

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF
THE LOWER R.N.S.D. AND S.E.F. SITES,
TOPSHAM ROAD, EXETER**

DEVON

SX 9535 8974

On behalf of

Dukeminster Ltd

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REPORT FOR Dukeminster Ltd
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services conducted an archaeological evaluation of the proposed development site, from 19th July until 28th August 2007. Fifty-eight trenches, totalling approximately 1750 metres in length, were excavated to reveal the underlying natural geology.

Numerous undated ditches, pits and postholes were recorded across the site, and there would appear to be at least three phases or activity, but probably more. Prehistoric activity is represented by two Neolithic to Bronze Age ditches and a sparse scatter of flint. Remnants of a possible Roman field system adjacent to the line of the Roman road were recorded.

Other ditches probably associated with medieval and later field systems were also excavated including some features that appear to correspond to a boundary marked on the 1840's Tithe Map.

The investigation of a previously identified lynchet revealed it to be nothing more than modern landscaping.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The proposed development is situated east of Topsham Road and is centred on National Grid Reference SX 9535 8974. The site is divided into two, which are known as the lower RNSD and S.E.F sites. Both occupy the south-western part of the lower Royal Naval Stores Depot.

The lower RNSD site is 7.27 hectares (17.96 acres) in extent and has its perimeters marked by the fence along the edge of the SEF site to the north-west, the property boundaries of houses alongside the Topsham Road to the south-west, and the fence facing agricultural land to the south-east and the golf course to the north-east. The site is occupied by a series of buildings, many of which date back to the Second World War when it was used by the US navy as an amphibious supply base. The ground between the buildings on the south-western side of the site is surfaced with concrete, while a number of the structures in this area are set on terraces. The centre of the proposed development is under a mixture of tarmac, concrete and grass. The buildings in the northern part of the site are accessed by a tarmac road and the intervening land is under grass. Several buildings have been recently demolished although their concrete bases remain.

The S.E.F. site extends over 9.39 hectares (23.2 acres) and its perimeter is marked by a fence. This is congruent with the edge of the RNSD site to the south-east, the rear property boundaries of houses fronting onto the Topsham Road to the south-west and the edge of the golf course to the north-west and north-east. Some of the wartime buildings still survive within this proposed development area, but many have been demolished and replaced with modern warehouses and ancillary structures. The present structures are mainly located in the south-western two thirds of the site where they are surrounded by concrete aprons. By contrast the north-eastern end of the site

is occupied by a single works building and is largely under grass although many buildings formerly are present.

The one inch edition geological map (Sheet 325, Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales) shows Dawlish Sandstone across most of the RNSD site and across all of the S.E.F. land, while Terrace Gravel is depicted in the south-eastern part of the RNSD site. This is at odds with the more recent mapping of the Terrace Gravels, which shows the Fifth Terrace extending across the north-eastern part of the RNSD and the SEF land, with the Fourth Terrace occupying the south-western parts of both sites (Edwards and Scrivener 1999, Figure 37). According to this source, the Dawlish Sandstone does not outcrop within either of the proposed development areas, although it is likely to be stratified below the gravel.

1.2 Planning Background

It is the intention to redevelop the land for residential use. Due to the potential presence of remains of archaeological interest in the proposal area, Exeter City Council has advised that an archaeological assessment and evaluation of the proposal site should be undertaken. An archaeological desk-based assessment of the site has already been carried out. This is in line with PPG 16 and Local Plan Policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

A desk-based assessment of the site has been carried out (JMHS 2006). While there are no known archaeological features within the proposal site, it lies within an area of archaeological potential. The DBA concluded that there was a potential for prehistoric activity to be found on the lower RNSD and S.E.F. sites (JMHS 2006, 43-45). In addition the proximity of the Roman road between Exeter and Topsham gave a potential for the south-western end of both sites to contain remains relating to Roman settlement with the potential for associated fields in the north-eastern parts of the two sites (JMHS 2006, 45).

The potential for remains of Saxon, medieval, and post-medieval date was assessed as low by the desk-based assessment. However it was noted that the field name 'Brick Field' used on the Topsham tithe map for a plot coinciding with the south-eastern corner of the RNSD land (JMHS 2006, Figure 17, 571), may have archaeological implications. It could denote the site of an earlier building or refer to an area where bricks were made in the past. Post-medieval features connected with land-use might well survive within the proposed development areas. The field boundaries on the historic maps are likely to have been marked by ditches. These might contain dateable finds providing new evidence for the origin of the boundaries, although this is very unlikely. In general, field ditches were maintained and kept clean so that they tend only to contain material relating to the final phases of their use. For this reason they have a relatively low archaeological potential.

The lynchet identified during the site walkover survey at the south-western end of the RNSD site (JMHS 2006, Figure 31) was considered to be potentially an earlier field boundary pre-dating the 1840's tithe map. Its alignment would certainly suggest that it was part of the post-medieval layout, while the row of trees corresponding with the lynchet on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map implies that remnants of the field boundary were still in place in AD 1889.

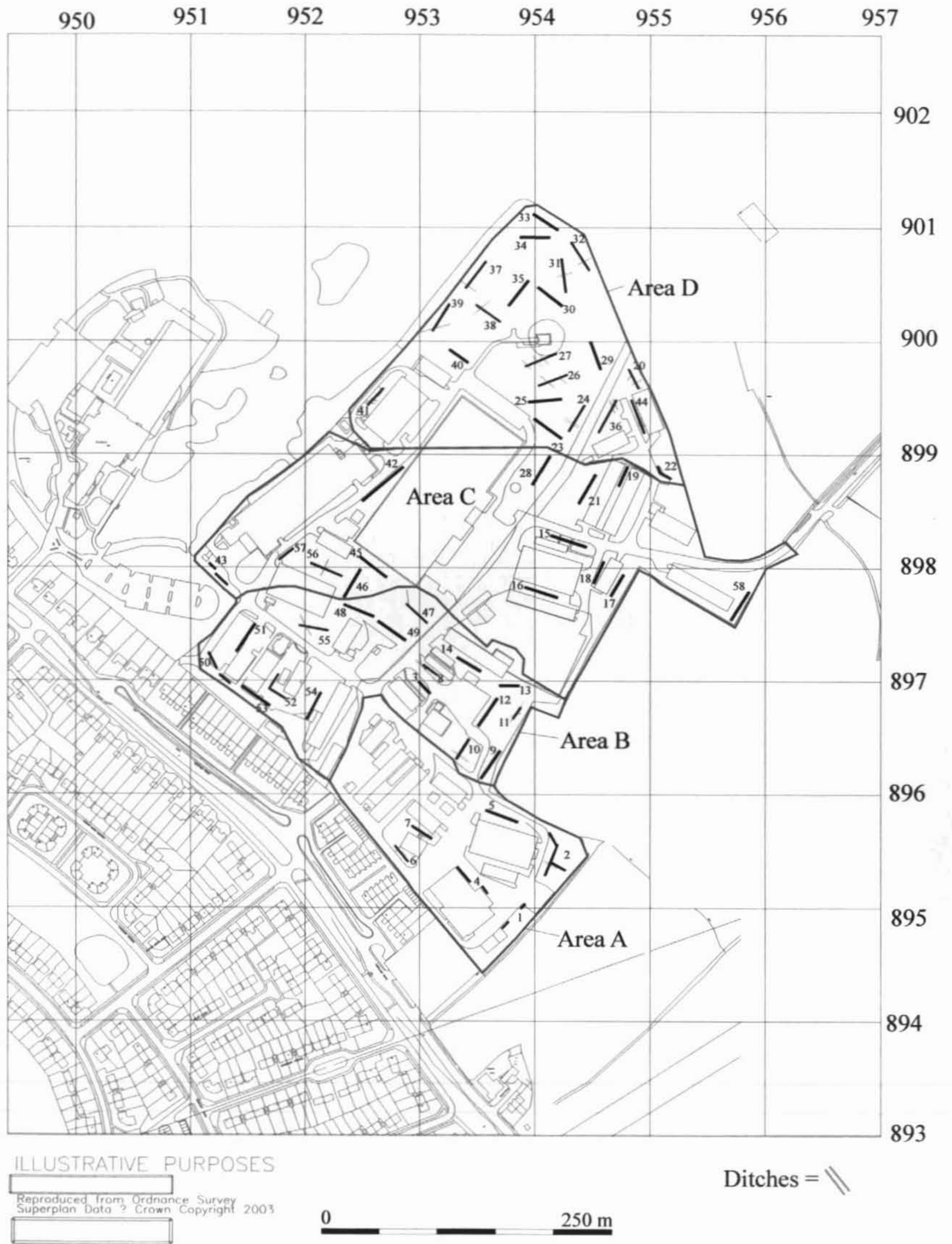


Figure 1. Trench location plan

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

In particular

- To establish whether to establish whether known prehistoric activity in the area extended onto this site
- To establish whether Roman settlement associated with the Roman road is present.
- To date the lynchet

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In response to Exeter City Council's request a scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and agreed with Exeter City Council and the applicant. The work was carried out by JMHS and was to involve the excavation of trial trenches across the site (Fig. 1).

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and the procedures laid down in MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

3.2 Methodology

The trenching sample required was to be achieved through the excavation of fifty-five 30.0m trenches. Certain trenches were shortened due to the presence of services while others were extended either to compensate for the shortening or where archaeological features were present. Contingency was given for further trenches of which 3 additional trenches were excavated.

All trenches were at least 1.6 m wide and were excavated by a 360° tracked 6 ton excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand prior to limited hand excavation of any identified archaeological deposits.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced. The trenches were backfilled after recording.

Mr Andrew Pye of Exeter City Council monitored the work.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Excavation Results

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in [] indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

Some features in certain trenches were left unexcavated due to health and safety reasons, for example where the trench was too deep or the sides unstable to allow entry into the trench. Numerous services were also recorded across the entire site.

The site was split into four areas based on its topography.

Area A

The area is defined as a low lying area to the south of the site at approximately 12-13m OD. Within it were located trenches 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

The natural geology over the majority of this area was an orange-brown sandy clay with gravel (2/06), (4/05), (5/04), (6/04) and (7/08). Some localised variations within the natural were recorded within trench 6 (6/24), (6/25) and (6/26). The natural exposed at the southern most end of the area was a light grey clay with gravel (1/05).

Trench 1

The trench was excavated in two halves, one to the south-west and the other to the north-east. Each displayed a slightly different stratigraphy.

Directly above the natural in the south-western section was a 0.2m thick deposit of grey gritty clay (1/04) that contained fragments of brick. Above this was a layer of large rubble blocks in a grey-black sandy clay matrix (1/03) that was 0.85m thick. This also contained brick fragments. Over this was a loose brown sandy clay with considerable quantities of small stones (1/02) this was 0.25m thick.

In the north-eastern section a 0.2m thick layer of orange gritty clay (1/10) lay directly above the natural. Over this was a 0.02 to 0.04m thick layer of black clay (1/09) with a small amount of gravel. It extended into the trench for only 2m from the north edge of the trench. Above this was a 0.4m thick layer of dark brown clay loam (1/08) with rubble chunks and brick fragments. Overlying this was a 0.6m thick layer of orange-brown silty clay (1/07) that contained metal, glass and brick fragments.

The upper most layer across both halves was a 0.1m thick topsoil of black-grey loam with a high percentage of gravel and some degraded tarmac (1/01)/(1/06).

Trench 2 (figure 2)

This trench displayed some archaeological features cut into the natural as well as a series of modern land drains.

At the northern end of the trench part of a large pit [2/12] was exposed. This was at least 4m in length and over 1m wide. This pit was unexcavated but contained a grey sandy clay (2/11) fill containing large quantities of gravel and brick. This pit was sealed by a layer of brownish-pink sandy clay (2/07) that contained large amounts of brick fragments and coal dust. This layer was present only in the northern part of the trench, it averaged 0.48m in thickness but this was thicker to the south-east of the deposit where it was over 1m, possibly filling another rectangular pit that was over 2m by 3m. This was also unexcavated.

Towards the southern end of the trench was a ditch [2/13], which was 2.8m wide and aligned roughly SE-NW. It had shallow sides at roughly 30° and was over 0.5m deep. It was not fully excavated due to flooding of the trench. The fill of this ditch was a grey sandy clay (2/14) with the odd rare charcoal fleck.

Two areas of grey sandy clay within the natural were recorded (2/08) and (2/15) that appeared to be small palaeo-channels. They were unexcavated.

These features were sealed by a 0.25m thick layer of orange silty clay (2/05). It was overlain by a 0.1m deposit of dark grey-brown sandy clay (2/04). These layers were not present across the entire trench and were quite hard to trace in certain places. It is possible that these represent the remnant of a buried soil sequence. Above this was a 0.44m thick deposit of dark orange-brown clay with gravel (2/03).

At the southern end of the trench was an irregular cut [2/10] that was over 3m long. This was filled with a dark grey sandy clay (2/09) with brick rubble and charcoal.

This pit was sealed by a 0.35m thick deposit of grey-black loam with large quantities of brick fragments and some tarmac (2/02). This deposit also lay over deposits (2/07) and (2/03).

The uppermost layer within this trench was a 0.15m thick deposit black gritty loam (2/01) with some tarmac chunks and brick fragments.

Trench 4 (figure 3)

The trench was excavated in two sections, one to the north-west and the other to the south-east. Each displayed a slightly different stratigraphy.

In the north-west section of the trench was a 0.25m thick layer of grey-brown sandy-clay (4/04) flecked with charcoal overlying the natural (4/05). Cut into this were two pits. The first pit [4/14] appeared oval, at least 2.6m wide and 0.3m deep with a flat base. It was filled with a dark grey clay with charcoal flecks (4/13). The second [4/16] was circular, 0.9m in diameter, 0.38m deep with a rounded profile and concave base. It was filled with a dark grey clay with charcoal flecks and brick fragments (4/15).

Also cut into this layer (4/04) was a french drain filled with gravel. This was aligned roughly north to south and obviously pre-dated the adjacent hanger.

Sealing the pits was a layer of dark grey-brown sandy clay (4/03) flecked with charcoal that was 0.25m thick. Above this was a 0.2m thick layer of red-brown sandy clay (4/02) containing brick fragments. The uppermost layer was 0.1m thick of grey gritty loam (4/01).

To the south-east a layer of dark brown sandy clay (4/09) overlay the natural (4/10), this was 0.2m thick. Cut in to this was a pit [4/12] that was oval, at least 4m wide and 0.34m deep. It was filled with a dark grey sandy clay with charcoal flecks and brick fragments (4/11).

Sealing this pit was a layer of light brown sandy clay (4/08) flecked with charcoal that was 0.3m thick. Above this was a 0.2m thick layer of grey-black sandy clay (4/07) containing brick fragments. The uppermost layer was 0.1m thick of grey-brown gritty loam (4/06).

Trench 5 (figure 3)

Cut in to the natural (5/04) was a sub-circular pit [5/05] that was roughly 0.8m in diameter and up to 0.3m deep with vertical sides and an uneven base. The fill was a mid grey silty clay with flecks of charcoal (5/06).

Sealing this pit was a layer of red-brown clay with the odd small stone and charcoal fleck (5/03). It varied between 0.2m and 0.4m in thickness. Above this was a 0.4m thick layer of grey mottled red sandy clay (5/02). The uppermost layer was a black-brown gritty loam (5/01) approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 6 (figure 3)

Two gullies were recorded aligned NW-SE cut into the natural (6/04). The first [6/05] was 0.35m wide, over 1.5m long and 0.07m deep. It was filled with an orange-grey sandy clay (6/06) flecked with charcoal. Parallel to it at 1m distance was a second gully. This one [6/17] was 0.3m wide and 0.09m deep filled with an orange-grey sandy clay (6/16). It was over 4m long and possibly cut by ditch [6/14].

Ditch [6/14] was aligned NE-SW and was nearly at right angles to [6/17]. It was 1m wide and 0.35m deep, filled with a dark grey-brown clay-sand (6/15).

Three postholes and a stake hole were located close to the two gullies. The first posthole [6/19] was 0.22m in diameter, 0.04m deep and filled with a dark grey-brown clay-sand (6/18). The second posthole [6/21] was oval measuring 0.4m by 0.18m, 0.06m deep and filled with a dark red-brown clay-sand (6/20). The third posthole [6/30] was 0.20m in diameter, 0.1m deep and filled with a grey-brown clay-sand (6/31). The stake hole [6/23] was circular in plan 0.05m in diameter, 0.08m deep and filled with a red to grey-brown clay-sand (6/22).

Plough marks were also observed cut into the natural. The first [6/27] was 0.1m wide, 4m long and aligned NW-SE it was filled with an orange-grey sandy clay (6/28). Parallel to this were two others. One [6/09] was 1.2m long and the other [6/11] 0.9m. Both had similar fills to the first (6/10) and (6/12) respectively. A further plough mark [6/07] was aligned NNW-SSE and bisected the first. It was also filled with an orange-grey sandy clay (6/08).

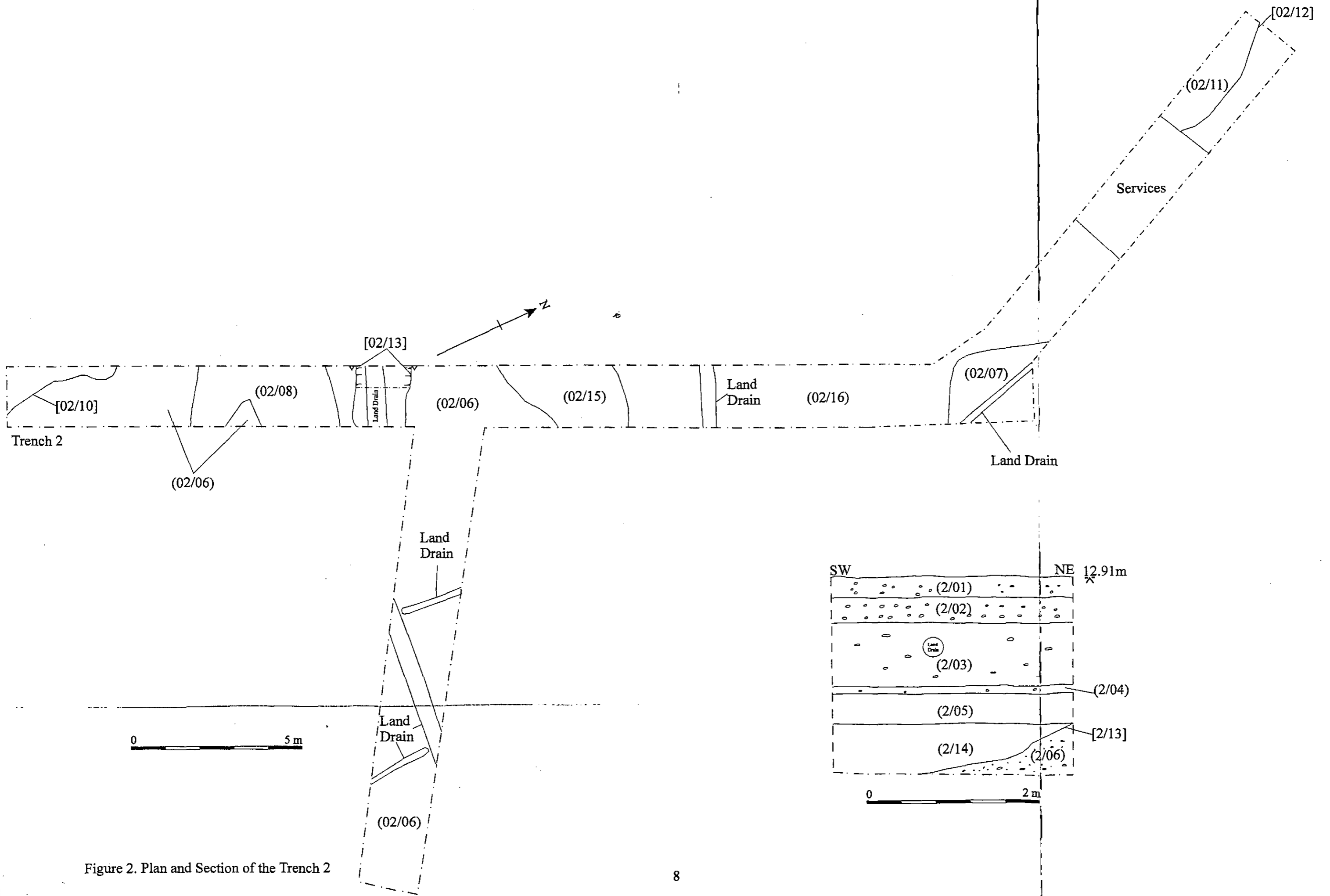


Figure 2. Plan and Section of the Trench 2

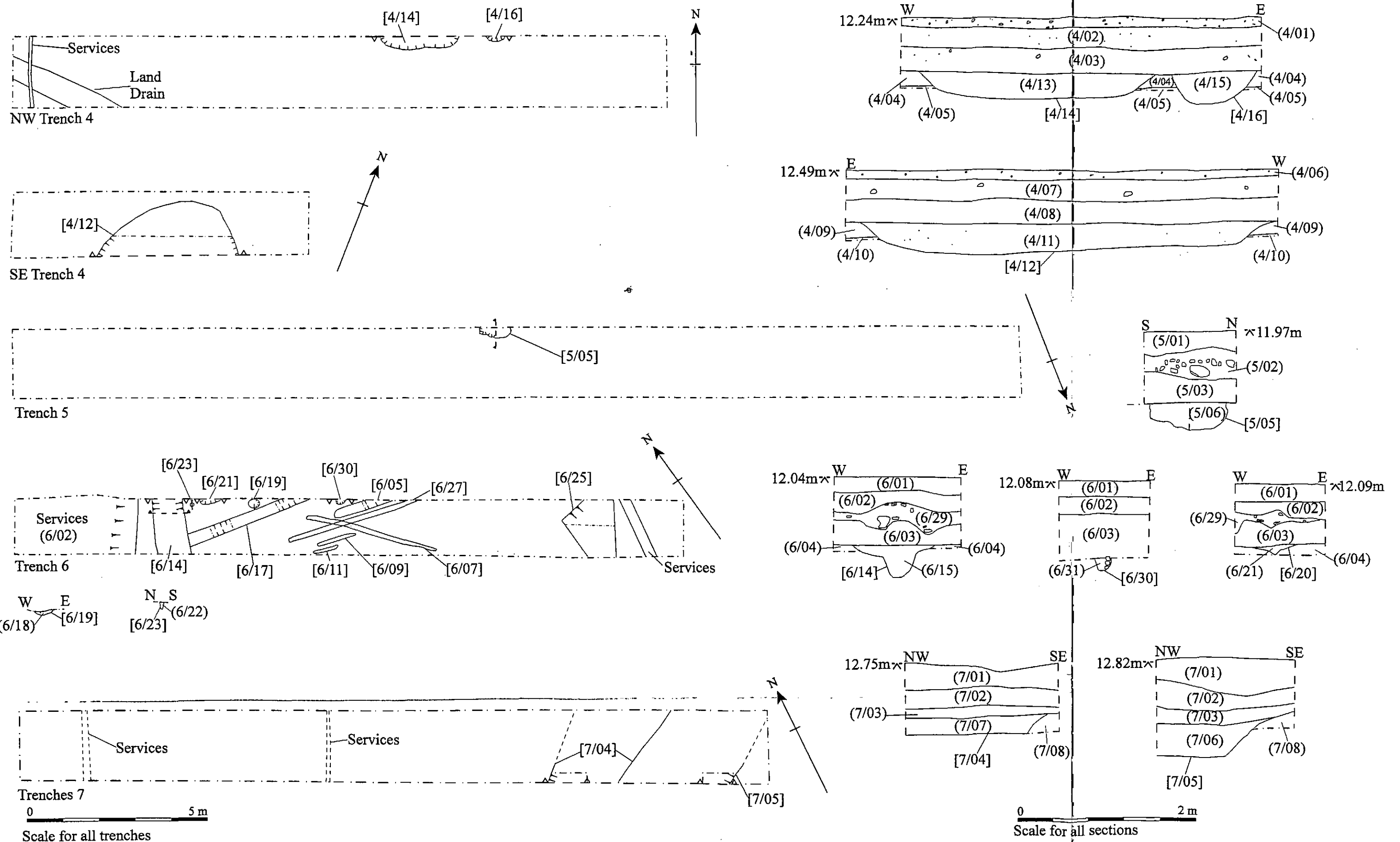


Figure 3. Plans and Sections of the Trenches 4, 5, 6 and 7

Sealing all of these features was a 0.2m thick deposit of orange-brown sandy clay (6/03) flecked with charcoal. Above this was a layer of red-brown sandy clay (6/02) also flecked with charcoal. Between these two layers at the northern end of the trench was a rubble layer (6/29) that was up to 0.2m thick in places. The uppermost layer was a dark red-brown loam (6/01) up to 0.2m thick containing brick fragments.

Trench 7 (figure 3)

Two ditches were recorded both cut into the natural (7/08). The first [7/04] was aligned roughly NE-SW and was 1.8m wide, 0.2m deep with 45° sides and a flat base. It was filled with a yellowish grey silty clay (7/07) which contained some iron nails.

The second ditch [7/05] was also aligned roughly NE-SW and was over 0.75m wide (continuing under the east baulk), 0.5m deep with 45° sides and a flat base. It was filled with a red-brown silty clay (7/06) which contained a sherd of hand-made pottery probably of a prehistoric date.

Sealing both of these ditches was a 0.15m thick layer of light grey sandy clay (7/03). Over this was a 0.15m thick layer of yellow-brown sandy clay (7/02) with glass, metal and brick fragments. The uppermost layer was a dark brown loam (7/01).

Area B

This area is located on the sloping ground rising up from area A to area C. This rise is from approximately 14m to 19m OD. Trenches 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54 and 55 were located here.

The natural in this area was a red clay-sand with varying amounts of gravel, in some places tinged brown or yellow-orange (3/06), (8/05), (9/04), (10/05), (11/06), (12/05), (13/07), (14/05), (47/04), (48/05), (49/06), (50/06), (51/04), (52/04), (53/04) and (55/03).

Trench 3

Directly above the natural was a 0.56m thick deposit of dark red-brown sandy clay with small stones (3/05). Above this was a layer of dark brown-yellow sandy clay (3/04) that was 0.35m thick. Over this was a light brown sandy clay (3/03) this was 0.35m thick. Above this was a green-grey silty sandy clay (3/02) with numerous small pebbles that was 0.1m thick. The uppermost layer was a brown loam (3/01) with gravel approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 8 (figure 4)

Cut in to the natural (8/05) was a ditch This ditch [8/09] was aligned NW-SE and was over 5m long, 1.8m wide and 0.13m deep with a flat base. It was filled with a red-brown clay with gravel (8/10). What about 8/05. Is it turning at east end?

Covering the ditch was a 0.35m thick layer of orange-brown clay-sand (8/04). Cut into this layer was a pit [8/07]. It was only partially revealed and was at least 1.3m wide by 0.5m long. The sides were at 60° and the base concave. It was filled with a grey sand with gravel (8/06) with the odd charcoal fleck.

Overlying deposit (8/04) was a layer of rubble and brick fragments in an orange-brown sandy clay matrix (8/03). Not showing on section of 8/07 This was 0.5m thick. Over this was a 0.6m thick deposit of light brown sandy clay (8/02) with brick fragments. The uppermost layer was dark brown sandy loam (8/01) that was 0.2m thick.

Trench 9

Directly above the natural was a 0.55m thick deposit of dark red-brown sandy clay with small stones (9/03) and brick fragments. Above this was a layer of orange-brown sandy clay with gravel (9/02) that was 0.6m thick. The uppermost layer was a brown loam (9/01) with gravel approximately 0.35m thick.

Trench 10 (figure 4)

Cut in to the natural (10/05) was a small ditch [10/06]. It was aligned NW-SW and was 0.6m wide and 0.13m deep with shallow U-shaped profile. It was filled with a grey sandy clay flecked with charcoal (10/07). Cutting this ditch were two modern French drains.

Overlying the ditch fill was a layer of orange-brown sandy clay (10/04) that was 0.55m thick. Above this was a 0.5m thick layer of mid-brown sandy clay (10/03), and above that a 0.5m thick deposit of dark brown sandy clay (10/02) flecked with charcoal. The uppermost layer was a dark red-brown loam (10/01) that was 0.3m thick.

Trench 11 (figure 4)

Cut in to the natural (11/06) were two linear features that were not excavated due the depth of the trench. The first [11/07] was 6m long, 0.4m wide and aligned NE-SW. It appeared to be filled with a grey-brown sandy clay. The second [11/08] was at least 7m long, at least 0.6m wide and aligned NE-SW. The fill was a grey-brown silty clay with large quantities of brick rubble.

Overlying these features was a light brown sandy clay (11/05) layer 0.5m thick. Above this was a 0.55m thick layer of grey clay (11/04) with stone and brick rubble. Over this a black-grey sandy clay (11/03) with large quantities of tarmac that was 0.35m thick. Above this was a thin layer (11/02) of degraded tarmac 0.03m thick. This probably represented a temporary surface. The uppermost layer was 0.15m thick of red-brown loam (11/01).

Trench 12

Directly above the natural (12/05) was a 0.25m thick deposit of grey sandy clay with small stones (12/04). Above this was a layer of dark brown sandy clay with gravel (12/03) that was 0.4m thick. Over this was a 0.7m thick layer of grey-brown gritty clay (12/02) with large quantities of brick fragments. The uppermost layer was a grey-brown loam (12/01) with gravel approximately 0.1m thick.

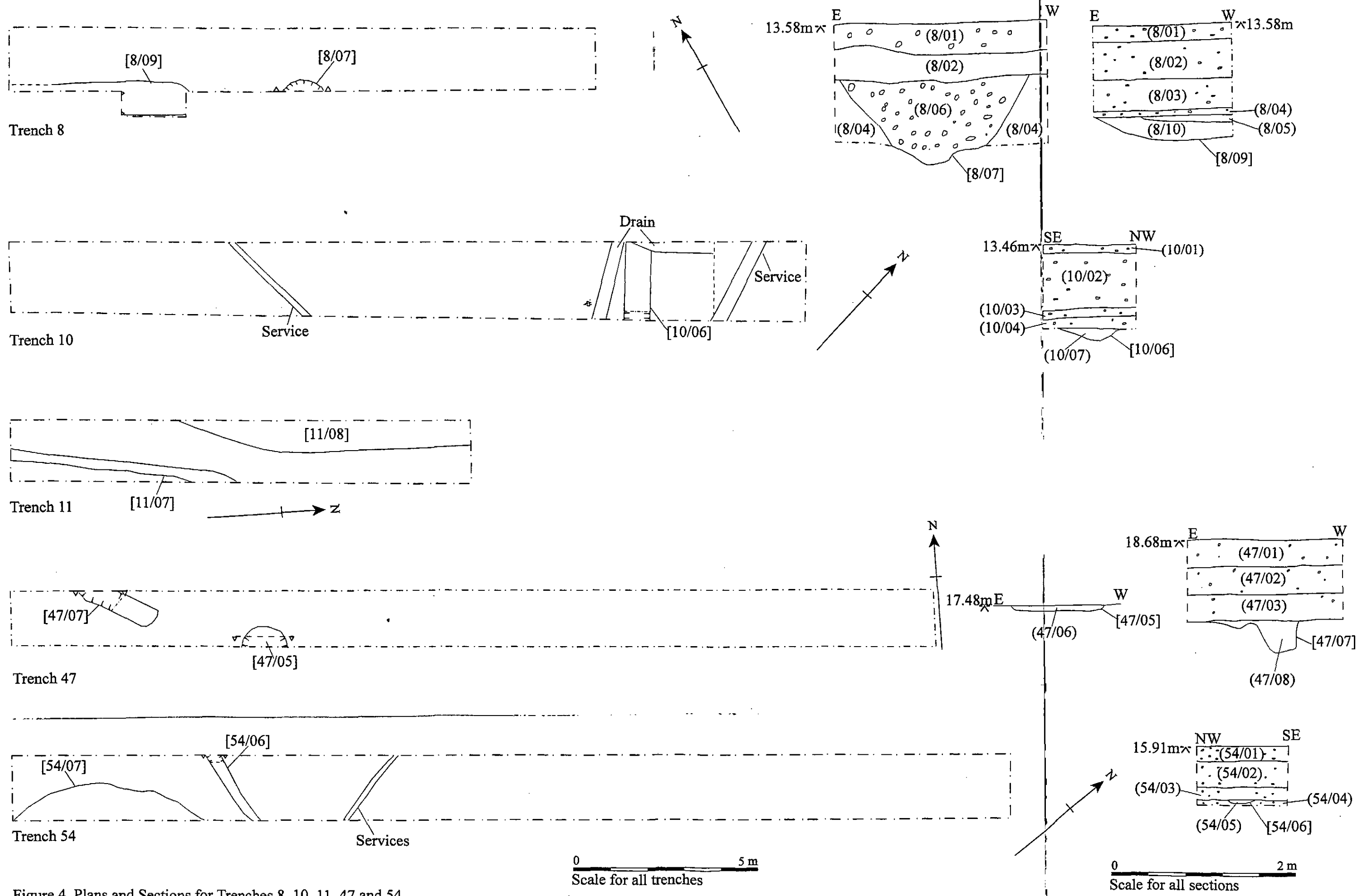


Figure 4. Plans and Sections for Trenches 8, 10, 11, 47 and 54

Trench 13

Directly above the natural (13/07) was a 0.3m thick deposit of orange-brown sandy clay with small stones and brick fragments (13/06). Above this was a layer of dark orange-brown sandy clay with gravel (13/05) that was 0.3m thick. Over this was a 0.25m thick layer of grey-brown sandy clay (13/04) with brick fragments. Above this was a 0.25m thick layer of brown-orange clay (13/03). Over this was a deposit of light brown-orange sandy clay (13/02) with rubble and brick fragments. The uppermost layer was a red-brown loam (13/01) with gravel approximately 0.1m thick.

Trench 14

Directly above the natural (14/05) was a 0.45m thick deposit of dark brown sandy clay with small stones (14/04). Above this was a layer of dark black-brown sandy clay with gravel and tarmac (14/03) that was 0.2m thick. Over this was a 0.87m thick layer of grey-red gritty clay (14/02) with large quantities of brick fragments. The uppermost layer was a grey-brown loam (14/01) with gravel approximately 0.55m thick.

Trench 47 (figure 4)

Cut in to the natural (47/04) was a ditch and a pit. The ditch [47/07] was aligned roughly N-S and was over 3m long. It was 0.6m wide, 0.3m deep with a U-shaped profile and filled with a light grey-orange sandy clay flecked with charcoal (47/08). The pit [47/05] was circular in plan approximately 0.75m in diameter, 0.05m deep and filled with a dark brown-red sandy clay with gravel (47/06).

Sealing these features was a 0.3m thick deposit of brown-grey sandy clay (47/03) with a moderate amount of brick fragments. Over this was a layer of black-brown sandy clay (47/02) that was 0.2m thick and contained brick fragments. The uppermost layer was brown loam (47/01) that was 0.3m thick.

Trench 48

Directly above the natural (48/05) was a 0.36m thick deposit of dark brown-red sandy clay with small stones (48/04). Above this was a layer of light grey-brown sandy clay with gravel (48/03) that was 0.18m thick. Over this was a 0.2m thick layer of grey-black gritty clay (48/02) with large quantities of brick fragments and tarmac. The uppermost layer was a grey-brown loam (48/01) with gravel approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 49

Lying above the natural (49/06) was a 0.25m thick deposit of dark brown-red sandy clay with small stones (49/05). Above this was a layer of dark brown sandy clay with gravel (49/04) that was 0.35m thick. Over this was a 0.8m thick layer of light brown gritty sandy clay (49/03) with large quantities of brick fragments. Above this was a deposit of orange-red sandy-clay (49/02) containing brick fragments that was 0.1m thick. The uppermost layer was a grey-brown loam (49/01) with gravel approximately 0.3m thick.

Trench 50

Directly above the natural (50/06) was a 0.16m thick deposit of brown-yellow sandy clay with small stones and brick fragments (50/05). Above this was a layer of dark brown sandy clay with gravel (50/04) that was 0.08m thick. Over this was a 0.18m thick layer of light grey-brown gritty sandy clay (50/03) with brick fragments. Above this was a deposit of brown-red sandy-clay (50/02) containing brick fragments that was 0.28m thick. The uppermost layer was a grey-brown loam (50/01) with gravel approximately 0.16m thick.

Two large square concrete foundation pillars were also recorded within this trench. They were roughly 1m wide and cut from layer (50/02).

Trench 51

Above the natural (51/04) was a 0.38m thick deposit of dark brown-red sandy clay with small stones (51/03). Over this was a layer of light grey-brown sandy clay with gravel (51/02) that was 0.16m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (51/01) with gravel approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 52

Lying above the natural (52/03) was a 0.12m thick deposit of dark brown-black sandy clay with small stones (52/04). This was possibly a buried land surface. Above this was a layer of yellow-brown sandy clay with gravel (50/02) that was 0.2m thick. The uppermost layer was a grey-brown loam (52/01) with gravel approximately 0.14m thick.

Trench 53

Above the natural (53/04) was a 0.2 thick deposit of dark brown-red sandy clay with small stones (51/03) and brick fragments. Over this was layer up to 0.18m thick of small stones (53/05). This possibly represents a temporary road or pathway. Above this was a layer of grey-brown sandy clay with gravel (53/02) with brick rubble that was 0.36m thick. The uppermost layer was a light grey-brown loam (53/01) with gravel approximately 0.14m thick.

Trench 54 (figure 4)

Cut into the natural (54/04) at the southern end of the trench was a large modern pit [54/07] over 5.5m long filled with black-grey clay-sand containing brick rubble and wood.

Also cut in to the natural was a narrow gully [54/06] aligned E-W. It was 0.4m wide, 0.08m deep and had a U-shaped profile. It was filled with a brown sandy clay (54/05) flecked with charcoal.

Sealing these features was a 0.13m thick layer of red-orange sandy clay (54/03). Above this was a layer of orange-brown sandy clay with gravel (54/02) with brick rubble that was 0.29m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (54/01) with gravel approximately 0.18m thick.

Trench 55 (figure 5)

Cut in to the natural (55/03) was a small ditch [55/05] aligned NNW-SSE. It was 0.58m wide, 0.15m deep with a U-shaped profile. It was filled with a grey-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (55/04).

Over the fill of this feature was a 0.5m thick deposit of brown sandy clay (55/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (55/01) with gravel approximately 0.2m thick.

Area C

Area C is located at the top of the rise from Area B in the upper slopes of the low hill at approximately 20m OD to the south of Area D. Trenches 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 28, 42, 43, 45, 46, 56, 57 and 58 are located within this area.

The natural in this area is a brown to yellowish-orange clay-sand with some gravel (15/03), (16/04), (17/04), (18/06), (19/03), (21/05), (28/04), (43/06), (45/04), (56/04), (57/05) and (58/04). The natural was not seen in trench 42.

Trench 15

Directly above the natural (15/03) was a 0.4m thick deposit of brown-orange sandy clay with small stones and brick fragments (15/02). The uppermost layer was a light grey-brown sandy clay (15/01) with gravel approximately 0.55m thick. The topsoil in this area had previously been striped during the construction of a road.

Trench 16 (figure 6)

Lying above the natural (16/04) was a 0.10m thick deposit of light brown-orange sandy clay with small stones (16/03). This was possibly a buried land surface. Above this was a layer of orange-brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (16/02) that was 0.3m thick.

Cut in to this layer was a modern circular pit [16/05] that was 1.4m in diameter and 0.5m deep with rounded sides. It was filled with a black-grey sandy clay (16/06) with tarmac and metal debris.

The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown sandy clay (15/01) with gravel approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 17

Above the natural (17/04) was a 0.45 thick deposit of dark brown-orange sandy clay with small stones (17/03) and brick fragments. Over this was layer up to 0.35m thick of brown sandy clay with brick fragments (17/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (17/01) with gravel approximately 0.45m thick.

Trench 18 (figure 6)

Lying above the natural (18/06) was a 0.27m thick deposit of light brown-orange sandy clay with small stones (18/05). Above this was a layer of dark orange-brown sandy clay with gravel (18/04) that was 0.4m thick.

Cut in to this layer was a modern circular pit [18/08] that was roughly 8.3m in diameter and 0.4m deep with rounded sides. It was filled with a black-grey sandy clay (18/07) with tarmac and metal debris.

Sealing this feature was a deposit of light brown sandy clay (18/02) with gravel and brick fragments. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (18/01) with gravel and brick fragments approximately 0.25m thick.

Trench 19

Directly above the natural (19/03) was a 0.48m thick deposit of brown-orange sandy clay with small stones and brick fragments (19/02). The uppermost layer was a light grey-brown sandy clay (19/01) with gravel approximately 0.39m thick.

Trench 21

Directly above the natural (21/05) was a 0.15m thick deposit of dark red sandy clay with small stones (21/04). Above this was a layer of light yellow-brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (21/03) that was 0.15m thick. Over this was a 0.1m thick layer of grey stone hardcore (21/02). It was probably a temporary road surface. The uppermost layer was a grey-brown loam (21/01) with gravel approximately 0.4m thick.

Trench 28

Lying above the natural (28/04) was a 0.36m thick deposit of dark brown-grey sandy clay with small stones (28/03). Above this was a layer of orange-red sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (28/02) that was 0.28m thick. The uppermost layer was a light grey-brown loam (28/01) with some gravel approximately 0.16m thick.

Trench 42

This trench was abandoned due to the excessive number of modern services in the area. The lowest deposit seen was an orange-brown sandy clay (42/03) at least 0.3m thick with large quantities of brick rubble with in it. Above this was a grey sandy clay and stone rubble (42/04) that was roughly 0.3m thick, but was no present across the entire length of the trench. At the western end of the trench was a tarmac surface (42/02) of an old road. This deposit was 0.03m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (42/01) with some gravel approximately 0.5m thick.

Trench 43

Directly above the natural (43/06) was a 0.24m thick deposit of brown sandy clay with small stones (43/05). Above this was a layer of brown-red sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (43/04) that was 0.46m thick. Over this was a 0.4m thick layer of red-brown sandy clay (43/03). This was overlain dark grey sandy clay (43/02) that

was 0.3m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (43/01) with gravel approximately 0.25m thick.

Trench 45

Lying above the natural (45/04) was a 0.35m thick deposit of dark brown-grey sandy clay with small stones and brick fragments (45/03). Above this was a layer of black-grey sandy clay with gravel, tarmac and brick fragments (45/02) that was 0.1m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (45/01) with some gravel approximately 0.4m thick.

Trench 46

Directly above the natural (46/05) was a 0.29m thick deposit of dark brown sandy clay with small stones (46/04). This was possibly a buried plough soil. Above this was a layer of dark red-brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (46/03) that was 0.27m thick. Over this was a 0.34m thick layer of yellow-brown sandy clay (46/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (46/01) with gravel approximately 0.19m thick.

Trench 56 (figure 6)

Cut in to the natural (56/04) was a ditch and a posthole. The ditch [56/06] was aligned NE-SW and was 0.8m wide, 0.3m deep with a V-shaped profile. It was filled with a red-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (56/05). The posthole [56/08] was to the SE of the ditch. It was 0.18m in diameter, 0.06m deep and filled with a grey brown sandy clay (56/07) that had the rare charcoal fleck.

Sealing these features was a 0.2m thick deposit of brown-red sandy clay flecked with charcoal (56/03). This was possibly a buried plough soil. Over this was a 0.56m thick layer of dark brown sandy clay with brick fragments (56/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown gritty loam (56/01) with gravel approximately 0.4m thick.

Trench 57 (figure 6)

Cut in to the natural (57/05) was a ditch. This ditch [57/06] was aligned NW-SE and was 1.1m wide, 0.15m deep with a shallow U-shaped profile. It was filled with a orange-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (57/07).

Sealing this ditch was a deposit of brown-orange sandy clay flecked with (57/04) that was 0.3m thick. Over this was a 0.34m thick layer of light brown sandy clay (57/03). Above this was a 0.18m thick layer of grey gritty clay (57/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown gritty loam (57/01) with gravel approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 58

Lying above the natural (58/04) was a 0.3m thick deposit of dark brown-red sandy clay with small stones (58/03). Above this was a layer of brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (58/02) that was 0.28m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (58/01) with some gravel approximately 0.26m thick.

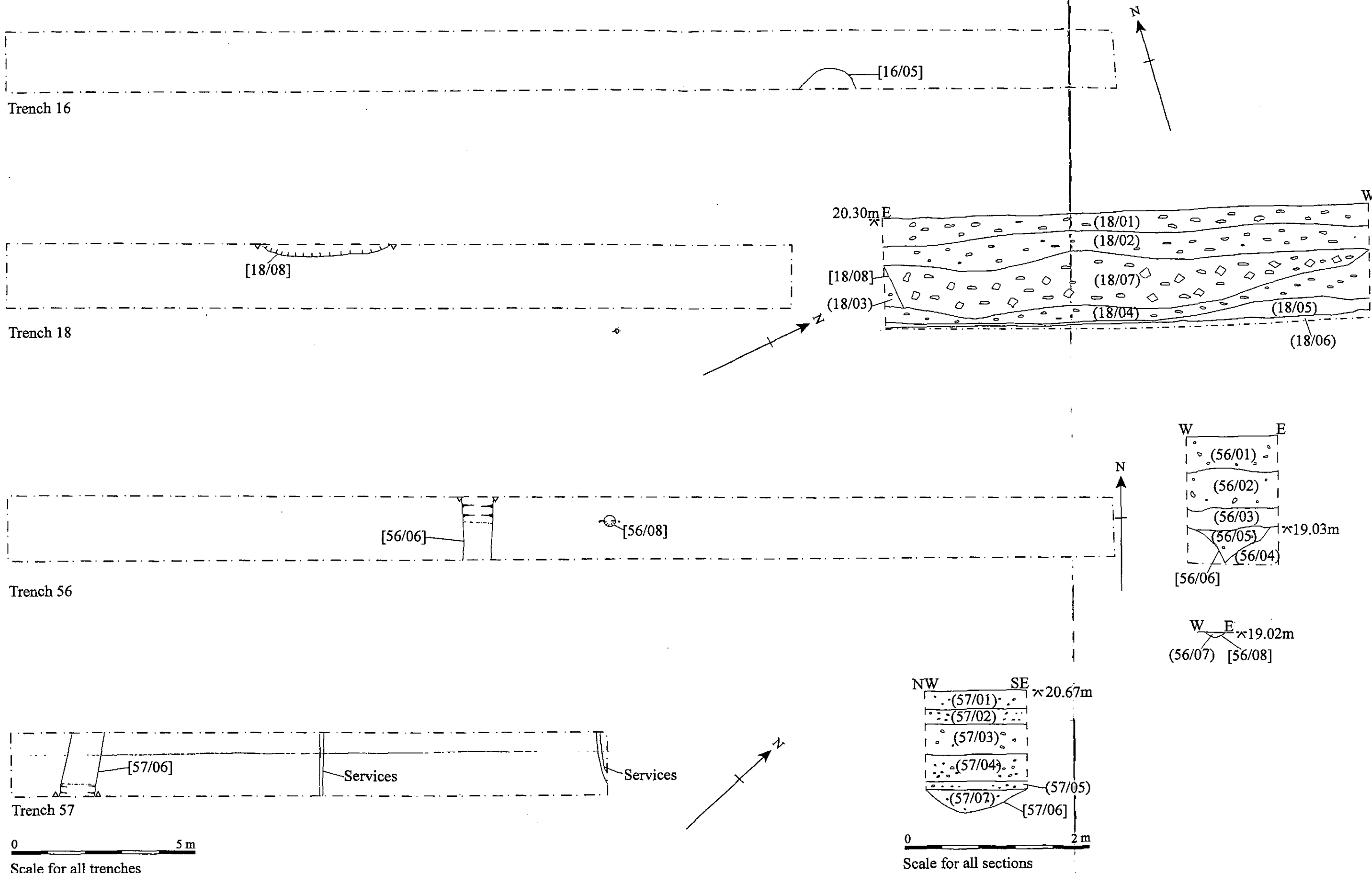


Figure 6. Plans and Sections of the Trenches 16, 18, 56 and 57

Area D

Area D is located on the summit of the low hill at approximately 21-22m OD to the north of the site. Trenches 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 44.

Trench 20 (figure 7)

Lying above the natural (20/04) was a 0.05m thick deposit of light brown-yellow sandy clay with small stones (20/03).

Cut into this layer were several features including services. A ditch [20/14] was aligned NE-SW, 0.8m wide, 0.28m deep with a shallow U-shaped profile. It was filled with a brown-orange clay-sand (20/12) flecked with charcoal. This was cut by a second shallow linear feature [20/13] that was aligned NWW-SEE. It was 1.8m wide, 0.3m deep with near vertical sides and a flat base. It was filled with a brown-orange clay-sand flecked with charcoal (20/11).

To the east of the trench, on top of (20/03), was a deposit of light yellow-red clay-sand (20/08) that was 0.02m thick and oval roughly 0.8m by 1.5m in plan

Above this was a layer of dark brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (20/02) that was up to 0.44m thick. Between this layer and the topsoil were three superficial modern dumping deposits of red-brown sandy clay with brick rubble (20/05), (20/06) and (20/10). These varied in thickness to a maximum of 0.3m.

The uppermost layers were a topsoil of dark grey-brown loam (20/01) with some gravel approximately 0.16m thick and a modern pathway (20/09).

Trench 22 (figure 7)

Cut in to the natural (22/04) was a N-S aligned ditch [22/08] that was 0.6m wide, 0.22m deep with a U-shaped profile. It was filled with a yellow-brown sandy clay (22/07) flecked with charcoal.

This was sealed by a 0.36m thick layer of yellow-brown sandy clay (22/09). In areas disturbed by services deposits of red sandy clay (22/03), yellow sand (22/06) and brown clay (22/05) were recorded. These formed a sequence approximately 0.65m thick.

Above this was a layer of brown-red sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (22/02) that was 0.45m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (22/01) with some gravel approximately 0.15m thick.

Trench 23

Lying above the natural (23/03) was a 0.5m thick deposit of dark brown-red sandy clay with small stones and brick fragments (23/02). Above this was a layer of brown-grey sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (23/04) that was 0.06m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (23/01) with some gravel approximately 0.16m thick.

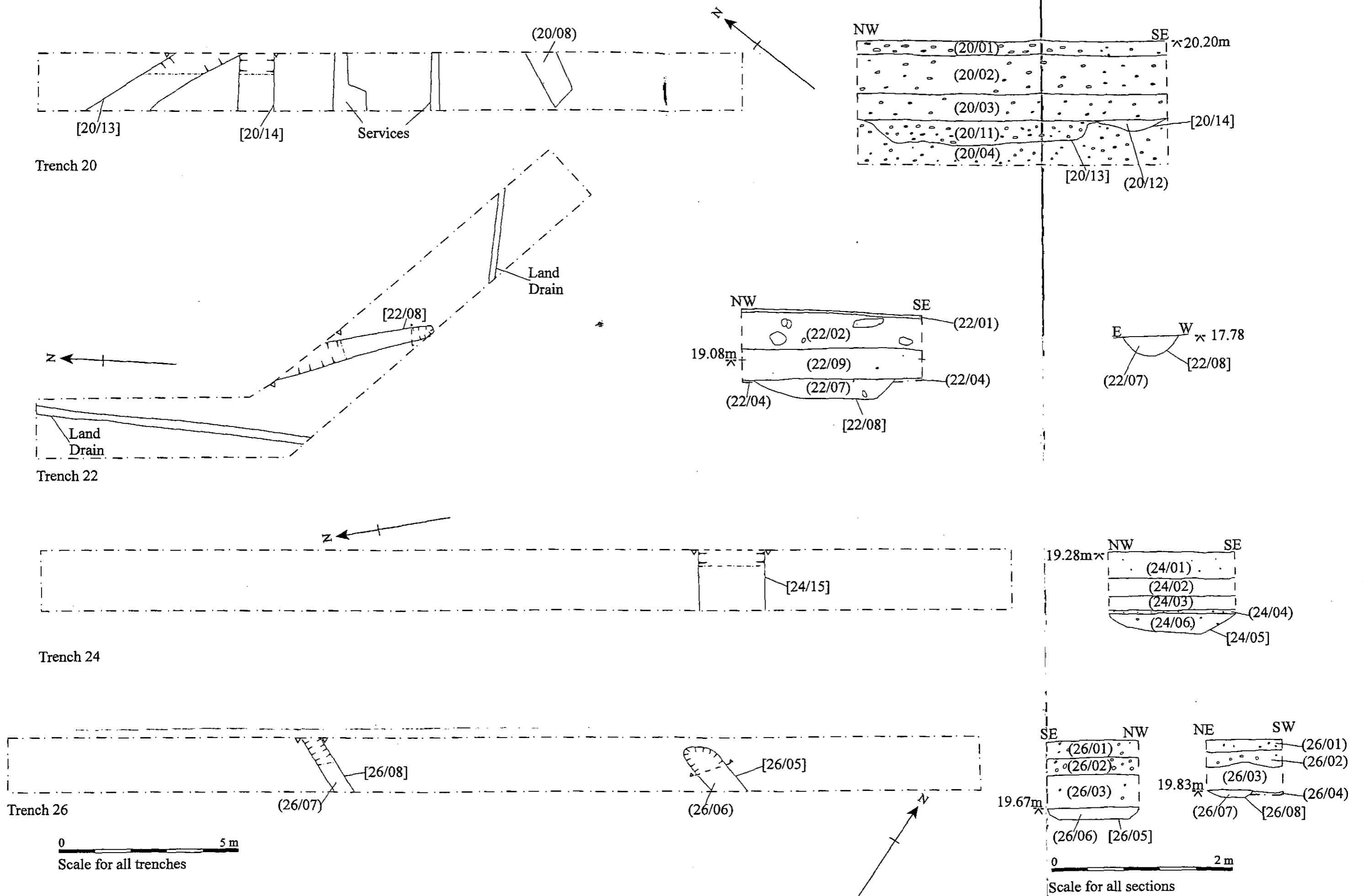


Figure 7. Plans and Sections of the Trenches 20, 22, 24 and 26

Trench 24 why no figure

Cut in to the natural (24/04) was a ditch [24/05] that was aligned NW-SE. It was 1.4m wide, 0.25m deep with a shallow flattened U-shaped profile that had a flat base. This was filled with a deposit of orange-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (24/06).

Sealing this feature was a 0.15m thick layer of orange-brown sandy clay (24/03). Above this was a layer of brown-grey sandy clay with some gravel and the odd brick fragment (24/02) that was 0.2m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark brown loam (24/01) containing some gravels approximately 0.3m thick.

Trench 25

Lying above the natural (25/04) was a 0.52m thick deposit of dark brown-orange sandy clay with small stones (25/03). Above this was a layer of dark brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (25/02) that was 0.14m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (25/01) with some gravel approximately 0.18m thick.

Trench 26 (figure 7)

Cut in to the natural (26/04) were two shallow ditches. The first [26/05] was aligned NW-SE. The terminal was excavated. It was 0.6m wide, 0.1m deep with a shallow flattened U-shaped profile. This was filled with a deposit of grey-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (26/06). The second [26/08] was also aligned NW-SE. It was 0.7m wide, 0.08m deep with near vertical sides and a flat base. This was filled with a deposit of grey-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (26/07).

These were sealed by a 0.39m thick layer of orange-brown sandy clay (26/03). Above this was a layer of light brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (26/02) that was 0.10m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (26/01) with some gravel approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 27 (figure 8)

Cut in to the natural (27/04) were three ditches and a group of postholes. The first ditch [27/06] was aligned NW-SE. It was 0.8m wide, 0.4m deep with a U-shaped profile. This was filled with a deposit of orange-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (27/05). The second [27/08] was also aligned NW-SE. It was 0.9m wide, 0.2m deep with stepped sides and a V-shaped base. This was filled with a deposit of light grey-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (27/07). The third ditch [27/12] was also aligned NW-SE and was 0.4m wide. It was 0.32m deep with a V-shaped profile and filled with a red-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (27/11).

Three inter-cutting postholes were recorded towards the western end of the trench. One [27/10] was fully excavated, the second half-sectioned [27/14] and the third [27/15] was unexcavated. They were each filled with a very similar fill of dark grey clay with charcoal flecks (27/09), (27/16) and (27/17) respectively. The relationship between these postholes could not be ascertained. Posthole [27/10] was 0.17m in diameter, had near vertical sides a rounded base and was 0.24m deep. Posthole [27/14] was 0.15m in diameter, similar in profile and 0.22m deep.

Sealing these features was a 0.62m thick layer of yellow-brown sandy clay (27/03). Above this was a layer of brown-red sandy clay with some gravel and the odd brick fragment (27/02) that was 0.14m thick. Between these layers was a localised dump of modern brick rubble (27/13) that was up to 0.3m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark brown loam (27/01) containing some gravels approximately 0.16m thick.

Trench 28

Lying above the natural (28/04) was a 0.36m thick deposit of dark brown-grey sandy clay with small stones and brick fragments (28/03). Above this was a layer of red-grey sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (28/02) that was 0.28m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (28/01) with some gravel approximately 0.16m thick.

A modern pit was noted cut into (28/02) that contained the remains of a hessian bag full of aluminium washers.

Trench 29

Directly above the natural (29/05) was a 0.12m thick localised deposit of orange sand (29/04). This was a variation within the natural geological formation. Above this was a layer of brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (29/03) that was 0.56m thick. Over this was a 0.35m thick layer of light orange-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (29/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (29/01) with some gravel approximately 0.3m thick.

Two tree casts [29/06] and [29/08] were noted within the natural of the trench.

Trench 30

Lying above the natural (30/04) was a 0.10m thick deposit of brown-orange sandy clay with small stones (30/03). Above this was a layer of brown-grey sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (30/02) that was 0.4m thick. Cut into this was a 3.5m wide modern pit [30/05] containing large quantities of brick rubble. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (28/01) with some gravel approximately 0.16m thick.

Trench 31 (figure 8)

Cut in to the natural (31/04) was a pit. This pit [31/08] was circular in plan 0.6m in diameter, 0.3m deep with a shallow flattened U-shaped profile. This was filled with a deposit of dark yellow-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (31/07).

A 0.2m thick layer of yellow-brown sandy clay (31/03) covered this feature. Cut in to this layer was a second pit, a ditch and a stake hole.

The second pit [31/12] was also circular 0.98m in diameter. It was unexcavated. It was filled with a deposit of black-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (31/011) containing metal fittings associated with the WW2 buildings.

The ditch [31/06] was aligned roughly E-W, 1.1m wide and unexcavated. It was filled with black-brown sandy-clay (31/05) with mortar and bricks. This is probably the remains of a 1943 foundation trench.

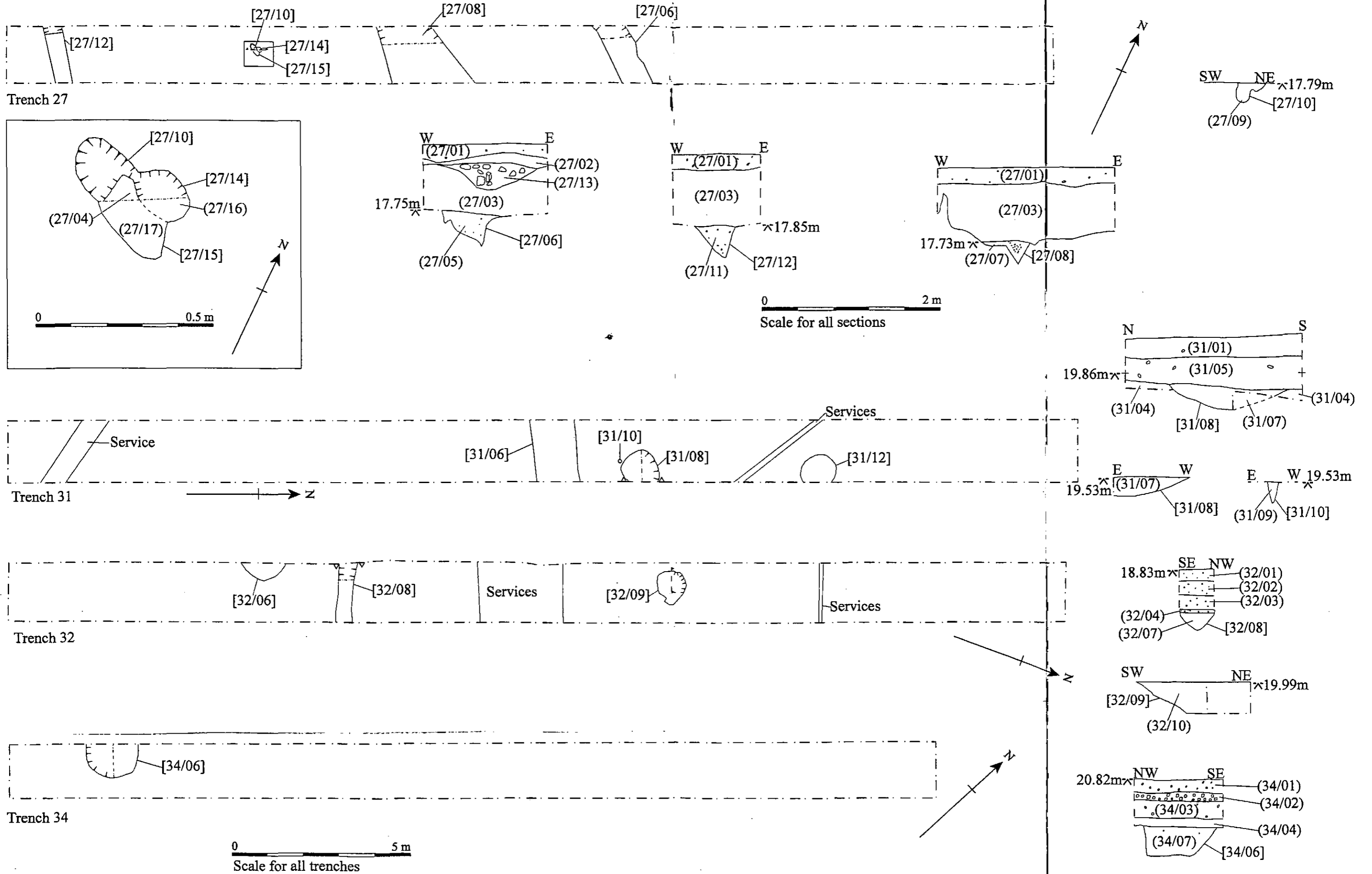


Figure 8. Plans and Sections of the Trenches 27, 31, 32 and 34

The stake hole [31/10] was circular in plan and 0.06m in diameter. It was 0.12m deep and still contained the tip of the wooden stake (31/09). This was a rectangular piece of wood that had been cut to a point, probably with a saw and is likely to be relatively modern.

Covering these features was a layer of yellowish brown sandy clay (31/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (31/01) with some gravel approximately 0.24m thick.

Trench 32 (figure 8)

Cut in to the natural (32/04) was a ditch and two pits. The ditch [32/08] was aligned NE-SW 0.4m wide, 0.6m deep with a U-shaped profile. This was filled with a deposit of dark yellow-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (32/07).

The first pit [32/06] was circular and 0.4m in diameter. It was not excavated but contained a dark brown sandy clay (32/05) with charcoal, modern brick fragments and limestone chunks. The second pit [32/09] was circular and 1.2m in diameter. It was 0.35m deep with 45° sides and filled with orange-brown sandy clay (32/10) with charcoal flecks.

Sealing these features was a 0.16m thick layer of yellow-brown sandy clay (32/03). Above this was a layer of brown-grey sandy clay with some gravel and the odd brick fragment (32/02) that was 0.29m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark brown loam (32/01) containing some gravels approximately 0.15m thick.

Trench 33

Directly above the natural (33/04) was a 0.5m thick layer of brown-orange sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (33/03). Over this was a 0.4m thick layer of brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (33/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (29/01) with some gravel approximately 0.12m thick.

Trench 34 (figure 8)

Cut in to the natural (34/04) was a ditch terminal or pit. This feature [34/06] was 1.8m wide, 0.35m deep with 45° sides and a flat base. This was filled with a deposit of light grey-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (34/07) and up to 75% stone rubble.

Covering this feature was a layer 0.1m thick of orange-brown sandy clay (34/04). Above this was a layer of brown-orange sandy clay with some gravels (34/03) that was 0.21m thick. Over this was a 0.1m thick layer of brown-black sandy clay flecked with charcoal (34/02). The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (34/01) with some gravel approximately 0.15m thick.

Trench 35

Lying above the natural (35/04) was a 0.15m thick deposit of grey-orange sandy clay with small stones (35/03). Over this was a layer of pinkish cream sand and gravel (35/05) that was 0.1m thick and 2.3m wide. It possibly represents the remains of a 1943 roadway. Above this was a layer of grey sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (35/02) that was 0.2m thick. Cut into this was a 7.5m long and 1.5m wide

modern pit containing large quantities of stone and brick rubble. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (35/01) with some gravel approximately 0.3m thick.

Trench 36 (figure 9)

Cut into the natural (36/05) were two features. A ditch [36/16] was aligned NW-SE. It was 0.8m wide, 0.2m deep with a flattened U-shaped profile. The fill was dark brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (36/09). Relationship with 36/12

A large pit or ditch terminal [36/12] was investigated. It was 1.8m wide, 0.75m deep with a U-shaped profile. The lower fill was a dark brown sandy clay with 70% small stones flecked with charcoal (36/13) that was 0.5m thick. The upper fill was a dark brown sandy clay with 40% small stones flecked with charcoal (36/08) that was 0.25m thick.

A potential feature was also investigated [36/10] and (36/11) it appeared to be no more than a variation within the natural. Not illustrated

These were sealed by a 0.5m thick layer of yellow-brown sandy clay (36/04). Above this was a localised 10m wide spread of dark grey clay (36/06) that was 0.1m thick.

Some modern services, initially thought to be an archaeological feature, were also recorded in the area [36/14] and (36/07). These were cut through deposit (36/04).

Overlying (36/04) and (36/06) was a 0.3m thick layer of brown sandy clay (36/03). Above this was a deposit of red-brown sandy clay (36/02) containing large quantities of modern brick. This deposit was 0.15m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (36/01) with some gravel approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 37 (figure 9)

Cut into the natural (37/03) were two features. A ditch [37/05] was aligned NW-SE. It was 0.7m wide, 0.24m deep with a flattened U-shaped profile. The fill was orange-red sandy clay flecked with charcoal (37/06).

A large rectangular pit [37/05] was investigated. It was 1.6m wide, 0.24m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. The fill was a dark brown sandy clay with 60% small stones flecked with charcoal (37/04).

Sealing these features was a 0.48m thick layer of orange-brown sandy clay (37/02). The uppermost layer was a dark brown loam (37/01) containing some gravels approximately 0.2m thick.

Trench 38 (figure 9)

Cut into the natural (38/07) was a ditch [38/09] that was aligned NW-SE. It was 0.65m wide, 0.1m deep with near vertical sides and a flat base in which was cut a 0.2m deep gully with a flattened U-shaped profile. The fill was dark grey sandy clay flecked with charcoal (38/08).

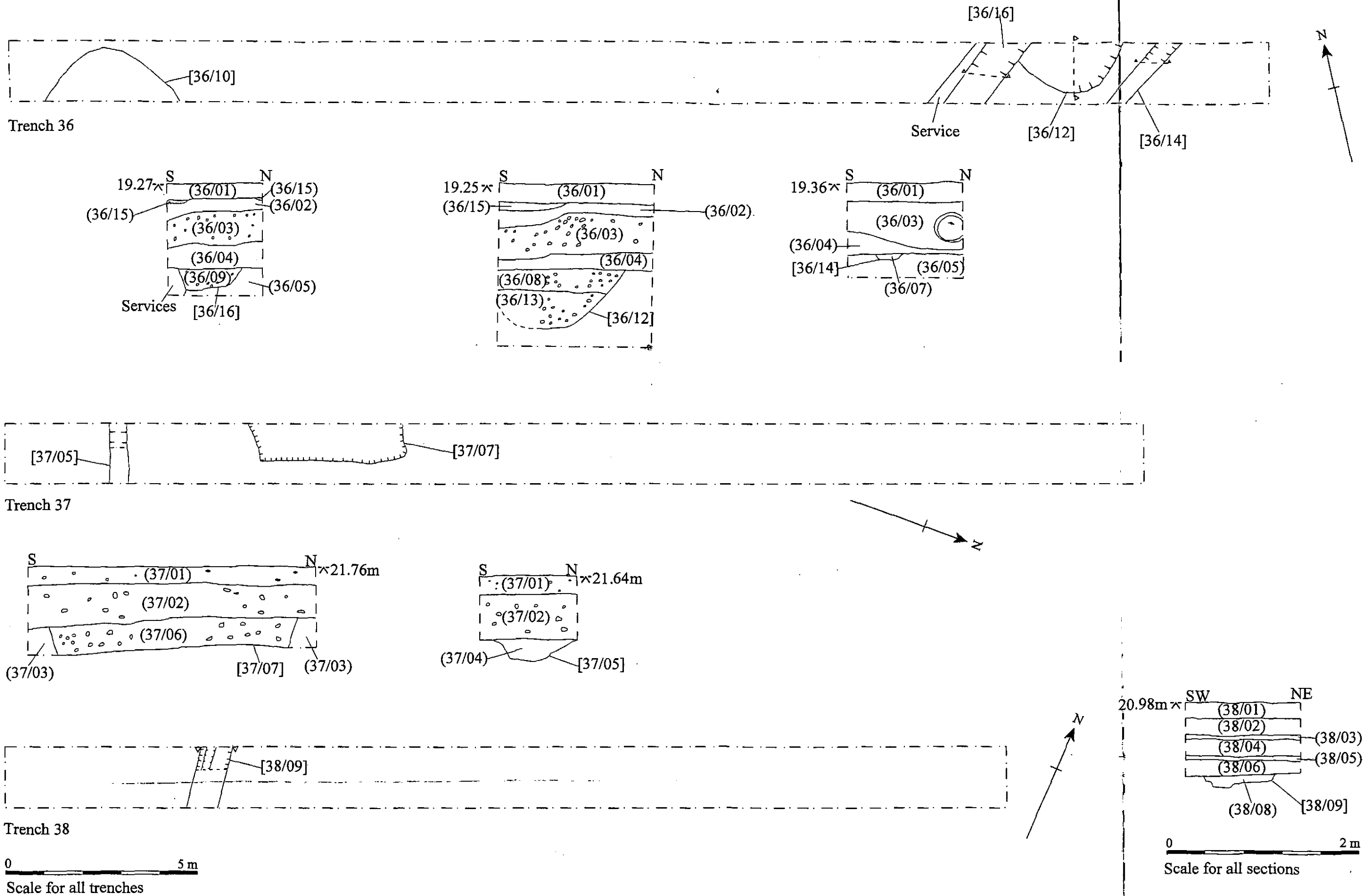


Figure 9. Plans and Sections 36, 37 and 38.

This was sealed by a 0.13m thick layer of orange-brown sandy clay (38/06). Above this was a layer of dark black-grey clay (38/05) that was 0.02m thick. Over this was a 0.14m thick deposit of dark brown sandy clay with small stones (38/04). Above this was a localised 4m wide spread of pink-cream sand and gravel (38/03) that was 0.04m thick. Overlying the entire trench was a 0.17m thick deposit of light brown sandy clay and stone rubble. The uppermost layer was a dark brown loam (38/01) containing some gravels approximately 0.16m thick.

Trench 39 (figure 10)

Cut into the natural (39/04) was a ditch [39/05] that was aligned roughly E-W. It was 0.9m wide, 0.25m deep with a flattened U-shaped profile. The fill was dark orange-brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (39/06).

This was sealed by a 0.15m thick layer of orange-brown sandy clay (39/03). Above this was a layer of brown sandy clay (39/02) that was 0.2m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark brown loam (39/01) containing some gravels approximately 0.45m thick.

Trench 40 (figure 10)

A tree cast was noted within the natural. Directly above the natural (40/03) was a 0.6m thick deposit of dark brown sandy clay with small stones (40/02). In places this was disturbed by numerous modern services. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (40/01) with gravel approximately 0.2m thick. Also noted in the natural was a tree cast [40/07].

Trench 41 (figure 10)

Cut in to the natural (41/04) were four ditches. The first ditch [44/06] was aligned NNW-SSE 0.28m wide and 0.18m deep with a flat base. It was filled with a dark brown sandy loam (44/05) flecked with charcoal. The second ditch [44/08] was aligned W-E 0.4m wide and 0.12m deep with a flattened U-shaped profile. It was filled with a dark brown sandy loam (44/07) flecked with charcoal.

The third ditch [44/10] was aligned NEE-SWW 0.2m wide and 0.2m deep with a V-shaped profile. It was filled with a dark red-brown sandy loam (44/09) flecked with charcoal. The fourth ditch [44/13] was not excavated due to flooding. It was aligned E-W and 0.7m wide. It was filled with a dark red-brown sandy loam (44/12)

Sealing these features was a 0.2m thick layer of red-brown sandy clay (41/03). Above this was a layer of brown-grey sandy clay with some gravel and the odd brick fragment (44/02) that was 0.6m thick.

Cut into this layer was a modern trench [41/11] that ran the entire length of the trench it was 0.6m wide and varied in depth from 0.7m to over 1.2m. At its lowest levels it contained gravel and shingle as well as plastic. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (41/01) with some gravel approximately 0.3m thick.

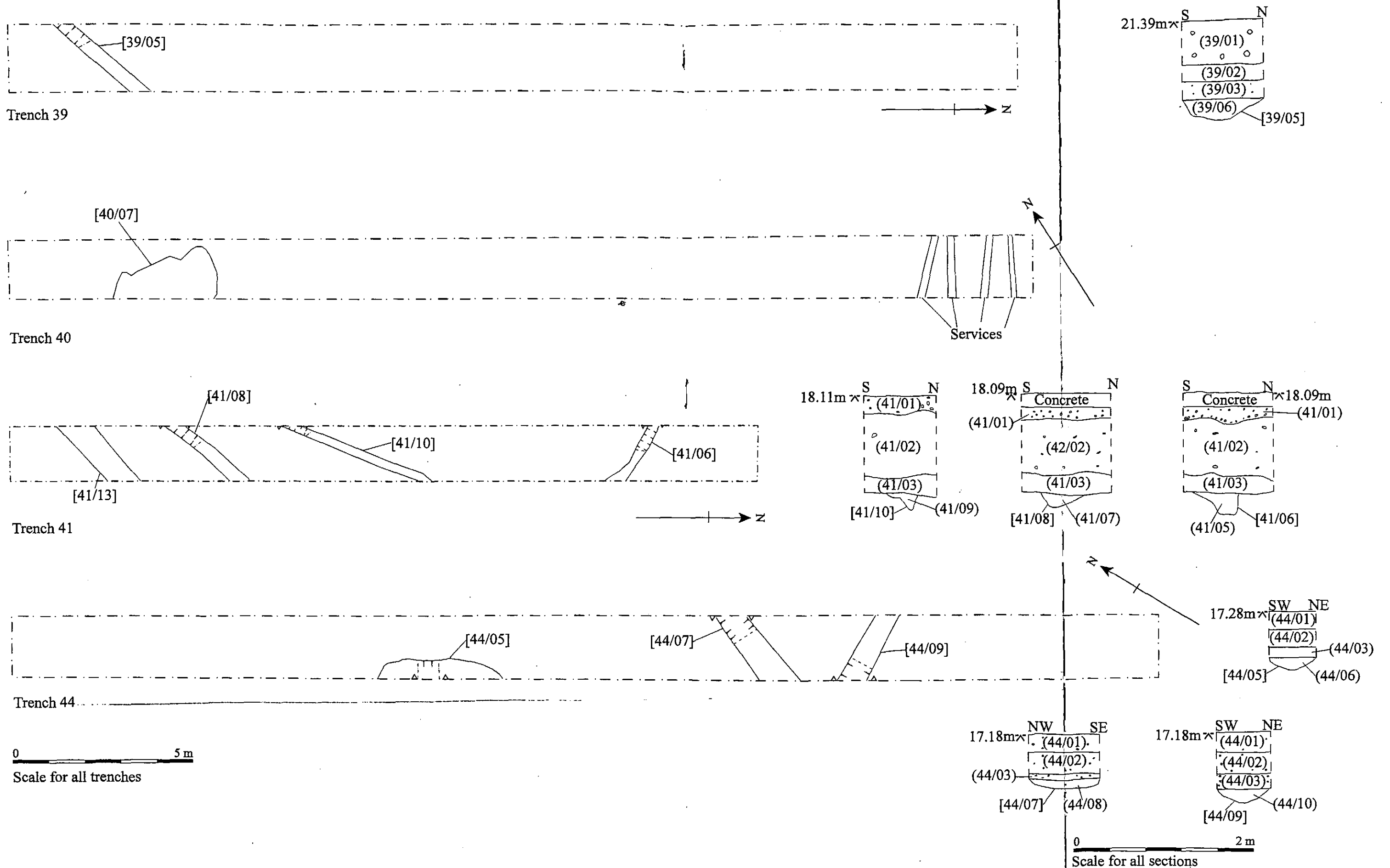


Figure 10. Plans and Sections of the Trenches 39, 40, 41 and 44

Trench 44 (figure 10)

Cut in to the natural (44/04) were two ditches and a pit. The first ditch [44/07] was aligned NNE-SSW 0.8m wide and 0.1m deep with a flat base. It was filled with a dark brown sandy loam (44/08) flecked with charcoal. The second ditch [44/09] was aligned NWW-SEE 0.6m wide and 0.14m deep with a U-shaped profile. It was filled with a dark brown sandy loam (44/10) flecked with charcoal.

The pit [44/05] was oval in plan 3m long and at least 0.5m wide. It had shallow rounded sides and a flat base. This was 0.16m deep and filled with a deposit of dark brown sandy clay flecked with charcoal (44/06) and containing some probable metalworking slag.

These were sealed by a 0.19m thick layer of black-brown sandy clay (44/03). Above this was a layer of dark yellow-brown sandy clay with gravel and brick fragments (44/02) that was 0.48m thick. The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown loam (44/01) with some gravel approximately 0.14m thick.

4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results

Extremely heavy rain throughout the excavation caused flooding of certain trenches. The worst effected trenches were in Area A, which was the lowest lying. In one or two cases this was so severe that the trench had to be abandoned, as the water did not drain even after two or more weeks.

The stratigraphy of some trenches (9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14) was so deep that it was considered unsafe to enter the trench. Features within the deepest sections of these trenches were recorded from the trench side.

5 FINDS**5.1 Pottery (by Paul Blinkhorn)**

The pottery assemblage comprised 44 sherds with a total weight of 1235g. It was all post-medieval, apart from a single late medieval sherd and a residual fragment of Romano-British material. The bulk of the assemblage dated to the 19th century.

The following fabrics were noted:

DON: *Donyatt Wares*. Wide range of medieval and post-medieval earthenwares with varying quantities of flint, quartz, limestone and iron ore. 13th – 18th century. 1 sherd, 19g

GRE: *Red Earthenwares*: Fine sandy earthenware, usually with a brown or green glaze, occurring in a range of utilitarian forms. Such 'country pottery' was first made in the 16th century, and in some areas continued in use until the 19th century. 4 sherds, 417g.

WEST: *Westerwald/Cologne stoneware* German import (Gaimster 1997). Hard, dense white fabric, usually decorated with cobalt blue slip. Later examples can have manganese purple slip. The ware was first produced c.1600 and is still in production today. 2 sherds, 11g.

ES: *English Stoneware*: White/grey stoneware with a white salt glaze. Made at numerous centres, such as Staffordshire, London and Nottingham, from the later 17th century onwards, in a wide range of utilitarian forms (Crossley 1990). 3 sherds, 130g.

19th: *Miscellaneous 19th and 20th century wares*. Mass-produced white earthenwares, flowerpots, etc. 33 sherds, 632g.

A single sherd of residual Romano-British pottery was also noted. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Tr	Cntxt	RB		DON		GRE		WEST		ES		19th		Date
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
2	3					1	40					2	37	19thC
6	1													19thC
7	1													19thC
17	2									1	91	1	5	19thC
18	U/S											1	11	U/S
19	U/S					1	7							U/S
27	1					1	284							16thC
29	2											1	10	19thC
30	1											1	10	19thC
31	1											1	14	19thC
31	2									1	3			18thC
32	1											4	38	19thC
32	2											2	282	19thC
33	1									1	36	1	20	19thC
34	1											3	26	19thC
35	1					1	86	1	10			2	8	19thC
36	2	1	26									1	21	19thC
39	1											2	35	19thC
44	U/S			1	19									U/S
52	2											1	5	19thC
54	2							1	1					17thC
56	1											2	44	19thC
57	1											2	4	19thC
58	1											1	4	19thC
58	2											1	1	19thC
88	1											4	57	19thC
	Total	1	26	1	19	4	417	2	11	3	130	33	632	

5.2 Flint (By Hugo Lamdin-Whymark)

A total of six struck flints and one piece of struck chert was recovered from the evaluation. Five of the flints were recovered from topsoil in Trenches 19, 22, 26, 30 and 31; the sixth flint was recovered from a ditch fill (32/07) in Trench 32. The piece of chert was recovered from topsoil in Trench 31. The raw material includes a grey

cherty flint and five pieces of a good quality dark brown to black flint. Three of the dark coloured flints exhibit small areas of abraded buff coloured cortex and heavily damaged edges of the original nodule. The condition of the nodule's surface suggests the raw material was probably obtained from a secondary source, such as river gravels. The chert is fine grained, exhibiting clear conchoidal fracture, and is dark greyish black in colour. This raw material is comparable to Portland chert.

The flint assemblage comprises, two flint flakes, a notched flake, two scrapers and a small core on a flake. The piece of chert exhibits scars from some flake removals, but is a relatively irregular piece of waste measuring 47 mm by 36 mm by 14 mm thick. The two flint flakes are small, measuring only 15 mm and 21 mm long respectively. The core is also remarkably small weighing only 4 g with final removals measuring up to 17 mm in length. The notch from Trench 30 measures 11 mm wide by 4 mm deep and is located at the plunging distal end of a broken flake. The two scrapers are of different forms. An end scraper with abrupt curving distal retouch was recovered from Trench 30, whilst an end and side scraper of horseshoe form was recovered from Trench 22. The distal ends of both scrapers exhibit small flake removals, possibly reflecting attempts to rework these tools as cores. The limited size of the flakes and core, and the attempt to rework the scrapers, is suggestive that good quality raw materials were in relatively short supply and represented a local commodity.

The artefacts present in the assemblage are not particularly diagnostic and assist little with dating. The scrapers have, however, been finely retouched and the flints result from a flake-, rather than blade-, based industry. This may indicate a Neolithic to early Bronze Age date is most appropriate for the assemblage.

5.3 Metal Objects

Objects of note included:

A firearms cartridge case was recovered from (31/05). It is a rimmed, centrefire .30-06 US round marked on the rim SL43. This marking indicates its manufacture in the St. Louis Ordnance Plant in 1943. The anvil, of the primer, is not deformed by firing.

A stainless steel four-pronged fork stamped "U.S.N." was recovered from (11/04). On the back of the shaft it is marked "silco stainless"

5.4 Glass

Objects of note included:

Two "Coca-Cola" bottles were recovered from (55/02). These bottles are in clear glass reading "Coca-Cola Trade Mark" on both sides of the shoulder. They are marked E-UGB-43 25 and E-UGB-44 25 on the bases respectively. It is possible that these are 1940's wartime GI issue.

A beer bottle in brown glass was recovered from (55/02) embossed with "The Dorsetshire Brewery Co. (Sherborne) Ltd.". This brewery was situated on Bristol Road in Sherborne and has since ceased to trade.

A milk bottle marked "Bottled by Members of the Quality Milk Association (Devon)" by moulding on its outer surface was recovered from (11/04).

5.5 Ceramic Building Material

Two bricks that had moulded inscription on them were recovered.

The first was from (2/02) and read "...HEXTER HUMPHER... PATENT NEWTON AB...". Newton Ab is presumably Newton Abbot indicating that bricks used in the manufacture of the 1943 Naval Base were sourced relatively locally.

The second from (55/02) was marked "...CROWN ...01 K...."

5.6 Environmental Remains

Samples of charcoal were taken from (7/06), (27/09) and (44/08). A large fragment of bone was also taken from (37/04). These were retained for possible radiocarbon dating.

6 DISCUSSION

Area A

Numerous land drains were located in this area probably associated with the land management of the golf course prior to 1943.

A considerable amount of more modern disturbance was noted over the area. Trenches 1 and 2 displayed thick layers of dumping deposits (1/03), (1/08) & (2/07). Modern pits were also recorded in this area [2/10], [2/12], [4/12] and [4/16]. Pit [4/14] was undated but its association within Trench 4 may well indicate a modern date.

Trench 2 displayed a buried soil sequence of (2/05) and (2/04). This sealed the large but undated ditch [2/13] that was aligned north-west to south-east. Also on this alignment were the two gullies [6/05] & [6/17] recorded in trench 6. These appeared to be at right angles to a larger ditch [6/14] and together may form part of an earlier field system. This alignment does not match any known historic field systems in the area.

The two gullies [6/05] & [6/17] are possible associated with several postholes [6/19], [6/21], [6/23] & [6/30]. These features may be the remains of a fenced land division. The plough marks [6/07], [6/09], [6/11] & [6/27] indicate the agricultural use of this land in two distinct phases.

A further two ditches [7/04] & [7/05] were recorded with Trench 7, however it is unlikely that these are associated with agricultural activity in the area. One [7/04] is relatively modern and contained an iron nail. The other, however, contained a piece of hand made pottery possibly of a prehistoric date of course; this may be residual.

A buried soil (5/03) was also recorded in Trench 5. This sealed an undated pit [5/05].

Area B

The lynchet first observed during the walk over survey (JMHS 2006) was bisected by two trenches (9 and 10). No evidence that this was an archaeological feature was seen in either trench. The area had been heavily disturbed during and after the construction of the Naval Base in 1943 by landscaping and services. Although it must be noted that trench 10 did record a ditch [10/06] that was on the same alignment, but slightly to the north-east. This ditch did not display the remnant of a bank that could have been mistaken for a lynchet.

The ground had been built-up and raised considerably in the area of Trenches 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 46, 48 and 49. In places these deposits were over 2m thick. The area raised was already on the slope of a low hill. It is likely that this occurred during the construction of the Naval Base and was done to maximise the building area on the higher ground.

Across the area several trenches displayed deposits that could be buried soils (3/04), (48/04), (49/05), (50/05) & (51/03) and possible old land surfaces (48/03), (50/04) & (52/04). Unfortunately no artefacts were recovered from any of these deposits.

The ditch [8/09] in Trench 8 is undated, however it is on the same alignment as ditch [10/06] and the field boundaries recorded on the 1st edition OS map of 1889 and both therefore may well be associated with agricultural activity of this period. The pit [8/07] is demonstrably later than ditch [8/09].

The two linear features with in Trench 11 are probably both of a relatively modern date. One [11/08] certainly is as the fill contains brick. As both are cut into the natural and both covered by the same soil sequence it is likely that they are contemporaneous.

A similar relationship occurs with in Trench 54 for the demonstrably modern pit [54/07] and the gully [54/06]. Again it could be that they are of a similar date although without any dating evidence this cannot be stated with any certainty.

Trench 47 located a ditch [47/07] and a pit [47/05]; both were sealed by a deposit containing brick fragments, although the fills of both features did not. It could be argued that the gully [54/06] in Trench 54 is at right angles to this ditch and also forms part of a field system.

Area C

Across the area several trenches displayed deposits that could be buried soils (16/03), (18/05), (21/04), (28/03), (43/05), (45/03), (46/04), (56/03), (57/04) & (58/04) and

possible old land surfaces (46/03) & (57/03). Unfortunately no artefacts were recovered from any of these deposits.

Trench 57 recorded a ditch [57/06], which appears to be on the same alignment as ditch [55/05] in Area B. Indeed one could be a continuation of the other. Their alignment does not match with known historic field boundaries in the area. Both ditches are cut in to the natural and may represent an earlier field system.

Modern disturbance was seen across this area in the form of services as well as pits [16/05] and [18/08].

Area D

Across the area several trenches displayed deposits that could be buried soils (20/03), (22/09), (24/03), (25/03), (26/03), (30/03), (31/03), (34/04), (35/03), (36/04), (38/06), (39/03), (41/03) & (44/03) and possible old land surfaces (34/03), (36/06) & (38/05). Again unfortunately no artefacts were recovered from any of these deposits.

Cut into the buried soil (20/03) in Trench 20 were two ditches, one [20/14] cutting the other [20/13]. With features in other trenches clearly sealed by buried soils this clearly represents at least three distinct phases of activity on the site.

Bisecting the centre of the area were a series of NW-SE aligned ditches [24/05], [26/05], [26/08], [27/06], [27/08], [27/12] and [37/05]. The profile of each ditch is varied and is a probable indicator that they are not contemporary. The placement of other trenches indicates that these ditches do not run continuously across the whole area, although [27/12] and [26/08] may well be the same feature. All of these features appear to be in the rough area and on the same alignment as a field boundary depicted in the Topsham Tithe map of the early 1840's. The number of ditches may indicate that this boundary moved slightly over time.

Several trenches produced undated pits and linear features but unfortunately the alignments of these did not form any coherent pattern. All the flint artefacts recovered come from this area and it is possible that at least some of these undated features may be prehistoric. At least one ditch [32/07] produced a single piece of flint work, of course this may be residual.

Modern disturbance was seen throughout the area notably in Trenches 22, 29, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36 and 41. This was in the form of services, pits and construction layers associated with the 1943 buildings.

Overall

The Official US Navy Records by John Moon US Navy Retired of the 10th Special Stevedores records that "the first US Navy personnel arrived in September 1943 at Topsham Barracks and construction was started on 12th October by the Seabee units, the 10th and 25th Naval Construction Battalions. The original plans called for 79 warehouses of 400,000 sq feet, but by December this was increased to 578,000 sq feet with 1,000 personnel. October through the winter of 1943/4 proved to be an especially

wet time in Exeter. Within a very short time of the start of construction the *"beautiful golf course... turned into the epitome of a mud hole"*. The men working on site were effected with 'mudphobia' - after a day at work clothes were caked in mud, giving off an unpleasant odour. A total of 100,000 loads of rock and sand was dumped onto the site to create 7 miles of roads that would support the largest trucks without them disappearing into a quagmire of oozing, sticky mud. The mud lingered and hindered through the end of 1943 and into 1944 - the site would not eventually be free of mud until the spring. On the 3rd February 1944 the depot was commissioned."

Deposits of this rock and rubble were recorded across the entire site, but they were probably thicker in Area A.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation located areas of preserved buried soils (see figure 11). The relationship of cut features to these buried soil sequences indicates that at least three phases of activity are present in the area.

A thin scatter of flint work from Area D marks the highest concentration of prehistoric activity on the site. It is possible that some of the undated features recorded in the vicinity date to this period. The hand built pottery sherd from Area A indicates some prehistoric activity also in this area.

Evidence for Roman activity is scant. A single residual sherd of Romano-British pottery was recovered from Trench 36. This is from almost the farthest point from the line of the Roman road on the site.

The remnant of the field system located in Area A appears to be roughly parallel to the road. This may indicate that they are of a possible Roman date. The system located in Area B around Trenches 47 and 54 are on a different alignment and appear to have little relationship to the line of the road, and may be later. These may have more to do with the topography of the area than the road. Many trenches indicated that the area had undergone landscaping so it is difficult to assess any links to original topography.

The thin spread of late medieval and post-medieval pottery across the site demonstrates activity of these periods in the area. This activity is likely to be agricultural with the sherds coming in during manuring episodes. It is likely that the majority of the features date to this period.

The supposed lynchet observed during the walk over survey (JMHS 2006) was investigated by two trenches. These concluded that it was not an archaeological feature, but was the product of landscaping in the area during or after the construction of the Naval Base in 1943.

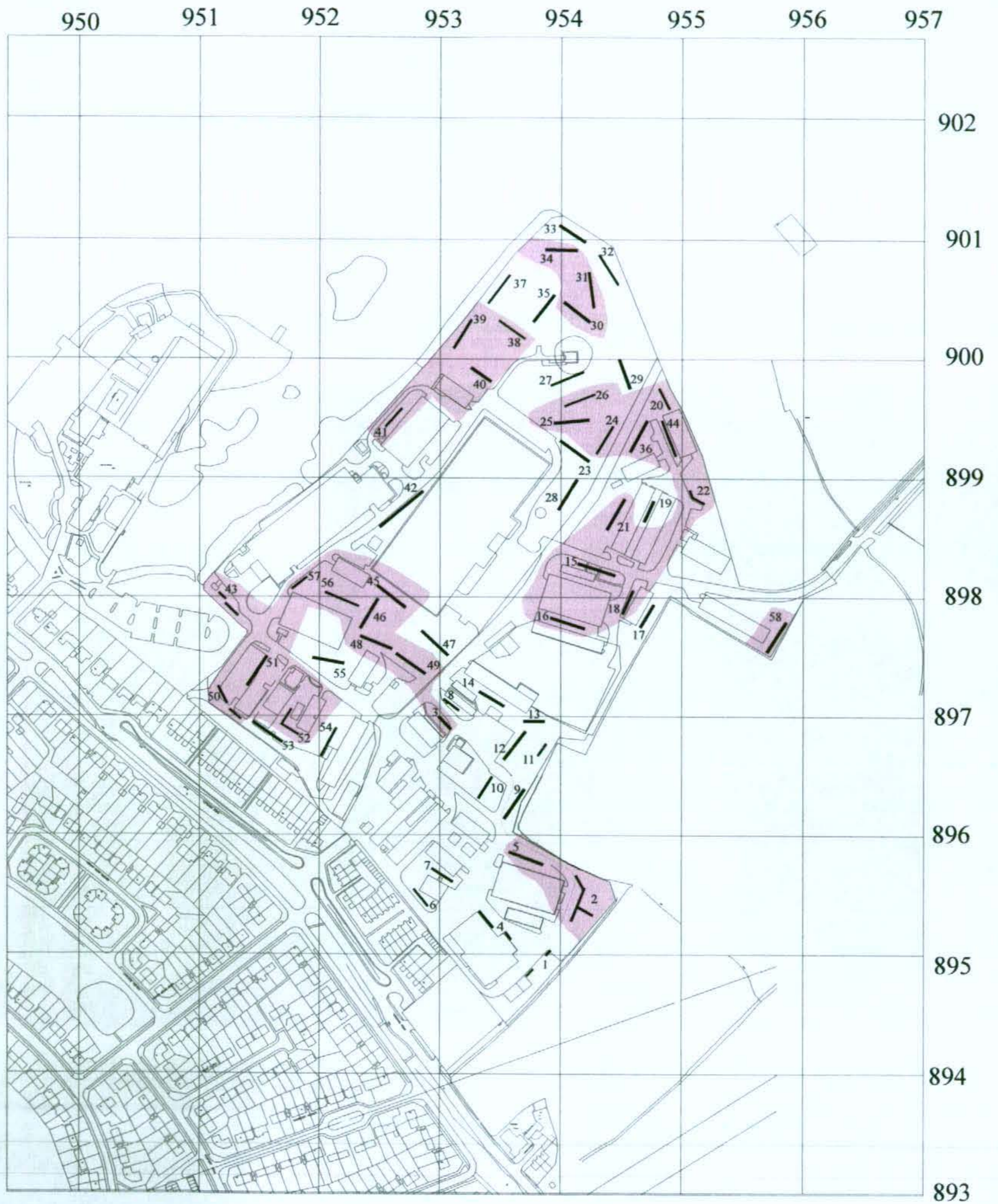


Figure 11. Area of buried soil sequences 37

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