

**Basingstoke Archaeological & Historical Society
(BAHS)**

Planning

How to draw plans and sections

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Introduction

Excavation is by its very nature a destructive process. This means that detailed and accurate records of the archaeology discovered is necessary in order to provide a permanent archive. This written account is key evidence of the archaeology present after excavation so unique context (see xxx), section and plan numbers are essential as well as photographic verification (see xxx).

Note that detailed information on drawing sections and plans may be found in the “Field Guide for Context Sheet Completion and Feature Recording” pages 10, 11 and 12 (kindly provided by and copyrighted to Wessex Archaeology). These pages are available as laminated guides for field use.

In addition, the following pages of the Wessex guide should prove useful:

- Page 2 - Understanding a Matrix
- Page 3 - Recording Cuts
- Page 4 - Soil Colour and Textural Class
- Page 6 - Density Chart for Coarse Components

Equipment

In order to create sections and plans, the following equipment is necessary:

- 4 – 6H pencil (propelling pencil preferred)
- Pencil sharpener (if needed)
- Eraser
- Triangular scale ruler
- Drafting film e.g. Permatrace
- Board to act as drawing surface (ideally with a metric squared background)
- Low tack tape to attach film to board
- Bulldog clips
- Planning frame (typically 1m x 1m in 10cm squares)
- Ground pegs
- Nails
- String
- Spirit line level
- Measuring tapes (minimum of two)

BAHS are able to provide a kit of equipment to allow fieldwork drawing.

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Drawing Sections

Section drawings are done to scale. They record the vertical cross section through archaeological features/deposits, presenting an accurate profile of a cut feature or elevation and the relative depth.

In order to draw a section:

- Clean up the area you wish to draw
- Set up a base line using a tape measure, with a minimum of 2 points
- Set up a string line using a spirit line level
- Measure along the base line - the horizontal measurement and using a second tape take the vertical measurement. This should be from your string line not ground level
- Mark each recorded measurement with a point on the film
- Repeat this process at regular intervals
- Connect the recorded measurement points with interpolated curves
- Draw any inclusions present and label in the key
- Ensure that section lines are correctly Identified on all associated plan drawings, including direction of view

Section checklist:

- Site code
- Title (e.g. Trench xxxx)
- Section number
- Orientation
- Scale bar/ Scale (e.g. 1:10)
- Levels
- Context matrix
- Context numbers clearly labelled
- Key (if required)
- Drawn by (name)
- Date

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Drawing Plans

Plan drawings are done to scale. They create a bird's eye map of the feature(s) excavated or present in the area of investigation. Plans show both relationships with other features (where present) and help locate the excavated area geographically.

In order to draw a plan:

- Clean up the area you wish to draw
- A baseline should be created using a minimum of two points measured from the existing site grid. If a site grid has not been established, the two points may be measured from other permanent site features or surveyed points (here you would leave pegs marked in the ground with the drawing points (DP) and cut number clearly labelled). If a site grid is in place, use those reference points. If not, use the plan number for the drawing points (DPs), for example if the plan number is 100 use DP 100.1 and DP 100.2
- Include corner grid points to enable overlay of plans or for them to be stitched together at a later time
- Measure along the base line - the horizontal measurement and using a second tape take the orthogonal measurement
- Mark each recorded measurement with a point on the film
- Repeat this process at regular intervals
- Connect the recorded measurement points with interpolated curves
- When drawing ditches plan at least 1m beyond the excavated slot
- If present ensure truncation, relationships, limit of excavation and feature shape are accurate
- Display break of slope (using hachure's)
- Section lines must be marked correctly with the section number, direction of view and correct conventions

Plan checklist:

- Site code
- Title (e.g. Trench xxxx)
- Plan number
- North arrow
- Scale bar/Scale (e.g. 1:20)
- Levels
- Grid points/drawing points
- Date Section line and number
- Cut matrix
- Key (if required)
- Drawn by (name)
- Date