

Northern Archaeological Associates

NORTH STOBWOOD, NORTHUMBERLAND

TRIAL TRENCHING REPORT

for

UK Coal Ltd

NAA 04/55

July 2004

Revised

November 2004

NORTH STOBWOOD, NORTHUMBERLAND
TRIAL TRENCHING REPORT

Summary	
1. Introduction	3
2. Location and Geology	4
3. Archaeological and Historical Background	4
4. Aims and Objectives	5
5. Methodology	6
6. Excavation Results	7
7. Assessment of Site Archive	21
8. Specialists Reports	23
9. Discussion	25
10. Conclusion and Recommendations	27
Bibliography	29

List of Illustrations

Figure 1.	North Stobswood: site location
Figure 2.	Trench location plan
Figure 3.	North Stobswood: trench 2, plan and sections
Figure 4.	North Stobswood: trench 15, plan and sections
Figure 5.	North Stobswood: trench 17, plan and sections
Figure 6.	North Stobswood: trench 25, plan and sections
Figure 7.	North Stobswood: trench 27, plan and sections
Figure 8.	North Stobswood: trench 28, plan and sections
Figure 9.	North Stobswood: trench 34, plan and sections
Figure 10.	North Stobswood: trench 35, plan and sections
Figure 11.	North Stobswood: trench 40, plan and sections
Figure 12.	North Stobswood: trench 41, plan and sections
Figure 13.	North Stobswood: trench 44, plan and sections
Figure 14.	North Stobswood: plans of extensions to trench 44
Figure 15.	North Stobswood: trench 53, plan and sections
Figure 16.	Location of proposed excavation and extent of proposed archaeological monitoring

Plates

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Plate 1. | Section through roadside ditch 314, trench 2 |
| Plate 2. | Plough furrow in trench 12 |
| Plate 3. | Section through pit 1253, trench 28 |
| Plate 4. | Section through gully 557, trench 35 |
| Plate 5. | Section through pit 503, trench 40 |
| Plate 6. | Section through pit 603, trench 41 |
| Plate 7. | Pre-excavation photograph of extension to trench 44 |

NORTH STOBSSWOOD, NORTHUMBERLAND

TRIAL TRENCHING REPORT

Summary

This document presents a report on the results of a programme of trial excavation at the site of a proposed coal and fireclay extraction area at North Stobsswood, about 9km to the north of Morpeth, Northumberland. The site comprises an area of approximately 45ha of land situated to the north of the Stobsswood Surface Mine which at present consists of arable and cultivated fields. The site of the proposed development was the subject of a phased programme of archaeological evaluation, the initial phases of this programme comprising a desk-based assessment and a programme of geophysical survey. The archaeological assessment characterised the site as having the potential for the survival of archaeological remains. Subsequent to the assessment a geophysical survey comprising a gradiometer survey of 9ha was undertaken in order to further investigate the archaeological potential of the site. This identified a number of anomalies which were considered to equate with archaeological features. Further investigation of these were recommended and a programme of trial trenching was initiated in areas of the site considered to exhibit the potential for the survival of archaeological remains that would be compromised by the proposed development. The work was undertaken in accordance with an agreed Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northern Archaeological Associates for UK Coal Ltd and agreed with the Archaeological Officers of Northumberland County Council.

For the purpose of the trial trenching, the site of the proposed development was divided into two areas. Area 1 comprised a strip of land adjacent to the C117 road which was examined as a series of 25 trenches comprising a total area of 1000m². Area 2 comprised the remainder of the site and was investigated in two phases in order to examine an area totalling 6764m². In total 12 trenches contained significant archaeological remains. Although these were located throughout the site, the western part of the site appeared to be the main focus of activity of potentially early date. More recent archaeological remains were encountered in other areas. Remains attributable to medieval agricultural practices were present in practically half of the trenches and 19 trenches contained exclusively agricultural remains. The remainder of the trenches, twenty-four in total, did not contain any significant archaeological activity.

A total of three stratigraphic phases were recognised during the course of the evaluation. The earliest of these, including gullies, post-holes and pits, some of which exhibited indications of in-situ burning, seem to date to the prehistoric period. These appear to be settlement related and were principally focused within field 6. The second and more readily identifiable phase of activity relates to the agricultural exploitation of the site during the medieval period. The remains of ridge and furrow cultivation were identified as relict subsurface features or upstanding earthworks over the majority of the site. The third phase of activity identified at the site relates to the post-medieval and modern periods.

Two potential clay extraction pits were partially exposed. Other features of this period were restricted to evidence of the former track- and roadways depicted in cartographic sources.

The proposed development will involve the removal of all existing surfaces and features present at the site with the exception of those located in the areas of the subsoil bund, where only topsoil will be removed, and the topsoil bund which will not be subjected to soil stripping. The impact of the development will be severe and will result in the total loss of any archaeological remains that still survive at the site.

In order to effect the preservation of those archaeological remains present in field 6 by record it is recommended that a further programme of archaeological investigation be undertaken in order to identify and fully record all of the surviving archaeological remains that may exist within this area. This should take the form of an open area excavation of that part of field 6 that has been demonstrated to contain archaeological features almost certainly originating in the prehistoric period. In addition, a programme of the archaeological monitoring of all soil removal should be initiated in those areas demonstrated to contain the remains of linear gullies and pits of unknown date in order to elucidate their form, function and chronology. This would be undertaken during the phase of the preliminary groundworks required by the development.

A Written Scheme of Investigation for these works should be prepared and this should be agreed as a suitable scheme of works for the project by the Environment Directorate of Northumberland County Council and UK Coal Ltd.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document presents the results of a programme of archaeological evaluation at the site of a proposed coal and fireclay extraction area at North Stobswood, Northumberland (NZ 2290 9480) (Figure 1). This report has been prepared by Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA) for UK Coal Ltd.
- 1.2 An archaeological assessment of the site of the proposed works was undertaken in February 2003 (Tyne and Wear Museums (TWM) 2003), which characterised the site as having the potential for the survival of archaeological remains although there were no known sites within the boundary of the proposed development. A scheme of works which included a site evaluation comprising a programme of geophysical survey and intrusive evaluation in the form of trial trenching was proposed in order to inform the preparation of strategy that would mitigate against the loss of any archaeological remains which might exist within the area of the proposed development.
- 1.3 The results of the geophysical survey (Timescape 2003) indicated that there were 37 significant responses within the development area, some of these may have had an archaeological origin. The responses comprised positive and negative, linear, rectangular, sub-rectangular, circular, sub-circular and irregular anomalies, areas of magnetic disturbance, bipolar anomalies, various indistinct anomalies, ferrous responses and the path of a former road. Trial trenches were sited across various features for supplementary investigation.
- 1.4 The 25 trial trenches in the southern part of the site (Area 1) were established in order to investigate putative settlement remains suggested by the presence of extant earthworks in some of the pasture fields in this area. The initial desk-based assessment of the proposed development (TWM 2003) highlighted the possibility that these may represent the remnants of building platforms of a shrunken medieval village and that these were accompanied by ridge and furrow cultivation remains of the same period. The 25 trenches in Area A represented a 2% sample excavation of the available land in this area. Within Area 2 a two-phase approach to trial trenching was adopted. Initially 17 trenches, representing a 0.47% sample of the total area, were established in order to investigate an area initially considered to be of low archaeological potential. The total number of trenches, and the size of some of the existing trenches, was subsequently increased in order to examine 2% sample of the area when a number of potentially significant archaeological remains were encountered. Due to the large number of trenches within the evaluation, the field numbers from the Cultural Heritage Assessment have been carried through for this report. Area 1 consisted of parts of fields 6, 7 and 10 and fields 9 and 12. Area 2 consisted of parts of fields 6, 7 and 10 and fields 8, 11 and 13.
- 1.5 The evaluation of the site proceeded in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (NAA 2004a) prepared by NAA and submitted to, and approved as an appropriate scheme of works by, Northumberland County Council. The project was undertaken in March, April and May 2004.

2.0 LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 The site comprises an area of approximately 45 hectares of land situated to the north of the Stobswood Surface Mine located some 9km to the north of Morpeth, Northumberland (Figure 1). The area of the proposed development is positioned between the village of Stobswood in the east and Middle and West Stobswood to the west and is delimited by the C117 road to the south-west and the East Coast Main railway line to the north-east. The site comprises a number of fields, bounded by hedges and fencing, and is currently in agricultural use.
- 2.2 The bedrock morphology of the area is composed of Westphalian coal measures of the Carboniferous period (IGS 1979). The drift geology is composed of boulder clay and morainic drift (IGS 1977). This is overlain by the mains soils of the Dunkeswick series, comprising fine loamy topsoil and clayey subsurface horizons (Jarvis *et al* 1984, 165).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A desk-based assessment (TWM 2003) of the site of the proposed development identified evidence of human activity within the wider area of the proposed development dating from the prehistoric period onwards.

Prehistoric

- 3.2 Although there is no evidence for prehistoric activity within the bounds of the proposed development, a series of crop and soil marks identified from analysis of aerial photographs (The Archaeological Practice (TAP) 2001, 11) is suggestive of a considerable density of Late Iron Age activity within the wider landscape. An Iron Age enclosure was recorded 2km north of the proposed site of development at Bullock's Hall, West Chevington (TAP 1997), which also provided evidence of earlier prehistoric activity including flint flakes of both Mesolithic and Neolithic date. Supplementary to this evidence four stone axes have been recovered from the vicinity of the site of the proposed development (TAP 2001, 11).

Romano-British

- 3.3 There is no archaeological evidence for activity dating to this period within the confines of the proposed development or its immediate environs.

Early Medieval

- 3.4 Although there are no sites or finds of this date known within the development area, the place name Stobswood derives from the Old English term '*stub*' or '*stobbe*' which refers to the stump of a tree (Mackenzie, 1825, 132).

Medieval

- 3.5 There are no early historical references to Stobswood though cartographic evidence for the site dating from the late 16th century onwards does exist. However the level of information contained within the earlier maps is somewhat limited and although a settlement at Stobswood is identified in the

earliest of these it is difficult to make definitive statements regarding the nature, form and extent of the settlement within the area in the medieval period from this category of evidence alone.

- 3.6 The relict forms of medieval field systems exist within some parts of the site and wider landscape. The eastern and western boundaries of enclosure 6 are recorded on the Tithe map of 1843 and this depicts a number of elongated fields fronting the road in a pattern characteristic of land division regimes established in the medieval period. Extant ridge and furrow cultivation remains are evident within field 7 and visible in aerial photographs of the area immediately adjacent to East Stobswood.

Post-medieval

- 3.7 Later cartographic sources, specifically those from c.1718 and 1843, indicate that three small settlements, comprising small farmsteads or possibly hamlets, at East, Middle and West Stobswood were in existence from the early 18th century at least. The present layout of a number of fields within the site was in existence in 1843 as these are depicted on the Tithe Map of that date. As no enclosure award map exists for the site, it has been suggested (TWM 2003) that the whole of the area was privately owned in the 17th and 18th centuries. Documentary sources indicate that the landowners were the Earls of Carlisle and Rentals from the estate survive from 1755 and 1758. The apportionment of the land at the time of the compilation of the Tithe Map strongly suggests the continuity of ownership by this family.
- 3.8 The railway which now forms part of the East Coast line was constructed in the first half of the 19th century. A number of collieries also opened in the region at this time. The nearest colliery was removed by the present Stobswood Surface Mine. Directly to the north-east of the site was Stobswood Colliery opened in c.1873 and closed in the 1960s. Associated with this colliery were a school, chapel and terraced housing. A brickworks, the Burn Fireclay Co. Ltd, was attached to the pit and survived until its closure in 1998.

4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 The aim of the project was to conduct a phased archaeological evaluation of the site of the proposed development, the results of which would be used to inform the preparation of an appropriate strategy which would mitigate against the loss of any surviving archaeological features prior to, or during the course of, the development.
- 4.2 The main objectives of the programme of evaluation are outlined below:
- to establish the date, nature, extent, degree of preservation and significance of any archaeological deposits within the proposed development area
 - to establish the potential for the preservation of environmental evidence within the site, in particular to identify the possibility of waterlogged remains

- to provide a means of assessing in detail the impacts of the archaeological resource of the area as a basis for future decisions about the preservation of deposits *in situ* or recording in advance of construction
- to assist in the formulation of an appropriate scheme of works for the development that accords with the professional standards for archaeological work both nationally and within the local authority within which the development is proposed

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 A programme of trial excavation was undertaken in two phases, the implementation of the second of these being contingent upon the results obtained in the initial phase (phase 1). This methodology was decided in consultation with the Archaeological Officers of Northumberland County Council

5.2 For the purpose of trial trenching the site of the proposed development was divided into two areas (Figure 2).

Area 1 (trenches 1-25), comprised a strip of land adjacent to the C117 which encompassed a number of features identified in the Desk-Based Assessment and the subsequent geophysical survey.

Area 2 (trenches 26-42), comprised the remainder of the site. Trenches 43 to 58 comprised part of the phase two evaluation of area 2.

5.3 The evaluation of Area 1 by trial excavation comprised a series of trial trenches (trenches 1-25), which measured 20m by 2m and represented a sample excavation of 2% of the total area concerned (7120m²).

5.4 Area 2 was initially subjected to trial excavation of up to 0.47% of its total area (equivalent to 1700m²). This took the form of seventeen 50m by 2m trenches (trenches 26-42) situated over known geophysical anomalies, and as a control measure, within areas not sampled by geophysical survey. After encountering significant archaeological features and deposits in some of the trial trenches within Area 2, a second phase of trial excavation in the area was agreed in consultation with the Archaeological Officers of Northumberland County Council and UK Coal Ltd. This consisted of the excavation of a further 15 trenches and the extension of five existing trenches to achieve a 2% sample. The area that would be occupied by the topsoil bund of the proposed colliery extension was excluded from this sample by agreement.

5.5 The trenches within Area 2 measured 50m by 2m, c.50m by 12m or c.50m by 7m, excluding trench 44, which was extended to examine a total area of 374m². The total excavation area covered c.6764m².

- 5.6 The position of each trench was established by UK Coal Ltd engineers using GPS technology. This information was transferred to AutoCAD 2000iLT software and reproduced for incorporation within this report.
- 5.7 The trenches were stripped using a 360° back-acting mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket which was operated under direct archaeological supervision at all times.
- 5.8 The machine removed topsoil down to a level at which significant archaeological deposits were first identified or down to natural subsoil, whichever was encountered first.
- 5.9 All exposed surfaces where archaeological features were identified were cleaned by hand and then planned and photographed. Hand excavation of selected archaeological features was undertaken to evaluate depth, character, and degree of preservation, and to attempt the recovery of sufficient artefactual and environmental evidence to enable dating and characterise the nature of the archaeology. Discrete features were half-sectioned and linear features were subject to a 20% sample or 1m section as appropriate. Deposits at junctions or interruptions of linear features were sufficiently excavated for the relationship between the individual components to be established.
- 5.10 Finds were recorded and processed using the NAA system and submitted for post-excavation assessment. Thirty-litre bulk palaeoenvironmental samples were taken from appropriate deposits and submitted for assessment. The recovery and sampling of environmental remains was undertaken in accordance with guidelines prepared by English Heritage (2002).
- 5.11 All finds recovered were appropriately packaged and stored under optimum conditions. Finds recovery and storage strategies were in accordance with published guidelines (English Heritage 1995; Watkinson and Neal 1998).
- 5.12 All archaeological features were photographed and recorded at an appropriate scale. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 where necessary. Archaeological plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 although trenches largely devoid of archaeological features were recorded at a scale of 1:50. A representative section of deposits within each area was drawn. Levels were tied in to Ordnance Datum.
- 5.13 A written description of features was recorded on *pro forma* sheets using the NAA context recording system. A photographic record of the site was taken using monochrome prints and colour slide at a minimum format of 35mm.

6.0 EXCAVATION RESULTS

- 6.1 In total twelve trenches contained significant archaeological remains (Figure 2). These trenches were located throughout the site though the western part of the site appeared to be the main focus of activity of potentially early date. More recent archaeological remains were encountered in fields 9 and 10.

Remains attributable to past agricultural regimes were present in practically half of the trenches and nineteen trenches contained exclusively agricultural remains. Although evidence for agricultural activity was noted throughout the site, the degree survival of features of this nature tended to be better in field 7. The remainder of the trenches, twenty-four in total, did not contain any significant archaeological activity. These trenches were located in each of the fields across the site though field 9 proved to be particularly deficient in pre-modern archaeological activity.

Trenches containing significant archaeological features.

6.2 Trench 2 (contexts 301-314) (Figure 3)

6.2.1 Trench 2 was situated in the south-west corner of field 6. It was also situated within transect 1 of the geophysical survey and was sited across two linear geomagnetic anomalies which crossed the transect in a north-west to south-east direction. These may have been indicative of the path of an earlier road represented on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1866. The trench was aligned north-east to south-west and measured 20m in length, 2m in width and was up to 0.28m deep.

6.2.2 The natural subsoil within this trench (310) was a mixed orange clay interspersed with lenses of coarse reddish sand. It was cut by plough furrow (303) located in the south-east corner of the trench which had been subjected to machine truncation. Only one side of the furrow was visible, this had a shallow sloping side, was aligned north-east to south-west and was 0.07m deep. The furrow's fill (304) was composed of a light greyish orangey brown, silty sand and did not contain any artefactual material.

6.2.3 Two north-west to south-east orientated ditches cut the natural subsoil at the north-east end of the trench. The more south-westerly ditch (314) (Plate 1) was generally steep sided with a flat base and measured 0.96m wide and 0.30m deep. This ditch contained one fill (313), which was an orange brown, silty gravely sand with occasional stones up to 200mm x 120mm x 100mm in size. The other ditch (312) was positioned 3.85m to the north-east of ditch 314. This ditch had broadly similar sides to ditch 314 though it had a concave base and was at least 0.78m wide and 0.42m deep. It was filled with an orange brown, silty slightly gravely sand with occasional stones (311), which were a maximum of 180mm x 80mm x 60mm in size. No artefactual material was recovered from either of the ditch fills.

6.2.4 An oval feature (305) with a U-shaped profile was located within the south-western portion of the trench. It appeared to have a regular cut and fills (306-9) which varied between whitish to dark grey black, clay sands, silty sands and sandy clays which were between 0.05m and 0.14m in thickness. Upon further investigation it was uncertain whether the feature was of anthropogenic origin or represented a tree bole and it did not contain any finds. The feature was cut by a modern field drain which was sealed by the topsoil (301), a mid greyish orange brown silty clay. The topsoil in trench 2 measured up to 0.28m in thickness and contained pottery, flint and ceramic building material.

6.3 **Trench 15** (contexts 1001-1014) (Figure 4)

6.3.1 Trench 15 was located in the south-west corner of the field 9. It was oriented north-east to south-west and measured 20m in length, 2m in width and was up to 0.60m deep.

6.3.2 The natural subsoil (1014) within trench 15 was a yellow brown, sandy clay, which was truncated at either end of the trench. The earliest activity appeared to be a plough furrow (1013) located at the north-east end. It had a shallow V-shaped profile and flat base and measured 0.70m in width, 0.07m in depth and contained one fill (1012). This deposit, a mid brown sandy clay, was cut by a post-hole (1011) which extended beyond the south-east section of the trench. The post-hole was sub-rectangular with relatively steep sides and measured 0.67m wide and 0.35m deep. It was filled by an orange brown sandy clay (1010), containing a post-pipe (1009). This was sub-circular with near vertical sides and a concave base. It had a diameter of 0.37m, was 0.32m deep and contained one fill (1008) composed of grey sandy silt with occasional pebbles. This deposit was environmentally sampled and contained traces of rotted charcoal.

6.3.3 Towards the south-west end of trench 15 a ditch was exposed with a clay bank to its north-east side. Both bank (1007) and ditch (1004) were aligned north-west to south-east and the bank was probably constructed during the initial excavation of the ditch. The ditch had gently sloped sides with a concave base and contained one fill (1003). The fill, a mid brown sandy silt with occasional small pebbles, contained a Victorian shoe heel and ceramic building material. The bank, composed of yellowish brown clay, was 2.4m wide by 0.35m high and was truncated on its north-east side by a later ditch (1006).

6.3.4 Ditch 1006, which was on the same orientation as bank 1007, had 45° sides and a concave base. It contained one fill (1005), a mid-light brown sandy silt, which filled the 0.58m wide and 0.15m deep extents of the ditch.

6.3.5 Both ditches and the bank were sealed by a mixed and variegated dump layer (1002). This mixed black, pink and brown deposit was predominantly composed of ash, shale, slag and cinder with frequent inclusions of machine manufactured brick. It also contained 20th century pottery and glass and extended 7.2m north-east from the south-west end of trench 15. The deposit was 0.50m thick and was sealed in turn by dark brown clay topsoil (1001) which was up to 0.36m thick and contained a clay pipe bowl.

6.4 **Trench 17** (contexts 751-755) (Figure 5)

6.4.1 Trench 17 was situated in field 9 and oriented north-east to south-west. It measured 20m in length, 2m in width and was between 0.30m to 0.70m deep.

6.4.2 The natural subsoil (752), a mid brown clay, was cut at the north-east end of the trench by a probable clay extraction pit (753) though the full extents of the pit were not exposed within trench 17. The southwest side of the probable pit was moderately sloped and its cut was 0.69m deep within the trench. It contained two fills (754, 755), which were both silty clays up to 0.45m in depth. The primary fill, (755) was mottled grey and orangey brown in colour and the secondary fill (754) was mid grey brown and contained a fragment of

fired clay. Samples for environmental analysis were retained from both deposits. This feature was sealed by the topsoil (751), a dark brown slightly clayey silt, which was 0.28m thick within trench 17.

6.5 Trench 25 (contexts 1651-1659) (Figure 6)

6.5.1 Trench 25 was positioned in the south-east corner of field 10 and was aligned north-east to south-west. It measured 20m in length, 2m in width and was up to 0.80m deep. The trench was initially machine excavated to a depth of approximately 0.40m below modern ground level. The remains of a modern road surface dating to the latter half of the 20th century were encountered at this level and this was subsequently reduced to a maximum depth of 0.91m below modern ground level by machine.

6.5.2 The natural subsoil (1659) was a mid orangey brown mottled with grey clay which was cut at the trench's south-western end by a plough furrow. This furrow (1656) was linear, aligned north-west to south-east and measured 1.15 to 1.60m in width and was 0.25m deep. It contained one fill (1657), a mid grey brown slightly clayey silt.

6.5.3 Two layers of dump deposits were encountered within the north-eastern portion of the trench (1655, 1658). These layers varied between mid orange brown mottled with grey to dark grey, silt ash and cinder, and ash coal and shale. The deposits were up to 0.14m thick and truncated by the construction cut (1651) for the road.

6.5.4 Cut 1651 was wide, linear, with gradually sloping sides and a flat base and was aligned north-west to south-east. It measured 7.06m in width, 0.42m deep and contained two deposits of road make-up. These layers comprised dark grey silt and clinker (1653) and mid pinkish brown sandy clay (1652). Both contained frequent inclusions of various sized stones and measured up to 0.28m thick. The make-up deposits were sealed by topsoil (1654) which was composed of a 0.15m thick deposit of mid grey brown clayey silt with frequent inclusions of shale, coal and clinker.

6.5.5 Four modern services and a field drain were also encountered within the trench, each extending into natural subsoil. No artefactual material was recovered from trench 25.

6.6 Trench 27 (contexts 701-705) (Figure 7)

6.6.1 Trench 27 was located in the centre of field 13 and was aligned north-east to south-west. In phase 1 the trench originally measured 50m by 2m but was subsequently extended in phase 2 to measure 7m in width and 50m in length. It was expanded on its western side to investigate a feature which extended beyond the limits of the original trench.

6.6.2 The natural subsoil within trench 27 (702) varied between a mid-brownish yellow to pink to reddish brown clay and silty clay. The subsoil was cut by an irregularly shaped pit (703) with a V-shaped profile and a rounded base. It measured 0.80m in length, 0.39m in width and was 0.26m deep and contained two fills. The primary fill (705) was composed of a light grey clay silt, which

contained flecks and small pieces of charcoal and measured 0.18m thick. The secondary fill (704) was dark grey mottled with pale grey clay silt and was also 0.18m thick. This deposit was environmentally sampled and contained some wood charcoal and charred seeds.

- 6.6.3 A modern field drain also cut the natural subsoil and all features within trench 27 were sealed by the topsoil (701). The topsoil comprised a mid yellowish brown clay silt which was up to 0.40m thick. No artefactual material was recovered from trench 27.

6.7 **Trench 28** (contexts 1251-1258) (Figure 8)

- 6.7.1 Trench 28 was positioned in the north part of field 13 and mechanically excavated as a 50m by 2m trench during phase 1. The trench was extended to the south-east and north-west to 12m by 50m in phase 2. It was oriented north-east to south-west and was between 0.27m and 0.40m deep.

- 6.7.2 The natural subsoil within trench 28 (1252) varied between a mid yellow brown clay to a mottled mid brownish yellow clay containing light grey clay lenses. Two linear gullies (1255, 1257), which were oriented north-west to south-east, cut the subsoil in the north-eastern half of the trench. The gullies, probably the remains of agricultural drainage or some form of boundary, both had U-shaped profiles and irregular or concave bases. They were spaced some 14m apart, and measured 0.42m in width and were between 0.05m and 0.11m deep. Each contained one fill (1256 and 1258 respectively), which were mid yellow brown to mid grey brown clay silts and contained between 1% and 5% small (50mm-100mm) rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular stones.

- 6.7.3 Within the central portion of the original trench an irregularly shaped pit (1253) (Plate 3) with a concave base was exposed. It contained one fill (1254), a mid grey clayey sandy silt with charcoal flecks and sub-rounded and sub-angular stones (less than 20mm). This deposit was environmentally sampled and contained wood charcoal and traces of coal. The pit, which was cut into the natural subsoil, measured 0.34m by 0.28m and was 0.11m deep.

- 6.7.4 Four modern field drains were encountered within the trench and these were overlain by the topsoil (1251), which consisted of mid brown clay silt up to 0.31m thick. No artefactual material was recovered from trench 28.

6.8 **Trench 34** (contexts 451-466) (Figure 9)

- 6.8.1 Trench 34 was located in the north part of field 7 and was oriented north-west to south-east. During phase 1 the trench was mechanically excavated to a maximum of 50m by 2m. In phase 2 it was extended by 5m on either side of the original trench to a maximum of 12m in width. The trench was up to 0.50m deep.

- 6.8.2 The natural pink clay subsoil within trench 34 (452) exhibited evidence of considerable root disturbance which partially obscured the lines of the plough furrows encountered within the trench. An irregularly shaped pit (465), 1.70m wide, 1.25m long and 0.24m deep with a concave base was cut into the natural clay at the northern end of the trench. It contained one fill (466), a dark brown

sandy silt, which also showed signs of root disturbance. A sample was retained from this deposit for environmental analysis.

- 6.8.3 A sub-oval pit (453) was exposed within the centre of the trench. This pit measured 0.84m long, 0.58m wide, 0.17m deep and contained one fill (454). The fill comprised a mid grey clay silt, which contained c.1% small (less than 100mm) sub-rounded stones. An environmental sample was retained from this deposit for analysis.
- 6.8.4 A further pit (463), located towards the southern end of the trench, was also exposed. The pit, which cut the natural subsoil, was 0.11m deep, steep sided with a flat base, measured 0.62m by 0.89m and contained one fill (464). This comprised a mid grey brown clayey sandy silt with 5% to 8% medium to large (100mm to 200mm) sub-angular and sub-rounded stones.
- 6.8.5 Two plough furrows (455 and 461), aligned north-east to south-west and which could be traced in the surviving earthworks in the immediate vicinity of the trench, were also observed cutting the natural clay. Furrow 461 was situated in the centre of the trench and had gradually sloping sides and an uneven base. It measured 0.58m to 0.70m in width, 0.07m deep and contained one fill (462), a mid grey brown sandy silt. The second furrow (455), located towards the south-eastern section of the trench, had a wide, shallow U-shaped profile and flat base. It measured 0.52m wide, 0.40m deep and contained one fill (456), a mid grey clay silt.
- 6.8.6 The greyish brown clay silt topsoil (451), which was between 0.35m and 0.50m thick sealed the pits and furrows. No artefactual material was recovered from trench 34.
- 6.9 **Trench 35** (contexts 551-554, 557-567) (Figure 10)
- 6.9.1 Trench 35 was situated adjacent to the eastern edge of the pasture field 8 and oriented approximately east to west. It was initially excavated as a 50m by 2m trench during phase 1. The trench was extended to the north and south to 12m by 50m in phase 2 and was up to 0.53m deep. The trench was sited within transect 3 of the geophysical survey which revealed a number of short positive linear anomalies in the area.
- 6.9.2 The natural subsoil (560) within this trench was composed of orangey brown slightly sandy and silty clay. It was crossed at the western end of the trench by a relict stream channel (551) which contained unworked flint and heat affected stone. To the east of this were two pits which cut the natural subsoil in the central section of the trench.
- 6.9.3 The more westerly of the two pits (563) was oval with a shallow U-shaped profile and an uneven base. This pit measured 0.88m in length, 0.65m in width, 0.12m in depth and contained two fills. The primary fill (562) was a light grey brown, clay silt that was 0.11m thick. The secondary fill (561) was a mid grey clay silt, which was 0.07m thick. Neither fill contained artefactual material. Both fills were environmentally sampled.

- 6.9.4 The second pit (565) was located slightly to the east of the centre of the trench and probably represented the remains of a post-hole. It was sub-rounded with an irregular U-shaped profile, an uneven base, and measured 0.82m by 0.89m and was 0.35m in depth. The pit was filled with a deposit (564) of mid brown grey, silt clay, which was 0.29m thick. This deposit contained the remains of a post-pipe (569) which had vertical sides and a diameter of 0.45m. The post-pipe was filled with a deposit (568) of mid grey brown clay silt that was 0.35m thick and contained charcoal and a sample was retained for environmental analysis. No artefactual material was encountered during excavation of this feature.
- 6.9.5 A linear gully cut (557) running on a north-east to south-west alignment was also exposed. This feature extended from the south section of the trench for some 7.80m (Plate 4). The gully had a wide U-shaped profile, an irregular to concave base and was 0.60m in width, 0.18m deep and contained one fill (558) comprising a mid brown mottled with grey clay silt. The gully terminated in the original phase 1 trench and no artefactual material was recovered from it.
- 6.9.6 A further gully (553) was identified approximately 20m to the east of gully (557) and was oriented on the same alignment. This gully had gradually sloping sides and a rounded base and measured 0.64m in width and 0.26m in depth. The gully contained three fills. The primary fill (554) was a mid grey brown slightly clayey silt which measured up to 0.10m in thickness and contained a post-medieval pottery sherd. The secondary fill (566), a mid grey brown slightly silty sand, was up to 0.06m thick and the tertiary fill (567), a mottled yellowy brown with grey brown sand, was 0.10m thick.
- 6.9.7 Two modern field drains also cut the natural deposits within trench 35. All of the features were sealed by a deposit of topsoil (559), a mid grey brown clay silt which contained ceramic building material and pottery and was up to 0.53m thick.
- 6.10 **Trench 36** (contexts 1151-1154)
- 6.10.1 Trench 36 was established in the north-eastern corner of field 8 and was oriented north-east to south-west. The trench measured 50m in length, 2m in width and was 0.23m deep. It was situated within transect 3 of the geophysical survey in an area where a number of positive sub-rectilinear anomalies were detected.
- 6.10.2 The natural subsoil within trench 36 was composed of an orangey brown slightly silty and sandy clay (1154). This subsoil was cut by a shallow, round based linear gully (1151) which was 0.20m wide and 0.09m deep and contained one fill (1152) comprising a mid grey brown slightly clayey silt. The gully terminated within the trench.
- 6.10.3 Three modern field drains also cut the natural subsoil. All of the features within the trench by topsoil (1153), a 0.35m thick deposit of mid grey brown clayey silt. No artefactual material was recovered from trench 36.

6.11 **Trench 39** (contexts 1351-1357)

6.11.1 Trench 39 was located within the northern part of field 6 and was oriented north-east to south-west. It measured 50m in length, 2m in width and was 0.30m deep.

6.11.2 The natural mid yellow orange clay subsoil (1357), exposed throughout trench 39, was cut by two features. In the south-west part of the trench a small sub-rectangular pit (1351) cut the natural subsoil. The pit had moderately sloping sides, a rounded base, measured 0.48m by 0.40m and was 0.24m deep and contained two fills. The primary fill (1355) was a mid grey brown clayey silt which was 0.08m thick. This was sealed by a secondary fill (1352) comprising mid grey brown clayey silt, which contained occasional charcoal and medium (less than 70mm) sub-rounded stones and a fragment of brick.

6.11.3 The second feature was the remains of a ditch corresponding to the line of a field boundary depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1854. The ditch (1354) was shallow with a flat base and measured 2.5m east to west and 1.2m north to south but was only 0.08m deep. It was oriented approximately north-east to south-west and contained one a mid grey brown silty sand fill (1353), which included occasional small (less than 50mm) stones.

6.11.4 A modern field drain also cut the natural subsoil and all features within the trench were sealed by mid brown clay silt topsoil (1356) which was up to 0.30m thick. No artefactual material was recovered from trench 39.

6.12 **Trench 40** (contexts 501-517) (Figure 11)

6.12.1 Trench 40 was located in the centre of field 6 towards its western side and was oriented approximately north-east to south-west. It was initially excavated as a 50m by 2m trench and was extended to the north-west and south-east to 12m by 50m during phase 2. The trench was established within transect 1 of the geophysical survey in order to examine a number of negative sub-rectangular and rectangular anomalies that were detected in the vicinity.

6.12.2 The natural subsoil (502) within trench 40 was composed of mid yellow orange clay which was cut by two pits and a gully in the southern half of the trench. One of the pits (503) was located at the extreme south-eastern end of the trench and was sub-circular, with a U-profile and irregular base and had a diameter of 0.60m (Plate 5). The pit was 0.20m deep, and contained one fill (504) that comprised a mid grey clay silt with 1% coal fragments and 5 to 10% sub-rounded stones (250mm-100mm). A sample was retained from this deposit for environmental analysis. No artefactual material was encountered during excavation of this feature.

6.12.3 A further pit (509) was identified some 12.50m to the north-west of pit 503. This probably represented a post-hole situated between a number of large stones which were exposed on the surface of the natural clay. These had flat, even, surfaces and which may have been used as post pads,. The feature was oval in plan and had a U-shaped profile and a concave base. It measured 0.36m by 0.30m and was 0.23m deep and contained a single fill (510) composed of mid grey clayey silt that was devoid of artefactual material.

- 6.12.4 The edge of a possible gully (514) was encountered at the western edge of the trench, which extended beyond the limit of excavation. It had an irregular U-shaped profile, a concave base and was filled with a mid grey clay silt (515). A sample was retained from the fill for environmental analysis which recovered coal and cinder with some seeds of probable modern date. The gully measured 0.56m by 0.52m and was 0.19m deep. No artefactual material was encountered during excavation of the gully.
- 6.12.5 Four plough furrows (506, 508, 511, 517), all aligned approximately east to west, were also encountered within trench 40. These were spaced between 3m and 4m apart and all had shallow, irregular, U-shaped profiles with irregular bases. The furrows measured between 2.30 and 0.80m in width and were between less than 0.02m and 0.12m in depth and each contained one fill (506, 512, 513 and 516 respectively). The fills were relatively comparable mid grey silts and, although one fill (506) contained fragments of coal, none of the furrows contained artefactual material.
- 6.12.6 Four modern field drains were also encountered within the trench, some of which cut plough furrows. All features were sealed by the topsoil (501), which comprised a mid brown clay silt up to 0.30m thick and which contained post-medieval pottery and ceramic building material.
- 6.13 **Trench 41** (contexts 603-7, 611, 613-615, 617-619, 623-625) (Figure 12)
- 6.13.1 Trench 41 was situated close to the north-western edge of field 6 and was aligned approximately east to west. It measured 50m in length, 2m in width and up to 0.40m deep. It was located over transect 1 of the geophysical survey which revealed a large area of magnetic disturbance and a number of negative sub-rectangular and rectangular anomalies.
- 6.13.2 The natural mid orangey yellow clay subsoil (607) was overlain at the western end of the trench by a deposit of light to mid brownish grey sandy clay (606) up to 0.14m thick. This deposit extended 2.38m east to west and was in turn overlain by a thin layer of mixed mid greyish and black silty sand (604) up to 0.04m thick containing up to 40% charcoal. A sample was retained from this deposit for environmental analysis. Neither deposit contained artefactual material.
- 6.13.3 At the eastern end of the trench the subsoil was overlain by a deposit of dark brownish grey clay (625). This measured 6.40m east to west and was 0.12m thick. This was sealed by a layer of mixed black and grey silty clay (613) which was 0.24m thick. Neither deposit contained artefactual material.
- 6.13.4 A gully (614) was situated approximately 13m east of the trench's western end. It was traced for approximately 3m within the trench and had a U-shaped profile. The gully measured 0.32m wide and 0.35m deep and was aligned approximately north-east to south-west. It contained one fill (617), which comprised variegated mid brown, grey and orange clay silts. This deposit was environmentally sampled. Due to its steep profile the gully may have represented the remains of a structural slot. The gully was cut by a second possible gully (615) with an irregular base and profile which contained a

single fill composed of light grey brown clay silt (618). The extents of this second gully continued beyond the trench's northern edge. No artefactual material was recovered from either gully.

- 6.13.5 The natural clay and layer 606 were both cut by a pit (603) which continued beyond the northern edge of the trench (Plate 6). The surrounding and underlying soils showed evidence of *in situ* heat discolouration in the vicinity of the feature. The pit was sub-rounded with a U-shaped profile and concave base and contained two fills. The primary fill (623) comprised a black clay silt, which was up to 0.08m thick and the secondary fill (605), a dark grey clay silt, was up to 0.25m thick. Environmental samples were taken from both deposits, the primary contained traces of charcoal and mortar and brick or tile. The secondary deposit contained wood charcoal and traces of cinder. The pit was 0.30m deep with a diameter of 1.90m and may have represented a hearth. No dating evidence was recovered from the pit, though it may have been associated with gullies 614 and 615 due to their close proximity.
- 6.13.6 Two linear features (611, 619) were exposed towards the east end of the trench. Both were aligned north-west to south-east and were typical of the plough furrows encountered in other trenches. They had rounded, concave profiles and were between 0.60m and 0.77m wide and up to 0.14m deep. Both appeared to have been filled with topsoil (626). Furrow 619 also cut the western extremities of deposit 613. All of the features and exposed surfaces within the trench were sealed by a deposit of mid grey brown clay silty topsoil which was up to 0.40m thick and contained no dating material.
- 6.14 **Trench 44** (contexts 1601-1650, 2051-2087) (Figure 13 and Plate 7)
- 6.14.1 Trench 44 was located towards the east side of field 6 close to the eastern boundary fence. It was initially opened as a 50m by 2m trench but subsequently expanded at its eastern end in order to better evaluate a number of archaeological features apparent in that area. The trench was further extended by the addition of three linear trenches excavated in the attempt to determine the full extent of the archaeological remains encountered within the majority of the trench.
- 6.14.2 The natural subsoil (2083) was composed of mixed mid orange yellow to dark grey orange clay and varied in composition throughout the trench. Within the eastern end of the trench a series of features that appeared to be of anthropogenic origin were encountered. However much of this activity lacked definitive structural coherence and provided little in the way artefactual material from which any cultural or chronological inferences could be derived.
- 6.14.3 A curvilinear feature situated at the eastern end of the trench which appeared to be the principal focus of the archaeological activity within the trench. The feature was primarily composed of a deposit (1631) of brown greyish orange, silty sandy clay containing 60% sub-angular and angular stones (100mm to 500mm) but no artefactual material. This deposit was environmentally sampled and contained traces of wood charcoal and cinder. Five sections were excavated across the deposit, three of which revealed features.

- 6.14.4 Two possible gullies (1629, 1627) were identified. The larger gully (1629) was generally linear with a U-shaped profile and irregular base. However the form of the gully was not regular and its profile differed between sections. It measured 0.78m in width, 0.35m in depth and contained three fills. The lower of these (2055 and 2056), were composed of light greyish orange and mid brown clay sands. The tertiary fill (1630) was composed of brown grey silty sand up to 0.15m thick and produced a single piece of flint identified as a chipping or spall. An environmental sample was taken from this deposit which contained traces of wood charcoal.
- 6.14.5 The other gully (1627) located beneath deposit 1631 was also linear with a steep U-shaped profile and irregular base. It measured 0.22m wide, 0.18m deep and contained one fill, a brown greyish orange silty sandy clay (1628) with 60% manganese fragments. No artefactual material was encountered during excavation and the high mineral content of the deposit may have been the result of natural deposition within the varied natural geology of the trench.
- 6.14.6 Directly to the east of deposit 1631 was a curvilinear gully (1625) which cut through a feature probably representing a post-hole (1647). The post-hole was circular, steep sided with a concave base and measured 0.15m by 0.11m and was 0.18m deep. It contained one fill (1648), a light orange grey, sandy silty clay with 50% small (less than 50mm) sub-angular and angular stones present as inclusions. This was cut by the gully which was curvilinear in plan with a V-shaped profile. The gully measured 0.45m wide, 0.19m deep and was traced for 4.80m within the trench. It had a concave base and contained two fills. The primary fill (1626), an orangey brown silty clay up to 0.19m thick was overlain by a greyish orange silty clay (1649). An environmental sample was taken from the primary fill which found traces of wood charcoal. This upper fill was cut by a post-hole (1635), situated at the south-west extremity of the gully. The post-hole was sub-oval in plan with a U-shaped profile, concave base and measured 0.88m by 0.62m and was 0.17m deep. It contained one fill (1636), a greyish orange sandy clay. No dating evidence was recovered from any of these features.
- 6.14.7 Three pit-like features (1621, 1641, 1617) appeared to cut deposit 1631. However as a result of the similarity of the deposits and the quantity of stone present in both layer 1631 and the pits the precise relationships of these features were not fully determined and no artefactual material was present in any.
- 6.14.8 A possible post-hole (1641) was located towards the eastern part of the trench. It was oval in plan with a V-shaped profile, a concave base, and measured 0.47m by 0.44m and was 0.28m deep. The feature contained two fills (1642, 1650), which varied between mid orangey brown to orange brown, clay silt. Both deposits contained 10% small (less than 100mm) angular, sub-angular and sub-rounded stones.
- 6.14.9 Directly to the south of post-hole 1641 was a larger sub-oval pit (1617) which was cut by a later plough furrow (1619/1644). The pit had an irregular profile and base and measured 1.68m in length, 1.20m in width and was 0.34m deep.

It contained one fill (1618), a dark brown grey orange clay silt, which had 5% inclusions of large, medium (500mm to 200mm) and small (less than 50mm) sub-angular and rounded stones of stones. An environmental sample was retained from this deposit and found to contain traces of wood charcoal.

- 6.14.10 The third pit (1621) which appeared to have been associated with deposit 1631 was an irregular steep-sided pit with a flat base. It was encountered some 2m from the southern section of the trench and was filled with a mid grey clay silt (1622) that contained 5% small (less than 50mm) to medium (100mm to 200mm) sub-angular stones.
- 6.14.11 To the west and south of deposit 1631 were other features that could be interpreted as pits or post-holes. A group of three post-holes (1603, 1605, 1607), arranged in a slightly irregular line, were situated to the west of 1631. These measured up to 0.69m in diameter and were up to 0.22m deep. Each feature contained one fill (1604, 1606 and 1608 respectively), which varied between mid brown grey, light orange brown and mid grey brown clay silts. An environmental sample was retained from deposit 1604.
- 6.14.12 To the west of deposit 1631 and adjacent to the northern trench section was a similar feature (1613). It was rectangular post-hole or small pit with a V-shaped profile and contained two fills (1614, 1643). The fills varied between grey brown to orange grey brown clay silts and the feature measured 0.40m in diameter and was 0.08m deep. No artefactual material was recovered from the pit.
- 6.14.13 Located directly opposite feature 1613 and adjacent to the south section of the trench was another possible pit (1615). It had an irregular profile, concave base, measured 1m by 0.74m, was 0.18m deep and contained two fills (1616, 1646). The fills varied between mid orange brown clayey sandy silt to mid brown grey clay silt. No artefacts were present in the fill of the pit. Environmental samples were taken from both deposits.
- 6.14.14 Located to the west of deposit 1631, was a sub-oval pit (1623). It had a U-shaped profile, concave base and measured 1.50m by 1.30m and was 0.42m deep. The pit (1623) contained two fills (1624, 1634), the primary of which (1634) comprised a grey to light brown silty clay, which contained 70% sub-rounded small to medium stones (50mm to 250mm). The deposit was 0.20m thick and was also sampled for environmental remains. It was sealed by a secondary fill comprising an orangey grey clay silt that contained less than 5% small to medium (50mm to 150mm) sub-angular, angular and rounded stones and was 0.22m thick. This deposit contained two flints a chunk and a blade, which were dated to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age. Both of these deposits were environmentally sampled and found to contain traces of wood charcoal.
- 6.14.15 A further pit (1639) was located directly north-east of deposit 1631. The pit was partially truncated during topsoil removal, and as a result, some stratigraphic relationships were compromised. The feature was sub-oval in plan with a U-shaped profile and concave base and measured 1.40m by 1.0m

and was 0.25m deep. The feature contained one fill (1640), a mid brown grey slightly clayey silt with 50% medium to large sub-angular and sub-rounded stones.

- 6.14.16 A total of five linear plough furrows (1609, 1611, 1619, 1637, 2080) were encountered, one (2080) located within the eastern extension of the trench. These appeared to be the latest activity encountered within trench 44. All were oriented north-east to south-west and had U-shaped profiles with irregular to concave bases. They measured between 2.24m and 0.34m in width and were between 0.16m and 0.06m deep. Each furrow contained one clay silt fill (1610, 1612, 1620, 1638, 2081), which varied in colour from mid orangey grey brown to grey brown to orangey grey brown. Furrow 1619 was truncated by machining and was likely to be part of another cut feature (1644) identified 8m to the north-east on the same orientation.
- 6.14.17 The topsoil (2082) in trench 44, a dark brown slightly clayey silt was up to 0.40m thick and sealed all discrete deposits and furrow fills.

Southern extension (Figure 14)

- 6.14.18 Some 2.50m from the northern extent of this trench extension, a ditch cut (2087) filled with a light brownish grey silty sand (2064) was identified. The ditch measured 2m south-west to north-east and was 1.80m south-east to north-west. Approximately 1.50m to the south of this ditch a further ditch (2086) was exposed. This was filled with a dark reddish brown slightly silty clay (2063). The ditch appeared to be curvilinear and measured 1.60m east to west and 1.15m north to south. Two sub-rounded pits were encountered to the south of ditch 2086, both of which extended beyond the limits of the trench. Pit (2085) was partially obscured by the western section but so far as could be seen was sub-rounded in plan and measured 1.05m north to south and 0.52m east to west. It was filled by a deposit (2062) of brownish yellow clayey sandy silt. Within the eastern section a further pit (2084) was revealed. This measured 1.05m north to south, 0.49m east to west and filled with a brownish yellow clayey sandy silt (2061).

Northern extension (Figure 14)

- 6.14.19 Deposit 1631 was also present in the northern trench extension and continued as a curvilinear feature. Furrow 1609 and its fill 1610 were also contained within this extension and situated 1m to the north of the furrow a sub-circular pit (2067) was noted. The pit was not fully exposed within the confines of the trench but so far as could be observed measured 1.20m north to south, 0.75m east to west and was filled with a mid grey brown clayey silt (2068). Some 3.75m to the north of this, a partially exposed gully (2073) was recorded. This measured 0.90m east-to west and 0.55m north to south and was filled by a light grey brown sandy silt (2072). A curvilinear gully (2069) was noted at the northern limits of the extension. This measured 5.50m north to south and 0.75m east to west and was filled with a deposit of orange yellow silty clay (2071) and was in turn was overlain by a deposit of stones (2070).

Eastern extension (Figure 14)

6.14.20 At the western end of this extension a deposit (2077) that appeared to be the same as 1631 was exposed. Although the precise relationship between the two deposits was not visible in plan they were identical in nature. Some 2m to the east of 2077 was a curvilinear gully (2075), which was not fully exposed within the confines of the trench. The gully, as exposed, was 3.35m in length, 0.50m wide and filled with a mid brown grey clay silt (2076). Approximately 1m to the east of this a sub-circular pit (2078) was identified. This measured 1.40m east to west and was 1.10m north to south and contained one fill (2079), a mid to dark brown silty clay. Located 10m to the east of pit 2078 was the remains of a plough furrow (2080). This measured 1.35m south-west to north-east and 0.70m south-east to north-west. The channel of a former stream lay a further 1m east of the furrow. No further indications of anthropogenic activity were identified to the east of the stream channel.

6.15 ***Trench 53*** (contexts 1751-1756)

6.15.1 Trench 53 was located in the northern corner of field 10 and was oriented north-east to south-west. It measured 50m in length, 2m in width and was 0.25m to 0.65m deep.

6.15.2 The natural subsoil within trench 53 (1756) varied from pink clay to yellowish blue grey clay. It was cut within the central section of the trench by a ditch (1754) which had steeply sloping sides and a flat base. This was oriented north-west to south-east and measured 0.52m in width, 0.10m deep and was filled by topsoil (1755). The topsoil was composed of mid brown slightly silty clay.

6.15.3 Situated towards the north-eastern limits of the trench was a large cut (1753), which was not fully exposed within the confines of the trench. This feature was probably the remains of a clay extraction pit. The pit was characterised by a shallow slope on its south-western side and a flat base, and within the extents of the trench it measured 9.18m in length and 0.28m deep. The pit contained one fill (1751), a mid grey brown, slightly sandy clay, which contained ceramic building material. This deposit was overlain by a dark purplish brown organic deposit (1752), which extended 6.08m from the north-eastern end of the trench. The organic deposit was 0.13m thick, contained recent pottery and plastic twine and was sealed by topsoil (1755) comprising a mid brown slightly silty clay. This also sealed a modern field drain cutting the natural subsoil. The topsoil in trench 53 was 0.25m thick.

Trenches containing agricultural remains (3-5, 7, 9-13, 30, 38, 42-3, 45, 47, 49-50, 52, 54, 58)

6.16 Twenty trenches were recorded as containing remains of features of purely agricultural origin. These were essentially remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation (Plate 2) dating to the medieval or early post-medieval periods.

6.17 In Area 1 (3-5, 7, 9-13) the furrows were all oriented north-east to south-west and were dispersed throughout fields 6 and 7. In several of the trenches within

this area the furrows could be seen to align with visible earthwork remains. The furrows measured between 1.60m and 0.43m in width and between 0.03m and 0.13m in depth. The deposits filling the furrows varied between silty sand, silty clay sand, clay silt, sand clay and clay which ranged from mid grey brown to mid brown to yellow brown to dark grey to light grey in colour. Some furrows were filled by the topsoil only. The furrows were spaced at intervals between 4.80m and 9.50m.

- 6.18 The remains ridge and furrow cultivation in area 2 were not as extensive as those noted within area 1, though this may have been a result of later truncation. Eleven trenches (30, 38, 42-3, 45, 47, 49-50, 52, 54, 58) in area 2 contained furrows, which were aligned north-east to south-west, north-west to south-east and east to west. They measured between 2m and 0.35m in width and were between 0.18m to 0.01m in depth. The furrows contained fills of clay silts, silty clays, clayey sandy silts and clay. The colours of the fills varied between yellow brown, mid yellowish brown, mid brown, grey orange brown, mid grey orange and light grey. The profiles of the furrows were generally U-shaped with irregular, concave and flat bases. In trenches that contained more than one furrow they were spaced anywhere between 1m and 10m apart, a variability which probably represents different phases of agricultural manipulation.

Trenches containing no significant archaeological features (1, 6, 8, 14, 16, 18-24, 26, 29, 31-33, 37, 46, 48, 51, 55-57)

- 6.19 A total of twenty-four trenches did not contain any archaeological remains. Though the trenches were located throughout areas 1 and 2, there appeared to be a concentration within fields 9 and 12 of trenches devoid of archaeological remains. The topsoil within these trenches generally comprised clay silts, silt clays and clay sand and the natural subsoil was composed of variegated boulder clays that contained a few lenses of clay sand and clay silt lenses in some of the trenches. Several trenches contained field drains both with and without ceramic pipes, all of which were probably of 19th and 20th century date. No artefactual material was recovered from any of the trenches listed above.

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF SITE ARCHIVE

7.1 Preliminary analysis

- 7.1.1 As part of the assessment of the site records the following level of analysis has been undertaken:

1. Provisional matrices were drawn up showing the stratigraphic relationships of all contexts recorded.
2. Plans and sections were checked against context record sheets to ensure cross-referencing. Catalogues of context and finds records have been put onto a computerised database (Microsoft Access).

3. Catalogues of slide and print photographs, and illustrations have been input onto a computerised spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel).

The combined quantification of the site record for the site is as follows:

Table 1: Primary archive inventory

Context descriptions	263
Plans	90
Sections	71
Colour slides (films)	15
Black and white prints (films)	17

Table 2: Summary of contexts

<i>Feature type</i>	
Plough furrows	62
Gullies	9
Pits	11
Undefined features	38
Soils and subsoils	200
Natural layers	38

7.2 Recommendations for further analysis

- 7.2.1 Further work is required on the matrix for the site in conjunction with selectively dated samples and finds so that more reliably phased information on the site can be attained. This is with particular reference to trench 44.

7.3 Storage and curation

- 7.3.1 The written, drawn and photographic records and the artefacts are currently held by Northern Archaeological Associates.
- 7.3.2 The archive will be deposited with the Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle upon Tyne after completion of specialists studies.

7.4 Specialist assessments

Processing and quantification

- 7.4.1 Artefactual material was processed immediately after the conclusion of the fieldwork. All of the finds have been recorded, marked where appropriate, packed in labelled bags and placed in labelled museum storage boxes. Finds databases were produced in order of context number. The finds database tabulates the artefact type, quantity and includes a brief description. The artefact assemblages are summarised in table 3 below.
- 7.4.2 Once processed a sample of the artefactual material was sent to appropriate specialists for assessment.

Table 3: Finds assemblage

<i>Artefact type</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
Flint	8
Pottery sherds	30
Cbm	15
Clay pipe (bowls and bowl fragments)	1
Glass	5
Slag	2
Cinder	1
Fired clay	2
Wooden shoe heel	1

8.0 SPECIALIST REPORTS

Flint

8.1 **Summary**

The flint assemblage comprises eight pieces of struck flint from four separate trenches (2, 35, 40, 44). In addition to this a lump of rolled un-struck natural flint was recovered from trench 40. Two of the eight pieces are broken with six being complete and the assemblage comprises three chunks, two chippings, two flakes and one blade. There are no retouched tools present in the assemblage, which is not a homogenous collection, probably dating to the later Neolithic and/or early Bronze Age periods. The majority of the material is knapping debitage, which was probably obtained from local sources. The quantity and residual nature of much of the material limits its value to inform fully on the site.

8.2 **Results**

The assemblage is an admixture from different periods and clearly defined diagnostic pieces are few, yet some basic assumptions can perhaps be made. The state of the material from the trenches other than trench 44 is relatively fresh evidenced by the majority of the assemblage being complete. The degree of breakage is minimal, which would suggest that the flint had not been subject to intensive plough damage. The chipping from the palaeochannel (context 551) in trench 35 has been subjected to a light to moderate degree of burning, which may have occurred while the flint was buried in a sandy soil.

8.3 Some of the material from trench 44 is residual and has been disseminated from its archaeological context. Two flints (a blade and a chunk) recovered from the secondary fill of pit 1623 cannot be related to the feature and due to their location within the upper portion of the pit may also be residual. Plough damage is evident on one piece of flint, a pebble flake from plough furrow 1611. It bears a degree of patination and has been broken.

8.4 As the assemblage is small and likely to be multi-period. The chunks exhibit dorsal scarring, which is consistent with removal from semi-prepared cores. Excluding the blade from pit 1623 and a trimmed flake from topsoil context 559, the material is probably debitage from flint knapping. All of these knapped pieces are considered to be from the early stages of flint knapping.

The trimmed flake (context 5589) results from a slightly later stage of core reduction and is indicative of quality knapping. The blade (context 1624) is the only complete piece from the later stages of flint knapping although the piece may be residual. The knapping appears to have been undertaken using hard hammer techniques

8.5 There is evidence for edge use on three of the pieces, all of which come from trench 44. The pieces comprise the blade and chunk from pit 1623 and the broken flake from plough furrow 1611. The degree of edge use is light to moderate though its exact nature cannot be discerned.

8.6 The raw material used in the production of the pieces was probably of local origin and derived from gravel pebbles. It ranged from various shades of olive grey to olive brown in colour with one exception, a small chipping of orange brown coloured flint (context 1630). The olive grey/brown flint probably came from small (less than 10cm diameter) glacial till derived from flint pebbles. The orange brown flint is likely to have come from local river gravel exposures.

8.7 ***Recommendations***

The small size of the assemblage limits its potential. The material is prehistoric and mainly debitage. For the area the assemblage size is far smaller than might be expected. The flint assemblage is of little or no regional significance. No further study of the lithic assemblage from this site is warranted, and none of the material requires illustration. The assemblage should be retained for future comparative purposes.

Environmental assessment.

8.8 ***Summary***

Thirty-six bulk sediment samples recovered during excavations at North Stobswood were submitted for an evaluation of their bioarchaeological potential. Twelve of these were selected for evaluation and their washovers from processing were examined for plant and invertebrate macrofossils.

8.9 ***Results***

The residues were primarily mineral in nature and ancient biological remains recovered from the processed subsamples were restricted to very small quantities of wood charcoal of no interpretive value. In some cases sufficient charcoal could be recovered for radiocarbon dating of the deposit to be attempted. Dating of the charcoal could perhaps be of some limited value in determining whether certain features are of prehistoric or much later date. Though this is not recommended as even the larger fragments of charcoal were relatively new growth or old wood, which would return an artificially old radiocarbon date. All of the examined deposits had been subject to root penetration and many others contained remains of modern origin (seed fragments, earthworm egg capsules).

8.10 ***Recommendations***

No further study of the biological remains from this site is warranted, unless material is required for submission for radiocarbon dating. All of the residues and remaining unprocessed soil fractions can be discarded.

Other Finds

8.11 Summary

A quantity of finds including pottery, ceramic building material (cbm), clay pipe, glass, industrial waste, and fired clay was recovered during the excavations. A total of 30 sherds of pottery, 15 fragments of cbm, 1 clay pipe bowl, 5 pieces of glass, 2 fragments of slag, 1 piece of cinder, 2 small pieces of fired clay and a wooden shoe heel was recovered from twenty six contexts.

8.12 Results

The pottery included Staffordshire type yellow slipped red earthenware, white earthenware with both blue and white, and green and white transfer print design and stoneware. All the pottery dated from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. A clay pipe bowl from topsoil 1001 was a Briar type imitation and dated from the 1930s onwards. The remaining finds were also post-medieval in date.

8.13 Recommendations

It is clear from the assessment of material from the site that the whole assemblage is of post-medieval date and has no significance or potential for further work. It is therefore recommended that all the material be discarded.

9.0 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site of the proposed development at North Stobswood covers an extensive portion of land located within a wider landscape known to contain archaeological remains dating from the Mesolithic period onwards. The site has been extensively truncated by past and present agricultural activity and there is also some evidence to suggest that clay extraction occurred in parts of the site at some stage in the past.

9.2 A total of three stratigraphic phases were recognised during the course of the evaluation, the earliest of these, which seems to originate in the prehistoric period, appears to have had its principal focus within field 6. The features identified in this area consist of a series of cut features which include gullies, post-holes and pits, some of which exhibited indications of *in situ* burning. Other features, such as arrangements of smooth, flat, stones which may have acted as post pads, noted in trench 40 could arguably have their origins in later periods or might be completely coincidental natural features. At this stage the precise nature of the activity resulting in the archaeological features identified so far has not been fully elucidated but, in general, the features and finds encountered in this area of the site, particularly those in trench 44, would appear to be settlement related. Other forms of activity, such as funerary or other ritual activity cannot, however, be readily dismissed since there was little artefactual material present at the site to support or refute either interpretation. The only readily datable material, in the form of flint flakes and debitage, recovered from features within trench 44, was of Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

- 9.3 Evidence for prehistoric activity across the remainder of the site is uncertain. Whilst a number of pits and gullies were encountered in other areas, none of these yielded datable artefactual material. Where occasional features did occur, the extension of the trenches did not provide much additional useful information. For example, a series of gullies identified in trenches 34 and 35 prompted the further expansion of these trenches. Aside from the identification of a few additional undated pits in both trenches, the further examination of the trenches only served to confirm the alignment of the gullies, which was almost identical in both trenches despite the fact that they were situated approximately 250m apart. The inevitable interpretation of these features is that they form part of an undated land division or demarcation system which seems to predate the medieval ridge and furrow system encountered over the majority of the site. The regularity of alignment might indicate that the linear gullies had their origins in the later Roman-British, or early medieval periods but such an interpretation cannot yet be substantiated. Many of the pits could equally represent something as mundane as the root boles of gorse bushes, and in support of this interpretation, many of the pits identified across the site as a whole were filled by deposits containing a high percentage of root fibrils.
- 9.4 The second and more readily identifiable phase of activity relates to the agricultural exploitation of the site during the medieval period. The remains of ridge and furrow cultivation were identified as relict subsurface features or upstanding earthworks over the majority of the site. Where such remains were absent in the evaluation trenches, their absence is probably attributable to the alignment and size of the trenches in relation to that of the furrows, or to the effects of later agricultural attrition. This latter effect was particularly apparent in field 11 where there was a near complete absence of topsoil, the crop present at the time of the evaluation having been planted directly into clay. Several different furrow alignments were noted across the site and the depths of medieval subsoil preserved at the site were generally relatively shallow. There was no evidence of the possible medieval settlement alluded to in the desk-based assessment of the site and the general paucity of artefactual evidence attributable to the medieval period in any part of the site suggests that the settlement responsible for its cultivation was located some distance away. As a result of this, the land was not subjected to the intensive levels of manuring seen in other areas with known settlement associations, for example, at North Seaton (NAA 2004b), where significant quantities of medieval pottery were recovered.
- 9.5 The third phase of activity identified at the site relates to the post-medieval and modern periods. Two potential clay extraction pits were partially exposed. There is no evidence for the presence of this type of extractive industry apparent in any of the early maps of the area, and if the pits were used for clay extraction then it would appear that this was undertaken on a casual basis, perhaps for *ad hoc* brick making. Other features of this period were restricted to evidence of the former track- and roadways depicted in cartographic sources.

10.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Archaeological remains of a diverse nature, dating from the prehistoric period to the 20th century were encountered across the majority of site of the proposed development. The focus of prehistoric activity, possibly settlement related, has been demonstrated to be centred in one specific area, in field 6, though it is acknowledged that some of the more disparate collection of gullies and pits encountered elsewhere on the site may also be contemporaneous. The precise character and extents of this activity were not fully elucidated by this programme of trial excavation though it is clear that the level of preservation exhibited by those features identified so far is relatively poor. The poor condition of these remains is directly attributable to attrition resulting from agricultural activity demonstrated to date from the medieval period onwards. There would also appear to be some potential for agricultural remains from an earlier, so far undated, period existing at the site, and these too will have contributed to the truncation of features belonging to the prehistoric period. Certain parts of the site may have also been subjected to clay extraction. Although the reason and period of this activity remains obscure, extractive processes of this nature will also have compromised the survival of any archaeological remains that may have once existed in the areas concerned.
- 10.2 The desk-based assessment (TWM 2003) highlighted the possibility of the presence of medieval building plots within the boundary of the development. Despite a concentrated campaign of trial trenching within the area proposed for this settlement, no structural evidence and very little artefactual material originating in the medieval period existed at the site. Agricultural remains in the form of ridge and furrow cultivation were present in the majority of the area of the proposed development, including the area of the putative settlement. These remains were moderately well preserved in some areas of the site, but appear to have been completely eradicated by later activity in field 11.
- 10.3 Other than the possible remains of hitherto unrecorded clay extraction pits, there is clear and comprehensive cartographic evidence for the presence of all of the other post-medieval features identified during the course of the evaluation.

Mitigation

- 10.4 The proposed development will involve the removal of all existing surfaces and features present at the site with the exception of those located in the areas of the subsoil bund, where only topsoil will be removed, and the topsoil bund which will not be subjected to soil stripping. The impact of the development will be severe and will result in the total loss of any archaeological remains that still survive at the site. The majority of the archaeological features potentially attributable to the prehistoric period are in a poor state of preservation and as such do not merit preservation *in situ*. However, their preservation *by record* is recommended. The surviving archaeological remains originating in the medieval and later periods are of relatively limited importance and do not warrant further intrusive intervention.

- 10.5 In order to effect the preservation of those archaeological remains present in field 6 it is recommended that a further programme of archaeological investigation be undertaken in order to identify and fully record all of the surviving archaeological remains that may exist within this area. This should take the form of an open area excavation of that part of field 6 that has been demonstrated to contain archaeological features almost certainly originating in the prehistoric period (Figure 16). The excavation should be undertaken in advance of the commencement of the development in order to allow sufficient time to identify, record and sample excavate any archaeological features present within this area. In addition a programme of the archaeological monitoring of all soil removal should be initiated in those areas demonstrated to contain the remains of linear gullies and pits of unknown date in order to elucidate their form, function and chronology (Figure 16). This would be undertaken during the phase of the preliminary groundworks required by the development.
- 10.6 A Written Scheme of Investigation for these works should be prepared and this should be agreed as a suitable scheme of works for the project by the Archaeological Officers of Northumberland County Council and UK Coal Mining Ltd.

NAA Report No: 04/55
Date: July 2004
Revised: November 2004
Project: 614
Text: Catrin Jenkins
Illustrations: Andrew Durkin
Edited by: Paul G Johnson
OASIS No: northern1-5306

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dobney, K., Hall, A. R., Kenward, H. K. and Milles, A. (1992). A working classification of sample types for environmental archaeology. *Circaea, the Journal of the Association for Environmental Archaeology* **9** (for 1991), 24-6.

English Heritage (1991) *Management of Archaeological Projects*

English Heritage (1995) *A Strategy for the Care and Investigation of Finds* Ancient Monuments Laboratory

English Heritage (2002) *Environmental Archaeology – A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*

Kenward, H. K., Hall, A. R. and Jones, A. K. G. (1980). A tested set of techniques for the extraction of plant and animal macrofossils from waterlogged archaeological deposits. *Science and Archaeology* **22**, 3-15.

Jarvis *et al* (1984): *Soils and Their Use in Northern England* Soils Survey of England and Wales Bulletin No. **10**

MacKenzie E (1825) *Historical View of the County of Northumberland*. Vol. II. Newcastle upon Tyne.

Neal V & Watkinson D (1998) *First Aid for Finds*

Northern Archaeological Associates (2004a) *North Stobswood, Northumberland; Archaeological Evaluation, Written Scheme of Investigation*. **NAA report 04/25**

Northern Archaeological Associates (2004b) *North Seaton Business Park, Northumberland: Post-excavation Assessment* **NAA Report 04/42**

TimeScape Surveys (2003) *North Stobswood Surface Mine, Ulgham, Northumberland. Geophysical Survey Report*.

Tyne and Wear Museums, Archaeology Department (2003) *North Stobswood Northumberland. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Assessment*.

APPENDIX I

Flint report

Peter Makey

Introduction. (For fuller descriptions see archive catalogue)

The North Stobswood assemblages comprised 8 pieces of struck flint (25.9g) from 4 separate trenches. In addition to this a lump (49.3g) of rolled un-struck natural flint was recovered from trench 40 (context 502, record 3).

The Main Points of the Assemblage.

- The assemblage consists of 3 chunks, 2 chippings, 2 flakes (1 broken) and 1 blade.
- No retouched tools are present in the assemblage.
- The material is not a homogenous collection.
- The material is probably of later Neolithic and / or early Bronze Age date.
- Most of the material is knapping debitage.
- Raw material was probably obtained from local sources.

Basic Trench Catalogue.

Trench 2. Area 1.
1 Chunk (context 301, topsoil).
Date: Prehistoric.

Trench 35. Area 2.
1 Chipping (context 552, fill of palaeochannel 551).
Date: Later Neolithic / Early Bronze Age.

1 Flake (blade like) (context 559, topsoil).

Trench 40. Area 2.
1 Chunk (context 502, natural subsoil).
Date: Prehistoric.

Trench 44. Area 2.
1 Flake {broken} (context 1612, plough furrow 1611).
1 Blade (context 1624, secondary fill of pit 1623).
1 Chunk (context 1624, secondary fill of pit 1623).
1 Chipping / Spall (context 1630, fill of gully 1629).
Date: Later Neolithic / Early Bronze Age. Early Bronze Age, probable.

State.

The material from the trenches other than trench 44 is in a reasonably fresh state and does not appear to have been subjected to any great degree of soil movement. The chipping from the palaeochannel (context 552) in trench 35 (record 4) has been subjected to a light to moderate degree of burning. This probably occurred while the flint was buried in a sandy soil.

The material from trench 44 is clearly residual and has been dispersed from its archaeological context. The pieces from the secondary fill of pit 1623 cannot be related to the feature. A pebble flake (record 6) from plough furrow 1611 betrays traces of plough damage and patination and has also been broken.

Reduction Sequence & Raw Material Technology.

Consideration of the knapping of the material can only be generalised since the assemblage is small and probably of more than 1 period. The chunks have dorsal scarring, consistent with initial removals from semi-prepared cores. All the material apart from the blade (record 7) from trench 44, pit 1623 and a trimmed flake (record 5) from topsoil (context 559) can be considered to be debitage from flint knapping. Most pieces are from early stages of flint knapping. The trimmed flake is from a slightly later stage of core reduction. The flake is indicative of quality knapping. The blade is the only finished piece from later stages of flint knapping although the piece is clearly residual. Knapping appears to have been by hard hammers.

The raw material employed was of various shades of olive grey to olive brown colour with 1 exception being a small chipping (trench 44, context 1630, record 9) of orange brown coloured flint. The orange brown flint probably comes from local fluviatile gravel exposures. The other raw material probably came from small (less than 10cm diameter) glacial till derived flint pebbles.

Use Wear.

Evidence of edge use is present on 3 of the pieces, all of which come from trench 44. The pieces comprise the blade and chunk from pit 1623 and the broken flake from plough furrow 1611. The degree is light to moderate but its exact nature cannot be discerned.

Chronology.

The material is an admixture and so cannot be accurately dated. All the struck material is prehistoric. The character of the trimming flake (record 5) from context 559 and the blade from pit 1623 (record 7, trench 44) is consistent with a later Neolithic to early Bronze Age date. Regionally such pieces are slightly more common in early Bronze Age assemblages.

The Regional Significance of the Assemblage.

The flint assemblage is of little or no regional significance.

The Archaeological Potential of the Flint Assemblage.

The small size of the assemblage limits its potential. The material is prehistoric and mainly debitage. For the area the assemblage size is far smaller than might be expected. The relative fresh nature of the material might indicate that un-disturbed prehistoric deposits remain to be discovered in the area of the evaluation.

Illustration.

None of the pieces require illustration.

APPENDIX II

Environmental Remains

John Carrott and Stewart Gardner

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation excavation was carried out by Northern Archaeological Associates at the site of a proposed coal and fireclay extraction area at North Stobswood, Northumberland (NGR NZ 2290 9480), during 2004.

Thirty-six bulk sediment samples ('GBA'/'BS' *sensu* Dobney *et al.* 1992) were recovered from the encountered deposits. The samples were submitted to Palaeoecology Research Services Limited (PRS), County Durham, for an evaluation of their bioarchaeological potential.

Methods

All of the sediment samples were inspected in the laboratory and twelve were selected (from the excavator's initial 'short list' of nineteen) for evaluation. The lithologies of the selected samples were recorded, using a standard *pro forma*, prior to the processing of subsamples, broadly following the procedures of Kenward *et al.* (1980), for the recovery of plant and invertebrate macrofossils.

The washovers resulting from processing were examined for plant and invertebrate macrofossils. The residues were primarily mineral in nature and were dried, weighed and their components recorded.

The residues were primarily mineral in nature and were dried, weighed and their components recorded.

Results

The results are presented in context number order by Trench. Archaeological information, provided by the excavator, is given in square brackets. A brief summary of the processing method and an estimate of the remaining volume of unprocessed sediment follows (in round brackets) after the sample numbers. Sample numbers were derived from the context numbers for PRS internal recording keeping purposes.

No ancient invertebrate remains were recovered from the subsamples.

TRENCH 15 (AREA 1) – oriented north-east to south-west and measured 20 m long by 2 m wide, and was up to 0.60 m deep

Context 1008 [fill of post-pipe 1009, cutting plough furrow]

Sample 100801/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 13 litres of unprocessed sediment remain).

- Just moist, light grey-brown to mid to dark grey-brown, crumbly, slightly clay sandy silt. There was a trace of rotted charcoal and stones (2 to 20 mm) and modern rootlets were present.

- The small washover (~20 ml) was mostly angular fine wood charcoal (three larger fragments to 25 mm but most to 2 mm), with some modern rootlets and sclerotia of soil dwelling fungus.
- The residue was small (dry weight 0.38 kg) and mostly of sand, with stones (to 30 mm), mortar (~7 g) and charcoal (~5 g of larger fragments sorted from residue but many smaller fragments left).

TRENCH 27 (AREA 2) – aligned north-east to south-west, opened as 50 m long by 2.15 m wide but subsequently widened to 6.40 m

Context 704 [secondary fill of pit 703, containing charcoal]

Sample 70401/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 14 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Just moist, light buff to mid to dark grey-brown (in shades of grey-brown; also light to mid orange-brown in places), stiff to crumbly (working plastic), slightly silty clay, with some rotted charcoal present.
- Approximately one-third of the small washover (~25 ml) was modern rootlets. The remainder was fine wood charcoal (to 5 mm) and sclerotia, with a few charred seeds and fragments of modern beetle cuticle.
- The very small residue (dry weight 0.18 kg) was sand, with some stones (to 25 mm) and a little charcoal (less than 1 g).

TRENCH 28 (AREA 2) – oriented north-east to south-west and originally 50.20 m long by 2 m wide. This trench was extended to the south-east and north-west to 51 m by 12.10 m and was between 0.27 m and 0.40 m deep

Context 1254 [fill of possible post-hole, may contain burnt flint]

Sample 125401/T (2.9 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; no unprocessed sediment remains)

- Just moist, light brown to mid grey-brown (in shades of grey and grey-brown), crumbly to unconsolidated, sandy clay silt. There was a trace of ?coal and modern rootlets and seedlings were present.
- There was a small washover (~30 ml) of modern plant debris (rootlets, other detritus and some seeds), with a little fine wood charcoal (most to 2 mm, occasionally to 12 mm), some sclerotia and ?earthworm egg capsules (also probably modern).
- The small residue (dry weight 0.38 kg) was mostly stones (to 30 mm), with some sand and coal (~2 g), and a little charcoal (~1 g) and ?glass (less than 1 g).

TRENCH 40 (AREA 2) – oriented approximately north-east to south-west and initially 50 m long by 2 m wide; extended to the north-west and south-east to 50.70 m by 12.85 m and 0.30 m deep

Context 515 [fill of possible gully 514]

Sample 51501/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 13 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Moist, mid grey-brown, crumbly to unconsolidated (working soft and more or less plastic), silty clay, with occasional patches of light to mid orange-brown clay. Stones (20 to over 60 mm) and modern rootlets were present.
- There was a small washover (~40 ml) of modern rootlets, with traces of coal and cinder (both to 2 mm), a few seeds (probably also modern) and very many sclerotia of soil dwelling fungus.
- There was a small residue (dry weight 0.42 kg) of sand and stones (to 80 mm), with a trace of charcoal (~1 g).

TRENCH 41 (AREA 2) – aligned approximately east to west, 50 m long by 2.20 m wide and up to 0.40 m deep

Context 605 [secondary fill of burnt pit 603]

Sample 60501/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 22 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Just moist, light to mid grey-brown to mid to dark grey, crumbly to unconsolidated (working soft), clay silt, with stones (20 to 60 mm), rotted charcoal and modern rootlets present.
- The washover was of modest size (~90 ml) and mostly of modern rootlets. There were also traces of wood charcoal (to 7 mm, some angular and some rounded), very many sclerotia and occasional fragments of cinder (to 3 mm).
- The small residue (dry weight 0.41 kg) was mostly stones (to 40 mm), with some sand and a trace of charcoal (~2 g).

Context 623 [primary fill of burnt pit 603, possible hearth]

Sample 62301/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 23 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Just moist, mid to dark grey (colour resulting from abundant very fine charred material in matrix), crumbly to unconsolidated, clay silt. Rotted charcoal was abundant and modern rootlets were present.
- The small washover (~60 ml) was of modern rootlets, with many sclerotia and a little fine wood charcoal (most to 2 mm but occasional larger fragments to 8 mm).
- The medium-sized residue (dry weight 0.76 kg) was mostly stones and charcoal (there were 12 g of larger fragments, to 18 mm, but abundant finer material was left in the residue), with some sand, mortar/plaster (22 g) and brick/tile (36 g).

TRENCH 44 (AREA 2) – initially opened as 50 m long by 2 m wide, subsequently extended by a further 12 m by 5 m to the north and south side, and again by three 2 m wide extensions to the north, south and east sides of the east end of the trench

Context 1618 [fill of pit 1617]

Sample 161801/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 13 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Dry, light to mid brown to mid grey-brown (in shades of grey-brown; also occasional patches of light to mid orange-brown), indurated to crumbly, silty clay. Stones (6 to 60 mm) and modern rootlets were present.
- The small washover (~50 ml) was of modern rootlets, with a trace of fine wood charcoal (to 2 mm) and some sclerotia.
- The residue was small (dry weight 0.75 kg) and mostly of sand, with stones (to 30 mm), mortar (~7 g) and charcoal (~5 g of larger fragments sorted from residue but many smaller fragments left).

Context 1624 [secondary fill of pit 1623, contained flint]

Sample 162401/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 15 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Dry, light grey-brown to mid grey-brown, indurated to brittle, silty clay, with some charcoal flecks, stones (6 to 20 mm) and modern rootlets present.
- The washover was of modest size (~80 ml) and of modern rootlets, with some sclerotia and a few seed fragments (also modern).
- The residue was rather small (dry weight 0.52 kg) and mostly of sand, with stones (to 10 mm) and a little charcoal (less than 1 g).

Context 1626 [fill of curvilinear gully 1625]

Sample 162601/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 5 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Dry, light grey-brown to mid orange-brown (with some patches of dark grey), indurated to brittle (working crumbly), slightly silty clay, with stones (6 to 60 mm) and modern rootlets present.
- The small washover (~50 ml) was of modern rootlets, with a trace of fine wood charcoal (to 1 mm).
- The medium-sized residue (dry weight 0.95 kg) was of sand and stones (to 50 mm), with a little cinder (~1 g).

Context 1630 [secondary fill of pit 1623, contained flint]

Sample 163001/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 14 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Dry, light to mid grey-brown to mid orange-brown to mid to dark grey, brittle to crumbly (working plastic when wetted), slightly silty clay, with a trace of ?charcoal, stones (20 to 60 mm) and modern rootlets present.
- The small washover (~25 ml) was of modern rootlets, with a few sand grains, fragments of fine wood charcoal (to 5 mm) and ?earthworm egg capsules (again probably modern).

- The medium-sized residue (dry weight 1.01 kg) was of stones (to 60 mm), with some sand and a trace of coal (less than 1 g).

Context 1631 [curvilinear deposit]

Sample 163101/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 13 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Dry, light grey-brown to mid to dark grey-brown (and shades of grey-brown between), brittle to crumbly, stony (stones 6 to 60 mm were common), silty clay, with traces of ?coal and modern rootlets present.
- The medium-sized washover (~110 ml) was of modern rootlets, with a trace of fine wood charcoal (to 4 mm).
- The large residue (dry weight 1.52 kg) was of stones (to 40 mm), with some sand and a little cinder (~5 g).

Context 1634 [primary fill of pit 1623]

Sample 163401/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 2 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

- Dry, light grey and light brown to mid grey-brown (with some patches of mid orange-brown), indurated to crumbly, silty clay, with traces of ?charcoal (as flecks) and modern rootlets present.
- The small washover (~25 ml) was mostly of modern rootlets, with some sclerotia and a trace of fine wood charcoal (to 3 mm, very rotted, crumbly and rounded).
- The small residue (dry weight 0.36 kg) was mostly sand, with one stone (to 50 mm) and a little coal and charcoal (both less than 1 g).

Discussion and statement of potential

Ancient biological remains recovered from the processed subsamples were restricted to very small quantities of wood charcoal of no interpretative value. In some cases (e.g. context 1008) sufficient charcoal could be recovered for radiocarbon dating of the deposit to be attempted but this is not recommended if relatively precise dating is required—even the larger fragments of charcoal were rather poorly preserved, not identifiable to species and indeterminate as to whether they represented relatively new growth or old wood (which would return an artificially old radiocarbon date). Dating of the charcoal could perhaps be of some limited value in determining whether certain features are of prehistoric or much later date (e.g. medieval, post-medieval), however.

All of the examined deposits had been subject to modern root penetration and many contained other remains of modern origin (e.g. seed fragments, sclerotia, ?earthworm egg capsules). Should radiocarbon dating be attempted then care would need to be taken that such material was not included with the submitted sample.

Recommendations

No further study of the biological remains from this site is warranted, unless material is required for submission for radiocarbon dating.

Retention and disposal

Unless, as noted above, material is required for radiocarbon dating, the remaining sediment samples and the washovers and residues from the processed subsamples may be discarded.

Archive

All material is currently stored by Palaeoecology Research Services (Unit 8, Dabble Duck Industrial Estate, Shildon, County Durham), along with paper and electronic records pertaining to the work described here.

APPENDIX III

Other Finds Assessment

Sarah Wilkinson

Introduction and methodology

A quantity of finds including pottery, ceramic building material (cbm), clay pipe, glass, industrial waste, and fired clay was recovered during excavations at North Stobswood Farm in Northumberland. A wooden shoe heel with iron nails *in situ* was also recovered. A small flint assemblage is discussed elsewhere.

The material was washed and quantified in the two measures of count and weight and entered into an Access database. The material all dated to the post-medieval period, approximately the eighteenth to the twentieth century.

Discussion

A total of 30 sherds of pottery, 15 fragments of cbm, 1 clay pipe bowl, 5 pieces of glass, 2 fragments of slag, 1 piece of cinder, 2 small pieces of fired clay and a wooden shoe heel was recovered from twenty six contexts.

The pottery included Staffordshire type yellow slipped red earthenware, white earthenware with both blue and white, and green and white transfer print design and stoneware. All the pottery dated from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. A clay pipe bowl from topsoil 1001 was a Briar type imitation and dated from the 1930s onwards. The remaining finds were also Post Medieval.

Recommendations

It is clear from the assessment of material from Stobswood Farm that the whole assemblage is of post-medieval date and has no significance or potential for further work. It is therefore recommended that all the material discussed here be discarded.

NORTH STOBWOOD, NORTHUMBERLAND

Addendum to Trial Trenching Report (NAA 04/55)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document presents an addendum to the results of a programme of archaeological evaluation at the site of a proposed coal and fireclay extraction area at North Stobswood, Northumberland (NZ 2290 9480). The report for this work was prepared by Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA) for UK Coal Ltd in July 2004 and was subsequently revised in November 2004 (NAA 04/55).
- 1.2 This addendum has been prepared in response to a revised development proposal in which the area of the development has been reduced and the position of the site access altered. The new layout is depicted on UK Coal drawing 173/D29.

2.0 PREDICTED IMPACTS OF THE REVISED SCHEME

- 2.1 The proposed area of extraction is situated within an area which was demonstrated to contain archaeological remains during the course of the evaluation of the site undertaken in 2004. These were fragmentary and disparate and not considered to be of sufficient importance to warrant their preservation *in situ*
- 2.2 The revised access to the proposed extraction area would be via an underpass directly opposite the entrance to the existing Stobswood mine. The access route would be constructed within an area examined in three archaeological evaluation trenches, trenches 11, 12 and 13. All three of these trenches contained the remains of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation but no other archaeological features (NAA 2004, 20). No artefactual material was recovered from any of the trenches.

3.00 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The area of extraction under the revised scheme is still situated within an area containing archaeological remains however the recommendations made for the mitigation of this area (ibid 27) would not be altered by the revision of the original scheme.
- 3.2 The revised position of the access track would impinge upon an area containing the truncated remains of medieval ridge and furrow and no additional mitigation measures are required or recommended.

References

Northern Archaeological Associates (2004) *North Stobswood, Northumberland Trial Trenching Report*. NAA report **04/55**

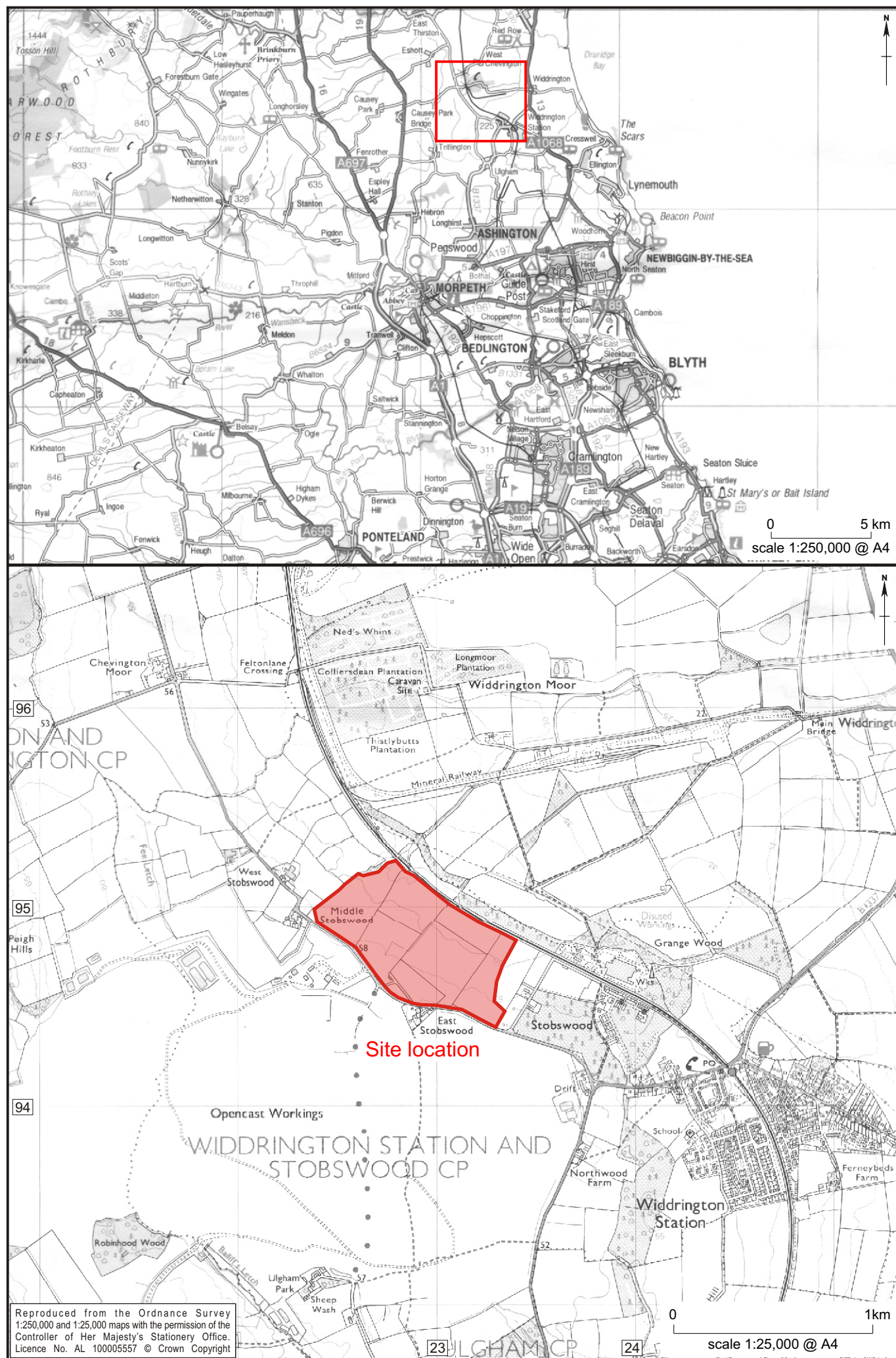


Figure 1 North Stobswood: site location

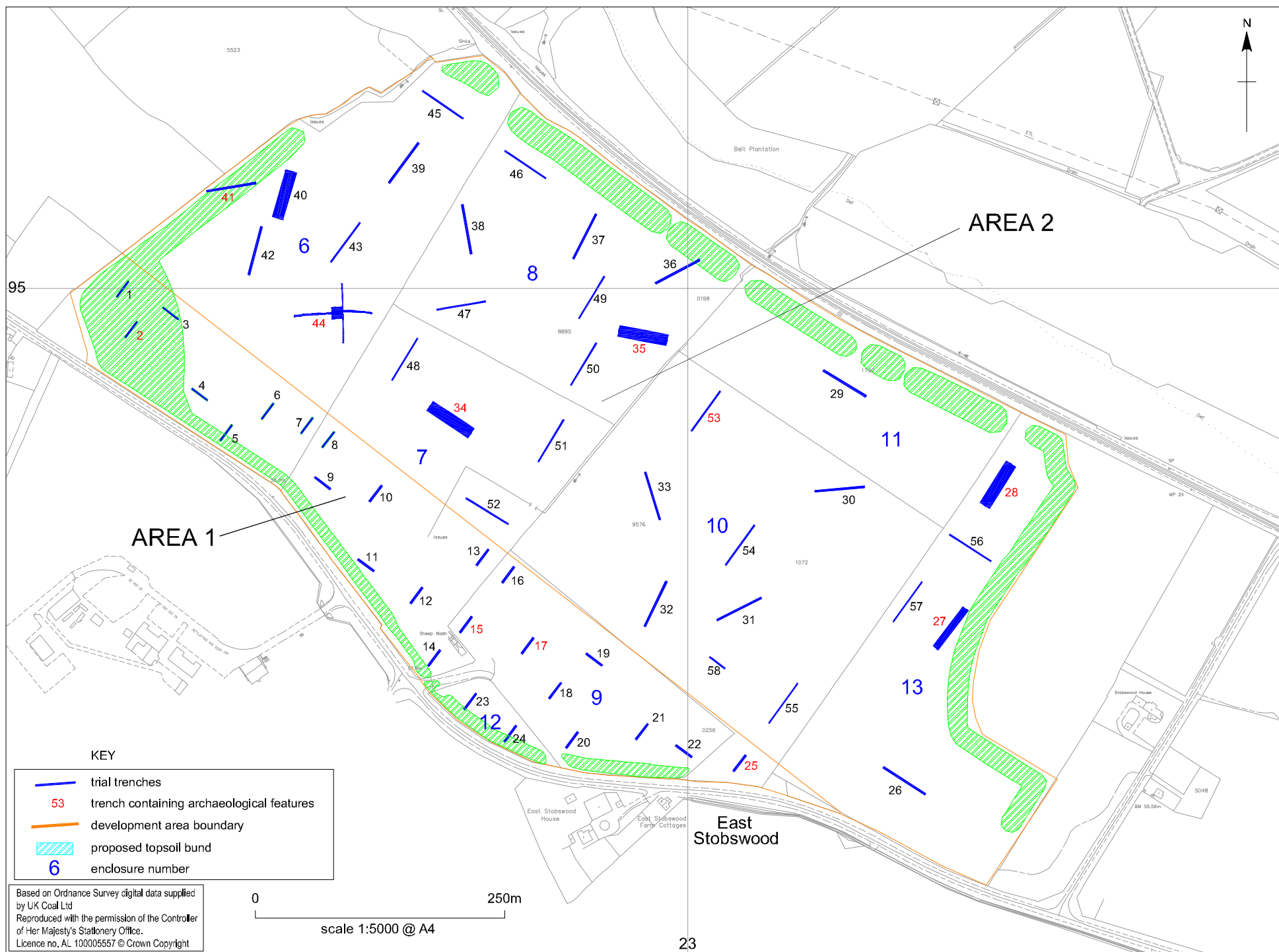
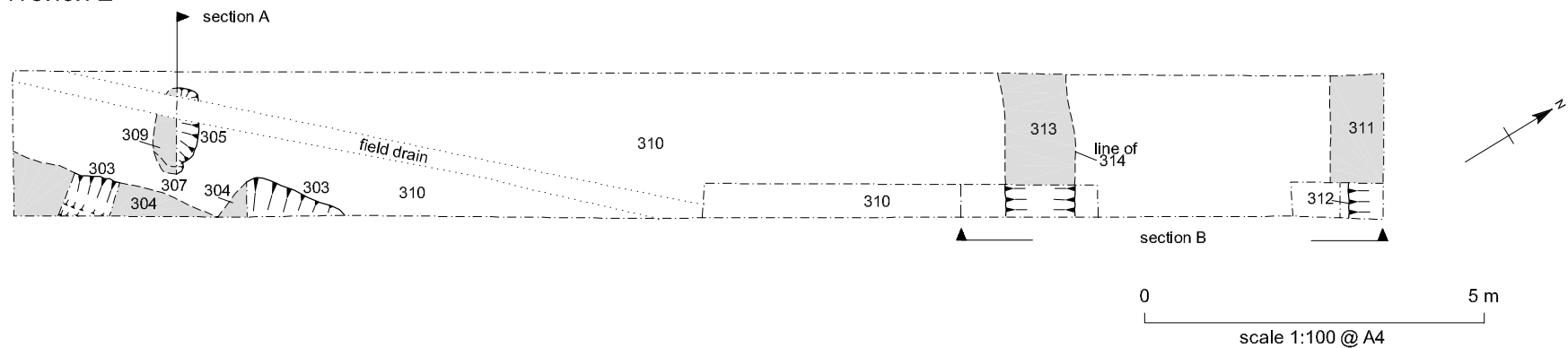
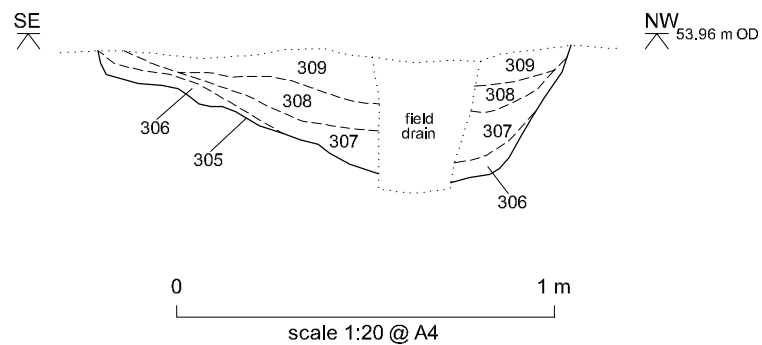


Figure 2 North Stobswood: trench locations

Trench 2



section A



section B

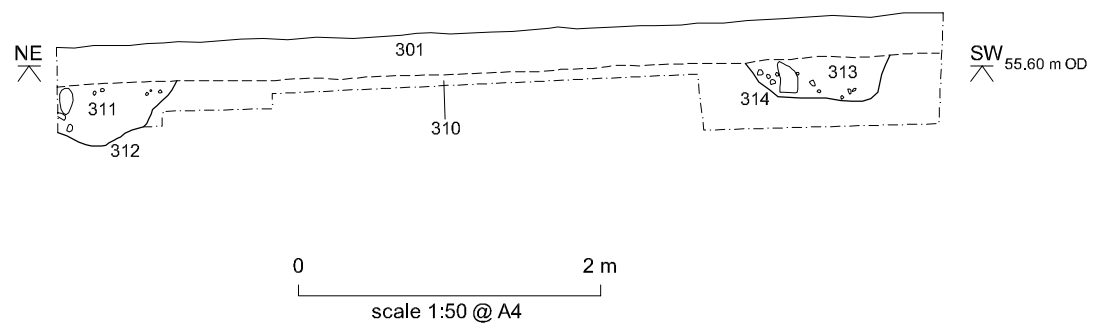


Figure 3 North Stobswood: trench 2, plan and sections

Trench 15

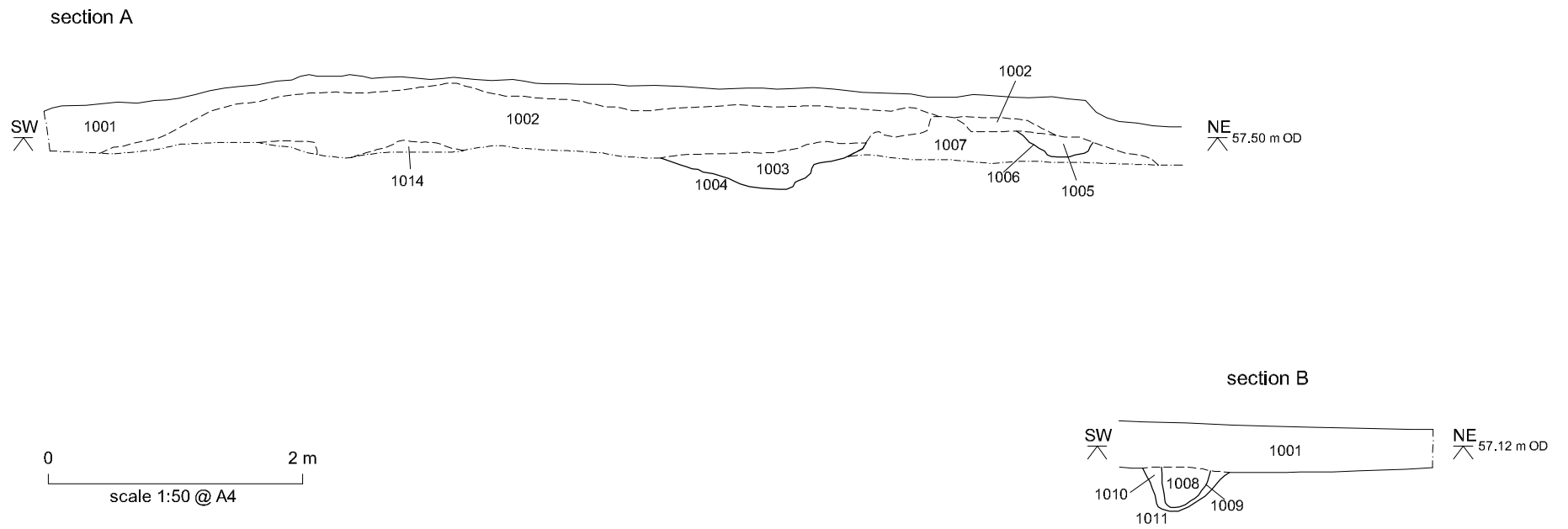
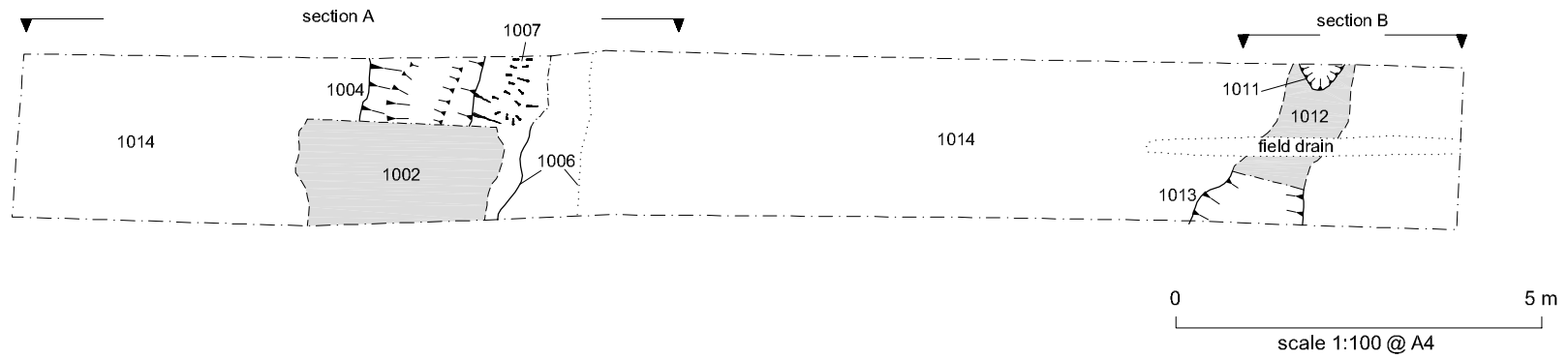


Figure 4 North Stobswood: trench 15, plan and sections

Trench 17

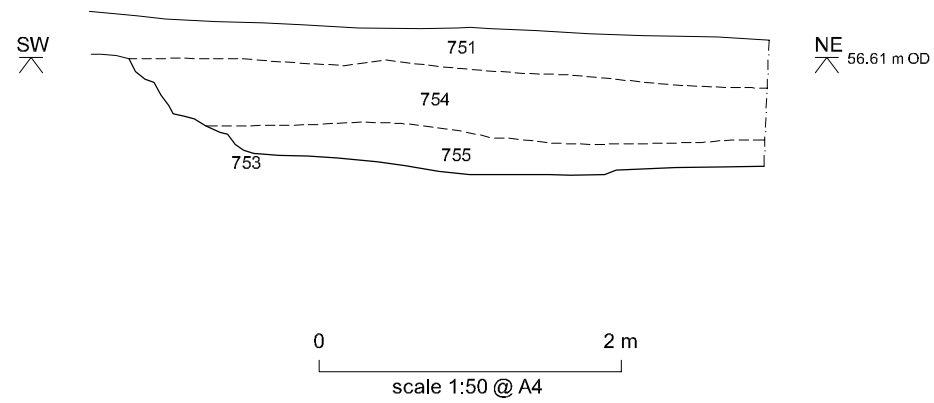
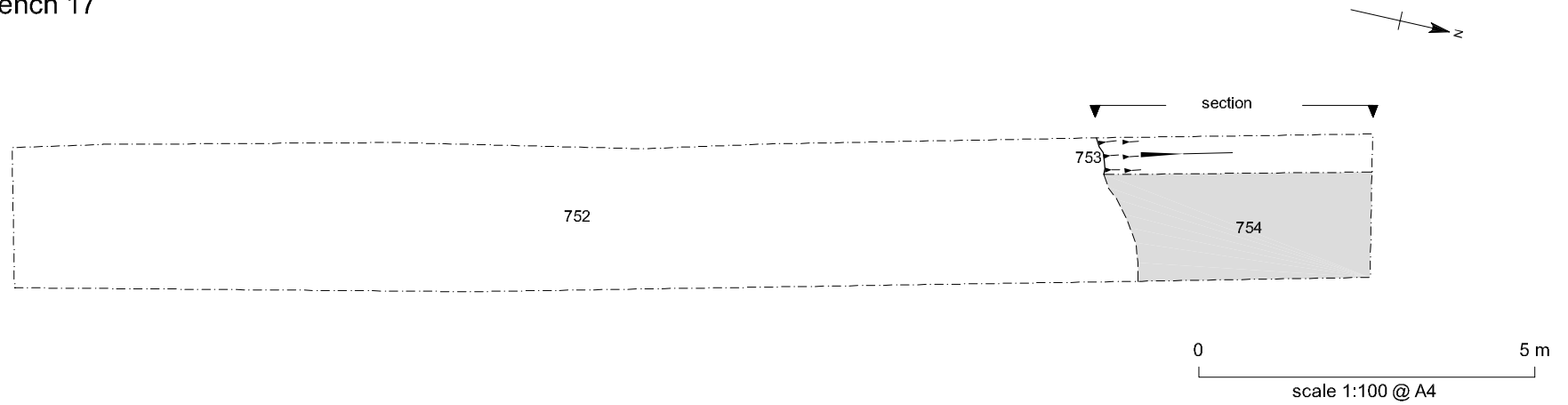


Figure 5 North Stobswood: trench 17, plan and section

Trench 25

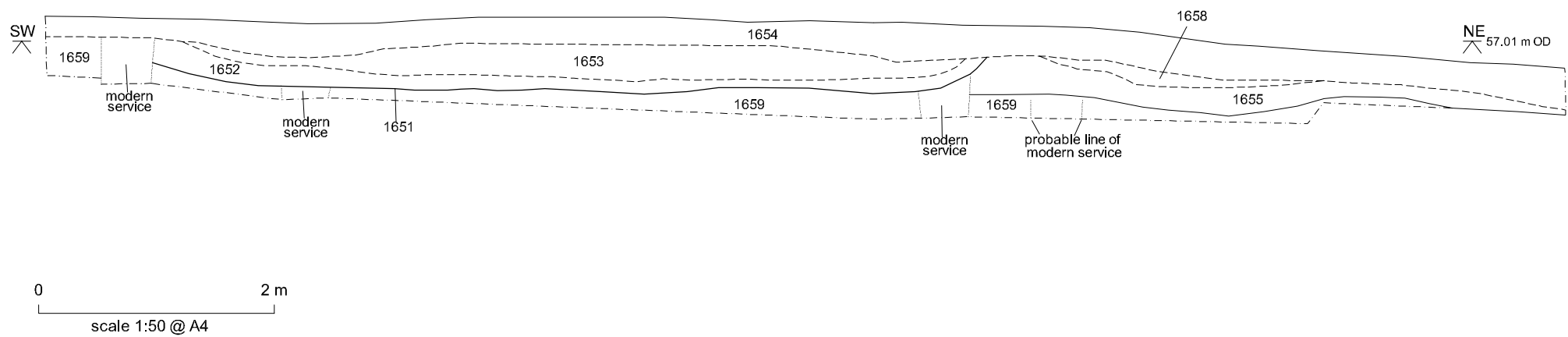
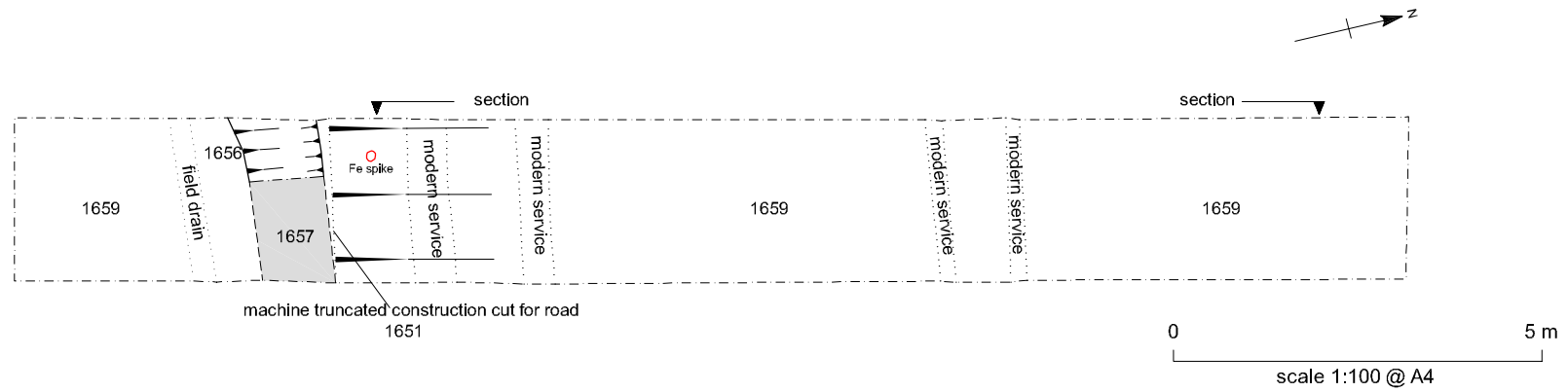
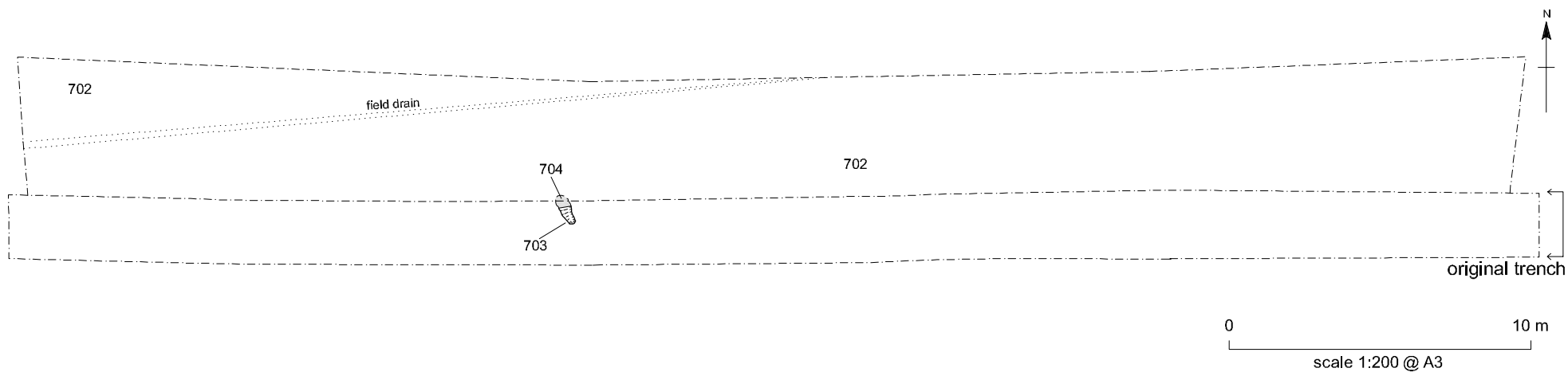


Figure 6 North Stobswood: trench 25, plan and section

Trench 27



Detailed plan of pit 703

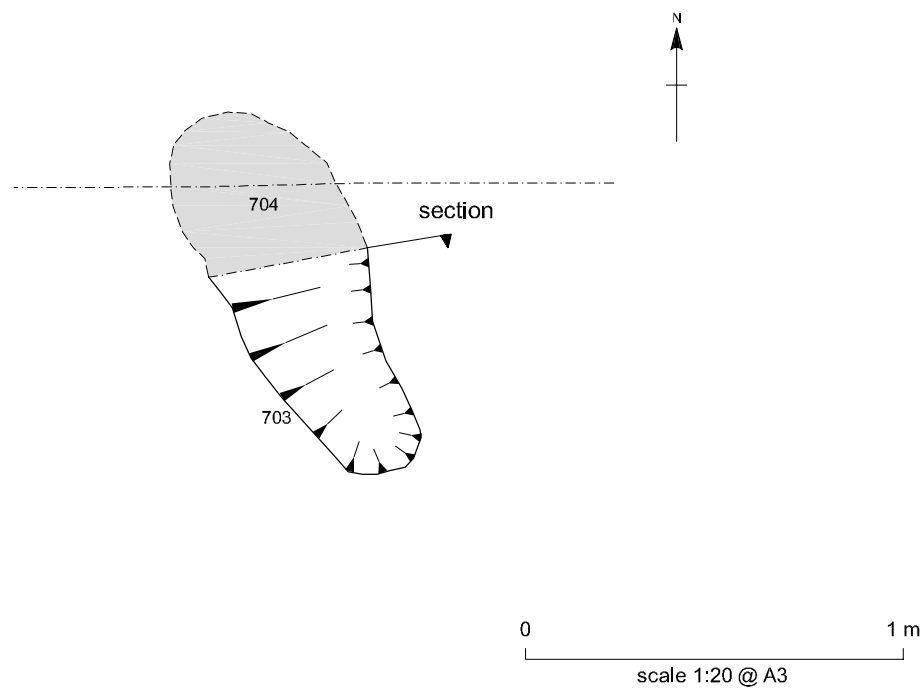


Figure 7 North Stobswood: trench 27, plans and section

Trench 28

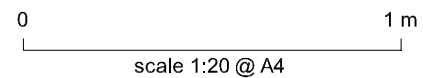
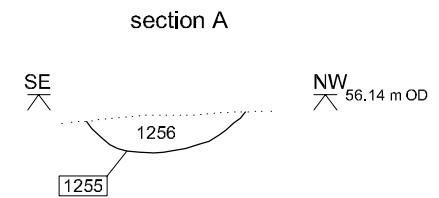
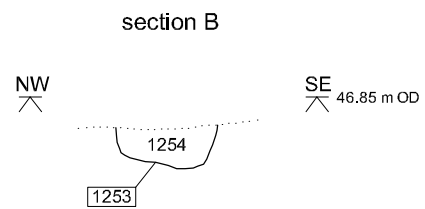
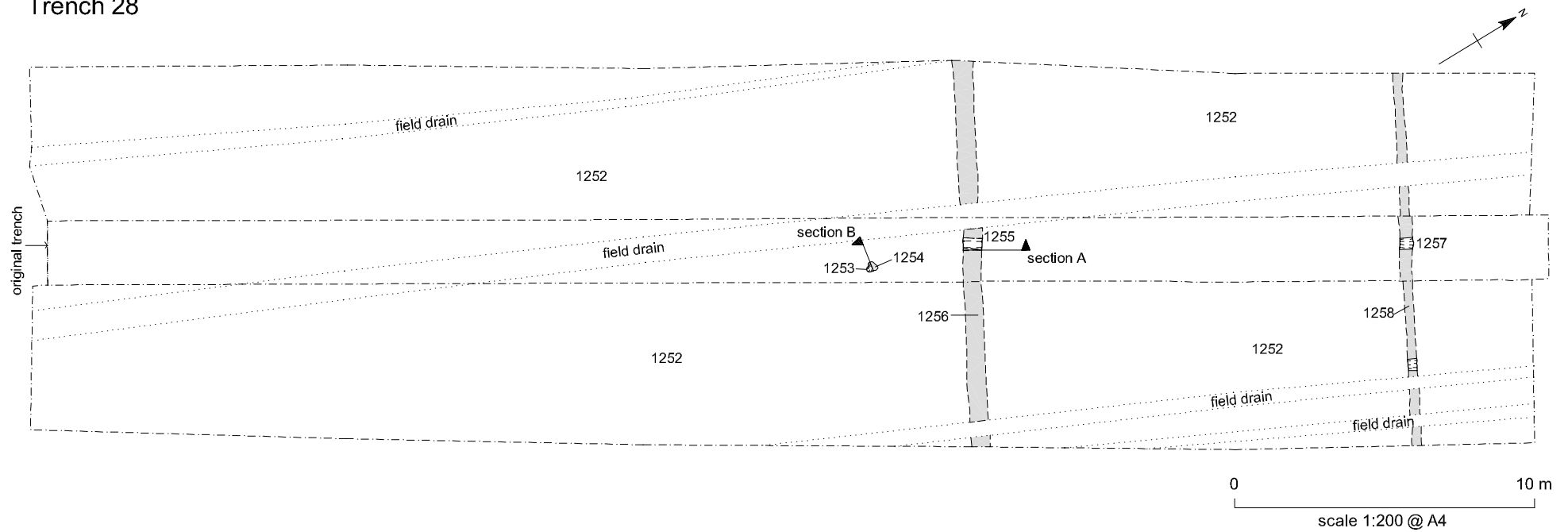


Figure 8 North Stobswood: trench 28, plan and sections

Trench 34

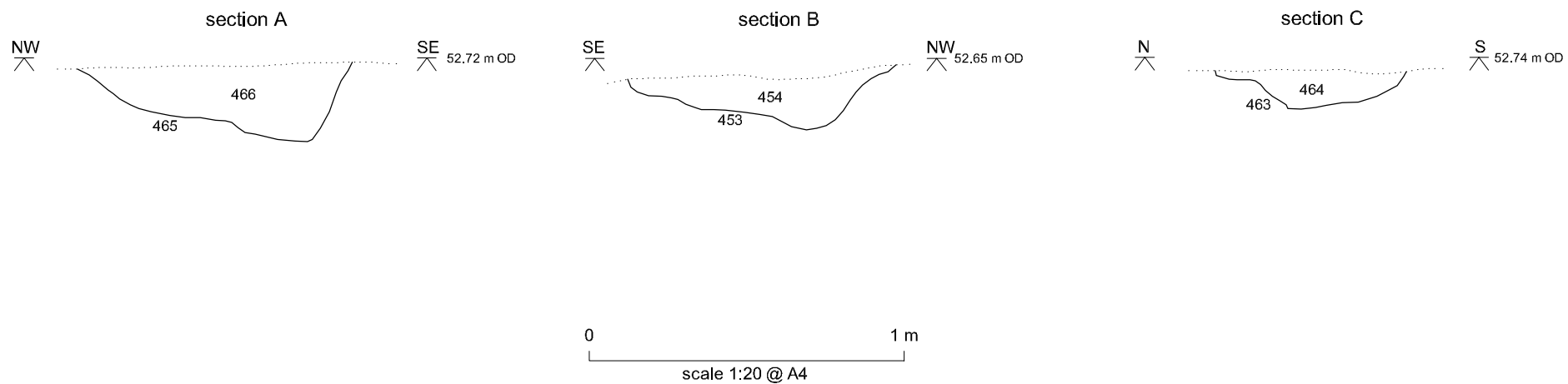
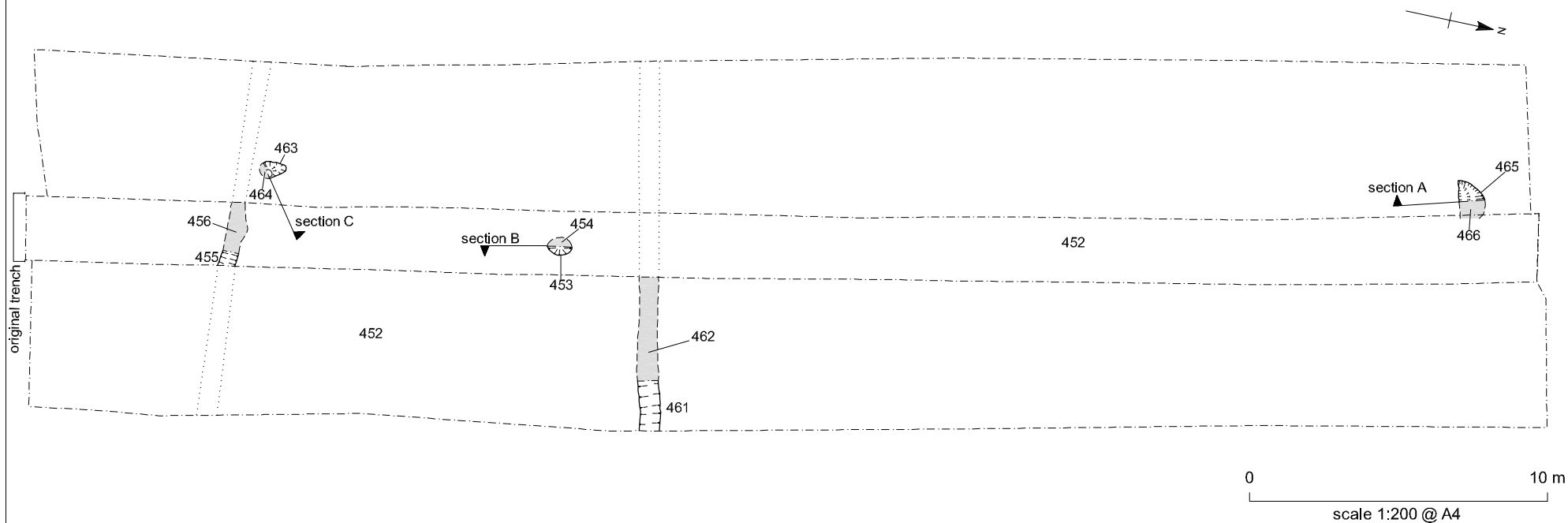


Figure 9 North Stobswood: trench 34, plan and section

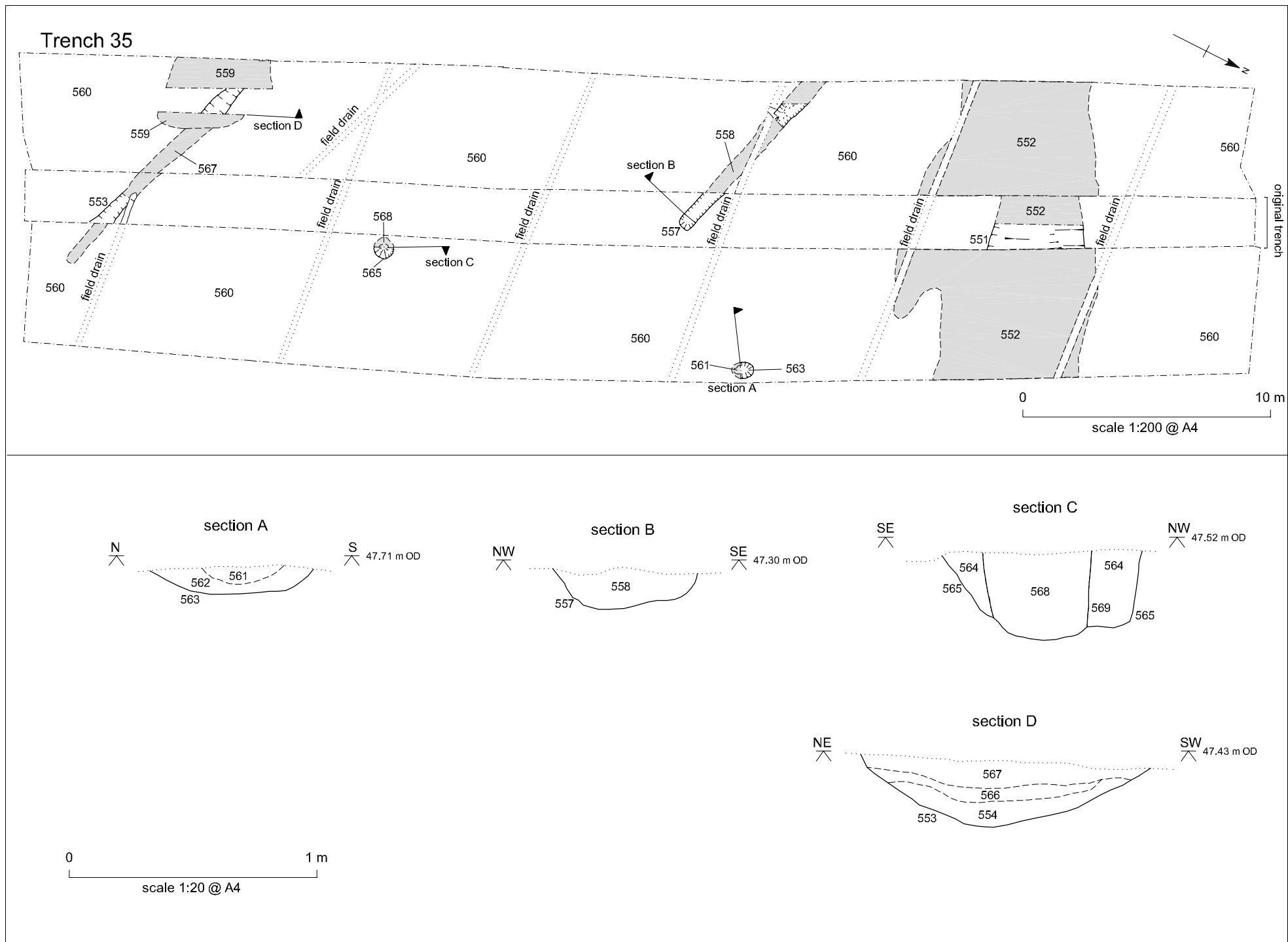


Figure 10 North Stobswood: trench 35, plan and sections

Trench 40

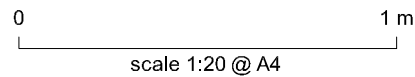
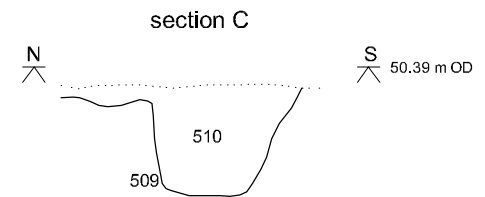
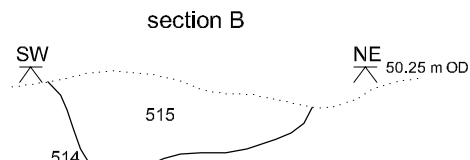
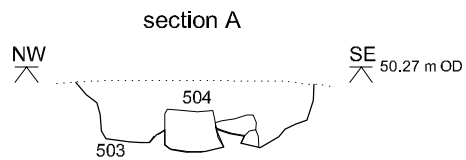
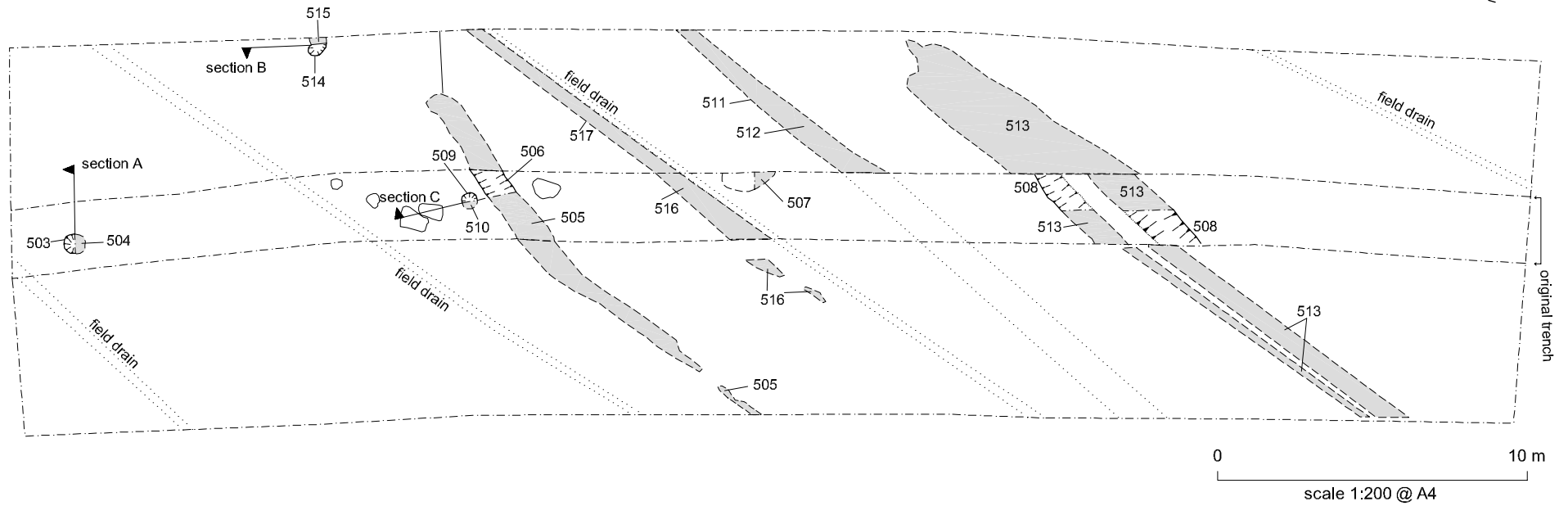


Figure 11 North Stobswood: trench 40, plan and sections

Trench 41

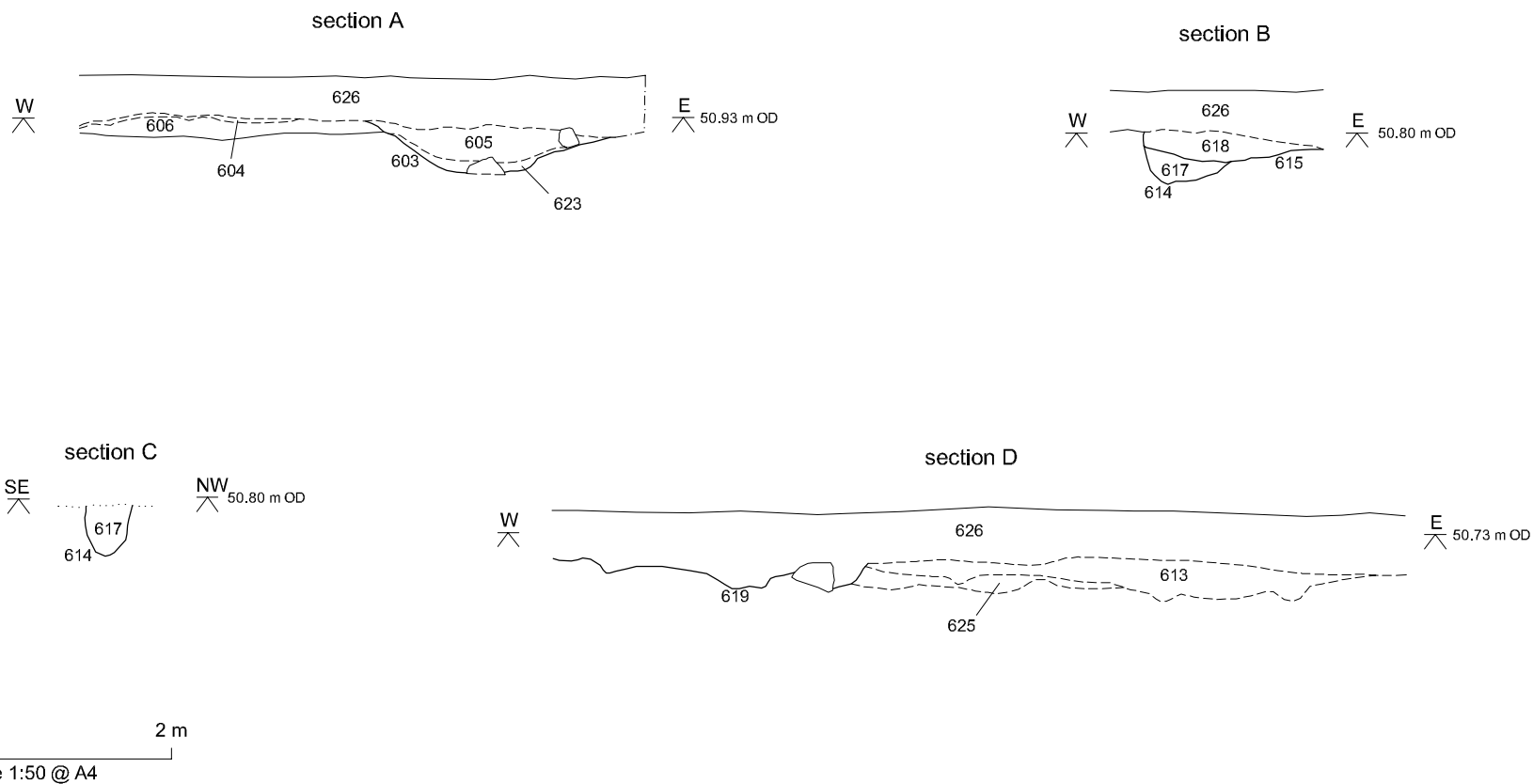
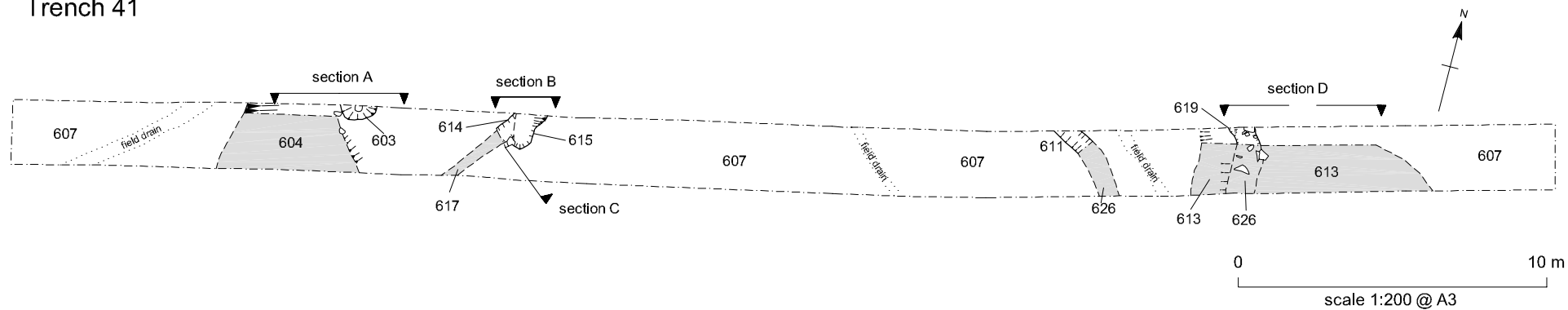
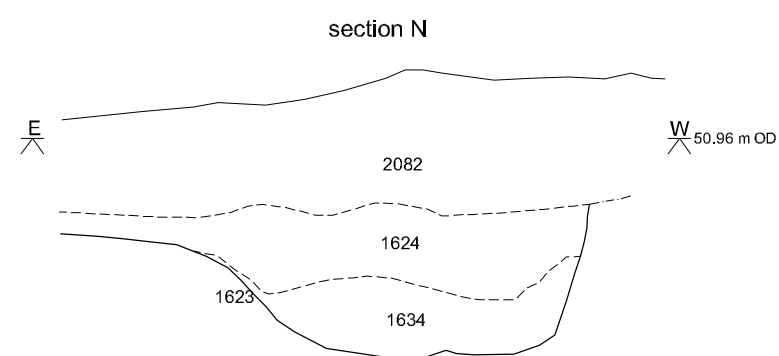
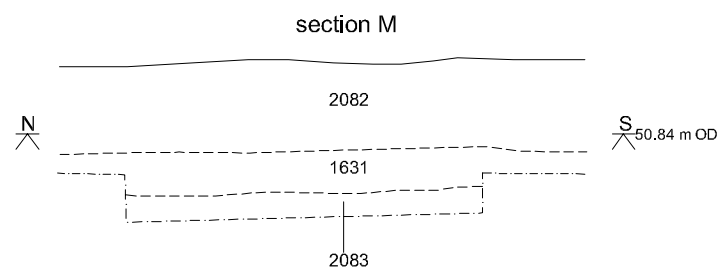
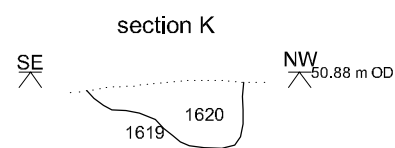
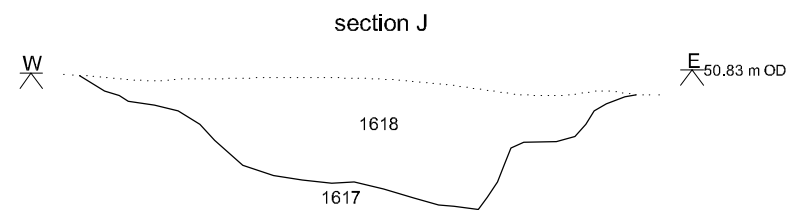
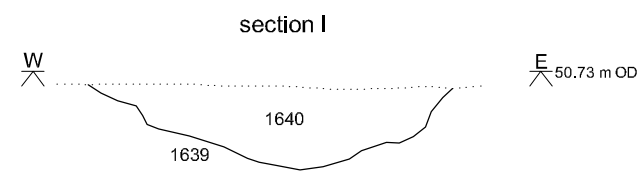
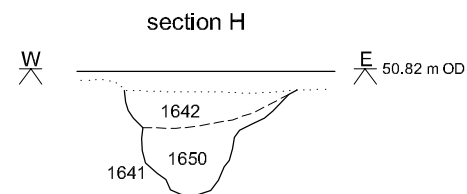
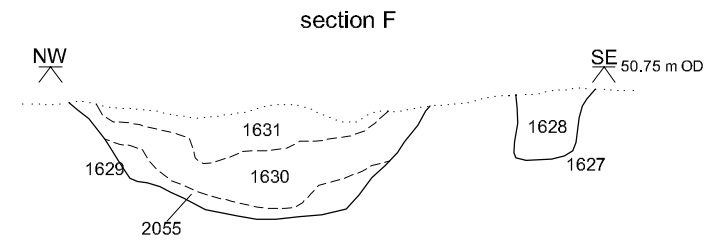
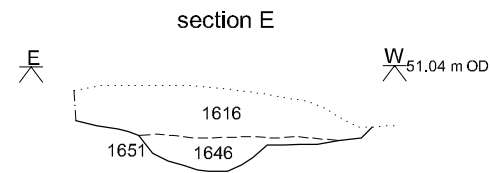
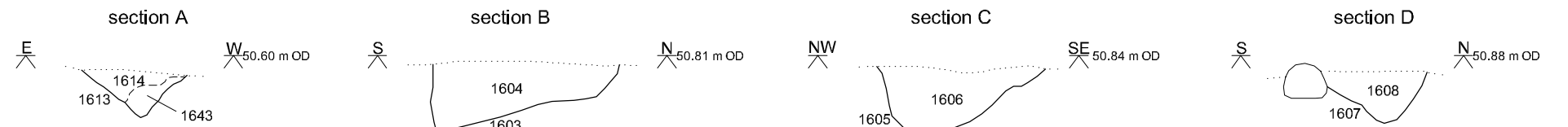


Figure 12 North Stobswood: trench 41, plan and sections

Trench 44: sections

0 1 m
scale 1:20 @ A3



Trench 44: plan

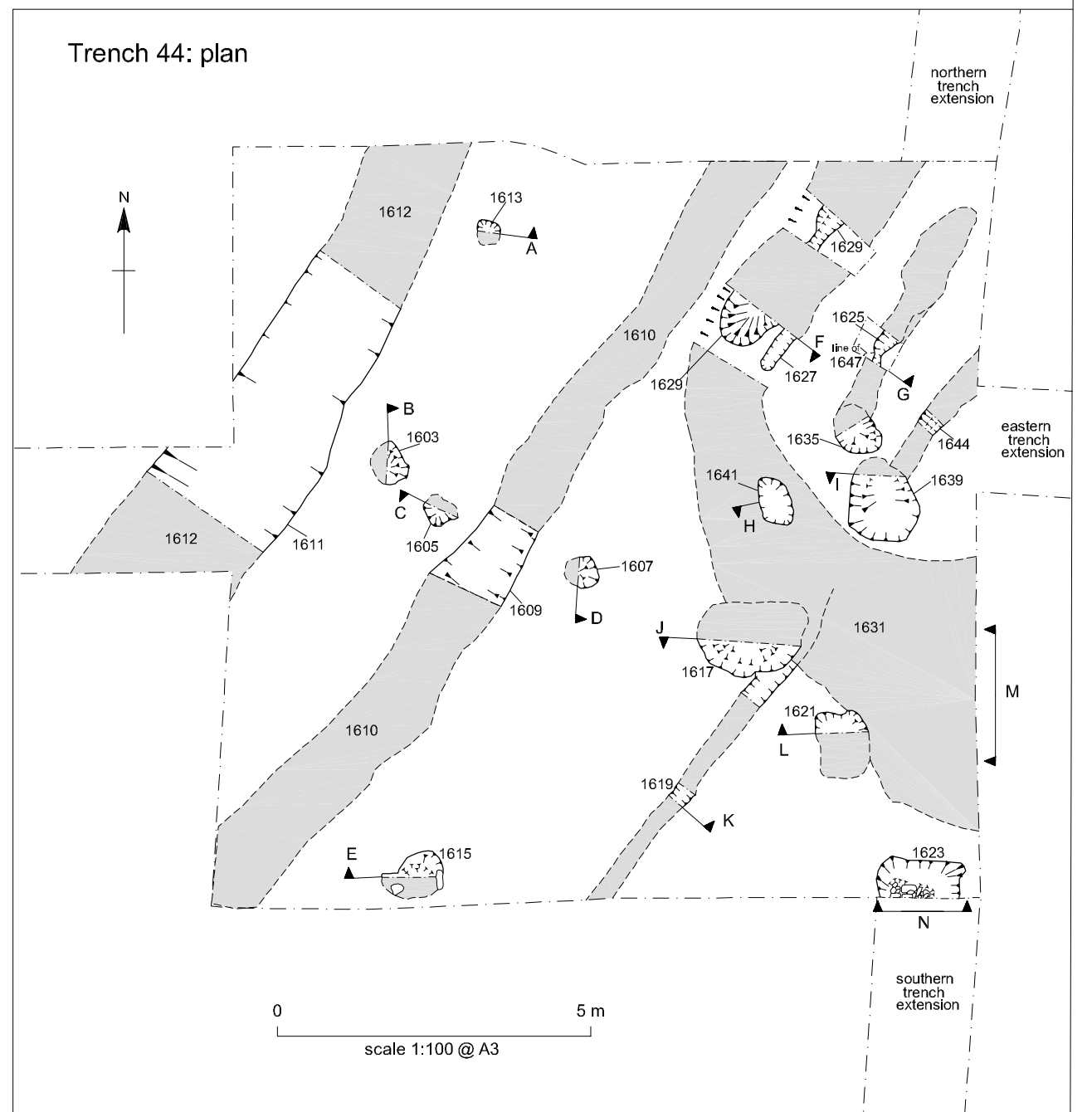
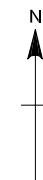
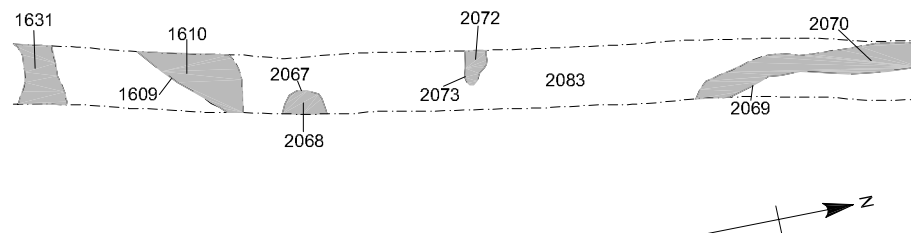
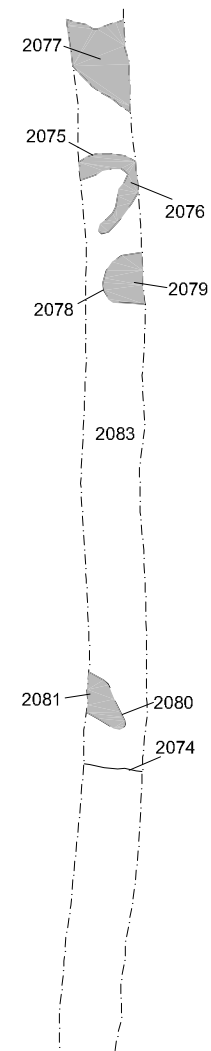


Figure 13 North Stobswood: trench 44, eastern portion plan and sections

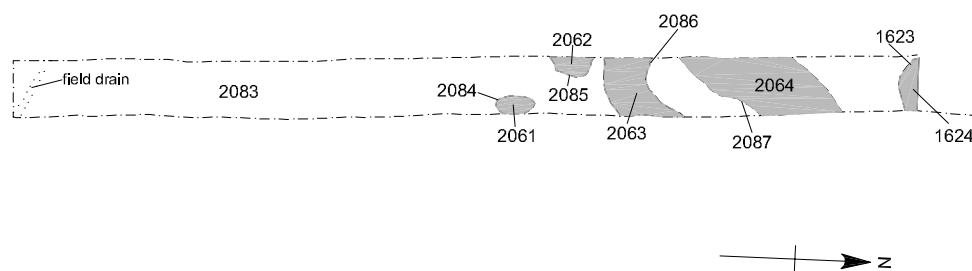
Northern extension to trench 44



Eastern extension to trench 44



Southern extension to trench 44



0 10 m
scale 1:200 @ A4

Figure 14 North Stobswood: plans of extensions to trench 44

Trench 53

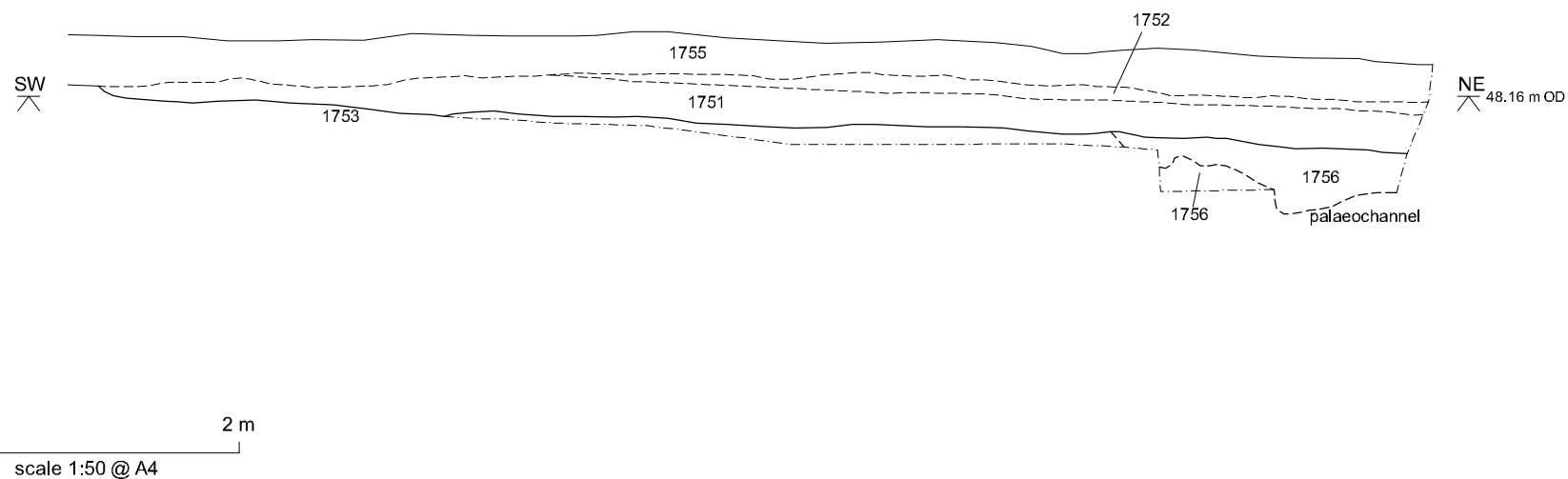
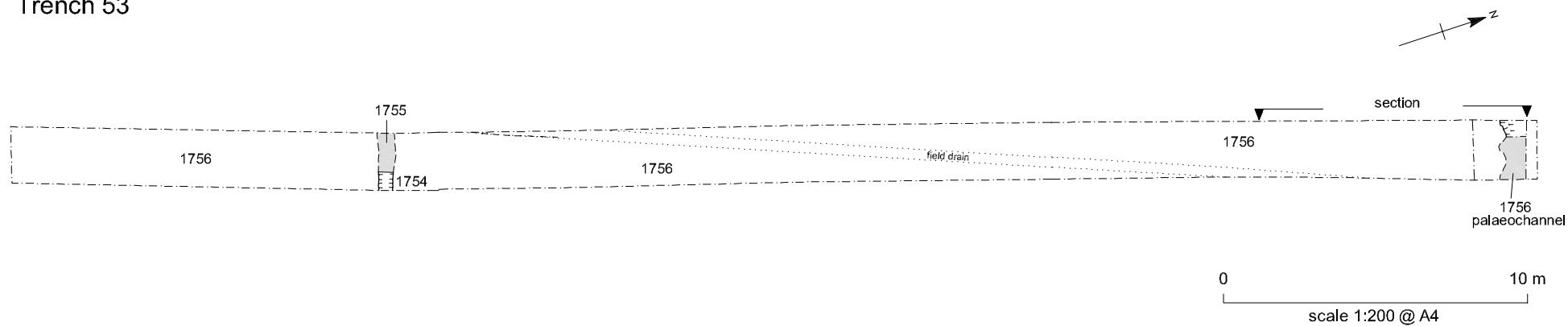


Figure 15 North Stobswood: trench 53, plan and section

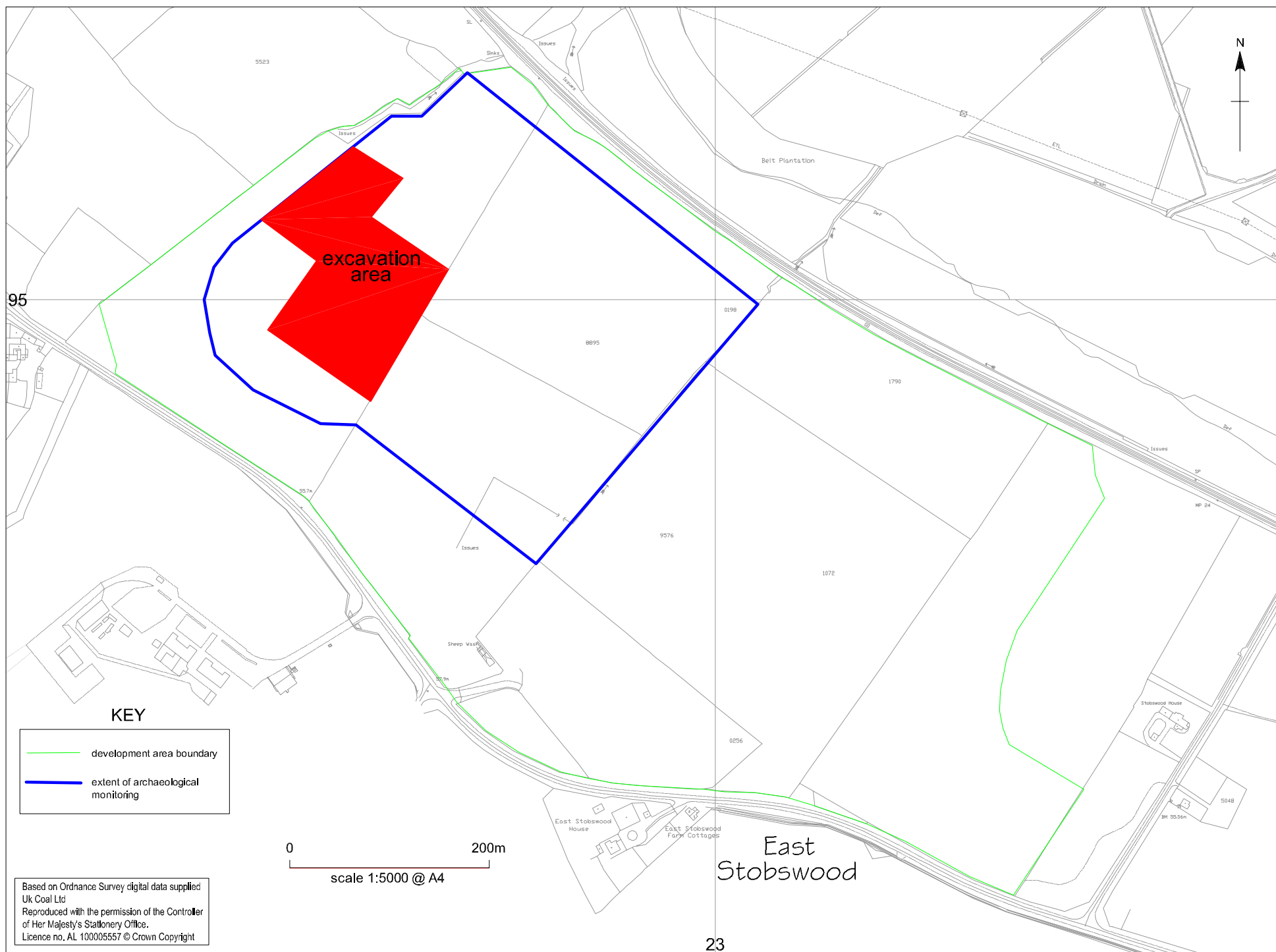


Figure 16 North Stobswood: location of the proposed excavation area and extent of the proposed archaeological monitoring



Plate 1 North Stobswood: section through roadside ditch 314, trench 2



Plate 2 North Stobswood: plough furrow in trench 12



Plate 3 North Stobswood: section through pit 1253, trench 28



Plate 4 North Stobswood: section through gully 557, trench 35



Plate 5 North Stobswood: section through pit 503, trench 40

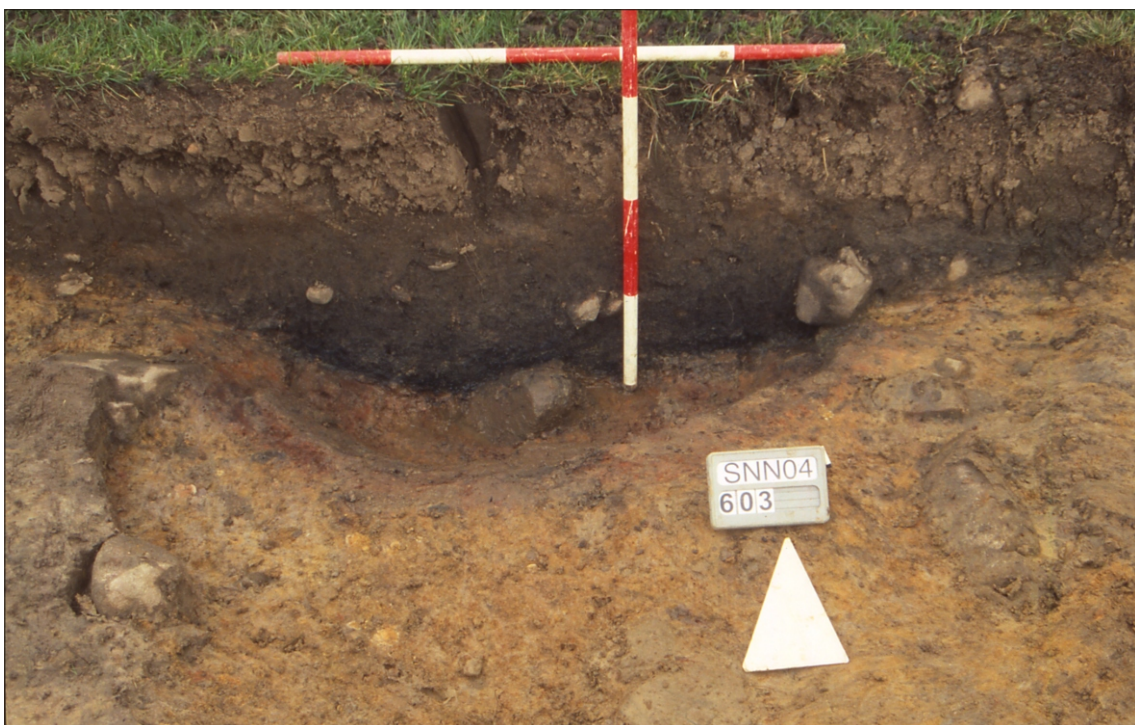


Plate 6 North Stobswood: section through possible hearth 603, trench 41



Plate 7 North Stobswood: pre-excavation shot of extension to trench 44