

EVALUATION AT CROFTLANDS,
HARVINGTON

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Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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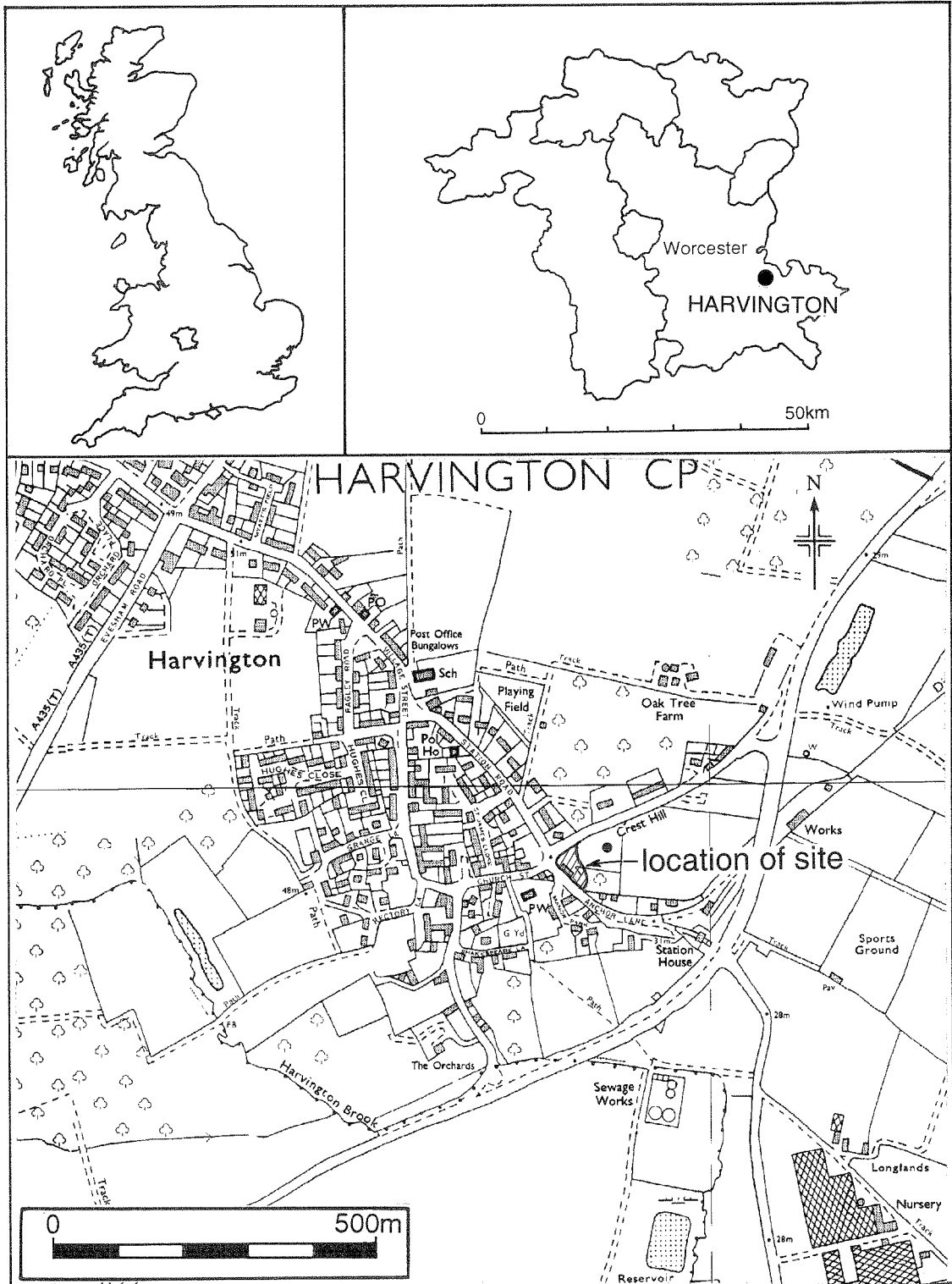


Figure 1: Location of the site

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Evaluation at Croftlands, Harvington

Shona Robson and David Wichbold

Part 1 Project summary

1. Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on behalf of SET Design in advance of proposed residential development. The project was designed in response to an archaeological brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Section of the County Archaeological Service and dated 25th June 1998. The site is registered on the County Sites and Monuments Record (reference number WSM 27043) as a site of archaeological interest (Statutory Instruments 1988; no 1813). The nearby presence of the parish church and the site being located at the main road junction in the historic part of the village suggested a potential for the survival of medieval deposits within the proposed development area.

2. Outline of results and significance

There was no evidence for any deposits or artefacts on site that predated the modern period. This would suggest that there was no medieval occupation of this site and that the area of this development has been farmland until this century. The results of the evaluation suggest that Anchor Lane marked the eastern edge of the medieval village of Harvington.

3. Conclusions

The evaluation produced no evidence of any archaeological remains of particular significance on the site of the proposed development.

Part 2 Detailed report

4. **Aims**

The aims of the evaluation were to locate archaeological deposits and determine, if present, their extent, state of preservation, date, type, vulnerability and documentation. The purpose of this was to establish their significance, since this would make it possible to recommend an appropriate treatment that may then be integrated with the proposed development programme.

5. **Topographical and archaeological background**

The site of Croftlands at Harvington, near Evesham, is located at NGR SP 0578 4886. The underlying geology of the site is river terrace gravel overlying Mercian Mudstone (solid geology).

The village of Harvington was originally known as *Hereford* and *Herforton* meaning 'settlement at the ford' (Mawer and Stenton, 1927, 134). The village has a church dating at the latest to the twelfth century (WSM 2738), which is opposite the site of Croftlands. The older surviving part of the village consists of a number of timber framed and thatched cottages. Many of the fields on the eastern side of the village contain cropmarks of prehistoric enclosures (WSM 2761, 2762, 2763, 2784, 2785, 2786, 2787, 2788, 2789). In the fields to the north of the village a Bronze Age axe (WSM 2781) and dagger (WSM 2780) have been found.

The enclosure map dated 1787 (WRO BA 4455) indicates that the site of the proposed development is within an area known as *Inward Piece* and *Croftland Furlong*. The term furlong suggests that the site was associated in the 18th century with arable cultivation (ie agricultural activity). Maps of 1811 (estate belonging to Thomas Williams; WRO ref not known), and 1838 (parish map; WRO BA 491) both show that the area of the site remained undeveloped (ie a field) despite its position near the parish church.

6. **Methods**

6.1 **Documentary search**

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). In addition the following sources were also consulted: County Record Office, Victoria County History (VCH 1913), parish records (SMR), the Domesday Survey (Thorn and Thorn 1982), and sources for the place-names of Worcestershire (Mawer and Stenton 1927).

6.2 **Fieldwork**

6.2.1 **Fieldwork strategy**

Fieldwork was undertaken on 1st December 1998. Three trenches (Trenches 1, 2 and 3, Fig 2) were excavated under archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator. For Trench 1 (a car park area) a 1m wide toothed bucket was used and for Trenches 2 and 3 a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket was used. These trenches were 2m, 6m and 12m long respectively. Trench 1 was located in a yard just to the rear of Croftlands. Trenches 2 and 3 were located either side of the driveway running off the main road. The trench locations were designed to test for the presence or absence of archaeological deposits over the entire area of the proposed development that was available. Subsequent excavation was by hand and both excavation and recording followed standard Service practice (CAS 1995, as amended).

6.2.2 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Structural analysis was effected through a combination of structural (ie contexts) and artefactual evidence, allied to the information derived from the preliminary documentary and topographical research. Archaeological contexts are summarised in Table 1.

6.3 Artefacts

6.3.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy was as defined in the County Archaeological Service recording system (CAS 1995, as amended). This in principle determines that all finds, of whatever date, are collected.

6.3.2 Method of analysis

All hand retrieved finds were examined. A preliminary record was made of all finds using the Context Finds Record sheets (AS 8). Artefacts were identified, quantified and dated to period. Where possible a *terminus post quem* date was produced for each stratified context. Pottery fabrics area referenced to a fabric series maintained by the Service (Hurst and Rees 1992, 200-9).

7. Analysis

Trench 1 comprised a layer of tarmac and hard-core (101), 0.1m deep, it was on top of a 0.2m deep layer of red brown sandy loam with a moderate amount of gravel (102). This was above a layer of gravel within a red brown sandy loam matrix 0.15m thick (103). Below this was the natural red clay with occasional gravel (104, Fig 3).

Trench 2 comprised topsoil which was 0.3m thick and was brown loam with occasional gravel (201). This was on top of red brown sandy loam with a moderate amount of gravel (202), 0.2m thick. This layer was above the natural gravel within a red brown sandy clay matrix (203, Fig 3).

Trench 3 comprised topsoil (301), which was a brown loam with occasional gravel 0.3m thick. This was above a layer of red brown sandy loam with a moderate amount of gravel (302), 0.15m thick. This layer was on top of the natural red clay mixed with gravel (303). There were occasional patches of gravel in a red brown sandy clay matrix also mixed in with the clay (Fig 3).

No pottery of a date later than the nineteenth/twentieth century was recovered from any of the contexts and the finds that were recovered were only present in the topsoil.

8. Discussion

The evaluation produced evidence that suggests that the site has not been occupied prior to the construction of the present building on the site. It is likely that the site has been agricultural land since at least the medieval period. The natural is close to the surface and did not have any features cut into it. The layers above natural are the typical subsoils of the rural landscape in the part of Worcestershire. The fact that the only finds recovered were from the topsoil also suggests that the site has not been occupied for very long.

The field pattern on the 18th century enclosure map suggests that the site lay within an area of medieval open field agriculture prior to the insertion of a road which subsequently became the north boundary of the proposed development area. The absence of medieval pottery which

would usually be found where open field (ie arable) cultivation had taken place is surprising, though this may be explained by the small size of the evaluation area that was examined.

9. **Significance**

In considering significance, the Secretary of State's criteria for the scheduling of ancient monuments (DoE 1990, annex 4), have been used as a guide.

These nationally accepted criteria are used to assess the importance of an ancient monument and considering whether scheduling is appropriate. Assessment is made against the following headings: *period, rarity, survival, vulnerability, potential*. Though scheduling is not being considered in this case they form an appropriate and consistent framework for the assessment of any archaeological site. The criteria should not, however, be regarded as definitive; rather they are indicators which contribute to a wider judgement based on the individual circumstances of a case.

The earliest activity on the site was of the modern period. The deposits recorded on the proposed development site at Croftlands were, therefore, of no particular archaeological significance.

10. **Academic summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The Client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken, at Croftlands (NGR SP 0578 4886), Harvington near Evesham, by the Worcestershire County Archaeological Service on behalf of SET Design. Archaeological evidence for the occupation of the site was limited to the modern period, while cartographic evidence suggested that the area of the proposed development had been used for agricultural purposes from the medieval period up to at least the later 19th century.

11. **The archive**

The archive consists of:

- 1 Fieldwork progress records AS2
- 2 Photographic records AS3
 - 1 Colour transparency film
 - 1 Black and white photographic film
- 1 Scale drawings
- 1 Box of finds
- 1 Computer disk

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum, Hartlebury Castle, Hartlebury, Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ

Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

12. Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank Mr S. Taylor (SET Design) and Mr Mike Glyde for their kind assistance in the conclusion of this project.

13. Personnel

Fieldwork and reporting were undertaken by Shona Robson and David Wichbold. Finds processing was undertaken by David Wichbold and reporting by Derek Hurst. Illustrations for the report were provided by Carolyn Hunt.

The project was designed by Derek Hurst who also edited this report.

14. Bibliography

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Mawer, A, and Stenton, F M, 1927 *The Place Names of Worcestershire*, Cambridge

Thorn, F, and Thorn, C, 1982 *Domesday Book - Worcestershire*, Chichester

VCH III, Page, W (ed), 1913 *Victoria History of the County of Worcestershire*

15. Abbreviations

CAS County Archaeological Service

SMR Sites and Monuments Record.

WSM Numbers prefixed with 'WSM' are the primary reference numbers used by the Worcestershire County Sites and Monuments Record.

Table 1. Summary of structural analysis

Context	Type	Interpretation	Description
Trench 1			
100	unstratified finds		
101	layer		tarmac and hard-core
102	layer	subsoil	red brown sandy loam with moderate gravel
103	layer	natural	gravel in a red brown clayey loam matrix
104	layer	natural	red clay with occasional gravel
Trench 2			
200	unstratified finds		
201	layer	topsoil	brown loam with occasional gravel
202	layer	subsoil	red brown sandy loam with moderate gravel
203	layer	natural	gravel in red brown sandy loam matrix
Trench 3			
300	unstratified finds		
301	layer	topsoil	brown loam with occasional gravel
302	layer	subsoil	red brown sandy loam with moderate gravel
303	layer	natural	red clay mixed with gravel

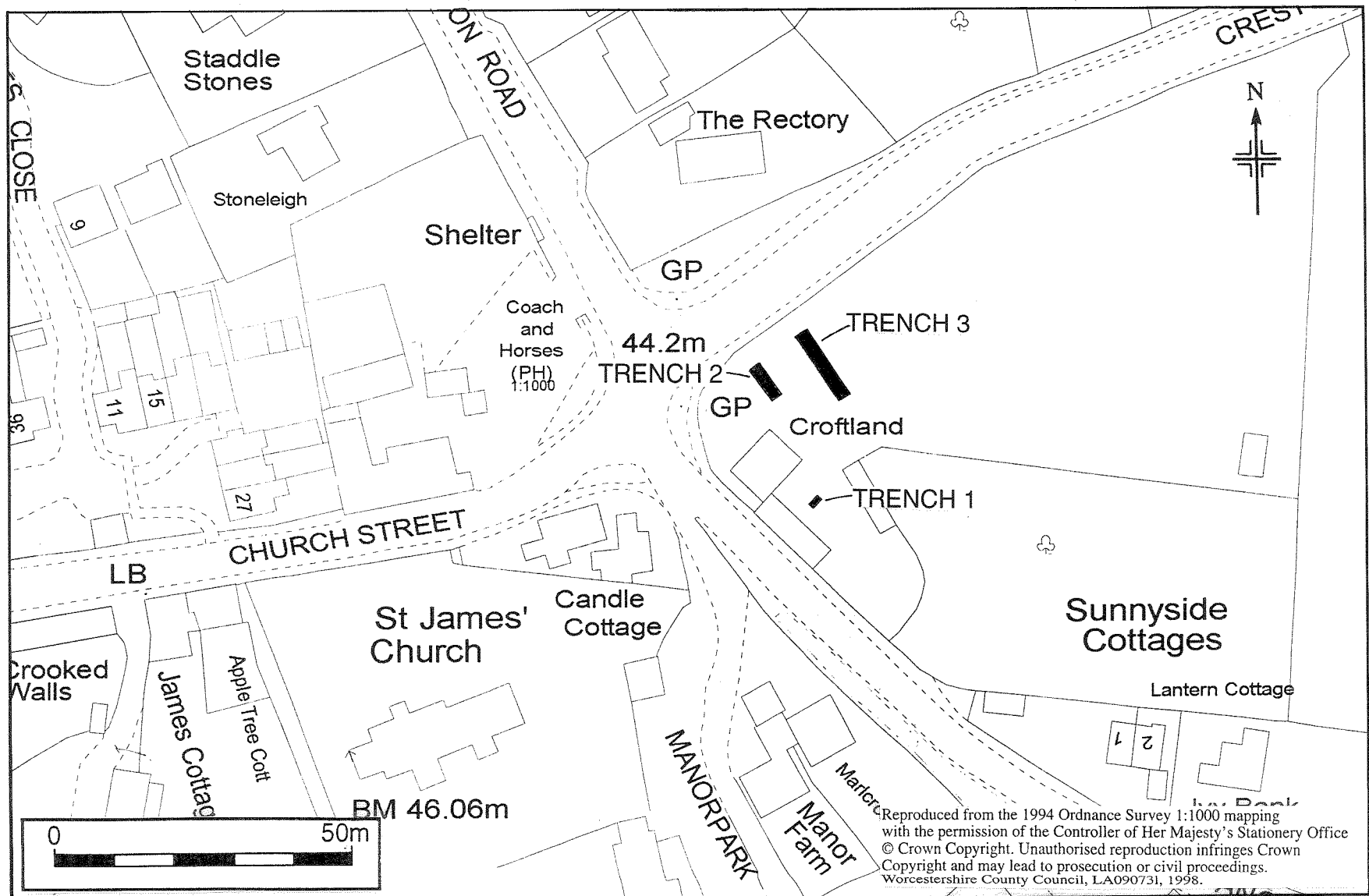


Figure 2: Location of trenches

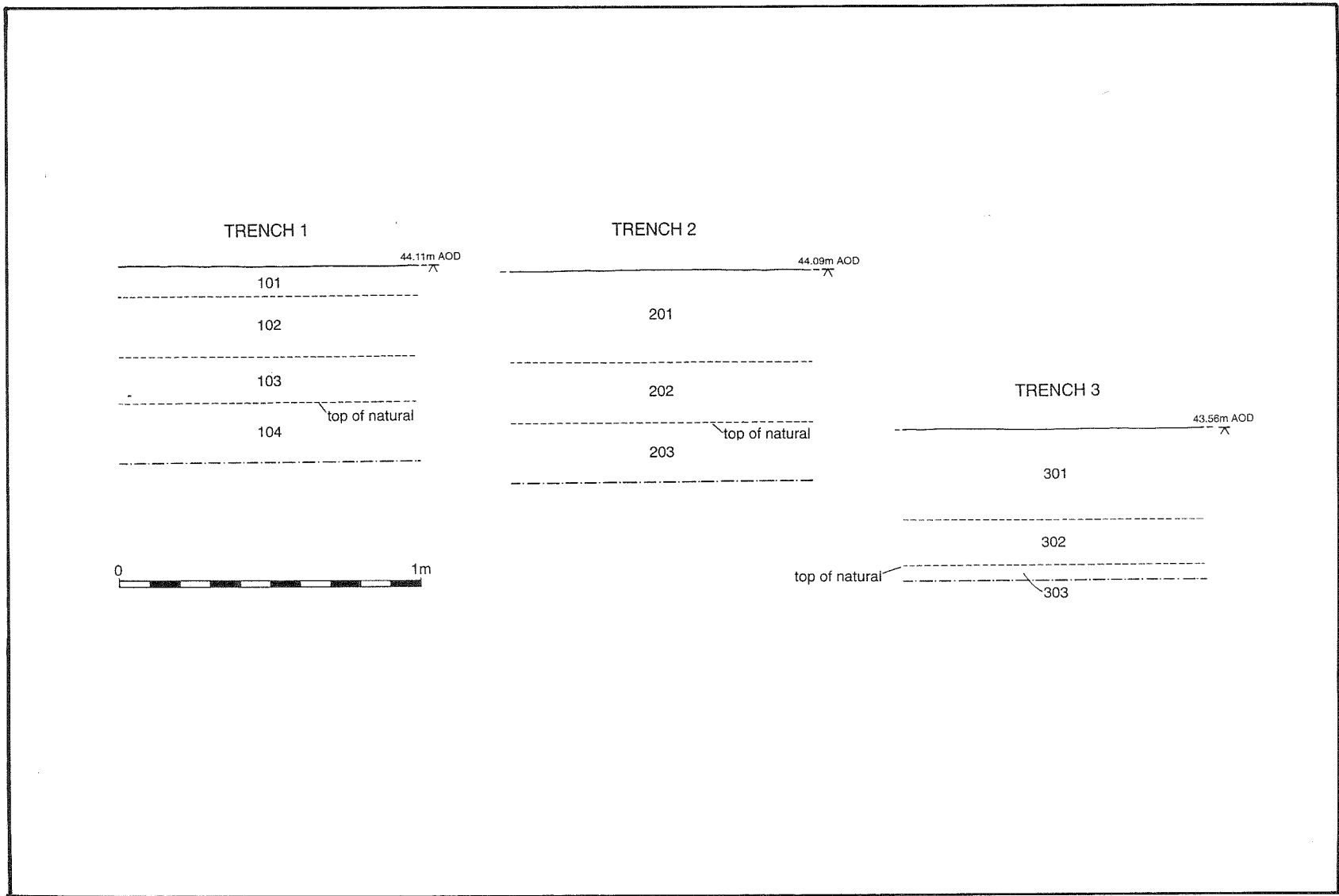


Figure 3: Sample sections