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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

**Swallow, Land off Caistor Road
Archaeological Evaluation**

NGR: TR 1765 0299

Site Code: SWCR 01

LCNCC Museum Accession No.: 2001.108

Planning Application No: 99/P/0491

Report for

Mr J. Board

on behalf of

Sir Richard Sutton Settled Estates

**LAS Report No. 537
June 2001**

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- 6 JUL 2001

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Land off Caistor Road, Swallow, Lincs.
Archaeological Evaluation
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Summary

Excavation of an evaluation trench at Swallow revealed a chalk rubble deposit immediately below topsoil. It appears to be a levelling deposit of quarry waste. A pit beneath the chalk layer, at the south end of the evaluation trench, probably the anomaly picked up during the geophysical survey, produced no dating material. It may have been a test pit assessing the lands potential for quarrying. The potential for archaeological remains is considered to be minimal.

Introduction

An excavated for Mr J. Board, on behalf of Sir Richard Sutton Settled Estates, in accordance with the general requirements of the Archaeology Section of Lincolnshire County Council, as set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (1998), was carried out on 24th May 2001 and the requirements of the Built Environment Assisstant.

Site Location and Description

The site (Fig.1) is 0.79ha in extent and located on the south side of the Caistor Road. A stream flows east-west across the site. It is currently pasture and is the subject of an outline planning application for housing development.

Archaeological Background

Swallow is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 which confirms its origins in the pre-Conquest period. The application site occupies a pasture field on the western edge of the present Swallow village, but lies opposite the parish church and is presumed to be very close to the centre of the medieval settlement. There are suggestions of medieval settlement earthworks across the site, most pronounced to the south of the small stream. The stream appears to have been managed, possibly diverted to the north of its natural course. A sherd of medieval pottery was found on the field surface during a site visit in February 2000. The NE part of the site has been pitted for chalk extraction, probably in the early nineteenth century. No other remains of any date have been reported from the site.

An archaeological desk-based assessment was prepared by LAS for this site in February 2000, and a geophysical survey was undertaken in July 2000. The geophysical survey identified a number of possible pits, some probably containing burnt material, of possible archaeological interest.

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the evaluation was to...

- establish the presence or absence, quality and extent of archaeological remains and their location within the development area.
- gather sufficient information to enable an assessment of the potential significance of any archaeological remains to be made and the impact which development will have upon them.
- enable an informed decision to be made regarding the future treatment of any archaeological remains and consider any appropriate mitigation measures either in advance of and/or during development

Method

Recording Systems

LAS operates a standard context recording system, based on MOLAS and CAS models. A full written (single context) and photographic record was made of the site, including site plans at a scale of 1:50, and section drawings at 1:50 and 1:20.

A full photographic record, in colour print, in 35mm format, was made during the progress of the evaluation covering principal features together with general site shots.

A temporary bench mark was established on site, derived from a spot height on Caistor Road (49.0m O.D.).

The Evaluation Trench (Figs.3 and 4)

A single trench, 15m x 2m, was placed 90° to the site frontage with Caistor Road, 32m from the NW corner of the development area, 4.5m into the site (PI.1), to evaluate the date of features (pits) against the frontage, noted in the geophysical survey.

The trench was machine excavated, using a 360° excavator with a toothless 2m wide dyking bucket, to the top of the first recognisable archaeological horizon. The machine excavation occurred under archaeological supervision (PI.2). The trench was hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan.

Results (Fig.4)

The machine removed the 0.25m deep topsoil, **100**, revealing a layer of chalk rubble **101** (PI.3). This deposit had chalk blocks up 0.28m x 0.23m x 0.20m in size, within a dark brown sand silt matrix. Brick dated 18th – 20th century in date and a quern stone fragment with a

square central hole were retrieved from this deposit. This deposit was removed by machine after recording. Levelling layer **101** had a depth of 0.20m at the north end of the trench increasing to 0.70m at the south end, reflecting the natural gradient of the site (Pls. 4 and 5). Beneath **101**, at the south end of the site was a pit, **104** (Pl.6), of which only 1m was exposed within the evaluation trench. Pit **104** was 0.85m wide, 0.27m deep, had a flat base and vertical sides. It had a dark brown silt clay fill, **103**, devoid of finds. This pit might have been the anomaly identified in the geophysical survey. Pit **104** cut the natural, **102**, a mix of chalk fragments and red brown boulder clay (Pl.7).

Context List

Context	Length	Width	Depth	Description
100	15m +	15m +	0.25m	Topsoil
101	15m +	15m +	0.70m max	Chalk Rubble
102	15m +	15m +	n/a	Natural
103	1m +	0.85m	0.27m	Fill of 104
104	1m +	0.85m	0.27m	Pit

Discussion

The desk based assessment identified chalk quarry pits at the east end of the site (Fig.2). It seems likely that the chalk levelling layer **101**, post dates the quarrying and is an attempt at landscaping the quarry waste. Undulations in the area of the site are probably also associated with this activity. Pit **104**, with its vertical sides and flat base, may have been a test pit assessing the lands potential for quarrying. Without dating material it is difficult to be certain.

Conclusion

The evaluation has established that the site has undergone extensive landscaping after chalk quarrying ceased. The anomaly recorded by the geophysical survey is archaeological in nature but of unknown date and function. The potential impact of the proposed development on archaeological remains would appear to be minimal.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Laurence Bacon the machine driver. All fieldwork was carried out by the author and Mark Williams. The pottery and tile was identified by Jane Young. This report was edited by Naomi Field and produced and collated by Jane Frost.

Mick McDaid

June 2001

References

Tann, G., 2000. *Land South of Caistor Road, Swallow, Lincs. Desk – Based Assessment*. LAS developer report.

Johnson, A.E., 2000. *Land South of Caistor Road, Swallow, Lincolnshire. Magnetometer (Gradiometer) Survey*. Oxford Archaeotechnics Limited developer report.

Archive List

Plans

Sections

Levels

Correspondence

Photographs

LAS Film No. 01/35/23 - 37

01/43/00 - 17

Tile Archive SWCR 01

Jane Young and Mick McDaid

<u>Context</u>	<u>Cname</u>	<u>Fabric</u>	<u>Sub Type</u>	<u>Frag</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
100	BRK			1	1381	BRICK	18 to 20 TH
100	BRK			1	786	BRICK	18 to 20 TH
100	BRK			1	968	YELLOW BRICK	18 to 20 TH
100	BRK			1	73	CORNER	18 to 20 TH

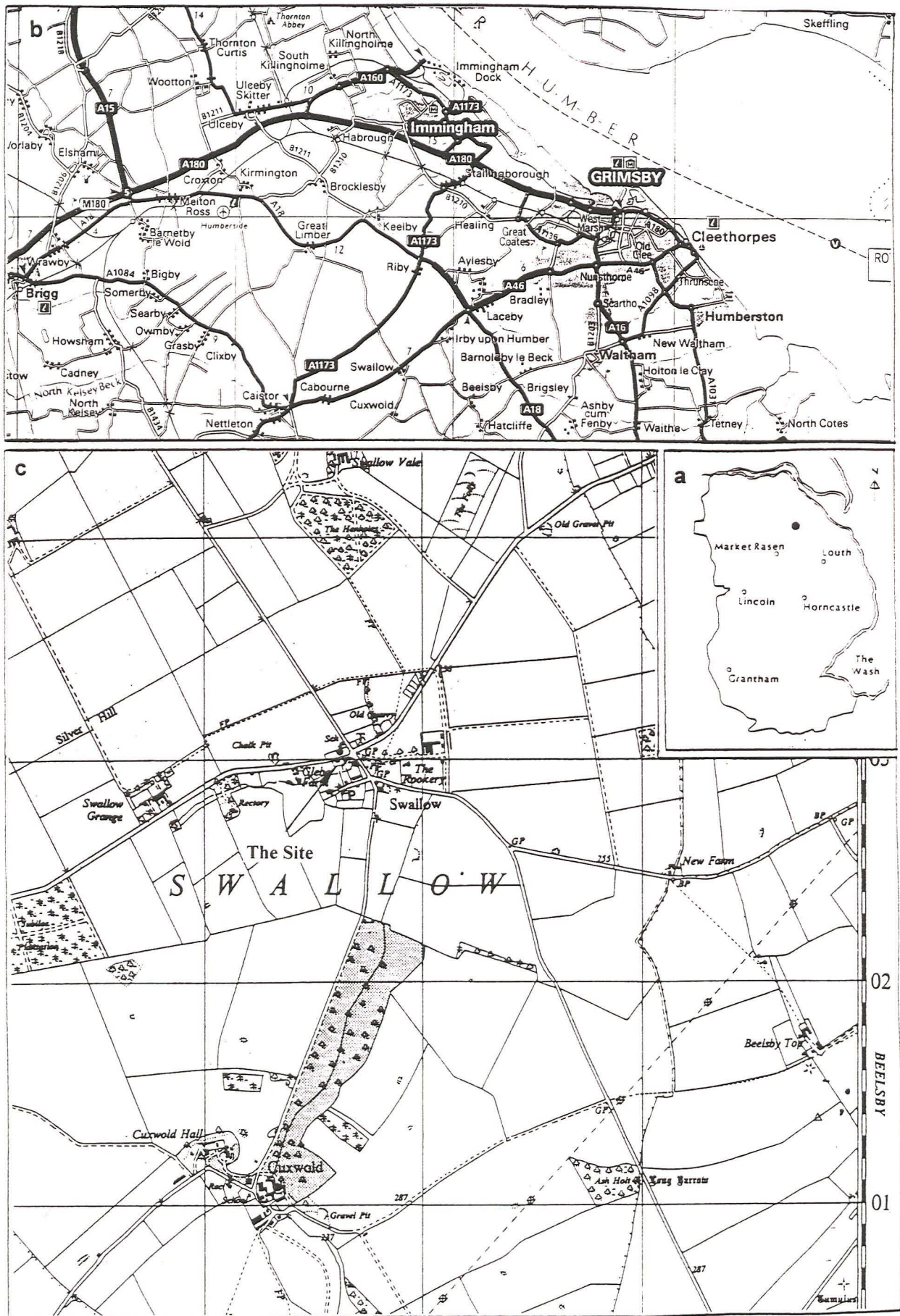


Fig. 1 Swallow site location. (Insert C based on the 1953 Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 map sheet TA 10. © Crown Copyright. Reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, LAS licence number AL 100002165)

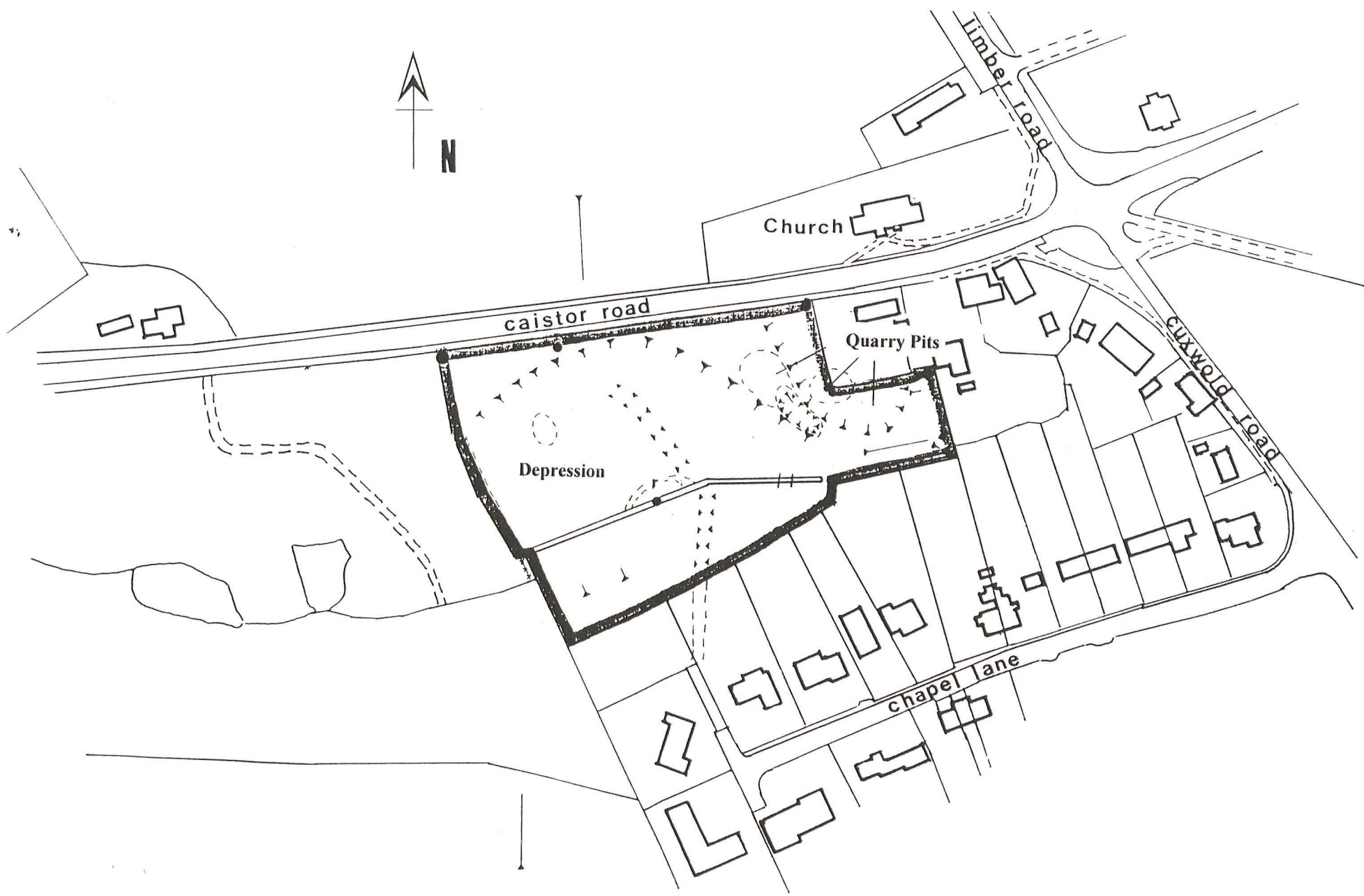


Fig. 2 Topographical features noted during site visit in February 2000.

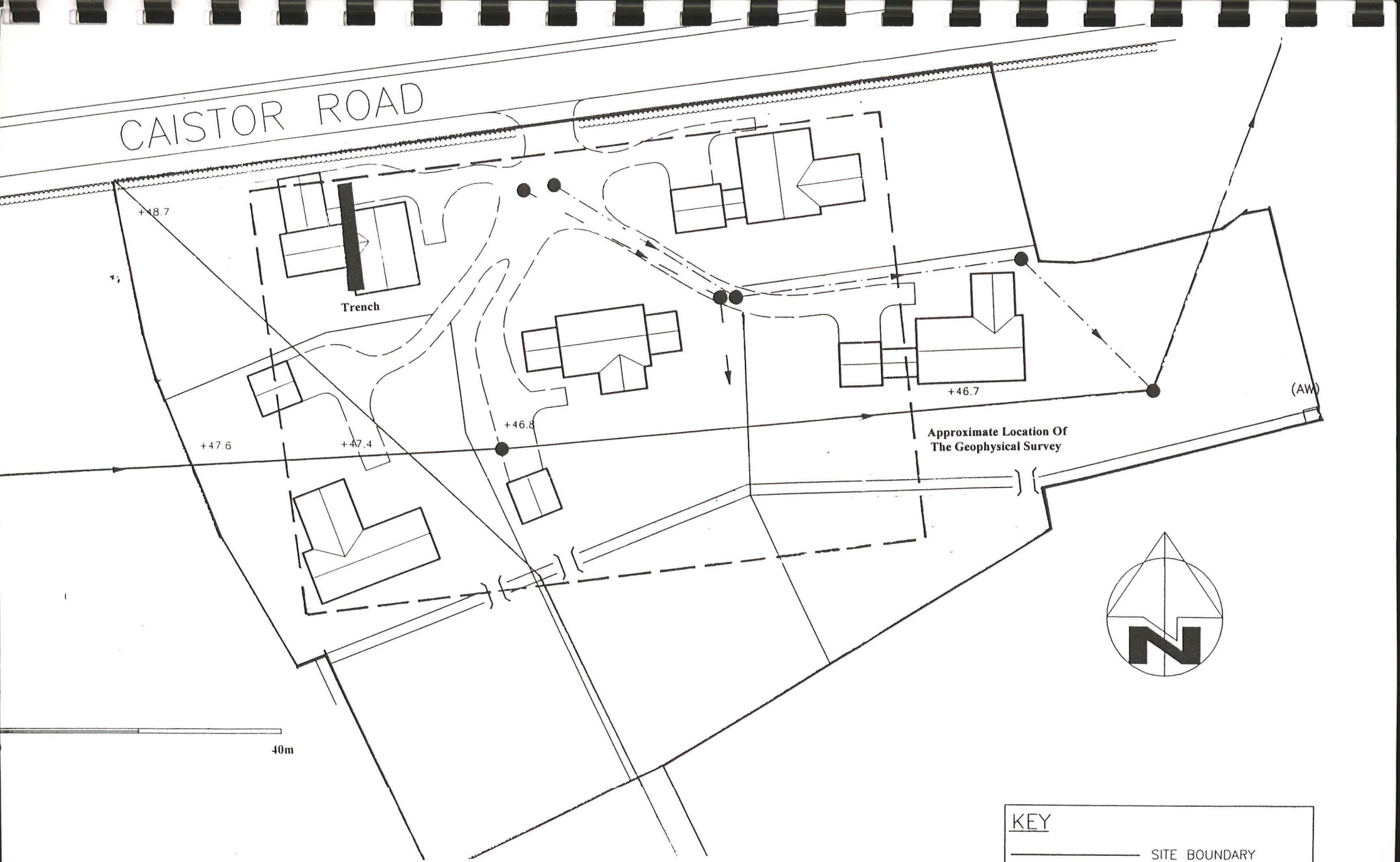


Fig. 3 Trench location in relation to proposed housing and the area of the geophysical survey. Based upon a plan provided by the developer. Drawing No. 99515-01.

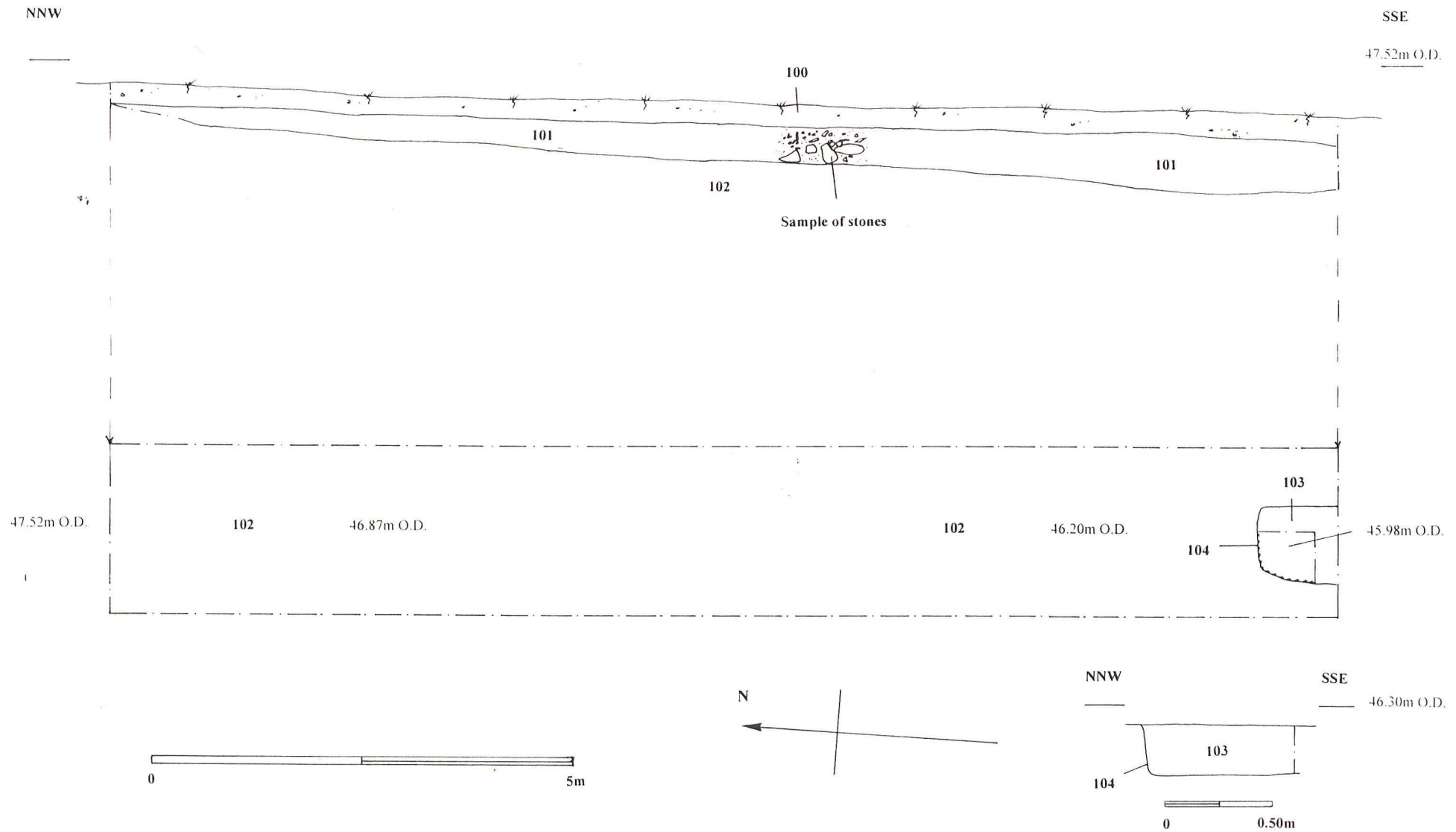


Fig. 4 Plan and sections of the evaluation trench.



Pl. 1 General view of site. Looking east.



PI. 2 Machine excavation of trench under archaeological supervision.

PI. 3 Chalk rubble 101 immediately beneath topsoil. Looking north north west.
Scales 1m and 2m.

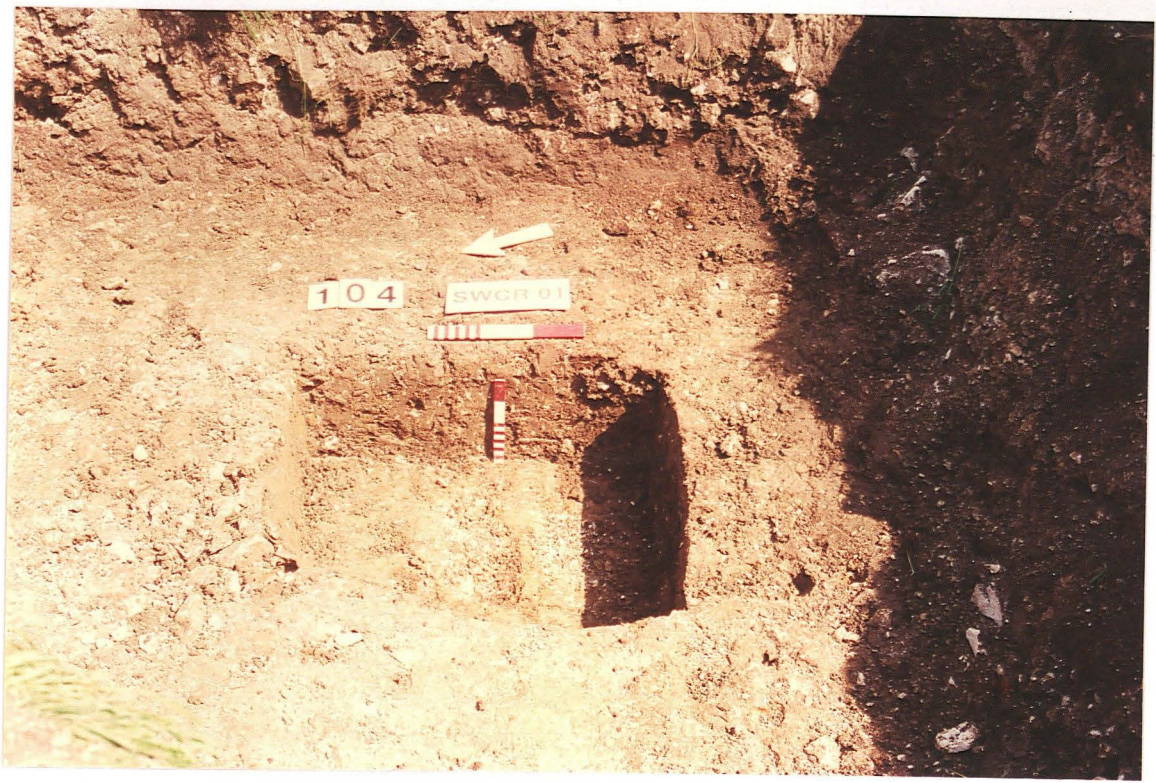




PI. 4 North east facing trench section. Vertical scales 1m, horizontal scale 2m.

PI. 5 North north west facing trench section. Vertical scales 1m, horizontal scale 2m.





Pl. 6 Pit 104, sectioned. Looking east. Vertical scales 0.20m, horizontal scale 0.30m.

Pl. 7 The trench after the removal of 101, showing natural 102. Looking north north west.

