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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF LAND ADJACENT TO
CHURCH ROAD, SKIRBECK,
BOSTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(CRB96)**



A P S
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF LAND ADJACENT TO
CHURCH ROAD, SKIRBECK,
BOSTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(CRB96)**

Work Undertaken For
Land and Buildings Consultancy

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APS Report N°: 18/96

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1. SUMMARY

An evaluation was undertaken to determine the archaeological implications of proposed development of land east of Church Road, Skirbeck, Boston District, Lincolnshire.

The investigation is located in proximity to sites of Romano-British (c. A.D. 50-410) occupation. Saxon activity (450-1150) has been recorded just north of the site and takes the form of two sunken-floored huts dated to the 8th century.

Geophysical survey of the site recorded several magnetic anomalies of possible archaeological origin. Thirteen trenches were used to examine these anomalies, as well as other parts of the site that lacked the geophysical signals.

Skirbeck is first mentioned in Domesday (1086) when it is described as a small village. The earliest large scale map of the area (1833) depicts agricultural land use.

The evaluation excavation identified possible archaeological remains in the form of two gullies and a ditch. Although no dating evidence was retrieved from these features, it is possible that the gullies are Roman. These were then sealed by deposits of clay, formed during marine flooding of the area. The only other definite archaeological feature on the site was a ditch that cuts the subsoil. The top half of the subsoil has been altered, possibly by biological action and the movement of sub-surface water. The ditch, therefore, is probably post-medieval (1500-1700).

A single fragment of pottery of 15th to 17th century date was recovered from the site.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Between the 1st and 17th April 1996, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land east of Church Road, Skirbeck, Boston, Lincolnshire. This was in order to determine the archaeological implications of proposed development at the site, as detailed in planning application B05/0314/92. The evaluation excavation was commissioned by the Land and Buildings Consultancy and carried out by Archaeological Project Services, in accordance with a brief set by the Community Archaeologist for Boston District Council (Appendix 1).

2.2 Topography and Geology

Boston is situated 45km southeast of Lincoln and approximately 7km from the northwest coast of the Wash, in the fens of south Lincolnshire. Skirbeck forms part of the southeastern suburb of Boston and lies 1km southeast of the town centre (Fig. 1 and 2).

The proposed development site is located c. 450m to the north of Skirbeck centre as defined by the parish church of St Nicholas (Fig. 2). Situated at a height of c. 2.5m OD on land to the east of Church Road (National Grid Reference TF33804360), the proposed development site covers approximately 3.5 hectares of fairly level ground.

Local soils are the Tanvats Association typical alluvial gley soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 319) and Wisbech Association calcareous alluvial gley soils developed on deep marine alluvium (*ibid.*, 361). Beneath the alluvium is glacial drift that was deposited in a geological basin between the Lincolnshire Wolds and the East Anglian Heights (Harden 1978, 5). The glacial

deposits overlie a solid geology of Jurassic clays.

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Church Road, Skirbeck, is located in an area of moderate archaeological activity dating from the Romano-British period onwards. Prehistoric activity has not been identified within Skirbeck (no details of this period are contained within the Sites and Monuments Record for the Skirbeck area maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire), and it is considered likely that the area was salt marsh or submerged during this period.

Pottery of 2nd to 3rd century A.D. date (Roman) has been found within 200m east of the proposed development area (Phillips 1970, 316; B05/049). An archaeological watching brief carried out in 1992 retrieved more pottery and boundary ditches were also identified (Heritage Lincolnshire 1992, 4; B05/051).

Saxon activity has been identified immediately north of the site. This took the form of two sunken-floored buildings (*grubenhäuser*) and several ditches that suggest Saxon occupation of the area (Palmer-Brown 1995, 1; B05/094). Middle Saxon Maxey ware pottery dated to the 8th century was recovered from these investigations.

Skirbeck is first referred to in the Domesday Survey of A.D. 1086 and is mentioned as having two churches, two priests and two fisheries and belonged principally to Count Alan (Foster and Longley 1976, 69). Referred to as '*Schirebec*' the name derived from the Old Scandinavian *skiri bekk*, meaning bright brook (Ekwall 1974, 425).

Known medieval activity is restricted to the centre of the village, c. 450m south,

and is represented by the 13th century parish church of St. Nicholas (DoE 1975, 8). Although St. John's church and hospital and an Augustinian friary were each situated within the parish, they were probably located closer to Boston, east of the Maud Foster Drain (Harden 1978, Fig 9).

The earliest large scale map of Skirbeck (1833) shows the area of investigation as being part of an enclosed field system. Later maps indicate gradual development in the vicinity, though none impinges upon the site (A.P.S. 1996, 6).

A geophysical survey undertaken prior to this investigation identified several magnetic anomalies, some of which were interpreted as possible archaeological features taking the form of linear and curvilinear ditches (G.S.B. 1996).

3. AIMS

The aims of the evaluation were governed by the requirements of the Project Brief set by the Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council (Appendix 1). These were, in summary, to locate archaeological deposits and determine, if present, their extent, state of preservation, date, type, vulnerability, documentation, quality of setting and amenity value. The purpose of this identification and assessment of deposits was to establish their significance, in order to facilitate recommendations for an appropriate strategy that could be integrated with the proposed development programme.

4. METHODS

Eleven trenches, each c. 15m long by 1.5m wide and c. 1m deep, and two trenches c. 20m long were mechanically

excavated (Fig. 3). Two of the proposed trenches (7 and 13) were not mechanically excavated due to adverse site conditions and with the agreement of the Community Archaeologist. The location of the trenches was determined by the results of the geophysical survey (see above). The possible archaeological features were targeted by several of the trenches, and blank areas were also trenched to provide sample coverage of the development area. The sides and base of each trench were cleaned by hand and examined to identify any archaeological features. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number with an individual written description (context number and context description - see Appendix 2 for a summary of these). Natural geological deposits were also recorded. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at scales 1:10 and 1:20.

5. RESULTS

Records of the deposits and features recognised during the evaluation were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A stratigraphic matrix of all identified deposits was created, and phased. Three phases were identified:

Phase 1 Natural and Associated
Archaeological Deposits

Phase 2 Clay Deposits

Phase 3 Post-Medieval Natural and
Associated Archaeological
Deposits

Contexts recorded are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field, although where the same context was

recorded in more than one trench (and which will therefore have more than one number), one number has been quoted. Appendix 2 lists all the contexts identified during the evaluation.

5.1 Phase 1 Natural and Associated Archaeological Deposits

The earliest deposits encountered on the site comprised a layer of silt (50) situated in Trenches 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 14 and 15. Where exposed in Trench 3, it was noted that the surface of the silt was mottled, indicating that the silt had been exposed to surface air.

Of uncertain relationship to deposit 50, either contemporary or later than it, was a layer of clayey silt (5) identified in Trenches 9, 10 and 15.

Situated in Trench 15, cut into the clayey silt was a man-made NW-SE linear gully (39) 1.9m long (as exposed) by 1.1m wide and 0.32m deep. Just east of gully 39, also cutting the clayey silt 5 was a man-made 'L' shaped feature (40) 0.6m long N-S before continuing NW from its northern extent for 1.7m (as exposed), by 0.52m wide and 0.25m deep. Interpreted as a gully, both this and gully 39 were filled by a deposit of grey-brown clayey silt (43).

Truncating the layer of clayey silt 5, were three natural gullies (41), (42) and (102). Extended use of the latter was represented by natural recutting (104).

Sealing deposit 5 in Trenches 9 and 15 was a layer of grey-brown clayey silt (4), that in turn was overlaid by a layer of blue-grey clayey silt (119).

Overlying the natural silt 50 were several deposits of clayey silt, silty clay and clay (108, 110-114), that were dipping NW (Fig. 8). Deposit 108 also extended SE

were it was overlaid by a brown silty clay (107).

Of uncertain relationship to the above, located in Trench 10 was a layer of mottled brown clayey silt (74). Truncating this was a natural gully that had been naturally recut four times (68-73, 75-8 and 96).

Overlying layer 49 in Trench 12, filling natural gullies 42 and 104 in Trenches 15 and 11 respectively, and also observed in Trench 3 was a layer of blue-grey silty clay (45), that was sealed by a deposit of brown clay (55). Both have been interpreted as marine deposits.

Probably contemporary with 55, sealing layer 45 where it filled, and dipped into, natural gully 104 in Trench 11, was a layer of blue-grey mottled clay (99).

5.2 Phase 2 Clay Deposits

Situated in Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 15, filling recut gully 77 in trench 10 and sealing deposits 43, 55, 99 and 119, was a deposit of blue-grey clay/silty clay (3). This has been interpreted as a marine deposit. Where it occurred in the side of Trench 8 it was seen to dip down below the base of the trench and reappear again. It is likely that such a characteristic indicates the location of a buried feature, probably a ditch. This feature has been allocated context number 126 and measured c. 2m wide by 0.36m deep (as exposed).

Sealing layer 3 where it fills ditch 126 was a deposit of brown mottled silty clay (123), indicating sustained use of this channel. Sealing deposit 123 and extending into Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, and 12 was a layer of brown clay/silty clay (17). Overlying layer 3 in Trench 15 was a deposit of brown mottled silty clay (117),

of indeterminate function.

Situated in Trench 1, cutting through phase 3 deposit 17, was an E-W linear feature (16), 1.5m long (as exposed) by 5.6m wide and 0.5m deep (as exposed). This feature has been interpreted as a roddon. The earliest fill consisted of grey-brown mottled laminated clayey silt (15). Tentatively interpreted as the primary fill of 16 (the full depth of the feature was not exposed), it is possible that 15 represents a levee. Sealing this was a deposit of grey mottled clayey silt (127), which in turn was overlaid by a layer of grey silt (128). These have been interpreted as the secondary and tertiary fills of the roddon.

Truncating roddon 16, parallel to its northern edge, were three natural gullies (7, 9 and 11), between 0.5 and 0.83m wide by 1.5m long (as exposed)

Situated in Trench 12, cutting through the brown clay 17, was a natural gully (26) oriented N-S, 1.7m long (as exposed) by 0.55m wide and 0.34m deep. This feature contained a primary deposit of brown silty clay (30).

Sealing the gullies 11 and 26 in Trenches 1 and 12, and the brown clay 17 in Trench 5, was a layer of blue-grey clay/clayey silt (80, 24 and 130 respectively). Although described as one deposit, it is possible that 24, 80 and 130 were deposited independently of each other.

Sealing layer 80 in Trench 1 was a layer of grey-brown silty clay (79). A similar deposit of brown silty clay (94) sealed the brown clay 17 in Trench 10. Both of these are of indeterminate function.

5.3 Phase 3 Modern Deposits

Overlying fills 6 and 8 and layer 79 in Trench 1, and layers 24, 94, 117 and 130

in Trenches 12, 10, 15 and 5 was a layer of brown silty clay (14). This deposit has been interpreted as a subsoil, and extended across the entire site. A small quantity of cattle bone was recovered from the deposit.

Truncating the subsoil was an E-W linear feature (37), 3m long (as exposed) by 1.75m wide and 0.54m deep. Interpreted as a man-made drainage ditch, this feature contained a primary fill of brown clayey silt (48). This was sealed by a deposit of mottled grey-brown silty clay (47), interpreted as a secondary fill, that in turn was overlaid by a tertiary fill of grey-brown silty clay/clay (38).

Sealing the tertiary fill of the ditch, and extending across the whole site was a layer of grey-brown clay (2), interpreted as a subsoil. Although initially described as a separate deposit, it is possible that the upper half of subsoil 14 has been transformed, changing it sufficiently to alter its colour, creating deposit 2. Such transformation (or reworking, caused by post-depositional processes such as worm action, the movement of ground water and ploughing), would have destroyed any evidence for features that were cut through this layer. Therefore, it is possible that ditch 37 was cut through layer 2, but that it can no longer be identified within this deposit.

Overlying the subsoil and covering the entire site was a topsoil comprising grey-brown clayey silt. Cut through this layer were at least 4 land drains (28, 36, 92 and 116). Subsequent reworking of the topsoil by ploughing has served to remove any trace of the land drain cuts, so that the cuts only become visible in the upper subsoil. A piece of 15th - 17th century pottery was recovered during the initial machining of the trenches, and consequently can not be assigned to a

context.

6. DISCUSSION

In Fenland archaeology micro-topography and micro-environments played a crucial part in determining site location and settlement potential. For this reason it is necessary to emphasise in this report the naturally formed deposits, more than might be expected for dry-land geological, or natural deposits.

First, an explanation of the complex formation processes of marine (marsh) environments must be attempted. However, prior to this, it is as well to remember the conditions in which these deposits formed. Sediments of the type encountered at Church Road were laid down in active salt marsh conditions in a tidally affected landscape inundated twice daily by swirling tidal waters, draining at each ebb by means of a network of sinuous channels. When the tidal waters returned the channels overflowed and sediment held in suspension dropped out in a sequence according to particle size, first sands, then silts, finally clays. These actions resulted in the formation of flanking natural banks, called levees. Once elevated sufficiently to cease functioning as drainage channels, during periods of lower sea-levels, or after artificial drainage, the former channels remain as elevated sinuous banks of silt in an otherwise flat clay landscape. These fossilised former channels, locally called roddons, then provide prime locations for settlement.

One such roddon is represented at Church Road by a layer of silt (50). It is located in Trenches 3, 4, 9, 11, 12 and 14. Where exposed, layer 50 has a level surface, except for within Trench 14 where it was seen to dip down to the NW (Fig. 8).

The route of the roddon and its associated tributary system are postulated to cross the northern extent of the investigation area, oriented east-west, with tributaries present beneath the eastern and northwestern boundaries of the site.

A series of Ordnance Datum readings were taken at regular intervals along the western border of Woad Farm Primary School (marked A-B on Fig. 3), and along the eastern property boundary of St. Nicholas' School, continuing south to the southern boundary of the investigation area (marked C-D on Fig. 3), to try and identify any central roddon mound that may survive.

The A-B transect revealed that a dip and slight mound exist where the transect crosses the postulated route of the northern E-W aligned roddon, and that a slight mound exists where the same channel should cross the C-D transect (Fig. 9).

After the presumed east to west roddon and its associated tributary system, completely dried up, the silt surface would have provided relatively high dry ground. The surface of this deposit was seen to be mottled, suggesting that the silt was exposed to surface air.

This stabilisation had probably occurred by the Romano-British period when there is activity recorded immediately east of the site. Some of this activity (B05/051), however, occurred after clay had been deposited in the area now occupied by Woad Farm Primary School (Heritage Lincolnshire 1992, 4). Such a sequence suggests that a markedly different depositional regime existed east of the study area.

Either subsequent to, or contemporary with, the final stages of the deposition of the silt, the environment began to change. This is evidenced by the inclusion of clay

in silt (5), indicating that water was no longer flowing freely along the route of any channels, but that it was still, or at least sluggish.

Located in Trench 15, which is situated over the postulated route of the E-W roddon, two gullies (39 and 40) were cut through the clayey silt to drain it. Bearing in mind that the infilled roddon would provide the highest ground in the area, this would, after drainage, be most easily kept dry. Such a landscape would tend to invite activity more readily than any lower, less easily drained ground.

Natural gullies then formed, showing that the area was becoming wetter. This period, probably immediately post-Roman, must mark the beginning of the wetter conditions recognised in many parts of the fens at this time.

Subsequent to the gullies 39 and 40 silting up, a natural E-W gully (41) cut through the clayey silt. This feature silted up naturally and was truncated by another natural gully oriented N-S (42).

Truncating the clayey silt in Trench 11 was a natural gully filled with clay (102), that had been naturally recut (104).

Two layers of clayey silt (4 and 119) were deposited across the northern extent of the site, indicating a more widespread inundation of water. This supposition is supported by the continual natural recutting of a gully in Trench 10, indicating periods of marine inundation interspersed with drier periods during which the gully silted up.

Two distinct layers of blue-grey clay/silty clay (3 and 45) were recognised. One of these was deposited either before or during the Saxon period, as is evidenced by the construction of the *grubenhäuser* north of

the area occupied by Trenches 1 and 2, and which truncates one of the blue-grey layers identified during this work (Palmer-Brown 1996, Fig. 4, p12).

In Trench 8 it was noted that layer 3 probably formed the primary fill of feature 126, illustrating that a large (or sustained) flow of water, laden with clay and silt, had flooded the area and then drained away. This layer was of an even thickness across much of the site, and was slightly thicker where it overlay existing water-courses. The topography of the area, however, had not changed sufficiently to alter the pattern of drainage. This is illustrated by the deposition of layer 123, which is restricted to the area occupied by ditch 126, and shows reuse of this drainage channel.

The next major environmental change occurred when roddon 16 was formed. The roddon itself probably did not remain active for very long, although the route of the channel was reused when gullies 7, 9 and 11 were formed.

This point in the sequence post-dates the layers of blue-grey clay, and is, therefore, either contemporary with or later than the *grubenhäuser* (that cuts through one of these clay layers, see above) identified during an archaeological watching brief immediately north of the site.

Subsequent flooding of the area is likely to have deposited the silty clay subsoil.

Cut through the subsoil was a ditch, the top part of which is not visible due to transformation of the upper half of the subsoil. This ditch probably represents post-medieval activity, preparing the land for agricultural use, helping to drain it after the level of the water table had fallen. The area was then subject to the plough until this century when it

eventually became recreational ground.

7. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For assessment of significance the *Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling ancient monuments* has been used (DoE 1990, Annex 4; see Appendix 3)

Period

Dating evidence from the deposits was not retrieved, although comparison to local archaeological work indicates that the evaluation exposed deposits ranging from the Roman to modern periods. The features comprised ditches and gullies which are non-period specific.

Rarity

The deposits and features identified during this investigation are not considered to be rare in national or regional terms. Roddons have been identified, through aerial photography, as a quite common phenomena of the fenland landscape. Ditches and gullies represent a popular form of drainage or land demarcation.

Documentation

Records of archaeological sites and finds made in the Skirbeck area are kept in the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record. Further records are available in the files of the Community Archaeologist for Boston District, maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

Various synopses of archaeological survey and excavation exist for the Skirbeck area. A site specific desk-based assessment was undertaken prior to the present field investigation.

Group value

The natural deposits identified on the site have a low group value. Undated

archaeological features were present and their association with known Romano-British and Mid-Saxon activity in the area indicates a moderately higher group value.

Survival/Condition

Those features encountered were relatively intact, with only partial transformation of the upper fills of ditches. As such, the degree of preservation observed is probably typical of that of any other archaeological feature in the vicinity. Site conditions prevail against the survival of environmental indicators, other than through charring as has been demonstrated at investigations to the north-west.

Fragility/Vulnerability

As the proposed development will impact the investigation area, possibly into natural strata, any and all archaeological deposits present on the site are extremely vulnerable.

Diversity

The archaeological remains encountered, are broadly of one type: drainage and/or boundary ditches and gullies. Functional diversity, therefore, is very limited. Period diversity can not be ascertained due to an absence of datable artefacts.

Potential

Potential for archaeological remains generally is low. However, it is possible that where the site lies close to the location of the Saxon *grubenhäuser*, there is potential for archaeological remains of this date surviving within the area. Additionally, although undated, it is possible that the relatively dry silt landscape created through drying up of the dendritic drainage system would have provided suitable habitable land, even if on a temporary basis. The potential, therefore, for occupation on the silt located at the north, west and eastern limits of the evaluation area is moderately

high.

7.1 Site Importance

In summary, the criteria for assessment have established that the archaeological deposits are locally important. However, it should be noted that there is potential for occupational remains on the surface of the silt (now sealed by c. 0.5-0.75m of marine clay). There is also potential for occupational remains associated with the Saxon habitation identified just north of the site.

Such Saxon habitation remains are of major regional, or even national importance. However, the ancient topography, represented by the location of the roddon, provided conditions favourable to Saxon occupation, as identified immediately north of the site. There is therefore, the potential for further remains of Saxon settlement and activity on the area of the roddon and such habitation evidence would be of major regional or even national significance.

8. EFFECTIVENESS OF TECHNIQUES

The strategy of using trial trenches located over magnetic anomalies, and over 'blank' areas of the site, was on the whole, effective. Several of the magnetic anomalies identified by the geophysical survey were found to have been caused by geological, rather than archaeological, features. However, archaeological activity was detected.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations were undertaken at Church Road, Boston, to

provide information to assist the planning authority in determining an application for development of the site. The investigations were required because of previous discoveries Romano-British and Saxon remains immediately adjacent to the site and the consequent possibility that associated remains might extend into the proposed development area.

The investigations identified a well-preserved sequence of natural and archaeological deposits. Many natural, geological, deposits and features were recorded and though archaeological remains were few in number, archaeological deposits were encountered at a depth of 0.36m below the present ground surface.

A roddon traverses the field in which this evaluation was conducted and heads towards the location of the Saxon features described by Palmer-Brown (1995). It is this slightly higher and drier band of silt that yielded the few archaeological features revealed at Church Road and which offered the greatest potential for finding further archaeology of any date.

Many of the geophysical anomalies previously identified on the site were found to have been caused by ancient natural watercourses and smaller channels, rather than archaeological features. However, the investigation did not clearly establish whether the Saxon settlement remains previously identified northwest of the site extended into the area examined. Moreover, the lack of dating evidence means that the archaeological features identified cannot clearly be associated with previous discoveries in the vicinity.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to

thank Mr. C. Scott of the Land and Buildings Consultancy who commissioned the investigation and analysis. The work was coordinated by Tom Lane and this report was edited by Gary Taylor and Tom Lane.

Access to the County Sites and Monuments Record was kindly provided by Mark Bennet of the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council. Thanks are also due to Jim Bonner, the Community Archaeologist for Boston District Council who permitted examination of the relevant parish files.

11. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Tom Lane
Supervisor: Mark Dymond
Site Assistants: Robert Ashford, Christine Bloor, Dave Bower, Neil Herbert, Jim Rylatt
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-Excavation Analyst: Mark Dymond

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13. ABBREVIATIONS

Numbers prefixed by 'B' are the reference codes used by the Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council.

Department of the Environment publications are identified by the initials 'DoE'.

Archaeological Project Services reports are

denoted by the initials 'A.P.S.'.

Pre-Construct Archaeology reports are identified by the initials 'P.C.A.'.

References to Geophysical Surveys of Bradford have been abbreviated to the initials G.S.B.

Appendix 1

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION PROJECT BRIEF LAND OFF CHURCH ROAD, BOSTON

1. Summary
 - 1.1 This document is the brief for the archaeological evaluation to be carried out prior to the determination of planning permission for land off Church Road, Boston, Lincolnshire on behalf of Land and Buildings Consultancy.
 - 1.2 This brief should be used by archaeological contractors as the basis for the preparation of a detailed archaeological project specification. In response to this brief contractors will be expected to provide details of the proposed scheme of work, to include the anticipated working methods, timescales and staffing levels.
 - 1.3 The detailed specifications will be submitted for approval by the Community Archaeologist of Boston Borough Council. The client will be free to choose between those specifications which are considered to adequately satisfy this brief.
2. Site location and description
 - 2.1 Boston is situated 45km southeast of Lincoln and approximately 7km from the northwest coast of the Wash among the Fens of south Lincolnshire.
 - 2.2 The site is situated off Church Road in Boston which lies east of the Maud Foster Drain at National Grid Reference TF 33804360
 - 2.3 The site is an open area of playing fields covering approximately 3.5 hectares.
3. Planning Background
 - 3.1 Part of this site has been the subject of a previous planning application from Lincolnshire County Council for outline permission for residential development (B05/0314/92). The archaeological evaluation is required before any decision can be made on any future applications regarding this area.
4. Archaeological background
 - 4.1 There have been no finds of prehistoric date made in the vicinity.
 - 4.2 There were large quantities of Romano-British pottery found during the construction of St. Nicholas' Primary School and a watching brief conducted on the construction of a classroom extension also revealed Romano-British pottery in association with ditches. There have also been other casual finds of Romano-British material from the vicinity.
 - 4.3 The site is almost a kilometre east of the centre of the town and thus it is extremely unlikely that any finds of medieval date will be made.
 - 4.4 The potential of this site lies in the probability of Romano-British remains existing potentially undisturbed below the playing fields of the school. While from the density of pottery finds it looks

likely that the main area of settlement is slightly to the east of the site in question, namely under the school, remains could well extend into this area and provide an indication of the nature and date of the settlement.

5. Requirement for work

5.1 Prior to this scheme of development being undertaken a detailed desk-top assessment and a field-evaluation must be carried out. The desk top assessment phase must be completed prior to the evaluation. Any adjustments to the brief for the evaluation should only be made after discussion with the Community Archaeologist of Boston Borough Council. If any major archaeological discovery is made it is hoped that this will be accommodated within the scheme and preservation in situ be given due consideration.

5.2 The purpose of the archaeological evaluation should be to gather sufficient information to establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits.

6. Stages of work and techniques

6.1 The archaeological evaluation must be preceded by a fully detailed desk-top assessment. This will indicate the presence of any archaeological constraint hitherto unidentified. As this detailed desk-top assessment will be followed by a field investigation of the sites identified and an evaluation of the threat to their survival in situ, the project specification must be sufficiently flexible.

6.2 The desk-top assessment should include an assessment of the site within both the local and regional context. It should highlight any particular relevant research priorities which may be addressed by this project.

6.3 In order to ensure that all possible archaeological constraints are evaluated all secondary sources must be consulted as part of the desk-top assessment. Sources to be consulted should include:

6.3.1 Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record;

6.3.2 All Ordnance Survey maps;

6.3.3 Tithe, Enclosure Award and Parish Maps (where appropriate);

6.3.4 Historical documents, particularly those held in Lincolnshire Archives Office;

6.3.5 Archaeological books and journals;

6.3.6 Unpublished reports and archives (where appropriate), particularly those of the Boston Community Archaeologist;

6.3.7 Aerial photographs;

6.3.8 Any other sources deemed appropriate.

6.3.9 A visit to verify site conditions.

6.4 The specification will be expected to contain a reasoned discussion of field techniques selected. The rejection of a particular technique must be explained. Consideration should also be given to field-walking, site survey, geophysical survey and the observation of geotechnical test-pits (if appropriate) as well as the undertaking of archaeological test-pits as possible field evaluation

techniques. When preparing the specification account should be taken of local geology, topography and land-use as it affects the feasibility of the various techniques.

6.5 It is appreciated that the nature and extent of trial trenching will depend upon the results of the non-intrusive survey methods and is, therefore, difficult to quantify at this stage. Thus, for the purposes of the specification it should be presumed that 2% of the site will be sampled by trial trenching, although a smaller sample may actually be used.

6.6 The evaluation should also take into account environmental evidence and provide an assessment of the viability of such information should further archaeological work be carried out.

7. Methods

7.1 In consideration of methodology the following details should be given in the contractor's specification:

7.1.1 A projected timetable must be agreed for the various stages of work;

7.1.2 The staff structure and numbers must be detailed. This should include lists of specialists and their role in the project;

7.1.3 It is expected that all on site work will be carried out in a way that complies with the relevant Health and Safety legislation and that due consideration will be given to site security;

7.1.4 The techniques applied in field survey, if undertaken, must be described in full. These should include the conventions applied in earthwork survey presentation, the spacing of transects and presentation of statistical data from field-walking and the plotting of aerial photographs.

7.2 Excavation is a potentially destructive technique and the specification should include a detailed reasoning behind the application of this technique. The following factors should be borne in mind:

7.2.1 the use of an appropriate machine with a wide toothless ditching blade;

7.2.2 the supervision of all machine work by an archaeologist;

7.2.3 the machine should be used to remove topsoil down to the first archaeological horizon;

7.2.4 the most recent archaeological deposits are not necessarily the least important and this should be considered when determining the level to which machining will be carried out;

7.2.5 when archaeological features are revealed by machine these will be cleaned by hand;

7.2.6 a representative sample of every archaeological feature must be excavated by hand (although the depth of surviving deposits must be determined, it is not expected that every trench will be excavated to natural);

7.2.7 all excavation must be carried out with a view to avoiding features which may be worthy of preservation in situ;

7.2.8 any human remains encountered must be left in situ and only removed if absolutely necessary. The contractor must comply with all statutory consents and licences regarding the exhumation and interment of human remains. It will also be necessary to comply with all reasonable requests of interested parties as to the method of removal, reinterment or disposal of the remains or associated items. Attempts must be made at all times not to cause offence to any interested parties.

- 7.2.9 it is expected that an approved recording system will be used for all on-site and post fieldwork procedures.
8. Monitoring arrangements
- 8.1 The Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council will provide a monitoring programme to ensure that fieldwork meets the specification. To facilitate this he should be contacted at least one week prior to the commencement of fieldwork.
9. Reporting requirements
- 9.1 The final report must be produced in two stages. There must be a preliminary report of the desk-top assessment. This report must:
- 9.1.1 summarise all available information;
 - 9.1.2 provide a comprehensive list of all sources consulted, along with an explanation if sources detailed in paragraph 6.3 above are not consulted;
 - 9.1.3 outline all possible options for further work including recommendations for alterations to the original evaluation specification.
- 9.2 The second stage shall be an evaluation report which should be a straight-forward account of the fieldwork carried out and should be produced within two months of the completion of the fieldwork phase. If this is not possible then the Boston Community Archaeologist must be consulted at the earliest possible opportunity. The report should include:
- 9.2.1 plans of the trench layout and features therein;
 - 9.2.2 tables summarising features and artefacts together with a full description and brief interpretation;
 - 9.2.3 plans of actual and potential deposits;
 - 9.2.4 a consideration of the evidence within the wider landscape setting;
 - 9.2.5 a consideration of the importance of the findings on a local, regional and national basis;
 - 9.2.6 a critical review of the effectiveness of the methodology;
 - 9.2.7 recommendations for further work or aspects to be considered as part of the archaeological strategy to mitigate the impact of development to be adopted by the developer.
- 9.3 A copy of the desk-top assessment and evaluation reports must be deposited with Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record, the Boston Community Archaeologist and Land and Buildings Consultancy.
10. Archive deposition
- 10.1 Arrangements must be made with the landowner(s) and/or developers and an appropriate museum for the deposition of the object and paper archive. If the receiving museum is to be the City and County Museum, Lincoln then the archive should be produced in the form outlined in that museum's document 'Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives', see address below.

11. Publication and dissemination

- 11.1 The deposition of a copy of the report with the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record will be deemed to put all information into the public domain, unless a special request is made for confidentiality. If material is to be held in confidence a timescale must be agreed with the Boston Community Archaeologist but is expected this will not exceed six months. Consideration must be given to a summary of the results being published in Lincolnshire History and Archaeology in due course.

12. Additional information

- 12.1 This document attempts to define the best practice expected of an archaeological evaluation but cannot fully anticipate the conditions that will be encountered as work progresses. However, changes to the approved programme of evaluation work are only to be made with the prior written approval of the Boston Community Archaeologist.

Brief set by Community Archaeologist, Boston Borough Council, January 1995

Appendix 2

Context Summary

Context	Trench	Description	Interpretation
001	9	Grey-brown clayey silt	Topsoil
002	9	Grey-brown clay	Upper subsoil
003	9	Blue-grey clayey silt	Marine deposit
004	9	Grey-brown clayey silt	Marine deposit
005	9	Grey-brown clayey silt	Marine deposit
006	1	Brown clay	Fill of 7
007	1	Cut feature	Natural(?) gully
008	1	Grey-brown clayey silt	Fill of 9
009	1	Cut feature	Natural(?) gully
010	1	Grey clay	Fill of 11
011	1	Cut feature	Natural(?) gully
012	1	Same as 1	Topsoil
013	1	Same as 2	Subsoil
014	1	Brown clayey silt	Lower subsoil
015	1	Grey-brown clayey silt	Primary(?) fill of 16
016	1	Cut feature	Natural water course
017	1	Brown mottled clay	Marine deposit
018	4	Same as 17	Marine deposit
019	4	Same as 3	Marine deposit
020	4	Unused	
021	12	Same as 1	Topsoil
022	12	Same as 2	Upper subsoil
023	12	Same as 14	Lower subsoil
024	12	Blue-grey silty clay	Marine deposit
025	12	Same as 17	Marine deposit
026	12	Cut feature	Natural(?) gully
027	12	Brown silty clay	Fill of 28
028	12	Cut feature	Land drain
029	12	Same as 24	Marine deposit

Context	Trench	Description	Interpretation
030	12	Brown silty clay	Primary fill of 26
031	12	Same as 14	Lower subsoil
032	15	Same as 1	Topsoil
033	15	Same as 2	Upper subsoil
034	15	Same as 14	Lower subsoil
035	12	Brown silty clay	Fill of 36
036	12	Cut feature	Land drain
037	12	Cut feature	Drainage ditch
038	12	Grey-brown silty clay	Tertiary fill of 37
039	15	Cut feature	Gully
040	15	Cut feature	Gully
041	15	Cut feature	Natural(?) gully
042	15	Cut feature	Natural(?) gully
043	15	Grey-brown silty clay	Fill of 40
044	15	Same as 43	Fill of 39
045	15	Blue-grey silty clay	Fill of 42/marine deposit
046	15	Yellow-brown clayey silt	Fill of 41
047	12	Grey-brown silty clay	Secondary fill of 37
048	12	Brown clayey silt	Primary fill of 37
049	12	Grey-brown silty clay	Marine deposit
050	12	Yellow-brown silt/clayey silt	Alluvial deposit
051	3	Same as 1	Topsoil
052	3	Same as 2	Upper subsoil
053	3	Same as 14	Lower subsoil
054	3	Same as 3	Marine deposit
055	3	Brown clay	Marine deposit
056	3	Same as 45	Marine deposit
057	3	Same as 50	Alluvial deposit
058	12	Same as 17	Marine deposit
059	12	Same as 45	Marine deposit
060	12	Same as 50	Alluvial deposit
061	4	Same as 1	Topsoil

Context	Trench	Description	Interpretation
062	4	Same as 2	Upper subsoil
063	4	Same as 17	Marine deposit
064	4	Same as 3	Marine deposit
065		Unused	
066	10	Same as 17	Marine deposit
067	10	Same as 3	Marine deposit
068	10	Brown silty clay	Fill of 78
069	10	Grey-blue-brown silty clay	Fill of 96
070	10	Blue-grey silty clay	Fill of 75
071	10	Red-brown clayey silt	Tertiary fill of 76
072	10	Brown silty clay	Secondary fill of 76
073	10	Brown silty clay	Primary fill of 76
074	10	Brown mottled silty clay	Marine deposit
075	10	Cut feature	Natural recut of 76
076	10	Cut feature	Natural gully
077	10	Cut feature	Natural recut of 78
078	10	Cut feature	Natural recut of 96
079	1	Grey-brown silty clay	Indeterminate layer
080	1	Blue-grey clayey silt	Marine deposit
081	2	Same as 1	Topsoil
082	2	Same as 2	Upper subsoil
083	2	Same as 14	Lower subsoil
084	2	Same as 17	Marine deposit
085	2	Same as 3	Marine deposit
086	6	Same as 55	Marine deposit
087	6	Same as 3	Marine deposit
088	6	Same as 14	Lower subsoil
089	6	Same as 2	Upper subsoil
090	6	Same as 1	Topsoil
091	6	Grey silty clay	Fill of 92
092	6	Cut feature	Land drain
093	9	Same as 50	Alluvial deposit

Context	Trench	Description	Interpretation
094	10	Brown silty clay	Indeterminate layer
095	10	Same as 17	Marine deposit
096	10	Cut feature	Natural recut of 75
097	11	Same as 2	Upper subsoil
098	11	Same as 14	Lower subsoil
099	11	Blue-grey clay	Tertiary fill of 104
100	11	Grey-brown clay	Layer/tertiary fill of 102
101	11	Blue-grey clay	Primary fill of 102
102	11	Cut feature	Natural gully
103	11	Same as 50	Alluvial deposit
104	11	Cut feature	Natural recut of 102
105	14	Same as 2	Upper subsoil
106	14	Same as 14	Lower subsoil
107	14	Brown silty clay	Marine deposit
108	14	Grey-blue/brown clayey silt	Marine deposit
109	14	Same as 50	Alluvial deposit
110	14	Brown silty clay	Marine deposit
111	14	Brown silty clay	Marine deposit
112	14	Reddish-brown clay	Marine deposit
113	14	Brown-blue clay	Marine deposit
114	14	Grey-brown silty clay	Marine deposit
115	14	Brown silty clay	Fill of 116
116	14	Cut feature	Land drain
117	15	Reddish-brown silty clay	Marine deposit
118	15	Same as 3	Marine deposit
119	15	Blue-grey clayey silt	Marine deposit
120	15	Same as 4	Marine deposit
121	15	Grey-brown silty clay	Marine deposit
122	15	Blue-grey silt	Fill of 42
123	8	Brown silty clay	Tertiary fill of 126
124	15	Reddish-brown clayey silt	Marine deposit
125	15	Same as 121	Marine deposit

Context	Trench	Description	Interpretation
126	8	Cut feature(?)	Ditch
127	1	Grey clayey silt	Secondary fill of 16
128	1	Grey silt	Tertiary fill of 16
129	5	Same as 17	Marine deposit
130	5	Blue-grey clay	Indeterminate layer
131	8	Same as 17	Marine deposit
132	15	Blue-grey clay	Marine deposit
133	11	Same as 45	Marine deposit
134	4	Same as 50	Alluvial deposit

APPENDIX 3

The Finds
by
Hilary Healey and Gary Taylor

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DATE
Unstratified	1 fragment of Bourne D ware pottery	15th-17th century
34	16 fragments of cattle rib; 1 cattle jaw (mandible) fragment, young animal; 2 cattle metapodials (feet/lower leg) bones, both butchered, one dog-gnawed	

In general the bones are in fairly good condition. The cattle rib pieces are highly fragmented and it is possible that they represent a single rib bone. Minor rodent gnawing is evident on several of the bones.

Appendix 4

Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling Ancient Monuments - Extract from *Archaeology and Planning* DoE Planning Policy Guidance note 16, November 1990

The following criteria (which are not in any order of ranking), are used for assessing the national importance of an ancient monument and considering whether scheduling is appropriate. The criteria should not however be regarded as definitive; rather they are indicators which contribute to a wider judgement based on the individual circumstances of a case.

i *Period*: all types of monuments that characterise a category or period should be considered for preservation.

ii *Rarity*: there are some monument categories which in certain periods are so scarce that all surviving examples which retain some archaeological potential should be preserved. In general, however, a selection must be made which portrays the typical and commonplace as well as the rare. This process should take account of all aspects of the distribution of a particular class of monument, both in a national and regional context.

iii *Documentation*: the significance of a monument may be enhanced by the existence of records of previous investigation or, in the case of more recent monuments, by the supporting evidence of contemporary written records.

iv *Group value*: the value of a single monument (such as a field system) may be greatly enhanced by its association with related contemporary monuments (such as a settlement or cemetery) or with monuments of different periods. In some cases, it is preferable to protect the complete group of monuments, including associated and adjacent land, rather than to protect isolated monuments within the group.

v *Survival/Condition*: the survival of a monument's archaeological potential both above and below ground is a particularly important consideration and should be assessed in relation to its present condition and surviving features.

vi *Fragility/Vulnerability*: highly important archaeological evidence from some field monuments can be destroyed by a single ploughing or unsympathetic treatment; vulnerable monuments of this nature would particularly benefit from the statutory protection that scheduling confers. There are also existing standing structures of particular form or complexity whose value can again be severely reduced by neglect or careless treatment and which are similarly well suited by scheduled monument protection, even if these structures are already listed buildings.

vii *Diversity*: some monuments may be selected for scheduling because they possess a combination of high quality features, others because of a single important attribute.

viii *Potential*: on occasion, the nature of the evidence cannot be specified precisely but it may still be possible to document reasons anticipating its existence and importance and so to demonstrate the justification for scheduling. This is usually confined to sites rather than upstanding monuments.

Appendix 5

Glossary

Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (4).
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, <i>etc.</i> Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Dumped deposits	These are deposits, often laid down intentionally, that raise a land surface. They may be the result of casual waste disposal or may be deliberate attempts to raise the ground surface.
Environmental material	The term 'environmental material' is used to describe all kinds of plant and animal substances, such as bones, skin, hair, beetle wing cases, mollusc shells, wood, pollen <i>etc.</i> When present, these materials can be used to indicate past environmental conditions at the archaeological site. The materials survive differentially under varied burial conditions, though waterlogging or extreme dehydration often provides the optimum circumstances for the preservation of the most classes of this type of evidence.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Gleyed soil	A gleyed soil is one that has been subject to waterlogging and the action of micro-organisms or by-products of decomposing organic matter. These processes cause the alteration of rust-like iron within soil to more mobile, colourless or grey iron compounds and produces distinct soil horizons.
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Natural	Deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Transformed deposit	Over time deposits of soil and other materials may be significantly changed from their original nature and characteristics. The processes responsible for such alteration are many and varied and include ploughing, the action of worms, the activities of burrowing animals and natural plant growth, amongst others. Any deposit that has experienced such alteration due to these or other processes is said to be transformed.
Truncated	Any deposit or feature which is affected by a 'cut' has been reduced in size from its original extent and is said to be truncated.

Appendix 6

The Archive

The archive consists of:

134	Context records
74	Photographic records
33	Scale drawings
1	Stratigraphic matrix
1	Bag of animal bone

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

City and County Museum, Lincoln, Accession Number: 36.96
Archaeological Project Services project code: CRB96

Plate 1

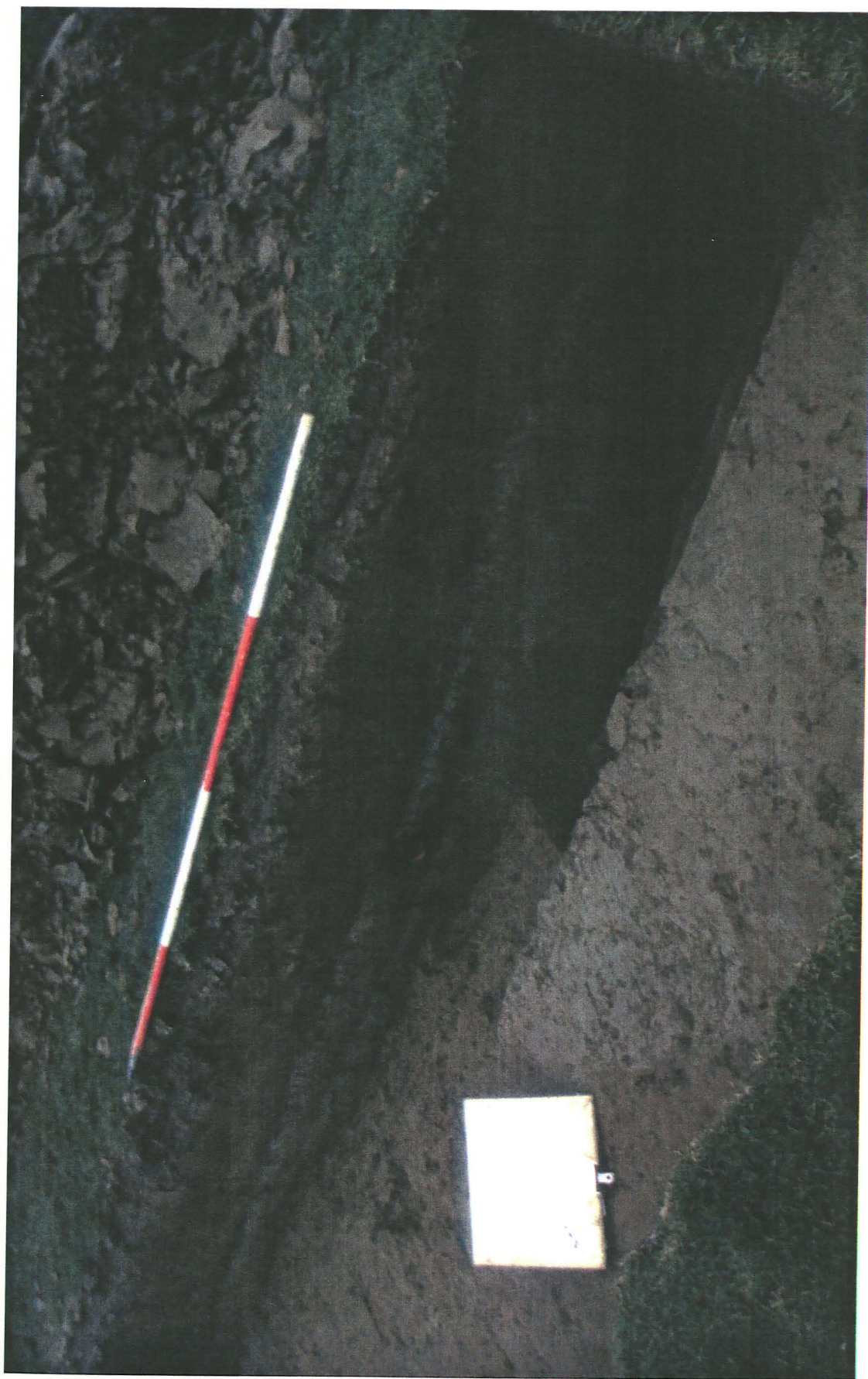
Trench 4 General View



Plate 2

Trench 12 Showing Clay/Silt Boundary





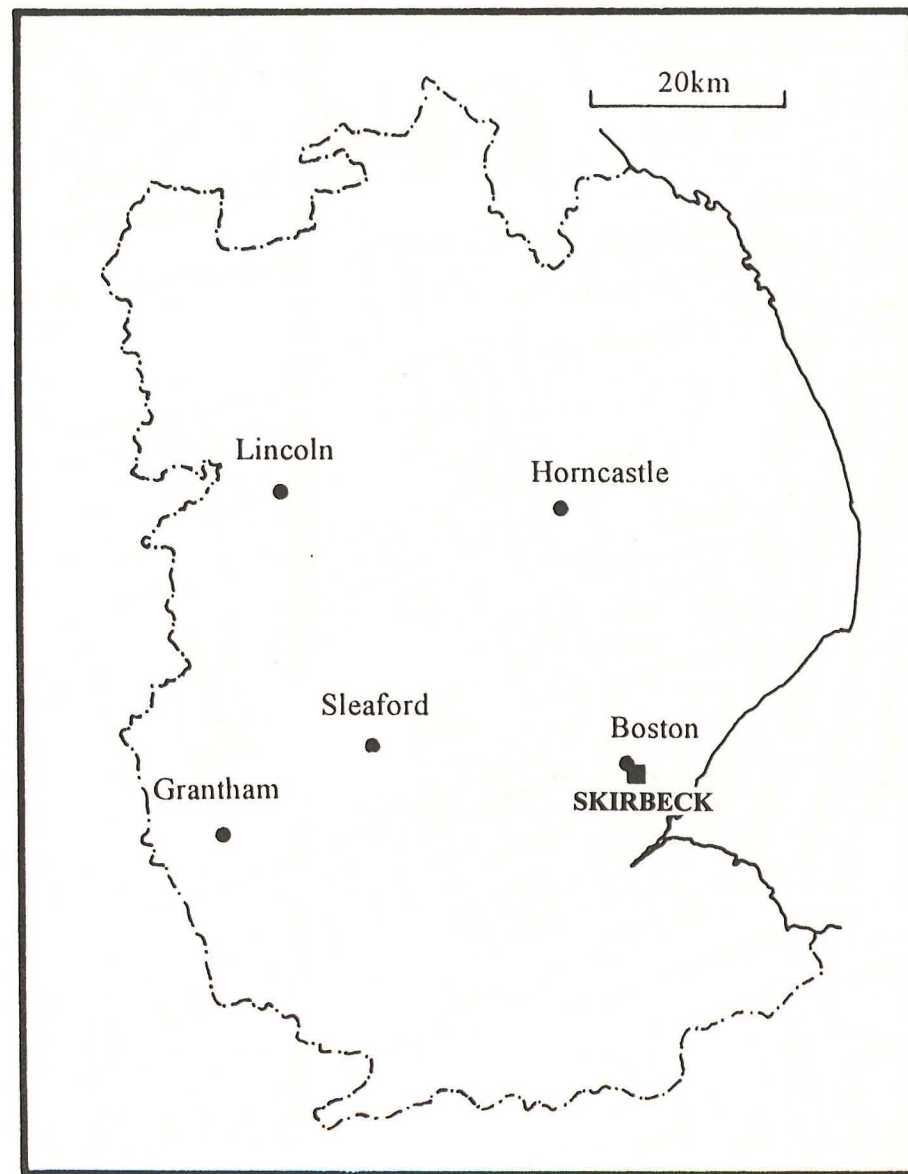
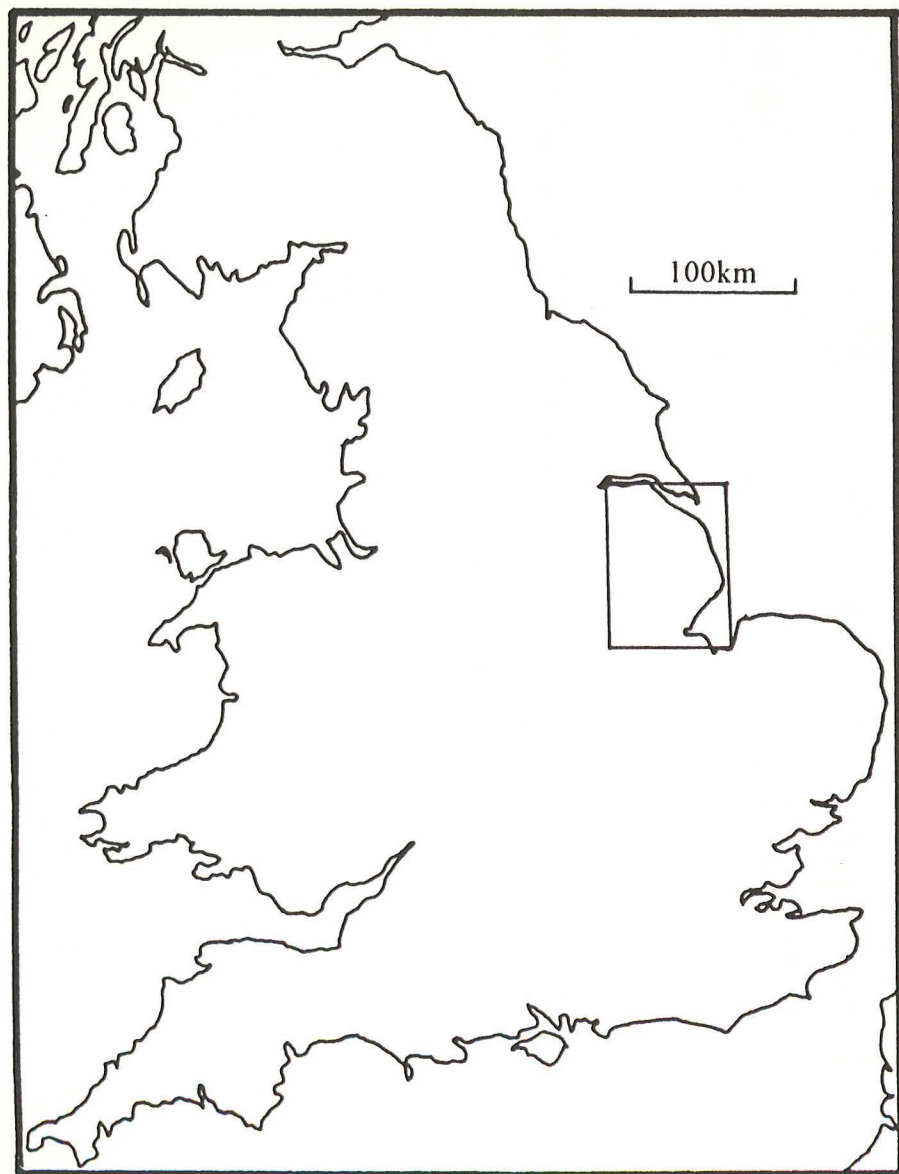
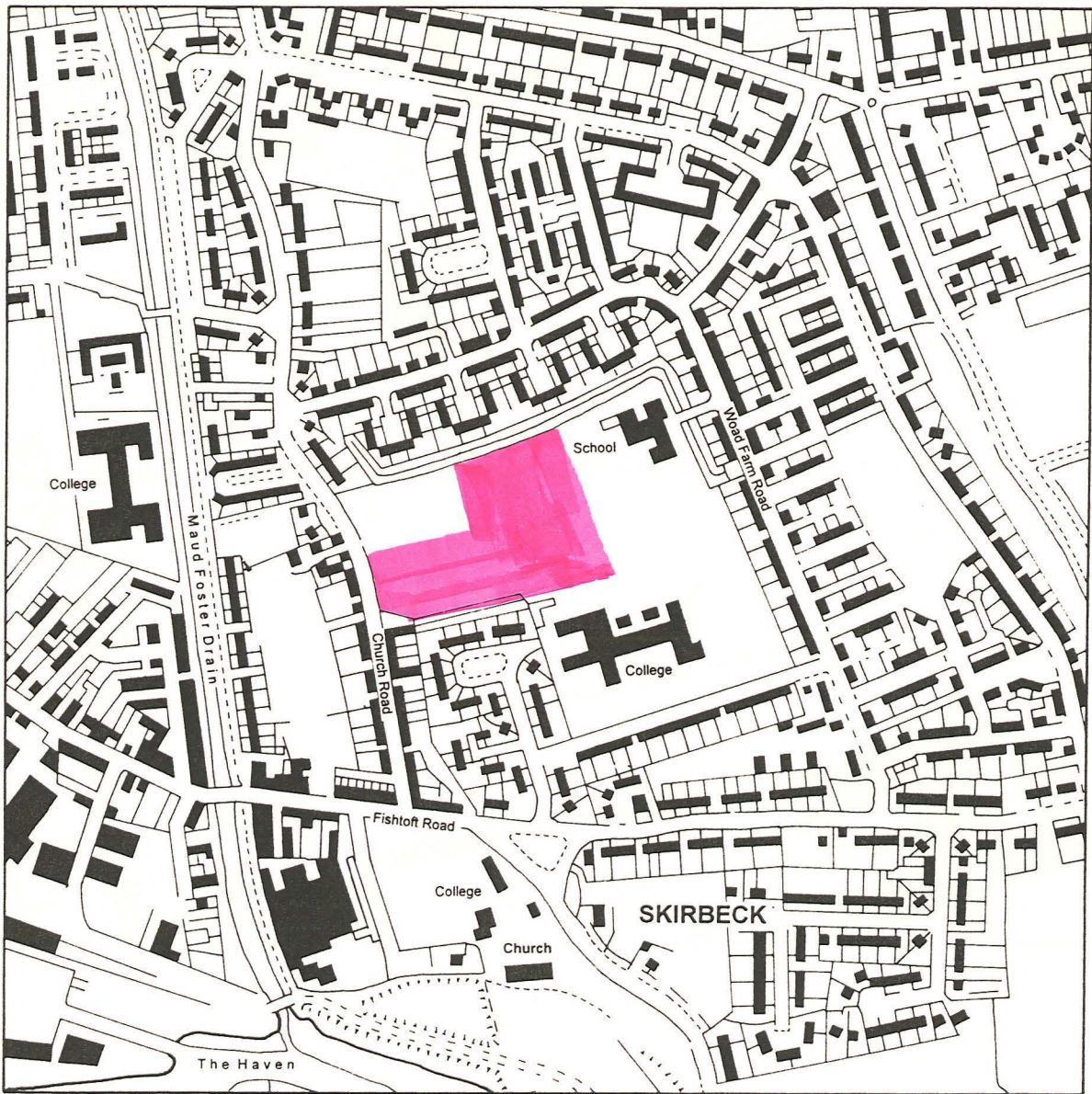


Fig. 1 General Location Plan

Fig. 2 Site Location Plan



Area of Proposed Development

Fig. 3 Trench Location Plan

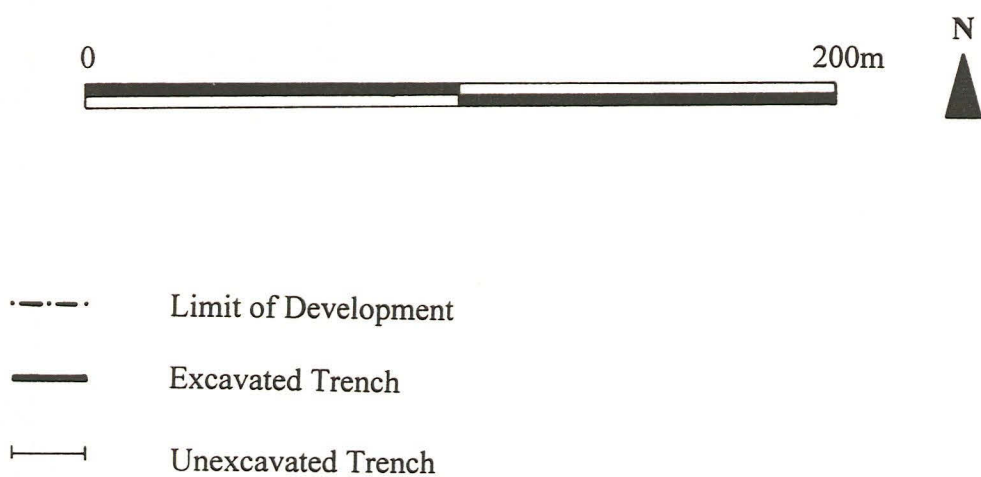


Fig. 4 West Facing Section Through Trench 1 Showing Roddon 16 and Associated Deposits

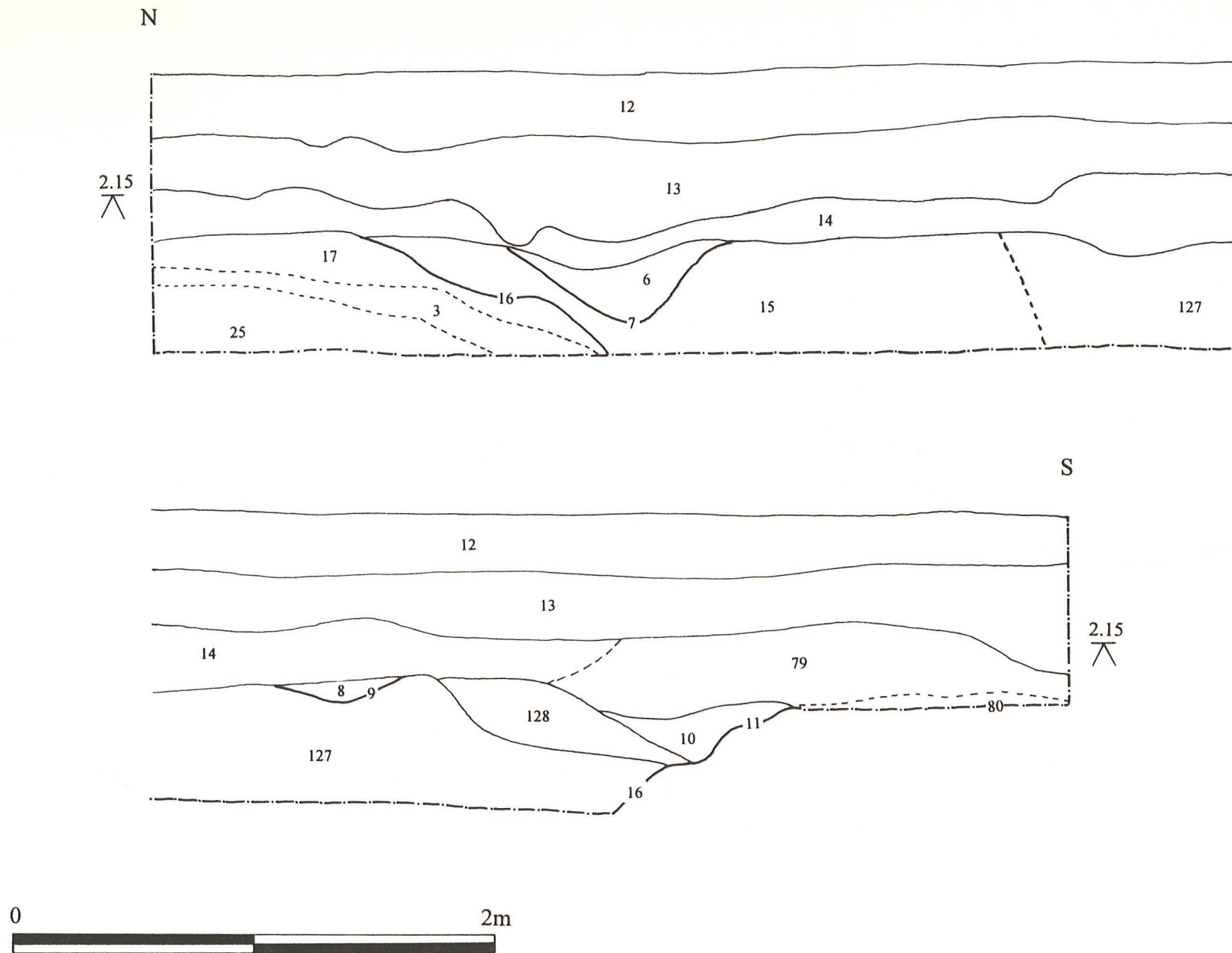


Fig. 5 North Facing Section Through Trench 15 Showing Gullies 39 and 40

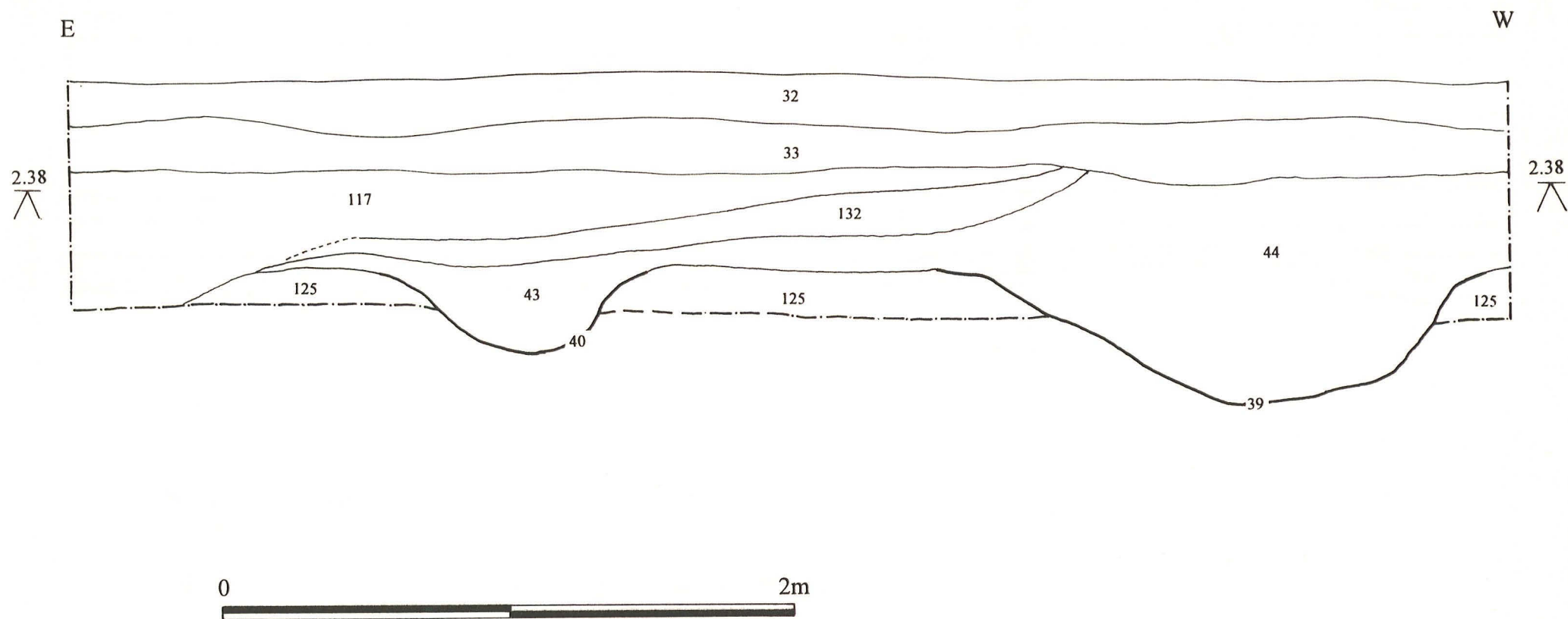


Fig. 6 Northeast Facing Section Through Trench 12 Showing Ditch 37 and Clay/Silt Boundary Between 59 and 49

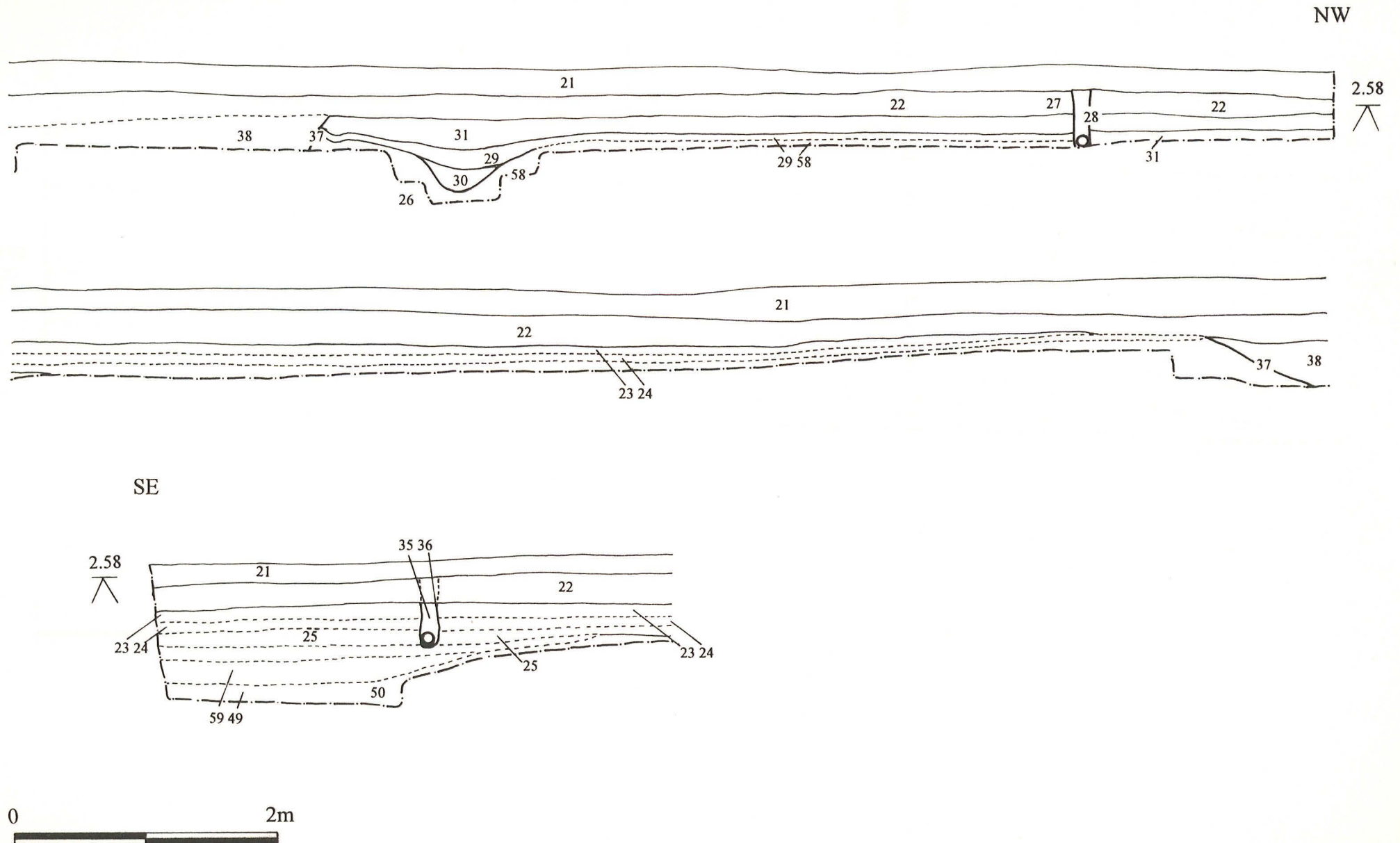
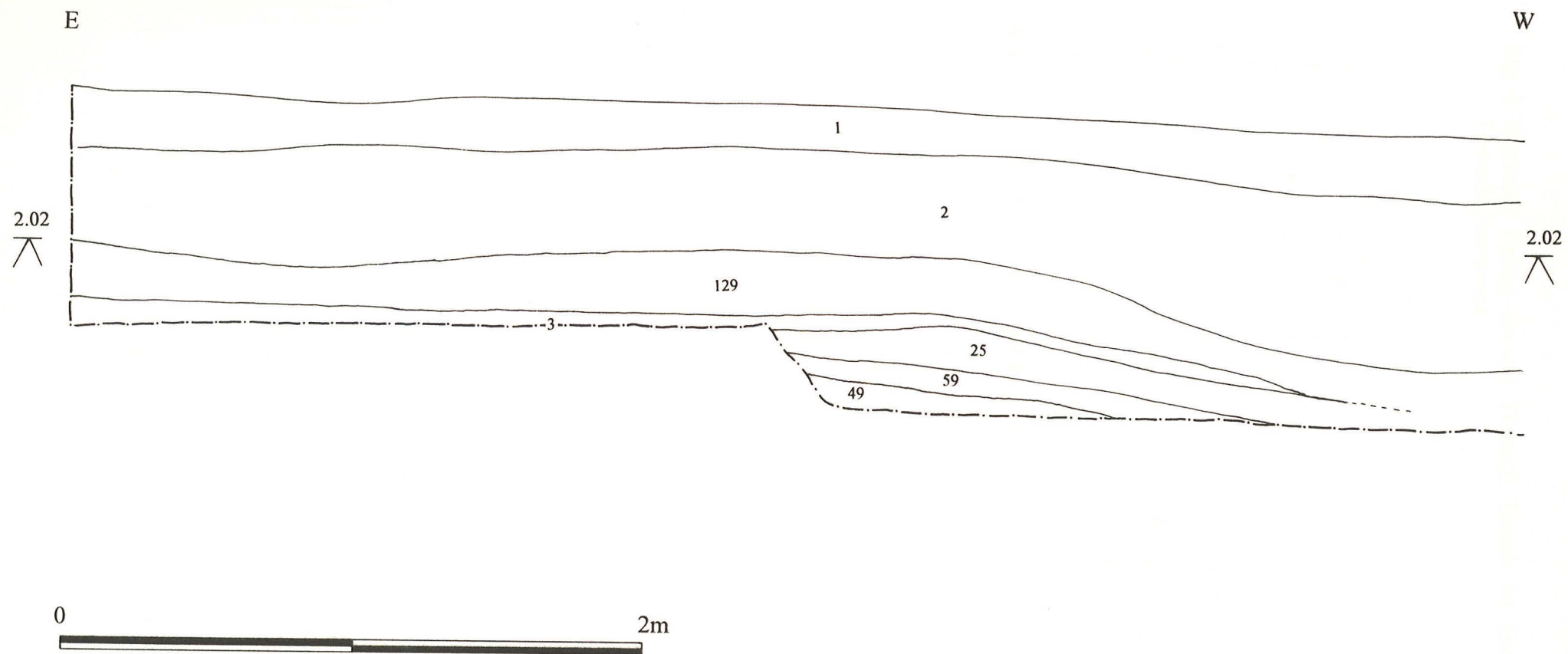


Fig. 7 North Facing Section Through Trench 5 Showing Blue-Grey Clay Layers 3 and 59



Towards Northwest

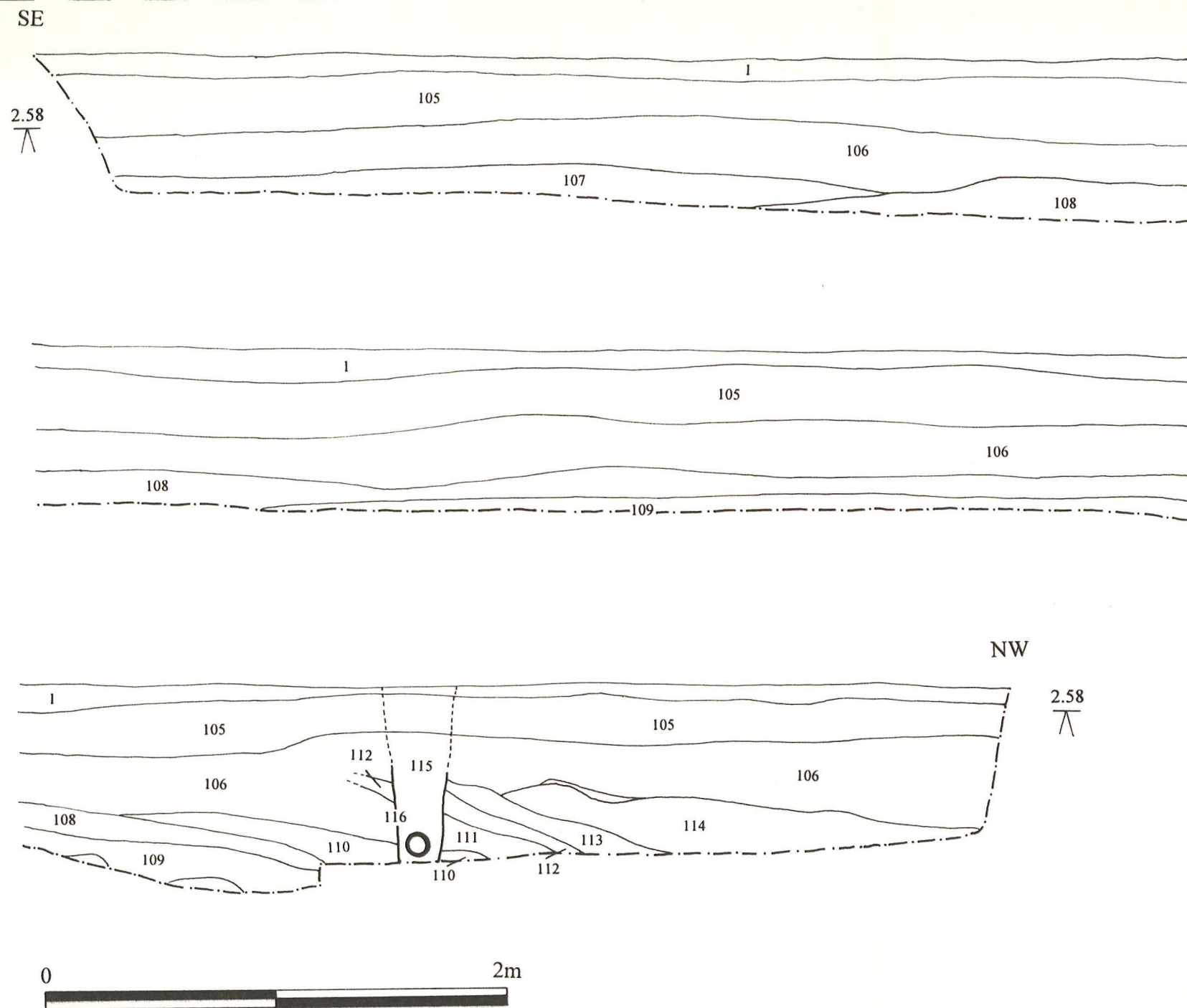


Fig. 9 Plot of Ordnance Datum Readings For Transects A-B and C-D Showing Location of Postulated E-W Roddon.

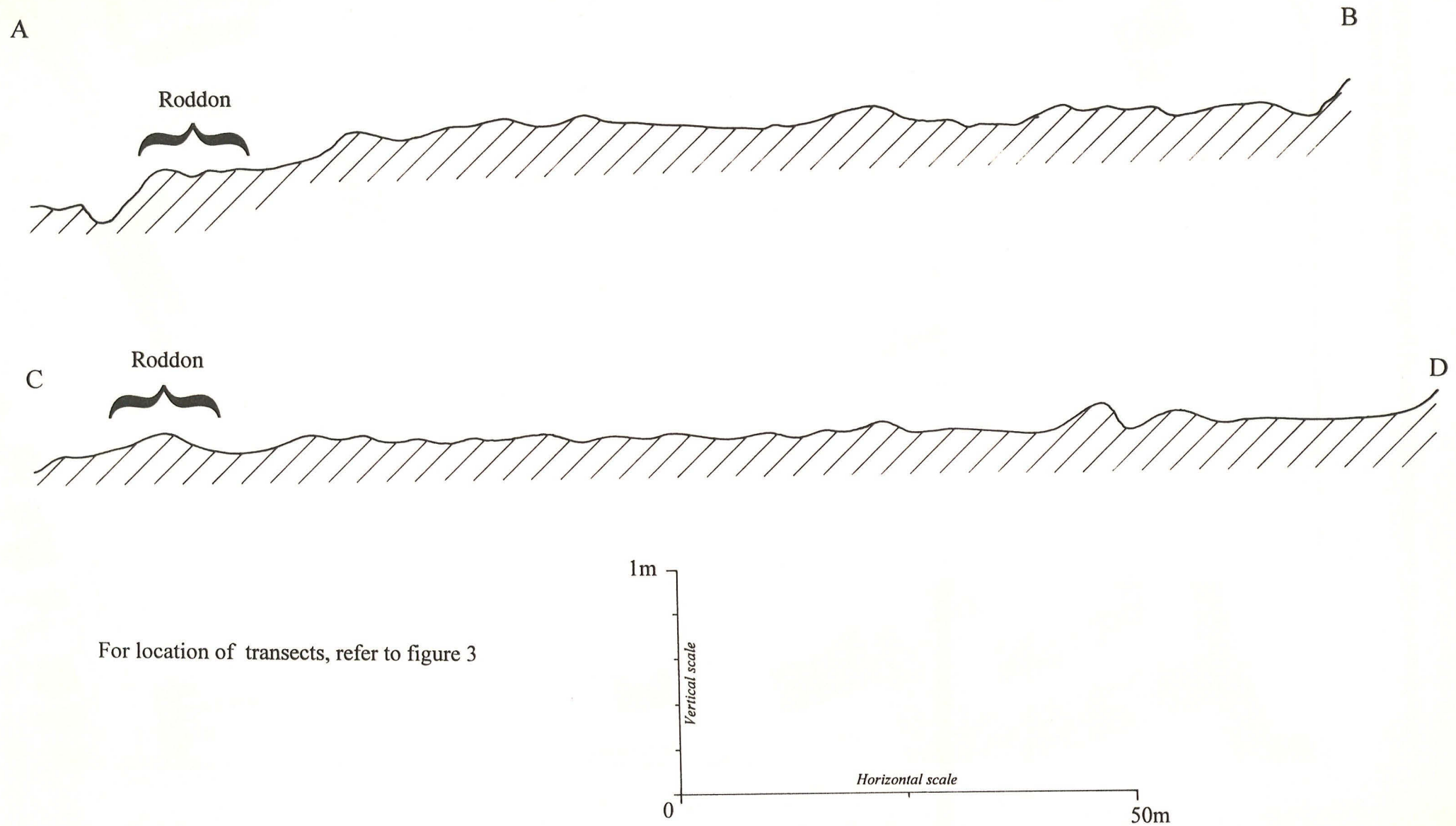


Fig. 10 Summary Plan Showing Archaeological Features, Distribution of Silt and Postulated Location of Roddon

