Report on Archaeological Evaluation Trenching at Hardacre Farm, Preston-by-Wingham, October 2000

(CAT Site Code PHF-00)

Keith Parfitt,
Canterbury Archaeological Trust,
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Introduction

In the autumn of 2000 Canterbury Archaeological Trust was employed to excavate a series of evaluation trenches on land at Preston-by-Wingham, ahead of proposals for planting new woodland (Figs. 1, 2 & 3). The area investigated lay on the eastern side of the modern village, across land that had formerly been an orchard associated with the now defunct Hardacre Farm. NGR TR 2540 6095 (Fig. 2).

Situated on the summit of a low ridge and extending down a shallow south-east facing slope, the site encompassed a rectangular block of ground measuring overall about 320 metres (NW-SE) by 215 m. (NE-SW) and covering roughly 6 hectares. It lay at an elevation of between 16.5 and 12 metres above O.D. The ground was occupied by four small arable fields, designated here Fields A-D (Fig. 3). These were delimited by hedges and trackways and were bounded along the north-west and north-east sides by Mill Lane, with Hardacre farm-house (dating to the first half of the twentieth century and soon to be demolished) on the north-western boundary (Figs. 2 & 3). Previous archaeological work in the area had located a number of significant prehistoric features and suggested a good potential for the site before the present work began (Ogilvie 1977).

Excavation showed that the sub-soil across the site consisted principally of an orange-brown brickearth (context **8**), over flint gravel (context **9**). Near the centre of the area investigated the brickearth deposit thinned out to expose the underlying gravel just below the plough-soil (see Trench 15). Significant traces of prehistoric and Roman activity were revealed in most of the trenches excavated.

The Excavated Remains

A total of nineteen trenches (Trenches 1-19) was excavated to a pattern previously indicated by the County Archaeologist's department of K.C.C. (Fig. 3). Most contained features of archaeological interest and several were densely covered with such features. Root disturbance, connected with the orchards that had formerly occupied this area, was found to be minimal and was largely confined to the trenches in Field C, at the lower end of the site.

The excavations were conducted during the first half of October, throughout a period of particularly wet weather. These adverse conditions, together with the significant number of archaeological features exposed, limited the amount of field-investigation possible and a somewhat cursory examination was all that was possible for a number features; two large, complex features (**Fs 99 & 117**) were left untouched. Nevertheless, the primary objectives of the project, to ascertain the extent of any archaeological remains and to establish something of their date-range, was adequately achieved.

Fifty individual archaeological features were located (Figs. 4-8). These were scattered throughout the trenches excavated, with only four (Trenches 1, 3, 6 & 7) failing to reveal at least one feature. Just over half the features discovered consisted of ditches and gullies. There were also ten pits of varying sizes, with seven post-holes and two large composite features that were not investigated. Most of the features were concentrated on the southern and western sides of the site, particularly in Fields C and D. Details of the individual features located and the material they contained are set-out in the tables at the end of this report (Tables 5 & 6).

A continuous layer of plough-soil (contexts **1, 2, 3 & 4**), between 0.25 and 0.40 m. thick, covered the entire site and in most places this rested on a layer of sub-soil (contexts **5, 13, 32, 36, 71, 74, 77, 82, 93, 94, 119, 128 & 131**) between 0.05 m. and 0.45 m. in thickness, that sealed both the 'natural' and the archaeological features cut into it. The archaeological features were thus buried by between 0.30 m.

and 0.80 m of soil. Details of the soil coverage in each trench is set out in the table below (Table 1). Prior to the excavation, walking of the surface of the rough harrowed fields revealed the presence of a light scatter of calcined flints, together with occasional prehistoric struck flints, medieval pot-sherds and peg-tile fragments. A brief metal-detector survey failed produce anything of particular significance.

The sub-soil deposits contained varying amounts of archaeological material, mostly prehistoric pottery with some early Roman sherds and a few prehistoric struck flints (see below). The distribution of the ceramic material appeared to at least partially reflect the density of the remains buried below. Most of the sub-soil deposits were removed by machine in order to expose the underlying features but significant areas were left unexcavated in Trenches 10, 12 & 16, where substantial quantities of finds appeared to be present. Collectively, the sub-soil deposits yielded some 122 sherds of pottery, 72% of which was prehistoric in date.

Trench No.	Depth to top of natural/arch. features
1	0.40 - 0.50 m.
2	0.80 m.
3	0.40 m.
4	0.70 m.
5	0.72 m.
6	0.30 m.
7	0.40 m.
8	0.53 m.
9	0.65 m.
10	0.70 m.
11	0.57 m.
12	0.53 - 0.63 m
13	0.37 m.
14	0.45 m.
15	0.42 m.
16	0.80 m.
17	0.70 m.
18	0.38 - 0.55 m.
19	0.70 m.

Table 1: Details of the soil coverage over archaeological features (by Trench)

Ditches and Gullies

These were the commonest type of feature located. From the variety of axes, depths and profiles represented it seems clear that several separate phases of such feature must be represented, although the exposed sections are generally too fragmentary to reveal any clear overall patterns. Lengths of what were probably the same ditches were traced in Trenches 5 and 8; Trenches 9, 10 and 11 and Trenches 17 and 19.

Some ditches are likely to have delimited fields and garden plots and the sterile fills of a number suggest that they must have stood at some distance from any habitation area. Other ditches, particularly some of those located in Field C (see below), contained much (Roman) domestic debris and must have lain close to contemporary occupation areas. A few contained evidence of re-cutting, suggesting that some well-established boundaries were maintained for a significant length of time.

Both straight and curved sections of ditch/gully are present and the pottery dating evidence indicates late Bronze Age-early Iron Age and Roman dates for their fillings. The straight ditches/gullies are

probably to be associated with rectilinear enclosures and perhaps droveways. In Field C a series of ditch sections (**Fs 41, 44, 101, 105**) showing some evidence for re-cutting (**F. 39**), effectively formed a continuous boundary, running north-east by south-west, for at least 80 metres through Trenches 9, 10 and 11. These produced significant quantities of early Roman pottery.

The sections of curved ditch/gully recorded might represent the rounded corners of otherwise rectangular enclosures but those firmly assigned to the late Bronze Age-early Iron Age could also represent penannular ditches around hut circles. Feature **63** in Trench 15, apparently enclosing a group of post-holes, may be particularly significant in this context. Pottery tentatively dated to the period *c.* 1500/1300-1100 B.C. was recovered from a curving ditch in Trench 17 (**F. 124**). This early dating might suggest that the ditch predates the bulk of the other excavated features on the site. Too little of the ditch was examined for its precise interpretation to be certain; it might represent an early hut circle but it is not inconceivable that it formed part of a ring-ditch relating to a Bronze Age round barrow.

Pits

A total of ten pits was excavated (**Fs 15, 17, 25, 49, 51, 65, 91, 97, 120, 122**). These were of varying shapes and sizes but most were either circular or oval in plan. The deepest was Feature **15** at 0.72 m. (Fig. 7, S. 6) and this produced 21 sherds of flint-tempered pottery broadly dated to the period *c.*900-600 B.C. Broadly similar Late Bronze Age-early Iron Age pottery was recovered from pits, **Fs 17, 51, 91, 97, 120 & 122**. There were no obvious pits belonging to the Roman period, although the fillings of three (**Fs 25, 49 & 65**) were sterile and must remain undated.

Pit/Ditch Terminals

Three features (**Fs 59, 61** and **95**), only partially exposed within the trenches, could represent either portions of pits or the terminals of ditches that extended beyond the excavation limits. The pottery from **Fs 61** and **95** suggest a late Bronze Age-early Iron Age date for their filling. Feature **59** remains undated.

Post-holes

Of the seven posts-holes recorded four (**Fs 34, 53, 55 & 57**) were located cut into the natural gravel of Trench 15. Although no clear pattern could be discerned (Fig. 5), it seems fairly certain that the post-holes in this trench related to one or more timber structures that had existed here (Fig. 7). Further post-holes probably lay outside the area of the excavated trench. Perhaps significantly, the exposed post-holes were partially enclosed within a curving gully (**F. 63**). Only **F. 34** produced any datable material, in the form of a single pot-sherd of flint-tempered ware, broadly dated to the late Bronze Age-early Iron Age period.

Two post-holes (**Fs 80 & 132**) were discovered in Trench 11 (Fig. 4), one on either side of the early Roman ditch, **F. 47** but it is not clear whether they were directly associated with the ditch. Neither produced any datable finds. A single isolated post-hole, also devoid of finds, was located in Trench 18 (**F. 23**).

Uncertain Features

Large unexcavated features of uncertain form were located in Trench 9 (**F. 99**) and Trench 14 (**F. 117**). It seems likely that both are composite features containing several separate elements, perhaps of differing periods, that could not be isolated in the time available for the field-work. A sherd of pottery recovered from the top of **F. 99** might suggest a Roman date for its infilling but this cannot be certain.

Finds

The Prehistoric Flintwork *by Keith Parfitt*

A total of 44 prehistoric struck flint artefacts was recovered, together with 51 calcined flints. The distribution of the artefacts across the site is set out in Table 2.

Top-soil	**6**
Sub-soil	**12**
Features	**26**
Total	**44**

Table 2: Distribution of struck flint across the site

The flint artefacts have been assigned to general categories, as shown below in Table 3.

Type	Quantity
Waste flakes and blades	31
Cores & struck Lumps	3
Retouched & Utilised Pieces	8
Tools	2
Total	44

Table 3: Flint Assemblage Composition

All of the flint artefact assemblage is likely to be residual, although the material is generally in a fresh condition. More than half the assemblage was recovered from excavated features dated to the late Bronze-early Iron Age and Roman periods. The remainder come from the overlying sub-soil and top-soil deposits. No contemporary features were identified.

The quantities of waste flakes, cores, hammer-stones and other knapping debris suggest that flint-working was taking place within the vicinity. There is a significant proportion of retouched and utilised pieces represented within the present group. The range of implement types is shown in Table 4.

Type	Quantity
Scrapers	2
Miscellaneous Retouched Pieces	2
Utilised Piece	6
Total	10

Table 4: The Retouched & Utilised Pieces

The bulk of the calcined flints recovered came from the excavated features and most are probably contemporary with them. A few, particularly the small fragments, could be contemporary with the earlier struck flint assemblage, however. The largest calcined flints are up to 70 mm. across. The gravel deposits partially exposed on the site appear to have provided the bulk of the raw material required.

It is likely that the flint artefact assemblage from the site is of Neolithic - earlier Bronze Age date and in this context it is of interest to note that a circular hearth of early Neolithic date has been previously recorded around one kilometre to the north of the present area (Dunning 1966; Ogilvie 1977, 96-7). Some of the flints recovered could be contemporary with the earliest pottery from the site.

The Prehistoric and Roman Pottery

by Nigel Macpherson-Grant

1. ***SITE LOCATION AND SMR DATA :***
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE NUMBER : **TR 2540 6095**
DISTRICT SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD NUMBER : **000**

2. Overall recovered sherd total and weight : 915 sherds (weight:8kgs.788gms)

3. Context-based sherd quantities and dating :

CONTEXT : 3
Pottery : **1 sherd (weight:11gms)**
1 sherd 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered : c.25 BC/25-75 AD prob range

CONTEXT : 4
Pottery : **9 sherds (weight:80gms)**
1 sherd LPP flint-tempered : c.1500/900-600 BC **prob, worn**
1 sherd EIA flint-tempered : c.600-350 BC, **rusticated**
3 sherds Romanised 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.100-150 AD
1 sherd Roman CG samian : c.125-200 AD
1 sherd LM Tyler Hill sandy : c.1300-1350/`1375 AD **but could be later**
2 sherds PM redware : c.1625-1675 AD

CONTEXT : 5
Pottery : **1 sherd (weight:16gms)**
1 sherd LPP flint-tempered : c.1500-600 BC **preference but could be Neolithic**

CONTEXT : 13
Pottery : **69 sherds (weight:478gms)**
66 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC
2 sherds 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered : c.25 BC-50 AD
1 sherd Gallo-Belgic whiteware : Broadly C1-2 AD

CONTEXT : 14
Pottery : **18 sherds (weight:97gms)**
18 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-600 BC

CONTEXT : 16
Pottery : **19 sherds (weight:190gms)**
19 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC

CONTEXT : 18
Pottery : **2 sherds (weight:10gms)**
2 sherds LPP flint-tempered : c.1500-600 BC

CONTEXT : 21
Pottery : **11 sherds (weight:80gms)**
11 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC **preference**

CONTEXT : 28
Pottery : **7 sherds (weight:36gms)**
6 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC **but might be earlier**
and :
1 sherd flint+organic-tempered ? briquetage/light industrial ceramic (weight:9gms)

CONTEXT : 30
***Pottery :* 110 sherds (weight:743gms)**
110 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC

CONTEXT : 31
***Pottery :* 4 sherds (weight:51gms)**
4 sherds ? later BA Deverel-Rimbury flint-tempered : c.1500-1100 BC, **but might be LBA/EIA**

CONTEXT : 32
***Pottery :* 6 sherds (weight:24gms)**
6 sherds LPP flint-tempered : c.1500/900-600 BC

CONTEXT : 33
***Pottery :* 2 sherds (weight:7gms)**
2 sherds LPP flint-tempered : c.1500/900-600 BC

CONTEXT : 35
***Pottery :* 1 sherd (weight:13gms)**
1 sherd prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-600 BC **preference but ? from c.1100 BC**

CONTEXT : 36
***Pottery :* 26 sherds (weight:272gms)**
7 sherds prob EIA flint-tempered : c.600-350 BC **some might be LIA**
3 sherds Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.50-75/100 AD
1 sherd Roman Upchurch-type : c.75-125 AD range prob
13 sherds Romanising/ed 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.75-125/150 AD, **3 prob post-100 AD**
1 sherd Roman Canterbury sandy ware : c.125-150/175 AD
1 sherd Roman CG samian : c.125-200 AD

CONTEXT : 37
***Pottery :* 21 sherds (weight:268gms)**
1 sherd Roman Upchurch-type ware : c.75-100/125 AD, **worn**
2 sherds Roman Canterbury sandy ware : c.75-125/150 AD
15 sherds Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.75-125 AD,
2 sherds Roman Canterbury pink-buff sandy : c.75-150/175 AD range **emphasis, 1 ? pre-100 AD**
1 sherd Roman Canterbury sandy : c.125-150/175 AD

CONTEXT : 38
***Pottery :* 122 sherds (weight:1kg.413gms)**
2 sherds LPP flint-tempered : c.500-50 BC
4 sherds prob Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.50/75-100 AD
2 sherds B/ER fine sandy : c.25-75/100 AD
6 sherds Roman Upchurch-type : c.75-125 AD
3 sherds Roman Canterbury pink-buff sandy : c.75-125 AD prob
5 sherds Roman Canterbury sandy : c.75-125 AD
91 sherds Romansing/ed 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.75-125/150 AD, **inc 21 post-100 AD; 1 with sgraffito**
1 sherd Roman fine cream ware (flagon) : c.100-150 AD
7 sherds Roman Canterbury sandy : c.100-150/175 AD
1 sherd Roman CG samian : c.125-200 AD

CONTEXT : 40
***Pottery :* 5 sherds (weight:17gms)**
2 sherds LPP flint-tempered : c.1500-600 BC **but ? LIA**
1 sherd Roman fine sandy (?Upchurch-type) : c.75-125 AD
2 sherds Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.75-125 AD; **1 might be pre-100 AD**

CONTEXT : 42
***Pottery :* 215 sherds (weight:2kgs.371gms)**
4 sherds B/ER fine sandy ware : c.25-75/100 AD
1 sherd North Gaulish white ware : c.Mid-late C1 AD prob

1 sherd Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged	: c.50-75/100 AD prob
190 sherds Romanising/ed 'Belgic'-style grogged	: c.75-125/150 AD, **73 post-100 AD**
10 sherds Roman Upchurch-type ware	: c.75-125 AD
1 sherd Roman Canterbury pink-buff sandy	: c.75-125 AD
4 sherds Roman Canterbury sandy ware	: c.75-125 AD, **1-2 poss > 150 AD**
4 sherds Roman fine cream ware (flagon)	: c.100-150 AD prob

CONTEXT : 43
***Pottery :* 18 sherds (weight:213gms)**

2 sherds Roman Canterbury sandy ware	: N.Gaulish style, c.75-100 AD
16 sherds Romanising/ed 'Belgic'-style grogged	: c.75-125/150 AD, **7 prob post-100 AD**

CONTEXT : 45
***Pottery :* 21 sherds (weight:227gms)**

2 sherds LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500/900-600 BC **preference**
1 sherd 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered	: c.75/50 BC-50 AD
2 scraps ? North Gaulish buff fineware	: c.Mid-late C1 AD, **worn = Context 46**
1 sherd ?NG fine sandy white-pink ware	: Mid C1-C2 AD broadly
1 Roman Upchurch-type ware	: c.75-125 AD prob
2 sherds Roman Canterbury sandy	: c.75-125/175 AD, **pre-150 emphasis prob**
8 sherds Romanising/ed 'Belgic'-style grogged	: c.75-125/1540 AD, **some post-100 AD**
1 sherd Roman CG samian	: c.125-200 AD **worn stamp**

CONTEXT : 46
***Pottery :* 21 sherds (weight:173gms)**

3 sherds ? North Gaulish buff fineware	: c.Mid-late C1 AD, **worn = Context 45**
1 sherd Canterbury pink-buff sandy	: c.75-125/175 AD
3 sherds Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged	: c.75-100/125 AD range prob
3 sherds Romanised 'Belgic'-style grogged	: c.100-150 AD prob range
14 sherds Roman CG samian	: c.125-200 AD

CONTEXT : 48
***Pottery :* 1 sherd (weight:3gms)**

1 sherd LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500-600 BC

CONTEXT : 52
***Pottery :* 1 sherd (weight:13gms)**

1 sherd LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500/900-600 **preference, but ? from c.1100 BC**

CONTEXT : 62
***Pottery :* 4 sherds (weight:18gms)**

4 sherds LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500/900-600 BC **preference**

CONTEXT : 68
***Pottery :* 2 sherds (weight:15gms)**

2 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered	: c.900-700/600 BC **but might be earlier**

CONTEXT : 73
***Pottery :* 4 sherds (weight:6gms)**

4 sherds LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500/900-600 BC **preference**

CONTEXT : 76
***Pottery :* 1 sherd (weight:7gms)**

1 sherd LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500-600 BC; **very worn**

CONTEXT : 79
***Pottery :* 11 sherds (weight:44gms)**

11 sherds LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500-600 BC; **mostly worn**

CONTEXT : 85
***Pottery :* 22 sherds (weight:182gms)**
2 sherds LPP flint-tempered : c.1500/900-600 BC **preerence, worn**
9 sherds EIA flint-tempered : c.600-350 BC, **fresher, inc 1 rusticated ? some > LIA**
1 sherd Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.75-100/125 AD **prob. fairly worn**
1 sherd Roman Upchurch-type : c.75-125 AD
7 sherds Romanised 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.100-150 AD

CONTEXT : 86
***Pottery :* 11 sherds (weight:66gms)**
6 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC **preference, but could be earlier**
4 sherds 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered : c.75/50 BC-50 AD
1 sherd Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.75-125 AD
1 sherd Roman SG samian : C1-EC2 AD

CONTEXT : 87
***Pottery :* 4 sherds (weight:32gms)**
3 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC
1 sherd Romanising 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.75-125 AD

CONTEXT : 92
***Pottery :* 3 sherds (weight:121gms)**
2 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC
inc :
1 small sub-fineware jar base sherd re-used as spindle-whorl (damaged weight:47gms)

CONTEXT : 93
***Pottery :* 4 sherds (weight:217gms)**
4 sherds ? LBA/EIA-EIA flint-tempered : c.700/600-500 BC

CONTEXT : 96
***Pottery :* 12 sherds (weight:74gms)**
12 sherds LBA PDR flint-tempered : c.1100-900 BC **but might be LBA/EIA**

CONTEXT : 98
***Pottery :* 6 sherds (weight:51gms)**
6 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC **or ? from c.1100 BC**

CONTEXT : 100
***Pottery :* 8 sherds (weight:25gms)**
7 sherds LPP flint-tempered : c.1500-600 BC
1 sherd Roman sandy ware : c.75-125/150 AD range prob; **? intrusive**

CONTEXT : 103
***Pottery :* 32 sherds (weight:251gms)**
1 sherd Roman Canterbury cream sandy : c.75-125 AD range prob
28 sherds Romanising/ed 'Belgic'-style grogged : c.75-125/150 AD, **at least 8 post 100 AD**
3 sherds Roman Canterbury sandy : c.125-175 AD

CONTEXT : 110
***Pottery :* 2 sherds (weight:16gms)**
2 sherds LPP flint-tempered : c.1500-600 BC

CONTEXT : 112
***Pottery :* 42 sherds (weight:462gms)**
1 sherd LBA/EIA flint-tempered : c.900-700/600 BC, **might be from c.1500/1100 BC**
2 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered : c.75/50 BC-25 BC **preference but ? >25 AD**
39 sherds Roman coarse sandy : c.60-75/100 AD, **part same jar, fresh**

CONTEXT : 116
***Pottery* : 6 sherds (weight:32gms)**

4 sherds LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500/900-600 BC **slight preference**
1 sherd 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered	: c.75/50 BC-50 AD, **might go to c.75 AD**
1 sherd Roman Upchurch-type	: c.75-125 AD

CONTEXT : 119
***Pottery* : 14 sherds (weight:260gms)**

1 sherd LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500-600 BC **preference, worn**
1 sherd LPP flint+grog-tempered	: c.600-350 B **preference but ? > LIA**
10 sherds 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered	: c.75/50-25 BC, **same pot, fresh, ? > 25 AD**
1 sherd Romanising 'Belgic'style grogged	: c.75-100/125 AD, **worn ? intrusive**

CONTEXT : 121
***Pottery* : 3 sherds (weight:25gms)**

3 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered	: c.900-700/600 BC

CONTEXT : 123
***Pottery* : 1 sherd (weight:6gms)**

1 sherd LPP flint-tempered	: c.1500-1100/600 **slight preference**

CONTEXT : 125
***Pottery* : 9 sherds (weight:41gms)**

9 sherds prob later BA globular D-V flint-tempered	: c.1500/1300-1100 BC

CONTEXT : 127
***Pottery* : 1 sherd (weight:25gms)**

1 sherd ? later BA Deverel-Rimbury flint-tempered	: c.1500-1100 BC **but could be LBA/EIA**

CONTEXT : 128
***Pottery* : 2 sherds (weight:6gms)**

2 sherds prob LBA/EIA flint-tempered	: c.900-600 BC **but could be from c.1500 BC**

4. Summary and Recommendations :

Summary :
Upto 2-3 main period blocks appear to be represented embracing between 5-6 archaeological periods. The uncetainty is due to sherd types recovered which, amongst the prehistoric material, rarely includes diagnostic formal elements despite a reasonable quantity of moderate-sized sherds. Overall 2-3 prehistoric periods and 3 main historic periods are represented :

Later prehistoric phases :

Later Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury (c.1500-1100 BC) : Possibly but not definitely represented by a small quantity of rather coarse gritted sherds from *Contexts 31, 125* and *127*; the latter context potentially includes the most diagnostic element - a rim sherd from a possible globular urn - but the form could be LBA/EIA. The potential value of this material may lie in their contexts of origin : if the associated ditches and gullies have any likely chronological depth technically *below* those containing LBA/EIA pottery, then a Deverel-Rimbury phase of activity may be genuinely represented.

Alternatively this material is an element within a phase of activity broadly datable to between c.1100-900 BC and additionally represented by pottery from *Contexts 96* and *98*; in this case the coarseness of the globular vessel from *Context 127* might be more applicable in this potential chonological phase. Both contain forms that can occur in PDR assemblages elsewhere (cf.Reading Business Park, Moore and Jennings 1992), in particular a hook-rim coarseware jar from *96*. However both forms could also occur in LBA/EIA assemblages (cf. Highstead, Chislet Period 2).

Late Bronze/Early Iron Age transition (c.900-600 BC) : The only really well-defined phase of prehistoric activity, with a few forms with fairly good contemporary regional parallels recorded from *Contexts 13, 16, 21, 28, 30* and *92*. *Contexts 21* and *30* contain the most diagnostic elements including a coarseware jar part-profile from *30* and a fineware jar base re-used as a spindle-whorl from *Context 92*. A scrap of non-daub organic-tempered fired clay from *Context 28* may dewrive from activities associated with either salt-production or another light-industrial activity.

Early Iron Age (c.600-350 BC) : One large sherd from a small context assemblage (*Subsoil 93*) has a slightly slurried rusticated surface. This could be of IA date but the finish is not a classic example and since this is the only sherd from the whole prehistoric assemblage that has IA characteristics, it is possible that it may also be of LBA/EIA date. If the influence represented is genuinely Iron Age then a date for the LBA/EIA elements close to c.600/550 BC may be applicable.

Historic phases :

Indigenous Late Iron Age (c.150-50 BC) : No flint-tempered material could be assigned to this period, despite the presence of probable pre-Conquest AD 'Belgic'-style grogged wares. Whilst earlier first century BC activity may have occurred originally, and possibly represented by some of the more undiagnostic bodysherds recovered, no genuine evidence was recorded.

Late Iron Age 'Belgic'-style (c.75/50 BC-50 AD) : One context, *Subsoil 119*, contained part of a combed bead-rim jar that might date from mid-first century BC and a few isolated residual or intrusive sherds from other contexts (eg.*Context 13*) may be representative of activity from as early as c.75.50 BC. However examining other context assemblages, the bulk of the recovered pre-Romanising 'Belgic'-style pottery suggests some activity dates from c.25 BC rather than earlier, and perhaps starting as late as the early first century AD.

'Belgic'/Early Roman (c.25-75 AD) :
Definitely represented by 'Belgic'-style comb-finished fine sandy wares from *Contexts 38* and *42;* some of the standard grogged wares and a few probable North Gaulish imports may date to this period also, though the later are more likely to be concurrent with the marked surge in activity represented by later first century AD wares.

Roman (c.75-175/200 AD) :
The bulk of the earlier Roman pottery dates to between c.75-125/150 AD, represented particularly by large assemblages from *Contexts 38, 42* and more modest assemblages from *Contexts 36-37, 45-6*. These are dominated by mostly oxidised, frequently worn sherds of Romanising or fully Romanised native tradition grogged pottery, but the usual range of N.Kent Upchurch-types and local Canterbury sandy cooking and flagon wares are also present. At least one Canterbury jar in the distinctive N.Gaulish style is notably present (these are fairly rare in the city itself).

A moderate quantity of the native wares and some Canterbury sandy wares are harder fired and these, together with some Central Gaulish samian suggests a decline in activity around mid second century AD, perhaps terminating between c.150-175 AD. No firm evidence for significant post-200 AD occupation was recovered. It is worth noting that the assemblages containing moderate-large quantities of oxidised native wares contain a high proportion of bodysherds and rim fragments from different vessels; these suggest end-of-phase or occupation clearance deposits.

Post-Roman :
One sherd of fourteenth-fifteenth century Tyler Hill sandy ware and a few sherds of Post-Medieval red earthenware from *Topsoil 4* may derive from agricultural manure scatters or from settlement-frimge contexts.

Comment :
It is worth noting that, despite the closeness of the present site to the ceramic producing locations recorded by Dr.J.Ogilvie along the 1960 Stourmouth-Adisham Watermain trench (Site 2), there is no material obviously similar to the Early and Mid Iron Age pottery noted to have come from Site 2 by Dr.Tim Champion (Ogilvie 1977).

Dating and Conclusions

Dating

In the absence of any coins or distinctive metal-work, dating of the excavated remains must be based on the pottery, although only 60% of the features produced any datable material. From the finds, there appear to be three main periods of activity on the site:-

Period 1, Neolithic-earlier Bronze Age

A light scatter of residual prehistoric struck flints indicates limited activity in the area during the Neolithic-earlier Bronze Age

Period 2, Late Bronze Age-early Iron Age period, *c*. 900-600 B.C.

Later, more intensive, occupation on the site is marked by a series of pits, ditches and post-holes producing a range of flint-tempered wares, broadly datable to the late Bronze Age-early Iron Age period, *c*. 900-600 B.C. Features containing material of this date were largely confined to Fields B and D, although three pits were also located in Field C (Trench 12). A small quantity of pottery could be earlier than this, hinting at a early-middle Bronze Age date for the origins of the site; some of the lithic material might be contemporary with such an early settlement. Later Iron Age pottery similar to that previously recovered in the area by Ogilvie (see Champion in Ogilvie 1977) is largely absent.

Period 3, early Roman, *c*. A.D. 50-200

Subsequent occupation is represented by a further series of ditches yielding pottery of early Roman date. Features producing Roman material were confined to the lower part of the site (Trenches 9-11, 13 and 14) and it seems likely that associated remains extended into the fields beyond the present study area. Most probably, the excavated remains formed part of a native farmstead with ditched fields and enclosures. The available dating evidence indicates that this Roman settlement was occupied from the mid-late first century to the end of the second century A.D. A few specific sherds of grog-tempered pottery could be earlier and might indicate a pre-Conquest origin for the settlement but on present evidence there does not appear to have been unbroken continuity of settlement from the early Iron Age.

Conclusions

On the evidence of the number of features located and the amount of pottery recovered (about 900 sherds) from the fairly limited excavations, there can be no doubt that part of a major, multi-phase archaeological complex has been revealed across the area examined. This appears to have been occupied at various times between the Bronze Age and Roman periods. Previous work, conducted during the laying of a pipe-line in 1960, had already suggested the presence of significant remains in the region (Ogilvie 1977) and the present work has amply confirmed this, helping to further define the chronological and geographical extent of this site. Although there appears to be some overlap in the geographical distribution of features associated with *Period 2* and *Period 3*, those relating to the Roman occupation (*Period 3*) seem to lie off the summit of the hill, mainly in Field C. In contrast those features assigned to *Period 2* tend to be concentrated on the higher part of the site in Field D.

The fairly limited number of features discovered along the north-eastern side of the area investigated, confined to just a few ditches and gullies with largely sterile fills, suggests that these lay on the periphery of the main site. Present-day Mill Lane would, therefore, appear to mark the north-eastern limit of the archaeological complex. Further to the south and west the density of archaeological features and finds was much greater, implying actual settlement here. Ogilvie's observations (1977, 103) on the earlier pipe-line suggest that later Iron Age features extend into the next field to the south-west, with a complex of crop-marks in the field beyond that (Ogilvie 1977, 94). A rare La Tène I brooch has also been recovered from this area (Parfitt 1999), together with a quantity of Roman coins (D. Holman pers comm.).

Based on the evidence noted above, an extensive complex of archaeological remains covering a large area east of the modern village of Preston seems to be implied. In this context it is worthy of note that the present-day B2046, running through Preston, is believed to represent the line of a prehistoric trackway leading from the shores of the Wantsum Channel to Barham Downs. The entire Preston region thus appears to be of high archaeological potential and this should be fully recognised for any future development work undertaken in the area.

Within the present investigation, the principal areas of archaeological interest lie in Fields C and D. Archaeological remains in Fields A and B seem to limited and tree planting in these areas should pose no major threats to significant buried remains. The remains in Fields C and D, however, are more extensive and of greater significance. The density of features in Field D appears to be quite considerable and the dating evidence suggests that the bulk of these are of late Bronze Age-early Iron Age date. The soil coverage over the archaeology here varies from about 0.35 m. to 0.80 m. More limited work in Field C indicates the presence there of a number of early Roman ditches and other features buried at depths of between 0.50 m. and 0.70 m.

Due to the often fairly shallow depth of the buried remains, it seems probable that a significant proportion of the archaeological features now known to exist in this area could be subject to at least some root disturbance, as the new trees establish themselves. Most vulnerable will be features buried at depths of less than 0.50 m. (Table 1).

Recommendations

Planting across a significant part of Field D, now known to contain significant prehistoric remains, will be precluded by the presence of two intersecting power-lines, whose routes must be kept clear of trees. The trenches excavated adjacent to these power-lines indicate the presence of substantial numbers of archaeological features, many buried at quite shallow depths. It is suggested that the unplanted areas required by the power-lines are extended as far as possible, in order to allow the buried archaeological remains in this area to be left undisturbed by root action.

The slightly thicker soil coverage apparent in Field C may be help minimise root damage to buried archaeological feature there, although some (quite limited) previous root disturbance was noted in the excavated trenches.

References

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PHF - 00 Feature Register

Preston 2000
Hardacre Farm

Field	Trench No.	Feature No.	Type	Shape	Main Axis	Length	Width	Depth	Sides	Base	Filled by PHF-00	Notes
A	2	F.11	Ditch	linear	N-S	2.70 m. *	1.15 m.	0.43 m.	steep/sloping	dished	10, 12	axis and profile suggests F.7 & F.11 not related
A	2	F.7	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	1.96 m. *	0.44 m. - 0.62 m.	0.54 m.	steep	rounded	6	
B	4	F.70	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	10.60 m. *	0.92 m.	0.40 m.	sloping	rounded	69	poss. terminal or corner revealed at SW
B	5	F.72	Ditch	linear	E-W	3.50 m. *	1.50 m. - 1.70 m.	0.34 m.	sloping	rounded	73	
B	8	F.75	Gully	linear	NW-SE	3.60 m. *	0.52 m.	0.27 m.	sloping	rounded	76	
B	8	F.78	Ditch	linear	NW-SE	6.30 m. *	1.55 m.	0.71 m.	steep/sloping	flat	79	
C	9	F.39	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	2.00 m. *	1.55 m.	0.53 m.	steep/sloping	dished	37, 38	cut in top of ditch F.41
C	9	F.41	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	2.00 m. *	2.40 m. - 2.55 m.	0.53 m.	steep/sloping	not seen	40	cut by later re-dig F.39
C	9	F.99	Unex. features	?	NW-SE	16.45 m. *	1.85 m. *	0.05 m. *	not seen	not seen	100	possibly represents continuation of ditcxhes F's 72 and 78
C	10	F.101	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	5.50 m. *	0.85 m.	0.64 m. *	steep/vert.	not seen	102, 103, 104	terminal or corner at SW end, cuts F.105
C	10	F.105	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	9.20 m. *	1.15 m.	0.65 m. *	not seen	not seen	106	cut by F. 101
C	11	F.132	Post hole	circ.	-	0.22 m. diam.		0.20 m.	steep	rounded	133	
C	11	F.44	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	1.90 m. *	1.80 m.	0.58 m.	sloping	dished	42, 43	
C	11	F.47	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	2.00 m. *	1.60 m. - 1.70 m.	1.04 m.	sloping	rounded	45, 46	probably same ditch as F.101 in Trench 10
C	11	F.80	Post hole	circ.	-	0.24 m. diam.		0.20 m.	steep	rounded	81	between ditches F's 44 & 47
C	12	F.91	Pit	oval	NW-SE	1.80 m.	0.80 m. - 0.88 m.	0.17 m.	sloping	dished	92	
C	12	F.95	Pit/ditch terminal	?	NW-SE	1.60 m.	0.62 m. *	0.27 m.	sloping	flat	96	
C	12	F.97	Pit	oval	N-S	0.80 m.	0.52 m.	0.48 m.	sloping	rounded	98	
D	13	F.84	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	1.00 m. *	1.40 m. - 1.55 m.	0.78 m.	steep/sloping	dished	85, 86, 87	not identified beyond trench
D	13	F.88	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	10.65 m. *	1.79 m.	0.70 m.	steep/vert.	not seen	89, 90	may represent several features including re-cut F.84
D	14	F.107	Gully	linear	SW-NE	1.90 m. *	0.70 m.	0.14 m.	sloping	flat	108	relationship to gully F.109 not clear
D	14	F.109	Gully	linear	NW-SE	9.30 m. *	0.68 m. - 0.80 m.	0.22 m.	sloping	dished	110	runs into undefined feature F.117
D	14	F.111	Ditch	L-shaped	NW-SE NE-SW	3.70 m. * 1.10 m. *	0.48 m. - 0.77 m.	0.40 m.	sloping	dished	112	touches gully F.109
D	14	F.113	Gully	linear	E-W	1.20 m. *	0.55 m.	0.09 m.	sloping	dished	114	cut by F's 115 & 117
D	14	F.115	Ditch	linear	SW-NE	2.00 m. *	2.40 m.	0.73 m. *	vert.	not seen	116	cut F.113
D	14	F.117	? Features	D-shaped	NW-SE	1.75 m. - 2.75 m.	2.00 m. *	0.05 m. *	not seen	not seen	118	merges with gully F.109
D	15	F.17	Pit	sub-rect.	NW-SE	1.50 m.	0.80 m. *	0.29 m.	steep	flat	16	
D	15	F.19	Gully	linear	SW-NE	1.85 m. *	0.70 m. - 0.80 m.	0.20 m.	sloping	rounded	18	
D	15	F.34	Post hole	oval	NW-SE	0.28 m.	0.24 m.	0.24 m.	v. steep	dished	35	
D	15	F.49	Small pit	oval	NW-SE	0.70 m.	0.35 m.	0.14 m.	steep/sloping	dished	50	
D	15	F.51	Pit	ovoid	SW-NE	0.90 m. *	0.75 m.	0.18 m.	steep	dished	52	
D	15	F.53	Post hole	circ.	-	0.36 m. diam.		0.24 m.	v. steep	dished	54	
D	15	F.55	Post hole	circ.	-	0.30 m. diam.		0.13 m.	steep	dished	56	

* denotes minimum measurements

PHF - 00 Feature Register

Preston 2000
Hardacre Farm

Field	Trench No.	Feature No.	Type	Shape	Main Axis	Length	Width	Depth	Sides	Base	Filled by PHF-00	Notes
D	15	F.57	Post hole	circ.	-	0.36 m. diam.		0.29 m.	steep/vert.	dished	58	
D	15	F.59	Pit/ditch terminal	circ.	N-S	0.78 m. *	0.70 m.	0.15 m.	steep	flat	60	
D	15	F.61	Pit/ditch terminal	?	N-S	0.95 m. *	0.70 m.	0.20 m.	sloping	flat	62	
D	15	F.63	Curving gully	linear	SW-NE to E	3.10 m. *	0.55 m.	0.13 m.	sloping	dished	64	cut by ditch F.19, terminal at East end
D	15	F.65	Small pit	oval	NW-SE	0.90 m.	0.53 m.	0.29 m.	steep/sloping	dished	66	
D	15	F.67	Curving gully	linear	SW-NE to E	3.20 m. *	1.40 m. *	0.15 m.	sloping	flat	68	terminal at East end
D	16	F.15	Pit	oval	N-S	2.40 m. *	1.35 m.	0.72 m.	steep	dished	14, 33, 48	oval pit in base - 0.68 x 0.35 x 0.10 m.
D	17	F.120	Pit	ovoid	E-W	3.40 m. *	2.60 m. *	0.23 m.	sloping	not seen	121	not fully exposed
D	17	F.122	Pit	oval	SW-NE	1.18 m.	0.63 m.	0.10 m.	sloping	dished	123	
D	17	F.124	Curving gully	linear	NE-SW to NW	12.00 m. *	1.30 m. - 2.10 m. *	0.25 m. *	sloping	not seen	125	probably contains several re-cuts
D	17	F.126	Ditch	linear	NW-SE	4.65 m. *	1.90 m. - 2.10 m.	0.10 m. *	not seen	not seen	127	not excavated
D	18	F.20	Ditch	linear	N-S	4.00 m. *	1.95 m.	0.48 m.	sloping	dished	21, 22	appears to contain a re-cut
D	18	F.23	Post hole	circ.	-	0.24 m. diam.		0.19 m.	steep	rounded	24	
D	18	F.25	Small pit	circ.	-	0.68 m. diam.		0.16 m.	sloping	dished	26	
D	18	F.27	Gully	linear	NW-SE	2.00 m. *	0.38 m. - 0.76 m.	0.14 m. - 0.32 m.	sloping	rounded	28	
D	18	F.29	Ditch	linear	E-W	4.40 m. *	2.50 m.	0.45 m.	steep	flat	30, 31	
D	19	F.129	Ditch	linear	NW-SE	13.00 m. *	1.12 m. *	0.30 m.	sloping	flat	130	not fully exposed

Table 5: Details of excavated features by trench

* denotes minimum measurements

Preston 2000
Hardacre Farm

Field	Trench	Context No. PHF-00	Pottery	Daub	Stone	Animal bone	Iron/slag	Struck Flint	Calcined flint
	topsoil	3	1						
	topsoil	4	7	1				6	
	1,2,3	5	1					2	
A	2	6						1	
A	2	10						1	2
B	5	73	4						
B	8	76	1						
B	8	77						2	
B	8	79	11				1	1	1
C	9	36	26				2	1	
C	9	37	21					3	
C	9	38	122	10				2	
C	9	40	5			15		2	4
C	9	100	8						
C	10	103	32						
C	11	42	215	29			1		4
C	11	43	18	7					
C	11	45	21	6					1
C	11	46	21	12			1		2
C	12	92	3					2	
C	12	93	4						
C	12	96	12		1				
C	12	98	6					1	
D	13	85	22	3					4
D	13	86	11				bronze pin		
D	13	87	4					1	1
D	14	110	2						
D	14	112	42						1
D	14	116	2	1				1	1
D	14	119	14	1			3		
D	15	16	19	25			5		15
D	15	18	2						
D	15	35	1	2					
D	15	52	1		1			1	
D	15	62	4						
D	15	68	2	1					1
D	16	13	69	1				2	6
D	16	14	18	7				2	3
D	16	33	2	1					2
D	16	48	1						
D	17	121	3						
D	17	125	9						
D	17	127	1						
D	17	128	2						
D	18	21	11	3				4	2
D	18	22						1	
D	18	28	9		2			1	
D	18	30	110	22			8	2	1
D	18	31	4						
D	18	32	6	4				5	
		o/a Totals	915	135	4	15	22 various	44	51

Table 6: Details of pottery and other finds recovered

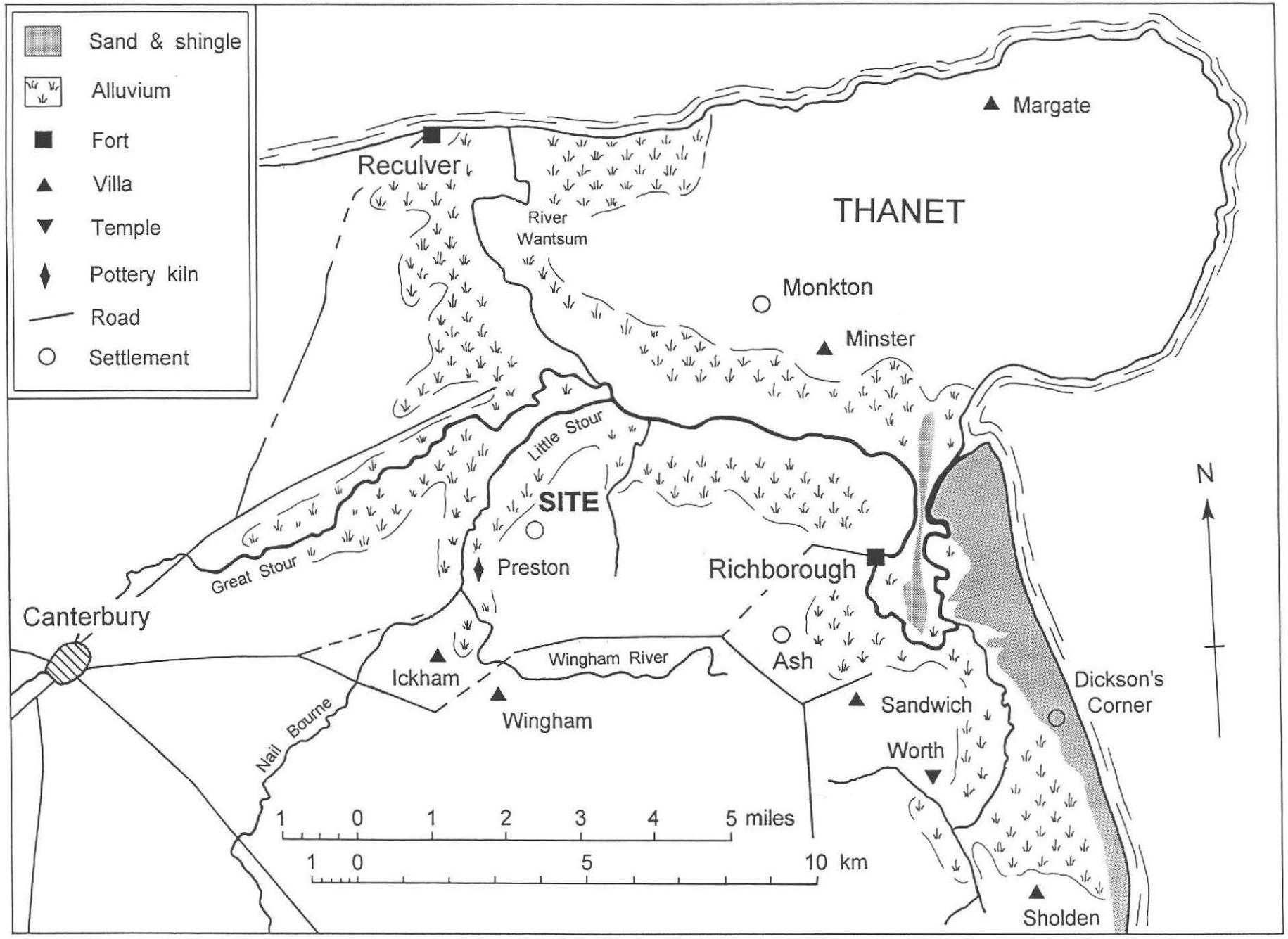


Fig. 1 Map of north-east Kent showing the location of the Preston site in relation to other Roman sites and marshland formerly the Wantsum Channel

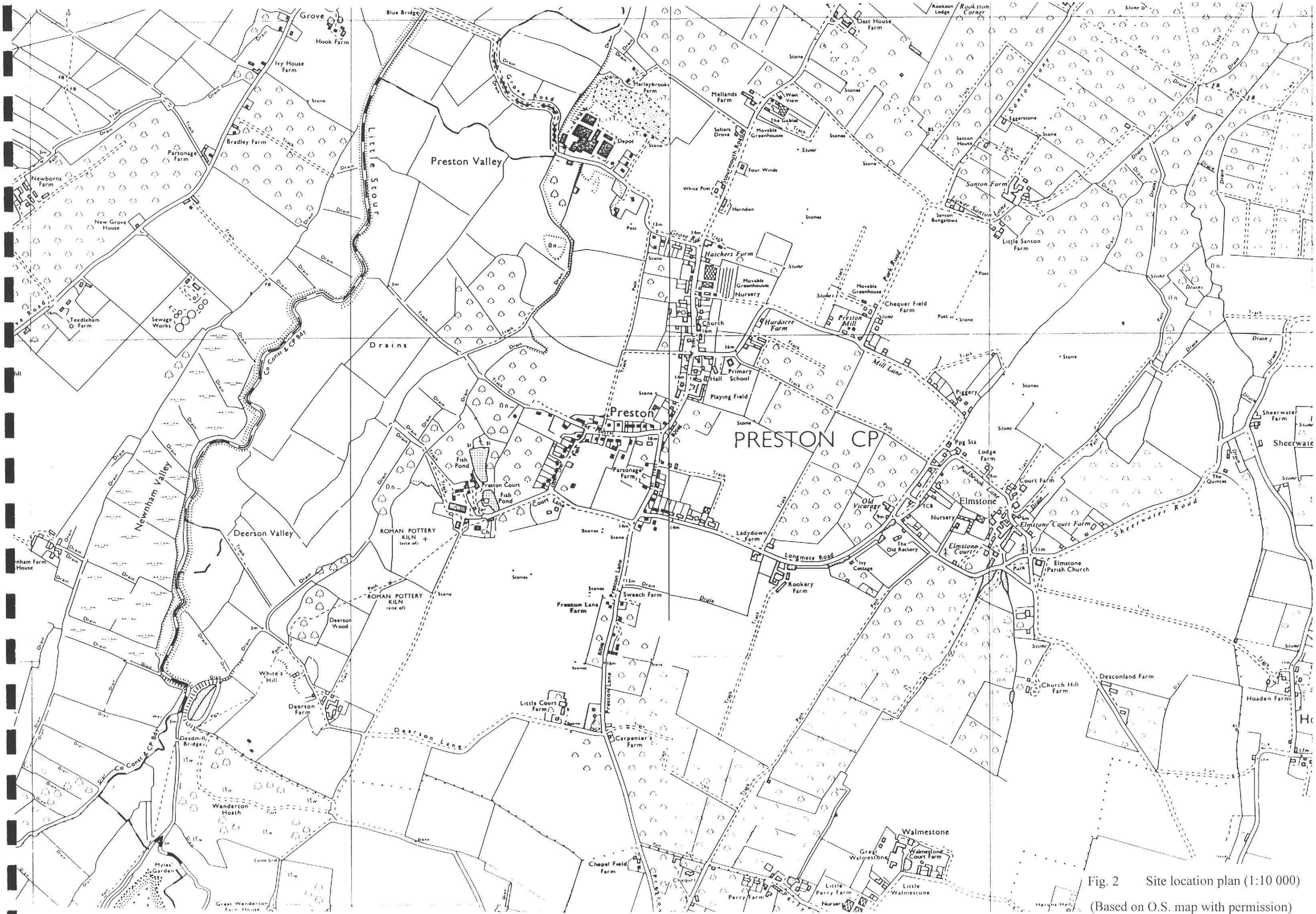


Fig. 2 Site location plan (1:10 000)

(Based on O.S. map with permission)

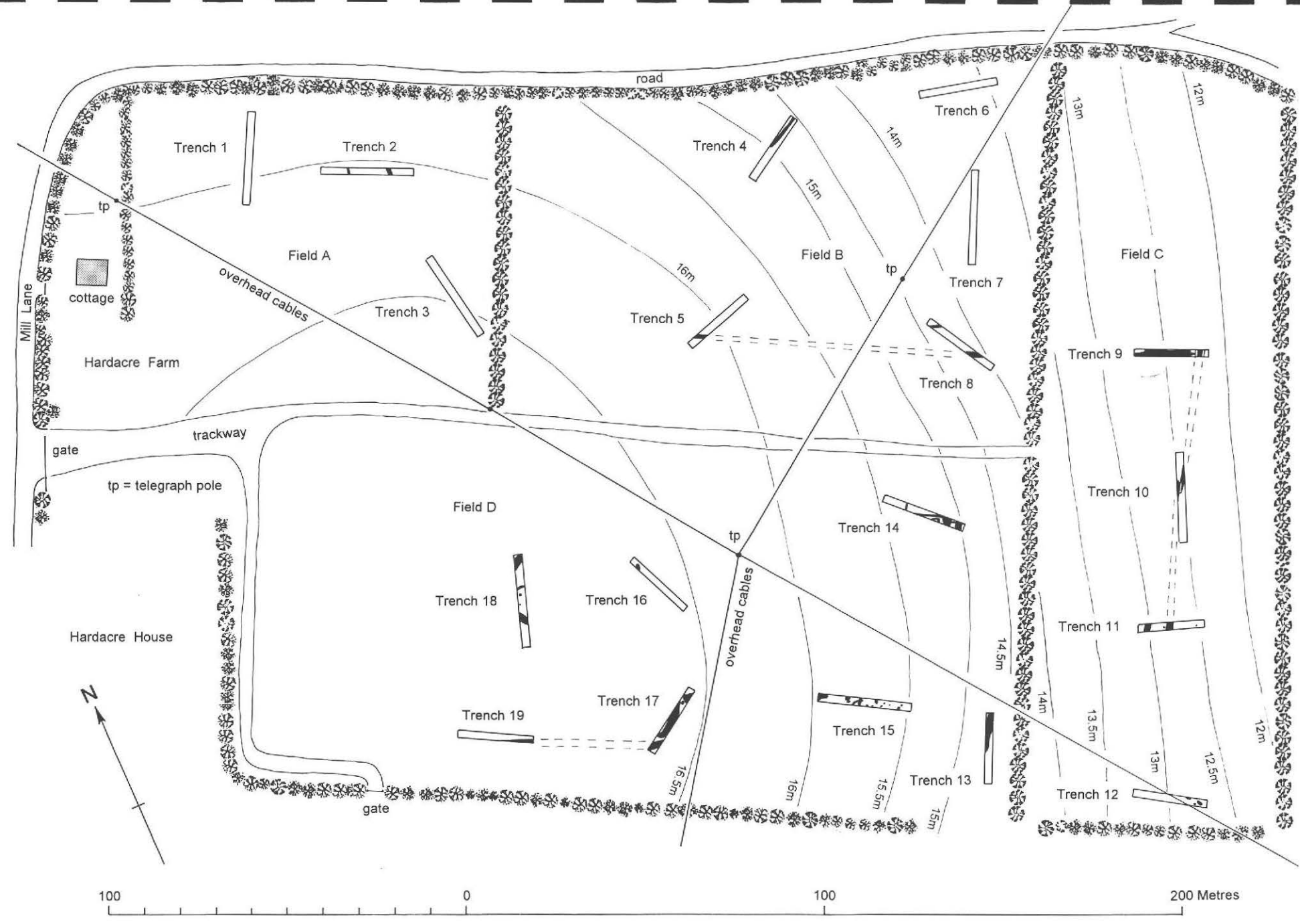


Fig. 3 General site plan showing contours, excavated trenches and principal ditch alignments

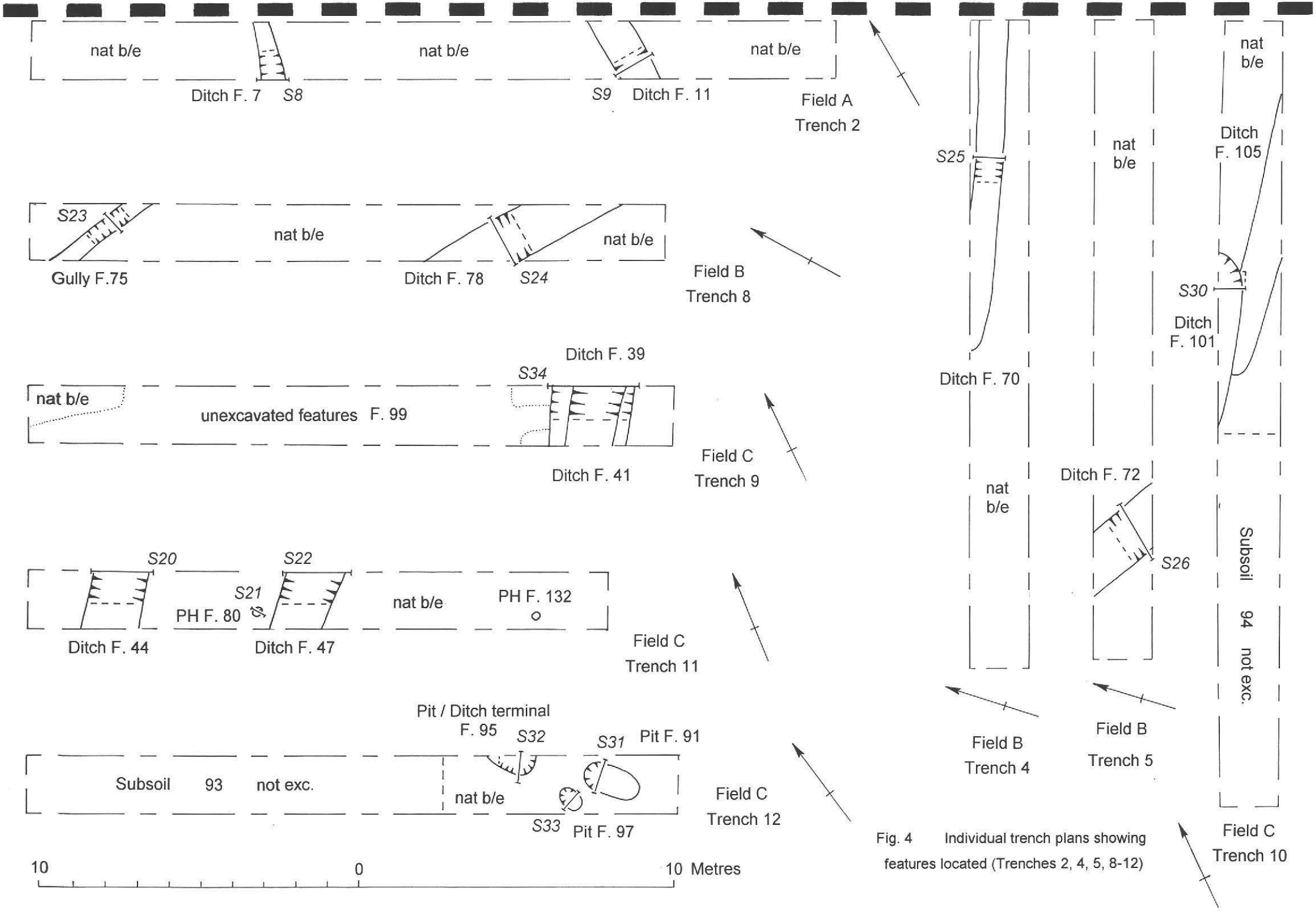


Fig. 4 Individual trench plans showing features located (Trenches 2, 4, 5, 8-12)

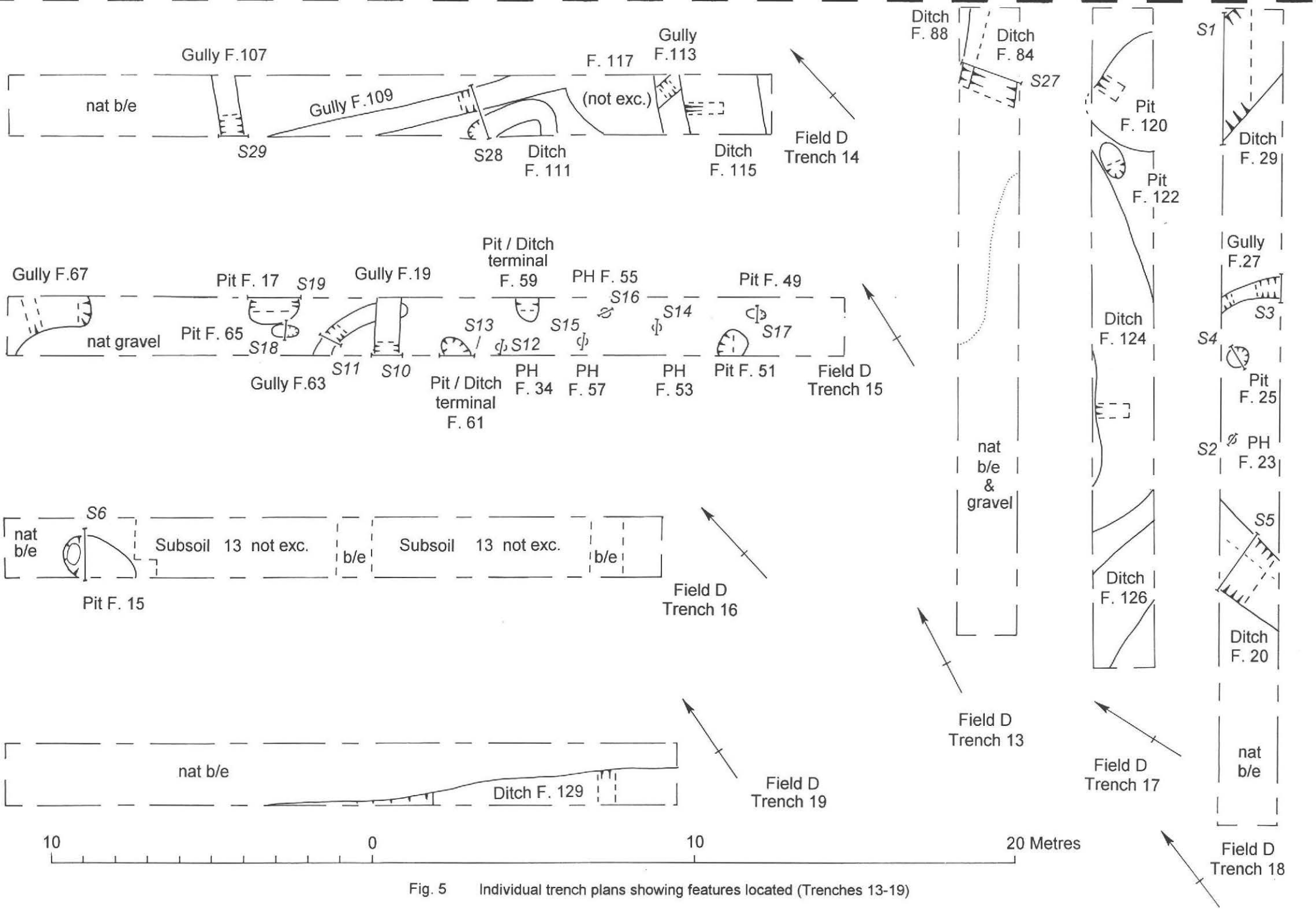
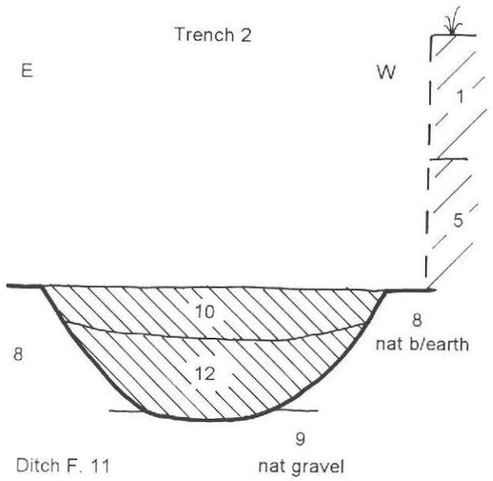


Fig. 5 Individual trench plans showing features located (Trenches 13-19)

Fig. 6 Sections across excavated features



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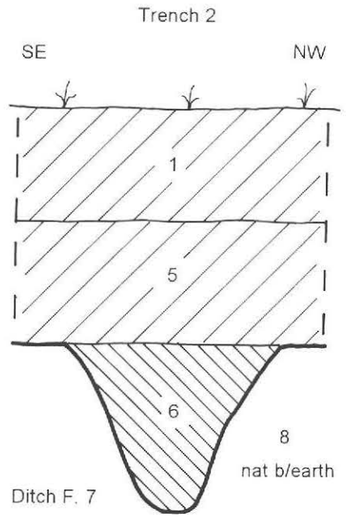

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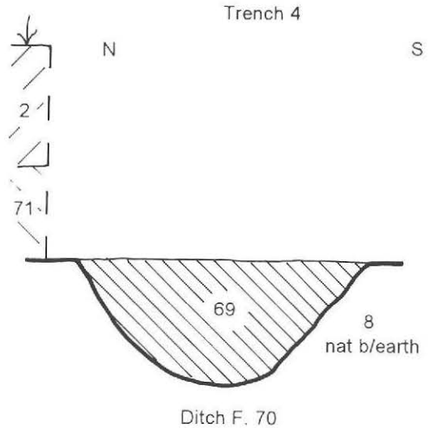

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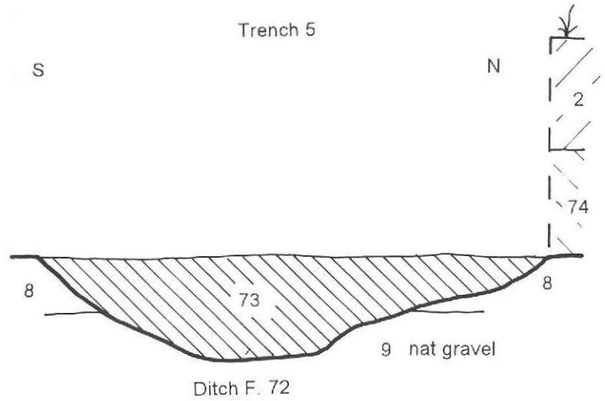

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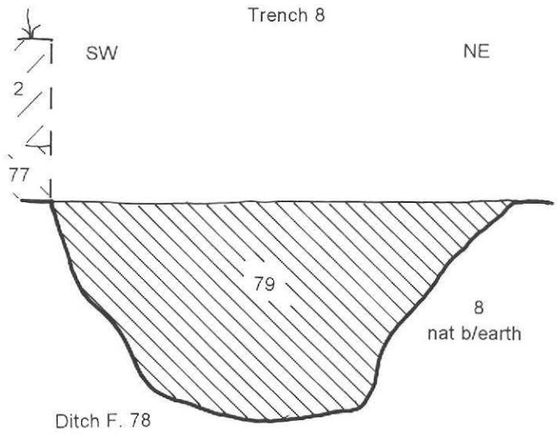

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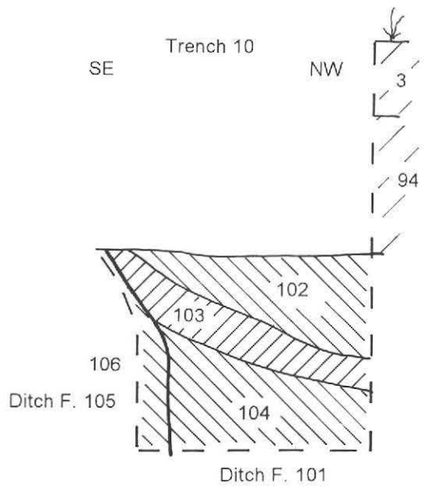

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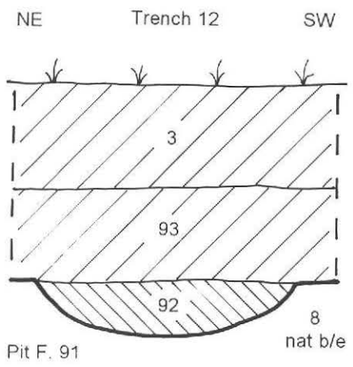

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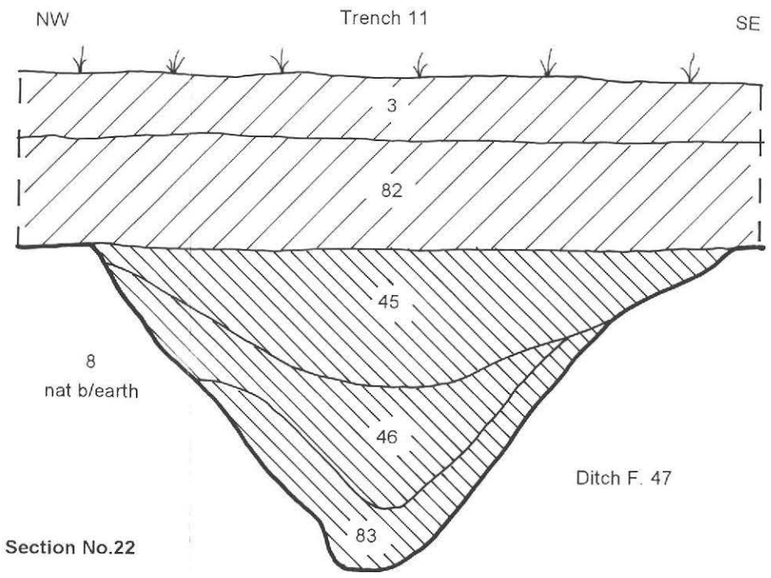

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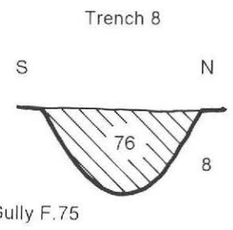

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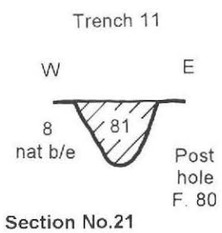

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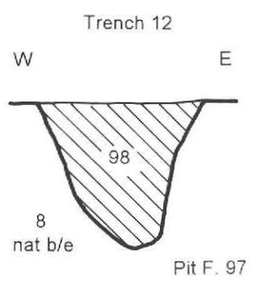

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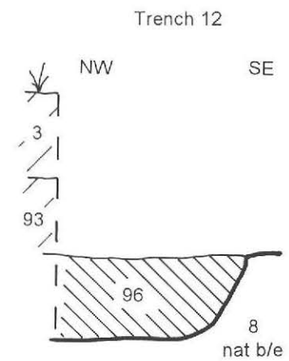

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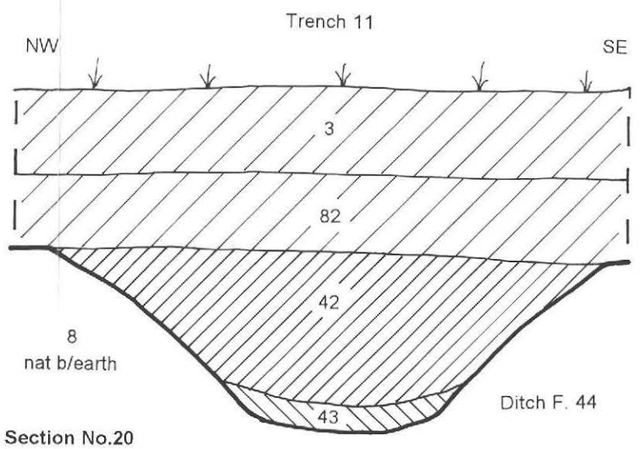

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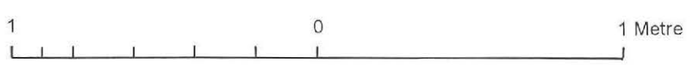

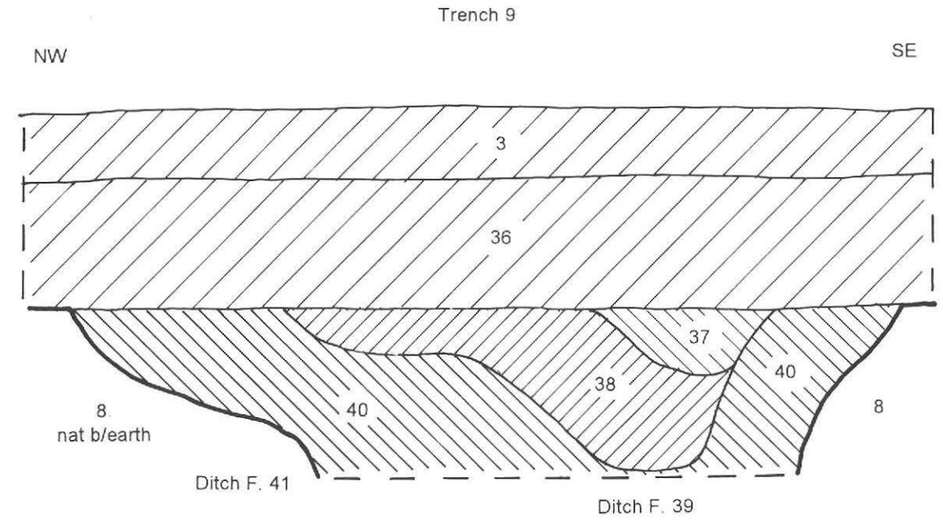

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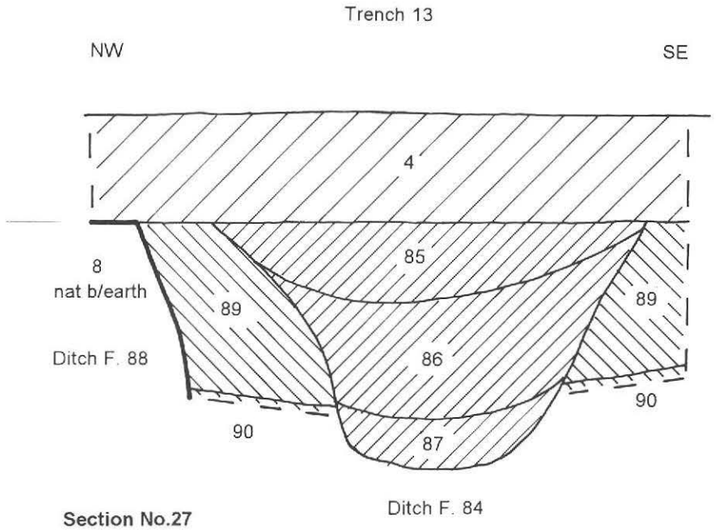

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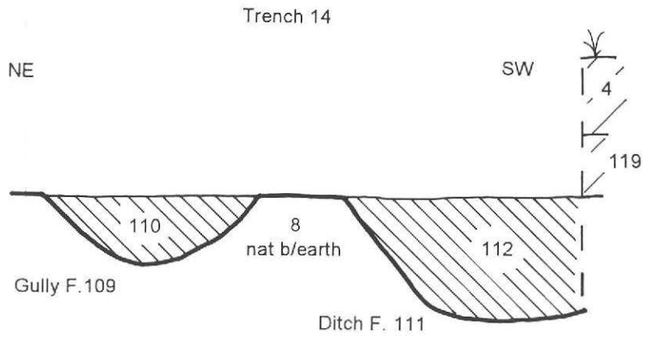

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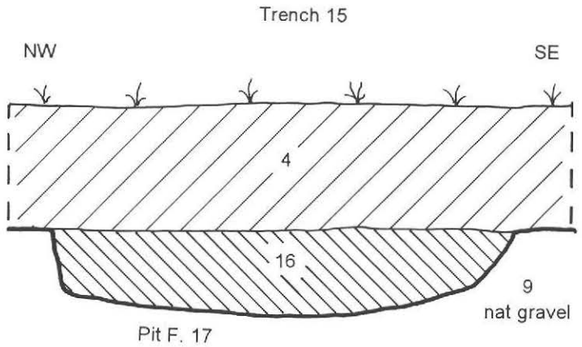

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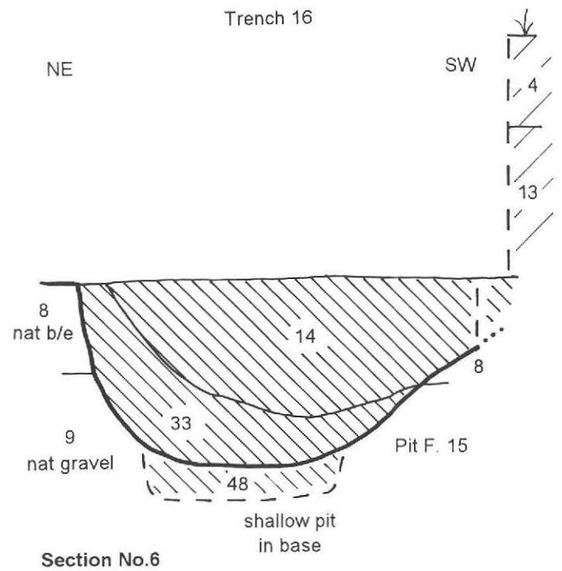

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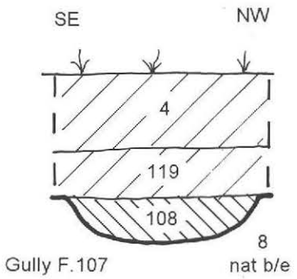
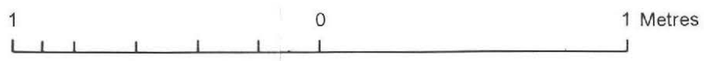
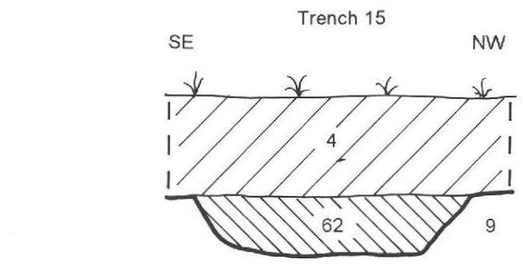


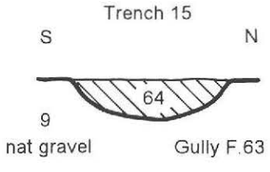
Section No.29

Fig. 7 Sections across excavated features





Section No.13 Pit / Ditch terminal F. 61



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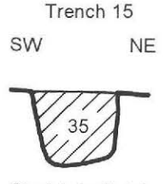

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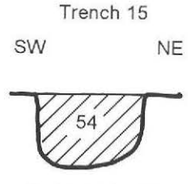

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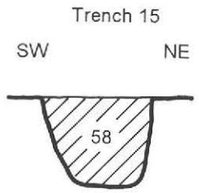

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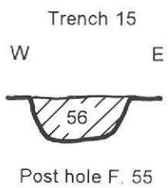

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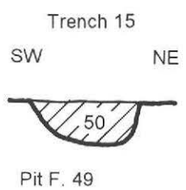

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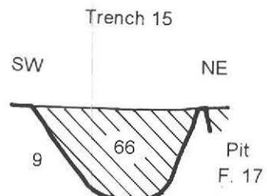

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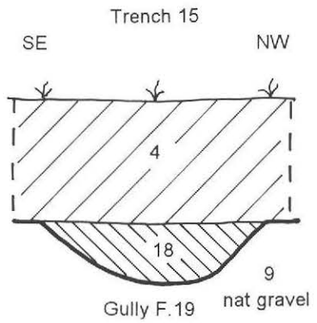

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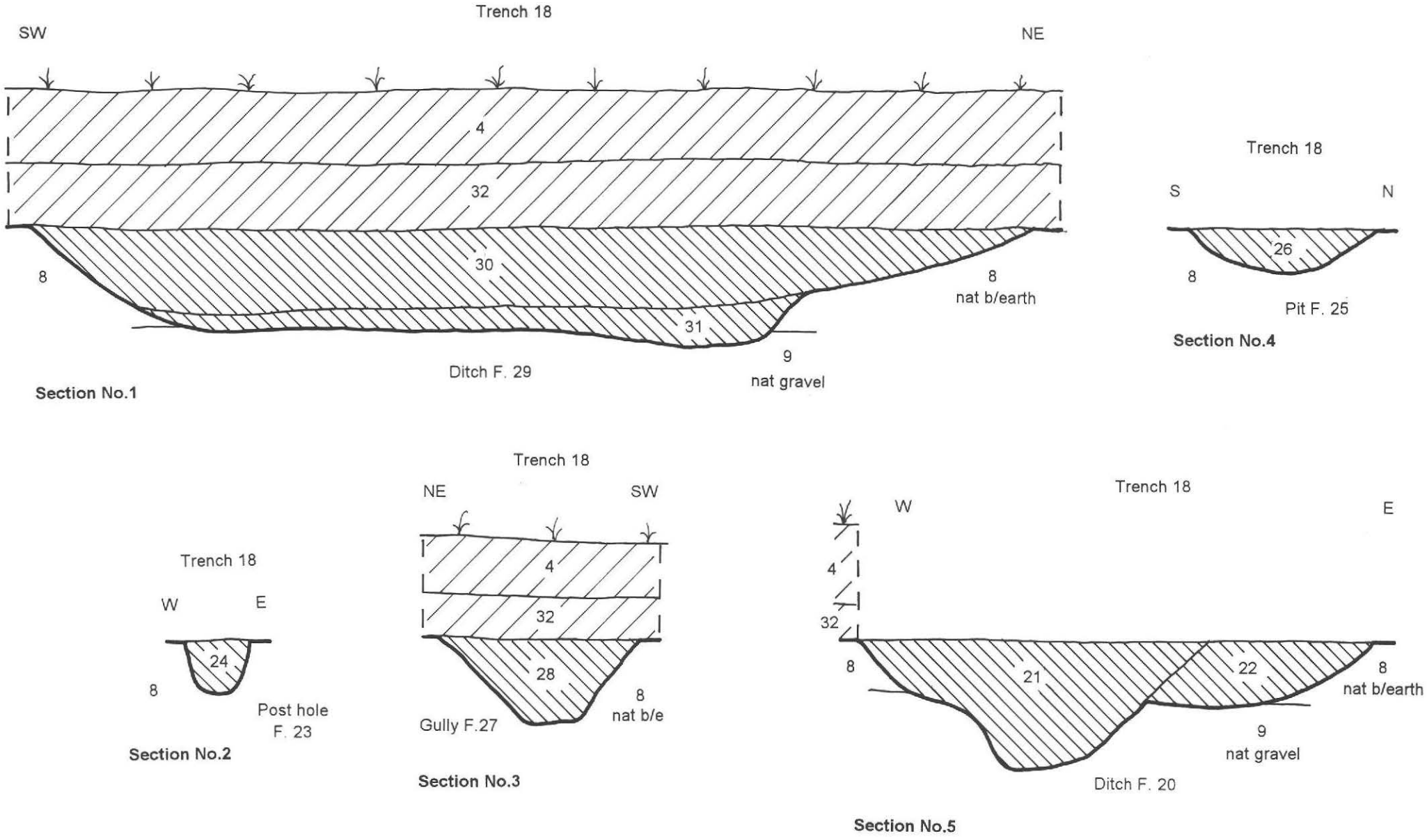

Fig. 8 Sections across excavated features