

GLAMORGAN-GWENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST
TRIAL EXCAVATIONS AT LLANTARNAM VILLAGE
GWENT

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The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd
Ferryside Warehouse, Bath Lane, Maritime Quarter, Swansea SA1 1RD
Tel (0792) 655208 Fax (0792) 474469

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Trial excavation in O.S.Field 006 between Llantarnam Village and Llantarnam Abbey, on the route of the proposed A4042 Llantarnam By-Pass revealed the remains of three buildings and two roads all probably part of the deserted medieval village of Llantarnam. Documentary and structural evidence has confirmed that the Mill Barn was a post-medieval mill and may be on the site of the monastic mill associated with the Abbey.

It is recommended that the archaeological remains should be protected against destruction, but if this is not possible then excavation of the whole of the affected area should be conducted before the construction of the road.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The excavation archive was compiled by Neil Maylan and Peter Wright and the reports written by Neil Maylan. Reports on the finds were compiled by Steven Sell and environmental samples by Alison Rutherford. Advice and further information about the excavation was given by other members of the staff of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

The author would like to thank the staff of Gwent County Council, especially their Farms Officer Michael Grace for access to the excavation area and the staffs of Gwent County Record Office, Newport Reference Library, and Newport Museum for their help during the documentary research for this report. Mr A.G.Mein gave considerable assistance from his knowledge of the earlier work on the deserted medieval village. Mr H.J.Thomas of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales gave advice on the structure and function of Mill Barn.

1. INTRODUCTION

The proposed route of the Llantarnam bypass section of the A4042 Newport-Shrewsbury trunk road will pass between the present village of Llantarnam and Llantarnam Abbey. An archaeological assessment of the route was commissioned by the Welsh Office Highways Directorate in early 1990. This report (Geake 1990) suggested that O.S.Field 0006 was possibly the site of part of the deserted medieval village of Llantarnam. In January 1992 the Welsh Office Highways Directorate commissioned the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust to carry out trial excavation in the field.

2. TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The proposed route of the road crosses the valley of the River Dowlais by bridge and embankment. It then cuts through a triangular shaped promontory, the apex of which points to Llantarnam Abbey before it proceeds across the floodplain of the Afon Llwyd.

Geotechnical survey by Thyssen Geotechnical has suggested that the promontory is of glacial origin and consists of gravels and sands overlying clays and mudstones.

A test pit cut as part of the geotechnical survey (Pit K) revealed a layer 1.1m below the present ground surface which was interpreted as a paeleosol. Excavation in the proximity of this trial pit failed to discover a corresponding layer and it is suggested that the trial pit must have cut through an archaeological feature, probably a pit.

The field is now pasture, although it has previously been part of the parkland surrounding the Abbey. In the north-western corner of the field are the farm buildings associated with Abbey Farm. The majority of these buildings are of modern date, except for the Mill Barn which appears to date from the nineteenth century

3. THE EXCAVATION

Introduction

The trial excavation was undertaken between the 13th January 1992 and 7th February 1992. The weather throughout the excavation was cold (with frequent heavy frosts) but dry.

Objectives

The objectives of the trial excavation were to determine the character, quality, significance, chronology and depth of surviving archaeological features and to make recommendations about the protection of the archaeological resource or methods of mitigating the damage caused to it during the road construction.

Methodology

Five transects (lettered from the south A to E) across the proposed route of the road were mechanically excavated, to the top of the archaeological horizons. The transects were then cleaned manually and the exposed archaeological features drawn. Any modern features were then removed by hand to enable the depth of the archaeological stratigraphy to be observed without causing further damage.

Recording

All archaeological deposits were recorded using an integrated context system. Significant deposits were photographed in 35mm format in both monochrome and colour. All plans and sections were drawn to a scale of not less than 1:20. The site location and scale drawings were related to the national ordnance grid.

Sampling

Only one sample was taken for palaeoenvironmental analysis. This came from the base of the only significant waterlogged feature, a large ditch.

Buildings

Parts of three buildings (I, II & III) were identified. I and II were recorded at the southern end of the excavation area, whilst III was found at the north.

Building I was located in the centre of Transect A1. A substantial north-south rubble-cored wall (0.73m wide) formed the western boundary of an area of angular sandstone rubble which may have formed a surface, but is more likely to be rubble from a collapsed building. This area of cobbles only covered an area up to 5m east of the wall, but contained a substantial quantity of medieval pottery. This may indicate that a major medieval structure is located to the south of Transect A1.

The second building (II) was located at the eastern end of Transect A2. The exposed part of the building, 14.5m in length, consisted of three north-south rubble-cored walls (up to 0.6m in width) which formed at least three rooms, as only one appeared to be an external wall. One of the rooms was floored with sandstone slabs whilst the other two had beaten earth floors. The structure was covered by building debris, in which there was evidence that some of the walls had collapsed partially intact. Recent work has suggested that this would have been caused by deliberate demolition rather than by natural collapse (G.Keevill pers.comm). The building rubble also contained clay roof tiles and glazed ridge tiles dating to the medieval period. It can therefore be suggested that building II was stone walled with a tile roof and of medieval date.

The third building (III) was located in Transect E. Parts of four walls of faced sandstone blocks divided the building into four rooms. One room had been floored by a succession of mortar floors, whilst another had a cobbled surface. The lack of building debris and roofing material (although this may have been thatch) may indicate that this building was dismantled and its components used elsewhere. Finds associated with this building are of eighteenth century date. It is not depicted on the tithe map of 1840 and it would therefore appear that it had ceased to exist by this date.

Roads

Two roads or tracks were revealed during the excavation. The more substantial road was visible as a linear earthwork or agger leading eastward from the end of Abbey Lane towards Llantarnam Abbey.

Transect D cut diagonally across this feature and revealed 14m of metalled surface, although it failed to locate its northern edge. Delineating the original southern side of this surface, was a ditch (1.4m wide and some 0.6m deep). This had been abandoned when the metalled surface had been reduced in width, by the construction of a substantial rubble cored wall, 0.62m wide. The metalled surface was wider than expected for a road and it is possible that the road surface had been extended to form a yard or hard standing. A small sondage cut through the road to determine the depth of the metalling showed that the road structure was only 0.23m deep. At this point it overlay an earlier stone lined pit (see below).

John Aram's plan of Llantarnam Abbey drawn in 1779 shows a substantial road in this position and this road, in a reduced width, appears to have continued in use until the late nineteenth century (Ordnance Survey 1882).

The second track appeared to depart from the line of this road at a point some 20m east of the gate into the field. Its probable course can still be detected as a slight earthwork running south

towards Buildings I and II. Sections across the track were made by Transects B, C and D. Unfortunately, the line of the proposed Transect A coincided with the route of a high pressure gas main and the probable continuation of the track at this point could not be confirmed.

The track consisted of a 3m wide spread of rounded sandstone cobbles. The three excavated sections showed no evidence of roadside ditches or boundary fences. In Transect A2, however, immediately to the west of the presumed line of the track a substantial ditch was found. This feature had been re-cut on at least three occasions. The last resulting in the widest ditch (4.5m wide), whilst the first was the deepest, with its base some 1.83m below the present ground surface. Very few artefacts were discovered in the fill of the ditches and no date can be assigned for their excavation or filling. An environmental sample taken from the waterlogged basal layer of the first ditch, suggested that it had been situated in open ground, possibly near human occupation, and that it had silted up over a considerable period of time (see appendix 4).

The purpose of the ditch is unknown: it appears to be too large and deep to be a roadside ditch associated with the neighbouring track, and it did not extend as far as Transect B. When the eastern end of Transect B was excavated, water was found at a depth of 0.3m. The water-table was not reached at any other point during the excavation, except at the base of the ditch. It is possible that a spring is situated to the east of the excavation area and that the ditch was excavated to the Dowlais Brook to drain this.

Pits:

Four pits were located during the trial work. Two of these were in Transect A to the west of the track. These features were not excavated. A sondage to investigate the depth of the road (see above) in Transect D cut into the side of an underlying stone-lined pit. This bottom of this pit was not reached, but it was excavated to a point 0.5m below the road surface. The fourth pit, located close to the Mill Barn and exposed in Transect E, was of modern date. It contained a number of modern bottles and jars.

Conclusions of Excavation

The excavations have shown that the proposed road will cut through an area containing medieval and post-medieval archaeological deposits.

The position of the buildings located in Transect A and the structures recorded by AG Mein during the construction of the lagoons, suggest that there was a road or street running east-west on the approximate line of the boundary fence to the lagoons. It is possible that other structures were aligned

alongside this street, but were not picked up by the trial excavations, as they lie outside the area investigated.

The trial excavation has confirmed that a road leads from the parish church of Llantarnam to the site of the Abbey. The discovery of structures and a probable yard in the trial works, all of which extended outside the areas of the transects, suggest the likely presence of other archaeological features in this vicinity.

The two areas of structural remains are linked by the north-south trackway located in Transects B, C, and D. Although, no features (other than the trackway) were identified during the trial work in Transects B and C, this should not be taken as definite evidence that no archaeological layers are located in this central region. The position of the transects may have missed such evidence and earth cut features were not easily recognised on this site. Features associated with the the gardens and plots of land attached to the buildings recognised in the other transects may well be present in the central area.

Further archaeological work will be required before the road is constructed. Excavation work at other deserted villages in South Wales, for example at Barry (Thomas and Dowdell 1987), Cosmeston (Parkhouse 1985), Margam (GGAT 1976), has shown the value of large scale open area excavation in placing the structures of the village in their setting. Therefore a complete area excavation of the area affected by the road should be undertaken.

4. STANDING REMAINS

Mill Barn

During the course of the field work, visual inspection of the Mill Barn suggested that the present structure may contain elements of an earlier building, possibly a mill. The present building was inspected by Mr HJ Thomas of the Royal Commission of Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales. He suggested that elements of the building probably dated to the early nineteenth century and were probably associated with a watermill. A mill building is shown in this position on the tithe map of 1840. In 1888 a survey of the Llantarnam Estate by Egerton and Breach, Surveyors, stated that Llantarnam Mill consisted of:-

"a water corn mill of 4 floors with 2 breast wheels not worked".
(Llantarnam Deeds).

By 1907 it appears that it had been extensively altered into its present form. Allgood (1907, 2) described it thus:-

"The ancient mill has been turned into a hall for gatherings in connection with the people on the property, the mill race now supplies its force for engendering electricity".

The last known miller was a Mr Sawtell who was involved in a dispute with R.J. Blewitt in 1876 (newspaper cutting in "Llantarnam Estate") which led to his eviction. Given that it is described as "not worked" in 1888 and had been converted to a meeting hall and electricity generator by 1907, this would appear to be the end of its use as a corn mill.

The Tithe Map (1840) and the first edition of the Ordnance Survey (1882) show that water to power the mill was supplied by two watercourses or leats. The first of these left the Afon Lwyd to the north of Court Farm (NGR ST 3028 9421), followed the course of the present Llantarnam Road, and continued along the northern side of Abbey Lane, a distance of 1.36km. No evidence of this feature can now be seen, except in the abandoned nursery to the north of Abbey Lane, where a substantial bank 32m long and c.2m high is situated.

The second leat left the Dowlais Brook at Court Wood (ST 2992 9352) and proceeded to the south of the Greenhouse Public House and then along the southern boundary of the abandoned nurseries to the mill, a distance of 1.31km. The course is preserved by a modern drain from the Brook to the Greenhouse Public House and from there on has become a public footpath. The two leats met at ST 3088 9309, where a complicated system of sluices controlled the flow of water. The mill is positioned on a steep escarpment allowing a fast flowing race to be provided. A spillway looped south of the mill and the tail-race (outfall) ran west to the Afon Llwyd, joining the river at ST 3144 9318. The line of the

tail-race can still be seen as a linear depression alongside the present fenceline.

The construction of two leats, each over 1.3km in length, from two separate sources would have required large resources of manpower. It would also imply that both sources of water were under the control of the same landowner. It is common for mills to be rebuilt on the site of their predecessors, so that they can take advantage of both the waterworks constructed previously and the legal rights for taking water from a river. The first mention of a watermill at Llantarnam is in the Ministers Accounts for 1535-6. This was after the abbey had been taken into royal control, when a grinding mill worth 56/8 is mentioned, as is "the stream which runs to the abbots mill". (PRO SC6). There is no direct evidence, at present, that this reference concerns the later mill site, although it is known from a court action in the Star Chamber that the Abbot's mill was fed from water obtained from the Afon Lwyd (M26/21 (37)). The presence of a watermill at Llantarnam is recorded from the Dissolution of the Abbey until 1888, and there are no suggestions that its position had been changed. It must therefore be probable that the position of the last mill i.e. Mill Barn was the site of the medieval monastic mill.

5.RECOMMENDATIONS

The preferred option would be the preservation of the deserted medieval village by means of the burial of the site below a large embankment.

If this is not possible we would suggest that all of the village area affected by the road and its easement should be excavated. This should include all of the affected area in O.S.Field 006.

Before excavation is carried out the High Pressure Gas Main cutting north-east, south-west across O.S.Field 006 should be diverted. If possible the gas main should be diverted to the west of field 006; however if this is not possible, and the main has to cross the main area of the deserted village, the pipe trench should be excavated by hand by qualified archaeologists.

Trial excavation should be conducted in the vicinity of the Mill Barn to investigate its potential medieval origins. If these are proven full excavation of the mill site may have to be undertaken.

It is thought that the majority of the remains of the deserted medieval village lie between the proposed road and the Abbey. Proposals have been made to plant trees in this area. Further investigation of the archaeological features in this part of O.S.Field 006 should be undertaken, before any further action is taken.

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MAPS CONSULTED

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- Tithe Map (1840) Tithe Map of Llanfiangel Llantarnam
Drawn by T.Morris.

APPENDIX 1:

**Llantarnam Bypass
Field Evaluation
Specifications**

1. Objectives

- 1.1 Determination of the character, quality, significance, chronology and depth of surviving archaeological deposits.
- 1.2 Preparation of recommendations concerning protection of archaeological interests.
- 1.3 Preparation of recommendations concerning mitigation of damage to archaeological interests.

2. Trial Excavations

- 2.1 Manual excavation (following mechanical removal of topsoil) of five archaeological test sections (A, B, C, D & E - see plan attached) primarily to establish the character, quality, chronology and depth of deposits relating to known or potential archaeological features associated with the deserted medieval village of Llantarnam.

Section A will be centrally located at ST 3077 9311, oriented east-west, and will measure 65m x 3m.

Section B will be centrally located at ST 3074 9301, oriented southwest-northeast, and will measure 125m x 3m.

Section C will be centrally located at ST 3071 9292, oriented east-west, and will measure 65m x 3m.

Section D will be centrally located at ST 3080 9326, oriented southwest-northeast, and will measure 25m x 2m.

Section E will be located at ST 3080 9317, oriented northeast-southwest, and will measure 25m x 2m.

- 2.2 Throughout each section the minimum number of archaeological deposits exposed by the removal of the topsoil will be manually excavated to establish the character and chronology of past human activity.

20% of each section will be excavated to the base of that part of the stratigraphy which contains archaeological and related palaeoenvironmental evidence

to determine the potential range and depth of such deposits.

- 2.3 Recording - All archaeological deposits will be recorded using an integrated context system. Photographs of significant deposits will be 35mm format in both monochrome and colour. All plans and sections will be drawn to a scale of not less than 1.20. The site location and scale drawings will be related to the national ordnance grid.
- 2.4 Finds - All finds will be recorded using an integrated context system. Any finds not requiring conservation will be cleaned and recorded by Trust staff prior to dispatch, if necessary, for specialist study. Any finds requiring conservation will be stored in a stable condition until dispatch for treatment to an archaeological conservation laboratory.
- 2.5 Sampling - Samples for palaeoenvironmental analysis may be taken for specialist analysis in order to ascertain the potential range of such data in the event of a more intensive programme of archaeological works being required.
- 2.6 Preparation of archive of archaeological records to the specifications laid down in Management of Archaeological Projects, English Heritage, 1991.
- 3. Post-excavation
- 3.1 Assessment of information gathered through the undertaking of sections 2 and 3 above.
- 3.2 Preparation of interim statement of archaeological results.
- 3.3 Supplementary Documentary Research.
- 3.4 Arrangement of appropriate specialist services (environmental, conservation, artefact) as necessary.
- 3.5 Arrangement of deposition of artefacts\ecofacts, to an appropriate institution subject to the agreement of the site owners.
- 3.6 Deposition of the site archive with the County SMR and the National Monuments Record for Wales.
- 4. Assessment of Impact
- 4.1 Assessment of the effects of the proposed land use on the identified archaeological resource.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Preparation of recommendations for the in situ preservation of archaeological features within the development proposals.

5.2 Preparation of recommendations for the recording of archaeological features by controlled excavation where the in situ preservation of archaeological features is not possible.

6. Report

6.1 Synthesis of data gathered through the execution of 2-5 together with inclusion of supporting evidence in appendices as appropriate.

6.2 Summary of recommendations (section 5 above).

6.3 Preparation of report in appropriate publication outlet, should full excavation of the site not be needed.

APPENDIX 2:

TRIAL EXCAVATIONS AT LLANTARNAM VILLAGE

STRUCTURAL REPORT

AREA A:

This transect was designed to cut the proposed route, at the point where the road will cross the low ground beside the River Dowlais by the means of an embankment, and enter a cutting through a low ridge. The transect was divided into two parts (A1 & A2) by the presence of a high-pressure gas-main. For safety reasons, an area 10m wide was not excavated in the vicinity of the gas-main.

The topsoil was a brown silt containing very occasional sandstone stones (004), up to 0.24m in depth. At the western end of A2, two nineteenth century drains were revealed. Drain 067 ran east-west for some 10.3m from the western edge of excavation and was 0.36m wide and 0.68m deep. It was filled by large rounded sandstone cobbles and hand-made bricks (068). It terminated when it joined a north south drain (065) which crossed the area and was 0.36m wide and 0.36m deep. This drain was filled with similar material (066) to 067.

Another drain (086) crossed the area some 24m from the western edge of A2. It was 0.38m wide and 0.9m deep and filled by a brown clay containing occasional rounded sandstone cobbles (085), but unlike the previous drains it contained a ceramic drain pipe. The drain cut through a structure (111) which consisted of three stone features. The western feature was a rubble cored stone wall (006; c.2.8m long and 0.73m wide) with one course of faced angular and rounded sandstone cobbles, all bonded by a brown clay. This extended from the northern edge of the area to the point where it was cut by the drain and met a less well defined feature (091) which consisted of a roughly rectangular, north-south aligned, group of rounded and angular sandstone cobbles bonded by a brown clay, measuring c.0.7m by 0.65m. This feature may be an extension of wall 006, but is more likely to be a separate feature abutting it. Although it was thought that further structures associated with these features should be present to the east, no evidence for them was found. It is therefore probable that further structural remains are located to the south of this area.

Further east a layer of brown silty clay (088) overlay two groups of stones (089 and 090) which may be indications of pits dug into this area. Unfortunately, time factors prevented further investigation in this area.

The section through the archaeological deposits provided by drain 086 suggested that they were some 0.2m thick in this part of the transect.

The two parts of Transect A were divided by the safety zone left either side of the gas main. There was evidence in the form of a linear earthwork that the track discovered in areas B, C and D crossed through the safety zone. At the western end of Transect A1 there was a substantial ditch sequence (064). This was marked on the surface by a linear depression some 3m north-south and 4m wide. All of the ditch that was exposed in the area was excavated to a depth of 1.2m, when due to safety considerations, the excavation width was reduced to 1.5m. Excavation revealed that the ditch sequence was some 4.5m wide.

The latest feature in the sequence was a post-medieval drainage trench (084), which was 1.08m deep and 0.38m wide. It was filled with a brown silty clay (083) containing occasional rounded river cobbles and at the base, a ceramic drainage pipe bearing the name "P.B.Jones, Newport". This drain cut through ditch 080 which was a wide flat bottomed ditch measuring 0.45m in width and 1.25m in depth. It was filled by three layers of silty clay. The upper layer was a brown clay (082) containing occasional rounded sandstone cobbles and stones especially at the base of the layer. Beneath this was a thin layer of red-brown clay (081) containing frequent rounded sandstone cobbles and this overlay a thick layer of brown silty-clay (079) containing rounded sandstone cobbles and charcoal flecks. Ditch 080 cut through the upper layers of a wide steep sided flat bottomed ditch (076). This ditch was 3.1m wide, but only 0.7m of its fill survived. Two layers were observed, an area of material slumped into the trench from the western side (077) which consisted of a pink silty-clay, overlay a brown silty-clay (074) containing frequent rounded river cobbles and stones. The base of this layer was denoted by a thin layer of iron pan (0.02m thick).

The earliest ditch in the sequence (073) was cut by ditch 076. The surviving portion of the ditch was 1.45m wide and 0.52m deep. It was filled by three layers, a layer of pink silty-clay (075) appeared to have slumped into the ditch from the western side. This collapsed onto a layer of brown sandy-silt (072) with occasional charcoal flecks some 0.26m deep. This overlay a waterlogged layer of red-brown silty-sand (047) with frequent rounded sandstone cobbles, which was the deepest deposit in the ditch. This layer contained organic deposits (see report by Alison Rutherford below) including twigs and nuts.

At the eastern end of Transect A2 a layer of building rubble (087) was revealed. The area exposed was 14.5m long and across the whole of the transect. The layer was 0.25m deep and comprised angular sandstone cobbles and stones. These had produced a uniform layer of rubble with occasional undulations. The rubble was cut by a modern drain (098), 0.58m wide and 0.9m deep. It was filled by a red-brown silty clay (097) containing angular sandstone cobbles and stones, presumably derived from the rubble (087) that it cut through. At the base of the trench was a ceramic drainage pipe.

To prove that the rubble overlay a structure and was not a dump of building material, the layer was excavated. This revealed the remains of a substantial stone building. Two rubble cored walls were located both running north-south. The foundations of wall 104 consisted of one course of faced angular and rounded sandstone cobbles, 0.72m wide. To the east of the foundations an area of pitched angular sandstone blocks 1.2m wide, possibly represented part of the collapsed superstructure. 6.6m east of wall 104, the foundations of wall 101 consisted of one course of faced angular and rounded sandstone cobbles 0.6m wide. To the west of these foundations a spread of pitched angular sandstone blocks, 2.4m wide, possibly denotes a area of the collapsed superstructure. Between the two wall foundations a possible clay floor (106) 6.6m wide was situated.

The line of a possible wall (112) was denoted by a line of angular sandstone blocks, some 1.2m north-south and 0.2m wide. The area between wall 112 and wall 104 (some 1.5m) was paved by large flat sandstone slabs (107 and 108). At one point the sandstone slabs were missing and revealed another stone slabbed surface (109) some 0.1m below the original floor.

The side of drainage ditch 098 revealed that it had cut through archaeological deposits 0.4m deep.

AREA B:

The transect was cut north-east south-west, diagonally across the proposed road route. The whole transect was excavated to a depth of 1.1m. A trial section 2.2m deep was cut at the north-eastern end of the area to inspect the underlying geology and to look for a paleotopsoil mentioned in the geotechnical report (Pit K).

The topsoil (001) was a brown silt, 0.15m deep. This overlay a brown silty clay containing occasional sandstone stones (002) some 0.41m deep. These layers covered a red-brown silty-clay, containing occasional sandstone cobbles, stones and charcoal flecks (003), some 0.33m deep, except in an area at the north-eastern end where a layer of frequent angular sandstone stones and occasional rounded sandstone cobbles, marked the line of a linear feature (005) some 6.3m wide and 0.35m deep. This feature was slightly humped and may represent a road or track crossing the line of the transect. These layers were on top of a layer of light brown sand containing frequent rounded sandstone pebbles, stones and cobbles (008), up to 0.6m thick. This in turn covered an undulating layer of red-brown clay interspersed with mudstone (009).

The archaeological horizon appears to have been the red-brown silty layer 003, but no evidence for features other than the road or trackway was found. No evidence for a paleotopsoil was found and it is possible that the test-pit cut through an intrusive archaeological feature such as a pit.

AREA C:

This transect, cut east-west across the proposed line of the road. The whole transect was excavated to the base of layer 018 some 0.75m deep. Two trial pits were excavated into the top of 019 to a depth of 0.5m to investigate the underlying geology.

The topsoil was a dark grey-brown silty-clay containing moderate quantities of pebbles and angular sandstone stones (013) some 0.22m in depth. This layer merged with a red-brown silty clay containing moderate quantities of rounded sandstone cobbles and pebbles (017), 0.35m deep. At the eastern end a linear spread of rounded and angular sandstone cobbles crossed the area (110), 0.35m deep. This appears to have been the surface of a trackway or road and is probably a continuation of feature 005 seen in Area B. These layers overlay a pink silty-clay layer containing occasional rounded sandstone cobbles (018), 0.2m deep. Underneath this layer was a yellow silty sand containing frequent cobbles and pebbles over 0.5m in depth (019).

The archaeological horizon appears to be the pink silty clay layer (018). Apart from the road or trackway (110), no archaeological features were identified in this area.

AREA D:

This transect was 55m long and positioned to diagonally cross (north-east south-west) the proposed road and cut through the linear earthwork which extended from the gate at the end of Abbey Lane westwards towards the Abbey.

15m from the western end of the transect a linear spread of rounded and angular sandstone cobbles and stones (040), some 3m wide delineated the line of the track previously seen in areas B and C. To the south of the track a ditch (043), 2.4m wide, running east-west was located. This was filled by three layers, the upper one (037) being a brown silty-clay containing occasional sandstone stones and charcoal flecks, 0.28m deep. This overlay a layer of grey silty-clay containing frequent charcoal flecks and occasional sandstone cobbles, 0.2m deep. The base deposit was a brown silt containing occasional charcoal flecks (056) some 0.14m deep. The ditch ran alongside an area of hardstanding which was present over all of rest of the area (059). This appears to be a road and formed the linear earthwork running from the end of Abbey Lane. It would therefore appear that ditch 043 represents a roadside ditch.

It would appear that the road had been narrowed by the construction of a rubble cored wall (044). This consisted of three courses of faced angular sandstone blocks bonded by a yellow mortar 0.62m wide. This had been built in a foundation trench (053) at least 1.35m wide and 0.34m deep. The gap between the edge of the foundation trench and the wall being filled with brown silty-clay and occasional sandstone cobbles. An area of

road surface (059) 14m long was recorded. The final surface consisted of well bedded sandstone stones. This was overlain by three patches of rubble (054, 057 and 058). These appear to have been derived from the collapse of the roadside wall (044).

At a point 11.5m from the eastern end of the transect a sondage was excavated to investigate the depth of the road surfaces. This showed that the road was only 0.23m thick, but at this point it had been constructed over an earlier pit (063). The pit was 0.53m deep and appeared to have been lined by a stone and mortar wall (062) 0.3m wide.

AREA E:

This transect cut east-west across the proposed road route. It was positioned so that it would intercept any leat leading to the east of the Mill Barn, and to cut through a rectangular earthwork.

No indications of a leat were discovered at the western end of the transect but the area was covered by up to 0.7m of topsoil and made ground. It is possible that any watercourse leading to the mill would have been contained in a trough at this point. 10m from the western end of the transect a large pit had been dug. The pit (035) was 3m in diameter and 0.8m deep. It was filled with two layers (033 and 034) of black silty soil containing frequent sandstone cobbles and numerous bottles and jars. These items were all manufactured in the early 20th century and it would appear that pit 035 was dug for the disposal of rubbish in this period.

The eastern side of pit 035 cut through the western wall (032) of a building. Wall 032 consisted of two courses of faced rounded and angular sandstone cobbles bonded by a white/yellow mortar. It crossed the trench north-south and was 0.45m wide. It possibly butted an east-west wall (025) which divided the excavated area into two parts. The wall consisted one course of faced rounded and angular sandstone cobbles bonded by a white/yellow mortar. In parts it only survived as patches of mortar, but it was at least 7.2m long and 0.45m wide. It abuts a north-south wall (022, 023 and 024) consisting of two courses of faced rounded and angular sandstone cobbles bonded by a brown clay. It was at least 2.2m long and 0.75m wide and can be divided into three parts possibly due to the presence of a threshold (023) in the centre of the exposed area. A fourth wall may be situated

2.1 m west of wall 024, where a change in the surface coincides with a group of angular sandstone cobbles, two of which appear to have been faced.

The walls divide the exposed area of the building into four rooms. The north-western room was only partly uncovered. The majority of the floor would appear to have been red-brown clay (031) with occasional charcoal flecks but, in one area a small

patch of rounded sandstone cobbles (036) bonded by a brown clay may represent the partial survival of a cobbled floor. The south-western room measured 3.6m east-west and had been refloored on at least three occasions. The latest surface was a white mortar floor of which an area 3.6m by c.1.6m survived. This floor was 0.1m thick and had been laid on top of a red clay makeup layer (029), 0.06m thick. This covered another floor surface consisting of a grey mortar (030) containing frequent charcoal flecks. This surface had been laid on the same surface (031) as was present in the north-western room. The central room was at least 2m north-south and 1.65m wide. It had a brown clay surface (024) covered by occasional angular stone rubble. The eastern room was only partly uncovered. It measured more than 2.4m north-south and was surfaced by rounded river cobbles set in a brown clay (020).

APPENDIX 3:

The Finds by S.H.Sell

Finds from a total of twenty-three contexts were presented for analysis. Of these most represented clearance of overburden and cleaning down to underlying structural remains and other archaeological deposits. There is an extensive archive containing full details of the artefactual record, but only contexts 006, 010, 016, and 087 need consideration in detail (see below). The nature of the other contexts is reflected by the material presented, which ranges from fragments of prehistoric flint-working waste (contexts 001, 013, and 088) through to 20th century material, from topsoil clearance and from pit 033, of which more later. The Roman period is represented by two undiagnostic sherds, one of colour-coat and the other of red-ware, from contexts 037 and 082 and a piece of brick possibly from re-use in Llantarnam Abbey, from context 038. Medieval pottery and roof-tile was noted in contexts 001, 002, 004, 006, 010, 037, 039, 041 and 087. Apart from the contents of pit 033 (see below) all of the rest of the assemblage would probably either fit within the period 1550 - 1850 or cannot be dated empirically (items such as animal bone, most ironwork, slags etc.). A large quantity of brick or tile fragments, notably from contexts 014, 016, and 039 almost certainly derive from post-medieval bricks, probably dating to the earlier part of the period - more complete examples of that date were recovered from contexts 016 and 056 and pit 033; however, as noted above, Roman building material was present on the site (context 038) albeit probably in a secondary, medieval guise, and some of the other undiagnostic fragments may be Roman rather than the post-medieval in date. The medieval structural evidence is enhanced by the presence of a limestone shaft fragment, either from blind arcading or from a doorway, and exhibiting claw-tooling characteristic of the medieval period¹ (context 057); an almost complete micaceous sandstone roof-tile from context 074 could also belong to the same period. No doubt attaches to the ceramic roof-tile present in small degrees; although much of it was badly abraded, these pieces point more clearly to the presence of medieval buildings in the vicinity than the evidence of a scatter of medieval pottery. Taken together, the evidence can not be denied.

Pit 033 deserves a brief mention, if only for the very large assemblage of late 19th century or early 20th century bottles, jars and other hardware present (over 35kg), and the fact that much of it was intact. Perhaps it represents a clearance over and above normal rubbish disposal in the days before municipal collections.

1. I am indebted to my colleague David Evans for this information.

Contexts 006, 010, 016, 087 must be considered in more detail, although only 006 and 087 contained medieval ceramic material in any quantity. Perhaps ten different fabrics (or pots) were noted from 006, both glazed and unglazed, in an assemblage of 20 sherds (0.220kg). This included fragments of jugs with both thumbled and plain bases and the everted rim of a cooking pot. A little medieval tile was also present, and a small quantity of post-medieval finds. Context 010 contained a much greater proportion of post-medieval material - much of it probably dates to the eighteenth century. There were two medieval sherds and one fragment of tile. No medieval finds were noted in context 016, but a wide selection of predominantly 18th century material was represented. Context 087, by contrast, produced 18 pieces (0.340kg) of medieval tile and only one sherd, probably of late medieval or early post-medieval date; there were no other dateable finds.

A number of other finds of interest in their own right, although irrelevant to the site, deserve brief mention. A bronze rowel-spur, probably of 18th century date, came from context 014, and a gilded bronze ?harness mount with floral decoration, still attached to its leather backing, from context 039. A 16th or 17th century date has been given to this piece - it is most unlikely to be medieval. Context 039 also produced a lead musket ball (another came from context 013), a sixpence of 1816 and part of a bottle seal, unfortunately not dated, which may be contemporary with the neck of an "onion" bottle from context 014 which can be dated to c.1700. Two other coins were noted, an Elizabethan shilling (fifth issue) from topsoil and part of a George II halfpenny from context 016 (giving perhaps a new meaning to the term "cut halfpenny"?). Finally, a bronze button from topsoil depicting a squirrel has a parallel device on a seal matrix found in the locality; this may thus be a livery button with local connections.

In fine, an interesting collection of finds with some significant indications of medieval occupation at no great distance, and a variety of artefacts from the post-medieval period. And, of course pit group 033.

APPENDIX 4:

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT by ALISON S. RUTHERFORD

5kg of sediment (188/047) was removed from the basal deposits of ditch 073, the earliest and deepest cutting of ditch sequence 064. The sediment was washed through a nest of sieves of mesh size 2mm, 1mm, and 500 microns.

The biological preservation was good with a variety of remains intact. Small fragments of charcoal, plant roots and stems, hazel nut shells, twigs and a variety of weed seeds have survived. The weed seeds included Rubus sp. (raspberry family) and Rumex sp. (dock). Rumex made up the vast majority of the surviving seeds. Both Rumex and Rubus grow in grassy or open ground areas and could have been deposited in the ditch during its natural silting up process. These weeds could have been growing on the sides or edges of the ditch.

The small charcoal fragments were unidentified and could either suggest human activity nearby, or possibly a natural fire. The former would appear more likely as human occupation is evident near to the ditch.

The twigs and hazel nuts could suggest bushes or trees within a close vicinity, and could have fallen into the ditch during its natural silting up process.

The biological remains surviving in the ditch are not sufficient to be able to suggest a use for the ditch or the nature of the human activity taking place in the area.

APPENDIX 5:

CATALOGUE OF MATERIAL HELD IN THE SITE ARCHIVE

1. Correspondence relating to the fieldwork (but excluding financial and contractual matters.
2. Survey Reports
 - i) Geotechnical Report by Thyssen Geotechnic (Part)
 - ii) Previous Assessment Report
 - iii) Historical Documents and Notes
3. Photographic Records:-
 - i) Monochrome (35mm) Original Negatives and Contact Prints and Index.
 - ii) Colour Slide (35mm) Original Negatives (Unmounted) and Index.
4. Site Drawings
 - i) Plans:-Ink 10 Pencil 10.
 - ii) Sections:- Ink 12 Pencil 12
 - iii) Site Level and Total Station Records
4. Site Context Records
 - i) Site Context Records (112)
5. Finds
 - i) Pottery stored by Context
 - ii) Finds Context Records
6. Sample Forms
Samples not retained

TRIAL EXCAVATIONS AT LLANTARNAM VILLAGE, GWENT

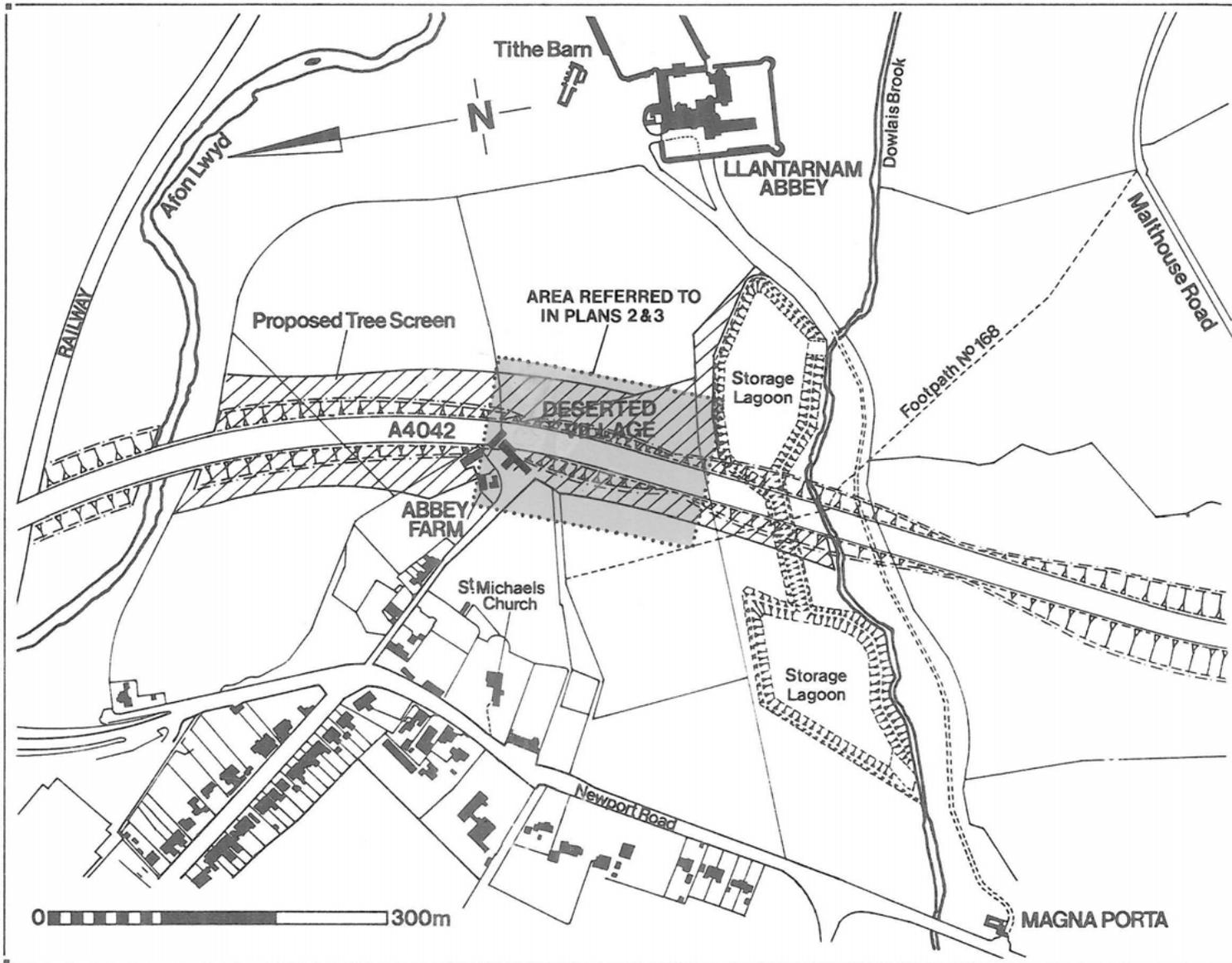
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FIGURES

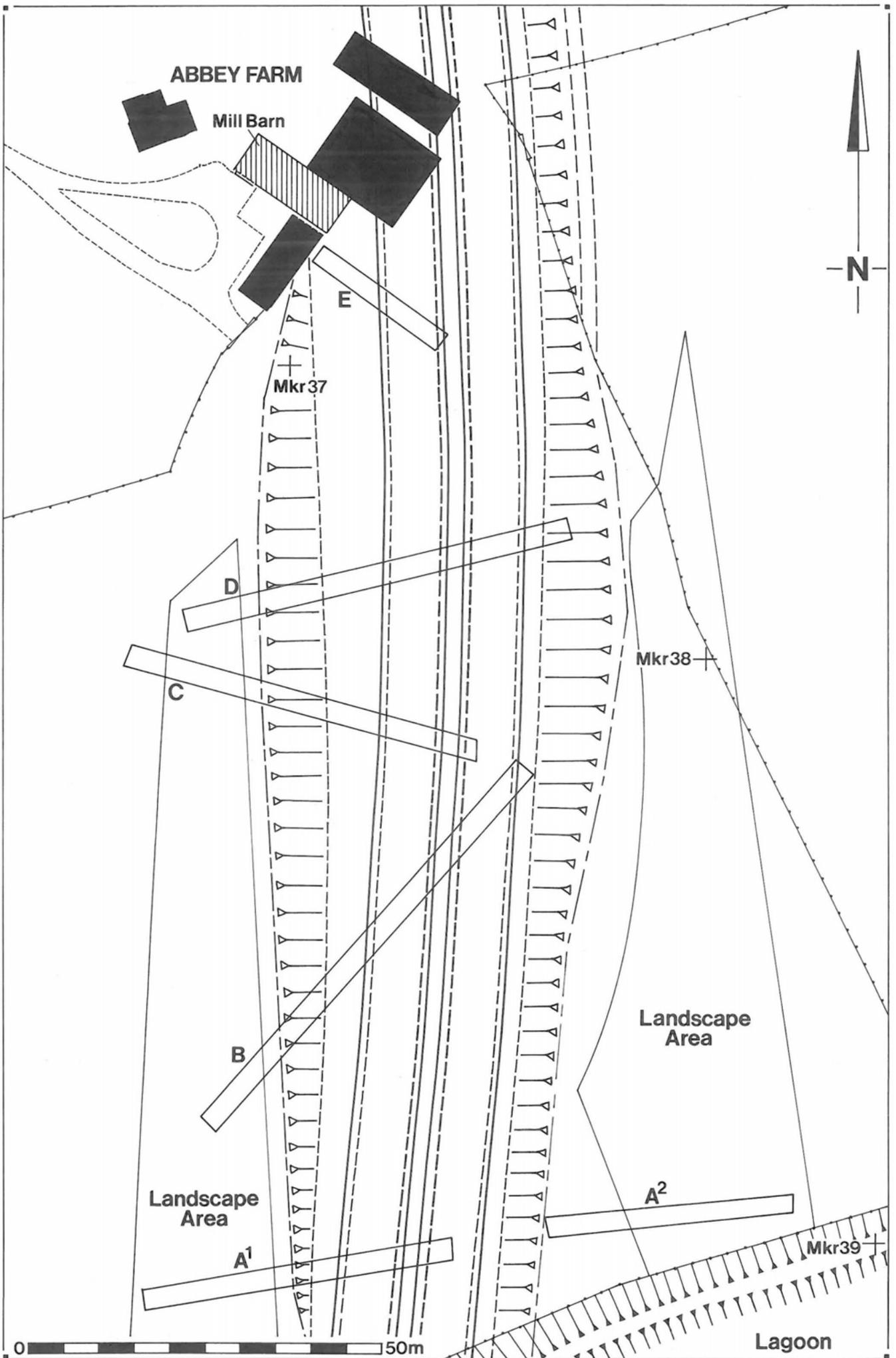
1. Location Of Site
2. Position of Transects Across Proposed Road
3. Archaeological Features
4. Plan of Transect A1
5. Section of Ditch in Area A1
6. Plan of Transect A2 (after removal of upper demolition layer)
7. Plan of Transect D
8. Plan of Transect E
9. Rim of Medieval Cooking Pot (C13th/C14th)
10. Gilded Bronze Harness Mount With Floral Decoration
(late C16th/C17th)

Plates

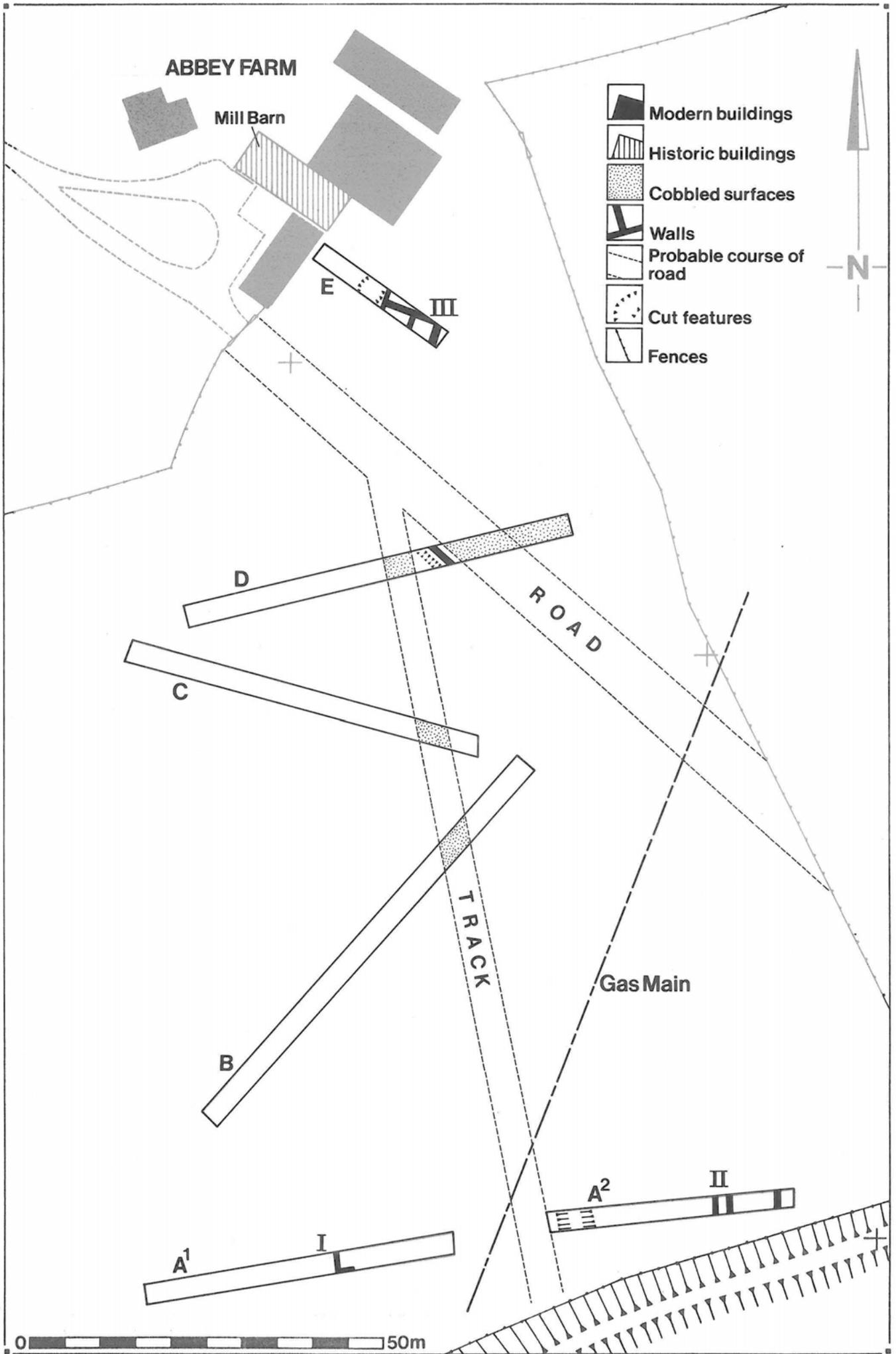
1. Bottle Seal (AD 1680 -1760)
2. Neck of "Onion" Bottle (c.AD 1700)
3. Bronze Rowel-Spur (C18th)
4. Reverse of Elizabethan Shilling (Fifth Issue AD 1595-8)



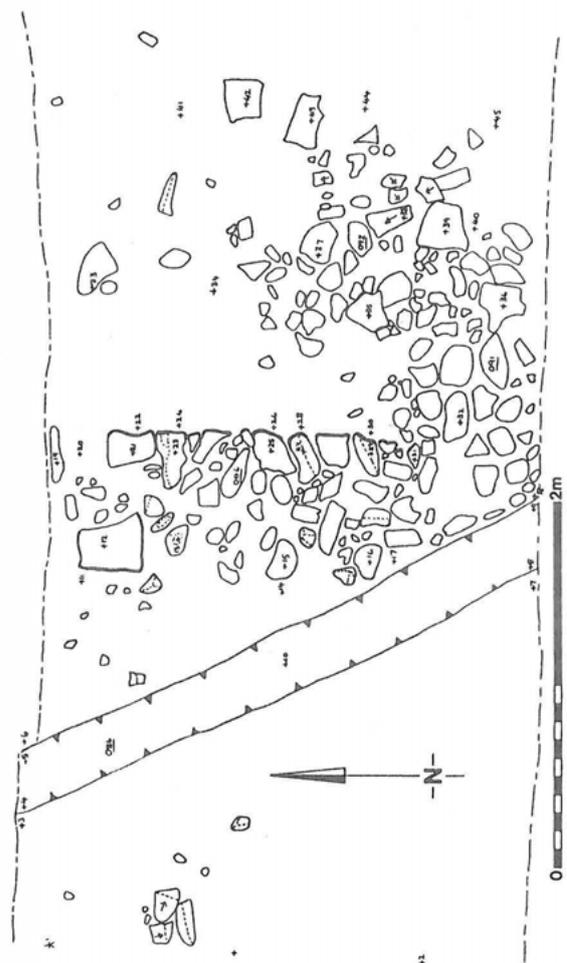
1. Location Of Site



2. Position of Transects Across Proposed Road



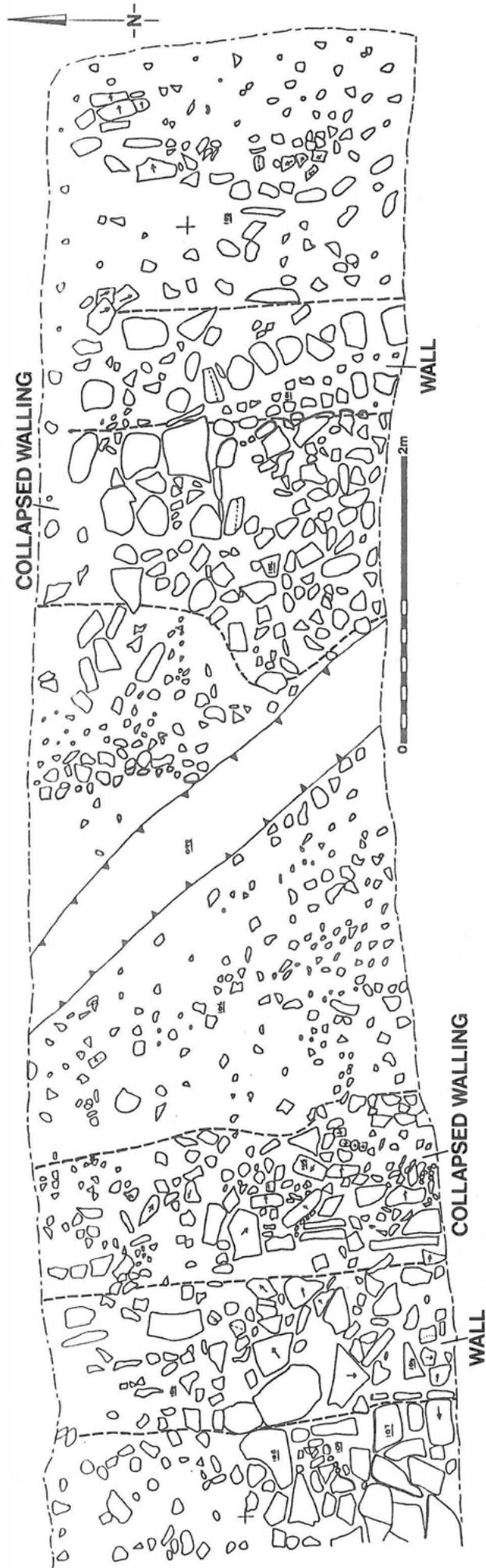
3. Archaeological Features



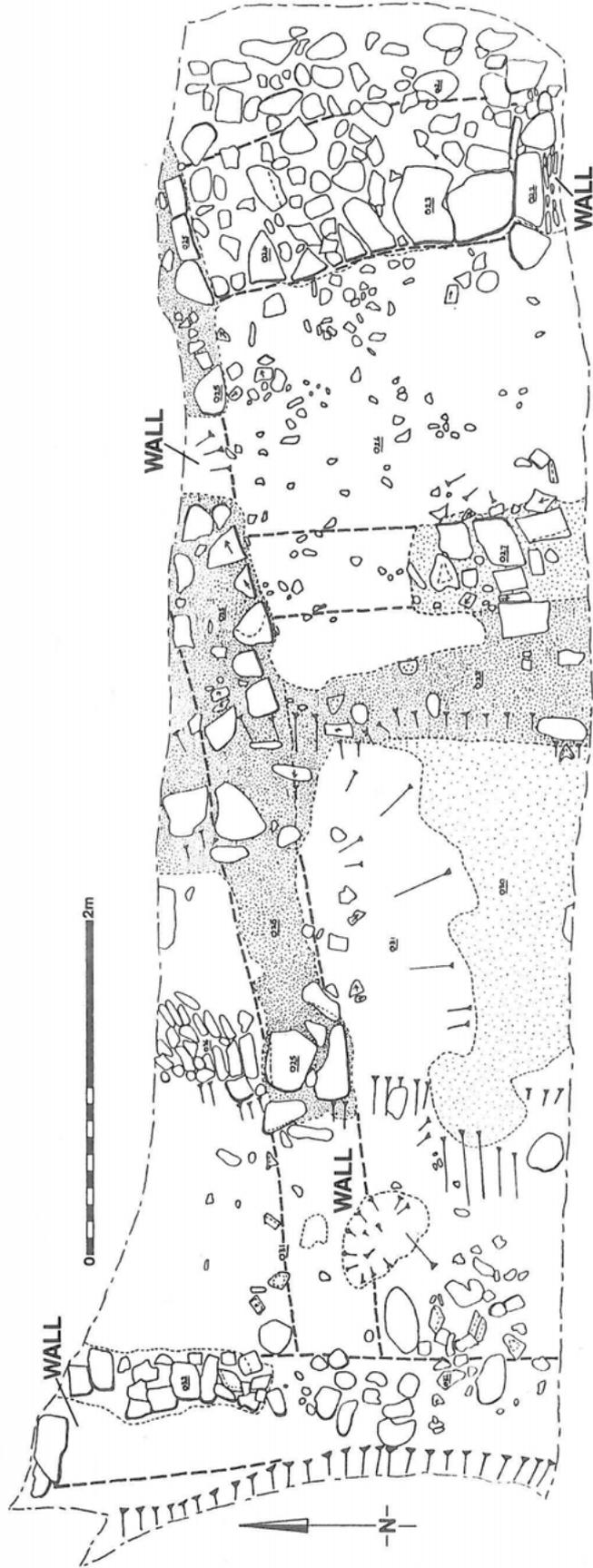
4. Plan of Transect A1



5. Section of Ditch in Area A1



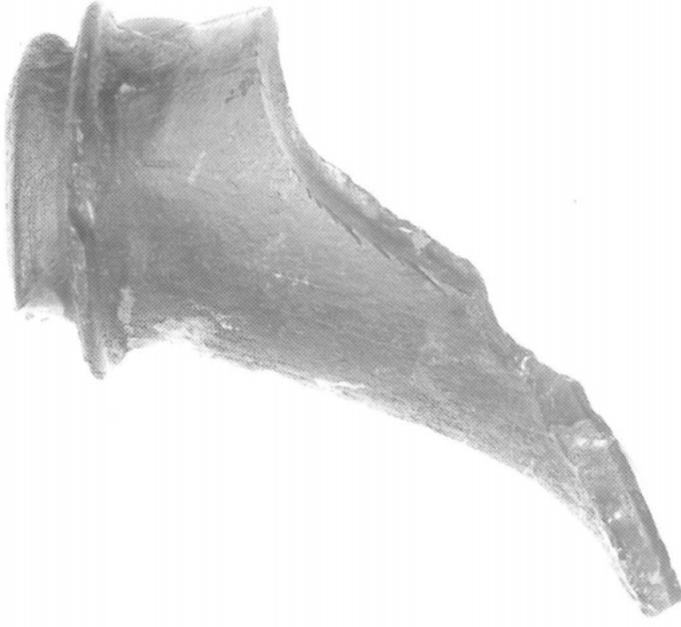
6. Plan of Transect A2 (after removal of upper demolition layer)



8. Plan of Transect E



1. Bottle Seal (AD 1680 -1760)



2. Neck of "Onion" Bottle (c.AD 1700)



3. Bronze Rowel-Spur (C18th)



4. Reverse of Elizabethan Shilling
(Fifth Issue AD 1595-8)