

#### **4.7 Trial Trenches 3, 4, and 5**

While in itself Tr22 provided further valuable information about the nature of the enclosure ditch one of its main purposes was to provide a guideline for excavations within the 'Ale House' track way designed to locate the line of the ditch beyond Area B. To this end the topsoil and subsoil were machine stripped from three trial trenches within the track way (Fig 3).

Trial trench 3 was excavated in a direct line east of Tr22. It ran north to south for 5.0m parallel to and 1.50m west of the east wall of the track way. Trial trench 4 was 6.0m long and 1.6m wide. It was excavated east to west across the track way, the west end of the trench finishing 0.80m away from the west wall of the track way. Trial trenches 3 and 4 were linked and together formed an L shape. The purpose of these two trenches was to see if the enclosure ditch continued straight east or started to turn to the south.. The removal of topsoil and subsoil in trial trench 3 revealed the natural boulder clay with a 1.75m wide band of mid-grey brown silt sand running east to west across the trench in a direct line with the enclosure ditch in Tr22. A possible feature was also located within trial trench 4. In this trench natural bedrock was exposed. In the west end of the trench one edge of what seemed to be a band of orange grey silt was seen running roughly north west to south east was observed.

The proximity of the west wall of the track way to the edge of trial trench 4 prohibited any further machine work at that location. Trial trench 5 was a stepped trench measuring 6.30m east to west and 3.0m north to south. Based on a projected line it was positioned 10.0m to the south of trial trench 4 with the purpose of trying to get a further view of the feature observed in trial trench 4. A further task of this trench was to see if the enclosure ditch turned sharply from Tr22 to run south following the line of the track way. Apart from a field drain running north to south in the west step of the trench no archaeological features were seen in trial trench 5.

#### **Discussion**

The band of silt seen in trial trench 3 was a clear target for a potential continuation of the enclosure ditch. The potential feature seen in trial trench 4 could indicate a curve of the ditch to the south east within the track way. However if this was the case it might be expected that it would have shown up in trial trench 5. It is possible that it changes its alignment between trial trenches 4 and 5 to run between the two trenches. Trench 5 showed that if the enclosure ditch turns sharply to run along the track way it must be beneath one of the track way walls. Given the evidence from the trial trenches it was decided to record 4 and 5 without carrying out any excavation and to concentrate resources on trial trench 3. Therefore trial trench 3 was extended and excavated as Trench 24