



**LAND NORTH OF FORTE TRAVELODGE
EPSOM ROAD, MORDEN
LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

Archaeological Evaluation Report



**LAND NORTH OF FORTE TRAVELODGE
EPSOM ROAD
MORDEN
LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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**LAND ADJACENT TO NORTH OF FORTE TRAVELODGE,
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Contents

<i>Non Technical Summary</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>iii</i>
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND	1
1.2 PLANNING BACKGROUND	1
2 SITE DESCRIPTION	1
2.1 THE SITE	1
2.2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY.....	1
3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	2
4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
5 METHODOLOGY	2
5.1 THE EVALUATION	2
5.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	2
5.3 FIELDWORK.....	3
5.4 FINDS COLLECTION AND RETENTION	3
5.5 THE ARCHIVE.....	3
6 RESULTS	4
6.2 THE FINDS.....	4
6.3 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE.....	4
7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	5
8 BIBLIOGRAPHY	6
APPENDIX 2 OASIS SUMMARY	8

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Plan showing location of trench and section

Figure 2. Representative Section

Non Technical Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by George & Harding (the Client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land north of Forte Travelodge, Epsom Road, Morden, London Borough of Merton (the Site), centred on NGR 525010 67419. The Site consisted of a grassed area forming the rear of a beer garden.

The evaluation comprised one 7.50m x 2.20m trench, which was excavated in order to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features.

No archaeological deposits, structures or artefacts were uncovered during the evaluation.

Evidence of a buried subsoil and topsoil were uncovered which was sealed by a 0.50m thick layer of modern material consisting of redeposited clay mixed with building rubble. This levelling deposit appeared to have been mostly derived from the construction of the Forte Travelodge. The present topsoil on Site appeared to post date the construction of the Forte Travelodge and was almost certainly lain down during landscaping for the beer garden.

Undisturbed geological deposits comprising yellowish orange silty clays were encountered at a height of 35.79m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

The report concludes that the Site has been subject to significant modern disturbance and truncation as a result of the construction of the Forte Travelodge Hotel.

The lack of archaeological remains or artefacts uncovered during the evaluation, suggest that little or no significant archaeological remains are present within the proposed development area.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank George & Harding Ltd for commissioning the project. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Diane Walls of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) for monitoring the work.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Lawrence Pontin (Project Manager); the fieldwork was undertaken by Gary Evans (Project Officer) who also compiled the report. Mark Roughley prepared the illustrations

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of land north of Forte Travelodge, Epsom Road, Morden in the London Borough of Merton (the Site) centered on NGR 525010 167419 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The evaluation was commissioned by George & Harding Ltd (the Client) and took place on the 3rd of March 2006.

1.2 Planning Background

1.2.1 Planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the Site involving the extension of the Travelodge Hotel on its northern side. An archaeological condition has been attached to the permission requiring archaeological evaluation of the Site area, with mitigation to follow if archaeological horizons are present.

1.2.2 The evaluation and preparation of this report have been undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, which was prepared by Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology 2006,) and approved by Diane Walls, the English Heritage GLAAS Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Merton.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The Site

2.1.1 The Site comprises a 0.1 hectare rectangular parcel of land to the west of Epsom Road (A24). The Site is immediately adjacent to the Forte Travelodge Hotel which lies to the south and presently forms the rear of a beer garden belonging to The George Public House which lies to the east. The 17th century church of Saint Lawrence lies to the north. To the west, the Site is partly bordered by a modern Rectory and part of a miniature golf course in Morden Park (**Figure 1**).

2.2 Topography and Geology

2.2.1 The Site lies at *c.* 37m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

2.2.2 The Site, which forms part of The George Public House beer garden, is currently disused and is covered by rough grass and a number of mature trees.

2.2.3 The underlying geology consists of London Clay (BGS 1:50000 scale, Sheet 270, 1998).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 The Site lies within the Archaeological Priority Area (APA) of Morden Park, where remains of Roman and medieval date have been found. The park contains a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), the 'Morden Park Mound' thought to represent a Roman burial mound or an 18th century viewing platform.
- 3.1.2 The Site also lies within the line of Roman *Stane Street*, another Archaeological Priority Area which passes across the south east of the park. Remains of the road are thought to survive buried underground.

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 The aims of the evaluation were to:
- 4.1.2 Characterise the nature, date, extent and state of preservation of underlying archaeological deposits.
- 4.1.3 Identify the depth of burial (and thus the depth of sensitivity) of any underlying archaeological deposits or features.
- 4.1.4 More specifically the evaluation sought to:
- 4.1.5 Identify any activity associated with the Romano British burial mound in Morden Park, Roman *Stane Street* or with the medieval occupation of Morden.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The Evaluation

- 5.1.1 The fieldwork strategy is described in detail in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2006), in summary the evaluation comprised the machine excavation of one trench 7.40m x 2.10m in plan and excavated to a depth of 1.00m, .Due to the depth of overburden a 2.60m x 1.00m, 1.00 m deep sondage was cut in the middle of the trench (**Figure 1**).
- 5.1.2 Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, arrangements were be made with the Museum of London for deposition of the archive and finds, and a Museum of London Site code was allotted (FTM6).

5.2 Health and Safety

- 5.2.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices overrode archaeological considerations at all times.
- 5.2.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992 and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.
- 5.2.3 Wessex Archaeology prepared a Health and Safety Risk Assessment. As part of the Project Briefing all staff were made aware of their responsibilities and site specific hazards, identified under the Risk Assessment prepared by Wessex Archaeology prior to commencement of fieldwork.

5.3 Fieldwork

- 5.3.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the prescriptions of the guidance and standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (1999). The fieldwork was conducted according to a Written Scheme of Investigation compiled by Wessex Archaeology (WA 2006) and agreed by GLAAS.
- 5.3.2 The trench was located on the ground using tapes from known landmarks and features present on Ordnance Survey (OS) maps (e.g. boundaries or buildings).
- 5.3.3 The trench was dug using a mechanical excavator (JCB) fitted with a toothless grading bucket. This took place under the constant supervision of a competent archaeologist.
- 5.3.4 All spoil was scanned for finds.
- 5.3.5 Machining continued to the top of archaeological deposits or the underlying natural strata.
- 5.3.6 A complete drawn and photographic record of the trench was compiled. This included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 or 1:50 for plans, 1:10 or 1:20 for sections). The heights of all trenches were expressed in metres above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and plans/sections were annotated with OD heights.
- 5.3.7 A photographic record was also compiled including digital images, colour transparencies and black and white negatives (on 35mm film).
- 5.3.8 On completion of fieldwork, the trench was backfilled with the agreement of Diane Walls of GLAAS.

5.4 Finds Collection and Retention

- 5.4.1 All collected finds were to be treated in accordance with the principles and practices set out by the Society of Museum Archaeologists (1993), Medieval Pottery Research Group (2001) and the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (1999).
- 5.4.2 Where features or deposits were clearly modern, finds were examined, noted and discarded.

5.5 The Archive

- 5.5.1 The completed project archive will be prepared in accordance with *the Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990).
- 5.5.2 The resulting archive will be microfiched to the standards accepted by the National Monuments Record (NMR).
- 5.5.3 One copy will be deposited with the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (SMR); a further copy will be deposited with the NMR.
- 5.5.4 The archive from the project, subject to the wishes of the landowner, will be deposited with the Museum of London.

5.5.5 Details of the evaluation will be entered into the online ‘Oasis’ database maintained by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

6 RESULTS

6.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below with a detailed summary of the results of the evaluation presented in **Appendix 1**.

6.1.2 Fully cross referenced site records are contained in the site archive (WA 62310).

6.1.3 In the following sections context numbers are given in bold.

6.1.4 The Natural Geology comprised an upper, 0.10m thick, deposit of mid yellowish orange silty clay (**05**) with occasional inclusions of large flint pebbles, was uncovered at a height of 35.90maOD. This deposit overlay a light yellowish orange silty clay (**06**) which contained no inclusions but was observed to contain occasional lens of yellow coarse sand. The base of this deposit was not reached at 34.90maOD.

6.1.5 Directly above the natural geology a layer of mid to dark greyish brown clayey silt (**04**) with 40% dark orange mottling throughout and few inclusions, represented the former subsoil in this part of the Site.

6.1.6 The former subsoil was overlain by a mid brownish grey fine sandy clayey silt deposit (**03**) with 10% brown orange mottling and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt clay. This deposit, which was only 0.15m thick, contained no artefacts and represented the remains of the former topsoil.

6.1.7 The former topsoil (**03**) was sealed by a, 0.50m thick, mixed deposit of light yellowish brown clay and grey clay silt. This deposit (**02**) contained frequent inclusions of red and yellow bricks, fragments of red roof tile, chalk, plaster and lime mortar. As well as occasional fragments of ceramic drainpipe and breeze block. This deposit almost certainly represented a modern levelling deposit, probably associated with the construction of the adjacent Forte Travelodge.

6.1.8 The present topsoil on Site (**01**) was a homogenous mid grey clayey silt with occasional inclusions of red brick, mortar, chalk and modern china. This deposit, which was 0.50m thick, was almost certainly brought from elsewhere as part of the landscaping of the Site during the laying out of the George Public House beer garden.

6.2 The Finds

6.2.1 The only material recovered from the Site consisted of modern pottery(china) and CBM fragments of a clearly post-medieval and modern date. This material was noted but not retained.

6.3 Environmental Evidence

6.3.1 Due to the absence of any suitable deposits, no samples were taken for environmental analysis.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 No significant archaeological deposits, structures or artefacts were uncovered during the evaluation.
- 7.1.2 The results of the evaluation indicate that the Site has been subject to significant modern disturbance as the result of the construction of the Forte Travelodge and subsequent landscaping of the area during the laying out of the George Public House's beer garden.
- 7.1.3 Evidence of a buried subsoil and topsoil were uncovered during the evaluation, these deposits, which contained no artefacts, were sealed by a 0.50m thick layer of modern material, redeposited clay mixed with building rubble. This levelling deposit appeared to have been mostly derived from the construction of the adjacent Forte Travelodge Hotel. The present topsoil on Site appeared to post date the construction of the Forte Travelodge and was almost certainly laid down during landscaping for its use as part of a beer garden.
- 7.1.4 The former topsoil was only 0.15m thick and contained no artefacts. No archaeological features were observed cutting into the former topsoil.
- 7.1.5 Undisturbed geological deposits comprising yellowish orange silty clays were encountered at a height of 35.79m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 7.1.6 The evaluation produced no evidence for activity associated with the possible Roman Burial mound in Morden Park or with Roman *Stane Street*.
- 7.1.7 The lack of archaeological remains or artefacts uncovered during the evaluation, suggest that little or no significant archaeological remains are present within the proposed development area. Given the depth of disturbance across the Site it appears unlikely that there is the potential for any archaeological remains to be disturbed by the proposed development.

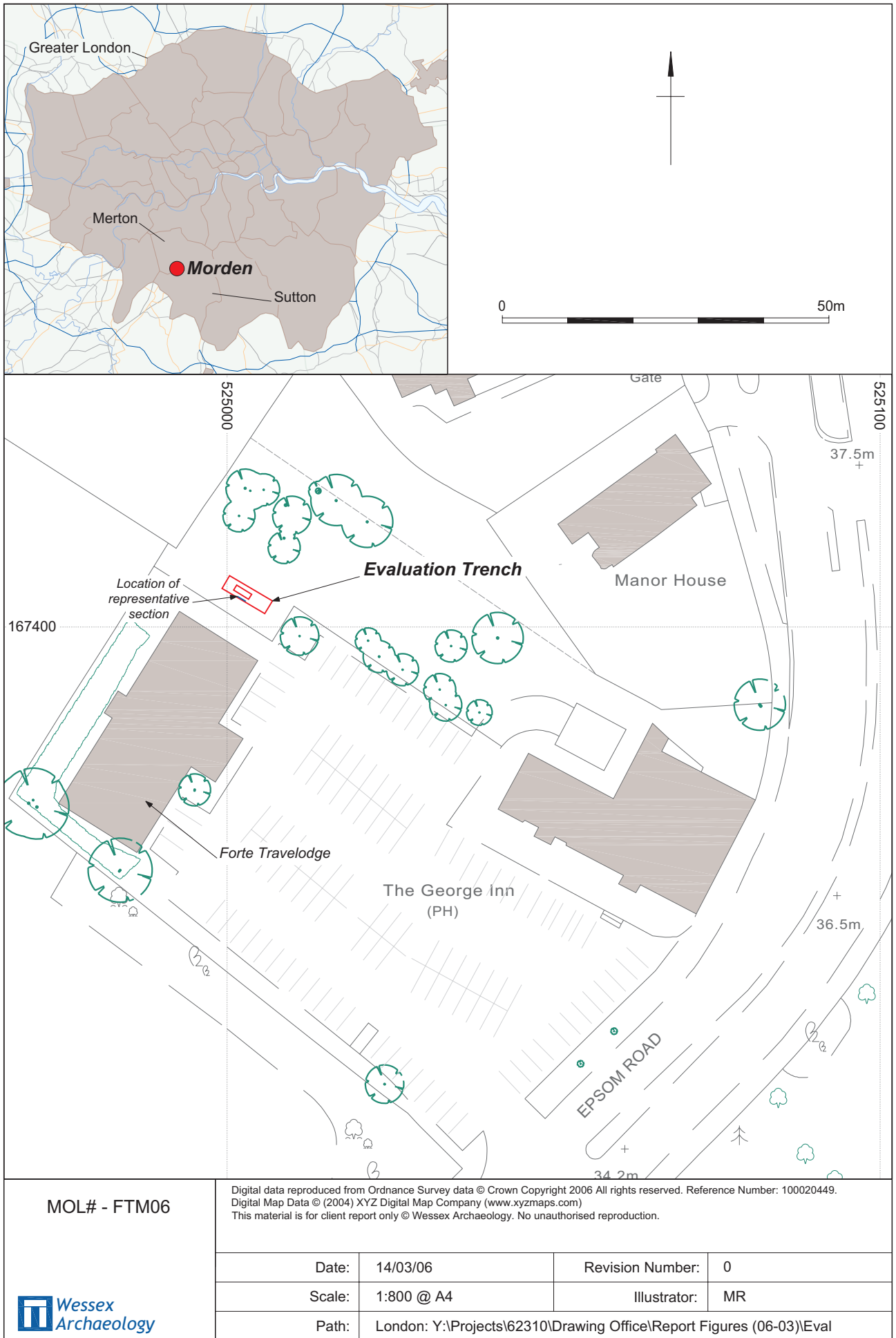
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- Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations*
- Wessex Archaeology 2006 *-Land Adjacent to North of Forte Travelodge Epsom Road, Morden SM4, London Borough of Merton Written Scheme of Investigation For Archaeological Evaluation*

9 APPENDIX 1 TRENCH SUMMARY TABLE

Trench Number 1	Length 7.40m	Width 2.10m	Ground Level 36.79 m aOD
Context no.	Description	Keyword	Depth (m)
001	Mid grey clay silt. with occasional medium well rounded pebbles. Line of turf within upper .0.10m. Moderate tree roots and inclusions of modern material including fragments of machine made red bricks, yellow stock brick, mortar and chalk Lower, boundary wavy and sharply defined	Present Topsoil (A Horizon)	0.0-0.50m
002	Light yellowish brown clay silt frequent flecks of white mortar, thick lens of mid grey clay silt. Moderate amounts of red machine made brick, fragments chalk occasional fragments of breeze block, red peg tile, ceramic drain and iron pipes Boundary very wavy but sharp.	Levelling makeup	0.50-0.80m
003	Mid brownish grey with 10% orange brown mottling throughout. Fine sandy clay silt with occasional small-medium sub rounded to well rounded pebbles, flecks of charcoal and burnt clay. Lower boundary wavy and diffuse	Former Topsoil (A Horizon)	0.80-0.95m
004	Mid-light greyish brown with 40% dark orange brown mottle, a clayey silt with occasional small (20mm) well rounded pebbles. No other inclusions	Former Subsoil (B Horizon)	0.95-1.05m
005	Mid-light yellowish orange with 10% dark orange mottles a homogenous compact silty clay with very occasional large (0.35) flint pebbles boundary diffuse	Natural	1.05-1.20m
006	Light yellowish orange well sorted very compact silty clay with occasional dark orange mottles concentrated within 0.20m of the top occasional lens of yellow coarse sand. No other inclusions	Natural	1.20-1.90m. (+)

10 APPENDIX 2 OASIS SUMMARY



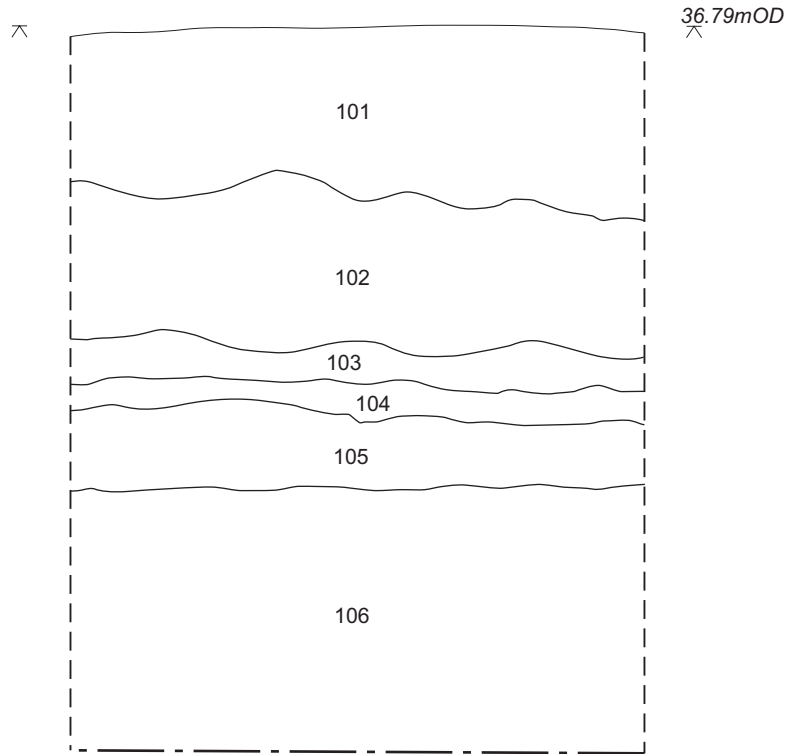
Site Location Map showing location of WA Evaluation Trench

Figure 1

Evaluation Trench - Section

SE

NW



MOL# - FTM06



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