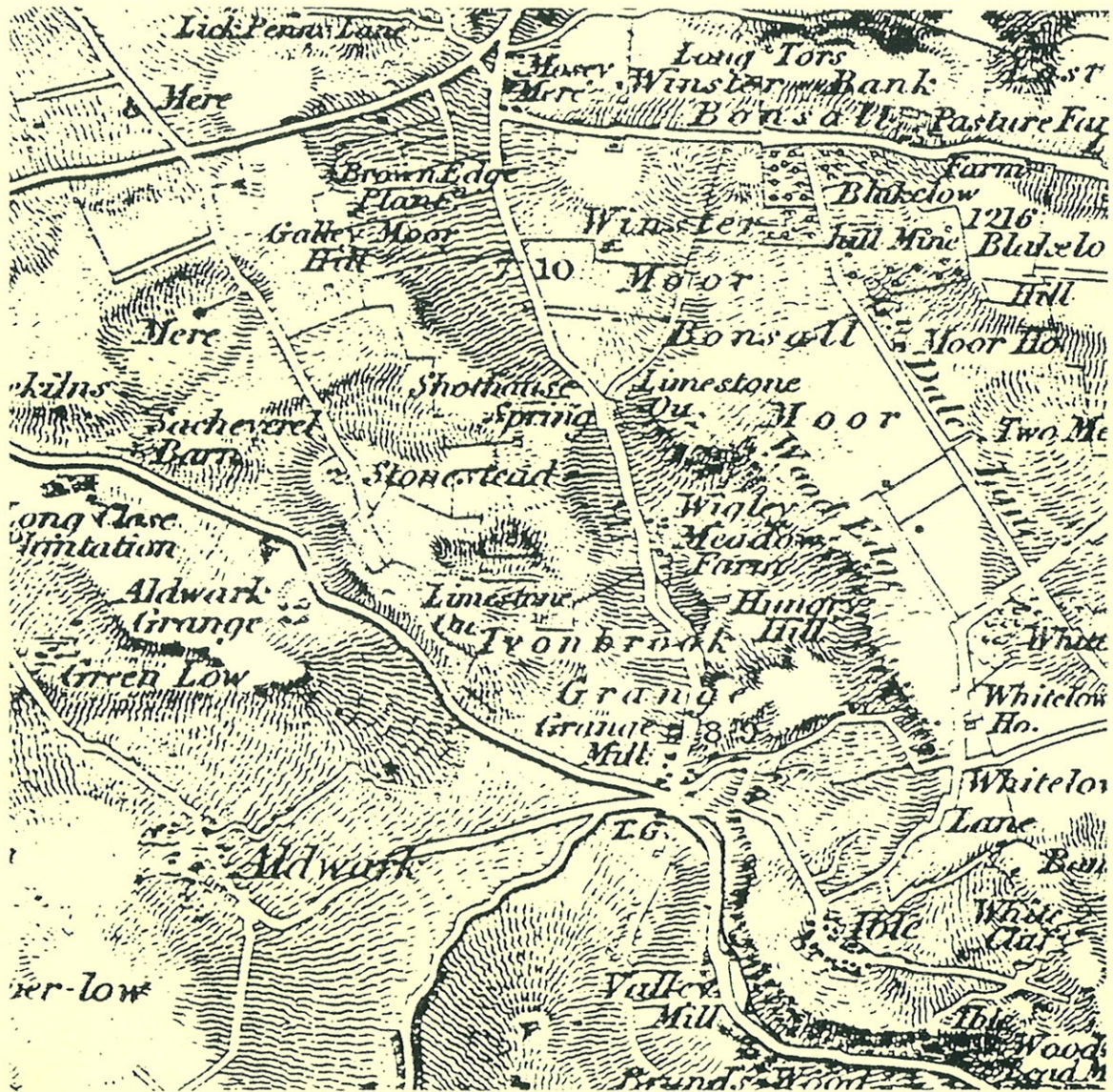


# Ivonbrook Quarry Derbyshire Archaeological Evaluation Report



**Bardon Roadstone Ltd**

**Ivonbrook Quarry, Ivonbrook Grange, Derbyshire  
Archaeological Evaluation Report**

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**NGR SK 598 236**

*Summary*

*An archaeological evaluation of a possible barrow site on land adjacent to Ivonbrook Quarry. Ivonbrook Grange, Derbyshire comprised five machine-excavated trenches. No deposits and/or features of any archaeological significance were found. The only feature that was discovered proved to be a modern quarry pit, possibly associated with fluorspar prospecting.*

**1 Introduction**

1.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit was commissioned in summer 1995 by Bardon Roadstone Ltd to carry out an archaeological Desk-Based Evaluation of the Archaeological and Cultural Historical implications of the proposed extension of Ivonbrook Quarry in North-East Derbyshire (cf Figure 1). The study revealed that a possible prehistoric or later barrow would be affected by the proposals. This report documents the archaeological evaluation that was carried out at the site between 4/11/95 and 7/11/95.

**2 Archaeological Background**

2.1 The area of the proposed quarry extension lies within an area of demonstrated prehistoric, Anglian and medieval archaeological activity and contains the possible remains of an undated barrow (Derbyshire SMR no 8621: see below). No further sites were identified on the RCHME Aerial Photographs inspected.

2.2 The principal sites in the surrounding area are the remains of two prehistoric Barrows, both Scheduled Ancient Monuments, which are located on the summit of Green Low 600m to the south-west of the current quarry. These include Green Low Chambered Tomb (SAM no 13368), a late Neolithic round cairn with a facade of coursed limestone blocks on the south side. This barrow was excavated in 1843 and then again in 1964 and found to contain disarticulated human bones and late Neolithic pottery and flint. The cairn produced a chance find of Roman coins and pottery, possibly suggesting that it was opened or investigated in the Roman period. To the west of this lies Green Low Bowl Barrow West (SAM no 13331), a Bronze Age Round Barrow, also excavated in 1843, which contained a primary cremation, secondary inhumation and flint implements.

- 2.3 Field walking of the slopes of the hill adjacent to the area of the proposed development to the east has produced evidence of prehistoric activity including Mesolithic flints, Neolithic pottery and flints and Bronze Age flintwork (DSMR 8603-8605, 8609-8610).
- 2.4 Anglian Settlement of the area is indicated by the, now destroyed, Anglian Barrow on Winster Moor. This monument, whose exact location is now lost, was opened in 1765 during the inclosure of the moor and found to contain a number of rich grave furnishings including a silver bracelet, circular gold brooch, a decorated gold cross and pottery and glass vessels.
- 2.5 Ivonbrook is mentioned in Domesday as containing land for 1 plough although the parish was then described as 'waste', a term used by most commentators to refer to areas left devastated by William I's campaign following the Mercian Revolt of 1069 (Holly 1962: 313). During the medieval period it appears that the development area and its immediate surrounding area formed part of the landholdings of two large monastic houses. Ivonbrook Grange is listed by Hart (1981: 155) as being a grange belonging to the Cistercian abbey at Buildwas in Shropshire. A medieval monastic grange was an independently controlled estate, usually located at some distance from the mother Abbey and possibly in this instance sited to exploit the sheep farming potential of the area. To the north of Wiglymeadow Farm lies a large undated earthwork enclosure (NAR 3), long described as a Roman camp, but now considered by the NAR to possibly be a pastoral enclosure connected to Ivonbrook Grange.
- 2.6 To the east of the current quarry, and across the road which acts as the parish boundary, lies Aldwark Grange, described as the Derbyshire Sites and Monuments Record (DSMR no 135), as the site of a grange belonging to the Augustinian Monastery at Darley near Derby.
- 2.7 No medieval buildings or finds have been recorded from either Ivonbrook Grange or Aldwark Grange. A 1988 excavation of the Ivonbrook Grange enclosure produced no dating evidence.

### 3 Archaeological Features of the Proposed Development area

- 3.1 The development area contained one possible archaeological feature of interest. The possible remains of an undated, although perhaps prehistoric Barrow, (DSMR 8621), much plough-damaged, were identified during a site visit by the Peak National Park Archaeologist in 1991, who noted that its extent seemed to correspond with an area of molehills, possibly reflecting subsoil area of more easily worked soil. A flint fragment and a fragment of bone were recovered during this visit. No other features were recorded in the sites and monuments record, within the proposed quarry area and no additional archaeological features were identified on the aerial photographs examined at the RCHME air photograph library at Swindon.
- 3.2 The putative barrow was visited by OAU in September 1995. It consists of an low

sub-oval earthwork, approximately 0.30-0.40m high at its highest point. Its full extent was extremely difficult to determine as the earthwork was very poorly defined and any original mound had clearly been spread by ploughing. The limits of the mound were roughly definable on west, south and east sides, but imperceptible to the north, where only the extent of molehills possibly indicated the extent of the feature. The spread mound appeared to cover an area of up to 27m x 28m. The walkover survey did not recover any archaeological material from the area of the barrow.

- 3.3 Its status as an archaeological feature was doubtful: other probably natural localised hummocks of even less convincing shape were seen in some of the neighbouring fields, and such localised undulations were evident in this field from a broad, shallow hollow in the northwest corner of the field which merged with a very low ridge, which itself merged imperceptibly with the putative barrow at its southern end. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine by a minimal amount of trial trenching the archaeological or geological nature of this enigmatic feature.

#### 4 Evaluation Results

- 4.1 The initial configuration of trenches as defined in the Written Scheme of Investigation was for a radial pattern of four 10 x 10 m trenches (designed to investigate possible mound accumulation, quarry ditches and buried land surfaces) arranged around a central 3 x 3 - 5 x 5 m trench (designed to investigate possible subsurface burials), with a possible further 3 x 3 - 5 x 5 m in the south-east quadrant (in order to examine possible satellite burials). Following the discovery of a modern quarry pit, this schema was altered slightly and only five trenches were excavated. A JCB was used to remove the topsoil in all five trenches prior to hand cleaning. Figure 2 shows the location of these five trenches.

##### Trench 1

- 4.2 The easternmost trench (10 x 1.5 m) was designated trench 1. Excavation revealed a 15-20 cm thick layer of topsoil (context no. 1) overlaying a c. 15 cm thick layer of natural subsoil (context no. 2) deposited directly on top of the natural limestone bedrock (context no. 5), which sloped down from west to east. In the south west and western section of the trench an incutting feature was revealed (context nos. 3 and 4), which relates to a modern quarry pit also found in trench 3 (see below). The only find from trench 1 was a possible struck flint recovered from the topsoil.

##### Trench 2

- 4.3 The westernmost trench (16 x 1.5 m) was designated trench 2. The excavated stratigraphy in trench 2 was similar to that seen in trench 1. A 25 cm thick layer of topsoil (context no. 101) overlay a 10-15 cm thick band of natural subsoil (context no. 102), which in turn overlay the natural limestone bedrock (context no. 103). However, in trench 2 the bedrock sloped down from east to west. The only find from this trench was a small piece of post-medieval pottery recovered from the

topsoil.

### **Trench 3**

- 4.4 The southernmost trench (10 x 1.5 m) was designated trench 3. A 10-15 cm thick layer of topsoil (context no. 201) was removed to reveal a 30 cm thick band of natural subsoil (context no. 205) in the southernmost 2.5-3 m of the trench, which was deposited over the natural limestone bedrock (context no. 206). The remainder of the trench was taken up by a large modern quarry pit (context no. 204), cutting into the natural subsoil and bedrock, which was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.3 m against the northern baulk (cf. Figure 3). The uppermost fill of this feature (context no. 202) was similar in colour and texture to the deposit seen in the southwestern and western parts of trench 1 (context no. 3), suggesting that the quarry pit originally extended at least 10 m north-south. Context 202 contained numerous pieces of plastic, baling twine and other modern finds; presumably relating to a deliberate backfilling on the part of local farmers. It overlay a much thinner band of darker material (context no. 203) which could represent re-deposited topsoil washed into the open pit. The natural limestone bedrock was seen below context 203.

### **Trench 4**

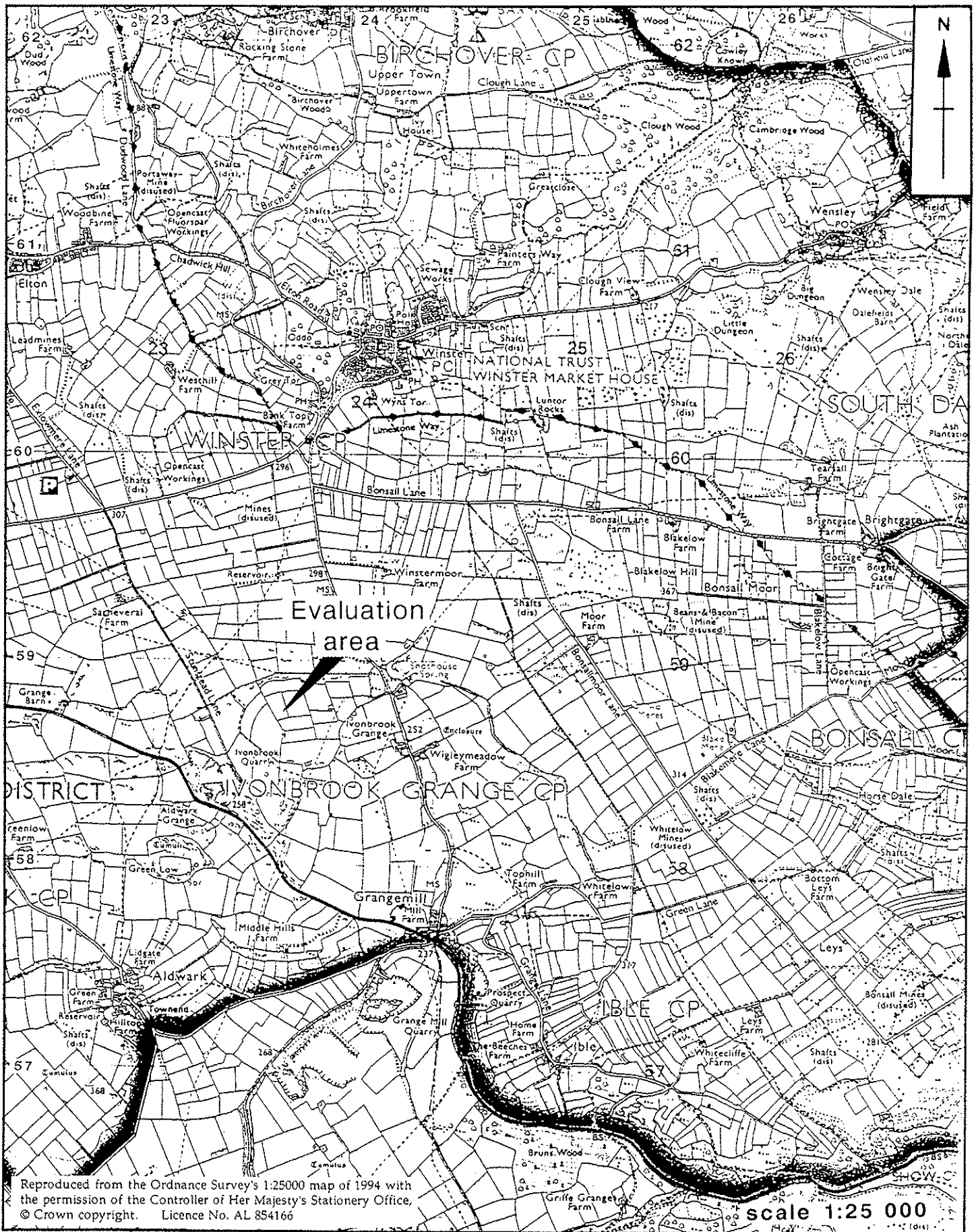
- 4.5 The northernmost trench (10 x 1.5 m) was designated trench 4. A 20-30 cm thick layer of topsoil (context no. 301) was removed to reveal a thin band of natural subsoil (context no. 302), which in turn overlay the natural limestone bedrock (context no. 303). No finds were discovered in trench 4.

### **Trench 5**

- 4.6 A 4 x 4 m trench, designated trench 5, was placed north of trench 1 and east of trench 4. A 25 cm thick band of topsoil (context 401) overlay a thin band of natural subsoil (context 402), which in turn was deposited on the underlying natural limestone bedrock (context no. 403). The only find from trench 5 was a corroded iron nail recovered from the topsoil.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 No archaeological deposits and/or features of any significance were discovered in any of the evaluation trenches. The one feature that was investigated proved to be a modern quarry pit, perhaps originally a fluorspar prospection pit (the nearby hills have occasional veins of fluorspar in the natural limestone) later infilled by farmers. The results of the evaluation therefore suggest that the proposed extension of Ivonbrook Quarry is unlikely to affect an area of major archaeological importance.



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scale 1:25 000

Fig. 1

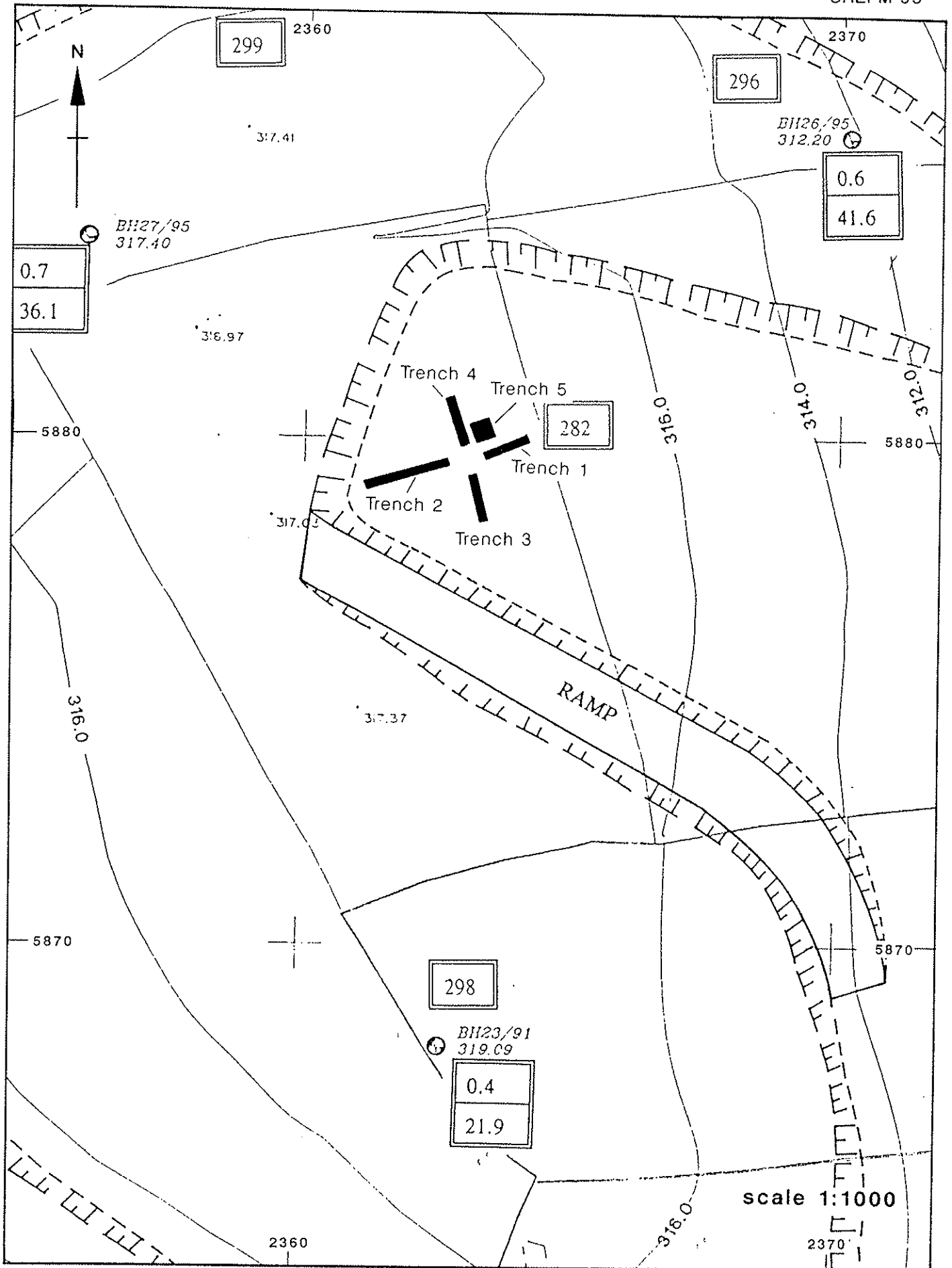


Fig. 2



Trench 3

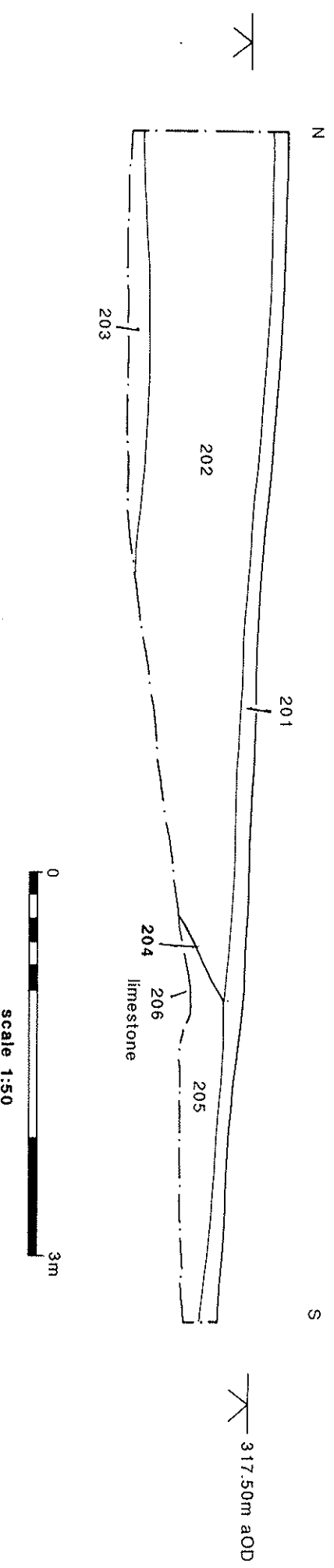


Fig.3

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