

B4451/B4100 DUAL CARRIAGEWAY GAYDON, WARWICKSHIRE (M40:J12) ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1635

MAY 2016



*Working for
Warwickshire*

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SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological trial trenching and was undertaken in advance of a new feeder road on behalf of Warwickshire County Council. Three areas of archaeological activity were recorded. In Area B an isolated pit contained poorly preserved late Iron Age or early Roman (transitional) pottery along with heat-cracked pebbles which seems likely to have been an outlier to a settlement site outside the area examined. In Area A the basal parts of probable Roman field system were recorded which included some residual transitional pottery. A post-medieval field system was found in the flatter, low lying part of the site. Area C contained a characteristically prehistoric burnt deposit, although due to the later ploughing activity it could not be more securely dated.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission was granted for a scheme to improve traffic management at Junction 12, M40, Gaydon, Warwickshire. The improvements had the potential to impact on previously unidentified archaeological remains and it was recommended that an archaeological evaluation be undertaken in order to determine how best to mitigate against the impact of the scheme.

1.2 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the planning authority in June 2014.

1.3 This report presents the results of that work which was undertaken in June 2014. The project archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum under the temporary accession number T/1317.

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The site is located immediately to the north and north-west of the village of Gaydon, in Warwickshire (centred on NGR SP 364 547) and covers an area of approximately 11.5 hectares of arable land, the surface rising steadily from south-east to north-west.

2.2 The underlying geology of the area is Charmouth Mudstone formation with superficial deposits of Diamicton Till (BGS 2015).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The Warwickshire Historic Environment Record lists two possible round barrows in the area for which a member of the public reported the presence of two tumuli in 1962 (HER MWA 685). The exact location of these features remains uncertain and no such tumuli are visible on aerial photographs.

3.2 In the wider area (not shown on Fig 1) there are numerous and as yet undated cropmarks which are interpreted as possible field systems.

3.3 The site was likely to have been part of the open fields in the medieval period. It was certainly covered in ridge and furrow (Mr White, Farmer, pers. Comm.). Historic aerial photographs enabled the National Mapping Programme to identify stack stands and a headland within the ridge and furrow (MWA 19449, MWA 19460). The nearest medieval settlement was Gaydon just to the south (MWA 9011).

3.4 The roads which bound the southern sides of the site were once toll roads. The B4451 was a turnpike established in 1852 (MWA 8690) and the B4100 was a much earlier turnpike from Birmingham to Banbury of about 1725-50 (MWA 4774).

3.5 The medieval open fields around Gaydon were enclosed in 1759 (VCH 1949). The field pattern that exists today is typical of this planned enclosure and has not changed since the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 (1:2500, Landmark 2003). Modern aerial photographs (google earth) show the parch marks of former medieval ridge and furrow across some of the fields in the wider area. They also show slight shadows of probable ESE-WNW furrows north of Area A.

3.6 During WWII RAF Gaydon was created as a satellite to RAF Chipping Warden (MWA 8026). It is now used by the Heritage Motor Centre, Jaguar Landrover and Aston Martin.

4 AIMS AND METHODS

4.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine if there are any significant archaeological remains in the area to be disturbed; to form an understanding of their value and their potential to shed light on the subsequent development of the area. Secondary aims include placing the results in their wider local and regional contexts as appropriate.

4.2 The objectives were to locate, record and analyse archaeological materials and deposits and to disseminate the results in an appropriate format.

4.3 Additional trenches were excavated in order to understand the initial results and to attempt to characterise the deposits therein.

4.4 An additional piece of evaluative fieldwork undertaken in November 2014 included a trench to the south of Areas B & C. No archaeological finds or features were noted within it.

5 RESULTS

5.1 A total of 26 trenches were excavated in positions agreed with the planning authority (Fig 1): Trench 3 was not excavated due to a newt protection buffer zone. Seven of these trenches revealed archaeological deposits. In Area A, a sequence of shallow gullies was found in Trenches 17, 18 and 19 in the flat area at the south-east end of the site. Further trenching (trenches 29-34) was undertaken around the features in order to establish whether they related to nearby settlement activity or formed a coherent pattern. The gullies aligned on two different axis (Fig 5).

Phase 1. Late Iron Age Roman Transition (1st Century BC - 1st Century AD)

AREA B

5.2 In Trench 7, oval pit 703 (1.3m long by 0.89m wide) had sloping sides and a rounded base 0.57m deep. It was 100% excavated (Fig 6, Photo 1). A lower fill of dark yellowish brown clay loam (705) contained sherds of pottery and was overlaid by dark greyish brown clay loam, with frequent charcoal and six heat cracked pebbles, pottery and a few small fragments of animal bone (704). The trench was widened but there was no evidence for it being part of a group or associated with other features.

5.3 The occurrence of heat-cracked pebbles in this feature, a phenomenon ubiquitous on Iron Age sites in Warwickshire, suggests it was associated with hot water technology or cooking. The small collection of animal bone fragments recovered from 704 are unusual finds in Warwickshire's acidic soils but are too fragmentary to be useful. Soil samples taken from 704 contained a few seeds and fragments of fruitstone and nutshell not worthy of further analysis (Greig pers comm).

5.4 The evidence, such as it is, points to a short-lived event, such as a temporary camp site although given that similar pottery was found residually in Area A, it would appear more likely that it represents an outlier to settlement outside the area examined.

AREA C

5.5 In Trench 9, also potentially of this phase, was a disarticulated lens of pebbles in a charcoal matrix lying directly above the geological strata at the base of the plough zone (Figs 4, 6, Photo 2). It had been truncated by ploughing both horizontally and vertically but survived to c.20mm deep.

5.6 This kind of deposit is usually associated with prehistoric activity and will often be distinct from settlement and ceremonial sites. Soil samples yielded charcoal fragments and a single weed seed (James Greig pers comm), but the degree of intrusive truncation meant that it was unsuitable for absolute dating.

Phase 2. Roman

AREA A

5.7 Gullies in Trenches 17, 18, 19, 29, 30 31 combined to form an coaxial field system aligned broadly WNW-ESE. Gully 1905 and 3007 appeared to form the northern side of a possible trackway to which gullies 1703, 3103, 2907, 3005 appeared to form the southern side. Extending at right angles from the southern side were gullies 3105 and to the east gullies 2905 and 1805. A southern boundary could be deduced from combining gullies 2903 and 3003. The gullies were no more than 0.3m deep and often less than 0.1m deep (Fig 6).

5.8 The trackway would have been some 8m wide and the fields to the south 20m wide and perhaps 25m long. The earliest known field systems in Warwickshire date from the Roman period (Palmer in press) although a possible late Iron Age example was implied on Dunsmore Heath. This field system at Gaydon is therefore most probably Roman and the pottery residual, perhaps having worked down-slope from a settlement to the north-west to which pit 703 was an outlier.

Phase 3. Medieval and Post-medieval

AREA A

5.9 A NE-SW alignment of gullies in Trenches 34, 18, 32 and 18 and 19 included gullies 1803, 1807, 3203, 3403 and 3405).

5.10 This second system of gullies corresponds to the orientation of the extant road system and hedge lines and therefore probably relates to the medieval and post-medieval field system.

5.11 Trenches 1 and 2 revealed a gully aligned NE-SW (Fig 3), parallel to the field boundary shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 (Fig 2). No finds were recovered but its alignment strongly suggests that it was part of the remnant post-medieval field system.

Typical deposit sequence in blank trenches

5.12 Geological natural of yellowish brown clay and grey patches was between 0.44m and 0.65m below the modern surface. Medieval and perhaps Roman plough soils (dark yellowish brown clay) were between 0.18m and 0.4m thick, variations attributable to ridge and furrow ploughing. Topsoil was more consistent at a depth of c.0.25m and was a very dark greyish brown clay loam.

The Pottery by Dr Phil Mills

5.13 52 sherds of pottery, weighing 86g were examined and these included 3 sherds, 9g, which were from unstratified deposits. There were no diagnostic fragments noted – only very small fragments of body sherds.

5.14 There were 24 sherds, weighing 24g, of a class C hand-made shell tempered fabric, of probably Iron Age date.

Table 1 Pottery spot dates

Context	Fabric	NoSh	WT (g)	Spot Date
0	E11	1	3	C1BC -AD70
0	P00	2	6	IA (LIA)
1904	E11	3	8	C1 BC - AD 70
1906	E11	2	9	C1 BC - AD 70
1808	E11	1	1	C1 BC - AD 70
3001	E11	1	1	C1 BC - AD 70
704	C00	24	24	LIA+
704	P00	14	25	LIA+
705	E11	4	9	C1 BC - AD 70

5.15 There were 12 sherds, weighing 31g, of a class E (transitional) hand-made grog tempered ware with occasional inclusions of lime and quartz, with oxidised surfaces and a black core. This is dated from the last half of the first century BC to AD 70. The poor quality of the finish and the lack of any wheel made material would suggest that this pottery belongs to the earlier part of the date range.

5.16 There were 16 sherds, 31g, of a class P, hand-made reduced Iron Age tradition fabric, with common medium sand. This is of probable Iron Age date.

5.17 This material would suggest some Iron Age, probably later Iron Age activity at the site. The range of fabrics is what would be expected of later Iron Age supply in the area.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 A single pit containing late Iron Age (transitional) Roman pottery was found which seems likely to have been an outlier to an otherwise unknown settlement. The pit contained evidence of hot water technology or cooking but not enough to deduce any significant conclusions. A burnt spread may have been associated with this feature but remained undated.

6.2 The basal parts of a gully-defined coaxial field system were found orientated on an WNW-ESE alignment. These gullies contained residual pottery, possibly derived from the settlement alluded to above, but the field system was very likely Roman in date. The absence of Roman finds suggests that the settlement from which the fields were farmed lay some distance to the evaluation area.

6.3 A second alignment of gullies found in the same area are likely to be the remains of a medieval or post medieval field system as they align with the current road network. The Fields of Britannia project explored the relationship between the medieval landscape its antecedents (Rippon, Smart and Pears 2015). The study reported that the 'central zone', which includes this part of Warwickshire, was highly Romanised. It also found that in this zone, 70% of excavated Romano-British field systems shared an alignment with the succeeding Saxon and medieval fields. Such continuity is not apparent here at Gaydon. One possible explanation for this is that the Romano-British fields may have been abandoned prior to the 4th century as was evidenced elsewhere in the 'central zone' (*ibid*).

6.4 The archaeological features and deposits evaluated at Gaydon had been considerably truncated and denuded by ploughing, probably from the medieval period to the 20th century. This, along with the intractable clay substrate, had seriously affected the potential for recovering meaningful data. The present work has though successfully demonstrated that a settlement of later Iron Age transitional Roman date lay outside the area evaluated and may yet yield the quality of data that will further prehistoric and Roman studies in the county.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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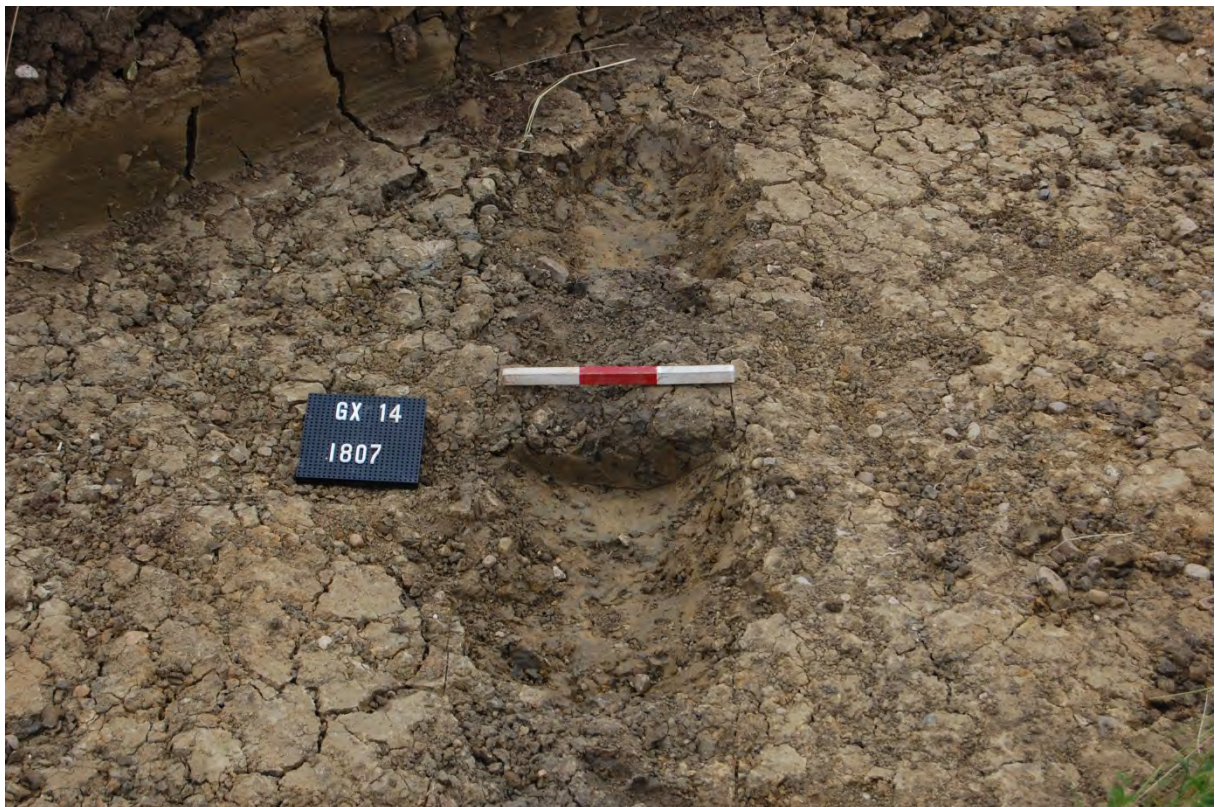
1. Phase 1 Pit 703 when 50% excavated



2. Phase 1 Context 903 showing its amorphous nature



3. Phase 2 gully 1703



4. Phase 2 gully 1807



5. Phase 2 gully 1805



6. Phase 2 gully 1905



7. Phase 2 gully 2903



8. Phase 2 gully 2905



9. Phase 2 gully 2907



10. Phase 2 gully 3003



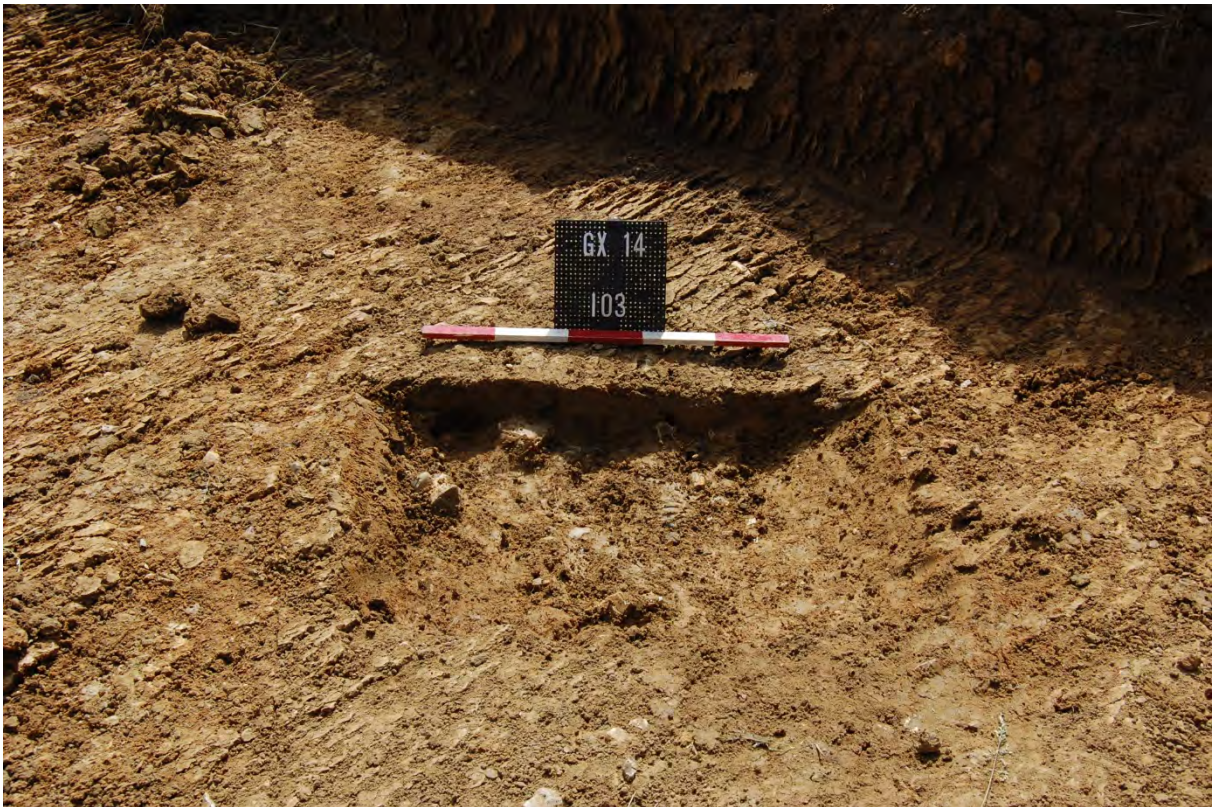
11. Phase 2 gully 3005



12. Phase 2 gully 3007



13. Phase 2 gullies 3103 and 3105



14. Phase 3 gully 103



15. Phase 3 gully 1803



16. Phase 3 gully 1903

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Depth m or AOD</i>
1	100	Very dark greyish brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil	0.28-0.32
1	101	Dark yellowish brown sandy clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.28-0.3
1	102	Yellowish brown sandy clay	Geological Natural	
1	103	U shaped gully cut, 0.66m wide	Gully	0.08
1	104	Brownish grey clay loam	Fill of 103	0.08
2	200	Very dark greyish brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil	0.2-0.3
2	201	Dark yellowish brown sandy clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.18-0.2
2	202	Yellowish brown sandy clay	Geological Natural	
2	203	U shaped gully cut, 0.37m wide	Gully	0.09
2	204	Dark yellowish/grey clay loam	Fill of 203	0.09
4	400	Very dark greyish brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil	0.26-0.3
4	401	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.25-0.3
4	402	Yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
5	500	Very dark greyish brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil	0.35-0.37
5	501	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.2-0.25
5	502	Yellowish brown clay with reddish brown patches and gravel patches	Geological Natural	
6	600	Very dark greyish brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil	0.12-0.3
6	601	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.28-0.3
7	700	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.2-0.25
7	701	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.2-0.27
7	702	Greyish brown clay and grey clay, occ patches of yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
7	703	Sub rectangular pit, U shaped profile, 1.3m long, 0.89m wide	Pit	0.57
7	704	Dark greyish brown clay loam, frequent charcoal and 6 heat cracked pebbles	Upper fill of 703	
7	705	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Lower fill of 703	
8	800	Very dark greyish brown sandy clay loam	Topsoil	0.26-0.28
8	801	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.2-0.26
8	802	Dark yellowish brown and grey brown clay, patches gravel incl. flint	Geological natural	
9	900	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.25-0.38
9	901	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.25-0.36
9	902	Dark yellowish brown and grey brown clay, patches gravel	Geological natural	

9	903	Layer deposit of very dark grey clay with frq small fragments of burnt stone and charcoal	Burnt deposit	0.02
10	1000	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.0.23-0.25
10	1001	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.28-0.4
10	1002	Dark yellowish brown clay, patches gravel	Geological natural	
11	1100	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.25-0.26
11	1101	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.18-0.4
11	1102	Dark yellowish brown clay, patches gravel	Geological natural	
12	1200	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.27-0.34
12	1201	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.24-0.3
12	1202	Dark yellowish brown clay, patches gravel	Geological natural	
13	1300	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.22-0.24
13	1301	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.24-0.52
13	1302	Dark yellowish brown clay, patches gravel	Geological natural	
14	1400	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.22-0.24
14	1401	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.3-0.36
14	1402	Greyish brown clay and grey clay, occ patches of yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
15	1500	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.32-0.36
15	1501	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.3-0.34
15	1502	Greyish brown clay and grey clay, occ patches of yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
16	1600	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.29-0.32
16	1601	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.18-0.54
16	1602	Greyish brown clay and grey clay, occ patches of yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
17	1700	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.26-0.28
17	1701	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.4
17	1702	Greyish brown clay and grey clay, occ patches of yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
17	1703	Linear gully, ESE-WSW aligned, gently sloping sides and rounded base. 0.29m wide	Gully	0.05
17	1704	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Fill of 1703	0.05
18	1800	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.27-0.3
18	1801	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.22-0.23
18	1802	Yellowish brown and grey clay	Geological Natural	
18	1803	Linear NE-SW gully, u shaped, 0.4m wide	Gully	0.11
18	1804	Dark greyish brown clay loam	Fill of 1803	0.11
18	1805	Linear NNE-SSW gully, U shaped, steep sloping sides, 0.43	Gully	0.15
18	1806	Dark greyish brown clay loam	Fill of 1805	0.15
18	1807	Linear NE-SW gully, u shaped, moderately steep	Gully	0.14

		sloped sides, 0.3m wide		
18	1808	Dark greyish brown clay loam, 2 tiny sherds of pottery	Fill of 1803	0.14
19	1900	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.3
19	1901	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.3
19	1902	Greyish brown clay and grey clay, occ patches of yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
19	1903	ENE-WSW gully, u shaped profile, steep sloping sides, 0.37m wide	Gully	0.19
19	1904	Dark yellowish/grey brown clay loam. No pebbles, sticky clay	Fill of 1903	0.19
19	1905	NE-SW gully, u shaped profile, steep sloping sides, 0.68m wide	Gully	0.34
19	1906	Dark greyish brown clay loam. Very occasional rounded pebbles, sticky clay	Fill of 1905	0.34
20	2000	Dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.24-0.28
20	2001	Yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.16-0.48
20	2002	Dark grey clay and occ patches of strong brown clay	Geological Natural	
21	2100	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.32
21	2101	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.31
21	2102	Yellowish brown clay, occ patches of gravel and bands of grey clay	Geological Natural	
22	2200	Very dark greyish brown clay loam, few frags of brick	Topsoil	0.25-0.26
22	2201	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.18-0.32
22	2202	Yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
23	2300	Very dark greyish brown clay loam, few frags of brick	Topsoil	0.26-0.34
23	2301	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.34-0.36
23	2302	Yellowish brown clay	Geological Natural	
24	2400	Very dark greyish brown clay loam, few frags of brick	Topsoil	0.3-0.4
24	2401	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.4
24	2402	Yellowish brown clay and greyish brown clay mixed, occ patches of gravel and grey banding	Geological Natural	
25	2500	Very dark greyish brown clay loam, few frags of brick	Topsoil	0.26-0.3
25	2501	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.5-0.74
25	2502	Yellowish brown clay and greyish brown clay mixed, occ patches of gravel and grey banding	Geological Natural	
26	2600	Very dark greyish brown clay loam, few frags of brick	Topsoil	0.2-0.4

26	2601	Dark yellowish brown clay loam	Ploughsoil	0.2-0.33
26	2602	Yellowish brown clay and greyish brown clay mixed, occ patches of gravel and grey banding	Geological Natural	
27	2703	Dark brown with yellow brown mottling clayey sandy silt	Upper fill of ditch	0.27
27	2704	Mid brown clayey sandy silt	Fill of ditch	0.35-0.4
27	2705	Dark brown with frq. pebbles	Primary ditch fill	0.15
31	3100	Dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.3
31	3101	Brownish grey clay	Ploughsoil	0.3
31	3102	Strong brown and grey clay	Geological Natural	
31	3103	E-W? gully 0.3m wide with gentle sloping sides and flat base	Gully	0.04
31	3104	Dark greyish brown clay loam	Fill of 3103	0.04
31	3105	N-S? gully 0.2m wide, steep sides and rounded base	Gully	0.09
31	3106	Greyish brown clay loam	Fill of 3105	0.09
32	3200	Dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.2-0.22
32	3201	Brownish grey clay	Ploughsoil	0.12-0.3
32	3202	Yellowish brown clay, occ patches of gravel and bands of grey clay	Geological Natural	
32	3203	NE-SW gully, intermittent, 0.25m wide, unex	Gully	n/a
32	3204	Dark greyish brown clay loam	Fill of gully 32	n/a
33	3300	Greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.28
33	3301	Brownish grey clay	Ploughsoil	0.16-0.39
33	3302	Strong brown clay with patches of grey clay	Geological Natural	
34	3400	Greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil	0.28-0.32
34	3401	Brownish grey clay	Ploughsoil	0.12-0.13
34	3402	Strong brown clay with grey clay patches	Geological Natural	
34	3403	NE-SW gully, with sloping sides and base	Gully	
34	3404	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Fill of 3403	
34	3405	NE-SW gully, with sloping sides and base	Gully	
34	3406	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Fill of 3405	

B List of Finds

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
U/S	Pottery	2	
704	Pottery	4	Poor state
704	A.bone	8	poor state, undiagnostic fragments
705	Pottery	4	Poor state
3001	Pottery	1	Poor state
1904	Pottery	2	Poor state
1906	Pottery	2	Poor state
1808	Pottery	1	Poor state

C Archaeobotanical Assessment *by James Greig*

Two flots from samples were examined: Pit fill 704/1 and burnt spread 903/1.

704/1

This mainly consisted of charcoal, with a few seeds and fragments of fruitstone and nutshell. Some modern roots were noticed. The seeds were *Atriplex* sp (=6) (orache), a weed, which may or may not have been charred, as they are black anyway, it can be hard to tell. There was also a charred fragment of *Prunus spinosa* (sloe) fruitstone, and a charred fragment probably of *Corylus* (hazel) nutshell.

Some fragments of wood charcoal were present; much of the charcoal was rather amorphous.

Also seen were two bone chips, a modern *Betula* (birch) seed, and a Coleopteran elytron (a beetle's wing case).

903/1

This flot also consisted mainly of small charcoal fragments, and sorting produced only a single seed of *Persicaria maculosa* (redshank), a weed. Wood charcoal was also present.

The material does not provide very much information, as the few plants found are common weeds, or like sloe and hazel they could be eaten or have been brought in with firewood.

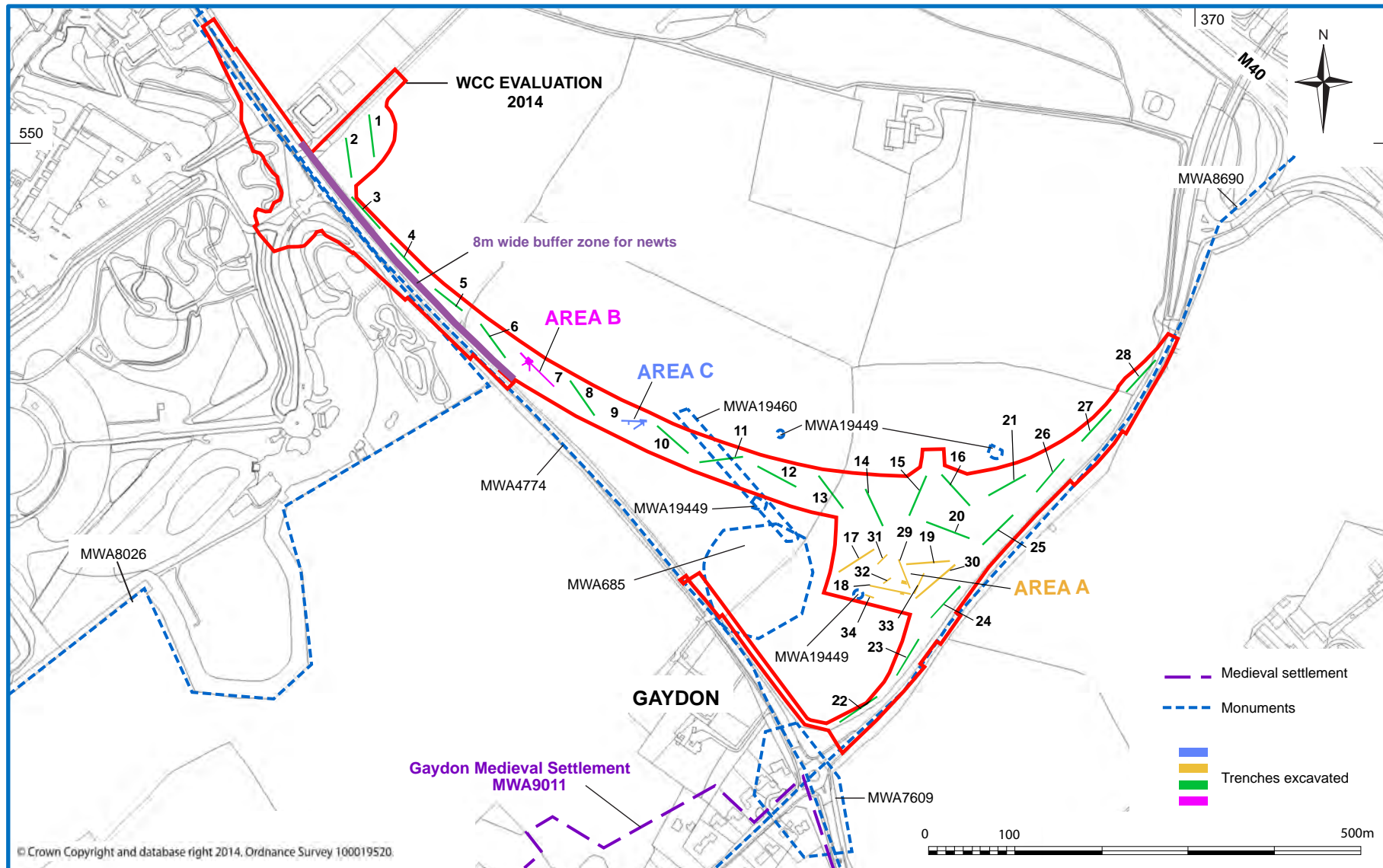


Fig 1: Site location and Historic Environment Information

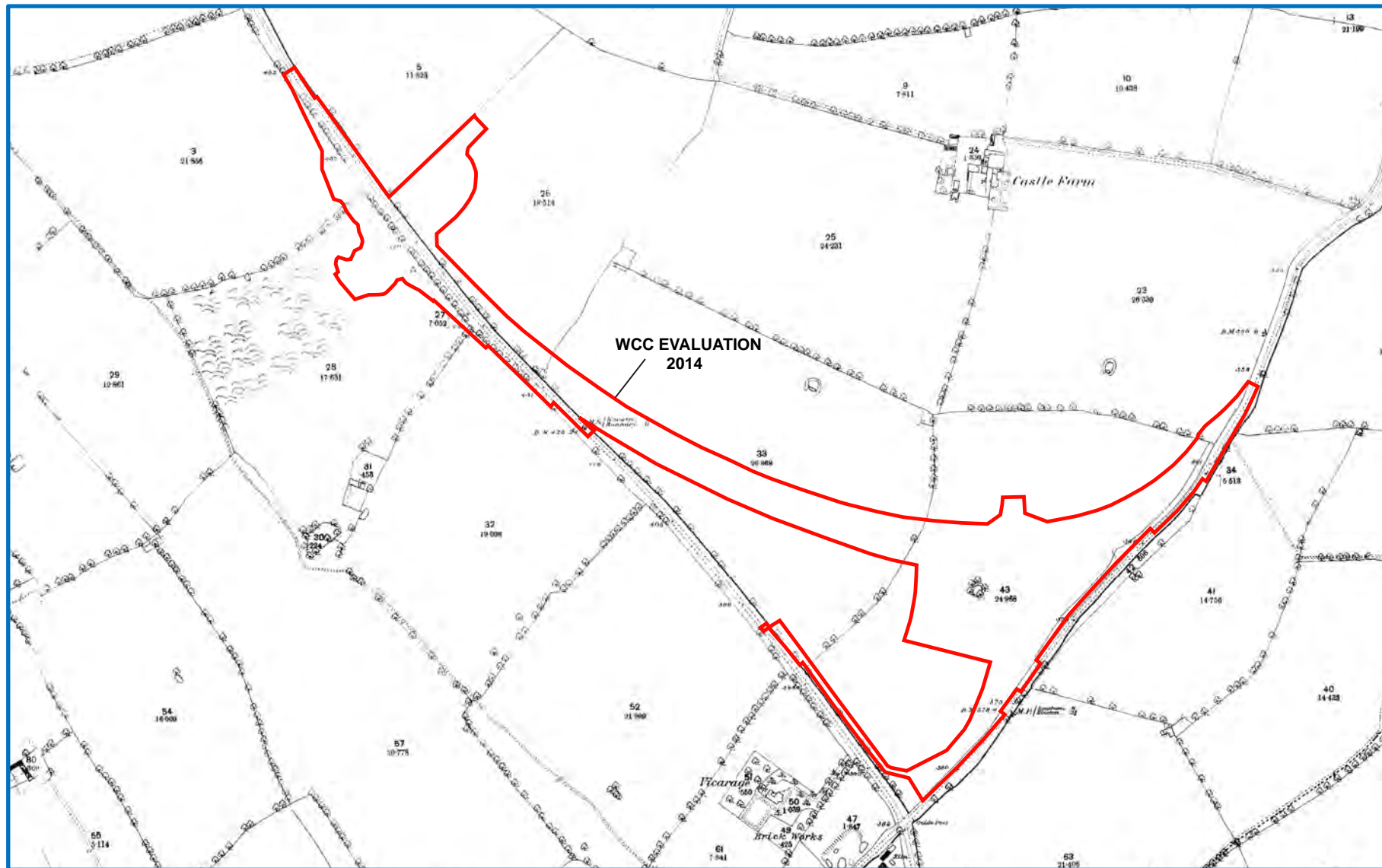


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886

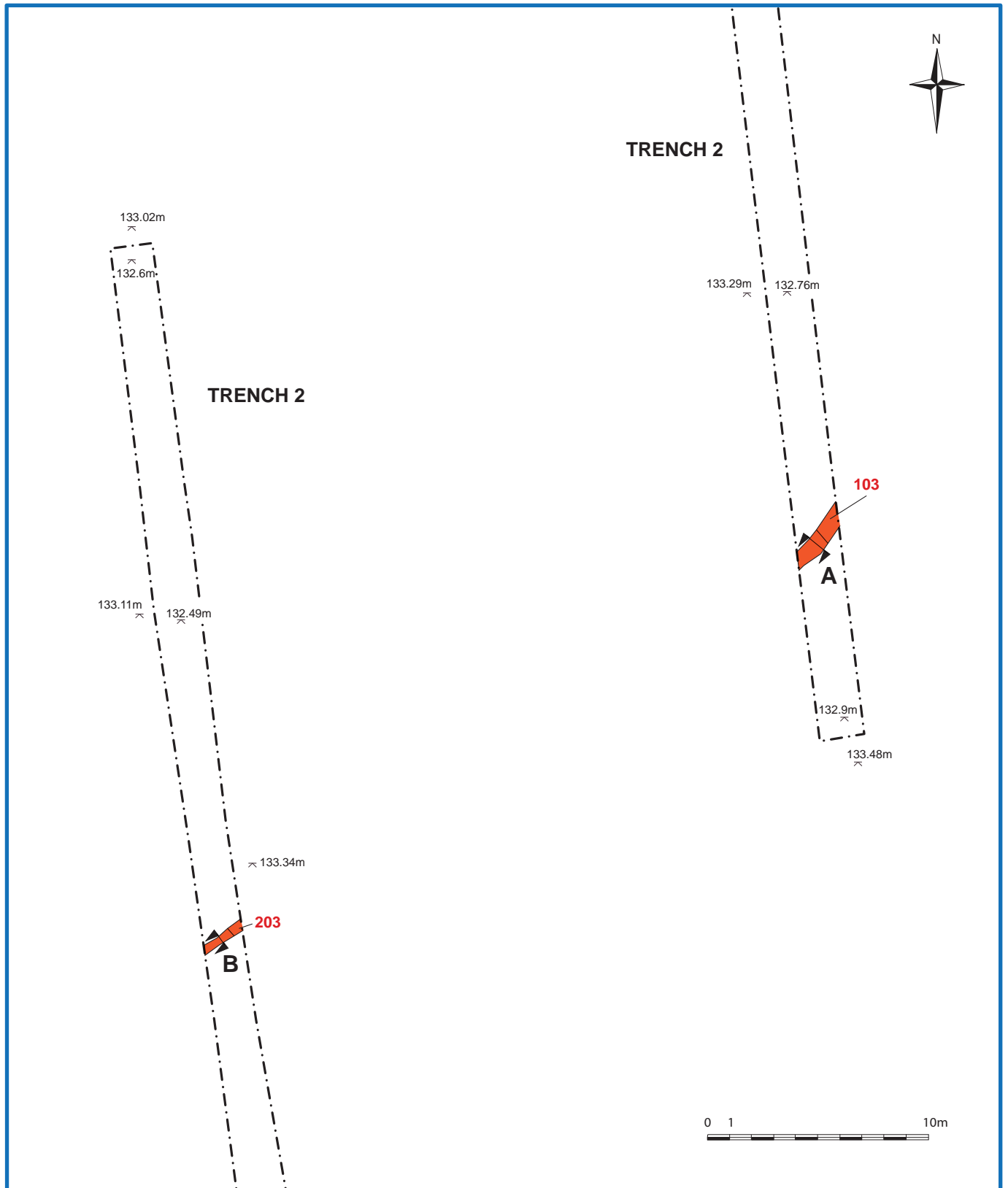


Fig 3: Detail of trenches 1 and 2

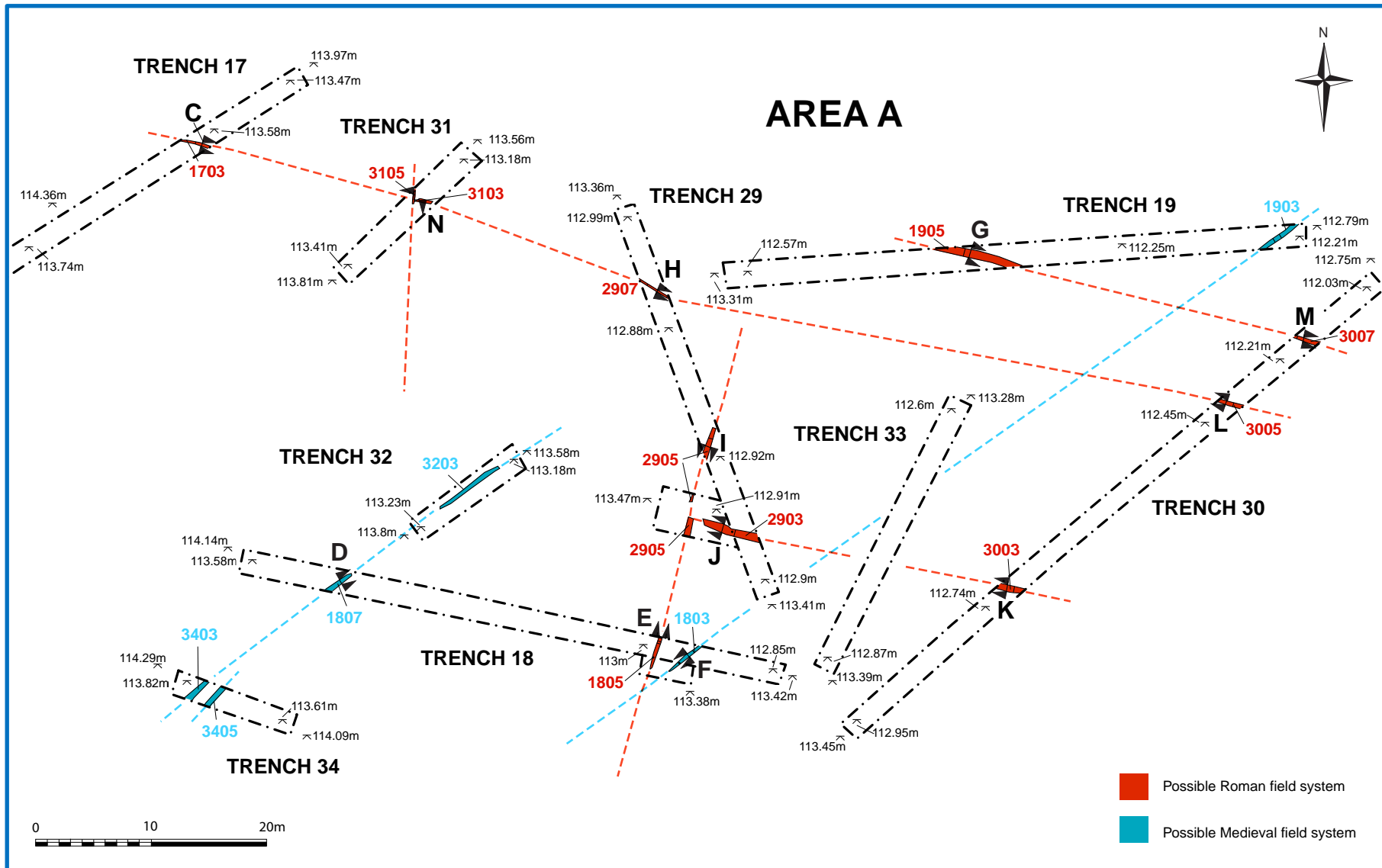


Fig 4: Area A: Trenches 17, 18, 19, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34 and features

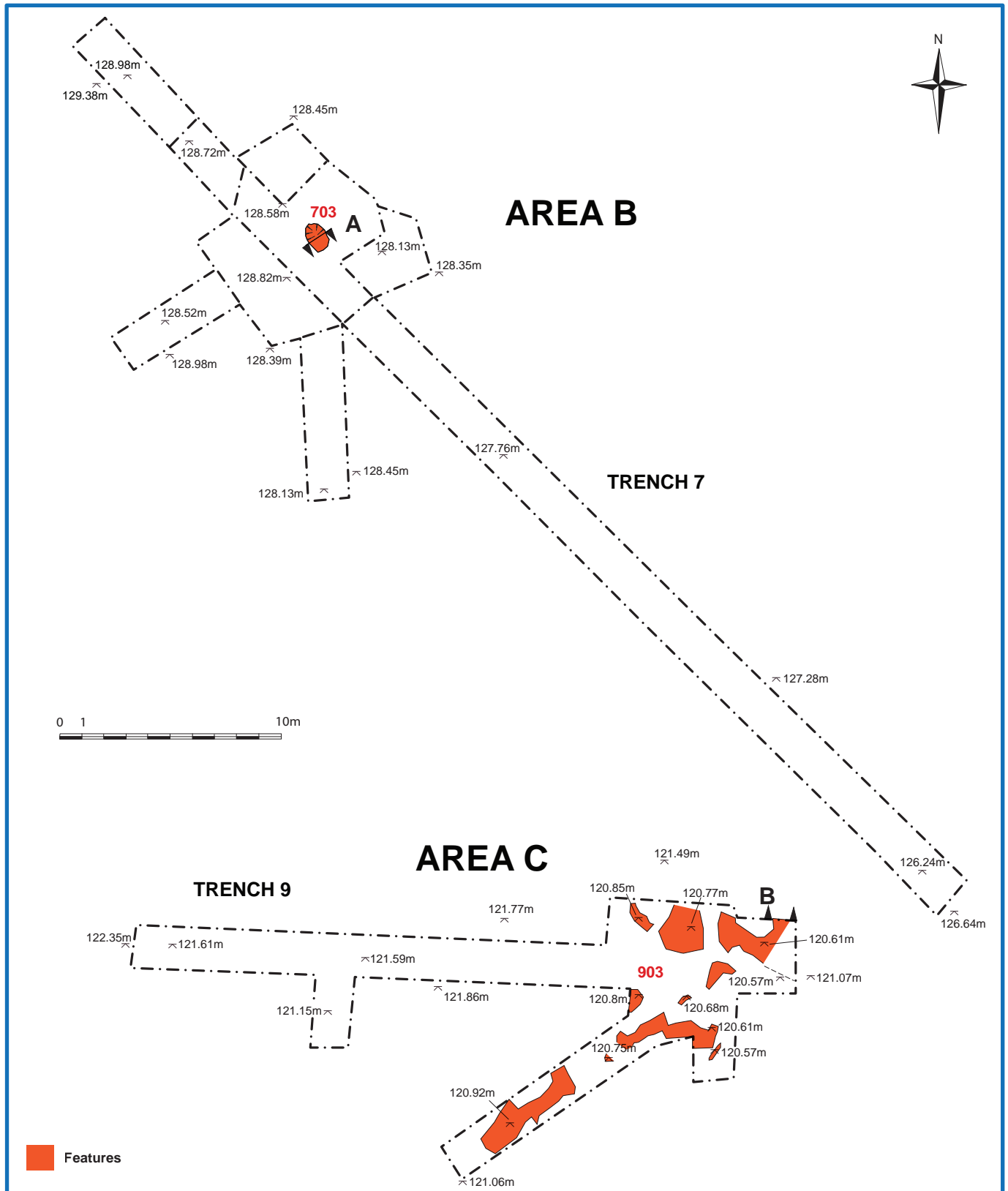


Fig 5: Areas B and C: Trenches 7 and 9 and features

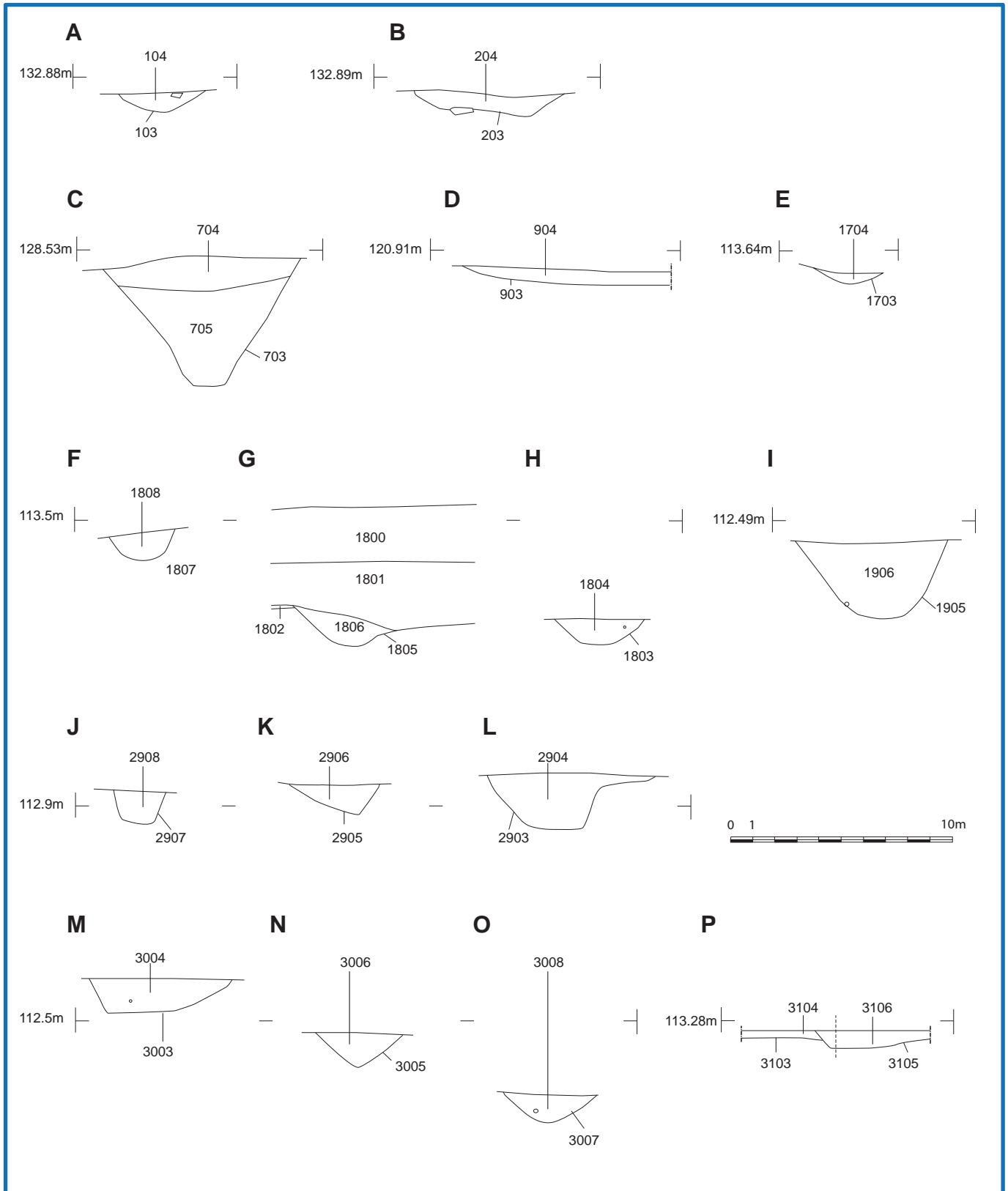


Fig 6: Sections A-P