

97/4 Plect 13472

GYPSY LANE/STATION ROAD, SWINESHEAD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Site Code = GLS96
LCNCC Acc. No.: 59.97

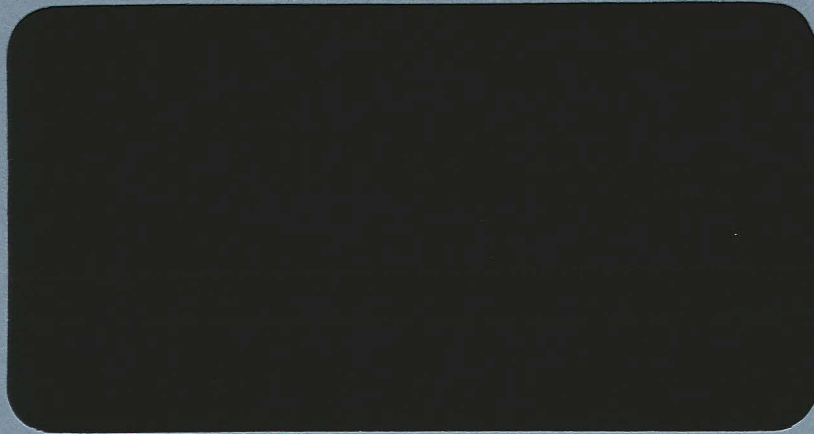
Lincolnshire County Council

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Prepared for Grimme UK Ltd. by RL Schofield

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CONTENTS

<i>Summary</i>	1
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Location and description	2
3.0 Requirement and methodology	2
4.0 Archaeological and historical background	4
5.0 Results	6
6.0 Conclusions	8
7.0 Acknowledgements	8
8.0 References	9
9.0 Appendices	

Appendix 1: List of archaeological contents

Appendix 2: Information derived from the County Sites and Monuments Record and records held at Heritage Lincolnshire

Appendix 3: Colour photographs

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 General location map

Fig. 2 1:10,000 site location

Fig. 3 1:500 development plan incorporating principal archaeological features

Fig. 4 Plan of main ditch [103] and interconnecting features

Fig.'s 5 - 13 Individual feature section drawings at scale 1:20

Summary

- * *Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) were commissioned by Grimme UK Ltd to undertake a standard archaeological watching brief during the construction of a distribution and component manufacturing centre situated 2km north-west of Swineshead village, Lincolnshire.*
- * *An undated system of gullies draining into a large ditch was exposed (the only artefacts recovered comprised two animal jaw bones).*
- * *This agricultural drainage system does not relate to any present day scheme, and a Medieval date is suggested, but has not been proved.*

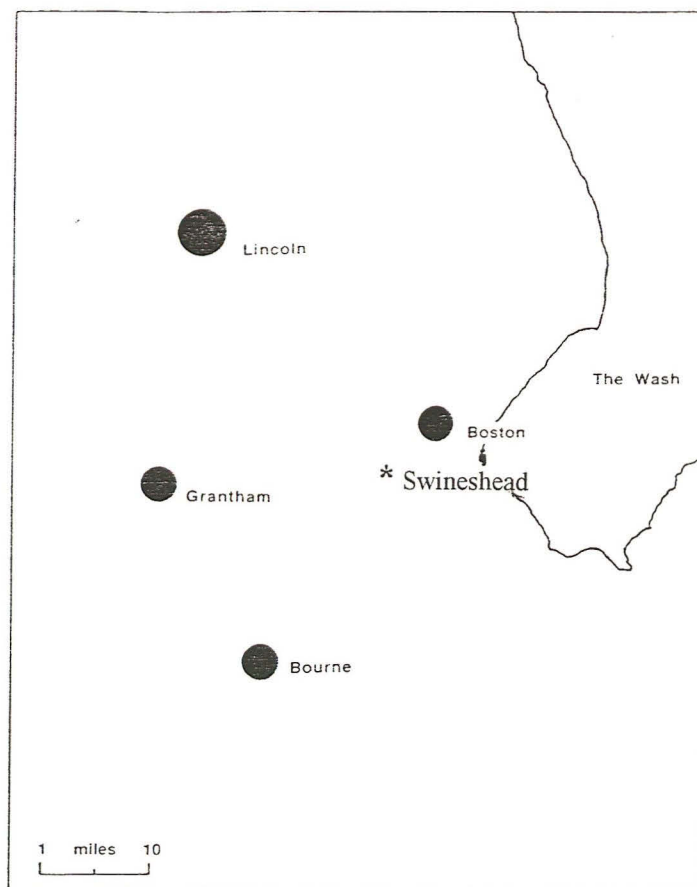


Fig. 1 General site location

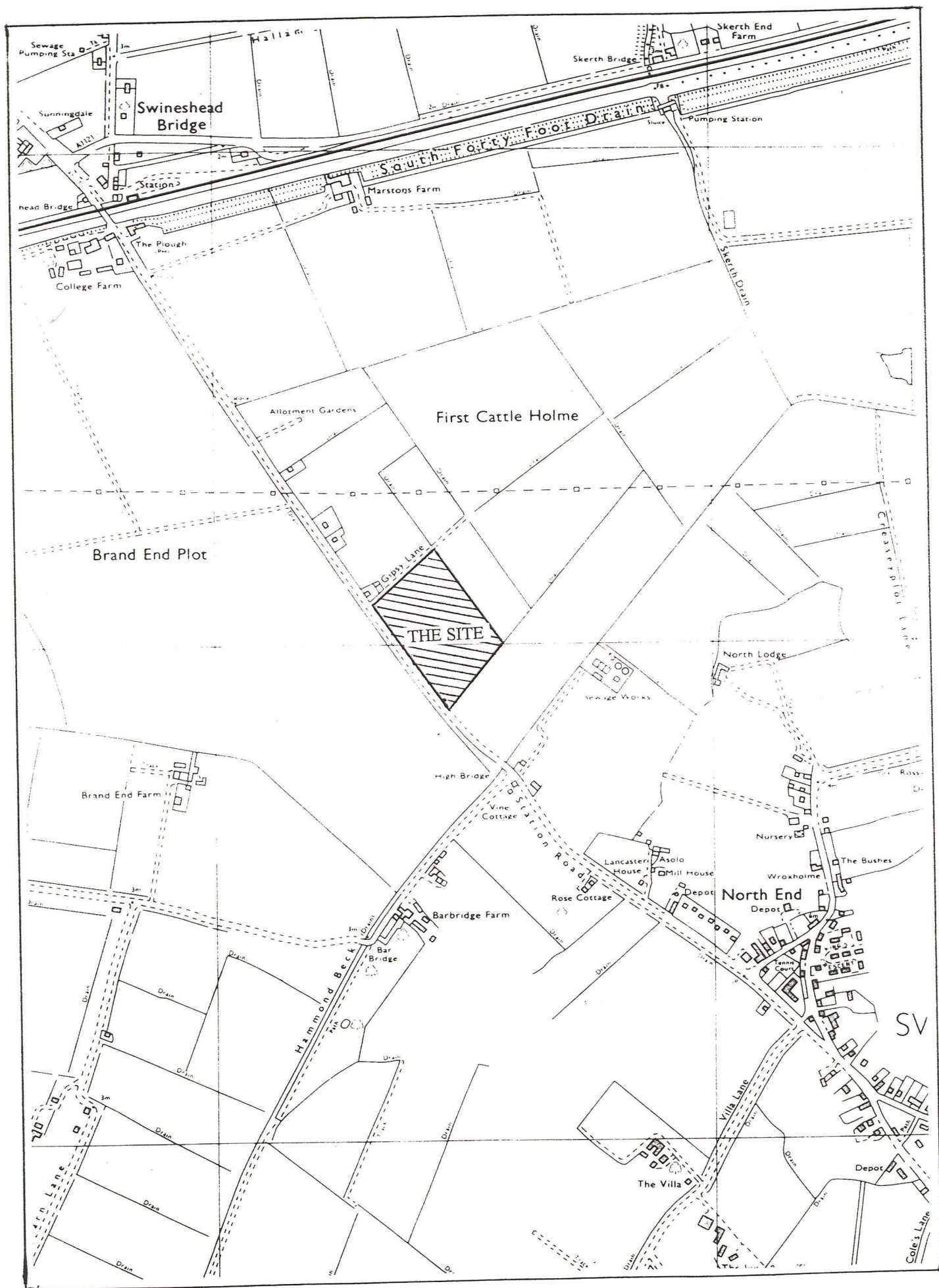


Figure 2: Extract from 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey
 (Copyright reference AL 515 21 A0001)

1.0 Introduction

In the late summer of 1996 and the early part of 1997 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the construction site of a distribution and component manufacturing centre at land between Gypsy Lane and Station Road, Swineshead, Boston, Lincolnshire (Fig. 2).

Pre Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) were commissioned to carry out monitoring on all groundworks on behalf of Grimme UK Ltd.

Copies of this report, which details the results of the watching brief, will be deposited at the County Sites and Monuments Record; with the Community Archaeologist for Boston and with the City and county Museum, Lincoln. A summary account will also be submitted to the editor of the county journal *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology* for inclusion in a future edition. An ordered archive of both paper and object elements is in preparation and will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln within six months of project completion: thereby satisfying all aspects of the project brief.

The watching brief was undertaken by the writer and Mr S. Johnson.

2.0 Location and description

The site is situated approximately 2 km north-west of St Mary's Church in the centre of Swineshead. Swineshead is in the silt fens of Lincolnshire, approximately 7.5 km south-west of Boston, 45 km south-east of Lincoln. The site is bound on its west side by Gypsy Lane and on its south side by Station Road. To the east, over a small drain, is a large new development which extends to the New Hammond Beck on the edge of Swineshead. The site is centred on National Grid Reference TF 225 422, and is situated on level ground which extends from Swineshead to the South Forty Foot Drain and is known as First Cattle Holme.

The local soils comprise light silts; laid down by seasonal flooding, which befits the name "Holme", a "Norse word translating as;(1) an island in a river near the mainland, or (2) a piece of ground by a river, which is submerged in times of flood."(O.E.D. 8th ed, 1992).

3.0 Requirement and methodology

In 1990, the Department of the Environment issued *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, Archaeology and Planning* which, for the first time, made the effects of development on archaeological resources a 'material consideration' within the planning process. This document lays emphasis on preservation *in situ* but where this is not

possible requires archaeological deposits to be 'preserved by record'. This principle has been embraced within the Boston Local Development Plan (LDP Draft 1993).

The Community Archaeologist (acting on behalf of the Borough Council) issued a project brief requiring that an archaeological scheme of works should be undertaken during development. The level of recording deemed appropriate on this occasion was an archaeological watching brief. This has been defined as follows:

'a programme of observation and investigation conducted during the destruction of archaeological deposits, resulting in the preparation of a report and ordered archive' (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994 'Standard Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs').

The development lies approximately 2km north-west of St Mary's Church - away from the core of Swineshead. However, the village plan is linear, and it terminates approximately 0.5 km south-east of the site. The land in question lies between the present Village and what is known as First Cattle Holme near Swineshead Bridge.

Entries forming part of the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), suggested the possibility that unexplored archaeological remains could be disturbed during the course of development (Appendix 9.5).

Archaeological monitoring comprised the following elements:

- (i) Collection of surface artefacts
- (ii) Observation of topsoil stripping and the inspection of subsoil for archaeological features prior to levelling with limestone hardcore.
- (iii) Observation during foundation and service trenching, followed by inspection of section and plan surfaces for archaeological features.
- (iv) Recording of archaeological features and limited excavation to determine, where possible, the date and nature of deposits.

Recording was undertaken using Watching Brief Record Sheets, supplemented with scale drawings (usually at 1:20) and a comprehensive photographic archive. Observation points were plotted on 1: 500 location plans and overlays which were provided by the clients.

Prior to the start of fieldwork, the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) was examined.

4.0 Archaeological and historic background

Evidence dating to the prehistoric period within the parish is slight: Neolithic finds consist of; (1) a flint scraper which may have derived from imported gravel at TF 22804150 and (2) a polished stone axe found in 1954 at TF 23114182.

The only evidence of Bronze Age activity comprises a single socketed axe, found at TF 23224211 in 1957.

It is accepted that during the Iron Age sea levels were much further inland than they are today, and that Swineshead was probably submerged beneath a shallow sea with slow moving tidal waters. This had the affect of depositing several meters of silt over the area. At Walcote near Billingham, fresh water peat buried beneath these deposits has been dated to the middle Bronze Age (circa 1000 BC, HTL Archive notes). This now-buried surface could have been exploited during the Bronze Age and earlier periods for summer grazing, with the surrounding marsh giving good stock for hunting and fishing (it should be noted that the Fens were not only governed by the sea, but that they were also a large catchment area for fresh water draining from higher land to the west).

Most of the East Midlands in the Late Iron Age was inhabited by a tribe known as the *Corieltavi*. Given the above environmental conditions, there is no evidence of the tribe in the area of Swineshead, though there is evidence of Romano-British occupation, dating from at least 125 AD to the later Roman period. From the information available, it would appear that Roman occupation in the area centred around the Creasey Plot, 0.5km east of the site, with the nearest finds coming from the cleaning of the New Hammond Beck.

The apparent upsurge in occupation following the Roman Conquest of Britain was due partly to the lowering of sea levels by around 1.5m, leaving areas previously flooded as dry land. Analyses of the finds from Coney Hill, North Lodge, Low Grounds and probably Broad Ings, suggest that the Romanised population were extracting salt from the surrounding sea water.

From the evidence of Roman salt-making sites, from aerial photographs of extinct tidal creeks, and from modern drainage patterns, the Roman coastline has been determined with some confidence. The topography of Swineshead would suggest a tidal creek (now gone) which may have entered the sea at Sykemouth.

Although Swineshead would have been an isolated island between sea and marsh during the Roman period, pottery finds of Samian from Central Gaul (France) and Mortaria from what is now Warwickshire prove that trading links existed with distant areas: most sites also produce pottery from the Nene Valley area (Colour Coated Wares are common on most Roman sites in Lincolnshire).

Salt was an important element of the Iron Age and Romano-British economy - the modern word salary derives from the Latin word *salarium* (soldiers salt-money).

A Roman road and river crossing may have connected Swineshead with Wainfleet and Grantham in the other direction, illustrating the importance of the area during this period.

The Roman occupation of the fens terminated c.375 AD: earlier than the withdrawal of the Roman administration in Britain as a whole. There are two main reasons for this apparent premature withdrawal; (1) the gradual rise in sea level, and (2) the threat of Saxon incursion.

The Saxons are noted in the area as early as 214 AD: an inscription containing the word " Frisions" indicates the presence of people from the coast of modern Holland and Germany. These people would not (apart from their language) have been radically dissimilar from the existing population and would have found a similar environment to their homelands across the North Sea.

There is no evidence for the settlement of Swineshead during the Early Saxon Period and because of the relatively high sea level, Swineshead may have been flooded until c.650 AD. An early Saxon Charter of 664 AD mentions Wulfhere, King of the Mercians and Southern Angles granting land and privileges to the monastery of Medeshamstede (modern Peterborough) in Swynesheved, and again in 680 AD another charter reaffirms these land rights. The name Swineshead in the Oxford English Place-Names is listed as "pig's headland or hill", although there are suggestions that this may be the head of the river Swin (Simmons 1979). The Cartularium Saxonicum, another charter of 786-96 AD, mentions "aet Svinesheadbe" (at Swineshead).

Swineshead is not recorded in the Domesday book of 1086, although Drayton and Bicker, two manors on the east side of Swineshead, are. Drayton possessed considerable lands in the area, and the manor is listed as being owned by Count Alan Rufus, who assisted William I in his conquest of 1066. Drayton had almost 2,000 acres: of this, 68 acres were meadow and probably lay on the outskirts of the village. In Domesday Book, Drayton was valued in excess of £91 - a large sum for a fenland manor at the time. It had other land holdings on the coast and over 22,000 acres are attributed to Drayton in total, around 10% of the available land in Holland. The name Drayton has two elements: " Dray" to pull and "-ton", settlement, suggest that we may be looking at a port which pre-dated Boston, where boats were pulled up to the settlement.

The earliest record of a religious building in the area does not occur until 1148 AD when the Cistercian Abbey was founded (the Cistercian monks were a farming order). The Abbey has been shown to cover an area of around 40 acres (16 ha) and was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1536-7 AD. King John stayed here after his ill fated trip across the wash in 1216 AD, shortly before his death on returning to Newark Castle. The only remains of this important building survive as reused stone in a farmhouse built in 1607. Swineshead Abbey had two outlying granges; Hardwick and Brothertoft. Close to the Abbey is a large earthwork, the Manwarings, the first historical reference to which is in the time of King John, and archaeological evidence would point to this being a form of Norman Castle.

Drainage of the area has been constant: reference is made in 1170 to a lady of Swineshead, Hawyse Grelle, who gave a grant for the purpose of building a new Dyke (the fact a new Dyke is mentioned clearly infers that an old one must have existed, this pre-dates reference to the church).

Swineshead's prosperity during the medieval period, as today, was based on agriculture. It is difficult to determine the full extent of the medieval field system due to modern intensive agricultural systems which, to a great extent, have obliterated their Middle Age precursors..

5.0 Results

The first element of work to be monitored comprised the laying of a pipeline to the south-east of the site across the frontage of the Geoff Gilbert International site. Monitoring was carried out by S.Johnson on the 25/7/96, though no archaeology was exposed.

A second phase of work took place on an intermittent basis between 23/9/96 and 10/10/96. Soil stripping of an area 1.92 hectares in extent took place prior to the excavation of foundation trenches. This element was carried out by a D7 Bulldozer: due to the churning nature of this process, no satisfactory record of the top soil profile could be drawn or measured. The topsoil comprised light brown humic silt with some traces of organic remains. The soil surface and the churned ploughsoil contained fragments of modern pottery and glass: the finds were discarded on site.

Following initial soil stripping, a series of near-parallel gullies were exposed which fed into a larger central ditch [103] that curved across the site and was dug through the underlying natural silt deposits, [101] - Figure 3. The gullies were evenly spaced at c.32m apart, with the main three [119] [125] and [129] orientated north-south. They were traced for some 50m before extending beyond the north limits of the area stripped. Each of these features was sectioned, and a summary of their dimensions is presented thus:-

[119]: 0.2m deep, 0.55m wide

[125]: 0.28m deep, 0.62m wide

[129]: 0.26deep, 0.66m wide.

Gullies [119] and [125] were joined by an east west shallower gully [121] which was substantially truncated and survived only as a stain in places, but did extend beyond [125] to the east boundary of the site.

The fills of gullies [119] [125] and [129] all appeared to have been deposited by relatively slow moving water which was draining at an even rate into the large ditch [103]. Gully [121] may have been some form of balancing feature between the north-

south gullies to ensure, possibly, that water levels remained constant between the two drains, although this could not be proved. The main ditch [103] extended the full length of the area stripped, entering the site at the south-east end and terminating at the north-west end. It arched across the site, with the centre of the arch to the south-west. In section the ditch was U-shaped, although this final form may have resulted from weathering of the ditch sides during its use (ie the original profile might well have been V-shaped). A section was cut through this ditch, and its internal stratigraphy may be summarised in chronological sequence as follows:-

[[102] a: grey-brown silty clay

/
[102]b: laminated silt-sand on the north side of the ditch indicative of a series of possibly rapid influxes of water (releasing only sand followed by silt)

/
[102]c: grey clean silt weathering from the southern side of the ditch

/
[102]d: primary fill comprising fine reduced blue clay, indicative of standing water, and containing two animal jaw bones (the only stratified finds from the site.

103]: 0.8m deep, 2.3m wide

The interface between the ditch and the gullies described above showed an interleaving relationship of the gully fill [122] and ditch fills, indicating seasonal change in the energy levels of the off-flow. At the point where gully [119] adjoined the ditch, other features were exposed, [105], [107] and [109], and this area was cleaned and planned (Figure 4).

[105]: a curved slot with vertical sides and a flat bottom 2.5m long 0.18m deep and 0.4m wide, south end runs into [123], where sectioned a square impression was seen in the bottom

[107]: a straight slot which runs north/east off the main ditch [103], it has vertical sides and a flat bottom, it is 2.9m long 0.2m deep and 0.48m wide, in section its fill appeared to show a post pipe and in the base of [107] is a square impression

[109] a straight slot which runs north/east off the main ditch, it has vertical sides and a flat bottom, it is 3m long 0.24m deep and 0.4m wide, where sectioned a square impression was seen in the bottom

From their square profiles and impressions in their bases, they would appear to have held posts and may have been part of a sluice system which regulated the flow of water, although precise mechanisms were not determined.

[118] [119]

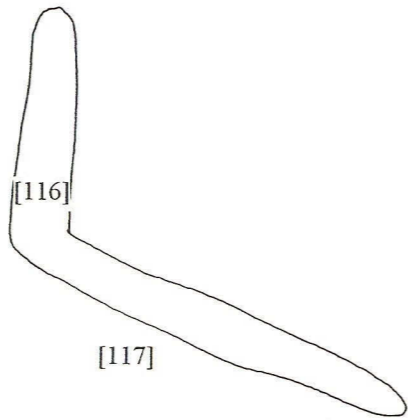


Figure 4: Plan of interface between ditch [103] and gulley [119]

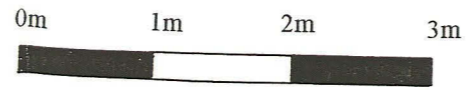
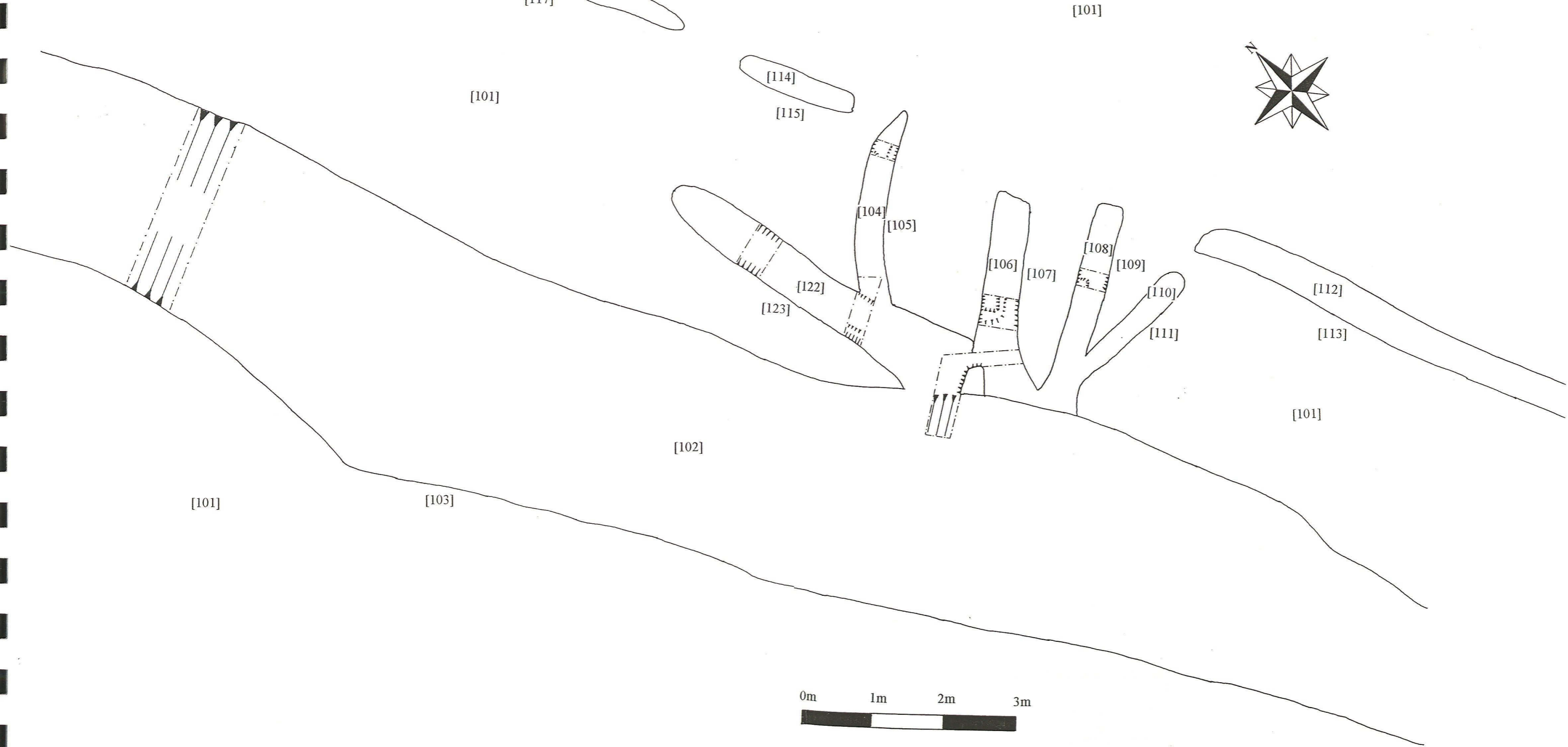


Figure 5: West facing section of main ditch [103]

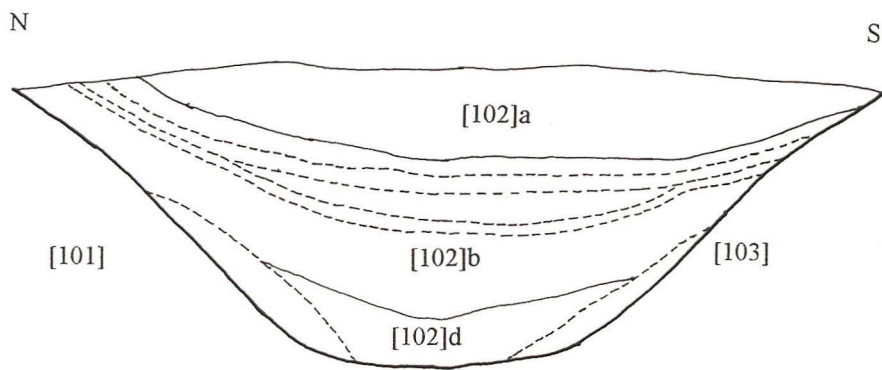


Figure 6: South facing section of gully [125]

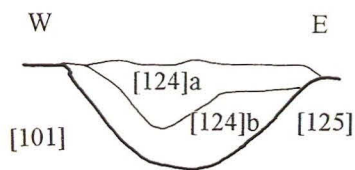


Figure 7: North facing section of gully [119]

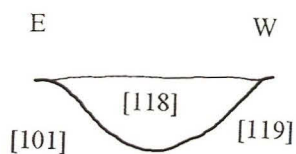


Figure 8: South facing section of gully [129]

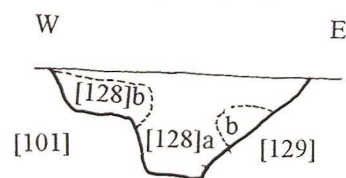


Figure 9: North facing section of slot [109]

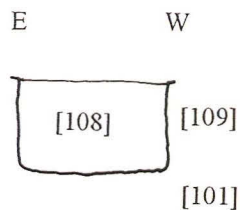


Figure 10: South facing section of slot [107]

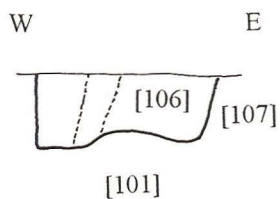


Figure 11: North facing section of slot [105]

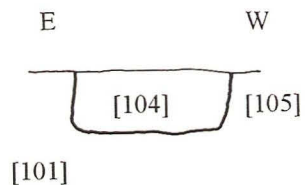


Figure 12: West facing section of truncated gully [121]

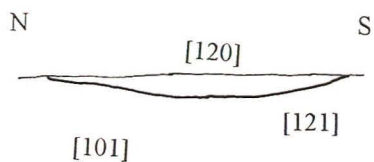
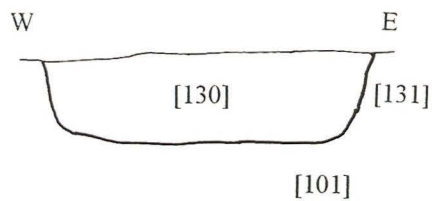


Figure 13: South facing section of pit/ depression [131].



0m

1m

2m



A final phase of monitoring took place between 3/2/97 and 14/2/97, during which foundation trenches were excavated and a communication trench along the east boundary of the site was monitored. During the gap between phases a membrane and a crushed limestone hard standing was placed over the area to allow easy access for plant to the site. The foundation consisted of a ring beam stretching round the building, with two cross-wall beams, in reality this beam only broke the surface of the membrane. The ring beam connected 64 foundation pads, 22 on the north and south walls, 5 on each of the end walls and cross walls. These pads varied in size due to the internal layout of the planned factory (See figure 14). They were numbered in the order of excavation.

This phase of work was monitored due to the lack of dating evidence associated with the archaeology already exposed. One unexpected feature was sampled during the digging of pit 38; a gully [137] on the south side of the main ditch [103]:

[136] fine blue silty fill of [137]

[137] north-south linear gully; 0.32m deep, 0.5m wide

6.0 Conclusions

The brief has resulted in the exposure of a well preserved, planned, field and land management system. This system does not relate to the modern drainage pattern and must pre-date, therefore, the existing layout.

Considering the total absence of stratified dating evidence, it has not been possible to place the field system in any one cultural period, though the presumption is that it was medieval. It may have belonged to the Manor of Drayton, the Abbey of Swineshead, or it may have related to the expansion of the Medieval Village around and after the 14th century. The regular system exposed is indicative of considerable expenditure in terms of manpower (and man-hours) and social organisation.

7.0 Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are expressed to Grimme UK Ltd for commissioning Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) to undertake the watching brief: in particular, to Paul Ingamells for his co-operation, assistance and patience throughout the project. Thanks are expressed also to Jim Bonnor (the former Community Archaeologist) and Steve Membrey (present Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council).

8.0 References

- Boston Borough Council 1993 Local Development Plan (draft)
- Palmer-Brown, CPH 1995 '*Station Road, Swineshead*' unpublished
assessment report.
- Dept. of the 1990 '*Archaeology and Planning*' Planning Policy
Environment *Guidance Note 16* (PPG 16)
- Mills, A D 1993 *English Place-Names*
- Morris J (general ed.) 1986 '*Lincolnshire*' *Domesday Book 31*
- Simmons, BB 1979 *Notes On The History of Swineshead*
(unpublished)

9.0 Appendices:

Appendix 1 List of archaeological contexts

Context	Description
100	Modern top cultivation soil, light brown loose silt.
101	Natural lamina flood silt deposits, under plough soil with all features cut
102	a Greyish brown silty clay top fill of ditch [103], very clean, may be a backfill
102	b Lamina silt sand wash deposit fill of ditch [103], which lines the northern edge of the ditch, sealed by [102]a and sealing [102]c.
102	c Grey clean weathered silt eroded from the southern edge of ditch [103], the surface of this deposit has a thin organic deposit, sealed by [102]b seals [102]d
102	d Clean blue reduced standing water deposit lining d base of ditch [103]
103	U shaped cut of large ditch running east west across the site, cuts [101]
104	Even blue silt fill of small north/south gully, cut [105]
105	Small curving gully cut with square sides and a flat bottom, contains [104]
106	Light grey silt fill of slot [107], appears to show post pipe.
107	Short regular square flat bottomed linear slot, which may have held posts, fill [106].
108	Mid grey brown silty fill of slot [109]
109	Short square in profile slot, which appeared to have post impressions in the bottom, contains [108].
110	Light grey blue silty clay fill of unexcavated gully feature.
111	Cut of small linear unexcavated feature.
112	Blue grey fill of small gully, which runs parallel to [103] on its north side.
113	Linear cut which contains [112]
114	Section of very truncated gully fill contained by [115]
115	Cut of very truncated gully part of [113] and [117].
116	Blue fill of truncated gully, same as [114] and [115].
117	Part of very truncated gully cut associated with [113] and [115]
118	Blue grey silty fill of gully running north/south.
119	V shape north/south gully cut containing [118]
120	Blue grey silty fill of gully [121].
121	Cut of north/east south/west gully which joins [119] and [125],but is much shallower than the north/south ditches.
122	Chocolate brown clay and silt deposit in lamina form, seals [104], appears same as [102]b.

- 123 Slot with vertical sides which runs into ditch [103] and has [105] running into it.
- 124 a Blue grey clay top fill of north/south gully [125].
- 124 b Mid brown silty clay lower fill of gully [125].
- 125 Cut of north south gully.
- 126 Silty clay fill of small depression [127].
- 127 Small depression containing [127], probably natural.
- 128 Blue grey silty clay fill of north/south gully [129].
- 129 Cut of north/south gully.
- 130 Dark grey blue solid clay fill of small depression or pit.
- 131 Cut of long thin pit with vertical sides, no finds may be natural.
- 132 Clay with some silt fill of a natural channel, fill [133]
- 133 Cut of natural water channel.
- 134 Fill of small natural water channel
- 135 Cut of small natural water channel which runs to meet [133].
- 136 Fill of north south gully seen in south wall beam slot.
- 137 U shaped cut of north south gully, the only one seen on the south side of ditch [103].

**Appendix 2 Information derived from the County Sites and Monuments
Record and records held at Heritage Lincolnshire**

NGR	SMR ref.	HTL ref.	Description
TF 22804150	12574		Flint scraper (Neolithic) in imported gravel?, 1976
TF 23114182	12570	19/030	Neolithic polished stone axe, found 1954
TF 23224211	12569	19/024	Bronze Age (? socketed) axe, found March, 1957. Also Roman and medieval pottery
TF 23204210	12568	19/023	Scatter of Romano-British pottery discovered by Mr Frankish (now departed). Find spot = Creasey Plot
TF 23204210	12589		Medieval faceted pipkin handle
TF 242395	(P)- map		Large concentration of medieval pottery + occasional sherds of Romano-British and saltern material
TF 1231231398	(N)- map		Scatter of Stamford ware pottery + Bourne type, Toynton, ?Saxo-Norman pot + bronze spoon
TF 236406	(P)- map	19/04	Complete medieval jug; brown glazed, green splashes
TF 24753965	(D)-map		Human remains; associated C16 th /C17 th pottery, tile, mould fragments. Site of St Adrian's Chapel (EMAB(1965), 27)
TF 223410		19/001	Soil marks (recorded on aerial photographs, CUCAP 1975); rectangular + linear - probably settlement enclosure and associated fields
TF 23754020		19/006	St Mary's Church
TF 221433		19/031	Romano-British grey ware pottery, colour coat + Samian ware
TF 229422	12590	19/032	Romano-British pottery: reported after clearing out of the New Hammond Beck. Appears to have derived from a marked geological division between clay and silt and is possibly the ancient course of the River Witham
TF 235408		19/040	Human skeleton associated with C14 th /C15 th pottery. Found 4 feet beneath modern ground surface in sewer trench

TF 23204125	19/041	Possible pit discovered during watching brief; no associated finds
TF 23114240	19/043	Negative watching brief result
TF 226417	19/044	Pit like feature; burnt deposits, pottery, bone (?x 1 Potterhanworth-type sherd + 2 earlier fragments). Watching brief
TF 236407	19/045	Timber-framed mud and stud cottage destroyed. Medieval pottery found.? Watching brief/survey.
TF 231399		Estevening Hall (site of)

Aerial photography

Several aerial photographs (many without reference numbers) are held by the Boston Community Archaeologist (usually vertical cover). Those which covered the present site were scrutinised: site-specific crop/soil marks or other distinguishing features were not detected.

Appendix 3 Colour photographs



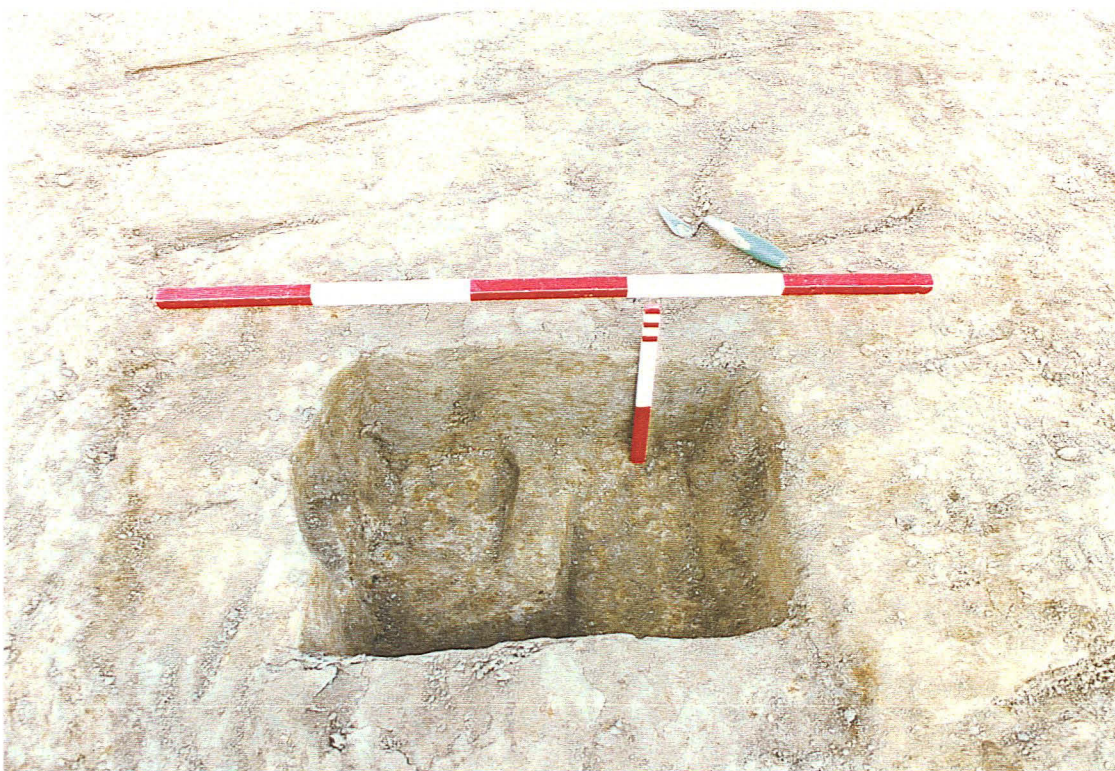
P 1; General shot of stripped site facing north east down ditch [103].



P 2; Section of gully [119] taken from the south.



P 3; Section of gully [129] taken from the south



P 4; Section of slot [107] taken from the south west.



P 5; Section of excavated ditch [103] showing cow mandible over fill [102]d