

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING  
AT INDIO PONDS, BOVEY TRACEY,  
TEIGNBRIDGE, DEVON**

**prepared for  
Charteroak Estates**

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**Exeter Archaeology**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for Charteroak Estates, and presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording undertaken by Exeter Archaeology (EA) in September and October 2008, at Indio Ponds, Bovey Tracey, Teignbridge Devon (SX 8154 7750). The archaeological work was required under a condition attached to the grant of planning permission (No. 07/04587/MAJ, Teignbridge District Council) for the replacement of originally approved permanent chalets with mobile homes.

### 1.1 The site

The site occupies land around Indio Pond, comprising a thin strip of land to the east of the pond and an area extending to approximately 100m to the south. A second, smaller pond has been created towards the southern end of site. The area between this pond and the southern site boundary is wooded and undulating.

## 2. PROJECT BRIEF

A brief for the project was supplied on behalf of the local planning authority by the Devon County Council Historic Environment Service (HES), at the request of Michael Shaw of Charteroak Estates. The main requirements of the brief were:

- Examination of historical documentation and map sources relating to the site,
- The monitoring of groundworks relating to the development,
- The cleaning, excavation and recording as appropriate of archaeological deposits and features
- reporting and archiving of the results, as appropriate.

## 3. AIMS

The principle aim of the project was to observe all intrusive groundworks associated with the development and to ensure that any archaeological deposits exposed were adequately investigated and recorded prior to their removal.

## 4. METHOD

### 4.1 Desk-based assessment

Examination was made of relevant cartographic sources, including the tithe map and early Ordnance Survey maps of the area as well as documentary records held by the HER, Devon Record Office and West County Studies Library.

### 4.2 Fieldwork

All groundworks that had the potential to expose archaeological deposits were monitored by an EA archaeologist. These included ground reduction for the construction of paths, and service trenches. Excavation was carried out by machine to the top of either archaeological deposits or natural ground, (whichever was higher). Where archaeological deposits were present machining then ceased, the area was cleaned by hand and deposits investigated and recorded.

The standard EA recording system was employed. Stratigraphic information was recorded on *pro-forma* trench record sheets and standardised single context record sheets and survey drawings, plans and sections were prepared at scales 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate. A photographic record was compiled in black and white and digital (colour) format. Finds from secure contexts were labelled and bagged on site for processing at EA's offices.

## 5. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The development site lies adjacent to Indio Pond, a large broadly triangular pond which is now partially infilled. The pond lies to the south-west of Indio. It has been claimed that Indio is on the site of a medieval priory, but it appears that it was probably rather a grange farm for the hospital of St John in Bridgwater.<sup>1</sup> There are records of a house being built at Indio in the 16th century; the present house was built in 1885.<sup>2</sup>

The main archaeological interest in this area is the industry of the Bovey Tracey potteries, which appear to have begun in the second half of the 18th century. The area called Bovey Heath, or Heathfield, produces both good quality ball clay and coal (lignite), for fuel, and other potter's materials such as lead, manganese and haemetite occur within a few miles.<sup>3</sup>

The main pottery industries in the area around Indio Pond appear to be those that developed at Indio, from 1766, and Bovey Heathfield (later Folly Potteries) to the south. Further works however appear to have existed at Pond Garden (see below). Both Indio and Folly potteries closed in 1836, although the latter reopened in 1843.<sup>4</sup>

To the south of the pond, two sand pits are shown on the OS 1888 map, the southern of which is still depicted on the modern map. The house called Grey Walls on the modern map is shown on the OS map of 1888, but not on the Tithe Map.

### 5.1 Pond Garden Pottery and Pond House

There is some evidence of a pottery existing adjacent to Indio Pond, in an enclosure called Pond Garden. John Pike Jones, curate of North Bovey between 1818-1831, wrote that the Bovey Tracey potteries had been 'established in the town about 60 years since by a Mr Hammersley and his sons from Staffordshire, who afterwards transferred it to an enclosure called Pond Gardens on the Heathfield, from whence it transferred to Indio ...'.<sup>5</sup>

The surveyors' Two Inch Drawing of 1803-4 shows the pond, but gives no indication of adjacent buildings. A detailed map of 1837<sup>6</sup> and the Tithe Map (1841) both depict an enclosure on the east side of the pond, which is still shown on the OS map of 1888. The 1837 map key describes the enclosure as 'Garden on lease to Mr Gillett'; Joseph Gillett was a partner in the Indio pottery in 1776.<sup>7</sup> On the Tithe Apportionment (1839) the enclosure is called 'Pond Garden', under the tenement name 'Heathfield Garden' and is described as containing young trees (plot 2482). The enclosure was owned by the Earl of Devon, and

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<sup>1</sup> HER PRN 8492.

<sup>2</sup> HER PRN 8492.

<sup>3</sup> Adams & Thomas 1996, 7-8.

<sup>4</sup> Adams & Thomas 1996, 43.

<sup>5</sup> Adams & Thomas 1996, 8; HER PRN 56322.

<sup>6</sup> Map of Part of Bovey Heath and of several watercourses belong. to The Folly Pottery' DRO.

<sup>7</sup> Adams & Thomas 1996, 9.

occupied by Joseph Steer, and the name suggests that it is the site of Mr Hammersley's pottery, described by John Pike Jones.

No buildings are shown within the enclosure on the early maps but in Land Tax assessments for 1780 a 'Pond House', owned by Lord Courtenay, is described as in ruins, and in 1782 it was occupied by Joseph Gillett.<sup>8</sup> It is possible that Pond House was located within the enclosure, perhaps with other buildings. A report of 1843 mentions that Gillett leased the garden in 1784 at which time there were ruined buildings there.<sup>9</sup>

## 5.2 Indio Pond

Indio Pond appears to be associated with the potteries at Pond Garden, Bovey Heath (Folly potteries) and Indio and has therefore been assumed to be of mid 18th-century origin.<sup>10</sup> A detailed map of 1837 indicates that at that time the pond was considered to belong to the Folly Pottery (Bovey Heathfield), describing it as 'The main pond now claimed by Mr Steer'.<sup>11</sup> The Tithe Apportionment (1839) records that Joseph Steer was the owner of the pond (given as part of Indeo), which he occupied with others.

The 1837 map shows the pond with watercourses running to and from it. A watercourse runs into the north side of the pond, continuing out (southward) from the south side past Folly Pottery to the coal works.<sup>12</sup> The watercourse (No. 9 on the map) is described as 'Under Leat cut for the use of the Folly Coal Works about 60 years ago'.

A further watercourse aligned with the southern edge of the pond passes south-westward under the road and is described as 'Leat from main Pond to the Folly Pottery' (No. 15). The words 'Old Feeder now standing' are written on the southern edge of the pond but it is not clear if this relates to one of the features depicted. Immediately to the west of the road 'Site of Old Pond' is shown.<sup>13</sup> To the north-west of the pond another watercourse is shown running north-westward across the road and then turning eastward across the top of the pond. This is described in the key as 'Pot Water Leat' and was also depicted on the OS 1888 map. Extending north-eastward from the eastern side of the pond a feature is marked 'Adit cut in 1810 or 1811.' This supply feeds a cistern close to Indio House.<sup>14</sup>

## 6. RESULTS

The overall layer sequence observed across the site consisted of topsoil, approximately 250mm thick, overlying natural subsoil. A total of five cut features were observed, consisting of four linear features and one pit, all of which cut from the level of subsoil. In addition, evidence was identified for three possible buildings. These features were all located within the historic enclosure of 'Pond Gardens'. Two further areas of ground disturbance were exposed, which probably related to episodes of quarrying. The excavated area and positions of exposed features are shown on figure 2.

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<sup>8</sup> Adams & Thomas 1996, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Adams & Thomas 1996, 9-10.

<sup>10</sup> HER PRN 56323.

<sup>11</sup> Map of Part of Bovey Heath and of several watercourses belong. to The Folly Pottery' DRO.

<sup>12</sup> The part to the south of the pond appears to be recorded as HER PRN 21317.

<sup>13</sup> HER PRN 56318.

<sup>14</sup> Adams & Thomas 1996, 42; HER PRN 21322 & 56320.

### 6.1 Linear features (Plan fig. 3, sections fig 4)

These consisted of three relatively shallow ditches (509, 512, 514) and one significantly more substantial ditch (516). There were no physical inter-relationships between the features. All features were located in close proximity, to the east of Indio Pond.

Ditch 509 was orientated NE-SW and was exposed over a distance of 9.2m. It measured 600mm wide and 290mm deep with a steep-sided, flat-based profile. It contained a single fill (510) comprising dark brown silt, from which were recovered a number of pottery sherds and clay pipe fragments, dating to the late 18th century.

Ditch 512 was aligned NW-SE. It was exposed over its full length and measured 5.5m long, 550mm wide and 180mm deep. It had a gently sloping 'U' shaped profile and contained a single fill (513) of dark brown silty clay. Pottery sherds and clay pipe fragments dating to the late 18th century were recovered from this material. The ditch lay perpendicular to 509 suggesting an association between the two features.

Ditch 514 was aligned NE-SW. It was exposed over its full length and measured 5m long, 500mm wide and 200mm deep. It had a gently sloping 'U' shaped profile and contained a single fill (515) of dark brown silty clay. This material produced pottery and brick fragments dating to the 19th century, including a single fragment of kiln furniture.

Ditch 516 was aligned NW-SE and was exposed over a distance of 3.5m. It measured 2.26m wide and 680mm deep with a steep sided, asymmetrical open-based profile. This ditch contained a base fill (519) of dark brown loam overlain by two clay-based fills (517, 518) which produced pottery dating to the mid 18th century onwards.

### 6.2 The Pit (Plan fig. 3, section fig. 4)

Pit 520 was located to the immediate east of ditch 516. It measured 1m by 560mm in plan, and was 160mm deep. It had steep sides and a flat open base and contained a single fill (521) of brown sandy silt. Pottery and kiln furniture dating to the 18th century was recovered from its fill.

### 6.3 Structural Evidence (Plans fig. 2 & 3, sections fig 4, plate 2)

#### ***Building 1***

Survival of this building was extremely poor, its footprint being defined primarily by the SE and SW sides of a probably square or rectangular terrace cut (527). With the exception of a single course of stonework (528) exposed in section (Fig. 4, section 7), the SE and SW walls to the building had been completely removed, although the foundation trench (522) of the SW wall had survived. This measured approximately 550mm wide by 120mm deep and was filled with mortar rubble following removal of the wall. The area between the rear of the walls and the edge of the terrace had been backfilled with clay loam (524, 529) which produced sherds of late 18th-century pottery. This material had been cut through (525) during the extraction of the wall (plate 2).

The interior floor of the building had been completely robbed, the entire area comprising stone and mortar building rubble throughout (523). Pottery and kiln furniture dating to the late 18th-century was recovered from this rubble.

**Building 2**

The site of a possible second building was identified to the NE of building 1 during the excavation of a 500mm wide service trench. The evidence comprised a near vertical NW-SE aligned cut (531) containing a spread of brick and mortar rubble (530, 502).

**Building 3**

A third possible building is suggested by the presence of further demolition debris (534) contained with a possible terrace cut (535) exposed some 4m to the north of building 2, within the same service trench. Kiln furniture and pottery dating to the late 18th century was recovered from this material.

No further exposures of buildings 2 and 3 were possible due to the limited depth of ground disturbance required for the new development.

**6.4 Quarrying (Plan fig. 2)**

Two areas of ground disturbance (536, 537) were identified towards the southern end of the site, during the excavation of a service trench. Area 536 was sited on the edge of a wooded area within which were numerous undulations suggestive of partially infilled quarry pits. The Area 537 was sited immediately to the west of a small pond. Both contained a primary fill consisting of a thin band of dark humic soil, overlain with mixed re-deposited natural subsoil.

**7. THE FINDS**

The excavations produced archaeological artefacts from the prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval periods. These are summarised in the table below.

Context	Date	Post-medieval pottery		Clay Pipe		Faunal bone		Glass		Kiln Furniture		Lithics		Metals		Misc.	
		Qty	Wgt	Qty	Wgt	Qty	Wgt	Qty	Wgt	Qty	Wgt	Qty	Wgt	Qty	Wgt	Qty	Wgt
500	post 1780	24	306	1	4			1	24	16	406	2	24				
502	post 1780	12	500			1	122	1	10	26	8814	2	18				
503	late 18thC	22	206	3	10			2	60	1	124			2	16		
504	late 18thC	28	392					1	6	2	262						
506	18thC	4	26	3	14												
510	late 18thC	5	46	9	34												
513	late 18thC	1	2	1	2												
515	19thC	10	36			10	22			1	2						
517	post 1740	2	2													2	8
518	mid 18thC or later	1	2									1	118				
521	late 18thC	4	12							4	104	1	2				
524	late 18thC or later	0	0							4	146						
526	late 18thC or later	1	6														
529	late 18thC or later	1	10							1	22						
530	late 18thC or later	9	38														
534	late 18thC or later	1	2							1	128						
Totals		125	1586	17	64	11	144	5	100	56	10008	6	162	2	16	2	8

Table 1: Quantification of finds by context and category. Weights are in grams.

### 7.1 The pottery

In total 125 sherds weighing 1.586 kg was recovered from 15 contexts, all post-medieval in date. Of some interest is the presence of salt-glazed stone wares, and industrial refined white wares, some clearly wasters. There was a revolution in the production of ceramics in England during the 18<sup>th</sup> century with Staffordshire being the centre and catalyst for producing new wares using new industrial techniques. It is known that some Staffordshire potters moved to other counties to set up potteries, taking their knowledge with them, in order to produce these increasingly popular wares. Salt-glazed stonewares have a general production range of 1710-1760 when their popularity in the market began to wane, but are known to have continued being made into the 1790's. There are 13 sherds of this type of pottery from five contexts, unusually some are a dull grey colour, instead of the normal white dipped or plain white. Forms where recognised are table wares. Industrial refined white earthenwares are the most common ceramic present in this assemblage. Some vessels have a slipped tortoiseshell decoration introduced during the 1740's, and others are in an underglazed blue transfer print common from the 1780's. Perhaps the most significant finds are pottery wasters from six contexts (500, 502, 503, 504, 510 and 513). Industrial wares are known to have been fired more than once and the presence of these unglazed biscuit ware wasters is clear evidence of pottery production in the vicinity. Forms identified are typical tea or tablewares.

Local coarseware fabrics, of which there are 36 sherds, are represented by wares from North Devon (1500-early 19<sup>th</sup> century), South Somerset (17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century fabrics) and Totnes-type (1500-late 18<sup>th</sup> century). The only recognisable forms are a North Devon gravel-tempered ware bowl and jug, a South Somerset 18<sup>th</sup> century cup and a Totnes-type chafing dish.

The overall range for the majority of pottery is post 1770's/1780's with some wares perhaps being a little earlier, dating from the middle to late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### 7.2 Kiln Furniture

Another important aspect of the assemblage is the presence of kiln furniture; some 66 fragments weighing 10.008 kg. These take the form of saggars or pottery props. Saggars were used to protect the more delicate vessels during the firing process. The vessels would be placed inside the saggars and these would then be stacked inside the kiln prior to firing. There is also a single trivet or spacer from context (500). Trivets were used to separate individual vessels such as dishes or plates which were stacked on top of each other. The kiln furniture is further evidence of pottery production in the area.

### 7.3 Clay pipe

There are only a few tobacco clay pipe fragments from the overall finds assemblage, some 17 in all, three bowls and 14 stems. There are no complete bowls, so precise dating is difficult - the bowl fragments are perhaps mid-late 17<sup>th</sup> century or late 17<sup>th</sup>/early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The stems have a general date range of 1650-1750.

### 7.4 Glass

All five glass shards are English green bottle types. Two are datable to the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, one is post 1750, and two are post 1800.



### 7.5 Ironwork

Only two ironwork objects, both nails, were recovered, these come from context (503) which is late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### 7.6 Lithics

No diagnostic pieces. Nodule from context 518 appears to derive from a chalk source. There is a high proportion of burnt flint and primary flakes, nodular material is interesting, and hints at settlement with primary flint reduction, but sample too small to be diagnostic.

## 8. DISCUSSION

The monitoring project has revealed clear evidence for one building together with indications for a further two. The evidence for building 1 is relatively conclusive. Its southeast and southwest walls are clearly defined although the southern corner of the building was beyond the limit of excavation. Its maximum dimensions are limited by the eastern site boundary and by an area of ground reduction carried out to the north within which it was not observed. Buildings 2 and 3 are less well represented, consisting of spreads of demolition debris within poorly defined robbing cuts. *In-situ* structural remains are limited to a single course of stonework (building 1); the remainder of the evidence for buildings on the site relates to a phase of demolition, robbing and clearance.

Of the cut features, although there are no physical inter-relationships between them, at least two of the ditches (509 and 512) can be seen as associated, based on their relative positions and alignments. Furthermore, ditch 516 lies parallel with building 1 and therefore these may also be contemporary.

The finds evidence also supports the view that all of the excavated features relate to the same broad phase of use of the site, as all of the finds fall within a very close date range (mid to late 18th century or later). This date range sits well with the documentary evidence for pottery production in the vicinity of the site, and the presence of kiln furniture and industrial waters provides confirmation of a production site nearby.

The series of features located to the west of building 1, comprising ditches 509 and 516, gullies 512 and 514 and pit 520, remain open to interpretation. They clearly respect the overall layout of the site and contain contemporary pottery. Their function, however, is unclear. They may be little more than garden features as the name of the enclosure that they occupy ('Pond Gardens') suggests.

## 9. CONCLUSION

The presence of structural remains within the enclosure identified on the map of 1837, together with distinctive ceramic kiln furniture, recovered from several features, provides tangible evidence of a former 'Pond Garden' pottery. It is also possible that one of these building plots is the location of the former Pond House noted in Land Tax assessments for 1780 (see section 2). The layout of demolished buildings and other features is reasonably well preserved beneath up to 250mm of topsoil. Survival of *in situ* building fabric is, however, very limited.

## 10. PROJECT ARCHIVE AND 'OASIS' REPORT

A fully integrated project archive has been compiled and will be deposited at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, under museum accession number 212/2008.

A report of the excavations (including a pdf version of this document) has been submitted to the on-line database OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS), under OASIS ID: exeterar1-59143.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Ordnance Survey

1:2500 map Sheet 101.14, 1888

1:10560 map Sheet 101SW, 1890

Surveyors' Two-Inch Drawing No. 37, surveyed 1803-4

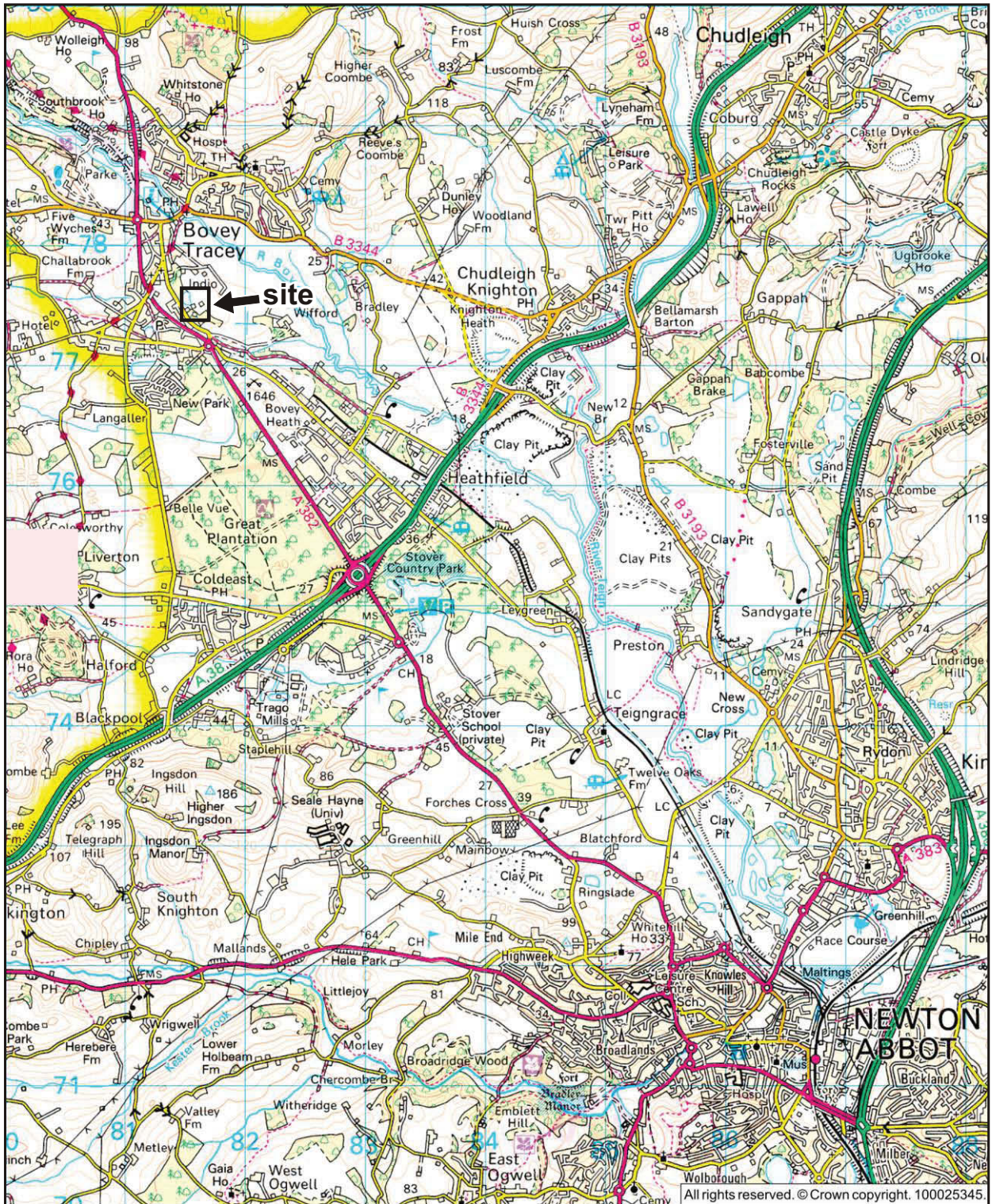


Fig. 1 Location of site

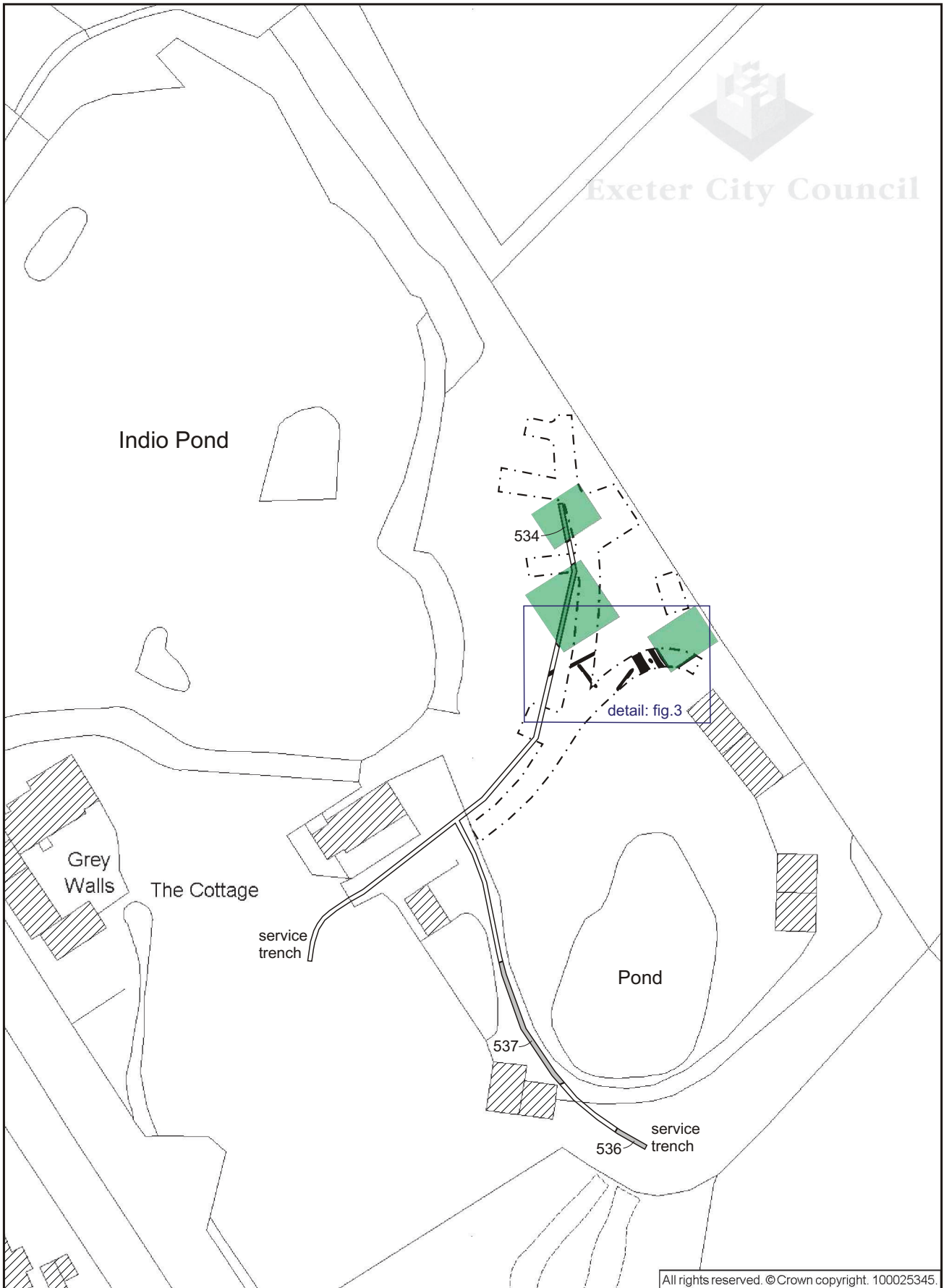


Fig. 2 Location of excavations showing exposed features and conjectural positions of removed structures (green). Scale 1:1000.

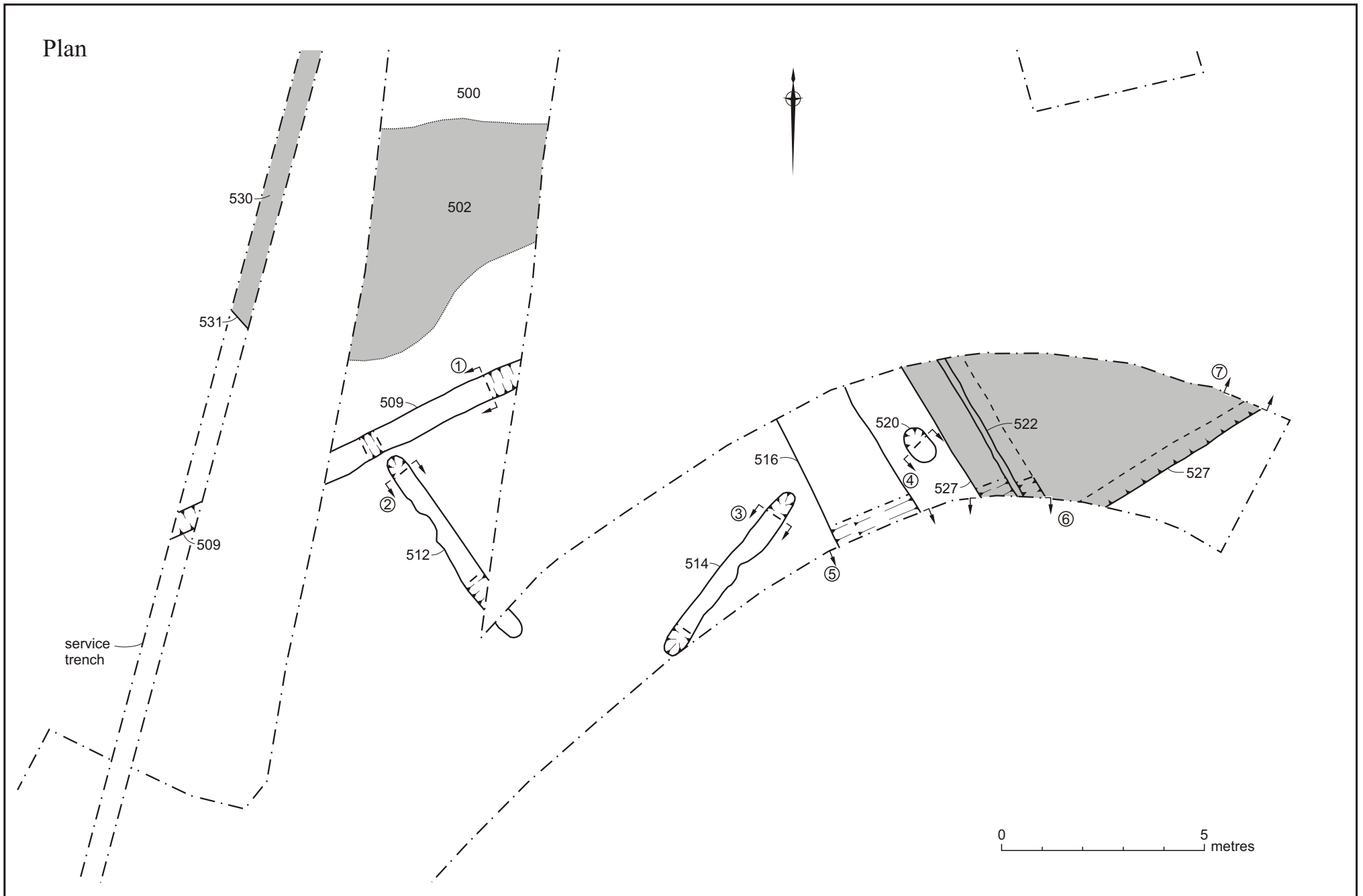
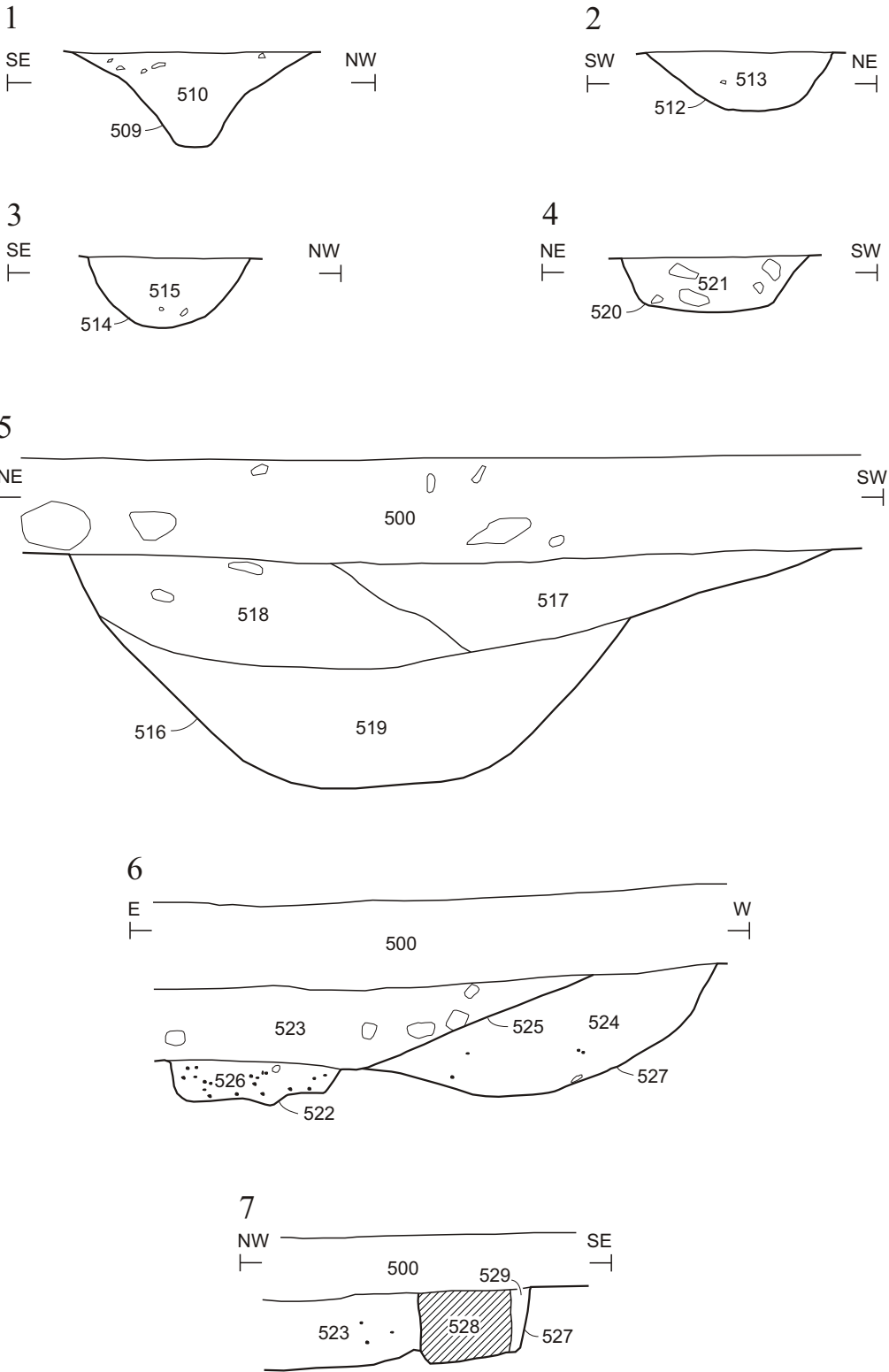


Fig. 3 Plan of features. Scale 1:125.

# Sections



arbitrary datum throughout

0 1 metre

Fig. 4 Sections.



Pl. 1 General view of topsoil removal, looking north-east.



Pl. 2 View of section 6 showing in-filled terrace (521). Scale 1m, looking south-east.