



Archaeological evaluation at Altira Business Park, Blacksole Farm, Herne Bay, Kent. (Archaeological Phases III & IV) Interim Report

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**Altira Business Park
Blacksole Farm, Herne Bay, Kent**

**Archaeological Evaluation
(Archaeological Phases III and IV)
Interim Report**

**NGR: 619606 167254
Site Code: BSF-EV-07 & BSF-EV-08**

**Report for
Kitewood Estates**

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Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	iv
<i>List of Tables</i>	iv
<u>SUMMARY</u>	1
<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1
<u>PLANNING BACKGROUND</u>	1
<u>SITE DESCRIPTION AND TOPOGRAPHY</u>	3
<u>ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND</u>	3
<u>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES</u>	6
<u>METHODOLOGY</u>	6
<u>MONITORING</u>	7
<u>RESULTS</u>	7
<u>Phase II (2007 Evaluation)</u>	8
<u>Trench 104</u>	8
<u>Trench 107</u>	8
<u>Trench 108</u>	9
<u>Trench 111</u>	9
<u>Trench 112</u>	10
<u>Trench 113</u>	10
<u>Trench 114</u>	10
<u>Trench 117</u>	11
<u>Trench 118</u>	11
<u>Trench 119</u>	11
<u>Trench 120</u>	12
<u>Trench 122</u>	12
<u>Trench 128</u>	12
<u>Trench 129</u>	13
<u>Trench 130</u>	14
<u>Trench 131</u>	14
<u>Trench 133</u>	15
<u>Trench 144</u>	15
<u>Trench 200</u>	15
<u>Phase II (2008 Evaluation)</u>	16
<u>Trench 81</u>	16
<u>Trench 83</u>	17
<u>Trench 84</u>	17
<u>Trench 85</u>	17

<u>Trench 86</u>	18
<u>Trench 87</u>	18
<u>Trench 88</u>	18
<u>Trench 89</u>	18
<u>Trench 90</u>	19
<u>Trench 91</u>	19
<u>Trench 92</u>	19
<u>Trench 94</u>	20
<u>Trench 95</u>	20
<u>Trench 96</u>	20
<u>Trench 97</u>	20
<u>Trench 98</u>	20
<u>Trench 99</u>	21
<u>Trench 100</u>	21
<u>Trench 101</u>	22
<u>Trench 102</u>	22
<u>Trench 103</u>	22
<u>Trench 157</u>	23
<u>Trench 158</u>	23
<u>Trench 159</u>	23
<u>Trench 160</u>	23
<u>Trench 161</u>	23
<u>Trench 162</u>	24
<u>Trench 163</u>	24
<u>Trench 164</u>	24
<u>Trench 165</u>	24
<u>Trench 166</u>	25
<u>Trench 167</u>	25
<u>Trench 168</u>	25
<u>Trench 169</u>	25
<u>Trench 170</u>	26
<u>Trench 171</u>	26
<u>Trench 172</u>	26
<u>Trench 178</u>	26
<u>Trench 180</u>	26
<u>Trench 181</u>	27
<u>Trench 182</u>	27
<u>Trench 183</u>	27
<u>Trench 184</u>	27
<u>Trench 185</u>	28

<u>Trench 187</u>	28
<u>Trench 188</u>	28
<u>Trench 189</u>	28
<u>Trench 190</u>	29
<u>FINDS</u>	29
<u>PROJECT CONSTRAINTS</u>	29
<u>DISCUSSION</u>	29
<u>IMPACT ASSESSMENT</u>	30
<u>Existing Impacts</u>	30
<u>Proposed Impacts</u>	31
<u>MITIGATION</u>	31
<u>CONCLUSION</u>	31
<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</u>	32
<u>REFERENCES</u>	32
<u>APPENDIX 1 - Context Summary</u>	34
<u>APPENDIX 2 – DATING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE MULTI-PERIOD POTTERY</u>	
<u>ASSEMBLAGE</u>	46
<u>APPENDIX 3 – Figures</u>	53

List of Figures

- Fig.1 Location of site of proposed development within Herne Bay, Kent
- Fig.2 Location of test trenches within proposed development area
- Fig.3 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 81 & 83
- Fig.4 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 84 & 85
- Fig.5 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 86 & 87
- Fig.6 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 88 & 89
- Fig.7 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 90 & 91
- Fig.8 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 92, 94 & 95
- Fig.9 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 96-98
- Fig.10 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 99-101
- Fig.11 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 102 & 103
- Fig.12 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 104 & 107
- Fig.13 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 108 & 111
- Fig.14 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 112-113
- Fig.15 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 114 & 117
- Fig.16 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 118-119
- Fig.17 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 120 & 122
- Fig.18 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 128-129
- Fig.19 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 130-131
- Fig.20 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 133 & 144
- Fig.21 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 157-159
- Fig.22 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 160-162
- Fig.23 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 163-165
- Fig.24 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 166-168
- Fig.25 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 169-171
- Fig.26 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 172, 178 & 180
- Fig.27 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 181-183
- Fig.28 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 184, 185 & 187
- Fig.29 Trench Plans (1:100) and Sections (1:20) – Trenches 188-189

List of Tables

- Table 1 Phases of Archaeological Fieldwork
- Table 2 Trench Numbers assigned to Fieldwork Phase
- Table 3 Number of Archaeological Features (per trench)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT ALTIRA BUSINESS PARK,
BLACKSOLE FARM, HERNE BAY, KENT
(Archaeological Phases III and IV)
NGR: 619606 167254
Site Code: BSF-EV-08

SUMMARY

Under the direction of Dr Paul Wilkinson, Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to Blacksole Farm, Herne Bay, Kent, between May 2007 and February 2008. A planning application (PAN: CA/98/0544/HBA Condition 7) for a business park comprising Class B1 and B8 units along with associated highway access, car parking and services at the above site was submitted to Canterbury City Council (CCC) whereby the Archaeological Officer requested that an Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT 25th January 2007) and in discussion with the Archaeological Officer, Canterbury County Council.

116 evaluation trenches revealed the presence of enclosures, droveways, pits and post holes representative of extensive settlement dated to the prehistoric periods. Archaeological horizons were shown to survive at a depth approximately 0.5m below the existing ground level. Truncation of archaeological horizons was relatively minimal, evident only by the existence of low impact field drains.

INTRODUCTION

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by Kitewood Estates to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT 2007) and in discussion with the Archaeological Officer, Canterbury County Council. The evaluation was carried out in two phases, the first phase comprising 54 trenches commencing in April 2007, followed by the excavation of a further 61 trenches in February 2008 (see below).

PLANNING BACKGROUND

A planning application (PAN: CA/98/0544/HBA Condition 7) for a business park comprising Class B1 and B8 units along with associated highway access, car parking and services at the above site was submitted to Canterbury City Council (CCC) at

which time it was requested that an *Archaeological Evaluation* be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The following condition was attached to the planning consent:

No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a proper record of matters of archaeological interest.

Requirements for the archaeological evaluation comprised trial trenching, targeting a minimum of 5% of the impact area, with trenches designed to establish whether there are any archaeological deposits at the site that may be affected by the proposed development. The results from this evaluation will be used to inform CCC of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

To date, archaeological works on site have comprised Phase I (Archaeological Evaluation, 2007) and subsequent Phase II mitigation (Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample excavation, ongoing). This report details two further phases of archaeological evaluation on the eastern extent of the proposed development site. Table 1 below summarises phases of archaeological work;

Phase	Description
I	Archaeological Evaluation of the western area of the proposed development area, as detailed by SWAT with an Archaeological Evaluation Report (Allen 2007)
II	Archaeological mitigation in response to Phase I in the form of a Strip, Map and Sample excavation as detailed by SWAT within an archaeological specification (Britchfield 2007). This programme of works is currently ongoing (see <i>Archaeological Background</i> below)
III	Archaeological Evaluation carried out in April 2007 on the eastern extent of the proposed development area (this report)
IV	Archaeological Evaluation carried out in February 2008 on the eastern extent of the proposed development area (this report)
V	Archaeological mitigation in response to Phases III and IV as required by Canterbury City Council (see <i>Archaeological Mitigation</i> below)

Table 4 Phases of Archaeological Fieldwork**SITE DESCRIPTION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The site is situated north of Thanet Way (centred on National Grid Reference 619606 167254), adjacent to Bogsole Lane to the east (see Fig. 1). The site is c.9.7ha in extent, relatively flat, with a slight decline to the east, at a height of approximately 35-37m A.O.D, (Above Ordnance Datum) and is divided by angular hedgerows and drainage ditches. Prior to the evaluation the site was used for arable farming.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**Archaeological investigations carried out within the surrounding area**

An extensive archaeological narrative for the surrounding area is provided within the archaeological evaluation report prepared by SWAT (Allen 2007) for the adjacent site and need not be repeated in this document. That said, three sites are of particular relevance due to their proximity to Blacksole Farm. Therefore, for the sake of consistency, extracts from the report prepared by SWAT (2007) are detailed below;

Bogshole Lane A, Beltinge (NGR TR 1975 6720) - During archaeological monitoring of trenching in advance of pipe laying, part of a Mid Iron Age settlement site was discovered on either side of Bogshole Lane, near Beltinge, some 500m east of the present site (Parfitt and Hutchinson 1995, 5). Here, gullies, ditches, post-holes, pit complexes, a four-poster structure (possibly the remains of a raised grain store) and part of the remains of a round house were exposed and over 2000 potsherds recovered, most being dated to c. 500 - c. 300 BC. The remains of the Iron Age round

house were particularly well preserved, consisting of a penannular gully (presumably an eaves gully) with an internal diameter of 14m, and containing a cluster of post-holes and post-pits.

Bogshole Lane B, Beltinge (NGR TR 2045 6770) - This site lies on a gentle, east-facing slope between May Street and Bogshole Lane, some 50m east of the Bogshole Lane A site and some 500m east of the present site. The Bogshole Lane A and B remains may, in part, supply evidence for the same phase of occupation activity. If so, an extensive area for this activity is indicated. On the Bogshole Lane B site eleven pits, a gully, a post hole and parts of four ditches were exposed, one of which produced about 50 sherds of Neolithic pottery (Parfitt and Hutchinson 1995). Other than the ditches, the features were, on the basis of limited ceramic evidence, of probable Late Bronze/Early Iron Age date. However, the north-east/south-west and north-west/south-east alignment of the ditches suggested that they may have represented an eastern extension of the ditched Late Iron Age/Early Roman- period field system exposed on the Bogshole Lane A site. If so, the small amount of Late Bronze/Early Iron Age pottery in the Bogshole Lane B ditches was residual.

Bogshole Lane C, Broomfield (NGR TR 1985 6695) – Here, copious evidence of prehistoric activity was uncovered in the form of pits, field/boundary ditches and an expansive north-east/south-west aligned metalled trackway, the latter dated on the basis of an overlying bronze hoard to earlier than c. 850 - c. 700 BC . Occupation activity predating and including the Mid to Late Bronze Age is indicated (Allen 2001, 12; Helm undated, Helm 2003, 23).

Perhaps of more interest, in archaeological terms, was the presence of a very large, roughly circular pit (average diameter 14.5m). It was excavated to a depth of 2.3m, at which point excavation was abandoned in the interests of safety, but the pit was clearly of considerably greater depth. It had been subject to at least two major re-cuts during prehistory, presumably because its location within London Clay-dominated terrain meant that it was subject to continual infilling through collapse and colluvial down-flow. In addition, several large pits of unknown function had been cut at intervals into the fills of the feature, as had a large number of roughly circular pits. These surrounded the large circular pit and, in a small number of cases, were cut (again at intervals) into its internal fills. A distinctive common feature of the smaller pits, which had depths of between 0.12 - 0.3m and diameters of between 0.3 - 1.47m, was their fills, which in all cases consisted of compacted burnt daub and charcoal.

The features as a whole provide good circumstantial evidence for ritual activity, as it

is difficult to account for the size, form and complexity of the overall structure otherwise. If the original structure did indeed have a ritual function, it represents a rare example of a prehistoric ritual monument in the London-Clay dominated parts of north Kent. A Late Bronze Age hoard was discovered in a small pit 40m south of the probable ritual monument (Allen 2001, 12). The hoard, which consisted of 27 copper alloy (bronze) fragments, was retrieved from a pit which also contained five flint-tempered potsherds of Late Bronze/Early Iron type Age representing the remains of at least three vessels. This suggested that the hoard was buried in or near a settlement, probably the Willow Farm settlement some 400m to the north west, in what was an already deforested area. A more precise date than that derivable from the potsherds was indicated by the bronze hoard, which was of Ewart Park type, dated to the last part of the Bronze Age (c. 850 - c. 700 BC).

Settlement and/or ritual activity on the Bogshole Lane site at Broomfield appears to have ceased some time during the Early Iron Age, probably in the sixth century BC and, as in the case of the nearby Willow Farm site, occupation activity appears not to have resumed until the Late Iron Age, when a drainage ditch containing grog-tempered 'Belgic' pottery was cut across the site. However, the presence across the site of a low-intensity scatter of ceramic material of the same type pointed to small-scale Late Iron Age settlement activity, and a single rectangular posted structure dated by its associated ceramics to the Early-Mid Roman period suggested that settlement activity continued up to the mid third century AD or thereabouts, as was also the case for the nearby Willow Farm site.

Archaeological investigations carried out to date, within the Proposed Development Area (PDA)

The archaeological evaluation carried out by SWAT in April 2007 (Phase I) indicated the presence of extensive, multiphase remains associated with prehistoric and Roman-period occupation/settlement activity in addition to large-scale prehistoric industrial activity and probably pottery production. The results of the evaluation appeared to confirm that the Levels were relatively well populated during the Late Bronze/Early Iron Age but, in common with a minority of the other sites in the area, the site also produced evidence of earlier occupation activity. Evidence for significant activity during the Mid Iron Age was lacking but renewed activity during the Late Iron Age and probably into the Early Roman period was indicated, again reflecting a general theme. Allen (2007:30) suggests that evidence pointed to the remains of a possibly high-status Mid Roman-period settlement being present in the northern part of the Phase I evaluation area.

Ongoing archaeological excavations within the western extent of the PDA (Phase II) has confirmed the presence of multi-phased occupation dating from the Bronze Age through the post-medieval period. Early results suggest nucleated prehistoric settlement, including individual roundhouses with associated domestic, agricultural and possibly industrial land use, set out within a managed agricultural landscape. Roman and medieval remains (at the time of preparing this document) appear to have been focused along the northern extent of the western PDA, as suggested by Allen (2007: 30).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation, as set out within the Archaeological Specifications was to:

- i) establish whether there are any archaeological deposits at the site that may be affected by the proposed development. The excavation is thus to ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on site.
- ii) establish the extent to which previous development on the site has affected archaeological deposits.

Additional aims were to:

- iii) gather sufficient information to enable an assessment of the potential and significance of any archaeological remains to be made and the impact development will have upon them.
- iv) enable an informed decision to be made regarding the future treatment of any archaeological remains and consider any appropriate mitigatory measures either in advance of and/or during development.

METHODOLOGY

Trial trenching consisted of the excavation of 116 trenches, each measuring 2m in width and approximately 20m in length, equating to a 5.9% sample of the entire site. Trench locations were agreed prior to the excavation between CCC and SWAT. Each trench was initially scanned for surface finds prior to excavation. Excavation was carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, removing the overburden to the top of the first recognisable archaeological horizon, under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist. Trenches were

subsequently hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross-sections through a selection (see below) of features were excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the specification.

A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. A full list is presented in Appendix 1. Layers and fills are recorded (**100**). The cut of the feature is shown [**100**]. Context numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes; these are used in the report (in **bold**). Each number has been attributed to a specific trench with the primary number(s) relating to specific trenches (*i.e.* Trench 1, **1/001+**, Trench 2, **2/001+**, Trench 3, **3/001+** etc.). Trench numbers were assigned sequentially in order to fit with the earlier phase of evaluation works. Table 2 provides a breakdown of evaluation trench details for the site as a whole;

Trench Numbers	Phase	Year	Report
1-77	I	2007	Tim Allen (2007)
78-80	Trenches not excavated		
81-103	III	2008	This report
104-156	II	2007	
157-195	III	2008	
200	II	2007	

Table 5 Trench Numbers assigned to Fieldwork Phase

MONITORING

Curatorial monitoring was carried out during the course of the evaluation by CCC at which time, methodologies and preliminary results were discussed. All visible features revealed during that course of the Phase III evaluation were investigated. However, following mechanical excavation of Phase IV trenches, it was suggested that only a small percentage of visible features be investigated as it was clear that further extensive archaeological mitigation would be required.

RESULTS

A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the entire site comprising topsoil/overburden (**001**) overlying a buried subsoil (**002**) and the natural Brickearth (**003**). The topsoil/overburden consisted of friable dark grey black slightly silty clay

overlying the buried subsoil comprising mid brown grey silty clay. A clear line of horizon gave way to natural Brickearth where mechanical excavation ceased and careful examination and investigation for truncating features was carried out. The thickness of the overburden varied, with the average depth of the natural geology being located c.0.5m below the existing ground level. Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence for all trenches.

Phase II (2007 Evaluation)

Phase II of the archaeological evaluation was carried out during April 2007 in dry and bright conditions. A total of 54 trenches were excavated, 19 of which contained archaeological remains. Despite the archaeological potential within the surrounding development site, specific areas appeared to be archaeologically sterile. These included; trenches **105-106**, **109-110**, **115-116**, **121**, **123-127** (inc), **132**, **134-143** (inc) and **145-156** (inc). Trenches possessing archaeological features are described below.

Trench 104

(22.5 x 2m) Fig. 12

Located within the north western extent of the development area and aligned northwest-southeast, Trench 104 measured 22m in length and contained a single pit [104/006]. Measuring 0.47m in width, this feature possessed an upper fill comprising a mottled blue/grey and orange/brown silty clay (104/004) and a lower fill consisting of redeposited, or slumped natural brickearth (104/005).

Pit [104/006] was sealed by the buried soil (104/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (104/003) at a depth of approximately 0.49m (33.04m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 107

(16m x 2m) Fig. 12

Located to the southeast of Trench 104, Trench 107 measured 16m in length and contained a single pit [107/005] and gulley [107/007]. Located centrally within the trench and measuring 1.07m in width and 0.31m in depth, feature [107/005] possessed a single fill comprising pale orange brown silty clay with occasional manganese¹ and rare inclusions of charcoal (107/004) and a lower fill consisting of redeposited, or slumped natural brickearth (107/005). To the immediate south, gully [107/007] measured 0.76m in width, with a depth of 0.29m. A single fill (107/006) comprised

¹ A naturally occurring metallic trace element

pale-mid orange brown silty clay with occasional manganese and charcoal flecks, containing 4 sherds of pottery dated to the Late Iron Age (Appendix 2).

Both features were sealed by the buried soil (107/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (107/003) at a depth of approximately 0.47m (33.5m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 108

(20.5 x 2m) Fig. 13

Located to the east of Trench 107 and aligned east-west, Trench 108 measured 20.5m in length and contained a single NW-SE orientated gully [108/005]. Measuring approximately 0.31m in width, this feature possessed a single fill comprising mottled blue/grey and orange/brown silty clay (108/004) to a depth of 0.19m, containing 7 sherds of pottery dated to the Late Iron Age (Appendix 2).

Feature [108/005] was sealed by the buried soil (108/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (108/003) at a depth of approximately 0.42m (33.59m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 111

(19m x 2m) Fig. 13

Located to the south of Trenches 107 and 108, Trench 111 measured 19m in length and contained two parallel ditches [111/007] [111/109] and gully/elongated pit [111/005]. Located centrally within the trench and orientated north-south, both ditches measured approximately 1m in width with similar depths of c.0.3m. However, the eastern most ditch also contained a post hole [111/111], cut into the base of the ditch. All three features contained a single fill comprising pale orange brown silty clay with occasional manganese and rare inclusions of charcoal (111/006, 111/010 and 111/010) suggesting that the post hole was either earlier or contemporary with the parallel ditches. To the west, a gully or elongated pit [111/1005] measured 0.5m in width with a depth of 0.19m filled by pale blue-grey silty clay with rare manganese (111/004).

All features were sealed by the buried soil (111/002), cutting into the natural Brickearth (111/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m (c.33.76m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 112

(20.5m x 2m) Fig. 14

Located to the west of Trench 111, Trench 107 measured 20.5m in length and contained a single stake hole [112/008] and ditch [112/006]. Orientated north-south within the eastern half of the trench and measuring 1.34m in width and 0.42m in depth, ditch [112/005] possessed an upper fill comprising mottled pale blue-grey and orange silty clay with rare pebble inclusions of charcoal (112/004) and a lower fill consisting of redeposited, or slumped natural brickearth (112/005). To the immediate east gully [112/008] measured 0.12m in diameter, with a depth of 0.05m. A single fill (112/007) comprised mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks.

Both features were sealed by the buried soil (112/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (112/003) at a depth of approximately 0.49m (33.62m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 113

(20m x 2m) Fig. 14

Located adjacent to the western extent of the evaluation area, Trench 113 measured 20m in length and contained a possible pit/ditch terminus [113/005] and ditch [112/007]. Orientated north-south within the western half of the trench and measuring 0.56m in width and 0.16m in depth, ditch [113/007] possessed a single fill comprising mottled light grey orange/brown silty clay with frequent manganese flecks (113/006). To the immediate east, a shallow pit or ditch terminus [113/005] measured 0.87m in length, with a depth of 0.08m. A single fill (113/004) comprised mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks.

Both features were sealed by the buried soil (113/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (111/003) at a depth of approximately 0.51m (c. 33.1m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 114

(21 x 2m) Fig. 15

Located adjacent to the western extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 114 measured 21m in length and contained a single pit [114/005] measuring approximately 1.06m in width, this feature possessed a single fill comprising mottled pale orange/yellow and grey silty clay (114/004) to a depth of 0.21m, containing a single sherd of pottery dated to the Late Iron Age (Appendix 2).

Feature [114/005] was sealed by the buried soil (114/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (114/003) at a depth of approximately 0.50m (33.53m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 117

(21.4m x 2m) Fig. 15

Located centrally within the evaluation area, Trench 117 measured 21.4m in length and contained two ditches [117/005] [117/007], the former being truncated by a later pit [117/009]. Orientated east-west within the centre of the trench and measuring 0.96m in width and 0.19m in depth, ditch [117/007] possessed a single fill comprising mottled light grey orange grey/brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks (117/006), containing 6 sherds of post-medieval pottery (Appendix 2). To the immediate southwest and orientated north-south, the second ditch [117/005] measured 1.01m in width, with a depth of 0.41m. A single fill (117/004) that comprised mid orange-brown silty clay with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks, had been truncated by a pit or possible re-cut [117/009] filled by mid brown grey silty clay with rare snail shell inclusions (117/008).

Both features were sealed by the buried soil (117/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (117/003) at a depth of approximately 0.42m (c. 33.8m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 118

(19.5 x 2m) Fig. 16

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned northwest-southeast, Trench 118 measured 19.5m in length and contained a single ditch [118/005]. Measuring approximately 1.51m in width, this feature possessed a single fill comprising mottled orange grey/brown silty clay with occasional chalk, iron and shell flecks (118/004) to a depth of 0.47m.

Feature [118/005] was sealed by the buried soil (118/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (118/003) at a depth of approximately 0.49m (34.6m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 119

(19 x 2m) Fig. 16

Located to the immediate west of Trench 118 and aligned east-west, Trench 119 measured 19m in length and contained a single pit [119/005]. Measuring approximately 0.51m in diameter, this feature possessed a single fill comprising mid orange grey silty clay with occasional shell flecks (119/004) to a depth of 0.39m.

Feature [119/005] was sealed by the buried soil (119/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (119/003) at a depth of approximately 0.47m (34.8m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 120

(20 x 2m) Fig. 17

Located centrally within the assessment area, Trench 119 measured 19m in length and contained a single shallow gully [120/005] & [120/007] filled by mid orange grey silty clay with rare charcoal flecks (120/004) & (120/006). The gully, which was curvilinear in plan with a slight east-west orientation, was sealed by the buried soil (120/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (120/003) at a depth of approximately 0.47m (34.7m AOD) below the existing ground level. Context (120/004) contained a single sherd of pottery and roof tile dated to post-medieval period (Appendix 2).

Trench 122

(21 x 2m) Fig. 17

Trench 122 measured 21m in length and contained a single ditch [120/005], along with a pit [122/007] and post hole [122/009] with an unclear stratigraphic relationship. Measuring 1.26m in width with a depth of 0.43m, ditch [120/005] was filled by mid orange brown silty clay with occasional manganese, chalk, clinker and snail shell (122/004), containing finds dating the fill to the post-medieval period. (Appendix 2). To the immediate east, the post hole [122/009] and pit [122/007] were both filled by pale blue grey clay (122/008) and (122/006) simultaneously.

Archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (122/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (122/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m (34.5m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 128

(21 x 2m) Fig. 18

Trench 128 measured 21m in length and contained a single ditch [128/007] and possible ditch terminus [128/005]. Measuring 0.61m in width with a depth of 0.18m ditch [128/005] was filled by pale grey brown silty clay with occasional manganese

and rare charcoal (128/004). To the immediate west, ditch [128/007] measured 0.65m in width with a depth of 0.22m, which was filled by pale beige brown clay (128/006).

Both archaeological features within this trench were sealed by a buried soil (128/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (128/003) at a depth of approximately 0.53m (35.1m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 129

(20 x 2m) Fig. 18

Located within the far western extent of the evaluation area, Trench 129 was orientated east-west, measured 20m in length and contained six discrete post holes [129/005] [129/010] [129/012] [129/014] [129/016] and [129/020], together with a curvilinear ditch [129/008] [129/018] and a smaller gully [129/022].

The most westerly post hole [129/005] measured 0.35m in diameter with a depth of 0.11m. Steep sides and a relatively flat base gave way to a primary fill comprising mid orange brown silty clay (129/006) overlying a secondary fill consisting of dark brown silty clay with abundant charcoal (129/004)². Adjacent to the southeast, the second post hole [129/012] was slightly smaller measuring 0.30m in diameter with a maximum depth of 0.05m, containing a fill that consisted of mid orange brown silty clay (129/011). Similarly, post hole [129/014] measured 0.26m in diameter with a depth of 0.09m, albeit with a slightly more tapered profile than other post holes within this trench. The single fill comprised mottled orange/brown blue silty clay with occasional manganese (129/013). Features [129/016] and [129/020], although recorded as post holes, represent little more than shallow undulations within the natural geology, while feature [129/010] possessed a distinct bowl-shaped profile with a diameter of 0.25m and depth of 0.09m. The single fill of this feature consisted of mid orange brown coarse sandy silty clay with occasional manganese (129/009). Located within the centre of the trench a slightly curving ditch [129/008] [129/018] had an average width of 0.62m and depth of c.0.28m. Orientated NW-SE the single fill comprised mottled light blue grey and mid orange brown silty clay with occasional flecks of charcoal and chalk (129/007) (129/017), the latter containing 9 sherds of pottery dated to the Late Iron Age (Appendix 2). To the east a NW-SE orientated gully [129/022] measured 0.37m in width with a depth of 0.08m. A concave profile gave way to a pale orange brown silty clay fill (129/021).

² This feature was originally thought to represent a cremated deposit, although on further investigation no evidence was found to support this.

All archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (129/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (129/003) at a depth of approximately 0.52m (c. 35.1m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 130

(20 x 2m) Fig. 19

Located within the south-western extent of the evaluation area, Trench 130 measured 20m in length and contained two discrete post holes [130/005] [130/007]. Measuring approximately 0.30m in diameter and 0.15m in depth, post hole [130/005] possessed a single fill comprising mid orange brown silty clay with rare pea gravel (130/004), while adjacent, post hole [130/007] had a diameter of 0.21m and depth of 0.11m and was filled by mid orange brown silty clay (130/006). Both features possessed steep near vertical sides giving way to a relatively flat base, sealed by the buried soil (130/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (130/003) at a depth of approximately 0.47m (c. 35.2m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 131

(20 x 2m) Fig. 19

Located within the south-western extent of the evaluation area, Trench 131 measured 19m in length and contained two discrete post holes [131/005] [131/007] and the combination of a larger post hole [131/011] and post pipe [131/009].

Measuring approximately 0.38m in diameter and 0.08m in depth, post hole [131/007] possessed a single fill comprising pale orange brown silty clay silt with rare pea gravel (131/006), while adjacent, post hole [131/005] had a diameter of 0.19m and depth of 0.07m and was filled by mottled pale blue/grey and mid orange silty clay (131/004). The third and largest of the features within Trench 131 consisted of a cut post hole [131/009] measuring 0.53m in diameter to a depth of 0.37m backfilled with mid orange brown silty clay (131/010) around a clearly visible post pipe [131/009] filled by mottled blue grey and orange silt clay (131/008). The nature of the contexts associated with this feature would suggest that the post was removed after use, thus forming the 'post pipe' profile.

All archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (131/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (131/003) at a depth of approximately 0.49m (c. 35.5m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 133

(22m x 2m) Fig. 20

Located within the southern extent of the PDA, Trench 133 measured 22m in length and contained a single pit [133/005] truncated in antiquity by a later ditch [133/007] & [133/009] and two modern land drains.

Measuring approximately 1.18m in width and 0.24m in depth, ditch [133/005] and [133/007] possessed rounded sides giving way to a relatively flat base. The single fill, which dated to the post-medieval period, comprised mid orange brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks (133/006) had been truncated by two modern land drains. Underlying this ditch, an earlier pit [133/005] had a surviving width of 0.49m and depth of 0.22m, filled by mottled orange/brown grey clay with rare inclusions of charcoal (133/004).

Both archaeological features were sealed by the buried soil (133/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (133/003) at a depth of approximately 0.47m (35.5m AOD) below the existing ground level. Modern drains had both cut through the surviving subsoil.

Trench 144

(19.5 x 2m) Fig. 20

Located within the south-western extent of the assessment area Trench 144 measured 19.5m in length and contained a single shallow gully [144/005] filled by mid brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks (144/004). The gully, which was curvilinear in plan with a slight southeast-northwest orientation, was sealed by the buried soil (144/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (144/003) at a depth of approximately 0.47m (35.3m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 200

(21 x 2m) Fig. 30

Located within the western extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 200 measured 21m in length and contained a single pit or post hole [200/005]. Measuring 0.41m in width, this feature possessed a fill comprising mid orange grey silty clay (200/004) sealed by the buried soil (200/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (200/003) at a depth of approximately 0.55m (34m AOD) below the existing ground level. Dating of the finds from this feature suggest a Mid Bronze Age/Late Iron Age date (Appendix 2).

Phase III (2008 Evaluation)

Phase IV of the archaeological evaluation was carried out in February 2008 in dry and bright conditions. A total of 62 trenches were excavated: 14 of which contained confirmed archaeological remains, while 34 trenches contained 'potential' archaeological remains. Following the completion of mechanical excavation and trench planning, a meeting was held to discuss the most appropriate form of excavation strategy. It was agreed that the investigation of unknown archaeological features within confined areas (i.e. an evaluation trench) could be detrimental and that such a high frequency of 'potential' features would warrant further, more extensive archaeological mitigation. For this reason, the majority of 'potential' features have been simply mapped and thus remain undisturbed until more extensive archaeological works take place. Definitions, as to the potential of these features (labelled type 'D' within the context register – see Appendix A), are provided below.

Archaeologically sterile trenches comprised; **82, 93, 173-177 (inc), 179 and 191-195 (inc)**, although it should be noted that trenches **82** and **93** flooded as soon as excavation began and may, therefore, have contained archaeological remains. Trenches **78-80** were not excavated as they are within an area subject to earlier (Phase II) mitigation.

Trench 81

(20 x 2m) Fig. 3

Located within the far northern extent of the evaluation area, Trench 81 was orientated north-south, measured 20m in length and contained four discrete ditches **[081/005]** **[081/007]** **[081/009]** and **(081/010)**.

The most westerly ditch terminus **[081/007]** measured 0.78m in width with a depth of 0.16m. Shallow concave sides and a relatively flat base gave way to a primary fill comprising mid orange brown silty clay **(081/006)** that contained friable fragments of prehistoric pottery. Adjacent and to the east, the second ditch terminus **[081/005]** was slightly larger, measuring 0.80m in width with a maximum depth of 0.24m, containing a fill that consisted of mid orange brown silty clay **(081/004)**. The proximity and NE-SW alignment of both these ditches suggest a contemporary date, although no finds were present within the latter. Similarly, ditch **[081/009]**, which measured 1.16m in width with a depth of 0.21m, was orientated at a tangent to the previous two, providing evidence for a possible enclosure, such as a paddock or pen. The single fill comprised mottled orange/brown grey silty clay with occasional manganese **(081/008)**. The final feature within this trench was not examined

(081/010). However, the mid orange brown coarse sandy silty clay with occasional manganese and charcoal inclusions suggested that either a third ditch terminus, or elongated pit was represented.

All archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (081/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (081/003) at a depth of approximately 0.52m (c. 34.1m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 83

(23 x 2m) Fig. 3

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 83 measured 23m in length and contained two pits and a ditch terminus. Measuring 0.81m in width with a tapering V-shaped profile to a depth of 0.21m, ditch [083/007] possessed a fill comprising mid orange grey silty clay (083/006). Within the eastern extent of the trench, a large pit [083/005] measuring 2.05m in diameter comprising mid blue grey silty clay (083/004) to a depth of 0.32m, possessed small friable fragments of prehistoric pottery. A pit or large posthole (083/008) situated between the pit and ditch remained unexcavated.

All archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (083/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (083/003) at a depth of approximately 0.50m (c. 34.2m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 84

(19.5 x 2m) Fig. 4

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 84 measured 19.5m in length and contained a single ditch [084/005]. Measuring 0.89m in width, this feature possessed a fill comprising mid orange grey silty clay (084/004) sealed by the buried soil (084/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (084/003) at a depth of approximately 0.61m (34.3m AOD) below the existing ground level. Dating of the finds from this feature suggests a prehistoric date (discarded due to friable condition).

Trench 85

(19.5 x 2m) Fig. 4

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 85 measured 19.5m in length and contained a single unexcavated anomaly indicative of natural rooting (085/004) sealed by the buried soil (085/002), cutting into

the natural brickearth (**085/003**) at a depth of approximately 0.59m below the existing ground level.

Trench 86

(20.5 x 2m) Fig. 5

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 086 measured 20.5m in length and contained an unexcavated gully terminus (**086/007**) and pit (**086/006**), along with a large pit [**086/005**] measuring 1.05m+ in length with a width of 0.18m. The single fill of this feature (**086/004**) consisted of mid grey brown sandy silt with occasional flecks of manganese and charcoal, sealed by the buried soil (**086/002**), at a depth of approximately 0.46m (34.7m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 87

(21 x 2m) Fig. 5

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 087 measured 21m in length and contained six unexcavated features including potential pits (**087/004**), (**087/005**), (**087/008**) & (**087/009**), along with a possible ditch terminus (**087/006**) and an anomaly indicative of natural rooting (**087/007**).

Trench 88

(33 x 2m) Fig. 6

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned northwest-southeast, Trench 088 measured 33m in length and contained six unexcavated features including potential postholes (**088/004**), (**088/007**) & (**087/008**), along with two gullies (**088/005**) & (**088/006**) and a possible ditch terminus (**088/009**).

All potential archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (**088/002**), cutting into the natural brickearth (**088/003**) at a depth of approximately 0.59m (c. 34.1m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 89

(21.5 x 2m) Fig. 6

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 089 measured 21.5m in length and contained an unexcavated ditch terminus (**089/008**) and two gullies (**089/006**) & (**089/007**), along with a large ditch [**089/005**] measuring 2.70m in width with a single fill (**089/004**) consisted of mid orange brown sandy silt with occasional flecks of manganese and charcoal, sealed by the buried soil

(089/002), at a depth of approximately 0.71m (33.7m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 90

(19.5 x 2m) Fig. 7

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 090 measured 19.5m in length and contained five unexcavated features including three potential pits (090/004), (090/006) & (090/007), along with a gully (090/005) and a possible posthole(090/008).

All potential archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (090/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (090/003) at a depth of approximately 0.48m (c. 34.5m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 91

(20 x 2m) Fig. 7

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 91 measured 20m in length and contained 3 ditches, each aligned north-south. Measuring 0.71m in width with a tapering V-shaped profile to a depth of 0.30m, ditch [091/005] possessed a fill comprising mid orange brown silty clay (091/004). Directly adjacent, a second ditch [091/007] measured 1.03m in width comprising mid blue grey silty clay (091/006) to a depth of 0.22m, possessing small friable fragments of prehistoric pottery. A third ditch (091/008) within the eastern extent of the trench remained unexcavated.

All archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (091/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (091/003) at a depth of approximately 0.59m (c. 34.8m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 92

(23 x 2m) Fig. 8

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 92 measured 23m in length and contained three unexcavated features including a ditch (092/004), a charcoal filled pit (092/005) and a narrow northeast-southwest orientated gully (092/006), all of which were sealed by the buried soil (092/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (092/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m (c. 34.7m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 94

(19 x 2m) Fig. 8

Located adjacent to the northern boundary of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 094 measured 19m in length and contained a single unexcavated anomaly indicative of either a pit or possible ditch terminus (094/004) sealed by the buried soil (094/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (094/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m below the existing ground level.

Trench 95

(19 x 2m) Fig. 8

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 95 measured 19m in length and contained two unexcavated features comprising a curvilinear gully (095/005) and a probable root bole (095/004), both of which were sealed by the buried soil (095/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (095/003) at a depth of approximately 0.53m (c. 34.2m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 96

(20 x 2m) Fig. 9

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 096 measured 20m in length and contained a single unexcavated anomaly indicative of either a possible gully (096/004) sealed by the buried soil (096/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (096/003) at a depth of approximately 0.60m below the existing ground level.

Trench 97

(20 x 2m) Fig. 9

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 97 measured 20m in length and contained four unexcavated features including two potential ditches (097/004) and (097/006) plus two possible pits (097/005) and 097/007). All features were sealed by the buried soil (097/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (097/003) at a depth of approximately 0.61m (c. 34.2m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 98

(19 x 2m) Fig. 9

Located within the central eastern area of the evaluation site, Trench 98 was orientated north-south, measured 19m in length and contained three investigated ditches [098/005], [098/007] and [098/009], along with a further unexcavated ditch (098/011) and pit (098/010).

The most westerly ditch [098/005] measured 0.82m in width with a depth of 0.24m. Relatively steep concave sides and sloping base gave way to a primary fill comprising mid orange brown silty clay (098/004) that contained friable fragments of prehistoric pottery. Adjacent to the east, the second ditch [098/007] was slightly larger measuring 0.92m in width with a maximum depth of 0.26m, containing a fill that consisted of mid orange brown silty clay (098/006). Similarly, a ditch terminus or even large pit [098/009] had a maximum visible width of 2.61m with an investigated depth of 0.26m. The single fill comprised mottled orange/brown grey silty clay with occasional manganese (098/008) that had been truncated by a modern field drain. Two additional features within this trench were not examined, (098/010) and (098/011), although the mid orange brown coarse sandy silty clay fills with occasional manganese and charcoal inclusions suggested that a third ditch and additional pit were represented.

All archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (098/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (098/003) at a depth of approximately 0.63m (c. 34.2m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 99

(21 x 2m) Fig. 10

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 99 measured 21m in length and contained a single unexcavated anomaly indicative of either a possible gully (099/004) sealed by the buried soil (099/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (099/003) at a depth of approximately 0.63m below the existing ground level.

Trench 100

(24 x 2m) Fig. 10

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned northwest-southeast, Trench 100 measured 24m in length and contained seven unexcavated features including potential pits (100/005), (100/006), (100/007), (100/008) and (100/010), along with two potential ditches (100/004) & (100/009).

All potential archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (100/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (100/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m (c. 34.5m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 101

(23.5 x 2m) Fig. 10

Located centrally within the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 101 measured 23.5m in length and contained a single unexcavated anomaly indicative of either a possible gully, ditch or natural rooting (101/004) sealed by the buried soil (101/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (101/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m below the existing ground level.

Trench 102

(19.5 x 2m) Fig. 11

Located within the central northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 102 measured 19.5m in length and contained 3 unexcavated anomalies indicative of ditches (102/005) and (102/006), plus a small pit or ditch terminus (102/004) sealed by the buried soil (102/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (102/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m below the existing ground level.

Trench 103

(18.5 x 2m) Fig. 11

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 103 measured 18.5m in length and contained the extents of two possible ditches, [103/005] and [103/009], along with a smaller 'feeder' ditch [103/007].

Measuring 2.31m in width with a shallow concave profile to a depth of 0.19m, ditch [103/009] possessed a fill comprising mid grey silty clay (103/008). Within the eastern extent of the trench the second ditch [103/005] measuring approximately 2.41m in width comprising mid blue grey silty clay (103/004) to a depth of 0.31m, had an undistinguishable relationship with a possible feeder gully [103/007] to the east. A variation on the natural was recognised within the western extent of the trench, comprising stiff clean clay (103/010).

All archaeological features and natural deposits within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (103/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (103/003) at a depth of approximately 0.51m (c. 36.6 m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 157

(22 x 2m) Fig. 21

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 157 measured 22m in length and contained an unexcavated pit (157/006), along with a ditch [157/005] measuring 0.66m in width with a depth of 0.33m. The single fill of this feature (157/004) consisted of mid grey brown sandy silt with occasional flecks of manganese and charcoal, sealed by the buried soil (157/002), at a depth of approximately 0.60m (36.6m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 158

(19 x 2m) Fig. 21

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 158 measured 19m in length and contained two unexcavated parallel ditches (158/004) and (158/005), forming a potential droveway, both of which were sealed by the buried soil (158/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (158/003) at a depth of approximately 0.51m (c. 36.4m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 159

(19 x 2m) Fig. 21

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 159 measured 19m in length and contained two unexcavated ditches (159/005) and (159/006), forming a potential roundhouse drip gully, along with a large unexcavated ditch (159/004), all of which were sealed by the buried soil (159/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (159/003) at a depth of approximately 0.51m (c. 36.5m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 160

(22 x 2m) Fig. 22

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 160 measured 22m in length and contained a single unexcavated anomaly indicative of east-west aligned ditch (160/004) sealed by the buried soil (160/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (160/003) at a depth of approximately 0.57m below the existing ground level.

Trench 161

(19 x 2m) Fig. 22

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 161 measured 19m in length and contained two unexcavated parallel ditches

(161/004) and (161/005), both of which were sealed by the buried soil (161/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (161/003) at a depth of approximately 0.50m (c. 34.1m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 162

(22 x 2m) Fig. 22

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 162 measured 22m in length and contained an unexcavated ditch (162/006), as well as a second ditch or pit (162/005) both of which were sealed by the buried soil (162/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (162/003) at a depth of approximately 0.51m (c. 34.4m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 163

(19 x 2m) Fig. 23

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 163 measured 19m in length and contained an unexcavated posthole (163/004), as well as a ditch terminus or pit (163/005) both of which were sealed by the buried soil (163/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (163/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m (c. 36.1m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 164

(18 x 2m) Fig. 23

Located within the far north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned northwest-southeast, Trench 164 measured 18m in length and contained a single unexcavated cut comprising modern brick, charcoal and tarmac (164/004) and redeposited clay (164/005), both of which are most likely associated with the construction of the adjacent railway or bridge. No archaeological features were present within this trench.

Trench 165

(19 x 2m) Fig. 23

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 165 measured 19m in length and contained two unexcavated parallel ditches (165/004) and (165/005), both of which were sealed by the buried soil (165/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (165/003) at a depth of approximately 0.40m (c. 36.2m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 166

(19 x 2m) Fig. 24

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 166 measured 19m in length and contained unexcavated ditch(es) (166/008) and posthole (166/009), along with a curving ditch [166/005] and [166/007] measuring approximately 0.52m in width with an average depth of 0.45m. The single fill of this feature (166/004) and (166/006) consisted of mid orange brown sandy silt with occasional flecks of manganese and charcoal, sealed by the buried soil (166/002), at a depth of approximately 0.51m (36.5m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 167

(19 x 2m) Fig. 24

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 167 measured 19m in length and contained two unexcavated parallel curvilinear gullies (167/004) and (167/006), as well as an addition unexcavated ditch (167/005), all of which were sealed by the buried soil (167/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (167/003) at a depth of approximately 0.51m (c. 34.1m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 168

(20 x 2m) Fig. 24

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 168 measured 20m in length and contained a single unexcavated anomaly indicative of a potential pit or possible tree bole (168/004) sealed by the buried soil (168/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (168/003) at a depth of approximately 0.49m below the existing ground level.

Trench 169

(20 x 2m) Fig. 25

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 169 measured 20m in length and contained an unexcavated ditch (169/006), along with a slightly curving ditch [169/005] measuring approximately 0.52m in width with an average depth of 0.24m. The single fill of this feature (169/004) consisted of mid grey brown sandy silt with occasional flecks of manganese and charcoal, sealed by the buried soil (169/002), at a depth of approximately 0.66m (36.4m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 170

(23 x 2m) Fig. 25

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 170 measured 23m in length and contained a single unexcavated ditch (170/004) sealed by the buried soil (170/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (170/003) at a depth of approximately 0.46m below the existing ground level.

Trench 171

(18.5 x 2m) Fig. 25

Located within the north-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 171 measured 18.5m in length and contained a single unexcavated anomaly indicative of natural rooting (171/004) sealed by the buried soil (171/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (171/003) at a depth of approximately 0.58m below the existing ground level.

Trench 172

(20 x 2m) Fig. 26

Located within the northern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 172 measured 20m in length and contained a single unexcavated ditch (172/004) sealed by the buried soil (172/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (172/003) at a depth of approximately 0.51m below the existing ground level.

Trench 178

(17 x 2m) Fig. 26

Located within the south-eastern corner of the evaluation area and aligned northeast-southwest, Trench 178 measured 17m in length and contained a single unexcavated ditch (178/004) sealed by the buried soil (178/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (178/003) at a depth of approximately 0.66m below the existing ground level.

Trench 180

(18 x 2m) Fig. 26

Located within the south-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 180 measured 18m in length and contained five unexcavated features including the extents of potential ditches (180/007), (180/008), (180/00) & (180/010), along with a curvilinear ditch (180/006). An additional ditch, cutting across the south-western corner of the trench, disappeared beneath the baulk edges. An excavated profile revealed a shallow concave side giving way to a gently sloping base,

underlying a fill comprising mid orange brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and friable fragments of prehistoric pottery (180/004).

All potential archaeological features and natural deposits within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (180/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (180/003) at a depth of approximately 0.68m (c. 37.5 m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 181

(19 x 2m) Fig. 27

Located within the south-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 181 measured 19m in length and contained a possible ditch (181/006) and pit measuring 3.50m in width with a shallow undulating profile to a depth of 0.24m [181/005]. The single fill consisted of mid grey silty clay (181/004). Within the eastern extent of the trench the second ditch [103/005] measuring approximately 2.41m in width comprising mid blue grey silty clay (103/004) to a depth of 0.31m, sealed by the buried soil (181/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (181/003) at a depth of approximately 0.73m (c. 37.4 m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 182

(20 x 2m) Fig. 27

Located within the south-eastern extent of the assessment area, Trench 182 measured 20m in length and contained a single unexcavated gully [182/005], along with two adjacent pits (182/004) and (182/006). All features were sealed by the buried soil (182/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (182/003) at a depth of approximately 0.63m (33.9m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 183

(18.5 x 2m) Fig. 26

Located within the south-eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 183 measured 18.5m in length and contained a single unexcavated ditch terminus (183/004) sealed by the buried soil (183/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (183/003) at a depth of approximately 0.63m below the existing ground level.

Trench 184

(19.5 x 2m) Fig. 28

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 184 measured 19.5m in length and contained four unexcavated features including two

potential ditches (184/006) and (184/007), a possible pit (184/005) and a clay spread (184/004), possibly representing a large clay extraction quarry. All features were sealed by the buried soil (184/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (184/003) at a depth of approximately 0.51m (c. 34.3m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 185

(19 x 2m) Fig. 28

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 185 measured 19m in length and contained a single unexcavated ditch terminus (185/004) sealed by the buried soil (185/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (185/003) at a depth of approximately 0.56m below the existing ground level.

Trench 187

(17.5 x 2m) Fig. 28

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned north-south, Trench 187 measured 17.5m in length and contained a single unexcavated ditch terminus (187/004) sealed by the buried soil (187/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (187/003) at a depth of approximately 0.40m below the existing ground level.

Trench 188

(18.5 x 2m) Fig. 29

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 188 measured 18.5m in length and contained a single unexcavated curvilinear gully (188/004) sealed by the buried soil (188/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (188/003) at a depth of approximately 0.48m below the existing ground level.

Trench 189

(18.5 x 2m) Fig. 29

Located within the south-eastern extent of the evaluation site, Trench 189 was orientated north-south, measured 18.5 in length and contained an investigated ditch [189/005] and pit [189/007], along with a further unexcavated ditch (189/010) and two pits (189/008) and (189/009).

The most westerly ditch (098/005) was curvilinear in plan suggesting the presence of a drip gully or enclosure ditch that appeared to cut into one of the earlier pits (189/009). Ditch [189/005] measured 1.22m in width with a depth of 0.18m.

Relatively steep concave sides and flat base gave way to a primary fill comprising mid orange brown silty clay (189/004) that contained friable fragments of prehistoric pottery. Adjacent to the north, the pit [189/007] was slightly larger, or a possible ditch terminus, measuring 2.10m in width with a maximum depth of 0.26m, containing a fill that consisted of mid orange grey silty clay (189/006).

All archaeological features within this trench were sealed by the buried soil (189/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (189/003) at a depth of approximately 0.57m (c. 37.2m AOD) below the existing ground level.

Trench 190

(19 x 2m) Fig. 30

Located within the eastern extent of the evaluation area and aligned east-west, Trench 190 measured 19m in length and contained a single unexcavated ditch (190/004) sealed by the buried soil (190/002), cutting into the natural brickearth (190/003) at a depth of approximately 0.49m below the existing ground level.

FINDS

See Appendix 2.

PROJECT CONSTRAINTS

Of particular note would be the relatively high water table. Problems with trench flooding and submerging plant had been encountered during the evaluation and elsewhere on site suggesting that when further work is required consideration should be given to water levels.

The complicated nature of the natural brickearth has also become apparent. Colluvial drift, windblown soils, bioturbation and a 'living' buried soil horizon make the identification of the upper archaeological horizon extremely difficult, especially in bright and sunny conditions. With that in mind, the weathering of excavated surfaces is strongly recommended.

DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Blacksole Farm has demonstrated the extensive presence of archaeological activity dated predominantly from the Iron Age through to the post-medieval period, within the extents of the proposed development area. The natural geology was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.5m below the existing ground surface (c. 35-37m AOD), directly underlying a

buried subsoil/ploughsoil. Cartographic regression suggests that the site has been relatively undisturbed throughout the past 150 years, confirmed during the evaluation as any modern truncation was limited to the occasional hedgerow and land drain.

Phase	Trenches						Total
	Positive		Potential		Negative		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
I	13	17%	17	22%	48	61%	78
III	19	35%	0	-	35	65%	54
IV	14	24%	34	54%	14	24%	62

Table 6 Number of Archaeological Features (per trench)

Phases III and IV of archaeological evaluation works at Blacksole Farm (this report) have confirmed and emphasised the frequency of archaeological deposits within the proposed development area. From the outset it was clear that archaeological remains were present on site, as encountered on

the adjacent site (Allen 2007). That said, the nature of the deposits does differ. Evidence for the production of pottery was abundant on the adjacent site (2007:29), which pointed towards an emphasis on population growth within the Late Iron Age. Whilst the majority of features within the Phase III and IV evaluations are contemporary, no such evidence was encountered. This may suggest that an 'industrial' area is present, possibly supporting a nucleated settlement, rather than mass production.

Table 3 illustrates the frequency of archaeological features encountered during the evaluation, with at least 50% of all trenches encountering archaeological remains³. Trenches have clearly shown the presence of potential droveways (Trenches **89, 91, 98, 111, 113, 158, 161** and **165**), enclosures (Trenches **81, 95, 117, 167, 172** and **189**) and possible structures (Trenches **129, 130, 131**), a pattern reflected during Phase IV evaluation works. This report has attempted to further define the archaeological features encountered, although it must be stated that further work will be required to fully examine and provide an understanding for the complex settlement patterns present at Blacksole Farm.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Existing Impacts

The proposed development site has been largely arable fields, and therefore subject

³ As part of the final publication for this site a statistical review of evaluation sampling strategies is recommended, in accordance with Hey and Lacy (2001)

only to low impact farming and agricultural activities such as ploughing, the cutting of drainage ditches and planting of hedgerows.

Proposed Impacts

At the time of preparing this document, the full extent of future development proposals at Altira Business Park was not known. However, it has been made clear that any future planning application will, most likely, comprise the construction of large industrial units along with associated access, parking and utilities. Areas of open green space are considered to be unlikely.

MITIGATION

The purpose of all phases of archaeological evaluation was to provide an assessment of the contextual archaeological record, in order to determine the potential survival of archaeological deposits that may be impacted upon during any proposed construction works. *Full development proposals are at present time unknown. In the event,* however, that finished ground levels remain constant, the depth of foundations trenches, services, access and car parking are likely to require the excavation of material exceeding 0.50m in depth. In the absence of ground raising, proposed impacts to archaeological deposits throughout the entire site is therefore deemed as high. The potential indirect impact caused during the construction process should also be taken into consideration.



This evaluation has therefore assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Archaeological Officer (CCC) of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. Archaeological horizons have been shown to survive at a depth approximately 0.5m below the existing ground level, with 58% of the evaluation trenches indicating the presence of surviving archaeological features and finds. Truncation of archaeological horizons was relatively minimal, evident only by the existence of low impact field drains, root boles and animal burrows. Suggestions as to the definition of potential archaeological features have been offered above, although it must be stated that only after further excavation of these areas can more positive conclusions be drawn.

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David Britchfield, March 2008

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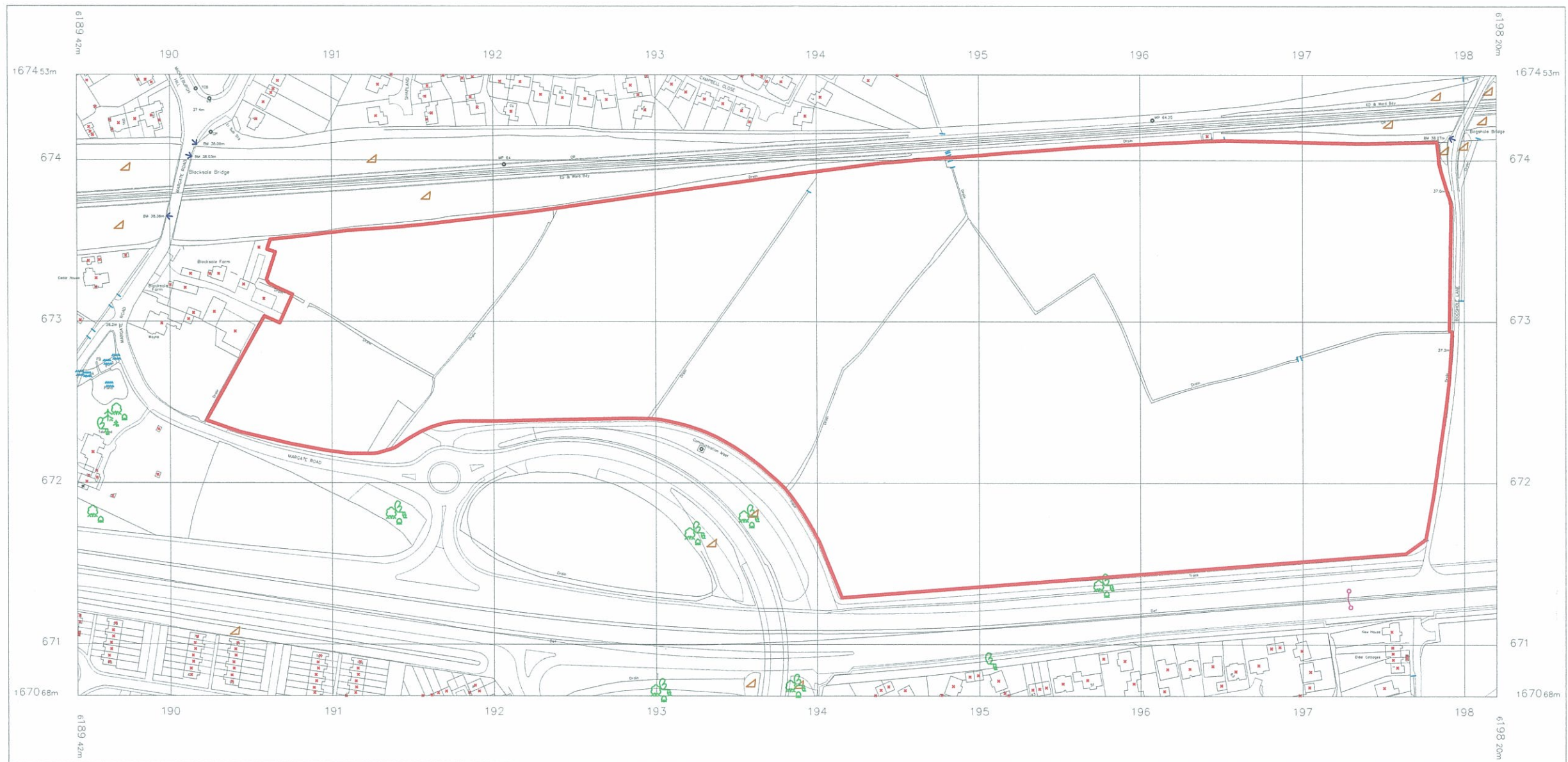
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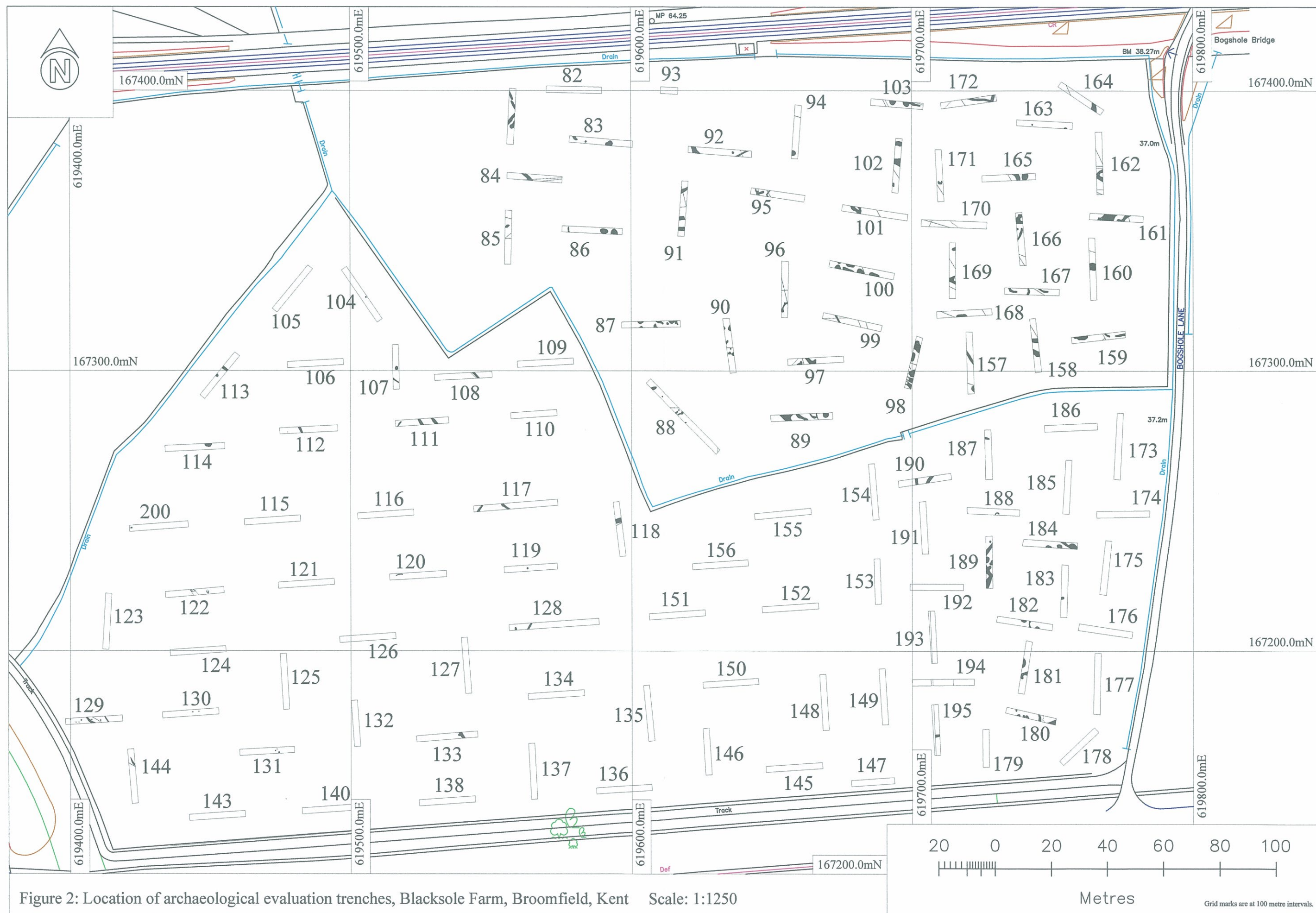
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Metres

Scale 1:3000

Figure 1: Location of site of proposed development, Blacksole Farm, Broomfield, Kent Scale 1:3000



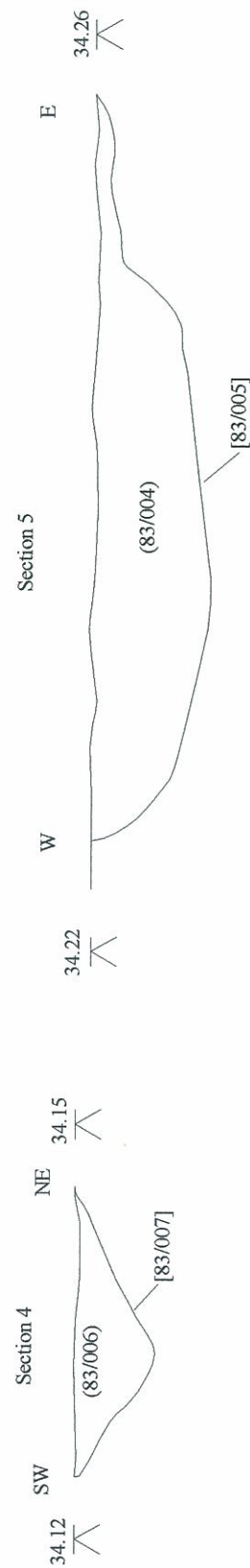
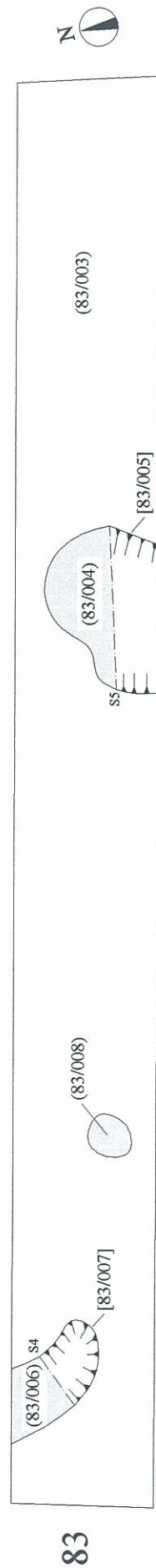
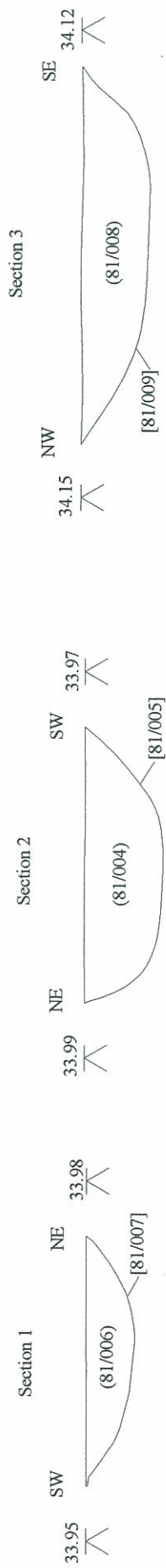
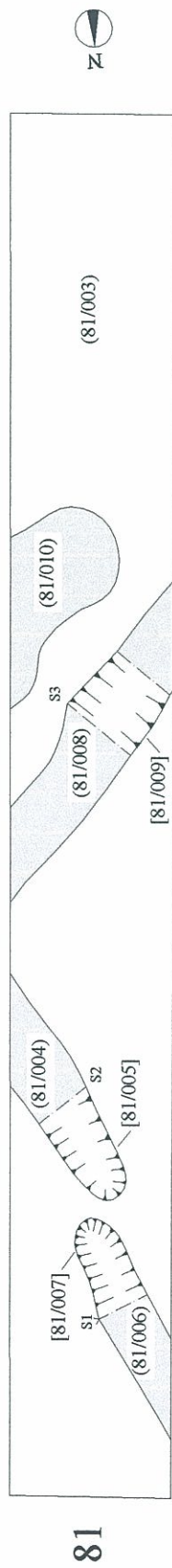


Figure 3: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

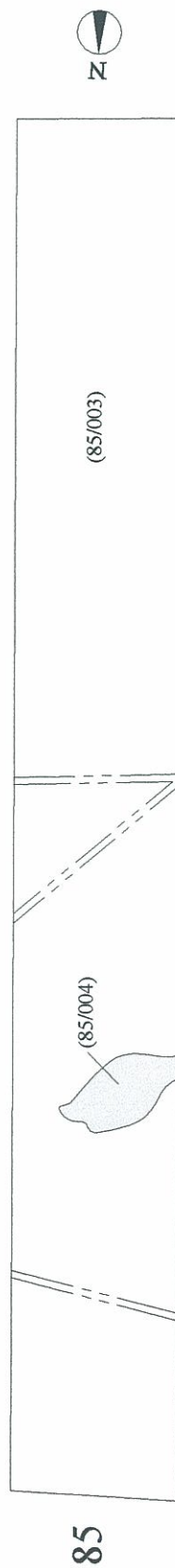
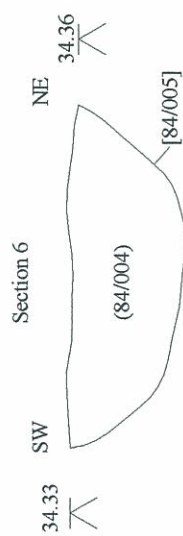
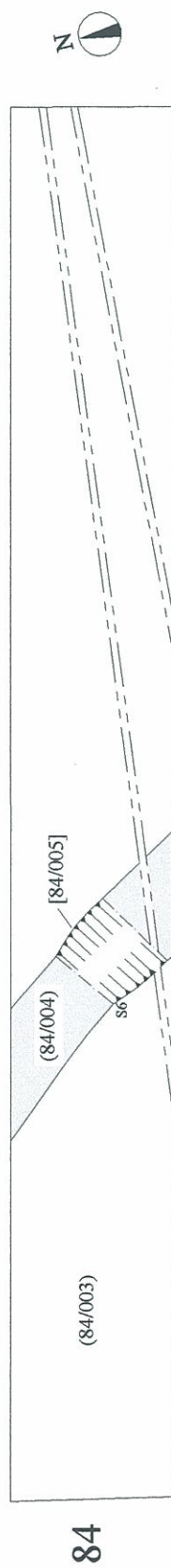


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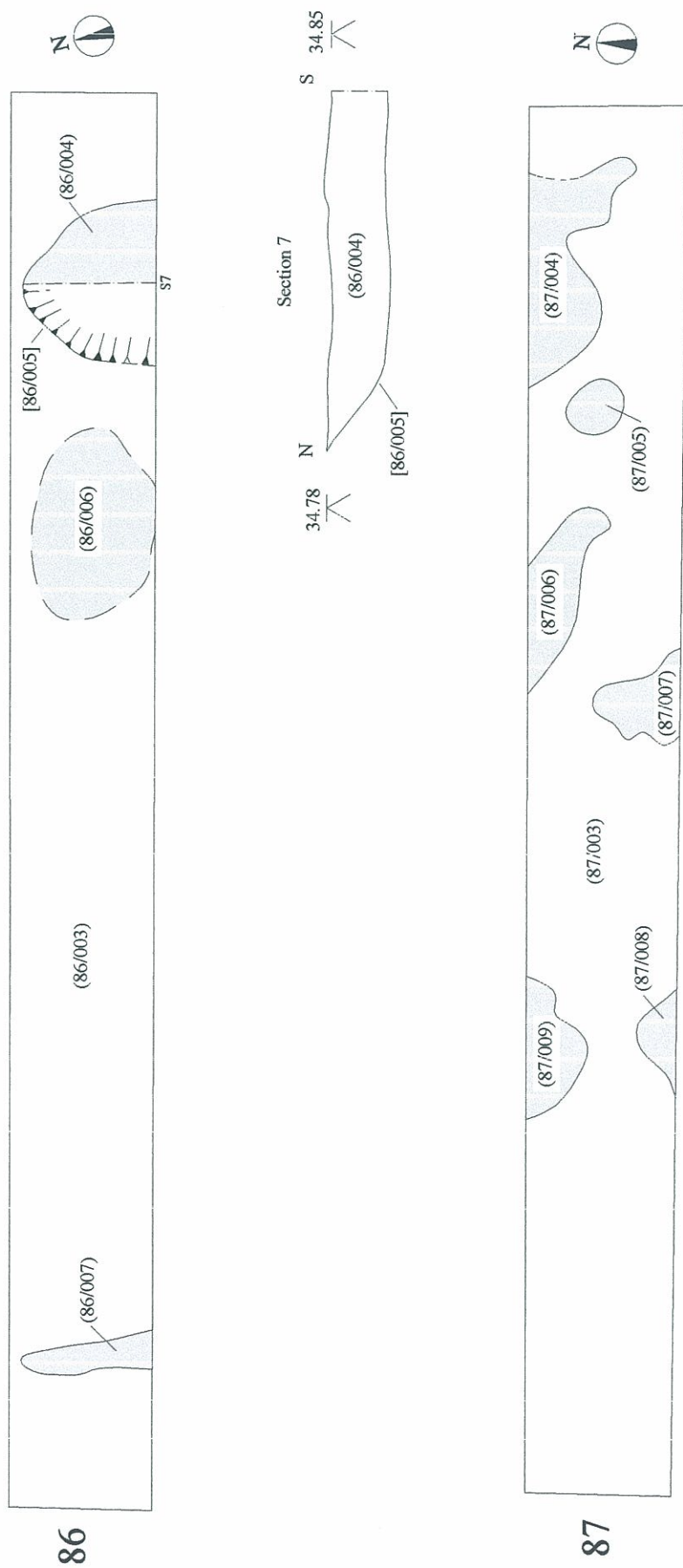


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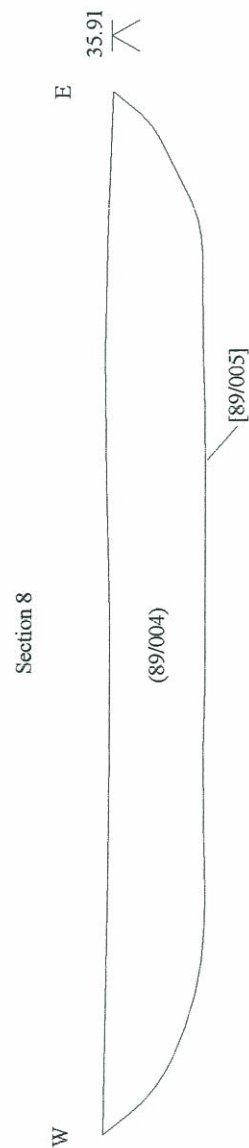
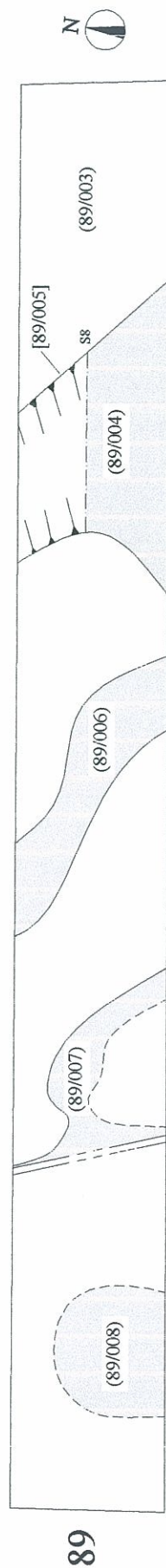
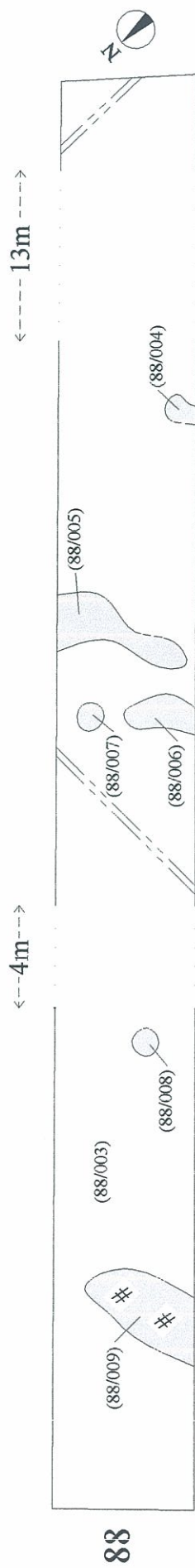


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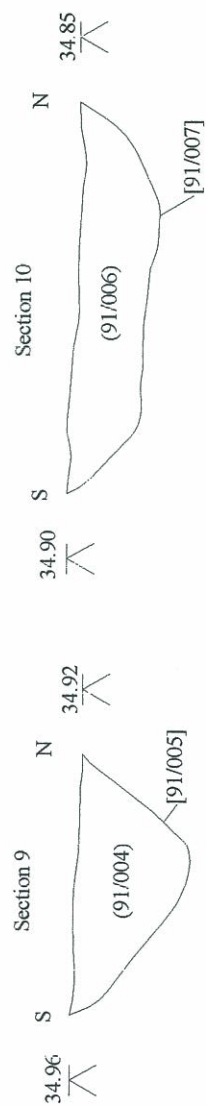
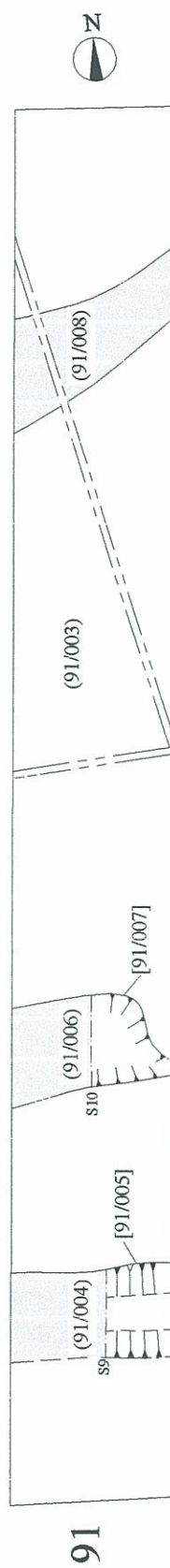
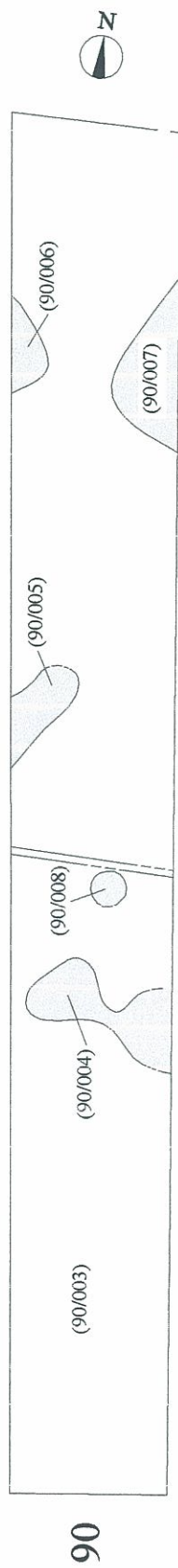


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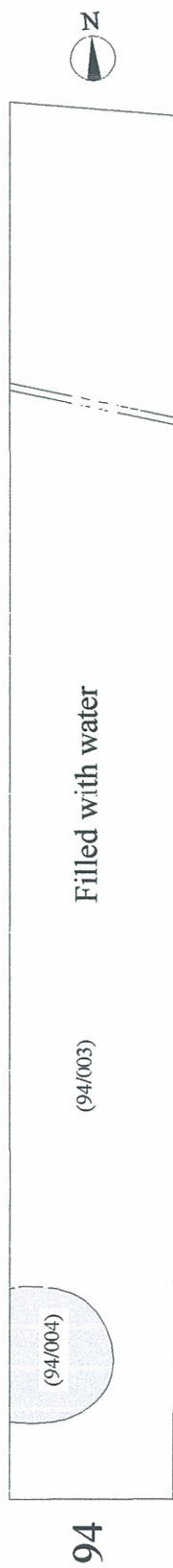
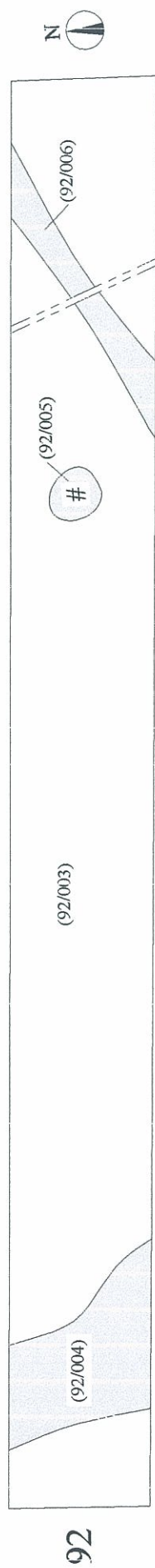


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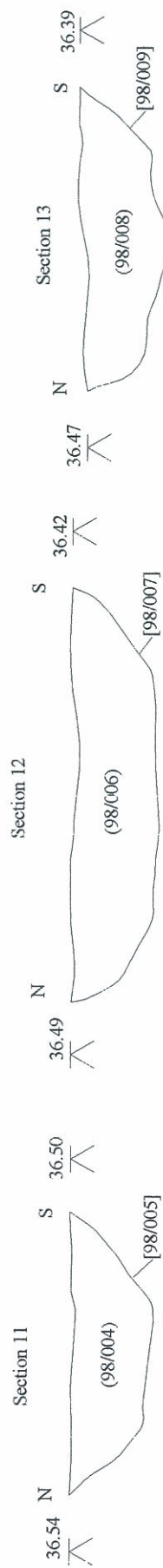
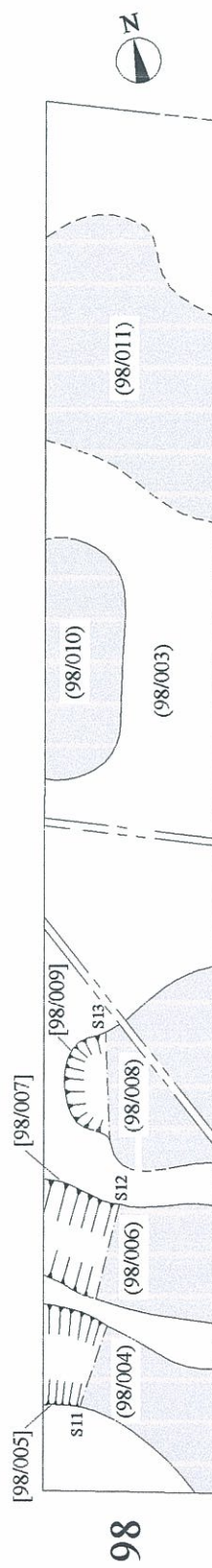
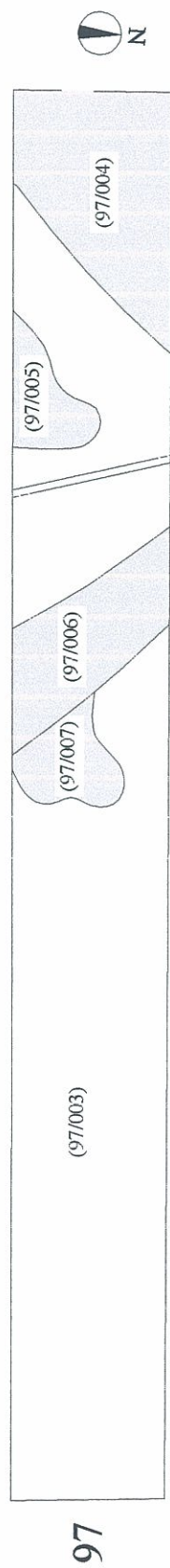
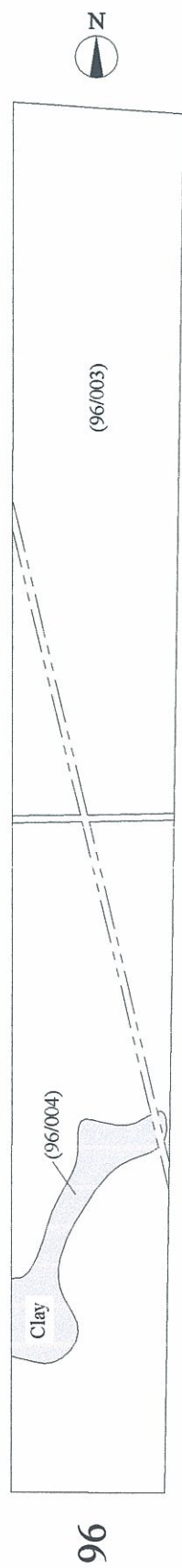


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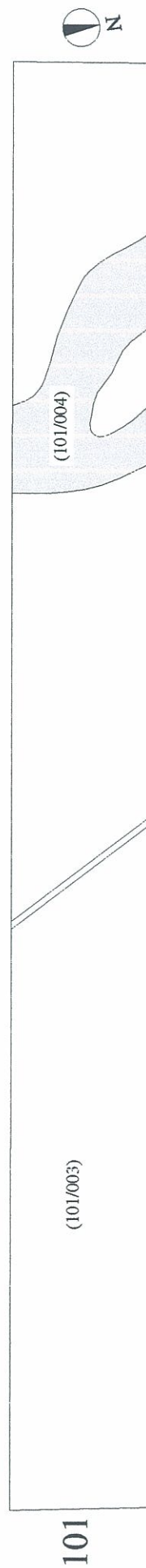
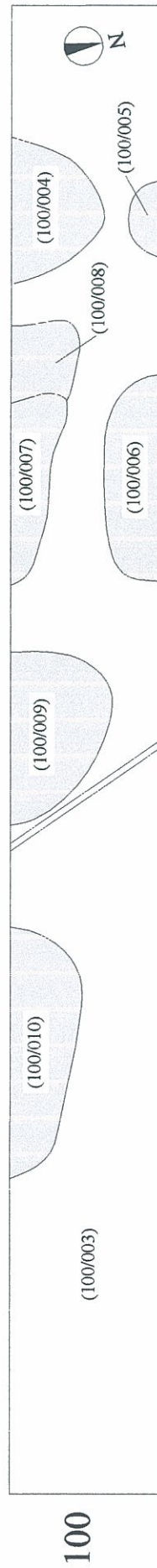


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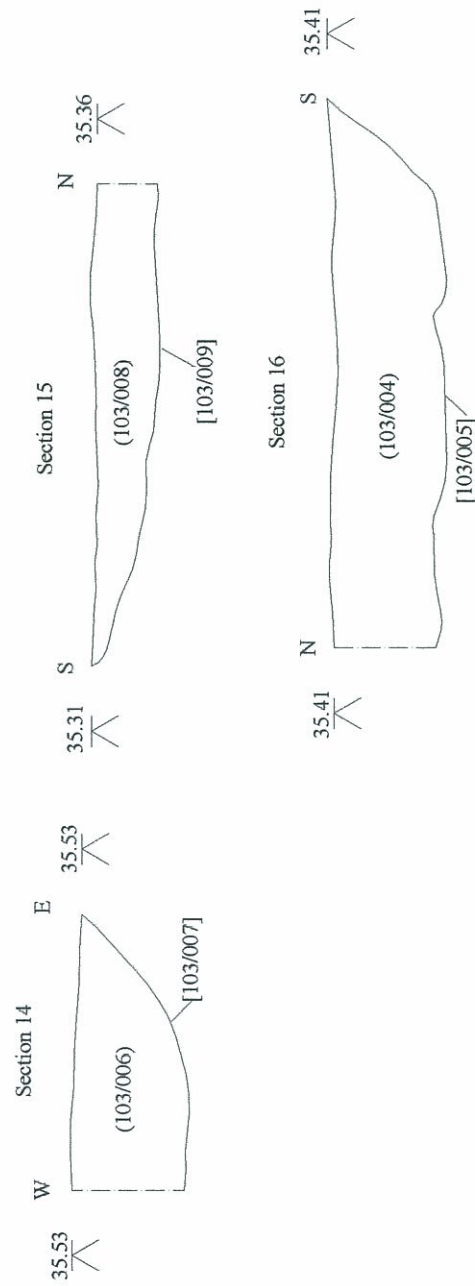
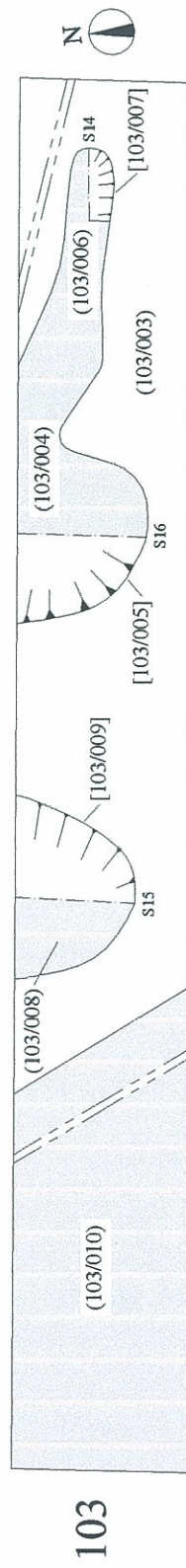
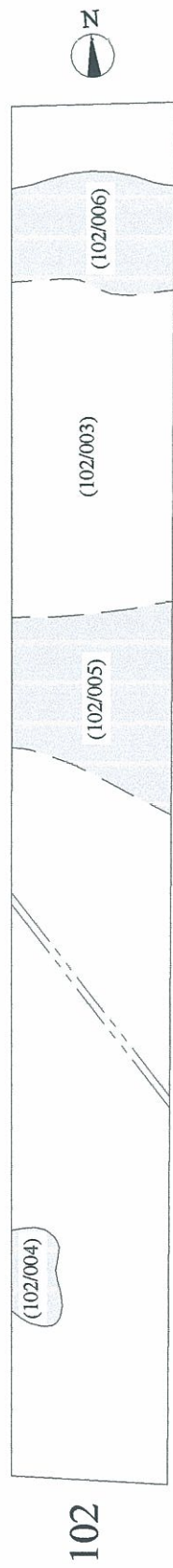


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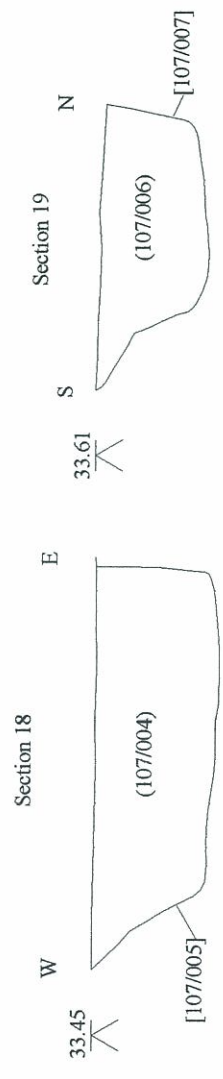
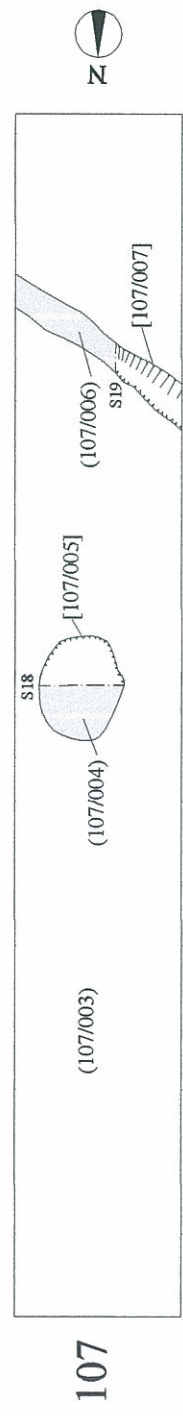
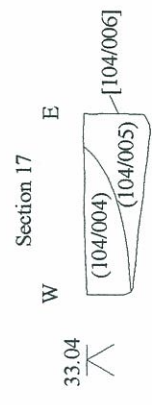
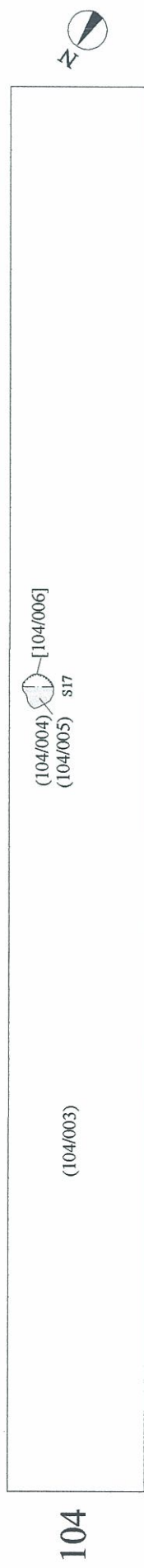


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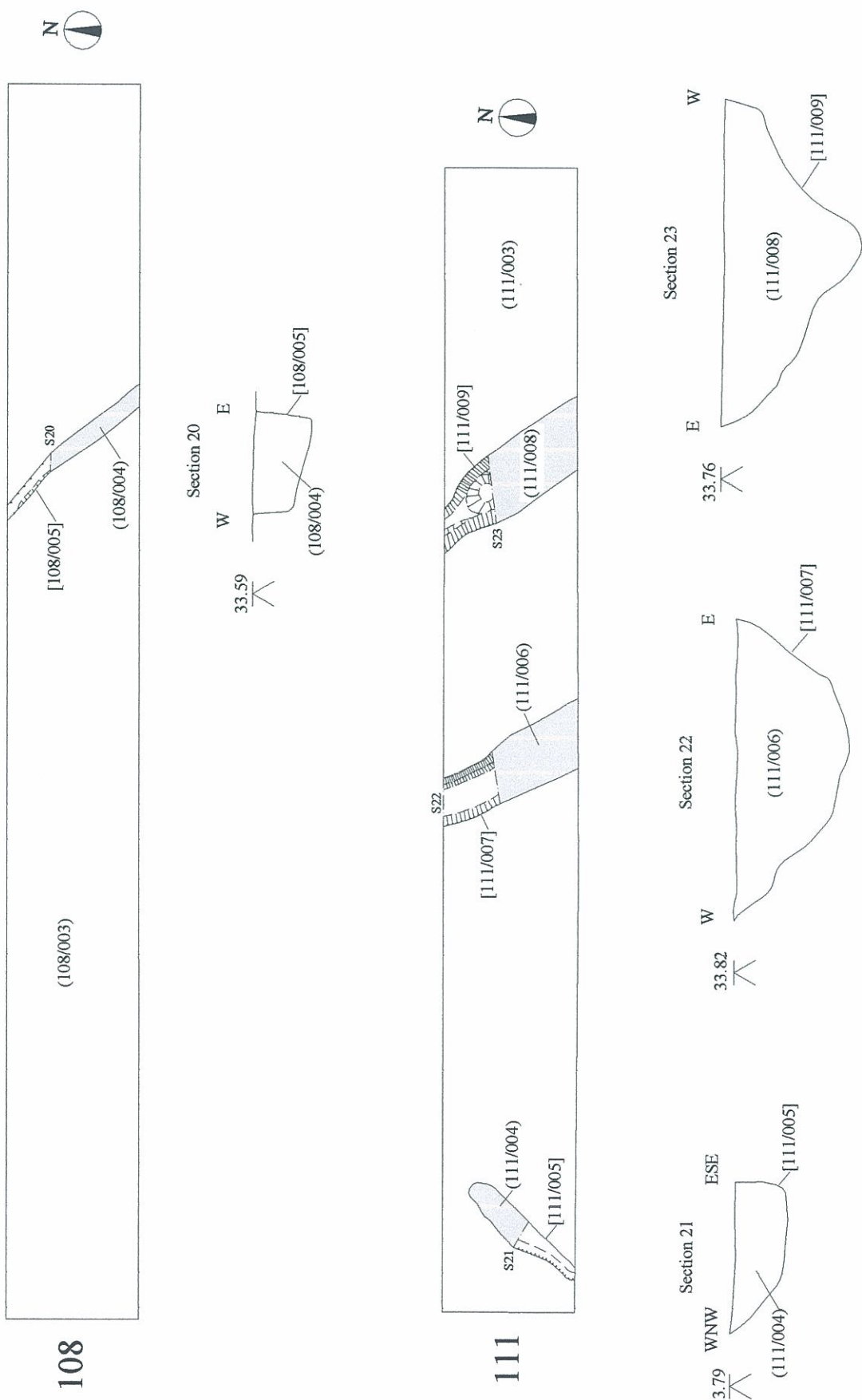


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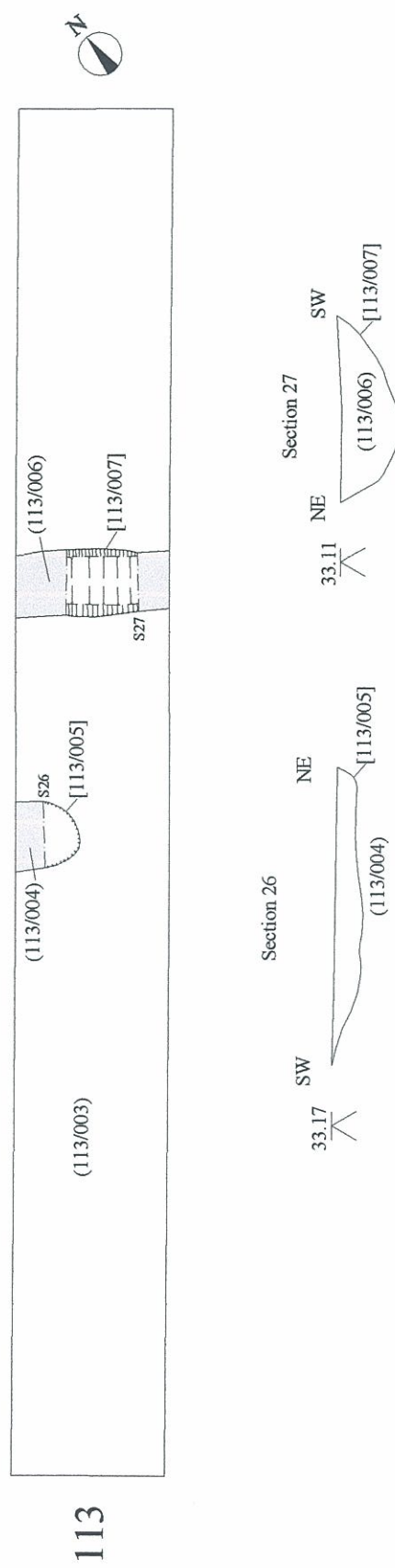
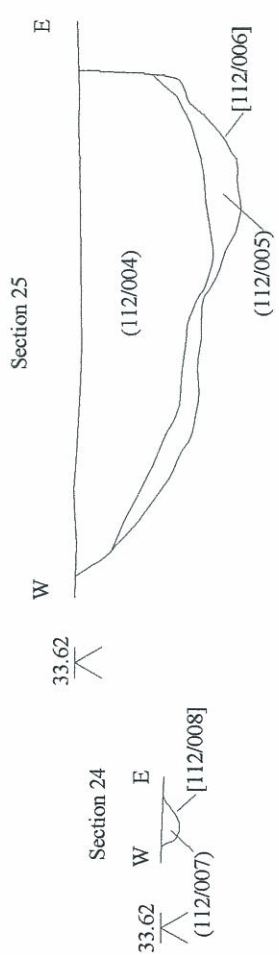


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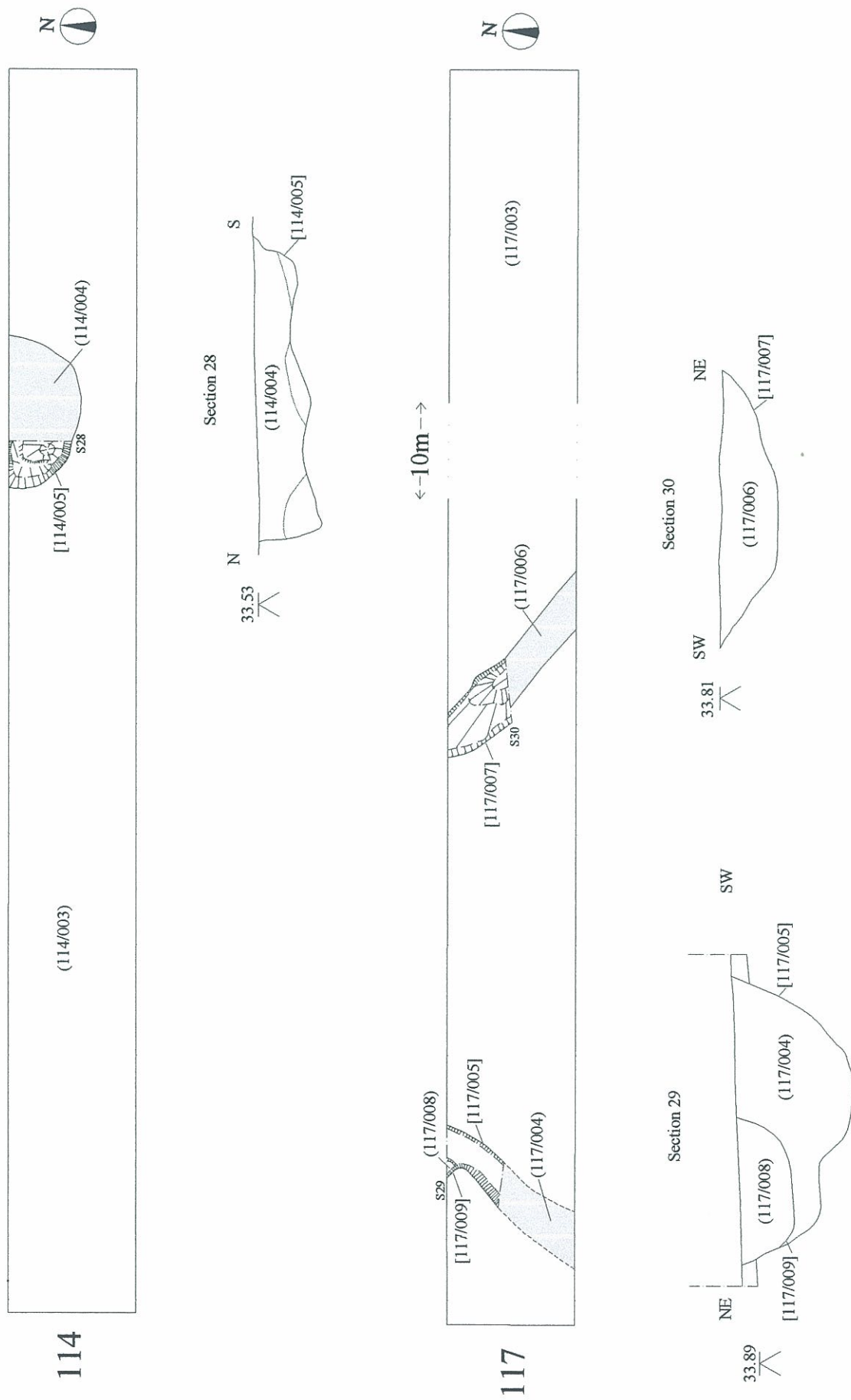


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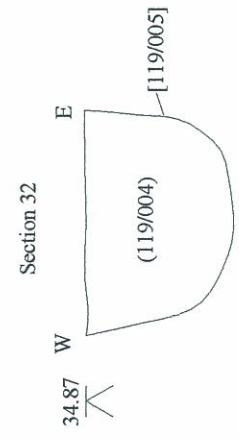
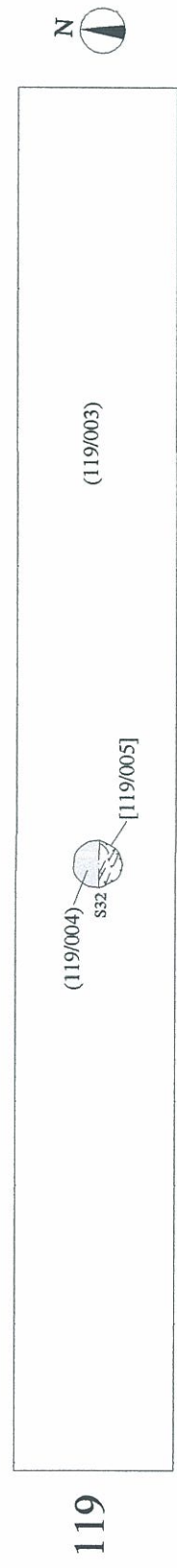
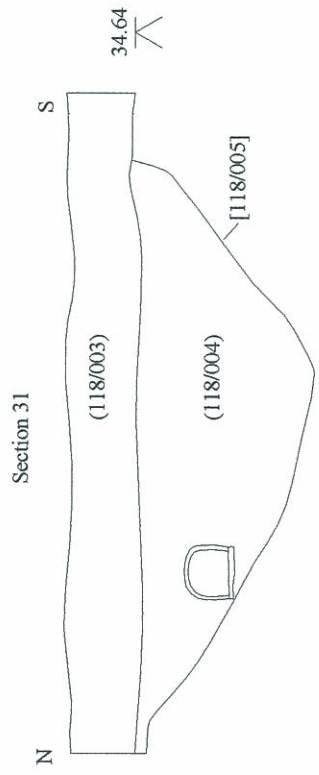
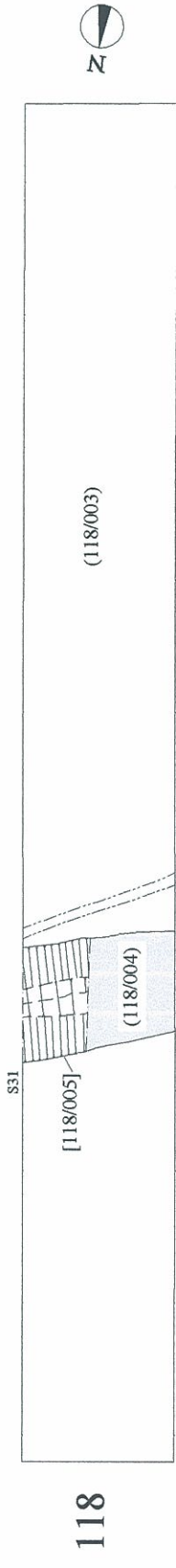


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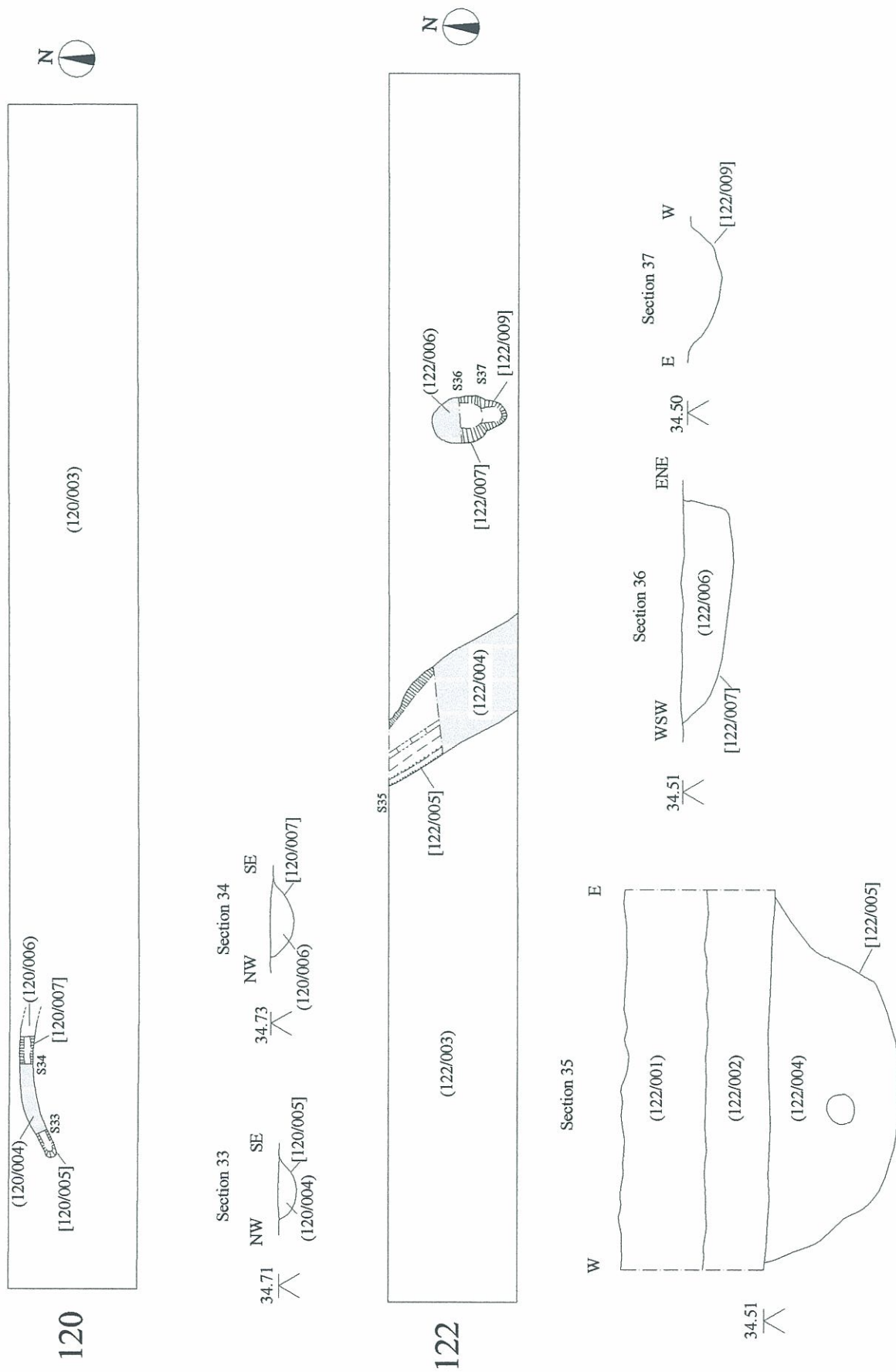


Figure 17: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

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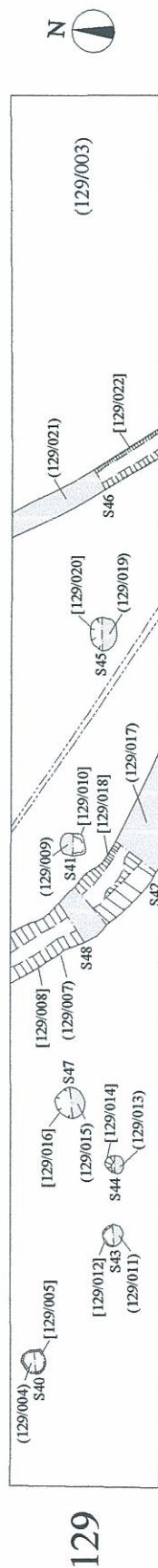
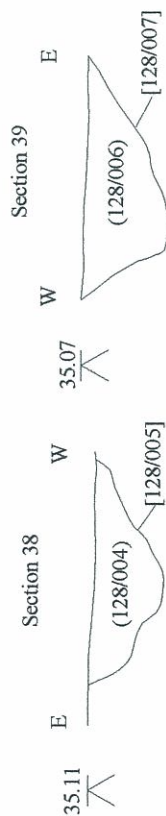


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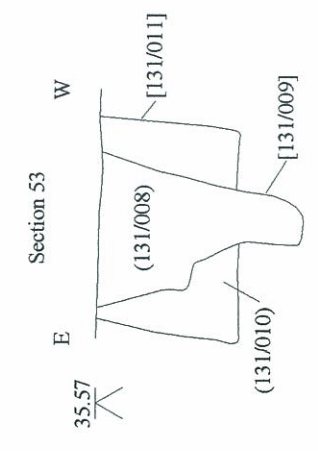
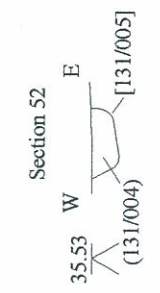
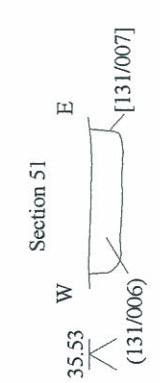
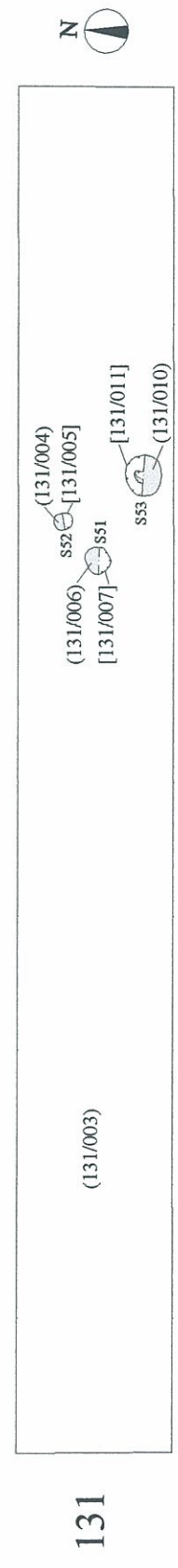
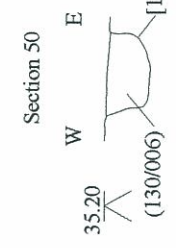
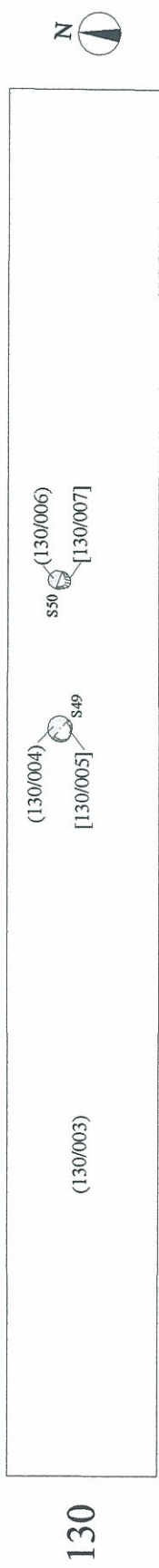


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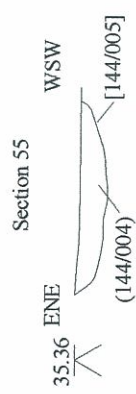
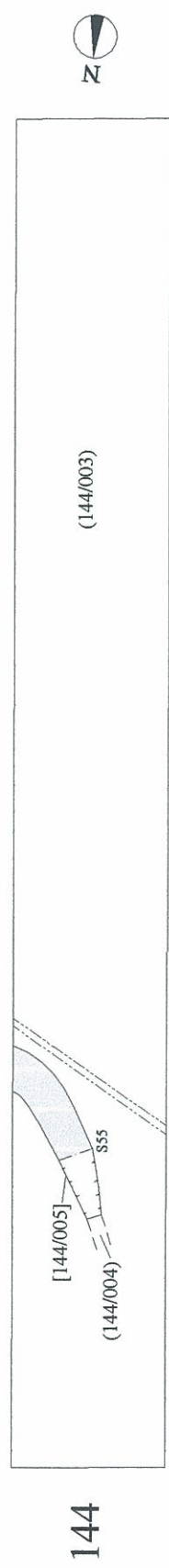
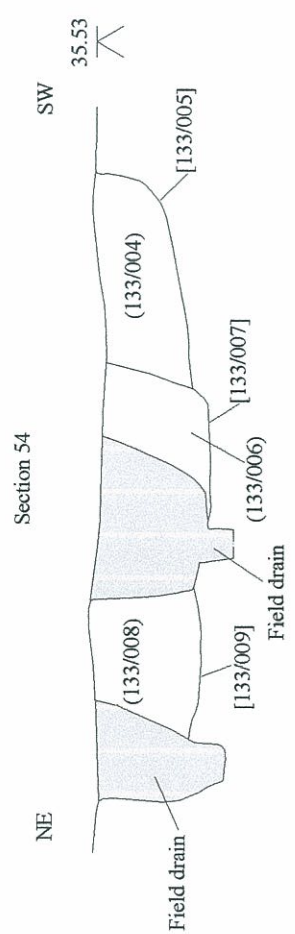


Figure 20: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

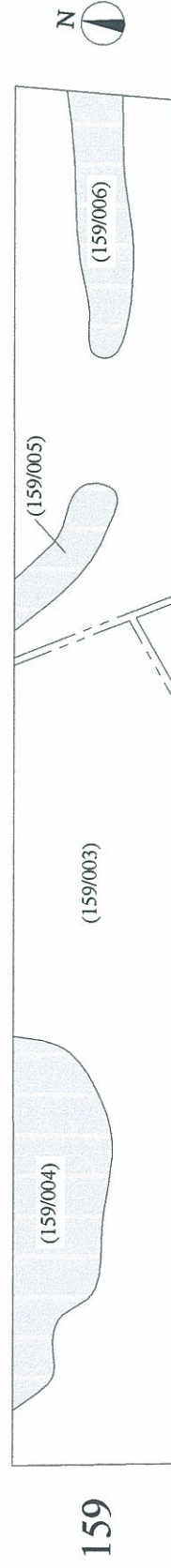
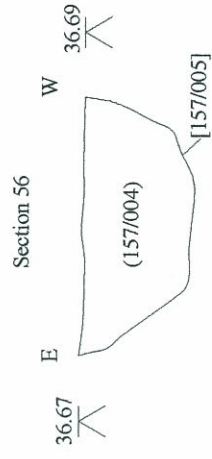
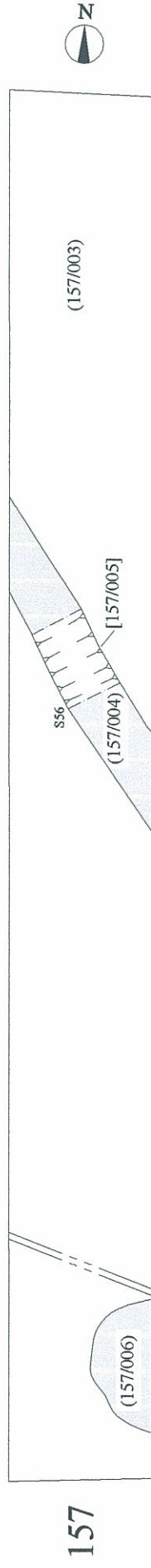


Figure 21: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

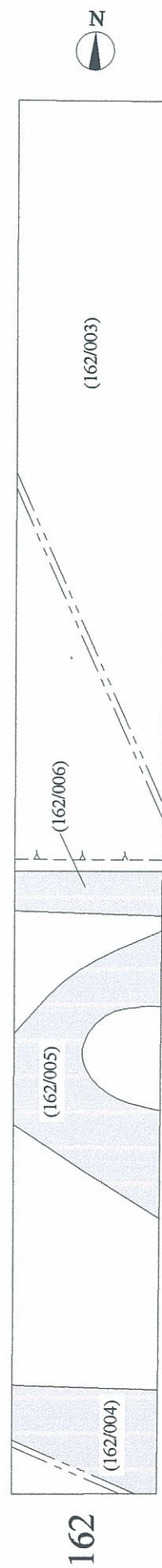
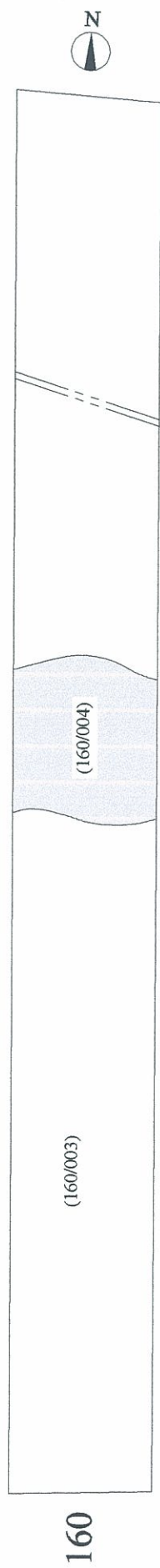


Figure 22: Trench Plans 1:100

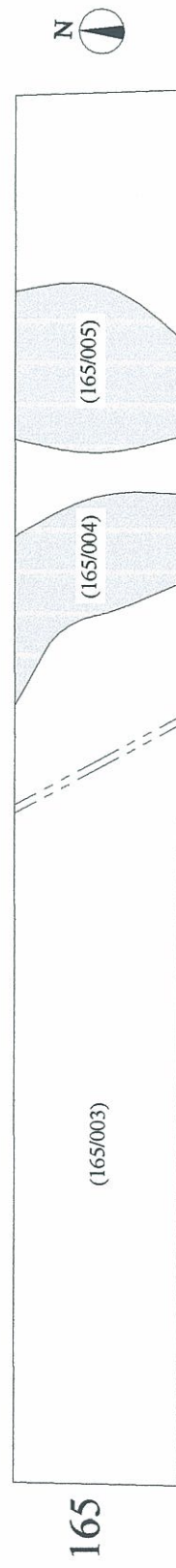
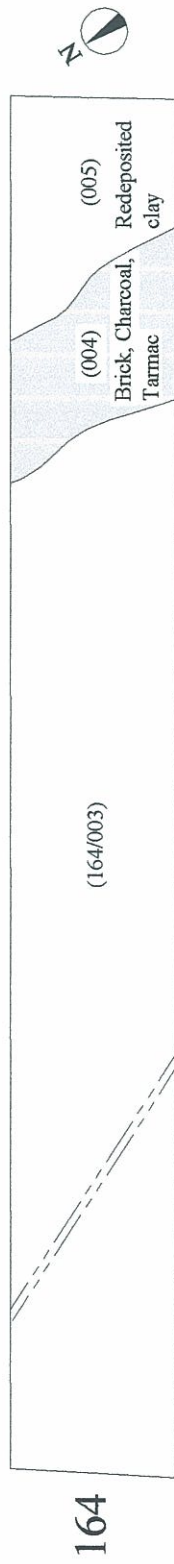
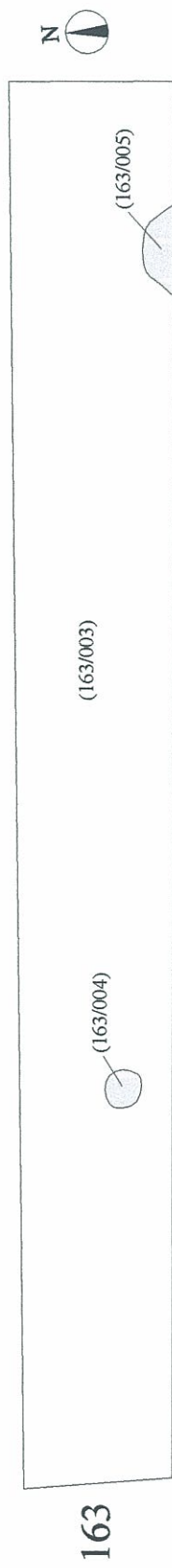


Figure 23: Trench Plans 1:100

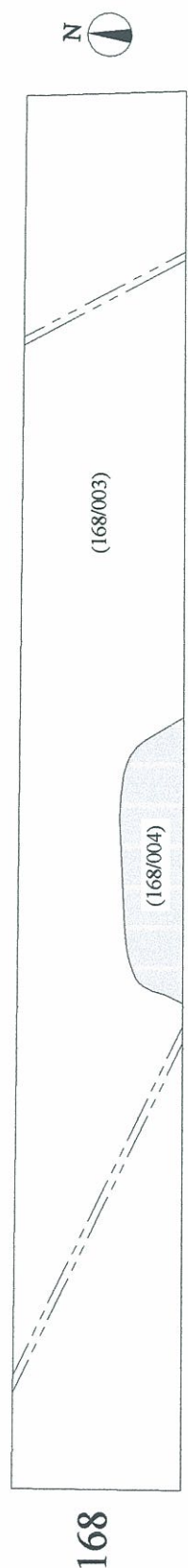
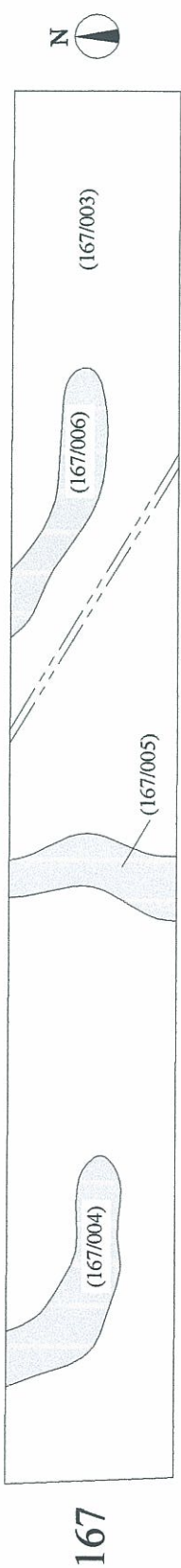
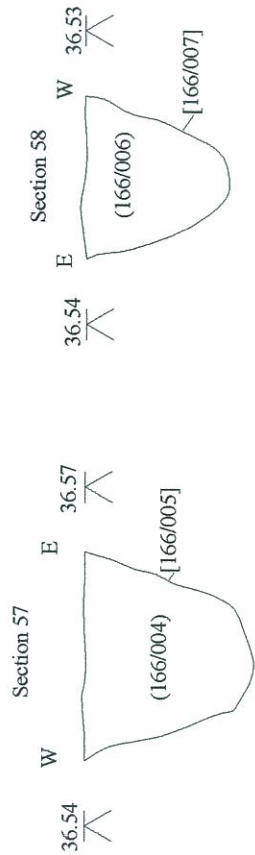
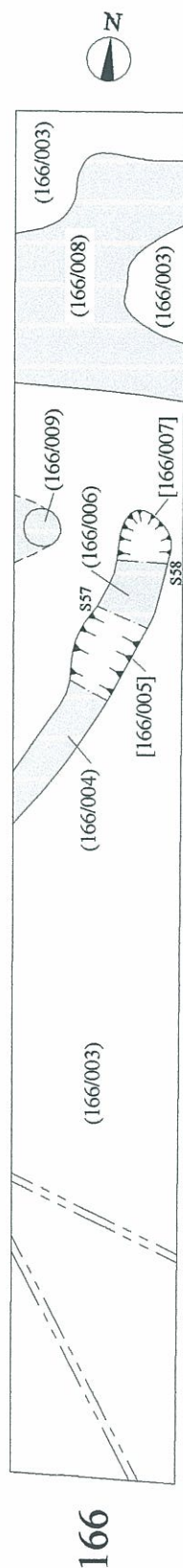


Figure 24: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

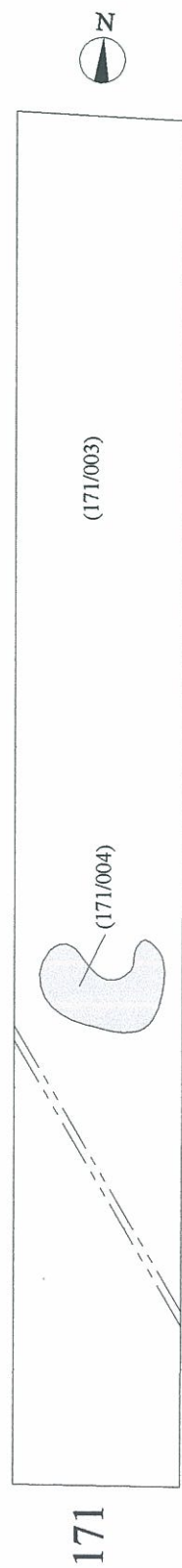
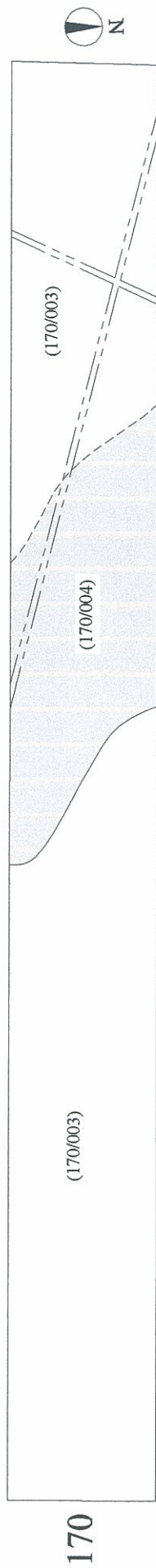
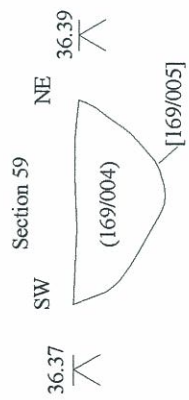
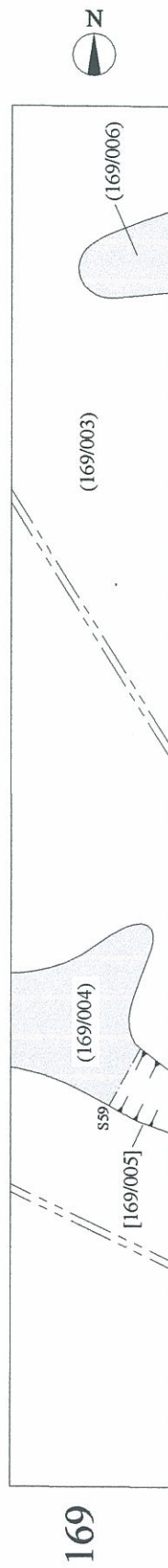


Figure 25: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

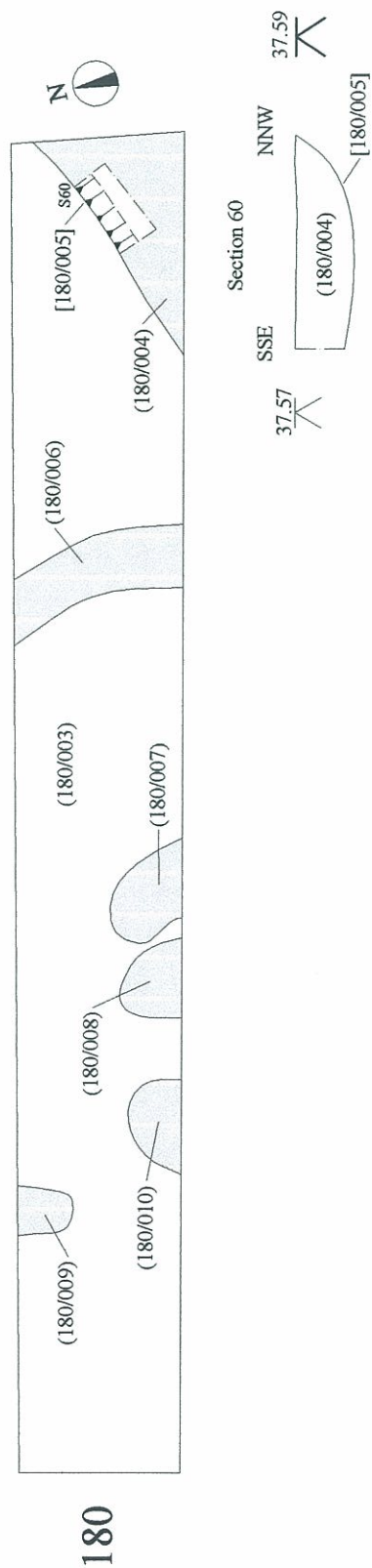
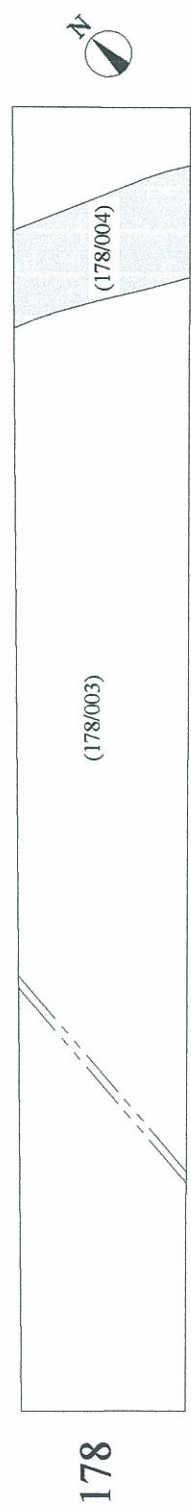


Figure 26: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

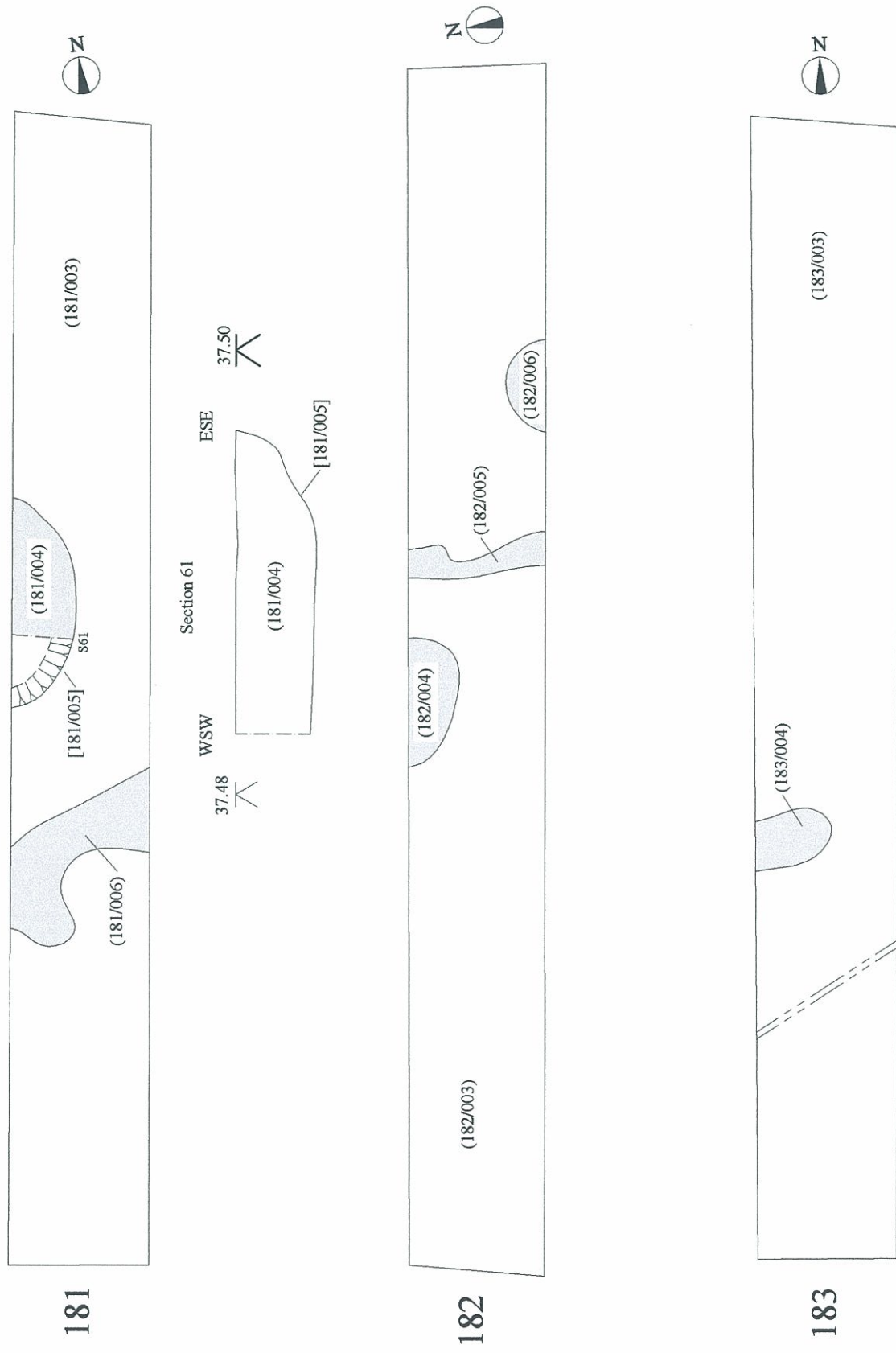


Figure 27: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

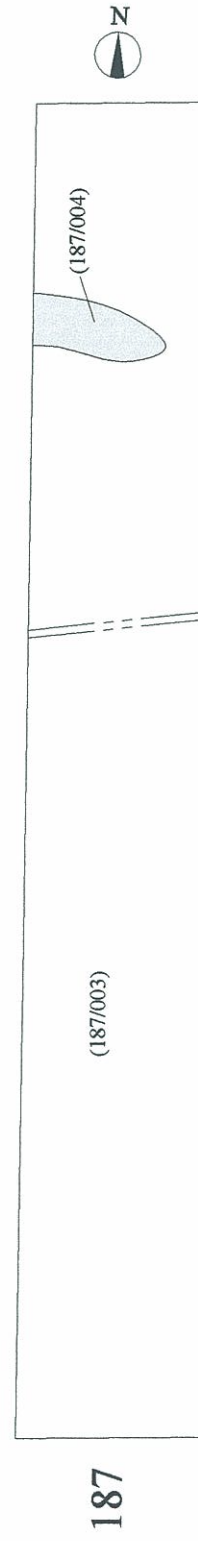
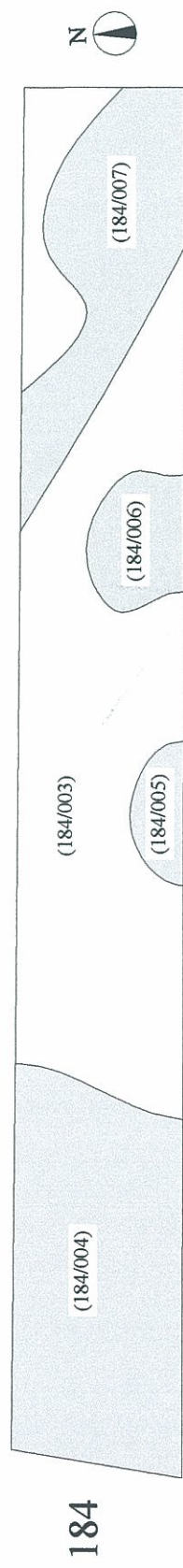


Figure 28: Trench Plans 1:100

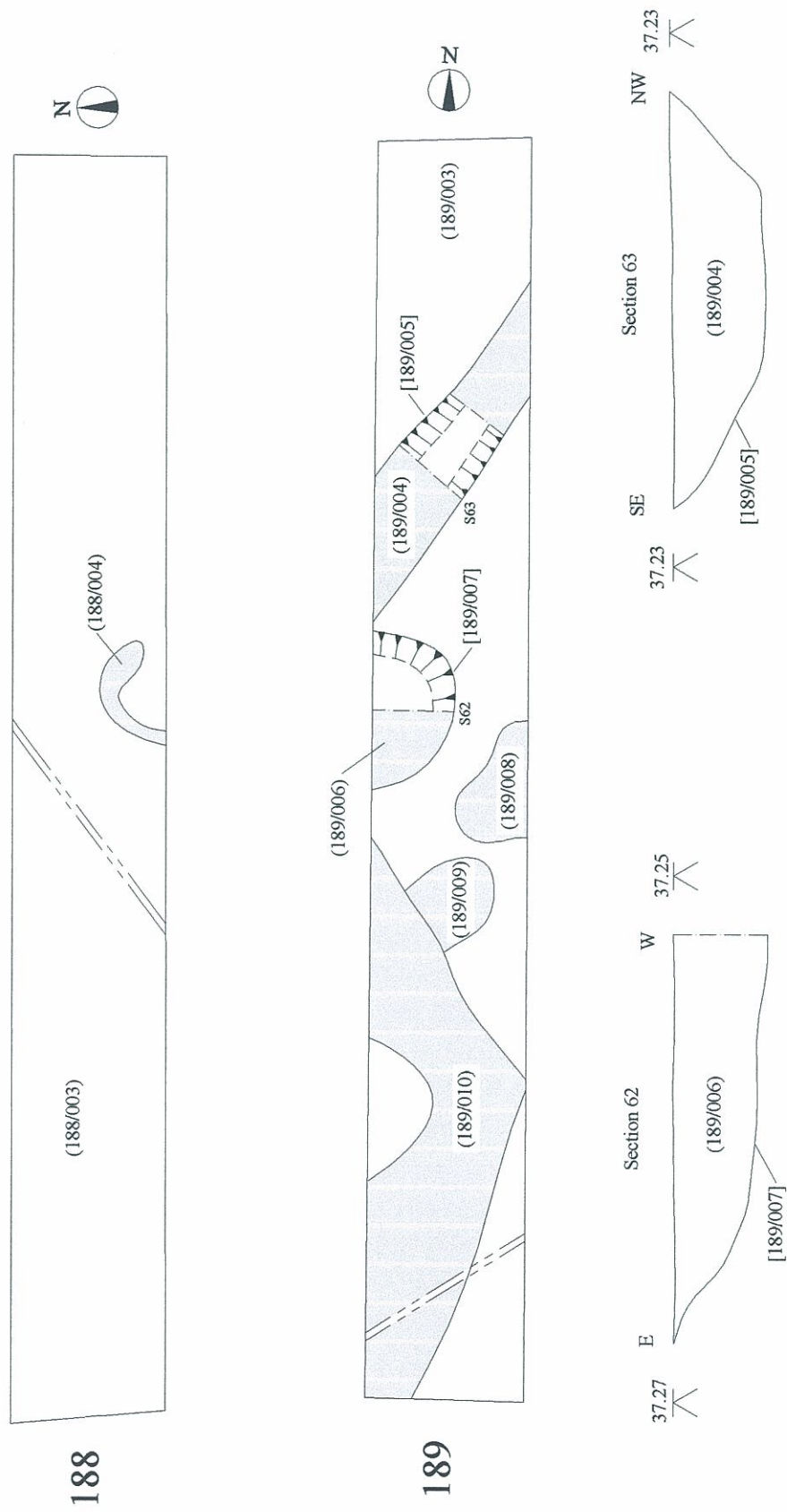


Figure 29: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20

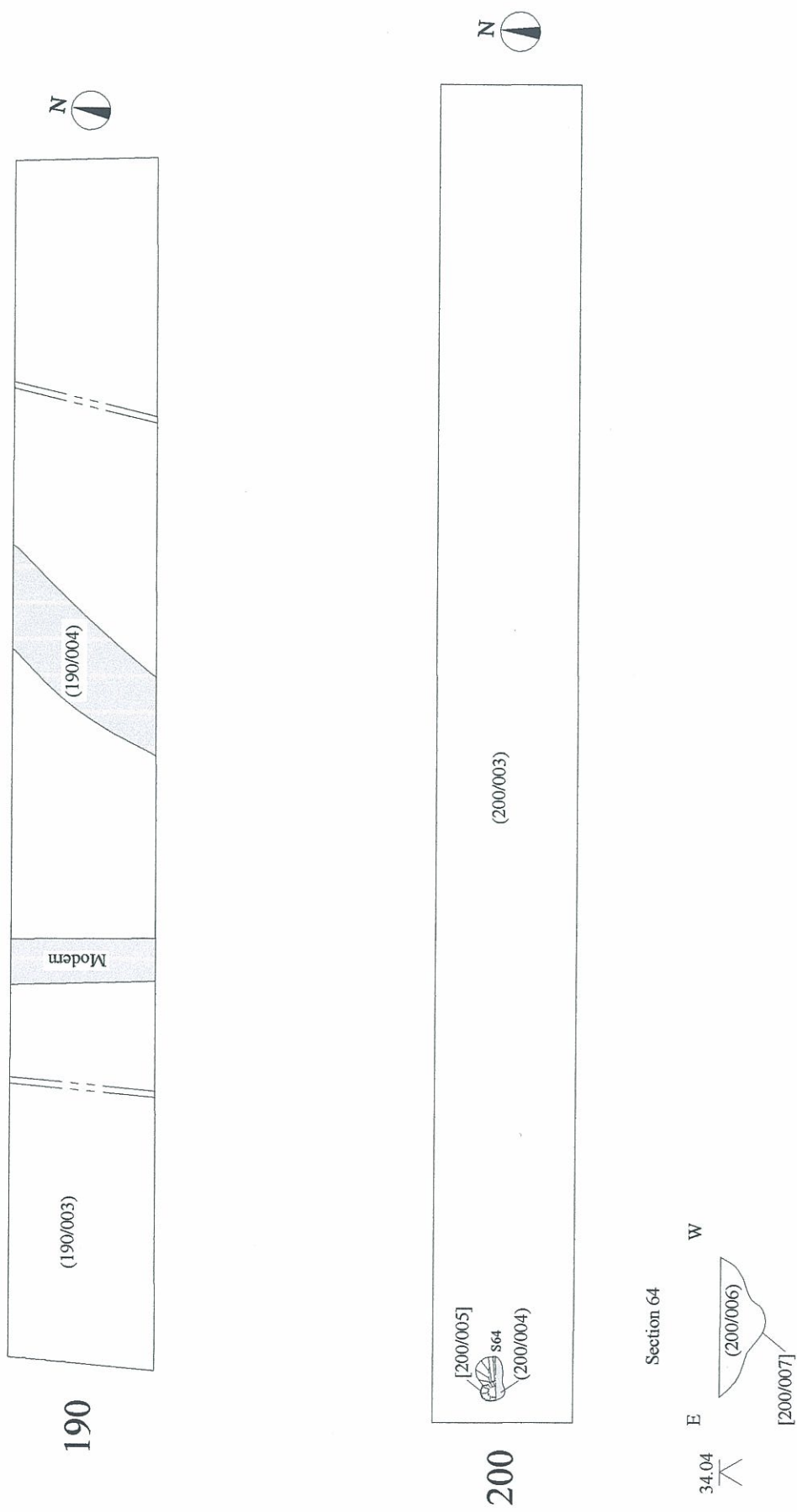


Figure 30: Trench Plans 1:100 and Sections 1:20