

CAMBRIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECTS LTD.

Richmond Park, Carmarthem



Archaeological Watching Brief



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CAP Report No. 261

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

**Richmond Park,
Carmarthen**

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Carmarthen Football Club

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Non Technical Summary

This report results from work undertaken by Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd (CAP) for Carmarthen Football Club at Richmond Park, Carmarthen. The report draws upon the results of a watching brief of the excavation of a 30m long trial trench and two test pits. Significant archaeological remains of Roman date were located. The report puts the results in the context of earlier geophysical survey of in the grounds.

1 Introduction

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 On the 3rd July 2003 Cambrian Archaeological Projects (CAP) carried out an archaeological watching brief to the south of the stand at Richmond Park (Fig 1).
- 1.1.2 This was in respect of a Scheduled Monument Consent for the trial works (Scheduled Monument Reference: Carmarthen Roman Town CM 234).
- 1.1.3 The archaeological work had been planned by Mr N Page of Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology (ACA), but because of a heavy work load, ACA were unavailable on the day of the trenching. Kevin Blockley of Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd was contacted on the 2nd July and agreed to undertake the watching brief at short notice.
- 1.1.4 The proposed development concerns the demolition of the existing football stand and construction of a new stand.
- 1.1.5 The trial trenching was principally aimed at investigating the depth of overburden over the archaeological levels so that a foundation can be designed which will not damage the archaeology.

1.2 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.2.1 Carmarthen is the site of the Roman settlement of *Moridunum*. Richmond Park lies in the north-western half of the settlement and has been the subject of previous watching briefs (Ludlow 1996; Ludlow 1998; Tavener 1999).

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1.1 To establish the depth of overburden over the archaeological remains.

3 Evaluation Methodology

3.1 Scope of Fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The watching brief comprised the excavation of a 30m long trial trench along the line of the proposed new stand, on the Richmond Terrace half of the site. A watching brief was also maintained on two test pits dug to the south of the site to establish depths of overburden and presence of archaeological remains.
- 3.1.2 The trenches were dug by a machine fitted with a toothless ditching blade. Each trench measured 1.2m width. The machine was used to removed the overburden under close archaeological supervision.
- 3.1.3 Site director Kevin Blockley undertook the watching brief. The trenches were cleaned by hand and a plan and one long section of each trench drawn to a scale of 1:20.
- 3.1.4 All trenches were photographed using digital photography.
- 3.1.5 All works were undertaken in accordance with both the IFA's *Standards and Guidance: for an archaeological watching briefs* and current Health and Safety legislation.

3.2 Presentation of results

- 3.2.1 This presentation outlines the results from each trench. An inventory of all contexts is presented in Appendix 1. Note that all levels are related to the level of the football pitch which is used as a temporary datum with a value of 0.00m (Fig 4).

4 Watching Brief Results

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 4.1.1 Generally the site and weather conditions were good with no rain during the machining and recording of the trenches.
- 4.1.2 The overburden comprised three distinct layers. The topsoil (A) was a loose, dark brown loam containing many roots and was up to 0.1m thick. The middle layer (B) was an average of 0.35m thick, of dark brown loam containing frequent flecks of lime. The lower layer (C) was a mid brown, fine loam with no visible inclusions, which came cleanly down to the archaeological levels.
- 4.1.3 The B soil sealed recent features which were clearly cut through the C overburden.

4.2 Distribution of deposits

- 4.2.1 The Roman archaeological levels were uncovered in all three trenches and were cut by a number of more recent features. The top of the archaeological levels varied in depth from the surface. In most places the overburden was 0.6m deep, with areas being 0.55m below the surface. The Roman road, however, survived to within 0.4m of the surface.

4.3 Descriptions

Trench 1 (Fig 2) (Plates 1-4)

- 4.3.1 The overburden was removed revealing a number of distinct features (Contexts 1-10):. From west to east the following contexts were recorded:
 - Context 1, mid brown loam with patches of yellow clay and tile fragments. Interpretation: Roman occupation layer (similar to Context 15 in Trench 3).
 - Context 2, fine grey loam with charcoal flecks. Interpretation: Roman occupation layer.
 - Context 3, red sandstone chippings, burnt in-situ. Interpretation: probable Roman floor surface.
 - Context 4, yellow-grey loam and cobbles. Interpretation: Roman material, spread from Roman road 6.
 - Context 5, fine grey silt with charcoal flecking. Interpretation: Roman silt alongside road 6.
 - Context 6, layer of cobbling with camber west and east. Interpretation: Roman road.
 - Context 7, fine mid brown loam with charcoal flecks. Interpretation: general Roman layer (similar to Context 13 in Trench 2).
 - Context 8, dark grey silt. Interpretation: Roman material spread from Roman road 6.

Context 9, linear feature with dark brown loam fill. Interpretation: modern field drain.

Context 10, linear feature with dark brown fill. Interpretation: modern field drain.

Trench 2 (Fig 3) (Plates 5-6)

4.3.2 The overburden was removed revealing the following deposits (Contexts 11-14):

Context 11, compact layer of shale chippings. Interpretation: a Roman deposit, perhaps part of a floor or yard surface.

Context 12, mid grey silty loam. Interpretation: Roman silt layer below the shale chippings (11).

Context 13, fine mid brown loam with charcoal flecks. Interpretation: general Roman deposit (similar to Context 7 in Trench 1).

Context 14, edge of linear feature with dark brown loam fill. Interpretation: modern field drain.

Trench 3 (Fig 3) (Plates 7-8)

4.3.3 The overburden was removed revealing the following deposits (Contexts 15-16):

Context 15, mid brown loam with patches of yellow clay and tile fragments. Interpretation: Roman occupation layer (similar to Context 1 in Trench 1).

Context 16, linear feature with dark brown loam fill. Interpretation: modern field drain.

5 Discussion And Interpretation

5.1 Reliability of field investigation

5.1.1 The evaluation was unhampered by any modern building or agricultural activity. A number of relatively recent linear features at right angles to the alignment of the football pitch were recorded. All other deposits were Roman in date and part of either a Roman road or adjacent occupation deposits.

5.1.2 The section drawings show that the overburden varies between 0.55-0.6m above the archaeological levels, with the Roman road lying just 0.4m below ground level.

5.1.3 The levels taken on site show that the ground level in the area of the evaluations varies in height (Fig 4). When the levels are taken in relation to the existing surface of the football pitch the following levels are noted:

Datum	Football pitch	0.00m
Level 1	Gravel drive	0.25m
Level 2	West end of trench 1	0.10m
Level 4	East end of trench 1	0.37m
Level 5	Beside trench 2	-0.07m
Level 6	Beside trench 3	0.18m
Level 7	Roman levels west end trench 1	-0.62m
Level 8	Roman road surface in trench 1	-0.42m
Level 9	Roman levels east end trench 1	-0.42m
Level 10	Roman levels in trench 3	-0.61
Level 11	Roman levels in trench 2	-0.48m

Table: levels of ground surface and archaeology in relation to the surface of the football pitch

5.2 Overall interpretation

- 5.2.1 The evaluation revealed a wealth of archaeological remains below a 0.4-0.6m depth of overburden.
- 5.2.2 Sufficient information of overburden and levels were established to enable the foundations of the new building to be designed without damage to the archaeology.

6 Acknowledgements

- 6.1.1 Thanks to; Lucy Rowley-Williams of ACA, Malcolm Williams of Carmarthen Football Club, and Cadw for their help and advice during the site works.

7 Bibliography and references

- Ludlow, H, 1996 *Richmond Park, Carmarthen: Archaeological Evaluation at the Football Pitch* (Unpublished report for ACA).
- Ludlow, H, 1998 *Archaeological Watching Brief on the Football Ground drainage improvement scheme, May-June 1998* (Unpublished report for ACA).
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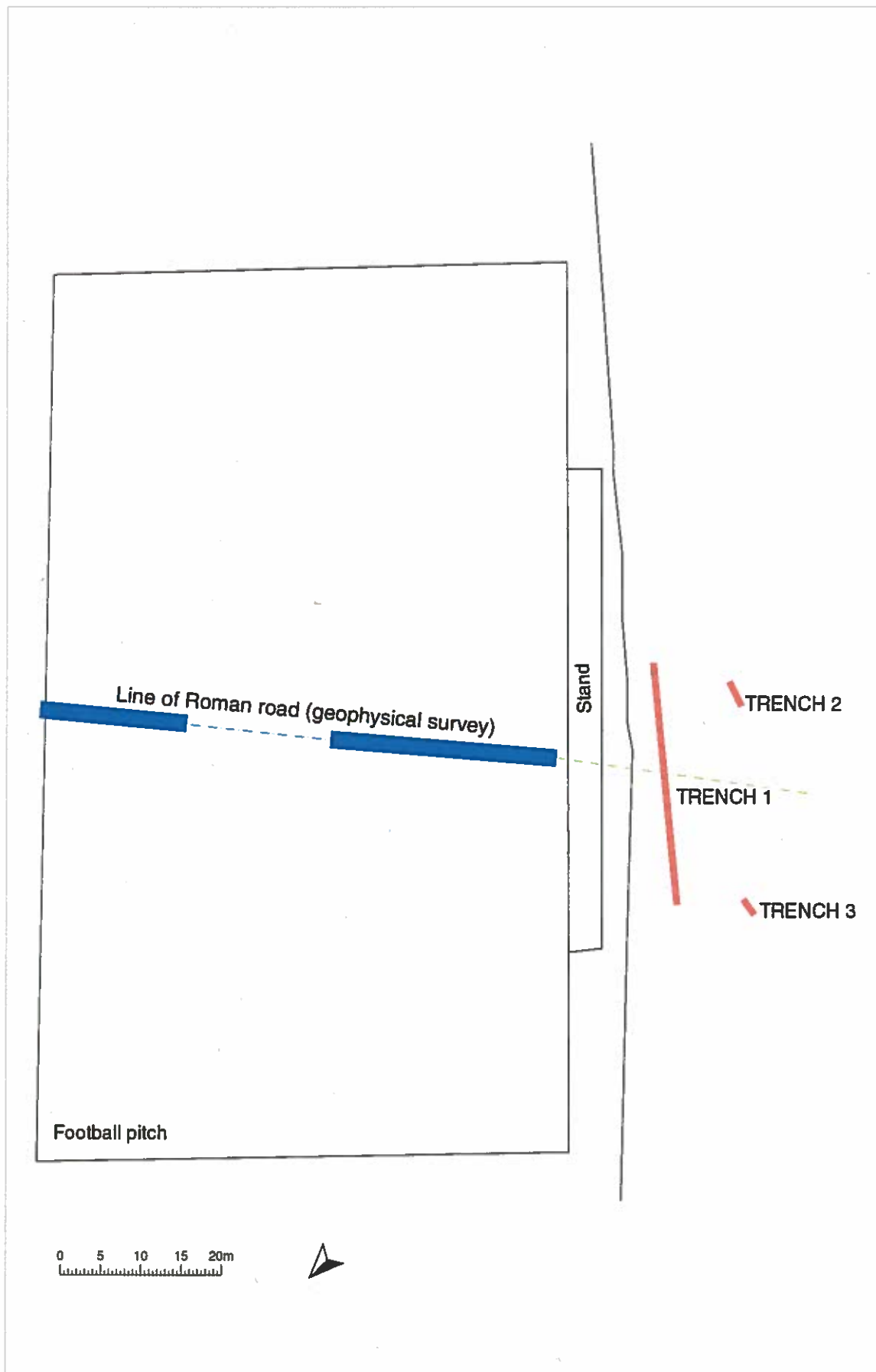


Fig 1: Location plan of trenches and Roman road

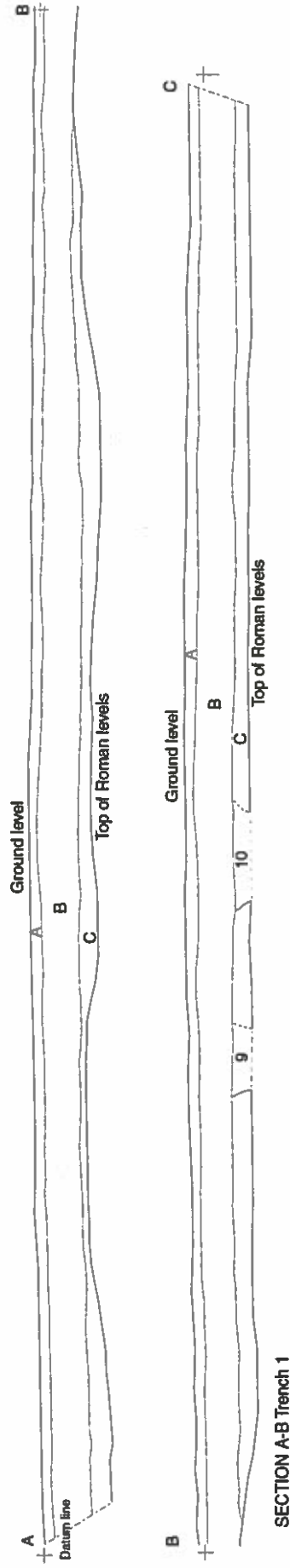
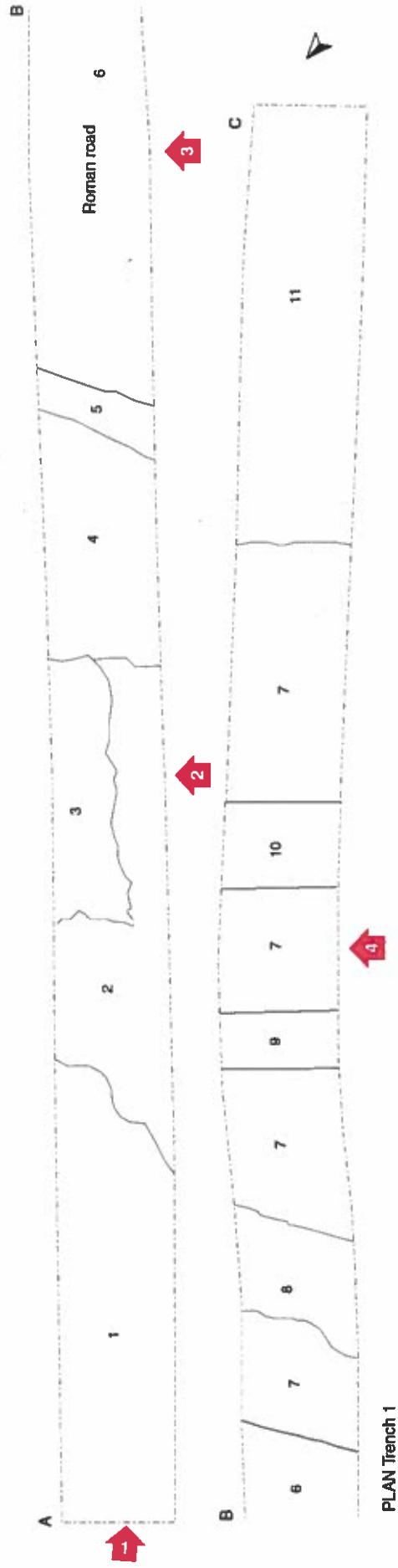


Figure 2: Plan and section Trench 1

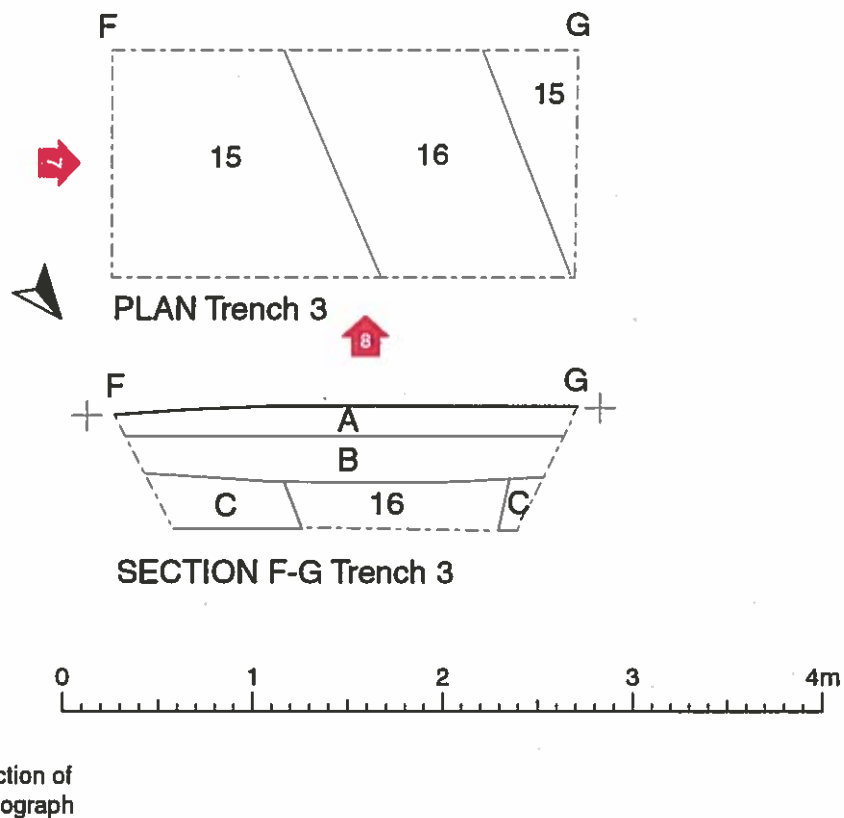
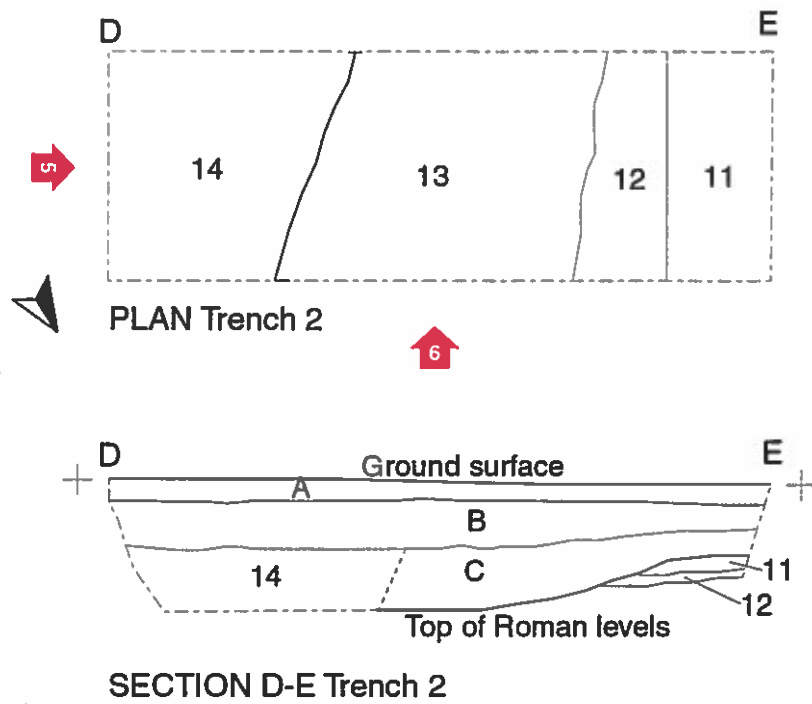


Fig 3: Plan and sections Trenches 2 and 3

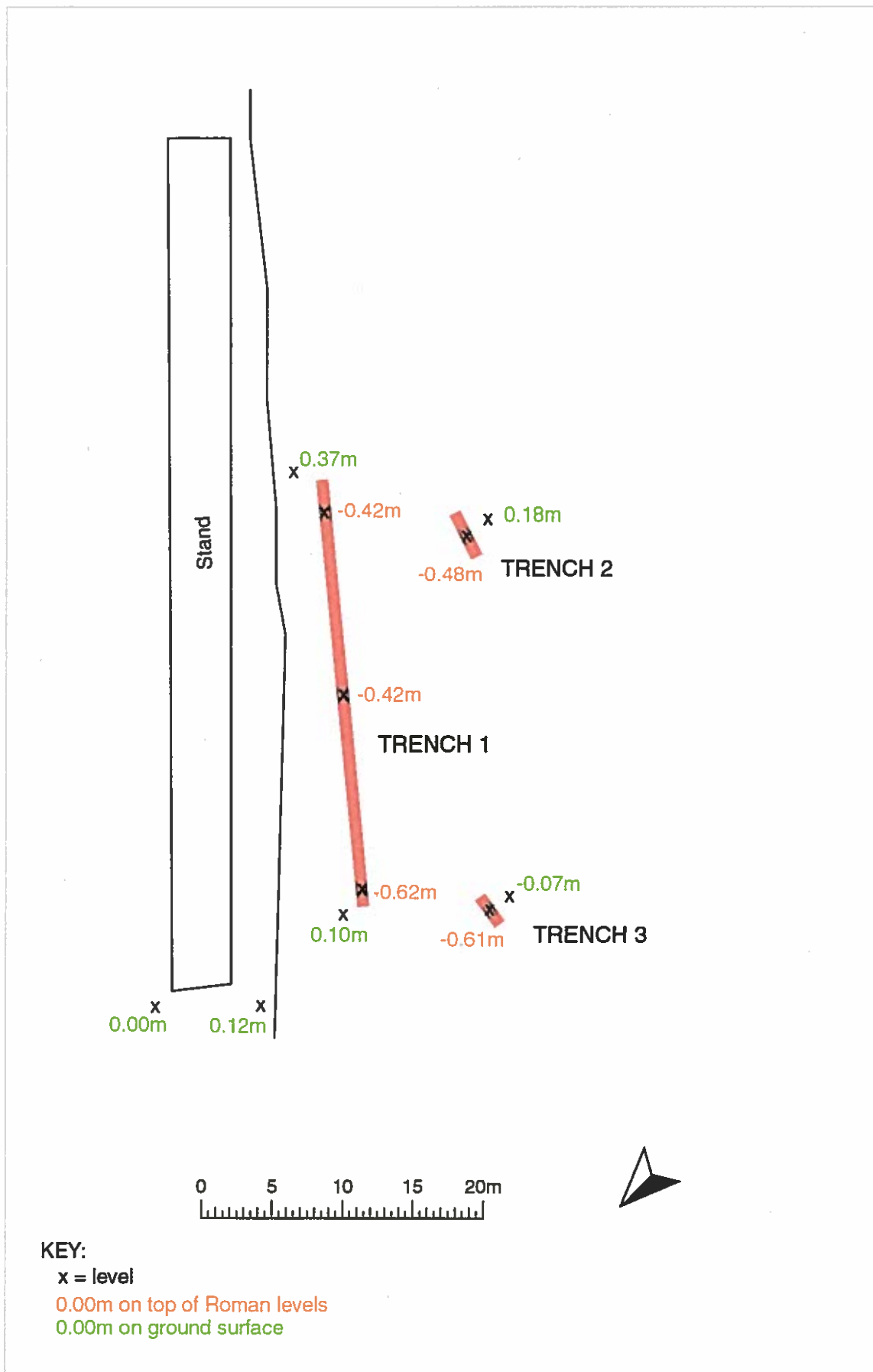


Fig 4: Relative levels of ground and archaeology



Plate 2: Detail of section in Trench 1, west end. Scale 2m, looking north



Plate 1: General view along Trench 1. Scale 2m, looking west



Plate 3: Detail of section, Trench 1, Roman road. Scale 2m, looking north



Plate 4: Detail of section, Trench 1, east end, looking north



Plate 5: General view of Trench 2. Scale 2m, looking west



Plate 6: Section of Trench 2. Scale 2m, looking south

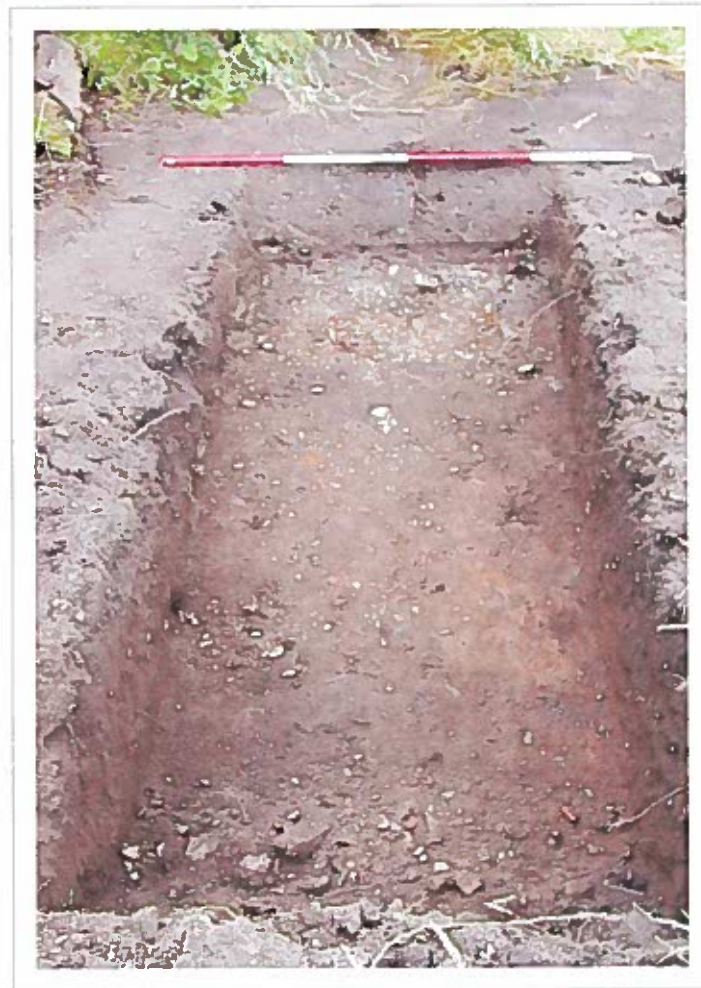


Plate 7: General view of Trench 3. Scale 2m, looking west



Plate 8: Section of Trench 3. Scale 2m, looking south

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