

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY L I N C O L N

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION REPORT;
LAND OFF CHURCH LANE,
GREAT LIMBER, LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: TA 1355 0864
SITE CODE: CLGL03
LCNCC ACC. NO: 2003.226
Planning ref. M02/P/0458



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Report prepared for
Havelok Housing Association Ltd.
by Chris Clay
June 2003



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CONTENTS

	Summary	1
1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Site location and description	2
3.0	Planning background	2
4.0	Archaeological and historical background	3
5.0	Methodology	3
6.0	Results	4
6.1	Trench 1	4
6.2	Trench 2	4
6.3	Trench 3	5
7.0	Discussion and conclusion	5
8.0	Effectiveness of methodology	5
9.0	Acknowledgements	6
10.0	References	6
11.0	Site Archive	6
Appendix 1	Colour plates	7
Appendix 2	List of archaeological contexts	9

List of Figures

- Fig. 1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)
- Fig. 2: Trench location plan, showing the development area highlighted in green (scale 1:500)
- Fig. 3: Trench 1 plan and sample section (scales 1:50 and 1:20)
- Fig. 4: Trench 2 plan and sections (scales 1:50 and 1:20)
- Fig. 5: Trench 3 plan and section (scales 1:50 and 1:20)

List of plates

- Pl. 1: General view of the site, looking south-east
- Pl. 2: Trench 1, looking east-south-east
- Pl. 3: Trench 2, looking north-north-west
- Pl. 4: Ditch [205], Trench 2, looking south-west
- Pl. 5: Trench 3, looking north-east
- Pl. 6: Ditch [304], north end of Trench 3. Looking east

Summary

- An archaeological field evaluation was undertaken in advance of residential development of land off Church Lane, Great Limber, Lincolnshire.
- The area of interest is situated amid an area of extensive earthworks, relating to the former medieval village, an estate of the Knights Templar, and associated field systems.
- Three trenches were investigated, revealing two small undated gullies and a shallow pit. A single small fragment of 12th century shell tempered pottery was recovered from Trench 3.

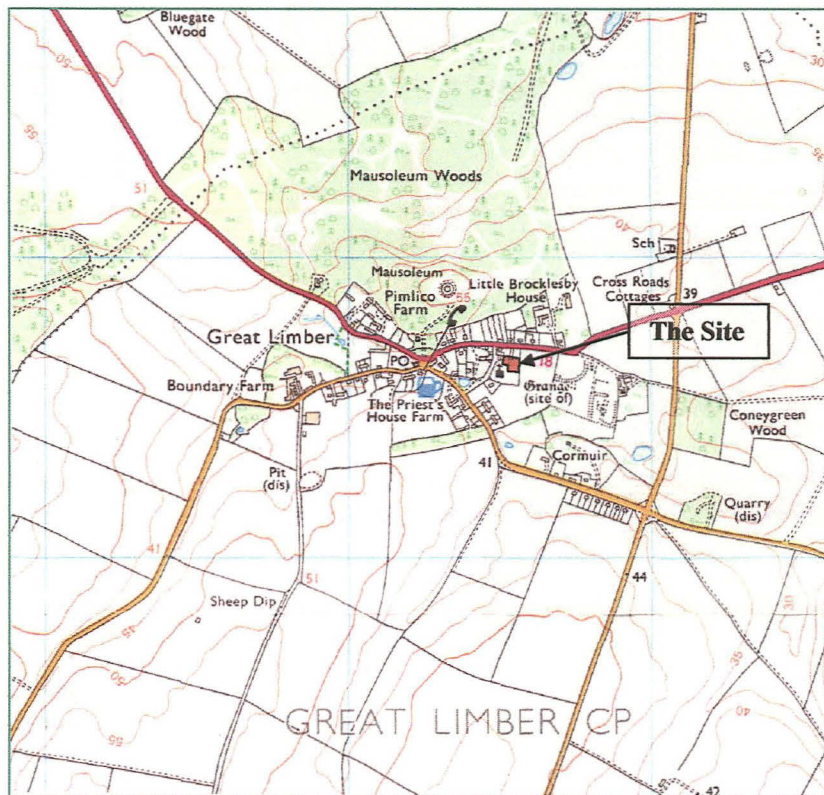


Fig.1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)
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Fig. 2: Trench location plan, showing the development area highlighted in green (scale 1:500)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Havelok Housing Association Ltd. to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation prior to the residential development of land off Church Lane, Great Limber, Lincolnshire. These works were undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a project specification prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). The approach adopted is consistent with the recommendations of *Archaeology & Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (Department of the Environment, 1990), *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (IFA, 1994), and the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: a manual of archaeological practice* (LCC, 1998).

Copies of this report have been deposited with the commissioning body and the County Sites and Monuments Record for Lincolnshire. Reports will also be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, along with an ordered project archive for long term storage and curation.

2.0 Site location and description

Great Limber is in the administrative district of West Lindsey, approximately 14km west of central Grimsby. The proposed development area is towards the east side of the village, to the east of Church Lane.

The development area comprises two broadly sub-rectangular blocks of land and an east-west access from Church Lane. The block of land to the east measures 52m by 37m, and has a coverage of nettles, tall grass and weeds c.1m high. The northern portion of this area extends into the garden of an adjoining property. On its western boundary is a second block of land measuring 36m by 20m, which is covered by a closely cropped lawn. A flowerbed runs along the west and south side of this development area, with a small cabbage patch and two trees towards its centre. The parish church of St. Peter is immediately to the south. The site centres on NGR TA 1355 0864.

The local geology consists of Burnham Chalk, forming the scarp slope of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Immediately to the north and east of the site lie glacial deposits of Till with patches of sand and gravel, marking the beginnings of the Lincolnshire Marsh (British Geological Survey, 1990).

3.0 Planning background

Planning permission is sought for residential development, comprising two pairs of semi-detached bungalows, and an access from Church Lane (planning ref. M02/P/0458). This permission is subject to the undertaking of an archaeological evaluation, to assess the archaeological potential of the site and the likely threat to archaeology from the proposed development.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

There is very limited evidence of settlement activity in the prehistoric period. A pit alignment has been recorded approximately 2.5km south-east of the village (Bewley, 1998). Romano-British activity is attested by scatters of pottery to the east and south-west of the village (SMR data).

There is tentative evidence for occupation of the area in the Anglo-Saxon period, where a single coin of Wulfred, Archbishop of Canterbury (810-22 AD), was found close to the village (Blackburn, 1993). Corroborative place name evidence also suggests the presence of extensive pre-Conquest woodland: Limber derives from the Old English components *lind* and *beorg*, meaning 'the hill where lime trees grow', lime trees being a commonly accepted indicator of the presence of ancient woodland (Sawyer 1998, Cameron 1998).

The village is mentioned in the will of Ulf and his wife Madselin (between 1066- 68). Numerous estates, including land in Limber, were disposed of prior to his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, much of which was passed to various abbeys and family members (Sawyer, 1998). By the time of the Domesday Book, the land was in the possession of The King, The Archbishop of York, Hugh son of Baldric, Drogo of La Beuvriere and Rainer of Brimeux (Morgan & Thorn, 1986).

Extensive earthworks and cropmarks to the south, west and east of the village identify several phases of medieval settlement. At the east end of the village are the earthwork remains of an estate owned at least from the late 11th century by the Knights Templars. Following the suppression of this order at the beginning of the 14th century, the estate passed into the hands of the Knights Hospitallers. After the Dissolution, the estate passed to Sir William Pelham. The remainder of the identified features relate to the medieval village, and include hollow ways, closes, building sites and ridge and furrow cropmarks. An estate map of 1676 shows much of this area still in use.

Fieldwalking of the area to the west of the modern village has recovered pottery of 13th to 14th century date. In 1967, the area to the east of the village was ploughed, revealing building remains fronting High Street and a parallel hollow way. Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered from this field (Everson et.al., 1991).

5.0 Methodology

Three trenches were investigated, two of which were 15m long; the third being 12m long (see fig. 2). Initial excavation was carried out using a JCB fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching blade. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in spits not exceeding 0.2m, until the first archaeological or natural horizon was exposed. Where archaeological deposits were encountered, all further excavation was by hand.

Archaeological features were sample excavated to establish depths and profiles and, where possible, date and function. Features were recorded in plan and in section at appropriate scales (1:50 and 1:20), and written accounts were prepared on pro forma

context record sheets. A colour photographic record was maintained throughout the project, and selected prints have been reproduced in this report.

The author supervised the fieldwork, with the assistance of two experienced field archaeologists. The excavations were carried out over a period of three days; 28th, 29th, 30th May 2003.

6.0 Results

6.1 Trench 1 (fig 3)

A dark brown/grey topsoil layer, up to 0.3m deep, (100), sealed the underlying deposit sequence, and this contained moderate quantities of modern brick and tile. It lay directly over the natural geology (102), a mid-brown sand, with abundant sub-angular chalk and flint. A second natural deposit, (101), was also identified: a brown clayey sand with patches of reddish brown clay. This was intermittent and was interpreted as the infilling of solution holes and natural hollows caused by geological processes.

An isolated feature was identified towards the east end of the trench, [103]. This was a small, sub-circular posthole-type feature, surviving to a depth of 0.05m. It contained a dark grey/brown fill, (104), that was very similar to the topsoil, suggesting that the feature was of relatively recent origin.

6.2 Trench 2 (fig 4)

Topsoil (200) was the uppermost deposit in this trench, consisting of dark brown/grey loam, between 0.3m and 0.5m deep, being deepest at the north-west end of the trench.

The above sealed two features. At the north-west end of the trench, a small, possibly sub-circular, pit was exposed, [203]. This survived to a depth of 0.18m, and it contained an undated fill of dark brown sand, (204).

Towards the south-east end of the trench was an irregular, north-east to south-west linear feature, [205]. On the south-west side of the trench, this was 1.4m wide with shallow, irregular sides and a concave base. This narrowed considerably, being only 0.35m wide at the opposite side of the trench. It is possible that the feature terminated immediately beyond the excavated area. It was filled with a brown clayey sand deposit, (206), that contained no dating evidence.

The natural geology in the trench was identical to that in Trench 1, consisting of a yellowish brown chalk brush, (202), and patches of brown clayey sand, (201), filling numerous solution holes.

6.3 Trench 3 (fig 5)

A very dark grey sandy loam topsoil, (300) was approximately 0.35m deep. Beneath this was a similar depth of greyish-brown clayey sand subsoil, (301). This produced a single very small sherd of pottery of probable 12th century date (J. Young *pers. comm.*).

A single linear feature, [304] was observed beneath the subsoil at the very north end of the trench, running on an east to west alignment. This was more than 0.65m wide and survived to a depth of 0.24m. The one exposed edge was moderately steep, with a gentle break of slope to a concave base. The fill, (305), was a dark brown, slightly loamy sand, that produced no dating evidence.

As with Trenches 1 and 2, the natural geology was represented by a yellowish brown chalk brash (303), with patches of brown sand (302) filling geological features.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

Extremely low levels of archaeological features were exposed in all three trenches, associated with virtually no dating evidence (the only artefactual material was a sherd of medieval pottery from the subsoil in Trench 3, directly overlying ditch [304]). Such a small sherd is of little use in dating the archaeological deposits, and it could even be residual, or possibly derived from truncation of the underlying ditch. As a result, the dating of the features exposed is unknown. Furthermore, little can be established about the function of the excavated features. All were relatively shallow and had been subject to considerable truncation, particularly those in Trenches 1 and 2. Whether these features form components relating to the recorded medieval earthworks and cropmarks is unknown. One observation that has been made is that the ditch that was exposed at the north end of Trench 3 is on the exact alignment of an existing boundary, c. 15m to the east (see fig. 2).

The area in which Trenches 1 and 2 were excavated appears to have been subject to some reduction in ground level, where this area is approximately 0.5m lower than the area of Trench 3. It is also of note in this context that the subsoil deposit observed in Trench 3 was not evident in Trenches 1 or 2.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The chosen methodology was appropriate to the development. The evaluation has demonstrated that the area has a limited archaeological potential, and that the proposed development is unlikely to disturb or destroy significant archaeological remains.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Havelok Housing Association Ltd. for this commission. Thanks also go to the residents of the nearby properties for their cooperation during the excavations.

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11.0 Site archive

The documentary and physical archive is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This will be deposited at Lincoln City and County Museum within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number 2003.226.

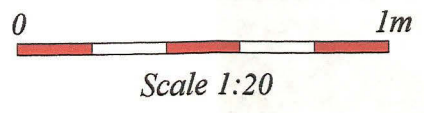
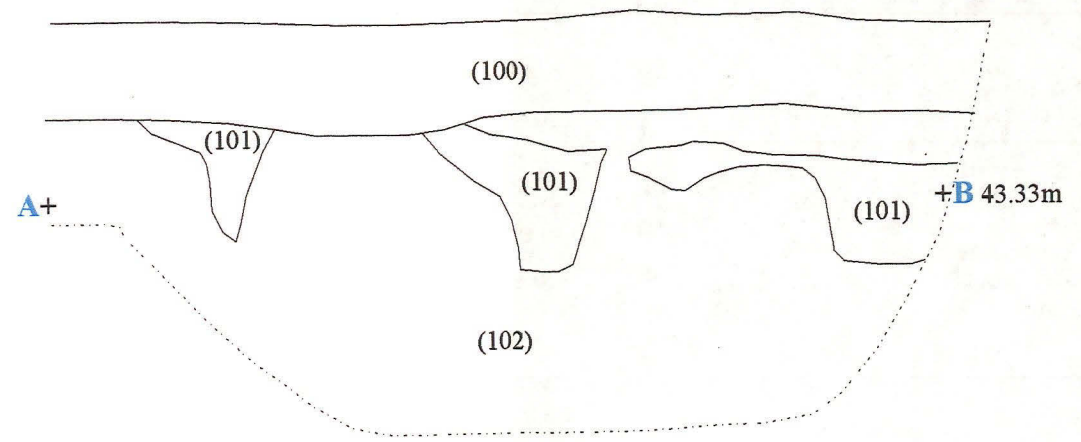
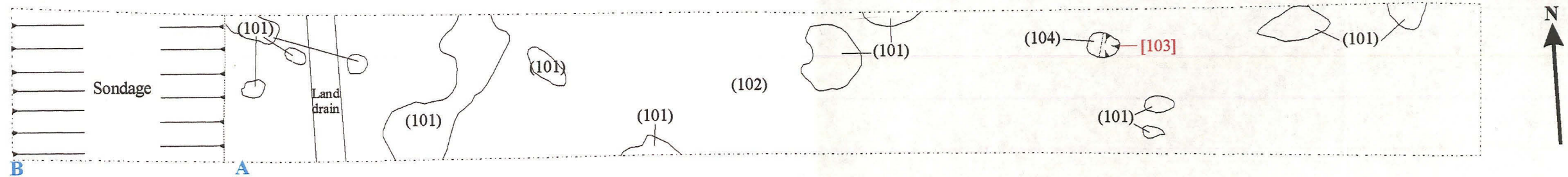


Fig. 3: Trench 1 plan and sample section (scales 1:50 and 1:20)

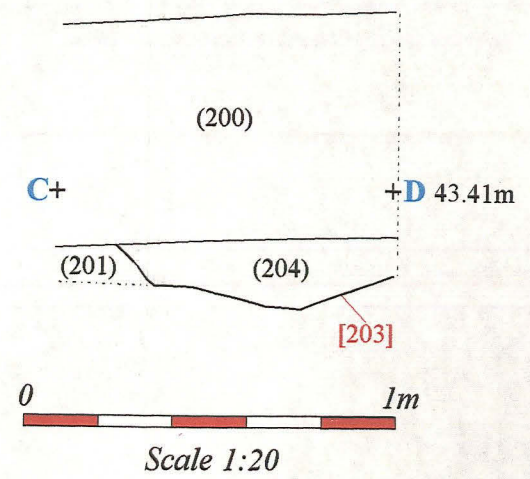
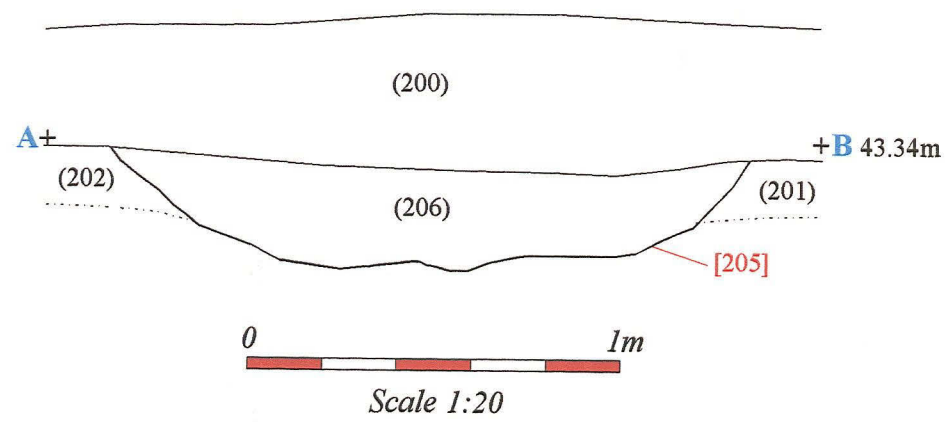
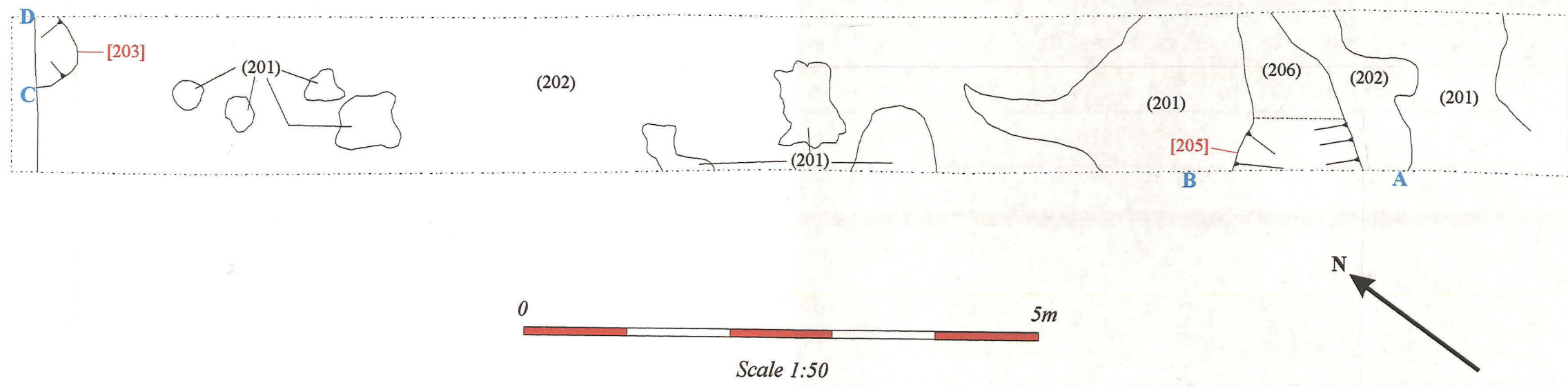


Fig. 4: Trench 2 plan and sections (scales 1:50 and 1:20)

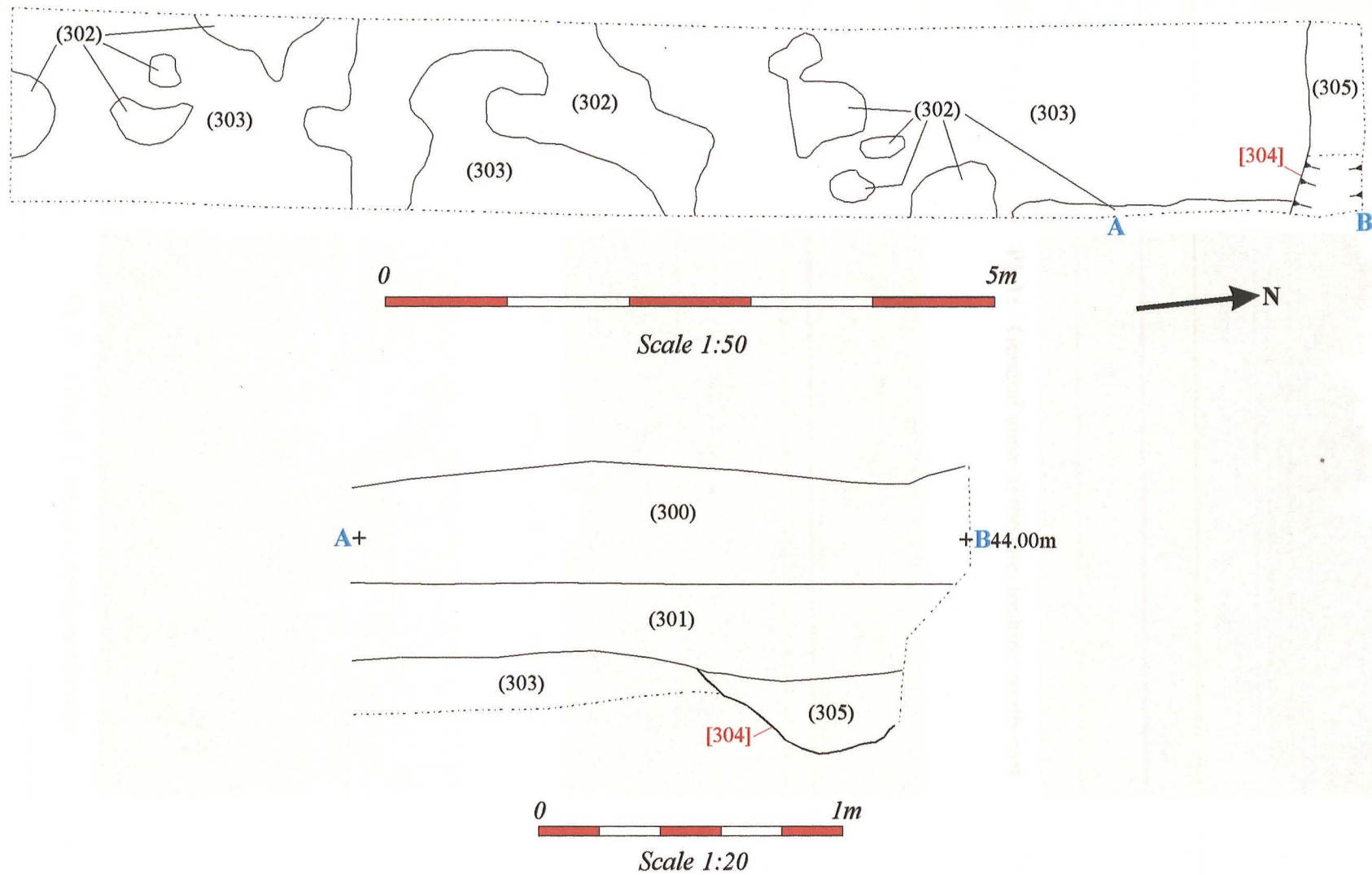


Fig. 5: Trench 3 plan and section (scales 1:50 and 1:20)

APPENDIX 1: Colour Plates



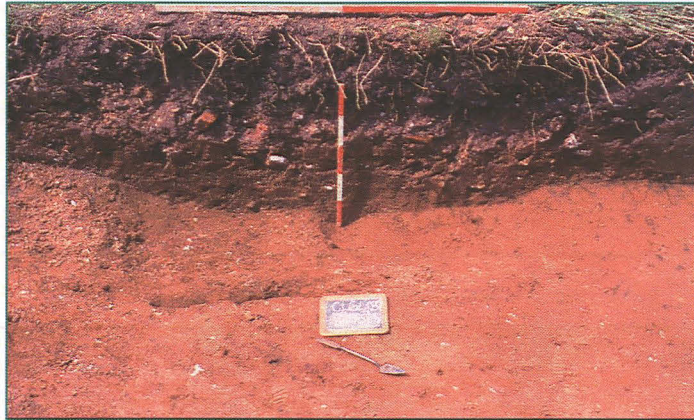
Pl. 1: General view of the site, looking south-east



Pl. 2: Trench 1, looking east-south-east



Pl. 3: Trench 2, looking north-north-west



Pl. 4: Ditch [205], Trench 2, looking south-west



Pl. 5: Trench 3, looking north-east



Pl. 6: Ditch [304], north end of Trench 3. Looking east

APPENDIX 2: List of archaeological contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
100	Layer	Topsoil
101	Deposit	Brown sand filling solution holes/geological features
102	Layer	Natural chalk/flint brash
103	Cut	Post hole cut, contains (104)
104	Fill	Fill of post hole [103]
200	Layer	Topsoil
201	Deposit	Brown sand filling solution holes/geological features
202	Layer	Natural chalk/flint brash
203	Cut	Shallow subcircular pit, contains (204)
204	Fill	Fill of pit [203]
205	Cut	Irregular linear feature, contains (206)
206	Fill	Fill of ditch [205]
300	Layer	Topsoil
301	Layer	Subsoil
302	Deposit	Brown sand filling solution holes/geological features
303	Layer	Natural chalk/flint brash
304	Cut	Linear feature, contains (305)
305	Fill	Fill of ditch [304]