

**GROUNDWORKS FOR A NEW POULTRY UNIT
ON LAND OPPOSITE BUSH FARM
HALL ROAD
GREAT BROMLEY
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
REVISION 1



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

February 2010

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HALL ROAD
GREAT BROMLEY
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
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Prepared By: A. Letch and P. Sparrow Position: Project Officer and Project Supervisor	Signature: Date: 26th February 2010
Checked By: P. Allen Position: Project Manager	Signature: Date:

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***As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments
you may have on the content or the presentation of this report.***

Please contact the Archaeological Fieldwork Manager at the

Field Archaeology Unit

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

Tel: 01376 331431

Fax: 01376 331428

Email: fieldarch@essexcc.gov.uk

EHER SUMMARY SHEET

Site Name/Address: Land opposite Bush Farm, Hall Road, Great Bromley, Essex	
Parish: Great Bromley	District: Tendring
NGR: TM 0752 2693	Site Code: GBYHA 09
Type of Work: Archaeological Monitoring	Site Director/Team: Andy Letch and Phillippa Sparrow ECC FAU
Dates of Work: 1st September 2009, 5th & 8th February 2010	Size of Area Investigated: 137.5m x 18m
Curating Museum: Colchester	Funding Source: Mr Simon Brazier
Further Work Anticipated? No	Related HER Nos. HER 2499
Final Report: Summary in EAH	
Periods Represented: prehistoric, Middle Iron Age/ Early Saxon	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>Archaeological monitoring took place during the excavation of 30 concrete pad footings for a new free-range poultry unit on land to the north-west of Bush Farm (Fig. 1). An extensive cropmark complex lies in the same field as the new unit and comprises probable prehistoric settlement enclosures with plus large roundhouses. Over the stream to the north of the site are more cropmarks indicative of early settlement (Fig. 1, HER 2499).</p> <p>The trenches were each dug 1.50m square and to a depth of c. 0.40m by machine onto the natural subsoil. Sections showed a dry, degraded ploughsoil c.0.33m from ground level over the remains of a fine silty clay subsoil that was in most cases indistinguishable from the natural soil. The natural soil is an orange sandy gravel to the south and an orange sandy clay to the north, where the ground level is slightly lower.</p> <p>Four likely archaeological features were concentrated centrally and to the east of the north side of the poultry unit, with a fifth located along the southern line of pads, again close to the centre (Fig. 2). Each was partially excavated to assess its provenance and all were cut into the natural subsoil.</p> <p>The nature of the features was varied, consisting of a possible irregular pit (pad 6, Fig. 3), intercutting postholes (pad 9, Fig. 4), a probable ditch (pad 13, Fig. 5) and a pit (pad 21, Fig. 6). All fills were of a grey clay silt nature with few inclusions, apart from context 11 in pad 6 that contained high levels of charcoal. The features were only partially excavated to c. 0.10m to record their edges, therefore their full extent and depth is unknown. No finds were recovered.</p> <p>A second phase of archaeological monitoring and recording was conducted in response to the extension of the original poultry unit, to the south-east and north-west of the originally monitored area (Fig. 8). Twenty extra 1.5m x 1.5m pads were cut along the same alignment as the original 30. Pads 36 – 39 inclusive did not extend deeper than the ploughsoil and therefore contained no archaeological finds or features. Pads 47 - 49 inclusive and pad 44 were waterlogged. The only finds and features were present in pads 31-33, and 35.</p> <p>Prior to the excavation of the extra pads, a layer of made ground, c. 0.38m thick, was deposited across part of the site in order to level and stabilise the ground (Fig. 12). A layer of</p>	

subsoil, which sealed the archaeological features, was present in the south-western corner of the site (pads 33 and 35; Fig. 12).

Pad 31 (Fig. 12) contained a small posthole, visible in section, which was filled with sterile silty sand. Pad 32 (Fig. 9) contained three small, shallow pits 14, 16 and 18 and one posthole. The posthole appeared to be filled with ploughsoil and was therefore probably modern. Only one feature contained an archaeological find; pit 18 yielded one small piece of undatable baked clay (Appendix 1).

Pad 33 presented two pits, both of which yielded pottery (Figs. 10 and 12) within their light silty sand fills. Pit 22 contained one undiagnostic pot sherd of prehistoric date and was cut by Pit 24 which contained one possible Middle Iron Age or Early Saxon pottery sherd (Appendix 1).

A possible ditch terminus (27) was located in pad 35 (Figs. 11 and 12). Ditch 27 was aligned north-east to south-west with a regular steep-sided terminus, a concave base and a similar silty sand fill to the fills of the aforementioned phase 2 pits. One sherd of possible Middle Iron Age or Early Saxon Age pottery was retrieved from its fill, 28 (Appendix 1). The base of the terminus was cut by two stakeholes (29 and 31) filled with the same fill as that of the ditch. This evidence is suggestive of a boundary ditch marked by a small fence line. Though the ditch does not link with any of the known cropmarks in the fields to the south of the site, it was created on the same alignment, therefore indicating that the known cropmarks represent only part of a series of archaeological features.

The phase 1 monitoring work along the outline of the new poultry unit has identified several probable archaeological features of indeterminate date that suggest prehistoric activity related to the cropmarks to the north and south of the site. Phase 2 monitoring identified several pits, a ditch terminus cut by stakeholes and a posthole. One pit yielded prehistoric pottery while the other pit and the ditch yielded Middle Iron Age or Early Saxon pottery thereby representing two phases of archaeological activity at the site. Though limited, the evidence recovered indicates that the known cropmarks may be of Iron Age or Saxon date, as the ditch appears to have been aligned along the same axis as those present in the cropmark complex to the south. This also indicates that the cropmarks probably represent only a small proportion of the underlying archaeological remains. Such activity remains just below ploughsoil. Excavations for the new access road (Fig. 1) were limited to a depth of only 0.10m and therefore did not penetrate the archaeological horizon. Ground reduction in the north-western area of the site was limited to a depth of around 0.35m, and therefore did not reach archaeological deposits.

Previous Summaries/Reports: None

<i>Author of Summary:</i> A. Letch and P. Sparrow	<i>Date of Summary:</i> 26th February 2010
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APPENDIX 1 FINDS REPORT

Joyce Compton

Finds were recovered from four contexts, each representing the single fill of features in three of the excavated pads (32, 33 and 35). The finds have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context. Full details are shown in the table below. The finds are described by category, as follows;

Baked clay

Pit 18 in Pad 32 produced a small piece of undatable baked clay in a hard red fabric.

Pottery

A total of three sherds of pottery, weighing 30g, was recorded, all of which are featureless body sherds. The pottery has been examined by NJ Lavender, as follows; pit 22 in Pad 33 produced a large unabraded sherd of flint-tempered pottery, broadly dated to the prehistoric period. Pit 24 in Pad 33 and ditch 27 in Pad 35 each contained a small sherd of sand-tempered pottery. In all probability, both sherds are Middle Iron Age, although lack of diagnostic elements means that they could equally be Early Saxon.

Comments on the assemblage

The features uncovered each produced single finds with low potential to elucidate the nature of the activity represented. Lack of diagnostic elements, coupled with minimal information regarding the nearby cropmarks, has led to a tentative assignation of a prehistoric date for the assemblage as a whole. Stratigraphically, there is nothing to preclude the small sand-tempered sherds from being Early Saxon, however, and this must remain a possibility.

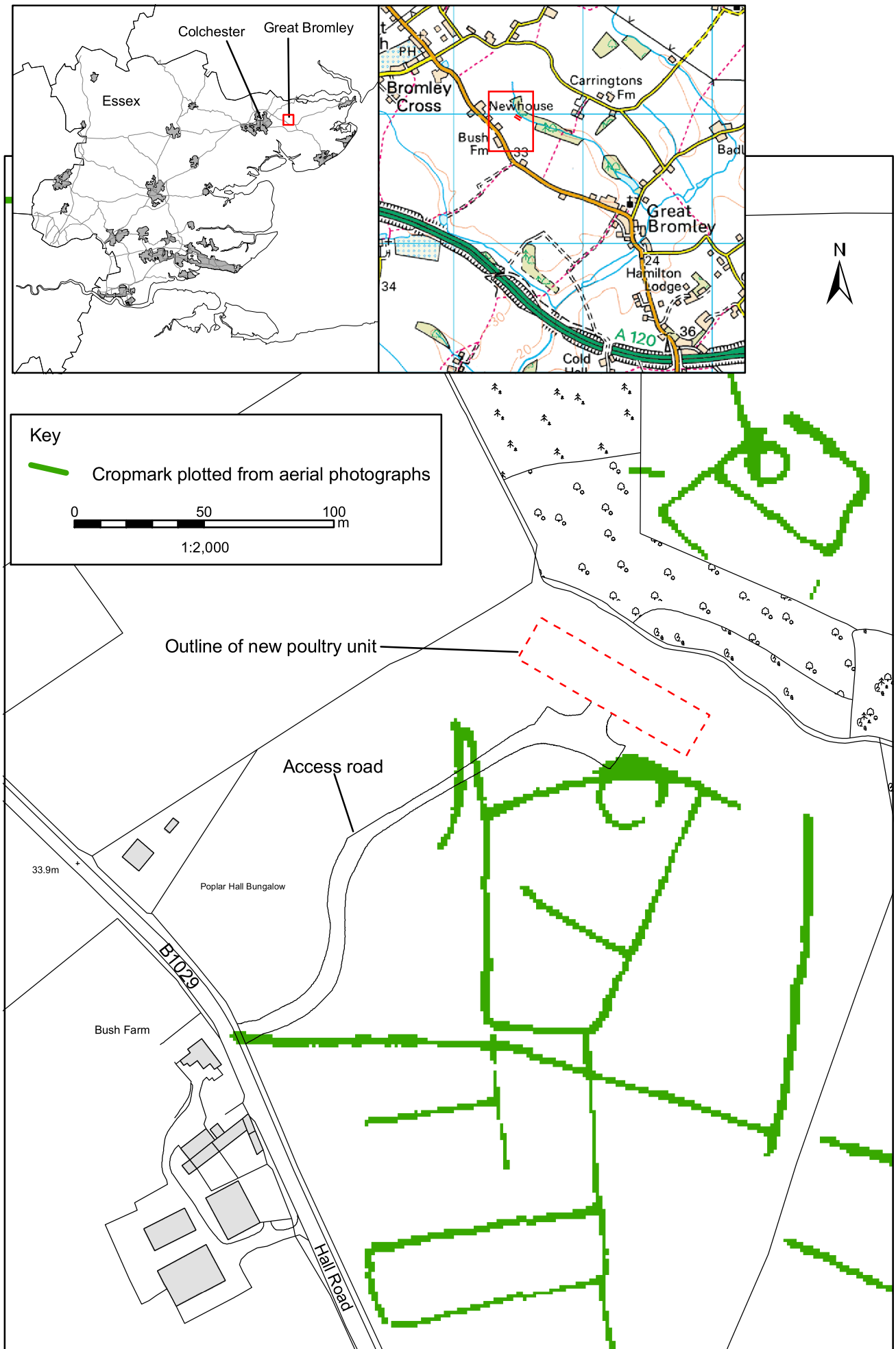
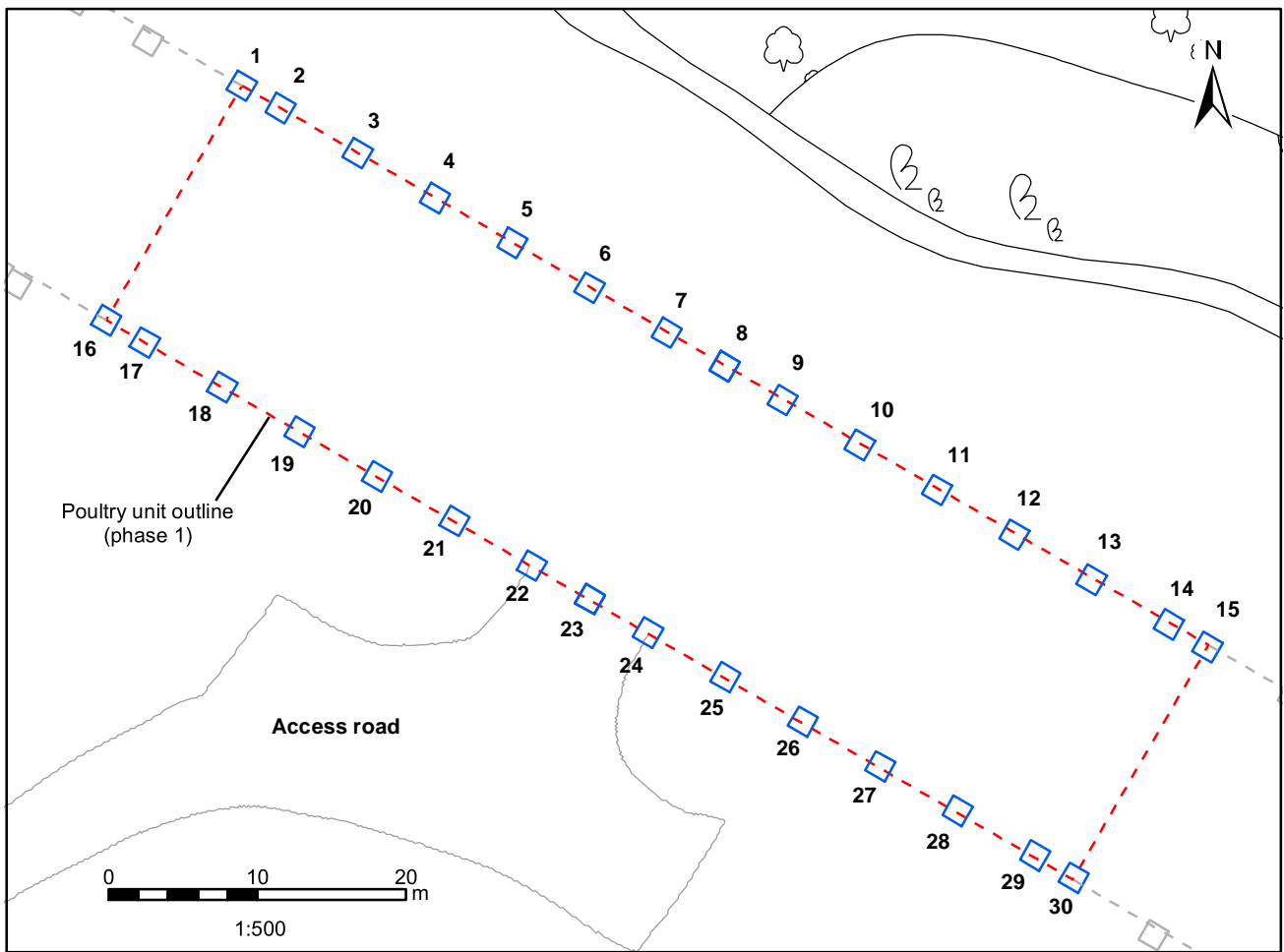


Fig.1. Site location

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Fig.2. Pad locations - phase 1

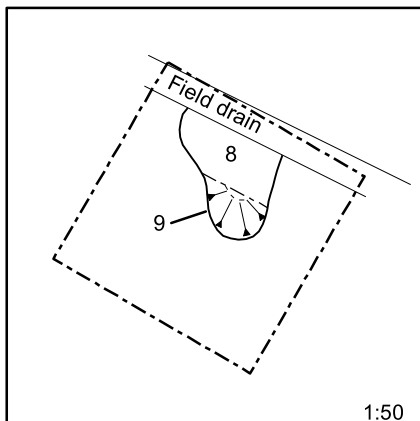


Fig.3. Pad 6

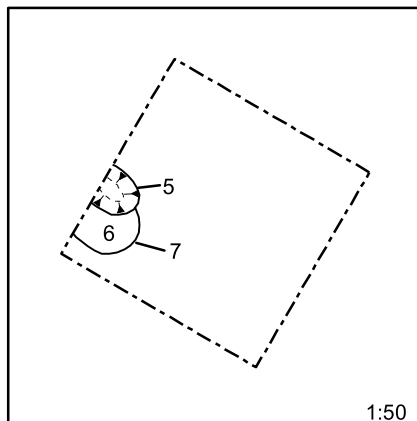


Fig.4. Pad 9

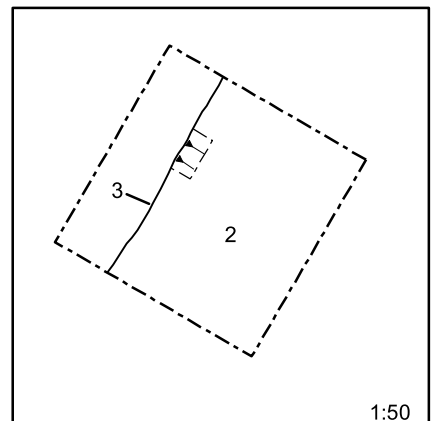


Fig.5. Pad 13

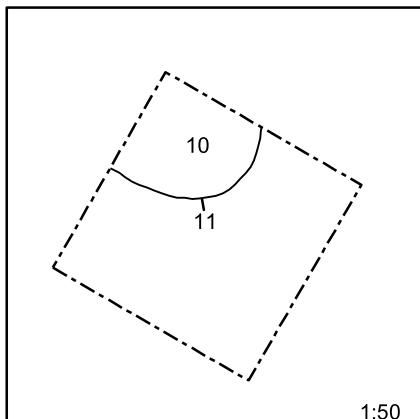


Fig.6. Pad 21

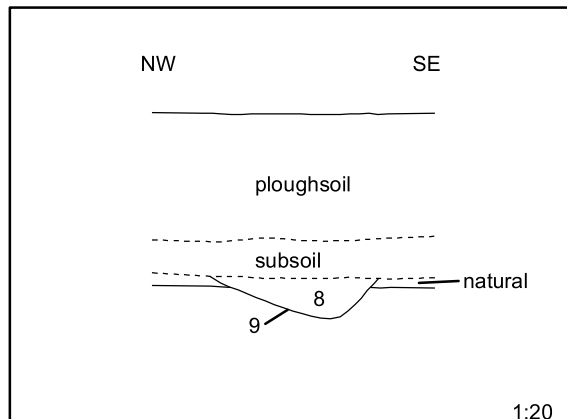
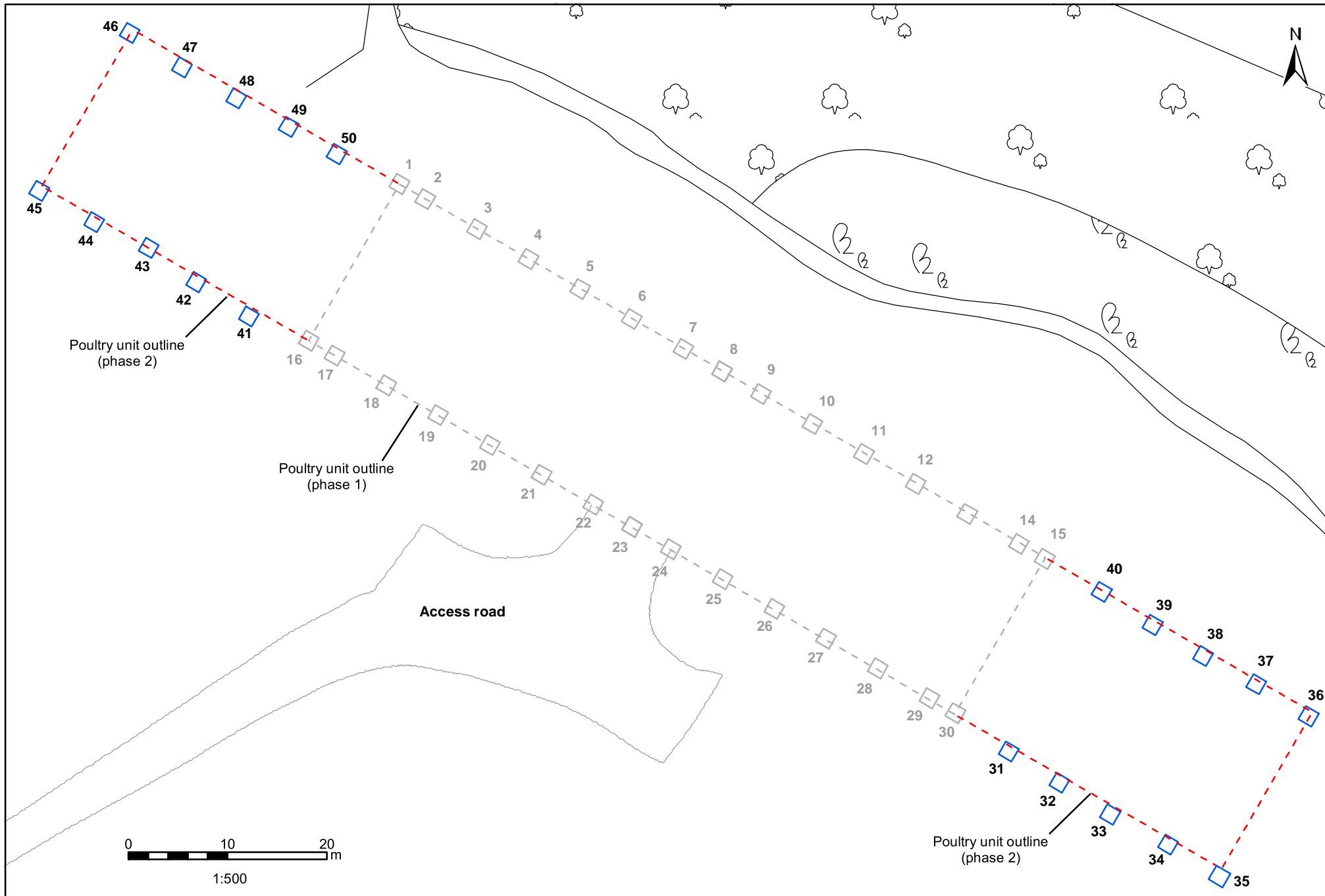


Fig.7. Typical section based on Pad 6



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Fig.8. Pad locations - phase 2

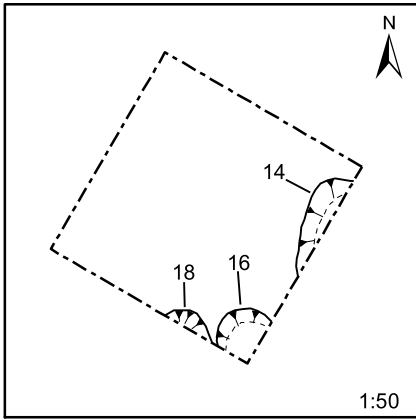


Fig.9. Pad 32

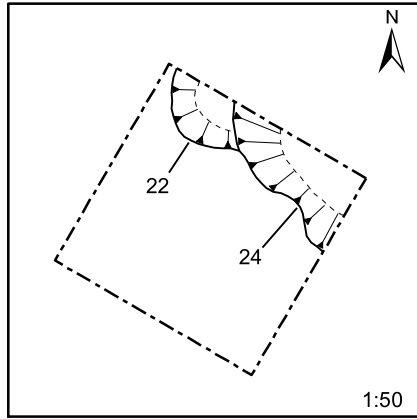


Fig.10. Pad 33

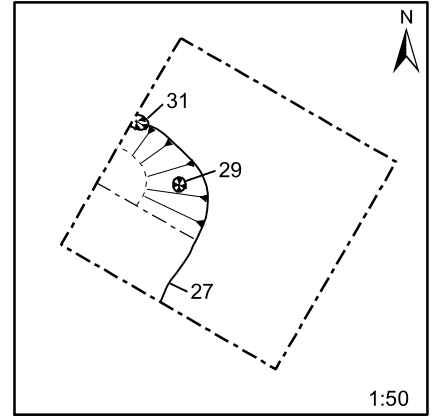


Fig.11. Pad 35

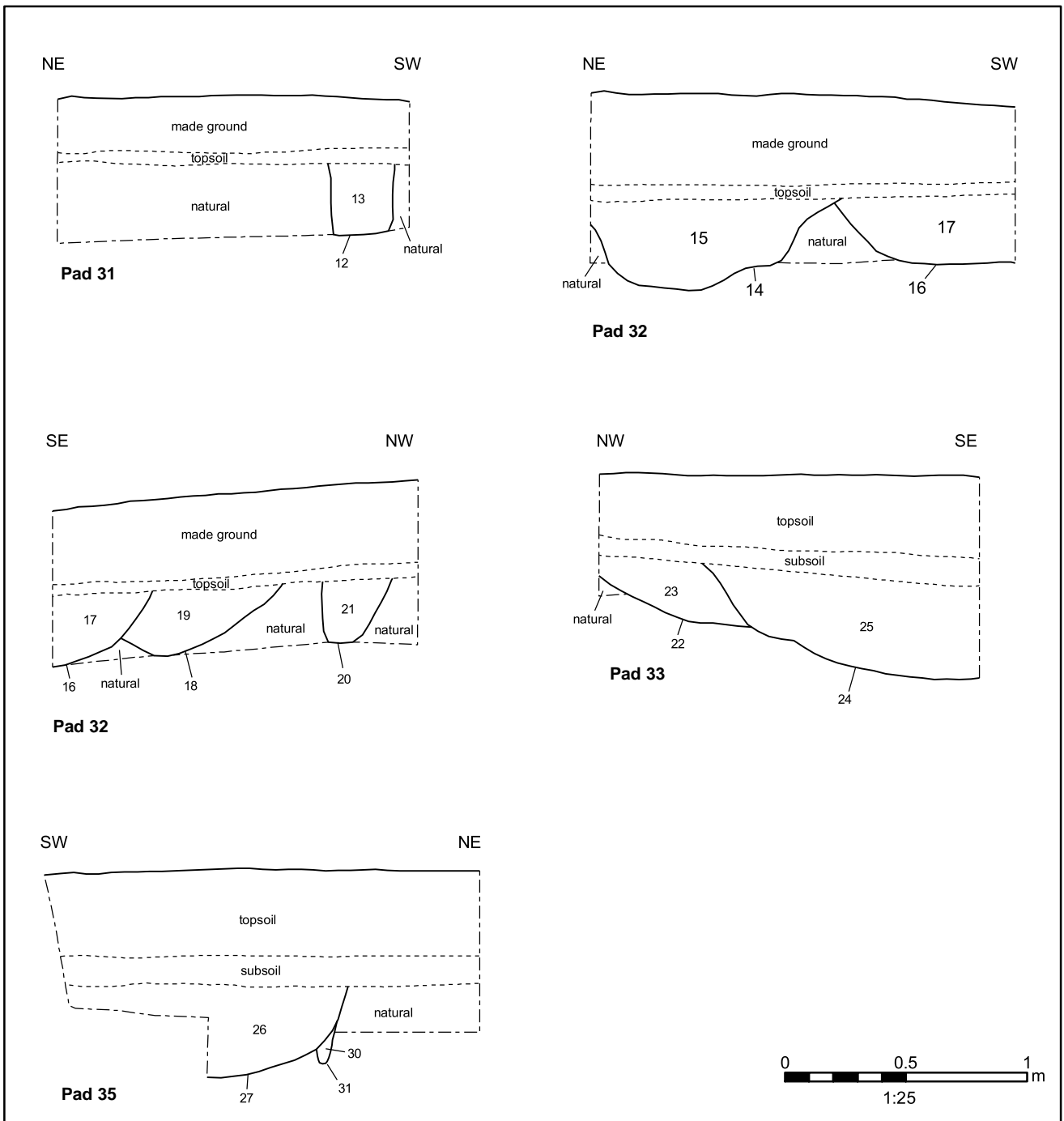


Fig.12. Sections from phase 2 monitoring