



UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON, BARKING CAMPUS
LONGBRIDGE ROAD
LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING AND DAGENHAM
GREATER LONDON

Archaeological Evaluation Report





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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CGMS Consulting on behalf of George Wimpey East London Ltd to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the former University of East London Barking Campus, Longbridge Road, Barking (NGR 546460 185650). Nineteen trenches were excavated in total across the site. No archaeological remains were present anywhere on site, and it appears likely that the site area has been severely truncated during previous phases of construction.

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Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CGMS Consulting on behalf of George Wimpey East London Ltd (the Client). Wessex Archaeology would like to thank David Divers of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) for help and advice on the project.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Nick Truckle. The fieldwork was undertaken by Cornelius Barton, with the assistance of Alice O'Mahoney and Steven George. Cornelius Barton compiled this report with illustrations by Gareth Owen.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of Document

1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of George Wimpey East London Ltd (The Client) to conduct an archaeological evaluation on land at the University of London, Barking Campus, Longbridge Road in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (**Figure 1**) hereafter referred to as 'the Site'.

1.2 Planning Background

1.2.1 Planning permission had been granted for the redevelopment of the Site as a residential area with an associated school and doctor's surgery. The Site is located within an area of Archaeological Significance, as defined within the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Unitary Development Plan (UDP), and the planning application was supported by an Archaeological Desk-based Assessment of the Site (CgMs 2006).

1.2.2 The assessment suggested that there was a moderate potential for archaeological remains dating from the later prehistoric period to be present on the Site and therefore a condition requiring a archaeological field evaluation was placed on the consent on the advice of the Greater London Archaeological; Advisory Service acting as archaeological advisors to the Borough.

1.3 Site Description

1.3.1 The Site comprises an irregular parcel of land measuring 9.58 hectares, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 546460 185650 (**Figure 1**). It is bounded to the north and west by Longbridge Road, to the south by Mayesbrook Park and to the east by Lodge Avenue.

1.3.2 The Site is currently occupied by abandoned / disused university buildings.

2. GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Geology

2.1.1 The Site lies within the former floodplain of the River Roding and River Thames. Mayes Brook flows approximately 50m to the southwest of the Site into the River Roding, the modern banks of which flow approximately 2.5km southwest of the Site.

- 2.1.2 The title Mayes Brook is recorded from the 16th century but is thought to derive from around 1300 (CgMs 2006). The brook splits into two branches to the south of the Site, the western part of which is now mostly culverted.
- 2.1.3 The underlying geology of the Site is Taplow Gravel river terrace deposits. To the east of the Site this is overlain by Ilford Silt 'brickearth' (BGS 1996, Sheet 257, Romford).

2.2 Topography

- 2.2.1 The Site lies on a slope which rises gently from southwest to northeast with ground levels varying from 6.7m aOD at the southwest of the Site to 8.05m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to the northwest.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The Site was the subject of a Desk-based Assessment by CgMs Consulting in 2006 and its main conclusions were as follows:

3.2 *Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic (45,000 – 1,800 BC)*

- 3.2.1 No evidence from the early prehistoric periods has been recorded on the Site.

- 3.2.1 The Site is located on the former gravel terraces of the River Roding and River Thames where it is probable that hunter-gatherer communities would have utilised the water resource. The river gravels have been subject to heavy fluvial erosion by fluctuating river channels, therefore any prehistoric finds are likely to be derived and residual

3.3 *Bronze Age (1,800 – 600 BC).*

- 3.3.1 An archaeological excavation, undertaken in 1991 by Newham Museum Service, within the surrounding locale of the Site revealed two possible Middle Bronze Age ditches and associated material which may have formed an enclosure. The exact location of the excavation has been lost but it is likely to have been undertaken prior to the expansion of the university campus in the south and/ or west of the Site.
- 3.3.2 Aerial photographs of the Site, taken in 2005, revealed anomalies immediately to the south. Circular features which may represent enclosures in conjunction with linear features probably representing field systems could relate to the Middle Bronze Age features uncovered during the nearby excavation. The location of the Site on the drier gravel terraces of the river floodplain may have rendered it a likely candidate for early settlement

3.4 Iron Age (600BC – AD43)

3.4.1 There is scant evidence of this period in the vicinity of the Site. During development at Westrow Drive in 1936, 500m to the southwest, a large Iron Age jar and fragments of another were uncovered. Further evidence of Iron Age activity was recovered from cropmarks on Fairlop Plain, situated 4km to the north, which were excavated in 1994 and interpreted as evidence of several enclosures and field system ditches.

3.5 Romano-British (AD43 – AD410)

3.5.1 Excavation evidence from the previously mentioned 1991 excavation of the Site revealed a shallow pit of Roman date in conjunction with a small assemblage of pottery recovered from the plough soil, indicating activity in the area.

3.5.2 The excavations at Fairlop Plain uncovered two groups of cremation burials which were cut into surface of the previously mentioned Iron Age ditches indicating continued utilisation of the Site.

3.6 Saxon (AD410 – 1066)

3.6.1 The earliest documentary reference to Barking dates from AD735 and describes the establishment of the Abbey in AD666 by Erkenwald, Bishop of London, for his sister Ethelburga. Early development of Barking concentrated around the Abbey precinct where the River Roding joins Barking Creek, 4km to the southwest of the Site.

3.6.2 There is no known evidence of the early medieval period on the Site. It is likely that during this period the Site lay within an agrarian landscape of scattered hamlets and farmsteads.

3.7 Medieval and Post-Medieval (AD1066 – 1799)

3.7.1 By the medieval period the Site lay within the manor of Jenkins or Dagenham. During the 12th century the manor was the property of Barking Abbey and consisted of 101a arable and 19a meadow (VCH 9199). According to cartographic evidence the manor house, which was surrounded by a moat, was situated within Mayesbrook Park 1km to the southwest of the Site.

3.7.2 By the 15th century the Site was bounded to the north by the current Longbridge Road (formerly Smallwell Road) which provided a major route from Barking to Becontree Heath.

3.7.3 The Site continued to occupy part of the estate of the Manor of Jenkins in the post-medieval period as indicated by the estate map of 1653. By this date the northwest corner of the Site was occupied by Longbridge House. The remainder of the Site comprised agricultural land including a field to the west entitled Tile Kiln Field. There was little change in the use of the Site throughout the post-medieval period.

3.8 Post-Medieval and Modern (AD1799 – Present)

- 3.8.1 In 1860 Longbridge House was demolished and replaced by Longbridge Farm and associated gardens whilst the remainder of the Site continued to be utilised as agricultural land.
- 3.8.2 In the 1920s the town of Barking spread east along the Longbridge Road and by 1936 the South East Technical College was opened on the Site. The main building was H-shaped in plan and fronted onto Longbridge Road. It was designed by J.Stuart, the Essex County architect and is described by Pevsner as a symmetrical building with projecting wings and a seven bay centre with a solid stone cupola. The building was a three storey structure, constructed of pale brick with some good cast stone decoration. There were further buildings in the complex of single and two storey construction in conjunction with a grassed quadrangle and associated grounds. Longbridge Farm still occupied the Site during this period of expansion.
- 3.8.3 By the 1960s the college campus had expanded extensively, additional blocks were added to the east and west of the main building and the current students union was constructed on the site of the previously demolished Longbridge Farm buildings, of which only the main farmhouse and two ancillary buildings survived.
- 3.8.4 By 1977 the farmhouse had also been demolished and its land had been incorporated within the Technical College campus as the site of an engineering block with associated car park and landscaping.
- 3.8.5 In 1992 the college became the Barking campus site for the University of East London. Prior to this date additional buildings had been constructed to allow for this transition including residential buildings, additional academic blocks and associated car parks. The standing buildings have been subject to an assessment that will be presented as a separate report

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 The objective of the evaluation was to establish and record the presence and nature of any surviving archaeological remains associated with human occupation and activity in the area covered by the Site.

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

5.1 Fieldwork

- 5.1.1 All evaluation work was conducted in compliance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2007a), which follows standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2001) and the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service Guidance Papers.
- 5.1.2 All archaeological deposits were recorded by means of Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording sheets. A photographic record was

made by means of black and white prints, colour slides and digital images. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate, and annotated with OD heights. Sections, including a representative section of each trench, were drawn at 1:10. The trenches were surveyed and tied into the Ordnance Survey grid by means of a GPS system.

5.2 Trial Trenching

- 5.2.1 It was originally proposed to evaluate the Site through the excavation of 25 trial trenches, each measuring 30m by 1.8m to be excavated to the depth of significant archaeological remains or to the level of the underlying natural gravels, whichever should be encountered first. Two of the proposed trenches were abandoned due to the position of surviving flowerbeds that were to be retained, leaving 23 proposed trenches. In the event, only 19 trenches could be excavated, due to the presence of live services or protected trees (see **Figure 1** for locations of proposed and excavated trenches).
- 5.2.2 The trenches were dug by a JCB excavating machine under the supervision of an archaeologist. Trenches were dug using a toothless ditching bucket to facilitate examination of exposed deposits.

5.3 Health and Safety

- 5.3.1 All works were carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. 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. A Risk Assessment was compiled by Wessex Archaeology before commencement of works (WA2007b).

6 RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 No archaeologically significant remains were present in any of the trenches. The Site can be divided into two broad areas- the western and central area housing the University buildings, and the south-eastern area of the sports field.

6.2 Area 1

- 6.2.1 Trenches **3, 5, 8, 9, 13-16** and **22-25** were dug in the western and central area. The stratigraphic sequence in all these trenches was essentially the same. Below the tarmac cap was a layer of building rubble and hardcore, laid onto a thick plastic mesh. Directly below the mesh were natural sandy gravels (see **Section 1** and **Plate 1** for an example of this sequence). The gravels were probed in several trenches to ensure that the deposits were natural laid gravels, and in all cases were present to depths in excess of 1.5m, and clearly natural in origin. This would indicate that the ground was levelled by removal of topsoil and subsoil, presumably at the time of construction of the university buildings.

6.3 Area 2

- 6.3.1 Trenches **10-12** and **17-21** were dug in the eastern area of the Site, in the area previously in use as a sports field. The ground was largely undisturbed in this area. In all trenches a silty clay subsoil deposit was present below the topsoil. This deposit appeared colluvial in origin, and contained occasional small fragments of modern ceramic building material in the upper horizon. Below the subsoil were natural sandy gravel deposits similar to those seen elsewhere on the Site (see **Section 2** and **Plate 4** for an example of this sequence).

6.4 Finds and Environmental

- 6.4.1 No artefactual or environmental material was recovered.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 No archaeological remains were encountered anywhere on the Site. It appears likely that any archaeological remains which may have been on the main Site area would have been destroyed during construction of the University. Following consultation with representatives of GLAAS and CgMs the trenches were all backfilled.

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APPENDIX: Trench summary tables

Trench Number 01		Ground Level mOD	
Not Excavated			

Trench Number 02		Ground Level mOD	
Not Excavated.			

Trench Number 03		Ground Level mOD 7.47	
Context.	Description	Type	Depth
301	Tarmac cap	-	0.09m
302	Hardcore and rubble	Made ground	0.35m
303	Dark yellow sandy gravel	Natural	0.35m+

Trench Number 04		Ground Level mOD	
Not excavated			

Trench Number 05		Ground Level mOD 8.06	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
501	Tarmac cap	-	0.10m
502	Mixed rubble and hardcore	Made ground	0.35m
503	Dark yellow-brown gravel	Natural	0.35m+

Trench Number 06		Ground Level mOD	
Not excavated			

Trench Number 07		Ground Level mOD	
Not excavated			

Trench Number 08		Ground Level mOD	
Not excavated			

Trench Number 09		Ground Level mOD 7.75	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
901	Tarmac cap	-	0.03m
902	Hardcore and rubble	Made ground	0.27m
903	Dark grey-brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.93m
904	Dark yellow-brown clay	Natural	0.93m+

Trench Number 10		Ground Level mOD 7.18	
Context.	Description	Type	Depth
1001	Mid brown silty clay	Topsoil	0.33m
1002	Yellow-brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.56m
1003	Dark yellow-brown clay	Natural	0.56m+

Trench Number 11		Ground Level mOD 7.35	
Context .	Description	Type	Depth

1101	Dark yellow-brown silty clay	Topsoil	0.12m
1102	Mid yellow-brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.37m
1103	Reddish-brown clay	Natural	0.37m+

Trench Number 13		Ground Level mOD 8.17	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
1301	Tarmac cap		0.05
1302	Hardcore and rubble	Made ground	0.25m
1303	Red-brown clay with gravel patches	Natural	0.25m+

Trench Number 14		Ground Level mOD 8.15	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
1401	Tarmac cap		0.09m
1402	Hardcore and rubble	Made ground	0.40m
1403	Mid yellow-brown sandy gravel	Natural	0.40m+
1404	Cut of NNE-SSW linear	Drainage ditch	0.14m
1405	Dark yellow-brown silt fill of 1405	Silt fill of small ditch	0.14m

Trench Number 15		Ground Level mOD 7.82	
Context.	Description	Type	Depth
1501	Tarmac cap		0.09m
1502	Hardcore and rubble	Made ground	0.38m
1503	Red-brown sandy silt with gravel patches	Natural	0.38m+

Trench Number 16		Ground Level mOD 7.48	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
1601	Tarmac cap		0.11m
1602	Hardcore and rubble	Made ground	0.38m
1603	Dark red-brown sandy gravel	Natural	0.38m+

Trench Number 17		Ground Level mOD 7.29	
Context.	Description	Type	Depth
1701	Dark grey-brown silty clay	Topsoil	0.19m
1702	Yellow-brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.41m
1703	Red-brown silty sand with gravel patches	Natural	0.41m+

Trench Number 18		Ground Level mOD 7.07	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
1801	Mid grey-brown silty clay	Topsoil	0.50m
1802	Mid yellow brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.70m
1803	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	Natural	0.70m+

Trench Number 19		Ground Level mOD 6.93	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
1901	Mid brown silty clay	Topsoil	0.28m
1902	Mid orange-brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.43m
1903	Dark yellow clay with gravel patches	Natural	0.71m

Trench Number 20		Ground Level mOD 6.92	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
2001	Pale brown silty clay	Topsoil	0.16m
2002	Dark yellow-brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.28m
2003	Red-brown sandy gravel	Natural	0.28m+

Trench Number 21		Ground Level mOD 6.88	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
2101	Pale brown silty clay	Topsoil	0.17m
2102	Dark yellow-brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.22m
2103	Red-brown gravel with sand and silt patches	Natural	0.22m+

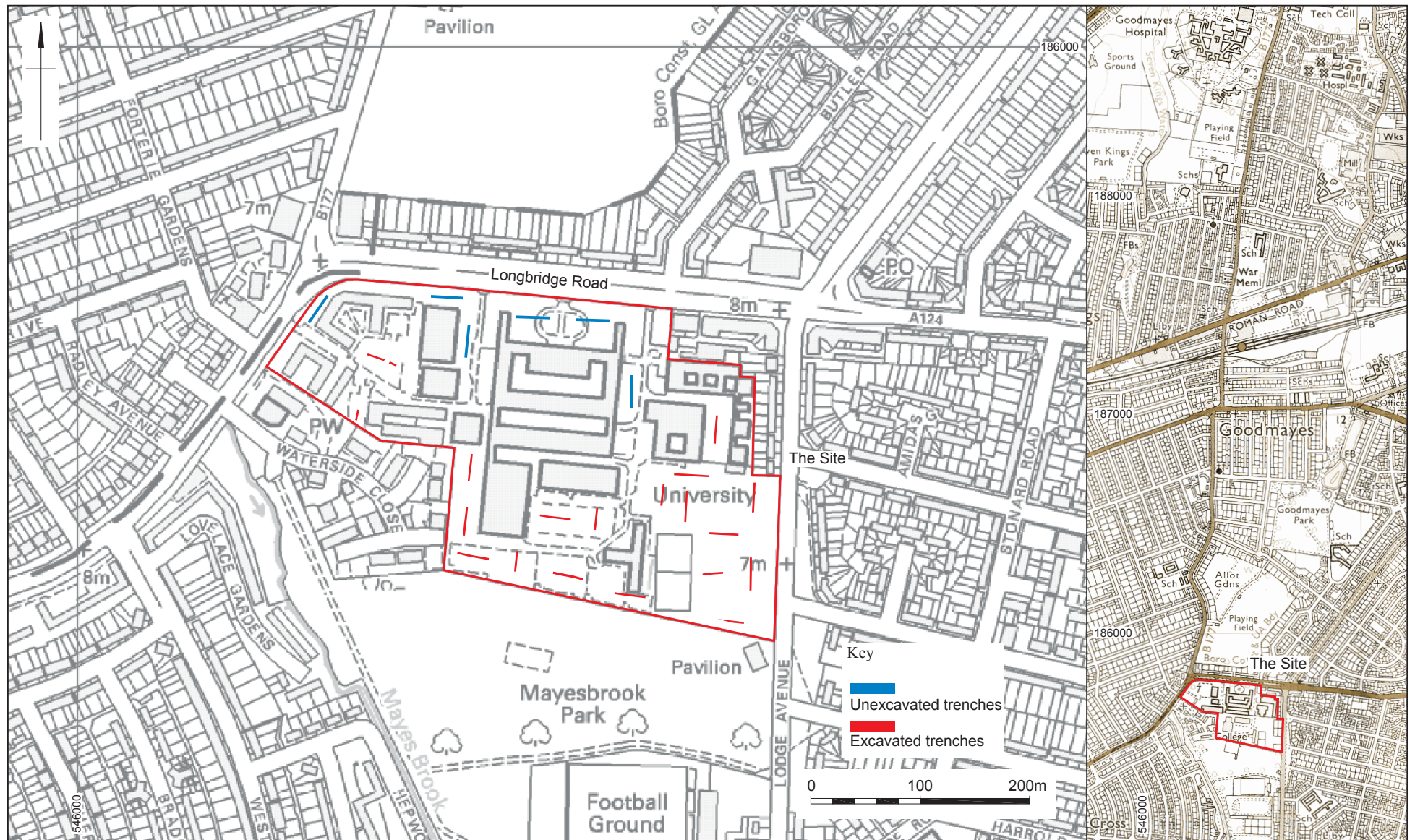
Trench Number 22		Ground Level mOD 6.80	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
2201	Tarmac cap		0.09m
2202	Hardcore and rubble	Made ground	0.40m
2203	Dark red-brown sandy gravel	Natural	0.40m+

Trench Number 23		Ground Level mOD 7.43	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
2301	Tarmac cap		0.09m
2302	Hardcore and rubble	Made ground	0.40m
2303	Dark red sandy gravel	Natural	0.40m+

Trench Number 24		Ground Level mOD 7.70	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
2401	Tarmac cap		0.09m
2402	Mixed rubble and hardcore	Made ground	0.40m
2403	Dark red-brown sandy gravel	Natural	0.40m+

Trench Number		Ground Level mOD 8.09	
Context	Description	Type	Depth
2501	Tarmac cap		0.09m

2502	Mixed rubble and hardcore	Made ground	0.36m
2503	Dark red-brown sandy gravel	Natural	0.36m+

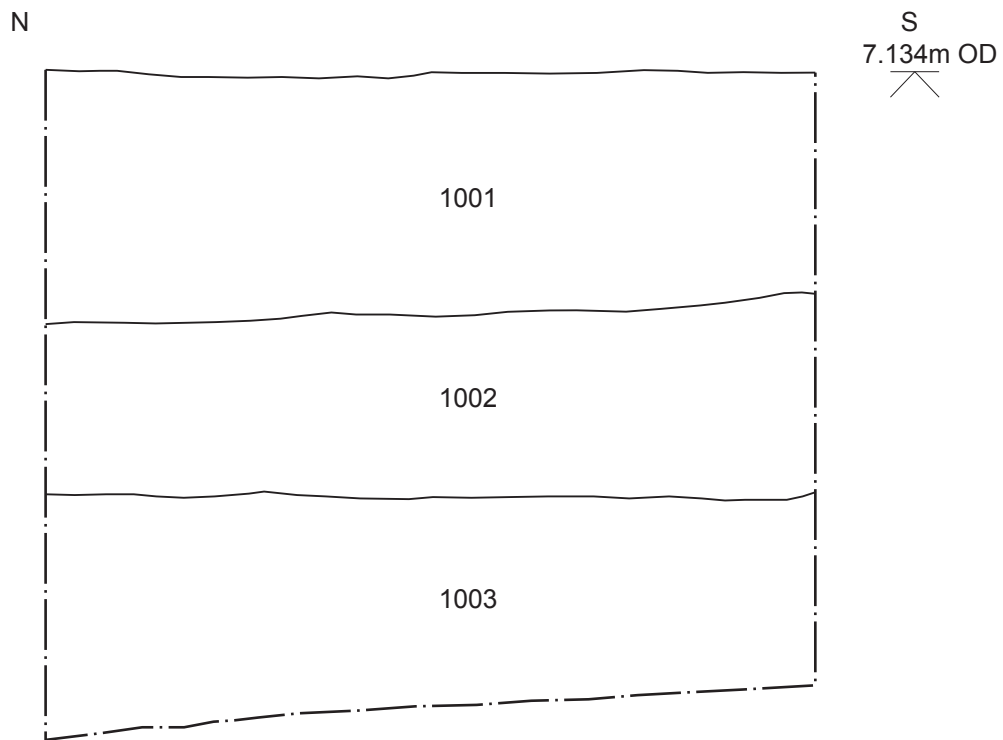
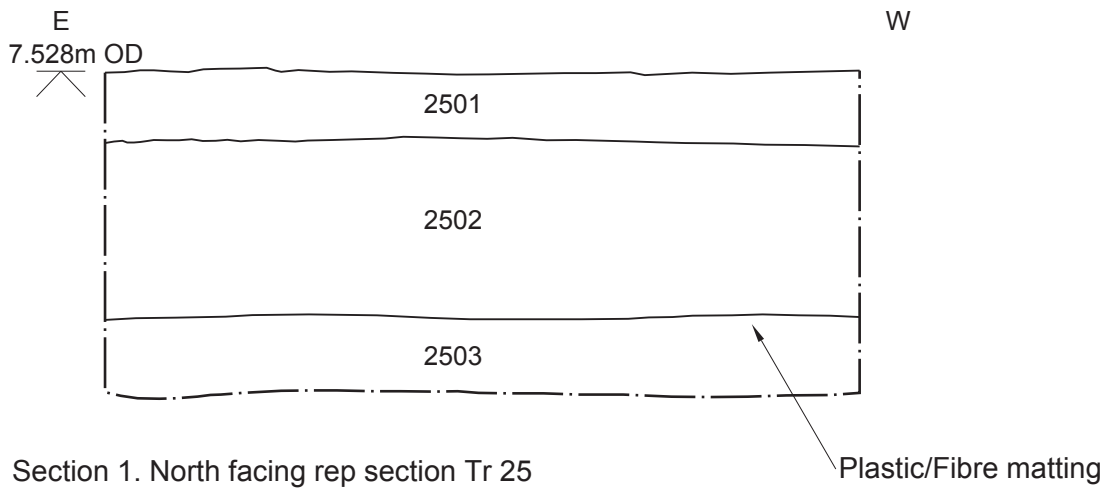


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Site and Trench location plan

Figure 1



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Plate 1. Dcp 3890 Rep. Section Tr.25 N. facing, 1m Scale



Plate 2. Dcp 3891 General shot of Tr.25 from West 1x1m & 1x2m Scale



Plate 3. Dcp 3381 Rep. Section Tr.10 W. facing, 1m Scale



Plate 4. Dcp 3880 General shot Tr.10 from south, 1x1m & 1x2m Scale