

# Harry Stoke, Stoke Gifford, South Gloucestershire.

## Archaeological Evaluation

(SGSMR 11,006)



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## ABSTRACT

This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out in June/July 1996 by the Avon Archaeological Unit on behalf of ICP Properties Limited in advance of a planning application for development of a site off Harry Stoke Road, south and east of the hamlet of Harry Stoke, South Gloucestershire (NGR ST 623789). The evaluation exercise (South Gloucestershire SMR 11006) was carried out prior to the submission and determination of a planning application, as suggested by Central Government Note 16 (DoE 1990) and Avon County Council Structure Plan (Third Alteration) Policy BE4a.

The aims of the evaluation, which was undertaken by means of trial archaeological excavation, were:

i) to determine the extent to which archaeological stratigraphy survived on the site, ii) to define the extent to which it may be affected by the proposed development and iii) to provide information which would, if necessary, enable any subsequent stages of archaeological investigation to be targeted and designed in accordance with the nature of the surviving evidence.

The areas of trial excavation were sited by Lawson-Price Environmental, the appointed agents of ICP Properties Limited, with a view to providing a representative sample of archaeological features or deposits within the area of the proposed development footprint.

Forty-two archaeological trial trenches were opened within the assessment area. Significant archaeological remains represented by either soil or stone features and/or artefacts were revealed in seventeen of the evaluation trenches although the overall distribution of the remains was patchy. The evidence dated from the post-medieval, medieval and prehistoric periods and, where positively dated, is interpreted to reflect previous human activity associated with:

- 1 Post medieval agriculture.
- 2 Medieval settlement and agriculture.
- 3 Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age settlement or funerary activity.

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- 16 Prehistoric (Beaker) pottery ( .. )

Numbers 15 and 16 - Copyright Salisbury Conservation Centre

The following abbreviations are used throughout the report:

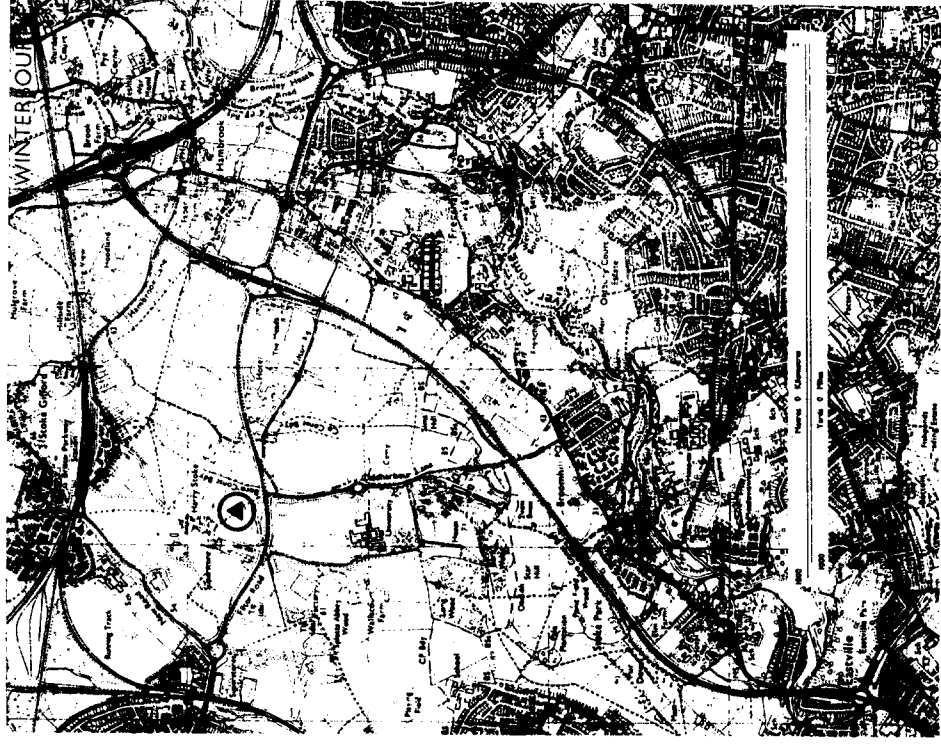
ASMR	Avon Sites and Monuments Record
SGSMR	South Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Record
A.O.D.	Above Ordnance Datum
c.	circa
m	metres
O.S.	Ordnance Survey
NGR	National Grid Reference
EBA	Early Bronze Age

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figure 1

i) Site Location



**Harry Stoke Evaluation**  
Site and Trench Location  
July 1996 JGPE  
SGSMR 11006 BRSMG 59/1996

ii) Study Area



iii) Trench Location



# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken within land adjacent to Harry Stoke Road, Harry Stoke (NGR ST 623789, figure 1), specifically the area bounded by Harry Stoke Road, the A4174 Avon Ring Road and the Stoke Gifford/Winterbourne parish boundary. The project was undertaken on behalf of ICP Properties Limited in advance of a planning application for development of the site.
- 1.2 In accordance with Avon County Planning Policy BE4a, Central Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 and Avon Planning Department Archaeological Guidance Note 1, the South Gloucestershire Archaeological Officer recommended that an archaeological evaluation should be undertaken within the proposed development footprint, in order to assess the archaeological implications of future development on the site.
- 1.3 The objective of the archaeological programme was to establish the extent to which archaeological remains survived on the site and, if so, to determine their character, quality and extent within the assessment area. The evaluation was designed to recover a sample of archaeological information which would allow the Local Planning Authority and the proposed developers to make informed and practical decisions concerning the archaeological implications of any future development on the site, and if necessary to provide the basis for future strategies to either conserve and/or record any significant archaeological remains which were identified during the project.
- 1.4 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by the writer, Andrea Cox, Sean Damant, Jonathan Erskine and Raymond Ducker. Andrew Young was responsible for overall project management. The evaluation, which commenced on the 20th June 1996, consisted of three weeks of fieldwork and three weeks of post-site analysis, archive work and report preparation. All illustrations produced within this report was prepared by staff of Avon Archaeological Unit.
- 1.5 All archaeological finds recovered were marked with the appropriate Bristol City Museum Accession Number (BRSMG 59/1996). Further analysis and conservation of artefacts was undertaken by Rod Birchill (Post Excavation Services, Bristol), Vince Russett MIFA (Freelance flint specialist), and Ann Woodward (freelance prehistoric pottery specialist). The prehistoric pottery was cleaned and consolidated by Gille Schofield at Salisbury Museum Conservation Centre. Palaeoenvironmental assessment of soil samples was organised by Vanessa Straker of the University of Bristol. The site records, drawings photographs and finds will be temporarily stored at the premises of the Avon Archaeological Unit, 325 Fishponds

Road, Bristol as part of the site archive of South Gloucestershire SMR 11006. The project archive will ultimately be deposited for long term curation and storage with the City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery under its accession number BRSMG 59/1996.

- 1.6 The archaeological project was wholly funded by ICP Properties Ltd.
- 1.7 Thanks are due to Paul Chadwick of Lawson Price Environmental for his assistance in arrangements for the fieldwork project. Special thanks are due to Mr Shaw of The Paddocks Farm, Harry Stoke, and Mr Churchill, the tenant, who greatly assisted the smooth implementation of the project. Further thanks are due to the various specialists who have provided assessments of artefacts found during the project.

## 2 **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The site of the study area lies adjacent to the following sites recorded in the South Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Record:

SGSMR 1334: a rural medieval manorial settlement (Young 1996; in press)

SGSMR 2260: site of a former coal mine (the site has recently been developed by the Ministry of Defence)

SGSMR 5257: a possible U-shaped enclosure revealed as a cropmark by aerial photography.

SGSMR 10749: site of early-modern agricultural activity and minor undated features.

- 2.2 In a wider context; the study area lies within a zone, bounded by, and to the south of the M4 and M5 motorways, where previous archaeological fieldwork as part of development control, has recorded important Bronze Age (SGSMR 7442; Erskine 1996; in press and SGSMR 8273; Parry 1992), Iron Age and Romano-British remains (SGSMR 7441; Erskine 1993).

### 2.3 **Historical Background**

Historically, Harry Stoke was a subsidiary hamlet or tithing of the parish of Stoke Gifford, located slightly to the north. However, it constituted a separate manor in the later medieval period which passed through a succession of owners. An important clue to its status is reflected by the fact that it never possessed its own chapel or church. Like many small settlements of this nature, which have a history of private ownership (as opposed to ownership by a monastery or large baronial family), Harry Stoke is very poorly documented indeed.

Atkins' history of the county (1712) indicates a few references in the historical documents, but Rudder, the Gloucestershire antiquarian, was unable to add very much, and very little new documentary information has been revealed since. This appears at odds with the extensive archaeological remains which were recorded at the northern end of the settlement in the 1980's (Young *ibid*).

The parish of Stoke Gifford itself contained four hamlets; Stoke Gifford, Great Stoke, Little Stoke and Harry Stoke. This occurrence of four 'stoc' names, indicating settlements dependent upon a larger, more important place, suggests that the parish was broken off from a larger, multiple estate at a date earlier than Domesday. It is significant that the church of St. Michael in Stoke Gifford did not originally possess the important rite of burial. Instead the dead were carried either to Almondsbury to the north, or Stapleton to the south. Harry Stoke was originally in Swineshead Hundred, and Taylor (1889) suggested that it was transferred to Barton Regis Hundred on the creation of the great barony of Gloucester in the 12th century. The tenurial landscape of south Gloucestershire was heavily reorganised during the 12th century, with interference from the earls of Gloucester and later under the influence of the Berkeley family. The evidence does suggest, however, that the original settlement at Harry Stoke was, with the other hamlets of Stoke Gifford parish, peripheral to a large multiple estate at Almondsbury.

At the time of Domesday Harry Stoke must have been important enough to have constituted a separate estate within Stoke Gifford. Under the lands of the Bishop of Coutances, a 'stoke' is listed;

*"Theobald holds it from him. Aldred held it from Earl Harold and could go where he would. 2 hides; 1 which pays tax, the other not. In lordship 1 plough; 2 villagers and 1 smallholder with 1 plough. 6 slaves; meadow; 5 acres. The value was 40s; now 20s.*

Recent publications seem happy to identify this 'Stoke' with Harry Stoke, but it is by no means clear if Harry Stoke is the estate described. However, as Harry Stoke alone passed out of the tenurial ownership of Stoke Gifford, it remains the most likely candidate.

At Domesday Harry Stoke was a very modest estate, but thereafter tracing the descent of the area becomes difficult. Robert de Mowbray, the heir to the bishop, had his lands confiscated in the late 11th century, and most of his manors were redistributed. Osbern Giffard was awarded Stoke Gifford in 1066, and in the early 14th century, following a rebellion by John Giffard, his lands

were awarded to Maurice de Berkeley. Harry Stoke may have passed to the family at the same time. Although it does not occur in the accounts of the Berkeley manorial records, Harry Stoke may have been held by a collateral branch of the family, or simply sub-let.

Elias de Filton was siezed of the manor in 1331-32, and Evans (1958) perhaps erroneously attributed the naming of Harry Stoke to this man. In fact the origin of the name is untraced (EPNS). In the late 14th century the manor was held by Sir Thomas FitzNichols and his son, also Thomas. In turn it was sub-let for a few years in 1381 to Edmund Blount, together with the manor of Filton, for 16 marks annually. Surviving documents of 1625 and 1653 refer to a tenement known as Kemis of Kemys House and an associated field called Kemis Hayes. Based on the assumption that Kemys House represented the only house in Harry Stoke worth mentioning in the documents, it is possible that it represented the original manor house of the settlement. A further clue lies in the name 'Kemys' which is linked to a retainer family of the lords of Berkeley (after Birchill 1989). An important estate map of 1725 preserves field names including one called 'Kennis Hay', within which an enclosure and house are represented, which had disappeared by the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey. The first edition probably preserves the outline of that enclosure as a line of trees.

As a whole the morphology of the surviving settlement appears to represent simple development along a street, which may suggest a later date (post Domesday) for the majority of its growth.

### **Summary**

Harry Stoke appears to represent the settlement of a typical small, subinfeudated manor of the 12th or 14th century. The lists of tax-payers recorded in the 1327 Subsidy Rolls for Stoke Gifford do not separate the various hamlets, but a William atte Dych who is listed may, on the evidence of field names, have come from Harry Stoke. If the Domesday entry does refer to the area of Harry Stoke, then the hamlet should have archaeological remains dating from at least the 11th century. The little manor was probably detached as a small parcel of land coterminous with the tithing, although the boundaries of this are unfortunately impossible to determine with any certainty.

It was, however, never very important or, it seems, profitable, and Kemys House was reduced in status by the 17th century. Since then the hamlet has undergone further shrinkage, with much of the northern half, including Kemys House, abandoned by the late 19th century.

### 3 GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDUSE

- 3.1 The geology underlying the site is shown on the 1:50000 British Geological Survey Map (Solid and Drift; Sheet 265 - 1967). The study area straddles a geological interface separating classic Keuper Marl and a pale silty clay facies of the same period, the former confined to the eastern half of the site.
- 3.2 The topography of the assessment area is generally undulating with a slightly elevated ridge (to c.70m A.O.D) entering the site from the southwest; to the north and east of this the land slopes gently to the east although there is also a gentle west facing slope immediately east of Harry Stoke Road.
- 3.3 The survey area was in use as pasture at the time of evaluation. No evidence for recent ploughing was noted.

### 4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 For the purposes of the evaluation forty-two trenches were opened within the study area (figure 1) using a JCB and 1.6m wide toothless grading bucket. The average length of the trenches was 25m although a few were significantly longer, up to 48m. The evaluation trenches were sited to avoid an existing public right of way, which crosses the south eastern part of the site and to comply with SWEB safety regulations concerning the operation of machinery in the vicinity of overhead power lines. As a result of this it was not possible to evaluate areas below or immediately adjacent to the corridor of the power lines. With this exception trenches were located to maximise coverage of the site and to investigate earthworks in the northwestern part of the site which are designated as 'Moat' on the OS 1:25000 map ST 6070, 1984 edition.
- 4.2 The majority of trenches were excavated to a depth of c.0.3m-c.0.5m below the modern ground surface although Trenches 19, 20, 24, 36, 55, 56 and 57 were excavated to a depth of between c.0.8m - 2.6m to remove layers of hillwash and/or recent overburden. All archaeologically significant features revealed by machine excavation were subsequently cleaned and investigated by hand.
- 4.3 Archaeologically significant features and deposits were recorded on standard archaeological context sheets, photographically and in archaeological section drawings and plans drawn at a scale of 1:10m, 1:20m and 1:50m.
- 4.4 The precise locations of the forty-two evaluation trenches were surveyed and related to an Ordnance Survey 1:1250 scale map of the area. In addition, archaeological

features and deposits were related to a nearby Ordnance Survey benchmark (67.01m AOD).

- 4.5 The evaluation trenches were identified numerically from 1 to 36 and 41, 42, 55, 56, 57 and 58 although this sequence is not continuous as the locations were originally surveyed and allocated numbers as part of a project to investigate a larger study area. The evidence revealed in each of the trenches is described in detail below (section 5). Context numbers assigned to archaeological deposits and features recorded in the trenches are numbered sequentially.
- 4.6 After the evaluation exercise was completed, all trenches were backfilled with excavated material and the topsoil/turf reinstated by machine.

## 5 DETAILED SITE OBSERVATIONS

- 5.1 No archaeologically significant features or deposits were recorded in Trenches 5, 9, 12, 13, 14, 28, 29, 30 and 31. These trenches were excavated to a depth of between c.0.3m to 0.4m below the modern ground surface through topsoil averaging c.0.15m and a clean yellowish brown silty clay subsoil. The subsoil varied between 0.12m and 0.34m in thickness and lay above the undisturbed natural clay substratum which varied in colour from light yellowish brown to pale brown to light olive brown (see archive for Munsell Chart references).
- 5.1.2 Similarly, no archaeologically significant features or deposits were recorded in Trenches 15, 17, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 34 and 35. These trenches were excavated to a depth of between c.0.35m and 0.45m through topsoil averaging c.0.16m and reddish-yellow to dark brown silty clay subsoil (between 0.1 and 0.2m thick) to undisturbed reddish brown Keuper Marl substratum. Likewise no archaeologically significant features or deposits were recorded in Trenches 18, 20, 55, 56 and 57. These trenches, however, were excavated to a depth of between 0.5m to 2.6m through topsoil (c.0.16m thick) and a deposit of modern made-ground comprising multi-coloured clays and rubble which varied between 0.14m and 1.75m in thickness. This modern dumped material (which contained bricks, iron, concrete and plastic) is understood to have been derived from the construction of the Filton Road carriageway. The material buried the former land surface which was evident as a clean brown silty clay horizon. This in turn overlay a layer of silty clay hillwash of variable thickness (0.2m to 0.95m thick) and the undisturbed Keuper Marl substratum.

- 5.1.3 Unstratified archaeological finds were recovered from Trenches 5, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34 although no archaeologically significant deposits or features were recorded in these trenches. These are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 5.1.4 Archaeologically significant features and deposits were recorded in Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 16, 19, 23, 24, 36, 41, 42 and 58 (Figure 2).
- 5.2 **Trenches 1 and 2**  
**figure 3 : Photographs 1 and 2**
- 5.2.1 For the purposes of explanation Trenches 1 and 2 will be discussed together. These trenches were located in the southwestern corner of the study area. They were excavated in a T-shaped configuration to an average depth of c.0.47m and reached an undisturbed reddish yellow silty clay substratum (193).
- 5.2.2 Directly underlying the topsoil (110) in the central part of Trench 2 was an intermittent line of limestone rubble set within a dark brown silt clay loam matrix (186). The feature extended northeast-southwest across the trench and southwards into Trench 1 for a distance of 3.1m (figure 3). Hand excavation of the rubble revealed the heavily disturbed remains of a drystone wall c.0.56m wide, with a few facing stones surviving. A thin deposit of mixed clay and limestone rubble (195) lay immediately to the west of the wall (186) and patches of similar material were also present to the east of it (Photograph 1). Significant quantities of 12th-13th century pottery sherds were recovered from this layer. Sherds of 12th century pottery were also recovered from context 230.
- 5.2.3 Wall 186 filled a shallow flat-based cut (feature 194, Figure 3, Section 18) in the silty clay subsoil (187). Layer 195 sealed a linear cut feature (feature 185), 0.24m deep, which appeared to represent a narrow ditch or gully. The feature was filled by a soft brown silty clay (184) and a few small limestone stones and slabs and also contained quantities of late 12th and early 13th century pottery. The ditch (185) was cut through the subsoil (187) into the natural substratum (193, Figure 3, section 18; Photograph 1) and was orientated parallel to Wall 186, described above. Samples of deposit 184 were taken for palaeoenvironmental assessment (see appendix 6).
- 5.2.4 A better preserved section (c.4m long) of drystone wall (154), of the same construction as Wall 186, was revealed at the western end of Trench 2 (figure 3). The wall was orientated east-west and appeared to extend beyond the trench to the west. The wall was sealed by topsoil (110) and a yellowish-brown clay loam deposit (153). The masonry

consisted of unmortared limestone rubble with roughly coursed and faced stones preserved to a maximum of three courses, the lower course laid as a slightly wider footing. The cavities of the wall were filled with brown clay loam although it was not clear if this was used as a deliberate bonding or simply filtered soil.

- 5.2.5 The eastern end of Wall 154 was disturbed by a cut feature (182/183) which appeared to represent a modern field drain.
- 5.2.6 Wall 154 was flanked to the north by an extensive deposit of tumbled limestone rubble set within a matrix of greyish brown clay loam (155) with some large inclusions of charcoal and charcoal dust. In section, deposit 155 was found to overly the subsoil (187) along the side of the trench and a further course of faced limestone rubble (189) which were set parallel to Wall 154 (figure 3, Photograph 2). The feature (189) underlay Wall 154 and appeared to represent either an earlier wall or, more likely, a course of wider foundation stones.
- 5.2.7 Significant quantities of 12th and early 13th century pottery were recovered from deposits 153, 154, 155. An irregular sandstone block with two circular cup-shaped depressions in opposite faces was recovered from deposit 155, adjacent to Wall 154 (figure 3). This was interpreted as a door pivot-stone. Two sub-rectangular sandstone blocks were also recovered from layer 155. These had been used as hone stones. A small quartzite hammer stone was recovered from the surface of layer 183, again close to Wall 154.
- 5.2.8 Approximately 1m to the east of Wall 154 a subrectangular Posthole (191) measuring 0.32 x 0.22 x 0.2m deep, was cut into the subsoil (187). The feature contained three upright limestone slabs which appeared to represent remnants of a packing and a greyish brown silty clay fill (192). No archaeological finds were recovered from the feature although the spatial relationship between it and Wall 154 suggests that the two features were probably contemporary.

### 5.3 Trench 3

- 5.3.1 Trench 3 was excavated to an average depth of 0.6m through topsoil (110) and light yellowish-brown silty clay subsoil (172) to reveal a pale brown silty clay substratum (173). A large linear cut feature (177) was revealed c.2.3m from the northern end of the trench 3. The feature cut the subsoil (172) and the substratum (173) to a depth of 0.62m. It was oriented east-west and filled by a sequence of two silty clay deposits (174 and 175), and a clay primary fill (176). Two large fragments of modern drain-pipe were recovered from the latest fill (174).

5.3.2 The ditch (177) was evident as a linear depression on the ground surface and was also recorded in Trenches 4 (Feature 119, Figure 3; Section 3) and 6 (Feature 115, Figure 4; Section 2). A detailed description is included in paragraph 5.5.1. below.

5.3.3 Five sherds of unstratified 19th century pottery were recovered from Trench 3.

5.4 **Trench 4**  
**Figure 3 : Photographs 3 and 4**

5.4.1 Trench 4 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.47m through topsoil (110), light yellowish brown silty clay subsoil (138) to reveal a pale yellow silty clay substratum (139).

5.4.2 Approximately 0.4m from the southern end of the trench a short (3.6m), irregular linear soil feature was distinguished from the surrounding substratum. The feature was oriented north-south and ultimately allocated five context numbers (100/101/131/132/160) as a means of recording the spatial distribution of archaeological finds recovered from it. The deposit consisted of a soft light brownish grey silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and some larger woody fragments. Three sections were excavated across the deposit to reveal a lozenge-shaped ditch-like feature (133) with gently sloping sides and a slightly rounded base (Figure 3, Sections 6, 7 and 8, Photographs 3 and 4) and a maximum depth of 0.25m. During excavation the greatest concentration of charcoal fragments were noted to lie towards the surface and centre of the feature (Photograph 3) .

5.4.3 An assemblage of finds were recovered from the feature including decorated Bronze Age pottery sherds (Photograph 15), flint tools, flakes and a few small fragments of cremated bone (see Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 6) . The finds were distributed throughout the deposit although the greatest concentrations occurred in contexts 100, 101 and 131 (figure 3). Fifteen small to fist-sized fragments of sandstone were also recovered from contexts 101 and 131. Specialist assessments of the flint and pottery assemblages are appended. Samples of the fill were taken for palaeoenvironmental assessment (see Appendix 6) .

5.4.4 Feature 133 was cut by a modern field drain oriented east-west.

5.5 **Trenches 4 and 6**  
**Figures 3 and 4 : Photographs 5 and 6**

5.5.1 Ditch 177 was recorded in Trench 4 (feature 119; Figure 3, Section 3) and Trench 6 (feature 115; Figure 4, Section

2), and in each case had a very similar sequence of ditch fills (120, 122, 123 and 116, 117, 118 respectively) to those previously detailed above.

5.5.2 Trench 6 was excavated through a sequence of topsoil (110) and subsoil (158) similar to those encountered in Trench 4, to an average depth of 0.28m. In Trench 6, Ditch 115 appeared to be re-cut from the level of the topsoil. Modern pottery sherds and tile fragments were recovered from the latest ditch fill (116).

5.5.3 Ditch 115 cut an earlier parallel ditch (156), oriented east-west (Section 2, Figure 4, Photograph 5). Only the base of the earlier ditch (156) survived where it had a flattened V shaped profile and was filled by a soft plastic olive brown silty clay (157). A few fragments of poorly preserved bone were recovered from the base of the fill although no dating evidence was recovered.

5.5.4 To the south of Ditches 115 and 156 the edge of a linear soil feature (136) was revealed which was sealed by the subsoil (Figure 4, Section 10). The deposit was barely exposed but appeared to be oriented northeast-southwest and was at least 3.1m long and 0.2m deep. It consisted of light olive brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks. A few small fragments of Pennant sandstone were recorded on the surface of the deposit and an unstratified struck flint flake was recovered from the immediate vicinity. Deposit 136 was found to be the fill of a cut (144) in the substratum (231) although the full depth of the cut was not determined (Photograph 6). The feature (144) also appeared to cut a narrow linear gully (161) to the south which was filled by an olive brown silty clay (137) no more than 0.07m deep. An unstratified struck flint flake was recovered from the immediate vicinity of the gully.

5.5.5 Nine modern pottery sherds, a subrectangular sandstone honestone, two clay pipe fragments, one bone fragment and one ferrous object were recovered unstratified from Trench 6.

## 5.6 Trench 7

Figure 4 : Photograph 7

5.6.1 Trench 7 was sited to investigate well defined terrace located at the shoulder of the higher ground to the west. It exposed the geological interface between Keuper Marls and paler silty clays which formed the higher ground. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.78m through topsoil (110) and subsoil (107), to reveal undisturbed reddish brown clay (114) in the west and light olive grey to brownish yellow silty clay (124) in the east.

5.6.2 Approximately 4.5m from the western end of the trench, two parallel ditches (102 and 103) were recorded, both of which were cut into undisturbed substratum (124). The larger western ditch (102) was cut through the subsoil (107) and had a rounded profile filled by deposits 104 and 105 (Figure 4; Section 2). Fill 104 consisted of olive silt loam and overlay fill 105, a dark greyish brown clay loam. Sherds of modern pottery and glass were recovered from the latest fill 104. Ditch 103 was sealed by the subsoil (107) and had a flat base. It was filled by a light olive brown silty clay (108) although no dating evidence was recovered from the deposit.

5.6.2 Unstratified finds from Trench 7 included modern pottery sherds, a single animal bone and an iron nail.

#### 5.7 Trench 8

##### Figure 4 : Photograph 8

5.7.1 Trench 8 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.68m, through topsoil (110), pale brown silty clay subsoil (142) to reveal undisturbed light yellowish brown clay (143).

5.7.2 A linear soil feature (140) was recorded 8.3m from the western end of the trench, sealed by the subsoil (142). The deposit consisted of light brown silty clay and contained rare fragments of charcoal and sandstone. It filled a narrow, flat-bottomed ditch (141) oriented north-south (Figure 4, Section 9, Photograph 8). No dating evidence was recovered from the feature. A modern field drain cut both ditch and fill.

#### 5.8 Trench 10

##### Figure 5 : Photographs 9 and 10

5.8.1 Trench 10 was excavated to a depth of 0.43m through topsoil (110) and very pale brown subsoil (167) to reveal a yellowish brown clay substratum (235),

5.8.2 Four soil features were recorded at the western end of Trench 10, all of which were sealed by the subsoil (167). The deposits (149, 150, 165, and 151) all contained rare charcoal flecks and small Pennant sandstone fragments.

5.8.3 Feature 149 consisted of a yellowish brown silty clay layer, 0.2m deep. It filled a narrow cut feature (164) with gently sloping sides which appeared to represent a ditch terminal (figure 5; Section 13; Photograph 9). No archaeological dating evidence or other finds were recovered from the feature.

5.8.4 A wide linear cut feature (163) extended across Trench 10 to the east of cut feature 164. It was filled by a

sequence of two deposits (150 and 165; Figure 5; Section 12). The primary fill (165) consisted of a pale brown clay which lay within an irregular sided cut (163) with a wide base (Photograph 10) although the purpose of the feature was not clear. No archaeological finds were recovered from either fill, although an unstratified struck flint flake was recovered in the vicinity of deposit 150. A modern field drain cut through the centre of the feature.

5.8.5 Soil feature 151 was situated to the east of feature 163 (Figure 5), and consisted of a deposit of olive brown silty clay. It filled a shallow feature (162) cut into the natural substratum. The cut (162) had steeply sloping western sides and a flat base approximately 0.3m wide. No archaeological dating evidence or other finds were recovered from deposit 151.

5.8.6 Unstratified finds from Trench 10 included one fragment of slate roof tile and one fragment of ceramic roof tile.

## 5.9 Trench 11 Figure 5

5.9.1 Trench 11 was excavated to a depth of 0.6m, through topsoil (110), very pale brown silty clay subsoil (169) to reveal undisturbed yellowish brown clay substratum (170).

5.9.2 A large soil feature (145) was revealed close to the western end of the trench. The feature was sealed by the subsoil (169) and consisted of a shallow layer of greyish brown silty clay with some darker banding. The deposit filled an irregular cut feature (171; Figure 5 Section 16).

5.9.3 A second large soil feature (152/146) was revealed to the east of cut 171 which was also sealed by the subsoil. The deposit consisted of a shallow layer of yellowish brown silty clay (152) which filled irregular depressions in the substratum (Figure 5, Section 14). It sealed a small sub-circular clay deposit (178) which filled a shallow cut feature (179) that appeared to represent the base of a posthole. A similar feature (180) was revealed a short distance to the west although here the fill (181) was sealed by the subsoil.

5.9.4 Layer 152 extended eastwards to fill a broad shallow cut (168), 0.14m deep (Figure 5, Section 14). A few small and poorly preserved bone fragments were recovered from the deposit but no dating evidence.

5.9.5 Another, deeper, (0.25m) cut feature (148), probably a posthole, was sealed by the subsoil at the eastern end of the trench. The feature had steep sides and a pointed base and was filled by a yellowish brown silty clay (147)

(Figure 5, Section 15).

5.9.5 No dating evidence was recovered from any of the sealed features and deposits revealed in Trench 11.

5.10 **Trench 16**  
**Figure 5**

Trench 16 was excavated to a depth of 0.43m, through topsoil (110), reddish brown silty clay subsoil (113) to reveal undisturbed reddish brown clay substratum (114).

5.10.1 A steep sided ditch cut (112) was revealed towards the southern end of the trench which cut the subsoil and the natural substratum (Figure 5, Section 4). The ditch was filled by reddish grey silty clay (111). Finds from the fill included a modern glass bottle-neck and a tile fragment.

5.11 **Trench 19**  
**Figure 6**

5.11.1 Trench 19 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.34m through topsoil (110) and recently deposited reddish brown clay and rubble (126) to reveal the undisturbed reddish brown clay substratum (114).

5.11.2 A sequence of thin soil layers (127-130) were preserved beneath the recent dumped material (126) towards the eastern end of the trench (Figure 6 ; Section 5, Photograph 14). Layer 127 appeared to represent the remains of a buried topsoil. Underlying this was a more extensive layer of brown to yellow silty clay (128) representing the former subsoil. This filled a series of hollows in the underlying substratum 114. Layer 129 appeared to represent a buried low earthwork, probably a bank. It overlay layer 130, a grey silty clay which contained common charcoal fragments. Layer 130, possibly the remnants of an earlier buried soil lay directly above undisturbed natural substratum (114). Iron panning had formed on the western slope of the buried bank in layers 127 to 130.

5.11.3 A few fragments of post medieval pottery were recovered from layer 128, however no dating evidence was recovered from the other layers which formed the buried bank.

5.11.4 Other unstratified finds from Trench 19 were confined to modern pottery and glass, animal bone and a few fragments of metallic slag.

**5.12 Trench 23**  
**Figure 6**

- 5.12.1 Trench 23 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.56m, through topsoil (110) and dark brown silty clay subsoil (199), to reveal the undisturbed dark brown clay substratum (200).
- 5.12.2 A dark grey soil feature (196) was revealed close to the southern end of the trench. The feature was sealed by the subsoil (Figure 6) and contained significant amounts of fragmentary charcoal and small lumps of distinctive sandy clay. The deposit filled a small steep sided pit with a flat base (Figure 6, Section 20). Finds included a single bone fragment and a small struck flint flake. A second flint flake was recovered unstratified immediately adjacent to the feature.
- 5.12.3 A single sherd of late Romano-British pottery was recovered from the subsoil during machine excavation of this trench.

**5.13 Trench 24**  
**Figure 6**

- 5.13.1 Trench 24 was excavated to a depth of 1.25m, through topsoil (110), dark brown silty clay hillwash (c.1m thick), to reveal undisturbed reddish brown clay substratum (204).
- 5.13.2 A subcircular clay deposit (201) was revealed 9.1m from the southern end of the trench which was sealed by the hillwash. The surface of the deposit appeared to have been heat affected and contained charcoal flecks and occasional pieces of limestone and Pennant sandstone rubble. It filled a shallow flat based scoop (202) in the substratum (Figure 6, Section 21). No dating evidence was recovered from the feature.
- 5.13.3 No unstratified finds were recovered during the excavation of the trench.

**5.14 Trench 36**  
**Figure 6**

- 5.14.1 Trench 36 was excavated through slightly thicker topsoil (110), brown silty clay hillwash (207; c.0.6m thick) to reveal undisturbed reddish brown clay substratum (208).
- 5.14.2 A linear soil feature (205) extended across the trench orientated roughly east-west. The feature was sealed by hillwash and consisted of a strong brown clay which contained small angular Pennant sandstone fragments. It

filled a shallow ditch cut (206) with gently sloping sides and a level base (Figure 6, Section 22). No dating evidence or other finds were recovered from the fill.

5.15 **Trench 41**  
**Figure 7**

5.15.1 Trench 41 was 48m long and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.43m. It was sited to examine a shallow linear surface depression c.7m wide and oriented northeast-southwest (see figure 1). The trench was excavated through topsoil (110) and yellowish brown silty clay subsoil (229) to reveal the undisturbed olive brown silty clay substratum (236).

5.15.2 A brown silty clay soil feature (221) was revealed running across the trench. It was located at the base of the northwestern slope of the surface earthwork (figure 2) although the exact edges of the feature were difficult to determine as they merged with the subsoil (Figure 7, Section 26). The deposit filled an irregular ditch cut (237) with a wide base which was cut through the subsoil. Sherds of 15th century pottery and fragments of animal bone were recovered from the ditch fill.

5.15.3 Sherds of medieval and 16th century pottery and a struck flint flake were recovered from the subsoil 229 close to the western end of Trench 41. Unstratified finds included one sherd of 15th century pottery, fragments of modern glass, clay pipe stems, a struck flint flake and a tile fragment.

5.16 **Trench 42**  
**Figure 7 : Photograph 12**

5.16.1 Trench 42 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.4m, through topsoil (110) and yellowish brown silty clay subsoil (226), to expose olive brown silty clay substratum (220).

5.16.2 An intermittent line of limestone rubble, set in a shallow deposit of greyish brown silty clay (217), was revealed close to the western end of the trench (Figure 7). The rubble was sealed by the topsoil although it was not of sufficient density or order to represent the remains of a drystone wall and its function could not be ascertained. The stones were laid on the surface of the subsoil and oriented north-south. One sherd of pre-13th century pottery and a small flint blade were recovered from the soil matrix (217) surrounding them.

5.16.3 A stone lined drain (218) was revealed some 5.3m to the east of feature 217. The drain (Photograph 12) was formed

of limestone rubble with edge-on side stones and rubble capstones, most of which had collapsed inwards (Figure 7, Section 25). The interior channel of the drain contained a pale brown, very silty clay (228). No dating evidence was recovered from deposits 218 or 228 although unstratified medieval pottery was recovered from nearby. At ground level the line of the feature was visible as a shallow linear depression which descended a slight gradient to the north.

5.16.4 Unstratified medieval and 17th century pottery and animal bone were also recovered during the excavation of the trench.

5.17 **Trench 56**  
**Figure 2a : Photograph 14**

5.17.1 Trench 56 was sited to examine land which was accessible within the corridor of the overhead power lines. The trench revealed topsoil (110) and a deep deposit of modern rubbish and made ground which became thicker towards the south. Excavation of the trench was halted when the depth of unstable made ground exceeded 1.75m.

5.17.2 Sealed beneath the modern made ground was a deposit of clean yellowish brown sandy clay. The deposit had an irregular upper surface (Photograph) which appeared to represent former surface earthworks similar in form to ridge and furrow. The long axes of the features were orientated roughly north to south and parallel. A thin darker horizon separated the clean sandy clay from the modern overburden. This appeared to represent the remnants of a former topsoil.

5.17.3 No archaeological dating evidence was recovered from the sealed deposits in Trench 56.

5.18 **Trench 58**  
**Figure 7 : Photograph 11**

5.18.1 Trench 58 was sited to examine a wide (c.13m), flat bottomed holloway some 60m long and orientated northwest-southeast which was preserved as an earthwork (figure 2).

The northern and southern ends of the trench were excavated through topsoil (110) and brown silty clay subsoil (224) to expose the silty clay substratum. The central section of the trench exposed a tranche across the base of the holloway. In this area thin layers of red sandy clay and limestone hardcore (225) and a buried topsoil (110) were removed by machine to reveal a section of cobbled trackway c.6.7m wide and a series of adjacent deposits (212, 213, 214, 215 and 216; figure 7; Section 23). Other features included a charcoal rich deposit

(213) and areas of disturbed ground (214, 215 and 216) to the north and south (Figure 7).

- 5.18.2 The surface of the trackway was formed of closely packed limestone rubble and stones. Larger stones, possibly the disturbed remains of a curbing, were preserved along the its northern edge and at least three wheel-ruts were evident within the surface of the metalling. The metalling (212) lay directly above the surface of the natural substratum (223). Pottery from the soil matrix surrounding the metalling included 16th and 17th century sherds. A larger collection of similar post medieval pottery sherds and a number of iron objects were also recovered during cleaning (210) of the trackway surface.
- 5.18.3 Layers 213, 214, 215 and 216 were thin and patchy deposits of clay or clay loam along the flanks of the metalling. Post medieval (17th century) pottery sherds and a quantity of animal bones were recovered from deposits 215 and 216.
- 5.17.4 A narrow ditch (222) was revealed to the east of the trackway, orientated parallel to it. The feature (Photograph 11) cut the subsoil and substratum and had been back-filled with pale brown clay and limestone rubble (211). No archaeological dating evidence was recovered from the ditch fill.

## 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Figure 8

6.1 The evaluation exercise has demonstrated that archaeological remains of varying quality, extent and importance are preserved as subterranean features within the proposed development footprint. The spatial distribution of those remains is not, however, uniform and the information gathered during the project makes it possible to distinguish specific areas which appear to have significant concentrations of archaeological remains and other areas which do not. For the purposes of this discussion and the subsequent conclusions those areas are referred to as Zones I, II and III (see figure 8).

6.2 Those archaeological remains which are reliably dated indicate that significant previous human activity has taken place in the study area during the later prehistoric (2nd-3rd millennium b.c.), medieval (12th-15th century) and post medieval (16th century to modern) periods.

### 6.3 Prehistoric Evidence

6.3.1 Zone I - The earliest datable activity on the site relates to the Early Bronze Age (Beaker) period (c.2200-2000 b.c. calender) and is represented by the small but fine collection of flint tools, waste flakes and decorated pottery, the great majority of which were recovered from the ditch-like feature in Trench 4 and other features revealed in Zone I (figure 8, Zone I). The condition and quality of the assemblage from Trench 4 suggests that material has undergone very limited transportation and is in a primary context close to the original point of activity and deposition. However, the precise character of that activity is not illuminated by the prehistoric features themselves which are, in the main, rather amorphous and not accompanied by any true occupation layers. Therefore, whilst the evaluation has demonstrated that there are a significant number of prehistoric features within Zone I, the distribution of those features is patchy and it is not possible to define any focus for the activity represented (other than that most finds were recovered from a feature in Trench 4), or to provide more than a general interpretation that the features represent the truncated remnants of either ditches, pits or other unspecified negative features associated with either occupation or funerary activity.

6.3.2 The collective nature of the assemblage of prehistoric finds from Trench 4, in particular the presence of small fragments of cremated bone and woody charcoal and the absence of other domestic animal bone or waste, suggests the assemblage may relate to ritual or funerary activity, possibly the site of a barrow or cemetery. The geography

of the area, with extensive views to the north and east, would seem conducive for such. This may also explain the unusually high proportion of tools as opposed to flakes which were recovered, since the deposition of such items are increasingly seen to have played an important role in later Neolithic and Bronze Age ritual and funerary activity.

**Conclusion** - the Early Bronze Age remains revealed in Zone 1, in particular those from Trench 4, are of considerable local and regional importance despite the fact that the activity they reflect remains unclear. This is a reflection of the rarity of evidence for Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age activity in the region as a whole although here the importance is amplified because the finds assemblage is varied, of high quality and also contains environmental material which would be suitable for C14 dating. The information gathered during the evaluation suggests there is the potential for further prehistoric remains of similar quality to be preserved elsewhere within Zone I.

- 6.3.3 **Zones II and III** - Three other probable prehistoric features were recorded in Zone II and small numbers of unstratified flint tools and flakes were also recovered from this area and Zone III. The total numbers involved do not, however, suggest anything more than a residual background scatter. The features in Zone II (Trenches 23, 24 and 36) are attributed to this period on the basis of stratigraphy (where they are sealed beneath significant accumulations of Hillwash) or the presence of fragmentary (often heat affected) lumps of sandstone which is a recognised, if poorly understood, characteristic of prehistoric remains elsewhere in the area (e.g. Erskine *ibid* and Parry *ibid*). The small pit in Trench 23 did contain flint flakes and fragmentary charcoal although the nature of the activity represented was not clear.

**Conclusion** - collectively this evidence suggests there probably was some limited prehistoric activity along the eastern fringe of the study area, at the base of the east facing escarpment; however, the physical remains are confined to three small features of limited extent which are widely separated. This, in conjunction with the very low incidence of unstratified flint tools or flakes, or indeed finds of any description, suggests that further more extensive or more important evidence of prehistoric activity is unlikely to be preserved in that area.

#### 6.4 **Medieval and Post Medieval Evidence**

- 6.4.1 **Zone III** - Significant remains associated with the medieval settlement of Harry Stoke were expected to be preserved on the site, particularly in the area of well preserved earthworks which extended into the north of the

study area. These earthworks were investigated by Trenches 29, 30, 31, 41, 42, and 58. Elsewhere the potential for the preservation of medieval remains was unknown.

6.4.2 Despite the complexity of the earthworks which are preserved in Zone III the trenches revealed surprisingly little evidence of any associated settlement or other non-agricultural related activity. The cobbled trackway revealed in Trench 58 could have been anticipated from the broad nature of the earthwork although it is not immediately apparent where it would have led other than to the fields beyond or the tenement now known as 'Coulstrang' (see Figure 8). Pottery and other finds recovered from the trackway metalling suggests it was in use as late as the 17th century although its origins may be significantly earlier, and quite possibly medieval. However, the evidence from Trenches 28, 29 and 58 clearly indicates that no substantial buildings were ever been erected immediately alongside the trackway or that the area has ever been disturbed to any significant extent by cultivation.

6.4.3 Elsewhere in Zone III evidence was confined to an undated stone-lined drain, almost certainly of agricultural origin, revealed in Trench 42 and shallow ditches in Trenches 41 and 58, the former clearly related to the boundary formed by the earthwork. Unstratified pottery from the area as a whole included material from the 12th-18th centuries although the total quantities recovered were far lower than that which would be expected in areas of former occupation and no more than one would expect to find in agricultural land immediately adjacent to a small settlement.

**Conclusion** - the medieval and later remains identified in Zone III provide useful, if negative, evidence concerning the pattern of medieval and later settlement at Harry Stoke. There is no indication, however, that significant medieval or early post medieval occupation extended into Zone III.

6.4.4 **Zone I** - unsuspected medieval remains were revealed in Trenches 1 and 2 which clearly indicate the site of a building and an area of occupation and activity during the late 12th and early 13th century. The distribution of the remains suggests that the overall area of activity was confined to a relatively narrow strip immediately adjacent and to the east of Harry Stoke Lane, quite possibly bounded by Ditch 185 in Trench 1. The simple drystone wall is identical to those revealed during excavations in the north of the Hamlet in the late 1980's (Young *ibid*) where a well preserved farmstead complex was revealed. The range and quality of the finds are also comparable although they suggest that this building was abandoned during the 13th century, a hundred years or so

earlier than the farmstead in the north. From the point of preservation there is no indication that the remains have been seriously disturbed by ploughing or other agricultural practices subsequent to abandonment.

**Conclusion** - it is likely that much of the remainder of the building and related features will be preserved in a condition comparable with those remains revealed during the evaluation. The evidence is certainly of local importance as a means to enhance our understanding of the medieval and later development of Harry Stoke. The remains are also of potential wider significance as the development of rural medieval settlement in the region remains poorly investigated compared to urban sites and more data, particularly concerning the natural environment, domestic practices and agricultural systems, is needed. The structural features and artefactual evidence revealed during the evaluation suggests the remains are sufficiently well preserved to contain such information.

## 6.5 Undated and Other Evidence

6.5.1 Trenches 18, 19, 20, 55, 56 and 57 revealed an extensive area of modern dumped material which had buried the former land surface. In Trenches 18, 20, 55 and 57 that buried land surface was uniform and level or slightly sloping to the east. In Trenches 19 and 56 the surface retained the impression of former earthworks or features. Trench 19 revealed a buried bank orientated roughly north-south which had a broad shallow depression running along its western side. The feature appeared to represent the remains of a former field boundary although no such feature is indicated on the 1st Edition OS plan of the area. In the area of Trench 56 the dumped material was much thicker (up to 1.75m thick) and sealed narrow linear earthworks analogous to ridge and furrow. The long axes of the features were orientated approximately north-south. The features appeared too closely spaced to represent classic ridge and furrow strips although the presence of the adjacent brook suggests that they may have been associated with seasonally flooded water meadows. Insufficient evidence was recovered to date these features with any certainty.

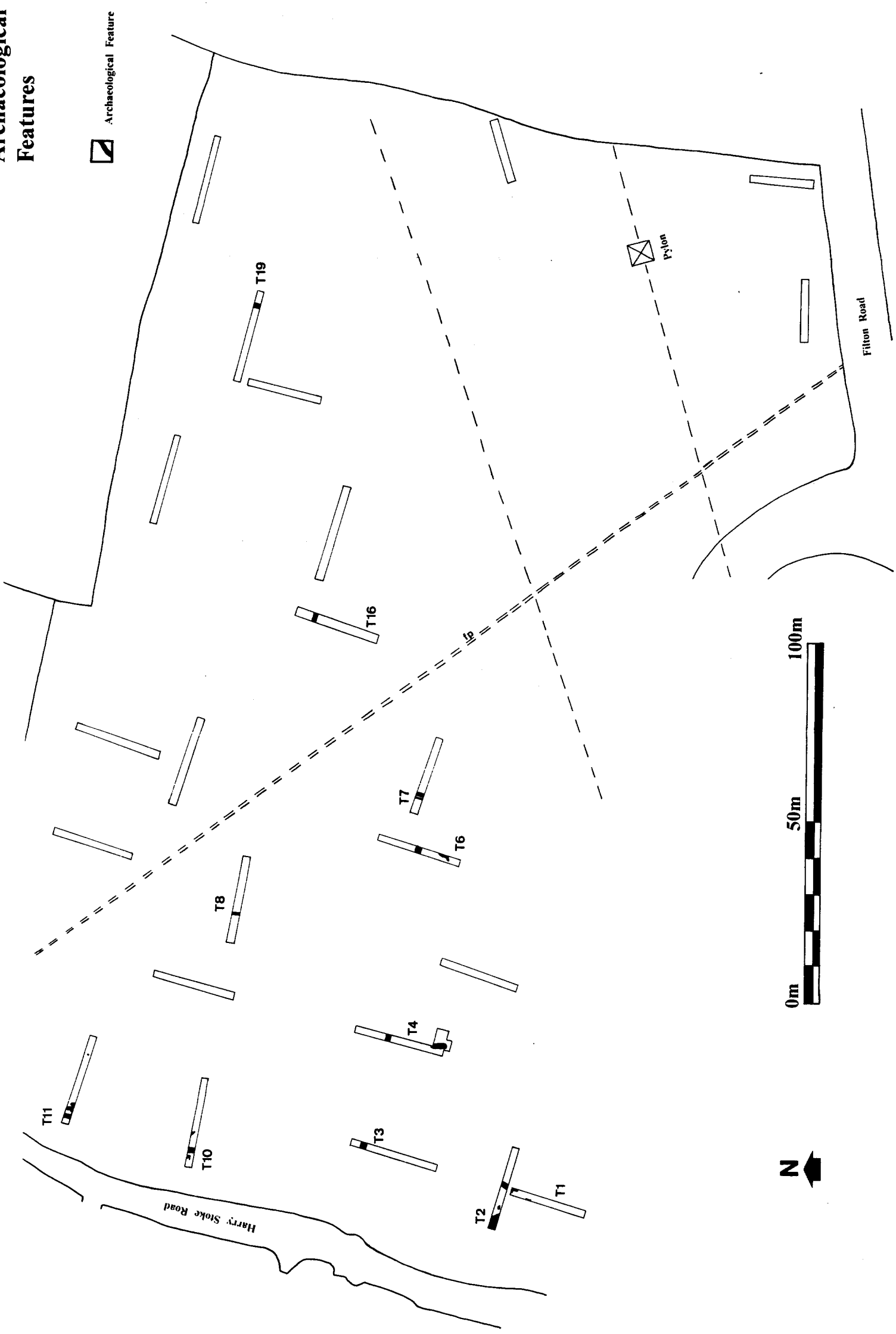
6.5.2 Various former field boundaries are shown crossing the study area on the 1881 OS 1:25000 Edition (sheet 72.2 for Gloucestershire). The boundaries have since been removed although they correspond with, and explain, the larger ditches revealed in Trenches 3, 4, 6, 7 and 16.

**Conclusion** - the remains of former agricultural and landscape features revealed during the evaluation work are of interest in understanding the development and usage of the settlements agricultural land. However, they are not

considered to be of any more than local interest and may well be more fully understood by means of a desk based documentary and cartographic study.

figure 2a

### Distribution of Archaeological Features



**Harry Stoke Evaluation**  
Archaeological Features  
July 1996 SD  
SGSMR 11006 BRSMC 59/1996

figure 2b

Distribution of  
Archaeological  
Features

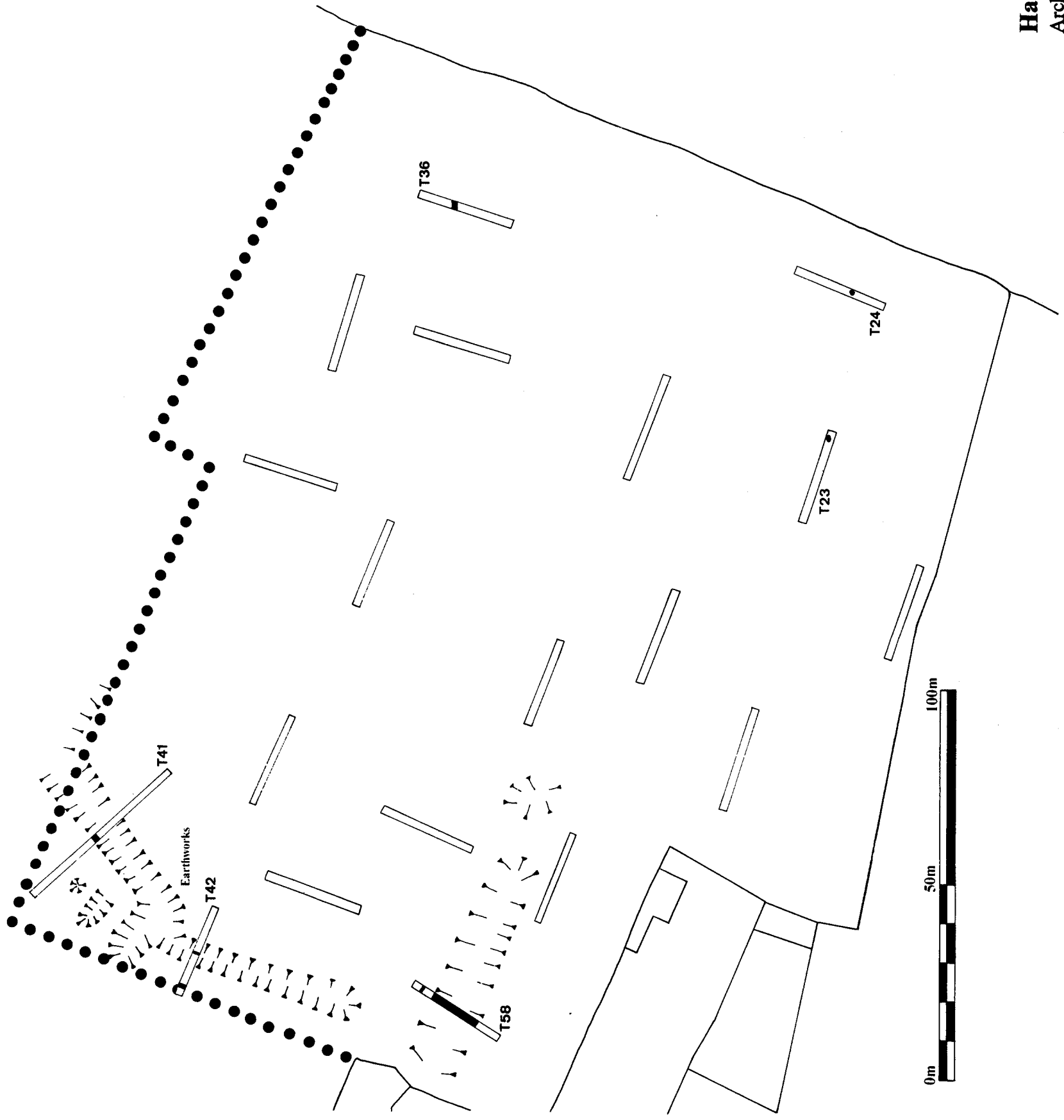
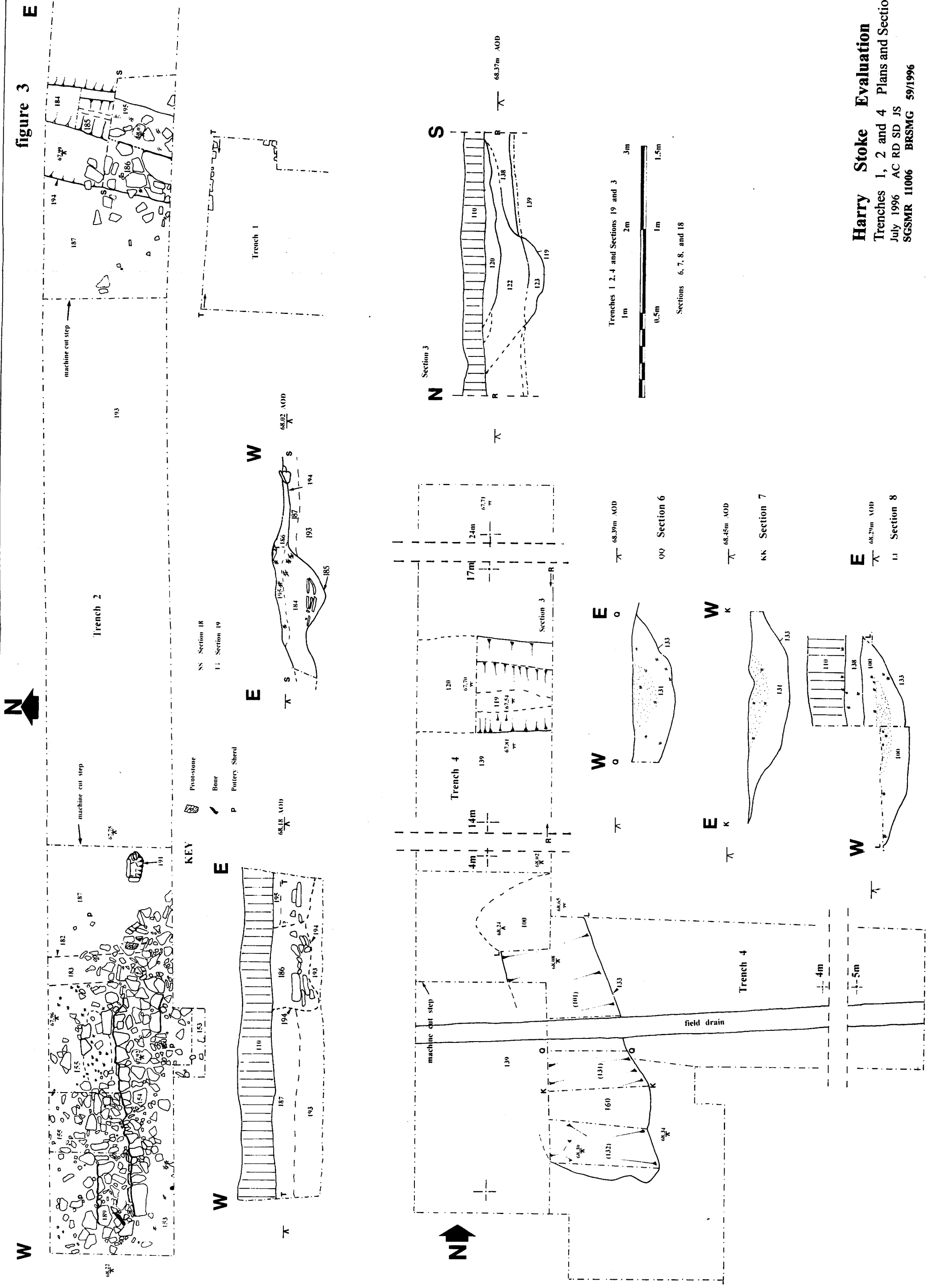


figure 3 E



**Harry Stoke Evaluation**  
 Trenches 1, 2 and 4 Plans and Sections  
 July 1996 AC RD SD JS  
 SGS MR 11006 BRSMG 59/1996

figure 4

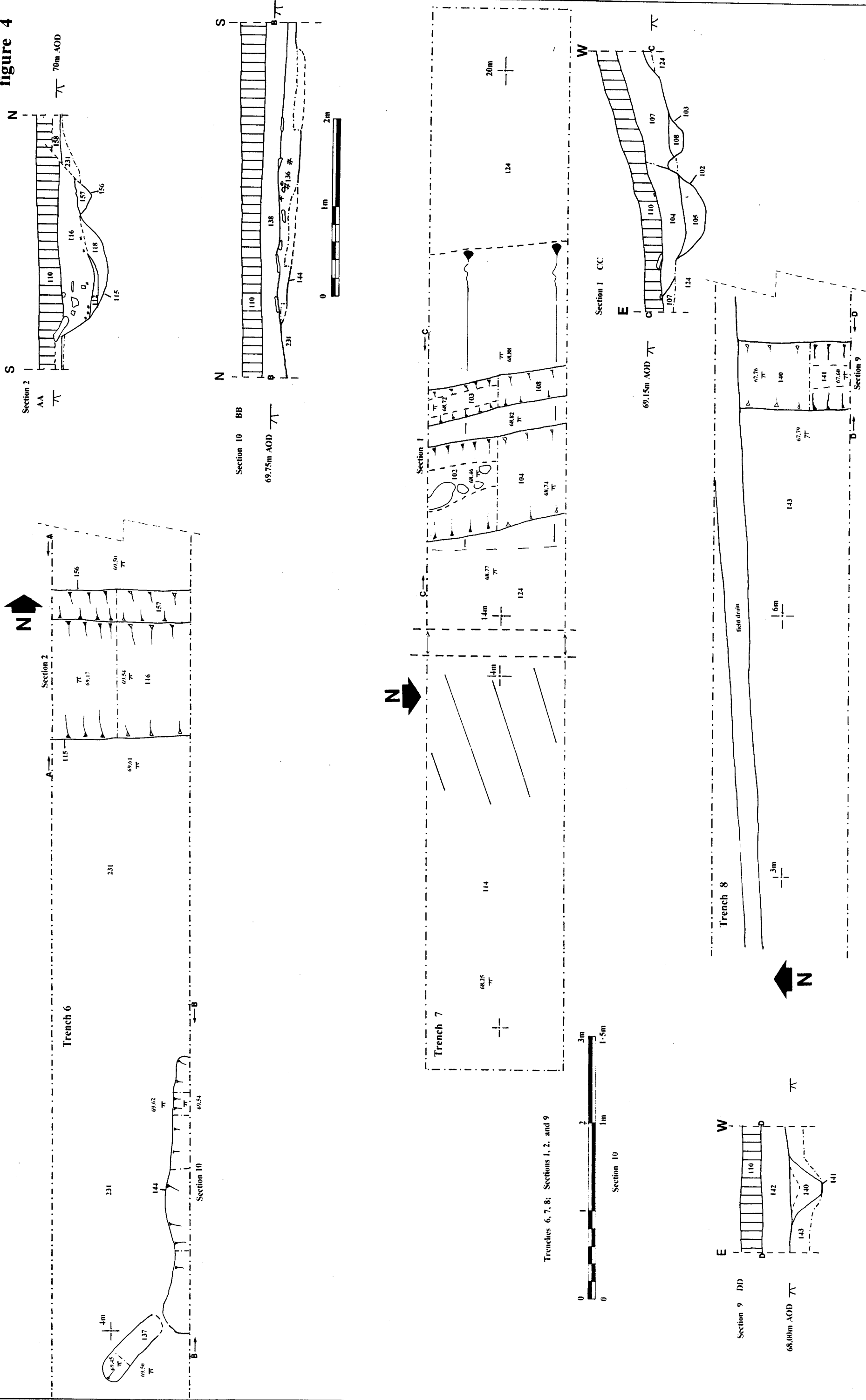
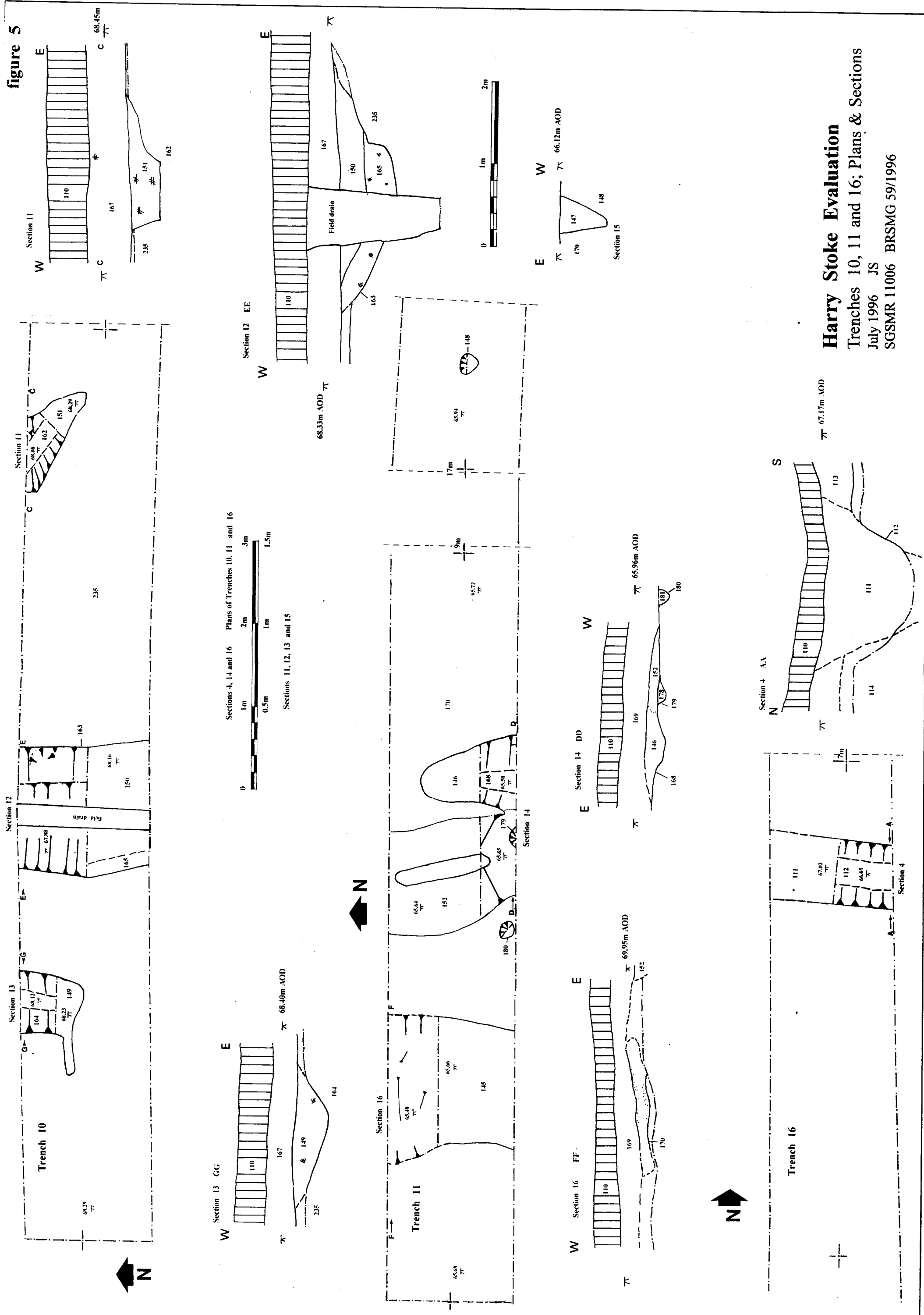


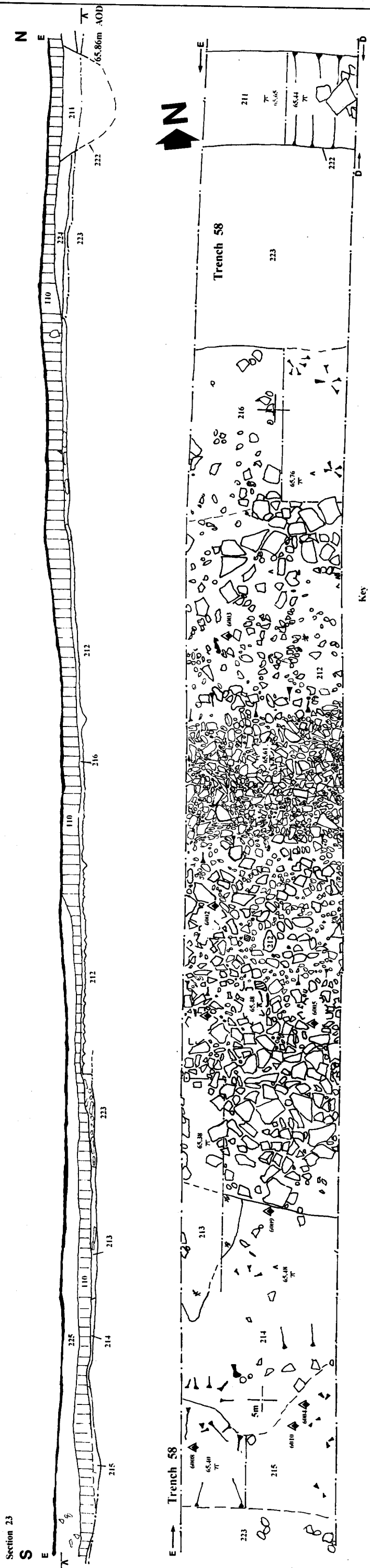
figure 5



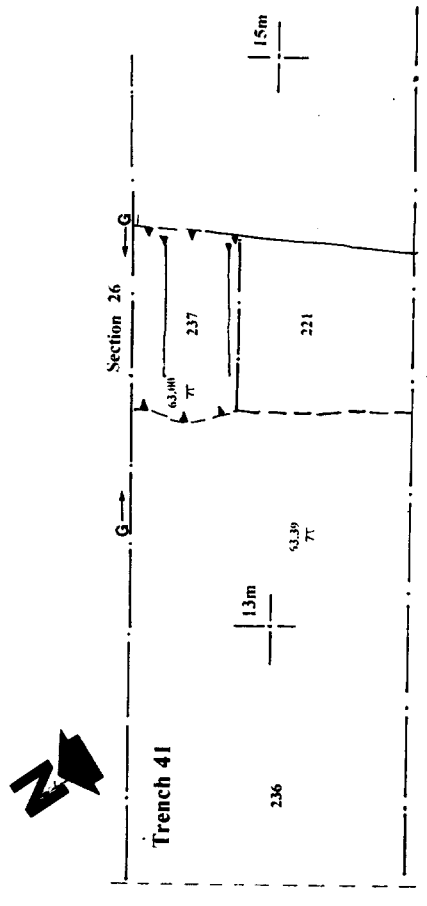
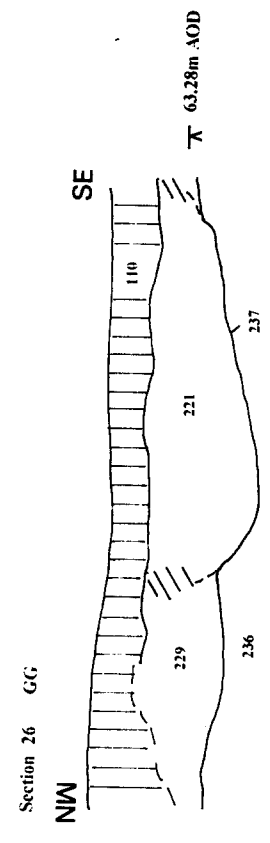
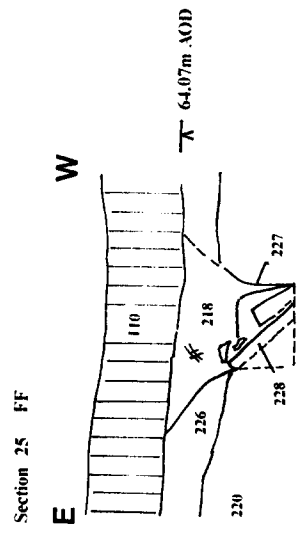
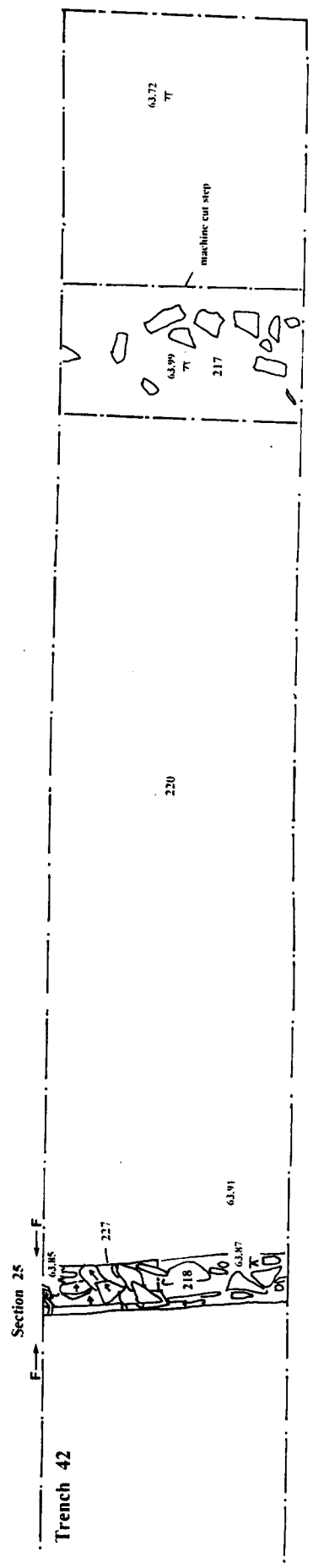
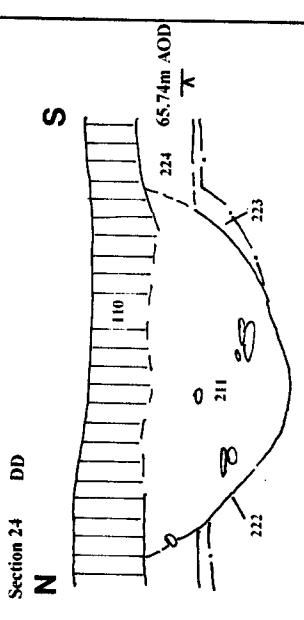
**Harry Stoke Evaluation**  
 Trenches 10, 11 and 16; Plans & Sections  
 July 1996 JS  
 SGSMR 11006 BRSMG 59/1996



figure 7



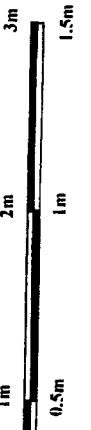
Key  
 ◆ Small Find  
 ● Bone



Trenches 41, 42 and 58; Section 23



Sections 24, 25 and 26



**Harry Stoke Evaluation**  
 Trenches 41, 42 and 58; Plans & Sections  
 July 1996 JS  
 SGSMR 11006 BRSMG 59/1996