

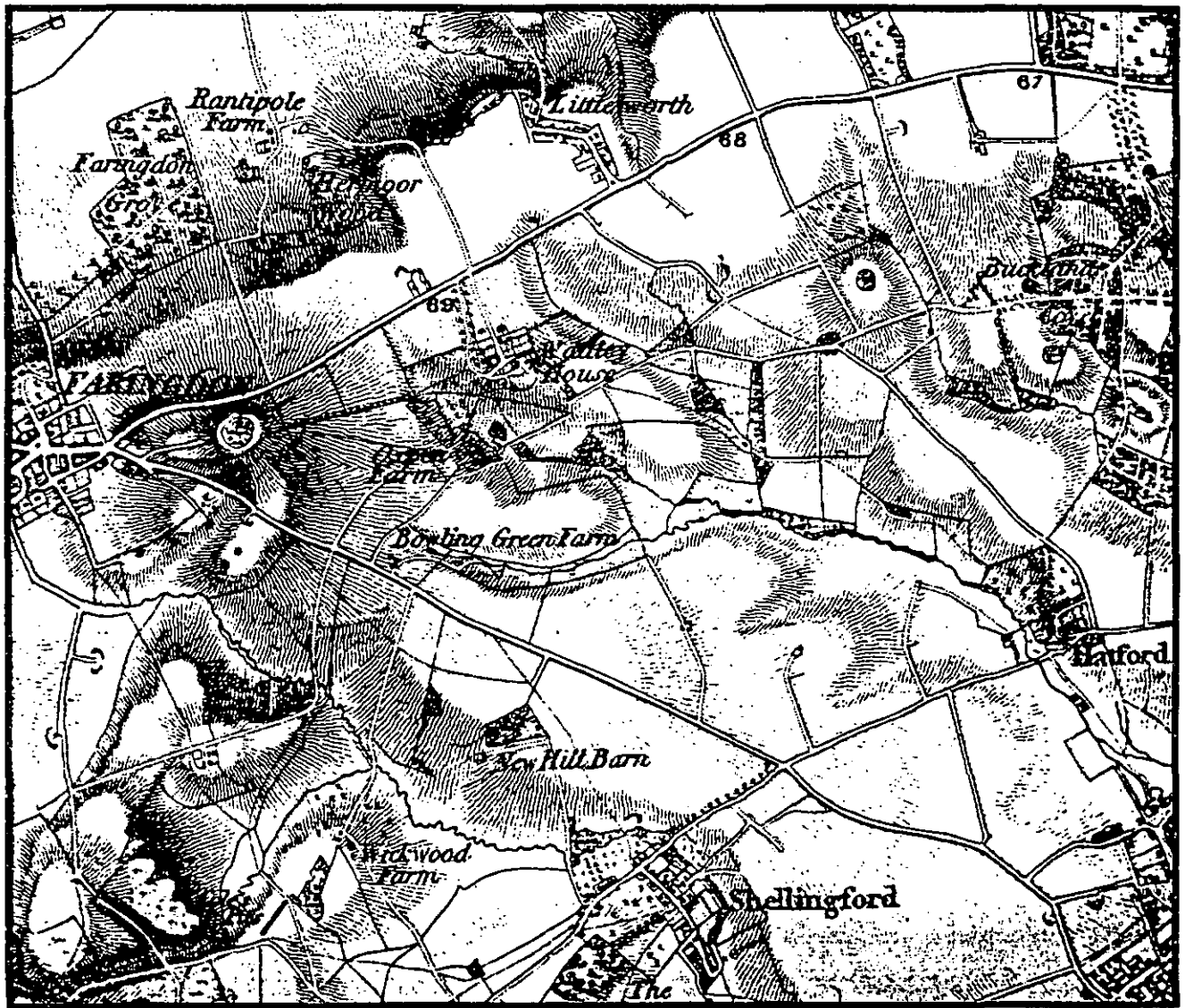
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# Bowling Green Farm, Faringdon Oxfordshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

September 1994

# **BOWLING GREEN FARM, STANFORD ROAD FARINGDON, OXFORDSHIRE**

## **Archaeological Evaluation**

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**BOWLING GREEN FARM, STANFORD ROAD, FARINGDON****Archaeological Evaluation (NGR SU 31059485)****SUMMARY**

*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) of 11.23 ha of land at Bowling Green Farm on behalf of Hills Aggregates Limited. Twenty-two trenches, representing a 1% sample of the area proposed for mineral extraction, were excavated. These revealed considerable evidence of plough disturbance of the underlying geological strata, particularly to the underlying limestone on the higher ground to the south. Several linear features of Roman date were located on the western side of the area, all sealed beneath a thick layer of hillwash. These most likely represent outlying boundaries of the Roman settlement located 200 m to the north. The most northerly of the trenches revealed a recent field boundary, cut through the hillwash, containing 19th century refuse.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

In 1991 a planning application (STA/8417/2) was submitted to Oxfordshire County Council by Hills Aggregates Limited to extend their mineral workings at Bowling Green Farm. The area proposed for the extraction of sand and limestone lies between the Frogmore Brook and the A471 Wantage/Faringdon road (Fig. 1). The land use is pasture and the centre of the site is at approximately 105m OD, although it slopes from 108m at the south end to 102m OD towards the brook. While no archaeological sites have been identified within the extraction area, a substantial Romano-British settlement (PRN 9237) was excavated by the Oxford Archaeological Unit in 1987 and 1989 c.200 m to the north, in advance of extraction. Dense Iron Age and Romano-British occupation was revealed including stone buildings, kilns, ovens and wells. To the east of the area, prehistoric trackways and field systems (PRN 12002) have been identified from aerial photographs.

Conditional planning permission was granted in December 1993 on condition that the area was to be archaeologically evaluated. A detailed brief was prepared by the Deputy County Archaeologist and the evaluation was undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit between 5th and 9th September 1994.

**2 AIMS**

The principle aim of the evaluation was to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the extraction area, to determine the extent, condition, character, quality and date of any remains and to establish the environmental/ecofactual potential of any features or deposits.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The evaluation consisted of twenty 30m-long and two 15m-long machine-dug trenches, randomly set within the extraction area (Fig. 2). The trenches were excavated by a 360 degree tracked Hymac excavator equipped with a 1.8 m wide ditching bucket. Once machined the trenches were hand cleaned and sufficient features were investigated to achieve the aims described above. Context recording was in accordance with the standard OAU method (Wilkinson 1992)

In addition to the evaluation trenches, seven test pits (Fig. 2) were dug by Hills Aggregates Limited to examine the underlying geology. These were also examined for any trace of archaeological deposits or features.

### 4 RESULTS

#### 4.1 The soils

A dark brown sandy loam topsoil, on average 0.25m thick, was recorded in all of the trenches. This overlay the remains of an earlier ploughsoil which averaged 0.10-0.15m thick and contained pottery of Romano-British to post medieval date. A 0.30 m thick deposit of light brown sandy hillwash was recorded in all of the trenches in the northern half of the site, where it overlay the sand substrate. This hillwash also contained pottery ranging in date from Romano-British to post medieval. Natural sand lay beneath the hillwash in the trenches at the northern lower end of the site and coral rag limestone was encountered in the shallower trenches on the higher ground to the south.

#### 4.2 Trench descriptions

Trenches 1,3,5,6,7,8,9,10,13,14,16,17,18,19,20 and 22 contained no archaeological features, although several natural and geological anomalies were seen, investigated and recorded. All were found to be either tree-throw pits or areas of tree root and animal disturbance. Only those trenches which contained archaeological features are described below. A description of all the layers in all of the trenches appears in the Archaeological Context Inventory at the end of the report.

##### *Trench 2 (Fig. 3)*

The northern end of this trench contained a single ditch (2/5), 2.05 m wide and 0.72m deep with a U-shaped profile, aligned almost exactly E-W. Only a single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the lower fill, suggesting that this feature could be of this date. several tree-throw pits were noted in the rest of the trench.

#### *Trench 4 (Fig. 4)*

This trench contained several features. At the eastern end a small gully (4/4), 0.75m wide and 0.20m deep, was aligned NE to SW. No dating evidence was recovered from its fill. At the western end of the trench another similar gully (4/6) was recorded. It was slightly larger at 1.00m wide and 0.40m deep, and aligned NNE to SSW, but again no dating evidence was recovered. In the middle of the trench a large 7.5m wide linear feature aligned NE to SW was initially revealed by the machine. On excavation this feature was found to be two or possibly three shallow ditches (4/12), (4/14) and (4/8). The latest of the three ditches (4/14) cut both the eastern edge of Ditch 4/12 and the western edge of Ditch 4/8. Consequently it is impossible to establish the original widths of Ditches 4/8 and 4/12 which may conceivably be the same very broad shallow ditch. Ditch 4/14, which was 2.00m wide and 0.35m deep, contained no dating evidence. A few pottery sherds of Roman were recovered from the fills of Ditches 4/12 and 4/8.

#### *Trench 11 (Fig. 5)*

This trench contained a single linear feature (11/4) aligned SW to NE. On excavation by hand it was found to be 1.50m wide and 0.82m deep with a stepped V-shaped profile. Roman pottery and several fragments of struck flint were recovered from the fill. This feature may be a continuation of one of the features further up the slope in Trench 4 to the south.

#### *Trench 12 (Fig. 6)*

This trench revealed a large 1.65m wide and 0.58m deep ditch (12/4) aligned WNW to ESE. Running parallel to this large ditch and only 0.40m to the south was a smaller gully (12/6). Both features contained post-med/modern pottery and metalwork. The larger of the ditches was also visible further east in Trench 21. This feature is still just visible as a cropmark in the vegetation, and is probably a modern field boundary, which has been removed.

#### *Trench 15 (Fig. 7)*

This trench contained two pits (15/4 and 15/9) of modern date and a linear feature (15/6) aligned NE to SW. The ditch, which was 1.30m wide and survived to no more than 0.18m deep, had a flat bottom and near vertical sides. A single fragment of Roman pottery was recovered from its fill.

### *Trench 21 (Fig. 8)*

This trench contained only one ditch (12/6) 2.00m wide and 0.50m deep and aligned E to W. It is almost certainly the continuation of the recent field boundary ditch previously described in Trench 12.

## **5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

It is clear from the evaluation that no occupation and very little other activity has ever taken place on the site. Over the southern, more elevated, half of the site located on limestone, only one ditch was found in Trench 15. The very simple pattern of ditches, aligned E to W and NE to SW, located in the western half of the site in Trenches 2, 4 and 11, along with the ditch recorded in Trench 15 may represent field boundaries associated with the Romano/British settlement sited 200m to the north. The very sparse quantity of Roman pottery or other artefacts supports their interpretation as field boundaries and further emphasises the distance of these ditches from any habitation areas.

The ditch located in Trenches 12 and 2, is the remnant of a modern boundary which has been cleared, possibly done when the pond (centred at 31210/95020) was dug. To the east of the hedgeline forming the east boundary of the site another hedge continues the line of the ditch in an easterly direction.

### **Bibliography**

Wilkinson, D. 1992 *The Oxford Archaeological Field Manual*

Mick Parsons  
Oxford Archaeological Unit  
September 1994

# 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench/ Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1/1	Layer	0.25		Topsoil
1/2	Layer	0.08		Ploughsoil
1/3	Layer			Natural sand
2/1	Layer	0.21		Topsoil
2/2	Layer	0.10		Ploughsoil
2/3	Layer			Natural sand
2/4	Layer			Natural limestone
2/5	Cut	0.72	2.07	Ditch
2/6	Fill	0.36		Fill of 2/5
2/7	Fill	0.35		Fill of 2/5
3/1	Layer	0.28		Topsoil
3/2	Layer	0.18		Ploughsoil
3/3	Layer			Natural sand
3/4	Fill	0.22		Fill of 3/5
3/5	Cut	0.22	1.30	Tree throw pit
4/1	Layer	0.16		Topsoil
4/2	Layer	0.12		Ploughsoil
4/3	Layer			Natural Sand
4/4	Cut	0.20	0.75	Ditch
4/5	Fill	0.20		Fill of 4/4
4/6	Cut	0.40	1.45	Ditch
4/7	Fill	0.40		Fill of 4/6
4/8	Cut	0.55	3.00	Ditch
4/9	Fill	0.25		Fill of 4/10
4/10	Fill	0.30		Fill of 4/10
4/11	Layer	0.08		Natural
4/12	Cut	0.20	2.50	Ditch

<i>Trench/ Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
4/13	Fill	0.20		Fill of 4/12
4/14	Cut	0.35	2.00	Ditch
4/15	Fill	0.35		Fill of 4/14
5/1	Layer	0.14		Topsoil
5/2	Layer	0.35		Ploughsoil
5/3	Layer			Natural sand
5/4	Fill	0.22		Fill of 5/5
5/5	Cut	0.22	1.30	Tree throw pit
6/1	Layer	0.11		Topsoil
6/2	Layer	0.17		Ploughsoil
6/3	Layer			Natural sand
7/1	Layer	0.20		Topsoil
7/2	Layer	0.10		Ploughsoil
7/3	Layer			Natural limestone
7/4	Cut	0.09	0.70	Plough marks
7/5	Fill	0.09		Fill of 7/4
7/6	Cut	0.15	1.14	Pit?
7/7	Fill	0.15		Fill of 7/6
8/1	Layer	0.17		Topsoil
8/2	Layer	0.13		Ploughsoil
8/3	Layer			Natural sand
9/1	Layer	0.15		Topsoil
9/2	Layer	0.10		Ploughsoil
9/3	Layer			Natural limestone
10/1	Layer	0.18		Topsoil
10/2	Layer	0.28		Hillwash
10/3	Layer			Natural sand
11/1	Layer	0.29		Topsoil
11/2	Layer	0.26		Hillwash



<i><b>Trench/ Context</b></i>	<i><b>Type</b></i>	<i><b>Depth (m)</b></i>	<i><b>Width (m)</b></i>	<i><b>Comments</b></i>
11/3	Layer			Natural sand
11/4	Cut	0.82	1.50	Ditch
11/5	Fill	0.82		Fill of 11/4
12/1	Layer	0.30		Topsoil
12/2	Layer	0.36		Ploughsoil
12/3	Fill	0.60		Fill of 12/4
12/4	Cut	0.60	1.65	Ditch
12/5	Fill	0.34		Fill of 12/6
12/6	Cut	0.35	0.70	Gully
12/7	Layer			Natural sand
13/1	Layer	0.15		Topsoil
13/2	Layer	0.15		Ploughsoil
13/3	Layer			Natural sand
13/4	Cut	0.10	0.20	Ploughmark
13/5	Cut	0.10	0.20	Ploughmark
13/6	Cut	0.10	0.20	Ploughmark
13/7	Cut	0.10	0.20	Ploughmark
13/8	Cut	0.20	0.70	Tree throw pit
14/1	Layer	0.15		Topsoil
14/2	Layer	0.15		Ploughsoil
14/3	Layer			Natural
14/4	Layer			Natural limestone
15/1	Layer	0.12		Topsoil
15/2	Layer	0.26		Ploughsoil
15/3	Layer			Natural limestone
15/4	Cut	0.30	2.60	Pit
15/5	Fill	0.30		Fill of 15/4
15/6	Cut	0.18	1.30	Ditch
15/7	Fill	0.18		Fill of 15/6

<i><b>Trench/ Context</b></i>	<i><b>Type</b></i>	<i><b>Depth (m)</b></i>	<i><b>Width (m)</b></i>	<i><b>Comments</b></i>
15/8	Fill	0.10		Fill of 15/9
15/9	Cut	0.20	1.20	Pit
15/10	Fill	0.10		Fill of 15/9
16/1	Layer	0.12		Topsoil
16/2	Layer	0.20		Ploughsoil
16/3	Layer			Natural limestone
16/4	Fill	0.30		Fill of 16/5
16/5	Cut	0.30	1.10	Tree throw pit
16/6	Fill	0.15		Fill of 16/7
16/7	Cut	0.15	1.55	Plough furrow
16/8	Fill	0.14		Fill of 16/9
16/9	Cut	0.14	1.80	Tree throw pit
16/10	Fill	0.20		Fill of 16/11
16/11	Cut	0.20	0.50	Tree throw pit
17/1	Layer	0.11		Topsoil
17/2	Layer	0.06		Ploughsoil
17/3	Layer	0.03		Disturbed Natural
17/4	Fill	0.30		Fill of 17/5
17/5	Cut	0.30	1.80	Tree throw pit
17/6	Fill	0.10		Fill of 17/7
17/7	Cut	0.10	1.10	Plough furrows
17/8	Layer			Natural sand
18/1	Layer	0.16		Topsoil
18/2	Layer	0.14		Ploughsoil
18/3	Layer			Natural sand/limestone
19/1	Layer	0.15		Topsoil
19/2	Layer	0.20		Ploughsoil
19/3	Layer	0.12		Hillwash
19/4	Layer			Natural sand

<i><b>Trench/ Context</b></i>	<i><b>Type</b></i>	<i><b>Depth (m)</b></i>	<i><b>Width (m)</b></i>	<i><b>Comments</b></i>
19/5	Cut	0.40		Tree throw pit
19/6	Fill	0.40		Fill of 19/5
20/1	Layer	0.15		Topsoil
20/2	Layer	0.15		Ploughsoil
20/3	Layer	0.30		Hillwash
20/4	Layer			Natural sand
21/1	Layer	0.12		Topsoil
21/2	Layer	0.18		Ploughsoil
21/3	Layer	0.22		Hillwash
21/4	Layer			Natural sand
21/5	Cut	0.60	2.00	Ditch
21/6	Fill	0.60		Fill of 21/5
22/1	Layer	0.11		Topsoil
22/2	Layer	0.19		Ploughsoil
22/3	Layer	0.13		Natural limestone
22/4	Layer			Natural sand

## 7 RESULTS FROM MACHINE-DUG TEST PITS

<b>TEST PIT A</b>	<b>DEPTH(m) 2.40</b>
Topsoil	0.15
Ploughsoil	0.20
Hillwash	0.30
Natural sand	1.75

<b>TEST PIT B</b>	<b>DEPTH(m) 2.50</b>
Topsoil	0.15
Ploughsoil	0.17
Hillwash	0.50
Natural sand	1.78

<b>TEST PIT C</b>	<b>DEPTH(m) 2.80</b>
Topsoil	0.15
Ploughsoil	0.17
Hillwash	0.60
Natural sand	1.88

<b>TEST PIT D</b>	<b>DEPTH(m) 2.25</b>
Topsoil	0.15
Ploughsoil	0.16
Hillwash	0.60
Natural sand	1.54

<b>TEST PIT E</b>	<b>DEPTH(m) 2.60</b>
Topsoil	0.14
Ploughsoil	0.20
Hillwash	0.52
Natural sand	1.74

<i>TEST PIT F</i>	<i>DEPTH(m) 2.70</i>
Topsoil	0.20
Ploughsoil	0.15
Hillwash	0.15
Limestone	0.30
Natural sand	1.90

<i>TEST PIT G</i>	<i>DEPTH(m) 0.91</i>
Topsoil	0.15
Ploughsoil	0.10
decayed Limestone	0.23
Natural Limestone	0.43

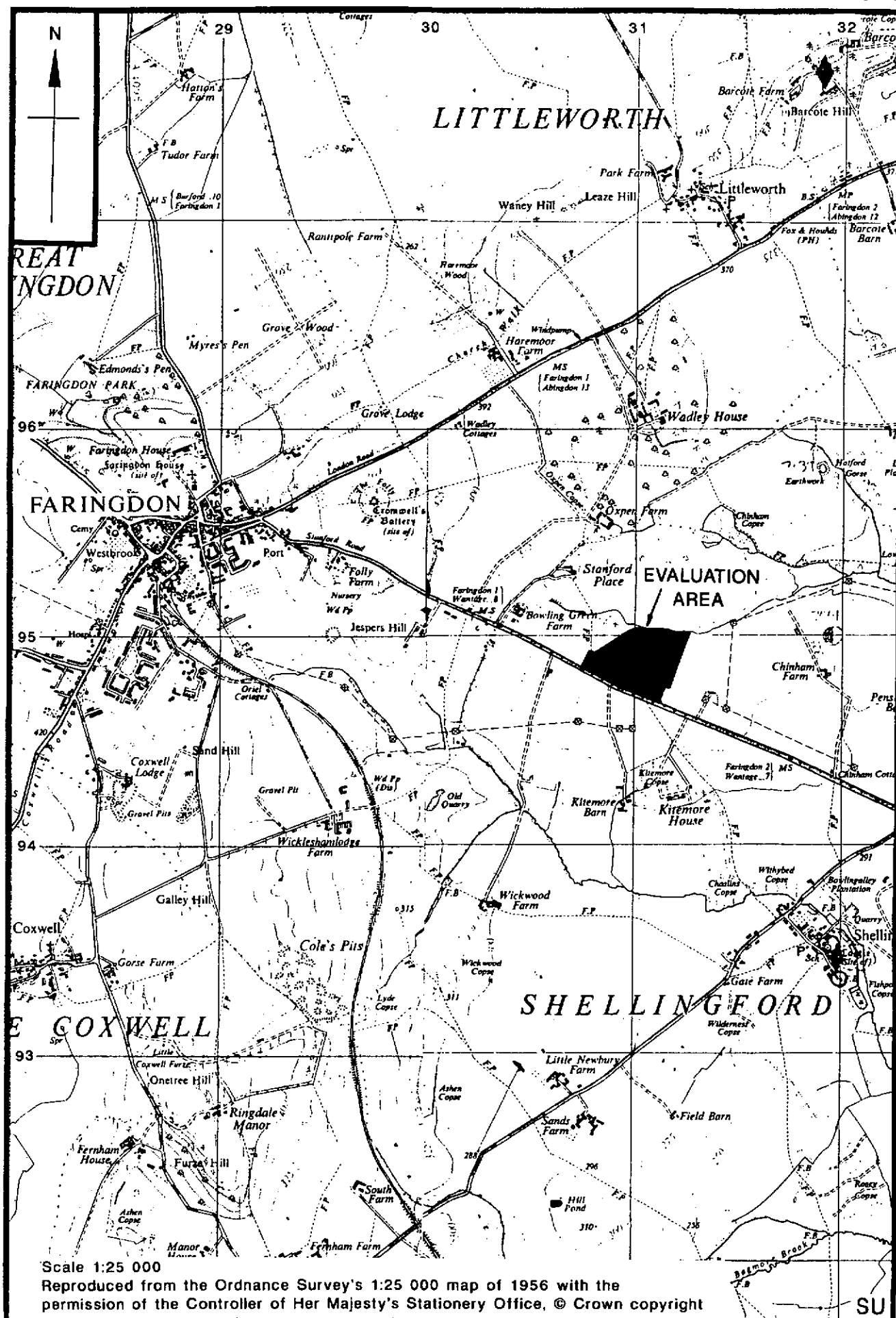


figure 1: Location plan

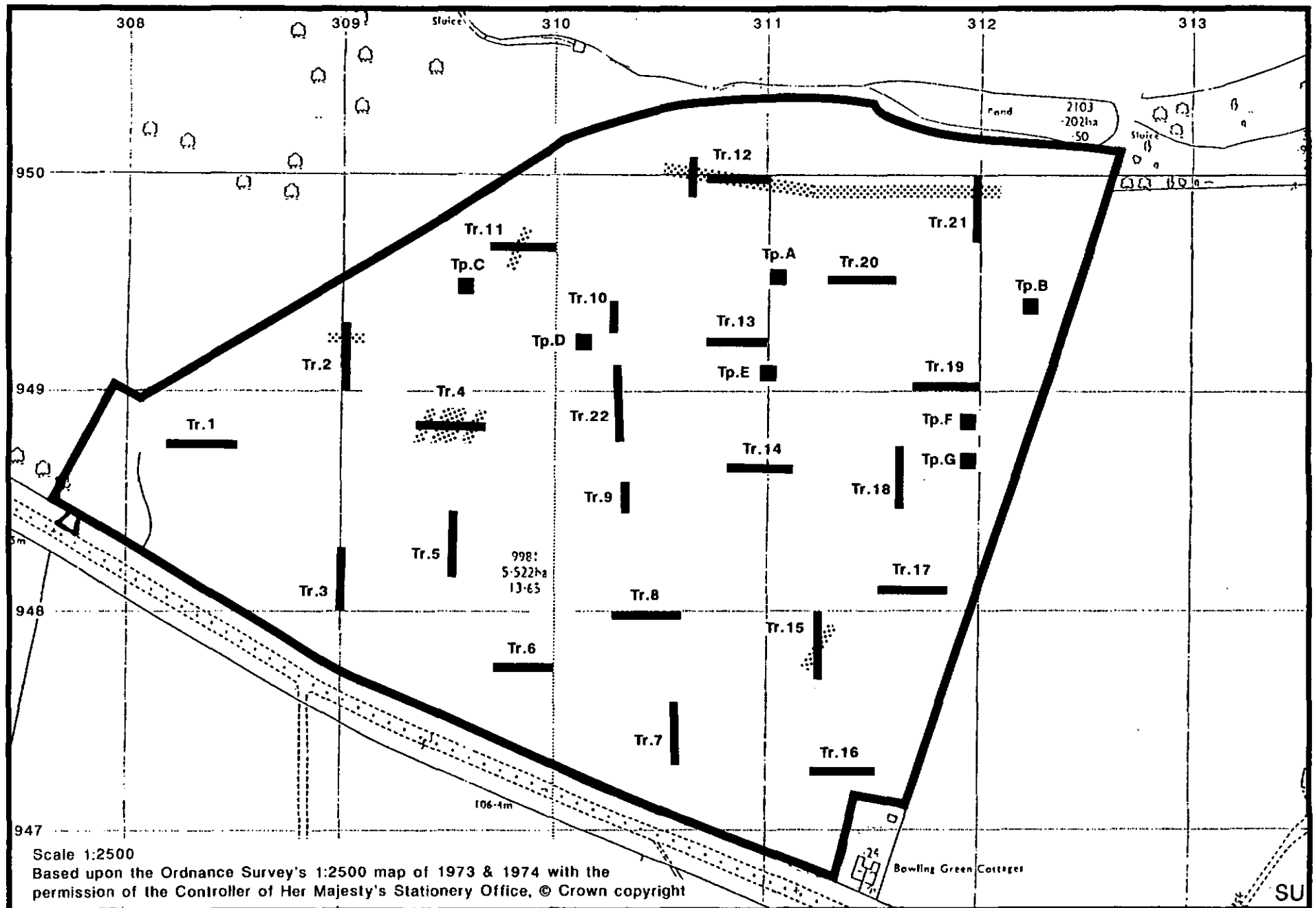
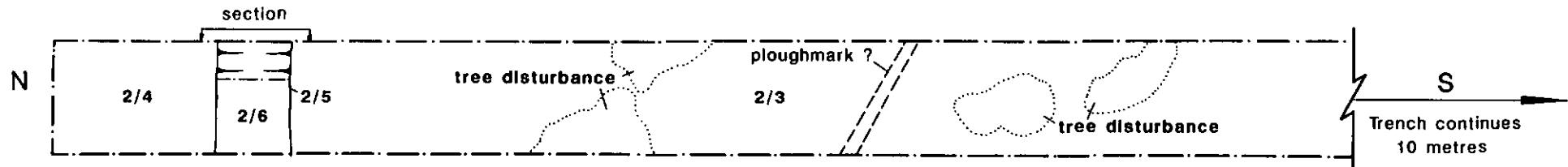
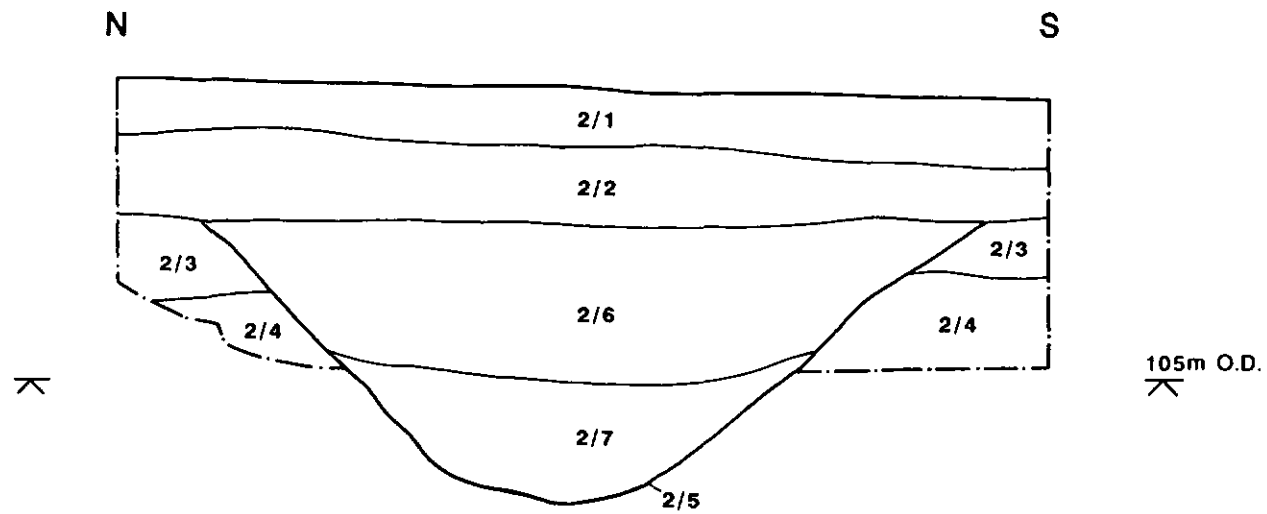


figure 2: Trench location plan

## Trench 2



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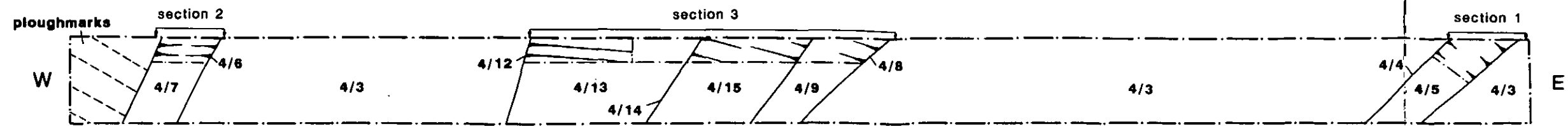


scale 1:20

figure 3: Trench 2 plan &amp; section

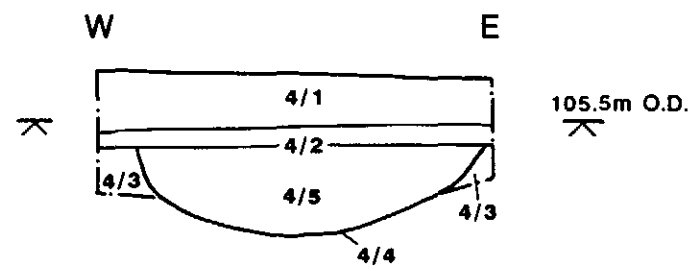


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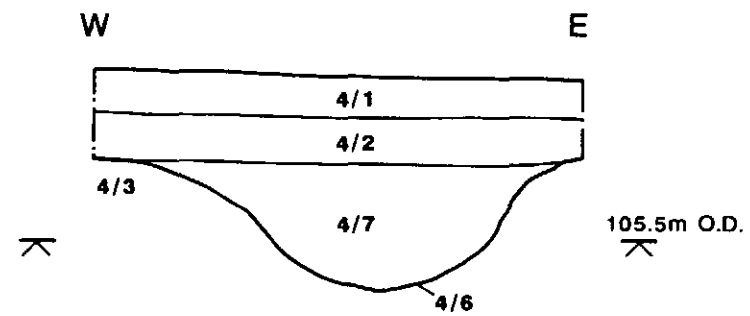
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## section 1



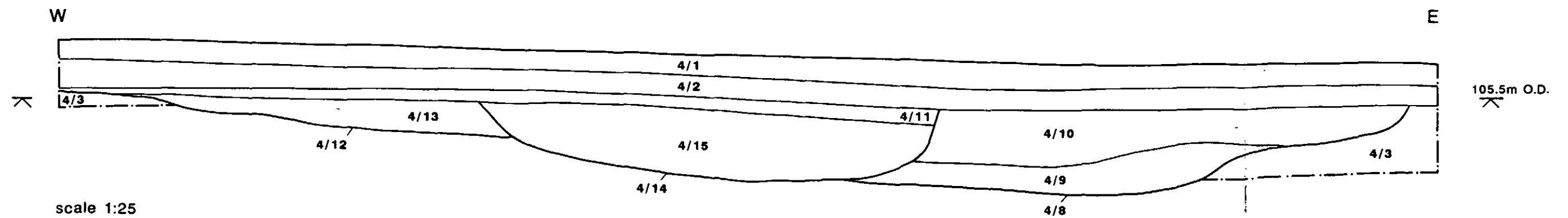
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## section 2



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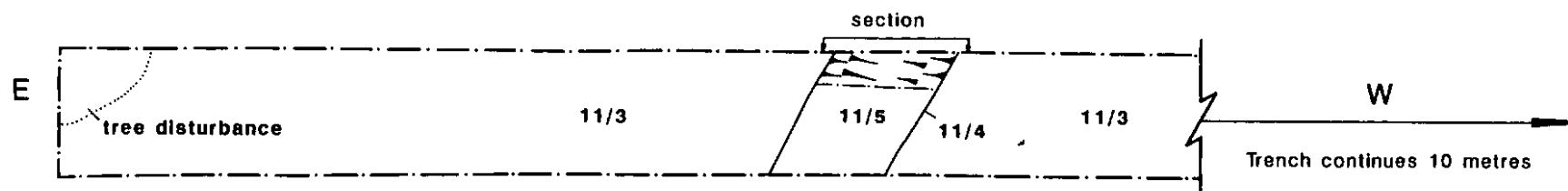
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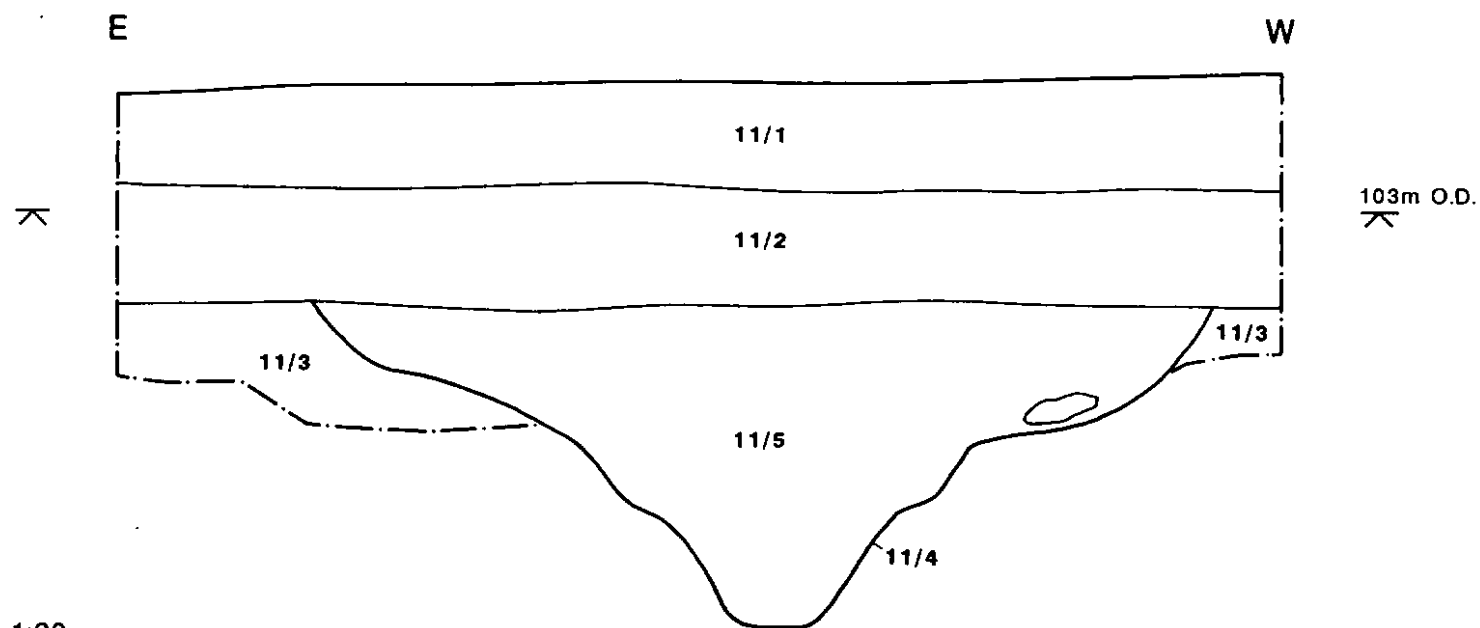
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figure 4: Trench 4 plan &amp; sections

## Trench 11



scale 1:100



scale 1:20

figure 5: Trench 11 plan &amp; section

Trench 12

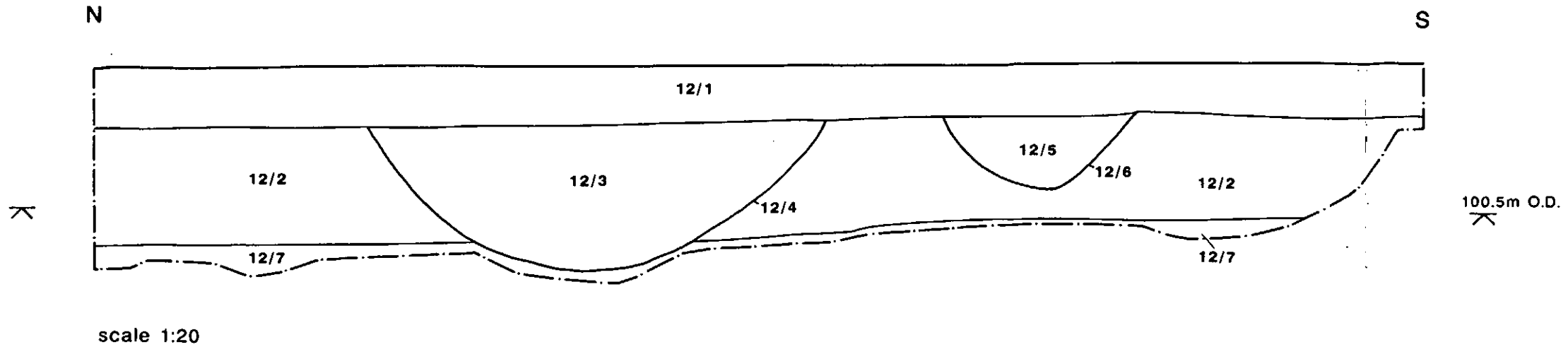
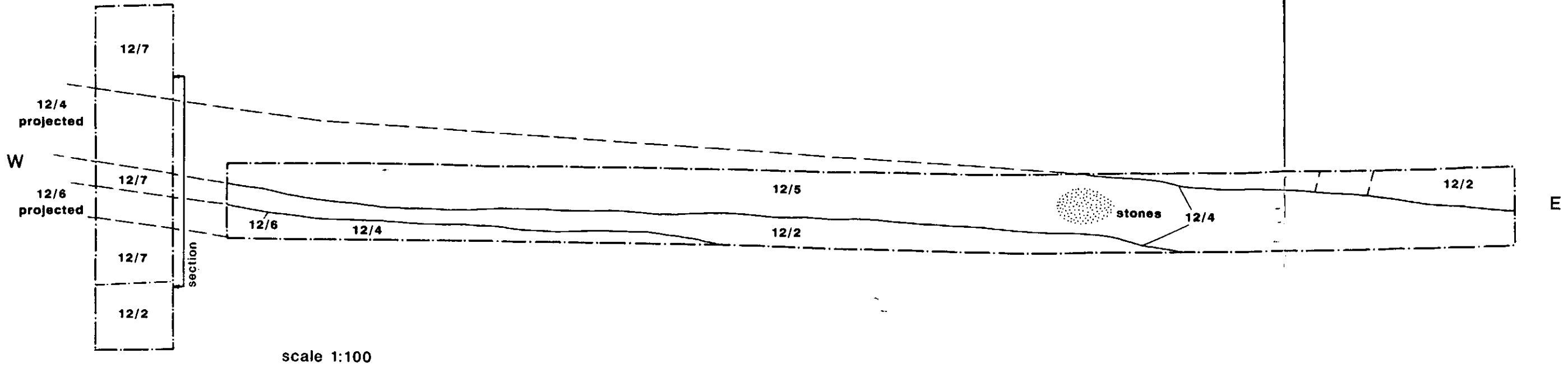
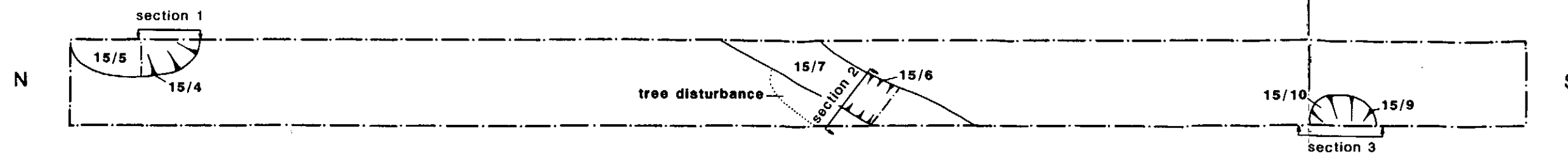
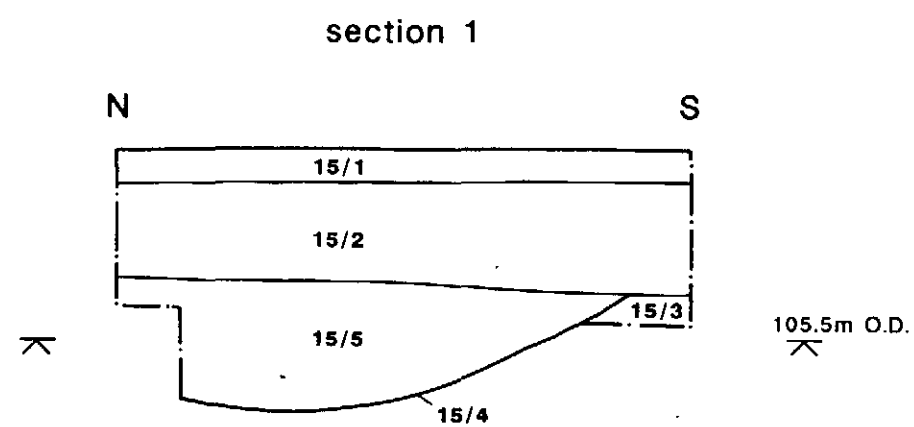


figure 6: Trench 12 plan & section

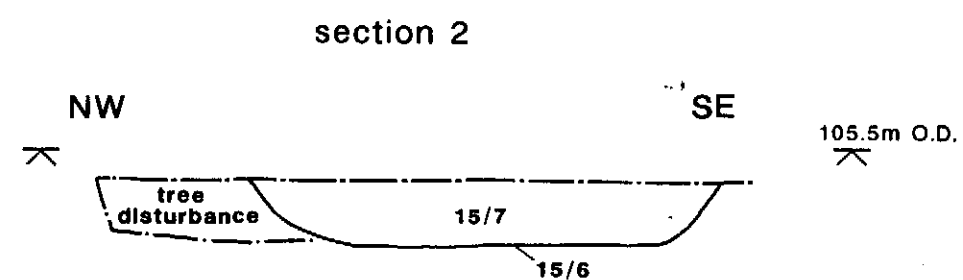
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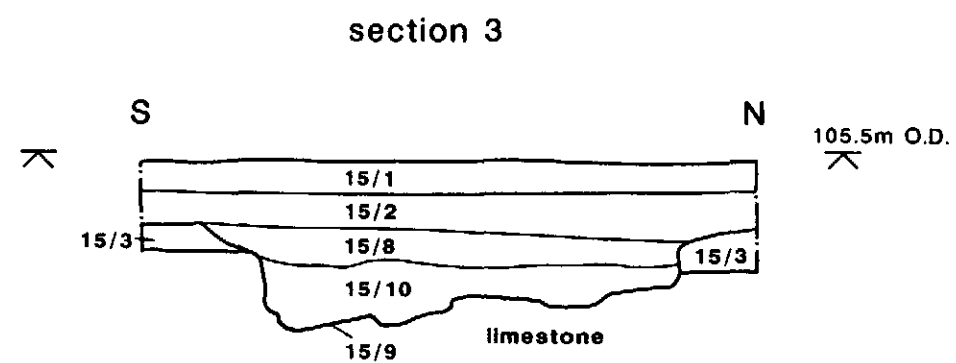
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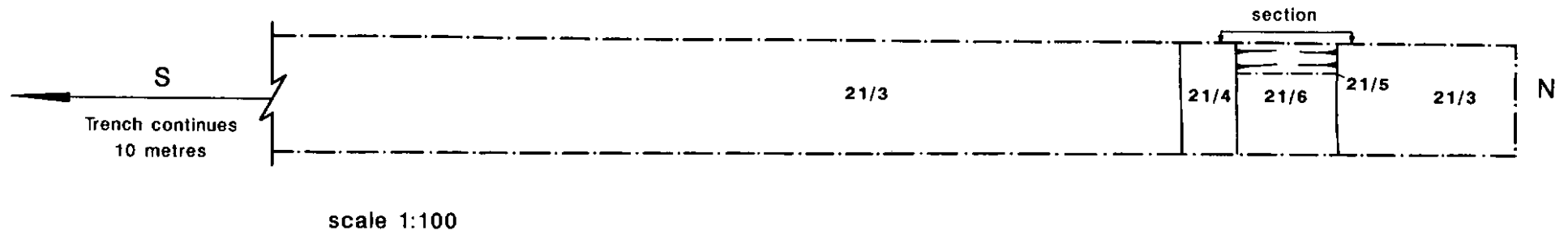
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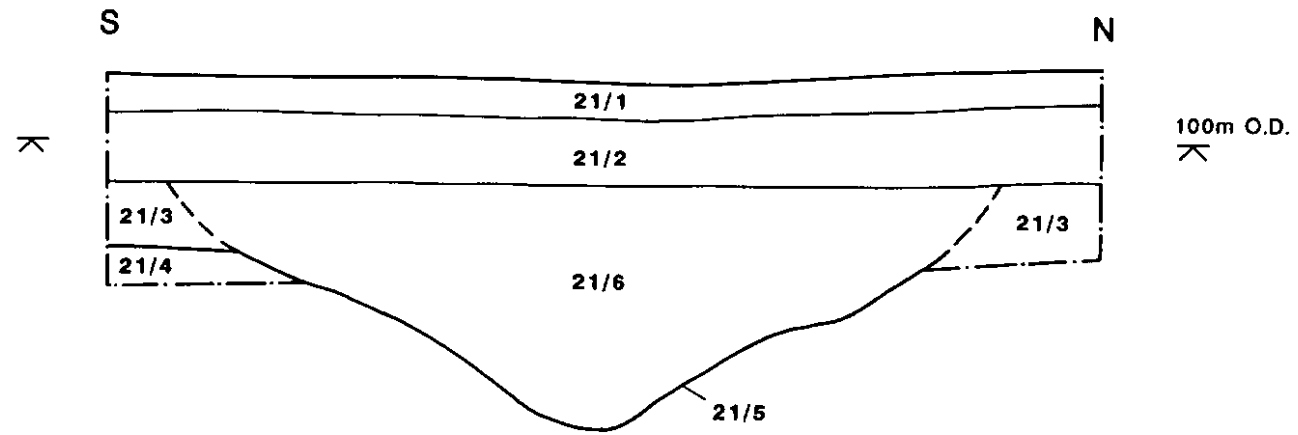
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figure 7: Trench 15 plan &amp; sections

## Trench 21



scale 1:100



scale 1:20

figure 8: Trench 21 plan &amp; section

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