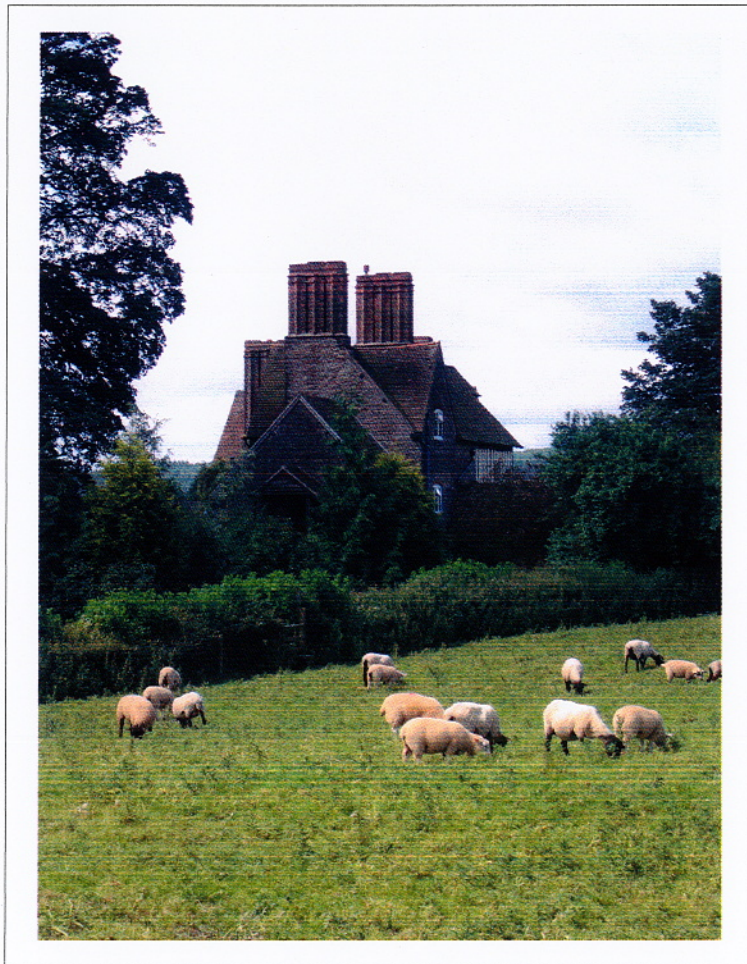




Detton Hall CLEOBURY MORTIMER

Archaeological Evaluation



June 2006

Hereford Archaeology Series 722

This report is produced by

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Cover picture

West facing view of Detton Hall.

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**Detton Hall,
Cleobury Mortimer
(NGR SO 6673 7959)**

Archaeological Evaluation

Earthwork Survey

S. Mayes, D. Rouse

Trenching

S. Porter, L. Craddock-Bennett

Report

L. Craddock-Bennett

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June 2006

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Detton Hall

CLEOBURY MORTIMER

(NGR SO 6673 7959)

Archaeological Earthwork Survey and Evaluation

1. Summary

The project was undertaken in response to proposals to create a new access road to Detton Hall through agricultural land to the north of the Manor House.

The main aims were to investigate potential archaeology in the areas likely to be affected by the route of the access road and to make a satisfactory record of any findings.

The evaluation results came from three trenches positioned along the route of the proposed development and an earthwork survey.

Medieval pottery was found within the topsoil, but no 'in situ' deposits or features were identified.

Ploughing during the post medieval period may have destroyed any evidence for settlement.

2. Introduction

Archaeological Investigations Ltd. was commissioned through Mr. James McIntyre of Nock Deighton Agricultural Services on behalf of the owners, Arthur and Clair Ratcliffe to carry out an archaeological earthwork survey and program of trial trenching on land within Detton Hall Estate near Cleobury Mortimer (Figure 1), prior to the proposed creation of a new access road to the hall. The earthwork survey was conducted on the 16th of June 2006 and the trial trenching took place on the 22nd and 23rd of June 2006.

The site of the current works is designated a Deserted Medieval Village.

In view of the potential archaeological significance of the proposed development site it was deemed necessary to carry out a field evaluation of the site in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the DoE Planning Policy Guideline No. 16 (1990).

The route of the proposed access road passes through a pasture field immediately to the north of the hall which contains a series of earthworks associated with the medieval settlement of Detton. The portion of the field likely to be affected by the proposed development is an area of approximately 7350m² ranging in height from 159m OSL in the north to 155.5m OSL in the south (Figure 2). All levels were recorded from a temporary benchmark in the south of the site established by the use of GPS.

The underlying geology is a combination of Clee formation and Brownstone Group.

3. Historical Background (SMR Location Map, Figure 3)

Evidence for prehistoric activity in the area is limited to isolated finds located on Catherton farm, approximately one kilometre south-west of Detton Hall. A leaf shaped arrow head and other worked flints were found in 1926, and in 1960 a finely worked flint dagger was found on a ploughed field on the farm. A curvilinear enclosure was observed from the air in 1990 at Dinmoor, two kilometres to the south-east of Detton Hall. It is however currently undated.

Approximately 500 metres to the north of Dinmoor enclosure is Wall Town camp, a Roman Fort excavated by members of the Kidderminster and District Archaeological Society in 1960. The excavation revealed two main military periods overlying earlier occupation, with later occupation above. The later fort was in existence during the first half of the second century and probably abandoned by the end of the second century, although civilian occupation continued into the fourth century. Aerial photographs appeared to show a larger and earlier fort, however, excavation revealed that these earthworks were due to terracing of the slope for a street and timber buildings associated with occupation layers which produced pottery of the later first and early second centuries. Isolated finds have also been made in the vicinity including a gold coin of the Emperor Claudius dated AD46.

Medieval activity in the area appears in abundance. The Church of St. Mary in the village of Neen Savage, two kilometres to the south of Detton Hall is twelfth century in origin.

The site north of Detton Hall (the focus of the current evaluation) is designated a Deserted Medieval Village. The adjacent field to the west of the current scheme of investigation was described and excavated in 1960 in advance of bulldozing for agricultural use. Prior to excavation the site appeared to consist of an east-west high street with lanes running off to the north and south, and crofts beside the road. Evidence in excavation was limited and no house plans were recovered, although medieval occupation layers were recorded in the east and west of the site. The site is probably Dodintone in Domesday, and the ceramic evidence dates from the early twelfth to the second half of the thirteenth century. Traces of a chapel were evident on the site as late as the nineteenth century, indeed the field is referred to as Chapel Meadow on the 1891 first edition Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4). During the 1960 excavation, three trenches were dug across the northern part of the chapel site. The east side of the visible surface platform was shown to correspond with a robbed and buried drystone wall of two periods. At the south end the walls had been entirely robbed out. Some stones from the chapel are possibly incorporated in Detton Cottage which stands adjacent to the current area of investigation. Less than one kilometre from Detton at Nethercott, another site has been designated a DMV, although no archaeological work has been carried out there to date.

Detton Hall itself is currently used as a farmhouse, although seems likely to have formerly been a manor house built c.1600 with additions in the later seventeenth century. Detton Mill House to the west of the Hall dates to the early seventeenth century with nineteenth and twentieth century alterations. Several interior walls have early seventeenth century panelling with carved frieze panels which are said to have come from Detton Hall (Salop SMR).

4. Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the project was to enable archaeological features to be identified in the areas affected by the proposal.

The main objectives of the work were to:

- a. Locate any archaeological features and deposits within the study area.
- b. Assess the survival, quality, condition and relative significance of any archaeological features, deposits and structures within the study area.
- c. Produce a record of the features.
- d. To identify and recommend options for the management of the archaeological resource, including any archaeological provision where necessary.

5. Method

5.1 Earthwork Survey

The earthwork survey was carried out using a total station to map breaks of slope along the tops and bottoms of major earthworks on the site. A contour map was then produced at a scale of 1:1000, as specified in the archaeological brief.

5.2 Trial Trenching

Three trenches measuring approximately 10 metres by 1.5 metres were excavated using a JCB with a 1.5 metre wide toothless bucket. We would like to thank the client for supplying the machine and driver.

The location of the trenches (Figure 2) was established following the earthwork survey and discussions between Archaeological Investigations Ltd. and the Historic Environment Officer for Shropshire County Council, Mr. Mike Watson.

Deposits were carefully removed until undisturbed natural subsoil was uncovered. A small sondage was excavated in the base of Trench 1 to confirm that it was the level of natural subsoil that had been established.

All trenches were recorded in a consistent manner in accordance with Archaeological Investigations Ltd's site manual. A representative section was drawn of each trench at a scale of 1:20 (Figure 5), and a plan drawn at a scale of 1:50. Each trench was photographed in plan and section using 35mm black and white, and colour film following cleaning. Any features were also photographed and drawn in plan and section. A context record was produced, numbered individually by trench, and registers maintained for photographs, drawings and context records. All artefacts were bagged according to context and retained.

Trench locations were recorded by triangulating from known points and recorded on the earthwork survey map of the area (Figure 2).

A temporary benchmark was established on the site using GPS. Levels were taken at the top of all sections and features, and at the base of all trenches and features.

6. Results (Appendix 2)

None of the trenches contained sealed archaeological contexts.

Trench 1 was totally devoid of archaeology, the topsoil overlying an undisturbed deposit of natural subsoil.

Trench 2 contained a range of pottery dating between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, all contained within the topsoil (201). A possible feature was identified cut into the natural (Figure 6) containing a fragment of post medieval roof tile and six iron nails 20mm long.

Trench 3 contained a spread of coal fragments and heat affected stone (302) overlying natural subsoil. The deposit contained post medieval roof tile fragments and more significantly, with respect to establishing the date of the deposit, a small sherd of machine made whiteware of post nineteenth century date.

7. Discussion

The earthwork survey (Figure 7) revealed significant undulations suggesting the continuation of the DMV into the study area. However, results from the trial trenching have not produced evidence for permanent settlement during the medieval period. The presence of medieval pottery within the topsoil suggests that there was activity in the vicinity as early as the thirteenth century, but no archaeology was found *in situ*. The specialist pottery report (Appendix 3) notes the advanced degradation of the medieval pottery compared to the later seventeenth and eighteenth century pottery. This may suggest a period of sustained ploughing of the land during the later medieval period and subsequently a change of use during the post medieval period. The current land owner attests that the field was ploughed by his father during the 1960's.

8. Conclusion

No secure evidence for medieval occupation of the study area was found. There is a strong suggestion that evidence for occupation of the site has been destroyed by ploughing in the post medieval period. Therefore the proposed access road is not likely to impact upon archaeology of great significance. An adequate record has been made of the form of this site as part of this report prior to any development.

9. Bibliography

Boucher, A. (2006) **Project Design for archaeological evaluation and earth work survey – Detton Hall, Shropshire**. Archaeological Investigations Ltd.

Watson, M. (2006) **Brief for an archaeological field evaluation at Detton Hall, Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire**. Sustainability Group, Shropshire County Council.

Salop SMR <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk>

Appendix 1: Site Archive

One Context Register
Five Context Sheets
Two Photographic Registers
One Drawing Register
Three Trench plans at 1:50 scale
Four Section drawings at 1:20 scale
One pack of colour photos and negatives
One pack of black and white photos and negatives
One copy of this report
Pottery and CBM from evaluation trenches

Appendix 2: Context database

Trench 1

Context No.	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Pottery	CBM	Fe Objects
101	Mid brown silty clay. Moderate compaction. Small (10-20mm) rounded and sub-rounded stones. Topsoil.	10	1.5	0.3	-	-	-
102	Light brown almost yellow silty clay. Moderate compaction. Patches of degraded bedrock. Subsoil interface with natural.	10	1.5	Not Fully Excav.	-	-	-

Trench 2

201	Same as (101)	10	1.5	0.3	Med. & Post Med.	Post Med.	-
202	Pale/mid brown silty loam. Moderate compaction. Roots throughout. Very similar to (201).	0.7	0.4	0.12	None	Post Med.	Six Small Nails
203	Oval cut orientated E/W. Shallow 'scoop'.	0.7	0.4	0.12	X	X	X

Trench 3

301	Same as (101)	10	1.5	0.22	Post Med.	Post Med.	-
302	Mid brown silty clay. Moderate compaction. Coal fragments (c.10-20mm) (5%) and heat affected stone fragments (5%) present.	1.5	0.3	0.1	Post Med.	Post Med.	-

Appendix 3: Pottery and ceramic building material from Detton Hall

Table 1: pottery

Cont	Fabric	Wt (g)	Date	Form	Decoration/Comment
201	STCO AR	5	17/18	?	Bodysherd. Pale fab – black slip and clear glaze
201	STRE	7	18+	lid	Lid more likely than base as glazed
201	Midpur p?	60	14/15+	jar	Midlands purple? Form post-med
201	sand	39	13+	jug	Strap handle. Patchy yellow gl. Groove in centre. Abraded
201	sand	42	13+	Sm jug	Rod handle, knife slashed, mottled yellow green gl
201	sand2	20	med	cookpot	Rim diam 22cm. everted rim
302	Wht	1	19+	flatware	Very small sherd of machine made whiteware
301	STSL	33	17/18	dish	Pale fabric, stripes of brown and white slip, clear glaze

Table 2: ceramic building material

Cont	Fab	Wt g	Date	Form	Decoration/Comment
201		51	p/med*	brick	Badly broken – ext surfaces abraded or don't survive
201		29	p/med	brick	Same fabric as above – even worse damaged
201		16	p/med	brick	As above
201		7	p/med	brick	Less highly fired
201		86	p/med	roof tile	Unglazed. Rounded form suggests reuse – as a lid?? 18mm thick
201		15	p/med	roof tile	Unglazed. Fabric as above. Lower surface broken away
201		49	p/med	roof tile	Different fabric with mixture of fe free clay. 12mm thick
201		15	p/med	Roof tile	Lower surface not present
202		160	p/med	Roof tile	Scratched and abraded – ploughed? 21mm thick
301		77	p/med	Roof tile	14mm thick. Highly fired. Sand on lower surface
301		40	?	roof tile	Almost certainly postmedieval but less highly fired. 18mm thick
302		114	p/med	Roof tile	Scratched and abraded – ploughed? Sand on lower surface
302		29	p/med	Roof tile	16mm thick. Patches fe free clay in fabric
302		11	p/med	roof tile	Lower surface broken away. Patches fe free clay in fabric

302		54	p/med	rooftile	Patches fe free clay in fabric. 16mm thick
302		12	p/med	rooftile	17mm thick. Patches fe free clay.
302		75	p/med	rooftile	13mm thick. Lower surface sandy
302		1	p/med	Rooftile?	No upper surface.

*p/med = post-medieval

A total of eight sherds of pottery (207g) was recovered from the site at Detton Hall. In addition eighteen fragments of ceramic building material (841g) of which four (103g) were brick and the remainder rooftile, were recovered.

There were no sealed contexts containing medieval material on the site; the only medieval material (much abraded) being found in the topsoil in Trench 2. Two fabrics were represented. The first 'sandy micaceous ware' ('sand' in Table 1) was a soft iron rich clay, fired to an orange colour with a reduced grey core. It contained considerable rounded quartz up to 1mm and some larger sub angular quartz (up to 3mm), small flakes of mica in sufficient quantities to produce a glittering effect on the surface of the vessel, and occasional orange brown ferruginous inclusions. Two vessels were represented, both jugs. The first was a strap handle with the remains of a sparse olive/yellow glaze. The second was a rod handle from a small jug with a central knife cut central groove and stabbing where the handle joined to the body. The glaze was yellowish with bright green speckles. In Hereford similar forms date to the mid 13th century and later.

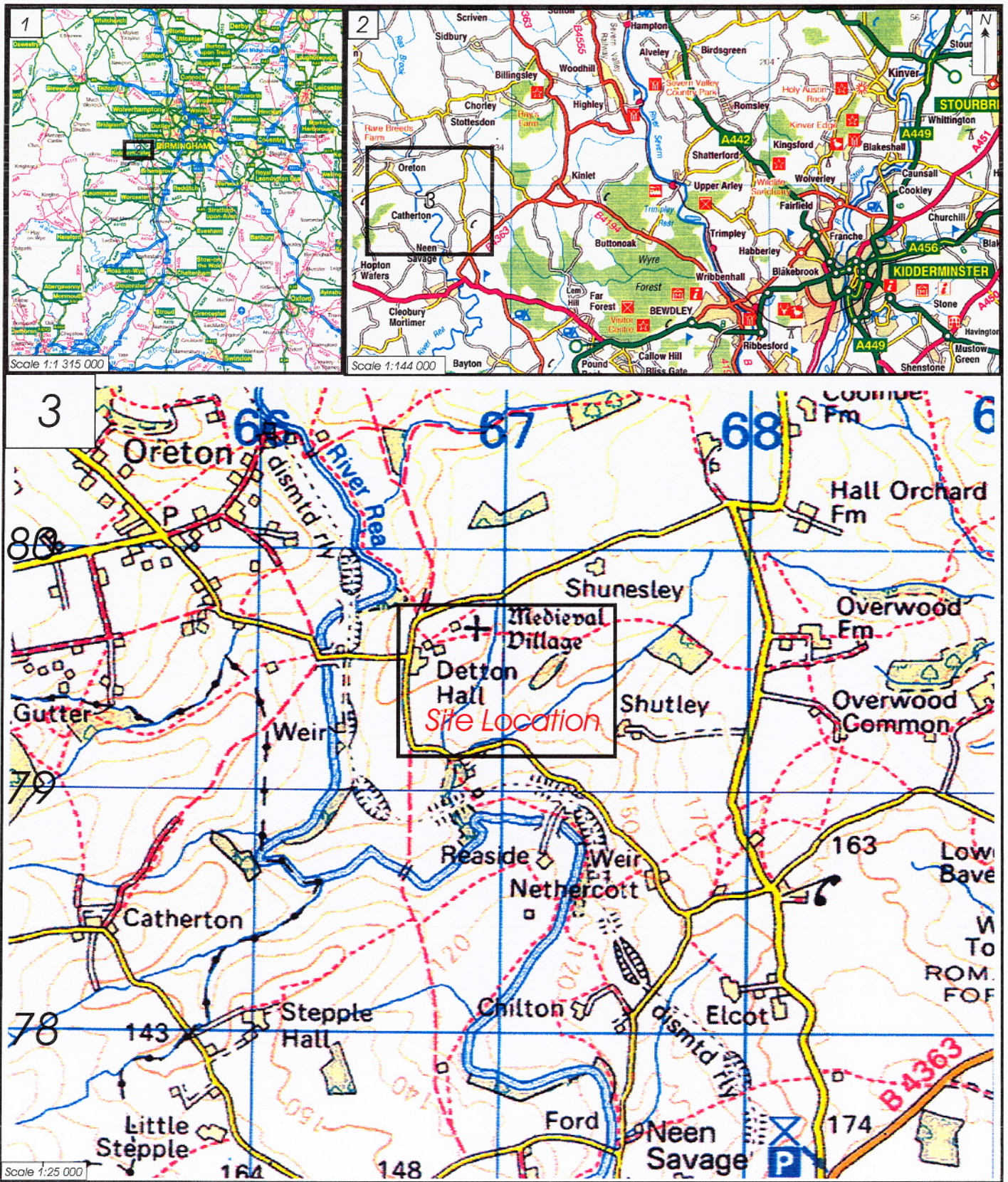
The cooking pot was of a similar sandy fabric, ('sandy micaceous2' = 'sand2' in the table), almost certainly a variant of 'sandy micaceous' described above. In this case was reduced grey with oxidised brown patches on the outside while the ferruginous inclusions were considerably less frequent.

Unlike the much abraded medieval material, post-medieval material from the topsoil showed no obvious signs of abrasion. This effect could be result of ploughing after deposition of the medieval material and before that of the post-medieval or the abrasion of the medieval pottery took place immediately post-breakage, for example broken pottery could have been left in a yard or on a floor, prior to deposition. It should be noted, however, that both the jug and cooking pot fabrics were very soft.

Post-medieval pottery included two sherds of Staffordshire wares, one of coarseware one of slipware with stripes of yellow and dark brown slip under a clear glaze. This material was fairly ubiquitous in the 17th and 18th centuries and a sherd possibly of Midlands Purple ware, though it is also possible that it was an overfired sherd some other fabric. Midlands Purple was made at a number of sites throughout the Midlands between the late 14th century and in some places into the 18th century. The form of the sherd from Detton Hall suggested a post-medieval date.

The roof tile was all unglazed and oxidised throughout. Similar material in Hereford is dated to between the 16th and 18th centuries.

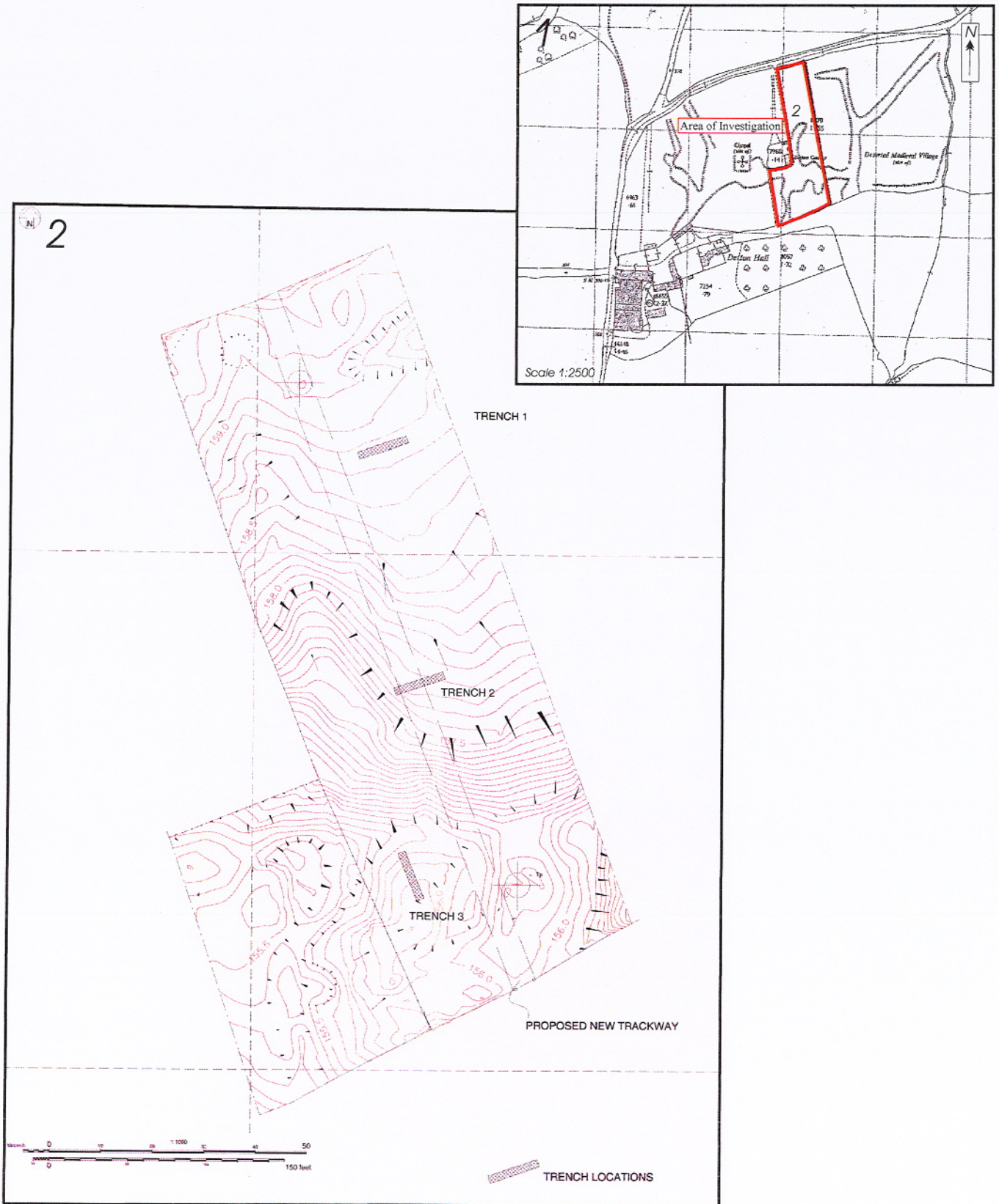
K H Crooks



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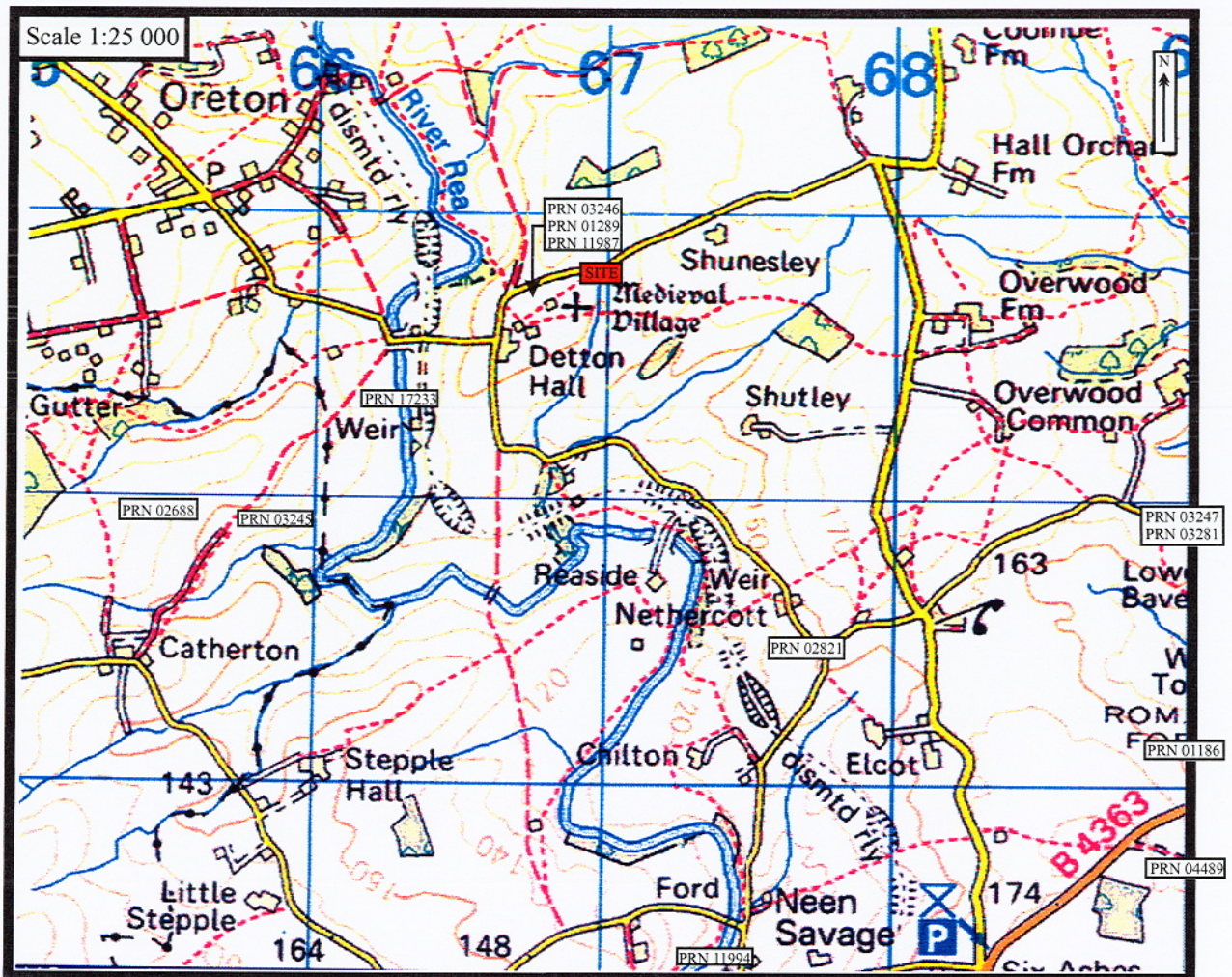
Site Location Map

Figure 1



Trench Location Map

Figure 2



SMR Number	Period	Description
PRN 02688	Neolithic	Long flint dagger, finely worked, found with beakers. Found in 1960 on ploughed field on Catherton farm.
PRN 03245	Neolithic	Leaf shaped, chipped flint arrowhead, picked up on the Slate Field, Catherton farm.
PRN 04489	Undated	Dinmoor. A Curvilinear enclosure first observed from the air in July 1990.
PRN 01186	Roman	Wall Town camp. Roman military fort. Later 1 st and early 2 nd century.
PRN 03281	Roman	Lower Baveney. 3 rd and 4 th century pottery discovered 400m to the north of Wall Town camp.
PRN 03247	Roman	A gold coin of Claudius AD46 was found in Baveney Wood.
PRN 11994	12 th century	Church of St. Mary, Neen Savage.
PRN 02821	Medieval	Nethercott DMV.
PRN 01289	Medieval	Detton. Excavated during 1960's. Site appeared to consist of E/W high street with lanes running off to N and S.
PRN 03246	Medieval	Chapel of which traces remained in the 19 th century.
PRN 11987	Post Medieval	Detton Hall. Manor House c. 1600.
PRN 17233	Early 17 th century	Detton Mill House. Internally, several walls on both floors have early 17 th century panelling said to have come from Detton Hall.

SMR information reproduced from SALOP SMR
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk>

SMR location map

Figure 3

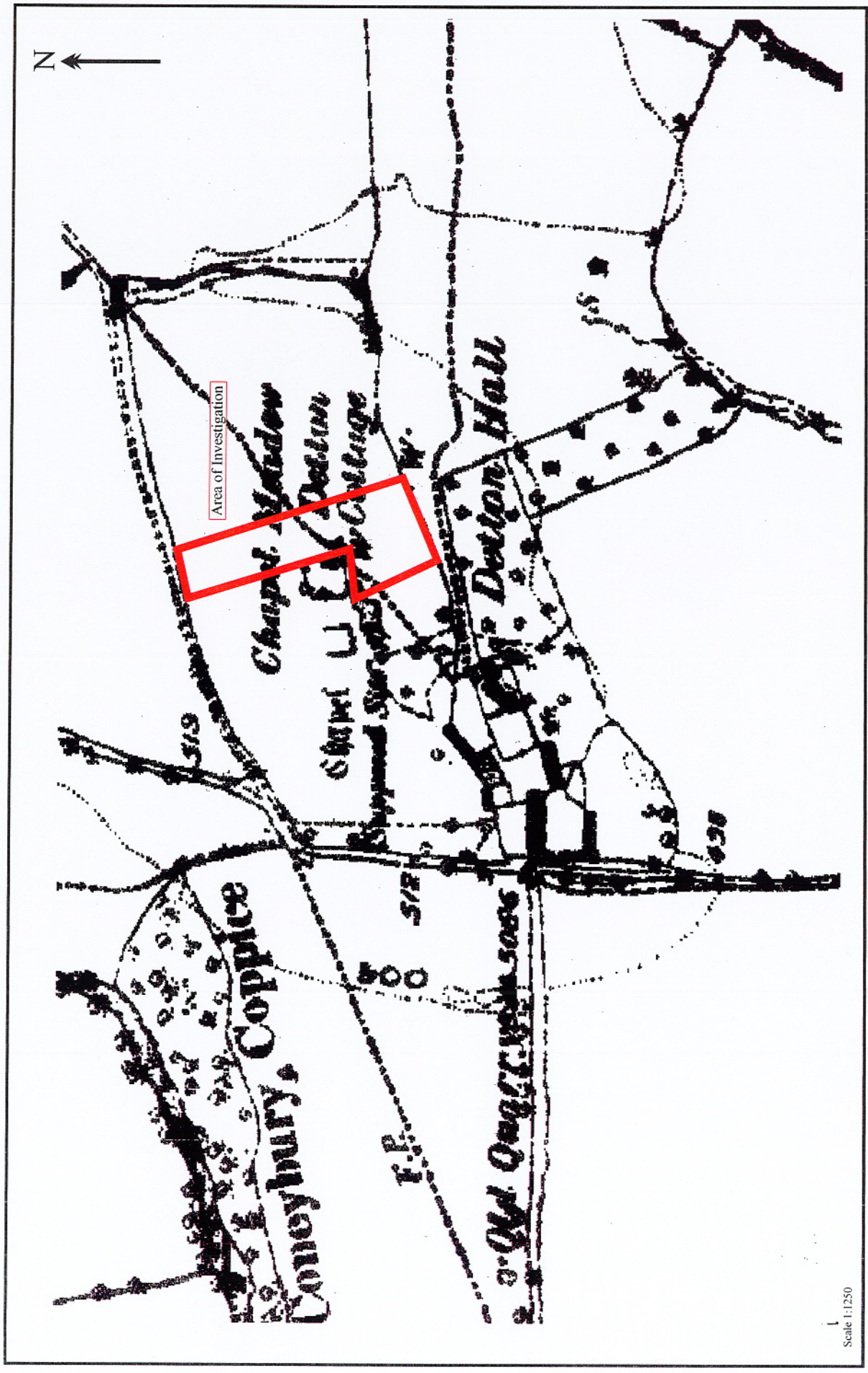
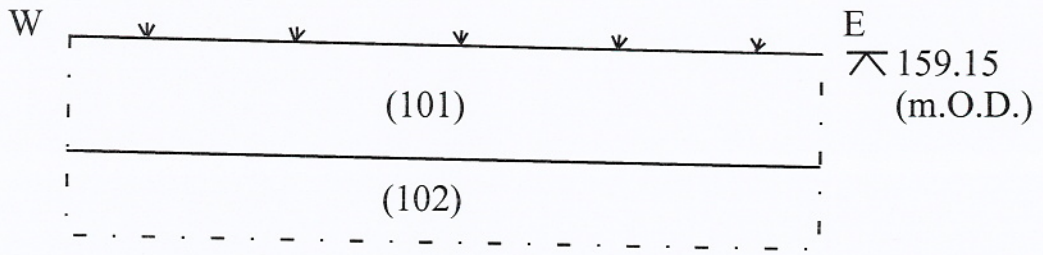
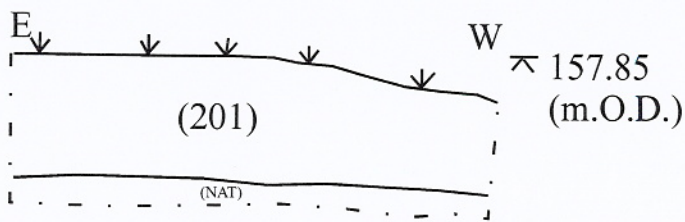


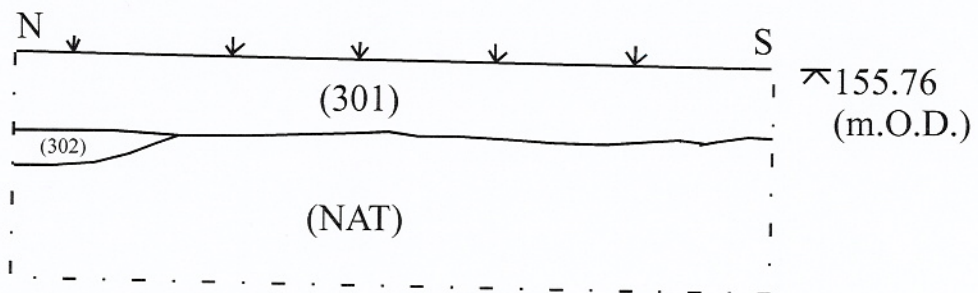
Figure 4 1891 Ordnance Survey Map of Detton Hall, Shropshire



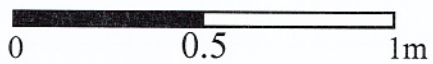
Trench 1 - South facing representative section



Trench 2 - North facing representative section

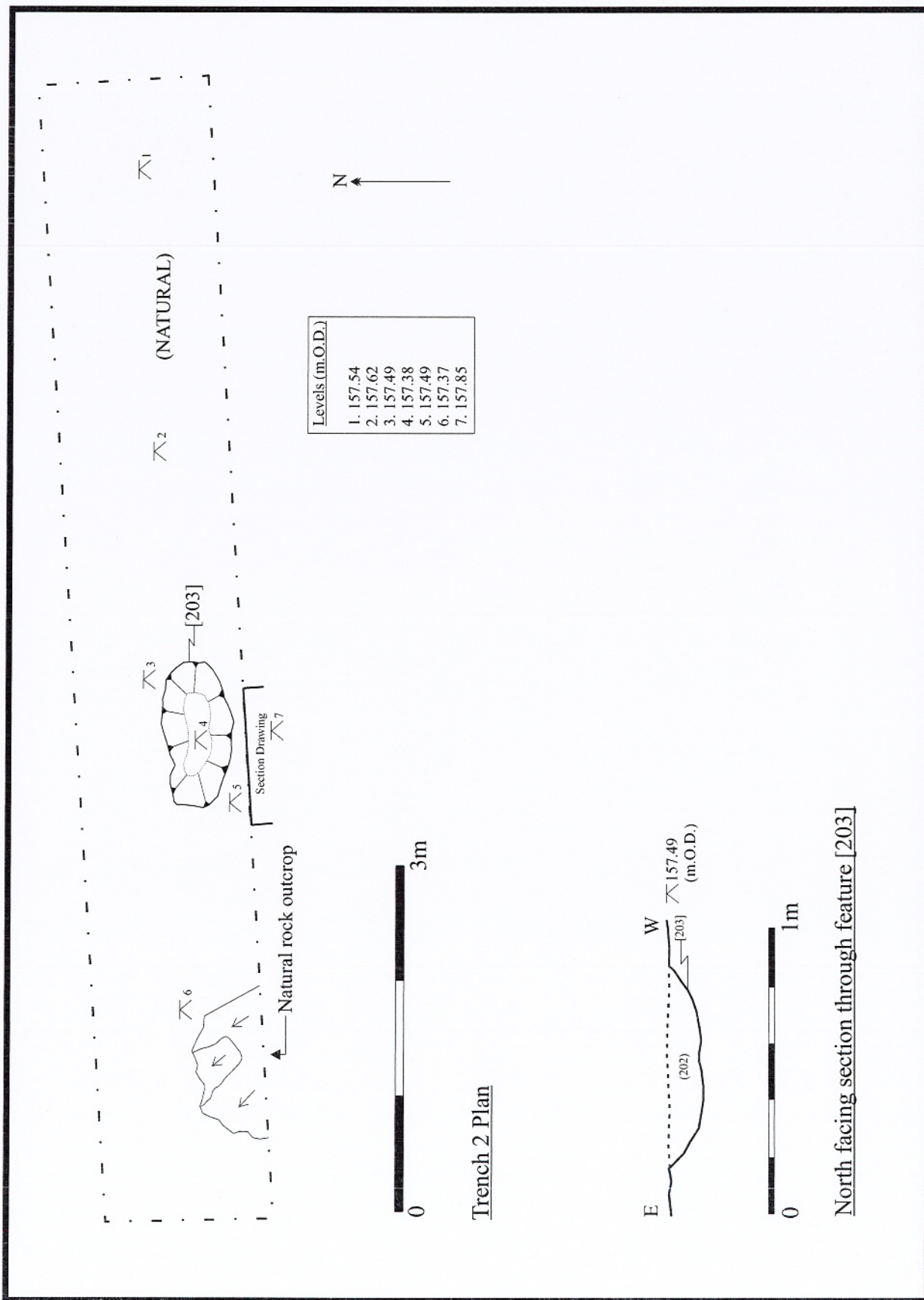


Trench 3 - West facing representative section



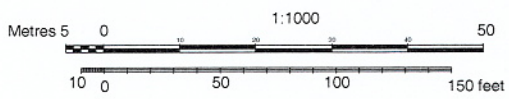
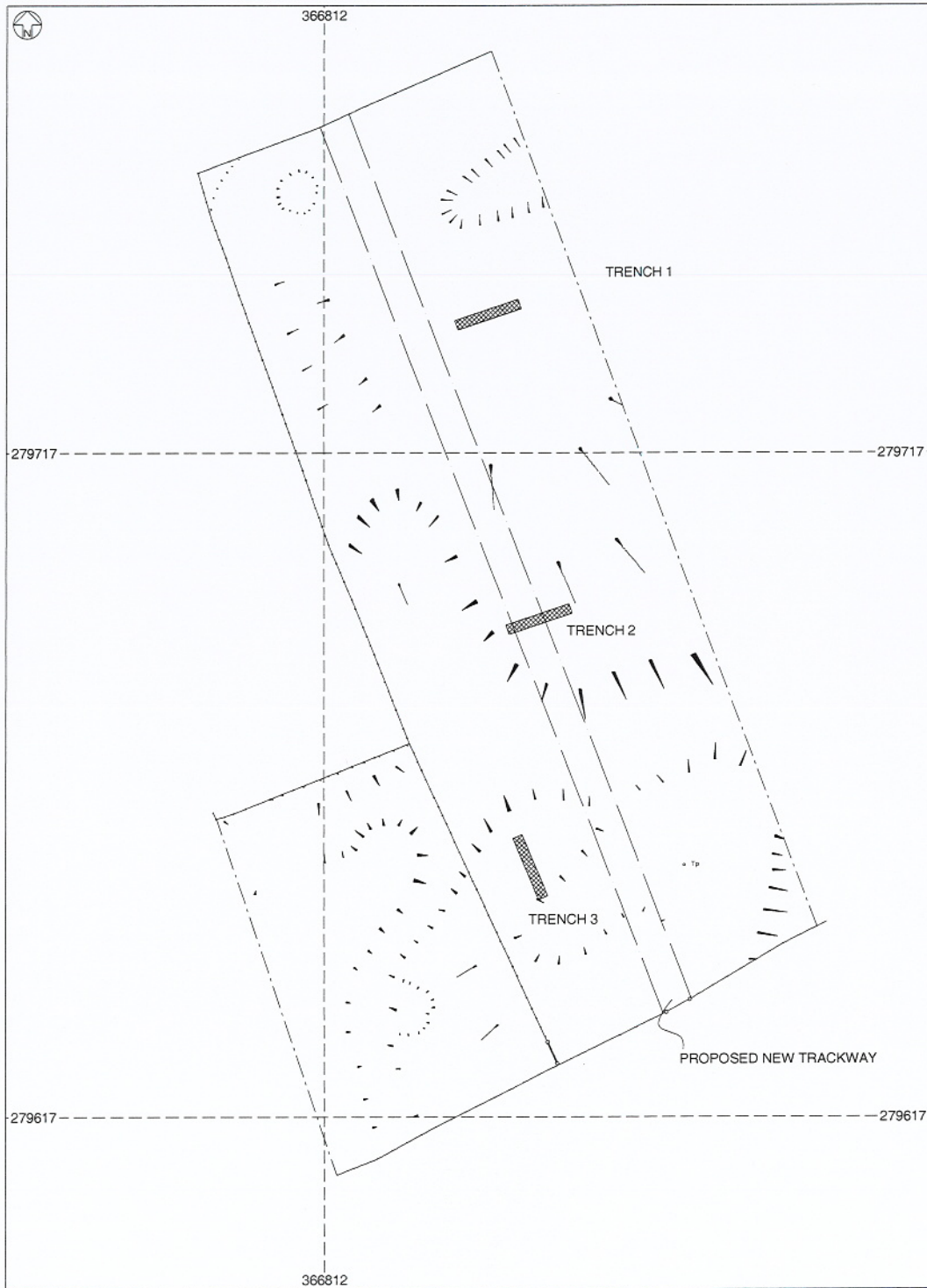
Section Drawings

Figure 5



Site drawings of feature [203]

Figure 6



 TRENCH LOCATIONS

Earthwork Survey showing Evaluation Trench locations. Figure 7