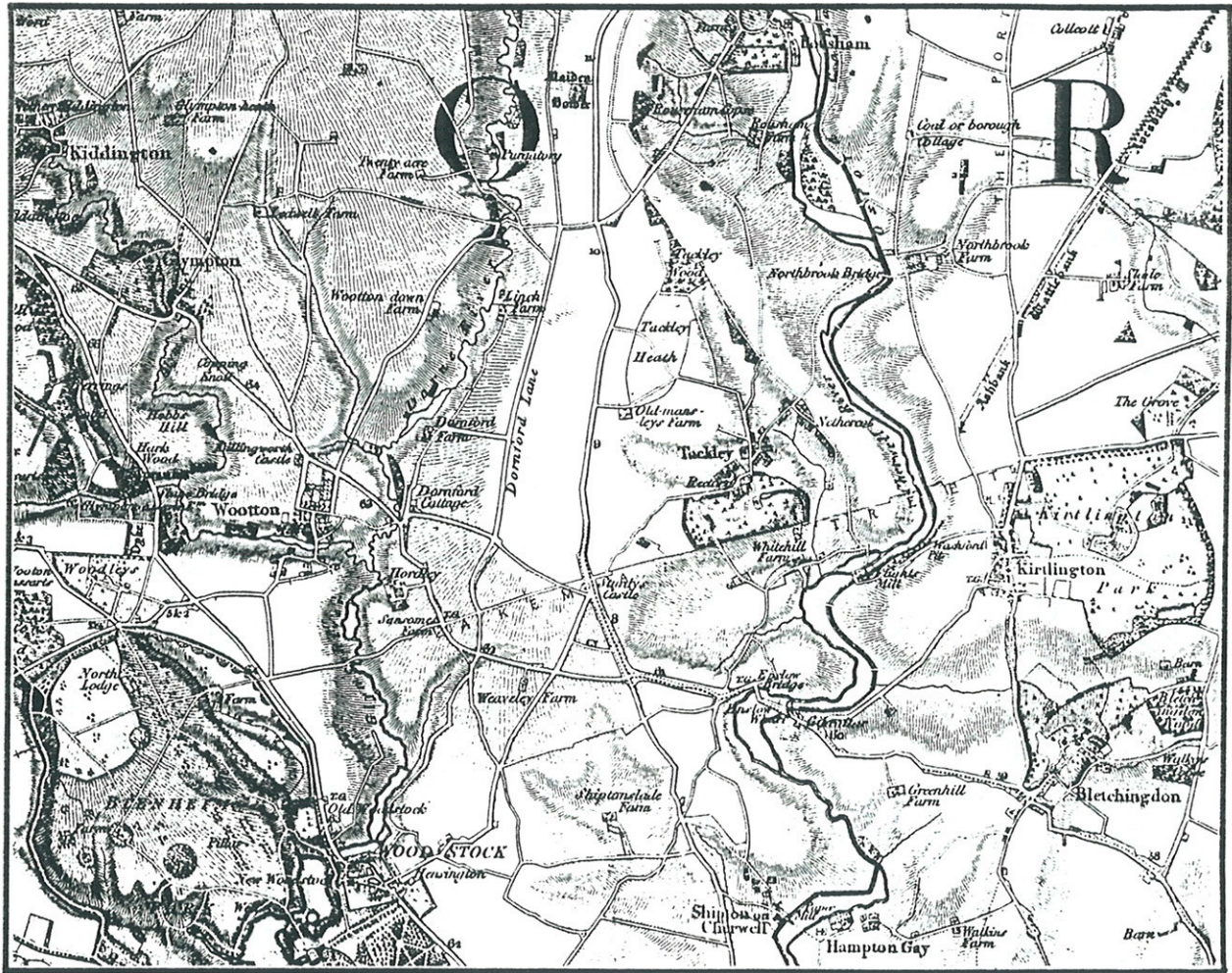


GLYMPTON PARK, OXFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
JANUARY 1993

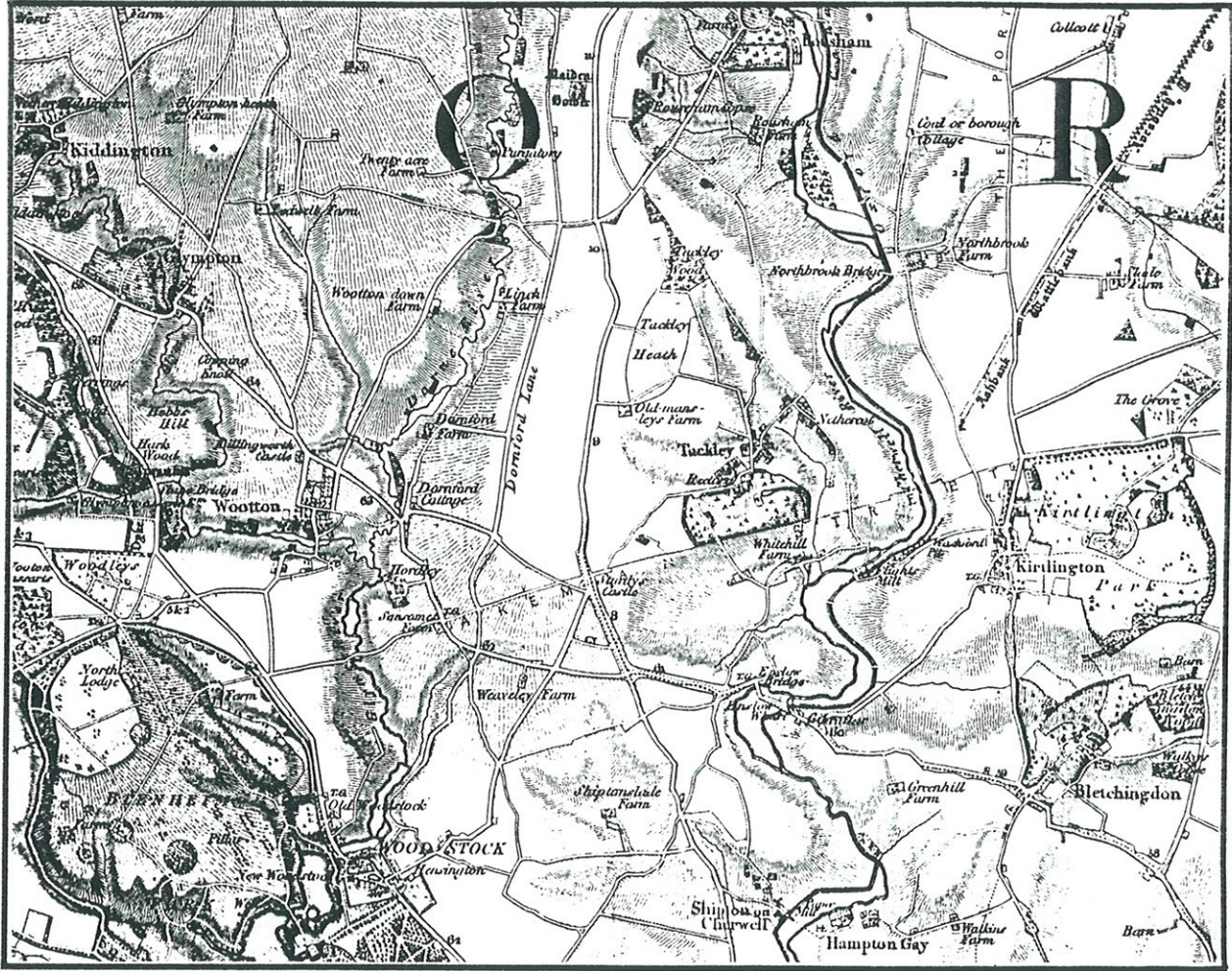


Oxford Archaeological Unit



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46 Hythe Bridge Street

GLYMPTON PARK ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Summary

An archaeological evaluation consisting of four trenches at Glympton Park in the area of the Estate Office, produced evidence of the Medieval Village of Glympton, including a well preserved stone building, and some trace of earlier Roman-British occupation.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Philip Jebb Associates to carry out an archaeological evaluation on the site of proposed new estate offices. A Project Design specification was agreed with the Oxfordshire County Council's Archaeological office.
- 1.2 The area of investigation occupies the end of a tongue of cornbrash limestone which falls away sharply to the north of the site, down to the River Glyme. The site is about 20 m to the west north west of St Mary's churchyard. The church was once the focus of the Medieval settlement of Glympton, which was moved in the 18th Century when the present landscaped park was created.
- 1.3 The proposed development site was therefore thought to have potential for medieval occupation evidence relating to the deserted medieval village. In addition the prominent position above the Glyme is one where earlier prehistoric or Romano-British occupation might be found.

The Aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- * to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- * to determine the extent, condition character and date of any archaeological remains.
- * to establish the potential of archaeological features for environmental data.
- * to appraise the likely impact of the development proposals on any archaeological remains.

2. Strategy

- 2.1 Following the examination of Sites and Monuments Record data field evaluation took place. The site was not suitable for fieldwalking (under lawns and gardens) and the potential of geophysical survey was limited by the presence of service trenches etc.

- 2.2 Three trenches (Trenches 1, 2, 3) were excavated by machine using a JCB with a 1.6 m toothless ditching bucket. A further trench (4) was dug by hand (Fig 1).

3 Results

3.1 Trench 1 (Fig 2)

- 3.1.1 Trench 1 (4.6 m x 1.6 m) was dug to the east of the present estate office in an area proposed for landscaping. This trench was machined down to the top of archaeological deposits, removing the topsoil (layer 4) and about 0.50 m of modern rubble (layer 6). Several drains and service pipes were located (see Fig 2, Section), the latest of which was a fire hydrant pipe [16] aligned North-South. This cut through a ceramic land drain [19], which in turn cut a stone lined drain [13]. These all severed deposits of Medieval occupation, a mixture of yellow silty clay with mortar, gravel and charcoal flecks (layer 7, 10, 11 and 12).

- 3.1.2 The Medieval occupation layer were dated by pottery and contained animal bone fragments. The surface of the Medieval layer was 0.35 - 0.40 m from the surface of the turf and at least 0.50 m thick where it could be observed.

- 3.1.3 The cornbrash was seen at a level of 105.02 m OD, sloping away to the east to a level of 104.58 m OD.

3.2 Trench 2 (Fig 3)

- 3.2.1 This trench (10.0 m x 1.6 m) was dug by machine north-west of the existing estate officer, at an angle to the present trackway, in or an order to avoid known service trenches. Approximately 0.20 m of topsoil was removed to reveal natural cornbrash in the south western half of the trench. In the northern half of the trench, a corner foundation wall of a building was seen 0.10 m below the existing ground surface. The wall of limestone was 0.70 m wide at a maximum and consisted of a single course of stone and mortar [42] on a NW/SE alignment. No floor levels were seen as it was not possible to extend Trench 2 into the inside of the building.

- 3.2.2 Abutting the wall to the north east was a 0.25 m thick layer of occupation soil (4), medieval in date and possibly contemporary with the building. A shallow scoop filled with brown/grey loam (39) (Figure 3) underlying the medieval layers produced Romano-British sherds. Natural cornbrash was recorded at a level of 105.62 m OD in the north east end of the trench.

3.3 Trench 3 (Figures 1 and 5)

- 3.3.1 This trench was dug 20 m west of the estate Officer. It was excavated by machine to a depth of 0.80 m in the west to reveal 0.50 m of topsoil and modern garden soil, directly overlaying cornbrash. In the eastern end of the trench it was excavated to a depth of 0.60 m. This revealed 0.30 m of topsoil and garden soil, again laying directly on top of cornbrash. No archaeological features or deposits were seen.

3.4 Trench 4 (Fig 4)

- 3.4.1 Following the discovery of the Medieval building in Trench 2 a further trench (Trench 4) was excavated at the request of the County Archaeological Officer. Its purpose was to clarify the extent and location of the Medieval building and to establish whether floor levels were present in the interior of the building. In the event a continuation of the Medieval building had been removed at this point by a service trench aligned North-South. However, another wall [26] was located which may be part of a second building or a different phase of that seen in Trench 2. This wall, 0.60 m wide, was only 0.20 m below the existing ground surface and consisted of three courses of mortared limestone; layer 31 (Fig 4, Section) was possibly a construction trench. Layer 36, of limestone rubble and mortar may be a make-up for a floor [35]. Layers 45 and 46, beneath this, of clay loam and charcoal may predate the building.
- 3.4.2 A mortar floor [35] was seen in the southern end of the trench 0.30 m below the existing ground surface, to the south of the wall [26]. Although no relationship was observed the floor may be contemporary with the building. No dating evidence was recovered from the floor or its make-up layer [34] and [36], but some pottery was recovered from deposits directly below them. Cornbrash was recorded at 105.38 m OD.

4 The Pottery

Cathy Underwood-Keevill

- 4.1 A total of 82 sherds weighing 0.692 kg was recovered from eight contexts in trial trenches 1, 2 and 4. The pottery ranged in date from Roman to late Medieval. A small quantity of Roman grey ware and a worn Roman oxidised ware sherd were recovered from context 39, trench 2. Saxo-Norman (C10-C11) pottery, St Neots type ware, was recorded in context 10, trench 1 and context 41, trench 2. The majority of the assemblage was concentrated in two contexts in trench 1: contexts 10 and 12. The vessel forms in context 10 consist of late C12-C13 cooking pots and bowls in limestone tempered fabrics. Context 12 contains limestone gritted wares including a mid-late C12 cooking pot rim with stabbed decoration similar to a rim type found at the Hamel, Oxford in Oxford fabric type AC (Mellor 1980, 163).
- 4.2 The assemblage from Glympton appears to be predominantly C12-C13 in date, with a limited fabric and vessel range. The limestone fabric types are very similar to Oxford types AC, BK and BB. The latter fabric type probably derives from Gloucester. Later sandy wares such as C13/C14 Brill/Boartall jug sherds and C14 Surrey white ware types are present in small quantities. The Surrey ware is restricted to context 12, trench 1 and context 40, trench 2.

Ref. M Mellor, 1980 in Palmer N, 'A beaker burial and medieval tenements in The Hamel, Oxford', *Oxoniensia* xlv, 160-82.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 Trenches 1, 2 and 4 all produced evidence of Medieval occupation notably the remains of at least one, and possibly two, stone base buildings. Internal floor levels appear to have survived in part. It is not possible to estimate the dimension of the building(s) but it seems probable that they occupy the area immediately North of, and probably beneath the present estate office. To the east a Medieval occupation layer in Trench 1 probably represents contemporary settlement.
- 5.2 Trench 1 produced evidence of Anglo Norman pottery of the 10-11th centuries indicating relatively early occupation. The stone base building(s) are likely to belong to the period around about 1200 AD. To the north of the medieval building the ground drops rapidly to the Glyme, so we probably have here the northward limit of the principal occupation area of the Glympton Medieval village.
- 5.3 Only a single feature was found containing Romano-British pottery. In view of the very limited area observed beneath the medieval occupation layer this may represent more substantial Romano-British occupation than is immediately apparent. The extent and character of Romano-British occupation remains uncertain.
- 5.4 The construction of an estate office could potentially have a major impact on these archaeological deposits. This could, in part, be mitigated by a building design solution (for example careful positioning of piles) or by excavation and recording before development. In the area of Trench 1 any movement of ground below about 0.20 m would have an impact on Medieval occupation layers. In damp conditions even quite minor soil movement could result in damage from machine wheels etc.

APPENDIX 1**SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD DATA**

Ref Number

- 1243 Church of St Mary. Modern building in early dec. style. Church restored 1872; chancel rebuilt.
- 3398 DMV of Gilmpton. Village moved in 18th century to make way for parkland. NG ref given; SP 424218.
- 5885 Post medieval stocks. Now moved/destroyed, in 1985 were recorded leaning up against wall in churchyard.
- 8728 Glympton Park. 1665 - first mention of park. By 1931, had 110 acres, having expanded several times.
- 14183 Manor house - post medieval. Grade II listed building. 17th century remodelling, poss. 16th century origins. 18th century plan shows half H shape of building. Early 19th century, W range of building demolished. Late 1840s - house remodelled.

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- Fig 2 Trench 1: Plan and Section
- Fig 3 Trench 2: Plan and Section
- Fig 4 Trench 4: Plan and Section
- Fig 5 Trench 3: Sections

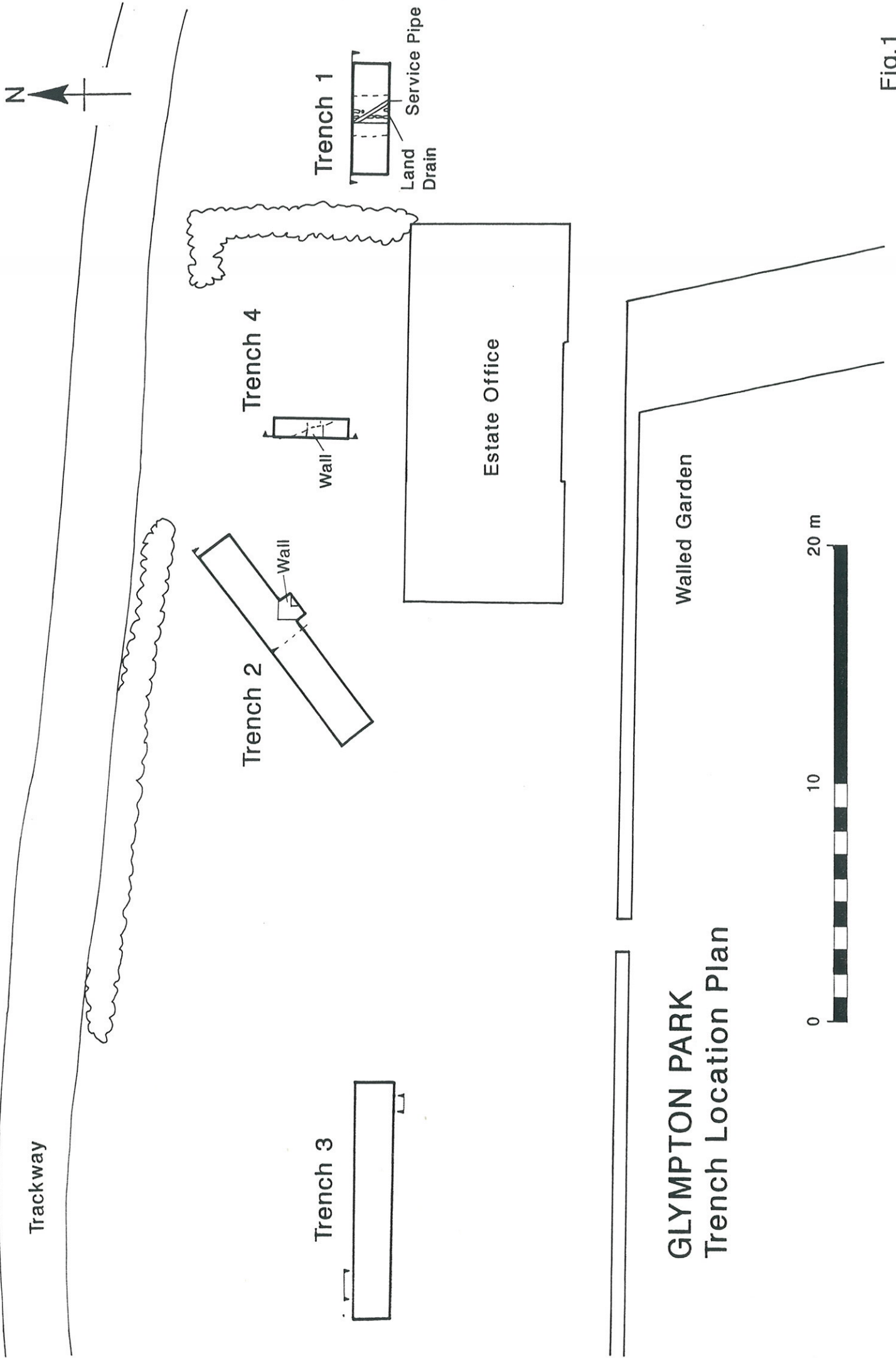
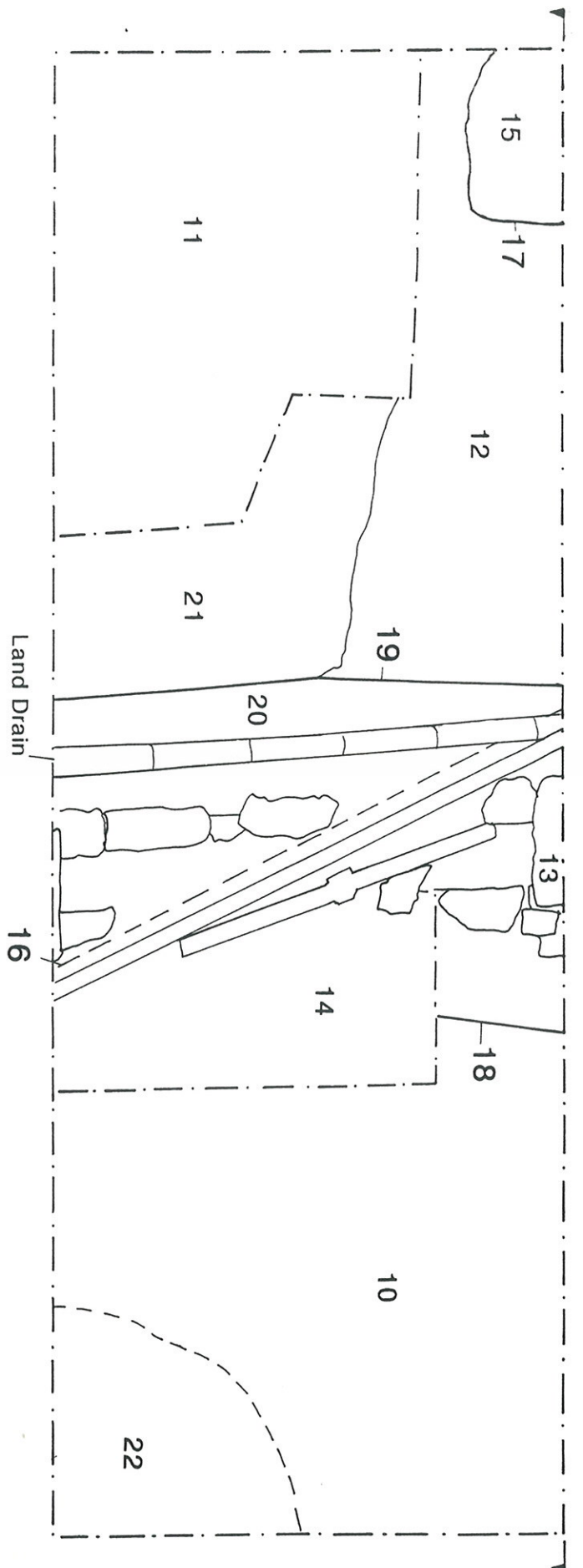


Fig.1

Trench 1



Section

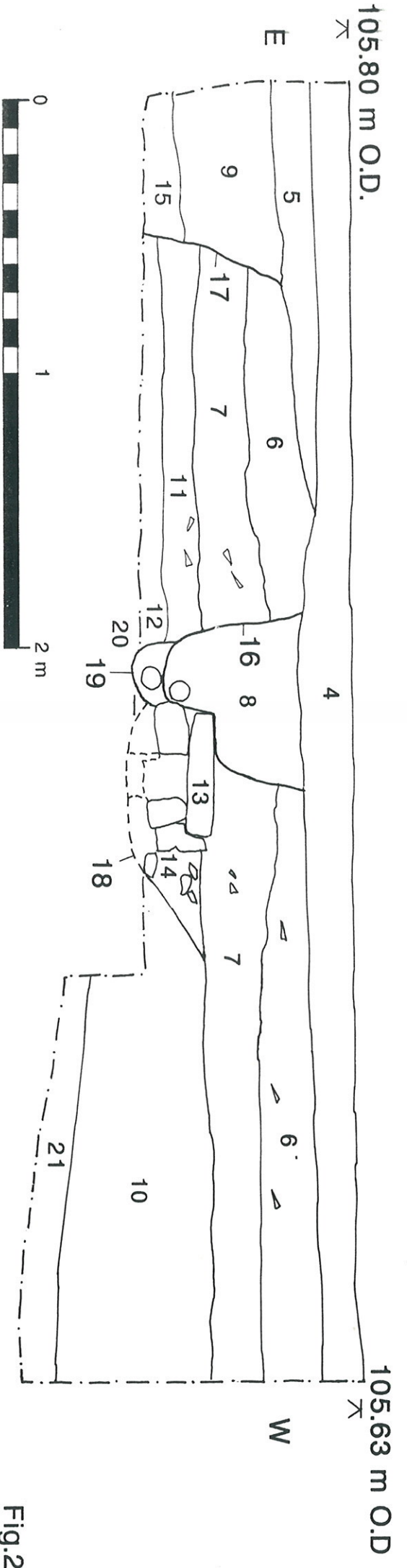
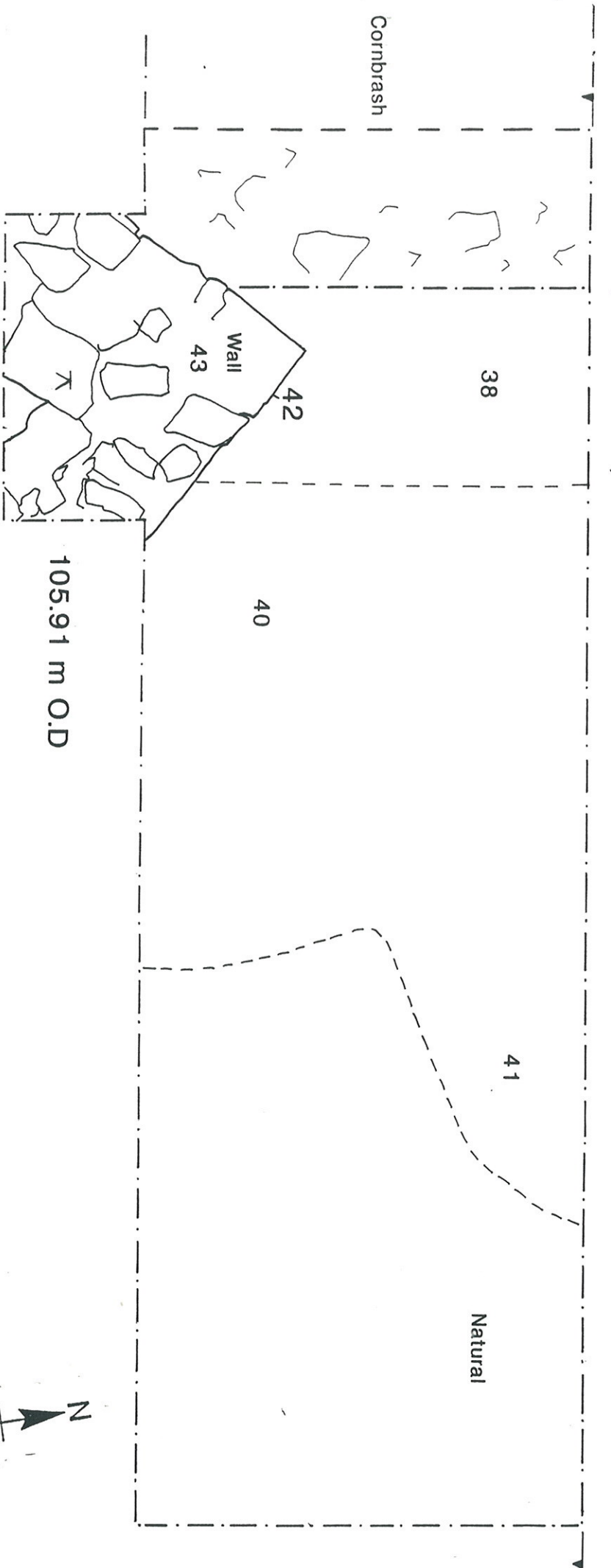


Fig.2

Trench 2 (East half)



Section

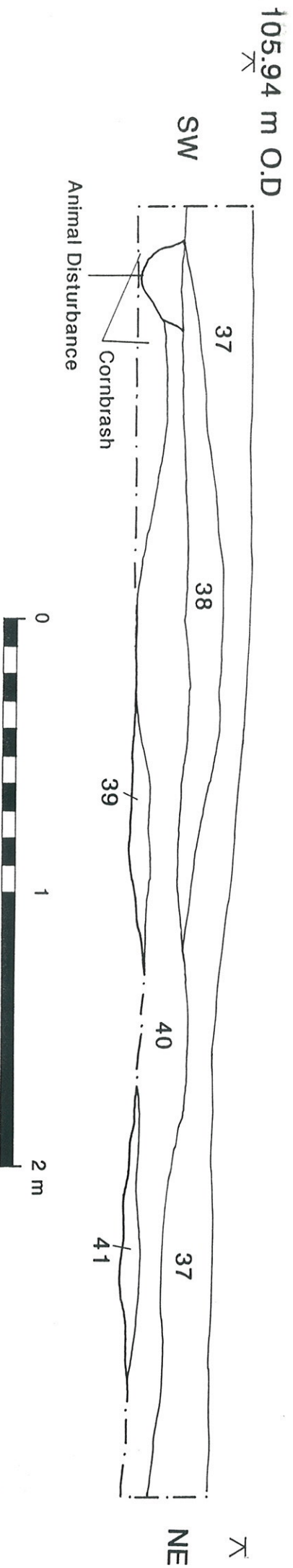
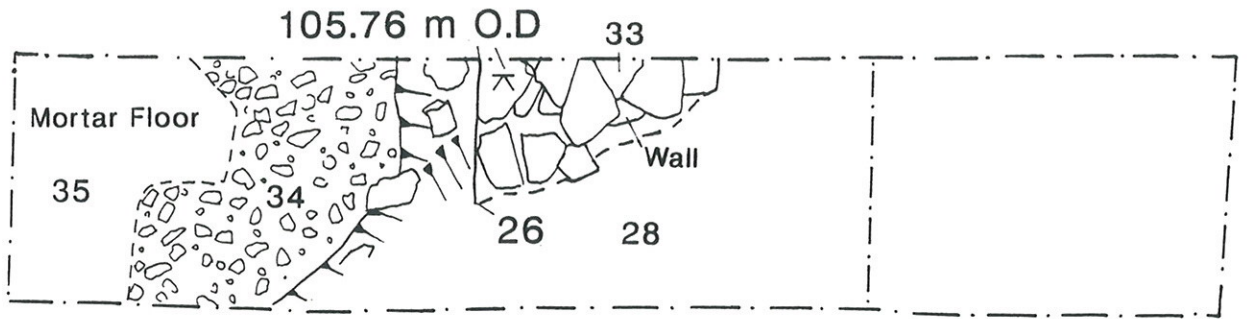


Fig.3

Trench 4



Section

106.34 m O.D

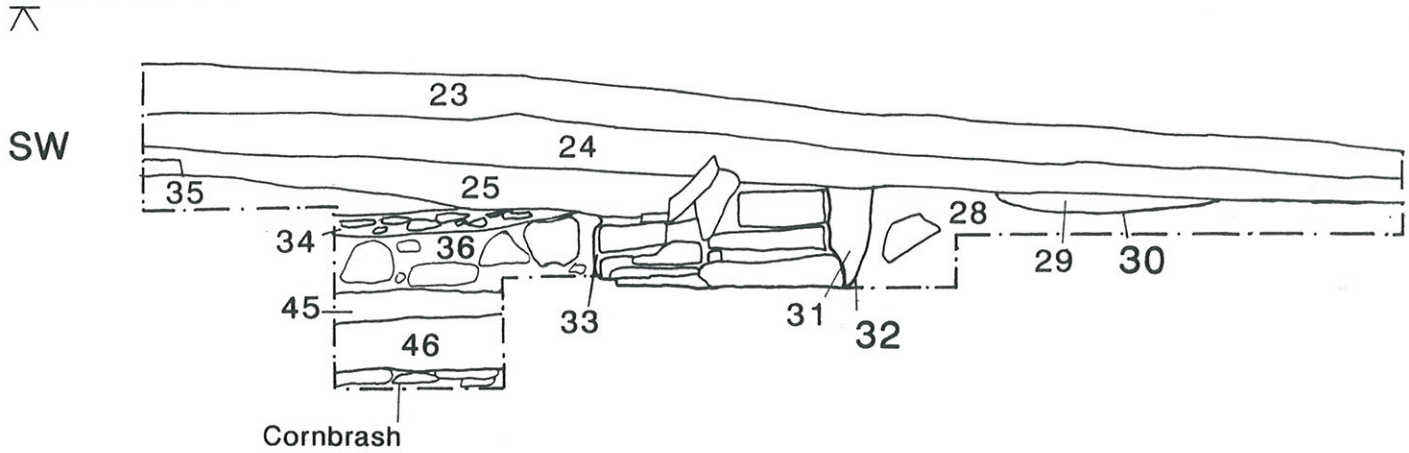
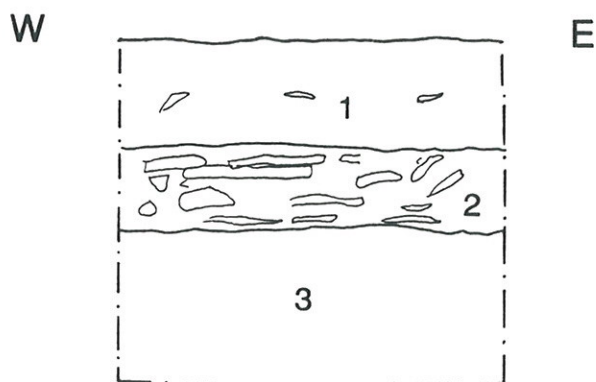


Fig.4

Trench 3

North Section



South Section

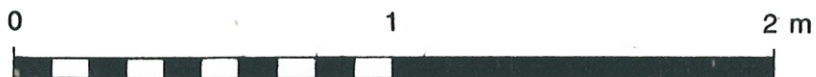
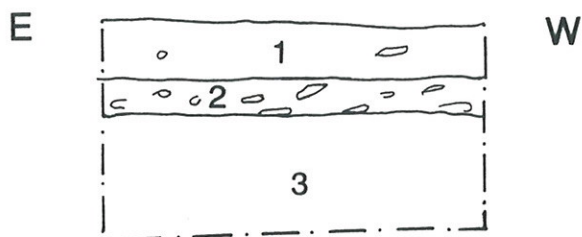


Fig.5