An Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at Forest Hill Golf Club, Markfield Lane, Botcheston, Leicestershire (SK48780642)

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Summary

This document provides a report on the results of an evaluation and subsequent excavation at Forest Hill Golf Club, Botcheston (SK 4878 0642). The fieldwork was in advance of the golf course extension where aspects of a clayland Iron Age farmstead settlement have been investigated including an enclosure, two circular structures and various other features. The pottery from the site is exclusively Iron Age, dating between 175 B.C. and 20 A.D. The settlement form is consistent with other excavated examples in Leicestershire and Rutland of a similar date. The form of the site coupled with the artefacts and environmental evidence gathered suggest a small farming community that grew crops and kept domesticated animals for food, as well as supplementing their diet with local gathering of wild species.

The archive will be deposited with the Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services with accession number X.A176.2005

1. Introduction

1.1 BWD Architects and Surveyors, on behalf of Forest Hill Golf Club, proposed to alter and extend the current golf course and facilities at Forest Hill Golf Club, Markfield Lane, Botcheston, Leicestershire (SK4878 0642; fig.1).

1.2 In accordance Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning), para.30 and Hinckley and Bosworth Local Planning Authorities, an archaeological desk based assessment was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS Report No.2005/101), which highlighted the archaeological potential within two areas of the proposed development (Areas A and D; figs. 1-2).

1.3 As part of an archaeological condition of planning permission a scheme of archaeological survey work was undertaken, prior to the development of the area.

1.4 Initially, geophysical survey of the development area was undertaken by Stratascan, on behalf of ULAS. The results of the survey proved inconclusive as to the presence/absence of archaeological deposits. Details and results of the geophysical survey are contained in Stratascan Report No. J2044.

1.5 Results of the subsequent archaeological evaluation, in the form of trial trenching, however, indicated the presence of Mid-Late Iron Age deposits within Area D, including possibly structural remains. In view of the evaluation results in relation to the 'footprint' of the development, two areas, where deep ponds were to be located, were machined under full archaeological supervision in order to expose any further archaeological deposits in those areas.

1.6 University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Mr S. Sherwin to carry out the archaeological evaluation and subsequent excavation. The work was directed by James Harvey between 22nd August and 30th September 2005.

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The proposed development consists of *c.*25ha. and is located 1.7km to the north of Botcheston, in the borough of Hinckley and Bosworth (figs. 1-2). The then present golf course is spread across two parishes, with the main area including the clubhouse located in Bagworth (Area A), and a section to the southeast within Desford. The proposed extension (Area D) lies within Ratby parish, to the east of the present course.

2.1 Area A (Fig. 2)

2.1.1 This area consisted of a small pasture field to the south of the club house that enclosed an area of *c.* 3ha. It was proposed that land be converted into a new 9 hole academy course. The field was bounded to the north by the clubhouse, by Markfield Lane to the south and west, and by the adjacent field to the east. The ground sloped upwards from the southwest at a height of between 128-138m OD.

2.2 Area D (Fig. 2)

2.2.1 This area was spread across two pasture fields that were located to the northeast of the existing gold course, covering an area of *c.*10 hectares. The land was bounded to the west by a small stream, by the adjacent fields to the north and south and the southern field was also bounded to the east by an adjacent field. The land across the fields sloped steeply down from the northeast from a height of 138m OD that levelled off towards the stream at a height of *c.*120m OD.

2.3 Geology

2.3.1 The underlying geology is Triassic Mudstone (British Geological Survey South, Forth Edition Solid, 2001). The overlying soils are known as Wimpole 3 soils which are stagnogleyic argillac brown earths. These consist of Reddish course and fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoil's and slight seasonal waterlogging (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 3 Midland and Western England)

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Archaeological Background (Taken from Harvey 2005)

3.1.1 No archaeological sites have been recorded within the proposed development areas; however this may reflect the lack of systematic archaeological investigation. The wider area, within 1km of the proposed development sites, includes an extensive range of recorded archaeological sites from the Leicestershire Sites and Monuments Record.

3.1.2 Various prehistoric sites have been identified in the vicinity of the proposed development area. A Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flint knife was found 550m to the east of Area D in Ratby Burroughs (**MLE7246**). Two blade like flakes dated to the Mesolithic have also been found in Ratby Burroughs, 675m to the southeast (**MLE7062**). A Late Neolithic flint axe was found 970m to the southeast of Area D, just north of Bury Camp (**MLE7245**). A possible Iron Age hillfort is located 1km to the southeast of Area D at Bury Camp (M**LE3100**), which is a Scheduled Ancient

Monument (**SAM – 31525**). A corroded copper alloy object has been found just north of Bury Camp. It is suggested that the artefact may be part of an Iron Age bridle (**MLE9392**). Earlier activity has also been identified at Bury Camp in the form of Late Bronze Age pottery (**MLE6361**).

3.1.3 Five Roman sites have been identified in the vicinity of the development area. Greyware pottery that may date to the second century AD has been found 250m north of Area D (**MLE7950**). Roman activity has also been identified at Bury Camp hillfort where a sherd of mortaria was found in 1938 (**MLE7951**). Long Lane, between Ratby and the deserted settlement of Bondman Hays (1.1km to the northeast of Area D) is a very straight road, and may well represent the fossilisation of an earlier Roman road (**MLE3096**). Roman pottery and coins have been found 1300m to the south of Area A in the village of Botcheston (**MLE7926** and **MLE7928**).

3.1.4 The development areas are located on the edges of the present parish boundaries of Desford, Bagworth and Ratby, some distance away from the known cores of medieval settlement in the area (**MLE2750**, **MLE5942** and **MLE10075**). Immediately east of Area D is the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) of a medieval moated site, located on the present site of Old Hays Farm (**SAM 11563**, (**MLE3103**)). Immediately to the north and west of the moated enclosure are the well-defined earthwork remains of two rectangular enclosures and a series of small rectangular hollows.

3.1.5 Two undated enclosures have been identified within the vicinity of the development area. A rectangular enclosure located 550m southwest of Area A (**MLE2682**). Also a sub circular enclosure has been located off Cow Lane, 1km to the southeast of Area D.

3.2 Geophysical Survey (Stratascan 2005; Figs. 3-4)

3.2.1 The geophysical survey was undertaken by Stratascan and revealed a few potential archaeological features scattered across the development area. Positive anomalies with negative responses were observed in all areas and probably relate to near surface ferrous objects of modern origin. A large number of linear anomalies with positive and negative responses were recorded in Area A that have probably been caused by field drains. Area D produced a number of positive and negative linear anomalies that probably relate to agricultural marks. A small number of positive linear anomalies were recorded in the southern part of Area A that have been interpreted as possible cut features but their disjointed nature may suggest a modern origin. Finally a large area of faint positive response was identified in Area D which was orientated perpendicular to the agricultural marks. This anomaly has been interpreted as possibly associated with ploughing and agricultural activity but may also by of archaeological origin.

3.2.2 Little to none of the anomalies could be confidently associated with archaeological activity.

3.3 Historical Background (Taken from Harvey 2005)

3.3.1 The development area is spread across two parishes. Area A is located in Bagworth and Area D is in the parish of Ratby. It is suggested that the name Bagworth means ‘Enclosure of a man called *Bæcga’ (Mills 1998). The name of Ratby has at least two possible origins. Margaret Gelling of Birmingham University argues an Old English interpretation, ‘the earthwork enclosure called ‘Ratae’’ (Liddle. 1982: 26) as a

possibility. This may indicate pre-Roman origins for the name and may be connected with Ratby Bury camp, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (17039) located 1.2 km south east of Ratby (MLE3100). Another interpretation is the 'by' ending of Ratby indicating Danish origins with the meaning of the name being 'Rota's settlement' (ibid.).

3.3.2 Domesday records one entry for each parish; Bagworth is recorded under the lands of the Count of Meulan (or Robert of Beaumont), who became Earl of Leicester in 1107 and a close advisor to Henry I. The landowner for Ratby is recorded as Hugh de Grandmesnil, the Sheriff of Leicester and constable of Leicester Castle. Both held considerable amounts of land in Leicestershire and the surrounding counties.

The land of the men of the Count of Meulan

44,10	Ralph holds of the count 9 carucates of land in Bagworth. There were 7 ploughs. Now in demesne there are 2 [ploughs] with 1 slave; and 24 villans and 3 sokemen with 7 bordars have 5 ploughs. [there is] woodland 1 league long and half a league wide. It was worth 40s; now £4. Ulfkil held it freely (Williams *et al.* 1992:649)

The land of Hugh de Grandmesnil

13,6	The same man [Hugh] holds in Ratby 6 carucates of land, less 3 bovates. There is land for 6 ploughs. In demesne are 2 ploughs with 1 slave; and 10 villans with a priest and 5 bordars have 4 ploughs. There is a mill rendering 28d. It was worth 20s; now 60s (1992:633)

3.3.3 From the Domesday Book entries it is often difficult to get a clear understanding of the actual size of villages at the time. The Bagworth entry records 1 slave, 24 villans, 3 sokemen and 7 bordars, all of whom would have been heads of households. For Ratby, a slave, a priest and 5 bordars are recorded. It is most likely that other people would also have lived in the settlements, but being of a lower status and presumably not personally owning any land, or in service to the lord, they would not necessarily have been recorded. Thus Bagworth and Ratby would appear to have been fairly sizeable villages at the time of the Domesday survey, although it is not recorded whether the settlements were dispersed, or nucleated.

3.3.4 The Tithe award and map for Ratby dated to 1847 only shows the two fields associated with the golf course extension (Area D). The map suggests that the fields were empty. The southern field (100) is referred to as 'Great West Close' and the northern field is referred to as 'Fish Pond Close'. The earliest available map Area A is the first edition OS map of 1885. This area is shown as a complete field with no structures present. Area D is shown as having two fields, both of which have footpaths leading towards Old Hayes Farm. The lower field contains three ponds and the upper field contains a single, larger pond located directly adjacent to the stream. It is worth noting that there is not this density of ponds elsewhere in the neighbouring fields. The 1959 OS map shows the footpath route in the northern field of Area D has been slightly

adjusted. The most recent map shows that part of Area A has become part of a car park for the golf course and Area D remains unchanged.

4. Aims and Methods

4.1 The Evaluation

4.1.1 In accordance with ULAS (2005) *Design Specification for Archaeological Work*, three 30m trenches were to be located in Area A (fig. 4) in order to target geophysical anomalies and nine trenches (eight at 30m and one at 20m) were to be located in Area D in order to target geophysical anomalies as well as across the potential locations of the new ponds for the golf course extension (fig.3). These trenches represented a 5.7% sample of the evaluation area. The trenches were positioned using a Garmin Global Positional System (GPS) 12 parallel channel receiver. The GPS accuracy ranged between 3 to 8 metres.

4.1.2 The trenches were excavated using a tracked mechanical excavator equipped with a 2.1m wide toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and overlying layers were removed under full archaeological supervision until either the top of archaeology or natural undisturbed ground was reached, or to a depth of 1.20m.

4.1.3 The bases of the trenches were examined for archaeological remains and any possible features were hand-cleaned. Where confirmed archaeological remains existed they were planned to scale and recorded. Limited excavation of archaeological features was carried out to determine the character and date of any remains. Archaeological features were recorded with reference to the ULAS recording manual.

4.1.4 The trenches were located using an Electronic Distance Measurer linked to a hand-held Psion data logger and the data was processed using N4ce survey software.

4.1.6 All work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, and the Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicestershire County Council).

The main aims and objectives of the evaluation were:

- To confirm or otherwise the archaeological origin of the features identified from geophysical survey.
- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits in areas outside the scope of the geophysical survey.
- To provide information on the nature, extent, character, date and significance of archaeological deposits within the application area.
- The potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains, whether known or postulated, will be assessed.
- The archaeological evaluation, once the above information has been gathered, will serve to determine a decision being made on planning permission regarding archaeological issues, including an appropriate mitigation strategy.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

4.2 The Excavation

4.2.1 The results of the evaluation indicated a possible focal point for archaeological activity located within the footprint of one of the proposed ponds in Area D. Based on these results the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council requested that the areas of the proposed ponds must be exposed under archaeological supervision and that any archaeological deposits encountered be suitably recorded.

4.2.2 The two ponds were excavated using two tracked mechanical excavators equipped with a 2.1m wide toothless ditching buckets. The topsoil and overlying layers were removed under full archaeological supervision until either the top of archaeology or natural undisturbed ground was reached.

4.2.3 Each excavation area was subject to partial hand cleaning, in order to clearly define the archaeological remains present. Where confirmed archaeological remains existed they were excavated, planned to scale and recorded. Any discrete features were half sectioned and linear features were sampled, as appropriate, in order to determine the character and date of any remains present. Archaeological features were recorded with reference to the ULAS recording manual.

4.2.4 The excavation areas were located using an Electronic Distance Measurer linked to a hand-held Psion data logger and the data was processed using N4ce survey software. Final digital plans were produced using TurboCAD version 11 software.

4.2.5 All work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Excavation,* and the *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicestershire County Council).

The main aims and objectives of the excavation were:

- To ascertain the function, date and chronology of the archaeological deposits present.
- To locate and record any structural elements associated with these deposits.
- To recover environmental data likely to provide information on the economy and local environment of the settlement.

5. Results of the Evaluation

Note: Archaeological contexts as a cut are indicated by: [ ], those that are fills or layers are indicated by: ().

A total of 12 trenches were excavated in two areas, Trenches 1-9 were located in Area D and Trenches 10-12 in Area A. The trenches were 2.1m wide and totalled a length of 351m. They were arranged in order to target the areas of archaeological potential based on the geophysical survey as well as to evaluate the locations of the new ponds in Area D (figs. 3-4).

Table 1: Trench Summaries

Trench	Length (m)	Average depth (m OD)	Natural	Notes	Minimum depth to archaeology (m)
1	30	0.8	Mid grey clay, heavily mottled with reddish brown iron pan	negative	N/A
2	30	0.57	Mid brownish grey sandy clay with occasional rounded stones	negative	N/A
3	30	0.48	Reddish pink clay and mid brownis grey sandy gravely clay	pit, ring gully and ditch	0.30
4	29.5	0.81	Dark yellowish brown sandy grave clay	negative	N/A
5	21	0.72	Greyish brown gravely clay	pit	0.68
6	30	0.53	Pink gravely clay and course sand gravel	pit/posthole?	0.36
7	30	0.65	Reddish brown gravely clay	negative	N/A
8	30	0.55	mid orangey brown clay and red sa gravel	negative	N/A
9	30.5	0.47	Reddish sand and gravel and gree brown clay	negative	N/A
10	30	0.48	Reddish brown gravely clay	negative	N/A
11	30	0.44	Light orangey brown clay	negative	N/A
12	30	0.37	Yellowish brown clay and dark bro clay	Negative	N/A

5.1 Trench 1

5.1.1 Trench 1 was aligned north-south in the proposed footprint for one of the new ponds (this proposed pond was subsequently withdrawn). Two ceramic field drains were observed that were orientated east-west. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features.

5.2 Trench 2

5.2.1 Trench 2 was aligned northwest-southeast within the proposed footprint for one of the new ponds (this proposed pond was subsequently withdrawn). The trench contained no archaeological finds or features.

5.3 Trench 3 Contexts [3], (4), [7], (8), [9] and (10)

(Figure 5)

5.3.1 Trench 3 was aligned north-south within the proposed footprint for one of the new ponds (Pond 1). Several features were observed within this trench. At the south end of Trench 3 a *c.*4m stretch curvi-linear gulley [9] was encountered that continued underneath the trench on its eastern side. Its width varied between 300-400m and it had a depth of 90mm. The sides and base of the feature were concave and it was filled by a light brownish grey silty clay deposit (10) that contained occasional small rounded stones. A small quantity of Mid-Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from this deposit. At the northern end of the curvi-linear a ditch feature [7] was observed and partially excavated. It measured 900mm in width, 400mm deep and was orientated east-west. Its sides were steep, with an incline of *c.*70° and the base was fairly flat. It was filled by a

mid greyish brown silty clay deposit (8) that contained abundant inclusions of small-large sub-rounded stones, occasional pebbles and charcoal flecks. A moderate quantity of Mid-Late Iron Age pottery was also recovered from this deposit. There was a stratigraphic relationship between the ditch and curvi-linear gulley but this was located against the edge of the trench although its investigation was left until more of the features could be exposed. A small sub-circular pit [3] was observed and sample excavated *c*.2.5m north of the ditch. It measured 640mm x 570mm and was 170mm deep. Its northern side was straight and shallow with an incline of *c*.45°, the southern side was steeper and concave as was the base. It was filled with a mid grey silty clay deposit (4) that contained occasional inclusions of small angular pebbles.

5.3.2 Two other unexcavated features were also observed within Trench 3. A second circular feature was observed *c*.1.8m to the northeast of pit [3] and a second linear feature was observed *c*.7.4m beyond ditch [7] on the same east-west alignment.

5.4 Trench 4

5.4.1 Trench 4 was aligned northeast-southwest within the proposed footprint of one of the new ponds (Pond 2). The trench contained no archaeological finds or features.

5.5 Trench 5 Contexts [5] and (6)

5.5.1 Trench 5 was aligned northeast-southwest within the proposed footprint of one of the new ponds (Pond 1). A single circular feature was partially exposed and excavated *c*.10m from the southwest end of the trench. Much of the trench was under water that meant detailed excavation and recording of the feature was not possible. It measured >440mm and >200mm deep and the sides were observed to be steep to vertical. It was filled by a mid grey silty clay deposit (6) that contained a large quantity of rounded and angular pebbles up to 200mm in size. A reasonable quantity of Mid-Late Iron Age pottery was also recovered from this deposit.

5.6 Trench 6 Contexts [1] and (2)

(Figure 6)

5.6.1 Trench 6 was orientated northwest-southeast to cross two negative linear anomalies highlighted by the geophysics. A small oval shaped pit [1] was observed and sample excavated *c*.10m from the southeast end of the trench. It measured 550mm x 340mm and was 140mm deep. Its sides were steep with an incline of *c*.80° and it had a concave base. It was filled by a mid grey silty clay deposit (2) that contained occasional inclusions of small angular pebbles. A ceramic field drain was also observed that may account for one of the geophysical anomalies.

5.7 Trench 7

5.7.1 Trench 7 was orientated northeast-southwest to cross a faint positive response highlighted by the geophysics. It was suggested that the anomaly may be associated with ploughing and agricultural activity or could be archaeological in origin. A modern field drain was located on a northwest-southeast alignment but it was a lot smaller than the

feature suggested by the geophysics. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features.

5.8 Trench 8

5.8.1 Trench 8 was orientated northwest-southeast to cross a number of positive linear anomalies highlighted by the geophysics. However the trench contained no archaeological finds or features.

5.9 Trench 9

5.9.1 Trench 9 was orientated east-west and was located in an area suggested to be 'archaeologically blank' according to the geophysics. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features.

5.10 Trench 10

5.10.1 Trench 10 was orientated northeast-southwest in order to cross a number of positive linear anomalies highlighted by the geophysics. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features although ceramic field drains were recorded that are likely to have caused the geophysical results.

5.11 Trench 11

5.11.1 Trench 11 was oriented northeast to southwest in order to cross a positive linear anomaly and a linear anomaly with positive and negative returns. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features although ceramic field drains were recorded that are likely to have caused the geophysical results.

5.12 Trench 12

5.12.1 Trench 12 was orientated was orientated northeast-southwest in order to cross a number of faint positive liner anomalies. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features although ceramic field drains and plough scars were recorded that are likely to have caused the geophysical results.

6. Evaluation Discussion

6.1 The trial trenching at Forest Hill Golf Club, Botcheston, showed that archaeological deposits were located at the bottom of the slope on the western side of Area D. All the anomalies highlighted by the geophysical survey turned out to be modern or natural in origin. Of the twelve trenches excavated, Trenches 3, 5 and 6 produced evidence of archaeological activity.

6.2 The majority of the archaeological deposits were located in the southern end of Trench 3 (fig.5). Here two ditches, a curvi-linear and two pit/posthole features were observed. Stratified pottery dating to the Mid-Late Iron Age (*c*.400BC-43 AD) was recovered from the fill of one of the ditches (8) as well as the curvi-linear feature (10).

Additional pottery dating to the same period was also recovered from the fill of a small pit (6) located within Trench 5. An undated pit was also recorded towards the centre of Trench 6, located on the higher ground to the east.

6.3 On the basis of the features observed in Trenches 3 and 5, it was proposed the archaeology may represent part of a Mid-Late Iron Age farmstead settlement incorporating domestic buildings and associated enclosure ditches at the base of an east facing slope. Enclosures are relatively common in the Iron Age of the East Midlands. Similar sites have been interpreted from cropmarks, earthworks, artefact scatters and excavated data, and over 220 locations of Late Iron Age occupation are included in the Leicestershire and Rutland Sites and Monuments Record. From analysis of well-surveyed areas including Medbourne, Oakham and Misterton a density of one Late Iron Age site per 1.8-2 sq km can be extrapolated (Clay 2002).

7 Results of the Excavation

Based on the findings of the archaeological evaluation, the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, on behalf of Hinckley and Bosworth District Council, requested that the proposed ponds be machined under full archaeological supervision. This was to be conducted until either the top of archaeology or undisturbed natural ground was reached, in an attempt to track the continuation of any of the archaeological deposits recorded within Trenches 3 and 5.

The ponds were irregularly shaped water features. **Pond 1** was located in the area of Trench 3 and 5. It measured *c.* 46m in length, between 12-47m in width and covered a total area of 1216m². **Pond 2** was located in the area of Trench 4. It measured *c.*64m in length, between 7-18m in width and covered a total area of 960m² (figs.7-8)

Pond 1

(Figure 8)

7.1 Circular structure 1

(Figure 8; Figure 9; Figure 10)

Gulley [9], [95], [101], [130], [134]

7.1.1 At the south end of Trench 3 a c.4m stretch curvi-linear gulley [9] was encountered that continued underneath the trench on its eastern side. Its width varied between 300-400m and it had a depth of 90mm. The sides and base of the feature were concave and it was filled by a light brownish grey silty clay deposit (10) that contained occasional small rounded stones. During the strip an entire circular structure that existed as a continuous gully with a southeast entrance was exposed, measuring c.10m in diameter. This structure had been truncated through the middle be a ceramic land drain. Six sections excavated through the feature in total, which revealed a probable closed feature that had postholes set into it.

7.1.2 The southern termini [101] was 510mm wide and 160mm deep, with edges breaking almost vertically to a horizontal base. It was filled by a dark grey silty clay

(102) that contained common inclusions of granite up to 300mm in size as well as common charcoal flecks and sub-angular/angular stones. The northern termini [95] was enlarged forming a 'key-hole' shape that measured 720mm in width and 0.32m deep, with edges that again broke almost vertical to a base that sloped upwards towards the south. It was filled by a heavy clay deposit (96) that contained common inclusions of large angular and round stones up to 350mm in size. The nature of the deposits did suggest that large timbers post might once have stood at both the termini of the structure where the large stones (not seen elsewhere in the cut) were used as packing material.

7.1.3 A slot was excavated on the northeast side of the gulley [130] that was 650mm wide and 350mm deep and it had concave sides and base. It was filled by a mid greyish brown clayey silt deposit (131) that had occasional inclusions of small rounded stones and rare medium angular stones and charcoal flecks. The slot [130] excavated on the northwest side varied in width between 180-450mm and 100-150mm deep. Here the sides of the gully had a straight incline c.50° that broke to a base that sloped downwards towards the inside of the circle. Here the fill was very similar to what was observed in the northeast slot. A difference was seen at the slot that was excavated on the southwest side [134]. The width here varied between 570-700mm and it was 300mm deep. The northeast side (inside) was straight with an incline of c.45° and the southwest side (outside) broke from c.35° to 50° and the base was concave. It was filled by (135) that was very similar to (130) but was separated in the middle by a deposit (133) that was 160mm wide with vertical sides. This deposit was made up of a mid grey silty clay that contained no inclusions and is likely to represent the silting of a posthole (a post-pipe) after it had rotted in situ post-abandonment.

7.2 Posthole [97]

7.2.1 Immediately to the south of the southern termini was a posthole that measured 780mm in diameter and 190mm deep, with edges breaking on an incline of c.40° to a roughly flat base. It was filled by a mid greyish brown clayey silt deposit (98) that contained occasional medium rounded stones, rare small/medium angular stones and pebbles up to a size of 270mm. There was also a substantial build-up of iron pan that may suggest the feature was waterlogged at some time. It is possible that this posthole may indicate the presence of an entrance or porch although this could not be substantiated as the projected location for the rest of this structure would be located outside the excavation area.

7.3 Internal features

Post pits [70], [72], [74], [76], [80], [84], [88], [128], Hearth [90]

7.3.1 Within the circular gully were a number of pit or posthole like features and a central hearth feature. The central feature [90] was semi-elliptical and irregular in shape, measuring 700mm x 640mm and 140mm deep. It had shallow sloping sides and a near horizontal base. It was filled by a reddish orange clay deposit (91) that was capped with heat-treated quartzite pebbles measuring between 50-80mm in size. The excavated section showed that the clay was still plastic interspersed with frequent charcoal flecks. The feature has clearly been subject to heat exposure but the evidence would suggest

that the thermal source was strong enough to induce a colour change in the clay but not significant enough to fire the clay or crack the quartzite pebbles. Postholes [84] and [88] were located a short distance to the northeast and southwest respectively. Posthole [84] was sub-circular, measuring 500mm x 380mm and 110mm deep and had concave sides and base. It was filled by a light greyish brown clayey silt deposit (85) that contained occasional inclusions of medium sub-rounded stones and rare pebbles. Posthole [88] was also semi-circular, measuring 620mm x 400mm and 150mm deep. The sides and base were generally concave although the south-western edge breaks almost vertically to horizontal step before breaking again to the concave base. These postholes may represent evidence of a structure associated with the hearth.

7.3.2 Feature [70] was located adjacent to the southern termini of the gully. It was circular, measured 540mm in diameter and 390mm deep, with edges breaking almost vertically to a near horizontal base although on the northernmost edge is a short step that interrupts the slope. This feature would have been capable of holding a reasonably substantial post and it is possible that the step was intentional in the cut in order to facilitate the placing/packing of the post. It was filled with a greenish grey silty clay deposit (71) that had occasional granite and quartzite inclusions. Posthole [72] was located *c.*2m west of the northern terminus. It was sub-circular, measured 590mm in diameter and was 180mm deep. Its sides and base were concave and it was filled be a mid brownish grey clayey silt deposit (73). This contained rare medium-large rounded and angular stone inclusions and occasional pea grit. Posthole [74] was located on the northern inner edge of the gully. It was ovoid in plan, measured 560mm in diameter and was 160mm deep. The sides of the feature were vertical and the base sloped north to south. It was filled by a light grey clayey silt deposit (75) that contained abundant inclusions of granite and quartzite pebbles and common charcoal flecks. Posthole [76] was located *c.*1.2m to the west of [74]. It was sub-circular, measured 560mm x 520mm and was 220mm deep. Its sides were steep and straight with an incline of *c.*80° and it had a slightly concave base. It was filled by a mid greyish brown clayey silt deposit (77) that contained rare inclusions of fire-cracked pebbles, large rounded and sub-angular stones and occasional pea grit. Posthole [80] was located 1.5m south of the hearth [90]. It was sub-circular in shape, measured 42mm in diameter and was a maximum of 110mm deep. There were no clearly discernable sides to the feature but the base was concave. It was filled by a mid brownish clayey silt deposit (81) that contained rare inclusions of small-medium rounded stones. Posthole [128] was located on the western inner edge of the gully. It was ovoid in plan, measured 850mm x 690mm and was 300mm deep. The southwest side of the feature broke vertically from the top to a step that sloped at an incline of *c.*10° which subsequently broke again towards the base at an incline of *c.*70°. The northeast side of the feature sloped at an incline of 50° and it had a flat base. It was filled by a light grey silty clay deposit (129) that contained common inclusions of granite and quartzite pebbles.

7.4 Circular Structure 2

Gulley [122]

7.4.1 Immediately to the north of CS1 a second curvi-linear gully was encountered. This feature also measured c.10m in diameter although the gully expired to the northwest. It truncated the enclosure ditch [113] and was truncated by a modern field

drain and by the sump that had been machined during the evaluation to drain the water out from Trench 3. Five sections were excavated through the gully in total that produced similar results to CS1, exhibiting evidence of a closed feature with posts set into it.

7.4.2 The south-eastern terminus was 790mm wide and 150mm deep. The sides were steep and straight and it had a flat base. It was filled by a light greyish brown silty clay deposit (123) that contained occasional small-medium sub-rounded/sub-angular stones. Also included in the fill were four large granite blocks, average size 300x200x150mm. These had been disturbed by the machine but potentially could originally have formed a packing structure for a large post. Indeed, no other stones of that size were observed within the fill of the gully. The northernmost end of the gully was 300mm wide and had a maximum depth of 150mm. The sides were almost non-existent and it was clear that the gully was truncated away to the northeast from this point rather than the northern end of the gully representing a true terminus. Three sections were excavated along the western side that showed that the gully varied in width between 250-950mm and between 100-240mm. This variation was due to the variation in machine depths rather than a real change in the shape of the feature. All of the sections showed that the sides were steep and straight with an incline varying between 60-80° that broke to a flat base. The fill was very similar across the whole gully as was seen at the southeast terminus although occasional orangey brown mottles within the fill were seen elsewhere. A subtle change in the fill was observed in the southwest face of the northernmost section that has been interpreted as a possible post-pipe.

7.5 Postholes [120] and [149]

7.5.1 An oval shaped posthole [120] was located immediately south of the southern terminus. It measured 600mm x 460mm and was between 20-50mm. Its sides were very shallow and it had a slightly concave base. It was filled by dark greyish brown silty clay deposit (121) that contained occasional inclusions of small-medium sub-rounded/sub-angular stones and rare charcoal flecks. Although this feature was clearly truncated its location may suggest that it was part of a door structure associated with CS2. Another sub-circular posthole [149] was located 3m to the northeast of [120]. This posthole measured 660mm x 560mm and was 280mm deep. Its sides were almost vertical and it had a flat base. A collection of large rounded and angular pebbles (150) were observed on the northeast side of the feature. These had an average size of 300x200x150mm and were likely to be packing stones for a large post. The remainder of the feature was filled by a mid brownish grey silty sand deposit (151) that contained occasional inclusions of medium-large sub-rounded stones and common charcoal flecks. The location of [151] may suggest it relates to the opposing side of a door structure.

7.6 Features within CS2

Post pits [103], [107], [118], [126], [141], [145], [147] [152], and [153], Gulley/beamslot [105], [111] and [143]

7.6.1 Several features were observed within CS2 although they do not conform to an obvious interpretable pattern. It is clear that not all these features relate to the circular

structure but a lack of clear dating and stratigraphic relationships means they have been grouped by their spatial location within the structure.

7.6.2 Gully/beamslot [105]/[111] was located on the western inner edge of CS2 and respected the curve of the gully although the northern part of the feature was truncated by the modern drain.. It was linear and measured 2.35m in length, a maximum of 320mm in width and was 180mm deep. Its sides were almost vertical with an incline of c.80° and it had a flat base. A possible interpretation of this feature is a beamslot for a weaving structure, given its location within the circular structure. Similar sized structures have been encountered elsewhere such as at Willington, Derbyshire, where triangular loom weights were recorded within the fill of the beamslot cut.

7.6.3 Posthole [103] was located c.1.8m south of the northern extent of CS2. It was sub-squared with rounded corners, measured 680mm x 600mm and 260mm deep. The sides of the feature were concave and the base was fairly flat, that sloped down slightly towards the west. It was filled by a dark greyish brown silty clay deposit that contained occasional inclusions of small-large sub-rounded stones, fire-cracked pebbles, burnt clay and abundant charcoal flecks. Posthole [107] was located c. 1.5m southwest of [103]. It was circular in plan, measured 370mm in diameter and was 250mm deep. Its sides and base were concave and it was filled by a dark greyish brown sandy silty clay deposit (108). This contained occasional inclusions of small sub-rounded stones and charcoal flecks. The feature cut a shallow scoop of material that has been interpreted as a change in the natural. Posthole [126] was located 0.6m southwest of [107]. It was circular, measured 520mm in diameter and 110mm deep. The sides were very shallow but regular and it had a flat base. It was filled by a mixed pinkish red/greyish brown silty clay deposit (127). It contained rare inclusions of small sub-rounded stones and occasional charcoal flecks. The deposit was a mixture of unfired natural mudstone and silt. Posthole [147] was located c.1.2m north of the southern terminus. It was oval in plan, measured 780mm x 680mm and was 320mm deep. The sides and base of the feature were concave and it was mostly filled by stones which had been disturbed during machining. These measured an average of 250x200x100mm and included a flat piece of granite placed horizontally on the base of the feature. The remainder of the deposit (148) consisted of a mid brownish grey clayey silt that contained occasional inclusions of small rounded stones and rare charcoal flecks. Posthole [152] was located c. 1.6m southwest of [147]. It was sub-circular, measured460mm x 360mm and was 380mm deep. Its sides were near vertical and it had a flat base. It was filled by a mid grey silty clay deposit (115) that contained abundant granite fragments that may have formed post-packing as well as abundant charcoal inclusions. Immediately adjacent to the southwest was a small circular stake-hole [153] that measured 200mm in diameter and 100m deep. The sides were steep with an incline of c.60° that tapered to a point at the base. The stake-hole was filled by a dark grey silty clay deposit (154) that contained abundant charcoal inclusions. Posthole [141] was located 600mm from the southwest corner of CS2. It had been heavily truncated by the modern field drain but the remains of the feature looked circular. It measured 400mm x >300mm and was 120mm deep. The sides and base of the feature were concave and it was filled by a dark greyish brown sandy silty clay deposit (142). There were abundant large pebble inclusions that had been dislodged during machining that may have been the remains of post-packing. Posthole/pit [118] was located c.1.6m north of posthole [149]. It looked sub-circular in plan although it was badly disturbed during machining, measured 400mm x 380mm and was 200mm deep. The southwest side was steep, almost vertical, whereas the northeast

side was concave, the base was also concave. It was filled by dark brownish grey clayey silt (119) that contained rare inclusions of small sub-rounded stones and charcoal flecks.

7.6.4 It was shown that features [143] and [145] do stratigraphically pre-date CS2. Pit [145] was sub-circular, measured 1060mm x >900mm and was 220mm deep. Its sides were steep and straight with an incline of c.80° and it had a flat base. It was filled by a mid greyish brown silty clay deposit (146) that contained common inclusions of small-medium sub-rounded/sub-angular stones, occasional pebbled and charcoal flecks. It was truncated on its northern side by gulley [143]. This linear measured c.4m x >500mm and was 170mm deep. The sides of the gulley shallow and poorly defined and it had a reasonably flat base which was pitted in areas. It was filled by dark greyish brown silty clay deposit (144) that contained common inclusions of small sub-rounded stones, pebbles and charcoal flecks. The northern edge of the fill was truncated by the enclosure and it had also been bisected by the modern field drain.

7.7 Posthole Group 1

[14], [17], [20], [23], [26] and [155]

7.7.1 Trench 5 located a small posthole feature [5] (that subsequently became [23]) that was partially excavated. Excavation of the pond area in the vicinity of this feature exposed five additional posthole features. Posthole [14] was oval, measuring 880mm x 840mm and was 350mm deep. The sides of the feature were concave and it had a flat base. Located on the base of the feature was a cluster on angular stones and river worn pebbles (15), the average size of which was 90x80x80mm. The arrangement of these stones that included a fragment of beehive quern stone indicated a post-pad structure with associated packing stones. The remainder of the feature was filled by a mixed deposit (16) consisting of a dark greyish black silty clay (70%) and dark reddish brown re-deposited natural clay (30%). The fill was rich in charcoal and contained common rounded and angular pebbles that on average measured 40mm. A second posthole [17] was located 2.3m to the south. This feature was sub-circular, measuring 1020mm x 940mm and was 520mm deep. The sides were steep and straight with an incline of c.80° breaking to c.60° towards the base which was flat and was marked by a change in the natural from clay to compacted gravel. Similar stones (18) were located towards the base of this feature as (16). They consisted of rounded and angular pebbles measuring an average size of 270x190x90mm that formed a post-packing arrangement. The remainder of the fill consisted if a mid greyish brown silty clay deposit that contained occasional inclusions of fire-cracked pebbles, small rounded stones and charcoal flecks. Another possible posthole [20] was located 2.5m to the southwest. This feature was oval and measured 840mm x 780mm and was 160mm deep. The sides of the feature and shallow and concave as was the base. This feature also contained a quantity of pebbles and angular stones (21) that had an average size of 140x100x80mm. These stones seemed less structured than what had been observed from previous features but given the depth of the feature it is likely that it has been subject to more severe truncation and disturbance. The remainder of the fill was made up of a dark grey silty clay deposit (22) with light orangey brown mottling. This deposit had rare inclusions of charcoal and small rounded stones. A sub-oval feature [26] was located 1.5m south of posthole [17]. It measured 780mm x 500mm and was 240mm deep. The sides of the feature sloped at an incline of *c.*50° that broke to a slightly concave base. A concentration of rounded and

angular pebbles (27) was observed on its north eastern side that have been interpreted as possible post-packing evidence. The remainder of the feature was filled mid grey silty clay deposit (28) that contained rare inclusions of small angular stones and charcoal flecks. Posthole [23] was located 2.3m southwest of feature [26]. It was circular in plan and measured 660mm in diameter. The sides of the feature were steep with an incline of *c.*75° that broke to a slightly concave base. Several angular stones (24) were observed towards the base that had an average size of 210x120x100 that formed a post-packing structure. The remainder of the feature was filled with a mid grey silty clay deposit (25) that contained common large angular stones and occasional pea grit. Posthole [155] was located 1.9m to the south of posthole [23] on the southernmost edge of the excavation area. It measured 620mm x 720mm and was 380mm deep. Its sides were steep with an incline of *c.*80° that broke to a slightly concave base. This posthole was packed with rounded and angular stones (156) that had an average size of 140x110x60mm that clearly formed a packing structure. The remainder of the feature was filled by a dark grey silty clay deposit (157) that contained occasional inclusions of small rounded pebbles and rare charcoal flecks.

7.7.2 These features were very similar in nature and are likely to be contemporary, forming a posthole structure. It is likely that the features exposed only form part of a larger that extends beyond the limit of the excavation. Spatial analysis of postholes exposed does not provide a clear indication of the form of this structure. Features [14], [23], [26] and [155] form a broadly linear arrangement on a north-south alignment. It could be postulated that the features may represent a fence line that ran parallel with the side of the valley.

7.8 Ditch Systems

Enclosure Ditch	[7], [55], [57], [59] [64], [113] and [136]
Ditch	[45]

7.8.1 A ditch [7] was located and partially excavated at the southern end of Trench 1. When the area was opened it was found to be part of a small enclosure ditch. The enclosure was part ‘D’ shaped and measured approximately 15m x 8m. A total of nine sections were excavated in order to understand its nature and investigate possible stratigraphic relationships. The northern side of the enclosure [113] was between 500-760mm wide and a maximum of 320mm deep. The sides were steep and parallel with an incline of *c.*70° and it had a flat base. This side was clearly cut by CS2 and also by the modern field drain. The terminal at eastern end of the northern side was sectioned, where it was found that the ditch expired rather have having a true terminus. This indicates that the ditch has been truncated away, which is conceivable considering its shallow depth elsewhere. Considering its location close to the point where the valley slope drops away sharply, an alternative interpretation than can be considered is that the valley base provided a natural boundary especially if it existed as a water channel. The north-western corner of the enclosure ditch [59] formed a wide arced right angle. It was 620mm wide and 280mm deep. The sides here are also very steep but the base was undulating and pitted, this was probably caused by the very mixed drift glacial geology in this area of the site. The west side of the enclosure [64] varied in width between 600-820mm and was 240mm deep. The outer edge was steep with an incline of *c.*80° whereas the inner edge was shallower with an incline of *c.*40° and the base was flat. The

west side formed a contemporary 'T' junction with the southern side of the enclosure. The ditch here [55]/[57] widened to 1.10m towards to the west end that continued beyond the exposed excavation area, *c.*3m to the west of the junction. Here the sides were fairly steep with an incline of *c.*60° and the base was flat. The enclosure terminated 6m east of the junction in the northwest corner of CS1. Here the ground was extremely poorly defined which meant that together with the shallow depth of the features, that the relationship between the two features was not clearly discernable. The shape of the terminus [136] seemed to be irregular and curving around the inner edge of CS1 to the northeast although this may not reflect the true shape or extent of the ditch. It is likely that the enclosure does in fact respect CS1 and that they were contemporary features within the landscape. The fill of the ditch was very similar throughout consisting of a mainly dark greyish brown silty clay deposit that contained common inclusions of small-large sub-rounded stones and occasional pebbles. The quantity of charcoal inclusions did vary though the fill. The southern side of the ditch was charcoal rich whereas the inclusions of charcoal elsewhere more sparsely spread out.

7.8.2 The terminus of Ditch [45] was located 3.6m north of enclosure corner [59]. From here the ditch ran westwards beneath the excavation edge, *c.*3m to the west. The ditch was roughly parallel, had a maximum width of 790mm and was 210mm deep. The sides of the feature were near vertical and broke to an undulating base. It was filled by a light grey silty clay deposit (46) that contained occasional pebble inclusions. Its spatial location may suggest the existence of a second, larger enclosure relating to the southern side of Enclosure 1 with an access point between the terminus of [45] and the enclosure corner [59].

7.9 Internal features?

Post-pits [3], [51], [53], [139]

7.9.1 Post-pit [3] was excavated towards the centre of Trench 3 during the evaluation. It measured 640mm x 570mm and was 170mm deep. Its northern side was straight and shallow with an incline of *c.*45°, the southern side was steeper and concave as was the base. It was filled with a mid grey silty clay deposit (4) that contained occasional inclusions of small angular pebbles. Post-pit [53] was located *c.* 1.8m southwest of [3]. It was oval, measured 750mm x 560mm and was 60mm deep. Its sides were very shallow and sloping and it had a concave base. It was filled by a mid greyish brown silty clay deposit (52) that contained abundant large angular stones. Pit [139] was located 1.6m north of [3] and was oval in plan. It measured 1020mm x 820mm and was 250mm deep. Its sides were steep and uneven with an incline of *c.*75° and it had a flat base. It was filled by a mid greyish brown silty clay deposit (140) that contained occasional inclusions of small-medium sub-rounded stones, pebbles and charcoal flecks. The eastern edge of this deposit was truncated by CS2. Feature [51] was located *c.*1.85m northwest of [3]. It was oval in plan, measured 750mm x 560mm and was 60mm deep. There were no discernible sides and it had a poorly defined concave base. It was filled by a mid greyish brown silty clay that contained common inclusions of large angular stones. The feature was virtually identical to the surrounding ground and was likely to be natural rather than archaeological. It can be concluded that none of these features can be clearly related to the enclosure ditch.

7.10 Other features to the south and west of Enclosure Ditch 1

Post pit [47], [49], [61], pit [66], and gulley [92]

7.10.1 Three features were located immediately to the south of the enclosure. Pit/pothole [61] was located immediately south of the enclosure ditch 'T' junction [55]/[57]. It was circular, measured 720mm in diameter and was 240mm deep. The edges were steeply broken at an incline of *c.*70° that broke to a horizontal base. A quantity of large stones was observed on the southeast side of the feature (62). There was a mixture of granite fragments and rounded pebbles; these had an average size of 150x120x100mm. The stones were not well structured but represent the remains of post-packing. The remainder of the feature was filled by a mid brownish grey clayey silt deposit (63) that contained occasional small sub-rounded stones and charcoal flecks. Immediately to the south of [61] an elongated shaped pit [66] was recorded. It measured 1.9m x 900mm and was 270mm deep. The sides of the feature were shallow and sloping with an incline of *c.*40° and it had an undulating/pitted base. It was filled by a light grey silty clay deposit (67) that contained common inclusions of granite fragments and large pebbles as well as rare charcoal flecks. A shallow gulley [92] was recorded 1.5m east of pit [66]. It measured *c.*4m in length, between 300-500mm width, had a maximum depth of 100mm and was east-west orientated. The sides of the gulley very shallow but regular and it had a reasonably flat base. It was filled by a dark greyish brown clayey silt deposit (93) that contained occasional small-medium sub-rounded/sub-angular stones and occasional charcoal flecks.

7.10.2 Two features were located close to the northwest corner of the enclosure. Feature [47] was oval, measuring 850mm x 590mm and 90mm deep. Its sides were poorly defined and its base was irregular that sloped to the southeast. It was filled by a mid brown clayey loam deposit (48) with common inclusions of small-medium angular/rounded stones. The fill was very 'topsoil' like and given the irregularity of the feature it is likely that the feature was created by the dragging of a large stone during machining rather than being archaeological in nature. Feature [49] was located 2.3m southwest of [47]. It was circular, measured 350mm in diameter and 50mm deep. There were no discernible sides and it had a poorly defined base. It was filled by a homogenous mid orangey brown silty clay deposit (5) that contained rare inclusions of small rounded stones. It is possible this feature was natural rather than archaeological in origin.

Pond 2

7.11 Sunken Feature 1

Pit?/structure? [29] and potholes [31], [33] and [11]

7.11.1 The northernmost features were located to the east of Trench 4. Here a rectilinear feature [29] was excavated that had been partially exposed in the excavation area. It measured at least 2.39m in length and 2.3m in width and had a maximum depth of 290mm. The clearest edge was on the western boundary, elsewhere the cut was more subtle that may infer the exploitation of a natural depression in the ground by cutting the

westernmost edge. The base was reasonably horizontal although sloped slightly downwards to the north. In the base of the feature, two postholes, [31] and [33] were observed and sample excavated. Posthole [31] was circular, measuring 340mm in diameter and 200mm deep. The edges broke at an incline of *c.*45 that tapered to a point at the base. Posthole [33] was sub-circular, measuring 300mm long, 260mm wide and 140mm deep. The sides and base of this feature were concave. All the features were filled by a similar blackish grey silty clay ((30), (32) and (34) respectively). These contexts contained abundant inclusions of granite lumps up to a size of 700mm as well as common charcoal flecks.

7.11.2 These features are likely to be contemporary and the deposit suggests a mono-episodic backfill of the sunken feature after the posts had been removed. It is difficult to interpret these features because the extent of the rectilinear feature is not known. It is possible that the feature is a ditch terminus with post markers or it may represent evidence of a sunken structure of unknown function that may have utilized a natural depression in the ground.

7.11.3 A circular posthole [11] was located 1.6m northwest of the rectilinear feature. It measured 490mm in diameter and was 170mm deep. The sides of the feature were steep and straight with an incline of *c.*70° that broke to a horizontal base. Post-packing stones were recorded to the southern side of feature (12) that consisted of mainly of granite fragments and fire-cracked pebbles. These had an average size of 200x200x50mm and were stacked up the southern side of the feature. The remainder of the feature was filled by a dark greyish brown silty clay deposit (13) that contained occasional inclusions of pea-grit, rare small sub-rounded stones and common charcoal flecks.

7.12 Other features within the southern area if pond 2

Ditch [35], Gully [37], Pits [39], [41] and pit/gully feature [43]

7.12.1 A number of features were observed at the southern end of pond 2. A poorly defined curvi-linear ditch [35] was located and sample excavated. It varied in width between 850-1050mm and it was 240mm deep. It was orientated east-west curving to southeast-northwest and spanned the width of the excavation area. The sides of the ditch were shallow and poorly defined with an incline of *c.*45° and it had a roughly flat (slightly irregular) base. It was filled by a mid brownish grey deposit (36) that contained abundant inclusions of small-large sub-rounded/rounded stones and rare charcoal flecks. This ditch was clearly cut by a later, well defined gulley. This linear [37] measured 640mm in wide, 230mm deep and spanned the width of the excavation area on a north-south orientation. The sides and base of the gulley were concave and it was filled by a dark grey silty sand deposit (38) with brown mottles. The fill contained rare inclusions of small-large sub-rounded stones. This gulley must terminate or change orientation beyond the northern extent of the excavation area as it does not reappear when its alignment is projected into the northern area of the pond.

7.12.2 Three features were located *c.*6m to the north of ditch [35] and *c.*3m to the east of gulley [37]. Pit [39] was square in plan with rounded corners. It measured 920mm x 860mm and was 350mm deep. The sides and base of the feature were concave. It was filled by a light greyish brown clayey silt deposit (40) that contained occasional inclusions of small sub-rounded/angular stones and angular pebbles. Another Pit/posthole [43] was located 1.7m southeast of [39]. It was oval in plan and measured

580mm x 470mm and was 220mm deep. Its sides were straight with an incline of *c.*50° and it had a flat base. It was filled by a light greyish brown clayey silt deposit (44) that contained occasional inclusions of small rounded/angular stones and rare angular pebbles. Feature [41] was only partially exposed on the northern edge of the excavation area. Its shape in plan suggested a possible gulley terminus although it could have been an elongated pit. It measured >840mm in length, was 60mm wide and 280mm deep. The sides of the feature were straight and regular with an incline of *c.*60° that broke to a flat base which sloped down to the north. It was filled by a light greyish brown clayey silt deposit (42) that contained occasional inclusions of large rounded/angular stones.

7.12.3 Two features were located eastern edge excavation area. An unexcavated curvi-linear ditch was observed that measured 1090mm wide and continued beneath the excavation edge. It was orientated north-south curving to northeast-southwest. Also a small unexcavated pit/posthole was located on its eastern edge that measured 480mm in diameter. These features were not excavated as they were not threatened by the development.

8 The Prehistoric Pottery and Miscellaneous Finds

Nicholas J. Cooper

8.1 Introduction and Quantitative Summary of Condition

8.1.1 A stratified assemblage of 348 sherds of mid-late Iron Age pottery, weighing 6.2kg with an estimated vessel equivalent (EVEs) value of 1.22 and an average sherd weight of 18g was retrieved during the excavation. The majority of the pottery falls into the East Midlands Scored Ware tradition (Elsdon 1992a) and at least 18 separate vessels were identified from individual rims (15 of which are typical scored ware forms). The material derives from the fills of round house gullies and associated ditch and pit features, a total of 40 features. The largest and most coherent group comes from (123) with smaller groups from (8), (93), (114), (131) and (137). The average sherd weight of 18g is relatively high compared to other nearby contemporary assemblages and although there is some surface abrasion, there are large numbers of joins and sherds belonging to the same vessel. This would indicate that much of the assemblage represents primary rubbish incorporated into features soon after breakage.

8.2 Methodology

8.2.1 The Iron Age material has been analysed by form and fabric using the Leicestershire County Museums prehistoric pottery fabric series (Marsden 1998, 45), with reference to the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Groups Guidelines (PCRG 1992), and quantified by sherd count, weight and estimated vessel equivalents (EVEs based on rim values). Two major contemporary assemblages have been published in recent years from sites in the county at Wanlip and Hamilton (Marsden 1998 and 2000).

8.3 Analysis of Assemblage by Fabric and Form

Fabric Summary				
Fabric	**Sherd**	**Weight**	**%Sh**	**Av.Sh.Wt**
R1	299	5751	86	19
Q1	21	316	6	15
S1	16	69	5	4
S/G (fine	1	6	<1	6
G (fine)	11	59	3	5
Total	**348**	**6201**		**18**

Table 2: Fabric Summary

8.3.1 Table 2 summarises the quantification of the assemblage by fabric. The range of Iron Age fabrics (but in varying proportions) matches those from the nearby assemblages at Wanlip and Humberstone, and most recently from Hallam Fields, Birstall (Cooper unpublished report XA25.2001) and are described briefly here for convenience (Marsden 2000, 171; 1998, 45) including two finer variants.

8.3.3 Q1 Sandy ware

Moderate to very common sub-rounded or rounded quartz (well to moderately sorted, up to 1mm) and sparse-moderate angular quartz.

8.3.4 R1 (formerly RQ1) igneous rock inclusions (granodiorite)

Sparse to very common sub-angular igneous rock fragments (poorly sorted, most up to 5mm).

8.3.5 S1 Shell tempered

Moderate, to very common, poorly sorted fossil marine shell up to 8mm.

8.3.6 Variants:

Two fabrics used in the manufacture of smaller vessels and similar to ‘Belgic’-type fabrics of Late pre-Roman Iron Age date but forms not clearly diagnostic of that date.

8.3.7 G (Fine)

Finer ‘grog’ or red/brown clay pellets than used in scored ware vessels. Common up to 1mm.

8.3.8 S/G (fine)

A variant of G (fine) including fine fossil shell up to 1mm.

8.4 Discussion

8.4.1 The assemblage is dominated by the granite tempered (R1) fabric (86%) with a small, but significant, proportion of the sandy (Q1) fabric (6%), a pattern broadly in line with the assemblages noted above and consistent with what would be expected in the north and west of Leicestershire, close to the probable source of the opening materials, the granodiorite outcrops of Mountsorrel (Knight, Marsden and Carney 2003). There are no examples of Scored Ware vessels in shell tempered fabrics S would be normal in the east of the region (Cooper 2000). These two fabrics are used to produce forms specifically in the scored ware tradition (although no examples of scored decoration occurs in Q1 which is also the case at Birstall), generally thick-bodied jar forms with upright or flaring rims (varying in diameter from 100mm to 400mm), occasionally flattened and with diagonal slash decoration along the top (all in fabric R1), for example Vessel 14 from (46), Vessel 1 from (123), and Vessel 4 from (8) with diameters of 400mm, 280mm and 240mm respectively, and paralleled closely from Grove Farm, Enderby (Elsdon 1992b fig. 24 Form 2). Vessels 6, 7 and 8 from (131) and 12 from (114) are also of Form 2 but lack decoration on top of the rim and are noticeably smaller in diameter. Examples of Elsdon's (1992b fig. 24) Form 1, generally smaller (100-140mm rim diameter) with a short everted or flaring rim, globular profile and occurring in both fabrics, came from (114) (Vessels 10 and 11) and (137) (Vessel 13). Where scored decoration occurred there were two clear examples of arcs (including Vessel 1) (Eldon 1992a, 85, illus.1, Style 6) and two of sparse vertical scoring (Style 7) (Vessel 9).

8.4.2 Alongside the largest scored ware group, from (123), was the remains of two (Vessels 2 and 3) or three distinctly smaller vessels in a shell tempered and 'grog' or mudstone (clay pellet) fabric respectively (size indicated by far smaller average sherd weight). An additional shell and 'grog' (S/G (fine)) tempered sherd also came from (40) but otherwise these were the only occurrences of these fabrics. Vessel 2 is a small, shouldered jar with outcurving rim and most similar to material from Area 7 at Elms Farm, Humberstone dated to the late Iron Age (Marsden 2000, 186 and fig. 52.39 also in a shell-tempered fabric).

8.4.3 The overall dating of the assemblage would appear to be late Iron Age. The broad similarity of forms with those of the early phase at Grove Farm, Enderby, dated *c.* 175 BC to AD 20 (Clay 1992, 33) and the occurrence of the non-scored ware vessels from (123) in finer fabrics may suggest a date closer to the first century AD, although the clear lack of Roman material would suggest no long occupation after AD 43.

8.5 Other Finds

8.5.1 Fragments of fire cracked pebbles came from (19), (77), (114) (131) and (137). Four fragments from a triangular loom weight, with evidence of a single perforation came from (30), with four fragments of another from (19). Four fragments of fuel ash came from (10) and two from (131).

Context	Cut	Fabric	Form	Type	Rim	Dec	Sherds	Weight	EVEs	Diam	Comment
123	122	G	jar	base			11	59			Vessel 3 Mudstone
58	57	Q1	jar				1	14			
71		Q1	misc				2	8			
92	91	Q1	jar	Enderby 3			2	20	0.15	12	Vessel 15 joining
93		Q1	jar				1	12			?same vess as (137)
93		Q1	misc				1	28			
102		Q1	jar				1	28			
137		Q1	jar	Enderby 1	short evert		11	188	0.03	14	Vessel 13 globular profile
67		Q1 (fe)	jar				2	18			joining
6	5	R1	jar				8	210			all one vessel
8	7	R1	jar	Enderby 2	flat&slash		12	802	0.26	24	Vessel 4 Abraded diagonal slashes as Enderby 2
8	7	R1	jar	base			3	66			
8	7	R1	jar			scored	6	116			
10	9	R1	jar				4	22			
16	14	R1	jar				3	22			
25	23	R1	jar				23	653			not scored
28	26	R1	jar				1	8			
30		R1	jar				3	44			
32		R1	jar				1	12			
36	35	R1	jar				7	34			
42	41	R1	jar				2	94			joining
46		R1	jar	Enderby 2	flat /slash		2	38	0.05	40	Vessel 14
46		R1	jar				12	144			
56	55	R1	jar				1	18			
60		R1	jar				11	50			
67		R1	jar				5	82			
71		R1	jar	Enderby 2			1	12	0.06	14?	Vessel 18
75		R1	jar				1	20			smoothed external
77	76	R1	jar				2	32			
81	80	R1	jar				3	12			
93		R1	jar	base			8	238		8	Vessel 5 four joining base sherds
96		R1	jar				3	40			
102		R1	jar				16	130			
106	105	R1	jar	Enderby 4	rolled		3	12	0.02	?	Vessel 17
106	105	R1	jar				1	8			
108	107	R1	jar				1	1			
112	111	R1	jar				3	36			joining
114	113	R1	jar	Enderby 1	short evert		1	12	0.05	10	Vessel 10 fine body
114	113	R1	jar	Enderby 1	flaring		1	6	0.08	12	Vessel 11 fine body
114	113	R1	jar	Enderby 2	flat undec		2	6			Vessel 12 nail impression below rim
114	113	R1	jar				22	285			coarse fabric
114	113	R1	jar			scored	1	34			coarse fabric
114	113	R1	jar				4	44			finer fabric
115		R1	jar	base			2	14			
121	120	R1	jar				4	22			
123	122	R1	jar	Enderby 2	flat&slash	Arcs EL6	13	769	0.13	28	Vessel 1 faint diagonal slashes on top of rim cf Enderby Type 2
123	122	R1	jar			Arcs EL6	21	506			poss Ves1
123	122	R1	jar				19	182			other vessels
123	122	R1	jar				3	14			
131	130	R1	jar	Enderby 2	flat undec		1	26	0.06	16	Vessel 6
131	130	R1	jar	Enderby 2	upright		1	6	0.05	14	Vessel 7

131	130	R1	jar	Enderby 2	upright		1	10	0.15	9	Vessel 8
131	130	R1	jar	base		Vert EL7	2	54			Vessel 9
131	130	R1	jar			scored	3	108			same vessel
131	130	R1	misc				15	212			three sherds of finer body
137		R1	jar			Vert EL7	4	104			coarse fabric
137		R1	jar				16	204			coarse fabric
137		R1	jar				5	72			sparse rock. Sandy temp sim to Q1
142	141	R1	jar				1	12			
144	143	R1	jar	Enderby 2	flat		1	10	0.03	20	Vessel 16
144	143	R1	misc				2	5			
148		R1	jar				3	36			
151	149	R1	jar				1	8			
154		R1	jar				1	6			
157	155	R1	jar				3	28			
40	39	S/G	jar				1	6			
115		S1	jar	base			1	6			fabric as Vessel 2
123	122	S1	jar	base	flaring		14	52	0.1	9	Vessel 2 not scored ware
123	122	S1	misc				1	11			fine sparse shell
Total							**668**	**12268**	**1.22**		

Table 3: Forest Hill Golf Club Pottery

9 The Lithics

Lynden Cooper

9.1 Twenty-four worked flints were recovered from features. There was a single tool, a scraper on a thick flake with dorsal blade scars. The retouched edge was minimal and possibly indicates re-use of an older blank. The debitage technology is flake-based and executed with little skill i.e. lack of preparation and generally quite squat. The small assemblage would appear to be late prehistoric in date, but not necessarily contemporary with the structural evidence.

Context	Description
13	Shatter
30	7 x flakes (one burnt)
30	Shatter
30	Core
36	4 x flakes
67	Core fragment
67	Flake
71	Flake frag
122	Flake
123	2 x flake (one burnt)
123	Side scraper
131	2 x flake
151	flake

Table 4: Lithics Catalogue

10 Charred Plant Remains

Angela Monckton

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 Environmental samples were taken during the course of the excavation in order to recover plant and animal remains which can give evidence of diet and agriculture in the past. Features were sampled if they were datable and had the potential to contain any remains which would provide evidence about the site and for comparison with other sites in the region.

10.2 Methods

A total of seven samples from contexts which contained Iron Age pottery were processed in ten sample parts of around 10 litres in size.

10.2.1 Samples were wet sieved in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm mesh sieve. The residues were air dried and the fraction over 4mm sorted for all finds which are included in the relevant sections of this report. The fractions below 4mm were reserved for analysis. The flotation fractions (flots) were transferred to plastic boxes and air dried and submitted for analysis.

10.2.2 The flots were examined with a x10 stereo microscope, the plant remains were removed to glass specimen tubes and were then identified by comparison with modern reference material at ULAS. The remains were counted, including remains from the residues, and tabulated below (table E1). The plant names follow Stace (1991) and the remains are seeds in the broad sense unless described otherwise.

10.3 Results

10.3.1 Charred plant remains were very sparse on the site but were recovered in small numbers from a few of the samples with the exception of one sample from a post-hole which had quite numerous cereal grains. The post-hole sample (25) was extremely wet although not waterlogged, and most of the grains were found in the residue (below 4mm) because they did not float, probably because they were soaked and concreted with clay. Little was found in the residues of the other samples examined. The samples were fairly rich in charcoal so the remains were thought to be contemporary with the features. The cereal grains were broken and abraded and a small amount of chaff was also found. The cereal grains included barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and some glume wheat (*Triticum dicoccum/spelta)* and some indeterminate cereal. There was a little diagnostic chaff in the samples including a few wheat glumes which could be identified as spelt (*Triticum spelta*). Charred seeds were also present in small numbers, these were mainly arable weeds (table E1.). A few fragments of hazel nutshell (*Corylus avellana*) were found as evidence of the use of gathered food and the presence of domestic waste. The cereals and weeds found are all common on Iron Age sites in England (Greig 1991).

10.4 Discussion

10.4.1 Three contexts of the roundhouse, (96) and (131) from the gully and (75) an internal posthole were examined and only single items of cereal remains were present in the gully samples, with charcoal only in the internal feature (75). A ditch context (123) outside the roundhouse contained a spelt glume and a sedge seed. Isolated features away from the roundhouse area included a shallow feature (30) which contained occasional cereal grains, including one of barley, and a few wheat glumes were present together with weed seeds. This type of waste is produced because the chaff of glume wheat such as spelt stays attached to the grains after threshing and requires parching and pounding to remove it, this together with weed seeds, can be removed from the grains by using a sieve which retains the grain, then final cleaning can be carried out by hand-sorting (Hillman 1981). The remains found here are likely to represent small scale cereal cleaning and food preparation waste from domestic hearths scattered about the site.

10.4.2 A different type of sample from post-hole (25) contained quite numerous cereal grains with few seeds or chaff indicating that this was cleaned cereal grain with barley and glume wheat present, barley being most numerous. This may be grain accumulated in the post-hole from nearby processing, the wheat would have been parched to free it from the chaff and the hulled barley to remove the papery hulls before consumption. A third type of sample was dominated by weed seeds was from hearth (91), this included clover type seeds and small grasses suggesting nearby grassy vegetation and probably grass used as kindling for the fire.

10.4.3 Most Iron Age sites are likely to have carried out mixed farming but the balance between arable and pastoral would have varied with the suitability of the land and other factors. Some Iron Age sites in this area have produced sparse cereal remains such as at Enderby and Kirby Muxloe, at the former there was evidence for nearby pastureland from snail shells of open grassland habitats. At Kirby Muxloe cereal remains were found at very low densities although cereal pollen was present in the waterlogged deposits, additional evidence from insects and seeds in the waterlogged deposits suggested that nearby grassland was probably used as pasture. This evidence for pasture taken together with the few cereal remains on the sites suggests that there may have been a bias towards a pastoral economy. Although the evidence for pastureland is lacking here it is likely to have been part of the economy. Other Iron Age sites such as Humberstone, Wanlip, Ashby and Huncote where have produced more abundant cereal remains (summarised in Monckton 2004) suggesting that they produced cereals. At Humberstone charred cereal grains were found in a post-hole of a four-post granary, the charred grain is thought to have accumulated in the post-hole from nearby processing by parching (Pelling 2000). The preservation here is poorer and structural evidence is lacking but the cereal may also have been charred in nearby processing. The remains do show that cereals may have been stored and processed on this site. Little cereal cleaning waste was found perhaps because of sampling bias, or because cereal waste can be used for fodder, or perhaps because of soil conditions, so there is little to suggest where the cereal was produced. Although conclusions about the economy should be treated with caution the site seems to fall between the two groups mentioned above and is likely to have had a mixed farming economy.

10.5 Conclusions

10.5.1 Charred plant remains were found as a low density scatter near the roundhouse. Barley grains were present and spelt wheat was identified from chaff, a very few arable weed seeds were also present. This may represent waste from small scale cereal cleaning during food preparation. A sample from a post-hole contained a mixture of grains of barley and glume wheat which may have accumulated from nearby processing by parching to de-husk the grain. The remains found provide evidence of the consumption of cereals on the site although it is suggested that the site is likely to have had a mixed farming economy. The evidence indicates that the barley and spelt together with gathered hazelnuts formed part of the diet of the inhabitants.

Table 5: Charred plant remains from samples

Samp	Cont	Feat	Samp Vol. litres	Flot Vol. mls	Gr	Cf	Se ch	Se un	Nut	Ch	Comments
4	25	2 P-H	16	26	72	5	4	+	-	fl	Barley grains 16, wheat grains 9, cereal grains 47, wheat glumes, a spelt glume, seeds of brome grass, black bindweed and scentless mayweed.
5	30	29 Feat.	8	10	1fr	-	1	-	-	fl	A clover type seed, a cereal fragment only.
9	92	91 Hth	10	7	1	-	15	-	-	+	A ?barley grain, seeds of sedge, clover type and small grass.
13	96	95 RH Term	18	11	1	2	1?	-	5	fl	A barley grain, wheat glumes, and an indet seed frag., hazel nutshell.
15	75	74 RH Int.F.	18	13	1	-	-	+	-	+	A cereal grain fragment.
21	131	130 RH Gully	10	9	-	-	-	-	-	++	Charcoal only.
25	123	122 Ditch	10	3	1fr	2	1	-	5	fl	A spelt glume, a wheat glume, a seed of sedge, and hazel nutshell.

Key: Gr = grain, Cf = chaff, Se ch = charred seed, Se un = uncharred seed, Nut = hazel nutshell,

Ch = charcoal, fl = flecks, fr = fragments. P-H = posthole, Int.F. = internal feature,

RH = round house.

11 Discussion

The shallow depth of topsoil where the archaeology was present and prolonged period of plough erosion had truncated the archaeology. In addition the nature of the glacial drift material across some of the site made the recognition of archaeological features under wet conditions very difficult.

11.1 Project Aims and objectives

11.1.1 All of the aims listed previously have been addressed. The excavations identified the character, extent and date of the archaeological deposits that would be affected by the groundworks. These were appropriately excavated and recorded. The archive and report have been produced and the results will shortly be published and disseminated. Specific research aims were to examine the nature and environmental indicators of the Iron Age rural landscape in this area. An attempt was also made to consider the pottery assemblage within the regional pottery traditions although the nature and size of the assemblage made this difficult. Understanding the morphology of Iron Age field systems and their relationship with adjacent settlements is also an important research aim when studying Iron Age settlement patterns although the small portion of the farmstead that was excavated makes it difficult to comment on the field systems at this site.

11.2 Prehistoric (Pre-Iron Age)

11.2.1 No definite pre-Iron Age features were identified, although the flint assemblage recorded during excavations show that there was some prehistoric activity within or close to the area. Although a number of flints were recorded from within features, these are likely to be residual.

11.3 Iron Age

11.3.1 The Later Iron Age saw an expansion of settlement and land use in Leicestershire with environmental evidence suggesting an emphasis on pastoralism. Evidence suggests an increasing population operating within a tribal system. The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record include over 220 Later Iron Age sites. These sites have an average height above sea level of 103m OD, a preference for a south-facing aspect and are an average of 0.4 km away from the nearest source of water (Clay 2001). From the information gathered from the excavation the presence of a small scale Mid-Late Iron Age farmstead at Forest Hill Golf Club is suggested, which fits well in the regional framework of sites from this period (Willis 2006). Similar sites have been interpreted from cropmarks (Pickering and Hartley 1985; Hartley 1989), together with earthwork, artefact scatters and excavated data. The interior of most Iron Age sites appears to be asymmetrical (Windell, 1981). Given the fact that only a small area of the site was exposed, it is hard to say exactly how large the site was. However, it seems likely that this was a relatively small farmstead, typical of many from the region..

11.3.2 The topography of the site is likely to have been central to the location of the settlement. Excavation of Pond 1 revealed deep colluvial deposits that had filled the valley bed. Examination of the exposed topography showed that the settlement activity was located towards the base of the valley on a ridge of relatively even ground at a

height of *c.*121.5m OD before the land sloped steeply to 120m OD at the base (fig. 16). The eastern side of Circular Structure 1 was partially covered by the western edge of the colluvial deposit, showing that the colluviation of the valley post-dated the Late Iron Age activity. No other archaeological deposits were recorded below the deeper areas of colluvium, suggesting that the area at the very base of the valley was unsuitable for settlement. It has been suggested that a small stream may have seasonally flowed through the valley during the settlement period (Beamish pers. Comm.).

11.3.3 The site is also located *c*. 1 km from Ratby Bury, a sub-rectangular earthwork with a substantial bank and ditch system that covers *c*. 3 ha. This was previously thought to be a Roman Camp but it has also produced Iron Age material (Liddle 1982, 26) and may be the equivalent of a lowland defended 'hillfort'. The settlement at Forest Hill Golf Club may well have been a part of a wider network of settlements intrinsically linked with Ratby Bury.

Structures

11.3.4 Special care is needed in interpreting plough-damaged sites as the evidence is incomplete, with lesser structural elements being under represented (Guilbert 1981, 30). Two round houses were excavated on the site (CS1 and CS2). Both gullies were polygonal in plan shape, with a broadly flat based profile (CS1 was slightly concave). The recorded evidence suggested that these served a structural rather than a drainage purpose, forming the outer walls of the roundhouses. Examples of this type of construction has been seen elsewhere in Leicestershire (e.g. Cossington; Sturgess and Ripper 2000 and Wanlip; Beamish 1998) The internal features, apart from the hearth features within CS1 can not be clearly be structurally or constructionally related to the roundhouses on the basis of the stratigraphic evidence. Beamish investigated two hypotheses for the construction sequence of the roundhouse found at Wanlip, Leicestershire. By considering the polygonal shape of the ring groove (the construction gully) it is possible to establish whether the ring beam for the roof dictated the wall construction or whether preformed hurdles of a single size were used in the outer wall and the shape of the ring groove reflected this. It was found that the nodes of the polygon respected the locations of the outer ring beam posts and that there were no clearly standardised lengths of the hurdles (based of the lengths of the sides of the polygonal gully). Although no clear ring of postholes was found for either roundhouse at Forest Hill Golf Club, this is not to say that they were not there originally. The experimental archaeologist Peter Reynolds found in the deconstruction of Pimperne house (a modern reconstructed roundhouse) that the posts had rotted away in their holes so completely as to leave the base of the un-rotted post above ground, but held up laterally by a lip of packed material around the top edge of the post hole; the structure had not suffered despite strong winds in 1987 and 1989/90 (Harding *et al.* 1993). Therefore the inner ring of posts with an arrangement where the external wall was the main load-bearing structure could leave a more ephemeral trace, and in a heavily ploughed site, none at all. Based purely on the shapes of the polygonal ring grooves of the roundhouses it is likely that a similar construction technique for the roundhouses was used here as at Wanlip because the lengths between nodes varied considerably around both the ring grooves.

11.3.5 The entrance of Circular Structure 1 is approximately 114° from north and the entrance of Circular Structure 2 is likely to be approximately 129° from north. Work by Oswald (1997) has demonstrated that roundhouse entrances are orientated predominantly to the east, and specifically to the direction of sunrises at equinoxes and midwinter. The likely southeast entrance of Circular Structure 2 is centred on mid-winter sunrise whereas Circular Structure 1 is on an east southeast orientation. This is centred close to mid-summer moonrise, between equinox sunrise and mid-summer sunrise. It certainly appears the 'correct' direction to enter an Iron Age house or settlement may have been linked to the cosmological principles embodied in the architecture and use of settlement space (Hill 1993, 6).

The Field Systems

11.3.6 Due to the limited excavation area it is difficult to interpret the field systems within the settlement. The main feature exposed was the small 'D' shaped enclosure. There appeared to only be one phase of activity associated with this enclosure, no re-cutting or re-modelling was observed. Its relationship with Circular Structure 1 was not clearly determined but the ditch seemed to respect the location of the roundhouse indicating a cotemporary usage. A possible interpretation of the enclosure is that it acted as a stocking yard where animals could be processed, considering that there were very few internal features within the enclosure. The continuation of the southern side of the ditch does suggest that the enclosure is just part of a larger field system with possible further enclosures continuing southwards. The southern roundhouse may well be contained within a larger enclosure, representing the main settlement area as at many other sites in Leicestershire such as Wanlip (Beamish 1998), Enderby and Huncote (Meek *et al*. 2004). Stratigraphic evidence does show that the small enclosure had gone out of use (silted up) by the time Circular Structure 2 had been constructed. Evidence of further field systems were observed in Pond 2 that represents the continuation of the farmstead northwards but it is unclear whether these represent the continuation of occupation settlement or whether they are outlying fields of the farmstead.

Dating

11.3.7 Roughly half of the features revealed by the excavations at Forest Hill Golf Club contained pottery belonging to the long lived East Midlands Scored Ware Tradition dating from the fifth century BC until the first century AD. It has parallels with the assemblage from Enderby which was dated between *c*. 175 BC and AD 20. The majority of the pottery came from the enclosure ditch and the two circular gullies. This assemblage, along with the form of the features suggests two phases of settlement. The first phase included the southern roundhouse and associated small enclosure. A slightly later phase was identified that is solely made up of the northern roundhouse which may be more closely dated to the first century AD. Unlike many Mid – Late Iron Age settlement sites, the absence of Roman material does suggest abandonment of the site before Roman material culture has impact on the pottery typologies.

Economy

11.3.8 There was no animal bone recovered from the site to suggest pastoral farming; however this is more likely to be due to adverse soil conditions for bone survival rather

than reflecting an absence of livestock. However, sampling of the deposits has produced a small but significant amount of information about the farming practises of the inhabitants. The numerous cereal grains represented include spelt and glume wheat and barley. This is similar to types found on other Iron Age sites from the Midlands. The numerous weeds from arable and disturbed soils represented suggest that there were areas of well drained soils nearby that were cleared and utilised for the growing of crops. Most of the remains represent waste from the processing of cereals after harvesting (e.g. cleaning, de-husking) rather than grain itself. A posthole sample from Posthole Group 1 did yield a rich sample of cleaned cereal that indicates that processed grain could have been stored in this area. Therefore it is possible the posthole group may be part of a structure associated with the processing/storing of grain within the settlement. The inhabitants' diet would have been supplemented by collecting nuts and berries from the local area, such as hazelnuts represented by shells found in the samples.

12. Conclusions

12.1 The excavated area at Forest Hill Golf Club was dictated by the limits of the development and therefore the extent of the settlement was not established. However, the excavations have revealed some detail about the lives of people living on this part of the East Midlands claylands in the late Iron Age.

12.2 The settlement which they lived in was well organised and there was a clear awareness of their position in the world as they built their structures, apparently with reference to cosmological events and in this way the inhabitants were similar to those in other parts of the country.

12.3 The inhabitants would have been farmers and although we cannot be definite about the relative importance of any particular agricultural activity, they were likely to have been concerned with tending their livestock and the small enclosure was probably predominantly used for managing herds. The plant foods eaten included grain and gathered resources, although it is not possible to be clear about the extent of grain cultivation near the site. Given the proposed economy of the site, cattle and sheep may have formed an important part of their diet. By analogy with other sites, the site would have existed in an increasingly open environment with woodland on the valley sides removed to make way for agriculture

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14 Archive and Publication

11.1 The archive for this project, including records from the evaluation and the excavation, will be deposited with Leicestershire Historic and Natural Environment Team, under accession number X.A176.2005 and consists of the following:

12 x A2 Permatrace Drawing Sheets

1 x A3 Permatrace Drawing Sheet

1 x Copy of Evaluation and Excavation Report

12 x Trench Sheets

157 x Contexts Sheets

Digital Photo Contact Sheets

1 x CD of Digital Photos

Miscellaneous Plans, Survey Sheets and Drawings

11.2 A version of the Summary (above) will be published in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

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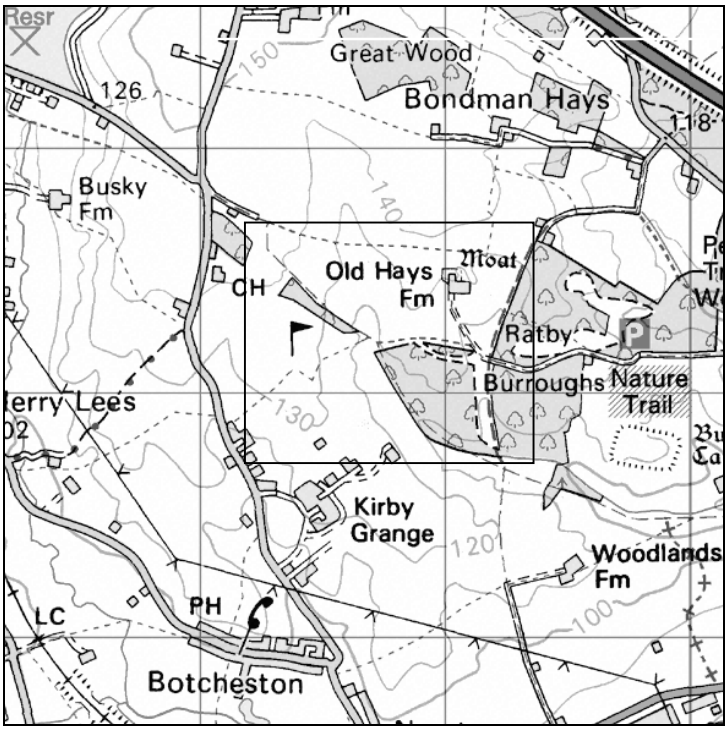

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

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Figure 2: Site Plan showing the separate re-development areas (Taken from Harvey. 2005)

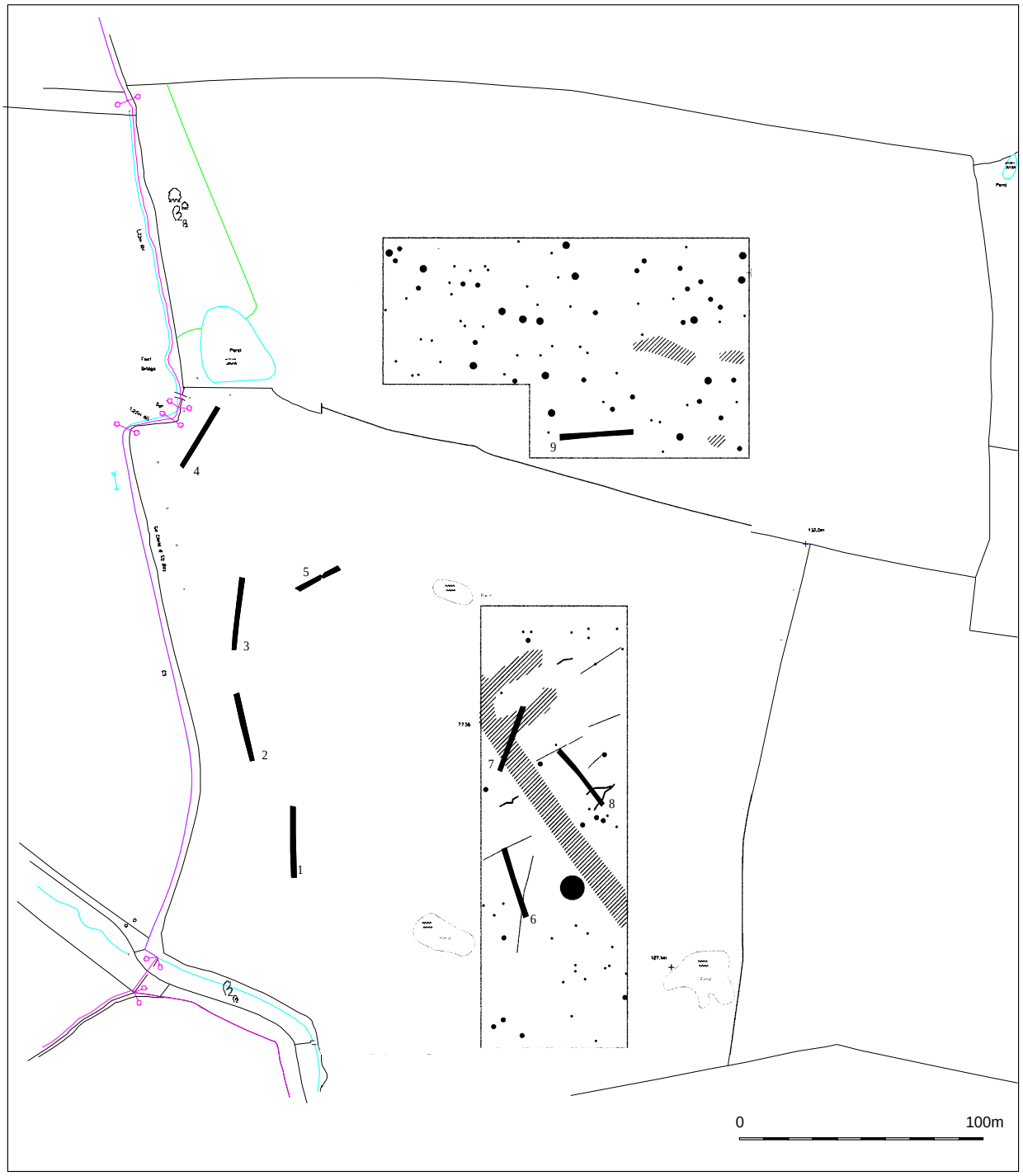

Figure 3: Trench Plan of Area D incorporating the geophysical survey

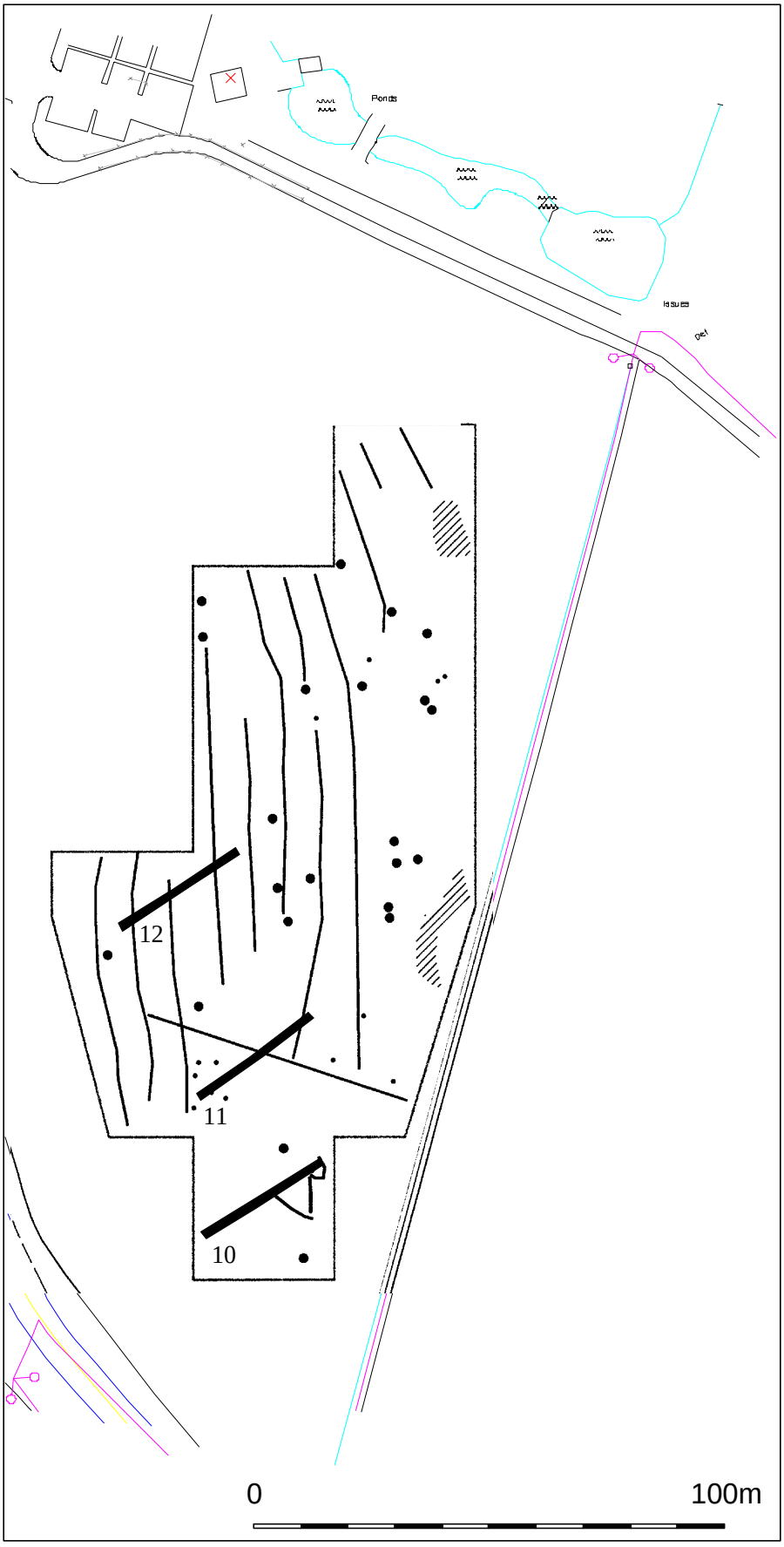

Figure 4: Trench Plan of Area A incorporating the geophysical survey

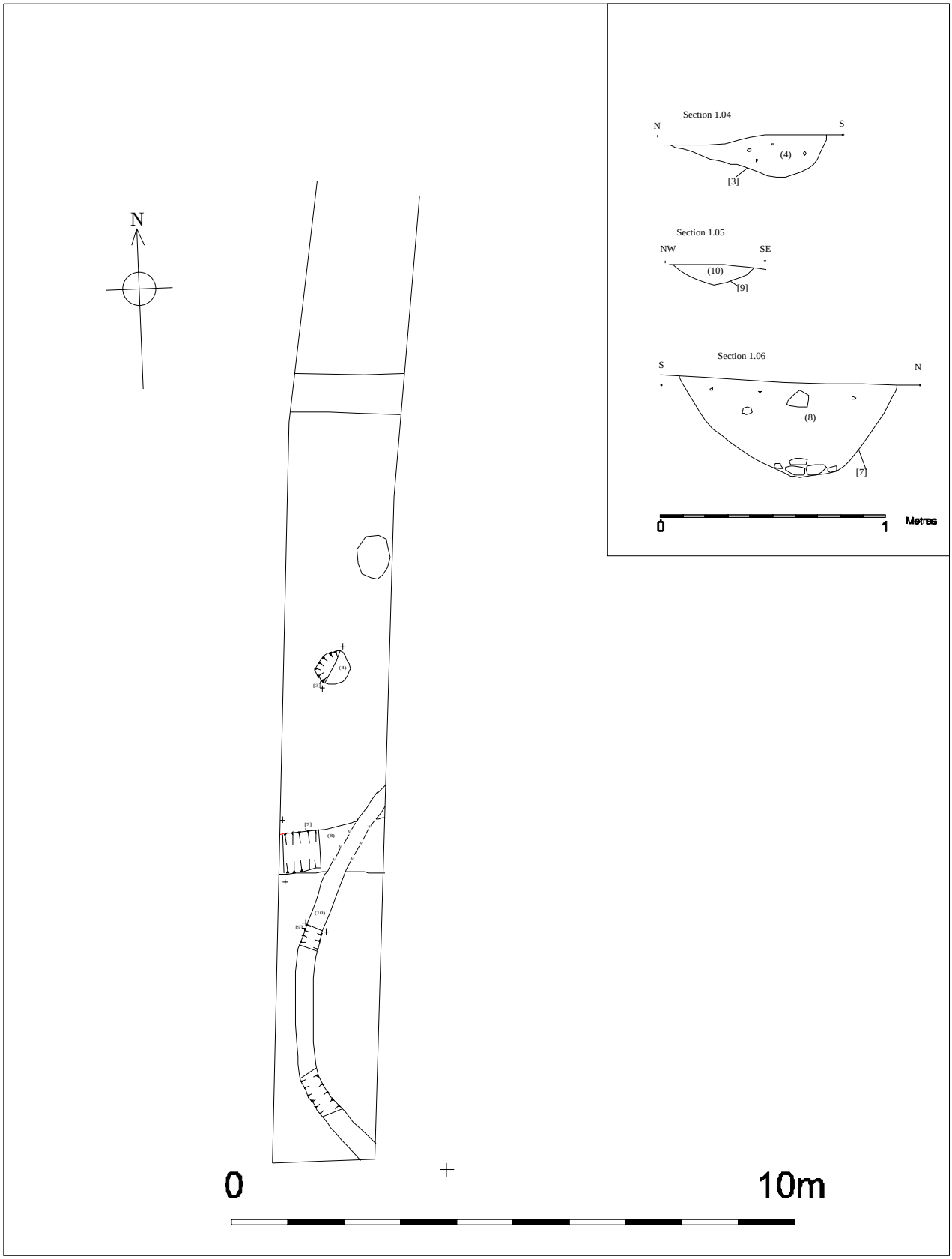

Figure 5: Visible archaeology at the southern end of Trench 3

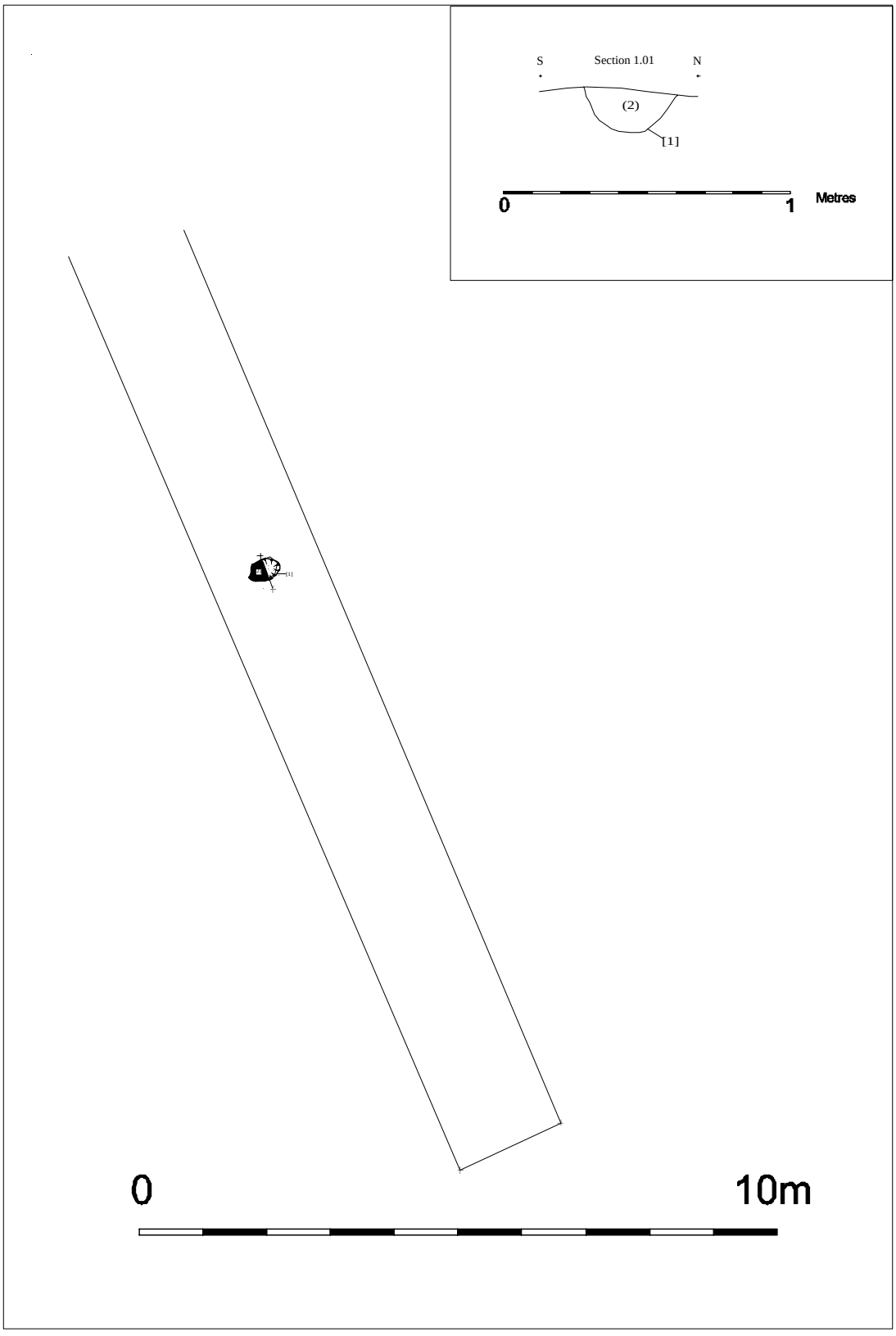

Figure 6: Pit located towards the centre of Trench 6

Figure 7: Plan showing the location of the new ponds in relation to the trench plan

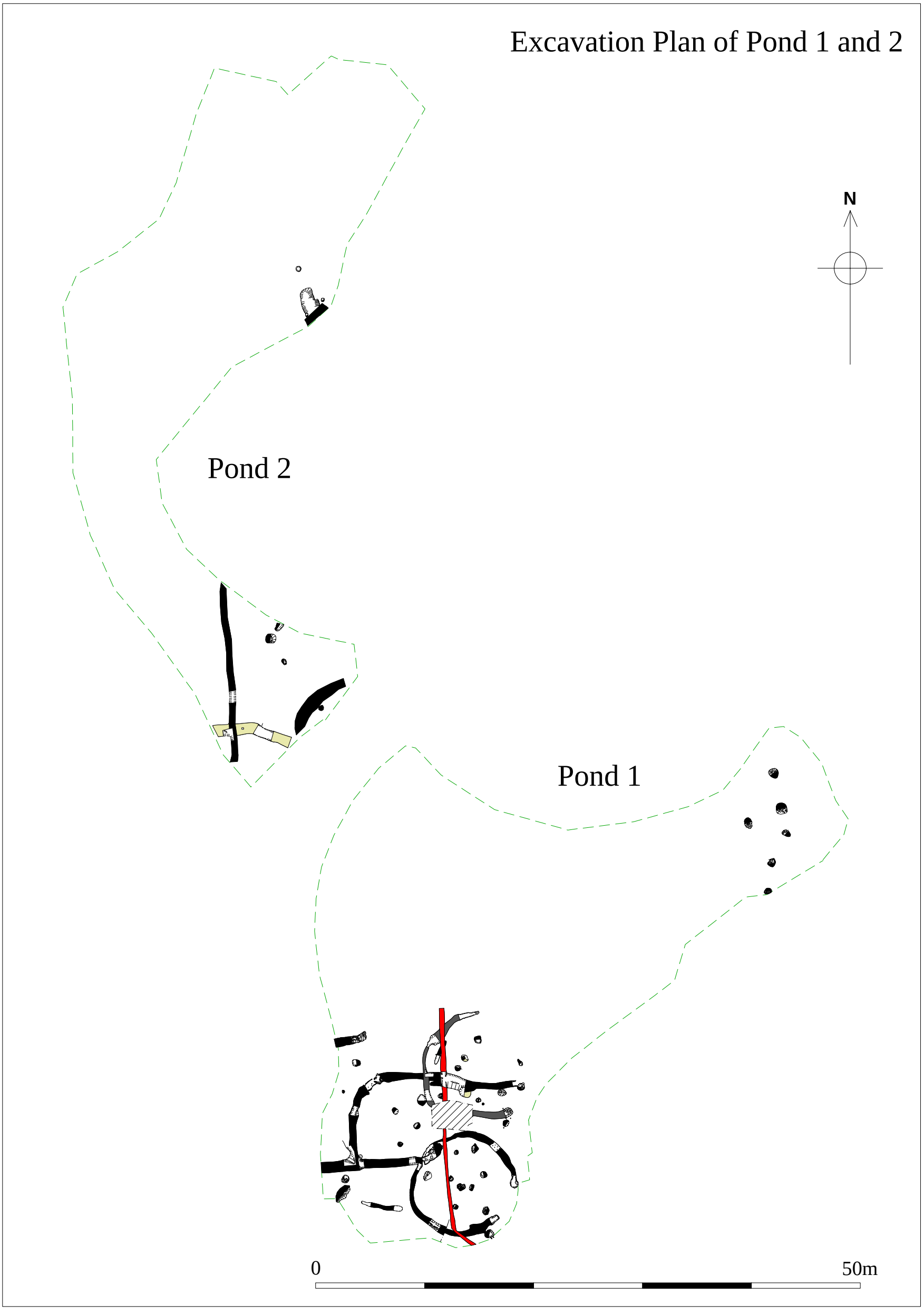

Figure 8: Plan of Excavated Features, Ponds 1 and 2

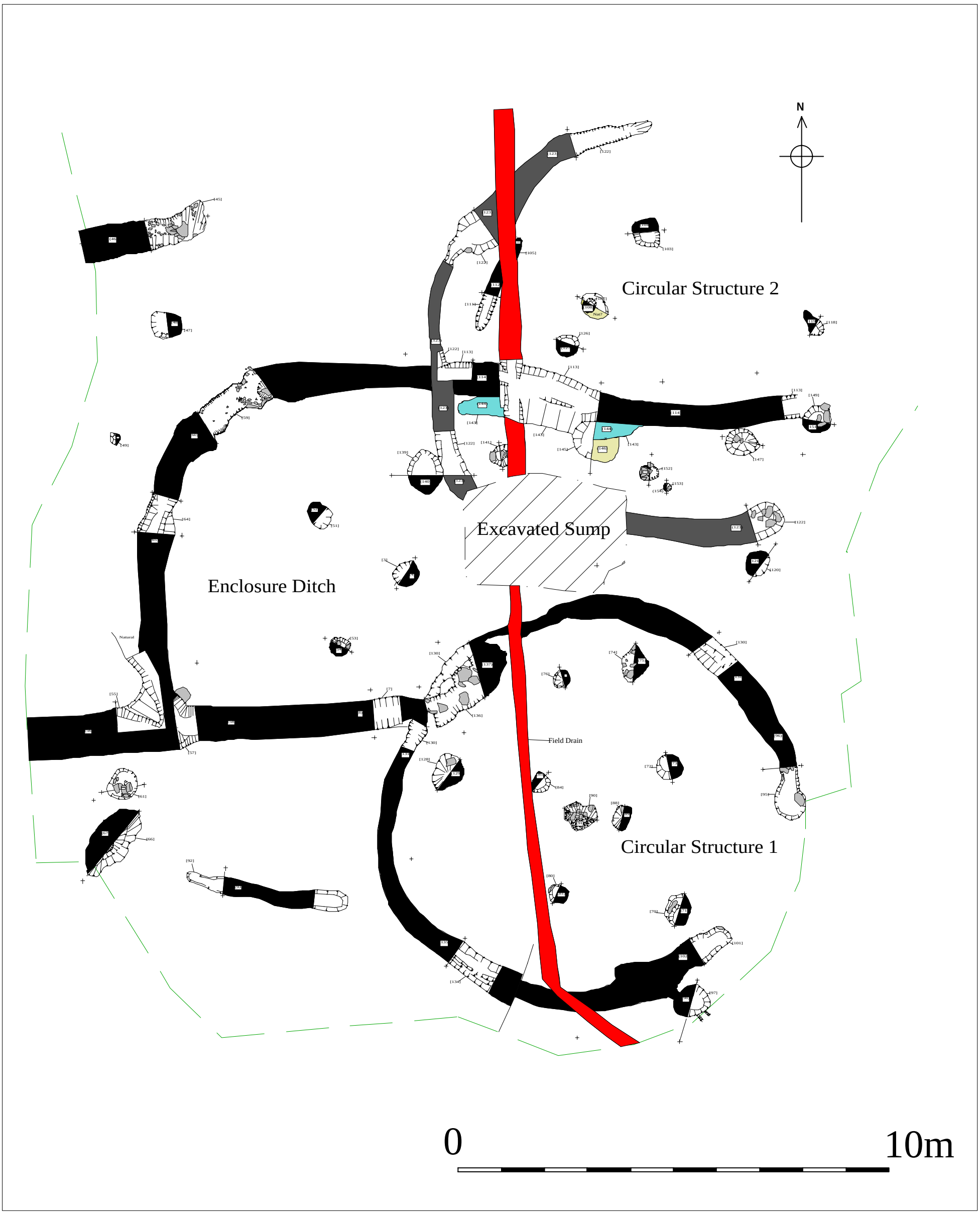

Figure 9: Features at the southern end of Pond 1

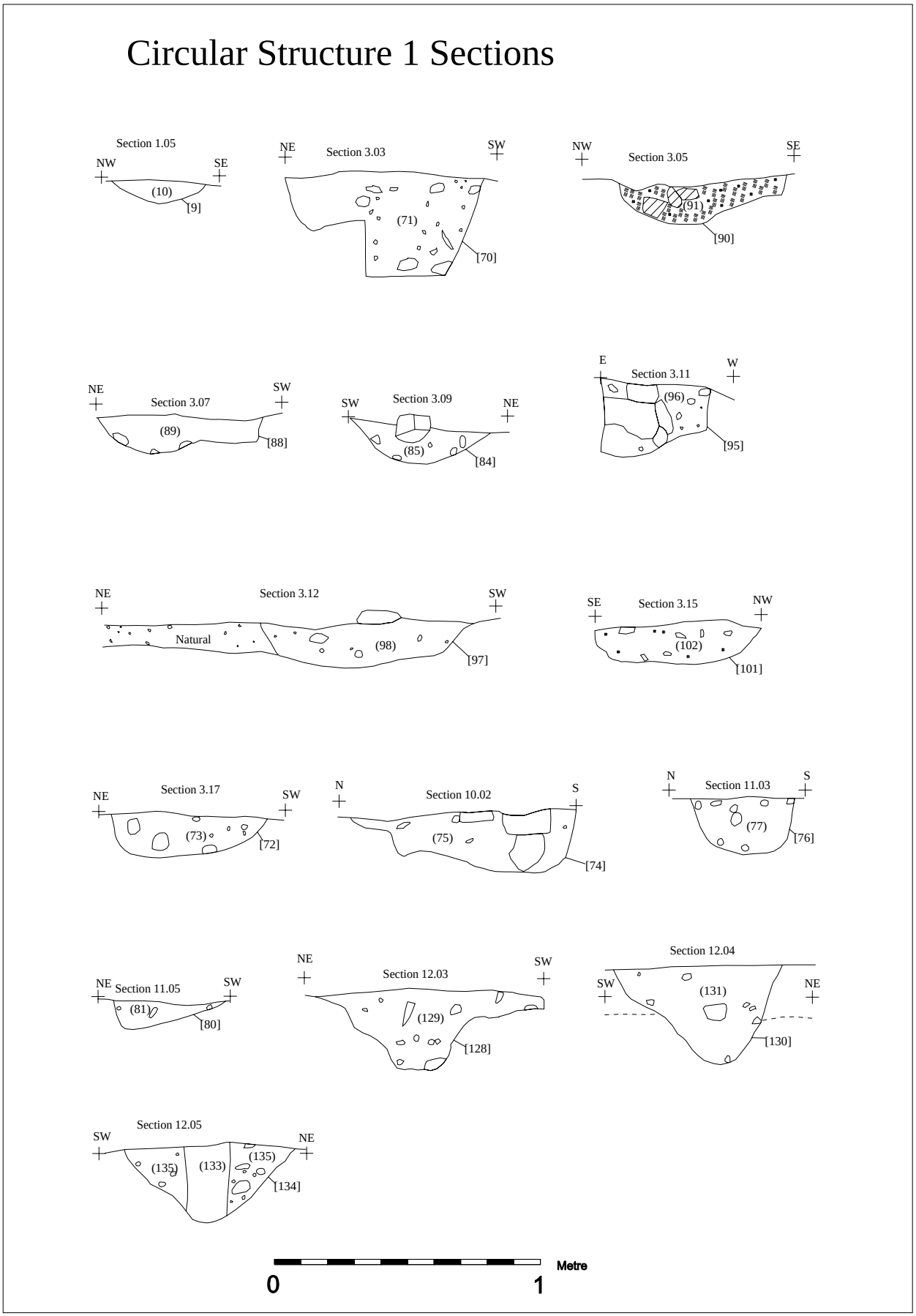

Figure 10 Sections from Circular Structure 1

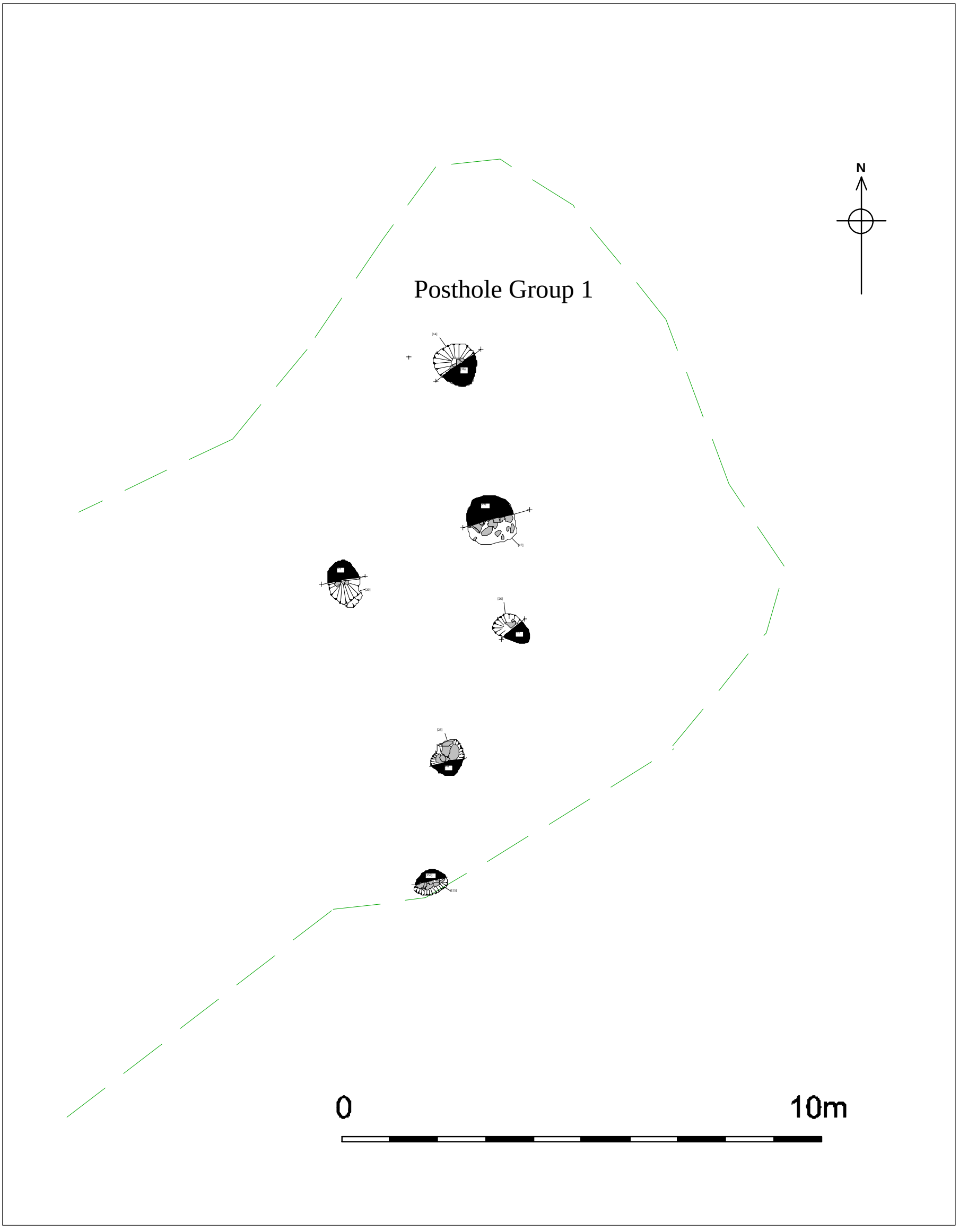

Figure 11: Posthole Group 1 at the northeast corner of Pond 1

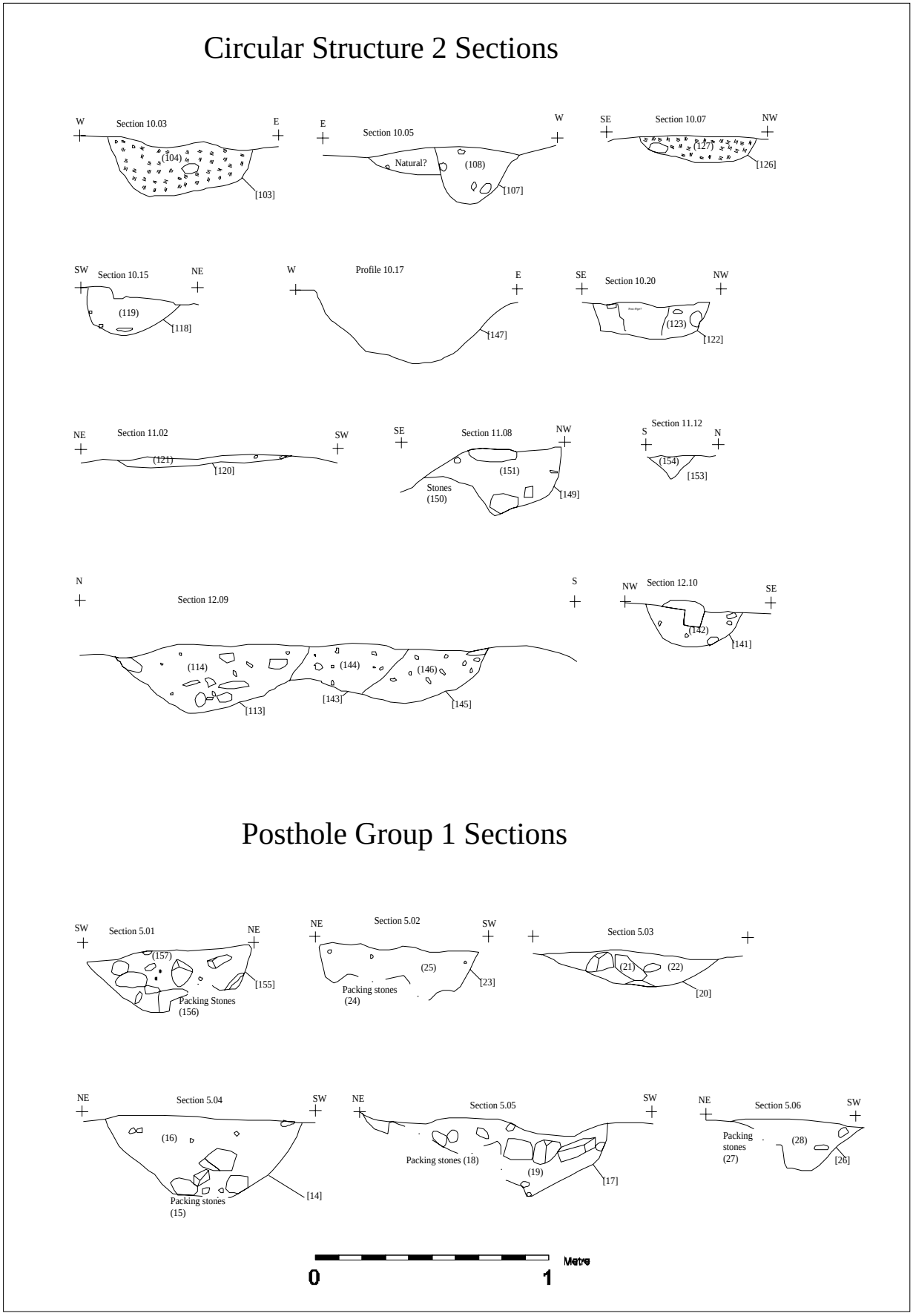

Figure 12: Sections from Circular structure 2 and Posthole Group 1

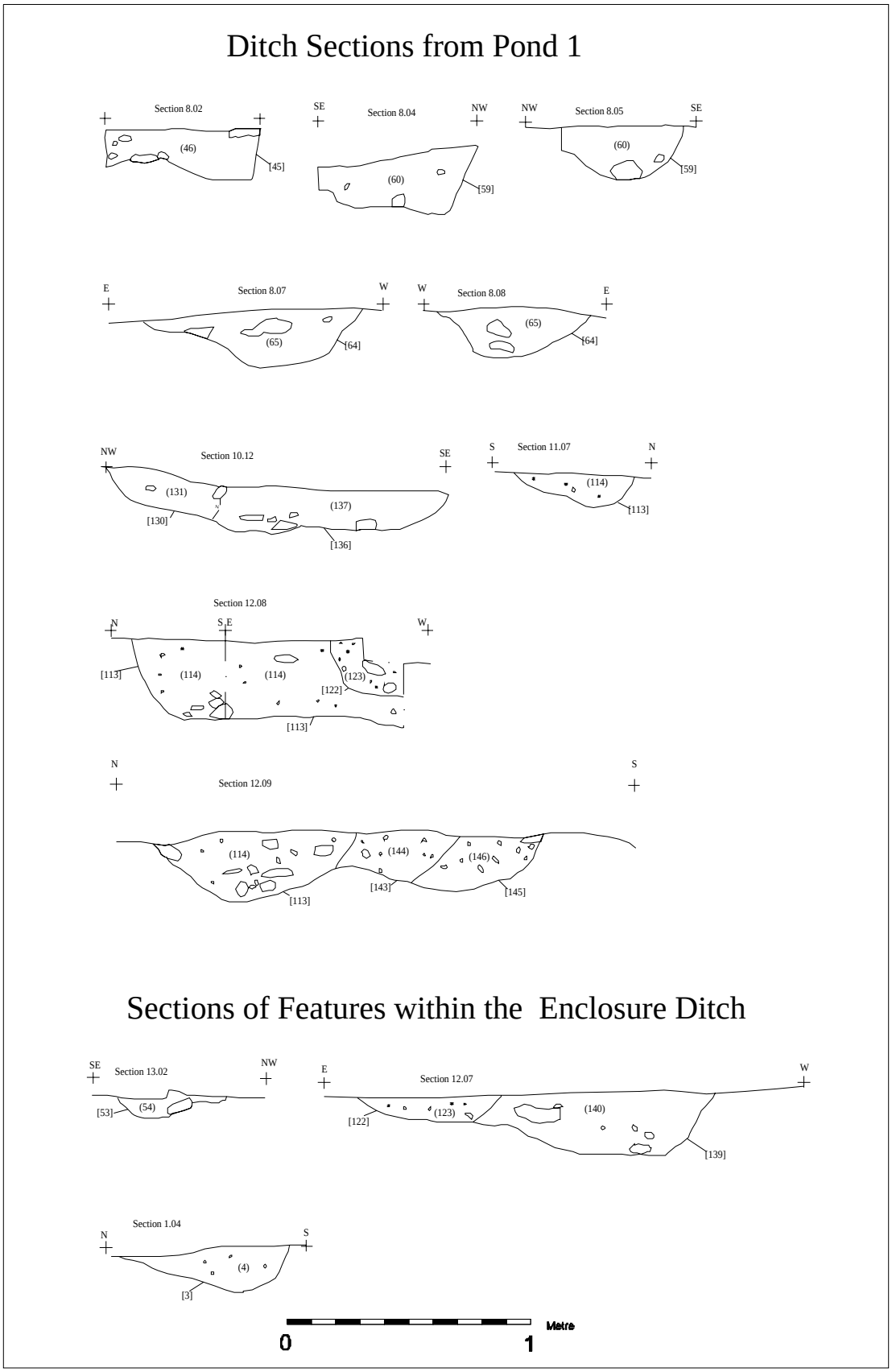

Figure 13: Sections from the Enclosure Ditch and internal features?

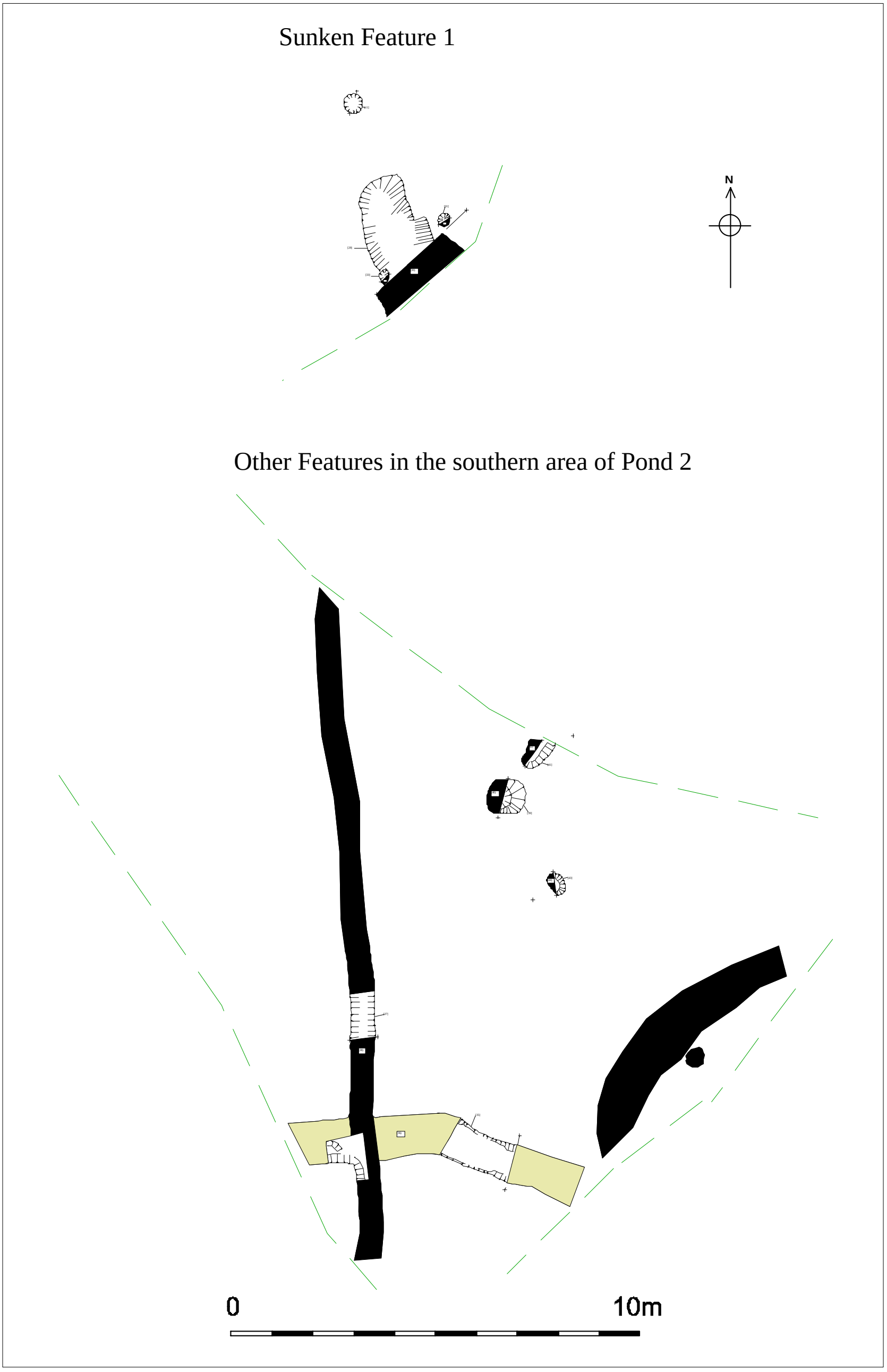

Figure 14: Features located in Pond 2

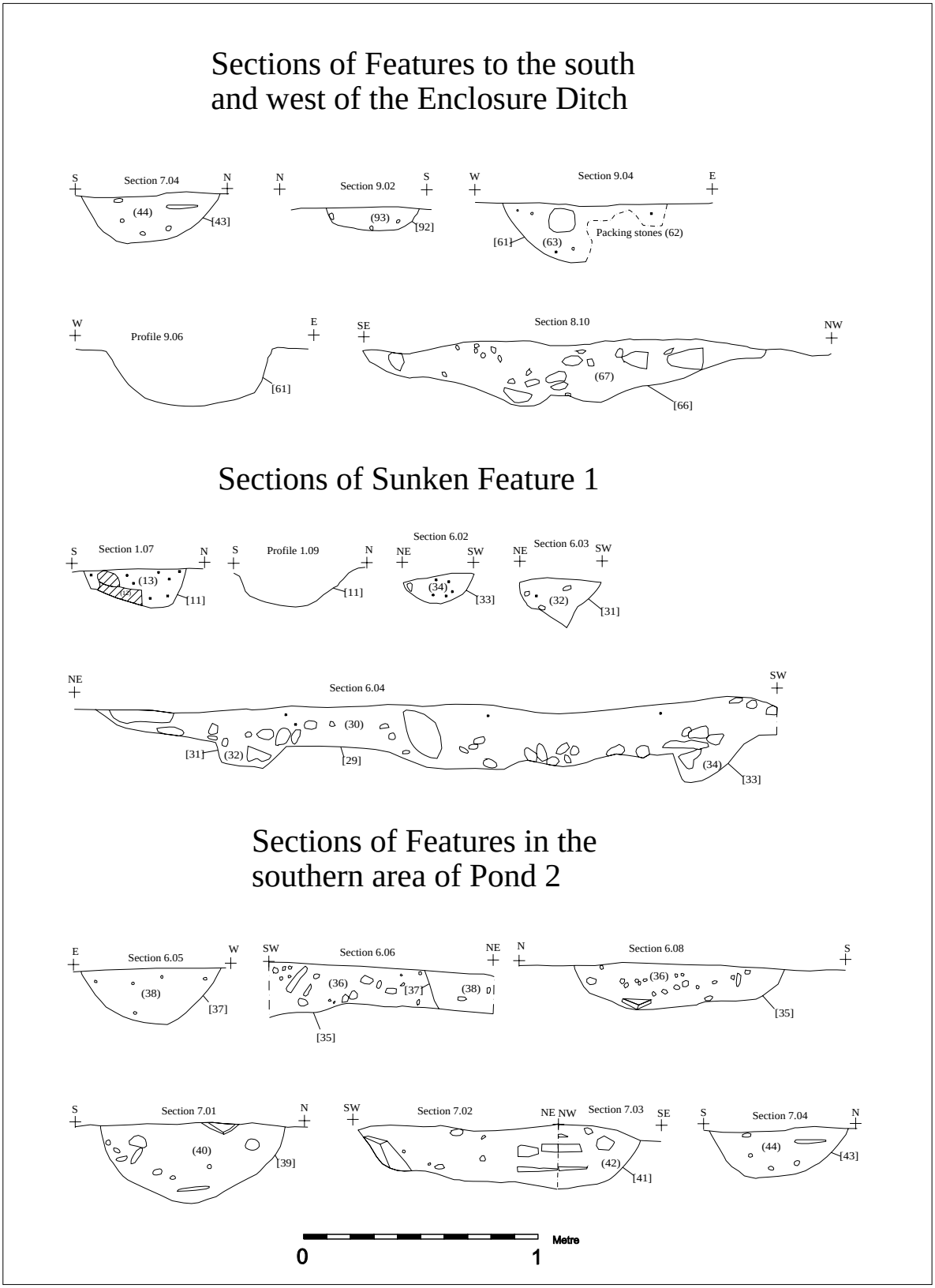

Figure 15: Various sections from Pond 1 and 2

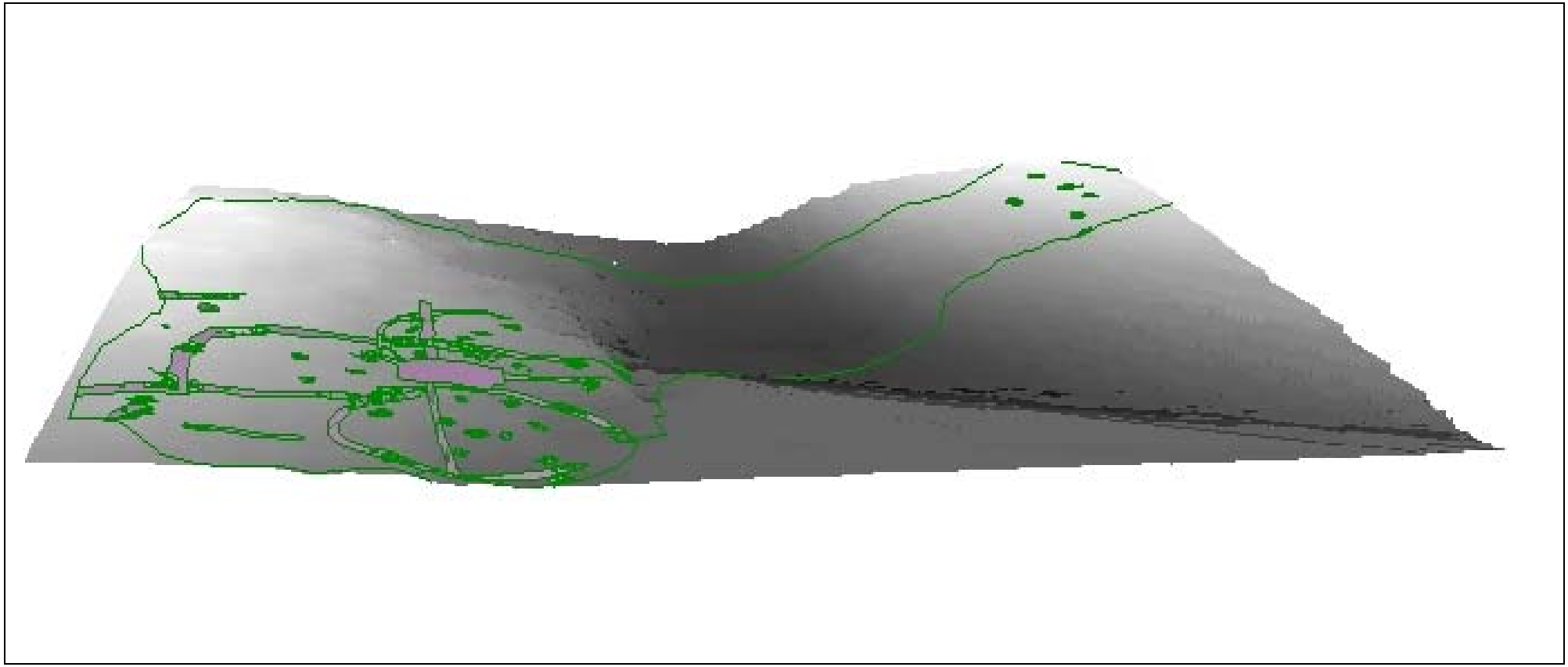

Figure 16: Contour survey of the natural substratum within Pond 1 (incorporating the recorded archaeology)