

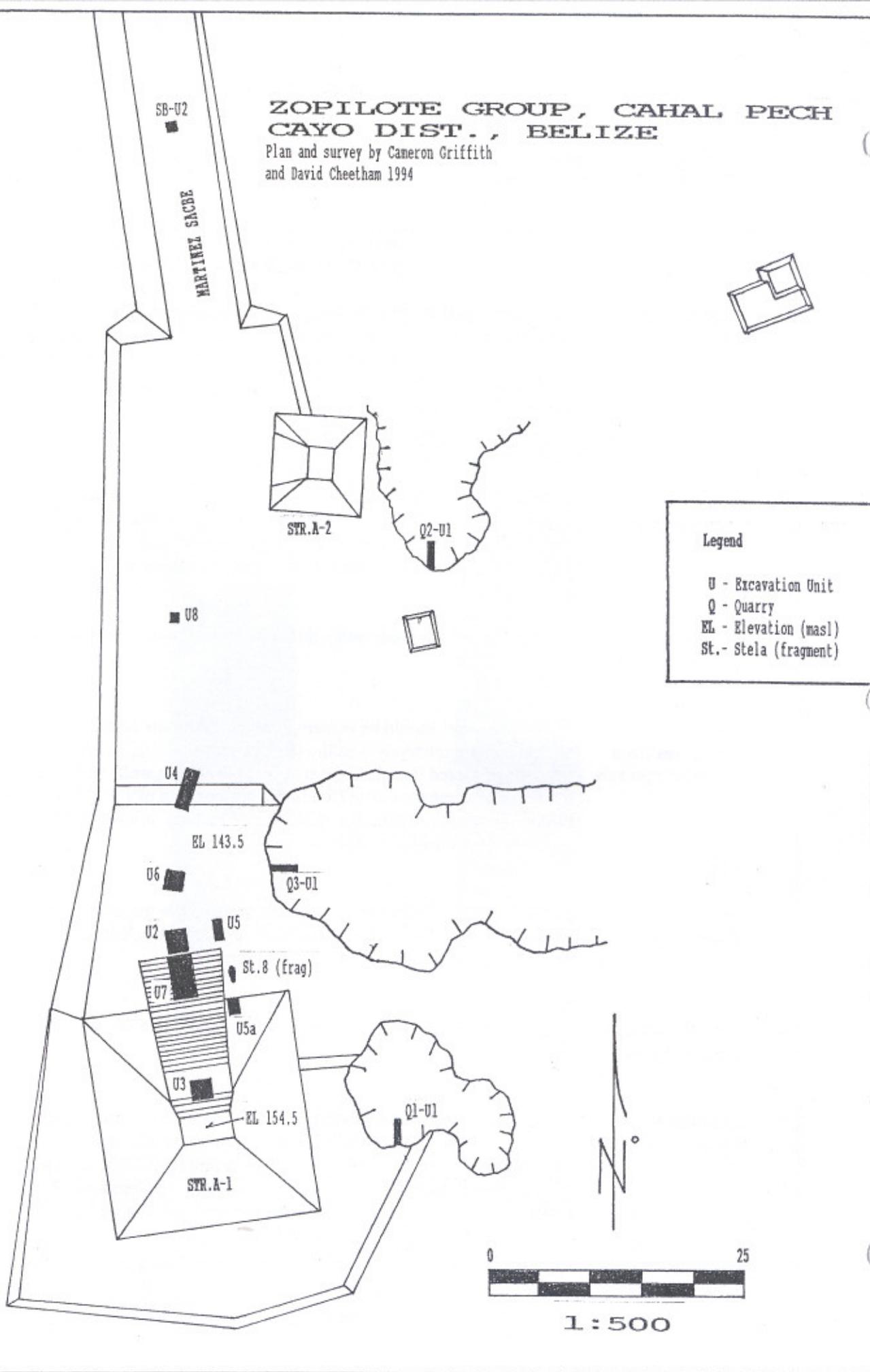
RESEARCH DESIGN

Completed before field work begins, often as a project or grant proposal, but always to help the researcher think through a particular research question. Hypothesis testing [analysis] and interpretation come later.

STEP	WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF ANCIENT MAYA CAUSEWAYS?
1. general hypothesis from existing data	The Classic period (AD 250-900) Maya of tropical Central America built causeways (elevated roads) within sites. These constructions connect the center of large sites and one or more large temple buildings on the outskirts or periphery of the site. <u>It is hypothesized that such causeways were formal pathways to important elite ceremonial locations, or habitation areas with associated pyramids, or both.</u>
2. explain background of hypothesis	Causeways and associated temple buildings have not been systematically explored in the past. In the 1980s, a 250 m long causeway was discovered at the site of Cahal Pech, Belize. A large temple building and several smaller temple buildings were located at the end of the causeway.
3. theoretical approach	standard scientific, processual (chronological, comparative), materialist
4. specific hypotheses from general hypothesis	Such causeways should be contemporary with the site center. Pyramid(s) should contain relatively wealthy (fancy) deposits (e.g., richly stocked tombs, deposits of sacred items). If the area is residential as well, there should be evidence of domestic refuse (food remains, cooking utensils) or residential buildings, or both. If not, then there should be little or no domestic trash and no evidence of residential buildings.
5. kinds of data needed to address hypotheses	Pottery and other artifacts from special deposits (tombs, etc) encountered in pyramids. Pottery and other artifacts associated with possible domestic areas beyond the pyramids but in the same general area.
6. research methods to recover data	Strategically placed trenches, test-pits. Collect all data for analysis.
7. methods of analysis	Classification: use pottery to date the causeway and pyramids (found in the construction fill) and any tombs or burials (Maya tombs usually contain pottery vessels); determine the types of artifacts present (ritual items, domestic items, both?); determine the frequency of the artifacts (rare, frequent); determine the context of the artifacts (rare, frequent); compare all data with similar artifact classes excavated within the site center.

ZOPILOTE GROUP, CAHAL PECH
CAYO DIST., BELIZE

Plan and survey by Cameron Griffith
and David Cheetham 1994



Legend

- U - Excavation Unit
- Q - Quarry
- EL - Elevation (masl)
- St. - Stela (fragment)

1:500