

Chalkshire Road, Terrick, Ellesborough, Buckinghamshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for The Rural Housing Trust**

by Simon Cass

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CRT 07/158

December 2007

Summary

Site name: Land off Chalkshire Road, Terrick, Ellesborough, Buckinghamshire

Grid reference: SP 8398 0808

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 3rd–5th December 2007

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Simon Cass

Site code: CRT 07/158

Area of site: 0.33ha

Summary of results: Three furrows were observed and investigated. No finds nor deposits of archaeological interest were observed

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 17.12.07
	Steve Preston ✓ 17.12.07

Chalkshire Road, Terrick, Ellesborough, Buckinghamshire An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 07/158

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at land off Chalkshire Road, Terrick, Ellesborough, Buckinghamshire (SP 8398 0808) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mrs Helen Visram for RHT Developments, 12 Home Farm, Ardington, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8PD.

Planning consent is to be sought from Wycombe District Council for the development of the site, entailing the construction of six new houses. In light of the possibility that the development might have an adverse impact on archaeological remains, a field evaluation was requested in order to provide information on the archaeological potential of the site, to accompany the planning application.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Radford, Archaeological Officer with Buckinghamshire County Council, archaeological advisers to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by Simon Cass, Sean Wallis and Marta Buczek between the 3rd and 6th of December, 2007 and the site code is CRT 07/158. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

Terrick is located within a triangle formed by the towns of Wendover, Stoke Mandeville and Princes Risborough. The site is situated between the A4010 (Aylesbury Road) as it passes north of the parish of Ellesborough, and the northern end of Chalkshire Road, Terrick (Fig. 1). The site lies on the boundary of the gault clay (including greensand) and lower chalk (BGS 1946) at an approximate height of 118m above Ordnance Datum. At the time of this evaluation the land was pasture.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a brief for the project prepared by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (Radford 2007). In summary this potential stems from its location in an area containing known sites of various dates, including Bronze Age occupation, Roman settlement (including a villa site), Saxon occupation deposits and three medieval moated sites (Grove Farm, Terrick Moat and Nash Lee Moat). An undated ditch has been recorded just to the north of the development site (JMHS 2007). In addition, the site lies close to the junction of two historically important routes. One is aligned SW–NE (The Icknield Way) and is followed by the route of the modern B4009 to the north, and the other aligned NW–SE follows the route of Chalkshire Road. The Icknield Way has long been thought of as prehistoric, but although this may be true for parts of it, the idea that the overall route is so old is based on a number of misconceptions (Harrison 2004) and both routes are now thought to be of medieval or later date (Taylor-Moore and Dyer 2007).

A range of historic maps was consulted in order to determine previous land-use on the site: no historic map examined shows the site as anything other than open space/farmland e.g., Bryant, 1825 (Fig. 6); Ordnance Survey 1884 (Fig. 7).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. Specific aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any earlier phases of a trackway are present on the site; and
- to establish whether there is evidence for Medieval or post-medieval occupation, property boundaries, domestic, commercial or industrial activities located specifically adjacent to the possibly historic trackway

Five trenches were to be excavated by a JCB-type or 360⁰ excavator fitted with a ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision, sited to investigate the areas likely to undergo the greatest disturbance according to the current building scheme. They were to be 14m long and at least 1.6m wide. Spoil heaps were to be checked for stray finds.

Results

Five trenches were dug by a 360⁰ machine fitted with a ditching bucket and measured between 13.1m and 15.2m in length. They were 1.8m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Plates 1 and 2)

This trench was 15.2m long, 0.5m deep and orientated east-west. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.18m of dark brown silty clay topsoil above 0.1m of mid greyish brown silty clay subsoil. This sealed degraded chalk and orangey brown clays, interpreted as natural geology. This trench contained one feature (5), interpreted as the remains of a furrow, from a medieval ridge and furrow agricultural regime. No archaeological deposits were observed.

Trench 2 (Plate 3)

This trench was 15.1m long, 0.45m deep and orientated north east-south west. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.15m of topsoil above 0.15m of mid greyish brown silty clay subsoil. This sealed degraded chalk and orangey brown clays, interpreted as natural geology. This trench contained another shallow furrow (4). Two linear patches were investigated in this trench but are considered to be no more than a variation of the natural geology. No archaeological deposits were observed.

Trench 3 (Plate 4)

This trench was 14.3m long, 0.55m deep and orientated east-west. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.15m of topsoil above 0.15m of subsoil this sealed the natural degraded chalk and orangey brown clays. This trench also contained a shallow furrow (1). No archaeological deposits were observed.

Trench 4

This trench was 13.1m long, 0.6m deep and orientated east-west. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.15m of topsoil above 0.15m of mid greyish brown silty clay subsoil. This sealed degraded chalk and orangey brown clays, interpreted as natural. As above, one linear patch was investigated in this trench but is considered to be no more than a variation of the natural geology. No archaeological deposits were observed.

Trench 5

This trench was 14.5m long, 0.5m deep and orientated NNE–SSW. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.15m of dark brown silty clay topsoil above 0.15m of mid greyish brown silty clay subsoil. This sealed the natural degraded chalk and orangey brown clays. This trench encountered a further two linear patches which were considered to be no more than a variation of the natural geology. No archaeological deposits were observed. One piece of modern (20th-century) pottery was found in the subsoil (not retained).

Finds

Only one piece of pottery of modern date was encountered during this evaluation. Furrow 1 in Trench 3 contained two small fragments of undiagnostic ceramic building material. Some fragments of bone were encountered within one of the furrows, although these were badly fragmented. These finds were retained on site.

Conclusion

In conclusion, other than the remains of furrows from medieval ridge and furrow field systems, no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were observed. Several variations of the natural geology were observed and were investigated but are now considered to be of natural origin. The site does not appear to have any archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 238, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Harrison, S, 2004, 'The Icknield Way: some queries', *Archaeol J* **160** (for 2003), 1–22
- JMHS, 2007, An Archaeological Watching Brief of the Nash Lee Rising Main, Terrick, Buckinghamshire. John Moore Heritage Services, Waterperry
- PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
- Radford, D, 2007, 'Brief for an Archaeological Field Evaluation (Trial Trenching)', Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, Aylesbury
- Taylor-Moore, K and Dyer, C, 2007, 'Medieval Buckinghamshire (AD 1066–1540)', in 'Solent Thames Historic Environment Research Framework: Draft Resource Assessment'

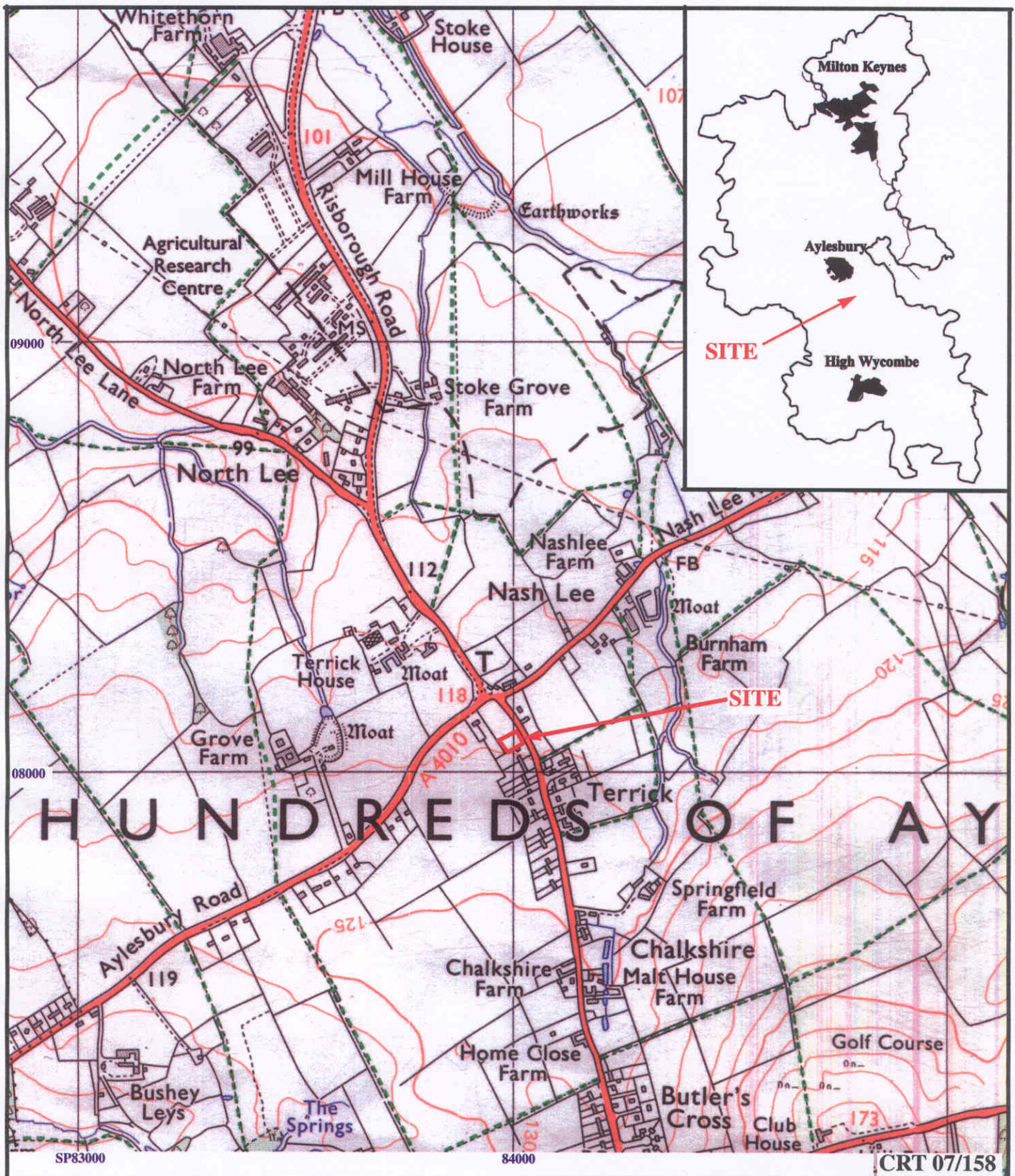
APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at South or West end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	15.2	1.8	0.5	0-0.18m dark brown silty clay topsoil; 0.18-0.28m mid grey brown silty clay subsoil; 0.28m+ orange/brown clay and degraded chalk (natural geology). Furrow 5. [Plates 1 and 2]
2	15.1	1.8	0.45	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15-0.30m mid grey brown silty clay subsoil; 0.3m+ orange/brown clay and degraded chalk (natural geology). Furrow 4 [Plate 3]
3	14.3	1.8	0.55	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15-0.30m subsoil; 0.30m+ natural geology. Furrow 1 [Plate 4]
4	13.1	1.8	0.6	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15-0.30m subsoil; 0.30m+ natural geology.
5	14.5	1.8	0.5	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15-0.25m subsoil; 0.25m+ natural geology.

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type	Date	Dating evidence
1	5	54	Furrow	Medieval?	None
2	4	53	Furrow	Medieval?	None
3	1	50	Furrow	Medieval?	None

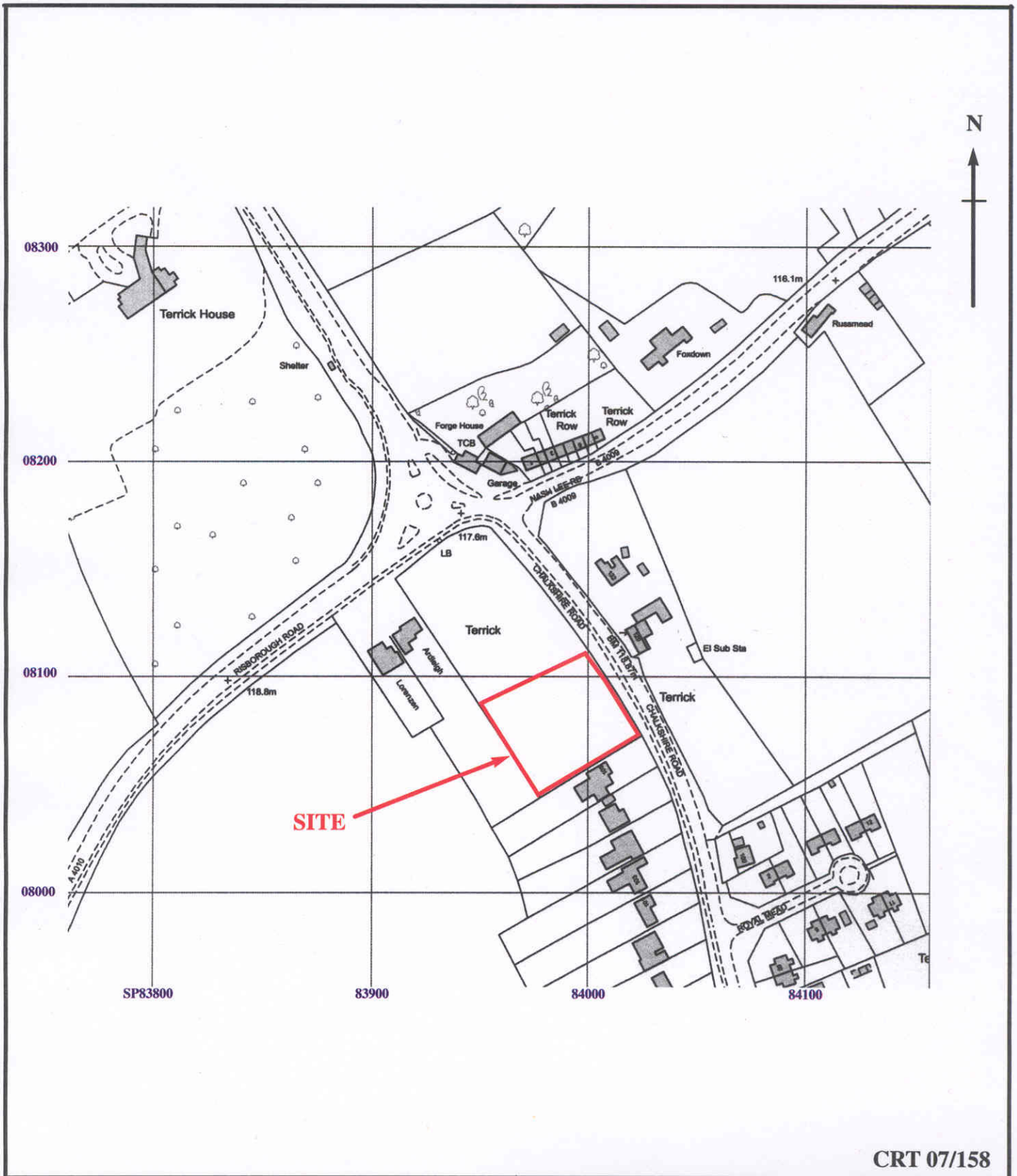


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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Terrick and within Buckinghamshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Chalkshire Road.

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Figure 3. Location of trenches.

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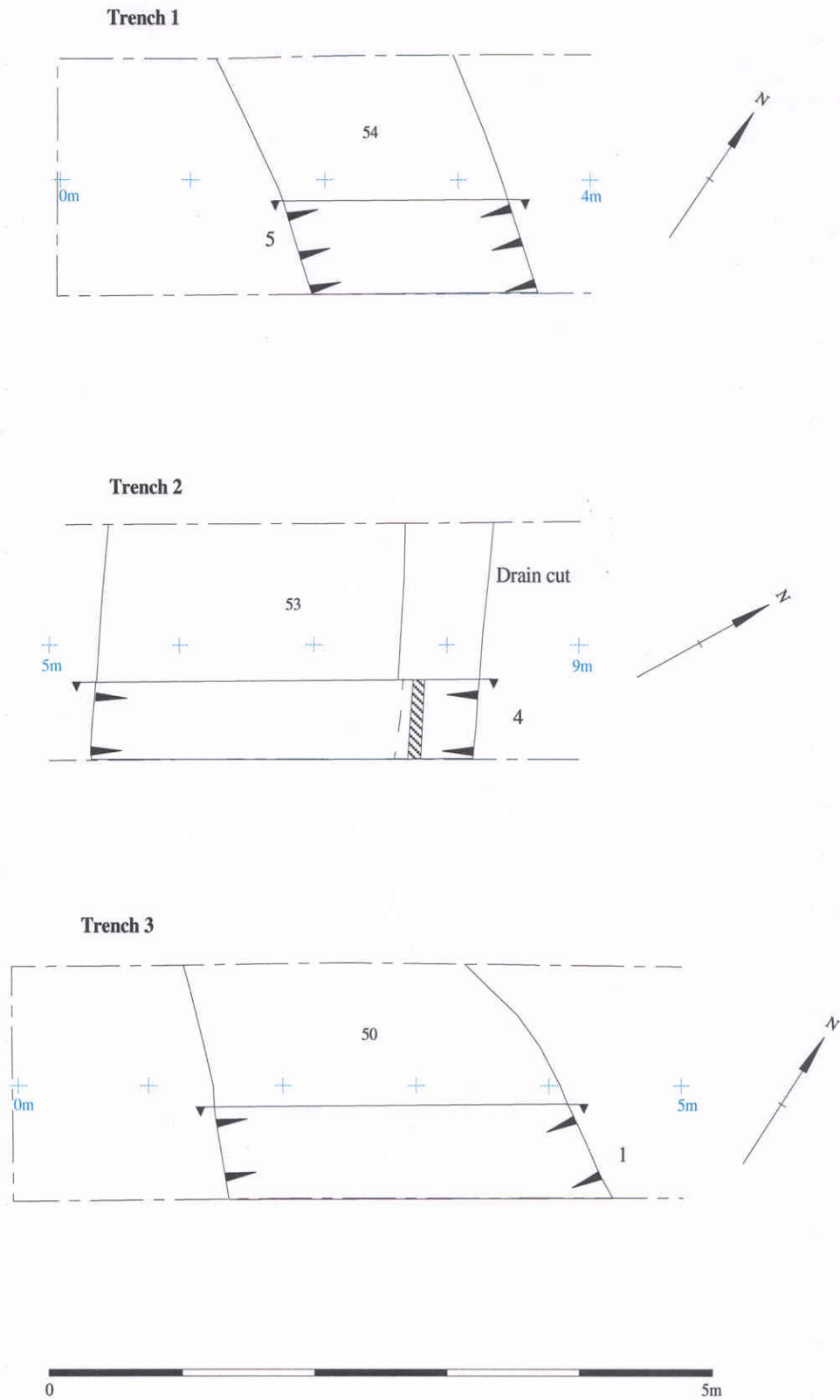


Figure 4. Detail of trenches.

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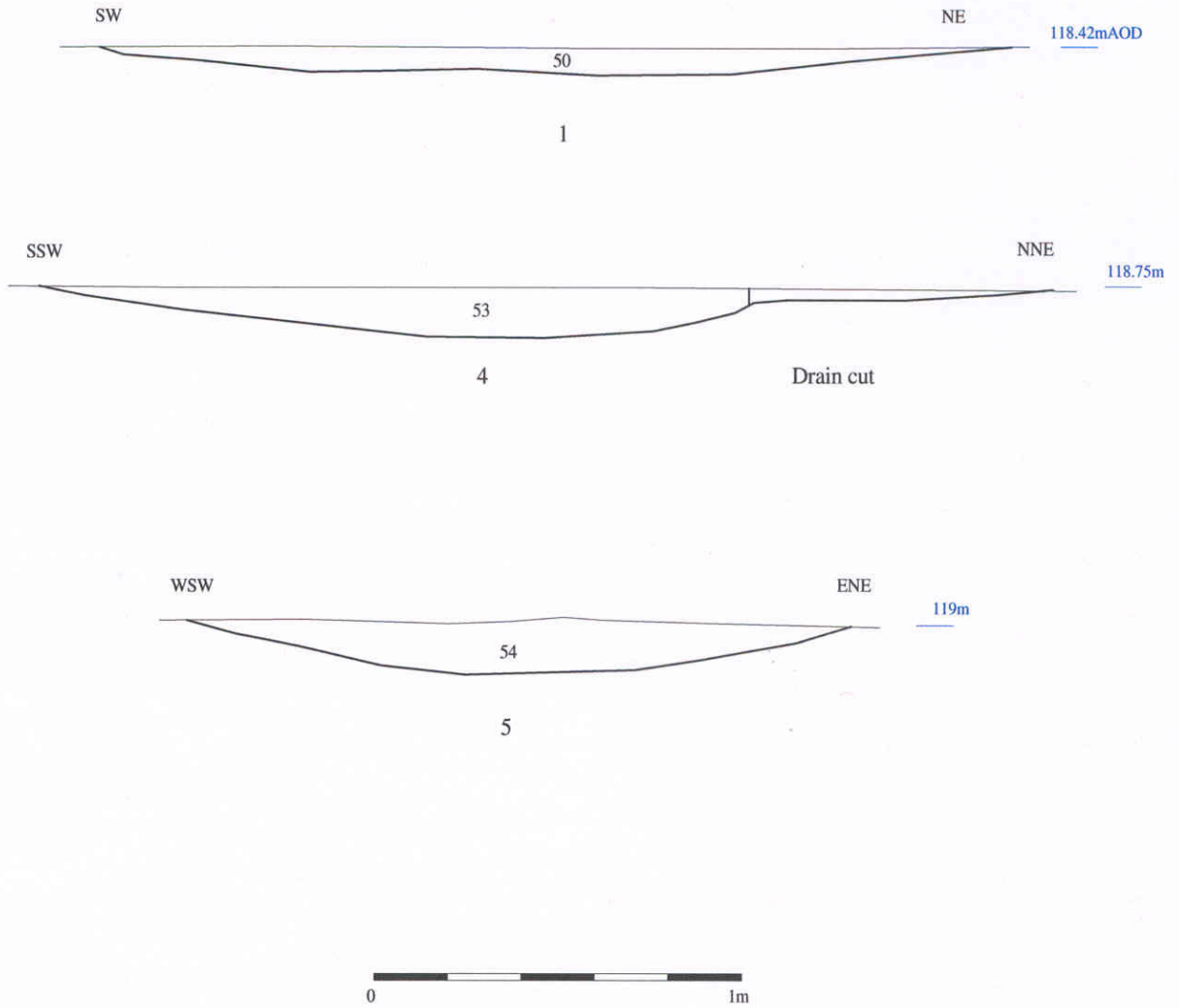
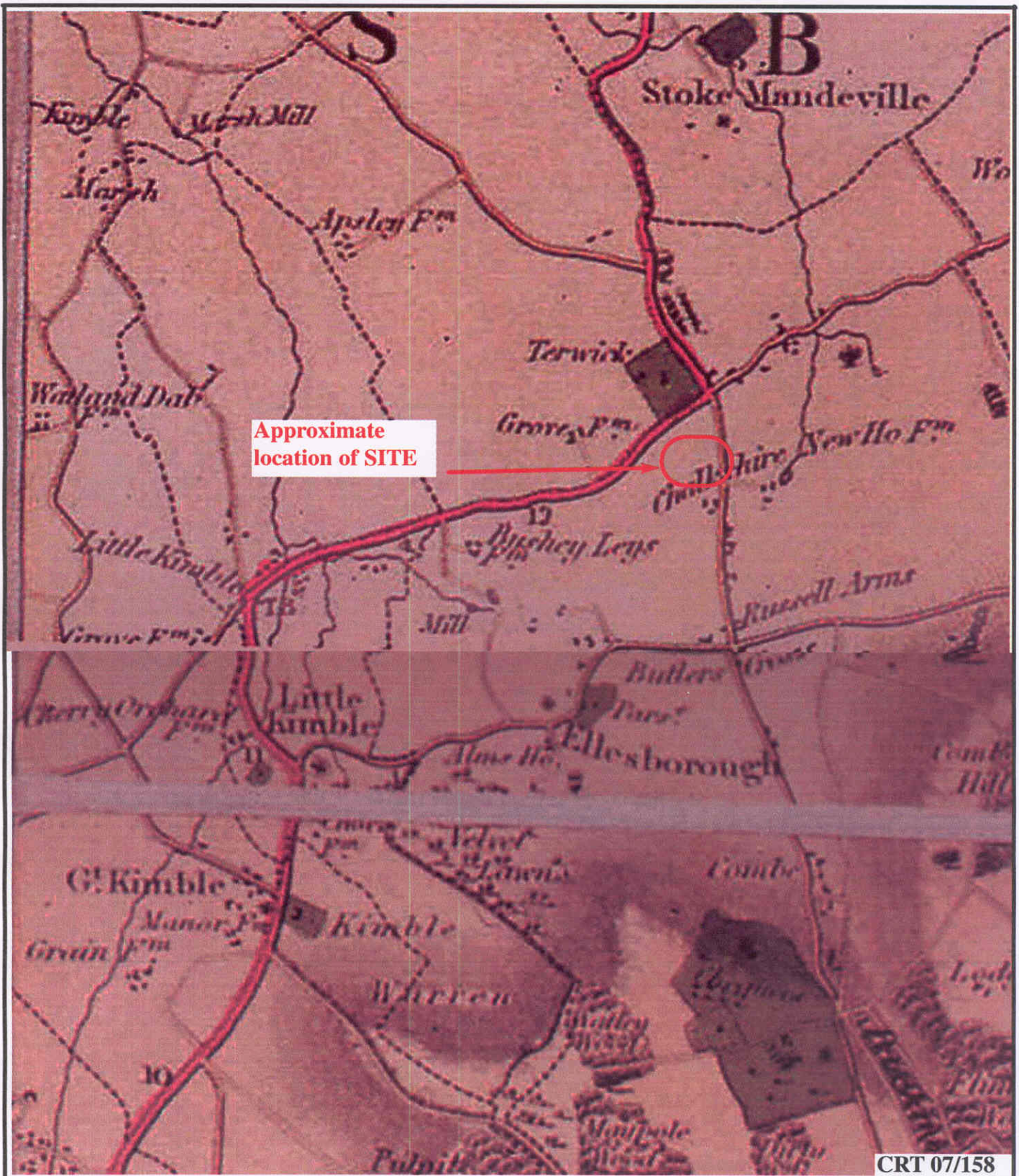


Figure 5. Sections.



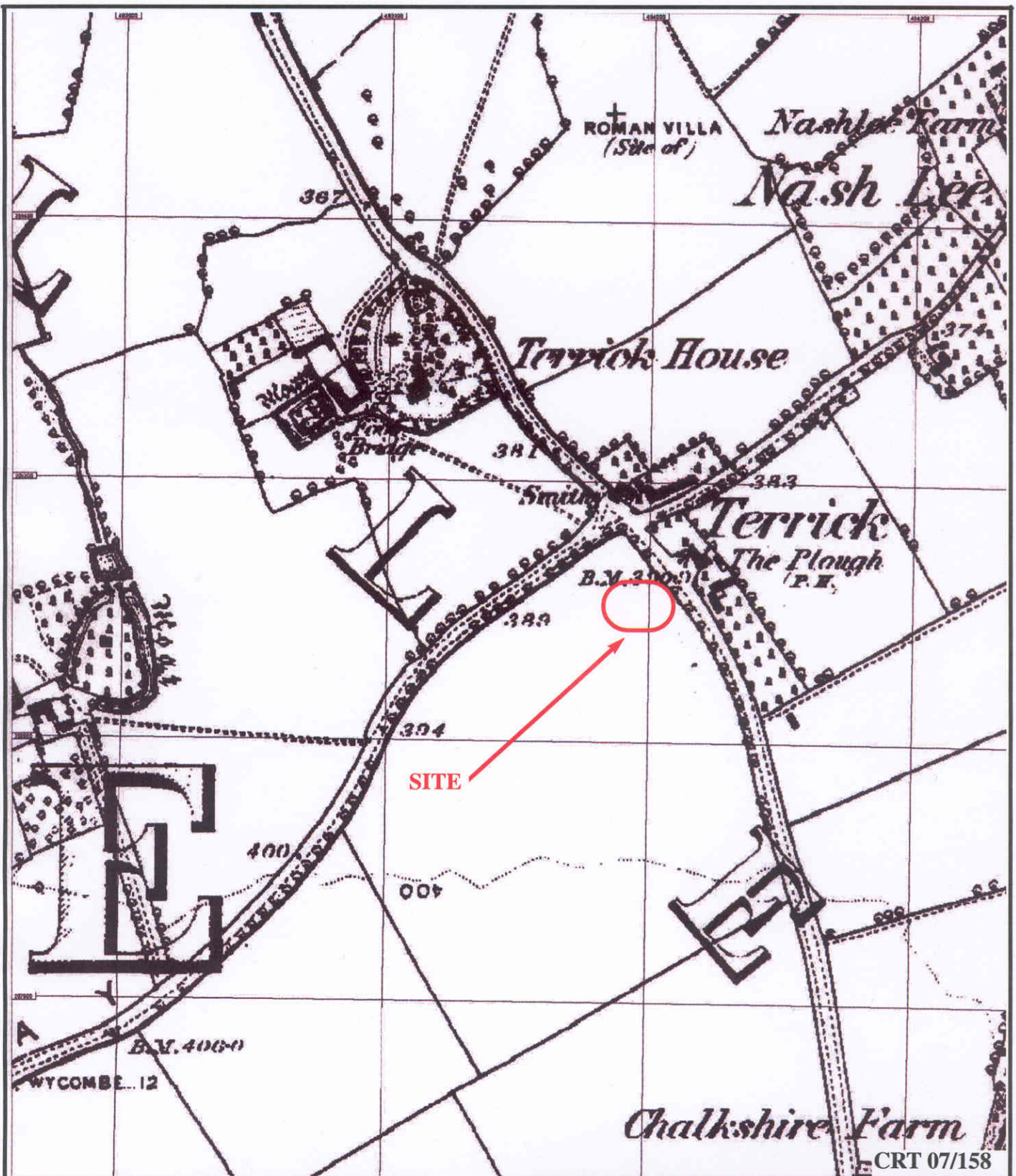
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Figure 6. Bryant's county map, 1825.

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Figure 7. Ordnance Survey First Edition 1884/5.

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking east; horizontal scales 2m and 1m, vertical scale 0.3m.

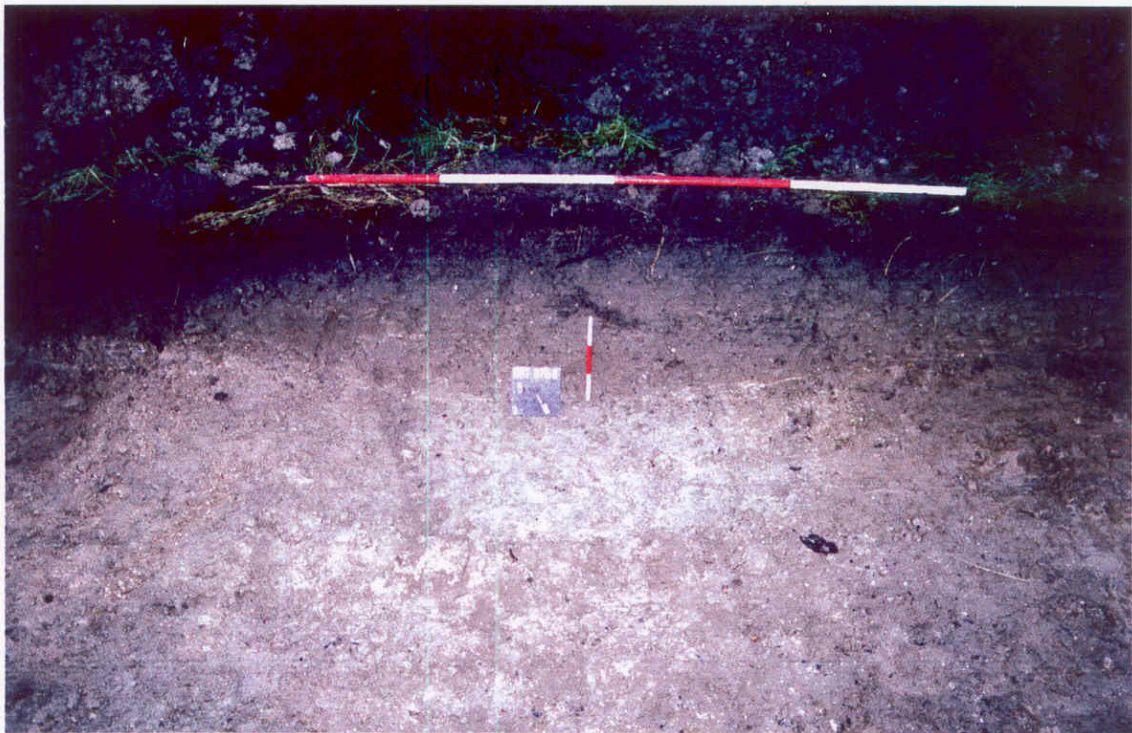


Plate 2. Trench 1, furrow 5, looking south-west; horizontal scale 2m, vertical scale 0.3m.



Plate 3. Trench 2, looking north-east; horizontal scales 2m and 1m, vertical scale 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 3, looking east; horizontal scale 2m and 1m, vertical scale 0.3m.