



**Northamptonshire  
County Council**

---

# Northamptonshire Archaeology

**Archaeological Recording and Evaluation  
in the Old Estate Yard, Over End, Elton  
Cambridgeshire  
Event no. ECB 2175**

March 2006



Simon Carlyle

March 2006

Report 06/47

---

**Northamptonshire Archaeology**

2 Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park  
Northampton NN4 8BE

w. [www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk)

t. 01604 700493/4

f. 01604 702822

e. [sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk)



**STAFF**

Project Manager: Anthony Maull Cert Arch

Fieldwork: Simon Carlyle BSc, MSc, AIFA and Mark Patenall

Text: Simon Carlyle

Pottery: Iain Soden BA, MIFA

Tile: Pat Chapman BA, CMS, PIFA

Slag: Andy Chapman BSc, MIFA

Animal bone: Karen Deighton MSc

Illustrations: Jacqueline Harding BA, HND

**QUALITY CONTROL**

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Anthony Maull		
Approved by	Steve Parry		

(Front page illustration: General view of yard buildings, facing north-west)

**OLD ESTATE YARD, ELTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project title	Archaeological Recording and Evaluation in the Old Estate Yard, Over End, Elton, Cambridgeshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Archaeological remains, probably dating to the medieval period, comprised a probable boundary ditch, two smaller ditches following the curving embankment of a hollow way, two pits or small ditch terminals and a possible pit or tree throw scar. The junction between two ditches in the north-west corner of the site probably dates to the late medieval or early post-medieval period, although this feature has been extensively truncated by modern services and groundworks. Other activity on the site dates to the 19 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> centuries. A large pit containing iron working slag may be associated with the activities of James Hayes, who used the workshops and iron foundry in the Old Estate Yard in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.	
Project type (eg desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Trial trench evaluation	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Desk-Based Assessment, The Heritage Network	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown	
Monument type and period	N/A	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Cambridgeshire	
Site address (including postcode)	Old Estate Yard, Over End, Elton	
Easting (use numerical 100km grid square no.)	50899	
Northing	29355	
Height OD	32m OD	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice	
Project Design originator	Anthony Maull, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Simon Carlyle, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project Manager	Anthony Maull, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body	Sidell Gibson Partnership	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	8/3/06	
End date	10/03/06	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no. ECB 2175)</b>	<b>Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical		
Digital		
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Archaeological Recording and Evaluation in the Old Estate Yard, Over End, Elton, Cambridgeshire	
Serial title and volume		
Author(s)	Simon Carlyle	
Page numbers	19	
Date	March 2006	

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>EXCAVATION RESULTS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>FINDS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	
	<b>APPENDIX 1</b>	

## ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig 1** Site location plan  
**Fig 2** Trench location and feature plan  
**Fig 3** Sections

## PLATES

- Plate 1** Boundary ditch [413], looking south-east  
**Plate 2** Boundary ditch [416], looking south-east  
**Plate 3** Pit or ditch terminal, looking north-west  
**Plate 4** Boundary ditch [505], looking north

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING AND EVALUATION  
IN THE OLD ESTATE YARD, OVER END, ELTON  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**Event no. ECB 2175**

***Abstract***

*An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in the Old Estate Yard, Over End, Elton, Cambridgeshire. Archaeological remains, probably dating to the medieval period, comprised a probable boundary ditch, two smaller ditches following the curving embankment of a hollow way, two pits or small ditch terminals and a possible pit or tree throw scar. A junction between two ditches in the north-west corner of the site probably dates to the late medieval or early post-medieval period, although this feature had been extensively truncated by modern services and groundworks. Other activity on the site dates to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. A large pit containing iron working slag may be associated with the activities of James Hayes, inventor of the mechanical straw elevator, who worked out of the workshops in the yard in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

In March 2006, an archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) in the Old Estate Yard, Over End, Elton, Cambridgeshire (site centred on NGR TL 0899 9355; Fig 1). The evaluation comprised the excavation of five 30m trial trenches (150 linear metres) and the work was commissioned by the Sidell Gibson Partnership LLP.

The evaluation formed part of a programme of archaeological investigation initiated by Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA), in response to the submission of planning proposals for a residential development on the site (planning application no. H/05/01609/FUL). The programme was designed and implemented to mitigate against the impact of the development on buried archaeological remains. Previously, an archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) had been prepared by The Heritage Network (Simmelmann 2004).

The main objective of the evaluation was to assess the archaeological potential and significance of the site, in order to inform the planning process and to assist in developing a suitable mitigation strategy. The specific aims of the evaluation were to:

- Determine the location, date, extent, character and state of preservation of any archaeological remains
- Obtain a chronological sequence for human activity on the site and to place it within its regional context
- To assess the environmental potential of the site through an examination of suitable deposits.

Reference has been made to the national framework for research, as set out by English Heritage (EH 1997). Further reference has been made to the archaeological resource

assessment for the Eastern Counties prepared by Glazebrook (1997) and the research framework for the Eastern Counties of England as set out by Brown and Glazebrook (2000).

The work was carried out in accordance with the project design prepared by NA (2006) to the requirements of the brief issued by CAPCA (2006). The project design also complied with Appendix 2 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (EH 1991). This report details the results of the trial trench evaluation.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Topography and geology**

The small hamlet of Over End, Elton is situated on a low, west-facing spur on the east bank of the River Nene, approximately 10km to the south-west of Peterborough city centre. The development site is located opposite the parish church, close to the northern edge of parkland belonging to Elton Hall, which lies *c* 0.6km to the south. The site had recently been cleared and the northern and central areas were covered in a levelled layer of demolition debris. The southern part of the site remained undisturbed by demolition and clearance activity.

Soils on the site belonged to the Elmton 1 (343a) soil association, consisting of shallow, well-drained, brashy calcareous fine loamy soils (SSEW 1983). The underlying solid geology comprised Jurassic Cornbrash Limestone of the Great Oolite Group (BGS 1987). The site lay at approximately 32m aOD.

### **2.2 Historical and archaeological background**

The historical and archaeological background of the site is presented in detail in the desk-based assessment prepared by The Heritage Network (Semmelmann 2004). The DBA identified sites of historical and archaeological interest in and around Elton, dating from the Neolithic period through to modern times.

Neolithic and Bronze Age finds from various parts of the village suggest an early riverside settlement, with activity focusing on the confluence of the River Nene and its tributary, the Willow Brook, to the west of the village. A probable hengiform monument has been identified to the north of Elton; such monuments typically date to the late Neolithic. An alignment of Iron Age pits (SMR 5657), possibly the remains of a palisade, lies *c* 0.2km to the east of the site.

Settlement in the vicinity in the Romano-British period is attested by seven possible occupation sites identified from fieldwalking. Evidence for Romano-British activity was also revealed during the excavation of the medieval manorial site known as Burystead (SMR 5577a), at Nether End, at the north-west end of the village. The small Roman town of Ashton in Northamptonshire lies 6km to the south-west.

The site at Burystead was occupied in the early Saxon period and remained in use until the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Four early to mid Saxon and two mid Saxon sites have been located by fieldwalking in the area. In the early 11<sup>th</sup> century the manor of Burystead was acquired by Bishop Aethelric and given to Ramsey Abbey; it remained in the ownership of the abbey until the Dissolution in 1538.

A second manor, known as Hall Fee, had developed in the southern part of the village by the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, and entries in the Domesday Book suggest that there may have been a manor here as early as the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. This second manor encompassed the area of the development site. Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks are still extant in the fields adjacent to Old Estate Yard.

The manor of Burystead was abandoned in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and Elton Hall, formerly Hall Fee, became the manorial focus of the village. There are a number of post-medieval sites in the area, notably a smithy (SMR 142), barns at Carr's Farm (SMR 143), Cooper's Hospital Almshouses (SMR 4316) and several Grade II listed buildings. The latter includes elements of the Old Estate Yard, namely No. 15 Over End, the home of James Hayes, who invented and patented agricultural machinery in the workshops and iron foundry in the Old Estate Yard in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Until recently, the yard area was largely covered with 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century farm buildings, now demolished, and large piles of building rubble imported from the surrounding area.

### 3 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

Five 30m trial trenches were excavated using a JCB-type mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.7m wide toothless ditching blade. The trenches, which were marked out prior to excavation, had been positioned in accordance with the trench location plan agreed upon with the client and CAPCA (Fig 2).

All overburden was stripped under archaeological supervision, with the topsoil and subsoil stacked separately and adjacent to the trenches. Mechanical excavation proceeded to the top of the archaeological deposits, to the limits of safe working practice or to the natural substrate where no archaeology was encountered. Due to Health and Safety considerations (i.e. broken glass, rusty metal and the weight of pieces of building rubble), the large machine-dug pit/trench in Trench 3 was excavated by machine.

Archaeological excavation and recording followed the guidelines outlined in the NA *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (2003). Trenches containing archaeological remains were cleaned by hand, sufficient to define the features. Each feature or deposit was given a unique number consisting of the trench number and an individual context number (eg 1302, Trench 13, context 2). The details of each context were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets. The trenches were planned (scale 1:50) and section drawings were made at an appropriate scale (1:10 or 1:20). Levels, which were related to Ordnance Datum, were taken on the trenches at appropriate points, on section datum and on all major features. Trench locations were related to the OS National Grid. A photographic record was made of the excavation, using both 35mm colour transparency and black and white negative film. The spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval. No suitable deposits were encountered for environmental sampling.

All works were carried out in accordance with the IFA *Code of Conduct* (1995, revised 2002) and the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IFA 1994, revised 2001). In addition, all works complied with the guidelines set out in *Standards*

for *Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2002). All procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

The programme of trial trench evaluation was monitored by CAPCA. Arrangements have been made with Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Office for the deposition of the site archive and finds (accession/event no. ECB 2175). The guidelines of the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA 1993) will be followed in the preparation of the archive.

## 4 EXCAVATION RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

Trenches 1-4 were located in the main yard area, where a number of modern buildings had recently been demolished. Demolition deposits covered almost the entire area, and in many places lay directly over the natural substrate, indicating varying degrees of truncation. However, pockets of subsoil survived in places, particularly along the eastern part of the site, and modern buried topsoil was revealed in Trench 4. Elsewhere in the main yard area the topsoil appears to have been extensively disturbed and was largely redeposited.

According to an estate worker, the yard has long been used locally as a dump for building material and other refuse, and until recently there was a 10m high pile of building rubble covering the north-east corner of the site. It is therefore likely that much of the building material mixed into the demolition layers has been imported from the surrounding area and does not derive from former buildings on the site.

The only part of the development site that was relatively undisturbed by modern activity was the block of land on its southern edge, in the area of Trench 5, where ridge and furrow was still visible on the ground. The extreme south-east corner of the main yard area, to the east of the curving embankment, was also reasonably intact, although extensive animal burrowing was evident.

The natural substrate was cornbrash, which varied from a gritty, light orangey yellow clay with frequent fine to coarse, angular limestone pebbles, to fine to coarse, angular limestone pebbles and small cobbles in a mid yellow clay matrix. Solid limestone was encountered at the base of several features. Occasional hollows in the substrate were filled with sterile, light to mid reddish brown clayey silt, probably the remnants of an early post-glacial soil.

In the places where it survived, the subsoil was up to *c* 0.3m thick and comprised mid brown slightly clayey silt with brashy inclusions. The undisturbed topsoil on the southern part of the site was mid greyish brown organic silt, typically *c* 0.2m thick, again with brashy inclusions. Plans of Trenches 1, 2, 4 and 5 are given in Figure 2. A summary of the features in each trench is given in Appendix 1.



## 4.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned from north to south and was located in the north-west corner of the site. The southern end of the trench was moved 2m to the east from its proposed position, in order to avoid a fence and a tree.

Possibly the earliest feature in this trench was a shallow linear cut [107], interpreted as a furrow, at the northern end of the trench. It measured 3.5m wide by 0.56m deep and was filled with mid brown clayey silt (106), identical to the subsoil. Aligned from east to west, the feature was parallel to the ridge and furrow in the adjacent field to the north.

The northern edge of the probable furrow was cut by a broad ditch [113] on the same east to west alignment. This ditch probably continues into Trench 2. The ditch had shallow sloping sides and measured 3.8m wide by at least 0.8m deep; the full depth of the ditch could not be determined as the base of the ditch had been truncated along its length by a modern service trench. The primary fill was mid brown clayey silt (112) with occasional brashy inclusions, not unlike the subsoil though slightly darker. Modern pottery was recovered from near the surface of this deposit, but the pottery could be intrusive, given the degree of disturbance in this area. This deposit was sealed by a thick layer of redeposited natural (111), up to 0.55m thick, which largely filled the ditch. The remaining hollow in the top of the ditch was filled with charcoal and ashes (110), which contained 19<sup>th</sup> century bottle glass.

At the southern end of the trench there was a small, linear ditch, measuring 0.9m wide by 0.36m deep. It had a steep-sided, V-shaped profile and was filled with mid grey silty clay containing rusty iron and 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds.

All of the features in the trench were sealed by a layer of demolition debris, which varied in thickness from 0.3m at the southern end of the trench to 0.6m over ditch [113] at its northern end.

## 4.3 Trench 2

This trench, which was aligned from east to west, was situated close to the northern edge of the development site and ran parallel to the site boundary and to the ridge and furrow earthworks in the adjacent field to the north.

Near the centre of the trench there was a shallow, natural hollow [205], up to 0.22m deep, filled with sterile, mid reddish brown clayey silt (204). Angular limestone pebbles cast up against the western edge of the hollow suggest that it was probably formed by tree throw, the pebbles pulled up by the roots of the tree. The type of soil indicates that this is an early post-glacial feature.

At the western end of the trench there was a T-shaped junction between two ditches. It had been extensively truncated by modern activity, which included the insertion of a sewer trench. The first ditch [213] entered the trench from its western end on an east to west alignment; it is probably the continuation of ditch [113] in Trench 1. Due to truncation its profile and true dimensions could not be ascertained, although its general size and the depth of the base below modern ground level was commensurate with it being the continuation of ditch [113]. The fill of ditch [213] was also identical to the primary fill of the ditch in Trench 1.

Ditch [213] extended *c* 5m into the trench before forming a junction with ditch [211]. This ditch, which was aligned from north to south, was approximately 3.5m wide and up to 0.84m deep (Fig 3, section 1). It had a steep eastern slope and a flat base; the western slope appeared to have been largely truncated by the cutting of ditch [213]. The primary fill (210) was up to 0.39m thick and comprised mid brown silty clay with frequent fine to coarse, angular to sub-angular pebbles. It was sealed by mid brown clayey silt (209), which was indistinguishable from the fill of ditch [213].

The junction between the two ditches had been cut away to a depth of *c* 0.7m below modern ground level; the resulting hollow had then been infilled with bricks and general building rubble. This deposit (208) probably dates to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as a sewer trench [207] was subsequently cut through this layer. The most recent deposit was a layer of demolition debris (201), *c* 0.3m thick, which extended in section down the full length of the trench.

#### 4.4 Trench 3

Trench 3, which was aligned from east to west, was located near the centre of the site and partly covered the footprint of one of the former yard buildings, although no trace of its foundations survived in the trench. No significant archaeological features were revealed.

Excavation demonstrated that this area had been truncated by modern activity, with demolition deposits lying directly on the natural substrate. Pockets of subsoil survived in places, particularly at the eastern end of the trench; due to the degree of disturbance, it was not clear if these represented the remnants of furrows, or isolated patches of subsoil.

Near the centre of the trench there was a large, machine-excavated pit or trench [305], approximately 1.8m wide and 0.6m deep. It contained modern demolition debris and refuse, but included a number of fragments of shaped Oolitic limestone, one fragment possibly forming part of a window mullion. As large quantities of building debris have been imported onto the site from the local vicinity, the provenance of the stonework cannot be established.

#### 4.5 Trench 4

Trench 4 was located in the south-east corner of the main yard area. It was aligned from north-east to south-west and crossed a curvilinear embankment defining the south-west side of a hollow way. The embankment had once been topped with a hedgerow.

At the south-west end of the trench there was an irregular, natural hollow in the natural substrate, filled with sterile, mid reddish brown silt, up to 0.26m thick. This natural feature is similar to that found in Trench 2 and likewise probably dates to the early Holocene.

Near the centre of the trench there were three discrete features (Fig 3, section 2). The earliest of these was an irregular pit or possibly a tree throw scar [422], filled with mid brown clayey silt, up to 0.38m thick, containing angular to sub-angular limestone pebbles. This feature was cut by a sub-rectangular pit or ditch terminal [420], which was aligned from north-west to south-east (Plate 3). This feature had steep, near vertical sides and a flat base and measured 0.8m wide by 0.57m deep. The primary fill (419) was bluish grey clayey silt, up to 0.27m thick, which contained occasional limestone

pebbles and a single fragment of deer bone. This was sealed by mid brown clayey silt (418) of the same thickness, over which was a deposit of 'claggy' mid brown silty clay (417) with frequent angular limestone pebbles. The third feature [426], probably a pit, was only partially exposed in the trench, and had a curving edge and a steep, near vertical slope. It was filled with dark grey clayey silt (425) that was at least 0.21m thick. All three of these features were sealed by subsoil, suggesting that they are at least medieval in date, or perhaps earlier.

At the north-eastern end of the trench there were two ditches, running parallel to the line of the embankment (Fig 3, section 3). The larger ditch had a shallow concave profile and measured *c* 1.6m wide by 0.31m deep (Plate 1). The primary fill (415) was 0.09m thick and comprised mid yellowish brown silty clay with moderate limestone pebbles. The secondary fill (414) was mid greyish brown clayey silt, up to 0.21m thick, with occasional to moderate inclusions. The second ditch was situated *c* 0.6m to the south-west and upslope of ditch [416] (Plate 2). It was *c* 1.0m wide, 0.36m deep, and had a reasonably steep-sided, V-shaped profile. It was filled with mid greyish brown clayey silt (412), which contained occasional limestone pebbles and several small to medium sized limestone cobbles. Both ditches were sealed by the subsoil, and given that they are associated with the visible earthworks, it is likely that they are medieval in date.

Subsequent activity dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century or later, and comprised a large pit [411], which contained glass, slag, clinker and tile, and two postholes [428 and 430], one of which had brick packing. Pit [411] cut through the buried topsoil (424) and subsoil (402) horizons that sealed the pits in the centre of the trench. It was sealed by the recent demolition layer (423).

#### 4.6 Trench 5

This trench was aligned from east to west and was situated on relatively undisturbed ground along the southern edge of the site. Extant ridge and furrow earthworks, aligned from north to south, were visible in the adjacent field and undulations in the ground along the length of the trench demonstrated their continuance into the development area. The spacing between the ridges was approximately 12m, consistent with it being medieval in date. An established hedgerow planted on one of the ridges crossed the line of the trench at its eastern end; this was left *in situ* and the trench was excavated in two parts.

In the eastern part of the trench there was a broad ditch [505], *c* 2.2m wide and up to 0.6m deep (Fig 3, section 4; Plate 4). It was filled with fine to coarse, angular to sub-angular limestone pebbles in a mid brown clayey silt matrix (504). The ditch crossed the trench on a north to south alignment and broadly followed the base of a furrow, although it was slightly offset to the west. The upper part of the fill of the ditch had been ploughed away, indicating that the ditch pre-dates the ridge and furrow. It therefore probably dates to the Saxo-Norman period, and probably represents a former land boundary.

Other than the ridge and furrow, there were no archaeological remains in the western part of the trench.

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Pottery by Iain Soden

A representative sample (11 sherds, 536g) of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery was recovered from two modern ditches in Trench 1. The sherds from ditch [105] included the base of a Mocha ware bowl or dish, dating to 1830-50, and sherds of a 'willow pattern' soup tureen in underglazed transfer-printed earthenware, dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A sherd of 'willow pattern' earthenware was also recovered from ditch [113], along with a sherd from an English stoneware dish, which also dates to the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 5.2 Tile by Pat Chapman

Three fragments (125g) of roof tile were recovered from the fill (409) of a modern pit [411] in Trench 4. Two of the fragments are in a hard, red sandy fabric; the third fragment is in a hard, reddish orange fabric. All of the tile fragments are post-medieval or later in date.

### 5.3 Slag by Andy Chapman

Two pieces (174g) of olive green vitreous slag were recovered from the fill (407) of pit [411] in Trench 4. It is the by-product of iron smelting in a modern blast furnace.

### 5.4 Animal bone by Karen Deighton

A fragment (14g) of the shaft of a deer metatarsal was recovered from the fill (419) of a possible medieval pit [420] in Trench 4. The fragment is too small to identify to species.

## 6 DISCUSSION

Despite extensive modern disturbance associated with the demolition of the former yard buildings and areas of truncation related to other modern activity, the evaluation was successful in demonstrating the presence and survival of archaeological remains on the site. No waterlogged deposits were encountered and the potential for the survival of environmental evidence is considered low.

There were a number of features on the site that probably date to the medieval period, and it is conceivable that some of these may be earlier. No artefactual dating evidence was recovered from any of these features, although they were all sealed by subsoil (B horizon).

In the south-west corner of the site there was a linear ditch, sealed and partly truncated by a furrow. This feature possibly dates to the Saxo-Norman period as it is on the same alignment as the furrow and probably represents a former land boundary, immediately

predating the later medieval open field system. Two boundary ditches following the line of a curvilinear embankment on the west side of a hollow way are also probably medieval, as is the feature interpreted as a furrow in the north-west corner of the site.

Near the centre of the site there were two pits or ditch terminals. Between the two was another possible pit, although this could just have been a tree throw scar. The only find from any of these features was a fragment of deer bone from the base of the sub-rectangular pit/ditch terminal. These features are probably medieval, though an earlier date cannot be ruled out.

In the north-west corner of the site there were two large but relatively shallow ditches that formed a T-junction. They had been heavily truncated by modern services and an earlier phase of demolition activity, probably dating to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, had removed most of their upper fills. It is possible that one of the ditches had been recut in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as pottery sherds dating to this time were found in the upper part of one of the ditches. The date of these ditches is uncertain, though one of the ditches cuts the probable furrow in Trench 1 and their alignment in relation to the ridge and furrow in the adjacent field to the north and the nature of their lower fills, suggests that they may date to the later medieval or early post-medieval period.

Other activity on the site dates to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. A large pit close to the probable medieval pits near the centre of the site contained vitreous slag from a blast furnace, and may be related to the activities of James Hayes, inventor of the mechanical straw elevator, who worked out of the workshops in the yard.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

BGS 1987 *Central England*, British Geological Survey, HMSO

Brown, N, and Glazebrook, P, 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2: Research Agenda and Strategy*, East Anglian Occasional Paper, **8**

CAPCA 2006 *Brief for Archaeological Recording and Evaluation at the Old Estate Yard, Over End, Elton, Cambridgeshire*, Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice Section

EH 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects, Appendix 2*, English Heritage

EH 1997 *English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda*, English Heritage, unpublished draft

EH 2002 *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to Theory and Practice for Methods, from sampling to post-excavation*, English Heritage

Glazebrook, J, (ed) 1997 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 1: Resource Assessment*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper, **3**

Gurney, D, 2002 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*

NA 2003 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

NA 2006 *The Old Estate Yard, Over End, Elton, Cambridgeshire; Project Design for Archaeological Investigation and Excavation (Trial Trenching)*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Semmelmann, K, 2004 *Old Estate Yard, Elton, Cambs. Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment*, The Heritage Network, report no. **241**

SMA 1993 *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections; Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, Society of Museum Archaeologists

### **Maps**

SSEW 1983, *Soils of Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 4, 1:250,000

## APPENDIX 1

### Summary of features

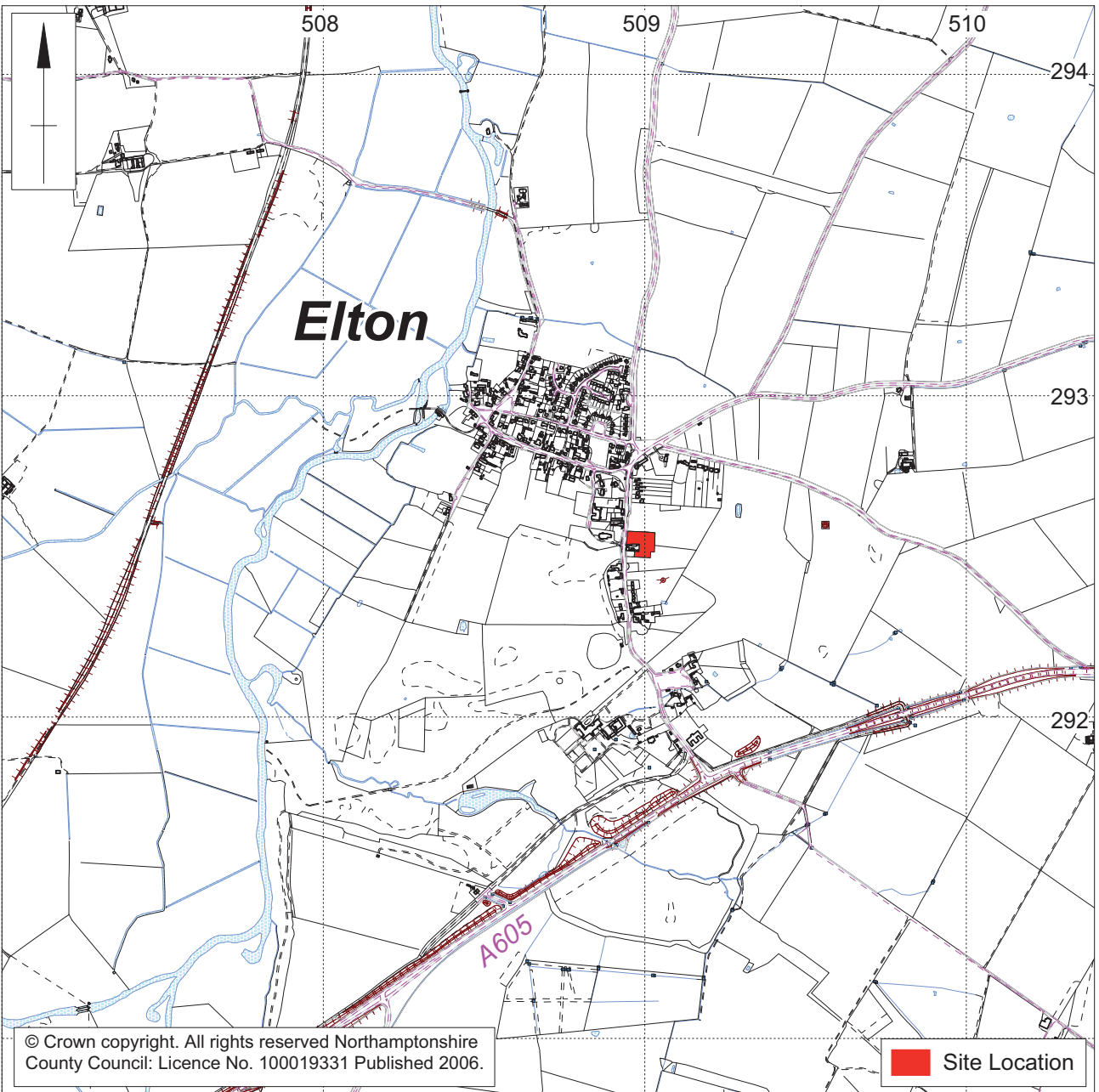
#### *Abbreviations*

P pottery; Sg slag; T tile; B bone

Trench no.	Context no.	Feature type	Date	Finds
1	101	Demolition layer	Modern, 21 <sup>st</sup> century	
	102	Subsoil	-	
	103	Natural substrate	-	
	104 [105]	Ditch	Modern, 19 <sup>th</sup> century	P
	106 [107]	Ditch or furrow	Medieval??	
	108 [109]	Machine dug trench	Modern, 20 <sup>th</sup> century	
	110 111 112 [113]	Ditch	Late medieval/post-medieval??	P
	114	Layer	Modern	
	115	Demolition layer	Modern	
2	201	Demolition layer	Modern, 21 <sup>st</sup> century	
	202	Subsoil	-	
	203	Natural substrate	-	
	204 [205]	Natural hollow	-	
	206 [207]	Sewer trench	Modern, 20 <sup>th</sup> century	
	208	Demolition layer	Modern, 20 <sup>th</sup> century	
	209 210 [211]	Ditch	Late medieval/post-medieval??	
	212 [213]	Ditch	Late medieval/post-medieval??	
3	301	Demolition layer	Modern, 21 <sup>st</sup> century	
	302	Subsoil	-	
	303	Natural substrate	-	
	304 [305]	Machine dug trench	Modern, 21 <sup>st</sup> century	
4	401	Topsoil	-	
	402	Subsoil	-	
	403	Natural substrate	-	
	404 [405]	Natural hollow	-	
	406 407 408 409 410 [411]	Pit	Modern, 19 <sup>th</sup> century	T, Sg
	412	Ditch	Medieval?	

Trench no.	Context no.	Feature type	Date	Finds	
	[413]				
	414 415 [416]	Ditch	Medieval??		
	417 418 419 [420]	Pit or ditch terminal	Medieval?? or earlier	B	
	421 [422]	Tree throw/pit?	Medieval?? or earlier		
	423	Demolition layer	Modern, 21 <sup>st</sup> century		
	424	Buried topsoil	Modern		
	425 [426]	Pit?	Medieval?? or earlier		
	427 [428]	Posthole or pit	Modern??		
	429 [430]	Posthole	Modern		
	5	501	Topsoil	-	
		502	Subsoil	-	
		503	Natural substrate	-	
504 [505]		Ditch	Medieval??		



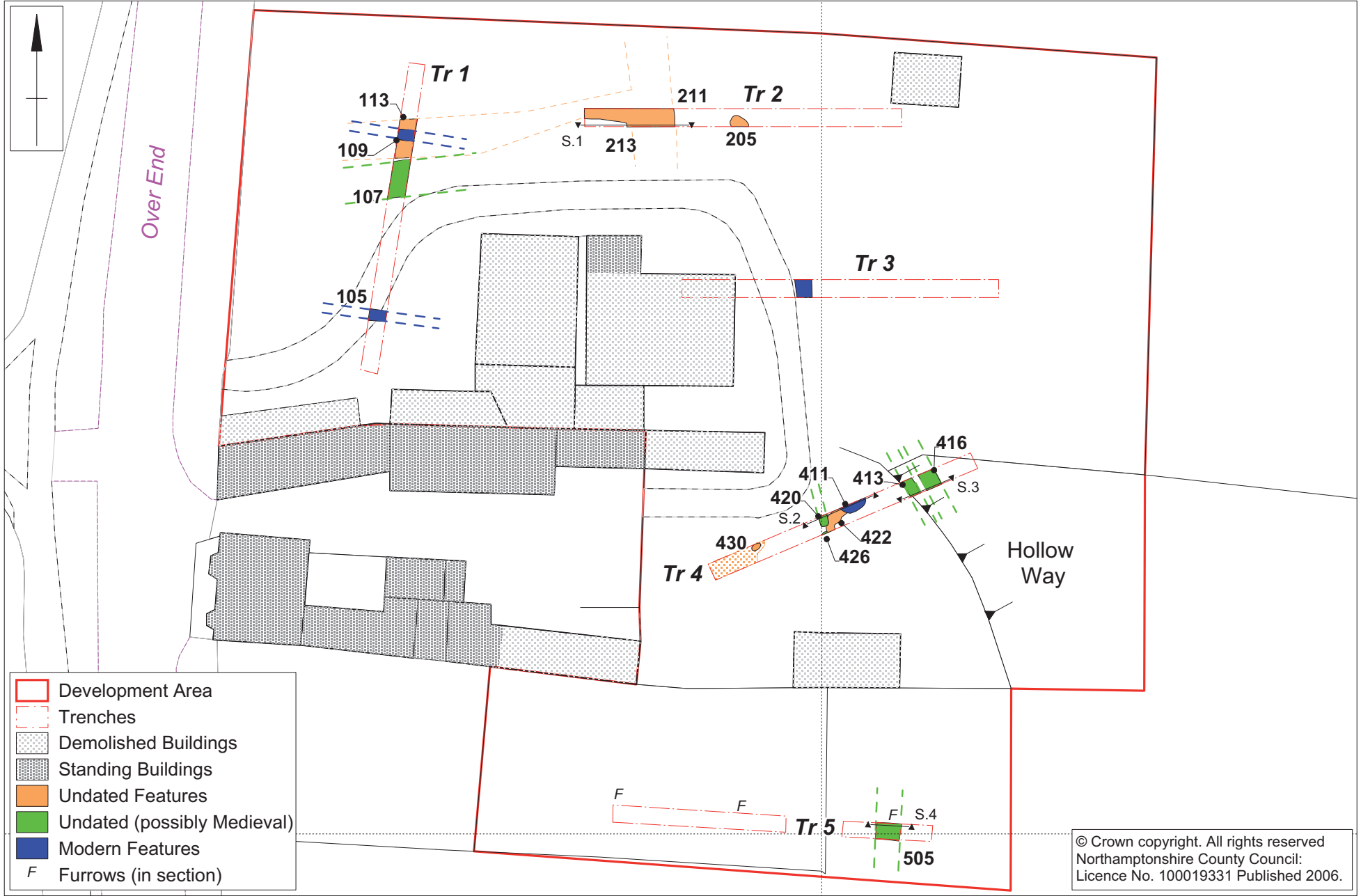


Scale 1:20,000

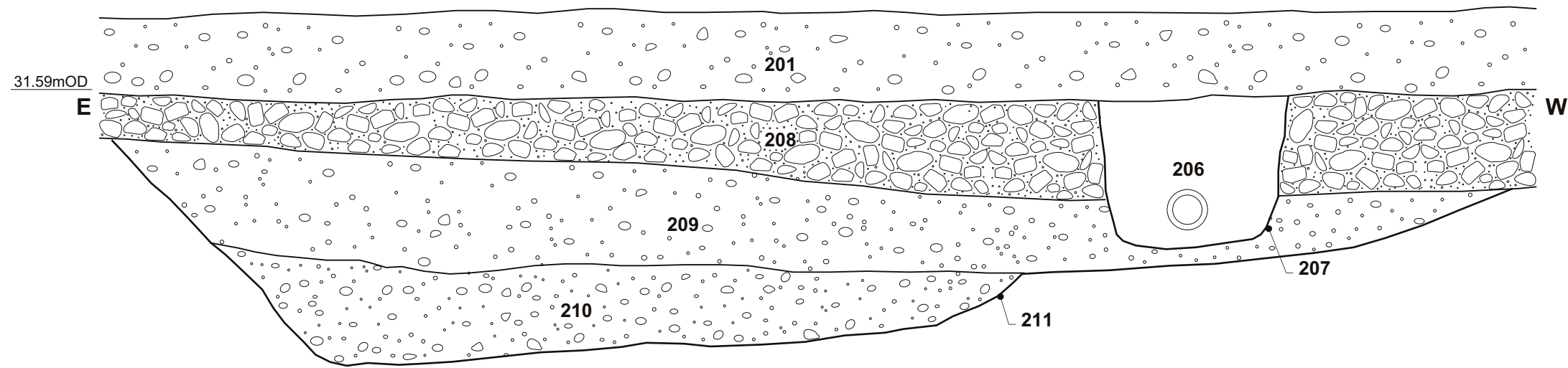
Site Location Fig 1

Scale 1:500

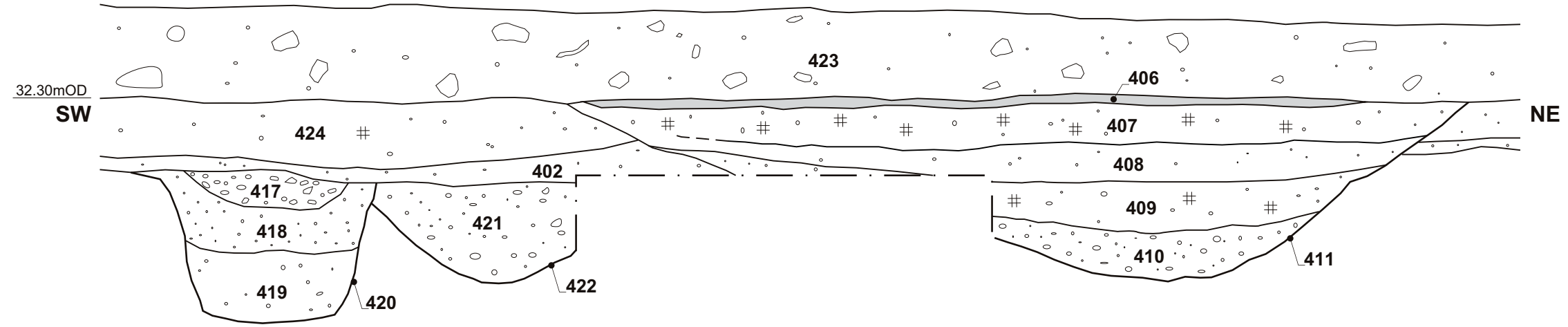
Trench Layout and Feature Plan Fig 2



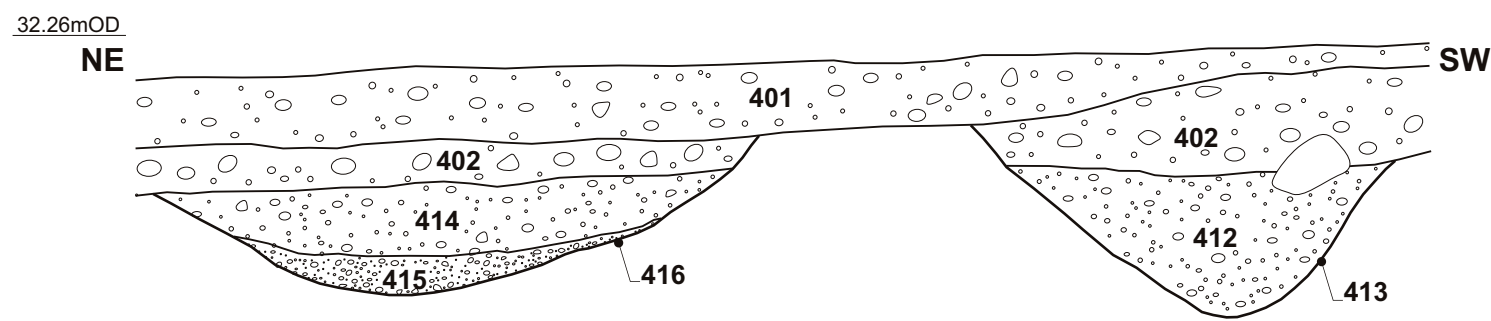
**Section 1 - Trench 2**



**Section 2 - Trench 4**



**Section 3 - Trench 4**



**Section 4 - Trench 5**

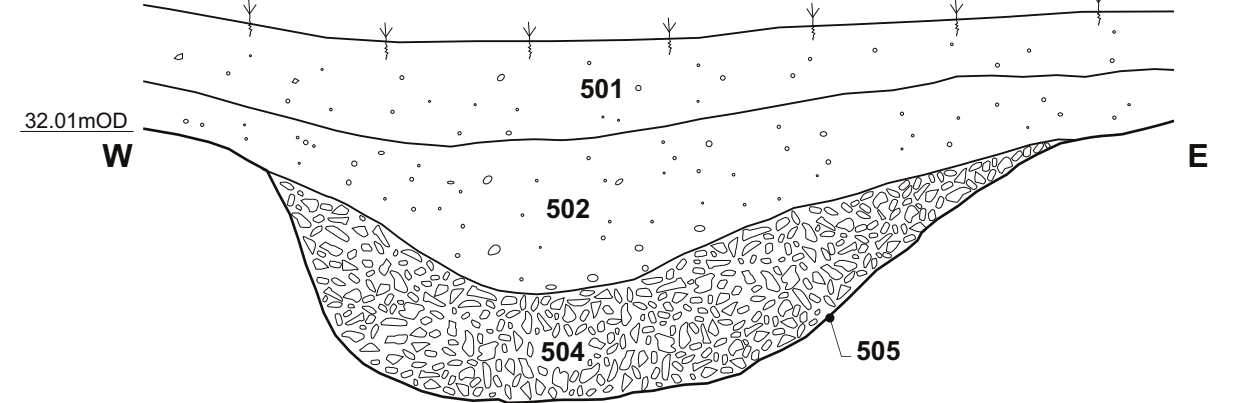




Plate 1: Boundary ditch [413], looking south - east.



Plate 2: Boundary ditch [416], looking south - east.



Plate 3: Pit or ditch terminal [420], looking north - west.

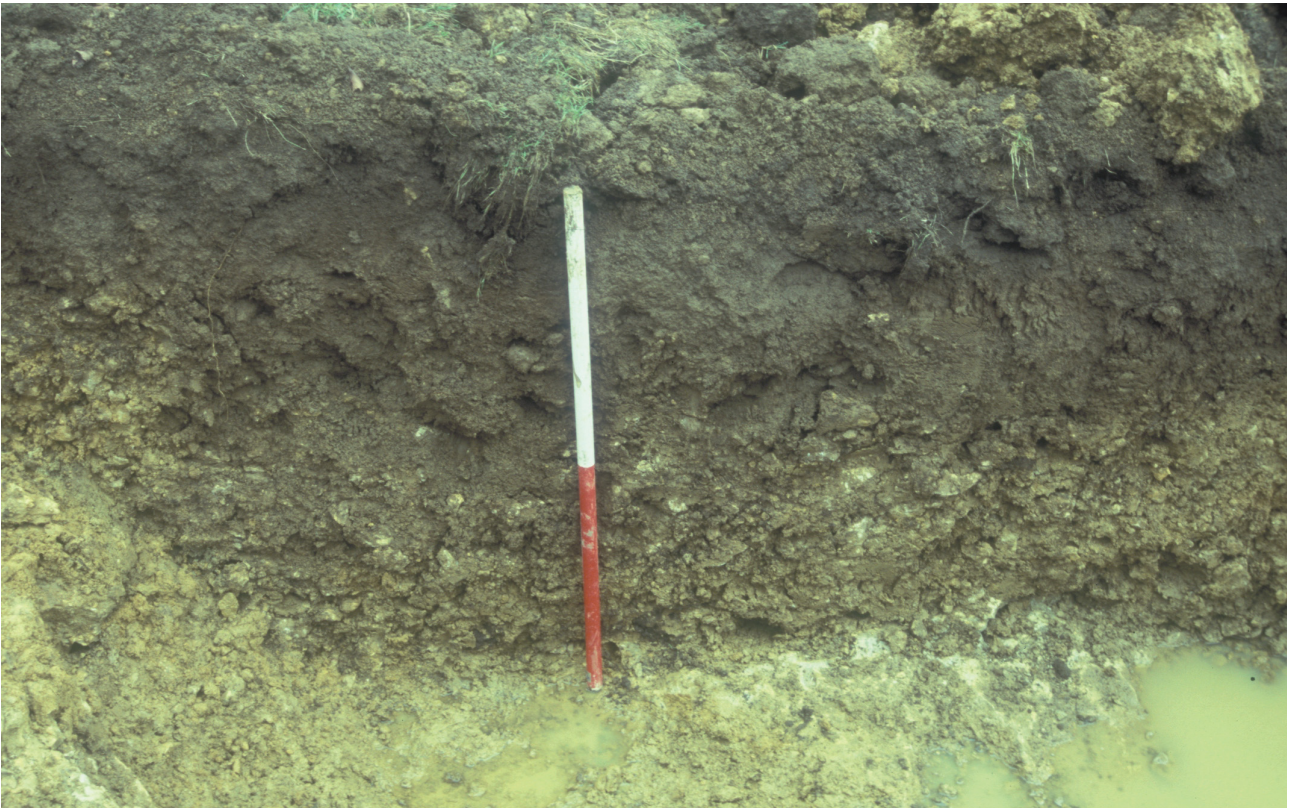


Plate 4: Boundary ditch [505], looking north.