

| NYCC HER |         |
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| SNY      | 9022    |
| ENY      | 2557    |
| CNY      | 3720    |
| Parish   | 4009    |
| Rec'd    | 14/7/04 |

**Hopper Hill Road  
Crossgates  
Seamer  
North Yorkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief  
Area F**

**MAP  
June 2004**

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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief carried out by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. on the south-west corner of a field lying west of Hopper Hill Road, Crossgates, Seamer Parish, North Yorkshire (Fig. 1 - TA 0330 8310), in June 2004.
- 1.2 The Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out on behalf of AWJ Glass Limited, in accordance with an archaeological brief attached to the planning permission for the site, designed to ensure the implementation of a suitable scheme of archaeological work in advance of development for light industrial purposes. This brief arose from the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out in 2000 over the entire field as part of the pre-planning determination of the development (details of which are to be found in section 4 below).
- 1.3 All maps within this report have been produced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 50453A.

**2. Site Description**

- 2.1 The site comprises an area of c. 2 acres (Site F) forming the south-western portion of a former arable field of c. 8 hectares, bounded by hedges and fencing on the north and west sides (Figs 2 & 3). The topography consists of a number of a low undulating hillock, the general elevation of the land dropping towards the north.
- 2.2 The site lies immediately south of modern industrial units situated along Hopper Hill Road, and west of the access road to the Seamer Carr landfill site. The former Burton Riggs gravel quarry, now a wetland area of Special Scientific Interest, lies immediately to the west (Fig. 2).

**3. Geology**

- 3.1 The geology at the site consists of glaciofluvial deposits, mainly of sands and gravels, underlying coarse loamy, non-calcareous soils of the Wick 1 Association (Mackney *et al.* 1983).

**4. Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 4.1 The area lies within a rich landscape of multi-period archaeological remains, the Vale of Pickering having formed a focus for human occupation since earliest times.

- 4.2 The Vale of Pickering Research Trust has conducted extensive research into the late glacial and early post-glacial periods at the eastern end of the Vale of Pickering. To the south of the site, beyond the railway line, a number of nationally important early mesolithic sites have been excavated, along with sites ranging from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age (Schadla-Hall 1988). The mesolithic sites are concentrated around the 25m contour at the margins of low gravel hills - such as Hopper Hill, No Name Hill and Rabbit Hill - which rise out of areas of peat.
- 4.3 The later prehistoric sites identified by the Vale of Pickering Research Trust occurred at a higher level around the 27m contour. Neolithic occupation was identified on the western edge of Manham Hill. A horse-shoe shaped gully, further gullies and postholes excavated on Hopper Hill were dated by flint artefacts and pottery to the late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age.
- 4.4 There is considerable cropmark evidence for later prehistoric sites on the southern side of the Vale of Pickering situated around the 30m contour. On the northern side of the Vale, excavations in advance of housing development on land both east and west of Crab Lane (600-900m north-west of the site) identified field boundaries, enclosures and structures dating from the Early Iron Age to the Roman periods. Iron Age occupation within a large square enclosure directly underlying Crab Lane was superseded by a Roman stone building dating to the First and Second centuries A.D. (MAP 1999).
- 4.5 Closer at hand, during the years 1947-81 gravel extraction from the Burton Riggs quarry immediately west of the site revealed a wealth of occupation sites - pits, gullies, postholes and structures - ranging in date from the late Iron Age to Anglian periods (Pye 1976 and 1983, Rutter and Duke 1958). Particularly significant was a large square or rectangular enclosure, situated c. 200m north of the site, originally interpreted as a 'Roman Fortlet'; this was the subject of additional excavation by the Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) in advance of industrial development in 1989 (Leach 1989).
- 4.6 Rutter and Duke referred to the site as 'Field F', and it was "searched for surface finds without result" (Rutter and Duke 1959, 6).
- 4.7 The 1989 BUFAU excavation was accompanied by Geophysical Survey of those areas of the proposed industrial development not previously excavated, including the present site. A sample area of the site was subjected to Resistivity Survey, presumably in the expectation of the presence of stone buildings, and several anomalies were identified (Jones and Pearson 1989).
- 4.8 An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the entire field in 2000. The first stage consisted of a Gradiometry survey, by which the field was scanned, areas of potential identified, and the most promising 20% of the area subjected to detailed survey (GSB 2000). A number of linear anomalies were seen as having archaeological potential; others were interpreted as being of natural origin or the result of modern ploughing trends. This survey provided the

targets for the evaluation trenches, which were excavated in August 2000. Trench 1, lying c. 50m south of the watching brief area intercepted two gullies and a number of pits and postholes. Associated finds consisted of Neolithic pottery, and flint tools and flakes. Trench 2, at the southern boundary, revealed a broad shallow gully, possibly a furrow (MAP 2000).

- 4.9 An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken in July 2003 on Site A No archaeological features or deposits were revealed by the topsoil strip. The only features present were deep multiple (modern) plough scars running adjacent to the present field boundaries. Four flint artefacts were recovered from the topsoil: a scraper, a core and two flakes. These are dateable to the early Neolithic period (P. Makey, pers. com. – MAP 2003i).
- 4.10 An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken during the striping of the an access road and compound in October 2003. No archaeological features other than modern plough scars were observed and the only find consisted of a flint core found on the surface of the natural (MAP 2003ii).

## 5. Methodology

- 5.1 Topsoil and subsoil had been stripped from the entire area of Site F by a tracked 360-degree excavator, using a toothless blade, without archaeological supervision (Fig. 3: Pls 1 - 3) to form a level area.
- 5.2 In the area of the new build a platform was created from the stripped material and then capped with hardcore.
- 5.3 Observation and photographic recording was undertaken on Stanchions 1-30 but due to the negative information from these excavations no observation was made on the interior rows.

## 6. Results

- 6.1 No archaeological features or deposits were revealed in the observed stanchions, only deposits of disturbed and in situ natural <sup>and</sup> subsoil Pls 5-8).
- 6.2 A single flint flake was recovered from the top of the natural on land adjacent to the new build. The only other finds observed were quantities of broken land drains.

## 7. Discussion

- 7.1 Unfortunately the Archaeological Watching Brief was severely hampered by the unmonitored topsoil strip. The recovery of a single flint flake complimented similar findings to the north again suggesting some form of Neolithic presence on the site.
- 7.2 The distribution of the features in Evaluation Trench 1 suggested that activity might be clustered into groups rather than spread evenly. It is within the development plot (encompassing Trench 1) immediately north of the Watching Brief area (Site E: Pl 4) where additional evidence concerning the nature of Neolithic activity is anticipated. A detailed scheme of archaeological works

has been prepared by the Heritage Unit of NYCC for this plot, which needs to be initiated in advance of development.

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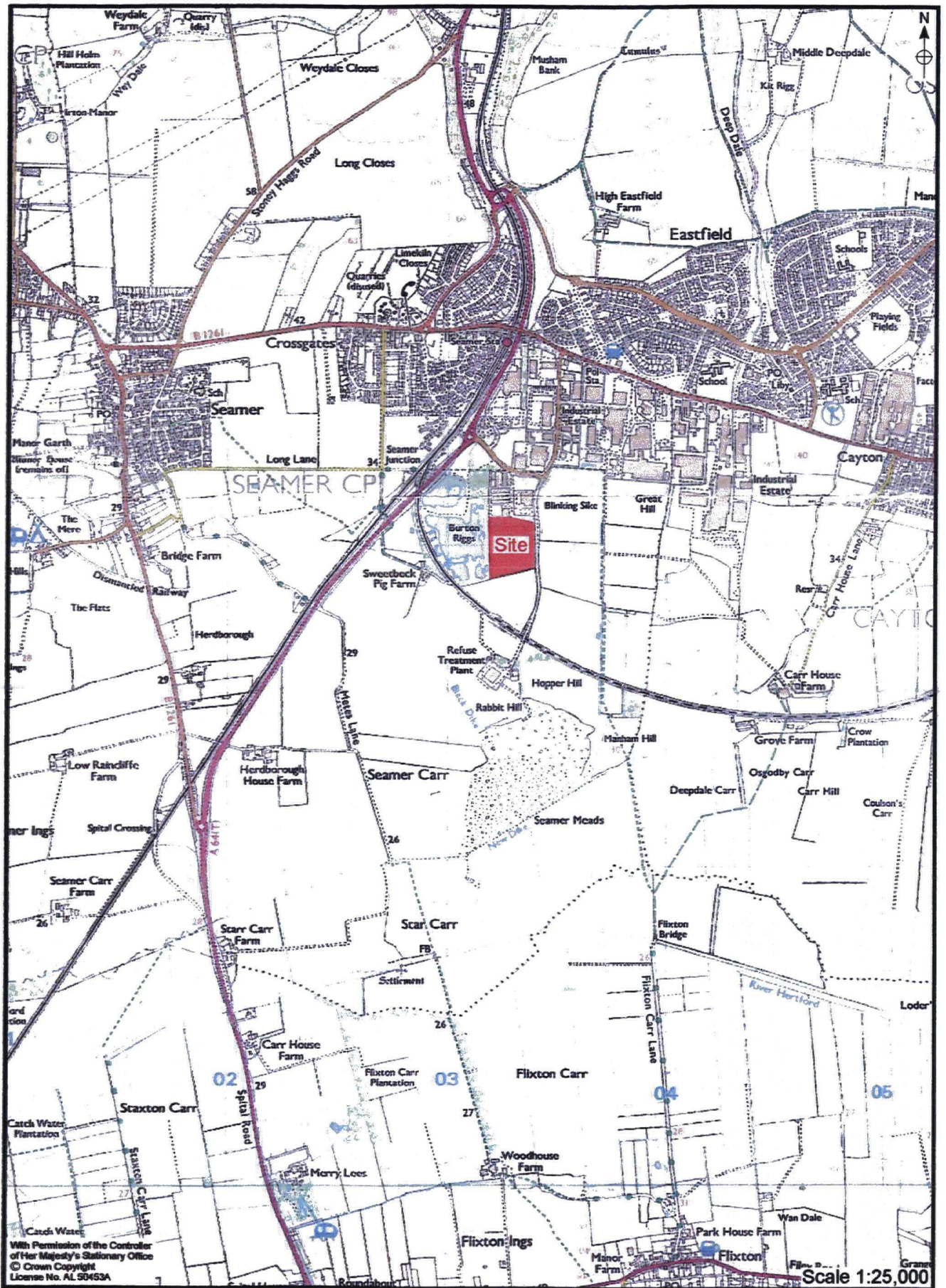


Figure 1. Site Location



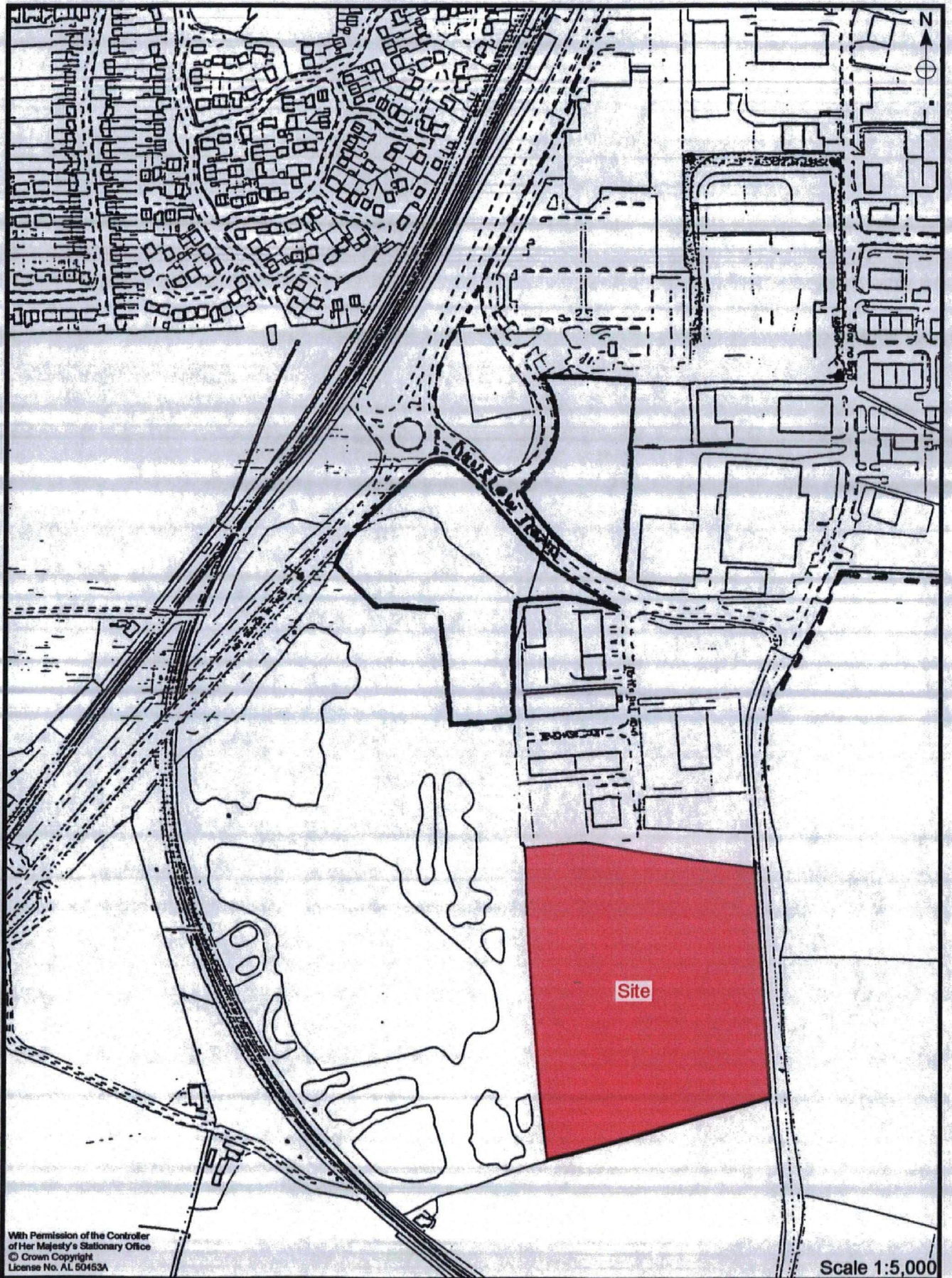


Figure 2. Site Location





Plate 1. Site F. Area of new build. Facing south.



Plate 2. Site F. Area of new car park. Facing south.



Plate 3. Site F. Area to the north of new build, proposed access road.  
Facing east.



Plate 4. Area E. Facing north.

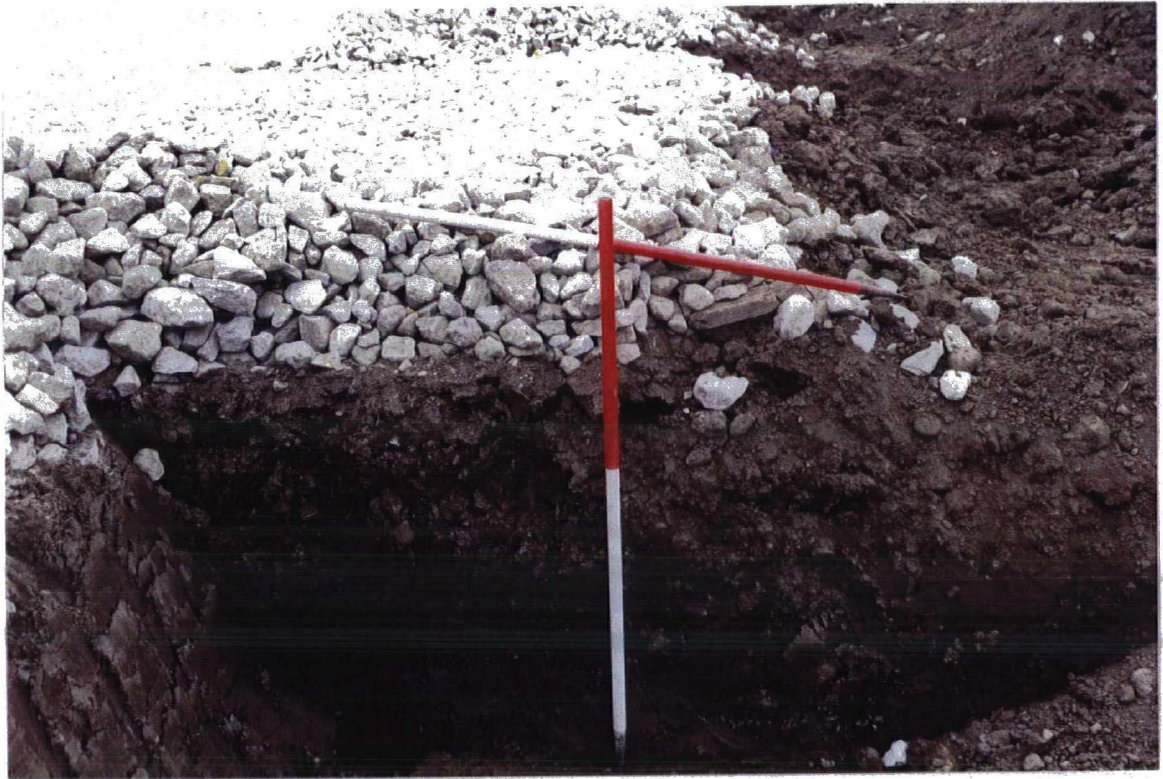


Plate 5. Stanchion 8. Facing east.

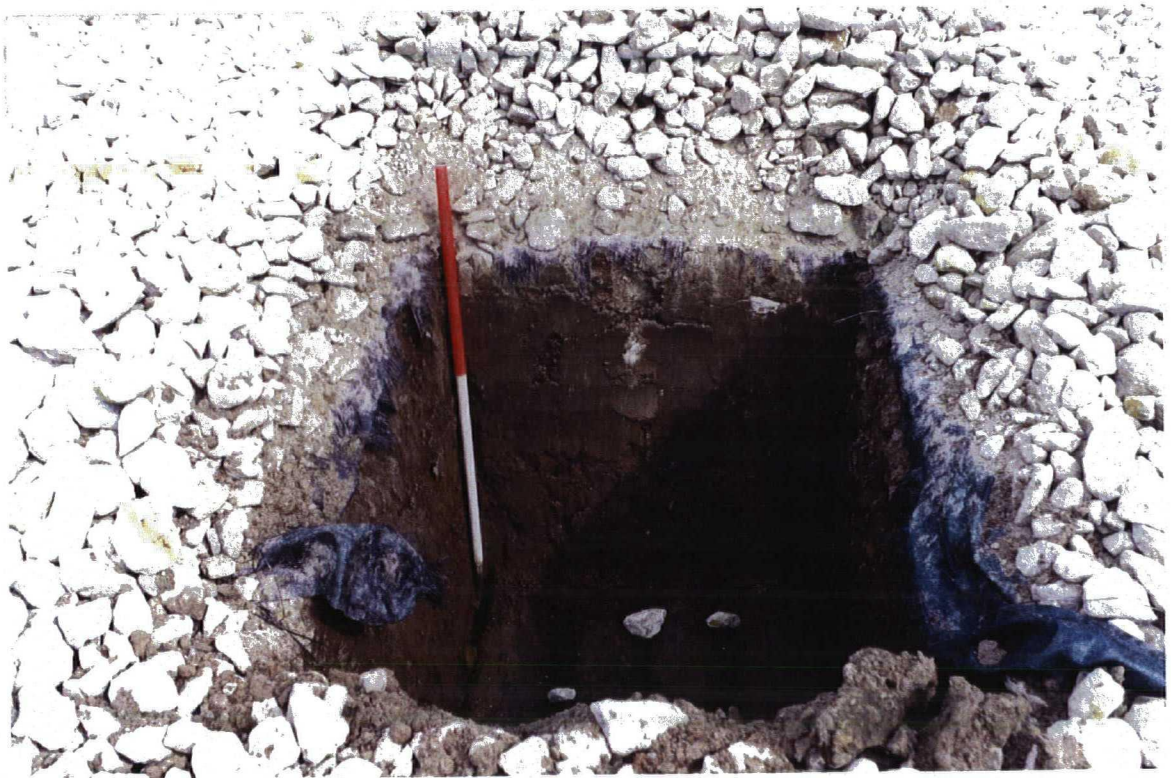


Plate 6. Stanchion 16. Facing north.

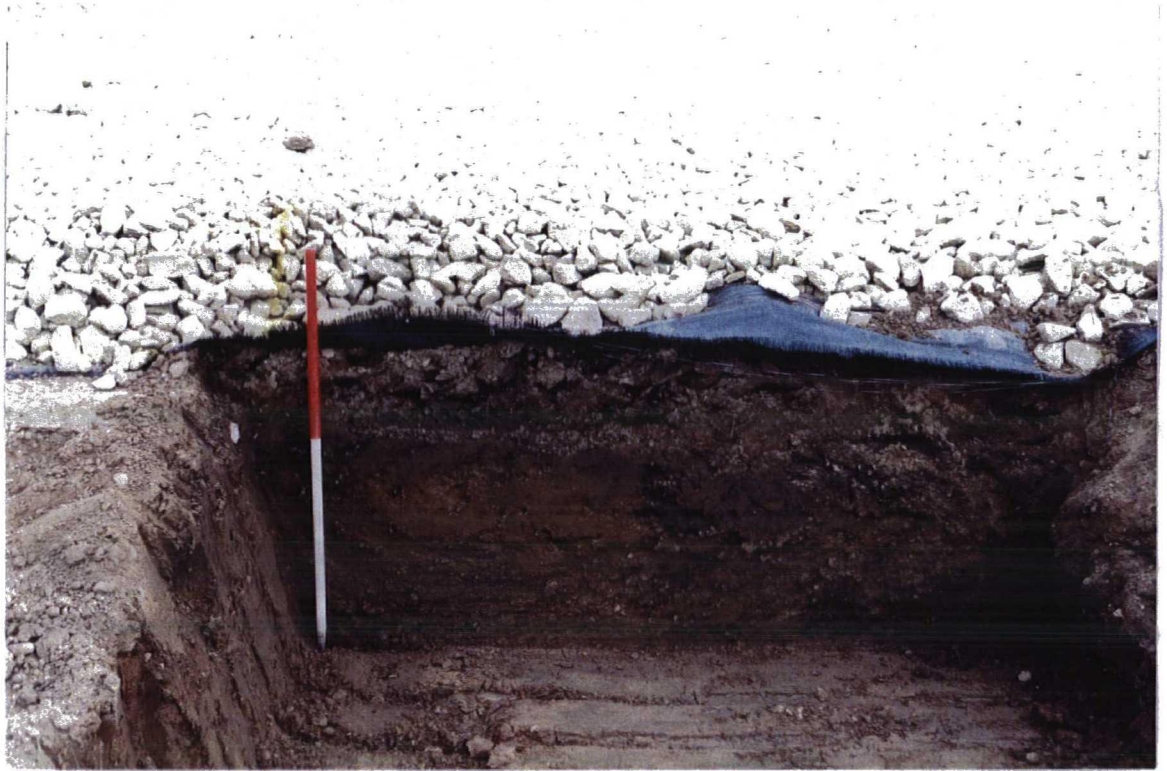


Plate 7. Stanchion 21. Facing west.



Plate 8. Stanchion 22. Facing west.