

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSED  
DEVELOPMENT OF LAND OFF DORCHESTER ROAD, STRATTON,  
DORSET (NGR SY 649938)**

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# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF LAND OFF DORCHESTER ROAD, STRATTON, DORSET (NGR SY 649938)

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## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological field evaluation was carried out in May - June 1997. A total area of 677.25m<sup>2</sup> of trenches was excavated and recorded, comprising approximately a 2% sample of the entire development area. Sporadic evidence for archaeological deposits was found over the area and included: a number of ditches, possibly field boundaries, containing finds of prehistoric worked flint and, in one instance a truncated pit containing Late Bronze Age - Early Iron Age pottery; three features containing Romano-British finds; hillwash of probable medieval date and one field boundary containing post-medieval pottery.*

*The distribution of the subsoil deposits and finds suggests the intermittent use of the site from an early date. No firm evidence could be found for the Roman Road across the NE area of the site nor any west extension to the medieval village of Stratton beyond the church.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report contains the results of an archaeological field evaluation of the proposed residential development of land (known as the 'Western Area') adjoining the south side of the Dorchester Road, Stratton. The work was carried out by AC **archaeology** during late May and early June 1997.

2.2 The evaluation had been commissioned by the site developers, Morrish Builders, at the request of the local planning authority, as advised by the County Archaeological Officer. The site is the subject of a planning application to West Dorset District Council (Application No. 1/E/94/425).

2.3 The aim of the work was to determine the nature, date and importance of any archaeological remains on the site, in order that an informed decision might be made on the detailed planning permission.

2.4 The site covers an area of approximately 3.5 hectares at the western end of the modern village of Stratton (Fig. 1). The land generally slopes down to the south and east, between approximately 85 and 70m OD, with a south-facing aspect above the valley floor of the river Frome. The underlying geology is chalk with clay and gravel capping on the upper levels.

The southern boundary of the site is formed by a deeply incised stream which once formed the Head Main for watermeadows across the broad valley floor of the Frome. This latter area is unaffected by the development proposals. The present land-use of much of the site is rough grass pasture, resulting from an earlier episode of soil stripping, although the east end is predominantly disused farmyard buildings.

The southern zone of the site is known to have been infilled in recent years as part of a flood protection scheme. A slight hollow or terrace is evident on the hillside in the east central zone of the site.

### **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

3.1 A desk-based archaeological study was undertaken prior to the evaluation (Cox & Chandler 1997) which reviewed the existing information relating to the history and archaeology of the village and this site. The report concluded that there was the potential for the survival of archaeological deposits within this area, which lies on the western fringe of the historic (medieval) core of the village of Stratton.

3.2 Previous discoveries on the site have included prehistoric flint artefacts, recorded from within the development area, and Iron Age and Romano-British Pottery has been discovered from outside on the east of the site. The projected course of a Roman Road runs across the NE of the site. There is also evidence that the original medieval village extended to the west of the church and may have been the subject of clearance in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Medieval deposits and finds had previously been recorded outside the development area on the NE side, near the Dorchester Road.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The evaluation comprised a 2% sample of the entire area to be developed, with the total area covered by evaluation trenches being 677.25m<sup>2</sup>.

4.2 A total of 12 trenches and one trial pit were mechanically excavated using a toothless digging bucket to a nominal width of 1.50m. Subsequent to the excavation of the eight trenches and one trial pit proposed in the original evaluation specification, four additional trenches (Trenches 3, 5, 10 and 11) were excavated to determine the extent and nature of specific archaeological features, in consultation with the County Archaeological Officer. The dimensions of the trenches were as follows:

Trench 1: 25 x 1.5m; Trench 2: 53.5 x 1.5m; Trench 3: 30 x 1.5m; Trench 4: 94 x 1.5m; Trench 5: 14.5 x 1.5m; Trench 6: 43.5 x 1.5m; Trench 7: 50 x 1.5m; Trench 8: 25 x 1.5m; Trench 9: 25 x 1.5m; Trench 10: 15 x 1.5m; Trench 11: 25 x 1.5m; Trench 12: 50 x 1.5m, and; Trench 13: 1 x 1.5m.

4.3 Topsoil, modern overburden and deposits considered to be of a post-medieval date were removed by mechanical excavator under constant archaeological supervision. All trenches were excavated to the top of the natural subsoil, with the exposed surface being examined by hand for features of archaeological interest. The spoil heaps were scanned for displaced archaeological artefacts.

4.4 All artefacts or deposits were recorded using the standard **AC archaeology** pro-forma recording system, with appropriate scale plans and section drawings, photographs and finds records. The archive has been prepared using the site code AC 383.

## 5. RESULTS

### 5.1 Trench 1 (See Fig. 2 for plan of trench)

Trench 1 was located at the top of the south-facing slope, and was aligned NE - SW. The trench was excavated on the projected line of the Roman road which is considered to run across the NE of the development site. On the excavation of this

trench six ditches, aligned approximately NW - SE, were recorded and partially excavated. None of these features can be directly identified as being related to the Roman Road. Most contained fragments of worked flint, probably of Bronze Age date, and moderate quantities of burnt flint. The natural subsoil comprised weathered chalk with occasional periglacial features at the southern end of the trench. These are not shown on Fig. 2.

**Ditch F110** (section Fig. 4A) - had steep convex sides and a flat base. It was up to 2.41m wide and 0.76m deep. F110 contained a complex series of fills, which are summarised in the following table;

Context No.	Width	Depth	Description	Comment
(108)	1.69m	0.27m	A yellowish brown compact clayey silt, with rare small irregular flint fragments, moderate small sub-angular chalk fragments and chalk flecks.	The upper fill which appears to have slumped gently north-south.
(113)	1.26m	0.35m	A compact yellowish brown compact clayey silt, with moderate small sub-angular chalk and flint fragments and chalk flecks.	The majority of the course components in this fill are of degraded chalk, which is indicative of extensive periods of weathering ? The fill appears to have slumped to the north.
(114)	0.80m	0.16m	A light yellowish brown clayey silt, with rare small irregular chalk and flint fragments, and chalk flecks.	Primary fill, appears to have silted in from the south, against the lower south side and base.
(115)	1.25m	0.14m	A yellowish brown compact clayey silt with rare irregular flint fragments, common sub angular chalk fragments and chalk flecks.	A very chalky fill, silting in from the north
(116)	1.02m	0.17m	A humic ditch fill, which was a yellowish brown, compact clayey silt, with rare small flint fragments and chalk flecks.	Silting in from the north
(117)	0.67m	0.20m	A light yellowish brown compact clayey silt with common small sub angular chalk fragments and moderate chalk flecks.	The secondary fill, silting in from the north along north side and base, and lying partially above primary fill (114)

**Ditch F109** (section Fig. 4A) - was 0.80m wide, and 0.31m deep and cut through the upper fill of F110 at its N edge. It had steep slightly convex sides, and a concave base. Context (103) was the primary fill and consisted of a dark yellowish brown, compact, clayey silt with moderate small irregular flint fragments, and rare chalk flecks. Context (102) was the secondary fill and consisted of a yellowish brown compact clayey silt with common small sub - angular flint fragments, and moderate sub-angular chalk fragments.

**Ditch F121** (section Fig. 4B) - had a steep abrupt north edge, a shallow south edge and an irregular base. Evidence for a second cut can be seen by the manner in which context (122) appears to cut contexts (123) and (124). Ditch F121 was a

maximum of 3.40m wide, and 0.60m deep, and was filled with the contexts (122) (123) (124) and (125), which are summarised in the following table;

Context No.	Width	Depth	Description	Comment
(122)	2.00m	0.40m	A light brown compact, friable clayey silt with moderate chalk fragments and flecks, and occasional flint fragments.	It is possible that this fill may represent the cut of a later feature, as it appears to cut contexts (123) and (124) in section.
(123)	0.60m	0.40m	A light grey brown, compact friable clay silt with rare chalk and flint fragments	The secondary fill silting from the north
(124)	1.60m	0.60m	A light grey brown friable chalky silt with moderate chalk and flint fragments	The primary fill silting from the north
(125)	0.60m	0.50m	A light brown compact, friable clayey silt	Primarily chalk slippage

**Ditch F118** (section Fig. 4B) - had steep edges and a rounded base. F118 was a maximum of 1.60m wide, and 0.40m deep, and was filled with contexts (119) and (120). Context (120) was the primary fill and comprised a mid to dark brown, compact, plastic, clayey silt with rare chalk, flint fragments and charcoal flecks. Context (119) was the secondary fill and comprised a light grey, friable, clayey silt, with moderate chalk and flint fragments.

**Ditch F111** (not shown on section) - was very narrow in plan with abrupt edges and a rounded irregular base. F111 was a maximum of 0.60m wide, and 0.22m deep, and was filled with context (112); a grey brown, friable, clayey silt with moderate chalk and flint fragments.

**Ditch F104** (section Fig. 4C) - was shallow, with steep edges and a concave base. F104 was a maximum of 0.90m wide, and 0.18m deep, and was filled with context (105); a grey yellow brown, friable compact, clayey silt with moderate chalk and flint fragments.

**Ditch F106** (section Fig. 4C) - was shallow, with gently sloping edges and a rounded base. F106 was a maximum of measured 1.00m wide, and 0.14m deep, and was filled with context (107); a grey brown compact, friable, clayey silt with moderate chalk and flint inclusions.

## 5.2 Trench 2 (See Fig. 2 for plan of trench)

Trench 2 was aligned N-S, and located on the steep south-facing slope. The natural subsoil comprised weathered chalk with frequent clay-filled periglacial striping and irregular features. These are not shown on Fig. 2. A single possible archaeological feature, F204, which was noted in plan, proved on excavation to be natural in origin.

It was aligned approximately SW - NE, and filled with (207) a mid to dark brown, compact, friable silty clay loam. A shale lathe core fragment was recovered from this deposit. To the south of this feature a spread of black brown clay silt with charcoal flecks and occasional flint and chalk fragments, context (205) was examined. It appeared to be modern in origin and was found to be sealing a layer of redeposited of chalk (206), also considered to be modern in origin.

### **5.3 Trench 3 (See Fig. 2 for plan of trench)**

Trench 3 was aligned N-S, and located on the south-facing slope. A sharp break in slope in this area appears to be the result of terracing, associated with a slight earthwork platform. The subsoil comprised weathered chalk with frequent clay filled periglacial striping and irregular features, not shown on Fig. 2. An area of clay with gravel-capping comprised the north end of the trench, with the following four archaeological features cut into the earthwork platform being sealed by the hillwash deposits (304) and (305).

**Pit F306** (section Fig. 5A) - was initially only partially exposed in the east and north facing section of a hand dug trial pit. Subsequently, a larger trial pit was mechanically excavated to examine the area in more detail. The full extent of F306 was not established, however the profile revealed in section had steep sides and an apparently flat base, with a maximum width of 1.20m and a maximum depth of 0.83m. No dating evidence was recovered, but the in-situ layer of burning, context (308) at the base of the feature and the deliberate backfill, context (307), may be indicative of its use as a fire pit. No dateable finds were recovered, but the feature is likely to be post-medieval in date. See the following table for a summary of these contexts.

**Pit F311** (not shown in section) - was located in the west-facing section, but not seen in plan. It had steep sloping edges and a flat base, with a maximum width of 1.10m, and depth of 0.52m. The relationship between this pit and pit 306 was unclear, although F311 did appear to cut ditch 312. Pit 311 was filled with contexts (317) (318) and (319) which are summarised in the following table.

**Ditch F312** (section Fig. 5A)- was aligned NE - SW, cutting the trench obliquely. It had sloping edges, a maximum width of 2.25m and depth of 0.80m (exc.). The base was not established. Ditch 312 was filled with contexts (309) (313) and (314) which



are summarised in the following table. Dating evidence for this ditch was provided by the 39 Black Burnished Ware sherds recovered from context (314).

**Pit F315** (section Fig. 5A) - was noted in the west-facing section, and only partially observed in plan. The complete profile not revealed, although in section it appeared to have steep edges. Pit 315 had a maximum width of 1.50m, and depth of 0.65m and was filled with context (316). See table below for summary of contexts.

Context No	Width	Depth	Description	Comment
<b>F306</b>				
(308)	--	0.38m	Several lenses of an orange- grey black slightly silty ash, with frequent charcoal inclusions and rare small scorched flint fragments.	The primary fill which may represent in situ burning
(307)	--	0.45m	A mixed chalk rubble in a dark brown silty clay matrix with pea gravel and frequent chalk fragments, occasional flint fragments and rare charcoal flecks.	The secondary fill which may represent the deliberate back filling of the feature.
<b>F311</b>				
(317)	--	0.18m	A dark grey brown compact silty clay with frequent small flint fragments and occasional charcoal flecks.	The upper fill of pit F311
(318)	--	0.20m	A black- brown silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and fragments, occasional flint fragments, and pockets of chalk.	Possible in situ burning within pit F311
(319)	--	0.14m	A grey greasy friable clay silt with moderate charcoal flecks, occasional flint and chalk fragments, and burnt clay flecks	The primary fill of pit F311
<b>F312</b>				
(309)	--	0.30m	A spread of dark brown silty clay with moderate flint fragments, occasional, chalk fragments and charcoal flecks	Upper fill of ditch F312
(313)	--	0.50m	A mid dark brown compact silty clay with frequent chalk fragments, occasional flint fragments and rare charcoal flecks	Fill of ditch F312
(314)	--	0.70m	A dark brown silty clay with moderate - frequent flint fragments, occasional chalk fragments and charcoal flecks	Fill of Ditch F312
<b>F315</b>				
(316)	--	0.70m	Chalk rubble in a dark brown silty clay matrix with rare flint fragments	Fill of large pit F315

#### 5.4 Trench 4 (See Fig. 2 for plan of trench)

Trench 4 was aligned N-S on the steep south-facing slope. The natural subsoil comprised weathered chalk and areas of periglacial stripping which are not shown on Fig. 2. Two areas of hillwash deposits, contexts (401) and (409) were noted.

On excavation of the trench a single feature was identified. This comprised a pit F406 which was oval in plan with steep-sloping edges and a flat base. It measured

2.00m x 0.95m in plan and had a maximum depth of 0.35m. It was filled with context (407), a mid to dark brown, compact, silty clay with frequent flint fragments and rare charcoal and chalk flecks (See Fig. 5B). Several fragments of probable late Bronze Age to early Iron Age pottery and a moderate amount of worked flint were recovered from this context.

A trial pit was hand dug into an area of colluvium at the south end of the trench. This deposit (405) comprised a dark brown, compact, friable, silty clay with common flint fragments (35-40% by volume). The trial pit was later mechanically-excavated revealing this deposit to be approximately 1.30m in depth, and colluvial in origin. It was also possible to demonstrate that the area of compacted chalk at the extreme southern end of the trench was associated with the flood prevention scheme landscaping activities.

A second mechanically-excavated trial pit was located in the upper zone of hillwash designated context (401). This colluvial deposit was a mid to dark brown, compact, friable silty clay with common flint fragments (35-40% by volume). This trial pit revealed the deposit to be 0.60m in depth.

### 5.5 Trench 5 (See Fig. 2 for plan of trench)

Trench 5 was aligned E-W at the top of the south-facing slope. This was an additional trench intended to define and determine the extent of any early linear boundaries. The natural subsoil comprised weathered chalk and areas of periglacial striping, which is not shown on Fig. 2.

A single ditch, F505, aligned NW-SE was located at the west end of the trench. On excavation it appeared to be slightly curving in plan, with shallow edges giving way to the abrupt edges of a steep gully at its base. (see Fig. 5C) Ditch F505 had a maximum width of 1.80m and a maximum depth of 0.70m. The primary fill, context (506), comprised a mid brown, compact, silty clay with common chalk fragments (60% by volume) and occasional snail shells. The secondary fill, context (504), comprised a mid brown, friable, silty loam with charcoal flecks and common small - medium flint fragments (60% by volume).

#### 5.6 Trench 6 (See Fig. 2 for plan of trench)

Trench 6 was aligned NE-SW, at the top of the south facing slope. The natural subsoil comprised weathered chalk and areas of periglacial striping, which is not shown on Fig. 2. An area of hillwash, context (601) was noted at the south end of the trench.

A single ditch aligned NW -SE, F606, was noted in plan for a length of approximately 6.00m. On excavation the feature appeared to be a gully cutting an area of periglacial features. Gully F606 had moderately steep sides, a flat base, with a maximum width of 0.78m and depth of 0.30m. (See Fig. 5D) F606 was filled with context (605), a dark yellowish brown friable silty loam with moderate small to medium irregular flint fragments. Three sherds of post medieval pottery were recovered from the fill of this ditch.

#### 5.7 Trench 7 (See Fig. 3 for plan of trench)

Trench 7 was aligned N-S, on the steep south-facing slope. The natural subsoil comprised weathered chalk with areas of periglacial striping, which is not shown on Fig. 3. A hillwash deposit, context (701), was noted at the north end of the trench. No archaeological features were observed.

#### 5.8 Trench 8 (See Fig. 3 for plan of trench)

Trench 8 was aligned NW-SE, on a slight terrace along the steep south facing slope. The natural subsoil, which comprised weathered chalk with areas of periglacial striping (not shown on Fig. 3), was sealed by a deep colluvial deposit (801). This deposit comprised a mid reddish brown friable, silty clay loam with common flint fragments (50% by volume).

Approximately 15.50m from the north end of this trench, this deposit was mechanically removed revealing two cut features F807 and F808. (See Fig. 6A)

**Pit F807** (section Fig. 6A) - was 1.50m x 0.60m in plan, with a maximum depth of 0.30m. It had irregular, but abrupt, edges and a flat base. F807 continued beyond the east-facing section of the trench and it may represent a partially truncated pit. The fill, context (804) comprised a mid reddish brown, friable, clayey silt with common flint and chalk fragments and occasional charcoal flecks. The fill contained a single fragment of worked flint.

**Ditch F808** (section Fig. 6A) - was a small ditch or gully, slightly curving in plan, with a maximum width of 1.04m and a maximum depth of 0.32m. It was aligned approximately NW - SE, and was exposed for a length of 1.70m, with gently sloping edges, and an irregular base. The primary fill, context (806), comprised a dark black to brown, charcoal rich, silty clay loam with rare flint and chalk fragments. A lense of red brown silty clay loam may be considered as evidence for burning in situ. A single sherd of Romano - British pottery was recovered from this context (806) The secondary fill, context (805) comprised a light greyish brown, friable, clayey silt with common chalk and flint fragments, and charcoal flecks. This fill contained a single fragment of worked flint.

#### **5.9 Trench 9 (See Fig. 3 for plan of trench)**

Trench 9 was aligned NW-SE, on the more level, elevated ground to the NW of the site. No archaeological features were observed, although a substantial lower soil (904) horizon was noted at the northern end of the trench, sealed by the deposit (901). This may represent the natural silting of a hollow. A trial pit was located in this area to determine the nature and depth of these deposits, the results of which are summarised below;

0.00m - 0.15m, context (900), the topsoil;

0.15m - 0.43m, context (901), a grey brown, friable silty loam with moderate to rare irregular flint fragments;

0.43m - 0.76m, context (904), a silty fill of a natural hollow. This was a reddish brown friable sandy silt with moderate sub rounded to irregular small - medium flint fragments;

0.76m - 0.86m, context (905), the fill of a natural periglacial feature F906. This was a reddish brown friable sandy silt.

The trial trench was subsequently mechanically-excavated to a depth of 1.30m, which demonstrated that (904), lay directly above (902) a natural deposit of flint in a sandy silt matrix.

#### **5.10 Trench 10 (See Fig. 3 for plan of trench)**

Trench 10 was excavated to further determine the nature of the curvilinear feature F505 in Trench 5. The natural subsoil comprised weathered chalk and areas of periglacial striping, which are not shown on Fig. 3.

On excavation of the trench a the fill of a linear feature (F1002), aligned NW - SE, was recorded in plan, but not further excavated. The fill comprised a dark brown friable silty loam with moderate to frequent small sub-angular to sub-rounded flint fragments. If projected, F1002 it would have continued in the same orientation as F505 and F606, thus demonstrating that the three exposures represent one continuous feature. The difference in profile between the two sample-excavated sections (F505 and F606) may be attributed to the later truncation of F606, or the need for deeper ditch in the area of Trench 5, possibly for the purpose of drainage. No finds were recovered from F1002.

#### **5.11 Trench 11 (See Fig. 3 for plan of trench)**

Trench 11 was aligned NE - SW on the upper part of the site. It was excavated to further determine the nature and extent of the linear features identified in Trench 1. The natural subsoil comprised weathered chalk. On excavation of the trench a number of additional features was noted; one of which, feature F1101, appeared to correspond in size and orientation with the linear F110 recorded in Trench 1. No other features could be directly related to the previously-exposed linear features in Trench 1.

A single hand-excavated trench was cut through the complex of linear soilmarks in the northern end of the trench (see plan Fig. 3). All other features were planned, but not further investigated. The following summarises the deposits present:

**Ditch F1101** - Unexcavated feature aligned east-west across the width of the trench at the extreme northern end of Trench 11. The upper fill exposed in plan comprised a 2.05m wide deposit of yellowish brown, compact, silty clay with rare small irregular flint fragments, and frequent chalk flecks.

**Layer 1103** - Fill of linear feature, comprised of dark yellowish brown clayey silt with moderate amount of small sub-angular flint fragments and frequent chalk flecks. Cuts through linear features F1110 and F1111. Undated.

**Layer 1105** - Fill of slightly curving feature, comprised of a light grey brown, friable, clayey silt with a moderate amount of small irregular flint fragments, and small sub-angular chalk fragments. Cuts through linear feature F1110. Undated.

**Layer 1106** - Fill of small pit, comprised of a light grey brown, friable, clayey silt rare small irregular flint fragments, and sub-angular chalk fragments. Cuts through linear feature F1110. Undated.

**Layer 1107** - Fill of possible pit, comprised of a yellowish brown, compact, silty clay with rare small irregular flint fragments, and a moderate amount of small sub-angular chalk fragments. Undated.

**Layer 1108** - Fill of possible pit, comprised of a light yellowish brown, compact, silty clay with rare small irregular flint fragments and moderate amount of chalk flecks. Undated.

**Ditch F1110** (section Fig. 6B) - N-S aligned ditch with steeply-sloping sides, with ledge on west side and rounded base. The primary fill, context (1104) comprised a yellowish brown, compact, clayey silt with common chalk flecks, a moderate amount of sub-angular chalk fragments and rare flint fragments. The upper fill, context (1102), comprised a dark yellowish brown, friable, clayey silt with a moderate amount of small sub-angular flint fragments and common chalk flecks. A moderate quantity of <sup>Roman pottery,</sup> burnt flint and occasional charcoal flecks were apparent, but not collected, in the upper surface of this deposit.

**Ditch 1111** (section Fig. 6B) - Poorly-defined cut running approximately W-E. Observed in the extension to the trench excavated to expose ditch F1110. The ditch contains one fill, context (1112), which was a mid brown, compact clayey silt with common chalk fragments and flecks with rare occurrence of flint fragments. A single flint flake and fragment of animal bone were recovered from the fill. The relationship between F1111 and F1110 could not be ascertained in this exposure.

## **5.12 Trench 12**

Trench 12 was aligned N-S, and was excavated across the projected course of the Roman road through the farmyard. A number of spreads and layers were noted above truncated chalk bedrock, all of which were found to be post-medieval in date and included fragments of modern iron, bricks and concrete. A single linear feature was investigated and found to be a modern water pipe trench.

### 5.13 Trench 13

Trench 13 was a trial pit excavated by mechanical plant, adjacent to the stream course, to confirm the nature of the infill which forms part of the flood alleviation scheme. The trial pit was 1.00m x 1.50m in plan, and excavated to a maximum depth of 2.60m. The profile recorded comprised the following (all depths related to existing ground surface):

0.00m - 0.07m, context (1300), topsoil and turf

0.07m - 2.00m, context (1301), made ground. This comprised a mid to light brown silty clay, with pockets, and lenses of redeposited chalk, and common flint nodules.

2.00m - 2.60m, context (1302), river gravels, which comprised a waterlogged deposit of gravel (flint) in a silty sand matrix. Plant remains were noted but were considered to be recent in date.

## 6. THE EXCAVATED FINDS

Table 1 provides a summary of all the artefacts recovered.

### 6.1 Pottery

#### *Prehistoric Pottery*

A total of 34 pieces of probable late Bronze Age to early Iron Age pottery weighing 102g was recovered from Trench 4, context (407), the fill of a truncated pit F406. The fabric group consists of two broad categories. The dominant group comprised coarsewares of a sandy fabric, with generally frequent spherical voids suggestive of chalk or limestone tempering and elongated voids indicative of vegetable tempering. The second group consisted of coarsewares which were largely flint tempered with sparse to moderate quantities of irregular burnt flint in a fine sandy fabric. Of significance were two sherds from the same vessel which appeared to be a bowl with a complex internally moulded rim.

#### *Romano-British Pottery*

A total of 41 pieces of Romano-British pottery weighing 738g was recovered. Thirty-six pieces weighing 724g were recovered from context (314) F312, Trench 3. They are considered to be of the same vessel, a second century AD Black

TR NO.	CONTEXT NO.	FEATURE NO.	POTTERY				WORKED FLINT	BURNT FLINT	TILE	ANIMAL BONE	SHALE	COMMENT
			LBA-EIA*	Romano-British	Medieval	Post-med						
1	(102)	F109	-	-	-	-	14/488g	-	-	2/2g	-	Flakes = 8 complete, 5 retouched; 1 core flake
"	(103)	F109	-	-	-	-	6/156g	59/1,740g	-	-	-	Flakes = complete
"	(107)	F106	-	-	-	-	1/4g	-	-	-	-	Broken retouched flake
"	(108)	F110	-	-	-	-	4/52g	3/84g	-	-	-	Flakes = 2 complete, 1 broken, 1 retouched
"	(112)	F111	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6/22g	-	
"	(113)	F110	-	-	-	-	1/24g	6/360g	-	12/22g	-	Flake = hinge fracture with side retouch
"	(114)	F110	-	-	-	-	1/80g	47/4,148g	-	-	-	Large quantity of burnt flint
"	(116)	F110	-	-	-	-	2/22g	3/100g	-	-	-	Flakes = complete
"	(122)	F121	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/34g	-	Traces of butchery
"	(123)	F121	-	-	-	-	2/12g	-	-	-	-	Flakes = complete
2	(207)	F204	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/6g	Re-used lathe core from bracelet manufacture - Romano British
3	(309)	F312	-	1/6g	-	-	4/96g	-	-	-	-	Flakes = 2 retouched flakes may be scrapers
"	(314)	F312	-	39/724g	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Black Burnished ware jar - C2 <sup>nd</sup>
4	(407)	F406	34/102g	-	-	-	23/554g	19/728g	-	-	-	Flakes = 19 complete ( 1 burnt), 3 retouched. 1 blade with bluey white patination. Some flints show hinge fractures
"	(409)	hillwash	-	-	-	-	8/126g	-	1 /134g	1/2g	-	Flakes = 5 complete, 2 broken 1 retouched
5	(504)	F505	-	-	-	-	3/16g	-	-	-	-	Flakes = 1 complete, 1 retouched
"	(506)	F505	-	-	-	-	1/56g	-	-	-	-	Retouched flake - poss. scraper
6	(605)	F606	-	-	-	3/196g	1/34g	-	-	-	-	Hinge fractured flake with retouch
8	(804)	F807	-	-	-	-	1/6g	-	-	1/4g	-	Flake = retouched
"	(805)	F808	-	-	-	-	2/12g	-	-	-	-	Flakes = complete
"	(806)	F808	-	1/8g	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Oxidised Black Burnished ware
9	(901)	layer	-	-	-	-	6/118g	50/1,982g	-	-	-	Flakes = 1 complete, 2 broken, 3 retouched
"	(904)	layer	-	-	-	-	6/92g	3/58g	-	-	-	Flakes = 2 complete, 1 broken, 3 retouched
11	(1100)	topsoil	-	-	-	-	1/8g	-	-	-	-	Flake = complete
"	(1112)	-	-	-	-	-	1/62g	-	-	1/26g	-	Flakes = 1 complete, 1 broken
	unstrat.	-	-	-	1/2g	-	19/380g	3/80g	-	-	-	C13 <sup>th</sup> - Medieval pottery. Tr 7 - Flakes = 3 complete, 2 retouched; Tr 8 - Bluey white blade core heavily patinated, Flakes = 2 complete, 4 retouched; Tr 9 - Flakes = 2 complete, 1 retouched; Tr 11 - Flakes = 3 complete with hinge fractures, 1 retouched
TOTALS			34/102g	41/738g	1/2g	3/196g	107/2,398g	193/9,280g	1 /134g	24/112g	1/6g	

Table 1: Summary of Finds

\* Late Bronze Age - Early Iron Age



Burnished Ware jar with an everted rim. Traces of obtuse lattice decoration were noted. A single oxidised Black Burnished Ware sherd was recovered from (806) F808, Trench 8. The remaining coarseware sherd was recovered from context (309) F312, Trench 3.

### ***Medieval Pottery***

A single piece of unstratified medieval coarseware, weighing 2g was recovered. The sherd comprised a quartz tempered sandy fabric. The fragment displayed no diagnostic attributes but is considered to be of a thirteenth-century date.

### ***Post-medieval Pottery***

Three pieces, including two rim fragments, of lead glazed post-medieval pottery weighing 196g were recovered from context (605), the fill of linear F606. The sherds are considered to be from the same vessel, probably a pancheon.

## **6.2 Worked Flint by J. Valentin**

A total of 107 pieces of worked flint weighing just under 2.4kg was recovered from the evaluation. The assemblage has been assessed on the basis of raw material, condition, technology and diagnostic elements. The flint is generally dark grey or mottled grey/black, and fresh in appearance. It is likely that the flint was derived from a local chalk source.

A high proportion of the material shows surviving cortex as well as hinge fractures and edge damage due to plough damage or frost action. Within the assemblage there were no characteristic tool types. This absence makes it difficult to assign a positive date, though it is possible to make some general comments.

The majority of the material comprises broad waste flakes which can be attributed to a flake, rather than a blade industry. Approximately 30% of this group has been retouched, which is generally steep. The retouched flakes do not appear to have been deliberately selected for 'tool' manufacture, indicating casual procurement and discard on site.

Two pieces from the assemblage appear to be from an earlier blade industry (usually attributed to the late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic). One is a blade core from

topsoil adjacent to Trench 8 and the other is from a pit in Trench 4, context (407) F406. Both pieces display greater patination than the rest of the assemblage. The blade from F406 was recovered with the material which as a group is likely to be a later Bronze Age, flake industry. This is supported by the pottery evidence recovered from the same context.

It is therefore likely based on technology, the majority of the flint is from a late prehistoric (Bronze Age) flake industry. However, it is conceivable in an area where flint is a readily available resource, that it is contemporary with the main phase of activity on the site. The presence of a blade core and blade flake indicates the possibility of earlier activity on or immediately adjacent to the site.

### **6.3 Burnt Flint**

A total of 193 pieces of Burnt Flint weighing 9,280g, was recovered from Trenches 1, 4 and 9.

### **6.4 Animal Bone**

A total of 24 pieces of animal bone weighing 112g was recovered. Some of the fragments displayed signs of butchery. No further identification of species has been undertaken.

### **6.5 Other finds**

A single piece of tile weighing 134g was recovered from the colluvial deposit (409) in Trench 4. The tile was generally undiagnostic but may be of medieval date. The single piece of Kimmeridge Shale from context (207), F2045, was a fragment of a lathe-turned core from bracelet manufacture which had been subsequently re-used as a spindle whorl. The lathe fixing technique comprised a two-pin type and is therefore of Romano-British date.

## **7. COMMENT**

The field evaluation has demonstrated the sporadic occurrence of archaeological deposits across the site, of various dates, which can be summarised as follows:

7.1 Evidence for prehistoric activity is available from several sources. First, the single discrete feature F406 in Trench 4 contains pottery of probable late Bronze Age or early Iron Age date and is the only, limited, evidence for settlement activity within the development area. Secondly, the few diagnostic elements in the worked flint assemblage, which lacks identifiable tool types, suggests later prehistoric activity within the area. Thirdly, although largely undated, much of the sequence of linear ditches in Trenches 1, and 11 is suggestive of prehistoric (or possibly Roman) field ditches across the more elevated part of the site.

7.2 No positive evidence could be found for the Roman road on its predicted course in Trenches 1, 11 and 12. However, of the sequence of linear ditches observed in the north of the site, features F108 and F1101 may lie in the most approximate position for road side ditches. The profile of Ditch F108 does not seemingly correspond with that observed elsewhere in exposures of the Roman road (W G Putnam pers comm.) The possibility remains for the course of the Roman Road to lie slightly further to the north, possible under the existing hedgebank. It is even conceivable that it has later been superseded by Old Dorchester Road.

7.3 Other evidence for Roman activity includes finds from three features on the site. Feature F312 contained a moderate amount of pottery and may be positively assigned to this period, whereas the single sherd of pottery from feature F808 and fragment of worked shale in F204 provides less convincing evidence. Nevertheless, it can be suggested that further Romano-British activity may exist on the site, possibly focused around the complex of features in Trench 3 and associated with the slight earthwork or terrace on the hillside.

7.4 None of the subsoil features can be positively assigned to the medieval period, nor provide evidence for the westward extension of the medieval village beyond the church. Indirect evidence for medieval cultivation is provided by the sequence of hillwash deposits in the central and southern area of the site. Although no firmly dateable artefacts were recovered from the hillwash, in Trench 8 the material seals a feature containing Romano-British pottery and such must post-date the Romano-British period. The linear feature noted in Trenches 5, 6 and 10 (F505, F606 and F1001) contained sherds of post-medieval pottery. It is feasible that this

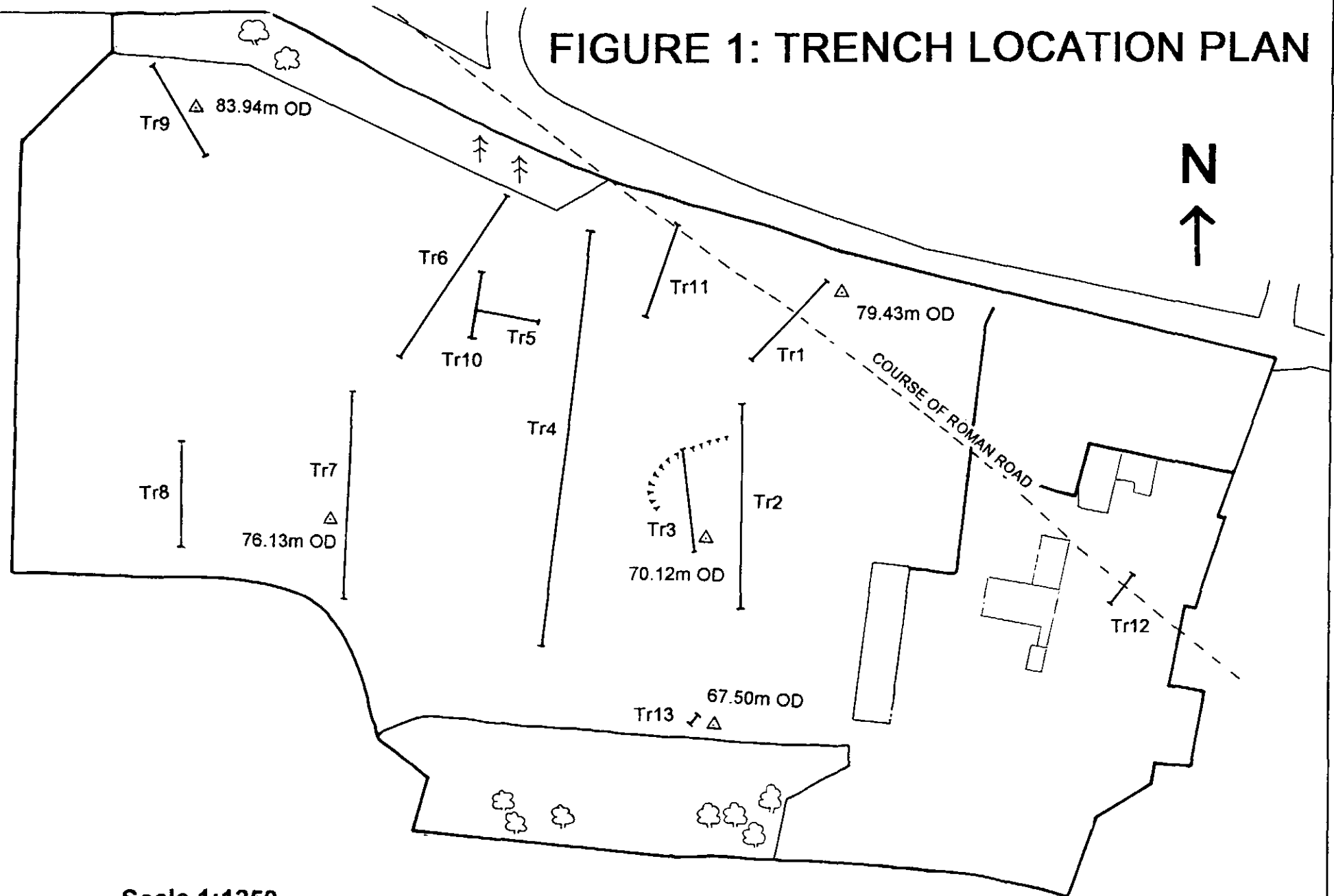
feature may represent a medieval land division, running approximately N-S up the slope, which was abandoned and infilled in the post-medieval period. Further medieval settlement evidence may once have existed at the east end of the site, presently occupied by the derelict farm buildings. The truncation of deposits here, as is evident in Trench 12, is likely to have removed all but the most robust archaeological features.

## 8. REFERENCES

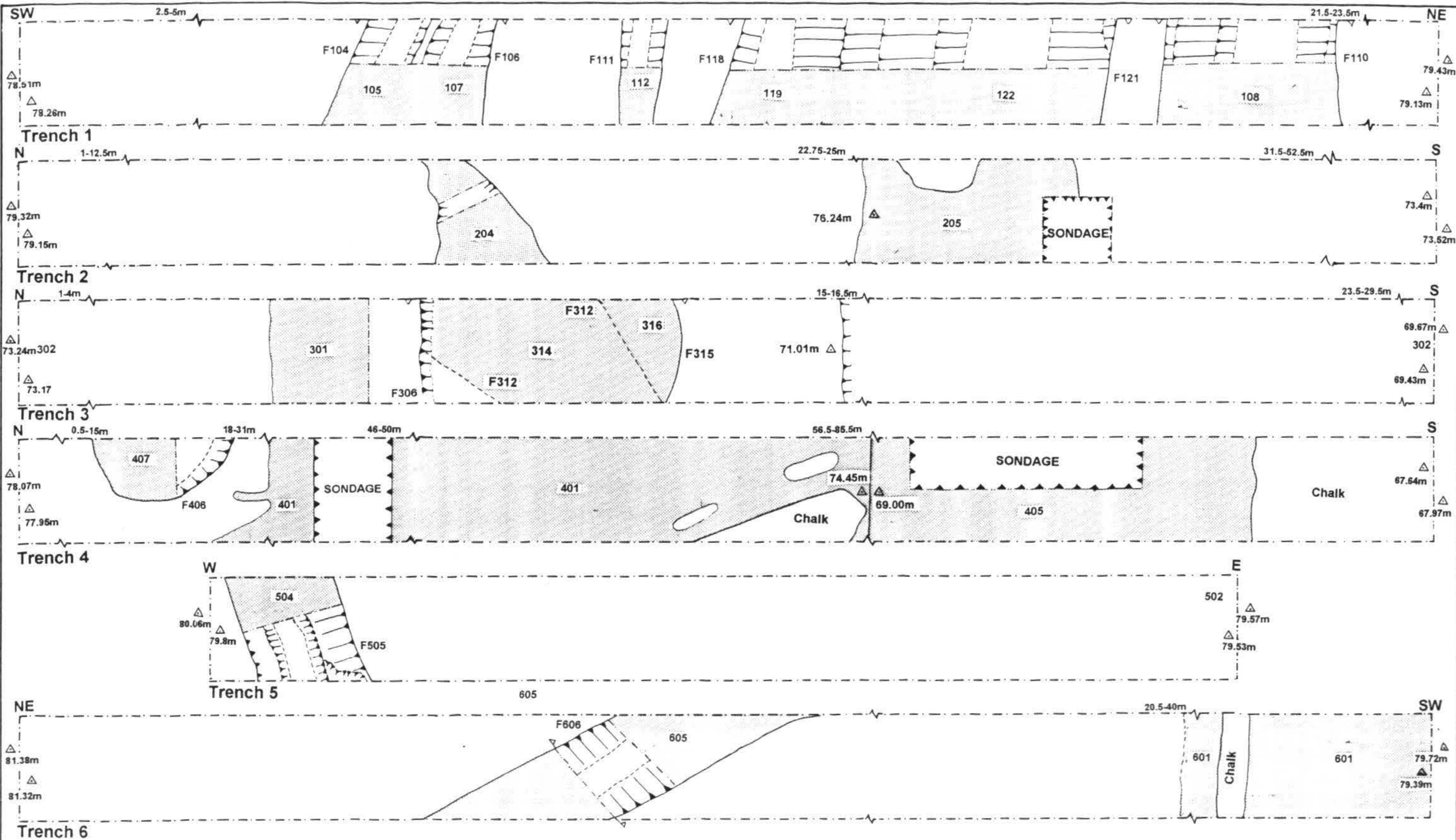
Cox, Peter, W., & Chandler, John, 1997, '*A preliminary archaeological assessment of the proposed development of land off Dorchester Road, Stratton, Dorset (NGR SY649938)*', unpublished client report by AC archaeology, no 9396/1/0, February 1997

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FIGURE 1: TRENCH LOCATION PLAN



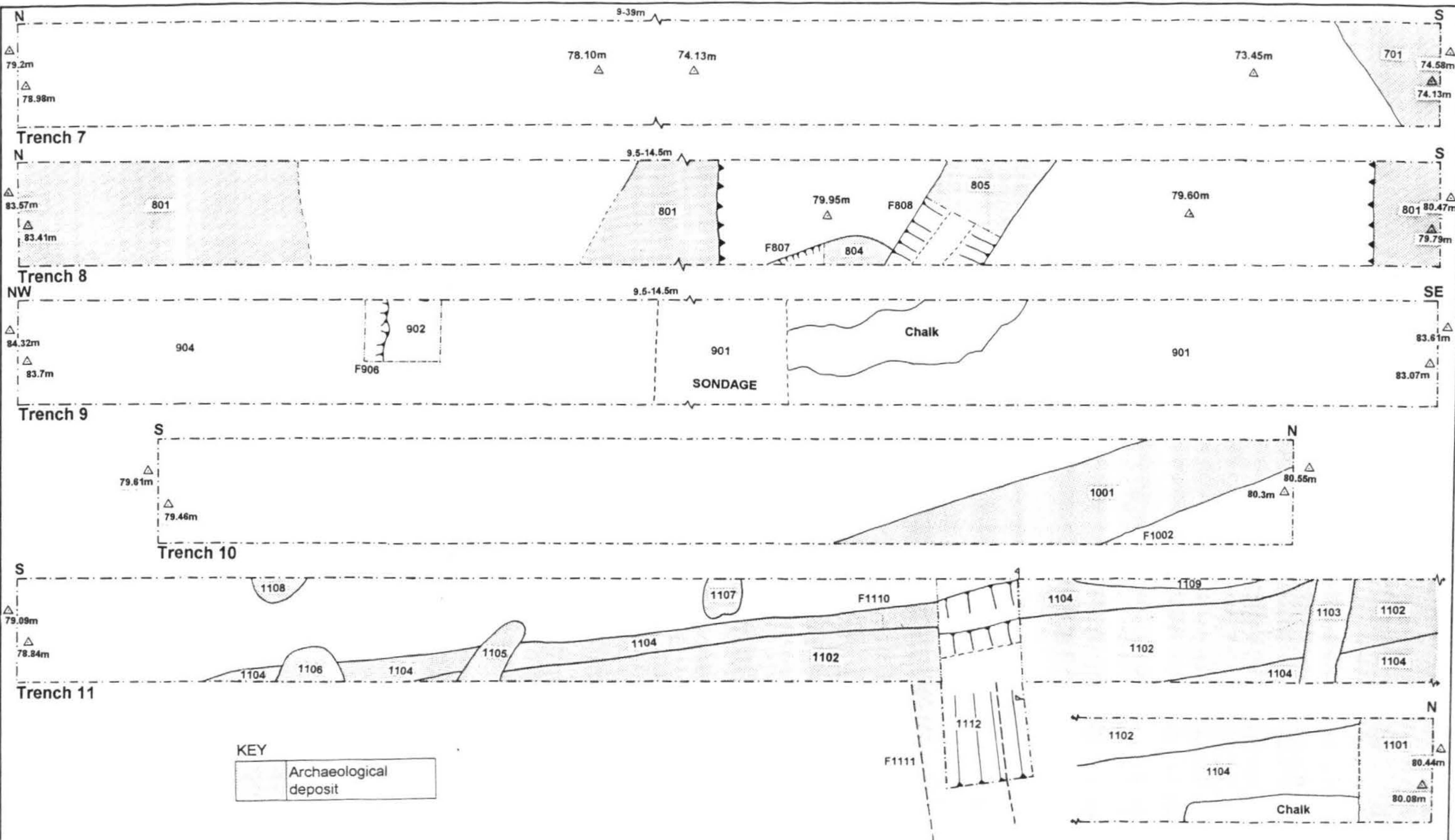


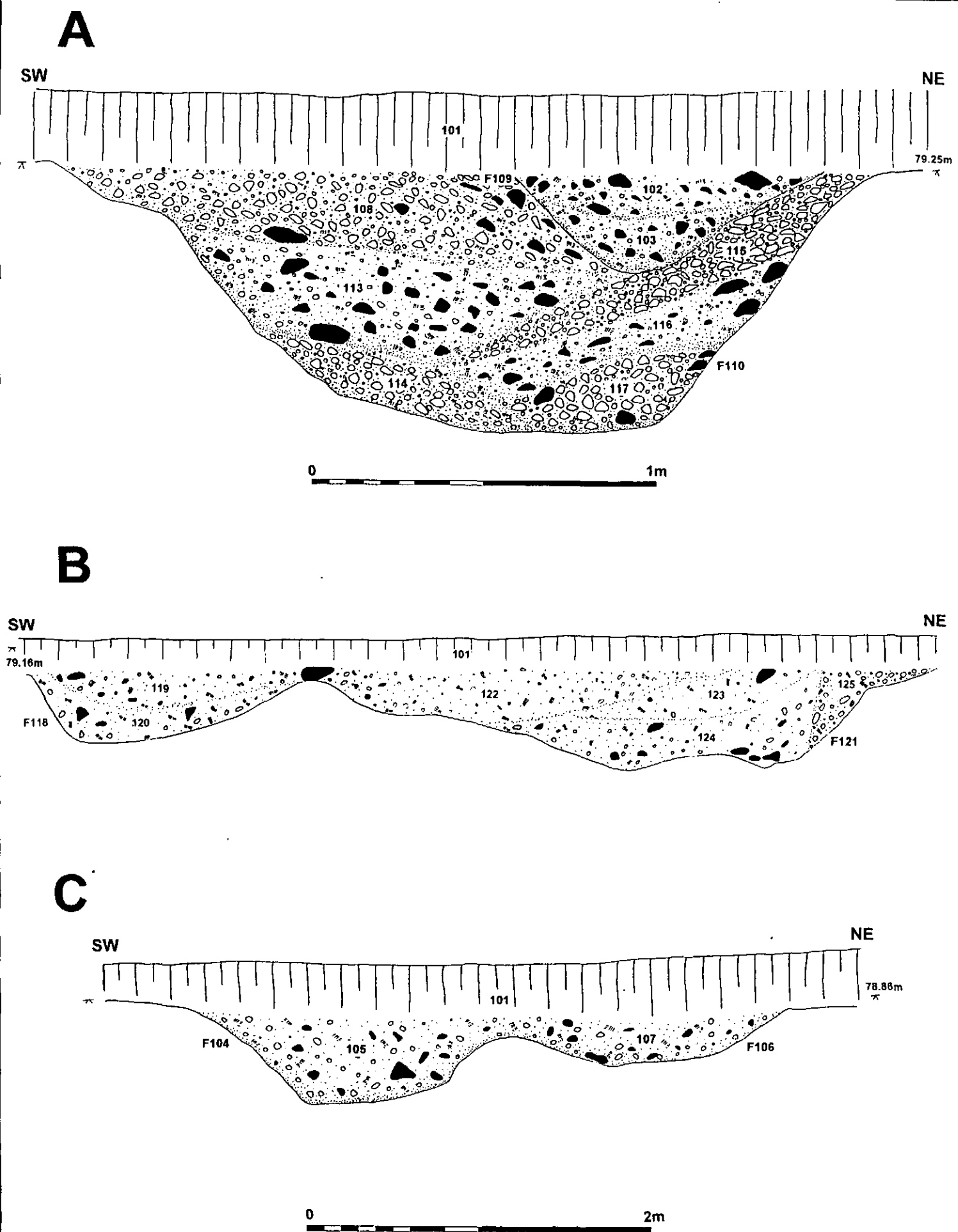


**FIGURE 2: PLANS OF TRENCHES 1-6**



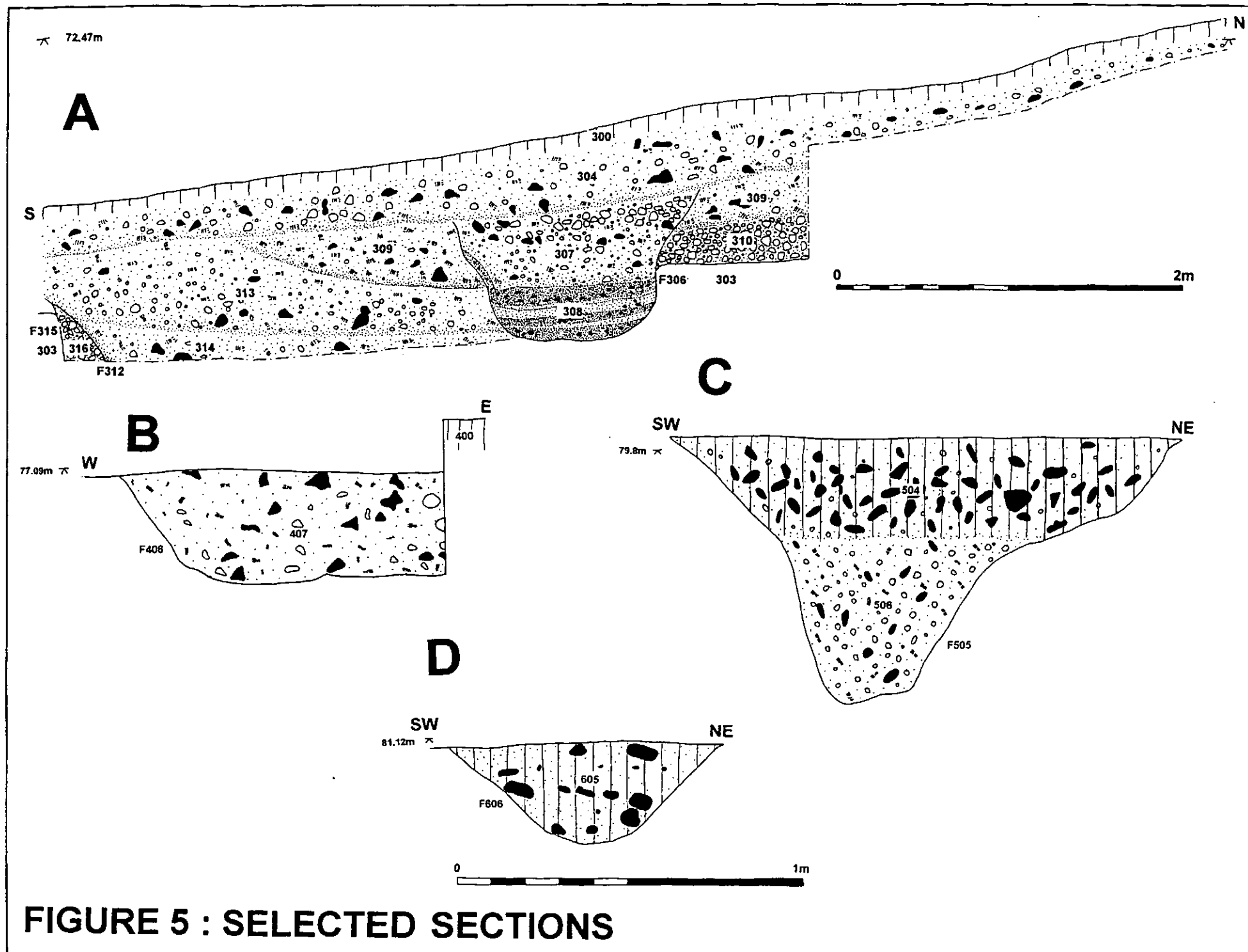




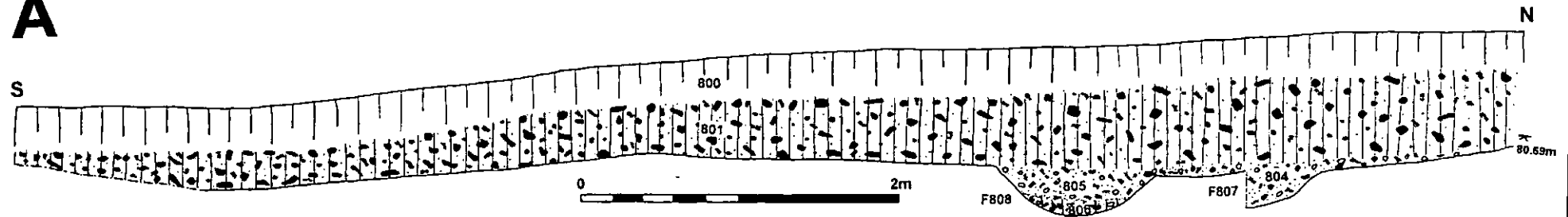
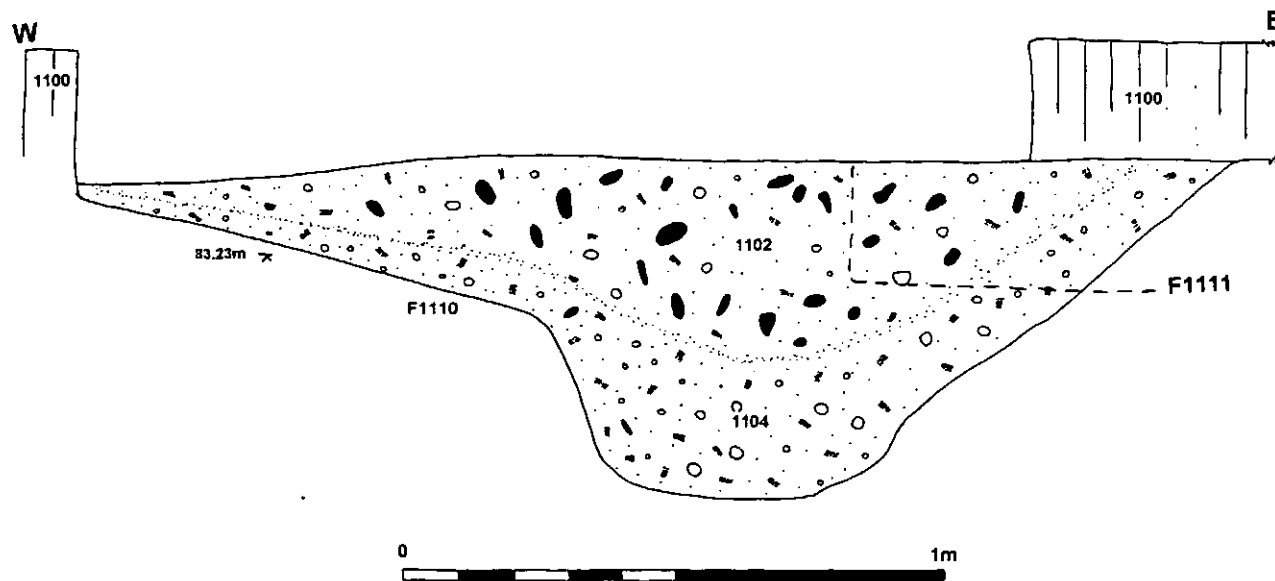


**FIGURE 4 : SELECTED SECTIONS**





**FIGURE 5 : SELECTED SECTIONS**

**A****B**

**FIGURE 6 : SELECTED SECTIONS**