



Northamptonshire
County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Watching Brief
at Tattenhoe Park,
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
January 2007



Leon Field

February 2007

Report 07/22

Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park

Northampton NN4 8BE

t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822

e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk

w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



STAFF

Project Manager Adam Yates BA, AIFA
Fieldwork Leon Field BA/BCom
Text Leon Field
Illustrations Hale Moharramzadeh BA MA

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Adam Yates		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological watching brief at Tattenhoe park, Milton Keynes	
Short description (250 words maximum)	In January of 2007 Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out a watching brief during road and drainage works at Tattenhoe Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire on behalf of English Partnerships. The watching brief covered an area of approximately 8.1 hectares across three different fields. Aside from a modern coal dump and an undated shallow pit no other archaeology was found within the scope of the watched area.	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Watching Brief	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Trial Trench Evaluation and Geophysical Survey (NA 2005) Excavation of area A, B, and C (NA 2006)	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Development of land	
Monument type And period		
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Buckinghamshire	
Site address (including postcode)	Land near Tattenhoe Bare farm, Tattenhoe Park	
Easting (use numerical 100km grid square no.)	SP 824 332	
Site Area	8.1 ha.	
Height OD	113-117m aOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Milton Keynes city council	
Project Design originator	NA	
Director/Supervisor	Leon Field	
Project Manager	Adam Yates	
Sponsor or funding body	English Partnerships	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	17 th January 2007	
End date	05 th February 2007	
ARCHIVES		
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	None	
Paper	Northants Archaeology	Record sheets, plans, sections
Digital		
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological watching brief at Tattenhoe Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire January 2007	
Serial title & volume	07/22	
Author(s)	L Field	
Page numbers	11	
Date	March 2007	

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT TATTENHOE PARK, MILTON KEYNES,
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
JANUARY 2007**

ABSTRACT

In January of 2007 Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out a watching brief during road construction and drainage works at Tattenhoe Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire on behalf of English Partnerships. The watching brief covered an area of approximately 8.1ha. across three different fields. Aside from a modern coal dump and an undated shallow pit no other archaeology was found within the scope of the watched area.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in January 2007 on land near Tattenhoe Bare Farm, Tattenhoe Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire (Fig 1; NGR SP 824 332).

The watching brief was undertaken as part of a series of works in advance of proposed development of the land by English Partnerships and was designed to meet the requirements of a project design issued by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2005) in accordance with a brief issued by Milton Keynes Council (Giggins 2005).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The entire site area comprises a series of fields totalling 54 hectares. Area D, the focus of the watching brief, is located in the centre of the proposed development area and is approximately 8.1 hectares in size spread over three different fields. It slopes upwards to the west from 113 to 117m aOD towards excavation area A (Fig 1 & 2, Plate 1).

Area D is bounded to the east by a stream acting as a field boundary, to the west by a hedgerow and oil pipeline and to the north and south ends in open fields.

The geology comprises Oxford Clay and Kellaways Beds overlain with Boulder Clay and Morainic drift (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm>). The land cover is predominantly

arable, with some recreational land.

2.2 Archaeological background

In 2005 Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out a trial trenching and geophysics evaluation of the area and identified four main areas of interest (Brown *et al* 2005).

- Area A was an Iron Age settlement site at Tattenhoe Bare Farm in the north-west part of the site with some peripheral features, occupying an area of 6ha.
- Area B was a post-medieval farmstead known as Bottle House, occupying 0.1ha in the south-east part of the site
- Area C comprised two ditches in the south-west part of the site
- Area D comprising a scatter of features in the central part of the site.

In 2005 Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of English partnerships, put in place and instigated a series of projects to investigate the archaeological resource present in areas A, B, and C in accordance with a brief prepared by Milton Keynes Council. Excavations were carried out in April-September 2005 to investigate a middle Iron Age settlement in area A, a post-medieval farmstead in area B and a small ditch in area C (Taylor 2005).

Area D was designated for an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during road construction (NA 2006).

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

General objectives for the four evaluation areas were set out in the project design, (NA 2005), but a specific objective was set down for area D in the brief from Milton Keynes council (Giggins 2005):

- To investigate the scatter of features and sample any other archaeological features which are exposed during the stripping of the area prior to construction.

3.2 Methodology

The watching brief covered an approximate total area of 8.1 ha. (Fig 2) but only the areas marked for the road construction were observed as specified in the project design (NA 2006).

The removal of the topsoil and other overburden was carried out by a tracked 360-degree mechanical excavator, fitted with a 2m-wide toothless ditching bucket, operating under continuous archaeological supervision. In all areas mechanical excavation proceeded as far as the natural substrate or the first significant archaeological horizons.

All potential archaeological features were investigated by hand excavation. Standard Northamptonshire Archaeology recording procedures were employed (NA 2003). All works were undertaken in agreement with Milton Keynes city council and conducted in accordance with *IFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1994, revised 2001) and the *Code of Conduct* of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1985, revised 2000). All work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Project Design (NA 2005).

4 RESULTS

4.1 General stratigraphic sequence

Throughout the area the natural geology comprised yellow/ brown clay. There was no subsoil in the furthest western part of the site, elsewhere it comprised a thin band of mid brown silty soil measuring on average 0.10m thick. Topsoil was between 0.23m thick at the lower eastern part of the area and steadily increasing up the hill to the west reaching a maximum thickness of 0.32m (Plate 3).

4.2 The features and deposits

Two features were found, both within the central part of area D.

In the north-west corner of the central area a slight depression from a former coal pile lay 0.25m below ground level, directly underneath the topsoil and above the natural clay (Fig 3). The layer, (104), was 1.20m in length with a width at its widest point of 1.10m and a depth of 0.03m on average. The layer itself was made up of dark brown/black mixed clays with frequent coal inclusions. No diagnostic material was recovered but the presence of coal in the feature would indicate a post-medieval or modern date.

In the south-east corner of the central area there was a shallow pit. The feature, [107], lay 0.30m below ground level, overlain by the topsoil and was cut into the natural (Fig 3, Section 1, Plate 2). The pit measured 0.56m in length with a width of 0.86m at its widest point and was 0.07m deep. The lower fill, (106), was of mid brown clay with no inclusions, and the upper fill, (105), was of black silty clay with frequent charcoal stains and flecking. No dating evidence was found.

5 DISCUSSION

No dating evidence was available for either of the two features to determine their relative or absolute dates. Coal found from the remains of a likely coal pile suggests a broad dating to the post-medieval or modern period but no other clearer dating is available.

The pit feature can not be dated to any period due to lack of evidence. Its close proximity to the area A excavation could suggest it was a related feature of a middle Iron Age settlement but no direct evidence was available to link the two.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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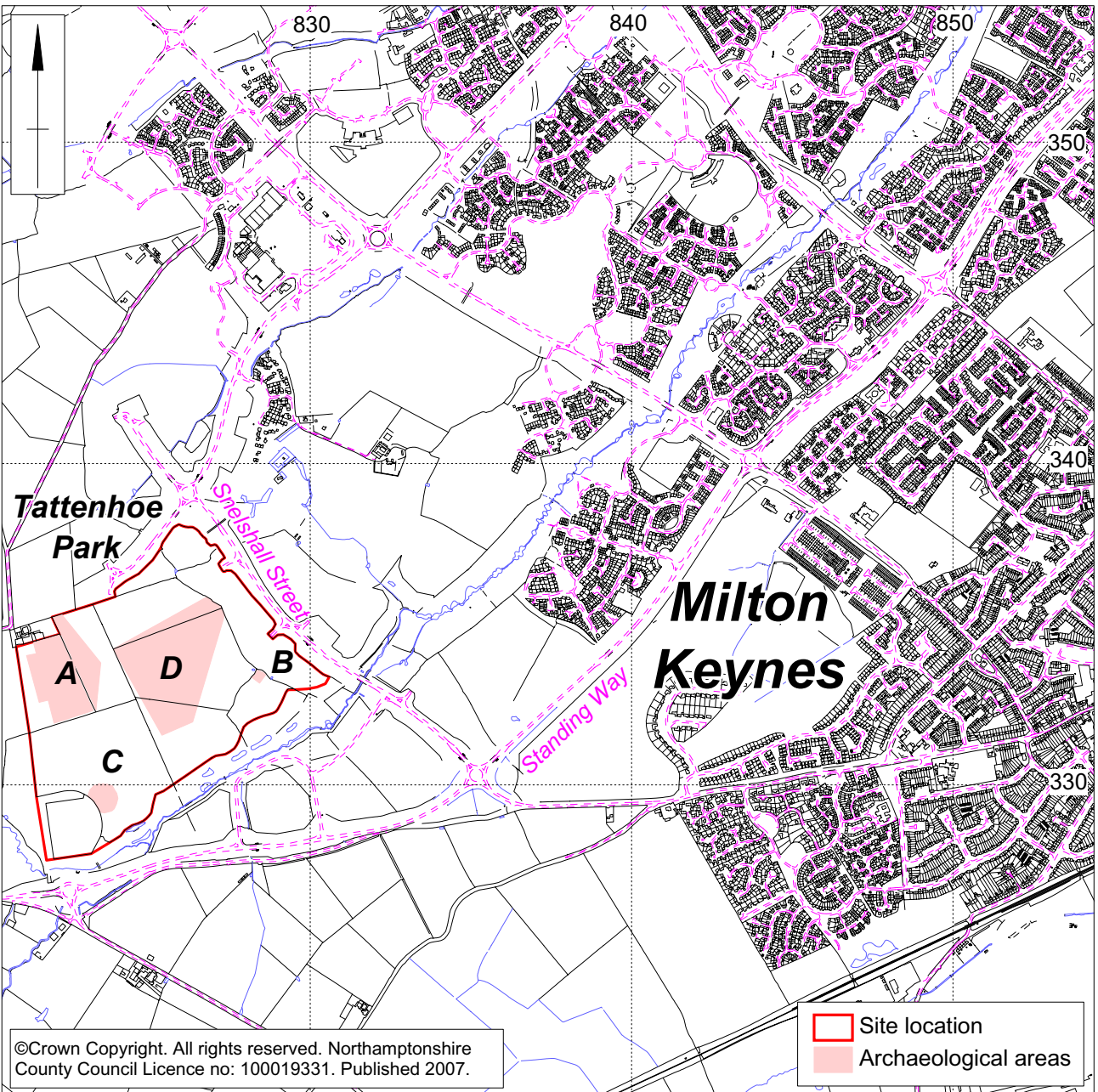
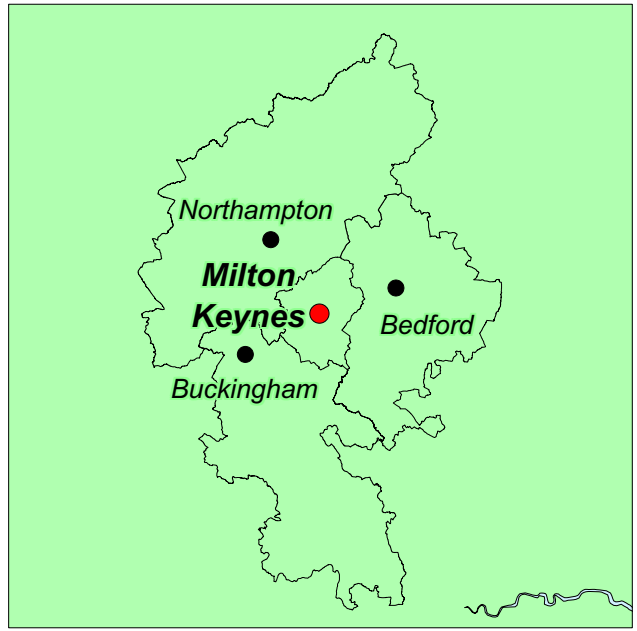
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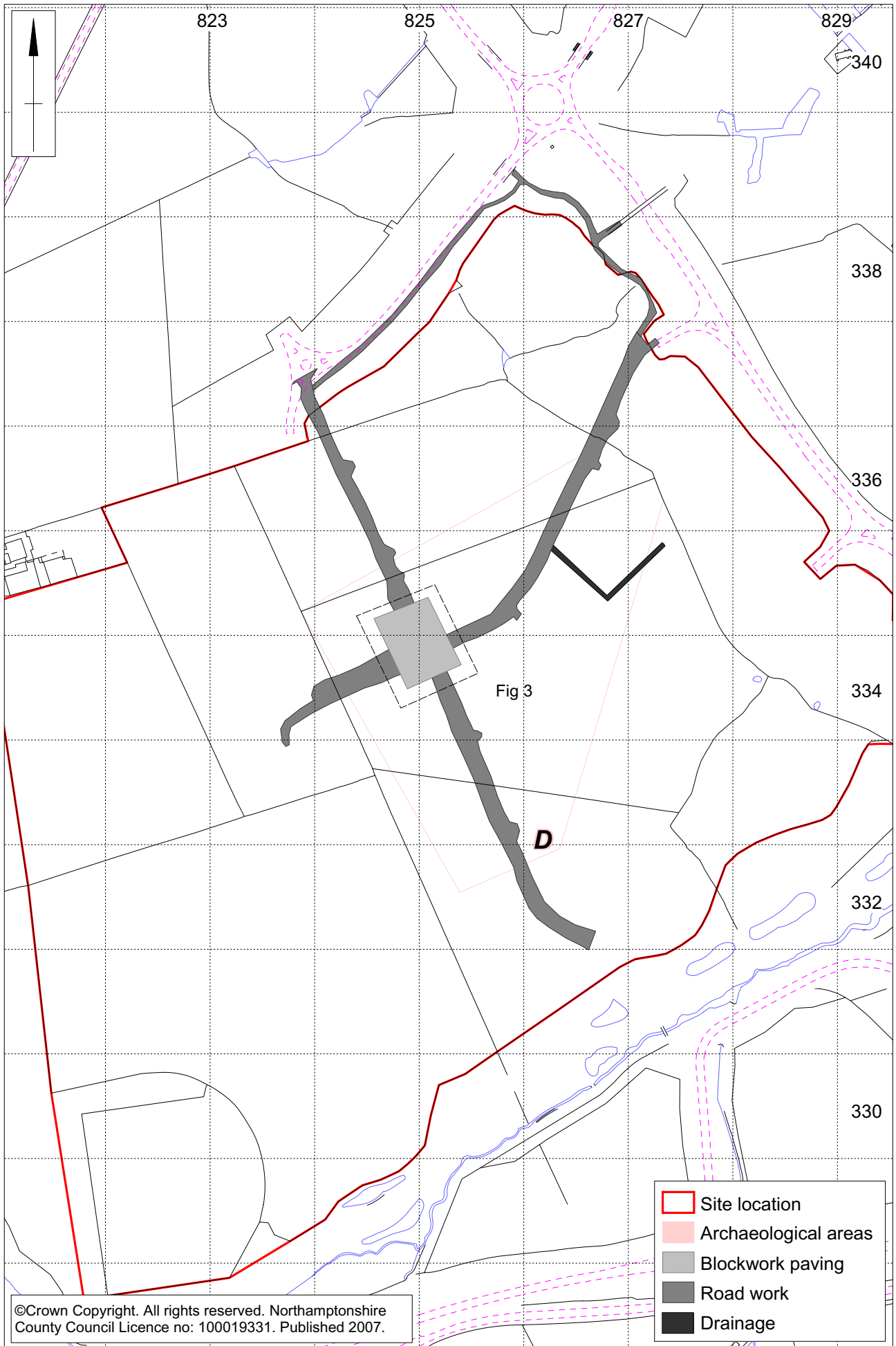
APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context number	Type	Description	Length	Width	Depth
101	Topsoil	Brown/Black silt soil			0.27
102	Subsoil	Mid brown silt soil			0.10
103	Natural	Yellow/brown Clays			
104	Layer	Dark brown/black mixed clay	1.20	1.10	0.03
105	Fill	Dark brown/black silty clay	0.56	0.71	0.02
106	Fill	Mid brown clay	0.56	0.86	0.07
107	Cut	Oven feature	0.56	0.86	0.07



Scale 1:20,000

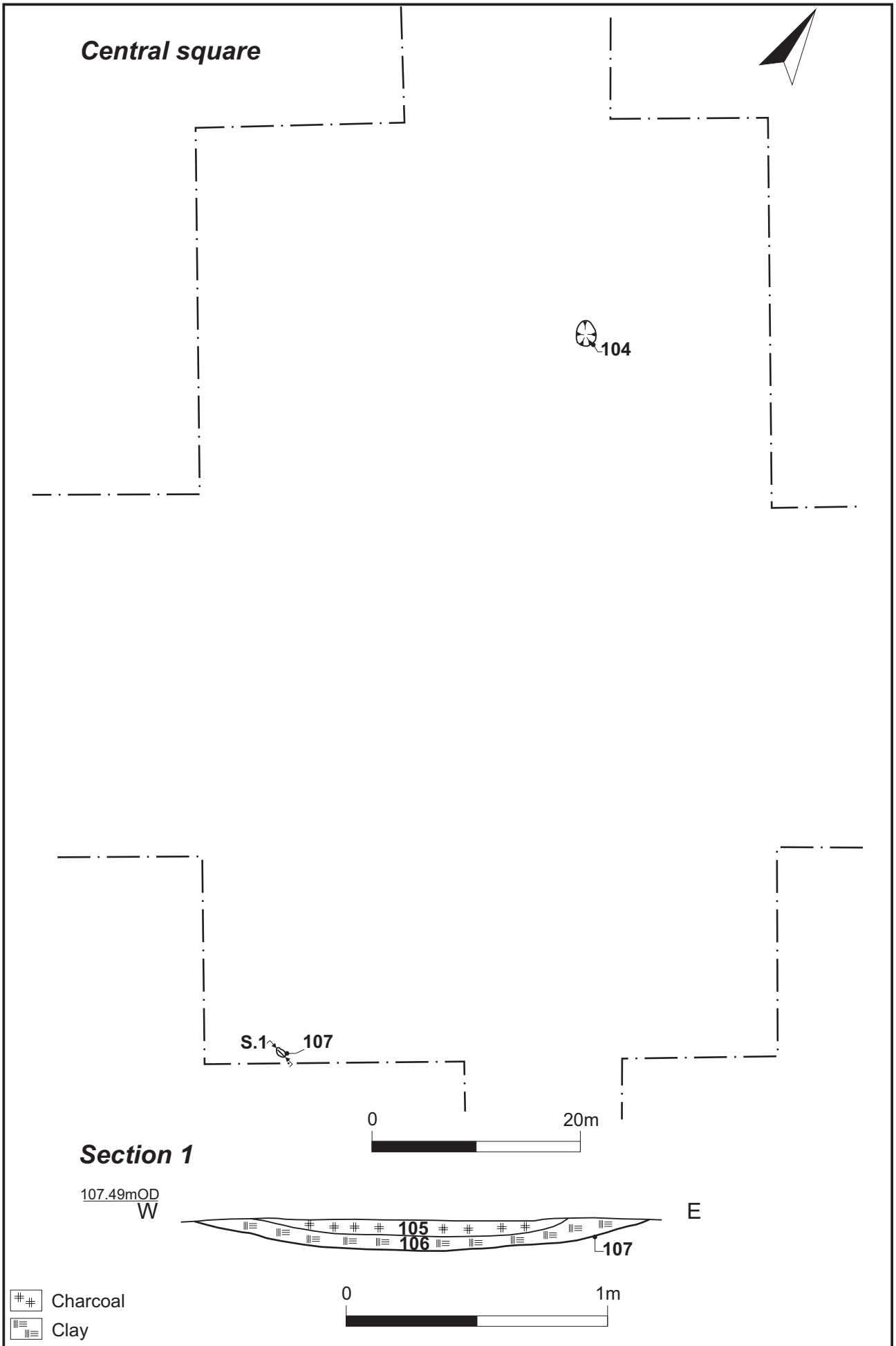
Site location Fig 1



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Scale 1:5000

Area D overview Fig 2



Detail plan, and Section 1 Fig 3



Plate 1: Central area looking west



Plate 2: Feature [107] looking north



Plate 3: Topsoil section, central area looking west