

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

*Llanymynech Golf Club*  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AND WATCHING BRIEF

CPAT Report No 228

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**W.G. OWEN**  
June 1997

Report for Munro Associates


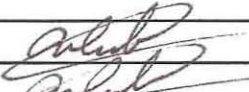

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## CPAT Report Record

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 1995, the Contracts Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (henceforth CPAT Contracts) was requested by Munro Associates, acting on behalf of their client Llanymynech Golf Club, to submit a quotation and specification for undertaking archaeological work at the site of a new machinery store and greenkeeper's office at Llanymynech Golf Course.
- 1.2 The development lies within Llanymynech Hillfort (fig. 1), a monument of national importance and protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Mg 30). Scheduled Monument Consent for the works was granted by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, which was conditional on a specified archaeological response, which consisted of three stages:
- Stage 1 The archaeological excavation of station pits on the northern side of the steel-framed building and a watching brief to monitor all other groundworks with the exception of the excavation of strip foundations.
- Stage 2 The total archaeological excavation and recording of the area of the strip foundations.
- Stage 3 Post-excavation research and preparation of a report.
- 1.3 CPAT Contracts were subsequently commissioned by the Llanymynech Golf Club to carry out the work. Stage 1 was completed in December 1995 and a modified version of Stage 2 in January 1996.

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The archaeological background of Llanymynech hillfort has been previously summarised in the report on the archaeological evaluation work carried out in April 1995 (Fig. 2) and which preceded the granting of SMC for the present works (Thomas 1995). This report also concluded that, although no structural features of archaeological significance were revealed, artefacts of Iron Age date were recovered from a soil layer (Thomas 1995, context 6) which was interpreted as a possible old ground surface dating to this period. In addition, a flint core recovered from the topsoil layer suggested the strong possibility of prehistoric occupation nearby.

## 3 STAGE 1a: EXCAVATION OF STATION PITS

- 3.1 Four station pits on the northern side of the building were excavated under Stage 1 of the Specification (Fig. 2). In each case, the overburden, consisting of hardcore and rubble, was removed mechanically and subsequent excavation carried out manually.
- 3.2 Station Pit A (1.1 x 1.1m; Fig. 3)
- 3.2.1 Removal of the overburden (01) exposed a thin layer of grey clay (02) c. 0.04m thick, which extended across the surface of the pit at a depth of c. 0.35m below the present ground surface. A flint scraper of Neolithic or Early Bronze Age origin was recovered from the interface of contexts 01 and 02. Below the clay layer, a brown clayey loam (03), which was interpreted as hillwash, extended down to the yellow-brown natural clay soil (04) at a depth of c. 0.85m. In the south-eastern corner of the station pit, the natural was cut by a shallow pit (05), 0.25m deep, which extended beyond the limits of excavation. The fill of the pit was indistinguishable from layer 03. Apart from a small fragment of animal bone, no finds were recovered from this pit. A soil sample from context 05 was removed for possible analysis.
- 3.3 Station Pit B (1.0 x 1.0m; Fig. 4)
- 3.3.1 Removal of the concrete and hardcore overburden (01) exposed a grey clay layer (06) similar in texture and thickness to layer 02 in Station Pit A. Below this, a dark brown clayey loam layer (07), c. 0.18m thick merged at a depth of 0.50m into a layer (08) which was similar in colour and texture but contained charcoal flecks. This layer extended to yellow-brown natural clay at a depth of 0.70m, and was cut by a pit (09), 0.20m deep, which extended beyond the limits of excavation. Its fill (10) was similar to context 08 but contained more frequent charcoal flecks. No finds were recovered from Station Pit 2 but a sample of context 10 was removed for possible analysis.



### 3.4 Stantion Pit C (1.1 x 1.1m; Fig. 5)

- 3.4.1 Removal of the overburden (01) exposed a loam soil (11), c. 0.15m thick which overlay a dark brown clay (12) c. 0.20m thick extending to the yellow-brown natural clay at a depth of c. 0.50m. Both this layer and context 12 were truncated by a drainage channel (13), finds from which indicated that it was of modern origin. At the level of the natural clay this channel cut two elongated features (14) and (15) which were interpreted as ard or plough marks. The surface of the natural clay was also cut by a shallow, bowl-shaped pit (16) 0.20m deep. No finds were recovered from Stantion Pit 3 but a soil sample was removed from context 15 for possible analysis.

### 3.5 Stantion Pit D

- 3.5.1 The investigation revealed extensive modern disturbance and rubble deposits, with no archaeological features recorded or finds recovered from this pit.

## 4 STAGE 1b: WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.1 Following the excavation of the stantion pits on the northern side of the plot, a watching brief was maintained as the remaining six stantion post pits (Nos E-J) were excavated mechanically. As these were excavated, exposed soil surfaces were examined for archaeological features and the spoil examined for finds. After the pits were completely excavated, exposed surfaces were cleaned manually and, with the exception of Stantion Pit G whose position coincided with a concrete tank, a representative section was drawn.
- 4.2 Soils exposed in Stantion Pits E and F showed no signs of disturbance, the loam topsoil overlying a clean, yellowish-buff coloured silty clay subsoil with sandstone bedrock exposed in Stantion Pit F at a depth of 0.80m. No features of archaeological significance were visible.
- 4.3 Stantion Pits G, H and I were all disturbed by a modern pipe-trench to some extent but sufficient was exposed to demonstrate that they contained no archaeological features. Soils in Stantion Pits H and I contained abundant sandstone fragments probably derived from the rock face to the south of and overlooking the site and which may have been quarried in the past.
- 4.4 The silty clay subsoil in Stantion Pit I was severely truncated by hardcore overburden and, again, showed no archaeological features.
- 4.5 No finds other than material of recent date were recovered from any of the pits.

## 5 STAGE 2: EXCAVATION OF STRIP FOUNDATIONS

- 5.1 As a result of communications problems between Munro Associates and their building contractors, the strip foundations were excavated mechanically without archaeological supervision. CPAT Contracts were only informed after the work had been carried out and were therefore unable to undertake the complete archaeological excavation and recording of the strip foundations as defined in Stage 3 of the specification.
- 5.2 Following instructions from Dr Sian Rees, CPAT Contracts were able to examine the foundation trenches and clean and record one appropriate section between each of the stantion pits. Since most of the sections revealed little in the way of archaeological detail, only those with significant features are illustrated here.
- 5.3 Section C-D (Fig. 6)
- 5.3.1 Immediately below the hardcore layer (17) and c. 0.30m below the present ground surface, a layer of grey clay (18) was visible similar to the clay layers 02 and 06 identified in Stantion Pits A and B. This was truncated by the evaluation trench (19) excavated in April 1995. Below layer 18, a brown silty clay (20) extended down to the natural yellow-buff coloured clay. At one point, the profile of a shallow pit (21) was visible. The base of the trench adjacent to this feature, when examined, showed this feature to be a gully 0.12m deep, which curved obliquely across the trench. No finds were recovered from it but a soil sample was taken for possible further examination.



#### 5.4 Section D-E

- 5.4.1 The soil stratigraphy in this section consisted of a brown loam (22) c. 0.40m thick directly overlying apparently natural yellow-buff coloured stiff clay. A concentration of stone contained in a loose brown loam at the northern end of layer 22 indicated some disturbance probably of recent origin. It seems likely that represented material backfilled into the April 1995 evaluation trench. No features or finds of archaeological interest were recorded.

#### 5.5 Section E-F

- 5.5.1 The uppermost soil layer in this section (23) showed evidence of disturbance possibly associated to the construction of the adjacent water-storage tank and a pipe trench leading from this. Beneath this a thin layer of dark brown loam (24), c. 0.05m thick, probably represents a truncated topsoil layer. This overlay the natural undisturbed clay. No features or finds of archaeological significance were found.

#### 5.6 Section F-G

- 5.6.1 This section showed a simple stratigraphy consisting of a disturbed brown loam (25), max. 0.40m thick, over a layer of silty clay (26) containing an abundance of fractured sandstone fragments which extended below the base of the trench. No features or finds of archaeological interest were noted.

#### 5.7 Section G-H (Fig. 7)

- 5.7.1 The soil stratigraphy in this section was basically similar to that of Foundation Trench D consisting of a disturbed brown loam (27), max. 0.20m thick, over a silty clay (28) containing sandstone fragments of increasing frequency with depth.

- 5.7.2 At one point a concentration of bone fragments was visible towards the base of the section and further fragments occurred across the base of the trench. The bone appeared to be located at the base of a feature (29), sealed beneath layer 27 and filled by a greyish-brown stony clay-loam (30). The feature was seen only in the exposed section and without further investigation, it was not possible to determine whether the bone was in a primary context, or redeposited within the feature, which produced no other artefacts. The bone fragments were removed for further examination. No other finds or features of archaeological interest were noted in this foundation trench.

#### 5.8 Section H-I

- 5.8.1 The stratigraphy of this section consisted entirely of sandstone fragments contained in a loose clayey silt matrix (31). As noted in Station Pit 9, this material is probably associated with the rock face to the south and overlooking the area. No finds or features were recorded.

#### 5.9 Section I-J

- 5.9.1 The stratigraphy of this section consisted of modern hardcore overburden (32) overlying the natural buff-coloured clay. No features or finds were noted.

#### 5.10 Section J-A (Fig. 8)

- 5.10.1 Modern overburden (1) in this section overlay a brown clayey loam (33), max. 0.25m thick, which extended to the natural clay in the southern half of the trench. At the northern end of the trench, a layer of grey clay (34) c. 0.05m thick separated the overburden from the loam for a distance of 0.60m along the section. This appears to be a continuation of the similar layer recorded in Station Pit 1.

- 5.10.2 At one point, part of a pit (36), 0.20m wide, cut the natural clay to a depth of 0.12m. A concentration of stone visible in the section above this pit obscured any clearly defined edges to the pit that may have existed but the possibility that this pit may have been the base of a post-hole cannot be dismissed.



## 6 EXCAVATION SURROUNDING THE INHUMATION

- 6.1 The bone fragments recovered from this area (par 5.7.2) were identified as human, consisting mostly of cranial fragments with two rib and one pelvic fragment. On the basis of this identification, Cadw/Welsh Historic Monuments decided that further excavation was required to determine the date and archaeological context of these remains. CPAT then presented a specification (Appendix 2) and a quotation for undertaking this work to Munro Associates acting on behalf of their client, Llanymynech Golf Club which was subsequently accepted. The excavation was carried out in early April 1996.
- 6.2 An area on each side of the foundation trench was excavated (Fig. 9), the modern overburden (37), approximately 0.25m deep, being removed mechanically and surfaces below this cleaned manually. Below layer 37, to the north of the foundation trench (40), context 42 consisted of a buff-yellow coloured stiff clay which was interpreted as natural undisturbed subsoil. This butted against context 41, a brown, friable clayey loam containing angular sandstone fragments and was similar to context 31 in strip foundation section H-I (Par 5.8 above). Two features were revealed cutting 41 and 42. Feature 44, when excavated, proved to be a shallow pit or hollow, 0.20m deep, the fill of which was a clean, fairly stiff clayey loam. No finds were recovered from it. The southern end of this pit was cut by grave 45 the fill of which (46), was a brown, friable clayey loam a sample of which was taken for further examination. It contained, at its base, the lower limbs of an extended human burial aligned north-west/south-east (47). The bones were friable and partly fractured possibly caused by later disturbance from above. The maximum depth of the grave was only 0.18m suggesting severe vertical truncation. The southern part of the grave was cut by the foundation trench from the base of which a small quantity of bone fragments was recovered including a single tooth. Further detailed examination undertaken by Sheelagh Stead suggested that the inhumation was that of a child approximately seven years old (see Appendix 3). A date of 2375 $\pm$ 55BP (OXA-6824) was obtained from the Oxford University Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit. This calibrates to 770BC - 370BC at 95% level of confidence using the 1986 Calibration curve and the Oxford University Calibration programme v.2.17. A sample of context 46 was removed for further examination
- 6.2.1 The position of a slight indentation (29) in the north-facing side of the foundation trench, its brown loamy fill which was similar to 46 and cranial fragments recovered from it may be consistent with it representing part of the south-eastern end of the grave.
- 6.2.2 Following the removal of the overburden (37) in the area excavated to the south of the foundation trench, the exposed surface (38) consisted of a buff-yellow, stiff clay closely similar to context 42 but containing some angular sandstone fragments within it. Apart from feature 29 and a black alkathene pipe (39) crossing the area at the interface of 37 and 38, no other features were recorded. Finds were limited to pottery sherds and other artifacts of recent origin which were recovered from the overburden.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The excavation of the stantion pits revealed evidence of prehistoric activity further to that produced by the 1995 evaluation excavation (Thomas 1995). The pits and possible ard-marks found in Stantion Pits 1, 2 and 3 occurred at the interface of the natural clay and soils which are interpreted as being equivalent to context 06 identified in the earlier evaluation report (op. cit.) and may, therefore, be prehistoric in date. This is possibly also true of features identified in Foundation Trenches A and H.
- 7.2 The flint scraper from Stantion Pit 1 was recovered from the interface of Layers 01 and 02, which is not regarded as a securely stratified context. However, it does support the conclusion made in the earlier evaluation report (op. cit.) that prehistoric occupation should be anticipated in this area.
- 7.3 The investigation of the strip foundation trenches revealed the continuation of the layer of grey clay interpreted as an old ground surface or occupation layer possibly of prehistoric origin into trenches C-D and J-A. From Trench G-H, 25 fragments of bone, mainly cranial with two fragments of rib and one pelvic were recovered. A preliminary identification of these identified all of them apart from one as human.



- 7.4 Further excavation in this vicinity exposed the lower limbs of a juvenile extended inhumation the remainder of which had been destroyed by the mechanical excavation of the trench. Radiocarbon dating of a sample of the bone indicated that it belonged to the earlier Iron Age which is consistent with the dating of peat samples recovered from deposits within the hillfort in 1991 (Martin 1992).

## 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CPAT Contracts wishes to thank the staff of Llanymynech Golf Club for their help during the course of the excavation and watching brief. Thanks are also due to Sheelagh Stead for identifying the bone fragments.

## 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Martin, C.R.M., 1992. Llanymynech Hillfort. *Archaeology in Wales*, 32, 64.

Thomas, D., 1995. *Llanymynech Hillfort, Powys: Archaeological Evaluation*. CPAT Report No. 136.

**APPENDIX1  
SITE ARCHIVE**

**Site Data**

47 Context Record Forms  
1 A3 site plan  
10 A4 site plans/sections  
2 B&W negative films, prints and contacts  
2 colour slide films  
Photographic catalogue  
2 A1 section drawings of foundation trenches  
10 A4 site plans and sections  
Report on human bone  
Radiocarbon analysis report  
Correspondence

**Finds**

1 flint scraper. Context 01/02  
Animal bone fragments. Context 05  
Human bone fragments. Contexts 30,46

**Soil samples**

Station pit A. Context 05  
Station pit B. Context 10  
Station pit C. Context 15  
Inhumation grave fill. Context 46



## APPENDIX 2

### SMC APPLICATION: LLANYMYNECH GOLF CLUB (SAM Mg30) SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT BY THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed development at Llanymynech Golf Club involves alterations and extensions to the present club house situated within the above named scheduled ancient monument.
- 1.2 This area lies within the interior of Llanymynech hillfort which is designated as a monument of national importance by the Secretary of State for Wales and appears in the schedule of ancient monuments as Mg30.
- 1.3 The Inspectorate of Cadw:Welsh Historic Monuments in their capacity as archaeological advisers to the Secretary of State for Wales have determined that an Archaeological response is necessary to assess the implications of the proposed development on the archaeological resource. Accordingly and Archaeological Assessment has been requested to provide a clear picture of the nature and extent of survival of any archaeological remains which may be affected.

#### 2 Objectives

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works are:
  - 2.1.1 to record the nature, condition, significance and, where possible, the chronology of any archaeological deposits and/or features revealed within the area of the proposed development during the development works in so far as these aims are possible;
  - 2.1.2 to prepare a report outlining the results of the assessment.

#### 3 Methods

- 3.1 The assessment will comprise the excavation of three trenches as stipulated by Cadw (ref CAM 1/2/1519/6) to the depth of the footings or to the top of archaeological horizons whichever is the shallower.
- 3.2 All archaeological deposits and/or features noted during the Assessment will be sampled by hand and recorded by drawn section and/or photography.
- 3.3 Following the on-site work an illustrated and bound report will be prepared according to the principles laid out in the Brief. This will be in A4 format and contain conventional sections on: Site location, Topography and Geology; Historic Background; Catalogue of sites identified with notes on their condition and significance, Conclusions and Recommendations and References, together with appropriate appendices on archives and finds.
- 3.5 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 watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled and experienced archaeologist. 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 watching brief.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the assesment will take no more than 4 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 and negotiated access. 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 November 1996



**APPENDIX 3****REPORT ON HUMAN BONE (CONTEXTS 40, 47)**

Prepared by Sheelagh Stead

From the identification of individual bones, this is an extended burial of a child aged 7 years +/- 9 months. The second lower deciduous molar and its fitting section of alveolar found in the foundation trench are consistent with the long bones found *in situ*.

All bones, except for some unfused epiphyses, are broken and incomplete.

Context 47

- A. Right tibia - shaft.  
Right femur - distal epiphysis articulating with two fragments of shaft.
- B. Right fibula - shaft.
- C. Left tibia - shaft.  
Fragments of tarsals and epiphyses.
- D. Left fibula - shaft.
- E. Left tibia - proximal epiphyses.  
Long bone shaft fragments, presumably from left femur.  
Fibula - epiphyses.
- F. Right foot - talus, first metatarsal and phalanges.

Context 40

Loose tooth, lower second deciduous molar (right) showing a little wear and with slightly shrunken roots.

Section of mandible alveolar fitting the above.

Small vault fragment from skull.  
Right femur shaft at proximal end.



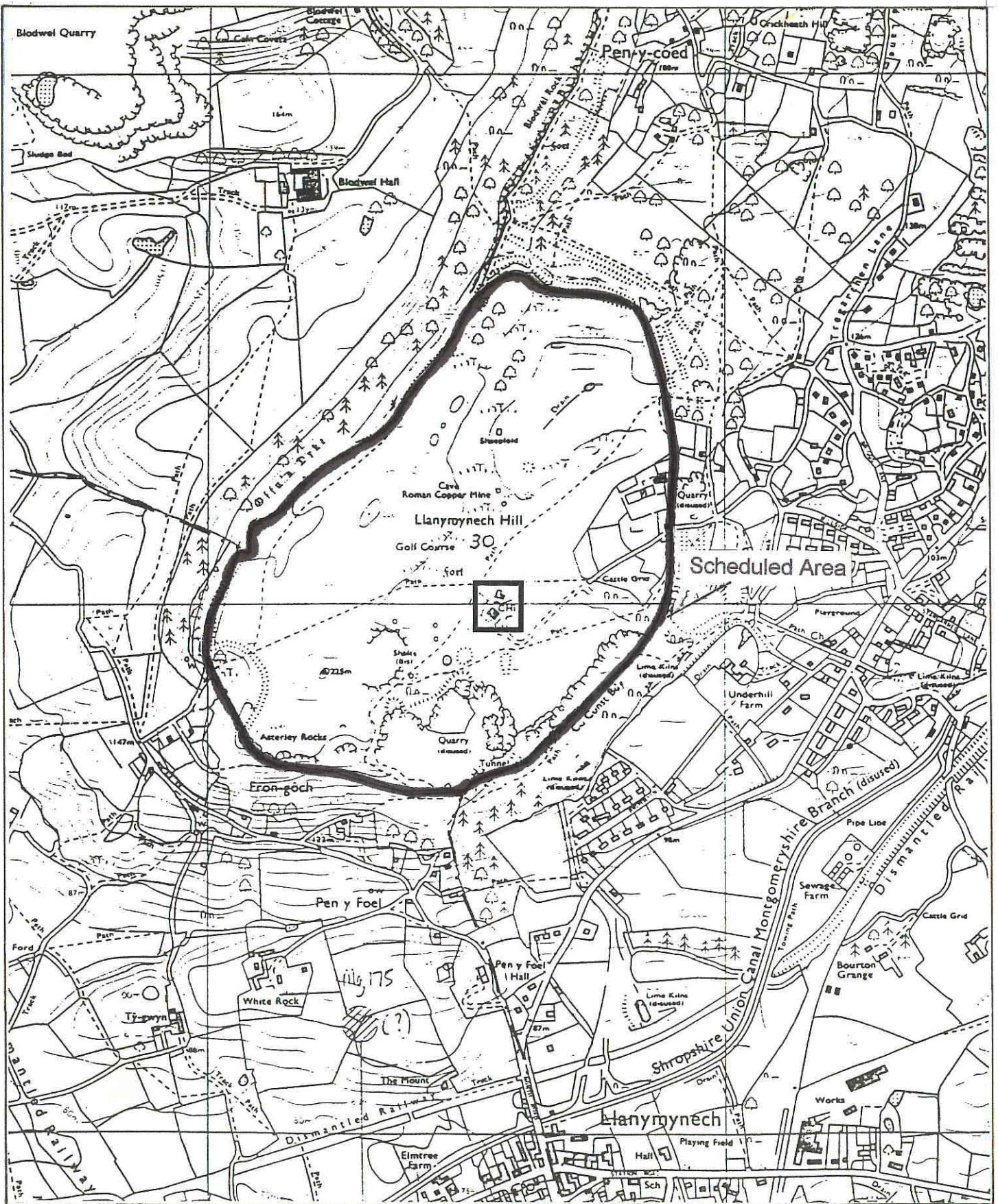


Fig. 1: Llanymynech Hillfort and Golf Club location. Scale 1:10,000



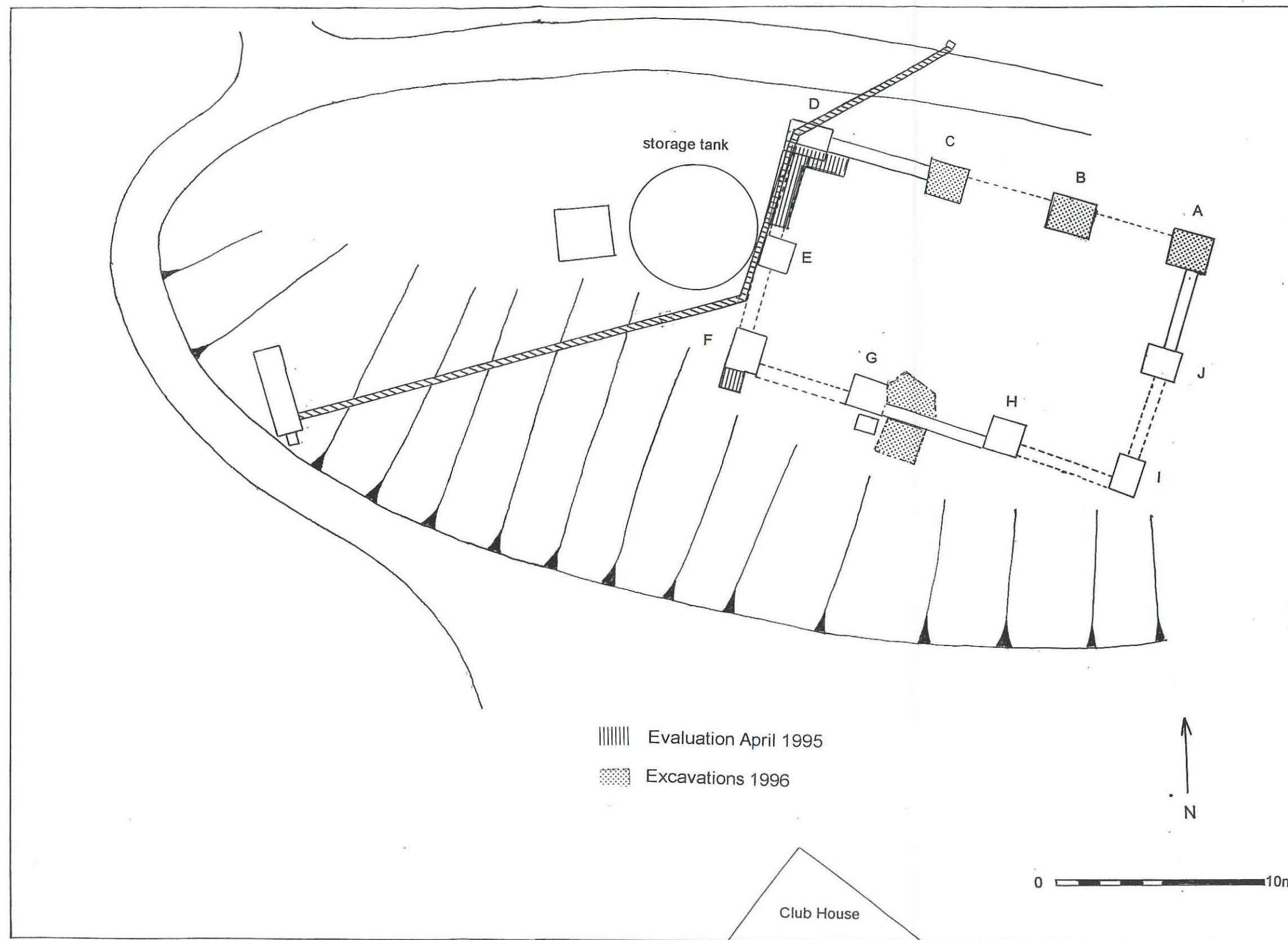


Fig. 2: Location of excavated areas

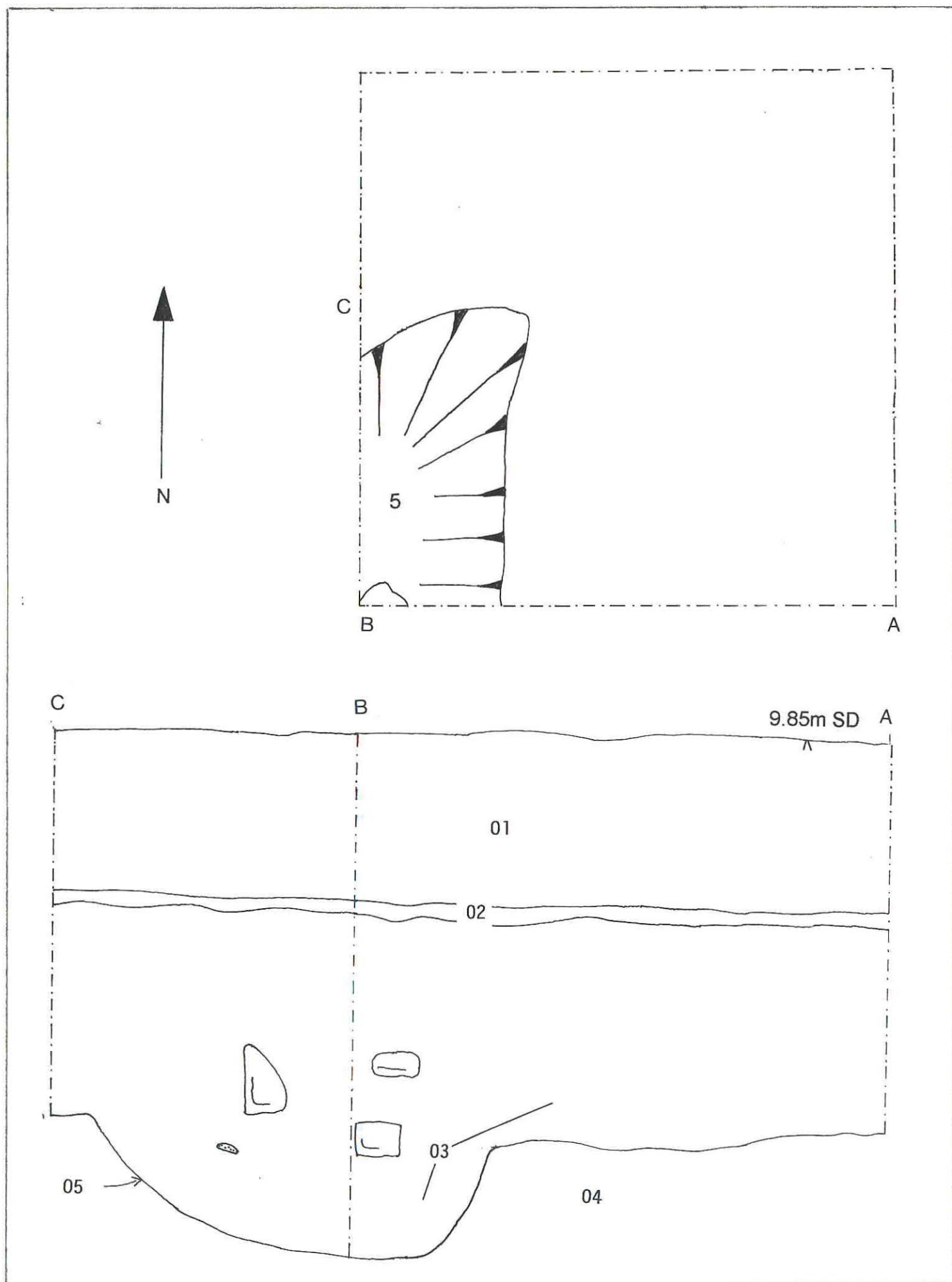


Fig. 3: Station Pit A plan and section. Scale 1:10



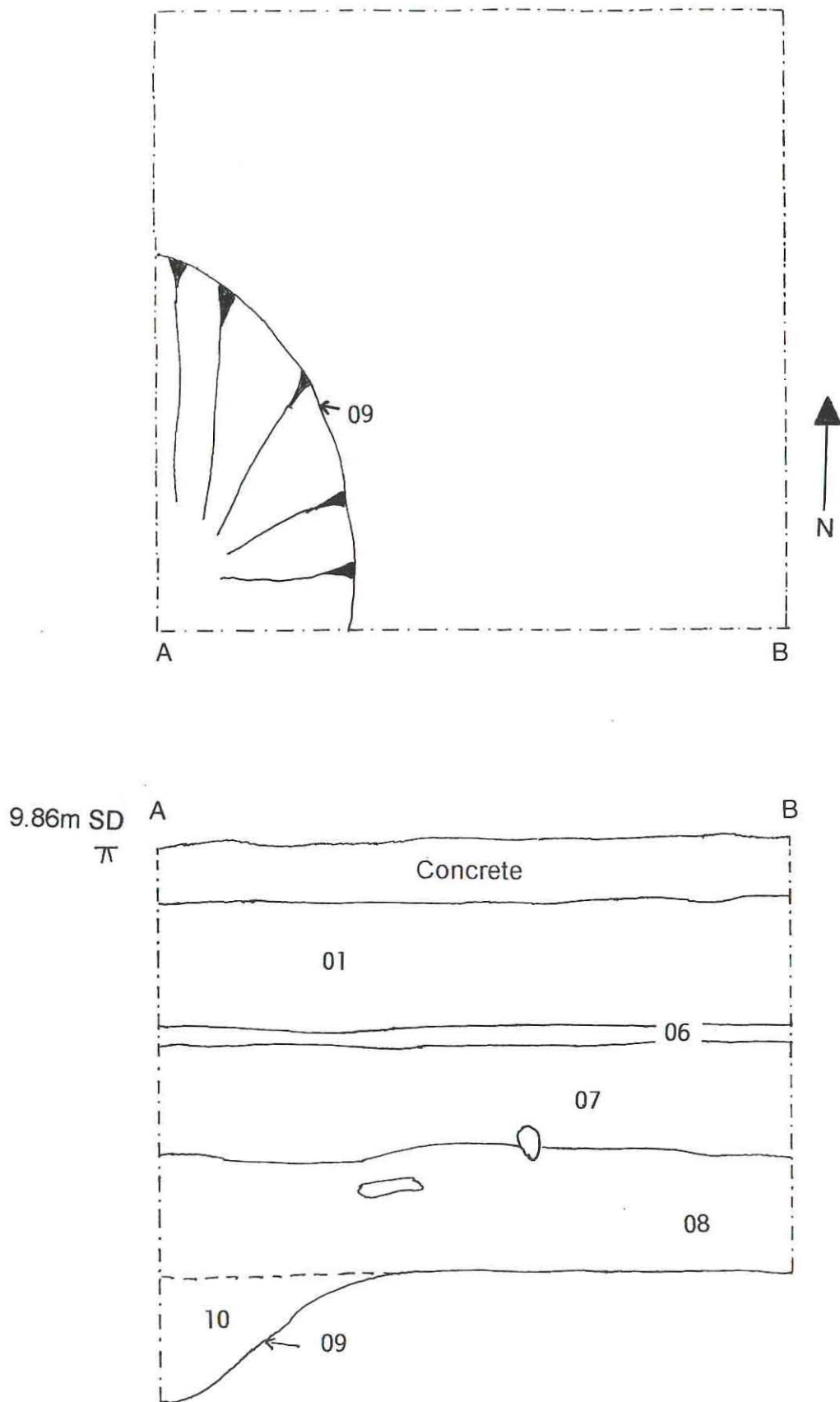


Fig. 4: Station Pit B plan and section. Scale 1:10

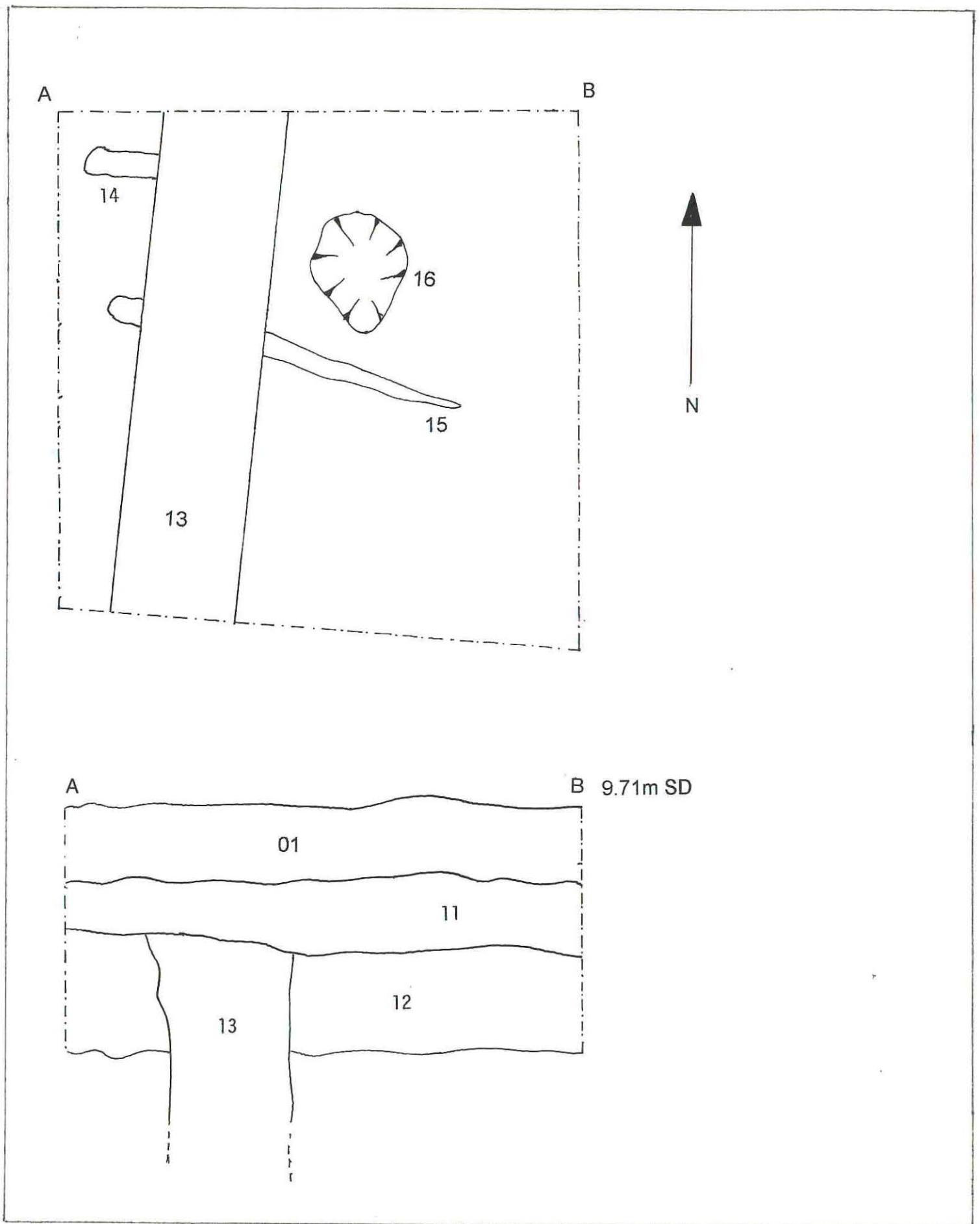


Fig. 5: Station Pit C plan and section. Scale 1:10

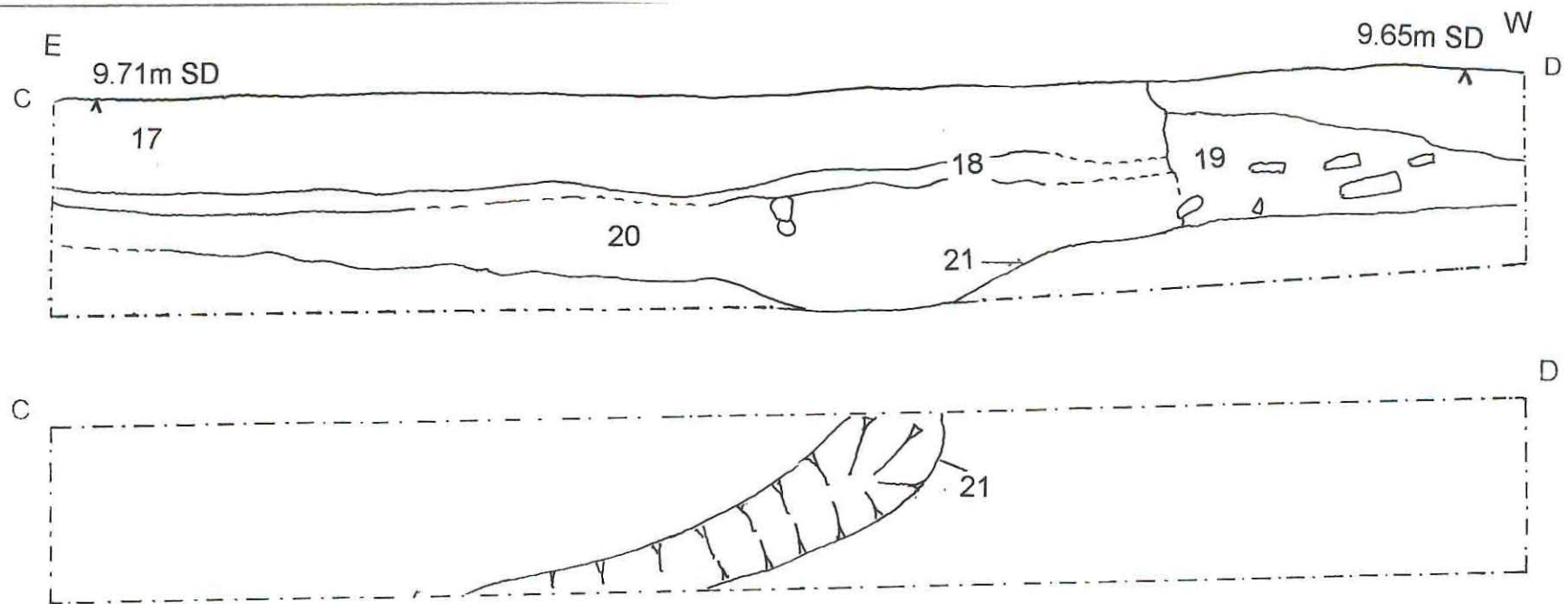


Fig. 6: Foundation trench section C-D. Scale 1:20

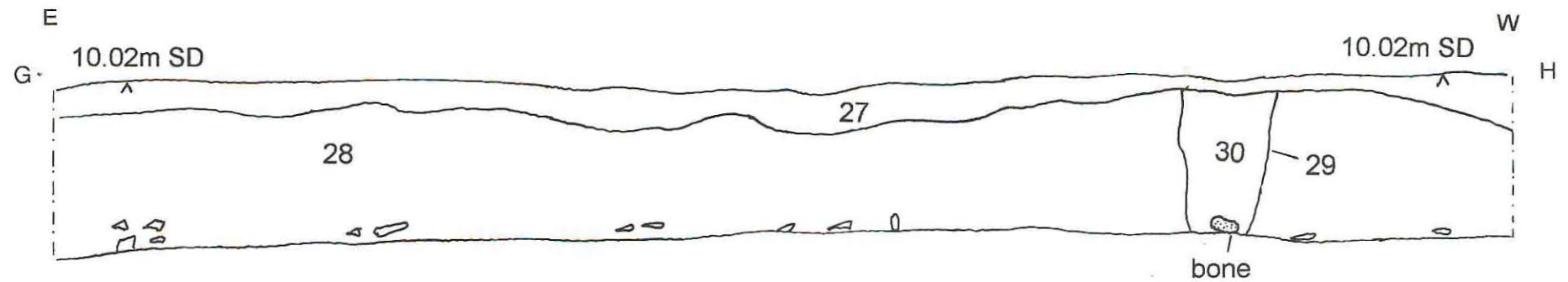


Fig. 7: Foundation trench section G-H. Scale 1:20



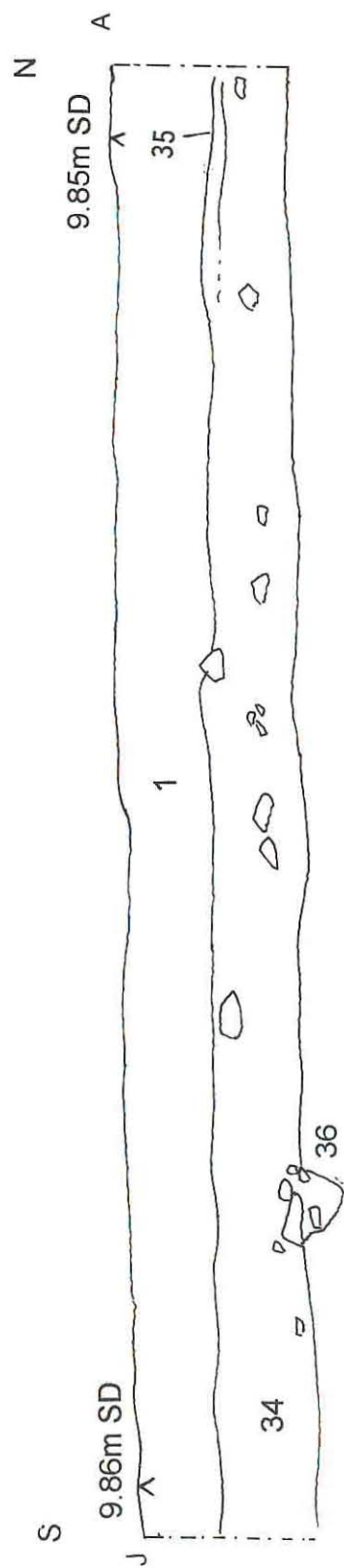


Fig. 8: Foundation trench section J-A. Scale 1:20

