J Smith & Sons, Bletchingdon

Gill Mill, Ducklington, Oxfordshire
Area North West of Gill Mill House

Archaeological Evaluation Report

SP 4379 2071

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

December 1997

Gill Mill, Ducklington, Oxfordshire
Area North West of Gill Mill House

Archaeological Evaluation Report

SP 4370 2071

Prepared by: B.Matthews	
Date: 5/12/98	
Checked by: G Lambrica	
Date: 17/12/97	
Approved by: [signature]	
Date: 22/12/97	

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

December 1997

Gill Mill, Ducklington, Oxfordshire
Area North West of Gill Mill House

Archaeological Evaluation Report

CONTENTS

1. **Introduction** 1

1.1 *Location and scope of work* 1
1.2 *Geology and topography* 1
1.3 *Archaeological background* 1

2. **Evaluation Aims** 2

2.1 *Evaluation Methodology* 2

3. **Results:** 3

3.1 *General Results* 3
3.2 *Trench Descriptions* 3
3.3 *Finds* 7

4. **Discussion And Interpretation** 10

4.1 *Reliability of field investigation* 10
4.2 *Distribution of archaeological deposits* 10
4.3 *Summary of Results* 12

5. **Significance and Impact** 13

5.1 *Significance of the results for the Gill Mill complex* 13
5.2 *Impact of Gravel Extraction* 14

6. **Bibliography and references** 14

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Pottery assessment/ spot dating
Appendix 2 Environmental data
Appendix 3 Archaeological Context Inventory

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1 Site location map
Fig. 2 Location of trenches and S106 Agreement area
Fig. 2a Location of features within trenches
Fig. 3 Trench 5
Fig. 4 Trench 7
Fig. 5 Trench10
Fig. 6 Trench 15
Fig. 7 Trench 16
Fig. 8 Trench 18
Fig. 9 Trench 19
Fig. 10 Trench 20

Gill Mill, Ducklington, Oxfordshire
Area north west of Gill Mill House

Archaeological Evaluation Report

SUMMARY

In November 1997, the Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a field evaluation on fields NE of Gill Mill House, at Gill Mill Pit, Ducklington on behalf of J Smith and Sons (Bletchingdon) Ltd. The evaluation revealed a Roman field ditch system originating in the 1st to 2nd century AD and quarrying activity within the paddocks which had extensive spreads of late roman occupation debris in the top of them. Limestone surfaces were located within former shallow channels in trenches at the southern edge of the site. These are thought to be parts of Roman possible fording points in an area liable to occasional flooding.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Location and scope of work*

In November 1997, as part of the on-going archaeological evaluation of J. Smith and Sons' Gill Mill gravel pit, the Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a field evaluation at in fields to the north east of Gill Mill House. The work was carried out in accordance with a brief and WSI agreed with the Deputy County Archaeologist.

The site lies within fields immediately to the north and north east of Gill Mill House (see figs 1 and 2).

1.2 *Geology and topography*

The underlying geology of the site consists of gravel overlain by alluvial deposits within the river Windrush floodplain. The fields here are presently under pasture except to the north east of the site where a vegetable crop (kale) has been left to provide cover for game. A visible cropmark was evident running SSW - NNE between trenches 5,16,19 and 20 (see fig 2).

1.3 *Archaeological background*

Since 1988 the pit area has been the subject of several evaluations which are summarised below.

In 1988 an evaluation located to the south of the river Windrush and east of Gill Mill House uncovered a previously identified Roman road, areas of limestone rubble, gravel surfaces and spreads of pottery. These indicated the remnants of a ribbon settlement abutting both sides of the Roman road which crosses the river Windrush valley at Gill Mill, running NNE-SSE across the river Windrush floodplain. The recovered pottery from this evaluation dates to the 3rd and 4th centuries.

The 1988 evaluation also located enclosure ditches of an Iron Age (c.200-50 BC) farmstead, in the area of the silt ponds east of the quarry plant which was excavated in 1990.

In 1990 some 3.5ha was examined in salvage work, situated just south west of the present site. The 1990 work identified the western limits of the Roman settlement which consisted of a series of ditches, some of which were waterlogged, probably defining small

fields and paddocks. Nine cremations and three inhumations were also uncovered , and further burials and cremations were recorded through additional area excavation.

In 1995 fields to the west of the present site were the subject of a further evaluation. This uncovered a pattern of ditches which probably represent small fields and paddocks dating to the 1st - 2nd century with a small amount of occupation dating to the 3rd - 4th century imposed upon this. Four inhumations were also identified and these probably represent scattered burials similar to those identified in the 1990 salvage excavation. A small area in the vicinity of these burials was subsequently investigated as an open area.

A system of palaeochannels to the west were mainly shallow undated braided channels which contained only occasional bone fragments.

2. EVALUATION AIMS

The aim of this evaluation was to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present, and in particular to assess the possible continuation of adjacent settlement patterns and the ecofactual/ environmental potential of deposits within the evaluation area.

2.1 *Evaluation Methodology*

2.1.1 *Machining and sample size*

Twenty two trenches, measuring 30m long by approximately 1.90m wide were machined to the first significant archaeological horizon using a 360° tracked excavator under close archaeological supervision. This amounts to an approximate 2% sample of the development area.

2.1.2 *Fieldwork methods and recording*

The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at a scale of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

2.1.3 *Finds*

Spoil tips were monitored for finds. Where large amounts of finds were located some selective collection was employed to retain the most diagnostic sherds / fragments.

2.1.4 *Environmental data*

The site was visited by Dr Mark Robinson of University Museum, Oxford, to assess the environmental potential of deposits. As a result five targeted samples were taken. Generally it was noted that while the environmental potential of the site would formerly have been very good recent lowering of the water table, probably as a result of nearby quarrying activity (perhaps exacerbated by dry summers), has since significantly reduced this potential (See Dr. Robinson's report below).

3. RESULTS:

3.1 *General Results*

3.1.1 *Soil and ground conditions*

Topsoil across the site consisted of a dark brown clayey silt, typically 0.25m - 0.30m thick. This overlay a orange brown to grey brown silty clay alluvial up to 0.30m thick.

This alluvial must date from the late Roman period onwards as it consistently seals deposits of late Roman material. Beneath this alluvial layer pale orange brown post-glacial soil filled natural irregularities within the underlying gravel.

Ground conditions were generally dry during the evaluation.

3.1.2 *Presentation of results*

Individual trenches, finds analysis and environmental data are described briefly below, with a following interpretation and discussion of the archaeological evidence by chronological sequence.

Appendices contain tables for dimensions of features and deposits, and more detailed analysis of finds and the environmental evidence.

3.2 *Trench Descriptions*

3.2.1 *Trench 1*

Near the centre of this trench a linear ditch [258] ran NNE-SSW. This had concave sides and a flat base and measured 1.20m wide x 0.30m deep. Its upper fill (256) contained 2nd.century pottery. Just to the west of this ditch a slightly irregular linear gully [261] ran NNW-SSE. This feature was relatively poorly defined with a clean fills containing no finds. It is thought to be possibly pre-historic in date.

3.2.2 *Trench 2*

Trench 2 was found to be empty of archaeological features.

3.2.3 *Trench 3*

Trench 3 contained two parallel NNE-SSW running linear ditches, these were [322], a 'U' shaped ditch measuring 0.80m deep x 2.58m wide, and [325] with straight sides and a flat base, measuring 0.58m deep x 1.6m wide. The fills of these ditches contained some animal bone but no pottery.

3.2.4 *Trench 4*

Trench 4 contained a WNW-ESE running ditch [306], measuring 0.82m deep x 2.83m deep, with concave sides and a flat base. Its primary fill (305) contained pottery dating to the 2nd century. Several other features, [308] [311] [314], found here had irregular sides and are thought to be the result of quarrying activity, with another shallow cut [314] being obscured by a 6.1m wide gravely spread towards the north of this trench.

3.2.5 *Trench 5*

Trench 5 contained Three NNE-SSW running ditches, [294] [297] [300], at its eastern end. Ditch [294] had a flat base and straight sides sloping at 45° to the horizontal. Its fills contained no finds.

Ditch [297] represents recuts of ditch [300] slightly to the west. They both have sides which slope at 30°- 40° to the horizontal with flat bases, and appear to be very similar.

A NNW-SSE running ditch [291] at the extreme east of this trench also has straight sloping sides and a flat base, and measures 0.28m deep x 1.70m wide. Its upper fill (289) contained 2-3rd. century pottery.

3.2.6 *Trench 6*

Trench 6 was empty of archaeological features.

3.2.7 *Trench 7*

Trench 7 contained two parallel WNW- ESE running linear ditches, [245] and [253], at its extreme southern end. Ditch [245] has slightly convex sides meeting a rounded base and measures 1.8m wide x 0.38m deep. Its upper fill (247) contained 2nd century pottery, animal bone and two Roman coins. Ditch [253], to the south, is similar but with straight sloping sides meeting a flat base and measures 1.10m wide x 0.22m deep. Its fill (252) also contains 2nd century pottery.

At the extreme north of this trench a possible ditch, pit or quarrying cut [251] was partially revealed, but within the confines of this trench it was not possible to assess the true nature of this feature and its fills contained no finds.

Close to the northern end of this trench a small irregular spread of iron-panning deposit was noted with adjacent small bone fragments and charcoal flecking. This context (267) was partially excavated and sampled but proved to be very shallow (up to 0.06m deep approximately) irregular, poorly defined and is not thought to constitute a deliberately excavated feature. The bone sampled within this context was later identified as human, but no definable pattern of deposition was noted when excavated.

3.2.8 *Trench 8*

Trench 8 contained a single WNW-ESE running ditch [270]. This had shallow, slightly concave sides with slightly irregular flatish base and measured 2.00m wide x 0.25m deep. Its upper fill (272) contained animal bone, mid 2nd century pottery and possible iron slag fragments. This ditch seems to correspond to cut [280] within trench 9.

3.2.9 *Trench 9*

Trench 9 contained two WNW-ESE running ditches [275] and [280]. The southern-most of these ditches [275], at the extreme south of this trench, had straight sloping sides and a rounded base and measured 1.30m wide x 0.54m deep. Its upper fill (277) contains late 3rd to 4th century pottery. Ditch [280], some 6.5m to the north, has a different profile with similar straight sloping sides but a flat, broader base and measures 2.50m wide x 0.60m deep. It is thought that this ditch represents a continuation of a field ditch visible as cut [270] within trench 8 to the north east.

Two other features [278] and [285] were partially excavated within this trench but found to be irregular in shape and are thought to have been naturally caused.

3.2.10 *Trench 10*

Trench 10 contained two north-south running ditches, [5] and [73]. Ditch cut [73] was 'U' shaped in profile with vertical sides and a rounded base. It measured 1.12m wide x 0.52m deep. Ditch [5] had a similar profile but was considerably deeper, measuring 1.50m across x 1.20m deep. This ditch cut a gravely sandy clay spread (4) some 0.20m deep, which contained animal bone and Roman pottery. This might be upcast from nearby quarrying activity.

Large features, [15], [11] at the north of this trench were partially sectioned and these are thought to be two large intercutting pits at least 1.00m deep. These are likely to be quarry pits dating to the Roman period.

Trench 10 also contained a medium sized pit [18] with vertical sides and a rounded base which measured 0.82m x 0.85m x 0.53m deep, containing burnt stone, animal bone and Roman pottery within its fills.

3.2.11 *Trench 11*

Trench 11 contained two approximately WNW-ESS running, parallel ditches [163] and [167].

Ditch [163] was 3.00m wide x 0.86m deep with a broad gently concave base whereas ditch [167] was narrower, measuring 1.75m wide x 0.88m deep with steep, slightly concave sides meeting a rounded base. The fills of both ditches contain Roman pottery.

To the north of this trench a gravel deposit (173) spreads from a large pit [174] were partially revealed at the extreme north of this trench. The southern side of this feature had stepped sides and was 0.50m deep as excavated. Its fills contained animal bone and Roman pottery.

3.2.12 *Trench 12*

Trench 12 contained two parallel E-W running ditches [207], [210]. These were partially sectioned. Ditch [207] has rounded sides and measured 2.15m wide x 0.88m deep, whereas the cut of [210] appears stepped and measures 2.00m wide x 0.70m deep. The fills of both of these features contain animal bone and 2nd century pottery.

Towards the north of this trench a large pit [216] was excavated to reveal near vertical sides with an uneven base. This pit measures 2.70m wide x 0.52m wide and its fills contain animal bone and 2-3rd century pottery.

3.2.13 *Trench 13*

Trench 13 was empty of archaeological features with the exception of a spread of 2nd century pottery sherds (230) situated above a clean alluvial deposit (229) filling irregular natural undulations above the natural gravel here. This pottery spread appears to be the remains of several broken vessels but no cut associated with its deposition could be identified.

3.2.14 *Trench 14.*

In the eastern end of this trench two parallel ditches[116] and [122] run NNE - SSW. Ditch [116] had straight evenly sloping sides with a uneven base and measured 2.2m wide x 0.55m deep. Ditch [122] was only partially sectioned on its western side and this appears similar to the cut of [116] with a slightly concave side here and a depth of 0.75m. This cut was not fully revealed within the confines of trench 14. Two irregular pits [125], [127] were located just to the west of these ditches and appear to be the result of quarrying activity here.

3.2.15 *Trench 15*

The southern end of trench 15 revealed a broad spread of dark soil (88) containing much pottery and bone. This overlay what is thought to be a series of intercutting quarrying pits [89], [91], [93], [95], [97], [99] and [101], the largest of which measured 0.65m deep x 2.70m wide. Typically these cuts were broad with flat bases, although there was some variation, with the smallest of these cuts [91] having a more rounded profile. A possible posthole [105] and stakehole [107], to the north, were sectioned and found to be fairly

shallow. These measured only 0.16m and 0.14m deep respectively. Their fills contained no finds.

3.2.16 *Trench 16*

Within trench 16 a linear NNE -SSW running ditch [79] cut a larger feature [76] on the same alignment. The cut of [79] was broad with stepped sides and a flat base and its fills were noticeably peaty. This is very similar to ditch cut [144] and fill (143) within trench 19 some 80m to the south. A visible slightly sunken earthwork visible as a vegetation mark links the two features. Finds within the fill of [144] indicate that this is a relatively modern ditch. The lower earlier cut [76] was not fully excavated but to the west it had gently concave sides and base. Its upper fill (78), a silty gravel, extended to a total width of 5.6m east to west.

In the east of this trench a broad shallow spread (86) was sectioned. This contained much animal bone, pottery, tile and scattered stone and was similar to adjacent patchy spreads. Also within this area a possible pit or ditch terminus [82] was sectioned. Its shallow upper fill was also similar to surrounding spreads and contained animal bone and Roman pottery, but its deeper primary fill (83), a yellowish brown silty clay was markedly different with no finds. Hence it is thought that this is an earlier feature with some slumping of Roman spread material.

3.2.17 *Trench 17*

Trench 17 contained an east-west ditch [242] at its northern end. A very broad irregular cut [238] to the south is thought to be the result of quarrying activity here.

3.2.18 *Trench 18*

The northern half of trench 18 contained two groups of intercutting features, [30], [36], [47] and [53], [59], [65]. The cuts of these features were all somewhat irregular but generally their sides were stepped with gently rounded to flat bases with maximum dimensions of 2.7m wide and 0.68m deep. Initially these features were interpreted as a pattern of intercutting ditches. However some of these cuts were seen to be terminating within the excavated sections, while their fills were very mixed and their orientations vary between north-east to south-west, and east to west.

This suggests that at least some of these cuts may be the result of quarrying activity here although it was not possible to confirm this within the confines of this trench. Much animal bone, tile and 2-4th century Roman pottery was recovered from the fills.

A single linear north-west to south-east cut [69] was also noted to the south of this trench but not excavated.

3.2.19 *Trench 19*

Two large pits dating to the Roman period lay at the eastern end of this trench with a further partially uncovered pit to the extreme west. A possible limestone surface (138), (202) overlay a compacted gravely spread close to the southern end of this trench. This was cut by a shallow ditch [142] running NNE-SSW. Both surfaces and ditch fills were overlain by a 0.34m thick grey alluvial layer (145). This was in turn overlain by a darker alluvial deposit (140) which is more typical of features in other trenches across the site.

A later ditch NNE - SSW ditch [144] also cut the alluvial deposit from a level immediately beneath the present topsoil. This ditch appears to be a continuation of ditch cut [79] within trench 16 to the north, and a visible, slightly sunken earthwork and vegetation mark runs between them. The fill of this later ditch was noticeably organic and contained modern plastic.

3.2.20 *Trench 20*

At the north of this trench a large pit [158] was partially uncovered. To the south of this an area of scattered limestone fragments and gravely soil overlay the large irregular stepped cut [152] of probable quarrying activity. Within the central southern area of the trench, deepening alluvial deposits above water-washed gravel indicated the presence of a possible former water channel running approximately east to west. Beneath this a thin spread of grey brown silt covered an intermittently intact limestone surface (356) and a partially filled a east to west running ditch [334].

At the southern end of the trench a NNE-SSW running feature with a dark fill (187) was thought to be a ditch corresponding to the modern ditch showing elsewhere on the surface and noted in 19 and 16 to the north. This feature was not excavated again here.

3.2.21 *Trench 21*

Within the north of this trench a broad area of quarrying activity was partially sectioned to reveal two cuts [179] and [181]. Cut [179] measured 1.35m in diameter x 0.80m deep with steep sides and a rounded base which cut the fill of [181]. The cut of [181] dropped away from the excavated section and was not fully excavated due to safety considerations.

Two shallow and narrow linear cuts[112] and [114] with rounded profiles ran north to south across the central area of this trench and seemed to respect a very poorly defined ditch running east to west here. All of these features contained Roman finds.

In the centre of this trench above these features, the base of the trench had the appearance of being water-washed in a similar manner to trench 20 to the east, with a deepening alluvial deposits here.

3.2.22 *Trench 22*

Lower levels of trench 22 had a water-washed appearance similar to that of trench 21 to the east. Here a lower bluish grey alluvial deposit (223) appeared intermittently a slightly darker brownish grey alluvial and filled probable natural undulations above natural gravel.

3.3 ***Finds***

3.3.1 *Pottery*

A full report on the pottery by P Booth is presented in Appendix 1. Substantial amounts of pottery were retrieved from deposits across the site. Virtually all of the pottery dates from the 2nd century onwards indicating that the features excavated had gone out of use by the later Roman period. A total of ten coins, which date from the late 3rd century onwards, were also recovered (see below) and reinforce this interpretation.

It is also likely that some of the later ditch, quarry and pit fills represent scattered mixed refuse or possible 'midden' material intermixed with soil. This would account for the amount of pottery and animal bone present within these fills. It is also particularly noticeable that these deposits and a higher density of finds in general are concentrated within the southernmost of the two fields evaluated, i.e. close to a main centre of occupation in the vicinity of Gill Mill house and to the south.

3.3.2 *Coins by Paul Booth*

Ten Roman coins were recovered in the evaluation. The coins were generally in quite poor condition, many being heavily encrusted. In some cases limited manual cleaning was sufficient to permit provisional identification for dating purposes. Otherwise further

cleaning by a conservator will be necessary before detailed, or in some cases any, identification can be carried out. The coins are listed in provisional approximate chronological order.

1. SF 16, context 287. Fragmentary barbarous radiate. c AD 260-295.
2. SF 2, context 10. Radiate. ?Carausius; reverse ?VIRTVS AVG. AD 286-293.
3. SF 1, context 10. ?Quinarius of Allectus; reverse, ship. AD 293-296.
4. SF 4, context 155. Follis, emperor unknown; reverse GENIO POP ROMANI, Lyons. AD 301-303.
5. SF 13, context 247. Follis, Constantine I; reverse ADVENTVS AVG, London. c AD 310-312.
6. SF 8, context 119. AE3, VRBS ROMA. AD 330-335.
7. SF 7, context 88. AE2; reverse, standing figure. 4th century.
8. SF 12, context 137. AE2. 4th century.
9. SF 14, context 247. AE3. 4th century (after c AD 330).
10. SF 9, context 137. Late 3rd or 4th century.

The group is too small for definite conclusions to be drawn. The presence of two coins of the early 4th century in such a small group is notable, however, as such coins are rare as site finds in comparison with later 4th century issues. None of the coins is certainly later than about the middle of the 4th century. While this assessment might change in the event of the unidentified 4th century pieces being cleaned, the fact that two of these are relatively large (AE2, ie more than c 18 mm diameter) might suggest that these also belong to the earlier part of the 4th century, which would give an unusual chronological emphasis to the group. Without further cleaning of the coins, however, such an interpretation is speculative.

3.3.3 *Other finds by Leigh Allen*

Copper alloy bracelet: This is a Ribbon Bracelet (SF 3, ctx 235) decorated with a wavy line of punched dots along its length. The bracelet would have been fastened by means of a perforated terminal or eye at one end locating over a tapered hook at the other. Similar examples were recovered from Shakenoak (Brodribb, Hands and Walker 1973, 110, Fig.54, No.188) from a late 4th century context and Bancroft (T Hylton and R J Zeepvat 1994, 303-306, Fig.139, No.60).

Leather: The following fragments are in reasonable condition, they are stored damp in a refrigerator. One group of fragments (SF 6, ctx 130) consists of fragments from a shoe consisting of parts of the quarters(the material that goes round the back of the human heel), part of the shoe heel and other scraps. A second group (SF 10, ctx 139) consists of one fragment is from the sole of a shoe and two fragments from the heel section. The leather is in reasonable condition.

3.3.4 *Palaeo-environmental plant and invertebrate remains by Dr M Robinson*

Details of methodology and tables of results are given in Appendix 2. For the waterlogged remains to have been preserved, Contexts 35, 88 and 133 must have extended below the water table, but apart from a *Helophorus* beetle and perhaps the *Carex* spp. (sedge) seeds, there is little evidence of aquatic conditions. The quantity of thorny and twiggy debris in Samples 1 and 3 suggests that these contexts were adjacent to sloe / hawthorn scrub, which could have been in the form of a hedge, or that cuttings had been dumped in the features. Some of the weeds are appropriate to a scrub flora, including *Anthriscus sylvestris* (cow parsley), *Conium maculatum* (hemlock) and *Urtica dioica* (stinging nettle). However, there are also many seeds from annual weeds of disturbed ground, especially in Sample 3, such as *Stellaria media* gp. (chickweed),

Polygonum aviculare agg. (knotgrass) and *Urtica urens* (small nettle), which suggest proximity to disturbed, possibly cultivated ground.

Two seeds stand out as of particular interest: *Apium graveolens* (celery) from Sample 1 and *Beta vulgaris* (beet) from Sample 3. Each is represented by a single seed. Both plants are native maritime species which were cultivated by the Romans, as they are today, for vegetables. Celery is quite well known as a Roman horticultural crop but this is perhaps only the second record of beet from Roman Britain. A charred seed of beet was identified from the Roman town of Alcester (Moffett 1987). It is possible that there was a Roman vegetable plot on the site. A third species, *Brassica nigra* (black mustard) from Sample 1, could also have been a cultivar.

The charred plant remains revealed little in the way of crop processing remains. There is only a single cereal grain from Sample 4.

The charcoal is of interest because of the occurrence of *Fraxinus excelsior* (ash) in a couple of the samples. Waterlogged ash wood is also present. It is possible that the site was obtaining some wood from an ash woodland rather the more usual oak woodland.

The surviving waterlogged remains show that the site had once been of considerable potential but that much has been lost as a result of recent deterioration. Organic material has deteriorated over the entire site, including those deposits close to the River Windrush. The character of the deterioration, with voids containing invertebrate droppings still present, suggests that the deterioration is very recent, perhaps occurring over the past five years. The ongoing nature of the deterioration will perhaps mean that all evidence that there ever were waterlogged organic deposits on the site will be lost in another very few years.

It is clear that the deterioration of the organic material was initiated by permanently lowering the water table below the organic sediments. Colonisation by decay organisms will take time and brief episodes of low water table possibly result in little, if any, damage. However, once decay has been initiated, the early stages of the rate of decay will be exponential as the decay organisms reproduce.

A raising of the water table would probably halt the deterioration but while it has gone too far for this to be a worthwhile option for this site, this is a consideration for how extraction here could affect deposits elsewhere further from previous dewatering effects of the present workings.

The evaluation has demonstrated some useful results for waterlogged macroscopic plant and invertebrate remains from Samples 1 and 3. It is recommended that any further excavation occurs as soon as possible and those few deposits which contain identifiable organic remains be sampled. Sampling should be also undertaken for charred plant remains and molluscs where suitable deposits present themselves. It is also recommended that the remainder of the Gill Mill site be evaluated promptly to determine a policy with the options of maintaining a high water table, immediate excavation and abandonment for different parts of the site.

3.3.5 *Animal Bones by Bethan Charles*

This report is a brief evaluation assessment of the bones recovered from DUGM 97. The the assemblage has been characterised by identifying as many bones as possible in a range of bags of material selected at random, coupled with a general assessment of the remainder.

The collection is in the main in very good condition with little post excavational damage or weathering. A large proportion of the bones have suffered butchery damage and at least one of the bones that was assessed had been sawn. A few of the bones had been

burnt and at least two of the bones looked at had been chewed by some other animal, probably dogs. None of the bones examined had any pathological damage.

The animal bone from all contexts is dominated by the bones of the major domestic species. However, most of the bones were from cattle and there is much evidence for butchery. There were not very many sheep bones, as may have been expected in the collection. This which may indicate either that there were not many sheep, but could reflect some recovery bias if some smaller bones were overlooked due to the conditions, or could be a reflection of taphonomic factors such as the effects of animal scavenging which were shown just down the valley at Mingies Ditch to result in larger bones tending to end up further from the centre of occupation than the smaller ones.

There were also a few horse bones. In addition to this a juvenile horse's skull and a complete tibia was found in the same context. Pig bones do feature in the assemblage but these were even fewer than the sheep. Some red deer bones were also found in the collection along with some fragments from a dog.

4. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 *Reliability of field investigation*

With a layer of alluvial silty clay overlaying the archaeological horizons the deposits were found to be relatively undisturbed by later disturbance. With some probable Roman gravel quarrying activity, spreads of dirty gravel obscure parts of some trenches and where these were not fully sampled it is possible that some earlier features may have remained obscured.

4.2 *Distribution of archaeological deposits*

4.2.1 *Possible prehistoric features: Trenches 1, 7, 16*

Several probable tree-hole or tree-throw features were excavated, to reveal irregular cuts and no finds. These all had brown-grey to orange-grey silty clay fills which may be old alluvial deposits filling naturally occurring disturbances. There was little evidence of prehistoric activity, with only one small residual sherd of Iron age pottery and a single struck flint flake recovered from across the whole site.

A medium sized pit or possible ditch terminus [82] within trench 16 ,(fig 5) had a shallow upper fill (84) containing Roman finds but it is possible that its primary fill, a clean yellow brown silty clay, is a prehistoric deposit with this Roman material slumping into the top of this feature. It is not proven that this primary fill is a prehistoric, deposit but it is dissimilar to known later fills and layers across the site.

A shallow feature [254] containing iron panning deposits, bone fragments and charcoal flecking was located and sampled within the north of trench 7. Excavation revealed a very irregular shallow and poorly defined cut and it seems unlikely that this was a deliberately created feature. The bone sampled within this context was later identified as human, but no definable pattern of deposition was noted when excavated.

The only other possible prehistoric feature found was a possible slightly irregular shallow linear gully [261], measuring 0.95m wide by 0.20m deep, running NNW - SSE across trench 1. This feature contained no finds and was partially cut by a Roman ditch. It is doubtful whether this cut is man-made in origin or a partially revealed natural feature.

4.2.2 *The Roman period*

There were extensive Roman occupational remains within the area of the evaluation. These consist of ditch systems, gravel quarrying activity, pits and a possible SSW-NNE running trackway surface at the South of the evaluation area.

4.2.3 *The Roman ditch system: Trenches 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21.*

This evaluation revealed series of Roman ditches orientated NNE-SSW, and WNW-ESE with only two parallel ditches [207] and [210] running east-west within trench 12 on the eastern side of the site and a single ditch [291] within trench 5 appearing to run NNW-SSE.

Generally it was not possible to detect a connecting pattern between most of these ditches as revealed within the available evaluation trenches, although it is likely that they represent a field boundary system on a NNE-SSW and WNW-ESE alignment.

Substantial amounts of pottery were retrieved from both ditch fills and other features across the site. Within the ditches sampled, noticeably larger amounts of pottery was recovered from upper rather than lower fills. Virtually all of the recovered pottery dates from the 2nd to 4th centuries, indicating that these ditch systems had gone out of use by the later Roman period but providing little evidence for their origin.

It is also likely that some of the later ditch fills represent scattered mixed refuse or possible 'midden' material intermixed with soil. It is particularly noticeable that these deposits and the density of finds recovered in general are concentrated within the southernmost of the two fields evaluated, i.e. close to a main centre of occupation in the vicinity of Gill Mill house.

4.2.4 *Quarrying activity and/or pits: Trenches 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21.*

Within the southern end of trench 15 a broad area of intercutting pits [91], [93], [95], [99] and [101] are likely to be the result of opportunistic gravel digging within the Roman period. These cuts tend to be flat based and with stepped sides and here are covered by a dark soil spread (88) containing much late Roman pottery as well as animal bone and occasional tile. This spread may be the result of a deliberate spreading of domestic debris and waste.

Trenches 17 , 20 and 21 also revealed broad areas of probable quarrying activity. Within trench 17 this seems to have resulted in the creation of a single large stepped cut [238]. At the north of trenches 7, 11 and 12 three further possible quarrying cuts were sectioned, but here an insufficient area of each feature was seen to positively identify these features.

Two large single pits [132], [136] were also uncovered within trench 19. The function of these is uncertain but it may be that they are individual quarrying pits. Fragments of a leather sandal / boot were recovered from a fill (130) of one of these pits [132].

To the east of trench 10 two large pits [15] and [11] intercut. The size and nature of these cuts and the orange gravelly upper fill of the earlier pit suggests that they are the result of gravel quarrying.

To the east of the site, within trench 18, what were initially thought to be a series of ditches were sampled. Within the sampled area there was much intercutting of features, with mixed banded gravely fills, and some of these cuts appeared to terminate within the sectioned area. It is not clear whether these cuts represent ditches or were the result of gravel digging or a mixture of the two. As elsewhere on the site it proved difficult to properly identify likely gravel extraction activity within the confines of the available opened trenches.

An isolated occurrence of possible quarrying activity was also located at the north eastern corner of the site within trench 4 where irregular cuts [309] and [311] contain very gravely fills and a broad gravely spread (312) obscures a smaller underlying irregular cut [314].

4.2.5 *Possible trackway or ford surfaces: Trenches 19 and 20.*

Possible trackway surfaces were located to the south of the site within trenches 19 and 20. Within the western end of trench 19 an area of worn limestone fragments (138) sloped down gently to the east where it was truncated by a shallow NNE-SSW running ditch [142]. A further worn limestone area to the east of this is possibly a continuation of the same surface but may be a separate feature of similar type. Within the confines of this evaluation trench it was not possible to define the orientation of this surface with any degree of certainty. A 0.35m thick grey alluvial layer overlay both limestone surfaces and later truncating ditch [142], indicating a later period of localised flooding here. Within trench 20 a flat patchy limestone surface (336) lay beneath a water-washed sandy gravel (338) and clayey silt (186). This clayey silt also filled an east-west ditch [334] to the north of surface (336) and was overlain by a alluvial layer which is up to up to 0.45m thick.

A deepening of alluvial layers and water washed appearance of lower deposits within trenches 19, 20, 21 and 22 at the southern edge of the site indicates the presence of former water course close to the present river Windrush.

A possible interpretation of the surfaces uncovered within trenches 19 and 20 is that they represent ford crossings, perhaps for a track running approximately north-west to south-east across an area liable to seasonal flooding. They do not fall on the line of the definite north-south Roman road south of Gill Mill investigated in 1988. During that evaluation very similar ford deposits were found off the line of the road close to the Windrush in Area 1. Given the probabilities of finding such deposits within a 2% sample of the area, it seems likely that these features were a common occurrence where there were shallow channels. Another possible interpretation is that they were watering places for cattle.

4.2.6 *Post Roman features: Trenches 4, 5, 16, 19 and 20.*

Trenches 5, 16, 19 and 20 contain post-Roman ditches with organic peaty fills which correspond to a visible slightly sunken earthwork and vegetation mark running NNE - SSW across the site between trenches 5 and 20. The fills of these ditches contain very little dating evidence, however a piece of plastic was recovered from within the fill of ditch cut [144] within trench 19, indicates that all of these ditches are of a modern date. It may also be noted that the line of this ditch intersects the boundary dividing the two fields evaluated where it makes a pronounced dogleg, reflecting the former existence of another boundary crossing it. A dark organic fill within ditch [306], running WNW-ESE across trench 4 at the north eastern corner of the site indicates that this may a continuation of this ditch system, draining towards the south east of the site.

4.3 ***Summary of Results***

No definite pre-Roman features could be identified within this evaluation, and there was an almost complete lack of pre-Roman finds. Several irregular features were investigated but are thought to be the results of root or tree throw disturbance. Undated features, such as a possible pit [82] within trench 16, a shallow irregular cut [254] to the north of trench 7, and a possible shallow linear [261] within trench 1, had fills dissimilar to typical Roman deposits found elsewhere, and might be prehistoric. Otherwise finds date to the Roman period..

Ditches representing Roman field boundaries predominantly run NNE-SSW and WNW-ESE within most trenches across the site. This ditch system appears to have originated in the late 1st or 2nd century AD. One deposit with human bone was found in the western part of the southern field, closest to where burials had been found in 1995-6. Within the field system, in the south and south east parts of the area investigated, there is evidence of possibly quite extensive opportunistic quarrying activity, perhaps dating to this period or later.

In the tops of many of the ditches, pits and quarry hollows in the eastern half of the southern of the two fields investigated there are extensive spreads of dense late Roman occupation debris of the late 3rd and 4th centuries AD, containing abundant animal bone, pottery, burnt stone and some other finds. These rather patchy deposits usually infilling earlier features seem most likely to be midden material rather than *in situ* occupation horizons. The late Roman material is much more abundant than the earlier finds, and there is a fairly consistent trend for increasingly late material to be found in stratified fill sequences as ditches filled up, suggesting that they were not kept cleaned out.

Apart from one undated post-hole and a stake hole no evidence for structures was located, but it is possible that other structural evidence was not found where the "midden" deposits were not removed.

Limestone surfaces were found within trenches 19 and 20 at the southern edge of the site and these are thought to represent possible trackway surfaces running approximately NNE - SSW or late Roman fording ways. Deepening alluvial deposits here indicate a period of flooding post-dating these surfaces which may be contemporary with more general flooding resulting in alluvial deposition over or in the tops of Roman deposits.

5. SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

5.1 *Significance of the results for the Gill Mill complex*

Overall the impression is of a pattern of rectangular plots or paddocks probably similar to those investigated to the west of this area in 1995 and to the south in 1990. These paddocks may have been associated with some, possibly fairly small scale occupation in the late 1st to 2nd century, and it is noticeable that material of this date predominated in the area investigated in the fields to the west. Whereas several burials and cremations were also found there in the 1995 excavation, only a small scatter of human bones was found in this evaluation, suggesting that they are on the periphery of the small cemetery found in 1995.

The evidence of pottery getting later as the ditches filled in suggests that they ceased to be actively cleaned out, and this would fit with the occurrence of relatively sterile quarrying deposits. The substantial quantity of later Roman domestic refuse is suspected as being dumped midden material rather than *in situ* occupation debris: unlike the area south of Gill Mill investigated in 1989, there is no definite evidence of sleeper walls or floors, and the range of small finds is much more restricted. The character of the animal bone, dominated by larger mammals may also reflect this if the predominance of cattle and other large mammal bone is due to taphonomic processes such as the effects of scavenging. However, the presence of pits with domestic debris in their fills, and the occasional posthole may indicate more domestic activity.

As with previous work at Gill Mill, there appear to have been semi-metalled crossing points across shallow channels representing fords, probably mainly for access tracks through the field system. Two such features were found in similar topographical situations in 1989, and as they are entirely random discoveries, given their relatively limited likely extent and the sample size of the evaluation, it is likely that these features were quite numerous, and perhaps of no great significance, though it would be useful to confirm the full form and original topographic context of such deposits.

In general terms the results tend to confirm and amplify the established pattern of Roman activity at Gill Mill, but has added significantly to the indications of chronological variation within the overall layout of the complex. Despite the considerable density of late Roman material it is tentatively concluded that this particular area may have been used first for rather limited earlier Roman occupation and agricultural activity and then opportunistic gravel digging, prior to the dumping of extensive midden material in the late Roman period, which was derived from a nearby settlement which by then had shifted away from its earlier focus in and to the west of this area.

If this is the case the area may not be as significant as it would be if the dense late Roman material indicated *in situ* occupation. However, this interpretation can only be somewhat tentative without seeing the pattern and layout of features more clearly in plan.

5.2 *Impact of Gravel Extraction*

The gravel extraction will result in the loss of all deposits in the area to be dug, covering most of the two fields evaluated, with the main exception of a 100m buffer zone round Gill Mill House. A narrow sliver down the east side of the site was defined as an area of archaeological interest under the planning consent, with provision for excavation if warranted (or for *in situ* preservation if preferred by the company). The evaluation has shown that hydrological effects have had a deleterious effect on the preservation of waterlogged deposits right across the site, and presumably therefore beyond it to some unknown extent. The extent of further loss of preservation beyond the limits of the site as gravel extraction progresses cannot readily be predicted, not least because any intervening deep silt- or clay-filled palaeochannels (if they exist) could act as buffers to the draw-down effects.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Wilkinson, D (ed) 1992, *Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual*, (First edition, August 1992)

Brodribb et al. 1973, *Excavations at Shakenoak, Oxon,* Vol.IV.

T Hylton and R J Zeepvat 1994, in R J Williams and RJ Zeepvat, *Bancroft: a late Bronze Age/Iron Age Settlement, Roman Villa and Temple Mausoleum.*

APPENDIX 1: THE POTTERY
by Paul Booth

Introduction

Some 1644 sherds of pottery (24.264 kg) were recovered in the evaluation. With the exception of a single small fragment probably of Iron Age date all the material was assigned to the Roman period, ranging from the 2nd to the 4th century AD. A few context groups were dated late 1st-2nd century or early-mid 2nd century, but the majority of context groups were of later Roman date. The range of material present was generally unremarkable and probably indicates a low-middle status settlement. No post-Roman material was present.

The pottery was in moderate condition. The average sherd weight (14.7 g) was reasonable but not particularly high. The surface condition of the sherds was variable, with some sherds quite eroded as a result of poor soil conditions. Staining and cracking and splitting were also noted in some cases, and may indicate periodically wet or even locally semi-waterlogged conditions. The material was scanned by context, being recorded for the most part in terms of the major ware groups defined in the OAU Roman pottery recording system. Some specific fine and specialist wares were recorded individually. The major vessel classes present were also noted. Quantification of ware groups was by sherd count and weight, though in the following summary, discussion will be in terms of sherd count unless otherwise specified. Vessel type quantities are based on counts of rim sherds. An estimated date for each context group was also given.

Fabrics

The following fabrics/ware groups were present:

Fine and Specialist Wares

S. Samian ware (all sources). 42 sherds.
F43. Central Gaulish 'Rhenish' type ware. 1 sherd.
F44. Trier 'Rhenish' type ware (Moselkeramik). 2 sherds.
F51. Oxford colour-coated ware. 49 sherds.
F53. New Forest colour-coated ware. 1 sherd.
OF. ?Oxford colour-coated ware (surfaces eroded). 7 sherds.
A. General amphora fabrics. 3 sherds.
A11. South Spanish olive oil amphora (Dressel 20). 4 sherds.
M22. Oxford white mortarium fabric. 32 sherds.
M31. Oxford white-slipped oxidised mortarium fabric. 1 sherd.
M40. Possible Oxford red colour-coated mortarium fabric. 3 sherds.
M41. Oxford red colour-coated mortarium fabric (cf F51). 13 sherds.
W. White wares. 21 sherds.

Other Coarse Wares

E. Late Iron Age-Early Roman 'Belgic type' wares. 4 sherds.
O. Oxidised coarse wares. 246 sherds.
R. Reduced coarse wares. 957 sherds.
B. Black-burnished wares. 152 sherds.
C. Calcareous (usually shell) tempered wares. 105 sherds.

P. Hand made (Iron Age) fabric (shell-tempered). 1 sherd.

The assemblage was dominated by reduced wares, which amounted to 58.2% of sherds. The fine and specialist wares together totalled 10.9%, of which the principal components were samian ware and Oxford products, both colour-coated ware and mortaria. The samian ware was not recorded consistently with a view to identification of source, though the great majority of sherds are likely to have been of Central Gaulish origin. No decorated material was noted. A few probable Oxford colour-coated ware sherds, with all traces of the surface removed as a consequence of poor soil conditions, were recorded under the code OF. The only non-Oxford fine wares were the F43 and F44 imports and a single sherd of New Forest colour-coated ware. A small quantity of amphora was present; all the sherds were probably from Dressel 20 olive oil amphorae, but only four of the seven were confidently ascribed to this type on fabric grounds. Mortaria were drawn from the Oxford industry, apart from a single samian ware example and with the possible exception of sherds assigned to fabric M40. These oxidised sherds had trituration grits characteristic of Oxford fabrics, but no traces of surface treatment and a somewhat atypical appearance, though these characteristics may again have resulted from poor soil conditions. The source of the white wares is generally uncertain, though some probable Oxford products were included.

The majority coarse ware category, reduced wares, is likely to have been comprised of relatively locally produced fabrics. These certainly included R37, a fairly fine sandy fabric present in substantial quantities at sites such as Asthall and Wilcote north of Gill Mill, and also fairly common at Yarnton to the east. This is not an Oxford product, but a source within the region is certain. Oxidised wares are also likely for the most part to have originated fairly locally. One distinctive product, O81, was noted separately (37 sherds, subsumed under O in the list above). This fabric, pink grogged ware, with a source in Northamptonshire/Buckinghamshire, perhaps not far from Towcester, is widespread across the region, particularly in the later Roman period. The black-burnished ware category included a number of different fabrics, not rigidly separated. BB1 of Dorset origin was by far the principal component, but a few sherds in one or more ?wheel-thrown imitations were also present. The C ware category consisted entirely of shell-tempered sherds, though again several sub-types and sources may have been represented, including the standard late Roman type from sources such as Harrold in Bedfordshire. This may, however, have been a minority component in the present group, and it is possible that more local sources, the chronology of which is less well-established, contributed the bulk of this material.

Vessel types

Some 244 vessels were represented by rims. The breakdown of these by broad vessel class is as follows:

Jars	130 (including 6 large storage jars)
Jars/bowls	16 (uncertain types)
Beakers	3
Bowls	36
Bowls/dishes	9 (uncertain types)
Dishes	26
Mortaria	16
Lids	2
Unknown	6

No amphorae or flagons were represented by rims. Beakers were poorly-represented and other drinking vessels such as cups were entirely absent. This reflects in part the chronological emphasis of the group, since cups are usually most common in samian ware. Here all the identifiable samian ware forms were bowls (plus a single mortarium of form Drag 45), mostly of form 31 where identifiable. The samian assemblage is thus typical of later 2nd century groups. Other fine ware forms were also mostly bowls. Identifiable Oxford

forms (Young 1977) represented were C45 (4, including 1 in fabric OF) and C51 (in fabric OF), with a single indented beaker also present. The other fine ware fabrics (F43, F44 and F53) almost certainly occurred as beakers, but no rims were present in any of these. Oxford mortarium forms identified were M10, M14, M17 (6), M18, M19 and M22 (3), WC4 and C100 (all Young 1977 types).

Jars were the major component in the assemblage (53.3% of vessels), with the majority occurring in reduced fabrics. The highest representation of jars within any ware group, however, was in C wares, where 16 of the 17 vessels were jars and the remaining one was assigned to the uncertain jar/bowl category. Jars were also reasonably well represented in oxidised wares and (as 'cooking pots') in black-burnished wares. Four of the six vessels identified as large storage jars were characteristic forms in pink grogged ware (fabric O81). The second most important vessel class, bowls (14.8%) was divided almost equally between samian and fine ware fabrics on the one hand and coarse ware fabrics on the other. Reduced and black-burnished ware flanged bowls were the majority component of the latter group, most of these vessels being of the typical drop-flanged form of later 3rd-4th century date. Dishes, the third most important vessel class (10.7%), were entirely in reduced and black-burnished wares, and again were almost exclusively of the simple 3rd-4th century straight sided ('dog dish') form.

Chronology

As already indicated, elements of the assemblage suggest a later Roman emphasis. E type wares, characteristic of the 1st century AD, are almost entirely absent, and they occurred, along with the single Iron Age sherd, residually in later contexts. Only two context groups, 164 in Trench 11 and 124 in Trench 14, were tentatively dated late 1st-2nd century, but neither was demonstrably of 1st century date. The lack of precise dating for the reduced wares is problematical - fabric R37, for example, appears to have been in use from the later 1st century to at least well into the 3rd - since groups containing only such material could not usually be closely dated. Many were therefore placed in a '2nd century or later' category. In the majority of cases where more chronologically diagnostic pieces were present, however, these indicate a 3rd-4th century date, with many groups assignable to the later 3rd-4th century.

One large assemblage, from Trench 13 (230), was dated approximately to the early-mid 2nd century. This group consisted almost entirely of reduced wares, amongst which a large number of jars were present. These characteristics are typical of earlier Roman groups in the region. It is notable, however, that this group stood out as being unusual in the context of the rest of the site assemblage. While 44 out of 90 context groups were datable broadly to the 2nd century or later on the basis of the pottery, these contained only 28.5% of the total sherds, almost half of which came from the single context (230) already discussed. On this basis the strong later Roman emphasis of the site is clear.

Closer consideration of the later material, however, suggests an emphasis in the later 3rd-mid 4th century rather than later. This can be seen from the Oxford mortaria, eight of which could be dated to the second half of the 3rd century (types M17, M18 and M19) while there were only three examples of type M22, the only significant 4th century white mortarium type (but actually dated AD 240-400). This preponderance of later 3rd century types is potentially supported by the presence of the Oxford colour-coated type C45. This is dated AD 270-400 by Young, but on the basis of the excavation of the production site at Lower Farm, Nuneham Courtenay, there is reason to believe both that the type first appeared earlier than Young would suggest and also that it was particularly characteristic of the later 3rd -mid 4th century rather than later (Booth, Boyle and Keevill 1994, 161-3 and 169). Characteristic later 4th century Oxford colour-coated types are notable by their absence here, as are other common components of very late Roman assemblages, such as Nene Valley colour-coated ware and

significant quantities of late Roman shell-tempered fabrics. The suggestion that groups of the second half of the 4th century are rare if not totally absent receives some independent support from the coin list which, while small, also hints at an earlier 4th century emphasis for the material.

Context and Status

Quantities of pottery are summarised by evaluation trench as follows:

Trench	No. Sherds	Weight	Ave. Weight
1	2	35	
4	2	8	
5	6	58	
7	18	202	11.2
8	7	88	
9	29	450	15.5
10	376	4348	11.6
11	63	843	13.4
12	49	915	18.7
13	198	2416	12.2
14	100	1667	16.7
15	182	3348	18.4
16	130	1598	12.3
17	26	693	26.7
18	53	713	13.5
19	136	2119	15.6
20	98	2384	24.3
21	169	2379	14.1

The average sherd weight per trench was examined to see if this produced any evidence for patterning in the distribution of pottery across the site (trench assemblages with less than 10 sherds were not considered). Comparison of these figures with the simple trench totals show relatively little of obvious significance. Trenches in the northern field (1-6, 8 and 9) produced very little pottery and trenches adjacent to the north-eastern margin of the southern field (7, 10 and 16), while containing reasonable quantities of material, tended to have a below average sherd weight, but beyond this little can be said.

The overall character of the assemblage is consistent with that from other sites in the region. Some continental trade contacts are indicated not only by the ubiquitous samian ware but also by imported fine wares and amphorae. The representation of these fabrics is slightly above what would be expected in a typical low status rural settlement assemblage. However, the overall representation of fine and specialist wares is not particularly high (at 10.9%), and it cannot be claimed on the basis of these figures that the site is an unusually high status one. More chronological definition of the material, however, might enable a more meaningful analysis in these terms, since fine and specialist ware figures for late Roman sites in the region are consistently higher than for 1st-2nd century sites and earlier and later Roman phases have to be distinguished before valid results can be gained. A dearth of later 4th century contexts, which would be expected to contain quite high proportions of Oxford colour-coated wares and other products, might help to explain why the fine and specialist ware figure appears to be somewhat low when compared to other late Roman assemblages in the region.

References

Booth, P, Boyle, A, and Keevill, G D, 1994, A Romano-British kiln site at Lower Farm, Nuneham Courtenay, and other sites on the Didcot to Oxford and Wootton to Abingdon water mains, Oxfordshire, *Oxoniensia* **58** (for 1993), 87-217

Young, C J, 1977, *Oxfordshire Roman pottery*, Brit Archaeol Rep (Brit Ser) **43**, Oxford

Table 1: Waterlogged Seeds

	Sample	1	2	3
	Context	35	88	133
Ranunculus cf. *repens*	creeping buttercup	+	-	-
Thalictrum flavum	meadow rue	-	-	+
Brassica nigra	black mustard	+	-	-
Coronopus squamatus	swine-cress	-	-	+
Thlaspi arvense	field penny-cress	+	-	-
Stellaria media gp.	chickweed	+	-	++
Chenopodium polyspermum	all-seed	-	-	+
C. album	fat hen	-	-	+
Beta vulgaris	beet	-	-	+
Atriplex sp.	orache	+	-	+
Malva sylvestris	common mallow	-	-	+
Rubus fruticosus agg.	blackberry	-	-	+
Potentilla reptans	creeping cinquefoil	-	-	+
Crataegus cf. *monogyna*	hawthorn	-	-	+
Anthonomus sylvestris	cow parsley	+	-	-
Conium maculatum	hemlock	++	+	-
Apium graveolens	celery	+	-	-
Polygonum aviculare agg.	knotgrass	+	-	+
Rumex sp.	dock	+	-	+
Urtica urens	small nettle	-	-	++
U. dioica	stinging nettle	++	++	+
Ballota nigra	black horehound	+	-	-
Lamium sp.	dead-nettle	-	-	+
Galeopsis tetrahit agg.	hemp-nettle	+	-	-
Plantago major	great plantain	-	-	+
Sambucus nigra	elder	+	-	+
Sonchus asper	sow thistle	+	-	-
Eleocharis S. *Palustres* sp.	spike rush	+	-	+
Carex sp.	sedge	+	+	++
Gramineae indet.	grass	-	-	+

+ present, ++ many

DUCKLINGTON, GILL MILL: DUGM97						
Trench	Context	Type	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Comments
ALL	1	Layer	0.30			Topsoil
10	2	Layer				Natural gravel
10	3	Layer				Silty clay
10	4	Layer	0.20			Former ploughsoil
10	5	Cut	1.2	1.5		Ditch
10	6	Fill	0.35			Fill of ditch [5]
10	7	Fill	0.22			Fill of ditch [5]
10	8	Fill	0.22			Fill of ditch [5]
10	9	Fill	0.22			Fill of ditch [5]
10	10	Fill	0.35			Fill of ditch [5]
10	11	Cut	1.05+	1.80+		Probable quarry pit
10	12	Fill	0.24			Fill of [11]
10	13	Fill	0.22			Fill of [11]
10	14	Fill	0.17			Fill of [11]
10	15	Cut	0.72+			Quarry pit
10	16	Fill	0.24			Fill of [15]
10	17	Fill	0.46			Fill of [15]
10	18	Cut	0.53	0.82	0.83	Pit
10	19	Fill	0.06			Fill of [18]
10	20	Fill	0.45			Fill of [18]
18	21	Layer	0.10			Alluvial
18	22	Layer				Fill of natural features
18	23	Fill	0.28			Fill of [30]
18	24	Fill	0.16			Fill of [30]
18	25	Fill				Fill of [27]
18	26	Fill	0.18			Fill of [30]
18	27	Cut				Unexcavated possible feature
18	28	Fill	0.16			Fill of [30]
18	29	-				-
18	30	Cut	0.63	1.40	2.30	Ditch
18	31	Fill	0.37			Fill of [36]
18	32	-				-
18	33	Fill	0.19			Fill of [36]
18	34	Fill	0.13			Fill of [36]
18	35	Fill	0.08			Fill of [36]
18	36	Cut	0.69	1.75	2.15	Ditch
18	37	Fill	0.45			Fill of [41]
18	38	Fill	0.14			Fill of [41]
18	39	Fill	0.43			Fill of [41]
18	40	Fill	0.11			Fill of [41]
18	41	Cut	0.60	1.00	2.10	Ditch
18	42	-				-
18	43	-				-
18	44	-				-
18	45	-				-
18	46	-				-
18	47	Fill	0.19			Fill of [65]
18	48	Fill	0.19			Fill of [65]
18	49	-				-
18	50	Fill	0.19			Fill of [55]
18	51	Fill	0.10			Fill of [55]
18	52	Fill	0.21			Fill of [55]

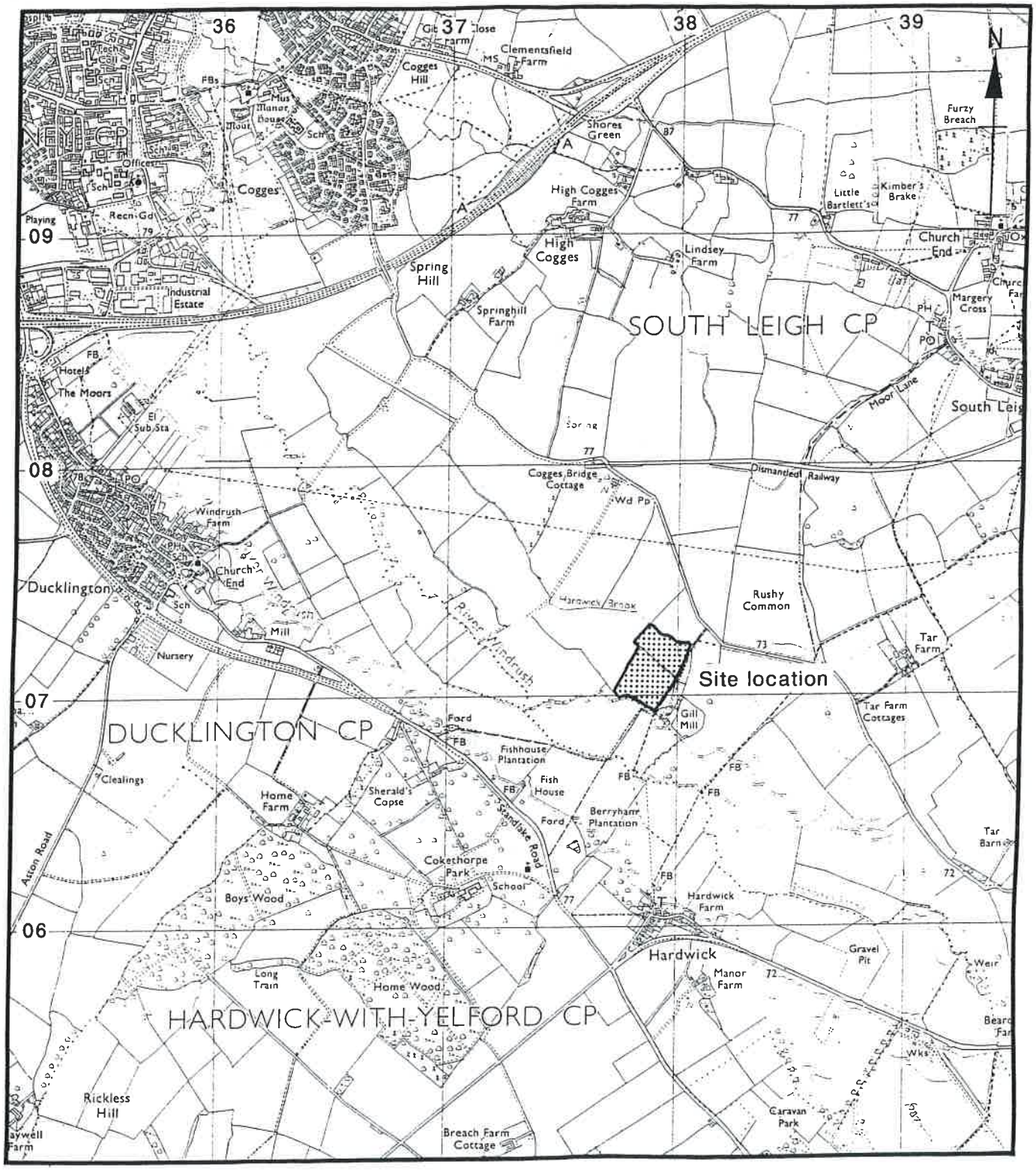
Trench	Context	Type	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Comments
18	53	Fill	0.09			Fill of [55]
18	54	-				-
18	55	Cut	0.50	1.25	3.2	Ditch
18	56	Fill	0.10			Fill of [59]
18	57	Fill	0.20			Fill of [59]
18	58	Fill	0.20			Fill of [59]
18	59	Cut	0.50	1.40	3.10	Quarry pit
18	60	Fill	0.21			Fill of [65]
18	61	Fill	0.12			Fill of [65]
18	62	-				-
18	63	-				-
18	64	-				-
18	65	Cut	0.47	1.65	3.50	Ditch
18	66	Fill				Fill of [67]
18	67	Cut				Unexcavated feature
18	68	Fill				
18	69	Cut		2.45	2.45	Unexcavated feature
18	70	Layer				Natural gravel
10	71	Cut	0.07	0.54	0.60	Natural feature?
10	72	Fill	0.07			Fill of [71]
10	73	Cut	0.52	1.12		Ditch
10	74	Fill	0.43			Fill of [73]
10	75	Fill	0.09			Fill of [73]
16	76	Cut	0.80	3.20		Probable Roman quarry pit
16	77	Fill	0.24	1.26		Fill of [76]
16	78	Fill	0.50	0.70+		Upper fill of [76]
16	79	Cut	0.5	2.60		Ditch
16	80	Fill	0.30	2.16		Lower fill of [79]
16	81	Fill	0.32	2.60		Top fill of [79]
16	82	Cut	0.23	0.90		Possible ditch terminus
16	83	Fill	0.20			Primary fill of [82]
16	84	Fill	0.08			Upper fill of [82]
16	85	Cut	0.08	4.70		Shallow quarried area
16	86	Fill	0.08	4.70		Shallow fill of [85]
16	87	Layer				Natural gravel
15	88	Layer	0.08			Dark soil layer over quarry pits
15	89	Cut	0.70	2.80		Broad quarrying cut
15	90	Fill	0.70			Fill of quarry workings [89]
15	91	Cut	0.36	0.60		Intercutting pit
15	92	Fill	0.36	0.60		Fill of [91]
15	93	Cut	0.44	2.00		Quarrying cut
15	94	Fill	0.44	2.00		Fill of [93]
15	95	Cut	0.44	3.70		Quarrying cut
15	96	Fill	0.44	3.70		Fill of [95]
15	97	Cut	0.40	1.10		Quarrying cut
15	98	Fill	0.40	1.10		Fill of [97]
15	99	Cut	0.40	1.00		Quarrying cut
15	100	Fill	0.40	1.00		Fill of [99]

Table	Context	Type	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Comments
15	101	Cut	0.44	1.50		Quarrying cut
15	102	Fill	0.44	1.50		Fill of [101]
15	103	Cut	0.20	1.00		Shallow quarrying activity?
15	104	Fill	0.20	1.00		Fill of [103]
15	105	Cut	0.16	0.34		Posthole
15	106	Fill	0.16			Fill of [105]
15	107	Cut	0.14	0.30	0.30	Posthole / stakehole
15	108	Fill	0.14			Fill of [107]
15	109	Layer	-	-	-	Natural
21	110	Cut	0.38	1.80		Ditch
21	111	Fill	0.38			Fill of [110]
21	112	Cut	0.10	0.35	4.5+	Gully / shallow ditch
21	113	Fill	0.10			Fill of [112]
21	114	Cut	0.04	0.35	4.00+	Gully / shallow ditch
21	115	Fill	0.04			Fill of [114]
14	116	Cut	0.55	2.2	2.00+	Ditch
14	117	Fill	0.25			Fill of [116]
14	118	Fill	0.08			Fill of [116]
14	119	Fill	0.23			Fill of [116]
14	120	Fill	0.15			Fill of [116]
14	121	Fill	0.30			Fill of [116]
14	122	Cut	0.75	1.80	2.00+	Ditch
14	123	Fill	0.45			Fill of [122]
14	124	Fill	0.35			Fill of [122]
14	125	fill	0.60			Fill of [122]
14	126	Fill	0.60			Fill of [122]
14	127	-	-			-
14	128	Layer	0.25			Natural clay?
19	129	Fill	0.36			Fill of [132]
19	130	Fill	0.22			Fill of [132]
19	131	Fill	0.20			Fill of [132]
19	132	Cut	0.77	2.00+	3.00+	Large quarry pit
19	133	Fill	0.20			Fill of [136]
19	134	Fill	0.28			Fill of [136]
19	135	Fill	0.26			Primary fill of [136]
19	136	Cut	0.78	0.88+	2.45+	Large pit
19	137	Layer	0.07			Sandy layer overlying (138)
19	138	Layer	0.20	5.35	2.00+	Limestone surface
19	139	Fill	0.16			Fill of [142]
19	140	Layer	0.22			Alluvial
19	141	Layer	0.72+			Natural gravel
19	142	Cut	0.16	0.82	2.00+	Ditch
19	143	Fill	0.37			Fill of [144]
19	144	Cut	0.37	1.60	2.00+	Ditch
19	145	Layer	0.07			Alluvial deposit
19	146	Layer	0.10			Compacted layer beneath (138)
20	147	Layer	0.48			Alluvial spread
20	148	Layer	0.13			Stone rubble spread
20	149	Fill	0.24			Fill of [152]
20	150	Fill	0.20			Fill of [152]

Trench	Context	Type	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Comments
20	151	Fill	0.44			Primary fill of [152]
20	152	Cut	0.06	-	-	Quarry pit
20	153	Fill	0.15			Fill of [154]
20	154	Cut	0.15	0.25	1.05	Pit?
20	155	Fill	0.38			Fill of [158]
20	156	Fill	0.17			Fill of [158]
20	157	Fill	0.10			Primary fill of [158]
20	158	Cut	0.52	1.90	0.54+	Quarry pit
20	159	Fill	0.20			Fill of natural feature?
20	160	Layer	-			Natural gravels
11	161	Layer	-			Natural gravels
11	162	Layer	0.16			Alluvium
11	163	Cut	0.86	3.00	2.00	Ditch
11	164	Fill	0.32			Fill of [163]
11	165	Fill	0.39			Fill of [163]
11	166	Fill	0.14			Fill of [163]
11	167	Cut	0.88	1.75		Ditch
11	168	Fill	0.43			Fill of [167]
11	169	Fill	0.20			Fill of [167]
11	170	Fill	0.16			Fill of [167]
11	171	Fill	0.17			Fill of [167]
11	172	Cut	0.11	1.20	0.70+	Probable tree bole disturbance
11	173	Layer	0.03			Gravel surface and scatter
11	174	Cut	0.50	2.50+		Pit?
11	175	Fill	0.18			Fill of [174]
11	176	Fill	0.15			Fill of [174]
11	177	Layer	0.30			Fill of [174]
21	178	Layer	0.10			Alluvium
21	179	Cut	0.80	1.35	1.35	Quarry pit
21	180	Fill	0.80			Fill of quarry pit
21	181	Cut	0.90+	-	-	Quarry pit
21	182	Fill	0.30	-	-	Fill of [181]
21	183	Fill	0.60+			Fill of [181]
20	184	Fill	0.22			Fill of [334]
20	185	Fill	0.20			Fill of [334]
20	186	Fill	0.26			Primary fill of [334]
20	187	Fill	-	-	-	Fill of [188],unexcavated
20	188	Cut	-	1.50.	-	Ditch
20	189	Cut	~0.10..			Possible watercourse
14	190	Layer	-	-	-	Natural gravel
19	191	Fill	0.24			Fill of [194]
19	192	Fill	0.23			Fill of [194]
19	193	Fill	0.16			Peaty fill of [194]
19	194	Cut	0.52	1.55+	2.00+	Quarry pit
19	195	Fill	0.08			Fill of [200]
19	196	Fill	0.10			Fill of [200]
19	197	Fill	0.48			Fill of [200]
19	198	Fill	0.07			Fill of [200]
19	199	Fill	0.52			Primary fill of [200]
19	200	Cut	0.52.	2.00+	9.00	Quarry pit

Trench	Context	Type	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Comments
19	201	layer	0.05			Overlays surface (202)
19	202	layer	0.04	2.00	2.50	Limestone surface
19	203	Layer	0.04			Underlays surface (202)
14	204	Layer	0.18			Alluvium
12	205	Layer	-	-	-	Natural gravel
12	206	Layer	0.12			Subsoil / alluvium
12	207	Cut	0.88	2.15		Ditch
12	208	Fill	0.34			Fill of [207]
12	209	Fill	0.15			Fill of [207]
12	210	Cut	0.70	2.00		Ditch
12	211	Fill	0.18			Fill of [210]
12	212	Fill	0.21			Fill of [207];[210]
12	213	Fill	0.28			Fill of [210]
12	214	Cut	0.22	1.40		Pit?
12	215	Fill	0.22			Fill of [214]
12	216	Cut	0.52	2.70		Quarry pit
12	217	Fill	0.26			Fill of [216]
12	218	Fill	0.22			Fill of[216]
12	219	Cut	0.40	-	-	Quarrying activity?
12	220	Fill	0.10			Primary fill of [219]
12	221	Fill	0.31			Fill of [219]
22	222	Layer	0.30			Alluvium
22	223	Layer	0.15			Alluvium
22	224	Cut	0.20	0.75		Natural feature?
22	225	Fill	-			Fill of channel
22	226	Layer	-			Natural gravel
22	227	-	-			-
13	228	Layer	0.30			Alluvium
13	229	Layer	-			Natural silty clay
13	230	Interface				Finds scatter at interface
13	231	Layer	-			Natural gravels
22	232	Cut	-	10.00		Natural cut?
17	233	-	-			-
17	234	Layer	0.25			Alluvium
17	235	Fill	0.36			Fill of [238]
17	236	Fill	0.48			Fill of [238]
17	237	Fill	0.22			Primary fill of [238]
17	238	Cut	0.56	10.2		Quarry pit
17	239	Layer	-			Natural gravels?
17	240	Fill	0.07			Fill of [234]
17	241	Fill	0.09			Fill of [242]
17	242	Cut	0.28	1.70		'V' shaped ditch
17	243	Layer	0.03			Thin gravel spread
17	244	-	-			-
7	245	Cut	0.38	1.80		Ditch
7	246	Fill	0.11			Fill of [245]
7	247	Fill	0.30			Fill of [245]
7	248	Layer	0.24			Alluvium
7	249	Fill	0.18			Fill of [251]
7	250	Fill	0.15			Fill of [251]

Trench	Context	Type	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Comments
7	251	Cut	0.28	-	-	Natural feature?
7	252	Fill	0.22			Fill of ditch [253]
7	253	Cut	0.22	1.10		Ditch
7	254	Layer	-			Natural gravel
1	255	Layer	0.13			Subsoil / alluvial deposit
1	256	Fill	0.17			Fill of ditch [258]
1	257	Fill	0.14			Fill of ditch [258]
1	258	Cut	0.30	1.20	2.15+	Ditch
1	259	Fill	0.13			Fill of ditch [261]
1	260	Fill	0.08			Fill of ditch [261]
1	261	Cut	0.20	0.95	2.40+	Ditch
1	262	Layer	0.30+			Natural gravel
6	263	Layer	-			Natural gravel
6	264	Layer	0.13			Subsoil
6	265	Cut	0.20	1.00	4.00	Natural feature
6	266	Fill	0.20			Fill of [265]
7	267	feature	0.06			Irregular natural feature?
8	268	Layer	-			Natural gravel
8	269	Layer	0.13			Subsoil
8	270	Cut	0.25	2.00		Shallow ditch
8	271	Fill	0.20			Fill of [270]
8	272	Fill	0.22			Fill of [270]
9	273	Layer	-			Natural gravel
9	274	Layer	0.20			Subsoil
9	275	Cut	0.54	1.30		Ditch
9	276	Fill	0.06			Primary fill of [275]
9	277	Fill	0.20			Fill of [275]
9	278	Cut	0.11			Natural feature ?
9	279	Fill	0.11			Fill of [278]
9	280	Cut	0.60	2.50		Ditch
9	281	Fill	0.16			Fill of [280]
9	282	Fill	0.22			Fill of [280]
9	283	Fill	0.24			Fill of [280]
9	284	Fill	0.19			Fill of [280]
9	285	Cut	0.16.	-		Irregular natural feature
9	286	Fill	0.09			Fill of [285]
9	287	Layer	0.12			Overlays [285]
5	288	Layer	0.20			Alluvium
5	289	Fill	0.10			Fill of [291]
5	290	Fill	0.10			Primary fill of [291]
5	291	Cut	0.28	1.70		Ditch
5	292	Fill	0.08			Fill of [294]
5	293	Fill	0.10			Primary fill of [294]
5	294	Cut	0.18	1.10		Ditch
5	295	Fill	0.12			Fill of [297]
5	296	Fill	0.22			fill of [297]
5	297	Fill	0.26	1.65		Ditch recut
5	298	Fill	0.18			Fill of [300]
5	299	Fill	0.18			Primary fill of [300]
5	300	Cut	0.36	0.90+		Ditch



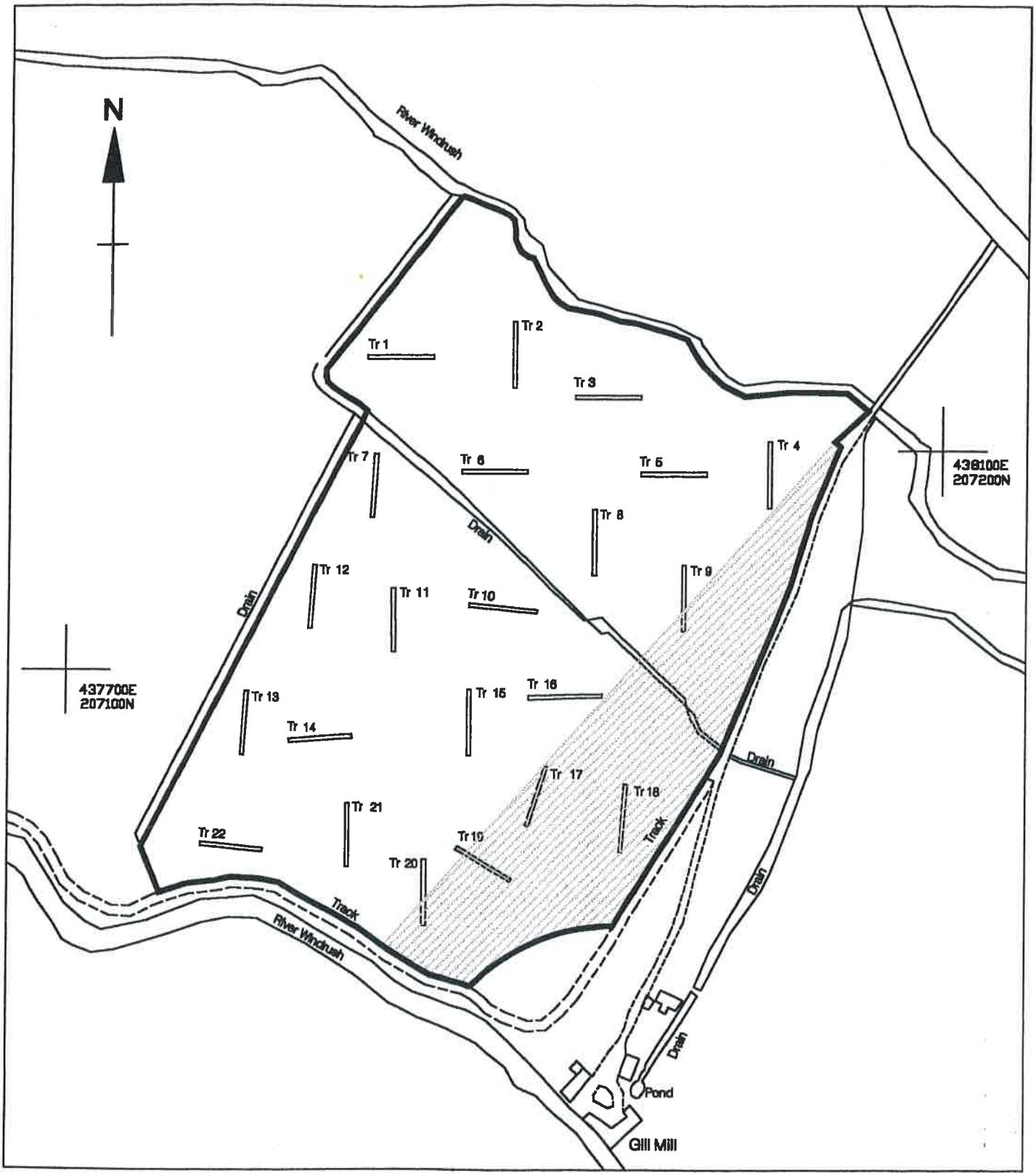
scale 1:25000

Site location map

Figure 1

Trench location

DUGM 97



area referred to in Clause 5 of Fifth Schedule of Section 106 agreement

limit of extraction

Figure 2

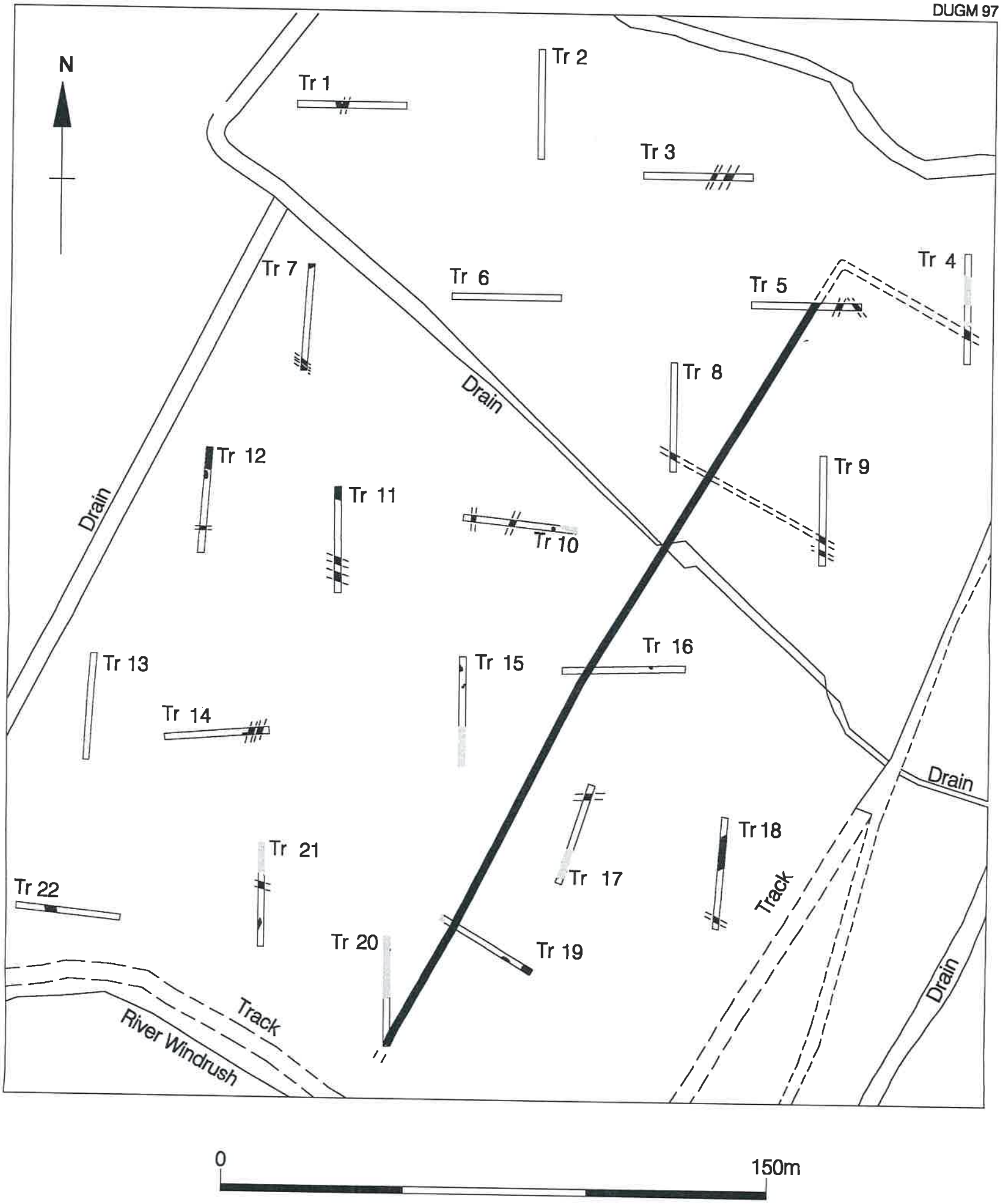
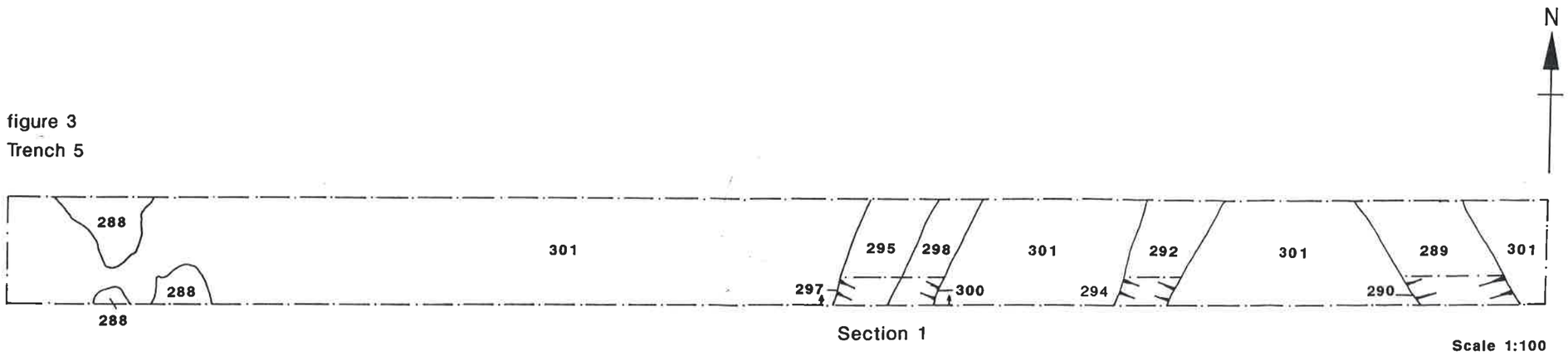


Figure 2a : Location of features

figure 3
Trench 5



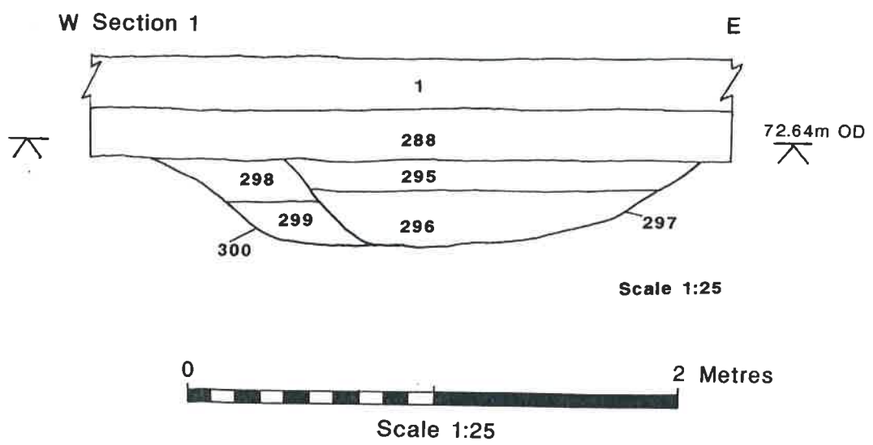


figure 4
Trench 7

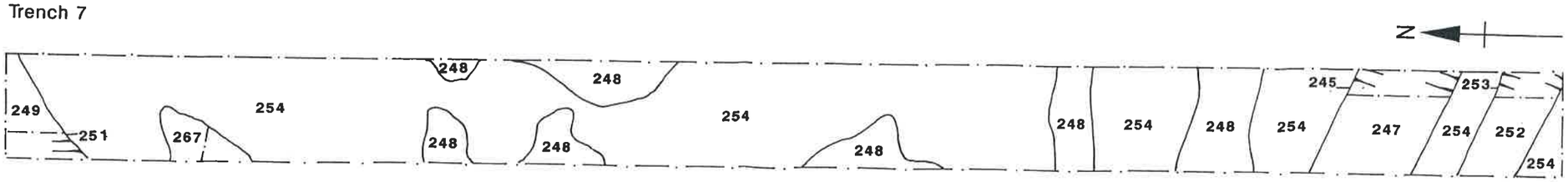
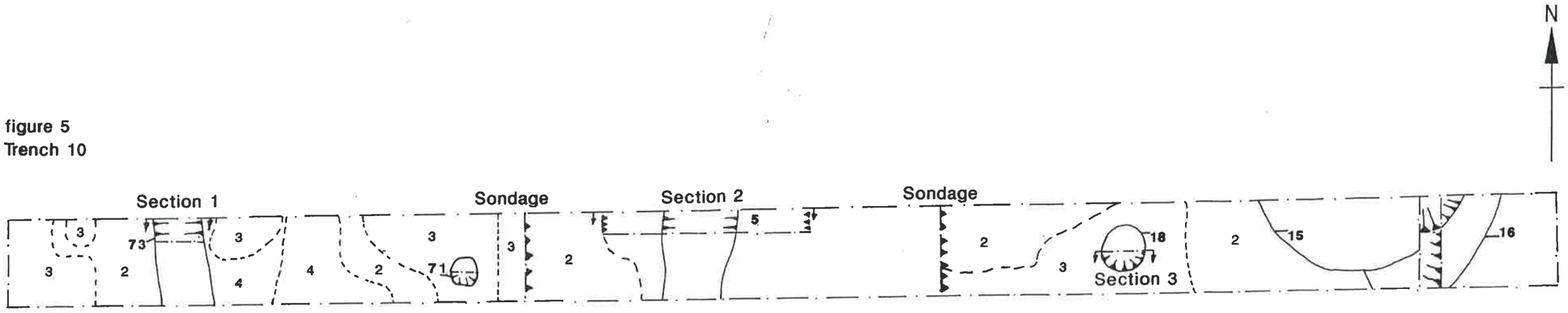


figure 5
Trench 10

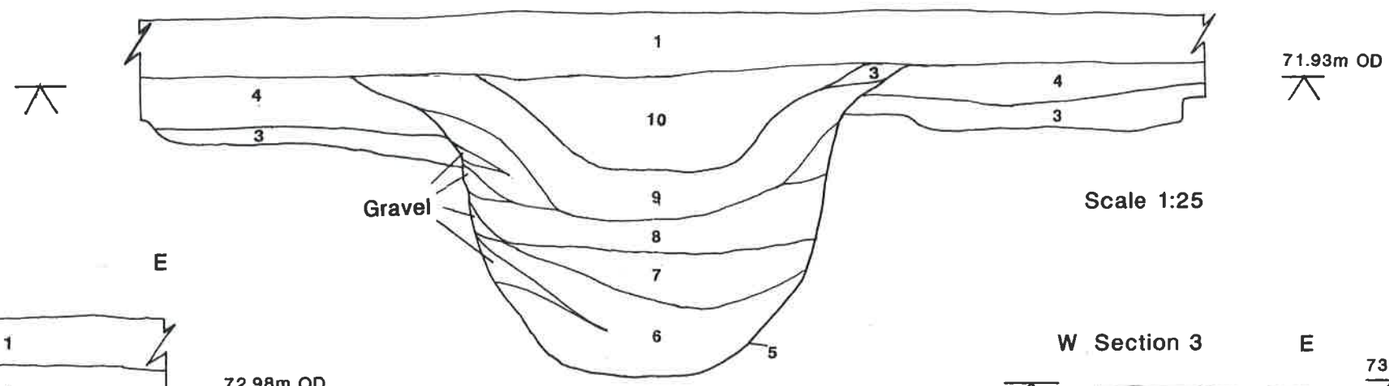


Scale 1:100

0 10 Metres

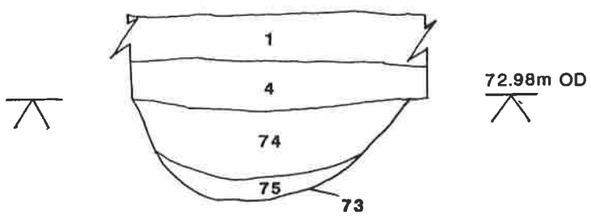
Scale 1:100

W Section 2 E



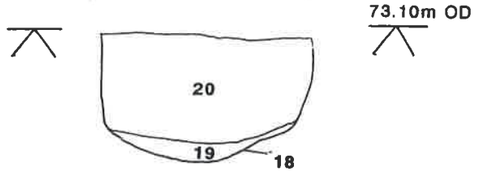
Scale 1:25

W Section 1 E



Scale 1:25

W Section 3 E

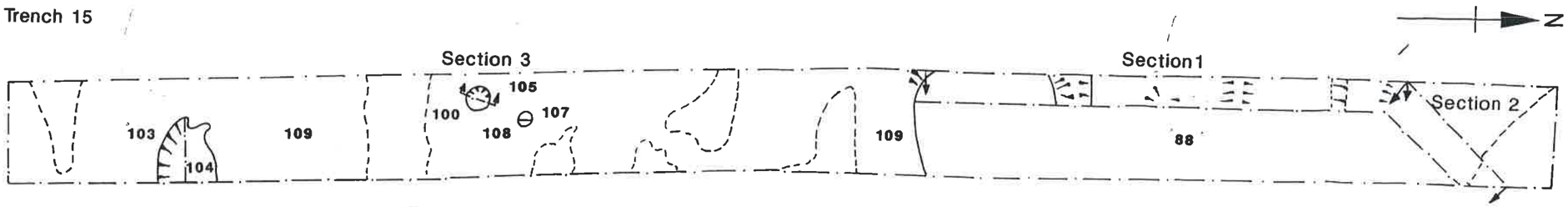


Scale 1:25

0 2 Metres

Scale 1:25

figure 6
Trench 15



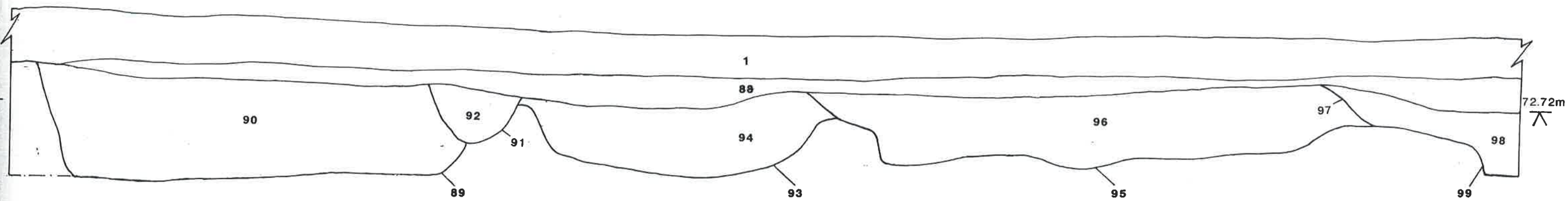
Scale 1:100

---= Alluvium

0 10 Metres

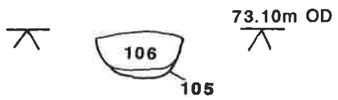
Scale 1:100

S Section1 N



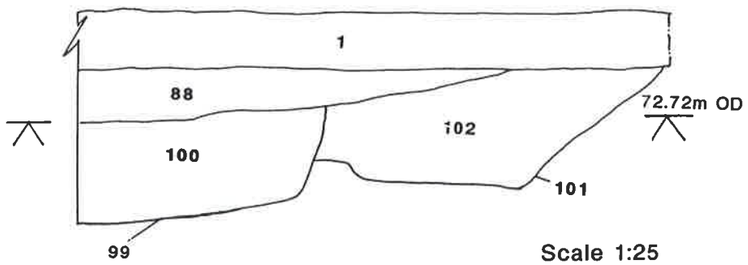
Scale 1:25

NE Section 3 SW



Scale 1:25

SW Section 2 NE

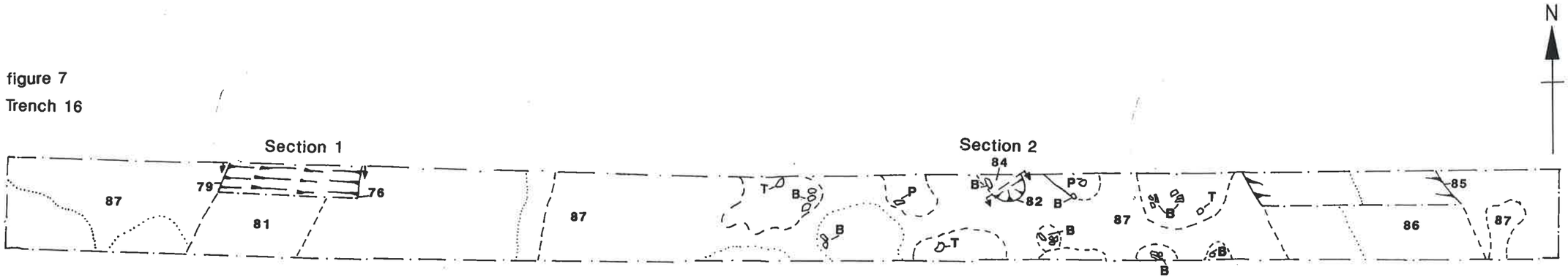


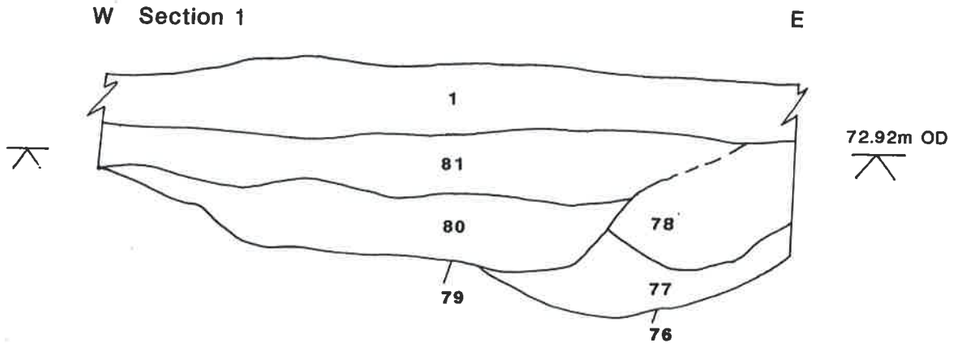
Scale 1:25

0 2 Metres

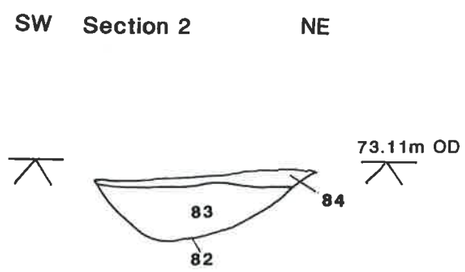
Scale 1:25

figure 7
Trench 16





Scale 1:25

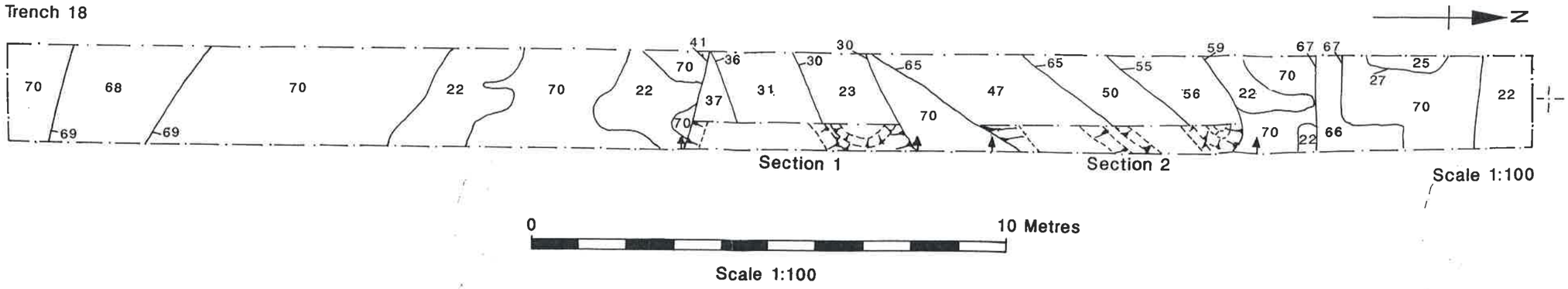


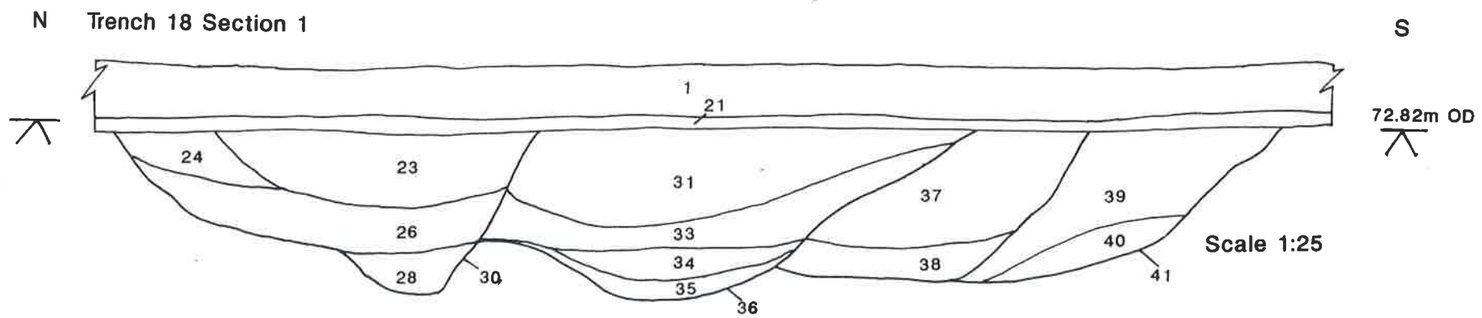
Scale 1:25

Scale 1:25

figure 8
Trench 18

DUGM 97





0 2 Metres
Scale 1:25

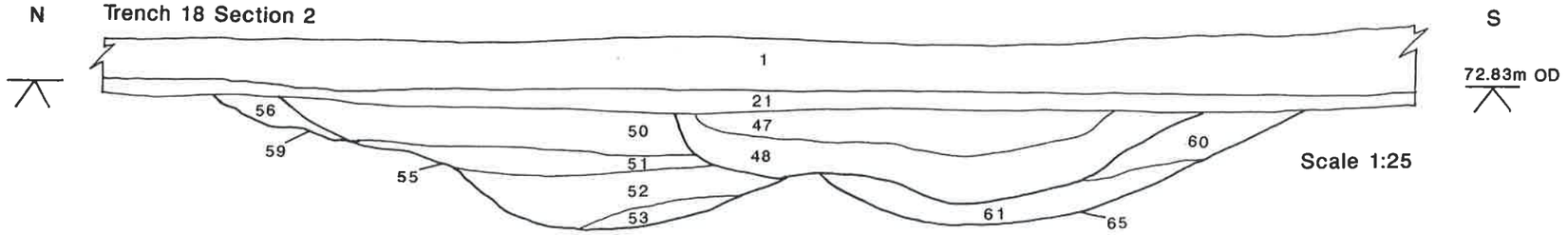
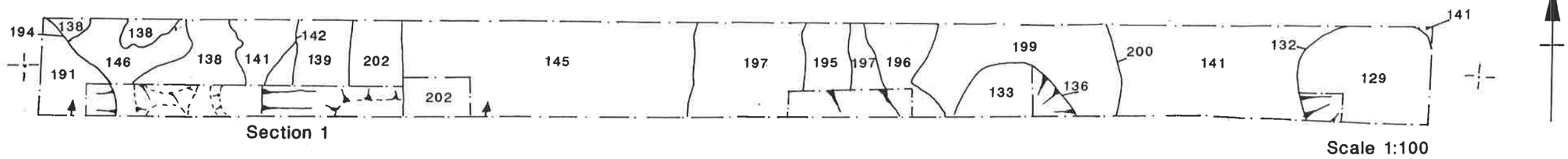


figure9
Trench 19



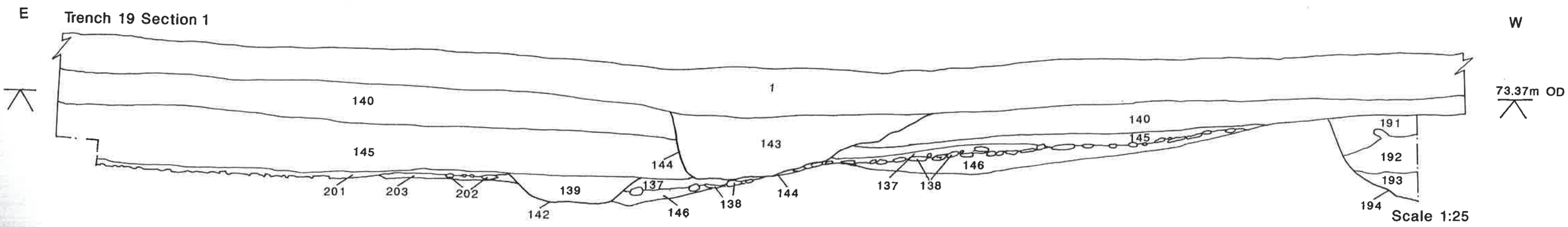
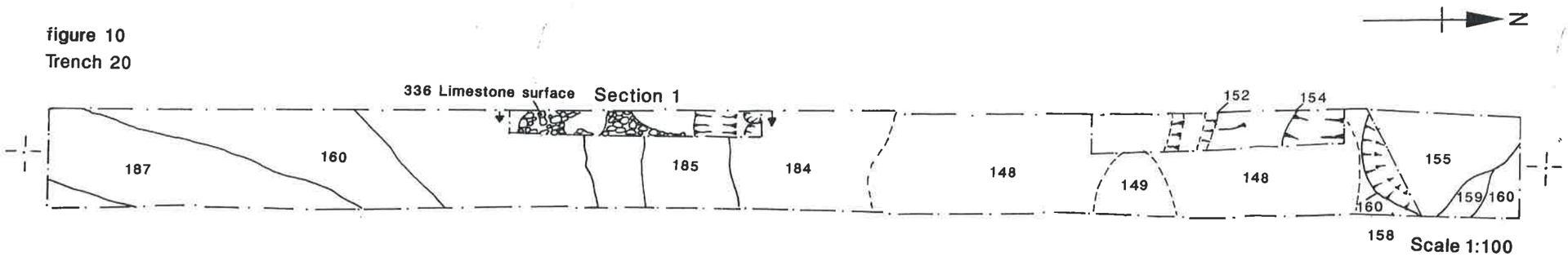


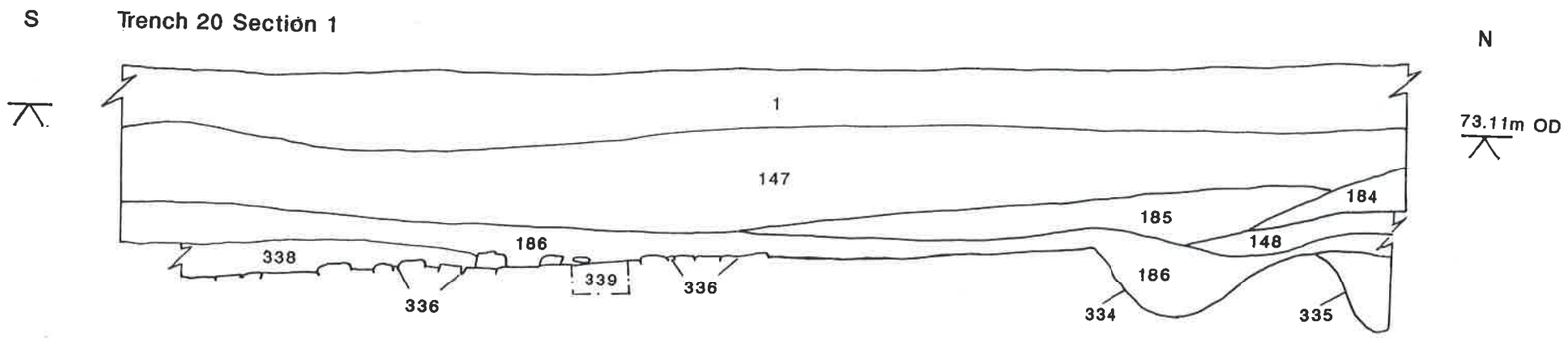
figure 10
Trench 20



Scale 1:100

0 10 Metres

Scale 1:100



Scale 1:25

0 2 Metres

Scale 1:25