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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION  
LAND AT YEWS FARM  
SPALDING ROAD  
PINCHBECK  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(PIYF22)**

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Work Undertaken For  
**Ashwood Homes**

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Report Compiled by  
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES**





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## 1. SUMMARY

*Archaeological Project Services (APS) was commissioned by Ashwood Homes to undertake archaeological mitigation, comprising a strip, map and sample excavation in advance of a proposed housing development at Yews Farm, Spalding Road, Pinchbeck.*

*A prior archaeological evaluation of the site had revealed several ditches, one of these containing a sherd of 11th-12th century pottery.*

*The current work comprised excavation of an open area on the eastern side of the plot where most of the archaeological features were concentrated.*

*This excavation confirmed the continuation of the linear features already investigated on the Spalding western relief road (Section 5) and helped to determine the extent, spatial arrangement and stratigraphic sequence of the ditches uncovered by the evaluation.*

*The earliest feature revealed on the current work was a wide palaeochannel or creek in the northern area sealed by natural laminations of sand.*

*The earliest dated feature, by a single sherd of Saxo-Norman pottery, was part of a system of drainage ditches continuing beyond the limit of the site. This was originally thought to be possibly Roman being closely aligned with a 2<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century ditch investigated to the east for the Spalding western relief road. The lack of Roman dating material and the character of the features, exclusively drainage ditches, confirmed that the site lies in a peripheral area to the Roman site, where industrial bread production was recorded.*

*The early medieval and medieval ditches produced a small quantity of artefacts and*

*accurate dating of this phase was quite challenging. The investigations highlighted however the main character of these features as ditches, part of wider systems set out on the silt land of the Fens to drain the land for agricultural or pasture purposes. The presence of approximately parallel ditches represented a probable medieval dyings subdivision which comprised strips of land separated by ditches. The different alignment of some of the ditches and the stratigraphic sequence testified the presence of a possible early medieval phase.*

*Some of the ditches were in use for a long period of time showing a continuity of use up to the modern period and showing that the management of the water was a priority for the Fens through the centuries.*

*During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the original partition of the fields, which probably had roots in the medieval phase, has been altered with amalgamation into one field indicated by the closure of at least three approximately parallel ditches.*

*Finds included Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery, CBM (ceramic building material), animal bone and clay pipe.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of an Excavation

*An archaeological excavation is defined as, "a programme of controlled, intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. The records made and objects gathered during the fieldwork are studied and the results of that study published in detail appropriate*

to the project design” (CIFA 2014).

## 2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological mitigation was undertaken on behalf of Ashwood Homes for a hybrid planning application seeking full planning permission for 100 new homes, landscaping and infrastructure and outline planning permission for up to 300 new homes, landscaping and infrastructure (Planning Application H14-1218-21) on land at Yews Farm, Spalding Road, Pinchbeck. The work was carried out from 3<sup>rd</sup> of April to 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2022 in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services (APS, 2022) and approved by the planning archaeologist for South Holland.

## 2.3 Location, Topography and Geology

Pinchbeck is located 2.5km north of Spalding and 20km southwest of Boston in the South Holland district of Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). The site is located 635m south of the centre of Pinchbeck as defined by St Mary’s Church. The proposed development area is to the west of Pinchbeck Road/Spalding Road, east of Blue Gowt Lane and south of Market Way at National Grid Reference TF 2439 2460 (Fig. 2). The site lies at a height of approximately 2.5-3m AOD.

Local soils are of the Wisbech Series, typically coarse silty calcareous alluvial gley soil (Robson 1990, 36). These soils are developed upon a drift geology of alluvial tidal flat deposits (BGS 1992).

The investigated area covers approximately 0.50 hectares and lies on the western side of the construction site for the Spalding western relief road (Section 5).

## 2.4 Archaeological Setting

An evaluation carried out on the east side of Spalding Road in 2014 (c. 100m east of the current site), revealed several ditches which included finds of Later Iron Age pottery. The ditches were interpreted as former boundary or drainage ditches, possibly at the edge of a former settlement. Analysis of environmental samples revealed that crop processing had been taking place in this area (LHER 25833; Parker, 2014).

An archaeological evaluation took place in 2018 along the route of the proposed Spalding western relief road. This included land immediately east of the current site. This area revealed a concentration of Roman, late Saxon and medieval archaeology (PCA, 2019).

The Roman remains comprised ditches and pits as well as undefined features (i.e. not possible to characterise due to the constraints of the trenches). The pottery assemblage dated these features from the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Contemporary finds of fired clay, including possible briquetage, indicated that salt making is likely to have taken place nearby. These features were sealed by a layer of post-Roman silting, which was cut by late Saxon and early medieval features. A small part of the pottery assemblage from these features were dated to the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century, with the majority dating to the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Also cut into the post Roman layer were a series of regularly spaced ditches likely to represent medieval dyings (strips of cultivated land on the siltlands of the Fens). The pottery assemblage from these features ranged from the medieval to the post-medieval and modern periods. This indicates a longevity of use with dredging and re-cutting taking place periodically, and a likely backfilling of the ditches in the modern era.

This evaluation was followed up in 2020 with an open area excavation concentrated to the east of the current site. This investigation highlighted the presence of a network of creeks and Iron Age ditches backfilled in the 2nd century, when a new navigable ditch system associated with drainage was constructed. The land units created by the ditch system were generally sterile of activities apart from the central area where an industrial bread production area with several ovens was uncovered.

After a phase of abandonment in the 10<sup>th</sup>-11th century this land was divided into four plots with different functions (for cattle and habitation) and the remains of a possible settlement were identified. In the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century the plots continued to be used with some alterations to the buildings. A new building, clay lined pits and keyhole oven related to the flax processing were constructed.

By the 14<sup>th</sup> century the settlement and surrounding plots were abandoned and the fields divided into strips and enclosure for livestock. Further alterations occurred throughout the post-medieval period, slowly reducing the quantity of fields until it became one plot in the modern era (Allen Archaeology, 2022).

A prior trenching evaluation of the current development revealed several ditches across the site one of these containing a sherd of 11<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> century pottery. The majority of the ditches were undated, and varied in their alignments, perhaps suggesting that they were not all in contemporary use. Numerous ceramic land drains were revealed in the trenches, and it therefore seems likely that at least some of the earlier ditches were also cut to drain the area. Some may have been part of the system of medieval dylings identified in the wider area. Several of the ditches

contained finds which put their final use in the post-medieval or modern period.

Finds from the ditches included animal bone, medieval and post medieval pottery, medieval and post-medieval brick and 18<sup>th</sup> century clay pipe. In addition, a post-medieval whetstone was found (Blythe 2021).

Pinchbeck is first reliably mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Pincebec*, the name is derived from the Old English *pinca* and the Old Norse *bekkr*, meaning the minnow stream (Cameron 1998, 97). The Grade I Listed Church of St Mary (NHL 1064433) is said to have had a Saxon precursor, though during restoration works the earliest remains were of a Norman nave revealed beneath the floor (LHER 22431).

The Domesday Survey of c. 1086 records that at that time Pinchbeck was held by Ivo Taillebois, as sokeland of his manor of Spalding, and Guy de Craon, as sokeland of his manor of Holbeach (Foster and Longley 1976, 14/98; 57/52). The parish contained 12 carucates (between 770 and 880 hectares) of arable land as well as 22 sokemen, 23 villeins and 12 bordars (ibid) giving an approximate population of around 200 people.

Prior to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, part of Pinchbeck would have been within the Forest of Kesteven and subject to forest laws. The area was finally deforested in 1227-31 (Varley 1974, 2). An area of land southwest of Pinchbeck subsequently became a park of Spalding Priory (Gooch 1940, 149). The fen to the west of Pinchbeck appears not to have belonged to the town and was intercommoned (pasture that is shared by several communities), as in 1250 Pinchbeck, Gosberton and Surfleet declared that the fen was open to anyone who wished to common on it (Darby 1974, 76).

Pinchbeck prospered during the medieval period and became wealthy due to its revenues from its markets, fairs, flax, wheat and salt. In 1287 there were 646 households and an estimated population of over 3,000 (Hallam 1965, 176). In the Lay Subsidy of 1332, Pinchbeck was paying over £40 in tax, a figure comparable with Spalding and significantly more than most other places in Lincolnshire with the exception of Boston which paid over £60 (Darby 1974, 137).

The 19<sup>th</sup> century maps show the current site as quite a distance south of the settlement of Pinchbeck. Given the identification of dyings in and around the current mitigation area, it is highly likely that during the medieval and post-medieval periods the site was occupied by agricultural land.

The HER has records of two sites with evidence for post-medieval drainage *c.* 80m to the east, and *c.* 335m to the south (HER 25835 and HER 23959) of the site. It is likely that these are representative of drainage on the agricultural land across this whole area.

An examination of the available historic mapping was made as part of the desk-based assessment (Smith 2021) carried out for the current site. The following is a summary of this.

The site was on the edge of a 1620-21 (LAO MCD 851/26) map of Pinchbeck, at which time it was depicted as meadow. By the time of the Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1815 the field boundaries within the site were depicted in much the same arrangement as today, though with additional boundaries, so that the land occupied by the present site comprised six whole or partial fields.

Further field boundaries had been established by the time of Upton's map of 1843, so that the site occupied nine whole or partial fields. By the time of the first edition OS map of 1887, these had been amalgamated into four fields, and the Great Northern and Great Eastern Joint Railway Line had been constructed (1879), which marks the southwestern boundary of the proposed development area. Further field boundaries had been removed by the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and a gas infrastructure compound had been constructed in the western corner of the site.

The former field boundaries were evident on aerial photographs and lidar data. In addition there were a number of short parallel linear features, likely to be dyings. A possible palaeochannel was evident in the southern part of the site.

### 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the work were to supervise the stripping of the site and to plan and archaeologically excavate and record any features revealed;

The objectives were to:

- Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
- Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
- As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
- Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.
- Determine how the site can contribute

to the East Midlands Research Agenda (Knight *et al.* 2012) and any updates to the agenda.

- 5.4: Rural settlement patterns and landscapes
- 5.5: The agricultural economy

#### 4. METHODS

Removal of topsoil and other overburden was undertaken by a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket working under constant archaeological supervision.

Each deposit exposed during the excavation was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their interpretations appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was also compiled and sections and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20 respectively. Recording of deposits encountered was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

A metal detector (no discrimination) was used to aid the recovery of any metallic artefacts from all exposed surfaces and spoil.

The location of the excavated trench was plotted using a survey grade differential GPS.

Environmental sampling was undertaken using guidelines established by English Heritage (2011). The subsequent processing of the samples is detailed in Appendix 3.

Following excavation, finds were examined and a period date assigned where possible (Appendix 2). The records

were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

#### 5. RESULTS (Figs. 3-10)

Archaeological contexts are described below. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field (full descriptions of the individual deposits can be found in Appendix 1).

Four broad phases were identified:-

- Phase 1: Saxo-Norman
- Phase 2: Early medieval
- Phase 3: Medieval
- Phase 4: Post-medieval

Natural deposits across the excavated area comprised a compact mid brown and orangish grey mottled silty clay (102), tidal sediment. This was covered in the central part of the site by a marine alluvial deposit of loose yellowish grey sand (258) 0.15m thick and cut by the later ditches (Fig. 8 Section 46).

A possible palaeochannel, east-west aligned, with a secondary northwest-southeast branch was crossing the northern part of the site. It was investigated by a slot which revealed the edges of the secondary branch of the palaeochannel [249]. This was partially excavated due to the presence of the water table up to 0.72m. It had a moderate slope and measured 4.32m wide ( Fig. 8 Section 45; Plate 1).

Palaeochannel [249] was silted up by an alluvial marine sediment of compact mid yellowish grey sand (250) more than 0.5m thick and with occasional marine shells.

In the upper part of deposit (250) it was possible distinguish a recut [251] with an

irregular shape in plan, moderately sloping sides and concave base, measuring 2.56m wide and 0.56m deep. It was filled by a compact light yellowish brown silty sand, 0.52m thick (252) and overlain by mid reddish yellow clayey sand 0.22m thick (253).

No artefacts were recovered during the excavation of either natural feature.

### **Phase 1: Saxo-Norman**

The investigation revealed the presence of a system of ditches in the central part of the site extending beyond the limit of the investigated area. The only dating evidence was a single sherd of Saxo-Norman pottery.

A large east-west aligned ditch [142]=[165]=[26005] was investigated in the central part of the site. The latter was investigated during the evaluation phase and no finds were recovered from its fill.

Ditch [142] (Fig. 9 Section 13; Plate 2) had moderately slope sides, a concave base and measured 2.28m wide and 0.66m deep. It was filled by a single deposit of loose orangish yellow sand showing several thin laminations as a result of a natural depositional processes. On the northern side the edge of this deposit with the spread natural sand (258) was unclear.

To the east this ditch was investigated by a relationship slot which confirmed the continuation of this feature with a north-south alignment [165]=[167] (Fig. 9 Section 22). It was filled by (166)=(168), a friable-loose light yellowish-brownish grey sand with occasional marine shells, very degraded and 0.38-0.47m thick.

Along the north-south alignment the ditch was slightly curvilinear and investigated by interventions [171]=[254]=[221]=[130].

Segment [171] (Fig. 9 Section 23; Plate 3) had a moderate slope on the eastern side, steep and stepped on the western side and a concave base. It was 2.05m wide and 0.68m deep and filled by (173) a friable/plastic light yellowish sand with clay slumps and marine shells, 1.35m wide and 0.16m thick. It was overlain by (172), a compact/friable yellowish brownish grey sand with occasional degraded marine shells, 2.05m wide and 0.16m thick.

Where the ditch curved, segment [254] (Fig. 8 Section 46; Plate 4) was excavated showing moderately sloping and gently stepped sides and a concave base. It measured 2.27m wide and 0.60m deep and was cutting the alluvial marine deposit (258). The lower fill (255) comprised a deposit of friable mid red grey sand with mineral patches 0.15m thick overlain by (256), a friable red-white silty sand 0.45m thick. The feature was sealed at the top by (257) a friable mid red-white sand 0.30m thick.

All these deposits were the result of natural depositional processes and no artefacts were recovered from them.

Segment [221] (Fig. 9 Section 38 Plate 5), located further north, between two later ditches, had moderate sloping sides, a concave base and measured 2.47m wide and 0.50m deep. It was filled by two quite similar deposits both the result of natural depositional processes. The lower fill (222), a friable mid greyish brown silty sand was 0.28m thick and overlain by (223), a friable mid brownish greyish sand 0.27m thick.

Segment [130] (Fig. 10 Section 9; Plate 6) had moderate sloping sides and a concave base, measuring 1.70m wide and 0.50m deep. It was filled by (131), a firm dark brown clay with occasional marine shells, 0.10m thick and overlain by (133) a firm light and mid brown clay silt, 0.34m wide

and 0.20m thick, interpreted as slumping or wind-blown soil. Both deposits were sealed by (132), a firm mid brown clayey silt, 1.22m wide and 0.35m thick.

The ditch [171]=[254]=[221]=[130] continued further north bending slightly to north-west, where it was investigated by intervention [188] which was truncated at the top by the later cut [185].

Ditch [185] (Fig 10 Section 29; Plates 7 and 8) had moderate sloping sides, an irregular and flat base and measured 1.70m wide and 0.32m deep. A compact dark orangish brown deposit of clayey silt (190), 1.07m wide and 0.07 m thick was excavated at its base. This latter was covered by a friable mid brownish yellow sand (189), 1.70m wide and 0.26m thick. The silting deposit (189) was cut by [185]=[191]=[195] a possible re-cut on the western side of ditch [188] and terminating to north-west with the terminus [191]. Cut [185] was filled at base by (187), a firm/compact light bluish grey sandy silt deposit, 0.70m wide and 0.04m thick, overlain by (186), a friable mid brownish yellow reddish mottled fine sand, 0.75m wide and 0.15m thick, which sealed the cut at the top and produced animal bone and a sherd of 11<sup>th</sup> to mid 12<sup>th</sup> century Saxo-Norman pottery.

Terminus [191] (Fig. 10 Section 30 Plate 9) had moderately sloping sides and a flat base, measuring 1.21m wide and 0.23m deep and was filled by a naturally occurring thin silty sand deposit. At its base was a friable/loose light greyish yellow sand (194) 0.08m thick overlain by a compact and slightly plastic silty clay (193) 0.05m thick, occurring during water stagnation when the ditch was still in use. The terminus [191] was sealed at the top by (192), a compact (when dry)/loose light brownish yellow sand, 1.21m wide and 0.15m thick.

To the south of terminus [191] a relationship slot showing the re-cut [195]=[185] was also cutting a narrower ditch east-west aligned [199] (Fig. 10 Section 31; Plate 10), further investigated by three interventions ([235]=[237]=[243]) and considered as part of the same early drainage system.

To the western end it was heavily truncated by a land drain and for this reason not investigated, and a slot was placed 4.5m from its end. Segment [235] (Fig. 10 Section 40; Plate 11) had moderate and steep sloping sides and a rounded base, measuring 0.95m wide and 0.29m deep and sealed by a single deposit (236), a friable mid grey-brown sand.

Intervention [237] (Fig. 10 Section 41) had stepped and moderately sloped sides, an undulating base and measured 1.05m wide and 0.32m deep. It was filled by a single deposit (238), a hard light yellow brown clay with no inclusions.

Cut [243] (Fig. 10 Section 43) was close to the eastern baulk of the site, had moderately sloping sides and a concave base, measuring 0.95m wide and 0.20m deep. It was filled by (244), a friable mid orangish brown silty clay with a small fragment of probable briquetage, perhaps residual from the Roman site to the east.

## Phase 2: Early medieval

A northwest-southeast aligned ditch [260]=[262]=[290]=[220]=[215] was investigated in the northeast corner of the site.

Segment [260] (Fig. 12 Section 49) had steep sides and a concave base measuring 0.31m wide and 0.32m deep. The fill (261) was a friable mid grey blue sandy clay with yellow lens of sand. This was partially truncated by a later cut [262] with moderate sloping sides and a stepped and

undulating base, 1.45m wide and 0.41m deep. The lower fill (263) was a friable mid grey blue clayey sand, 1.37m wide and 0.23m thick, overlain by (264) a friable-hard mid grey-brown with orange flecks sandy clay and occasional rootings. It was 1.28m wide and 0.26m thick.

A relationship slot further northwest revealed how ditch [290] (Fig. 12 Section 56), a continuation of [260]=[262] was truncated by a later east-west aligned ditch [287] (see below). Cut [290] was 0.63m deep and filled by (292), a compact mottled reddish brown clayey silt, 0.18m thick, overlain by (291), a compact mid brownish grey sandy silt, 0.46m thick which produced a single sherd of 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century Stamford ware pottery.

To the northwest segment [220] (Fig. 12 Section 37; Plate 15) had moderately sloping and concave sides and an irregular concave base and measured 1.40m wide and 0.76m deep. Its lower fill (227) was a firm brownish grey sandy clay, 0.55m wide and 0.13m thick overlain by (226), soft mid brown medium sand with reddish manganese inclusions. It measured 0.77m wide and 0.22m thick and was covered by (225), a firm brownish grey medium sand/silty sand, 0.98m wide and 0.17m thick. Ditch [220] was sealed at the top by (224) a friable deposit of reddish brown sand 1.15m wide and 0.43m thick. None of these fills produced artefacts.

The last intervention [215] (Fig. 12 Section 36; Plate 16) was close to the northern baulk of the site and characterised by different silting deposits. Cut [215] had moderate and straight sloping sides, a flat base and measured 1.63m wide, 0.53m deep. The lower fill (219) was a soft light brown fine and medium sand, 1.05m wide and 0.12m thick naturally deposited at the base of the ditch. It was overlain by (218), a firm mid greyish brown sandy clayey silt which produced a single sherd of 10<sup>th</sup> to

mid 12<sup>th</sup> century pottery and flecks of low fired clay. It was 1.30m wide and 0.22m thick and covered by (217) a firm greyish black sandy clay with occasional flecks of fired clay measuring 0.16m thick. Fill (216) was sealing the upper part of ditch [215]: it was a firm mid greyish brown clayey fine and medium sand with an iron nail, charcoal and five sherds of early medieval pottery. Fill (216) measured 1.63m wide and 0.30m thick.

In the northeastern corner of the site was a slightly curvilinear ditch running beyond the limit of excavation and exposed for a length of approximately 21m [160]=[209]. It was approximately northeast-southwest aligned.

The first intervention [160] (Fig. 13 Section 19; Plates 17 and 18) revealed a ditch with moderately sloping and concave sides, 1.15m wide and in excess of 0.90m deep (not fully excavated for safety reason).

The lower fill (164) a plastic bluish grey clay in excess of 0.10m thick was overlain by (163), a plastic yellowish brown silty clay, 0.20m thick which contained a single sherd of 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

This was covered by (162) a firm dark greyish brown sandy clay 0.30m thick and extending to the upper part of the ditch. Fill (162) was covered by the upper fill (161), a firm mid yellowish greyish brown sandy clay, 0.45m thick with five sherds of 12<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

The second segment [209] (Fig. 13 Section 33) was a relationship slot which did not investigate the entire profile of the ditch, exposing just the two upper fills. The lower deposit (211) was a friable dark greyish brown silt with occasional clay lumps and frequent rounded fragments of low fired clay with charcoal flecks; it was excavated for a maximum thickness of

0.27m thick and interpreted as possible dumped refuse from some nearby activities. It was covered by (212) a compact mid greyish brown clayey silt with occasional marine shells and a single sherd of 12<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

Another possible ditch related to the early medieval frequentation was excavated in the central part of the site; it was east-west aligned and partially investigated during the evaluation phase by a two slots within Trench 26, numbered as [26009]=[26017]. Fill (26010) produced a single sherd of pottery of mid 11<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> century date (Blythe, 2021, Appendix 2).

During the mitigation this ditch was excavated by a relationship slot, segment [176], to confirm that it was cutting the earlier ditch [174] (Fig. 13 Section 24; Plate 19). Cut [176] was filled by (177), a hard/firm light yellowish brown sandy silt, in excess 0.22m thick which did not produced artefacts.

To the west a second intervention [183] (Fig. 13 Section 28) was excavated in which the ditch had moderate sloping sides and irregular flat base. It measured 1.20m wide and 0.61m deep. The boundary with the natural was diffuse and for this reason the edges of the ditch were overcut during the investigation. It was filled by (184), a compact/hard mid orangish brown-grey mottled clayey silt with moderate marine shells, animal bone and six sherds of 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

### Phase 3: Medieval

Three linear features were ascribed to the later medieval period.

Ditch [287]=[275]=[293]=[298]=[280] observed on the northern side of the site had an east-west alignment and was truncating, as mentioned before ([287] cutting [290]), the previous ditch

[260]=[262]=[290]=[220]=[215]. It was investigated by a relationship slot and four interventions which all confirmed the presence of a lower cut truncated at the top by a later ditch occurring probably in the post-medieval period (see ditch [285]=[278]=[296]=[301]=[267]).

The relationship intervention [287] (Fig. 12 Section 56) showed steep and concave sides with a concave base and was 0.75m deep. The lower part was filled by (289) a compact dark greyish brown silty clay, 0.13m thick, overlain by (288) a compact mid greyish brown silty clay, 0.29m thick, which produced two sherds of 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery and a piece of fired clay.

Segment [275] (Fig. 12 Section 54) had steep, stepped and irregular sides and a concave base measuring 1.53m wide and 0.72m deep. The lower fill (276) was a compact mid brownish grey silty clay, 1m wide and 0.41m thick and interpreted as slumping. It was covered by (277), a compact mid reddish grey silty sand with occasional orangish red flecks. It measured 1.53m wide and 0.58m thick.

To the west segment [293] (Fig. 14 Section 57; Plate 20) had steep and stepped sides, an irregular and concave base and measured 1.61m wide and 0.80m deep. The lower fill (294), a compact mid brownish grey silty clay was 0.28m thick and overlain by (295), a compact mid greyish red silty sand, 0.53m thick and the result of natural depositional processes.

The excavation of intervention [298] (Fig. 14 Section 58; Plate 21) revealed approximately the same profile measuring 1.95m wide and 0.87m deep. The lower fill (299) was a compact mid brownish grey clay, 0.38m thick containing a single sherd of 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery and several articulated animal bones only partially recovered as continuing beyond the limit of excavation It was overlain by a natural

deposit of mottled mid reddish yellow sand 0.30m thick (300).

Close to the baulk of the site was the intervention [280] (Fig. 14 Section 55) which had steep and irregular sides and a concave base measuring 2.11m wide and 1.33m deep. The lower fill (283) was a compact mid bluish grey clay 0.39 m thick with organic material, remains of vegetation preserved in a partially waterlogged/wet environment. It was covered by (282) a compact mid yellowish grey sand, 0.19m thick with one pottery sherd of 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century date. The upper fill (281) was a hard mid reddish brown silty clay, 0.27m thick which contained a sherd of pottery also of 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century date and a fragment of a possible quern stone.

At the north end of the site, a northwest-southeast aligned ditch [207]=[213] was cutting ditch [160]=[209] indicated by a relationship slot excavated close to the baulk of the site. Ditch [207] (Fig. 13 Section 33) had moderate sloping sides, and a concave base. It was 1.18m wide and 0.36m deep and filled on the northeast side by (208), a compact mid greyish brown sandy silt, 0.31m thick with three sherds of mid 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century pottery and a residual Stamford ware sherd and three rounded low fired clay fragments. It was covered by (210), a compact mid brownish grey sandy silt, 0.27m thick.

The terminus [213](Fig. 13 Section 35) of this linear feature had moderate sloping side and an irregular base. It measured 0.58m wide and 0.11m deep and was filled by (214) a single deposit of friable mid greyish yellow sandy silt with a single sherd of medieval pottery, a piece of mica schist, possibly a whetstone fragment and animal bone, 0.11m thick.

South of this a further east-west aligned linear feature was excavated by three slots [120]=[139]=[147] and by a relationship

slot [128] which showed it truncating ditch [126]=[171]=[254]=[221]=[130] (Fig 10 Section 8).

Segment [120] (Fig. 11 Section 5; Plate 12) had concave sides and base and measured 1.85m wide and 0.45m deep. It was filled by (121) a single deposit of firm mid brown mottled silty clay which contained three sherds of 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

Segment [139] (Fig. 11 Section 12; Plate 13) had moderate sloping sides and a concave base and measured 1.95m wide and 0.56m deep. It was filled by (140), a firm dark grey-brown silty clay 1.95m wide and 0.30m thick. This was covered by the upper fill (141) a firm mid grey-brown clay silt, 1.60m wide and 0.26m thick.

Close to the western baulk of the site was excavated segment [147] (Fig. 11 Section 15; Plate 14), 1.90m wide and 0.55m deep. It was filled on the northern side by a firm dark blue and brown silty clay (148), 0.30m wide and 0.50m thick, overlain by (149), a firm mid brown sand 1.60m wide and 0.55 m thick.

#### Phase 4: Post-medieval

As mentioned before, ditch [287]=[275]=[293]=[298]=[280] was truncated by a post-medieval linear feature [285]=[278]=[296]=[301]=[267] excavated probably to set up part of a land drain system. It is possible that the medieval ditch had not completely silted up and that the clay pipes were placed within it.

The relationship slot showed a ditch [285] (Fig. 12 Section 56) with a steep side and concave base, 0.41m deep. It was filled by a single deposit (286), a hard mid brown silt, 0.41m thick.

To the west a second intervention [278] (Fig. 12 Section 54) had moderate and

irregular sloping sides and an irregular base and was filled by (279), a compact mid greyish brown silt which had a land drain in the top. It was 0.89m wide and 0.26m deep and truncated the deposit (277) the upper fill of [275].

A third segment [296] (Fig. 14 Section 57; Plate 20) had the same "U" shaped profile with a concave base and was 0.78m wide and 0.35m deep. It was filled by (297) a compact mid greyish brown silt containing a ceramic land drain.

Segment [301] (Fig. 14 Section 58; Plate 21) was cutting (300), the upper fill of earlier ditch [298]; it had moderate sloping sides, an irregular concave base and measured 1.58m wide and 0.55m deep. Two clay pipes of two different land drains were visible in the section. It was filled by (302), a mid-brown silt with no finds.

Close to the western baulk of the site was the segment [267] (Fig. 14 Section 55) with moderate sloping sides and a concave base and measuring 1.62m wide and 0.56m deep. The lower part was filled by (268) a compact mid greyish brown clayey silt, 0.23m thick. It was overlain by (269) a compact mid greyish brown silt, 0.26m thick, which produced one piece of early modern glass and one sherd of medieval pottery.

A second ditch [26007]=[231]=[203]=[239] was uncovered in the central part of the site which had been partially investigated by the evaluation trench 26 (cut [26007], filled by (26008)). This linear feature was east-west aligned and excavated by a relationship slot [231] (Fig. 11 Section 39) which confirmed that it was truncating the previous ditch [228] (see above). Two more interventions showing the entire profile completed the investigation.

Segment [231] had a steep and straight side, a concave base, and was in excess of 0.48m wide and 0.41m deep. It was silted in the base by (232) a friable mid brown sandy silt, 0.18m thick which contained occasional animal bone, an iron hinge strap and a very abraded sherd of late 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery. A deposit of loose mid brownish yellow sand (233) with occasional manganese inclusions and low fired clay. 0.11m thick was overlay it. The upper part of the ditch [231] was silted by (234) a compact mid yellowish brown sandy silt, 0.21m thick.

To the west segment [203] (Fig. 15 Section 34; Plate 22) had moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It measured 1.70m wide, 0.60m deep and was filled on the southern side by (206) a slumping deposit of loose mid orangeish brown sand, 0.13m thick containing a sherd of medieval pottery, a fragment of 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century brick and a fragment of early modern glass. This was covered by (205), a friable/plastic mid brownish silty clay, 1.40m wide and 0.18m thick. This was overlain by upper fill (204) from which four pottery sherds dating between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, fragments of animal bone, CBM, early modern glass and late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century clay pipe were retrieved.

Close to the limit of excavation, segment [239] (Fig. 15 Section 42; Plate 23) had steep and irregular sides, a concave base, and measured 1.67m wide and 0.62m deep. It contained three fills: the lower (240) was a compact mid brownish grey clayey silt 0.27m thick, with occasional animal bone and pottery sherds of 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, 16<sup>th</sup> century and 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century date. This was covered by (241) a friable mid yellowish-brown silt with patches of sand, 0.10m thick overlain by (242), a hard mid brown clayey silt with occasional crushed marine shells. The latter was 0.25m thick and was probably the result of

a levelling activity after the abandonment of the ditch.

On approximately the same alignment in the southern part of the site was another ditch investigated by four interventions [155]=[107]=[122]=[245] (Plate 24).

The first slot from the west [155] (Fig. 15 Section 48; Plate 25) showed a ditch with moderate sloping sides, and a concave base which was 1.65m wide and 0.36m deep. The lower fill (259), a plastic dark bluish grey clay, 1.35m wide and 0.47m thick, produced two fragments of animal bone. It was the result of natural depositional processes which progressively silted the lower part of the ditch when it was still active.

Fill (259) was covered by (157) a friable mid reddish brown sandy silt 0.15m thick which was formed probably when only the upper part of the ditch was in use. It produced five sherds of medieval pottery and a post-medieval steel button and was truncated by [103], the foundation cut for a brick surface (105) (Fig. 17 Sections 20 and 47; Plates 25 and 26). The northeast side of this pavement measuring 2.10m by 3.40m, was higher and not very well preserved as it had probably been truncated by modern agricultural activity. It had a sloping surface from northeast to southwest and comprised fragmented bricks lying on edge without bonding material. Most of the elements of this pavement showed clear signs of over firing proving that almost exclusively waste material not suitable for walls had been used in its construction. The fragmented bricks were lying on a layer of loose yellow coarse sand (104) filling the foundation cut [103].

Deposit (157) and the brick surface were sealed by (156) a hard light yellowish brown silty sand, slightly clayey, 0.21m

thick, which represented the upper fill of ditch [155] (Plate 25).

To the east of this, a second segment [107] (Fig. 16 Section 1; Plate 27) was excavated: it had moderate sloping sides and a slightly concave base and was 2.40m wide and in excess of 0.57m deep. The lower fill (110) was a friable medium reddish brown and dark brown mottled sandy silt, measuring 0.15m thick. It was quite similar to (156) and overlaid by (109), a deposit of brick fragments dumped along the northern side of the ditch (Plate 27). It measured 1.45m wide, 1.85m long and 0.10m thick, and was covered by (108) which comprised a deposit of compact light yellowish brown sandy silt, 0.45m thick.

Segment [122] (Fig. 16 Section 7; Plate 28) had moderate sloping sides in the upper part and steep in the lower sides with a rounded base. It measured 2.35m wide and 1.09m deep. The lower fill (125) comprised a plastic/hard dark bluish grey orangish mottled clay 0.55 thick which was also lining the upper edges of the ditch. It contained five sherds of medieval pottery. This fill, probably darkened by the decomposition of organic material, was partially covered by (124), 0.10-0.40m thick deposit of friable dark reddish-brown orange mottled sandy silt with occasional pieces of CBM, three sherds of medieval pottery, a sherd of 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century pottery and animal bone. Both fills were covered by (123), the final silting of ditch [122]. It was a 0.45 m thick deposit of compact light yellowish brown sandy silt, with lumps of grey clay redeposited natural and contained a flake of medieval pottery and animal bone.

Segment [245] (Fig. 16 Section 44; Plate 29) showed a profile similar to [122] and the same stratigraphic sequence. It had moderate and concave sides, a concave base and was 1.60m wide and 0.75m deep.

The lower silting deposit (248) also lined the upper part of the ditch and consisted of a hard-plastic mid dark grey orangish mottled silty clay, 1.60m wide and 0.32m thick. Similarly to deposit (125) this fill was darkened by the decomposition of organic material. Above this fill was (247), a friable-compact dark brownish grey sandy clayey silt with manganese inclusions and containing a lump of post-medieval worked sandstone, 1.00m wide and 0.13m thick. This deposit was probably the result of sedimentation occurring during the last use of the ditch and was sealed by (246) which represented the abandonment of this linear feature. The latter was a deposit of firm-hard mid yellowish brown sandy silt measuring 1.25m wide, 0.30m thick and containing occasional animal bone and one very abraded sherd of Stamford ware pottery.

### Undated features

In the southern part of the site two ditches and one linear gully were investigated. These were separated from the other features and did not produce artefacts.

The first ditch [111]=[113] was close to the southern corner of the site and east-west aligned. It was exiting the site to the east and terminating to the west with segment [111] (Fig. 17 Section 2) which had squared corners and a moderately steep side and concave base. It measured 2m wide and 0.55m deep and was filled by (112), a hard light yellowish brown and light grey mottled sandy silt, slightly clayey.

Intervention [113] (Fig. 17 Section 3; Plate 30) showed the entire profile of the ditch which had steep sides, uneven base and measured 2.00m wide and 0.50m deep. It was filled by (114) a hard light yellowish-brown light grey mottled sandy silt, slightly clayey which contained a fragment of Rhenish lava stone.

The second ditch [115]=[134]=[150] was also east-west aligned and terminating on the western side whilst to the east it continued beyond the limit of excavation.

The terminus [150] (Fig. 17 Section 16; Plate 31) had rounded corners, moderately sloping and concave sides with a concave base and measured 1.62m wide and 0.60m deep. The lower part was filled by (151) a compact mid grey silty clay with occasional marine shells measuring 0.17m thick. It was covered on the southern side by (152), a friable mid greyish brown silt, 0.13m thick and interpreted as slumping material. This was overlain by (153) a compact mid reddish brown silty clay, 0.34m thick which included a deposit of plastic/hard dark bluish grey clay (154), 0.30m thick and interpreted as a natural variation due to water stagnation.

The second intervention [134] (Fig. 17 Section 10; Plate 32) showed the "V" shaped profile of the ditch which had straight and moderately sloping sides and pointed base. It was 1.41m wide and 0.55m deep and had a lower fill of compact mid grey silty clay (135) with frequent shells, 0.25m thick. This deposit was covered by (136) a compact mid brownish grey sandy clay, 0.31m thick.

Segment [115] (Fig. 18 Section 21; Plate 33) appeared with a slightly different profile and had moderate sloping sides and a concave base measuring 1.77m wide and 0.65m deep. The lower fill was a compact mid bluish grey clay (116) with frequent crushed shells, 0.24m thick. This was covered by two slumping deposits (117) and (118) visible on both sides of the ditch. The first was a compact mid yellowish brown sandy silt 0.27m thick and the second a hard mid greyish blue silty clay, 0.24m thick. Both deposits were covered by (119) a compact mid yellowish brown sandy silt, 0.41m thick and cut by a

later gully southwest-northeast aligned [169]=[137]=[145]

The first segment of this gully [169] (Fig. 18 Section 21; Plate 33) had steep and concave sides, a concave base and was 0.56m wide and 0.31m deep. As mentioned above, it was cutting the upper fill (119) and was filled by a single deposit (170) of hard mid reddish-brown clay.

The second segment [137] (Fig. 18 Section 11) had moderate sloping sides, concave base and was 0.85m wide and 0.22m deep. It was filled by a single deposit (138), a hard mid reddish brown sandy silt.

This gully terminated to the southwest where segment [145] (Fig. 18 Section 14) was excavated: it had gentle and irregular sloping sides, an irregular base and measured 0.52m wide and 0.08m deep. It was silted by single deposit (146), a hard mid grey clayey silt.

A small and shallow linear gully [180] (Fig. 18 Section 26) lay on the northern side of ditch [115]=[134]=[150]; it was northwest-southeast aligned and 2.60m long. This gully was investigated by a single intervention showing a "U" shaped profile with moderately sloping and concave sides, an irregular base and was 0.29m wide and 0.07m deep. It was filled by two thin deposits: the lower (181) was a hard mid grey and orangish brown mottled silty clay with occasional small flecks of low fired clay. It was 0.24m wide and 0.04m thick and covered by (182), a hard dark grey clay with frequent charcoal flecks, occasional low fire clay flecks and tiny sherds of animal bone. This measured 0.29m wide and 0.06m thick.

A little to the north were the remains of a possible hearth [178] (Fig. 18 Section 25; Plate 34). This was irregularly shaped and measured 1.31m by 1.12m and 0.15m deep. It was filled by a single deposit of

hard mid reddish brown mottled grey clay (179) with occasional lumps of low fired clay, charcoal and very small pieces of animal bone.

In the central area was ditch [202]=[26013] (Fig. 18 Section 32; Plate 35) which was partially investigated during the evaluation. Neither segment did produced artefacts. Cut [202] had moderate sloping sides and a concave base and measured 1.14m wide and 0.29m deep. It was filled by (201) a firm/compact mid greyish brown silty clay with manganese flecks.

In the northwest corner of the site the remains of very shallow and undated features were recorded: they could be related to modern agricultural activity rather than archaeological features.

Exiting the site to the west was an east-west aligned gully [158]=[270] which was 10.17m long. Segment [158] (Section 18) was steep-sided and had a flat base, measuring 0.75m wide and 0.16m deep. It was filled by a single deposit (159), a hard orangish yellow clayey sand 0.16m thick.

Terminus segment [270] (Fig. 18 Section 52) had gentle sloping sides and a flat base and measured 0.27m wide and 0.11m deep. The lower fill (271) was a compact mid brown sandy silt and 4mm thick covered by (272), compact mid brown sandy silt, also 4mm thick.

Along the northern baulk of the site was a partially visible squared cut [265] (Fig. 18 Section 50) which had moderate sloping sides and a flat base, measured 0.46m wide and 0.12m deep and was filled with a friable light brownish yellow sand (266).

East of this, was the terminus of an east-west aligned gully [273] (Fig. 18 Section 53) continuing beyond the LOE. It had moderate sloping sides and sloping base,

measured 0.14m wide and 0.17m deep and was filled by a single deposit (274), a loose mid yellow sand with occasional shells.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The mitigation revealed several ditches across the site, some of them representing the continuation of the linear features investigated to the east for the construction of the Spalding western relief road (Section 5).

An analysis of the artefacts, character and relationship of the archaeological features allowed four possible main phases to be identified.

### Geology

The formation of the drift geology is related to the deposition of tidal sediments formed mainly by clayey silt deposits (102 natural) covered in the central and northern part of the site by sediments of loose sand respectively (258) and (284). On the northern part was a wide palaeochannel [249] and [251], part of a network creeks defining an area of high ground, a roddon. This natural feature was partially investigated during the evaluation phase by Trench 25 [25007]. The current intervention did not produce artefacts and the general character confirmed its possible natural origin from periodic tidal erosions and depositions. The alignment of this possible palaeochannel matches with one of the Roman ditches investigated to east for the Spalding western relief road (Allen, 2022 Group 3/[198]) so the hypothesis that it represent the continuation of it cannot be discounted.

### Phase 1: Saxo-Norman

The excavation of many segments of the earliest ditch, in the central part of the site,

did not produce any artefacts to corroborate the expected Roman dating and it is possible that seasonal tidal events of accumulation/erosion partially removed the original fills and re-shaped the course of the ditch. All the fills appeared to be the result of natural depositional processes.

The last part of this ditch was narrower and turning to east and west forming two branches with a curvilinear course ([235]=[237]=[243]. The eastern part continued beyond the limit of excavation and the only artefact retrieved was a fragment of probably residual briquetage, the only possibly Roman find from the site.

At the northern end of ditch [165]=[167]=[171]=[254]=[221]=[130] a re-cut [185]=[195] was excavated which was terminating to northwest with terminus [191]. The upper fill (186) was the only deposit containing dating evidence in the form of a sherd of Saxo-Norman pottery. The purpose of this re-cut was unclear, a possible maintenance intervention being the more convincing interpretation.

### Phase 2: Early medieval (12<sup>th</sup> century)

The second phase consisted of three linear features containing a few sherds of early medieval pottery which continued beyond the limit of excavation.

Ditch [260]=[262]=[290]=[220]=[215], in the northeast corner of the site was cut by the later ditch [287]. Segment [215] excavated close to the northern baulk of the site revealed slightly different fills, compared with the rest of the excavated interventions, showing deposits of dumped waste material with animal bone, charcoal, lumps of low fired clay and sherds of pottery.

This ditch continued on both sides beyond the limit of excavation representing probably the continuation of one of the ditches investigated to west for the route for the Spalding western relief road (Section 5).

A second ditch was the slightly curvilinear [160]=[209] which was quite wide and deep and investigated for a maximum depth of 0.90m from ground level due to the presence of the water table. The two segments excavated produced little pottery: fill (163) contained a single sherd. The relationship slot excavated close to the northern baulk of the site revealed the presence of dumped refuse containing lumps of low fired clay and charcoal from some nearby activities. The lower fill (212) contained a single sherd of pottery.

In the central part of the site, another ditch related of early medieval date was excavated; it was partially investigated during the evaluation phase by two slots within Trench 26, numbered as [26009]=[26017]. Fill (26010) produced a single sherd of mid 11<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> century pottery (Blythe 2021, Appendix 2).

To the west a second segment [183] was excavated filled by (184) which contained 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery

### Phase 3: Medieval (1200-1500)

It is possible to ascribe to this phase two linear features which truncated two of the earlier ditches.

Ditch [287]=[275]=[293]=[298]=[280] in the northern part of the site truncated, as shown by the relationship slot, the previous ditch [290]. The upper fill (288) contained two sherds of 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

Most of the excavated silting deposits of this long ditch did not produce artefacts with a few exceptions: the lower fill (299)

of segment [298] produced a a single sherd of 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery and several articulated animal bones. Close to the baulk of the site segment [280] produced two sherds of 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery respectively from fills (282) and (281) which also contained a fragment of Rhenish lava quern.

The second ditch related to this phase was [207]=[213] in the northeast corner of the site which cut the earlier curvilinear ditch [160]=[209]. The lower fill (208) of segment [207] produced three sherds of 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century pottery. More artefacts were recovered from the fill (214) of the terminus [213] which produced a single sherd of medieval pottery.

A further medieval ditch [120]=[139]=[147] was investigated on the central area of the site and three sherds of 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery were recovered from fill (121) the only context producing some artefacts.

### Phase 4: post-medieval (1500-1900)

Three of the investigated ditches seemed to belong to the post-medieval period (Phase 4).

The first [285]=[278]=[296]=[301]=[267] was a recut of the medieval ditch [287]=[275]=[293]=[298]=[280] (Phase 3) and excavated to set up part of a new land drains system, taking advantage of the medieval ditch, probably not completely silted, in which the clay drainage pipes were placed.

A fragment of modern glass was recovered from (269), the upper fill of segment [267] along with one sherd of medieval pottery.

A ditch [26007]=[231]=[203]=[239] in the central part of the site had been partially investigated by evaluation Trench 26: (26008) fill of [26007] produced artefacts

dating from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the same dating range was confirmed by the excavation of new segments of this ditch. The lower fill (232) of segment [231] produced occasional animal bone, an iron hinge strap and a very abraded sherd of late 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

To the west was excavated segment [203]: the lower fill (206) containing a sherd of medieval pottery, a fragment of 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century brick and a fragment of early modern glass. The upper fill (204) produced pottery dating between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, early modern glass and some late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century clay pipe which confirmed the proposed modern dating.

This ditch was continuing beyond the western baulk of the site and close to it was segment [239], the lower fill of which (240) contained single sherds of pottery of 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, 16<sup>th</sup> century and 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century date.

This ditch represented the continuation of one of the ditches investigated on the eastern side for the Spalding western relief road (Section 5).

With approximately the same alignment was another ditch in the southern part of the site excavated by four interventions [155]=[107]=[122]=[245].

All the investigated segments showed approximately the same stratigraphy: the lower part of the ditch was sealed by clayey deposits, the result of natural depositional processes indicating a possible period of lack of maintenance. The ditch was still active at a higher level for a short period of time as shown by the formation of thin deposits related to the last use. The definitive abandonment of the ditch was marked by the accumulation of a substantial fill used to level the area probably to eliminate the original partition

of the land which was now amalgamated into one large field.

The first segment from the west [155] produced from the lower fill (259) two fragments of animal bone. It was a result of natural depositional processes which progressively silted the lower part of the ditch when it was still active.

Fill (259) was overlain by (157), formed probably when only the upper part of the ditch was in use. It produced five sherds of medieval pottery and a post-medieval steel button and was truncated by [103], foundation cut of a brick surface (105). Most of the bricks comprising this pavement showed clear signs of over firing proving that almost exclusively waste material not suitable for building walls was used. The function of this surface is unclear, it was probably a sort of ford or passage on top of the ditch when the lower part was completely silted and only the upper part was still in use.

In the second ditch segment [107] investigated, on the upper part of the northern side was a dumped deposit of brick fragments similar to the bricks used for the pavement (105).

The lower fill (125) of segment [122] comprised a plastic/hard dark bluish grey orangish mottled clay probably darkened by the decomposition of organic material. It was covered by (124) containing occasional pieces of CBM, pottery and animal bone. Both fills were overlain by final silting (123).

Segment [245] showed a profile similar to [122] and the same stratigraphic sequence, with the lower silting deposit (248) the result of natural depositional processes. This deposit was also darkened by the decomposition of organic material. It was covered by (247), the result of a sedimentation occurred during the last use

of the ditch. Upper fill (246) represented the definitive abandonment of this linear feature and contained occasional animal bones and one pottery sherd.

On both sides of the site this ditch extended beyond the limit of excavation; to the east it was probably joining with one of the ditches investigated for the Spalding western relief road (Section 5).

On the west side it was noted that this ditch had the same alignment as the drainage ditch currently marking the limit of the site and still in use. It is possible to suppose that the current ditch, instead of turning to the southeast, was originally contiguous with this ditch.

An original subdivision of the site area is visible on Upton's map of 1843 which shows a partition into two separate fields later amalgamated into just one. This change occurred before 1887 as depicted in the first edition 6" Ordnance Survey of this year (Smith 2021).

The site contributed to an overall corpus of medieval material revealed in the Pinchbeck region, though contributed little to the known Romano-British settlement site excavated immediately to the east. As such, and when taken into consideration the other archaeological interventions in the parish the result may help inform the research priority of rural settlement patterns and landscapes (Knight *et al*, 2012).

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological mitigation, comprising strip, map and sample excavation was carried out at Yews Farm, Spalding Road, Pinchbeck.

The work confirmed the continuation of some of the linear features previously

investigated on the Spalding western relief road (Section 5) and helped to determine spatial partition within the site. Recovering further artefacts and investigating the relationships allowed the main phases of the site to be outlined and a comparison to be made with the already investigated features.

The lack of Roman cultural material confirmed that the site probably lies in a peripheral area compared with the substantial frequentation attested on the site to the east where industrial bread production was encountered. Only part of a drainage ditch system survived and no marks of settlement were encountered. The only sherd of pottery found in these ditches was of Saxo-Norman date.

The early medieval and medieval ditches produced very few artefacts and accurate dating of these phases was quite challenging. The investigations highlighted however the main character of these features as part of wider drainage systems set out on the siltland of the Fens for agricultural purposes. These features were in use for a long period of time sometimes showing a continuity of use up to the modern era and proving that management of water and landscaping represented a priority through the centuries.

The presence of approximately parallel ditches probably reflected the medieval subdivision of land into strips by ditches known as dylings. The differing alignment of some of the ditches and the stratigraphic sequence testified the presence of a probable early medieval phase.

During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the pattern of fields on the site, probably with its roots in the medieval phase, was amalgamated into one field through the backfilling of at least three parallel ditches.

Finds included Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery, fired clay, animal bone and clay pipe.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge Mr A Jagger of Ashwood Homes for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Paul Cope-Faulkner, who also edited this report along with Mark Dymond. Greg Pickup kindly allowed access to the library and parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

## 9. PERSONNEL

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 Finds Processing: Denise Buckley  
 Photographic reproduction: Paolo Carbonari  
 CAD Illustration: Paolo Carbonari  
 Post-excavation Analysis: Paolo Carbonari  
 Archiving: Denise Buckley, Maria Leroi

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
APS	Archaeological Project Services
BGS	British Geological Survey
CBM	Ceramic Building Material
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
GPS	Global Positioning System
HER	Historic Environment Record
LAO	Lincolnshire Archive Office
LHER	Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record
LOE	Limit of Excavation
OS	Ordnance Survey

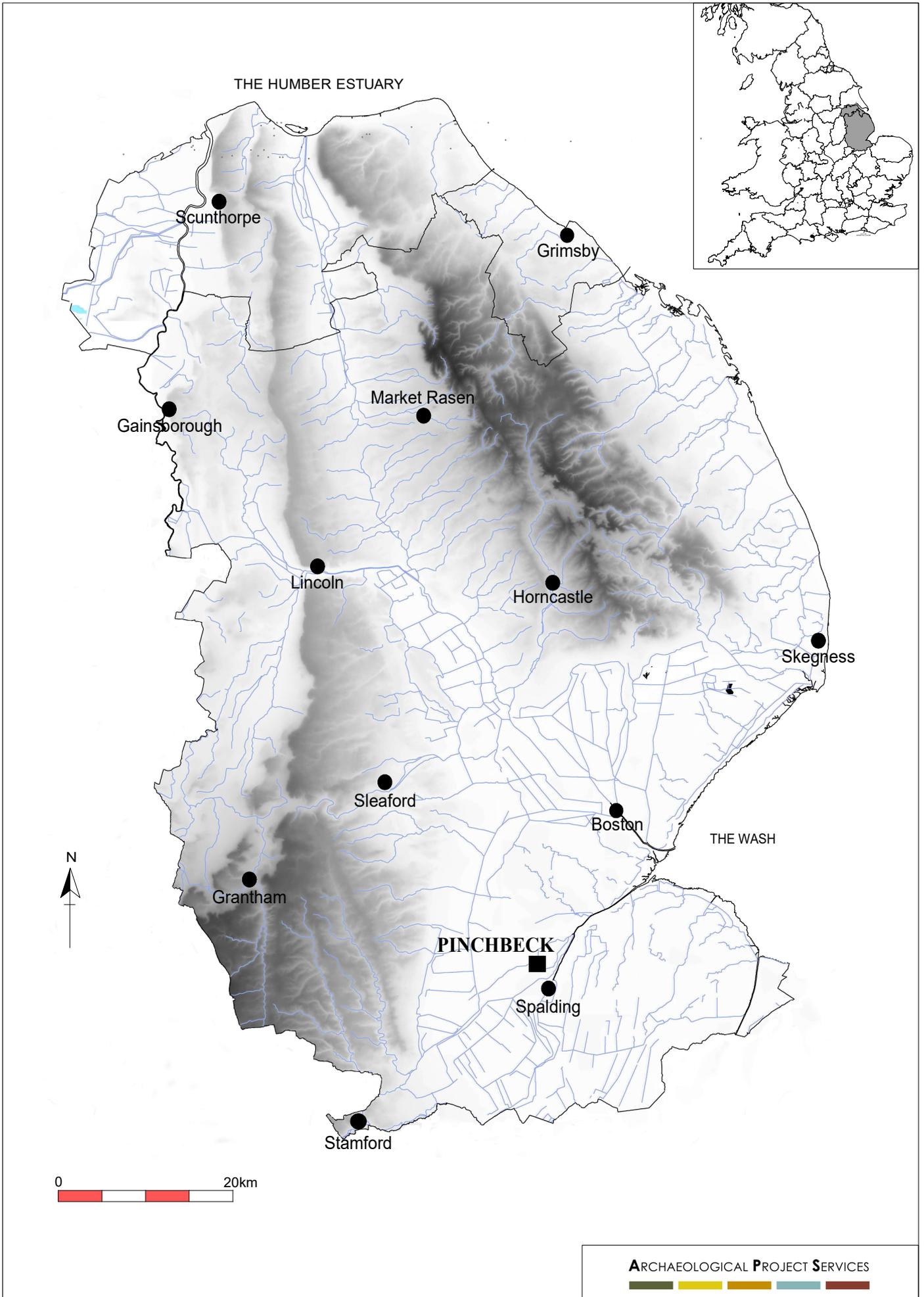


Figure 1. General location plan

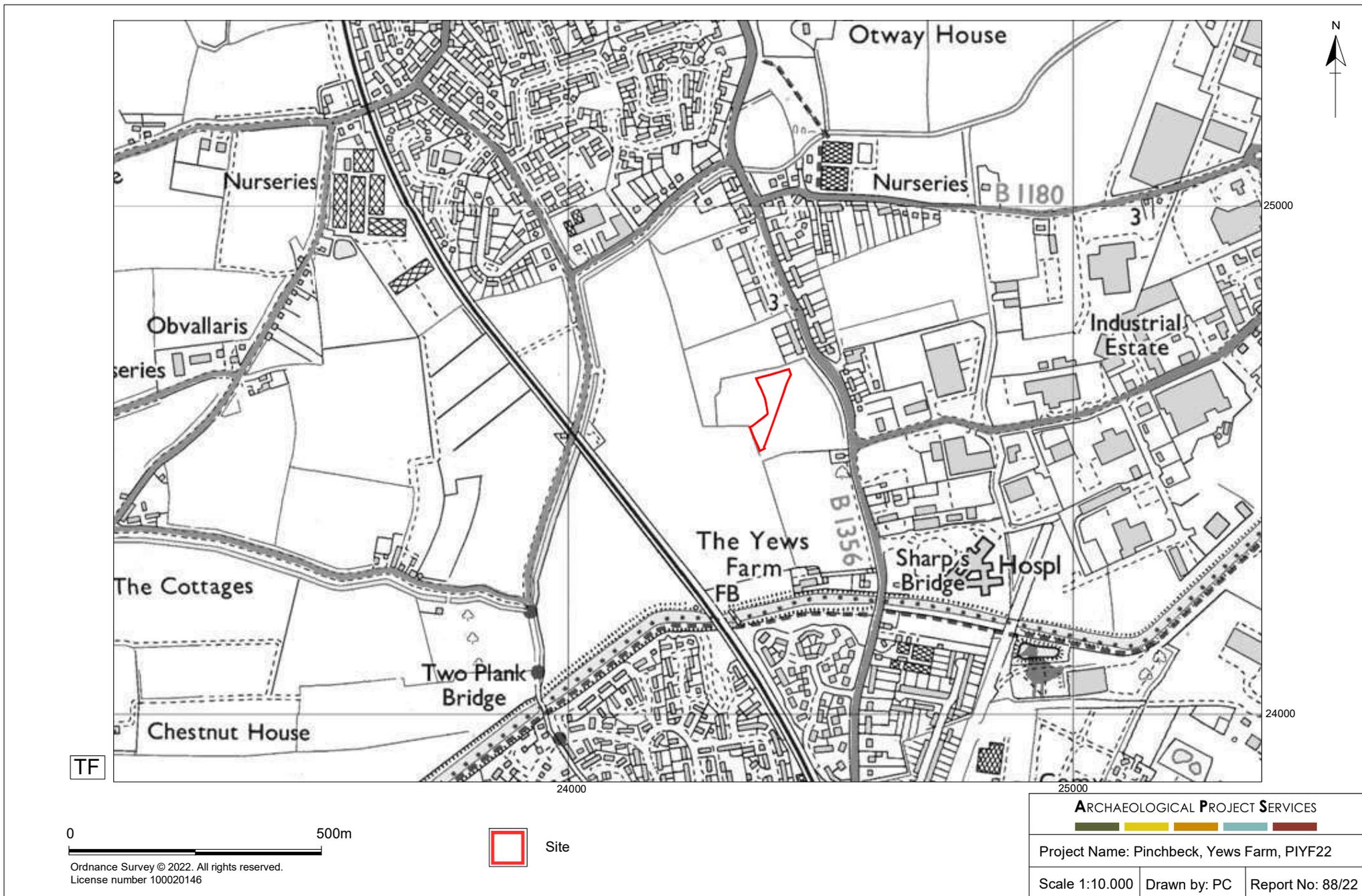


Figure 2. Site location plan

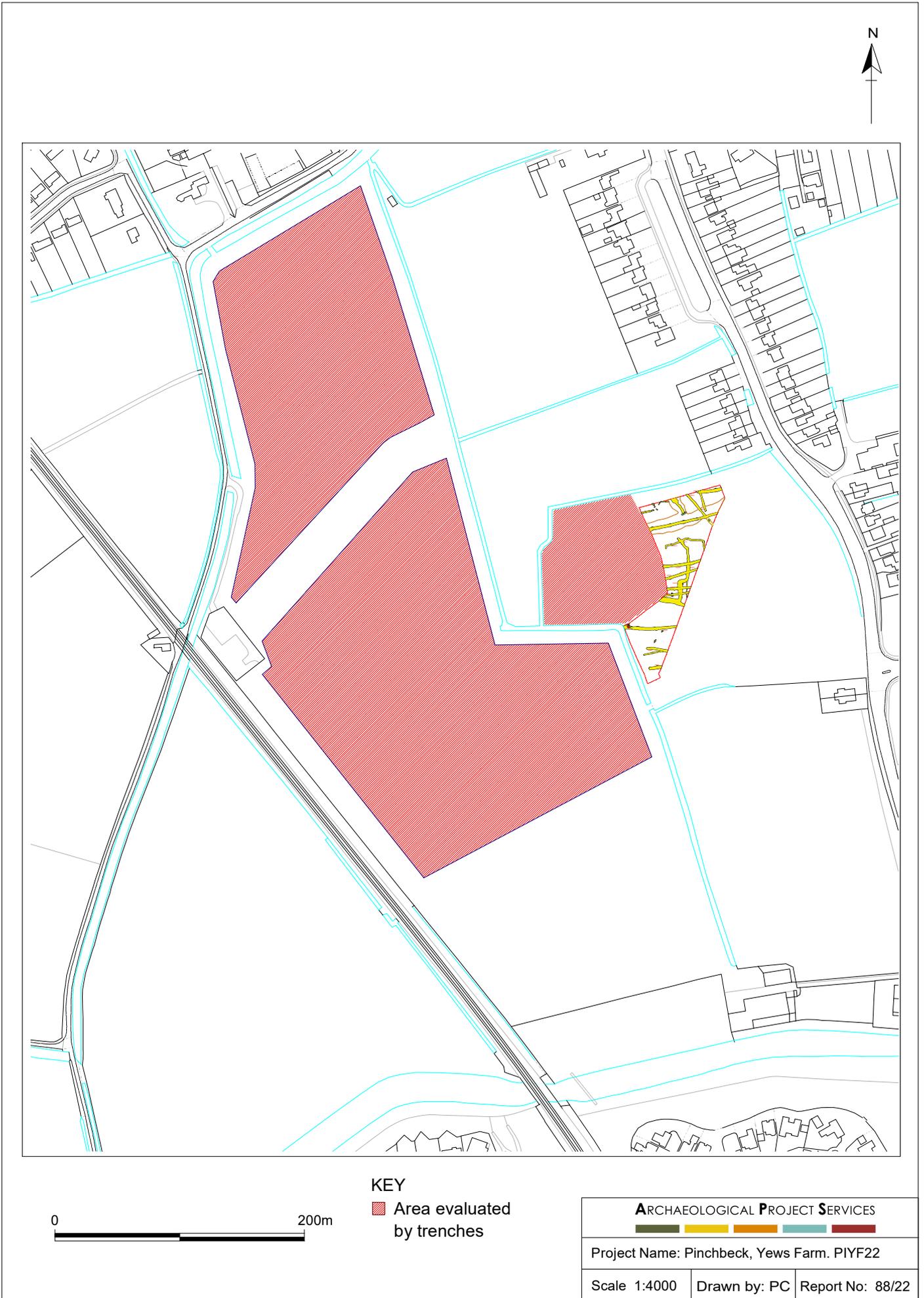


Figure 3. Site location in relation to the area evaluated by trenches

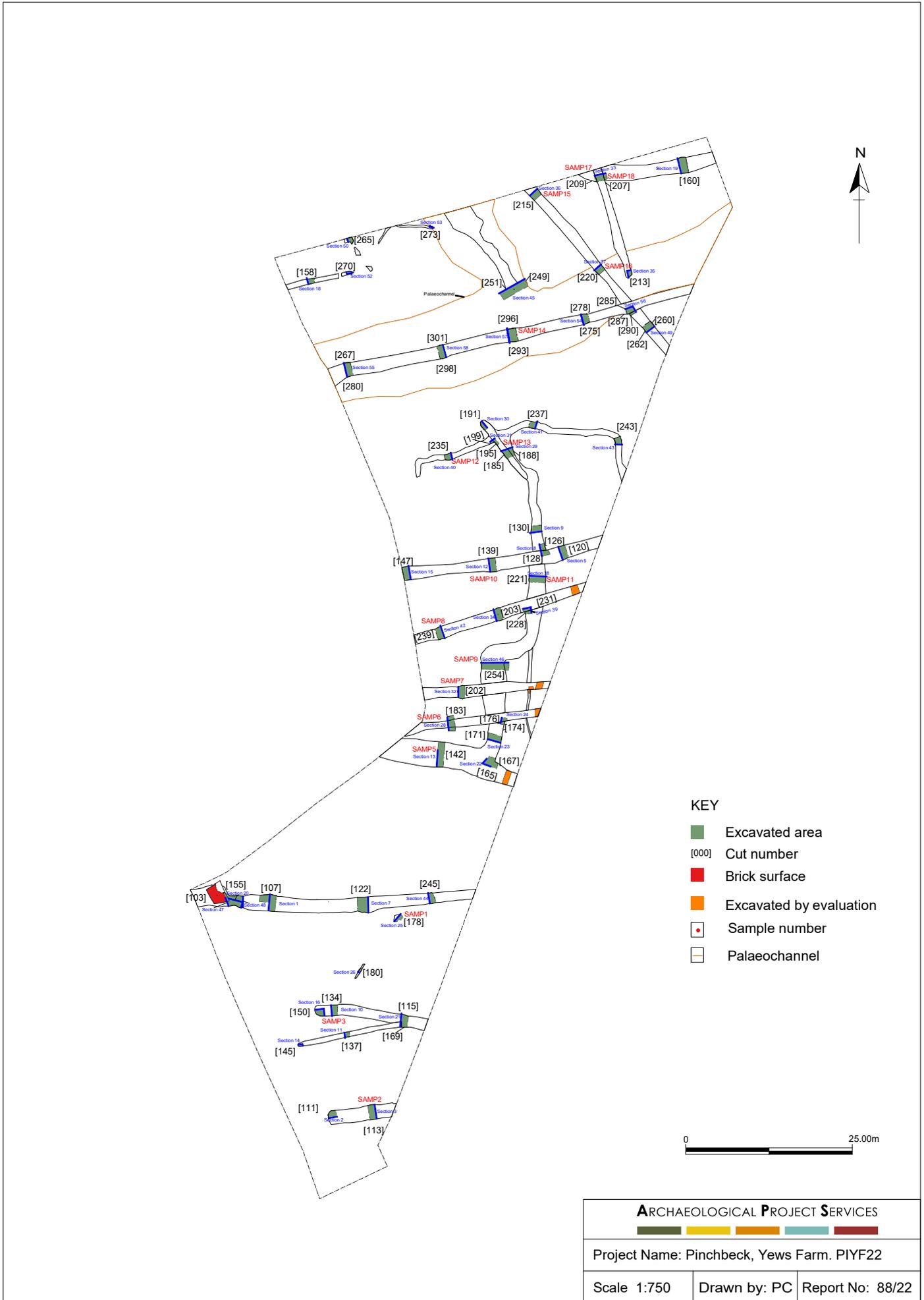


Figure 4. General plan of the site

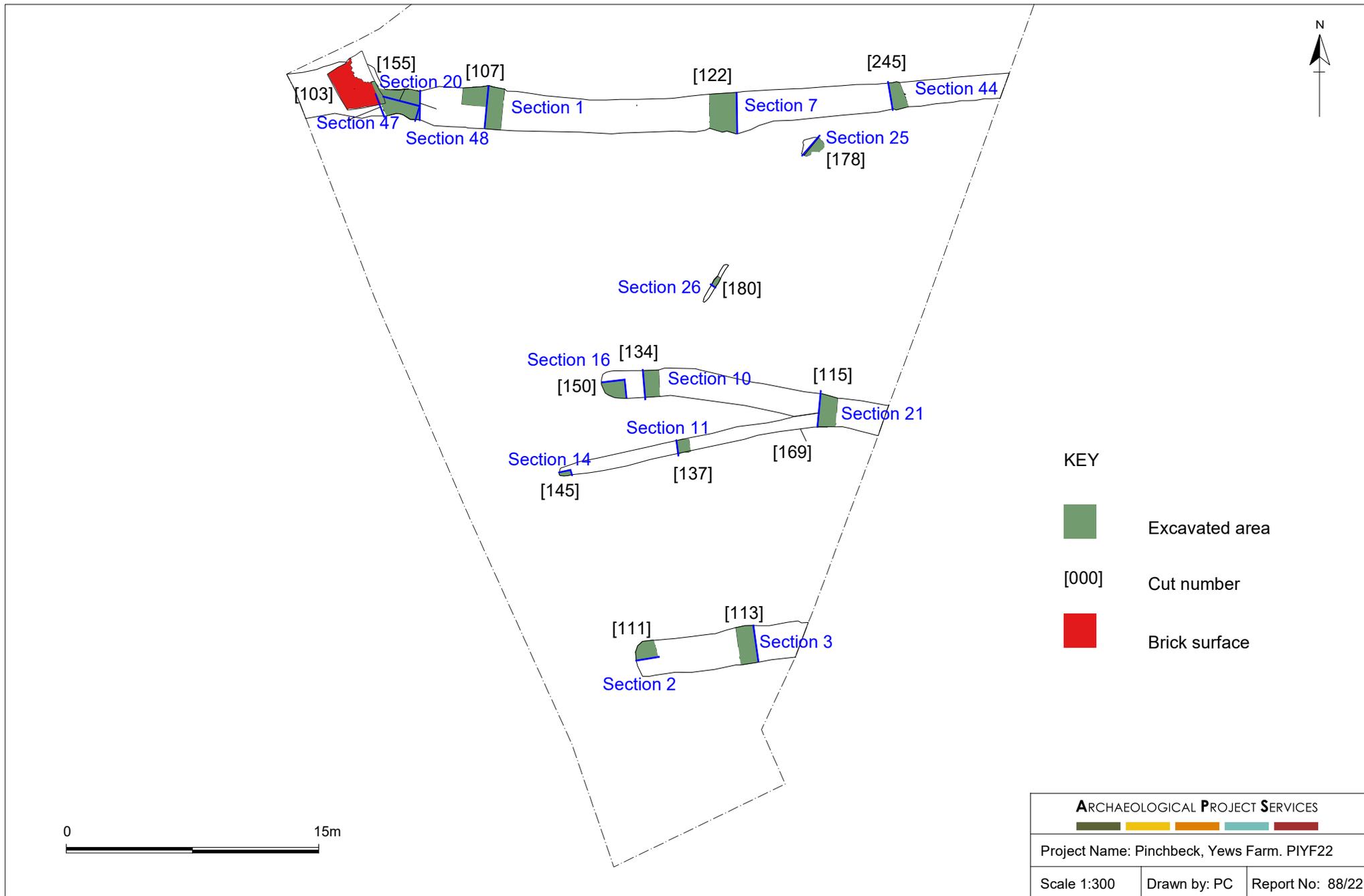


Figure 5. Plan detail of southern part of site

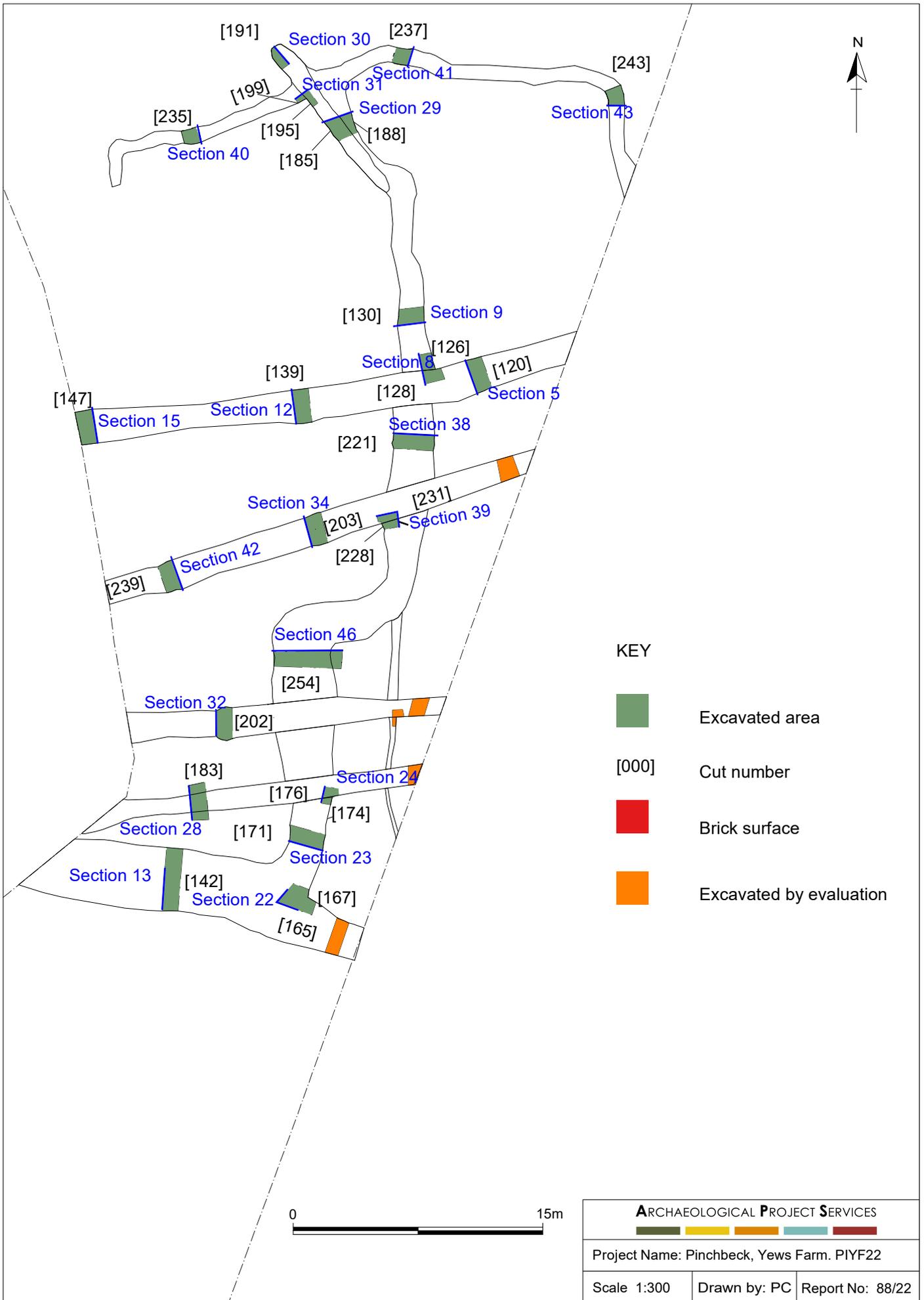


Figure 6. Plan detail of central part of the site

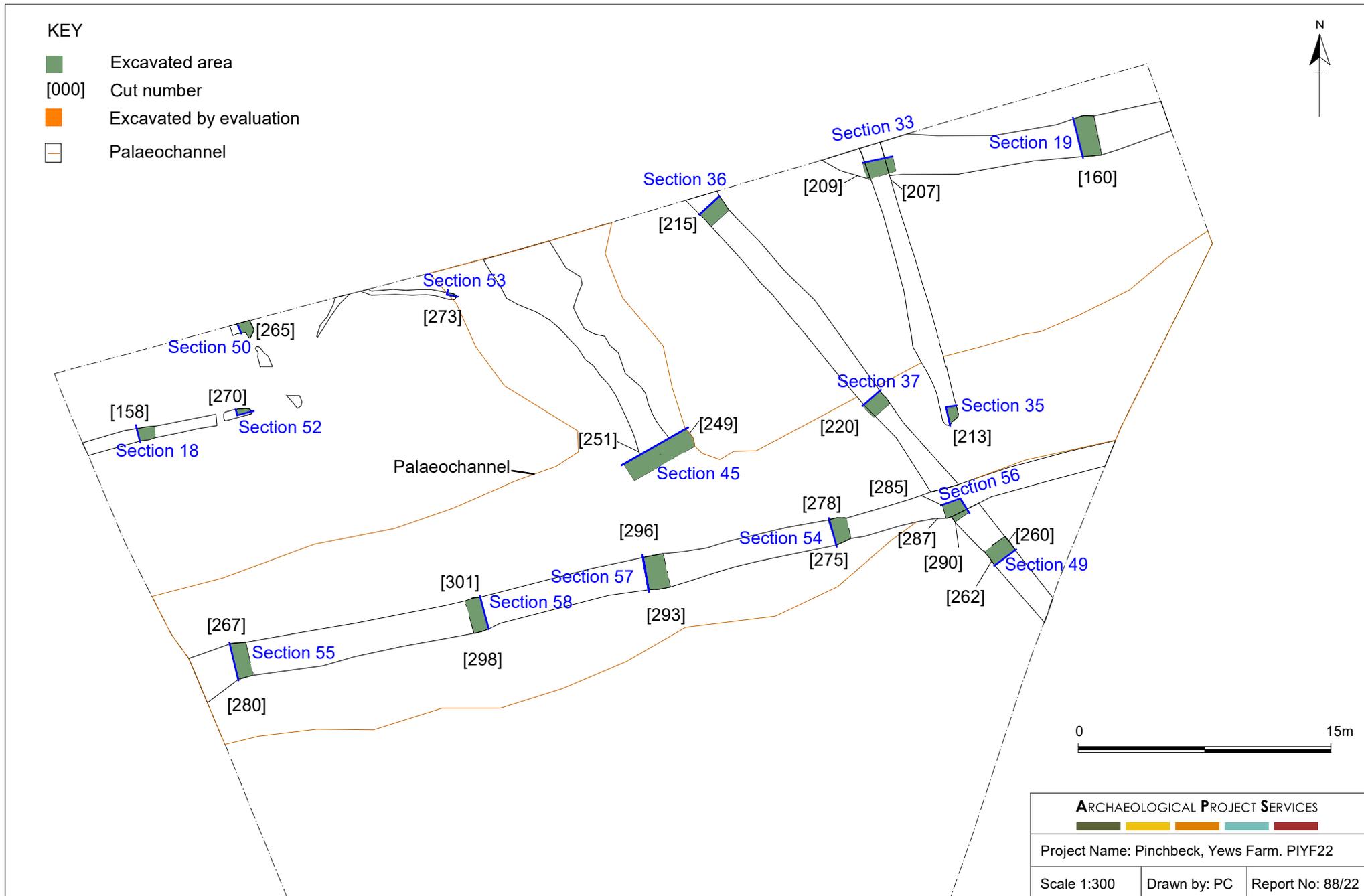


Figure 7. Plan detail of the northern part of the site

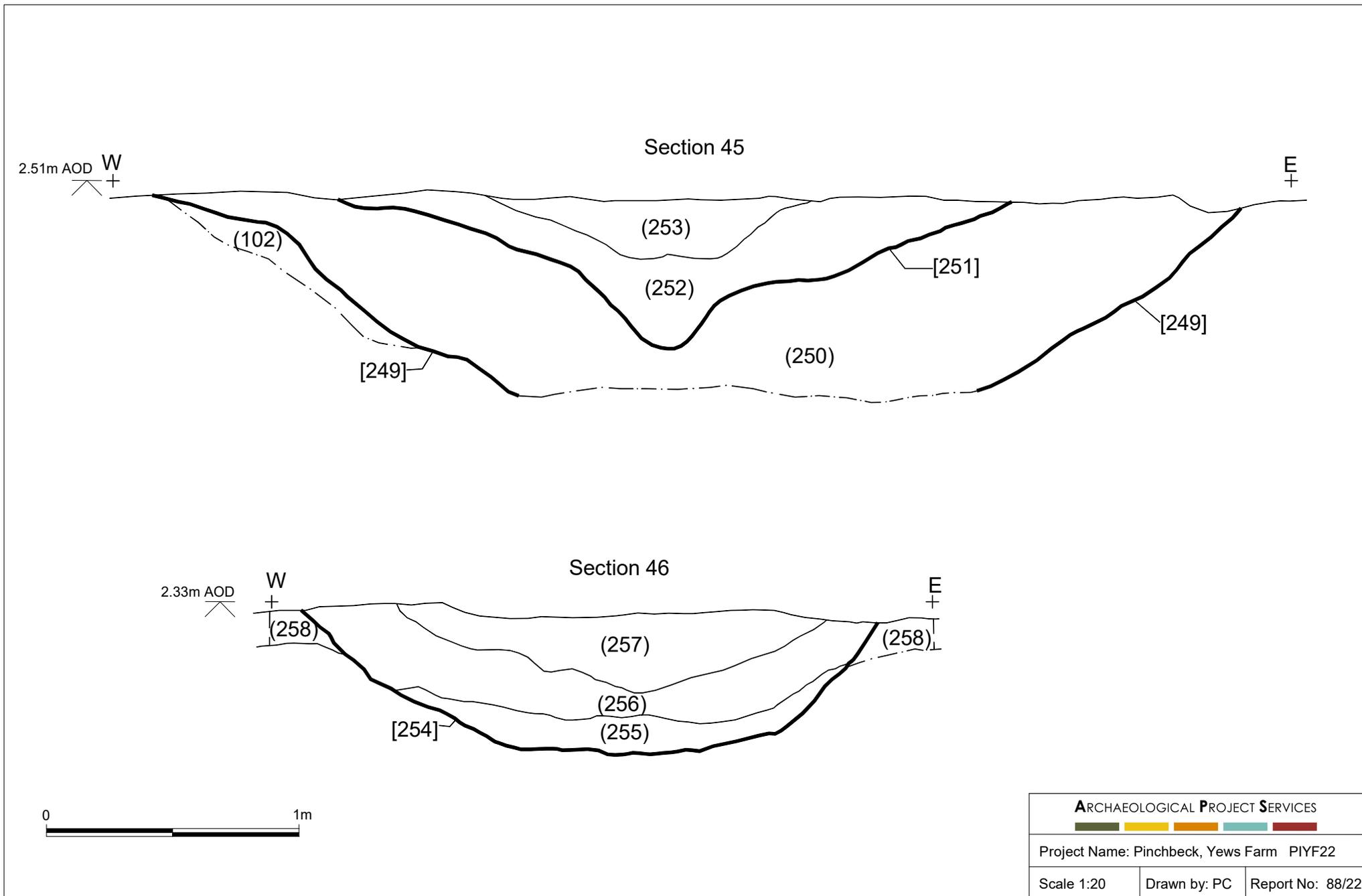
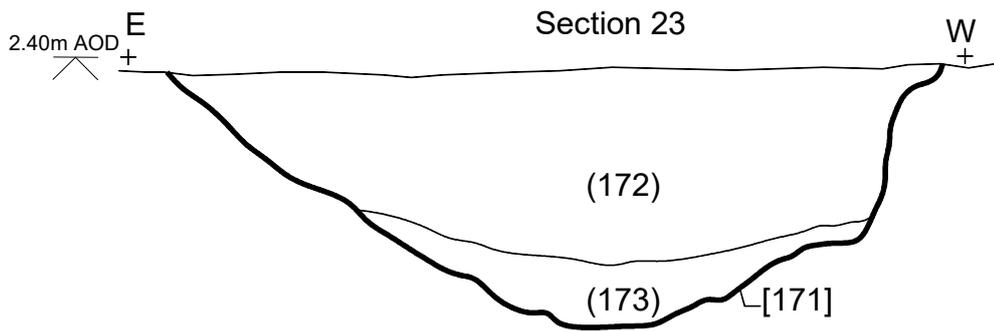
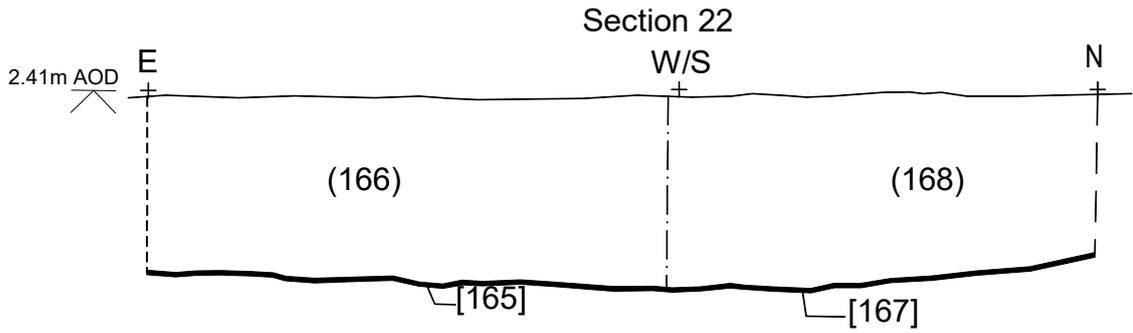


Figure 8. Sections 45 and 46



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Figure 9. Sections 13, 22, 23 and 38

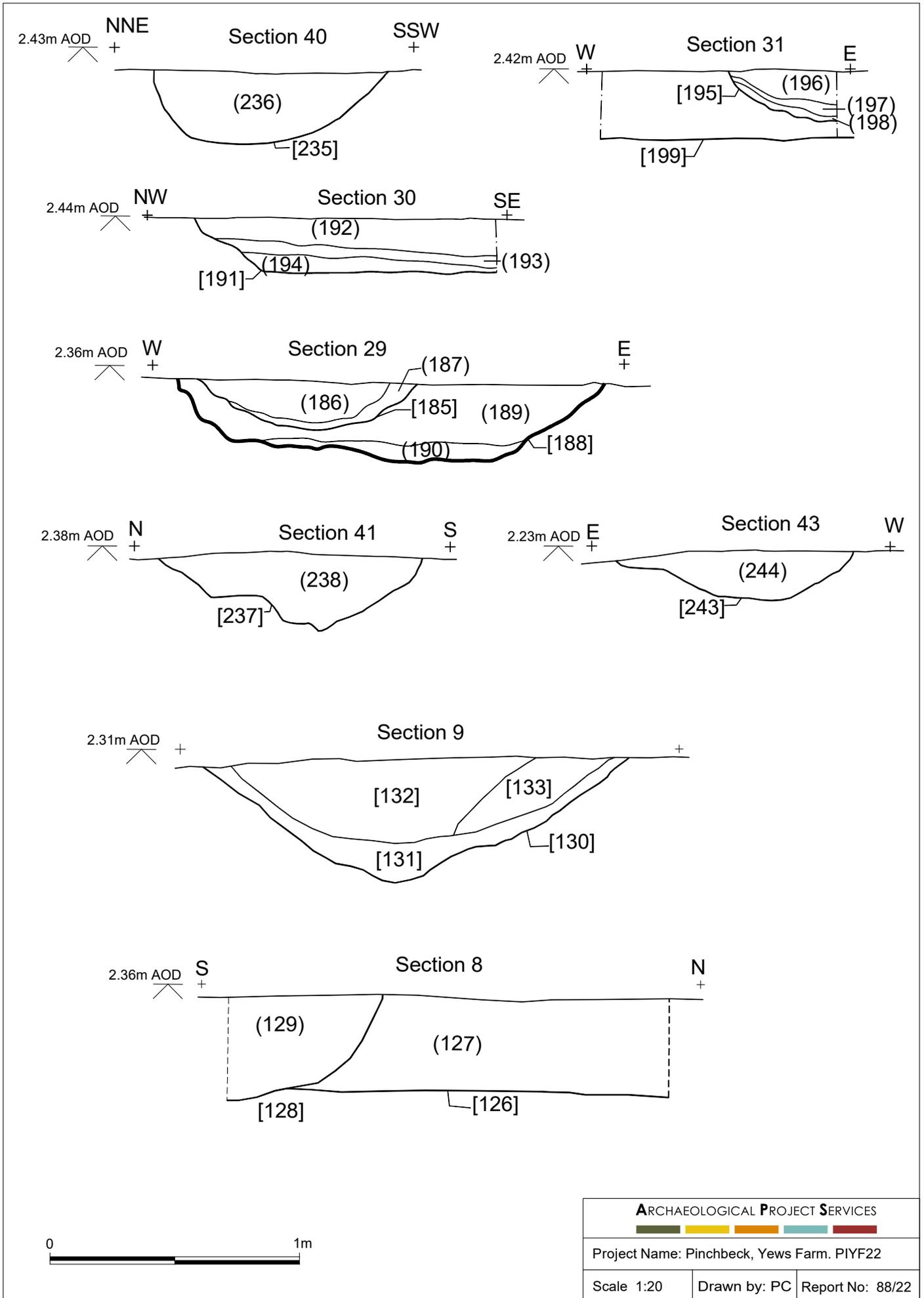
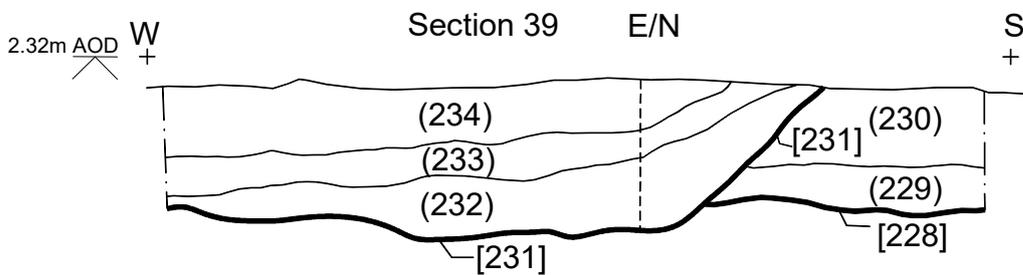
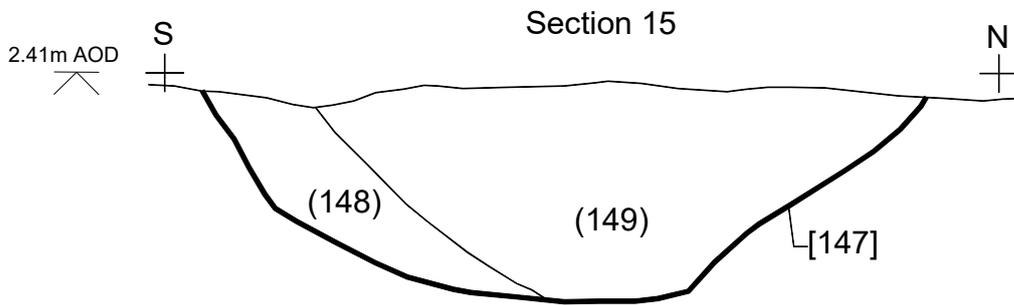
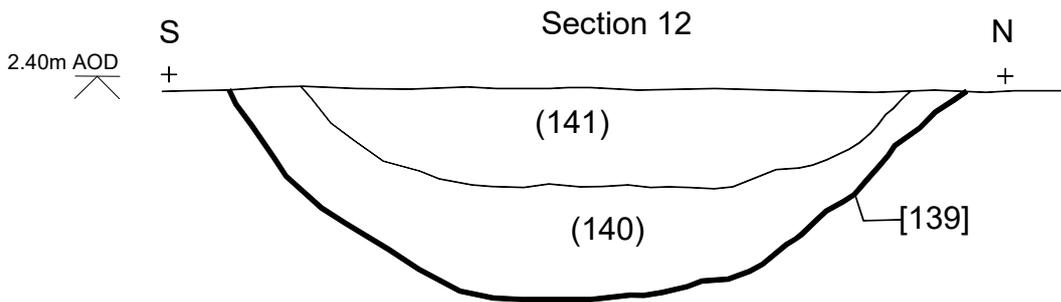
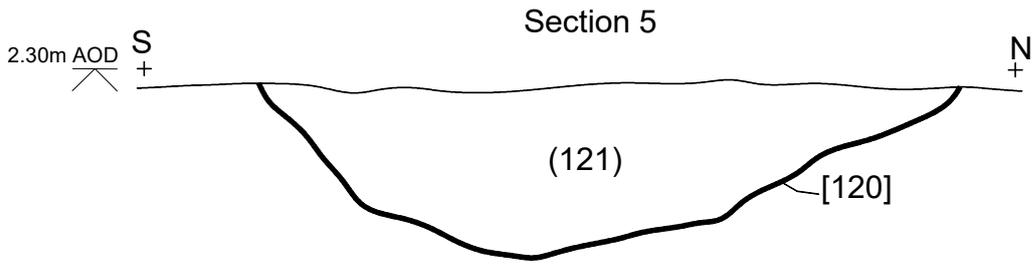


Figure 10. Sections 40, 31, 30, 29, 41, 43, 9 and 8



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Figure 11. Section 5, 12, 15 and 39

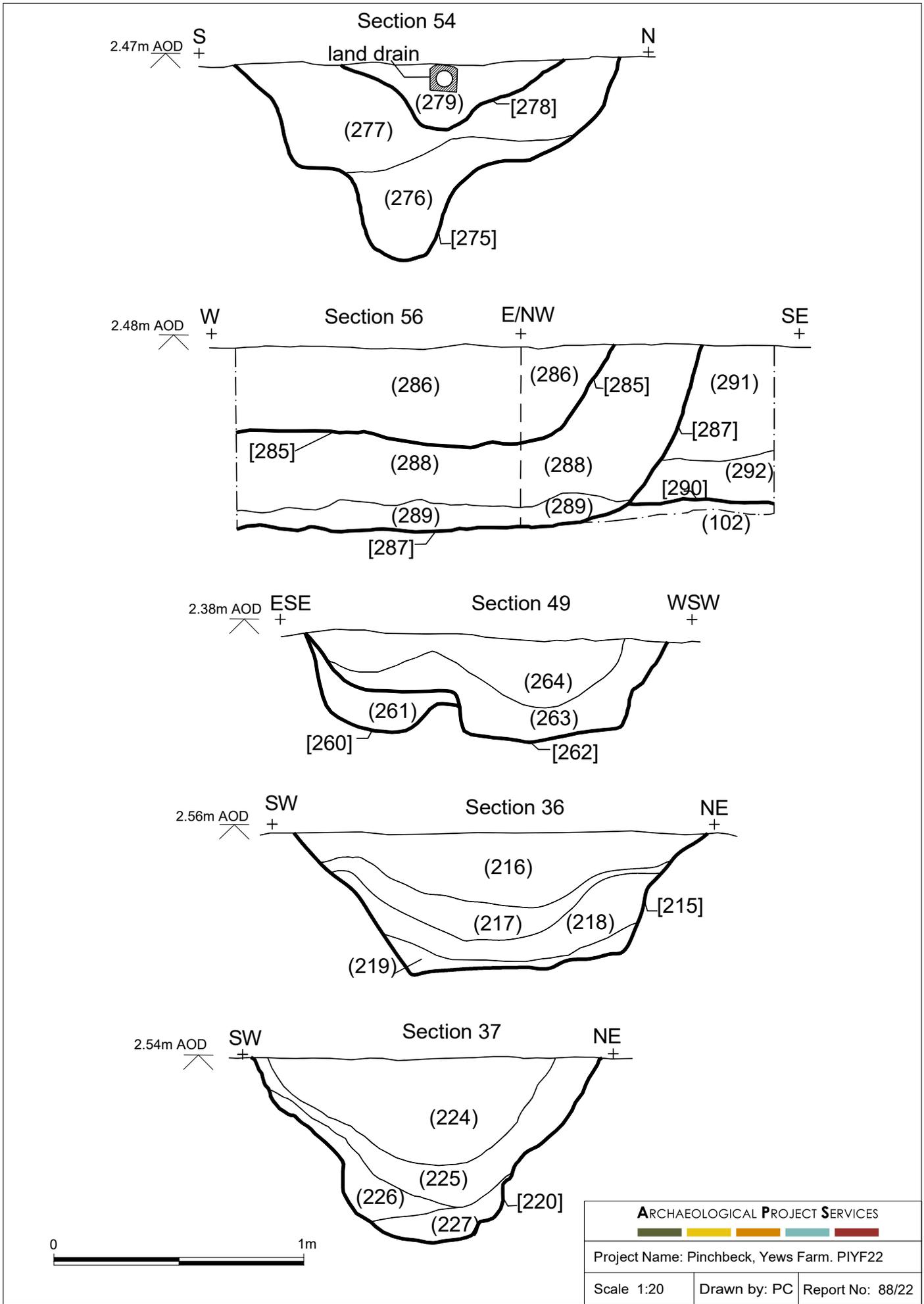


Figure 12. Sections 54, 56, 49, 36 and 37

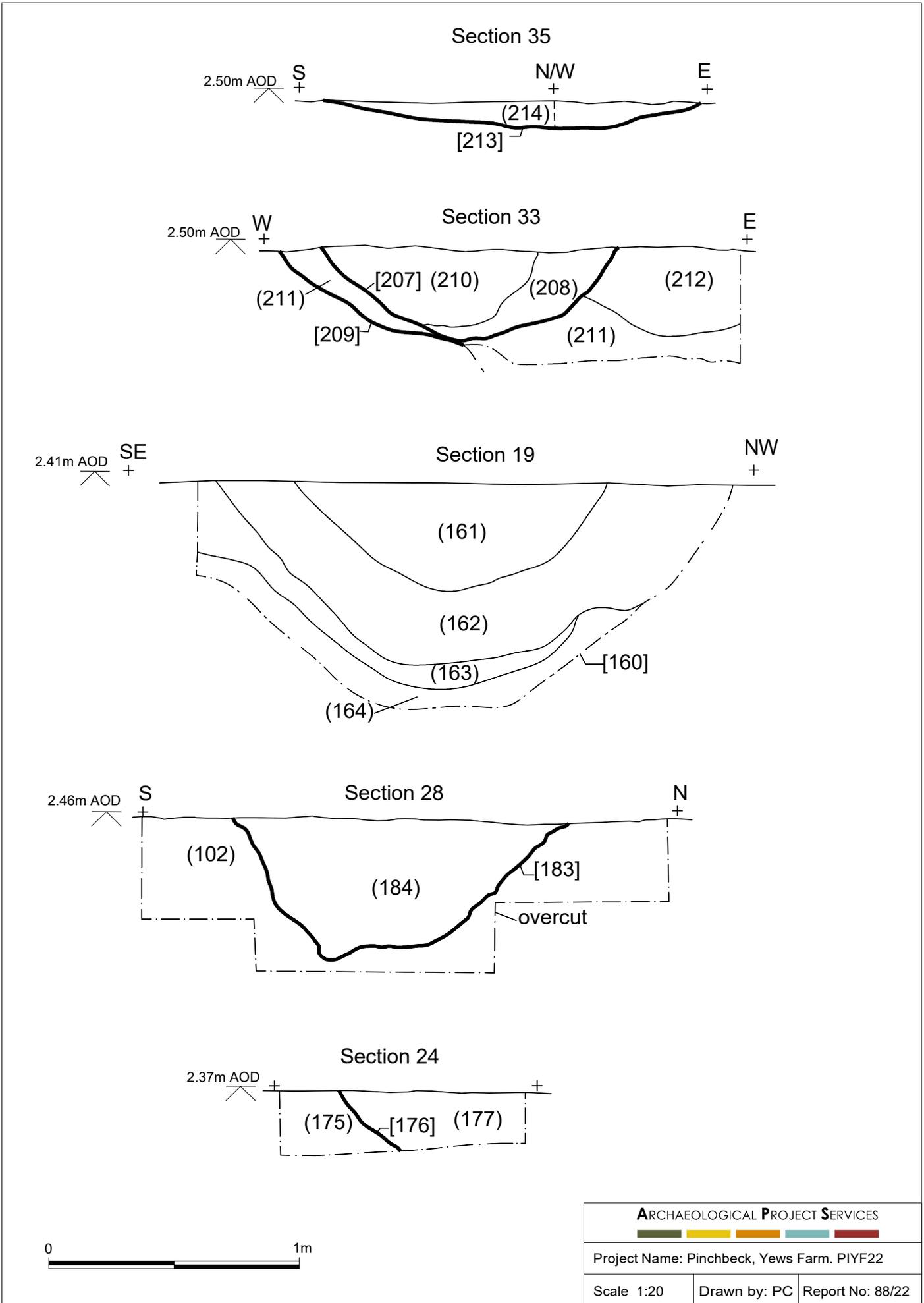
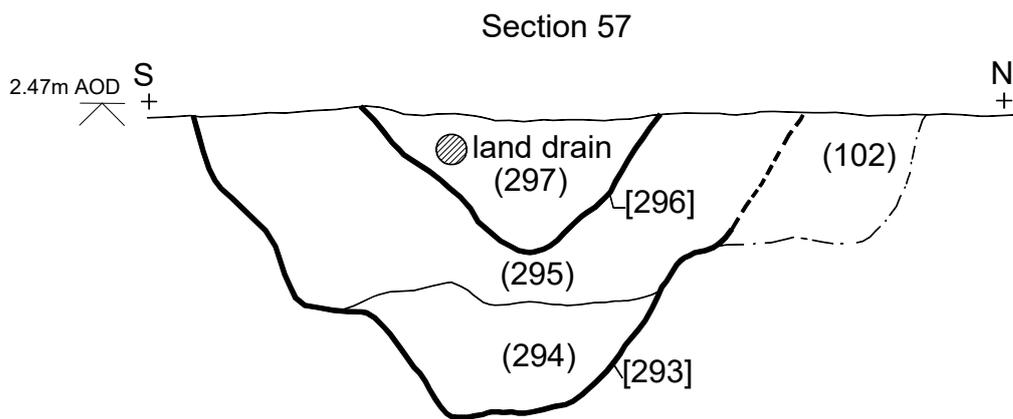
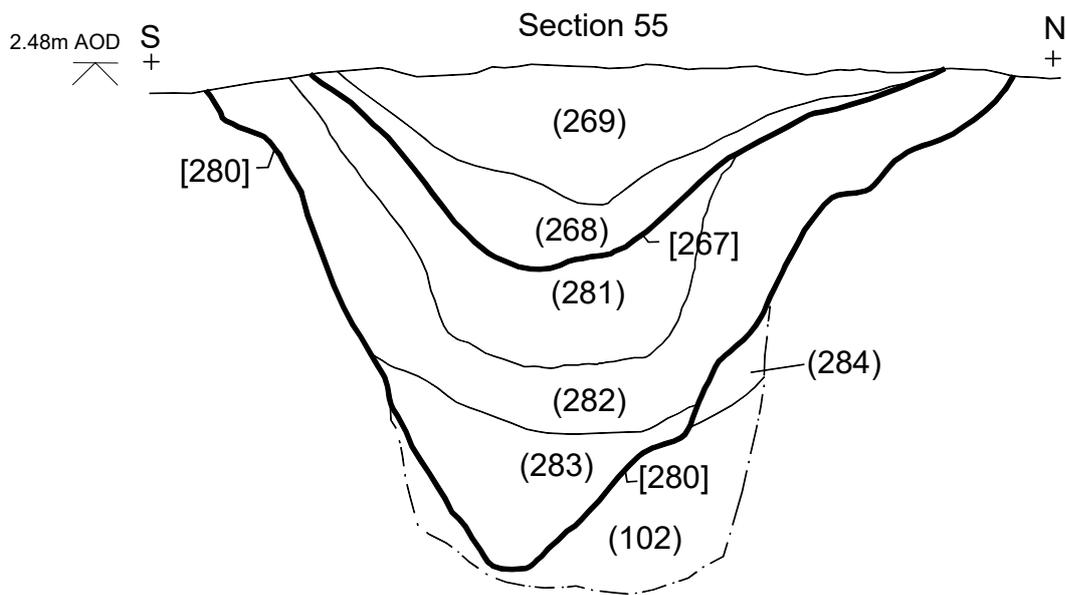
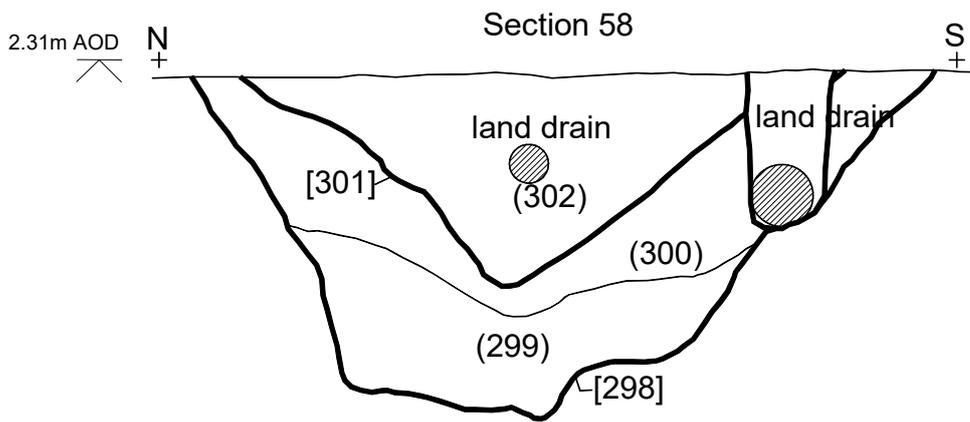
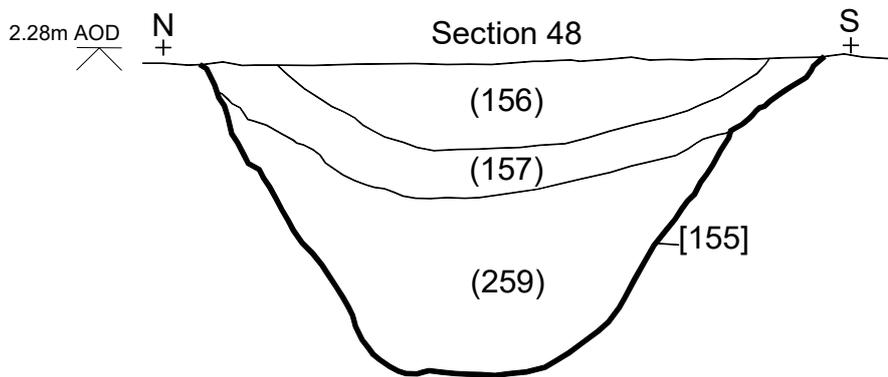
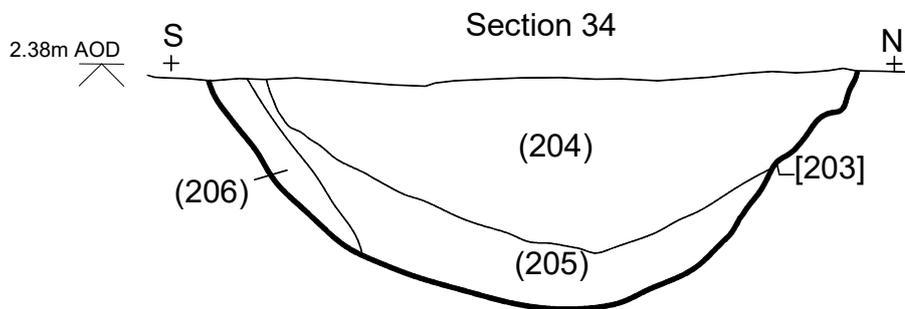
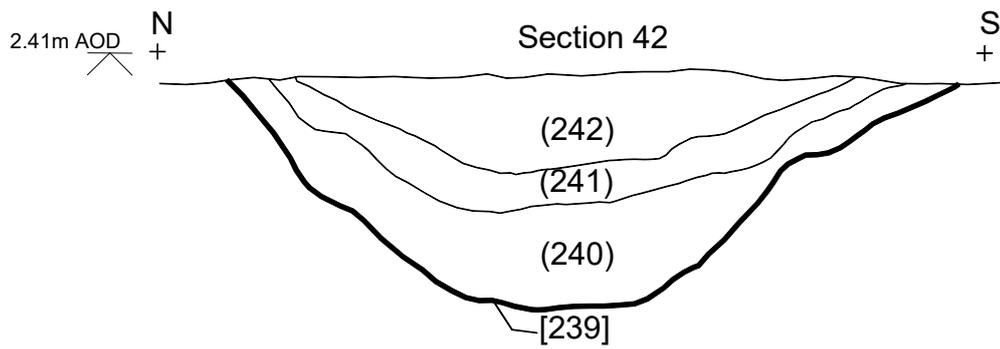


Figure 13. Sections 35, 33, 19, 28, 24, and 39



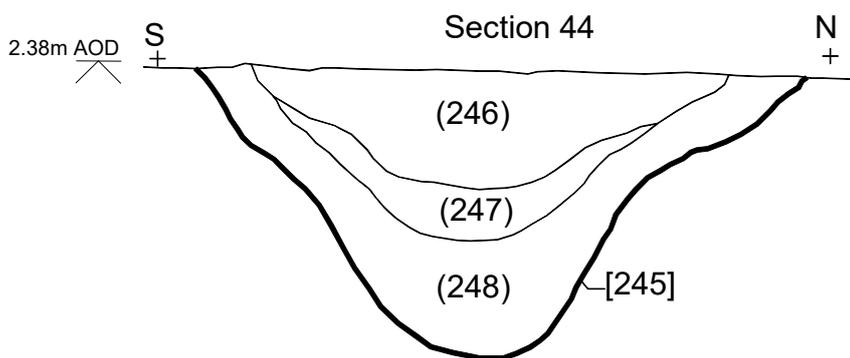
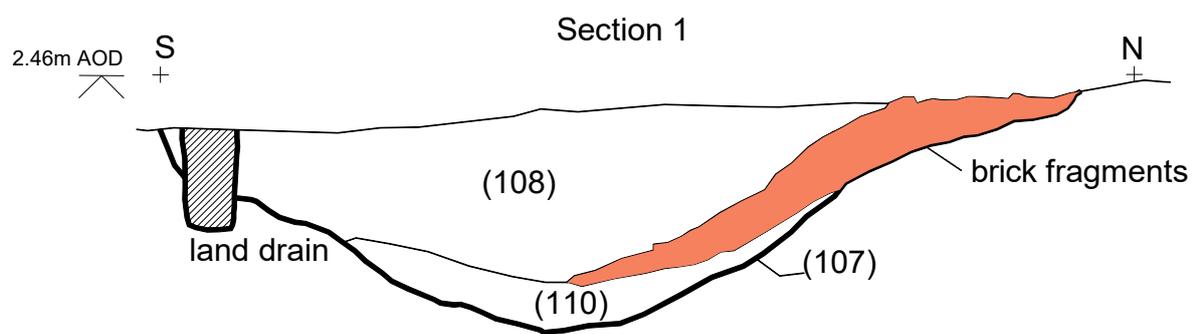
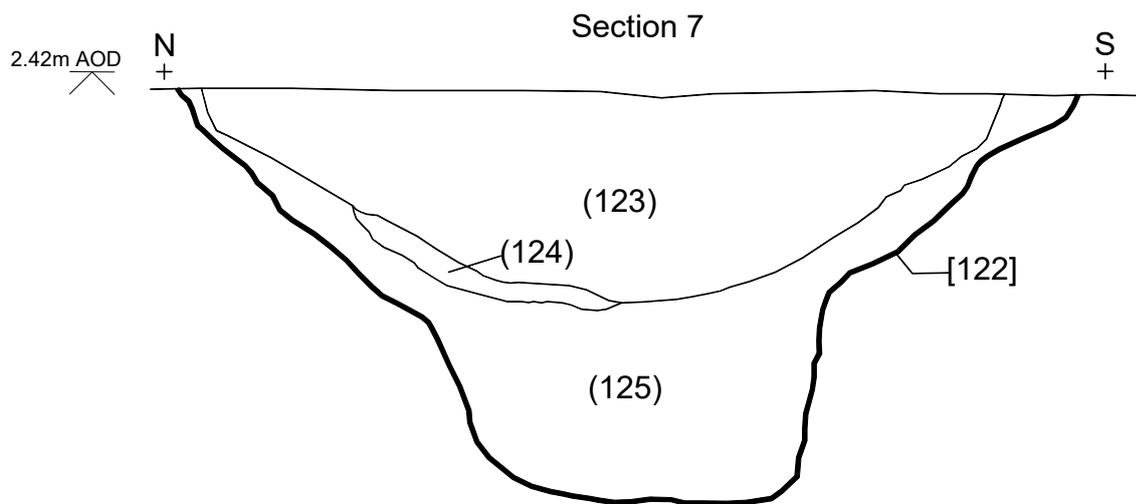
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Figure 14. Sections 58, 55 and 57



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Figure 15. Sections 42, 34 and 48



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Figure 16. Sections 7, 1 and 44

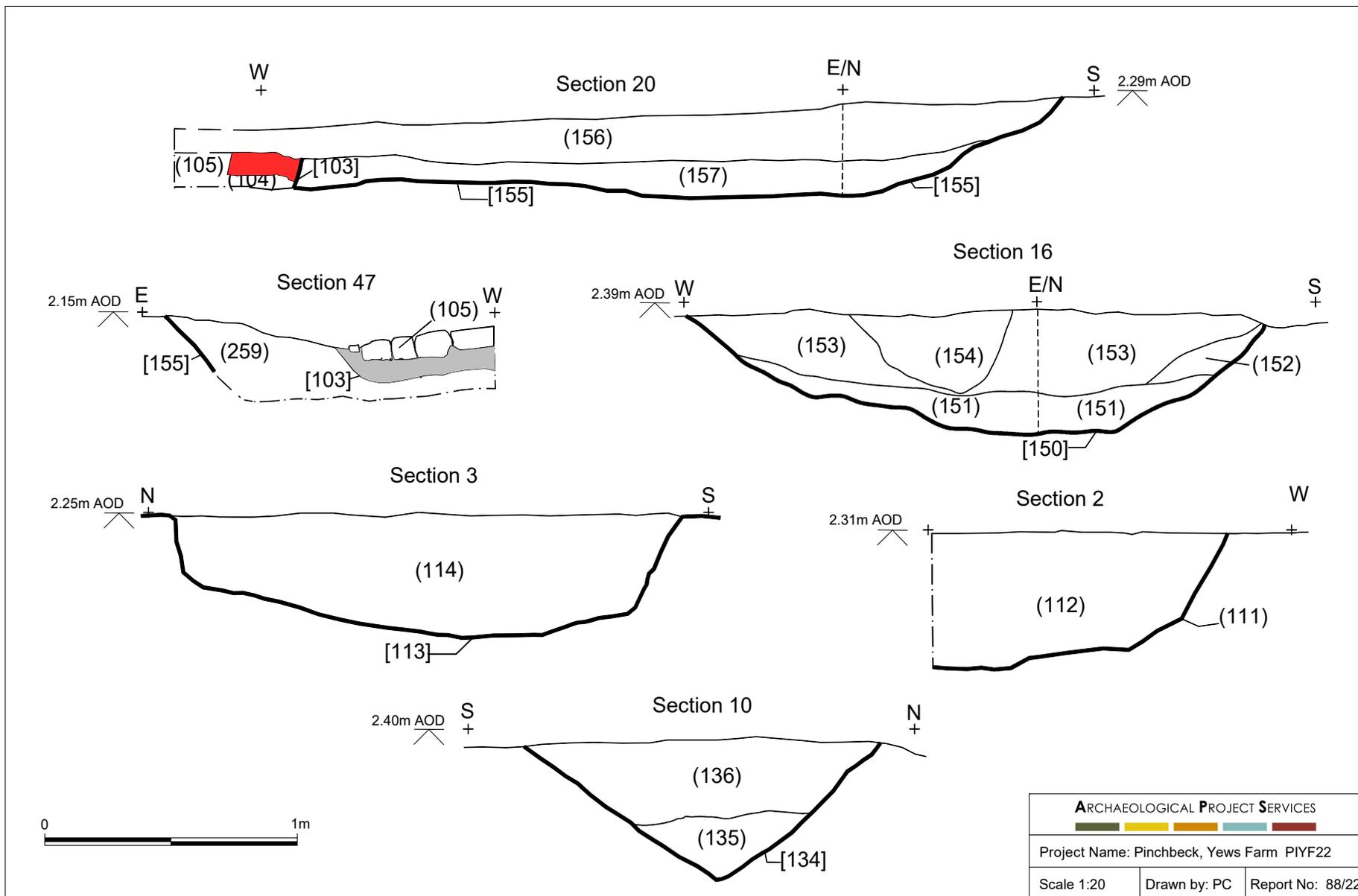


Figure 17. Sections 20, 47, 16, 3, 2 and 10

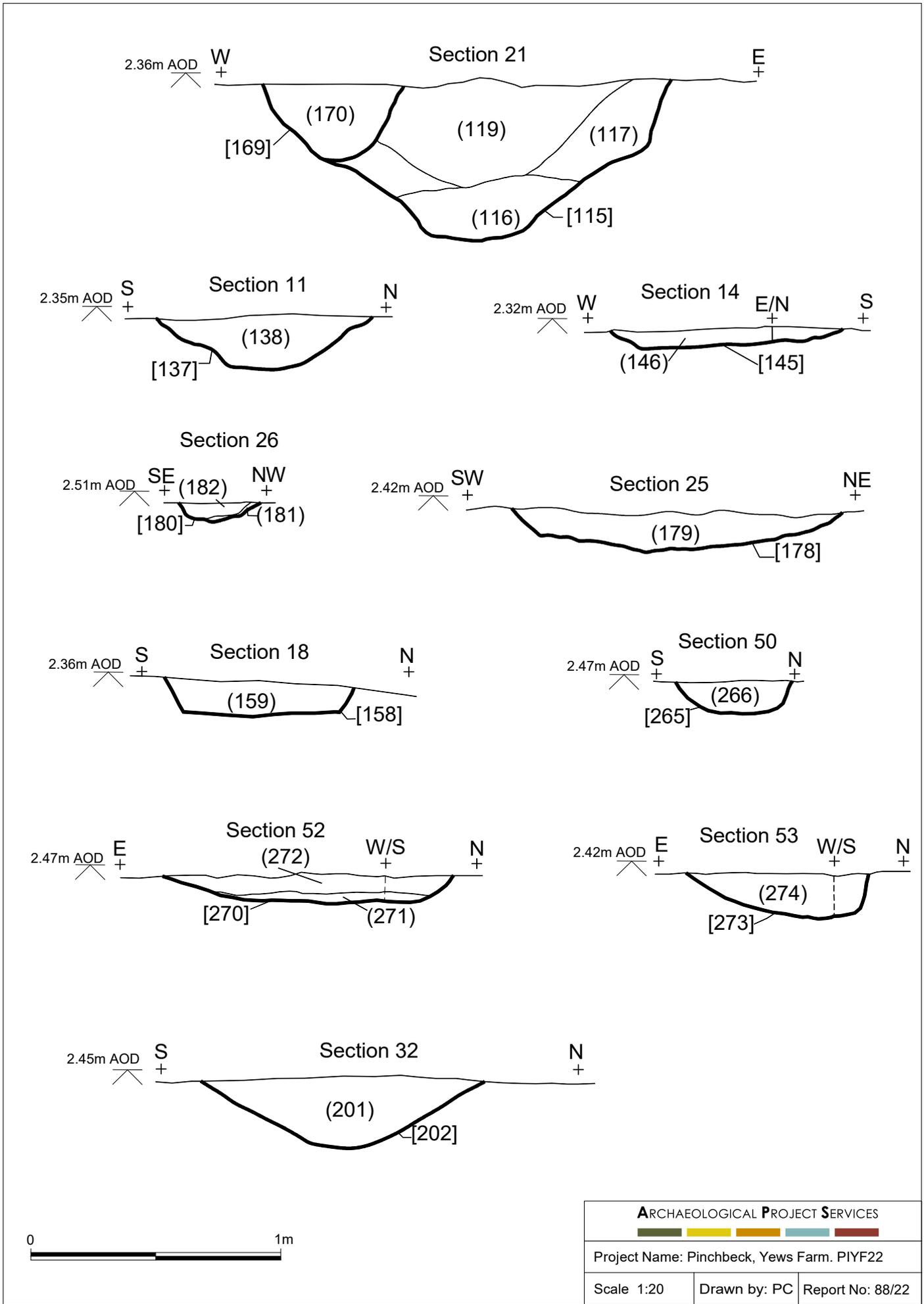


Figure 18. Sections 21, 11, 14, 26, 25, 18, 50, 52,53 and 32