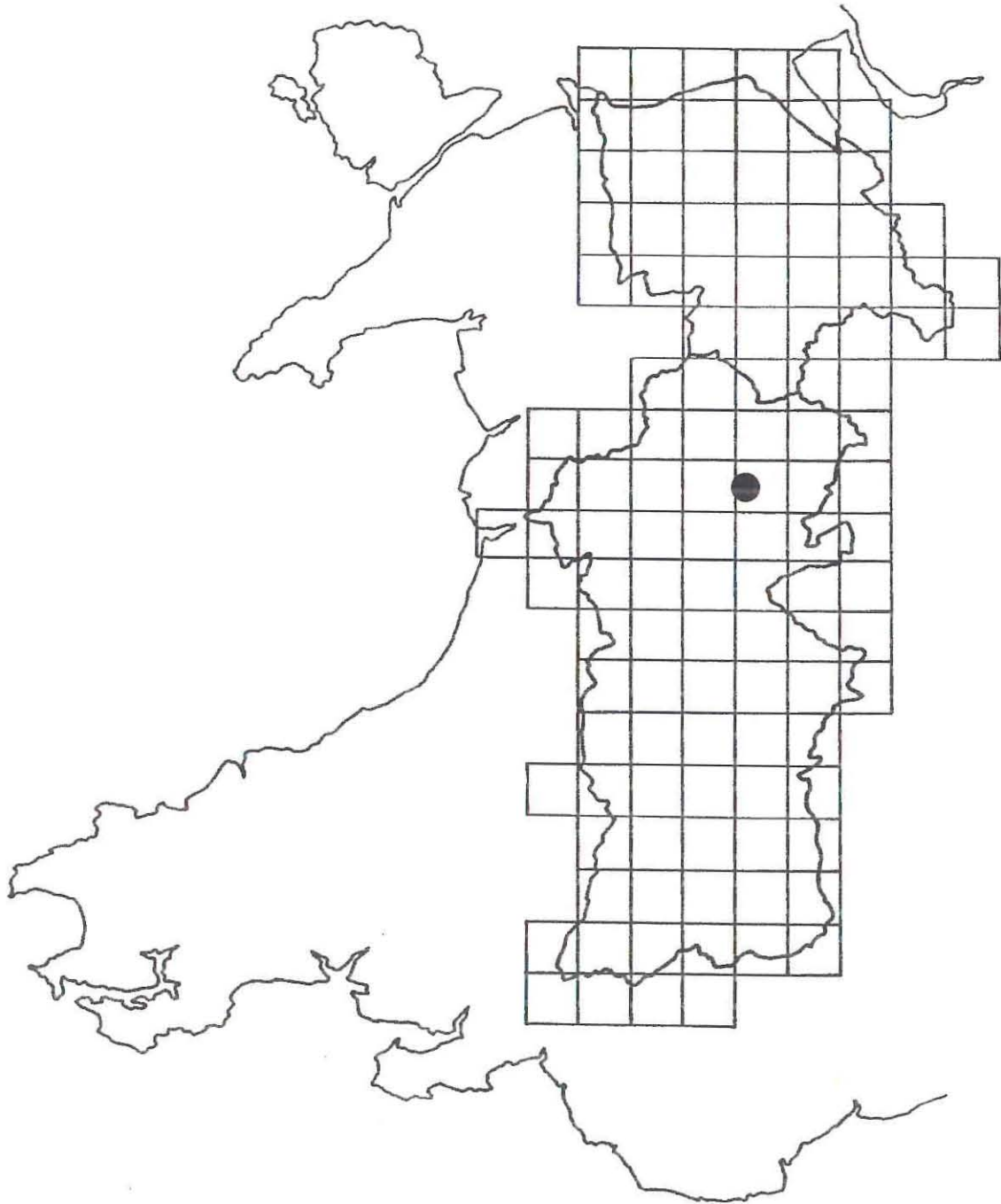


Tanllan Enclosure, Llanfair Caereinion, Powys
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



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by **N. W. Jones**
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Report prepared for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 1995 the Contracting Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (hereafter CPAT) was invited by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments to prepare a specification and tender for an archaeological evaluation to determine the archaeological sensitivity of the proposal to plough and reseed an area encompassing the Scheduled Ancient Monument known as Tanllan Enclosure, Llanfair Caereinion (SAM MG203, PRN 2505).

1.2 The evaluation was requested by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments acting in their role as archaeological advisors to the Secretary of State for Wales.

2 LOCATION (Fig. 1)

2.1 The enclosure is situated c. 300m SW of Tanllan, centred at SJ 1060 0715, and lies at the crest of a slope forming the NW side of the Banwy valley 0.5km N of Llanfair Caereinion.

2.2 The site was initially discovered by aerial photography which revealed a multivallate enclosure c. 130m across, which is likely to date to the later prehistoric period.

2.3 The enclosure now lies within two fields, a relatively recent fence now running through the northern defenses. The majority of the enclosure lies within the southern field, which is the subject of the application. At present the field is pasture, and has not been ploughed for approximately 18 years. The northern field is also pasture and was last ploughed about 9 years ago.

2.4 An inspection of the site revealed that bedrock was exposed in several places along the inside of the northern defensive bank where there has been some erosion by sheep. It would appear that the bank has been constructed partly along a natural ridge, so that the surviving extent of the bank is considerably less than it might appear. Elsewhere, the bedrock appears to be fairly close to the surface.

3 THE EVALUATION

3.1 CPAT was commissioned to undertake the evaluation, which was carried out on 22nd August 1995. In accordance with recommendations by Cadw, a single trial trench was excavated to determine the extent of the surviving archaeology and to evaluate the significance and likely dating of any features revealed (Fig. 1). The trench was excavated entirely by hand to a maximum depth of c. 0.28m. A full drawn, written and photographic record was maintained throughout the evaluation. In addition to the evaluation trench, the opportunity was also taken to survey the surviving earthworks in order to provide a context for the evaluation results. Figure 1 shows the earthwork survey with the projected line of ditches plotted from available aerial photographs. Contours are only approximately related to Ordnance Datum. The results from the excavations were as follows:

3.2 Trench A (2 x 1m Fig. 2). Numbers in brackets refer to Fig. 2.

3.2.1 The trench was located on the crest of the northern defensive bank adjacent to the line of a former field boundary which bisected the enclosure.

3.2.2 The upper c. 0.10m of consisted of topsoil (1), which was removed to reveal a layer of yellow-brown stony clay-silt (2). This would appear to represent the former ploughsoil, which extended to a depth of c. 0.25m below the surface.

3.2.3 Beneath the old ploughsoil a layer of small angular stone in a clay matrix (3) extended over the western part of the trench. This overlay a yellow-brown silty clay (4), which sloped away at either end of the trench (see section Fig. 2). No features were evident within the excavated area, and no artefacts were recovered.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The evaluation revealed that the site had previously been ploughed to a depth of c. 0.25m within the area investigated. It is possible that the two layers revealed beneath the old ploughsoil represent in situ bank material, although this could not be confirmed due to the limited nature of the evaluation.

4.2 The results from the evaluation and the earthwork survey would suggest that some of the defensive bank still survives, at least along the northern side, where it is also possible to trace the line of the inner ditch. Elsewhere, previous ploughing, presumably over several centuries, has levelled the remaining sections of the bank and infilled the ditches. It would also appear the ploughing has spread bank material onto the interior.

4.3 The evidence from the evaluation would suggest, therefore, that the proposed ploughing is unlikely to result in significant further damage to the monument unless the plough penetrates to a depth much in excess of 0.25m. The close proximity of bedrock to the surface would suggest that previous ploughing has already removed above ground traces of the enclosure over much of the area, although the interior may have been protected to some extent by redeposited bank material.

APPENDIX 1

ENCLOSURE 300m SW OF TAN-LLAN, LLANFAIR CAEREINION.

SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION BY CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

1 Introduction

1.1 The proposed development of a block of land centred on SJ106072 involves the ploughing and reseeded of pastureland.

1.2 Within this area lies a multivallate enclosure likely to date to the later prehistoric period. The site was discovered by aerial photography as a triple ditched enclosure and subsequent field visits have confirmed the presence of slight remains of attendant earthworks.

1.3 Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the Secretary of State for Wales have determined that a field evaluation is necessary to assess the implications of the proposed development on the archaeological resource.

2 Objectives

2.1 The objectives of the evaluation are:

2.1.1 to reveal by means of an evaluation trench, the nature, condition, significance and, where possible, the chronology of the archaeology within the area of the proposed development in so far as these aims are possible;

2.1.2 to record any archaeology revealed in the evaluation trenches;

2.1.3 to prepare a report outlining the results of the field evaluation and incorporating sufficient information on the archaeological resource for a reasonable planning decision to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the area affected by the proposed development;

2.1.4 to identify and make recommendations options for the management of the archaeological resource, including any further provision for that resource where it is considered necessary.

3 Methods

3.1 Stage one will take the form of a single trench, approx 2m long by 1m wide across the surviving earthwork at a point to be agreed with the applicant. Where required these will be taken to a maximum depth of 1.2m below the existing ground surface. Consultation with the client and the curator will be necessary before this depth is exceeded.

3.2 The evaluation will be undertaken using standard evaluation procedures:

3.2.1 removal of modern overburden by machine;

3.2.2 evaluation of the archaeological deposits by hand trowelling to establish their importance and integrity, but avoiding any unnecessary disturbance of the deposits. All features encountered will be examined as fully as appropriate to fulfil the requirements of the evaluation and within the constraints imposed by time and safety considerations.

3.2.3 all archaeological contexts recorded using the standard numbered context system employed by CPAT. All significant contexts to be planned and/or drawn in section at appropriate scales (as defined in the Evaluation Brief), and photographed in monochrome and colour. All drawn records will be related to control points depicted on modern maps.

3.2.4 all archaeological artefacts and environmental samples recorded and processed in a manner appropriate to the material involved. Those requiring conservation or other specialist treatment will be stored in a stable environment until such times as they can be examined by a specialist. All finds, except those deemed to be Treasure Trove, are the property of the landowner. It is anticipated that they will be donated to the appropriate local or regional museum, subject to agreement being reached with the landowner and the museum curator.

3.3 Following the on-site work an illustrated and bound report will be prepared according to the principles laid out in the Evaluation Brief (section 3.8). This will be in A4 format and contain conventional sections on: Site location, Topography and Geology; Historic Background; Excavation; Conclusions and Recommendations and References, together with appropriate appendices on archives and finds.

3.4 The site archive will be prepared to specifications laid out in Appendix 3 in the Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991).

4 Resources and Programming

4.1 The evaluation will be undertaken by a small team of two skilled archaeologists under the direct supervision of an experienced field archaeologist, who will also be responsible for undertaking the desk-based assessment. Overall supervision will be by Dr A Gibson, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

4.2 All report preparation will be completed by the same field archaeologist who conducted the evaluation.

4.3 It is anticipated that the assessment and evaluation will take no more than three days in all and that the subsequent report would be prepared immediately thereafter, dependent on the client's instructions and the arrangement of a suitable timetable. The date of commencement, at the time of writing, has yet to be agreed with the client, and will be dependent on the state of the site. The archaeological curator will be informed of the detailed timetable and staffing levels when agreement has been reached with the client.

4.4 Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.

4.5 CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance.

A.M. Gibson
26th July 1995

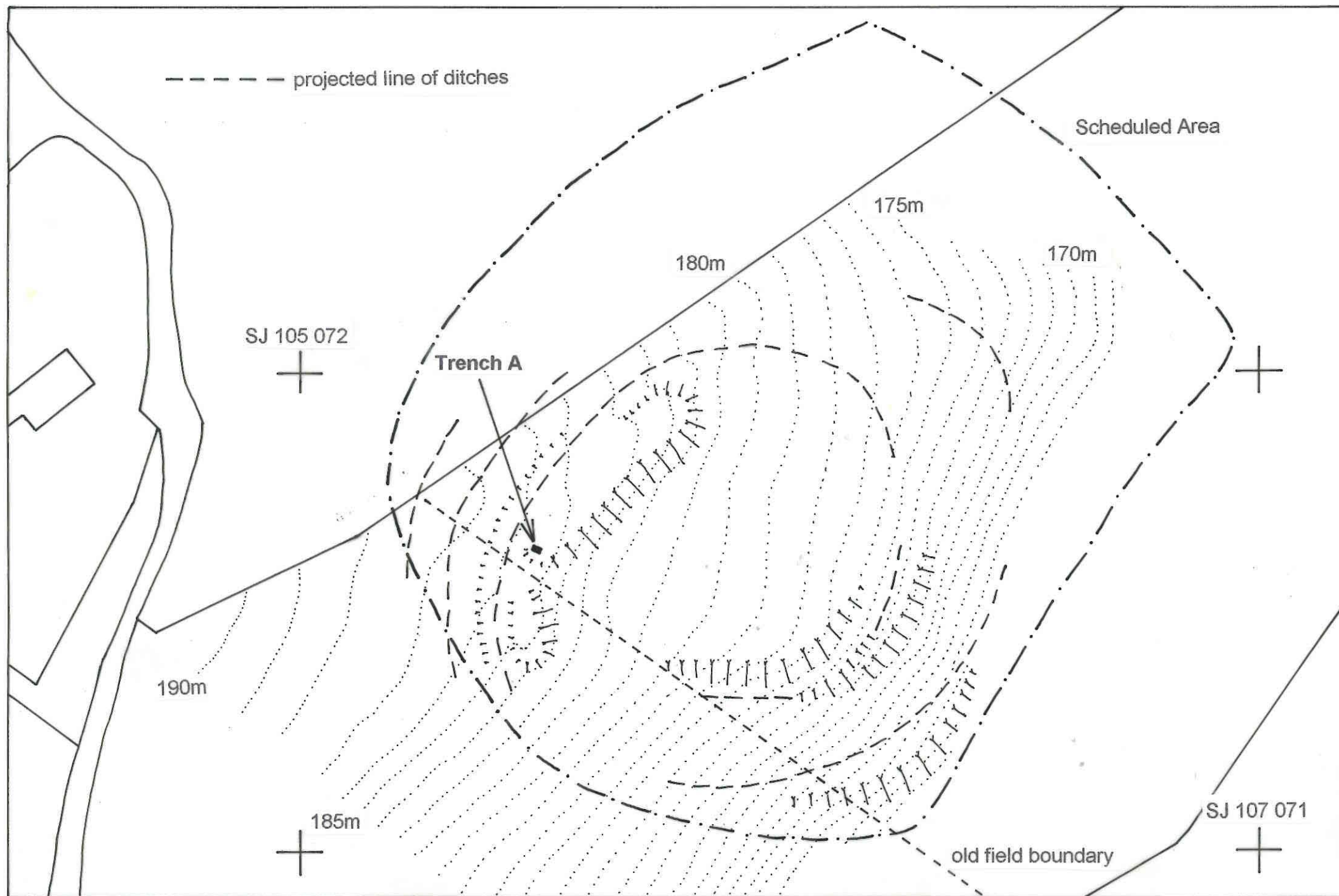


Fig 1. Location and earthwork survey. 1:1,000

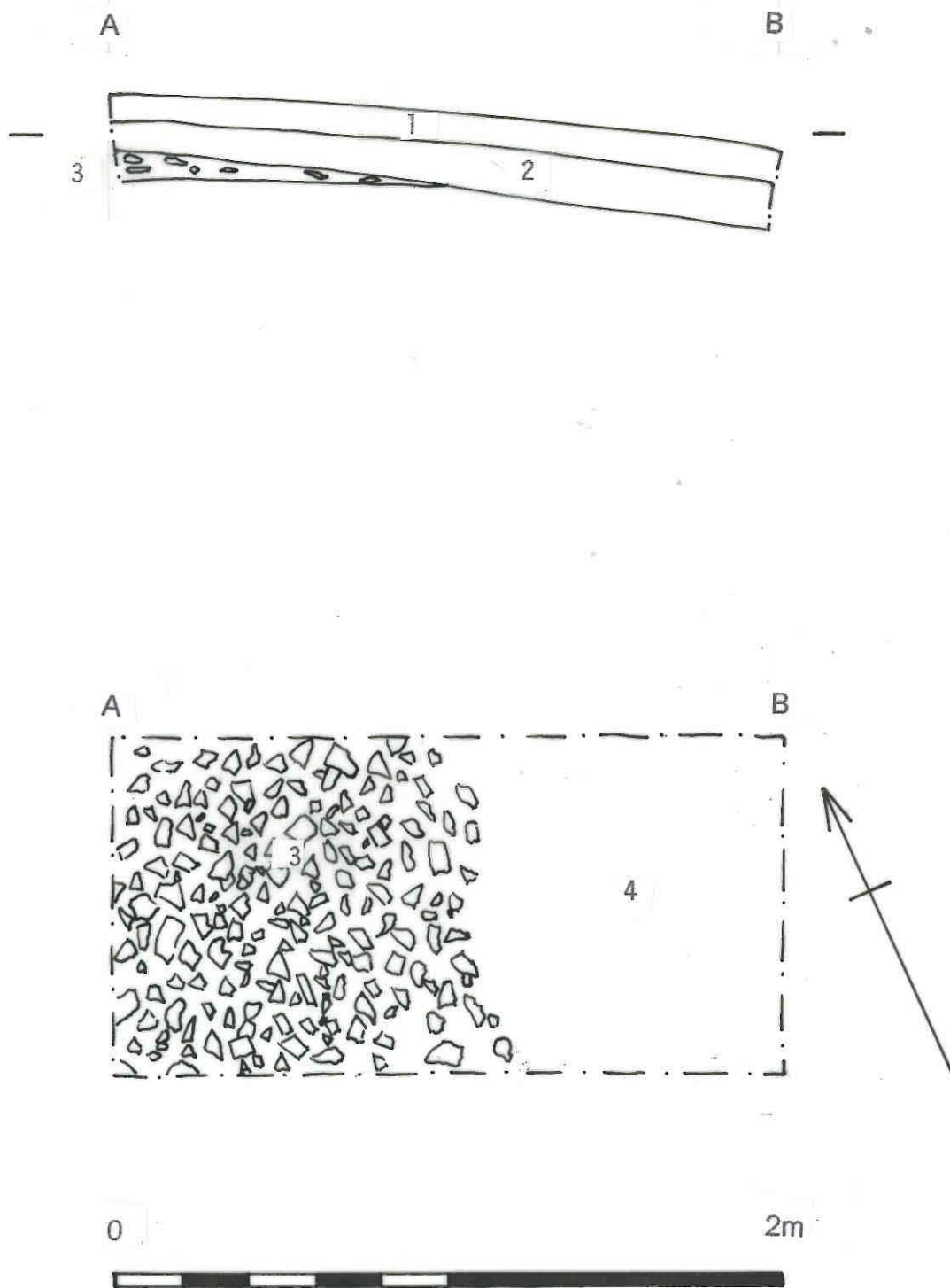


Fig. 2 Trench A plan and section . 1:20