

New Reservoir, The Berkshire Golf Club, Ascot, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For The Berkshire Golf Course**

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BCB 08/07

March 2008

Summary

Site name: New Reservoir, The Berkshire Golf Club, Ascot, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 9000 6560

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 21st January – 6th February 2008

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andy Taylor

Site code: BCB 08/07

Area of site: 0.926ha

Summary of results: A single ditch dated to late post-medieval times by the presence of tile was recorded. No deposits or finds 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 Reading Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 18.03.08 Steve Preston✓ 18.03.08

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Report 08/07

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at The Berkshire Golf Club, Ascot, Berkshire (SU 9000 6560) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Chris Lomas of The Berkshire Golf Club, Swinley Road, Ascot, Berkshire, SL5 8AY.

A planning consent (07/00534/FUL) has been granted by Bracknell Forest Borough Council to construct a new reservoir at The Berkshire Golf Club, Ascot, Berkshire. This consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology which requires a watching brief (strip and record) to be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Mary O'Donoghue, Archaeology Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor between the 21st January and 6th February 2008 and the site code is BCB 08/07.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in Berkshire Golf Course off the A322 between Bagshot and Bracknell and to the south-west of Ascot (Fig. 1). Prior to this work the site was a wooded area on the side of the golf course (Fig. 2). The underlying geology consists of Bracklesham Beds (BGS 1981), which were observed across the site. The site lies at a height of *c.* 81m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location close to the projected line of the Devil's Highway, the London to Silchester Roman Road (Ford 1987); Margary's route 4a (Margary 1955, 79). An extensive Roman roadside settlement has been suggested at Rapley Farm to the west though fine details are

lacking (Corney and Gaffney 1983). It is possible that the remains of roadside Roman settlements or burials may be found on the proposal site.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to;

Excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the areas threatened by the proposed development.

Produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded on the site.

Establish the character of these deposits in attempt to define functional areas on the site such as industrial, domestic etc.

Produce information on the economy and local environment and compare and contrast this with the results of other excavations in the region.

Results

The area of the site was stripped of overburden (topsoil/subsoil where present) of *c.* 0.3m depth down to the top of natural geological horizon using a 360⁰ machine under continual archaeological supervision. Just a single feature of possible archaeological significance was observed. A ditch was noted, orientated NNE–SSW across the site. Three slots (Fig 3: 1-3) totalling 5.70m were excavated to investigate this feature. The ditch was between 0.80m and 1.4m in width and between 0.15m and 0.28m deep (Fig. 4). The fill of this was a dark brownish grey silty sand. The only dating evidence recovered was a single large piece of late post-medieval tile.

Finds

Tile

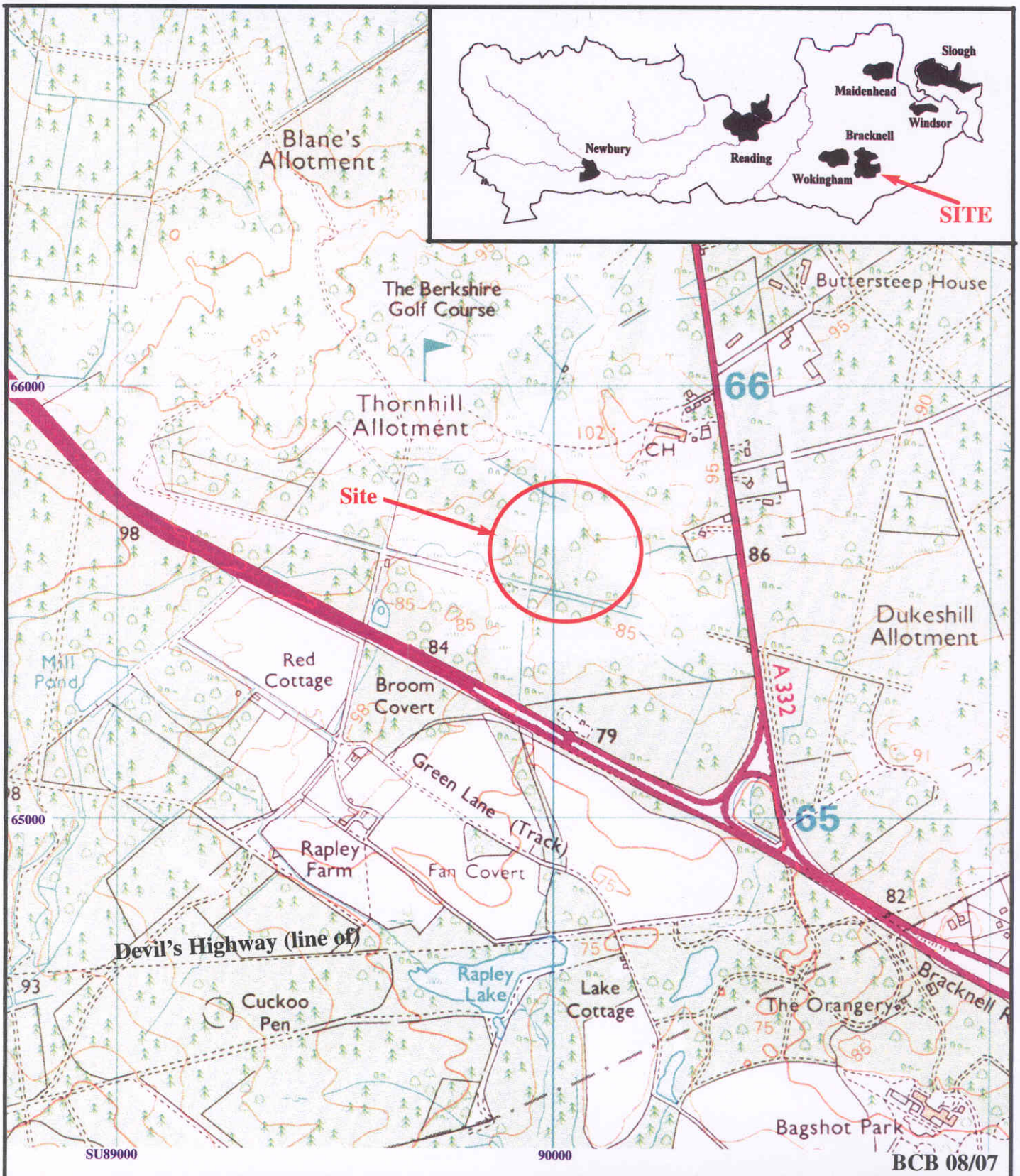
A single large fragment of tile (1471g) was recovered from slot 3. It was part of a tile drain and is of late post-medieval date and was retained on-site.

Conclusion

The fieldwork has recording the presence of a single ditch as the only feature of any possible archaeological interest on the site. The ditch though is of late post-medieval date and presumably relates to an old field boundary pre-dating the golf course and woodland; it parallels drains shown on modern mapping.

References

- BGS, 1981, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 269, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Corney, M and Gaffney, V, 1983, 'Wickham Bushes', in A Taylor and R Taylor (eds), *Recent Archaeology in Berkshire*, Berkshire Archaeol Soc Fld Res Grp, Reading, 17
- Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Council Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap **1**, Reading
- Margary, I D, 1955, *Roman Roads in Britain*, London
- PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

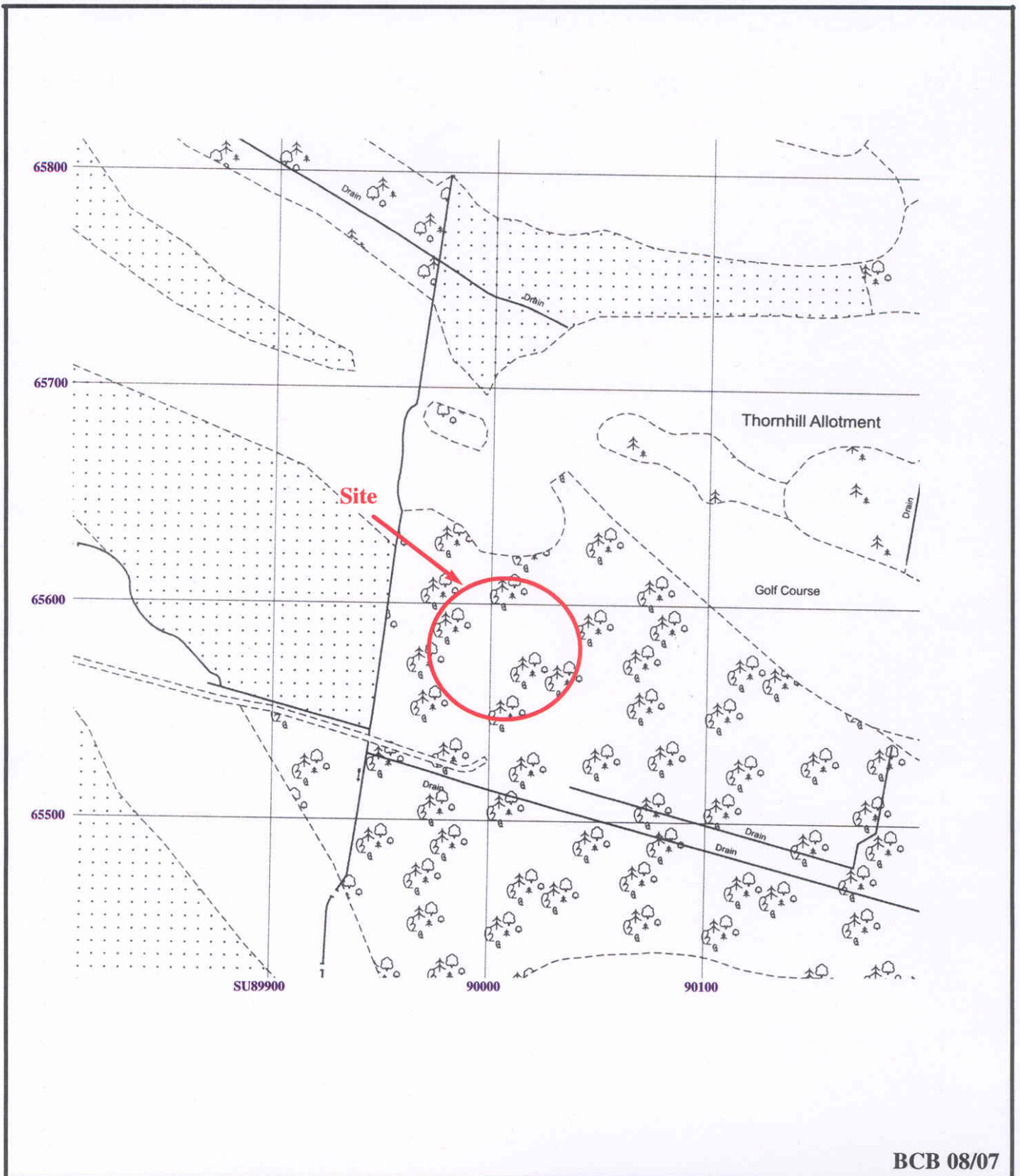


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Figure 1. Location of site within Ascot and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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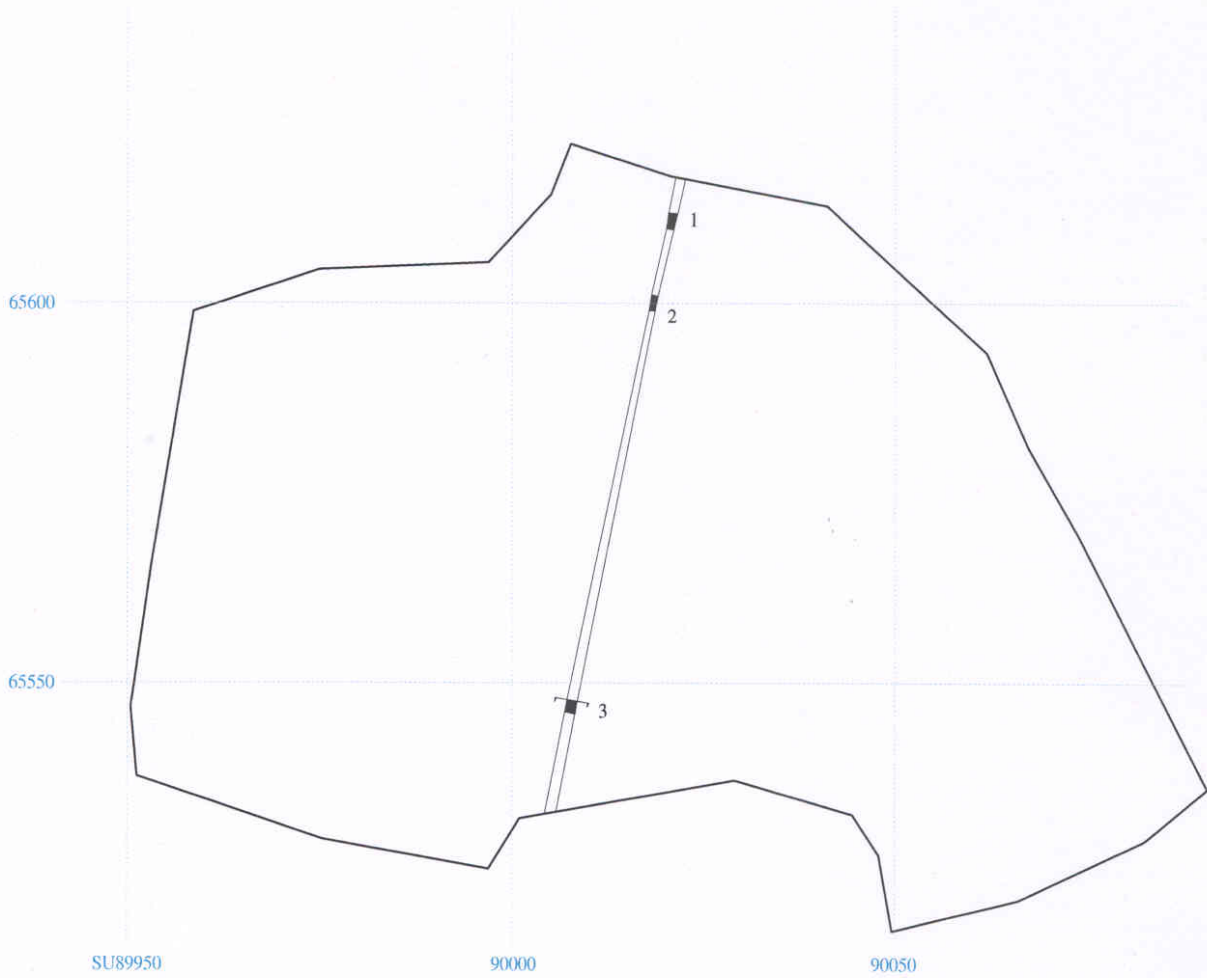


Figure 3. Plan of site showing area stripped and the single ditch recorded.

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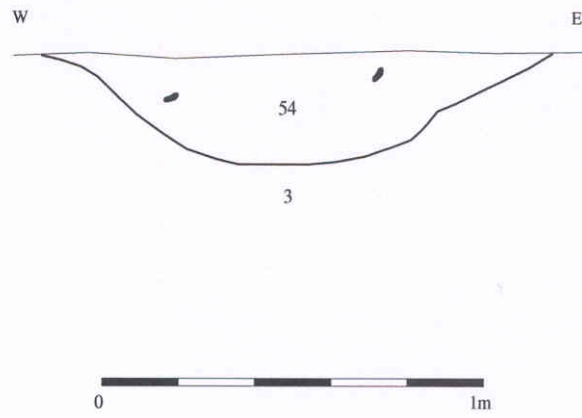


Figure 4. Section of ditch slot 3.