PLASHES FARM

STANDON

HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Essex County Council
Planning

Field Archaeology Unit

April 2000

Written by T.R. Ennis
Project Officer,
Field Archaeology Unit, Essex County Council

Checked by N. Cowie-Wade
Archaeological Fieldwork Co-ordinator,
Field Archaeology Unit, Essex County Council

As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or the presentation of this report.
Please contact Philip Clarke, Principal Archaeologist, at the Field Archaeology Unit, Bocking Place, Courtauld Road, Braintree, Essex CM7 9BG
Tel: 01376 331470
E Mail: Phil@eccfau.demon.co.uk

s 3400

PLASHES FARM

STANDON

HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Report Prepared by
T. Ennis

April 2000

Field Archaeology Unit,
Bocking Place
Courtauld Road
Braintree
Essex.
CM7 9BG.

Tel: 01376 331470
Fax: 01376 331428

CONTENTS

PLASHES FARM, STANDON, HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Client: Mr B.W. Ellis
NGR: TL 380 203
Site Code: PFS'00
Dates of Fieldwork: 7th February to 15th March 2000

SUMMARY

A total of 53 evaluation trenches were excavated. Several phases of archaeological activity were identified.

A pit dating to the third millennium BC was excavated in the south of the development area and two prehistoric boundary ditches were excavated in the east.

A concentration of Late Iron Age to later Roman activity was found in the south west of the development area. Features included an early Roman kiln and a number of ditches, gullies, pits and post-holes. A geophysical survey of this area showed a strong focus of activity between trenches 31 and 40 and it is possible that further kilns are present.

Several medieval features were located and excavated dating to the 12th century and later. The majority of the features were ditches probably originally associated with the former earthworks. Of note was a wide linear feature, possibly a hollow way rather than a large ditch. No evidence of a medieval moat was found within the development area.

A rectilinear ditched enclosure, identified on the aerial photographic plot, was investigated. One sherd of 19th/20th-century pottery was recovered from the south western side of the enclosure ditch.

A post-medieval boundary ditch on the line of a former field boundary clearly shown on 19th century maps of the area was excavated. The foundations of two buildings recorded on the 1839 Tithe Award Map were exposed. The more northerly building was probably a barn. Its surviving foundation included re-used 16th-17th century bricks. The other building, possibly a store or stables, consisted of two phases of "L"-shaped wall foundations. The earlier foundation included re-used 18th century bricks and the smaller later foundation included an early 19th century brick.

Overall, the levelling of the site in 1984 was comprehensive with very little of the up standing earthworks surviving and only the bases of the post-medieval buildings.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out at Plashes Farm, Standon, Hertfordshire. The work was undertaken by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of Mr B.W. Ellis.

The work was carried out in accordance with an archaeological brief prepared by the Hertfordshire County Council Archaeology Office, who monitored the work. The site archive will be deposited at Hertford Museum.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and Geology (Fig. 1)

The site is located about 2.2km south-south east of the village of Standon on relatively high ground (mostly 105m to 111mOD) between the A10 to the west and the River Rib to the east. The area of investigation comprises broadly flat arable land surrounded by extensive areas of ancient woodland (Plashes Wood to the north, Hanging Wood to the east).

The far south of the area (adjacent to Blackey Mead Wood) comprises rough ground that has been subject to landfill over the past three to four years.

The underlying geology is comprised of sand and gravel drift deposits over tertiary clay. There are outcrops of chalk in the vicinity of the study area.

2.2 Previous Work

Previous work within the study area comprises a desk top assessment and fieldwalking survey, both undertaken by Essex County Council, Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) (Ennis, 1999, Germany 1999), and an aerial photographic appraisal (stage 1 and 2) undertaken by C. Cox (1999).

2.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

The development area lies to the south of the historic core of the village and to the east of the A10 which runs along the route of Ermine Street. Standon, a parish in the Rib valley, is recorded in the Domesday survey under the name of Standone; documentary evidence indicates that the settlement achieved borough status from at least 1291.

Known archaeological sites in the area include the Iron Age and Roman settlement at Braughing, the defended Iron Age enclosure of Gatesbury and the excavated Roman pottery kilns at Hadham.

Plashes farmhouse dates from the early 17th century, although the south range may be earlier. Located to the north east of the house are the barn and stables. The barn dates to the 16th century. These buildings lie just off the western edge of the evaluation area. Documentary evidence suggests that the manor of plashes was created by the de Clare family in the 13th century (Ennis, 1999).

An extensive area of well-preserved earthworks surviving to approximately 1m high in places was destroyed by levelling and ploughing in 1984. Subsequent fieldwalking revealed no evidence of occupation (Hertfordshire Sites and Monuments Record (HSMR) 2587). The earthworks are visible on aerial photographs (e.g., HSMR 3269) which show a range of features including a number of clearly defined banks, some of which are former field boundaries (Ennis, 1999).

The ancient woodland surrounding the evaluation area is shown extending into the north and west of the evaluation area on the 1839 Standon Tithe Award Map. This map also shows the

remnants of a possible moat to the west of the farmhouse, farm buildings located south of the existing pond and a large rectangular building, probably a barn, in the field to the immediate east of the pond (Ennis, 1999).

2.4 Aerial Photographic Survey (Fig. 2)

A stage 2 aerial photographic survey showed several areas of interest including banks and ditches, the possible remains of a hollow way and a rectangular ditched enclosure. Other features identified included ponds, areas of ridge and furrow cultivation and faint areas of disturbed ground noted as having archaeological potential (Cox, 1999).

2.5 Fieldwalking Results

The fieldwalking survey (Germany, 1999) identified five areas of archaeological interest. Two possible prehistoric areas were marked by a sherd of Neolithic/Bronze Age pottery and a small cluster of worked flint. A third, Roman, area was marked by a thin scatter of Roman pottery and tile near to Blackey Mead Wood in the south west corner of the site. The final two areas were marked by concentrations of post-medieval brick and tile that correlated with the position of the former farm buildings and probable barn identified on the 1839 tithe map (see above). In general the fieldwalking results did not show clearly defined areas of specific archaeological potential but rather a 'background noise' of material that suggests activity in the vicinity if not directly on the evaluation area itself.

3 0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Generally, the aim of the work was to determine the location, date, character, extent, condition, quality and significance of any archaeological remains threatened by the development proposal.

3.1 Requirements of Brief of Works

The brief identified the following archaeological requirements:

> "Areas of archaeological potential as identified by previous assessment and evaluation work on the site will be targeted for exploratory excavation by specifically located trial trenches. In addition, apparent blank areas should be tested by means of trial trenches located at regular intervals."

Areas highlighted by the brief of works which required specific evaluation were:

- the area of former earthworks to the east and south east of the present farm (trenches 6-9, 18-23, 45, 48),
- the nature and archaeological potential of 'boggy areas' identified during the walk over survey (trenches 18, 33),
- the significance of artefact 'scatters' identified during the fieldwalking programme (trenches 1-7, 29-36, 53),
- the character of the possible moated site (feature I in Stage 2 Aerial Photographic Appraisal) (trenches 30, 47),
- The character and date of the bank and possible ditch features (L & M in the Stage 2 Aerial Photographic Appraisal) (trenches 13-16, 26-28).

4.0 METHOD

The layout of the trenches was proposed by the ECC Field Archaeology Unit in a specification document and agreed with the Hertfordshire County Council Archaeology Office. The layout was designed to sample the whole development area (including blank areas) as well as features and areas of archaeological interest identified from the desktop study, aerial photographic survey and the field walking results.

Trenches were surveyed on to the Ordnance Survey grid using a Zeiss Rec Elta 15 total station theodolite. Due to technical survey problems a number of trench locations varied from their positions as set out in the specification; they were however all within the areas of archaeological interest identified. Where necessary, additional trenches were located to investigate specific features. Further trenches were cut either to help clarify archaeological areas or features identified during machine excavation (e.g. Roman trenches 40 and 41) or to investigate potential features indicated by changes in topsoil colour or finds spreads (e.g. trenches 48 and 52).

The topsoil was removed under archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a flat bladed bucket. Archaeological features exposed in the trenches were then excavated by hand and fully recorded using standard ECC FAU record sheets.

It was decided in agreement with the Hertfordshire County Council Archaeologists that a geophysical survey of the Late Iron Age and Roman area should be undertaken to help ascertain the nature and extent of this site. The results of the survey were to be included as part of the evaluation report. The survey was duly arranged and carried out after the evaluation trenches had been back-filled. A survey grid of 20m x 20m squares was established in alignment with local field boundaries. Magnetic data was collected within this grid at a sample interval of 0.5m and a traverse separation of 1m. The survey was carried out using a Geoscan Research FM36 Fluxgate Gradiometer and ST1 Sample Trigger. The collected data was downloaded to, and processed by, Insite software installed on an IBM laptop PC.

5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS (Fig. 3)

A total of 53 trenches were machine excavated (numbered 1-54, no number 19). In most cases between 0.3 to 0.44 metres of gravely clay silt topsoil was removed onto natural subsoil deposits. This subsoil varied in composition across the area. To the south and far east of the area it was predominately brown to yellow orange gravel. To the north and centre of the area were more mixed deposits of orange brown clay, clay silts, sand and gravel.

Bad weather during the latter stages of the evaluation meant that a few trenches became completely flooded (e.g. trenches 18 and 23) before they had time to be archaeologically investigated.

The results from the fieldwalking exercise (Germany, 1999) clearly pointed to Roman activity focused on the south west corner of the development area. This was confirmed in the evaluation trench results where a concentration of Late Iron Age and Roman archaeology was found encompassing trenches 31, 34, 35, 37 and 40 (Area A). Evaluation trenches across the remainder of the development area (Area B) produced a scattered range of features dating from the prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval periods. Of particular note, was a barbed and tanged arrowhead found by chance in the topsoil just to the east of the pond.

5.1 Area A: Late Iron Age and Roman (Fig. 4)

Trench 31 (Fig. 8)
This trench contained a single-chambered twin-flued updraught kiln (14) (Plate 1) that was dated by its pottery to the early Roman period. The kiln was 50% excavated in two quarter sections (Fig. 23, Sect. O). The kiln was orientated east/west and was an irregular hourglass shape in plan. Its overall measurements were 3.8m long by 1.82m wide by 0.4m deep. It was comprised of a central sub-circular kiln cut [27] with a short flue [23 and 43] and irregular stoke-hole depression [21 and 41] at either end. The kiln was lined with heat reddened clay (24) up to 0.2m thick. A few burnt flints were noted towards the centre of the kiln sitting upon this lining. No central pedestal was observed nor was any kiln furniture recovered. On its north side the lining was cut by a small north west/south east orientated gully [19] that was dated as Mid Roman.

The other features in this trench were a north/south orientated ditch [8] (Fig. 21, Sect. D) that produced pottery dating to the Late Iron Age from its primary fill (11) and an undated pit [12], that continued beyond the edge of the trench.

Trench 34 (Fig. 9)
Trench 34 contained a Linear north west/south east orientated ditch [2] (Fig. 21, Sect. E) that produced Late Iron Age pottery in its fill (3). Pit [4] produced 4th century material from its fill (5). A pit or ditch terminus [6] (that continued beyond the trench) produced pottery dating to the 4th century. Two small post-holes [28 and 30] were located towards the west-end of the trench; neither produced any dating evidence.

Trench 35 (Fig. 10)
At the north end of the trench was a shallow pit [59], that produced no finds and was possibly a natural feature. An east/west orientated ditch [32] (Fig. 23, Sect. K) produced pottery dated to the ?3rd century from its fill (33), whereas, the fill (47) of sub-circular pit [46] (Fig. 23, Sect. N) produced pottery dated to the 4th century. An adjacent linear feature [66] appeared, upon excavation, a patch of disturbed natural subsoil. An undated, shallow, north east/south west orientated, ditch-like feature [53], possibly a furrow, truncated a probable pit [55], that continued beyond the trench. The fill (56), of pit [55], was dated from the pottery to the late 2nd to early 3rd century. At the south end of the trench was another probable pit [61] dated to the later 4th century and an undated very shallow east/west orientated gully [63].

Trench 37
This trench contained a north/south orientated ditch [17] with a fill (16) producing Mid to Late Roman pottery (mid 2nd to mid 4th century). An adjacent subsoil deposit (15) also contained Late Roman pottery (late 3rd to mid 4th century).

Trench 40 (Fig. 11)
This trench contained a number of features. At the north end of the trench was a pit [76] that produced Early Roman pottery. Further down the trench was an undated north west/south east orientated gully [104] (Fig. 23, Sect. L) and the butt ends of two east/west orientated ditches [106 and 108]. The fill (107) of ditch [106] was dated to Late 2nd to 4th century Roman and the fill (109) of ditch [108] (Fig. 23, Sect. M) was dated Late 3rd to 4th century Roman. Some unclear disturbance was noted at the very southern end of this trench.

5.2 Area B: Other Periods (Fig. 5)
(Trenches without features not discussed)

Trench 2 (Fig. 12)
This trench contained a north/south orientated ditch [50] (Fig. 22, Sect.G). The fills (48 and 49) of this ditch produced medieval pottery dating to the 11th or 12th century. Also in this trench was a large, poorly defined, pit-like feature [96] that produced 12th century pottery from its fill (95) along with a post-medieval bottle base and associated fragments.

Trench 8
This trench contained one undated north east/south west orientated ditch [58].

Trench 9
This trench contained one undated post-hole [35].

Trench 10
This trench contained one post-hole [37] that may be post-medieval in date as the fill (36) included a few flecks of brick and one small undated ditch [39] orientated north west/south east.

Trench 11
This trench contained one irregular linear feature [91], orientated east/west that produced a few pieces of post-medieval tile (not retained) from its fill (90).

Trench 12 (Fig. 13)
This trench contained a north/south orientated ditch [71] that was post-medieval in date. The fill (70) contained one sherd of glazed post-medieval pottery and some tile (post-Roman). Also, in this trench was a partially surviving, north/south orientated, brick wall foundation (72) of building (166).

Trench 16 (Fig. 14)
This trench contained two prehistoric ditches [79 and 81]. Ditch [79] (Fig. 21, Sect. B) was orientated east/west and ditch [81] was orientated north west/south east. The fill (78) of ditch [79] produced two sherds of prehistoric pottery and the top fill (80) of ditch [81] produced one sherd. This pottery was not closely dateable.

Trench 17 (Fig. 15)
This trench contained two "L"-shaped wall foundations (160 and 166) forming building (143).

Trench 18
This trench was located across the northern end of a former boggy patch, which showed as a long spread of darker topsoil. This showed up, in section, as a deepening (from 0.3m to 0.4m) of the topsoil in section. A north east/south west orientated ditch-like feature was identified towards the south eastern end of this trench, but was not excavated due to flooding.

Trench 20
This trench contained one large poorly defined feature [140], possibly connected with quarrying activity, extending beyond the confines of the trench. The fill (141) of this feature produced 4 abraded sherds of medieval pottery, but, given the size of the feature, it may be that these are residual finds.

Trench 21 (Fig. 16)
This trench cut through a possible hollow way [152] (Fig. 24, Sect. P). This was orientated north/south and consisted of three fills (149,150 and 151) none of which provided any dating evidence. Also in this trench was an undated north/south orientated ditch [148].

Trench 22
This trench contained a north/south orientated ditch [103] (Fig. 22, Sect. I) with a rounded butt end. The fills (101 and 102) of this ditch produced medieval pottery dating to about the 12th century.

Trench 23
Soon after being cut this trench became completely flooded. However, a possible north west/south east orientated ditch was identified about mid-way down the trench.

Trench 25
This trench contained a shallow north east/south west orientated undated gully [145] and the probable continuation of ditch [148] from trench 21.

Trench 26
This trench contained one east/west orientated ditch [52]. The fill (51) of this ditch contained one piece of post-Roman tile.

Trench 27 (Fig. 17)
This trench contained one east/west orientated undated linear feature [113]. This was probably a ditch, but was quite shallow (only 0.21m deep) and hence might alternatively have been a furrow.

Trench 28
This trench contained one north/south orientated undated ditch [44].

Trench 29
This trench contained two east/west orientated ditches [137 and 139]. The larger of the two features [137] (Fig. 24, Sect. R) produced one piece of post-medieval pottery and a piece of post-Roman tile from its fill (136). It was also truncated by the cut of a tree bole [135]. Shallow ditch (139) was located a metre to the south and failed to produce any dating evidence.

Trench 30 (Fig. 18)
This trench contained several archaeological features. An east/west orientated ditch [158] (Fig. 22, Sect. F) produced one sherd of medieval pottery from its fill (159). This ditch appeared to converge with north/south orientated ditch [164]. The fill (163) of ditch [164] was slightly darker and ditch [164] appeared to cut ditch [158]. Also, ditch [164] was directly aligned with ditches [88 *et al*] from trench 47 (see below) and was almost certainly a continuation of this ditch line. At its north west limit the trench was crossed by a north east/south west orientated ditch [153]. Its fill (154) produced one piece of clay pipe stem giving it a possible post-medieval or later date. At the very end of the trench ditch [153] cut another deeper feature [156]. South east of ditch [153] was a compact flint cobble deposit (165), possibly the remnant of a surface, orientated north/south.

Trench 33
The east-end of this trench was flooded immediately after machine excavation. Towards the west-end an undated north/south orientated ditch [131] was identified. This is possibly a continuation of a feature from trench 47 (see below).

Trench 39
This trench contained one undated north/south orientated ditch [133].

Trench 42 (Fig. 19)
This trench contained a number of features. Towards the north end of the trench was an undated east/west orientated ditch [68]. Another undated ditch [84] orientated north east/south west, terminated about half way down the trench. A small oval pit [74] (Fig. 21, Sect. A) produced sixteen sherds of prehistoric Grooved Ware pottery from its fill (75), thus dating the feature to the third millennium BC. Another small pit [100] and an oval post-hole [114] both failed to produce any dating evidence, whilst an elongated scoop [111], produced a small fragment of modern white glazed pottery (not retained).

Trench 43
This trench was positioned to investigate a darker patch of topsoil. Underlying this topsoil was a wide feature [129] (Fig. 22, Sect. H), possibly a pond, filled with a compact very dark grey silt (128) flecked with chalk and charcoal. The edges of this feature could not be investigated due to flooding.

Trench 44 (Plate 2)
This trench became flooded. No features had been previously observed.

Trench 45
This trench contained one undated east/west orientated gully [127].

Trench 46
This trench contained the continuation of small ditch [117] from trench 47 (see below).

Trench 47 (Fig. 20)
This trench contained several archaeological features. Located at the north east end of the trench were the butt end of an east/west orientated undated ditch [121] (Fig. 22, Sect. J), a probable animal burrow disturbance [123] and an undated irregular possible post-hole [125]. A little to the south west were two small roughly parallel ditches [98] (Fig. 21, Sect. C) and [117] orientated north/south. Both ditches were undated and were cut by a modern plough mark. The largest features in this trench were a series of three inter-cutting north/south orientated ditches [93, 89 and 88] (Fig. 24, Sect. Q). Ditches [93 and 89] seem to be re-cuts of the original ditch line as represented by ditch [88]. One piece of 19th to 20th century pottery was recovered from the fill (65) of ditch cut [89].

Trench 48
This trench was positioned to further examine a long spread of darker topsoil. Unfortunately, this trench became totally flooded and was unable to be fully investigated. During machine excavation the topsoil/silt was noticeably deeper in the central area of the trench.

Trench 49
This trench was located to check for any continuation of a moat south west of the pond. The only feature encountered was a patch of brick debris about 12 metres from the north west end of the trench. This probably represented the foundation of a post-medieval brick wall associated with the brick structure in trench 17. This feature could not be fully recorded due to flooding of this trench.

Trench 50
This trench was located to check for any moat north of the pond, none was observed.

Trench 51
This trench was located to check the direction of the wall foundation (72) (building 166) recorded in trench 12 (see above). This did indeed continue through trench 51 and was here recorded as wall foundation (73).

Trench 52
This trench was located to examine a spread of post-medieval tile in the topsoil adjacent to the track. No features were observed underlying this deposit.

Trench 53
This trench was positioned to examine another dark patch of topsoil. Below the topsoil was a very dark grey silty clay deposit (162) sitting in a very slight hollow directly above natural clay.

5.3 Geophysical Survey

5.3.1 Principles of Magnetometer Surveying
Iron in the form of chemical compounds is dispersed through soils, clays and rocks. Activities associated with past human settlement and industry have redistributed, concentrated and enhanced the magnetic properties of these compounds. Archaeological features containing such enhanced material can have a localised effect on the strength and polarity of the Earth's magnetic field and by logging regular measurements of this field with a magnetometer it is possible to recognise patterns and anomalies (Clark 1990).

Structures and features incorporating fired clay such as kilns or hearths produce particularly strong uniformly positive anomalies when compared to general background readings because the magnetic iron compound within the clay is enhanced during firing. Features with a high brick or tile content generally produce strong mixed polarity responses due to the varying orientation of each magnetically enhanced artefact.

The detection of pits and ditches depends upon there being a difference between the magnetic properties of the backfill of a feature and the geology into which it has been excavated. This contrast is usually present because the fill often consists of a proportion of topsoil which is normally more magnetically enhanced than subsoil (Tite & Mullins 1971). Again these features produce positive magnetic responses although usually weaker than those caused by fired materials. Walls and foundations constructed of masonry are detected in a similar way although the signal is negative due to the generally low magnetic properties of these materials.

5.3.2 Printed Plots
The data collected during the survey is reproduced in this report as a grey scale plot (Fig. 7). With this method the data readings are converted into varying shades of grey. The density of the

shading is proportional to the difference between the reading and pre-determined maximum and minimum cut off levels. In a black and white image positive magnetic values above the maximum level will appear black and negative values below the minimum will be white with varying levels of grey in between. This produces images of considerable subtlety with a wide range of data displayed on one plot.

5.3.3 Survey Results (Figs.6 and 7)
The survey located a number of magnetic anomalies indicative of archaeological features.

Throughout the site are linear features which are characteristic of ditches. The data suggest that these can be divided into at least two phases of construction. The earlier phase (A) comprise faint features approximately 2.5-3.5m wide. These are overlaid in three places (x) by similar but more contrasting anomalies (B) which measure around 2.5-3m wide. This later series of ditches is associated with a concentrated region of archaeological activity to the north of the site. This is the location of a quantity of anomalies characteristic of ditches and pits. The strength and contrast of all anomalies in this area, including sections of the ditch mentioned above that pass through it, indicates that they are associated with, or filled by material that has been significantly magnetically enhanced. This material, such as ceramic debris or other heat affected deposits, may indicate the location of settlement and/or industrial activity.

6.0 FINDS

6.1 Summary of Finds
A wide range of finds were recovered from this evaluation. Finds included pottery, brick and tile, small quantities of animal bone, a possible coin, vessel glass, clay pipe and a flint arrowhead. The earliest pottery recovered dated to the third millennium BC. Other pottery dated to the Late Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods. The bulk of the recovered pottery was Roman in date from features located in trenches to the south west of the development area.

6.2 Prehistoric Pottery by N. Brown
The excavation produced 42 sherds (weighing 450g) of prehistoric pottery, which has been recorded according to a system (details in archive) devised for prehistoric pottery in Essex (Brown 1988). Almost all the pottery (91% by sherd weight) comes from the fill (75) of a small pit [74] in trench 42, and most of the pottery from this context (83% by sherd weight) comprises a group of grog tempered sherds. This material includes a large sherd of an inturned rounded rim with a slight internal bevel, and part of the lower wall of a jar like pot, quite possibly from the same vessel as the rim. The fabric and rim form are characteristic of Grooved Ware pottery dating from the third millennium BC (Garwood, P. 1999). Some of the wall sherds have ?burnt food residue on the interior. Other pottery from context 75 consists of rather fragmentary flint tempered body sherds and a small flat topped rim, some of these sherds are decorated with slight raised ridges or incised lines on the exterior. Given the relative scarcity of Grooved Ware in Hertfordshire (Longworth and Cleal 1999) the pottery from 75 is of particular interest. The remaining pottery comprises small body sherds in a range of flint tempered fabrics not closely dateable within the prehistoric period (Appendix 3).

6.3 Late Iron Age & Roman Pottery by T.S. Martin

6.3.1 Method

The pottery was classified using the Chelmsford typology (Going 1987, 2-54) which is standard for all Essex County Council Field Unit sites. However, not all of the vessel forms or fabrics fitted comfortably within Going's scheme. Given the absence of a usable typology for East Hertfordshire, it was decided to persevere with the latter. Consequently, additional references have been sought in published site reports from East Hertfordshire where this was appropriate. Analysis is primarily concerned with identifying the variety of fabrics and forms, and providing dating evidence for site features. Quantification is by sherd count and weight by fabric for all contexts. None of the groups examined presented themselves for additional quantification by Estimated Vessel Equivalents (EVEs) based on rim percentage.

A total of twenty fabrics or fabric groups, including two mortarium fabrics, was recorded (Appendix 4, Table 1). ECC mnemonic codes are used throughout the dating evidence sections for consistency as not all of the fabrics are found in Going.

6.3.2 Introduction

A total of 230 sherds of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery, weighing 4.6kg, were recovered from twenty-one contexts. Of this material, all but about 9% came from feature fills (Table 1). None of the pottery is unstratified or derived from either occupation layers or floor levels. Pottery in varying quantities was recovered from six trenches (22, 31, 34, 35, 37 and 40) with the material spread unevenly between the trenches: trench 35 produced 39% of the site's pottery, while trench 22 produced less than 1%. Although the size of individual groups was variable, most contained less than thirty sherds. Only one group (context 25 in trench 31) was present with more than thirty sherds and there were no large-sized groups (i.e. with more than 100 sherds).

6.3.3 The Pattern of Pottery Deposition

The pattern of pottery deposition at Plashes Farm exhibits a number of features that are very different to that seen on most rural sites in Essex (Appendix 4, Table 2). First and foremost, the range of feature types represented is very limited, being restricted to linear features, pits and a pottery kiln. There does not appear to be any evidence for structures within the sampled areas. Secondly, the bulk of the pottery appears to come from pits (39%) rather than linear features (20%). The only parallel for this is at Downhouse Farm, West Hanningfield (Martin in preparation). What is more, the pottery from the pits is also better preserved in terms of average sherd weight. Indeed, the material recovered from linear features seems to be exceptionally fragmentary and thus very poorly preserved. This suggests that the pottery from the pits is not only much less broken than the material from the linear features, but also constitutes more reliable dating evidence. On rural sites, ditches and gullies tend to be important sources of pottery dating evidence, but here more pottery was recovered from pits.

Approximately 27% of the site's pottery came from contexts associated with the kiln in trench 31. However, when these are viewed individually, none are significant in terms of the quantity of pottery recovered from them. Coupled with the small amounts of obvious kiln waste present, this suggests that much of the kiln waste is likely to have been deposited some distance from the kiln itself.

6.3.4 Site Chronology

The pottery recovered from the six trenches (22, 31, 34, 35, 37 and 40) exhibits a very broad Late Iron Age to Later 4th century date range. However, very few contexts can be considered to

be well-dated due to the absence of any significant amounts of closely datable material. Although a high proportion of contexts sampled contained pottery that appears to be broadly early Roman in date, this material is not especially diagnostic. Dating largely rests on a single form, or on the range of fabrics present. By comparison, the later contexts are more securely dated.

The earliest pottery reaching the site appears to include a variety of Grog-tempered wares. Two contexts, 3 (ditch [2], trench 34) and 11 (primary fill of ditch [8], trench 31), contained this material alone. However, both of these groups comprised single sherds only and are therefore, poorly-dated. The pottery associated with the kiln in trench 31 is not especially diagnostic, although seems to fall within a broad early Roman date range. Most of the identifiable forms were lids, a vessel class that does not lend itself to typological change like other forms. The presence of a B2/B4 type bead-rimmed dish ought to indicate a date from the Hadrianic onwards. However, this piece is very fragmentary, being represented by nothing more than the rim-tip. This suggests that this is probably intrusive. The dating of the kiln rests largely on the presence of a G19.4 type grey ware necked jar and a bowl-like G21. This later piece resembles a vessel from Skeleton Green (cf. Partridge 1981, fig. 47.78) and is almost certainly typologically early within the so-called 'Braughing' type jar *genre*.

The three excavated features in trench 34 are not well-dated. Ditch [2] is possibly Late Iron Age, while the pit or ditch terminus [6] contained a range of fabrics in keeping with an early Roman date. However, the fill of pit [4] produced a small amount of 4th century material. It is highly likely that the presence of Oxfordshire red colour-coat indicates a later 4th century date. The pottery recovered from trench 35 is generally later than the material from trenches 31 and 34. Moreover, there is also a marked absence of residual Late Iron Age and early Roman pottery, with only one sherd of Grog-tempered ware from the fill of pit [55]. This context also produced the rim of a late 2nd century Colchester buff ware mortarium and is the main indicator of date for the feature as a whole. Ditch [32] contained a number of pieces that suggest a tentative 3rd century date for this feature.

Later Hadham wares, especially the oxidised red ware are strongly represented in trench 35. Moreover, this trench also produced large amounts of shell-tempered pottery. In central Essex, these sherds would be termed Late shell-tempered ware (LSH) because they generally occur in contexts that are mid-4th century or later in date. The dating of this fabric is something of a problem outside central Essex as has been discussed by Wallace (1993). At Great Chesterford (cf. Toller 1988, fig. 12.3) and *Verulamium* (cf. Wilson 1984, fig. 95.2283), for example, sherds in this fabric are present throughout the Roman period. There is thus a possibility that these shell-tempered wares might also have a broader date-range at Plashes Farm. For this reason this fabric has been termed Midlands shell-tempered ware (MSH) in this report. However, the range of forms present, where identifiable seem to be typically 4th century. Pits [46] and [61] are both assigned to the 4th century with the latter, containing Portchester D (cf. Fulford 1974, 299), considered to be later 4th century. Pit [61] is probably one of the latest feature to be excavated.

The bulk of the pottery from trenches 37 and 40 probably falls within a later 2nd to 3rd century date range. Only the filling of pit [76] needs to have occurred in the early Roman period. There is nothing to suggest that pottery deposition continued into the 4th century.

The dating evidence is summarised as Table 3 (Appendix 4)

6.3.5 The Evidence for Pottery Production

The presence of the kiln structure (a single-chambered twin-flued updraught type) and the small number of spalled sherds recovered from the filling of the kiln and stoke-hole constitute strong evidence for pottery production at Plashes Farm. However, the dating of this is not well established, largely because of the absence of diagnostic pottery. What pottery was present would seem to fit comfortably into an early Roman date. This material included several G19 type jars were recorded from the filling of stoke-hole [21]. Although there is very little evidence for the actual kiln products themselves, there is tentative evidence for the production of the so-called 'Braughing' type jar on account of the presence of a spalled sherd with horizontal rilling from the fill of stoke-hole [21]. The presence of a relatively large number of lids in the fill of the oven (14) might also imply the production of this class as well as jars. All the examples are of the simple plain-rimmed K3 type. The presence of pottery production is to be expected in a region where large-scale potting is well-known (cf. Swan 1984).

6.3.6 Pottery Supply

Very little can be said about pottery supply and virtually nothing meaningful about assemblage composition. Pottery that is diagnostically Hadham represents 17% of the total excavated assemblage, while undiagnostic grey wares account for a further 33%. It is likely that much of this material is also derived from the Hadham industry kilns. Presumably the Grog-tempered wares are all locally made as well and these account for a further 8% of the excavated assemblage. Other sources represented include small amounts of BB1, Colchester buff ware, Nene Valley colour-coat, Oxfordshire red colour-coat and white ware, Portchester D ware from the Tilford/Overwey kilns, and Verualmium region white ware. The Midlands shell-tempered ware could have been derived from a number of sources including the Nene Valley and Lakenheath (Suffolk), but is perhaps most likely to have originated from the kilns at Harrold, Bedfordshire (Brown 1994).

The bulk of the vessel forms identified comprised jars. This is also the case in contexts of all periods. All of the other vessel classes represented form relatively minor assemblage components. Leaving aside the evidence for pottery production, which is discussed above, the remaining vessel classes recovered from the site comprise bowl-jars, dishes and bowls. A small number of mortaria were also recorded, but no certain flagons were identified. Their place seems to have been taken by the G40 type bottle. All of the mortaria are derived from two sources Colchester and Oxfordshire, and are represented by single vessels. The dishes, bowls, bowl-jars and jars are mainly local products until the 4th century. This period sees the introduction of jars, probably corresponding to the G27 group, from Harrold and the Tilford/Overwey region and a range of Nene Valley colour-coat open forms of uncertain type. The Harrold kilns also seem to have supplied a small number of B5 type dishes as well.

6.3.7 Conclusions

As it stands, from the dating evidence recovered from Plashes Farm, it is only possible to construct the most tentative of chronological schemes. This is largely because of the absence of large groups and the small number of diagnostic pieces within the sample. Consequently, further excavation is required before the chronology of the site can be fully appreciated. While a small amount of production waste was recovered from the site, again very little, if any of this material is closely datable. Further fieldwork is required to locate the main waste dump before this aspect of the site can be properly understood. What is more, the pattern of pottery deposition is unusual at Plashes Farm in that most of the pottery appears to come from pits. Once again further excavation might help clarify the situation, by providing a much larger sample from a larger number of features from which it will be possible to test the conclusions presented above.

6.4 Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery by H. Walker

A very small amount of pottery was recovered, a total of 39 sherds weighing 333g, and much of the pottery is abraded indicating residuality is a factor. Perhaps the earliest pottery comes from ditch 50. This has been tentatively identified as Thetford ware giving it an 11th century date, otherwise a 12th century date is more likely. A thumbed early medieval ware cooking pot from feature 96 provides a 12th century date for this feature, and ditch 103 may also be of a similar date. Ditches 140 and 158 produced sherds of medieval coarse ware and South Hertfordshire greyware and may be contemporary with the above or slightly later. All the medieval pottery consists of coarse ware fabrics, no fine wares are present. Post-medieval pottery was recovered from ditches 71 and 137. While the pottery from ditch 89 is modern. See Appendix 5 for detail.

6.5 Miscellaneous Finds by H. Major, P. Ryan and R. Tyrrell

6.5.1 Summary

Miscellaneous finds included metalwork, ceramic building material, glass, stone and worked flint. Bricks from two post-medieval buildings were identified. A concentration of Roman brick and tile along with several pieces of possible Barnack stone suggest the possibility of a Roman building in the vicinity of trench 35. The catalogue of miscellaneous finds is included as (Appendix 6).

6.5.2 Copper Alloy

A rather worn disc, which may be a coin, was found lying on the surface of the subsoil (15) of trench 37. The accompanying pottery is mostly late Roman and if, a coin, the size is consistent with this date.

6.5.3 Iron

The poorly defined pit-like feature [96] in trench 2 produced an unidentified fragment of metal, probably a badly corroded nail. The other iron object is a robust rectangular hook, possibly from agricultural machinery, found in the fill of ditch [153] in trench 30.

6.5.4 Slag

The site produced four pieces of slag weighing 4g, from ditch [17] in trench 37. This is not a significant amount.

6.5.5 Roman Brick and Tile

The evaluation produced fifty-five fragments of Roman brick and tile weighing 6.586 kg from fifteen contexts. Four types of tile were recorded in the assemblage, and these are listed below.

The type categories used for cataloguing were *tegulae, imbrices*, box flue tile, brick and spall. In this report, 'brick' includes all ceramic building material except roof-tiles and box flue tile. For this site, the thickness of the definite *tegulae* and *imbrices* for the largest context (56) were analysed, and the parameters used were; *imbrex* - thickness <18mm; *tegula* - thickness 18-27mm; 'brick' - thickness >27mm

Tile Type	Imbrex	Tegula	Brick	Box-flue	Spall	Total
Fragment count	6	11	8	2	24	51
%	12%	21%	16%	4%	47%	100

Table 1. Quantities and Percentages of Types of Tile (by count).

The two pieces of box-flue from (33) both had combing patterns. These are identified as A2 and AA1 (see E.C.C. type-series, details in archive). Another fragment worth noting is part of a tegula with a faint signature consisting of an arc, tangent against the edge of the tile, cut by a short line.

There were no particularly large concentrations of tile. Two features produced above the 439g average for the site; 2.260kg from pit [55], 1.848kg from ditch [32] in trench 35. 77% of the assemblage came from trench 35, which leads to the possibility of a Roman building somewhere beyond this part of the excavation. However the small proportion of box-flue tile in the group suggests that it was not one heated by a hypocaust system. The material is not noticeably abraded so it does not appear to have been reused many times nor turned over in the soil much.

6.5.6 Post Roman Brick by Pat Ryan.

Three fragments of brick were recovered from wall foundation (72) in trench 12. These are 16th-17th century in date and have been re-used. Possibly, these were originally flooring bricks. One whole brick was recovered from wall foundation (160) and one whole brick and a part brick was recovered from foundation (161) in trench 17. The brick from foundation (160) was early 19th century in date and the bricks from (161) were both 18th century in date. The part brick from this context was probably re-used. See catalogue for dimensions.

6.5.7 Post-Roman Tile

Four pieces of post-Roman tile were recovered. The undiagnostic fragments from two contexts, (70) and (136) weighed 234g in total.

6.5.8 Baked Clay

Trenches 31, 34, and 35 produced 80 small fragments of baked clay weighing 1.134kg. 62% of this is from in and around the kiln (14) in trench 31. The pieces from trenches 34 and 35 probably originate from this kiln or another, since they are made from a similar fabric.

The material is a rather poorly mixed fabric, with fairly common vegetable tempering, often burnt out and therefore vesicular. The fabric is light in weight and typically dark grey-brown through to buff-orange. The pieces are mostly irregular in shape but those from the main kiln fill (25) and the fill (42) of its western flue [43] have smoothed flattish surfaces suggesting that they probably came from an inner surface of the kiln. The level of heat damage is fairly slight compared with the vitrified fragments from the late 2nd – early 3rd century kilns excavated at Elms Farm, Heybridge (Tyrrell forthcoming). It is possible that lower temperatures over a shorter working life are responsible for this difference.

6.5.9 Vessel Glass

Fragments of two glass vessels were recovered from the site. One is a small fragment of a large dark brown vessel from a late 2nd- early 3rd century pit [55] in trench 35. Yellow/brown glass is usually found in contexts dated as late as the third quarter of 2nd century (Price and Cottam 1998, 15). This piece may have been deposited at the earlier end of the date range. The shard is too small to identify the form of the vessel it came from. The other fragment is a base of a 19-20th century beer or wine bottle recovered from the poorly defined pit-like feature [96] in trench 2.

6.5.10 Stone

Two contexts produced stone. A fragment of millstone grit quern with signs of wear on the grinding surface came from an early Roman pit or ditch terminal [6] in trench 34. Ditch [32] in

7.0 DISCUSSION

7.1 Prehistoric

7.1.1 Discussion of Evidence

Three prehistoric features were positively identified during the course of the evaluation. A few sherds of residual prehistoric pottery were also found in Roman features in trenches 31 and 37. The best dated of the prehistoric features was pit [74] in trench 42 which contained Grooved Ware pottery dating to the third millennium BC (Neolithic period). The other prehistoric features were two ditches, both in trench 16, to the east of the development area, that contained sherds of undiagnostic prehistoric pottery.

No other features dating to the third millennium BC were positively identified and it is possible that pit [74] may be an isolated occurrence. The ditches in trench 16 were located in an area of possible features identified as cropmarks in the aerial photographic study. The east/west ditch did not show at all as a cropmark but the north west/south east orientated ditch did show up though the aerial plot suggests this is a couple of metres further west. Given the three metres margin of error (Cox, 1999) in the aerial plot it seems likely that this is indeed the same feature.

The fieldwalking results (Germany, 1999) mentioned two areas of possible prehistoric interest marked by a sherd of pottery and a small cluster of worked flint. No evidence was found in the evaluation trenches (3, 6, 7, 53 and 30, 32) to confirm this.

7.2 Late Iron Age and Roman Activity

7.2.1 Discussion of Evidence

The Late Iron Age and Roman activity is concentrated in the south west of the proposed development area in trenches 31, 34, 35, 37 and 40. The excavated pottery covers a wide date range from Late Iron Age to Later 4th century with a high proportion of contexts containing broadly early Roman material.

The Late Iron Age is represented by two poorly dated probable field boundary ditches, both of which are located to the west of the area (western halves of trenches 34 and 41). The kiln in trench 31 and a pit to the north of trench 40 are both dated to the early Roman period (mid 1st to mid 2nd century). A gully which cuts the kiln lining and a pit located roughly in the middle of trench 35 were dated as mid Roman (mid 2nd to late 3rd century). A large 3rd century ditch crosses the northern end of trench 35. Later Roman (3rd/4th and 4th century) features are found to the south of the area (eastern ends of trenches 34 and 37, southern halves of trenches 35 and 40).

The evidence suggests a small rural settlement (and/or area of industrial activity) that was chronologically fairly long lived and of a typically low status. Features comprised a kiln, gullies, ditches, pits and post-holes. Most of the ditches probably represent field boundaries. No structures could be ascertained from the limited features present in the trenches. A concentration of brick and tile and stone in trench 35 might suggest the presence of a building in the vicinity. The kiln structure and spalled sherds constitute strong evidence for pottery production at Plashes Farm in the early Roman period. It is possible there are other kilns in the vicinity. Fragments of baked clay recovered from trenches 34 and 35 may have come from the excavated kiln (14) in trench 31 or possibly from another near-by kiln.

7.2.2 The Geophysical Survey

The results of this survey clearly point to a focus of activity extending south from trench 31 to trench 40 and to the immediate east of trench 34. The strength and contrast of features in this area suggest that they are filled with magnetically enhanced material such as pottery or heat affected deposits. Though this material could come from a settlement site it seems more likely to come from pottery production or other industrial activity given that one kiln has already been excavated and there are other excavated kiln sites in the local area (Hadham).

The geophyisical survey also identified two types of ditch-like feature, identified as "A" and "B". The faint "A" type features might be geological rather than archaeological as one appears to pass through the western half of trench 40 and another through the eastern end of trench 37. In neither case was an archaeological feature positively identified (a ditch and adjacent subsoil deposit were identified and excavated at the far eastern end of trench 37, but slightly further east than the believed location of the "A" type feature). The "B" type features appear to be ditches of an archaeological nature. The north west/south east orientated "B" type feature passed through the northern end of trench 35 and on excavation proved to be a large 3rd century ditch. A north/south orientated "B" ditch also appears to clip the south west end of trench 40. Some unclear disturbance was noted at the very southern limit of this trench that may represent the edge of this ditch. Another east/west orientated "B" type ditch apparently crossed the north of the enlarged area opened up to fully investigate the kiln and associated features (trench 41).

7.3 Medieval

7.3.1 Discussion of Evidence

A number of medieval features were identified during the course of the evaluation. To the north of the development area a north/south orientated ditch [50] was excavated in trench 2 that contained pottery dating it to the 11th or 12th century. An adjacent feature [96] was dated to the 12th century by its pottery but also contained a post-medieval glass bottle base. This feature was poorly defined and was clearly disturbed as the fill was seen to extend beneath a patch of re-deposited gravel. It may be that this feature represents a post-medieval pit truncating and distorting an earlier medieval feature, possibly a ditch.

In the area of former upstanding earthworks south of the pond a 12th century ditch [103] was excavated in trench 22. Contemporary or slightly later medieval pottery was recovered from features excavated in trenches 20 and 30. In trench 20 a large feature [140] associated with re-deposited gravel produced 4 abraded sherds of medieval pottery. This feature had an unclear extent and may be later in date than the pottery suggests. In trench 30 an east/west orientated ditch [158] produced one sherd of medieval pottery.

The 12th century date for some of these features is interesting as the documentary sources (Ennis, 1999) first mention the lands forming the manor of Plashes in the 13th century. However, the 12th century features might pre-date the creation of Plashes and may have been constructed when the land still belonged to the manor of Standon.

A number of undated features are also likely to be medieval in date, particularly those located in the area of former earthworks south of the pond. Two undated features were excavated in trench 21. Both were north/south orientated, one was a ditch [148] and the other a wide linear feature [152]. Feature [152] (Plate 3) was 5.5 metres wide, 0.6m deep and had a flat to slightly concave bottom. It contained three fills and from its profile (Fig. 24, Sect. P) appeared to represent a

possible hollow way rather than a large ditch. Ditch [148] appeared to continue through trench 25 to the south. Also in this trench was an undated north east/south west gully [145].

7.3.2 The Presence of a Moat

The 1839 Tithe Award Map (See Ennis, 1999) shows a curving stretch of water to the west of Plashes Farm believed to indicate the presence of a possible moat. Trenches 49 and 50 were positioned to see if any trace of this moat could be found within the development area. No evidence was found in these trenches and it seems unlikely that the moat extended this far and therefore the existing large pond is unlikely to be a moat remnant. Topographically, the most likely position for the east side of the moat, if it existed at all, would be under the small trees forming the eastern boundary of the farmhouse garden.

7.4 Post-Medieval

7.4.1 Discussion of Evidence

A number of the dated ditches are clearly post-medieval. A major post-medieval boundary ditch was excavated in trench 29. This ditch [137] was nearly 4 metres wide and was on the line of a former field boundary clearly shown on the 1839 tithe Award Map and the 1878 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map (Ennis, 1999). A smaller undated ditch [139], on the same alignment, and located only a metre to the south was also probably associated with this post-medieval boundary.

North/south orientated ditch [71] in trench 12 was post-medieval in date as probably was an irregular linear feature [91] in trench 11, a post-hole [37] in trench 10 and the ditch [153] in trench 30 (see below). Other undated features may also be of this date.

7.4.2 Post-Medieval Buildings

Two post-medieval buildings (143 and 166) were identified in the northern part of the site. Both of these were present on the 1839 Tithe Award Map, but were not recorded on the 1878 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map, thus suggesting that they had gone out of use by this time (Ennis, 1999).

7.4.3 Building (166)

The northern feature, building (166), was identified in trenches 12 and 51. It was comprised of a north/south orientated wall foundation (contexts 72 and 73). In trench 12 the foundation (72) was comprised of half bricks and smaller brick pieces bonded by a creamy buff mortar that appeared to have been laid directly onto sandy gravel natural. Three half bricks were recovered and are dated to the 16th-17th century, though they have been re-used. This foundation only survived in the south part of the trench, to the north it had been removed, but was visible as a line of mortar. The wall foundation continued southwards through trench 51, where it was recorded as context (73). The composition of this foundation changed as it passed through the trench. To the north it appeared similar to context (72) but changed a little into the trench to a layer of broken tile sitting directly on a layer of compact closely packed medium to large flints.

Overall, little remained of this northern building (166) with only the base of the foundation in part surviving where investigated. Although no flooring survived, but given the debris spread, it seems likely that the wall foundation represents the eastern side of the building. As only a few bricks were recovered from the area of this building during the field walking survey it is therefore likely that the superstructure of this building was constructed from timber. The cartographic evidence (Ennis, 1999) indicated that this building was probably a barn.

7.4.4 Building (143) (Plate 4)

This feature, building (143) was located south of the pond in trench 17. It was comprised of two "L"-shaped brick wall foundations (contexts 160 and 161) with the main orientation of the structure being north/south. The longer foundation (161) survived to three courses of brick high at its northern end, dropping down to one course to the south, where the bricks appeared to be laid on a bed of mortar. The foundation was composed of bricks and half bricks covered and bonded by a deposit of creamy buff mortar. Two bricks were removed from foundation (161) for dating purposes, both were identified as 18th century bricks and one was probably re-used. Foundation (160) was similarly comprised of bricks and half bricks covered and bonded with a creamy buff mortar. This foundation was a few centimetres narrower, a little more irregular and appeared to butt up to foundation (161). A brick removed from foundation (160) was dated to the early 19th century. The evidence therefore suggested that wall foundation (160) represented a later episode of building to that of foundation (161).

Again, as with building 166, only the foundations seem to have survived. No evidence of flooring was observed. Several slight spreads of chalk were noted below the topsoil and above a brown clay deposit to the north, south and west of this trench. The wall foundations located appear to represent the western side of a former brick structure, possibly a store, stable or animal shelter.

7.5 Specific Areas

7.5.1 Rectilinear Enclosure

One area of particular interest was that of the rectilinear enclosure identified from the aerial photographic study. This was centred around trenches 30, 46 and 47. A north west/south east orientated section of the main boundary ditch [88] was excavated in trench 47. This ran at 90° to the trench and no sign was seen of the north east/south west orientated side of the enclosure. Boundary ditch [88] was 0.9 metres wide and 0.65 metres deep and appeared to have been re-cut on two occasions [89 and 93]. Only one piece of 19th/20th-century pottery was recovered from this feature. It was found in one of the ditch re-cuts [89] and does suggest a relatively modern date, though it is always possible that this one sherd is intrusive.

The line of the ditch clearly continued north westerly from trench 47 through trench 30 where it appeared to cut east/west orientated medieval ditch [158]. Beyond trench 30 the aerial photographic plot suggested that the enclosure ditch [88 et al] should change direction to a north east/south west orientation. This section of the ditch was not observed in trench 46 but might possibly be located just beyond the west end of the trench.

A number of other features were noted in this area. A post-medieval or later ditch [153] crossed the north west end of trench 30 cutting another undated feature [156]. Also in this trench was a compact flint cobble deposit (165), possibly the remnant of a surface or base of a bank. Two small undated ditches [98 and 117] were excavated in trench 47. These were orientated north/south and did not seem of the same phase as the rectilinear enclosure. One of these small ditches [117] was noted passing through the eastern end of trench 46. Also at the north east end of trench 47 were an undated irregular possible post-hole [125] and what may have been the butt end of an east/west orientated ditch [121].

7.5.2 The East of the Development Area

In the east of the development area ditches were also excavated in trenches 26, 27 and 28. An east/west orientated ditch [52] was recorded in trench 26 and a further east/west ditch [113] was

recorded running down part of the length of trench 27. These ditches appeared to be on a similar alignment and could be the same feature. The profiles were noticeably different however, with ditch [52] having a rounded "V" shaped profile as opposed to the shallower "U" shaped profile of ditch [113]. One piece of post-medieval tile was noted in the top of ditch [52], though the top of this ditch was scarred by plough marks and it may be that this tile was intrusive. The positions of these excavated east/west ditches, along with that of an undated north/south orientated ditch [44] in trench 28, did not correspond to possible features shown on the aerial photographic plot, although ditches on a similar alignment are shown in the vicinity.

7.5.3 Boggy Areas and Darker Patches of Topsoil

A number of boggy areas and darker patches of topsoil were noted on the initial site walkover undertaken as part of the desktop study (Ennis, 1999). Trench 33 went directly through one of these boggy patches. The subsoil in the base of this trench was comprised of brown sandy silt and sand at the west of the trench, changing to orange silty clay in the eastern part of the trench. The eastern part of the trench was on a down slope and filled up with ground water soon after it was machine excavated. The subsoil in this trench looked entirely natural and the wetness of the topsoil seems to be related to the perched water table.

Another boggy area identified during the initial site walkover (summer 1999) was only visible as a linear spread of darker topsoil during the evaluation phase. This area was investigated by trenches 18 and 48. The subsoil at the base of both of these trenches was clay or clay with gravel. Bad weather during the second half of the evaluation period resulted in total flooding of trench 48 and partial flooding (the east end) of trench 18 before they could be investigated. However, it was noticed that the depth of the topsoil was noticeably deeper in both of these trenches. The position of trenches 18 and 48 part coincided with the position of a spread bank identified on the aerial photographic plot. Although now ploughed out the deeper topsoil might be a slight remnant of this bank.

A dark patch of topsoil identified to the west of the site during the walkover and a spread of burnt flint identified to the north of the site during the field walking exercise (Germany, 1999) were both investigated by evaluation trenches (43 and 53).

Trench 43 was an additional trench to investigate a dark patch of topsoil. Underlying this topsoil was a firm very dark grey silt deposit (128), containing burnt flints and flecks of lime, sitting in a wide shelving cut [129] up to 0.4m deep. The subsoil in this trench was a yellow brown clay with gravel that also partially flooded as a result of bad weather. This meant that the full extent of feature [129] could not be examined.

The excavator of trench 43 thought that feature [129] was pond-like. It did have a definite shelving cut and could have been used by livestock. It could also have been originally dug as a clay pit, it may be relevant that the area to the south and west was known as Tiler's Field on the 1839 Tithe Award Map (Ennis, 1999). The back fill of very dark grey silt with burnt flints and flecks of lime is slightly unusual. This back fill could have been brought from elsewhere or it may have resulted from some sort of rural industrial activity (like tile making). In the early 19th century this part of the field was still within Plashes Wood.

The spread of burnt flint was found in another patch of darker topsoil investigated to the north of the area by trench 53. At the base of the topsoil in this trench was a very dark grey silty clay layer (162) some 0.14m thick. No sign of a cut was visible though the deposit did seem to sit in a very slight hollow within the clay subsoil. It is possible that the very dark grey layer (162) was

caused by animals churning up the mud in a boggy hollow. The aerial photographic plot did show two banks located roughly on either side of the darker topsoil associated with this layer and one function of these banks may been to funnel livestock.

It was very noticeable after the bad weather that the trenches that flooded were all those with a clay subsoil. The positions of these coincided very close with the positions of the boggy patches and the darker topsoil spreads. It seems clear that the clay causes the water to puddle and hold in the topsoil.

7.6 The Aerial Photographic Plot

7.6.1 Assessment of Aerial Photographic Evidence

A number of the evaluation trenches were located to specifically examine features identified on the aerial photographic plot produced as part of the Stage 2 Aerial Photographic Assessment (Cox, 1999). The accuracy of the location of the features on the plot was within a tolerance of +/- 4 metres for one feature and +/- 3 metres for most others.

The aerial photographic plot is based mostly on photographs taken after the Second World War and prior to the levelling of the site in 1984. Consequently, none of the features on the plot are now visible on the ground and the whole site is covered with a topsoil of fairly uniform thickness. Before levelling the banks, ditches, ridge and furrow and raised areas suggest that there were many areas of deeper topsoil and subsoil. With the exception of the deeper topsoil in trenches 18 and 48 and the possible cobble deposit in trench 30 (see above) no evidence of banked features was observed.

With the exception of the possible prehistoric features to the east of the development area (see 7.1) the majority of the earthworks identified on the aerial photographic plot are likely to be medieval or post-medieval in date and represent agricultural and drainage features.

The correlation between the aerial photographic plot and the excavated features varied. In some places ditches were found very close to where they were predicted, in others the type of feature located was different to that suggested on the plot (e.g. some of the supposed banks were in fact ditches). A number of ditches shown on the aerial plot were not located at all and conversely ditches were located that did not show on the aerial plot. Several reasons can account for this variation. The 3m margin of error in the positions of the features on the plot means that the correlation between plotted feature and excavated feature is not always exact. Higher parts of the original (pre-levelling) ground surface may mean that some of the ditched features never extended down into the natural subsoil.

7.7 The Evaluation

7.7.1 Assessment of Reliability: Trial Trenching

Overall the results from the 53 evaluation trenches give a good indication of the areas and types of archaeology present. Feature identification was generally very reliable in the trenches with a gravel subsoil (e.g. most of the south and east of the development area) but slightly less reliable where the natural subsoil was clay or clay silt (e.g. parts of the north and centre of the development area). Some features that were hard to distinguish from the natural subsoil initially did improve with weathering through time. Particular attention was paid to areas of the evaluation trenches where the aerial photographic plot had suggested possible features. These features could not always be identified, even after careful cleaning and hand investigation.

7.7.2 Assessment of Reliability: Geophysical Survey
The gravel subsoil in the south west of the development area was very suitable for geophysical survey. The results showed a number of ditches and an area of focused activity. With the exception of the nature of the type "A" features the results from the evaluation trenches concurred with that of the geophysical survey. Overall, therefore, the results from the geophysical survey should give a reliable indication of the below ground archaeology.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

A total of 53 trenches were excavated. Several phases of archaeological activity were identified.

Three prehistoric features were positively identified. One of these was a pit dating to the third millennium BC and containing Grooved Ware pottery. The other two features were field boundary ditches, located to the east of the development area, containing undiagnostic prehistoric pottery.

A concentration of Late Iron Age and Roman activity was identified to the south west of the development area. The excavated pottery covered a wide range from the Late Iron Age to the Later 4th century with a high proportion of contexts containing broadly early Roman material.

The features excavated included a kiln (dated to the early Roman period) and a number of ditches, gullies, pits and post-holes. These probably represent a low status rural settlement and area of industrial activity. The kiln structure and several spalled sherds recovered from its fill constitute strong evidence for pottery production at Plashes Farm in the early Roman period.

A geophysical survey of the area of Late Iron Age and Roman activity was undertaken. The results of this survey showed a strong focus of activity located between trenches 31 and 40. Given that one kiln has already been excavated it is likely that the focus of activity represents industrial activity and that further kilns will be present.

Several medieval features were located and excavated dating to the 12th century and later. The majority of the features were ditches probably originally associated with the former earthworks situated to the immediate east and south of the pond. A number of features were undated but probably were medieval in date. Of note was a wide linear feature, possibly a hollow way rather than a large ditch. No evidence of a medieval moat was encountered within the development area

A rectilinear ditched enclosure, identified on the aerial photographic plot, was investigated. One sherd of 19th/20th-century pottery was recovered from the south western side of this ditch. This pottery may be intrusive, though, this ditch did appear to truncate a medieval ditch on a different alignment.

A major post-medieval boundary ditch was excavated in trench 29 that was on the line of a former field boundary clearly shown on 19th century maps of the area. Other post-medieval features included ditches, a post-hole and the foundations of two buildings. The buildings were recorded on the 1839 Tithe Award. The more northerly building was probably a barn, its surviving foundation included partially re-used half bricks dated to the 16th-17th century. The other building, possibly a store or stables was constructed of two phases of "L" shaped wall

foundations. The earlier and larger foundation included re-used 18th century bricks in its construction and the smaller later foundation included a brick dated to the early 19th century.

Overall, the levelling of the site in 1984 was comprehensive with very little of the up standing earthworks surviving and only the bases of the post-medieval buildings.

9.0 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL

The main area of archaeological potential is that of the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement present in the south west of the development area. Geophysics has clearly defined an area of intense activity that would be under threat in future development of the site.

Although Roman rural settlements are common, their excavation (other than villas) has been very under represented and little evidence exists for rural settlement layout and economy (Going and Plouviez, 2000). This site has the potential for furthering our knowledge of Roman rural settlement layout and economy. Also, if further kilns are present this will aid our understanding of the Hadham (area) pottery industry. At present in the eastern counties "well known regional and local pottery production centres are mostly very poorly analysed and published" and are a "critical gap in terms of dating sites and in examining market patterns" (Going and Plouviez, 2000, 38).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work was undertaken by the author and members of the ECC Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of Mr B.W. Ellis.

The work was monitored by Hertfordshire County Council Archaeology Office.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, A.	1994	'A Romano-British Shell-Gritted Pottery and Tile Manufacturing Site at Harrold, Bedfordshire', *Bedfordshire Archaeology* **21**.
Brown, N.	1988	'A Late Bronze age enclosure at Lofts Farm, Essex', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 54, 249-302
Clarke, A.	1990	*Seeing Beneath the Soil: Prospecting Methods in Archaeology.* London, Batsford.
Cox, C	1999	*Plashes Farm, Hertfordshire, Aerial Photographic Appraisal: Stage 1,* Air Photo Services Ltd.
Cox, C	1999	*Plashes Farm, Hertfordshire, Aerial Photographic Appraisal Stage 2: Aerial Photographic Assessment and Mapping,* Air Photo Services Ltd.
Ennis, T	1999	*Plashes Farm, Standon, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment,* ECC FAU
Fulford, M.	1975	'The Pottery', in Cunliffe, B., *Excavations at Portchester Castle, Vol. I: Roman,* Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London, **32**, 271-367.
Garwood, P.	1999	'Grooved Ware in southern Britain. Chronology and interpretation' in Cleal, R. and MacSween, A., *Grooved Ware in Britain and Ireland: Neolithic Studies Group Seminar Papers* 3, 145-176
Germany, M	1999	*Plashes Farm, Standon: Archaeological Evaluation By Fieldwalking,* ECC FAU
Going, C.J.	1987	*The Mansio and other sites in the south-eastern sector of Caesaromagus: the Roman pottery,* CBA Research Report **62**.
Going, C.J. and Plouviez, J.	2000 (Jan.)	'Roman' in Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J., *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2: Research Agenda and Strategy* (Draft Document)
Longworth, I and Cleal, R.	1999	'Grooved Ware Gazetteer' in Cleal, R. and MacSween, A., *Grooved Ware in Britain and Ireland: Neolithic Studies Group Seminar Papers* 3, 177-206
Partridge, C.	1981	*Skeleton Green: A Late Iron Age and Romano-British Site,* Britannia Monograph Series **2**.
Price, J and Cottam, S	1998	*Romano-British Glass Vessels: A Practical Handbook,* CBA Practical Handbook in Archaeology 14, 15.
Swan, V.G.	1984	*The Pottery Kilns of Roman Britain,* Royal Commission on Historical Monuments Supplementary Series: **5,** HMSO.
Tite, M. S. and Mullins, C.	1971	Enhancement of the Magnetic Susceptibility of Soils on Archaeological Sites. Archaeometry 13, p209-219.
Toller, H.	1988	'Other pottery' in Draper, J., 'Excavations at Great Chesterford, Essex, 1953-5', *Proc Cambridge Antiq Soc* **75**, 1986, 3-41.
Wallace, C.	1993	Notes on the Dating of Late Shell-tempered Ware in Essex, *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies* **6**, 123-6.
Wilson, M.G.	1984	'The other pottery', in Frere, S. *Verulamium Excavations,* Vol. III, OUCA Monograph **1**, 200-263.

APPENDIX 1

Trench Descriptions

Trench Number	Trench Length	Trench Width	Trench Depth	Orientation	Subsoil Description
1	14.2m	2m	0.35m	NE-SW	Orange to reddy orange sandy gravel.
2	33m	2m	0.35m	NW-SE	Orange grey sandy clay silt with orange gravel patches
3	24.8m	2m	0.32m	NW-SE	Light grey orange silty clay with gravel
4	19m	2m	0.3m	E-W	Greyish orange clay with occasional flints
5	20.4m	2m	0.3m	NW-SE	Orange grey clay
6	17.8m	2m	0.3m	E-W	Orange grey clay with occasional flints
7	18.5m	2m	0.4m	N-S	Brown sandy clay silt with frequent gravel
8	14.8m	2m	0.4m	NW-SE	Orange gravel with orange grey clay patches
9	20m	2m	0.35m	E-W	Orange brown sandy gravel
10	28.5m	2m	0.42m	NE-SW	Brown to orange grey sandy gravely silt
11	19.4m	2m	0.4m	E-W	Orange grey brown gravely sandy silt
12	32m	2m	0.37m	E-W	Brown to orange brown sandy silty gravel
13	29.1m	2m	0.35m	WNW-ESE	Mid to light yellow orange sandy gravel
14	30m	2m	0.35m	N-S	Light to mid yellow brown gravel
15	16m	2m	0.4m	E-W	Light to mid yellow orange gravel
16	30m	2m	0.4m	E-W	Mid yellow brown gravel
17	23.m 8.8m	2m 3m	0.3m	NE-SW NW-SE	Brown clay with chalky patches
18	33m	2m	0.4m	NW-SE	Orange brown clay with gravel
-	-	-	-	-	-
20	32m	2m	0.4m	N-S	Brown sandy gravely silt
21	44m	2m	0.43m	E-W	Light to mid orange yellow gravel
22	30m	2m	0.38m	N-S	Yellow orange clay with gravel patches
23	18m	2m	0.3m	NE-SW	Orange brown clay silt
24	15m	2m	0.35m	N-S	Mid-dark grey brown gravely silt
25	60m	2m	0.3m	E-W	Brown gravely silt to brown gravel
26	50m	2m	0.35m	N-S	Mid yellow orange gravel
27	41.6m	2m	0.35m	E-W	Light-mid yellow gravel
28	30m	2m	0.45m	E-W	Light yellow white gravel with orange gravel patches
29	30m	2m	0.4m	N-S	Brown sandy gravel
30	30m	2m	0.4m	NW-SE	Brown gravel
31	30m	2m	0.3m	E-W	Dark brown gravely silt with patches of yellow brown clay
32	30m	2m	0.4m	E/W	Brown sandy silty gravel
33	29m	2m	0.4m	E/W	Brown sandy silt to brown grey sand
34	30m	2m	0.35m	E/W	Gravel and sandy silt
35	30m	2m	0.3m	N-S	Brown grey silty gravel
36	29.7m	2m	0.32m	N-S	Silty brown gravel
37	29.3m	2m	0.33m	E/W	Silty brown gravel
38	29.7m	2m	0.37m	N-S	Brown to mid greyish brown silty gravel
39	30.3m	2m	0.35m	E/W	Brown gravel with silty patches
40	30m	2m	0.4m	NE-SW	Brown silty gravel

41	17m	2m	0.44m	N-S	Grey brown silty gravel with yellow brown clay patches
42	29m	2m	0.4m	N-S	Dark grey brown silty gravel
43	17.5m	2m	0.35m	NE-SW	Yellow brown clay and gravel
44	20m	2m	0.3m	NE-SW	Trench flooded
45	20m	2m	0.32m	N-S	Light yellowish brown clayey gravel
46	20m	2m	0.5m	NW-SE	Yellow brown sandy gravel
47	25m	2m	0.6m	NE-SW	Patchy yellowish brown sandy gravel
48	16m	2m	0.65m	NW-SE	Orange grey mottled clay. Trench flooded
49	18m	2m	0.35m	NW-SE	Orange brown gravely clay
50	10.7m	2m	0.3m	ENE-WSW	Sticky grey orange clay
51	13.8m	2m	0.35m	E-W	Brown to orange brown sandy gravel
52	5m	2m	0.34m	NW-SE	Brown sandy gravel
53	15.8m	2m	0.54m	N-S	Greyish orange clay
54	13.5m	2m	0.4m	NE-SW	Mid to light orange yellow gravel

APPENDIX 2

Context Descriptions

Context	Trench	Description
1	All	Topsoil/machining
2	34	Ditch. 2.50m long x 1.35m wide x 0.35m deep
3	34	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 2
4	34	Pit. 1.30m long x 0.70m wide x 0.40m deep
5	34	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 4
6	34	Ditch terminus/Pit? 0.90m+ long x 1m wide x 0.15 deep
7	34	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 6
8	31	Ditch. 2m+ long x 1.12m wide x 0.35m deep
9	31	Dark greyish brown sandy silt. Upper fill of 8, 0.23m deep
10	31	Dark greyish brown sandy silt. Middle fill of 8, 0.08m deep
11	31	Dark greyish brown sandy silt. Primary fill of 8, 0.12m deep
12	31	Pit. 0.4m long x 0.83m wide x 0.25m deep
13	31	Dark greyish brown sandy silt. Only fill of 12
14	31	Feature number for kiln. 3.8m long x 1.82m wide x 0.4m deep
15	37	Mid greyish brown sandy clay silt subsoil. 0.14m thick
16	37	Mid greyish brown sandy clay silt. Fill of 17
17	37	Ditch. 2m+ long x 1.9m wide x 0.31m deep
18	31	Dark grey brown silty gravel. Only fill of 19
19	31	Gully. 3.00m+ long x 0.45 wide x 0.12m deep. (Associated Kiln 14)
20	31	Black (with brown streaks) silt. Only fill of stoke-hole 21 (Kiln 14)
21	31	East Stoke-hole. 0.85m long x 0.66m wide x 0.17m deep (Kiln 14)
22	31	Dark grey brown silt. Only fill of flue 23 (Kiln 14)
23	31	East Flue. 0.42m long x 0.45m wide x 0.19m deep (Kiln 14)
24	31	Pale yellow-orange red clay. Lining of 27. 0.2m thick (Kiln 14)
25	31	Black (with brown lenses) silt. Main fill of 27 0.2m thick (Kiln 14)
26	31	Dark brown silt. Upper fill of 27, 0.09m thick (Kiln 14)
27	31	Kiln cut, 1.82m long x 1.26m wide x 0.40m deep (Kiln 14)
28	34	Post-hole. 0.4m long x 0.3m wide
29	34	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 28
30	34	Post-hole. 0.44m long x 0.4m wide
31	34	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 30
32	35	Ditch. 2m+ long x 2.7m wide x 0.70m deep
33	35	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 32
34	9	Grey brown gravelly silt. Only fill of 35
35	9	Post-hole. 0.54m long x 0.52m wide x 0.24m deep
36	10	Mid brownish grey sandy clay silt. Only fill of 37
37	10	Post-hole. 0.55m long x 0.44m wide x 0.09m deep
38	10	Mid grey to orange grey silty clay. Only fill of 39
39	10	Ditch/natural? 2.00m+ long x 0.80m wide x 0.30m deep
40	31	Black silt. Only fill of stoke-hole 41 (Kiln 14)
41	31	West Stoke-hole. 0.94m long x 0.56m wide x 0.24m deep (Kiln 14)
42	31	Dark brown clay silt. Only fill of flue 43 (Kiln 14)
43	31	West Flue, 0.42m long x 0.36m wide x 0.20m deep (Kiln 14)
44	28	Greyish brown silty sand. Only fill of 45
45	28	Ditch. 2.00+m long x 2.52m wide x 0.46m deep
46	35	Pit. 1.00m diameter x 0.35m deep
47	35	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 46
48	2	Mid greyish brown slightly sandy clayey silt. Top fill of 50

49	2	Mid brownish grey sandy clay silt. Bottom fill of 50
50	2	Ditch. 2.00+m long x 1.55m wide x 0.70m deep
51	26	Brown grey sand silt. Only fill of 52
52	26	Ditch, 2.00+m long x 1.70m wide x 0.41m deep
53	35	Ditch/furrow? 3m long x 1.8m wide x 0.25m deep
54	35	Mid brown silt. Only fill of 53
55	35	Pit? 1.65m long x 1.1m wide x c.0.3m deep
56	35	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 55
57	8	Brownish grey silty clay. Only fill of 58
58	8	Ditch. 2.00+m long x 1.60m wide x 0.36m deep
59	35	Pit/natural? 1.5m long x 1.5wide
60	35	Mid brown silt. Only fill of 59
61	35	Pit. 1.00m long x 0.80m+ wide x 0.30m deep
62	35	Dark grey sandy silt gravel. Only fill of 61
63	35	Gully? 1.10m long x 0.60m wide
64	35	Brown grey sandy silt. Only fill of 63
65	47	Mid greyish brown silty sand. Only fill of 89
66	35	Natural disturbance 1.00m long x 0.50m wide
67	35	Mid greyish brown gravely silt. Only fill of 66
68	42	Ditch. 2m+ long x 1.60m wide x 0.38m deep
69	42	Dark greyish brown. Only fill of 68
70	12	Mid greyish brown to mid brown sandy silt. Only fill of 71
71	12	Ditch, 2.00+m long x 1.28m wide x 0.20m deep
72	12	Brick wall foundation (continues as 73). 2m+ long x 0.64m wide
73	51	Brick wall foundation (continues as 72). 2m+ long x 0.72m wide
74	42	Pit. 0.54m long x 0.44m wide x 0.18m deep
75	42	Dark greyish brown sandy silt. Only fill of 74
76	40	Pit. 1.5m long x 0.74m+ wide x 0.35m deep
77	40	Dark grey silty gravel. Only fill of 76
78	16	Mid brown sandy gravel. Only fill of 79
79	16	Ditch 14m+ long x 0.8m wide x 0.4m deep
80	16	Mid brown sandy gravel. Top fill of 81
81	16	Ditch. 2.20m + long x 0.80m wide x 0.30m deep
82	42	Mid orangey brown sandy silt. Upper fill of 84
83	42	Mid orangey brown sandy peagrit silt. Lower fill of 84
84	42	Ditch. 2m+ long x 1.35m wide x 0.28m deep
85	-	Not used
86	-	Not used
87	47	Mid orange grey brown silty sand. Only fill of 88
88	47	Ditch. 2m+ long x 0.9m wide x 0.65m deep
89	47	Ditch. 2m+ long x 1.5m wide x 0.6m deep
90	11	Mid grey brown sandy clay silt. Only fill of 91
91	11	Irregular feature. 5.5m long x 1.34m wide x 0.28m deep
92	47	Mid orange brown silty sand. Only fill of 93
93	47	Ditch. 2m+ long x 0.95m wide x 0.5m deep
94	16	Mid orange brown sandy gravel. Bottom fill of 81
95	2	Light to mid grey brown sandy clay silt. Only fill of 96
96	2	Irregular pit? 2m+ long x 3.4m wide x 0.54m deep
97	47	Mid grey brown silty sand. Only fill of 98
98	47	Ditch. 4m+ long x 0.72m wide x 0.3m deep
99	42	Mid orange brown sandy silt. Only fill of 100
100	42	Pit. 0.55m x 0.2m+ wide x 0.13m deep
101	22	Mid grey brown clay silt with brown/orange lenses. Top fill of 103

102	22	Dark grey clay silt. Bottom fill of 103
103	22	Ditch. 9m+ long x 1.04m wide x 0.54m deep
104	40	Gully. 2m+ long x 0.9m wide x 0.24m deep
105	40	Dark grey silty gravel. Only fill of 104
106	40	Ditch terminus. 2.1m+ long x 1.7m wide x 0.25m deep
107	40	Mid grey silty gravel. Only fill of 106
108	40	Ditch terminus. 2m+ long x 2.6m+ wide x 0.4m deep
109	40	Mid grey brown silty gravel. Only fill of 108
110	42	Mid orange brown silty sand. Only fill of 111
111	42	Scoop. 0.9m long x 0.23m wide x 0.06m deep
112	27	Mid grey brown sandy clay silt. Only fill of 113
113	27	Ditch/furrow? 26m+ long x 1.6m wide x 0.21m deep
114	42	Dark grey brown silty sand. Only fill of 115
115	42	Post-hole. 0.47m long x 0.27m wide x 0.17m deep
116	47	Mid grey brown with yellow brown mottles. Only fill of 117
117	47	Ditch. 3m+ long x 0.65m wide x 0.3m deep
118	47	Dark grey brown silty sand. Only fill of 119
119	47	Plough mark. 2.4m+ long x 0.25m wide x 0.1m deep
120	47	Dark grey brown silty sand. Only fill of 121
121	47	Ditch terminus. 1.6m+ long x 0.8m wide x 0.25m deep
122	47	Dark brownish grey silty sand. Only fill of 123
123	47	Animal burrow? 0.45m long x 0.2m wide x 0.1m deep
124	47	Mid grey brown silty sand with yellow patches. Only fill of 125
125	47	Post-hole? 0.5m long x 0.4m wide x 0.15 deep
126	45	Grey brown clay silt. Only fill of 127
127	45	Gully. 2m+ long x 0.66m wide x 0.13m deep
128	43	Very dark grey silt. Only fill of 129
129	43	Feature/pond? 3.9m+ long x 2m+ wide x 0.4m deep
130	33	Mottled brownish dark grey sandy silt. Only fill of 131
131	33	Ditch. 2m+ long x 1.8m wide x 0.27m deep
132	39	Mid greyish brown sandy clay. Only fill of 133
133	39	Ditch. 2m+ long x 1.68m wide x 0.44m deep
134	29	Dark grey brown sandy silty loam. Only fill of 135.
135	29	Tree bole. 2m+ long x 2.1m wide x 0.65m deep
136	29	Mid yellow brown silty sand. Fill of 137
137	29	Ditch. 2m+ long x 3.9m wide x 0.67m deep
138	29	Mid grey brown sandy silt. Only fill of 139
139	29	Gully. 2m+ long x 1m wide x 0.2m deep
140	20	Linear feature. 3m+ long x 2.5m+ wide x 0.64m deep
141	20	Mid brownish grey sandy silt. Only fill of 140
142	29	Mid yellow brown sandy silt. Fill of 137
143	17	Building. Consists of foundations 160 and 161
144	25	Mid brown sandy silt. Fill of 145
145	25	Gully. 2.2m+ long x 0.5m wide x 0.06m deep
146	21	Light/mid grey brown silt. Top fill of 148
147	21	Mid/dark grey brown sandy silt. Middle fill of 148
148	21	Ditch. 2m+ long x 2.05m wide x 0.64m deep
149	21	Mid yellow brown sandy gravel. Top fill of 152
150	21	Dark greyish brown sandy silt. Middle fill of 152
151	21	Mid yellow brown sandy silt. Bottom fill of 152
152	21	Hollow way? 2m+ long x 5.5m wide x 0.6m deep
153	30	Ditch. 2m+ long x 1m wide x 0.35m deep
154	30	Dark brown sandy silt. Fill of 153

155	21	Mid orange brown sandy silt. Bottom fill of 148
156	30	Ditch? 2m+ x long x 0.5m+ wide x 0.6m deep
157	30	Mid brown sandy silt. Fill of 156
158	30	Ditch. 5m+ long x 1.6m wide x 0.65m deep
159	30	Mid brown sandy silt. Only fill of 158
160	17	"L" shaped brick wall foundation. 1.4m+ N/S x 2m E/W x 0.4m wide
161	17	"L" shaped brick wall found. 4.7m+ N/S x 1.7m+ E/W x 0.44m wide
162	53	Very dark grey silty clay layer. 0.14m thick
163	30	Dark grey brown sandy silt. Fill of 164
164	30	Ditch. 3.5m+ long x 3m wide. Not excavated
165	30	Orange brown silty sand and rounded stones. Surface?
166	12 & 51	Building. Consists of foundations 72 and 73

APPENDIX 3

Prehistoric Pottery Distribution

Trench	Feature	Context	Weight (g)	Number of Sherds
37	Subsoil	15	10	1 Sherd
	Ditch 17	16	14	2 Sherds
31	Kiln 14	25	7	1 Sherd
	Kiln 14	42	5	1 Sherd
42	Pit 74	75	408	34 Sherds
16	Ditch 79	78	5	2 Sherds
	Ditch 81	80	1	1 Sherd

APPENDIX 4

Roman Pottery

BB1	Black-burnished ware 1	**(40)**
BSW	Misc. Black-surfaced wares	
BUF	Unspecified buff wares	**(31)**
COLBM	Colchester buff ware mortaria	**(27)**
GRF	Misc. Fine grey wares	**(39)**
GROG	Grog-tempered fabrics	**(53)**
GRS	Misc. Sandy grey wares	**(47)**
HAB	Hadham black-surfaced wares	**(35)**
HAR	Hadham grey wares	**(36)**
HAWG	Hadham white-slipped grey wares	
HAX	Hadham oxidised red wares	**(4)**
MICW	Misc. Iron Age coarse wares	
MSH	Midlands shell-tempered wares	
NVC	Nene Valley colour-coats	**(2)**
OXRC	Oxfordshire red colour-coats	**(3)**
OXWM	Oxfordshire white mortaria	**(25)**
PORD	Portchester 'D' ware	
RED	Misc. Red wares	**(21)**
STOR	Storage jar fabrics	**(44)**
VRW	Verulamium region white wares	**(26)**

Table 1 Identified pottery fabrics (numbers in bold after Going 1987):

Context type	Feature type	Sherds	Wt. (g)	% Wt.	Average Wt.
Fill	Kiln oven	46	695	14.82	15.1
	Kiln flue	8	147	3.13	18.3
	Kiln stoke-hole	16	438	9.34	27.3
	Ditch/gully	65	939	20.02	14.4
	Pit/ditch terminal	5	173	3.69	34.6
	Pit	61	1844	39.33	30.2
(Fill total)	-	201	4236	90.35	21.0
Subsoil	-	29	452	9.64	15.5
Totals	-	**230**	**4688**	-	**20.3**

Table 2 The pattern of pottery deposition.

Tr.	Feature	Context	Pottery	Dating
22	103 (ditch)	101 (top fill)	*Misc. pottery:* Fabric GRS	Roman
31	14 (kiln oven)	25 (primary fill)	*Misc. pottery:* *dish B2/B4 (BB1)*; jar G [necked] (GROG); lids **K3** [x3] (**GRS** & GROG). Fabrics **BSW**, BUF, **GRF** & HAR.	Early Roman
31	14 (kiln oven)	26 (top fill)	*Misc. pottery:* jars **G21** [bowl-like b/s] (GRF), G [unclassified rim] (RED). Fabrics **VRW**, GRS & BUF.	Early Roman
31	19 (gully)	18 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* jar G21 [b/s] (GROG). Fabrics GRF, GRS, HAR, **HAWG**, **HAX**.	Mid-Roman
31	21 (stoke-hole)	20 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* jars **G19.4** (GRS), G19 [b/s] (GRS), G21 [spalled b/s] (GRS). Fabrics BSW, GRF, GROG, HAR & MICW.	Later 1st to early 2nd century
31	23 (flue)	22 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* Fabrics **BUF**, **GRF**, GROG, **GRS**, **HAR**.	?Early Roman
31	41 (stoke-hole)	40 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* Fabrics GRF & HAR.	Roman
31	43 (flue)	42 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* jar **G21** (**BSW**). Fabric GRS.	Early Roman
31	8 (ditch)	11 (primary fill)	*Misc. pottery:* Fabric GROG.	LIA
34	2 (ditch)	3 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* Fabric GROG.	LIA
34	4 (pit)	5 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* dish B3 (HAX); bowl C8 [flange] (RED). Fabric BUF, GRS, MSH & **OXRC**.	4th cent.
34	6 (pit or ditch terminus)	7 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* **BSW**, GROG, **GRS** & MICW.	Early Roman
35	32 (ditch)	33 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* dishes B1.3 (GRF & HAR); bowl-jars **E6** (HAR), **E** (**HAX**); jar G [necked] (VRW). Fabrics GRS, **OXWM** & RED.	?3rd century
35	46 (pit)	47 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* dish **B5** (MSH), **B** [base] (**NVC**); bowl-jar E3 (HAX); jars G27 (MSH), **G35** [b/s] (GRS). Fabric HAR.	4th century
35	55 (pit)	56 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* mortarium **D2.1** (COLBM); jar **G40** (**HAX**). Fabrics GROG, GRS, HAR & STOR.	Late 2nd to ?early 3rd century
35	61 (pit)	62 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* dish **B** [base] (**NVC**); bowl-jar E6 (HAX); jars **G27** (**PORD** & MSH). Fabric GRS.	Later 4th century
37	-	15 (subsoil)	*Misc. pottery:* bowl-jar **E2** (GRS); jars G9 (GRF), G40 [b/s] (GRS), G (STOR). Fabrics GROG, HAB & **HAX**.	Late Roman
37	17 (ditch)	16 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* bowl-jar **E** (HAR); jars **G43** (STOR), G [necked] (GROG & GRS). Fabrics BSW, GRF, HAB & **HAX**.	Mid/later Roman
40	76 (pit)	77 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* jar G19 (HAR). Fabrics GRS & STOR.	Early Roman
40	106 (ditch)	107 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* dish B1 (HAX). Fabrics HAR, GRF, GROG.	Late 2nd to 4th century
40	108 (ditch)	109 (fill)	*Misc. pottery:* dishes B1 (GRF), ?B2/B4 (HAX), B6.2 (GRS). Fabric HAR.	Late 3rd to 4th century

Table 3. Summary of the dating evidence (The pottery that appears in **bold** dates the context, material)

APPENDIX 5

Medieval and Later Pottery

Shown in feature number order

Tr.	Feature/ Type	Fill No.	The Pottery	Wt (g)	Date range
2	Ditch 50 (top fill)	48	1 tiny sherd fine grey ware - ?Thetford-type ware; 6 sherds ?shell-tempered ware – vesicles only, some could be from grog inclusions; 2 sherds shell-and-sand-tempered ware; 8 sherds early medieval ware, including a slightly beaded cooking pot rim and joining sherds from a sagging base. Most sherds are very abraded and some are iron-stained	88	?11th C
	Ditch 50 (bottom fill)	49	6 sherds shell-tempered ware (including 4 from same vessel), similar in context 48	49	?11th C
12	Ditch 71	70	1 sherd abraded post-medieval red earthenware with dark external glaze	1	late 16th C onwards
47	Ditch 89	65	1 sherd modern white earthenware lid-seated jar rim	5	19th to 20th C
2	Disturbed feature 96	95	6 abraded sherds of early medieval ware, including a thumbed cooking pot rim	124	12th C
22	Ditch 103 (top fill)	101	1 abraded sherd early medieval ware from shoulder of cooking pot, borderline medieval coarse ware	14	?12th to 13th C
22	Ditch 103 (bottom fill)	102	1 sherd early medieval ware	5	10th to 13th C
29	Ditch 137	136	1 sherd post-medieval red earthenware from shoulder of jar showing partial internal glaze and horizontal grooves externally	16	late 16th C onwards
20	Ditch 140	141	4 abraded joining sherds from a medieval coarse ware base	19	12th to 14th C
30	Ditch 158	159	1 sherd south Hertfordshire greyware	12	1150 to 1300
				333	

APPENDIX 6

Miscellaneous Finds Catalogue

(Tr = Trench, F = Feature, weights in grams.)

Copper Alloy.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Comments
15	37	-	subsoil	L Roman & prehistoric	A rough surfaced disc, possibly a coin. D 15mm.

Iron.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Comments
95	2	96	dist feat	12th C	A large rectangular sectioned hook. L 100mm; W 62mm.
154	30	153	ditch	-	A large rectangular sectioned hook. L 100mm; W 62mm.

Slag.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Count	Weight
16	37	17	ditch	Mid/later Roman + *prehistoric*	4	4

Roman Brick and Tile.

Cxt	Trch	F No	Feature type	Imbrex No	Tegula No	Brick No	Box-flue No	Spall No	Post-Rm No	Wt (g)	Comments
159	?	158	ditch					1		18	
57	8	58	ditch					1		64	
70	12	71	ditch						3	0	200g PM tile
44	28	45	ditch	1						130	very abraded
136	29	137	ditch						1	0	34g PM tile
25	31	14	kiln					7		41	
5	34	4	pit	1						100	
5	34	4	pit		2					214	1 burnt piece
33	35	32	ditch			1				178	{1848
33	35	32	ditch		4					1670	tegula with signature
47	35	46	pit	1						88	
47	35	46	pit		2					158	
47	35	46	pit			1				82	
56	35	55	pit			4				2060	{2260
56	35	55	pit		1					118	
56	35	55	pit				2			500	an A2 and an AA1
62	35	61	pit					1		58	
62	35	61	pit	1						106	
62	35	61	pit		1					78	
15	37		subsoil					6		100	
15	37		subsoil			1				43	
15	37		subsoil		1					46	
16	37	17	ditch					8		120	
16	37	17	ditch			1				220	
109	40	108	ditch	1						42	
87	47	88	ditch	1						118	
			Totals:							6352	
15				6	11	8	2	24	0	51	
				12%	21%	16%	4%	47%			

Post Roman Bricks.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Date	Count	Comments
72	12	166	wall	16th-17th C	1 1 1	127mm long x 115mm wide x 50mm high 115mm long x 110mm wide x 50mm high 90mm long x 120mm wide x 59mm high
160	17	143	wall	E.19th C	1	228mm long x 101mm wide x 64mm high
161	17	143	wall	18th C	1 1	210mm long x 101mm wide x 64mm high 152mm long x 101mm wide x 50mm high

Baked Clay.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Count	Weight	Comments
24	31	14	Kiln lining		12	37	
3	34	2	Ditch	L Iron Age	1	19	
25	31	14	Kiln	E Roman + *prehistoric*	24	180	Some flattish surfaces
26	31	14	Kiln	*prehistoric*	13	51	
18	31	19	Gully	Mid Roman	8	23	
20	31	21	Stoke hole	L1st-E3rd C + *prehistoric*	2	27	
20	31	21	Stoke hole	L1st-E3rd C + *prehistoric*	2	3	Dark orange clay with no inclusions, possibly burnt soil.
22	31	23	Flue	E Roman + *prehistoric*	6	112	
40	31	41	Stoke hole	Roman	6	40	
42	31	43	Flue	E Roman + *prehistoric*	5	270	Some flattish surfaces
47	35	46	Pit	4th C	1	372	
				italics = PMcM dates!	80	1134	Totals

Glass.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Count	Comments
56	35	55	pit	L2nd-E3rd C	1	Dark brown and almost flat, possibly from a Roman vessel
95	2	96	dist feat	12th C	3	A dark green/brown cylindrical bottle with a concave base and two body shards. Post med

Stone.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Count	Weight	Comments
7	34	6	pit/ditch end	E Roman	1	560	An piece of millstone grit quern irregular but with part of one worn grinding surface
33	35	32	ditch	3rd C	9	3830	A calcareous stone possibly Barnack. Two of the largest of the fragments are roughly dressed into right-angled corners.

Flints.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Count	Comments
1			u/s		1	Barbed and tanged arrowhead with slight damage to one edge, in brown flint. A finely worked example with rather pointed tangs, corresponding to Green's type C (Green 1984, 30) L.28mm, W.18mm. Middle to late Bronze Age
75	42	74	pit	*prehistoric*	1	Tertiary flake in fresh condition
78	16	79	ditch	*prehistoric*	1	Secondary flake with possible slight retouch along one edge

Burnt Flints.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Count	Weight
16	37	17	ditch	Mid/later Roman + *prehistoric*	1	15
25	31	14	kiln	E Roman + *prehistoric*	2	20
47	35	46	pit	4th C	1	10
65	47	89	ditch	19th-20th C	1	7

Clay Pipe.

Context	Tr nos	F nos	F type	Pot spot dates	Count
154	30	153	ditch	-	1

APPENDIX 7

Animal Bone Catalogue

Tr.	Feature	Context	Species	Description	Weight (g)
34	4	5	Cervus	Six fragments of Metapoidal shaft	14
34	6	7	Unident	Unidentifiable fragment	6
31	27	25	Unident	Two unidentifiable fragments, one is burnt	1
35	32	33	Equus Cervus Bos	Distal end and shaft of left Metacarpus Proximal end and part of shaft of left Metatarsus Two pieces of left mandible Twenty three fragments of, and one tooth from, left mandible	373
10	39	38	Equus	Most of a very worn molar	22
35	46	47	Bos	Four fragments of a tooth (molar)	7
35	61	62	Bos	One Molar maxilla	31
40	76	77	Medium Mammal	Fragment of mandible	3

APPENDIX 8

Contents of Archive

53 Trench Sheets
4 Context Register Sheets
1 Plan Register Sheet
1 Section Register Sheet
4 Photographic Register Sheets
166 Context Sheets
31 Plan Drawings
53 Section Drawings
2 Sets of Colour Prints, 1 Set of Black & White Prints, 1 Set of Colour Slides
Trench Location Data
Finds Archive Data

APPENDIX 9

SMR SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Plashes Farm, Standon, Hertfordshire	
Parish: Standon	*District*: East Hertfordshire
NGR: TL 380 203	*Site Code*: PFS'00
Type of Work: Evaluation and Geophysics	*Site Director/Group*: T. Ennis, Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit
Dates of Work: 7th February to 15th March 2000	*Size of Area Investigated*: 2684m^2
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Hertford	*Funding source*: Developer
Further Seasons Anticipated?:	*Related SMR Nos.*:2587, 3269
Final Report: April 2000	
Periods Represented: Prehistoric, Late Iron Age, Roman, Medieval, Post-Medieval	

SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:

Fifty three evaluation trenches were excavated. Several phases of archaeology were identified.

A pit dating to the third millennium BC was excavated to the south of the development area and two prehistoric boundary ditches were excavated to the east.

A concentration of Late Iron Age to later Roman activity was found to the south west of the development area. Features included an early Roman kiln and a number of ditches, gullies, pits and post-holes. A geophysical survey of this area showed a strong focus of activity between trenches 31 and 40 and it is possible that further kilns are present.

Several medieval ditches were excavated. These dated to the 12th century and later and were probably originally associated with the former earthworks. Of note was a wide linear feature, possibly a hollow way rather than a large ditch. No evidence of a medieval moat was found within the development area. A rectilinear ditched enclosure, identified on the aerial photographic plot, was investigated. The only dating was one sherd of 19th/20th-century pottery recovered from the south western side of the enclosure ditch.

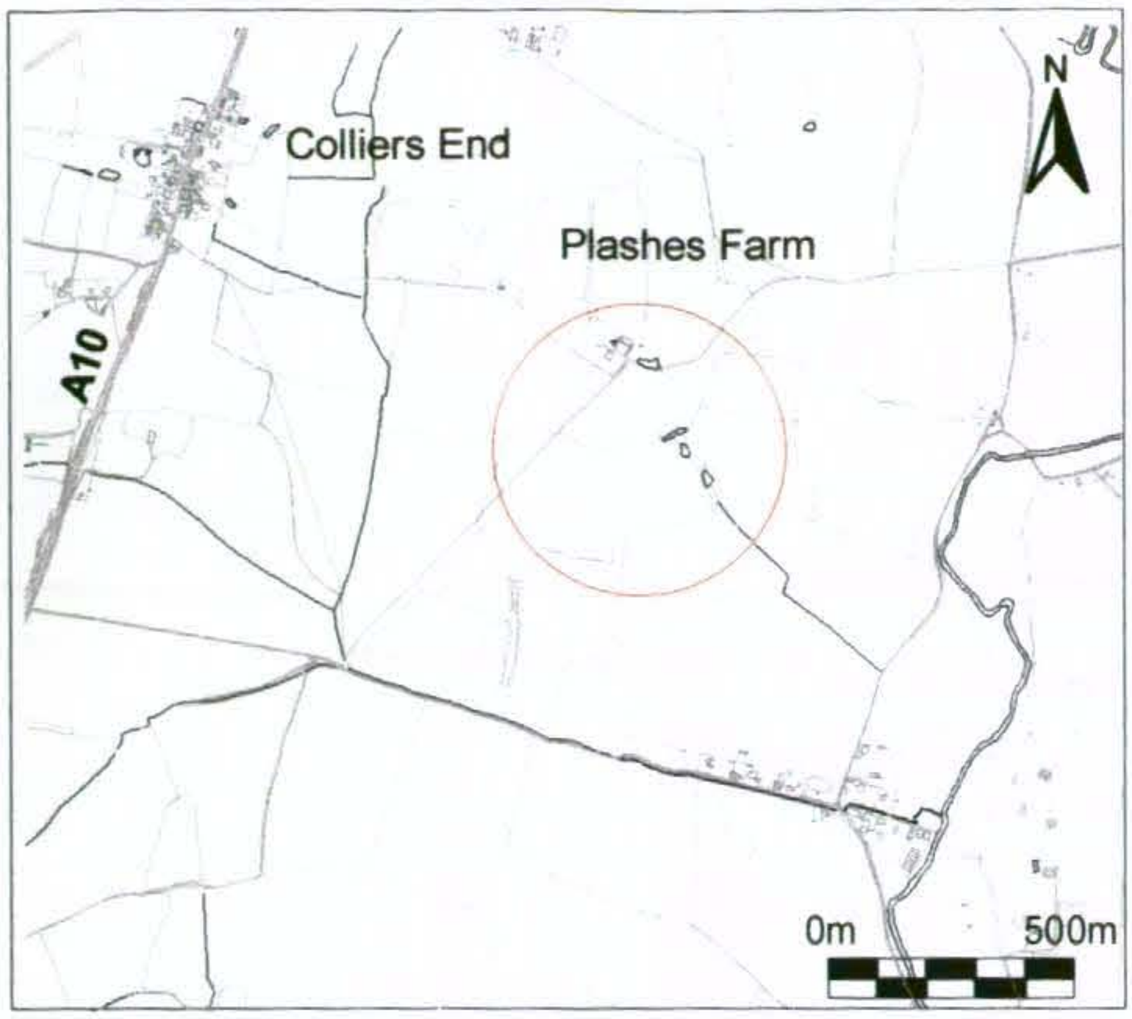
A post-medieval boundary ditch on the line of a former field boundary clearly shown on 19th century maps of the area was excavated. The foundations of two buildings recorded on the 1839 Tithe Award Map were exposed. The more northerly building was probably a barn. Its surviving foundation included re-used 16th-17th century bricks. The other building, possibly a store or stables, consisted of two phases of "L"-shaped wall foundations. The earlier foundation included re-used 18th century bricks and the smaller later foundation included an early 19th century brick.

Overall, the levelling of the site in 1984 was comprehensive with very little of the up standing earthworks surviving and only the bases of the post-medieval buildings

Previous Summaries/Reports:

Plashes Farm, Standon, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, Ennis 1999 (ECC FAU). *Plashes Farm, Standon, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation By Fieldwalking*, Germany 1999 (ECC FAU). *Plashes Farm, Hertfordshire: Aerial Photographic Appraisal: Stage 1* and *Stage 2:Aerial Photographic assessment and Mapping,* Cox 1999 (Air Photo Services Ltd)

Author of Summary: T. Ennis	**Date of Summary:** April 2000



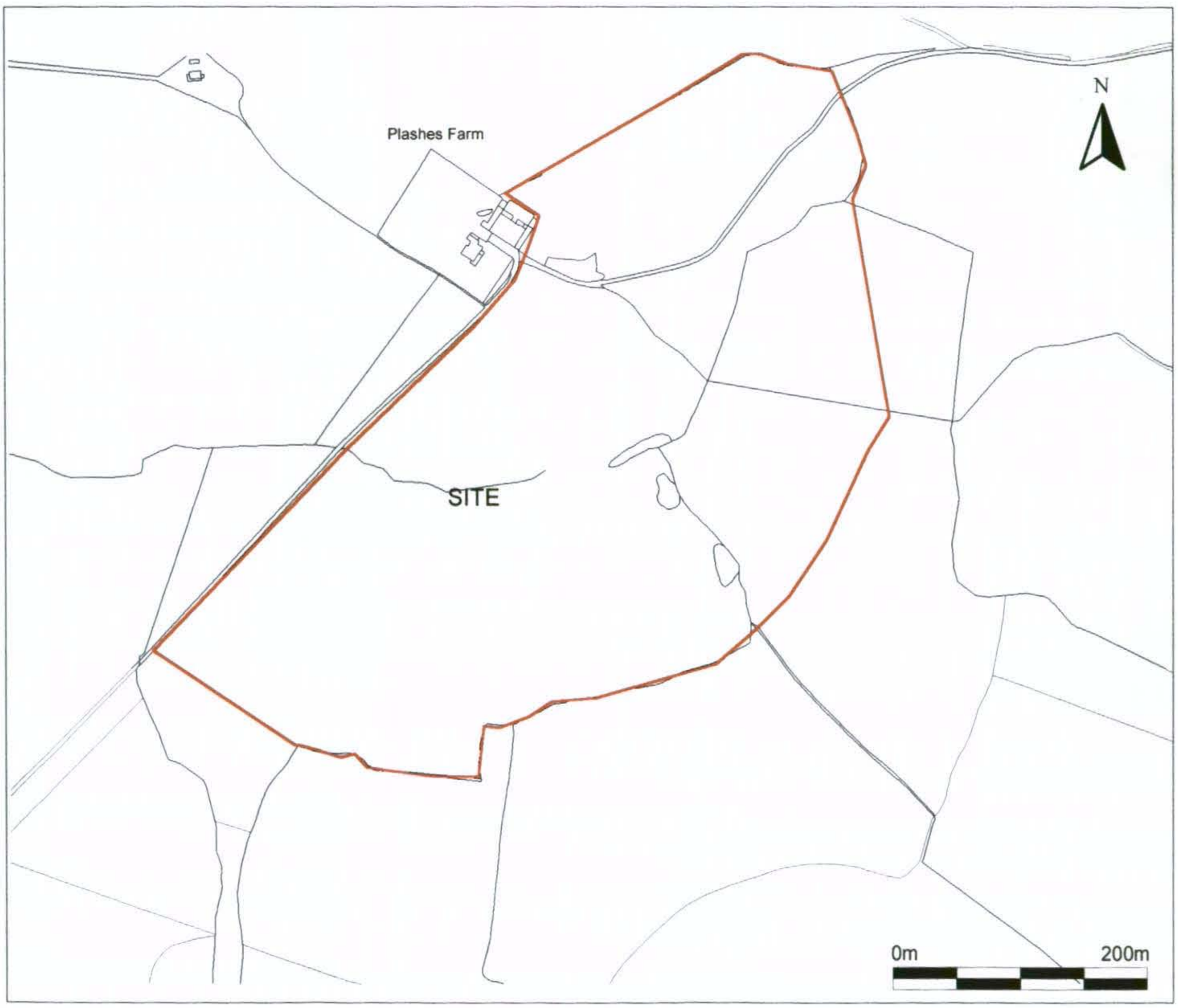
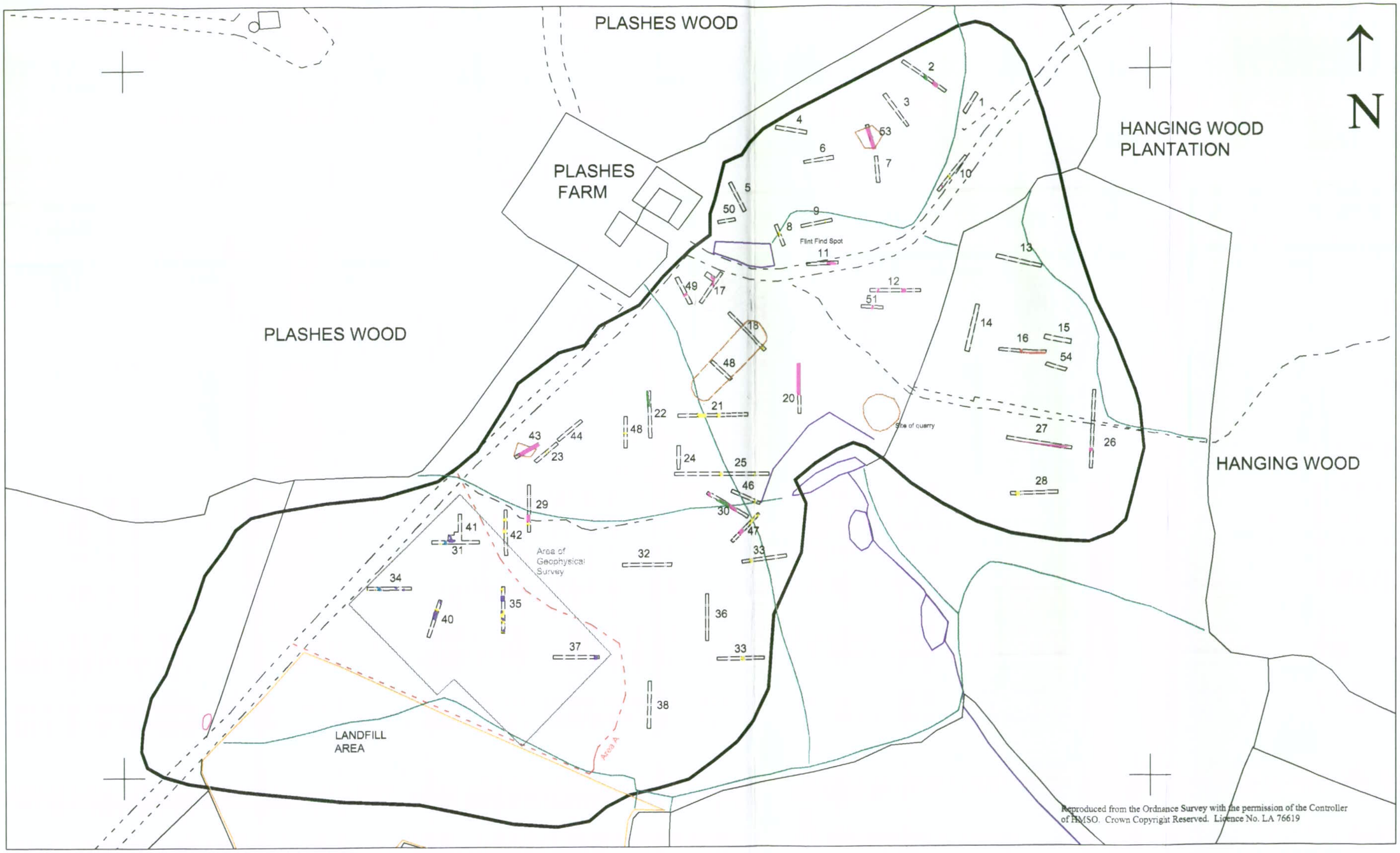


Fig. 1 Site Location Plan

Bank
Ditch
Possible hollow way
Ponds visible on air photos
Area of archaeological Potential
Possible former quarry or hollow
Former watercourse
Former ridge and furrow cultivation
Possible ditches
Deeper soil, further archaeological potential

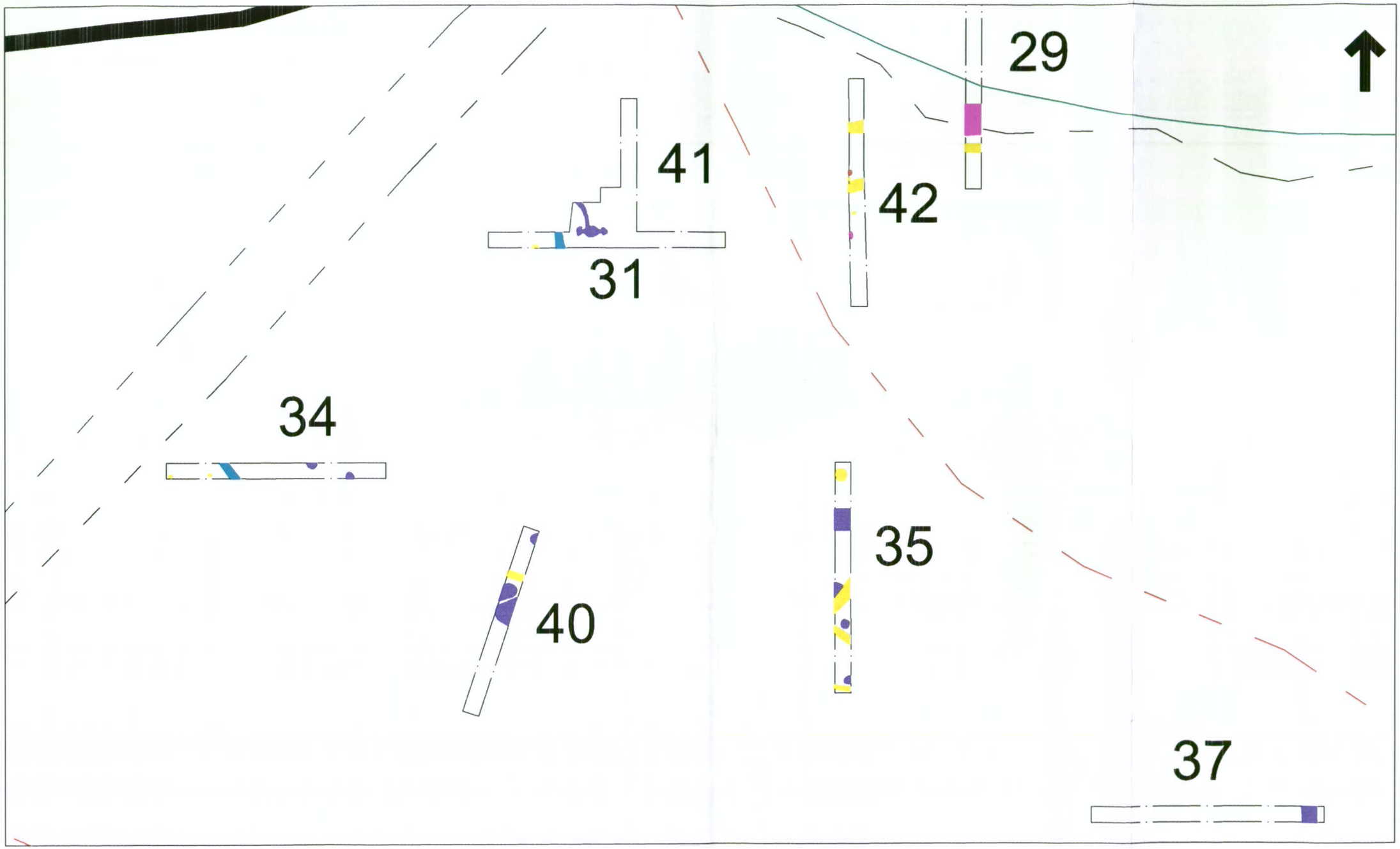
Fig. 2 Aerial Photographic Plot
(Plot: Air Photo Services Ltd)



0 50m

Old Boundaries
Areas of Dark Soil
Prehistoric
Late Iron Age
Roman
Medieval
Post Medieval
Undated

Fig. 3 Trench Plan



(For Key see Fig. 3)

0 50m

Fig. 4a Trench Plan Area A

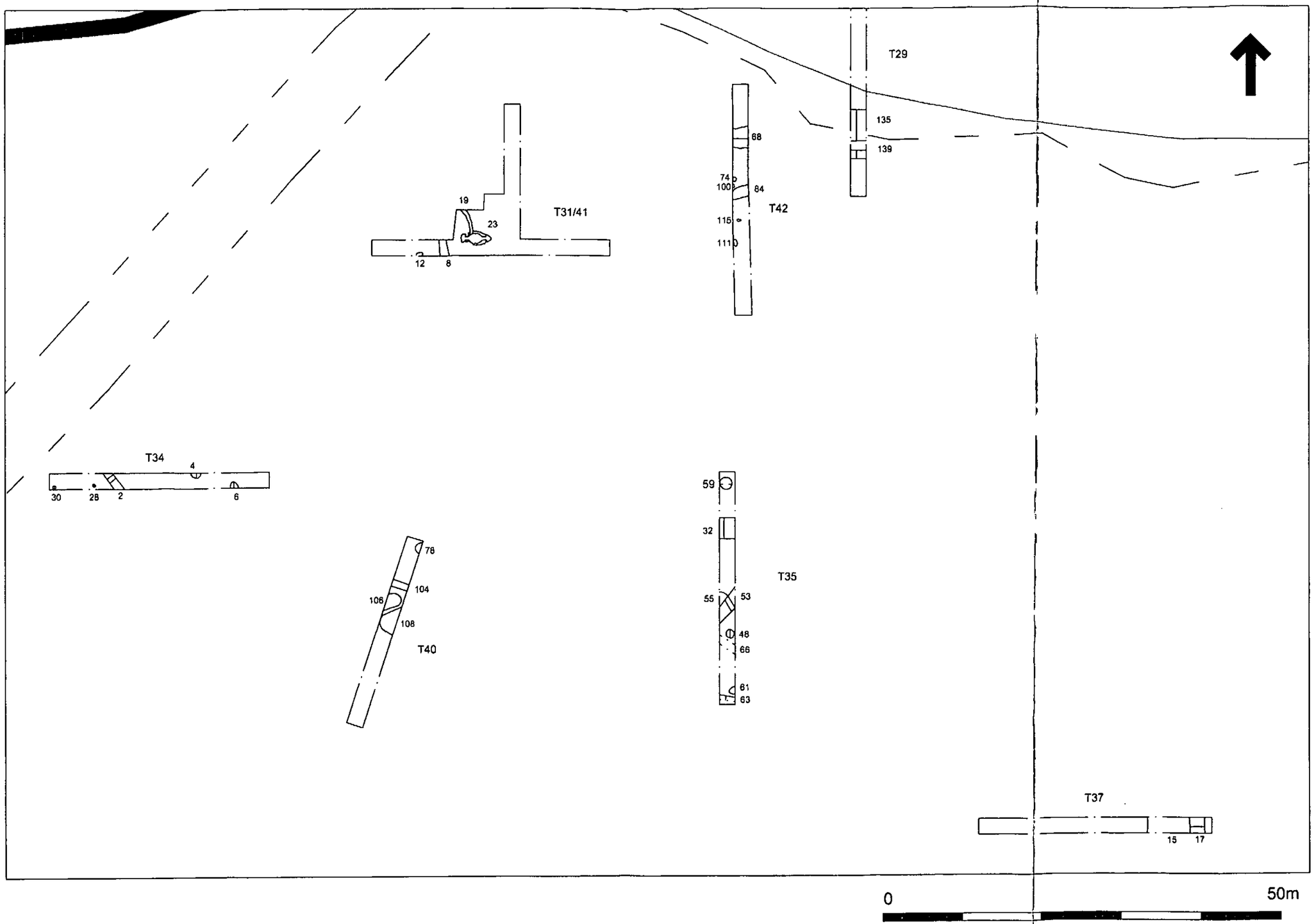


Fig. 4b Trench Plan Area A

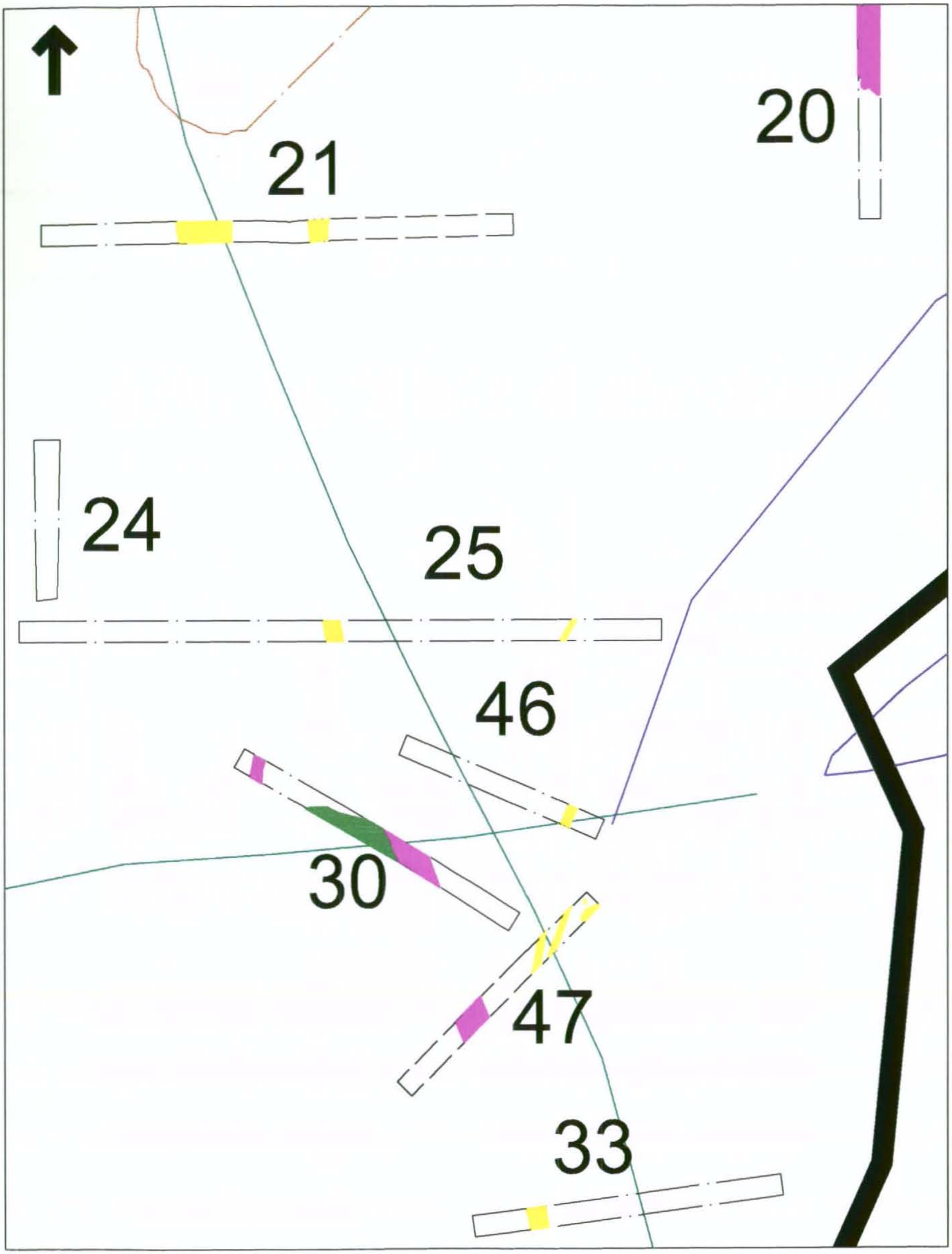


Fig. 5 Detail Area B

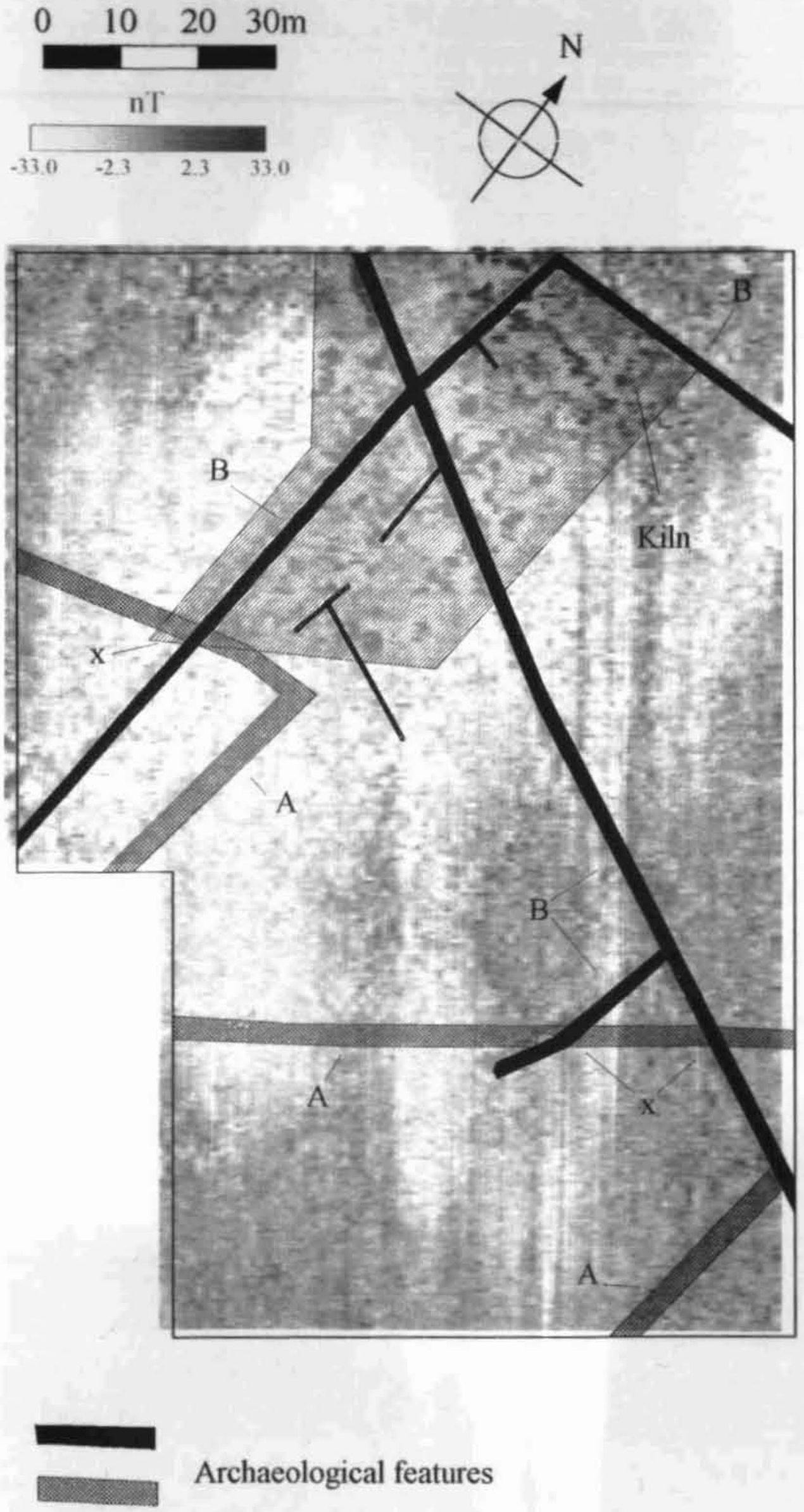


Fig.76 Survey Results

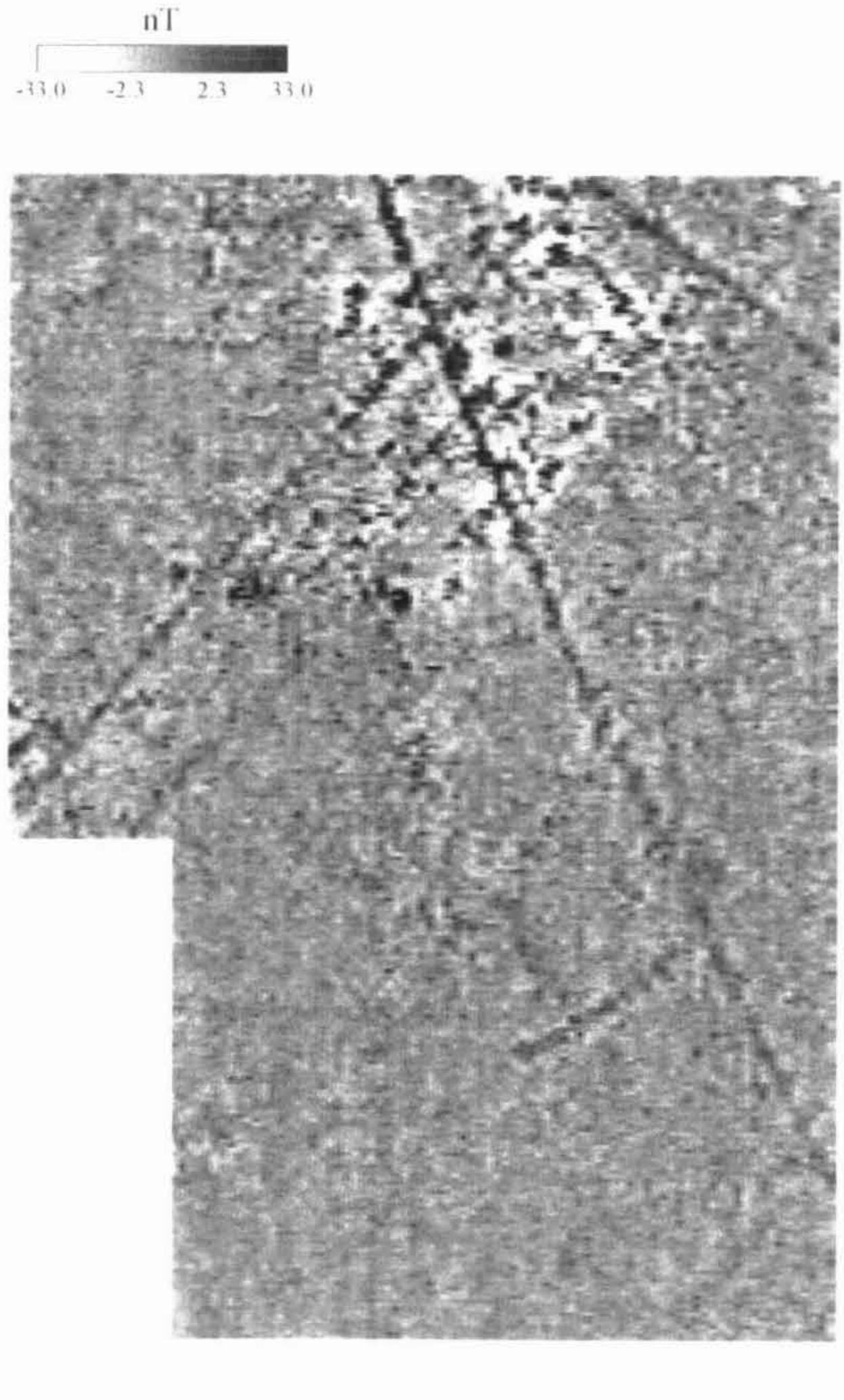


Fig. 7 Grey Scale Plot

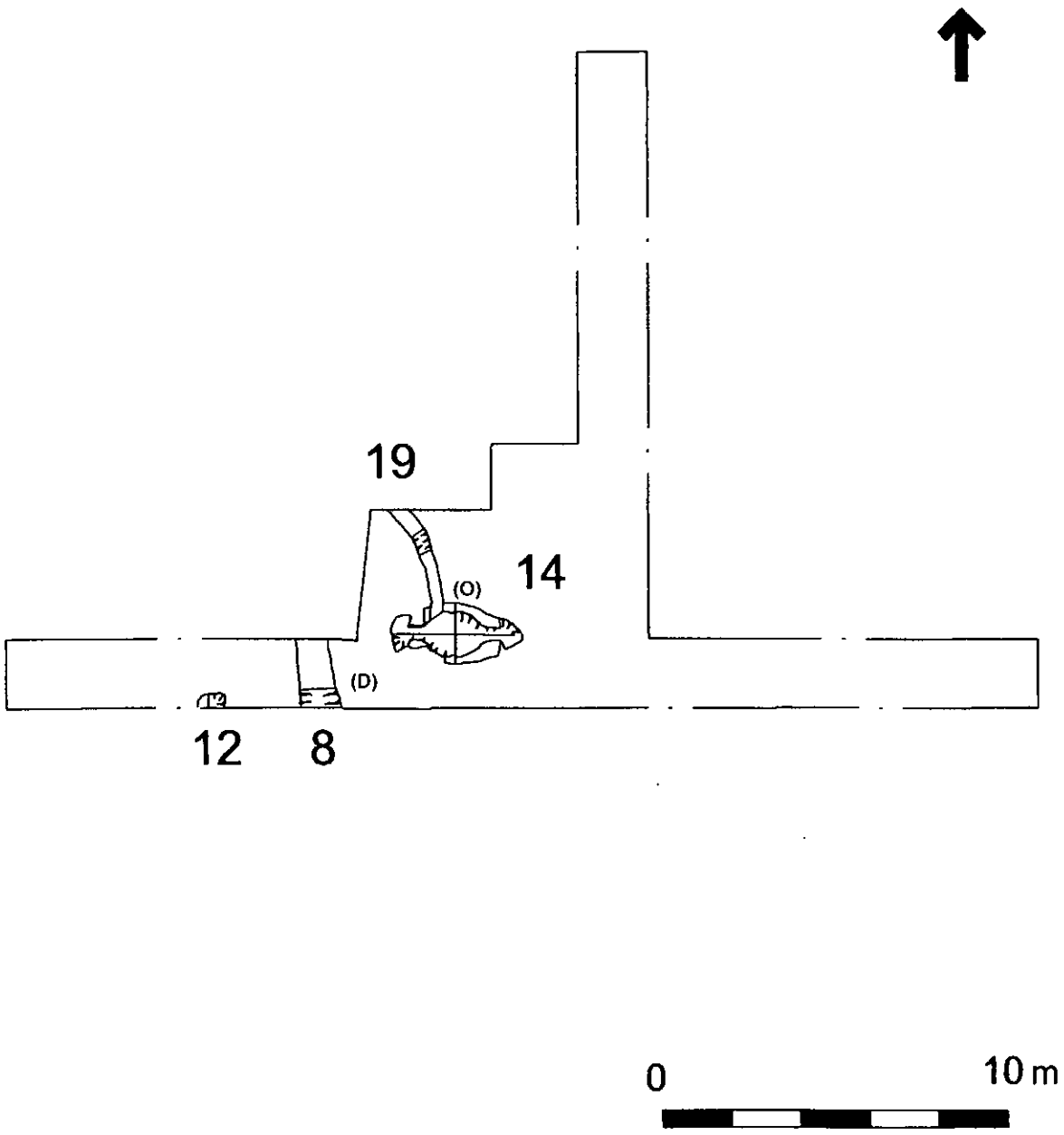


Fig. 8 Trench 31/41

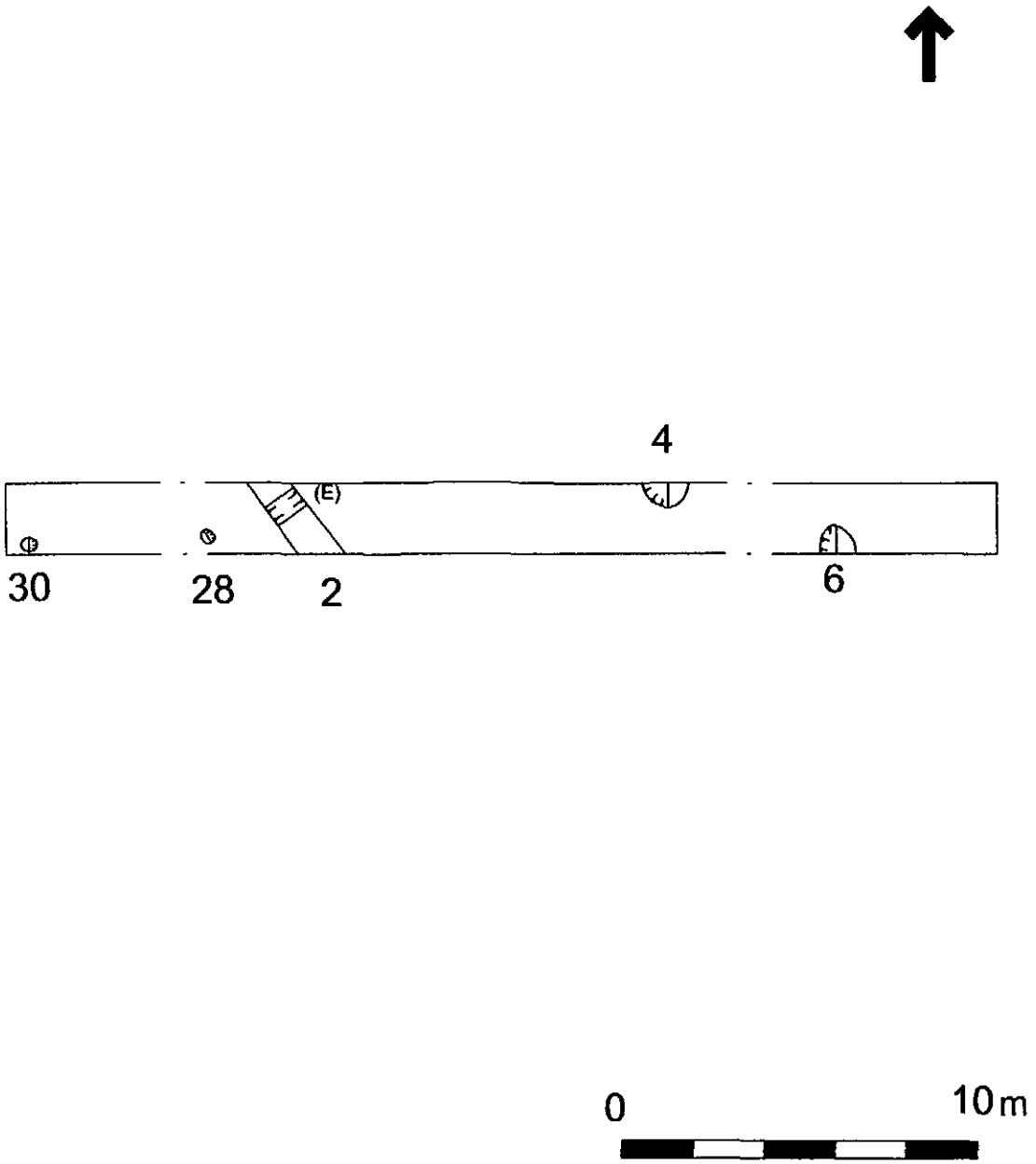


Fig. 9 Trench 34

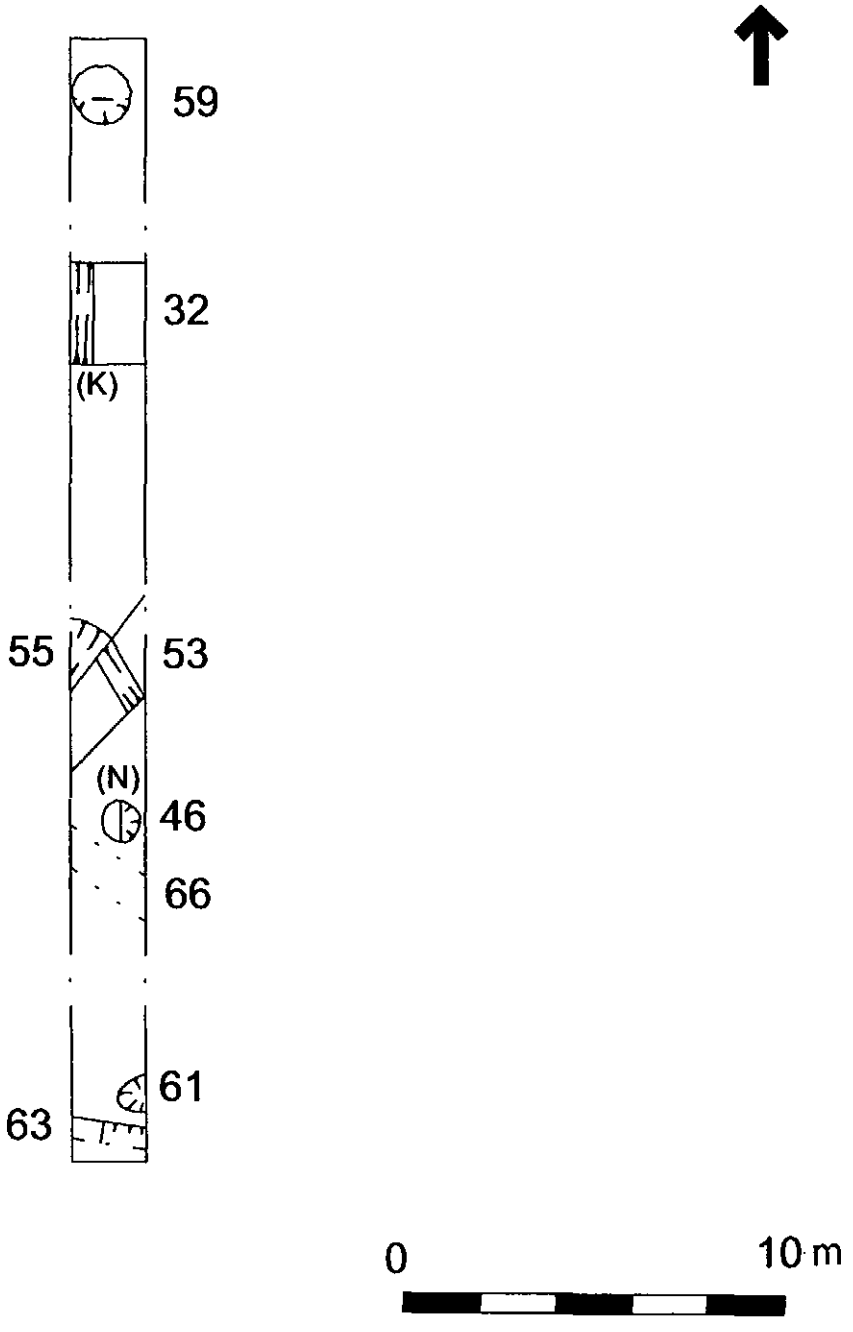


Fig. 10 Trench 35

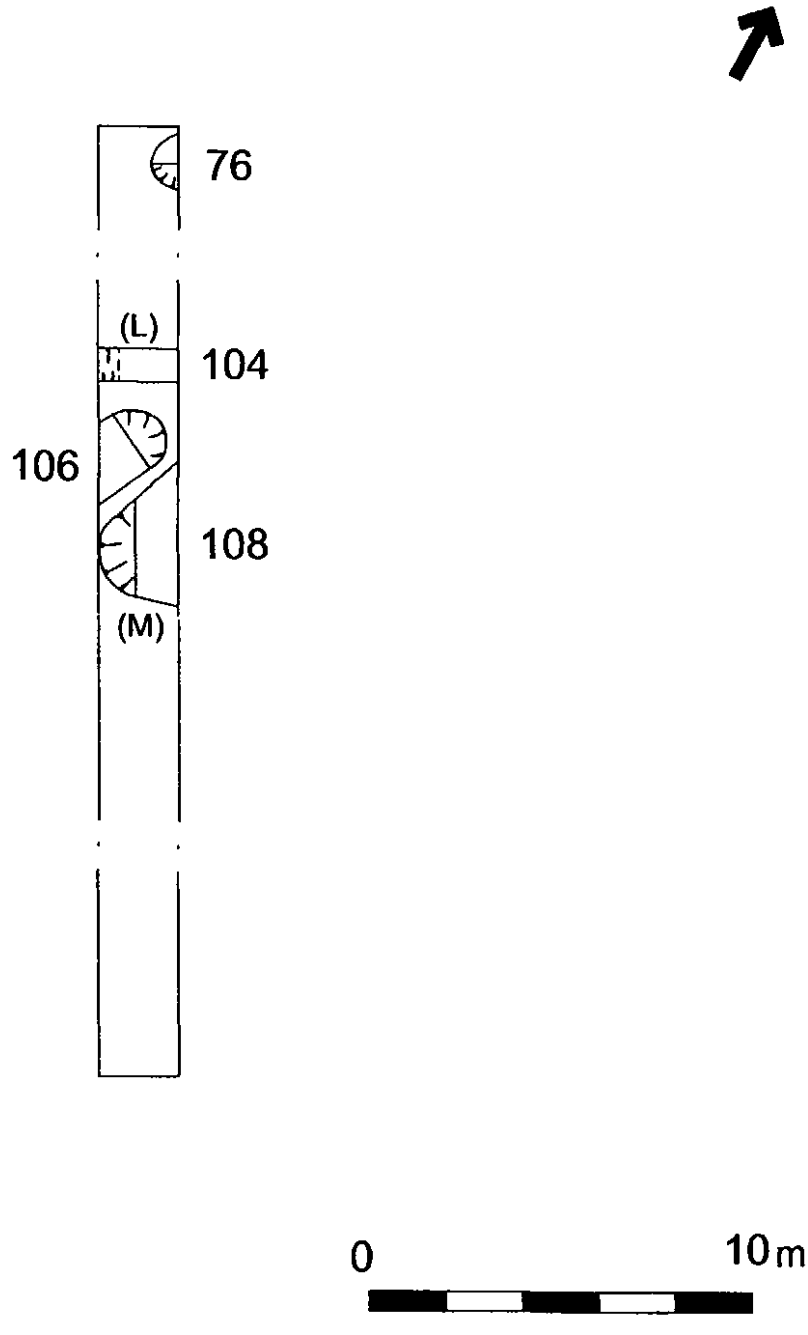


Fig. 11 Trench 40

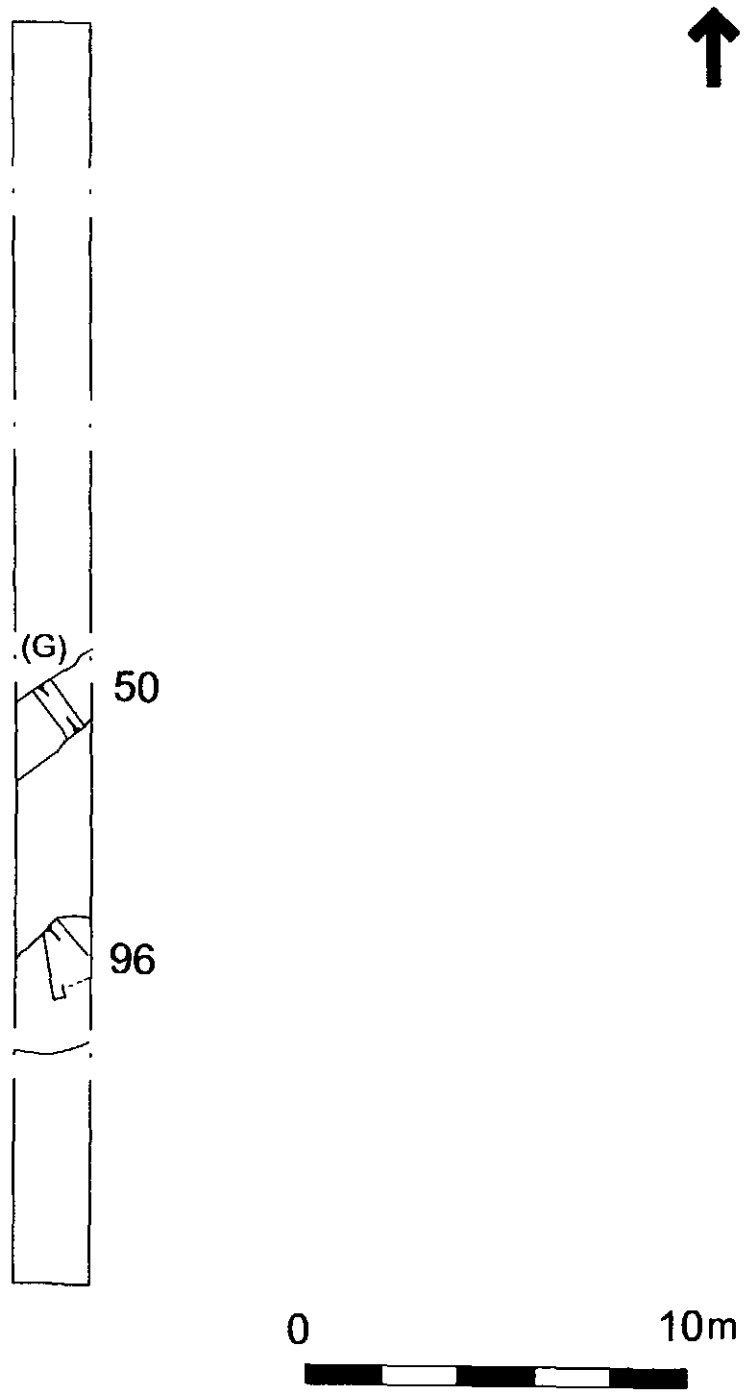


Fig. 12 Trench 2

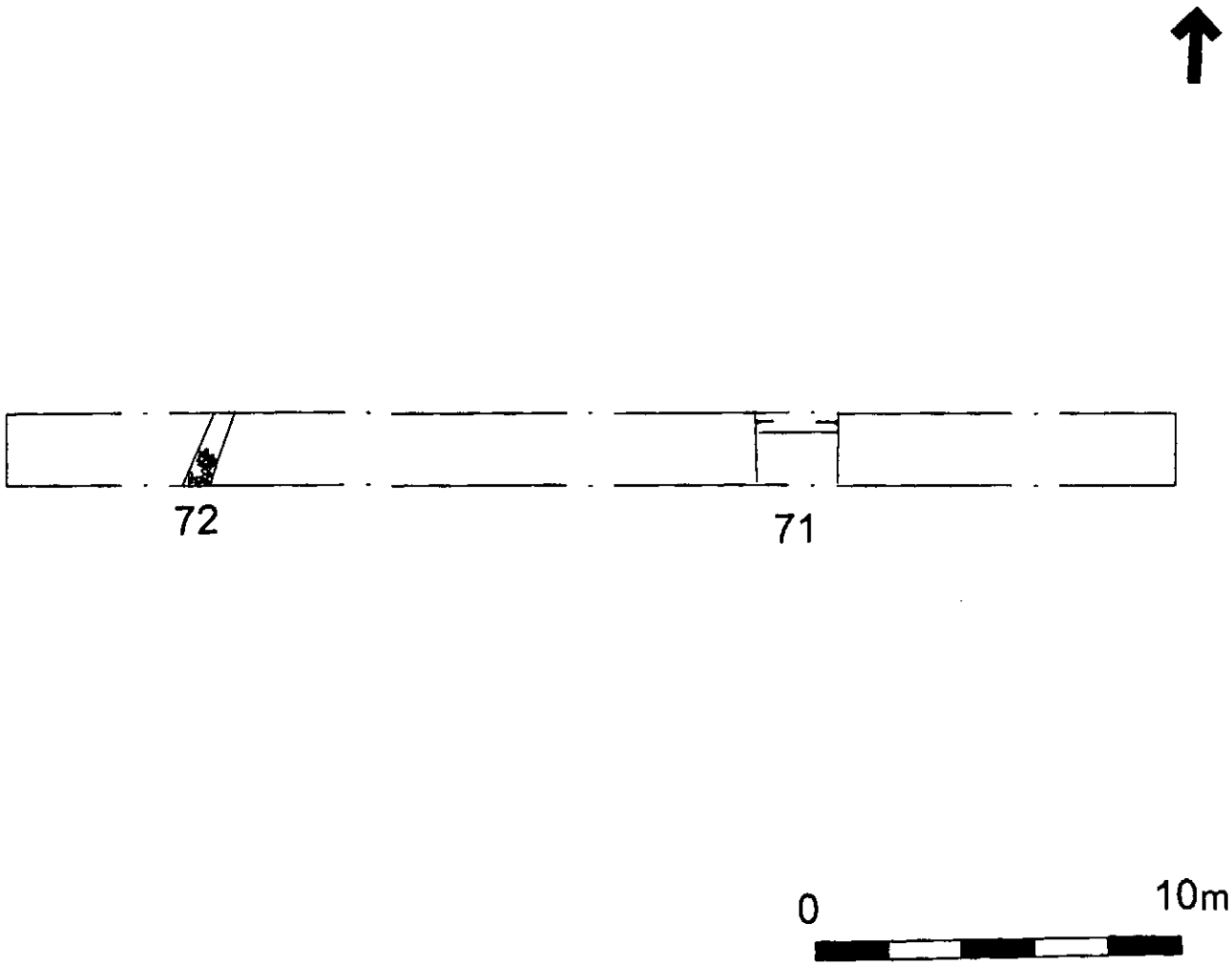


Fig. 13 Trench 12

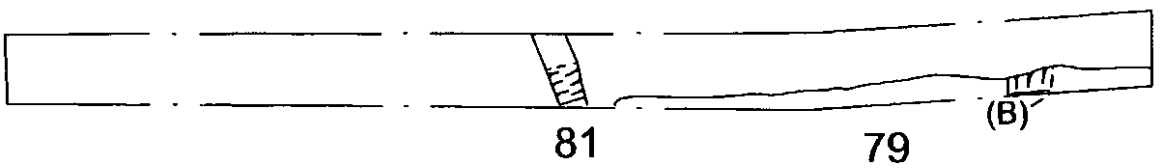


Fig. 14 Trench 16

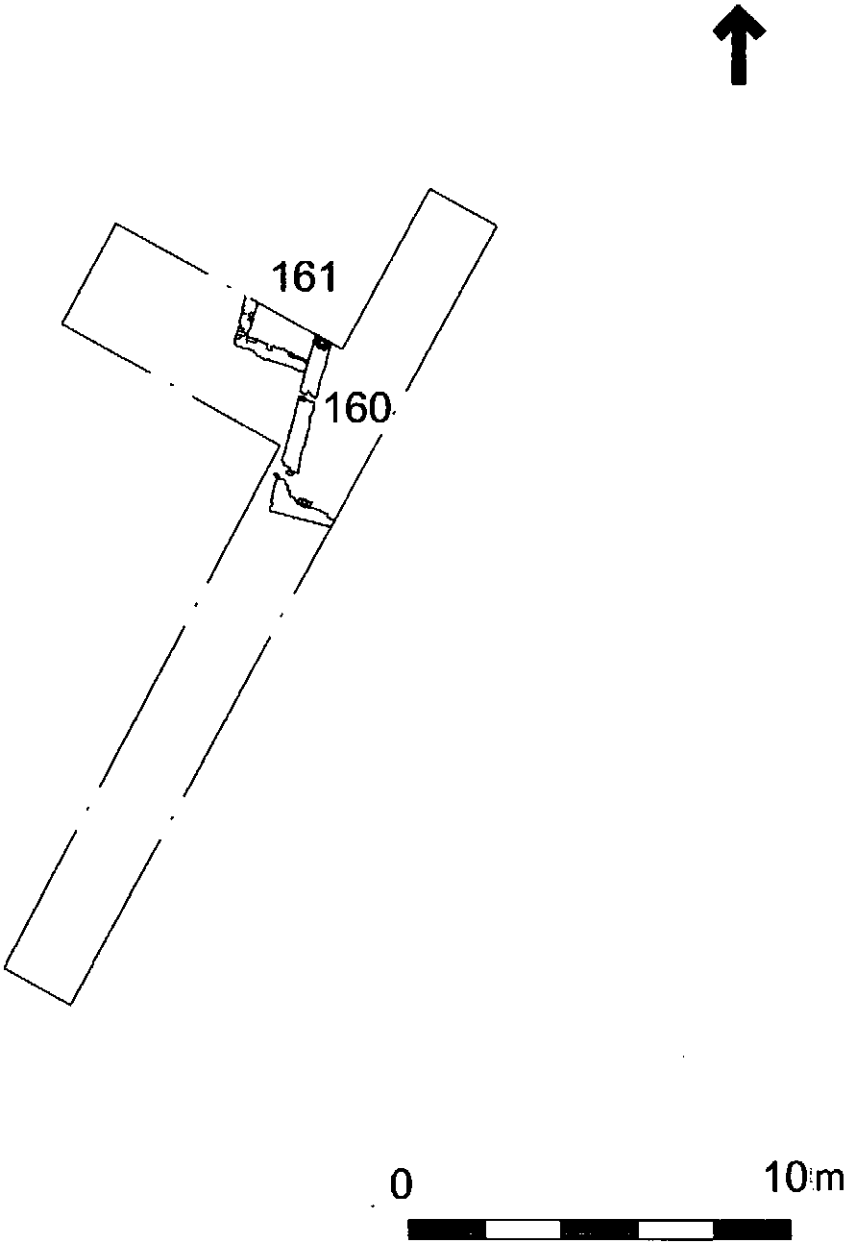


Fig. 15 Trench 17

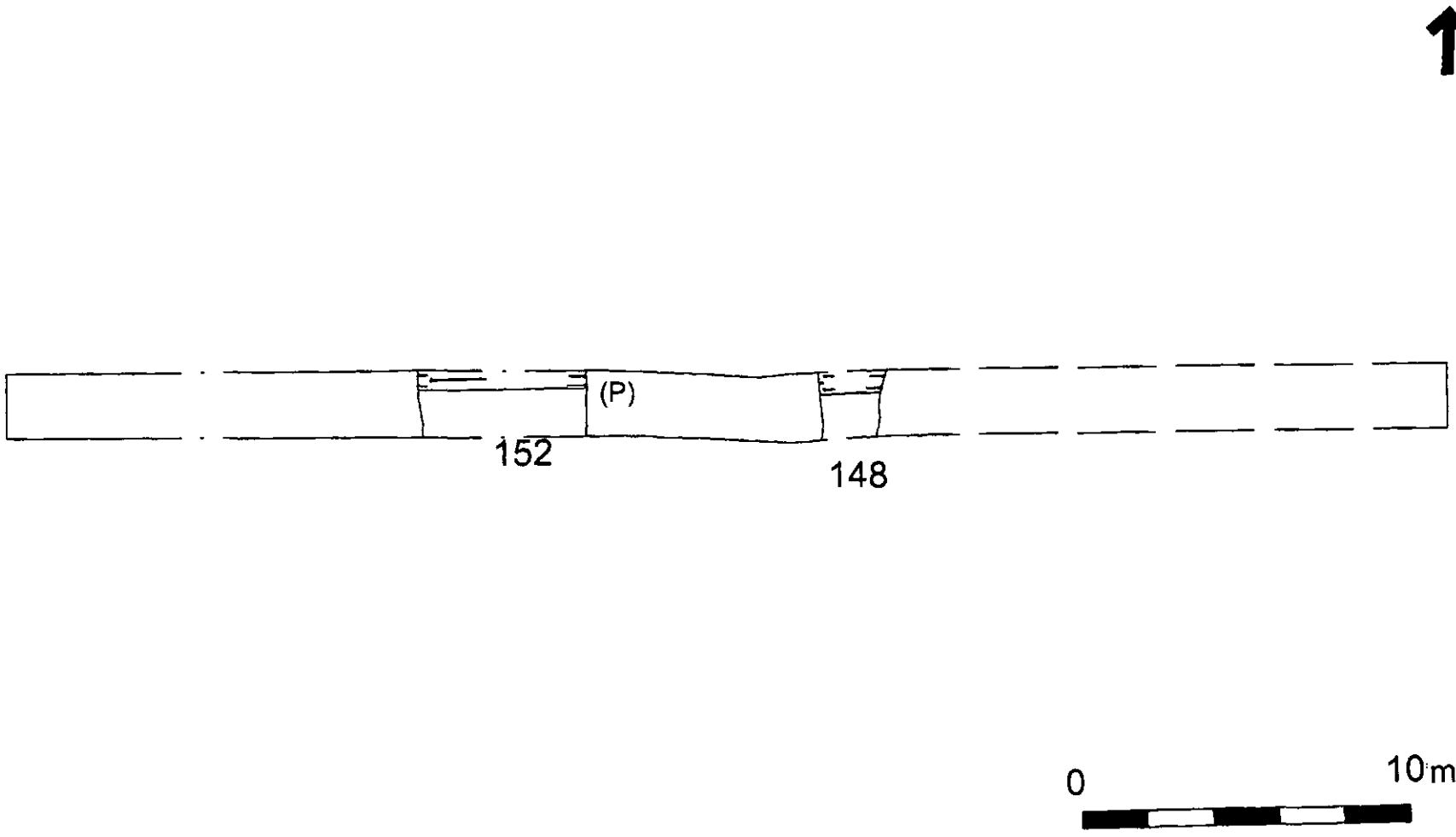


Fig. 16 Trench 21

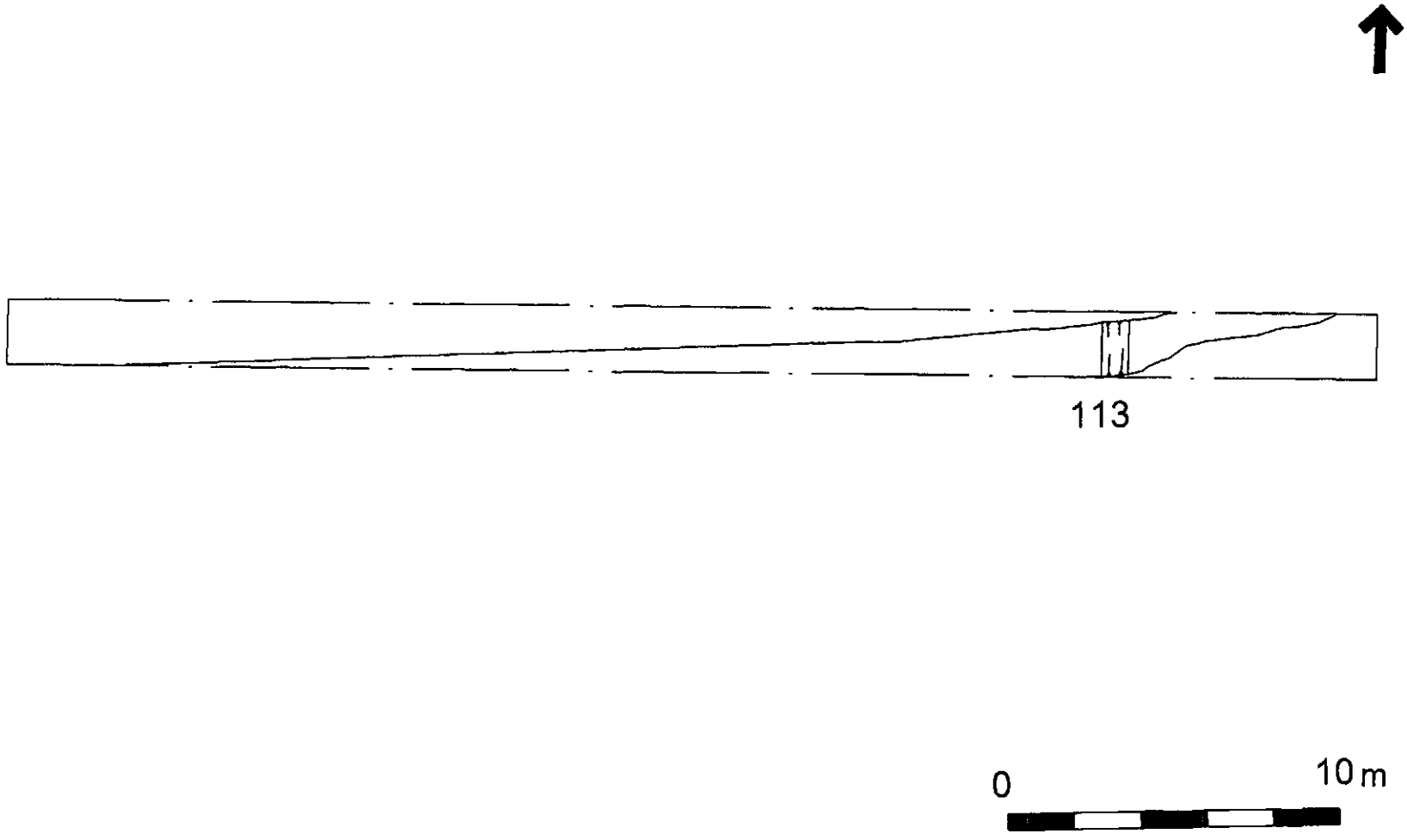


Fig. 17 Trench 27

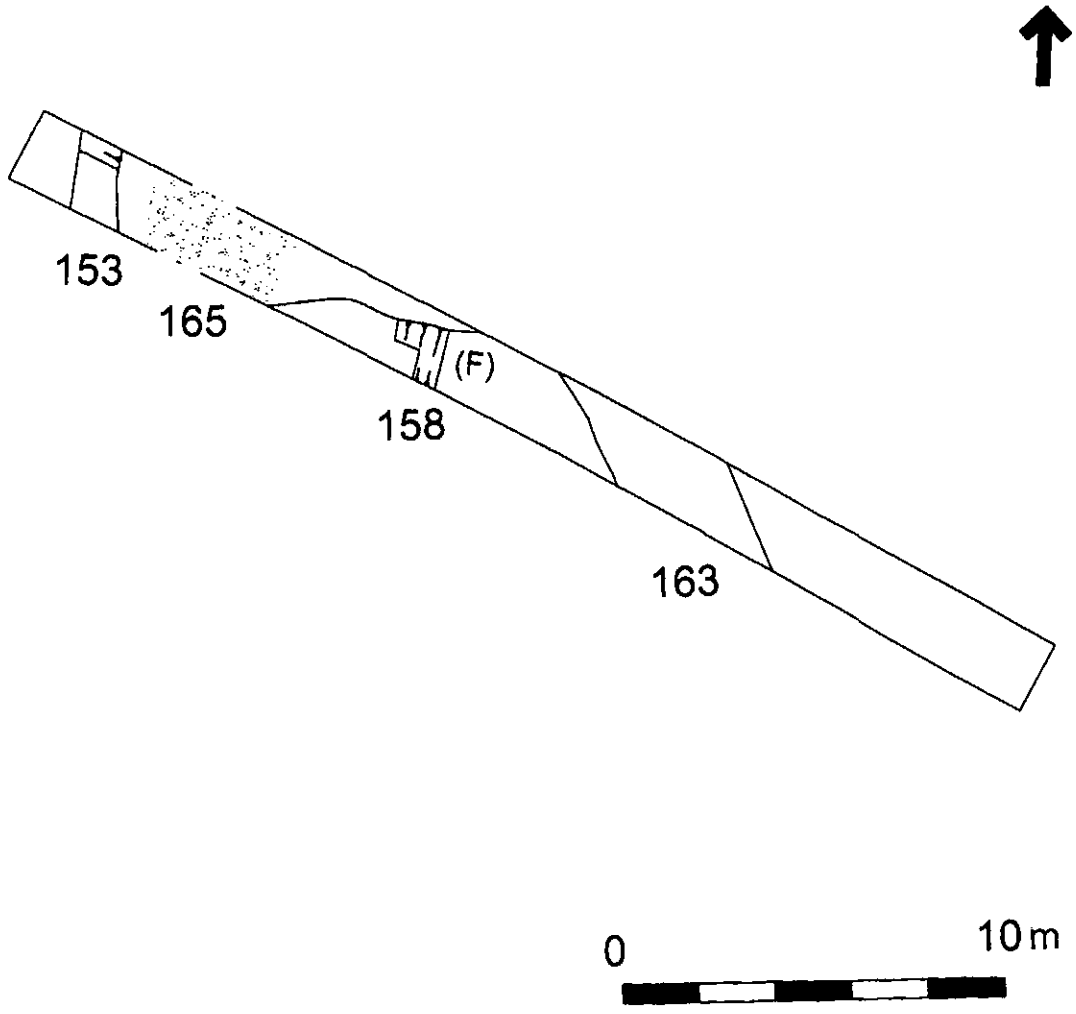


Fig. 18 Trench 30

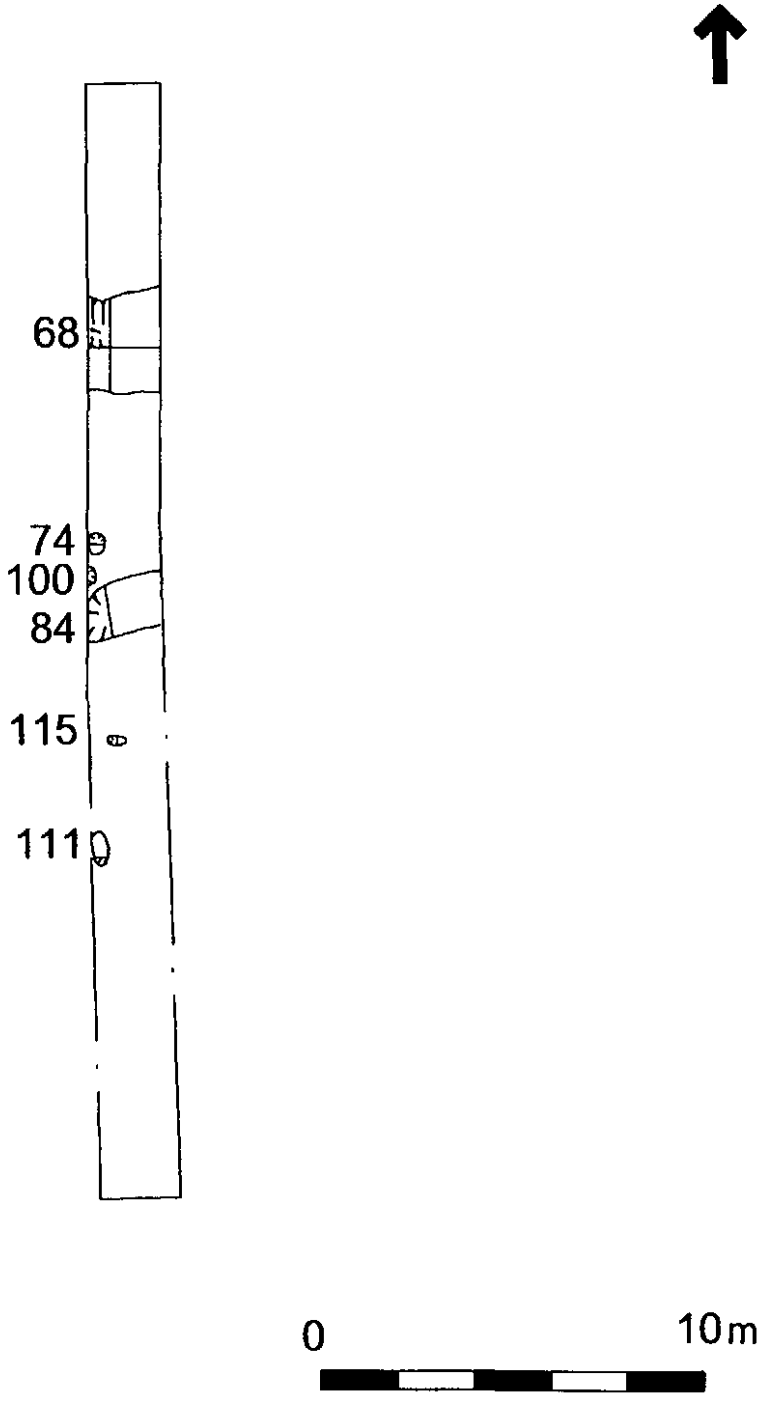


Fig. 19 Trench 42

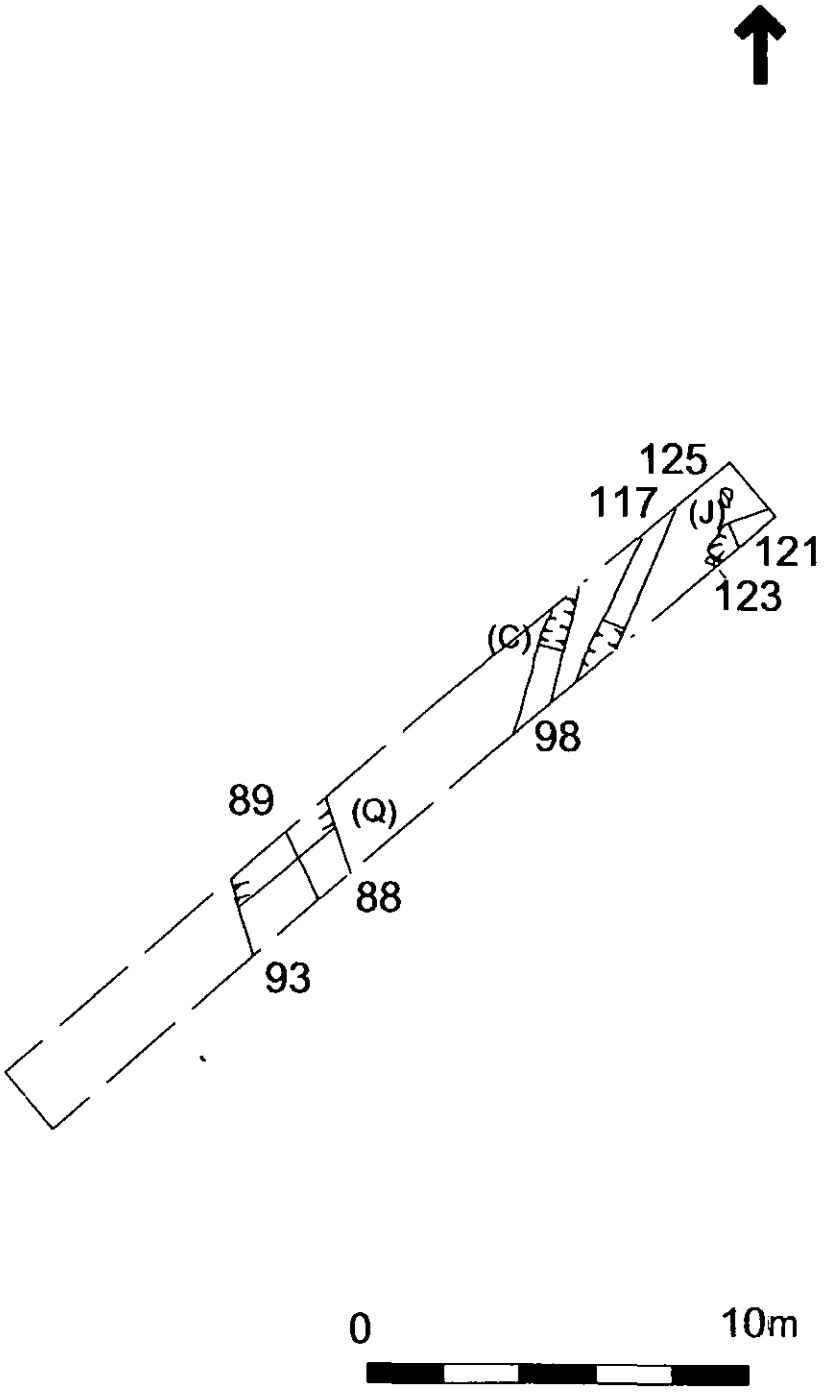


Fig. 20 Trench 47

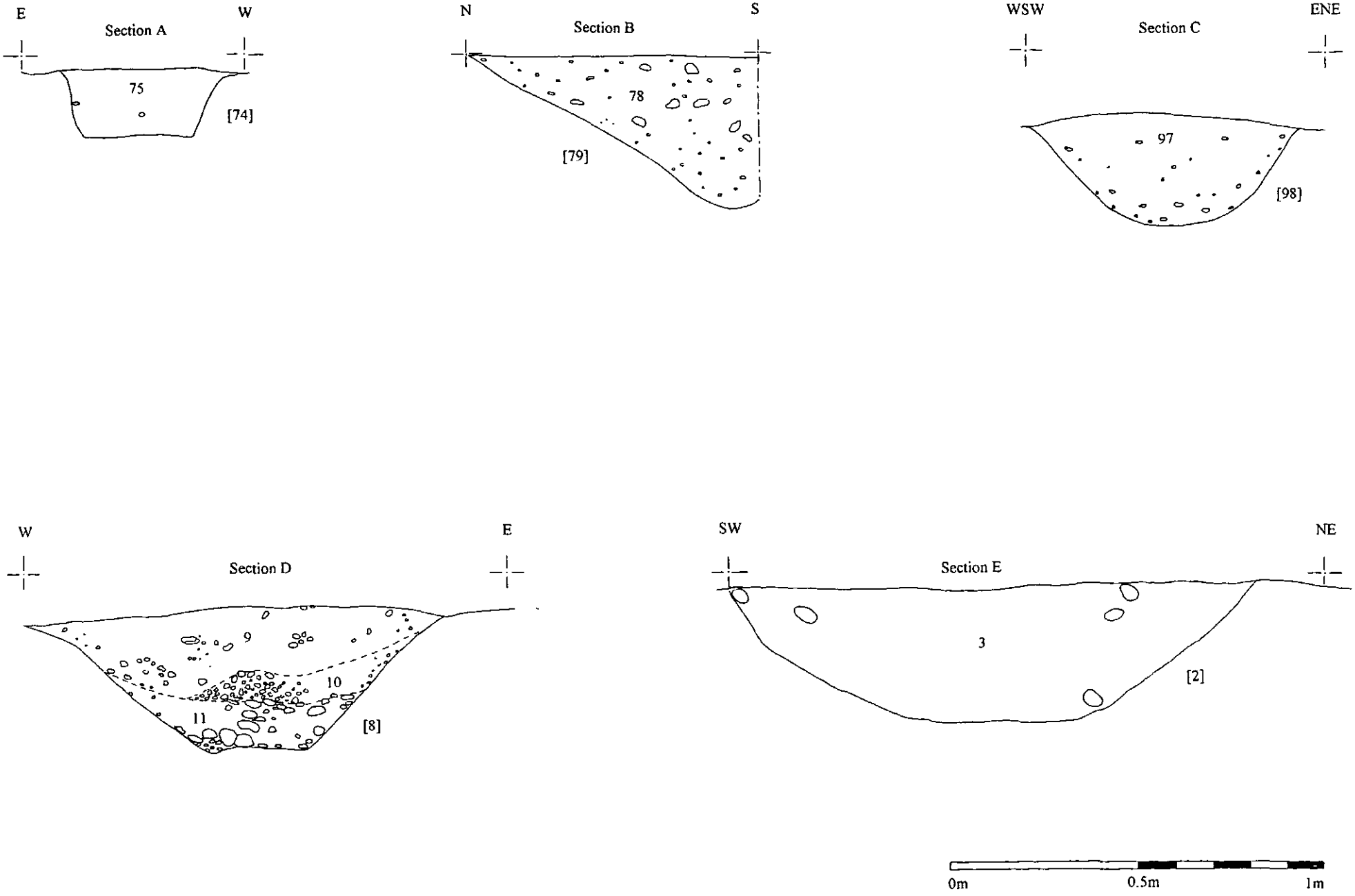


Fig. 21 Sections A-E

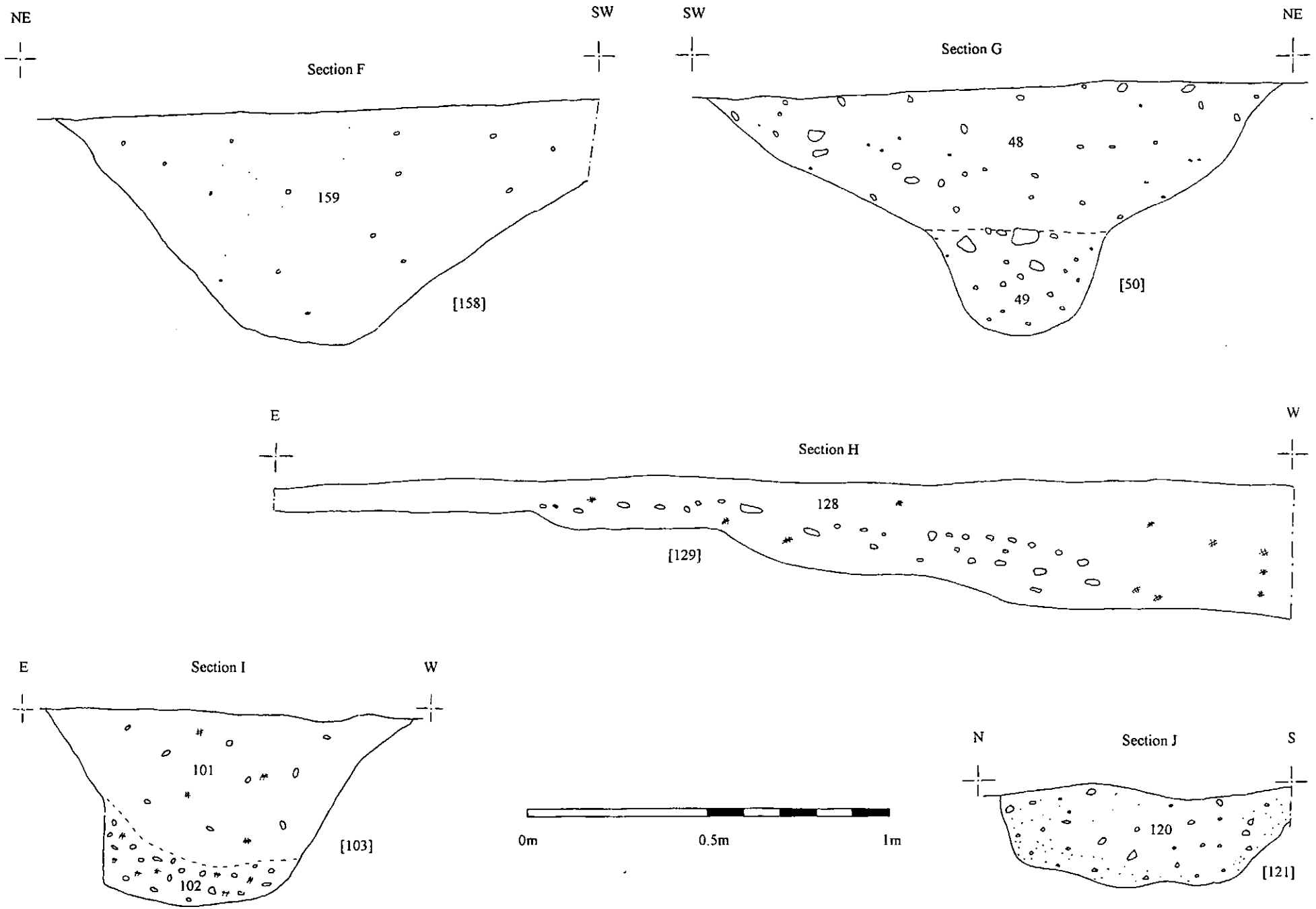


Fig. 22 Sections F-J

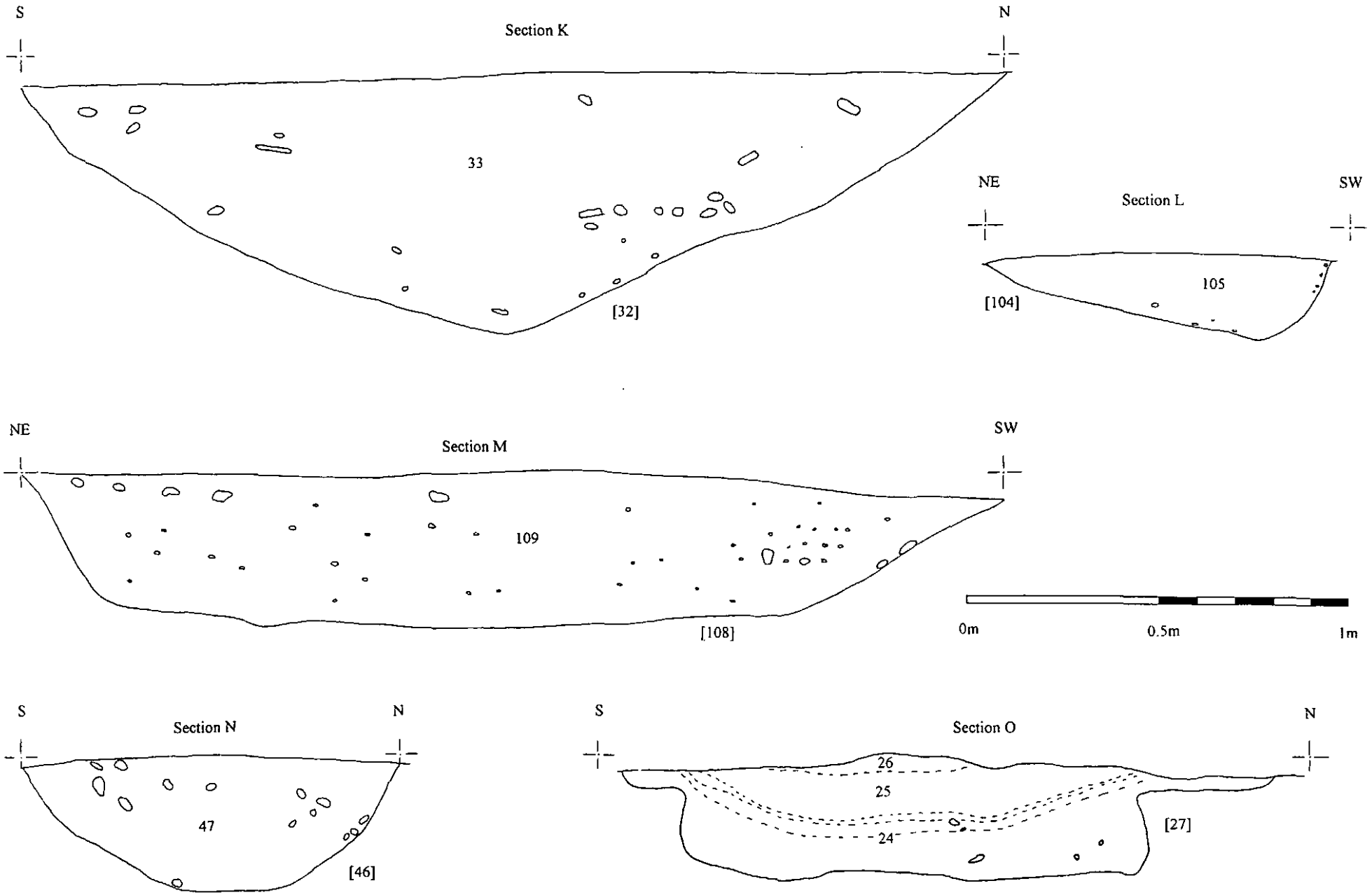


Fig. 23 Sections K-O

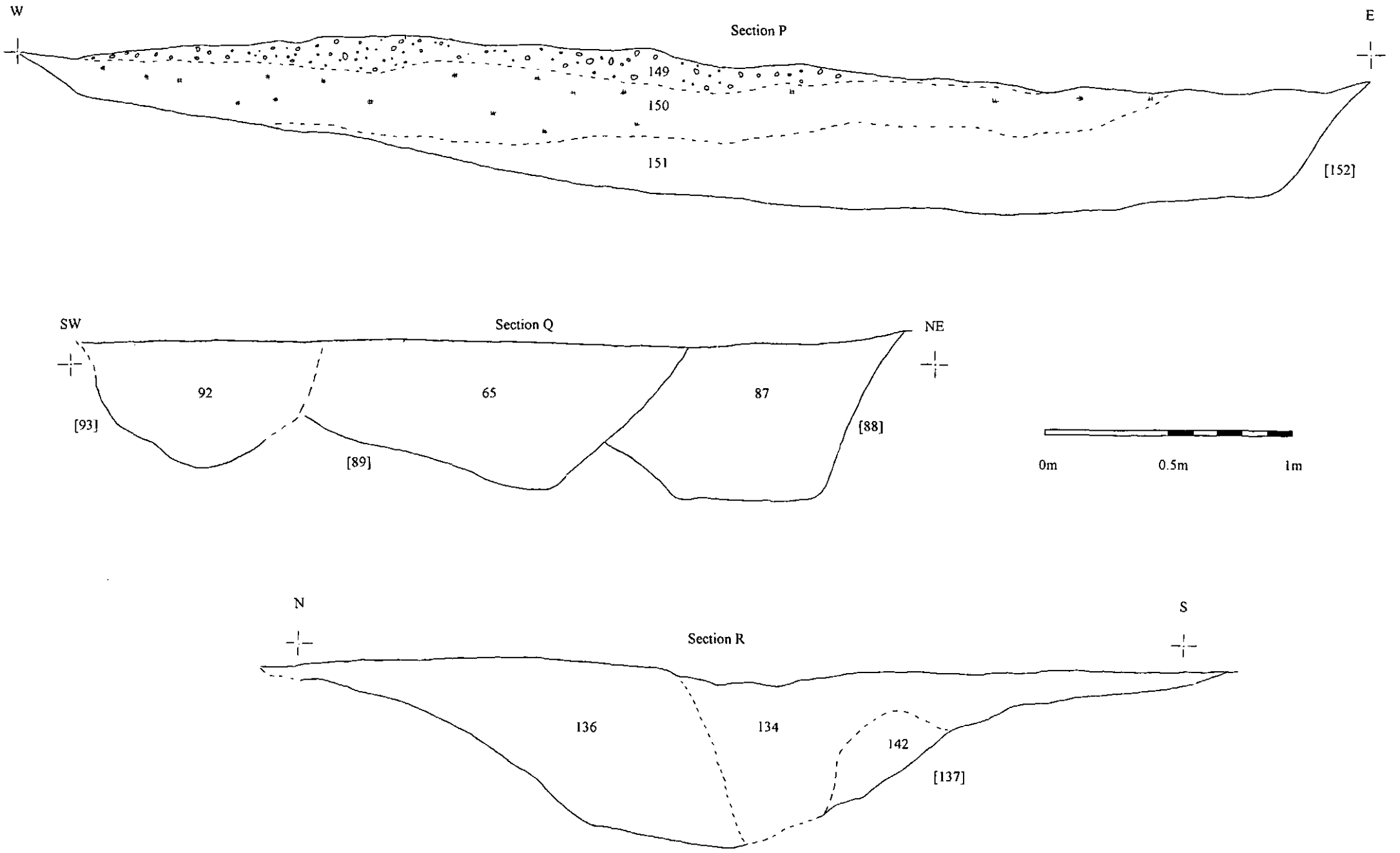


Fig. 24 Sections P-R

PLATE 1 Kiln (14), Trench 31

PLATE 2 Flooded Trench 44

PLATE 3 Hollow Way [152], Trench 21

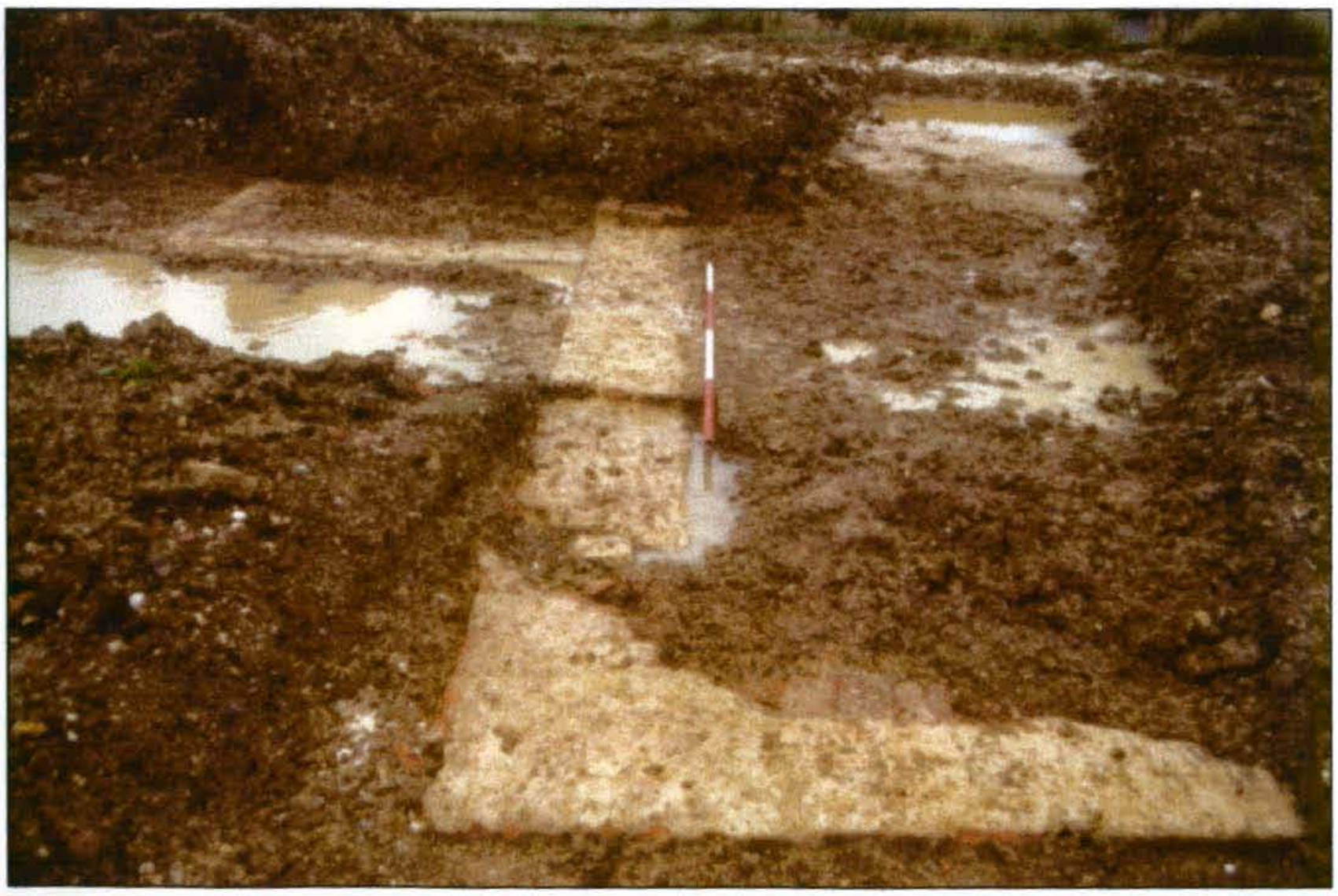


PLATE 4 Building (143), Trench 17