

**PRIORS GREEN
TAKELEY
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY
TRIAL TRENCHING**

Phase 1, Stage 1



Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit



March 2005

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TRIAL TRENCHING

Prepared By: Andrew Robertson Position: Project Supervisor	Signature: Date:
Approved By: Mark Atkinson Position: Unit Manager	Signature: Date:

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Please contact the Archaeological Fieldwork Manager, at the

Field Archaeology Unit,

Fairfield Court, Fairfield Road, Braintree, Essex CM7 3YQ

Tel: 01376 331470

Fax: 01376 331428

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**PRIORS GREEN
TAKELEY, ESSEX
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY TRIAL TRENCHING**

SUMMARY

Client: RPS (PTE) on behalf of Countryside Properties Plc
FAU Project No.: 1428
NGR: TL5730 2140
Planning Application No.: UTT/0816/00/OP
Site Code: TAPG04
Date of Fieldwork: 29/11/04 – 17/12/04

An archaeological evaluation, covering c.9.9 hectares, was carried out on the site of proposed housing development at Priors Green, Takeley. Forty trenches were opened, covering 2980 sq m (c.3%). The majority of features uncovered were ditches and gullies with only a few pits and post-holes scattered across the site.

In the western third of the site three parallel Early Iron Age ditches running northwest-southeast were identified. Along with fragments of further ditches that seem to run northeast-southwest these possibly form a co-axial field system. The other prehistoric features identified include a possible ring ditch and cremation burial at the eastern end of the site.

No Roman or Saxon period remains were identified but a handful of medieval ditches and pits were; mostly in the eastern third of the site. In the southeast corner the possible remains of a small medieval enclosure were investigated but no definite conclusions were reached.

A number of post-medieval ditches, including at least nine parallel, north-south aligned ditches in the southwest corner of the site, were investigated. Several of these late ditches correspond to field boundaries marked on the 1874 1st edition O.S. map. The parallel ditches were perpendicular to the present Dunmow Road, parallel to existing field boundaries, and are probably the remains of a strip field system.

A large possible boundary ditch running approximately east–west across the centre of the western third of the site may be geological in origin although the evidence from the excavated segments is inconclusive.

In general, all the features seem to be agricultural in nature and none produced significant quantities or types of finds indicative of settlement activity, of any period, in close proximity. However, evidence of the prehistoric exploitation and usage of the Essex boulder clay is of significance as it is traditionally considered as less agriculturally viable land.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report contains the results of an archaeological evaluation prior to the construction of housing at Priors Green, Takeley, Essex (Fig. 1). The evaluation consisted of trial trenching across an area of perceived archaeological potential. The investigation was designed to determine the presence, nature, date and survival of any archaeological remains in the proposed development area.

Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) carried out the evaluation for RPS Planning Transport and Environment, the latter acting as consultants on behalf of Countryside Properties Plc. The project was carried out in accordance with a brief prepared by the Heritage Advice, Management and Promotion (HAMP) Team of Essex County Council, who also monitored the work. The site archive will be deposited at Saffron Walden Museum. A copy of this report will be deposited with the Essex Heritage and Conservation Record (EHCR) and a summary will appear in Essex Archaeology and History (EAH).

Evaluation work and the reporting of it have been carried out to professional standards and guidance issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999) and the Association of County Archaeological Officers (ACAO 1993).

The report is structured to describe the background to the project, followed by the results of the fieldwork. Finds reports are then organised by category with an overall discussion, followed by an assessment of the results at the end. Appendices include trench, context and finds data, in addition to the details of the archive contents and the EHCR summary. All illustrations are placed together towards the back of the report.

Phase 1 mitigation proposals are subject of a separate document (RPS 2005).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Planning

A planning application (UTT/0816/00/OP) for a c.30ha housing development was submitted to Uttlesford District Council by Countryside Properties Plc in August 2000. After the completion of an archaeological desk-based assessment (CgMS 2000) followed by an Environmental Impact Assessment and Statement (RPS 2000) the HAMP Team of Essex County Council recommended that pre-determination archaeological evaluation work was required before the determination of the application. However, after negotiation and preliminary field walking it was agreed that the archaeological issues facing the development could be addressed by the placing of an archaeological planning condition on Outline Consent. Due to the perceived low archaeological potential of the proposed development area, it was agreed that a 2.5% archaeological evaluation sample (with the option to increase the sample to a maximum of 5% should significant archaeological remains be uncovered) would be an appropriate strategy to implement. In response to this condition Countryside Properties Plc commissioned RPS Planning Transport and Environment to manage the historic environment issues. RPS in turn commissioned Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) to undertake an evaluation, by trial trenching, on Phase 1 of the development, an area of c. 9.9ha. This report presents the results of the trial trenching investigation.

2.2 Location and Topography (Fig. 1)

The proposed development lies within a parcel of land bounded to the north by Jacks Lane, to the east by Thornton Road, to the south by Dunmow Road and to the west by property boundaries (TL 5730 2140) (Fig.1).

The site is currently fallow fields which until recently have been under cultivation. It is a relatively flat, roughly grassed area with a fall to the south, towards Dunmow Road. The highest point, situated at the northwest corner of the site, is 99.37m O.D. and the lowest, at the southern end of Warwick Road, is 92.49m O.D. There is also a slight downwards slope west - east with the northeast corner of the site having a height of 94.88m O.D. The area is traversed by Hamilton Road, Warwick Road and a public footpath, all running north-south, and by Clarendon Road running east-west. Several houses are situated around the edges of the area.

2.3 Geology

The depth of the topsoil averaged c.0.30m, although many trenches exhibited a significant sub-soil layer of disturbed silty-clay of c.0.25m deep below this.

The drift geology of the site was generally that of pale brown chalky boulder-clay of the Lowestoft Formation, although this was mixed with deposits of purer mid brown clay across the site. A few patches of natural gravel were also observed, especially towards the south of the area. The solid geology of the area is London Clay (BGS map EW222 Great Dunmow v.2).

2.4 History and Archaeology

The site is located within a wider agricultural landscape, dating from the Bronze Age through to the present day, that is becoming increasingly better understood and documented as a result of archaeological field work taking place in advance of construction development work. This is shown particularly by recent work at Stansted Airport (Havis & Brooks, 2004; Framework Archaeology, in prep), evaluation and excavation work undertaken in advance of the re-alignment and construction of the A120 (Fitzpatrick 2001) and also be recent work undertaken at Takeley, some 1.5km to the west of the present site (Roberts 2003).

To the immediate south of the site Dunmow Road is on the approximate line of Stane Street, the Roman road from Braughing/ Puckridge to Colchester (Drury and Rodwell 1980). To the northeast at Frogs Hall is a presumptive Roman villa (ESMR 9140) with associated Roman features whilst Warish Hall (ESMR 4572), a Scheduled medieval moated site (protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979), lies 1km to the north. Another medieval moated site, Jacks Green (ESMR 4655), is located immediately to the north west of the current site, but is of lower status. Jacks Lane, a bridleway that runs east west to the north of the site, is also thought to have medieval origins.

The picture emerging from this increasing body of evidence is that the area between Stansted and Braintree was well settled and farmed from the Bronze Age onwards. From the Late Iron Age onwards, with an increasing Roman influence on the landscape and the apparent re-alignment of the focus of the landscape, small farmsteads began to appear along the road line (e.g. Buildings Farm, Lavender 1997), some which developed into small towns, such as Great Dunmow (Robertson (a) in press; Wickenden 1986) and Braintree (Drury and Rodwell 1980), during the Roman period.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The evaluation work was undertaken to locate, identify and record any surviving remains within the proposed Phase 1 development area. In particular, the evaluation sought to clarify:

- Whether surface flint finds from the 2001 walkover survey relate to buried archaeology of Neolithic and/ or Bronze age date
- Whether there is evidence within the Proposal Site which can be related to settlement evidence of prehistoric, Roman and medieval date recorded at Stanstead Airport
- Whether there is any evidence of medieval occupation in the land surrounding the moated site of Jacks Green or the medieval routeway of Jacks Green lane
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the archaeological resource (RPS 2004)

4 METHOD

A mechanical excavator with a flat-bladed bucket was used to open 40 trenches under archaeological supervision.

Standard ECC FAU methodologies were employed with regard to excavation and recording. All features were recorded using the FAU's context recording system. Planning and surveying was tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A photographic record consisting of colour slide, black and white print and digital images was maintained throughout the course of the excavation.

The machine-excavated surface of the trenches was sufficiently cleaned to ensure that any features present were visible. Archaeological features and deposits were excavated using hand tools, other than obviously modern features and particularly large ditches, which were partially machine excavated under close archaeological supervision, with the agreement of RPS and HAMP.

The original trench plan, as proposed in the Written Scheme of Investigation, was modified with the agreement of HAMP and RPS to clarify questions that arose during the excavation. In addition to the original 32 trenches (Trench 1 was split in to 1a and 1b to avoid electricity cables), eight further trenches (32 to 39) were excavated, giving a total of 40 trenches. The original trenches comprised a total of 2.5% of the total area with a contingency for a further 2.5% if needed. The extra trenching increased the total area investigated to 2980 sq m, 3% of the total area.

5. FIELDWORK RESULTS (Fig 1)

Thirty-one of the trenches measured approximately 40 x 2m, four measured 20 x 2m, two measured 25 x 2m and one measured 10 x 2m, the remaining two measured 15 x 8m and 20 x 5m respectively. Trenches 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 24, 30 and 36 contained no archaeological features and Trenches 3, 18 and 21 contained features, which were probably geological in nature. The remaining trenches and the features contained in them are described, in summary, below.

A number of the features identified across the site show evidence of plough truncation. In general there is very little stratigraphy with few intercutting features identified. The dating evidence collected was not of sufficient quantity or quality to allow more than the broadest dating of features to be undertaken. It should be noted that few of the features are securely dated at this stage. With a few exceptions, which are noted in the descriptions below, all the features were filled with a mid brown homogenous silty clay containing chalk pebbles and small stones.

Further information on individual trenches is presented in Appendix 1 and individual features, including dimensions, are listed in Appendix 2. All pertinent trench plans (Figs 2 – 12) and sections (Figs.13 and 14) are situated at the rear of the report. In the descriptions below the excavated context number is cited in brackets – thus [136]. Where the same feature was recorded, either by excavation or plan, in more than one trench a group number has also been assigned, primarily for use in the discussion. Heights of the excavated ground surface above Ordnance Datum (O.D) for the centre of each trench are noted alongside the individual trench headers.

5.1 Trench 1a (Fig.2a) 97.53m O.D

In the northwest corner of the site Trench 1a ran east-west, parallel to Jacks Lane. Two ditches were recorded in this trench. Ditch [136] lay at the western end of the trench and ran southwest–northeast. Ditch 138 lay at the eastern end of the trench and ran northwest–southeast. Neither ditch contained dateable material. However, ditch [138] potentially lines-up with ditches in trenches 5 and 6 (Group 158).

5.2 Trench 1b (Figs. 2b and 12b) 97.88. O.D

Approximately 75m to the east of Trench 1a, Trench 1b ran east-west and was again positioned parallel to Jacks Lane. Two features were recorded in this trench. A ditch terminal [128] ran northeast to southwest through the centre of the trench, with the terminal towards the north. No dating evidence was recovered from this feature. The second feature, the remains of a hedge line [174], which is marked on 1st edition O.S. map, ran north-south through the western end of the

trench and was also noted in Trench 39. This was filled with dark brown loose loam and numerous rotted roots and contained car spark plugs, amongst other modern detritus.

5.3 Trench 2 (Figs. 2c and 14a) 96.18m O.D

Slightly to the southeast of Trench 1b, Trench 2 ran north-south parallel to the boundary of Gamecards Cottage. Two ditches and a pit were recorded in this trench. Ditch [112] ran northwest-southeast across the centre of the trench and contained no datable material. Ditch [114] ran east west also in the centre of the trench, from which an undated, single struck flint flake was recovered. Pit [100] lay towards the northern end of the trench and contained nine sherds of pottery dating to the 12th to 14th centuries. None of the features in this trench have been equated with similar remains in other trenches.

5.4 Trench 4 (Figs 3a and 14b) 96.27m O.D

Trench 4 lay immediately to the south of Trench 1a and ran north-south. Two post-holes [132] and [130] and a possible gully [134] were identified in this trench. Post-hole 130 lay along the eastern baulk in the central part of the trench. Post-hole 132 lay towards the northern end of the trench. Gully 134 was very shallow and filled with topsoil and was probably a plough scar. None of the features contained any dating evidence. This trench exhibited a variable geology with the chalky boulder clay interleaved with areas of purer clay.

5.5 Trench 5 (Fig 3b, 13 and 14c) 96.66m O.D

Running east-west Trench 5 was situated to the south of Trench 3. Four features were identified in the trench, two pits [81] & [83], a gully [71] and a large northeast-southwest running ditch [69]. Small pit [83] lay towards the eastern end of the trench and contained no dateable material. Pit [81] lay immediately to its east and, although it contained no dateable material, cut gully [71]. Gully [71] ran northwest-southeast and contained 60 small sherds of Early Iron Age pottery (weighing 46 grams in total). A continuation of it was seen in Trenches 1a and 6 (Group 158). Ditch 69 is particularly large at approximately 5m wide and 1.4m deep. It only contained one fill of sterile clay but had very clear edges. The sides of this ditch sloped at approximately 45° and it had a flat base. It was also seen in Trench 38 (Group 171).

5.6 Trench 6 (Fig. 13) 96.62m O.D

To the south and east of Trench 5, Trench 6 ran north-south. A single ditch running northwest-southeast was identified in this trench but was only planned as further parts of it had been previously investigated in Trenches 5 and 1a (Group 158).

5.7 Trench 7 (Fig 11) 95.98m O.D

Running east-west, parallel to Clarendon Road, Trench 7 lay to the west of Trench 6. Four ditches were identified in this trench but were only planned as they were encountered and excavated in other trenches. The three most westerly of the ditches ran approximately north-south, parallel to one another, and were also identified in Trenches 10, 11 and 33 (Groups 166, 165 and 164) respectively. The most easterly ran northwest-southeast and was also identified in Trench 12 (Group 159). The projected line of this ditch ran parallel with that encountered in Trenches 1a, 5 and 6.

5.8 Trench 8 (Fig 11) 95.79m O.D

Immediately to the southwest of Clarendon Road Trench 8 ran northwest southeast. Two parallel, shallow ditches [144] and [142] ran north-south at the western end of the trench. Ditch [144] contained one sherd of Late Iron Age pottery which may be a residual find as the context also contained two fragments of charcoal and coal while [142] yielded two small fragments of undiagnostic prehistoric pottery and one burnt flint. Three other ditches also ran north-south and were planned only, being excavated in Trenches 33 & 11.

5.9 Trench 9 (Figs. 4a, 11 and 14d) 94.14m O.D

Situated in the southwest corner of the site, Trench 9 ran north-south. Three ditches and a possible pit were recorded in the trench. All the ditches [73], [91] and [96] were situated in the southern half of the trench and ran northwest-southeast. The pit [75] was cut by ditch [73] but is probably a natural feature. No dating evidence was recovered from this trench.

5.10 Trench 10 (Figs. 5, 11 and 14e) 93.94m O.D

Trench 10 lay to the east of Trench 9 and also ran north-south. Trench 11 was joined perpendicularly to the southern end of Trench 10. Parallel ditches [65] (Group 161) and [56] (Group 162) ran northwest-southeast across this trench and were projected continuations of ditches evaluated in Trench 11 and planned in Trench 33. The fill of ditch [56] contained a single sherd of Late Iron Age pottery and a single sherd of Early Iron Age pottery.

Pit [67] lay towards the northern end of the trench and pit [85] towards the southern. Both were probably natural in origin possibly tree throws or solution hollows and did not contain any dating evidence. At the very south of the trench undated post-holes [87] and [89] were recorded.

5.11 Trench 11 (Figs. 5 and 11) 94.41m O.D

Perpendicular to Trench 10, Trench 11 ran east-west. It contained the highest number of features on the site with nine ditches and a small pit. Parallel Ditches [150] (Group 167), [152] (Group 168), [154] (Group 169), [146] (Group 170), [108] (Group 165) and [120] (Group 164) all ran north-south and are also seen in Trenches 33, 7 and 8. Ditches [93] (Group 162), and [106] (Group 161) seem to run at a slightly different angle to the other ditches and were also identified in Trenches 10 and 33. Undated ditch [156] ran northeast-southwest. At the eastern end of the trench was small pit [126]. The average dimensions of these ditches were approximately 0.8m wide and 0.4m deep although the maximum width was 1.36m and the minimum depth was 0.11m. A more comprehensive list of dimensions is laid out in Appendix 2. Ditch [93] contained two 'crumbs' of undiagnostic prehistoric pottery, one small sherd of Roman pottery, a small fragment of iron and a fragment of modern, 'fibrous' tile suggesting that the early ceramic material was residual. Ditch [120] yielded two sherds of pottery dating to the Early Iron Age; ditch [154] produced a single sherd of undiagnostic prehistoric pottery and ditch [108] a single piece of abraded post-medieval pottery.

5.12 Trench 12 (Figs. 4b and 14f) 93.89m O.D

To the west of Trench 10, Trench 12 ran north south. Only one northwest-southeast aligned ditch [58] was identified and was a continuation of one planned Trench 7 (Group 159). The pottery from the ditch (91 sherds from a single vessel) suggests that the feature is Early Iron Age in date. It represents the most reliable dating evidence on the site.

5.13 Trench 13 (Fig 1) 96.29m O.D

To the south of the boundary to Gamecards Cottage, Trench 13 ran north-south, parallel to Warwick Road. A single, east-west running, ditch was identified in the trench but it was only planned as it was recorded and further investigated in Trenches 23, 27 and 26 to the east, where it was revealed to be modern.

5.14 Trench 20 (Figs. 6a and 14g) 95.21m O.D

Trench 20 was located towards the eastern end of the site and ran east-west. Single shallow gully [22] ran north-south through the centre of the trench. The pottery recovered from the feature indicates that it was either Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age in date, a single intrusive sherd of Roman pottery and two struck flint flakes were also collected. This gully may have curved and be associated with gully [98] in Trench 35. A small undated pit [33] was located towards the eastern end of this trench.

5.15 Trench 22 (Fig 1) 95.67m O.D

Situated to the east of Warwick Road, and slightly to the north of No 5 Hamilton Road, this trench ran east-west. It contained a small pit [45], which seems to have contained a fire as the surrounding clay was scorched. No dateable material was recovered from this feature.

5.16 Trench 23 (Fig 1) 96.32m O.D

Parallel to Warwick Road, directly to the east of Trench 13, Trench 23 ran north-south. A single east-west running ditch was identified. This was machine excavated as the surface finds, such as coal and china, indicated that it was modern in origin. The ditch proved to have a land drain situated in its base and so was only recorded in plan. It was also identified in Trenches 13, 27 and 26.

5.17 Trench 25 (Fig 6b) 96.03m O.D

Running east-west, Trench 25 lay to the west of Hamilton Road. Modern pit [28] and undated post-hole [26] lay in the centre of this trench. Towards the western end V-shaped ditch [30] ran north-south. The ditch and pit [28] contained modern glass and cans, all of which was discarded on Health and Safety grounds. Ditch [30] aligns with an extant property boundary to the north and appears as a field boundary on the 1st edition OS map.

5.18 Trench 26 (Fig 10a) 95.79m O.D

In the southeast corner of the site Trench 26 ran northwest-southeast from Thornton Road. Ditches [24], [25], [61] and [63], gully [40] and possible post-holes [52] and [50] were identified in the trench. Ditches [24] (containing post medieval roof tile fragments and iron nails) and [25] ran approximately east-west and appear to be part of the same modern ditch seen in Trenches 13, 23 and 27. Gully [40] cut ditch [25] but was probably a plough scar. Post-holes [50] and [52] were very shallow and irregular and may only have been pockets of natural silting. Shallow ditch [61] ran east-west and was also identified in Trench 37 immediately to the west. Ditch [63] ran north south but was not identified in any other trench. No other dating evidence was recovered from this trench.

5.19 Trench 27 (Figs. 7a and 14h) 95.94m O.D

To the west of Trench 26, Trench 27 ran north-south. It contained a single east-west running ditch [42], which contained post-medieval artefacts and had a ceramic land drain at its base. The ditch was also identified in Trenches 13, 23 and 26 and appears on the 1st edition OS map as a field boundary.

5.20 Trench 28 (Figs. 8 and 12a) 95.15m O.D

Perpendicular to Thornton Road and to the north of Trench 20, Trench 28 contained ditch [14], pit [16] and possible cremation burial [8], and ran east west. Shallow ditch [14] ran northeast-southwest and was also identified in Trenches 29 and 34. No finds were recovered from this feature. Small oval pit [16] contained no datable material. The fill of possible cremation burial [8] was 100% sampled (Sample<1>) and passed through a flotation tank. It contained a small quantity (seven sherds) of Late Bronze Age pottery and two sherds of possible Roman pottery (burning hindered diagnosis) together with burnt bone, slag, charcoal fragments and six carbonised grains. The tiny quantity of burnt bone present does not allow species identification and it is unclear whether it is human or animal. The area around the putative cremation burial was opened-up (see Trench 34), but no other cremation-like features were identified.

5.21 Trench 29 (Figs. 7b and 12a) 95.91m O.D

Running north-south to the east of Trench 28, Trench 29 contained ditches [6], [12], and [20] and pit [18]. At the southern end of the trench parallel ditches [6] (Group 172) and [20] (Group 173) ran northeast to southwest and were identified in Trench 34, some 9m apart. Ditch [6] (containing a single piece of 13th to 14th century pottery) was further identified in Trench 28 and. Undated narrow ditch [12] ran east-west across the centre of the trench. Pit [18] contained no finds and was located between ditches 6 and 20. It may in fact have been a ditch terminal rather than a pit, as it was similar in depth and breadth.

5.22 Trench 31 (Fig. 9) 94.53m O.D

In the northeast corner of the site Trench 31 ran north-south from Jacks Lane. The only feature present was a modern ditch [10] that ran northwest-southeast and contained a land drain in its base. This ditch is shown on the 1st edition OS map as a field boundary. Natural feature [4] was situated in the centre of the trench but upon excavation it proved to be geological.

5.23 Trench 32 (Fig. 9) 94.53m O.D

Adjoining Trench 31, Trench 32 was 25m long and ran east-west. A northward continuation of modern boundary ditch [10] was recorded, though not further excavated.

5.24 Trench 33 (Fig. 11) 94.53m O.D

Trench 33 lay immediately to the north of Trench 10 and was parallel to Clarendon Road. Six north-south ditches were present, but only one [148] (Group 164) was excavated. No dating evidence was recovered from this feature. The others were planned only, further parts of these

having been excavated in Trenches 7, 11 and 10. The only other feature present was a probably natural deposit of silt, [140].

5.25 Trench 34 (Figs. 8 and 12a) 94.83m O.D

An area measuring 10 x 8m was opened around the eastern end of Trench 28 to determine whether any further putative cremation burials lay in the vicinity. None were identified but further parts of ditches investigated in Trenches 29 and 28 were plotted. No artefacts were identified on the surface of the ditches were identified.

5.26 Trench 35 (Fig. 6a) 93.26m O.D

Perpendicular to, and adjoining, Trench 20, Trench 35 ran north south for 20m. A single gully terminal [98] was investigated and pottery recovered from it dated to the Early Iron Age. A number of flints were also collected, including a twice-worked core. This feature may be part of gully [22] in Trench 20.

5.27 Trench 37 (Figs. 10a and 14i) 92.58m O.D

Running north-south for 25m from the south-western side of Trench 26, Trench 37 contained ditches [116] and [118]. Shallow ditch [116] was a continuation of ditch [61] investigated in adjacent Trench 26 and confirmed the westerly continuation of this feature. The pottery recovered from ditch [116] was Early Iron Age and Roman in date but the abraded nature of all of these sherds may suggest that they are all residual. Vertical-sided ditch [118] ran approximately north south and contained abraded sherds of 12th to 14th century pottery. Ditches [116] and [118] may in fact be contemporary, but their intersection lay outside the trench and so a precise relationship was not established.

5.28 Trench 38 (Figs 10b, 13 and 15) 96.87m O.D

Trench 38 was 20m long and ran northwest to southeast between Trenches 2 and 13. Large Ditch [123] (Group 171) measured approximately 9m wide and 1m deep and ran approximately east-west through this trench and contained two fills. It is likely that this is the same feature as ditch [69] recorded in Trench 5. Although reduced by machine a 1m wide section was hand excavated through this ditch. Two small sherds of pottery were recovered from the upper fill of the hand excavated section, one prehistoric and one 12th to 13th century in date. Both sherds were retrieved during manual excavation from the very top of the feature, which allows a modicum of doubt as to the nature/circumstance of their deposition, especially if the sterile nature of the remaining infill is considered. A currently unprocessed column sample was taken from the section

(Samples <2> and <3>). A modern east-west ditch ran to the south of ditch [123] and was recorded in plan only.

5.29 Trench 39 (Fig 12b) 97.56m O.D

This was the smallest trench on the site, measuring 10m long, and was situated to the west of Trench 2, running northwest to southeast. The features in it were planned only and consisted of an undated northeast-southwest aligned ditch [160] and the eastern edge of the old hedge line also observed in Trench 1b.

6 FINDS

6.1 Finds Summary by J Compton

Small amounts of finds were recovered from a total of twenty-three contexts, across fourteen of the excavated trenches. All of the material was counted and weighed, in grams, by context; full details can be found in Appendix 3. The finds types present comprise mainly struck flints and pottery, predominantly of prehistoric date. Few site features can be closely dated, but, in general, the medieval and post-medieval material was recovered near to currently-occupied buildings. In addition, modern and post-medieval finds were located in a drainage trench running across the centre and east of the investigated area. A fragment of modern fibrous tile came from ditch [93], Trench 11 and a piece of burnt stone, possibly derived from tarmac, from pit [89], Trench 10.

Prehistoric material was recovered from features in the west of the excavated area, but these finds are also few in number. Prehistoric pottery came from twelve contexts, and amounted to 175 sherds, weighing 620g. Seven contexts produced a total of fifteen worked flints, weighing 200g. The flints, prehistoric pottery and medieval pottery (15 sherds, weighing 81g) form the subject of separate short reports, and, since the remaining categories are few, these are described together below.

Late Iron Age and Roman pottery was recovered from five contexts, amounting to 7 sherds, weighing 24g. These are small body sherds, none of which can be closely dated within the Late Iron Age and Roman periods; two sherds are in grog-tempered ware, ditches [56] and [144], and three are sandy grey ware, ditches [22], [117] and [93].

Six pieces of post-medieval roof tile, weighing 68g, came from three contexts. These are small and abraded. The fragments from fill (39) of ditch [25] are associated with a sherd of post-medieval red earthenware and a clay pipe stem. Those from fill (36) of ditch [24] are associated with two iron nails. A flat iron fragment was found in fill (94) of ditch [93], in the same context as the fibrous tile noted above. This ironwork is likely to be post-medieval, although there are no diagnostic features which confirm this date.

A fragment of iron was also recovered from the fill of possible cremation burial [8], in Trench 28. Twenty-four burnt bone fragments, weighing less than 2g, were recovered from the feature, but the amount is too small to ascertain whether these are animal or human. Also present were quantities of slag and charcoal, and the latter included six carbonised cereal grains. The few sherds of pottery present are prehistoric, with two which are either Roman in date, or have been severely burnt. Identification as a cremation burial is problematic, as the burnt bone is not necessarily

human. The presence of iron, slag and prehistoric pottery together is improbable, unless one category is residual or the other intrusive.

Baked clay and slag fragments were present in two fills of post-medieval ditch [42]. The sole animal bone is a very abraded sheep/goat molar in fill (60) of Early Iron Age ditch [58]. Charcoal and coal fragments were found in three contexts ((23), (43) and (145)); these were discarded after recording.

The prehistoric pottery and the flints attest to prehistoric activity in the vicinity. However, the assemblage, including the prehistoric finds, is fragmentary and abraded. The average sherd weight for all of the pottery is 3.5g, indicating a potentially high level of residuality. In addition, there are instances of modern intrusion, such as coal and fibrous tile, over much of the site. It seems likely that few of the finds are in their original places of deposition.

Quantities are too small for further study, although more work at Takeley may provide enough evidence to define the prehistoric activity. The finds should all be retained, except for the modern and post-medieval items.

6.3 Prehistoric Pottery by N.J. Lavender

The excavation produced a total of 175 sherds (625g) of prehistoric pottery from twelve contexts, and includes two unidentifiable burnt sherds from fill (9) of possible cremation burial [8] which may be later (possibly Roman). The pottery was recorded using a system developed for prehistoric pottery in Essex (Brown 1988). Most of the material is in flint-and-sand tempered Fabric E, with a small number of flint-tempered sherds and some grog-and-vegetable tempered (Fabric M) sherds from fill 9. The assemblage is fragmentary and mostly abraded.

Only one context (fill (60)) contained diagnostic material, including small fragments of a flat base and the neck and shoulder of a slightly angular shouldered, upright-rimmed Form D jar. Sherds from a slightly flared rim are finer and unlikely to be from the same vessel. The Form D jar belongs to the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age. The slightly flared, flat-topped rim sherds from the same context indicate an Early Iron Age date, as does the sand-and-flint tempered fabric, which comprises most of the assemblage.

6.4 Medieval and Post-medieval Pottery by Helen Walker

A very small amount of medieval and later pottery was recovered, 15 sherds weighing 81g. The earliest pottery is a sherd with very sparse shell-tempering, which is similar, but not identical, to a fabric recovered from the nearby Stansted Airport excavations datable to the 12th to early 13th

centuries from ditch [123] (Group 171, Trench 38). This sherd may be intrusive as earlier pottery was also recovered from the same feature. Dating to the 13th to 14th century is a single tiny sherd of sandy orange ware, most likely from a jug, showing the remains of white slip decoration from ditch [6] (Group 172, Trench 29). There are also several abraded sherds of medieval coarse ware, perhaps from cooking pots, which are probably contemporary with the sandy orange ware sherd from ditch [118] (Trench 37). In spite of a medieval drove road and moated site in the vicinity, there is very little evidence from the pottery of medieval activity. The post-medieval period is represented by only two sherds of post-medieval red earthenware one from ditch [25] (Trench 26) and one from ditch [108] (Group 165, Trench 11), a ware manufactured throughout the post-medieval period, but as these examples are glazed they are unlikely to date before the late 16th/17th century.

6.5 Flints by Hazel Martingell

Twenty pieces of flint, weighing a total of 200g, came from seven contexts. Fifteen of these were humanly worked and five were natural. Patination occurs on three of the worked pieces.

There are two cores and two core-trimming flakes. One, from fill 99 of ditch 98, is a good core from which flakes have been removed at different times. The three earliest flake removal surfaces are patinated and then, later, flakes were removed from this core using the patinated surfaces as platforms. A core-trimming flake (fill (119), ditch [118]) also has a patinated platform.

The second patinated piece is an interesting retouched flake (fill (115), ditch [114]). It has fine invasive retouch all along one curved edge. This flake was removed from a larger implement, possibly a knife.

The remaining ten pieces consist of flakes and one fragment.

The patinated flints should be of an early prehistoric date, but patination can occur at later dates on artefacts from chalky soils, for instance, the core from ditch 98 occurs with Early Iron Age pottery, but the trimming flake is associated with medieval pottery and must be residual. The unpatinated flints suggest a late prehistoric date, but no closer dating is possible for these artefacts.

Most of the assemblage was recovered from excavated ditch segments, mainly in the eastern part of the site, but some flints are clearly residual. Even the patinated flints are probably residual in later prehistoric features.

7 DISCUSSION

The Phase 1 site can perhaps be divided into three distinctive areas based upon the archaeological remains uncovered by the trial trenching evaluation. The western third of the site contains the majority of the Prehistoric remains as well two possible phases of Post-medieval field systems, the central third is largely blank apart from a few undated discrete features and the eastern third contains mainly medieval and Post-medieval remains with Prehistoric remains represented by a solitary putative cremation burial and two small gullies which may be part of a ring ditch. Interpretation and discussion of the significance of the major features is presented, by broad period, below.

Prehistoric (Fig.18a)

A series of ditches at the western end of the site appear to be the remains of prehistoric field systems. Two possible alignments (alignments 1 and 2) (Fig.16) have been identified, but it should be stressed that these are speculative at present as the distances between the observed segments are often in excess of 50m.

Ditch Alignment 1 (Fig 16a)

The first and probably most speculative of the alignments (alignment 1) runs northeast to southwest and consists of shallow ditch segments in Trenches 1a (ditch [136]), 1b (ditch [128]), 39 (ditch [160]) and 11 (ditch [156]). No artefacts were retrieved from their single homogenous fills and their tentative dating is deduced from the similarity of feature dimension and fill type with datable ditches in prehistoric alignment 2. All but ditch [156] cluster in the northwest corner of the Phase 1 area. Although similarly proportioned and aligned, the south-westerly location of [156] may suggest that it is not directly associated with the others.

Ditch Alignment 2 (Fig 16b)

Ditch alignment 2 runs northwest to southeast and roughly perpendicular to that of alignment 1. It comprises three parallel ditches [112] (Trench 2), (158) (Trenches 1a, 5, 6) and (159) (Trenches 7 and 12), the longest of which exceeds 160m in length. These shallow features again contained a single homogenous fill and generally few artefacts. However, the excavated segments in Trenches 5 and 12 (ditches [71] and [58], respectively) yielded Early Iron Age pottery that appears to be in situ and therefore constitutes reliable dating evidence.

Their relative position suggests that alignments 1 and 2 may be contemporary and are the remains of a co-axial field system and therefore indicative of Early Iron Age agricultural exploitation of the boulder clay landscape at this location. It is interesting to note that neither of the alignments seems

to relate to those of the perceived succeeding elements of the surrounding landscape; Stane Street (Roman) and Jacks Lane (Medieval). This may substantiate the tentative prehistoric date assigned to these features. While no remains indicative of associated settlement activity of this date has been identified within the Phase 1 evaluation area, the nearby excavations at Stansted Airport have revealed earlier Iron Age sites that include several storage structures, 'ritual' pits and rubbish pits (Havis and Brooks 2004, 519). Although it is unlikely that the Priors Green remains are directly associated those at Stansted, it is evident that they add to the growing appreciation that the boulder clays of northwest Essex were widely occupied and exploited during the period.

Other Prehistoric features

Apart from these ditch systems, only a small number of discrete features of prehistoric, or possible prehistoric, date have been identified. The substantial ditch [171], running approximately east-west through Trenches 5 and 38 (Fig.12), may be of natural origin but the single prehistoric pottery sherd as well as the probable intrusive medieval sherd (both from high up in the top fill), and the fact that it runs contrary to the prevailing north-south alignment for periglacial features as noted from this and previous excavations in this vicinity, both suggest otherwise. If archaeological in nature, it clearly represents a small part of a substantial boundary feature, though not obviously associated with settlement activity. Though projected to intersect with alignment 2 ditch [158] to the south of Trench 5, this was not substantiated in the field and so their relative chronology is not determined.

Two small gully segments, [98] and [22], revealed in Trenches 35 and 20, may be parts of a single feature. Although lacking any direct relationship, their similar V-shaped profiles and relative positions suggest they may be parts of a ring gully. If so, and if regular, this feature could be postulated to be in the order of c.30m diameter. Although ring ditches and gullies are not exclusively of prehistoric date, this is a distinct probability if such conjecture is right. The presence of worked flints and early Iron Age pottery would seem to support an interpretation as a small enclosure, though the seemingly intrusive sherd of Roman pottery introduces an element of caution.

The possible cremation burial [8] (Trench 20) is a seemingly isolated occurrence. There is no evidence for any associated structures or features. It is not unusual to find solitary prehistoric cremations at a considerable distance from settlements. Although this feature is significant in that it indicates prehistoric activity in the area, it does not necessarily suggest that settlement is in the near vicinity. Indeed the presence of iron slag and carbonised grain throws the classification of this feature as a cremation burial into doubt.

Late Iron Age and Roman

No Late Iron Age or Roman features have been identified on the site and the few sherds of pottery recovered are likely to be residual in medieval or later features. This absence is interesting in itself given the proximity of the Phase 1 area to the Roman fields, kilns/hearths, cremation burials and presumptive villa alongside the river Roding at Frogs Hall some 8km to the north-east (T. Ennis *pers comm.*). Past investigation alongside both the old and new A120 roads has further established that Roman farming settlement sites occur with regular frequency alongside Stane Street, often slightly set back amid a well-developed agricultural landscape such as at Buildings Farm (Lavender 1997), Stansted Airport and new A120 (Fitzpatrick 2001, 363 – 364).

It is interesting to note that the settlements alongside Stane Street appear to have been sited on gravel rather than boulder clay and it may be the case that soil-type, geology and topography is key. The fact Phase 1 Priors Green happens to be located on less-preferred clay may account for the apparent no use of the area during these periods. However, some of the sites at Stansted Airport were situated on similar clays, which suggests that this may not be the sole reason for the lack of visible activity during the Late Iron Age to Roman periods.

Medieval (Fig.18b)

Within the Phase 1 development area, medieval period remains are confined to ditches [116]/[61] (Trenches 26 and 37), [118] (Trench 37), (172) and (173) (Trenches 29, 28 and 34), and a single pit [100]. The ditches all lay in the eastern third of the site. Ditches (172) and (173) ran parallel to each other and may constitute the remains of a trackway. Ditches [116]/[61] and [118] may be part of a small enclosure or structure, but this is speculative on the present evidence. None of the ditches are particularly well-dated, with only a few sherds of 12th to 14th century pottery from each. In Trench 2, Pit [100] contained a 9 sherds of pottery but the fill, which contains no obvious organic material or silting resulting from being left open, looks to have been backfilled quickly after the feature was dug. It is likely that several of the undated pits and post-holes in the north-western corner of the site are also medieval in origin and perhaps associated with pit [100]. However, none of the medieval features on the site seem to have any direct relationship with either Jacks Lane or any of the moated sites that lie just beyond the peripheries of the Phase 1 area. The relative absence of medieval period remains at this location may be due to tangible activities being confined within the moated sites themselves, the closest being Jacks Green, just off the north-west corner of the evaluation area. The results of excavation at Frogs Hall suggests that medieval agricultural and processing/manufacturing activities were not particularly different from those of the Roman period, with traces of fields and pottery manufacture being identified alongside the river

Roding (M. Atkinson *pers comm.*). It is therefore perhaps likely that a similar pattern of land-use and avoidance can be expected in the medieval period as for the Roman at Priors Green.

Post-medieval (Fig. 19)

A series of parallel ditches at the western end of the site appear to be the remains of one, or possibly two, Post-medieval field systems (alignments 3 and 4).

Ditch Alignment 3 (Fig 17a)

Alignment 3 consists of three pairs of parallel ditches approximately 23m apart, in the south-west corner of the site. They all run approximately NNW to SSE. All contained homogenous single fills. Although, small quantities of Late Iron Age pottery were retrieved from ditches [142] and [144] (Trench 8) and Ditch [56] (Group 162, Trench 10), Roman and post-medieval pottery was recovered from segment [93] (Group162, Trench 11). The fragmented nature of the earlier pottery sherds suggests that it is likely to be residual in significantly later features. There is no clear indication as to what these pairs of ditches represent and it may be that they are actually part of alignment 4.

Ditch Alignment 4 (Fig.17b)

Alignment 4 comprises nine parallel ditches, again located in the south-west corner of Phase 1. Closely and regularly spaced at approximately 4m apart, these features run slightly nearer north-south than those of alignment 3. While they form the most convincing group in plan and uniformity, they are poorly dated – relying solely upon a three small abraded sherds of prehistoric pottery from ditch segments [120] and [154] (Groups 164 and 169, Trench 11) and a Post-medieval sherd from ditch segment [108] (Group165, Trench 11).

It is possible that alignments 3 and 4 are part of a single system of ditches and that their slightly differing alignments merely constitute re-cutting or re-establishment/replacement, either wholesale or piecemeal. Both, and particularly alignment 4, appear to lie perpendicular to the lines of Stane Street and Jacks Lane, at either end of the Phase 1 area. Furthermore, alignment 4 is seemingly parallel with the existing field boundary just to its west. Although both alignments contain prehistoric pottery and worked flints, this is likely to be wholly residual. A similar arrangement of ditches containing small abraded sherds of prehistoric pottery was identified by trial trenching evaluation at Marks Hall School, Harlow. Subsequent open area excavation showed them to be in fact of Post-medieval, perhaps early 19th century, date (Robertson (a), in press).

Several other post-medieval ditches were also encountered in the Phase 1 area, the majority of which can be directly related to boundary features marked on the 1st edition O.S map of 1874 (Fig.20). None of the excavated segments suggest that the ditches had significantly earlier origins and their fills contained frequent items of 19th and 20th century rubbish. Although parts of a few of these old field boundaries are now incorporated into modern property boundaries, the majority have clearly been deliberately infilled to create larger fields.

8. ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

The results of the evaluation in relation to the stated aims of the project are addressed below;

Whether surface flint finds from the 2001 walkover survey relate to buried archaeology of Neolithic and/ or Bronze Age data.

There was no evidence of archaeological features or deposits dating to the Neolithic or Bronze Ages. The few worked flints recovered from around the site were residual in later features. Bronze Age sites have been identified in the general area (Couchman 1980) so it is therefore not surprising that residual flints are found in later features.

Whether there is evidence within the Proposal Site which can be related to settlement evidence of prehistoric, Roman and medieval date recorded at Stanstead Airport.

None of the revealed archaeology at Priors Green seems to be directly related to the settlements uncovered at Stanstead Airport. However, it is clear that the area of the site formed part of the wider landscape in which the settlements functioned.

The Early Iron Age field systems are potentially outer fields for the settlements at Stanstead Airport but equally they may relate to other, as yet unidentified, settlements. Although no evidence for significant settlement was identified within the Phase 1 development area the early Iron Age enclosure gully in Trenches 20 and 35, together with pit [8] and its burnt remains, may indicate a small habitation area in the east of the site.

The lack of substantive Roman and the low incidence of the medieval remains may reflect a preference for utilising less heavy soils during these periods.

Whether there is any evidence of medieval occupation in the land surrounding the moated site of Jacks Green or the medieval routeway of Jacks Green lane.

The investigation of medieval activity alongside Jacks Lane, particularly in the form of dwellings and plots fronting onto this thoroughfare, has not proved productive. It appears that there has been no significant past activity along, and associated with, this part of the ancient track. There is no obvious relationship between the medieval features on Phase 1 and close-by sites such as the Jacks Green and Warish Hall moated farms. However, parallel ditches (172) and (173) may be the remains of a trackway which further investigation may show to connect to other medieval sites.

The impact that the proposed development would have on the archaeological resource.

Most of the features are less than 0.5m deep with good preservation and definition of archaeological horizons. There is evidence of significant modern plough truncation, which indicates that any intrusion of construction works into sub-soil deposits will have an adverse effect upon any archaeological remains present. Furthermore, it is very likely that the majority of the archaeological remains on the site will be totally removed by any groundworks in excess of 1m in depth.

However, bearing in mind that the trenched area totals only some 3% of the proposed development, it is possible that both extensive ditches and smaller, discrete, features may lie undiscovered in the intervening spaces. From the trial trenching it is possible to identify two potential 'hot spots' of archaeological activity, in the western third of the site and in the southeastern corner. The impact of the development outside these areas is likely to be negligible on the present evidence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

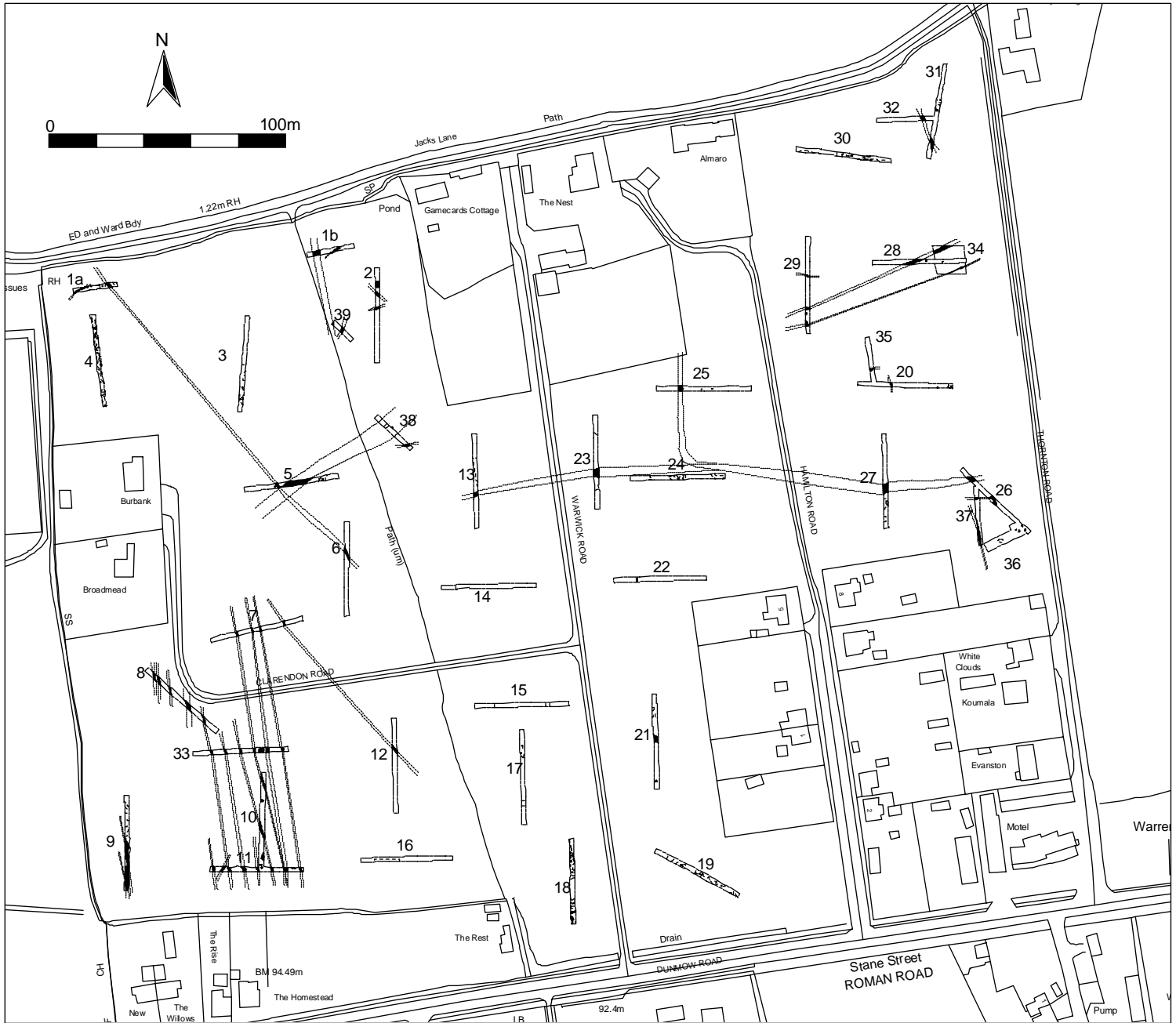
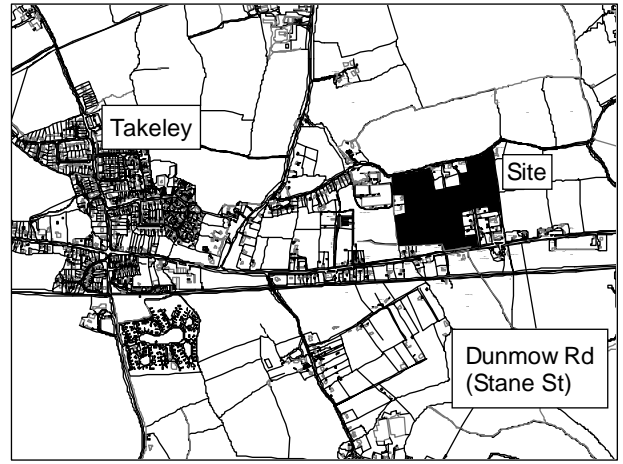
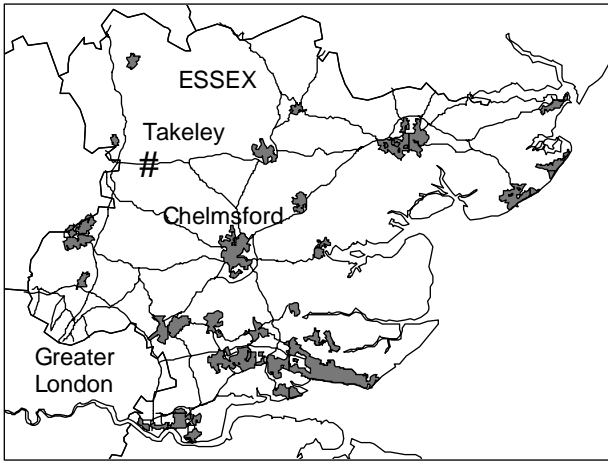
This project was commissioned by RPS (PTE) Plc on behalf of Countryside Properties Plc. Thanks go to S Blatherwick and R Masefield for their assistance throughout the project. The project was conducted by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit. The fieldwork was carried out by the author with the assistance of J Archer, B Barker, C Down, A Turner and D Smith. All finds were processed by Phil McMichael and analysed by Joyce Compton, Nick Lavender and Hazel Martingell. Digitising of plans and digital illustration was undertaken by Andy Lewsey. The project was managed by Mark Atkinson of ECC FAU. Richard Havis of the ECC HAMP Team monitored the fieldwork.

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Walker, H.	2004	'Medieval pottery', in Havis and Brooks, 2004, 398-435
Wickenden, N.P.	1988	<i>Excavations at Great Dunmow, Essex: a Romano-British Small Town in the Trinovantian Civitas</i> EAA 41



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Fig.1. Priors Green - location, excavated features and projected alignments

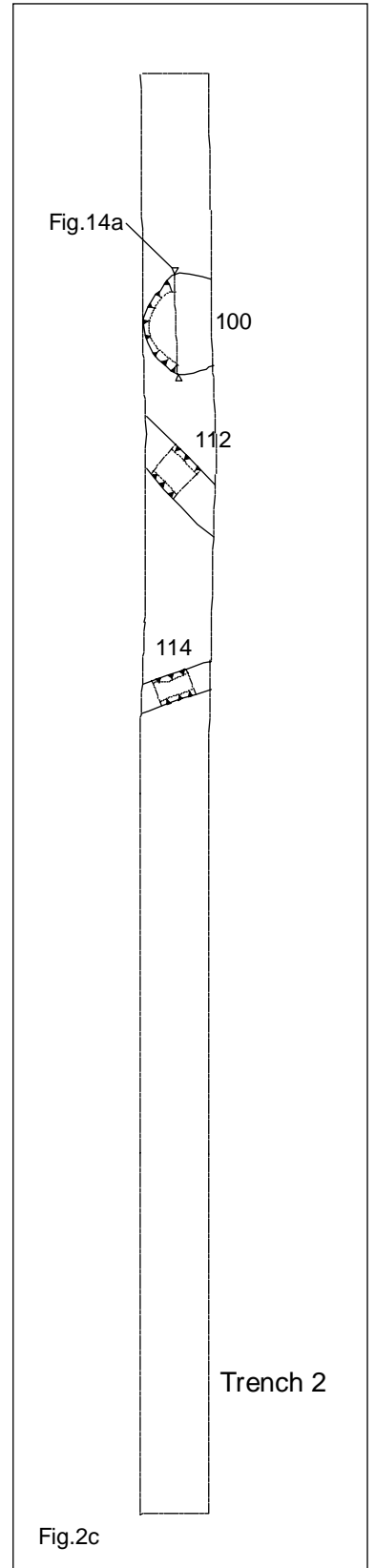
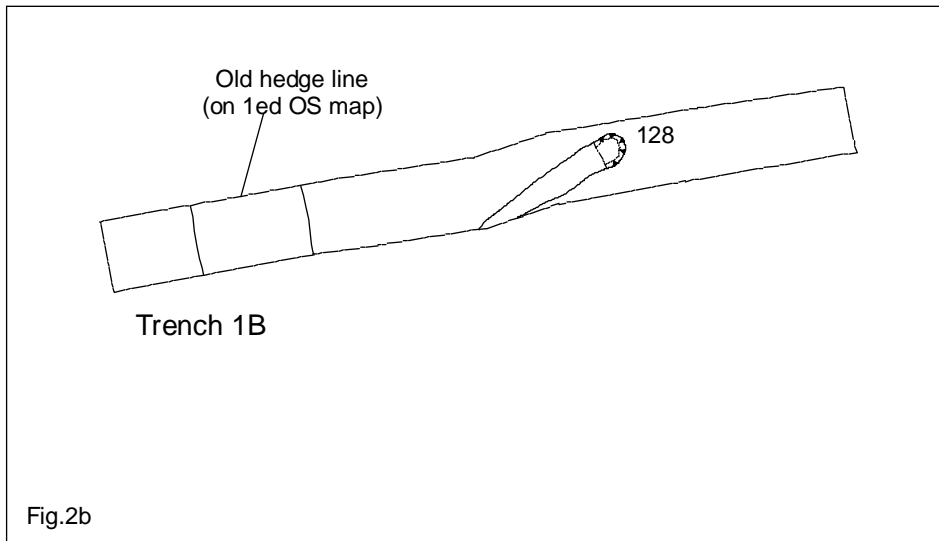
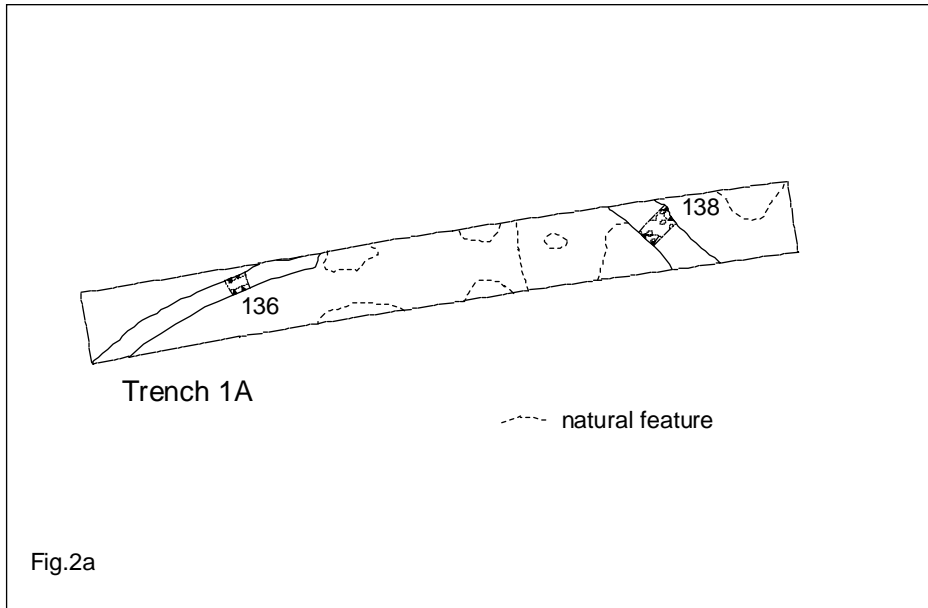


Fig.2. Trenches 1A, 1B & 2. 1:200.

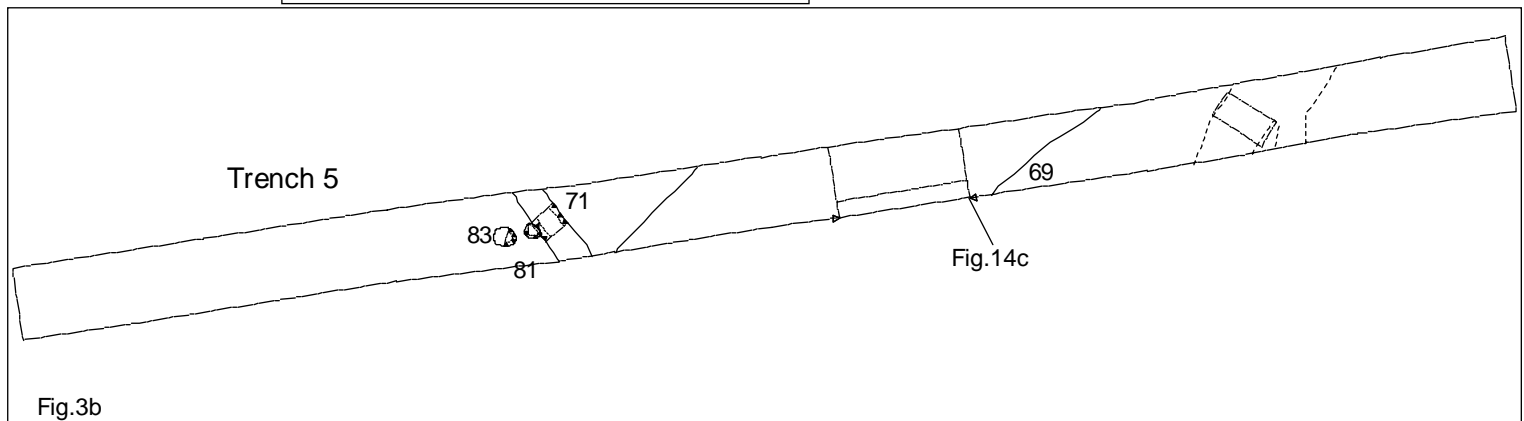
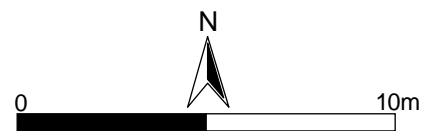
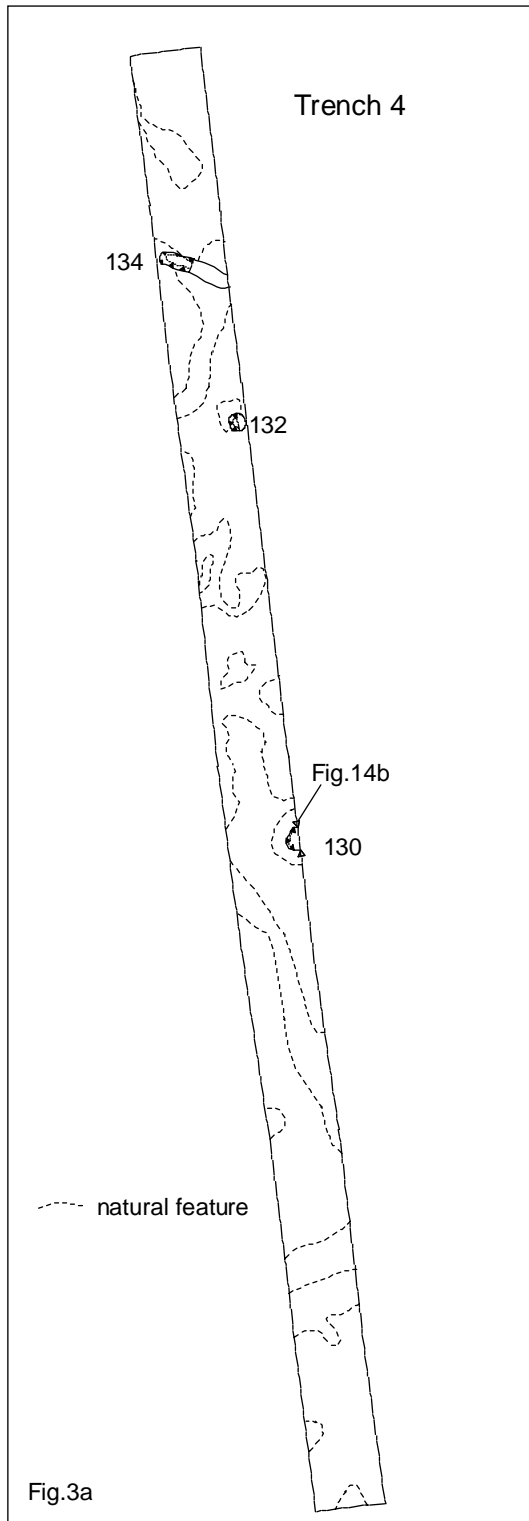


Fig. 3. Trenches 4 & 5. 1:200.

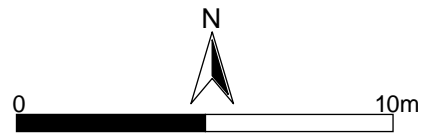
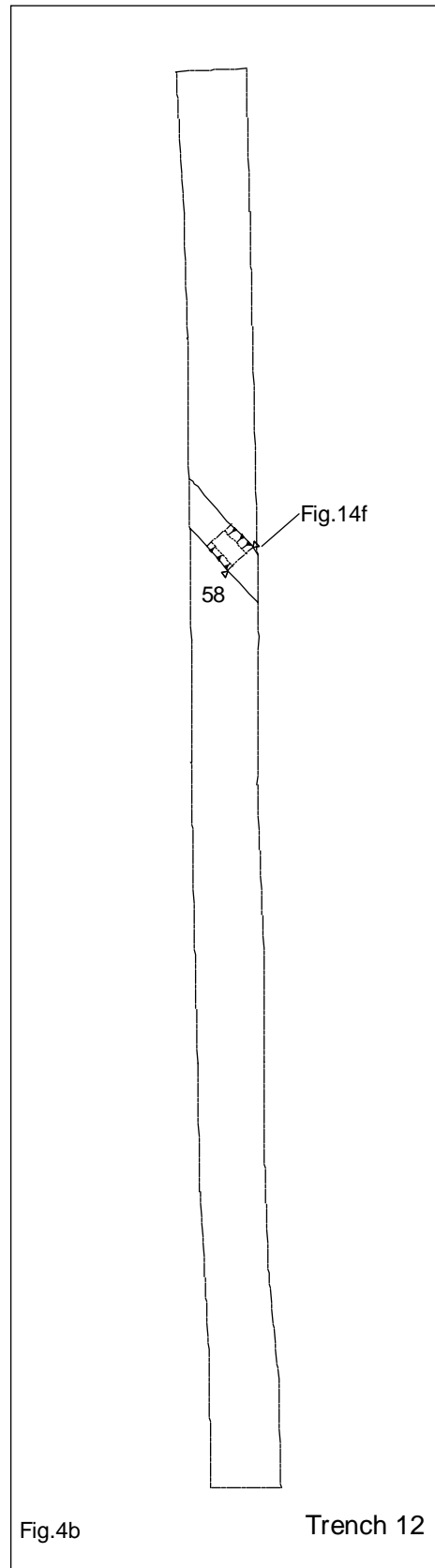
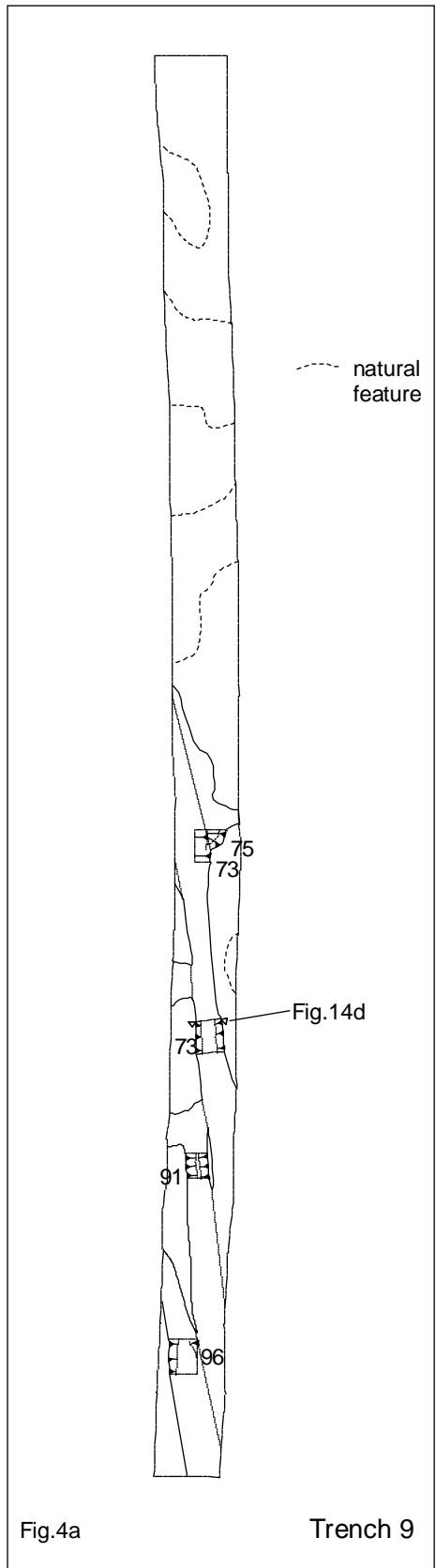


Fig.4. Trenches 9 & 12. 1:200.

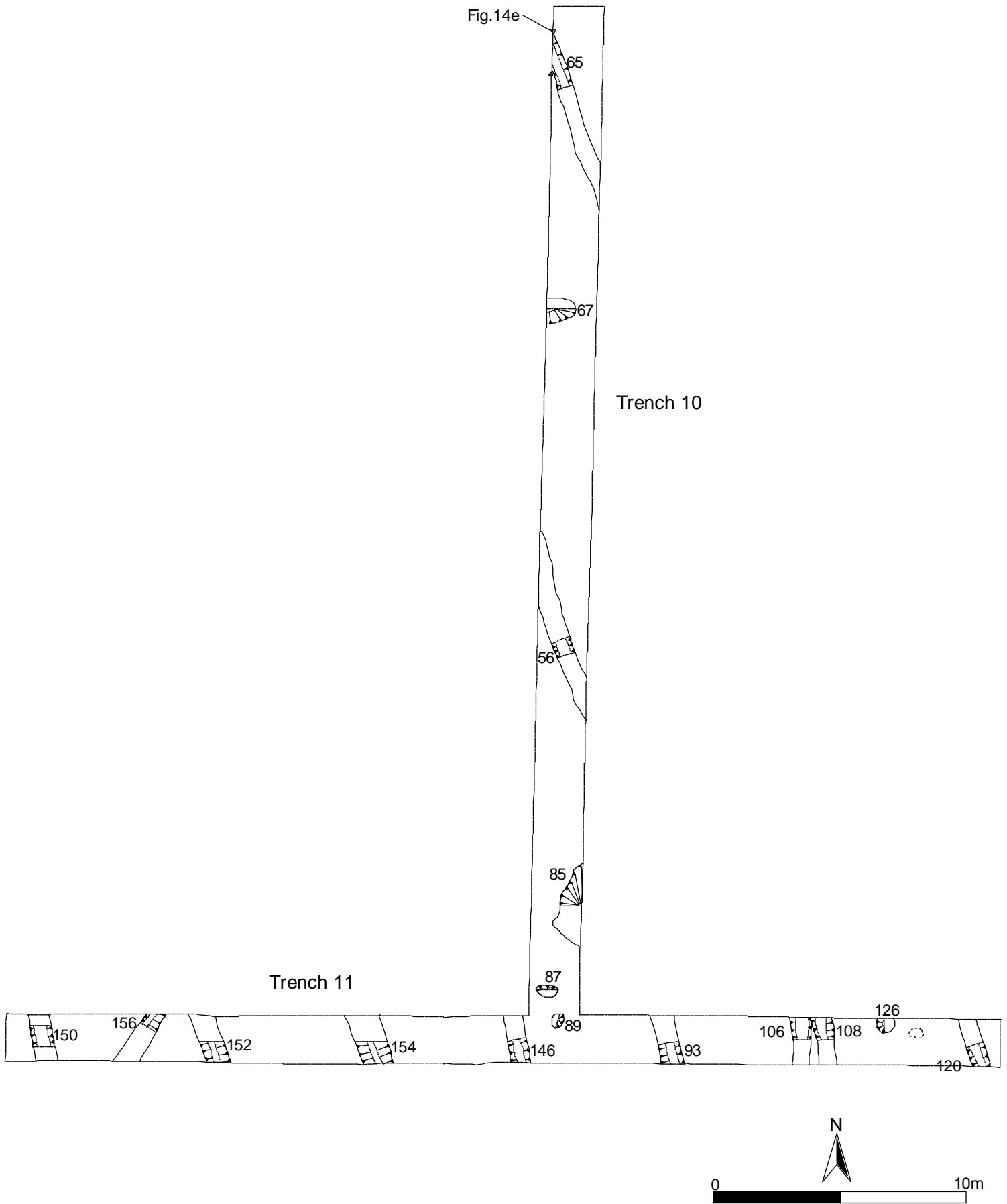


Fig.5. Trenches 10 & 11. 1:200.

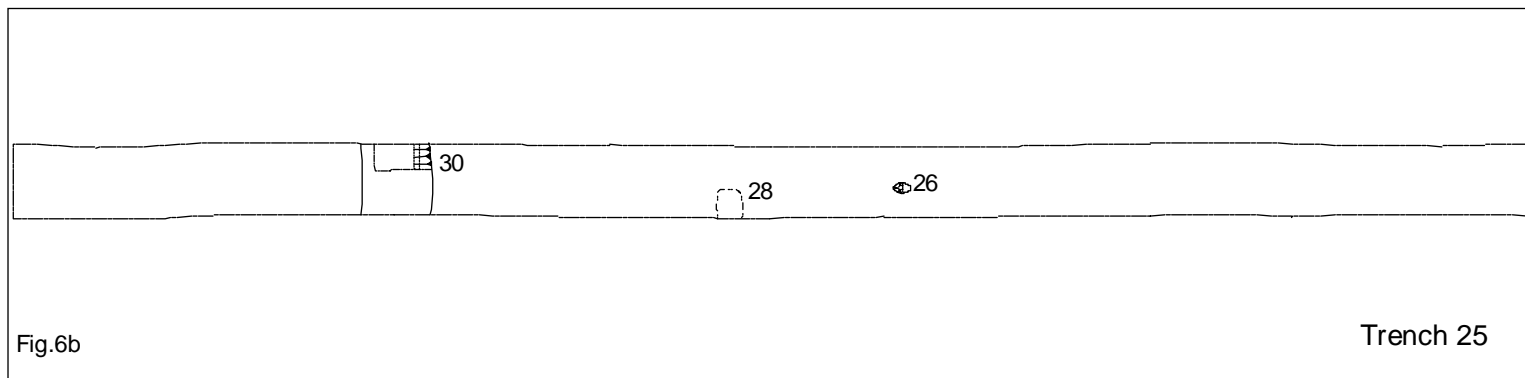
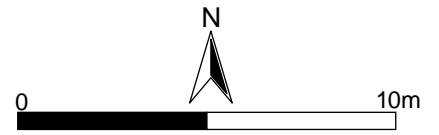
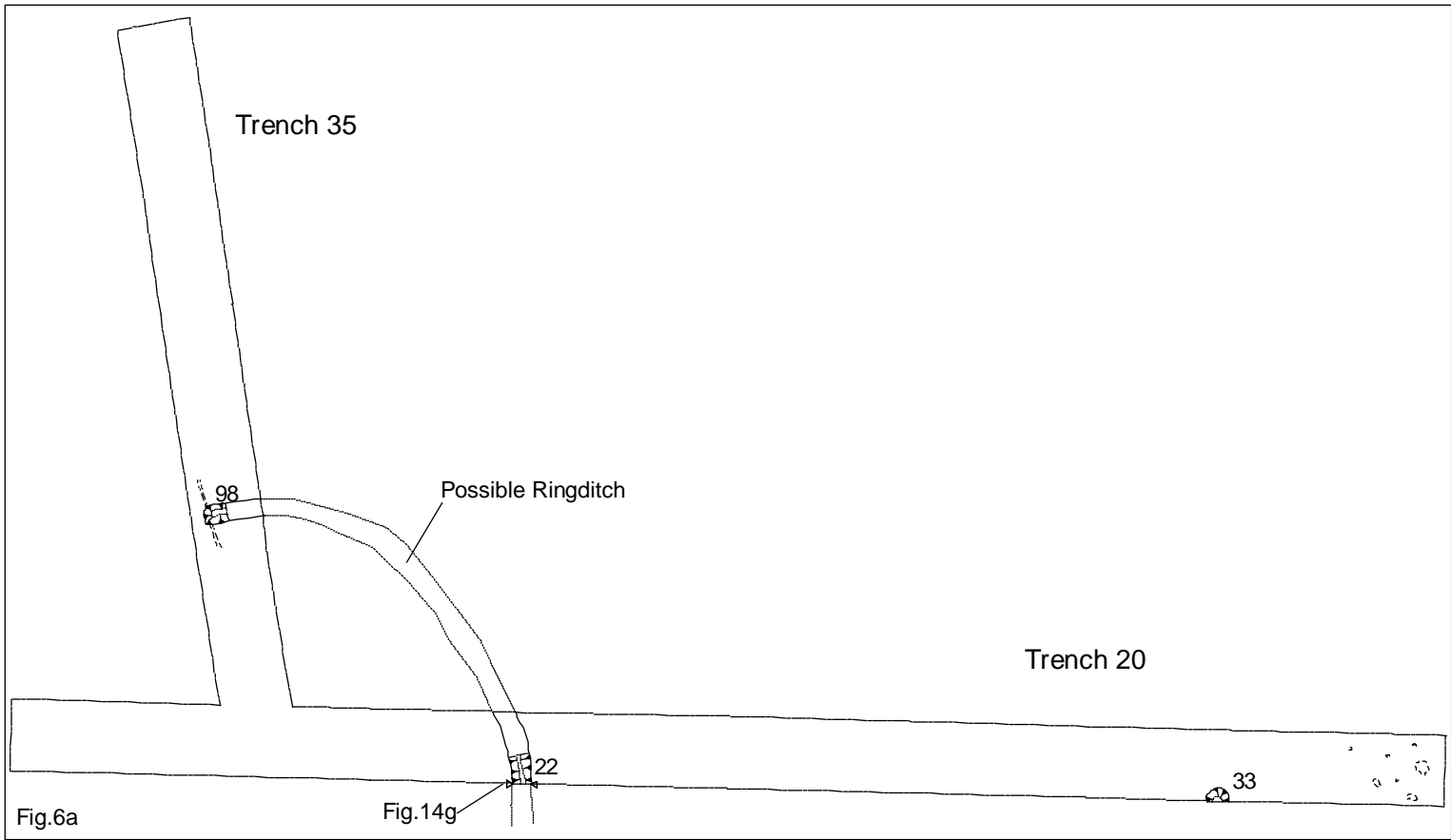


Fig.6. Trench 20, 25, 28, 34 & 35. 1:200.

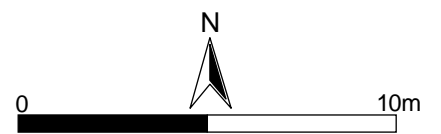
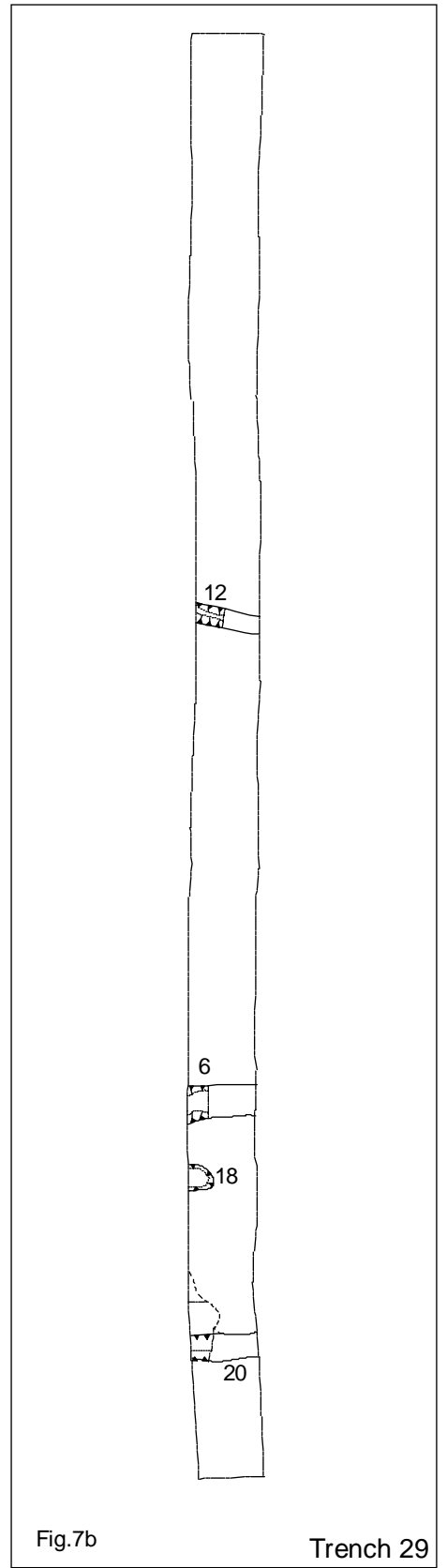
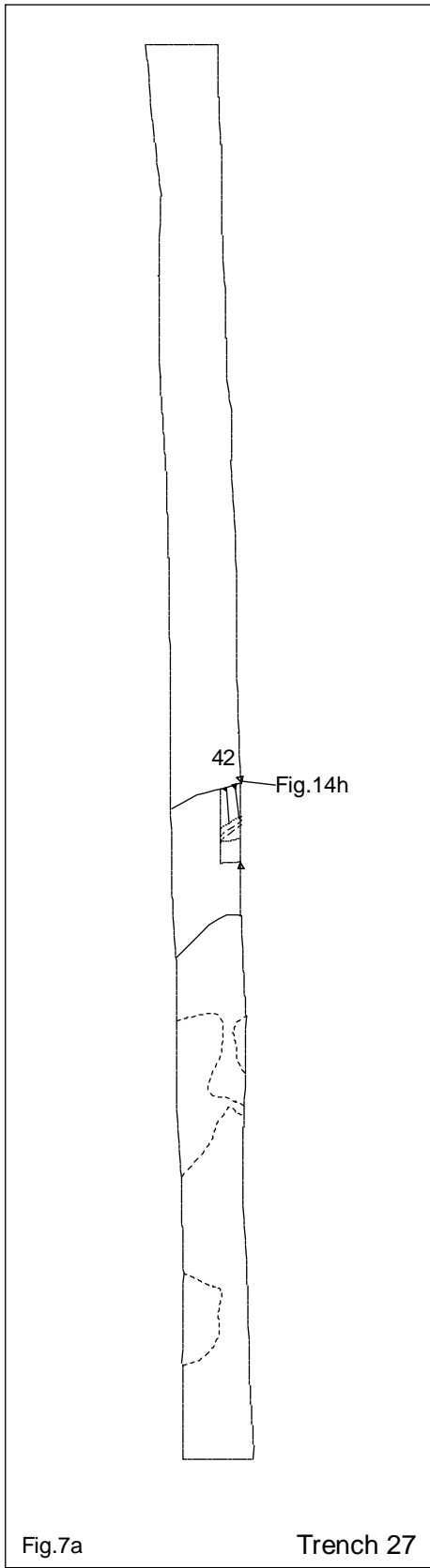


Fig.7. Trenches 27 & 29. 1:200.

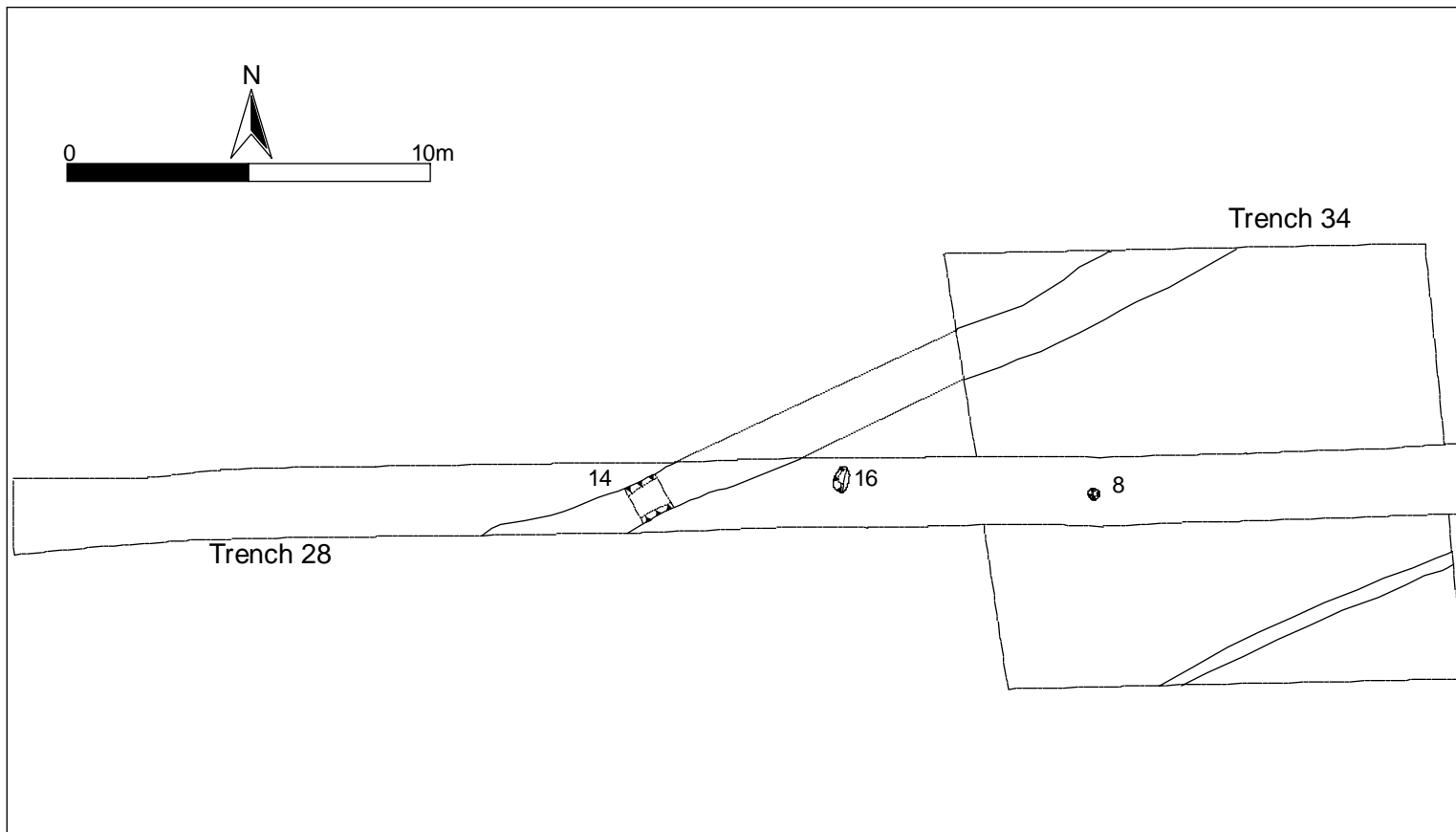


Fig.8. Trenches 28 & 34. 1:200.

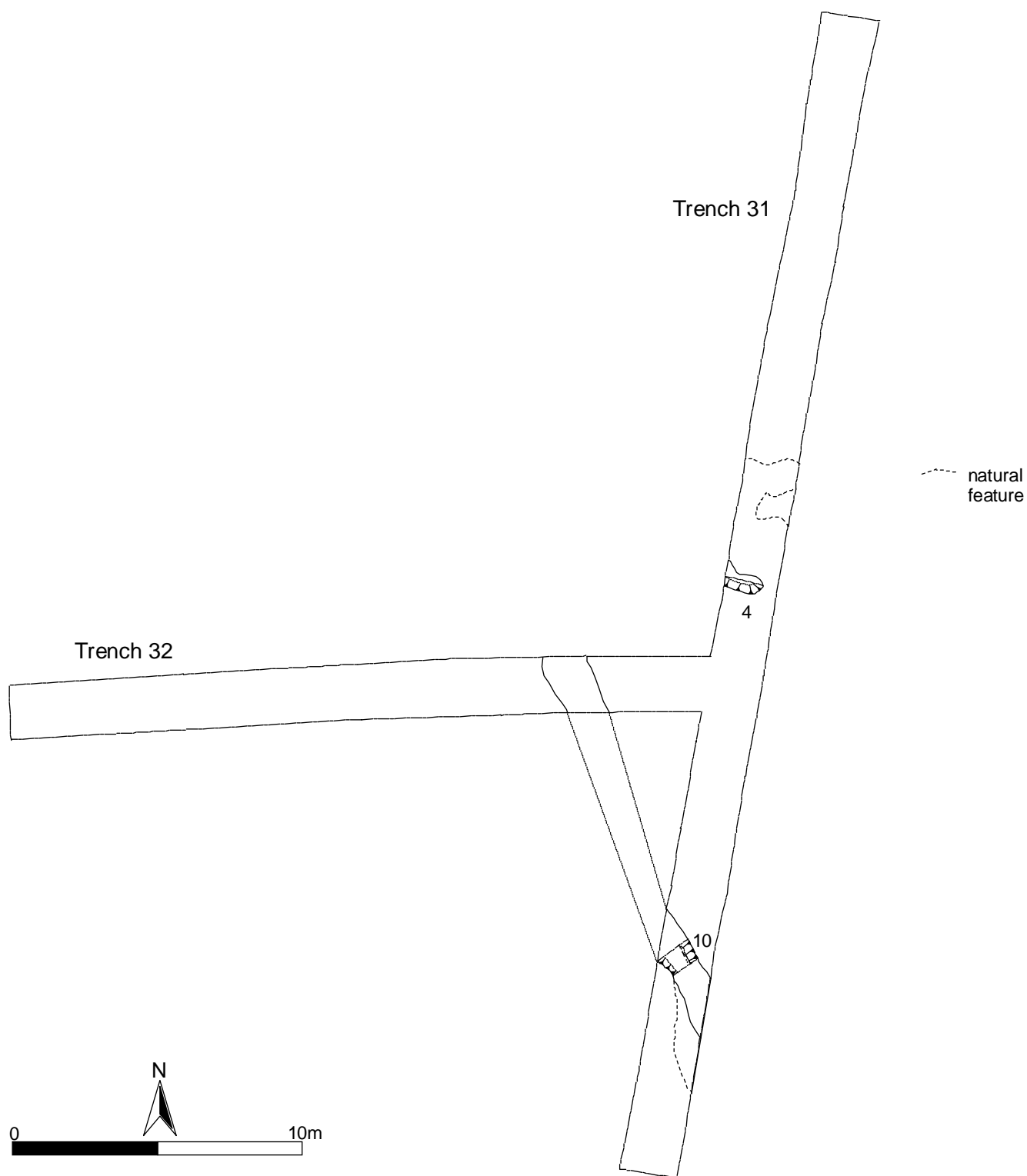


Fig.9. Trenches 31 & 32. 1:200.

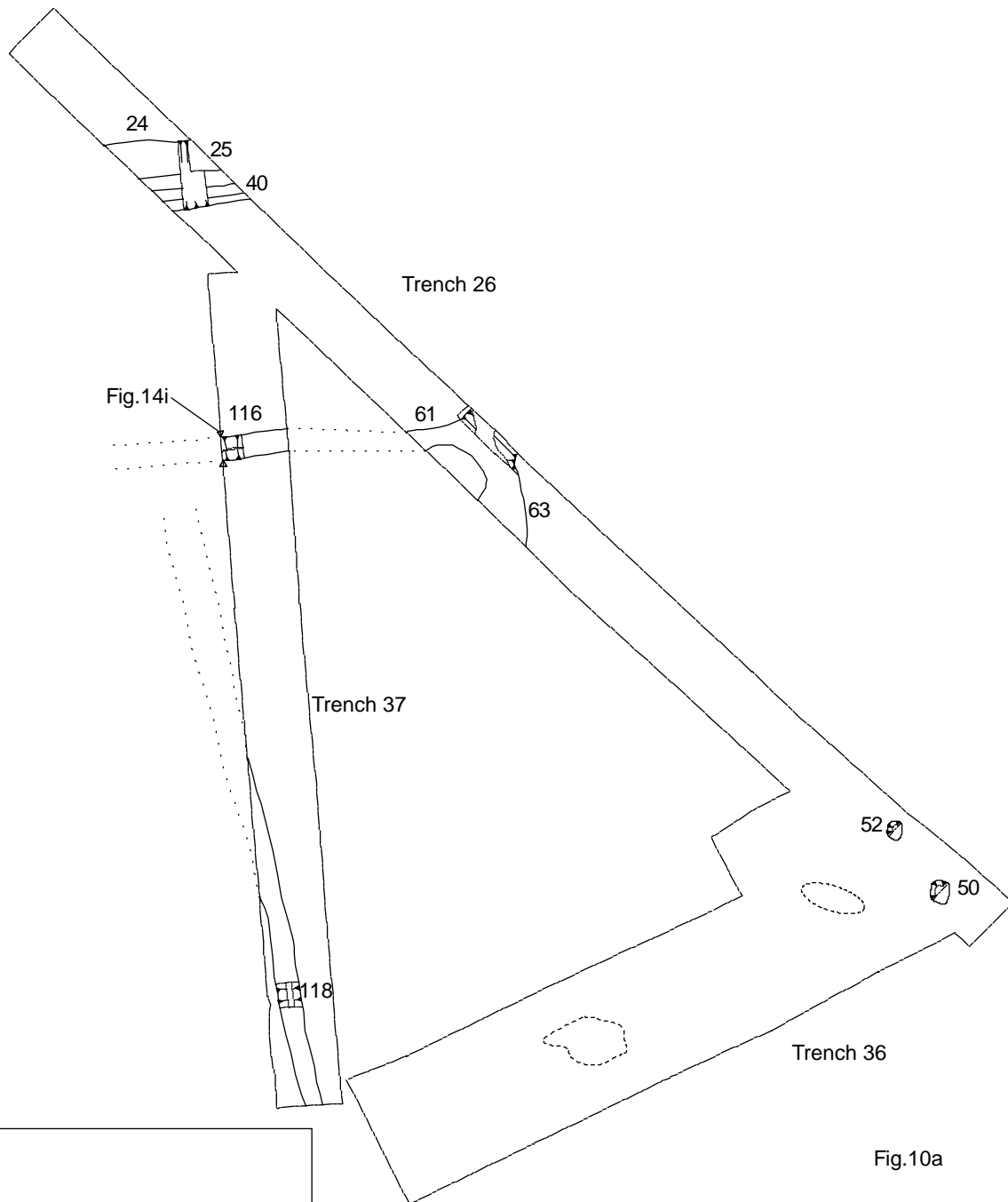


Fig.10a

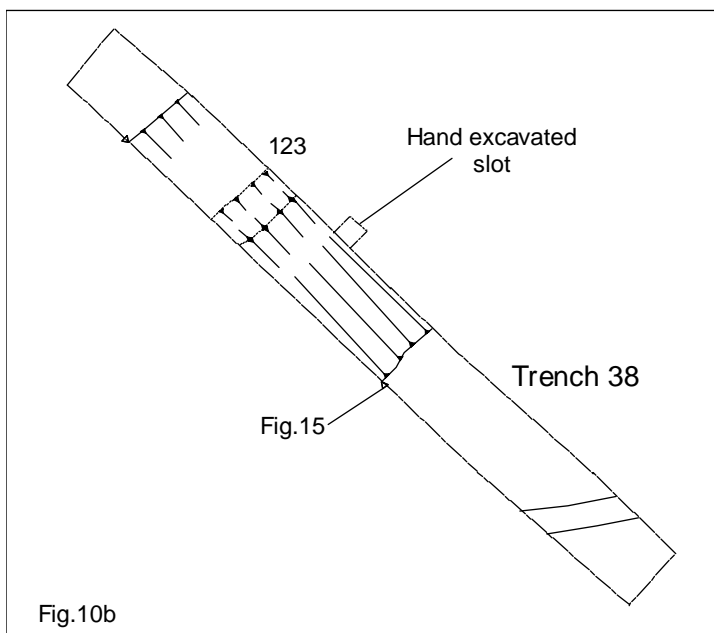


Fig.10b

Fig.10. Trenches 26, 36, 37 & 38. 1:200.

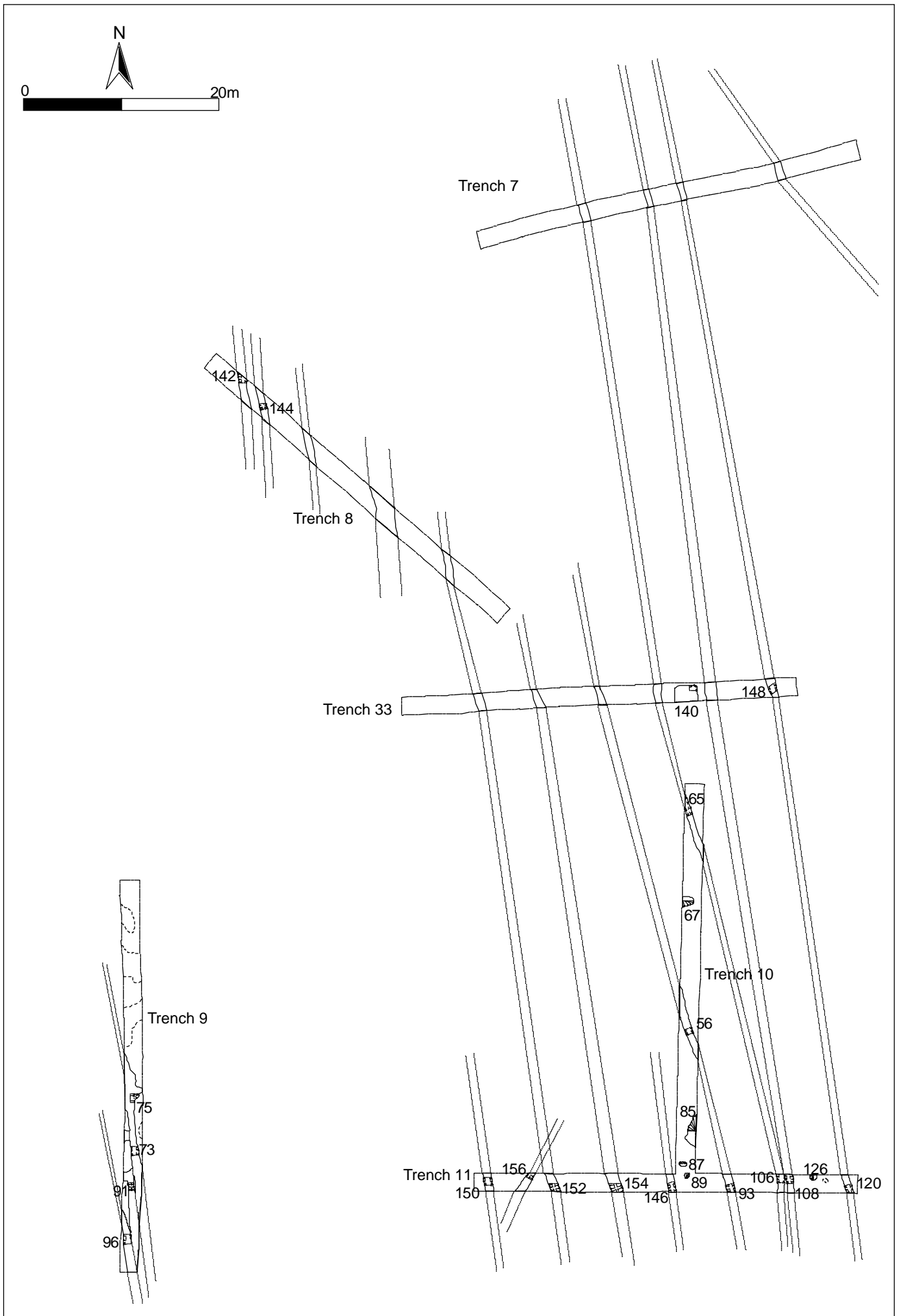


Fig.11. Trenches 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 33. 1:500

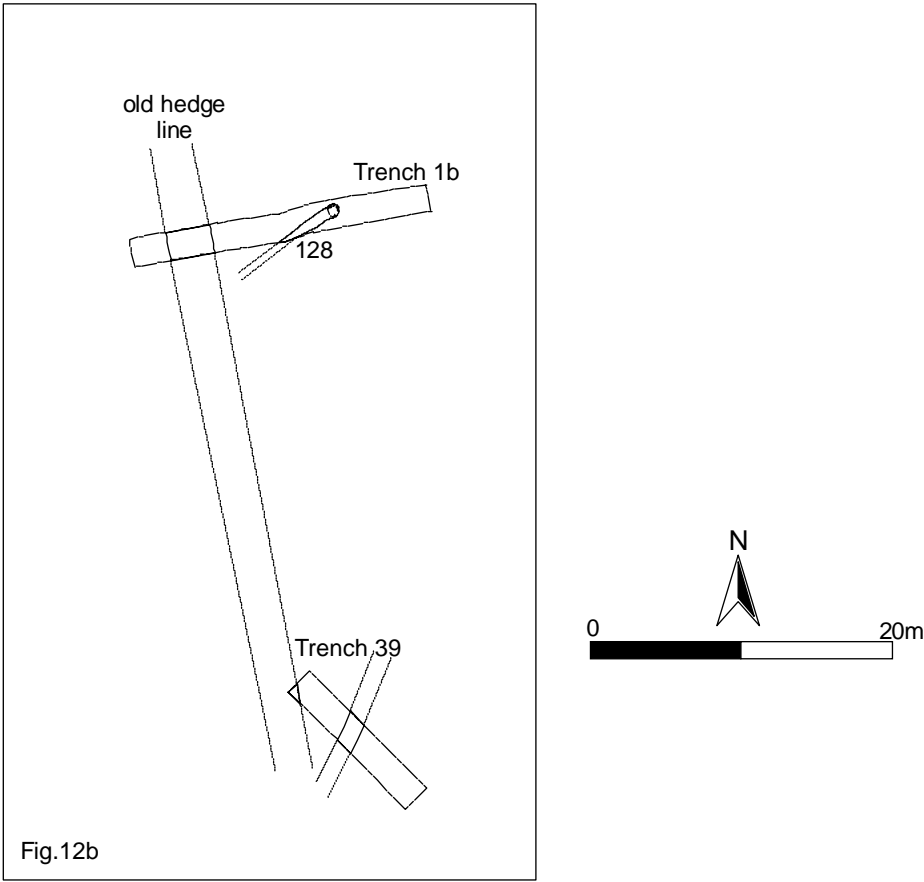
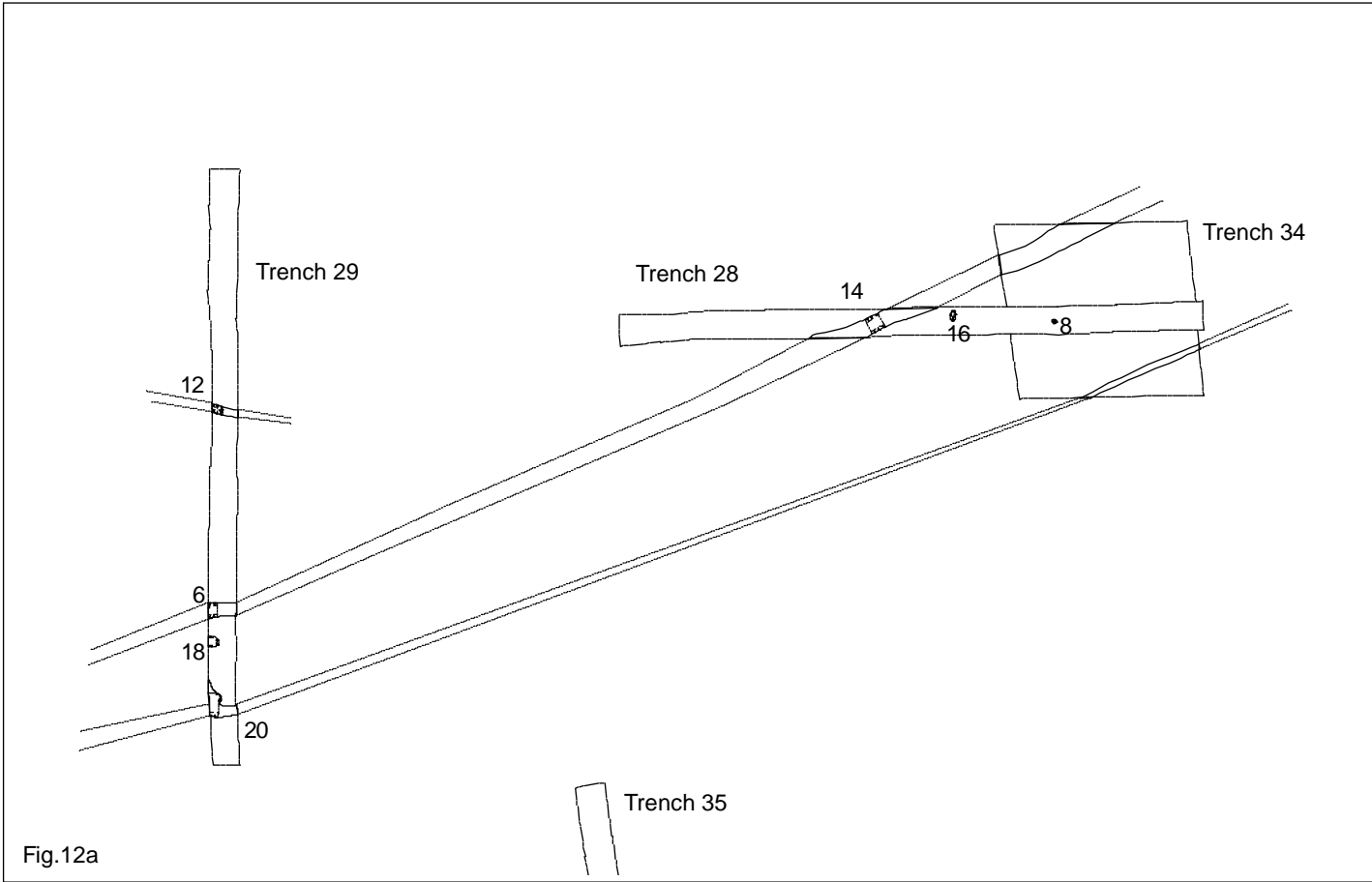


Fig.12. Trenches 28, 29 & 34 and 1b & 39. 1:500

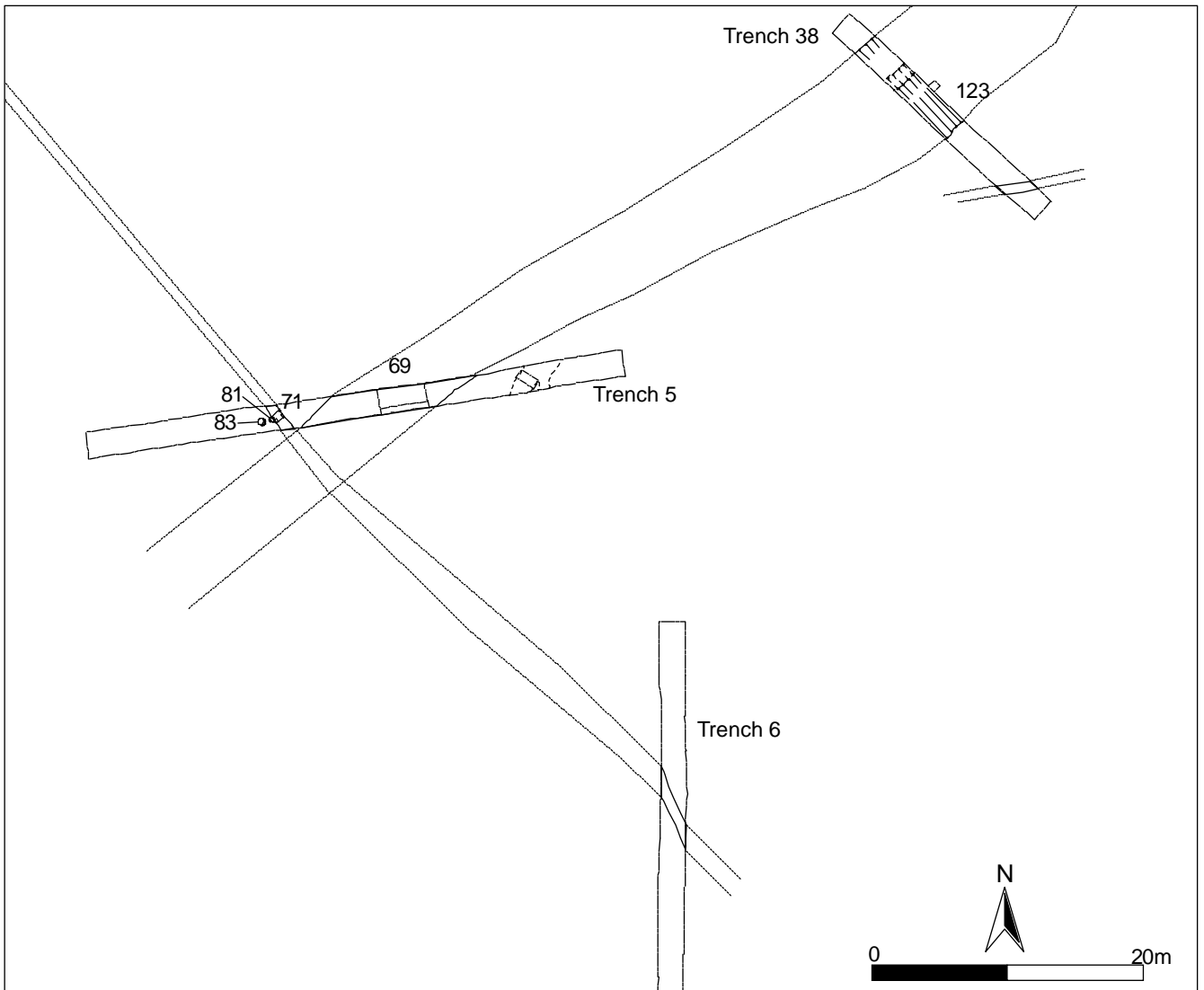


Fig.13. Trench group 5, 6 & 38. 1:500

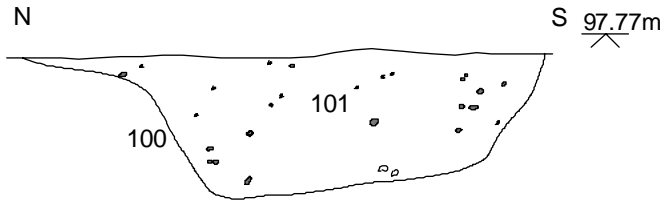


Fig. 14a. Trench 2

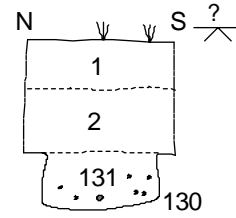


Fig. 14b. Trench 4

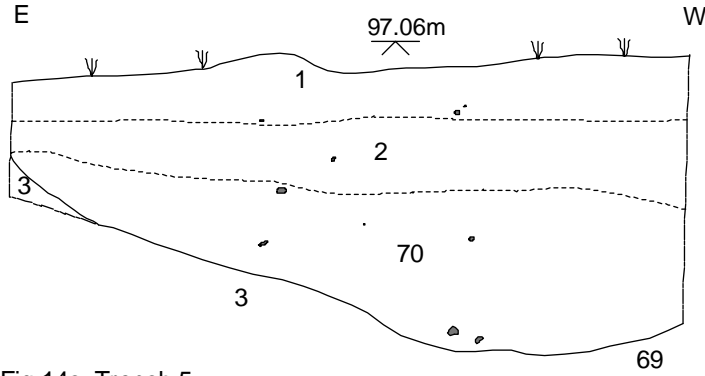


Fig. 14c. Trench 5

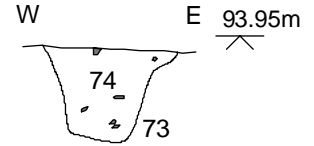


Fig. 14d. Trench 9

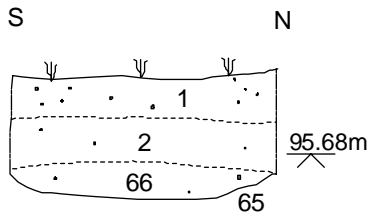


Fig. 14e. Trench 10

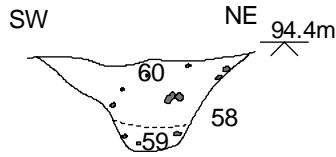


Fig. 14f. Trench 12

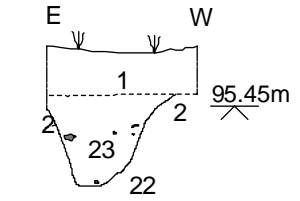


Fig. 14g. Trench 20

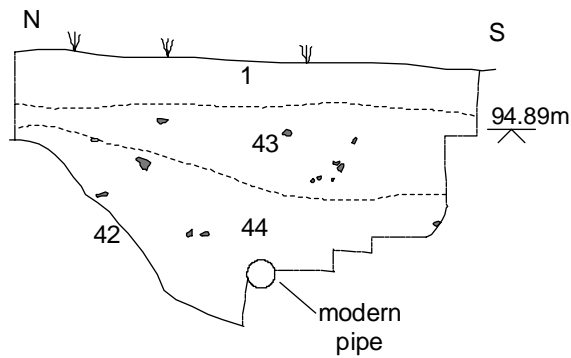


Fig. 14h. Trench 27

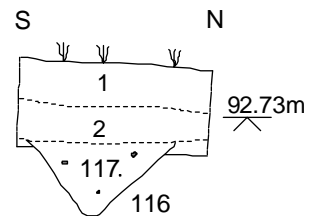


Fig. 14i. Trench 37



Fig. 14. Sections

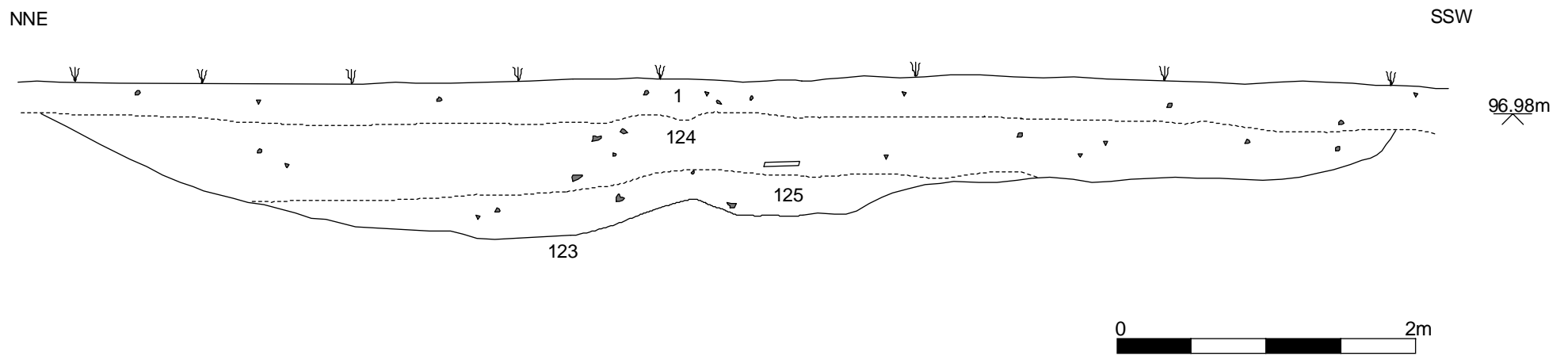


Fig.15. Section of Trench 38

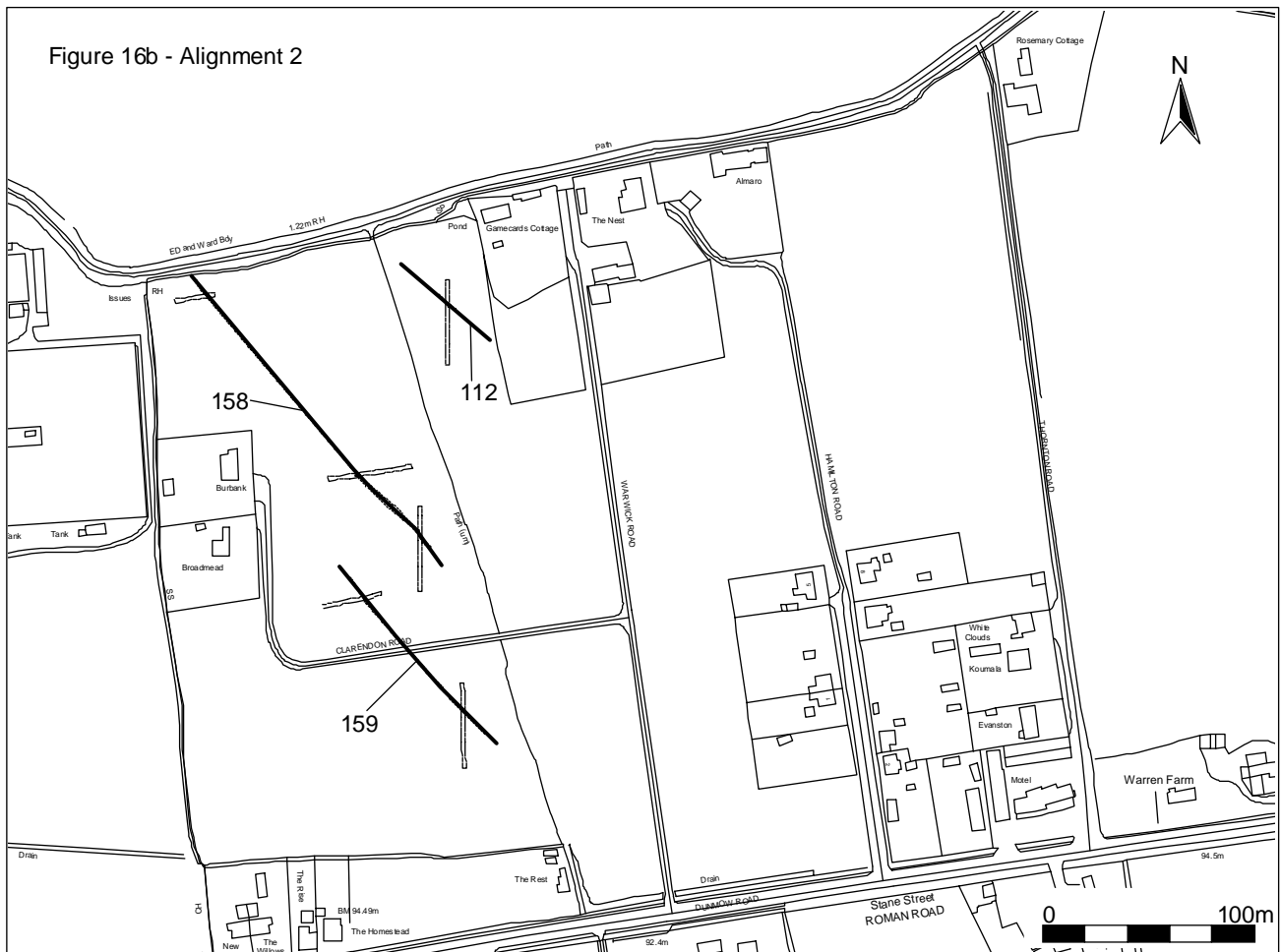
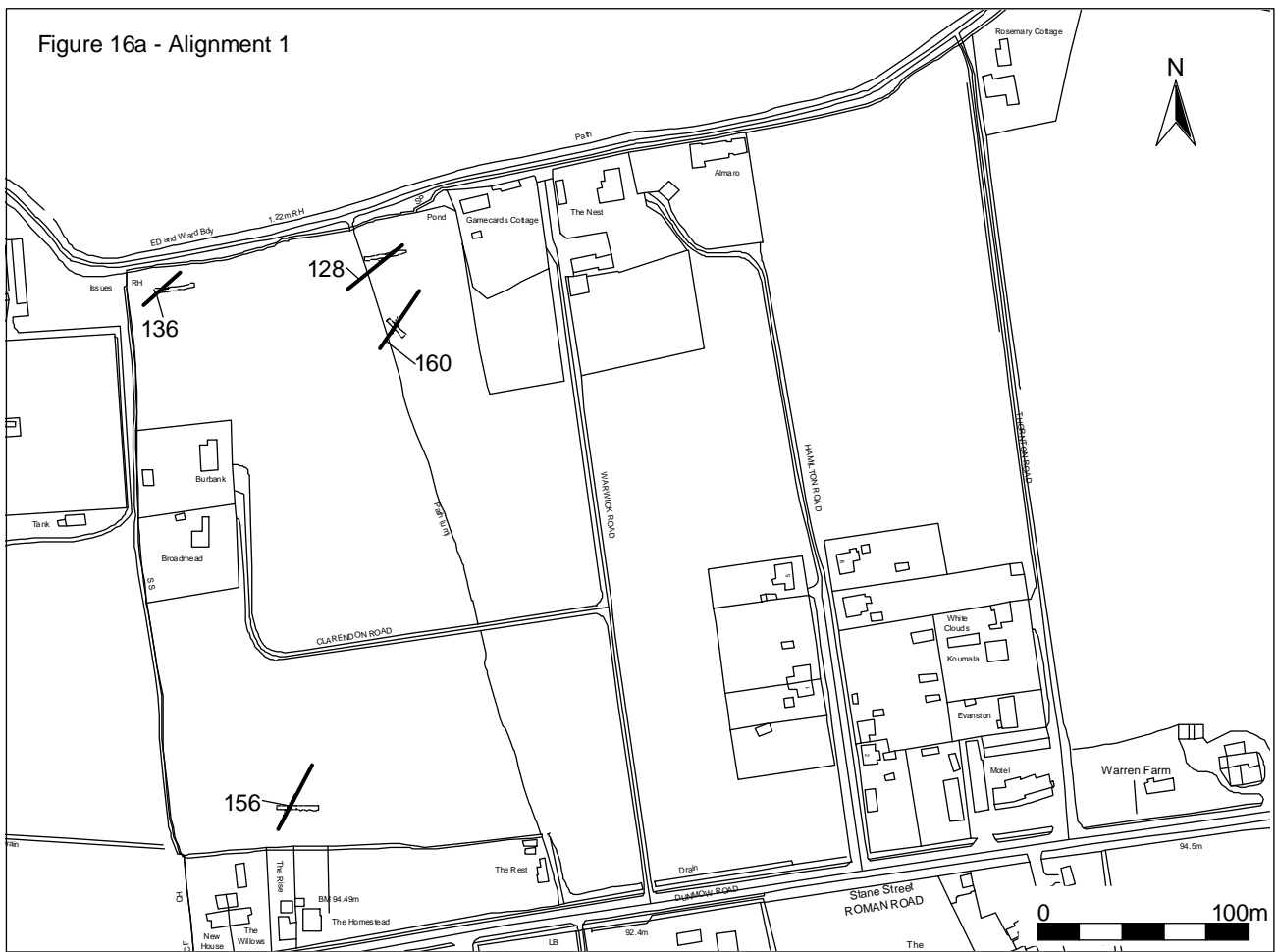


Figure 16 - Ditch alignments 1 and 2

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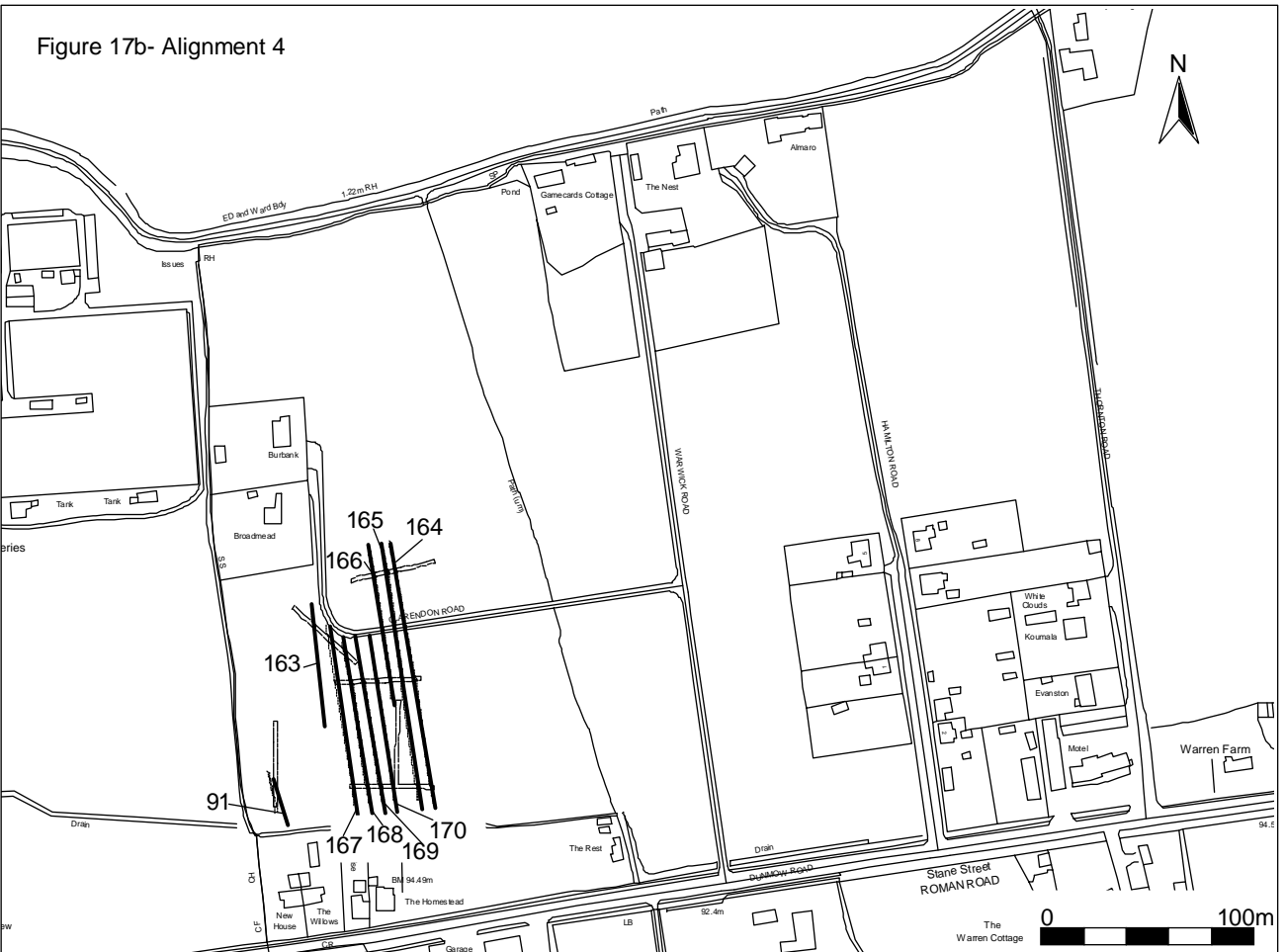
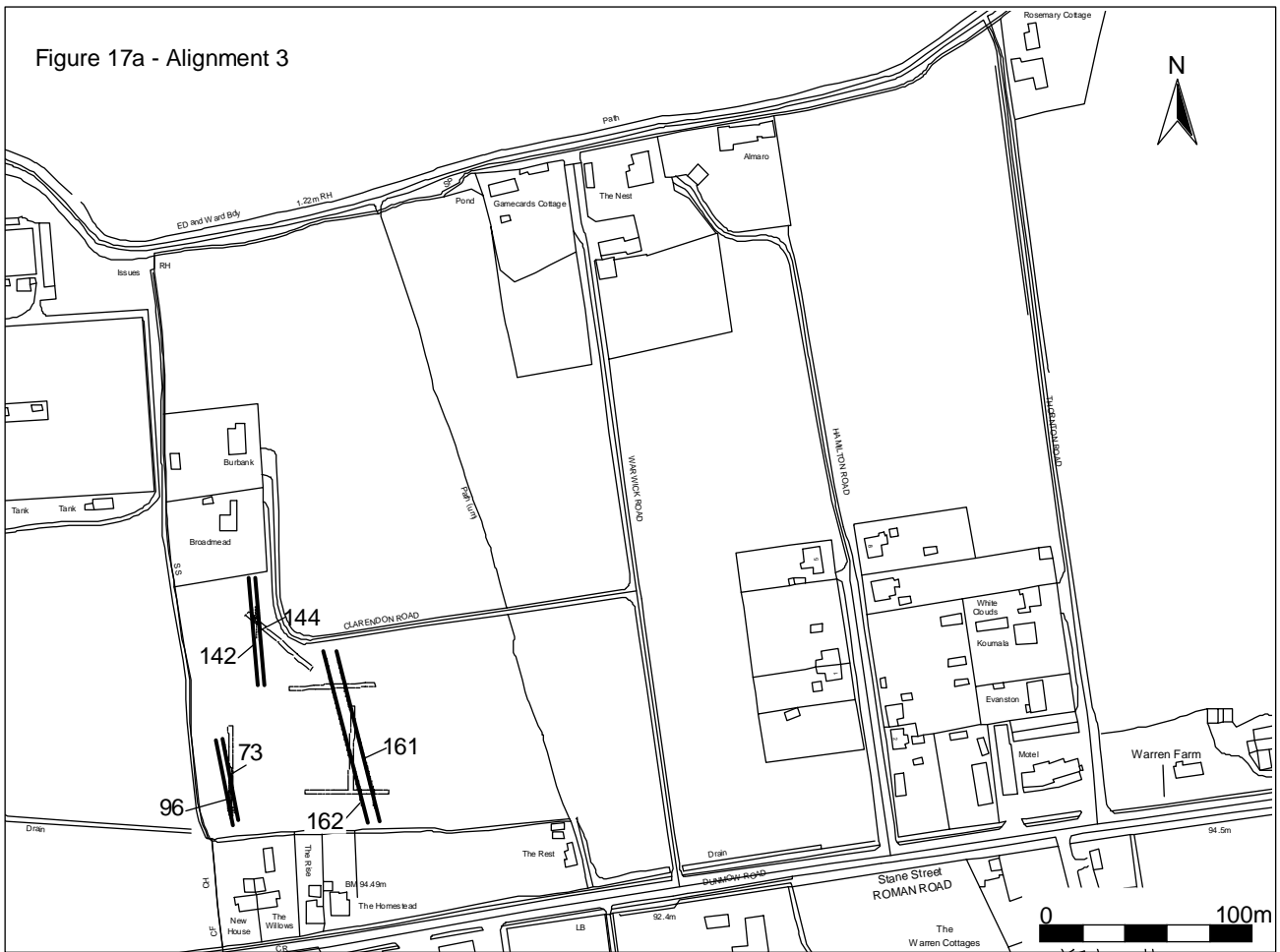


Figure 17 - Ditch alignments 3 and 4

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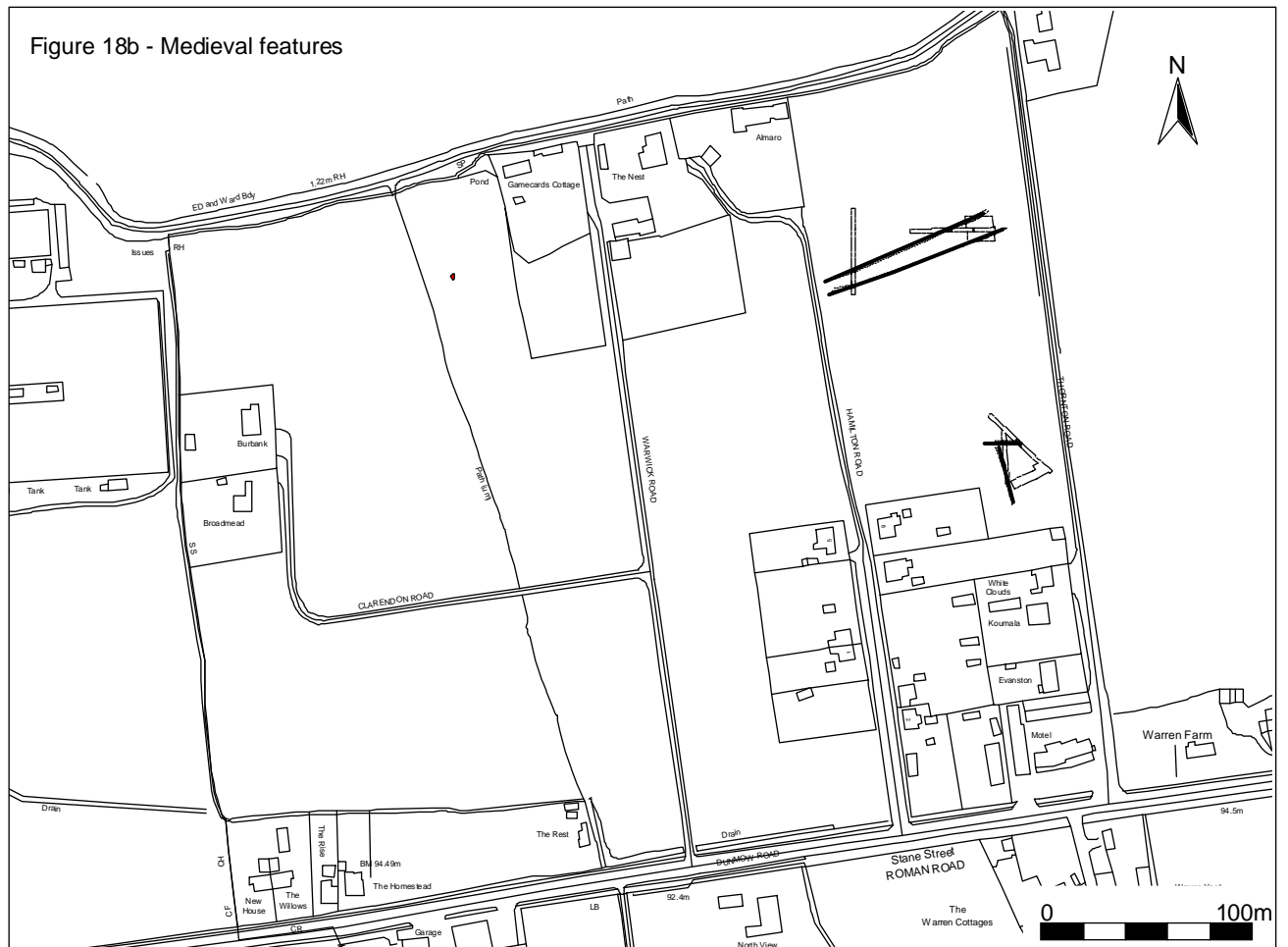
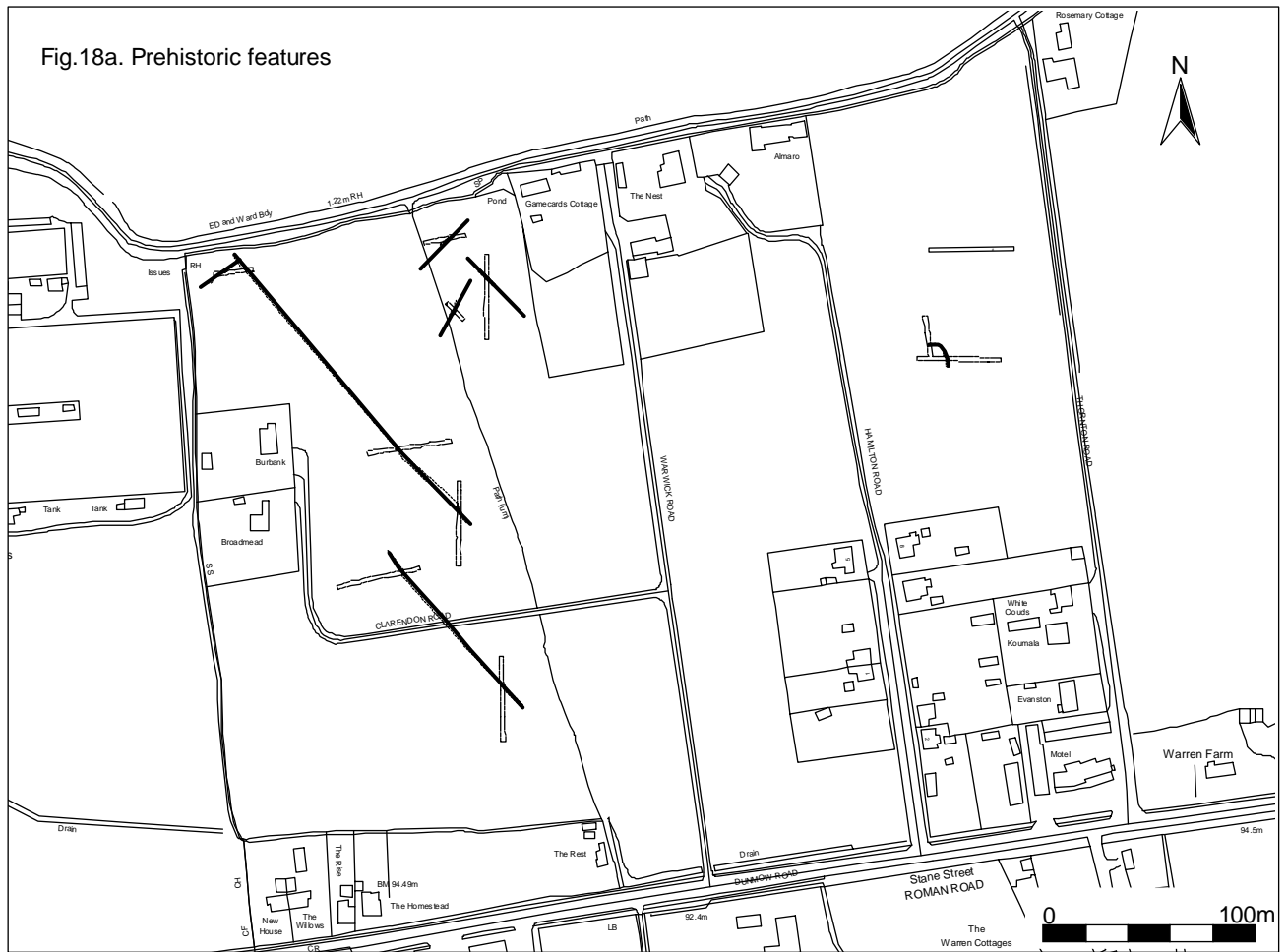


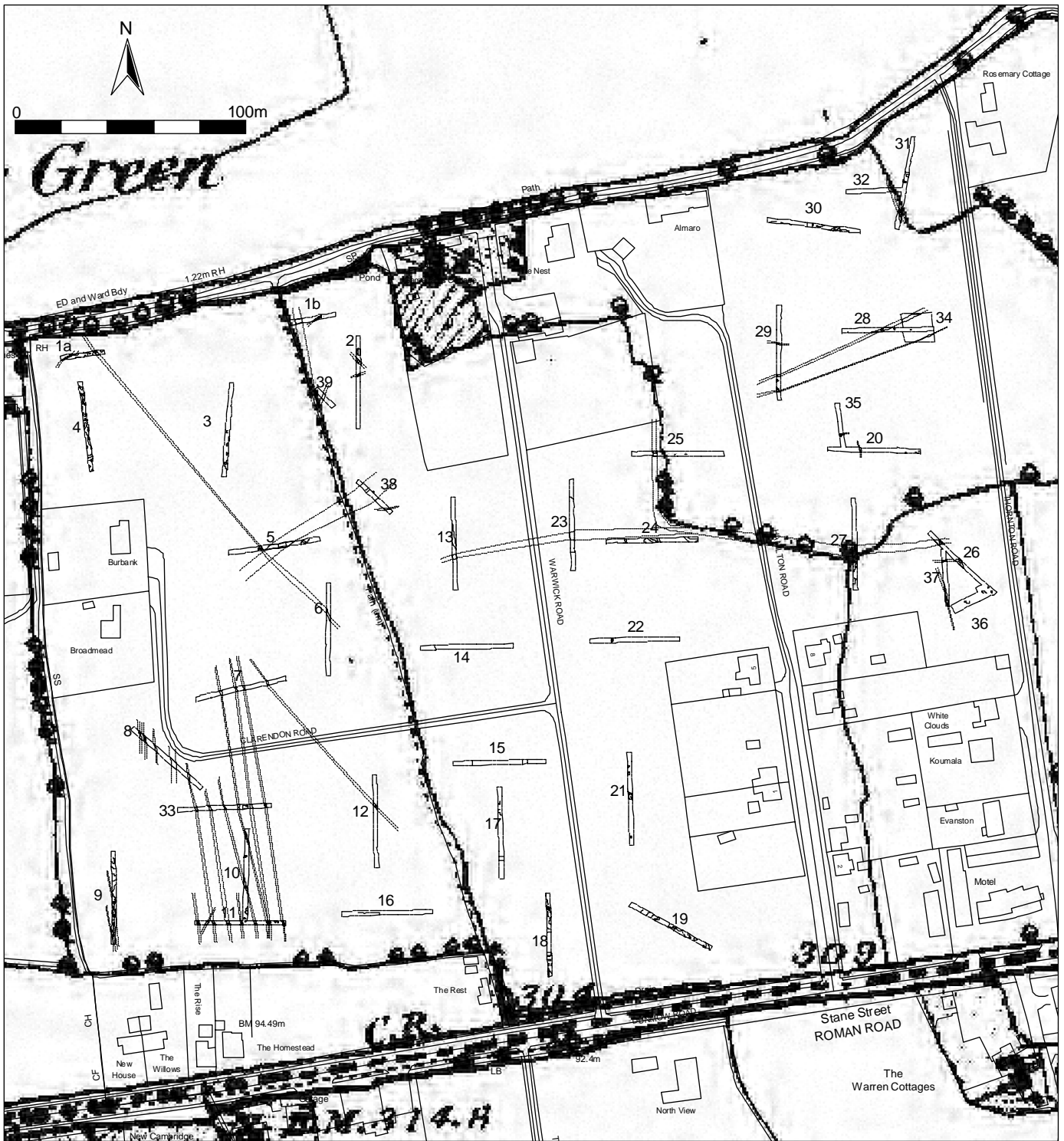
Figure 18 - Prehistoric and medieval features

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Fig.19. Post-medieval features



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Fig.20. Priors Green - excavated features and first edition OS map

APPENDIX 1 : TRENCH SUMMARY

All dimensions are given in metres

Trench	Length	Width	Depth	Area	Grid Refs. NW & SE corner	Orientation	Features
1a	20	2	0.6	40	TL 57282/21538 57301/21524	East-West	Ditch 136, Ditch 138
1b	20	2	0.37	40	TL 57379/21538 57401/21540	East-West	Ditch 128, Mod Hedge line
2	40	2	0.38	80	TL 57410/21532 57411/21492	North-South	Pit 100, Ditch 112, Ditch 114
3	40	2	0.55	80	TL 57355/21512 57353/21471	North-South	Natural Feature 110
4	40	2	0.6	80	TL 57355/21511 57296/21473	North-South	Ph 130, Ph 132, Gully 134
5	40	2	0.75	80	TL 57354/21438 57394/21443	East-West	Ditch 69 & 71, Pit 81, Ph 83
6	40	2	0.5	80	TL 57397/21425 57399/21384	North-South	Planned only - 1 ditch
7	40	2	0.43	80	TL 57342/21363 57380/21383	East-West	Planned only – 4 ditches
8	40	2	0.54	80	TL 57314/21363 57342/21335	Northwest-Southeast	Ditch 142, Ditch 144 – 3 other ditches planned only
9	40	2	0.55	80	TL 57304/21309 57305/21268	North-South	Ditch 73, Ditch 91, Ditch 96, Pit 75
10	40	2	0.54	80	TL 57362/21319 57362/21279	North-South	Pit 85, Pit 87, Ph 89, Ditch 65, Pit 67, Ditch 56
11	40	2	0.54	80	TL 57340/21279 57379/21276	East-West	Ditches 93, 106, 120, 108, 146, 150, 154, 156, Ph 126
12	40	2	0.5	80	TL 57417/21342 57419/21301	North-South	Ditch 58
13	40	2	0.3	80	TL 57451/21462 57453/21421	North-South	Planned only – 1 ditch (Mod)
14	40	2	0.45	80	TL 57438/21398 57478/21396	East-West	Blank
15	40	2	0.46	80	TL 57502/21348 57492/21347	East-West	Blank
16	40	2	0.46	80	TL 57404/21283 57442/21281	East-West	Blank
17	40	2	0.42	80	TL 57452/21337 57473/21296	North-South	Blank
18	40	2	0.7	80	TL 57492/21291 57494/21255	North-South	Layer 102, Nat Feat 103
19	40	2	0.5	80	TL 57529/21287 57562/21266	Northwest-Southeast	Blank
20	45	2	0.6	90	TL 57622/21483 57653/21481	East-West	Ditch 22, Ph 33
21	40	2	0.43	80	TL 57528/21352 57529/21311	North-South	Pit 48
22	40	2	0.37	80	TL 57511/21401 57549/21399	East-West	Pit 45
23	40	2	0.4	80	TL 57502/21470 57505/21430	North-South	Modern ditch – Machine excavated
24	40	2	0.32	80	TL 57518/21443 57557/21443	East-West	Blank
25	40	2	0.3	80	TL 57529/21482 57569/21480	East-West	Ph 26, Pit 28, Ditch 30
26	40	2	0.45	80	TL 57657/21446 57687/21420	Northwest-Southeast	Pit 50, Pit 52, Ditches 24, 25, 40, 61,63
27	40	2	0.4	80	TL 57624/21461 57626/21421	North-South	Ditch 42
28	40	2	0.54	80	TL 57620/21535 57659/21534	East-West	Crem 8, Ditch 14, Pit 16
29	40	2	0.55	80	TL 57593/21545 57594/21504	North-South	Pit 20, Pit 18 Ditch 06, Ditch 12
30	40	2	0.63	80	TL 57588/21583	East-West	Blank

					57627/21575		
31	40	2	0.5	80	TL 57650/21619 57644/21577	North-South	Nat feat 04, Ditch 10
32	25	2	0.6	50	TL 57622/21595 57645/21594	East-West	Planned only – 1 ditch
33	40	2	0.80	80	TL 57333/21327 57373/212328	East-West	Nat feat 140, Ditch 148 5 ditches planned only
34	15	8	0.43	120	TL 57646/21540 57659/21529	N/A	Planned only – 2 ditches
35	20	2	0.5	40	TL 57618/21503 57621/21483	North-South	Ditch 98
36	20	5	0.53	100	TL 57668/21415 57685/21420	East-West	Blank
37	25	2	0.4	50	TL 57665/21439 57667/21415	North-South	Ditch 116, Ditch 118
38	20	2	0.36	40	TL 57410/21468 57426/21455	Northwest- Southeast	Ditch 123 1 other ditch planned only
39	10	2	0.45	20	TL 57392/21509 57400/21502	Northwest- Southeast	Planned only – 1 ditch

APPENDIX 2: FEATURE LIST

All dimensions are given in metres.

Number	Type	Filled by	Equals	Length	Breadth	Depth	Trench	Date
1	Topsoil						All	
2	Subsoil						All	
3	Undist Nat						All	
4	Pit	5	-	1.1	0.78	0.35	31	
6	Ditch	7	14	0.55	0.98	0.57	29	13–14 C
8	Crem Pit	9	-	0.3	0.29	0.15	28	LBA or Roman
10	Ditch	11	-	0.95	1.12	0.35	31	
12	Ditch	13	-	0.8	0.54	0.28	29	
14	Ditch	15	6	+1	1.2	0.26	28	
16	Pit	17	-	0.35	0.78	0.12	28	
18	Pit	19	-	0.8	0.65	0.19	29	
20	Pit	21	-	1.65	0.6	0.15	29	
22	Ditch	23	-	0.7	0.56	0.29	20	Prehist or Roman
24	Ditch	35, 36	42	0.5	1.05	0.4	26	P Med
25	Ditch	37, 38, 39	-	0.7	1.14	0.62	26	L16-19 C
26	Post-hole	27	-	0.46	0.28	0.09	25	
28	Pit	29	-	0.75	0.65	-	25	
30	Ditch	31, 32, 77, 78, 79, 80	-	+1	1.8	0.9	25	
33	Pit	34	-	-	0.55ø	0.26	20	
40	Ditch	41	-	0.5	0.4	0.3	26	
42	Ditch	43, 44	24	0.6	2.4	1.4	27	Modern
45	Pit	46, 47	-	1.16	0.74	0.17	22	
48	Pit	49	-	-	1.2	0.22	21	
50	Pit	51	-	0.47	0.88	0.11	26	
52	Pit	53	-	0.58	0.6	0.06	26	
54	Ditch	55	63	2	1.7	0.7	26	
56	Ditch	57	93	0.68	0.6	0.25	10	LBA/EIA
58	Ditch	59, 60	-	2.7	1.06	0.51	12	EIA
61	Ditch	62	116	2	0.6	0.36	26	
63	Ditch	64	54	2	1.3	0.53	26	
65	Ditch	66	106	2.1	0.58	0.12	10	
67	Pit	68	-	1.28	1	0.27	10	
69	Ditch	70	123	1.9	3.5	1.04	5	
71	Ditch	72	138?	1	0.95	0.18	5	EIA
73	Ditch	74	-	0.48	0.7	0.98	9	
75	Pit	76	-	1.05	0.58	0.32	9	
81	Pit	82	-	0.4	0.48	0.13	5	
83	Post-hole	84	-	0.55	0.5	0.21	5	
85	Pit	86	-	2.5	0.74	0.43	10	
87	Post-hole	88	-	0.93	0.8	0.19	10	
89	Post-hole	90	-	0.85	0.7	0.15	10	Modern
91	Ditch	92, 95	-	0.7	0.6	0.25	9	
93	Ditch	94	56	0.91	0.81	0.27	11	Modern
96	Ditch	97	-	0.8	0.82	0.31	9	
98	Ditch	99	-	+1.7	0.5	0.26	35	EIA
100	Pit	101	-	+1.9	2.8	0.8	2	12 – 14 C
103	Nat Feat	104, 105	-	2	0.5	1	18	
106	Ditch	107	65	0.9	0.7	0.24	11	

108	Ditch	109	-	0.84	0.76	0.11	11	P.med
110	Nat Feat	111	-	0.7	1.15	4.9	3	
112	Ditch	113, 122	-	+1	1.25	0.5	2	
114	Ditch	115	-	+1	0.86	0.38	2	
116	Ditch	117	-	+2	0.71	0.38	37	Roman or later
118	Ditch	119	-	+8	0.6	0.51	37	12 – 14 C
120	Ditch	121	148	0.92	0.69	0.22	11	EIA
123	Ditch	124,125	69	+2	8.7	0.94	38	Prehist or 12/13 C
126	Post-hole	127	-	-	0.7 \emptyset	0.13	11	
128	Ditch	129	-	+1	0.9	0.28	1b	
130	Post-hole	131	-	+0.35	0.6	0.3	4	
132	Post-hole	133	-	0.5	0.4	0.15	4	
134	Ditch	135	-	+2	0.35	0.08	4	
136	Ditch	137	-	+5.5	0.4	0.1	1a	
138	Ditch	139	71?	+2.5	0.9	0.6	1a	
140	Pit	141	-	+1.9	2.35	0.27	33	
142	Ditch	143	-	+2.5	0.75	0.18	8	Prehist
144	Ditch	145	-	+2.5	0.89	0.26	8	LIA
146	Ditch	147	-	1	0.73	0.26	11	
148	Ditch	149	120	+1.9	1	0.23	33	
150	Ditch	151	-	+1.9	0.89	0.45	11	
152	Ditch	153	-	0.8	1.25	0.36	11	
154	Ditch	155	-	0.94	1.36	0.45	11	Undiag prehist
156	Ditch	157	-	+2	0.83	0.22	11	
158	Group	-	138, 71	-	-	-	1a; 5; 6	
159	Group	-	58	-	-	-	12; 7	
160	Ditch	Planned only	-	-	-	-	39	
161	Group	-	106, 65	-	-	-	10; 11; 33	
162	Group	-	93, 56	-	-	-	10; 11; 33	
163	Ditch	Planned only	-	-	-	-	8	
164	Group	-	120, 148	-	-	-	11; 33; 7	
165	Group	-	108	-	-	-	11; 33; 7	
166	Group	-	-	-	-	-	33; 7	
167	Group	-	150	-	-	-	11; 8	
168	Group	-	152	-	-	-	11; 33; 8	
169	Group	-	154	-	-	-	11; 33	
170	Group	-	146	-	-	-	11; 33	
171	Group	-	123, 69	-	-	-	5; 38	
172	Group	-	6, 14	-	-	-	28,29,34	
173	Group	-	20	-	-	-	28, 34	
174	Group						1b, 39	Modern

APPENDIX 3: FINDS DATA

All weights are given in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
7	6	1	1	Pottery; body sherd, sandy orange ware showing traces of slip-coating or slip-painting	13th to 14th C
9	8	1	2	Iron fragment from sample 1	-
		-	22	Slag fragments from sample 1 (magnetic but very lightweight)	-
		24	1	Burnt bone fragments from sample 1 (not possible to ascertain whether human or animal)	-
		-	150	Charcoal fragments, including six carbonised grains, from sample 1	-
		9	26	Pottery; body sherds, inc 5 sherds, 8g, from sample 1 (two may be Roman or may just be burnt)	Late Bronze Age
23	22	1	-	Charcoal (Discarded)	-
		2	8	Flint flakes	-
		1	-	Pottery; crumb, grey ware	Roman
		2	6	Pottery; body sherds, flint-tempered	Prehistoric
36	24	2	36	Iron nails, with heads	-
		2	18	Roof tile fragments	Post med.
39	25	1	8	Flint flake	-
		1	4	Clay pipe stem	Post med.
		2	36	Roof tile fragments	Post med.
		1	6	Pottery; body sherd PMRE, glazed both sides	Later 16th to 19th C
43	42	1	102	Slag	-
		3	1	Charcoal and coal fragments (discarded)	Modern
		3	18	Baked clay	-
44	42	2	6	Baked clay	-
		2	14	Roof tile, joining fragments	Post med.
57	56	1	10	Pottery; body sherd, grog-tempered ware	LIA
		1	2	Pottery; body sherd, flint-tempered	Early Iron Age
60	58	1	2	Animal bone; sheep/goat molar, badly eroded	-
		91	519	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, flint-tempered, mostly all same vessel	Early Iron Age
72	71	60	46	Pottery; body sherds and crumbs, very friable	Early Iron Age
90	89	1	12	Burnt stone (looks modern)	-
94	93	1	4	Iron; flat fragment SF1	-
		1	2	Tile fragment; fibrous	Modern
		3	2	Pottery; body sherd, grey ware, abraded (Roman); two crumbs, flint-tempered (prehistoric)	Various
99	98	5	102	Three flint flakes, one patinated core fragment and two unworked flints	-
		3	6	Pottery; body sherds, flint-tempered	Early Iron Age
101	100	9	58	Pottery; body sherds, medieval coarse ware, most likely from cooking pots	12th to 14th C
109	108	1	6	Pottery; body sherd PMRE, showing a red wash and traces of glaze, very abraded	Post med.
115	114	1	12	Flint flake, patinated	-
117	116	3	20	Two flint flakes and an unworked flint	-

		4	2	Pottery; crumbs, three are Roman grey ware, one is prehistoric	Various
119	118	7 2	44 4	Flint core fragment, three flakes, two flakelets and an unworked flint Pottery; body sherds, medieval coarse ware, abraded	- 12th to 14th C
121	120	2	6	Pottery; body sherds, flint-tempered	Early Iron Age
124	123	1 1	6 2	Body sherd with very sparse shell-tempering, similar fabric at Stansted (Fabric 13i, Walker 2004) Pottery; body sherd	12th to early 13th C Prehistoric
143	142	1 2	6 1	Burnt flint, grey and white, crazed Pottery; crumbs	- Prehistoric
145	144	2 1	1 10	Charcoal and coal fragments (Discarded) Pottery; body sherd, grog-tempered ware	- LIA
155	154	1	6	Pottery; body sherd, flint-tempered	Prehistoric

APPENDIX 4: ARCHIVE INDEX

SITE NAME: TAPG04

Index to the Archive

File containing:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Brief for Evaluation
- 1.2 Specification for Evaluation

2. Research Archive

- 2.1 Evaluation Report
- 2.2 Analytical Reports
 - 2.2.1 Finds Reports
- 2.3 Finds Catalogues
 - 2.3.1 Context Finds Record

3. Site Archive

- 3.1 5 x Context Record Register
- 3.2 Original Context Records 1 to 157
 - 3.2.1 2 x Plans Register
 - 3.2.2 5 x Sections Register
- 3.3 12 x Levels Register
- 3.4 6 x Photographic Register
- 3.5 Site Photographic Record (90 x B+W prints; 90 x Colour Slides)

Not in Files:

Site Drawings – 6 A1-size Permatrace section sheets

21 A1-size Permatrace plan sheets

22 A5-size Permatrace plan sheets

1 box of finds

APPENDIX 5: EHCR SUMMARY SHEET

Site Name/Address: Priors Green, Takeley, Essex.	
Parish: Takeley	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 5730 2140	Site Code: TAPG04
Type of Work: Evaluation by Trial Trenching	Site Director/Group: A Robertson ECC Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: 29 November 2004 until 17 December 2004	Size of Area Investigated: Development area c.9.92 ha Trenching: 40 trenches = 2980m ² (3%)
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Saffron Walden	Funding Source: RPS (PTS) on behalf of Countryside Properties Plc
Further Work Anticipated? Yes	Related EHCR Nos: 4572; 4655
Final Report: N.A.	
Periods Represented: Prehistoric Medieval Post-medieval Modern	
<p>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</p> <p>An archaeological evaluation, covering c.9.9 hectares, was carried out on the site of proposed housing development at Priors Green, Takeley. Forty trenches were opened, covering 2980 sq m (c.3%). The majority of features uncovered were ditches and gullies with only a few pits and post-holes scattered across the site.</p> <p>Prehistoric</p> <p>In the western third of the site three parallel Early Iron Age ditches running northwest-southeast were identified, long with fragments of further ditches which seem to run northeast-southwest. These possibly form a co-axial field system. The other prehistoric features identified include a possible ring ditch/gully enclosure and a possible cremation burial at the eastern end of the site.</p> <p>Medieval</p> <p>No Roman remains were identified but a handful of medieval ditches and pits were, mostly in the eastern third of the site. In the southeast corner the possible remains of a small medieval enclosure were investigated but no definite conclusions were reached.</p> <p>Post Medieval</p> <p>A number of post-medieval ditches, including at least nine parallel, north-south aligned ditches, in the southwest corner of the site were investigated. Several of the post-medieval ditches correspond to field boundaries marked on the 1874 1st edition O.S. map. The parallel ditches are probably the remains of a strip field system and are perpendicular to the present Dunmow Road and parallel to existing field boundaries.</p> <p>A large possible boundary ditch running approximately east – west across the centre of the western third of the site may be geological in origin as the evidence from the excavated sections is inconclusive.</p>	

In general all the features seem to be agricultural in nature and none produced significant quantities of finds indicative of settlement activity, of any period, in close proximity. However, evidence of the prehistoric exploitation and development of the Essex boulder clay is of significance, as it is traditionally considered as less agriculturally viable land.

Previous Summaries/Reports: N.A.

Author of Summary:

A. Robertson (ECC FAU)

Date of Summary:

January 2005