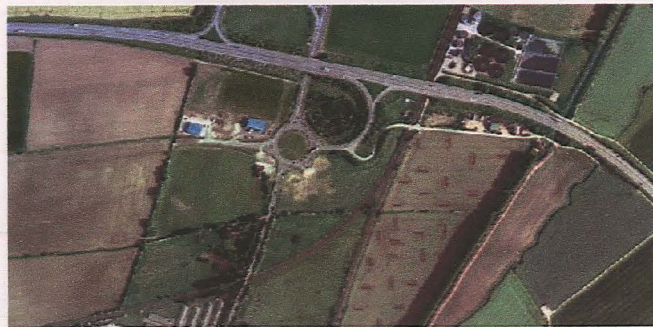




Northamptonshire Archaeology

**Archaeological Trial Excavation
at Sleaford Enterprise Park,
Lincolnshire
March 2005**



Checked by

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Report 05/59

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EVENT LI 5937

INTERVENTION LI 10071
EXCAVATION LI 10072


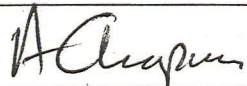
PRN 60813 Roman
PRN 60812 Iron Age

SLEAFORD ENTERPRISE PARK

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QUALITY CONTROL

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SLEAFORD ENTERPRISE PARK

OASIS REPORT FORM

SITE CODE SEPOS

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological trial excavation at Sleaford Enterprise Park	
Short description (250 words maximum)	<i>Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned by New Park Projects Limited to carry out a trial excavation. The site was situated on the northern edge of Sleaford, between East Road and the Sleaford Road railway junction. Six trenches totalling 124 metres in length by 1.6 metres wide were excavated under archaeological supervision. Ditches possibly relating to the Iron Age enclosure were found. The Roman road, Mareham Lane, was tracked along the western edge of site.</i>	
Project type (eg desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Field Evaluation	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Geophysics Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown	
Monument type and period		
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Lincolnshire	
Site address (including postcode)	Sleaford Enterprise Park	
Easting (use numerical 100km grid square no.)	5079 00	
Northing	3469 00	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire County Council	
Project brief originator	Joanna Hambly, Heritage Officer NKDC	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Samantha Hepburn	
Project Manager	Tim Upton-Smith	
Sponsor or funding body	New Park Projects Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	21/03/05	
End date	23/03/05	
ARCHIVES		
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	LCNCC:2004.189	Site Archive
Digital	LCNCC:2004.189	Disc/Digital Copy of above
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	Archaeological Trial Excavation At Sleaford Enterprise Park, Lincolnshire	
Serial title & volume	NA Report	
Author(s)	Samantha Hepburn	
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Date	April 2005	

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Plate 2: Trench 2 looking W. Gully 106 to fore, Ditch 204 in background

Plate 3: Trench 3 truncated remains of Roman road

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL EXCAVATION

AT SLEAFORD ENTERPRISE PARK,

LINCOLNSHIRE

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned by New Park Projects Limited to carry out a trial excavation, at Sleaford enterprise park, Lincolnshire. The site was situated on the northern edge of Sleaford, between East Road and the Sleaford Road railway junction. Six trenches totalling 124 metres in length by 1.6 metres wide were excavated under archaeological supervision. Ditches possibly relating to the Iron Age enclosure were found. The Roman road, Mareham Lane, was traced along the western edge of site.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned by New Park Projects Ltd of Newark, under the advice of the North Kesteven Heritage Officer, to carry out an archaeological evaluation comprising trial excavation in March 2005 at Sleaford Enterprise Park, Lincolnshire. The site lies between East Road and the Sleaford Road railway junction (NGR: centred on TF 0790 4690; Fig 1) and covers about 1 ha.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Archaeological Background

Existing knowledge of the area suggests that the site is situated within an extensive landscape of particularly prehistoric and Roman archaeological remains. A middle Iron Age sub-rectangular enclosure ditch is suspected to extend into the present site from the north, where drainage features of similar date have been identified (Hambly 2003, 1). A Roman road, Mareham Lane, is known to run north - south to the west of the development area and has been identified as well-preserved to the north-west of the site (Hambly 2003, 2). The Roman road, where closest to the current site, was not particularly well preserved. Evidence was found for the resurfacing of the road and the re-cutting of flanking ditches until the 3rd-4th centuries AD. Deeply-cut features, where found nearby, have contained waterlogged basal deposits; these are of regional importance due to the environmental information they contain.

Geophysical survey carried out over the site in 2004 was largely inconclusive, being hindered from confirmation of the presence of remains by magnetic interference from ferrous and brick-based debris (Butler 2004).

2.2 Geology and Topography

The underlying geology consists of River Terrace deposits of sand and gravel (BGS 2004).

The site was situated adjacent to the north-west of a functioning railway line and east of the B1517 road out of Sleaford. A thick hedge formed the northern boundary of the site, which was a pasture field with a central pond overgrown with trees. The western half of the field was subdivided by an electric fence with two brick sheds on the northern boundary and a steel water trough. An electric power line traversed the site south-west to north-east, supported by three telegraph poles.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

The general objective of the evaluation was to establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits, and to present sufficient information to inform local authority decisions regarding a planning application.

3.2 Methodology

The works were undertaken in accordance with Northamptonshire Archaeology standard excavation procedures.

Six trenches, measuring 124m in total length, were excavated within the development area. A trench plan was agreed with Joanna Hambly, the North Kesteven Heritage Officer (Fig 2).

The excavation of the trial trenches was continuously supervised by an archaeologist. All trenches were excavated using a JCB 3cx/180° type excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. All trenches were 1.6 metres wide. Topsoil, and subsoil were removed until archaeologically sensitive deposits or clean natural horizons were revealed. All deposits were cleaned sufficiently to identify their nature. Excavation of features was carried out by hand, and where given permission, by a machine using a toothless bucket 0.50m wide. Recording was by

Northamptonshire Archaeology pro-forma context sheets, supplemented by drawn plans at a scale of 1:50, and sections at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. A photographic record in black and white and colour slides of all trenches and features was completed.

4 EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The natural geology across site comprised pale to dark orange sand with gravel patches (002). The majority of the features present were cut into this deposit.

A subsoil of mid yellowish brown sandy silt (001) varied in thickness from 0.54m – 0.62m in the west, to 0.32m in the north-east. This was overlain by a dark brown sandy clay/silt topsoil (000), which had a consistent thickness of 0.27m-0.34m across the site.

4.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned east to west in the southern part of the site (Fig 2); and was 20m long by 0.70m deep.

A ditch [104] aligned north to south, partially visible in plan, was not excavated due to its presence in Trenches 2 and 3. The ditch was filled with a mid grey clay (103).

4.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned east – west on the western edge of the site (Figs 2 & 3), and was 24m long by 0.70m deep.

Ditch [204] was aligned north to south. It was 4.76m wide by 0.86m deep with steep 45° sloping sides, and an uneven base. It was filled by a mid yellowish brown, sandy silt/clay, with occasional gravel inclusions (203) (Fig 4, section 1).

A possible road surface (207) was aligned north to south, and comprised a compact layer of redeposited natural gravels with a mid orange sand matrix (Plates 1 & 2). The road, which measured approximately 6.50m wide, had very diffuse edges.

Gully [206], aligned north to south, had gradual 30° sloping sides, and measured 0.66m wide by 0.20m deep. The fill comprised a mid brown sandy silt (205), with occasional gravel inclusions. The gully truncated road surface (207) (Fig 4, section 1).

4.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned east to west in the north-east corner of the site (Figs 2 & 3), and was 20m long by 0.94m deep.

Ditch [304], which was aligned north to south, measured 3.90m wide, and was not excavated as a section was put through the same feature in Trench 2 [204]. The fill comprised a mid grey/brown sandy silt (303) (Fig 4, section 2).

A continuation of the possible road surface in Trench 2 (207) was noted in this trench (305). It was aligned north to south, and made up of a compact layer of redeposited natural gravels in a pale yellow/orange sand matrix (Plate 3). The road measured 5.80m wide. It was truncated by pit [307].

Pit [307] was only partially visible in plan. It measured 3.15m wide by 0.44m deep with a 45° slope on the west edge and 70° slope on the east edge. It had a fill of mid yellowish brown sandy silt (306), with rare small stones inclusions (Fig 4, section 2).

4.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned north-west to south-east along the northern extent of the site (Fig 2); and was 20m long by 0.71m deep.

Ditch [404] aligned north-east to south-west. It measured 1.58m wide by 0.37m deep, and had a near vertical slope on the north-east edge, the south-west edge had a 45° slope, with a slightly concave base. It had a fill of pale brown sandy silt deposit (403), with occasional gravel inclusions (Fig 4, section 3).

4.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned north-east to south-west along the northern extent of the site (Fig 2), and was 20m long by 0.59m deep.

Gully [504] was aligned east to west. It was a shallow U-shaped gully with steep sides, 0.47m wide by 0.10m deep. It had a fill of mid yellow/grey silty sand (503), with occasional gravel inclusions (Fig 4, section 4).

Another gully [506] was aligned north to south, butt ending to the south. It was a U-shaped gully with shallow sloping sides, 0.65m wide by 0.11m deep. It had a fill of pale yellowish brown silty sand (505), with occasional gravel inclusions (Fig 4, section 5).

4.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned north-west to south-east in the north-east corner of the site (Fig 2), and was 20m long by 0.66m deep.

A curvilinear ditch [605] aligned north to south, with a butt end to the north. It was a shallow U-shaped ditch with steep sloping sides, 1.50m wide by 0.27m deep; the northern edge had been disturbed by vegetation. The primary fill (604) was 0.20m thick at the butt end and comprised of a dark grey organic sandy silt, with rare small stone inclusions. The secondary fill (603) was 0.27m thick and comprised of a mid grey/brown sand/silt, with occasional gravel inclusions. (Fig 4, sections 6 and 7)

5 CONCLUSIONS

Previous excavation of surrounding areas had revealed a part of a sub rectangular enclosure ditch which had been dated to the middle Iron Age. Ditch [404] is aligned with the western (edge) enclosure ditch, and maybe an extension. Similarly, butt end [605] is aligned with the eastern (edge) enclosure ditch and may indicate an entranceway. The absence of datable finds for both of these features means that these interpretations are conjecture based upon their locations in plan.

Previous excavations also revealed part of the Roman road, Mareham Lane. The preservation of the road was recorded as good to the north, and less so in the south. This seems to have been a continuing trend as the road, visible in Trenches 2 and 3, was in poor condition, deteriorating from the north to the south, so much so that it was not evident in Trench 1. The road surface was clearly defined on its western edge, due to the presence of a wide ditch [104], [204] and [304]. However there was no flanking ditch on the eastern side, where the road surface petered out and was almost indistinguishable from the natural gravels. The west flanking ditch showed no evidence of recutting, and produced no datable evidence.

There were several small undated gullies, possibly used for drainage, and an undated pit possibly created as a result of gravel extraction.

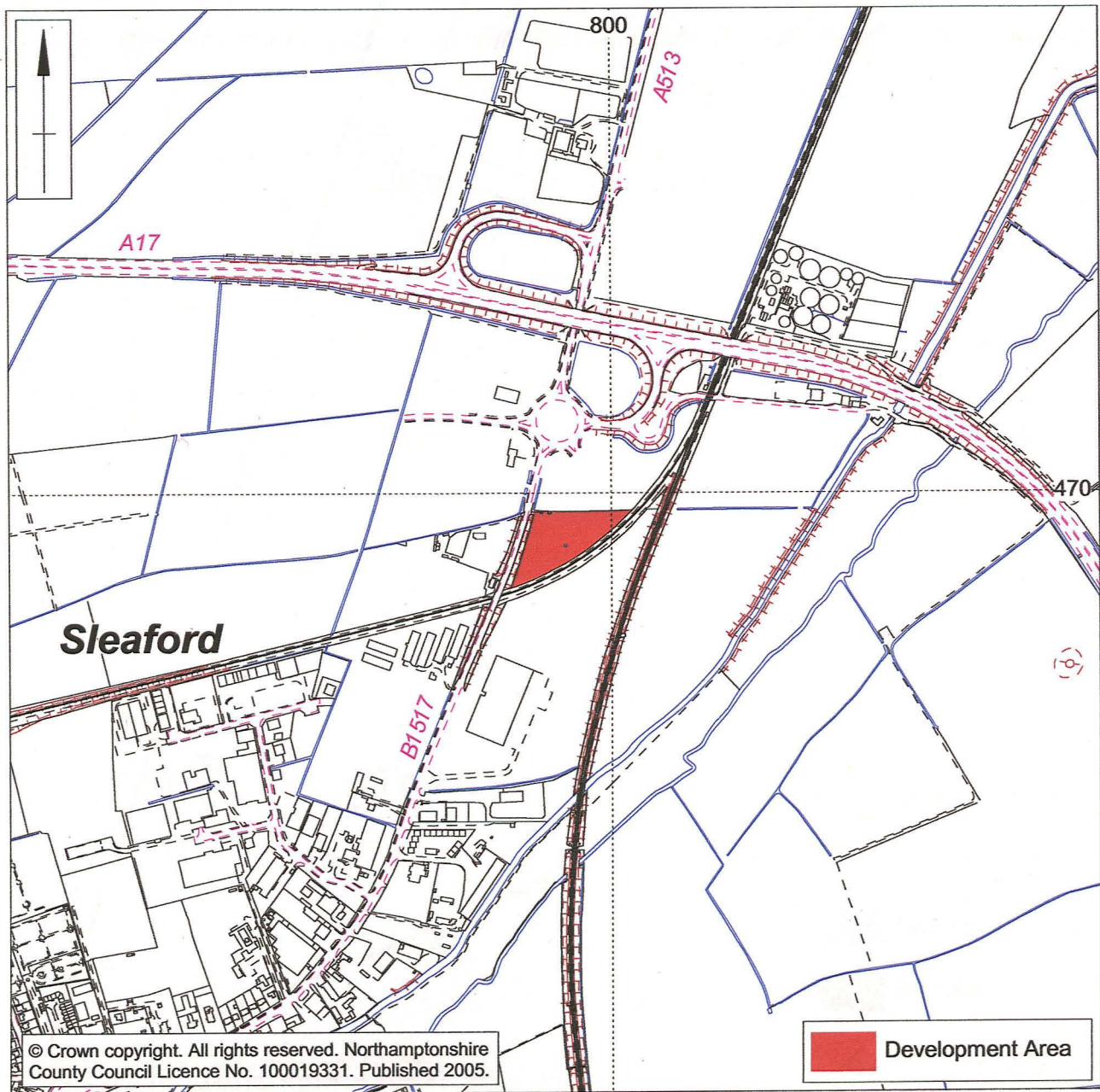
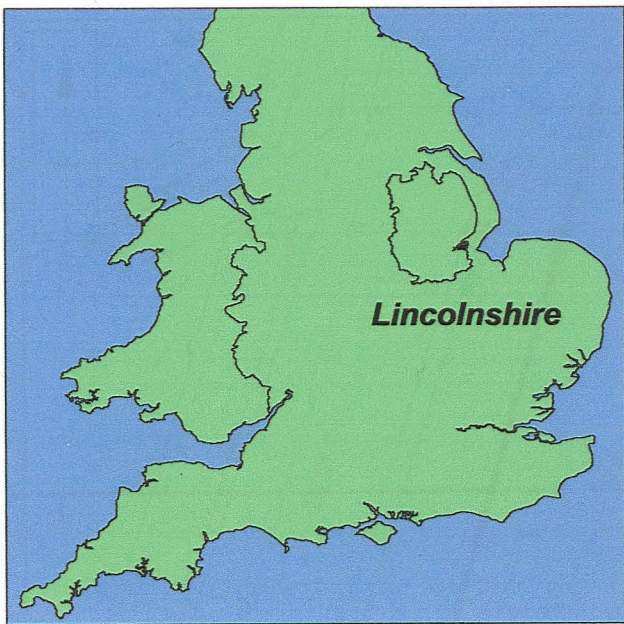
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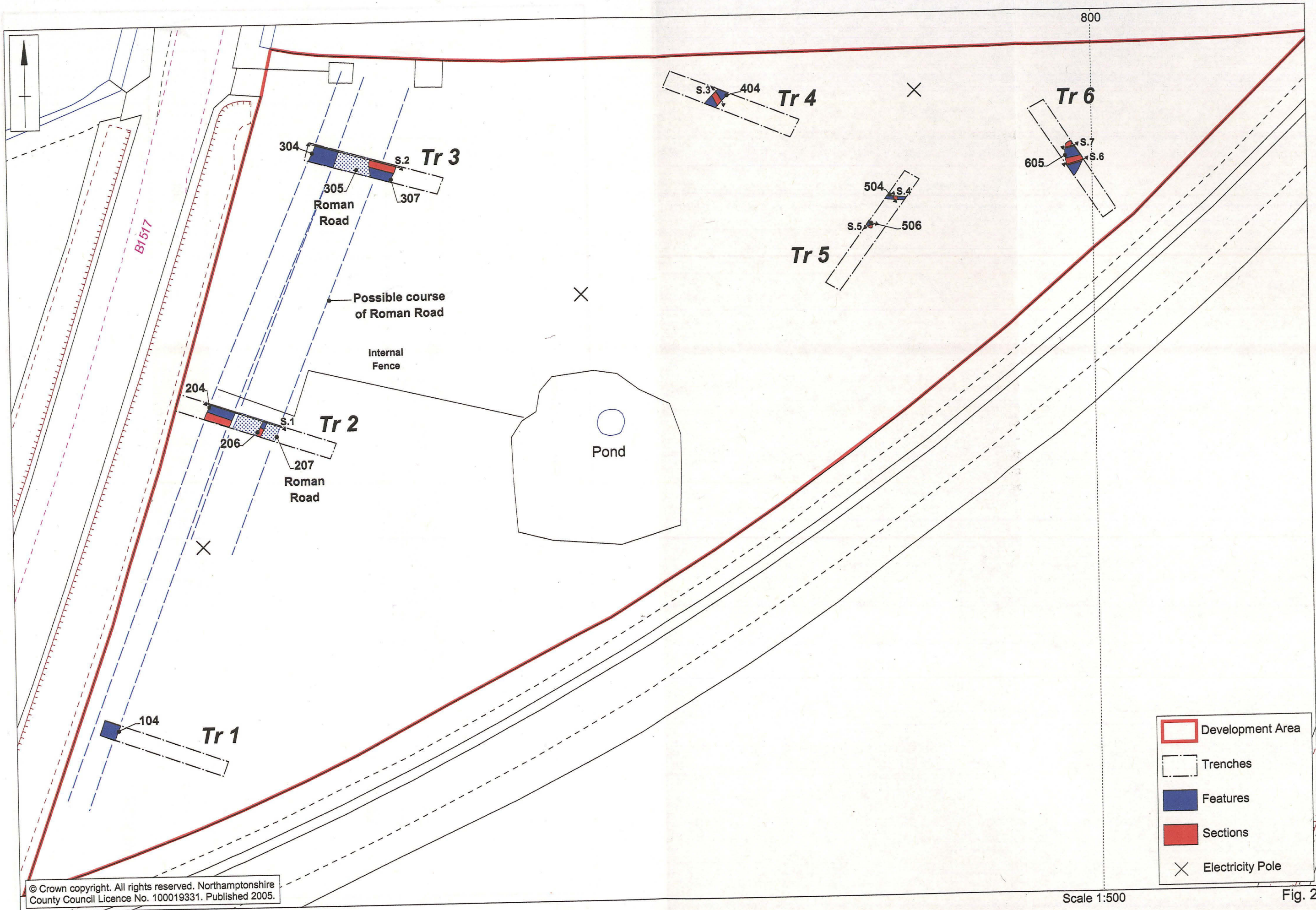
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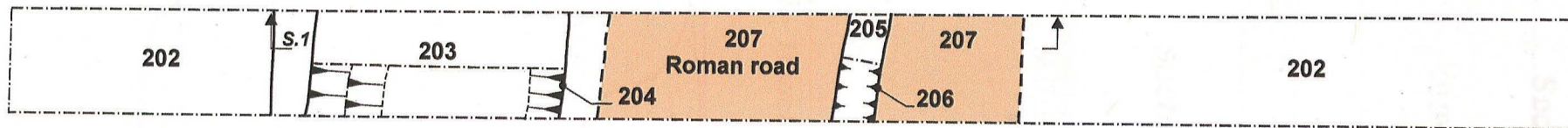


Scale 1:10,000

Fig. 1



TRENCH 2



TRENCH 3

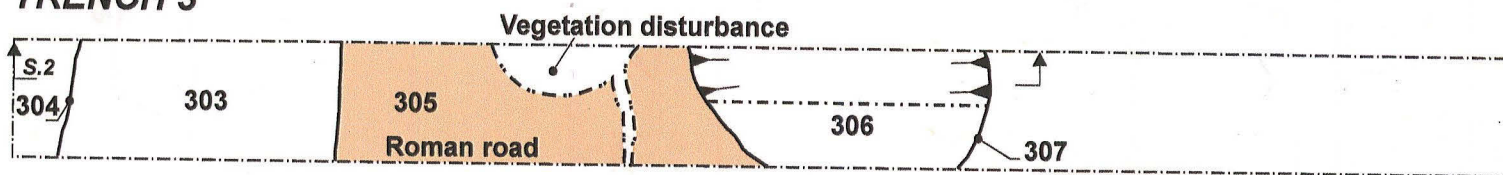
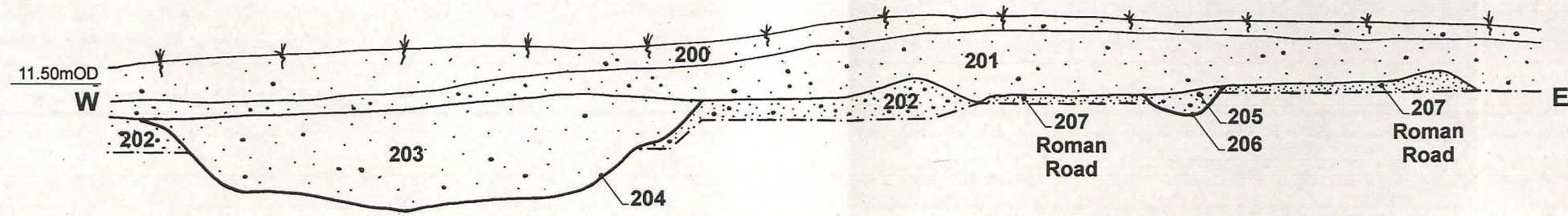
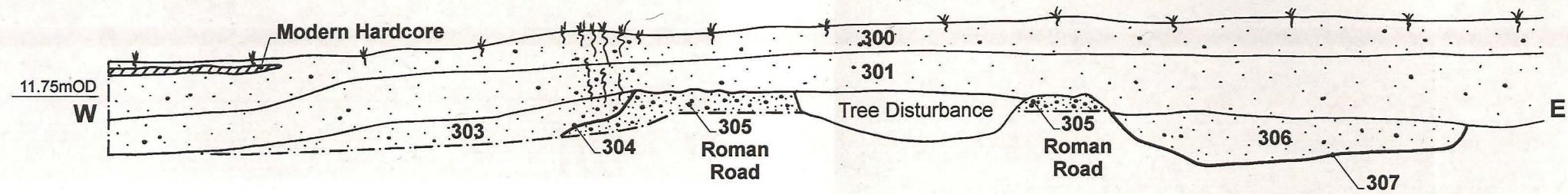


Fig. 3

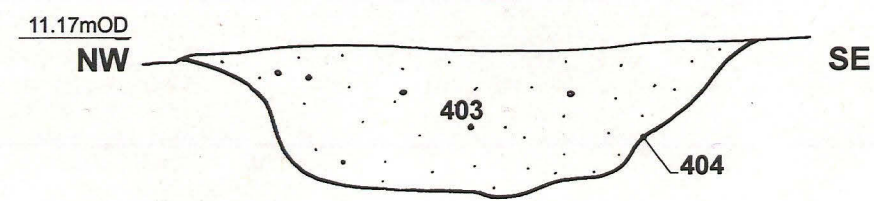
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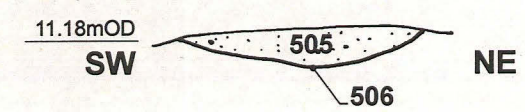
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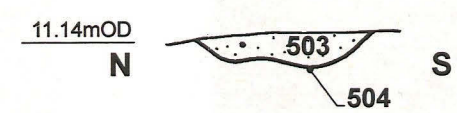
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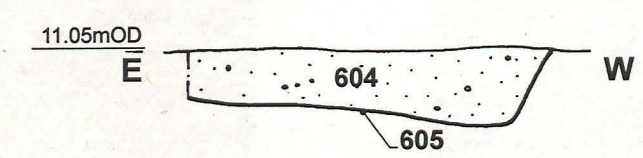
Section 5 - Trench 5



Section 4 - Trench 5



Section 7 - Trench 6



Section 6 - Trench 6

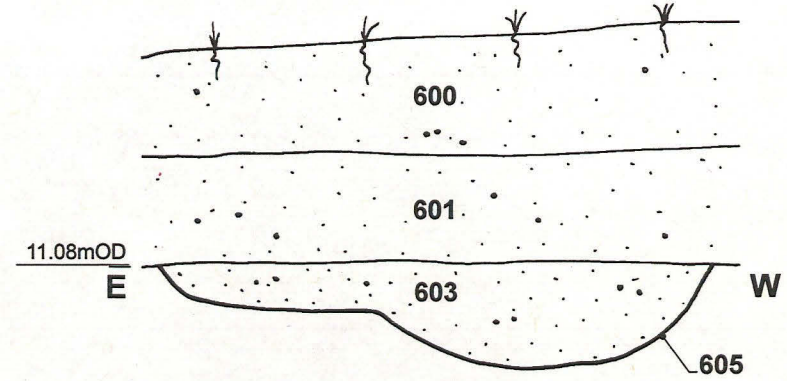


Fig. 4



Plate 1



Plate 2



Plate 3