

LAND AT THE POPLARS, POPLARS LANE, LEGBOURNE, LINCOLNSHIRE

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION TRENCHING**

NGR: TF 36724 84126  
ELDC Planning Ref.: pre-planning  
LCNCC Museum Accn No. 2010.55  
Site Code: LTPE 10  
PCA Job Ref: 630

Report prepared for

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by

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## 1.0 Non-Technical Summary

- Five archaeological evaluation trenches were opened by machine under archaeological supervision on a plot of land at The Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne, Lincolnshire.
- Relatively low densities of ditch-like features and one shallow pit were identified in three trenches situated towards the northern part of the site. The only pottery recovered was of medieval date (13-15th century).
- Part of a small late Saxon bead, not thought to derive from a burial context, was recovered after sieving a soil sample from a ditch in Trench 2.
- A 17th century or later brick rubble foundation associated with a track in Trench 4 appeared to continue the line of Poplars Lane, and may have served a lodge house beyond the proposed development site.
- A former stream channel was exposed towards the south of the site, which may have been diverted when the railway was constructed in the 19th century.
- Development of the site may have a limited impact on medieval archaeological remains, which appear to be restricted to the northern part of the site (closer to the historic core of Legbourne). To mitigate the effects of this, a restricted programme of strip, map and recording, with supplementary recording during development, has been agreed with the Planning Archaeologist for East Lindsey District Council.

## 2.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCA) was commissioned by Fenland Laundries Ltd in April 2010 to undertake archaeological evaluation trenching on land adjacent to The Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne. Site works, directed by Neil Jefferson, commenced 26th April 2010 and were completed 30/4/2010.

The archaeological programme was undertaken to meet the objectives of a project specification prepared by PCA (dated 6th April 2010) and approved by the East Lindsey District Council archaeological advisor. The work was conducted in accordance with the recommendations of *Code of Conduct* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2008), *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2008 as revised), and the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (Lincolnshire County Council, 2010 v2.1).

## 3.0 Site Location and Description (Figs. 1 and 2)

The village of Legbourne lies approximately 4km to the south-east of Louth. The proposed development, situated at the southern edge of the village, comprises a cultivated, sub-circular field of approximately 4ha, attached to 'The Poplars'. Hedges surround most of the site, which is otherwise bounded to the west and south by a stream, to the east by a drain, and by residential properties (including The Poplars) to the north. Three mature trees lie in the western half of the site.

A trout farm, Cawthorpe Spring Farm, lies to the immediate south of the site, and a disused railway is situated to the west. The site is centred on NGR: TF 36724 84126.

The site of the proposed lake and landscaping areas is currently open ground. The topography is characterised by a slight south facing slope that falls from the highest ground adjacent to The Poplars towards waterlogged ground at the southern end of the site.

The solid geology of the area comprises Sandstone (Carstone Formation), which is overlain by glacial (Diamicton) Till (<http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer/>).



**Fig. 1** Site location plan (based on the 1990 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Landranger map, Sheet 122, reproduced at 1:25,000 scale. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCA Licence No. 100049278).

#### **4.0 Planning background**

There is a proposal for the excavation of a lake and the creation of associated landscaping. No planning application has yet been submitted but preliminary discussions have taken place with the East Lindsey District Council Archaeological Advisor, and a project brief was issued in December 2009. A geophysical survey was conducted as an initial phase of evaluation, and was used to inform the subsequent trenching programme.

#### **5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background**

The site lies within the extent of surviving earthworks of Legbourne shrunken medieval village, depicted as probable late medieval settlement earthworks including tofts, crofts, ridge and furrow, boundaries and a pond. The full extent of this activity is not known.

The site lies in close proximity to the earthwork remains of Legbourne Priory, founded in the 12th century, and now a scheduled ancient monument.

A fluxgate gradiometer survey undertaken March 2010 identified what appeared to be predominantly natural deposits associated with wet ground/alluvial material (Bunn, D. 2010 *Geophysical Survey: Land at The Poplars, Legbourne, East Lindsey, Lincolnshire*. Pre-Construct Geophysics Report, March 2010). Potential indications of medieval settlement remains, comprising possible ditches and pits, were restricted towards the north/north-eastern sector. A linear arrangement of relatively strong anomalies in the

western part of the site was thought to have possibly derived from ceramic materials within a more recent ditch or drain.

## 6.0 Aims and Objectives

The principal aim of the evaluation was to gather information to establish presence/absence, character, extent, state of preservation and date of any archaeological remains present. This information would be used to inform and assist the proposed development, and at the same time seek to ensure the preservation of any significant archaeological remains; either *in situ* or by record.

## 7.0 Methodology

The evaluation involved the investigation of five 15m x 2m trenches, located as indicated on Fig. 2. Trench positions were designed to investigate a number of geophysical anomalies that had been identified across the proposed development site. Trench locations were accurately located by GPS and then opened using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless blade.

All machining was carried out under constant supervision, until the first archaeologically significant or natural deposit was encountered. Each trench was hand cleaned, and archaeological features and deposits were sample excavated, where finds were retrieved for dating purposes following PCA standard operating procedures.

Context numbers were assigned for recording each feature / deposit, and pro-forma recording sheets were completed. A context summary is provided (Appendix 2). Trenches were recorded in both plan and section, where plans were prepared at scale 1:50, sections at 1:20. A photographic record was maintained to complement these accounts, and selected photographs are reproduced in this report (Appendix 1).

## 8.0 Results (Pls. 1-15)

### **Trench 1** (Figs. 2 and 3; Pls. 3 and 4)

This trench was aligned north-east/south-west, and was sited to the east of The Poplars towards the north of the proposed development site. The topsoil (100) was a dark brown clayey sand, 0.3m thick. It covered a 0.15m thick orange/brown clayey sand subsoil (102), with natural pebbly gravel (102) below. Parts of four backfilled features were identified in the northern part of the trench, all sealed by the subsoil.

The eastern edge of shallow pit or depression [108] extended 0.6m into the trench. This was 0.18m deep and 4m long, with a shallow side and flat base. One fragment of animal bone was found in the fill (107) (Appendix 6). Approximately 1m to the north was a 0.6m wide, 0.14m deep gully or ditch [106], aligned west-north-west/east-south-east. No dating evidence was recovered from the fill of this feature.

A shallow (0.28m) curvilinear ditch [104] was revealed at the northern end of the trench, cutting through the southern edge of a 0.6m deep ditch [110] (Pl. 4). The deeper ditch was over 1m wide, with a north-west/south-east alignment, steeply sloping sides and a narrow base. Its fill (109) contained domestic waste, including pottery sherds of 13th-15th century date (Appendices 3 and 7). The shallower feature, which was at least 0.65m wide, had a flat base and had cut through the fill of [110]. Ditch [110] was interpreted as a component of a possible enclosure, where [104] could have been a shallower recut. Pottery of 13th/15th century date was found in the fill of [110]

**Trench 2** (Figs. 2 and 4; Pls. 5-9)

This trench was aligned north-east/south-west, and sited immediately to the south of the grounds of The Poplars. It identified relatively high levels of past activity in this part of the site, mostly associated with drainage or land division. Some features may have been precursors of the modern boundaries of The Poplars, though in slightly different positions.

The topsoil (200) was 0.35m thick, overlying 0.15m of subsoil (201). The underlying natural gravel and sandy clay over the eastern side of the trench (203) was less sandy than to the west (202), coinciding with a slope down to the east.

Ditch [207], which featured longitudinally along the southern side of the trench, was later in date than the other ditches and was either an earlier southern boundary of The Poplars plot, or defined an access beside it. The steeply sloping northern edge of this feature broke to a flattish base at a depth of 0.4m; its width being greater than 0.7m (Pl. 6). Its fill (206) contained domestic waste, and assessment of a soil sample identified half of a late Saxon small bead and a droplet of lead melt waste (Appendices 7 and 8).

Approximately 2.5m from the western end of the trench, a north-west/south-east aligned ditch [213] was exposed; 0.28m deep and 1.1m wide (Pl. 9). This may have been a continuation of an existing boundary to the north-west.

Ditch [205], just clipped at the south-east corner of the trench, was aligned roughly north-east/south-west. Little of its profile was accessible, but it seemed unlikely to have been a return of either Ditch [207] or [213] (Pl. 8). It is also unlikely to have been associated with north-south aligned ditch [209], which was only 1.08m wide, and 0.4m deep.

Ditch [209] had cut across the eastern side of a 1.4m diameter pit [211] which had a surviving depth of 0.4m, remaining within the gravel. The pit contained 13th/14th century pottery and an animal bone fragment, and may have been associated with the disposal of rubbish (Appendices 3-6).

**Trench 3** (Figs. 2 and 5; Pls. 10 and 11)

This north-east/south-west aligned trench was located close to the centre of the proposed redevelopment plot, 55m south of the boundary of The Poplars' garden. Topsoil and subsoil layers were similar to those in the other trenches, but the thin natural gravel with sandy clay, layer (302), had a higher clay content than in Trenches 1 and 2. It overlaid a clay layer (303).

Two features were recorded at the western end of the trench, both of which may have had a drainage function. A 0.3m wide strip of land between them may have been left deliberately, as the features appeared to be parallel. The larger of the two, ditch [307], was 0.9m wide and 0.2m deep, with shallow sides and a rounded, possibly recut, base. Gully [305] to its east was 0.5m wide and 0.1m deep. Excavation of each had stopped when the heavy clay (303) was encountered, but reaching the clay may have been intentional.

**Trench 4** (Figs. 2 and 6; Pls. 12 and 13)

The north-east/south-west aligned trench was sited about 80m south of the boundary of The Poplars' garden. The foundation of a brick rubble track (403) crossed this trench from south-east to north-west, coinciding with a marked geophysical anomaly. The 2.4m wide feature had been cut through the subsoil (401) but was overlain by topsoil (400) and had been disturbed by ploughing after it became redundant. The bricks within the

rubble were handmade, providing a date range of 17th-19th century (Appendices 4 and 5).

The geophysical survey results indicate that the post-medieval track terminates about 25m from the watercourse at the southern edge of the development plot, and appears to have continued the line of Poplars Lane.

**Trench 5** (Figs. 2 and 6; Pls. 14 and 15)

The north-east/south-west aligned trench was positioned 65m to the north of the stream at the southern edge of the proposed development plot.

A 3m wide shallow south-east/north-west aligned backfilled ditch or watercourse [504] crossed the evaluation trench. It was 0.5m deep, with gently sloping sides and a rounded base, with a fill of grey clay (503). The feature coincided with the position of a broad, slightly sinuous, anomaly on the geophysical survey. This feature may represent a former course of the stream, which now turns abruptly at the end of Poplars Lane and flows around the western side of the proposed development site.

## 9.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The medieval finds are tightly grouped within the 13th and 14th/15th centuries, with no evidence of any dated activity taking place between then and the construction of the 17th century or later track recorded in Trench 4. This seems to indicate either that medieval occupation on or close to the site was of limited duration, or that the site remained clear of domestic intervention after the ditches were backfilled. The majority of the retrieved pottery sherds were recovered from ditches in Trench 1, closest to the core of the historic settlement. The presence of domestic waste in the sampled fills of [110] and [207] suggests that this material may derive from settlement activity to the south of the present village, closer to these evaluation trenches.

The brick track foundation crossing Trench 4 appears to represent a continuation of Poplars Lane. That lane appears to cut across the plot alignments of the medieval settlement but is roughly parallel with the former railway line, hinting at a post-medieval or even late 19th century origin for the lane. This dating is similar to that of the brick rubble in the track foundation. The function of the metalled thoroughfare is not especially clear, other than as an access across a poorly drained part of the field or parkland, but it may have originally extended southwards to a house, marked on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition One Inch map and labelled on a later edition as a Lodge (OS 1824; OS 1888). Both maps show a lane to that house from Wood Lane (to the west); neither shows a track from the north.

The putative former watercourse recorded in Trench 5 produced no evidence of having been backfilled deliberately and no date can be given with confidence. During the evaluation, a local resident recollected that there had been a field boundary in this approximate position. This would imply that both the watercourse alignment and the 20th century field layout were contemporary, which may suggest a late post-medieval date for the diversion or natural silting of the feature. Although medieval monastic communities were often responsible for water management schemes, this instance may be associated with the construction of the railway in 1863. It may be the stream marked on the 1824 map but the map scale is too small to be sure (OS 1824).



## **10.0 Effectiveness of Methodology**

The methodology employed was appropriate to allow the investigation and recording of deposits and features within the evaluation trenches, thus providing both the developer and the local planning authority with information that can be used to inform the advancement of the proposed development scheme.

## **11.0 Acknowledgements**

Pre-Construct Archaeological services Ltd would like to thank Fenland Laundries Ltd for this commission.

## **12.0 Bibliography**

OS 1824 Ordnance Survey First Series 1:63.360 map, Sheet No. 84.

<http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/>

OS 1888 Ordnance Survey First Series 1:63.360 map, Sheet No. 84, with railway revisions.

## **13.0 Site Archive**

The documentary archive for the site is currently held by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd. This will be deposited with The Collection before the end of December 2010. (Accn. No. LCNCC: 2010.55).



Pl. 1 The evaluated site, looking south from beside Trench 2.

Pl. 2 Location of Trench 1 (looking south-east).



Pl. 3 Trench 1: exploratory slots have been excavated across the features identified below the subsoil. Looking south-west, scales 1m.



Pl. 4 Trench 1:  
section across ditches  
[104] and [110]  
(looking south-east,  
scales 1m and 0.5m).

Pl. 5 Trench 2,  
looking south-west.  
Exploratory slots have  
been excavated  
across the ditches  
crossing the trench  
(scales 1m and 0.5m).



Pl. 6 Trench 2:  
section across the  
western side of ditch  
[207]. Looking south-  
west, scales 0.5m).



Pl. 7 Trench 2:  
section across ditches  
[209] and [211].  
Looking south-east,  
scales 1m and 0.5m.

Pl. 8 Trench 2:  
section across part of  
ditch [205] at the  
south-east corner of  
the trench. This  
feature may be a  
return of ditch [213].  
Looking south, scales  
0.5m.

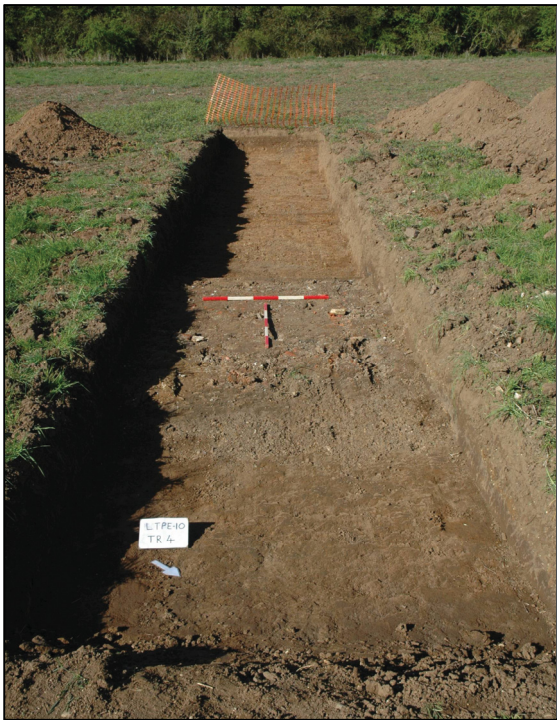


Pl. 9 Trench 2:  
section across ditch  
[213] (looking east,  
scales 1m and 0.5m).



Pl. 10 Trench 3 (looking north-east, scales 1m).

Pl. 11 Trench 3: section across gully [305] and ditch [307] at the western end of the trench. Looking south-east, scales 1m and 0.5m.



Pl. 12 Trench 4, showing the position of the brick rubble track foundation (403) (looking south-west, scales 1m).



Pl. 13 Trench 4: view along brick rubble track foundation (403). The track base had been cut through the subsoil, which has been partly removed to the left and fully removed to the right. Looking south-east, scales 1m.

Pl. 14 Trench 5: the depression across the centre of the trench is interpreted as the natural course of a former watercourse [504]. Looking east, scales 1m.



Pl. 15 Trench 5: Gravel base of [504], which may represent a former course of a stream. (Looking south-east, scales 1m and 0.5m.)

## Appendix 2

## Context Summary (LTPE 10)

Trench	Context	Type	Relationships	Description	Findings	Dating
1	100	Layer	above 101	Grey/brown clayey sand topsoil, 0.3m thick		
1	101	Layer	below 100, above 103, 105, 107	Orange/grey/brown clayey sand subsoil, 0.15m thick		
1	102	Layer	cut by 110, 106,108; above 111	Brown/orange clayey sand and gravel with frequent pebbles. Natural deposit.		
1	103	Fill	below 101; fill of ditch 104	Grey/brown sandy clay	pottery	13/14thC medieval
1	104	Cut	filled by 103, cuts 109	Curvilinear ditch, possibly enclosure ditch. 0.65m wide, 0.29m deep		
1	105	Fill	below 101, fill of ditch 106	Grey/brown sandy clay	pottery	13/14thC medieval
1	106	Cut	filled by 105, cuts 102	Small east-west ditch, 0.62m wide, 0.14m deep. Rounded base		
1	107	Fill	below 101; fill of pit 108	Grey/brown sandy clay	animal bone x1	
1	108	Cut	filled by 107; cuts 102	Large shallow ?oval pit, 0.7m+ x 4.1m+ x 0.2m deep		
1	109	Fill	cut by 104; fill of ditch 110	Light grey/brown sandy clay. Higher proportion of large stones in fill on north-east side	pottery	13/14thC medieval
1	110	Cut	filled by 109, cuts 102	NW-SE ditch, 1.1m+ wide, 0.62m deep. ?Boundary ditch.		
1	111	Layer	below 102	White natural gravel		
2	200	Layer	above 201	Grey/brown clayey sand topsoil, 0.3m thick		
2	201	Layer	below 200, above 206	Orange/grey/brown clayey sand subsoil, 0.15m thick		
2	202	Layer	cut by 213	Pale yellow gravel. Natural deposit.		
2	203	Layer	cut by 210, 205	White natural gravel		
2	204	Fill	cut by 207, fill of 205	Dark grey/brown clayey sand		
2	205	Cut	filled by 204, cuts 203	NE-SW ditch, 0.7m+ wide, 0.38m deep		
2	206	Fill	below 201, fill of 207	Grey/brown clayey sand	pottery	13/14thC medieval
2	207	Cut	filled by 206, cuts 204, 208, 212	East-west ditch, ?boundary ditch. 0.7m+ wide, 0.4m+ deep		
2	208	Fill	cut by 207, fill of 209	Brown/grey clayey sand		
2	209	Cut	Filled by 208, cuts 210	North-south steep-sided, narrow base ditch; east side of cut has a narrow shelf. 1.08m wide, 0.4m deep		

2	210	Fill	cut by 209, fill of 211	Grey/brown clayey sand	animal bone x1
2	211	Cut	filled by 210, cuts 203	1.3m+ x 1.37m+ pit, 0.46m deep. Rounded base.	
2	212	Fill	cut by 207, fill of 213	Orange grey/brown clayey sand	
2	213	Cut	filled by 212, cuts 202, 203	NW-SE ditch, 1.1m wide, 0.28m deep, rounded base	
3	300	Layer	above 301	Grey/brown clayey sand topsoil, 0.3m thick	
3	301	Layer	below 500, above 304, 306	Orange/grey/brown clayey sand subsoil, 0.15m thick	
3	302	Layer	above 303, cut by 305, 307	Pale yellow gravel. Natural deposit.	
3	303	Layer	below 302	Grey clay natural, 0.2m+ thick	
3	304	Fill	below 301, fill of 305	Grey/brown sandy clay	
3	305	Cut	filled by 304, cuts 302	NW-SE gully, 0.52m wide, 0.12m deep. Sloping sides.	
3	306	Fill	below 301, fill of 307	Black/dark brown clayey sand	
3	307	Cut	filled by 306, cuts 302	NW-SE ditch, 0.92m wide, 0.23m deep.	
4	400	Layer	above 401	Grey/brown clayey sand topsoil, 0.3m thick	
4	401	Layer	cut by 404, above 402	Orange/grey/brown clayey sand subsoil, 0.15m thick	
4	402	Layer		Natural	
4	403	Fill	below 400, fill of 404	Grey/brown sandy clay with high proportion of rubble	bricks, tile, slate
4	404	Cut	filled by 403, cuts 405	NW-SE feature 2.2m wide, 0.1m+ deep. ?Construction trench for post-medieval track.	
4	405	Layer	cut by 404, above 401	Orange/grey silty clay lens, 0.1m thick, either side of track 404.	
5	500	Layer	above 501	Grey/brown clayey sand topsoil, 0.3m thick	
5	501	Layer	below 500, above 503	Grey/brown sandy clay subsoil, 0.15m thick	
5	502	Layer	cut by 504	Pale yellow sand. Natural deposit.	
5	503	Fill	below 503, fill of 504	Grey clay, probably natural. 0.5m+ deep	
5	504	Cut	filled by 503, cuts 502, 505	North-south irregular feature, 3.7m wide, 0.5m+ deep. ?Former stream channel.	
5	505	Layer	cut by 504	Pale yellow gravel. Natural deposit.	



## Appendix 3

## Pottery Archive for Land at the Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne, Lincolnshire (LTPE 10)

Jane Young

trench	context	cname	sub fabric	form type	sherds	vessels	weight	decoration	part	action	ref no	description	date	condition
Trench 1	103	TOY	+ ca	jug	1	1	4		BS				late 13th to 14th	
Trench 1	103	TOY	+ ca	jar	2	1	16		BS			abraded	late 13th to 14th	
Trench 1	103	BEVO2T		jug	1	1	7		BS			abraded	13th to early/mid 14th	
Trench 1	103	TOY	+ ca	large jar	1	1	17		BS				late 13th to 14th	
Trench 1	103	BEVO2T		jar	1	1	13		BS			very abraded	13th to early/mid 14th	
Trench 1	105	NLST		large jar	1	1	17		rim			abraded	13th to 14th	
Trench 1	105	NLST		large jar/bowl	1	1	24		BS			abraded;leached external surface	13th to 14th	
Trench 1	109	NLST		large jar	1	1	48		BS				13th to 14th	
Trench 1	109	TOY		jug	1	1	75		handle			rod handle	late 13th to 14th	
Trench 1	109	TOY	+ ca	jar	1	1	50		rim			abraded;everted;thick walled;? Accidental pressing on rim edge	late 13th to 14th	
Trench 1	109	NLST		large jar	1	1	23		rim			wide everted rim;a very large shell inclusion	13th to 14th	

Trench 1	109	NLST		large jar		5	1	82	BS			soot ext & part int; quite fine shell; int & ext leached surfaces	13th to 14th
Trench 1	109	NLST		?		1	1	1	BS	sample 2		from sample 2; tiny scrap; ? ID	late 12th to 14th
Trench 1	109	LEMS		?		2	1	1	BS	sample 2		from sample 2; tiny scraps; ? ID	mid 12th to early/mid 13th
Trench 1	109	TOY		?		1	1	1	BS	sample 2		from sample 2; tiny scrap	late 13th to 15th
Trench 1	109	TOY		jar		1	1	8	BS	sample 2		from sample 2; thick ext soot	late 13th to 15th
Trench 1	109	NOTGL		jug		1	1	1	BS	sample 2		from sample 2; tiny scrap; cu glaze; ? ID	13th to early/mid 14th
Trench 2	206	BEVO2T		jug		2	1	75	base			soot on underside & part over edge	13th to early/mid 14th
Trench 2	206	TOY		jug ?		1	1	5	BS	sample 1		from sample 1	late 13th to 14th
Trench 2	206	NLST		?		1	1	1	BS	sample 1		from sample 1; tiny scrap ? ID	late 12th to 14th
Trench 2	206	WEMS		?		1	1	2	BS	sample 1		from sample 1; tiny scrap ? ID; soot	12th to 13th
Trench 2	206	MISC	shell temper	?		3	2	1	BS	sample 1		from sample 1; tiny scraps	12th to 14th
Trench 2	206	MISC	fine quartz	?		2	2	1	BS	sample 1		from sample 1; tiny scraps	?

**Appendix 4**

# Brick Archive for Land at the Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne, Lincolnshire (LTPE 10)

Jane Young

<b>trench</b>	<b>context</b>	<b>cname</b>	<b>full name</b>	<b>fabric</b>	<b>frags</b>	<b>weight</b>	<b>description</b>	<b>date</b>
Trench 4	403	BRK	Brick	fine orange	1	1466	handmade;common ca & fe in fabric;large pebbles;salt surfacing;160+ x 110 x 64mm;simple frog/stick stacking mark on underside;sand moulded	17th to 19th

**Appendix 5**

# Dating Archive for Land at the Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne, Lincolnshire (LTPE 10)

**Jane Young**

<b>trench</b>	<b>context</b>	<b>date</b>	<b>comments</b>
Trench 1	103	late 13th to mid 14th	
Trench 1	105	13th to 14th	
Trench 1	109	late 13th to 14th	
Trench 2	206	13th to early/mid 14th	single vessel
Trench 4	403	17th to 19th	date on handmade brick

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## Appendix 6

### Land at the Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne, Lincolnshire (LTPE 10)

#### *The Animal Bone*

*By Jennifer Wood*

### Introduction

A total of 2 (23g) fragments of animal bone were recovered by hand during archaeological works undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Services Ltd at the Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne, Lincolnshire. The remains were recovered from a large shallow pit [108] within Trench 1 and pit [211] within Trench 2.

### Results

The remains were generally of a moderate overall condition, averaging between grades 3 and 4 on the Lyman criteria (1996). No evidence of burning, gnawing or pathology was noted on the remains.

A single fragments displayed evidence of butchery, consistent with jointing of the carcass.

*Table 1, Summary of Identified Bone*

Context	Taxon	Element	Side	Number	Weight	Comments
107	Sheep/Goat	Metatarsal	L	1	9	Distal shaft, no condyles. Chopped and snapped midshaft
210	Large Mammal Size	Cervical Vertebra	L	1	14	Neural arch

The assemblage is too small to provide meaningful information on animal husbandry and utilisation on site, save the presence/use of the animals on site. The assemblage appears to represent domestic butchery waste.

### References

Lyman, R L, 1996 *Vertebrate Taphonomy*, Cambridge Manuals in Archaeology,  
Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES  
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of  
Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd

Land at the Poplars  
Legbourne  
Lincolnshire

palaeoenvironmental assessment

report 2434  
June 2010



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## **1. Summary**

### **The project**

- 1.1 This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of two bulk samples taken during an archaeological evaluation on land at The Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne, Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The assessment was commissioned by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

### **Results**

- 1.3 Both samples produced evidence of domestic waste comprising burnt and unburnt bone, fish bone, pot and charcoal. A sheep/goat size jaw was identified from context (206). Low numbers of charred plant remains included barley and cf. bread wheat, which are typical, although not exclusive, of medieval sites.

### **Recommendations**

- 1.4 No further analysis is required for the plant macrofossils due to their low numbers and poor preservation. If additional work is undertaken at the site, the results of this assessment should be added to any further environmental data produced.



## 2. Project background

### Location

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd on land at The Poplars, Poplars Lane, Legbourne, Lincolnshire. This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of two bulk samples taken from ditch fills (109) and (206).

### Objective

- 2.2 The objective of the palaeoenvironmental assessment was to establish the potential of the samples to provide information about diet, land use and palaeoenvironment of the site and provide material suitable for radiocarbon dating.

### Dates

- 2.3 Samples were received by Archaeological Services Durham University on 1st June 2010. Assessment and report preparation was conducted between 9th and 10th June 2010.

### Personnel

- 2.4 Sample processing was carried out by Janet Beveridge and faunal remains were identified by Louisa Gidney. Palaeoenvironmental assessment and report preparation was undertaken by Lorne Elliott.

### Archive

- 2.5 The site code is **LTPE10** for **Land at The Poplars, Legbourne, Evaluation, 2010**. The flots are currently in the Environmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University. The small finds have been returned with this report.

## 3. Methods

- 3.1 The bulk samples were manually floated and sieved through a 500µm mesh. The residues were examined for shells, fruitstones, nutshells, charcoal, small bones, pottery sherds, flint and industrial residues, and were scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flots were examined at up to x60 magnification for charred and waterlogged botanical remains using a Leica MZ7.5 stereomicroscope. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Environmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University. Plant nomenclature follows Stace (1997).

## 4. Results

- 4.1 Both samples produced evidence of domestic waste with burnt, unburnt or calcined bone, fish bone, pot and charcoal present. A sheep/goat size jaw was identified from context (206). Additional small finds included a small bead and a possible lead weight. Charcoal fragments appeared to be mainly oak for both contexts, with a small fragment of willow/poplar branchwood noted in context (109), and a small fragment of ash charcoal identified from context (206). A few uncharred seeds of pale persicaria, black bindweed, prickly sow-thistle and goosefoot were recorded in the samples, although the presence of modern roots and the well-drained nature of the soils suggest these are modern introductions. Fragments of flint were abundant in both samples reflecting the local geology.

- 4.2 Charred remains were few in number and generally in very poor condition due to puffing and pitting, possibly as a result of intense heat (Boardman & Jones 1990). Charred plant macrofossils from context (206) included a few grains of cf. bread wheat, barley, indeterminate cereal grains and weed seeds of vetch. Context (109) comprised a similar assemblage including grains of cf. bread wheat, indeterminate cereals, and weed seeds of dock. Material suitable for radiocarbon dating is absent for both samples. The results are presented in Appendix 1.

## 5. Discussion

- 5.1 The low numbers of charred plant remains prevent firm conclusions from being drawn about the age and nature of the deposits or crop husbandry practices, although the results of the small assemblages suggest wheat and barley were used at the site. Diagnostic chaff was absent, although the wheat grains from both contexts had the characteristic shape of *Triticum aestivo-compactum* (bread wheat). The presence of bread wheat is typical of medieval sites as this was the most common crop at the time (Greig 1991, Huntley & Stallibrass 1995); however, this crop was not confined to the medieval period.

## 6. Recommendations

- 6.1 No further analysis is required for the plant macrofossils due to their low numbers and poor preservation. If additional work is undertaken at the site, the results of this assessment should be added to any further environmental data produced.

## 7. Sources

- Boardman, S, & Jones, G, 1990 Experiments on the effects of charring on cereal plant components, *Journal of Archaeological Science*, **17**, 1-11
- Greig, J R A, 1991 The British Isles, in W Van Zeist, K Wasylkova & K-E Behre (eds) *Progress in Old World Palaeoethnobotany*, Rotterdam
- Huntley, J P, & Stallibrass, S, 1995 *Plant and vertebrate remains from archaeological sites in northern England: data reviews and future directions*, Research Report No. 4, Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland, Durham
- Stace, C, 1997 *New Flora of the British Isles*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge

## Appendix 1: Data from palaeoenvironmental assessment

Sample	1	2
Context	206	109
Feature	Ditch	Ditch
Volume processed (l)	10	10
Volume of flot assessed (ml)	20	7
<i>Residue contents</i>		
Bead	1	-
Bone (burnt) indet. frags	+	-
Bone (calcined) indet. frags	-	+
Bone (unburnt) indet. frags	++	+
Bone (unburnt) sheep/goat jaw	1	-
Bone (fish)	+	+
Flint	++++	++++
Lead weight	1	-
Pot (no. of fragments)	7	5
Snails (terrestrial)	-	+
<i>Flot matrix</i>		
Bone (unburnt)	+	-
Charcoal	++	+
Coal	(+)	-
Fuel ash	+	-
Roots (modern)	+	++
Snails (terrestrial)	-	+
Uncharred seeds	+	++
<i>Charred remains (total count)</i>		
(c) Cerealia indeterminate grain	8	2
(c) <i>Hordeum</i> spp (Barley species) grain	3	-
(c) <i>Triticum</i> cf. <i>aestivum</i> (cf. Bread Wheat) grain	7	2
(x) <i>Rumex</i> spp (Dock) nutlet	-	2
(x) <i>Vicia</i> spp (Vetch) seed	3	-

[c-cultivated; x-wide niche. (+): trace; +: rare; ++: occasional; +++: common; ++++: abundant]

## Appendix 8

### Small Finds from Land at The Poplars, Legbourne

by J. Mann

Two finds which had been recovered from sieving a soil sample were presented for identification.

#### **Context 206    *Bead fragment***

Half of a red/brown glass bead with 'dimpled' decoration. Broken vertically. Height 8mm, external diameter 8mm.

The bead is Late Saxon, from late 9th – late 11/12th century.

#### **Context 206    *Lead fragment***

A minute fragment of lead had been provisionally identified as a possible lead weight when it was recovered. This is 8mm long, and 1.5mm maximum diameter.

It is a droplet of lead melt-waste and not an object.

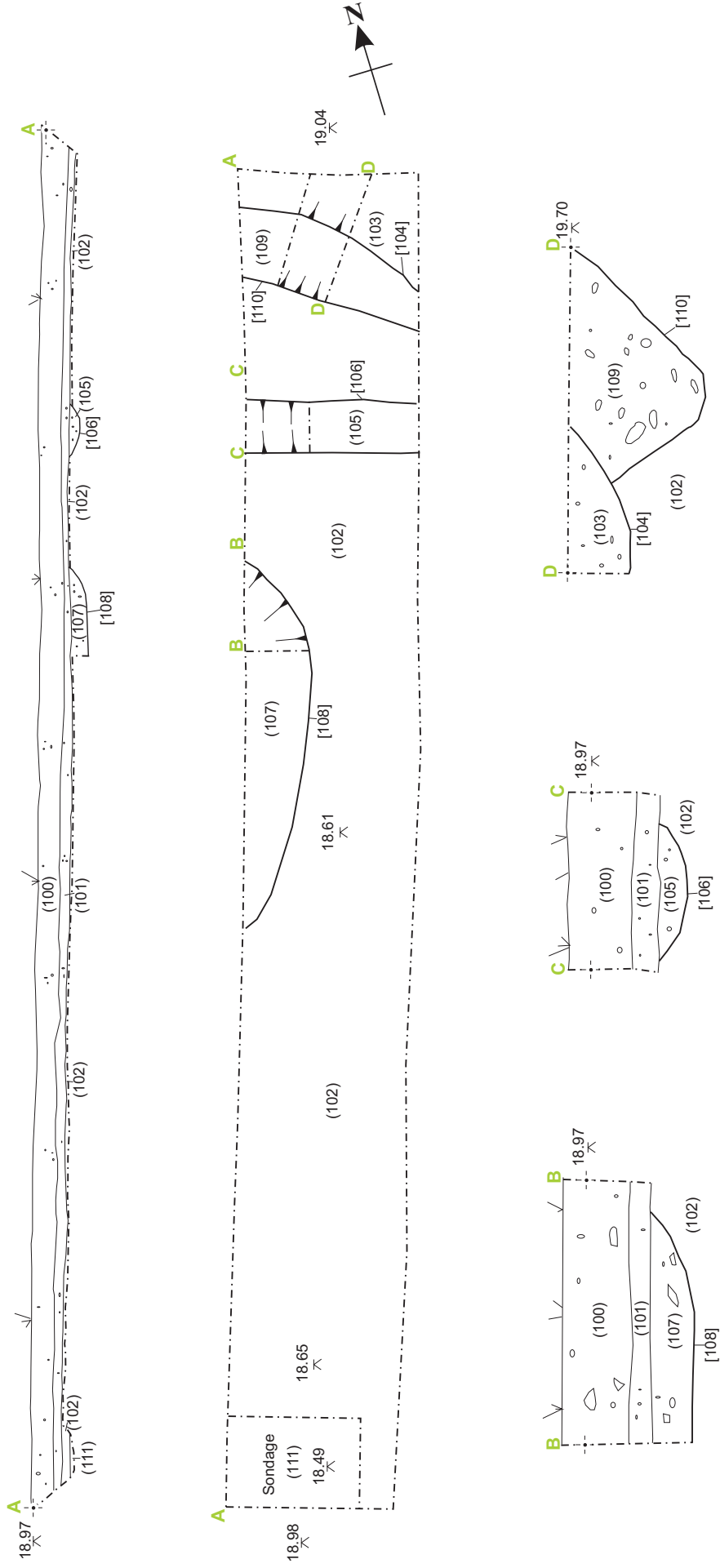
<i>Context</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Comments</i>
206	Glass	Bead	Sub-conical, <50%; opaque orange-brown with tapering perforation. H: 8mm, Diam: 8mm (max). Probably Late Saxon/early medieval.
206	Lead	Waste	Tiny fragment extruded melt waste? Cigar-shaped, pointed one end, the other flattened. L:8mm, Diam 1.5mm (max).



Fig 2: Trench Layout

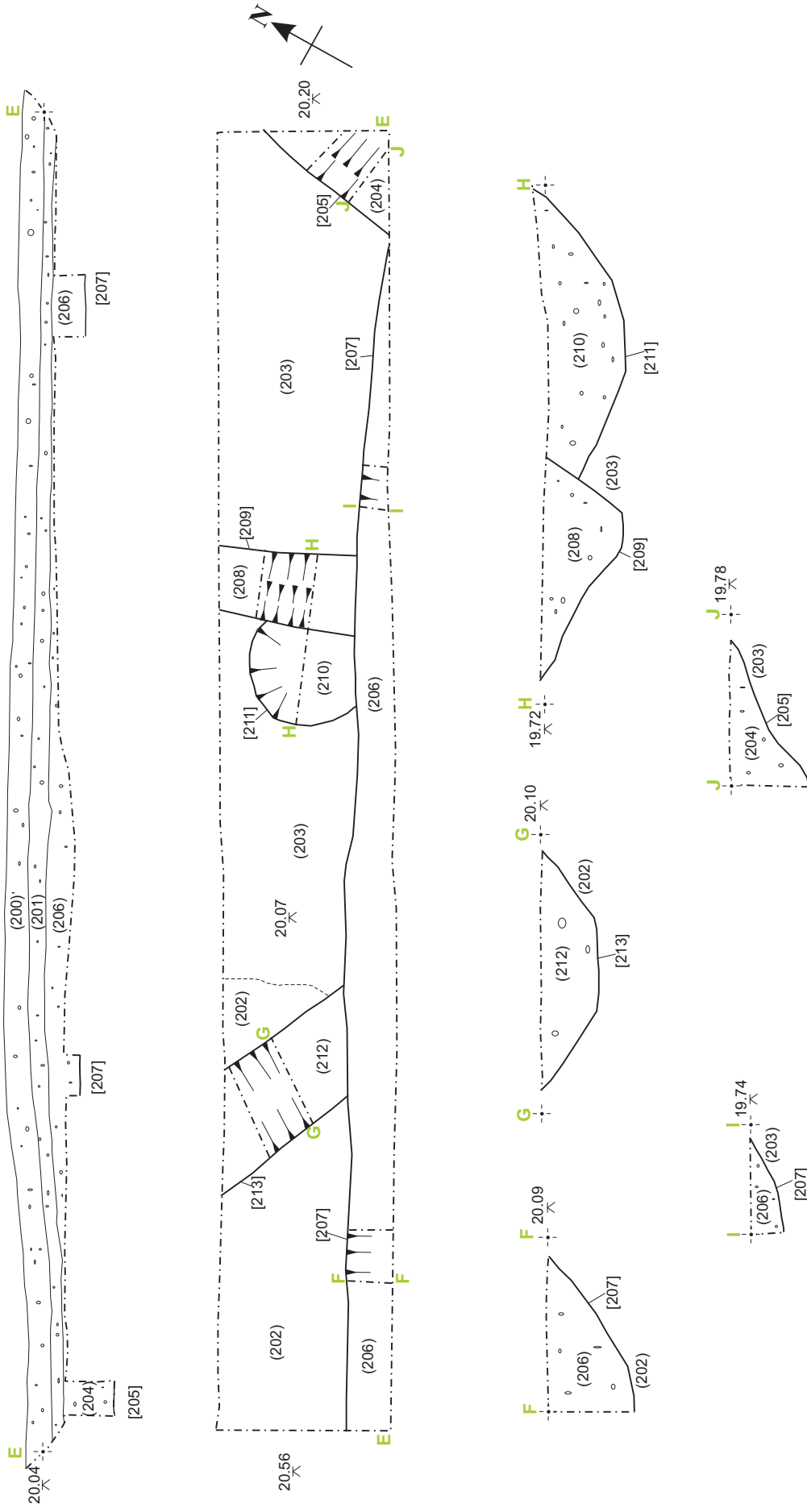
1:1250

# Trench 1



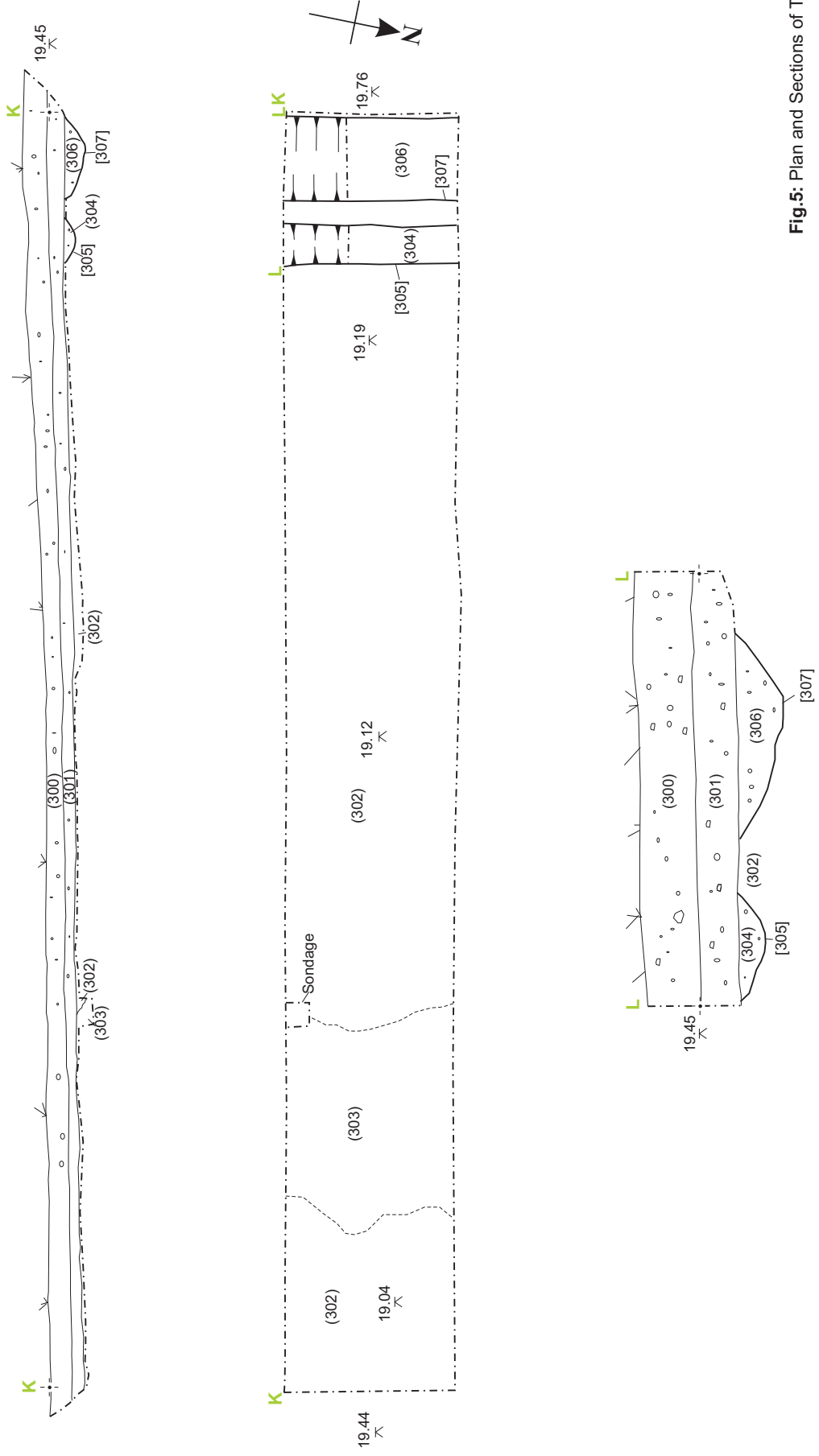
**Fig. 3: Plan and Sections of Trench 1**  
 Plans and Section A 1:50, Sections B-D 1:20  
 Scales @ A3  
 Levels shown mOD.

### Trench 2



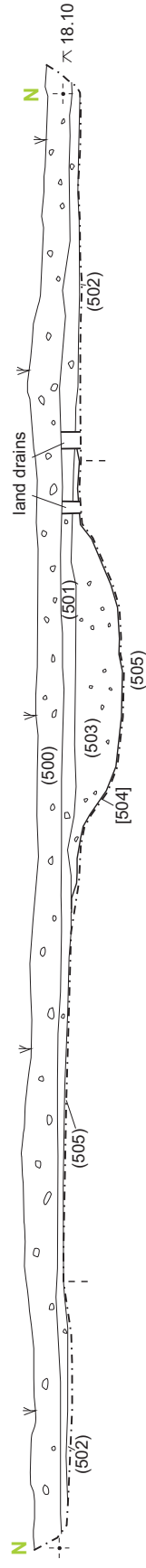
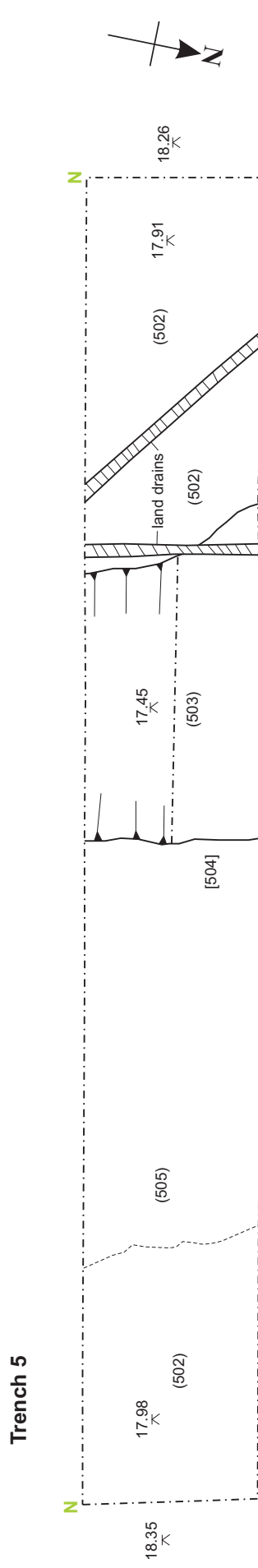
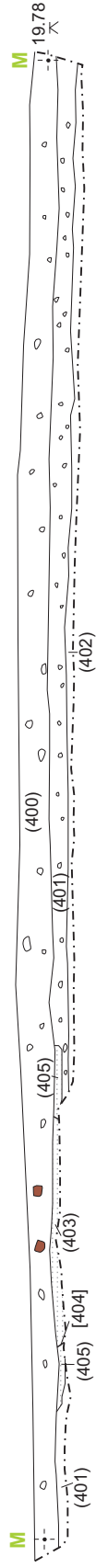
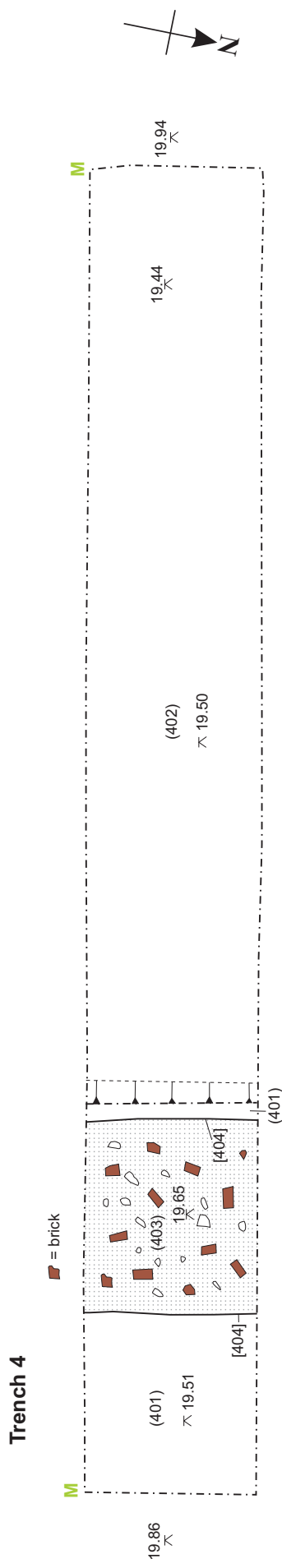
**Fig. 4: Plan and Sections of Trench 2**  
 Plans and Section E 1:50, Sections F-J 1:20  
 Scales @ A3  
 Levels shown mOD.

### Trench 3



**Fig.5: Plan and Sections of Trench 3**  
 Plan and Section K 1:50, Section L 1: 20  
 Scales @ A3  
 Levels shown mOD.





**Fig. 6:** Plan and Sections of Trenches 4 and 5

Plans and Sections 1:50

Scales @ A3

Levels shown mOD.