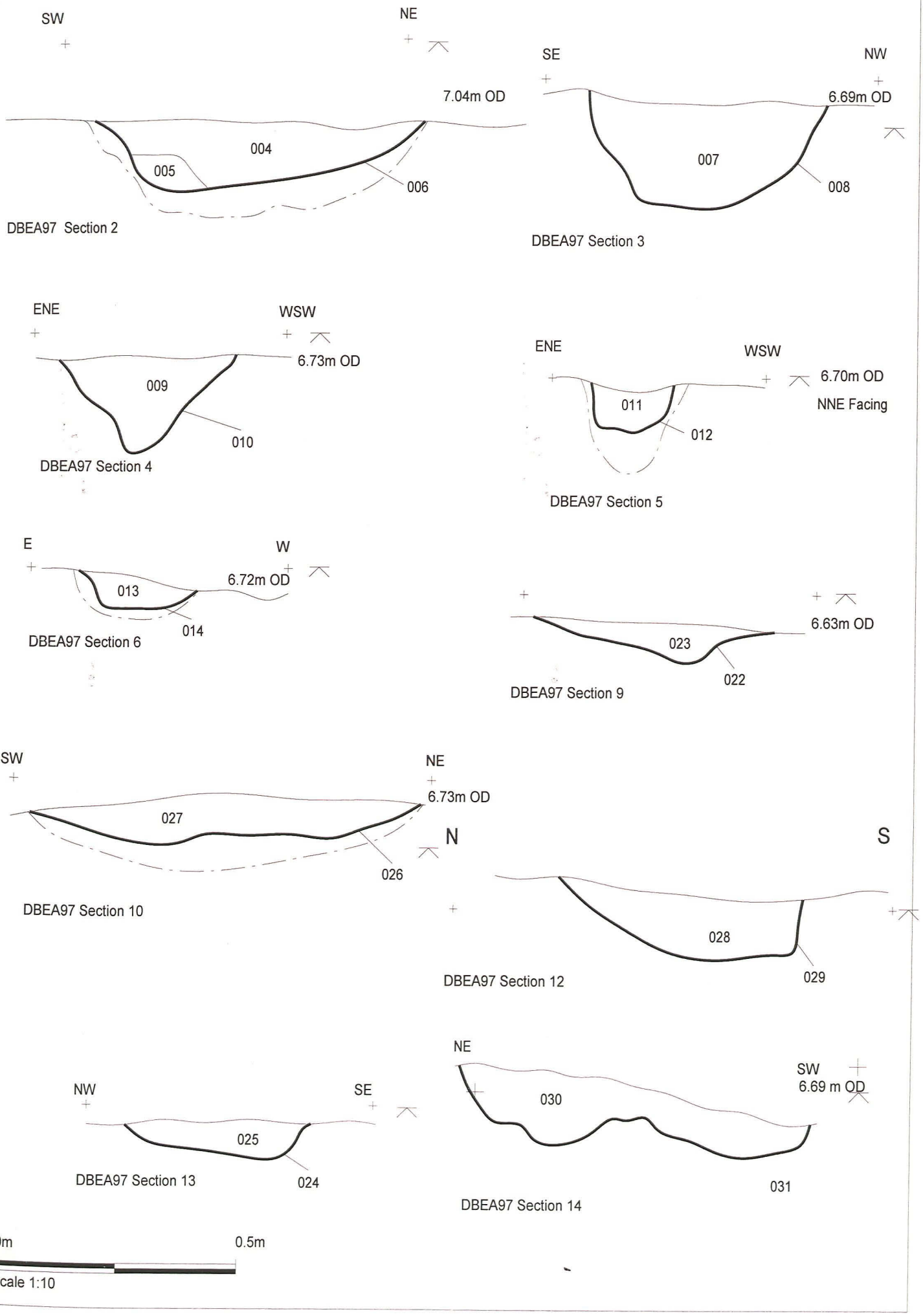


Figure 11. Site 2 (DBEA97) Sections

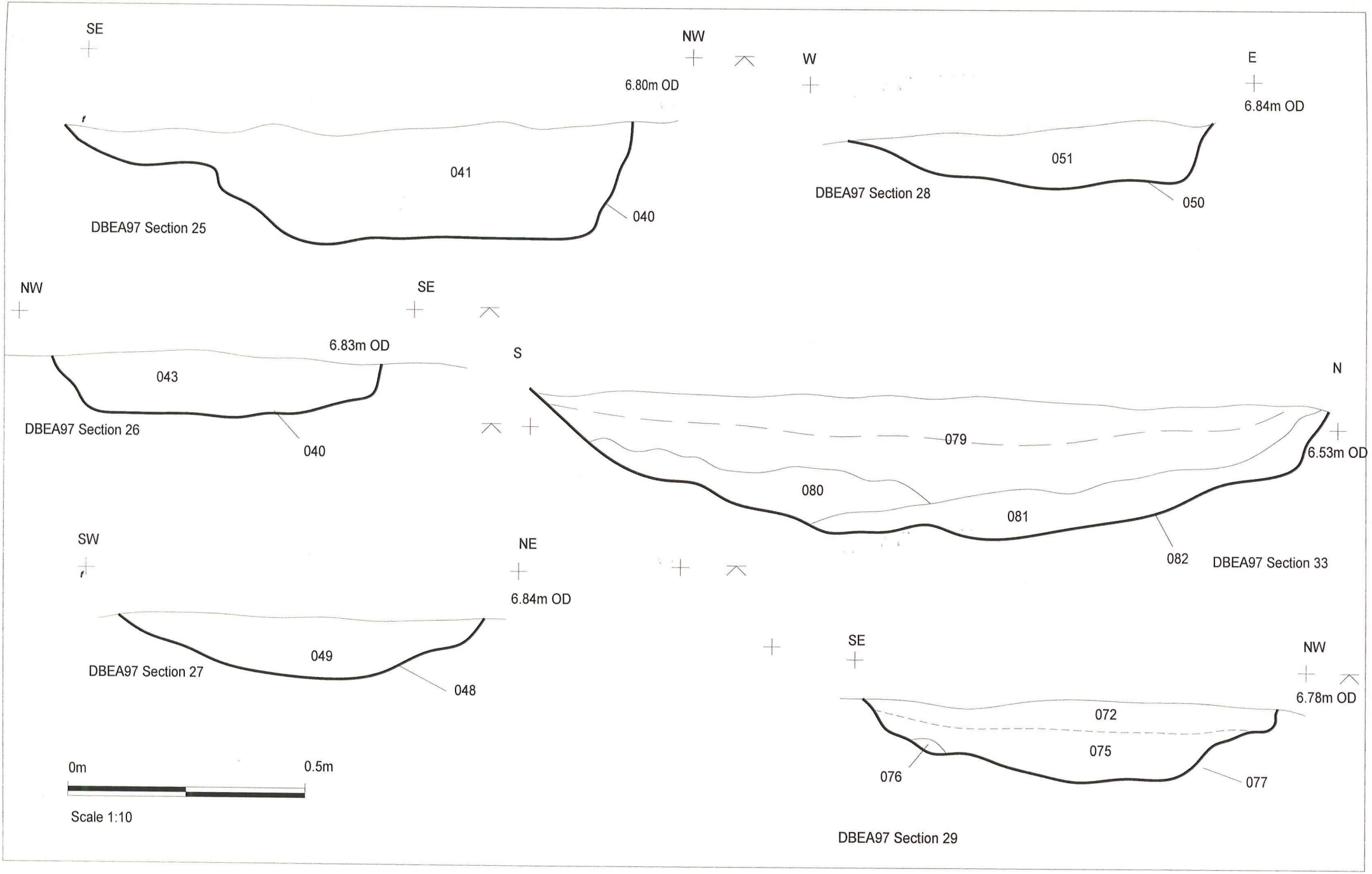


Figure 12 Site 2 (DBEA97) Sections

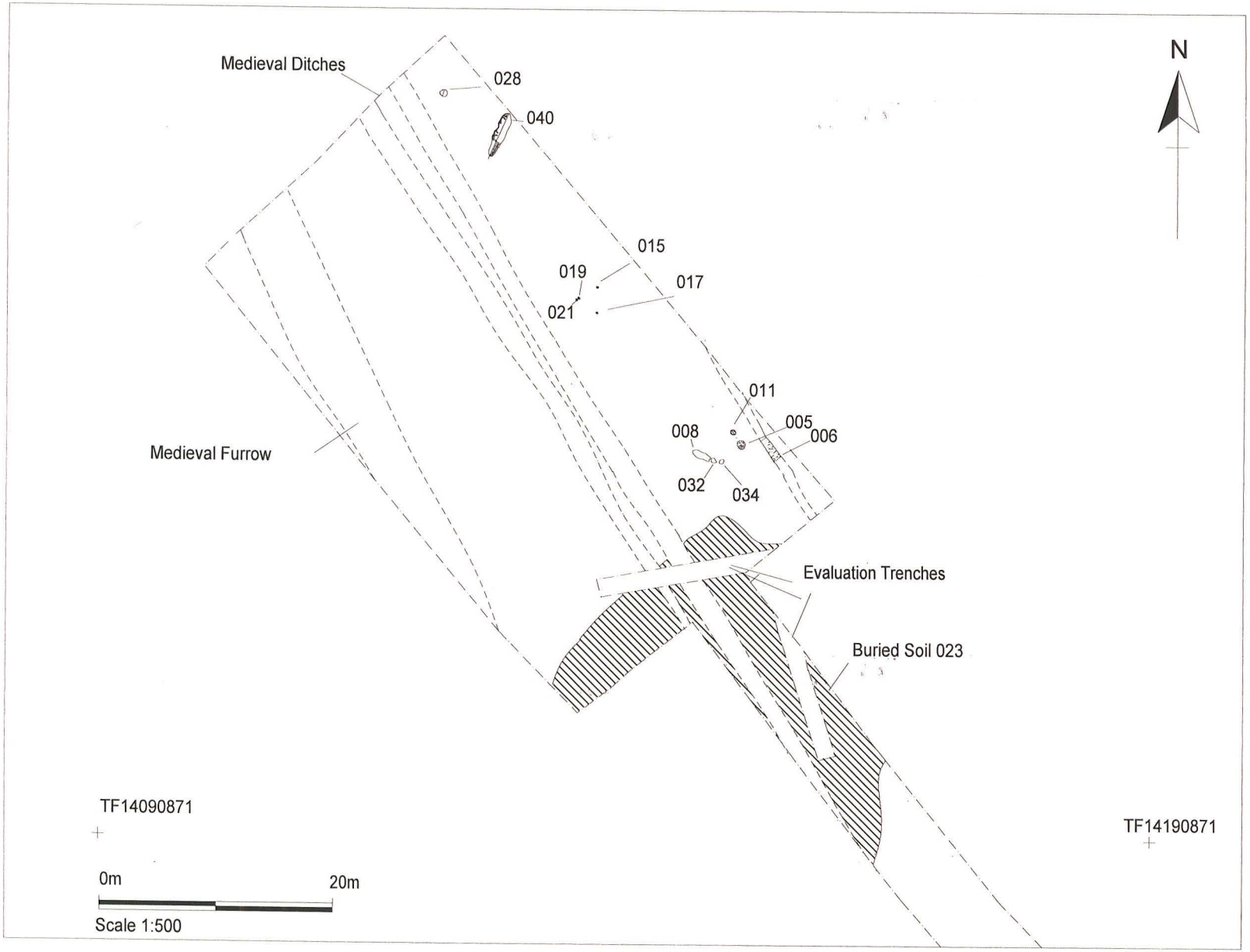


Figure 13 Site 3 (DBEB97) General plan

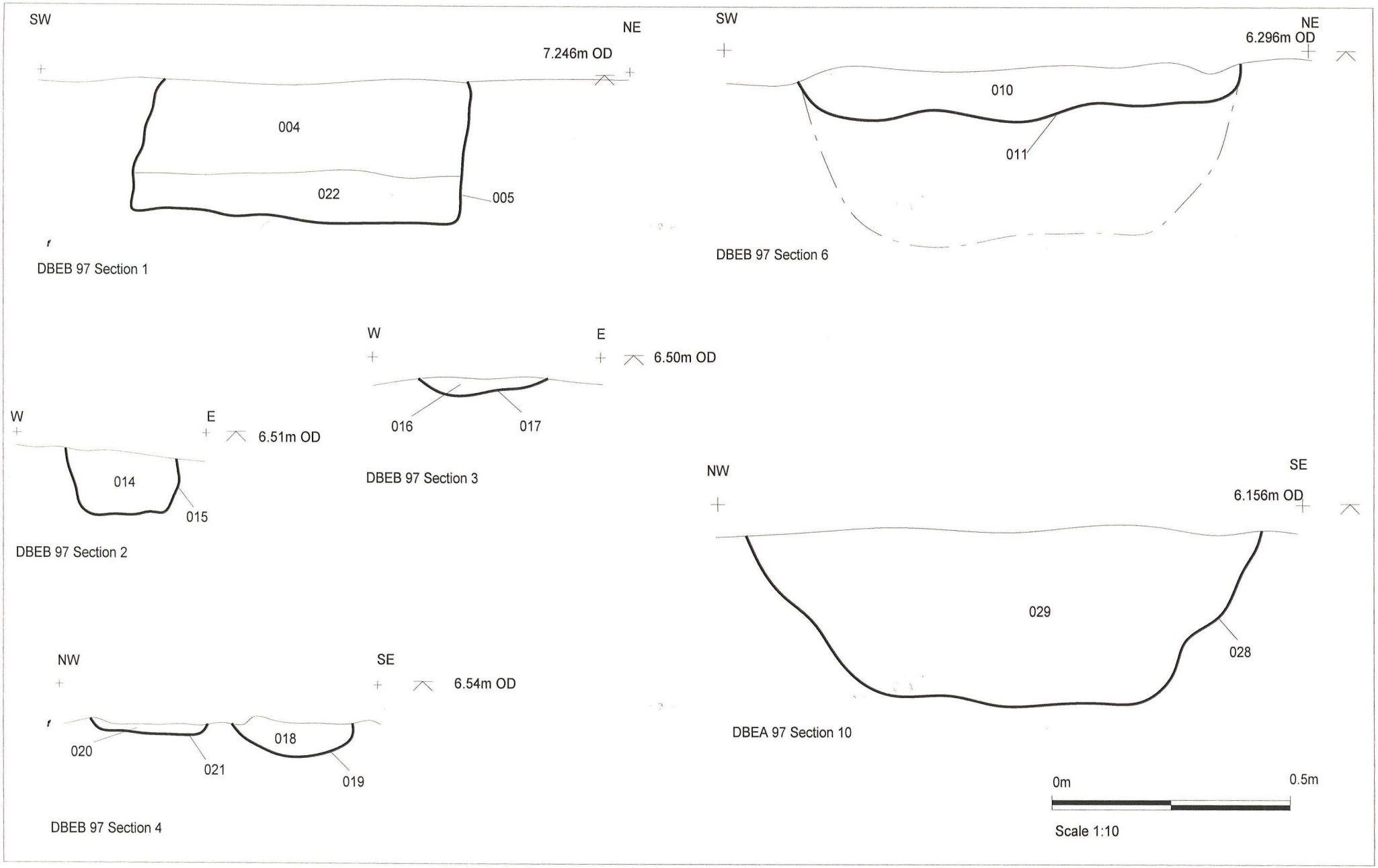


Figure 14 Site 3 (DBEB97) Sections

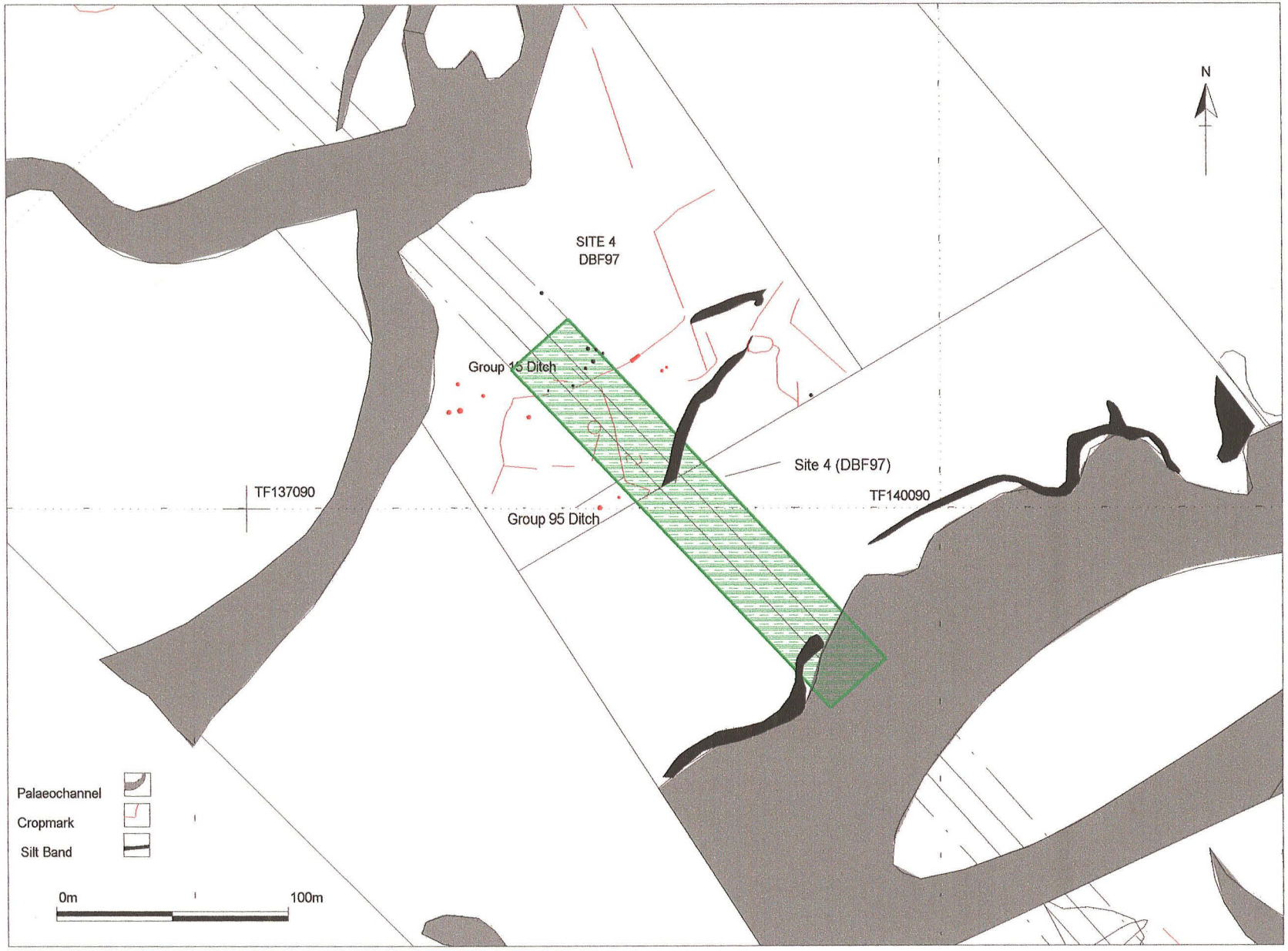


Figure 15 Plotted cropmarks from around Site 4 (DBF97)

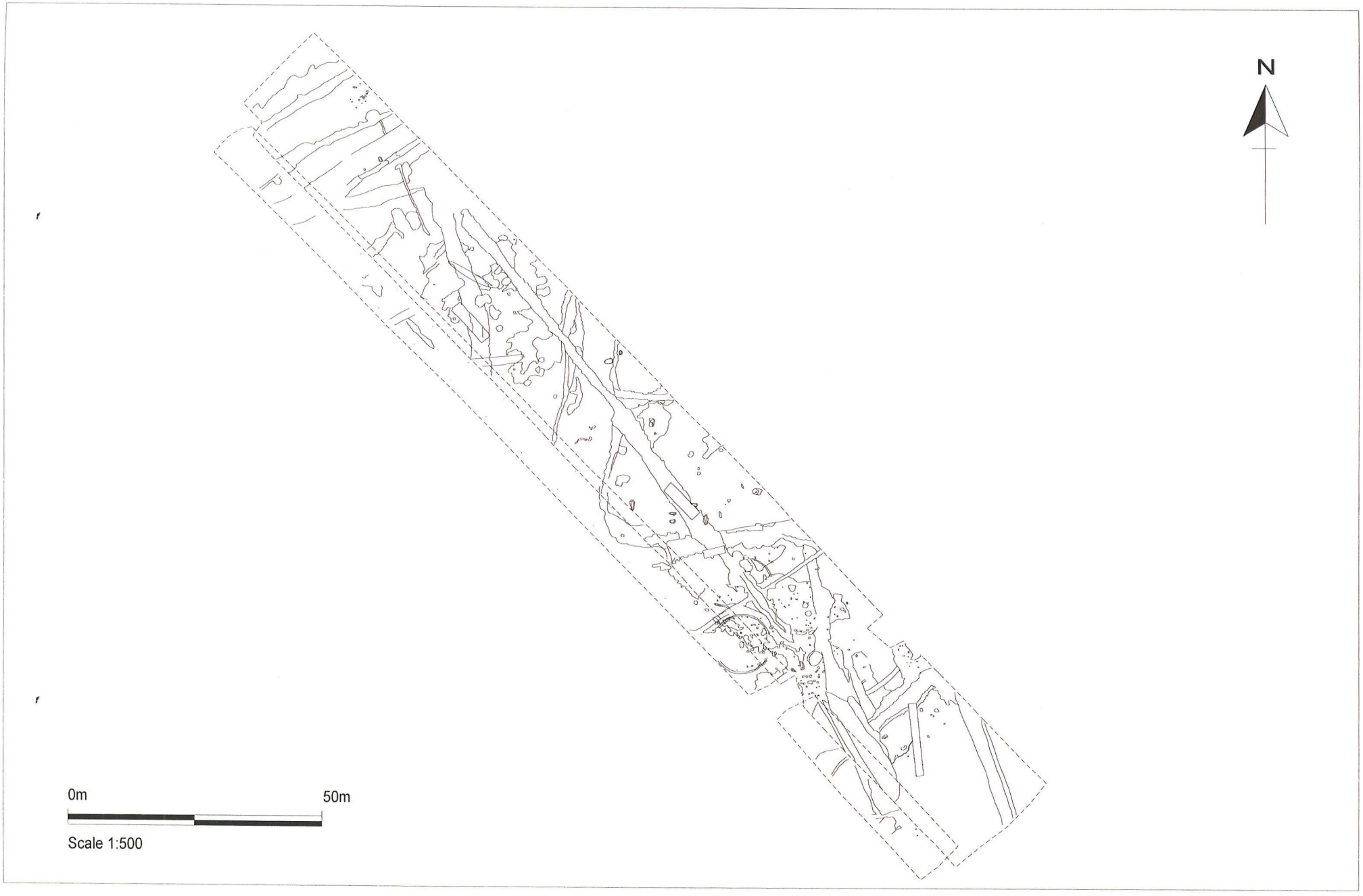


Figure 16. Site 4 (DBF97) Surface EDM plan

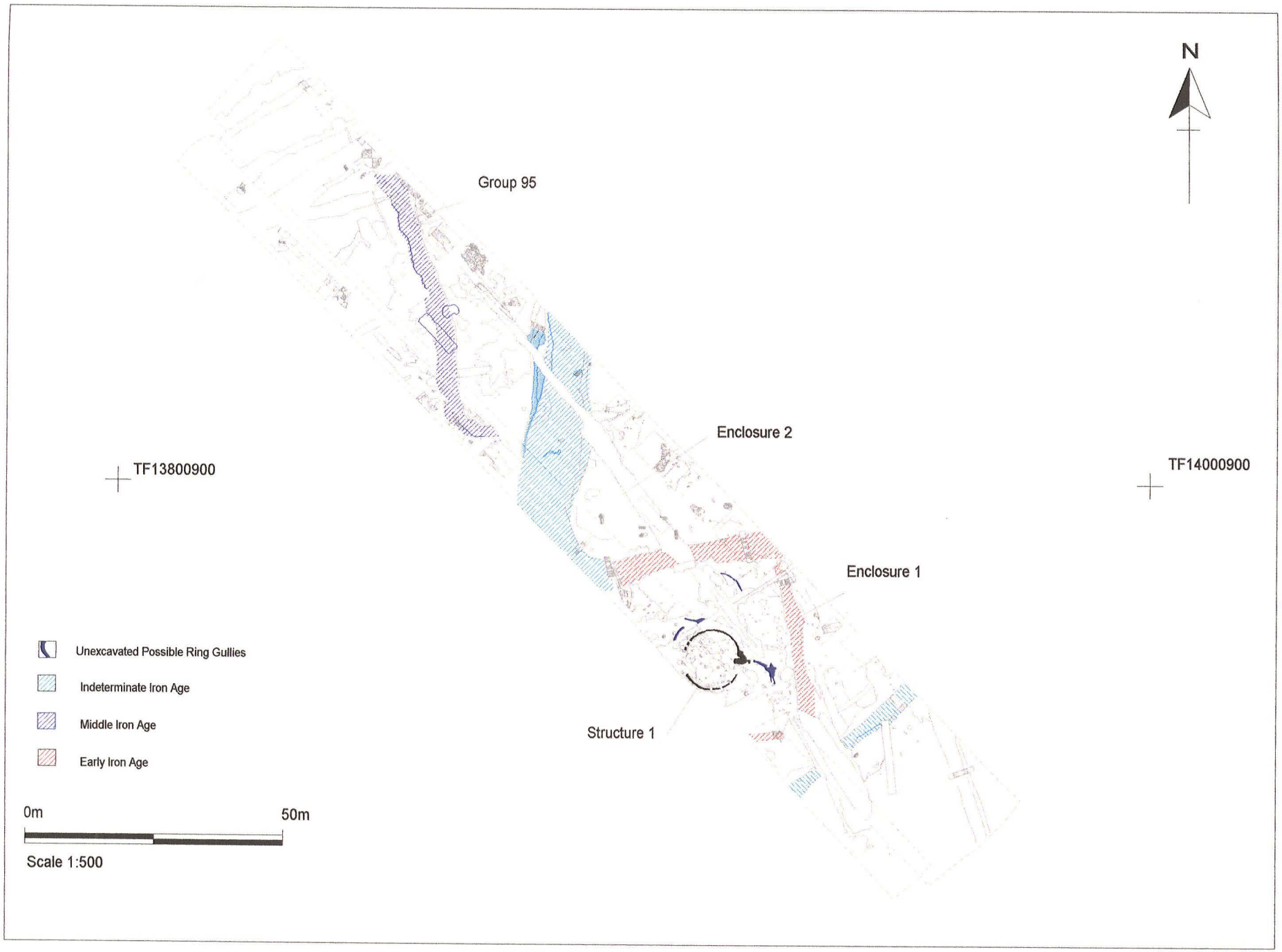


Figure 17. Site 4 (DBF97) Location of Major Iron Age Features

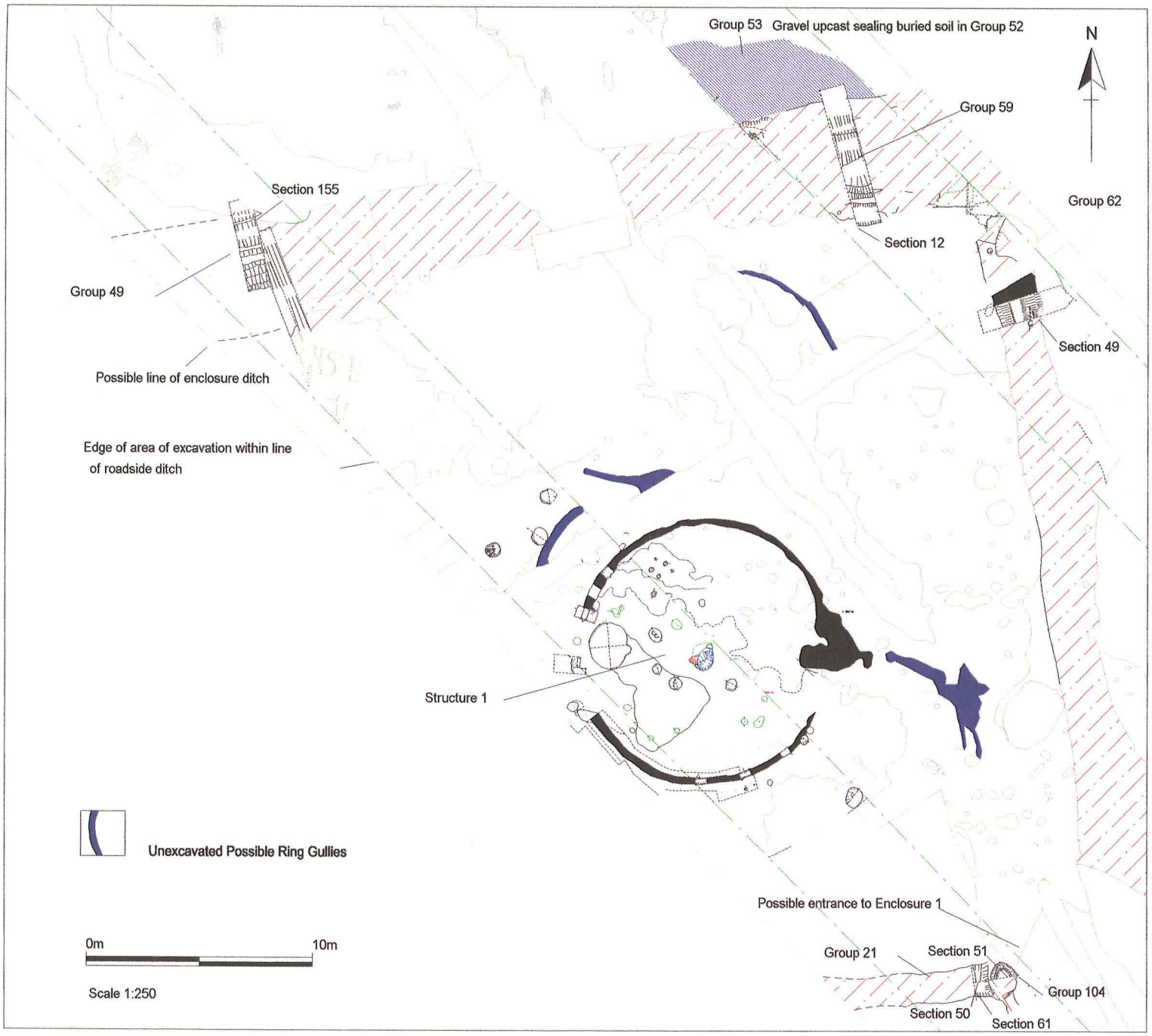
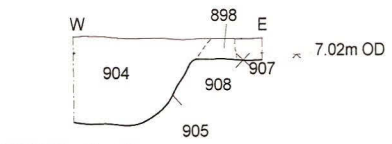
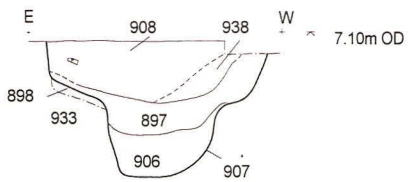


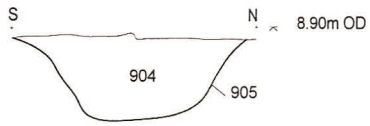
Figure 18 Site 4 (DBF97)Early Iron Age Enclosure 1



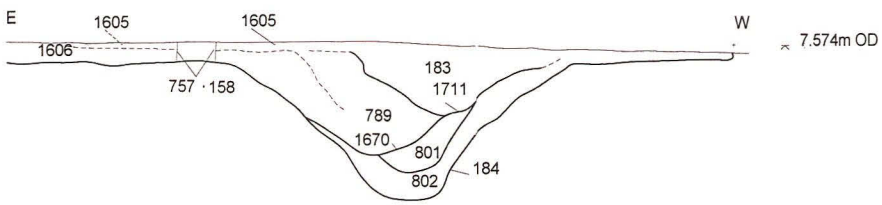
DBF97 Section 50



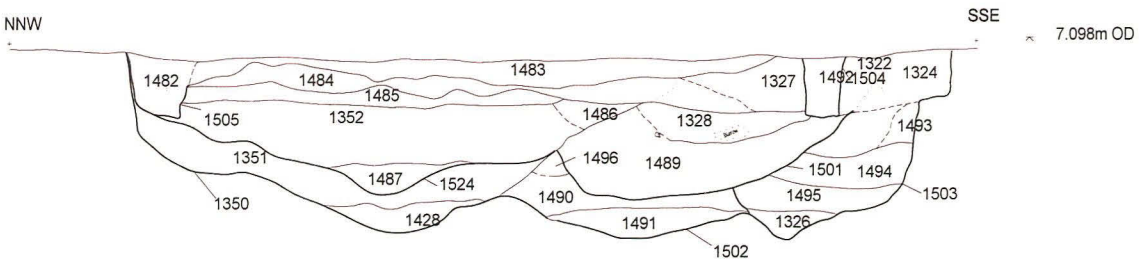
DBF97 Section 51



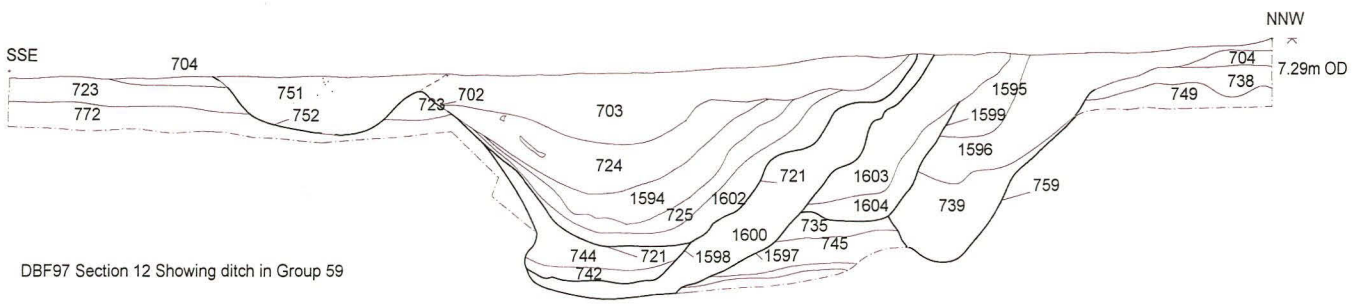
DBF97 Section 61



DBF97 Section 49



DBF97 Section 155 Showing ditch in Group 49



DBF97 Section 12 Showing ditch in Group 59

Om 1m

Scale 1:40

Figure 19 Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across Groups 21, 104, 49 and 59.

Figure 20 Site 4 (DBF97) plan of Structure 1

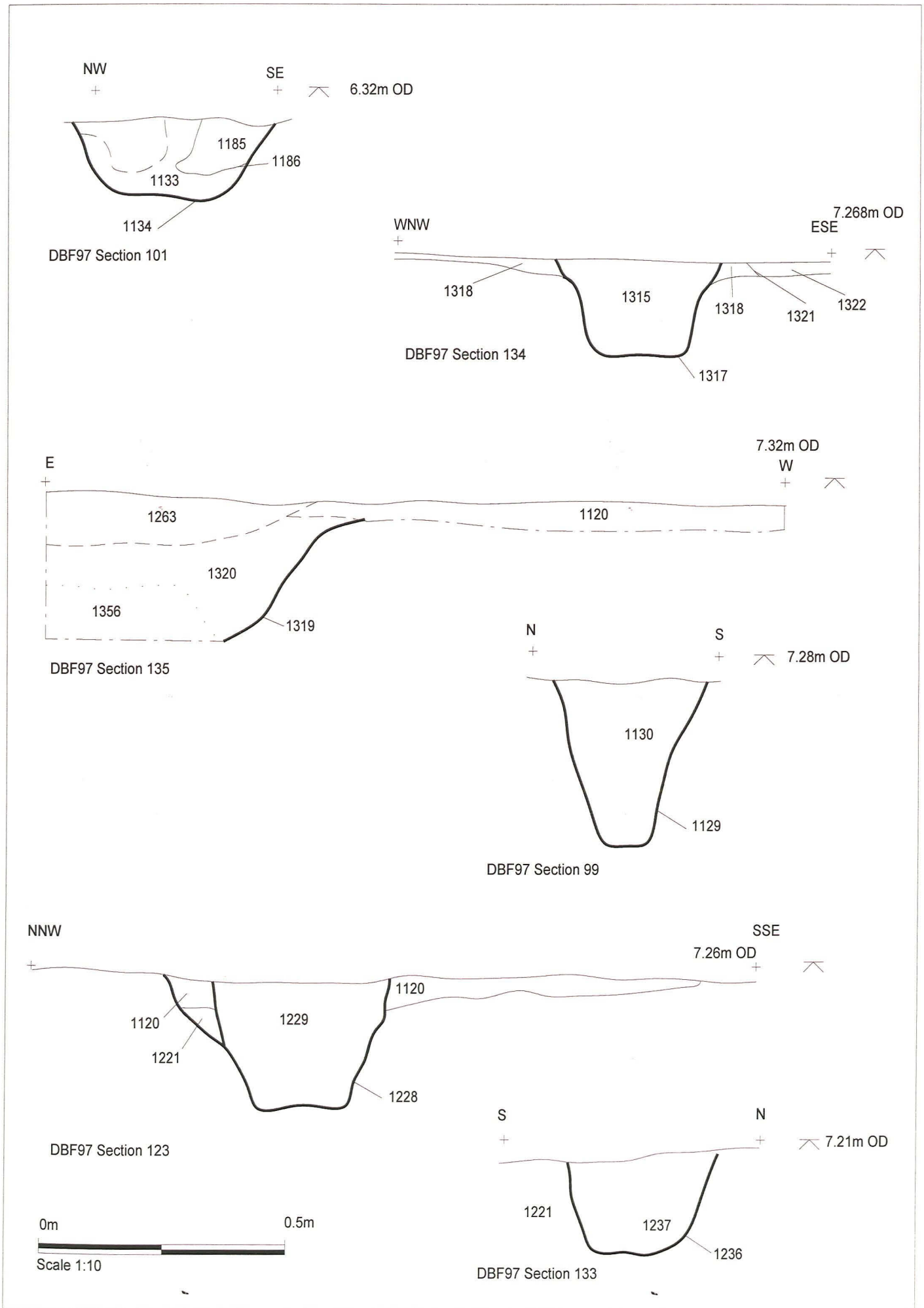


Figure 21. Site 4 (DBF97) Sections from Structure 1

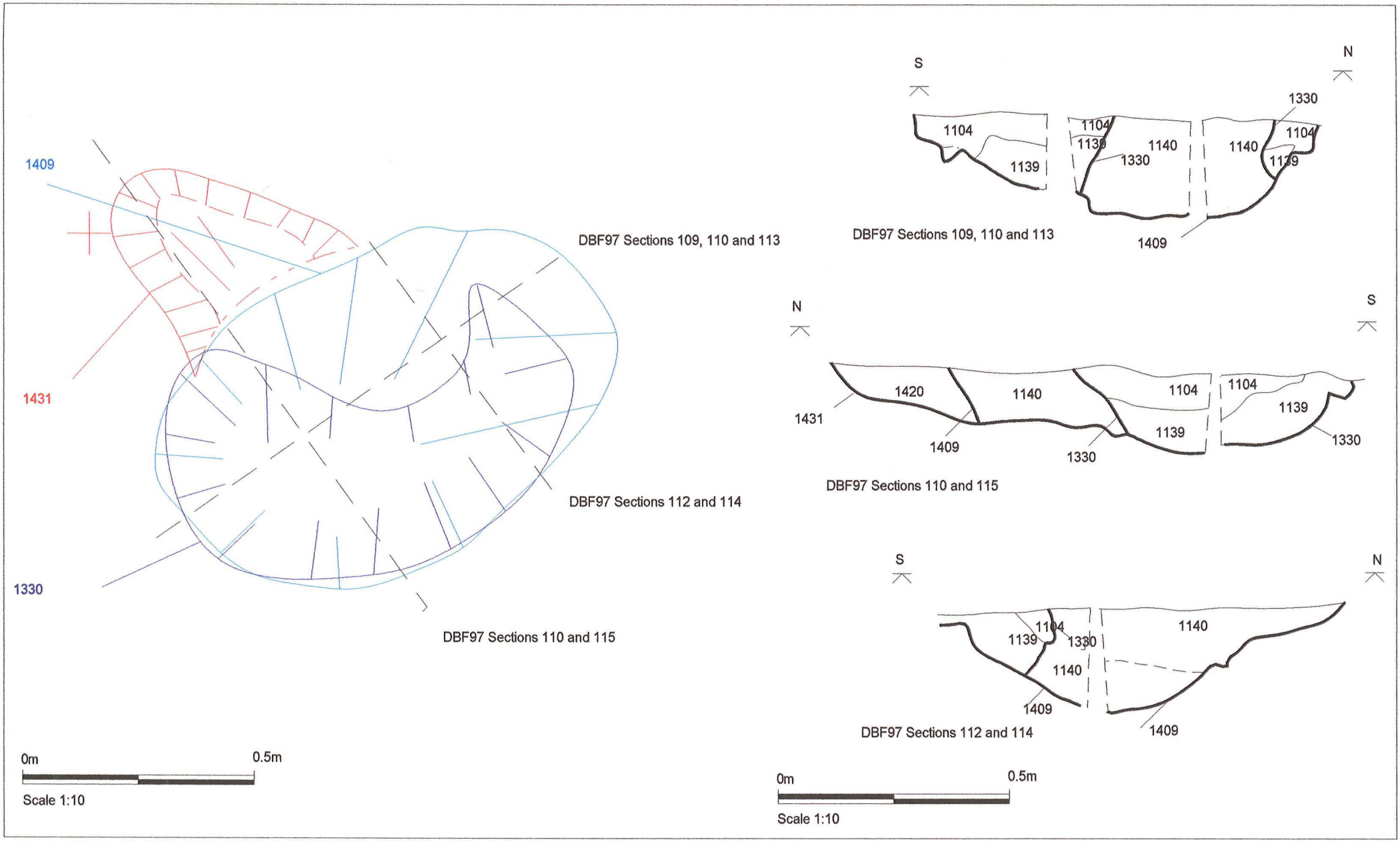


Figure 22. Plan and section across hearth in Group 74 in Structure 1 on Site 4 (DBF97)

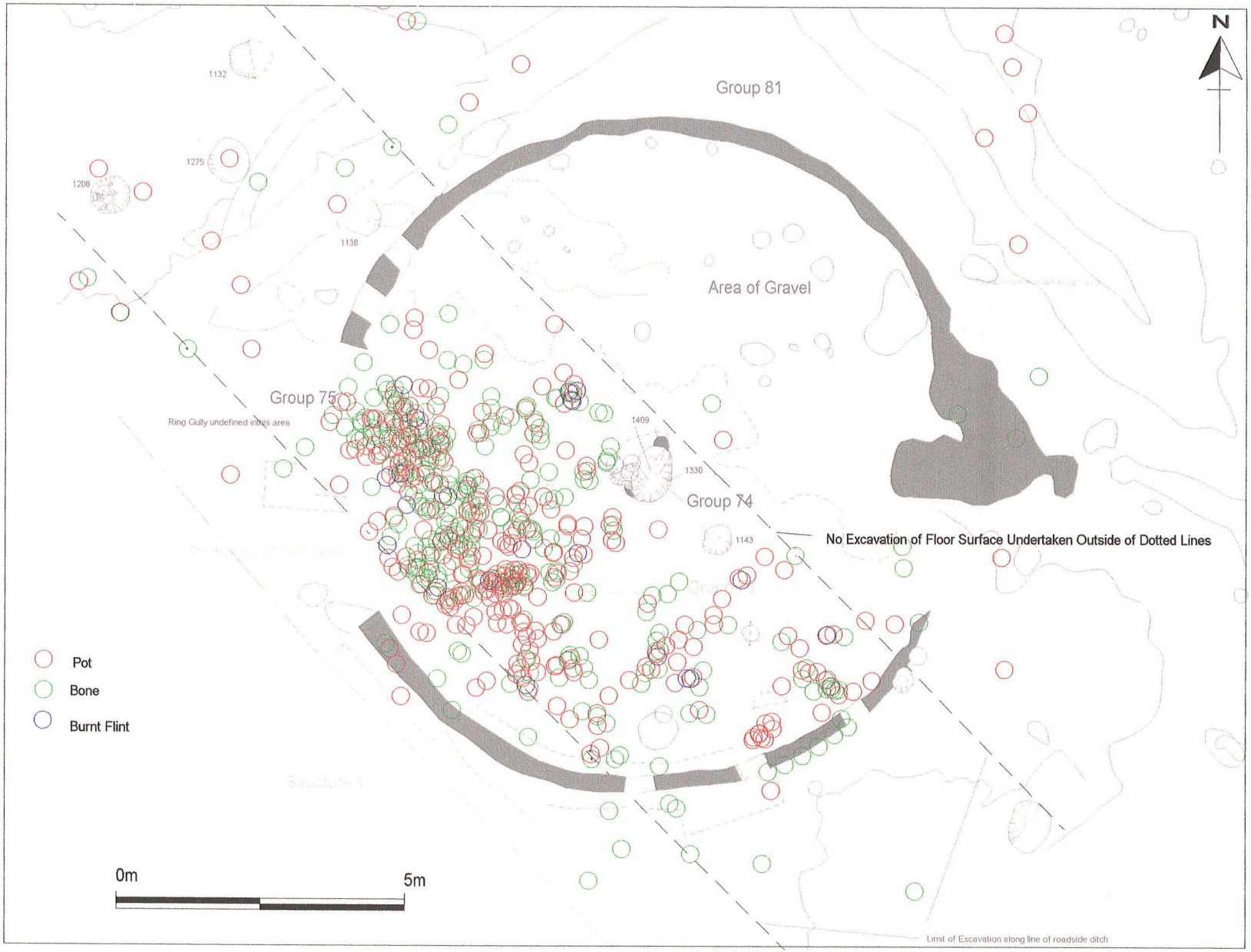


Figure 23 Site 4 Finds plotted in floor deposits and buried soil in Structure 1

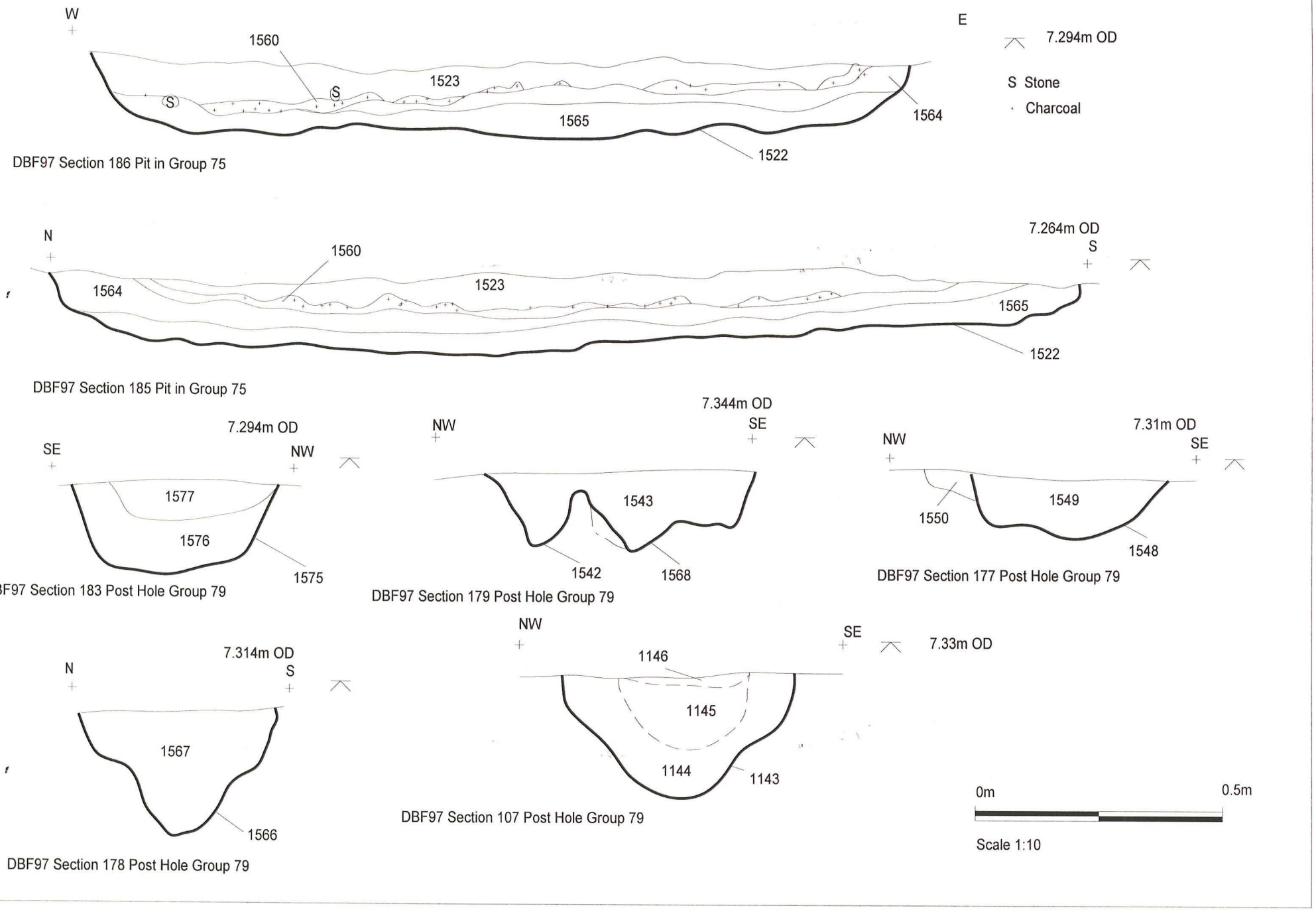


Figure 24 Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across Group 75 pit and Group 22 post holes

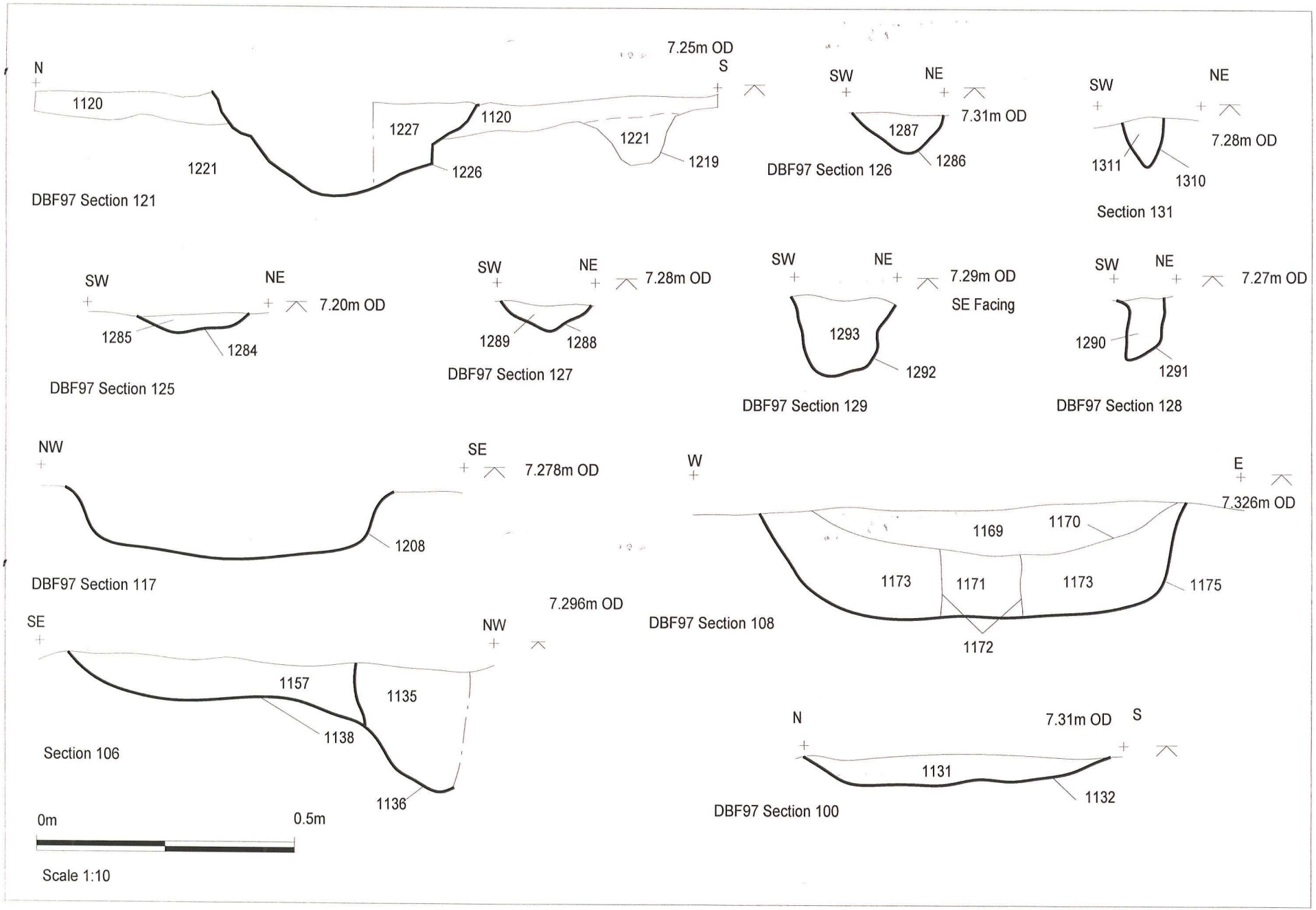


Figure 25 Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across pits in Group 61, Group 57 postholes in Structure 1

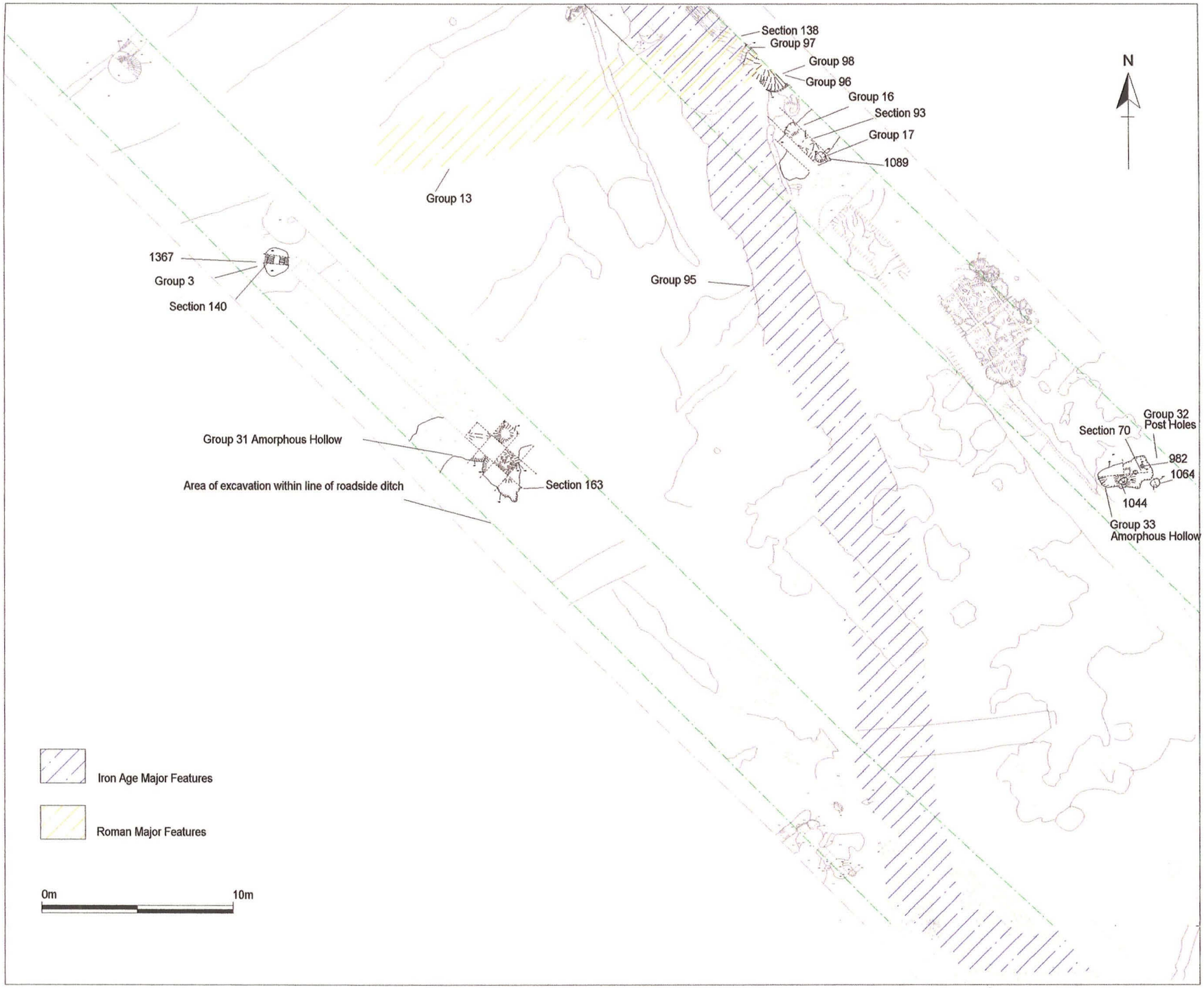
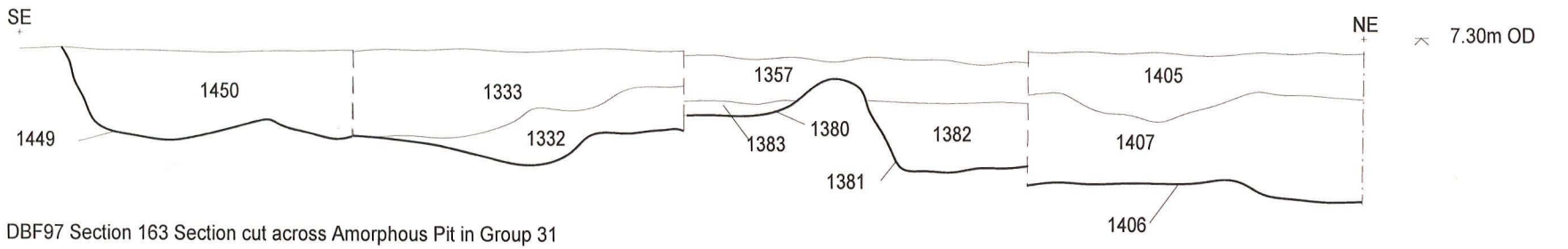
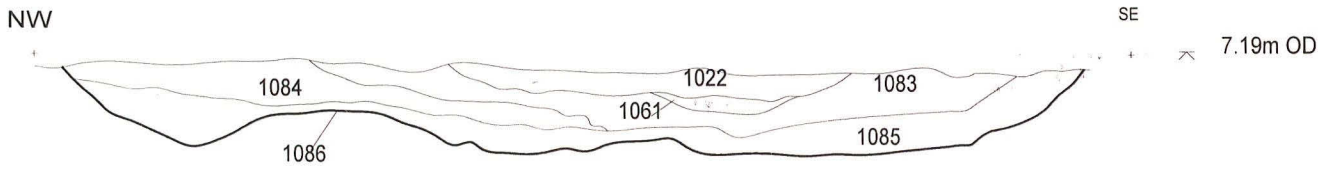


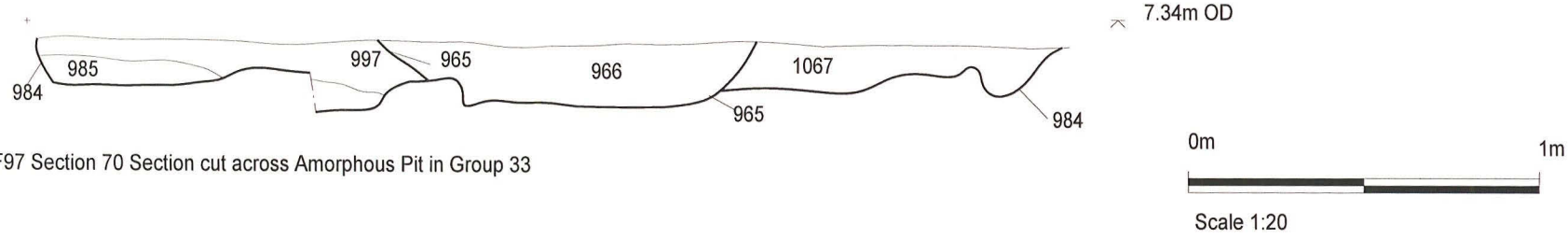
Figure 26 Site 4 (DBF97) Early Iron Age and Middle Iron Age features



DBF97 Section 163 Section cut across Amorphous Pit in Group 31



DBF97 Section 93 Section cut across Amorphous Pit in Group 16



DBF97 Section 70 Section cut across Amorphous Pit in Group 33

Figure 27 Site 4 Sections across Early Iron Age amorphous hollows

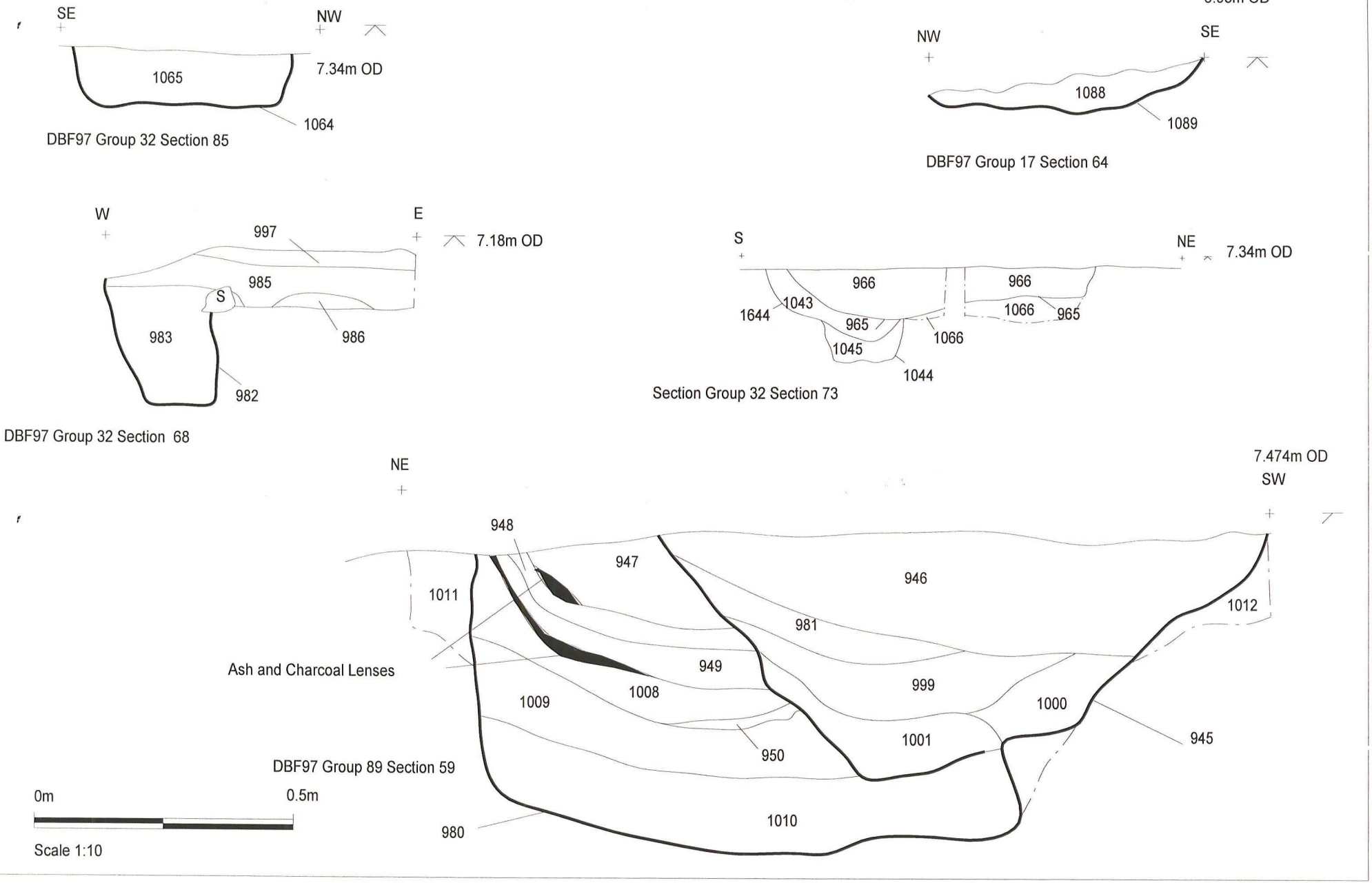


Figure 28 Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across Group 89 pit and Group 32 postholes

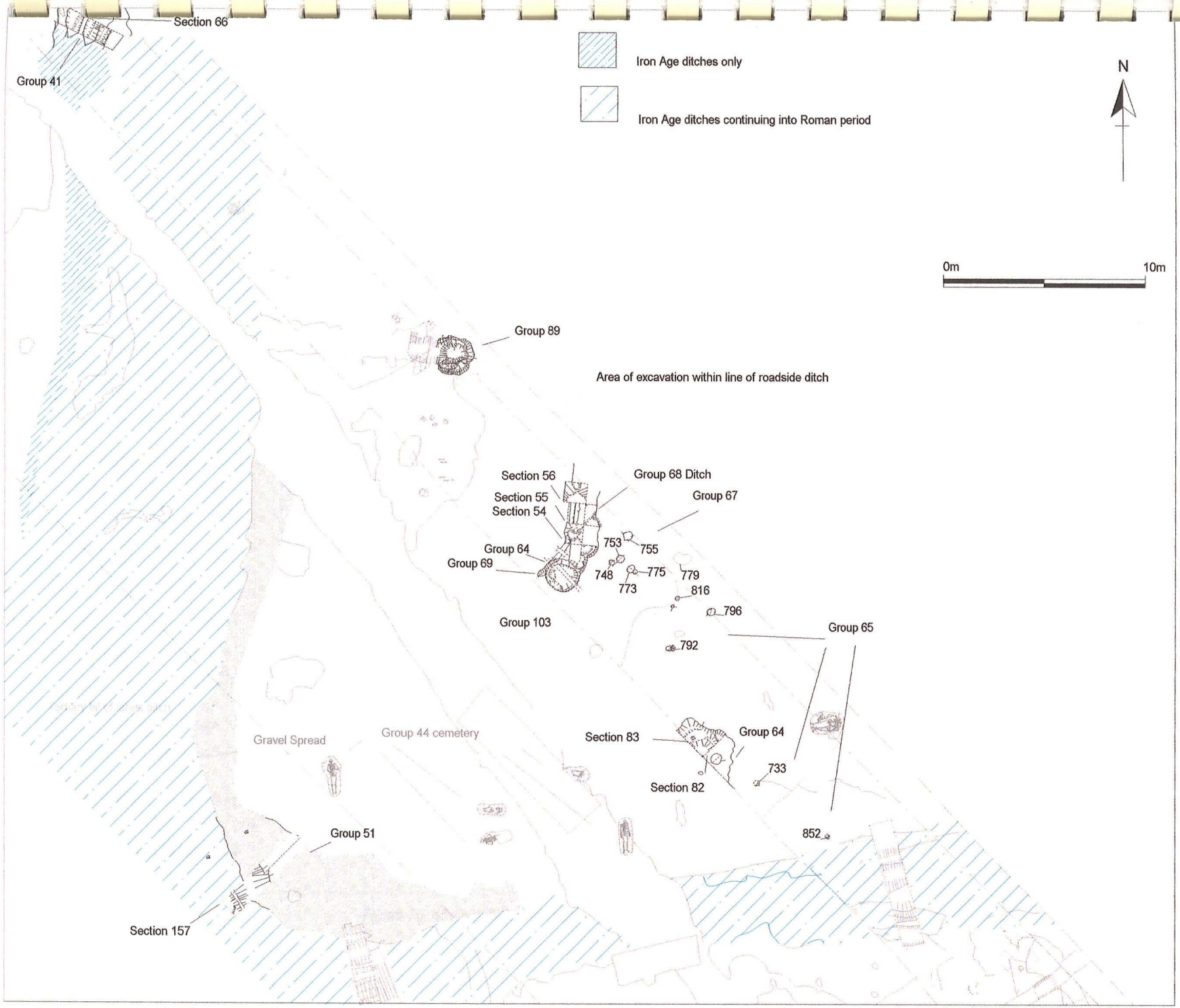


Figure 29 Site 4 (DBF97) Early and Middle Iron Age features in area of Enclosure 2

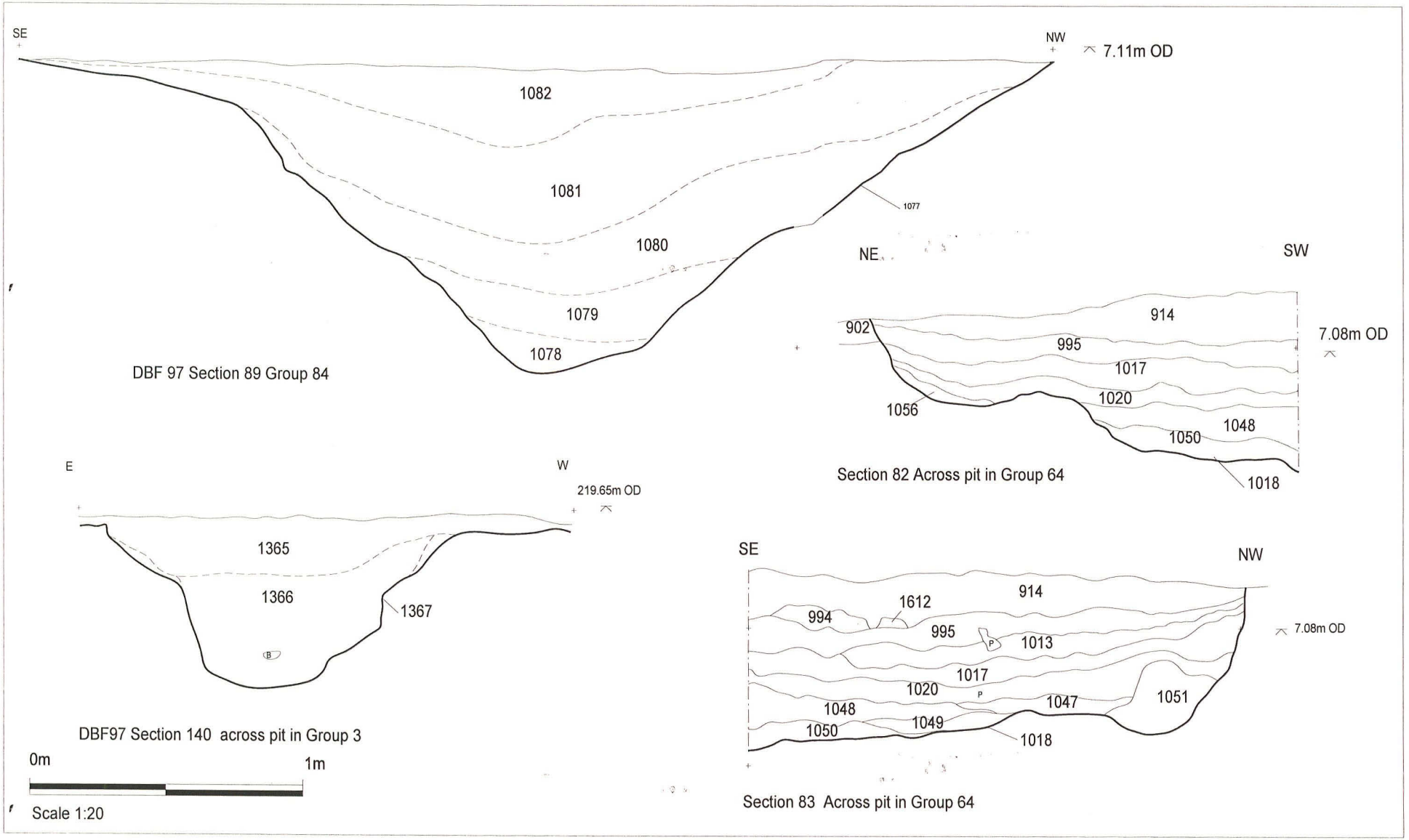


Figure 30. Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across pits in Groups 3, 64 and 89

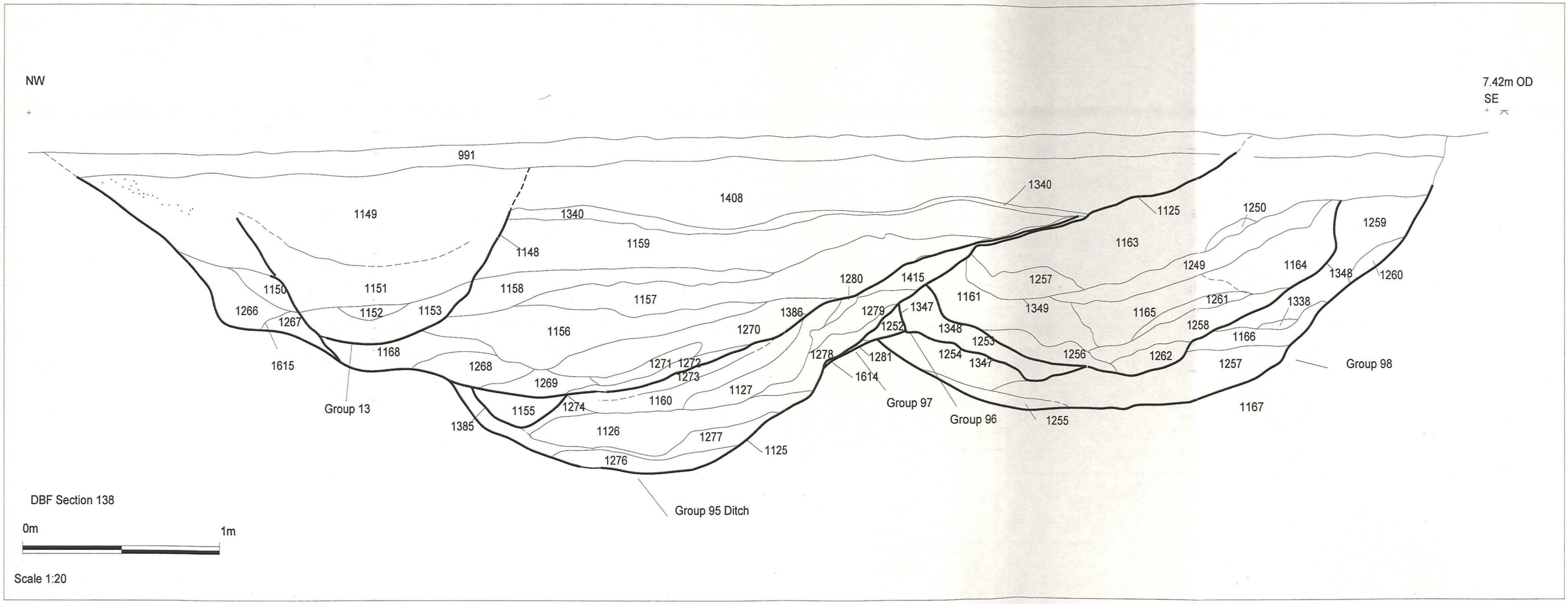


Figure 31 Site 4 (DBF97) Section across Middle Iron Age ditch in Group 95 and earlier features.

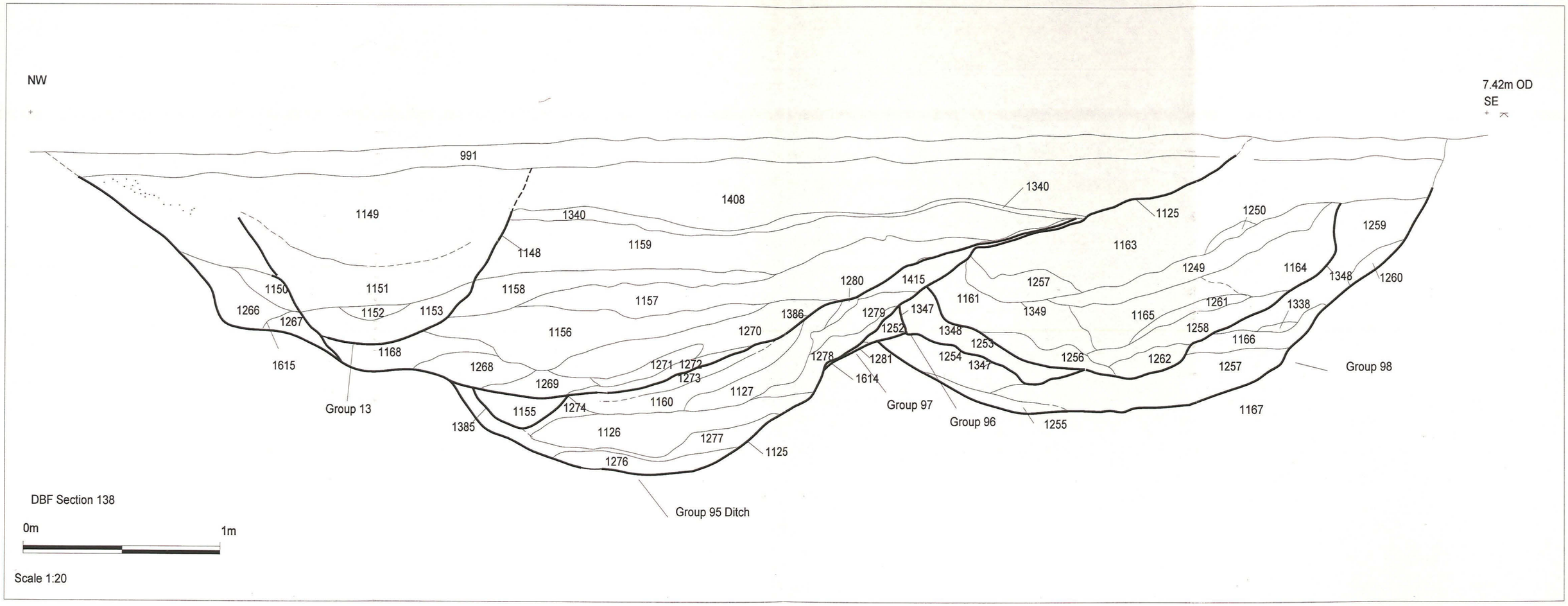
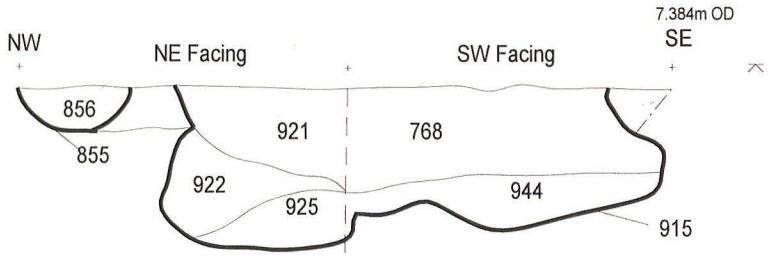
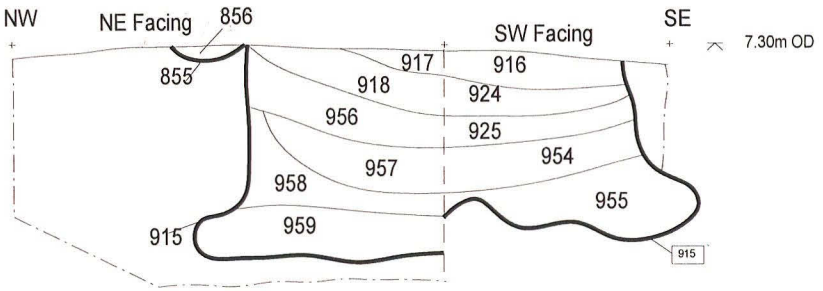


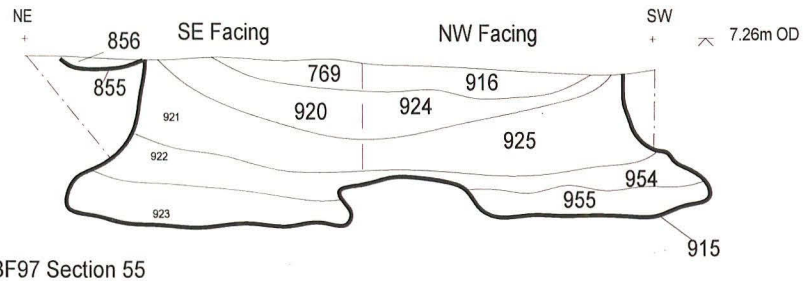
Figure 31 Site 4 (DBF97) Section across Middle Iron Age ditch in Group 95 and earlier features.



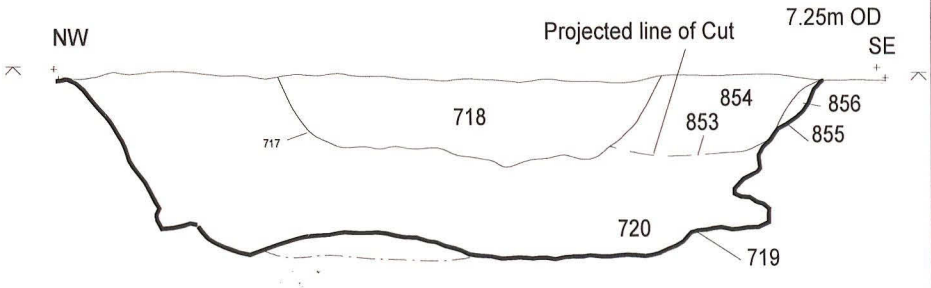
Section 54



DBF97 Section 56



DBF97 Section 55



Reconstruction of Section Across Pit in Group 103
Using Sections 15 and 190

0m 1m

Scale 1:20

Fig 32. Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across Middle Iron Age ditch in Group 68 and Pit 103.

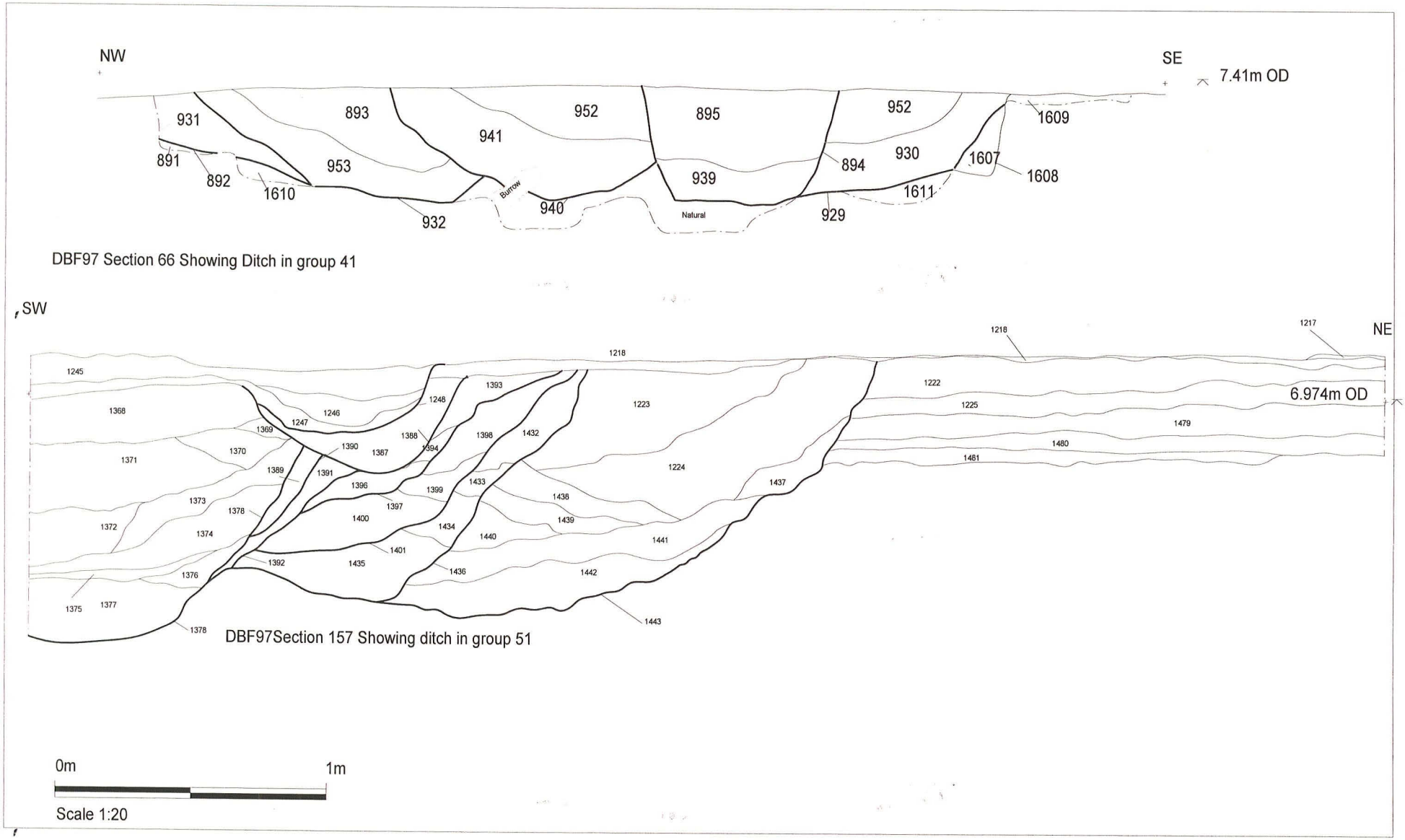


Figure 33 Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across ditches in Groups 41 and 51.

Figure 34 Site 4 (DBF97) Plan showing features of Indeterminate Iron Age date at south end of site

Figure 35 Site 4 (DBF97) Major Roman Features

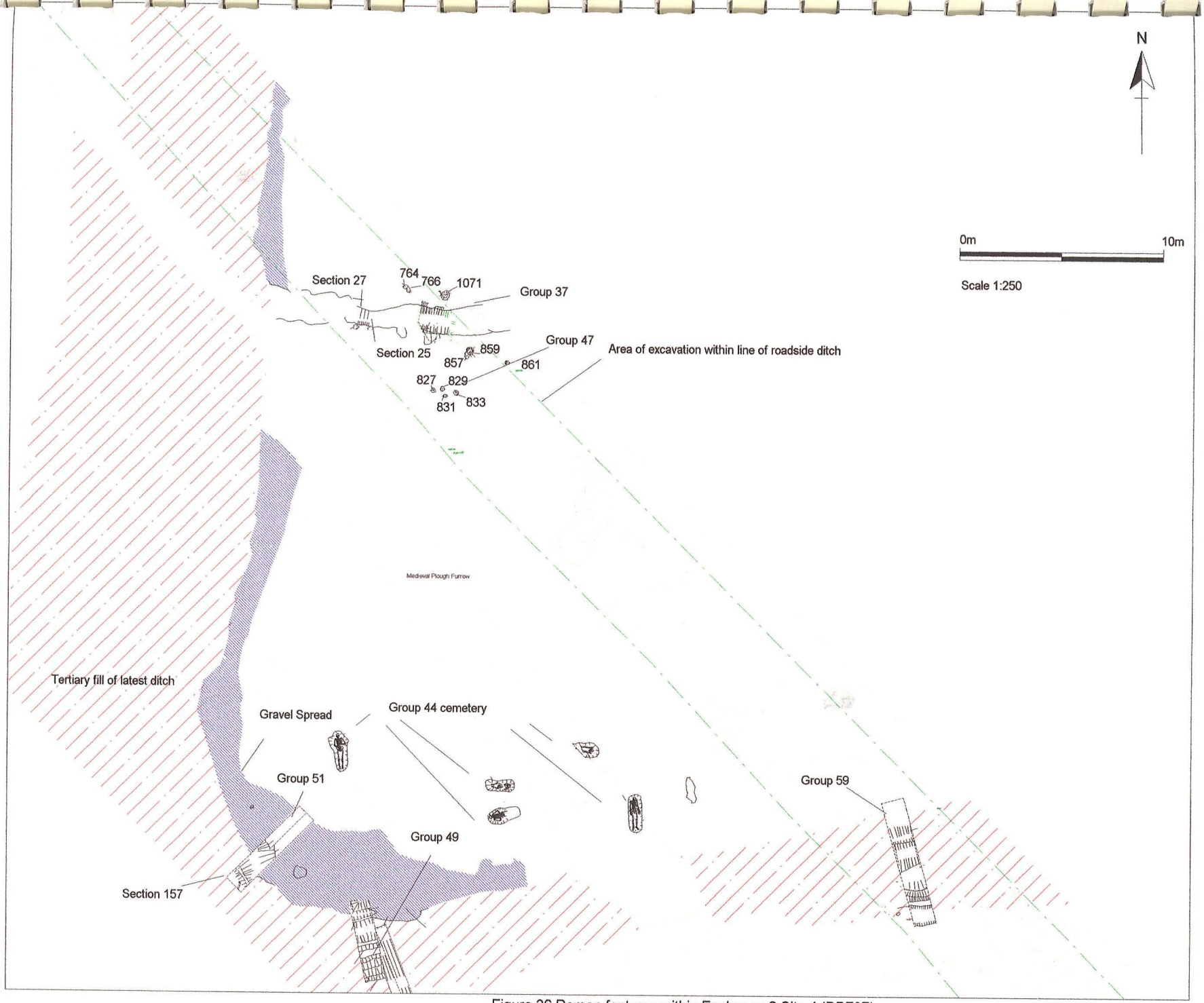


Figure 36 Roman features within Enclosure 2 Site 4 (DBF97)

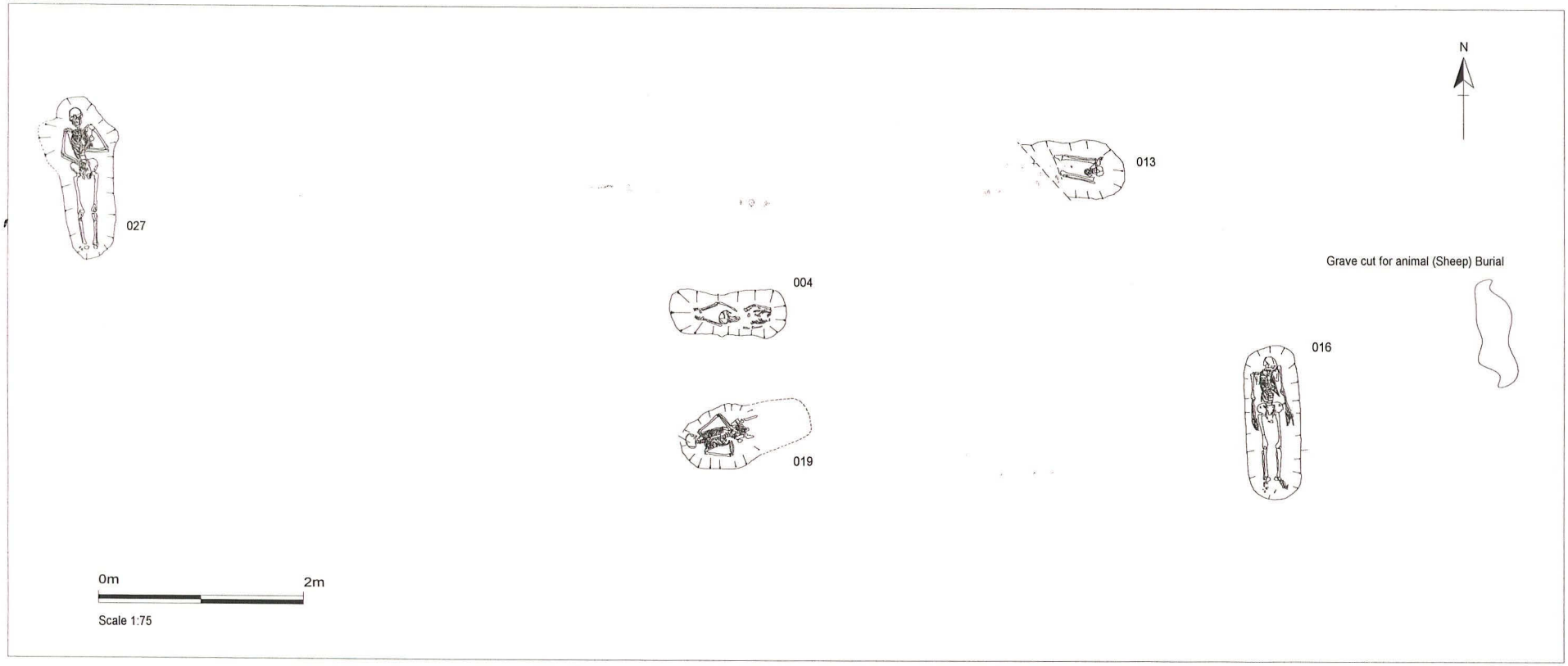


Fig 37 Site 4 (DBF97) Plan showing location of graves in Group 44.

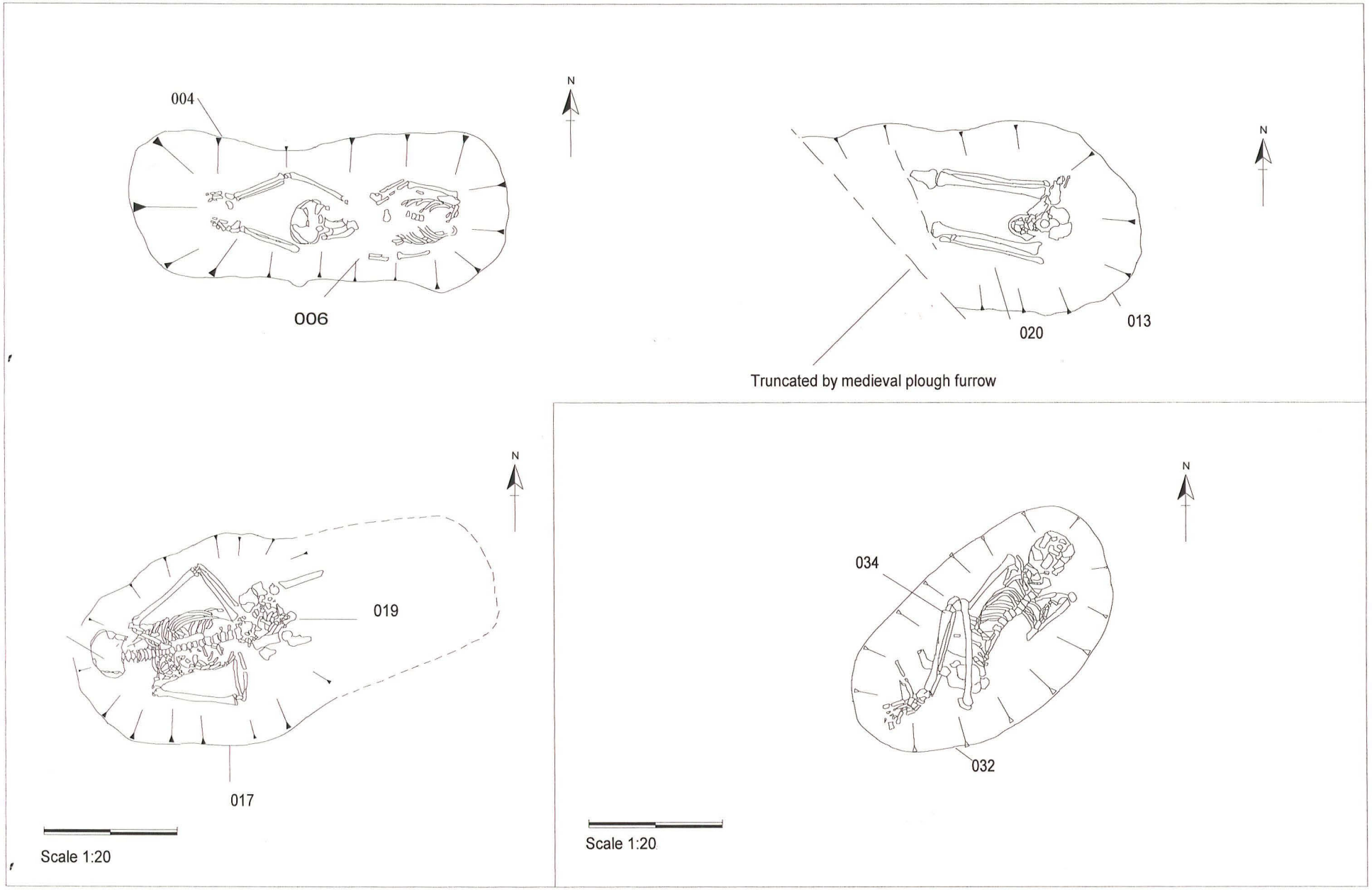


Figure 38 Site 4 DBF97 Plans of skeletons 006, 020 and 019. Also probable Iron Age skeketon 034 in Group 83

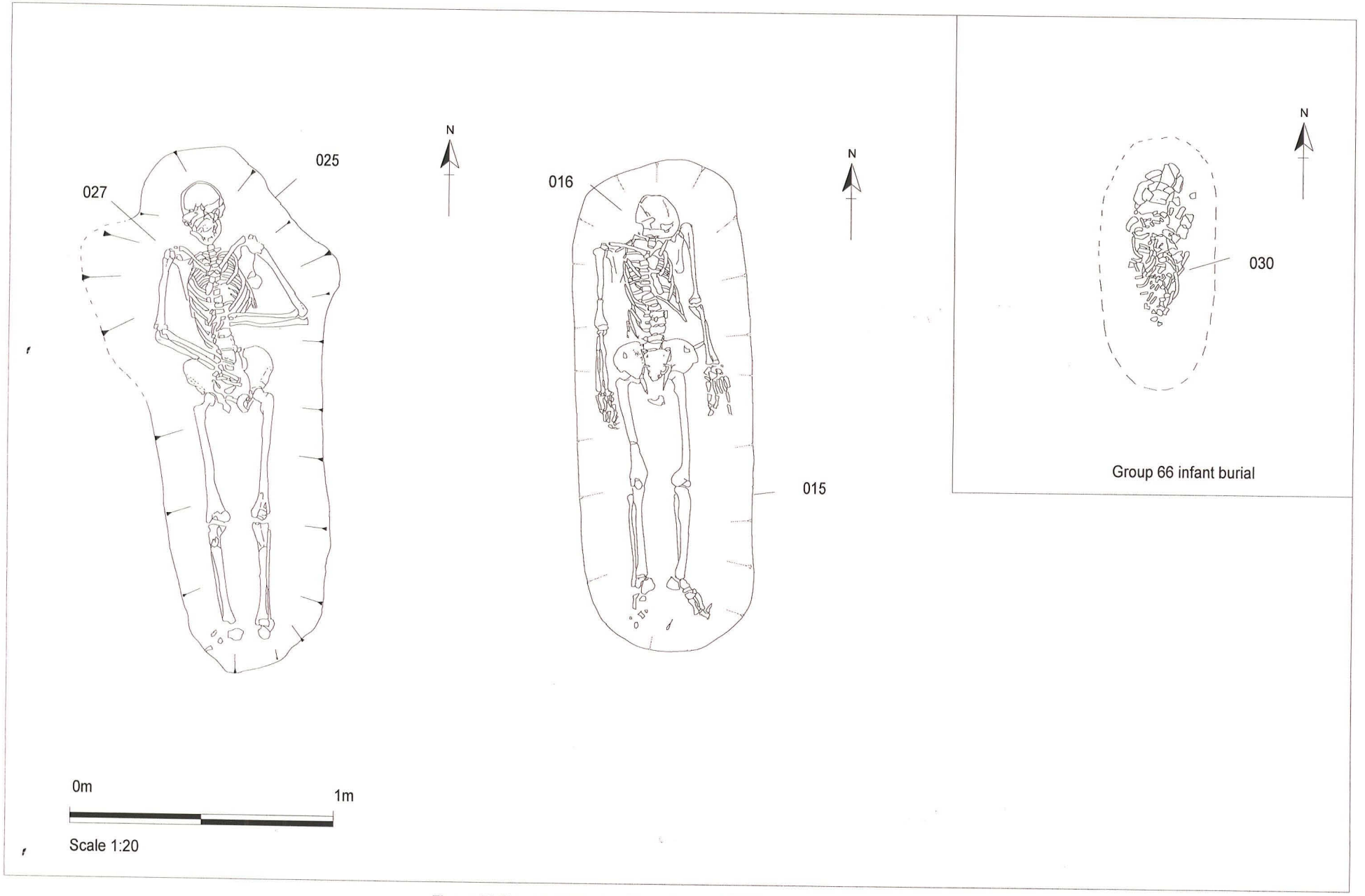
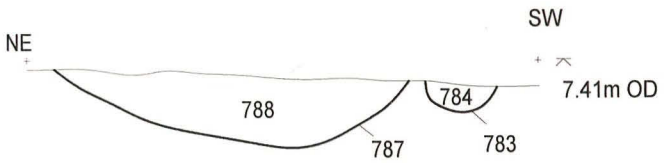
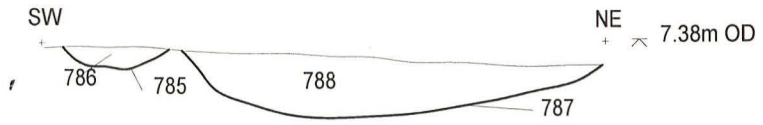


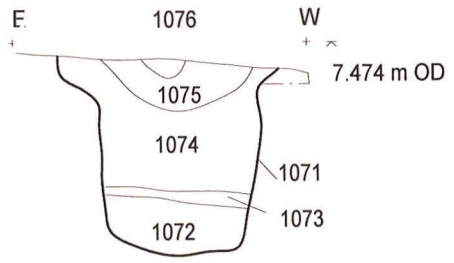
Figure 39 Site 4 (DBF97) Skeletons 016 and 027 from Grave Group 44. Also infant burial in group 66.



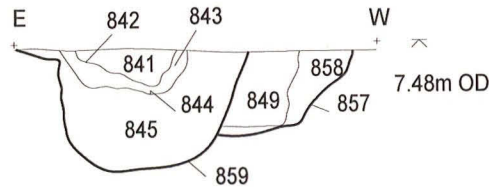
DBF 97 Section 25 Across Gully in Group 37



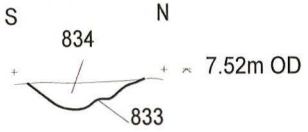
DBF97 Section 27 across Gully in Group 37



Section 88 Post Hole Group 47

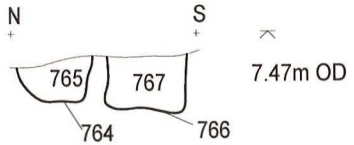


Section 41 Post Hole Group 47

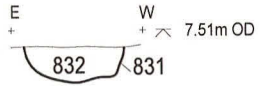


Section 39 Post Hole in Group 47

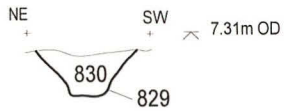
7.48m OD



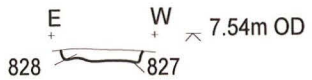
Section 24 Post Hole Group 47



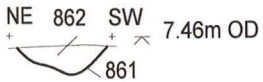
Section 38 Post Hole Group 47



Section 37 Post Hole Group 47



Section 36 Post Hole Group 47



Section 40 Post Hole Group 47

Scale 1:20

Figure 40. Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across Roman phase Gully in Group 37 and Post Hole Groups 47

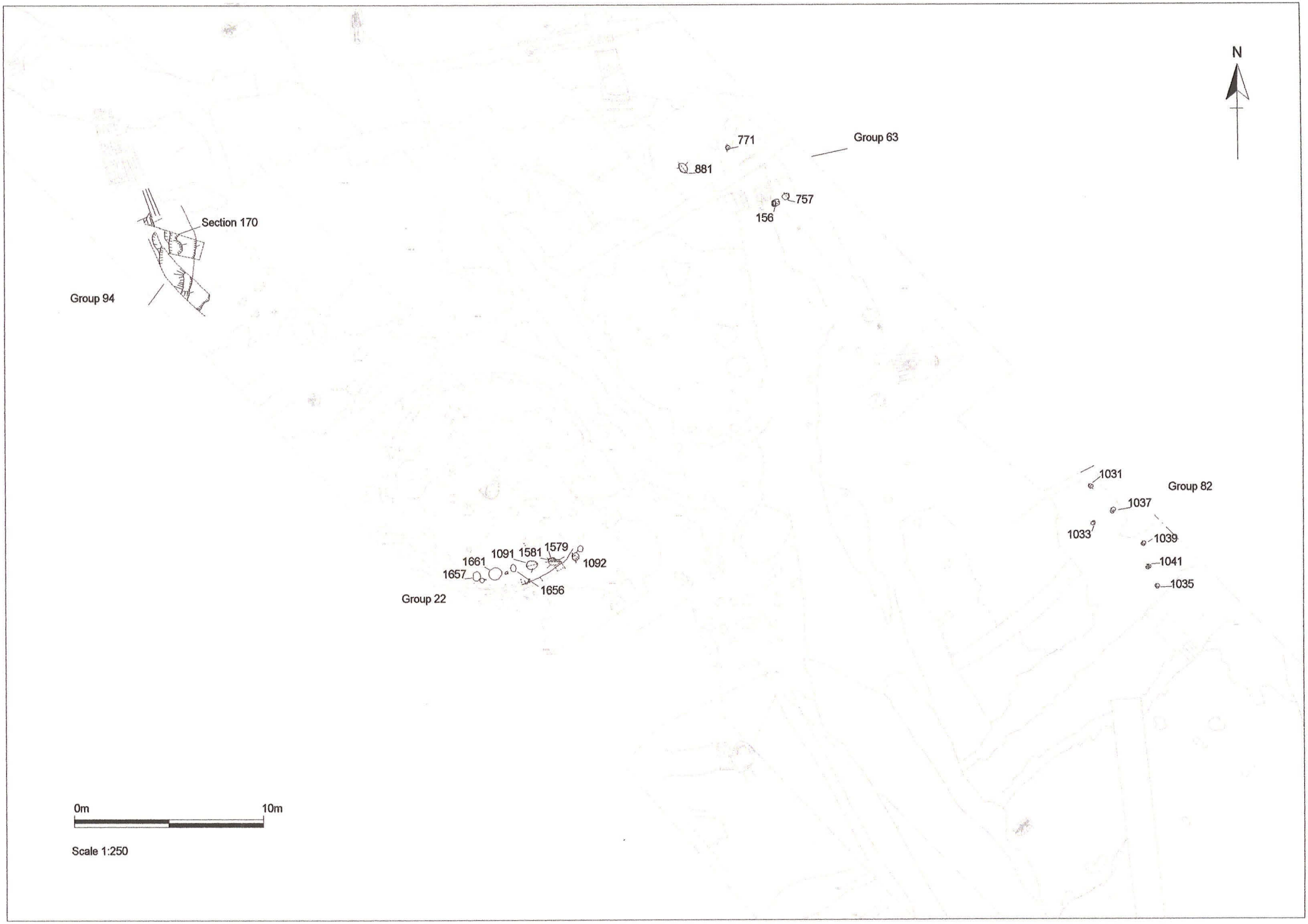


Figure 41 Site 4 (DBF97) Roman phase features at south end of site.

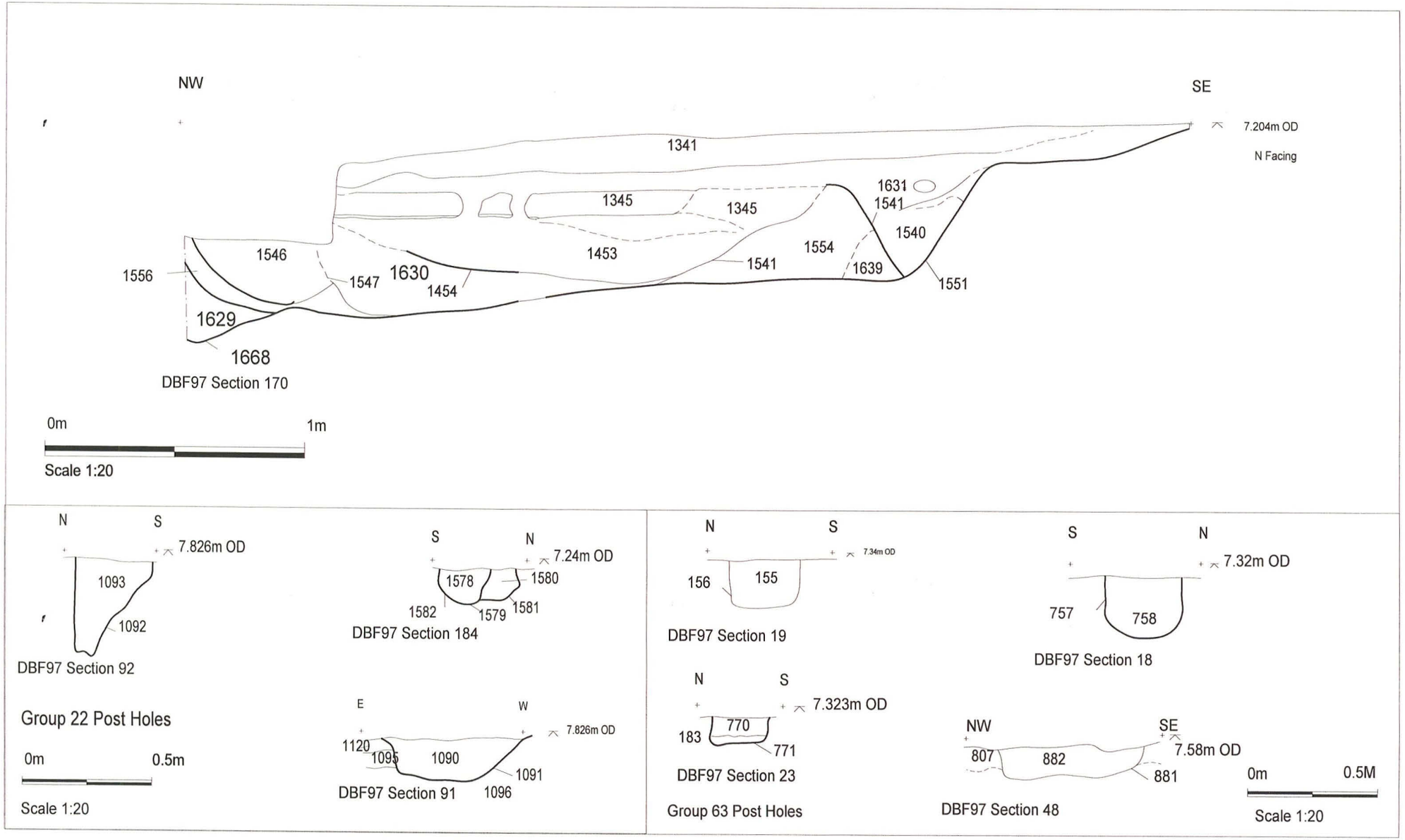


Figure 42 Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across posthole Groups 22, 63 and ditch Group 94.

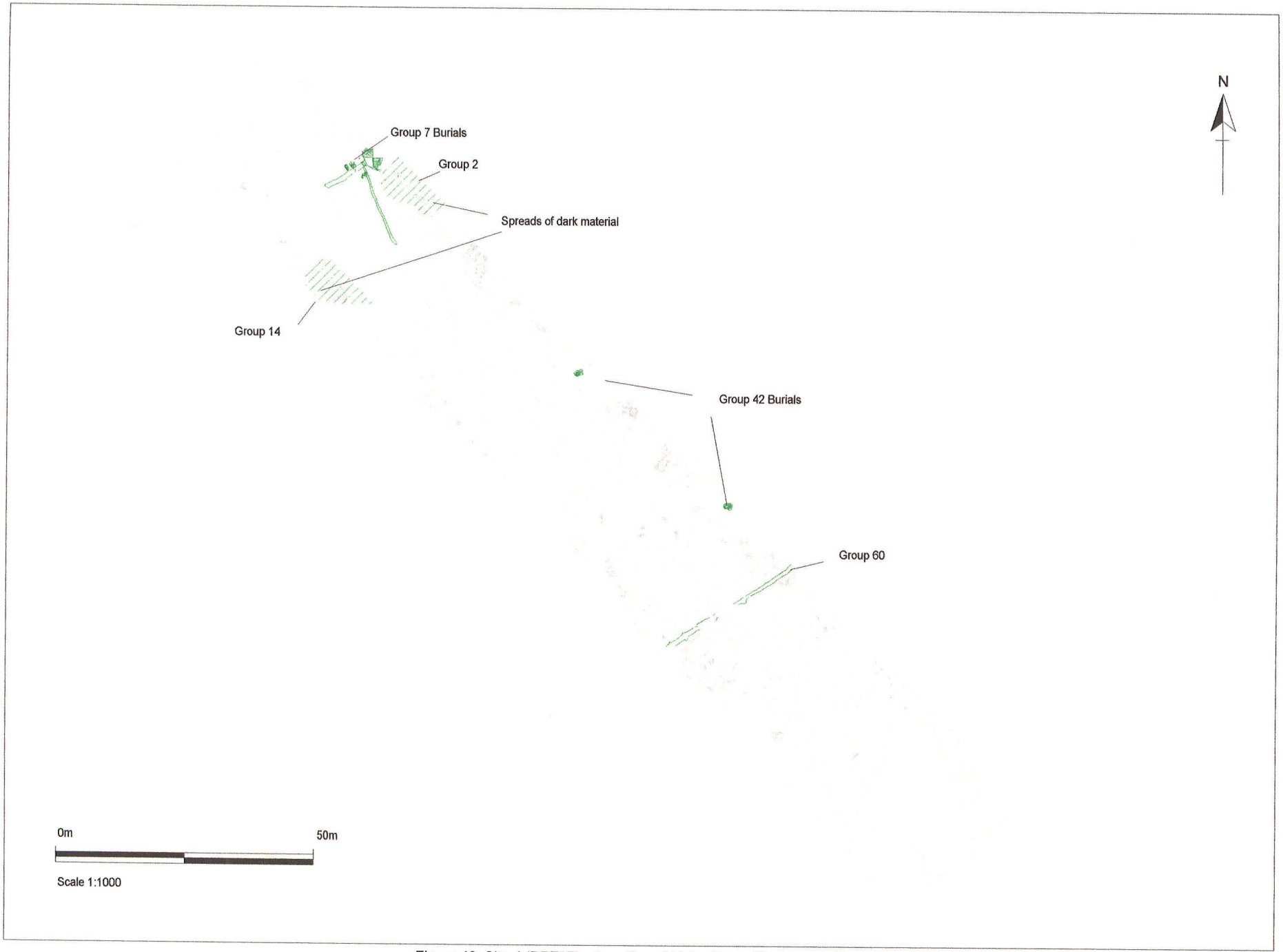


Figure 43. Site 4 (DBF97) mLocation of Major Saxon Features at Site 4 (DBF97)

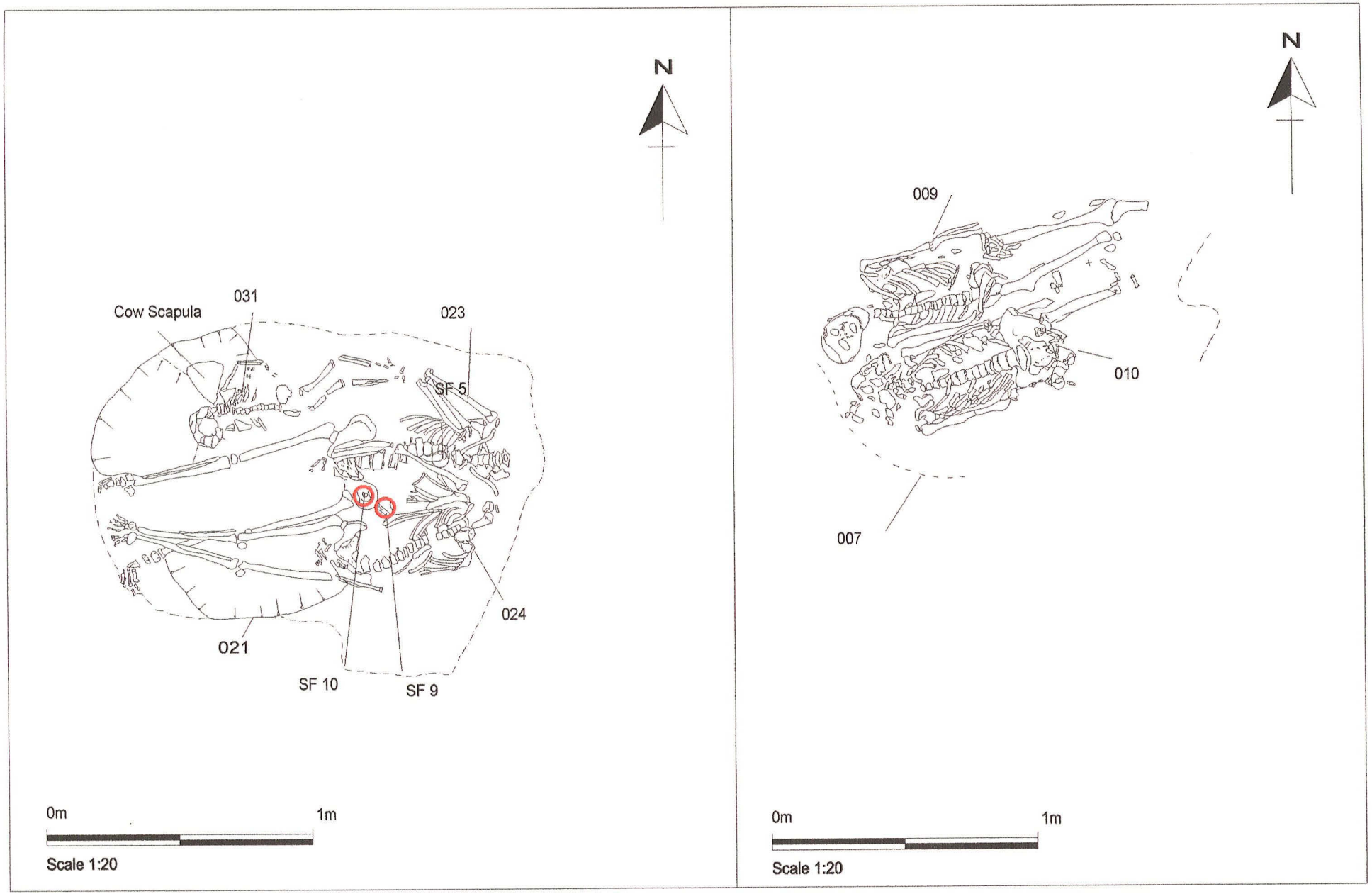


Figure 44. Site 4 (DBF97) Early Saxon double and triple graves in Group 42

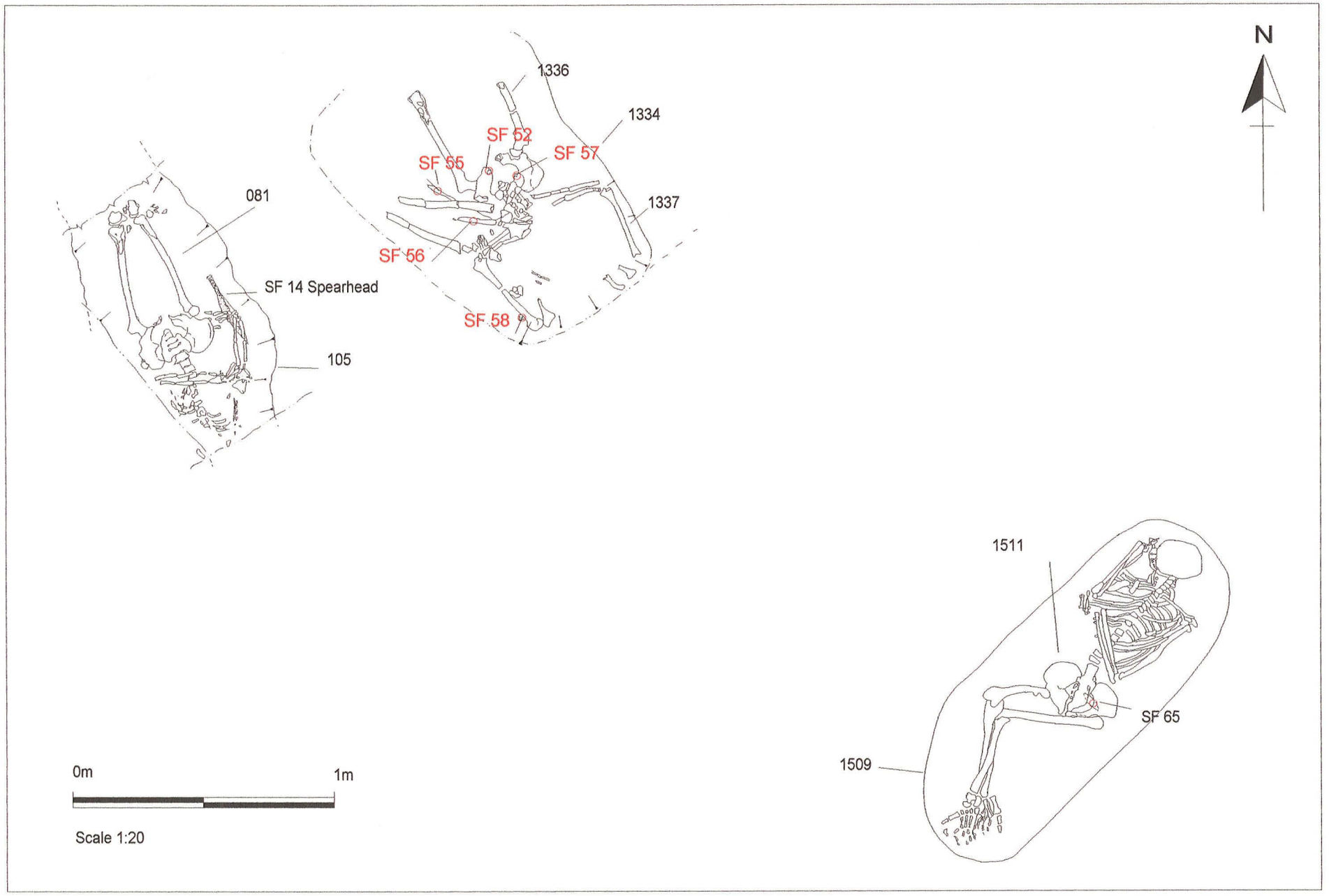


Figure 45 Site 4 (DBF97) Saxon Grave Group 7.

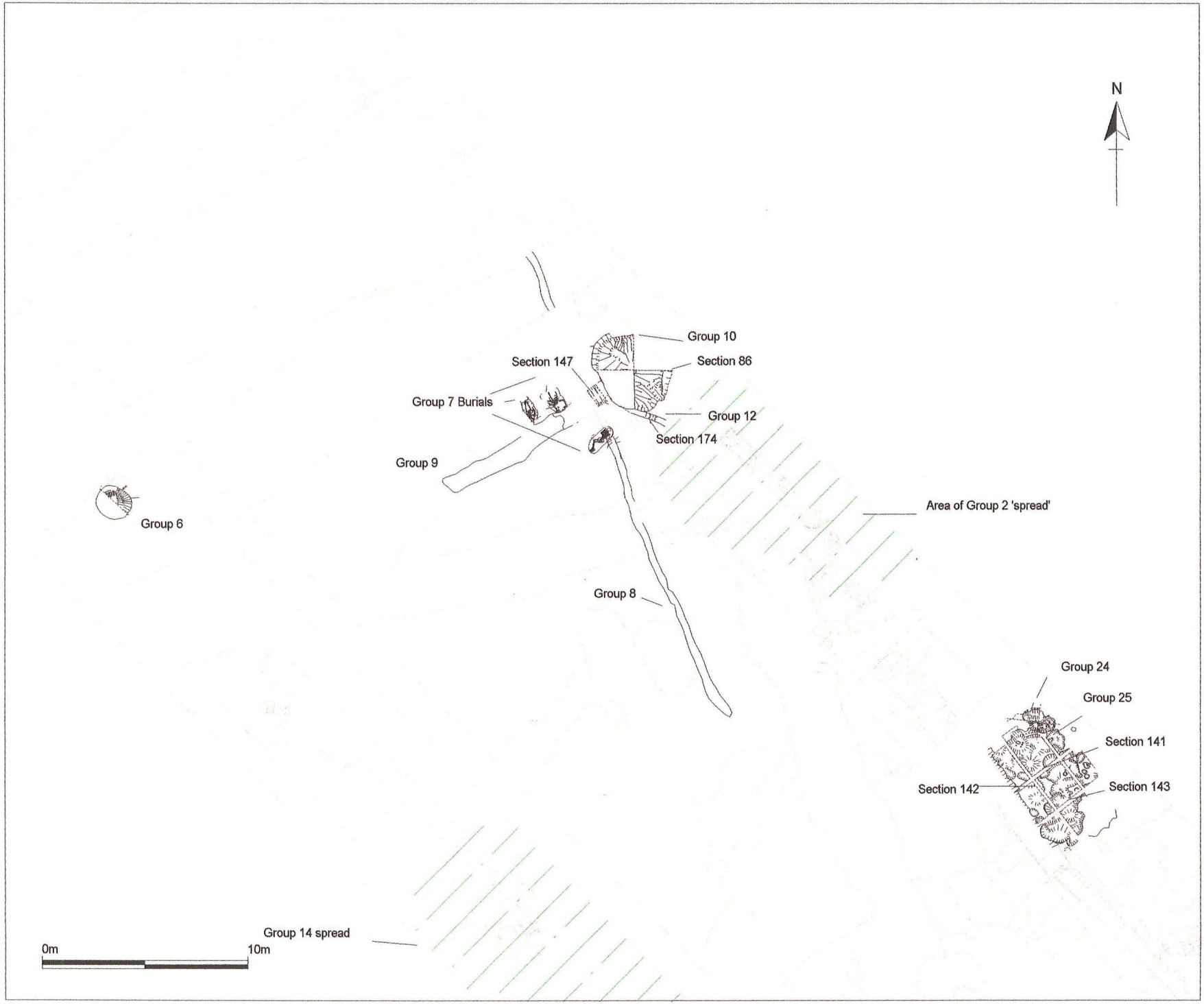


Figure 46 Site 4 (DBF97) Saxon features at north end of site

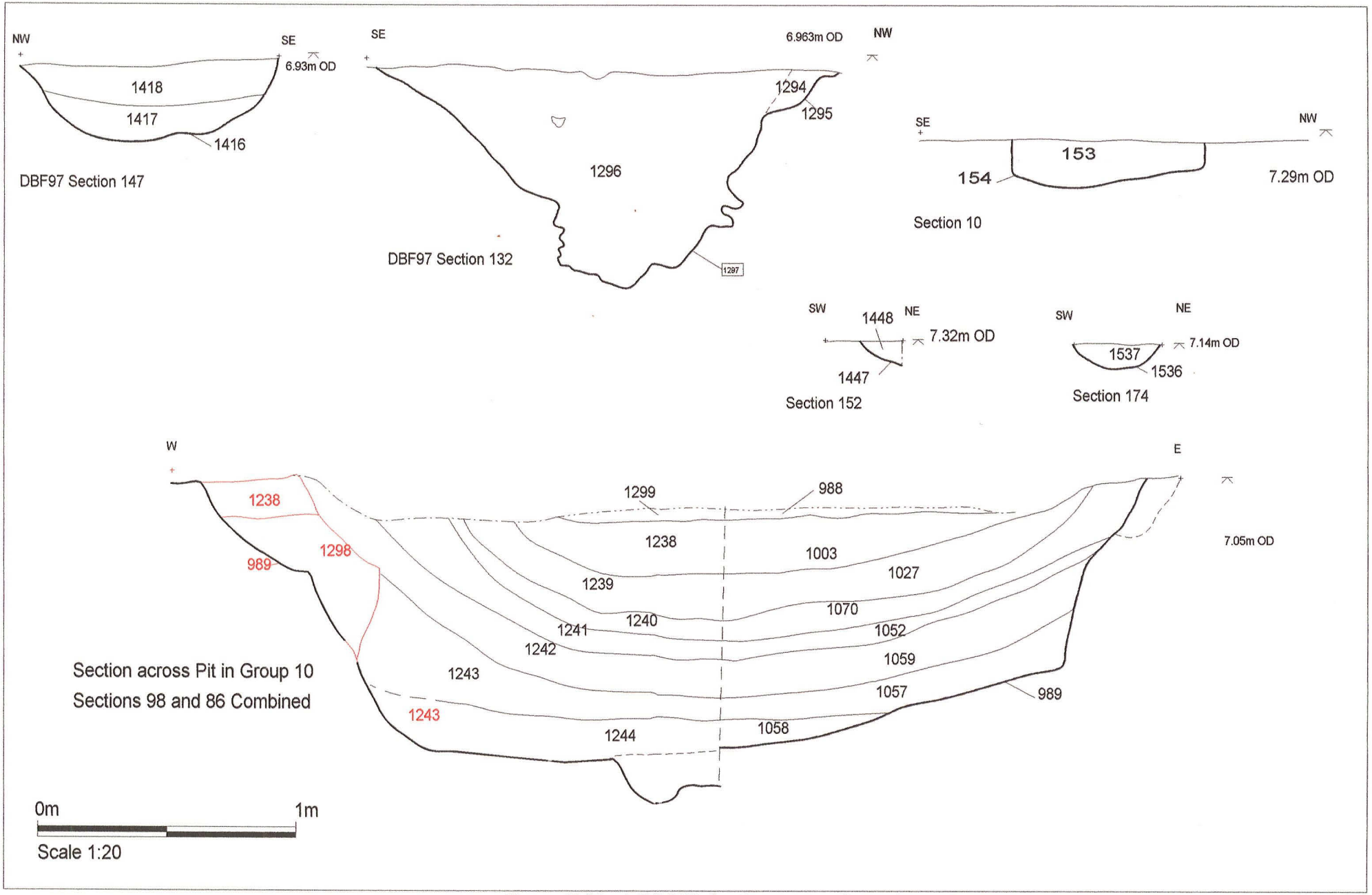


Figure 47 Site 4 (DBF97) Sections across Saxon Phase features.

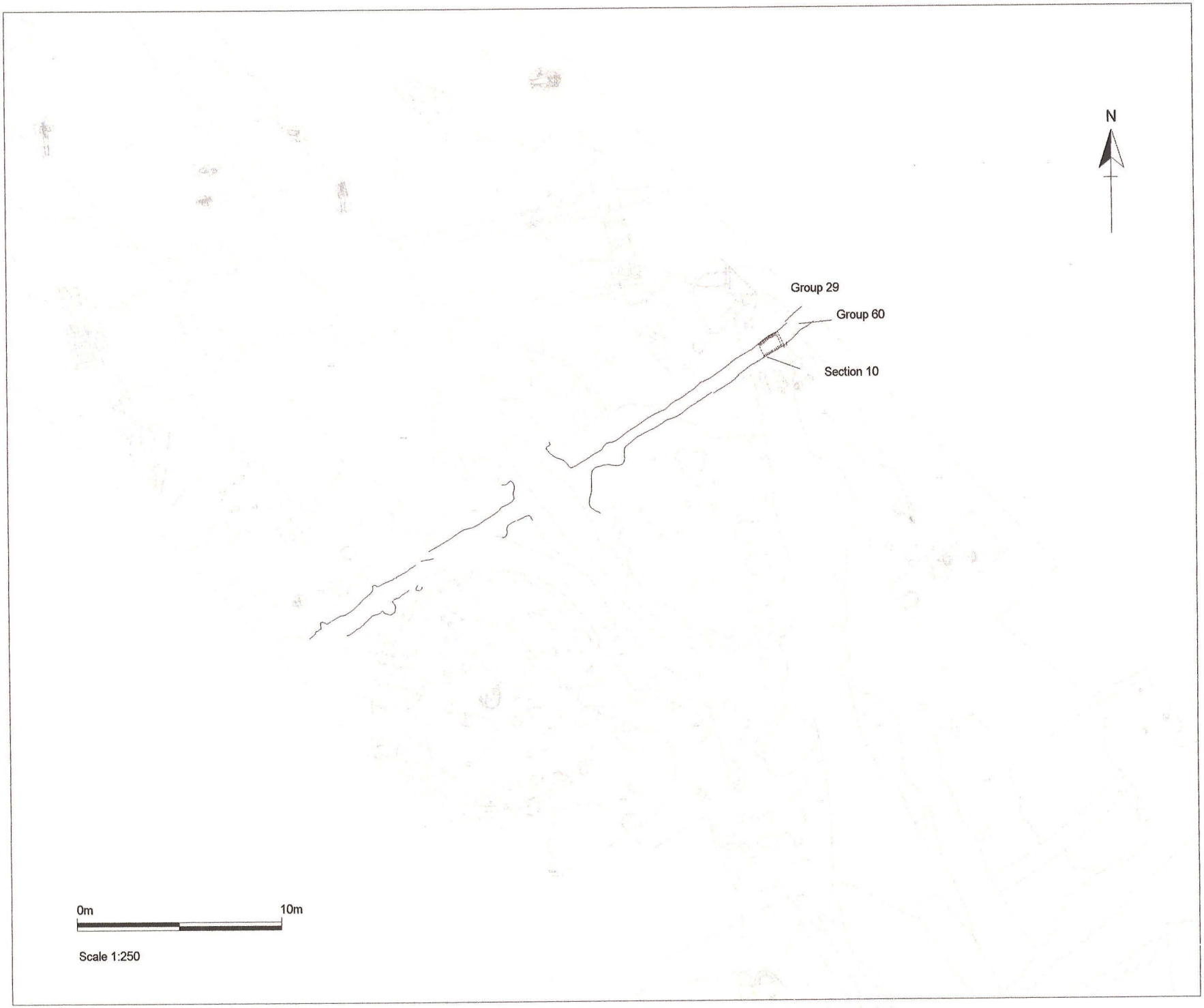


Figure 48 Site 4 (DBF97) Possible Saxon gully at south end of site.

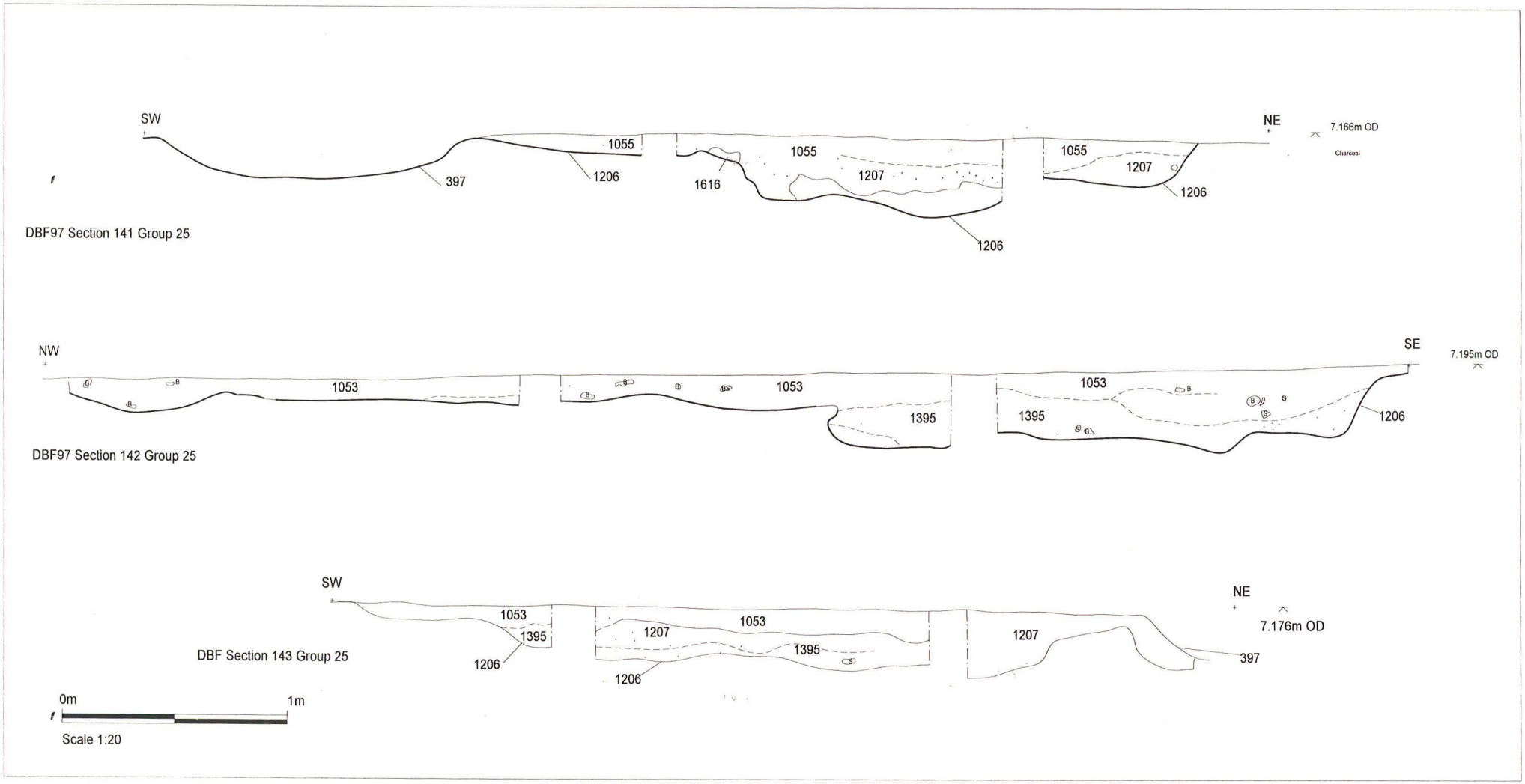


Fig 49 Site 4 Sections across Amorphous Hollow from Saxon phase

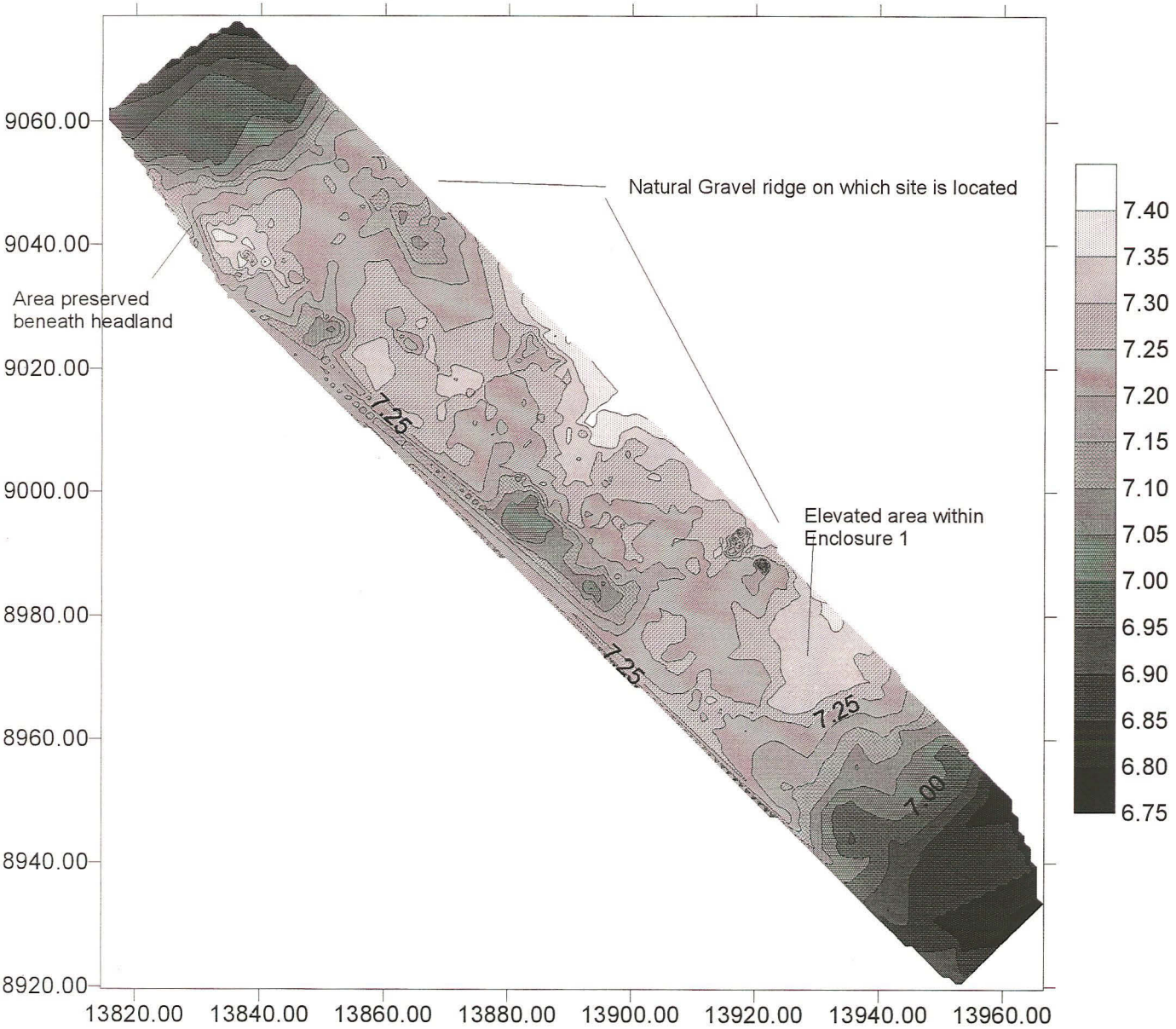


Figure 50 Site 4(DBF97) Contour plan at 5cm intervals

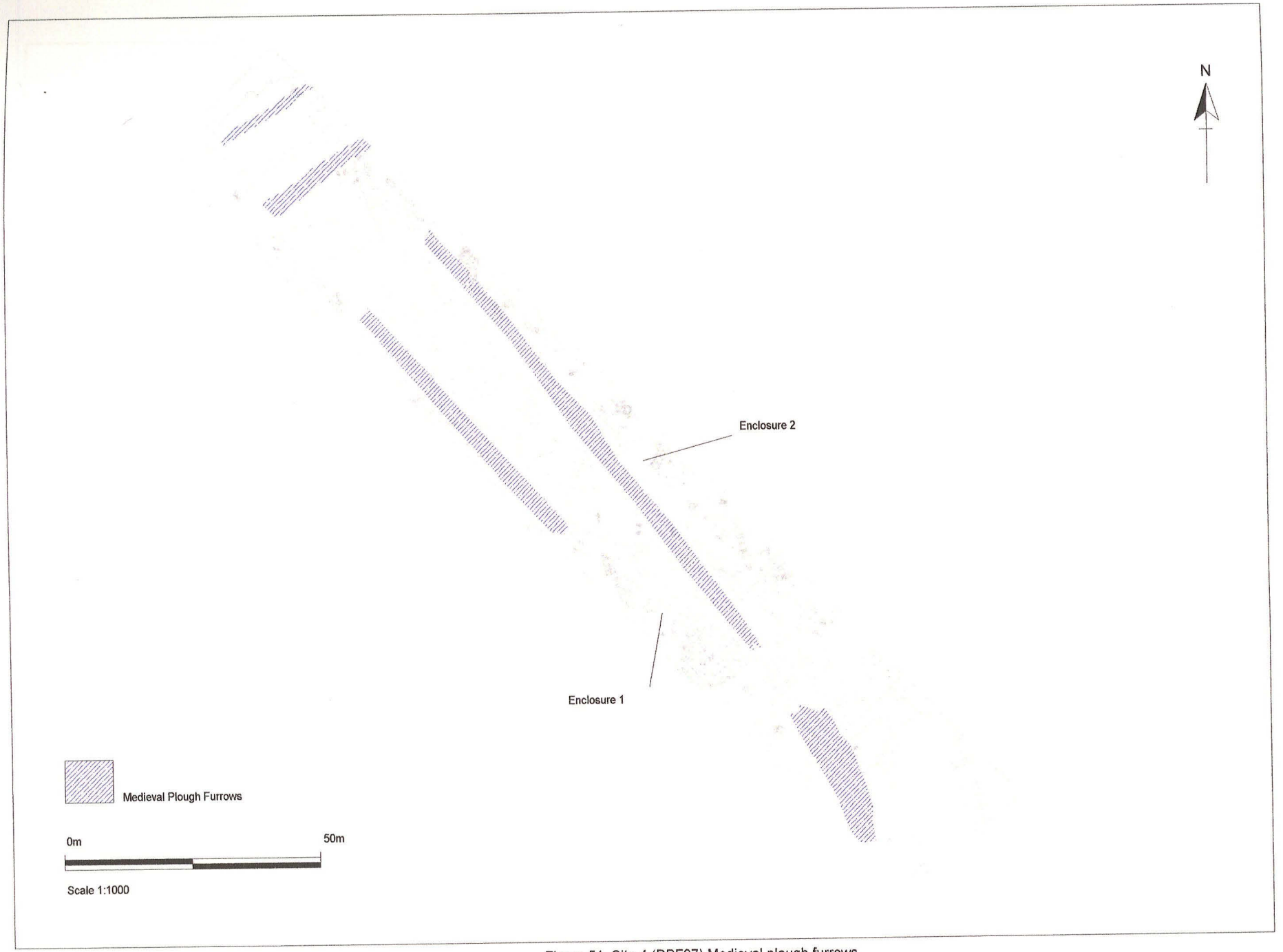


Figure 51. Site 4 (DBF97) Medieval plough furrows.

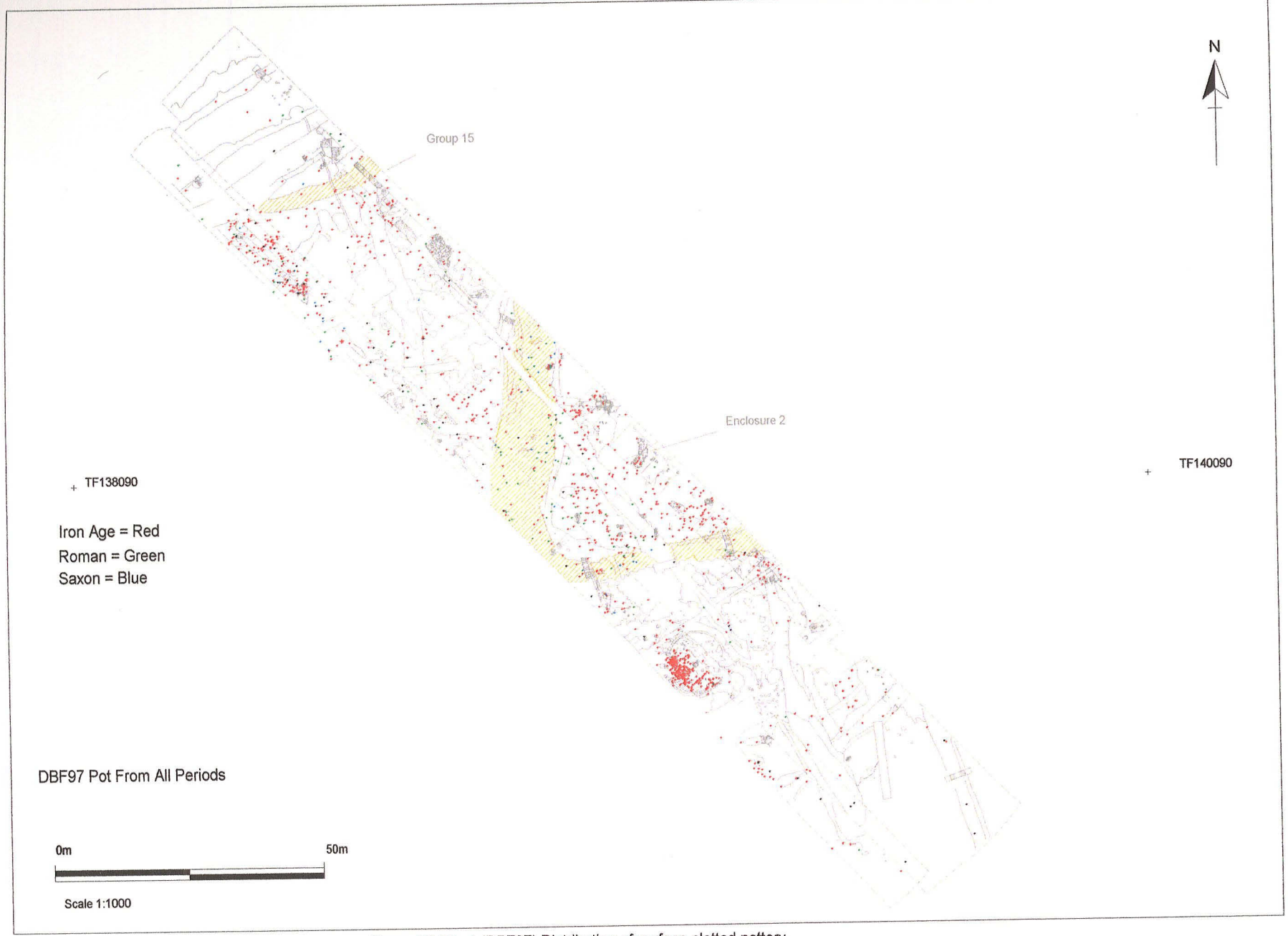


Figure 52 Site 4 (DBF97) Distribution of surface plotted pottery

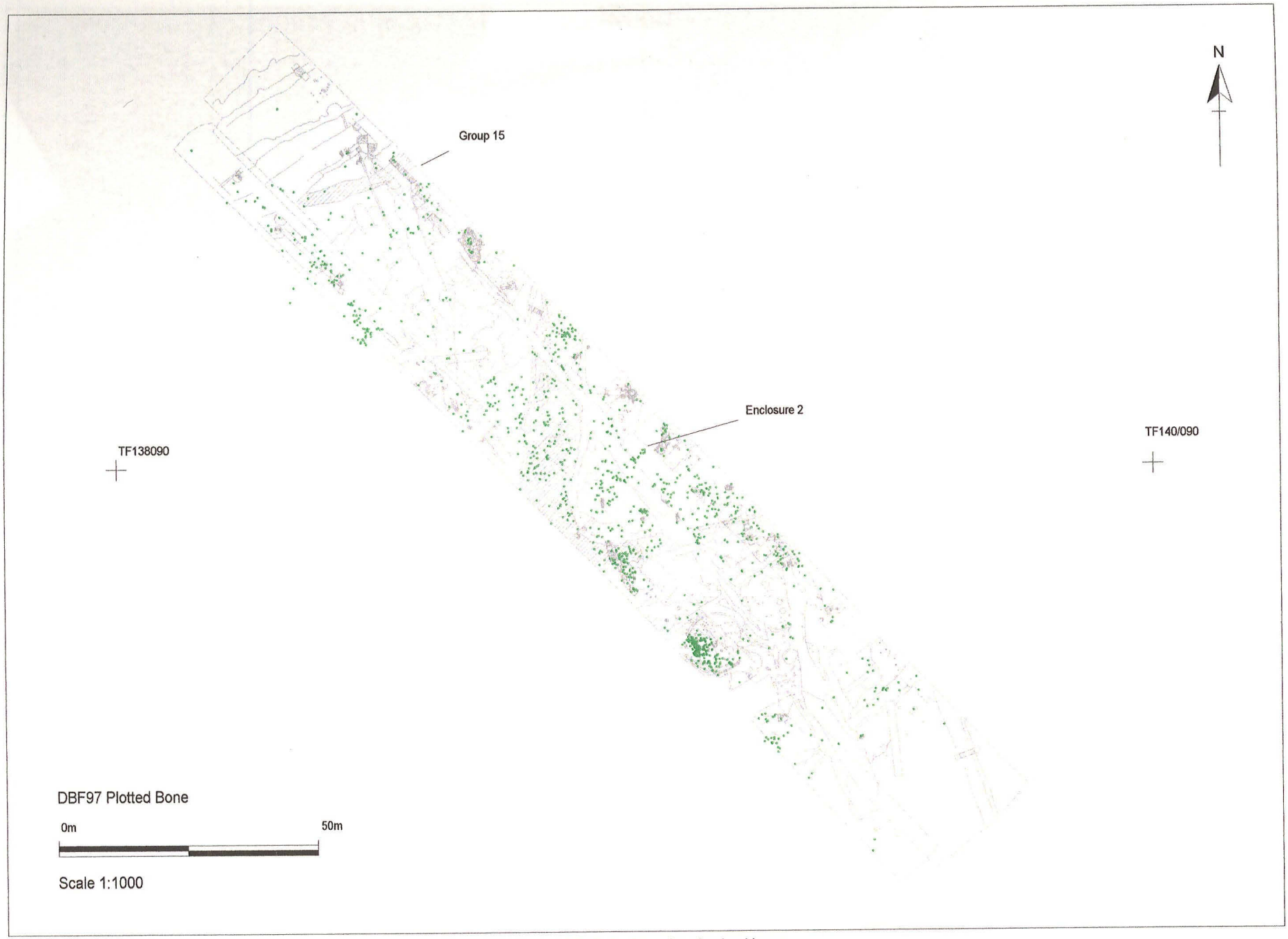


Figure 53. Site 4 (DBF97) Surface plot of animal bone

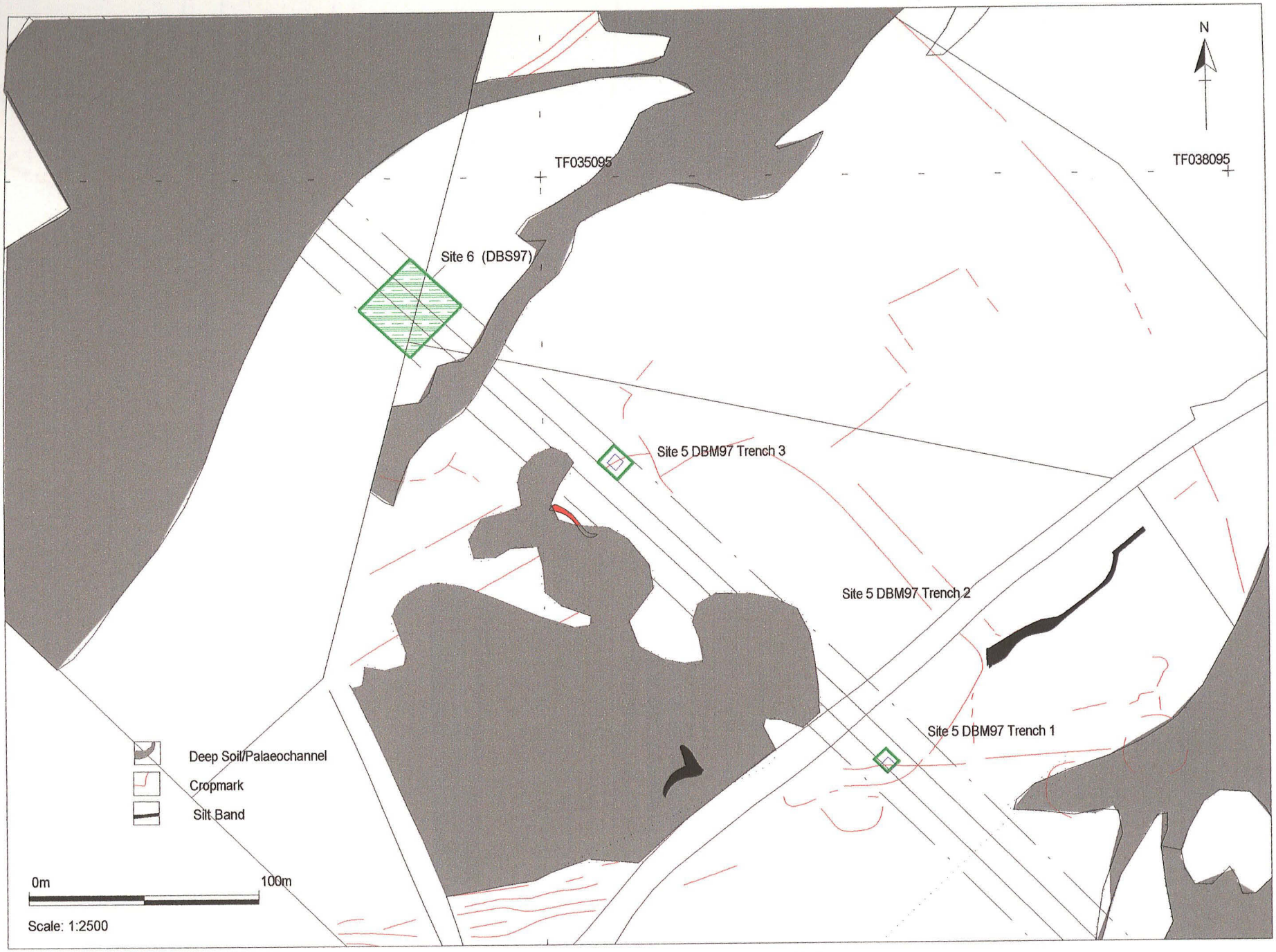


Figure 54. Plotted cropmarks in the area of Sites 5 (DBM97)and 6 (DBS97)

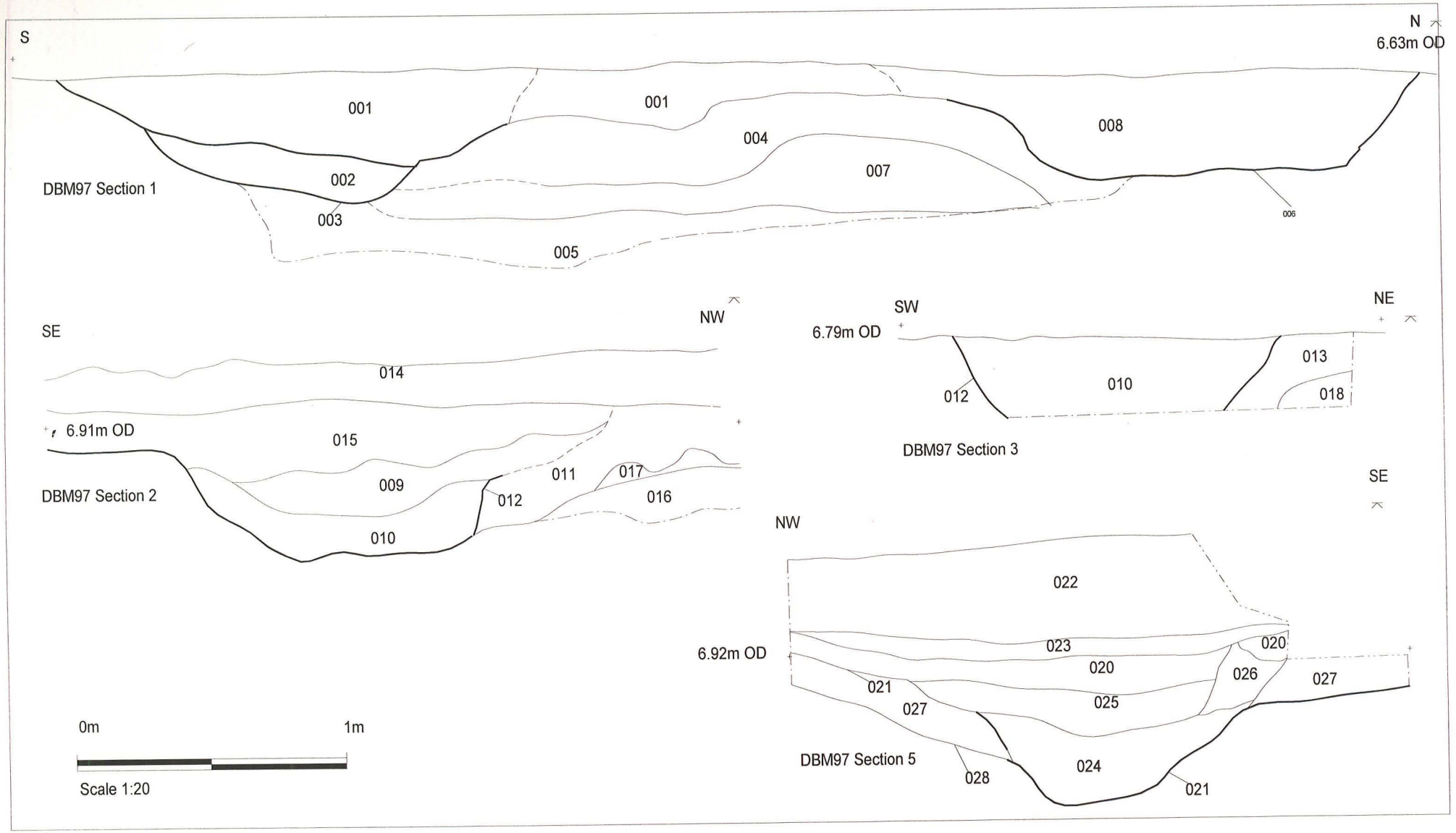


Figure 55 Site 5 (DBM97) Sections

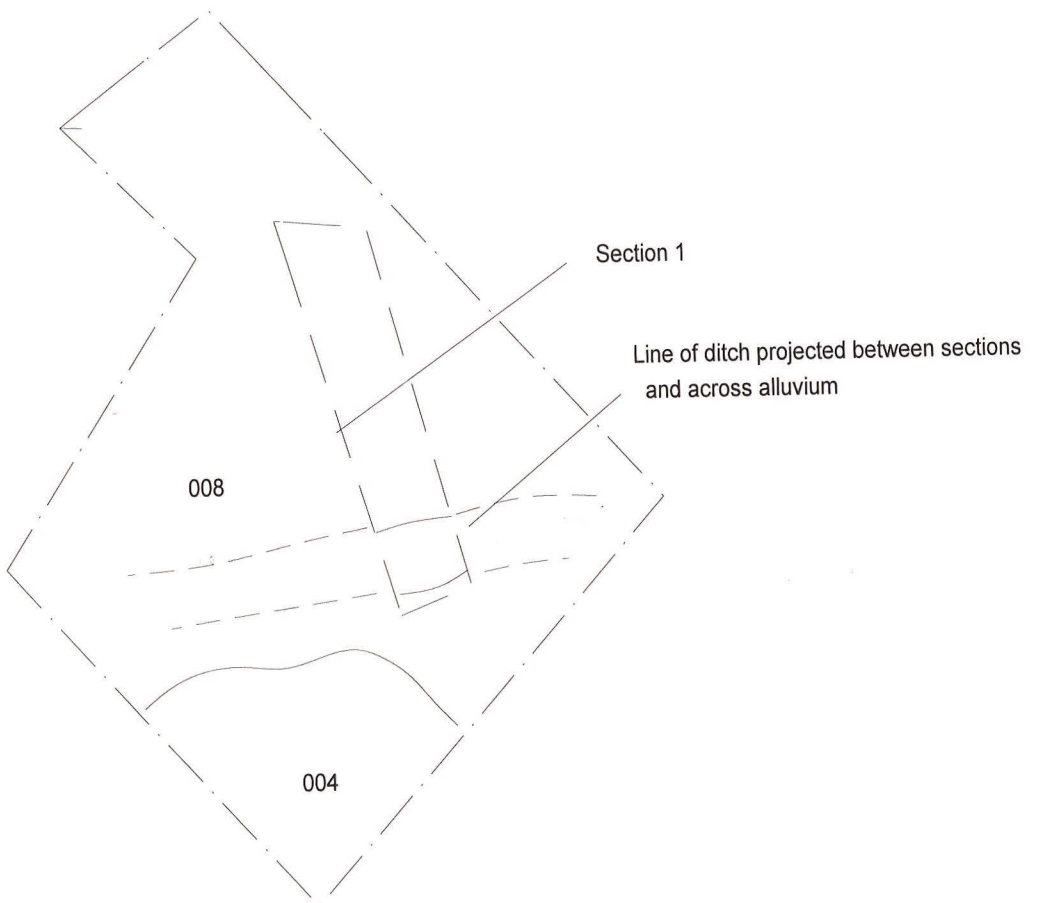


Figure 56 Site 5 (DBM97) Plan of Site Trench 1

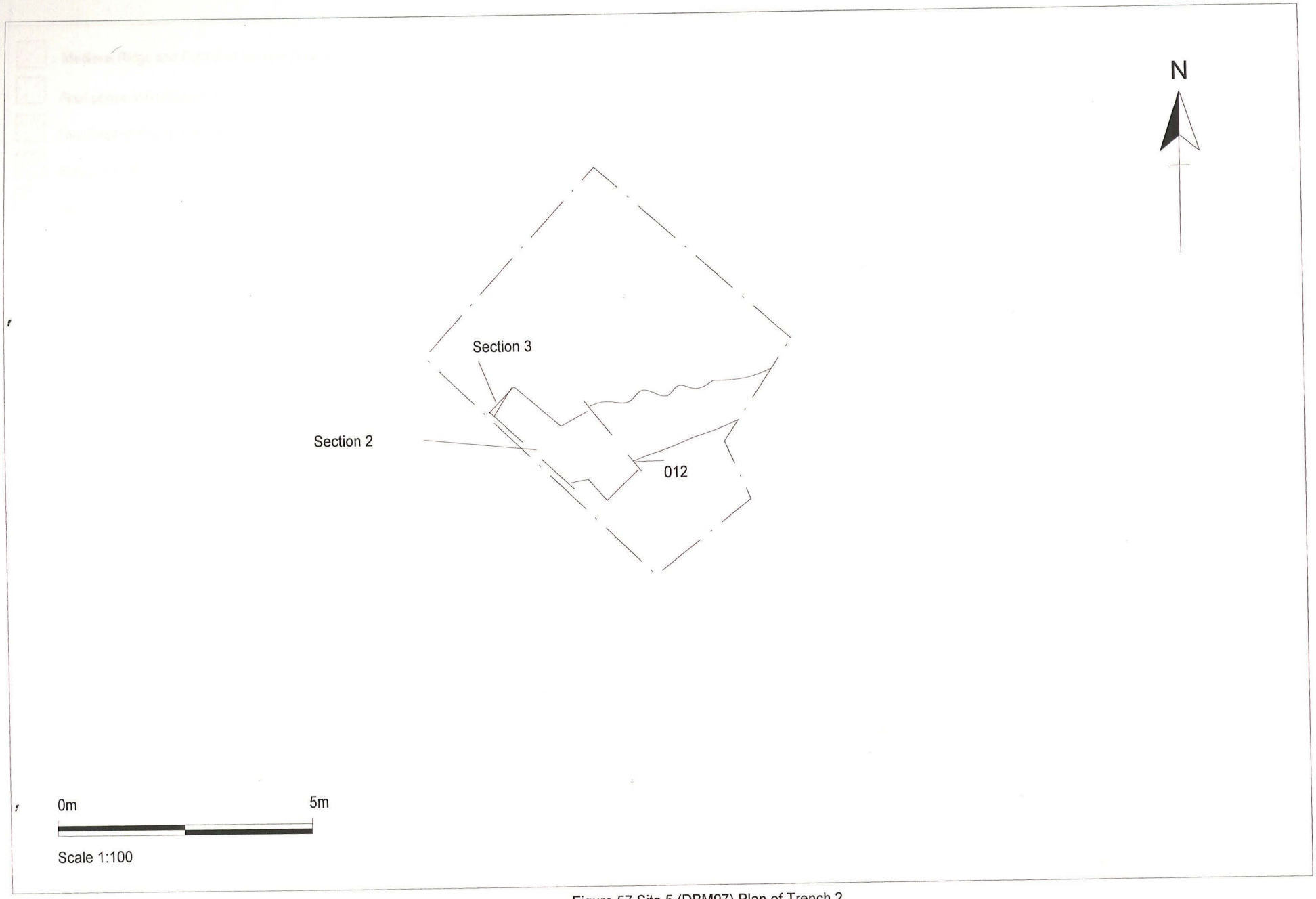


Figure 57 Site 5 (DBM97) Plan of Trench 2

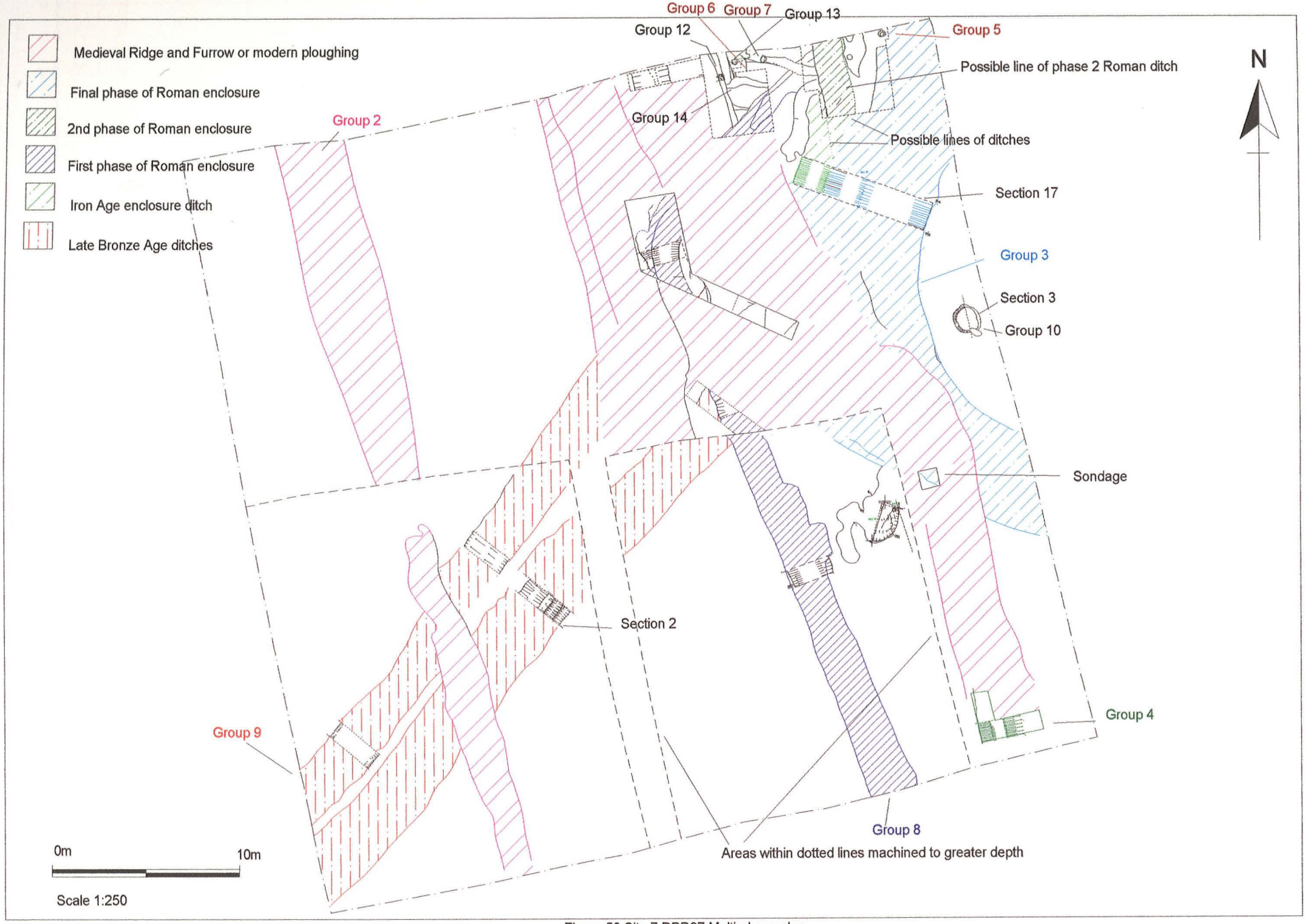


Figure 58 Site 7 DBD97 Multi-phase plan

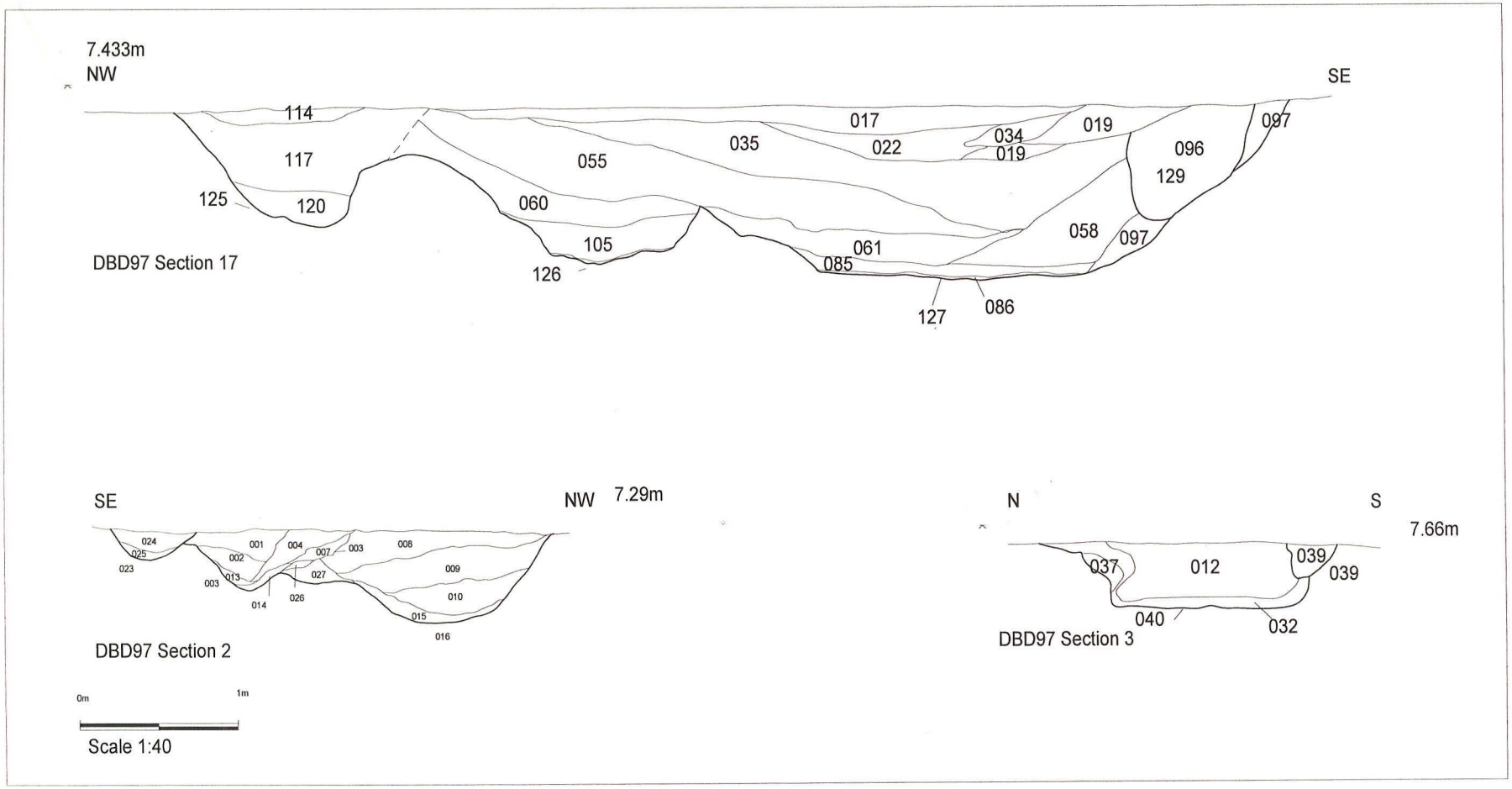


Figure 59. Site 7Sections across enclsoure ditch, Late Bronze Age linear and Iron Age pit. Sections 2,3 and 17

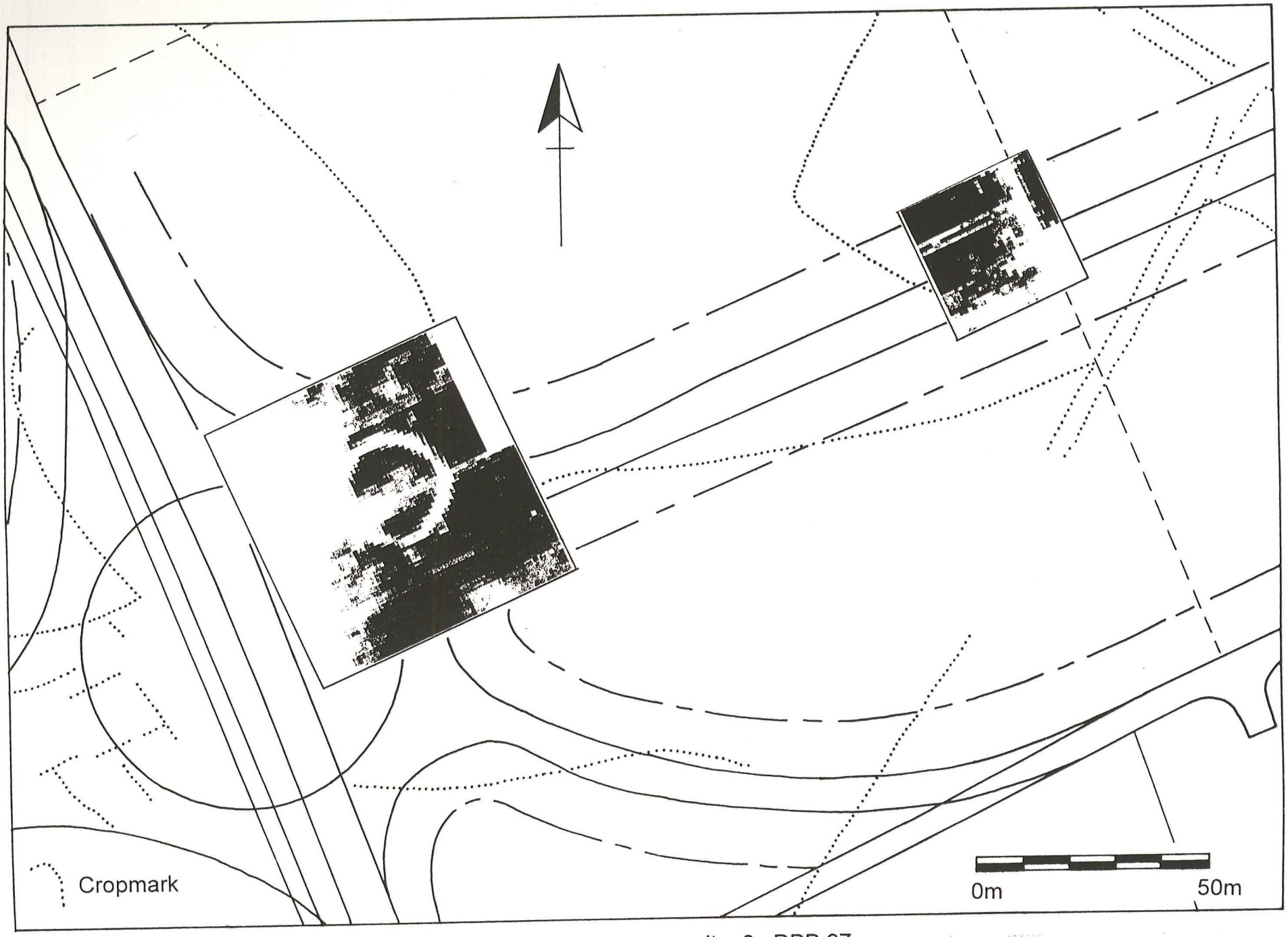


Figure 60. Geophysical survey over site 8 DBB 97

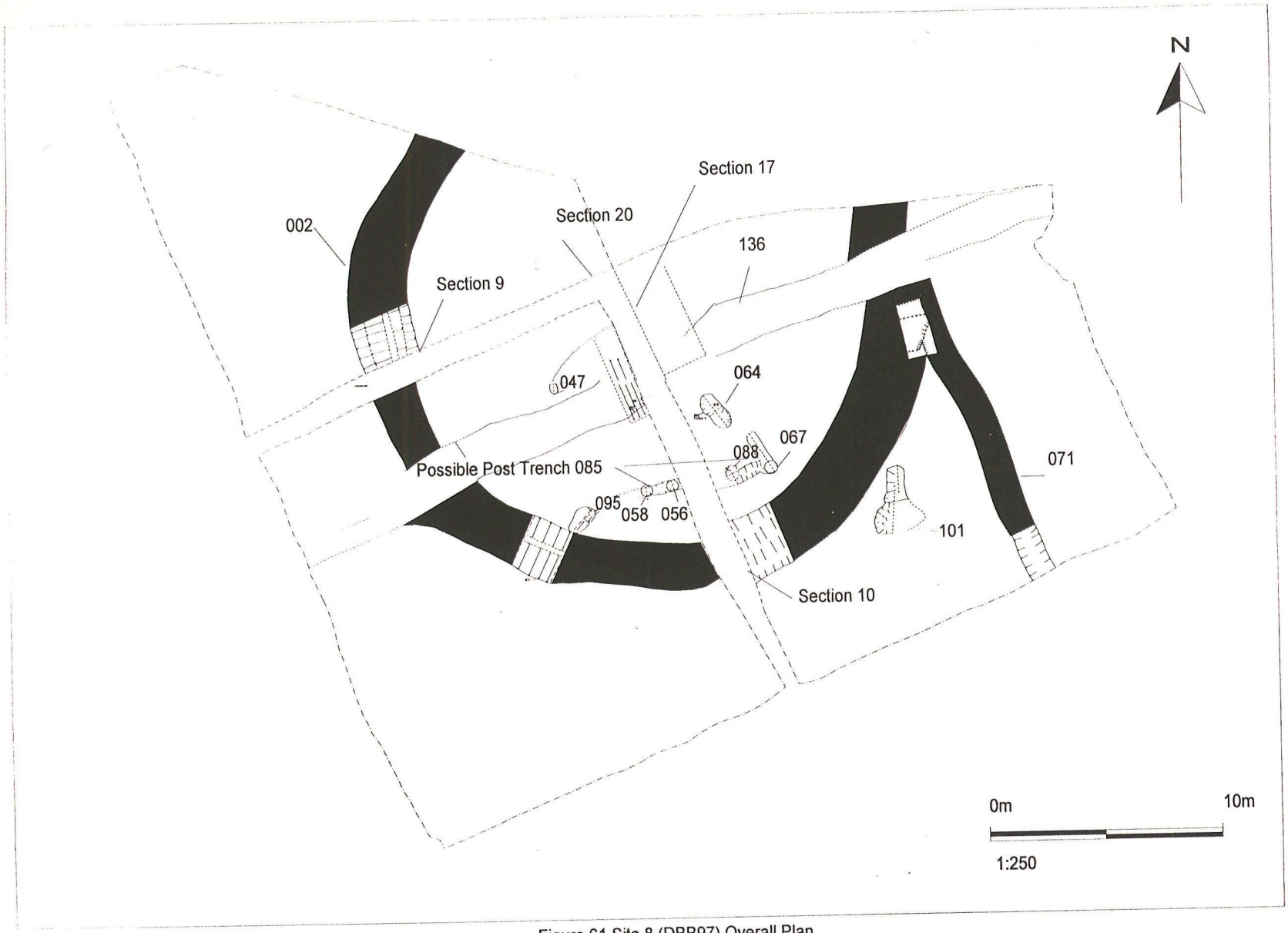


Figure 61 Site 8 (DBB97) Overall Plan

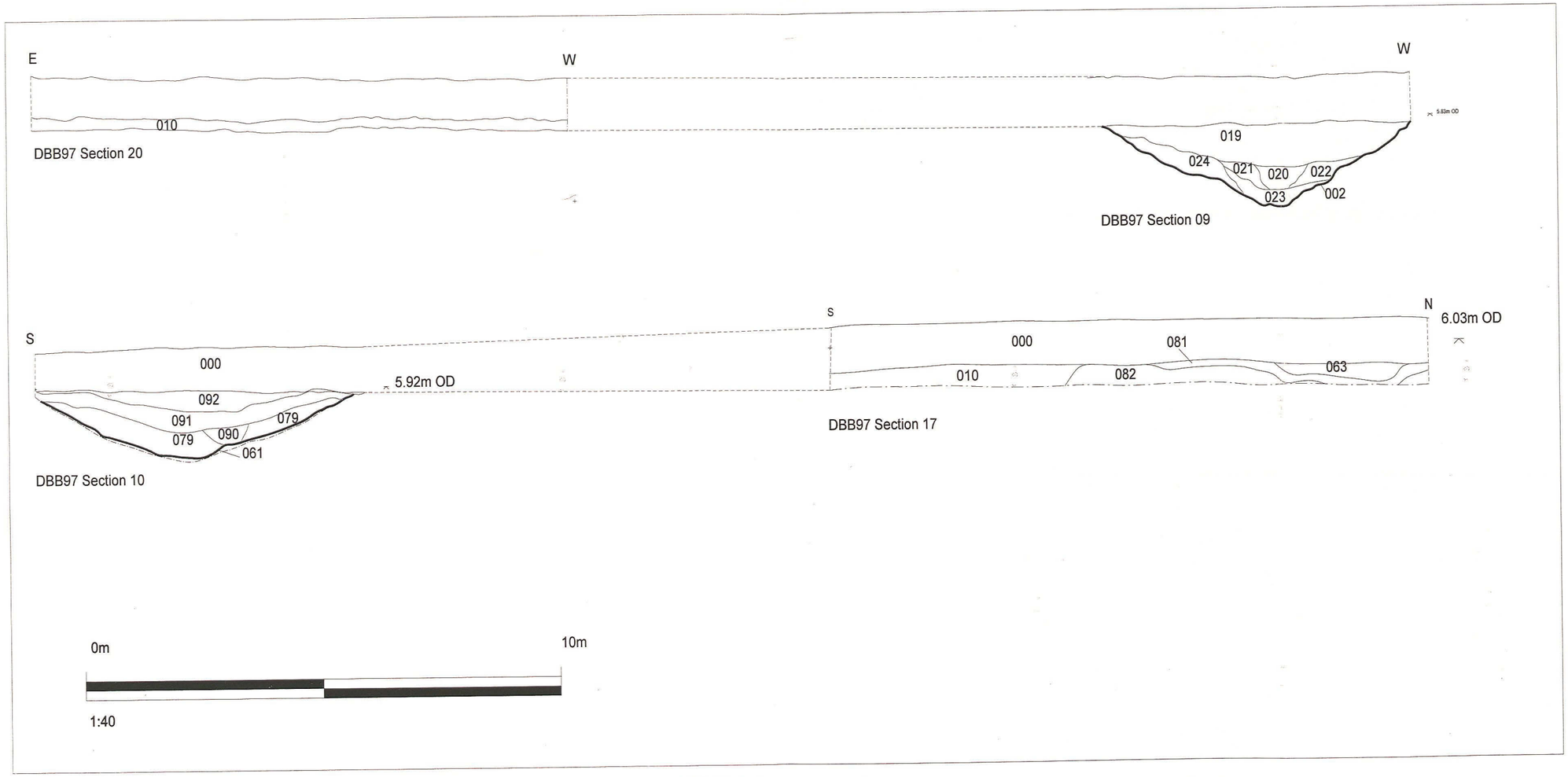


Figure 62 Site 8 (DBB97) Sections across ring ditches.

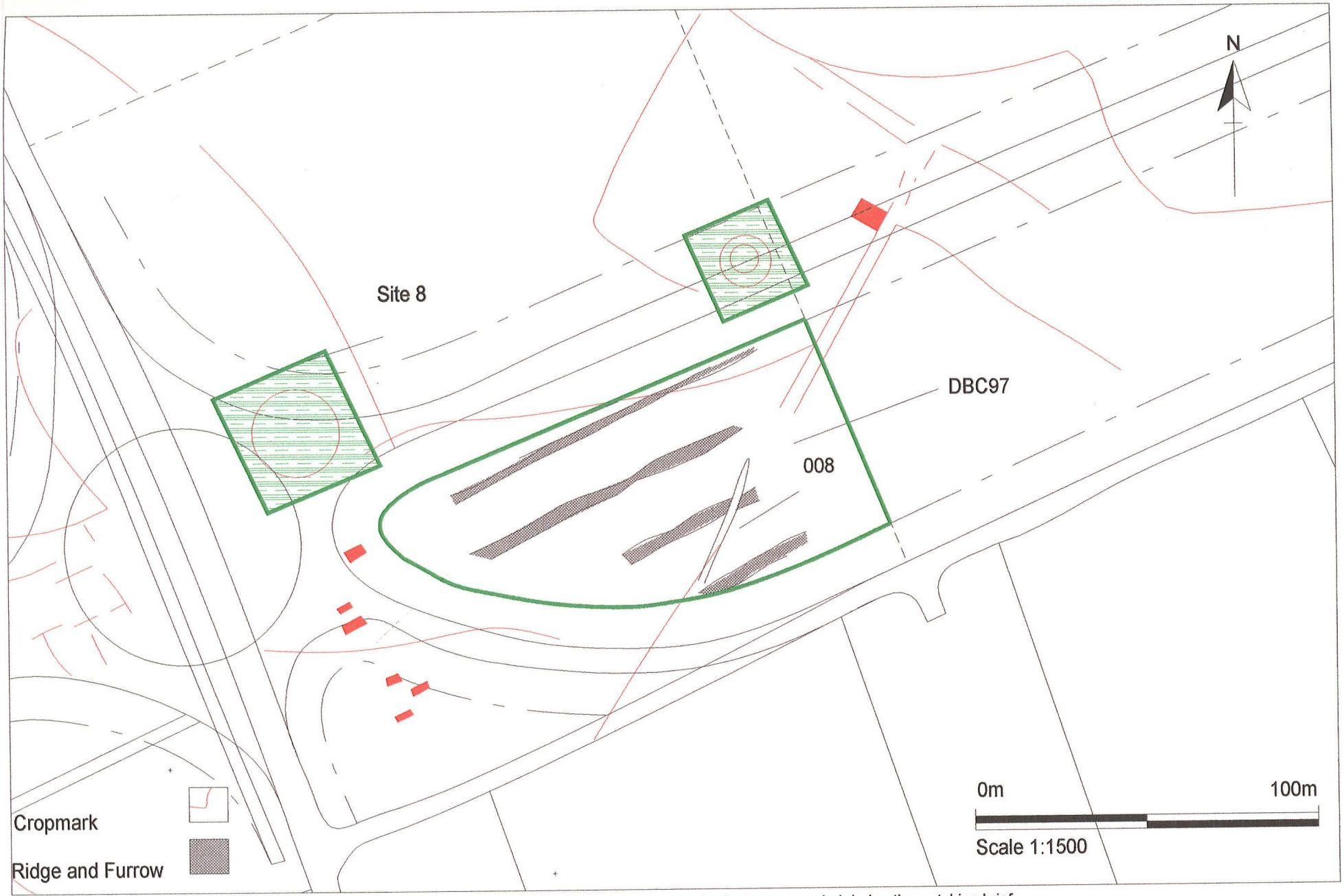


Figure 63 Cropmarks plotted in the area of Site 8 and major features recorded during the watching brief.

+Site 10

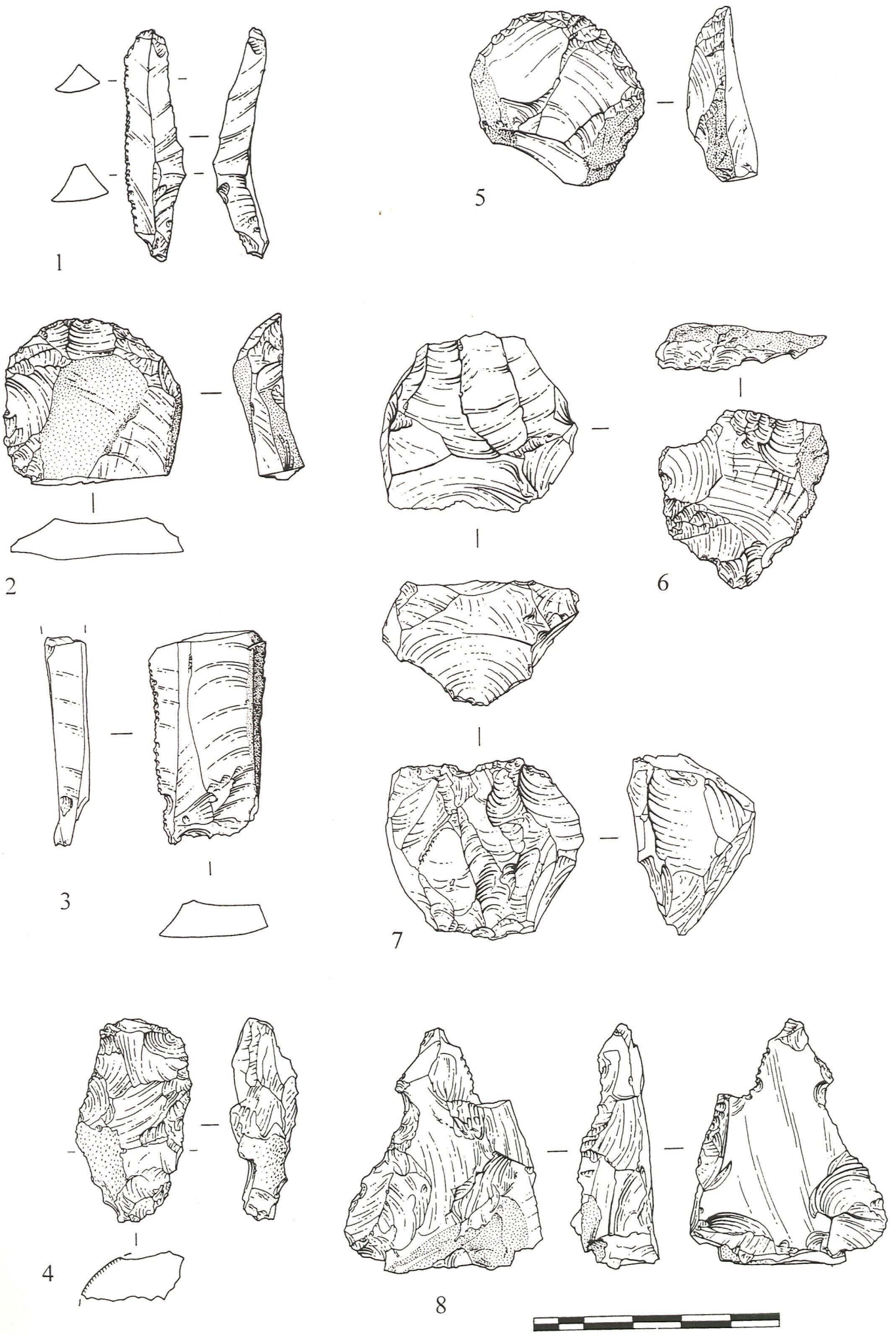
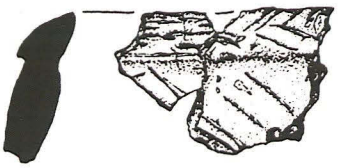
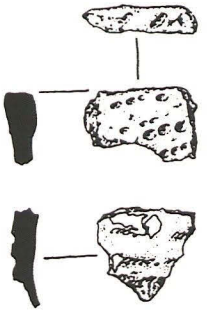


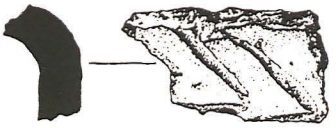
Figure 64 Site 4 (DBF97). Worked Flint



Vessel 1

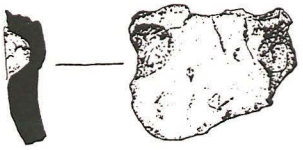


Vessel 9

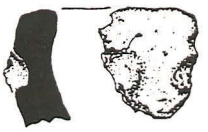


Vessel 3

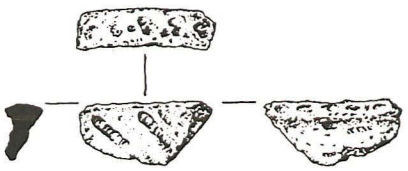
Vessel 10



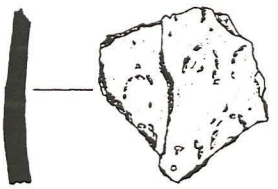
Vessel 4



Vessel 11



Vessel 7



Vessel 15

20mm

Figure 65 Sites 1 (DBH97), 3 (DBEB97) and 4 (DBF97). Early prehistoric pottery

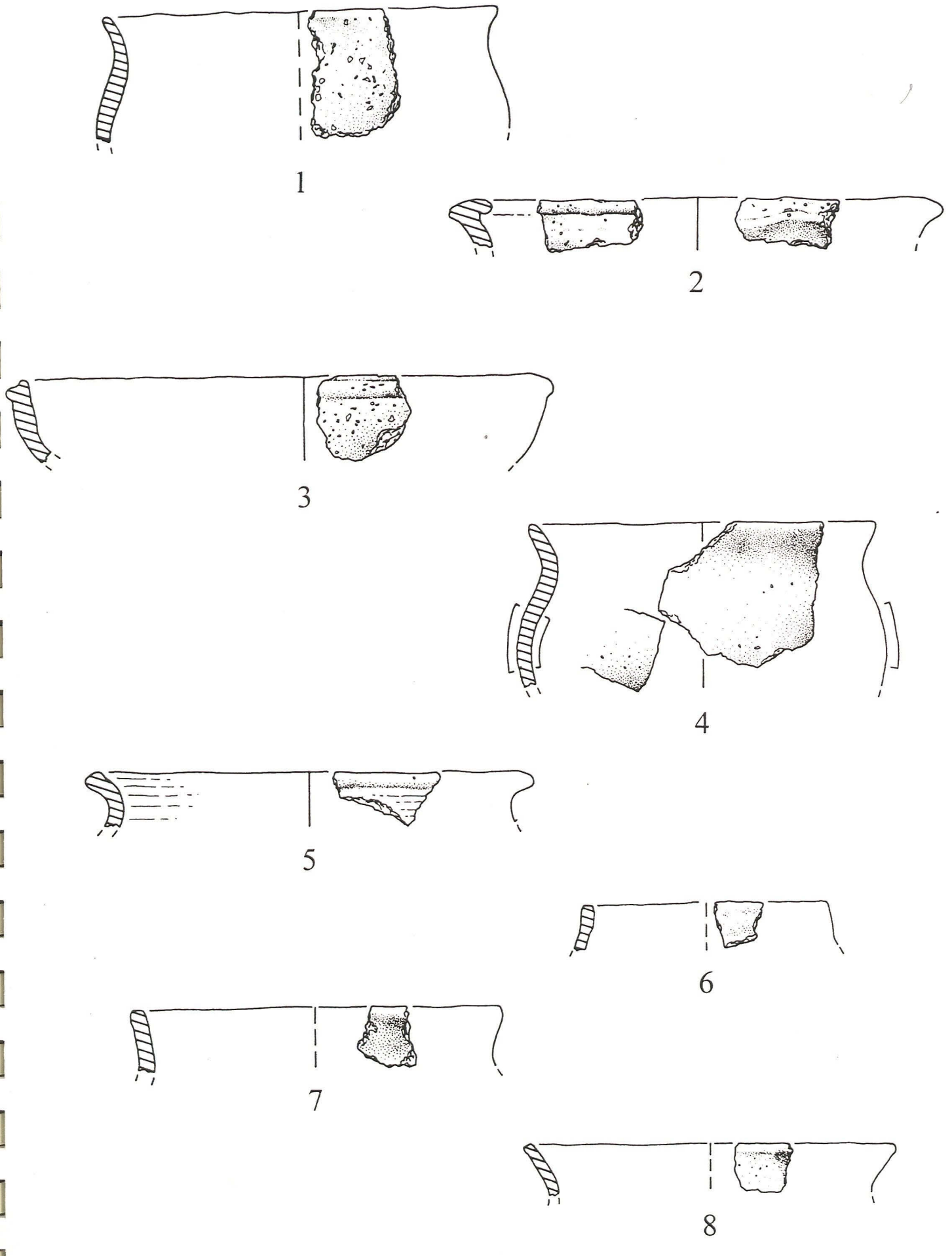
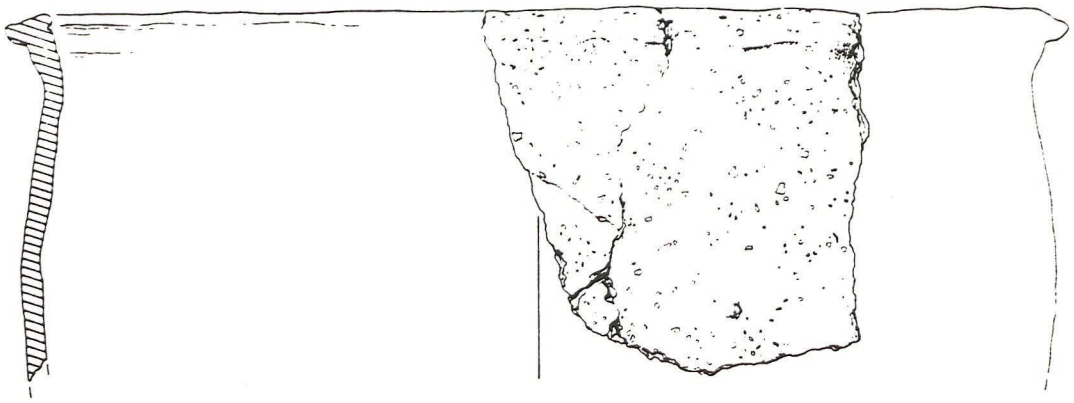


Figure 66 Site 4 (DBF97). Iron Age pottery Drs 1 - 8



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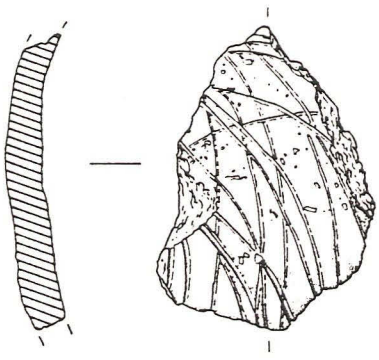

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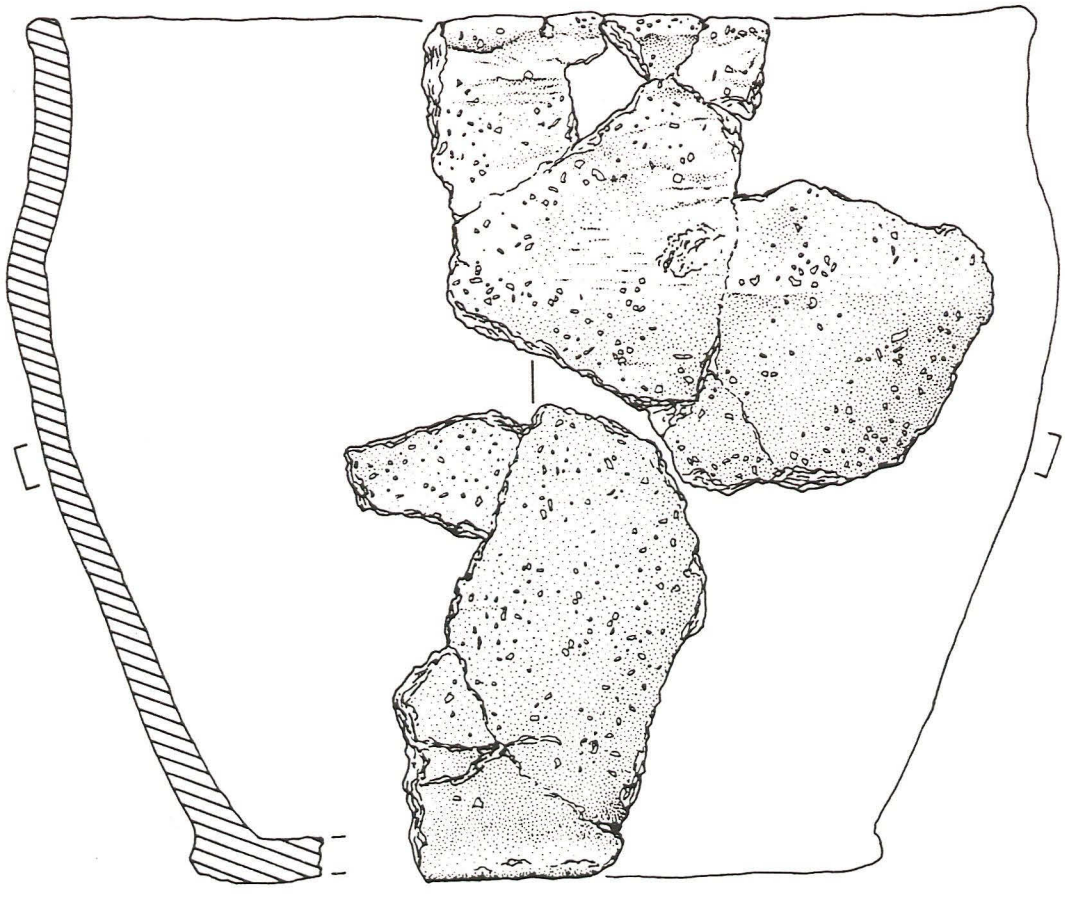
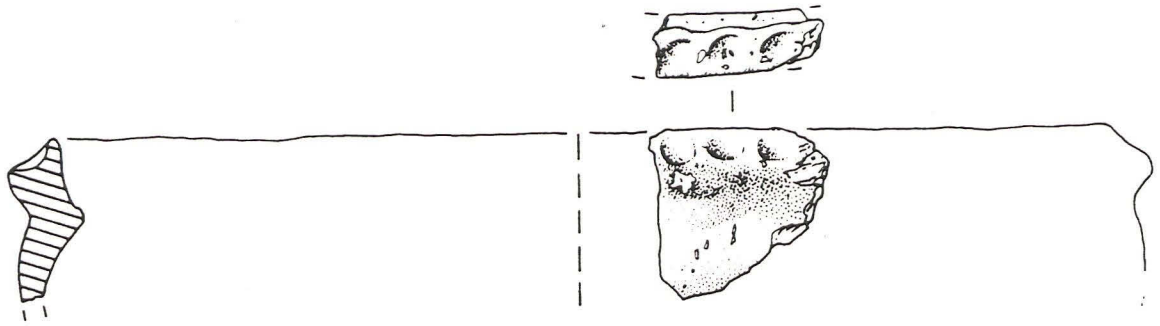


12

Figure 67 Site 4 (DBF97) Iron Age pottery Drs 10 - 12



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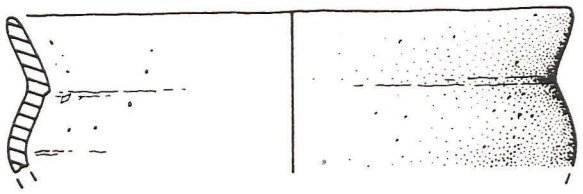

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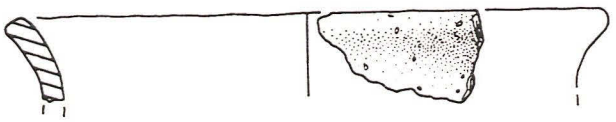

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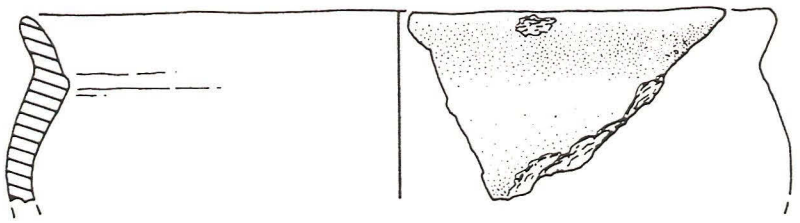
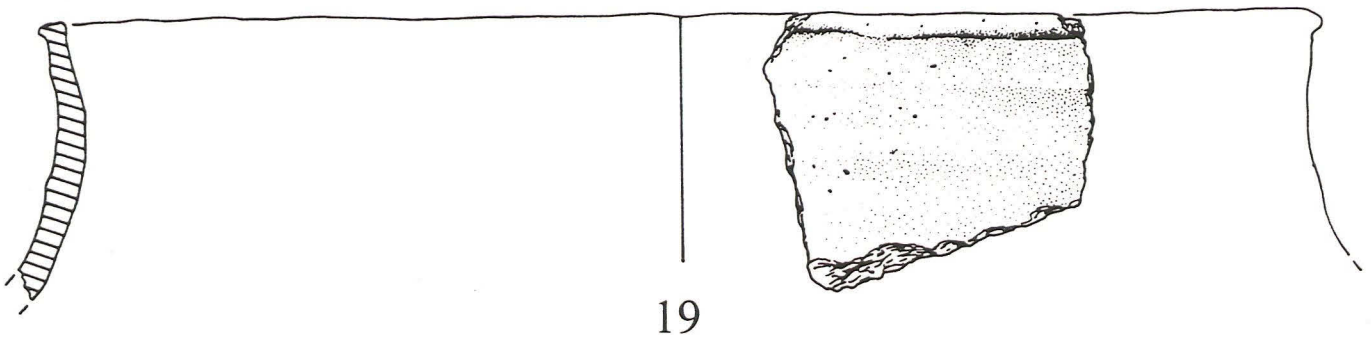


18

0 20cm

Figure 68 Site 4 (DBE97) Iron Age pottery Drs 14-18



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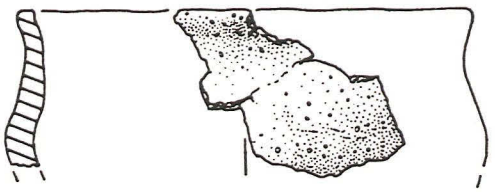

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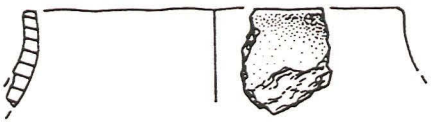

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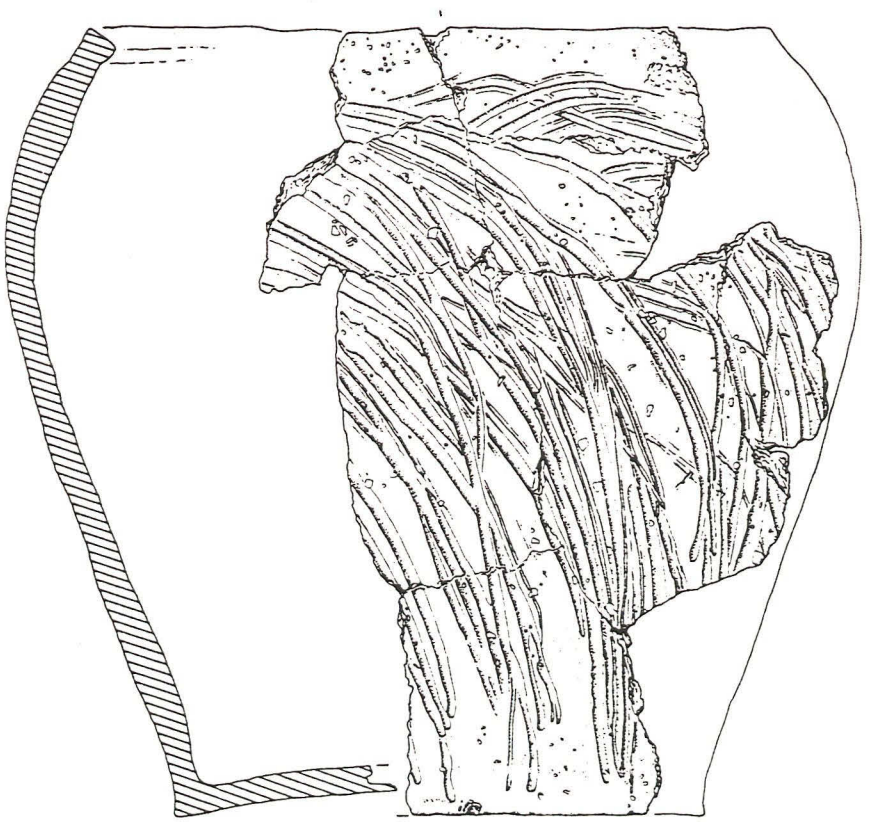


23

0 20 cm

Figure 69 Site 4 (DBF97) Iron Age pottery Drs 19 - 23

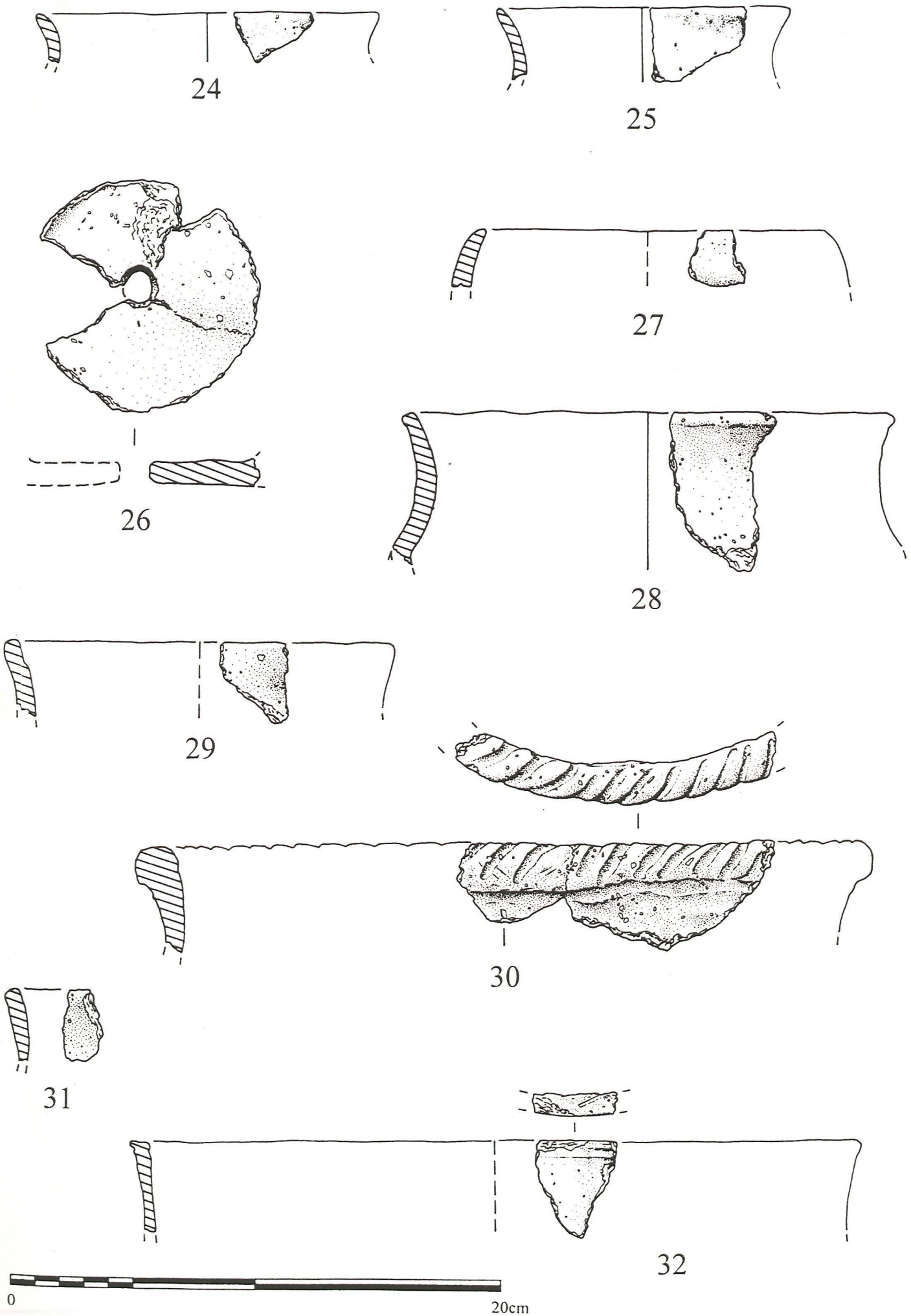


Figure 70 Site 4 (DBF97) Iron Age pottery Drs 24 - 32

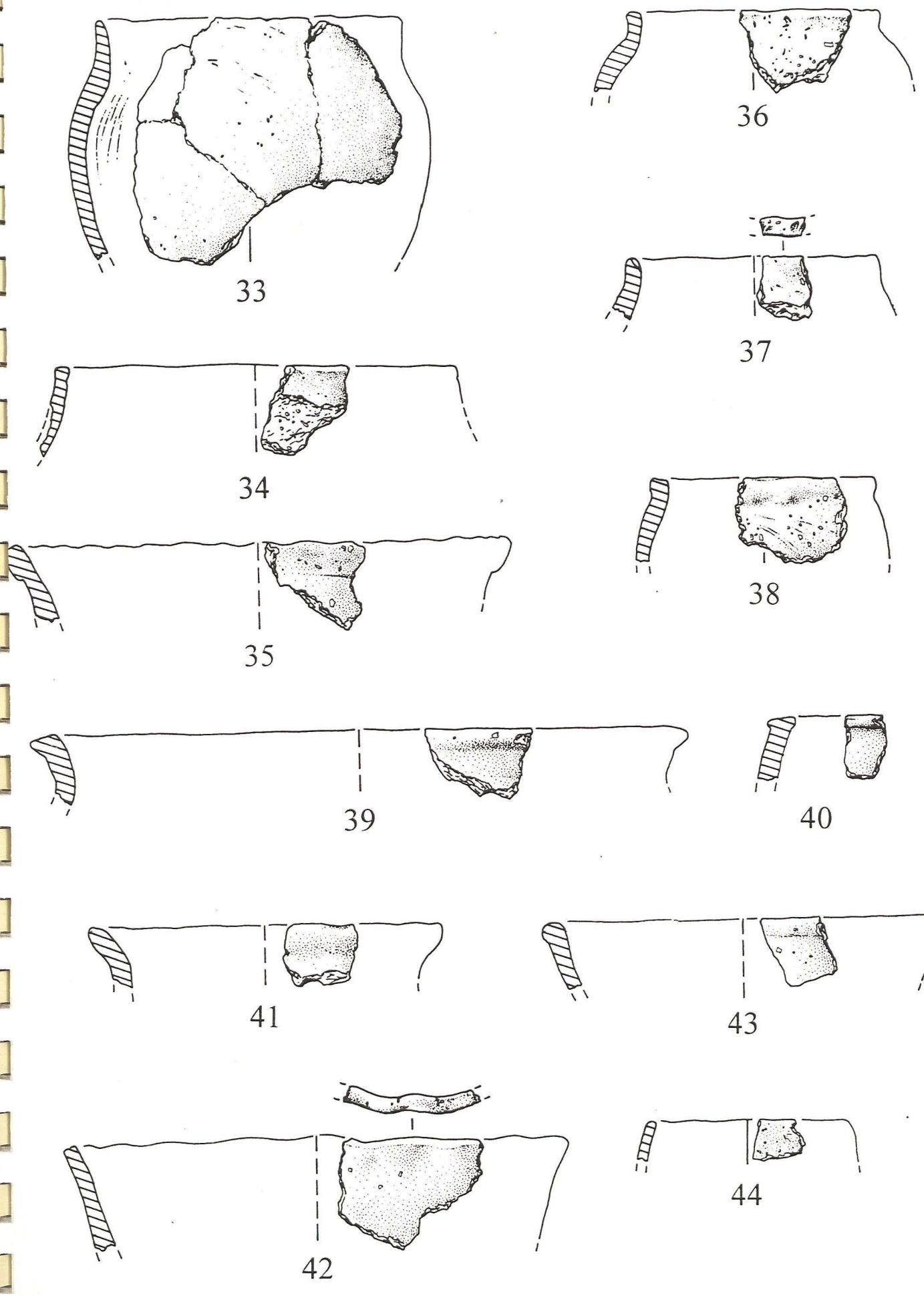


Figure 71 Site 4 (DBF97) Iron Age pottery Drs 33 - 44

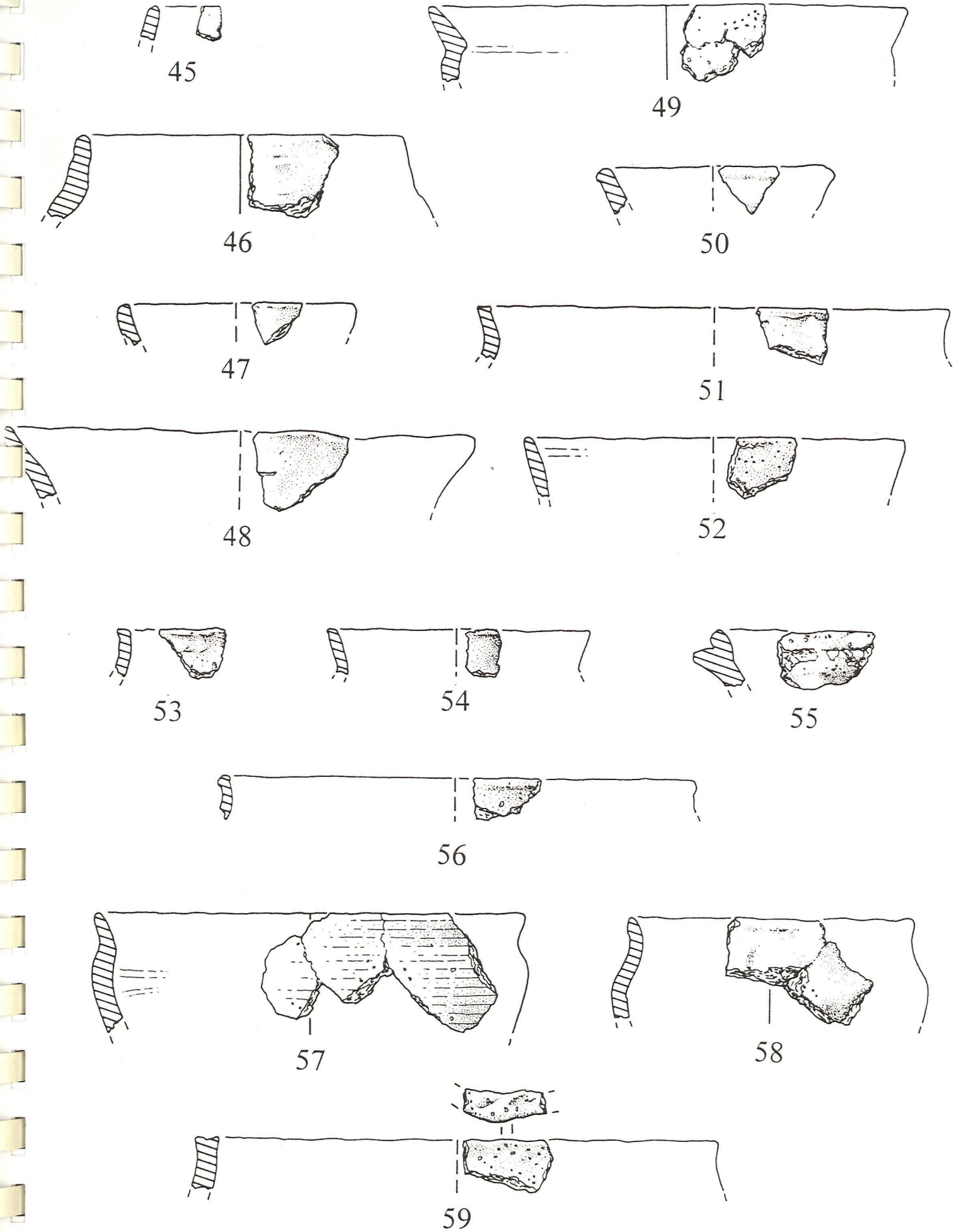


Figure 72 Site 4 (DBF97) Iron Age pottery Drs 45 - 59

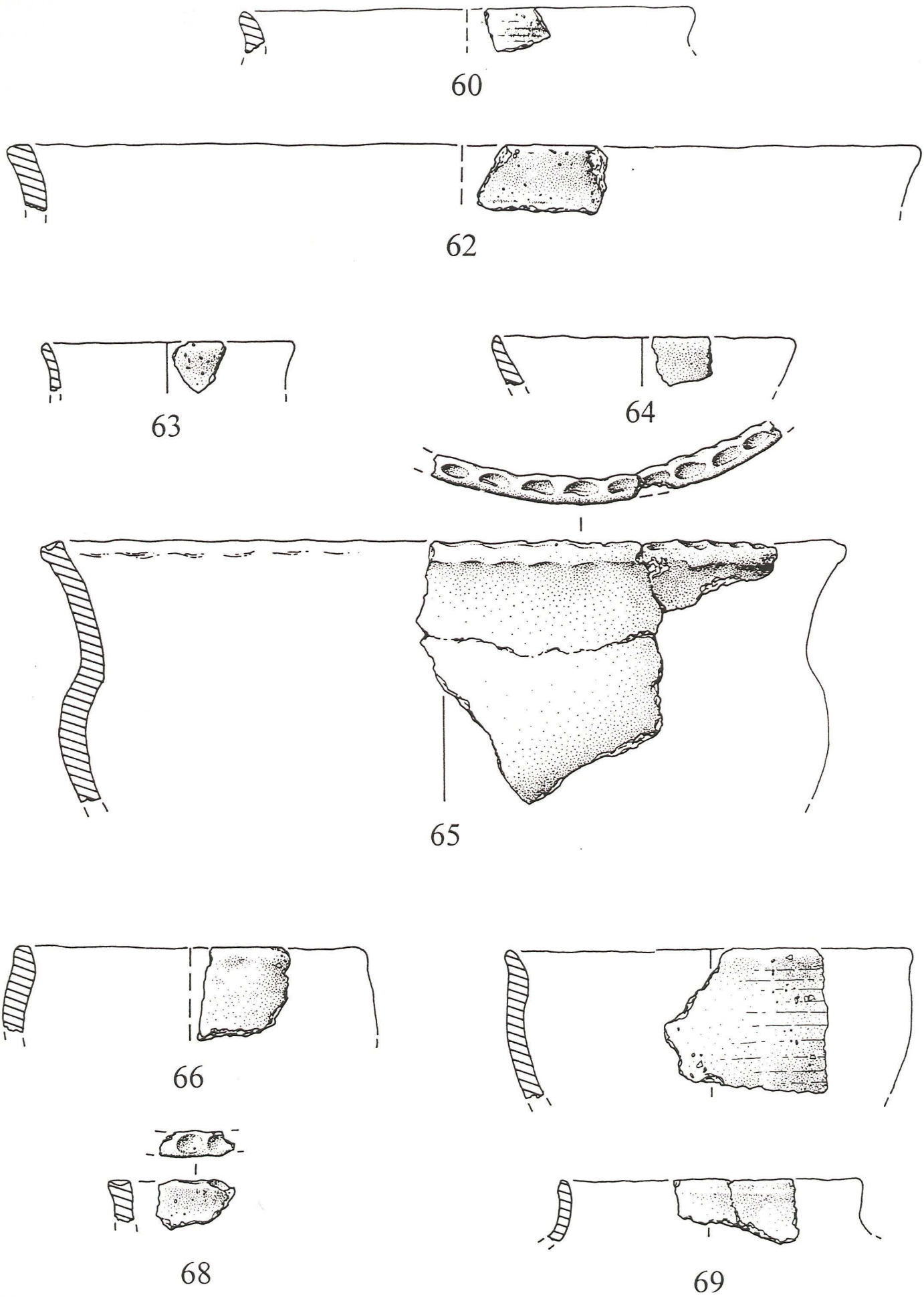


Figure 73 Site 4 (DBF97) Iron Age pottery Drs 60 - 69

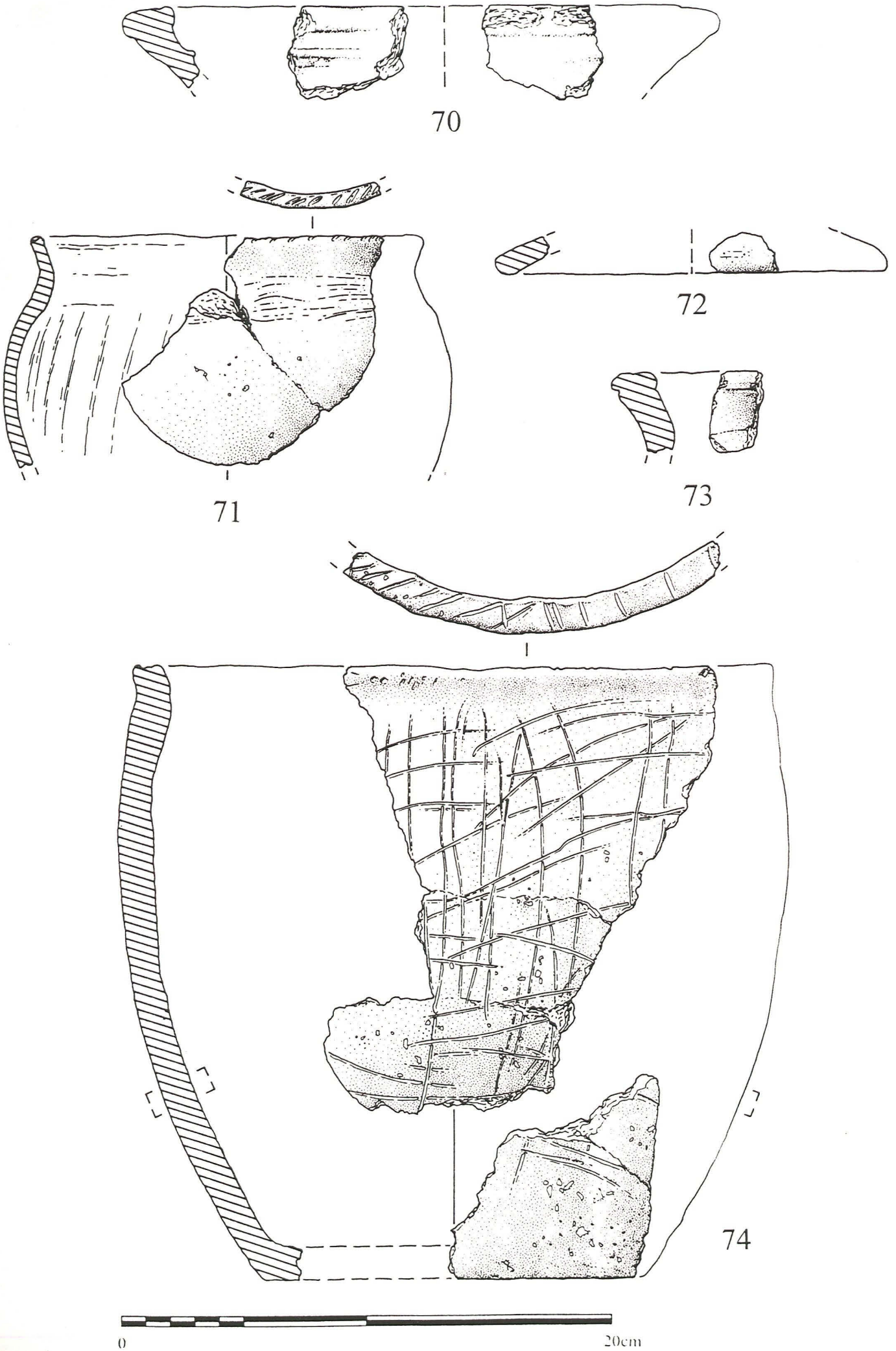


Figure 74 Site 4 (DBF97) Iron Age pottery Drs 70 - 74

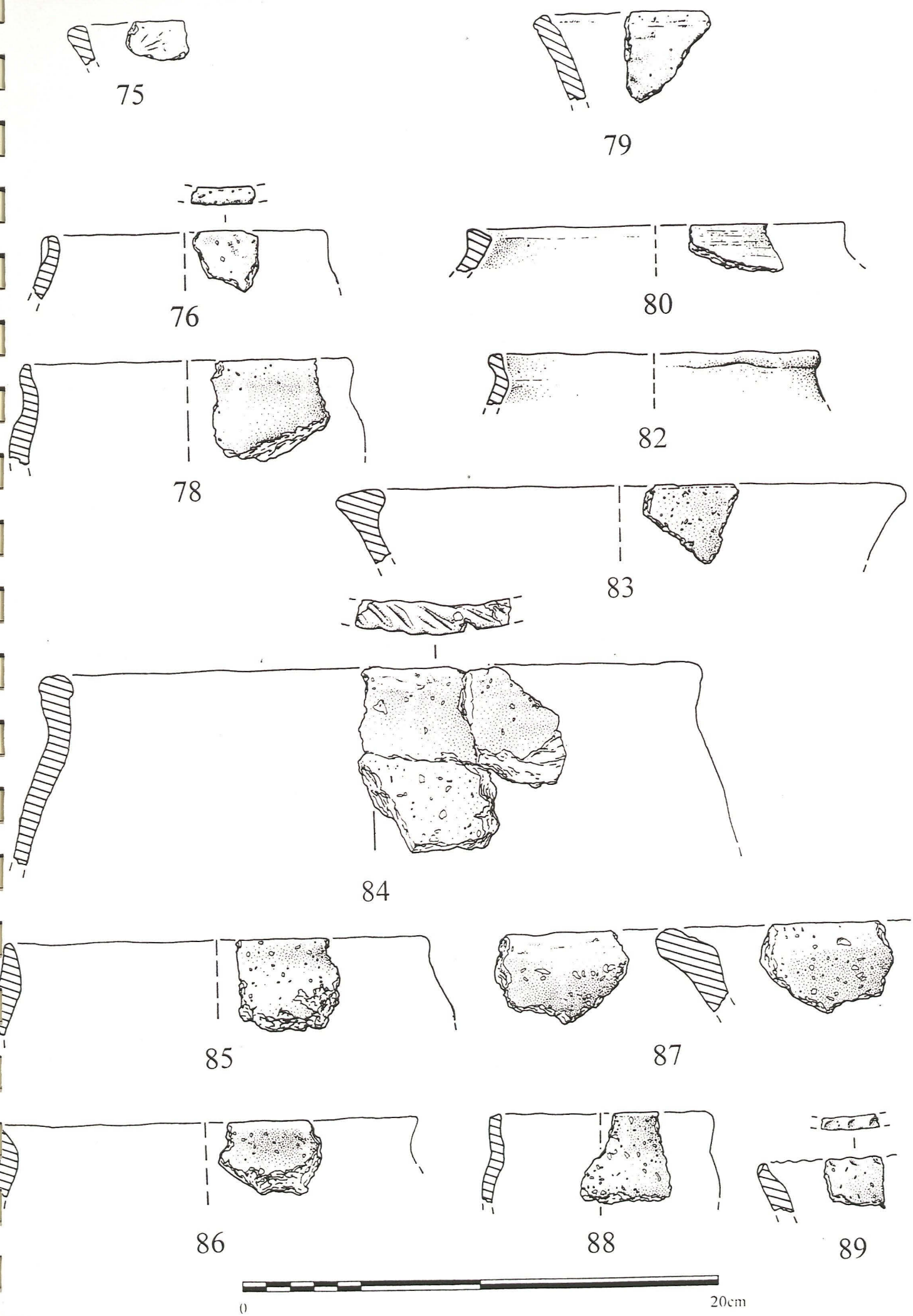
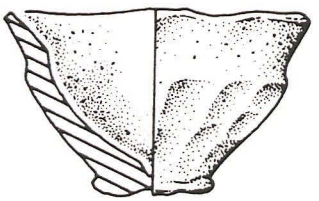
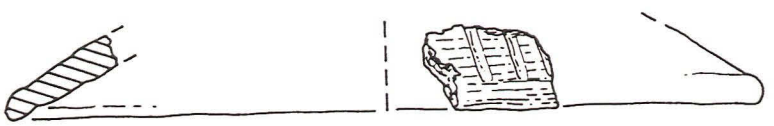


Figure 75 Site 4 (DBF97) Iron Age pottery Drs 75 - 89



90

Small Cup/Bowl



91

Decorated Lid

Figure 76 Site 4 (DBF 97) Iron Age small cup/bowl and Lid

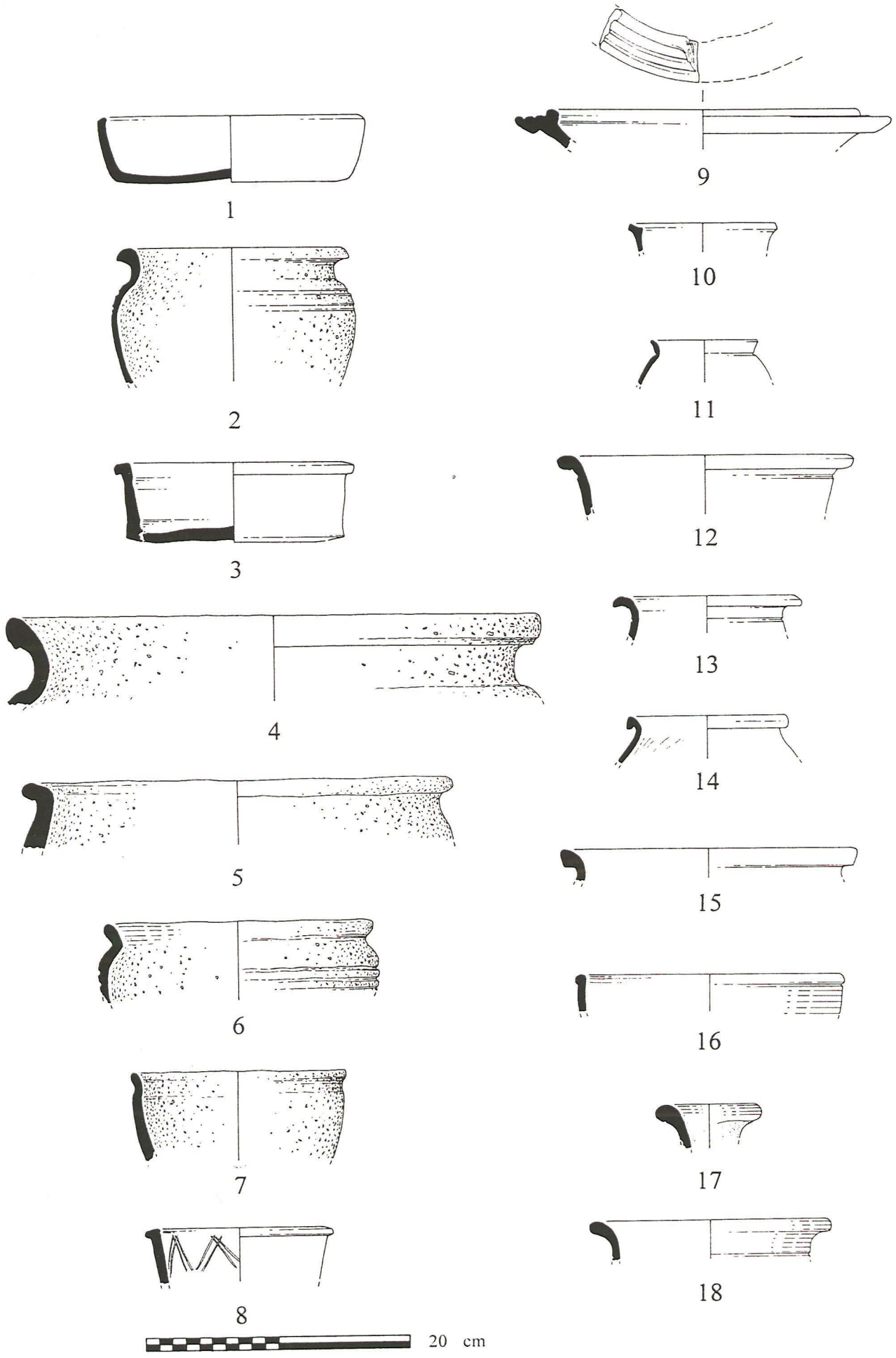
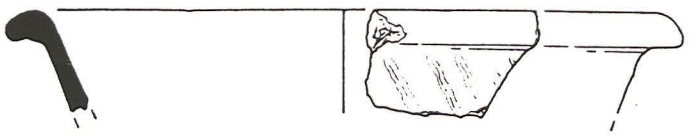
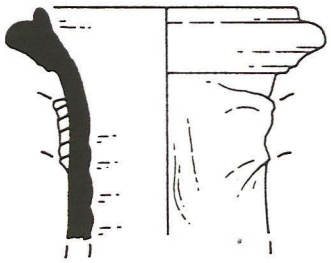


Figure 77 Site 4 (DBF97) Roman pottery



1



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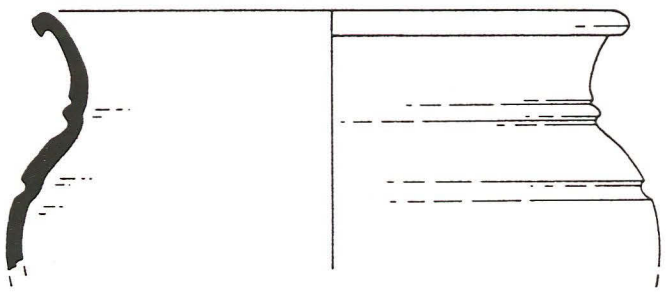

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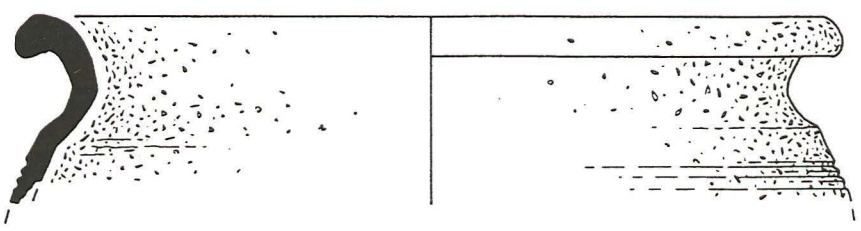


4

15 cm

Figure 78 Site 7 (DBD97) Roman pottery

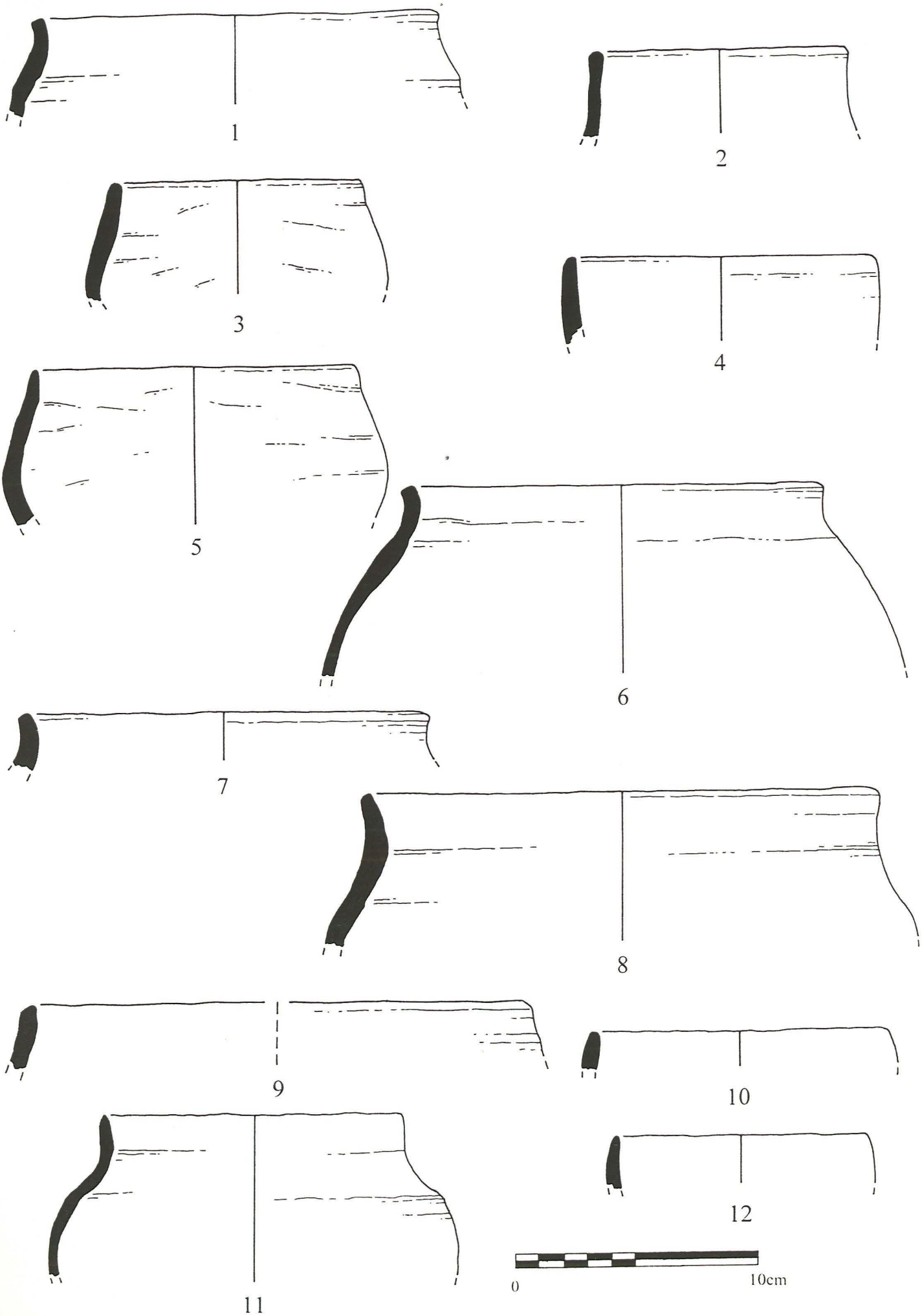


Figure 79 Site 4 (DBF97) Anglo-Saxon pottery

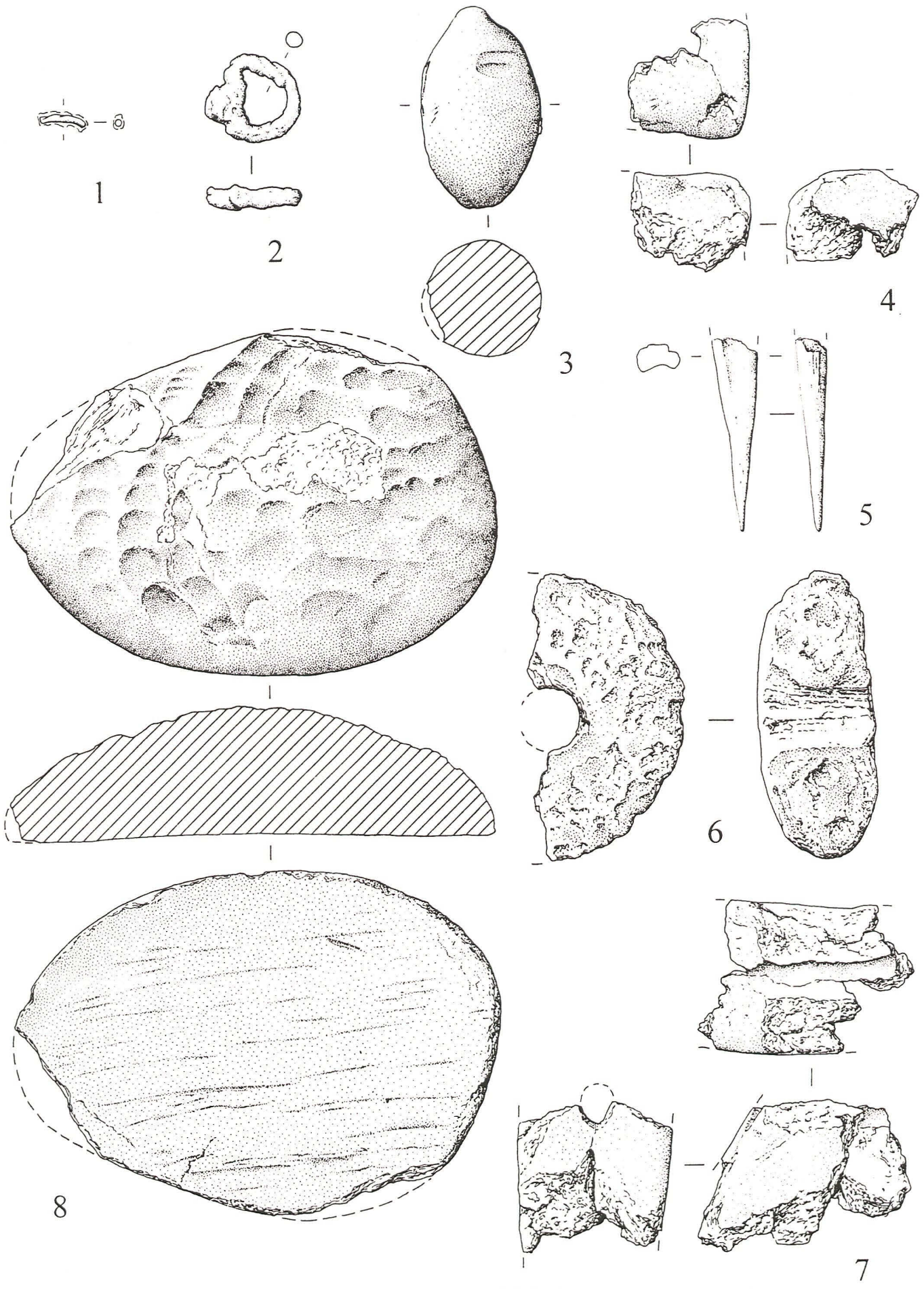


Figure 80 Site 4(DBF97) Iron Age small finds

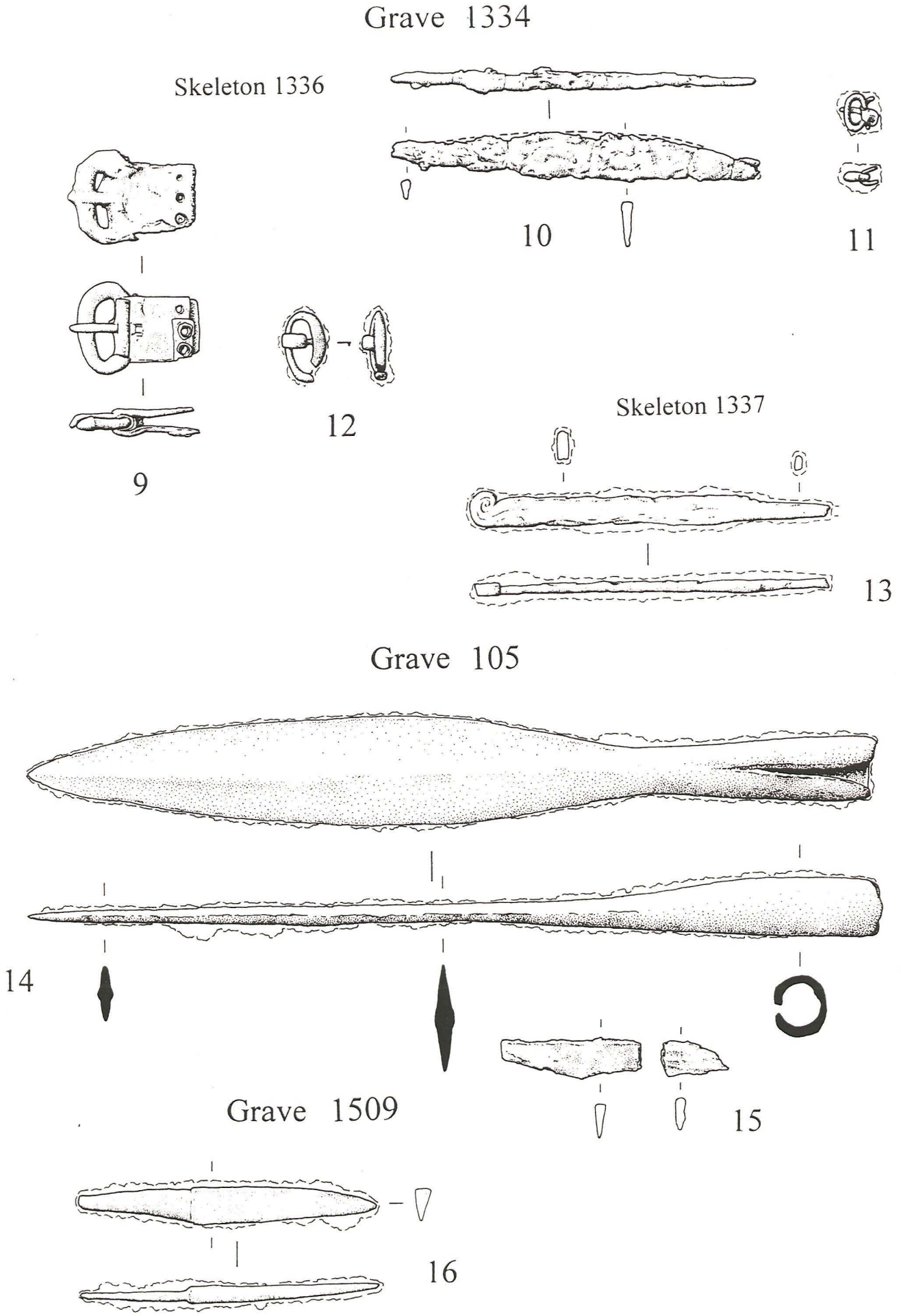
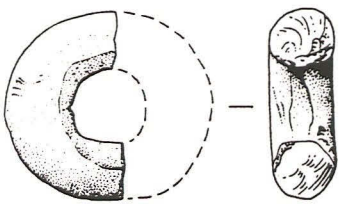
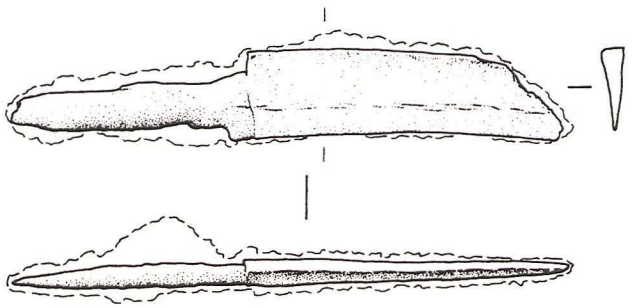


Figure 81 Site 4(DBF97) Finds from Saxon graves 1334, 105 and 1509

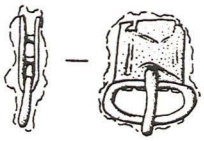
Grave 021



17

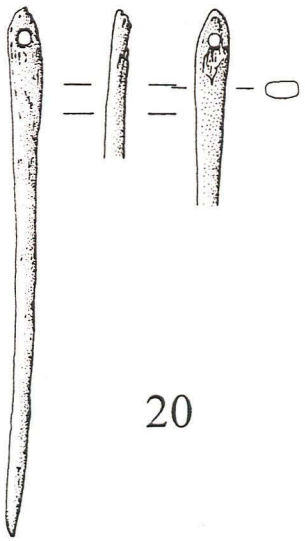


18

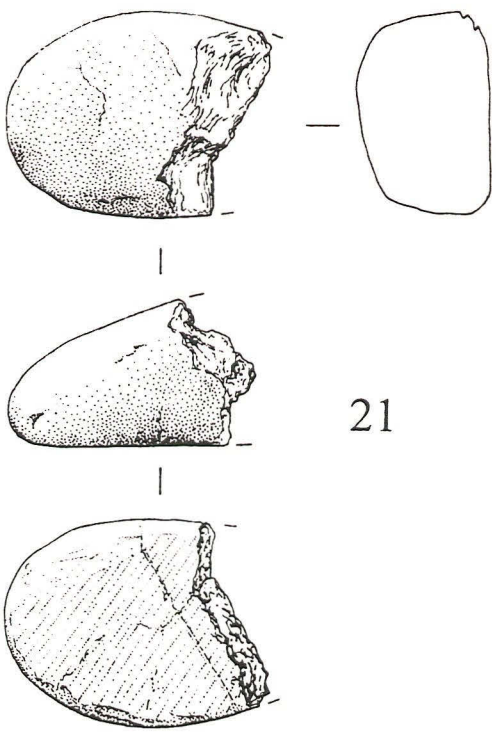


19

Other Anglo-Saxon finds



20



21

10 cm finds 17 20

10 cm finds 18 19 21

Figure 82 Site 4(DBF97) Finds from Saxon grave 021 and Saxon finds from non grave features

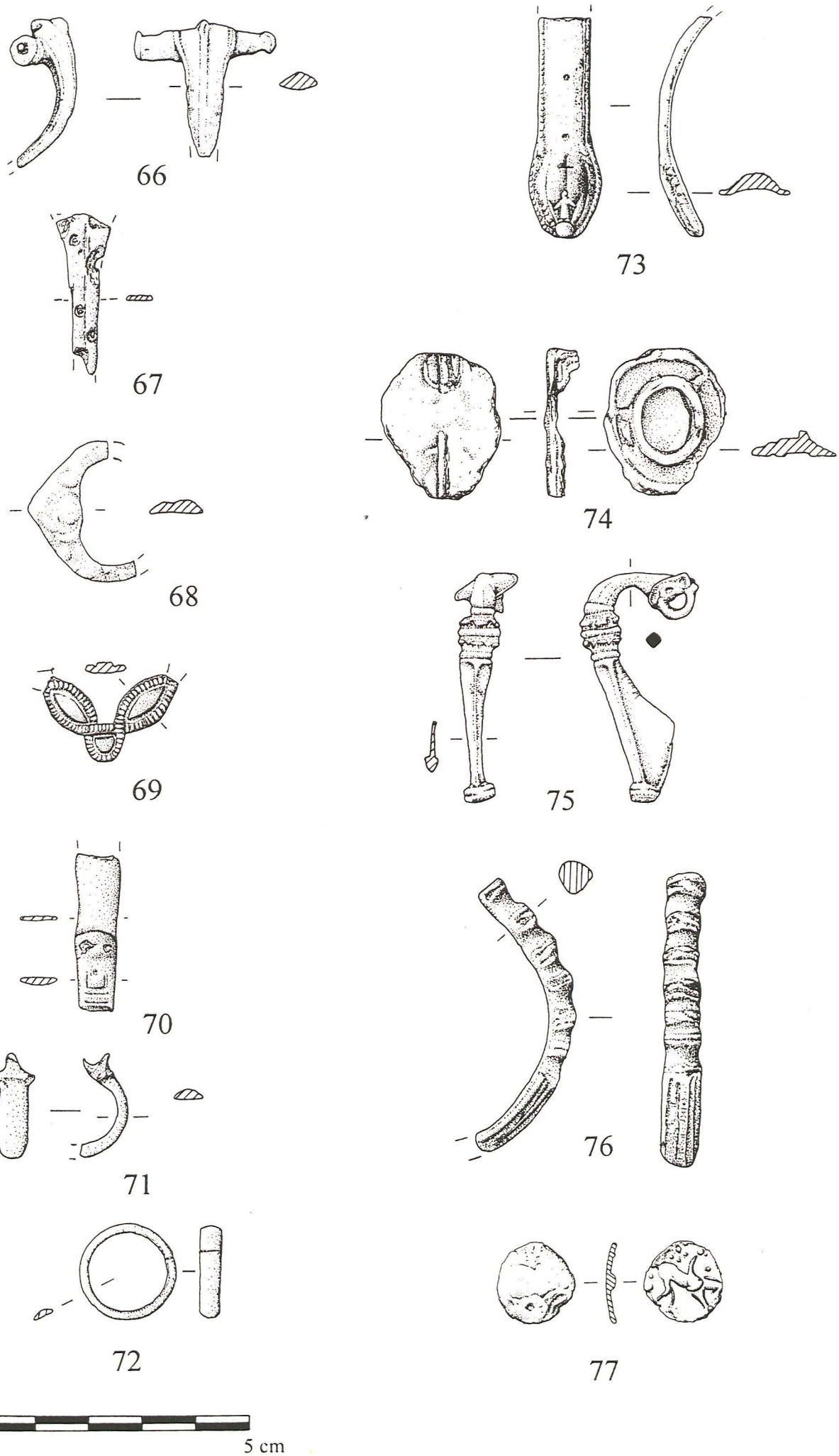


Figure 83 Site4 (DBF97) Finds discovered from around Site 4 by local metal detectorist.

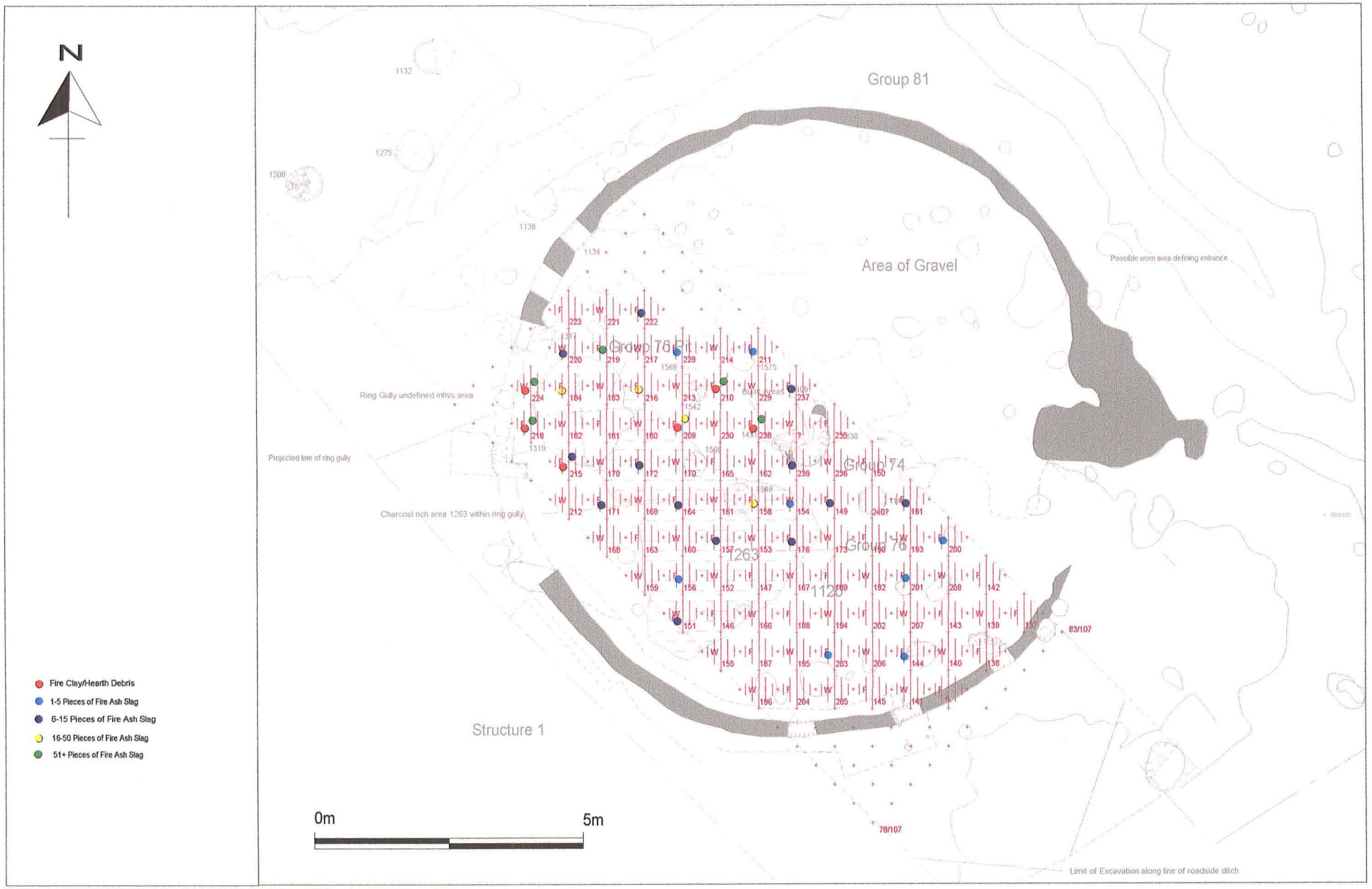


Figure 84. Site 4 (DBF97) Distribution of fired clay and fire ash slag inside Structure 1

Plate 1 Site 1 DBH97 Trench section from southwest showing topsoil, alluvium and buried soil.

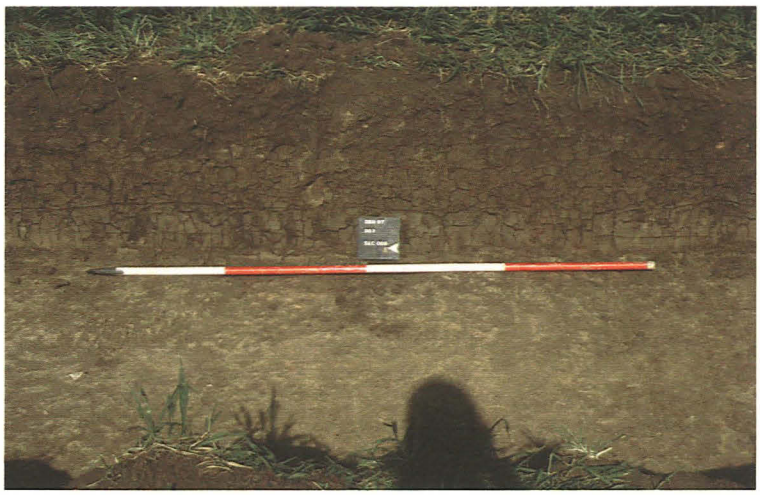


Plate 2 Site 1 DBH97 Pit (001) from southwest. The fills of the pit contained Ebbsfleet style Peterborough Ware Neolithic pottery.

Plate 3 Site 2 DBEA97 Ditch cut (040) from southeast cutting through tertiary fills of palaeochannel (020). The ditch may be part of the enclosure plotted from aerial photographs.

Plate 4 Site 2 DBEA97 Cut (031) from southeast. One of the shallow pits recorded within the possible Late Bronze Age enclosure.

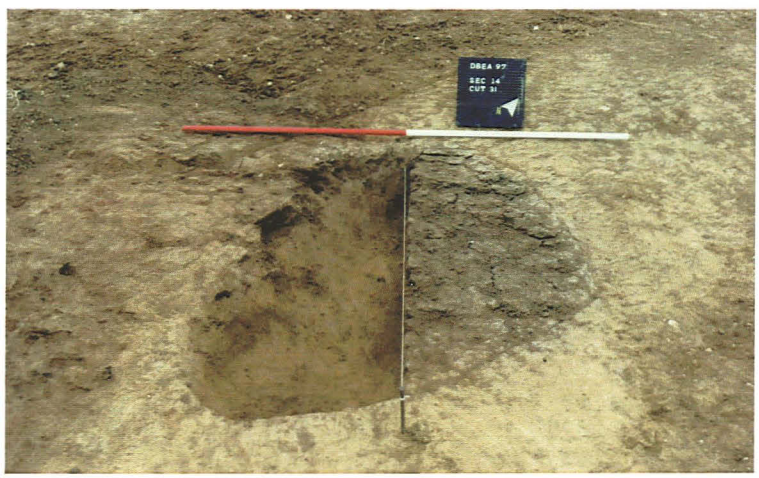


Plate 5 Site 2 DBEA97 Cut (033) from southwest, shallow linear ditch recorded in the trench linking Sites 2 and 3. Orientation could suggest a Late Bronze Age date.

Plate 6 Site 2 DBEA97 Palaeochannel (020) showing organic primary fill (068). From northwest.

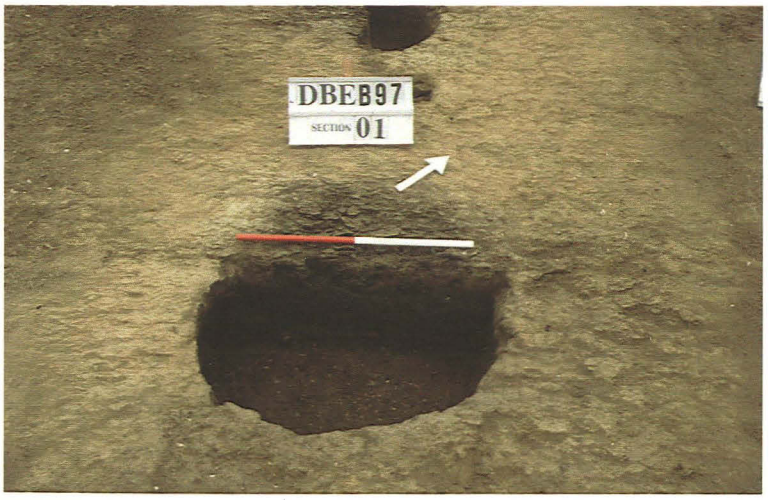


Plate 7 Site 3 DBEB97. Pit (005) from southeast. Earlier Neolithic Mildenhall type pottery, charred hazelnuts and possible cremated human bone was recovered from the fills of this feature.

Plate 8 Site 4 DBF97 Aerial shot of excavations underway from southwest. Crest of gravel ridge shows as light area adjacent to trackway crossing the site. Tertiary fills of Enclosure 2 show up as area of dark grey soil.

Plate 9 Site 4 DBF97 Buried soil containing Early Bronze Age flints sealed beneath gravel bank of probable Early Iron Age date. The buried soil/occupation layer overlying the bank contained abundant sherds of Early iron Age date. From northwest.

Plate 10 Site 4 DBF97 Crest of the gravel ridge on which the site is located. The main carriageway after hand cleaning. Most of these features remained unexcavated as they lay within the area selected for preservation. From southwest.

Plate 11 Site 4 DBF97 Early Iron Age pit in Group 104 located adjacent to terminal of enclosure ditch in Group 21. From north.

Plate 12 Site 4 DBF97 Enclosure 2 ditch in Group 59 from east. The latest phases contained Roman artefacts but there is good evidence to suggest that the earliest phases date to at least the Early iron Age.

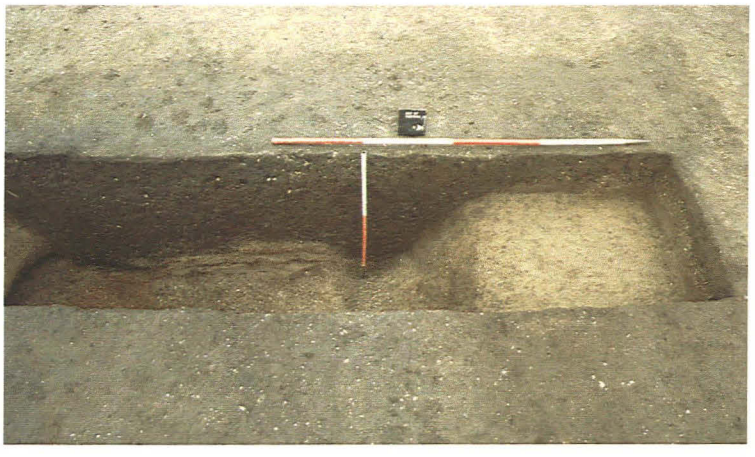


Plate 13 Site 4 DBF97 Early Iron Age Structure 1 from southeast after removal of floor layers and buried soil.

Plate 14 Site 4 DBF97 Early Iron Age Structure 1 from northeast after removal of floor layers and buried soil.

Plate 15 Site 4 DBF97 Shallow pit in Group 75 located on east side of Structure 1. From south.

Plate 16 Site 4 DBF97 Quern fragments in early Iron Age pit 1208 in Group 61. Note inverted upper half of quern stone on north side of pit. From east.

Plate 17 Site 4 DBF97 ➤ Fragmentary but *in-situ* scored ware vessel recorded in base of amorphous hollow in Group 33. From north.

Plate 18 Site 4 DBF97 The ➤ scored ware vessel in Group 33 after removal of collapsed top of pot. From north

Plate 19 Site 4 DBF97 The Early ➤ Iron Age pit in Group 89 containing layers of heat reddened silt and clay and deposits of ash and charcoal. From southwest.

➤ Plate 20 Site 4 DBF97 Middle Iron Age ditch in Group 68. Note Group 103 pit in foreground. From south.

Plate 21 Site 4 DBF97 Group 83 crouched burial of probable Iron Age date from southwest. The burial lies parallel to ditch in Group 84.

Plate 22 Site 4 DBF97 Skeleton 027 from Roman Grave Group 44 from south. The cemetery was located within the corner of Enclosure 2.

Plate 23 Site 4 DBF97 Skeleton 016 from Roman Grave Group 44 from south.

Plate 24 Site 4 DBF97 Skeleton 006 from Roman Grave Group 44 from west. Note position of decapitated skull between thighs of skeleton.

Plate 25 Site 4 DBF97 Skeleton 020 from Roman Grave Group 44 from west. Medieval plough furrow in foreground has severely truncated the skeleton. Note position of skull between the feet of the skeleton.

Plate 26 Site 4 DBF97 Early Saxon Grave 1334 from Group 7 containing skeletons 1336 and 1337. From northwest.

Plate 27 Site 4 DBF97. Plough truncated Early Saxon skeleton 081 in Group 7 from southwest. Note spearhead under left arm.

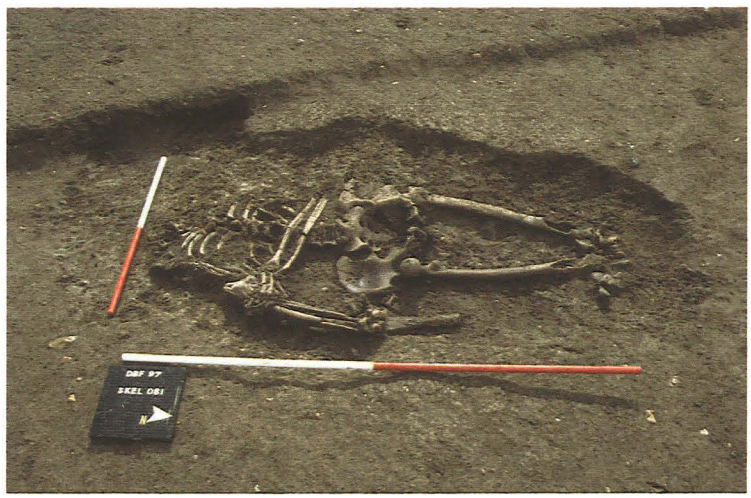


Plate 28 Site 4 DBF97 Spearhead under left arm of skeleton 081 from southwest.

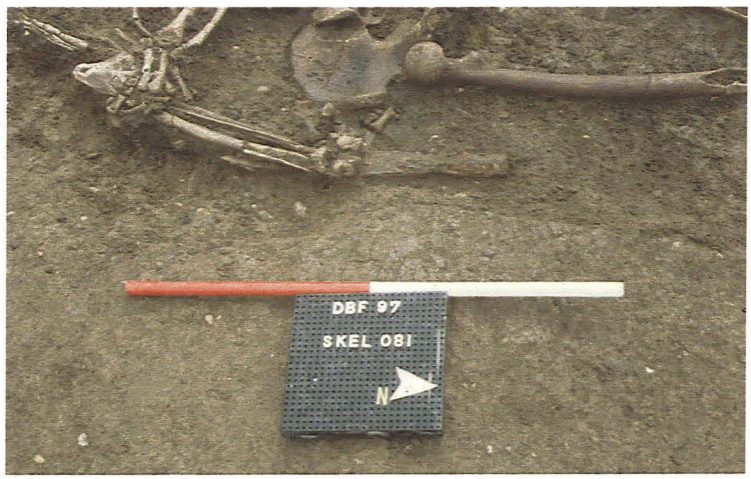


Plate 29 Site 4 DBF97 Skeleton 1511 in group 7 from southwest

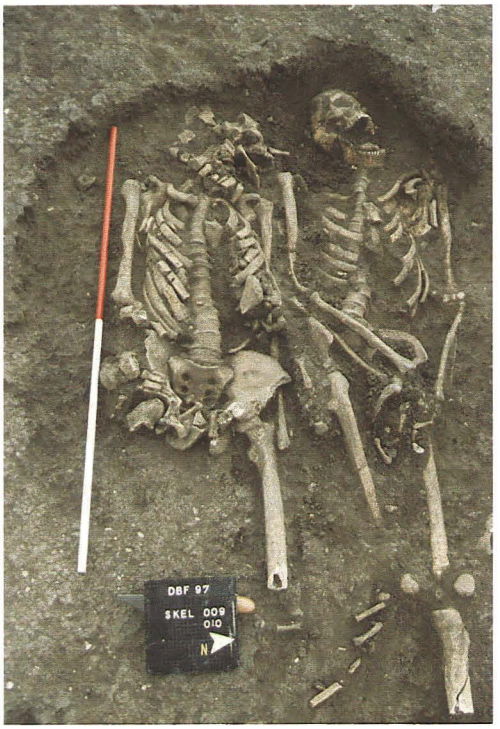


Plate 30 Site 4 DBF97 Double Early Saxon Grave in group 42 cut into tertiary fill of Roman Enclosure 2 ditch. From east.

Plate 31 Site 4 DBF97 Excavating the triple Early Saxon grave in Group 42. From west .

Plate 32 Site 4 DBF97 Iron buckle and buckle plate (SF 10) on front of pelvis of male skeleton (023) in early Saxon triple burial. An Iron knife or small Seax (SF9) can be seen behind the pelvis.

Plate 33 Site 4 DBF97 Early Saxon amorphous hollow in Group 25 from east ➢

Plate 34 Site 5 DBM97 Section across ditch cut (003) in Trench 1 from northeast ➢

Plate 35 Site 7 DBD97 Aerial shot of site during excavation from southwest ➢

Plate 36 Site 7 DBD97. Section across the shallow recut curvilinear ditch of possible Late Bronze Age date. From northeast. ➢

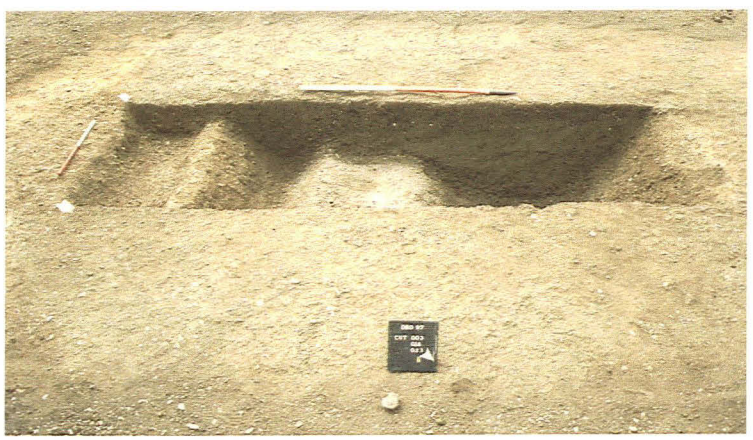


Plate 37 Site 7 DBD97 Iron Age pit in Group 10 from west.

Plate 38 Site 7 DBD97 Recut enclosure ditch from southeast.

Plate 39 Site 8 DBB97 Ring ditches east of AI5 in area of Site 8

Plate 40 Site 8 DBB97 Aerial shot of site under excavation from southwest.

Plate 41 Site 8 DBB97 West cross baulk across ring ditch showing north facing section ➢

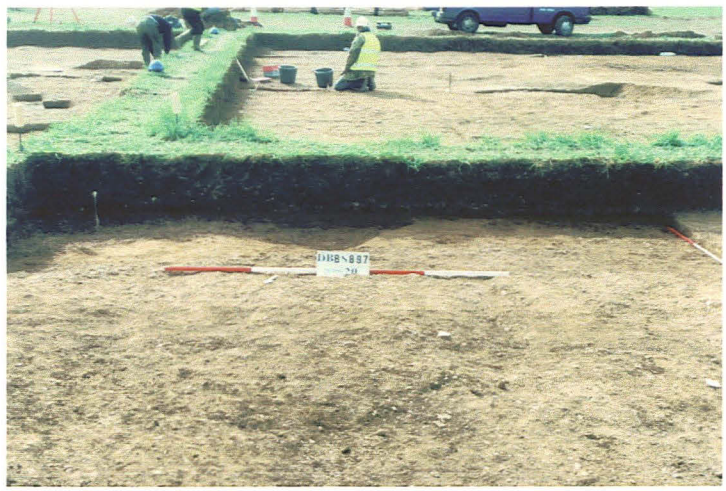


Plate 42 Site 8 DBB97 Ring ditch section from east. ➢

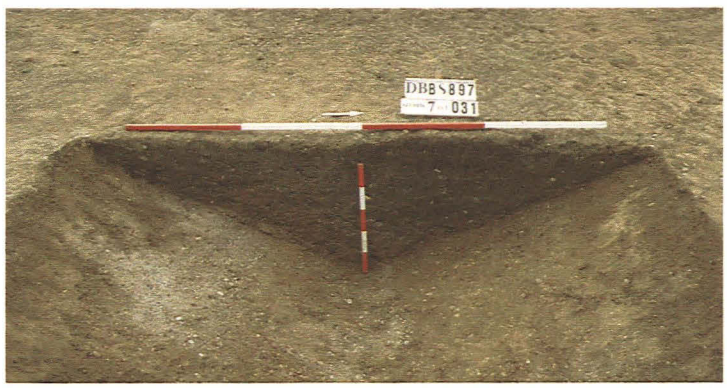


Plate 43 Site 8 DBB97 Possible post trench (085) in southeast quadrant of excavation. ➢

Plate 44 Site 8 DBB97 Linear ditch (071) which intersects east side of ring ditch From north. ➢