

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT:
TRIAL TRENCHING ON LAND AT GRAISELOUND, HAXEY,
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: SK 7730 9808

Planning ref. 2006/1024

AAA site code: HAG 06

North Lincolnshire Museum archaeology site code: HXAR



Report prepared for
Mr. Andrew Barlow

by Chris Clay

September 2006

Allen Archaeological Associates
Unit 1c, Branston Business Park
Lincoln Road

Branston
LN4 1NT

Tel.: 01522 794400

e-mail: allenarchaeology@btconnect.co.uk



Contents

Summary	1
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Site location and description	2
3.0 Planning background	2
4.0 Archaeological and historical background	2
5.0 Methodology	3
6.0 Results	3
6.1 Trench 1	3
6.2 Trench 2	4
6.3 Trench 3	4
7.0 Discussion and conclusion	5
8.0 Effectiveness of methodology	5
9.0 Acknowledgements	5
10.0 References	6
11.0 Site archive	6
Appendices	
Appendix 1: Colour plates	7
Appendix 2: List of archaeological contexts	9

List of Figures

- Fig. 1:** Site location, showing the development area highlighted in red (scale 1:25,000)
- Fig. 2:** Trench location, in relation to the proposed development. Ditch cuts [102] and [202] are shown, and the postulated continuation of the feature between Trenches 1 and 2 is indicated as a dotted line (scale 1:2000)
- Fig. 3:** Trench 1 plan and sections (scales 1:50 and 1:20)
- Fig. 4:** Trench 2 plan and sections (scales 1:50 and 1:20)
- Fig. 5:** Trench 3 plan and sections (scales 1:50 and 1:20)
- Fig. 6:** First Edition Ordnance Survey map of the site (1889), showing the location of the evaluation trenches (scaled to 1:10,000)

List of Plates

- Pl. 1:** General view of the development area, looking south-east, during machine excavation of Trench 1.
- Pl. 2:** Trench 1 pre-excavation, looking south.
- Pl. 3:** Trench 2, after cleaning, looking south-west.
- Pl. 4:** Southern baulk in Trench 2, looking south-east.
- Pl. 5:** Ditch [102], Trench 1, truncated on its east side by a ceramic land drain. Looking west.
- Pl. 6:** Ditch [202], Trench 2. Looking north-east.
- Pl. 7:** Hand excavated slot, Trench 2, exposing a ceramic land drain. Looking north west.
- Pl. 8:** Machine excavated sondage, Trench 2, looking south-east.

Summary

- A programme of archaeological trial trenching was undertaken on the site of a proposed fishing lake on land at Graiselound, near Haxey, North Lincolnshire.
- The site lies within an area of archaeological potential, attested by nearby prehistoric flint scatters and cropmarks of ditches and trackways of possible prehistoric date.
- Three trenches were investigated within the development area. An undated linear feature ran through Trenches 1 and 2. Modern ceramic land drains were exposed in all 3 trenches.

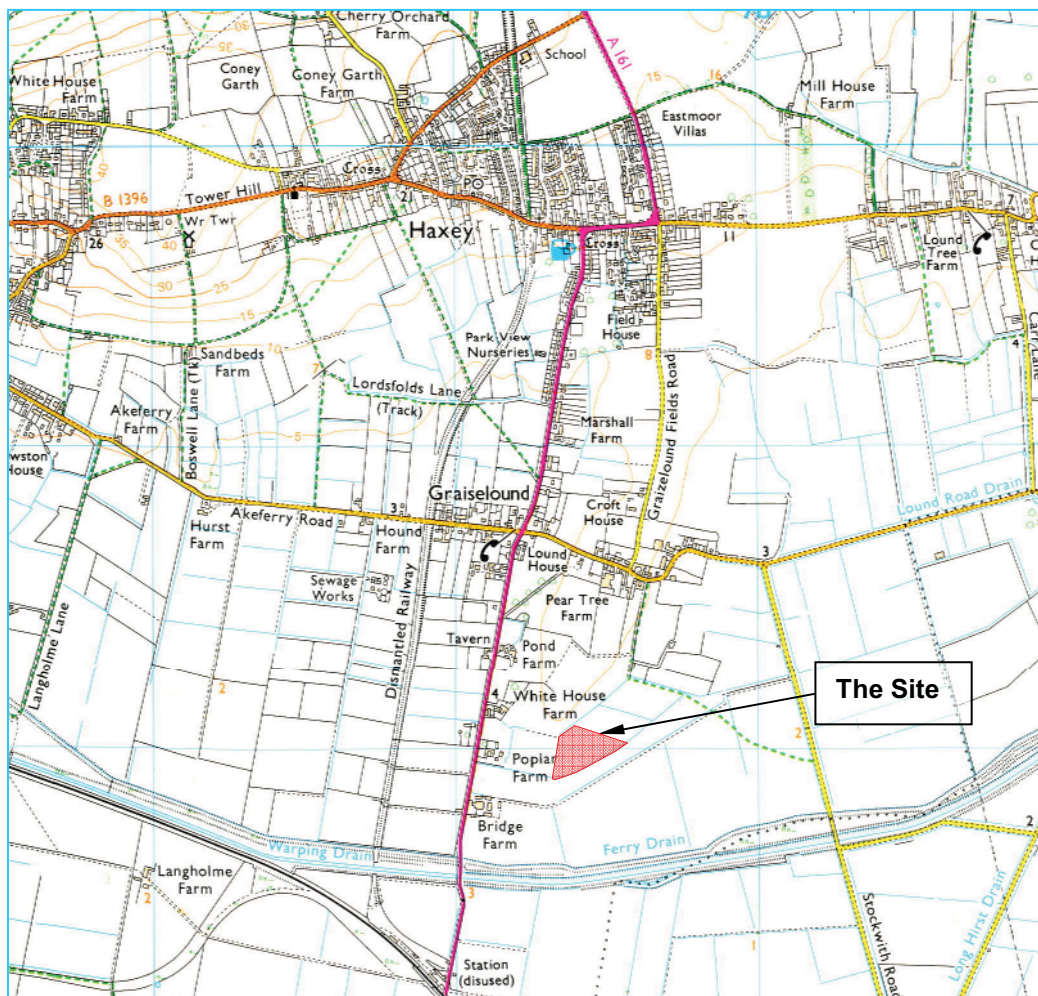


Fig. 1: Site location, showing the development area highlighted in red (scale 1:25,000)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeological Associates was commissioned by Mr Andrew Barlow to carry out a programme of archaeological trial trenching in advance of the excavation of a proposed fishing pond on land at Graiselound, near Haxey, North Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The site works and reporting conform to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Field Archaeologists 'Standards and guidance for archaeological evaluations' (IFA 2001).
- 1.3 The archive will be submitted to North Lincolnshire Museum.

2.0 Site location and description

- 2.1 The site is located at the south end of the Isle of Axholme, approximately 16.5km south-west of Scunthorpe. It is in the parish of Haxey, just to the south of the hamlet of Graiselound. The proposed pond lies within a former pasture field, to the east of the A161, bounded by field drains to the south and north, with fencing to the east and west. It centres on NGR SK 7730 9808.
- 2.2 The site is predominantly flat, and lies at a height of approximately 4m above Ordnance Datum.
- 2.3 The local geology consists of drift deposits of Older Blown Sand, overlying a solid geology of the Clarbrough Beds; Permo-Triassic deposits of Mercia Mudstone (British Geological Survey 1969).

3.0 Planning background

- 3.1 Full planning permission was granted for the development of a fishing lake with associated car parking and access (planning ref. 2006/1024). The permission was granted subject to the undertaking of a programme of archaeological works to be agreed and implemented in advance of any development work.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

- 4.1 Evidence of prehistoric activity has been identified close to the site. Fieldwalking undertaken as part of the Humber Wetlands Survey identified a small flint scatter in the field immediately to the south of the site. This comprised a barbed and tanged arrowhead, three flakes and two flint chunks, suggesting a Bronze Age date (Fenwick et al 1998). Linear cropmarks in this area may also relate to prehistoric activity. A hoard of socketed axes and a stone macehead of Bronze Age date are recorded as being found to the south of Haxey (Archaeology Data Service ref. NMR_NATINV-323132).
- 4.2 Evidence of Romano-British activity is limited to a coin of Antoninus Pius (AD 138 - 161) found to the north of Westwoodside (ADS ref. NMR_NATINV-59231), and cropmarks and pottery scatters further to the north, around Low Burnham (ADS refs. NMR_NATINV-59240 and NMR_NATINV-59241).
- 4.3 There is no archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity in the parish. However, both Haxey and Graiselound appear in the Domesday Book, suggesting that the settlements

existed in the Late Saxon period. The land at this time was owned by Geoffrey of La Guerche, and included ten fisheries among its holdings (Morgan & Thorne 1986).

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The brief for the archaeological works required the excavation of three trenches; the locations of which were suggested by the North Lincolnshire SMR Officer. The trench locations were scanned into an Ordnance Survey digital map tile and downloaded into a Thales Zmax survey grade differential GPS system. The GPS was then used to locate the trenches on site prior to excavation. Trench 1 was positioned in the location recommended by the North Lincolnshire Council Sites and Monuments Record Office. Trenches 2 and 3 were moved slightly as their suggested location was beyond the area of development impact, as marked out on site by the client. Trenches 1 and 2 measured 25m by 2m, and Trench 3 was 15m long by 2m wide.
- 5.2 Initial machine excavation of the trenches was carried out using a JCB 3CX 180° excavator, fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil deposits were removed in spits no greater than 0.2m in depth, under close archaeological supervision, until the first archaeologically significant horizon was exposed. Further excavation was then carried out by hand. Deep sondages were machine excavated in all three trenches to observe the stratigraphic sequence.
- 5.3 Archaeological features were sample excavated in order to establish depth, profile, orientation, and where possible, date and function. Slots were hand excavated through the natural blown sand deposits in each trench in order to detect further archaeological features, occupation horizons or dating evidence.
- 5.4 A full written record of all archaeological features and deposits was made on standard Allen Archaeological Associates context recording sheets, accompanied by plan and section drawings at appropriate scales (1:50 and 1:20). A full photographic record was maintained, in colour slide and black and white, and selected prints have been included in this report.

6.0 Results

6.1 Trench 1

- 6.1.1 Machine excavation of a 0.3m deep topsoil layer, 100, exposed a single linear feature, 102, running north-west to south-east. It was 2.1m wide and survived to a depth of 0.42m. It contained a single undated fill, 101, a grey silty sand, formed by natural silting. The ditch was cut into a pale yellow, loose, wind blown sand deposit, 103. A slot excavated through this deposit showed it to be 0.2m deep and sealing another blown sand deposit, 104. This was 0.3m deep and was a more compact brown sand, mottled with lenses of orange and mid grey sand and dark grey brown silty sand. The lenses of material and darker colour to this deposit may suggest a waterborne component. It sealed 105, an orange/brown clayey sand that extended beyond the limit of excavation, and may also have partially been subject to waterborne deposition.
- 6.1.2 Two modern ceramic land drains also ran across the trench, one of which cut the north side of ditch 102.
- 6.1.3 A sondage was excavated by machine at the north end of the trench, to a depth of 1.85m. Water gathering in the base of the sondage, and collapsing sides, made it unsafe to enter

for recording purposes. However, it was possible to observe a compact grey clay layer beginning approximately 1.5m below the modern ground surface.

6.2 Trench 2

- 6.2.1 The topsoil in this trench, 200, was 0.35m deep and sealed two linear features, both running north-west to south-east across the centre of the trench. The larger of the two, 202, was 2.4m wide and 0.55m deep. Its alignment suggested that it was an extension of ditch 102 exposed in Trench 1. Three fills were identified within ditch 202. The primary fill, 203 was a thin lens of mottled dark grey/brown and pale grey sand, representing natural sands blown into the feature soon after its excavation. It was sealed by 204, a layer of compact dark grey sand. This is likely to have been formed by the action of wind and rain washing sand into the feature, and mixing with decaying organic matter from plants growing in and around the ditch. The final fill was 205, a mid brown sand, also formed by natural silting. No dating evidence was recovered from the ditch.
- 6.2.2 The second linear feature, 206, ran along the east side of 202. It was only 0.15m wide and 0.05m deep, and terminated within the trench. It was filled by a single undated deposit of dark grey sand, 207.
- 6.2.3 Three probable land drains ran across the trench, one of which was excavated, exposing a ceramic pipe with 'horseshoe' profile.
- 6.2.4 A slot was excavated through the natural sand to expose the stratigraphic sequence. The trench was machined down to a natural horizon, 201, comprising a mixed deposit of pale yellow, orange and grey loose sand. The excavated slot showed this to be up to 0.2m deep. It sealed 208, a 0.18m deep layer of pale grey sand with occasional brown mottling, representing a probable wind blown deposit. Below this was 209, which was up to 0.25m deep and was a mottled brown and dark brown sand. This is also likely to have been a blown sand deposit, although the darker colour suggests some decayed organic material. It sealed a thin layer of very dark brown, laminated slightly organic silty sand, 210, which was only 0.06m deep. This may represent a former developing topsoil, incorporating moderate quantities of decayed organic matter. Below this lay 211, a 0.1m deep layer of mottled reddish brown and grey sand. The formation of this deposit is unclear; it may represent a blown sand deposit, with the orange colour being caused by the leaching out of iron rich minerals, either from the clay layers below or the organic material above. At the base of the slot, it sealed a moist light grey clayey sand with occasional small gravel, 212, that is likely to have been deposited in an environment of slow moving or standing water. No dating evidence was recovered from any of these deposits.
- 6.2.5 A machine-cut sondage was excavated at the east end of the trench, to a maximum depth of 1.2m below the modern ground surface (See Plate 8). This exposed a largely similar stratigraphic sequence to the hand excavated sondage, although the slightly organic silty sand 210, was slightly thicker, at approximately 0.1m. The sondage did not expose the pale grey clayey sand layer 212; the basal deposit being laminated pale grey and brown sand, 213, representing another probable wind blown layer.

6.3 Trench 3

- 6.3.1 The topsoil within this trench, 300, was 0.3m deep and sealed a pale yellowish grey deposit of blown sand, 301. The only feature within this trench was a single land drain running north-east to south-west.

- 6.3.2 A slot excavated through the blown sand, showed its depth to be up to 0.2m. The underlying deposit was a mottled orange/brown sand, 302, with lenses of grey/brown sand (particularly at its interface with 301 above). This deposit was similar to 211 in Trench 2, and may also have been coloured by the leaching of iron rich minerals. The clearly defined interface with 301 above may suggest the growth and subsequent decay of some vegetation at this stage which served to stabilise the soil before the accumulation of 301.
- 6.3.3 A machine excavated sondage at the west end of the trench exposed a compact grey clay with lenses of grey sand, 303, sealed by up to 0.55m of deposit 302. The interface between these two deposits in the sondage was irregular, suggesting some form of disturbance, possibly caused by animal burrowing or root action.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

- 7.1 The deposits and features identified were of limited archaeological significance. The principal feature exposed was the large ditch running through Trenches 1 and 2. No artefactual evidence was recovered from this feature to offer a date for its excavation, nor does the field boundary appear on either the Enclosure map of the area¹, or on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. The function of the small gully 206 and its relationship to the adjacent ditch is unclear in this context.
- 7.2 The natural stratigraphic sequence showed a series of blown sand deposits that had accumulated over a significant period of time. These deposits sealed a grey alluvial clay layer, evident in all three trenches, reflecting a time when the site was subject to extensive and prolonged flooding. No dating evidence was recovered to provide a chronology for this natural sequence.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

- 8.1 The methodology employed for this programme of works was appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, and has provided sufficient information to adequately evaluate the archaeological potential of the site, which is considered to be negligible.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeological Associates would like to thank Mr. Andrew Barlow for this commission. Thanks also go to the site assistant, Russell Priest.

¹ The microfiche copy of the Epworth Enclosure was consulted at Lincolnshire Archives Office, but could not be copied due to a fault with the microfiche copier.

10.0 References

British Geological Survey, 1969. *Doncaster. England and Wales Sheet 88. Drift Edition. One-Inch Series*. Keyworth, Nottingham: British Geological Survey.

I.F.A., 2001, *Standards and guidance for archaeological evaluations*, Institute of Field Archaeologists, Reading

Morgan P., & Thorn C., (eds.), 1986, *Domesday Book: vol.31: Lincolnshire*, Phillimore & Co. Ltd, Chichester

Fenwick H., Chapman H., Head R., Lillie M., 1998, 'Chapter 9. The archaeological survey of the lower Trent Valley and Winterton Beck', in Van de Noort R. & Ellis S., *Wetland heritage of the Ancholme and Lower Trent Valleys. An archaeological survey*, pp.142 – 197, Humber Wetlands Project, Centre for Wetland Archaeology, Hull.

Van de Noort R. & Ellis S., 1998, *Wetland heritage of the Ancholme and Lower Trent Valleys. An archaeological survey*, pp.142 – 197, Humber Wetlands Project, Centre for Wetland Archaeology, Hull.

11.0 Site archive

- 11.1 The documentary archive is currently in the possession of Allen Archaeological Associates. It will be deposited at North Lincolnshire Museum within six months, and archived under the museum accession code HXAR.

Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Pl. 1: General view of the development area, looking south-east, during machine excavation of Trench 1.



Pl. 2: Trench 1 pre-excitation, looking south.



Pl. 3: Trench 2, after cleaning, looking south-west.



Pl. 4: Southern baulk in Trench 2, looking south-east.



Pl. 5: Ditch [102], Trench 1, truncated on its east side by a ceramic land drain. Looking west.



Pl. 6: Ditch [202], Trench 2. Looking north-east.



Pl. 7: Hand excavated slot, Trench 2, exposing a ceramic land drain. Looking north-west.



Pl. 8: Machine excavated sondage, Trench 2, looking south-east.

Appendix 2: List of archaeological contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
Trench 1		
100	Layer	Grey silty sand. Topsoil.
101	Fill	Grey silty sand. Natural silting of 102.
102	Cut	NW-SE ditch cut. Contains 101.
103	Layer	Pale yellow sand. Wind blown sand.
104	Layer	Mottled brown sand. Wind blown/waterborne natural deposit.
105	Layer	Orange/brown clayey sand. Natural ?alluvial deposit.
Trench 2		
200	Layer	Dark brownish grey sand. Topsoil.
201	Layer	Mottled pale yellow/orange/grey sand. Wind blown sand.
202	Cut	NW-SE ditch cut. Contains 203, 204, 205.
203	Fill	Mottled grey/brown sand. Primary fill of 202. Probable blown sand deposit.
204	Fill	Compact dark grey sand. Secondary natural silting of 202.
205	Fill	Moderately compact brown sand. Tertiary natural silting of 202.
206	Cut	NW-SE linear gully, terminates in trench. Contains 207.
207	Fill	Dark grey sand. Natural silting of 206.
208	Layer	Pale grey sand, occ. brown mottling. Wind blown deposit?
209	Layer	Mottled brown and dark brown sand. Blown sand with organic component.
210	Layer	V. dark brown, laminated slightly organic silty sand. Poss former topsoil?
211	Layer	Mottled reddish brown and grey sand. Wind blown sand deposit.
212	Layer	Moist light grey clayey sand, occ. small gravel. Alluvial deposit.
213	Layer	Laminated pale grey and brown sand. Wind blown deposit?
Trench 3		
300	Layer	Dark brownish grey sand. Topsoil.
301	Layer	Pale yellowish grey sand. Wind blown sand.
302	Layer	Mottled orange/brown sand. Wind blown sand.
303	Layer	Compact grey clay, occ grey sand lenses. Alluvial deposit.

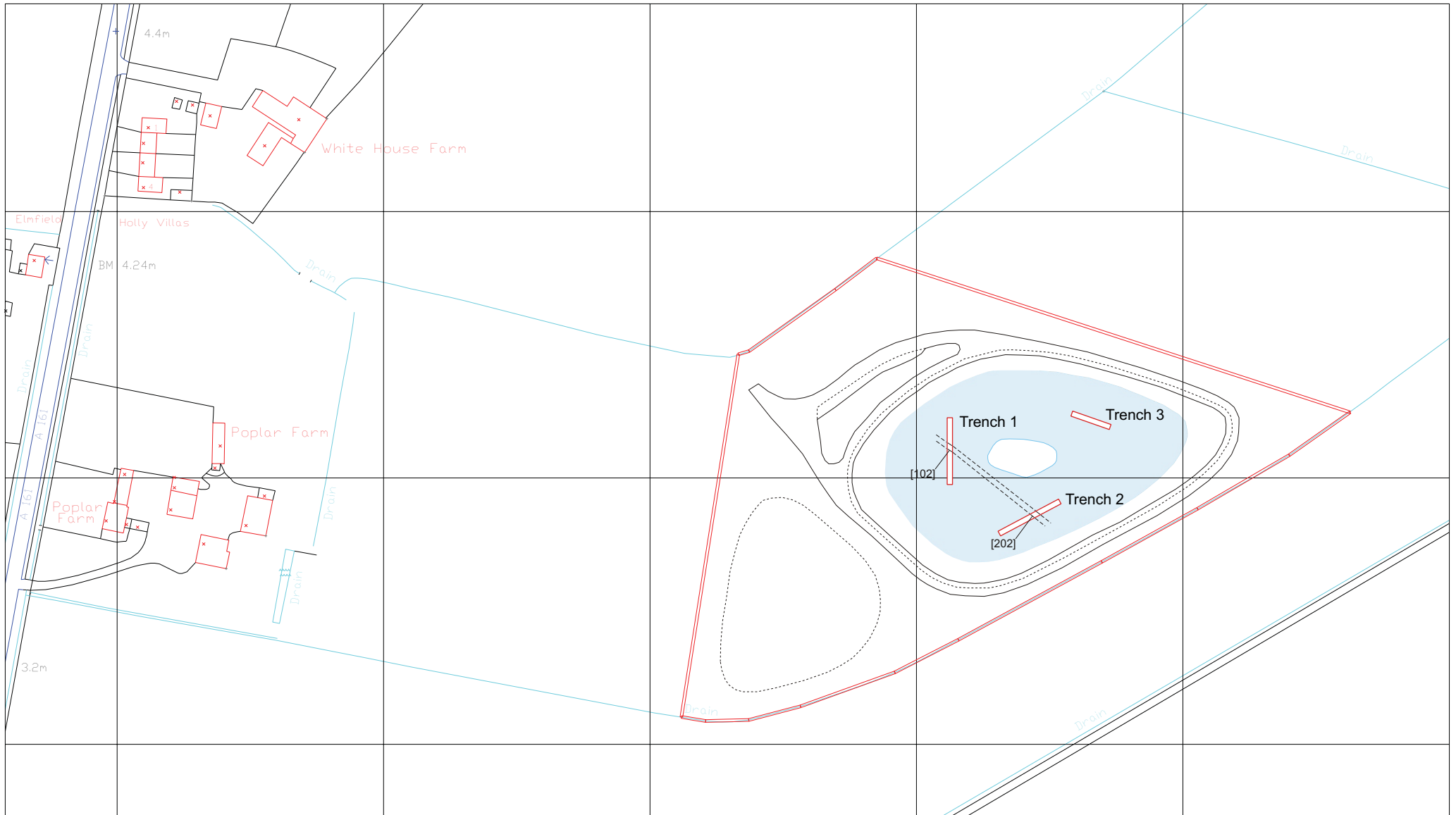


Fig. 2: Trench location, in relation to the proposed development. Ditch cuts [102] and [202] are shown, and the postulated continuation of the feature between Trenches 1 and 2 is indicated as a dotted line (scale 1:2000)

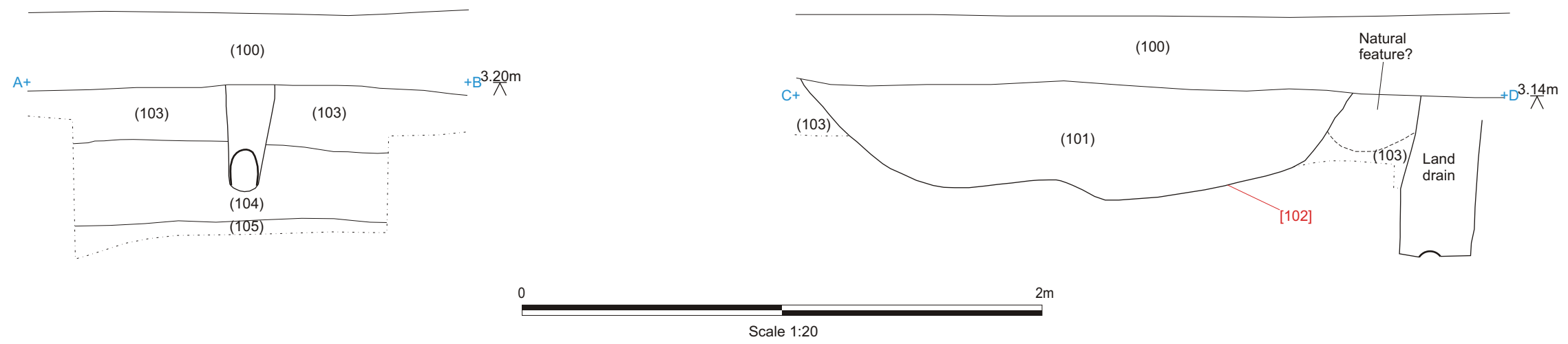
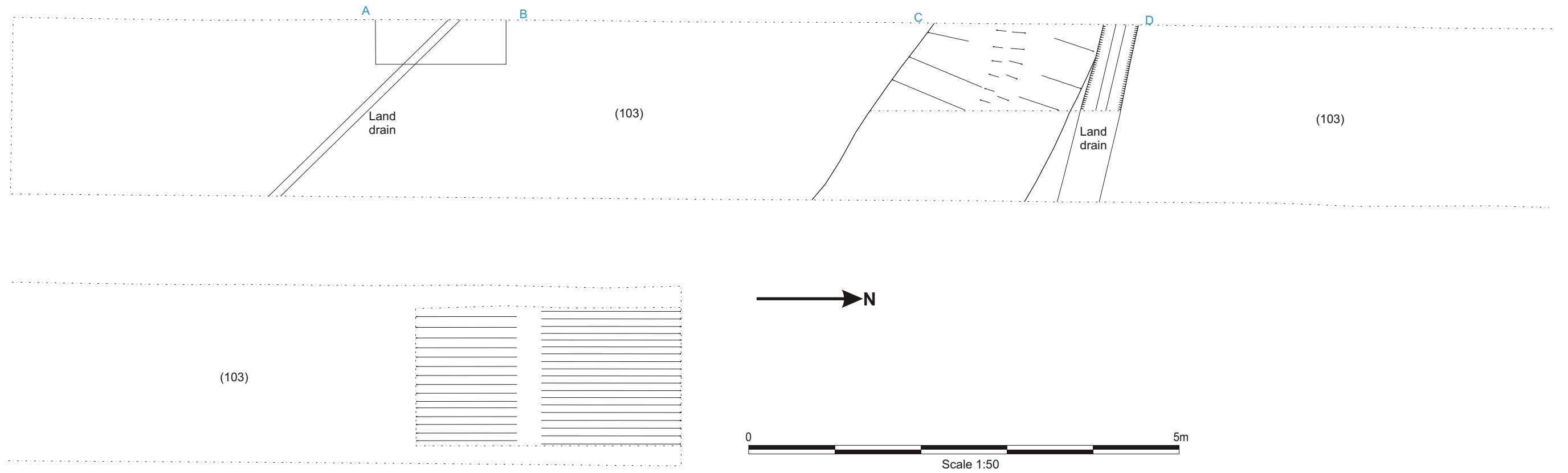


Fig. 3: Trench 1 plan and sections (scales 1:50 and 1:20)

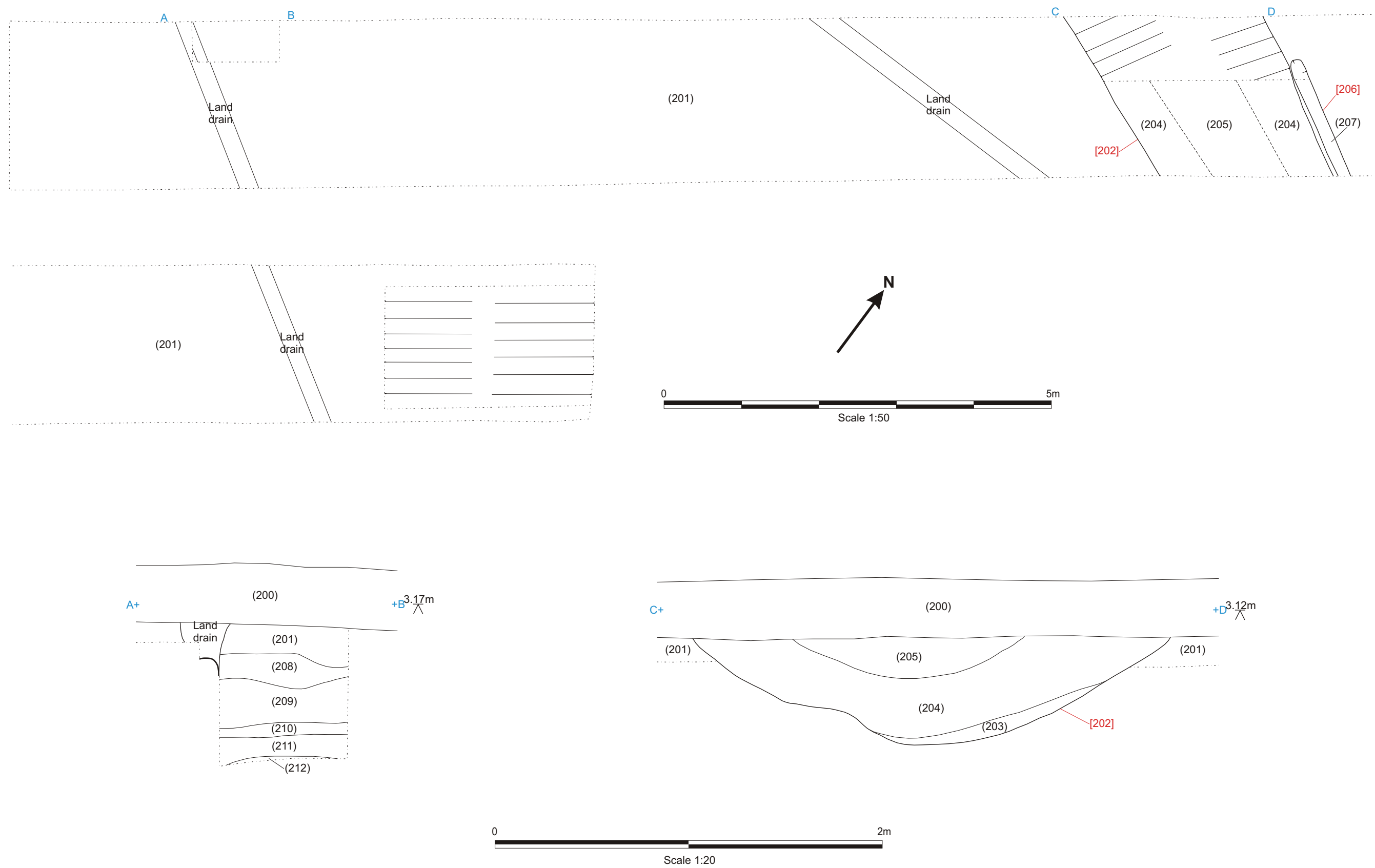


Fig. 4: Trench 2 plan and sections (scales 1:50 and 1:20)

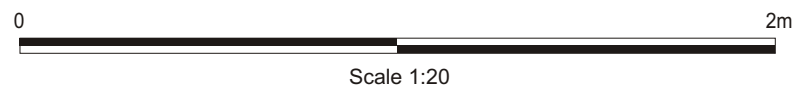
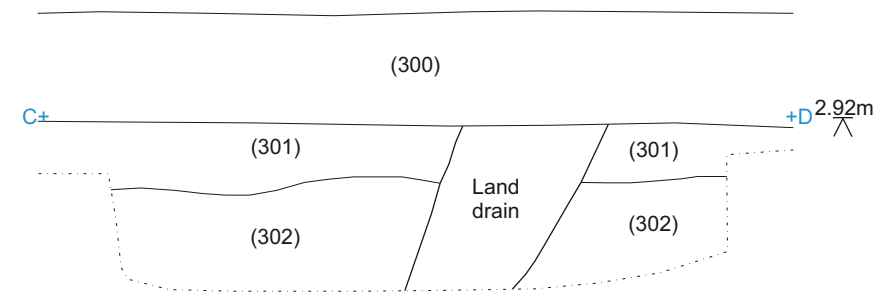
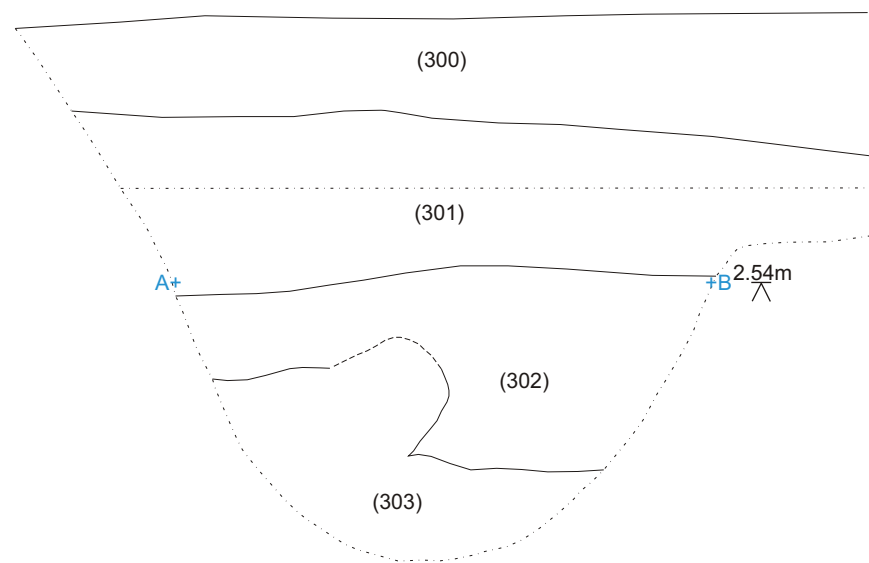
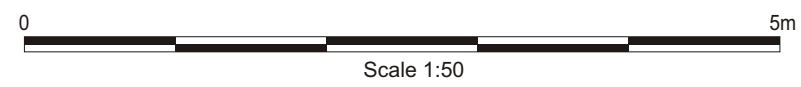
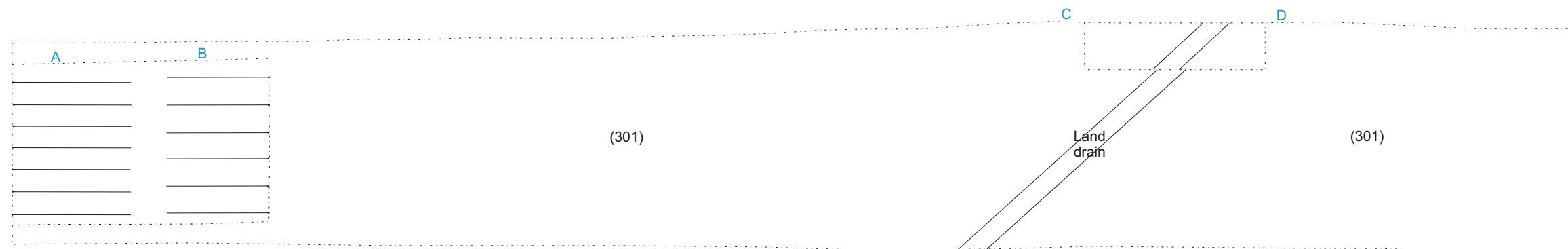


Fig. 5: Trench 3 plan and sections (scales 1:50 and 1:20)