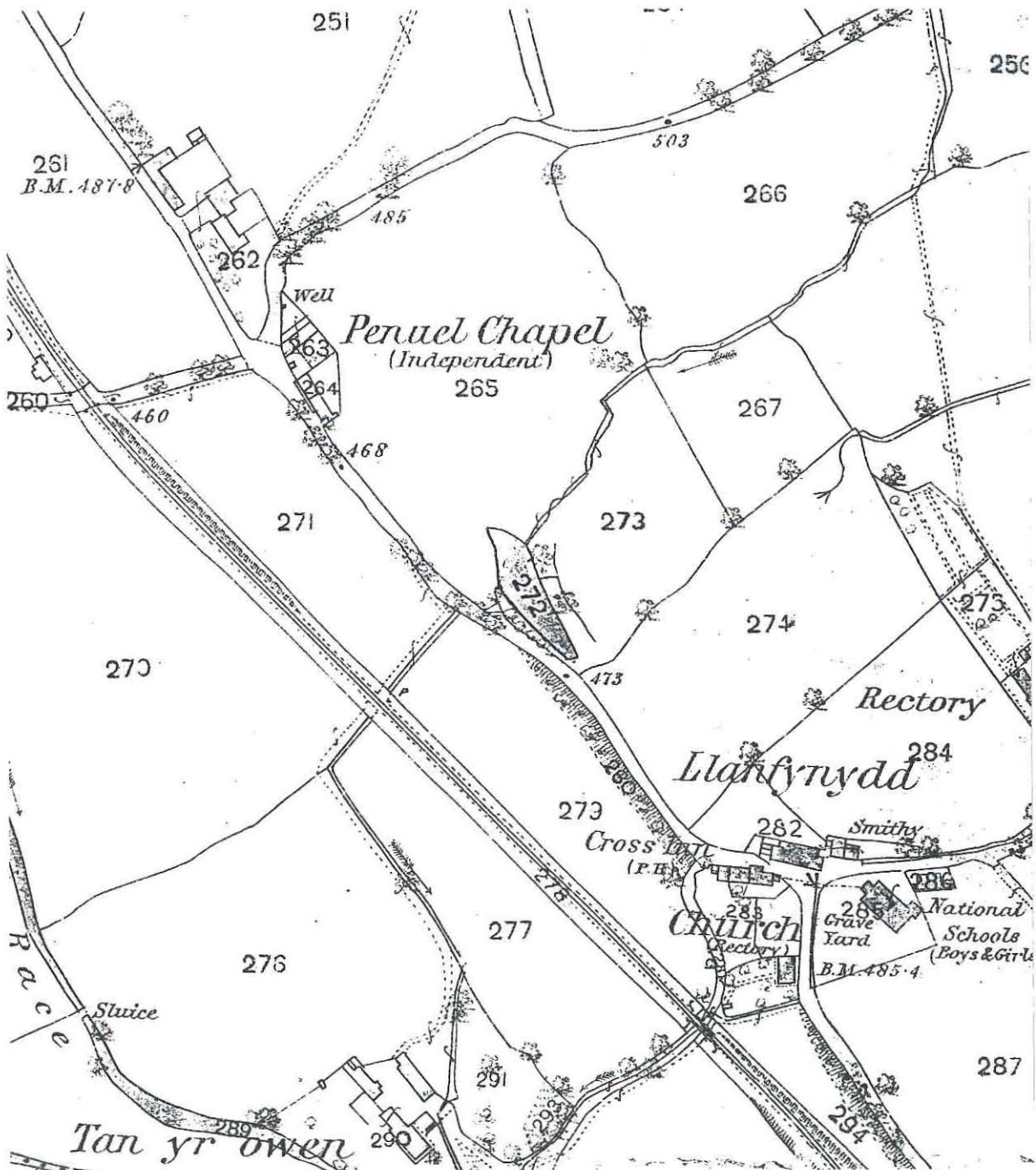


*Clwyd Special Riding Centre,
Llanfynydd, Flintshire*
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



CPAT Report No 390

*Clwyd Special Riding Centre,
Llanfynydd, Flintshire*
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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September 2000

Report for Denton Clark & Co.

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

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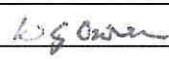

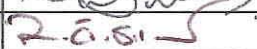
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CPAT Report Record

Report and status

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 1999 the Contracts Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust was invited by Mr AP Roberts, Denton Clark & Co., to submit a quotation and specification for an archaeological watching brief at the Clwyd Special Riding Centre, Ty'n y Cyffion, Llanfynydd, Flintshire. The quotation was accepted in July 2000 and the work undertaken during July and August.
- 1.2 The development involved additions and alterations to existing buildings at the Clwyd Special Riding Centre (Flintshire County Council Planning Application P99/4/008794). The site lies in an area of potential archaeological sensitivity and it was considered possible that the works might impact upon deposits related to Offa's Dyke, which lies immediately to the south-west of the development area. Accordingly, the Curatorial Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, acting in their role as archaeological advisors to the local authority, determined that a watching brief should be carried out during the initial stages of topsoiling, construction and service trench excavation, and a Brief (CWAT 341, dated 6/10/99) was prepared detailing the scheme of works required.

2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 Ty'n y Cyffion is located to the north of the village of Llanfynydd on a terrace in the Cegidog valley (SJ 2770 5695; 150m OD; Fig 1). Soils at this location are well drained sandy loams of the Wick 1 association derived from glaciofluvial drift, whilst immediately to the east soils are fine loamy soils of the Brickfield 2 association derived from drift from Palaeozoic and Mesozoic sandstone and shale (Rudeforth *et al.*, 1984).

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Sir Cyril Fox, who carried out a survey of Offa's Dyke in the Cegidog valley found that it followed closely the line of the road between Treuddyn and Ffrith, although in the village of Llanfynydd, where the road bends to the south-east, it departed from the line of the road to rejoin it again to the south of the village. At a point some 600m to the north of Ty'n y Cyffion the dyke is clearly visible today as a substantial bank immediately adjacent to the road on its eastern side. Here, Fox maintained that the road follows the line of the ditch on the western side of the dyke (Fox 1955). During the course of his survey carried out in 1937, Fox also recognised the dyke close to the farm buildings of Ty'n y Cyffion in the field immediately to the north where it survived as a ridge sloping steeply from the east towards the road. He also identified an isolated fragment of the bank some 1.8m in height in a garden in the northern angle of the cross-roads by Penuel chapel. In the field to the south of the chapel, on the eastern side of the road, although ploughed down, the dyke was seen as a ridge 20m in breadth. Closer to the village, the dyke appeared on the west side of the road as a distinct rampart with traces of a ploughed-in ditch. Here, as elsewhere in his survey in this area, Fox referred to the ditch, where he was able to detect it, as being on the western side of the dyke.

4 THE WATCHING BRIEF (Figs 2-3)

- 4.1 The watching brief was carried out between July 25th and August 23rd 2000, following the breaking-up and removal of the concrete floor of the building which formerly occupied the area. Thereafter, an area of 60m² of a dark brown overburden containing stone, brick fragments and wood was removed. This was approximately 1.2m thick along the western and north-western sides of the area and diminishing to c. 0.6m on the eastern and north-eastern sides. No features of archaeological significance were uncovered.
- 4.2 This stage was followed by the mechanical excavation of 11 station pits (Fig. 2, A-K). In each case, the spoil was examined for finds, the exposed surfaces cleaned manually, photographed and a representative section drawn at the scale of 1:20. The only artefacts recovered consisted of modern or 19th-century brick and pottery, none of which was retained.

- 4.3 The station pits varied in depth, this being dependent on the depth at which a stable surface was reached. Pits were generally shallower on the eastern and southern sides and deeper on the western and northern sides. Station Pit I at the NW corner of the site, which was the deepest, was excavated to a depth of 2.0m below the surface.
- 4.4 The fill of each pit varied but, in general, the sequence consisted of brown to grey-brown clayey silts of varying textures containing stone, small brick fragments and loose coal fragments overlying a cleaner layer, interpreted as natural subsoil, and which varied from a compact yellow clay in Pits A, B, C and D to loose yellow sands or sandy silts in Pits E, F, G, H, J and K. Pit I was different in that the layers below the upper stony clayey silt consisted of a coarse gravelly silt extending to the base of the pit and butted against a yellowish-brown sandy silt at the eastern end of the pit. Because of the depth of this pit and the instability of the sides, for reasons of safety, a detailed section was not drawn. It was noted that the silty sand of Pit J was cut by an apparently natural coal seam of 0.25m maximum thickness. Similarly, another seam overlay the surface of the compact yellow clay at the base of Pit B. No features of archaeological significance were recorded in any of the pits and no finds were recovered.
- 4.5 Soil surfaces exposed following the excavation of foundation trenches located between the station pits were also cleaned manually and examined for archaeological features, in particular for any stratigraphic evidence which could be associated with the location of Offa's Dyke. The contractor's programme of work did not allow sufficient time to record drawn sections of the trenches, although each trench was recorded photographically and by written record. The soil layers examined generally corresponded to those exposed in the station pits, but no evidence that could be related to the location of Offa's Dyke was forthcoming.
- 4.6 The partial collapse of a bank adjacent to the northern end of a retaining wall along the western side of the site did, however, expose some stratigraphy consisting of a reddish-brown soil layer approximately 0.20m thick and some 3.0m long which could be interpreted as relating to the Dyke (Plate 1). The instability of the exposed section prevented full recording, although a photographic and written record was made.
- 4.7 Two trenches excavated to form foundations to the extension to the main building at its northern end were also examined and section drawings and a photographic record carried out (Fig. 3; Plate 2). Context 1 consisted of a moderately stony brown, friable clayey loam of maximum thickness 0.58m which overlay a stony, greyish-brown stiff clay of maximum thickness 1.30m (Context 2) and at the angle of the two trenches, a layer of compact, moderately stony silty clay (Context 4). Context 2 overlay a thin layer of stiff, dark grey clay which extended below the base of the trench.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Sir Cyril Fox was able to identify Offa's Dyke immediately to the north and the south of Ty'n y Cyffion, although nothing can be seen today. By extension, however, the line of the Dyke could have run through the development site with the ditch located to the west, possibly below the road. No clear stratigraphic evidence emerged during the course of the watching brief which could be interpreted as the remains of the dyke on the site of the proposed building and it seems that the soil layers above the natural sand and clay were redeposited for the purposes of levelling-up before the erection of the former building. It seems likely, therefore, that the bank of the Dyke was removed either at that time or sometime before. Again, the presence of the stone retaining wall immediately to the west of the site would support this interpretation. More positive evidence for the former existence of the Dyke is the stratigraphy noted in the bank to the west of the site beyond the line of the retaining wall (Par. 4.6).
- 5.2 The stratigraphy of the soils exposed in section in the two foundation trenches at the northern end of the site (Par 4.7) where there was a possibility of some evidence of the Dyke, was inconclusive.
- 5.3 Finds were limited to the upper levels of the soils in the station pits and foundation trenches and were of late post- medieval or modern date.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Contracts Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust would like to thank the staff of the Clwyd Special Riding Centre for their kind help during the course of the watching brief.

7 REFERENCES

Fox, Sir Cyril, 1955 *Offa's Dyke: A Field Survey of the Western Frontier Works of Mercia in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries A.D.*, 30-31. London, Oxford University Press.

Rudeforth, C C , Hartnup, R , Lea, J W , Thompson, T R E , and Wright, P C , 1984. *Soils and their Use in Wales*, Bulletin No 11. Harpenden: Soil Survey of England and Wales.

APPENDIX 1

CLWYD SPECIAL RIDING CENTRE, TYN Y CYFFION, LLANFYNYDD, FLINTSHIRE SPECIFICATION FOR A CONTRACTED ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF BY THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed development involves additions and alterations to existing buildings at Tyn y Cyffion, Llanfynydd, Flintshire (Flintshire County Council Planning Application P99/4/008794). The Curatorial section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, acting in their role as archaeological advisors to the local authority, have determined that a watching brief should be carried out during the initial stages of topsoiling, construction and service trench excavation. Accordingly, a Brief (CWAT 341, dated 6/10/99) has been prepared detailing the scheme of works required.
- 1.2 This site lies in an area of potential archaeological sensitivity and may impact upon deposits related to Offa's Dyke, which lies immediately to the south-west of the development area. It is considered possible that part of the Dyke, of which there is now no surface evidence, may lie within the affected area.

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 watching brief.

3 Methods

- 3.1 The watching brief will be undertaken to include the initial topsoil stripping, foundation trench excavation, service trench excavation and construction of a new access.
- 3.2 Limited excavation of all significant contexts will be undertaken where possible following negotiations with the developer. All significant archaeological deposits and/or features noted during the watching brief will be recorded by drawn plan/section and photography in 35mm format black and white negative, colour slide and colour print. All features will be tied in locationally to the Ordnance Survey as accurately as possible.
- 3.3 Following the on-site work an illustrated and bound report will be prepared according to the principles detailed in Section 8 of 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. Further publication of the results in an appropriate regional or national journal will be undertaken at a later date and as considered appropriate depending on the nature of the findings.
- 3.5 The site archive will be prepared to specifications laid out in Appendix 3 in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991). Following agreement with the landowner, arrangements will be made for the long term conservation and storage of all artefacts in an appropriate repository.

4 Resources and Programming

- 4.1 The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled and experienced archaeologist. Overall supervision will be by Mr R.J.Silvester, 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 or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist who conducted the watching brief.
- 4.3 The duration of the watching brief will depend entirely on the developers programme of work. The subsequent report will be prepared immediately following completion of on-site recording, dependent on the client's instructions and the arrangement of a suitable timetable. An interim report will be produced within one month of site works being completed. The date of commencement, at the time of writing, has yet to be agreed with the client. 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.

N.W.Jones
Projects Officer
2nd December 1999

APPENDIX 2

SITE ARCHIVE

Site data

A1 plan 1: Section drawings of Stantion Pits A - K

A1 plan 2: Sections a-b and b-c, scale 1:20; Site plan, scale 1:50

1 black and white negative film and contacts

1 colour slide film

1 colour print film

Photographic catalogue

37 Context record forms



Plate 1 Collapsed section of bank adjacent to retaining wall. Photo CPAT 997.17



Plate 2 Section a-b. Photo CPAT 997.16

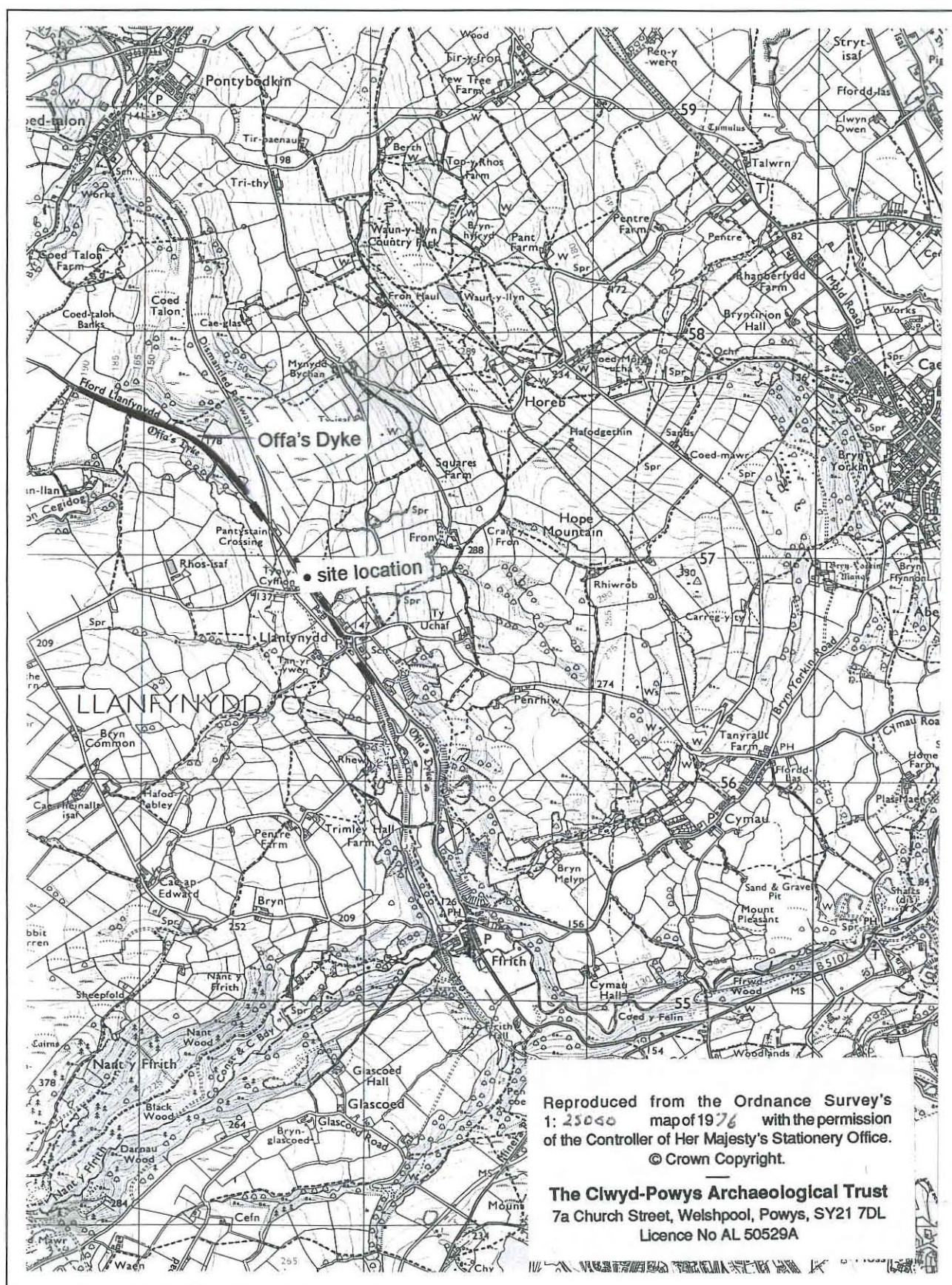


Fig. 1 Site location. Scale 1:2,500

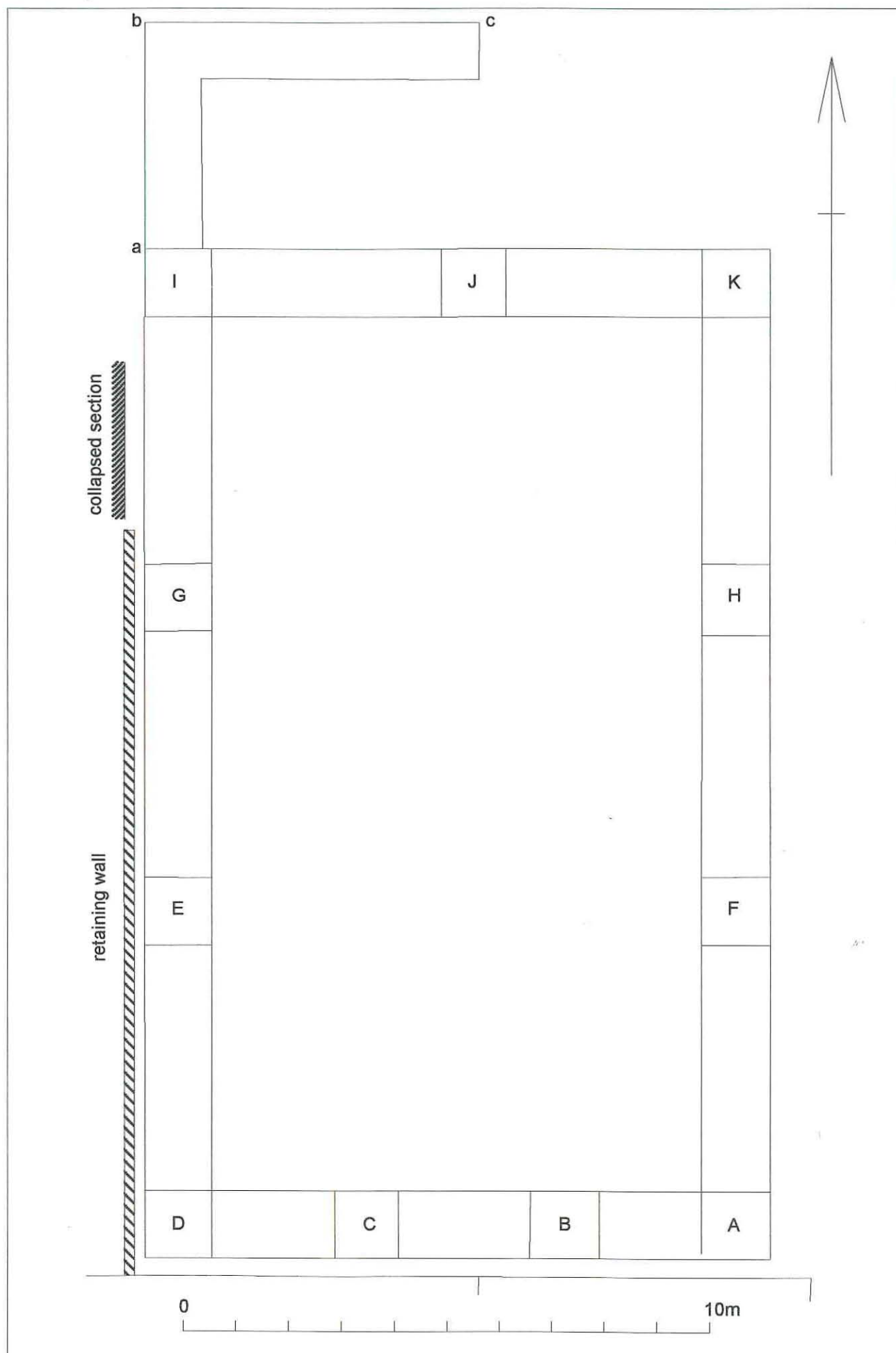


Fig. 2 Site plan, scale 1:100

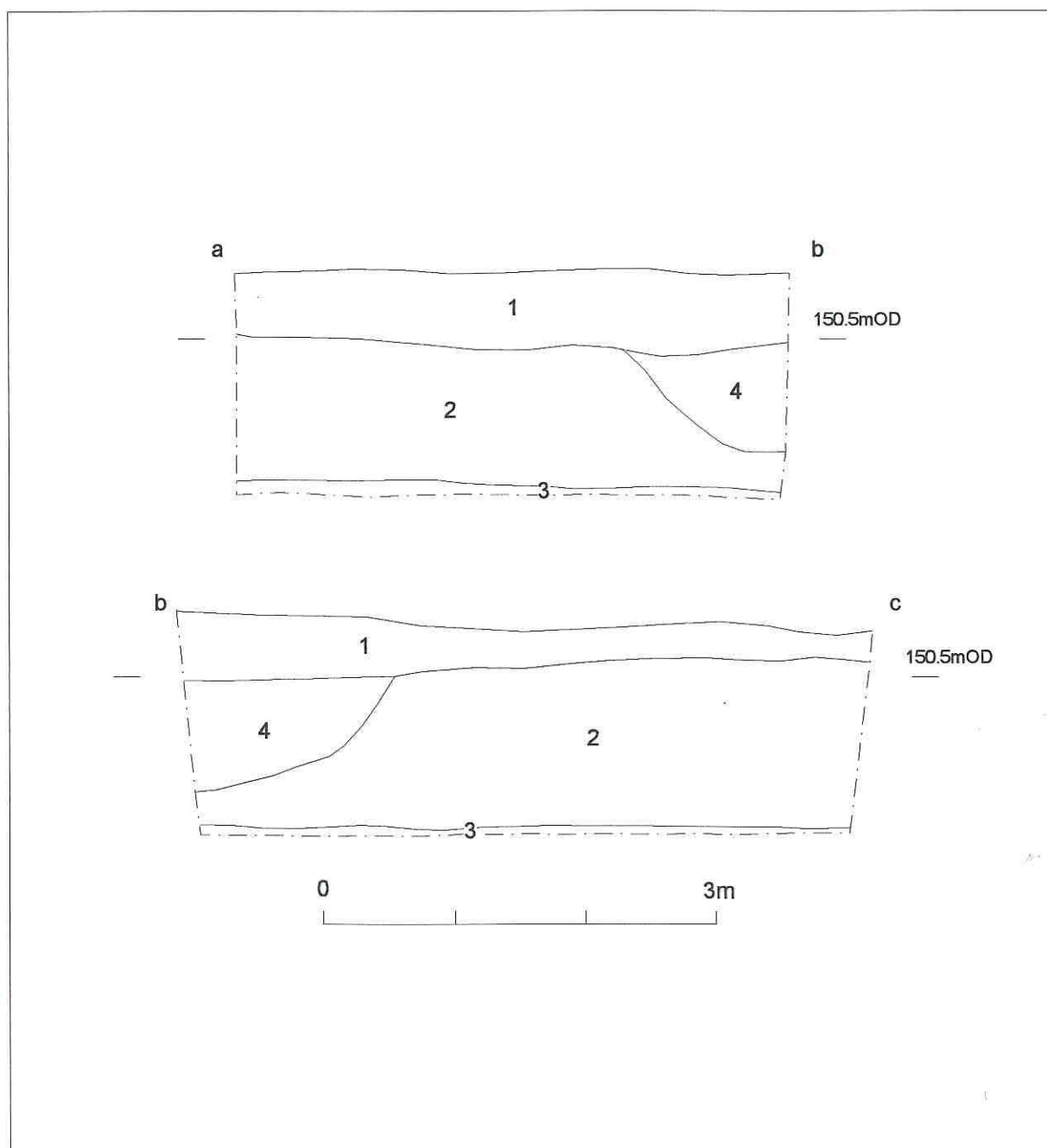


Fig. 3 Sections a-b and b-c, scale 1:50