

# Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, North Lincolnshire

NGR SE 9989 0732

## Archaeological Evaluation Report



Oxford Archaeological Unit  
June 1997

**TESCO, FORMER STOCK MARKET, BRIGG, NORTH  
LINCOLNSHIRE**

**Archaeological Evaluation**  
(NGR SE 9989 0732)

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# TESCO, FORMER STOCK MARKET, BRIGG, NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE

## Archaeological Evaluation (NGR SE 9989 0732)

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. *Two trenches excavated by the Oxford Archaeological Unit on the site of the proposed Tesco store on the former Stock Market. These revealed a number of 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century features which were probably associated with the rear plots of houses shown on the 19<sup>th</sup> century OS maps. Other disturbance relates to services for the former Stock Market. There were only two features which could be earlier in date; a ditch in Trench 2 which contained a sherd of 14th- to 15th-century pottery, which may be residual, and a ditch in Trench 1 which only produced bone.*

### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. Planning permission has been granted by North Lincolnshire Council to Tesco Stores for the construction of a new supermarket and petrol station with car parking (Planning Ref 97/0121).
- 2.2. Brigg is situated approximately 10km southeast from Scunthorpe. The site, formerly the town Stock Market, is bound to the north by Barnard Avenue, to the east by Cary Lane and to the south by Spring Way. Brigg (SE 9989 0732) at approximately 3 to 4m above Ordnance Datum (O.D.) and is currently used as a car park.
- 2.3. Humberside Archaeology Partnership (HAP) on behalf of the Local Planning Authority has therefore advised that an archaeological evaluation should be carried out as part of a planning condition in accordance with PPG 16.
- 2.4. The field evaluation was undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1997.

### 3. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1. The solid geology is made up from the Ancholme Clay Group which is overlain by later Pleistocene (glacial) and Holocene (post-glacial to present) alluvial deposits of clay, sand and peat. The borehole survey indicates the alluvium is between 1.8m and 2.7m thick (Fairhurst 1997).

### 4. AIMS

- 4.1. To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposal area.
- 4.2. To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.
- 4.3. To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.
- 4.4. To make available the results of the investigation. The site archive and finds will be deposited with Scunthorpe Museum.

### 5. STRATEGY

- 5.1. Two trenches were machine excavated with a JCB equipped with a 1.55m ditching/toothless bucket.
- 5.2. The proposed store occupies an area of 60m x 35m at the southeast corner of the site which is bound by Spring Way and Cary Lane. Two trenches, 1 and 2, were placed in the footprint of the store. Trench 2 was repositioned slightly further east than originally proposed, due to the presence of a live power cable.
- 5.3. Trench 1 measured 19m in length and 1.55m in width and up to 1.17m in depth.
- 5.4. Trench 2 measured 17m in length and 1.55m in width and up to 1.60m in depth; this trench was stepped in order to maintain safe working conditions.
- 5.5. At a later stage, during the construction phase, a petrol tank and oil separator will be excavated to a depth of about four metres. This will take place under close archaeological supervision to locate any archaeological deposits and undertake palaeo-environmental sampling.

## 6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 6.1. The site lies in an area which has produced numerous prehistoric finds which are listed in the Sites and Monuments Records (SMR). Most significant are preserved timber remains. The excavations for the petrol tanks may reach deep enough (c. 4 m) to affect any preserved timbers.
- 6.2. A number of late Bronze Age and early Iron Age finds have been found in the alluvial deposits in the low lying area to the west of Brigg. The site of the trackway suggests routes across the marsh and the remains of boats which utilised trade routes up to the Humber. The river Ancholme at this time was a broad tidal estuary fringed by marshes and the valley narrows to form a natural crossing point at Brigg. (For a summary of SMR data in Nos. 1789 and 1790 concerning Bronze Age and Iron Age boats in Humber area see Appendix 1).

### 6.3 Brigg Trackway (SMR No.1783)

- 6.3.1. In 1884 a timber causeway and trackway was found in a brickyard on 'Island Carr' just west of Brigg (180m northwest of the site), between the Old and New River Ancholme. The trackway was discovered by A. Atkinson and a contemporary description given to the Society of Antiquaries by W.M. Wylie states it was constructed from a bed of 'small trees and branches' which was overlain by 'planks' secured 'by means of stakes which had been driven through holes made at the ends of each plank and into the ground below.'
- 6.3.2. The trackway was sealed by a 1.83 m sequence of alluvium and peat. Finds recovered near the trackway include a late Bronze Age spearhead. This type of trackway construction is similar to Meare Heath in Somerset.
- 6.3.3. Coincidentally two Bronze Age wooden trackways at Rainham and Barking, on the fringe of the London marshes, have been on the sites of Tesco stores. The Rainham trackway was found during the excavation of petrol tanks (*Current Arch.* No.143).
- 6.3.4. A further exposure of the Brigg trackway in 1933 located a late Bronze Age spearhead. Pollen grains, retrieved from the spear socket at a later date, show it to have been deposited some time between c.800-500BC. The surface of the trackway itself produced a rare fine bronze pin with a concave disc head; which is also late

Bronze Age in date.

#### **6.4 Brigg Logboat (SMR No. 1789)**

- 6.4.1. The hollowed out log boat was discovered in 1886 during the construction of a gasometer immediately west of the site and measured 14.8 m long and 1.3 m wide with a separate oak sternboard. A radiocarbon date of 834 BC has been obtained from the remains which survived the air raid in 1943. A contemporary illustration of the boat is shown in *The Graphic* May 8, 1886 and reproduced in Henthorn's 'A History of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Brigg'.

#### **6.5 Brigg Plank Boat (SMR No. 1790)**

- 6.5.1. Part of a plank boat was found at Brigg brickyard in 1880. It was situated 300m northwest of the log boat. The so called 'raft' was re-excavated in 1973-4 by S. McGrail and a radiocarbon date of 680 BC was obtained. Six oak planks survived which formed the bottom of the plank boat. These were 0.05 m thick and secured with peg cleats and stitched together. The gaps were caulked with moss and covered with hazel laths.
- 6.5.2. There have been similar boats located in North Ferriby by E. V. Wright in 1937, on the Humber Estuary (see Appendix 1) and more recently a boat also sewn with twisted yew and moss caulking was discovered at Dover, in Kent (Parfitt K. 1993, 1993a). Both the Ferriby boats and the Dover boat had been partially dismantled.

#### **6.6 Civil War Defences**

- 6.6.1. Fortifications were set up in Brigg in November 1643 by Lord Willoughby of Parham. No traces exist today, but in the 1970s Kevin Leahy located a 'massive' 17<sup>th</sup> century ditch in College Yard which would be the eastern defensive ditch for the town. This ran north-south and the likely route of the ditch would mean it turns west across the former Stock Market to link up with the Old River Ancholme. The fortification probably reflect the strategic importance of the crossing point on the Ancholme and two skirmishes occurred at Brigg during May 1643 (Williams D.J. 1992).

#### **6.7 Post-Medieval Brigg**

- 6.7.1. The town today is mostly 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century and up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century the town population remained relatively static at about 2000. The main expansion of the town occurred after the railway

had been built in 1849. The 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings are characterised by their yellow and red brick construction and red pantile roofs. (the last thatch roof was recorded c. 1906). In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the tiles were exported to East Anglia and as far afield as London and had become a well established trade by the 1820s (Henthorn F. 1987).

## 7. RESULTS

### 7.1. Trench 1

- 7.1.1. In Trench 1 a yellowish sand, (123), was located at 4.50m above O.D, the borehole logs (Fairhurst 1997) indicate this alluvial sand deposit. At the east end of the trench this was 1.17m below the present ground level and at the west end 0.80m below the present ground level. The eastern end of the trench had not been greatly disturbed by later features and the sand 123 was cut by a linear flat bottomed feature, a ditch (100) which measures 0.27m in depth and orientated north-south across the trench. This feature, probably a ditch, varied slightly in width between 1.00m and 1.40m. This feature produced a quantity of bone but no pottery.
- 7.1.2. The western half of the trench had been badly disturbed by later disturbance which probably dates to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The later features/disturbance were characterised by dark sandy silt deposits which were flecked with coal. Layer 124 is probably a post-medieval soil horizon, which is very similar to layer 207 in Trench 2.

### 7.2. Trench 2

- 7.2.1. In Trench 2 a yellowish sand, (203), was located at 4.23m above OD (0.87m below present ground level). This was uniform in character and in places stained by desiccated organic material. The borehole logs (Fairhurst 1997) indicate this alluvial sand deposit is in places up to 3.5m thick. A large feature, (211), cut into the top of the sand 203; which was filled with interleaved lens of sand and desiccated peat (206, 210). This feature produced no finds and probably represents a 'natural' fluvial feature which had been 'scoured' into the top of sand layer 203.
- 7.2.2. A linear feature, 200, probably a ditch was orientated east west and cut feature 211. It was located at the north end of Trench 2 and measured 0.85m in width and 0.38m in depth. This feature terminated within the trench. The fills (201, 202, 209) consisted of sand and desiccated peat, finds recovered from 200 included a sherd

of green medieval pottery a bone and small piece of ceramic building material, probably brick.

- 7.2.3. The linear feature 200 was sealed by a layer 207. This layer was continuous along the northern half of the trench and is probably a post-medieval soil. To the south this layer was truncated by a number of features which are all probably date to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These comprised a large irregular pit with *in-situ* wooden posts, (212) and two east-west linear features 215 and 219. The linear feature 219 was hand excavated to establish its depth. Due to their recent date, the remaining features were left unexcavated; only a sample of the pottery and tile was kept from these three features.
- 7.2.4. The only other feature was a possible posthole, (220), which produced red clay roof tile.
- 7.2.5. The remaining layers, (208, 205 and 204), were associated with the old Stock Market.

## 8. POTTERY

C.G. Cumberpatch BA PhD

### Introduction

The pottery from the evaluative excavations on the site of BRIGB97 was examined by the author on 17th June 1997. The assemblage consisted of forty-six sherds of pottery weighing approximately 1298 grammes and dating to between the 13th and 20th centuries. Details are given in the accompanying table.

### The medieval pottery

Three sherds of pottery were positively identified as of medieval date (contexts 108, 201 and 219) with a further five chips and flakes of a possibly similar date. The precise ware types represented by these sherds could not be identified, although they fell into the broad Humberware tradition of sandy textured green glazed wares and were dated according to their technical characteristics. To the south of the Humber and its tributaries and west of the Trent, medieval assemblages are dominated by Humberwares from Cowick and Holme-on-Spalding-Moor and by the products of potteries in and around Doncaster. In northern Lincolnshire however it would seem that wares from potteries around town such as Blyth was commoner, in addition to material from workshops in and around Lincoln itself. It is probable that these sherds represent products from workshops which have yet to be precisely characterised, although it is clear that the potters were working within a well established tradition of manufacture.

The condition of the sherds was generally good, suggesting that they were derived from relatively intact medieval deposits somewhere in the immediate vicinity.

### **Post-medieval and early modern pottery**

Sherds from contexts 114 and 213 were of early modern character. None could be specifically ascribed to the 17th century, the only possible contenders, the Black Glazed Coarseware sherds from context 114, seeming, on balance, to be somewhat later (probably 18th century). The mixture of tablewares and utilitarian wares suggests a domestic origin for the material.

### **The modern pottery**

The assemblage was dominated by pottery of recent date; late 19th or early 20th century. As with the earlier material the group represents a mixture of mass produced utilitarian wares and tablewares. None of the pottery was of particularly high quality and there was nothing to indicate anything other than a domestic origin for the material.

8.1.

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL**

9.1. No environmental samples were taken as the features were predominately post-medieval in date and the organic material was desiccated. The bone from Ditch 100 was well preserved.

## **10. CONCLUSIONS**

10.1. Most of Trench 1 was disturbed by features which date to the 19th century. These are probably associated with houses which are shown on the 19th and early 20th century OS maps of Brigg. Some of the disturbance is also associated with drainage for the Stock Market.

10.2. Layer 124 is probably a post-medieval soil, which has also been disturbed by later activity.

10.3. The light sandy silt of Ditch 100 and layer 130 differed from the dark fills of the later disturbance and this may indicate they can be ascribed to an earlier period, although there were no datable finds to confirm this.

10.4. Trench 2 was also disturbed by 19th/20th century features which predominates in the southern half of the trench. Layer 207 is probably a post-medieval soil contemporary with 124 in Trench 1. The earliest feature was a ditch 200 sealed by layer 207. The ditch

produced a sherd of 14th- to 15th-century pottery and a small brick fragment which could indicate the medieval pottery is a residual deposit in a later feature. The only other medieval pottery was from a post-medieval context 219.

Andrew Parkinson  
OAU  
June 1997

## 11. References

Henthorn F. (1987), 'A History of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Brigg'

Fairhurst and Partners, 'Tesco Store, Summary Report on Geotechnical and Chemical Conditions', Jan. 1997, R/I/D/35002/02

Parfitt K. (1993), 'The Discovery of the Bronze Age Boat', Canterbury Archaeological Trust Annual Report 1992-1993.

Parfitt K. (1993a), 'The Dover Boat', *Current Archaeology*, No.133.

Sites and Monuments Record former 'Humberside County Council' No. 1783. 1789, 1790

Williams D. J. (1992), (Curator Baysgarth Museum, Glanford Borough Council) Letter to Mr Dennison (Humberside Archaeology Unit) dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1992.

'Bronze Age Trackways in East London', *Current Archaeology* No. 143, (1995).

## APPENDIX 1

Summary of information in SMR Nos. 1790 and 1789 concerning Bronze Age/Iron Age Boats in Humberside Area						
Type of construction	Location	Year discovered	Radio carbon date	Comments	SMR No.	
Plank boat	Yaddletorpe	1815		Destroyed		
Plank boat	North Ferriby	1937	1430BC 1443BC 1170BC	Discovered by E. V. Wright, they were partly dismantled planked boats, 15.25m long, sewn together with yew withies and sealed with moss caulking.		
Plank boat	Brigg	1880	680BC	Re-excavated in 1973-4 by S. McGrail	1790	
Log boat	East Ferry	1811		Destroyed		
Log boat	Scotter	1814		Destroyed		
Log boat	Messingham	1954		Destroyed		
Log boat	Appleby		1100BC	In Scunthorpe Museum	75	
Log boat	Brigg	1886	834	14.8m long, 1.3m wide with separate oak sternboard. Destroyed in air raid in 1943. Only fragment survived.	1789	
Log boat	Hasholme	1985	450BC	Under conservation	4999	
Log boat	Short Ferry, Fiskerton on	1952	646BC	Lincoln Museum		

*Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, North Lincs.*

Summary of information in SMR Nos. 1790 and 1789 concerning Bronze Age/Iron Age Boats in Humberside Area						
Type of construction	Location	Year discovered	Radio carbon date	Comments	SMR No.	
	river Witham					
Log boat	Deeping Fen, Welland Valley E of Stamford			14m long and 1.75m wide		

*Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg , North Lincs.*

## APPENDIX 2

Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, N. Lincs: (BRIBG 97)					Finds
Context	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	
Trench 1					
100	Cut	1.14-1.4	0.27	Ditch	
101	Fill		0.27	Fill of 100	Bone
102	Cut	1.25	0.32+	?Drain for Stock Market	
103	Fill		0.32+	Fill of 102	
104	Fill		unexcavated	Bricks in 102 ? cover for drain	
105	Layer		unexcavated	Sandy peat deposit	
106	Fill		unexcavated	Fill of 102	
107	Cut		unexcavated		
108	Fill		unexcavated	Fill of 107	5 sherds medeival pottery Clay tobacco pipe CBM Bone
109	Cut		unexcavated	?Cut for water pipe	
110	Fill		unexcavated	Fill of 109	
111	Cut	1.7	unexcavated	Recent pit	
112	Fill		unexcavated	Fill of 111	Bone Clay tobacco pipe 19th/20th century pottery Shell CBM
113	Cut		unexcavated	Recent disturbance	
114	Fill		unexcavated	Fill of 113	Clay tobacco pipe 19th/20th century pottery

Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, North Lincs.

Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, N. Lincs: (BRIBG 97)					
Context	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Finds
115	Cut		unexcavated	Cut for drainage pipe of stockyard	Bone CBM
116	Fill		unexcavated	Fill of 115	
117	Pipe		unexcavated	Drainage pipe	
118	Cut	2.2	0.64+	Recent ?ditch	
119	Fill		0.64+	Fill of 118	19th/20th century pottery
120	Layer		0.16	Post-medieval layer	
121	Layer		0.16	Same as 120	Pottery Pantile (roof tile) CBM
122	Layer		0.05	Tarmac of car park	
123	Layer		unexcavated	Alluvial sand, same as 203	
124	Layer		0.32	Soil horizon	1 sherd medieval pottery, CBM, Bone
125	Layer		0.76	Made ground for Stock Market	
126	Layer		0.20	Make-up for Stock Market	
127	Layer		0.35	Roadstone for Stock Market	
128	Layer		0.48	Recent layer, probably same as 125	
129	Layer		0.18	Soil horizon, probably same as 124 and 207 and	

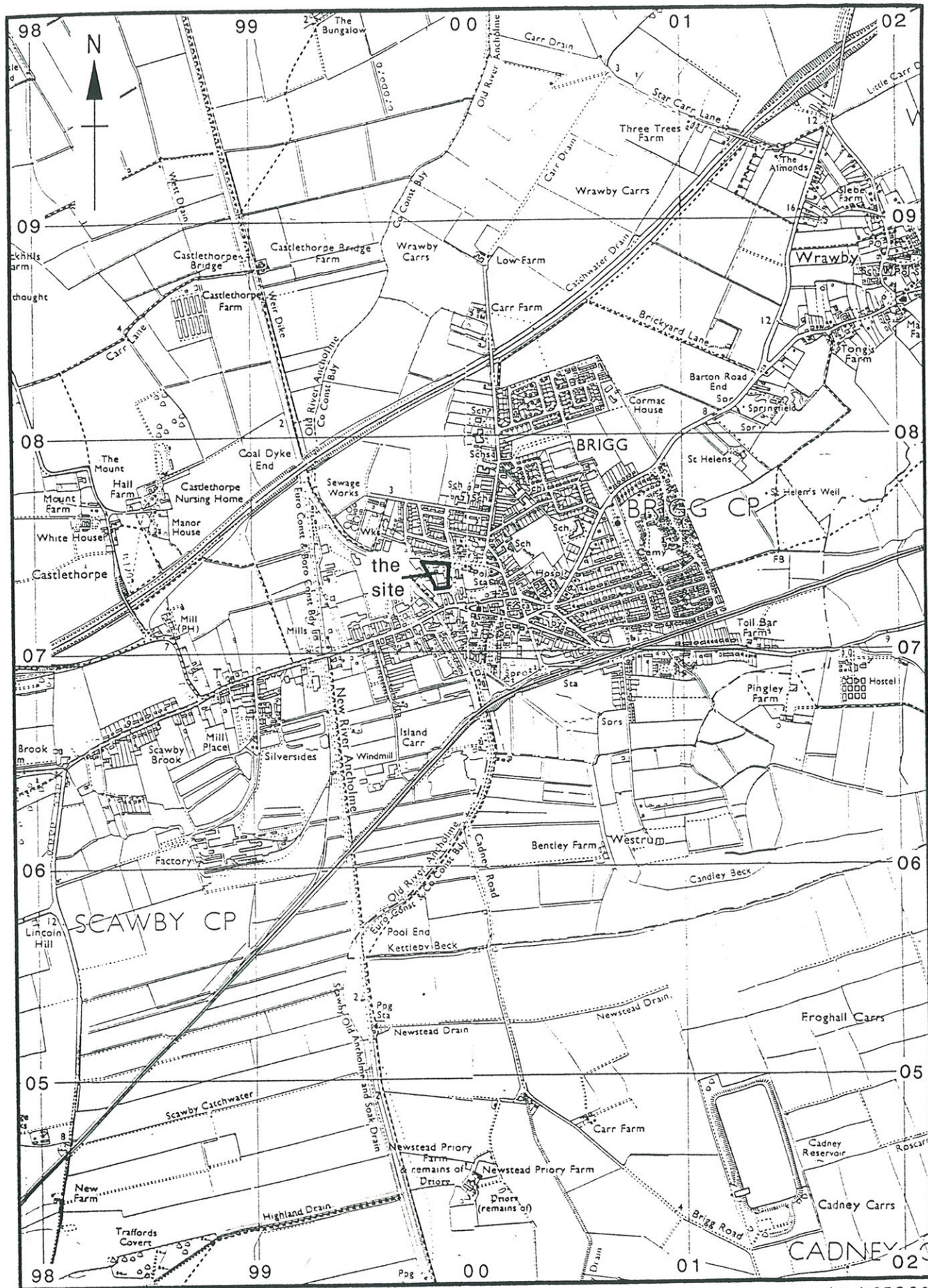
Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, North Lincs.

Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, N. Lincs: (BRIBG 97)					
Context	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Findings
130	Layer		0.30	214	
131	Layer		0.24	Soil horizon	
				Gravel layer sealing ditch 100	
Trench 2					
200	Cut	0.85	0.38	Ditch	
201	Fill		0.13	Fill of 200	1 sherd 14th- 15th century pottery Bone
202	Fill		0.12	Fill of 200	1 sherd medieval pottery CBM
203	Layer			Alluvial sand, same as 123	
204	Layer		0.07	Tarmac	
205	Layer		0.40	Brick rubble of old Stock Market	
206	Fill		0.14	Fill of 211	
207	Layer		0.25	Soil horizon	
208	Layer		0.42	Make-up for Stock Market	
209	Fill		0.10	Fill of 200	
210	Fill		0.60	Fill of 211	
211	Cut	2.5+	0.71	?Natural feature	
212	Cut	2.4+	0.59+	Recent feature	
213	Fill		0.59+	Fill of 212	Clay tobacco pipe Modern pottery Pantile (roof tile)
214	Layer		0.25	Soil horizon ? same as 207	

Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, North Lincs.

Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, N. Lincs: (BRIBG 97)					
Context	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Finds
215	Cut	1.4	0.54+	Recent feature	
216	Fill		0.54+	Fill of 215	Modern pottery
217	Cut	1.06	0.69	Recent feature	
218	Fill		0.69	Fill of 217	Modern pottery Pantile (roof tile)
219	Layer		0.50	Post-medieval layer	Clay tobacco pipe Modern pottery
220	Cut	0.25	0.13+	Post-medieval	
221	Fill		0.13+	Fill of 220	Recent pottery

*Tesco, Former Stock Market, Brigg, North Lincs.*

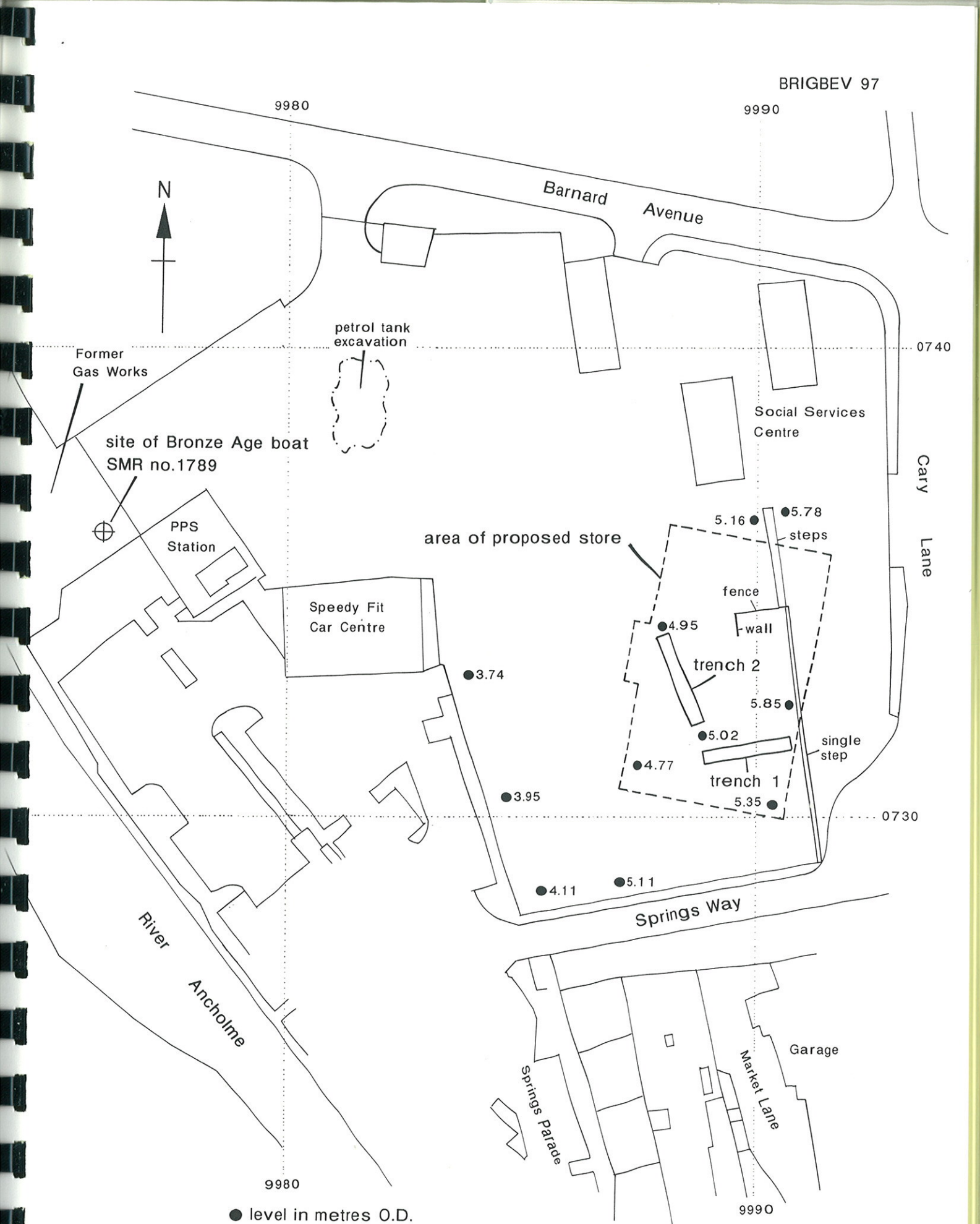


Site location

scale 1:25000

Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:25000 maps of 1983 and 1990  
with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office,  
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Figure 1



scale 1:100

Trench location

Figure 2

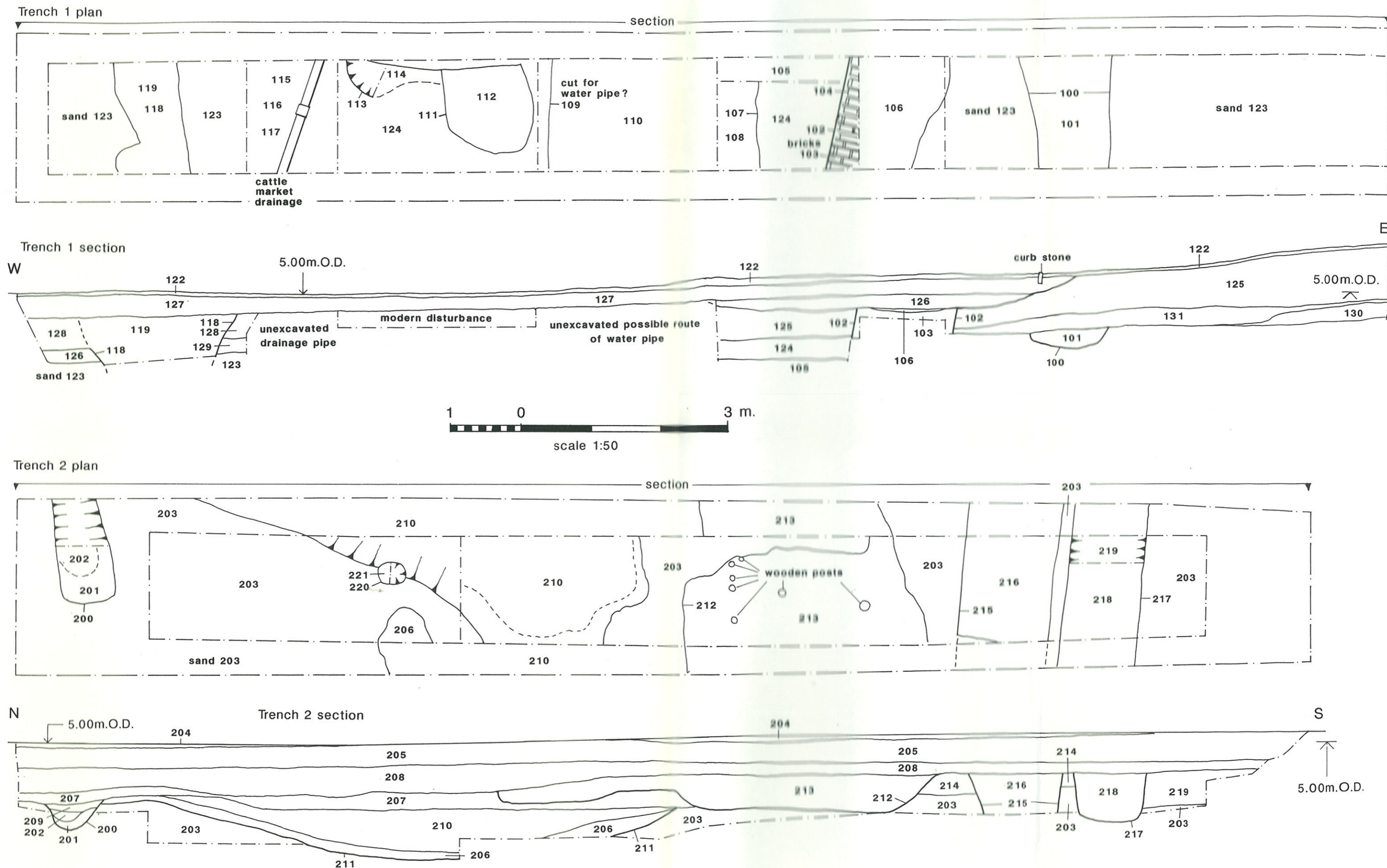


Figure 3



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