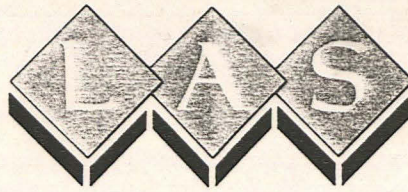


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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

FRANCIS HOUSE SILVER BIRCH PARK GREAT NORTHERN TERRACE LINCOLN LN5 8LG

MOLE END STANTON LE VALE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

NGR: TF 1731 9430
Site Code **SLV 95**
Museum Accession No. **97.95**

report for

**MR G. WARD
WILTON COBLEY LTD**

August 1995

**Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section
12 Friars Lane
LINCOLN LN2 5AL
TEL: 0522 575292 FAX: 0522 530724**

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Mole End Stainton le Vale Archaeological Watching Brief

NGR: TF 1731 9430
Site Code **SLV 95**
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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of an extension to a house (Mole End) at Stainton Le Vale, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). No significant archaeological remains were exposed during ground works, though undated features were recorded in one section face.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by Wilton Cobley Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of foundation trenches for an extension to the house known as Mole End. This was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the planning consent granted to Wilton Cobley Ltd in May 1995. The fieldwork was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) on behalf of LAS.

On this occasion no project brief was issued but a specification was prepared by Lindsey Archaeological Services which outlined the project scope and methodology to be employed in accordance with the general requirements of the Archaeology Section of Lincolnshire County Council.

The project has been conducted with reference to guidelines set out in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1993, revised August 1994).

Site Location

Stainton Le Vale is a small village in West Lindsey, located in the heart of the Lincolnshire Wolds at 76-91m above modern sea level, approximately 23km north-east of Lincoln. The development site lies on the north side of the hamlet, between two roads, running west-east across the valley, and former trackways in the village. (Fig. 1).

Mole End was originally a pair of stone-built cottages, constructed in 1906 which was later converted to a single dwelling. In 1989 the structure was extended northwards and, in 1991, a swimming pool was built west of the dwelling. The present development comprises an extension on the north side of the house measuring approximately 11.5m east-west x 8.5m north-south.

Archaeological Background

The name 'Stainton' is frequently applied to settlements in the north of the country and is usually taken to mean 'farmstead on stony ground' (Mills 1993, 306). At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 there existed a minimum

population of 39 persons at Stainton Le Vale, higher than at any time until the present century (Everson et al 1991, 177).

Dense earthworks survive to the east, west and south of the present development, and there are ridge and furrow cultivation marks in fields to the north. They extend for approximately 1.6km along a chalk valley which drains eastwards, one of the longest settlements recorded in West Lindsey.

The development site lies just north of a central group of settlement remains sandwiched between two defined 'manorial' holdings, one associated with the Old Rectory and the second with Manor Farm. There have been no excavations within the modern settlement but the earthwork remains have been surveyed in detail (Everson et al 1991, 177-183). They are also recorded in the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record (PRN 50537).

The Watching Brief

It was possible that groundworks for the extension to Mole End would cut through medieval settlement features and provide an opportunity to assess their forms and functions and, perhaps more importantly, their date.

The client was granted permission to remove the upper make-up, exceeding 1.0m in depth, material which was deposited when a swimming pool was constructed a short distance west of the more recent development.

Recording was carried out using standard watching brief daily log sheets and context record sheets. One scale drawing (the west section) was made at 1:20 and a photographic record was made of the site. A context numbering system was used for recording purposes, referred to in the text and drawing.

Results (Figs. 2 and 3)

When the site was inspected, the extension had been marked-out and the modern overburden (context **01**) removed using a 360 degree mechanical excavator, fitted with a wide toothless blade. The overburden (which was deposited in 1991 during the construction of a swimming pool) measured up to 1.0m in depth, and sealed the top of the old ground surface/garden soil, **02**, which was also removed prior to archaeological monitoring.

The site was monitored during subsoil and bedrock removal, to a depth approximately 2.1m beneath the top of the modern ground surface. The subsoil, **03**, measured up to 0.70m in thickness, sloping and thickening from north to south. It comprised a virtually stone-free clean brown silty clay which had almost certainly accumulated as a result of down-wash from higher ground to the north. It rested over friable chalk fragments and degraded chalky clay, **010**, interpreted as weathered bedrock.

The interface between the soil creep/subsoil horizon and the degraded chalk was wavy. In the west section, the subsoil and/or the chalk was cut through

by archaeological features. Although only one feature produced any dating evidence it is suggested that the remains are of relatively recent origin.

At the north end of the west section, a shallow pit-like feature, **09**, was exposed, where it cut through underlying chalk. Its fill, **08**, was identical to the natural subsoil and it contained no finds. Its north edge was cut through by the base of another feature, **07**; a stepped, ditch-like feature which was observed extending south-west to north-east across the stripped area. The level of its cut could not be determined due to disturbance by a modern water pipe trench. It was filled with stiff gritty clay containing frequent chalk gravel inclusions and limestone chunks, **06**.

About 1.4m south of the two features described above was a very large pit, **05**, which measured more than 1.0m in depth and 2.5m wide. It was filled with greyish-brown, firm, sandy clay mixed with flecks of charcoal and pockets of natural chalky gravel, **04**. Its function was not determined and it was not dated. Although there was no reason to suppose the feature had any great antiquity attached to it, it did pre-date the buried topsoil horizon, **02**, which clearly sealed the top of it.

No other archaeological features were exposed during the recording brief. Intermittent shallow depressions were seen in the top of the natural chalk, probably natural in origin. The only find recovered was a single sherd of post-medieval pottery; which was found in the spoil heap.

Conclusions

The archaeological watching brief at Mole End, Stainton Le Vale did not identify any significant archaeological remains within the development area, though undated features were exposed in one section face. It is suggested that the features exposed were of relatively recent origin although there was no associated dating evidence.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Wilton Cobley Ltd for assistance on site and for providing the plan for Fig. 2. Thanks to Mark Bennet, the County Sites and Monuments Records Officer, for undertaking a search of the records held at the City and County Museum, Lincoln. Helen Palmer Brown kindly prepared a disc copy of the report and the finished report was collated by Jane Frost.

Colin Palmer Brown and Naomi Field
July 1995

References

Everson, P L, Taylor, CC and Dunn, CJ, 1991 *Change and Continuity: Rural Settlement in North-West Lincolnshire* (HMSO)

Mills, AD 1993 *English Place-Names* (Oxford)

APPENDIX 1

STANTON LE VALE

CONTEXT LIST (Site Code SLV 95; Museum Accession Number 97.95)

01 A mixture of topsoil, subsoil and natural chalky gravel which was deposited when a nearby swimming pool was built, overlies buried topsoil **02**.

02 Dark brown/grey silty clay horizon below **01**. Very mixed soil containing chalk gravel fragments, charcoal and modern inclusions. A buried soil horizon pre-dating the construction of the modern swimming pool.

03 Thick layer of firm, clean, brown silty clay below **02**. Subsoil horizon deposited as a result of hillwash from higher land to the north. Cut through by archaeological features.

04 Fill of large pit-like feature seen in west section. Grey/brown sandy clay, flecked with charcoal and pockets of natural gravel. Contained by **05**.

05 Cut of large pit in central part of west section. Undated

06 Fill of ditch seen on north side of west section; stiff gritty clay containing frequent chalk gravel + occasional medium/large limestone pieces. Contained by **07**.

07 Cut of the above. ?ditch, orientated N/W - S/E. Modern.

08 Fill of pit-like feature seen on north side of west section, identical to subsoil **03**. Contained by **09**.

09 Cut for the above. Shallow bowl-shaped 'scoop', possibly a natural depression

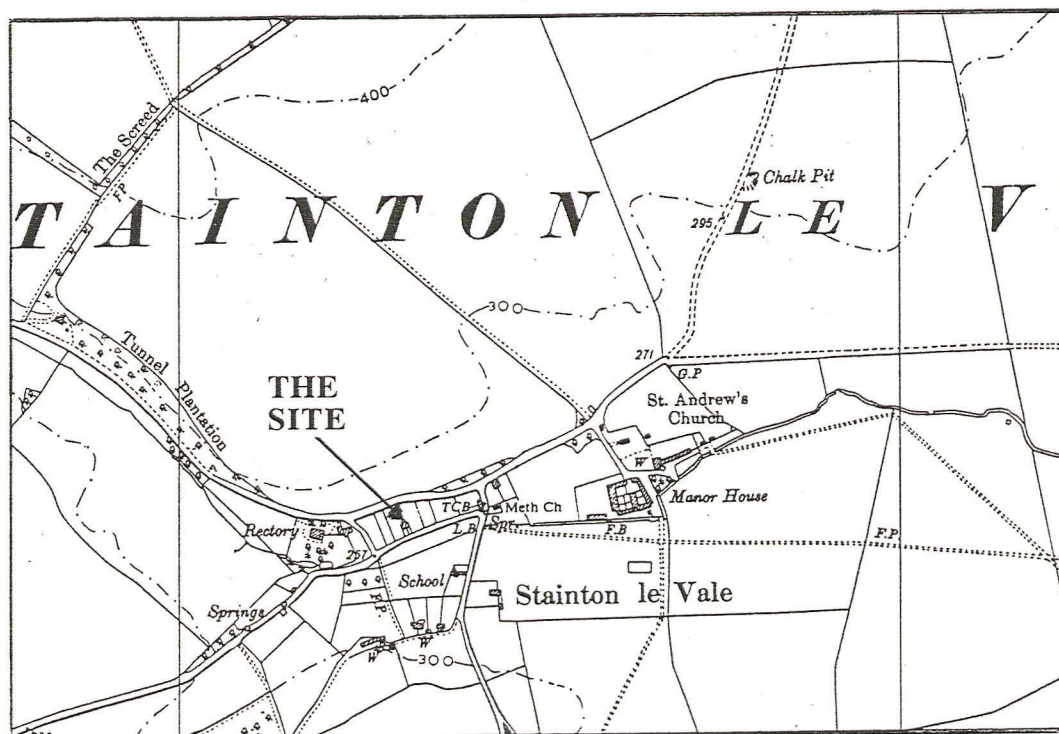
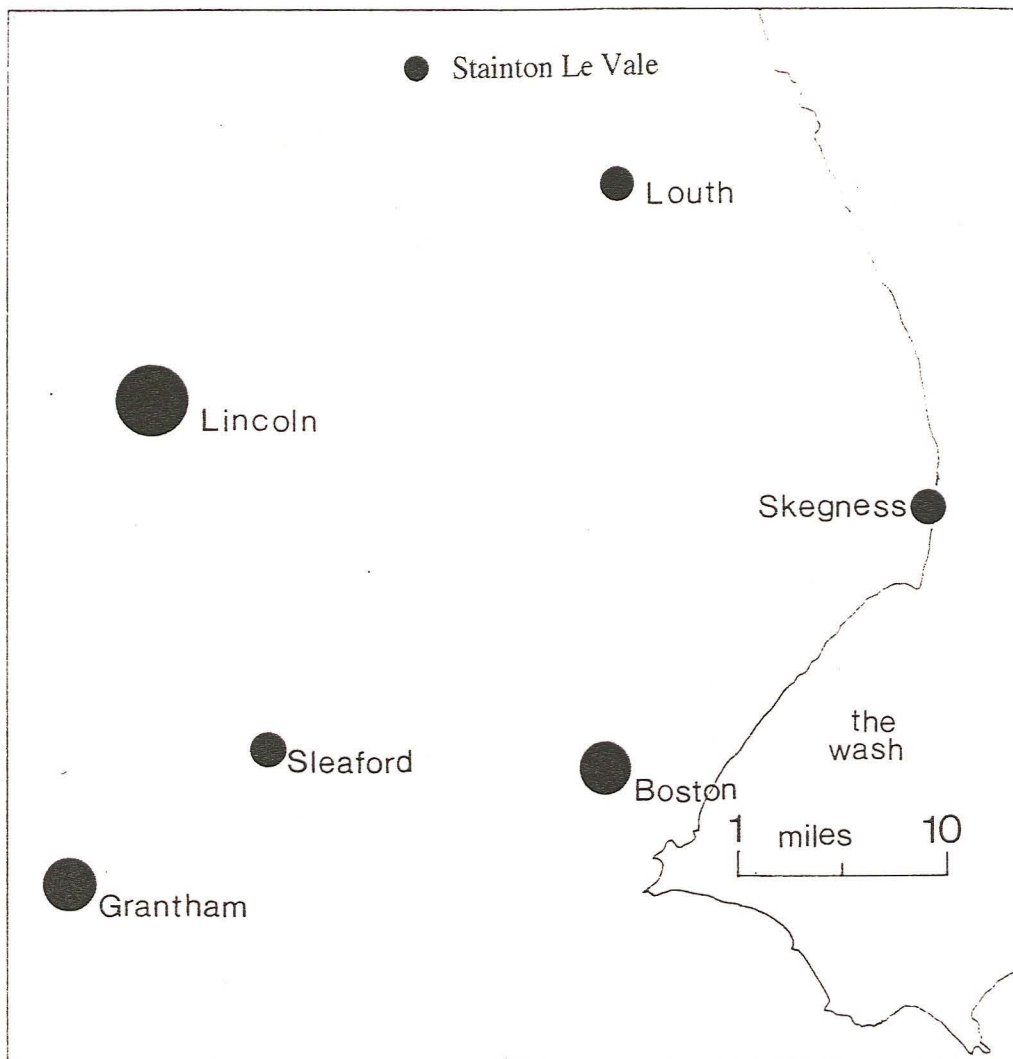
010 Upper portion of thick bed of natural chalky gravel set in chalky clay matrix. Weathered bedrock.

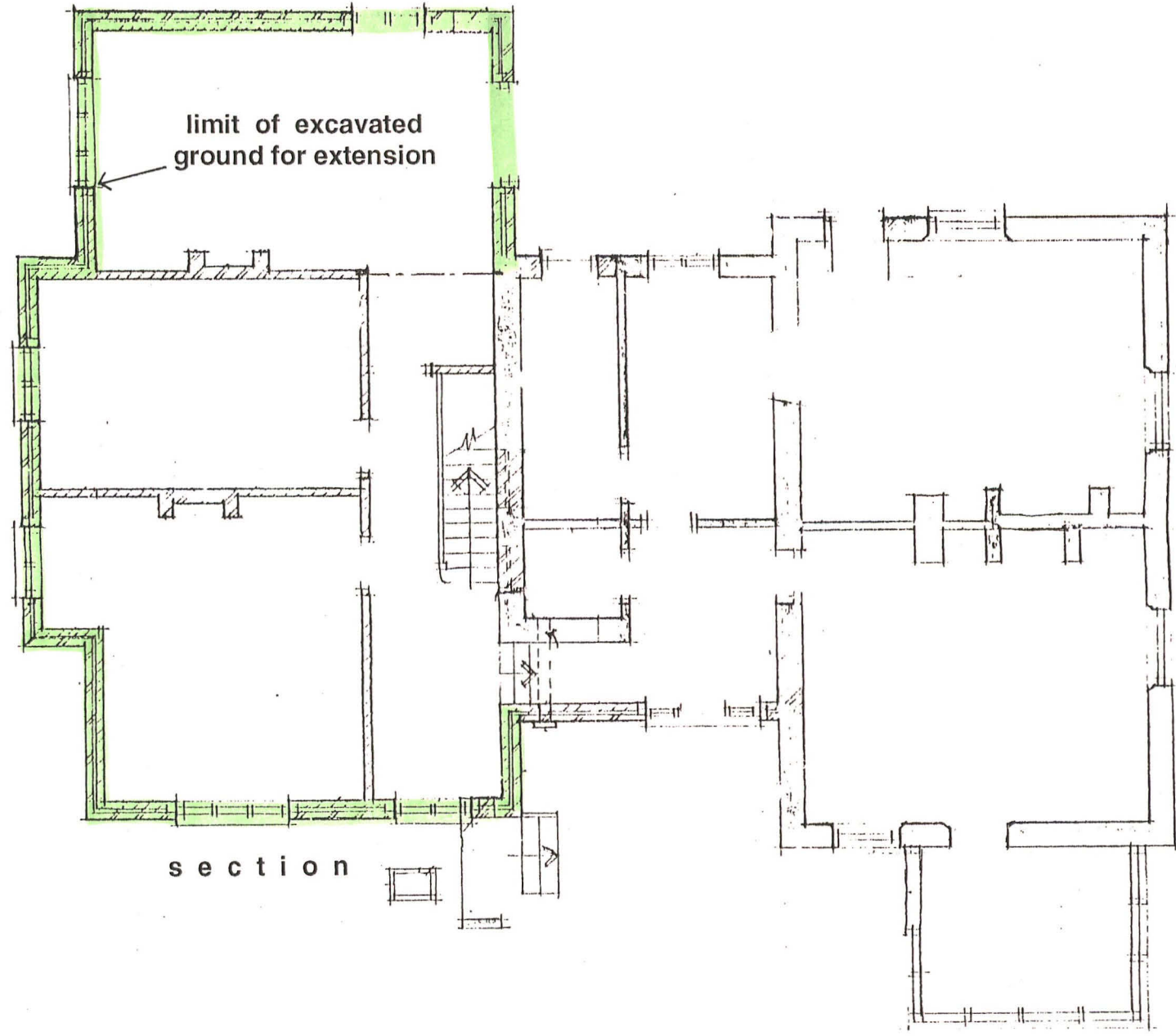
APPENDIX 2

CONTENTS OF SITE ARCHIVE

- 1 watching brief record sheet
- 10 context record sheets
- 1 scale drawing (1:20 drawing of west section)
- Architects plan of the proposed extension
- Photographs Film no. 95/23A negs. 15-19
- Correspondence

Fig. 1 Site location. Reproduced from the O. S. 1: 10,560 map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, Crown copyright. (LAS licence AL50424A)





limit of excavated
ground for extension

s e c t i o n

Fig. 2 Mole End extension, location of west section (based on plan supplied by Wilton Cobley Ltd)

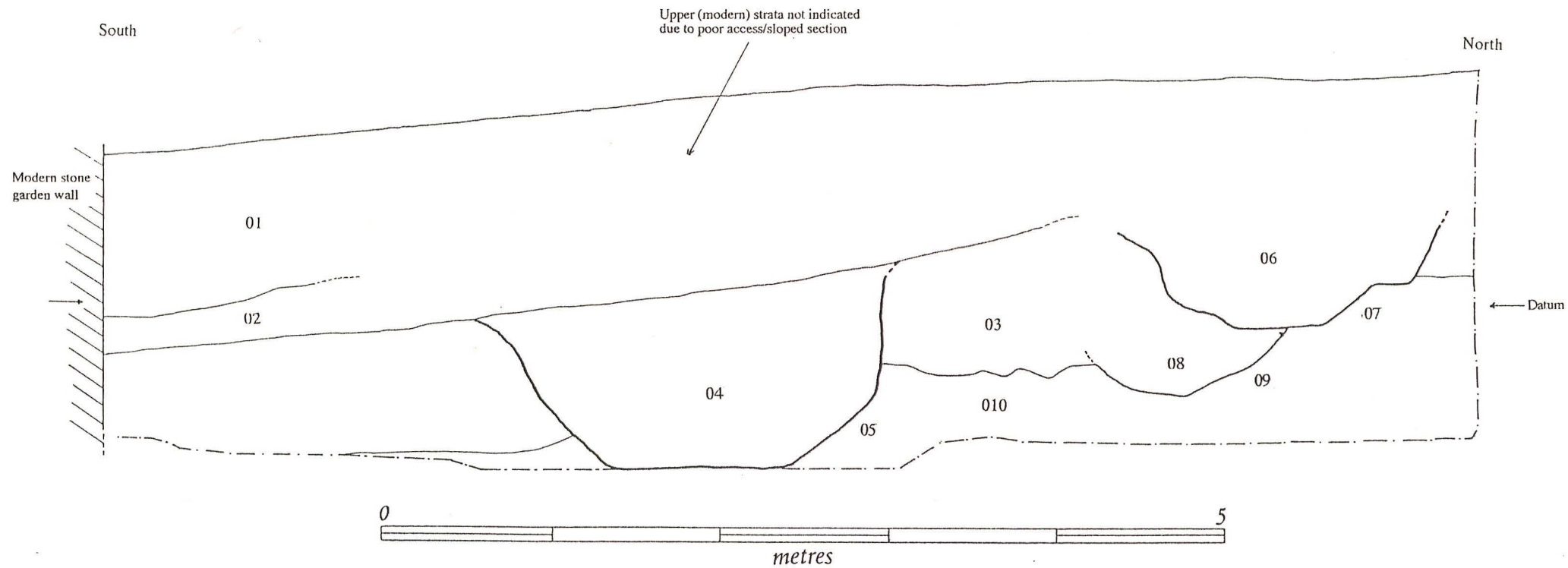


Fig. 3 Features recorded on the west side of the extension. (C. Palmer-Brown)



Pl. 1 General view of Mole End looking east

Pl. 2 West and north sections , looking NW





Pl. 3 West section

Pl. 4 Excavation of NE corner of plot

