

**TEBB'S LAND, WHITEHORSE LANE, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND TRENCHING REPORT**

NGR: TF 32776 43638
Site code: BWHT 10
PCAS Ref: PCAS10/721

Report prepared for

Chestnut Homes

by

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December 2010



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Site Name:	Tebb's Land, Whitehorse Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire
NGR:	TF 32776 43638
Company/Applicant:	Chestnut Homes
Planning Application:	n/a
Date:	16th November 2010
Archive Repository:	The Collection (LCNCC Accn No. 2010.171)
Site Code:	BWHT 10; Anticipated deposition June 2011
Archaeological Contractor:	Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd.
PCAS Job Ref.:	721



Figure 1. Site location plan (based on the 1999 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey Map Sheet 261. ©Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS License No. 100049278)

Non-technical Summary

- *Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd. (PCAS) opened two archaeological evaluation trenches at Tebb's Land, Whitehorse Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire for Chestnut Homes prior to the construction of residential properties.*
- *The excavation confirmed the presence of modern, post medieval building foundations and make-up layers for the 18th- and 19th-century buildings which had occupied the site. Sealed below these layers was a mixed deposit which probably represented a consolidation phase of the site.*
- *Below the mixed layer a small pit which contained pottery, animal bone and an iron object (probably a ring) and a limestone foundation was recorded. The pottery has been dated to the early to mid 12th century.*
- *In both trenches, sondages were cut. In both trenches an organic layer was identified at a depth of 2.9m and 3.5m from present ground level. The results of environmental sampling taken from both trenches suggest that despite the presence of occasional charred plant macrofossils and a fruit-stone, the deposits are both of natural origin and may indicate episodes of flooding.*
- *Three geo-technical test-pits were monitored which showed no archaeological deposits although the organic material was encountered albeit at a shallower depth than in the evaluation trenches.*
- *A single auger sample was taken and examined on site. The profile indicated a homogeneous light brown silty clay deposit to a depth of 0.75m.*

1 Introduction

PCAS conducted an archaeological monitoring of three geological trial pits and excavated a L-shaped evaluation trench at Tebb's Land, Whitehorse Lane, Boston (NGR: TF 3278 4364) for Chestnut Homes prior to the construction of residential properties.

This work was carried out in accordance with a specification for a scheme of archaeological evaluation trenching produced by PCAS (Tann 2010) and approved by the Boston Borough Council archaeological advisor acting on behalf of the planning authority. The scheme also conforms to the requirements of:

- *PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment (DCLG, 2010)*
- *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook (Lincolnshire County Council, 2010)*
- *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (Institute of Field Archaeologist, 2008)*
- *Code of Conduct (Institute of Field Archaeologist, 1994 as revised)*

The work was conducted between the 29th November and 7th December 2010 and was carried out by Simon Savage, Julian Sleaf and Dan Stone.

2 Site location and description

The 0.1122ha proposed development site is located to the south of Boston town centre, close to the west bank of the River Witham, within an area of mixed industrial and

residential use (**Fig. 1**). The site is bounded to the north by Whitehorse Lane. The eastern end of the site is 35m from the River Witham and is beside a former Protestant Dissenters burial ground (closed in 1856).

Prior to excavation the topography was rough but level ground within a former builder's yard. The superficial (formerly drift) geology is clay and silt tidal flat deposits overlying Amphill clay mudstone (British Geological Survey online geology viewer).

3 Archaeological and historical background

The site is located in an area of known archaeological significance. It is located in an area of the town in which previous archaeological work has identified medieval and later remains.

The town of Boston is recorded as being founded shortly after the Norman Conquest by the Earl of Richmond who established port and was granted license for a number of fair by AD 1071. The early town developed to the east of the river and was extensively engaged in the wool trade. The prosperity that this trade brought, allowed the town to expand to the opposite bank of the river and saw the allied trades such as ship building. The town went into gradual decline as the river began to silt up.

Settlement of the area of the proposed development site is attested by the survival of two possibly medieval timber framed houses at Nos. 25 and 32 Whitehorse Lane and a documentary reference to Whitehorse lane in 1564.

Robert Hall's 'Map of Boston' (surveyed 1741) shows a property on the frontage of Whitehorse Lane. Woods' map shows that by 1829 a Baptist chapel and schoolroom had also been constructed. The chapel established a burial ground in 1763 that was later used for Protestant Dissenters until 1856. There is no evidence of a more extensive burial ground within the site boundary.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1889 shows that the site was a ship building yard with a warehouse or similar along the frontage to Whitehorse Lane.

Archaeological evaluation trenching and monitoring of the HP Foods site to the east was unable to examine in sufficiently deep deposits as to be able to assess the early processes of land use. The sequence is comprehensible from the 15th century with the large scale tipping of mixed soil layers mixed with a small amount of domestic refuse. Both Hall (2006) and Mordue and Tann (2009) suggest that the area may have remained in agricultural use rather than industrial use.

4 Aims and objectives

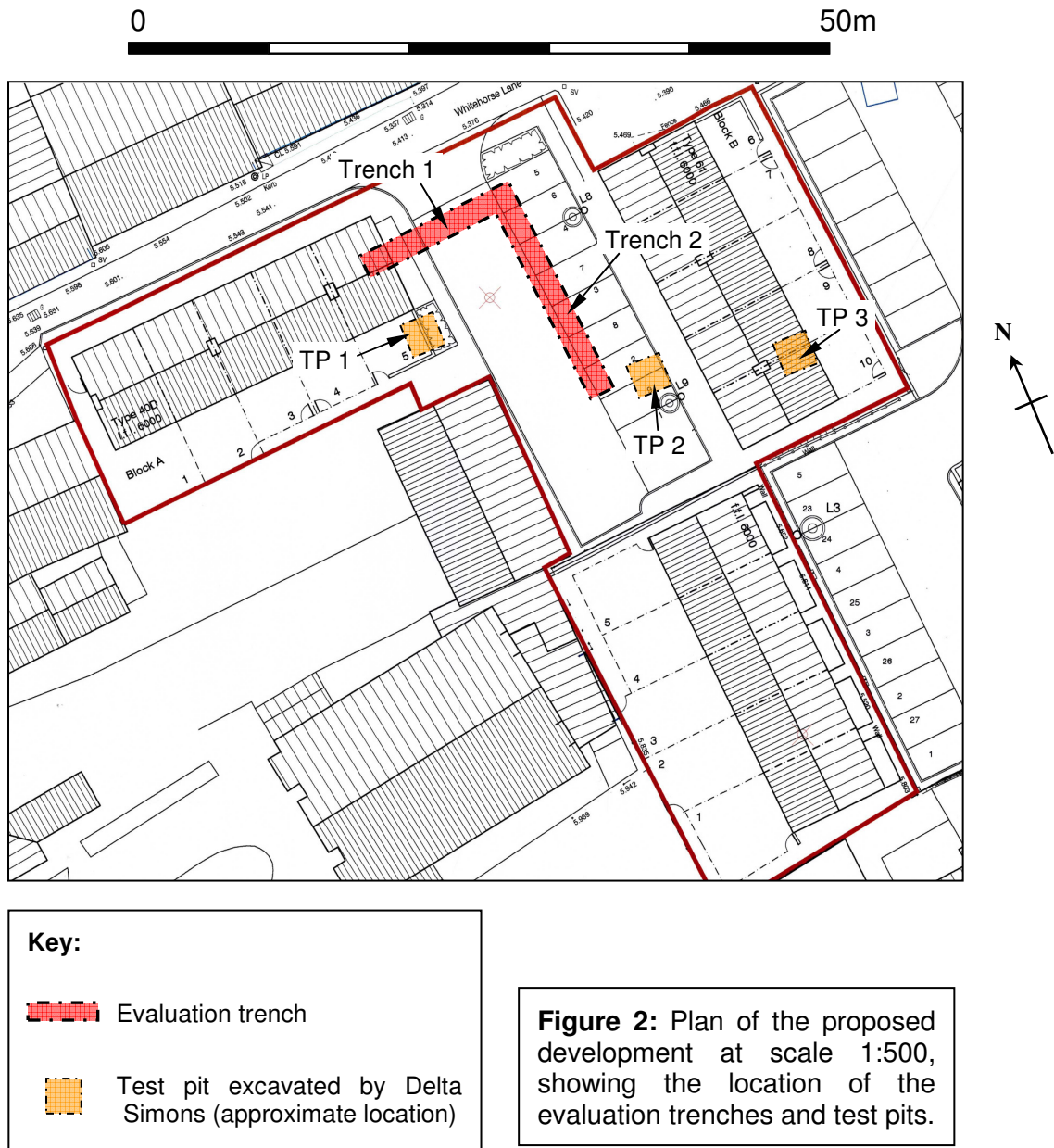
The evaluation consisted of two 10m by 1.8m trenches located along the frontage of Whitehorse Lane. Trench 2 was moved slightly to the north so they formed a 'L-shape' (**Fig. 2**). The trenching aimed to further clarify and characterise the archaeological deposits and features present within the development area to aid further mitigation strategies.

4.1 Methodology

The evaluation trenches were opened under archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat, toothless bucket. A toothed bucket was used for the test pits.

Context numbers were assigned to all deposits (listed in Appendix 2) and records made of them using *pro forma* PCAS recording sheets. Plans and sections were drawn and a

photographic record of both slide and digital images were kept. A selection of prints has been included (Appendix 1).



5 Results

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 10m by 1.8m and aligned east to west (**Fig. 3**). It was excavated to a depth of 1.5m with a sondage cut at the west end to a depth of 3.5m from ground level to assess the character of any deeper deposits, in particular the peat deposits.

The most recent deposit of Trench 1 was a layer of demolition rubble (100) to a depth of 0.35m which covered a tiled surface (101) which had been used as a car park but was originally the interior surface of the 19th century building that had once stood on the site. There only remains to this building was the wall footings (111). The tiles were on a layer of bedding sand (102) which in turn rested on a deposit of mid grey brown silt sand (103) which appears to have been a consolidation layer. No finds were recorded in these layers and they are all modern.

Below these modern layers was a 0.70m thick deposit of mid to pale grey brown silty sandy clay which contained frequent patches of rubble (104). A piece of peg tile was recovered from the interface between (104) and (105). (104) in turn sealed a shallow, multi-fill pit [106] 0.30m deep that cut into a layer of flood deposits (105). The upper fill of the pit (107) was grey brown silty sand with frequent limestone fragments. A *fe* object, possibly a ring, and a single potsherd were recovered along with an animal bone. The other deposits within the pit (108) and (109) were appeared to be the result of deliberate deposition rather than episodes of in-wash (**Fig. 4** and **5**).

The pit was cut into a layer of grey laminated flood deposits to the limit of excavation at 1.5m so no further digging was carried out below this level apart from a sondage that was excavated to a maximum depth of 3.5m from ground level. Deposits within the sondage consisted of a layer of clay (112) at least 1.9m thick lying over sporadic peat deposits (113). A sample of the peat was taken for palaeoenvironmental analysis.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 15m by 1.8m and aligned north to south meeting Trench 1 at the northern end (**Fig. 6**). It was excavated to a depth of 1.5m with a sondage cut at the south end to a depth of 2.9m from ground level, to assess the character of any deeper deposits, in particular the peat deposits.

The most recent deposits of Trench 2 were a series of modern layers and features relating to the 19th century buildings that had occupied the site. The remnants of a brick floor (208/218) appeared to be repair to the surface as there was modern material below it. A series of thin layers at the southern end of the trench had been cut through by a drain (206/217) and relate to the building, probably as layers of levelling for floors that have now been removed. The most substantial of the 19th-century remains was the footings for the wall (111/223). These were constructed from machine made brick and were butted to the north by the floor seen in Trench 1 (101).

The lower sequence for Trench 2 was less clear than Trench 1 as there had been more disturbances by modern deposits but seems to be similar to the profile in Trench 1. Below the 19th- and 20th-century deposits was a thick layer of mixed soils (207), (209), (214), (215), (219) and (224). This in turn sealed a course of foundations for a bonded stone wall (221) which was visible in the east facing section of the trench and appeared to be aligned east to west.

The limit of excavation for the trench was 1.5m with a sondage machine dug in the southern end of the trench to a maximum depth of 2.9m from present ground level. The deposits within the sondage consisted of a layer of clay (226) at least 1.3m thick lying over peat deposits (227). A sample of peat was taken for palaeoenvironmental analysis.

5.3 Geological Test Pits

Delta Simons test pit 1 revealed 0.4m of modern made ground overlying silty sand to a depth of 2m from existing ground level (**Fig 9** and **10**). No archaeological remains were observed and no finds were present in the spoil.

Delta Simons test pit 2 revealed 0.50m of rubble and made ground over an organic material from a depth of 2.20m (**Fig. 11**). No archaeological remains were observed and no finds were present in the spoil.

Delta Simons test pit 3 revealed made ground over peat deposits. No archaeological remains were observed and no finds were present in the spoil.

5.4 Augering

Augering was conducted at the intersection of Trench 1 and 2 to a depth of 0.75m. The profile recovered indicated an homogenous light brown silty clay (frozen ground hinder the augering).

6 Discussion

The uppermost contexts identified in both trenches constituted the foundations, floor and make up for the 19th-century buildings and rear yard surfacing which had occupied the site and was ranged along the south side of Whitehorse Lane. These were present to a maximum depth of 0.5m and contained layers of flooring and the foundation walls to the building. Dating evidence was limited to the style of bricks used in the foundations but these were relatively generic and could date from the mid to the late 19th century.

Sealed below these layers was a mixed, mass fill of deposits (104), (207), (209), (214) and (224) to a depth of up to 1.5m. This ground is likely to represent tipped dumps of large quantities of unwanted soil mixed with quantities of demolition rubble. There appeared to be no associated buildings for the rubbles and it is probably that the deposits were brought onto the site representing episodes of ground consolidation, raising and levelling the ground along Whitehorse Lane and the river front. They may possibly been remnants of agricultural land rather than land used for industrial purpose (Hall 2006; Mordue and Tann 2009) but the evidence is not conclusive.

This mixed deposit sealed a shallow pit and the foundation to the wall, implying that the site may have been horizontally truncated before the mixed deposits were laid. This may have occurred to remove waterlogged ground before consolidation, but again there is scant evidence. The stone wall (221), although it contained no dating evidence, is probably a remnant of a medieval period building and occurred at a similar level to pit [106] which contained a single piece of mid to late 12th-century pottery. It is difficult to assess if the wall was aligned north to south (running across the site) or east to west (running back from Whitehorse Lane) but it would be probably that it was the former. Since the limit of excavation was reached it was not possible to examine the foundation to its full height/depth.

The environmental sampling considered that although there were a few domesticated plant macrofossils and a fruit stone, most of the material came from naturally waterlogged or wet plants. Although the report suggests a medieval or post-medieval date for them, when considered with the associated evidence it is more likely that they offer a Saxon or earlier reflection of the environment.

6.1 Conclusion

The site produced a small amount of evidence to support medieval settlement of the area around Whitehorse Lane. The wall in Trench 2 was of a solid construction and would have represented a considerable investment. The town of Boston expanded rapidly in the 12th and 13th centuries, prospering from the wool trade (Rogers 1985: 51): the wall could be a reflection of this. The pottery recovered from pit [106] also yields an early medieval date but there is nothing more to suggest neither what kind of settlement nor what industries, if any, were being carried out.

The layer of made ground observed in both trenches and from other excavations in the area appears to be an attempt in the 18th century or later to consolidate the riverside after the retraction of the town and port in the 15th and 16th century (Hodgett 1975: 83). Although it has been previously suggested that the land may have been in agricultural use (Mordue and Tann (2009) it may also have been too wet for either arable or pasture and may have just been waste ground along the riverside.

By the early 19th century the fortunes of Boston had revived (Lewis and Wright 1973: 10) and a warehouse was constructed on the site by 1889 when the land was being used as a shipyard. The foundations and walls observed in both trenches are from this phase of use.

7 Effectiveness of methodology

Poor weather conditions hindered the excavation and recording of the site and although the evaluation trenches informed us more on the recent history of the site than the medieval or early post-medieval, it has allowed us to see that medieval deposits do survive at a depth below 1.5m from current ground level. The thick layer of made ground has masked these deposits: if further work is to be done in the area than this has to be taken into consideration.

8 Site Archive

The documentary and physical archive for this scheme is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd. This will be transferred to The Collection (LCNCC Accn No. 2010.171) within six months of completion of this report.

9 Acknowledgements

PCAS would like to thank Chestnut Homes for their commission of the project. They also express their thanks to the ground crew for their cooperation and assistance during the fieldwork.

10 References

Hall, N. (2006) *The Former HP Foods Factory Site: Whitehorse Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire: Archaeological Monitoring Report* unpublished PCA (Lincoln) report 298

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Tann, G. (2010) Specification for a Scheme of Archaeological Evaluation Trenching: Tebb's Land, Whitehorse Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire unpublished PCAS report

11 Appendix 1 – Plates



Plate 1 Post excavation Trench 1 looking west



Plate 2 Post excavation Trench 2 looking northeast

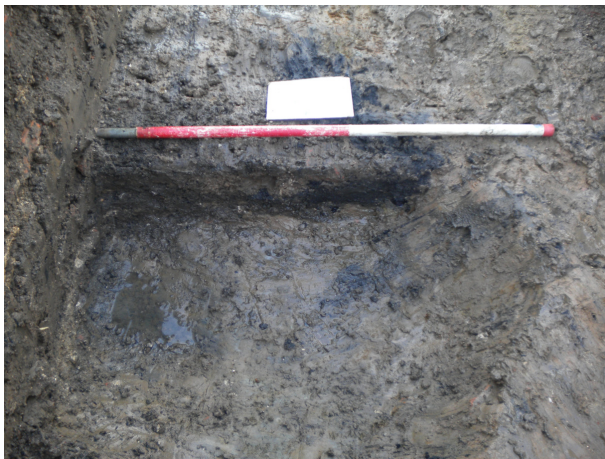


Plate 3 Trench 1, East facing Section pit [106]



Plate 4 Trench 2, East facing section wall foundation (221)



Plate 5 Trench 1 sondage



Plate 6 Trench 2 sondage

12 Appendix 2 – Context descriptions

Context number	Type	Description	Location
100	Layer	Rubble	Trench 1
101	Surface	Tile surface	Trench 1
102	Layer	Consolidation layer for (101)	Trench 1
103	Layer	Rubble	Trench 1
104	Layer	Made ground	Trench 1
105	Layer	Mixed re-deposited silts	Trench 1
106	Cut	Pit	Trench 1
107	Fill	Upper yellow/pale brown fill of [106]	Trench 1
108	Fill	Dark black /brown grey rubble fill of [106]	Trench 1
109	Fill	Lower mid brown grey rubble fill of [106]	Trench 1
110	Layer	Peaty layer	Trench 1
111	Fill	Wall foundations	Trench 1
112	Layer	Grey blue clay natural	Trench 1
113	Layer	Peat within grey blue matrix	Trench 1
200	Layer	Cream mudstone fragments surface	Trench 2
201	Layer	Red brown clay fragments and crushed charcoal	Trench 2
202	Layer	Very fine as(201)	Trench 2
203	Layer	Very fine as (200)	Trench 2
204	Layer	As(201)	Trench 2
205	Layer	Very fine as (202)	Trench 2
206	Drain	Drain cut, backfill and conduit fill	Trench 2
207	Layer	Subsoil/ made ground	Trench 2
208	Layer	Make up bedding for brick floor and mortar	Trench 2
209	Layer	Dark black silty clay	Trench 2
210	Layer	Dark black brown silt	Trench 2
211	Layer	Light yellow brown silty clay	Trench 2
212	Layer	Dark black brown silt	Trench 2
213	Layer	Cream mudstone fragments similar (200)	Trench 2
214	Layer	Subsoil	Trench 2
215	Layer	Subsoil	Trench 2
216	Layer	Make up layer	Trench 2
217	Drain	Drain cut, backfill and conduit fill	Trench 2
218	Floor	Brick yard surface	Trench 2
219	Layer	Subsoill	Trench 2
220	Layer	Subsoil/ backfill	Trench 2

Context number	Type	Description	Location
221	Wall	2 course bonded stone wall foundations	Trench 2
222	Culvert	Brick culvert	Trench 2
223	Wall	Brick wall	Trench 2
224	Layer	subsoil	Trench 2
225	Floor	Floor tiles, make up layers and bedding layer	Trench 2
226	Layer	Blue grey clay natural	Trench 2
227	Layer	Peat within blue grey matrix	Trench 2

13 Appendix 3 – Specialist reports

13.1 Pottery

Pottery Archive for Tebb's Land, White Horse Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire (BWHT 10)

Jane Young

A single splashed-glaze jug sherd in fairly fresh condition was recovered from the site. The vessel has been skilfully wheel-thrown but is not typical of known regional centres in the East Midlands. It is most probable that the jug dates to between the mid and late 12th century. This jug sherd has been added to the County Type Series and should be included in any future scientific analysis of Early Medieval pottery in the County.

February 2011

Context	CName	Full Name	Sub-fabric	Form Type	Sherds	Weight	Part	Action	Description	Date
107	EMX	Non-local Early Medieval fabrics	OX/dark R; med sandy	Jug	1	25	BS	Taken for County Type Series	Large fairly fresh sherd; amber & light green splashed glaze; neither main Lincoln or Nottingham types; well wheelthrown; comm-abun clear quartz most 0.4-0.6mm up to 1.2mm some poly crystalline mod fe occ aggregated SST inlc fe cemented	Mid to late 12th

13.2 Tile

Tile Archive for Tebb's Land, White Horse Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire (BWHT 10)

Jane Young

A single fragment for a flat roof tile with a square peghole was recovered from the site. The fragment is of 13th to 16th century date and should be kept for future study.

February 2011

Context	CName	Full Name	Fabric	Sub Type	Frag	Weight	Description	Date
105	PEG	Peg tile	Boston Tile Fabric 2	Square hole	1	140	Tapering square hole from 11mm to 6mm; thumb impression on underside	13th to 16th

14 Figures

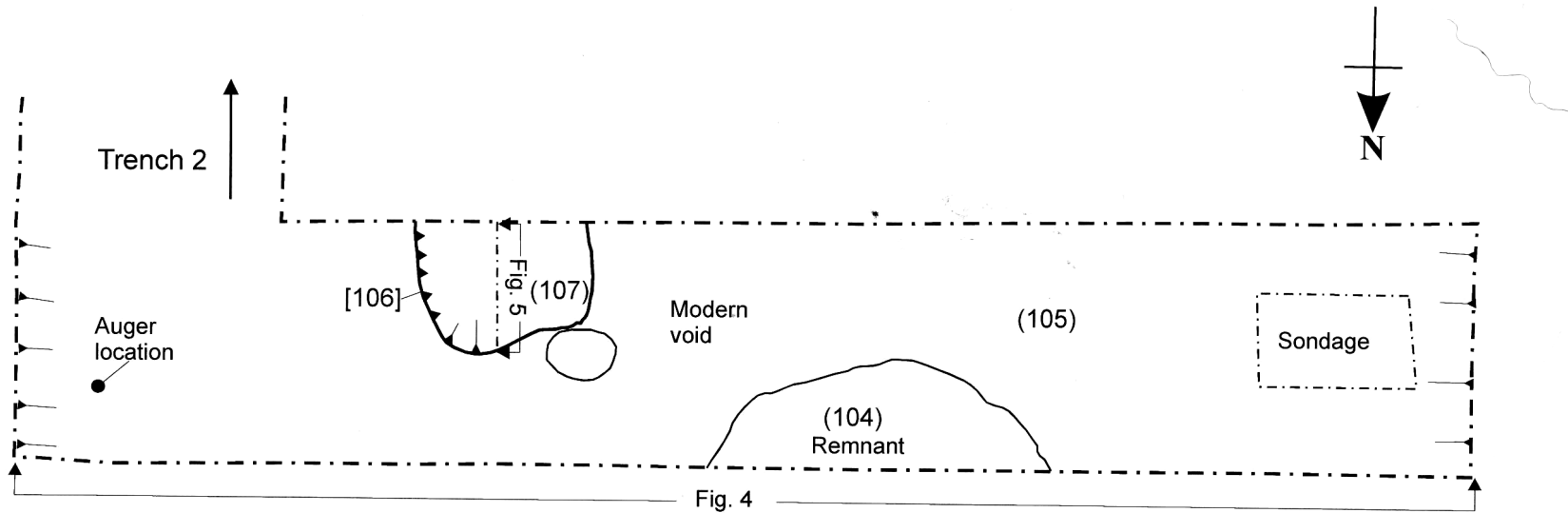


Fig. 3 Trench 1 plan
Scale 1:50

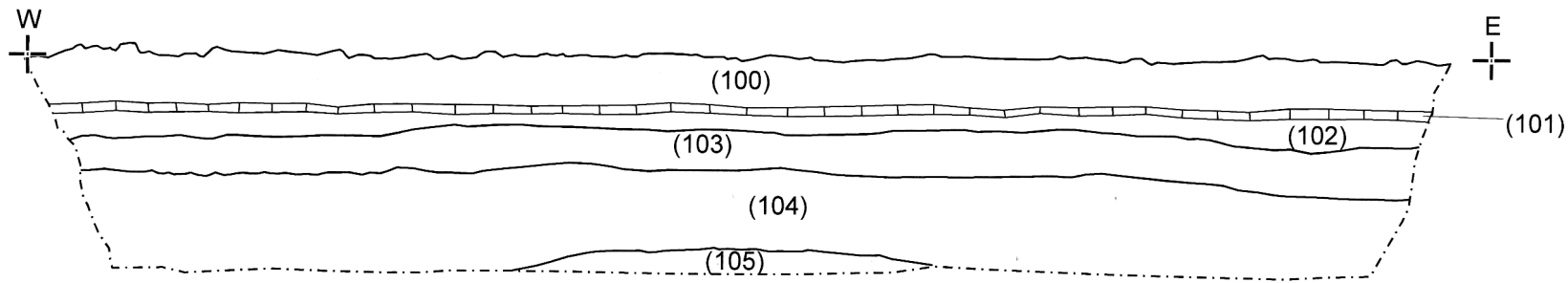
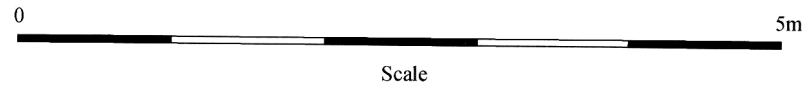


Fig. 4 South facing section Trench 1
Scale 1:50

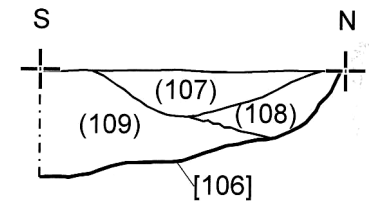
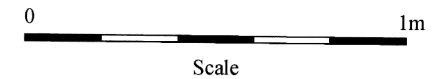


Fig. 5 East facing section Pit [106]
Scale 1:20



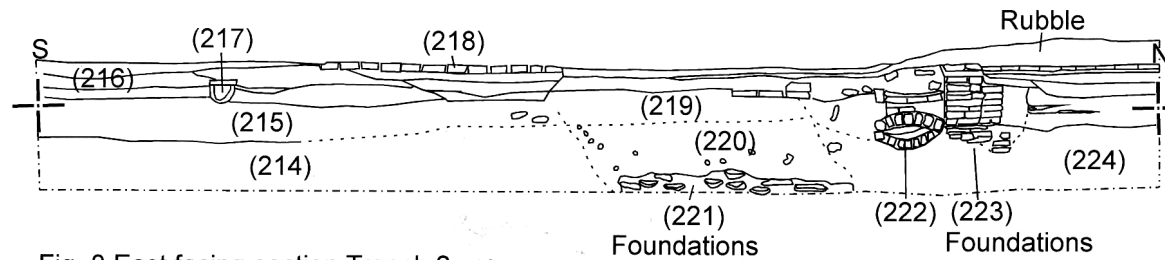


Fig. 8 East facing section Trench 2
Scale 1:75

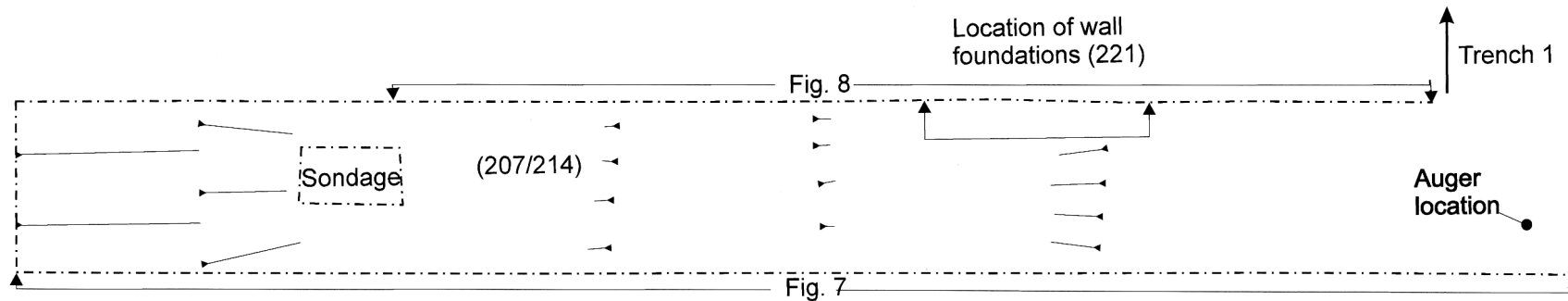
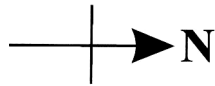


Fig. 6 Trench 2 plan
Scale 1:75

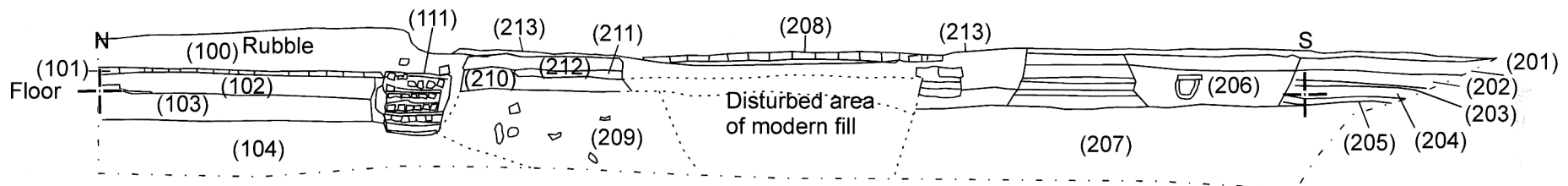


Fig. 7 West facing section Trench 2
Scale 1:75

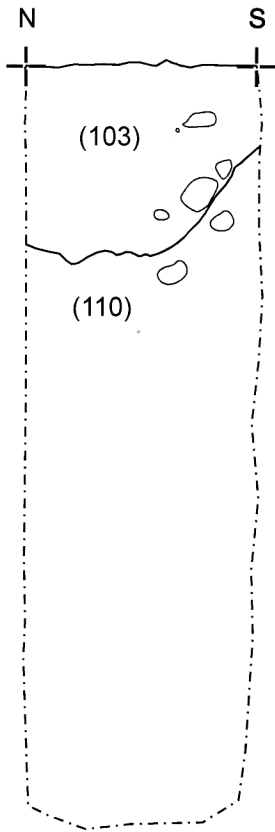


Fig. 9 West facing section in
Delta Simons Test Pit 1
Scale 1:20

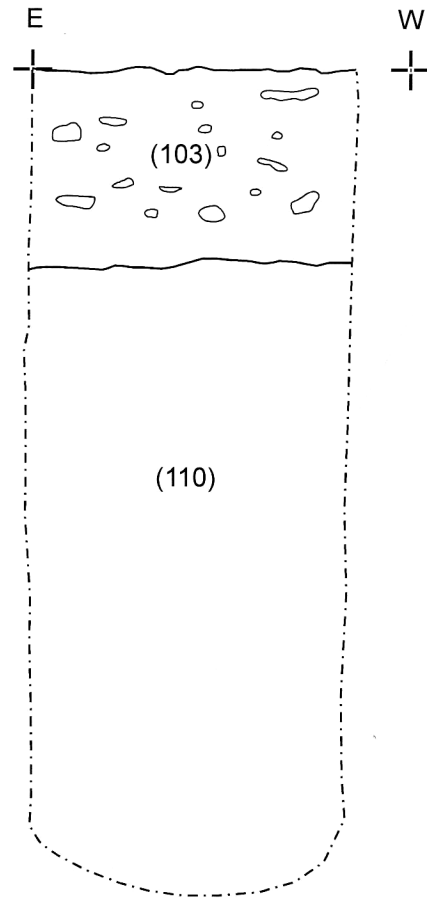


Fig. 10 North facing section in
Delta Simons Test Pit 2
Scale 1:20

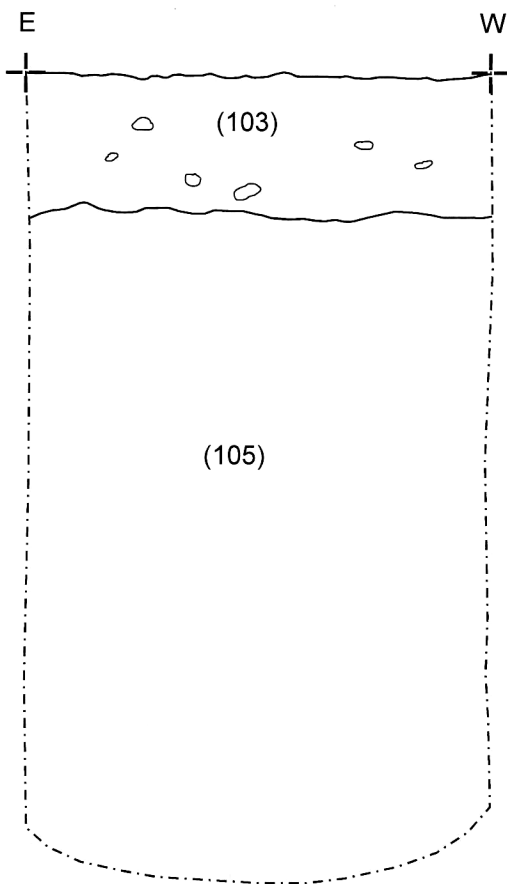


Fig. 11 North facing section in
Delta Simons Test Pit 3
Scale 1:20

